A Reformed Druid Anthology

Second Edition

A.K.A.
"Son of A Reformed Druid Anthology: The Druid Strikes Back"

40th Reunion 2003

The Drynemetum Press

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Frangquist, Fisher & Nelson
Founders of the RDNA
Picture, circa 1964
Hill of Three Oaks, Carleton

Press, Carruth (obscured), Nelson, Frangquist, Shelton & Weber at the 40th Anniversary Service, Beltane 2003 at New Stone Circle.

A REFORMED DRUID ANTHOLOGY

2nd Edition

In three volumes.

(Main Volume, Green Books Volume & Magazine Volume)

This is Volume One of the Saga

(Parts 0-5, 7-10, & 12 of ARDA 2)

THE MAIN VOLUME

ARDA is an odd collection of wandering writings by, for and about Reformed Druids over the last 42 years, drawn from a myriad of collections and authors.

Familiarize yourself with the layout of its overall contents. One day, even obscure corners of ARDA may become useful. Use it or disregard it, as you will.

ARDA is merely a collection of what one individual Druid has considered important enough to type, edit and distribute. It is not authoritative or particularly inspired.

So, I hope that it proves to be a handy reference source to complement your interaction with other Druids (& other wise folks), in addition to Nature, of course.

Perhaps other groups will find someone too who is this obsessive to compile their own works, and if so, I'd love to commiserate with that poor fellow. Enjoy.

The Drynemetum Press

Part Zero: Introductory Materials

Section One: Preliminary Information

Detailed Library Bibliographical Information

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Only 50 copies were physically printed.

This is copy

Given to:

Obtaining Additional Copies
A web-site at http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna also has copies of these files available for downloading and ready to print on a double-sided laser-printer. Another possible site to download from at http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html or perhaps at http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/ or at yahoogroups.com on the RDNAtalk conference, in the file section. If these web sites also becomes unavailable, visit the main Carleton page at http://www.carleton.edu and search for the Carleton Archives. Adobe Acrobat versions of this collection should be available then on CD-ROMs from the Archives for a nominal fee of $10 cash, in such case.

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A Reformed Druid Anthology, 2nd Edition

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Some materials from 1963-2004.

Most materials in the main volume are likely of the public domain, except where indicated by Copyright. Parts 6 & 11 have numerous copyright material whose permission have not been granted to us, and thus not published in the main volume, but printed separately for a private study program. See our policy in the ten important notices on the next page. Questions should be sent to the Drynemetum Press.

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2400 pages. Three Volumes. 8 1/2" x 11" dimensions. Hardback.

Suggested Catalogue Description of the Collection:
"A uniquely rare encyclopedic anthology of 40 years worth of literature by the Reformed Druids of North America, which is the ancestor of the modern Druidism in America. This collection was primarily produced by the Berkeley Grove and the Carleton College Grove. Contents include a history, study guides, meditations, poetry, songs, jokes, theological debates, rules, customs, liturgies, magic charms, statistics, and recommended reading lists. Their various works of literature draw upon Buddhism, Christian traditions, ecology ideals, the Feminist movement, very ancient Jewish practices, Earth-centered mysticism, New Age beliefs, Neopaganism, Hinduism, the Occult, the Celts, Tao, Wicca, and lots of Zen."

Acknowledgments

A detailed list of the various authors can be found in Part Four: "Credits, Founders and Known Innovators" but I would like to thank a few very special people for their help in putting this collection together. Isaac Bonewits and Robert Larson published "The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)" in 1976 under the Drynemetum Press label, and from whose collection much of ARDA's material can be traced. Richard Shelton and David & Deborah Frangquist were very helpful in giving me leads and constant advice. Stacey Weinberger has proven of inestimable assistance in acquiring and understanding material from the 1980s at the Live Oak Grove. Without Mark Heiman's professional layout experience, it would not look as fine and polished as it is in the 1st Edition, and whose influence continues in the 2nd's organization. Steve Crimmins contributed enormous energies to provide photos and transcriptions and typing up last minute articles to fill up this 2nd Edition. I would like to thank Eric Hillemann for providing space at the Carleton Archives for the Carleton Druid Archival Project, for conducting many oral interviews with past Druids, and offering helpful hints in collecting and organizing a mountain of materials. I thank Professor Philip Niles and Professor Dietheim Prowe for their academic support and counseling during the 1992-1994 period when I was collecting many these materials to complete my senior comprehensive exercise in the history department. I would like to thank my parents, my friends, roommates, fellow Carleton Druid grove members, Ar nDraiocht Fein, The Henge of Keltria, all the other groves of the Reform, and the authors of the First Amendment. In order to be true to all my friends, I should boldly state the following about Druidism:

The Entire RDNA Dogma is Contained in the Two Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism (Law 4-6):

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it men do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.

No more, no less, but these are often traditionally abbreviated into:

1. Nature is good.
2. Likewise, Nature is good.

'Ten Important Notices'

1. Nearly all of this material in the main volume, except where indicated by the author (& Parts 6 & 11), are likely of the Public Domain and is free for you to use and distribute. Nothing in here is considered "oath-bound" material. Please acknowledge the authors, use it only for non-malicious purposes, such as study, and not for personal gain. If you produce a book, article, or report that makes significant use of these materials; please send us a complementary copy in care of the Drynemetum Press (see above).
2. Please, do not take this stuff too seriously. Most of us certainly do not!
3. Materials represent only the individual opinions of their authors and no one else.
4. We do not have official group dogma. We merely have our individual opinions, and we bicker frequently.
5. Just because it was printed, doesn't mean the authors haven't changed their minds since they wrote the materials.
6. Most Druids get along just fine without ever reading ANY of these unofficial materials. Many (if not most) Druids thrive better without this literature!!
7. In general... most of us consider Reformed Druidism to be a perspective, not a religion. Do not be fooled by all the external trappings, whistles, and bells.
8. Membership in Druidism is considered very compatible with all religions by many members and the term "Druid" is usually considered to be gender neutral. Or, at least, we tend to think so.
9. Technically speaking, those who do not have the Apostolic Succession descending from Fisher are not permitted to use most of the traditional liturgies.
10 Within reason, all documents have been presented here in their original historical forms (i.e. after spell-checking and versical numbering).

N O **T** A G

O P **E** R A

T E N E T

A P **E** R O

G A **T** O N

PREFACE 2003

Thoughts on the Second Edition

Does anyone read a preface anymore?

If so, thank you. I've spent a lot of time writing this essay to help orient you in using this collection in a simple manner.

I hope the gentle readers will approach this Anthology primarily as a historical literary collection, since it is really intended as a jumpstart for researchers, and a model for other groups interested in preserving their history. It was not prepared to be a coherent step-by-step induction into the mysteries of Reformed Druidism, but it is rather a sprawling mish-mash of materials that should be dived into, played with, pondered and utilized, if needed. Siblings await your counsel and Nature waits beyond your window with a myriad of more important lessons.

What a strange beast ARDA must seem to those new to the RDNA. Even to old-timers, there's quite a lot of new material in here, overwhelmingly so. A veritable mountain of trivia, various customs and other debris of different groves and individual recollections. But this is still a minute fraction of all the unrecorded personal and group activity and conversations of the movement (just the wrapper on the Twinkie). The most I have been able to do is draw a few cupfuls of water from several swift streams. Even then, few could possibly have the time to incorporate it all into their religious life, and much is contradictory. But it is said, "the opposite of a truth is often another truth." Not all of it is pertinent to you. As with diamond mining, there is one ton of rock for every jewel, so I wish you the best of luck in treasure hunting here and elsewhere.

As you can tell by all the stars in the Table of Contents, there's much material you haven't seen even if you have read the entire first edition of ARDA. Despite the massive bulk, I am still hesitant to publish it now because I know of other great reserves of archives that may soon come to light that will change my perspectives on group dynamics, especially at the Berkeley and Seattle Groves. Yet, I want to get this collection published first, and then start working on the next collection. If I constantly put it off, no one would be able to enjoy it in the intermediary period. What a delightful never-ending task I've assigned to myself!

The question arises often to me whether many of the gaps should be filled in, or even published. Often when information is missing, we have a tendency to put the most reasonable piece of information into a hole, to "smooth" out the story, even if it is wrong or unnecessary. Probably because it's fun. I don't agree with the opinions or styles of many contributors in this edition, but I have chosen not to censor or unduly filter the resources for future scholars. Hopefully the 2013 edition will give me an opportunity to remove those unworthy gap-stoppers. All these documents for me are like fallen leaves in autumn, lying on a trail, passed by many without a thought, and perhaps inspiring a few to stop and gaze awhile and contemplate the tree from which they came.

I don't think Druidism needs to fulfill all the roles of big-time religions. Not all areas have to be explored, detailed, or codified by Druidism alone to enjoy some benefits. Silence on some matters can often be as instructive. The great outdoors remains there to inspire us. The materials collected here may portray us with a greater sense of continuity and fullness than actually ever existed in reality or attainability. I've always likened the RDNA to mistletoe grafted onto another tree's branches, a set of glasses, or perhaps as a cybernetic implant on another organism. Others see it as a borrowed practice to improve their own spiritual lives, like Zen Meditation or Yoga. For those to whom the RDNA is sufficient unto itself, and there are a few out there, they will eventually dream up confessionals, baptisms, coming-of-age ceremonies, training programs, visions of the afterlife; and thereby design with it, a most recognizably full-fledged religion in the eyes of many, such as happened with ADF.

Feel free to add more, but try to do so in a way, and I emphasize, that enriches it but does not limit the possibilities for your successors (if any). Like a campsite or wilderness, leave it cleaner than you found it. The rest of us probably won't go that far, or other faiths will supply those needs; if such is fervently desired. For me, Druidism & philosophy has been about constant questions, and religions are the accumulation of accepted answers. Hopefully those who go "full-time" in their Druidism will say to themselves and others, "These views go beyond the basic tenets, and cannot be hoped to be believed by all within the Reform."

It is thought that the original Founders chose the name "Druids" not only because of the connection with Nature, but also because so little was known about them. Over the last 40 years so much has been learned about the beliefs of the Celts, that the mere application of 10% of those findings & suggestions might overwhelm the pleasant simplicity of this little movement. However, some groves may choose such an orientation, and I wish them good fortune.

I hope you don't just go only for the easy "paste and play" mode of Druidism, with the belief that older Druids are unquestionably ever so much better at finding the truth than we are. This is just not so. Truth may ring true through the centuries, but mistakes and outmoded ideas may also accompany them. The ARDA is not a bible, at least for me and most people I've talked to about it. It can be referred to, but should not be deferred to. These materials are not necessarily divine, and some are certainly not inspired. We heartily recommend a visit to a forest or beach or gaze up at the sky. Go out there and wing it sometimes or figure out what you want to do, and don't be so busy that you can't hear the quiet response of Nature to your cries for assistance. Perhaps that odd afternoon on July 23 really is a perfect day to celebrate, despite not being a traditional day. Druidism need not get so complicated. I'd like to think that the first orders are the most innocent of the organizing tendency, they are probably just in an absorbent stage and not externally manifesting this desire to stack the blocks together (and then weld them). But some will stack them tightly.

The First Edition of ARDA has been both more popular than I hoped and than I feared. Although only 30 copies were printed, a few thousand downloads have occurred since they became available on-line. Like the anthropologist whose very interaction with remote populations will change the very cultures he wishes to study, I also know that ARDA will change the group that I so dearly love. I have also unwillingly been mis-understood as the Archdruid of the Reform by several individuals, rather than as a simple archivist of information. I had intended to release a heavily illustrated Y2K version in January 2000, but was unable to pull the resources together, and the 40th Anniversary of the RDNA provided the next appropriate opportunity, but did not come together until 2003/2004. I have spent far too many hours in this project for my graduate studies to be successful, and yet this final result is far from polished, and likely to be fraught with errors. For this, I apologize and ask for assistance in making corrections in the next edition which will be 2013. This edition actually came out a full year later than expected, but fortunately Druids believe Time is a circular phenomenon rather than linear, so I'm still on time in that sense.

It's hard to tell which section will appeal the most to the general reader. Part Zero offers a study course for trying to absorb the whole collection in stages. Part One (Chronicles) and Part Five (HDNA) have no noticeable changes except for

spelling, but you'll notice enormous additions to Part 3 (Rituals) with better classification, and new subsets for advice on seasonal activities and should be assisted by Green Book 7. Part 2 (Apocrypha) now has numerous debates being added on new themes and events. Part 4 shows more documents elucidating how various groves organized themselves; how various off-shoots organized & diverged from those patterns, and recent general publications by RDNA showing how groves have represented themselves. Part 6 (Green Books of Meditations) has a large diverse compilation of stories, essay, historical materials, poems and quotes of interest to the Reform, but has been removed from the main volume of ARDA, due to copy-right concerns, and is viewable at the website. Part 6 has also mushroomed enormously in size, and represents my largest contribution to RDNA literature.

Part 7 (Miscellany) has been ransacked and a grab-bag of various research articles on the RDNA and other essays on historical Druidical matters has been relocated to Part 6 Green Book 10. Part 8 (History) contains a short update on 80's and 90's Druidism, but will undoubtedly go into greater depth in the 2013 collection after I have further access to the archival collections of Stephen and Emmon, and better evaluate the current frenetic period with the hindsight of passing time. Part 9 has a new delightful collection of mini-histories in the Dead River Scrolls. Most of the epistles in Part 9 weren't quite the right material to add to the apocrypha, so this section remains a useful repository. Part 10 has a few new interviews to give future Archdruids an idea of the scope of high and low points from other AD's tenures. Part Eleven (Druid Magazines) won't be ready until Winter 2004/5 and will be published separately, but will offer a 25 year perspective on the changes and fortunes of the NRDNA branch of the Reform through the regular newsletters.

As an interesting side note, as Norman Nelson put it, the Druids seemed to have forgot to put guilt, moralizing and after-life promises into their writings, which they expressly self-deprecate. Lastly, for the bookish again, I repeat that these primary historical materials, while useful, cannot replace primary experiences of your own. Go out and seek those! I can think of no other group of companions with wish to seek such experiences, and delight in presenting these records to you. It is my gift to you, and how you use it will be your gift to me.

I'd like to add more and encourage you further, but everything I'd like to tell you has probably already been said somewhere in this Anthology. So, I will stop here. If you come up with other materials that you'd like to add, feel free to contact me. I wish you clarity of thought and purpose in your life.

-Mike Scharding
Grand Patriarch of the Ancient Order of Bambi
April 1, 2003 c.e.
Day 60 of Earrach, Year XL of the Reform

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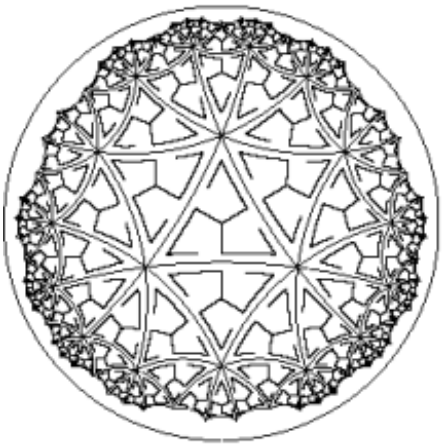


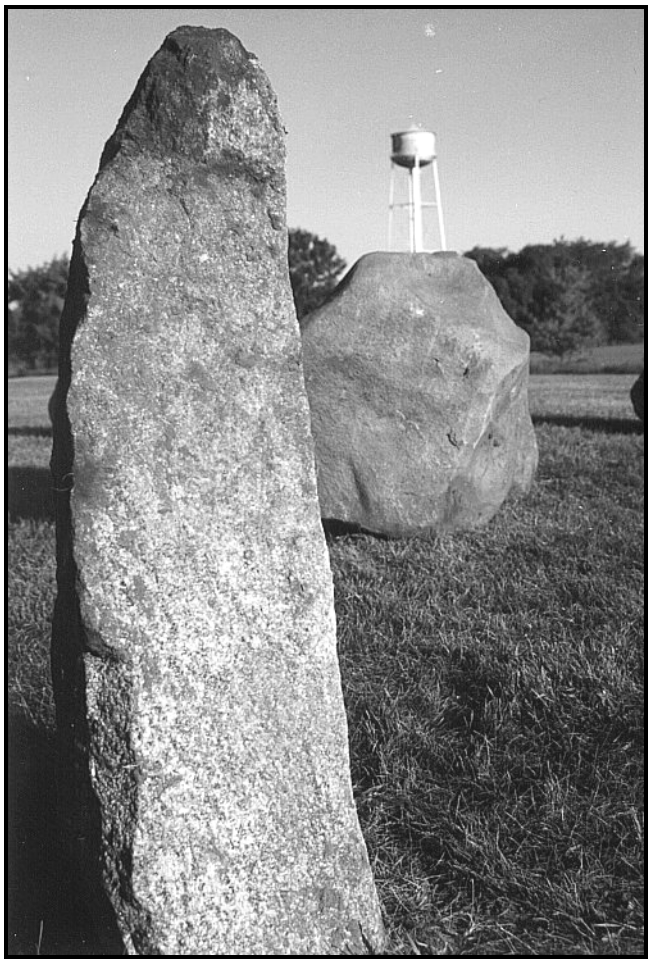


Figure 1 First Stone Circle, c. 1956.

PREFACE 1996

Why was this book published?

The reasons behind printing this Anthology are difficult to convey to the Reader. I would hope that I'm not doing this work out of pride, one-upmanship, or to prove a point; but the mind can often rationalize the secrets of the heart.

Most readers will assume that this Anthology is being printed as a precise manual to preserve our rituals in their purest official forms; essentially to produce orthodox texts. Nope. Except for the occasional historian, like me (Michael Scharding), a Reformed Druid tends to see little value in the age of our religious texts. A religion that mandates only one interpretation of a text, or that even only one text be used, has already taken a wrong turn and has reduced the usefulness of its teachings to the value, of, oh.... dung. (No offense.) A piece of dung more than 40 years old is not much more valuable that a piece of dung from 20 years ago. They both smell about the same and make equally useful fertilizer, but they are not as tasty as the original apple. This text may last two hundred years, but I doubt that there will be anyone around at that point who still goes by the label of "Reformed Druid." It is possible that the spirit of Reformed Druidism may still continue on, unlabeled, in the hearts of people who have interacted with Reformed Druids. Long after the trappings have passed away, the message of Reformed Druidism will be alive in our lifestyles. Preserving our oldest texts in an uncorrupted form is certainly not the purpose of this Anthology.

Could the purpose of this book be to disseminate our unique wisdom to a larger audience? Am I evangelizing to gain converts? Nope. Our only truth is so simple that most people have probably already guessed it all a long time ago, and then gone on with their lives. Most of the readers, after reading these texts, will probably realize that the RDNA is not trying to make more Reformed Druids (there are already too many to keep track of!), but to make people into better Christians, Neo-Pagans, Taoists, Buddhists, Atheists or Whatevers! Reformed Druidism is not in the business of finding recruits, rather, we are merely helping those who have joined us anyway. When and where they choose to go after a short stay with us is up to them. We are not seeking converts.

Am I trying to gain influence within the current Reformed Druids? Realistically, I expect that 95% of past and future Reformed Druids will never read anything beyond the Chronicles, if even that much. Most will never even know the existence of this work, and many of those who do may not care. And they may well be living a far more Druidic life that I will ever attain. Experience is difficult to gain from a book, and once gained, no longer needs the book. As Four Guns, an Oglala Sioux, once said:

"Many of the white man's ways are past our understanding. They put a great store upon writing; there is always a paper. The white people must think paper has some mysterious power to help them in the world. The Indian needs no writings; words that are true sink deep into his heart, where they remain. He never forgets them. On the other hand, if the white man loses his papers he is helpless."

I suspect more Druids will resent this publication than will ever thank me. To try and put Druidism down on paper is a near impossible task and the reader could easily misconstrue the meaning. A symphony can not be put into words. This Anthology may lead as many people onto the wrong path as it may help some, if any. If I mislead you, I deeply apologize and ask you to forgive my impetuosity.

If anything, I would consider myself a taxonomist or a biologist who has discovered a new, exotic species. With so many species becoming extinct every day, I would hate to not write about the lifestyle and customs of such a creature. Do as you will with it.

My name is Michael Scharding.
I wrote this on May 1st, 1996 c.e.

INTRODUCTION 1996

(By Robert Larson with apologies to David the Chronicler)

1. There shall come unto thee those who do inquire: "What is this thing hight Reformed Druidism?"
2. And thou shalt answer them by quoting the basic tenets, for this is the only answer with which all Reformed Druids do agree.
3. Yea, there may be those druids who do have reservations even about these basic tenets.
4. And some there shall be who do understand, and who do gain in awareness.
5. For there are those who do be Reformed Druids, yet who know it not, never before having heard of us.
6. May the blessings of the Mother be upon them.
7. But others there shall be who understand not, and who shall ask again, "What is this thing hight Reformed Druidism?"
8. And thou shalt answer them by paraphrasing the Great Bard, saying, "It is a tale of sound and fury, signifying what thou wilt."
9. For, verily, even as Reformed Druids do disagree, so do they agree to disagree.
10. And even as they do agree to disagree, so do they disagree so that they may agree.
11. And some there shall be who do understand, and who do gain in awareness.
12. May Be'al smile upon them.
13. But many there shall be who do grow yet more confused. Yea, even shall they be confused in their confusion.
14. And they shall ask once again, "What is this thing hight Reformed Druidism?"
15. Then shalt thou pick up this tome and throw it at them. Yea, shalt thou throw it at them even aiming at their most tender parts.
16. And thou shalt intone even as thou dost throw this tome the First (and only) Commandment of Reformed Druidism.
17. For, yea, though it be nowhere written, it is a commandment most dear to all Reformed Druids.
18. And that commandment is this:
19. "Think for thyself, foolish one."
20. Then shalt thou grow in awareness, even as he doth grow who doth ask.
21. And then shall ye both receive the blessing of the Mother and of Be'al.

We have accumulated a lot of verbiage, haven't we? And we began with such a simple little idea; indeed, as a jest. But doesn't everything begin simply and grow and elaborate? Is not the most complex mathematical formula grown from simple basic (and unprovable) postulates? Are not all the sciences based upon simple observations, which have been elaborated upon through the centuries by a method of inquiry? So it has been with Reformed Druidism. From the acorn of the basic tenets, druidical inquiry fostered an oak. May the future see the oak become a forest, each oak different but related through the original acorn.

So it is good to see this new edition of the Chronicles and other accumulated druidical writings. I feel that Brother Michael has done a service to both present and future druids by his compilation.

Of course, many druids will find much, if not all, of this book irrelevant to their personal druidical path. This attitude is both right and wrong. While it is correct to say that only the druidical attitude of tolerant individual inquiry in the search for awareness is truly relevant, nevertheless no path to awareness, or expression of belief, can be considered irrelevant to this search. My belief has been and continues to be that all concepts of deity deserve equal respect, as long as they extend the same respect to others. Every belief system, be it mundane or bizarre, tells us much about the relationship of human beings to the ineffable and thus helps us define our own beliefs and relationships to Be'al.

So while Sturgeon's Law ("Ninety percent of everything is crap") certainly applies to all this verbiage, Larson's Corollary also applies: "Yes, but the crap fertilizes the crop. No crap, no crop."

Brother Michael's history of the RDNA will also be useful to druids, I believe. Only by understanding the origins and past can we begin to understand the present or to fathom the future. Though I'm sure that nearly every druid will find point of disagreement with his interpretations (for such is our contentious nature), his attempt to present an evenhanded and dispassionate view is largely successful. I would expect no less from a brother druid and Carletonian. For his efforts and his sheer persistence, he deserves both congratulations and praise.

On a personal level, it both pleased and amused me to learn that the edition of the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) which Isaac and I put out two decades (gods! has it been that long?) ago, for which we took a deal of flak, was found useful in reconstituting the RDNA at Carleton. I've always liked irony. Perhaps a similar fate awaits this edition. The production of the DC(E), like this work, was largely a labor of love. The original purpose was to produce a new printing of the Chronicles so that current and future druids who wanted one could have a decent copy. (My original copy was getting pretty ragged from all the use and copying.) The tradition that any Third Order could add whatever he chose to the apocrypha led to the growth of the project and the inclusion of some things many found objectionable. As the person who had to do the printing I was not altogether pleased with the growth. (Perhaps a better title would have been "The Druid Chronicles (Metastasized)). As for the "objectionable content" which might give an unbalanced view of druidism, my attitude was that those objecting should contribute their own writings to be included, not criticize other druids' expressions of belief. Inclusion, not exclusion, has always been the guidon of Reformed Druidism, as I perceive it. I hope that Brother Michael has had a smoother journey through the job of redaction than Isaac and I had.

To those who are reading this book to learn about Reformed Druidism I give a warning and some advice.

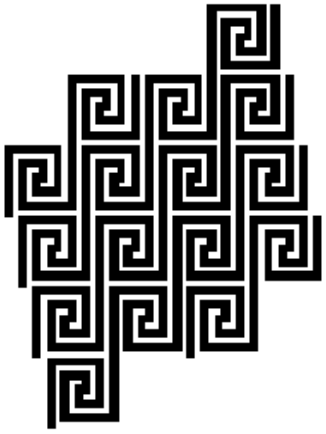
Firstly, druid communications must be taken with a large dose of salt. As a class, we druids tend to discuss trivial matters seriously and serious things jokingly. Often the difference between a serious belief and a joke is obscure, even to the writer. (I've maintained that many serious things are jokes, and jokes can be very serious, indeed.) A good sense of humor is essential to understanding the context of druidism.

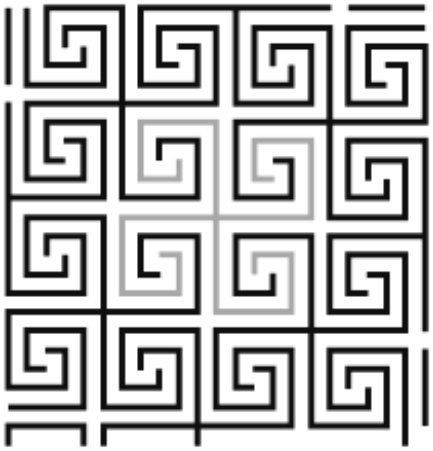
Secondly, druidism is deceptively simple. Only belief in the basic tenets is, by definition, required of Reformed Druids, and these tenets are intentionally vague, general and subject to individual interpretation. So druidism is easy, isn't it? Well, yes and no. (The druidical "maybe") Druidism is what you make of it, and you get from it according to what you put into it. If you just want a nice service, and a bit of down time and camaraderie under the oaks, that's fine and a grove can provide these.

But if you want to use druidism as a vehicle for your own search for religious/philosophical awareness and to define what you truly believe, it can be difficult indeed, for druidism does not tell you what to believe. Rather, it requires you to ask questions of yourself, to answer them with complete intellectual and emotional honesty, and then to examine your answers. The search is truly unending, and the way may be rocky indeed.

Finally, a thought to take you into your readings. The Reformed Druids were founded at Carleton College in 1963, which was arguably the perfect (inevitable?) time and place. Within a few years young people throughout Western Civilization were exploring exotic religions and philosophies and Neo-Paganism became a notable movement. At the same time, the academic world saw an increased interest in Celtic studies and an explosion of research in and books on Celtic matters which continues to this day with a resultant increase in knowledge about a people until then largely shrouded in mystery. Were we ahead of our times? Is all this just coincidence? Serendipity? Jungian synchronicity? Perhaps it's a sign.

Peace Síocháin Heddwch
Robert Larson D.A.L., Be.





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SECTION TWO: STUDY AIDS

Who are the Reformed Druids?

In a woefully inadequate thumbnail sketch; the Reformed Druids are a group of people from many religions and philosophies who are attempting to find answers to spiritual and philosophical questions. They officially began at Carleton College in 1963 as an attempt to circumvent a mandatory attendance requirement of religious services. Disliking the attitude behind forced attendance, they lightheartedly made up their own "religion" and attended it regularly to see if that was sufficient. After Carleton rescinded the requirement the Druids found that their activity had brought up many questions that weren't answered yet. They changed their goal from bucking the Requirement into a quest for personal growth and spiritual exploration. Over the years, they established "missionary groves" to continue their work. One such missionary branch, in Berkeley California, would eventually take itself a little more seriously and become the first Neo-Pagan Druidic religion in America. From that grove, Ar nDraiocht Fein, The Henge of Keltria and a few other major Druid movements in America would come to trace their roots. Most Reformed Druids continue to disagree with each other on all other details.

An ARDA Study Program

Introduction 1996

You are looking for answers to difficult questions. So are we. We are not gurus and none of us will know all the answers. Reformed Druidism is an unending search. You might already be a Reformed Druid and just may not know it. If so, congratulations! If you don't think so, that's fine too. My estimation of personal worth is not affected by how many people share my beliefs... or I would like to think so.

Let's face it, this is a big collection and it all looks very complicated. Druidism is actually very simple, perhaps so simple that you will pass by its message and keep looking for a more complex answer. Druidism is merely asking questions to yourself and to others and not stopping until you get honest answers, with the occasional inspiration from Nature. No kidding, it really is that simple! It's also that difficult. If you cannot accept that, then you should put this book down. Everything else in this collection is just an affirmative elaboration on this point.

Remember that all one has to do to be a Reformed Druid (at least in the Spirit of the law) is to agree with the Basic Tenets as listed in verses 4-6 of the Book of Law which can be found in the Druid Chronicles (Reformed), and I quote:

> 1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

> 2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it men do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.

Any Druid who claims any further requirement to be a Reformed Druid is not following the broad tradition of the Reform, or may be referring to local Grove membership rules. Most people have probably already come to those two conclusions by their own brainpower and could well already be considered First Order Druids in the Body of the Reform, even if they haven not drunk the consecrated Waters of Life to thereby also become First Order Druids in Spirit of the Reform (cf. Chapter One of the Customs of the Druids to be found in the Chronicles). Therefore, having read only this far, I'm sure you are now fully capable of closing this book and continuing on your study of the Reformed Druidism through the active medium of your own life and the world that surrounds and permeates you, without ever having to read more from this collection again!

So why did I bother to construct a study program? Partly because it was fun for me. Partly, because a friend asked me to make one and because eventually somebody else would have again pestered me into making one. The better question is why do you need a study program? Perhaps because, if you read this book straight through, from cover to cover, you will only get confused and may not enjoy it. I know of no one, including myself, who would ever want to follow that method! Would you read a French dictionary from cover to cover just to learn a definition of the word "terre-neuve"? The easiest way to begin to understand a new religion or culture is to listen to its favorite stories. Treat each of the articles in this anthology as a story, not as a textbook or cookbook. We're not going to quiz you and even I don't know all this stuff verbatim (nor would I ever care to!). If you don't like one of the articles, don't read it!!, and just skip around until something else catches your eye. However, some of you eggheads may wish to learn more of the past, in an orderly structured fashion. For you, I have devised a study program.

Reasons **Not** to Undertake the Twenty Step Study Program

You should have no doubts that there is more than one optional possible schedule, yea, it is one among many ways. I jokingly refer to it as my "Druidic Twenty Step Program" and I made it up by myself in December 1995 and modified it in 2003 after an online teaching session, so in all likelihood you'd be amongst the first to try it out. Please, don't expect anyone else to have ever heard of it or to be impressed that you worked on it. Also, I would indeed be saddened if you were studying Reformed Druidic texts in order to "quote scripture" at other Druids to get your own way. Your participation in such a program should only be because you want to explore the issues of Reformedly Druidical thought for your personal benefit. The Reform has not required any training program of its members. Let me explain:

In the past, people would attend a few rituals to get the feeling for the RDNA before entering the First Order. Similarly, because people often entered the Second Order to act as Preceptor in a service, they would generally become familiar with the text of the average liturgy in use. Those intending to enter the Third Order would often study the liturgy a little more, because they might have to perform a service, and usually by that point they would probably have read (at least once) the five books in the Druid Chronicles (Reformed), and they probably meditated before making a lifelong commitment to the Reform by entering the Third Order. Some people entered these Orders as a sort of spiritual maturation rite of passage and never intend to perform a liturgy in their entire life! Indeed, some people have spent all of 30 minutes skimming the texts of the Reform before feeling ready for the Third Order. I've even ordained someone who hadn't even read the Chronicles! So if you are seeking an eventual path to ordination to the First Order or above, you DO NOT have to participate in this program, just locate a friendly local Reformed Druid and save yourself a lot of time and effort. Spending all that time amongst the past writings of Reformed Druidism may in fact hinder your own participation, when you should be more concerned with the more important present or future of your own Reformed Druidism! Therefore proceed only if you desire questions, because that's all you will get from this study, but hopefully they'll be good questions that will take you to other fulfilling studies.

How to Proceed in the Study Program

The basic maxim of the study program is "slow and steady ploughs the farm". It may easily take over three or four diligent months to fully digest this reading regimen that I have listed below. Fortunately, you will not need a sponsor. Inspiration often comes unexpectedly with the raw passage of time, so do not despair. Going slowly allows you the time to digest what you read. I have gone through several plateaus (sometimes lasting nine months) during my first five years in trying to understand Druidism, and I have had many excellent teachers and fellow Druids to talk with. Each step of a phase should take a few days, or perhaps even a week or two, but you may choose your own pace. I recommend that after finishing each step, meditate a bit, and reread your favorite parts. Definitely, it may help to let a few days pass before proceeding to the next step. Go as far as you need. After placing the issues in a generic context, discuss them with a friend. Druidism is best absorbed with a cup of tea, a warm cat, and a pile of cookies.

I have added a few questions and comments to think about before you begin on each step. If you'd like to (and have nothing better to do, like going outside to a park for a pleasant walk) you can write little mini-essays for yourself on the questions I have included in each step, or make up your own questions, or you can ignore the questions. Do not send the essays to me or expect anyone else to review them, but feel free to donate the better quality essays to the Druid Archival project for storage (or yes, you can send it me anyways). I also welcome the submission of alternative study plans that you may come up with based on your firsthand experiences of studying Reformed Druidic scriptures with a clean slate of mind. Who knows, someday your recommendations just might get read by someone. It is rather chronological in format, but here it is.

The Beginning Phase: The RDNA from 1963-74

Step 1. What was Reformed Druidism in the Beginning at Carleton?

Begin by reading the five books of The Druid Chronicles (Reformed) in Part One. Then read the interview with Frangquist in Part Ten. Finally read “A Spring Thaw”, the first Epistle in Part Two. This will essentially provide you with a colorful history of what happened during the very first year of Reformed Druidism. The Chronicles are also a handy collection of early

customs, tentative rules and meditations which David Frangquist (the third Archdruid of Carleton) thought would be useful for incoming Druids to know about.

· What a group does in its first years can often tell you a lot about them. Develop a general feel for the group and write a brief summary.
· The DC(R) was written and rewritten through the first year of founding (May 1963-May 1964), and may be Frangquist's attempt to prepare the foundations for his formative Archdruidcy (1964-1966).
· With the possible exception of recruitment leaflets, DC(R) enjoys the honor of being the most widely read text within the Reform.
· Footnotes help, but if you will read this twice, read it the first time without referring to the footnotes, trying to get a feeling for it as a whole work of literature.
· Keep in mind, they often have their tongue firmly planted in their cheek. The language is awkward, because they thought it sounded funny and formal that way.
· The creative outburst actual occurrence is far more important than the specific ceremonies, holidays, or hierarchy.
· How many biblical allusions can you spot?
· The Book of Meditations, incidentally, has nearly all of the passages from the entire Reformed literature that talks about the vague Be'al and Dalon Ap Landu. I suspect that most later Carleton Druids concentrated more on the perceptions of Druidism and did not really concern themselves with building a mythology. Curiously, even the NRDNA of Berkeley, which became heavily Neo-Pagan, did not elaborate much upon these name-archetypes.

Step 2. Views on the Reform by Early Druids Besides Frangquist.

Read all the letters in "The Earliest Selections" in Part Two. This part of the Apocrypha is a collection of letters and sermons by Reformed Druids that were written after the Druid Chronicles (Reformed) were written by Frangquist, and before Shelton's departure. I suppose some might consider this the "Golden Age of Reformed Druidism." Step 2 stops with the letters written in May 1970. We will pause in our reading of the Apocrypha at this point, as these letters represent the quieter period of early Druidic expansion, before the Isaac Affair stirred things up. We will continue the Apocryphal readings in Step 6, when you'll have understood more about the thoughts of Reformed Druidism during the early years. Finally, read Robert Larson's interview in Part Ten, Robert would go on to found the Berkeley Grove (1968) after nearly graduating from Carleton in 1965.

· Consider these letters as by-products of Druidism in action, not as dogma.
· Note the individual styles.
· These books are light in spirit and provoke friendly introspection.
· Don't move on to the remaining Apocryphal books, yet.
· After reading a selection, read the matching historiography at the end of Part Two. How does this change your interpretation? Why should it?

Step 3. The Eclectic Interests of the Druid of the Early Reform.

Browse through Green Book, Volume One in Part Six. An important part of a Druidic service was the reading of a short meditation and then followed by a period of silence. Many Druids considered this part of the service to be very special for their spiritual growth. The Green Books contain samples from the many religions of the world, considered to be Druidic in spirit by their collectors. You can tell a lot about a group by the kinds of stories they would tell. Although most Groves would come up with their own readings (or sit quietly), the Green Book was only really known at Carleton. Please note that volume 1 comes from Carleton's 1963-1976 period. Afterwards, do a little research on Rinzai (concerned with Koan riddles) and Soto (concerned with sitting meditation) forms of Zen Buddhism.

· Pause for a few minutes after reading each selection, and meditate quietly.
· You may meditate on how these selections fit into their "home" religions, but also consider whether they illuminate an already existing aspect of your own faith. You'd be amazed at what leeway exist in the corners of many religions.
· It is interesting that many of these selections become more interesting with the passage of time between readings.
· If you enjoy one particular area of readings, (perhaps the Christian or Bahai selections?), then go to a library or bookstore and do some further exploration.
· Ask friends for their favorite collections of religious stories. If you find a good collection send some of your favorite short stories, quotes or lessons into the Archives or to other Groves. Perhaps you might wish to start your own little Green Book collection and eventually publish it. The trick is that they must understandable to someone with little background knowledge.
· Occasionally return to the Green Books and see if something then looks interesting.

Step 4. Learning those Strange Terms, Rules and Trivia.

Casually skim through the Traditions, Customs and Other Irrelevant Trivia in Part Four. In particular, read "Record of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu" in Pt.. 4 Sect 1, Carleton & Berkeley Constitution in Pt. 4 Sect 2, What is Reformed Druidism? (1965) in Pt. 4 Sect 4. This section explains the pesky terms that are peculiar to Reformed Druidism. It will be valuable to acquaint yourself with the location of Pt.4 Sect 6 & 7, and their general contents, may help you when you try to understand the actors, timeline and terms used in the future Apocrypha debates.

· Acquaint yourself with the location of the selections, but do not memorize them.
· Note in the Expansion Chart the bi-polar nature of Carleton and Berkeley in spawning new groves.
· Skip areas that don't look useful now, like by-laws & calendars. You can always return later when you need to know more.
· This area is a reference tool, only to be studied when necessary.
· This is a heavily fossilized area, so beware of falling dinosaurs.
· At this point, you have now read more about Reformed Druidism than 95% of all the Druids in the Reform. Are your opinions better informed than their real-life experiences?

Step 5. So What Did the Early Druids Do at Services?

Leisurely examine The Liturgy of the Druids in Part Three, especially focusing on Sect 1 & 2. I've delayed this part of ARDA, because many Reformed Druids have seen ritual as a perennial distraction from Druidism and occasionally as a potential cause for fierce debate. This collection represents almost 95% of all the written liturgies that I've been able to get my hands upon. I suspect they represent less than 25% of all the actual variety of scripts ever performed by Reformed Druids. Much of the time, Druids repetitiously used either the original Black Book scripts at Carleton up to 1980, or the DC(E) versions (Sect 3) amongst the NRDNA & at Carleton 1986-1993, with a great deal of improvising by both groups. The rest of the time they just winged it.

· You may wish to review the calendars and holidays of the various branches of the Reform found in Pt. 4 Sect 7 & 8, so that you can understand why the liturgies have different themes and activities depending on the time of the year.

· What types of opinion exist within the Reform about the role of liturgy both within the Reform itself and in the context of mankind as a whole? Review Pt. 2's "Earliest Selections".
· Understand the liturgical and secular roles of the three officers of a Grove. These roles differed occasionally between groves, and after 1976 it gets more complicated amongst the New RDNA of the West Coast and the SDNA.
· What is the role and purpose of ritual, routine or liturgy in your life?

Step Six. The Affairs of the Shelton Archdruidcy

Read "The Early Selection: Smiley Affair" and "Less Early Selections: Codex Affair" in Part 2. Then read Shelton's interview in Part Ten. Finally read Pt. 3 Sect 8's "Exorcism of War" and Sect 2's "Beltane Tips" Shelton is one of the most outstanding Druids in the upcoming Reformed debates, and his powerful influence reached throughout the 70s up to the present day, but he was not always so wise. His troubled Archdruidcy, from 1969-1971, rebuilt the foundations and foresaw many of the issues and concerns with continuity, dogma and publication, that would arise again in the Isaac Affair debates of the mid-70s.

· Note the influence of the Vietnam War on his Archdruidcy.
· Note the difficulty he had re-establishing the smooth operation of a grove after a short break in the oral tradition.
· His attempt to impose strict order and firm guidelines on the practices of the Druids drew strong rebukes, not unlike the future Isaac Affair.
· Also during his Archdruidcy, the last measure passed unanimously through the Council to unequivocally give equality to priestesses. He also oversaw the reprinting of the simple Druid Chronicles (Reformed) and withdrawal of the Founders from frequent intervention in the affairs of the Reform.
· Many of the 1970's liturgies in Section Two of Part Three are also likely of Shelton's authorship, as are several of the selections in the first volume of the Green Book.

The Intermediate Phase: The Great Debates of the Isaac Affairs

Step 7. The opening groundwork of the debates.

Read Pt. 2 "The Middling Selections: The Isaac Affair" from The Book of Changes, Pt. 1 upto and including The Epistle of Norman. This collection of letters show the initial reactions to a revolutionary letter sent by Isaac to the entire Council of Dalon Ap Landu, the legislative body of the Reform. Step 7 through Step 9 are some of the most argumentative sections of the study program, because most of the Druids involved in the debate didn't know much about each other and the concept of Neo-Paganism had only really been invented in 1973, about a year earlier. Perhaps you should research how other religions have experienced schisms; like Catholic/Orthodox & Protestant Christianity, Shia & Sunni Islam, Mahayana & Theraveda Buddhism, Orthodox and Reformed Judaism, etc.

· Go slow, and use your reference skills from Step 4 to look up the people and terms being bandied about here.
· It is vital to remember that these are all personal opinions and are not doctrinal statements.
· Up to now, you haven't really seen Reformed Druids argue. Don't choose sides, but observe the arguments. What are the most interesting statements, in your opinion?
· After each selection, read the corresponding historiography, and then review your opinion. Has your opinion or understanding changed? Why?
· Notice the attempt to respectfully discuss their deeply personal opinions.
· What do you think are the key points in the debate for the groups on both sides of the Rocky Mountains?

Step 8. The branching of the Reform into three groups.

Read from the second part of The Book of Changes up to and including the Second Epistle of Isaac as found in The Books of the Apocrypha in Part Two's "Middling Selections: The Isaac Affair". Review the Liturgies in Pt. 3, Sect 3. Also read the SDNA Constitution in Pt. 4 Sect 2 and "What and Why is Reformed Druidism? 1976 in Pt. 4 Sect 4. Read some of the NRDA songs in Pt. 6 Green Book Volume 6 (Book of Songs and Poetry Zero and 4 "Old NRDNA Magazines"). Finally examine the HDNA's materials in Part Five, one of the few other active SDNA groves, besides Isaac's Mother Grove.

Isaac's vote was taken and a sort of stalemate was reached. The Reform developed three branches at this point, essentially an status quo group retaining the name RDNA, a radical experimental version known as the Schismatic Druids of North America, and a moderate party known as the New RDNA. The turn of debates is turning more towards issues of improving communication to prevent future flare ups. The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) collection is put together during this period.

· Follow the same comments as in Step 7.
· It is intriguing how even the most individualistic Druids will sometimes rely on local custom rather than a personal understanding or experimentation.
· What's are the pros and cons of the proposed hierarchy upon Reformed Druidism?
· In what ways do you see substantial differences between the RDNA and the SDNA?

Step 9. The Conclusion to the Great Debates of the Isaac Affair and the Formation of ADF.

Conclude your Apocryphal studies with readings from the third part of A Book of Changes in the "Middling Selections" up to the final entry (Beginning of ADF) in "Late Selection: Trouble in Paradise", in The Books of the Apocrypha. Then briefly review the liturgies from Pt. 3 Sect 4 (paying special attention to the historiographical notes at the end of Pt. 3) which show a transition from NRDNA style to the ADF liturgy format. The Council of Archdruids gave way to the Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu, whose notes are in Pt. 4 Sect 1. Isaac published several magazines, and you're welcome to skim through the Druid Chronicler and Pentalpha Journals in Part 11 (which is a separate volume of the ARDA collection). Skim through the By-Laws of Pentalpha and ADF in Pt. 4, Sect 3. Finally read the biographical notes on Isaac in Part Ten. More essays by Isaac on Druidism in general are available in "Pt. 6 Green Book Volume 10 Sect 3".

Basically this collection is a winding down of the Isaac Affair and the beginning of new attempts to organize a subset of the Druids. Isaac stopped writing letters about change, and simply started printing a magazine known as The Druid Chronicler & Pentalpha Journal, in which Druids could hold discussion on various topics. Eventually he realized that the RDNA was not the best organization to further develop his plans for a Neo-Pagan church and ADF was founded, using many lessons learned in his years with the RDNA. If you have time read from the works of Dumezil on Indo-European culture.

· Again, follow the same steps as in Steps 7 and 8.
· Notice where opinions have changed or where differences are acknowledged.
· Summarize the important debates of the Isaac Affair.
· What is your current inclination on these issues? Note them now, and refer back to them in a few years to investigate how much

your opinions change over time.
· How did the liturgies change during Isaac's liturgical experimentation, and which items carried over into the early ADF liturgies?
· How do the Reform's various liturgies and orders compare to those found in religions that you are familiar with?
· If you are interested in the mechanics and theory of writing ceremony, pay attention to Robert Larson's and Isaac's materials. Isaac's epistles in the Apocrypha, and his book "Real Magic", describe his own attitude towards magical liturgies, and his groups in Ar nDraiocht Fein have done further work with his ideas and those of other Neopagan Druids. Do not assume that everyone in Berkeley agreed with Isaac as the Oral History tapes and comments from the Dead Sea Scrolls of Part Nine and the publications of Part Eleven may demonstrate.

Step 10. Review of First 20 Years
Read my "General History of Reformed Druidism" in Part 8 up to and including Chapter Four. Up to this point, you have only read primary historical resources, unfiltered, and should be able to devise your own opinion on the early history of the Reform.
· How is your perception of events different from mine?
· Write your own summary of these first twenty years, perhaps a page or two, listing the main themes and trends towards organization.
· This is a very large reading. Break it down into separate readings, as you see fit.
· Remember that this is just a long epistle, laden with my own personal opinions.
· Notice the resources used, which you should be familiar with by now; documents, oral interviews, and wild conjecture.
· How could Scharding's Carleton background & Zen-Christian inclinations bias the history?
· What underlying message is Scharding trying to convey?
· What would be different if this history were written by Bonewits, Larson or Carruth? See Pt. 4 Sect 6 "Credits, Founders & Known Innovators" to see what and where they wrote materials.
· What a historian does not talk about is very revealing. Is something missing?

Upper Intermediate Phase:

Druidism Since Isaac

Step 11. The Live Oak Years

Read Pt. 2's "Later Selections: The Live Oak Years" which tells of some of the debates in the Druid Missal-Any magazine that came out after Live Oak Grove split off from the Berkeley Grove under Larry Press, Joan Carruth (Epistle of Myopians, Order of Dian Cecht) and Emmon Bodfish. Also skim through Part 11's issues of "A Druid Missal-Any" from 1982 to 1991; and then review the essays by authors in that period within Pt. 6 Green Book Volume Seven. Note the Live Oak liturgies in Pt. 3 Sect 5. Read the "What is Reformed Druidism? 1987" in Pt. 4 Sect 4. Read Pt. 9's "The Dead Bay Scrolls" which tells of the mood at the Hazlenut Grove during the 80s and early 90s in California. Browse through all the liturgical selections from the 1980s in Pt. 3 Sect 9. Read some of their poetry in Pt. 6 Green Book Vol Six Book #4. Part 8's Chapter Six has a short history of those years at Live Oak. Green Book 7 in Part 6 may be an interesting compilation for you. In the early 90s, Emmon Bodfish's failing health led to the closing of grove activities, and the premonitious "Suggested Funeral Activities" in one of the final issues. Services stopped around 1993 at the Orinda site.
· Notice the drop in organizing enthusiasm in the Missal-Any after the Coup attempt referred to in 1985 ("Open Letters to the Grove" of Pt. 2).
· Tom Cross seemed to make many Druids in the Neo-pagan community angry by what has been described as scholarly fundamentalism on Celtic matters, possibly a result of the increase in research materials.
· Coincidentally Tom and Albion are the only non-Thirds to have letters in the Apocrypha.
· How would you describe the tone and general mood of these materials? Contemplative? Hermetic?
· It does seem that most attempts to organize the Druids have brought rather increasingly disappointing end-results.
· What would you say Emmon's primary interests are?
· What you can't tell from the layout in Part 11 is that the Druid Missal-Any was laden with small pictures, cartoons and hand-drawn notes, local clippings, filled with light hearted anecdotes, as opposed to the relatively austere version that Isaac produced.

Step 12. The Carleton Revival 1986-1996

Read "Latest Selections: The Carleton Revival" in Part 2. Peruse Pt. 3 Sect 5's liturgies & historiographies. Note the new orders in Pt. 3 Sect 7. Read The Big River Grove Constitution in Pt. 4 Sect 2 and the most recent publications in Pt. 4 Sect 4, except Dear Perspective Druid. Skim quickly through Pt. 6 Green Books Volume 2, 3 & 4 to gauge the eclectic interests of those years. Read the poetry of Scharding and the Carleton Grove in Pt. 6 Green Book Vol. 6 (Book of Songs & Poetry # 1, 2, 3). Then read Pt. 9's "Dead Lake Scrolls" for the 1990-1995 years at Carleton. Finally read Mike Scharding's interview in Pt. 10.

Carleton had a difficult period of transition between 1980 and 1985, in which they mostly fell apart twice, and the succession of the Third Order and most traditions had been broken. The group that formed afterwards naturally filled the gaps with amazing social and activity experiments, such as Wiccan & Native American services (which have sadly not been recorded in the Archives). In 1992, Scharding brought back many of the traditions and produced a flood of materials and archival efforts that have shaped developments since then. The period ends with Mike going to Japan.

· Note the greater flexibility and diversity of ordination customs.
· Note the sharp lack of interaction with other groves. It was very isolated, although many grove members attend Pagan Festivals.
· This was an era of increasing complexity out of the raw experiments of the early years.
· How would you describe Scharding's writing style?
· Did it change in any way by 1996?
· It was a period of greater interaction with past members and amongst other RDNA groves.
· I have to admit, I was crazily publishing non-stop from 1992-1996, and the burnout led to my decision to go to Japan in 1996.
· The archives were established around this time, but haven't grown much since 1996. They reflect my interest in studying the relationship between the different Druid groups. The website is at www.geocities.com/druidarchives
· Despite the publication outburst, grove activity only slowly grew from 30 on the mailing list in 1992 (a low point) to 160 in 2000 (a high point), although the attendance at services was between 3-10, with triple that at bigger festivals.
· Andrea Davis (AD 90-93) also had significant influence as an advisor with the Carleton Druids throughout the 90s.

Step 13. Recent Developments 1996-2003

Read Pt. 2's "New Selections." Skim through the Online Services and most recent liturgies in Pt. 3 Sect 5. Note the emphasis in Pt.3 Sect 10 on non-liturgical activities, a trend encouraged by Mike's living in Japan's traditional farming villages, attending Shinto festivals. Irony's trip to Europe, like Mike's in 1991, also led to a re-evaluation of their Druidism. Note Pt. 4 Sect 5's internet "wait and see" proselytizing efforts along with Dear Perspective Druid in Sect 4. Pt. 6 Green Book Volume 5 and 9 show a greater increase in humor, activism, and traditional lore in the Druid Missal-Any newsletter that began again in 2000 under Stacey Weinberger. Skim through those issues in Part 11. After Mike left, and Carleton was on its own, the brakes on its creativity were lifted, and Pt. 9's Dead River Scrolls ensued. Also check out the poetry in Pt. 6 Green Book Vol. 6 (Books # 5, 6, 7, 8).

This era was essentially the digitalization of the Druidism. The number of groves and protogroves skyrocketed, and the time and postage costs grew minimal with free communication and data transfer of materials, such as ARDA, to members all over the country, far from a functioning grove. The NRDNA and RDNAtalk conferences on Yahoogroups.com quickly swelled to over a hundred members, including several old-time Druids and lots of new seekers. Postings steadily rose to about 40/day on the average in late 2002. Most active members know each other on-line, but still haven't met each other in person, a trait becoming common in the late 70s with Isaac's newsletter efforts.

· I consider Irony Sade one of my most gifted successors, but this was an age of great creativity by many other members in non-literary areas.
· Note the rapid growth of groves and complexity of the Druid Missal-Any, as a rallying device for loosely organizing Druids.
· Many interesting new voices enter the records during this point.
· Can you see parallels between Carleton in the 90s and Berkeley in the 70s?
· What are the recent trends?
· What do you feel are the likely future developments?

Step 14. Review of the Last 20 Years for the RDNA

Read Pt. 8's "General History" chapters 6, 7, & 8. You've now finished most of the material generated by the Reform, and should be able to quickly locate and explain the contents to someone inquiring about RDNA literature.

· What do you think of the developments?
· What is the RDNA like without strong organizing members?
· Are members in greater contact than ever before?
· How do members stay in touch?
· What are the continuing weaknesses of the Reform?
· Is the Reform a religion, or something else?
· Can you see similar developmental trends in other groups that you are familiar with? (e.g. KMT & CCP split in modern Chinese history)
· If you were going to start a grove, in which tradition would you found it and how would you go about allowing creativity and encouraging members to grow?
· What is your favorite Reformed literature so far?

Step 15. Reviewing Literature on the RDNA

Read Pt. 6 Green Book 10, Section 1 & 2. Since you now know quite a great deal about the RDNA history, it's time for you to read what other people have written about the RDNA. I haven't found any significant new postings since 1996 in the reference section, most of which assume the Reform is more or less moribund.

· What are your reflections on the various reviews?
· What are the limitations of the various sources?
· What is the major concerns of each piece?
· Note the influence of Fisher letter to Melton and succeeding enccylopedists.
· What are they trying to convey to the reader?
· What do you hope to see covered in future reviews?
· What are the likely summaries likely to mention in future reviews?
· Why is the RDNA even covered at all in this collections?

Step 16. Unexamined Sections

Go back and review the various sections of the book especially sections that you haven't read. There should be large gaps in you reading in Pt. 3, 4, 6 & 11.

· Enjoy and take your time, perhaps a week or two.
· Try to work out a blue-print for starting an imaginary grove. How would you structure it, how would you fill positions, what materials would you use to advertise it, what would your grove espouse, how would you run the services, which activities would you sponsor?
· Review the terminologies, famous Druids, grove rolls and try and understand how the enormously complicated calendars worked at Carleton, Berkeley and among the ancient Celts.
· Try to place every article or selection with a writer's name or a grove or a trend in the RDNA. (e.g. Pt. 3 Sect 9's "Four Salutations of the Day" could be quickly summarized as "Written by Emmon Bodfish for the Druid Missal-Any during the Live Oak Grove period of the 1990s, belonging to the NRDNA movement in a Post-Isaac environment, showing Emmon's special interest in magick and the occult and Eastern martial arts.") As you do so, the historical useful-ness of this collection will greatly increase as you put together the pieces of the puzzle, and can appreciate the larger pattern that comes together before you.
· Perhaps put together your own Green Book collection over the next year?

The Advanced Phase: Beyond the RDNA

Step 17. Researching Spin-Off Groups

Read Chapter 5 of Part 8. Go online and read or download as much information as you can on Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF) at www.adf.org and Henge of Keltria at www.keltria.org Read as many of their old magazines, group statements, liturgies, by-laws and essays as you can. Perhaps sign up membership with them, and stay current on their events. Go to a few festivals or services with them. Perhaps enroll in their study courses (if this study course hasn't already exhausted you!). Many of their materials are available at the Carleton Archives, but many are also available at the on-line sites or can be back-ordered. Also try to learn about affiliated groups like Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross (Used to be Reformed Druidic Wicca) and the Order of Mithril Star (OMS). Find their home pages and talk conferences, if you can. Buy a copy of "American Druidism" on Amazon.com if it's still available, plus any of the books on modern Druidry, such as "Druidcraft- the Magic of Wicca and Druidry" or "Druid Renaissance" by Philip Carr-Gomm. To understand other Waters brotherhoods, read "Stranger in a Strange Land" & "Dune" in the science fiction field.

· How are their organizations run differently or similarly to the RDNA?
· What are the primary inheritances from the RDNA
· What are their areas of specialty?
· What can they teach the RDNA?
· How big are they and where are their groves located?
· Who runs the groups, who are their leaders?

· Why attracts some groups to affiliate with the RDNA or ADF?

Step 18. Researching Ancient Druids

Now that you know so much about Modern Druids, it wouldn't hurt to brush up on your ancient Druids. This will require a life time of reading, but for about two weeks or so, read some of the suggested books about the ancient Druids for Pt. 6 Green Book Vol. 10 Section 5 & 6.

· I highly recommend authors Ellis, Piggott & Miranda Green.
· John & Caitlin Matthews have put out a large number of resource collections on various ancient Druids and modern fraternal groups. They don't often write about the faults of the various pieces, rather, they just present them to you.
· Note interesting practices you'd like to adopt.
· Note certain customs that don't seem to be possible in modern society.
· Continue to read a book every two or three months after you finish this study course. After 10 years that's 50 books, and you'll be quite learned by then.

Step 19. Researching Neo-Paganism

Read the most recent edition of Drawing Down the Moon (1979, 1986, 1997), and refer to some of the resource materials in Pt. 6 Green Book Vol 10, Section 5 "Academic Resources for Researching Druidism" which has a selection on Wicca and Neopaganism.

· Read Drawing Down the Moon and two or three other books.
· This may take a few weeks.
· How similar is the RDNA to the history of the modern Wicca and other Neopaganism?
· What is the "niche" of the RDNA?
· What generally sets the RDNA apart from everyone else?
· How does Druidism stand apart from other forms of Neo-Paganism?

The Super Advanced Phase: A review

Step 20. Final Thoughts and a Time for Reflection.

Slowly review all your questions, notes and insights from the first nineteen steps of the beginner's study guide program. At the end of every project there should be a time to pause and assess the outcome and progress that has been attained.

· Ask yourself, "What lessons have I learned?". Meditate for a while.
· Ask yourself, "Which could I apply to my life?". Meditate again.
· Participation in this study program did not require dropping your religion and become a Druid. It hopefully required you to think.
· You have studied a great deal of written texts by Reformed Druids. Now realize, as I explained in The Book of Lacunae, that all of these Druids received THEIR inspiration from Nature and not from books.
· A Druid is a Druid because they are a Druid.
· Most Druids find that the insights of Druidism (whatever they may be) will make their studies and practice of religion more useful and challenging.
· Ask yourself, "What more is there to learn?" Go and learn it well.

Certificate of Completion for this ARDA Study Program

Most study programs hand out a certificate of accomplishment, so here's one if you feel like you need one. The Deanship of Druid Textology, regularly abbreviated as D.D.T., was first administered by Frangquist in April of 1970 to McDavid for his efforts of internal cross-referencing for a new edition of The Druid Chronicles (Reformed), which wasn't really redone until the 1978 release by Morrison. By the time you finish your studies, you'll realize that most Druids do not put much stock in titles and some actually do so only for mischievous purposes. However, some people welcome a chance to display an intellectual achievement has been performed. For those people, I offer them a chance to devise a certificate for their DDT.

Feel free to duplicate and adapt its structure to a horizontal 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of paper, filling in the appropriate blanks. I recommend for a lower left seal, perhaps using a picture of a Nature scene using a color copier, and drawing a few simple sigils with your drawing program. Most copy shops can provide fancy border strips to line the edging or a word processor can put a black-line-box around the whole thing.

The Reformed Druids of North America

"Texts of the Reformed Druids"

This award is to certify that (insert your full name here) has been awarded a degree as a Dean of Druid Textology on _____of the year _____ of the Common Era, by the powers already vested in him or her for meritorious recognition upon the completion of a course of instruction in Reformed Druidic texts. To this candidate is bestowed all the rights and responsibilities pertaining thereunto.

Dean of Druid Textology

May the blessings of the Earth-Mother be ever apparent unto thee,

(Sign your own first name here and
draw a druid sigil to the right of it)
(Indicate any other titles you wish here)

Day ___ of (Season)
Year of the Reform____
DD/MM/YYYY c.e.

Advice for Generic Religious Scholar

I'm assuming that you've spent a couple years of thoughtful personal study on more than one world religion. You are probably unfamiliar with how to categorize Reformed Druidism. The simple answer is, "Don't". I can't do it and I've tried very hard. If you think you've succeeded, then you're probably ignoring all the exceptions. Druidism is just Druidism.

Advantages about studying or teaching Reformed Druidism:

· Once certain misconceptions are dismissed, it is very simple to understand.
· It concerns itself with basic issues of religion, which are always good for debate.
· It is a manageable microcosm of the new religions movement.
· The RDNA is the great grandmother of the modern Neo-Druid movement.
· It is rather old in the eyes of the Neo-Pagan movement, with a history over 40 years.
· All of the primary movers and shakers are still alive and can still be interviewed.
· The RDNA has a remarkably good archive of its history, all publicly accessible.
· In fact, this Anthology represents perhaps only 70% of printed records by the RDNA.
· Even if it does not like to use them, it has all the external trappings of a religion in a Protean sense.

There are stumbling blocks about Reformed Druidism in store for you:

· They have produced lots of literature, but none of it is considered dogma.
· They disagree, or are unsure, if they are a religion, philosophy or perspective.
· They sometimes say very serious things with their tongue in the cheek. You never know if they are pulling your leg.
· The role of ritual and group activity is an individual decision.
· Terribly isolated and unorganized in reality despite the appearance of this volume of readings.
· The Celtic cultural trappings, prominent in several groves, may be unfamiliar to many students.
· The hierarchy's sole purpose seems to be to inhibit its own efficiency.
· Members of each grove come from (and often maintain) ties with diverse religions.
· Reformed Druidism has a very different agenda from other Druidic organizations.

Books That You Might Wish as Supplementary Texts:

If you haven't purchased a copy of Drawing Down the Moon by Margot Adler, ISBN 0-8070-3253-0, and try to get the 1997 edition or newer, it would be a good time to do so. Although most of the Reformed Druids do not consider themselves Neo-Pagans, they often resemble the Neo-Pagans in the way they think outside of traditional Western thought. Adler's book is a very good back to use alongside this Anthology, and they even have a chapter in there about us! It's available everywhere, find out if there is a newer edition has been made since 1986.

Other possible accompanying texts for a course on Modern Druidism or Neo-Paganism would include “Being a Pagan: Druids, Wiccans & Witches Today” by Ellen Evert Hopman, “Complete Idiot’s Guide to Paganism”, “Contemporary Paganism: Listening People, Speaking Earth” By Graham Harvey, “The Druid Renaissance” by Phillip Carr-Gomm, “Paganism: An Introduction to Earth Centered Religions”.

The main volume of the Anthology should be available on-line in a print-on-demand format soon, so inquire to mikerdna@hotmail.com if you want to order printed versions.

Daniel Hansen has written a book called American Druidism: A Guide to American Druid Groups, ISBN 0-89716-600-0. If you have trouble finding it, it should be available from Peanut Butter Publishing, 226 2nd Ave W. Seattle Washington 98119 (206)281-5965. It is a good concise overview of the Neo-Druid movement, although it’s hard to find now on Amazon.com.

How Should the Scholar go About Studying with the Anthology?

There is no reason that you can't also follow the advice of the Type One beginner. You might want to work at a faster pace, certainly. The important choice for you to make is whether or not you wish to start by reading my History of Reformed Druidism in America (in part eight). I probably have a Carleton bias in my writings and I have the advantage of hindsight, which the earlier Druids did not have. By following the beginner's program you will follow the Reform opinions develop and diversify over time. Also from following the development of primary sources, you can watch trends and events develop unexpectedly. The opinions that you will develop on your own will be markedly different than they would be if you started with my History. Of course, starting with the History may put the whole study in a quick perspective.

Most of the questions discussed in the beginner's regimen are probably appropriate for you also. However, if you don't find them challenging enough, here are some tougher questions for you to ponder:

1. What is really important in a religion?
2. How do labels limit understanding?
3. When does an irreverent joke become a respectable tradition?
4. What is gained or lost from such a transition?
5. At what point does a religion exist?
6. The Reform began by poking fun at Christianity, but does its own evolving history end up following the same course of Christianity and other developing religions amongst oppressed minorities?
7. Is Druidism really as unique as it claimed, or did they not know better?
8. How does Reformed Druidism resemble Quakerism?
9. How does Reformed Druidism resemble Taoism or Zen?
10. How does Reformed Druidism resemble liberal Christianity or Universal Unitarianism?

What to Do When You're Done?

I would gladly welcome copies of any papers that you produce using these materials, or if we're only a small part of a larger book, just send a photocopy of the parts relating to us. I also take comments on this collection very graciously. My next ten years are unstable geographically, but you can always write to the International Druid Archives, Care of Carleton College Archives, 300 North College Street, Northfield, Minnesota 55057. They can

find me and will gladly take possession of any contributions of your materials.
After finishing your study here, there are several natural extensions of study:
1. Teach it as a class. Copies are available free on disk and they you can print as many copies as you want.
2. Go to the International Druid Archives and study a specific issue or grove in depth.
3. Critique by presentation severely and send me a copy
4. Study the growth and activities of Ar nDraoicht Fein, the Henge of Keltria etc.
5. Study the Neo-Pagan movement in general.
6. Compare American Druidism with European Druidism.
7. Compare Neo-Pagan movements with Christian movements seeking a return to the original faith of the Christians.

Advice for Neo-Pagans, Celtophiles, Wiccans, etc.

I assume that you've been practicing a "fringe religion" for a few years already, and like the religious scholar, you know your way around the block. Yet you are like the "novice" seeker of truth for whom I devised the study program, since you fully intend to incorporate any discovered wisdom into your life. There's a good chance that you are raiding ARDA for materials to take "home" with you. You are welcome to do so, but be careful not to call it Reformed Druidism and remember to give us some credit, and a copy when you're done.

If you are reading this collection because you think that we know all the secrets of the Ancient Celtic Druids, um. . . you're probably in the wrong place and should be looking elsewhere or try contacting one of the more Celtic oriented NRDNA groups (see below). Don't despair! I have provided a reasonably good bibliography of books on Celtic Druidism in Pt. 6 Green Book Vol. 10 Section 5, which should have some leads in it. There are also addresses for modern Druid groups, on Isaac's website at www.neopagan.net. If you live near Minnesota, you can visit the Druid Archives and thereby read the literature of several extant and extinct Modern Druid groups. In any case, I'm sorry if we have distracted you, but feel free to visit.

You will probably already understand the Neo-Pagan mindset, and so you will be able to appreciate this collection a lot faster than the religious scholar. For you, there are certain practical benefits that you can take home to own coven or group. Here are some things to think about as you read:

1. Should your group produce a collection of its own?
2. This Anthology was only possible because of decent record keeping from the beginning. What habits do you suspect were used?
3. Why don't the Reformed Druids keep their materials secret?
4. Is it better to deeply understand the purpose of religion before choosing one?
5. Why do religions choose definitions that exclude people?
6. What is the role of organization and ritual in religion?
7. Issues of power of leaders over followers and vice-a-versa.
8. The role of open communication in running a religious group.
9. The difficulty of transforming an established group.
10. Why Druids?

Where to Study After Working on the Reformed Druids?

If you are enamored with our pseduo-anarchic organizational activities and philosophies, then you may be interested in studying the following groups:

1. The Discordians (see Margot Adler's Drawing Down the Moon)
2. The Quakers (aka The Society of Friends)
3. The Deists of 18th century England (mostly extinct now)
4. The Unitarian Universalists
5. The Universal Life Church 601 third street, Modesto California, 95351 (209) 527-8111. (the guys who'll ordain anyone)

Advice for the Old Warhorses of RDNA:

Well it's here. What can you do with it? And how do you like being written about?

1. Use it as evidence that I've gone mad (more than usual) and write long detailed letters proving it. Make sure to send me copies, via the Archives.
2. Make a copy for your local university's reference section.
3. When someone asks you about Druidism, throw this book at them. Whether they read it or not isn't the point.
4. Keep it around as a handy portable archives.
5. Door stop or paperweight or boat anchor.

Well, if you really liked Isaac's Druid Chronicles (Evolved), you'll find most of those materials are still in here, and that edition will be reprinted (minus some artistic flourishes in 2003 also). The introductions, commentaries and endnotes have been heavily edited or lengthened to put them in my perspective of the Reform's long history. Heck, you might even want to try the study course that I suggested. There are significant additions that you may find interesting to inspect:

1. Historiographies on most of the publications.
2. Eleven new books to the Apocrypha that dialogue with the original contents.
3. Many versions of the Liturgy that you haven't seen.
4. Carleton's calendrical system and additional trivia of Part Four.
5. The Green Book, rarely seen outside of the Carleton Grove
6. A General History of Reformed Druidism.
7. The Books of the Latter-Day Druids
8. All the past Druid Chroniclers, for free and in one sitting.

How to Correct Errors

Since I'm going to be distributing this primarily online, so I can make corrections relatively easy for the next edition. If you send in lists of corrections, they'll eventually get worked into an updated version. Please especially tell me if there is a misquoted author or copyright violation, so that I can amend or remove the offending element.

I should continue to have an operative e-mail for a few years after publishing ARDA 2, barring a catastrophic disaster, at mikerdna@hotmail.com

Call Carleton's Alumni service at www.carleton.edu/alumni and do a people search to find me, or write to: Carleton College Archives, regarding IDA, 300 North College St., Northfield, Minnesota 55057.

How to Get More Copies

Free downloads of the main volume are available at http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/ or at the site of http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html and the Green Books and Magazine volumes should also be viewable there. They should be ready to print on a double-sided laser-printer. My own web-page at www.geocities.com/mikerdna should be up for a few more years. Mikerdna@hotmail.com and I'll send the files.

If that really fails, send $10 in cash to cover a CD-ROM copy of this publication for research purposes to the Carleton Archives, Carleton College, Northfield MN 55057, plus return postage costs, and we'll mail you files in an Adobe Acrobat format with all the materials (and more) in the ARDA collection.

If this web site becomes unavailable, visit the main Carleton page at http://www.carleton.edu and search for the Carleton Archives or other searches on the internet for the Anthology.

Other Sources on the RDNA

If you are not satisfied with my presentation of the Reform, or you feel that I was biased (which I probably am), then you may wish a second opinion. Although we are not famous, there have been many other attempts to analyze and discuss Reformed Druidism.

Published Reviews of the RDNA

Although I might have missed a few of them, most of them will be available at Pt. 6 Green Book Vol. 10 Sect 1, 2 & 3. It should give a wider sense of understanding than just my own views by encyclopedia makers and professional writers. So far, little has been written about the RDNA by either ADF or Keltria, perhaps due to a low historical consciousness, as both groups have not produced their own archives or historical collections yet.

International Druid Archives

This is the Reform's own collection of its historical documents and you can try to reconstruct your own opinion or pursue further examination of certain aspects of Reformed Druidism. They have tapes, magazines, letters, interviews and other RDNA publications in addition to material on ADF, Keltria and other offshoot groups.

For more information write to the Carleton Archives, RE: International Druid Archives, 300 North College Street, Northfield, Minnesota, 55057. They also have a web-page online. A reasonably full list of Druid archival contents are at http://www.geocities.com/druidarchives

Printing Advice

Make a more focused printout collection to carry with you:

Liturgist Collection: Main 3 & Green 7 --- 300pages
Traveling Missionary: Main 1,(2),3,4 & Green 7 --- 450 pages
Contemplative: Main 1, 2 & Green 1-4 --- 500 pages

SECTION THREE: CONCLUSION

Dedication

This edition is dedicated to Robert Larson, Be. who died on Aug. 6th, 2004 prompting the revived enthusiasm to get this volume published. Robert Larson, as you'll read in here, was the Druid who brought RDNA Druidism to California, where it prospered and initiated the modern Druid movement of America. May he rest with peace and frolic in the Land of the Young evermore.

Editor's Blessing upon the Reader

May the blessings of the Earth-Mother be apparent unto you in every day of your life. May you live as long as you wish, make and keep good friends, profit in your just undertakings, gain respect from your peers for your good deeds, and avoid ill-health.

As For Written Tradition…

"They are said to commit to memory a great number of verses. And they remain some 20 years in training. Nor do they judge it to be allowed to entrust these things to writing although in nearly the rest of their affairs, and public and private transactions, Greek letters are used. It seems to me there are two reasons this has been established: neither do they wish the common people to pride themselves in the training nor those who learn to rely less on memory, since it happens to a large extant that individuals give up diligence in memory and thorough learning through the help of writing."
Julius Caesar 44 b.c.e.

Midwinter

When the wind blows cold
on the Hill of Three Oaks
the hearth fire is warm.

Richard Smiley, 1964

The Inheritance

What shall I leave as
A keepsake after I die?
In spring, flowers;
Summer, cuckoos;
Fall, red maple leaves;
Winter, snow.

Ryokan's deathbed poem, 1831

Thus Endeth
Part Zero
of ARDA 2

PART ONE
THE DRUID CHRONICLES
(Reformed)
a.k.a.
The Chronicles of the Foundation

Written 1963 - 1964.

By David Frangquist

1996 Introduction

Originally published under the title of The Druid Chronicles (Reformed), abbreviated DC(R) and nicknamed The Chronicles, these books contain the basic history and beliefs of the first year of the original branch of the Reform founded at Carleton College from which all the past, present and future Branches of the Reformed Druidism spring. Thus the Chronicles are the about the only section of A Reformed Druid Anthology that is acknowledged by every group. The primary author, David Frangquist, has made no claim of divine inspiration; nor has any other branch of the Reform. These five books have no canonical status, but they're chock-full of interesting and fun stuff. Don't take it too seriously and try to see the message that underlies all the outer-trappings, holidays and names.

For a more detailed discussion on the Chronicles see the End-Notes, Printing History and Historiography at the end of end of this Part One. Internal cross-referencing is indicated by raised numbers. The existence of detailed endnotes related to a verse is signaled by asterixes. Both are listed at the end.

2003 Introduction

No significant changes were made this section, except typographical corrections, and moving the cross-referencing notes forward a few pages and sub-dividing them.

The Drynemetum Press

The Early Chronicles

Chapter the FIRST

1. The first of the chronicles of the disciples of the Earth-Mother, and of the various and wondrous events which did occur to them who gave themselves in service to the establishment of the reform, which branch* of the order was in Northfield, which is a city in Minnesota, the southeast part thereof. Peace be unto those whose hope lies in the comfort of the Earth-mother.
2. In those days (when Nason was president at Carleton) a decree went out from the Administration that all Sundays must be accounted for.* So each went to their own place of worship in order that their credit might be established on their record.
3. And it came to pass that there were those among these people who chose to pursue such forms of worship as were not at that time in general acceptance. And one of these was a man named David, who was also a Fisher.*
4. Now he did appear in the area which is north of the Lake of Lyman,* proclaiming the glory which was Druid. And a few there were who listened to him and consulted with him.
5. And it came to pass that when a group of the faithful were gathered on a hill, where there had been set up a small monument in stone, they concluded among themselves that this place should be the new location of an altar, which would be built with the work of their hands out of rough stone.*
6. And it also came to be revealed, at that time, that David, who was a Fisher, was a priest in the order of the Druids, and that his rank was that of the Third Order Priest.*
7. Now it was decided that there should be a regular service of worship which could be held in the appointed place, and which would be held on the last day of the week, which is Saturday, according to the old custom.*
8. All of these things, which have been presently related, did occur during the month of April,* which is just before the celebration of Beltane, and that time is generally held to be the time of the beginning of the reform.

Chapter the SECOND

1. And it came to pass that when the celebration of Beltane (which is the first day of the month of May) was held, there was not yet completed the altar which was to be built of stone, according to the plan which had been adopted by the faithful.*
2. And so it was that an altar which was small and portable and made out of steel came to be used for the service. And it was generally agreed that it was indeed an inferior type of altar.*
3. Thus, a group of disciples began to assemble the rough stones which were necessary to build the new altar. An although their numbers were small in the beginning, those who did lend their help did increase until their number was nearly doubled.*
4. Now when the last stones had been laid in the altar, the priest did step back from it, and did look upon it, and he said: "It is good.[a] We shall hold services here around it today, after the noon" (for it was Saturday).
5. And the altar did measure about two cubits high, and about two cubits wide, and about three cubits long.*
6. And it came to pass that there were in number about a dozen people who did gather at the altar that day, and who did partake of the waters-of-life.*
7. After the waters of life had been passed, Howard who was called Cherniack, did rise up (for he was a Preceptor, and of the Second Order), and he did read to them from a paper.
8. The purpose of this paper was to establish for them a constitution;* so when the reading had been completed, the Arch-Druid (for such was the priest to be called) did ask those who were gathered if they did approve.
9. Now all who were present did give their assent, save one who was not yet of the First Order. And it came to pass that when the question was again asked on the week following, all did again approve, save one who did not disapprove of the paper, and so it was considered unanimous.
10. And so after the paper had been accepted in this manner, the congregation of the disciples was then known as the Reformed Druids.[b] *

Chapter the THIRD*

1. Now after the paper had been read on the first Saturday after the celebration of Beltane, it was perceived that the sky was covered by clouds. And this was not good for a Saturday evening.
2. Thus did the Arch-Druid go and kneel before the altar and invoke the Earth-Mother asking for a clearing of the weather.
3. And the Earth-mother did look upon the congregation of the faithful, and did look upon the altar which had been built to her glory, and saw that it was good.
4. And, behold, there was a great wind in the sky, and it did blow from the sky in the space of less than two hours all of the clouds, yea, even the last vestige thereof. And the sun shone brightly in the sky.
5. And this was taken to be a sign.
6. But some there were those in the area who did scoff, for their hearts were hardened. And they did conspire, saying: "Let us tear down the stones from the altar which has been built on the hill."
7. And they did go in secret to the altar, and did tear at the altar, each with his bare hands, and did take therefrom the stones which had been set there, yea, even down to the foundation thereof.
8. And the Earth-mother did look upon this with disfavor, for it was the defilement of the altar which had been built to her glory.
9. And so it came to pass that in that same day, even as the last stones were being removed, a storm did gather, and there was thunder and lightning and rain;
10. and it was exceedingly cold, and the clouds did not leave the skies for a period of four days.
11. And this also was taken to be a sign.

Chapter the FOURTH

1. And it came to pass that when those of the faithful who had built the altar, each one with their bare hands, did find that the altar had been defiled, they did rend the air with their lamentations.
2. And they did set themselves there to the task of once again building the altar, that is, of rebuilding it; and they did set each stone in the place which had been appointed to it.
3. And as they did complete their task, the sun did make a brief appearance unto them from in the midst of those clouds which were covered over the sky;*
4. and each took this to be a sign, each in their own way.[c]
5. Now after the work was the second time completed, those whose purpose it was to do evil unto the altar did come the second time also;
6. and they did come in the darkness of the night, for they were the Anti-Druids.
7. Now when these Anti-Druids did come, their coming being covered by the darkness of the night, they did come with the smell of drink heavy upon them; yea, were they so filled with drink that they were under the influence thereof.*
8. And they did pull at the stones of the altar, yea, did they tear at the altar with their bare hands, and they did pull the stones away, one from the other.
9. Now as the Anti-Druids did defile the altar in this manner, one of their number did shout in his loudest voice: "Blasphemy!....Blasphemy!" for so was he under the power of strong drink.
10. And it came to pass that the faithful did perceive that the altar had once again been attacked by the hand of violence, then did they again rend the air with their lamentation, so great was their grief.
11. Wherefore they did set to the task which was before them, which was the task of placing the stones the third time in their proper places; but they did fix them there this time with mortar,[d] that they might not be wrested therefrom by the hand of the Anti-Druid.
12. And a curse was placed on the altar; and the Arch-Druid spake unto the Druids assembled saying: "Verily I say unto you, whosoever findeth him who hath done this thing, be he admonished to do whatsoever he will to make for him his life miserable."
13. And it came to pass that it was made known to them that one of the Anti-Druids had come to twist his ankle, yea, even to sprain it; and this was taken to be a sign.

Chapter the FIFTH*

1. And it came to pass that the time was near at hand for the altar to be consecrated.
2. Now it was the custom that when an altar was to be consecrated, that a sacrifice should be made upon it, which sacrifice should be of a living thing, yea, a thing which doth testify to the bounty of the Earth-mother.
3. And the purpose of this sacrifice is to consecrate the altar.
4. But behold, there did arise a dispute among the Druids concerning this sacrifice which was to be made upon the altar.
5. For there were some among them who were in favor of a small sacrifice and some who were persuaded that the sacrifice should be a large one;
6. those being in favor of the small sacrifice having a desire that it be of the living leaves and branches of a tree;
7. those being in favor of the large sacrifice having a desire that it be of the living flesh and blood of an animal or bird.
8. Wherefore, there did ensue a dispute among them concerning the manner in which this sacrifice should be made.
9. And it came to pass that Howard, who was Preceptor, did arise and he spake unto them saying: "Have ye not forgotten that we are reformed, yea, even do we call ourselves by the name of Reformed,[e] wherefore we must put behind us those things which do bring offense to our senses;" for Howard was one of them who were in favor of the small sacrifice.
10. But another did arise, who did call himself Jan, for he was in favor of the sacrifice of an animal, and he spake unto them saying: "Have ye not forgotten the customs of old which were the customs of our predecessors before us? Verily I say unto you, nothing will be acceptable to the Earth-mother save it were nothing smaller than an animal or fowl, yea, even a chicken."*
11. Wherefore, there was about to occur a great schism between those on the one hand who were of the first faction and those on the other hand who were of the second faction.
12. And they were exceedingly wroth one with the other.
13. But behold, Jan did rise up and relent his position, asking neither that flesh nor blood be spilt upon the altar; for he did perceive that they were not strong enough and that such a schism would be their end, wherefore he did relent that the schism might not take place.*
14. And it came to pass that the altar was consecrated by the burning of living leaves and branches of a tree;[f] and it came to pass that the altar was consecrated on the third Saturday after the celebration of Beltane (which is the first day of the month of May).

Chapter the SIXTH

1. Now it came to pass that on the fourth Saturday after the celebration of Beltane,* it came to be decided that petition be made unto the authorities, that is the Administration, concerning the recognition of the activities of the Druids.
2. And it came to pass that there were many among them who did approve; for they were in number about one score and two.
3. And each went and prepared their petition in the manner that was prescribed by the Administration.*
4. But behold, there were then returned notices which did say: "Thy actions are not acceptable in our sight."*
5. Wherefore, Howard, who was preceptor, did go up unto the authorities saying: "Do ye not see that there are many like us which do go by strange creeds?"
6. And he was answered: "Yea, verily we do see that there be many like ye which do go by strange creeds. Neither ye nor they are acceptable in our sight."
7. And Howard spake saying: "By what method do ye judge?"
8. And he was answered: "We are chosen that we should be judges. Yea, even do we judge according to our judgements."*

9. But there were two of the petitions which were not rejected, for they were the domain of a different authority; and this was taken to be a good sign.*

Chapter the SEVENTH

1. Now on the fifth Saturday after the celebration of Beltane,* the Druids were assembled as usual; and after the waters-of-life had been passed, the Arch-Druid spake unto them saying:
2. "Behold, how our altar is attacked on the one side,[g] and our recognition is rejected on the other.[h] Are we not afflicted even as were our predecessors before us?"
3. "Our predecessors of old did take up the sword and fight with those who afflicted them, but they were defeated.
4. "Wherefore, we must not take up the sword, but remain tolerant and patient in our afflictions that there might be peace."*
5. And he spake saying: "Behold, this is the last time we shall be together for a long time. The time is at hand when we shall depart, each of us going his own separate way.*
6. "Behold the flowers of the earth and the beauty thereof; and behold the sky and the clouds and the beauty thereof; and behold all the handiwork of the Earth-mother and the beauty thereof.
7. "Be ye firm in the faith; and as ye go your separate ways take time to pause before all the glory of the Earth-mother (which is Nature); and fail not to meditate on that which has been said and done here, yea, even as the sun does reach it height in the north (which is Midsummer and an important day with us) should ye meditate on these things.
8. "For verily I say unto you, when the sun crosses the equator, shall ye be again reunited here with these thy brethren."[i]
9. And each went his own way glorifying the Earth-mother and singing her praises, yea, even unto the very ends of the land did they journey praising the beauty of all that is to be found in earth and sky.
10. Now these are the records which have been made to the glory and honor of the Earth-mother. Praise be to the Earth-mother for the beauty which is in her in the earth and in the sky; all the birds of the air and the animals of the ground are a testimony to her excellence. Even as the dawn of the new day brings new light, is there new hope.

Peace!

The Book of the Law

Chapter the FIRST

1. The Book of the Law as revealed by the Reformed Druids, in council at Carleton College, for the purpose of making more fruitful their existence.*
2. And it came to pass that they did take upon themselves a name, which is "The Reformed Druids of North America."[a]
3. And it came to be revealed that any person could become a member of them;[b] but any who would become a member would be first required to submit humbly a petition, which petition is a declaration of their subscribing to the Basic Tenets. And this petition may be written with the pen, or it may be spoken aloud with the mouth.*
4. Now the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism are these:
5. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
6. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it men do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.*
7. Now there shall be instituted in the grove three officers whose duty it shall be to minister unto the needs thereof.*
8. And first among them shall be the Arch-Druid, who shall be a priest of the Third Order or higher;[c] and the Arch-Druid shall preside over the Druids assembled.
9. And second among them shall be the Preceptor, who shall be a Druid of the Second Order or higher;[d] and he or she shall deal in the spiritual insofar as directed by the Arch-Druid, but she or he shall act foremost in affairs not of the spiritual, that is, the secular.
10. And third among them shall be the Server, who shall be of the First Order of the Druid or higher;[e] and she or he shall assist the Arch-Druid insofar as she or he may be called to serve.
11. And none shall serve in these positions save it shall be that he or she is selected by the members; and none shall serve save it shall be that she or he is worthy to serve; and selection shall be made each year during the period of Foghamhar.[f]
12. This is the Law which was revealed, but it is not all, for there is yet more. And no thing shall be revealed save it shall be to a majority of the faithful; and no thing shall be revealed save it shall be revealed twice, that is, at two meetings, the second of which shall be the first to be held after the first; and no thing shall be revealed save it shall be when one third are present to bear witness unto it.*
13. Yea, and this record is a true one and an accurate one.

Peace!

The Customs of the Druids

Chapter the FIRST*

1. Now it was the custom among the Druids, who were reformed, that at every meeting of the congregation, the waters-of-life* should be passed to those present.[a]
2. Now they who subscribe to the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism, as prescribed in the Book of the Law, they are accepted into the body of Druidism which is the organizational body of Druidism only.[b]
3. But, they who partake of the waters-of-life in communion with the congregation, they are accepted into the great body of Druidism which is the spiritual body of Druidism only.
4. But the whole and complete body of Druidism consists neither of the organizational body only nor of the spiritual body only, but of the both of them, which are then in whole and complete union.
5. Wherefore, they who have been accepted into the organizational body only are not of the whole body of Druidism;
6. wherefore, neither are they who are of the spiritual body only accepted into the whole body of Druidism.
7. Whereas, they who have been accepted into the spiritual body of Druidism and also into the organizational body thereof is thus accepted into the whole and complete body of the membership of the Reformed Druids;
8. and are thenceforth called by them a Druid of the First Order.*

Chapter the SECOND

(A Chant*)

1. O Earth-mother!
   We praise thee that seed springeth,
   that flower openeth,
   that grass waveth.
2. We praise thee for winds that whispers.
   through the graceful elm,
   through the shapely maple,
   through the lively pine,
   through the shining birch,
   through the mighty oak.
3. We praise thee for all things,
   O Earth-mother,
   who givest life.

Chapter the THIRD*

1. Now there are some among the congregations of the faithful who shall be set aside from the others as better;
2. for, they it is who have been chosen to serve the Earth-mother and to do her work.
3. And none shall be chosen save they shall be pure in spirit and save they shall have bowed themselves down in humility before the powers which are manifested in the Earth-mother;
4. And none shall be chosen save they shall be imbued with the spirit of the love of the service of the Earth-mother;
5. For those who are chosen to be honored are chosen also to be elevated to the Second Order, which is in the succession to the priesthood of the Druids.[c]
6. And those who have been chosen shall be questioned, and they shall be questioned in the following manner:
7. "Do you, in full consciousness, promise to serve faithfully the Earth-mother, ministering to her followers, and following your duties as a Druid of the Second Order to the best of your ability?"
8. "Do you understand from whence comes the source of all life, and the nature of the source of all life?"
9. "Do you understand the partaking of the waters-of-life, and the sacrifice of life that we offer up to our Mother?"
10. "Are you ready, then to sealed up to the service of the Earth-mother?"
11. And none shall be honored with the Second Order save they shall answer these questions in the proper manner.
12. And none shall be elevated save they shall partake of the waters-of-life in communion with the Arch-Druid and save they shall partake of them to the fullest extent.
13. These are the things which are prescribed, for so it must be done. Thus it was, and thus it is, and thus it is to be.

Chapter the FOURTH

1. Now these are the commandments which were given concerning the observance of those days which were considered sacred to the Druids.*
2. Ye shall observe always the festival of Samhain,[d] for it is the beginning of the period of Geimredh, and also of the year. This day shall ye celebrate by the lighting of great fires, for soon is the land to become cold in the time of apparent death.
3. Ye shall celebrate on the day of Midwinter, for on that day doth the sun begin again to rise in the south; so shall ye celebrate it with the burning of logs and making merry. So also shall ye make merry on the day of Oimelc,[e] which is the first day of the period of Earrach;
4. and on these days shall ye glorify the mistletoe and the evergreen, for it is a living testimony to the continuance of life, yea, even in the midst of a dead world.
5. Of great importance is the festival of Beltane,[f] which is at the beginning of Samradh. Then shall ye observe great ceremony; and with the kindling of large fires on the hilltops, and the glorification of the renewed tree shall ye celebrate the renewed life.
6. Ye shall take note of the decline of the sun in the sky, which doth begin on the day of Midsummer. Ye shall light your fires and let them die in token of the great fire which doth roll down in the sky even as a ball doth roll down a hill.
7. Lugnasadh,[g] which is the beginning of the period of Foghamhar, shall ye mark by the coming together in groups in order that ye might feast upon the fruits of the Earth-mother; and then shall ye offer up a sacrifice unto your prosperity.

Chapter the FIFTH

1. Also, shall ye observe the periods of the moon: the dates thereof when it is full and when it is new; for thus is seen reflected the birth and death, the growth and diminishing of all that is to be seen in Nature.
2. Ye shall begin new projects when the moon is waxing; but ye shall end old ones when it is waning.
3. And on the night of the full moon shall ye rejoice in the fullness of it; but on the night of the new moon shall ye be given over to vigils and to meditation.*
4. When ye come together that ye might worship, shall ye come together in Nature, that ye might offer up on the altar of stone your sacrifice of life.*
5. Then shall ye pass amongst you the waters-of-life, that ye may know the continual flow and renewal of life.
6. For they shall taste of the very essence of life, hallowed in the bosom of the earth, and purified by the worship of Druids.
7. And when all have partaken of the waters-of-life, then ye shall pour a libation of it on the altar, saying as ye do it:
8. "To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee."
9. Then shall ye go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that your sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight.
10. Peace! Peace! Peace!

Chapter the SIXTH

1. Behold, there is not one among you who is greater than they who have given of themselves in service to you.
2. For it is for this reason that the priests among you have been called to their station, that they might serve you.
3. And none shall be called except that they have sealed themselves up unto the grove.
4. And none shall be called except that they have been Druids of the Second Order.
5. And none shall be called except that they have dedicated themselves to the search for truth in Nature.
6. And none shall be called except that they have kept the vigil upon the bosom of the Earth-mother.*
7. This is the Third Order, the Order of the priesthood, the Order of Dalon Ap Landu.[h]
8. Unto it shall be given the consecration of the waters-of-life.
9. Unto it shall be given the consecration of the Second Order.
10. Unto it shall be given the sacrificing of life.
11. Unto it shall be given the mysteries of the worship of the Earth-mother.
12. For, even as priests are called unto it, shall they also call others.*

Chapter the SEVENTH

(A Response at Samhain*)

1. Ea, lord, Ea, Mother, thou with uncounted names and faces, thou of the many faceted nature in and above all, to thee we sing our chants of praise.
2. Go thou not from us.
3. Dalon Ap Landu, lord of this and all groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not thy pleasing face from us.
4. Go thou not from us.
5. The leaves wither; the trees and fields are barren; on what can we depend? Where is thy order, where is they strength?
6. Depart not from our midst, sleep not, O most high.
7. The sun, the bright fire of day withdraws his chariot; his face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the north wind walks the land.
8. Return to us his warmth.
9. Lo, we are as wraiths; our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.
10. Preserve us O spirit of day. Keep us in thy mind, O spirit of power.
11. O Earth-mother, guide our paths. If thou wilt leave us, save us through the time of silence, keep bright within our hearts till spring.
12. So let it be, O our Mother, for we are faithful, and would keep thy ways.

Chapter the EIGHTH

1. Behold, some there are among you whose reflections and whose deeds are of exceedingly great merit.
2. And they shall be selected for the great honor of the high Orders of the priesthood;
3. and they shall be selected by the Patriarchs [*or Matriarchs*], each to his [*or her*] own Order.
4. The council of the Third Order, of Dalon Ap Landu, shall select the Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of the Fourth Order, of Grannos;[i]
5. and also the council of the Fourth Order shall select the Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of the Fifth Order, of Braciaca;
6. and also the council of the Fifth Order shall select the Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of the Sixth Order, of Belenos;
7. and also the council of the Sixth Order shall select the Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of the Seventh Order, of Sirona;
8. and also the council of the Seventh Order shall select the Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of the Eighth Order, of Taranis;
9. and also the council of the Eighth Order shall select the Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of the Ninth Order, of Llyr;
10. and the council of the Order of Llyr shall have dominion over the selection of the Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of the Tenth Order, the highest of them, which is the Order dedicated unto Danu.
11. For such are the Orders of the priesthood, and so are they also dedicated.
12. And no one shall be Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of more than one Order, for no one can be so dedicated.*

The following three verse have been effectively nullified by Resolution in the Council of Dalon Ap Landu on 1 May

1971. These three verses are retained here for historical purposes.

13. But no priestess shall be admitted into the councils of the priesthood, but rather she shall be given unto one of them as a gift of service to beauty.
14. For she who is called to be a priest shall be sealed up unto one Order only, and unto her shall be given the service of it for all time;
15. and she shall be called a priest not of the Order, but rather a priest unto the Order.
16. For so it is written; thus it was, thus it is, and thus it is to be.

Chapter the NINTH (Incantation*)

1. Fain we ask Erinn,
   Faring o'er oceans',
   Motions to mountains,
   Fountains and bowers,
   Showers, rills rushing,
   Gushing waves welling,
   Swelling streams calling,
   Falling foam-thunder,
   Under lakes filling,
   Willing-abiding,
   Riding rounds, holding,
   Olden fairs meetly-
2. Fleet to lift loyal,
   Royal king's towers,
   Bowers for crowning,
   Frowning foes over_
3. Rover Mil's warlike,
   Starlike sons therein,
   Erinn shall longer,
   Stronger, show honour,
   On our Milesians-
4. Wishing, in trouble,
   Noble isles' wooing,
   Suing, we stay here-
5. Pray here to sail in,
   Wailing maids royal,
   Loyal chief-leaders,
   Pleader, blend pray'r in,
   So we seek Erinn

Chapter the TENTH (Invocation*)

1. I invoke the land of Erinn,
   Much-coursed be the fertile sea,
   Fertile be the fruit-strewn mountain,
2. Fruit-strewn be the showery wood,
   Showery be the river of waterfalls,
   Of waterfall be the lake of deep pools,
   Deep-pooled be the hill-top well,
3. A well of tribes be the assembly,
   An assembly of kings be Temair,
   Temair be a hill of tribes,
   The tribes of the sons of Mil,
4. Of Mil of the ships, the barks,
   Let the lofty bark be Erinn,
   Lofty Erinn, darkly sung,
   An incantation of great cunning,
5. The great cunning of the wives of Bres,
   The wives of Bres, of Buaigne,
   The great lady of Erinn,
   Eremon hath conquered her,
   Ir, Eber have conquered for her,
   I invoke the land of Erinn.

Chapter the ELEVENTH (The Mystery*)

1. I am the wind which breathes on the sea,
   I am the wave of the ocean,
   I am the murmur of the willows,
   I am the ox of the seven combats,
   I am the vulture upon the rocks,
   I am a beam of the sun,
2. I am the fairest of plants,
   I am a wild boar in valour,
   I am a salmon in the water,
   I am a lake in the plain,
   I am a word of knowledge,
   I am the point of the lance of battle,
   I am the God who created in the head the fire,
3. Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?
   Who announces the ages of the moon?
   Who teaches the place where couches the sun?
   If not I?
   Peace!

The Latter Chronicles

Chapter the FIRST

1. The chronicles of the acts of the remnant after the faithful were scattered over the face of the land. Which record is a true and an accurate one of the Reformed Druids of North America.
2. Now it came to pass that on the fifth Saturday before the festival of Samhain,[a]* a number of the faithful did gather on the hill where the altar had been built in the period of Samradh.[b]
3. And this was to fulfill the prophecy which had been made:
4. "For verily I say unto you, ye shall be reunited here with these thy brethren."[c]
5. And they did perceive that the altar which had been built did still stand upon the hill where it had been built.
6. And all did wonder, yea, they did marvel that the altar had been preserved in their absence from the hand of the Anti-Druid.
7. And this was taken to be a sign.[d]
8. But it came to pass that not all of the faithful had returned, for there was only a remnant that did come back.
9. Jan,[e] who was one of the faithful who was of the Second Order, and one of those who did not return, but who did choose to remain in a distant place to there continue in the work of the Earth-mother, did send unto them an epistle.*
10. And this epistle was then brought to the faithful by the hand of Norman,* who was Server.[f]
11. And Norman did reveal unto them the epistle* which had been written by the hand of Jan: and Jan did admonish them in the epistle to remain strong in the faith, and he did express to them his desire that the Reform should gain in strength.

Chapter the SECOND

1. It came to pass that the Arch-Druid was one day walking in the woods, and he was sore perplexed, for it did happen to begin to rain.
2. And he was exceedingly wroth, so that he did feel tempted to utter a vile curse.*
3. And it came to pass that he did so utter a vile curse, for such was his wrath.
4. And this curse which he did utter was a vile curse which was a vile curse which did call down the wrath of the Earth-mother, yea, even did it call upon the power of the Earth-mother.
5. And it came to pass that when he had spoken, there was a period of time which did last no longer than the space of a few seconds, and it passed.
6. And suddenly, there did occur a most horrible sound, and a blinding light did fill all the sky about.
7. For behold, all the power of Taranis was caused to be unleashed,[g] and it did fly as a spear, and did strike a tree which was rooted in the earth.
8. And Behold, from the tree to the Arch-Druid was a space not more than fifteen cubits in length, and he was sore afraid.*
9. So he did go back among the faithful, and he did say unto them: "Curse not in the name of the Earth-mother, for verily I say unto you: ye know not what it is that ye say."*
10. And when he had told them of these things which he had seen and heard, they did marvel at it.
11. And it was taken by them to be a sign.[h]

Chapter the THIRD

1. It came to pass that the Druids did continue to meet and to pass the waters-of-life[i] for the period of one month.*
2. But they did become anxious because there were left only a remnant of them.
3. Nevertheless, they did not come to be discouraged, for the size of their numbers did come to increase, though it was not by a very great amount.
4. And their efforts did continue to be thwarted, for the authorities had hardened their hearts against them.*

Chapter the FOURTH

1. But behold, it came to pass that they were gathered together on the hill, by the altar, on the Saturday before the eve of Samhain.*
2. And it came to pass that there did gather on the hill a multitude of people, the number of them being great than any which had ever been gathered at any other time.
3. Wherefore, the faithful did rejoice greatly, for they did see that it was not all come to nought, but that the truth was now spread among the people.
4. And they did behold the success of the reform, and they were glad in their hearts.[j]
5. And the Arch-Druid did look upon the great number who were gathered, and he said: "It is good."[k]
6. And he did speak unto them and he did welcome them, and he did tell them of the wondrous things which were to occur on the eve of Samhain,[l] which was near at hand.

Chapter the FIFTH

1. Now it did come to pass that the eve of Samhain did approach; and the moon was full.[m]
2. And they did gather in the light of the full moon, and did come together in the usual spot which was upon the hill near the altar.[n]
3. And there was a multitude of them, being in all greater than one score and ten in number.
4. The Arch-Druid did then offer up the sacrifice of life, but it was not accepted, for behold, the night of Samhain was at hand. Wherefore they did pass among them the waters, but they were not the waters-of-life, but rather the waters-of-sleep, for there was no life in them.[o]
5. And a great wailing did go up among them, for they did lament the ending of the summer, and the beginning of the winter season.[p]
6. The Arch-Druid did then light his torch and he did carry it before all those gathered as they did begin the pilgrimage. And they did all follow the torch, making their way to the grove, which was a grove of Oak.*
7. And when they had arrived at the grove of oak, the Arch-Druid did take the torch and light with it the fire, and so the flames did rise high up out of the fire,[q] testifying to the glory of Belenos.
8. And all were cheered by it.

9. Now the Arch-Druid did ask all who were gathered that they might sit upon the earth in the fashion of a great circle, each holding the hand of the one next to them. And he did ask that they might examine their souls,[r] and speak such as they felt they ought to tell the others.

10. And there did follow a period of silence which was exceeding long.

11. And behold, some did begin to speak, and their voices were lifted up above the crackling of the fire in the silence of the grove.

12. And one did prophesy much, at times speaking in tongues, and then saying: "Someone is dead...I see a great many people...and a large circular room there...but they need not be afraid...everything is going to be all right."[s]*

13. And behold, another did speak, saying: "I see... three stones on a black sky."*

14. And many other great and wonderful things were spoken, for it was the eve of Samhain.

15. Now as the fire did die down, many did begin to leave the grove; but some there were who did stay, and who did undertake to jump over the fire seven times each, thereby insuring their luck during the coming season.*

16. And when the fire had died down to ashes, they did all depart; and the moon was full.

Chapter the SIXTH

1. Now it came to pass that it was not long after the feast of Samhain when the chief of all the land did go out in a long procession among the people of the land.*

2. And as he passed among them, a man who was his enemy, did attack him.

3. And behold, the chief of all the land was smitten by the hand of his attacker; and he was slain.

4. And a great crying and also a great wailing did go up from all the people.

5. And it came to pass that the body of the chief of all the land was taken up into the principal city of the land, and there was placed in the chief building, in the great circular room thereof.

6. But among the Druids, there were those who were sore afraid at these events. For they did say among themselves:

7. Behold, for this is now the fulfillment of the prophesy of the night of Samhain; for it is now all come to pass as it was spoken.[t]*

8. And they did marvel at it, for it was taken as a sign.[u]

9. Now it came to pass that during the periods of Geimredh and Earrach, the earth did have the appearance of death; for the wind of the north did sweep over the land, and barrenness did settle upon the branches of the wood.

10. And there were during this time no meetings of the Druids, for there was no rejoicing in the time of sleep.[v]

11. But it came to pass that the Druids did come together to celebrate the coming of the period of Earrach, which is the festival of Oimelc.[w]

12. And they did rejoice that the time was half passed in its course from Samhain to Beltane.

13. And there was a man who came unto them at that time who was called John the Messenger.* And he came from across the sea from the land of Erinn.

14. And he brought unto them writings which were of the ancients: the incantations of Erinn.[x]

Chapter the SEVENTH

1. Now it came to pass that the festival of Beltane was near at hand; so the Druids did go up upon the hill of their altar, that they might see that all was in order.

2. And it came to pass that they did come up upon the hill, which was the one upon which was their altar, and they did look upon the altar which was there.

3. And they did say, one to the other, "Behold, our altar has not well weathered the periods of Geimredh and Earrach."

4. And they did say, one to the other, "Let us now go and fetch great stones, and place them together in a new altar, which shall be the greatest of all the altars which we have built."

5. Wherefore, they did go and fetch great stones, and they did bring them to the place of the altar. And they did begin to place them together in their proper places, according to the shapes thereof.[y]

6. And each Druid did work at the building of the altar with his bare hands.[z]

7. And they did fix the stones of the altar in their places with mortar, that they might not be wrested therefrom again by the hand of the Anti-Druid.[a]

8. And when they had completed the altar, they did stand back from it and rejoice in its completion; for it was the finest of all the altars which had been built.

9. And the altar was about four cubits long, and about three cubits wide, and about three cubits high.[b] *

10. And there was a passage through the center of it which did extend from the top of the altar down to the very bottom thereof, and through it could pass the smoke of the altar fires.*

11. And it came to pass that they did become apprehensive, for they did perceive that the mortar was still not dry;

12. and they did say: "Behold, the mortar is not yet dry, and the Anti-Druid will come and he will tear the stones from their places in the altar before they have been fixed there by the drying of the mortar."

13. And they were sore afraid.

14. But it came to pass that one of them did step forward, and his name was David (the Chronicler).* And he did offer himself for the purpose of the guarding of the altar.

15. And he did take it upon himself to stay by the altar until the mortar had dried.

16. And as he sat by the altar he did see the sun go down in the west; and all the majesty of the heavens were opened unto him.

17. And he did keep his vigil upon the bosom of the Earth-mother[c] as the moon did rise in the east, and yet as it did set in the west.

18. And behold, as the sun did rise again in the east, and all the Earth was bathed in the warmth thereof,[d] the Arch-Druid did come up upon the hill of the altar.

19. And they did kneel before the altar; and the Arch-Druid did consecrate David (who was the Chronicler) as a priest of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu.[e]*

Chapter the EIGHTH

1. Now it came to pass that the festival of Beltane was near at hand;* so the Druids did go up upon the hill of their altar, that they might see that all was in order.[f]
2. And when they had come to the place of the altar, they did find it not. And they did find there not even the least stone thereof.
3. For behold, all that was the altar had disappeared, yea, even the last vestige thereof.
4. And they did perceive that the altar had been again destroyed by the hand of the Anti-Druids.[g]
5. And this was the fourth time* that the altar had been defiled by the Anti-Druids, and this was the most complete and utter destruction that had yet come to pass. For they had destroyed it with hammer and chisel and all manner of terrible weapon.
6. And it came to pass that a great wailing and moaning did go up, and the air was rent by the lamentation of the Druids.[h]
7. But behold, they did go up from that place, and they did celebrate the festival of Beltane;[i] for even in the midst of their misfortune did they rejoice in the return of spring, and in the abundance of life which is the perpetual gift of the Earth-mother.
8. And they did go up upon the hill which was a short way off; and at the top of the hill they did find a grove of three oaks.
9. And they did rejoice in the renewal of the flow of the waters-of-life; and they did pour a libation of them upon the rock which they did find upon the hill where the three oaks did stand strong against the dark sky.
10. And that place came to be revered among the Druids, for it was the place of refuge in the time of their troubles.
11. And they did call that place the Hill of the Three Oaks.*

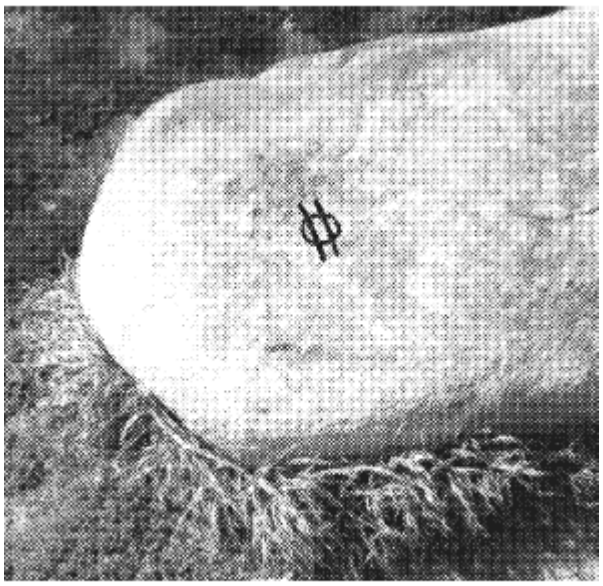
Chapter the NINTH

1. Now it came to pass that in the time after the festival of Beltane, which is the period of Samradh, Norman, who had been Server, did go up unto the Hill of the Three Oaks.*
2. And he did go up onto the Hill of the Three Oaks in order that he might better appreciate the wonders of the Earth-mother which were to be beheld there.[j]
3. And it came to pass that he did remain there until darkness had fallen over all the land around; and behold, the firmament was opened up unto him and he did behold the glory of it.
4. And he did continue to make his vigil until the dawn.
5. And it came to pass that as the sun rose in the east, he was met by the priests of Dalon Ap Landu who had come up onto the Hill of the Three Oaks.
6. And they did consecrate Norman, who had been Server to Dalon Ap Landu.[k]
7. And it came to pass that after Norman had become priest of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu, the priests of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu did gather together in council.
8. And the Council of Dalon Ap Landu did call upon David, who was a Fisher, and declare him Patriarch of the Order of Grannos,[l] which is the first of the Patriarchs, and with all the powers thereof.
9. And it came to pass that the Patriarch of the Order of Grannos did call upon those who were priests of Dalon Ap Landu.
10. And he did consecrate them unto Grannos: priests of the Fourth Order.
11. And it came to pass that the priests of the Order of Grannos did gather together in council.
12. And the Council of Grannos did call upon Norman, who had been Server, and declared him to be Patriarch of Braciaca,[m] with all the powers thereof.
13. And it came to pass that the Patriarch of the Order of Braciaca did call upon all the priests of Grannos.
14. And he did consecrate them unto Braciaca; priests of the Fifth Order.
15. And it came to pass that the priests of the Order of Braciaca did gather together in council.
16. And the council of Braciaca did call upon David (the Chronicler) and declared him to be Patriarch of Belenos,[n] with all powers thereof.
17. And it came to pass that the Patriarch of the Order of Belenos did call upon those who were priests of Braciaca.
18. And he did consecrate them unto Belenos: priests of the Sixth Order.*

Chapter the TENTH

1. Now it came to pass that in those last days a decree went out from the authorities;*
2. and they did declare to be abolished the regulations which had been placed upon the[o] worship of those at Carleton.*
3. And behold, a great rejoicing did go up from all the land for the wonders which had come to pass.
4. And all the earth did burst forth into song in the hour of salvation.
5. And in the time of exaltation, the fulfillment of their hopes,[p] the Druids did sing the praises of the Earth-mother.*
6. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
7. In all that we do we praise thee: In our getting up and in our lying down, in our sleeping and in our waking; in our eating and in our drinking: in our working and in our times of leisure; for we are alive only through thee,[q] and in our every act too we praise thee.
8. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
9. In all that we see do we praise thee: in the sky and the sea, the hills and the plains; in the clouds and the stars, the moon and the sun;[r] in the birds and the flowers, the butterflies and the myriad-colored fishes.
10. We praise thee with our admiration of the sunset and of the mountains, of the trees and of the streams. For thou hast made all things, and for all we see do we praise thee.
11. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
12. In all that we hear and smell and feel and taste do we praise thee: in the song of birds and the roar of the sea; in the perfumes of flowers and freshness of a summer rain;
13. in the softness of a kitten and the coolness of a lake; in the sweetness of honey and the savor of fruits; for all that we hear and smell and feel and taste is of thee,[s] and for all sensible do we praise thee.*
14. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.

15. For all that we love do we praise thee: for the love of our parents, and for the love of others; for the act and emotion of love is an act and emotion of praise, and in loving do we praise thee.*
16. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
17. In our meditations[t] and services do we praise and think upon thy works and power.*
18. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
19. In all the whole world do we praise thee, from the east to the west do we praise thee and from the nadir to the zenith do we praise thee.
20. We praise thee in the day, and in the night, in all seasons of the year, and in the myriad of years.[u]
21. We praise thee knowing and unknowing, believing and of little faith, for thou hast made all and art all, and we can praise and admire nothing without praising and admiring thee.
22. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
23. Peace! Peace! Peace!*



Altar stone on the Hill of Three Oaks

Meditations

Chapter the FIRST*

1. I was standing alone. And behold, I heard my name called, and I went.
2. And I had been called to a place where there was a great fire, and the flames of the fire did rise as high as the tops of the trees.
3. Near the fire there stood a man; and he said unto me: "Follow me!" And I followed him.
4. Now we went far into the darkness of the night, and I followed him to an open space in the forest, which was like a small valley.
5. He said to me: "Behold;" and I looked where it was that he had pointed , and there was a pile of sticks.
6. And he said to me: "here you will stay; and do not allow sleep to overtake you, but keep open your ears that you might hear."
7. And again he said "Behold;" and I looked where he had pointed and I saw there a small fire. And he said: "Take from the fire a brand."
8. Now I went to the fire, and took a burning brand from it, and returned to where the man had stood; but behold, he had disappeared.
9. So I took the brand and lit with it the sticks. And I sat down to listen and to meditate.
10. And I did not sleep.
11. And behold, I did hear my name called, and I answered. And a voice came out of the darkness and bade me not sleep but rather to examine my soul. And behold, this did happen twice.
12. And I was alone, but I did not any longer feel alone.
13. And as I watched my fire and contemplated the warmth and the light of it, behold, the sun did come up in the east, and I was bathed in the light and the warmth of it.
14. And I had not slept.
15. But I had seen things that I had not seen, and I had heard things that I had not heard and I had felt things that I had not felt.
16. And I arose, and left that place, glorifying Be'al and all the works of his hand, for I had seen the Earth-mother.[a]*

Chapter the SECOND

1. How wonderful are the works of Be'al!
2. How beautiful are all the things which are in the earth, which are on the face of the earth, and which are above the earth in the sky.
3. How beautiful are the flowers of the earth and the birds of the air. How beautiful are the stars and the moon, and the reflection of them upon the waters.
4. For these things are of Be'al, and not of man.
5. For thus saith the Earth-mother: "The Groves of the forest are my temples, and the trees of the groves are my icons,
6. "and the branches of the trees are my sacred scepters, and the green leaves of the branches are my sacrifice, which is a living sacrifice up unto beauty."[b]

7. Yea, how excellent are all these things, for they are created of Be'al, and they are not of man, Wherefore, they are sacred before us.

Chapter the THIRD

1. Behold the rocks of the mountains, and the trees above the grass waving; this is the Earth-mother.
2. Behold the ocean on the right, and the sea on the left, and mighty river which is but a trickle; this is the Earth-mother.
3. Behold the blue which is day and the black which is the night, salted with the stars, all above; even this is the Earth-mother.*
4. The Earth-mother is one.
5. The sun is her right eye, the moon her left; and the clouds are her silver hair. The rivers are her fingers, the oceans are cradled in her hands, as a child.
6. For the Earth-mother is all which is revealed unto our sight, and which our ears do perceive, and which we do touch as we reach out our hands.
7. For the Earth-mother is all things which do make themselves apparent unto our sense.
8. She is Disorder Ordered;
9. she is Power Impotent;*
10. she is Ugliness Beautiful.
11. And Be'al, he is cradled in the bosom of the Earth-mother;
12. and the eye of Be'al has entirely encompassed her.

Chapter the FOURTH

1. He is that which we have seen not with the eyes; and we have called his name Be'al.
2. And we have heard that which he is not with our ears; for his name we have called Be'al.
3. The taste which he leaves is not in the mouth; the odor of his presence is not sensed in the nose.
4. We have reached out, and touched, feeling his essence, though never with our fingers.
5. We have cried out in our anguish, our sublime anguish, and have called his name, yea, one name among many; we have called him Be'al.
6. For our knowledge of him is as that of the form in the fog, which has no form; we see it, and there is the more of it which we do not see; but it is.
7. Be'al is!
8. Yea, Be'al is one; even as he is many.
9. He has gathered the worlds in his net, even as they also have drawn him to them.*
10. For all things are delivered unto him.
11. His glories they are many, yea, as are many the names we have given him according as his glories are manifested unto us.
12. We have seen him on the bosom of the Earth-mother; huge woody arms raised to the sky in adoration, strong and alive; and we have called his name Dalon Ap Landu.[c]
13. Of his goodness we have tasted, yea, have we drunk of the fruits of the Earth-mother which he hath poured out before us; and his name we have called Braciaca.
14. We have seen him in the surf, beating his fists against the shore, and his vast body stretching to the horizon; and we have called his name Llyr.
15. His voice we have heard thundering in the heavens, his power we have seen flash across the sky; and his name we have called Taranis.
16. Out of the bowels of the earth has he poured forth the water of his life, healing, soothing; his name is Grannos.
17. We have seen his smile, bright, radiant, raining glory and warmth down upon the bosom of the earth from his seat on high in the midst of the blue heaven; and we have called his name Belenos.
18. And the other faces of Be'al also have been turned kindly toward us.
19. Merrily merrily, bubbling, gurgling, we have seen her dancing over the rocks down to her marriage with Llyr; and her name we have called Sirona.
20. We have seen her laugh with the young baby, fly with the bird, burst forth her abundance with the corn; in all that hath breath and life have we seen her good face; and her name is Danu the bountiful.[d]

Chapter the FIFTH

1. Ye have seen the glory which is day in the rising of the sun, and also the wonder which is night; and what greater thing is there?
2. Ye have seen the power of the floods and the tides; and what greater thing is there?
3. Yea, even have ye seen the bosom of the earth rent in twain, and fire and brimstone poured forth out of the bowels thereof; and what things is there which is greater?
4. Verily I say unto you: consider the small creatures of the forest which scamper gaily from bush to bush; are not they more wonderful that these other things?
5. Consider even the dainty flower, how exalted is the glory of it.
6. For these are possessed of the greatest and most wonderful of all of the gifts of the Earth-mother: which gift is that of life.
7. Wherefore, consider this tree, which ye have selected for the great size thereof; for this tree is possessed of great age.
8. Great is the abundance of life which is in it, and which has passed through it; wherefore ye have raised up your praises unto it.
9. For ye have offered up your worship unto this in which life is great, that your worship of the greatness thereof might be multiplied in the tree.*
10. This tree is your Bile.[dd]
11. For without life is there nothing which is anything.
12. The sun is as darkness without that it shines down on the living things; and the earth is as empty space without that it is a pedestal upon which have been placed the living things.
13. Thus, even the least leaf of this tree is greater than all on the earth and the sun.
14. For life is not of the Earth-mother, and life is not of Be'al, rather life is of them both.[e] And great is the power thereof.

Chapter the SIXTH

1. Verily I say unto you: is it not written: "and each took this to be a sign, each in his own way?"[f]
2. Which of you, having risen up saying: "this is truth, for I have seen it," will be followed? For even as ye have seen it, have not the others also seen it not; and where therein is the proof?
3. Rather, that which is as the bright light unto one man is as but the thick cloud unto the other.
4. For no man shall have truth save that he shall also have awareness.
5. Truth is as a bubble which dances in the air. Truly, it can be seen and the eye is aware of it; but it cannot be grasped by the hand, nor possessed. Neither can it be given to you by anyone.
6. Beware those men who say: "Follow my way, for mine is the way unto Be'al, and there is no other way."
7. Their numbers are great and their voices are loud. They shall present you much authority before you, and say: "We know our way to the only way, for it is the way of our fathers."
8. But take heed, lest you should fall into the trap.
9. For awareness shall come unto no one save it shall be in their own way; and it shall come unto no one save they shall come unto it.
10. Go ye, therefore, and seek after Be'al. And make your way not after the way of other men, but after your own way;[g]
11. and go too to the fountain[h] of Awareness, which is in Nature.*

Chapter the SEVENTH

1. For what reasons is that ye sit here under the oak? Why is it that ye have come out together under the stars?
2. Have ye come that ye might not be alone? If so, it is good.
3. But verily I say unto you: many there are who have come together, yet remain alone.
4. Do ye sit in the open that ye might come to know Nature? If so, it is good.
5. But verily I say unto you: many there are who have sat for hours and have risen up knowing less than when they sat down.
6. Rather, in your coming together, seek to know in what way ye may help him who is next to you, and strive to act justly toward him.
7. And in your sitting down in the fields of the Earth-mother, open your minds as well as your eyes. Let your meditation grow and branch out as the oak which is over your head.
8. Except that ye have done these things, your sitting is in vain and coming is futility.
9. And why is it that ye do stand up before others and speak unto them?
10. Do ye teach unto them the ways of the Ancient Druids? If so, it is good.[i]
11. For they had their wisdom, and that is oft forgot.[j] But verily I say unto you: in their day, even they also were young in their traditions.
12. The wise man is not constrained to learn only that which he is taught. Yea, even as there is a time for talking, is there also a time for no talking.
13. In the silence of your being shall ye find that which is not of your being; and in the Earth-mother shall ye find that which is not of the Earth-mother; in Be'al shall ye be made aware, and your awareness shall fill you.
14. Ye shall be like the morning sun which has risen and whose brightness is already full, but whose path is yet ever upward;
15. and the light of your awareness shall sweep before it all the shadows of your uncertainty.
16. Then shall ye need wait no more; for this is the great end and all else is but beginning.

Chapter the EIGHTH

1. When they come to you and then ask you "After what do ye seek?" then ye shall answer them saying: "Awareness;" for this is the first lesson.
2. For without awareness is there nothing which is.
3. But in your seeking of awareness, seek not it alone, as separate from all else;
4. for in seeking awareness ye shall find it not, and ye shall find it only in that ye seek it not.
5. Seek ye, therefore, after Be'al, for your awareness shall be in unity with Be'al.[k]
6. And make first your search in the dominion of the Earth-mother, for the Earth-mother and Be'al are not to be separated.

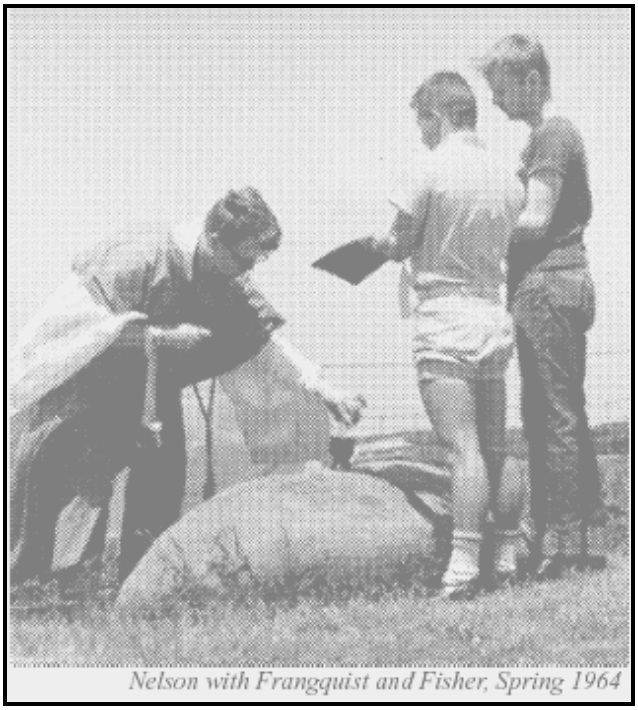
Chapter the NINTH

1. Behold, they shall come unto you, scoffing, and mocking the words that ye have spoken, and saying: "There is no thing at all which is this awareness; what proof do ye give of it?"
2. And ye shall answer them in a parable, for this is the second lesson:
3. There was a small village in which was produced the finest cheese in all the world. There was none other anywhere that was like unto it.
4. And it came to pass that a traveler, who was a merchant, came to the village; for it was his desire that the finest of all foods should be served upon his table.
5. Wherefore, he did seek out the makers of the cheese.
6. But behold, when he was given a piece of the cheese, he did thrust it away from him, for he was offended by the foul smell thereof; for it was an exceeding foul smell indeed.
7. And he said unto them: "I do not believe that the taste of this cheese can be good, for it doth have an odor which is foul like unto no other!"
8. And he was answered: "Thou needst only to taste once of the cheese, and thou wilst see for thyself that it be good."
9. But it came to pass that the merchant did go away again, having not partaken of the fine cheese.
10. And he never did have served on his table the finest of all cheeses, for he would not taste it, any of it.
11. Verily I say unto you: in all the books of Man is there not one word which can give you proof even of the taste of a cheese.

Chapter the TENTH

1. And when they come unto you and say: "And what, then, is the nature of this thing which ye do call awareness?" then shall ye give answer unto them in silence, for this is the third lesson.
2. For there be not one person who doth have awareness, save also that they are aware thereof.
3. And they are like unto them whose eyes are filled with the glory of all things upon which the light of the sun has cast itself.
4. But there are many, yea, it is the greater number, who, in their unawareness, are aware not even of their unawareness;
5. and they are like unto them who are blind from the day of their birth, and see not, nor know what it is to see.
6. But some there are who are aware only that they are also unaware; hallowed are they for they are the children of Be'al.
7. One of these is like unto them who keeps the vigil;[l]
8. for their gaze cannot pierce the mantle of darkness which is thrown over all the world about them, but they rest secure in the knowledge of the return of day.
9. In your awareness shall ye be as at the moment of the rising sun;[m]
10. and your spirit shall rise up even as the bird flies up to meet the light which is above, but which, hidden by the mountain, has fallen not yet upon the earth below.

Peace!



Nelson with Frangquist and Fisher, Spring 1964

Cross-References of the Chronicles

These cross-reference notes were assembled by Glenn McDavid in 1970 after a request by the current AD, Richard Shelton; for which he received the first Deanship of Druidic Textology (D.D.T.).'

The Early Chronicles

[a] :Other authorities read: "It looks good."
[b] :Other authorities add: "of North America."
[c] :See Med. 6:1.
[d] :See L.C. 7:7.
[e] : See E.C. 2:10.
[f] : See Med. 2:6.
[g] : See E.C. 4:8.
[h] : See E.C. 6:4.
[i] : See L.C. 1:2-4.

The Book of Law

[a] : Other authorities add: "at Carleton College"
[b] : Other authorities add: "Save he [or she] were first a student."
[c] : See Cus. 6:7.
[d] : See Cus. 3:5.
[e] : See Cus. 1:8.
[f] : See Cus. 4:7.
[a] : See Cus. 5:5.
[b] : See Law 4-6.
[c] : See Cus. 6:7; 8:1.
[d] : November 1st.
e : February 1st.
f : May 1st.
g : August 1st.
h : See Med. 4:12.
i : See Med 4:13-20.

The Customs of the Druids

a : See Cus. 4:2.
b : See E.C. 4:11.
c : See E.C. 7:8.
d : See E.C. 3:5,11; 4:4, 13; 6:9; L.C. 2:11; 6:8.
e : See E.C. 5:10.
f : See Law 1:10; L.C. 9:1.
g : See Med. 4:5.
h : See E.C. 3:5,11; 4:4, 13; 6:9; L.C. 1:7; 6:8.
i : See Cus. 5:5.
j : See E.C. 6:4.
k : See E.C. 2:4.
l : See Cus. 4:2.
m : See Cus. 5:1.
n : See E.C. 1:5.
o : See L.C. 6:10.

p : See Cus. 7; Med. 1:2.

q : See Cus. 7:2.

r : See Med. 1:11.

s : See L.C. 6:3-5.

t : See L.C. 5:12.

u : See E.C. 3:5, 11; 4:4, 13; 6:9; L.C. 1:7; 2:11.

v : See L.C. 4:4.

w : See Cus. 4:3.

x : See Cus. 9:1-5; 10:1-5; 11:1-3.

y : See E.C. 4:2, 11.

z : See E.C. 4:1.

The Latter Chronicles

a : See E.C. 4:11.

b : See E.C. 2:5.

c : See Cus. 6:6.

d : See Med. 1:13.

e : See Cus. 6:7.

f : See L.C. 7:1.

g : See E.C. 3:6, 4:6.

h : See E.C. 4:1, 10.

i : See E.C. 2:1; Cus. 4:5.

j : See Med. 7:4.

k : See Cus. 6:7; Med. 4:12.

l : See Cus. 8:4; Med.4:16.

m : See Cus. 8:5; Med. 4:13.

n : See Cus. 8:6; Med. 4:17.

o : See E.C. 1:2.

p : See E.C. 1:3; 6:1

q : See Med. 5:6.

r : See Med. 3:1-3.

s : See Med. 3:6.

t : See Med. 7:7.

u : See Cus. 4:1-7.

Meditations

a : See Cus. 6:6; Med. 10:7.

b : See E.C.

c : See Cus. 6:7.

d :See Cus. 8:4-10.

dd : This word could be “Bile”, which is Irish for a sacred tree or it could be a typo for “Bible.”

e : See Med. 8:6.

f : See E.C. 4:4.

g : See Med. 8:5.

h : See Law 1:4-6.

i : See E.C. 5:10.

j : See E.C. 6:4.

k : See Med. 7:13.

l : See Cus. 6:6; Med. 1:1-16.

m : See E.C. 7:10.

End-Notes to the Chronicles

It should be noted that these footnotes are not endorsed by the Reform. They are marked by asterixes in the text.

This is a collection of primarily historical notes with added bibliographical and liturgical materials provide for the most part by Norman Nelson (NN), Richard Shelton (RMS), Isaac Bonewits (IB), Robert Larson (RL), and Michael Scharding (MS).

The Early Chronicles

1:1 **IB**: "...Which Branch of the Order.." Some people now take this verse as the scriptural foundation for the legitimate founding of offshoots of Reformed Druidism, each calling itself a "Branch of the Reform."

1:2 **NN**: The Reformed Druids of North America (Henceforth "RDNA" or "Druids") were founded in the spring of 1963; John Nason was at that time President of Carleton College, a private Liberal Arts college in Northfield, Minnesota.

NN: The precise wording of the requirement mentioned is to be found on page 138 of the Carleton College Bulletin (Catalog Number) for March, 1963 c.e.: "ATTENDANCE is required at the College Service of Worship or at the Sunday Evening Program or at any regularly organized service of public worship. Each (ten week) term every student must attend seven of the services or religious meetings."

1:3 **NN**: As I recall it, the sole motive was to protest the requirement, not to try for alternatives for worship. If a "regularly organized service" was required, we decided to organize one! Chief among those involved were Dave Fisher and David Frangquist (then sophomores), Howard Cherniack, Jan Johnson and me (then all juniors).

NN: It is important to note that, while some were a-religious, other were churchgoers who felt that compulsory religion was a disservice to religion. There was never any intention to mock any religion; it was not intended that RDNA should compete with or supplant any other faith. We tried to write a service which could be attended "in good faith" by anyone; it require no renunciation of any faith to profess Druidism. If our protest was to work, the last thing we need was antagonism from anyone.

1:4 **NN**: Lyman Lakes extend across the north side of the campus proper, lying in a valley. Most of the Druids then lived in a new dorm [Goodhue] just north of the lakes, at the base of a hill. Immediately at the top of the hill was the soccer practice field and, just to the east of that, an area called Monument Hill (bearing a stele commemorating several pioneer events). Further north, across the soccer field, is a slight rise with a large rock sticking out of the ground and with three trees; this became known as The Hill of the Three Oaks.

RMS: By the late sixties, the name had become shortened to the Hill of Three Oaks. The name was used by everyone, not just Druids.

MS: The fourth side of the stele is blank, and a Carleton tradition is to make the Druid Symbol on its face every time one visits it. See the Book of Lacunae in the Apocrypha.

1:5 **NN** : Monument Hill.

1:6 **NN:** So far as I know, Fisher actually created the whole first ritual at this time; his story was that he had been made a

Druid in high school, since it made it more acceptable if it was an ongoing thing.

1:7 **IB**: Saturday afternoons became the customary time for Druid Services, in addition to the High Days, for many years. Some Groves now use Sunday afternoons and still other Groves use different days.

MS: Most groves don't have weekly services, anymore.

1:8 **IB**: Thus the reform is regarded as having started in April of the year known as 1963 in the common era, 6676 in the Julian era, 2623 Japanese, 2716 Roman (AUC), 1383 Islamic (Hegira), 1885 Hindu (Saka), 2276 Grecian, 7473 Byzantine, 5725 Jewish (AM) and nearly halfway through the First Year of the Reform (or 1 y.r.), which began the previous Samhain.

MS: The RDNA at Carleton agrees that that Samhain is the beginning of the Celtic year (NOV. 1st) but the Carleton Druids date their documents as if Beltane (May 1st) were the start of the year. To calculate "Year of Reform", if it is before Beltane take the year in question and subtract 1963 from it. If it is on, or after, May 1st subtract 1962 from the year in question. The NRDNA tends to use Samhain as the deciding date subtracting 1962 before Samhain and 1961 after Samhain. However, since their was no concept of Druidism at Carleton until April of 1963, why go back to Fall of 1962? The whole thing is like the Easter controversy between the Celtic and Roman church. See the calendrical section of *the Carleton Apocrypha* and Isaac Bonewits' Calendar of the Druids in his version of the *Chronicles*, both are in Part Four of ARDA.

2:1 .**MS**: Although the text leads you to believe that the first official service was Beltane on May 1st (or more likely May 4th), it is now generally assumed that there were earlier weekend services, likely starting on 4/20/63.

2:2 **NN**: The "altar" was Fisher's phonograph stand/record rack, draped with a cloth.

2:3 **NN**: The stones came from a place in the Arboretum, just north of Monument Hill I don't remember how many workedit was something like three, increasing to five.

MS: I believe the site of stone was the NEST OF DRAGON EGGS found in a depression next to the DRUID DEN (AKA the little grove) where a pile of head size rocks from the neighboring fields were deposited. Most of the remaining rocks there have been used for Arb trail maintenance.

2:5 **IB**: The exact measurements of the "cubits" used has been lost. The term usually refers to a length from 17" to 21" (based on the length of a person's forearm).

2:6 **IB**: The waters-of-life are Uiscebheatha in Irish Gaelic (other wise known as "whiskey"). Any alcoholic beverage can be used in a pinch.

MS: Since 1985, the Carleton Druids have been using Tea, Tang, or watered-down Whiskey. It depends on the sensibilities of the officiant and congregation.

2:7-10 **MS**: This was so they could become an "officially registered student organization." The original Constitution had an amusing typographical error: Article VI set the quorum for amendment at "one third of those known to be officers." Since there were only three officers to begin with... It is interesting to note that the Druids at Carleton never became an official student organization in and of themselves until 1995 under the leadership of Hrobak.

3 **NN**: A little hyperbole aside, this is essentially a factual account.

4:3 **NN**: Really spooky-a ray of sunlight broke through the cloud-cover and hit the altar.

4:4-5 **RL:** At one of the early services, some one brought an umbrella, more as a fashion statement then because of weather. It rained. From this came one of druidism's few informal prohibitions/superstitions; no umbrellas at services. Curiously, a similar occurrence happened at one of the early Berkeley grove services. Really odd, since May- Nov in California is the dry season when rain is really rare. (Insert Twilight Zone theme.)

4:7 **NN**: No liquor was allowed at Carleton. This rule was not enforced in the Arb, and quite a many students wandered home on Saturday Night/Sunday Morning under the influence. In the case of the repeated destruction of the altar, there was a specific (small) group which didn't like us as individuals, and took it out on our altars.. I don't remember if we thought they were anti-Druid or just anti-us.

5 **NN**: The dispute is reflected in the changes made in the Ceremony of Consecration.

RMS: In the ceremony preserved in the Black Book (which contained all the early liturgy), the following changes were written by hand on May 18th 1963:

"Attend us now o Spirits, as we offer this sacrifice of consecration" became

"Attend us now O Spirits, as we light this fire of consecration."

(Here the blood of the sacrifice shall be spilled upon the altar) became

(Here the fire shall be lit upon the altar)

"Accept this, our sacrifice" became

"Accept this, consecrate it."

5:10 **IB**: The speaker was Jan Johnson. Actually it is not known for sure whether the ancient Druids practiced human or animal sacrifice, though the former was the war-atrocity tale told by their enemies, the Romans. But since almost every Paleopagan tribe in Europe practiced the sacrifice of flesh now and then, such sacrifices by the ancient Druids must remain a possibility. For further details about the Paleopagan Druids, as well as other modern groups, see The Other Druids.

MS: As far as my research has gone, no Druidic group or Wiccan group in the US or elsewhere would ever allow the sacrifice of people or animals by their members.

5:13 **IB**: This almost schism should not be confused with the schism that did take place eleven years later, also over the question of just how Pagan the Druids were or should be.

6:1 **IB**: May 25, 1963 CE (1 y.r.)

6:3 **NN**: After six of seven "regularly organized services of public worship," the Druids filled out "chapel slips" listing the Druid services as our church for the week. These slips were handed out at campus services, and were available in the dorms for those who had attended services in town.

6:4 **NN**: The Chapel Slips were rejected by the Dean of Men's office, which had charge of such matters for male students.

6:5-8 **NN**: Howard Cherniack went to the Dean of Men with a list of various peculiar religious organizations gleaned from the Minneapolis and St. Paul Yellow Pages. After it was admitted that most of them would be acceptable, he asked why the RDNA wasn't. The answer boiled down, amounted to "You don't have a faculty advisor."

6:9 **NN**: The Dean of Women's office accepted the Chapel Slips from the two girls who submitted them.

MS: The twenty male students then in the RDNA never did receive official credit. But then, they never were expelled either. It is believed that the women weren't under the same scrutiny as the men, and so local towns' ladies (never hearing about the Druids) at the Office of Women passed the slips without a second thought. See the oral interview with the Frangquists.

7:1 **IB**: The date was June 1, 1963 (1 y.r.)

7:4 **NN**: or words to that effect.

7:5 **IB**: That is to say, Summer Vacation was coming on.

The Book of the Law

1 **NN**: This book is essentially a paraphrase of the Constitution of the Carleton Grove.

3 **IB**: It is no longer necessary to be a student (at Carleton or anywhere else) in order to join the RDNA (or its offshoots). All may join regardless of race, creed, color, sexual preference, gender, or place of cultural origin; provided they agree with the Basic Tenets and partake of the waters-of-life.

4-6 **MS**: These **Basic Tenets** are the rock-bottom beliefs of Reformed Druidism.

7 **MS***:* Some offshoots add extra officers. The following verses referred to both sexes as far as eligibility is concerned.

12 **NN**: My original copy of the Constitution sets the quorum (after correction: see note to EC 2:7-10 above) at one-eighth, not one-third.

MS: After 1976, some individual groves added some other rules. Isaac's talk below is of academic interest, since the Council of Dalon Ap Landu is, for all practical purpose, in abeyance and will probably remain so.

IB: This verse has subsequently been interpreted to allow business to be done through the mails. In typically Druidic manner, the quorum necessary to enact changes has only rarely been obtainable, since most Druids are too lazy to answer their mail or to send in changes of address. This difficulty in legislative communication (caused , as well, by inactivity on the part of the Arch Druids of the Carleton Grove) is one of the major reasons cited for the events of the Isaac Affair, and the forming of the Provisional Council of Archdruids. Although the structure of the national organization of the RDNA is still evolving, this Constitution is still the basic form used by most groves.

IB: It is the opinion of some Druids that this book refers only to Carleton Grove affairs and not to proceedings of the CoDAL.

An early (1965 c.e.) source in the Carleton Grove archive (by Fisher) requires a 3/4 majority for the adoption of any measure by the Council and for a quorum requires the entire CoDAL. This was later seemingly abandoned for the current practice of consensus voting and all resolutions passed to date by the CoDAL have been adopted by consensus of participating voters. Thus, it can be interpreted that the provisions of The Book of the Law were not meant to be taken as precedents for actions of the CoDAL. There have been a couple of resolutions concerning voting methods over the last few years, but all have died for lack of interest. It could be argued therefore that there are currently no rules for legal voting on Council matters.

The Customs of the Druids

1:1 **MS**: Only during the Summer Half of the Year. During the Winter Half, the waters-of-sleep are passed instead.

RL: (about the chapter as a whole) Gods, how prolix. Dave must have had a lot of fun writing this chapter!

1:8 **IB**: Note therefore, that there is no special ordination or initiation ceremony for entrance into the First Order.

2 **NN**: The words of the Chant were written by Kathie Courtice, and set to music by Peter Basquin. It was regularly sung as part of the Service of Worship.

3 **MS**: These words form the bulk of the service for consecrating the Second Order. The drinking of a good dollop of whiskey is known as "The Ordeal".

RL: I consider 3:1 to be a Fisherism, of course.

4:1-7 **NN**: Based, so far as I know, on Frangquist's research. He spent a bit of time on research as writing the Chronicles turned from the frivolity obvious in the first few chapters of Early Chronicles to the serious undertaking recognizable later on.

IB: For some reason, Frangquist's otherwise fine research missed the early Celtic celebrations of the Spring Equinox and the Fall Equinox, though their celebration is well attested by Celtic scholars. *(*Thus among the orthodox members of the RDNA, these two holidays are not celebrated, since they do not appear in this chapter. Most of the offshoots, however, do celebrate them.

MS: I doubt Frangquist ever found much evidence for the worship on equinoxes by the Celts, because I certainly have not. Nowadays, Carleton celebrates equinoxes when possible.

RL: I recommend the alternative spellings of Geimhridh for Geimredh, Imbholg for Oimelc, Samhradh for Samradh, Lugnasa for Lughnasadh, and Fomhar for Foghamhar. (this is largely a spelling difference between Irish and Scottish Gaelic). The usual way of observing the solstices/equinoxes is distinctly minimalist. A druid upon arising takes a look in the general direction of the sun and intones: "Looks like a solstice/equinox to me".

5:3 **IB**: Nonetheless, the night of the full moon seems to be more commonly used for ordination Vigils than the new moon.

MS: Full moons & new moons are great, but vigil when you feel the urge or when the weather looks good, especially in Minnesota!

5:4-10 **IB**: See the Orders of Common Worship.

RL: Interesting phrasing in 5:6, no? How can the "worship of druids" purify anything from the Mother??

6:6 **MS**: An all-night Vigil is one of the requirements before one may be ordained to the Third Order, although there is a rare precedent for *in absentia* ordination of a candidate, conditional upon the Vigil being consequently performed. This is frowned upon, and normally the service of Ordination is held just after sunrise, with the other Third Order Druids in the Grove coming out to join the candidate and conducting him/her to the service. It was also once a tradition that the newly ordained Third Order would conduct the next Druid service that would be held. The vigiler usually also bought breakfast for the ordaining Druid, and whiskey would be mixed in with breakfast.

6:12 **MS**: This chapter did not originally refer to both genders, although it does now. See Part Four's Record of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. Officially, only an Archdruid or Archdruidess who is the head of a legally constituted

grove may ordain priest and priestesses to the Third Order. There is now developing a custom whereby a solitary Third Order Druid may consecrate people to the Third Order. And at Carleton, since 1985, there is now a tradition that even 1st and 2nd Order can ordain people to their own respective orders that they hold.

7:1-12 **MS**: Written by David Fisher and is found in his first Samhain service.

8:12 **NN**: The Council of any particular Order elects the Patriarch of the next higher Order; he then ordains who he wishes to honor to that Order, forming its Council, which in turn elects... A nice self-perpetuating sequence, no? The Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Orders came into being on the same day. Fisher, Frangquist, and Fisher were the entire Council of Dalon ap Landu: we chose Fisher as Patriarch of the Fourth Order, and he ordained us to the Fourth Order. As the Council of the 4th Order, we elected me as Patriarch of the Fifth, and I ordained them. As the Council of the 5th Order, we elected Frangquist Patriarch of the Sixth Order, and he ordained us to the 6th Order (cf. LC 9:7-18). It should be noted that this was prearranged to the extent that we had our services of ordination written ahead of time.

MS: Gary Zempel was elected Patriarch of the 7th Order. The Higher Orders were pretty much forgotten from 1967-1974, when a brief attempt was made to revive them. Instead, a few new independent orders were founded.

8:13-16 **MS**: These verses had always been a thorn in the side of Druidic tradition. They were negated by Resolution of the Council on 29 March 1966 and 1 May 1971. See Part Four.

9:1-5 **NN**: Chapters 9, 10, and 11 are translations of genuine Old Irish poems, which were provided by Dr. John Messenger (see Latter Chronicles 6:12-14 and attached notes below). Notice the unusual "chain" rhyme-scheme of the chants in 9 and 10; the sound or the idea of the last word in each line is repeated at the beginning of the next. This is found in many pre-Christian poems in Celtic countries.

10:1-5 **RL**: This poem was spoken by Amerghin White-Knee, poet o the Milesian invaders, to still a storm which the Druids of the Tuatha De Danaan had raised up against the Milesian fleet to keep it from landing. The poem worked.

11:1-3 **IB**: "Also spoken by Amerghin, on landing at Inber Colptha with Eremon's half of the Milesian fleet." Larson. A longer and "less mystical version" appears in The Book of Bards under the same title, supplied by Robert Larson.

The Latter Chronicles:

1:2 **IB**: School started again on September 23, the first service of the Fall was therefore Saturday, September 28, 1963 c.e.

1:9 **NN**: Jan Johnson lived in Seattle, Washington and did not return for his senior year. (He had been my roommate in '61-'62)

1:10 **IB**: "..Norman who was Server." was Norman Nelson.

1:11 **IB**: This was a private letter, since lost.

2:2 **IB**: The Archdruid (David Fisher) was wroth because he intended to go "to the Arb" with his girlfriend that night and it was rainingan occurrence likely to dampen outdoor romance.

2:8 **NN**: It was actually a greater distance I gather about 300 yards but close enough to be very startling, he said.

2:9 **NN**: To the best of my knowledge, the "Druid Curse" was used three times: twice against those who tore down the altar and once as detailed here. Net total was one broken leg, one sprained ankle, and one bolt of lightning. It was decided that 'the Curse' would never be used again, and that we would not teach it to anyone who did not then know it.

MS: It was also used by the Stanford Grove with disastrous effects on a water tower.

3:1 **NN**: Two humorous incidents occurred, which somehow didn't get into the Chronicles. At one service, the waters-of-life had more life than we really wanted - a grasshopper jumped into the cup as it sat on the altar! It was flicked out again and most of the congregation did not know it had happened.

NN: Another time, Howard Cherniack was solemnly intoning the Preceptor's responses just before the Consecration, until he was asked: "Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?' He replied "YUP". It was weeks before we could get through a service with straight faces!"

RMS: Believe it or not, this is one of traditions that did survive the Great Interim. Very occasionally, the Preceptor would give what was known as the "Cherniack Response"and we couldn't keep straight faces either!

3:4 **IB**: The college was determined to harass the Druids by not granting "chapel credit" and by not recognizing the RDNA as "a real religion." Nonetheless, none of the Druids were ever suspended or expelled for failure to fulfill the religious attendance requirement.

NN: Dr. Messenger became our faculty advisor that fall, before the events of Chapter V.

4:1 **IB**: October 26, 1963 c.e.

5:6 **NN**: The customs repeated in this chapter were based on ancient customs detailed by Dr. Messenger.

5:12 **NN**: This really happened. We sat around the fire, passing a bottle or two of wine (we were in the Arb), then joined hands and sat in silence for some time. It was a girl whose name I forget who first 'spoke in tongues' [a psychic talent known as "glossolalia"], then began to repeat, over and over again, words such as those given here. It must have lasted for 4-5 minutes. She later told us that she did not remember speaking at all.

5:13 **IB**: In view of subsequent events, I am inclined to think that what was seen was a vision of three tombstones, those of John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King; three people whose assassinations made tremendous impacts on the nation and caused hundred of psychics to have (recorded) previsions in the early 60's.

5:15 **IB**: This is an old custom in Europe, all that is left of the traditions of driving cattle and other domestic animals through the flames of a High Day fire, in order to purify them from all evil influences and other vermin. There are various sexual fertility elements to it as well, when people jump through or over the flames.

5:16 **IB**: Druids have always been careful about their fires.

6:1 **NN**: November 22, 1963 in Dallas Texas.

6:7 **IB**: This had a sobering effect on the Druids.

MS: The sobriety soon wore off.

6:13 **NN**: Dr. John Messenger, Ph.D. came to Carleton (in September, as he remembers it, not December as implied in this chapter) as a Professor of Anthropology. "At one of the first (weekly and mandatory) convocations he spoke about his research in the Aran Isles (at the mouth of

Galway Bay) and mentioned various Druid customs still extant there under a thin veil of Christianity. Before he left the room that night, we had our official faculty advisor!

RMS: An article by Messenger on the Aran Islands appears in the November 1974 issue of Natural History.

IB: Dr. Messenger is the one who provided the translations of the Irish poetry for *The Customs of the Druids* and many photos reproduced in the edition of the Druid Chronicles (Evolved). He says "I can still recall how angry the Administration was with me when I agreed to be faculty advisor to the group." After him, their advisor was a Mr. Bardwell Smith, a comparative religions professor.

RMS: Many years later, Professor David Sipfle in the Philosophy Department told me how Messenger had recounted to him the bizarre activities transpiring on the Hill of Three Oaks. Messenger concluded in disbelief: "And you know, they really seem to believe that stuff!"

7:9 **IB**: See note to Early Chronicles 2:5 above.

7:10 **IB**: This is still considered by many to be the best design for a Druid altar.

MS: The use of altars have pretty much disappeared from Carleton Druidism.

7:14 **IB**: David Frangquist, because he was writing The Druid Chronicles (Reformed).

7:19 **IB**: This is the only recorded ordination to the Third Order known to have taken place during the Winter Half of the Year. The safe drying of the altar, however, constituted an emergency.

Frangquist's courage is noteworthy, for even in April, Minnesota Spring weather is not always kind and the Antidruids were still around.

MS: Actually there have been a handful of rare ordinations in the Winter. But realistically, Northern winters discourage such tomfoolery.

8:1 **IB**: The night of April 30, 1964.

8:5 **IB**: One defilement is not mentioned in the Chronicles.

8:11 **NN**: We knew the hill was there, with the rock and the three trees; we moved over there, intending to "dub" the trees honorary oaks. When we got there, all three were found to be oaks. And this was taken to be a sign."

MS: The stone was used as an altar, as a matter of fact, it still bears the faint remains of a Druid Sigil etched into its side.

9:1 **MS**: This was Norman Nelson.

9:18 **IB**: See note attached to Customs 8:12 above. Shortly after this time (summer of 64), Gary Zempel was elected the Patriarch of Sirona, the Seventh Order. However, before he got around to ordaining any other members of this Order, he sent out a letter renouncing his Patriarchy, even his identity as Gary Zempel. Not to long after, David Fisher attempted to resign the Patriarchy of the Fourth Order, due to a feeling it was inconsistent with being an Anglican Priest.

10:1-2 **NN**: On the day of my graduation (June 12, 1964) the Board of Trustees abolished the religious attendance requirement. Interestingly enough, we had invited the College administrators to the last full service of the year (before Finals Week) and none attended. During Finals Week, we planned an abbreviated service. As I approached the Hill of the Three Oaks (a few minutes later) carrying the waters-of-life in the chalice, I could see the regular group gathered around a couple resting on a blanket. My first thought was that someone was "Arbing" and that we were going to have to dispute them for possession of the Hill. As I reached the Hill, I saw that they were President and Mr. Nason! He apologized for not having been able to attend the week before and they stayed for the service and partook of the Waters. I served the Waters with my fingers crossed! At a school where possession of liquor could result in a ten-day suspension, he literally could have prevented me from graduating. Nothing was ever said about it. I still wonder if I was the only student (until the rule was changed a few years ago) to ever have served liquor to the college President on campus!

10:5 **IB**: The following verses (6-23) were not actually sung at that time. This collection of verses, now known as the "Hymn to the Mother," were written the subsequent Summer by Norman Nelson, one night/morning when he was working on the "Graveyard Shift" at the State Cement Plant, which was his summer employment during school. That September he sent it to Frangquist for inclusion in the Druid Chronicles (Reformed).

10:13 **IB**: This verse has an alternate ending, as follows: "...and for all that can be sensed do we praise Thee."

10:15 **IB**: This has an alternate reading, as follows: "In our meditations and services, and in our counseling and judging, do we praise Thee; in our divinations and prophecies, and in our wizardries and incantations, do we praise and think upon Thy works and Thy power."

10:17 **IB**: This has an alternate reading, as follows: "In all the whole world do we praise Thee: from the east to the west do we praise Thee, and from the north to the south do we praise Thee, and from the nadir to the zenith do we praise Thee; yea, from the Center of our being do we Praise Thee."

10:23 **RMS**: This last verse sums up the entire chant and reflects what I consider to be the basic idea of Reformed Druidism.

Meditations:

1 **MS**: This is David Frangquist's description of his Third Order Vigil. See notes to Customs 6:6 and Latter Chronicles 7:19 above. It is still a popular reading during the Vigil process amongst current Druids.

1:16 **NN**: "Be'al", The Druid name of old; it is apparently related to the Semitic word "Baal", meaning "Lord".

3:3 **IB**: Note that in Reformed Druid thought, the Earth-Mother is more than "Mother Nature" or the Biosphere of the planet Earth, although to many Druids (just as with many Wiccans) this may be the primary emphasis in worship. For as it says in verse 6 of this chapter, the Earth-Mother is all that is manifested to human senses. There does seem to be some overlap with the Wiccan concept of a Star Goddess who is beyond Earth, yet intimately involved with it; however, absolutely none of the Founders knew anything about Neopagan Witchcraft, and certainly had no intentions of being connected with it. See The Second Epistle of Isaac for comments on the concept of Supreme Being(s) in Neopagan Theology and possible correlation's that could be drawn (though only by those desiring to) between them and Reformed Druidism.

3:9 **IB**: There is an alternate reading, as follows: "She is Weakness-Strong."

5:10 **RL**: This is almost undoubtedly a typo for Bible. Bile was a progenitor god, father to the Dagda, whose mother was Danu. His earthly manifestation was the bile, or sacred

tree, usually an oak. The name Bile' is cognate with Bel, Belenos (and Be'al).

MS: I disagree with Brother Robert. I suspect that David, in his rudimentary Celtic researches, had come across the ancient Irish custom of "Bile" (pronounced "Bee-lay") which is a holy wooden tree-post. But the substitution of "Bible" is interesting.

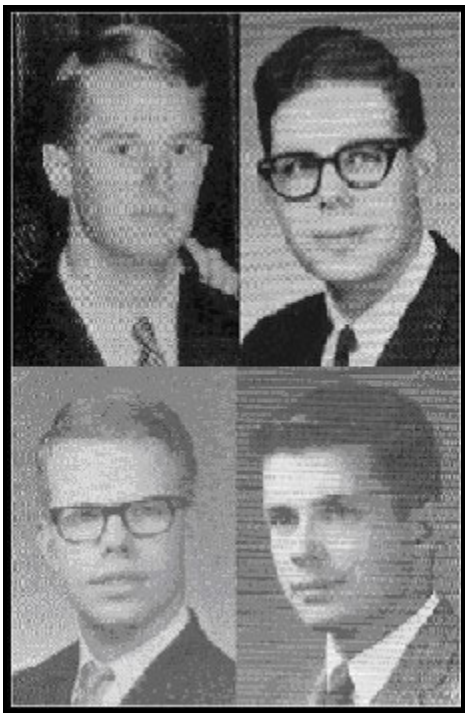


Figure 1 The Founders of the RDNA:
Top (L to R) David Fisher & Howard Cherniack,
Bottom (L to R) Norman Nelson & David Frangquist.
Taken c. 1961-1962.

Printing History of the Chronicles

The five books as found in Part One of this anthology are known as "The Chronicles". Some wonder if the fiveness of it was intended by Dave as a parody of the Pentateuch. (Intriguingly the number five has great importance to the Discordians.) Most of it was written as a self-complete project by David Frangquist in the summer of 1964, to chronicle the history and customs of the first year of Reformed Druidism at Carleton. It has been published under the Pseudo-real entity called "The Drynemeton Press". The name was a side-joke related to "The Grove Press" of the Underground scene of the 60's. This was the first edition and its printing dates are 1964, 1965, 1966, 1969, 1970, "the 1986 to 1992", and then 1993.

The five books of the Chronicles were reprinted in a Second Edition in the 1976 anthology called "The Druid Chronicles (Evolved), with a second minor printing in 1986. A Third Edition was assembled by Glen McDavid and Donald Morrison and had only one printing in 1977. Scharding put together a Fourth Edition, and it has had three printings; one in late summer of 1993, 1994, and finally in "A Reformed Druid Anthology" during 1996.

The First Edition's first five printings had some internal cross-references (e.g. See Cus. 3:5 found annotating verse 9 of the Book of Law). More were added by Glen McDavid, who received a Dean of Druid Textology as a reward, and first published in the Third Edition in 1977.

It was decided early on that the Druid Chronicles should not be added to by the future essays of other Druids. We felt that the Druid Chronicles (Reformed) should stand on its own merits without additions. This is why the Apocryphas were written.

The only change of their contents was made in 1976, when "The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)" were being assembled by Isaac Bonewits. The crux of the matter was the misogynist verses 13, 14 & 15 of Chapter 8 of Customs. Frangquist did not intend any misogyny by them, but those were Fisher's rules in 1964. The May 1, 1971 ruling of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (see Part Four of this Anthology) undeniably negated any remaining sexist interpretation of these verses, but many people wanted those verses removed from future editions of the Druid Chronicles. Isaac's work in 1976 omitted them, but I have reinserted them with a notation that these verses do not apply anymore.

Brief Printing History

1964 1st Edition
1965 2nd Edition
1966 3rd Edition
1969 4th Edition
1970 5th Edition
1976 6th Edition Druid Chronicles (Evolved)
1986-92 7th Edition (Many reprints)
1993 8th Edition
1994 9th Edition
1996 10th Edition (ARDA 1)
2004 11th Edition (ARDA 2)

Historiography of the Chronicles

Although David Frangquist was the primary author of The Druid Chronicles (Reformed), the following Druids made the following contributions:

- ·Howard Cherniack was the original formulator of the Basic Tenets (Law 5, 6). Frangquist reprinted it in a poetic fashion.
- Kathryn Courtice wrote the words to the Earth-Mother song in chapter two of Customs. It was put to music by Peter Basquin.
- David Fisher is the original author of the speech in Early Chronicles chapter seven and the ritual excerpts taken from the ordination of Second Order Druids found in Customs 3:7-10. He also wrote the Response at Samhain found in chapter 7 of Customs.
- The three incantations of Customs, chapters 9, 10, 11 were translated from the original ancient Gaelic by Professor John Messenger who was a visiting professor at Carleton.
- Norman Nelson composed the "Praise of the Earthmother" piece, supposedly while working a night-shift as a watchman in a cement factory.

David Frangquist was not one of the three Founders of the RDNA (Fisher, Cherniack, Nelson), but he came into Druidism a few weeks after it started and became close friends of the Founders. Frangquist, and Nelson to some extent, was a powerful force permitting Druidism to outlive the Chapel requirement. He spotted the important issues that Druidism dealt with and he became determined to make Druidism last a bit longer. It is doubtful at the time of writing the Chronicles, that he could have imagined just how long the Reform would last.

The Druid Chronicles cover the first year of Druidism under Fisher's Archdruidcy of April 1963 to April 1964 and during Norman's summer Archdruidcy of 1964. It was an attempt to capture the moment for future nostalgia. David Frangquist would be Archdruid from September 1964 until his graduation in 1966. Many peculiar aspects of Druidism in the Fisher era are preserved in the Chronicles, which would have been forgotten otherwise.

The Early Chronicles

This part of the chronicle covers the period from April 1963 to June 1963, during which much of the ritual and hierarchy became established. The short-term obsession with altar-building began at this time and would last until the decision to use the immovable boulder on the Hill of Three Oaks.

The Book of the Law

Despite the title, it is only the basic tenets (Law 5, 6) that are mandatory requirements for organizational membership in Reformed Druidism. It is basically a rewording of the Carleton Grove's own constitution. Of course, to be a 1st order in the *spirit* of Reformed Druidism you also have to partake of the Waters-of-Life, and there is no ordination service actually proscribed for it. These basic tenets were very carefully formulated by Cherniack, with input from Fisher, to express the most basic beliefs of the RDNA, and they have proved to be remarkably efficient. Fisher's preoccupation with power is evident in 8.

The Customs of the Druids

Most of the ordination procedures are of Fisher's origin. The Founders and Frangquist looked up the Celtic holidays from standard books on ancient Druids in the library. There is no compulsion to honor the holidays, of which the equinoxes are noticeably absent. An interesting dinosaur is found in chapter eight, where the election procedures of the Higher Orders are outlined. The most disputed verses 8:13-15, have long been a sore point of Reformed Druidism, and the battles to remove them are amply discussed in the History of Reformed Druids.

The Latter Chronicles

This covers a period roughly from September 1963 to June 1964 when the Chapel requirement was formally rescinded by Carleton College. Interesting notes are the Druid Curse, the prediction of President Kennedy's assassination, the first ordination of a Third Order Druid (L.C. 9), soon followed by the founding of the Higher Orders.

The Book of Meditations

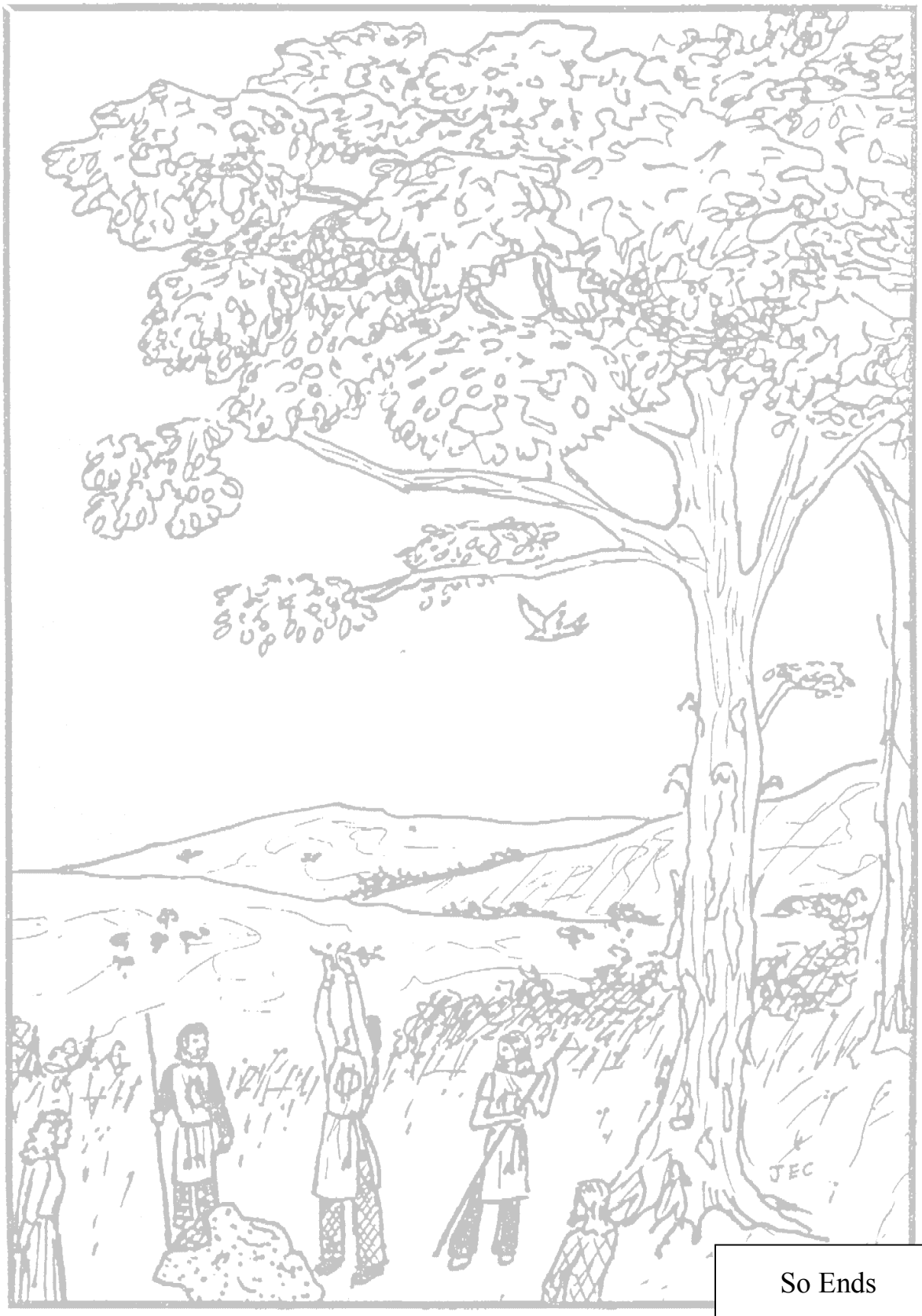
This has proved to be the most popular section of the Chronicles, especially as readings during the Order of Worship. The discussion of Be'al is rare amongst the Archives, the only other prominent documents are the Apocryphal books of Thomas.

Frangquist's Literary Career

The Chronicles are the most popular Druid document and have provided a constant reminder of the reasons why the Reform was founded. Frangquist also was responsible for guiding the early missionary efforts of the Reform, passing legislation, starting the Blue Book of Archives, and collecting the Green Book. He has also helped Druidism to revive at Carleton at least three or four times since he graduated. In essence, Frangquist put a firm stamp on Druidism of the period from 64 to 69, and acted as resource for ArchDruids ever since. See Part Ten of ARDA for an interesting transcript of the oral interview with David and Deborah Frangquist.

Figure 2 Deborah (Gavrin) & David Frangquist at Carleton Archives for Samhain 1993.

Ye Olde Scratchpaper.



So Ends
Part One
Of ARDA 2

PART TWO

THE BOOKS OF THE APOCRYPHA

(COMBINED AND EXPANDED)

DEDICATION

To Jan Johnson

The first Reformed Druid to write an epistle.

Drynemetum Press

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* Indicates a new addition to the collection.

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2003 Introduction

It has been a perplexing dilemma, of what to add to the fourth installment of the Apocrypha. I'm approaching my goal of making a portable set of archives, yet making it less portable in the process. After raking through old letters, new documents began to take on greater historical weight and importance. Recent letters from the internet correspondence seems timely, but I wonder if they will stand the test of time; and could one be removed at a later point if it fails such a test? In any event, the apocrypha has been expanded 2 or 3 times in size, and perhaps become unwieldy; yet I hope it is wielded wisely.

I have divided the Apocrypha into various convenient historical periods that will assist the browser to focus in on the "themes" of various collections of letters. As always, the letters are the opinions of the authors on that subject; and the absence of discussion on neglected topics does not necessarily indicate a lack of interest. The lamentable gap between 1980-1994 at Carleton is best explained by the lack of letter-writing tradition, burn-out amongst prominent members, lost computer files, and poor maintenance of contacts between Groves. A lot more went on than what you see here. I figure that most activity at Carleton and other groves is participatory and celebratory, and letter writing probably represents less than 2% of a Druid's activity.

A number of letters from the 80s have been unearthed and included to show how the Reform continued in California after Isaac left. After ARDA was published and I went to Japan, Druidism revived and thrived, and a few selections from the Age of Irony & Merri have been included. Since 1999 the internet has made free and quick correspondence so easy, that a flood of letters has erupted, more like chit-chat than the deeply laborious projects in the older days of typewriters and handwritten missives.

As we move into a new era with this update, when my own personal knowledge, experience and participation definitely increases, I am faced with the additional problem of controlling my own ego. It is difficult to be objective about one's own literary career. I should not overstate my own influence, but neither out of excess humbleness, should I understate the impact of my own frequent letters. As always, dozens of acceptable letters were not included, because I don't know of their existence, or am I not yet wise enough to grasp their importance to the course of the Reform. When they are brought to my attention, of course, they will be considered.

So I leave you to stumble and lumber through this forest of words and ideas as best you can. Take what lumber you need and build wisely with it.

-Michael Scharding
Day 1 of Earrach, Year XL of the Reform
(Feb 1st, 2003)
Embassy of Japan, Washington, D.C

1996 Introduction

The following Books were chosen from hundreds of letters circulated at large amongst the Third Order members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (although the lower orders were also welcome to communicate), because they are deemed illustrative. It has always been our firm intention that every Druid should add and/or subtract to their own copies of the Apocrypha as they see fit. These selections are merely a suggested nucleus for such a personal collection. As with the Druid Chronicles (Reformed), NONE of these authors would ever wish that their words be considered a dogmatic authority, nor do their words represent anyone's opinion but their own opinion.

The contents of various books may often seem to be in conflict with each other or even unconcerned with Celtic or Neopagan issues. This is because many of the Druids felt that Reformed Druidism has a life or message that goes beyond the window trappings of any one culture or religion; it is more of a perspective. Everything beyond the two Basic Tenets (Book of Law verses 4-6) should be considered only as a personal opinion from the author or a local custom. This includes me. In many ways, the Apocryphas provide better understandings of how various Reformed Druids have interpreted the message of Reformed Druidism in their own spiritual lives. Many of these letters were painstakingly composed to convey subtle thoughts, so ponder them carefully when reading them.

Most of these Books have been published before, in one of two collections, either the "Carleton Apocrypha" or The Books of the Apocrypha in Part Two of "The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)." Both versions had the Epistle of David the Chronicler, The Book of Faith and The Outline of the Fundamentals. The latter half of both Apocryphas dealt with various opinions on the "Isaac Affair" of the mid-70s, when Isaac initially desired to redefine the RDNA as a Neo-Pagan organization with more interaction (i.e. the Provisional Council of Archdruids) and an effective hierarchy. I have chosen to combine these two Apocryphal versions (plus adding some letters), because one version provided only the "Isaac" letters and the other only provided the "Carleton" letters. Neither version was truly understandable without reading the other version. But, together, they can provide an interesting historical dialogue for the reader.

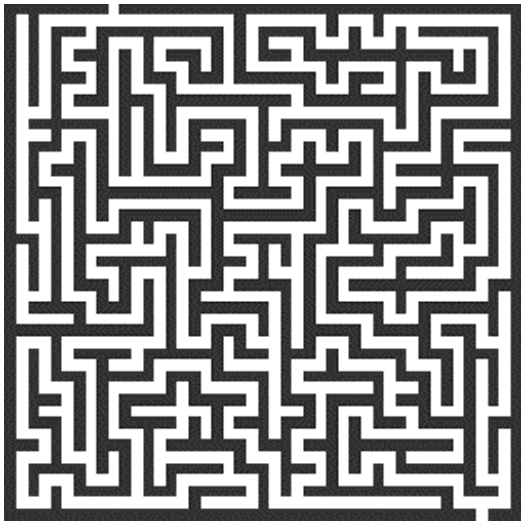
The issues leading up to the Isaac Affair are complex and are dealt with in more detail in "A General History of Reformed Druidism in America." The end-result was a lot of productive introspection, mutual understanding and an organizational subdivision of the Reform into three branches. The first branch retained the name RDNA and was composed of the Carleton Grove, Ann-Arbor Grove and New York #2. The second branch called themselves the "New RDNA" (NRDNA), which didn't wish to label themselves as Neo-Pagan, but they still wanted more interaction between Groves and a more functional Council of Dalon Ap Landu. The third branch was the Schismatic Druids of North America (SDNA), led by Isaac; they essentially abandoned the Council, identified themselves as being squarely in the Neo-Pagan movement and also spawned the short-lived Hasidic Druids of North America. After about three years, the original NRDNA groves had collapsed (along with the HDNA), and the SDNA relabeled itself as the NRDNA with the understanding that non-pagan members would be treated equally, but this second version of the NRDNA had an noticeable preference for the issues of the Neo-Pagan movement.

References of a sexist or creedist nature have been left intact, in order not to spoil the historical value of the various books. I have broken The Book of Changes into three parts to aid the reader in following the chronological dialogue. Except for arranging them in biblical-verse format, few spelling changes or emphasis has been added to these documents. All words in square brackets have been added by Michael Scharding for clarification. Longer side-notes were compiled in a document called the "Endnotes" and were placed the end of the letters; check them out. You may treat the Apocrypha as a collection of undoctored primary sources. I provide some background information on each letter in the Historiography section.

Please enjoy,
Michael Scharding
Big River Grove of Saint Cloud Minnesota
Day 1 of Samradh, Year XXXIV of the Reform
May 1st, 1996 c.e.

P.S. I've added some new selections to the ARDA version: the Epistle of Renny, the Epistle of Ellen, Gobbledegook and Red Tape, the three Epistles of Robert, A Cup Filled to the Brim with Druidism, Salutations, The Speaking of Beliefs, and the Book of Lacunae.

Figure 1 Jan Johnson, first epistle writer, c. 1963.



Why Were Two Separate Apocryphas Printed? 1996

When the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed*) were written, as found in Part One of this ARDA, most people felt that no more books should be added to the *Chronicles*. However, they still had the itch to write and distribute their own thoughts to other people, especially to future students at Carleton. The Blue Book was a binder of such past materials and it was passed from one Carleton Archdruid to their successors. Unfortunately, the Archdruids of the other groves did not have access to this mini-Archive, so Isaac put together "*The Druid Chronicles (Evolved*)," abbreviated as DC(E), to act as a Blue Book for other Groves. Not knowing where to put the letters into DC(E), Isaac borrowed Carleton's idea of an "*Apocrypha*," itself taken from the Christian bible making tradition. The term "*Apocrypha*," defined as being "unofficial accretion," seems to fit well, except that there are no "official" materials" onto which they can accrete. Also the definition of *Apocrypha* as "writings or statements of questionable authority," strikes a warm chord in the Druid heart.

Isaac had always intended his printed version of the *Apocrypha* to be enlarged by other people adding new selections that they deem fit. I suspect that most of the Carleton letters of the Isaac Affair were written too late to be included in the printed collection of DC(E). Richard Shelton in collecting his own *Apocrypha*, which have many letters of opposition to Isaac's reforms, positively decided not to include any of Isaac's letters. I suspect this is because Richard felt that Isaac had essentially formed or discovered a Neo-Pagan religion, and was trying to retroactively superimpose it upon the Reform. I don't think that Richard ever disliked Neo-Paganism, but he would have equally opposed similar attempts by Catholics to claim that Reformed Druidism has always been Catholic, or if Nicheren Zen Buddhists demanded that we should realize that Reformed Druidism is really Zen in disguise and that we should adopt mandatory chanting of sutras and eating pickled radishes. Richard felt that Isaac's letters would convince people to become overly concerned with the group's continued existence, and would encourage dogmatic group posturing rather than encouraging new Druids to work towards their own awareness. Any animosity between these two Druids was finally resolved at a Carleton meeting in April of 1994 over a pitcher of beer.

Richard's reasons for excluding Isaac's letters, and producing a "purer" *Apocrypha* are very tempting to me, because I am very much one of Richard's disciples. However, I have decided in ARDA to throw both versions together and then add a few more letters. Richard's "*Carleton Apocrypha*" will remain an available separate publication. I personally feel that the resulting *Apocrypha* displays an important facet of Reformed Druidism, the communication of ideas amongst peers. The Reformed Druidism at Carleton today and elsewhere is mostly drawing in people with at least a little bit of a Neo-Pagan background, and I think that these letters will help them to understand the differences between Neopagan Reformed Druidism and old-fashioned Reformed Druidism. This *Apocrypha* will also show them how Reformed Druidism can improve or mesh with a Neopagan Druidic religion (or any other type of religion), and yet still remain a quasi-distinct organization.

Good fortune to thee,
Michael Scharding
Day 1 of Samradh, Year XXXIV of the Reform,
May 1st, 1996 c.e.

Contents of the 1996 ARDA Apocrypha

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Contents of original Carleton Apocrypha 1976
Introduction to Carleton Apocrypha 1976
Introduction to Berkeley Apocrypha 1976
Contents of Original Berkeley Version 1976

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The Epistle of David the Chronicler 1964
The Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals 1966
Leabhar Toirdhealbhaigh 1967
Letter to My Brothers 1968
The Discourse of Thomas the Fool 1970
The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool 1970
The Book of Changes, Part One 1974
The Epistle of Renny 1974
The Epistle of Ellen 1974
The Words of Green 1974
The First Epistle of Isaac 1974
Gobbledegook and Red Tape 1974
The Epistle of Norman 1974
The Book of Changes, Part Two 1976
The Epistle to the Myopians 1976
The Epistle of Richard 1976
The Epistle at Midsummer 1976
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A Cup Filled to the Brim with Druidism 1976
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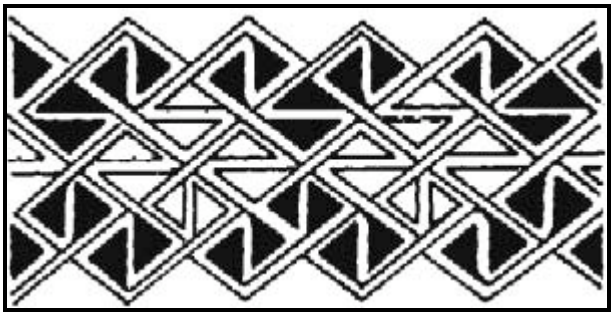
The Speaking of Beliefs 1987
The Third Epistle of Robert 1996
The Book of Lacunae 1996

Some Final Thoughts 1996
A Conclusion 1996
End Notes to the Apocrypha 1976
Historiography of the Apocrypha



Preface to the Carleton Apocrypha 1993

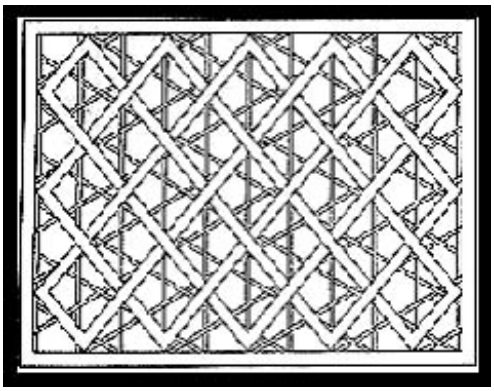
My purpose in printing the writings here collected is (of course) threefold. First, I would like to preserve some of the history and tradition of Carleton Druidism that was not preserved in *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* or that developed after the *Chronicles* were written. The intended audience here is the Carleton Grove itself. Second, in face of the growth of Neopagan Druidism, I would like to have something to offer those interested in the original nonpagan variety, something more complete and representative than the *Chronicles* alone. And third, I would like to discharge a long-standing promise to do something about the first two purposes.

This collection is a real hodgepodge, and despite my best efforts has nothing like the aesthetic unity of the original *Chronicles*, which are known to every Reformed Druid. Also it has nothing like the currency of the original *Chronicles*, which are known to every Reformed Druid. Most of these Apocrypha are known to few, though every Carleton Druid will find familiar material herein.

Although this is not a complete collection of all Druidic writings from Carleton, I have tried to keep the selection reasonably catholic, at least to represent the period from the founding in 1963 to about 1976, when my close contact with the Carleton Grove began to fade. Most of this material dates from 1976 or before. There are no Neopagan selections here, since in the early days the Grove was nonpagan, even arguably Christian. Certainly the founders would not have characterized Reformed Druidism as one of the oldest Neopagan groups in America, although on the strength of its founding in 1963 it seems to enjoy that reputation in the Neopagan community.

In recent years (after the period from which these writings are drawn) Druids at Carleton have become more interested in Neopaganism and Native American spiritual practices. Many would call themselves Neopagans. We "old-style" Druids have no quarrel with this, for one's Druidism is one's own affair, as David taught from the beginning. I believe Druidism transcends the nice distinctions we habitually make to compartmentalize the variety of the human spiritual experience, and I hope newer Druids will still find this material of interest, even, perhaps, of value.

Richard M. Shelton
Midsummer Day 1993



Introduction to the Carleton Apocrypha 1976

In the first days, the Reform had no published writings. David Frangquist ("the Chronicler") collected and printed *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed*) in 1964, and there were originally plans to update them by adding new material periodically. The mock-Biblical style seemed to call in particular for the "Acts of the Druids" and an Epistle or two. Several such works were in fact written. But as the aesthetic unity of the Chronicles came to be appreciated, it was decided not to add the other works, which naturally became known as the Apocrypha.

The term *apocrypha* signifies "things hidden away," and indeed almost all of these works remained literally hidden away in the personal files of the founders until comparatively recently. Some in fact were withdrawn by their authors. Thus, although they are of independent historical interest, these "early Apocrypha" did not contribute significantly to the development of either the Carleton Grove or the Reform in general.

When the College's religious attendance requirement was abolished in 1964, partly perhaps largely due to the challenge from the Reformed Druids, Druidism deepened considerably. With the Reform's immediate purpose fulfilled, the founders were a bit nonplused (David Fisher said he was "frankly stunned") to discover that this goal was but a secondary one for many who came to the services on the Hill of Three Oaks. Although all agreed that coerced religion was not a Good Thing and did not promote spiritual growth, what surprised the founders was that they had unwittingly created a setting more conducive to spiritual growth than many Druids had found anywhere else.

More was involved here than the rebellion against coercion. There was the spirit of intelligent and critical inquiry in matters religious, essentially an application of the high intellectual standard encouraged by the College in all things. There was the emphasis on the necessity of each person finding his own path himself, and a strong dislike for the very ideas of Dogma and Orthodoxy. There was a mistrust of formalism, a feeling that formalism tends to drive out meaning. Finally, there was the firm belief in the inseparability of humankind from its place in nature. These elements, and a vaguely mystical turn, combined to produce a view of life embracing far more than spiritual matters or better, extending spirituality to all matters. This attitude is what Carleton Druids understand by the term "Druidic."

In this period (circa 1965-1973) the forms and trappings adopted by the founders (with an eye toward hastening the death of the attendance requirement) became less important. The liturgy became more fluid. The turn to mysticism became sharper, and Druidism became more and more a personal affair. More writings appeared, many finding their way with some frequency into services, but never really intended for publication. This second wave of scripture became known as the "later Apocrypha."

The Third set of writings represented here stems from the flurry of letters and activity following proposals of Isaac Bonewits in 1974. Isaac, who came to Druidism via the Berkeley Grove, was the first Druidic proponent of Neopaganism. In a letter dated 18 July 1974 to the Council of Dalon ap Landu (comprising all Druid Priests), he suggested that the Reform describe itself in the following terms:

"The RDNA is an Eclectic Reconstructionist Neo-Pagan Priestcraft, based primarily upon Gaulish & Celtic sources, but open to the ideas, deities and rituals from many other Neo-Pagan belief systems. We worship the Earth-Mother as the feminine personification of Manifestation, Be'al as the masculine personification of Essence, and numerous Gods and Goddesses as personifications of various aspects of our experience."

He went on to outline a program for transforming the sleepy organization of Druidism into a vibrant Neopagan ministry. But it seemed to many of us that what he proposed for the Reform was very far from what Druidism was all about. In explaining our opposition, a good deal of ink was spent in trying to pin down our own conception of the Reform.

Of the selections included here, only two are from the early Apocrypha: *The Epistle of David the Chronicler* by David Frangquist and *The Book of Faith* by David Fisher, both dating from 1964. From the later Apocrypha come the *Outline* by David Frangquist (that quintessential Druidic broadside, dated 6/6/66), *Letter to my Brothers* by Steve Savitzky (circa 1970), and the *Discourse* and *Wisdom* of Thomas the Fool (a.k.a. Tom McCausland), both from 1970.

The Words of Green and *The Epistle of Norman* both were responses to Isaac's general letter of 1974. *The Epistle of Richard* dates from a couple of years later. These three letters have all been heavily edited in the present version to remove repetitive and irrelevant material.

I began working on *The Words of Green* almost the instant Isaac's letter arrived. It was addressed to the entire Council and dated 14 August 1974. At the time I was a Teaching Fellow at the University of Michigan, and the most expedient way to generate the requisite number of copies was to use the math department ditto machine I was already using to churn out lecture notes, problem sets, and exams. But I balked at the usual dittoed purple, so in an attempt to match the color of the letter to its spirit, I used green ditto masters for the letter, whence it acquired its current title. (Unfortunately, greenery has proven to be ephemeral: original copies of the letter have faded almost to illegibility.)

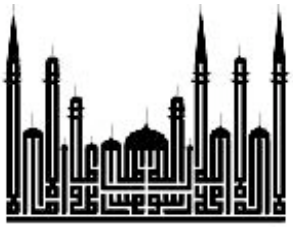
The Epistle of Norman was drawn from a letter by Norman Nelson to Isaac, dated 10 November 1974. Norman's response to Isaac was probably the most charitable, and Norman later spent time with Isaac, answering questions and eventually turning out *Between the Lines*, a set of historical notes on the *Chronicles* which were incorporated into the footnotes of Isaac's book (discussed below).

The Epistle of Richard is a pastiche of material drawn from two letters to Isaac, dated 26 May 1976 and 18 July 1976. By this time, Isaac had broken away to found his own group, the Schismatic Druids of North America, and was in the throes of assembling and printing *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved*), a compendium including much Neopagan material in addition to the original *Chronicles* and three of the present selections, as well as material from Between the Lines. At the time, it seemed possible that this compendium would answer the need for a new edition of *the Druid Chronicles.* As an added attraction, Isaac was also including his updated version of David Frangquist's pamphlet *What is Reformed Druidism?* But he was writing for a different audience and with a different agenda, and in the event, the *Evolved Chronicles* evolved into something most of us did not find useful.

In June of 1976, toward the end of this period, several Carleton Druids gathered at Carleton on the occasion of Midsummer Day. We had hoped to meet Isaac and other members of his Twin Cities Grove to work out our differences and come to some amicable understanding, but Isaac returned somewhat precipitously to California a month or so earlier. David and Deborah Frangquist, then living in Germany, could

not come themselves, but sent in their stead, *The Midsummer Epistle*. This letter has special significance for me, as it articulates what I had come to learn about my own feelings about Druidism (and religion in general) in the course of the struggle with Isaac. I hope Druidism will continual to bask in its light, as we basked in the light of the setting sun of Midsummer Day on the Hill of Three Oaks!

-Richard Shelton, 1993



Contents of the Carleton Apocrypha 1976

Preface, 1993
Introduction, 1976

Apocryphal Works
The Epistle of David the Chronicler
The Book of Faith
The Discourse of Thomas the Fool
The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool
Letter to My Brothers
The Words of Green
The Epistle of Norman
The Epistle of Richard
The Epistle of Midsummer
Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals
Some Final Thoughts

Historical Background
The Record of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu
What is Reformed Druidism? (1965 pamphlet)
Between-the-lines (footnotes to DC(R) & Apocrypha)
The Druid Calendar (Carleton's timekeeping)

(NOTE: the last four selections are now in Part 4 of ARDA)

Carleton Addendum 1976

The works that I had originally intended for this collection all came from the three sets described above. But as time passed, it became clear that other documents, such as the *Record of the Council of Dalon ap Landu* and David Frangquist's pamphlet, which in my day were widely known and in no sense hidden, have ceased to enjoy their former currency. Simply by dropping out of the light of day these became in a sense hidden, and in the interest of preserving a more complete picture of early Druidism, I have included these as supplementary works. To these I have added the original version of Norman Nelson's *Between the Lines* and my own brief disquisition on Druidic Time keeping. The latter developed from the set of instructions I drew up to accompany a Druid Calendar laboriously batted out on my typewriter at Carleton. (My excuses for not publishing the *Apocrypha* finally began to run out when I found a word processor that could handle the Calendar!)

A few textual notes. Except for the extracts from the letters to Isaac, which have been heavily edited as mentioned above, I have tried to restrain the editorial pen. I have silently corrected spelling errors and grammatical solecisms. I have made very few changes in punctuation since punctuation rules are more flexible and since some authors have strong views about certain nonstandard usages. In particular, I have made no attempt to standardize hyphenation or internal capitalization of the terms "Earth-Mother," "Archdruid," or "Neo-Pagan" as the Reform itself exhibits no consistency in this matter. Most of my additions to the text have been relegated to footnotes. The main exceptions are notes added to *Between the Lines*, which I have been careful to mark with my initials.

Richard Shelton,
Circa 1976

Contents of the Berkeley Apocrypha 1976

Introduction (as above)
The Book of Faith
The Epistle of David the Chronicler
The Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals
Leabhar Toirdhealbhaigh
The First Epistle of Isaac
The Book of Changes
The Epistle to the Myopians
The Second Epistle of Isaac

Introduction to the Berkeley Apocrypha 1976

The following Books consist of some of the letters circulated at large among the members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. None have been officially published before this time. Any member of the Third Order is entitled to add to this collection by the simple process of writing a letter, reproducing it, and mailing it out to all the members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. Because each Book represents (at most) the opinion of its author(s) concerning various matters of a Druidical nature, the reverence (if any) in which each Book is held will vary from Druid to Druid.

And because each Book is a personal communication, editing has been restricted to the correction of obvious spelling errors and similar trivia. References of a sexist or creedist nature have been left intact, in order not to spoil the historical value of the various Books.

The Editor has been informed that there are other Apocrypha currently being printed for distribution. Assuming that each has a date of writing attached, it should be easy to insert them in their proper order, vis-a-vis those included in this edition.

Isaac Bonewits
Summer 1976 c.e.

Earliest Selections:

The Quiet Years

A Spring Thaw?

(By David Frangquist, 1964)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. It has been a mild winter. I hope that this foreshadows an early spring thaw, in Laird and Severance as well as the Arb.
2. After the ground has dried, and a small flock of seekers after religious truth makes its return to Monument Hill, I hope that they will find that the fog of religious discrimination has also cleared. Last fall, as well as the spring before it, was a difficult one.
3. The college has proclaimed that the religious requirement may be satisfied by participating in worship in one's own church. Yet, several churches have not been granted the privilege of credit.
4. Among them is the Reformed Druids of North America. The reason for this sort of discrimination has never been fully justified.
5. Charges have been made that the Reformed Druids have not been in existence long enough to be given credit. This is rather like saying that Christianity was not a religion until, say, the time of Constantine.
6. But the fact is that, although the Druids have been actively organized at Carleton only since last April, the movement springs from a tradition older than Christianity itself: ancient Celtic Druidism.
7. It has been said that the Carleton Druids are not serious about their religion; but an altar on Monument Hill, weighing over a ton of rock, carried there manually, is evidence of their seriousness.
8. Finally, Druidism is said to have no relevance to the college's so-called Judeo-Christian tradition. I would only point out that Christian missionaries pushing into Gaul and Germany from Rome, in order to more easily convert large segments of the local population, incorporated large amounts of Druidic practice into the tradition of the Christian church.
9. I would assume that when the college says tradition, it means to include more than simply the Old and New Testaments. It might also be noted that credit is even denied to students participating in discussion conducted by missionaries of the church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints.
10. I really should not have dealt with these charges, for to do so would seem to affirm the principle that there is some basis on which a religious group may be denied credit.
11. This is not the case. No clearly definable basis can be established. Any basis for judgment must be purely subjective, for religion is essentially a question of personal conviction.
12. This is the reason for the failure of the student negotiation committees. Committees may provide help in solving political problems, but not in religious problems. The committees have tried to deal in logical arguments; religion deals in faith.
13. Dr. Maitland has said that religion is concerned with "ultimate personal questions."
14. Reformed Druids could not agree more strongly. Perhaps the characteristic which distinguishes them, however, is the seeking of these ultimate questions through Nature.
15. John B. Sparks has demonstrated that all of the major religions of the modern world have developed directly or indirectly from Nature Worship.*
16. Druids, find themselves, concerned, then, with the questions of the origins of religion and the ultimate nature of religious experience. Their reward for this concern has been simply discrimination.
17. The Reformed Druids of North America do not plan any mass demonstrations of strength, nor do they wish to personally attack any member of the Administration for his handling of the problem. They seek only to make their case known.
18. Reformed Druids do not seek direct abolition of the religious requirement, nor do they desire to upset modern religious institutions.
19. They merely seek recognition and credit for their personal efforts in dealing with "ultimate personal questions."
20. I hope only that they will not be disappointed, but that as spring brings good weather to Monument Hill it will also bring good news of acceptance.

-David Frangquist
Broadcast of KARL AM radio, 1964
*John B. Sparks, Histomap of Religion. Rand McNally, 1943.

The Book of Faith

(by David Fisher, 1964)

(Carleton & Berkeley Apocryphas)

1. I, David, Arch Druid of the Grove at Carleton, write these words so that those who come after me may know and understand some of the feelings which moved me to found the Druid movement. The tone of these writings will differ from the rest of the Books, but I write as I do for clarity, and, in accordance with Druid practice, make no request that my words become a dogma.
2. In the beginning, Druidism was formed as a protest against a religious requirement at Carleton College, not in affirmation of anything, except to affirm a mutual protest against coerced religion. The History of the Druids will be found elsewhere in the various books of this canon.[1]
3. The founders varied considerably in their degree of religious commitment. Some believed in no God, others in their own uncertainty, and others in the Christian religion. I am a believer in Christianity, and still hold myself as such.
4. Attacks have shifted in time from charges of insincerity to charges of emptiness and lack of real value. I write to reaffirm a new purpose, set forth elsewhere in the canon.
5. Druidism boasts no ethos. Since Druidism has never claimed to be a religion, dogmatism has always seemed incompatible with the organization. This does not mean that, as an individual Druid, I have no ethic, nor that any others who call themselves Druid are without beliefs as to what is right and wrong. As Druids, however, we can only affirm a mutual desire to ask ourselves questions about the meaning of life, and about the degree to which religious truth can be truth for us.
6. If I were to pass on any advice to my followers, it would be to never consider that they have found, as Druids, the ultimate answer to any of their questions. Druidism is a faith, if a faith, in questioning, not in answering. Awareness, to a Druid, is an individual thing, to be shared, perhaps, but never codified.
7. It has been asked, and with good reason: what is awareness. I can only answer that for me, awareness has meant a strengthening of my own faith, through communing with myself and with the world of Nature around me. I have come to a closer vision of the greater Reality that lies beyond this world, precisely because I have come to appreciate this world.
8. It has been asked, and again with good reason: if your purpose is to ask and to inquire, then why your use of ritual? Can not men seek for answers without the crutch of a ritual which has no real religious purpose? I can only answer that the Druid ritual has a value because it can be used by different men in different ways.
9. For one man, the sacrifice of life is the offering up of himself to a god or gods. To another, it is an offering up of his mind to a search for truth. As a priest, I repeat the great Answer to calm men's hearts and minds, not as a magical formula of absolution; but for some, the Answer is an absolution, washing away the distractions of a week of worry, and reaffirming confidence in the idea of a purpose in life.
10. For one man, the partaking of the Waters of Life is a mystical sacrament of communion with a god or gods. For another, it is an act of common fellowship with other seekers of the truth. As a priest, I do not seek to consecrate the Water to any use with my words, but rather think of my words as a common means for others, who watch and listen, to consecrate the Water within themselves.
11. Whether what has been founded at Carleton remains or passes away is now unclear. I will always have a concern for the Druids. My own feeling is that if the experience has helped any men to better see themselves, and to become aware of the problems of life in a new way, then it will have served its purpose.
12. I have called this book the Book of Faith. It is my faith in what I have done and in what I have seen grow. In accordance with a basic principle of Druidism, I do not presume to speak for anyone else except for myself. Yet I would add one word to the skeptical, to the vain, and to the self-satisfied.
13. Before you, O reader, pass a judgment on the Reformed Druids, look first into your own heart and be very sure that all is right and at peace. Then without false pride, ask those who call themselves Druids what they have learned form being Druids. Then, when you have weighed the amused against the serious, the scoffers against the men who call themselves aware, then only will you be able to judge.
14. In the name of the Earth Mother, the great personification of all that moves and walks and lives and is upon the Earth, and in the name of Be'al, the source of all truth without whom no Druid is aware, but whose nature remains to each man his own mystery, I ask upon you peace. May you, in your own way, find the truth, as I have found it.

So be it.
David Fisher
April 12th, 1964.

The Epistle of David the Chronicler

(by David Frangquist, 1964)

(Carleton and Berkeley Apocryphas)

Chapter the First

1. To Norman [Nelson], Patriarch of the Order of Braciaca, from his devoted servant David [Frangquist], a priest of the Order of Braciaca and Patriarch of the Order of Belenos.
2. It is with deep regret that I was required to postpone the writing of this epistle until the present time, but it was mine earnest desire that I should communicate to you only the fullest details of these experiences. It was therefore necessary to wait until all of the events herein recounted had transpired before I could begin to set them down on paper.
3. I would assure you, however, that I did receive the epistles which you did so graciously send to me and I have read them with great interest.
4. But there are a number of points which you have made which do cause me some concern.
5. Concerning your reference to yourself as the Archdruid of the South Dakota group: I would remind you that an Archdruid must be elected by the members of his grove, but that the only requirement in the formation of a grove is that each of the three officers be properly filled by election.[2]
6. Yet you mention only one other person as being a member.
7. Perhaps there is yet another whom you did not mention; I keep in mind the Bishop, who I'm sure would participate excellently in the position of Server.
8. Of much more concern to me, however, is your comment that it all did now seem so much like playacting.
9. It is with this that I should like to deal at some length, drawing freely from mine experiences of this last summer.

Chapter the Second

1. When I First came to arrive at Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan[3], I was fully resolved to there establish my mission.
2. But it was only with great difficulty that I did succeed in persuading two of my friends to attend the ceremony at Midsummer, which it was my duty to perform nevertheless.
3. But I was to be greatly disappointed in mine efforts, for in the following two weeks I was able to persuade no-one to join me in the worship of the Earth-Mother.
4. But the writings of our cause were well received, such that after I had made them available no fewer than nine people did attend the services which were held during the next two weeks.
5. Now we did continue to meet, and in the course of time there were seven who did see fit to become Druids of the First Order in the service of the Earth-Mother. And so earnest were two of these that they did take upon themselves the responsibilities of the Second Order.
6. Now it was at this time that they did come unto me, desiring to know if we might form a grove. And at their insistence, I did finally agree.
7. And a number there were who were most greatly impressed by our cause, and they did declare that at last had been found that for which they had made their search.
8. Now I bear proudly the title of Archdruid of Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan, not because of the title, for in that it is nothing, but because of the light that Druidism has now been able to bring into the hearts of a few people here.
9. I am firmly persuaded that what I have seen this summer is a clear demonstration that our message is an important one.
10. Here there were no restrictions against which to rebel, but only the desire to find truth in our own way.

Chapter the Third

1. It is mine observation that religion is composed of two parts: the philosophy and the ritual. Should either be absent, there is no longer religion.
2. For without the philosophy the ritual is but playacting; and without the ritual the philosophy lacks the warmth and vitality, which is capable of perpetuating it beyond its originator.
3. For there is in all men a certain desire for the glory of ceremony.
4. Often it is indulged in for its own sake, as in the case of secret organizations and in the worship of the state (which is often confused with patriotism).
5. For ritual is capable of crowding all else out and becoming the end in itself. It is for this reason that we are constantly threatened by the Druid ritual shedding its philosophy and becoming mere playacting.
6. I am persuaded that our philosophy is valuable, for in Nature we have found a peace and a fulfillment that was otherwise lacking.
7. But we have also recognized that ritual is most often a hindrance; and to eliminate it is simply to encourage non-ritual to become the ritual. Rather as Druids we have endeavored to build a ritual which will be the destroyer of its own importance.
8. We have therefore adopted a ceremony, which is sufficiently foreign to our cultural tradition as to shock, whereas being sufficiently close to it to be taken seriously.
9. It is our fervent hope that in this way we will be able to impress upon men that ritual is only relative, and thus help them to rise above its limitations toward the greater truth beyond.
10. It is for this reason that we must be careful not to admit of any ceremony which would be too closely allied with our cultural traditions or which would tend to focus too much attention on the ritual itself.
11. We must not utilize any practice which is not derived directly from ancient Druid custom or from analogies from Nature.
12. And as leaders of our cause, we must always keep in mind our principal objectives.
13. For I would again affirm that insofar as we can continue to bring to others a greater appreciation of the wonders of the Earth-mother, I am persuaded that our effort is not in vain.
14. May the Peace of the Earth-mother be yours, and may the radiance of Belenos daily illumine your spirit.

Peace!

Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals

(By David Frangquist, 1966)

(Carleton and Berkeley Apocryphas)

BEING: a brief catalogue of the major quasi-metaphysical-theological conclusions which may be abstracted from and by the application of the Reformed Druid point of view to questions of ultimate relevance (in outline form).
THE THREE PILLARS (or treasures, or paths, or baskets, or roots, or branches, or wondrous illuminations)

I. The Relentless Rebellion (threefold)

A. The categorical If
No Intellectually honest mind can long remain so termed unless it is willing to submit all things to rigorous examination, even the most sacred provinces. Blind faith is no faith; it is blindness.

B. The Principle of Non-Confirmation
Applying rigorous scrutiny to the world's religions, we find, especially in western form, universal claims to exclusiveness; yet none submits any more proof of its claim than an appeal to faith. Logically, therefore, all are equal.

C. The Principle of Non-Conformation
In the face of the insoluble problem of selecting the "one true faith" most people conform to one of two patterns:

1. The True Believer embraces the faith of his fathers wholeheartedly and unquestioningly, fearing to face the logical possibility (probability?) that he is wrong.
2. The Non-Believer rejects all faiths out of hand, fearing that he might prove himself a fool by choosing the wrong one.
Reformed Druids reject the necessity of conforming to either of these patterns based on fear. True spiritual growth exists only in the *Relentless Rebellion* against petrified norms.

II. The Paths of Paradox (also threefold)

A. The Ceremonial Syndrome
Man is incurably finite. He cannot conceive of spiritual activity except in terms of ritualistic hocus-pocus. But ritual must be carefully selected or it will independently acquire magical properties of its own. Ritual properly constitutes a springboard for the spirit only. Oak worship is ideal for this purpose (see also III).

B. The Primacy of Ambiguity
True spiritual growth consisting of personal effort and rebellion, Reformed Druidism must remain devoid of orthodoxy. All writings must be ambiguous and non-final (present dissertation included).

C. The Principle of Non-Confirmation (rears its ugly head again)
You'll get no pat answers here. There being no logical basis for the acceptance or denial of any faith, Reformed Druidism confirms nothing (including Reformed Druidism). You're welcome to, but you're on your own.

III. The Last Refuge (whadaya know?...threefold!)

A. The Noble Fivefold Formulation

1. The Nature of Life
Life is defined as the unity of the spiritual (Be'al) and the material (the Earth-Mother). Without the material the spiritual has no form; without the spiritual the material is dead.
2. And Man?
Man, as a living animal, ideally consists of both material and spiritual.
3. And Man?
Man is unique. This is because he has self-awareness. He passes from self-awareness through self-centeredness to self-importance, thence to self-isolation, resulting in self-misery.
4. Unity for All and All for Unity
Man's self-importance cuts him off from the life-giving benefits of unity with the spirit and Nature (the material). Druids sometimes call unity *Awareness*. It is the object of religion to restore unity; most concentrate on the direct attainment of spiritual unity, ignoring (or rejecting) the material.
5. Back to Nature
Druids (at least some of them) believe that a good approach is to first restore material unity. Having broken down part of the barrier around the self, the rest should then be easier. Hence, Druid Nature worship: the ideality of going to worship oaks.

B. The Basic Tenets
The Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism, which form the basis (believe it or not) for the preceding discussion, are found in the Constitution of the Reformed Druids, and in another form in the Book of the Law in *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed*). They are the quintessences of Druidism, such that a person need accept nothing else and still become a Reformed Druid. They are here presented in their most concentrated form:

1. Nature is good!
And the second is like unto the first:
2. Nature is good!

C. The Last Refuge
It is simple to grind out these systems. It is the expected thing to do. Perhaps it is useful. It is meaningless!

It is simple to sit on the Hill of the Three Oaks and look at the pretty blue sky. That, too, can be meaningless!

It is not so simple to stand alone under the pretty blue sky and watch all your preconceived systems come tumbling down.

But when they come tumbling down, there is a refuge: in Nature. There one may find a clearing of the head, a freedom from stagnant forms, a beginning. (The End)

David Frangquist
6/6/66

Leabhar Toirdhealbhaigh

(Translates as "Book of Torvel")

(By Robert Larson 1967)

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

I

The moonlight shining on the path
Blinding
The sister stars
Brightening the way
Dimming
Foot falls heavy
And raises dust in a
Shimmering
Cloud
Of many colors.

Softly go, wanderer
Where the wood calls
And lives.

Grass whispers
And trees walk
As you go your contemplative way
Brain empty, thinking
Body dead, living
Walking
Unfeeling.

Tree roots move
Snakes trying
To entwine your feet
And hold you forever
Wanting you, loving you
Wishing to talk
If you dare listen
But you will walk.

The owl hoots his song
Of loneliness
And the terror of the woods
Frightening you
Sending you running
Happily, joyfully
Fearfully
Tearfully
Through the forest
Seek then to escape
The tale that is told.

The grass damp beneath
You
Sparkles in the moon
Stops wets and cools your feet
Making you joyful
And cold
Feet numb from damp
Frigid
Fighting the moonlight trees
Continue on out
Out to the city
The grass hastens you away
You are not ready yet to stay
The woods seem to say.

II

Dew drips heavy
Wets the ground
Sparkling dew
Shimmering in the moonlight
Reflecting color schemes
Prismatic.

Moonbows
Sparkle from
Dripping dew
Bright and joyful
Breaking the moonlight
Healing.

Rejoicing in it, he wend
His way
Out from the city down below
Up to the fields
Where flowers grow
To the thicket
Full of life
Through the forests
Across the lea
Seeing all there is to see.

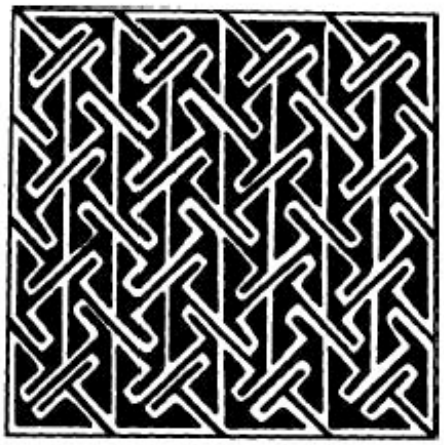
March forward, stepping lightly
Trampling life underfoot
Apologizing and smiling
Pardon my clumsiness in going
Up to the ancient oak
Caressing, talking
Adoring
Age untold, oh so old
And wise wonderful.

He stays doing nothing
Breathing, absorbing
Speaking at time
Throwing his head back
And laughing
Enjoying
Accosting the grass
Kissing the flowers
Teaching and learning
Talking with animals
On their way
Entranced, pause and
Tell of nightmare worlds
Of strange tales
And marvel at his
Yet stranger tale.

Walking onward through the trees
Over the thicket
Down the rabbitway
To the waterhole
Moonlight shines through his shape
Stars for eyes
Moon for heart
Meteors for limbs
Onward, onward into the eternal day-night
Smiling goes he.

No more seen in the city
No more seen in the field
No more seen but felt and heard
Kindly master-slave of all
Unwielding of power possessed
Yielding of love and life
Breath on the wind
Yet learning
Teaching, preaching
Lore-filled in every pore
Etheric and solid
Whispering into unknown ears
The man the grass teaches how to grow.

Toirdhealbhach MacLorcain
Ard-draoi Clann na Brocheta
Earrach 12 y.r.
[circa Spring 1973 c.e.)
a.k.a
Robert Larson, DAL, Be.
Archdruid, Berkeley Grove



Letter to my Brothers

(By Steve Savitzky, 1968)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

I

1. I am writing these words
for all of us
because I am writing them
and because I am
all of us

I find that I am a strange fraternity
knowing you brothers and sisters
who do not know one another
but who know
10 your brothers and sisters whom I do not know

I will speak of myself
and what I know

I have stood upon a hill
and felt the powers of the Earth leap out
over the nerves of the city bright below

Gazing into a fire I have seen
a life that is old and strange and glows
with the beating of the ruby heart
that lies in the breast of darkness

20. I know now that the trees
live guided by a wisdom beyond time
that they weave in their looms of leaves
the fabric of space itself and die by fire
to free the secret essence of their souls

I find within myself
the labyrinth which I have begun to search
there are many ways

mine is the power to gaze
deep into fires
30 into the core of things
mine is the power
to speak to trees
and listen to their songs
mine is the power to walk
at the left hand of darkness
at the right hand of the moon
mine is the power to dance
and call the winds together
into stillness

40. there are other powers
I have not yet found

We stand together now
at the still point of the storm to come

brothers and sisters
afraid
uncertain of our strength

but we are the children of light and darkness
we are the makers of dance and song
we are the joyful servants of earth and sky

50. I call you together to go forth
into the world of men
to learn of yourselves and your powers
and give your lives that life itself not die!

II

1. I have written these things
after reading Demian
dazed
from walking down halls of mirrors
dazzled by the reflections of myself

I write having consumed
green tea in cups uncounted
bread that did not rise
black coffee and black night

10. I write at the end of a time
when nothing has gone quite right
and I have not rated my studies
worth the price of coal in Hell

I can no longer keep things to myself
not only must I write
but also share

20. and so I give you these words
because I am driven
possessed
insane
a fool or a prophet whatever the difference is

I have told you to save the world
and look into your souls
I tell you to read Demian
and vigil upon the hill

I have said you are my brothers
30. I say you are my world

I will write to you again
and speak with you
and walk with you in city or on hill

and we will cast off these chains
for a little while
these chains of time and space

of loneliness
of darkness and of distance and of fear

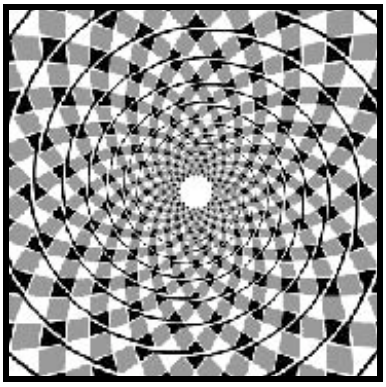
and we will gaze together
40. into a dying fire upon a hill
and warm ourselves with dance and words and love
until the dawn looks over the world's edge
and we like it are part of all we see

III

1. "I need only bend over that dark mirror to
behold my own image, now completely
resembling him, my brother, my master."
-Hesse

2. "Hypocrite lecteur, mon semblable, mon frere!"
-Baudelaire

3. "I can call on spirits from the vasty deep!"
"Why so can I, and so can any man,
but do they come when you do call them?"
-Shakespeare



The Discourse of Thomas the Fool

(By Thomas McCausland, 1970)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

I Invocation

O Grannos, hallow this thy essence by thy renewing power and by thy way of many-yet-one paths. Cleanse us. Purify us. Remind us that this thy essence is also ours and that as thou art many-yet-one, so too are we. Show us thy All-penetrating wisdom, and prepare us to receive thee as fully as thou hast received us.

II Text

I am the wind which breathes upon the sea,
I am the wave of the ocean,
I am the murmur of the willows,
I am the ox of the seven combats,
I am the vulture upon the rocks,
I am a beam of the sun,
I am the fairest of plants,
I am a wild boar in valor,
I am a salmon in the water,
I am a lake in the plain,
I am a word of knowledge,
I am the point of the lance of battle,
I am the God who created in the head the fire:

Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?
Who announces the ages of the moon?
Who teaches the place where couches the sun?

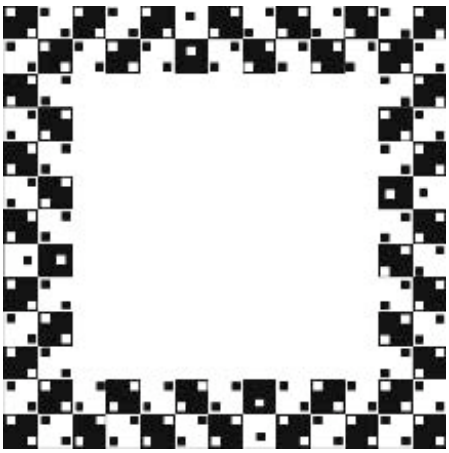
If not I-

III Discourse

1. Often it is that the Archdruids do read this ancient mystery. It is indeed one of the greatest treasures we know for it came verily form the ancient Sage-Druids who pleasured the earth in younger times. But who among you have verily heard this ancient mystery?
2. Oft it seems that these lines refer to the All-Mother, for she is truly all of these and more. But what is the mystery there? Not mystery but shining fact. No, the mystery is not the Mother. Nor is it Be'al. For this mystery is even more secret than He, though He knows and speaks it.
3. Verily, *I* am that mystery. Not the Mother, not Be'al, but I. How is it that I came to be all these things? I am the God who created in the head the fire! It is there. Look and understand! Who else could it be, if not I?
4. Now there may be some among you who would agree and would say that this was so, for ultimately Be'al and I are one. How deceived they are! While I am, Be'al is not, and there is no touching of these two. No, not oneness. For Be'al is not to have oneness with. Be'al is not! Understand this. It is only delusion which lends you to believe in Him and the Mother. Verily, a poor hoax it is!
5. Now listen carefully so you can understand. Be'al is not, for he is invented by man. He was invented to give man the freedom to relax in Man's creation. If Be'al is great,

how much greater is man, the creator of Be'al. Nothing more than the Highest spirit of man is Be'al. And though that seems most wondrous, it is but a poor hoax. Be'al is not great for He needs Existence and Non-Existence. He is All and Nothing. Can One be great and still be so dependent upon such limited realms? No. Be'al, though He is more than you or I can comprehend, is very powerless.

6. He who created the Universe cares not for All and Nothing. They are nothing to Him. He is so beyond that even all the Words of Knowledge said at one time would change Him not a drop. Be'al is merely the half-drop that almost changed.
7. Great it is to be one with Be'al, but to be one with Him is not great at all. *If not I.* Is the water great because it flows and trickles and dances, in other words, because it is water? No, water is not great: it is merely water. He is not great. I am not great. He and I are one. But hear the greatest mystery.
8. He is all of me, but I am not all of Him. And yet, by being merely a drop of Him, I am all of Him. Understand this!
9. Now you understand the Words of Power. Be the lake in the plain; be the ox and the boar; throw light upon the mountain. *If not I-*.



The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool

(By Thomas McCausland, 1970)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the First

1. Listen, my brethren, and I will tell you the great secret of Druidism. This I tell in order to assure the pure transmission of Druidism for all time. Many of you are there who have the spirit of the Mother burning brightly inside of you and yet, lacking a priest, must let this fire die. Hear and understand. Here is the great Wisdom known to all the Druids of old. Here is the one wisdom you must grasp if you would stay in the bosom of the Mother forever!

Chapter the Second

1. The great secret of Druidism is this: All the powers of the Mother are yours if you but learn your True Name. Even if you are but of the First Order, no secret shall be hidden once you learn this great secret.
2. The way is hard. The Three Ways of Day and One of Night must be traveled. The Wisdom of the Waters of Life must be heard.
3. What are the Three Ways of Day? The Way of the rising sun; the Way of the setting sun; the Way of the sun at Zenith.
4. What is the wisdom of the Waters of Life? The Wisdom of ice; the Wisdom of steam; the Wisdom of water.
5. Yet it is not in the Three Ways of Day that your True Name dwells; nor in the Wisdom of the Waters of Life. Neither is your Name of the Mother or of Be'al. It is of them both and of them not at all. Your True Name is in the Way of Darkness. Yet it is not of darkness nor was it of darkness born nor shall it die of darkness. Though Be'al is born of darkness and dies in darkness, your True Name knows darkness not at all.
6. Your True Name will be heard upon the bosom of the Mother; yet She hears it not, for it is not Her Name. Your Name, when it is truly heard, will rock Be'al from his slumber and cause rain to fall in the center of a stone.
7. To hear your Name, hear the Mother. To hear your Name, hear Her not. To hear your Name, hear the Mother!
8. This is the most powerful secret of Be'al! It is the most powerful secret in all of the Realm of the Four Ways and the Seven Powers and the Thirteenfold Mystery.
9. It is the Word which makes of all ends a beginning.
10. Only this is necessary. Know your True Name! All else is but the dreams of sand.

Chapter the Third

1. But how do we know that True Names exist? Listen and understand!
2. When we consecrate the waters, we do not say, "O great and glorious grove, thou of power deep rooted in the Mother; thou of power deep rooted in the Mother; thou of power sky rending; thou of power to block the sun and rain; consecrate these waters." Nor do we say, "O Healing

waters, consecrate this thyself by thy powers of All-pervading Wisdom." nor yet, "O power of the most secret essence of the vine, hallow this." nor even, "Mighty swirling Ocean, pounding the Mother, as mighty and as vast as even She is, hallow this drop of thee." We do not say, "O great light which rends the sky in storm, hallow this as thou dost hallow the rain by the great leveling fire." nor, "O greatest of the powers we see, Mighty Sun, hallow this which thou didst bring into being!" Nor do we say, "O gentle stream, by thy joyous power hallow this thy essence." nor even, "O great mysterious Life, hallow this, the essence of all life."[4]

3. Verily, all this is great Wisdom. And yet I tell you that this Wisdom consecrates not even the water of man's dreams.
4. If one but says "Dalon ap Landu" with the knowledge of the power of it, truly the whole Universe will be forever consecrated!
5. Understand the Thirteen-fold Mystery[5] and then understand how much more powerful is the knowledge of your True Name than the knowledge of the Names of the Mother. Your Name will consecrate even Be'al!
6. Brethren, hear your Name! Listen every moment, for the wind and the waters and all that dwell upon the Mother speak all the Names that are. Only by continual vigilance will ye hear your Name when it is spoken.
7. Be'al knows your Name. The Mother knows your Name. The Patriarchs know your Name. And ye, with every breath speak your Name. Listen and understand. Your every breath speaks your Name. Great is this secret. I pay for the carrying of it with my very life. Hear and understand. Listen always, for the Mother will speak your Name a moment before it is expected. Only by constant vigilance will ye be prepared.

Chapter the Fourth

1. I pray that the Mother will act kindly towards one such as I, who must tell these lies to those who would truly seek her. The Wise will hear me not. The Dull will hear me not. Only those who vigil will hear me, and maybe even they will not hear. For the sake of purity I tell these lies. May the Mother forgive such a fool as I who would have men chasing the bile of trees.

This is my folly.
Thomas the Fool
August 25th, 1970
Peace to those who dwell in the Mother!

Earlier Selections:

The Smiley Affair

The Smiley Letters, Part One

(By Richard Smiley, 1969)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

Richard F. Smiley
226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1
West Lafayette, In. 47906

1969 February 5

Local Board No. 151
Selective Service System
213 Water St.
Waukegan
Illinois 60085

Dear Sirs:

This is to inform you that

(1) My address has changed to the following
Richard F Smiley
226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1
West Lafayette, In. 47906

(2) I am no longer a student at Purdue University

(3) I am now a minister, and as such I wish to apply for a draft exemption (class IV-D). If you need any additiona1 information before p1acing me in this class, I will be glad to provide it. Simply inform me about what information is necessary.

Yours truly,
Richard F. Smiley
SSS no. #AA-BBB-CC-DDD

Chapter the Second

/letterhead/ SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

/stamp/

LOCAL BOARD NO. 151
SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM
213 WATER ST.
WAUKEGAN, ILL. 60085
(Local Board Stamp)

February 20, 1969

In Reply, Refer To:
#AA-BBB-CC-DDD

Richard F. Smiley
226 South Grant St., Apt 1
West Lafayette, Indiana 47906

Dear Sir:

We have received your letter dated February 5, 1969. Please be advised that we can place you in a minister, 4-D, classification you will have to have some official verification submitted, stating your present status.

Yours truly,

For the Local Board:

/s/
(Mrs.) Jacqueline Bradbury
Executive Secretary

jb

Chapter the Third

Richard F. Smiley
226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1
West Lafayette, In. 47906

1969 February 26

Local Board No. 151
Selective Service System
213 Water St.
Waukegan
Illinois 60085

Dear Sirs:

Thank you for your letter of February 20 (replying to mine of February 5, in which I informed you that I was a minister. According to your letter, you need some sort of official verification before placing me in classification 4-D. I expected that would be the case. However, your letter was not as specific as I had hoped it would be about what type of verification you wanted.

There should be no trouble involved in submitting verification (either from the person who ordained me or from our central organization) that I was properly ordained, or verification (either from our central organization or from people here in West Lafayette) that I am currently engaged in preaching and teaching our beliefs. Is any of these what you had in mind? If so, which would you prefer? If not, could you state more specifically what you do want?

Thank you very much.

Yours truly,
Richard F. Smiley
SSS # AA-BBB-CC-DDD

cc: D. Frangquist
S. Savitsky [sic]

Chapter the Fourth

Richard F. Smiley
226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1
West Lafayette, In. 47906

1969 February 28

Local Board No. 151
Selective Service System
213 Water Street
Waukegan
Illinois 60085

Dear Sirs:

I have just received from you a Notice of Classification(SSS Form 110) dated February 25. This Notice places me in Class 1-A, which seems to contradict your letter of February 20. I note also that the address on the Notice is incorrect. (See my letter of February 5.) The address was correct on the letter you sent me February 20. I would guess from this that some sort of mistake has been made. Would you check on this, and see whether the classification can be withdrawn, or, if not, whether there is something else which can be done? (See also my letter of February 26.)

Yours truly,
Richard F. Smiley
SSS # AA-BBB-CC-DDD

cc: D. Frangquist
S. Savitsky [sic]

Chapter the Fifth

/letterhead/ SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

/stamp/

LOCAL BOARD NO. 151
SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM
213 WATER ST.
WAUKEGAN, ILL. 60085
(Local Board Stamp)

March 13, 1969

In Reply, Refer To:
AA-BBB-CC-DDD

Richard F. Smiley
226 South Grant St., Apt 1
West Lafayette, Indiana 47906

Dear Sir:

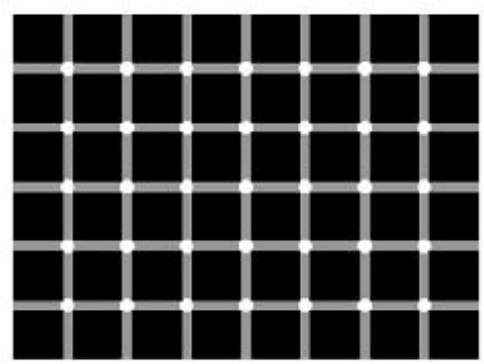
We have received your letters dated February 26, 1969 and the 28th. Please be advised that the Local Board had met on February 6, 1969 and you had already been issued a 1-A when I wrote to you on the 20th of Feb. The last school information that we have indicates that you were a Mathematics major at Purdue, when did your seminary training take place, what church or religion do you belong to, and when were you ordained?

Your I-A classification is correct at the present time until we receive new information for the Local Board to consider.

Yours truly,

For the Local Board:
/s/
(Mrs.) Jacqueline Bradbury
Executive Secretary

jb



Chapter the Sixth

Richard F. Smiley
226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1
West Lafayette, In. 47906

1969 March 24

Local Board No. 151
Selective Service System
213 Water Street
Waukegan
Illinois 60085

Dear Sirs:

In accordance with our previous correspondence (see my letters at February 5, 26, and 28, and yours of February 20 and March 13), I submit the following information for your consideration: I am a minister of the Reformed Druids of North America. I received my training concurrently with my regular undergraduate education, at Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota. I was ordained a third-order priest of the Reformed Druids in October, 1964. I currently conduct services, etc., for the Reformed Druids in greater Lafayette, Indiana.

I believe the Military Selective Service Act of 1967 would term me a "duly ordained minister of religion" (Section 16 (g) (1): "The term 'duly ordained minister of religion' means a person who has been ordained, in accordance with the ceremonial, ritual, or discipline of a church, religious sect, or organization established on the basis of a community of faith and belief, doctrines and practices of a religious character, to preach and to teach the doctrines of such church, sect, or organization and to administer the rites and ceremonies thereof in public worship, and who as his regular and customary vocation preaches and teaches the principles of religion and administers the ordinances of public worship as embodied in the creed or principles of such church, sect, or organization.") Consequently, I ask that you reopen my classification, and consider placing me in class 4-D (ministerial).

I will ask our central organization to write to you, confirming the above information.

Sincerely,
Richard F. Smiley
SSS # AA-BBB-CC-DDD

cc: D. Frangquist
S. Savitsky [sic]

The Smiley Letters, Part Two

(By Richard Smiley & Steve Savitzky, 1969)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the Seventh

Richard F. Smiley
226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1
West Lafayette, In. 47906

1969 March 27

Local Board No. 151
Selective Service System
213 Water Street
Waukegan
Illinois 60085

Dear Sirs:

A few days ago (March 24) I sent you some information regarding my status as a minister. I am currently in class 1-A. According to your letter of March 13, you had not yet received my letter of February 5 (in which I informed you that I was a minister) when you classified me.

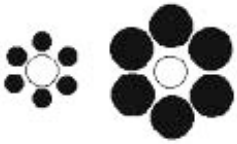
Thus, my letter of March 24 contains "facts not considered when the registrant was classified which, if true, would justify a change in the registrant's classification" (see Selective Service Regulations, 1625.2), so in that letter I requested that you reopen my classification, and place me in class 4-D (ministerial). I have every hope that you will do this, but if you decided not to reopen my classification, I would want to request a personal appearance, so that I could find out the reasons for your decision and supply you with any information I might have overlooked before. Unfortunately, I cannot delay my request until I find out whether a personal appearance will be necessary; since my Notice of Classification was dated February 25, my right to request a personal appearance evidently expires today.

So if you do reopen my classification, feel free to ignore this letter. However, if for any reason you decide not to reopen my classification, please schedule me for a personal appearance.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Richard F. Smiley
SSS # AA-BBB-CC-DDD

cc: D. Frangquist
S. Savitsky [sic]



Chapter the Eighth

Richard F. Smiley
226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1
West Lafayette, In. 47906

1969 March 28

Steve Savitsky
Carleton College
Northfield
Minnesota 55057

Dear Steve,

(I put this in business form so there would be an inside address on the letter, for our records.)

I am enclosing carbon copies of all my correspondence with my draft board. I think you should add these to the permanent files of the Council of Dalon ap Landu. Some one may in the future want to know how it was done.

By the way, I suspect the permanent files of the Council have fallen by the wayside. If so, I strongly suggest that you revive them. One item, which should be in the files, is a report, which Dave Frangquist sent out at the end of his term of office. In this report there is a list of the seven people who were at that time members of the Council, and on that list is the year in which each became a third-order priest. These are the only records you will have which indicate that I was ordained. (By the way, in case you are interested, I believe the ceremony--done by Dave Frangquist--was at about the time of the last full moon of Foghamhar, in 1964.)

So that you will be able to say so in the letter, I hereby ask you to write my draft board, confirming that I was ordained a third-order priest.

I'll enclose a rough draft of the letter as I think you should write it. (Actually, although I call it a "rough draft," I think it is probably well-worded right now. Probably the only change you will want to make is in your name. Since I didn't know your full name as you sign it, I put down "Steve Savitsky." Presumably this is not the way you sign letters, and should be changed.

I also enclose a certified mail slip, to be pasted on the front of the envelope, at

the left (see instructions on back of slip) and a receipt form to be glued to the back of the envelope after it has been sealed. Don't get these very wet when gluing them on--there isn't much glue. Also enclosed are a 40 cent stamp, a l0 cent stamp (airmail) and a 30 cent stamp (special delivery). These all should be pasted on the envelope (airmail to the right and special delivery to the left, I guess). Mail the letter at the post office Certified/Registered Mail window bright and early Tuesday morning. It has to get to Waukegan sometime Wednesday. So get it typed up by sometime on Monday. You'll notice that it is dated April 1. (I thought that was a nice touch.)

As I think I mentioned to you over the telephone, there may be some sort of investigation to make sure that the Reformed Druids are a legitimate organizat1on. So let me point out, to reassure you, that as far as I can tell, not only are the Reformed Druids a legitimate organization, but also, If you read the Selective Service Act, I think Reformed Druid priests are eligible for 4-D classification if their regular and customary vocation is being a Reformed Druid priest.

I think my draft board will write to Carleton. I would very much appreciate it if you would find out from Dean Smith whether he is willing to back us up at all. If he is, tell him the whole story, or as much of it as he wants to know.

I will call you up Sunday night to make sure there has been no trouble with the letter. It would be nice if you could get some one else to type it up, and go through the whole bit with the secretary's initials, as I have indicated. In any case, make sure the letter is extremely neat--a professional-looking job with (preferably) no erasures. I have sent you most of the letterheads we had printed up. They should have arrived by now, but in case they haven't I'll enclose a few of the ones I kept here for emergencies.

By the way, when you open the package of letterheads you'll find that there are also some matching blank sheets for second and third pages of letters. According to a secretarial handbook I consulted in our library, the front side of the paper is the side from which the watermark printing can be read.

As I have indicated on the letter, make carbon copies for me and for Dave Frangquist, and send them to us. I am enclosing two extra airmail stamps for this purpose. In case you don't have Dave's address, it is:

D. Frangquist
625-B Ft. Baker
Sausalito
California 94965

Also keep a carbon copy of the letter for the permanent files of the Council. Attach the certified mail slip, and the receipt when it comes back, to your copy of the letter. After you have typed the letter, make a notation on the three copies that the letter was typed on the "Carleton... Council.." letterhead. I'll enclose carbonpaper and onion skin to make the copies with.

Be sure to use a nice neat letterhead for the letter. (They vary some in quality-- on the envelopes there is sometimes a little smearing of the symbol, at the right, and on the letterhead itself there are sometimes flaws in the letters or the symbol because of a lack of ink.)

I still expect to show up at Carleton one of these days, but I don't know when. When you send the copy of the letter back to me, put in a note te11ing me when third term classes are over. I may not get there until almost then.

My plans are more definite than when I wrote the previous page. I'll be going to a conference Sunday through Wednesday. (It's a conference on computer graphics at the University of Illinois.) We'll be 1eaving here about 4:00 pm (3:00 pm your time). If you get this letter Sunday afternoon, call me collect--station-to-station--immediately after reading it. If there is no answer, I have left, and I will call you at 10:15 pm Sunday (your time). Incidentally, I will be staying at the Ramada Inn in Champaign, Illinois. The number there is (217)352-7891. In an emergency, you could try to get me there after 10:00 pm Sunday, Monday, or Tuesday. (That's local time, which I think is the same as Minnesota time.)

Thanks for your help. And to close with the traditional close,

Peace be with those who walk in the ways of the Earth-mother!

/s/
Dick Smiley

P.S. Dave Frangquist thinks we should have gotten a post office box and used that as the address on the letter-heads. For the record, I'll put down in writing here two things: (1) I agree that it would be more impressive, although I'm not sure that even with a post office box we would be believable; (2) the reasons we decided differently were that it would cost more money that way, the money and bother of having to go down to the post office to

check for mail all the time would impose a strain on the rather weak organizational structure of the Druids, and (I guess this last point is just summary) we are guaranteed that the Carleton address will be permanent.

cc: D. Frangquist

Chapter the Ninth

(Origina1 typed on Carleton Co11ege Council of Dalon ap Landu letterhead)

April 1, 1969

Local Board No. 151
Selective Service System
213 Water Street
Waukegan
Illinois 60085

Gentlemen:

We have received a letter from Richard F. Smiley (Selective Service No. AA-BBB-CC-DDD) stating that you wished confirmation that he was a minister or the Reformed Druids of North America.

Our records show that Mr. Smiley was ordained a third-order priest (i.e., a minister) in 1964.

We would appreciate being kept informed or Mr. Smiley's classification.

Sincerely,
THE REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA
Stephen Savitzky
Chairman of the Council

SS/bl

Certified
Return receipt requested
Air mail
Special delivery

cc: D. Frangquist
R. Smiley

The Smiley Letters, Part Three

(By Richard Smiley & Richard Shelton)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the Tenth

/letterhead/ SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

/stamp/
LOCAL BOARD NO. 151
SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM
213 WATER ST.
WAUKEGAN, ILL. 60085
Local Board Stamp)

In Reply, Refer To:
AA-BBB-CC-DDD

27 May 1969

Richard F. Smiley
226 South Grant St., Apt 1
West Lafayette, Indiana

Dear Mr. Smiley:

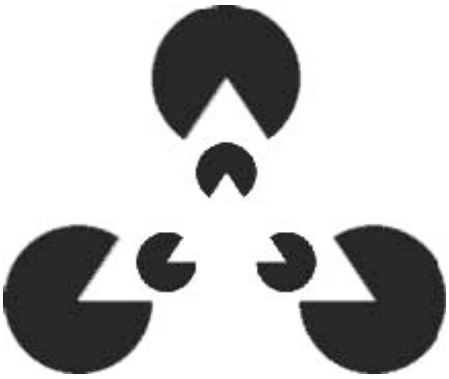
The local board requests a letter from the Chairman of the Council of your church or your superior verifying that your full time occupation is preaching and teaching the doctrine of your church. When this information is received, your file will be reconsidered for a 4-D classification.

Please give this your immediate attention.

Very truly yours,

FOR THE LOCAL BOARD;
/s/
(Mrs.) Henrietta Morton
Executive Secretary

HM:dak



Chapter the Eleventh

Richard F. Smiley
226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1
West Lafayette, In. 47906

1969 June 5

Richard M. Shelton
The Reformed Druids of North America
%Carleton College
Northfield
Minnesota 55057

Dear Dick,

(I suggest you read my letter of March 28 before or after reading this.)

I am enclosing two copies of the letter for my draft board--the original and a carbon copy. The latter is for the RDNA files. I have kept a copy for my files, and another one which I will take to Dave Frangquist. Notice that the letter is dated June 9. (That's Monday.) On that day (probably the day you get this) take the letter to the Post Office (after first signing it, putting it in the envelope, sealing the envelope, and gluing the receipt to the back of the envelope), and give it to the man at the Certified/Registered Mail window. When he gives you back the receipt from the front of the envelope, attach it to your copy of the letter, and file it. The return receipt present more of a problem. I suggest you take the other envelope I have enclosed to the Carleton post office and ask them to use it to send you the receipt when it comes. Also ask them to forward to you, during the summer, any mail which comes addressed to the Reformed Druids. (Another possibility is asking Dean Smith to handle it, but I don't think that's a good idea.) You'd better take the correspondence concerning me home with you this summer, too, in case you need it. (But be sure to bring it back in the fall. It begins to look as if this could be important to some other people, too.)

I am also enclosing, for the files, the latest letter from my draft board to me (dated May 27) and a cartoon strip, which appeared in The Chicago Tribune on May 1.

As I told you on the telephone, I hope to see you next week, up at Carleton. If I don't, thanks for your help.

Peace be with those who walk
in the ways of the Earth-mother!
/s/
Dick Smiley

cc: D. Frangquist

Chapter the Twelfth

/ Handwritten on notepaper imprinted
Carleton College
Northfield, Minnesota /

5 June 1969

Dear Dave [Frangquist],

This is just a quick note to inform you of my investiture as Arch-Druid of Carleton (pro tempore) to succeed Steve Savitzky (who will be, hopefully, at Stanford this summer or fall). I have been in touch with Dick Smiley and have the file concerning his ordeal with the powers that be; I would appreciate copies of any official missives you may be asked to write on his behalf. Also, much needed is a list of all priests (of 3rd & higher orders) known to you, together with addresses of same, etc. My summer (& home) address is 339 W. Pierce St., Macomb, Ill. 61455. I'll send out more official announcements, proposals, and so forth, later. Peace,

Dick Shelton

Chapter the Thirteenth

(typed on C. D. L. letterhead)

June 9, 1969

Local Board No. 151
Selective Service System
213 Water Street
Waukegan
Illinois 60085

Gentlemen:

Richard F. Smiley (Selective Service No. AA-BBB-CC-DDD) has informed us that you have requested a letter from us confirming that he actually is "teaching and preaching the doctrine" of Reformed Druidism (in contrast to our letter of April 1, 1969, in which we simply confirmed that he was qualified to do so).

Mr. Smiley's current work is of a missionary nature --that is, he is in the process of establishing a church (or "grove," as we prefer to call it) in an area where previously we have not had one. We will have only indirect evidence of Mr. Smiley's activities until the group which he has formed in Greater Lafayette applies for formal affiliation,

Accordingly, we feel it would be inappropriate for us to testify to Mr. Smiley's activities until this group has become formally affiliated with the Reformed Druids and regular communications are established. We anticipate such action

shortly, but in order to expedite matters, we are advising Mr. Smiley to ask some members of his group to send you letters testifying to his current activities.

If we can be of any further assistance, please contact us.

Sincerely,

THE REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA
Richard M. Shelton
Chairman of the Council

RMS/dz

Certified
Return receipt requested
Air mail

/ added by hand in the copy: /
cc: D. Frangquist
R. Smiley

Chapter the Fourteenth

/handwritten/

339 W. Pierce St.
Macomb, Ill. 61455

28 June, 1969

Dear Dave [Frangquist],

After I mailed my report of 24 June, it struck me that Dick Smiley might not have returned to Lafayette yet. Since he mentioned that he was going to see you, it seems possible that he with you now or that he has not even reached you yet. If he is or when he does, tell him that he will find a copy of a letter very similar to yours waiting for him.

[Note by RMS, 2003: presumably this referred to a confirmation by Frangquist that he had ordained Smiley in 1964; a copy of this seems not to have survived.] [The paragraph continues:]

If he has already left, let me know if you know when he plans to return to Lafayette and where I could reach him if doesn't plan to return soon.

Secondly, do you have current addresses for Dave Fisher, Norm Nelson, and Robert Larson? Dave's and Robert's reports were returned marked "moved, not forwardable," and I expect Norms to be. I've written C. A. S. [Carleton Alumni Service] and haven't heard yet.

Peace,
Dick Shelton

Chapter the Sixteenth

(typed on C. D. L. letterhead)

August 1, 1969

Local Board No. 151
Selective Service System
213 Water Street
Waukegan, Illinois 60085

Gentlemen:

Richard F. Smiley (Selective Service No. AA-BBB-CC-DDD) has informed us of your recent decision not to reopen his selective service classification file. We fee1, in light of our correspondence with you, that there has been a misunderstanding concerning Mr. Smiley's activities. As we stated in our letter of April 1, Mr. Smiley is an ordained third-order priest and as such is charged with the ministry and disemination [sic] of our faith; he is accordingly performing missionary work in Indiana. If we can furnish any further information to clarify this matter, please inform us immediately.

Sincerely,

THE REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA
Richard M. Shelton
Chairman of the Council

RMS/dz

Certified
Return receipt requested
Air mail
Special delivery

cc: D. Frangquist
R. Smiley

Chapter the Seventeenth

/handwritten/

339 W. Pierce St.
Macomb, Ill. 61455

3 August, 1969

Dear Dave [Frangquist],

Enclosed is a copy of a letter to Dick Smiley's draft board, sent at his instigation.

Re my letter of 24 June [Shelton to Council]: Dick mentioned that he thought it unnecessary to write liturgy before it was needed; I agree and should have made it clear that I had no intention of having consecration orders for orders 8-10 or

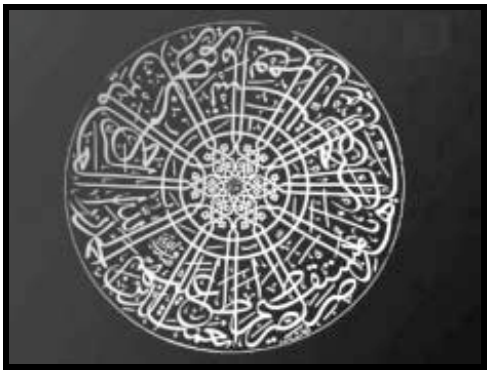
marriage ceremonies written until the need arises. However, I feel the rest is needed and should be collected.

I've had no responses yet; I shouldn't have expected too much in the summer. There have been several address changes, and the Alumni Service has lost track of Robert Larson completely. I have yet to hear from U.S.D. regarding addresses for Anne Beloof & Wesley Hubbard.

Fisher is in England (was in England?) Norman Nelson is at the College of Emporia, Kansas (66801) and Steve Savitzky is at 1640 Bay Rd., East Palo Alto, Cal. -- try to get in touch with him.

Peace,
Dick [Shelton]

[The Editor's Note: The letter trail abruptly ends here, but the result was that by the time the hearing was to be held, Dick Smiley was already too old to be considered for the Draft, leaving the issue unresolved.]



Early Selections:

The Codex Affair

The Codex of Form Missive

(By Richard Shelton, 1969)

(New to ARDA 2)

(a.k.a. The Massive Missive Mistake)

Chapter The First

1. Council of Dalon Ap Landu
2. 16 October, 1969
3. Dear Reverend Brothers- and Sisters-in-the-Mother,
4. This constitutes my second missive to the Council. The first (which apparently did not reach very many of you) contained an announcement of my appointment as Arch-Druid (pro-tempore) of Carleton and an outline of some of my goals.
5. This letter will serve as an announcement of my election as Arch-Druid by the grove and as my first general report to the Council.
6. Enclosed is a copy of the First Proposed Codex of Form and a commentary on it. As you can see, it is primarily the previous resolutions of the Council, together with regulations, designed to improve communications. There are, however, three new major provisions:
7. The creation of the Secretary to the Council
8. The provision for replacement of Patriarchs; and
9. The interpretations regarding priestesses, found in Article III (section 2) and Article IV (sections 4 and 6)
10. The commentary gives explanation and justification for most of the important measures that have no established precedent; I consider most them fairly straight-forward.
11. The title indicates my attitude toward amendment; I expect to have to submit at least one more proposed version before putting it to a vote. Please respond.

Chapter The Second

1. The Codex of Liturgy is not going so well. I still need the consecration ceremonies for orders five through seven and urge the Patriarchs concerned to forward these to me as soon as possible.
2. I also lack liturgy for Midwinters, Beltain, and Lughnasadh; anyone is invited to try his hand at writing services, for any or all three of these.
3. Druidism at Carleton is still very much alive, thanks due in large part to Steve Savitzky's recruiting efforts last spring. The Beltain service was attended by no fewer than thirty-one, though most of these did not customarily attend regular services.

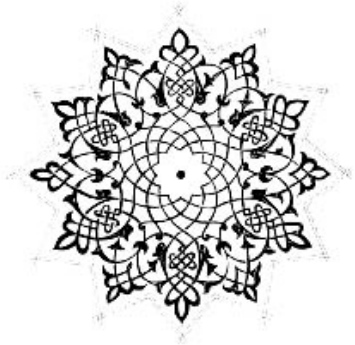
4. Attendance on Saturdays currently varies between six and twelve, and we expect a large turn-out for Samhain. We have three or four candidates for the priesthood, of who two or three are now sophomores, so the grove is not yet in danger of extinction.

Chapter the Third

1. Other groves seem not to have fared so well. I have records of four groves besides Carleton: those of Rapid City (S.D.), Vermillion (S.D.), Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan (Wis.), and the City of New York.
2. All of these are mentioned in David Frangquist's report of April 20, 1966, but aside from this, documentation is poor. I have no other reference to the Rapid City grove at all and only an announcement of the founding of the New York grove.
3. And while the founding of the University of South Dakota Drynemetum at Vermillion is well documented, the grove seems to have vanished; the University knows nothing of the Druids nor D. Wesley Hubbard nor of Anne Beloof.
4. Similarly, I have lost all track of Leonard E. Helding, the only priest consecrated at ma-Ka-Ja-Wan. To the best of my knowledge, none of these groves now has a third-order priest in residence. In light of this, I must consider all of them currently inactive. Any information concerning any of them will be appreciated.
5. A minor calamity transpired this summer: the college managed to lose one of my boxes in storage; it just happened to contain (1) the mimeograph masters for the Chronicles, and (2) most of the letterhead stationery.
6. I am looking into various means of producing a new edition of the Chronicles but doubt that such an edition will appear until after Midwinters. I don't know who had the stationery printed, who did the printing, or if another batch can be printed; again, information would be appreciated.
7. Please send me some indication that you received this.

Yours in the Mother,
Richard M. Shelton
Arch-Druid of Carleton

[**Editor's note**: The following documents were subsequently withdrawn in great haste and embarrassment as a "Big Mistake" by Richard. It should in NO way, be considered official, binding or inspired (nor should anything else in ARDA) and is here for historical purposes and representative of the thinking of Richard Shelton at that time, after a difficult period of transferal of tradition in the 1967-1968 period. There are also several errors in the text.]



FIRST PROPOSED CODEX OF FORM

Article I – Documents

1. The religious scriptures and basic law of the Reformed Druids of North America shall be collected in the Druid Chronicles, which shall include the Early Chronicles, the Book of Law, the Book of Custom, the Latter Chronicles, and the Book of Meditations.
2. The official liturgy of the Reformed Druids of North America shall be collected in the Codex of Liturgy, which shall include liturgy for the Common Orders of Worship, for the High Orders of the Feast Days, for the High Order of Investiture, and for the High Orders of Consecration.
3. The procedural and organizational regulations of the Reformed Druids of North America beyond those of the Druid Chronicles shall be set forth in this Codex of Form.

Article II – Liturgy

1. Any religious ceremony performed by a priest or priestess and utilizing the official liturgy adopted by this Council of Dalon ap Landu shall comprise an Order of Worship, of which there may be distinguished two types:
2. The Common Orders of Worship, for use at regular services, and
3. The High Orders of Worship, for use at services celebrating special religious events.
4. The High Order of Consecration to each high order of priesthood shall be presented by the first Patriarch of that order to the Council of Dalon ap Landu for approval and adoption as part of the Codex of Liturgy.
5. The Order of Worship may be celebrated by one who is a duly-consecrated priest or priestess of the third order. The High Order of Consecration of any higher order of priesthood may be celebrated only by a priest or priestess of or unto that order.
6. The waters-of-sleep shall be used during Geimredh and Earrach and the waters-of-life shall be reserved for Samradh and Foghamhar, except when they are need for healing or for consecration.
7. Priests and priestesses of the third order shall wear the white ribbon during Geimredh and Earrach and the red ribbon during Samradh and Foghamhar. But any priest of priestess consecrating the waters-of-life shall wear the red ribbon regardless of season, and any priest or priestess consecrating the waters-of-sleep shall wear the white ribbon, regardless of season.

Article III – The Council of Dalon ap Landu

1. The highest authority of the Reformed Druids of North America shall be reserved to all duly-consecrated priests and priestesses of the third order collectively in the Council of Dalon ap Landu.
2. Verses thirteen through fifteen of the eight chapter of the Book of Custom shall be hereby interpreted to apply only to the fourth through tenth orders of priesthood.
3. The Arch-Druid of Carleton, whenever that office be occupied, shall serve as Chairman of the Council. The Council may appoint one of its members as Secretary to the Council for a specified length of time, and whenever

the office of Arch-Druid of Carleton be vacant, the Secretary shall assume the responsibilities of that office.

4. The Arch-Druid of Carleton may grant to the Secretary any of the responsibilities of the Chairman normally reserved to the Arch-Druid, but these shall revert to the office of the Arch-Druid upon demand of the Arch-Druid or upon the election or appointment of a new Arch-Druid of Carleton.
5. The Arch-Druid of Carleton shall assume the responsibility of maintaining a record of the resolutions of the Council and of submitting to the Council a general report on the current state of the Reformed Druids of North America upon his retirement from office.
6. Each priest or priestess of the third order shall assume the responsibility of maintaining a current address on file with the Arch-Druid of Carleton.

Article IV – High Orders

1. The fourth through tenth orders shall comprise the high orders of the priesthood. The purpose of the high orders shall be to stimulate priests and priestess of the third order to continued spiritual inquiry and to honor achievement rather than tenure.
2. All high orders shall be considered equal in rank and honor, and equal in the sense that none shall be considered prerequisite to any other, save only with regard to the election of the first Patriarch of each order.
3. Any priest of a high order may consecrate priests or priestesses to that order, but no priest shall be so consecrated unless he be also a priest of the third order.
4. Any priestesses unto a high order, provided she be also a priestess of the third order, may consecrate priestesses to that high order, but no priestess shall be granted the right to consecrate priests to any high order.
5. Upon the consecration of a priest or priestess to a high order, the priest or priestess performing the ceremony shall so notify the patriarch of that order and the Arch-Druid of Carleton, and both the Patriarch and the Arch-Druid shall return confirmation of the consecration. Until such confirmation be received from the Patriarch, the newly-consecrated priest or priestess shall assume no rights or duties of that order, save only the right to the mark of the order.
6. The highest authority within each high order shall be its council, which shall include all priests of the order and over which the Patriarch shall preside. A priestess unto the order, who is also a priestess of the third order, shall enjoy the same voice and vote as does a priest of the order.
7. The Patriarch of each high order shall assume the responsibility of maintaining a record of the resolutions of the council of that order and of sending to the Arch-Druid of Carleton reports of all such resolutions.
8. A Patriarch of any high order shall hold office until his death or resignation. Upon such death or resignation, the Arch-Druid of Carleton shall appoint a priest of the order concerned to direct that council's election of a new Patriarch, who must be a priest of that order.
9. Each priest or priestess of or unto any high order shall assume the responsibility of maintaining a current address on file with the Patriarch of that order.

Article V – Groves

1. To establish a legally-constituted grove, a priest or priestess of the third order must see that the following are fulfilled:

   a. That a constitution be adopted;

   b. That the offices of Arch-Druid, Preceptor, and Server be filled by election as directed in the Book of Law (such election to be held at any time of year);

   c. That thereupon the Arch-Druid of Carleton be sent notification of the with a copy of the newly-adopted constitution and a list of the newly-elected officers.

   If he deem all in order, the Arch-Druid of Carleton shall then return written confirmation of the grove's establishment, which confirmation shall be included in the archives both of the Council of Dalon ap Landu and of the new grove.
2. All priests and priestesses of the third order shall be charged not to establish groves of a transitory nature.
3. Election of officers (except as noted in section 1) must be held during the period of Foghamhar as directed in the book of Law. Should it be necessary for an Arch-Druid to resign his office before the election of a successor, he shall appoint as Arch-Druid pro-tempore a member of his grove who is qualified to hold the office of Arch-Druid and who shall serve until the next election. An Arch-Druid pro-tempore shall assume all rights and duties of a duly-elected Arch-Druid.
4. A retiring Arch-Druid shall notify the Arch-Druid of Carleton of the election or appointment of his successor, and the Arch-Druid of Carleton shall return confirmation of such election or appointment.
5. Should a retiring Arch-Druid find no qualified member of the grove to fill his office, he shall notify the Arch-Druid of Carleton that he is leaving the office vacant and shall send him the archives of the grove. The Arch-Druid of Carleton shall thereupon declare that grove inactive. An inactive grove may be re-established as directed in section 1, on which occasion the Arch-druid shall return the archives of that grove to the new Arch-Druid.
6. Upon receiving confirmation of his election or appointment from the Arch-Druid of Carleton, the Arch-Druid of any legally-constituted grove shall assume the right to consecrate priests and priestesses to the third order. Further, consecration of priests and priestesses to the third order shall be reserved exclusively to Arch-Druids of legally-constituted groves.
7. Immediately following the consecration of a priest or priestess to the third order, the Arch-Druid performing the consecration shall so notify the Arch-Druid of Carleton, and the Arch-Druid of Carleton shall thereupon return confirmation of the consecration. Until such confirmation be received, the newly-consecrated priest or priestess shall assume no rights or duties of his order, save only the celebration of the Common Orders of Worship and the right to the mark of the order.
8. Each grove shall retain the right to organize itself in any way which will best serve its own need, so long as such organization does not violate the regulations herein set forth.

Article VI – Vestment

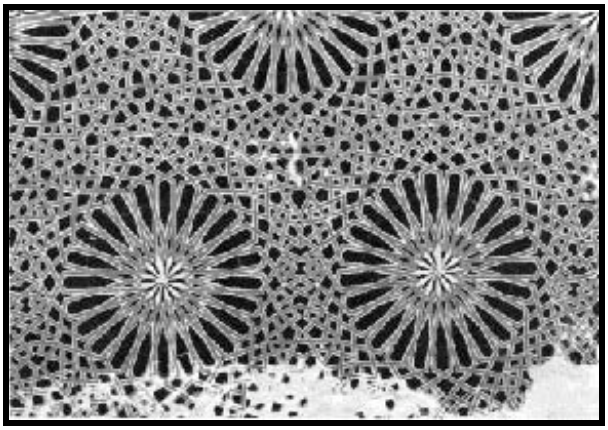
1. All Druid, particularly priests and officers, shall be encouraged to wear robes, for since ancient times the traditional sign of the Druid has been the white robe.
2. A Patriarch (and only a Patriarch) may wear a black robe, in honor of the first Patriarch. He may not, however, at the high order of which he is not Patriarch.
3. The mark of the third order shall be the red or white ribbon, to be worn as directed in Article II.
4. The first Patriarch of each high order shall establish, subject to the approval of the Council of Dalon ap Landu, the identifying mark of his order.
5. Each individual grove shall retain the right to establish any identifying marks for its officers as it sees fit, provided these do not conflict with marks adopted to identify any of the order of priesthood.
6. No druid may wear any established mark to which he has not the right.
7. No restriction on vestment than those herein noted are expressed or implied.

Article VII – Missives

1. The appended forms shall be the standard forms for reports, letters, and local constitutions.
2. The following shall be noted for purposes of dating:

   a. The First Year of Worship shall be considered to have begun with Samhain, 1963.

   b. The Druid day shall begin at the sundown immediately preceding the corresponding civil day.



The Reply of David

(By David Frangquist, 1969)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. Council of Belenos and Dalon ap Landu
2. 23 October, 1969
3. Dear Reverend Brother-in-the-mother Mr. Shelton:

4. I am aghast!
5. When I first received your letter this summer, I ran to our Webster's 3rd in near panic. I must confess that the word "codex" was new to me and I was afraid that you were actually going to try to codify something.
6. I found, however, that the only applicable definition in current use was a collection of "unbound sheets in manuscript, esp… ancient mythological or historical annals."
7. I couldn't think of a more constructive undertaking for an Arch-Druid. I was most friendly toward the idea of a perhaps slightly more organized collection of Druid memorabilia.
8. Besides, there was your assurance "that it is not my intention to inflict a strict procedural or liturgical code on the Reformed Druids." (As if you or anyone else could.)
9. However, I now cannot reconcile that statement with "The official liturgy of the Reformed Druids…" or "The procedural and organizational regulations of the Reformed Druids…" It does not matter how those sentences end, the phrases themselves are totally foreign to anything I ever knew of the Reformed Druids.
10. There are some constructions in the proposed code which have a delightfully Druidic, ambiguous flavor ("Any religious ceremony… shall comprise…."), but I am not encouraged by the fact that I suspect that you did not intend them that way.
11. Before I left Carleton, we (those of us who were around when this all started – I hesitate to say "founders") often wondered aloud about what would happen in the future to Reformed Druidism.
12. Much of what was delightful about it was unsaid. There was a tone or mood to all the Druid proceedings. Everyone understood it fairly soon after becoming a part of the "movement," it didn't have to be explained.
13. I fear, however, that during the discontinuities which the Druids at Carleton seem to have suffered in the last couple of years (of which I have only second-hand reports) there may have been a confusion of some of the more intangible values.
14. I am therefore going to try to deal in some of the specifics which have gone unstated in the past but which I now hope may clarify our original intentions. Naturally, what I say here is my own opinion only. I hope that it is also the opinion of my associates-in-the-mother.

Chapter the Second

1. There is one thing in your codex about which I am in complete agreement. That is your interpretation of the role of priestesses.
2. Your "alternative system" is probably closer to the actual practice in 1966, but we were then in a period of transition. A bit of historical background might be instructive here.
3. When the RDNA was first formed, women's dormitory restrictions at Carleton were considerably more severe than now. It did not seem conceivable that a candidate for priestess would have the remotest opportunity to engage in a vigil. Consequently, an alternative path into the priesthood was established which did not require a vigil and so that women would not be stuck at the 2nd order.
4. Unfortunately, some priests, particularly David H. Fisher, developed the opinion that priestesses were forever doomed to a second-class status. I am enclosing some correspondence from David on this subject.
5. It is too bad that I did not retain copies of my letters to him, but I think that even one side of the conversation should be enough to convince you of the strong feelings involved on both sides. The result of all this controversy was a series of compromises and never any clear interpretation. Yours is perceptive and just.
6. I do not, however, feel that the matter of priestesses should be put to a vote. The question which is now at stake is whether or not a priestess (who has vigiled) can vote in the Council of Dalon ap Landu. Can they, then, vote on this question itself? Once that is decided, there is no need for a vote.
7. My own position is that priestesses have always, by right, been members of the Council, and that the Council does not have the power to exclude anyone from its membership once admitted. (Excommunication, anyone?)
8. I therefore recognize your interpretation as a decision from the chair, which is not subject to appeal. I will refuse to recognize any resolution of the Council on which priestesses are not permitted to vote.

Chapter the Third

1. There are not, and ought not to be, established "religious scriptures and basic laws" of Reformed Druidism.
2. As far as I am concerned, the Chronicles are not closed. Naturally, while I was typing all the stencils, I was in no mood to waste my time on anything which I did not feel was stylistically appropriate.
3. I would also warn anyone who wishes to add to them that if the additions are not consistent in style with the rest, the whole may be damaged. I also reserve the right (as bearer of the title "Chronicler") to consider apocryphal anything I don't like. But I see no reason for spelling out the contents of the Chronicles as if we were setting up some sort of holy canon.
4. I am disturbed by all this confirming nonsense. You may feel that it will improve communication. It will not. It will only cause everyone to ignore the Arch-Druid of Carleton.
5. It is red-tape, pure and simple. As a veteran of three years in the army and currently a civil servant, I think I can speak with some knowledge on the subject of red-tape, and I know it when I see it.

Chapter the Fourth

1. The following points are worth keeping in mind:
2. The only authority in any higher order is the Patriarch, it was never intended in any other way. He is the only one who can select new members of the order and he must give his OK before the consecration (according to the intention of the resolution of 26 May, 1964).
3. The Patriarch alone decides the ceremonies for his order. He needs the approval of no one to establish the first one or to change it whenever it strikes his fancy.
4. Whenever anyone is consecrated a priest(ess), that's it, baby. There's no waiting in Reformed Druidism for the "official" shingle to arrive from the national office. Anyone who has made it through an all-night vigil has the right to be a priest right then and there.
5. By the way, just what are these rights and duties of the higher order that aren't going to be assumed until "national" gives the OK?
6. There was never intended to be any kind of official liturgy in Reformed Druidism.
7. Only the ceremony for the third order is fixed, and that only for reasons of nostalgia and continuity in what is the most important office in Druidism. Besides, it does happen to be one area which is the proper business of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
8. Liturgy is used as a tongue-in-cheek subject heading for some of the resolutions of the Council, but it should be noticed that they fall in the category of interpretations of existing customs.
9. As far as the adoption of the "basic order of worship" (7 May, 1964), that is a foundation only, a basis and a starting point for infinite variations.
10. I see no reason why there could not be ceremonies which could be performed by second or even first order Druids. David Fisher, in designing the original order, felt that any second order could offer up a sacrifice. The only customary restriction is that the waters-of-life should only be consecrated by a priest(ess) who has vigiled.
11. Does one need a ribbon to consecrate waters???

Chapter the Fifth

1. Don't flatter yourself that you've thought of something we missed: It is perfectly clear from the Chronicles that each Patriarch is elected by the council below.
2. It says nothing about those verses applying only to the first Patriarch of each order. You say that's awfully unwieldy? That's why we like it.
3. While I'm on the subject of Patriarchs again: Although a formal vote was never taken, a majority of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu expressed their opinions in the fall of 1965 (in response to a question from David Fisher) that resignation from the office of Patriarch was impossible.
4. Secretary of the Council? As in First Secretary of the Party?
5. It would appear that the only use this thing could serve would be to allow someone who was really attached to Druidism to pick up the ball and run with it—permanently. We don't need that.
6. We left the chairmanship at Carleton so that it would see a constant turnover and, hopefully, constant injection of new spirit. Also, we felt that we would all maintain a continuing interest in Carleton for other, obvious reasons,

and that this would be the easiest way to maintain communications.

7. If the interest dies out at Carleton, I'm sure the Council can take care of itself – if it wants to. If not, what materials would be best turned over to someone to whom they would have a personal significance.
8. I really don't see what's so bad about transitory groves. True, they are something of a pain in the neck for the Arch-Druid of Carleton, who is destined to never know what is going on. But I have a certain fondness for them – they're so… spontaneous.
9. Actually, you never know whether a grove is going to be permanent or not until a couple of years after it's founded. Besides, since it takes a grove to consecrate more priests we might miss consecrating someone in a transitory situation that might subsequently be in a position to star a really going concern.
10. Elections can be held any time the local grove wants. Don't forget that the Book of Law is only a translation of the Carleton Grove constitution into King Jamesian, including the section on amendments.

Chapter the Sixth

1. I don't see the need for setting up a calendar of Druid years, especially since there is not evidence that the ancient Druids recognized a beginning and end to the year. It is more likely that they viewed time as circular in nature.
2. Whenever precision is necessary, a civil date is usually used, whenever it is not, the year is seldom mentioned. And what's to prevent another grove from dating in terms of its own founding, or any other event, for that matter?
3. I'm surprised to find that those old standard formats [for letters] I wrote up are still in existence. Perhaps you would be interested in their origin?
4. It is true that they do generally describe the style originated and popularized by David Fisher. But the details grew out of the fact that they were produced as a diversion while I was in Army Clerk school. I was being pumped full of that junk eight hours a day, and those formats are basically a parody of the army correspondence manual.

Chapter The Seventh

1. By way of a summary, I should like to turn my attention to the very resolution of the Council which reserves authority to the Council. This resolution had two purposes.
2. First, we were anticipating the possibility that it might some day become expedient to incorporate. Whenever that occurred, it was likely that only one of the original members would be in a position to conduct the incorporation proceedings. We wished to agree before that time on the form the organization would take.
3. The resolution had the effect of establishing a potential board of directors, if in name only. The legality of the resolution is highly questionable since it was passed by the Council itself. However, it makes sense if you consider it in a negative way.
4. That was the second purpose of the resolution: not to give authority to the Council so much as to insure that no one else exercised it. Whether Arch-Druid, Patriarch, or Founding Father.
5. I am enclosing an epistle from David Fisher, which he originally asked to have included in the Chronicles. I suppressed it partly because he had second thoughts about it after it was written and partly because it exhibits the terrible tendency of those of us who founded to try to solidify those traditions for which we were responsible.
6. We expected in a few years it would be impossible to muster a quorum in the Council and that therefore the creative originality of individual Druids and Arch-Druids would be forever safeguarded.
7. Once the Council was instituted, it became convenient, as long as it was still small, to use it as a means of expressing our opinions on a number of controversial questions – a means of recording our intentions for posterity. But the resolutions are just that: an expression of the resolve of the members of the Council.

Chapter the Eighth

1. Now that I have had my tirade, it occurs to me that I may have misunderstood you completely, and that I am only furthering the cause of misunderstanding by attacking your codex so violently.
2. It is possible that you intended it all as a parody of organization, but if that is the case you might take my reaction as an indicator of your success. I suspect you were motivated primarily by a desire to bring a bit of organization to the Reformed Druids, but that's what it's all about!
3. Reformed Druidism is a statement that religion has a tendency to become organized religion, which then becomes organization devoid of religion. It is difficult to tell until we have communicated more just what you are seeking for Druidism.
4. In the meantime, I shall reserve my right as Patriarch of Belenos to withhold the ceremony for the sixth order from your proposed codex as long as there is any implication that it is the business of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu or the Arch-Druid of Carleton.
5. If what you wish to do is collect the current customs and traditions of the Druids in topical form, than I will gladly assist you, so long as it is made clear that they represent only the present version of a constantly changing picture. I do not feel, however, that such a collection should be submitted to the Council for approval.
6. It is worth noting that the Chronicles, the Order of Worship, and the various pamphlets were never submitted to the Council or anyone else for edit or imprimatur. Every Arch-Druid should feel free to develop whatever materials he needs to spread the word.
7. In any case, if you do submit anything for a vote, you can count on a negative vote from me if it contains the word "religious" (a word found nowhere in the Chronicles), "official" ("Get your OFFICIAL Captain Midnight magic decoder ring"), "regulation" (three years in the Army were enough to turn me against that one), or even "shall" (unless used in the first person).
8. May the Carleton Grove grow in strength and awareness and may those who sit on the Hill of Three Oaks find there a fresh breeze – blowing away stagnation and the petrifaction of religious forms.

Yours in the Mother,
David A. Frangquist
Patriarch of Belenos
Arch-Druid Emeritus of Carleton

Reply of the Other David

(By David Fisher, 1969)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. November 28th, 1969
2. Dear Richard,
3. I am enclosing several Druid documents, including a form for the sealing to the Fourth Order. The badge of that Order is a green glass chalice, which in my time could be purchased at the local Woolworth's.
4. I am also, as you will notice, appointing you Patriarch of the Fourth Order, for the period of your Arch-Druidship. This has always seemed a sensible move to make, for it will permit an active and continuing membership in the Forth Order.
5. Since I have left Carleton, my Druidism has become pretty much an inactive affair, mostly, I suspect, because of an increasing amount of certainty about my own Christian vocation. I still think Druidism served a useful purpose and will continue to do so, and I look forward with interest to further letters about the work.
6. I shall only comment briefly on your proposed Codex. It seems to me that although interesting, such a document does not represent the original intent of the founders of Druidism, among whom I was one.
7. We never meant it to be an elaborate and highly developed religion; we only saw it as a means of holding the college's then religious requirement up to ridicule: if they gave people credit for attending services, we would unmask ourselves as jesters, and if they withheld credit, they would be branded religious bigots.
8. It was really David Frangquist who began the serious work, although I had noted in my own sermons and meditations that Druidism did in fact seem to be helping some people along on their spiritual quest.
9. If the grove has continued, then I assume that this is a sign of people's interest, but the original three founders, Norman Nelson, Howard Cherniack and myself never saw the Druids as a permanent feature of Carleton life.
10. One minor note about vestments: do you still wear the white alb, the red and green reversible garment, (and carry the carven wooden staff) which I wore? Or have you reverted to the white robe only and the red or white ribbon? This was made a by a faithful second order Druid and I bequeathed it to Frangquist who added the staff.
11. By the way, the identifying mark of the Fourth Order ought to be a green silk ribbon.
12. You are correct in your surmise about Samhain 1963 since that was the time when the Druids were born, but actual worship on the hill began the next spring.
13. You ought, by the way, to have the Book of Faith among the Council records, my one actual contribution to the "official scripture." I would still stand by it, and if you have no copy, let me know and one will be sent.

Yours in the Mother,
David Fisher

P.S. There is no New York grove so far as I know, and I have no plans to establish one in St. Louis. I may be able to re-visit Carleton next year; if so, I would enjoy meeting the Druids and perhaps leading a service.

Fisher's Farewell

(By David Fisher, 1970)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. 13 April 1970
2. DAVID, FIRST ARCH-DRUID OF CARLETON, PATRIARCH OF GRANNOS, TO THE REFORMED DRUIDS OF THE CARLETON GROVE, PEACE AND GREETING IN THE MOTHER:
3. Brothers and Sisters:
4. I understand from Reverend Brother Shelton that certain aspects of the history of the Druids have been lost. To fill that lamentable gap, I am writing the following epistle.
5. You should understand first of all that Jan Johnson, author in large part of the Chronicles, because of the style he chose, had of necessity to alter a number of early events. David Frangquist, the second Arch-Druid, codified and printed the Chronicles and added much material, but Johnson is responsible for the main body of material.
6. He was, or is, a Druid of the Second Order, and served at one time as Preceptor. He chose not to fully record, in particular, the origin of the R.D.N.A. in full detail.
7. Even the Chronicles cannot disguise that R.D.N.A. was at least in part understood as a protest movement against the then religious attendance requirement at Carleton. The thought was that if no credit was extended, we could claim religious bigotry on the part of the Administration; if it was extended, on the other hand, we could reveal the frivolous origin of the cult.
8. For you must understand that whatever Frangquist made out of it, Reformed Druidism was originally the product of an interest of mine in Celtic and Norse mythology, and of Norman Nelson and Howard Cherniack's interest in setting up a quasi-religious body.
9. It began over a dinner table in April, and I held the first service on May Day. I never claimed any special consecration by a Druid in England, nor did I ever claim a vision or an inspiration. I simply proclaimed the glories of the Earth Mother and held services, constructed largely out of my imagination.
10. You will not have any of my early meditations; they were never written down. Basically, they upheld a panentheism, a general admonition to practice inwardness, and were originally intended to simply be as general as possible without offending anyone. They only became more intense and serious when I discovered that some of the persons who had come to laugh had found real meaning in the service.
11. Despite all of this, however, I think that it is to David Frangquist, far more than any of the three founders, that you owe your continued existence. Howard Cherniack soon lost interest and drifted away, once the requirement was abolished. Norman Nelson was a great lover of ritual and form for itself, but he shared with me a worry lest Druidism become too serious. I do not know what his current attitudes are.
12. For myself, I can only say that although I no longer hold services, nor am involved in a grove, I consider myself to retain much of the spirit of the original movement. Druidism's open and flexible character is part of my own theological outlook, which I attempt to incorporate as a Christian theologian.

13. I would not in principle object to holding a service if I were ever at Carleton, for example; it is simply that my spiritual needs are currently being met by something which seems to have more substance and more depth.
14. Indeed, when Druidism began to get "serious," Norman and I agreed that it would be well worth the trouble if the R.D.N.A. served as a way-station for homo viator, a place to be used for temporary refreshment and nourishment, perhaps, during years when alienation from more conventional forms of religion was greatest, but not as a final resting place.
15. We would have been far more definite in formulating our tenets had we intended the R.D.N.A. to be a self-sufficient religion. The tenets, in fact, as embodied in the Constitution, are the only remaining contribution of Howard Cherniack, and may reflect his lawyer's desire to frame a deliberately flexible instrument.
16. Some other marginal notes may be of interest. The higher orders were suggested Norman Nelson (his love of ritual perhaps getting the better of him) and given their names by Frangquist. The reversible chasuble was made and designed by Barbara Beahm, a Second Order Druid. The altar was build of discarded stones near the monument on Monument Hill, and torn down within a day of its building.
17. There are other sidelights that I could add, but I think this forms the substance of what I had intended to say. If you have the time, I should appreciate hearing from as many of you as care to write to me just what R.D.N.A. means to you. As founder, I feel a certain responsibility for all Druids, and your current ideas would greatly interest me.
18. Finally, as Patriarch of Grannos, let me mention that any of you who feel especially called to the work of healing, whether in a physical or other sense, and can journey to St. Louis, will, upon due thought, be welcomed by me into the Order of Grannos.
19. BLESSING AND PEACE, HOPE AND JOY FROM THE MOTHER EARTH, THE GROUND OF ALL LIFE, BE AND REMAIN WITH THE DRUIDS OF THE GROVE OF CARLETON.

David
Patriarch of Grannos
13 April 1970

The Polite Refusal

(By Richard Shelton, 1970)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. April 7, 1970
2. Dear David,
3. Many thanks for your letter of 28 November and for the assorted documents enclosed therewith. Since overseas mail is not often returned if undeliverable, I had no idea whether my missives were getting through, but I see that the most important did. Please let me know whether the St. Louis address will be relatively permanent.
4. I am returning the copy of the fourth order consecration service since I have what seems to be the original in the Archives. I do not, however, have the Book of Faith, so the proffered copy would be welcome.
5. The red and green reversible vestment is indeed still in use, although the staff apparently fell by the wayside some time ago (it would be an interesting custom to revive). Steven (Savitzky, 7th Arch-Druid), never one for ceremony, would throw the robe on over whatever he happened to have on at the moment, but I usually wear a white alb under it and have lately taken to wearing a cope-like robe under it.
6. It is, unfortunately, a bit weak about the hems, and I argue with my self periodically whether I should tamper with such a relic and re-stitch them. Who, by the way, is the faithful second order Druid that created it?
7. The codex has not been received well. Looking at it now, I see that it is much too stringent, and, as Frangquist has suggested, it really doesn't accomplish what I had in mind, i.e., improvement of communications.
8. Some of what has roused much ire was intended to do just that in order to ensure response, but most was due to the fact that a lot of tradition had not survived at Carleton – we suffered a break in the chain of Arch-Druids during which much was forgotten. At any rate, the Codex will be withdrawn.
9. Through cognizant of the honor you have done me, I must decline the Patriarchate.
10. My reason are based on two traditions that are as absolute as anything in Reformed Druidism: (1) that the Patriarch of any given order is chosen by the council of the next lower order, and (2) that within any high order the Patriarch wields absolute authority. In light of (2) I recognize your right to resign and will convey your resignation to the Council if you so desire – although I would do so with great unwillingness and would counsel you rather to maintain your well-deserved office and title.
11. However, I cannot accept the Patriarchate from any but the Council. Similarly, I shall not claim fourth-order priesthood unless I am actually consecrated to the order or am created Patriarch by the Council.
12. But there is a further difficulty in the implementation of your directive, and that is simply that, inasmuch as the Patriarch holds absolute authority within his order, no human force except the Patriarch himself can require that a Patriarch resign.
13. Steve has suggested the possibility of abolishing the Patriarchate and attaching to the office of Arch-Druid of Carleton the position of "Psuedo-Patriarch" with the

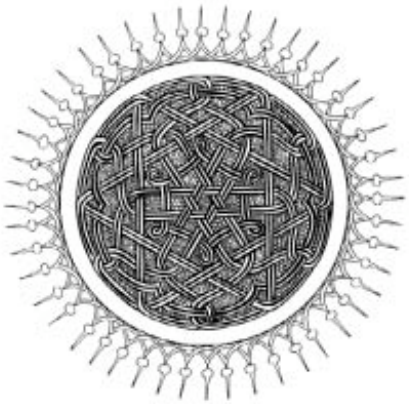
desired properties, but I doubt that such a radical change is either necessary or desirable.

14. The principal difference between the current arrangement and your proposal (with the logical extension to other high orders) is that the former forces priests of the higher orders to seek out new priests for elevation, while the latter makes the propagation of the order virtually automatic.

15. Since the high orders are not yet in grave danger of dying out, the former seems preferable in that it requires more effort on the part of the older priests and that it encourages paths to cross more often than would otherwise be the case. And I think that Druids are mobile enough to make the current arrangement work.

16. Having said that, I hardly need add that, should you be able to re-visit Carleton, you would be more than welcome.

Yours in the Mother
Richard Shelton
Arch-Druid of Carleton



Apology for Simplicity

(By David Fisher, 1970)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA
2. Patriarch of Grannos [i.e. David Fisher to Shelton]
3. Dear Reverend Brother-in-the-Mother,
4. I am sorry that you have misunderstood my proposals as reactionary in character and as attempts to hinder Druidism. Accordingly, acting on your advice and counsel, I direct the following: 1.That my vote on priestesses remain the same, but my letter not be circulated or reasons given to the Council.
5. That proposals No. 1, 4, and 5 be withdrawn.
6. That proposals 2 and 3 be submitted with whatever explanation the Arch-Druid of Carleton sees fit to add.
7. Believe me when I say that, far from being anti-feminine or attempting to impose a rigid dogma, I was merely attempting to return to the original, simple spirit of Druidism.
8. Analyzing the movement historically, I can see that I was responsible for many of the trends towards more complicated organization and ritual, as well as a more clearly developed theology, leading to what seems to me an invalid assumption on the part of some Druids, that Druidism is a religion, and a valid substitute for it.
9. I feel that Druidism is not a religion nor was ever intended to be by the founders, Norman Nelson, Howard Cherniak, and myself. Now I see my attempt to interject meaning into the services in the middle of my first year as Arch-Druid as a mistake, for while some meaning was necessary, it has been carried, I fell out of all proportion.
10. The original spirit vitiating Druidism was a fresh and as simple as the winds blowing over Monument Hill. There was a spicy irreverence not uncommon to Carleton which I could not appreciate but see now as a healthy balance.
11. In my proposals, I was but attempting, perhaps clumsily, to maintain some sort of guideline by the founders and original Druids on the organization which is, after all, our proximate, if not our ultimate, responsibility.
12. As you well know, from my widely varying letters, I have been worried at times over what I have done. At times I have been moved to consider resigning my orders. Now, however, I see my duty as remaining, and advising. If you wish to add priestesses, by all means do so, for my feeling is really tied to a desire to keep organization simple.
13. I must insist, however, that proposals 2 and 3 are vital if those who began the work of the Mother are to be kept in touch with new developments. The Reformed Druid has always boasted of his democratic ways, and I do not wish to impose control. But to advise is, I think, a minimal right which I maintain.
14. My sincere apologies for any disturbance this may have caused, and my best wishes for you personally next year in graduate school.

Yours in the Mother,
David Fisher
Arch-Druid of New York (Elect)
Patriarch of Grannos

The Report of Richard

(By Richard Shelton, 1970)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. Council of Dalon Ap Landu
2. 8 April 1970
3. Dear Reverend Brothers-and Sisters-in-the-Mother,
4. It is my pleasure to convey to the Council Robert Larson's announcement of the founding of the Berkeley Grove of the RDNA and of his election as its Arch-Druid. This grove is to my knowledge the only active grove besides the Carleton Grove; its advent is most welcome.
5. [New priests and available publications follow.]
6. The Codex of Form has not been received well. One reason for this is undoubtedly that my reconstructions of original practices from the tantalizingly incomplete Archives were wide of their mark, but the paramount reason lies simply in the conception of the Codex as a codex, i.e., as a codification of the material included therein.
7. I have been convinced (several times over) that such a great degree of regulation is not only unnecessary but also distinctly detrimental – and would only be ignored. Acceding, therefore, to the principle that the lack of rigid structure is one of the greatest assets of Druidism, I hereby withdraw the Codex from the consideration of the Council. Neither do I intend to develop a Codex of Liturgy inasmuch as I myself would feel unnecessarily fettered by a fixed liturgy.
8. On the other hand, a collection of tradition and of liturgy, to be observed at the priest's discretion, could be useful in the administration of a grove or mission. Further, it is my firm conviction that candidates for the priesthood should be thoroughly schooled in the history and traditions of the Reform, and such a collection would expedite matters considerably. It is this, then, that I shall direct my efforts.
9. Finally, I direct your attention to the enclosed proposal concerning priestesses. The proposal, submitted by Robert Larson and myself, seeks to abolish the restrictions that relegate priestesses to what Mr. Larson has called "second-class Druidiship."
10. These restrictions, which have no foundation in the basic tenets, are difficult to justify and have left the priestesses in a rather ambiguous position. This we have tried to remedy. As to some of the specific provisions of the proposal, Mr. Larson writes the following:
11. "Women, Danu bless 'em, have been causing men problems since the first. It's time to resolve this situation of priestesses.
12. As you are probably aware, the hours problem is not met with in most places, and I am sure that we can rise above our male chauvinism and accord them an equal place with priests if they want it.
13. This proposal would also enable them to refuse equality if they wish, and leave room for consecration of a priestess unto a higher order without a vigil where problems are met.
14. However, she could not be a third order without a vigil, nor could she perform the sacred worship, but only the duties of the order unto which she has been given until such time as she shall take the vigil if it is her wish to become a Third Order Druid."
15. You will note that this rather wordy proposal maintains the special place that women have among us while raining them to first-class Druidship. Maintaining their special place by allowing them to be consecrated to a higher order without being a Third Order, it nonetheless encourages their vigiling and preserves the decision-making area of the Council of Dalon ap Landu to those who have earned it by vigiling upon the bosom of the Mother and have Her find them worthy."
16. As Chairman of the Council, I have the responsibility of maintaining the legality of its resolutions lest that of any future resolution be jeopardized. Therefore, since the Council has operated under the directive in Customs 8:13 since its constitution, and since the Council has never formally granted priestesses of the third order any voice or vote in the Council, I must request that the priestesses refrain from casting ballots. Further, if the resolution is not passed, I cannot allow the priestesses to vote on any subsequent proposal until such privileges are granted them by the Council.
17. With that, I shall close, asking you to indicate your vote on the enclosed card.

Yours in the Mother,
Richard M. Shelton
Arch-Druid of Carleton

[Note: The vote did pass unanimously among priests (and priestesses) who voted, and was the last to do so. See Records of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, in Part 4 of ARDA.]

The Epistle to the Encyclopedist

(By David Fisher, 1973)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. 13 Jul 1973
2. The Rev. J. Gordon Melton, Research Director
3. The Institute for the study of American Religion
4. P.O. Box 1311
5. Evanston, Illinois 60201
6. Dear Mr. Melton,
7. In response to your letter of 26 June, I will be glad to provide you what information I can for your article. I make only two request in advance: that if you quote from this letter, you send advance copies of the article, and, if you merely use the information I provide you, that you send me a copy of the article as it appears in print.
8. My reason for this request is quite simple: there has been a tendency among the Reformed Druids of North America (hereafter RDNA) to expand statements, especially those made by myself as "founder," and I should not like further cultic legends to grow.
9. The RDNA began as a result of a conversation between myself and two other persons, Howard Cherniack, later to become first Preceptor, and Norman Nelson, later to become first Server. The conversation had been centered upon Carleton College's then religious requirement, a requirement that students be present at one of several religious exercises on Sunday.
10. My own reading in Frazer, Wesson, and other sources which I cannot at present locate, suggested the "Reformed Druid" concept, i.e. non-bloody sacrificial Druids, with a simplified "Earth Mother" panentheism accompanied with a ritual is reminiscent of Christian communion services and Quaker meetings.
11. Howard, I think, made the proposal that we actually form such a group, the strategy being as follows: if students are denied credit for attending our services, we will shout "religious persecution," and if they do receive credit, we will expose the whole thing as a hoax, thereby ridiculing the requirement. Either way, it seemed an excellent ploy for disturbing the status quo.

Chapter the Second

1. I shall not detail the gradual growth of ritual, for the most part the product of our fertile imaginations. For the most part, the meditations I gave were nature meditations, stressing quietism, peace, and reverence for life.
2. I personally never conceived Druidism as a genuine alternative to other religions, but as an additional source of meditation. What I think changed the direction of the Druids was the inspiration of my immediate successor, David Frangquist, and the literary work of Jan Johnson. Perhaps I should also add the ecstatic trances of a girl named Jackie, whose last name eludes me at present.
3. David, unlike myself or the co-founders, took his Druidism seriously, and meditated long and hard before asking for "ordination" as a Third Order priest. I think that whatever longevity the Druids possess owes more to his religious vision and vigor than to my "founding" activity, although I set the form and the theology, of which more later.
4. I think all three founders thought the Druids would fold with the ending of the religious requirement our senior year. Instead, there was such interest that I continued services, and agreed to make David a "Third Order" Druid, agreed to let him and Norman set up a hierarchy of Patriarchs, of which I was to be the first, and continued to hold services until David took over.
5. Jan Johnson composed the "Chronicles," which I assume are still in use at Carleton, and this further intensified the aura of religious zeal, for despite the mock-Biblical style of most of the books, elements in the "Customs" and in the "Meditations" from the hand of David Frangquist (identified as the Chronicler) were genuine.
6. Jackie was a co-ed who fancied herself as having powers to foresee the future, and my last year, at a fire on Samhain (Halloween), as we sat in a circle holding hands, she did indeed prophesy, and a month later, after President Kennedy's death, many claimed that she had given an exact picture of the Capitol Rotunda as it was for the funeral.
7. Out of these elements, and an innate hunger for a nature-mystical religion of the sort the Druids had become, the Druids grew. To my knowledge, there is still an Arch-Druid and Grove at Carleton, as I have received communications for a number of years from various Arch-Druids and I have no reason to believe that the phenomenon has died out.
8. I have heard of other "Groves" established throughout the United States by Successive Arch-Druids and other Third Order Druids, but have no knowledge of how or whether they are flourishing.

Chapter the Third

1. As an Ph.D. candidate in philosophical theology, I could write an elaborate statement on the kind of panentheistic theology I helped to form, but I think that the most adequate statement of my thinking – and of the thinking of the other Druids at the time – is contained in the pamphlet called "What is Reformed Druidism?" offered by David Frangquist with some editing by myself. I am also enclosing a copy of Frangquist's other pamphlet, "The Song of the Earth." These documents, written in 1964, capture much better the spirit of what Druidism tried to become, than I can now bring to memory.
2. You ask whether I am still a Druid. I am an Episcopal Deacon, and plan to spend the rest of my life as a Priest of the Episcopal Church, so formally, the answer is no, if one cannot serve two masters. I do not continue the rituals I and Norman Nelson wrought in 1963 on Saturdays.
3. On the other hand, I think the quality of my religious life has been influenced by the whole Druid experience, and since Druids never required members to renounce their previous religious preference, I suppose in a sense I still count myself a Druid. I am still listed, at least if your information source was Druidic rather than administrative, as a Third Order Druid, and am interested in the future of the group which I and other helped bring to life.
4. I think that Druidism was a phenomenon which was able to flourish through birth at the right time.
5. The Sixties were, after all, a period of intense interest in mysticism and strange religions, and a period also of the rise of the counter-culture. While none of the founders, or

David Frangquist, were then self-consciously "counter-culture," I think we provided those alienated by the turgidity of main line Protestantism a surprisingly viable alternative.

6. To the extent that Druidism has continued, I suspect that for some at least, the scanty theology of the RDNA provides a haven. Of course, there could not be Druid ethic, except of a minimal sort, and this is perhaps one of the strongest features of the RDNA. Certainly, many of those who became interested at the time of my leaving were rebels against an overly–moralistic Bible-Belt fundamentalism. But I am only guessing here.
7. One final comment, this time personal and evaluative. I think that RDNA meets Whitehead's requirements for a rational religion: it is capable of verification at all temperatures, to the extent that it is even possible to verify religious claims. This is, of course, easier for a non-historical religion with minimal theology than for a historical faith with a detailed doctrine of God and the world. Having said that I remain to some extent a Druid, let me conclude with the other side.
8. We formulated Druidism as a religion of the least common denominator, a faith that few could object to, and were surprised when some embraced it as adequate (making, of course, their own additions on the way).
9. For me, Druidism was not enough. Praying "to whom it may concern," which is what prayer to a personification of Nature amounts to, was not and has not been sufficient to sustain me.
10. However, despite my ambivalence about my responsibility for bringing the Druids to birth, I am happy if there have been and are those who have found in its minimal belief stance a helpful source of meaning in life.

Yours sincerely,
(The Rev.) David H. Fisher
P.S. I would appreciate any information you have on the current activities, or lack thereof, of the RDNA at Carleton.

Middling Selections: The Isaac Affair

The Book of Changes, PART ONE

(By Isaac Bonewits, 1974)

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the First

1. On July 18, 12 y.r. (1974 c.e.), the letter which follows was sent out by the Archdruid of the Twin Cities Grove to all the members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
2. "Dear Brothers and Sisters:
3. "I have thought long and hard about the difficulties facing the RDNA in the years ahead, and have come up with the following suggestions.
4. "as is traditional among the Druids, I make no request that my words become dogma, but rather that they be pondered and acted upon (either pro or con) by those of you who give a damn about Reformed Druidism, or would like to see it survive and even grow.
5. "Let us begin by admitting that we *are* a religion and describe ourselves to each other and the outside world roughly as follows:
6. " 'The RDNA is an Eclectic Reconstructionist Neopagan Priestcraft, based primarily upon Gaulish and Celtic sources, but open to ideas, deities and rituals from many other Neopagan belief systems. We worship the Earth-Mother as the feminine personification of Manifestation, Be'al as the masculine personification of Essence, and numerous gods and goddesses as personifications of various aspects of our experience. We offer no dogmas or final answer but only continual questions. Our goal is increased awareness and harmony within ourselves and all of Nature. We are willing to interact philosophically and ritually with members of all other belief systems that are compatible with our own approach and Nature."
7. "Let this be how we view ourselves and approach others.
8. "Next, I would recommend that, without getting into an evangelistic trip, we make our writings available to others and publicize the location and mailing addresses of our Groves through the Neopagan media.
9. "Next, let all the members of this Council who may in traveling meet other Neopagans of equivalent dedication to the search for awareness, act more swiftly to found Groves and to telescope (if ethically possible) the time needed to ordain these others to the Third Order down to a few months or even less; leaving the new Druids and Druidesses to take over the fledgling Groves while the ordainer travels on.
10. "Most especially can this be done, without the loss of 'quality control' within the Council, with those individuals who are already Priests and Priestesses in other Neopagan traditions based upon similar philosophies.

11. "In this way, a single Third Order Druid or Druidess in traveling about and meeting other Neopagans could in the space of one year provide legitimate ArchDruids or ArchDruidesses for three or four new Groves. This would solve the problem of maintaining our "Apostolic Succession" without the necessity of forcing would-be Druids to travel up to 2,000 miles to attend the services of one of the two surviving Groves for a year and a day.
12. "A similar program of 'exchanging ordinations' has already been carried out by many Witchcraft and other Neopagan organizations; and as long as reasonable care is exercised in the choices of who to telescope training for, no major problems arise.
13. "As for the conducting of the business of the Council, we are going to have to make some serious decisions immediately. Do we really need the Council? If the Carleton Grove is defunct (which it seems to be) how can we convene the Council when its official Chairperson is nonexistent? Was it really that wise to have the election of the head of the Council left to the caprice of any one Grove, especially a Grove whose membership changes every four years by 100%???
14. "I will make the following organizational proposals and ask that all members of the Council contact me with their reactions, before September 15th.
15. "Let the office of the Chairperson of the Council rotate from year to year among the heads of genuinely active Groves (i.e., holding at least one meeting per month). I will nominate Robert Larson, D.A.L., Be., Archdruid of the Berkeley Grove and an original Carleton Grove member as the First Chairperson.
16. "Let the By-Laws be changed so that members of the Council who do not keep in touch with the Chairperson (and send in change-of-address notes, etc.) may be temporarily dropped from the rolls of the Council until they get back into communication. This would solve the quorum problems so that we could actually get some work done now and then.
17. "Let the rules governing the Higher Orders and the selection and replacement of their Patriarchs and Matriarchs be changed or else let the Higher Orders be abolished.
18. "It is my earnest belief that these changes need to be made immediately and I hope that when this letter is eventually edited and tacked on to the end of my addition to the *Apocrypha*, that it will give a better picture of the RDNA than this letter presently presents.
19. "If the RDNA is to survive as an organization, these or similar changes are going to have to be made. I request all members of the Council to contact me as I said before, by September 15th at the latest.
20. "If the majority of the Council members approve (and remember, this is only the majority of those members known to exist as of two years ago, because nobody ever bothered to send out updated lists), then I will go down to Carleton College and attempt to recover the Archives. These I will send to Robert Larson.
21. "If the majority of the letters I receive disapprove of my suggestions, Robert and I will take our Groves and leave the RDNA to found a new group to be called the SDNA or Schismatic Druids of North America.
22. "We will declare *The Druid Chronicles [of the Foundation]* to be our 'old Testament' and will rewrite those portions we consider objectionable (though for historical reasons we will retain the original readings in footnote form). Then we will write additions of our own, incorporating the contents of this letter as our guidelines.
23. "This we will do, not because we seek to destroy Reformed Druidism or to co-opt it, but because we honestly feel that this is the only way that the principles that the RDNA stands for can be spread and grow into any form that can help either humanity or ourselves.
24. "The RDNA being basically anarchistic, has little it can do to prevent schisms and we are ready, willing and able to schis if that is what it takes.
25. "We are open to other suggestions, but suggest that they come quickly for our decision to schis or remain within the RDNA will be made before *Samhain*.
26. "May the Mother bless us all, and inspire us with the wisdom we need.
27. [signed] "Isaac Bonewits, D.A.L., Be.; Archdruid of the Twin Cities."

[Continued in The Book of Changes, part two]

The Epistle of Renny

(By Renata Seidel, 1974)

(New to ARDA 1)

Chapter the First

1. Dear Brother Isaac,
2. I am torn between a desire to write in such a manner as to show you the ludicrous irony of your discrepancy in spirit with the founding fathers of Reformed Druidism, and a desire to seriously confront you with the rather "dangerous" nature of the tone you have established.
3. Three things disturb me greatly.

Chapter the Second

1. One. Your tone, your approach, your pointed lack of all brotherly community feeling, and even awareness, in attempting to adopt a position of authority and a spirit of action.
2. An interest in change, in reform, in producing responsiveness, is perfectly admirable.
3. Where the need for such ominousness?
4. Please reread your letter and try to perceive the fearsomeness it quite naturally communicates.
5. If I did not take you seriously, I would laugh at what seems to me (if possible and probably the only possible) highly undruidic sentiment.
6. The "voice" itself of your letter frightens me into suspicions of its content and eventual implications.

Chapter the Third

1. Two. Your completely undemocratic method of attempting to bring about change. I cannot "vote" on the content of your letter, because I disapprove of both alternatives, i.e. your own particular approach vs. a schism.
2. Why do you assume that no other Druid would have worthwhile alternatives?
3. And why do you present the matter in such a way that it is impossible to make additional suggestions subject to vote?

Chapter the Fourth

1. Three. Your overriding concern with form, with definition, with growth, speed, efficiency, in other words with "progress" (please catch the implications of that term, I know you didn't use it), all "without getting into an evangelistic trip."
2. My dear brother Isaac, a concern with evangelism is a concern with evangelism, no matter whether you perceive that that's the source of your high or not.
3. Evangelism or even conversion have never been aims of Druidism.
4. Though you may think you can maintain an interest in "quality," an interest in speed and conversion are themselves antagonistic to the essential spirit of Reformed Druidism as it was conceived.
5. I myself, would never have become a Druid under your proposed approach or definition.
6. The entrance into any "public" system of information dispensing is itself a very touchy question, the importance of which you seem entirely unaware.

Chapter the Fifth

1. I have many objections to your "definition" of Druidism.
2. Unfortunately, you have presented it as subject to a yes or not vote, and not even revision by the members.
3. In the past, form and definition have always been of the greatest flexibility, and there is a principle and a spirit behind that fact - unexpressed, but all the more solemn for its unexpressibleness.
4. You act as if this flexibility were a result of disinterestedness, rather than meaningful interest.
5. In other words, you have presented a very complex question in a very narrow and political manner.
6. One might almost say tyrannical.

Chapter the Sixth

1. To put it mildly, brother Isaac, you scare the living daylights out of me, as far as the future of Druidism goes.
2. I am much more concerned about the institutional and highly political aspects you are introducing, than even in the sleepiness of the Carleton Grove, in spite of its crucial position organization-wise.
3. Skepticism and organizational sluggishness have always been present in the past and have not yet threatened the very existence of the Druidic movement.
4. In fact, it's very possible they reflect a certain typical state of mind, or one which at least has its own particular spiritual validity, the more credit to Druidism that it can attract even such people refer e.g. to the founding fathers themselves!
5. If you are so concerned about the situation at Carleton, I suggest you take a trip there and call a meeting, before you claim their membership has dropped to zero.
6. I suggest you contact Donald Morrison, who is only First order (due to his extreme spiritual ponderousness) and has not therefore taken over the "formal" rituals at the school.
7. You will find him most receptive to brotherly discussion.

Chapter the Seventh

1. The situation organizational-wise of Druidism is, of course, difficult. I have no argument against your complaint, only against your presentation and your solutions.
2. You will undoubtedly be hearing from at least one other person (Richard of Ann Arbor) on the history and the intricacies of the problem itself.
3. I hope you will be convinced of the necessity of a more involved discussion among members on so involved an issue.
4. (Schism is certainly not a light matter!)
5. P l e a s e s l o w d o w n and calm down, brother Isaac!
6. A blessing from the peacefulness of the East.
7. (Tonight, by the way, is Krishna's birthday.)

Peace,
Renny the Silent
Archdruid of Carleton
August 10th, 1974

The Epistle of Ellen

(By Ellen Conway Shelton, 1974)

(New to ARDA 1)

Chapter the First

1. Dear Brother Bonewits.
2. I have thought long and hard about what might be the nature of the difficulties you mention facing the RDNA in the years ahead, for I do not see that any are yet apparent.
3. The only difficulties I can see at all are those facing RDNA as an organized religion; and for the existence of these I rejoice.
4. I should be troubled indeed were RDNA to decline to the status of an organized religion.

Chapter the Second

1. "Verily, I say unto you: is it not written:
2. "And each took this to be a sign, each in his own way"?
3. "Which of you, having risen up saying: 'This is truth, for I have seen it, will be followed? For even as ye have seen it, have not the others also seen it not; and where therein is the proof?
4. "Rather, that which is as the bright light unto one man is as but the thick cloud unto the other." (Med. 6:1-3)

Chapter the Third

1. The most which may be said to characterize all of the RDNA is that which is set forth in the Two Basic Tenets.
2. If you wish to be more specific about your own view of your own Druidism, then it is your responsibility to make clear that the narrower view is your own, within the broad range defined by the Basic Tenets.
3. I confess that it is with some regret that I avow this to be so, for I not only am most definitely not a Neopagan, but also object to the infusion of Neo-Paganism into Reformed Druidism.
4. But by the same token, you must not expect that any of us will fail to complain bitterly if you present your view as that of all Reformed Druids.

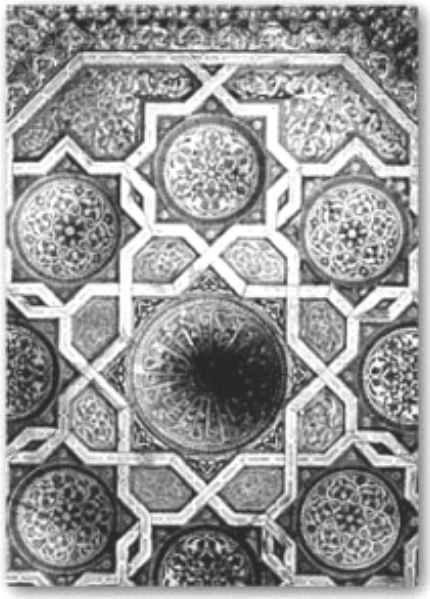
Chapter the Fourth

1. I do not share your hope for "RDNA... to survive as an organization."
2. Its origin was in protest at the organization of religion, and I hope to see it continue so.
3. I would prefer to see RDNA survive as a fellowship of people whose search for religious truth has led them to the contemplation of and delight in nature.
4. And I earnestly feel that in this (lack of) form, RDNA can indeed spread and grow (if so desired) into a vehicle that can help both ourselves and humanity.
5. But let us not make the mistake, which so many others have made, that of stressing the form to the neglect of the goal.
6. The form of Reformed Druidism of North America must be unique to each person in his own circumstances: only so can it ever hope to attain its goal.

Chapter the Fifth

1. "Religions construct cathedrals and design robes [or definitions], just as scientists develop elaborate journals, but all too often the enterprise may become limited to a propagation of the means, with the original end, the desired objective, forgotten." (Robert E. Ornstein, *The Psychology of Consciousness*, p. 98)

Ellen Shelton
Archdruid of Ann-Arbor
August 11th, 1974 c.e.



The Words of Green

(By Richard Shelton, 1974)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the First

1. To the Council of Dalon Ap Landu:
2. Many of you will recently have received a letter from Isaac Bonewits; this letter is in response to his.
3. I am somewhat bemused by this call for a description of Druidism. The description has been there all along; refer the curious to the Basic Tenets in the *Chronicles* (Law 4-6). More than that there is not. We are such a diverse group that there is almost nothing one can add to the Tenets and still embrace the entire Reform. If one wants a more direct description, say:
4. The Reformed Druids of North America are a fellowship dedicated to the search for religious awareness. We believe each person must find for himself his own path to awareness; we believe there is comfort and wisdom in nature and in the words of all who search.
5. I hesitate to suggest even that much. On the other hand, I find that Isaac's description bears little resemblance to my brand of Druidism. There is literally not one sentence in it I can agree with wholeheartedly.
6. I am not sure that I worship anything, for example; I am not even sure I know what worship is.
7. I find "the feminine personification of Manifestation" and "the masculine personification of Essence" devoid of any meaning whatever.
8. The phrase "eclectic Reconstructionist Neo-Pagan Priestcraft" just sticks in the throat; we have practicing Jews and Christians in the Reform, and "pagan" is not usually used to describe Jews or Christians, or Mohammedans or Buddhists, or their writings, from which I have drawn comfort and inspiration.
9. As for Priestcraft: if Druidism is Priestcraft, what shall we say of those Druids who are not ordained to the Third Order? Are they failed Druids, Druids who have not seen the light?
10. Quite the contrary; they are Druids in the fullest sense, even as we of the Third Order are Druids of the First Order first.
11. Indeed, it is the *priests* who fail, to the extent that our priesthood is in evidence. If we insist on attempting to guide others and on managing the Reform, let us at least recognize with Lao Tzu[6] that the best leadership is that which is not perceived.
12. It will be evident that Isaac and I disagree strongly on many matters.
13. Yet and this is my point we both call ourselves Reformed Druids. Let the Reform remain such that this is possible. Let us in particular not represent our private paths as Reformed Druidism.

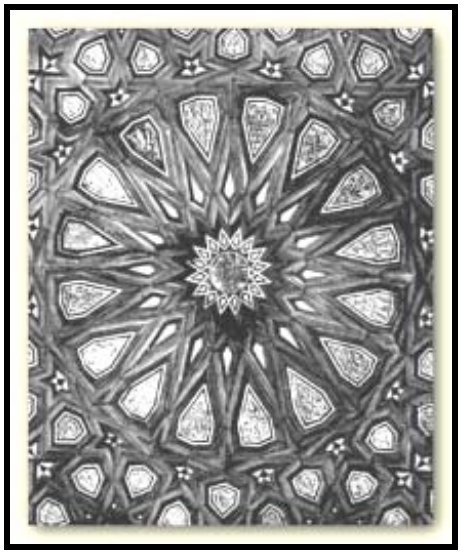
Chapter the Second

1. What is the hallmark of the Third Order? The answer is written all over Customs 6: it is service.
2. We are ordained to the Order because we feel the call to minister, and not to confer upon us any honor.
3. This call is beyond our commitment as Druids to the search for awareness, and it carries responsibility; responsibility to the Reform not to vitiate its particular Druidic nature, responsibility to the individual Druid not to tread too heavily in his path.
4. Take on the priesthood of the Neo-Pagans if you will, for your path may lead that way.
5. But as an Archdruid, offer the priesthood of Reformed Druidism only to those who receive it as a commitment to the service of the Reform and who receive it in this spirit of humility.

Chapter the Third

1. I hope to avoid schism; I find it hard to believe that, as undogmatic as we have been, we are faced with it.
2. But if Isaac and Robert feel the need for more dogma and more organization *within* Druidism, I am afraid I will welcome their schism.
3. For my part, I wish Druidism to remain what it took me some time to come to appreciate: a quiet, gentle revolution against tyranny in religion and as all-embracing as the mother Earth.

Peace be unto all of you!
Richard M. Shelton
14 Foghamhar XII
14 August 1974



The First Epistle of Isaac

(By Isaac Bonewits, 1974)

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the First:

On the Disintegration of the Druids

1. Dear Brothers and Sisters: The Reformed Druids of North America today seem to be facing an inevitable choice; a choice that most organisms, be they physical, psychic or social, must eventually face.
2. That choice is between growth and change on the one hand or stagnation and disintegration on the other; that is to say, between Life and Death.
3. As I write these words in the late summer of the Twelfth Year of the Reform (1974 c.e.), the RDNA *as an organization* is nearly defunct.
4. For of the many Groves which have been founded (Carleton, Berkeley, Chicago, Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan, New York, Stanford, Twin Cities, Vermilion and others) few are known to be thriving still.
5. The Berkeley Grove and the Twin Cities Grove meet frequently and have a score of members each. The Chicago Grove has a score of members who meet only on High Days. The Stanford Grove has only a handful and, as far as I Have been able to determine, the other others are defunct or nearly so.
6. Does this mean that the RDNA is dead?
7. Nay, for as someone from the apparently defunct Carleton Grove recently wrote to me, "The Druids are dead. Long live the Druids!"
8. For Reformed Druidism, as an idea, can never die as long as there is one individual still seeking awareness through Nature.
9. Now there are many possible interlocking explanations for the impending demise of the organizational body of Druidism, some of which should be briefly noted.
10. First of all, there is the basic anarchism of the majority of the Founders.
11. This dislike of authority and organization is vital and basic to our philosophy; for it has kept dogmatism and politics from engulfing the Druids.
12. But it has also prevented us from effective communication not only with each other, but with the outside world as well, many of whose inhabitants would have benefited greatly from Reformed Druidism, had they been able to find out about it.
13. Secondly, while many both inside and outside of the RDNA consider us to be one of the oldest public Neopagan movements in the country, nonetheless, it seems that many of the Founders were either Neo-Christians, Atheists or Agnostics.
14. Most of these have in the last ten years become respectable Neo-Christians, Agnostics, Marxists or members of other traditional and accepted religions, and have quietly but firmly dropped out of the RDNA (except to protest vigorously whenever anyone suggests changing the structure of the RDNA).
15. Thus, because most of its leaders have abandoned it, the RDNA has quite naturally tended to fall apart.
16. Thirdly, the RDNA has never been very "evangelistic" or anxious to recruit members, and therefore our numbers have never been very great.
17. Perhaps at our largest we have had sixty members and thirty priests and priestesses across the entire continent.
18. This is too small for an organization to survive in small, scattered units, without a logical and sensible structure.
19. There are no doubt that many other factors which have played important roles in our increasing disintegration as an organization, but there is no room to go into them here.
20. Let us instead turn to consider possible answers to what I feel are the two most important questions facing us in this Twelfth Year of the Reform:
21. Is Reformed Druidism, as an organization, worth bothering to keep alive at all? If so, how can we do it without violating our basic principles of individual autonomy and freedom?

Chapter the Second: Neopaganism and Reformed Druidism

1. "Neopaganism" is a term that was first brought to the attention of our generation by Ven. Tim Zell, Primate of the Church of All Worlds (in St. Louis, MO), which is the second oldest public Neopagan organization in America, having been founded in 1961 c.e., two years before the Reform (2 b.r.).
2. As he uses it, "Neo-Paganism" refers to a complicated and constantly evolving philosophy based upon "viewing humanity as a functional organ within the greater organism of all Life, rather than as something separate and 'above' the rest of the natural world."
3. Other philosophers have since expanded the term to make it far broader than Ven. Zell might consider proper.
4. As I use it, "Neopaganism" refers to the modern polytheistic (or conditional monotheistic) nature religions that are based upon the older or "Paleopagan" religions; concentrating upon an attempt to retain the humanistic, ecological and creative aspects of these old belief systems while discarding their occasionally brutal or repressive developments which are inappropriate to the "Aquarian Age."
5. "Neochristianity," to give a parallel that might make things clearer, is a term used by some to refer to such groups as the Christian Scientist, Quakers, Unitarians, and other "liberal Christians;" while the "Paleochristians" include Roman Catholics, High Church Anglicans, Baptists, Pentecostalists and other "conservative Christians."
6. There are of course people who could be called "Neojews" (Reform) and "Paleojews" (Orthodox), "Neobuddhists" (Mahayana) and Paleobuddhists" (Theravada), "Neowitches" (Wiccans) and "Paleowitches" ("Fam-Trads"), etc.
7. The major Neopagan movements include modern, humanistic versions of Egyptian, Norse, Celtic, Roman, Greek, Slavic, African, Chinese, Native American and other ancient religions from around the world.
8. Perhaps the most well-known of such Neopagan movements are the various diverse belief systems that refer to themselves as being "Wicca," "Witchcraft," "The Old Religion," etc.; based upon many different cultural backgrounds (though primarily Celtic) and of wildly varying levels of scholarship and practice.

9. The major principles that these Neopagan religions have in common would seem to be these: (1) a reverence for Nature and a willingness to live by Her laws, rather than trying to "conquer" Her; (2) a constant search for awareness and growth, beginning in the realm of Nature; (3) a belief that there are certain Archetypal forces in the cosmos, usually called "gods," "goddesses," "nature elementals," "spirits," etc., that humans interact with for mutual benefit; and (4) a knowledge that psychic talents do indeed exist and can be trained and developed through the use of ritual, among other methods.
10. So it is clear that, in this expanded sense of "Neopagan," the RDNA fulfills more than one qualification to be a Neo-Pagan movement, though whether it is a "religion" or a "philosophy" was never decided by the original Carleton Founders.
11. I will maintain that Reformed Druidism is, or can be, a Neopagan *religion*, even though this contradicts the word of the major Founder of the RDNA (see *The Book of Faith*, verse 5) and absolutely horrifies him and others.
12. I will maintain further, that if it is to survive, Reformed Druidism must recognize its own Nature, as an originally proto-neopagan movement that has evolved into a genuine Neopagan group, and accept its duty to take it rightful place among the Neopagan movements of America.
13. But let me now approach this subject from another angle, one that will make more sense to some of you and less sense to others.

Chapter the Third: Magic, Witchcraft and Reformed Druidism

1. "Magic"; is a word that has many meanings to many people, but for the purposes of this Epistle, I shall define it as "Folk Parapsychology," the techniques developed for centuries all over the glove that are designed to facilitate the use of psychic talents.
2. While respectable clergy and physicists scream to the contrary, it is a *fact* that psychic phenomena exist and that they rarely follow the desires of scientists or other preachers.
3. A religious ritual is a spiritual psychodrama done for magical purposes, whether simple or complicated, heavy or lightweight.
4. When the ritual is led by a priest and/or a priestess who perform(s) the act of channeling the energies raised, and who act (s) as the official representative(s) of the deities invoked, then we have a psychic technology that is referred to as a system of "Priestcraft."
5. If, on the other hand, all the members of the religious group share the task of channeling the energies equally, and all expect to develop their psychic abilities, then we have a psychic technology that is referred to (at least by some) as a system of "Witchcraft."
6. But be warned that both of these approaches can blur together greatly! And they are both interwoven with Ceremonial Magic, Wizardry, Shamanism, Strega, Macumba and other system of magic working; for these terms have always been in flux and today are more slippery than ever.
7. But it is safe to say, from a scholarly viewpoint, that the RDNA is a Priestcraft and not a Witchcraft; though many Druids and Witches seem to encounter no difficulty in attending each other's rituals.
8. Now the rituals of the RDNA, though not originally designed to be magically strong, can be (and have been) used by trained Druids for powerful magical purposes; ranging from the mere charging of the chalice with stronger than usual psychic energy, to healings of physical diseases and the performance of drastic weather spells.
9. So, while the RDNA has not been around long enough as an organization to acquire a strong circuit of power in the collective unconscious (as the 40+ Catholic Churches have, for example), nonetheless, under the leadership of a Druid/ess who has been properly trained in magic, our rites can be used to reach back to touch the Ancient Gods invoked.
10. Yet another advantage to the rituals of the RDNA is their ecumenical or eclectic structure; for almost any good Pagan deity can be contacted within the context of our liturgy, including the Pagan deities behind the Christos myths.
11. When the waters of Life are passed about the circle and a psychic link is forged between those who drink and the Old Gods that is magic!
12. When Grannos of the Healing Springs is invoked to heal a sick person and that sick person is healed that is magic!
13. When Taranis is beseeched for rain and clouds suddenly gather from the four corners of the sky, rushing together to pour their bounty upon the Earth below that is magic!
14. All these things I have seen, and more.

Chapter the Fourth: Magic vs. Science?

1. Now lest there be some of you who feel that I am talking foolishly about that which I know naught, I will state that I have been a scholar of minority belief systems for ten years, that I have authored books and many scholarly treatises upon the subjects of Magic, Paganism, Witchcraft, Voodoo, Parapsychology and other related subjects.
2. Therefore, Brothers and Sisters, do I assure you, that *I know whereof I speak*.
3. All these wonders, of the sort that I have just related, though their very possibility is frightening to many, have always been common among Paleopagans and Neopagans (and they used to be common among Christians and Jews as well); and it is only the fanatic technologists and devout materialists who will close their eyes to that which they do not wish to see.
4. For to admit that the cosmos is bigger than their minds can comprehend, would be to admit that they are only a *part* of Nature, and not Her "conqueror." And this admission truly goes against all of Western Civilization and the "Judeo-Christian" tradition.
5. Even so, I beseech you Sisters and Brothers, that as the RDNA has always fought against the coerced belief systems of Established Religions, let us also be willing to combat the coerced belief system of the Established Religion of Scientism.
6. For no humans are infallible, even if indeed they be wearing the ceremonial white Labcoats, and waving the ritual Sliderules, and chalking up the mystic Numbers, and chanting the most sacred mantra, "Science has proven that...."
7. Wherefore, let us as Reformed Druids confess that there are indeed powers beyond human comprehension, beyond the limitations of human religions (no matter how

respectable), and work to develop our psychic talents for our benefit and that of the Earth-Mother.

Chapter the Fifth: What Can Be Done

1. Now this can be accomplished through many means: through ritual and music, poetry and song, enchantment and the seeking of oracles.
2. Groves may easily add magical spells to the middles of the Orders of Worship, or reserve those enchantments for magical Orders within the Reformed Druid movement.
3. For while there are three Lower Orders and seven Higher Order at present, still there is no reason why more may not be founded and dedicated to patron deities for there are many more Gaulish, British, Irish, Scots, Manx, Welsh, and Pictish gods and goddesses who are not mentioned in *the Chronicles of the Foundation*, but who were known to the ancient Druids, whose ways we seek to reconstruct.
4. Now among these other deities were many who are now worshipped by some of those who call themselves "Witches"; and although the Triple Moon/Earth/Sea Goddess and the Horned God of the Woods are not mentioned in our scriptures, still they are a part of our Paleopagan heritage.
5. Let us therefore cooperate with those Witches and Covens who are of a like mind to our own, neither lording it over them nor bending the knee, but treating them as sisters and brothers along the Paths to Awareness.
6. For while Ancient Druidism (*Druidecht*) had little if anything to do with Ancient Witchcraft (*wiccacraeft*), representing in all likelihood different social classes, in today's world it is best for Neopagans of all kinds to assist each other in whatever way they can, for the befit of All.
7. And as we attempt to resurrect and reconstruct the religious and magical practices of the of the Ancient Druids, let us not forget one of their most powerful ones, poetry.
8. For every Druid and every Druidess should be a poet.
9. It is said that the Ancient Druids spent twenty years or more in training, learning the unwritten lore of their peoples and how to fashion it into poetry that could inspire and subdue, crown a brave warrior and dethrone a tyrant, heal the sick and enchant the world.
10. Surely, Reformed Druids can continue this tradition.
11. So therefore, Sisters and Brothers, let us return the magic of ritual and poetry, music and song, dancing and feasting to our forms of our worship.
12. Only in this way do I think we may provide the psychic revitalization which we and the world so sadly need.
13. Only in this way, by forging the bond between us through the *waters-of-life* into an unbreakable chain linking us with the Earth-mother and Be'al, may we survive as anything other than a quaint Carleton College Alumni Club.
14. Only in this way may the *spiritual body* of Druidism be revived from the malaise that has brought it low.
15. *The organizational body of Druidism* can then be easily resurrected, though in what forms remains to be seen.
16. But since this is already the longest book in the *Apocrypha*, I will close with this assurance:
17. Rejoice!
18. The Gods are alive! Magic is afoot!

Peace!
Isaac Bonewits, D.A.L., Be.
Archdruid, Twin Cities Grove
Foghamhar, 12 y.r. [circa late August, 1974 c.e.]

Goobledegook and Red Tape

(By Gerre Goodman MacInnes, 1974)

(New to ARDA 1)

Chapter the First

1. Dear Rev. Brother Isaac.
2. Having received your missive, and the subsequent communiqué from Richard, I now feel as if I must add my humble opinions to the tempest which you have insisted on brewing in the RDNA's teacup.
3. There are several bones that I must pick with you. Having never met you, through no fault of my own, (I tried!) I hesitate to pass any judgment on your convictions.
4. However, I must react to what I consider the high-handed and willful way in which you have presented your ideas.

Chapter the Second

1. I, as a Quaker as well as a priest of the third order, cannot help but object to your efforts to turn a heretofore simple movement dedicated to the individual search for religious awareness into a Neo-Pagan Gobbledegook.
2. Haven't you had enough red tape in your life, that you want to wrap Druidism in more of the same?
3. If you feel the need to narrow your outlook by enclosing it in pompous definitions, be it on your hand, but leave me out of it.
4. I try to follow the Inner light, wherever it may be, and I am not about to reject any belief system just because it is not a part of the "Neo-Pagan" belief system that you describe.

Chapter the Third

1. As regards the Council, its workings and voting patterns, I stand with Richard. As long as there is a Grove at Carleton, let it originate from Carleton.
2. For one thing, I don't trust the postal system, and a traveling chair could result in lost mail and more confusion than we have already.
3. No amount of organization is going to compensate for irresponsibility on the part of council members. Therefore, Dick's resolution is sound, and should cover most of your objections.
4. As far as higher orders are concerned, could it be that you aspire to a higher order and are blocked in your ambition by the present system?
5. Let me remind you that it is in the Third Order that our power and our duty lie.
6. Service, not personal honor, should be our concern, however that service may choose to manifest itself. Follow the leadings, and you can't go wrong.

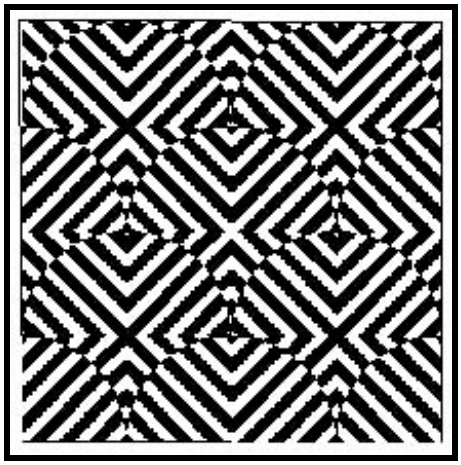
Chapter the Fourth

1. I am afraid that I regard your suggestions for increasing the number of Third Orders and Groves with some amusement, especially your suggestion to ordain (or re-ordain) those who are already "Priests and Priestesses in other Neo-Pagan traditions based upon similar Philosophies."
2. If the philosophy is similar, and the person in question has already received a call to the ministry, so to speak, the re-ordination to Third Order seems slightly redundant.
3. It's like saying "you have to be confirmed in our church before you can take communion with us."
4. In my opinion, you are trying to make holy those things which are, by their very nature, already holy to those who have eyes to see.

Chapter the Fifth

1. In short, Brother Isaac, it seems to me that you are trying to complicate the simple, making something dreadfully serious out of an idea that was conceived originally in a light spirit.
2. If you must, in order to be true to your conscience, schis, go with my blessing.
3. I, for one, must continue as I have begun, believing that life is, after all rather absurd, and he/she who takes anything too seriously is likely to end up looking nothing more than ridiculous.
4. "May the long time sun shine upon you, all love surround you, and the pure light within you guide you all the way on," wherever that may be.
5. Peace, and the light, be with you.

Gerre Goodman MacInnes
September 3rd, 1974 c.e.



The Epistle of Norman

(By Norman Nelson, 1974)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the First

1. Dear Isaac:
2. I don't know in advance what I'm going to say, and I really don't know where to begin. I guess I'll start by saying that I don't think that there is really any alternative to schism on *your* part. As I see it, RDNA can accept almost anything, but if you feel that you can't accept the other practitioners of the rite, in their infinite variety, then you must leave us for your own peace of mind.
3. Believe me, unless Druidism has changed tremendously in the several years I have been in only nominal touch with it, we will never require you to leave us!

Chapter the Second

1. The RDNA was never intended to be a religion, except in the "dictionary" sense, a strictly legalistic thing; since Carleton required everyone to attend religious services, we started our own religion, Druidism was not, at the time, intended to be anything except a joke.
2. As it developed, we wound up with quite a bit more than we had ever intended to create. I have used the catch-phrase that our disorganized religion appealed to those who couldn't stomach organized religion.
3. Seriously, though, we seemed to have struck a responsive chord in quite a few people. Dick Smiley was one I especially remember, for whom Druidism came to be an intensely serious business, we worked hard to keep it lighthearted!
4. One of the basic ideas which we hit hard on (partly to be acceptable, partly because it meant quite a bit to us *per se*) was that Druidism was not intended to be replacement for any religion no one was expected to deny any other faith (Christian, Jewish, what-have-you) to call himself a Druid; everyone who partook of the waters was automatically a Druid. (This means our membership includes such disparate entities as John Nason[7] and Bard Smith[8], the latter an ordained Episcopal priest.)
5. We established the first three orders because that was the way the service was written! Fisher was our 3rd order, and represented to everyone originally that he had gotten it all (including his ordination) from someplace he had been in school. Actually, of course, he invented it.
6. The higher orders came about equally haphazardly; Frangquist and I wanted to play a bigger role, so we invented the idea of the higher orders to ease Fisher out and let someone else be Archdruid! We gave him the honor of being Patriarch of the 4th order, and thereby "accidentally" wound up with the higher orders for ourselves!

Chapter the Third

1. To return to the question of your schism (repeating that I've been out of touch with what Druidism has been doing from about 1970 on):
2. Druidism is wide enough to embrace almost anything you want to do; if you feel it constrictive, then schism is best. I fear that you are getting away from the RDNA I know and if you're going to make great changes, then there is no question that to continue to call it the RDNA is doing a disservice to the RDNA we have known.
3. I am not frightened off by the Neopagan label. The only thing disturbs me about it in connection with RDNA is that we never conceived of ourselves as pagans! Druidism was a supplement or a complement to other religions.
4. I must admit that I have ceased to practice any other religion (unless you count church at Christmas and Easter) and *do* still occasionally have a Druid service (usually improvised, since I never remember to have the book with me), but the only time I have used the term "pagan" to describe myself has been when the Mormon missionaries were at the door. (And I recommend the effect *that* produces!)
5. My biggest concern is that Druidism will be submerged, will be merely another quaint alternative ritual for those who are grabbing a straws in an effort to be different. I am still convinced that for most of the practitioners thereof, neo-paganism is either a fad or a self-conscious revolt against mummy and daddy.

Chapter the Fourth

1. We somehow created more than we knew when we created the RDNA.
2. For many, what we were saying was that they were feeling; we articulated the inarticulate feeling that many had, which I once described as "Look around you there must be something bigger than we are."
3. We called it the Earth-Mother; the worship of the Earth-Mother was a symbolic way of saying thank-you to the forces that created the earth and us.
4. The other god-names were just trappings, as far as I know. Several of us got rather deeply into research at on point, and much of the trappings came from that period. In my mind, at least, and I think I speak for most of the others, we were just using alternative names for the Earth-Mother.
5. Again with the qualification that I don't know recent RDNA developments, I will have to admit that I laughed out loud when I read your description of Druidism. Two reasons impelled it.
6. The first was that you were so far from (beyond?) what we envisioned when we started it; the second was the incredible amount of jargon that seems to have accumulated.
7. Don't take me wrong; I just can't take the RDNA seriously!
8. Look to the origins, and you will find a college prank.
9. Look to the early years, and you will find a "philosophy" or whatever you want to call it, that somehow appealed to a lot people who were searching for some sort of meaning in the world.
10. (I suspect that our strongest appeal was to that bright sort of person you find at Carleton, who has all of a sudden begun to realize that they don't have all the answers and that nobody else does either.)

Chapter the Fifth

1. Finally, I want to stress one crucial fact in the development of RDNA; it just happened!
2. We had some literally incredible events (such as the prediction of the death of Kennedy, which is hinted at in Latter Chronicles 5:12ff., and scared the hell out of us; or the efficacy of the Druid curse, which after being used two or three times, with effect, made us decide to let the secret of it die with us who know it).
3. We almost convinced ourselves sometimes that we were playing with some power greater than ourselves. But we also always managed to keep the perspective; even at its most serious moments, Druidism kept one slightly askance eye on itself!
4. Today I still call myself a Druid, although I no longer call myself a Christian; I can't accept the story of Jesus as the Christ.
5. But all that Druidism asks of one is belief in the tenets. You can come up with all sorts of deep and jargonistic statements, but you can't get away from the tenets;
6. North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the *many ways* (emphasis added) in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found through Nature, (which we personify as) the Earth-Mother. Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the objects of creation (we never bothered about the implications of that; a creator) is important to man's spiritual quests.
7. Druidism isn't to me what it would seem to be to you. Perhaps you are right, but, being as close as I am to the origins, I can't forget what it meant then, and what it evolved into in the first few years. You can't; I can't!
8. This has been a long and rambling epistle apologize. As I said, I didn't know when I started where I was going; I'm still not sure that I have covered all the bases, but it's after midnight, so I'll quit.
9. May the blessing of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-Mother, be upon you in whatever you do.

Norman Nelson

10 Geimredh XII

10 November 1974

The Book of Changes, PART TWO

(By Isaac Bonewits, 1976)

[The aftermath from discussion on the letter in The Book of changes, part one]

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the Second

1. The reactions to this missive were, as usual for Reformed Druids, varied.
2. Out of the 33 copies mailed, some were returned by the Postal Service as undeliverable. These were: D. Wesley Hubbard, Marta Peck and Richard Smiley.
3. The following members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu objected *vigorously*: Diane Erbe (Adr. of Carleton), David Fisher, David and Deborah Frangquist, Gerre Goodman MacInnes, Thomas McCausland, Renata Seidel, Ellen Conway Shelton (Adr. of Ann Arbor) and Richard Shelton."
4. The following members of the Council agreed with the basic concepts outlined: Michael Bradley (Archdruid of Chicago), Joan Carruth, David T. Geller, Charles Hixson, Robert Larson (Archdruid of Berkeley), Cathy MacQuilling, Stephen W. A. McCalley, Steven Savitzky, S. Vokhvy Sterba and E. David Uggla (Archdruid of Stanford).
5. The following member of the Council sent no reply at all: Thomas Carlisle, Phillip Cooper, Stephen Corey, Victor Henney Jr., Robert Hirsch, Laura Kiigimagi Keeting, Glen McDavid, Don Morrison and Gary (of Schenectady) Zempel.
6. The following member of the Council sent as his reply a definite "maybe": Norman Nelson.
7. Thus it was that a majority of those who managed to communicate about the contents of the letter, including four ArchDruids of the Groves known to be active in July, 1974 c.e., desired that changes of the general sort outlined be made.
8. However, these Druids were divided into two factions: those who were of the majority, who favored the staging of a coup d'etat and those, who were of the minority, who favored a full or partial schism.

Chapter the Third

1. Now the ArchDruids who desired changes conferred with their Groves at Services and with each other by telephone and mail, and came to these conclusions.
2. That two new organizations would be formed which would, for at least a while, be semiautonomous branches of the RDNA; and that these groups would be known as the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA) and the Schismatic Druids of North America (SDNA).
3. That the name NRDNA would probably wind up being used by those Druids who wished to continue to acknowledge the Council of Dalon ap Landu; to wit, those who favored a *coup*.

4. That the name SDNA would likewise probably wind up being used by those who favored a full or partial schism from the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
5. That a new Council to be known as the Provisional Council of ArchDruids would be formed for at least a while, and that this Council would consist of all willing ArchDruids and ArchDruidesses of all active branches of the Reform that might exist or be formed in the future.
6. That all Groves would continue to retain their traditional autonomy.
7. That the purpose of the Provisional Council of ArchDruids would be to confer with and represent their Groves for the consideration of various matters of import and controversy.
8. That among these matters would be those of: new Constitution(s) and By-Laws, the continuation or ignoring of the Higher Orders, the possible need or ethical reasons for the institution of defrocking procedures, and the final decisions concerning the future political structure and interrelationships of the various branches of the Reform.

[To be continued in The Book of Changes, Part Three]

The Epistle to the Myopians

(By Joan Carruth, 1976)

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

000. To all the orders of Druids, peace; from Joan, priestess and Druid of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu, and Preceptor of the Grove which is in Berkeley.

00. May the Lord of the Groves guide my hand in this writing. Blessed be the Earth-Mother who bringest forth all life.

0. May the Earth-Mother keep David the Fisher in Her sight and bless him, for this is all his fault.

1. Priest and Patriarchs, hear me! Druids of much ilk, hear me! Worshippers in the Groves, hear me! Brothers and Sisters, Children of the Mother, followers of the way called Druid, attend unto my words and ponder them!

2. Much have I read the *Chronicles* and wondered at the beauty of them, and at the signs the Earth-Mother has shown, and still I am disquieted.

3. Much grief it is to me to see in the *Chronicles* words that do not indicate balance and harmony, nor true knowledge of the Ways of the Mother, and I wonder greatly that none have seen it.

4. Behold the Ways of the Mother, for all of them are good, and not just half of them.

5. If the Mother would bring forth life, First She must commit the seed to the grave, and bury it in the darkness, and surround it with effluvia, and the bodies of Her children of past seasons. If the plant would survive, and bring forth new plants to the glory of the world, First must it put its life into its seeds and die unto the world.

6. In this the great Mystery of the Mother is seen, that we are wont to call Defeat is turned to the *sine qua non* of Victory. Hearken unto my words and consider them, for there is a sadness in the Reformed Druids that wisdom would see turned to joy!

7. Fear not the waning of the Moon, lest ye would never again see Her wax. It is not a time of Evil, but of simplification and consolidation unto the seed, and though, lo, we see around us only growth and youth and wealth praised, many of the troubles we Druids are trying to escape from arise from this fallacy that half the work of the Mother is Evil. From it arises plagues upon the Earth. If Man is good, Woman is Evil. If Light is good, Darkness is evil. If Getting is good, Losing is evil. If Summer is good, Winter is evil. If the Spirit is good, the Body is evil. Long would my Epistle be if I listed them all.

8. Hence we praise the summer and reject the Winter, all unknowing that by doing so we reject the seed the mother would plant in the darkness of our hearts and compost with out "defeats" and our unfulfilled longings.

9. Fear not *Geimredh* nor *Earrach* therefore, nor disregard them, nor cease to worship them. Call upon Belenos to return with all your hearts, but with all your hearts accept the answer of the silence and the dark. Accept not in despair, nor in hope, but in peace and certitude: yea, even in joy. Though the Mother seem turned to Hag, it is not so: She's just a bitchy pregnant woman. Though the Lord seem merciless Hunter, it is not so: He slays the old that the new might find birth. Without *Samhain, Beltane* could not come. Therefore rejoice even in the gathering dark, for

it is the Repository of Mysteries and the Progenitor of Wisdom.

10. In our shortsighted desire for Life, we have disrupted the whole Biosphere, the living mantle of the Mother. In our attempt to defeat Death, we have created a true waste. Of all the Mother's creatures, we alone may be able to accomplish that defeat, and the world would not live but die. Then indeed would Arawn weep, for there would be no young children or tender blossoms to play upon His knees.

11. I am a warrior. I am a gardener, and a medicine-person, and a student of Life. That I worship, as I know you do. We have reclaimed the right-brain wisdom of the past. Let us not out of hand reject the left-brain wisdom of the present. It is only without each other that either becomes evil, and they do not contradict each other. Though all around you desire Life without Death, fall not into that trap, though your body and your senses much desire it; or the ways of the Mother and plans of the Lord of the Groves will be lost unto you and you shall be at odds with yourself until the end of your days. Blessed be the Lord who has given me to understand this. Blessed be the Lady who givest life.

Joan Carruth, D.A.L.
25 *Mean Earraigh*, 14 y.r.
Year of the Bison, c.e.
[circa March 25th, 1976 c.e.]

Lessons for a New Archdruid

(By Richard Shelton, 1976)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. 21 April 1976
2. Shelton to Morrision
3. Dear Don,
4. We were delighted to get your letter, and to learn that you'll be around this summer and next year.
5. It's beginning to look as though the Midsummer service will break a record for number of 3rd Orders present; there will probably be people from the cities (though not Isaac), and there's even a side chance that we'll have a majority of the Council.
6. You should receive shortly a document from Diana appointing you Arch-Druid of Carleton (pro-tempore).
7. When you receive it, you will become 13th Arch-Druid of Carleton and Chairman of the Council of Dalon ap Landu.
8. The "pro-tempore" signifies only that you are appointed, rather than elected, and you don't have to mention the "pro-tempore."
9. You can drop it altogether as soon as you can rustle up a Grove to elect you Arch-Druid.
10. But you will have all powers of a regularly elected Arch-Druid, including the right to consecrate priests to the third order.
11. I want you to have this office by Beltaine so that you can meet Isaac on equal footing.
12. If necessary, you should make it clear to him that <u>you</u> are the presiding Arch-Druid, and that <u>you</u> are running the show.

Chapter the Second

1. Now any Arch-Druid needs some paraphernalia, and to help tide you over until you can get the real thing, we enclose the following:
2. The Order of Worship – containing basic services for the Summer Half and Winter Half, 2nd Order Consecration, and a few other things.
3. This is most of what you need in the way of liturgy. Always remember: except for third order consecration, all priests are encouraged to write their own liturgy, and (except for third order consecration) there is no fixed liturgy.
4. Oh yes I have written in pencil the text as it appears in the Carleton Liturgy (the Black Books) as it differs somewhat from the printed version.
5. The black book version is the one we used (when we were following the book at all).
6. Second order consecration was the one service of these that we regularly did follow the book on.
7. A Service for Beltaine. This is meant only as a suggestion; if you like it, use it, but don't feel bound to it.
8. I guarantee it will take Isaac by surprise, since whatever he is calling the "Standard Beltaine Service" he must have written himself – the Black Book contains none (or didn't at my time, anyway).

9. This service I wrote myself at Carleton, Glenn might have stuck it in the Black Book, but Isaac can hardly have found a copy anywhere.
10. Also enclosed are some "stage directions," which might be useful. If you use this service and if Isaac asks for a copy, refer him to me, its mine, and I don't want it showing up in his Magnum Opus.
11. A copy of our printed version of the Green Books.
12. Read the introductory material carefully, and peruse the contents with pleasure; for here is the essence of Druidism.
13. Without the Green Books, no Grove is complete. But: for the time being, keep this to yourself.
14. Our problem is that we do not yet have all the copyright releases necessary, and I have been using that as an excuse not to send a copy to Isaac until after it's too late to include in his thing. So let him have no inkling that you have a copy.
15. Of course, you will get the real Green Book with the paraphernalia; in the meantime find a bind for this – and keep the temporary copyright page right after the tile page, as its our only protection against pirated copies.
16. A handy-dandy Druid Calendar – works even in leap years! – plus directions for use.
17. Copies of the Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals and of Letter to my Brothers. They are part of the Carleton Apocrypha. Isaac has O.F.F. , but not letter- it would be best if he did not know of the existence of the latter.
18. Our very last copy of the Chronicles – we haven't been able to reach Kelton, so I don't know yet whether he has been able to recover the rest.
19. The Carleton Constitution. (as amended) Notice the striking resemblance to the Book of Law.

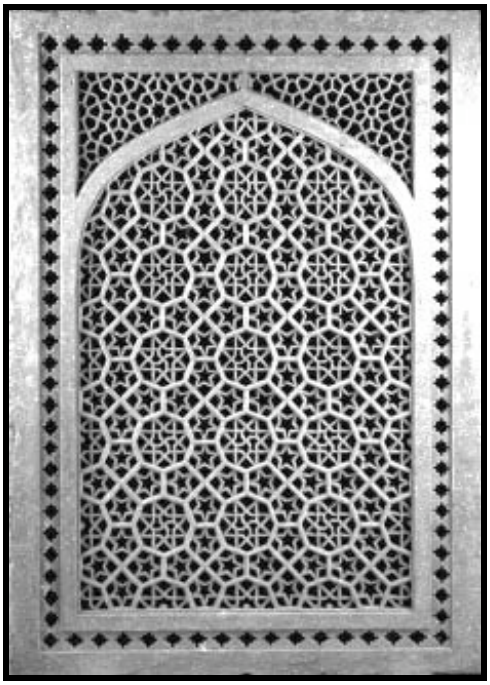
Chapter the Third

1. That should be enough to get you started. Let me know if you require anything else.
2. I don't know how well-versed you are in the art of performing a service, so please forgive me if you already know all the following. But just in case you don't, I offer these tips:
3. It is traditional for Carleton priests to inscribe (with their fingers) the Druid symbol on the North (Blank) face of the Monument just before services.
4. This is a token, looking forward to the day when we can have it inscribed (with a chisel) together with the legend "The First Reformed Druid Service was held on this spot on May 1st, 1963."
5. The presiding priest (usually, though not necessarily the A-D) gives the invocation somewhat apart from the congregation, and then processes (with his assistant, e.g. the Preceptor) to join the congregation.
6. Upon reaching it, the two draw a symbol with their staves, into which the presiding priest steps, and from which he gives the rest of the service.
7. SYMBOL ILLUSTRATION
8. An incantation is nice, though not necessary. It is hard to find (or write) good ones. The ones in Customs are nice, but they are given much too often.
9. "the Sacrifice" Oh yes, the Sacrifice. Did anybody remember to bring a Sacrifice? -Uh, just a minute folk, I have to find a Sacrifice. Be right back."
10. MORAL: Don't forget to bring a Sacrifice. This is the responsibility of the presiding priest.
11. (This is particularly important for 3rd Order consecrations – the candidate will be pretty groggy, and very impressionable, so it is important that the A-D have gotten a good night's sleep and have everything all ready for the consecration so that everything goes smoothly. This instant is the most serious Druidism gets – it means a lot to the candidate, and it is important that it be done well.)
12. The responses in the Answer are given by the assistant, who should be of 2nd order (or more). If no 2nd order are available, they can be given by the congregation in union. But it doesn't really matter.
13. Waters of life: the traditional ratio of Scotch to Water is determined by the marks on the cruet (part of the paraphernalia): one fills with Scotch to the first mark, then with water (traditionally from a drinking fountain from 1st Goodhue, but only because A-D's traditionally forget about the water until the last minute) up to the 2nd mark. I measured out once what this came to in milliliters, but have forgotten exactly.
14. It came to about 1 part Scotch to 2 parts water, for a total of about _ cup. Remember, for 2nd Order consecration, you need another cruetful in reserve for each 2nd order to be consecrated – for it is required that the aspirant consume the lion's share of the standard cruetful of waters.
15. Waters of Life (for Beltane): the ration is reversed: fill with water first, then Scotch. (This is one reason 2nd order consecration is traditionally **not** performed on Beltaine!)
16. Waters of Sleep: Straight water ("neither do they sing…")
17. Mechanics of 2nd order of worship (p.3) it say the 2nd order consecration is performed before the remainder of the waters is returned to the Earth-Mother. However, you need that chalice for the consecration, and the aspirant isn't supposed to leave any to be returned. So instead you proceed as follows: (suppose you have an aspirant)
18. Hallow the waters of life and serve the congregation, returning the remainder to the Earth-Mother, exactly as in a regular service.
19. Go to the aspirant. Ask him to kneel. Hallow the next batch of waters. Proceed with the consecration.
20. Go back to your homeplate (the Symbol) and continue the service (with the reading).
21. Now you begin to see why you need an assistant or two: to hold bottles (of water and of scotch), cruets, chalice and liturgy, and torches at night!
22. Sermons. Nobody gives sermons anymore. A reading, or three or four, followed by a period of silent meditation is usual. I believe Renny was somewhat more imaginative – but you would know more about that than I.
23. Oh yes, the official liturgical scotch of RDNA is Black & White (Although we considered changing it when they changed the clip tops to screw tops – wrote them a letter to about it, too (didn't get any response)).
24. That's all I can think of. Hope it helps. Let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Chapter the Fourth

1. News Department: The Ann Arbor Grove has been revived (see enclosed missive, which is for the Archives). So I may be addressed as “Richard, Arch-Druid of Ann Arbor” though I’ll think you stuffy if you do! (Except formally of course.)
2. Although it is not required, if you fell energetic it might be a good idea to send out an accession letter.
3. But you might hold off until after Midsummers, in case anything important is decided (Hah!)
4. Whatever you think best.

Peace
Richard



The Epistle of Richard

(By Richard Shelton, 1976)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the First

1. Dear Reverend Brother Isaac:
2. As I read your last letter, there grew an uneasy feeling that somewhere, somehow, there has been between us a small but important failure in communication.
3. After all that several of us have written you. I am frankly amazed that you can still even suggest that any of us want to stifle your spiritual growth, or want or need to denounce or destroy those with whom we disagree. Nothing could be further from the truth.
4. The very foundation of Reformed Druidism is that each person mush have the freedom to pursue his own religious inclinations. Druidism encourages people to do precisely that, and fully expects that the various paths that result will be a very diverse collection.
5. But to contain all those paths, Reformed Druidism has eschewed dogmatism and has limited formalism to a bare minimum.
6. This squares well with the sentiment (which has been present from the beginning) that formalism frequently tends to stifle spirituality.
7. So, as an institution, Reformed Druidism will offer the individual little more than encouragement and a wide variety of suggestions, from which each person must proceed in his own manner.
8. It is expected that each will in some sense go beyond what little the Reform offers as an "official line." But the specifics one brings to one's own faith will inevitably go beyond what the Reform as a whole is willing to commit itself to.
9. So you see, the uproar that followed your general letter to the Council stemmed not from disagreement with your spiritual beliefs, but rather from your suggestion that they and a great deal of formalism be adopted by the Reform as a whole, "officially,” as it were.
10. That, clearly, was impossible, not only because many of use don't share these beliefs, but also because such institutionalization of belief and practice flies in the face of the generality that the Reform has always stood for.
11. It is clear that you and others do feel the need for more formalism. That's an observation, not a judgment; formalism isn't bad per se, it's just that you must watch it like a hawk, or as likely as not, it will take over.
12. But since you do feel this need, I think your schism was the right course. By institutionalizing this formalism, you have created something new that goes beyond Reformed Druidism.

Chapter the Second

1. If I may draw an analogy. I would say that Schismatic Druidism is to you what Episcopalianism is to David Fisher; a personal path that satisfies your religious needs, and which has been influenced for you by Reformed Druidism.
2. I, too, have (or am attempting to find) a personal path that goes beyond the Basic Tenets.
3. This is not to say that you or David or I cannot be Reformed Druids; but when you do Schismatic Druidism, you are doing something different.
4. You are surely right when you say that Reformed Druidism is not a stone monument. But I don't think that the Oak is the right symbol either.
5. Reformed Druidism is really a frame of mind, more a way of looking at religion than a religion myself. To borrow an idea from Robert Graves,[9] Druidism is like mistletoe, grafting itself onto other, preexisting trees.
6. Thus David brings his Druidic outlook to Christianity, and you bring yours to paganism.
7. In this sense, I don't think it correct to describe Schismatic Druidism as an outgrowth or evolved form of Reformed Druidism; it is rather the result of applying Druidic ideas to the religious inclinations that you brought with you or found among other individual Druids.
8. It is true that the forms of your religion bear more resemblance to those of Reformed Druidism than to those of Christianity, but that's simply because Schismatic Druidism developed after Reformed Druidism, and in its light, while Christianity developed long before.

Chapter the Third

1. You mention that you have encountered hostility and indifference toward your book.
2. I'm sure that some people you contacted *did* feel that you were trying to ram this down our throats, and certainly you can understand hostility in that case.
3. Also, you realize by now that Schismatic Druidism is utterly foreign to many in the Reform, and some feel that you are doing the Reform a grave disservice by publishing the *Chronicles* in the company of all this "Neo-Pagan Gobbledygook".[10]
4. There is fierce resentment in some quarters of the association between the terms "Druidism" and "Neopaganism" that your book will create in the minds of the publican association that saddles us with religious baggage that is not ours.
5. Your insistence on appropriating the title *"The Druid Chronicles"* does nothing to ward off that association or to alleviate the resentment.
6. Personally, I will be satisfied if you will be scrupulous in indicating who goes with what, as you have promised to be, though you can understand my concern that you describe us accurately to the world at large.
7. And as I have indicated before, I would be much happier if you could find a different title.
8. As for indifference, there are of course indifferent Druids; but some lack of enthusiasm may stem from a reluctance to shell out five bucks just to get the *Chronicles*, and with the text altered, at that. I'm afraid that is an attitude you will have to get used to.

Chapter the Fourth

1. When the "Council of Archdruids" was proposed, we agreed to participate, but counter-proposed the title "Conspiracy of Archdruids," to keep us mindful of the implications of what we are doing. Its connotations are precisely germane to this situation.
2. Any activity, above the grove level, carried on behind the back of the Council of Dalon ap Landu (as this is) is questionable at best.
3. Even though it seeks merely to improve communication and oil the formal machinery of Druidism, such an attempt to bolster form and organization is a potential source of red tape and should be watched carefully and vigilantly.
4. And any notion that the Archdruids have any authority whatsoever to speak for the Reform is, in a word, un-Druidic, and should be firmly rejected.
5. Indeed, only after you wrote us last spring did it dawn on us how much importance you place on groves and Archdruids, as opposed to just plain old Druids.
6. Many of us do not regard grove activity as particularly important. Participation in a grove is only one way among many, even within Druidism. Being a Druid, even an active Druid, need not involve attending services of any kind.
7. And one of our concerns is that Druids not active in groves not be forgotten.

Chapter the Fifth

1. In your draft you attribute to us "traditional" Reformed Druids the notion that it is a mistake to structure one's beliefs. I doubt many of us would go so far. If beliefs are not structured, what are they but incoherent? It is *formalization* that you will find us wary about.
2. Even so, we will not say it is a mistake for you individually to formalize *your* beliefs, whether in a Neopagan fashion or otherwise. We do not believe that Neopagan Druidism *per se* is a step backwards; we do feel that as with *any* formal religion you must be careful with it, and it does not seem to me that your position and ours on this are very different.
3. Also, we are concerned not so much with "the abuses of the sorts for which monotheistic religions are so well known" as with the stagnation of spiritual development. For the latter is by far the more serious disease, and is the one from which all the others arise.
4. (And I must say that the anti-monotheism in your book comes close to being a disease, it is certainly un-Druidic.)
5. Some of us would go further. I have observed, as a Druid and later as a priest, that for many the big step is not the formalization of belief, but rather the prior attempt to translate religious experience and emotion into belief.
6. Our rational selves seduce us into believing that spiritual experience cannot have value or "validity" (a *rational* category, after all) until it is recast into rational belief. But belief, once formulated, draws attention away from the underlying experience to its own rational claims, clamoring to be proven true or denounced as false.
7. Myth that arises from profound experience has a power to reach deep into our souls. But myth all too often congeals into belief and creed, the original experience becoming secondary and contingent upon the truth of the mythology.
8. I have come to feel that for me and many others, this process of deriving belief from religious experience is

irrelevant to spiritual growth, and frequently gets in the way. Therefore it is a process I try not to perform.

9. If pressed, I might say that *I do not believe* that there is one god, or many gods, or no god, or that we cannot know whether there is a god.
10. For me, these are, in that delightful eastern phrase, "questions not tending to edification."
11. *The wind's breath catches my ear;*
    I cannot speak what it says.
12. *The hawk's flight commands my eye;*
    my tongue does not read its mystery.
13. *The oak's bough enfolds my heart,*
    its incantation not mine to pronounce.
14. *The mountain's peak exalts my very being;*
    I gaze at the abyss on every side and
    wordless, shiver at my smallness and mortality.
15. *The dark of night brings me face to face*
    with the dark wisdom of the soul;
    by dawn's light I can but dimly recall it.
16. *O tongue, where is thy subtlety!*
    O word, thy mastery!
17. *God's presence I will not speak but sing!*

Peace,
Richard Shelton
Arch-Druid of Ann Arbor
[circa May 1976]

Post Carleton Perplexations

(By Richard Shelton, 1976)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. 5 May 1976
2. Dear Dave & Dee [Frangquist]
3. I don't know how much you hear from Isaac, so I am enclosing a copy of his pamphlet and a copy of my last letter to him. It took me much longer to write the letter than I had expected, and I ended by sending only a fraction of what I had originally intended to say.
4. My main difficulty is simply that my attitude towards Isaac, and Druidism, has become so mercurial. I would like to take Isaac at his word and to believe in his basic honesty, but I cannot; it is too easy for me to read sinister intentions into his every word. That is perhaps unfair to Isaac, but I can't help it; I am not the master of my emotions.
5. And Druidism. For me at Carleton, Druidism was very easy and something I shared with many close friends. Druidism was a large part of Carleton for me, and to this day, a visit to Carleton makes me feel very Druidic.
6. But since leaving Carleton, I have become somewhat withdrawn, - and not only Druidically! – I fell no need to hold services here, and derive little benefit from them, for example. This is not to say I will not "minister unto those of her followers who have need of [my] aid," but I don't feel the need to go questing for them.
7. When we first came to Ann Arbor, there was no question of starting a grove, since neither of us had any time. While Diana [Erbe] was here we did found a grove, with Ellen as Arch-Druid (since, ironically, it was Ellen, whose Druidism has always been very private, and who was not really part of the Carleton Druid circle while we were there, who wanted to begin services again). But when Diana left, services stopped for a while.
8. Now that my coursework is finished and our financial situation has improved to the point where Ellen no longer has to work full time, we have started holding services again. But these services are for me like pulling teeth. I feel I spend far too much time explaining what Druidism is not.
9. Perhaps this will change as the attendance stabilized, and as people (and I) learn what to expect. But I suspect that the grove will become meaningful to me only when (if) it becomes something like the Carleton grove was for me: a communion of close friends.
10. I do not yet believe that it ever will, for much the same reason that I have found other aspects of Ann Arbor uncongenial. Ann Arbor simply is not Carleton. We never see any Druids, except at services; we never see any folk-dancers, except dancing; we never see our colleagues, except at work or in class.
11. We both find this profoundly depressing. Is this the real world? Is this the way it will always be? Perhaps to hope for better is merely to hope, vainly, sadly, to recapture Carleton. And that depresses me most of all.

Chapter the Second

1. 8 May 1976
2. Reading over what I wrote the other day, I realize I was pretty down when I wrote it. Ellen and I had a rather heated discussion (?, that the wrong word) shortly after I finished the letter to Isaac, and both of us were feeling miserable.
3. Anyway, thanks for being there to write to; curiously, though I've never met you, I feel confident that you will understand why I was so depressed and why I feel ambivalent about Druidism. There aren't many people I could write this to.
4. There remains one more thing I'd like to ask you about. It will be clear from Isaac's pamphlet that SDNA is worlds apart from what Druidism was (and I think still is) at Carleton.
5. Moreover, it is not clear just what Isaac understands his schism to be. From the pamphlet, it seems that he and his followers do not regard themselves as having left the Reform. That does not bode well, for at their current rate of growth, it will not take too long before they can command a majority in Council – and that is a spectacle I would not like to watch.
6. Can it be prevented? I have begun to doubt it, simply because the only counter-actions I can think of are all more or less un-Druidic. To wit:
7. Ask the Chairman to recognize the Schism, and sorrowfully accede to their "demand" that their names be removed from Council rolls, and not embarrass them any more with Council business. This is of course perilously close to excommunication, and flies in the face of precedent (cf. Fisher's trying to resign his orders.)
8. Adjourn the Council permanently, perhaps granting the Council of Grannos the right to choose its own Patriarchs. Perhaps also setting up some machinery for calling the Council to action in case of a real emergency (e.g. Druidism is declared the State Religion) – something like granting two Patriarchs (or the Chairman and a Patriarch) together the power to convene the Council; something strong to ensure it won't happen. This route strikes me as sort of an ostrich approach; besides, we would have to work fairly fast, since we would have trouble getting a majority (19) w/o counting on any SDNA Druids, and the size of the Council is likely to increase now that Samhradh is upon us.
9. Somehow establish firmly our principle of "rule by consensus" – to the effect that any small blocks of priests would have an effective veto on any Council business. – But I am at a loss to imagine how this might be done, though it strikes me as the most Druidic approach.
10. Am I needlessly bothered with all this? Is Isaac the demon I have come to think? (At least when I am not careful about disciplining my thoughts!) I don't know. Let me know what you think of all this. But at the same time, I do feel quite strongly about Druidism, and I strongly resent what Isaac is turning it into.
11. Perhaps it is true that Druidism (aside from Isaac's brand) can really only flourish at Carleton, and perhaps it is silly to get so upset over all this. But I am upset, and despite myself, I find myself spending an inordinate amount of time trying to salvage as much as I can.
12. But it is becoming more and more difficult, because I no longer know what I want for Druidism, and I am not sure what is reasonable to expect from Druidism.

Chapter the Third

1. Much has happened in the last year and a half. Isaac schised, of course, and founded the Schismatic Twin Cities Grove, and another offshoot (The Hassidic Druids), also Schismatic, is reputedly being found this year in St. Louis. Berkeley, however, did not follow Isaac into schism, so I really don't know what's going on there. I don't even know whether Bob Larson is still A.D. (cf. the last page of Isaac's pamphlet.) I don't know any of the people involved in any of these groves, or even who's behind the St. Louis grove.
2. I have only just learned of the NRDNA, and of the provisional Council of A.D.'s. I know no more than is contained in the pamphlet, though I am writing to Dave Uggla for more information. I am hoping we can persuade some of these groves to drop that first N, and Ellen and I (we trade off) are willing to join any <u>un</u>official Council of A-D's for the purpose of keeping communications healthy if that will help persuade them. But we're not willing to go very much father.
3. As for the Carleton Grove: Diana did us dirty by not issuing a general letter. But she was working on a double major and was poor to boot, so I guess I can understand why she didn't. When she graduated, Don was not prepared to take on the Arch-Druidship- or hadn't returned from France yet, or something or other. I haven't asked either of them what went wrong, and it's not important.
4. But Don does want to start holding services again, so we have sent him enough to get started, and told him to ask for the Archives whenever he wants them (Steve Corey still has them!) My judgment of Don is that if it's possible at all to start it up again, then Don can do it. Don's judgment of the situation at Carleton is that the grove should have no difficulty coming back to life. And that's better news than I've had in a long time.
5. You may have wondered why the 5 copies of Chronicles I promised you from Diana never arrived. Answer: the 5th printing (and all the mimeo masters) are still hiding somewhere in the cities. Steve Corey's memory has failed him and we have looked everyplace he can think of. But: my room-mate Kelton (who lives in the cities and is our Johnie-on-the-spot) finally has a good lead, and we are confident this one will work out.
6. Kelton has promised to write as soon as he knows. Kelton is mildly amused that we have managed to lose these so thoroughly, and is responsible for dubbing the missing Chronicles "the Dead Sea Scrolls"

Chapter the Fourth

1. Speaking of Chronicles: did you ever register them with the Copyright Office? I know much more about copyright law than I did two years ago, and it is clear that these are in the public domain, but I would feel much safer knowing that they were registered, just in case Isaac should try to establish a copyright. (Although that's one thing I really doubt he would try.)
2. It's not clear that that <u>Outline, Epistle of David,</u> and <u>Book of Faith</u> are in the Public Domain; again I would feel happier if those were registered. Would you have any objection if I did so? Since I am not the author (keep that; that's evidence!), such registration would not help me establish a copyright. But it would be a big obstacle to Isaac should <u>he</u> try to establish a copyright. [Yes, I know B of F is by Fisher; I just threw it in because it's the only

other thing Isaac's printing that I am thinking of using, too.]

3. About the Apocrypha: Isaac's magnum opus includes a section entitled "Apocrypha," though the only pre-SDNA stuff therein is Outline. I would like to have available (and I have felt the need for, in trying to run a grove) Outline, Letter to my brothers, B of F, and E of Richard.
4. I have the option of sending the ones Isaac doesn't have to him for inclusion in his Apocrypha, or of publishing a Carleton Apocrypha for inclusion in his Apocrypha, or of publishing a Carleton Apocrypha myself. I would prefer the latter. What I have in mind is pretty much what I described to you in '74;

   Book of Faith (Fisher)

   Epistle of David to the Druids at Carleton (fisher)

   Epistle of Jan? (Johnson, mentioned in L.C. 1st chapter)

   Epistle of David the Chronicler (Frangquist)

   Epistle of Richard to the Druids of Chicago (Shelton)

   Letter to my Brothers (Savitzky)

   The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool (McCausland)

   Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals (Frangquist)
5. Notice the absence of the Wanderings of Oisin, which was a piece of unmitigated presumption on my part. Besides, Yeats thought of it first.
6. My original idea in publishing Apocrypha was to round out the description of the Reform in the Chronicles with some later works. I don't think that's feasible now, and in any event, it's clear that I can't speak for the Reform.
7. So my idea is now to publish a collection of Apocrypha works that originated at Carleton and are in the spirit of the Reform (without claiming anything about how they may or may not describe the Reform today).
8. In a sense, this idea is still to round out the picture given by the Chronicles, but I would take pains to indicate that this is not a "New Testament," that this is <u>not</u> a publication of the Reform, or even representative of the Carleton grove today, although it does tend to illustrate how much variety there has been in the Reform (at least at Carleton).
9. A word about the Epistle of Richard. Were I not Richard, I would regard Richard presumptuous for including Epistle of Richard. (Just as I regard Isaac presumptuous for including TWO Epistles of Isaac – but I think Isaac is beyond hope, and I fear his collection is too.)
10. It was written shortly after Glenn founded the Chicago grove, and as Glenn would be returning to Carleton, leaving Mike Bradley in charge, he asked me to write something about the traditions and practice of Druidism to help the grove along. The result was five rough drafts and my first serious thinking about how I saw Druidism- and a lot of frustration for not being able to say exactly what it meant.
11. In the end I went myself to Chicago, and the letter was never written. But the drafts stayed in my files, and I found them particularly, in training new priests, and I have spent much time recently revising them, so that I think it has become a fairly good description of Carleton style Druidism. And since that's what I would like to establish here, I would like to have this available, since it is much better than Isaac's pamphlet, regardless of what I said in my letter to Isaac.
12. So, could I ask of you:
13. Tell me what you think of publishing Apocrypha at all.
14. Let me know what you think of the stuff I sent you: in particular, comment on the accuracy of David's letter.
15. Send me a copy of Epistle of David the Chronicler, if you think it would go well here (send one anyway, I'd like to see it)
16. Let me know if you mind my printing this stuff.
17. (If you sent a letter after the one dated 3 Sep 74, it miscarried. If you didn't – well, Druids are like that!)
18. Green Book: With Isaac prodding us, we finally got around to sending out a request for permission to print the various selections that are not yet Public Domain, but have not heard from everyone yet. Peter Pauper wanted to charge us $110, until we pleaded poverty ourselves, and pointed out what a small and profitless venture this is!

Chapter the Fifth

1. Last Minute notes: received today a card from Isaac and a letter from Don. Isaac promises to write more later, but it seems that he may change the title after all (to Druid's Compendium, largely, I suspect because "Compendium" has the same number of letters as "Chronicles" so that previously set material can be changed with minimum effort)
2. Don writes that the Beltane service was snowed out, and that Isaac and company will be coming down this coming Sunday instead. By that time, Don will have a bonafide grove started – he already has one 2nd order and perhaps by Sunday another. You might enjoy the following, which Don sent for my delectation. It is from the service Isaac wants to use for this service.

   Many a gallant Pagan fought,

   Many a gallant Wtich did burn;

   Priest and Priestess, both have sought,

   To sing the prayers Ye canna spurn!
3. This seems to be a song, perhaps one of those the pamphlet says is so important for SDNA. Next question: do they take it seriously?
4. Oh, yes – this coming June 18-20 (coincidentally Alumni Weekend) the folkdancers of my era (and somewhat before and after) have planned a big folk-dance reunion bash at Carleton. It's turning into a Druid reunion too since from Steve Savitzky onwards, most of us are dancers.
5. And the 20th is Midsummer's Eve this year, so I though "let's have a midsummer's service- after all how often do you get 10 third orders together at once!" Then discovered that Don will be at Carleton all summer, so will have a lot of time to talk, since we will be on campus those full 3 days, maybe more. (Moreover, Don is also a dancer, which I hadn't known.)
6. So we've invited TC grove down as well to show them Carleton Druidism in force. Unfortunately, Isaac will have returned to Berkeley by then.
7. Well, I had better cut this off or you'll never get it. Thanks for a pair of shoulders to cry one. And please write.

Peace
Richard

The First Epistle of Robert

(By Robert Larson, 1976)

(New to ARDA 1)

Chapter the First

1. Dear Siblings in the Earth-Mother,
2. Now that Brother Isaac has gotten off his duff, it is time for me to do the same. I have been waiting for the publication of the expanded works of Druidism to send this letter, and now that this event is imminent, I feel that it is time to do some organizational work and mayhap some fence-mending. To these ends this missive is addressed.

Chapter the Second: Personal

1. From my communications with Isaac, it would seem that he has stirred up a minor hornet's nest with his proposals. Good. That was the intent. Now that he has you thinking about the RDNA as more than a quaint club and has you concerned (or so I hope) about its future, perhaps something can be accomplished.
2. Unfortunately, I get the impression that some of you regard our moves as a power play and a perversion of the Reform. As far as I am concerned (and, I am sure, Isaac), nothing could be farther from the truth.
3. Some of you may have also reached the conclusion that Brother Isaac and I agree on the ideas that he has presented. Again, not so.
4. Isaac has a touch of the zealot in his makeup (sorry, Isaac, but it's true, you know). Though he keeps it under control, he is much the activist.
5. I, on the other hand, am more conservative and concentrate on personal mysticism. Let me take the main areas of disagreement that have arisen among us and state my views on the questions.

Chapter the Third: What is Reformed Druidism?

1. Above all, it is different things to different people. Rather than supplying a set theology, mythos, ethos, or whatever, Druidism supplies a basis from which each individual Druid defines his own mythos, ethos, etc.
2. This very characteristic is what sets us apart from most other "odd-ball" groups. In a way, we are a religion, since we worship certain vague deities in or rituals, but most things that distinguish a religion, such as set dogmas, are lacking in Druidism and should remain so.
3. Rather than looking upon Druidism as a religion or a philosophy, let us look upon it as a way to achieve or augment a religion or philosophy.
4. Druidism is neither polytheistic nor monotheistic; if anything, it is vaguely pantheistic. Most of the early members of the Reform were either Christian, like the First Patriarch, or agnostic.
5. What they held in common was a commitment to the search for "truth" and a belief that "truth" must come to each from within rather than being forced upon one from without.
6. For these reasons, I am opposed to Isaac's attempted redefinition of Druidism as "pagan," though I can see practical advantages and despite my personal pagan orientation.
7. Though I have found much personal religious truth and experience in my researches into Celtic (especially Irish) paganism and mythology, these are my "trip" and I have no wish to impose it on others.
8. Emotionally I am drawn to Isaac's proposition, for many of the groups he mentions have views very similar to that of Druidism, but I consider such a definition as over-restrictive for Reformed Druidism as a whole. For individual Druids and groves, however, it's a different matter.

Chapter the Fourth: Organization

1. By the reaction to Isaac's proposals it would seem that the fiercely individualistic spirit of the Reform is still alive and well in many of us. We remain mavericks, though it is to be hoped that we have mellowed a bit with age.
2. The organization, however, is sick.
3. For this sickness we all must bear some blame. We've gone our individual ways and failed to keep in touch. Though natural, this lack of communication and the intermittent nature of the Carleton grove have combined to yield a total lack of cohesion.
4. Most members of the Council of Dalon ap Landu are known to each other by name at best, and at times it's been impossible to register new members due to the Carleton grove's being in a state of suspended non-animation. Obviously, such a state cannot be allowed to continue if the Reform is to regain its health.
5. The council of Archdruids is an attempt to alleviate these problems. As I have been tentatively appointed chief of the council for its First year of existence, it behooves me to delineate what I hope and expect the council to be and do.
6. The main task of the Council of Archdruids will be the maintenance of communications between groves. The council's duties will be primarily organizational.
7. "Theology" will remain the province of the full Council of Dalon ap Landu. Since it is virtually impossible to get anything through the full council, we may expect nothing in the way of change in the basis of the Reform.
8. However, increased communication should lead to increased cohesion and understanding and, hopefully, new ways to "awareness" for us as we exchange ideas.
9. To increase communication, I propose that the chief of the Council of Archdruids write at least one report a year detailing the state of the Reform in each of the groves. To do this, he will, of course, need information from each of the groves.
10. Therefore, each member of the Council of Archdruids should be required to write at least one report a year on the state of his grove to the chief of the council, who would correlate these reports into the general report.
11. Eventually, I would like to see the council operate as a clearinghouse for organizational problems of groves, favorite meditations, philosophy, and general Druidical ravings, but first we must achieve the communication.
12. I suggest Samhain as an appropriate time for the general report and a month earlier for the reports of the individual Archdruids to the chief. This year let us get an idea of the problems we may have to resolve. All Archdruids will

receive a note from me in September to request a report. Next year we'll try to get this thing really off the ground.

13. Since the Council of Archdruids will not concern itself with policy decisions, I see no reason for any Arch-Druid to remain out of it, be he RDNA, NRDNA, or SDNA and I suggest that the general report be sent to all Archdruids whether they have declared themselves in on the council or not, and whether or not they have sent in reports. If they don't want to read it, they can throw it away. Though addressed to Archdruids, this report would be available to any Third Order Druid on request for the cost of printing and postage.
14. The Council of Archdruids could also provide a safeguard against the failure or suspension of the Carleton grove. Each Arch-Druid should report new ordinations to the chief of the Council of Archdruids as well as to the Arch-Druid of Carleton, thus giving us a backup list of members of the full Council of Dalon ap Landu.
15. In case of suspension of activities by the Carleton grove, the chief of the council of Archdruids could temporarily become head of the Council of Dalon ap Landu until such time as the Carleton grove should be reconstituted. Thus, proposals to the full council could be made and votes taken even should the Carleton grove be in abeyance.
16. Since some apocrypha have not been sent to all priests, I would suggest that all new apocrypha be sent to the chief of the council, too, for distribution to the various groves, so that at least the most active members of the priesthood would have them.
17. The chieftainship of the Council of Archdruids would rotate yearly among the Archdruids of all established groves in order of seniority. However, the chieftainship should be restricted to Archdruids of groves that have been in continuous operation for at least three years. At present, this order would be Berkeley, Stanford, Chicago; though by the time Chicago's period of office was up other Archdruids could be eligible.
18. Due to the intermittent history of the Carleton grove and the responsibilities of the Archdruid both to the full council and to studies, it might be advisable to skip Carleton in the succession. In fact, any Arch-Druid who felt unable or uninclined to accept the chieftainship should be allowed to pass it on to the next on the list.
19. Within the Council of Archdruids, each Arch-Druid would have an equal voice and each grove would retain its autonomy.
20. If a grove chooses to declare itself pagan, Buddhist, Jewish, Episcopalian, or even Pentecostal, that's its right and its own business, though it should be made clear that it's the individual grove's orientation, not that of Druidism in general.
21. If we ever got as big as the Catholic church (fat chance), it would be nice to be able to say to someone who did not like one grove, "Well, try the one down the trail a ways, they're on a different trip."
22. Within the basic tenets of the Reform, all sorts of development are possible and desirable. The more ways we develop, the more we will be able to offer those who cannot find their "awareness" within the context of the standard religions.
23. To paraphrase Mao Tse-Tung, let a thousand branches grow from the oak trunk of the reform.
24. But for the Mother's sake, let's keep the branches connected to the trunk.
25. Go mbeannai an Mhathair sibh go leir. (May the Mother bless all of you.) I look forward to your comments, ideas, and Bronx cheers.

Yours-in-the-Mother,
Siochain (Peace)
Robert G. Larson,
Arch-Druid, Berkeley Grove
May 26th, 1976 c.e.

The Second Epistle of Ellen

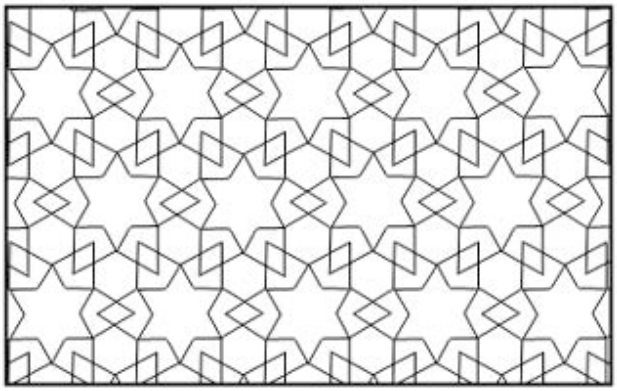
(By Ellen Conway Shelton, 1976)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA
2. COUNCIL OF DALON AP LANDU
3. 29 Samradh XIV/ 29 May 1976
4. Dear Reverend Brother Robert [Larson],
5. We were delighted to receive your letter yesterday, especially as I had been meaning to write you very soon to inquire into the difference between RDNA and NRDNA. It seems, from the little information we've received about it, that NRDNA differs only in an expressed concern for organization. True?
6. It is most certainly true that the original Reform did not expect such growth and scattering, and did not provide a framework for handling such diversity, so that it is very difficult now for any individual to know what the Druidic climate is like beyond his or her own grove and circle of correspondents.
7. But, please, don't equate the Reform with its organization! ("The organization… is sick. … such as state cannot be allowed to continue if the Reform is to regain its health.") The organization has <u>never</u> been the important part of Druidism. So long as it provides a means of helping people in their search for awareness, the Reform <u>is</u> healthy.
8. Communication is a convenience and proselytization is an option, but if I choose to develop quietly by introspection and to write privately to my friends, I am as much an active Druid- and, I believe, contribute as much to the Reform – as if I broadcast my views to the entire Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
9. However, I do agree that it is important to have a central source of information. By council resolution of 20 April 66, this is the responsibility of the Arch-Druid of Carleton, just as it is for the responsibility of the other Arch-Druids to send in the information necessary for maintaining the records.
10. But since Glenn announced Renny's election as his successor, no Arch-Druid (and there has always been one) has received anything to report – so it is evident that the existence even of a permanent center of communications has not been enough to get people to communicate even the existence of new groves and new priests. So I am somewhat dubious of the likely effectiveness of a rotating center.

11. Nevertheless, both Dick and I would be willing to participate in an unofficial Conspiracy of Arch-Druids – and given the universally acknowledged difficulty of getting anything through Council, it does not seem likely the Conspiracy could ever become official.
12. We would be perfectly willing also to serve as Chair (Chief Conspirator?) on our turn in the rotation. As long as Arch-Druids are free to pass up the Chair if they lack the time or inclination, the Carleton grove should definitely not be left out of the rotation.
13. In fact, the Conspiracy's report would only be necessary if the current AD of C neglected to send his/hers (presumably this worthy fellow could be persuaded to state his/her intentions to the Conspiracy).
14. All of the groves which enter the Conspiracy should undertake to maintain a complete set of the general reports, so that the revolution of the Chair would not involve entrusting any archival material to the mails. This duplication of records should also increase the chances of this stuff reaching Posterity.
15. I look forward to hearing your reactions to all this, and hope you can include an explanation of the differences between NRDNA and RDNA. I am also curious to know what sort of information you are considering including in a report of the state of a grove; and I would like to pool ideas on how <u>not</u> to leave out Druids (of <u>all</u> orders) who are not currently affiliate with groves.

Peace
Ellen Conway Shelton
Arch-Druid Emeritus (Emerita??) of Ann Arbor
Cc: Chairman, Patriarchs, Arch-Druids.



Felicitous Communications

(By Deborah and David Frangquist, 1976)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. 8 June 1976
2. Zweibruecken, Germany
3. Dear Dick and Ellen [Shelton],
4. Yes, we are still here. We must have a lot people wondering, though. Please rest assured that although we never write anybody (and I do mean anybody), we remain just as interested in Druidism as ever.
5. We are not now actively engaged in trying to form new groves or win new "converts," and like Fisher, our spiritual interests have taken a decidedly Christian turn, but we continue to consider ourselves Druids and value Druidism as a strong antidote for the kind of simplistic thinking most people engage in.
6. Following a flurry of activity a year and a half ago, when we were so concerned about Isaac's schism nonsense and about copyrights, we researched copyright law and found that there was nothing to worry about. In fact, it is clear that the Chronicles could not now be registered since they were published without a copyright notice.
7. So once there was no immediate crisis, we slipped into our usual slothful habits. No, there is not some other letter lost in the mail since '74. Perhaps it is a good thing you sent us those extra copies of the Chronicles, though. If they are now needed at Carleton, we can send them back.
8. We are glad to be able serve as shoulders to lean on. Even though we have never met you, we sense more and more that we are really kindred spirits.
9. Unfortunately, we are not felling very encouraging right now. Yes, the real world really is like that. Yes, there really is no place quite like Carleton, or at least we haven't found it. Your lament sounds sadly like the things we have said to each other on many occasions.
10. We have had many long discussions trying to figure out how to recapture some of that Carleton atmosphere, or even how to identify Carleton type people out here in the world. W e haven't found any very good solutions, but we have resolved that when we get back to the states, we will make every effort to look you guys up.
11. We thank you very much for keeping us informed of Isaac's activities. We have the feeling that there must have been some letters of his that we never got, and we were a little in the dark at first this spring as to what he was doing.
12. We are probably not as concerned about him as you are, although we get frustrated and maddened by his obvious lack of stylistic sensitivity and good sense. But we generally feel that if he has captured any of the essence of Druidism, it will come out in the end; and if he has not, then people will get bored with him. But keep up the fight.
13. This letter would have been longer, but we put most of our effort into composing the accompanying epistle. It is intended to be read aloud at your Midsummer Bash. We hope it helps. We hesitate to promise to write again soon, but we do have good intentions.

Peace
Dave & Dee [Frangquist]

The Epistle of Midsummer

(By David & Deborah Frangquist, 1976)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

An Epistle to the Druids assembled at Carleton

On the Occasion of Midsummer

In the Fourteenth Year after the Establishment of the Reform

Chapter the First

1. Greetings and salutations in the name of the Earth-Mother; may she always nourish you from her bounty.
2. And may the radiance of Belenos brighten your spirits, and may he give you strength from his power, on this his greatest day.
3. It gives us great pleasure to greet you today, especially because you are gathered at that great and hallowed seat of Reformed Druidism; Carleton.
4. For us, Carleton and Druidism are inextricably intermixed. We cannot say which has made the greater contribution to the other for us; Druidism to the fond memories we have of Carleton, or Carleton and its very atmosphere to the delights we found in the Druid experience.
5. We have not met you face to face. Yet were we present there with you today, and it saddens us that we are not, we would meet as old friends. For we have sat under the same trees on the same hilltops at Carleton, and there we have met each other in the Mother.
6. But chiefly we are pleased to greet you for the mere fact that you are there to be greeted.
7. In the early days of the Reform, we took no thought for the future. We did not dream that Druidism would touch the lives of so many, nor last for so long.
8. We sought only to proclaim the Mother and assert our right to do so.
9. When we paid least attention to finding new Druids, new Druids found us.
10. While we gave little thought to organizing, an organization appropriate to our needs evolved.
11. When rules were changed and our very reason for being seemed to vanish, we turned to the Mother and in her we found new meaning.
12. There is a paradox; if you would seek to save Druidism, you will lose it; but if you seek the Mother and what she can teach you, Druidism will grow and prosper to her glory and to your benefit.

Chapter the Second

1. We would do well to remember this in these days. For word has come to us on the wings of great birds that once again the Reform is threatened with schism.
2. This is no new thing. You may read in the Early Chronicles how at the very dawn of the Reform there was the threat of schism.
3. The schismatics were then led by Jan [Johnson], who wished to impose on other Druids practices and doctrines which were repugnant to them.

4. But Jan had the Mother in his heart, and he did relent that there might be no schism but rather peace and unity in the fellowship of the Druids.
5. Thus he demonstrated the true spirit of the Reform and established a tradition far more important that those he had first sought to establish.
6. Therefore seek peace, harmony, consensus, unity; for that is the Druid way.

Chapter the Third

1. You may ask; "Should we include these schismatics in the fellowship of the Reform?" You cannot do otherwise.
2. Druidism is open to anyone who wishes to be part of it, however imperfect in understanding. We require only the tasting of the waters-of-life and an affirmation of the Basic Tenets.
3. No one can add any other test. No one can add to the Basic Tenets. [Law 4-6 -Ed.]
4. We are given to understand that these schismatics use words like "outsider" in their writings. That is an error. The words "outsider" and "insider" have no meaning for Reformed Druids. You cannot exclude anyone.
5. You may ask: "Were there not Anti-Druids?" Indeed there were, and likely are, and no doubt will be.
6. They are distinguished by their acts of violence against Druidism and their complete lack of understanding of Druidism.
7. They are Anti-Druids by their own choice; they have not been excluded by the Druids. Anyone may exclude himself from the fellowship of the Druids, but you must not sit in judgment.
8. There is no need to name the Anti-Druids (they were not named in the *Chronicles*), but you will know them when they appear.
9. Again: you cannot exclude anyone. Whoever would exclude others is excluded.
10. You may ask; "Should we recognize the orders of the schismatics?" Do they recognize yours?
11. All who have vigiled on the bosom of the Earth-Mother, who have tasted the waters-of-life, who have inscribed the Basic Tenets on their hearts, and who have received their orders from the hands of an Arch-Druid in the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, they are priests of Dalon Ap Landu.
12. All such persons you should recognize as priests, provided only that they also recognize all others.

Chapter the Fourth

1. You may ask; "Is it not possible that the Council could become perverted and transform Druidism so that we could not recognize it?" But what authority does the Council have except what all Druids accept?
2. If the Council does what glorifies the Mother, what establishes unity and harmony among Druids, and what promotes enlightenment, then rejoice in the work of the Council and do not concern yourselves with factions.
3. But if the Council does what does not glorify the Mother, what causes dissension and conflict, and what becomes a stumbling-block for Druids, then it is not the True Council. Then the Council will have passed away.
4. For it is an institution and like all institutions it will pass away, though we know not whether the time be near or far. And when it passes away, do not grieve for it, but rejoice in the Mother who will abide.
5. And do not be concerned for the future of the Druids, for they too will abide, at least for a time. Even so, the Mother will be glorified in new and wondrous ways, for she is ever changing even as she remains the same.
6. You may ask; "How can we preserve the True Council?" That is a question not tending to edification.

Chapter the Fifth

1. Therefore, have hope, glorify the Mother, greet each other in her name, quarrel not, seek enlightenment, and remain steadfast in the Reform.
2. Then the Mother will renew and refresh you, and sustain you and grant you her peace.

David Frangquist Deborah Gavrin Frangquist

Priest of Dalon Ap Landu Priest of Dalon Ap Landu

Patriarch of Belenos Priest of Belenos

[Circa June 21st, 1976 c.e -Ed.]

The Second Epistle of Robert

(By Robert Larson, 1976)

(New to ARDA 1)

Chapter the First

1. Dear Siblings-in-the-Mother:
2. Enclosed you will find a Xerox of the final version of the evolved works of Druidism. Except for a few illustrations, this copy is complete. Please make your corrections as soon as possible and return them to me by July 20 at the latest.
3. Since we have included something to offend almost everyone, objections to content will not be considered; the only corrections made will be those pertaining to fact and general proofreading.....
4. [Followed by visual description of DC(E).]

Chapter the Second

1. ...I wish to take this opportunity to answer some questions which were raised by my last missive.
2. Brother Shelton suggests "Conspiracy of Archdruids" as a title for the provisional council.
3. While I feel this title to be in keeping with the self-mocking style of Druidism, I also feel that the word "Conspiracy" has implications and connotations contrary to the aims of the council (at least as I seem them). Therefore, I intend to continue to call it the Provisional Council of Archdruids.

Chapter the Third

1. As far as the "sexist" language issue is concerned, I tend to agree with Dick, being what our late unlamented president would call a "strict constructionist" in the matter of language. What we are seeing now is egalitarian euphemism similar to the sexual euphemism of Victorian times, and I feel that it too will disappear as its causes disappear.
2. In many cases, it's a good example of not being able to see the forest for the trees.
3. However we are living in the present, and it behooves us to bend to the winds of the present.
4. "'Our predecessors of old did take up the sword and fight with those who afflicted them, but they were defeated. Wherefore, we must not take up the sword, but remain tolerant and patient in our afflictions that there might be peace.'"

Chapter the Fourth

1. Sister Shelton implies in her letter that there is little real need for the Provisional Council, as most of my proposed functions are supposed to be taken care of by the Arch-Druid of Carleton. True, with emphasis on the "supposed."
2. The Provisional Council may well become a "goosing" agency more than anything else. I have never maintained that there was a spiritual malaise in Druidism, only that its organizational structure was not all that could be desired.
3. The Provisional Council is an attempt to resurrect Druidism as an organization (or disorganization). I would also point out that in the years to come, most new priests will probably not be ordained from the Carleton grove, but from one of the other groves. It's a simple matter of arithmetic.
4. The Provisional Council will, I feel, give these new priests more of a feeling of belonging and access to other Druids. Talking with your Arch-Druid is a lot easier than trying to communicate by letter either directly or through the Carleton grove.
5. With an effective council of Archdruids, each Arch-Druid will have input from all the groves to enable him to advise and give answers to other Druids and those who are interested in Druidism, so that it won't be a matter of "Well, this is the way we think here."
6. Nor do I wish to rule out input from Druids not associated with a grove. Input from all Druids would be welcomed. However, since the Provisional Council will address itself mainly to the organizational problems of groves, input from grove members or those who have tried to organize grove, whether successful or not, would be particularly valuable.

Chapter the Fifth

1. Sister Shelton also asks what would be included in the proposed grove reports. Most of the information would have to do with size, frequency of services, problems encountered, solutions, orientation, etc. Any special services which an Arch-Druid wishes to communicate to other Archdruids could also be included.
2. Lastly, there would be a place for Druidic ravings on such subjects as "Whither Reformed Druidism?", "What should the RDNA be as an organization?", etc. These suggested topics for ravings (not a complete list) will accompany my request for a grove report, which you should receive in late August.

Chapter the Sixth

1. Finally, in answer to Brother Morrison, I will now relate this incredibly ancient Druid fable which I have just written.
2. Ahem.
3. Once in the long ago there were three Druids, and very fine Druids they were, too. It came to pass that each of them inherited a piece of land with a large rock on it.
4. Now the First of these Druids went to his land and looked at his rock and immediately fell in love with it.
5. To make his rock even more beautiful he fell to rubbing and buffing it until it bore a bright polish.
6. Every day he would rub and buff it till it almost outshone the sun, so bright it was.
7. The people who lived nearby would often come to see the rock and say what a wonderful, bright rock it was being.
8. Now eventually the Druid died and went to the Sidhe hills as all good Druids do. But the wind and rain did not die.
9. Slowly it was that the rock lost its polish, but lose it it did. No longer did the people come to see the rock, now neither wonderful nor bright, for of what interest is a mere rock, except to geologists?
10. The second of the Druids went to his land and looked at his rock and thought what a wonderful statue his rock would make.
11. So he took a hammer and chisel and carved a statue of his god out of it. Paint he put on his statue, and gold and

jewels also, until it looked exactly like his idea of his god. And the people who lived both near and far came to marvel at the statue and worship at it, saying such things as "You could swear that it's alive, that it's being."

12. To which the Druid would reply, "It is."
13. Eventually the second Druid too died and went to the Sidhe hills where all good Druids go. But the wind and rain did not die, nor did human nature change.
14. Thieves came and stripped the statue of its gold and its jewels. Wind and rain completed the destruction, until the statue once again resembled nothing so much as a rock.
15. And the people stopped coming to marvel and to worship, for, after all, who wants to worship a rock after he's had the most wonderful statue in the world?
16. The Third Druid went to his land and looked at his rock. Then he climbed upon it and looked about him, liking what he saw.
17. He planted flowers, trees and bushes about the rock and lichen on it. Every day he would herd his cows and sheep on the land about the rock, sitting on or resting against it.
18. As time went by, the flowers, the bushes and trees grew and the lichen covered the rock, giving the Druid an even more beautiful view and a softer seat to watch his herds from.
19. So beautiful did the Druid's land become, that people came from far and near to sit with him and watch the deer and fox play and the flowers bloom, for it was said to be the most beautiful and peaceful place in the world.
20. The time came when the third Druid died and went to the Sidhe hills where all good Druids go. But the flowers did not stop growing, nor did the bushes and trees and lichen.
21. Still did the deer and fox play in the Druid woods, and still were cows and sheep herded about the rock.
22. The Druid's name was forgotten, but some people still came to sit on his rock and look at his woods, for it was yet the most beautiful and peaceful place in the world.
23. And so it remains to this day.
24. Beannachtai na Mathar libh. Siochain

Robert, ArchDruid, Berkeley Grove

28 Mean Samhraidh, 14 y.r.

(July 2nd, 1976 c.e.)

The Second Epistle of Isaac

(By Isaac Bonewits, 1976)

[A Discourse by Isaac on his **personal** understanding of Magick]

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the First: The Baby and the Bath Water

1. Sisters and brothers, the purpose of this missive is to make clear some matters concerning the subjects of Theilogy (the study of more than one God) and Hierurgy (the practice of sacred workings) insofar as they relate to ritual.
2. For there appears to be a great deal of ignorance about these subjects among Reformed Druids and more than a little hostility towards the very existence of ritual at all.
3. And this is understandable from those who have been raised in a monotheistic culture, especially since the religious leaders of that culture long ago lost what knowledge they once had about the proper use and purpose of ritual.
4. So that today the rituals of the Established Religions of the West have almost no power and very little positive use; but on the contrary, have been perverted into tools of manipulation and tyranny.
5. Now since all of us growing up in monotheistic cultures have been taught from birth that the only "real" religions are the Western ones, and since it has always been made deliberately difficult for us to get accurate information about non-western religions, we have naturally tended to reject the non-monotheistic religions we do not know along with the monotheistic ones we are familiar with.
6. This shortsightedness has been planned, for the powers that we would rather have us as atheists and agnostics rather than as non-monotheists, for thus we are still playing their game by their rules.
7. Also as intellectuals, we have been raised to have a knee-jerk reaction to such terms as "Magic," "the occult," "ritualism," "the supernatural," etc., so that we can only think about these subjects in the ways that we are supposed to.
8. For a full understanding of these terms by intellectuals, and eventually large numbers of other people, would spell the death of organized Western religion (though it would have little effect on the non-monotheistic systems).
9. *What I have to say in this Epistle are, of course, only my opinions.* {Emphasis added by Editor} But they are the opinions gathered from a career of studying many forbidden subjects and learning to think that which a Westerner is not supposed to be able to think.
10. For I have studied magical, religious and psychical phenomena from all around the world and have learned that the overwhelming majority of cultures in which these strange beliefs and occurrences appear happen to agree upon the same basic theories of magic and religion.
11. Granted, the explanations offered by these non-western thinkers may seem a little strange to Western philosopher and theologians, as well as their students, but historically

speaking it is the Western monotheistic thinkers who are out-of-step.

12. And I will submit that monotheism, far from being the crown of human thought and religion, as its supporters have claimed for several bloody millennia, is in fact a monstrous step backwards, a step that has been responsible for more human misery than any other idea in known history.
13. And I will suggest that, in rejecting all religion and ritual because of disgust with the only religions known to you, the monotheistic ones, some of you have thrown out the baby with the bathwater; just as you were supposed to do.
14. And I will further ask you, sisters and brothers, to read my words with as open of minds as you can, for whether you wind up agreeing with me or not is really not important; but you will at least understand my motivations and concepts, and those of my colleagues in the Neopagan movements.
15. Perhaps you will come to understand that we are not irrational, anti-intellectual, "back to the caves" fanatics, but that rather our philosophies are the equal in complexity to any ever invented in the West.

Chapter the Second:

Reality and Non-Reality

1. In order to understand the original ideas behind most magical and religious rituals, one must begin with the fact that the Gods are real.
2. Their type of reality is not that of a block of wood or of anything physical that we are familiar with, but a kind of reality it is nonetheless.
3. This may seem somewhat confusing to the dualists among us, so I will attempt to explain this rather complex matter.
4. The theological system that framed the philosophical structure of Western Civilization and conditioned westerners as to what was logically thinkable, is basically a "conditionally monotheistic dualism."
5. That is to say, while claiming to be monotheistic, it is in fact *poly*theistic, with the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, Mary and Satan (Allah and Shaitan, in Islam) as the major deities, with a host of lesser deities called Saints, Demons and Angels, all of whom are divided into two grand armies: the Good Guys and the Bad Guys.
6. Dualism is the metaphysical view that the cosmos is divided into two irreconcilable forces, usually described as Good and Evil; frequently, it is stated that the Good God is the God of the Spirit (and therefore everything nonmaterial is good, except of course the Bad God and his minions, who are also spirits) and the Bad God is the God of the Material World (and therefore everything material and fleshly, including all the female deities of the Earth, such as our Earth-Mother is irretrievably evil).
7. Unlike the Oriental systems, there is no overlap between Good and Evil, White and Black, Light and Darkness.
8. Now while Western theology claims that Satan/Shaitan is weaker than Jehovah/Allah, nevertheless, in their day-to-day statements, most Western theologians ascribe to the Bad God all the miraculous powers usually ascribed to the Good God (or his representatives, such as Jesus or Mohammed); in order to be able to explain the "counterfeit miracles" performed by the members of other faiths.
9. It is obvious to any Pagan theilogian that Western theology is basically dualistic, with the forces of Good and Evil pretty much evenly balanced; it is equally obvious that these theologians managed to force Western philosophy and metaphysics to become strictly dualistic as well.
10. Pushing Aristotle (and later Descartes) as the supreme logician, Western theologians created a worldview in which every object of perception or conception was either Good or Evil, True or False, Right or Wrong, White or Black, Real or Unreal.
11. The entire cosmos was sliced into two warring halves, and whoever refused to accept this worldview was automatically ascribed to the Evil half and executed as a menace to civilization.
12. All of this, mind you, is somewhat different from the views that have been held by 99% of the human race, throughout history, and probably for a million years before history began.
13. Polytheists have a tendency to develop logical systems based on "multiple levels of reality" and on the magical Law of Infinite Universes: "every sentient being lives in a unique Universe."
14. What is true for one person in one situation may not be true for another person in a different situation, or even for the *same* person in a different situation.
15. 'Truth' is defined as a function of convenience (the magical Law of Pragmatism, also used in most engineering and scientific activity: "if it works, it's true"); Truth does not exist in a comprehensible form as an eternal essence.
16. The simplest example of this is your favorite table: slam your fist down on it.
17. After yelling with pain, you will notice that, on the level of ordinary mundane reality, that table is quite solid.
18. Yet we all know that, on another level of reality (one we all believe in, even though we've never seen an atom), that table is 99.9999% empty space, as is your hand.
19. For the table is simultaneously solid and not solid, depending upon which level of reality we care to consider.
20. A beautiful perfume in my universe may be a terrible stench in yours; to a colorblind person, red and green may appear the same; sound is a false concept to a person born deaf, he or she has to be taught to perceive that which does not exist to his or her senses.
21. The wonderful theories of relativity being so proudly produced by modern physicists were known millennia ago by Pagan philosophers and mystics; the only reason relativity came as such a shock to our scientists was because the Western worldview does not allow for ambiguity or relativity, everything is either Absolutely Eternally True or Absolutely Eternally False ("He who is not with me is against me," "The lukewarm I vomit forth from my mouth," "Kill them all, God will know His own," etc.).
22. This is not the place for an extensive theilogical analysis of Western Religion; but it is necessary to point out these matters rather bluntly, in order to allow one to think the unthinkable by reasoning out that which Aristotle says is impossible to reason out.

Chapter the Third:

The Reality of the Gods

1. Now, with the preceding background, we may come to the fascinating point where metaphysical relativity intersects the realm of theilogy (one may use the term "polytheology" if the slight change in the usual spelling of "theology" is upsetting).
2. For the Gods are both real and unreal, "true" and "false," depending upon which level of reality one cares to deal with.
3. Taranis, for example, is on the physical level merely a quaint myth of our Celtic ancestors.
4. On the euhemeristic level, He may be the memory of a once famous and powerful warrior and weather magician.
5. On the intellectual level, He is an Archetype of thunder and lightening, as are Thor, Perkunas, Indra, Perun, the Thunderbird, and other deities.
6. But what if you invoke Taranis several times to start storms and *each time you get a storm*?
7. You must then face the fact that, on *some* poorly understood level of reality, Taranis is a real, living entity, one you can interact with.
8. I would say that Taranis is, in fact, like all gods and goddesses, a powerful Archetype in the collective unconscious of humanity; this collective unconscious (Jung's term) is what I have called elsewhere "The Switchboard" (in *Real Magic*), C. Taliesin Edwards (the leading thealogian in the Neopagan movements has called "The Da Mind" (in his *Essays Towards a Metathealogy of the Goddess*), and that others have called by a variety of names.
9. I would assure you that this gigantic interlocking net of Archetypes *exists* on what, for lack of a better term, has been called the *psychic* level (or sometimes the "spiritual" level, but that term tends to confuse matters more than it helps).
10. It is the source of the divine power used in *all* religious rituals, including those of the monotheists who think they are communicating with a Supreme Being.
11. Further details can be found in the above cited writings, but for now let it suffice to say that *all* the Gods and Goddesses, Angels, Demons, Saints, Avatars, Buddhas, etc., *exist,* they are real.
12. They exist as, if nothing else, many powerful circuits of psychic energy in a gigantic web linking every living sentient being on this planet Earth.
13. And although it became fashionable in Western Religion to promote local tribal gods to the rank of Supreme Being (through a process known as *hyperapotheosis* or "The Palestinian Heresy"), most theilogians would insist that the Most High God/ess is only a distant parent to the Gods and Goddesses of Earth, no matter how grand the claims of religious partisans.

Chapter the Fourth:

Earthly Deities and the Supreme Being

1. Followers of Reformed Druidism who are horrified by being associated with Paganism will be surprised to learn that traditional Pagan attitudes towards a Supreme Being are highly similar to those held by most Reformed Druids towards Be'al.
2. Most Paleopagan and Neopagan systems of theilogy tend towards a belief that the High God or High Goddess lives very far away and is not concerned with the actions of mortals; although He/She/It may have been the original parent of the tribal Gods, nonetheless, the High God/dess is not usually described in anthropomorphic way.
3. The Most High God/dess is neither male, nor female, nor even neuter; He/She/It has no human emotions or other characteristics whatsoever.
4. In accord with the mystics from around the world, theilogians will assert that any statement made about the Most High God/dess is bound to be incorrect, simply because He/She/It is Infinite and human minds (no matter how "divinely inspired" they may think they are) are all too finite.
5. Human languages are not equipped to deal with Infinity; neither are human emotions.
6. The Gods and Goddesses of Earth, on the other hand, *are* anthropomorphic, they laugh and cry, become angry or vengeful, feel love and hate, can be tricked and taught, send mercy or punishment, etc., and this is precisely *why* They are loved.
7. These are the entities that humans actually reach in their rituals, although westerners usually fool themselves into believing that they have reached the Supreme Being.
8. Theilogians would insist that none of the deities worshipped by westerners are as powerful as They are claimed to be, but They are powerful enough to produce magical effects ("miracles") once in a great while, and that is more than sufficient to allow those who are ignorant of the magical and psychic sciences to claim each of the Gods worshipped as the Supreme being.
9. And since occultists and theilogians are executed as quickly as possible by monotheists, there is no one around to contradict the leaders of whatever religion is the One True Right and Only Way in a given culture.
10. Now the official party line of Western theology for five thousand years has been that "all Pagan deities are demons in disguise," and that it was an insult to the Supreme Being to worship any lesser deities.
11. Naturally, this came as something of a surprise to the Pagans, who were more likely to say that "All Gods and Goddesses are of the Most High, and in honoring Them do we honor the One."
12. Western dualism, however, forced its theologians to insist that all the deities they met in their missionary work had to be turned into Saints or Demons immediately.
13. The closest that Neopagans seem to come to the direct worshipping of a Supreme Being (outside of one Egyptian monotheistic cult, and there seems to be some controversy as to whether or not they count as Neopagans) will be found in the cult of "The God and the Goddess."
14. Known as *duotheism*, this belief system states that the Ultimate Godhead is bisexual, or hermaphroditic.

15. As direct emanations form "The Star Goddess and Her Consort," there is an Earthly Goddess and God (referred to in Neopagan Witchcraft, for example, as a Moon/Earth/Sea Goddess and a Horned God of the Wildwood and the Sun).
16. This Earthly God and Goddess are the rulers and at the same time the quintessence, of all the male and female deities of planet Earth.
17. Every god or goddess of this planet is seen as an "aspect" or "face" of these Two, who are in turn the humanoid aspects of the Most High God/dess.
18. But most Neopagans are perfectly willing to admit that the dolphins might have an Earthly Dolphin God and Goddess, and that beings of another world might have deities of their own Who would be just as "real" as our own are, though totally inhuman.
19. It's a big cosmos and the universe is perfectly capable of counting higher than two.

Chapter the Fifth:

But What About Ritual?

1. Now as a Reformed Druid, I am entitled to believe any sort of nonsense, simple or sophisticated that I care to, and you will no doubt be happy to allow me that right.
2. But you may be wondering what all of this intellectual discussion has to do with the positive or negative values of ritual; therefore, I will turn to that subject as quickly as possible.
3. But first it is necessary to explain some of the terms I will be using in the forthcoming discussion, for Heirurgy (which means the work of worshipping) is a complex subject and cannot be understood without the use of fairly precise terms.
4. "Magic" is the art of science of getting one's psychic talents to do what one wants; in other words, "Folk-parapsychology."
5. A "ritual" is any sequence of ordered events designed to produce a desired effect.
6. A "magical ritual," therefore, is a psychodrama designed to facilitate the generation of psychic energy and the focused disposition of that energy, in order to accomplish a given result.
7. A miracle is a magical act or paranormal phenomena performed by a person working within a religious context of which you approve. A "counterfeit miracle" is an identical magical act or paranormal phenomena performed by a person working in a religious context of which you *don't* approve (this is often referred to as "evil black magic done with help of demons").
8. A "religion" is a combination of a philosophical system and a magical system (as mentioned in *The Epistle of David*) which is oriented primarily towards higher beings, period. There's no need to go all gooey and mystical about it.
10. An "active ritual" is one designed to have an effect upon a situation or entity outside of oneself (praying for rain, for example, or faith healing another).
11. A "passive ritual" is one designed to change oneself; to receive or store psychic energy rather than sending it elsewhere (doing a self-healing, for example, or becoming possessed by a Holy Spirit).
12. As a general rule, the **major** distinction in psychic technology between magical and religious rituals is that magical rituals *usually* involve few people and are actively oriented, while religious rituals *usually* involve large numbers of people and are passively oriented.
13. Because the majority always define cultural reality, it is easy for a theologian who is dishonest to claim that the ritual activity involving large numbers of people is somehow morally superior and qualitatively different from those rituals involving a minority.
14. So what really goes on at a religious ritual? Not, what do the people *think* is going on, nor what their theologians and priests may *tell them* is going on, but *really*?
15. Actually, the art of Priestcraft (which is what we are, after all, discussing) is rather simple, so simple in fact that the over mystification of the psychic technology involved is what led to the term having such a bad aroma.
16. The answer to the question of what really happens at a religious ritual will be answered in Chapter Seven, using the Reformed Druid Order of Common Worship as our example; but First we should consider the tools of ritual.

Chapter the Sixth: The Tools of Ritual

1. In a typical magical ritual various techniques are used to get the magicians(s) into the proper frame of mind to release psychic energy in a focused manner, including the following:
2. .... "mandalas" or "yantras" (known in the West as "pentacles" or "sigils") which are pictures or diagrams illustrating the type of energies being dealt with....
3. 52

.... "mantras" or "incantations", which are sound sequences which have both physical and psychological effects....

4. .... "mudras" or "gestures," which are postures having physical and psychological effects....
5. .... props (chalices, swords, wands, etc.).....
6. ..... scenery (the decoration of the ritual room with appropriate colors and textures)....
7. ..... costumes (special clothes or the lack of them, worn during the ritual)....
8. .... intoxicating methods and methods for otherwise altering the state of consciousness including breathing exercises, sexual techniques, alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, physical exercises and other methods.

8b. Each and every single one of these techniques and supporting elements shows up in religious rituals as well.

9. The mandalas may be two-dimensional paintings, icons or tapestries, or else they may be three-dimensional statues or idols (an "idol" is someone else's religious statue); in any event, they stimulate the sense of sight.
10. The mantras are, of course, the prayers, psalms, litanies and hymns used to stimulate the sense of hearing.
11. The mudras can include kneeling, genuflecting, kissing of sacred objects, saluting the Four Quarters of the sky, etc.; these are for the kinesthetic senses.
12. The props are frequently the same as those used in magical rituals, chalices, pointing sticks, plates of precious metals, altars, etc.
13. As for scenery, every temple or church building is decorated in whatever manner the congregation feels is most powerfully spiritually (i.e. "holy").
14. Naturally special costumes are worn by the clergy and laity alike, such as skullcaps, black shirts with white collars, prayer shawls, white robes, maniples, etc.

15. In Western Religions these days, the principal drug used to alter the state of consciousness is wine, though Oriental Religions frequently use cannabis, Voodoo uses rum, and Native American rituals will use tobacco, peyote or magic mushrooms.
16. Is it only a coincidence that religious ceremonies make use of exactly the same ritual tools as those used in ceremonial magic?
17. It is perhaps true, as some have claimed, that the ceremonial magicians are "actually" worshipping demons and deliberately stole the techniques from the organized religions in order to blaspheme and desecrate them?
18. Bullfeathers!
19. Ceremonial magicians shamans, witches and medicine-people have been around for millennia, since long before the rise of our modern organized faiths.
20. They were using those techniques then because they worked, a fact the organized religions know full well, because each of the organized religions was originally a tribal religion run by just such a local shaman or witchdoctor or prophet.

Chapter the Seventh:

The Magic of Druid Worship

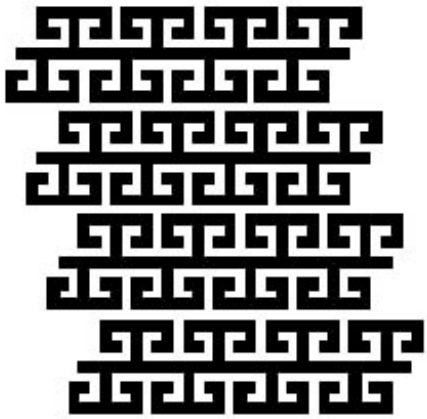
1. As you no doubt might imagine, brothers and sisters, I have been alternately amused and angered by comments about how easy it is for ritual to "independently acquire magical properties of its own."
2. My amusement was based upon my own knowledge that any effective religious ritual will already have magical properties or it won't work at all.
3. Whereas my anger was not directed at the speakers of the derogatory comments, for they had no way of knowing otherwise, but rather at the theologians and philosophers of the West who have so carefully assured that intelligent men and women will somehow separate magic from religion in their thinking.
4. As we have seen, what goes on in a religious ritual is exactly the same thing that goes on in a magical ritual: the manipulation of psychic energies by humans for human benefit.
5. The details of the technology may be a little different, but the forces used are basically the same.
6. In order to make my wild sounding statements a bit clearer, let us examine the Order of Common Worship in use by the various Reformed Druid movements.
7. Like all religious rituals, it opens with an Invocation, asking the deities to take notice of our presence and simultaneously initiating a form of unity between the members of the Grove.
8. In most religions, this is a far more elaborate part of the ritual and is designed to really make the group-mind (a telepathic resonance set up between a number of people thinking similar strong thoughts about a single subject) as strong as possible.
9. Note also that the Reformed Druid Invocation used includes a "confession of sins," another common element in opening prayers, designed to remind the people of their dependence upon the Gods.
10. Next is the Processional and the Hymns or Incantations of Praise, designed to "uplift" our emotion; i.e., to get us emotional and to focus that emotional/psychic energy towards the Earth-Mother and Be'al.
11. When the Sacrifice is offered, we are not only intellectually making an offer to the Gods, but we are also sending life force from the severed tree branches we are sacrificing (in a similar fashion, those religions that sacrifice animals are using that exploding life force to strengthen the psychic energy being aimed at the Gods).
12. We are in effect, by sacrificing anything living, taking advantage of the life force broadcast by any dying entity (see some Kirilian motion pictures of sliced plants, for example), and using it, along with our own psychic energies (the "sacrifice of our hearts") to "feed" the Gods.
13. This is a basic principle of Pagan theilogy, that the Gods need human worship as much as the humans need the blessings of the Gods; for every time you think emotionally (positively or negatively) about a deity, you feed more psychic energy into the collective unconscious about that deity, and reinforce its energy circuit.
14. This is why one can legitimately say that the Christians in the West (not so much in Russia and Eastern Europe) actually worship their Devil, because they think so much about Satan that they give Him tremendous power, certainly as much as they give to their Jesus.
15. Satan's power, like Christ's power, comes from human thoughts and human psychic energy, and not particularly from the Supreme Being, but both of these two Gods have more than enough psychic power to produce occasional magical effects.
16. Formalized worship services are not usually the time when the deities are fed the most psychic energy, for that is a day-by-day process; instead, the energy raised and sent to a deity in a typical religious ritual acts primarily as a catalyst: it is there to trigger a return flow of psychic energy, to be used for magical purposes under the direction of the priest or priestess leading the rite.
17. Now this kind of mechanistic approach to deity is distressing to most nonpagans in the West (though the Ancient Greeks or the modern Hindus would understand it perfectly), and it is, of course, an oversimplification; for there are thousands of variables involved in even the simplest exercise of psychic talents, and the response from the deity is not always as expected.
18. Is this the "free will" of the deity acting, or merely incompetence on the part of the worshipers? Perhaps it is both.
19. In any event, once the triggering energy has been sent via the Sacrifice to the deity (Who is usually visualized as "up there" somewhere, even if immanent as well), there is usually a response.
20. In Reformed Druid ritual, it is the presiding Druid/ess who listens for the answer, and joyously announces (at least during the Summer Half of the year) that the Earth-Mother has accepted the sacrifice and is ready to bestow Her blessings upon the Grove.
21. In other words, a message has been sent and acknowledged.
22. As in most religious rites, a Catechism then follows; though in Reformed Druidism this is a very brief one indicating the unity of belief among the members of the Grove concerning the Waters-of-Life.
23. The purpose of this is to further tune the group-mind, so that it will be ready to receive the psychic/spiritual energy sent it by the Gods (or, to put it another way, to open the group-mind to the reception of a message and a source of energy that is always available, if one merely tunes in and listens).

24. The presiding Druid/ess then Consecrates (psychically charges) the chalice, making it a focus for the energies of the Gods and the Grove to meet, just as in many other religions.
25. As the holy waters are drunk, each member of the Grove is linked more tightly to the Gods and to each other.
26. The intoxicating effect of the whiskey or wine is meant only as an additional shove to open any closed doors left in a member's mind; it symbolizes the fires of the spirit as it burns in us and serves to break down the conscious resistance to the Other Worlds.
27. Now is the time, in most other religious rites, when something active would be done by the spirit-filled Grove; a prayer would be said and repeated, to focus the linked and strengthened energies of the Grove, i.e., a "spell" would be cast (although that dirty word might never be used).
28. In Reformed Druidism, however, that energy is usually used for more passive purposes; to facilitate introspection and meditation, for the improvement of one's spiritual growth.
29. However, there is nothing to prevent a presiding Druid/ess form inserting a healing spell or a crop-growing prayer just before the pouring of the Libation ("To Thee we return....")
30. After the Communion is over, the presiding Druid/ess usually goes directly to this Libation, which has the dual effect of both strengthening the link between the members of the Grove and the Earth-Mother, and of "grounding out" the circle of energy generated in the ceremony.
31. This grounding and internalization of energy continues through the Meditation and Sermon. The last remnants of the energy are directed into the members of the Grove by the Benediction which, as in all religions, is designed to scatter the last blessing of the Gods over the people, while assuring them that their ritual worked and will accomplish their long term goals (this is known technically in ceremonial magic as "follow through" and is very important).
32. Now I know that this entire discussion of religion and magic has come as somewhat of an annoying shock to many of you, especially perhaps to those brothers who were the creators of the rite we have just been discussing.
33. But the fact is that, by accident or design, consciously or under the direct inspiration of the Earth-Mother and Be'al, they managed to create a ritual that follows the standard patterns all over the world for contacted supernatural entities and obtaining benefits from Them.
34. It is not a very powerful ritual as it stands, but with loving care and performance by individual Groves willing to put in a lot of work ("Hierurgy") it can produce as much in the way of spiritual force and fulfillment as those of the Established Religions and more than most.
35. With proper vestments, tools (like sickles, chalices, etc.), music and song, choreography and rehearsal (a good set of Bards helps here), Reformed Druid rituals can be as spiritually uplifting as any.
36. But rituals are another one of those things in life where "what you get out of it depends on what you put into it."
37. Heirurgy is hard work; but it's worth it when you have sick friends, failing crops, a long drought or spiritual malaise.

Chapter the Eighth: Conclusion (finally!)

1. The purpose of this Epistle has not been to convert anyone to my particular world view, but rather to share that worldview in detail with my brothers and sisters in the Council.
2. For many of you have expressed bewilderment at my words and actions.
3. And I have wanted you to be able to at least understand where I am coming from, whether you agree with me or not; for I am not alone in my beliefs, bizarre as they may seem.
4. There are thousands of us in this country, and millions around the world, and for the first time in hundreds of years of genocide against us, we are beginning to grow in numbers again, as the Gods return to claim Their own.
5. And we firmly believe that whether rituals become a stumbling block or a steppingstone to the stars is entirely dependent upon the discipline, knowledge and wisdom of those performing the rituals, not upon the rites themselves.
6. Blessed be the Most High Goddess, Who was and is, and is to come, always, now, forevermore, throughout all eternal space and time.

Peace!
Isaac Bonewits, D.A.L., Be.
Samradh, 14 y.r. (circa July 1976 c.e.)



The Book of Changes, PART THREE

(By Isaac Bonewits, 1976)

[The Voting Results of the Isaac Affair]

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the Fourth

1. Now other tentative decisions were made by the four ArchDruids with the majority consent of the Third Order members of their Groves; and these were as follows:
2. That no Reformed Druid should speak for the beliefs or nonbeliefs of *all* Reformed Druids, save to mention the Basic Tenets outlined in *The Book of the Law*, and that members of each branch of the Reform should speak only for themselves.
3. That the general definition mentioned in the letter of July 18 (Chapter 1, verse 6, above) for the RDNA might be used by the SDNA and/or the NRDNA instead.
4. That it be specifically mentioned to all Reformed Druids that they may found affiliated, subordinate or allied Orders, of whatever sort desired, to enhance their experience of Reformed Druidism.
5. That the suggestions made in the letter of July 18 (Chapter 1, Verses 8-12, above) concerning missionary work and the ordaining of new Third Order Druids might be followed by the NRDNA and/or the SDNA.
6. That the new addition of *The Druid Chronicles* being prepared by Isaac Bonewits and Bob Larson should be edited to remove obsolete passages and sexist phraseology, but that the original readings (for the benefit of those who prefer them, as well as for historians) of all passages changed drastically would be retained in *The Book of Footnotes*.
7. That the revisions to *The Druid Chronicles* as well as all associated materials to be published with them, would be agreed upon by the Provisional Council of ArchDruids *before* printing, and that in cases of disagreement, the original readings of each controversial passage would be retained in the body of the text, and the alternate readings be placed instead into *The Book of Footnotes*.
8. That copies of *The Druid Chronicles* would subsequently be printed and made available to all Reformed Druids, as well as to other interested persons, at a reasonable cost; save only that (a) copies of the ordination ceremonies to the Third Order would be available only to members of that Order, and that (b) copies of the ordination ceremonies or other rituals of the Higher Orders (as well as any other Orders founded) would be available only to members of each Order, unless the leader of a given Order were to say otherwise.
9. That editions of the original RDNA *Orders of Common Worship* for the Winter and Summer Halves of the year, as well as the original RDNA Second and Third Order ordination rites, would be printed intact; although individual ArchDruids and Groves might alter or rearrange these liturgies as desired (save only that nothing be actually removed from the Third Order ordination).
10. That copies of special rituals for the celebration of High Days, weddings, funerals, child namings, etc., would be incorporated into each new edition of *The Druid Chronicles* as they became available and/or were composed by individual members of the Third Order.
11. That the First Chairperson for the Provisional Council of ArchDruids would be Robert Larson, DAL, Be., ArchDruid of Berkeley and veteran of Carleton.
12. That the final proposals concerning the various matters of controversy and import would be submitted by the Provisional Council of ArchDruids to a vote of all Third Order members of all existing Reformed Druid Movements in or before *Foghamhar* 15 y.r. [i.e. August 1977 c.e. Ed.]
13. And that all concerned should abide gracefully by the decisions of the majority, or else feel free to form their own separate groups in mutual respect.

Chapter the Fifth

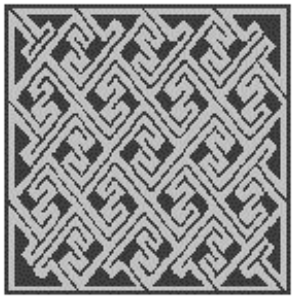
1. Now all these events herein recorded [in The Book of Changes, ed.] did occur in August of 12 y.r. and the decisions were originally meant to take effect as of the following *Samhain* (the beginning of 13 y.r.)
2. Indeed the Twin Cities did decide upon a partial schism at that time and did call itself the Schismatic Druids of North America.
3. And they did because they felt that it was unfair to present themselves as representative of all Reformed Druids, and because they were unhappy with what they felt was the negatively anarchistic structure of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
4. Still did they wish to remain in communication with the other branches of the Reform, so they did determine that their current and all future ArchDruids would become members of the Provisional Council of ArchDruids and that the ordination ceremonies to the Third Order of the SDNA would consist of the same elements and words used by the RDNA, with additions, so that the members of the Schismatic Third Order might also be members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
5. But none of the other decisions reached by the four ArchDruids and their Groves did take effect, because no one was notified of them.
6. This was because the ArchDruid of the Twin Cities Grove, who was supposed to print and mail this addition to *The Books of the Apocrypha*, was busy with a new job and a new wife.
7. And he was living on Central Druid Time.
8. Thus this Book was not printed and distributed to all the members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu as it was supposed to be.
9. And so no one outside of the four active Groves knew that the Provisional Council of ArchDruids had been formed, or that 13 y.r. was supposed to have been "The Year of Changes."
10. And that year was over and gone before this book was ready to be printed and distributed.
11. And it is now, as of this writing, *Samradh* of 14 y.r. (1976 c.e.) and the official notice has still not yet been properly distributed.
12. And behold in June of 14 y.r. was born yet another Grove and Branch of the Reform; for then was founded the Arch Grove of the Hassidic Druids of North America in the city of St. Louis, Missouri.
13. And in that same month did Eleanora Auvinen become the ArchDruidess of the Twin Cities Grove of the SDNA, for

the former ArchDruid did move back to Berkeley, California, there to preside over the Mother Grove of the SDNA.

14. Now therefore, because, because of all these things which have occurred and not occurred, has this last Chapter been added to this Book, and have the first four Chapters been edited to eliminate or expand various dating references.
15. And this *Lughnasadh* 14 y.r. edition of *The Druid Chronicles*, in which this Book appears for the First time, is being read and approved by the entire Provisional Council of ArchDruids prior to publication.
16. And therefore this Book is also being read and approved by the members of that Council, and shall be taken to be the proper and official notice of their actions and intentions in these matters.
17. May the Earth-Mother and Be'al bless us and guide us through this period of evolution.

Peace!

[The end was written in July of 1976 c.e. -Ed.]



A Cup Filled to the Brim with Druidism

(By Gerre Goodman MacInnes, 1976)

(New to ARDA 1)

Chapter the First

1. Dear Brother Isaac,
2. I received my copy of the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) on the 23rd of September, and wish to congratulate you on an excellent job.
3. It is obviously a labor of love, and I want you to know that I appreciate the effort that you have put into it.
4. Highpoints for me are the Mishmash, your Epistles, and the Druid Getafix, whom I met in Germany, where he goes by the name of Miraculix.
5. I hope you will not be too stunned if I say that by and large I agree with many of the philosophies put forth in your Epistles. I am, after all, one of those stuffy RDNA, a fuddy-duddy third order Neo-Christian etc.

Chapter the Second

1. I think it might be best for you to settle yourself with a nice cup of tea, (lavender is quite good for headaches) as I intend to ramble on at some length and hope to give you several points to mull over.
2. Copies of this are being sent to those members of the Councils whom I deem either interested or obligated by form, present or future ties of friendship, an/or professional association to wade through my philosophical and theological opinions.
3. I might say first that I am still a bit cross with you for not answering my last two or three letters.
4. I understand that you are a very busy man, but I am a very busy woman, and if I take the time to set down my thought (in longhand, yet!) it seems to me that you have an obligation to answer, especially the questions.
5. I do thank you for your recommendation of Dion Fortune's book, and despite its faint air of psychic paranoia, I am finding it most interesting.
6. At any rate, I sincerely hope to receive a reply from you on this missive sometime before Midwinter. I have been sorely tempted to work some kind of spell over it to insure that happening, but I really do believe in non-meddling, and so will merely trust in your conscience.
7. I am moved to share with you (And with the others: let no one feel distressed that the original of this letter is going to Isaac. It is just that he was the catalyst this time.) the place in which I find myself, hoping that it will help to create a bond of understanding and seeking between us, and perhaps contribute to the knowledge and growth of others.

Chapter the Third

1. To keep from confusing the issue we will stick to your definitions as expressed in the DC(E) as much as possible
2. I would like to note that my husband Brian, who is an Anthropologist (no doubt a cult in itself, by some definitions) has observed that you are playing fast and loose with both the terms 'Christian' and 'Pagan' as they are generally understood.
3. To illustrate this point, let us consider Quakerism, which you have labeled 'Neo' Christianity; many Friends, myself included, consider Quakerism to be closer to the 'original' sect than the practices of Roman Catholicism, which you place in the 'Paleo' category.
4. There are other things about that 'Neo' category which bother me: Christian Scientist, for instance, fit much more comfortably into 'Neo Pagan' by your definitions, yet most C.S would definitely consider themselves Christians.
5. On the other hand, many Universalist-Unitarians are emphatically non-Christians, while many spiritualists, who are sometimes very dogmatic in their approach to Christ and the Bible, are positively pagan in their approach to psychic phenomenon.
6. I think that I must say that maybe you don't know all that much about Christianity and that perhaps you have done to that group exactly what you accuse them of doing to you-throwing the baby (in the case, perhaps the Holy Babe?) out with the bath water.

Chapter the Fourth

1. Having stirred up that matter, I will proceed to the next topic: my current position in all this.
2. According to your definitions I find myself in the curious position of being both Neo Pagan and Neo Christian.
3. To explain this, a brief history lesson is necessary: I was born and raised Roman Catholic, became a born again Christian ala Billy Graham at the age of 15, served as a pillar of the Methodist Church in high school, discovered Zen, Siddhartha, yoga, T.M., and drug-induced mystical experiences during my first two years at Carleton, along with my growing interest in Druidism.
4. I began to evolve into a Quaker at the same time of the Cambodian Incursion in 1970.
5. Druidism has remained dear to my heart at the same time, although my involvement has been more with the Quakers due to the lack of other Druids and the marked propensity we seem to have for moving around every nine months. (That makes it rather difficult to find enough like-minded people to get a Grove going!)
6. I was attracted to the Friends for several reasons. They have historically placed the responsibility for the search for religious awareness squarely on the head of the individual.
7. They allow (encourage) considerable latitude in translating the traditional Christian doctrines; there are many Quakers who are not Christians.
8. They consider both men and women equal in the eyes of God.
9. They are socially involved and believe their concerns to be a part of their religious life, and not something separate.
10. They have put the emphasis back on meditation and dismissed the ritual and trappings that had become empty shells for most people.
11. Druidism, on the other hand, fill spiritual needs that Quakerism does not.
12. I would be less than honest if I denied my heritage. The ritual and symbolism speak to my former selves, as many pagans as Christians.
13. Both Quakers and Druids are basically anti-dogmatic and joyful in their approach. Both have accumulated enough traditions over the years to distinguish them from other groups; from each other, and from the purely individual approach to the questions of life.
14. The two systems are complementary as far as I'm concerned; they act as a system of check and balances, keeping the participant in a constant state of uproar and making it impossible to ever become too comfortable about religion.
15. If I were to succumb to the nutshell tendency, I could say "I am a Druidic Quaker" or, "I am a Quakerly (or Friendly) Druid." However that doesn't make it by a long shot.
16. Brian has rightly stated that I am Gerre, and my beliefs are what they are; a part of me.
17. To categorize does a disservice to anyone who would seek to really understand me or my beliefs.

Chapter the Fifth

1. Part of my responsibility as a person is to articulate my religious position and interpret it to those who come in contact with me in a way they can understand.
2. The search is barren if not interpreted; another way of saying 'faith without works is dead'.
3. Adherence to tenets is meaningless if the individual involved can't define what that adherence involves and what degree of truth they are willing to accept about those terms.
4. Blind faith has no place here: as a skeptic I tend to look askance at those who claim to be willing to die for their beliefs, but who cannot explain in some detail and with thoroughfulness exactly what those beliefs entail.
5. One really ought to know what one is dying for; it seems a waste of time to sit around afterwards and wonder, not to mention the karma involved!
6. Better to be a thoughtful nonbeliever.
7. At this point the only belief that I am willing to die for is the conviction that the individual has a right and a responsibility to formulate hi/her own beliefs without being dictated unto, whatever they may be. Only in this way can we be free enough to follow the paths of awareness and come to an understanding of what it all means to us.
8. In view of this I must agree with you about the short-sightedness of the monotheistic traditions. It does seem to me, however that your total rejection of that tradition is unfortunate. Some of my most meaningful and mystical experiences have come directly from the Christian tradition.
9. I say unto you, Isaac, that magic does not have to be skyclad to be magic, but can come in the guise of the communion, the stained glass windows or the Rosary of the Catholics, the hymns and the baptismal font of the Protestants, or the tremendous power of the gathered meeting of the Society of Friends.
10. Amulets and talismans can be just as powerful and hold just as much potential for the user when they represent the Christian Saints as when they represent the Ancients.

11. Do you really believe that the worship of the Virgin holds less power than the worship of the Mother for the true believer? The same spirit answers, the same results occur.
12. You tell St. Francis, St. Teresa, St. Bernadette that miracles (magic) don't happen in monotheism. You tell the hundreds healed by faith that their healings weren't real because they appealed to Jesus of Nazareth and not to Grannos or Diancecht.
13. Verily I say unto you, Isaac, you are a victim of the forces of anti-faith if you would condemn Christianity as totally negative and life-denying.
14. I agree that many things have been done in the name of God that ought not to have been done, but atrocities have ever been committed by humans on other humans in the names of their gods.
15. To humankind is given free choice, and to blaspheme in that way is part of the choice and the karma.

Chapter the Sixth

1. Although the names and forms of the gods have changed over the ages, anyone who is really paying attention can draw parallels between the 'old' gods and the Judeo-Christian God. I have always thought that it was Hera trying to get even with Zeus, imagine demanding all that attention!
2. I think you would agree that magic is meaningless (or ineffective, anyway) unless the participants are all in the same (or very similar) space.
3. The traditional Western ritual, which you claim powerless, has tremendous potential for magic and can be quite useful in focusing the participant's energy.
4. The sole stumbling block to the realization of this potential is guilt and self-abnegation.
5. It seems that this element was introduced by humans and not by the gods; while humbleness of spirit may be a good thing, guilt and low self-esteem are not, and have proven to be effective barriers to human-divine communication.
6. We have a right to be here.
7. We are part of the universe, and are worthy to be called the daughters and the sons of gods.
8. We are part of 'the burning oneness binding everything' that Kenneth Goulding describes so beautifully in the Nayler Sonnets.
9. I'm sure that you are familiar with Heinlein's Stranger in a Strange Land with its 'Thou art God, I am God' philosophy.
10. We all possess the potential to be magical, to make magic, to hold and use the power. Only our sense of guilt and powerlessness keep us from our heritage.
11. The Ancients (ha, the Good Old Days!) were no better than we are: if they held and wielded the power as it ought to be, we wouldn't be paying back the karma now.

Chapter the Seventh

1. I don't feel brash or blasphemous in stating things this way. Too many times have I felt 'at one with Be'al in the great dance of time' to believe otherwise.
2. One of the third orders once told me that I was the Mother personified, and he was more right than wrong.
3. Beset as I am by the dross left by centuries of negativity, by fear, guilt, hatred, still and always have I sought the mystic, the magical, the other-worldly contacts in my religious search.
4. In my lives I have gravitated always towards the awareness that would place me in rapport with my innate powers. This search has been sometimes more, sometimes less successful.
5. This life has been a complex search both for what has gone before and what is to come after.
6. I feel a sharp sense of urgency; a great need to consolidate the masses of information that I know I possess.
7. I need to reawaken the knowledge; the herb lore, the meditational techniques, the physical and psychic disciplines I once exercised.
8. I must do this before it is too late, before the chaos catches up and hurls us back to the very beginnings again.
9. Something slipped up this time around, and I have a feeling that it was meant to be so, and that someone has arranged a time out, so to speak, from the usual cycle for the express purpose of reevaluation and consolidation.
10. Being not foresighted in this life (at least not on a regular basis) I have no way of knowing how long this will last or whether I will ever be given another chance.
11. Therefore, I cannot and will not deny any of the experiences that are mine. Even the negatives are helpful, they have enabled me to see the shape and manner of the traps and given me the information need to avoid the ensnarement.
12. I will be free, and none can keep me from it save myself. I am the savior and the saved, the priest and the penitent, the master and the slave. I have the keys to the locks in my soul.
13. I give thanks in humbleness of spirit that I am, and rejoice that the awareness that I am has been given to me by the powers that be.

Chapter the Eighth

1. Isaac, be not so defensive in your search. You are loved and accepted by many!
2. Be not so concerned that we accept you Neo-Pagan credentials. Of course you know whereof you speak! Don't be such a fussbudget about it!
3. Too much do I see you pouting in the corner, poking in rage at those who disagree with you. Their paths area as valid as yours; their karma is their own.
4. Don't put others down because they chose to go back to Christianity. The 'falling away' of the brethren worries you too much. In the end we all take up the search for awareness in the ways that best suit us.
5. Our duty, joy and privilege is to learn from one another, to love one another, and to share with one another whatever we can in good conscience share.
6. With you I can share the traditional practice and discussion of magic.
7. Wit the Agnostics I can share the questions, the search, the levity and the skepticism that have made my own growth so meaningful.
8. With the Quakers I share the meditational silence, social activism, and contacts in the Christian Community of which I still consider myself a part.
9. Drink the whole cup. Don't quibble about the color or shape of the chalice, or who has supplied the wine. The source is the same for all of us. The same earth grows the grapes everywhere.

Chapter the Ninth

1. You are my brother.
2. I would give you wholeness and completeness in the search, and not have you cutting off your nose to spite your face.
3. We are One, whether we are engaged in the Mass, the meeting, the Coven, the practice of ritual intercourse, the long-drawn-out philosophical discussions that begin and end nowhere.
4. The secret is to recognize the oneness and to define it in as many ways as possible to keep from rejecting valid parts of ourselves.
5. Love is All.
6. Love me, Isaac.
7. Love David Fisher and Richard Shelton and Pope Paul and Billy Graham and Orthodox Rabbis and American Indians and the Dali Lama and the Buddhists and the Hindus and the Puritans and the Hedonists and Jesus and Be'al and Astarte and the Virgin Mary, and recognize that we are all One.
8. All together, and apart, and the power, be it of one god or many, is ours; meaningless unless we recognize the ridiculousness of artificial limits.
9. Be at peace, for there is no peace except in the knowledge that the only answer lies in the questions and that the only permanence lies in change, and the only truth lies in the constantly shifting changes of the universe, which is perfect love.

Chapter the Tenth

1. It strikes me as dangerous to deliberately alienate anyone who does not share your present beliefs, as that person may hold the key to the next step of your own search for awareness.
2. Nor is it good to alienate those behind you on the road, for you may be their key, and it would not be good to be the instrument which got in the way of them experiencing the truths that you hold.
3. Therefore let us be gentle with one another and with our beliefs, and let us not be bitter or hostile towards any system of beliefs or practices, for there are sisters and brothers in that space who still believe or who will believe, and if we put negative energy into hating a system 'for what it has done to us' we are only harming our brethren, who are seekers even as we ourselves, and who deserve only our love and positive energy.
4. Say good-bye to the old beliefs and let them go, but do not curse them, for they had their place and their purpose, and to deny them is to deny a part of ourselves.

Chapter the Eleventh

1. We have all been hurt so much!
2. We have been so closed to one another.
3. Alas for our generation, for we have come so close in so many ways, and yet in our defensiveness we have shut ourselves off from each other, and we shout the truth but have forgotten how to listen to the inner voice.
4. Quakers hear the inner voice; each person hears it differently.
5. There are as many true voices as the stars in the sky, and each voice is valid, loving, supportive, caring for all that is.
6. The trick is to hear that voice, to see with the inner eye. Satori, nirvana, astral projection, visions: all part and parcel of the same exercise.
7. Possession works if we let it. If we seek it. If we listen, and recognize it when it comes to us.
8. The inner voice is as valid as the voice of thunder. Each can be frightening or welcomed, depending on the state of the recipient.
9. May we be ever open to the voices, whatever their form.

Chapter the Twelfth

1. I must, at this point, question your mention of defrocking. It is my conviction that to frock or de-frock is a decision resting entirely with the individual.
2. No action on the part of any temporal body can take away a genuine call to the ministry.
3. The loss of a collar, staff or ribbon will not lessen the power of the magic or ministry exercised by the individual in question.
4. Only the person to whom it comes can decide the shape and manner of a religious vocation.
5. It cannot and ought not be defined or rejected by anyone else.
6. If I feel moved to speak, I speak.
7. If I feel moved to write Epistles, I write.
8. Though it may seem that no one is paying attention, it proves to have been what someone needed to hear.
9. The power that is in me can do no other, I might as well try to keep the sun from setting.

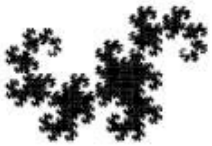
Chapter the Thirteenth

1. Now will you help me?
2. Where shall I go from here in my studies?
3. Which of your excellent bibliography shall I read first and why?
4. I am now asking your opinions, and the opinions of my other readers.
5. If some of you have decided that I'm stark raving bonkers, well, you suspected it anyway, and I do still love you, and isn't that the most important thing after all?

Chapter the Fourteenth

1. I must make one correction in your records.
2. I was also consecrated in the Third order in the winter half of the year. I vigilled at Carleton on a perfect late April night in 1970.
3. On discovering that I had never been 'properly' sealed unto the Second order (Mother alone knows why not) Brother Richard and I decided that we had better do the whole thing over again for the records, although I think that both of us count the first vigil and ordination as the true and valid religious experience that it was, and the other merely the filling of the expected forms.

Gerre MacInnes Goodman,
October 10th, 1976



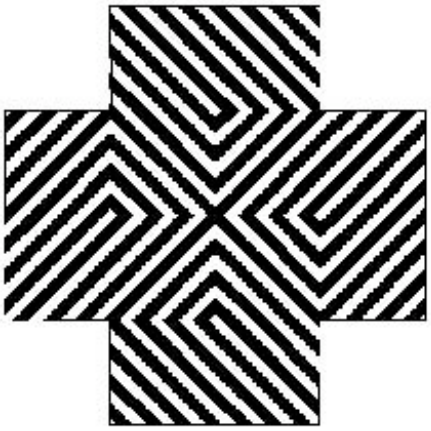
Salutations

(By Dale Fierbe, 1977)

(New to ARDA 1)

Salutations on this day of Oimelc!
The Magnolias stand serenely in this winter wind.
The pines shrug their branches
Snow drops to the ground
Unable to smother the spirit
Of Evergreen.
The Cedar whispers it's valiance
The quiet sentinel while other
Creatures and Flora
Wait for the name of Spring to
Brush past them, awakening them
From their sleep.
-Peace, Peace, Peace.

Dale Fierbe
Feb. 1, 1977 c.e.



Late Selections:

Trouble in Paradise

The Third Epistle of Isaac:

Doing Things the Rite Way

(By Isaac Bonewits, 1979)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First: A Complaint

1. Here with a moderately rude and impertinent article by Isaac Bonewits on a topic that should be of concern to all of us.
2. In recent years a number of people around the country have been complaining more and more about the quality of the rituals being performed by Druids, Witches and other Neopagans.
3. If we're going to be brutally honest about the matter, we'll have to admit that on a scale of one-to-ten the average ceremony in our community rates between two and four as far as the actual amount of psychic energies raised are concerned.
4. Even the best rites, the ones that people talk about in glowing terms for weeks later, still only rate between four and six. But this is a topic that, until recently, nobody wanted to talk about very much.
5. Politeness, interpersonal and intergroup politics, lack of fundamental psychic and magical training, and simple ignorance of what really strong psychic energies feel like, all conspired to make people reluctant to voice their growing doubts about the ritual technology in common use in our community.
6. Perhaps it is about time to forget about politeness and try to analyze just what's wrong with our ceremonies. We can't settle all the questions in one article, but if we can get folks discussing the topic openly we can at least start to work on the difficulties.
7. Readers of PJ&DC are invited to write articles commenting on this and other related matters.

Chapter the Second:

From Whence the Problem?

1. I'll start my theorizing with the observation that most American Neopagans are Americans first and Neopagans second.
2. Most of us are white, from middle class backgrounds and have high IQ's.
3. These factors combine to steer us towards highly intellectualized, "all head no gut" rituals.
4. It's no coincidence that most Druidic, Wiccan and other Neopagan ceremonies bear a strong resemblance to High Church Anglicanism.
5. The Reformed Druids were founded by an Anglican, as was Gardnerian Witchcraft, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and most of our other sources.
6. Most white middle class people have a positive terror of strong emotions to begin with. We've had strong programming through parents, school, and peers that inhibits our outward expressions of emotion.
7. As a result, most of us are stuck trying to do wordy, "head - tripping" rituals while trying to get excited enough to generate psychic energy.
8. As a result, we find that our fanciest theatrical rituals often generate only a fraction of the sheer energy that many "low class" Pentecostal or Voodoo ceremonies get routinely.

Chapter the Third:

Lessons from the Theater

1. Theatrical rites can be done effectively, if some basic factors are taken into consideration.
2. Because they have so little emotional power to begin with, they must be handled very well indeed in order to beguile the participants into enough excitement to generate any useful amount of mana.
3. This means that the theater aspects of the rite must be done properly: every important line must be memorized (or at least understood enough that the speakers can improvise effectively), all the cues for movement or speech must be memorized, the participants must rehearse all the elements of the rite (though the design could be flexible enough to allow spontaneous additions without disruption), and people must learn how to effectively speak and move for maximum effect.

Chapter the Fourth:

Dancing for the Gods

1. If dancing is going to be part of a ceremony, which I highly recommend, the participants should actually learn how to dance.
2. Holding hands and skipping (or more usually, stumbling) around in a circle is not dancing - it is, in fact, an insult to the Gods, particularly when done without any true involvement in the movement.
3. Every metropolitan area in the country has one or more folk dance centers where people can go for little or no expense and learn a few simple steps in only a few evenings or afternoons, and dancing with joy (or solemnity for that matter) would add a great deal to the energy raising.

Chapter the Fifth:

Study the Rules of Magic

1. If magic is going to be a part of the ceremony (which is usually the theory), it helps if the participants, and especially the leaders, know something about the generation and focusing of psychic energy fields.
2. Every single element of the ritual must be in a dynamic state of balance with every other part, and all must contribute to the general dramatic and magical atmosphere while still being focused around the general flavor and specific goal of the rite.

3. Every person participating in the ritual must be working (and playing) hard - our clergy are not good enough to do 100% of the work by themselves, which is what most Groves, Covens and Lodges seem to expect them to do.

Chapter the Sixth: Hard Work

1. Now all this sounds like it requires an incredible amount of time and effort. It does.
2. The name of the game, as I stressed in an overly long and pompous sermon last Winter Solstice, is "commitment." Too many of us want the excitement and glamour of being able to call ourselves "Druids" or "Witches" or "Psychics" without actually wanting to do any of the work required to justify those titles.
3. For people who did not grow up in a culture where effective magical and religious rituals are common, where everyone learns to dance as children and magical knowledge is commonplace, preparing to perform effective rituals is a time consuming and often expensive proposition.
4. One has to be willing to give up quite a bit of time in order to study theater, dance, psychism and mythology. This is not easy, especially if we are also trying to practice what we preach by being involved in ecological or other social activities in keeping with our beliefs, not to mention the amount of time involved in basic survival.
5. But if we aren't willing to invest the time and energy, and to make personal sacrifices for the deities and ideas we claim to love, then perhaps it's time we re-evaluated our motivations and personal priorities.

Chapter the Seventh: Commitment

1. This kind of commitment is hard to achieve, especially for the sort of intelligent, creative anarchists who make up our community.
2. Most of us are afraid, for very good historical reasons, to have a really deep commitment to any belief system.
3. Many of us have been burned before by established belief systems that tried to coerce us into following them.
4. Many of us, on a gut level, simply don't believe in magic no matter what our intellectual concepts on the topic may be.
5. As Americans, and anarchists, most of us have a strong aversion to discipline of any sort, including self-discipline.
6. We've been trained by television advertisers to expect "something for nothing" and "instant success," and this programming has been drummed into our heads from a very early age.
7. And most of us work so hard just to earn a living that we have very little time or energy to spare.
8. Now all of this means that we are unlikely to be a danger to anyone, but it also means that we are unlikely to be much of a help either. And that is a real tragedy, one that makes the topic far more important than our wounded egos.

Chapter the Eighth: What to Do?

1. As Archdruid of the Mother Grove, I am well aware that the Reformed Druids in general, and I in particular, suffer from these weaknesses as much as the rest of the community.
2. But the time is long past to start doing something about the situation instead of just bemoaning it in private.
3. Pentalpha is making a start.
4. We have one dance class going now and are planning others for this spring. We're organizing a song and dance workshop that we hope will be a learning experience as well as a good time.
5. We have organized a group that is creating a new sort of ritual for Oimelc with a nonverbal "gut" emphasis and some elements similar to those in Voodoo and Pentecostal ceremonies (see the front page for more details). After the ritual is done, we'll sit down and do a careful critique of it all, then start rewriting for the next one.
6. We would love to hear from folks in other parts of the country who are experimenting with nonverbal or balanced verbal/nonverbal ceremonies.
7. With a little luck and help from the Gods, combined with a lot of hard work, emotional commitment and lost weekends, we can create satisfying and effective forms of worship, celebration and magic.
8. And we can actually start practicing what we preach.

-Isaac Bonewits
1979/80?

Musings of An Ancient Religion in a Modern World

(By Shirin Ann Morton, 1979)

(New to ARDA 2)

Pentalpha/Druid Chronicler Vol. 2 No.4

Chapter the First

1. Today, as a necessity, I woke up, took my Javacrucian drug, (i.e. coffees, saluted the Sun (eyes scrinching at the early AM light) through the walled and windowed barrier to the outside world, and proceeded to journey to the marketplace where I could buy a few volumes of printed matter.
2. As I fumbled for my pen to write the check to purchase words on myth and symbolism, the thought occurred to me at how far we are from the reputed ability of our ancestral religion where learning began at birth and the history and knowledge was reputedly all orally learned.

Chapter the Second

1. I think about the lack of oral traditions we are faced with in our society.
2. If I want to know something, I have to resort to the printed word.
3. If I were a survivor of a great calamity, there would be no way I could relate the history of my culture from memory to the new generation, yet we see this ability time and again in groups of people who did not rely on writing for scholarship.
4. Who is more scholarly – I, who have a large library and can research obscure facts of knowledge, or the Navajo Indian, who can walk out into the dry prairie and find means to survive and teach the tradition to the new generation?

Chapter the Third

1. A sandchanter medicine person has to have the history of the clan in his/her mind along with the myths about the healing, along with complicated mandalas of sandpainting and all the herbal knowledge to compliment the ceremony.
2. This tradition is completely oral and visual, whereas mine is all written.
3. Admittedly as the young lose interest in the clan, parts of the system may be lost as has happened.
4. It seems to me that many who claim to follow the old ways should begin looking within and studying techniques of visual and oral retention.
5. When I look about me and see people doing rituals they have to read, working up ceremonies from written works, and reading them, I wonder about whether our so-called primitive ancestors were all that primitive.

-Shirine Morton

March 1979

The Fourth Epistle of Isaac

(By Isaac Bonewits, 1980)
(New to ARDA 2)

Pentalpha Summer 1980

Chapter the First

1. Isaac Bonewits has retired as Archdruid of the Mother Grove, so that he and his wife Selene could move down to Santa Cruz.
2. Joan Carruth, Matriarch of the Order of Dian Cecht, is now the Co-AD with Stephan McCaully of the combined Mother Grove and Hazel Nut Grove merging.
3. Isaac has kicked himself upstairs to the previously nonexistent position of Archdruid Emeritus. He swears up and down that he will not start a grove, coven, lodge, temple, or koffeeklatsch in Santa Cruz for at least another year. (No one believes him.)
4. He sends this following letter:

Chapter the Second

1. Dear Druidic and other Neopagan siblings:
2. It's true. I am now living near Santa Cruz, California, in something vaguely resembling a state of magical retirement.
3. While Selene goes to the University (to get her B.A. in Modern Ritual!), I'm working in the book composition field (typesetting, layout, camera work, etc.) and spending what spare time I have reading studying guitar (so I can actually start playing some of the songs I've been writing) and working on a couple of new books.
4. As Archdruid Emeritus, I get to take a break for a year or so. This means that people interested in knowing what's going on with the current Neopagan Druid movements should write to Joan or Stephen, not me. I'm on "sabbatical."
5. One of the projects I'm working on this year is a sort of "Druidic Handbook." I'm rewriting a lot of the material I originally wrote for The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) and adding a sizable amount of new stuff.
6. The book will include history, polytheology, philosophy, rituals, liturgical customs, music, poetry, organizational structures, and everything else necessary so that any qualified reader can use the book to start up his or her own Neopagan Druid group -with or without any "apostolic succession" from the Reformed Druids of North America.
7. It will be written and published in such a fashion that it can be taken into any court in the country and presented as "sacred scriptures" for legal purposes. Whether one wants to start up a Druidic group or not, it will still serve as a source of ideas on how to start a new religion.
8. The reason I'm mentioning all this is not to promote advance sales (it won't be available for at least a year or two anyway), but to ask for help. I want to include the best and most usable materials from any and all Druidic, semi-Druidic and pseudo-Druidic sources.
9. I'm looking for copies of Masonic (Mesopagan) Druid ceremonies, remnants of old Celtic folksongs and dances, experimental liturgies from current Neopagan groups and individuals, even people's "past life memories" of Druid

lore. Mind you, I will footnote everything properly, and I'm not going to present something as historical fact unless it can be pretty well documented. But there are many kinds of truth, and each can be presented on its own level of reality.

10. So if you would like to get involved in helping me create a new Neopagan Druid religion, feel free to send me whatever you've got to offer. Items that are copyright, or which you refuse to let me change, should be marked clearly as such. I won't print much of either kind of item, since I plan on altering, merging, and otherwise transmuting 95% of everything I can get my hands on.
11. As soon as I have working drafts of various sections of the handbook, I'll circulate copies among the dozen or so people who have shown the greatest interest, including members of as many other Druidic movements as I can find. With luck, we can come up with a consensus of what Aquarian Age Druidism might be like.
12. If you'd like to help, send your stuff to me at Box 9398, Berkeley, CA, 94709. Please mark your envelopes "Druid Handbook," so they won't get mixed up with the regular Pentalpha mail.
13. Oh, and I should point out that I am terrible at answering correspondence, (I'm about nine months behind on my current pile of letters), so don't think I'm not appreciating your stuff if I don't write you a letter back immediately. I will try and send postcards out to acknowledge receipt of your materials.
14. From time to time, bits and pieces of this project, as well as questions for people to argue about, will appear in The Druid Chronicler, along with occasional progress reports. But don't expect anything in a hurry, at least not from this Archdruid Emeritus. After all, folks in the magical community should be able to handle a little A.E. wait!

The Fifth Epistle of Isaac: The Farewell

(by Isaac Bonewits, 1981)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First: Cycle Ends, Cycle Starts

1. FROM THE ARCHDRUID
2. The ancient Druids are said to have built their solar-lunar calendar around a 19-year cycle (that is, 235 lunar months).
3. Samhain this year ends the first 19 years of the Reform begun at Carleton College, and begins a fresh cycle.
4. Samhain also begins the season of Geimreadh (winter), a traditional time of reforming and resurrection.
5. This winter bodes fair to continue those traditions in the grand old style.
6. Last September 20th I was (re-)elected Archdruid of what was then called the Berkeley Grove. I ran for the office on a "Revolution ticket," warning the Grove's members that I would make sweeping changes, especially in the areas of liturgy, organizational structure, and training.

Chapter the Second: The Revolution Ticket

1. I said it was time for the Reformed Druids to begin the work necessary to create a complete religion, to grow beyond the loose framework that is the sum of its current liturgy.
2. I painted out that, little as we know of the ancient Druids, we do know that they were the Brahmanic caste of the Celtic/Germanic/Slavic peoples (though they were called by different names in different times and places.) They were the artists, musicians, poets, healers, judges, historians, diviners, magicians, clergy - the cognoscenti of their societies.
3. Any neopagan group with the audacity to call itself Druidic should have, above all, a commitment to excellence and a willingness to be everything that the name implies.
4. These ideals are far beyond the pale of what the Founders of the Reformed Druid movement wanted in the early 1960s. Their image of a Druid was that of an anarchistic philosopher, a sort of Zen Unitarian, and most of them had no intention of starting a "real" religion; they had no idea that the Gods they were invoking happened to be very much alive.

Chapter the Third: The Gods are Alive

1. The Old Gods are alive - although I will grant that they're a little sleepy. After all, it's been a long time.
2. But what the folks at Carleton College built was not meant to last, to grow, to spread, and that Reformed Druidism is still around 19 years later is a testimony to the power of the Gods and of the Druidic archetype.
3. And given this archetype, these Gods and the power inherent in the concept of Druidism, we have the basis for a healthy, growing religion, a religion that works.
4. I have always thought that there was more to Druidism (Reformed or otherwise) than was dreamt of in the philosophies of those at Carleton College. It's out there somewhere, and through diligent hard work, we can find it. We will find it!

Chapter the Fourth: Criteria for Druids

1. Do I hear the Old Gods stirring in their sleep?
2. Everyone advances through the Circles according to their knowledge, ability and commitment.
3. We are still developing the Circles system and the criteria for admission and advancement, but a few things have become clear based on what we are trying to do:
4. There will be set criteria for advancement, and everyone no matter who they may be, elsewhere will follow the same criteria.
5. Various rituals will be structured to the level of their participants.
6. Everyone will be required to show mastery of the knowledge in one circle before being advanced to the next.
7. This has allowed us to get back to the OLD idea of what a "Druid" was. He or she was a priest, a bard, a magician, a healer; he/she was of the cognoscenti.
8. Not everyone was cut out to be one, nor did everyone qualify in the Gods' sight.
9. If you were proper Druid's material, you could demonstrate that fact. Nobody questioned your right to wear that robe because you had been challenged long before you were ever given it.
10. We are trying to return to that method and that standard.

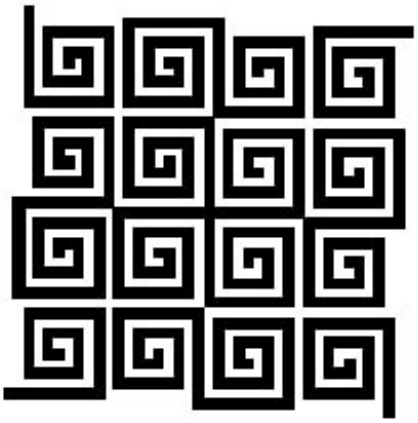
Chapter the Fourth: Connections With the Old Order

1. Does this mean that we have cut all ties with the old NRDNA structure?
2. After all, we're talking about making people *work* for what they want, then rewarding them for what they produce!
3. The old New Reformed Druids offered everybody the same things, and it was open to the public - in fact, they even held their rituals in public parks.
4. We haven't cut all our old ties; just most of them. For instance, we will not instantly invest someone into the third Circle just because they are a Third Order Druid in some other Grove.
5. In view of what we're trying to do with our Druidism, there is no way we can do that without compromising our objectives.
6. We will, however, keep our lines of communication open to other Groves and other groups of Druids. We want to hear what they are doing, and we want to tell them about ourselves.
7. We will allow public participation in some of our rituals. (Emphasis on the "some). There will most assuredly be rituals that are open only to members who have been admitted to the First Circle or higher, and rituals closed to lower Circles.
8. It depends what we're trying to accomplish with any given ritual. Why close some rituals? What do we have to hide? Nothing.
9. Druidism will continue to be as it ever was. But we will hold closed rituals. This is not because we hold any secrets; rather, it's because we want our rituals and services to *work.* When we look for an omen, we want an unmistakable omen.
10. We are going to help our rituals work by requiring everybody who participates to be familiar with our methods.
11. For these reasons, of course, we cannot participate in the old Council [or its successor, the "Coalition Council" (CoCoDAL)] of Dalon ap Landu. We do not recognize their authority to govern our activities, because their aims are not ours. How can the Mormon Elders guide a Roman Catholic congregation? Their ideals are too dissimilar.
12. Isaac spent some time during Samhain this year addressing that subject. In an open letter which he (perhaps unfortunately) finally decided not to mail, he said:
13. "We will not participate in the original Council (or the current "Co-Council") of Dalon ap Landu - the original governing body of the R.D.N.A., composed of all the priests and priestesses - unless it is made abundantly clear that we do not recognize their authority to make any decisions regarding our activities, structure, 'orthodoxy,' etc.
14. "We will participate to the extent of sharing ideas and information with other Reformed Druid groups.
15. "As for the 'Higher Orders,' the Mother Grove will not help reorganize, nor will we recognize the revival of the old R.D.N.A. Higher Orders or the more recent N.R.D.N.A. Special Orders.
16. "We're not going to be in any hurry to start any new ones either, save for revamping the Bards inside our own Grove.
17. "Members of the Mother Grove may start Special Interest Groups, or participate in the Higher & Special Orders already existing in other Groves, but such SIGs or Orders will have no official status for now."

Chapter the Fifth: What Are We Trying to Accomplish?

1. If we are throwing out so much of the old system, what will we replace it with? Exactly what are our goals?
2. At the bottom line, they're simple enough.
3. We want to establish a true relationship with the Gods.
4. We think that this is best done through a combination of ritual, magic, music, dance, poetry, and theatre.
5. The Gods love a good show! And to make this the best show possible, we are going to stress personal development and personal achievement within the Mother Grove.
6. We want dedication, and we think that the rewards - personal, spiritual, even perhaps physical - to be had from that dedication are more than worth the effort.
7. In addition, we want to see a balanced energy raised in our rituals. Too many Neopagan groups in the past have had a bias (however well-intentioned or even unconscious) toward either the male or the female in their workings.
8. For this reason, we strongly emphasize the value of working with a partner of the opposite sex for balance and completeness.

Isaac Bonewits
December 1981



The Epistle of Sally: Avoir Mes Amis

(By Sally Eaton, 1981)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. FROM THE ARCHDRUIDESS
2. My name is Sally Eaton. Bonewits is my legal last name, but I prefer to use Eaton. My own identity is very important to me, for all the usual reasons.
3. I've been involved with NRDNA since 1979. I've been a practicing Witch since my early teens and involved heavily in magic all my life.
4. I was attracted to Druidism because of my Celtic ancestry and because of the emphasis on music; among other things, I'm a singer and songwriter.
5. During 13 y.r. [1979-80], I was Server to what was then the Berkeley Grove. At that time we had two Archdruids, a woman and a man.
6. I liked this idea very much; the precisely equal division of leadership between male and female is my ideal.
7. I thoroughly agreed with the basic ideas of Druidism, but as time went on I found myself dissatisfied with certain aspects of the services.
8. We were meeting in public parks so newcomers could join freely, and I felt like I was working in a fishbowl.
9. Moreover, the services reminded me most of liberal Christianity - they didn't feel *Pagan* to me.

Chapter the Second

1. I'm not a Duotheist, I'm a Polytheist.
2. I work with particular Goddesses and Gods, not just the Great Mother and Father.
3. I wondered why we didn't bring back the real deities of our Celtic forebears.
4. I thought it was our *job* as Druids to do this.
5. When I tried to tell people this, though, I found myself bucking a rigid "tradition" that dated all the way back to 1963.
6. I made suggestions, and was told, that isn't the way we do things."
7. I was frustrated. I could make few creative contributions.

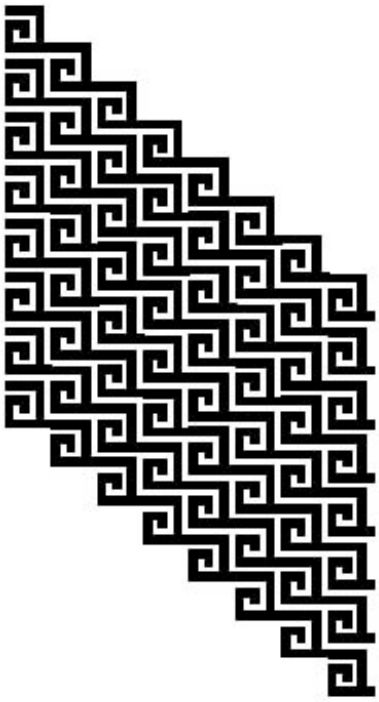
Chapter the Third

1. The Carleton College Druids never thought in terms of starting a "great" religion. Anarchy was their byword.
2. They had no training system for the clergy, even though the very word Druid is most often taken to mean "High Priests.
3. The ancient Druids often took twenty years to complete training in the arts of healing, divination, music, priest craft.
4. I myself have devoted my life to magic. Why should I want a part-time religion?

Chapter the Fourth

1. Folks in NRDNA who wish to continue the Carleton style of worship are welcome to do so, but there are those of us who felt it was our Karma to find a Druid way both older and deeper.
2. I want to see the ancient way restored to its full power and splendor.
3. I want to know the Gods of my ancestors, to come face to face with them on their own terms.
4. I want to know their music, their language, their teachings, and their love.
5. It may take more than our individual lifetimes, but I know it can be done.

Sally Eaton
December 1981



The Beginning of ADF

(© Isaac Bonewits, 1983)

(New to ARDA 2)

Originally published in Druid's Progress #1 of ADF

Welcome to the first issue of the Druids' Progress. Some of this Report will be familiar to a few of you, since I'm combining materials from several previously published articles with the contents of the first announcement letters about ADF. I'm doing this so I can send out this first issue to new Inquirers and give you all the data you need at once. Please note, however, that only supporting members of ADF will be guaranteed future issues. This whole project is being run on the proverbial shoestring... and the original Druids apparently did their rites barefoot! Let's start with the original "Open Letter" that planted the first seeds:

This is going out to all the people who have written to me wanting Neopagan Druid literature, training and/or fellow Druids with whom to worship. Copies are also going to various Neopagan publications, as well as a few folks who have indicated interest in the general topic of Druidism.

As many of you may know (perhaps from reading my book Real Magic or Margot Adler's Drawing Down the Moon, I've been a priest of the Reformed Druids of North America ("RDNA") since 1969. I've led groves (congregations) in Berkeley and Minneapolis, and founded others elsewhere; published newsletters (both Druidic and general Neopagan); and wrote most of, edited and produced The Druid Chronicles Evolved, (the closest thing to official scriptures the RDNA has). I'm also a priest and elder of the Craft, and I've been a Neopagan magician and occultist for nearly twenty years.

I've studied, practiced and written about many different forms of magic and religion over the years, yet always I find myself going back to Druidism. Many people have written to me to tell of similar spiritual histories, of their knowledge that they are meant to walk a Druid path. Yet what can we, who wish to worship and to grow as Neopagan Druids, do for fellowship? The Masonic Druids have much to teach us, yet they are not Neopagan. The "Druidic" traditions of Wicca are interesting, but they're not really very Druidic. The members of the RDNA have no interest at all in being organized by anyone, nor in recruiting and training would-be Neopagan Druids. There doesn't seem to be any organized group of people trying to reconstruct what the Paleopagan Druids actually believed and did, nor trying to apply such knowledge to creating a Neopagan religion fit for the Space Age.

What can we do? We can do it ourselves Thanks to the researches of such scholars as Dumezil, Ross, Piggott, Duran and others, we now have sizable amount of realistic data about Indo-European Paleopaganism and its clergy. But how do we apply this knowledge to creating a modern Neopagan religion? What does it mean to be a Druid in the 1980's? Using accurate information as starting point, how do we create rituals and fellowship, art and music, polytheologies and lifestyles that will give meaning to our lives and those of others?

Well, of course, I have my own vision of Neopagan Druidism. I see Druids as artists and intellectuals, magicians and clergy, holders of the highest wisdom their cultures (or subcultures) have to offer. This is what they used to be, and what (with sufficient hard work and dedication) they could be again. A number of people have told me that they share my vision and approve of the wars in which I think it could be accomplished. So, after a great deal of soul-searching, I've decided to try once again to see what I can do to create a form of "reconstructionist" Neopagan Druidism.

The purpose of this letter is an announcement of, and an invitation for, your participation in, the creation of: Ár nDraíocht Féin. The Irish words (pronounced "arn ree-ocht fane") mean "Our own Druidism," and that's what I have in mind -- a brand new form of Druidism, not just Pan-Celtic, but Pan-European. (By this latter term, I mean to include any of the European branches of the Indo-European culture and language tree -- Celtic, Germanic, Slavic, Baltic, even the pre-Classical Greek & Roman.) Paradoxically, this would resemble the original Paleopagan Druidism far more than any efforts of the last thousand years. It would be based on the best scholarly research available, combined with what has been learned (about art, psychology, small group politics and economics) through the theory and practice of modern Neopaganism, and my own knowledge of the polytheological and practical derails of magical and religious phenomena.

I've already started this project, through the organizing of my notes and the beginning of a new book. The purpose of the druid handbook will be to enable anyone who has a copy to start up their own Druidic grove, or to practice as a solitary Druid. Everything necessary will be included: history, polytheology, liturgy, legal structures, art and music, calendars and customs, etc.

This is where you come in, I'd like to make sure that what I'm creating will fulfill genuine needs in other Neopagans. So I'm going to need feedback, advice and research help from many people in order to make this project work. Unfortunately, I'm also going to need some sort of minimal financing in order to devote the time necessary to do this right (I'm talking about 10-20 hours per week for 2-3 years). Otherwise I simply can't do the huge job of coordinating the research and writing the book in anything less than 5-10 years.

What I have in mind is this: despite my experiences with Pagan publishing in the past, I'm willing to produce a highly irregular, nonscheduled Druid publication (that's what you're reading now). This will come out three or four times per year, and will simply consist of xeroxed sheets of dot matrix type. (I'm deliberately going to keep the format as simple as possible, so as to avoid falling into the common Neopagan pit of spending increasing amounts of time and money on improving the physical appearance of the publication, when I should be concentrating on content). Issues will include selections from the work in progress; research materials (advice, requests and reports for and from the readers); scholarly, liturgical and polytheological debates; Druidic rituals and guided meditations; and anything else that looked interesting and Druidic around publication time. (And since more and more people are wanting ADF to turn into an active Neopagan religion as soon as possible, I'll be including organizational materials and advice as well.)

Now Druidism is not everyone's cup of tea, so I'm not expecting a large response to this announcement. Professional journals for specialized interest groups charge as much as $850 per year, but I'm willing to mail out this stuff to people donating $20 or more per year (depending upon what each supporting subscriber honestly feels they can afford to contribute to the project). That won't be enough for me to "earn a living from my religion," but it could enable me to devote the time and energy needed (not to mention the expense of paper, postage, computer disks, printer ribbons, phone bills, etc.) without my actually losing, money on the project.

If you're interested, send your donation to me with a clearly printed or typed name, mailing address, zip or postal code, home and work phones (optional, with hours you can be reached at each), areas of expertise (European languages you can read and write, artistic skills, research background and

resources, Neopagan training already received, etc.) and areas of special interest (what you would most like to learn and what you think would be most useful to publish). Make our your check or money order to "P. E. I. Bonewits," and enclose a large (manila 9"x11" or 6"x9") self-addressed stamped envelope. If there aren't enough people who are enthusiastic about the project, the envelopes will be used to return the money of those who have responded. Otherwise, I'll use them to mail out the first issue sometime this spring. (Obviously, the response, though small, was enough to encourage me to go ahead. If you're receiving this issue in response to one of ADF's ads, then you don't really need to send in envelopes with your donation, unless you want to help out with the mailing costs on your future issues.)

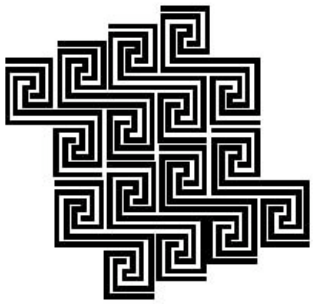
With a little bit of luck, the blessings of the Gods and a great deal of hard work, we can create an authentically Druidic Neopagan religion our ancestors would be proud of. ADF is an idea I have been wrestling with for years: a Neopagan Druid Order whose members would not be ashamed to honestly compare themselves with the original Druids. This requires mature, dedicated and talented people who are willing to invest both time and energy over a long period (remember, the original Druids took up to twenty years each to be fully trained, and they had an intact tradition).

The response to a rather small mailing of the Open Letter has been remarkable. About ten percent of the recipients have replied, and among them are a dozen linguists (who speak/read/write French, Spanish, German, Irish, Welsh, Russian, Czech, Latin, Greek, Sanskrit, Anglo-Saxon, Gothic, etc.). Several people who come from families that have always considered themselves Druidic have written, as have a few folks who are already students of Indo-European and/or Celtic studies. I expected a high proportion of Ph.D.'s and self-taught scholar, since they are common in the Neopagan community, but the actual proportion is amazing! Many have written to say how unsatisfied they have been with the scholarship and technical skills of other Neopagan traditions, and of how they have been looking for a group that took these matters seriously.

I've also had contact from poets, healers, and people who just talk to trees -- and ADF will need these types just as much as we will need scholars (though there is a large overlap, of course). I haven't heard from very many traditional musicians, singers or dancers yet, but I hope we'll able to recruit some. We also need participation from folks who are active in various ecology and conservation groups; therapists willing to help train Neopagan clergy in pastoral counseling techniques; people from Celtic and other cultural revival movements, and so on.

At this point in the birthing process, details are in short supply, but the general outlines are becoming increasingly clear. I can at least give you some specific ideas as to...

-Isaac



Later Selections:

The Live Oak Years

Open Letters to the Grove

(By Emmon Bodfish, 1985)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. 11 November, 1985
2. Dear Stacey,
3. We will not be having Druid meetings at 616 Miner any more. Herb will be receiving a letter from my attorney to this effect.
4. This is not an indication of hostility towards you or anyone in the group; it is what I have to do to protect myself legally.
5. Yes, some bad, heavy garbage came down from that quarterly Monday meeting. Till we get it worked out, there won't be anything going on at this place.
6. I guess you should call Bob Blunt or Lesley for when and where they are going to be doing Druidism. If and when Larry and I get together anything on our own, I'll sure let you know.
7. Poor Larry seems pretty disgusted and burned out right now.
8. Let's hope for the future,
9. Emmon

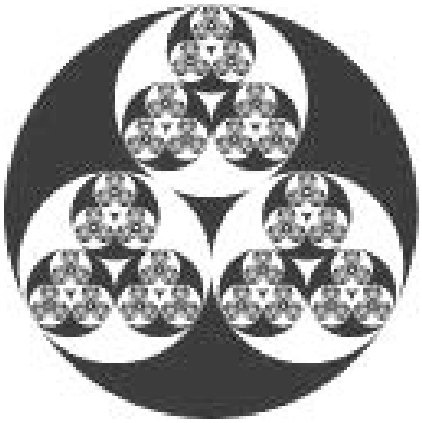
Chapter the Second

1. 12 November, 1985
2. Dear Bob Blunt,
3. In the last year I have seen the official status, Incorporation, and the prospect of material gain corrupt the Reformed Druids. This has happened over and over again in the history of religion.
4. I don't want this to happen or to help it on its way to becoming a political power grab or established religion.
5. I would like to see it become again a group of like-minded people who met for spiritual purposes, as when Joan had it, or Larry.
6. In line with this, I have changed my will and the Grove Site will no longer be left to The Reformed Druids, Inc., but to my son.
7. Material has corrupted us.
8. Since I am retired, and since it is the Sweeney Gelt figure's duty in Celtic society to give off-the-wall opinions, I offer this one for the improvement of the Live Oak Grove.
9. Disincorporate. Go back to being just a group of friends who meet, moons and High Days.

10. Whomever's house we meet at would be clearly understood to be just hosting that one meeting, like a party for friends.
11. No precedents, no obligations, no misunderstandings.
12. This would get rid of all the insurance and legal hassles, also.
13. -Emmon

Chapter the Third

1. Resolution Suggestion:
2. WHEREAS the so-called "election" that took place on November 10, 1985, was conducted in an atmosphere of fear, hostility and intimidation, and,
3. WHEREAS some people were afraid to participate because of the aforesaid atmosphere, and,
4. WHEREAS the outcome of this "election" was reported erroneously in "A Druid Missal-Any," a publication which has, in the past, purported to be the official publication of RDNA, Inc.,
5. BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that those "elections" were neither valid nor binding upon the membership of this corporation.
6. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Fair and Genuine Elections will be held on or before the Feast of Brigit, 1986, and the results reported to "A Druid Missal-Any" for publication.



Druidism and Truth

(An Editorial by Thomas Cross, Nov.1986)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First: "Druid"

1. The word druid itself is rooted in the same Indo-European source as the English word true and truth: names *dru – the zero-grade form of *deru "firm, solid, steadfast" which also gave us such words as tree, endure, durable, the Greek drus, Sanskrit druvam and so forth.
2. Since Druid means "he who is truthful" or "the firm, solid and steadfast one" (in Gaulish druis "druid" in nominative case, druidos in the genitive), it is appropriate that we look always for the truth and always utter the truth.
3. In old Irish sagas, the druid or seer who utters a falsehood is cursed and some disaster befalls him and whenever he takes an oath he promises or swears that if he should utter a falsehood knowingly, he may be swallowed up into the earth or some other calamity take him.

Chapter the Second: "Truth"

1. In our modern information age that we are now entering, I urge that us modern day druids do our share of preserving truth and guarding against falsehood and dishonesty.
2. I am of course speaking in terms of advertising, everyday speech, on the job, in school, in business, etc.
3. The truth must be able to stand on its own. Truth is not opinion, truth is fact, truth is not values, but truth, though it be impersonal, often hurts when people cannot face it.
4. I find that my greatest pet peeve is misinformation, misleading speculation, propaganda, deception in reporting and teaching. There is much deliberate writing of misinformation in the writings of the occult world.
5. Often the authors are too lazy or too hasty to do the proper research for supporting their opinions or they deliberately falsify their sources and present pseudo-history as history or vice versa.
6. There are so many popular misconceptions held by so many that the truth will be distorted for a long time in the folklore of the modern occultist and neo-pagan in the years to come – although we have the correct information available in most public libraries alongside the misinformation.

Chapter the Third: "Fundgelicals"

1. Another source of misinformation being disseminated to the general public (outside of the neo-pagan milieu) is the propaganda of the Christian Fundamentalists and Evangelists or "Fundagelicals," who deliberately report falsehoods about the beliefs of others in order to build "straw-men" of their religious and ideological competitors.
2. Often the Fundagelicals report or present their own idiosyncratic or personal religious views as if they were fact – that is, as if they were the objective truth!
3. The Fundagelicals, one might say, confuse fact with values or opinions – a blatant error in logic!

Chapter the Fourth: "Readings"

1. In the field of Celtic scholarship concerning the ancient or paleo-Druids, there is so much nonsense being passed off as fact that it is a time-consuming and tedious task to begin to research the subject.
2. To the beginner and those who have fallen victim to the nonsense, I recommend that you read many of the books coming out in the field of comparative religion and mythology by Georges Dumezil, Jaan Puhvel, Gerald Larson, Bruce Lincoln (to name a few) and consult the works of Mircea Eliade – one of the great 20th century scholars.
3. For those who are concerned about ecology and conservation, I recommend Lovelock's Gaia.
4. For the general reader I would recommend The New Apocrypha by John Sladek, Psychology's Occult Doubles by Leahy, The Psychology of Transcendence by Andrew Neher, the Dictionary of Misinformation by Burnam, More Misinformation by Burnam, There are Alligators in our Sewers by Dickson.

Chapter the Fifth: "Skepticism"

1. Also I recommend that all neo-pagans develop a skeptical side to how they view these things, to read between the lines, and question things and be curious. It is o.k. to be curious – in fact, it is healthy to be curious about life.
2. Most everyone reading this newsletter, will probably think to him or herself, "Oh I always think for myself, I question things, I read between the lines" and so forth.
3. I ask that you even question that, and even question what I have written as you read.
4. I am not suggesting that we be distrustful, or become reductionists, or overly critical and skeptical.
5. I am suggesting though, that we become less emotional and more inquisitive about learning… that we don't just accept things because they merely feel good or seem to work.
6. Playing around with metaphysics and making experiments with our consciousness is serious business, and one can so easily fool oneself into believing things that are not the case which can have serious repercussions for the future.
7. If anyone has read the book "The Day the Universe Changed" by James Burke or seen the series on PBS, you will understand on the worldly level also.

Chapter the Sixth: "Logic"

1. I recommend that you get a copy of a good simple-to-read book on Logic or Reasoning – especially if you have never studied the subject and read it carefully (I recommend "Introduction to Logic" by Copi).
2. Take a course in logic at a local college or school, it will well be worth it for anyone.
3. A fun pastime would be to identify fallacies while reading or watching TV or listening to the radio – (advertising is rife with fallacies and propaganda techniques).
4. Pretty soon you can tear apart the arguments of books simply on grounds of incorrect reasoning or illogic.

Chapter the Seventh: "Worlds"

1. I am sure this article will have offended many right-brain, purely emotional mystics, who believe that truth can only be found through some altered state or dream-world; my rebuttal to them is that they are not speaking of this world that we all must live in together.
2. I am talking about the physical world, the here and now, and the rules for living here depends upon people getting along with each other, keeping the environment clean and inhabitable, avoidance of war, avoidance of crime, learning to live with the weather and climatic conditions and avoiding stress, disease, poisons and dishonesty.
3. We all must face that we have to have the mundane necessities in order to survive and we cannot live by spiritual and visionary or magical experiences alone.
4. -Tom Cross

Chapter the Eighth: "Nonsense"

1. P.S. Nonsense or Popular Fallacies in the Neo-Pagan World:
2. That worshipping a Male deity is a trait of a male dominated society, or, that worshipping a female deity is the trait of a female dominated society.
3. That a society that used matrilineal descent was "matriarchal."
4. That all patriarchal societies treated females as inferiors.
5. That the mother goddesses of Europeans in pagan times are derived from a pre-Indo-European matriarchal or matrilineal people, and/or that they all represent a universal Mother-Earth.
6. That all celestial deities are male deities.
7. That removing sexism from our language will help us to be less sexist. (The Turks and Persians or Iranians have almost genderless mono-sexist languages – yet their cultures are very sexist).
8. That religious beliefs can be handed down genetically – that certain races have certain types of souls or spirits.

Letter to the Editor

(By Albion, January 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. I especially have come to enjoy "The Heathen on the Heath" series – it's well written and thoughtful, there is a place for both the scholarly point of view and "the country pagan" point of view. In my opinion, both are important.
2. I've lived in the country twice in my life, and it's much easier to be a "real" pagan in the country than in the city.
3. In my opinion – the natural cycles of the Earth and the seasons are far easier to follow and to be in tune with in the country – I long for the mountains and woods in my heart – I really don't like living in the city, but for now, that's reality I suppose.
4. Thom Cross tells me that the Celts really weren't Chthonic oriented – or Mother Earth oriented, but were more sky and astronomically oriented.
5. Well, the Celts loved Nature, from what I read – and I personally believe that some of their Goddesses were very much Earth Mother types (Dana or Danu for one example) – and in a way, it doesn't matter what the historic Celts believed in, or how they practiced their faith in the ancient times, but what we believe in and where we are going now.
6. I believe that Mother Earth needs our help, and now perhaps some of the "Balance" lost can be restored – perhaps I'm wrong – but that's one of the major reasons that paganism is important to me – that I'm of Celtic descent is important too, but it's second to the feelings above.
7. I believe that modern pagans should become more involved in ecology, because, at least to me, that is where the real "power" comes from – from our attunement to Nature, and to the natural cycles of building and decay-life and death.
8. I'm not trying to negate the role of scholarship and study either, for these are very important too – but one can probably learn more about the role of one's life in relation to the whole, and to "the Gods" by a few days in the wilderness, than by weeks spent studying in the library, or in one's study.
9. I suppose that it comes down to a question of balance in our lives, as well as in nature (which are lives are a part of – no matter if we live in city or country), to balance the studying and scholarship, and the playing and questing in Nature out, one with the other – "the middle path" as the Tibetan Buddhists might say.

-Albion

A Rebuttal to Albion

and the Irrationalists and the Anti-Intellectual

and Anti-Celtic "Druids"

(or Those who call themselves "Druids"

'cause they like the name)

(By Tom Cross, Feb 1987)
(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First: "Celts"

1. I would like to point out that I never told him that the Celts were "astronomically" oriented nor did I tell him that the ancient Celts had no chthonic beliefs (at all).
2. Mr. Albion has made a "straw man" of me and he uses an ad hominem argument by implying that I am anti-ecological or anti-nature because I happen to believe in BOTH the celestial and terrestrial.
3. Albion is apparently stricken with urban romanticism and somehow believes that knowing "too much" about the ancient Celts will somehow keep you from appreciating nature (which he equates with mother-earth).
4. The Celtic peoples of pagan times were very much concerned with natural phenomena. This is clearly not the same thing as MOTHER Nature, whom we have seen on margarine commercials (and elves do not bake cookies in trees either).
5. The ancient Celts have been romanticized for three centuries or more, and the Druids have been characterized as anything from White-Robed Hermits to Astronomers and medicine men.
6. I believe that we modern Druids are above this kind of la-de-da romanticism that contributes nothing to our intellectual and spiritual growth, but merely serves to obscure the truth behind pseudo-science and whimsical folklore and fairy-tales.
7. If paganism or NEO-paganism has to hide behind pseudo-science and irrational obscurantism, then it is not better off than the rubbish promulgated by mad-men, the delusions, the fads and falsehood that will certainly lead our civilization to ignorance and ruin.
8. Mr. Albion has attacked the years of research I have put into reconstructing and organizing the vast amount of comparative studies on the Druids and what they might have actually taught.
9. Because Albion has learned much from me (well, maybe not) and because he seems to be disappointed in what the paleo-Druids were about, he has decided to attack the messenger for the message.
10. However, he would not have been so quick to attack had he understood the significance of what the paleo-Druid's message had to teach, but unfortunately he finds his own reality a safe place than to try to comprehend the world of the ancient Celt.
11. Of course it is not easy to understand the world-view of the ancient pagans – but nothing worth knowing is always going to be EASY.

Chapter the Second: "Danu"

1. Furthermore, Albion hasn't his facts straight… Danu (Anglicised as Dana) was not an EARTH MOTHER type so far as scholars can deduce, for the name Danu comes from an Indo-European root meaning "to flow" or "to drip" (see page 175 of Julius Pokorny's Dictionary)…
2. Going by the fact that Danu is cognate with the name of the Danube river (*Danu- in Celtic renamed Danuuius by the Romans) it seems that She is (or was) originally a River Goddess.
3. This is not uncommon since rivers all over Britain and Ireland (also Gaul) are named after Celtic goddesses.
4. Danu's role in Celtic myths is very shadowy and ill-definable – all we can surmise is that she is the Mother-of-the-Gods since the name Tuatha De Danann (=tribes of Goddess Danu) and Welsh Mabinogi characters with divine names are frequently "ap Don" (= "son of Don" or "Son of Danu").
5. Also there are river names all over Britain resembling this Don/Danu: Donwy river, Don river (in Scotland) and the two Dee rivers (the Dee= Celtic Deua in Gaulish (or Brythonic) "goddess" the feminine equivalent of Deuos "god.")
6. Therefore, we have no real evidence for believing that Danu was an earth goddess.
7. Out of respect for the intelligence of Missal-Any readers I believe I am obligated to research and substantiate my assertions before I allow my ideas to be published… in Albion's case, what he has written speaks for itself.. as what many others have written in neo-pagan journals.
8. If you were led to think that Danu was an earth goddess and it was never presented to you any other way, you would not know any better.

Chapter the Third: "Tailltiu"

1. Unfortunately, Albion didn't know or consider using a better and more plausible example of an earth goddess for the ancient Celts (which I might add is quite obvious if one knows anything about Celtic mythology) that is Tailltiu who gave her name to Teltown – the site of an ancient shrine for ancient Irish pagans.
2. The name Tailltiu is etymologically cognate with the Latin Tellus and these names go back to an Indo-European root meaning "ground, floor" *Tel- and this gave the Gauls their word for earth talamu (genitive talamun) in Irish this word is talamh.
3. The ancient Romans had Terra mater 'mother earth" or quite literally "mother land." The Greeks had Gaia which James Lovelock used as the title of a well-known book…
4. And well the Celts loved nature so much but… if you're like Albion: just go out to the country and make up you own religion… why give a rat's arse about all that boog larning' anyway!!?!!
5. -Thomas Cross

Chapter the Fourth: "Satire"

1. The Modern Irrationalist
2. Of Fundamentalist Paganism
3. (A Satire by Thomas Cross)

4. I'm a kentree pagan ya see s'I doan need no ejjy-kayshunz
5. I doan give a dayam 'bout whut them ancient Droods tawt
6. I bleeve to be a true nay-o pagan ya need misty-cull oh-cayshunz
7. I doan wanna hair no tock 'bout them seltic or kelchick stories
8. I thank we should jest make it all up from our own thought.

9. I bleev that iffen ye larn too mech 'bout them myth-all-jeez
10. Ye aint goan get haaa oan naychur lag hawkin' in the wudds
11. Them payble who sets cheer in they lah-berries an' steddies
12. Hey man I doan wanna larn nuthin' I jest wont vibrations.

13. Whudda hair ya sayin' is thet yew bleev in yer reality
14. Well Ah got ma own reality ma min' is closed to what them skollies have to say
15. I thank all ye gotta do is go outside and teeka hawk through the wudds
16. I shore do miss them mountains I hate the setty laugh
17. I wants to get backy nachur lag the good ole daze

18. Although I'm not a blood-selt Ifail it een ma hort
19. I gnaw een ma hort awm a drood dude, man
20. So doan go conner-dickin' ma re-al-it-tee
21. So daon go tailin' me 'bout them oldtimey Droodz
22. It herts ma broyn to hair that steff 'cuz I
23. Done made up moan red-legion annitz my re-al-it-tee

24. I'm kenchee pagan ya see s'I doan bleev in HIS-story
25. I doan keer whut them SIGH-en-tists bleev or soy
26. I doan keer fer TAKE-gnaw-lujjy or air Eek-con-gnome-ee
27. Een ma hort an' spert I gnaw it all jest from what ah fail

28. Doan gimme them high-falutin' kolleej wurds
29. All I wont is them vibrations, man
30. I bleev in getting' back to nature with nuthin' but a a shovel and SIGH-kick energy
31. I doan need no Sigh-enz to hep out the earth jest my reality.

Chapter the Sixth: "Irrational"

1. "The Irrational Pagan"
2. -By Tom Cross, 1987
3. Bein' a pagan's nothin' more than goin' outside
4. Going out in the country and talkin' 'bout ecology
5. Yer only a true pagan when you go out in the woods
6. And getchy self in tune with nature or Mother Earth
7. We don't need Science and Tech-nology
8. To make the world a better place for what it's worth.
9. Though I don't care what they had to say
10. I call myself a Druid anyway
11. I also say I'm a Celtic –man
12. Though I aint interested in their culture.
13. It don't matter what's in history's plan
14. I jest know what I fail in ma hort with nature
15. So don't go telling' me 'bout them ancient folks
16. You can only learn about them in books.
17. It hurts my eyes and brain to read 'bout ancient stuff.
18. So I bleeve what I fail in my hort is enough.
19. What I hair yo sayin' man is that you bleeve in yer reality
20. Well I got my own reality and it's a safer place for me
21. In my own world where I b'long I get high on nature
22. I pine for the trees and mountains where there's no one
23. To Contradict me or disagree (with humongous college words)
24. There, I can say whatever I bleeve is pagan and Druidic
25. I can say that I am a Celt or Tibetan Buddhist and
26. No one can ask me questions about the Celtic or Buddhist bleefs.
27. Yep, I'm safe in my own reality there in the country
28. I am all alone to be a real backwoods mystic
29. Aint it a shame though that I have to live in the big city
30. Where there's a bunch o' other people talkin' and learnin'
31. I feel so damn powerless against them high rise buildings
32. I can only sound out magical energy to restore nature's balance.
33. But ahil there goes them damn scholars a-studyin' things again
34. Tellin' me it aint enough to be sendin' out vibrations
35. They tell me I got to read and learn things, damn that education!

-Thomas M. Cross 1987

A Rebuttal to Cross

(By Albion, Jan 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First: "Corrections"

1. First off, I'd like to say that it saddens me deeply that I have obviously lost a good friend.
2. Thomas, my letter was <u>not</u> an attack upon you personally, though you obviously took it that way.
3. I am truly sorry to have offended a friend over something like having different opinions (and it seems that we are indeed worlds apart in our views).
4. If I could offer some opinions here, (notice I said "opinions," that's exactly what I mean) I am going to ignore all the pointed jabs that Thom Cross makes at me personally, but I do want to address several of the issues that he raises.
5. I never meant to imply that Thom was "anti-ecological" or "anti-nature," I can't see where he finds this from after re-reading the original letter (which, by the by, was a personal letter to Emmon and was only published after he asked me if I minded if he did so) of mine.
6. On the contrary, I knew that Thom loves nature, long before I wrote this letter.
7. Where in my letter in question, do I attack "the years of research" that you have done, there <u>is</u> a need for scholarship, as I pointed out, but reading and studying will never take one all the way to a spiritual experience, it can help, but something more is needed.

Chapter the Second: "Celts"

1. It would be nice to know much more about what the Ancient Celts believed in and did, but even if I did know, it's doubtful that I would live or practice ritual in the same manner as they did.
2. Paganism, like all living religion and true forms of spirituality, is an evolving and changing thing.
3. I find it highly doubtful that we could go back to the world of the Ancient Celts, as time at this level is linear, we can only go forward (or around, as the case may be).
4. The Celts, as all ancient cultures, did some rather ghastly and Barbaric things – that I personally would never want to be part of.
5. I stand corrected about Danu, however, as the meaning of words changed, Dana, or Danu, came to be connected with the land in general in Ireland, this holds true today, as well in yesteryear.

Chapter the Third: "Pagans"

1. I think Thomas Cross is missing the point here, where paganism survived (at least in the British Isles) it was not usually the scholarly class who helped it do so, but the simple country people who had passed their beliefs on orally for hundreds of years, these people were not researchers, nor did their knowledge come from books-but it was passed down from generation to generation (by word of mouth).
2. I don't advocate "making up" one's own religion.

3. I do advocate getting to know your own Higher Self, I do advocate getting out of the cities if it's possible, which in many cases it isn't, in these cases some sort of "quest" into Nature and your own relationship to Nature at all levels is in order, I feel.
4. I feel that we as a species are at a turning point that could go either way – certainly, being an active ecologist is part of being pagan (at least for me).

Chapter the Fourth: "Albion"

1. After living in California for two years, the condition of much of the air and water in the heavier populated places is simply appalling to me. So much for my "urban romanticism."
2. I am proud to be of Celtic descent, I am interested in my ancestry and always have been.
3. I am not a "Druid" –since the real Ancient Druids all died off centuries ago (or thousands of years ago). What really qualifies one to be a "Druid?" There are many Druid-revivalist groups both here and in Europe, are any of them "real" Druids?
4. I have received teachings from a hereditary pagan from England, from two "Wicca" groups of modern origins, and done much research into Native-American Spirituality and Religion, as well as much reading into the Celts and everything Celtic, including their religion.
5. I'm probably also affected by "Quaker" thought (or "The Society of Friends") which was the last branch of Christianity that I was associated with before I adopted paganism.
6. I am not especially fond of titles, but "pagan" serves quite nicely at this time.
7. I do not think of myself as a scholar, but as a reasonably simple person, who wishes to see Life thrive and our planet survive these turbulent times.
8. If I have offended the readers of "A Druid Missal-Any," including Thomas Cross, I apologize. But, we are all entitled to our own opinions.
9. P.S. As to the mocking of my Southern accent: as Mark Twain once said, "You got the words, but you ain't got the tune."

The Balanced Epistle

(By Les Craig, March 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First: "Balance"

1. Balance? Not to doubt You, oh my Mother, but I don't see it.
2. As the hill greens around me, and the ducks begin to lay, work looms large; winter's anomie begins to thaw, and my own identity pokes its nose out of hiding – a belated groundhog in search of its shadow.
3. Where is meaning, or mission, or will? There is a place for me in these hills, and right easily could I stagnate in it.
4. Seasons come to us, reminding us that we are neither omnipotent nor alone, but seasons have as many names as there are folk to speak them.
5. I give rose-cuttings to a Wiccan neighbor 'for Brighid', because if I said Oimelc, she'd say "huh?"
6. And local farmers have other names for it: lambing-time, and also a pain in the ass, with bummers to nurse and marauders to repel – coyote, cougar, dog-pack. And then one must ask, are the berry-bushes cut yet?
7. Does the nursery have seed-potatoes? The time to remember the Equinox, and planting, is in February, before it is too late.

Chapter the Second: "Tradition"

1. Much is said in these pages of tradition, and of scholarship, and of knowledge that must not be lost.
2. Others, I among them, point in turn to the knowledge that sits directly in front of our noses, just waiting to be ignored.
3. Neither the traditional scholar nor I can do anything as a purist but yell at the other; in the vibrating tension between us is most of reality.
4. So let me say now that I do not set out to abandon the mythic awareness of our forefolk, but only to live a life with leaves as well as roots.
5. If we are not merely the inventors of myth, but co-participants with the gods, then we must recognize that myth springs both from humanity and from the soil itself.
6. Gladly will I learn what my people once knew of their homeland. But if you ask me (or even if you don't; you can always read something else!) I will tell you what I learn from my own homeland, for that may well be the only thing on Earth that I know and you don't.
7. Myth likes the grubby liberty of the hills, and hillfolk join gladly in the game, taking to themselves small notorieties as straight-men to Nature's comedies, or soldiers in mythic battles.
8. There is a Trickster here, called The Buck You'd Better Not Shoot At: he's robbed a thousand gardens with impunity, and whoso shoulders a gun against him is injured in the attempt.
9. I've seen him myself; he's magnificent.
10. There are good-lucks and bad-lucks, many of them founded in common sense: don't hunt between the houses, could hardly be called baseless superstition, nor could the

rough interpretations of Karma or hubris that passes for common knowledge.

11. "Something will hear you!" we warn our braggarts, and they turn pale and shut up.
12. And "god" help the one who drives heedlessly by a neighbor's stalled or swamped vehicle, for the local gods will not.

Chapter the Third: "Trees"

1. Where do these youthful, local traditions and the elder traditions of Celtic Druidism meet?
2. I spent as many days as anyone else with neither any recognizable knowledge, nor any use for it; then a neighbor came to me. "You're the Druid around here," he said; "which trees should I be careful not to cut?"
3. I could have said that Druids don't deal with things like that, except that what little I known of tradition states that our forebears were priests and cognoscenti, meant to be consulted by their neighbors.
4. I could have said that Neopagan Druidism was a religion –but since when does that make it irrelevant?
5. So "the Druid around here" spent a long day in a neighbor's woodlot, trying to feel the life-forces of trees, inspecting roots for firmness and tops for fullness, and trying to remember snatches of an ecology course she took in 1970.
6. Seat of the pants flying, indeed- but it might have been less confusing if I'd spent more time studying!

Chapter the Fourth: "Conclusion"

1. And there, perhaps, we have balance, if not stability. Just so is the spring a time of balance, though when it snows one day and cooks my greenhouse the next, it may be too pretty to appreciate it.
2. The year is not an orderly, well-mannered procession; it goes by fits and starts. And learning, if it is to take us anywhere we haven't been before, must see-saw between study and appreciation, with each testing the other.
3. And when I am confused, I shall admit confusion – not by intoning that there are Things I Was Not Meant To Know, but by realizing that I can't see (or portray) the whole picture at once.
4. I speak to you only as one person speaking, saying one thing at a time.
5. We are not the people of the One God, the One Truth, or the One Way; we are like the forces of Nature that we worship – a howling confabulation of extremes.
6. This is our balance (as when we chant to a March windstorm, "Balanced now are we!" and burst into giggles.)
7. Let no voice among us be silenced; this is what we are, and how we grow.

Spring Equinox Salvo

(By Tom Cross, April 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First: "Credentials"

1. Why does Albionn think that a religion should evolve and grow away from scholarship and towards some opinions unsupported by facts or contradictory of facts?
2. The fact is that the Celtic myths were composed by a scholarly class, the intellentsia made up of bards, filidhe and druids, not by mere eclectic pluralism.
3. Why does Albionn bring up some boasts about learning from some "hereditary" pagan group or about "Native-American Spirituality" and then "humble" himself with an appeal to plain folks (false modesty) about "I do not think of myself as a scholar?"
4. The last statement is certainly partly true, what he truly is (as far as I am concerned) is a scholar manqué – a half-hearted scholar who hasn't the interest to carefully read and utilize the materials he has requested.
5. If he were only using the data for his personal use and distorting it, I would not protest, but since he is putting his misrepresentations before many others – I must protest strongly.
6. I am vehemently opposed to deliberate misrepresentation of the tradition for the purpose of changing it to suit an individual's personal biases and prejudices and to deliberately pervert it.
7. As much as he has said, he is not promoting evolution or anyone getting to know his or her higher self – but rather to close people's minds to the possibilities offered by a reasonable and competent study of the ancient tradition.
8. He is promoting darkness, not enlightenment.

Chapter the Second: "Titles"

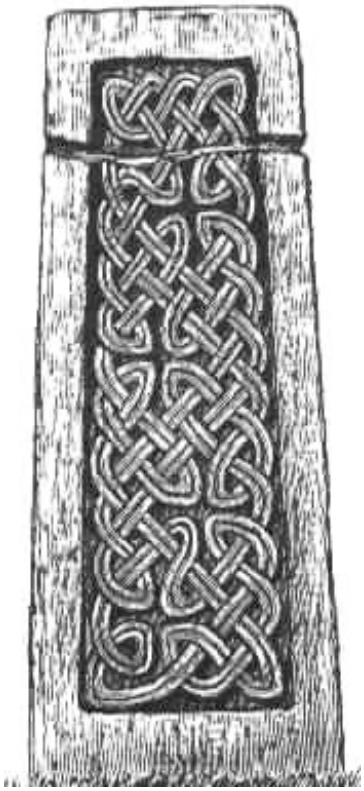
1. While Albion uses the genetic fallacy saying he's a Celt simply because he MAY be descended from Celts and saying that he has studied them (that's questionable to a degree) he appeals to authority (fallacy) by saying he's privy to some other traditions unrelated.
2. Scholars have better methods than mere fallacious reasoning to find the truth, and not just self-congratulatory appeals to folk wisdom and hearsay, but rather documentation.
3. Albion speaks for himself only as an individual (this I can say is his only defense), but somehow he expects that everyone should agree with his opinions because he appeals to the crowd by saying "it is highly doubtful we could go back to wishing to "see Life thrive and our planet survive."
4. Is he running for office? Certainly he is right in saying that "being an ecologist is <u>part</u> (my underscore) of being a pagan."
5. Albion suffers from onomatophobia when he is not fond of titles, because he has a problem with words and categories.
6. He doesn't want to label anything cause that means he would have to express himself, that he would have to define things and categorize them; which is something

he'd rather not do because that means getting to know something about them.

7. Also I might add, the avoidance of labeling things by many people, is simply to avoid giving them any meaning so that they can mean whatever they want them to at will and whimsy.

Chapter the Third: "Conclusion"

1. We were friends and he originally wrote to me asking for information on the ancient Celts, but unfortunately he's given me more reasons for mistrust because of his insincerity (pretending to understand the data when he didn't even read it) then taking what little he remembered and distorting it before our fellow pagans.
2. Albion had the data that would reconstruct the ancient Druids' wisdom right under his nose, but he ignored it because it required some intellectual thinking and an imagination as well as some difficult studying (philology, a bit of structural anthropology, comparative mythology, etc.)
3. If I had known that this stuff was too difficult for him, I would not have wasted my time trying to provide him with guidelines, but he led me to believe otherwise.



Druidaxta

(By Tom Cross, April 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First: "Names"

1. Onomatophobia, onomaphobia- these are the fear of words and names.
2. To be afraid of labeling oneself and other thing about oneself is to be afraid to categorize things.
3. To be afraid to refer to something in writing and any other communication is certainly a sign of a lack of self-confidence and certainly a lack of knowing whom one's self is.
4. Honesty in the use of words, or phrases, that is, true communication, is a very real and vital form of Life.
5. It is, along with actions or deeds, a divine and human phenomenon that is important to the expression of love, of freedom, of joy, of thought and emotion.
6. As the ancient Druids of Gaul were to say, according to Diogenes Laertius, "the gods must be worshipped, and no evil done, and manly behaviour maintained."
7. And from the Colloquy of the Ancients (Acallamh na Senorach) Caelte told Patrick, that "truth in our hearts, strength in our arms, and fulfillment in our tongues" were the virtues of the pagan Irish.

Chapter the Second: "Maya"

1. The elder Druids, which were reconstructionists (such as me), accept as our forbearers both spiritually as well as in name, were deeply concerned with the speaking of truth – intellectual and spiritual honesty.
2. The misuse of words is illusion – maya as the Indian Druids, the Brahmins, would call it.
3. Perhaps, the whole universe, the cosmos, the order, as we have named it and as we have perceived it in our mythologies and metaphysics are all pure maya, and in order to transcend it, we must get to know the illusion well enough to become disillusioned and then we can achieve the experience of deeply knowing and transcending the walls of illusion.
4. One cannot jump immediately from naiveté to transcendence with out experiencing a profound disillusionment first.
5. But one cannot change the world without changing the self and to change the self is a process of transcendence, a process of disillusionment, of accepting the truth about one's self and the cosmic order.
6. There is an eternal order to the external and internal world that does not evolve in any perceivable and contrived manner, the perceived evolution is within. The unperceived evolution is only identifiable by its results and not the process.

Chapter the Third: "Tradition"

1. The gods of the ancient Celts are like those of the Vedic Indians, Germanic peoples, etc. because they evolved from their Indo-European forbearers, as did the others, but the essential characteristics did not change by direct manipulation of the myth by people on the folk level.

2. The Druids always strove to keep the tradition intact, to keep it pure from foreign influence, to be caretakers of tradition so that it would not be diluted by those who would use it for maya (for deception) to contrive to force it to fit some purely modern needs in their time.
3. The Druids were indeed the cognoscenti of the ancient Celts and not peasants practicing some deviant religion.
4. Even the keepers of the traditions today, the seanchaithe of the Gaeltacht, tell the tales as they were told to them, that is they try to keep the tales word for word as they were transmitted, they avoid distorting and perverting the tradition… except, perhaps, a fabulist here and there, who may parody himself.
5. Even those pagan cults, which survived Christianity, were usually isolated and kept their traditions pure from some "new fangled" eclectic influence.
6. By the way, any pagan cult of the British isles which professes to be a PAGAN religion or cult, is more than likely not to be any older than this century, but you can see the oldest pagan cults (which have more links with the ancient pagan religion) carrying on through the Catholic Church tradition (e.g. the holy wells, saints cults, relic cults, and other hagiographical sites and traditions).
7. But it must be admitted that these are on a folk-level, not the products of the Celtic society of the time of the Druids.
8. Many scholars have gone out into the field to work with the conservators of ancient tradition. The Irish Folklore Commission has collected hundreds of recordings of Irish seanchathe (shanachies – the traditional story-tellers) and published many transcriptions of the stories.

Chapter the Third: "Inheritance"

1. Similarly, the Parsis of India are continuers of Zoroastrian religion who fled Iran for Gujarat, India. There are still the Irani (Zoroastrians) of Iran, who knows what has happened to them since Fundamentalist Islam has risen there?
2. But the mobads (the magi or priests) of the Parsis has not succumbed to eclecticism from the coming of western religious tourists who went there to study under them and over them in the twentieth century.
3. Although, some theosophists did succeed in converting some Parsis to Theosophy, they were very few and the mobads or magi did not allow it to pervert their tradition which was handed down to them from the ancient magi (mobad is the direct linguistic descendent of magu- (patis) that ancient Persian word for a magus, our word is Latinized and Hellenized.)
4. Modern Parsis, though, do not inherit their religion through their genes; its not a biological concept flowing through blood into the cerebrum.
5. There are many people of Irish descent who could claim legitimate descent from the Druids, filidhe, and bards of Old Erin.
6. If one has the last name of McNeilly, one may be a direct paternal descendent of an fili ("poet" "seer") since McNeilly derives from Mac an Fhilleadh "son of the fili," and other names of Ireland and Scotland's Highlands derive from occupational surnames of the Druids and Bardic class. Some clans and septs were hereditary bards.
7. I, myself, could be descended from ancient Irish satirists since my forefathers were the MacCrossans of Donegal, but my Welsh and Scottish forbearers do not have occupational surnames but other kinds of surnames and they are not paternal or patrilineal.
8. However, these do not mean we are what our names mean any more than people named Smith are really smiths, or people named baker are really bakers or people named Taylor are really tailors.
9. Religion is not inherited genetically anymore than one's profession and is even less determined by birth than a name.
10. The Indo-Europeans were a culture which developed from a segmentary lineage (according to the French structural anthropologists) and this culture pattern is found among the Nuer of Africa who developed a very similar religion to that of the ancient Indo-Europeans.
11. Their version of the sky-father (Taranus of the Gauls) is called Kwoth and his descendents the gods of heaven are their version of the Irish Tuatha de Danann, but they also have equivalents of the Fomoire and numerous other similarities.
12. The genealogy of the gods and goddesses are a segmentary lineage, their culture is pastoral, and there are numerous other similarities. The metaphysics of the Druids of antiquity is more sophisticated than some "savage barbarianism" we get from hard primitivists and we need not romanticize them by elevating them to "Noble Savage" either.

Chapter the Fourth: "Revival"

1. Sure, they have much in common with shamans, but the term shaman has been so abused by popular usage that the term has become almost meaningless.
2. Certainly they were not that much like classic shamans (as defined by Eliade, in his famous book) and only appear so on the most superficial level.
3. Do we want to popularize our Revivalist Druidism to some low proletariat level?
4. Do we want to succumb to creating some mass-media hype version of Druidism for display of middle-class or proletariat deviance because we may feel alienated?
5. Why not be rational and live according to what is honest and truthful?
6. We do not need self-deception.
7. We do not need to build walls by making our individual opinions become our dogmas.
8. The strength of our commitment to our "revived" and Reformed Druidism is productive efforts to create and not stagnate into some disunified sects professing some fundamentalist, fragmented dogmas and retreating into non-communication, non-participation, into a darkness of "belly-aching," complaining, and alienation.

Chapter the Fourth: "Sacrifice"

1. We are not together as independent individuals battling for a monopoly of truth, but we are all part of the sacred cosmos.
2. We cannot defy nature; it is impossible, for we destroy ourselves in the attempt.
3. We must grow and allow evolution to take place by realizing that we are not mere individuals but a part of the whole cosmos and that we are interdependent upon each other and everything of all that is.

4. Every one of us are a microcosm of the total order, we possess within ourselves the very physical elements of everything in the cosmos.
5. The cosmos, is interdependent also, it and all depends upon us both as individuals and as a collective unity.
6. The gods are within us. We need not look always for external manifestations of the divine and sacred.
7. Every act and deed we perform either conforms to nature, is creative and productive, or destructive and violent, both go together and both are part of the process of evolution.
8. Our act of eating, learning, and working (to create) are sacrifices… they are acts of sacrifice and when things become used, when things are given or spent, they are sacrificed also.
9. The food you eat has been sacrificed to you, and the water you drink has been sacrificed to you as an individual.
10. The love you give to someone else is a sacrifice to that person. And as Queen Medb made clear (she being a euhermerized goddess of Connacht) as her expectation of a husband (a king married to her-the tutelary goddess), "without jealousy, without fear, without stinginess."
11. Thus the embodiment of Royal Celtic and Druidic virtues in this triad includes generosity.
12. The king sacrifices cattle to feed his people and himself and he is a sacrifice himself. He stands as the leader and patriarch married, not only to his wife or wives, but to his goddess who protects and serves the people (her children).
13. The goddess is the land and people, the reign and the society and she is a part of the tribes' divine segmentary lineage, which itself is descended from the higher lineage of the Tuatha De Danann, the race of the gods of heaven and their lineage from the primordial family that rose from the oceans of chaos, from the fecundated darkness.
14. Thus the appearance of mankind is itself from the same and everyone has a bit of all within.
15. Therefore, "I am… , I am…" spoke Amhairghin when he stepped out of the boat of the "Milesians" and consecrated the sacred land of Erin by proclaiming himself, by meditating on the sacrifice within.
16. Donn, the Yama of the Irish pagans, is sacrificed and he dwells down into the otherworld where he built a home for mankind and his descendents.
17. He was a sacrificial victim, not so much placating the Tuatha De Danann, but as the ancestor (Dis Pater as Caeser would have called him) of mankind who prepared Teachh Duinn for the others.
18. There are many other themes in the early literature of the Irish and Welsh which correspond with other Indo-European themes right down to the detail: e.g. dogs which guard the entrances to the Otherworld/Underworld.. Cwn Annwn (Welsh), the Cu Sidhe, Kerberos (Greek), Garm (old Norse), the Hounds of Yama (Vedic) and so forth.

Chapter the Fifth: "Barriers"

1. We do not need to create an ad-hoc Druidism to fit our preconceived notions of religion and something else; we do not need to distort Celtic myths to fit a modern ideology created to fit our prejudices and our own individual experience.
2. To do so, builds walls, breaks down communication, obstructs others' quest for truth, obscures learning and growth.
3. It is an obscurantist attitude to moan "there are things I am not meant to know" and to take to the fields as a neo-Luddite and curse the repressive socio-economic-political system or the establishment; and get back in tune with nature is another thing.
4. Sure and certainly we are not "the people of one god, on Truth, one Way" but we are not "a howling confabulation of extremes" either. And if we are, why should we be?
5. It's something of a cop-out to merely point out that we are diverse in our attitude and opinions and not still grow like the branches on the tree, both in sharing a common knowledge, some common thread, some ground that we may share, that we may grow together?
6. The dialectic of various opinions may grow to a higher level of unity when we are well informed and can speak in similar terms.
7. We need not be some pluralistic society of people with no direction. We can have our philosophical pluralists, dualist, triplist, etc.
8. We can be all of these, and we can transcend mere complaining and semantic arguing, we can transcend the proletarianization of our religious and philosophic ideals. In short, we can deal with things on a much higher level.

Chapter the Sixth: "Scholarship"

1. Scholarship is important to achieving these means, because it is not mere "book learning," it is an attitude which opens doors and enlightens and if one has trouble with reading and comprehending the materials, then one must have patience and courage.
2. We should not feel that we must compete with each other, that is not the purpose of learning. Not to be clever and show-off, but to take away darkness and help other to learn also.
3. For everyone may benefit when one more person takes the time to learn something new. We are all interdependent and so the more one individual knows, the better is the world.
4. When one person refuses to learn, he or she keeps the totality down, or that is, he or she makes it more difficult for others. It slows down progress when many do not make the effort to allow progression.
5. We all can change the things we see around us that we do not like. Take action for positive change and not merely complain about it!
6. Study is more than formulating theories, scholarship is more than mere perusal of old manuscripts, it is testing those theories, it is going out and practicing what you preach.
7. The higher your standards are, the more difficult it can be to practice what you preach.
8. But going out to preach what you practice is another thing, and it is quite easy to do if you make no effort toward growing.
9. Still, you can be an instrument of deception, and not practice what you preach, because you are not the kind of person you're preaching at.
10. We know exactly about those famous men who don't practice what they preach because they're not the kind of people they're preaching to! I needn't mention them by name because there are many of them in America and they are frequently or constantly in the public eye.

Chapter the Sixth: "Reconstruction"

1. Reconstructionist Druids (like me) endeavor to reconstruct what was lost and use that as a foundation on which to build, it is an old time-tested foundation and well-grounded in the past
2. We do not seek to slip into some time-warp to become living anachronisms. There's the S.C.A. for that kind of fun!
3. We, however, take the identity of Druidism seriously enough to make it work, to create something that actually owes something to the elder Druids besides a mere word or name.
4. We are not ashamed to use labels, names or words; we do not suffer from onomatophobia or onomaphobia.
5. We do not commit human sacrifices or go out and play ancient Gaul in the woods.
6. We [the Post-Oak Protogrove] do enjoy ourselves. Jim C. is a musician in his spare time, Jim W. does Tai Chi, Chas. H. is in Drama and art, we have many friends and acquaintances from all ages and all walks of life.
7. I, Tom Cross, myself happen to be an English teacher, a literary person and so naturally I like writing different things.
8. This piece and other pieces for the Missal-Any is just one facet and subject of which I like to take a little time to write about. There are other bits and pieces I write, some fiction, some poetry, some non-fiction.
9. This is why we differ from say a Wiccan coven or a Hermetic Lodge, or New Age networks for centering or trance channeling.
10. We are not all of one mind, one way, one truth, but we share enough interests to talk, to meditate, and have some enjoyment of life.
11. I have friends who do not belong to the neo-pagan movement at all, who are Agnostic, Taoist, and Roman Catholic, and we respect each other's religions and some of them know more about the Celts and the Druids than many neo-pagans simply because they have read my stuff (including stuff I've read and written) as well as hearing it form me (when I show them the latest piece of literature I've read or bought).
12. I am the mere spokesman here because I like to write, while other do not or prefer to remain anonymous.
13 One Jewish friend of mine like to debunk falsehood and fallacies and for a while we were making it a game and running gag – it got me into the habit myself and I use it as part of my thinking habits.
14. So while we look to the ancient Druids for inspiration, we are also very tolerant of other's opinions and we have respect for other people's rights.
15. We do not believe ourselves pious ones, as braggarts and dogma-mongers – we are not evangelists or some Gospel of the Druids, but we have an interest in the hermeneutics of Celticism.
16. What is wrong with that? What is wrong with reconstructing Druidism in this regard?
17. If no one is interested in hearing anymore from me or us, let me know immediately and we shall not waste our time anymore.

Thomas Cross
An La Bhealtainne Maith
Any comments? If you care to write to me personally, write in care of 2009 Sunnybrook Lane, Garland, TX 75041.

Albion's Response

(By Albion, April 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. I came to the pagan faith because generally speaking, it is more tolerant than any other form of religion or spirituality I have found. But gee, Tom Cross may have changed my mind.
2. "Promoting darkness" Ay?
3. This tidbit comes to you from one who is supposedly "very tolerant of other's opinions," could've fooled me.
4. I stand by what I wrote last issue.
5. Paganism, as I see it, is made up of many different strands of thought, and if Tom Cross doesn't like that or can't deal with that – that is his problem, not mine.
6. It is a fact that the pagan faith survived in the British Isles, it was diluted or changed to a certain extent by folkways or ceremonial magic, or both, but it did survive. There really are hereditary pagans in the British Isles who practice a religion, that has survived for a very, very long time.
7. But let me ask the readership to judge the psychic quality of Tom Cross' letters in this issue and the last issue of A Druid Missal-Any.
8. Pagans should be beyond this brutal, personalized, back-stabbing that goes beyond defense to simply being hurtful and attacking someone because they are different from you, or hold a different opinion than yours.
9. The views expressed by Tom Cross in print [here] are tame compared to at least one of the letters I received through the mail.
10. If this was the work of "born-again" Christians or someone from the Nazi Party or the Klu-Klux Klan, I could perhaps understand – but this is a person who calls himself a "pagan," this implies (in my mind at least), some sort of tolerance for other's views.
11. Once again, I stand corrected.
12. I have always like the Missal-Any because of it's scholarship and approach, this sort of b.s. cheapens and degrades the quality of the Missal-Any, in my opinion.
13. I do care deeply for the Truth (in all of its forms), and I will not stand for someone saying that I don't.
14. There is not one way to the Gods, but many ways, even in the Celtic Tradition, and my suggestion is that Tom Cross meditate upon that.
15. If I could close with a quote from an earlier form of Revived Druidism: "Truth against the World."

-Albion

The Gift of Horses

(By Les, June 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First: "Invocation"

1. I invoke that portion of compost, which is the gift of horses.
2. Do you guys know how many times I've rewritten this #!%?!! thing? I think we can settle down and admit that the Missal-Any has become a new format: Interactive Nonfiction.
3. Is there some Hitchiker's Guide to the minority-theological Galaxy? Or are we headed for the Snit at the End of the Universe? Stay tuned…

Chapter the Second: "Summer"

1. This is the season of battle; the Sun stands ringed by hero-light, facing the confrontation He cannot win.
2. In the summer blaze of midsummer, YES!, we stand cocky and feisty at his side. The day is long and summer just begun – will it not last forever?
3. By August, each warm hour is precious: our words and deeds will echo with the gentleness of farewell.
4. The (Carleton) traditional services chant our glee at the conquest of day over night, but most of us have our moments of rooting for Pryderi.
5. We are in our glory, our attitude of immortality unsmirched, yet we can still take comfort in saying "This, too, shall pass."

Chapter the Third: "Respect"

1. We (genetic and/or emotional) Celts are historically marked as argumentative cusses, as witness the forms of lampoon, rant, and challenge-in-verse.
2. Boldness is our legacy, and defensiveness our last year's garbage.
3. What is the appropriate channeling of our quibblesome nature?
4. I, for one, would not go back to my pacifist beginnings; I have little respect for the tameness of a toothless dog.
5. My most honored comrades are dangerous folk, controlled by volition rather than weakness.
6. When people are scarce enough to be a resource rather than a nuisance, the strong can stop apologizing.
7. We don't sheathe our blades in the neighbor's house out of fear, but because we respect our neighbors.
8. Also, if we love, we are having too much fun to care overmuch what our beloveds can do to us…

Chapter the Fourth: "Neighbors"

1. As a religious minority, we are an automatic rural neighborhood.
2. We have our local characters, but let the stranger say, "Do you know that nut-case?" We will quite likely say, "Oh, he/she's okay once you know him/her," and find that, against the perspective of the rest of the world, we mean it.
3. I know, I know; you'll all howl that this kind of neighborhood loyalty is not something you reserve for Druids or extend to everyone who takes that name. That's true.
4. My primary clan relationships are likely to differ from Tom's, or Albion's, or Mad Sweeney's, and a good number of the members of my clan or clans do not name Neopagan Druidism as their religious orientation.
5. They are all, however, joined to me in avowed and reliable goodwill, and respectful of the orientations I profess.
6. So okay, I am available to my own clansfolk before I would be available to Tom, or Albion, or any other Druids that I don't personally know.
7. But I am available (willingly, and in good faith) to my Druish brethren and sistern before I am (willingly, and in good faith) available to the mainstream authorities.
8. I assume that we squabble en tutoyant, and will still be there for each other if that is necessary. (And yes, you can call me on that. Box 215, Myers Flat, CA 95554).
9. This doesn't mean you have to agree with me, or approve of me. Your minds, especially in devotion to the Gods, are your own.

Chapter the Fifth: "Names"

1. Fear of names? Sometimes.
2. What do I most fear to name: my Gods, or myself?
3. My dealing with some Gods are embarrassingly private. And I myself possess a name that will call me from sleep, or draw my energy to the user of it; I don't give that to just anybody.
4. But Tom and Albion have boldly "named" themselves in these pages, to a degree that I have not.
5. Ergo, the Summer Statement: Here am I, a woman 35 years old, attempting to farm a hillside steading in southern Humboldt while making a living as a freelance reporter and general odd-jobber (currently, selling cherry cider and produce to tourists.)
6. The untidy generosity of my physique bears witness to my undisciplined nature, but I'm still pretty functional.

Chapter the Sixth: "Work"

1. I write- basically, anything that anyone will print, and a lot of things they won't.
2. Most dear to me of all our lore are the poetic, emotionally-charge stories of Erin.
3. Like Albion, I was once a Quaker. My religious practice contains little of formal observance, but I operate under a number of what I see as my own geasa and obligations. (Laugh if you want; sometimes I do, too.)
4. I use magic only as a last-ditch adjunct to doing my damnedest on the physical plane, and only for certain purposes.
5. I honor ethics and deplore morality.
6. My greatest weakness is a reflexive snapping and snarling at what I see as elitism or authoritarianism.
7. I once beaned a wife-beater with my purse, but I am not reliably or consciously brave.
8. I'm a solitary 3rd, married, with a 7-year-old son who lives with me full-time and a 9-year-old daughter who visits.

Chapter the Seventh: "Wrap-up"

1. Tom, Albionn, I offer this: who among us has the power to be a threat to the others? (Hopefully none of us is such a slob as to throw energy around as we argue, instead of grounding it out!)
2. Both "promoting darkness" and "Klu Klux Klan" show a fine sense of drama, but you know effing well that if the storm troopers showed up looking for any of us tomorrow, the rest would lie like right valiant rugs to cover his/her ass.
3. So will you guys kiss & make up, or at least wait for the bell?!!
4. -Les

Chapter the Eighth: "Praise"

1. In any Neopagan Druid service, we pause self-consciously to remind ourselves that we are standing in one limited spot, using limited names to offer the limitless Gods a parcel of praise and sacrifice that They don't actually need.
2. In Beltane's disorderly abundance this reminder becomes especially poignant. Where is need of any kind in all of this?
3. Fullness approaches, and our need is for union, for celebration: to be drawn into the riotous family of nature.
4. Beltane is a love story, and I shall go a-Maying.
5. Shall I call you Earth Mother? Talithu? Nerthus? Ina? In all languages You have a name.
6. I have trusted the seed to its rebirth in the rich death-and-life cycle of the loam; the plant has risen.
7. Someday I shall be part of this, in body as well as in spirit.
8. Is composting and mulching and planting and watering praise? Is gratitude praise?
9. Shall I call you Danu, Wellspring, Mother of Gods and of Mysteries? Mysteries are not that-which-man-was-not-to-know, but that which lures the mind beyond its depth, lest it grow too stolid to swim.
10. Is it praise to seek our origins, to stare into the past and future, to revel in identity? Is it praise to be ourselves?
11. I begged my vision through night's chill, and morning's first ray was a kiss.
12. Belanos, Lovelight, Seed-father; what is my praise but desire? The praise of green grass means the same, but love does not judge.

Chapter the Ninth: "Amusement"

1. An antlered Cernunnos, may we amuse You!
2. Ever the joke is on us, Lord of Beasts and of deep woods, dark fear and bright mockery.
3. By green bough and animal-cry I know I shall live and lust and die in good company, but praise? You've heard me say things less polite.
4. My flower gardens belongs to Rhiannon, for what She has taught me. In birdsong and sweet scents nature may praise the wise Horsewoman, but I can only learn.
5. Let there be forgetfulness of that cruelty too often called justice: honor is a fresh blooming wild flower, and valor a note of music.
6. Is a life praise? I cannot know while I am living it.
7. Like children, we praise greedily, reaching up for notice and acceptance, as a baby demands a hug.
8. Our Gods are Mothers, Fathers, Lovers, Teachers; our gratitude quivers with wants yet unspoken.
9. Like children, we have little to offer but ourselves and our works, in the hopes that our arch-Parents will gather us to them as sentimentally as we do our own children. (All the while trying their patience by attempting to shove our siblings out of the way, and hog all the attention for ourselves!)
10. Is sharing praise, or service, or respect for fellow-creatures?

Chapter the Tenth: "Worship"

1. Surely we do not worship because we think our guaranteed annual year depends on it.
2. And if we worship for the sake of the Gods, what shall we say to the Gods we do not know?
3. The people of Thor offered wary respect to the White Christ, until Christian priests rejected, on Christ's behalf, the brotherhood of Thor. Then might Thor's people denounce Christ as a Wimp; but never did they take the view that what they did not know did not exist.
4. Defining "unproven" as "false," or "myth" as "fabrication," or "unknown" as "nonexistent" is a popular failing of the current scientific establishment; in seeking our own science, we must remember that the modern mind is trained to the square corners and shut doors of monotheism.
5. Though pre-existing knowledge is there for us, we are denied the cheap tricks of Central Authority.
6. Do we worship in ritual? And what is our ritual: the mutable traditions of a farmer in the garden?
7. A window opening on the visions of our forbears? Or a door to shut between emotion and thought, magic and work, religion and real life?
8. Lugh help us; it's not an easy path.
9. We seek the path of heroes, for the modesty of the monotheist is another copy-out we don't get.
10. Saints are safe in Heaven, beyond the reach of our kind, but heroes are meant to be emulated- though they may shine brighter out of antiquity, all their awkward moments over and one with.
11. We need only remember that some being or circumstance will eventually play Emer to our Cuchullain, and require us to place money where our mouth is.

Chapter the Eleventh: "Conclusion"

1. So be splendid in the splendor of May, fellow wedding-guests! If our praise is presumptuous and our dreaming extravagant, only look around: with gaudy flower fields, flooding light, and leaping beasts, we have a fine example.
2. Salacious Spring Meditation:
3. Make Sure the rigor of your mind is not rigor mortis, but the other kind!

Farewell of Tom Cross

(By Tom Cross, May 1987, pub. Sept '87)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First: "Apologies"

1. Dear Emmon,
2. Got your letter of "May 1st." Sorry to have been so didactic – perhaps I am out-growing neo-paganism – or perhaps I am rebelling against it – the theology of modern religion.
3. If I have offended anyone by defending myself, then it must be a sure sign that I no longer fit in anymore.
4. Still, I believe I have been unjustly criticized or whatever you want to call it.
5. It seems, also, now, that I have offended you. I truly regret this, if this is so.
6. I never intended to upset anyone but merely to state my position so that I could get on with writing scholarship or scholarly research type of stuff.
7. When I have to stop and defend scholarship, it took away from just writing it. I was beginning to feel that no one cared – no feedback – no positive feedback, either!
8. There's mysticism in scholarship which, I believe, we both share. Correct me if I'm wrong!
9. You have shared really great stuff with me and I like James Duran's exposition, because of listening to him, I was turned on to Structuralism, Cultural materialism, and comparing African New Religion, etc.
10. I believe that this turned my direction toward getting at the bottom of the I-E religious stuff- yet at the same time that I wanted to reconstruct the religion, I also turned away from its "modern" application.
11. It's like taking a shamanic journey into another time or another world. I believe there is mysticism in studying history – when you can imagine the past – dream about it and see it.
12. I'm not going to send in anymore stuff to the Missal-Any because I believe that it is not apparently of any interest to the readers anymore – unless someone wants to write to me, I'm going to keep my mouth shut and only contribute if requested!
13. I enclose the letter fragment I wrote a few days ago.

–Tom
May 1st, 1987

Chapter the Second: "Mystical"

1. [Emmon's note: to our new subscribers: This is the finale on a debate that has raged for eight or more months. To get the full fight, send a stamped large envelope for relevant parts of the back issues. Then write up your opinions and send them in.]
2. Scholarly pursuits and research can be very mystical and to deny this is missing the point of my attempt to reconstruct the ancient Druids' tradition.
3. When one takes the time to consume the writings of Indo-European scholars, archaeologists, comparative-mythologists, professors of religious history and socio-cultural anthropologists – you are disciplining yourself to a set of guidelines that will keep you on the path to truth.
4. The scholarly data are the guideposts and signs along the road to another time and place.
5. One forms a mental image or set of images; it starts out blurry and fuzzy, but the more you journey backward in time, the clearer it becomes.
6. When you study linguistics and philology- you can begin to hear the voices of the ancient ones. You can read the ancient inscriptions or etymologies and that helps you to hear the voices from the past.
7. When you study the culture of the ancient Celts or the Indo-Europeans, you begin to form clearer and clearer pictures and images of their lives.
8. And then, when you begin to organize and integrate the data you've collected, your mental picture becomes a whole, built-up upon many pictures, sounds and even feelings.

Chapter the Third: "Journey"

1. It is like a shamanic journey, but you are not witnessing or experiencing an Otherworld, but a past world – this world as it was.
2. When the puzzle pieces fit together – correlating and corroborating – the image must be true and real and you must reject those pieces which do not fit together, which are not verifiable by comparison and contrast.
3. When it comes together – the image can become so sharply focused that you can feel it.
4. When you are studying it and organizing it all – you are absorbed into it and you become like a shaman possessed by spirits.
5. But the important thing, when you take the journey, is to leave behind all assumptions – to become a detached observer leaving behind judgmental thoughts- prejudices, biases and misconceptions.
6. When you come back from the journey, you are in the here and now, and you may then form opinions about it (what you saw and felt), this is where you can apply the data, but the data is a reconstructed tradition and the more facts (verifiable through tests, correlation, corroboration, etc.) the closer your reconstruction is to the ultimate truth.
7. Another way of testing the truth is by its internal logic and also by substantiating it with appeals to the BEST authorities who have used strictest standards of reconstruction.

Chapter the Fourth: "Facts"

1. There is mysticism in scholarship, indeed!
2. It is very useful scholarship to reconstruct the past – for many reasons that are obvious.
3. It is not a matter of taste or opinion when you have actually seen or demonstrated a matter of fact – the reaction to the facts are something entirely different!
4. If something is an established fact, then it is right for its own sake and for the sake of truth.
5. Whether or not an ancient Druid said or did something is either a fact or not a fact, and can either be demonstrated or not!
6. One only has the authority to facts about something, but truth is contingent to facts.
7. You can choose to base your beliefs on a factual matter or not, but a belief which expresses to deny a fact is a false belief, no matter how you categorize it!

8. Example of a false belief: "Lugh is an Egyptian god believed in by industrial workers in China. I believe in this."
9. Example of a true belief: "I believe that the sunset occurred at dusk this evening."

Chapter the Fifth: "Assembling"

1. My vision of Druidism is to reconstruct the ancient religious beliefs and allow it to become part of a new tradition.
2. Now in reconstructing the old traditions – I am engaging in an activity that is subject to being fact or non-fact. Either the Druid said this (did this) or he did not.
3. Whether I can verify it through cultural, anthropological, linguistic, literary or historical evidence is the criteria for establishing its veracity.
4. If it is verifiable, provable, or demonstrable through scholarship, then it is worthy of becoming integrated into the tradition.
5. Once established into the reconstructed tradition, then it becomes a matter of fact – and only then can we say whether or not we agree with it or believe in it.
6. If we choose not to believe in it, then we have broken off from ancient tradition, but it is still part of our heritage as neo-Druids, for after all we have named ourselves after them and that implies that we have drawn from them somehow.
7. If we make-up a false tradition, on the other hand, we encourage false beliefs and we become a ridiculous joke in the history of human folly.
8. If we take ourselves too seriously, of course, we could very well become the sort of "Our way is the only right way" authoritarian fundamentalist type of thing.
9. But if we are not serious enough, we cannot fulfill ourselves, we are a joke and we can degenerate into a superficial band of people who miss out on thoughtfulness.

[Note: Here the letter turned into an incomplete collection of notes on Celtic priesthood, kingship and other matters. See the Fall Equinox issue of 1987 for the continuation.]

Albion's Thoughts

(By Albion, Sept 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. I don't want this to be another face-off with Tom Cross.
2. There is a need for scholarship and research into the ways of our Ancestors, there is a place for what Tom does, there is a need for what he does.
3. As I've said before, I'm not a "Druid."
4. Ritually, I practice some hereditary pagan ways (that came from the Midlands of England) mixed liberally with some modern paganism, (oriented towards the Celtic God/desses).
5. I also carry a "medicine bag," I ritually sweat in a sweatlodge whenever I can, and sometimes I smoke the ceremonial pipe as well.
6. I don't "blend" all of these ways together (i.e. the Celtic and Native American ways), but practice them separately, but they are different paths to the same source, and in some way, the Inner God/dess forms are very similar.
7. And, both paths, most importantly, work.
8. I've gone into all of this to say that it's O.K. to take whatever path(s) that you need to take to achieve your own personal union with the Gods, no matter what anyone else says, follow your own path, for this is "the High Road" to spiritual freedom.
9. There is one last thing that I'd like to address here.
10. "The Gods," like us, have grown.
11. We aren't in 2nd Century Ireland or Gaul, but reside in 1987 North America.
12. Our approach to the Gods is going to change over time, and change with our evolution as a race and species.
13. As we have changed and continued to grow, so too, have the Gods – although their space-time frame is not like ours, the Gods also "grow" and change.
14. The "Other-word" is different than 2000 years ago, just as our world is different.
15. Don't believe me, but take your own Shamanic journey to find out.
16. It is also O.K. to "update" our spiritual approach to the Gods, no matter what anyone else might say.
17. And I'm not saying that the Celtic "Old Ways" are no longer "valid" for our modern age, but perhaps our faith is a new, and I feel, improved form of the Old-Faith.
18. As I turn 36 years old on Samhain, I want to begin a new year of my life, and this is the last that I wish to write on this particular subject.
19. There is a place for us all on these pages, and no one should "give up" on helping others to learn, but, we all hopefully, have learned some important lessons about our selves.
20. This is true growth, and is a great spiritual lesson, and a gift.

Blessings to All,
Albion

Chapter the Second

1. I am calling an end to the Cross vs. Guppy et. Al. Debate.
2. It has become too acrimonious.
3. We Druids are a tiny minority within a minority, the modern pagans, and need to support and understand each other, or at least extend tolerance to one another, being as we are surrounded by an intolerant world, much of which wishes we did not exist.
4. Articles on the subjects are always welcome, but no more personal vilification.

By Emmon, Dec. 1987

The Epistle on Gruntwork

(By Les, 1988)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. Tim was when I tried to tie every column in with the theme of the seasons.
2. But I've ridden at least one revolution of the year-wheel with this column, and it has finally occurred to me that Mad Sweeney handles the seasonal aspects of the Missal- Any quite well, without the aid of my scholly sloppership.
3. So I think I'll stop the year and get off.
4. What, I haven't succeeded? Why, so I haven't.
5. For I have here a subject of rant and rave quite appropriate for winter's dark insistence.
6. You see, it occurs to me that winters- especially country winters- are a fine time to get down to the gruntwork of our religion.
7. We have sung and feasted and sacrificed, and yelled at one another and praised our ancestors.
8. But what do we do next?
9. What is a pagan, or more specifically a Reformed Druid, life, in grubby day-to-day detail?

Chapter the Second

1. I must first admit that hard, clearheaded scholarship is something that I perceive as a duty, badly neglected on my part.
2. I am currently poking my nose into the study of history, in bits and snippets, including more of the world than the U.S., or Celtic Britain and Ireland.
3. The future springs from the loam of the past; if one wants to add a few nutrients for its proper growth, it helps to know what was thrown on the compost heap to begin with, and also to be reasonably aware of the nature of composting.
4. But what do we want to do with that future?
5. Could I say that most of us would like to bring with us some of the values that we find in the visions of our Celtic forebears – the stubborn individualism that has led English-speaking peoples (and those who still speak Gaelic) into political experimentation that has continued to this day?
6. Do we want to continue the openhearted pride and hospitality of the Celt, and the bold curiosity that looks the very Gods squarely in the eye?

Chapter the Third

1. We can only start right now.
2. And though we may debate the correctness of possibility of writing, or rather rewriting, our own religion, the need to rewrite our culture is hardly worth an argument.
3. Culture gets rewritten, and one can either participate actively or be manipulated by those in power.
4. We're living a script that was heavily re-written in the aftershock of two world wars: although the sanctity of the family per se is a very old concept, the sanctity of the nuclear family is no older than our own parents.
5. Cut! We're gonna have to do that scene over again.
6. The previous generation meant well. They probably hoped, by isolating the breeding unit, to achieve greater individual prestige, and in some cases, it worked.
7. No one could have explained to them, without first trying it, that isolating small groups of people with specialized roles under heavy economic pressure would provide all sorts of motivation for abuse.
8. And the failure to deal with Grandma and Grandpa, though a grandiose glitch, is no bigger than some of the boners we'll pull, once we get the lead out and start doing things.

Chapter the Fourth

1. Who's that in the back row?
2. You say "doing things" is a fine idea for flaky South Humboldt hippies, but what about you real folks with real jobs and real bosses and neighbors and such to deal with?
3. You win a few, you lose a few.
4. Actually, country folks can be just as hardheaded in their expectations as city dwellers, and although rural neighbors are fewer, they have more influence on your day-to-day life.
5. Which brings me to the next point; if we expect to have any influence on our surroundings, we must exercise it as neighbours do, a little at a time.
6. It would perhaps be more fun to establish, immediately, a clan-type family structure with a set of equal-opportunity social customs.
7. This is always a favorite fantasy, probably because everybody wants to be The McGregor. But if you are the leader of your embryo clan, you have my heartfelt sympathy.
8. Chances are that your contributions pass unremarked, except by loud complaints of stubbornness, meddling, egotism, and being late when you drive the neighbors' kids to school.
9. The loudest grousing will come from your own immediate family, since time devoted to a larger group is time not lavished exclusively on them.

Chapter the Fifth

1. To be even responsible, much less acceptable or polite, we must start small. This means noticing small things.
2. To whom do we show respect, for what, and in what ways?
3. What are our prejudices? (Careful, lying saps power.)
4. Is there any subject regarding which we would not want to pass our beliefs on to our children?
5. Are our religious ideals reflected in our etiquette?
6. Do we give lip service to the Mother, but expect human mothers to stay home until their figures look normal and their kids don't cry unexpectedly?
7. Do we fear and ridicule old age?
8. Do we revere Nature, but describe biological processes in the language of disgust (Footnote: this correspondent is aware of the glory-in-grossness rhetoric of Crowley, or the Hell's Angels. She is also aware that the excuses for such rhetoric only fool men. Please don't refer to a pregnant acquaintance as 'spawning', at least in my hearing.. probably also in hers. We do know what you mean, and we don't like it.)
9. Or do we use euphemisms to shove conversation away from a subject, rather than handling it in a calm and neutral tone?
10. If a child asked you to describe sex, what words would you use? My "well, they fit together" may have been less than articulate, but it at least allowed my daughter to laugh, especially when I explained that when she was old enough, her instincts would cause her to enjoy it. "I always knew grownups were weird!" said she.
11. Do we deplore patriarchialism in the home, autocracy in business, and arbitrariness in law, but allow them to function unmolested?
12. Do we 'mind our own business' about socially acceptable cruelties, but pretend to the 'normality' of the busy bodies in power?
13. Do we vote? Do we volunteer in the service of our beliefs?
14. Do we have a relationship with our surroundings? With plants? With animals?
15. How well do we know our climate, our soil, our geography?

Chapter the Sixth

1. See, This is the gruntwork. This is the kind of thing a religion faces you with, once you've lasted through the honeymoon phase.
2. And half the time, once you've decided what the Gods really want you to do, your first impulse will be to try to talk Them out of it.
3. Like, there's a quintillion bazillion gophers in my garden, and You Guys don't want me to use any poisons? Not even one little pellet?
4. And about that geas, Folks, You really mean to tell me that You expect people to have geasa in the Eighties?
5. Next, You'll be asking us whether we believe in magic.
6. But if you readers are members of the NRDNA or related organizations at this point in their development, you're the diehards, the ones who have made it this far.
7. You've lived through the political snits and social catastrophes that drove away the dilettantes and novelty-seekers.
8. Your pagan eyes have seen births and marriages and divorces and deaths.
9. You have, somewhere within you, a worldview not taught to you by either mainstream religious or secular authorities.
10. Now, obviously, there's no law that says you can't just bug out on the project at this point.
11. Taking your feral spiritual priorities out for a spin can make you conspicuous, especially in the current sociopolitical climate of enlightened despair.
12. Giving up always looks terribly sophisticated.
13. But you can't bug out on winter.

Balance & Synthesis

(By Les, Sep 1988)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. In the time of balance, I think of Hairpulls, and of the doubts as old as religion that we may either decry or embrace.
2. Myself, I have learned to be fond of them; otherwise I suffer a lot.
3. Rationalism is a cold place. It also makes the sensations of one's isolated consciousness a little uncomfortable.
4. Why should I be peering out these two wet windows, instead of someone else?
5. And whatever I may think of it, does it matter very much?

Chapter the Second

1. I'm not really the believing kind.
2. Yet I walk in a world of many gods and goddesses, all part of the divine universe, and all workers of great magicks.
3. I speak, "Lord," "Lady," and solemnly declare that a living world hears me.
4. I also walk among others of my non-faith who call upon methods of divination, by cards and stars and crystals. And I have various odd means of justifying my refusal to reject such things outright: archetypal imagery, channels of intuition.
5. Phooey.
6. I cast cards on a table and read the pictures in them as a way of grasping at straws in confusion.
7. I count the images in star patterns and permutate and combine them in the sky of this or that moment in time, because the star-pictures are a handle on the mystery of personality, not because they name aught that I can truly know.
8. And I collect the lessons of each, ancient and well-laden with the thoughts and dreams of my forebears.
9. Help me, Old Ones! What did you know that I don't?
10. When does this – or the channeling of my energy through arbitrary places in my body, or the repetition of mantra or Wiccan doggerel - pass over the line between seeking and superstition?

Chapter the Third

1. When I walk among the people, I remember a card sent by Mad Sweeney: "Nature is not dirty, but it provides the raw materials from which we manufacture dirt."
2. And I tell myself that people are not foolish or shallow, but they have the materials in them from which foolery and crassness are made.
3. So I am still responsible for the times when I get used or jerked around, but for individual errors in present judgment, rather than for outreach to strangers at all.
4. People need not be mine to be benevolent, nor need they have been of my time to be wise.
5. Can we translate the speech of poets? And can our materialistically-trained minds then put to use what we hear?
6. Or is it lost to us forever, our efforts warped to fallacy by the indoctrination of an utterly alien culture?
7. And can we give our Mother any protection but our own extinction?
8. By loving Her, have we become the enemies of our own kind?
9. Many of the so-called scientific community think so.
10. Yet in rejecting all that they know, we continue in ignorance to wound that which we love.
11. We need more than balance: Synthesis. Turn in your compost, and think of that.

Latest Selections:

The Carleton Revival

The Speaking of Beliefs

(By Heiko Koester, 1987)

(New to ARDA 1)

Chapter the First

1. Dear Friends,
2. We are here to celebrate the creative powers of the earth-mother, of nature.
3. To celebrate the wonder of nature.
4. To think of any sunset, any rock, any river whose beauty and symbolic power have existed in your past.
5. Feel the force of those experiences with nature and to let it become a force to help build and sustain you.
6. The force of nature is represented to us here in this fire.

Chapter the Second

1. We're here to celebrate and feel the power of a group.
2. There is true power in a circle.
3. Circle is unbroken, is continuous.
4. We are all equal here and able to send energy in a complete way to each other in this unbroken circle.
5. We are not in rows or in single file and I am not speaking to you from a pulpit, but from within the circle.
6. An essential force of this circle is human love.
7. Without love, support, understanding, and giving, our ritual here tonight and our existence here at Carleton would be empty.
8. Let us keep this always in mind in our daily lives and during our ritual, that love and support is essential to our humanness and to our survival.

Chapter the Third

1. We are also here to celebrate the masculine and feminine natures of the universe to recognize their dual presence in each of us, their cosmic interplay, their equality and interconnectedness.
2. To think of the ying and the yang.

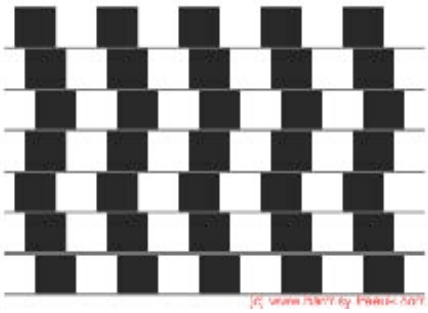
Chapter the Fourth

1. We are here to celebrate not just the nature outside of us, but also the nature within us.
2. We all have tremendous forces and powers which are not let out in daily life.
3. They are physical forces of motion, we find them in dance and making love.
4. They are mystical forces of intrigue, we find them in deep, searching eyes, in beautiful faces.
5. They are our natural feelings of power, of helplessness.
6. We all have tremendous psychic powers of change and tremendous helplessness and vulnerability, and we have to admit this.
7. In the same vein let us not idolize one thing over another.
8. One pointedness, whether it be of heroes or of ideas, is not our way.
9. Rather, let us celebrate the unique beauty of each season; weather, tree, mountain, and mood.
10. This extends to religion.
11. To regard each religion as unique and wonderful in its own right.
12. Especially to practice tolerance, the tolerance of all peoples, all objects, all religions.

Chapter the Fifth

1. Finally, we are here to celebrate the cycles of life.
2. To celebrate the circle in all we see, the cycles of seasons, the cycles of childhood, youth and old age, and to celebrate each in its own right.

Heiko Koestler
Farm House, Carleton College
Autumnal Equinox 1987



Mike's Farewell Epistle

(By Mike Scharding, 1994)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. December 11, 1994
2. To Hrobak, Graham & Curtis
3. Dear Sisters-In-The-Earthmother,
4. All in all, Druidism at Carleton can be wearing upon the Priests of the RDNA. It requires so much quick-planning and is filled with worries of whether one is "doing it right."
5. I ask you to remember that Druidism is first and foremost, a personal journey; which may intersect other's paths for a while, will ultimately be your own. No two people's Druidism is identical (or it seems like it, so far).
6. Yet we are called to "leadership" of Druidism at Carleton. Whatever that means.
7. Matt Cohen, a Druid from Carleton '92, told me that the secret of Druidism to him was doing what you normally like to do. If you do that, then others will be interested by your positive attitude towards the subject.
8. The unfortunate problem is that if you wish to "save Druidism" or actively recruit, people get turned off. Truly a pickle, this one is.
9. Carleton is much different than it was in the 60's and 70's, freedom of expression and appreciation of foreign cultures and religions is much more accepted now. That aspect of Druidism is now kind-of assumed as a basic tenet by most people coming to Carleton.
10. However, just because it's assumed doesn't mean it is carried out in practice.
11. To me, Druidism is an active/passive attempt at living a life of accepting & exploring the diversity, which is in the reality around us. It's that simple and it's that difficult.
12. Sure we can explore Wiccan beliefs; in fact it's probably a very good starting point for many. The term "Witch" conjures up so many of our culture's fears, that overcoming those fears of "witchcraft" is a great step towards overcoming our fears of other strange, non-Christian religions.
13. Another area that could well benefit exploration are the Asian, Native America & African religions; although the materials on the first two are far more accessible.
14. There is so many wonders, treasures and insights available from the many religions/philosophies of the world; wonders to be explored in class and social settings. Let us not stick to just one: there are many other student organizations capable of doing just **one** focus!!
15. Above all, let us not represent our personal paths as that of all Druidism.
16. Druidism is also very vague about it's purposes and provides a nice umbrella-organization for all other sorts of activities associated with practicing/exploring many religions: Candle-making, cloak-making, bonfires, vigiling/camping, offers experience in leadership roles in religion, debates, sweatlodges, vision-quests, arb-walks and meditations.
17. Druidism is a unique activity that Carleton is blessed with, unlike many colleges, because it is accepting of diversity and disparaging of dogma at a critical time in a person's life: college.
18. Thus, the trick, for me, was doing all the activities of a Druid, because I wanted to and inviting other people to join me, if they felt like it.
19. I kind-of wish I was better at group organizing, had encouraged yet more members to lead activities, and excelled at group-image-consolidation, but (in hindsight) that would have been unappealing to the easy-come/easy-go atmosphere of Druidism.
20. Similarly, I wish I could have encouraged greater study of the International Druid Archives by the members, because of the wisdom stored there that is so much like our own.
21. But, to indirectly force members to use any one source is as bad as the Bible-Thumpers' practice of only listening to arguments based on excerpts from the Bible. It remains an immense resource or rituals, debates, articles, opinions, poetry and humor at your disposal.
22. When time permits, please reflect upon the progress of your spiritual journeys. For some of you, it may be a time of unbridled exploration and dissent from rules, and for other it may be a time of intense scrutiny of a new system being sold to you by a bookstore.
23. Whatever the case may be, keep the Reformed Druids open to many types of people, be they pagan, Christian or "just plain don't know."
24. Avoid the dangers of over-ritualism and try to have quiet reflection, by group & individually, plus study nature in scientific & philosophic terms.
25. Read widely from as many traditions as you can. you never know where wisdom may hide! Your opportunity here at Carleton is so unlimited that you have no idea of what kind of person you will be in 4 years!
26. If Druidism should die in the next five years, I'm quite certain that it will spring up anew with someone exploring the archives, reading old Carletonians, a visit by an Alumni-Druid, etc. Druidism may have trouble flourishing, but it has no trouble reviving.
27. So release any anxieties about an "active grove." Trying to "save" one form of Druidism and you will fail, but if you explore the ways of the Mother, then she will bless you with abundance.
28. Enjoy your ever-so-brief stay at Carleton and share your joys and insights with whomever wishes to join you. I've enclosed $50 to help fund your pursuits, as I have tried over the last 5 years. Use it frivolously!
29. Be Druidic, whatever that means to you and allow the same freedom to other members in the group.
30. I wish you the greatest of experiences, AWARENESS.
31. Write to this lonely Druid and tell me of your Druidic studies.
32. I, an old Druid with wist-full memories, have rambled on long enough.
33. I hope that I have given you some encouragement for the upcoming Summer half of the year.
34. Try not to take Druidism as over-seriously as I did.

-Michael

The Third Epistle of Robert

(By Robert Larson, 1996

(New to ARDA 1)

An fh'rinne in aghaidh an tsaoil. (the truth against the world.) -old druid motto (really)
Everything you know is wrong. -The Firesign Theater

Chapter the First: Greetings

1. Dear Siblings in-the-Mother,
2. Go mbeannai an Mhathair sibh go léir. (May the Mother bless all of you.)
3. I wish to convey to you some thoughts that occurred to me while I was helping edit this edition of the Chronicles. I believe they may well give you something to meditate upon as you progress along your druidic path.
4. Of course, some of you may well think I'm crazier than ever.
5. Be that as it may, I ask you to think about my ponderings, which result from both long study and sudden illumination. (It is longer than I intended, but it just growed.)
6. I believe you'll find them interesting and, I pray, helpful.

Chapter the Second: What am I?

1. To those who are uncouth enough to ask my religious persuasion I normally reply that I am a devout pagan. However, I've always felt ambivalent about the term "pagan" or "heathen."
2. On the one hand, I prefer the tolerant and inclusive attitude of the vast majority of "paganisms" toward other belief systems to the exclusive and intolerant attitudes that have historically adhered to monotheistic and dualist creeds.
3. Also, most paganisms are pretty vague about their concepts of deities, which I find suits my druidic view very well.

Chapter the Third: The Term "Pagan"

1. On the other hand, "pagan" has periodically had a pejorative taint, and the present is one of those periods.
2. This pejorative context did not originate with the Christians, but with the ancient "pagan" Romans. "Pagus" in Latin means "countryside," and urban Romans considered "pagans" to be "hicks."
3. "Pagan" religion was looked down upon by the adherents of the more "sophisticated" State polytheism, much in the way that High Church Episcopalians look down upon Holy Rollers.
4. Also, Roman soldiers used "paganus" as an insulting term for civilians. This usage was picked up by the "soldiers of Christ" who used it as a generally pejorative term for non-Christians. "Pagan" has vacillated between being neutral and being pejorative ever since.
5. During the 19th century it was used in both ways when colonialists applied "pagan" or "heathen" to any non-European people, culture or belief system.

Chapter the Fourth:

The Term Neo-Pagan

1. Nor do I find "Neo-Pagan" truly acceptable. "Neo-Pagan" is a term first applied pejoratively (surprise!) to pre-Raphaelite artists which was later adopted as a self-description by another artistic group in the early 20th century.
2. The history of this latter group is curiously similar to that of the RDNA. It started as essentially a group of people who liked to take nature walks but had no real interest in restoring pagan religion.
3. One of its members was Francis Cornford, a follower of one Jane Ellen Harrison, who was a pagan reconstructionist, basing her reconstruction on Frazer. These people influenced others, including Margaret Murray, whose work underlies wicca.
4. An interesting parallel to us, isn't it?

Chapter the Fifth:

Neo-Pagan Pantheonizing

1. Parallels and linguistic connotations aside, one of the problems I find in "Neo-Paganism" in its current context is its tendency to over-define and personalize deity concepts.
2. In this "Neo-Paganism" models itself after the polytheistic pantheons of "established" mythologies, such as those of Greece and Rome, and tries to extend this structure to other vaguer pantheons, such as those of the Celts or Norse.
3. In this attempt they make the same mistake that the Romans did in their attempts to describe Celtic gods in terms of Roman deities.
4. Such a description seizes upon one aspect of a deity and equates it with a familiar god who has a similar aspect, even though it may be the only one the two gods have in common. The result is rather like a Christian identifying all healer entities with Jesus.
5. The attempt to structure Neo-Paganism is a mistake that confuses paganism with polytheism. They are not totally synonymous.

Chapter the Sixth: Folk Religion

1. Paganism or heathenism is, as the terms imply, folk religion.
2. As such, paganism is an accumulation over time of a myriad of traditions and beliefs, which are sometimes contradictory and always confusing to those outside the belief system or culture (and often to those in it!)
3. One should not look for consistency in paganism, such a search will lead only to confusion and frustration.
4. While some structuring exists, and a loose hierarchy of deities often emerges, paganism is essentially an organically grown mélange of beliefs with roots deep in the past. It is religion built from the bottom up.
5. Deities are numerous and each has many aspects, often overlapping. Most deities are localized.
6. For instance, there are some 400 deities recorded in the Celtic "pantheon," the vast majority of them mentioned only once, similar concepts and representations appearing under different names in different locales.

7. While the basic concepts may well be seen to be universal, the deities are different for each has different accretions overlaying the basic concept.

Chapter the Seventh: Organic Religion

1. It is this very organic quality which leads me to believe that paganism is "truer" in human terms than "revealed" religions such as Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and their like. Such cults are fine as parts of a greater whole, but when they become the whole, much human quality is lost.
2. The organic quality of paganism usually leads to its being open to new cults and religious concepts.
3. The average pagan of ancient times found no difficulty or contradiction in belonging to many cults. While he would respect and venerate all god concepts and spirits, he would only worship those which he believed impacted on his life or in which he had a particular interest. (Household gods, craft patrons, ancestral spirits, etc.)
4. Intellectual and curious pagans would always find themselves attracted to new cults.
5. The normal pagan did not differentiate between religious and secular life as we do today. Rather, religion was an integral part of life and imbued all its facets, as the spirits and gods were imminent.

Chapter the Eighth: State Religion

1. Structured polytheism and mythology, on the other hand, were constructs of the state and literature.
2. Though built from native beliefs, they were constructed from the top down rather than from the bottom up.
3. The political powers, priestcrafts and writers took one concept/god/myth from here, another from there, a third from yonder, etc. and set up a hierarchy and accepted mythology.
4. Essentially a state religion was built artificially. Similar deity concepts are amalgamated and their powers and responsibilities more rigidly defined.
5. For instance, under the Romans many local chieftain/thunder gods were amalgamated and called Jupiter or Jove, using their original names or localities as subtitles. Differences between the original deities were either submerged or particularized to a sub-cult.
6. The gods became eminent rather than imminent and adopted homes such as Mount Olympus.

Chapter the Ninth: Religious Persecution

1. Such a state religion, while still tolerant of other beliefs, has much tighter boundaries to its tolerance than does paganism.
2. While pagans found no difficulty in including the state-based religion in their belief systems, messianic and revelatory exclusivist cults did.
3. Though conflicts between cults are not unusual in paganism, and such conflicts could lead to "theological debate by other means" (to paraphrase Clausewitz on war,) such conflict rarely disrupted normal life for long; some accommodation would be reached.
4. However, with a state religion in place, some cults found themselves in conflict with the state, which led to the sporadic banning and/or persecution of the cults.
5. The most famous of these persecutions (because the cult eventually won) was that of the Roman state against the Christians.
6. While the Christians are the most famous example of Roman persecution, they are hardly the only example, nor are they the first. That honor probably belongs to the Dionysian cults.
7. The Roman state, as the era's biggest control freaks, had real problems accepting ecstatic and mystery cults, they were just too disorderly. Mithraism, Egyptian mysteries, Great Mother cults, and, of course, the druids among others were all banned or persecuted at some time.
8. Note, though, that these persecutions of religious cults were for political reasons, and usually occurred when the state was having troubles. They were essentially scapegoating operations.
9. As such the severity varied greatly according to the time and place, and many magistrates made great efforts to avoid punishing members of proscribed cults.
10. Of course, once a Christian sect won power, it banned pagan worship and persecuted both pagans and other Christian sects. That, however, is another sad story, one of persecution for religious reasons using state power.
11. Other examples of religious persecution for state purposes include Confucianist China against Buddhism, Shintoist Japan against Christianity, the Nazis against the Jews and Gypsies (and the other pogroms against the Jews), the U.S. government against Native American religions (still going on), and the Egyptians against the Aten cult.
12. This last example, however, is better seen as a case of revenge for Akhematon's religion-based persecution of the polytheistic Egyptian priestcraft.
13. Other persecutions for religious reasons include the Christian church against the German, Slavic, and Baltic paganism (among others), Islam against pagans (Islam has historically been tolerant toward other "people of the book," i.e. Christians and Jews, but has always been intolerant of paganism.), the Crusades, the Inquisition, the medieval witch-hunts, Communism against all other religions (counting Marxism as a religion), and Cromwell against the Irish Catholics.
14. The RDNA may well evolve into a true pagan religion given a few centuries; it certainly has the openness to do so, but it can only so evolve if it continues to avoid over-structuring its belief system in a Neo-Pagan manner.

Chapter the Tenth: Christian or Pagan?

1. For further illustration of the dichotomy between paganism and polytheism I'm making (and just for the fun), let's apply it to present day Christianity.
2. Catholicism can be seen as polytheistic with a triune god at the top, a mother cult, and myriad subsidiary deities (the saints).
3. Belief and structure are imposed from the top. The same is true of Eastern Orthodoxy and High Church Anglicanism.
4. Mainline Protestantism is a mixture of polytheistic structure and pagan belief. Fringe Protestantism, such as the Holiness Church, Primitive Baptists, snake handlers, Christian Science, etc. are essentially intolerant pagan cults.
5. (Well, I've always been a hillbilly at heart.)
6. Most pagan of all are the African-American churches, especially the small denominations which freely mix Christianity with African traditions.

Chapter the Eleventh: Getting Out of Bed in the Morning.

1. Having talked about my concept of paganism at much greater length than I originally intended, I will now take on the concept of "ritual."
2. Some of us consider ritual a hindrance in our druidic paths, Isaac is a ritualist par excellance, and the majority don't care about it.
3. I believe that everyone is using an overly tight definition of ritual. In truth, ritual is unavoidable.
4. The second time a baby cries and is fed, changed, or cosseted a ritual is born, both for the supplicant (the baby) and for the deity (the adult).
5. Ritual pervades human life, though it is normally unperceived.
6. For instance, we each have our own ways of starting the day. If we must rush, leave something out, or do things out of order we get upset. We have "gotten up on the wrong side of the bed" because our "morning ritual" has been disrupted.
7. Similarly, each of us has his own way of doing every habitual task, our personal rituals, though the individual differences are often masked by the similarity of the tasks.
8. But if we try to do a task in a different way, we'll usually screw up. At the least we'll feel we're doing something wrong until we learn a new ritual.

Chapter the Twelfth: Unconscious and Conscious Ritual

1. Most of these rituals in our lives are carried out unconsciously, of course.
2. If we had to think our way through every task, life would be much more difficult, if not impossible.
3. The ritualization of a task puts the body on automatic pilot, freeing the mind to concentrate on the goal of the task or to think of other matters.
4. Ritual can thus best be seen as an enabler and liberator rather than as a hindrance and encumbrance.
5. The freedom of mind brought by ritualization applies to both unconscious and conscious rituals.
6. Whole conscious ritual is not as necessary to life as is unconscious ritual, it is a normal human tendency and desire.
7. To suppress this desire is to suppress a part of our humanity.
8. Indulgence in conscious ritual, however, raises an important question. Will we control the ritual, or it control us?

Chapter the Thirteenth: Internalizing Ritual

1. Any conscious ritual, such as the druid liturgy, should be memorized and, preferably, rehearsed until the officiant can run through it in his sleep.
2. An officiant who does not do this, for whatever reason, does a disservice to both himself and the congregation.
3. The ritual will stumble and will not feel right. If it doesn't feel right to the congregation and the officiant, its results will be at best problematic.
4. A ritual must be done right to be truly effective.
5. This is one reason for a ritual's increasing power with repetition.
6. To use a theatrical parallel, an actor who must concentrate on remembering his lines and blocking will be unable to give sufficient attention to his actual performance, which necessarily will suffer.
7. Internalization of ritual permits the officiant to concentrate upon actually performing it and accomplishing its goals.
8. Instead of restricting his freedom, internalization enables the officiant to better pace the ritual and to improvise meaningfully in response to events and the congregation, leading to greater interaction on both physical and psychic levels.
9. The end result is a better more purposeful ritual.
10. A parallel to what internalization of ritual accomplishes can be found in traditional music or jazz.
11. The musician has internalized the basic tune; he knows where he's been, where he is, and where he's going at all times without having to think about it.
12. This enables him to experiment to ornament the tune and improvise around it as he plays, while maintaining the tune's basic structure.
13. The result is that every playing of the tune is both different and the same, increasing its meaning and personalizing it, and giving greater entertainment to both the audience and the musician.
14. What an officiant is trying to accomplish with a ritual varies with both the ritual and the officiant.
15. Some may try to invoke actual powers, external or internal; others may seek to increase the sense of togetherness in the congregation.
16. In the standard druid liturgy I believe that the entire purpose is summed up in the line "cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation."
17. It is in the meditation, after all, that each druid pursues his understanding of the Mother in his own way in the group setting.
18. A well-run service can assist this pursuit, which is really the thrust of Reformed Druidism.
19. So, fellow druids, do your rites right, each in your own way.

Chapter the Fourteenth: Facts and Myths

1. So much for old business, now on to new(ish) business.
2. On a deep level myth is truer than fact.
3. "Facts" are ephemeral; they change as new facts are found or current thinking is revised. Myth is much longer lived.
4. We all know that the Washington and the cherry tree story is false, it was invented by Parson Weems.
5. Yet the story has entered the American mythos.
6. Intellectually we discount it, but it still affects us and inspires us.
7. Similarly, few today believe in the literal truth of ancient myths (in fact, it's likely that few ancient pagans believed in their literal truth), but we can still be moved by them.
8. Biblical debunkers and fundamentalists make the same mistake about the factual content of the Bible.

9. Whether certain events happened or not, whether the Bible is factually true, doesn't matter. To a believer the Biblical mythos rings true; even to a disbeliever it is moving.
10. Facts speak only to the intellect; myth speaks to man's heart and soul.
11. With the longevity and tenaciousness of myth in mind, I will now address some myths about the RDNA, myself, the Berkeley grove, the Celts, and the ancient druids.

Chapter the Fifteenth:

Celtic Culture in the Early RDNA

1. In his history of the RDNA Brother Michael reaches some conclusions on the Celtic influences in the founding at Carleton of the original grove to which I would answer, "Yes, but..."
2. He is correct in saying that the Celtic trappings were there only to lend the name "druids" some legitimacy, and that reading were from various religious traditions with a heavy Zen influence (especially when Frangquist was Arch Druid).
3. My own interest in Celtiana was actually sparked by my involvement with the RDNA, probably due to my innate tendency to seek out the roots of ideas.
4. At Carleton, however, I knew Celtic culture only through song and poetry, both in English.
5. At that time (1963/64 c.e., 1/2 Y.R.) little was generally available on Celtic society or religion.
6. What was available usually relied upon classical sources and was either pretty basic and sketchy (and often wrong) or highly speculative.
7. Being a language freak, I started my research by learning Irish, which further sparked my interest.
8. Then the flood of Celtiana, which persists to this day, began.
9. For the most part I've swum in the more serious scholarly and semi-scholarly stream of this flood while dipping into the metaphysical and speculative eddies.
10. (Some of this stuff is quite good, much of it has some good perceptions, and some is downright ridiculous. Caveat.)
11. As I learned, I shared with others of my acquaintance. As a result, the Celtic veneer became thicker in the Berkeley Grove, but it was never more than a veneer.
12. For services I stuck to the original liturgy with appropriate additions for the High Days.
13. Meditations were often taken from the Chronicles.
14. The Celtic thing was my personal search, but I never consciously attempted to impose it upon the grove as a whole, though I welcomed fellow seekers.
15. (Thus my involvement with Clann na Brocheta.)
16. Some seem to think I became some kind of druid evangelist.
17. Nothing could be farther from the truth. While it is true that I desired a somewhat higher profile for the RDNA, my purpose was not to recruit, but to enable those who were searching for their religious footing to find us more easily.
18. I believed, and still do, that the RDNA has something to offer to such people, the same thing many of us found in it, a chance to define their own religious beliefs without preaching, pressure, or persuasion in a supportive group.
19. I've always found active proselytizing repugnant, however worthy the cause.
20. My attempt to increase the organizational coordination of the RDNA was similarly motivated.
21. The goal was to enable the most organizationally active druids and Archdruids to better serve other's searches for awareness by setting up a forum for discussing problems which groves and individuals encounter.
22. The hallmark of the Third Order is service, after all. This should be especially true for Archdruids.
23. One of the problems a priest runs into after setting up a grove or becoming an Archdruid (especially when the members are not living in close proximity and are not well acquainted with each other as at Carleton College) is that grove members look upon the AD as an authority figure (at least at first).
24. One of the problems of hierarchy.
25. This in turn rather constricts the A-D's search for "awareness," unless he wishes to hopelessly confuse the congregants.
26. A similar problem to that of Zen "masters" and "students.
27. How can you lead another to "awareness" if you're looking for it yourself, when they have to reach their own "awareness"?
28. You can tell them this, but it is often difficult to get through their own preconceptions. (Gee, you're the teacher, so teach!)
29. What I found myself doing (and, I suspect, other A.D.s too) was using their preconceptions to aid my own search, hoping they'd grow in their awareness, too, or at least become aware of their unawareness.
30. Thus, at least partially, the growing Celtic flavor, though I would often take my readings from meditations.
31. The Celtic flavor was always more window-dressing than substance, though.
32. When a congregant asks a metaphysical or philosophical question, the priest should always encourage the congregant to find his own answer.
33. If an answer is insisted upon, the priest should make clear that the answer is only his opinion.
34. All in all, Arch Druid can be a very comfortable position, if you go for anything deeper than having a good time sitting under the oak.

Chapter the Sixteenth:

Those Amazing Celts

1. Despite what I have written of Celtic influence on the early RDNA, I would suggest that it was unknowingly greater than intended.
2. This influence was inevitable, for the Celts made many contributions to our own culture, though these are usually overlooked.
3. Certainly we seem to have evoked the Celtic talent for disorganization.
4. Much to their sorrow (and our loss) when they ran up against the Romans, Germans, Saxons, and Normans, the Celts in their own culture rarely displayed much talent or desire for tight organization.
5. Celtic society, though structured and somewhat hierarchical was essentially libertarian and individualistic with a distinct tendency to surface anarchy.

6. To those who may wish to build a tightly-run pagan religion or organization I would suggest that Celtic deities and society are poor models to invoke.
7. Try the Romans, Greeks, or the Germans (though Himmler sort of ruined the last).
8. The picture that most people have of the Celts is that of a savage, bloodthirsty people who fought naked.
9. This myth is largely the result of Roman writings and can be laid to cultural differences, racism, and propaganda.
10. The centralized and orderly Romans found themselves repelled by the disorderly Celts, who refused to be quietly enslaved.
11. Romans had been racially traumatized by the Celtic sack of Rome early in their history, and the Celts frequently allied themselves with Rome's enemies, notably Hannibal.
12. Celts wouldn't play the Roman game.
13. Instead of pitched battle, Celts preferred raid and ambush.
14. Instead of whole armies facing off against each other with a resultant general slaughter, the Celts preferred individual combat, which might or might not escalate.
15. The fact is, the Celts simply had different cultural values from the Romans (and later the English).
16. The picture is now emerging of the Celts is that of a sophisticated society with a technology that was in some ways more advanced than the Romans', especially in agriculture and iron-working.
17. In fact the yields produced by Celtic agriculture were the best in Northern Europe prior to the development of modern agriculture.
18. Many roads in Gaul and England which are credited to the Romans have proved to have substantial Celtic foundations.
19. The conflict between Celtic and Roman aesthetics can be plainly seen in their art.
20. Celtic art was complex, elaborate, and intricate but was largely nonrepresentational. Roman art was mostly severely representational.
21. Perhaps worst of all to the Romans, Celts had little concept of private land ownership, and belonged to the tribe, not the individual, and no concept of primogeniture.
22. They even "allowed" their women to fight in battle and participate actively in their society and would even follow female leaders.
23. Surely such a people must be total savages!
24. True, the Celts had their savage side, but don't all societies?
25. True, some warriors fought naked. In fact, some Scottish Highlanders stripped for battle as late as 1745.
26. The reason was both religious and practical.
27. Symbolically, fighting naked relies upon the gods and upon one's own skill for protection, and better displays that skill to the gods.
28. Practically, a wound is less likely to infect without dirty cloth pressed into it.
29. If you didn't have armor, which was rare and expensive, you were better off fighting naked and unrestricted.
30. Also, cloth is expensive, mon! (Scots joke)
31. True, the Celts were headhunters.
32. Again the reason was religious, and the practice may only have been that of one warrior cult.
33. But the Romans enslaved conquered peoples and humiliated and murdered their leaders, not to mention their gladiatorial games and mass executions.
34. The English displayed the heads of executed felons until the 18th century and taught the Amerindians the quaint custom of scalping.
35. Who were the savages anyway?!
36. Certainly the Irish considered the English uncouth savages.
37. The same culture clash that led to their misunderstanding and fear of the Celts made both the Romans and English oblivious to or unable to acknowledge the Celtic contributions to their own cultures.
38. Many Latin writers and poets were in fact Romanized Celts from Cisalpine Gaul and Iberia.
39. Some Roman emperors, even, were Celts by descent.
40. Many "English" writers were really Irish, Scottish, or Welsh and thought of themselves as such. (I may be British, laddie, but I am NOT English!)
41. The most basic contribution to English culture is usually totally overlooked. It lies in the language itself.
42. Lexicographers will tell you that surprisingly few English words are derived from Celtic languages.
43. They're right, especially considering the long contact between the peoples.
44. The Celtic contribution is more basic and is found in the structure of the language itself.
45. English relies heavily upon the progressive tenses for the subtlety and flexibility of its verbal system.
46. These tenses are not found in either Anglo-Saxon (or other Germanic languages) or Latin.
47. In Celtic languages, however, such tenses are those most used, sometimes almost exclusively. (As I recall, linguists count some 26 tenses in Irish Verbs. This may be an undercount if various compound constructions are taken into account.)
48. All in all, then, Western culture owes a great unacknowledged debt to the Celts.

Chapter the Seventeenth:

Interrelated Religions

1. I would also suggest that there is a greater relationship between Celtic paganism, Hinduism, Christianity, and even Zen than is usually realized.
2. Let us look again to the roots, Celtic paganism, like all European paganisms except those of the Basque, the Magyar, and the Finns, evolved from the same Indo-European root as did Hinduism.
3. Hinduism gave birth to its own salvation cult, Buddhism, one sect of which became Zen. So Zen is actually a very distant cousin to Celtic paganism.
4. In the centuries before Christ, Judaism was influenced by both Hellenism and the dualist ideas of Zoroastrianism, another salvation cult outgrowth of Indo-European paganism.
5. These influences can be seen in both the messianic idea and the increased emphasis on Satan as a worldly power.
6. Buddhist ideas were also penetrating Judaism at this time.
7. All this influx of ideas led to the development of Jewish mystery cults, such as the Essenes and Christianity.

8. During its early years of development, Christianity absorbed yet more Greek influence, along with Egyptian ideas, which were themselves heavily Hellenized by this time.
9. Many influential early Christian theologians were from Alexandria or God, both places where persecution was relatively light.
10. Most of those from Gaul were, of course, Celts, and it is likely that some druidic beliefs and philosophies found their way into early Christianity.
11. Therefore, we should not be surprised when we find similar ideas expressed in all these religions and cultures.
12. Nor is it a total coincidence that some early Irish Christians wrote epigrammatic poetry similar to haiku, or that some surviving druidic teachings resemble Zen koans, for there is a root connection.

Chapter the Eighteenth:

Who were those old Druids?

1. The standard myth about the druids is that they were the primitive Celtic priesthood who conducted bloody rites in the deep woods and practiced human sacrifice.
2. The revisionist myth sees them as the priesthood of a nature-revering Celtic paganism, but discounts the human sacrifice as Roman propaganda.
3. Both those myths are based upon the Romantics' misreading of classical sources and ignorance of Celtic sources and society.
4. To take the human sacrifice question first, I know of only one Irish source that mentions such a practice, and there it is presented as a heretical aberration.
5. Surely, if human sacrifices were common the early Christian monks would have used the practice to discredit the druids.
6. Even Julius Caesar does not claim that the druids conducted such sacrifice; he says merely that the Celts would not sacrifice without the presence of a druid.
7. To me, this implies that the druids were required mainly to see that it was done right.
8. Caesar also admits that most sacrificial victims were convicted felons and prisoners-of-war, the ensnarement or execution of whom was common in all early societies.
9. Physical evidence of Celtic human sacrifice, though extant, is sparse.
10. We are led to conclude that human sacrifice was not a common practice, and probably only took place in times of great danger, if at all.
11. Such acts may have been a hankering back to earlier practice, much like the constant Roman theme of returning to the practices of the early republic. (We have deserted the way of our ancestors and must return to them if we wish to avert disaster.)
12. Certainly the ancient Irish and Welsh law texts that have come down to us prefer restitution to punishment. Capital punishment is unknown.
13. The myth that the druids were a priesthood has, in fact, no basis in either classical or Celtic sources.
14. Though they certainly had sacral duties, we must remember that religious duties were an integral part of every pagan's life.
15. In fact, neither classical nor Celtic writings refer to the druids as priest, and one, Dio Chrysotom, distinctly differentiates between them.
16. My own opinion is that <u>some</u> druids had a priestly function, but most did not.
17. Their privileged, sacred status is explained best by the druids' many important functions in Celtic society. They were the Celts' poets, seers, judges, doctors, philosophers, teachers, and repositories of tradition (Historians and genealogists).
18. No one druid practiced all these professions, of course.
19. Even the most primitive societies have specialists, and the Celts, as I have shown, were hardly primitive.
20. In historical Irish society all these trades ran in families, members of which were trained in the family trade from an early age, with some cross-training through the custom of fosterage.
21. It should be noted that in early Irish society all these professions were open to both sexes.
22. Only after the victory of the Roman Catholic Church over the Celtic church, a victory due more to organization than theology, did women disappear from the professional class.
23. It is as a professional and intellectual class that we can thus best define the ancient druids, and it was as such that they won the respect of both Greek (who found most of Celtic society as frightening as did the Romans) and early Christian philosophers.
24. This concept invites comparison with the Brahmin caste of India, and this comparison has often been made.
25. It is likely the Brahmins and the druids (and perhaps the Persian magi) had a common root in early Indo-European society.
26. Certainly many parallels exist between the Celtic and Hindu societies, and both mythological and even musical similarities exist.
27. If we look upon the druids as an intellectual caste, rather than as a priesthood with repugnant practices, Roman antipathy towards them is better explained, for a society's intellectuals are always the first target of a conqueror.
28. We can also see that the original druids did not die out with the coming of Christianity (there are mentions of them as late as the 9th century in Irish texts). Rather they metamorphised and maintained many of their positions under a new name.
29. In Ireland, they were known as the aos dana (people of art/learning) who retained much of the sacred status and privilege of the druids.
30. It is likely that the early Celtic Christian church owed some of its beliefs and philosophy to the druids, which it would later reintroduce to the continent through missionaries.
31. Pelagius, either a Briton or an Irishman, was specifically attacked as trying to "revive the natural philosophy of the druids" for his stands against the doctrine of original sin and in support of free will. (He believed Augustinian predestination theology led to immorality.)
32. He was finally condemned as a heretic after long political manipulation by Augustine and his followers.
33. It is certain that the knowledge preserved in Ireland which made it a magnet for those seeking education during the Dark Ages was not only Roman, Greek, and Christian, but also druidic.

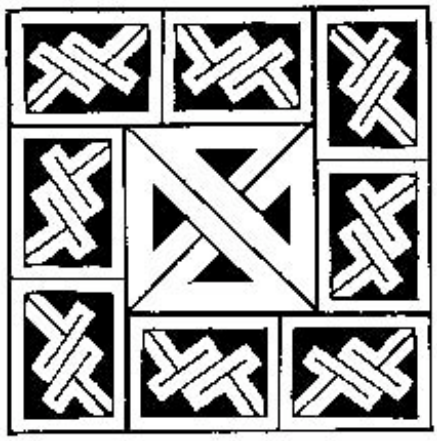
34. We can only mourn the loss of knowledge caused by St. Patrick's boasted destruction of 180 druidic books and by England's later banning and destruction of Irish books, even as we deplore the destruction of the library of Alexandria by Christian zealots and Mayan books by the Spanish priests.
35. Truly all these acts were crimes against all humanity.
36. If we wish to stretch a point, it can be argued that the original druidic caste did not totally die out until England's final suppression of the bardic schools and the brehon law in the 17th century.

Chapter the Nineteenth:

So Where Does That Leave Us?

1. If we accept the original druids as an intellectual caste, we can see a parallel with early Reformed Druids. For what were we at Carleton if not a somewhat mischievous group of intellectuals?
2. But surely I'm not suggesting that any real connection to the ancient druids existed, am I?
3. Certainly not. But, as I have shown, Western thought may well owe an unconscious debt to the druids.
4. No, certainly not, but I'll leave you with a short bit from a story from the Life of St. Guénolé, a 6th century Breton saint, by Wurdistan, a 9th century monk.
5. The story recounts the meeting of St. Guénolé with the last Druid in Brittany!
6. After the events of the story and a brief theological argument, which is essentially a draw, Guénolé offers the Druid refuge in his abbey.
7. The Druid declines and takes his leave, saying, "Do not all tracks lead to the same center?"
8. How druidic!

Peace Siochain Heddwch
Is mise,
Robert D.A.L., Be.
Spring Equinox XXXIII Y.R. (1996 c.e.)



The Book of Lacunae

(By Mike Scharding, 1996)

(New to ARDA 1)

Chapter the First

1. I believe Gerre would agree with me that, "It's a gift to be simple, it's a gift to be free."
2. In my personal form of Druidism, I consider this cliché to be an unspoken Third Basic Tenet.
3. Despite my quest for simplicity, you may have noticed that I have put together this huge tome.
4. Without exaggeration, I have probably spent more time collecting, analyzing, and commenting on Reformed Druidic laws, customs, rituals, letters, and calendars than anyone else. Has this helped me?
5. I have read thousands of our pages, interviewed scores of Druids from every Branch, and spent the better part of three years of my precious youth in this process. As Garfield said, 'Big, fat, hairy deal!'
6. Do you know what I've really discovered?
7. I think that I now know less about Reformed Druidism than when I started, and yet this is good.
8. Do you understand this?

Chapter the Second

1. Many was the long hour that I wended my way through the twisting trails of Carleton's Arboretum; down footpaths of which only the trees and I knew.
2. I would go to those quiet woods to escape the noise of student life in the Goodhue Dormitory.
3. Although I walked in the hoary homeland of Druidism, I was not always Druidical; instead I often puzzled over the intricacies of the Reform's organizational history, with a stubborn drive to somehow "prove" my form of Druidism.
4. Then suddenly!, I'd be distracted by some noise or scent, and I'd be totally enraptured by the starry sky of a Minnesota night; watching my tiny friend, Pleiades, try to escape from big old Orion.
5. In a moment such as that, I would forget about Provisional Councils, Ribbons, and Higher Orders.
6. I would then truly be a Druid; gawking in abject awe, trying to comprehend the Universe in all of its unimaginable vastness and layers of complexity; yet all the while knowing that it was impossible.
7. I would sometime try to compensate for such "limits" by trying to master something so banal and unimportant as the vagaries of our Council's voting methods. But that is, truly, the work of the dying.

Chapter the Third

1. Do you know how I now regard most religions?
2. It's much like story telling, "One mouth speaking and many different ears listening."

Chapter the Fourth

1. My dictionary (AHD) defines a grove as "a small wood or stand of trees that lacks dense undergrowth."
2. If the undergrowth creeps into a grove, it will no longer be a grove, but it becomes a woodland.
3. Woodlands are better than gravel pits, but realize that the old trees will now be more difficult to be discerned or even to be approached, and the youngest saplings may be choked of life-giving sunlight.
4. I sometimes wondered if this desire to remove undergrowth underlaid the practice of the ancient Druids when they removed mistletoe vines from their oak trees, in order to protect their grove's simplicities from parasitic complexities?
5. Likewise, tend ye thus to your groves, not in designing complexities, but in seeking simplicity.
6. Do not fear innovating to suit temporary needs, but be aware of the tenacious nature of traditions, once they become established.

Chapter the Fifth

Chapter the Sixth

1. It is a delicious irony that we, as a simplistic group, have accumulated so much hokey literature.
2. This collection from 33 years of Druidism contains about 800 leaves. Yet I tell you, verily, that a single shrub can match this feat within a year.
3. Perhaps the ancient Druids never wrote down any books about their beliefs, because Nature doesn't write in words, but in a rich tapestry of changing interrelationships and new experiences.
4. This book will probably never change, although you may very well change between your readings.
5. Unlike this book, there are billions of shrubs, which will grow, produce offspring, die, and return to the soil. This book will only sit on a shelf.
6. Would you rather be "of the shrub" or "of the book"? Would you rather be "now" or "the past"?

Chapter the Seventh

1. At the site of Carleton's first Druid service, on Monument Hill, there is a four-sided marble obelisk.
2. On one side is an inscription commemorating the first Christian service held in Northfield.
3. On the second side, a man chiseled in a reminder that the first marriage in Northfield was held here.
4. On the third side are details about the first Christian baptism of a baby in the whole region.
5. But the fourth side is smooth and blank.
6. Richard told me this side tells about Druidism.

Chapter the Eighth

1. Bruce Lee once told a story about a professor from a large university, who visited a Zen Master to seek more wisdom and to have a tea ceremony.
2. Now, he actually went there to impress the Master with his thesis on the Diamond Sutra, which is a difficult work. The Master listened patiently to him and presently he said, "Let us have some tea."
3. The Master carefully poured the hot tea into the professor's cup, but then would not stop pouring. The tea began to overflow and spill over onto the fine *tatami* mats, thereby ruining them.
4. The professor finally could restrain himself no longer and he cried out, "The cup is full, no more will go in!"
5. The Master smiled, and replied, "You, like this teacup, are full of your own opinions and theories. How can you hope to benefit from my words, unless you first empty your cup?"

Chapter the Ninth

1. A bowl's true usefulness requires emptiness, although you could still try to use it as a hammer.

Chapter the Tenth

Chapter the Eleventh

1. It is one of the remarkable aspects of "awareness" that with every breakthrough of understanding, I realize more about the flawed or irrelevant nature of so many dogmas that I carry around.
2. Yet, I am not disturbed by this.
3. Truths have risen and fallen amongst the many cultures of the world, and yet new systems will always arise and pose new solutions to us. We must be ready to choose wisely, or even to contribute.

Chapter the Twelfth

1. Do you know what most people have told me that they most fondly remember about their days of active participation in a Grove?
2. It's not something they can put into words.
3. Richard Shelton, may his camel herds thrive, told me that he had spent far too much of his time in Ann Arbor explaining what Druidism *was not*.
4. I have heard similar words from most Archdruids, and many of them as a result have despaired of passing on the awareness that they achieved at Carleton College (or elsewhere) to other seekers.
5. But where did you get your awareness? Did it come from the words of an Archdruid or did it come from just being

out there with Nature, perhaps with other Druids being present, so many years ago?

6. We can only try to help those who want our help. An unwanted gift, no matter how beautiful it may seem to us, is a burden unto the receiver.
7. But what is this obsession with proselytizing? Some evangelists are like problem drinkers; they do not set responsible limits on their vice and they do not know when its time to leave the bar.
8. Do not consider yourself a missionary out to spread "the truth," for that is not our way. Rather be like a humble traveler and teach wisdom to yourself. Ask good questions and listen to the answers.
9. But if your interests and pursuits of "awareness" should only find wooden ears and you receive a cold shoulder from your Grove, and yet you still need to talk, then go ye into the woods and talk to the trees.
10. For though a tree's ears are wooden, and their shoulders are cold, at least they will listen patiently and provide welcome support for your weary back.
11. When it is time, people may notice what is wise in your words, no matter where you are at the time; whether it be at a Druidical circle in a deep wood, at a New York coffee shop, in the classroom, at the assembly plant, at a hospital, or even (God forbid!) in distant lands during a bloody war.
12. Verily, the Earth is our Carleton College, and all of us are merely pupils in her classrooms. We have to tune our ears to her lectures and occasionally focus away from the voices of other students who murmur around us and pass notes to each other.
13. Let us boldly ask questions in our classes, listen to our classmates, do the best on our exams, exceed our homework's teaching objectives, play hooky, enjoy the games during recess periods, go on field trips, and work together on class projects.
14. Some say that we forget 90% of what we learned in College, but do not forget that there is no end of to lessons that can still be learned out there.

Chapter the Thirteenth

1. I have also heard complaints that too many Reformed Druids are "going back" to a monotheistic faith, or moving on to another religion.
2. Why do you now seek to bind other people solely to the ways of Reformed Druidism?
3. Many of us joined Reformed Druidism, not because it was the only way to find spiritual truth, but because we agreed that it was "one way, yea, one way amongst many."
4. I would also remind you that many of us never officially "left" our previous religions, because Reformed Druidism does not require us to abandon our previous affiliations or commitments.
5. When people judge that they have sufficiently explored our ways, who are we to begrudge them a chance to explore yet more ways?
6. I consider Reformed Druidism to be a spiritual way-station for pilgrims who are seeking for spiritual truths. They come from everywhere, they stay until rested, and they eventually go somewhere.
7. If we have been good caretakers of this way-station, they will remember our hospitality and perhaps they may return for a visit, but certainly they will fondly remember us <u>and</u> our ways.
8. May our gift of Druidism to these travelers not be a heavy ball and chain that will bind them to our ways, but rather may we give them a set of wings and a telescope to aid their journeys.
9. Perhaps you are worried that their relationships with the Earth-Mother will deteriorate or disappear under another religion?
10. Look ye at the Green Book and note ye how every religion of the world has wisdom in it, and that at least one voice in every religion has incorporated a respect or reverence for Nature.
11. If the people have truly met the Earth-Mother while they were with us, then when they leave they may naturally gravitate towards such voices.
12. Finally, I would ask you if such a preoccupation with other people's spiritual welfare is perhaps an indication that you are avoiding the tending of your own spiritual growth?

Chapter the Fourteenth

Chapter the Fifteenth

1. I tell you that when you develop "awareness" you can gain wisdom from every word, every book, every encounter, and from every possible silence.
2. No longer will you need to keep to the outer structures of Reformed Druidism, except as one keeps a beautiful painting on a living room wall; yet one still goes outside for a breath of fresh air, and to see what the squirrels & foxgloves are up to today.
3. If your copy of ARDA distracts you from the rest of Reality, then it is only worthy of recycling.
4. Keep it simple, stupid (KISS).

Chapter the Sixteenth

1. Indeed, after reading the ARDA, some of you may wish to adopt all those old customs, or perhaps even to revive the Reform's organization above and beyond the Grove level (i.e. a new Council).
2. Please, do not be surprised if you find that most of the older Reformed Druids (and myself) will refuse to participate in such a revival.
3. It is not because we disdain the past forms of Reformed Druidism, for I and the others will always be glad to advise you and help you on your journey, but consider this story:

4. "Chuang Tzu was fishing in the P'u when the Prince of Ch'u sent two high officials to ask him to take charge of the administration of the Ch'u State."
5. "Chuang Tzu went on fishing and, without turning his head, said: "I have heard that in Ch'u there is a sacred tortoise which has been dead now some three thousand years, and that the Prince keeps this tortoise carefully enclosed in a chest on the altar of his ancestral temple. Now would this tortoise rather be dead and have its remains venerated, or be alive and wagging its tail in the mud?"
6. "It would rather be alive," replied the two officials, "and wagging its tail in the mud."
7. "Begone!" cried Chuang Tzu. "I too will wag my tail in the mud."

Chapter the Seventeenth

1. That's about all that I can think to write about, but you can find more of my thoughts in the selections of Volume 2 and 3 of the Green Book.
2. I hope that this Apocrypha has shown to you the problems of Druidism, or of even knowing what is Druidism! "The never-ending search for religious truth" must continue for me, as it will for you.
3. Blessings of peace be upon you!

Michael James Anthony Ulhail Scharding
Grand Patriarch of the Ancient Order of Bambi
Day One of Samradh
Year XXXIV of e Reform
May 1st, 1996 c.e.

The Epistle of Amanda

(By Amanda, 1997)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. Dear Michael,
2. Thank you for your long-distance support, it's nice to know that because of our devotion to the Earth we can share our experiences and friendship.
3. There are many people who follow a Druidic path and call it Buddhism, Catholicism, etc.
4. I always find it interesting to attend the religious services of another faith, or get into a discussion with someone who think they believe differently, and see just how much we have in common.
5. We're all seeking, taking the paths that seem the most fitting for our beliefs, but we're all going to end up in the same place.
6. What, may I ask, pulled you to Druidism?
7. For me it was the combination of religion and Nature, the fact that it doesn't require me to think that other religions are "wrong."
8. [Many people have always believed that there is only one "right" way to spiritual awakening or whatever one would call it. However, you are right in that so many religions are very similar, they probably ARE the same religion, but some people found things they didn't like about one, changed it, and denounced the original.
9. Also, Christianity DID borrow from the Pagan religions in order to get more Pagans to convert.
10. These similarities aren't limited to Christianity and the Pagan religions of Western Europe, though. In Indian religions three is also a holy number, and there is a trinity of the Buddha, his Spirit body, Enjoyment body and Dharma(human) body, and there are parallels with Indian religion in Native American religions. Sorry about the run-on sentence. (24 Oct 1996)]
11. You asked about my vigil. It was one of the most surreal experiences of my life. Michelle started out with me in the lower Arb shortly before sunset. She shared with me information I would find valuable through the night.
12. As darkness fell, I expected it to bring fear, but I felt fear only once that entire night when something ran across a field and I though it came at me through the foliage lining the trail.
13. I did a lot of thinking before the sun rose that morning, mostly about the mother-daughter relationship I have with the Earth/Goddess (I'm Wiccan).
14. I saw it as an omen that I stood on the hill at sunrise, a doe and her fawn stepped into view in a nearby field. I can think of nothing else to say about the experience, it was beyond any verbal description.
15. Things are going well with the Druids. We have good participation for most things, but for our last full moon ritual no one showed up. Probably, because it was fairly cold and there were three inches of snow on the ground.
16. All in all a good fall term.
17. I don't have an Anthology yet, so I'm borrowing the Religious Diversity House copy for now.

Have a good Yule.
Amanda

The Sigil Letters

(By Various Authors,1997-8)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First: The Sigil Vigil

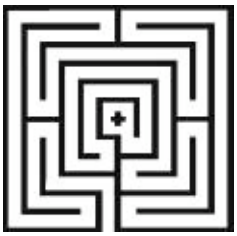
1. Dear Siblings
2. You asked me what I see when I look at this neat little sigil you sent to me? Is it now traditional to wear Druid Sigils as jewelry, this smacks of prosyletization, don't you think?
3. I had always preferred retaining the sigils for liturgical work and carving them on the winds at the close of the service with our hands (Peace, Peace, Peace), thus showing vividly how temporary is our mark on the world.
4. But, it was a good question, so I stayed up last night and thought about it, which is not hard since we have 23 hours at the South Pole.
5. Here are the more comprehensible thoughts that resulted;
6. I see two parallel lines intersecting a circle. (is there more to it than that?)
7. I see the original ritualistic gestures of its shape carved on the winds (where do they go?)
8. I see a fork and a knife on a plate (what was for dinner?)
9. I see two chopsticks resting on a bowl (is it full or emptied?)
10. I see a lid to a pot with bars to keep it from falling in (what's for dinner?)
11. I see a grate to filter out the flow of something (what's to be kept out?)
12. I see two boards placed on a well-top (are you thirsty?)
13. I see two pins and a ring, holding up a hairdo (how fancy is it?)
14. I see a drum and two drum sticks (what music does your rhythm accompany?)
15. I see two saplings with the sun rising behind them (what will happen today?)
16. I see two bars on window (is it locked?)
17. I see a galloping turtle with his head pulled in. (what is he afraid of?)
18. I see the world's tropics of cancer and Capricorn. (where will you go?)
19. I see a thing that cannot be described (do you see it too?)
20. I see a raggedy baseball in mid-flight (how will you swing?)
21. I see a bridge spanning over a pond (is it deep?)
22. I see rabbit ears on TV antenna. (What channel are you tuned to?)
23. I see a drawbridge of a castle entrance (what is protected?)
24. I see a Celtic cross, with swords unlocked (why were they fighting?)
25. I see some planks laid over a chasm (what made the hole?)
26. I see eyelashes on a half-closed eye (what does it see?)
27. I see the stalactite & stalagmite lined entrance to the Earth-Mother's womb (what will come out?)
28. I see three enclosed spaces (what else in there?)
29. I see a gold platter and two ivory tusks (was it worth the cost?)
30. I see the trails of two friends in a grassy meadow (which flowers will they pick?)
31. I see two streams of a waterfall pouring over the mouth of a cave (must you get wet?)
32. I see infinite space stretching away from the sigil (what is out there?)
33. I see the refined end-product of some melted rocks, hauled far from home (just like us, isn't it?
34. I see a division of a perfect year into two half seasons and two "days between the years"
35. I see analogies that have gone on too long (when will I stop?)
36. I see a short tube when viewed from the sides (details depend on the vantage point)
37. I see two parallel lines intersecting a circle on the other side. (sometimes opposites are similar)
38. It is a lump of pewter, than I hung on my computer.

-Ian Friesland, June 1997

Chapter the Second: Sigil Musings

1. November 11th, 1997
2. Dear Amanda Bradley, Sister-in-the-Mother.
3. I wish you a happy Celtic Year and beginning of the Time of Sleep in Reformed Druidism (Samhain to Beltane).
4. As a present I offer you this Druid Sigil which I usually give to new 3rd Orders. What does it mean?
5. It is merely a lump of silver to some, worth $20.
6. To others it is a symbol of weirdness, of people who refuse to accept societies predetermined paths of spirituality.
7. To others it is a symbol by which to recognize other Druids, but verily I believe that there are many people in many faiths or codes who follow the Druidic path but use a different name for it. Seek these people, too.
8. To others, it is a symbol of their desire to control the "magic" of Nature. I have done this too, but beware of egotism, because the control of Nature's magic can be abused just as we have abused Nature's other resources.
9. To others, it is an indefinite thing. This simple symbol has seemingly never been adopted or named before by any known group before 1963. It can be used as a tool without existing prejudice for teaching.
10. To you, it will mean whatever you wish. If you wear it, people will associate your deeds and words with this symbol.
11. I give it to you with this in mind.

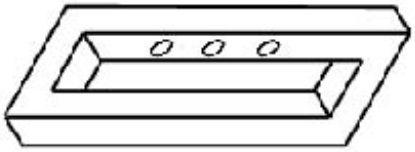
Yours in the Mother,
Michael
Druid Missionary in Japan



Chapter the Third: My Vision of the Sigil

1. I've thought a bit about the sigil. The following is born out of my experiences with a Rosen Method practitioner, my experiences with the Mists of the Stone Forest Grove in Minneapolis, as well as the events of the night of my vigil. In Neopagan Druidism, such as we are, there is a tendency to three-ness.
2. There are a number of three aspected Godheads in Celtic mythology, for example.
3. There is also the aspect of three in time, which has Gaelic names for past, present and future that I cannot remember.
4. Also, the three realities that the Cosmic Tree unites: Upper World, This world, Lower World. Another "three" that we at Mists worked with is that of Gods & Goddesses, Nature Spirits, and Ancestors. In our rituals we invoke these three.
5. The sigil of OBOD is the three-rayed sign, commonly translated as the rays of spirit, mind, and body.
6. My view of the RDNA sigil is that the two vertical rays represent spirit and soul. Soul could alternately be called mind. I see the difference between spirit and soul as being the two parts of life that reach for the heavens(spirit), and that which embraces the Earth(soul). I won't say that this is a sharp definition.
7. They could just as easily be two aspects of the same immaterial aspect of a human as two different things altogether.
8. However, they have a body around them, and I believe that is very effectively symbolizes the unity of Life, especially within a Pagan worldview.
9. The two rays extending in both directions beyond the "body" can than have significant meanings of the need to have the balance of an inner life coupled with the outer life of experience.
10. I am a believer in the mind/body connection, and this sigil could well symbolize that too.
11. That has been my experience of late with this Rosen Practitioner. It's a subtle form of touch that reads the soul as kept in the body. I was doing some experiments of my own in my last session, and the results were outstanding.
12. This practitioner I see is good. If I changed my mind in mid-stream, he felt it. I was changing my energies, by centering very deeply. When I hit core, I get body rushes, and when I did, he immediately noted it.
13. I was being silent the whole time, and experimenting with the method because I see this as being a powerful tool for healing souls, which is a desire of mine.
14. So the sigil to me is very profound. I wear it constantly, and it serves to remind me of my Third Order calling.

-Robert Harrison, ODAL,
Carleton Grove (associated)



Chapter the Fourth: History of the Sigil

1. What is a sigil?
2. The circle bisected by two vertical parallel lines is known as the Druid sigil in modern Druid groups. It is one of the many symbols now widely used by Reformed Druids of North America, its offshoot called Ar nDraoicht Fein (ADF) which started in 1983, which also had an offshoot The Henge of Keltria. Therefore, it is a prominent symbol of Druidism in America.
3. Any group can use the sigil, if they wish, we're not possessive about it, just send us a copy of your artwork for our gallery collection.
4. False Origin Myth #1
5. There is a well publicized myth that it came from a photograph of a Celtic-Romano temple's foundation which had a square Roman foundation over laying an older Celtic circular structure. It looks remarkably like the Druid sigil with two of the rectangular while parallely intersecting the circle. However, this shot published in Stuart Piggot's seminal work "The Druids" was first published in 1966, three years after the RDNA was already documented as heavily using the symbol.
6. So that can't be it. None of the founders probably had the background knowledge in 1963 of obscure archeological digs, so they couldn't have come across it anywhere else in the first two weeks of the founding of the RDNA.
7. Closer to the Truth Story
8. David Fisher, the founder of the RDNA, was eating lunch at Goodhue Dorm Cafeteria on Carleton College Campus in Northfield, Minnesota, USA in early April 1963 (perhaps April 1st?) and talking to Norman Nelson and a few of his other friends.
9. They were complaining about a mandatory requirement to attend weekly religious services by the college. They decided to start THEIR OWN religion to see if that was satisfactory, and they decided on the name "Reformed Druids of North America."
10. So they traipsed up to the hill of three oaks soon thereafter (April 17th, 1963) and had the first ceremony. David Fisher claimed to have been initiated into a Fraternal Druid order in Missouri, but they didn't believe him, because he had also tried to set up three other semi-secret farcical organizations on the campus with a similar story. But the others recognized the power of continuing an older tradition.
11. The sigil was apparently used during that ceremony. So from whence did it come? Probably from David Fisher's fevered imagination (divine inspiration?, definitely inspired by spirits of whiskey).
12. I have conducted over 21 hours of research through various books of symbols and magical runes, but I have found no trace of the circle with two vertical lines. The closest thing is a Greek letter of a circle with one vertical line (and David was possibly interested in starting a Greek fraternity style group, which were banned at Carleton). The alchemical symbol for oil is similar to that Greek letter.
13. What does it mean?
14. Good question. There is no definitive answer on this subject. It both means what you think it means, and it means something you don't think it means.
15. Various designs have popped up, but there were no ornate designs until 1969. It had always been simple three strokes

of a pen until that date. Recently, people have tended to draw it as a wreath pierced and supported by two wooden poles.

16. Since then, various designs, visualizations, and descriptive readings have been attempted of the Sigil. I'm in the process of collecting and listing them

Michael Scharding,
Former Arch Druid of the Carleton Grove,
Current Arch Druid of Monument Grove

The Epistle of Sam

(By Sam Adams, 1997)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. April 31, 1997
2. Dear Michael,
3. I hope you are well and enjoying your present circumstance, which I believe is very likely the case.
4. It was very good to hear form you and to receive your weighty tome on the Carleton Druids, a work which shall certainly bring you some degree of fame and/or notoriety in days to come.
5. I was just reflecting on the irony that this same organization, this merry band of "Zen anarchists" should remain so dear to my heart, closer, even, than some of the other manifestations that my spirituality has taken on over the years.
6. I am still intent on becoming Catholic. I am a member, still, of the Henge of Keltria. These are parts of my personality as well.
7. Yet I shall always remain a Druid, and I realize the flaws in the codifications of belief and expression that these latter institutions have adopted, limits and snares that the RDNA avoided by never defining itself so rigidly in the first place, and never, ever being that serious.

Chapter the Second

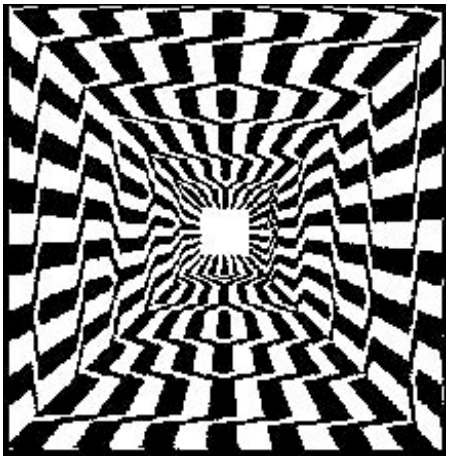
1. I continue with my studies of Celtic music, performing occasionally with a rather untraditional Irish musician, Sean Egan, who plays the clarinet: a strange instrument for Irish music, though familiar in Breton music, and most pleasant in combination with the accordion.
2. I have also a little one-drone bagpipe now, a "veuze," which I am struggling with-- I need to get some hemp and wax and get it sealed up properly before I shall make any progress, I fear. Hopefully I will gain some degree of competence over the next few years.
3. I have not been speaking much Welsh, but I have found some excellent resources on the Web, and soon shall subscribe to the WELSH-L e-mail list to get more practice in it.
4. So as you see, my Celtic interests continue unabated, as they are part of my soul life now and will no doubt continue as such.

Chapter the Third

1. Yet I marvel at my past preoccupation with "Real Druidism" and the attempts to force it into Reformed Druidism, which Bonewits made so fervently all those years ago, and which I perhaps harkened back to, in my own small way.
2. I remember a couple of rather prickly articles I posted to NOTES about such matters as the appropriate activities for an Imbolc ceremony -- it all seems rather ridiculous now, as perhaps such things always do.
3. It is interesting how the whole "druid" label seems to have been a massive red herring in the context of the RDNA - there was a real interest in Celtic stuff, which I have seen in Richard Shelton and his wife, but a more immediate preoccupation with personal development through Zen and Taoist concepts.
4. Still there is the sense though, that "Druid" stands for something noble and lost to the present culture, something to be reintroduced as a thing that is new, yet very old, native to us though unfamiliar. And that is what still draws me to it.
5. There are Neo-Pagan Druids who can quote chapter and verse from the Tain and plan elaborate Neo-Indo-European rituals, as though mocking something, which they really hold to be dead.
6. Then there are people who enjoy sitting around in smoky pubs with fiddles and pipes and accordions. I'm somewhere in between now, I think.
7. Have a nice time and be sure to call when you get back. Write and let me know when that will be! Heather Gruenberg sends regards. I'll be at Carleton for Beltane.

Yours in the Earth/Sky Mother/Father,
Sam Adams

P.S. Words for the day: Never be an "ex"-anything. Just keep adding things to your resume, and leave behind only the pain; ex-rascist, ex-classist, ex-xenophobe, etc. Never ex-Catholic, ex-Christian, ex-Pagan, ex-Druid. Thanks for the brandy!



What Are Druids?

(By Irony Sade, June 6, 1998)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. Irony, I will be writing a short press release for the college news bureau about the Carleton Druids.
2. The news bureau's press releases are sometimes published in local newspapers or call the attention of a newspaper to send down their own reporter to do a longer story.
3. I would like to take the angle of how the druids give an environmental consciousness to religion.
4. On the druid web page, it says "Everyone today realizes that we have to be environmentally aware of the earth's cycle and druids often go a step further."
5. If you could, please expand and maybe give some examples. (which I might quote) I will e-mail you the final press release before sending it out.
6. The news bureau is really just a public relations office and only wants to publicize the positive about our college.
7. Thanks! Jeff email: radkej

Chapter the Second

1. The Carleton Druids cannot help but give an environmental consciousness to religion.
2. We have only two tenets, or fixed beliefs. The first is an awareness that the quest for spiritual truth is an important and life long search. The second is that through study, awareness, and reverence of nature one can further this endeavor.
3. No one will claim that this is the only path to spiritual truth and understanding- it is merely one that we have chosen to follow.

Chapter the Third

1. Druids are by nature fairly solitary creatures, so the ways in which this reverence for the natural world plays itself out is as varied as we are.
2. Of the druids at Carleton, some become Biology majors, taking the path of rigorous study of nature and the environment. Others throw themselves into Philosophy.
3. All of us tend to spend an inordinate amount of time outside, and to think seriously about life- our own and that which we see around us.
4. We try to teach each other and those who approach us what little we have learned about nature, life, and living; for us, none of those are separate things.
5. Even as the hypothetical leader of the Carleton Druids I cannot tell you what being a druid means to every one of us, nor how that belief encompasses an environmental consciousness.
6. I can only tell you of my own experience in such matters, or of those things that the group as a whole has done concerning nature and the environment.

Chapter the Fourth

1. As a group we celebrate between four and six major festivals a year, each firmly connected to the seasonal changes in the world.
2. The most recent of these was Beltain, a celebration of the returning spring. It is marked by a recognition that the flowers are finally back, the Wood Ducks are nesting, herbs are growing in the forest again, and the Minnesota winter is finally really gone.
3. The celebration was held on Mai Fete island over midterm break, and held a bonfire, two weddings, a may pole, and hours of music and story telling. At the end of the day the northern lights came out in a display to pale the best that anyone there had witnessed.
4. Our other major holidays occur in the late autumn, midsummer, and midwinter, each focused around the season that it falls in. We also celebrate the solstices and equinoxes throughout the year.

Chapter the Fifth

1. One thing that will help to clarify the great importance that we place in the changing cycles and patterns of the natural world is to realize that the year is seen as a pattern for the life of man.
2. In its growth, maturity, decline and death, we see an endlessly repeated microcosm of our own lives. By celebrating these elements as they occur in the world around us we can acknowledge their existence in our selves.
3. Beltain is a time for celebrating not only the budding life in the world, but for becoming aware of the elements in our own lives that are passing through the spring of the soul - new projects, new loves, new life. It is a time of rejoicing in the beginnings that are always happening in the world and in our selves.
4. Samhain - the autumn festival- is similarly a time for recognizing death and sleep in the natural world and in ourselves. When all the world is preparing for winter we take the time to reflect and remember, to say good-bye to those who have died over the past year, and to the parts of ourselves that have changed, moved on, or withered.
5. By celebrating the endless and cyclic process of natural change in the world, we can also see it in ourselves.
6. By witnessing nature within our own lives, we create a framework within which to grow, to embrace birth, death, maturity, decay, and to endlessly recreate ourselves throughout our lives.

Chapter the Sixth

1. But perhaps you wanted more material stories of what we as a group have done.
2. This year the Carleton Druids have led sweeps through the Arboretum to clean it of litter after the spring floods.
3. Members of the group have bussed out to St. Peter's to witness the destructive power of the environment and to build new roofs over houses that were divested of them by tornadoes.
4. Less recently we have led Arb walks to acquaint new students with the landscape around Carleton, and arraigned herb gathering expeditions in the early spring.
5. We take care of the Arboretum in all the little ways that we can, collecting litter, clearing trails before the grounds

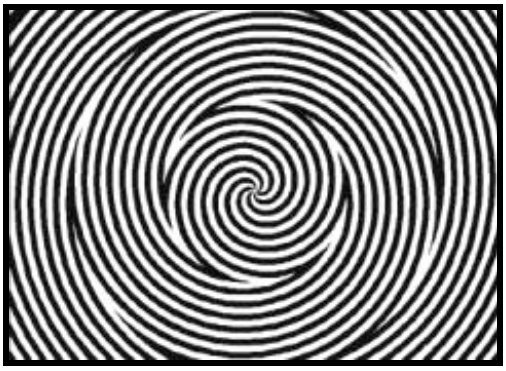
crew arrives, keeping fires in the areas that are safe for them, and occasionally assisting lost and benighted folks who cannot find their way out.

6. Through our daily interactions we try to instill a sense of respect and reverence for the environment in those we meet, telling them the stories behind the constellations, pointing out the wonders that they are missing, and making them aware of the casual damage they do to the world without ever realizing it.
7. Last year we arraigned and created the stone circle in the upper Arb as a place where people can come to enjoy the peace and beauty of the natural world in the closest thing we will ever have to a shrine.

Chapter the Seventh

1. I guess I don't really know what else to say.
2. Our 'environmental consciousness' is more of a cosmology than anything else.
3. It is something that affects everything we do, not a list of activities that we publicize.
4. If you want entertaining stories of the various ways that this has played out I would much rather talk in person.
5. There is a wealth of wonderful anecdotes even from just the years I've been here.
6. The time security interrupted a sweatlodge - twice! - and it was only luck that we all had our clothes back on when they came...
7. The time the folks at Farm House were dying for snow the day before winter carnival - they approached the Druids who adapted a rain-dance, half as a joke, and dropped a foot of snow over just Rice County the following night...
8. A time when one of the druids walked into a misplaced party and put out an illegal fire by trampling it barefoot...
9. Let me know if any of this is useful to you in your writing. If you have any questions, or other areas you would like me to address, give me a call.
10. Good luck getting the article printed - I hope to see it before it goes to press.

Yours,
Irony Sade
Current Archdruid at Carleton College



The Exile Letters, Part One

(By Irony Sade, 1998-9)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

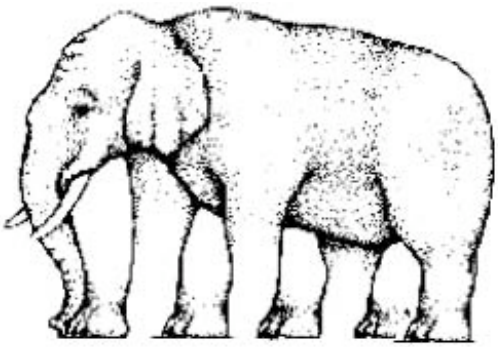
1. Dear Mec, [i.e. Mike Scharding]
2. My friend Chrissie is coming to Carleton in the fall, and I will teach her all I know about the workings of this place and to the dubious wisdom and traditions of the last three years.
3. She has that rarest of gifts, true initiative. NO one remaining here does. There is no feedback, no suggestions are offered.
4. Things happen only when out of the nothingness, I, or alas more rarely Michelle Hajder, decides that they will. Then people come participate and wander off again without comment.
5. Chrissie, though, creates her own schemes and is inspired by those she sees. She arrived at my door with a bag of tricks and announced that we were to celebrate.
6. After the feeling I have here of having to force things through by my will and my presence - All the while trying not to be a leader- it was unspeakably refreshing to have someone enthusiastic, creative in their own right and willing to walk beside, instead of behind or before.
7. I feel vaguely bad about planning for her to assume the leadership here and even a tad of humorous guilt for 'importing' an active and dynamic Druid when there were no local ones forth coming.
8. I have known Chrissie since before she could walk. Promoting her to Archdruidcy feels almost dynastic sometimes.
9. And now I've returned [to Carleton].
10. I have designed the first ethics major at Carleton, which may open up a new concentration.
11. Someone has stenciled John Lennon upon the north facing stone of the circle. Somehow it does not bother me much. The place is well loved by the people here, the lady has a path beaten down to her and I find flowers and offerings there at times.
12. I performed the weddings at Beltain to the great delight of the couples and onlookers. One was a couple from my class. The other, Harriet Erwin and her boyfriend - the secretary of philosophy/religion/classics if you don't recall.
13. We danced the maypole into the ground and Michelle led the last dance so that I could watch it all happen for once.
14. I am happy in a peculiar way with the near future looking full, serious, and wonderful. I miss my love immensely but we will be together again for another while soon. I am sorry to have missed your wedding.
15. Enough for now, for one letter,

Yours in service,
Irony
Carleton College, MN

Chapter the Second

1. Date: Fri, 06 Nov 1998 14:44:00 –0600
2. Druidism, as I practice it, is at its heart the recognition of only two things:
3. That the spiritual search is important, individual, and life long, and that nature presents one avenue down which to take this search.
4. What it requires is simply a great degree of intellectual honesty with ones self. You do not simply choose what you will believe; you search out what might be true and subject it to some rigorous examination.
5. Approach life with the premise that everyone and everything can teach you something you don't yet know, and knows something that you never will.
6. Druidism is about actively learning as much as you can about life and yourself- not merely on the spiritual plane.
7. I could go on forever, but it will become a description of my search rather than classical reformed druidism if I continue much.
8. It may help you to know one of the very basic suppositions and assertions of that system. You have a right to believe what you know to be true, no matter what anyone thinks of it.
9. I would be glad to talk to you in person about anything. An important learning technique is sharing with others the things you have learned, unlearned, or wondered about. Through their reflections on it, you gleen a lot.
10. Give me a call if you wish, or stop by.

Irony



The Epistle of The Rising Sun

(By Mike Scharding, 1998)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. Dear Brethren and Sisthren, a zestful spring to all of you from the land of the rising sun.
2. Every day I greet the sun while all of you are slumbering; a fitting place for a priest of Belenos, isn't it?
3. It is interesting how so many of us are interested in meeting space aliens from across the universe, but are reluctant to go next door and talk with the neighbors or to research the Maori culture of New Zealand... An idea that struck me today.
4. Recently, I've acquired a new "convert," or at least a new brother, Ikari Segawa who lives in Shikoku.
5. To further his studies (perhaps to retard them?) I've loaned him my copy of A Reformed Druid Anthology. Well, its a pretty boring book full of irrelevant historical trivia, old debates and (to me) interesting anecdotes.
6. Strangely enough, after I mailed him the book, I felt strangely NAKED. I felt like a bible-thumper who had to enter a debate without making a reference to the bible.
7. Why was this? I had gone through Druidism at Carleton, quite happily anarchic (sometimes autocratically, I suppose) without a book, what had changed?
8. I suppose instead of living each day in a Zen-like renewal of appreciation in the multitude of joys and pains of my life in Nature, I have instead come to dwell upon written memories and past experiences.
9. Now for you who are still at the College, this might sound like a cliché, but you are darn lucky for 4 (or 5) years.
10. Carleton, while not true wilderness, is a magical wonderland for Druidical pursuits both in the classroom and in Nature's own classroom-- The Arb.
11. I wholly recommend unto you that you frisk and frolic and meditate outside as much as possible in Minnesota's short spring season! Your precious days at Carleton ARE numbered.
12. While in Japan, I've had a field day with all the Shinto festivals and the general lackadaisical attitude toward religion here, which to me is almost Druidical, except most of them don't have that drive to search out and contemplate new religious ideas that I believe is essential to nurturing Druidism.
13. If you folks ever get the chance, please spend a year here on the JET program, teaching English with no qualification other than a BA (you don't have to know a word of Japanese). It's quite pleasant right after college....
14. As a parting thought, remember that Neo-Paganism are but a drop in possibilities of religion, and there are alternatives to religion (like philosophy and atheism).
15. I would like to hear more from you fellows, maybe some pictures. I don't know your names, but I'm sure we would be friends/companions if we were together.

Your in the Earth-Mother,
Michael, wandering busy-body
Akita, Japan Day 65 of Earrach,
Year XXXV of the Reform (4/6/98)

16. P.S. Has it been eight years already since my entry into Druidism? What have I learned? What have I forgotten?

Freedom Within and Freedom Without

(By Mike Scharding, 1999)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First: Greetings

1. Ho fellow Druids! Blessings of the Mother upon thee and may you revel in her fields and woods!
2. Come hear my words and ponder what I have to say.
3. It has long been the custom at Carleton and other groves that each congregation of a grove may choose its leaders, rituals and customs, as is fitting.
4. Now those at Carleton have been deeply moved by the purpose of the Reform, to ask questions from the heart and listen for the heart's answer.
5. Yet again, they have targeted the Third Order with their inquiries.
6. I regret to inform you of this as a fait accompli, but the ways at Carleton have changed. Now let me explain my reflections on recent history.

Chapter the Second: Past Changes in the Ordinations

1. Since the Founding until the great sleep of the 80s, those entering the 2nd Order have had to answer questions about the Order of Worship, and the 3rd Order offered meditations during the services.
2. Indeed, for in answering of these and other questions, the congregation has been enriched by these two orders at the services.
3. Since the Great Revival of the 80's until my time, the Order of Worship has faded in importance and services have changed, but the roles of the 2nd and 3rd Order have retained the role of asking challenging questions and offering their own insight to the problems of the grove.
4. During this time, the initiates of the 1st and 2nd Order were asked some questions during ordination and if deemed fit, they were proclaimed to have entered the Order in question.
5. In fact, from 1985-1993, because the 3rd Order liturgy was lost, vigilers to the 3rd Order were only briefly visited in the morning and the vigil was mostly a personally overseen activity separate from the assumption of the role of priesthood.
6. Indeed in those times, the performance of rituals was the right of any with such interest, regardless of their order, a practice that has continued to this day. Many who had vigiled performed services, many who had not vigiled also did great work; and knowing "which was which" was not easy.
7. As a result of my studies of our past, I reintroduced the 3rd Order liturgy, with the help of Brother Richard, in 1993 and have seen its usage prosper.
8. In fact, many who had vigiled on their own in earlier days, sought to vigil again so as to re-enter the Third Order through the liturgy, but we both knew that they had been already working many years for Dalon ap Landu.
9. From that date, at Carleton, no one to my knowledge has vigiled without using the Third Order liturgy, and many were their number. As much as I've enjoyed the liturgy, I have longed for the spontaneity of the style in the Great Revival.
10. Regardless, the idea up to my time has been, that Nature has wrought the change in the initiate of all Orders, not the ordainer. And Nature would often instigate subtle changes to each vigiling.

Chapter the Third: What's Wrong With the Ordinations?

1. Now, two Druid generations since my Arch Druidcy, in the time of Irony and Michelle's Archdruidcy (1999), many questions have arisen upon the importance of the Third Order Liturgy.
2. Indeed, we have much debated the role of the Third Order here in the Apocrypha and I need not repeat all the previous points, but I feel that one point has emphasized greatly; mainly that the Third Order must guard against the fossilization of religion and/or ritual experience.
3. And yet, in our very own backyard, we have rigidly stuck to a rigid reading of our 3rd Order liturgy, which is one of last strict customs of the Reform.
4. Don't get me wrong, I love to use it (perhaps too much) and I've been present at its usage before 17 vigilers at the time of this epistle, so I know its power and effectivity.
5. However, even I must admit that there are some things in the Third Order liturgy which are Fisherisms, and which have little relevancy for the Druids of today.
6. The Ordination services of the 2nd and 3rd Orders are patterned after the Order of Worship, which is not used at Carleton very much any more.
7. They invoke Be'al, Dalon ap Landu whose names are not used often any more.
8. Many in the Grove do not know if they believe in a God/dess so why invoke one anyway?
9. It is a bit patriarchal in style and language, isn't it?
10. But some have found new ways to be declared into the order, which they feel make a greater contribution to the grove.

Chapter the Fourth: Liturgy Bends to Our Needs

1. Over the years we have bent the liturgies to our needs and exceptions have been permitted
2. We used to require attendance at a grove's services for a year and a day before ordination to the Third, now we generally let Nature choose her own timing.
3. We used to ordain only during the Summer Half of the Year, now some cold ordinations have occurred.
4. We used to require only an Archdruid of an active grove to perform the liturgy of the Order of Worship and all ordinations, now anyone can ordain anybody to their own order or lower at Carleton.
5. Some groves would only have one Third, now many groves allow simultaneous members to be of the Third Order.
6. We've also performed Ordinations over the phone.

7. And I can provide examples both in my times and in the 60's/70's.
8. Anything to get the job done, right?
9. So we when we talk of change, we are not talking of a new trend, but a continuation of a long process.

Chapter the Fifth:

Recent Changes in the Ordinations

1. Let us look at some of the ways that Irony & Merri have offered.
2. During my time till Irony's, we have changed from a 7 hour+ solitary night vigil of stationary meditation to a 7 hour vigil, which may be stationary or perambulatory, preceded by a 1 or 2 hour pre-vigil meeting with friends and well-wishers asking questions and giving advice on what to think about during the long hours.
3. In the morning, there was the liturgy, the Ordeal of the Waters and the Breakfast of Peers, in which the new Third bought people breakfast and the boozing continued.
4. This year, the morning pattern has changed a little; a simple invocation of the winds was done, Waters then consecrated, and all were thus served the Waters, and the Waters returned. Nothing too unusual. They were now Third Order.
5. And then a shift of sites to the Great Stone Circle and the Ordeal of Questioning began: various members of the Grove surrounded the new Third and fired question upon question at the groggy Druid, ultimately seeking to reduce the Druid to an honest, "I don't know," thereafter the Druids decide (in a light=hearted seriousness) whether they accept this person's role as a leader of the grove.
6. As a side note, much the same thing seems to happen with the 2nd Order service, nowadays there.

Chapter the Sixth:

Personal and Public Roles

1. Now it appears that there are two forms of ordination being used at Carleton.
2. The first being the affirmation of a personal search for spirituality, similar to the Liturgy.
3. The second being an assumption of responsibility in a leadership role.
4. In the old days, while a grove could choose their Archdruid from the current Third Order members, the Archdruid could (theoretically) choose to ordain or not ordain her future prospective successors, but now it is up for the grove to choose whom it calls teacher, based on the wisdom shown.
5. For where does a grove's power come from: the Arch Druid or the people of the grove?
6. Now some of you will note that many have joined our council who are of the quiet nature and not much inclined to teaching or preaching. I'm sure it would be acceptable for them to avoid the questioning or simply respond with silence (or perhaps a Zen response), which may actually be a more enlightening response.
7. But in any case, the Third may call themselves priest of the Third Order regardless of the result of the questioning in the Ordeal, the only point being decided at the questioning is whether the grove chooses to follow this new priest.

Chapter the Seventh: Self-Initiation, A Dangerous Precedent?

1. Some may say that such ritual is nothing but self-initiation, and that the world may become overrun with self-proclaimed Third Order Druids, with no contact, tutelage or raising in a Reformed Grove.
2. Or perhaps you are worried that one bad apple may spoil the barrel? [She is as fine an apple as I've ever seen.]
3. Each decade has examples of Reformed Druids fearing some runaway permutation: Fisher in the 60's, Shelton in the 70's, Abbot in the 80s and Scharding in the 90s. Yet we have overcome these fears through patience and wisdom.
4. Are we not ourselves self-declared in some way, even if others were ordaining us?
5. If there is a bad apple in Druidism, it is myself, for writing down all this fluff and nonsense to misdirect future generations of Druids.
6. Why even do an ordination? Being ordained with the liturgy doesn't make you a better Third Order anymore than being married in a church makes you a better spouse. In fact, many couples living together, have stronger & open relationships with each other than married couples!
7. Every religion has been afflicted by con artists who irreverently pretend to bear their mantle of leadership and fool the people, who never check their background of the teachers very deeply, then leave the seekers with a bad taste in their mouth.
8. Others are more thorough and go to the seminary first before professionally unleashing their shenanigans.
9. As was said before about the Council of DAL in the 70s, a Druid will be known by their (in)action and words (or silences).
10. If a faker comes along to start a grove, those who become aware (by accident or nature) will soon realize this. Druidism is as Druidism does.
11. Anyway, if someone wanted to do this to the Druids, they can do it easily, and perhaps already have done it! Cons are easy, a liturgical format won't slow them much.
12. Unlike Isaac's goal of making the ordinations easily available to other Neo-Pagans, which is essentially recognizing the Druid already in them, this system is merely allowing for more personal participation and responsibility in the transformation of roles from 1st to 2nd to 3rd.
13. For each step and each person has special needs that we must address.
14. If there is really some magical power transferred by a previous Third Order Druid through the Liturgy (like a well-pipe from an underground aquifer), it may be more natural to roam and seek a spring or lake for the water we crave; rather than staying tethered to a well-head.
15. Essentially we are trying to teach them where to find water, not use a faucet.
16. As the saying goes; "If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. If you give a man a fishing pole, you feed him for a lifetime."
17. So it is with the priesthood, for me.

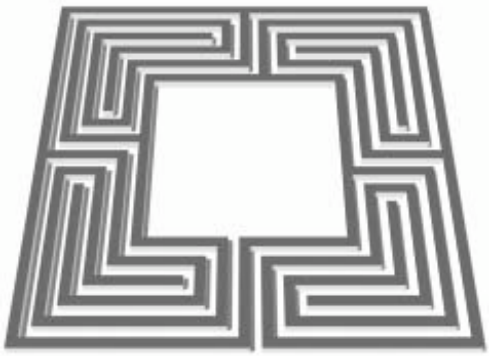
Chapter the Eighth: Apostolic Succession?

1. But what about the Apostolic Succession?
2. In what meaning is this question?
3. If you mean the act of people reading the same words at each other for 40 years after sitting up all night, is that the extent of transference and exchange between the generations of a grove? I hardly think that is sufficient!
4. Each applicant, ideally, has been in apprenticeship to the Earth-Mother for a long time and they have shared these insights with a previous member of the Council such that we invited or resigned ourselves to their entrance into a quest for awareness, one they may choose to share with other. This will continue to be the norm.
5. Change is a fact of life, and I can see the role and needs of the Third Order changing over the years. Our spiritual connection of purpose, to me, is far more important than the reading of any specific paper's words.
6. Most of us agree that we are merely recognizing a change already wrought.
7. If it is a mere pat on the back, as such, one may pat a back differently in many ways. We should concentrate on aiding their search rather than concentrating on the back-patting.
8. Indeed, following the example of none other than David Fisher, they are making up tradition as they go and it works.
9. Let us think about continuation, I quote from Idries Shah;
10. "Ordinary people, only through lack of experience in reflection, are without the means to judge such situations as these. They therefore tend to accept mere imitators who step into the shoes of a teacher and reject those who are indeed carrying on his work.
11. "When a teacher leaves a community, by dying or otherwise, it may be intended for his activity to be continued - or it may not. Such is the greed of ordinary people that they always assume that this continuity is desirable. Such is their relative stupidity that they cannot see the continuity if it takes a form other than the crudest possible one."
12. I'm not calling any of us stupid, although we often are, but I would guess that leaders have always felt uneasy about the changes of their successors.
13. Will these unorthodox vigilers be strangers unto us?
14. How well do you know yourself that you call others stranger?
15. Surely they have shaken up my preconceptions of my own role and where my "authority" comes from, as perhaps they have of yours.
16. That, after all, is the purpose and sign of the Third Order, to test preconceptions for falseness.
17. If their lives and activities are like unto ours, what's amiss if 15 specific minutes of ritual activity doesn't coincide with our own past?
18. I am sure they will continue to find new ways to innovate and restructure the Reform such that they can meet the needs of the Reform and groves in the new millennium and (perhaps) beyond.
19. Should we support them?
20. What else could we in good conscience do? We are not to obstruct the spiritual growth of others, we must merely to pursue our own growth and share our thoughts with others.
21. I know some of you will disagree with this, and that is why I am discussing it with you.

Chapter the Ninth: The Conclusion

1. I, for one, welcome them and their new ideas and I hope you do also.
2. For we and they have the same goals and hopes for the Reform and may that be the basis of our kinship relationship.
3. Warm, deep relations will continue between Druids as they learn from each other and Nature and most will enter the orders after deep consideration for the responsibilities, both to themselves and others.
4. The old script of the liturgy, and the ways of its usage, will continue to be passed down to new Third Orders, to be used or not as is willed by the initiate's own choice.
5. Some will choose to use it. Some will choose not to use it.
6. Hopefully, regardless of the style, the appropriate spirit has been conveyed to the next torch bearers.
7. But the greater choice has already been made, to enter a new life as a Third Order Druid and begin another stage of the search for Awareness. May they attain such goals.
8. Let us have Freedom Within and Freedom Without.
9. I wish you all wisdom and welcome your responses.
10. Peace! Peace! Peace!

Michael J.A.U. Scharding
Pursuant of Bambi
Arch Druid of the mysterious Akita Grove
Day 18 of Samhradh, Year XXXVII of the Reform (May 18, 1999 c.e.)
Written at Yuwa Town Junior High School, Akita Japan on a lazy afternoon.



Being A Druid

(By Robert Harrison, Aug 1999)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. Being a Druid is an appealing experience.
2. Since my practice of Druidism has a strong element of introspection, I have a tendency to investigate my motives and prejudices that are still hanging around. I have discovered in my experience that I have had to think seriously about what it means to be a Druid.
3. So I hope this little letter will help shed some light on this subject, which I believe is still relevant late in this century.

Chapter the Second

1. I used to think that there needed to be a specific cultural element involved in one's life if you claimed to be a Druid.
2. Preferably Irish, but Scottish would do. I happen to be Irish, so I have that bias. It also happens they were the last Druids to exist as a historical group.
3. I have come to rethink this idea though. Mind you, I'm glad to be Irish. But I'm also Scottish, with a wee tad of English, so I'm British by heritage.
4. The culture that existed on the British Isles was the Celtic culture. And who wouldn't want to identify with a colorful culture like the Celtic, which lived out loud in their dancing, music, and festivals?
5. So surely that at least was the cultural identification that was needed.
6. My studies of late have given me different ideas about the cultural and national origins of the Druids. I'm not so sure that the Druids were a creation of the Celtic race.

Chapter the Third

1. When the Celts settled in Southern and Western Europe, there existed a group of people that are referred to as the Megalithic, and little is known of them. Part of the reason for this designation is that the multitude of stone dolmens that exist in Europe, and the Stonehenge, were built during the times the Megalithic people existed, before the Celts arrived on the scene. Many of these stone structures required a great deal of knowledge in physics and mathematics, knowledge that is usually attributed to the Druids.
2. My opinion is that the Druids were possible exiles of the Old European civilization (South and East Europe) that existed roughly 7000 B.C.E..
3. The Old European civilization apparently had the level of knowledge needed to build the dolmens.
4. When the Kurgan invasion of Old Europe occurred, the invaded people moved into the western portion of Europe. The Celts then moved in many years later.
5. There are characteristics of the Celts and the Megalithic folk to indicate that so far as the Druids are concerned, a wedding of the two cultures occurred.
6. The Celts were known for their personified deities, and a zeal for learning, but other characteristics that the Druids possessed seemed lacking from Celtic culture.
7. The Megalithic people had the rituals, the doctrines, and the Druids. It would seem that the Megalithic also had understandings of social organization, a characteristic that the Celts never fully appropriated.
8. The wedding of the two cultures then brought forth the Druid schools, the personified deities that hallmarked the Celts, the rituals, and doctrines included.
9. So to be realistic, we have to consider the possibility that the areas from whence Druids could have come would be more in the area of southeast Europe: south to Crete, north to Czechoslovakia, east to the Black Sea and west to Austria.
10. So what cultural element do we identify with? Right, now you know why I found that a groundless meaning for being a Druid.

Chapter the Fourth

1. Another distinction I discovered was that between pagan and Druid.
2. Pagan is a Latin term that means country dweller. If you lived out of the city, where civilization existed, you were pagan no matter what you believed.
3. However, part of this distinction took into account that most country folk had their beliefs shaped by their relationship with the Earth around them.
4. At that time in history, it was a mostly undomesticated Earth. They had mostly local deities, and ceremonies that were related to seasons. Their calendar was based on the moon and stars and sun, nothing else.
5. There were likely local shaman, but neither level of knowledge nor group sizing such as the Druids had.
6. Jump ahead now several centuries.
7. Pagan as we currently know it are Earth based religions, or belief systems. Native American beliefs could be called pagan. Most indigenous belief systems can be.
8. Yet being Pagan does not make one a Druid.
9. If my take on history is correct, most likely the Druids were city dwellers before the Kurgan invasion.
10. After the invasion though, I believe many of them exiled to the wilderness of Europe.
11. Their demonstrated knowledge of natural sciences and celestial sciences would indicate a rather intimate knowledge of their environment.
12. However, there was a difference between the Druids and the rest of the culture.
13. Most people were not Druids. The Druids became the scholars of their culture due to their commitment to learning.
14. So one can be pagan and not a Druid.

Chapter the Fifth

1. So just what does it mean to be a Druid?
2. Personally, I believe it means to identify with the Druids as a level of knowing.
3. If you want to call yourself a Druid, I believe you should aspire to the level and breadth of learning that we are told the Druids achieved. That to me is the most important criteria.
4. From Julius Caesar we learn that the Druids studied for up to twenty years.

5. There were different classes of Druids, and if one reads the accounts of them in Celtic history, besides being masters of natural sciences, they were masters of High Magic.
6. They were doctors, judges, counselors, poets, musicians, magicians, herbalists, and astronomers to name just a few of the subject matters they learned.
7. Obviously today because of societal changes we can't expect ourselves to be doctors and lawyers. But we can learn justice and healing.
8. And the power of words and music.
9. And how to combine these energies in a ritual to a specific purpose, in other words, magic.
10. Of course we should anticipate a lifetime of learning for this!
11. That's what separates the real Druids from the "New Age" fluffy bunnies (to borrow a phrase from Isaac Bonewits) who want the mysterious image and read a book on quick spells and think they are Druids.
12. They give up though when a spell goes awry and their personal energies get jazz-balled and they don't know how to correct it.
13. It's easy to quote the myths. Anyone can read those.
14. But can I identify herbs in the garden or woods, and their uses?
15. Can I look into the night sky and tell what time of the year it is by identifying the constellations and their place in the heavens?
16. What of my ability to heal?
17. My understanding of justice, and how to apply these things to current world problems?
18. What relationship do I have with poetry?
19. After all, the Bards were considered the *creme de le creme* of the Druids, and there's a good possibility that the Ogham was a poetical way of speaking that coded the speakers true message.
20. How good is my magic?
21. Does it really accomplish that which I set it out to do? And am I aware of what the myths symbolize, and can I teach those truths to others?
22. So to me, the challenge is to come close to what was known by the Druids, not just quote what I've read about them.

Chapter the Sixth

1. The only cultural identification I would stipulate is one that I learned from my own experience.
2. Having left the Funny-Mentalist Charis-Maniacs (no puns intended) I felt spiritually adrift.
3. While I was studying chemical dependency counseling there was a great deal of discussion of spiritual nature.
4. There were some indigenous Natives in class, and their lifestyle struck me as to how whole their spirituality seemed.
5. Wanting what they have, I adopted the Medicine Wheel as my path, yet I had a nagging feeling that it wasn't mine. Well, it wasn't.
6. It belongs to the Red Tribe for the most part. Mind you, the White Tribe is part of their Wheel, but culturally the Wheel they live by isn't ours.
7. So I searched my own background. What Wheel did my ancestors live by?
8. As I mentioned, I'm British. The British have several centuries of Anglican, Catholic, Protestant, Pilgrim, and Puritan history.
9. But no Wheel. Several centuries of violence, I might add, and a lot of that violence against indigenous people.
10. So I asked myself, what preceded the advent of Christianity in Britain, and the world opened up to me.
11. Now among those who seek ancestral paths in America, there are numerous possibilities.
12. There are Teutonic (German) religions. There are the Scandinavian Runic systems and religions. Remember Thor, and Odin?
13. There are the Gypsy belief systems of the mid Eastern Europe area.
14. Italian and Greek beliefs.
15. I just happened to be Irish, thus Celtic.
16. I chose the Druid path because of its needed commitment, its pagan philosophy, and the breadth of learning.
17. It fit me, and it fit my culture.
18. To me, that's what it means to be a Druid.

Rob Harrison, Third Order
28 Fomhar, 5th Meton. 6th Era of Moytura
37th Year of Reform Circa August 28, 1999

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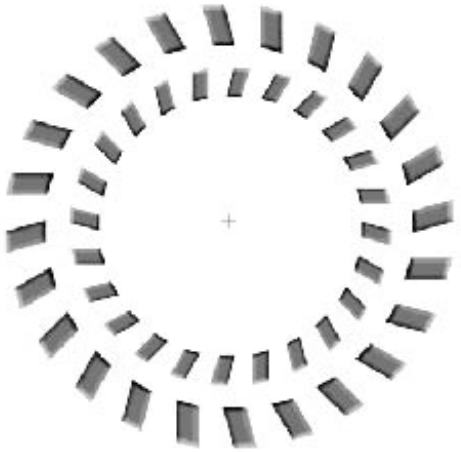


The Exile Letters, Part Two (2000-1)

(By Irony Sade, 1999-2001)

(New to ARDA 2)

(Full Text in Part Nine: Book of Exile)

Chapter the Third

1. Dear Mec,
2. After nearly four years, I am no longer Carleton's Archdruid. It is an odd feeling. My sigil necklace broke on the trip home and there was a longish space of time where I felt that I could no longer do magic, like that was a thing that went with the position... How was your severance experience?
3. It seems that I am still a servant of whatever it is I've finally begun calling god. Its strange.
4. I feel like this is another training period for a task I can't see yet. The other side of my brain thinks it's all hogwash of course. Who is to say who is right?
5. I enjoyed our contest last night. However long it took to recover from it...
6. I would be honored if you would come to my wedding.
7. For the Apocrypha: "Tread lightly on Fairy toes, and beware all drinking games with past Arch-Druids."
8. You taught me alot, Mec, I thank you.

Til next time. Irony
June 1999, New York

Chapter the Fourth

1. Dear Mike
2. I read all the books you sent me. Thank you deeply.
3. Machiavelli was fascinating, deserving of further study. The one truly disturbing thought it produced was this: will any system of thought, that does not make the acquisition of power one of its objectives, eventually become a tool for one that does? If so, what are we to do about it?
4. As my mother kindly pointed out one must distinguish between force and power, but still I suspect the quandary remains.
5. The Buddhist answer -- I suspect-- would be to distinguish between inner and outer power. Have enough power in yourself and noone can wield power over you (or have no self...)
6. When I think of Reformed Druidism as a "system" of thought, it seems that its goal - if it has one - is understanding.
7. (I also suspect it is also too small and esoteric a way for any external power monger to notice!) The old Druids though, were very powerful, and very hard to manipulate - which is why Rome had them killed. Bears thinking about....
8. Fate seems to enjoy messing with my mind. Each time I get something all planned out the wyrds weave some new thread past mine that sets me all adrift again. I don not know if I will aim for Japan.
9. The need to do useful work I can believe in is nagging at me and I am struck with Socrates' truth that the philosopher needs to be a citizen of the world. The U.N.'s calling me.
10. The creation of a cooperative peaceful, culturally diverse and environmentally sound planet is something I could work for whole heartedly. I know not by what means I would do this, nor how, nor where, but it tempts me to try.
11. My worry is the assertion that the world's ills are not susceptible to political solutions, but spiritual ones.... There seems to be some truth in that.
12. The Bahai's (worth intensive study - they are practically Druids already!) maintain that the purpose of religion is peaceable union and understanding, a cross cultural binding force - and insist further that it is better to be without religion than to support one that serves division. Them too I must learn more about....

Yours truly, Irony

Chapter the Fifth

Dalon ap Landu: Lord of the Palm Trees
Irony Sade, ODAL, VCN, in Tonga

1. Spring 2001?
2. Druidism becomes exactly as serious as you take it to be (not serious-dull, but rather, important, personal, life affecting.) You and I have taken it more seriously than most, and have (I hope) been rewarded accordingly.
3. I have moved in this year from the pyrhhic and phoenix-like sacrifice of leading, loving and leaving a grove and into what must be old territory for you: the life of a devout, wandering, groveless and lonely Druid priest.
4. Tonga is a lonely place in which to be a druid. The land and the people both challenge and passively assault my understanding and values.
5. Much of what we do as druids harks back to the life and cycles of Mother Earth. The seasons, Beltain, the living and dead halves of the year, growth and rebirth...
6. Even if you do not postulate the horned king, consort to the Goddess, whose life is that of the changing seasons - birth in mid-winter, love in spring, growth, Maturity and sacrifice at Samhain - there is much that is tied implicitly to the mysteries of the natural world.
7. But now I am thrust into confronting what I had always wondered about: the cycles we follow are those of a NORTHERN TEMPERATE world. Here in the tropical South, things differ. There is no spring, no autumn, no time of general death and growth.
8. The moon remains, bless her, but she travels widdershins. An anti-clockwise sky! I knew it would be that way in my mind, and I have adjusted my internal compass for the navigation, but then deeper questions begin to spring.
9. Clockwise, I have learned and practiced (during the rare occasions when I engage in ritual or external magic working) is the natural and appropriate direction of things.
10. Beginnings, summonings, progressions, growth, movement, callings- every natural "Good" ritual movement begins clockwise. North East South West, with endings, banishments, etc. being the opposite.
11. All that was explained and justified by the movement of the heavens and anti-clockwise movement is now regarded as "un-natural." The "left-hand path" was never, explicitly mind you, to be avoided as destructive and evil.

12. Now the stars move widdershins above me, and I must ask if the practice of magic is relative to geography (for every ritual culture I know of in the north proceeds clockwise...)
13. Now there are no seasons, and I must wonder if different gods and goddesses hold sway. The Earth remains - the Goddess is eternal- but does the Green Man peer between the coconut palms? Does Llyr swim amidst the reefs I see?
14. Does the Wild Hunt of the Northern Climes hold any truck with hurricanes? Do the Gods I know and serve even visit these regions or have they siblings I have yet to meet and love?
15. It is easy to say that all the gods and all their lovers are but facets of one Brahmanian whole, but it is a difficult thing to act upon.
16. I was consecrated a priest of the Lord of the Groves (though by my well-meaning, but foolish tongue I may have been the last) and I am faithful to that charge, but if Landu's son is a purely temperate beast where does that leave me in the tropics?
17. Such questions are the product of a fevered mind. The spiritual quest may be furthered through the study and experience of nature- all of her.
18. If I have wandered farther a field than our linguistic predecessors, it is absurd to blame my confusion on their ignorance.
19. The Goddess is Mother of all, and the lord of the Groves is present even amongst palm trees. Let not the Welsh name I met him under distract me from that fact.

Chapter the Sixth: What Do Druids Do?

1. June 2001
2. Dear Mec,
3. One of the men I work with here, Saia, by name, has been asking me about Druidism.
4. Religion plays a huge role in Tongan life, and I often ask him to describe parts of its impact.
5. Invariably he returns the questions; "What are the religious duties of a druid?" "What money does the church collect, and what is it used for?," "What are the requirements for being a priest?", "What obligations do they have?", "Do they serve for life?", "Can they marry?", "Are there Druidic schools?", "To what moral code are Druids bound?"
6. As it is the delicious doom of every Druid to answer such things for his or her self, I can only pass the questions on. May they stimulate much thinking.
7. A thing that fascinates me about his line of questioning is its purely practical focus. Not "What do you believe?" but "What do you do?"
8. In a way it is not such a bad place to start. Actions are driven by values, which may be derived from and supported by wildly divergent beliefs. Thus, if it be found that a group of Druids hold similar values, they can act in concert, even if those values are supported by different or even incompatible beliefs which each individual has developed through his or her independent search for spiritual truth.
9. The forum then becomes: I value X; therefore I will do Y. This shift in paradigms has immediate consequences. Not the least being that it moves one out of the highly contested and poorly articulated realm of theology.
10. Values, furthermore, seem to have a longer half-life than beliefs, which may suddenly shift in the light of new experience. Changes in what people value come only - I suspect - with a distinct change in a person's character, which experience shows is rare indeed.
11. The challenge is that one must engage in serious introspection to discover to which values one is really committed.
12. I did tell Saia the three moral commands supposedly taught by the old Druids: Act Bravely, Honor the Gods, Do No Evil. Tongan is a tongue of many puns, and I discovered as I said it that the last statement also translates as "Don't Fu*k Badly," a commandment bound to enthuse a certain class of Druids….
13. Life here is good. Much of my work involves counseling and advising rather than hands on work. Sowing seeds of reason into the discussion of kindergarten politics, suggesting accounting changes in the youth groups budget, encouraging people to engage in continuing education (and walking them through the application!)
14. To a large extent, I am simply living here, being part of an alien community, understanding and participating in its life, caring for my neighbors. The island's doctor has started referring me his patients, which is a bit ridiculous.
15. Most important to me I am starting to understand how people here think and am now able to engage in the same sort of thinking myself. That competence snuck up on me. Its existence was highlighted by the recent arrival of an anthropologist who stayed for a month at the other end of town.
16. She has been studying the culture of Tonga (actually the cultural change and how housing reflects that) for nine months, but apparently only the more diluted samples you find on the bigger islands. She tried to play a game which I have long learned to avoid, and was in too deep within two days and had to flee the island under threat of imminent marriage. Very entertaining.
17. Somehow or other I have now been here over a year. Next Beltaine will mark my release from the Peace Corps. Still no clear plan on what is to follow. Japan is looking less likely.
18. So is traveling right round the world, a trip many ex-volunteers arrange. I have gotten too deeply into this culture to enjoy a touristic whirlwind of several dozen others. I intend to see many other countries, but I wish to know them personally, and that will take time.
19. I know I will return to the states, see my family, maybe publish a few stories. If possible I would like to criss-cross the country a time or two, visiting all my scattered friends and correspondents. Perhaps I will build a new harp and simply be a bard for a while. Tis still too soon to tell..
20. There is yet another Pai Kava running across the road, possibly the last one with electric lights for some time. The island is out of gasoline again.
21. I've had to cut back on my kava intake. I hit a stretch where I was drinking every night for three weeks running. Several gallons a day. The stuff is a drug, after all. Turns you into a lizard if you don't watch it.
22. Much of the business gets transacted at such gatherings, so they are still obligatory, but I try not to drink so long these days.
23. Hope all is reasonably well state-side. How's that Washington Grove coming?

Yours in service. Irony.

Chapter the Seventh: Rampant Chickens

1. December 19, 2001.
2. Rain. Thought we might be in for a hurricane last night.
3. We had to seal all the windows of the town hall and to keep the water out. Now the wind has left for somewhere cooler and we retain only a solid perpendicular drizzle.
4. I can't recall if I mentioned my chickens.
5. For the longest time, I held off adopting any, figuring I could have either them or a garden. With zero local vegetables, the latter was more important.
6. One day, I came home to find two young hens hiding under my bed. I took the hind, tied them up and built a large cage to keep them in.
7. One puzzling fact about chickens is that after a week or two in a new environment, they forget having lived anywhere else. Once these two were thoroughly brainwashed I let them roam free.
8. First thing they did was devour my cabbages and tear up the onions. They haven't even produced any eggs yet!
9. Still, they are adorable – and I can always eat them if they bug me too much.
10. Time flies like a hummingbird. Magically still while sucking life's nectar, then gone too fast to follow. My time approaches the latter phase. Twelve weeks till escape from paradise. With luck I will be home for Beltaine.
11. Send nothing to Tonga after March 16.

Till then, I remain your sun burnt emissary.
Irony.

Chapter the Eighth: Burial Shenanigans

1. The following account is perfectly true and factual. The events happened last Friday. Makes you wonder just how thorough the missionaries were:
2. **HARD CORE PAGANS IN TONGA**
3. After being assured by the Doctors that there was nothing wrong with him, Siona Pko (false name) visited a good Christian card reader to diagnose on-going pains in his abdomen.
4. The reader examined his playing cards and announced that two of Siona's deceased in-laws were trying to take the family with them. Siona's wife had died just before his pains started, her brother only months before. Unless the spirits were stopped they would haul off the whole family.
5. Siona returned to his island and tearfully related the story to the surviving relatives. "I know I'm going to die," he told them.
6. Two of Siona's good Weslyan cousins decided enough was enough. They stole into the graveyard in the early morning and dug up the bones of the two offenders.
7. Carrying as many parts as they could, they snook to the lava field, doused the bodies in kerosene and burned them in the night. The skulls they carried to the wharf and then threw them into the sea, which promptly spat them back out.
8. "We are Christians!" the local priest bellowed at Mass the next Sunday. "Stop doing this! Haven't I taught you anything?"
9. Villagers were somewhat sympathetic, "Sure, we dig up our families graves … to clean and oil the bones sometimes."
10. Said one woman who spoke to me on conditions of anonymity; "The Spirits occasionally make us sick then show up to complain about tree roots prying their ribs apart. Once we clean the grave they always leave us alone."
11. Others were merely terrified of ghostly reprisals because the bones had not been completely destroyed. According to the police officer who recovered the ashes, the deceased were still alive and well and prevented his car from starting when he tried to leave for work.
12. "Go away and let me do my job!" he cried. Under Tonga's very Christian law such acts carry a ten-year sentence.
13. The local Druid when pressed for comment, smiled quietly behind his tea cup and simply asked if Siona Piko had recovered.

Fresh off the coconut wireless report
Irony Sade Reporting
P.S. Still digesting Marcus Aurelius' "Meditations." Very good. Definitely high class paganism.

New Selections:

The Internet Years

(The Parenthetical Epistle of Mike)

(By Mike Scharding, 2001)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. As always, I speak for myself, and certainly do not represent the opinions of the Reform or other members.
2. Why, in fact, I don't often agree even with my self.
3. Sometimes, I have the most interesting conversations when I talk to myself…
4. Few people join the Reform, or any other Druid group for that matter, without some pretty strong preconceptions already established.
5. Man has always wished to control Nature, rather than be controlled (or rather, just a part) of Nature, so myths are rife with gods, demi-gods or even mere mortals can twist or manipulate mighty Nature to their own whims and needs.
6. "Man" is often defined 'as the animal which uses tools', although we know that chimps use sticks and some birds sew their nests.
7. I would redefine "Man is an animal that uses drugs," which may make you smile (I refer you to the 5th Order for further guidance), but in a real way we all wish that we were something that we are not.
8. There are several avenues to accomplish this goal, mainly: drugs, insanity, and fantasy.
9. Religion tends to wander in and betwixt these three options, acting as a possible accelerant to their flames.
10. Fantasy is by far the most socially acceptable option in our present society.
11. This can take on many forms; day-night-wet dreams, the entertainment media which provides us a brief respite, living our dreams vicariously through other more famous people (i.e. soap operas), myths, gossip, stories, drama and games.

Chapter the Second

1. Tolkienn is often credited with being the grand-daddy of the Fantasy movement, so we all should add "The Hobbit" to our Grove libraries.
2. I seriously believe that without Tolkienn, there would be no Reform. (Or if there had been no McCarthy, or inquisition.
3. As all of you Dr. Who fans know, changing the past in reality is a very dangerous activity, but changing our understanding of the past is big business).
4. So, let's talk about Dungeons and Dragons, an influential off-shoot of this Fantasy movement.
5. We all know that Role-Playing Games (RPG) and the medieval Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA), both starting in 1971-ish, grew hand-in-hand with the Neo-Pagan/Wiccan/New-age emergence.
6. Perhaps, those evangelists are correct in saying that RPGs are a breeding ground for Paganism; which they add is a "bad thing."
7. Strangely enough, I kind of agree with them.
8. I first played D&D in 4th grade in the school yard, exploring the "S2: White Plume Mountain" scenario, as, can you guess? Yes, a 6th Level Druid named "Magoor," if I remember rightly.
9. My understanding of magic was heavily influenced by that game over the next 8 years, as well as by the definitions of the 9 alignments (Lawful Good, Neutral Evil, True Neutral, Chaotic Neutral, etc.), and the ordering of the Planes of Existence. (I dare not touch the topic that experience points and advancement are only gained by slaughtering others, which is actually capitalism….)
10. D&D provided a structure for me in which multiple pantheons of deities, ruling separate realms, could co-influence their respective spheres of activity over our mortal plane of existence (a concept that is no doubt conducive to my own eclectic brand of Druidism).
12. Yet it wasn't until College, that I began to depart Catholicism (the True Paganism!, according to some people.)
13. I am sure that Brother Isaac Bonewits (refer to his academic "Real Magic" tome or his RPG "Authentic Thaumaturgy") would be the first to agree with me, that these popular visions of fireball-flinging wizards are perhaps detrimental and distracting to the more practical magic that we are usually inclined towards practicing (although it would be fun to unleash a ninth-level "creeping doom" (i.e. a cloud of bugs) upon certain opponents….)

Chapter the Third

1. So that brings us back to Nature and our relation to it.
2. In numerous fantasy novels (in particular, the "Shannara" series), computer games ("The Druid," and the game "Mystery of the Druids", advertised in this issue, etc) and also in AD&D (where we are a special sub-class of Cleric); where we have been laden with the image of a rather crotchety old man, usually robed with a deep hood, who is rather neutral of human concerns (because nature does not concern itself with good or evil), hauling rocks around the landscape for no apparent reason (perhaps they were the inventors of the construction cartel?), in control of secret powers related to the control and protection of Nature, and loitering in dark leafy groves singing groovy tunes (that sounds like me, except the "old" part, I'm only 30).
3. Unlike most clerics, the powers of fantasy figures come through the study of Nature not the imploration of the god(s), and "absorbing of energies," or the gruesome activities of which the Ancient Druids are often accused (perhaps rightly), we can also change shape!
4. Adding to this stew, are the Celtophiles; who claim the Druids could do anything your ancestors could do, and could do it better (if they really wanted to try), including an imposing list of cultural, judicial, musical, medicinal,

philosophical & astrological skills that would make a modern renaissance liberal-arts student blush in shame.

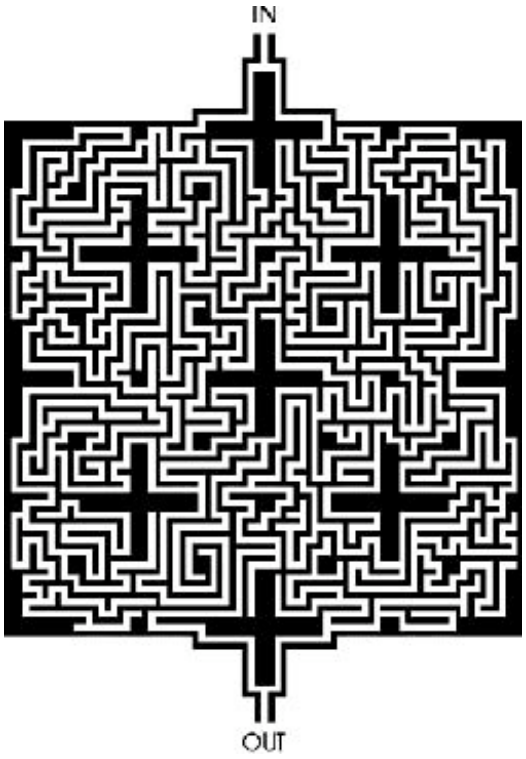
5. I suppose they didn't have specialists back then?
6. Don't forget that famous verse of "Gimme that old time religion" goes "We will worship like those Druids, who drink fermented fluids, waltzing naked through the woo-ids, and that's good enough for me!" (This, at least, describes the Carleton Grove rather too perfectly.)
7. As for the general public's opinion, don't forget lead guitarist Nigel's adept summary, in the movie "Spinal Tap," with his introduction to the song Stone Henge; "Long ago, in a mystical land, were a strange race of people, the Druids. No body knew who they were, or what they were doing…. But their legacy lives on in…. STONEHENGE!"
8. Of course, the Wiccans bring over their ideas, thinking we that we must also like athames, pentacles and quiet moonlit walks on the beaches… (which are cool too.)
9. Finally, there are our siblings in the UK & Europe, who are dotty over dolmens, heady over henges, and have a really poor fashion sense towards ridiculous headgear, unflattering robes, & gaudy jewelry. (I'm sorry, perhaps I'm really AM talking about us?)
10. This has been going on for at least four centuries, (see "The Famous Druids" by Owen in 1979)!

Chapter the Fourth

1. Whew! For good or bad, this is the image and mental baggage, which nearly all our recruits bring with them to the RDNA.
2. What's the problem with it, because it sounds really exciting and it's great for marketing our image (except that bit about sacrificing, which I might discuss further next time)?
3. Well, nothing I guess is really wrong, but I believe the founders of the Reform had different key elements; simplicity, revolutionary defiance and a love of whiskey (which I might add are key Scottish attributes…).
4. The RDNA began over the issue of not being coerced into worshipping the way other people want us to do (and perhaps it still is?).
5. Now, I'm a rather antagonistic person myself, being 41.32352% or so Celtic-ish ("The easiest way to make an Irishman to decline an action is to order them to do it"), always taking up an opposite view to balance things (there's my lasting imprinted notion of "neutrality" again), so I hate being defined by other's fantasies (mine are sufficiently strange, thank you!).
6. But it is only by examining your presumptions and preconceptions that you can know where you're coming from and going to.
7. The previously described image (the word "describe" also has a meaning of corralling or limiting) is rather similar to the one that many in the ADF, OBOD, Keltria & some of us are (perhaps willingly) striving towards, I believe.
8. What has made us stand apart from the pack of other Druid groups, is probably our well-developed sense of sarcastic humor (an ancient Druid trait) & our skillfully inept organizational skills (unfortunately, also an ancient Celtic trait).
9. However, borrowing the Taoist image of "the un-carved block of wood," whose future shape is yet undetermined, and therefore infinitely versatile; I believe each and every grove, yea!, every Druid in the Reform should consider stripping away these accretions (there's that "Waltzing naked in the woods" cry for simplicity!), return to the seed of Druidism (which may be something about Nature, isn't it?), then allow their trees (& groves) to follow Nature's course (please be reserved on pruning the mistletoe that clings to your boughs, too).

Chapter the Fifth

1. Like it or not, as a group, we are diverse, anarchic and eclectic. In the past we had Norse, Zen, Celtic, Hasidic, Wiccan, Non-Aristolean, Humanistic, Orthodox and others paths which had no easy labels (take a look at www.geocities.com/mikerdna/wheregrove.html for a fuller list).
2. In all honesty, our group has not been conducive to a Reform-wide mythology, theology, voting rules, set ritual, long-term membership, powerful-lobbying body, fund-raising, recognition by IRS, or fashion (Och lord, how I've tried, but I am a color blind Scot, yowsers!)
3. For most, that sounds like failure. But a leopard shouldn't complain about its spots.
4. I heard once that a sign of a good teacher (hopefully, one of ours is the Earth-Mother) is not the answers she gives, but the kinds of questions that she raises.
5. I believe that, under her tutelage, we have produced a healthy crop of really good questions about some very basic concepts and issues, (bull-shit is very good fertilizer).
6. As long as that activity continues, whether we call it Druidism or not (an oak is an oak is an oak), then the RDNA lives on.
7. What a long and twisting journey that was! Now that I've said my piece, what do you think?



Why Are We Called Reformed?

Reflections on Judaism and Calvinism

(By Mairi Ceolmhor, ODAL, DC Grove, 2002)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. Ogmos, and other gods interested in elegant speech, please guide my words to present my own personal views and reach the hearts of my readers; who will not mistake my views for those of the RDNA in general.
2. I'm sorry it's so long, so perhaps it should be read in two parts if you have a short attention.
3. Enough said, let's roll

Chapter the Second

1. What's in a name? Depends on the person, I guess.
2. Many people take great pride and derive much support by the names and associations, which they adopt.
3. Labels, much as we hate pigeonholing, provide a reference point for understanding someone.
4. How about members of the Reformed Druids of North America?
5. We've certainly spent a lot of time researching, defending, deprecating and defining the term "Druid," because in the RDNA, we call ourselves "Druids."
6. It is natural to understand the background and implications of that term.
7. But why are we also called "Reformed?"
8. What are we referring to "Year XXII of the Reform" or when we speak of our movement as "The Reform?"
9. Where exactly does the word "Reformed" come from?
10. The word "*reform*" first appears in surviving English literature as "*reformen*" in 1340, derived from French "*reformer*" or Latin "*reformare*" with a meaning of "make again" or "restoration."
11. After 1440 it added the nuance, "to improve"; and in 1563 "changed for the better" was added.
12. Around 1663, it was used popularly to denote "improvement by removal of some abuse or wrong," due to its use in describing the 16th century religious movement of the "Reformation."
13. "Reformatory Schools" began in 16th century to "reform" juvenile offenders (did the Founders belief they were in a prison-like school?). In days of Prohibition, it was also used to refer to drunkards who have given up the habit.
14. Today, the Oxford English Dictionary describes it as:
15. 1 a. to put or change into an improved form or condition.
16. 1 b. to amend or improve by change of form or removal of faults or abuses.
17. 2. To put an end to evil by enforcing or introducing a better method or course of action.
18. 3. To subject hydrocarbons (gasoline) to cracking to produce new products. (And most Druids like carbohydrates and they are "crackers")
19. Some members of the RDNA understand it in the "recasting" or "re-creation" or "re-constructing" modes with moderation. But, it is primarily under the religious and moral meaning that the term is now used in our general society.
20. So in order to appreciate this term, I looked at two churches (I'm not sure if we really are a church) that use "Reformed" in their title; Reformed Judaism and Reformed Christianity (sadly there's no Reformed Islam, I think.)
21. Let's hypothesize how their traditions may (or may not) have affected our own self-identity in the early 60s.
22. If nothing else, when discussing your "reform" during inter-faith dialogue, we should understand what their "reform" means.

Chapter the Third

1. We know that a movement, known as "Reformed Judaism," solidified around 1810, see www.ccarnet.org/platforms/principles.html It is described on several sites on the internet as:
2. "Judaism marked by a liberal approach in nonobservance of much legal tradition regarded as irrelevant to the present and in shortening and simplification of traditional ritual." -Anonymous
2. We Reform Jews are heirs to a vast body of beliefs and practices embodied in TORAH and the other Jewish sacred writings. We differ from more ritually observant Jews because we recognize that our sacred heritage has evolved and adapted over the centuries and that it must continue to do so. And we also recognize that if Judaism were not capable of evolution, of REFORM, it could not survive. Reform Judaism accepts and encourages pluralism. Judaism has never demanded uniformity of belief or practice. But we must never forget that whether we are Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, or Orthodox, we are all an essential part of K'lal Yisrael -- the worldwide community of Jewry. **http://rj.org/index.html**
4. The vernacular language is used in most services. Judaism is adapted to contemporary conditions. The spirit of the law, rather than the letter of the law, is observed. Revelation is seen as coming through the human spirit and nature, as well as sacred text. Traditional home rituals are not as highly valued as in other traditions of Judaism**.** **www.interfaithcalendar.org/ReformedJudaism.htm**
5. Reform Jewish services allow for women cantors, choirs, organs and pianos as well as other instruments, and "music" as well as chanting. Women are also allowed to read from and chant the Torah, as well as pray aloud. The worship service involves the congregation much more than Orthodox and Conservative counterparts. This allows for quite a bit of variety in worship, especially with regards to the musical language used in worship. http://simplechemistry.w00tcentral.com/Kyles/rejud.htm
6. Gosh, that sounds quite a bit like us!
7. I believe, there were at least a few members with a Jewish background in the Founding Days of the Carleton Grove, such as Howard Cherniack and Deborah Frangquist.

8. Throughout our history, some members have knowingly called ourselves "Drues," and cracked jokes like "That's funny, you don't look Druish" in Berkeley.
9. We also had our very own Hassidic Druids of North America branch in St. Louis Missouri during the mid-70s (for more info see, ARDA part 5 at :

   www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html
10. This belief seems also to niche in with the neo-old-testament style of the early Druid Chronicles of the 60s; e.g. rebuilding the altar, the psalm-like meditations of "David" Frangquist, lonely hermits seeking god in the wilderness, invocation of weather, prophetic ranting at authorities, and images of a persecuted people seeking release ("let my people go" by Cherniack). The prevalent "Cult of Carleton" has an apparent belief that Northfield is a special holy-land (let's see, that makes Israel in the Middle East and Carleton in the Mid-West…)
11. That, plus an innate desire for academic excellence, love of dancing & song, self-deprecating humor, a world-wide Diaspora, a tendency to delve into anti-defamation and fight persecution, adaptation to various cultures, and inveterate kibitzing, plus being human beings is as far as the resemblance seems to extend.

Chapter the Fourth

1. Of course, there are points of difference.
2. We look to the possibility of more than one divinity.
3. Most of the Druids aren't obsessed with returning to Ireland.
4. We don't have sacred scriptures, and don't read what few words we do have recorded.
5. The ancient Celts were illiterate, and we proudly continue that tradition by not "liter"-ing indiscriminately.
6. We also try to not blow our own horn, "sho far" as I can tell.
7. Nor do we have no dietary customs, except to eat enough to live and limit whiskey during the winter season (which sounds backwards in practicality to me), although the vegetarians amongst us are rather noisy and self-righteous. (I'm a Texan; we worship cows best when they're inside our bellies and on our feet.)
8. There is a definite lack of a sense of racial separatism (i.e. "us vs. the gentiles") among Druid (with the Celtophiles excepted), and we have no objections to marriage with members of other religions (in fact we seem to practice a bit of all of faiths) as long as they are civil.
9. And, we don't require members to cut off pieces of their bodies (either gender), although the Orthodox Druids have this thing about lopping off the heads of their enemies….
10. Finally, except for Brother Peter, most Druids don't seem to wear strange headgear.

[She added in 2003:

11. I'm not sure if we are a chosen people, but we are certainly a people who have chosen.]

Chapter the Fifth

1. We also know that many of the Founders were also members of the Protestant branch of Christianity, such as Fisher, Nelson & David Frangquist, and so the term "Reform" must have had several inescapable meanings that were attractive to them (although the first image of Presbyterian-style Druidism is a bit comical at first.)
2. "Reformed" often indicates a Protestant church that is related to the Calvinist branch, as formed in various continental European countries.
3. Calvinism had a "strong emphasis on the sovereignty of God and especially by the doctrine of predestination."
4. At first, this seemed like a strong mis-match for the RDNA, so I further investigated a lengthy sermon at a "Reformed" site at :

   www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html
5. This is when I discovered other meanings latent in the term. The lecture taught that;
6. "This position commits us to a high view of Scripture. We receive it as the infallible and fully inspired Word of God. **We will bow to no higher authority**. Historically this has meant that we do not elevate church tradition to the level of Scripture - as the Roman Catholic Church has done. But neither do we canonize our own experience, no matter how spectacular or supernatural it may be. Church tradition and personal experience have no independent status and are always subservient to the teaching of the Bible." (My emphasis)
7. Again, much of that does not mesh well with most Reformed Druids' beliefs (or, at least the Druids I know).
8. However, the revolt against the original Roman Church (the history of Catholicism is about warring factional beliefs), by a strong-willed minority of the oppressed, is quite heroic (despite what many of them would later do to other minorities) and well paralleled by the early Grove at Carleton.
9. The Founders of the RDNA revolted against the Deans of Men and Women for the imposition of mandatory religious attendance, but perhaps not to the extent of nailing 95 complaints onto their office doors (I'm sure they would have used thumb-tacks).
10. The distrust of "experience" part written above doesn't jive that well with us either. Again, the RDNA apparently does not look highly upon its own literature.
11. Attempts were made to stop publishing the 1976 Druid Chronicles (Evolved) and that 1996 A Reformed Druid Anthology, because the works were seen as encouraging dogmatism by providing too much material in a portable format that could encourage spiritual dependency on others' past experiences in written form (i.e. Bible hugging).
12. Brother Mike, an assistant editor of ARDA, recommended the book as a doorstopper or paper-weight on a desk; rather than as a 'brain-stopper' or 'dead-weight on the soul'. He is pleased to report that, "very few people have read it."
13. Indeed, the RDNA seems to lean more toward the individual's experiences as having greater spiritual power, rather than asserting the institutionalized fossilized customs of past members.
14. Reading further, I noted:
15. Because God is sovereign, He is Lord of all of life. Hence, we seek to live all of life to the glory of God. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Lo, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (I Cor.10:31). This is a far-reaching command, which Reformed people have generally taken quite seriously.
16. Hey, I'm not a Christian myself; but, change that deity to "Earth-Mother," remember that every sovereign has court officials, and add a flavor of Zennish "Everyday life as

religion" with unexpected moments of enlightenment, and I can swallow that pretty well.

Chapter the Sixth

1. A bit further:
2. "Hand in hand with this missions emphasis goes a concern for revival. Although this word has suffered abuse in recent years, there is nothing unreformed about revival! Again and again throughout the history of the church God has poured out His Spirit to bring times of refreshing."
3. IMHO, my own Reformed Druidism believes in the cycle of revivals of Nature and the pressing need for a continual discovery of Awareness and Wisdom through introspection and revelation from the gods.
4. And Gods know!, how the Groves crash and need a good rejuvenating jolt every few years.
5. The coming and going of members, or a change of focus, often breathes new life. So I can parallel with this thinking again.
6. As for missionary activity, I am rather neutral.
7. Make your presence findable and those who come, will come.
8. Don't be a public nuisance (unless it's necessary). That's my system.
9. I'm not a missionary of Druidism or grove-oriented like Brothers Isaac, Larson or Mike.
10. I think a well-balanced RDNA Druid can enjoy fulfilling participation in any religion's congregation, without forming their own "druid" grove.
11. This is what I plan to do. It's called "Guerilla Druidism," but I'm not into aping those around me (that would be "Gorilla Druidism," something I'm not bananas over.)
12. I'm definitely a "Solitary Druid," see my song in http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/bard.html (Salvo #5).

Chapter the Seventh

1. Further on, it continues:
2. "To the Reformers the Roman Catholic sacramental system seemed to be part of a transaction that was always going on between man and God. In it, people made sacrifices designed to appease and please God. They would attend the mass, bring offerings, show sorrow, do penance--which might involve self-punishment or compensatory good works--until God would be gracious. The leaders of the church, from priests through bishops and popes, mediated the transaction. The Reformers believed that such an arrangement could easily be misused as a political instrument for forcing rulers to comply with the church's wishes and as a personal instrument for keeping people in uncertainty or terror. It was this vision of Catholicism that helped inspire the Protestant leadership to rebel and to define justification in other terms."
3. The RDNA doesn't fit in with this, as we definitely are into pleasing the Gods, sacrificing, and seeking their wishes, although remaining doubtful of its effectivity.
4. I think, if you're going to live somewhere, you should ask those in the neighborhood what the rules are (including Nature, the first resident) and follow them.
5. The Brothers David (Fisher & Frangquist) say much on this subject of sacrifice;
6. "For one man, the sacrifice of life is the offering up of himself to a god or gods. To another, it is an offering up of his mind to a search for truth. As a priest, I repeat the great Answer to calm men's hearts and minds, not as a magical formula of absolution; but some the Answer is an absolution, washing away the distractions of a week of worry, and reaffirming confidence in the idea of a purpose in life." Book of Faith, V.9. The Apocrypha. www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html
7. I feel, that if the Gods don't like us at all, then they shouldn't have made us (or we shouldn't have made them).
8. We all have our good days and bad days, and any omniscient deity should realize that and take it into consideration on what to dish out to us.
9. I also believe that a mother knows what her child needs, no matter whether it gurgles, coos or grimaces; so we should remember that when the debate on "proper" ritual is brought up.
10. Brother MaDagda & Sister Tegwedd claim that the "Reformed" part of our name refers to some ancient practices which we have "reformed"; notably, our decision in 1963 to end the sacrifice of animals for religious purposes (including humans -and arguably- even politicians) or the offering of blood.
11. Sister Tegwedd recommends getting consent from the plant sacrifice by some means.
12. "The Book of Customs in the "Druid Chronicles (Reformed)" recommends several Celtic customs and practices, but does not require their mandatory obeisance.
13. Now, I'm not a bible-stroking, verse quoting, steely-tongued debater; but Cherniack once said,
14. "Have ye not forgotten that we are reformed, yea, we do even call ourselves by the name of Reformed, wherefore we must put behind us those things which do bring offense to our senses;" –Book of Latter Chronicles, Ch 5 Vs 9

Chapter the Eighth

1. The RDNA has been firmly silent on issues of an afterlife (and strangely reticent on a "before-life," by the way!).
2. Rather, I think most people to concentrate on this existence, or basically to "get a life."
3. Some members use the RDNA as a garnish or decoration attached to other religions that provide full-service after-life systems; other members treat the RDNA as the main-course and consider it to provide for all their needs.
4. Call me a Humanist, but I think there are enough good reasons to be gentle, responsible and caring member of a community or have a religious life without an "afterlife bribe/threat."
5. I believe that Confucius said, "How can a virtuous man understand the world of ghosts and spirits when they can't even program a VCR to stop blinking 12:00 on its clock?! Oi vey!" or thereabouts.
6. The Protestant "priesthood of believers" revived an ancient concept of a direct link to God(s) without the mediation of professional priests (who still have a role).
7. Members of the RDNA appear to be very careful not to vaunt the offices of the three orders; and we certainly don't get paid well enough to make a living off it.
8. I, personally, see them more as undertaking extra responsibilities rather than as an achievement of "perfection" or "completion" of Druid-ity.
9. In other words, a life-long First Order might just as speedily reach enlightenment or Awareness as a high

muckety-muck 9th Order Patriarch, without vigiling or drinking the Waters of Life every weekend.

10. Surely, the Earth-Mother knows her own, and all our fancy titles won't bias her relationship with us.
11. More than likely, according to the ARDA history, these orders were both an attempt to overthrow Fisher's control of the Carleton Grove, plus a carry-over from the Fraternal groups that David Fisher wanted to simulate at Carleton.
12. Yet, I believe they still have proponents who've found a use for them.

Chapter the Ninth

1. Going back to the "Reform Sermon";
2. "In theory, Protestantism has stood throughout its history for a principle of protest that calls under judgment not only the beliefs and institutions of others but also one's own movements and causes. On those grounds, however, most students of Protestantism would recognize that the Protestant tradition has not been substantially more successful than have other faiths at remaining self-critical or at rising above institutional self-defensiveness."
3. This last aspect seems the firmest legacy of Protestantism for the RDNA.
4. I have heard, "Show me two Druids and I'll give you at least 3 opinions on any topic."
5. Well, in my opinion, we are a rather argumentative, critical bunch of curmudgeons, who take matters into our hands, and are fiercely suspicious of hierarchy and the institutionalization & fossilization of religion. (And some aren't.)
6. Our name does have a potentially empowering meaning that could encourage activism and rebellion, without demanding it. Yet, like the last part, we also sometimes slip into ruts, avoid hard choices, resist natural adaptations and don't seek to know or correct our errors.
7. Remember the expression that, "It is easier to see smoke coming from a neighbour's kitchen window than to notice the burning roof on top of our own house?"
8. At the end of the ritual, we have to go home, sweep our corners, air the linens, and wash the dishes like our other fellow mortals.
9. I would add one last shade to the word "Reform" as in OED's 1A definition; its first meaning. That is to change into a new form.
10. As Nature breaks down and rebuilds all things (vegetable, animal or mineral), there is no "eternal," only change and adaptation.
11. Again, in my opinion and twelve years of experience, the RDNA's greatest power has been the power to take older diverse creeds, traditions, rules, and faiths and transform them into a new product (perhaps even "improved") by using our humor, reflection and piercing inspection such that could meet the current needs of our grove members.
12. As Brother MaDagda states, "As a reformed druid, I take what I can from our ancestors of the Oaken Brotherhood and reshape, reform it to fit within this time, this age."
13. Until now, the usual response to "Why are you called Reformed?" has always been (and Brother Mike just loves this joke), is "Because we also worship bushes… except elected ones…"
14. I hope that this essay will help you to go beyond that sort of reply in some way and start a good dialogue with other faiths.

Peace!
Mairi Ceolmhor

P.S. Proudly call yourself Reformed Druids when the Celtophiles criticize you. We can stand up to them also. Perhaps you can console them that without a "Reformed Druid" you can't have an "Orthodox Druid"?

Responses to Mairi

(Various Authors, 2002)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. Date: Tue, 16 Apr 2002 07:09:28 -0400
2. In the Vernal Equinox edition of the Druid Missal-Any, Mairi Ceolmhor speculates that Reformed Judaism "sounds quite a bit like us!" (in reference to the RDNA).
3. Though this may be only one perspective on the historical similarities between the RDNA and other "religious movements" throughout history, and not to reflect on other Groves beyond an historical anecdote, Silent Grove does not in any way, past or present, draw parallels to any aspect of Judaism, whether Reformed or not, or it's natural extension - Zionism.
4. Indeed, Silent Grove strongly disengages itself from the current atrocities committed by the Zionist regime, and does not wish to have its Grove sullied by any suggestions of connections, associations or similarities with historical or contemporary Judaism/Zionism in part or as a whole.

-Glen
Silent Grove

Chapter the Second

1. Dear Glen,
2. I'm glad you've broken your silence to speak out on issues that matter to you. :) The following, is of course, my personal opinion in reply to your personal opinion for the possible benefit of the readers' opinions. :)
3. Each grove in the Reform is naturally free to choose its sources of inspiration, and equally free to choose which one's not to be inspired by (if it is possible to ignore a "purple rhino" once the idea is mentioned to you.)
4. I believe what you most object to here is the collaboration between politics and religion.
5. Any religion, once it has a desire to achieve and keep political or military power, will then proceed to protect that power, usually against rival religions.
6. This is the sad fact of Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Sri Lanka, Israel/Palestine, Timor, the Wild West and numerous other locales.
7. I understand the dilemma that possible association or resemblance to any group can bring about unfavorable comparisons.
8. I'm still proud to have German ancestry, although I disdain the Nazism of the 20th century.
9. I'm proud to be part Irish, but deplore the violence of North Ireland.

10. I speak English, despite the millions of Celts killed, disenfranchised or enslaved (etc.) by Anglo-Saxon & French descendents.
11. I doubt that any western institution (especially a religious one) or academic environment that hasn't been affected, influenced or involved with Judaism or Christianity (which is Judaism blended with Mithraic and Greek Mystery cults) or Islam for that matter, which was Mairi's argument.
12. While I'm sure some Reformed Judaics support Zionism, I believe the underlying purpose of that movement is to adjust Judaism to the realities of modern life, rather than to adjust the world to Judaism, which is more Zionic to me.
13. If there is one lesson I've learned in Reformed Druidism, it is that there are allies and good lessons in nearly every religion, if you know where to look (the opposite also holds true) and search well.
14. But I will agree with you, that the current situation in the Middle East, with its messy blend of racism/ politics/ religion/ class/ lunacy is just plain discouraging.
15. I hope that America doesn't go any further down a similar road of its own, towards extremism or preferential treatment for population based on religion.
16. But, I do not know enough of the details and history behind these religious conflagrations which touch so many related topics. But I am applying myself to a growing understanding.
17. After all, the last reason why we're "reformed" is that we're trying to fix our mistakes, and we can learn much by relating to and engaging ourselves in the dilemmas of others, and we'll need your help.
18. This reminds me of what Isaac told Carleton-graduates in the 70s about "throwing the baby out with the bath water" (2nd Epistle of Isaac) when it comes to magic and associations with neo-paganism.
19. Interestingly, Isaac (of all people) was accused by several people of being Jewish because of his name (which resembles the founder of Reformed Judaism), involvement with founding the Hassidic Druids of North America, and a few other reasons.
20. I believe his reaction was "I'm charmed, but you're very mistaken."
21. On a final thought, I'm reminded that poem by Issho (Zen Harvest #19):

    Over the pond

    Every night casts its light

    But the water won't be soiled

    The moon won't be either.
22. But, I hope you at the very least found Mairi's article to be thought provoking? I welcome other input on dealing with PR issues of association with other groups and movements by the readers.

Yours moderately,
-Mike
April 16, 2002

Chapter the Third

1. Dear Mike,
2. Actually, Brother Mike, all I am saying is that Silent Grove does not consider itself, in any way, influenced by historical or modern Zionism.
3. We despise the situation in the Middle East, as provoked by war criminal Ariel Sharon in 1999 by his visit to a Palestinian holy location. We also despise the fact that your nation continues to fuel Zionist arrogance by providing $3B/annum in aid to a bellicose nation whose hegemonistic aspirations in the region are a detriment to world prosperity.
4. Any Druid would plainly see that the balance is completely torn asunder by misguided foreign policy that funds 'war brokers' to pad their corporate coffers.
5. This is not the wish of the Mother. As such, and I am sure you feel it as well, things will be corrected in the near future. Divination would tell you as much.

With warm regards,
Glen

Chapter the Fourth

1. Dear Glen,
2. It seemed a poor choice on his part, wasn't it?
3. Canada is a wonderful country, after all, I've thought of moving there. In a way, your grove appears to be negatively influenced by Zionism, as is shown by your outrage.
4. It doesn't take a Druid to realize such matters of the world exist. But it would take a Druid to know how to respond wisely. Without time travel, what would be a good course to take?
5. Most of my divination is about the Earth-Mother's acceptance of my sacrifices, not those of others'. I'm sure the gods hear those.

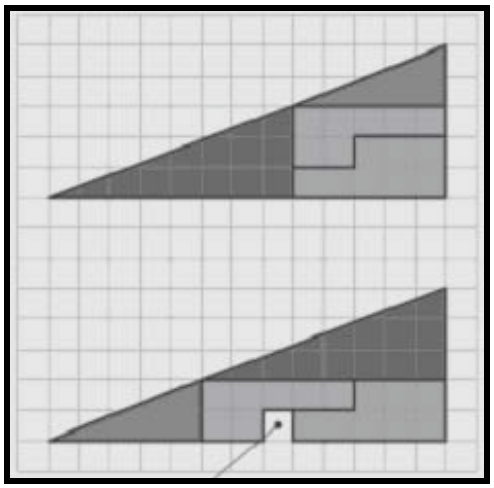
With warm regards,
-Mike

Chapter the Fifth

1. All in the Mother,
2. It is in the spirit of good ale, good music, and a good heart, that I need to rectify Brother Mike in his assumptions as to my sunrise message.
3. Indeed, the message is that each Grove delivers unto themselves the deeds they see as fit.
4. It is simple to be an editorial proxy, however to be representative, that has been the downfall of all political/ religious movements.
5. I welcome, each and everyone of you, to visit our website in the weeks to come, as we begin to practice "Druidism" without getting lost on provocations such as, "What is Reformed?" and glorify far more important trivial frivolities from days a' yore! Indeed, you may find our catalogue will soon surpass the "un-official website" of the RDNA.
6. Tsk! Such a shame that your arrogance exudes in statements that extol the self, rather than the Grace of the Mother. An old Taoist once proclaimed, "visit the river and sit there until you forget yourself. Only then can you become selfless."

7. As far as the Zionist regime is concerned, our Grove feels no bitter hatred, only a sullen remorse that such a wondrous group of people could degrade themselves to the pit of hate once again, such that many societies will reward them with violence as they have done throughout history.
8. BTW, I'm glad you left in question marks.
9. A Zen Buddhist once dropped by a pizza parlor called "Zen Pizza."
10. He ordered one with everything.
11. The pizza came, and he paid, but he complained when the clerk didn't give him any change.
12. The clerk quickly pointed out that, "change comes from within"
13. Therein lacks the wisdom.

With the Mother in our hearts,
Silent Grove



The Epistle of Adaptation

(By Dusty White, 2002)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. From Dusty White
2. All of this spirited thought has caught my eye. It is good to see some serious and intelligent exchanges of thought in neo/pagan (pick-your-favorite term and leave me alone!) circles - as it has been a bit dry around here locally.
3. I most highly agree with "Brother Glen" (hmm.. Can I be different and call him "Unca Glen?") in philosophy and perceived fact (I was not there; therefore I must assume what is reported is somewhat factual).
4. But there is so much more to this. I just wanted to put that in first! :-)
5. In as short of a statement of my view as I can squeeze this:
6. Hmm... "Reformed." I will avoid whipping out the dictionary and will just go straight into my personal diatribe here.
7. The druids of old are dead. (Or they are rrrrrrreally old and hiding with the faeries under the cairns!).
8. They were hunted down like so many other wonderful indigenous civilizations of the earth by the "conquering empires" (I blame the x-ians mostly - but that is entirely personal) and most of the records we could hope to have to trace a solid lineage or collection of rituals and purposes are lost.
9. This means that we in a very real sense are indeed practicing one of the most mysterious of all religions of the world in this day.
10. Because no one alive (except for the afore mentioned rrrrrrreally old druids) knows exactly what they did and how they did it and why... We have only our best guesses.
11. I hope I do not need to point out the fallacy of "modern science" over the past few millennia to show how mistaken we may be on them.
12. But I like to think we have a pretty good idea of "what drooids did."
13. They like trees. Hey! I like trees! And there we have a start.
14. This reaches into the shadowy realms of Celtic-recreationism and I am bound to (hopefully) offend some here with my line of thought.
15. Anything we do today is nothing more than an educated guess of those who walked before us. But this can be quite liberating!

Chapter the Second

1. With all due respect to my Wiccan(tm) friends - including those I have to meet - Wicca(tm - Gerald Gardner circa 1964?) is a "re-formation" of a collection of beliefs from all over Europe.
2. Pre 1960 there was no "Wicca." There were a variety of indigenous beliefs on every spot of dry land where people resided and the gods there reflected the environment of that locale.
3. Now we have a hundred different official sects and a million different interpretations, blending Egyptian,

Assyrian, Celtic, Hindu and other beliefs and calling it "Wicca(tm)." Hence it is an amalgamation of beliefs.

4. Okay - that's cool as long as we can see it for what it is. Today's Wiccans(tm) are as eclectic as today's fast food establishments. A burger at Mc Donald's is vastly different from one at Burger King ("they use microwaves!") but they are both lumped into the category of burgers or the larger grab-bag term of American "fast food."
5. So my mini-point here is that the systems of beliefs are varied even under the umbrella title of the predominant defacto "pagan" line of thought.
6. So - to bring this all together; "if" the druids are dead and gone (not to worry - we ALL die someday) and most of the records we could hope to enjoy have been destroyed then what we really have is a base of ideas and a completely new era.
7. The planet is the same, but the world has changed. Some of us may choose to be "guardians of history" and keep to what little we do know - calling ourselves purists (I like that term btw) and that is all good.
8. But... Isn't the very essence of life - of nature herself the ability to adapt and survive?
9. As druids we (should) all look around to the grand old lady herself and seek guidance by example. What does nature do? Nature adapts.
10. The lion eats the zebra (yum!). If there are not enough zebras the lion eats something else or starves. Nature allows the cycle to evolve. Where there are fewer zebras and giraffes (for example) the trees grow more plentiful and the grass grows taller.
11. Humans punch giant holes in the ozone and nature says - okay kids; playtime is over - you die now. "Next!"
12. All in all, nature just adapts and keeps going on.
13. So if the world is a different world than it was back in the days of our fun-loving, golden-sickle wielding forebearers, then "could" (note: I did NOT say "should" - do NOT flame me for implying "should") our beliefs not adapt also?
14. Would not those who went before us be disappointed if we did not see the world and create new songs and rituals to honor and bond with nature that are contemporary to our times and world around us?
15. This is not to imply abandoning old beliefs at all - but more that the term "re-formed" could well be taken as: solid ideas based on a sound premise ("nature is good") and applied to the world around us in a contemporary style that has the maximum impact of intended purpose ("nature is cool").

Chapter the Third

1. I mean we could all build a house using only an axe. We "could" make a 'Lincoln Log' cabin of sorts (note that I expressly do NOT condone the abuse, murder or butchering of trees or any plant-life - EVER!!!) but we have air-hammers now that shoot these really cool nails into (ahem) wood and build solid, well insulated houses -- in a fraction of the time -- it took our grandfathers and even more so those before to build homes for their families.
2. Should our personal spiritual beliefs remain in the Stone Age while all of our realities and perceptions advance forward at blisteringly divine speeds? Is this not the very reason that x-ianity has suffered such an attrition of real followers over the past 600 years and more so in the now deceased "2nd millennia"?
3. The Renaissance came about as the "common man" (a sexist term I know) had more free time from labor and thus better health, more time to learn and thus a chance to look above the rantings of the Church and local nobility and say something to the effect of "screw this! This makes no sense at all!." Europe's collective eyes were opened and the world started a change that has led us to this very moment of internet debates.
4. None of this discounts any basic precepts ("nature is good") but it DID invalidate the forced dogma of the previous generations as they had infected current religious thought of that time ("nature is good because God is better than thou and so is the Earl and therefore thou musts toil in the fields of thy Earl in service to him , in all of his holiness, so thou mayest achieve a servile position in his garden in paradise"). I realize this is a lot to chew on - but it is blissfully simple.
5. If we strip away all but the premise of what those who came before us held true then we have a tree (no?). Okay - so let's consider decorating that tree one belief at a time.
6. Add the ornaments of old by examining them to see if they are kept because of their timeless truth - or simple nostalgia. Can some broken and soiled ornaments not be placed in a jeweled box on display at the base of the tree in an honored position while new ornaments that reflect the time and the base notion ("nature is cool") be placed on the tree in their stead?

Chapter the Fourth

1. This is how I see us as reformed druids. I believe we laugh at nothing our forebearers did. If they thought the sun rose every day, and not that the earth revolved around the sun - cool!
2. But we know differently now; our understanding of that fact may negate a certain ritual that is focused on making the sun rise (I am being whimsically hypothetical here for example only) - but our songs of love of the sun rising are an extremely personal expression , as we know that it is to our eyes that the sun rises and that is how we romanticize the moment and draw power from it.
3. The eternal flame has long-been extinguished. Okay - we still know how to make fire. Drop the torch - light a new one. Hell! Use "Hazel" or "Birch cut under the light of the first smiling crescent when Venus and the moon make a one-eyed smiley face just after sundown" if you like - but the fact that the torch is lit and carried and protected from harsh winds seems more important to me than trying to use the same old charred stump soaked in gasoline.
4. I think that we all have our own interpretations of druidism - just as we all have our own beliefs on sex and monogamy/polygamy and polyandry.
5. But one thing I do know for a fact is that whether we choose to like it or not - we all are products of this world as it is - not as it was "back when" and those beliefs are inherent in us.
6. We can no more reject the world as it is today in our spiritual belief systems than we can live without the wonder of toilet paper, washing machines, refrigeration, toothbrushes or readily available soap and hot water.
7. So we are "21st century druids." Cool! I still like trees. But I also like my computer.

8. Okay - enough of my proselytizing! Thank you for reading - please feel free to write and tell me how sacrilegious I am.

Chapter the Fifth

1. One last fun note though:
2. Mike wrote:
3. “I doubt that any western institution (especially a religious one) or academic environment that hasn't been affected, influenced or involved with Judaism or Christianity (which is Judaism blended with Mithraic and Greek Mystery cults) or Islam for that matter, which was Mairi's arguement.”
4. X-ianity draws from Hinduism as well - this is a fun factoid I always like tossing at Jehovah"s Witnesses (because I AM an ass): The "forbidden fruit" of the Vedas (circa several thousand years pre-xianity) was a Banana!
5. So.. if x-ianity is the one and only "true belief" - why did the Hindus (heathen bastards :-) get the idea first? And what about when Sid (the Buddha) said a full 500 years before Jesus "I am the representation of the Buddha on earth.
6. But I am also the eternal spirit of the Buddha and I am the creator of all of this being the Buddha eternal" (I need to get the actual quote for you scholarly types - but it is there in the lotus Sutra).
7. Ain't life great?
8. Okay... faeries to you!

Dusty the passing druid
April 16, 2002

The Silent Cacophony

(Disgruntled Druid, 2002)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. April 24th, 2002
2. Our Grove has decided, not in haste, that we share no connection with the RDNA, and since our actions will be fairly robust in the weeks, months and years ahead, that we should singly represent ourselves as the Canadian Druid and Bardic Society.
3. We initially toyed with the idea back in January, prior to Imbolc, but recent events leave us little doubt that this is in the best interests of our Grove.
4. In the Mother, please notify all that we are leaving the Reform, and wish to have little to no contact with your organization, up and beyond the people we have met on a one-to-one email basis.
5. Best of Luck!

Chapter the Second

1. April 29, 2002
2. With good food, immaculate manner, and a belly full of ale we warmly greet you.
3. Just to let you all know, our Grove has broken with the RDNA.
4. The reasons are many, some that we wish to retain for ourselves, but others that should be glaringly obvious to others.
5. The Carleton Grove is nothing more than some faded venture, using its name for some place in obscure history.
6. The facade that each Grove manages itself is diaphanous as the day is long.
7. Most Groves have one member.
8. In essence the whole organization, at least the initial mandate as laid down by the original, founding organization is wind-worn and lichen bound.
9. It is time to shake the moss from your beards!
10. It is time for us to truly encapsulate the love of nature that we so, seemingly, cherish.
11. Am I not to hear so much as a mouse fart from the RDNA when your US government plans on allowing mountain mining ventures to completely ease their dumping restrictions?
12. Or is it just some sort of "past-time" with most of you?
13. How do you do druidism??
14. Everywhere, they all ask the question.
15. Up! All of you!
16. Make your organization again the robust entity it once was.
17. Principles are empty vapours. Seeming wisdom is nothing more than foolishness.
18. It is time to rise all!
19. Let us not miss this opportunity!

The Epistle of Alyx

(By Alyx, 2002)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

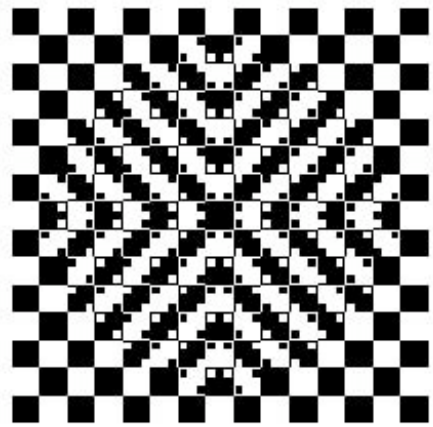
1. May 1, 2002
2. If you are looking for the RDNA to be an organized protest movement, waving the banner of environmental protection (or any other "protest cause of your choice") in the vanguard of the counterculture, you are doomed to disappointment. It isn't going to happen.
3. You talk of the organization's initial mandate; what you forget is that its founding came as a protest ~against~ compulsory behavior (in this case, religious attendance). Compulsory political protest or even compulsory political ~belief~ is no different.
4. However -- to take the lack of "Organized RDNA Presence" in the protest lines and conclude from that that the ~members~ of the RDNA are likewise uninvolved is an egregious and quite frankly careless error in judgment on your part.
5. Members of the RDNA, perhaps even individual groves, may be involved in all sorts of protests, causes, and yes even organizations of which you know nothing about. How one person or one grove lives out their spiritual belief is not a matter for you to judge, especially when you possess a remarkable lack of factual information about them.
6. If your concepts of "druid" and "grove" involve organized and visible political action on the part of and in the name of same, then perhaps it ~is~ best for all that you have disfellowshipped yourselves to form your own body.
7. I truly wish you all the best.
8. But to make sweeping and ill-informed judgments about the group, its members, and the validity and expression of our beliefs (even stooping to compare us to Nazis and Aryanism) because the RDNA does not meet your own personal expectation of "What It Really Means To Be A Druid" (or even a Reformed Druid) is in my opinion childish, inflammatory, and wholly unproductive.

Chapter the Second

1. Back in my more-or-less conservative Christian days (well, okay, a little bit on the "less" side by this time) and during my several year stint as a "career temp," I found myself coincidentally assigned to the headquarters of a national conservative men's ministry, which was located in our city and used my temp service.
2. During a lunch conversation with a Hispanic coworker one day, I discovered that the name "Chui," (pronounced "Chewie"), was a nickname for "Jesus" (pronounced "Haysoos."..). Inexplicably (and rather wickedly) delighted by this revelation, I wondered out loud if that meant one could then pray to Lord Chewie Christ....
3. I got some very odd looks around the office for a while.
4. But my intent, both then and now, was not to be disrespectful or sacrilegious.
5. There are many religions floating around these days, and many personal beliefs and faiths of people within those religions. And many people argue, fight, and even war over which religion is "right" or "correct" or "The One True Way."
6. But if one's beliefs are so "sacred" as to allow no examination, no questioning, (or dare I even say, no fun) then what on earth good are they?
7. It's not the form of a religion that is the useful part - it's what is inside.
8. To me, religion is like a pinata. On one hand, a faith or belief system that can't withstand some thumps or whacks is nothing but an empty shell; although it may look pretty hanging from the ceiling, but in the end it's nothing more than a decoration.
9. But more importantly, it's not the container that matters, but what's inside. Like the pinata, no matter what shape it is, how fancy it's made, or how elaborately it's decorated, religion is ultimately of no use to you unless you smash it open to get to the goodies inside.
10. And whether the stick is need, hardship, or even humor, eventually you're swinging it blindly until, finally, you connect.

Chapter the Third

1. "In the old days men used to worship sticks and stones and idols, and prayed to them to give them luck. It happened that a man had often prayed to a wooden idol that he had received from his father, but his luck never seemed to change. He prayed and he prayed, but still he remained as unlucky as ever. One day in the greatest rage he went to the Wooden God, and with one blow swept it down from its pedestal. The idol broke in two, and what did he see? An immense number of coins flying all over the place."
2. ("The Man and the Wooden God," pg. 268 of ARDA, pg. 46 of Part Six The Green Books.)



The Second Epistles of Norman

(By Norman Nelson, 2002-2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. 12 Nov 2002 12:58:26 -0700
2. I've been waiting a couple days for someone to come up with a definitive reply to you, but Druids, too, have a bad case of manana syndrome.
2. Let me introduce myself briefly, I'm Norm, and I'm about to turn 61. I'm one of the "Founders" and was the second Archdruid. [However, as you'll see below, that doesn't mean that anything I say is definitive!]
3. There is no single route to being a "Druid"; in fact, I would believe that every individual has found his/her own path. The Reformed Druids of North America have no creed; we used to say, "Look around you at the natural world; there must be something bigger than we are, and we choose to honor it as the Earth Mother."
4. That honor may be called worship, or just appreciation, or _____ [You fill in the blank]. The RDNA has *never* required anyone to give up another faith to become a Druid. We've always been complementary or supplementary, not exclusive.
5. Similarly, those who have attended RDNA services (or had other contact with RDNA) have either agreed with our premise and added it to their own beliefs (I know there are Druids with Jewish, various Christian, Shinto and Wiccan backgrounds, and there are probably representatives of other faiths, major and minor) or else have gone away and had nothing to do with Druidism. For a few, it has become their only religion; that's okay, too.
6. The whole RDNA "religion" started as a joke, anyway; a protest against required attendance at religious services at Carleton College in Minnesota. The day I graduated in 1964, the Board of Trustees repealed the requirement, thereby rendering RDNA moot, but to the surprise of the Founders, RDNA kept on going, and is now approaching its 40th birthday!
7. For some, including me, it remained a "supplement" to another belief (e.g. a way of getting in touch with the feminine, creative side of a patriarchal god, or whatever).
8. For others, it became their core belief because it answered their questions [which seems to me to be the real function of humanity's need for any religion].
9. If someone were to take a poll of RDNA today (don't worry, it won't be done because most folks wouldn't bother to reply!) I think you'd still find a whole spectrum of beliefs.
10. Consequently, there has never been a successful attempt to codify what Druids believe. As the joke goes, if you have two Druids together, you have at least three belief systems!
11. Imagine!!! A do-it-yourself religion that lets you pick and choose from a whole buffet of options. Start doing some reading (Mike Scharding's book is the obvious place to start) and devise your own "book" of readings, etc., to answer the questions you have. It won't match anyone else's, but it'll be right for you.
11. And, as I like to say, "Funny, you don't look Druish."

Chapter the Second

1. 21 Dec 2002 12:34:24 -0700
2. I concur that there is no authority that can "unmake" a Druid, just as there is none that can make one. You're a Druid if you feel Druish. I guess you could be kicked out of a particular (pun intended) Grove, but that doesn't mean you cease to be a Druid.
3. In the early days, everyone who partook of the Waters was automatically made a member of the Carleton Grove, including John Nason, the then president of Carleton, and his wife, to whom I served the waters the weekend before my graduation (with my fingers crossed, on a campus where the discovered possession of alcoholic beverages was an automatic 10-day suspension). By that standard, there are a lot of Druids out there, even if they don't know it.
4. The long-defunct Council of Dalon ap Landu never, to the best of my memory, ever tried to excommunicate anyone (even Isaac!). Given the above criterion, I don't think we even thought it possible.
5. The closest thing to a "head of the RDNA" would probably be David Fisher, since I think he's the highest ranked Patriarch. However, he's no longer practicing Druidism (at least officially he's not) and the opinion of any Patriarch is worth just as much as the opinion of any member of RDNA. For us to have a "head" would be the tail wagging the dog!
6. "The optimist proclaims that we live in the best of all possible worlds; and the pessimist fears this is true." -- James Branch Cabell

Chapter the Third

1. 28 Oct 2002 16:16:36 -0700
2. Excommunication? Can't have that unless we first have communication!
3. As I noted to someone recently, the "founders" didn't give up sacrifices. We gave up virgin sacrifices (couldn't find anyone willing to lose theirs in public), but we sacrificed plant life.
4. Given the cannibalistic overtones of the Christian communion [there's that word again!] sacrifice of some sort seems to be integral to most religions, serious or otherwise, be it a literal shedding of blood or the sacrifice of self during Lent or Ramadan.
5. Meseems that the Reform can stretch far enough to encompass almost everything. I'd qualify that by saying that "everything" should be limited to what's legal, but I also remember that I once served the Waters of Life to the president of Carleton on a campus where possession of alcoholic beverages was an automatic 10-day suspension (and the pop machine in the dorm parlor sold lemon sour and club soda!), so we've been stretching the limits since the Founding.

Chapter the Fourth

1. Sun, 4 May 2003 18:38:16 -0600
2. I'm just back from the reunion at Carleton; I'll tell you more later, if anybody is interested.
3. During the weekend, I had an insight that I want to pass along: one of the things that has attracted people to RDNA over the years is that, when we put it together, we forgot to include something that is a major aspect in most other "religions" - guilt.
4. While the service begins with "forgive three sins" (some modern versions say "three errors"), there's none of the "I'm a miserable sinner and have to spend the rest of my life trying to atone" that's a major aspect in most of the other major faiths.
5. Ergo, Druids are free to enjoy all the aspects of Nature, and to revel in them, without having to worry about crossing some invisible line and winding up among the damned. We don't have a hell... nor a heaven.
6. We don't object to those faiths that do, and if an individual believes in them, that's his/her business. We won't criticize them, as long as they don't try to demand that we share their beliefs.
7. As I said, this came to me this weekend as a genuine insight, one I'd never thought about before. Just thought I'd pass it along to see what others think about the concept. Several people to whom I mentioned the concept over the weekend agreed that it was a good point.
8. Right now, though, it's still "firmly carved in Jello", so if you want to dissent, go ahead. On the other hand, I think it could be a real revelation about what RDNA has meant to so many people from so many backgrounds.

Chapter the Fourth

1. Sat, 11 Jan 2003 12:05:11 -0700
2. I'd bet that each of us has had similar feelings at one time or another; it's one of the things that has led us to seek answers in Druidism, in communication with and honoring of Nature.
3. I've been extremely fortunate in finding another person who feels about these things as I do (although I don't think she's ever considered Druidism).
4. She used to live here, and now lives in Delaware, but she tries to arrange her schedule so that she can spend a month every summer at my family's cabin in one of the most beautiful spots in the Black Hills. And, as she likes to say, she just sits on the porch and stores up memories to hold her for the rest of the year when she's not here.
5. I've often found myself seeing something special, from a dew-spangled spider web to a lone pine tree growing out of a solid wall of granite, and showing it to her or telling her about it.
6. We don't use any mystical language to try to describe these things; in fact, we often don't use any language at all but to nod in appreciation. With her, I know I've found a kindred soul to whom such explanations are unnecessary.
7. Keep going out into Nature. I second the suggestion to get linked with some sort of group (mine is Sierra Club) that takes like-minded people into Nature, perhaps you'll find such a friend there.
8. Sierra Club also has something they call "Inner City Outings": they take young people from the inner city out on camping trips, etc. Such a trip could give you an excellent chance to pass along to others (it's easier with strangers) some of what you feel without worrying about being thought odd.
9. Most of all, keep seeking... spirituality is not something you find, it finds you. It has found many of us, in one form or another, and somewhere out there there's a person with whom you can have that silent understanding I feel you're seeking.

Chapter the Fifth

1. Sat, 18 Jan 2003 13:14:49 -0700
2. Here's a suggestion for "following your own path" in a contemplative way. An ancient (Celtic? it looks like it) tradition in Christianity is the Labyrinth, a pattern laid out on a cathedral floor or paths in a garden, etc. I've even seen one made with duct tape on a carpeted floor in a church "parish hall".
3. There's no reason you couldn't make one in your own living room or yard. It's NOT a maze, just a winding walk from outside to the center and back again.
4. The concept is that tracing the pattern allows you to center yourself, to think the necessary thoughts; it can be used for prayer, or meditation, or just relaxation. It can be very powerful to use.
5. (Also, it is customary not to acknowledge someone if you meet in one; they're there for their own reasons, and shouldn't be interrupted.) It's also something that would fit well into Druidism! Look into it, one and all.
6. [I haven't looked, but I'm sure that a search at Google, etc., would lead you to more information. I first encountered the idea from a young Episcopal priest who was heavily into Celtic spirituality; she laid out one at our church for a couple weeks.]

Chapter the Sixth

1. Sun, 19 Jan 2003 13:21:14 -0700
2. Ineffable is not secret, it’s just impossible to describe. Words can not communicate individual experiences, because there aren't the right words for that.
3. Make up one and give it a specific meaning, and you can use it to communicate, but the subtle nuances will never be there.
4. Perhaps this is why many groups use metaphor to discuss internal experiences. I remember a group that once spent two hours discussing "having the chair pulled away as you're sitting down" to describe various experiences in their lives. Each had an ineffable experience, but all shared the common feeling(s), and true communication happened.

Chapter the Seventh

1. Tue, 21 Jan 2003 11:59:24 -0700
2. It will be interesting to see the interchange on this. I don't think I've ever sat down and tried to define it for myself; could be fun to try to work it out.
3. A good discussion group (or bull session) can force you to do that kind of thinking. You can't express [to others] what you've not found the words for.
4. Breathing is certainly part of it (if you don't breathe daily, you'll have a hard time worshipping), but worship is something more. Perhaps that sharp intake of breath when something really hits you, like the autumn tree.

Interestingly, the Greek word translated as spirit in the Bible is pneuma, breath.

5. Falling down prostrate when struck by something special is optional, obviously. Getting a little weak in the knees is pretty common, at least for me. Awestruck is one word that comes to mind.
6. Finally, I'd note that worship is not just something done in your church, mosque, synagogue, or grove. If the pneuma is there, you're worshipping. If you're just tracking along through life without being aware, you're not.

Chapter the Eighth

1. Fri, 24 Jan 2003 11:48:49 -0700
2. From the very beginning, RDNA was *not* (yea, verily, *never*) intended to replace any other "religion", but merely to be a supplement recognizing the importance of Nature in the individual's life.
3. For some, it has become their sole belief, but many others find no conflict between Druidism and whatever else they practice.
4. I once said (literally giving the sermon from the pulpit on an Earth Day Sunday!) that until the 1979 revision of the Book of Common Prayer, when Episcopalians heard the word "stewardship" they knew it was Pledge Sunday. The new BCP has a dozen or so references to stewardship in the meaning of caring for the creation.
5. My favorite is from a section of additional prayers and thanksgivings in the back of the BCP. Thanksgiving #5 [For the Nation] is probably a good one (with appropriate changes) to use for Druid meditations. {incidentally, I usually refer to it as "the zingers") In usual usage, the leader reads each paragraph, and everyone joins in the responses. It is not copyrighted, so if you want to use it, feel free.
6. For the Nation [p. 838]
7. Almighty God, giver of all good things: We thank you for the natural majesty and beauty of this land. They restore us, though we often destroy them.
8. Heal us.
9. We thank you for the great resources of this nation. They make us rich, though we often exploit them.
10. Forgive us.
11. We thank you for the men and women who have made this country strong. They are models for us, though we often fall short of them.
12. Inspire us.
13. We thank you for the torch of liberty which has been lit in this land. It has drawn people from every nation, though we have often hidden from its light.
14. Enlighten us.
15. We thank you for the faith we have inherited in all its rich variety. It sustains our life, though we have been faithless again and again.
16. Renew us.
17. Help us, O Lord, to finish the good work here begun. Strengthen our efforts to blot out ignorance and prejudice, and to abolish poverty and crime. And hasten the day when all our people, with many voices in one united chorus, will glorify your holy Name.
18. Amen.

Chapter the Ninth

1. Wed, 29 Jan 2003 11:17:31 -0700
2. But I heard just last weekend that they're ice-fishing on Lake Wobegon... Did you hear about the [fill in your own favorite ethnicity] who went ice-fishing?
3. Caught two 25-pound blocks and a sack of cubes!
4. Wed, 12 Mar 2003 15:07:53 -0700
5. This Explains Everything!
6. In preparation for the Earth Summit, the UN conducted a world-wide survey. The only question on the survey was: "Please give your honest opinion about solutions to the food shortage in the rest of the world."
7. The survey was a complete failure. The Chinese didn't know what "opinion" meant; the Middle East didn't know what "solutions" meant; the East Europeans didn't know what honest" meant; the West Europeans didn't know what "shortage" meant; the Africans didn't know what "food" meant; the South Americans didn't know what "please" meant; and the USA didn't know what "the rest of the world" meant.

Chapter the Tenth

1. Mon, 3 Feb 2003 10:48:36 -0700
2. I don't think it's a benefit to ANY religion to make it compulsory that one must attend the services.
3. If you're getting something from it, you'll go to services or practice the rituals or meditate on your navel or whatever. If you're only there because somebody made you go, you're going to become restless and rebellious - dispirited in several senses of the word.
4. I would guess that exactly that happens to a majority of teens, for a shorter or longer period of time. I'll further guess that many in this discussion quit going to "church" for exactly that reason.
5. In other words, if you want someone to NOT practice a religion, make them do it.
6. RDNA was not started to protest religion; it wouldn't still be here if it was. It was started to protest making people practice religion. As I've noted before, at Carleton even the atheists had to meet to get chapel credit!
7. Carleton was founded by the Congregationalists, and the requirement was a left-over from the 1870s, when the population was much more homogeneous.
8. To end on a lighter note: I once was in a town where the Congregationalists and Baptists had combined; everybody called it "the Congo-Baptist Church", which always gave me some really great mental pictures.

Chapter the Eleventh

1. 5 Feb 2003 12:34:35 -0700
2. Phrased that way because we wanted everyone to be able to participate. Most religions are either/or -- you're a Christian or a Jew or a Buddhist or a Muslim or whatever, and can't be true to any combination thereof; you've got to pick one.
3. In that Tenet, RDNA very carefully described itself as a "supplementary" religion -- it was not necessary to give up any other beliefs to participate. We were consciously trying to be non-threatening to any other belief system.

4. And when I read that last sentence, I realize again that we expected RDNA to be ephemeral, and not to continue after its purpose was completed.
5. Please don't try to make RDNA one of those either/or types. You can believe almost anything and still get the benefits of contemplating the lessons of Nature, the Earth-Mother.

Chapter the Twelfth

1. Thu, 13 Feb 2003 11:00:11 -0700
2. Rather than respond to several postings individually, here's a sort of all-encompassing string of answers. You are cordially invited to thank me for not filling up your mailboxes with 4 or 5 postings!
3. If you'll check, you'll find that in the early 1960s the Christian fundamentalists were a very small minority, not the behemoth they've become today.
4. I very much doubt that any of them ever saw the Chronicles. They wouldn't read anything that smacked of paganism, anyway. [And remember: the Religious Right is neither!]
5. As for the "style" of the early Chronicles, bear in mind that they were written ONLY for the few of us who were at Carleton at the time; since most of us were also practicing Christians, the parody of the Biblical style only added to the fun.
6. Frangquist may dispute this, but I don't think they were meant to be enduring. I certainly never thought so. They were just a little "in joke" for us, because we could read between the lines and know what was actually being referred to.
7. For example, the "altar which was small and portable" was a wire phonograph stand from somebody's dorm room, draped with a sheet.
8. I don't think anyone outside our little group ever saw them when they were first written, so it was not necessary to write in a style intended to be "taken seriously".
9. Only when it became obvious that RDNA would continue to have real meaning for some did they become our "scriptures", subject to all sorts of interpretations. The theologists among us still enjoy that game.
10. I don't think that at the "founding" any of us thought that RDNA would have any life after we beat the religion requirement. Remember that it took more than a year to accomplish that goal. We held services in the spring of '63, fall of '63, and spring of '64.
11. By that time, all of us began to realize that we'd hit some sort of a chord that had real meaning to some folks; this is when the exploration of antecedents and meditations, etc., became more than a joke.
12. I'd say that it was also the time when the Chronicles evolved from the parody to serious thinking about our relationship to the world. I believe that it was also at this time that we began to realize that RDNA might continue to exist.
13. When you are reading the meditations, etc., which were recorded for use at services and as individual exercises, you're looking at RDNA after some people began to take it seriously.
14. Dr. John Messenger, who became our "faculty advisor", contributed some of the Celtic poetry which made it into the book. It became part of the service to read some meditation (including much not in the Chronicles--I sometimes used appropriate portions of the Psalms when I was A-D) aloud, and have a period of silence for people to think about it.
15. We didn't have a "sermon", with some leader telling us what to think, but each person was free to make his/her own interpretation (or just twiddle thumbs during the silence).
16. In the initial stages, only a Third Order could consecrate the Waters. (Actually, he/she didn't *do* it, just verified that they had been consecrated by the Mother.)
17. Everyone who partook of the Waters was considered a First Order, so there were lots of people who only attended one service but (usually without their explicit knowledge) became First Order Druids, including the Nasons.
18. As I recall, subscription to the Tenets was only necessary for Second and Third Orders. Again, note that the Tenets were written to be supplementary to other faiths, not exclusionary. [And remember that the Tenets weren't written until after the first few services.]
19. I hereby add the disclaimer that the above are my own opinions and memories. Others may have differing viewpoints. After all, it was 40 years ago!
20. I still think that the RDNA we know today was a process of evolution from joke to serious Weltanschauung. What's important is not what it was meant to be, but what it means to each of us today. If it still has validity, it lies in that.

Chapter the Thirteenth

1. 5 May 2003 11:03:44 -0600
2. The vigil, I'd say, can be any of these, although I think your "chapel in the woods" is closest to the intention, unless you have a nearby Bo Tree where you can find enlightenment. You need to spend the night thinking about Nature and your place in it. (This would presumably rule out a snipe hunt.)
3. A few hours of personal meditation and contemplation. A few hours of finding out WHO you really are. A few hours of finding out who the other people in your life are. A few hours of finding out WHY you are. A few hours of finding out WHAT you're here on earth to do.
4. Do a little digging and find out about the vigils of young men about to be knighted. There are some obvious similarities in intention, if not in rituals.
5. An unexpected side effect of being a Third Order is that, in the eyes of others, you become oracular. You're expected to know "the answers" to life's questions (and "42" doesn't count!).
6. You've got to find the answers inside yourself, for yourself. This will NOT equip you to counsel others with "the" answers, since the answers you find will be personal, but it'll give you some insight into how to help others find their own answers.

Chapter the Fourteenth

1. May 25, 2003 3:11 PM
2. It is a curious phenomenon by which, when you learn something new or get into a good discussion about something, it starts popping up all over the place. I remember once learning a fancy new word in 4th grade, and there it was in the funny paper that night!
3. I suspect that the "something" has been there all along, but you're newly sensitized to it, so it jumps out where

previously you wouldn't have noticed it. I think we've all experienced it, though. Which brings me to:

4. As we were having our discussion on morality, I was reading a science fiction book, *The Parafaith War*, by L. E. Modesitt. In it, I found the following, supposedly taken from the sacred text of one of his future societies. It seems worth passing along.
5. "...As cultures advance in knowledge and power, the conflict between reason and faith becomes apparently greater. Not only have people attained through technology the powers of old gods to cast thunderbolts or to heal or to destroy, but they have exercised those powers, and they know that divinity is not required. They can determine that sufficient power determines destiny.
6. "The problem with technology is that it rewards the able while also empowering those who are less able. A man who cannot fathom a computer or an infonet can destroy those who can, and who have been rewarded for their skills.
7. "Yet, if each individual obtains and wields the power within his or her scope, few individuals will survive. By placing power in a greater being, a deity, in some force greater than the individual, or even into a belief that the community is greater than the individual, an individual is expressing a faith in the need for an entity greater than mere personal ambition or appetite. That faith ... allows the individual to refrain from exercising power, yet it also places such an individual at the mercy of those without such faith.
8. "While it can be and has been argued that all people are created equal, genetics and environmental analyses have verified that such equality ceases at birth, perhaps even earlier.
9. "With unequal power and unequal ability the lot of humanity, religion has sought to establish a common ground by subsuming all to a mightier god, yet reason and technology have conspired to communicate that no such god exists -or that such a god does not interfere- and that some form of might makes right. And no god has, in recent historical times, destroyed the side with the bigger battalions and mightier technology.
10. "So ... how can a rational individual confront the problem of power? In the same way that all the faithful have throughout history - any sharing a set of ideals and a spirit of community more highly valued than individual application of power....
11. "One of the cries of the true believer is that there are moral absolutes that can only be set forth by a deity. Yet if life is sacred, as many deities have proclaimed, how can a deity command people to kill in his name, as most deities have done? How can we even exist, since we must consume, in the natural state, some other organism, and that means killing? Likewise, if life is not sacred, then the injunction to be fruitful and multiply is a military command, not a deistic one...."

Chapter the Fifteenth

1. June 19, 2003 1:22 PM
2. Everybody has/had two parents. Each of them, two likewise. Run this logic
3. back a few generations, and the number of ancestors of each of us is greater than the population of the whole earth at that time. Ergo, we're all related, in one sense.
4. The path that is right for you is not necessarily the path of your people", even if you know who they were. It's probably not even the path of your own parents. It's your path, and it's probably pretty eclectic.
5. I've maintained for years that much of the famous "adolescent rebellion" we all went through (and some of you are now seeing from the other side!) is a process of questioning the beliefs (not just religious, but almost everything) that have been handed down to you; from the whole buffet available, you eventually pick your own, personal, set of beliefs, and when you've internalized them, they're your own beliefs.
6. (Most of the time, for most people, they wind up being very close to the parental version, but by being tested, they've become internalized, instead of imposed.)
7. Accretions to your own personal beliefs can come from anywhere, and usually do. This one reason some people find Mike's books of meditations so fascinating. Just pick out the parts that fit!
8. I doubt that you could find two pastors in the same Christian denomination who share identical personal beliefs. Then throw in all the other denominations that call themselves Christian, and consider the number of individual paths involved! Yet they're all aimed at the same end. [Or do the Catholics believe all roads lead to Rome?]

Chapter the Sixteenth

1. Wednesday, July 2, 2003 1:01 PM
2. Some time in the late 70s or early 80s, I was up at the local mall and met a guy in a Carleton sweatshirt; I ask if he went there, and he said "Yes". I told him I was Class of '64, and he said, "Wow! We really admire your class, because you were radical before it was fashionable!"
3. The founding of RDNA was only a small part of what was going on there at the time... lots of other revolts against the Administration and the archaic "in loco parentis" rules (of which the religious attendance requirement was a part). Women's hours were enforced at almost every college in the country at the time; remember, we were only a couple years away from the 50s!
4. >Of course the whole chronicles are a biblical allusion in language, esp. book 5 which is something like the druids "sermon of the mountain".
5. The earliest part of the Chronicles was a deliberate parody of the Bible; it was part of the in-joke we were playing. I've long believed, and finally confirmed from Frangquist's own lips at the Beltane reunion, that as a couple years pass, in the later Chronicles you can literally watch RDNA change from a protest joke to being quite a serious philosophical system.
6. The idea of a personal search for "truth", for meaning in life, indeed for meaning beyond one's own life, is (to me) the best explanation for the continuation of the RDNA.
7. For many people, even those such as me who continued to belong to "traditional" religions, that mind-set of seeking for meaning continues to hold a powerful sway.
8. I took a 4-year seminar through an Episcopal seminary to learn about the history and theology of the church, and it was incredibly meaningful to me.
9. If you don't think questioning the articles of your faith is a widespread phenomenon, ask any priest or pastor or rabbi or imam about their own spiritual path.
10. They've all had the questions; they've found the answers that they sought in their faith, whatever faith it is. As has

been pointed out many times before, you cannot find faith by logic; you have to work it out for yourself.

11. Our "mission statement" (if you will) remains "Look around you at the world. There's got to be something bigger than we are." RDNA honors that concept by praise of the Earth-Mother.
12. RDNA may have started rather haphazardly, but at the same time it was carefully crafted to supplement, not supplant, any other faith.
13. For some, it became their sole practice, and that direction has attracted many other people to those Groves or as solitaries. For most of those who were there in the early days, RDNA remains an adjunct to their was of finding their own view of their faith.
14. Given the origin, RDNA really has little control over who calls him/herself a Druid! By announcing to the world (or just to yourself) that you are a Druid, you become one!
15. Originally, we considered anyone who attended a service and partook of the Waters to be a First Order Druid automatically. Today, apparently, to become a First Order requires a ritual of commitment of some sort in many Groves.
16. At the same time, I'll bet that some of you in this class consider yourselves Druids without ever having attended a service. No problem, at least in my mind.
17. Well, this has turned into more of a sermon than I intended. Take it all with a grain (or a block!) of salt.

Chapter the Eighteenth

1. Wednesday, July 9, 2003 12:00 PM
2. I'm reminded of two or three things by this discussion The JWs, working from some obscure Bible passage (in Revelation?) have as an article of their faith that only 144,000 souls will be saved at the end of the world. When I find them at my door, I ask them to verify this, and then ask how many members their sect has (it's above that number). They usually go away, then.
3. Back in the days when Mormon missionaries were easily recognizable (18-year-old boys wearing suits and hats, with nametags saying "Elder So-&-so"), my dad was sitting on the front porch when a pair of them approached, and politely asked if Dad would be interested in learning about their church. Dad, equally politely, replied that he wasn't interested, because he "belonged to a church that was in the apostolic succession".
4. They then made the fatal mistake of asking, "What's that?" For the next 30 minutes, my dad gave them a lecture on the history of the formation of the Christian church, the apostles having laid their hands on the bishops to pass along their "powers", the bishops ordaining the priests, etc., etc. The poor Mormons were too polite to interrupt him! They, too, went way as soon as they politely could.
5. I've also found that you can get rid of most door-to-door missionaries by telling them either that you're a Druid or that you're a Roman Catholic. They're afraid of the former, and know that it's hopeless to try to convert the latter!
6. And, of course, there's the option that's been discussed here: politely invite them in, start to undress, and ask them to assume the missionary position!!! [If that doesn't work, at least you'll have some fun!]

Chapter the Nineteenth

1. Sat Jul 26, 2003 11:56am
2. Some important points here. Every faith has something to contribute to the personal growth of one who reads their writings. Western civilization tends to be Bibliocentric, but that's unavoidable, given European history.
3. I once saw a very neat (and very hard) quiz which presented short quotations; all you had to do was decide if each came from Shakespeare or from the Bible. I consider myself well educated and well read, but I only got about half of them!
4. I strongly urge each and all of you to start your own "Green Book" - there's an old word for it, "chapbook"; a collection of quotations, etc., that have particular meaning to you at the time you collect them.
5. Your book will evolve, of course, as you do; today's incredibly apt words may be meaningless next year, but if you've gotten a year's worth of value from them, you're ahead!
6. The collections in the Reformed Druid tradition are items that have, at some time, appealed to somebody, and been deemed worthy of being passed along. Bear in mind that you were not the compiler(s), so some of them will have no relevance to you. Others will strike just exactly the right chord for where you are in life right now. And you'll add your own gems to your collection.
8. Some traditions are shared by RDNA and others. In fact, it's possible that our practice had its origin in a practice with which I was familiar before the founding.
9. Our family has a cabin up in the Black Hills, along with several other cabins, all owned by Episcopalians, and there's a little chapel there where they've had services every summer since the early 1920s. It's beautiful, with a window over the altar looking out at the Hills and with only waist-high walls and a roof where the congregation sits. [If a priest is not available, I'm licensed to read Morning Prayer, but so far this year I've not had to do it.]
10. Long ago, the then bishop decided that any priest who was staying there was on vacation: if he took the service, he shouldn't be asked to prepare a sermon, which was too much like work.
11. Consequently, the tradition for many years has been that after the readings from Scripture, where the sermon would normally be, we just say "be silent and look around you for a few moments".
12. Readings and meditation! In fact, I've been told by some who've attended there that they've never heard a better and more meaningful sermon!

The Epistle of Eric

(By Eric Powers, Feb 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

Beltane 2003, A Druid Missal-Any

Chapter the First

1. Dear Mike,
2. I apologize for not being able to attend the Reunions at the Mecca of Druidism, but please read this at a service, if you think it of suitable quality.
3. I was inspired, this morning when I was taking out my liturgical ribbons for a service, and noticed that an application for employment was being yet again delayed.
4. The rest followed naturally.

Chapter the Second

1. On Beltane, the Reformed Druids have a custom of switching from white ribbons to red ribbons, for the six months until Samhain.
2. My understanding of this custom goes back to the origins of the RDNA, which was a protest against the unreflecting organizational tendencies of religion, and the tendency of authorities to categorize and vaunt past practices over current experience, by the liberal use of red-tape.
3. Since the 1700s, bureaucrats had the habit of tying up legal documents with red string and whenever they needed to reread them, they had to be cut open again; which they were reluctant to do. As a result many thing were never examined again.
4. In the Reform, it is the Third Order Druids who are most beset and bound by self-imposed restrictions, copious literature, and the encrustation of customs, many of them conflicting.
5. If you notice, most Druids loosely hang their red ribbons around their neck, this symbolizes that they have not locked away the sources of their tradition, but keep them open to constant review.
6. Indeed the constant questions by new Druids, keeps them on their toes, and their understanding timely.
7. The ribbons are more than a decoration; they are a tool held in reserve.
8. What you choose to bind, will be bound, for a while; and what you unbind, will be unbound, for a while; so speak with caution, but with a full heart.
9. And don't forget, even the newest of Druid will wield the colorful ribbon of Beltane's maypole; wherein the beauty is in the motion of weaving and unweaving; not the unfocused ribbons in the beginning, nor the snug final pattern.
10. During the Season of Life, we also add the whiskey to the Waters of Life, and should remember that alcohol too is a poison, but one that in moderation may stimulate, assist in the expression of joy, and build communion; yet used too much, and it often brings sickness, despair and discord.
11. And the basis of those Waters, is simple water; the universal solvent and the supporting medium of life through our liturgical year.

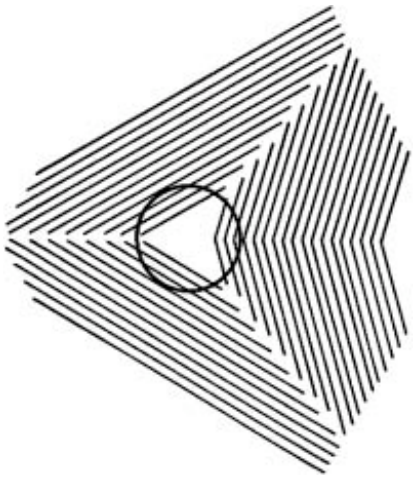
Chapter the Third

1. The hand that is always clenched, or always open and flat, is considered deformed, but a healthy hand is one that opens and closes when bidden.
2. We understand that some rudimentary organization is necessary to function, but we leave the options open and flexible to the current needs, rather than building a structure that will outlast our purpose.
3. We cannot always be celebrating and carrying out duties, for we must also have periods of inactivity and contemplation.
4. The Earth is a good example, in which the forces of life themselves have a period of rest during the winter, coming out leaner and hungry.
5. And so we have the Season of Sleep, in which groggy Druids do not partake of the grog, but rather pull up their settled thoughts for review and purification.
6. This is the meaning of the white ribbon, that of cleansing, crystallizing and reinvigoration, whilst the white snow blankets the earth, storing waters that will melt and flood the streams and fields in the spring.

Chapter the Fourth

1. These are my thoughts that I wanted to share.
2. So I ask you on this 40th Anniversary to think about those ribbons when you put them on your necks, what do they mean to you?
3. There are yet many more mysteries in them.

Yours in the Mother,
Eric Powers, O.D.A.L.
February 10, 2003



Wind Borne Seeds

(By John Slattery, 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. After reading several messages posted here dealing with paths or religions, if you will, I'm struck by the thought that everyone's point of view contains some grain of truth.
2. I feel that I must stop here to state that I follow no strict path or religion. Please don't misunderstand. I do believe in a power greater than the human race. If pressed I'd have to admit that I believe in the religion of nature.

Chapter the Second

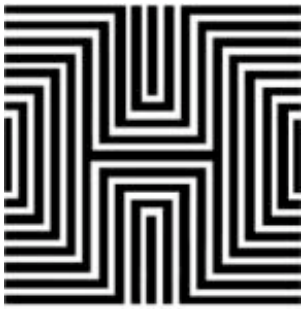
1. Take a moment and look to the trees. They will easily show you the religion of nature.
2. Sure, you can say that trees stand alone or in clusters of their own kind. I'll agree.
3. I've seen stands of Pine or Oak or Maple tightly grouped as if guarding against intruders. But in truth they're not.
4. A gust of wind could carry the seed of a Maple amongst a stand of Oak. The groundcover consisting mostly of oak leaves and downed branches will freely nurture the maple seed.
5. As a seedling the maple will be protected from the harmful direct rays of the sun, by the mighty Oaks towering canopy. That same canopy will soften a downpour into gentle thirst quenching raindrops.
6. Another concern of the sapling is erosion, but once again the Oak plays a role. This time its extensive root system holds the ground fast.
7. They live together in harmony for years until finally the oak dies. But not before it drops an acorn. Now it's the Maple's turn to nurture and protect.
8. Through all this shared life, they are still different, one never wanting or able to grow to become the other, the stronger never forcing the weaker into change, neither thinking themselves the better.
9. In this way they share the world as one. Giving freely of their resources. Teaching the right of it through example.

Chapter the Third

1. You might say it's just the way of things. You may well be right.
2. I, on the other hand, think of it as that higher power giving us guideposts, examples of the way.
3. On the path through the woods one should never focus on the path. The true knowledge is gleaned from the woods.
4. When dealing with narrow-minded people it'd best not to buy into their agenda. Rather, look to the whole for something of value.
5. When dealing with good people learn as much as you can. Absorb the knowledge.
6. Don't think you have to change yourself to receive the knowledge. Knowledge is a nutrient of growth, and growth brings change naturally.
7. Remember the Oak and the Maple.

Chapter the Fourth

1. By applying what I've noted of nature's ways to the people I encounter I'm able to sift the good and the valuable unknowns from the chaff.
2. Walk in the woods every chance you get. Feel the harmony.
3. Look for more of the connections that I've touched upon today.
4. If you know that, along with knowledge, friendship, kindness, understanding and tolerance are the food of growth, then whatever path you're on will be smoother.
5. I wish you enough.



When Leaves Leave Us

(By Mike the Fool, 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

Fall Equinox 2003, A Druid Missal-Any

Chapter The First

1. Those of us in the northern half of the American continent are treated to the spectacular cycle of the four seasons.
2. With our Druidic tendency to learn from trees, I thought it appropriate to write a little about what I've raked up from our teachers.
3. Trees and plants offer so many possible models to understand the world and our place in it.
4. Naturally, this consists of only my own opinions.

Chapter the Second:

The Science of Leaves

1. Leaves amaze us. They come in many shapes and sizes, some are single leafed, others are compound (like an ash or locust).
2. It appears that the shape has much to do with strategy. The vascularization of the leaf (the plumbing) tends to be radiative from the stem and spine, and the farther you are from that "backbone," the harder it is to supply and receive nutrients.
3. It's more efficient to keep the edge of the leaf equidistant from these veins. Thus you tend to see lobing like oaks, maples, and such rather than just round leafs.
4. No leaf can utilize all the sunlight that falls on it, and by being slightly transparent and lobed, lower branches can pick up the excess that is missed.
5. If they are so wonderful, then why do leaves change color and fall off in the autumn?
6. Actually leaves are never constant, they change from the first pale greens of spring, to the dark greens of summer, and then finish in a blaze of rainbow glory.
7. This is all due to the varying concentration of chlorophyll, a vital green pigment, that is present in the leaves.
8. This chemical aids in transforming water and carbon dioxide from the air into sugars and starch that will feed the rest of the tree, something science is still trying to imitate.
9. There are also yellow to orange pigments hiding in those leaves, which are completely masked from view by the abundance of chlorophyll for most of the year.
10. In the fall after the fruits, nuts and seeds are ripened, due to dropping temperatures and declining sunlight, the tree turns off the mechanisms of the leaves, and begins to withdraw the sap from the leafs, and the chlorophyll is allowed to degenerate.
11. The more hardy pigments like orange (carotene), yellow (xanthophylls) or red (anthrocyanin) gradually become more visible.
12. Different trees tend to have different colors in the fall, and the amount of sunlight or water and temperature will also affect the display. Aspen, birch and hickory tend to be yellow.
13. Oaks are usually brown from the tannin. Beech can be bronze. Dogwood and sumacs range from purplish to red due to the anthrocyanin formed by trapped glucose.
14. In order to slowly suffocate the leaf and protect the branch, a fragile cuticle of cells begins to build a barrier from the branch to the leaf. Eventually the leaf will be broken off by the wind or from its own disintegrating weight.
15. Much can be understood about Druids by contemplating these matters.

Chapter the Third:

The Philosophy of Leaves

1. Leaves are the faces of the trees. Such tender, thin, flexible and fragile on the fringe of the organism.
2. If they were made of the same sturdy materials as the branches, they would be unable to accomplish their tasks.
3. It is their short, sad duty to be bombarded by the sun, munched on, blighted and live short lives; while sustaining the larger organism.
4. For me the leaves are representative of our interaction with the environment.
5. We all have these little "antennas" out to bring in nourishment to different parts of our lives raining on us in all directions. Some of these leaves are attuned to sports, love, religion, food, politics, relationships, environment, entertainment, music, etc.
6. The new ones on the top of our consciousness, tend to get more attention and sunlight, while the older ones down a few stories, live in shade, doing the best they can to get the sun's eye. In such a way, our irregularities can nourish others near to us, allowing them to supplement our weaknesses with what they pick up.
7. Every season of the year has its rough storms and strong winds, but most of us have gone through a few periods of "autumn" when we have pulled away from our outer world, shunned tradition sources of comfort, withdrawing resources inside ourselves away from extremities, and hunkered down for a long winter of re-examination of our identity and roots.
8. But these leaves, when they fall, also will land on the outside of our roots, enrichening the exterior soil; and next spring, new leaves will likely emerge in most of the same spots as before on the branches.
9. Sometimes a branch or limb may not grow back in the spring, but that's the changing palate of life.
10. I now must leave you with these thoughts.

The leaves never know
Which leaf will be the first to fall...
Does the wind know?
--Soseki

Thoughts on Chaos

(By Fearadyn Arendelinn, June 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. TAG all, *good read by the way, I enjoy tongue in cheek and Norm, I am very glad you are here, my thanks.
2. Ok, I'll start. The beginning's of this movement interests me first as a part of the larger whole.
3. The cogs of human evolution had pretty much slowed to a rusty stop in the fifties. Or you could say the mass consciousness creative juices had begun to stagnate.
4. I am very much a chaos theorist. And any period in history that reaches this state of stagnation is a prime target for rebellion of youth, who are designed for just such a thing.
5. Chaos is something handled much better by the young, whose lives are usually this. Once a certain age is reached, comfort of the known becomes more important, except by the few oddballs who are goaded by something in their lives to produce radical change.
6. Our parents accepted what they were taught, by society, government, and established religion, and this was pretty much across the board. They lived a known and comfortable life, they knew what to expect down the road.
7. Any `rebels' were extremely visible. However as the sixties rolled in, a few strategically placed adults planted seeds that were tailor made for the now simmering pot of mass chaos that was fixed to boil over. This who and what fueled the pot is of especial interest to me.
8. Once the ball started rolling and youth realized that adults could truly only do so much - then many `stagnant' ideas were questioned and discarded as being mostly useless for the growth spurt needed to propel us to where we are now.
9. In a word it was needed. The mass conciseness of humanity desires to evolve. The only way this can occur is to keep stagnation to a minimum.
10. Now granted any form of chaos will fist turn all in its path upside down and inside out. Only the strongest creatures or ideals survive this. The ones that do are the next step.

Chapter the Second

1. Creativity flourishes in such an environment. However- stability always will occur. This is balance - my species represent balance. This is good. (Just realize chaos is also balance.)
2. But all too often the flows of such are dammed by those who have an extremely difficult time riding the waves of chaos flows.
3. These creatures also happen to be ones who are really really good at organizing. (its is like being an accountant-I don't see it as a fun job - so there are not to many who are good at it)
4. And so, as most really good ideals are something the authors wish to share - a group occurs. Groups can only move in unison by organization.
5. Any visionary or dreamer will happily give the responsibility of organization to someone else - "Good to and make it work, I want to dream and have more visions."
6. Organization is held together by rules. Rules tend to become dams of creativity. And progress of such groups tends to become measured in how well you follow the rules.
7. Which means the members of the group are kind of discouraged from independent thinking and urged to follow the now well-trod path to whatever. This leads to allowing oneself to become spoon fed.
8. Once this begins to happen, beings who are leader types (usually the good organizers, the dreamers having wandered off somewhere else confused as to why the dream is not taking shape as he first saw it) take the ropes of such to hold those under them together.
9. The leader then usually holds the keys to any new creativity and rules are changed or broken according to what he or she finds. Their group most of the time will follow, if what is changed is not damaging to them.
10. Which will eventually lead to stagnation.

Chapter the Third

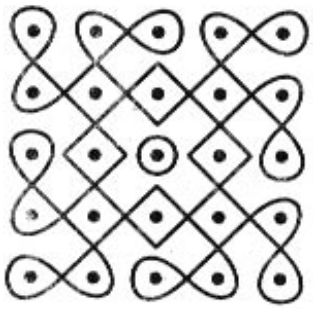
1. The next thing is the rules to keep a group like modern druidism together and growing in numbers are copied by studying other groups to see what works.
2. The uncertainty of this early group to decide if it was a religion or not shows how we tend to copy what works. I am comparing "A spring Thaw" by David Frangquist- passage where he is claming RDNA is a religion to be counted among the others. "Yet several churches have not been granted the privilege of credit. Among them is the Reformed Druids of North America."
3. As opposed to `The Book of Faith' David Fisher- passage # 30 - where he states "Since Druidism has never claimed to be a religion."
4. A `religion' tends to carry more weight than just an organization. It (this weight) was needed to make a point. So, I see this as normal seesawing.
5. Though it is of immense interest to me to see a `nature based group' that accepted so many norms of organized religions. Nature is chaos in action. It never stops. Life in such is dangerous. Long life is rare is such an environment.
6. And yet almost one of the first things they did was to make an altar the Monument Hill "over a ton rock." Altars are not needed in nature. But they are in most religious models we have.
7. Ritual was also an almost immediate addition to this- and I disagree with David Fisher in 'The Book of Faith' passage33-38 where he says " It has been asked, and again with good reason: if your purpose is to ask and to inquire, they why your use of ritual? Can not men seek for answers without the crutch of a ritual, which has no real religious purpose? I can only answer that the Druid ritual has a value because it can be used by different men in different ways."
8. Sure it can and all with the same base of purpose. I see ritual the same as I do the medical language. Those that know it can dole it out to those that do not.
9. There is always someone who knows it more than the one who comes after- if only because the first guy has had more time to learn it. It keeps power in certain places or with certain people.
10. There are always those who have a talent for this. And those that don't. Just as creatures who love to organize will always find their way to disorganization.

11. Why, because they are good at it. And it feels good to do something you are good at.
12. I think the pendulum of druidism leaned more into the religions category than just an organization.
13. There is the wording by David Fisher in `The book of Faith' passage 34-10 where he calls himself `priest', and again in passage 34-10.
14. And then when we get to David the chronicler we have Bishops. And this guy by now is dead serious. As compared to the more easy going Norm who he has some (well more than a few) concerns for.
15. He clearly by this time surrounded himself with all the trappings of organized religion- and you better damn well follow the rules buster!! Lol
16. He goes on to show that he has swallowed all the garbage most religions use to keep power to themselves.
17. The religions we know of are most likely composed of two parts (chapter the Third) 63-1) philosophy and the ritual.
18. I mean hey, it works. But, I argue that it is not essential. Philosophy can be completely free flowing changing as the flows change.
19. If we keep a (third) eye open all the time for opportunity to learn of our truer selves, worship can occur every second we are aware.
20. It is all and only a matter of perspective. But if you allow this, don't count on numbers of followers. It is a one on one thing.

Chapter the Fourth

1. I have to say in admiration- there were enough loopholes and creatures who allowed chaos in this mix so that it could be a manageable organism.
2. And so we see mutations of it without to much flack from the group the mutation occurred from or at least this is what I am gathering so far.
3. This being very healthy.
4. And I love that a person need accept nothing else except the truth of "nature is good."
5. Ok, dig in guys! Lol I'll come back at it in another perspective, but not tonight.

huggs
feara



Thoughts on Discord

(By Anonymous, 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. From: C de Malmanche <mist42nz@hotmail.com>
2. Date: Saturday, April 12, 2003 3:19 PM
3. Subject: Re: [druidcraft202] Are We Alive?

4, I've just finished reading of the Isaac affair.
5. I do think we're moving through this way too fast for the volume of reading material that there is to absorb. It takes a while to swap mindsets to see where people are coming from in their Epistles.
6. It would be easy enough to skim through and treat them as "just someone-else's opinion." But that would, IMHO, destroy the Druidry woven into each letter.
7. People have put time, effort and their life position into their replies. No matter how simple or not-particularly-heavy the persons thoughts on their druidry, each piece is truthful and honest. Is that not amazing... and worth taking a moment to understand?
8. For those with a background in the people, the organization or the druid philosophies, it might take them much less time.
9. For example, as I mentioned I have a long neo-pagan history - yet I formed completely the opposite opinion to the one Isaac formed.
10. The strength of the RDNA is no dogma, no grovely teachings, and all "outside" religions are welcome (encouraged even).
11. That is why I think this method of teaching is quite clever.
12. Once we understand the formation and history of the group then we can understand the dilemma that occurs when Carleton's Compulsory Religious Service is revoked.
13. Sure RDNA looks and acts like a "real" religion. That was its purpose, no?
14. If it had not had the appropriate parts then the Universities Administration would have stopped it.
15. So what parts did it have? The simple, most reductionist pieces of religion (and Carleton qualifiers.)
16. Surprisingly enough, they seemed to have stumbled onto the core consciousness that builds "real" religions.
17. So what to do with it when the initial purpose of its creation is gone? Forget it? Destroy it? Bury it in Bureaucracy in an attempt to keep it? hmmm...

Chapter the Second

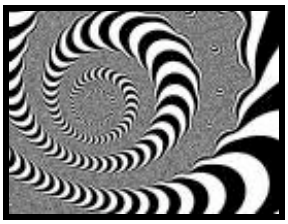
1. And of young Isaac. He so reminds me of a neo-pagan in their 2 to 5 year period. so so sooo reminds me :) IMHO, with my background.
2. He didn't throw the baby out with the bathwater - he just kept the bathwater and threw out the baby!
3. Of course RDNA looks like neopaganism. RDNA created a real religion. It *should* look like *any* other religion. It was created that way!

4. If anything, RDNA looks like the spiritualist (i.e. non-authoritarian/heirarchial. i.e. community-based not clergy based) versions of its founding faiths.
5. To say druidry is "this" religion, is the anti-thesis of the original intent if I read the histories right. If I read the forming of the church and the liturgies correctly. If the description of the rituals and attendances are accurate.
6. The founders were of different religions and they laid aside there differences in favour of what they agreed on (in the Mother :)
7. They declared all was good, and that only those who wanted to destroy that union (i.e. the anti-druids initially or latter those that decided others could not have their own druid path) did not understand what the druid path was.
8. I'm glad the schism occurred as it did. It would have been a sad day had it resulted in the eclipse of the original purpose by evolving the existing RDNA.
9. This way Isaac could have his own religious path as he should (called Druidry just to confuse the issue) and the others stayed on their own religious paths.
10. This, as I understand it, is the nature of it, of RDNA (and possibly of Be'al?)

Chapter the Third

1. All very heavy. Yes I'm catching up.
2. Near the end I find Norm's comment important. That the rituals were supposed to be fun, lighthearted.
3. It is hard to be fun & lighthearted, and oppose somebody or create a mission of conversion.
4. In this we can see that the RDNA was not to be a teaching institution (as people already had their faiths), it was not a body to perform formal duties (marriages, funerals, etc) and it was not a place to force people to observe correct religious protocols.
5. All things that are bogging down and destroying the spirit of modern churches.
6. All things that Isaac was promising (threatening?) to bring to the RDNA.
7. I'm not surprised there was such a reaction.
8. Yet how could a druid reply? Force? Teach? Over-rule?
9. The only way I see to stay true to the original principles (non-coercion, non-dogmatic, nature is good) was to let the vine grow on its own path.
10. I wonder what Isaac's learning on the RDNA is these days?
11. I wonder whether he has got passed his 2-5 year rush and matured into a druid Druid, or whether his hiding of his own sight has blinded him further (as happens to other churches that take on the principles that RDNA left at the door when the founders sat to their first meeting?)

Yours in the Mother,
Anonymous



A Whole of Druidry

(By Dana Felber, 2003)

(Reprinted with Permission)

(New to ARDA 2)

Summer Solstice 2003, A Druid Missal-Any

What is the "whole" when it comes to Druidry? Since Druidry is a spirituality that largely looks to the past for its practices and beliefs, this begs the question of, what was the whole of Druidry when there were actual Druids in the world? We tend to romanticize our ancestors, certain that they were not stumbling around in the dark as we are, wishing they were here to teach us their supposed certainties. But...is there such a thing as a One True Druidic Way to seek for? Did such a thing ever exist?

The Celts were a dominant force in Europe for the better part of a thousand years. As moderns in a culture that changes significantly from one decade to the next, we tend to telescope time when we think about the past and speak of Celtic culture and spirituality as though it were a neat, easily-defined package and that what was valid at the end when things were actually written down was bound to be already in place in the beginning. But no culture, especially a fragmented tribal one such as the Celts' is going to ever be consistent across the board, let alone over a period of a thousand years. Moreover, Celtic spirituality is rooted in venerating the spirits of place, which can differ drastically from location to location and even change over time. The nature of those spirits—temperament as it were—will also effect that particular tribe's outlook.

A lot of people today base their Druidry to a greater or lesser extent on the Irish materials that date to around 400 CE and later. It's very tempting to do so because there's a lot of it, more documentation than for any other place or time. And this is fine of course if this is what truly calls to an individual. But to exclusively focus on this material as what should define Druidry for everyone contains some inherent and flawed assumptions.

One assumption is that, coming as it does from the period when Druidry either died out or went underground, the Irish material represents all that was best in the whole history of Celtic culture, a synthesis and summary as it were. This in turn contains an underlying--erroneous--assumption of its own: that a culture or spirituality "progresses" in a linear fashion, i.e., that what comes first is "primitive" and what comes later is "advanced" and therefore "better." But is this in fact the case? If it is, then it would logically follow that the spirituality we possess today is what is truly superior. Why on Earth are we looking back to a "primitive" past for anything worthwhile or valuable? Or...perhaps our more remote ancestors possessed wisdom we have in fact lost, but that could be regained, if we make the effort.

Another assumption is that one Celtic culture is interchangeable with another because "we're all Celts." Yet Irish culture is very distinctive from Welsh, Scottish, Manx, Breton or Cornish culture, as anyone familiar with them or living within them would explain. Indeed, those could be fighting words to actual individuals living within these cultures today and seeking to keep them from being overwhelmed and lost. It's also frustrating and ultimately offensive to the many people living outside the Isles on the European continent who are reaching back to their ancestors of the Celtic tribes of their region. Some of these people are working very hard to discover that culture, their sacred sites and local spirits, yet when they reach out beyond their locale to share or to learn from other groups, they

are often met with indifference or dismissal or an attempt to assimilate them into a thinking they have no resonance with.

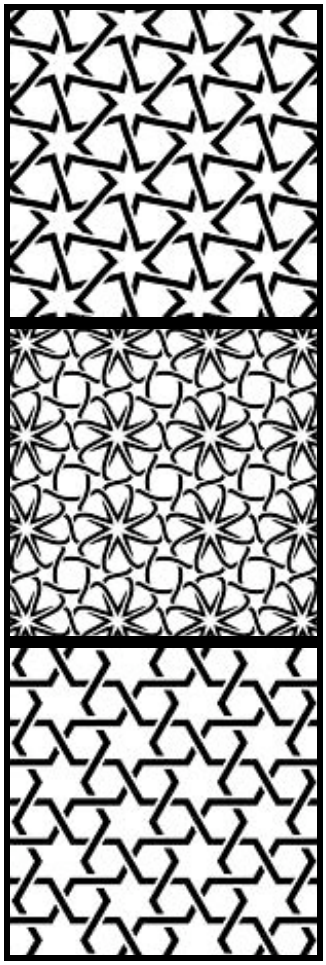
So...what is the whole of Druidry? That which, by rights, we should be giving our allegiance and devotion to even as we seek to uncover what it is out of the obscuring mists of the centuries? I think most people here would agree that no modern Druidic group has the exclusive corner on our wisdom. In my experience of the larger groups, the leaders themselves would agree with that. And Celtic culture itself was so steeped in intense individuality as to preclude such a thing. Yet one continues to run into this notion in the broader modern Druidic community. How does it come about?

A lot of people come to paganism and/or Druidry with the Judeo-Christian model of spirituality/religion so embedded within them that they can't conceive of something significantly different that can legitimately be called "spirituality." There must be deities, there must be hierarchy, of both pantheon and clergy, there must be set rituals, liturgies, practices, prayers, creeds and beliefs common to the whole group. So that's what they go looking for—and it's easy enough to find exactly that in certain segments of Druidry. But what about the rest? What about the people in the next newsgroup, next email list, next Druid organization? Are they wrong? Sometimes that's the reaction that occurs—we've all seen it. But that gets right back to attitudes found in Judeo-Christian thinking, the Protestant who tells the Catholic they're going to hell because they pray to saints, or the Jew who smiles smugly at the Gentile neighbors because he/she is certain of being one of "God's chosen people." Why do people who have - apparently - broken free of these molds want to go there? There's so much more to Druidry and Celtic culture and history than any one tribe's piece, or one person's interpretation of that piece. But it demands that we stretch ourselves, be willing to take some risks and be willing to think outside the box we've grown up with. Ultimately it's a quest for a Grail that will heal the very real Wasteland that's all around us. But we have to strive for what the warriors of the Red Branch and Arthur's Logres had: courage to step into the unknown. In this day and age, this kind of courage is less about facing a challenging enemy or dangers in a physical contest and more about opening our minds.

It's tough. We come to a new spirituality not knowing the ropes, uncertain of what we're doing. If someone takes a stance of authority and declares, "This is the way it is!" we often don't know enough in that neophyte stage to be able to judge whether or not the pronouncement is valid for us. Add to that that we want to belong, be a part of a group, a community. Accepted, validated even, in what is often a scary decision taken in defiance of friends and family. So even if these authoritative pronouncements strike us as not quite right, we tend to say, "Well, that's the way it is. The group needs me to go with them." Which all right as long as there's an adequate comfort level. But that doesn't mean we should stop seeking for our personal Truths (and we all have them) or refuse to accept them when they lead us away from the group, however difficult that parting might be. Because putting acceptance in a group above that seeking flies in the face of the Druidic maxim "The Truth against the world."

I think it's no accident that the hero who goes on a quest into unknown and dangerous lands is revered in the Celtic cultures and held up as an ideal to emulate. Imagine someone like Cu Cuchulain or Gawain coming back home, eager to tell of his adventures and the strange things he saw and experienced—and being told to shut up because he might upset people. Or being called a liar by the elders because they've never seen or heard of what he's talking about, so of course it doesn't exist. The seeking of adventures was expected of Celtic warriors and was encouraged by the institution of set occasions when the tribe would gather to hear--and praise--what had befallen them. Perhaps it's because our ancestors didn't have the kind of access to information we do today—we tend to think we can know it all, or at least be able to look it up. They lived in a world full of unknowns and, if the tale s are true, valued an eagerness to learn about what lay outside their sphere, an open-mindedness and acceptance of the unexpected that anyone would do well to emulate. The Druids were acknowledged the intellectuals of their day, and as modern intellectuals on a Druidic path, we too should be always striving for the open mind, and be alive to the spirit of inquiry that is part of the concept of awen/imbas. It's true, this may take us outside our comfortable notions of who and what we are, but to me this is what every story ever written about a quest is all about: leaving what is comfortable to take risks and achieve something. It's no accident that overcoming fear is an integral part of these stories. Fear is what keeps thinking narrow and what truly breeds differences, persecutions and wars, what alienates people and causes their voices to fall silent. Water needs to flow free to be clear and healthy; trapped, it stagnates, grows foul and breeds poisons.

So what is the Druidic "whole"? What else can it be but every person who comes to this path heeding a call of ancient voices with a sincere desire to learn and a willingness to be open to new ideas and teachings but who also has the conviction to hold to their own Truth against the world, however nascent and unarticulated it might be to begin with. They may come by unlikely or unpromising paths, enamoured of teachings they will later discard in quiet embarrassment, but the point is that they do come and they should be welcomed with encouragement rather than contempt for their ignorance. For the wisest person who ever reads these words will remember that he or she once knew no more than they.



Sacrificial Sentiments

(Dialogue of Various Druids, 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

From: Oriana May 13, 2003 4:01 pm

Here is one that's been banging around in my head a lot lately, it kind of goes along with yours... What is morally/ethically correct/incorrect? And once you figure that out, does it stand for all cultures? If so, why? and... If not, why?

Does it really boil down to...if it harms none? What about human rights issues? Other countries have far different views on what is ethical and moral.

-O.

From: Tegwedd May 14, 2003 5:32 pm

There may be some universals but as fragmented as we are, we don't know the answer to that yet.

"An it harm nane" is as good a place to start as any but you can't carry it to extremes. Balance in this, as in all things, is vital.

Tegwedd

From : gandald952 May 18, 2003 10:49 AM

But then we come to the thorny task of defining "harm."

There's also the issue that, since we never know the full ramification of any activity (the snow flake that starts an avalanche), there is always a possibility that the best intended action will ultimately end up causing harm.

I think that we are essentially obligated to making a "good faith effort" to cause no harm.

-Gandalf

From : sybok33 May 18, 2003 3:11 PM

I don't believe we are obligated to any such thing.

"Harm none" is from the Wiccan Rede. WE are Druids, not Wiccans.

The rule simply does not apply to us. Culturally, we Druids come from the ancient Celts, whose idea of tasteful decorating included the heads of their enemies displayed on staves.

Not exactly a "harm none" culture, eh?

nt -- Sybok /|\

From : Ric Knight May 18, 2003 3:46 PM

True, Wiccans we are not, but "Reformed" Druids we are (though some too be Wiccans, yet I digress greatly as always)....

What distinguishes us from the Celtic Druids of ages past is that we don't do those "icky" things or to quote "The 15 Lousy Lessons of Merlin the Schlep":

"No Bad Stuff. Well, we've succeeded, so far, at least. Like the vast majority of Neo-Pagans; we don't do blood/ animal/human sacrifice (although we occasionally offer a carrot or zucchini) because we are "Reformed" and we think that's yucky. We are however divided on whether fungi should be ritualistically categorized as animal or plant because they do possess characteristics of both. Likewise, we don't do such un-cool things like brainwashing (who wants a clean mind?), orgies (which is obviously a fast way to get STDs), take money/ property, or abuse our members (who'd want to be in such a group?). We treat our members with respect, and they freely come and go."

And does not the Fifth Chapter of Early Chronicles demonstrate the reluctance of the Druids to engage in animal sacrifice?

I refer you to verses 9-13 and the wisdom of Howard the Preceptor and the compromise of Jan.

These things from our RDNA culture form the basis of our obligation.

Thus endith the lesson

Blessed be Dalon Ap Landu...

Cheers, Ric

From : Norm Nelson May 18, 2003 4:18 PM

Well put! But I keep thinking these sniggly little thoughts, such as "If we don't do human sacrifices, why do I have a mental list of candidates?" :-) [Norm hums Gilbert & Sullivan... "I've got a little list..., they'll none of them be missed...."]

Or as I sometimes say, "Not only do I support abortion, I have a list of people for whom it should be retroactive!"

From : sybok33 May 18, 2003 4:55 PM

Ric Knight wrote:> or to quote "The 15 Lousy Lessons of Merlin the Schlep"....

I'm giggling uncontrollably at the last line..... But "nature is good." In nature, we have the Cougar, who has no qualms about taking down the innocent, vegetarian doe.

We also have the owl, who feasts on innocent, vegetarian rabbits, and mice, and (if we didn't keep ours in the house at night) pet cats.

By living and being a part of nature, we harm other beings all the time. Every time you walk out the door, you risk stepping on something smaller than yourselves. Every time you take a breath, you inhale countless numbers of microscopic organisms who die a horrible death.

How many spiders have you killed on purpose because they got into your house? How about wasps? Yellowjackets?

We rip innocent radishes and lettuce and cabbage, etc., out of the ground, torture them to death in steamers, or eat them alive in salads.

We eat meat -- sure, most of it's from Safeway in nice sterile plastic wrapped trays -- but still, we know where it comes from.

"Nature is good." So the tornadoes, floods, earthquakes, wild fires, tsunamis, etc,, that kill millions every year, are "good" also. It's all part of "nature." And we, as Reformed Druids, celebrate this nature we are part of. In fact, celebrating nature, proclaiming it's inherent "goodness" is our entire raison d'etre.

Yes, "nature is good," but it's not 'harm none." And neither are we. At best, we are "humane." We're for the most part anti-war, or at least we are against killing others of our own species.

But "harm none" is both far too broad of a brush, and impossible to live up to.

nt -- Sybok /|\

From: "Dee" May 14, 2003

I agree wholeheartedly. We have had this debate in our own group, and I'm glad that we have people who are able to see beyond black and white. Sometimes you must choose a lesser evil, or a greater good.

B*B Cerrulis /|\

From : Mike, A Capitol Fool May 19, 2003 8:06 AM

Dear Sybok,

I always preferred "Nature is complete and instructive" as a short hand for the basic tenets. As for the Wiccan Rede "An it harm none, do as thou wilt," I first heard it and immediately asked, "an it harm one, what should I do?" and my friend answered me, "be careful, consult, and considerate."

I also believe that the bad after effects of the "three-fold law" of cosmic karma, does not rebound on the individual, but on the community; which if you are "one with them", will affect you as if it hit you individually.

For the ostracized loner, the effects are not felt as strongly.

-Mike

From : Norm Nelson May 19, 2003 1:16 PM

To me, animal sacrifice is simply the taking of the life of an animal (people are animals, too, but that subset is usually called human sacrifice) as part of a ritual.

Whenever the topic comes up, I visualize some small, furry creature (for some reason, I usually think in terms of a gerbil!) having its throat cut and the blood spilled on the altar with some sort of incantation.

Invertebrates don't count, in my thinking at least. Stepping on an ant in front of the altar wouldn't be a sacrifice, unless it was done deliberately and with some ritual calling attention to the sacrifice involved.

Thus, stepping on it accidentally during the course of doing the Booty Sigil wouldn't be, because that ritual is not a sacrificial one.

I don't know how we would have considered the famous grasshopper that jumped into the chalice, had it not been removed before the waters were shared. Can suicide be considered a sacrifice in the sense discussed here? Until right now, while writing this, I've never thought about the possibility of sacrificing an amoeba or a lobster, although both are obviously invertebrates.

The sacrifice of vegetable life, on the other hand, seldom means the death of the plant, since I've always used only a few leaves or a flowering stem.

From : Mike, May 19, 2003 4:54 PM

The atheist would ask if it was to appease various psychological elements of the worshipper. By the way, would religious preparation of animal food products (holy butchering) be considered animal sacrifice?

I still consider capital punishment as a continuing indirect form of human sacrifice to the Gods of Justice and Revenge.....

-Mike

From : Ric Knight May 19, 2003 1:39 PM

You are giving the Cougar and Doe elements of morality they cannot posses. The Doe cannot be guilty or innocent as it lacks the moral agency to do so. Likewise the Cougar cannot have qualms.

The Cougar eats the Doe. It is nether good nor evil. It just IS. Nature IS Nature. The rest is pathetic fallacy. We however are moral agents. We divide actions into good and evil and order our communities along those lines.

Is there a RDNA morality? What is it?

Cheers, Ric Knight odm

From : popinjay June 16, 2003 4:25 PM

I have to agree with healingline and Ric.

"Nature is nature" is a Schardingism. You *can* adopt that philosophy as your own but it does not apply to all of RDNA.

Stacey, Weinbergerisming

From : sybok33 May 19, 2003 6:27 PM

The Cougar's morality is survival. That's it's entire raison d'etre.

We don't say "nature is nature," we say, "Nature is good." We've assigned "nature" (and all it's complexities, whether beneficial to us or not - whether nature kills us or not) a value -- "good." Therefore we are saying all that nature does and is "good."

Therefore killing another being for food is "good." Morality is a human invention, and changes from culture to culture and from religion to religion, and even, from person to person. There are no absolutes.

You asked, “Is there a RDNA morality? What is it?”

Good question for Norm I think. I would say that the RDNA is amoral, but that is strictly from a study of the ARDA, which doesn't seem to have any moral guidelines (but I haven't seen the new ARDA yet). But in general, religions without dogma tend to be amoral as well.

nt -- Sybok /|\

From : Ric Knight May 19, 2003 10:28 PM

We actually do say Nature is Nature... It is simple and brings about less debate than the entire 2 basic tenets.

Good is subjective, but only in the eyes of a moral agent. Beings incapable of moral judgment don't see the "goodness" they see the "being.” If Morality is Human then the Cougar's Morality cannot be the Cougar's... but rather the subjective view of the human watcher.

The question of absolutes is yet to be determined. Various sides in the debate may choose to believe or not depending various factors.

It changes with the whims of the Humans and the gods, but in no way do the animals and plants share in this. ARDA points out several moral incidents of morals.

The decision not to sacrifice animals and avoid the first schism. The decision of the Druids to refrain from ever using the Druid's Curse again. These are moral choices made by the founders. An amoral group would not have cared.

Cheers, Ric Knight odm

From : Oriana May 19, 2003 10:33 PM

There is also the discussion of acting "contrary to nature.”

It is the Cougar's nature to kill the doe.

If the doe were to turn carnivorous, would it then be evil, or amoral? So, then, what is "human"? Nature? Cruel? Benevolent? Immutable? Changeable? Is simply acting against our nature, be it good or evil, immoral?

B*B*, Cerrulis

From : Ric Knight May 19, 2003 10:57 PM

Nature is good the same way Beer is good. Both are pleasing to humans.

It is not a comment on the moral state of either nature or the nectar of the gods. Contrary to nature is hard to nail down as nature can oft be so contrary.

A carnivorous doe (or rabbit with huge sharp gnarly fangs) would be neither good no evil since it lakes the moral capacity to choose between the two concepts. I agree with Sybok that morality is a human thing, but I disagree that nature is a good teacher of morality.

Nature can be inspiring, it can up lift us, and fill us with wonder and awe, but only after humans apply intellect to the sensory inputs.

Were human morality to be solely based on nature... woe to the infirm and weak. Human morality can make allowances for the weaker and infirm... Nature does not.

Cheers, Ric Knight odm

From : gandald952 May 19, 2003 3:53 PM

Is it your position that deliberately trying to cause harm is acceptable?

I consider the "cause no harm" concept to be universal. I belief that we all have an obligation to make a conscious effort not just to avoid causing harm, but to help each other. The evils of this world will not be solved by any dramatic revelation.

Instead, it will take all of us making small contributions whenever we can.

Gandalf

From : Mike, A Capitol Fool

Sent : Tuesday, May 20, 2003 8:47 AM

>An amoral group would not have cared. Maybe moral decisions can be made by individual practitioners, while the teaching and group remains amoral?

-Mike

From : Ric Knight May 20, 2003 11:24 AM

Possible, but I rather think that, as with most groups, the morality of the group is molded by the collective morality of the practitioners.

If a particular grove decided that animal sacrifices were OK, then RDNA would become known as the group that practices animal sacrifices.

Group literature would need to be altered... the whole "Less is More" document on the unofficial website is rife with non-amoral statements.

I think a RDNA morality of sorts exists even though it is understated and subtle.

Cheers, Ric Knight odm

From : Norm Nelson May 20, 2003 1:04 PM

Aren't the moral agents the guys who work for Atty. Gen. Ashcroft? Abetted, of course, by the Religious Right. (Which is neither.)

From : Norm Nelson May 20, 2003 1:49 PM

>Maybe moral decisions can be made by individual practitioners, while the teaching and group remains amoral?

There was, as I recall, no specific discussion of moral issues at the founding.

Since we all came from "the Judeo-Christian tradition", there were obviously certain unstated assumptions, such as that sacrificing people was not a good thing.

Since (as we understood it) the original Druids were nature worshipers, and since it therefore seemed like the services should include a sacrifice from and to nature, it seemed appropriate to choose the sacrifice of plant material, rather then animals or humans.

The assumption that there was a superior power (we phrased it, "Look around you at the world; there's got to be something greater than we are; we choose to honor it in the name of the Earth Mother.") clearly implied that we were subordinate to something.

The word "honor" was specifically chosen as an alternative to "worship", since we didn't intend to supplant any other faith.

The whole "do no harm" mantra opens a wide area of philosophical discussion (as has already been demonstrated here!).

To me, the implication of "do no harm" is not to do harm *intentionally*. [Thus, when the (in)famous Druid curse seemed to work, we agreed not to pass it along to our successors.]

I referred to this in my previous posting about "sacrificing" an ant. There is, to me, a world of difference between stepping on ant unintentionally and doing it with intention. I must admit that I do sometimes step on them intentionally, but I don't do it as a sacrifice in the context of a ritual. When I'm walking down the sidewalk, I usually don't stomp on them, but once in a while,.... But is it "doing harm" to stomp the scorpion that you find in your boot at the campground in the morning? The implication of that question is that there must be a hierarchy of harm, no? Can you blame the snowflake that starts the avalanche? Or, in the metaphor I prefer, the straw that breaks the camel's back? That comes closer to the question of intention.

Does the drover load a little more fodder to kill the camel, or to save its life in the event that the trip is longer than planned? Since, as someone else mentioned, each of us has worked out his/her own morality, I would venture that RDNA is not amoral, since it assumes a certain widely-accepted morality among its practitioners; it just doesn't spell out its morality explicitly. I didn't intend to be so long winded here, but this is a topic in which each thought seems to lead to another.

A pity we can't get together in a chat room and toss it around with each of us being able to toss in the thoughts as they occur to us!

From : gandald95 May 20, 2003 4:00 PM

For some, all food preparation has religious significance. If an animal is going to be slaughtered, then thanks to the Gods were in order.

The part that I disagree with is using animal sacrifice (or any ritual for that matter) as supplication to the Gods for them to grant some kind of boon.

Gandalf

From : sybok33 May 20, 2003 4:10 PM

>Is it your position that deliberately trying to cause harm is acceptable?

That depends on how you define "deliberate."

But I think "intent" is more important.

If men come into my village, armed to the teeth, with the stated intent to harm my family or my tribe, then it's acceptable for me to attempt to disable (not kill) as many of them as I can (unless one proves to be sufficient).

OTOH, if I walk into a neighboring village, and decide to punch out the first person I see, just for fun, that is unacceptable. In either case, I have deliberately chosen an action, but the intent is different.

> I consider the "cause no harm" concept to be universal. Well, even stated that way, it's still too broad.

Originally though we were talking about "an it harm none," known as the Wiccan Rede. Not the Pagan Rede, not the Druid Rede, not even the Witches Rede. "Rede" means "advice," not law. So it's not even an absolute. "Harm" is abstract. Do we mean actual physical harm? Or psychological harm? Is stress harm?

If I, a Pagan, move into a neighborhood and my neighbor on one side is Christian, have I harmed him? He would probably perceive it so. And who is "none?" Humans only? Or any life form? For something to be "universal" everyone must believe / adhere to it. Well, it simply is not. Some embrace it, and some do not, and some fall in between.

>I belief that we all have an obligation to make a conscious effort not just to avoid causing harm, but to help each other.

I agree with that, and that is why I am a Socialist.

Human nature is such that most would never consider the condition of another without it being pointed out, and then they still might decide to follow Ann Rand.

Capitalism will never provide enough adequately paying jobs to employee everyone (and thus eradicate poverty and homelessness) because it's not in Capitalisms best interest.

The law of supply and demand insists that there must be unemployment (over supply or under demand of labor) in order to keep the cost of labor down, and profits up.

>The evils of this world will not be solved by any dramatic revelation. Instead, it will take all of us making small contributions whenever we can.

Agreed: "We're not trying to start the world on fire. We just want to light a few candles." -- Adam Walks Between Worlds

My problem with the whole "Rede" thing came when some began to interpret it way too broadly, so that it became impossible to live a normal life without worrying that some small thing I do would harm another life.

We examine this whole issue early on in *Druidcraft 101. On balance, we try to instill the sense that we value human life, and other plant and animal life as is necessary to sustain human life, but "harm" is too ultimate a value. In order to sustain human life, we have to harm some plants and some animals.

"Nature is good," and the whole cycle of nature, of life and death and rebirth, and of one life ending so that another life can live, is also "good."

nt -- Sybok /|\

From : Tezra May 20, 2003 6:31 PM

> Is it that we are squeamish, or that we are in agreement with modern mores and laws, and are therefore "Reformed"? I think it's because animal sacrifices make more of a mess than plant sacrifices, and they're yucky, blood, gore, and guts getting all over the place.

The Founders would have had a lot more to explain had they sacrificed animals, remember they were at a Christian college in a small town..

> Maybe moral decisions can be made by individual practitioners, while the teaching and group remains amoral?

I think you've hit the nail on it, Mike. Groups tend to be amoral or even become immoral when they become a mob.

Tegwedd

From : Norm Nelson May 21, 2003 1:01 PM

Barbecuing sacrifices is an ancient tradition. Reference all the instructions for temple rituals in the Old Testament. I don't recall any mention of small, furry animals there, but it's easy to consider by extension. Of course, such critters would have to be killed in accord with the laws of kosher slaughter...

Naaahh, that's too much work. I'll stick with leaves and flowers!

From : Tezra May 21, 2003 8:31 PM

Norm, thank you for bringing up another consideration that I didn't even think of. But I think that can comfortably come under the "ick" factor.

Tegwedd

From : sybok33 May 21, 2003 8:46 PM

Reminds me of a "Northern Exposure" episode called "A Hunting We Will Go," where, in the opening sequence, Fleishman berates Maggie about the buck she just killed that is laying in the back of her truck.

Her response was timeless:, "You eat meat don't you Fleishman? Well, meet meat."

BTW, those bbq'd animal sacrifices of the ancient Hebrews were eaten by the Priests themselves (I wonder if they had a "special sauce"?). According to my old Rabbi, the "sacrificial" aspect of these offerings was in the "giving up" of property.

Today, the religious generally take up monetary "offerings" ("sacrifice" = "offering"). The extent of the sacrifice" is dependant upon the wealth of the postulant. That also takes care of the "ick" factor.

nt -- Sybok /|\

From : Dee , May 22, 2003 10:48 AM

Here's another aspect of the "ick" factor. The Hebrews knew the mystical significance of blood. Their scriptures state that the life resides in the blood, and that there could be no remission of sins without the shedding of blood (theoretically the basis of Jesus' sacrifice).

The ancient pastoral traditions sprinkled blood on the fields for fertilizer, to bless the fields and ensure good crops, and I'm sure that practice eventually came from generations of observing the lush growth that would eventually spring up in fields where battle had been done. Even as children, we knew that a blood ritual would seal friendship between us forever. (Of course, this was before AIDs was an issue).

Cleansing the sacred space at Beltane fell to me this year, and, having reflected on the above thoughts regarding blood, I decided that I would make a personal sacrifice of my own blood in the cleansing and dedication. I presented my idea to the rest of the group. No one was comfortable with it. The "ick" factor hit full force.

So I wonder how we got from acceptance of ritual slaughter and use of blood, to a resistance to a small pinprick and 2 or 3 drops. I think it is because of the society we live in. People who don't live on farms (or work in meat packing plants) are not familiar with the slaughtering process. We find our meat in neat, bloodless packages in a refrigerated bin in the supermarket.

Even the butcher counter is a thing of the past; and I remember that in the early 70's. No more neighborhood butcher coming to the counter in a bloodstained apron. Anyway, that's just my 2 cents.

B*B*Cerrulis/|\

From : Norm Nelson May 22, 2003 1:44 PM

It's difficult to gross out a biologist.

Back in the middle 1960s, I had taught a comparative anatomy laboratory in the spring while I was in grad school, and my sister was an undergraduate biology major and had just taken an anatomy class.

That summer, she and I were staying at our family cabin up in the Black Hills, and we drove into the little town of Custer to buy some groceries.

As we stood in front of the butcher counter, we started to "anatomize" the T-bone steaks [which come from the sides of the cow's spine, behind the ribs. The "T" is actually half a vertebra]: "There are the dorsal and ventral processes of the spine, and the lateral process, and there's the neural arch..." "Look, there's one that still has the spinal cord in the neural arch..."

We then looked at the butcher, and saw that he had turned a definite shade of green! Apparently he had never given any thought to where meat comes from!

From : Mike, A Capitol Fool May 22, 2003 4:21 PM

I was sitting on the Subway the other day and got to thinking about what the medieval and iron age Europeans would have been most concerned with praying for.

Yes, it was Health and Wealth, with wealth being primarily defined through fertility of crops, children and livestock.

When's the last time you worried about if there was going to be enough food (not whether you could afford it, but would it be available)?

And yet with the assured supply of near-continuous availability of food throughout the year in America.

The impact of the seasons, the joy of Hazel gathering, and other seasonal delicacies has, I believe, been stripped from modern culture. It is another barrier to surmount to understand what ancient religion must have been like.

From : Ric Knight My 22, 2003 4:31 PM

Well... I think it's the age old division between the city and country mice... I'm sure Alberta Beef ranchers are praying hard to their "god(s)(ess)(es)" TM of choice for good old health and wealth of their livestock right now... what with BSE (mad Cow) and all.

As we become more "Urbane" (and Urban) we start to loose track of natural rhythms...

This was even a problem for the Romans who spent a considerable percentage of their government time on arranging wheat shipments from Egypt to ensure a well-fed populace who had no notion about troubles down on the farm....

From : Norm Nelson My 23, 2003 1:22 PM

O Tempora! O Mores! Our ancestors made sacrifices in their fields to ensure the fertility of their crops and cattle. Today, we sacrifice pieces of government-issued paper at the Safeway to ensure having enough food to sustain us. True, we're disconnected from the source of that food, but have we lost something, or gained something?

An orange in the toe of your Christmas stocking was a rare treat 100 years ago, because such tropical fruits were not readily available year around.

From : sybok33 June 6, 2003 4:29 PM

There's a bumper sticker available from AzureGreen that reads: "Vegetarian:" Ancient word for "lousy hunter."

"Mike, A Capitol Fool" wrote:

I've heard that one, and my room-mate replied to it: "How much intelligence does it take to realize that there are plentiful nutritious roots under the grass you're stomping upon like a Neanderthal, looking for the occasional scurrying critter out trying to feed its family." He was great at debates. :)

Mike

From : healingline June 16, 2003 4:20 PM

Folks, we say "Nature is good" because it is one of our "human limitations", being humans, to judge things.

Compare Krishna's justification of worship of divinity in human shape, to the questioning Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita. Divinity kindly makes allowances for our human limitations. That is why, the first time I heard the first lines of the Liturgy, I knew at last what I was, which was this sort of Nature lover.

In the old days, us humans sacrificed and prayed in all sorts of ways we now find outlandish, and were suffered to live and reproduce up till the present, despite it all. Hallelujah!

Katya Luomala

The Third Epistles of Norman

(By Norman Nelson, 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

The Forty-Year Long Protest March

Summer Solstice 2003, A Druid Missal-Any

1. Imagine yourself and a couple friends organizing a protest march to correct what seems to be an injustice.
2. A year later, the injustice is irrevocably ended. Forty years later, the march continues! What happened?
3. Since I find myself in exactly that situation, I was asked, "What do you think about the continuation of Druidism?"
4. These comments are mine only, but from conversations with some of the other founders, I believe they represent a consensus of opinion.

Chapter the Second

1. First, some forty-year-old history:
2. Back in the long-ago days of the early 1960s, several students at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, decided that the college's religious attendance requirement was actually doing a disservice to religion by forcing people to attend.
3. (A graduation requirement, it said that, seven weeks out of each ten week term, students must attend a religious service of some sort.)
4. Most of us were religious, but we felt that forced religion turns people away from faith, rather than attracting them.
5. Most students at Carleton attended the weekly Congregational services at the college chapel, conducted by the chaplain.
6. Some attended the downtown churches of their own denomination, and then filled out "chapel slips" to be handed in to the deans for credit.
7. For those who belonged to churches or religions not represented in town (such as Jews), there were official campus organizations which gave them credit for attending their meetings.
8. The situation had actually become so ridiculous that even the atheists had a campus group which met for chapel credit!

Chapter the Third

1. To organize a protest against the requirement, we decided to start our own "religion" and apply for chapel credit. If we got it, we would show how ridiculous the requirement was; if we didn't, we would protest and accuse the administration of hypocrisy, since we were attending religious services.
2. In the early spring of 1963, the Reformed Druids of North America was formed; we even drew up a constitution for ourselves as a campus organization. The official date of the founding was Beltane, 1963.
3. We were very careful to structure our "religion" so that it didn't require giving up any other faith; we didn't want to antagonize any one. (I've always called Druidism supplementary, not designed to supplant any other belief.)
4. After six or seven weeks of Saturday afternoon services, at the end of the school year in mid-June, several men and two or three women submitted chapel slips for the last Druid service of the school year.
5. We were careful also to go for our "regular" chapel credit, just in case. (The Druids met on Saturday so as not to conflict with any Sunday services people wanted to attend.)
6. The slips for the women were accepted by the Dean of Women's office, while the Dean of Men's office rejected credit for the men.
7. After the rejection, one of the founders went to the Dean of Men's office and asked why we had been turned down. He took along a list of "strange" religious groups from the Minneapolis phone book, and asked "Would this be acceptable? Would this? Would this?"
8. Finally, with all his other reasons exhausted, the Dean said that we couldn't receive the credit because we weren't "an officially recognized campus organization;" we didn't have a faculty advisor.
9. The next fall, the speaker at one of the first (also mandatory) weekly all-student convocations was a new professor, who spoke about his anthropological work in the Aran Isles, where Druid practices still continued under a thin veneer of Roman Catholicism. Before he left the room that night, RDNA had a faculty advisor! We knew we had outfoxed the Dean!
10. That fall, we received chapel credit for our services, and again when we started at Beltane for the spring. We felt that we had definitely won our protest.
11. It gets even better: the day I graduated in 1964, the college Board of Trustees met and abolished the religious attendance requirement.
12. I learned recently that one of those who most favored the repeal was the Episcopal bishop of Minnesota, who also argued as we had that the requirement was a disservice to religion. I've also heard that the college chaplain supported it, and that subsequently, enrollment in religion classes increased dramatically.
13. So, in June of 1964, there was suddenly no more need for protest, and therefore no more need for the Druids. Our victory was total, and most of the founders fully expected our organization to disappear very quickly.

Chapter the Fourth

1. However, for some participants, RDNA had begun to take on a meaning of its own. (We joked that, for the students who couldn't stomach organized religion, our disorganized one was perfect!)
2. In reality, through their meditations and study of their role in nature, they had begun to find a personal, meaningful realization we had never intended to impart.
3. RDNA met their requirements for a faith that explained their lives. For them, it was no longer a joke.
4. You can see this happening with David Frangquist, the author of "The Chronicles," as his writing changes from a parody of the Bible in the first chapters to a serious examination of what it meant to be a Druid.
5. Now, forty years later, here we are. Not only is Druidism still here, it's thriving! RDNA continues in its original form for some, but numerous "offshoots" have also arisen, attracting different sorts of people to their different emphases. While I've not looked into them, I salute them for answering the religious needs of their participants.

6. Personally, I still believe that RDNA is a supplement to other faiths, as I think do the other founders. But I must respect those for whom it has become their exclusive faith. Given our origin, I'm a little bemused by that, but I think I can understand it.
7. And, more importantly, I think that Druidism, in its various manifestations, should and will continue.
8. Even if it eventually becomes meaningful only to one person, it still deserves recognition for that. I guess we wrought far better than we thought we did when we started our little "protest march."

Chapter the Fifth

1. 10 Aug 2003 21:12:13 -0600
2. IMHO, an AD doesn't "head" a Grove... s/he is the person appointed/elected to conduct the services, not to speak on behalf of or to determine the thinking of the Grove's members.
3. The reason we've had a "meditation" instead of a sermon is that the AD doesn't tell the members what to think or believe, s/he just suggests ways for each member to make up his/her own mind.
4. Since the demise of the Council of Dalon ap Landu (due to the individuality of its members, who couldn't/didn't bother to reply to questions put to the Council), there has been no governing body of RDNA.
5. Ergo, each person who calls him/herself a Druid is one. There is no higher authority to determine orthodoxy or to declare excommunication.
6. This may be embarrassing to us old-timers, but it's a fact of life, and we've learned to live with it. We may fervently disagree with what a particular group is doing, but there's no way we can stop them from doing it.
7. From the beginning, RDNA has prided itself on being a "disorganized" religion; neither then or now is it time to start imposing criteria for what makes one a Druid.

Chapter the Sixth

1. Wed Aug 13, 2003 1:50pm
2. Isn't the term "orthodox Druid" a bit of an oxymoron? How can any group or "religion" which can be joined by saying "I'm a Druid" have an orthodoxy?
3. RDNA has been eclectic since its founding (believe me, I was there!) and remains so to this day. There may be some people calling themselves Druids whose practices are peculiar to me, but it has never been my job to determine what Druidism is (at least in its RDNA version(s)).
4. I suspect that to the Druid groups in Europe which are not part of "our" Druidism, we're as bogus as you can get! And it's highly unlikely to me that they, any more than we, are practicing the "true" Druidism of 2,000 years ago.
5. Originally, you became a Druid by partaking of the waters. Period. Belief that "Nature is good" quickly cropped up as an additional criterion. Remember, these were people whose "robes" were bed sheets and whose first altar was a small metal phonograph stand from someone's dorm room!
6. Most importantly, if we were to succeed in our purpose of ending the "religious attendance" requirement at Carleton, we couldn't do anything that would give the authorities an excuse to shut us down.
7. All the founders were Christian and Jewish, and we didn't want (and couldn't afford) to offend anyone. I've always maintained that RDNA was conceived as supplementary and/or complementary to "organized religion", not as a replacement for it.
8. The only reason that I can find for the continuation of RDNA 39 years after it became unnecessary is that for some people it is a means of the search for "truth" (yea, one way among many). For some it has become their exclusive "faith"; for others, be they Wiccan or other pagan or Christian, it remains a supplement.
9. For me as an Episcopalian, it gives new emphasis to the many places in the Book of Common Prayer where we are exhorted to take care of creation as a way of honoring the Creator.

Chapter the Seventh

1. 15 Aug 2003 11:08:55 -0600
2. I've been trying to distance myself from the OMS debate going on in RDNAtalk, but I do have a comment or two which may be relevant.
3. To my way of thinking, anyone who wants to call him/herself a Druid is one. To be a Reformed Druid, part of the RDNA, I'd add that one must partake of the Waters consecrated by an Archdruid in the RDNA.
4. Sorry if this makes a hardship for solitaries, but it's in the original Constitution, etc., and I can't change it unilaterally. [I'd be glad to send you some Waters, if you need them! You'll have to do your own ceremony, though.]
5. Likewise, anyone who is associated with RDNA can call her/himself a member of RDNA, or "a Druid" for short.
6. BUT, and this is the important thing, nobody (repeat, NOBODY), not me nor any other founder nor you nor any "offshoot" or Grove or individual member, can claim to *speak for* RDNA.
7. You can proclaim your own beliefs from the rooftops, or go door to door proselytizing, or whatever turns you on, but by the very nature of RDNA, you can't say "this is what RDNA thinks" or "this is what RDNA believes".
8. We don't have a pope, a moderator, a Sanhedrin, a senate, a General Assembly, or whatever you want to call the central authority.
9. The Council of Dalon ap Landu, which consisted of all ordained 3rd orders, was to be such an authority, but in the days before e-mail, it was impossible to get a quorum to make any decisions after the first couple years (and would probably have been so even with easier communication), and the CoDaL died a quiet death. I don't think it would be possible (or sensible) to try to reconstitute it.
10. If we're to continue as a "disorganized" religion, which I think is one of our great strengths, we should not have any such central, final, (and probably arbitrary) authority.
11. One of the serious problems in which any group, secular or religious, can find itself is to have such an authority, which must inevitably lead to that authority wanting to perpetuate itself.
12. This is what leads to schisms in religions, and to anarchy in civil organizations. RDNA does not want or need such an authority. "My way or the highway" is not a Druid attitude!
13. That little tirade doesn't really answer your question, so: First, bear in mind that the "original intent of the founders" was very specific - to get rid of a graduation requirement at Carleton College.

14. After that was accomplished, most of us never expected RDNA to continue. I've gone into my thinking on why it's still around elsewhere, and won't take the time or space here to repeat it.
15. To the extent that any group, splinter or symbiotic, carries on the "purpose" of RDNA - the search for [personal] truth with the assistance of Nature - that group is good because it carries on the purpose of RDNA for its members.
16. Someone noted someplace that any time you have two Druids in a room, you have at least three different opinions.
17. There is one thing we all agree upon, however, and that each Druid's search for "the truth" must be a personal search. We've never been a group which tries to impose "The Truth" on anyone. I don't think we've ever capitalized the word "truth".
18. To the extent that any group has found *the* truth, and begins to try to make others think exactly their way, they are doing a serious dis-service to RDNA.
19. Indeed, I'd go so far as to say that they have left RDNA by their own choosing, because that's inherently not the way RDNA does things.
20. I believe it was the wonderfully cynical Mark Twain who said, "Mankind is the only animal that has ever found the True Religion. Thousands of them!"

Chapter the Eighth

1. 15 Aug 2003 13:37:15 -0600
2. There are plenty of Archdruids. Every Grove has to have one. Each AD is, automatically, autonomous. Add in the "retired" ADs, and you're into the hundreds of people. But, and this is important, there is not, never has been, and organizationally can't be an "Arch-Archdruid", one supreme head of the RDNA.
3. When the "higher Orders" were conceived, it was never intended to make them leaders of the organization; rather, they were "honorary" higher levels for the ego of the participants. [Note that we made Fisher the Patriarch of the 4th Order, thereby limiting him from being patriarch of even higher orders.]
4. In a way, it's similar to Masonry: every Mason receives the first three degrees. There are additional degrees (two sets of them, in fact), but they are both adamant that there is no "higher degree" than Master Mason, the third degree.
5. There is no-one qualified to accept or reject any person or any group as part of RDNA.
6. If Mike chose to accept OMS stuff for ARDA2, that's his decision as an archivist. If ARDA is to represent the whole spectrum of the original RDNA and its subsequent manifestations (as I think should be its purpose), it needs to be all-inclusive.
7. Putting something in ARDA is not giving it the imprimatur of RDNA, since that's not the function of ARDA. There's a lot of stuff in there that's not "official".
8. ARDA is not an official RDNA publication, it's Mike's contribution to the RDNA. RDNA has no control over it (and vice versa).

Chapter the Ninth

1. 20 Aug 2003 11:46:34 -0600
2. Security Council of the United Druids? SCUD? Why not? Then any correspondence between the members would be guided missives?
3. Actually, deep in my heart, I don't like the idea of any body able to make decisions for me on what my version of RDNA is or will be or should be.
4. The original (now, if not dead, somewhere beyond moribund) CoDaL was a good idea at the time; there were only a dozen or so members, and many of them knew each other personally.
5. They all had a shared background. They could, therefore, be said to be the "collective thought" of RDNA at that time. As the number of Thirds grew, and as the Reform moved beyond Carleton, the Council became impractical, logistically.
6. There were members who had no connection with the original grove, and there were members nobody even knew about.
7. In the era of snail mail communication only, it was impossible to contact every member, let alone to force them to respond to anything they did receive.
8. How do you establish a quorum for a body so nebulous you don't even know who's in it?

The Missionary Im-Position

(By Mike Scharding, Jul 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

Printed in Fall Equinox Issue, A Druid Missal-Any

Chapter the Zeroeth

1. [This chapter's contents written in August 2004.]
2. The "P" word, proseyltization, is rarely evoked in the Reform without scorn, bewilderment or anger. It seems that everybody has a story to tell or a lesson they learned from an experience with a zealous evangelist.
3. It is a sad fact, that without some type of recruiting, the thousands of members in the RDNA would not exist beyond the one or two dozen Founding members; not that that would be an all together bad thing, but that would be the reality.
4. Whereas other Groves may have had core membership stretch with little interruption for a decade or two, Carleton has had to constantly acquire more members due to the fact that members keep graduating and leaving to start new lives elsewhere, involving some type of missionary activity both at Carleton and abroad.
5. We try to go about it with a good sense of humor, but in some ways, it still bothers many of us, but I think that it is in the manner in which you advertise your presence and the reasons you give to join that make a big difference from the ways other religions and organizations recruit.
6. As I'll mention, we're just so odd and strange, that word of mouth soon spreads that we're Druids, and eventually everyone knows. And the one who wants to be a Druid will indeed be looking for such type of people and will find us, rather than we find them.
7. If a grove shrinks down to one person, that's fine, we have the seeds to sprout anew within us when the climate or circumstances turns fortuitous again; and if not, there is always correspondence to give us a taste of interaction.
8. Don't worry so much about the quantity, but focus on the quality whenever possible. It will be okay, whatever Fate has decided. Now let's go to my original epistle.

Chapter the First

Some Opening Comments

1. Naturally, I speak here only for my own opinion. As you may have been following in the RDNAtalk conference, my thoughts have been turning to those young MIB who knock on my door to share the Good News with me.
2. I'd like to share some thoughts based on my own limited experience in door-to-door sales of the mundane variety, although I have little academic marketing experience. However, perhaps some of the parallels may be interesting.
3. I should start off by admitting that I actually admire the dedication and sense of inquiry that most door-to-door missionaries possess.
4. I am also a somewhat reluctant spiritual missionary myself, as is shown by the fact that most of you are reading this essay because of my outreach internet efforts, providing access to RDNA historical material.
5. My strategy is however naturally passive. I make suggestions but do not insist on them to the exclusion of others. I am just there. People come, sometimes stay, and often leave soon. Like a tree, I passively watch their passage and shade them while they are near by. I occasionally invite a friend to attend. Many pass under my limbs without even knowing a Druid is present.
6. This I feel is a rather common RDNA method of grove dynamics, it may not be the most organizationally effective way, but it is the most satisfactory method I have found. It is one way, yea, one way among many.
7. Now, if I was a Treant, like in the Tolkienn movie, I could pull out my roots and walk about lobbing boulders about and being a noisy nuisance. And in certain circumstances, I might contemplate such action.
8. Others make this a matter of course, and we see them at our doors every month or two, because we have a large Mormon barn in our neighborhood, so we tend to get the lazy ones who are not willing to travel far.
9. It pains my cynical post-modernist heart to credit them, but most of those to whom I talk to are actually rather nice, wholesome people with more community spirit that my hermitic nature can muster up. But there is something rather unsettling about the whole door-to-door thing, and I'm not sure that they are aware of it.
10. Occasionally, you'll get the hard sell from some door to door friends, that reminds me of a past part-time job that I once had, I think you'll see the parallels and be forewarned.

Chapter the Second

Nature Abhors a Vacuum Salesperson

1. In 1995, I answered one of those "Big money for part-time fun work" posters, and got sucked up into a scam-filled operation selling well-known expensive vacuum cleaners in Minnesota. I learned a lot about the way you set up a campaign with many applications to missionary activities.
2. First you divide up a town among the employees, distribute invitations for a free "no-obligation" comparison test via newspapers or coupons, with free complimentary present and literature.
3. When someone bites at the bait, you send out the young commission-paid worker to the address at the appointed time, with promises of how well they will be awarded on the often slim chance of a successful sales (10% conversion rate is considered high, with a 10% cut of the overpriced good).
4. Other times you just knock on doors up and down the neighborhood taking advantage of your sad tired visage to entice compassionate people to invite you in.
5. What happens next is you give your spiel, and start doing good deeds (such as vacuuming like a madman around the house) and showing off the features of a professional cleaner.
6. Now most people, (and few will admit it), don't mind a little grime in the corners, dust on the lampshade, or dirt under the sofa-cushions. People get by with a simple system of their own, but feel a bit guilty about it, and this is your entry point.
7. You, as a seller, by your zealous example associate your vacuum cleaner with a virtuous clean lifestyle. Mites and dust are a natural part of life, and for most of us they actually build-up our immunological defenses against real

parasites; but if given a choice in life, people would like to live in aseptically clean environment, free of grossness.

8. The odds are, even if they buy your brand of cleaner, that they wouldn't put that much more effort into cleaning, but they COULD if they wanted to.
9. This is called "overbuying" and the car and computer salesmen ply this trick just as often as door-to-door salesmen.
10. The customer is also acquiring "membership" or association with great clean people, who like mountains, are more often admired from afar or bypassed, rather than climbed and imitated.
11. Certainly, some will actually read your cleaning suggestions book and may actually follow the instruction manual you provide; but similar results could probably be had by diligently using any other cheaper vacuum cleaner.

Chapter the Third

Cleanliness is like unto Godliness

1. Mark Twain once said, "A cynic knows the price of everything but not its worth." Every salesman must truly believe in the product that they are selling.
2. You must study the other brands of vacuum cleaners only so far as to know their weaknesses, to be able to denigrate them, and then select tests that you know are going to show those faults.
3. Few people are prepared to defend their own cleaners to a well-prepared offense that they are not expecting.
4. The salesman makes it a matter of faith that your own product's deficiencies are more than matched by its strengths; and the cleaner must naturally be taken as a whole item.
5. I spent 30 minutes being instructed in the cleverness of its foaming carpet cleaner head. All types of methods of agitating the cleaning liquid were attempted before the inventor realized that a simple cheap cloth mesh over the end would foam-up the liquid.
6. When explaining this to the people, they begin to associate a few clever features of the cleaner to the rest of the whole contraption, which may indeed be pretty standard fare.
7. Now the vacuum cleaner sales pitch would start by discussing how much it cost to attain this marvelous product, for which a newly invented need was now apparent.
8. For those of you interested, this $900 vacuum cleaner really only cost $250 to produce, and were sold to the local head agent for $300. The salesman would naturally calm down the customer and "call his boss" to cut a deal, say to $750, which was still too much. Eventually you barter down to a reasonable $500 in regular payments.
9. They get a slightly sup-ed up cleaner, and probably put on a list of "easy marks" for other high-pressure sales agents.
10. You and your boss split the profits. My idealism got the better of me, as did low sales performance, and I left soon afterwards. [Naturally, I thought the job sucked.]

Chapter the Fourth

What to do with Door Knockers

1. I know that most missionaries perform their actions as a matter of testing the strength of their faith, a sign of compassion to the benighted followers of the wrong faith, and to follow the instructions of their superiors, and these I tolerate and a few I admire.
2. A few are witless and naïve people with but a few scraps of scripture to cover their nakedness, and I try not to scare them in their delicate condition.
2. For some, their sense of self-worth is painfully dependent on getting others to follow their own pathway, and I feel sorry for these.
3. Indeed I generally feel that those who come to my door may well indeed be the gods in disguise and I feel obligated to assist them in some fashion, even salesmen and missionaries.
4. However, others are belligerently bigoted and seek to stamp out anything that disagrees with their vision, and these I abhor.
5. I suspect that many of these groups are outward oriented, sometimes in a pyramid scheme, with all the spiritual profits rising organizationally to the founder.
6. It is true that perhaps some form of spiritual community is better than none, but I like to think that the ones that I choose are better, than the ones that choose me; assuming there is free will, of course.
7. Most people, I believe, tend to belong to a faith that operates nearby out of convenience more than avid support of their "small print" of social policies and theological beliefs outlined by their inner circle of organizers. I have always wondered why they don't apply this strong energy into improving the members that are already part of their community?
6. Some groups even seem to exist only to recruit more members. The Mormons are so desperate for growth, as to actually convert the already deceased ancestors of current members, and as a result, they have one of the most massive genealogical collections in the world, as my parents found out in their own family research.
7. Quite likely, several of your own ancestors have been converted in this manner already! Thus much good occasionally does appear to result indirectly from these activities.
8. There appears to be a few common responses in the Neo-Pagan and Druid community towards these wandering door knockers.
9. Some choose the "duck and cover" maneuver and refuse to answer the door, which is avoiding the whole issue.
10. There a few (like me) who politely listen and refuse to respond either way, giving neither support nor denial to their cause, basically taking up their time to save some other unknown resident the experience.
11. The most popular and funny, but probably rarely performed, are the "shock and awe" responses of overwhelming these people from narrow backgrounds with lavish displays of "see how weird and unsettling my lifestyle is! oooga booga!"

12. However, if you think you can surprise them with your Druidness, your mirthful days may be numbered. I recently came across a book which I read a 92 page point-by-point book of a series by Zondervan Guides to Cults and Religious Movement that teach how to witness to Pagans.
13. It is called Goddess Worship, Witchcraft and Neo-Paganism. (ISBN 0-310-48881-8 $6.00) If you want to go head to head against the toughest bible-thumper, I recommend you read it to see what arguments are coming.
14. It was an interesting applying logical methods to sell rather non-sensical fantastical spiritual myths. It is another of those circular argumentative systems that once you accept one point, you are locked into a series of semi-logical faith-based points of belief. Maddening as I found it, it provides intriguing insights into the whole process.
15. A nice counterpoint is to realize that world views are a dollar a dozen, and I'd recommend reviewing the following two books: The Truth About Neo-Paganism written by one-time RDNA member Anodea Judith (of Chakra fame), ISBN 1-56718-567-3 which is $3 at 60 pages.
16. Another book is Pagans and the Law: Understand Your Rights which is a good handbook to simple legal questions that many Pagans should know, if you get flak for your religious beliefs. I'll hopefully be reviewing this book in a future issue.

Chapter the Fifth

In Conclusion

1. In conclusion, I believe that the best preparation for dealing with the missionary is to follow the Druidic path of asking yourself the hardest questions ahead of time, to know what you really believe; and find out what areas of your spiritual life can be met with community involvement, psychiatry, lifestyle modifications and simple greater awareness.
2. After you've done that you should be able to explain the satisfactory nature of your beliefs and perhaps give them a little useful insight to take back with them.

Newer Selections:

The OMS Affair

(By Various Druids, Aug 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

The OMS Affair deals with the discussion by various Druis in the RDNAtalk conference about the manner of relationship that existed or didn't exist between the RDNA and the OMS groups. The debate raged fiercely throughout most of the month of August of 2003 and totaled about 500 posts or so, from which I have boiled it down to about 350 documents in the form of an epic dialogue of 60 or so pages that will be more easily readable. The main topics discussed are about the manner in which groups and individuals join the RDNA, the role of the Council of DAL, and the ways in which we understand the qualities of being a Reformed Druid. Your average Hairpull.

The whole mess ended up with much of the OMS withdrawing most formal associations, but keeping much in the way of culture and tradition of the RDNA, and I haven't heard much from them since then. The rest of us had a good venting, and will be much more careful in the future in our relationship with other organizations, and think deeply about the aspects of belonging that ties us together.

However, due to the very lengthy nature of this exchange it would unduly mess up the printing plans for the Apocrypha, and the extensive editing and disjointed manner of interaction are too much to blend into our current format, so they are being made available at the following on-line address in September;

http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/2part2-3.doc
http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/2part2-3.pdf

Newest Selections:

Rambling Onwards

The Epistle of Corwin

(By Corwin Troost, Oct 20, 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. Dear Brothers Stephen and Mike,
2. It has come down to me that our predecessors in Druidism wrote `epistles'. It would seem that these are merely letters written in a stilted, silly, Druidic style. This is for the best.
3. During my studies of Japan, it has come to me to return my gaze to that of the Grove, verily the grove of Carleton, for that is where my heart lies.
4. In these times, some of the wisdom of the ancient [aka 1960s] druids has been revealed to me through the works of the Heiman who did Mark and of Mike of the Schard.
5. For it is written in these works the epistles of those who came before, the wisdom they did impart therein.
6. Verily, though these be of less certain value than the Chronicles, it could perhaps be said that in their uncertainty they possess more value, for they impart direction. (but the Meditations are also pretty good, and the Isaac stuff gets old fast.)
7. The wisdom imparted to me through the joint efforts of tree, human, and breath (and... umm... what does ink come from?) is of three parts:

   A) Ritual is of great importance.

   B) Druidism began as a protest against standard(ized?) religion, and I think that much of its continued value lies therein.

   C) Carleton Druids/prospective Druids as a whole do not have enough spiritual common conception, experience or elaboration to have productive spiritual discussion.
8. Lo, but the one is three and the three are one!
9. For where lay the protest of druidism but in its ritual, its silliness and newness combating both the fist of fundamentalism and the emptiness of the mainline?
10. Where lies the protest or the irreplaceable, the spiritual, in quietly sitting down to discuss said spirit?
11. Verily, to speak is good, but to do is better, for in the doing comes speaking, and where lies common experience but in ritual?
12. Does not thinking arise more readily from the implicit provocation than the blunt query?
13. If we are truly a group without dogma and received teaching, then the lowliest, most ignorant initiate may participate at all levels-- yet in discussions, previous spiritual knowledge and confidence create a substitute hierarchy.
14. Further, if we are truly a experiential and material-embracing religion, then discussion, with its head-centeredness, lack of interaction with nature, and lack of shared starting points/beliefs/assumptions is not the Druidic path.
15. Simply put, we are NOT outdoor UU's-- particularly if we stay inside.
16. [Sorry about lapsing in the silly style, I can only keep it up so long, and only communicate so much in it]
17. I hope that Druidism is doing well on campus-- I have no way of knowing at this point. It might perhaps be good that I'm not there... there are times when I'm a bit too serious and Isaac like. <sigh>

Chapter the Third

1. Let's ponder what 1) we think Druidism is and has been, 2) what is good about Druidism (what we have liked?) 3) What Druidism should become.
2. Certainly, the survival of Druidism in others should be secondary to the quality of what Druidism we create.
3. My suggestions for what are good about druidism are: lightheartedness, nature, indy search for spirit, non-hierarchical, questioning.
4. I'm at best marginally satisfied with teas in their current form.
5. I really liked the rituals of the Elder Druids, with their silliness-- though I think we could come up with a form that wouldn't require too much preparation and would allow people to free-form participate.
6. I'm thinking like the calling the winds thing in the sweatlodges, but instead of just winds, whatever it is that we've picked out to praise/worship/recognize.... including anything from a Colonel Sanders statue to a tree to one particular grain of sand on the sidewalk, but other forms are cool too...
7. One of the epistles said that playacting can become sincerity, and I sort of believe it....
8. The other thing is that I think we need to promote the 2nd and 3rd order ordinations, I think, cause they really do have an effect... mine made me much more into the whole thing, and really worked out a lot of stuff for me.
9. Perhaps we could reinstitute some 1st order ceremony.
10. I'm also thinking that we always have at least a minimal trip outside, be it most of the tea/event or just 5 minutes.
11. I think it'd be cool if, when the weather permits (oops, I'm too late for this) we make a habit of meeting at Nourse for 15 minutes to have tea, processing to the circle or to the bald spot, meditating for 5 minutes, and only then doing something... it might take some time, but I think that it would actually have more and better effect than having more discussion.
12. Further, do silly things in public.
13. I am but a feeble monk, whose eyes cannot see the way, yet I pray that my words may find some harbor in your breast.
14. Nor should you consent to trust them more than words from thine enemy, for I am young and of quick temper, soon to speak and late to listen. But if the Reform will be aided by my speech, I am well rewarded.

Humbly,
Corwin, Arch-Druid in Exile

The Epistle of Stephen

(By Stephen Crimmin, November 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. My brother in the mother Corwin,
2. I was elated to see your epistle, and it has weighed long upon my thoughts this past month for it did not deserve a hasty reply.
3. I am glad that you have turned to history, for history is ever present.
4. Though, yay, we are also removed from history, and must be wary of it. And there is much that history can tell us.

Chapter the Second

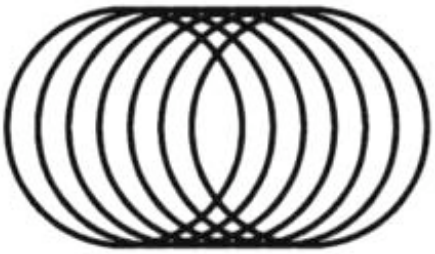
1. Certainly many have benefited from the old rituals. From the earliest days there have been some rituals.
2. Yay, even between the days of the lapse in the parly eighties and till the revival of Mike the Fool, those druids who did rebirth in the late eighties did have some ritual. And yay, it did work for many of them.
3. But verily I note that you are right, that we have in many ways forgotten the rituals, we do not consider them as closely as we might.
4. And so I can see that you are wise in asking to restore such rituals. And because they are, indeed silly.
5. Lo, the Druids do misstep and founder, and they must be guided, hand held along a reasonable path.
6. But be wary, I warn you. This is not an easy path to follow, and think careful about this path and others, for the path of the ritual is a difficult one, and this I have come to realize early this year.
7. Having departed on a similar journey as you, though through the documents that Mike the Fool and his partners did first look at before they did compile more than their compilation.
8. And I myself saw that we do miss much of the ritual of our forefathers.
9. And yay, I too did mourn that loss, and I did also mourn the loss in our current situation our the great numbers of Druids which hath preceded us.
10. And upon opening I did decide to hold such a ritual, thinking that this may be right.
11. But, lo, I did arrive at the circle, and did commence to spake those old words, in a slightly altered state (the words, not me), but they did not feel quite right to me.
12. For, though I had seen the paper upon with Brother Larson did write his third Epistle, and though I had read it thoroughly and gained much understanding from it, I had not truly understood it.
13. For Brother Larson talks of ritual, and says most wisely that we cannot just speak the ritual, as I spake it, but as we speak it we must breath it.
14. Wary be! It was not just that I had not practiced, but I have not seen a true good ritual, in good form, as Brother Larson might suggest, except for two or three, in the year of the anniversary.
15. And lo, I thought I could mimic those, but I certainly could not mimic the power to be had in them.
16. Even our former Brother who does instead now Fish, had the experience of his previous days, of the Episcopalians to guide him in his rituals.
17. And in the days since the Druids have had one always who has heard the words in some lineage from our Fishing Brother.
18. Even Mike the Fool, Foolish for reestablishing the rituals bolder than he might have been wise to, had an experience to help him.
19. For it is off said that the Episcopalians are but Catholics without a Pope. And so in many ways their service, that inspired Brother Mike did look similar to the service that did inspire our Fishing Brother.
20. In the days of later eighties they did not follow the older rituals. And in this they were wise, though they, like you and me and Mike the Fool, were all fools; for they did instead bring in the ritual of that which they knew and were already keenly interested, of various Neopagans and of the Native Americans.
21. And there is more, for the rituals that I have heard never quite spoke to me.
22. In trying to use them, with just lightly altering, I was quite the fool. For how could they speak through me if they did not speak to me.
23. And here I give you some positive advice. Look not to the old rituals, for if you are to use them you must have either great experience with them, or you must utterly rework them, going so far as to be barely recognizable.
24. They do not speak to me, and I am not sure that they speak exactly to you. Before you can speak them, you must find a ritual that speaks to you, in it's words, in it's rhythm, in it's everything.
25. And that ritual will speak through you brilliantly, if that will be your choice, though it will be a hard work.

Chapter the Third

1. And here I will give you more advice, though be wary of it, for it may lead you astray. You have many ways to look.
2. The first, which I am quite eager to see, is this. You have been in exile these past months, and I can only hope that your exile has taught you much, that your time as peregrinatio is not to be wasted.
3. I have often heard from Brother Mike that Japan is a land of Paganism, and that it may offer much to us, if you have seen it, and if anything it speaks to you.
4. But more generally, you must consider all that has spoken to you, and all which has not. And then write a ritual from what has spoken to you, be wary not to merely write what you think may speak to you.
5. And then I say this more, look not just at the early rituals, but look at all the rituals that you can find, if you want to reestablish rituals. There are many sources for those.
6. I would say, first, go down to the basement of the building of the Explorer President, and ask Eric the Hill Man to see the archives of the reform, first, and all the rituals that are recorded there, even the rituals of Isaac.
7. And look also at the descendents of the Reform, and look at their rituals that are recorded, for they are resplendent in variety.

8. And those that speak to you, diligently copy them in the scriptorium, so that you may work from them in creating your own rituals.
9. And then look even further. Look at the (inter)net that A Druid Fellowship has cast, because it also contains many rituals.
10. And look also at the rituals of the Henge an hour to our north, either at the site of a similar net or, if need be, write to them to see what rituals they perform.
11. And then widen your search even further, for other brothers, and for all the rituals that you might glance at.
12. And having collected those that speak to you, see what it is that speaks, and then begin to right anew and afresh from those rituals, and drawing them into the framework of the reform, without considerable reference to the original rituals, except that which truly speaks to you.
13. Yay, it would be a hard long path in front of you, fraught with much which could make you stumble, but if that is your journey, than you must tread it.
14. Moreover, I cannot help you. Though I also cannot stop you, and cannot but release you to look for an appropriate ritual, and wish you look, for indeed, now, the time of the comps is at hand, and I must heed that.
15. You then must walk a path that you will find, and learn in doing. I can only offer a few words here and there.
16. And I see that you already have many new ideas, and for that I am thankful, but do not let them say that you have what speaks to you.
17. For if you merely add little effects to a base that does not help you, you only gild the ritual, rather than make it work.

Yours in the Mother
Stephen Crimmin
Arch Druid of Carleton



Mike's Mini-Missive

(By Mike Scharding, 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. Dear Brother in the Mother, Stephen
2. Your words are legion and confusing, which is a sign of Druidic obfuscation in good tradition. :)
3. I agree with you both that every generation must look to the old for some strand of the rope to the continue, but must weave in new strands where old ones can stretch no further, and no single strand of a rope reaches the whole length.
4. And so no one tradition can be expected to continue uninterrupted from beginning or end, if one looks close enough.
5. Indeed, I encourage you to know what has been done, pay attention to what you're doing now, and think about what you would like to do, then do it.
6. Use any tool that you have, if it will accomplish your task adequately, we are the sum of our experience.
7. Go to your source of inspiration, if it be by the stream or on a hilll and speak with the tongue of the trees, let their words and your words merge, and let that be the message you share.
8. The Earth Mother and DAL, among many, are ready to give advice if you'll give them an ear.
9. You need not speak the same words of the ancient Druids, for they are not there to hear them.
10. You have new Druids who need to hear the new words that our times need; and if you can find a way to express them from your studies of the past, so be it.
11. But words without action are soon lost in the winds that you call forth, may those winds that you move, also move you to realize your potential in changing this world.
12. I also hope that brother Corwin will learn much from his sojourn in Japan.
13. "Exile" has also greatly changed me, but I reflect that as Socrates said, the Earth is our home, and as long as I walk on its face, I am "home," even if I be out of sight of my friends and relatives.
14. Although the Japanese do not see through the Monotheist lens, their vision is also clouded by other matters, such as modernism and a growing disconnect from Nature as they move from the farms to the cities.
15. Yea, verily each culture has its blindspots and sharp insights into the condition of Man and Nature, so draw your conclusions and give praise & critique carefully.
16. As I've stated before, Druidism existed at Carleton before the first student set foot in Northfield, and will continue long after the last student graduates.
17. It is the very connection and relation between materials and living creatures, of which we are but one, and whose mysteries we can only participate in part, limited by our form and schedule.
18. Strengthen your understanding of it with whomever else is also interested during your few years there, and beyond. But do not fret about it. :)
19. I have talked more than enough.
20. Fare thee well.

21. You're doing fine and my thoughts drift to you nearly every day,
22. May my prayers be carried to you with the sun that I see.

Mike the Fool
Day 31 of Geimreadh, Year XLI of the Reform
Dec 1, 2003

The Alphabet Epistle

(By Ian Friesland, 2004)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First: Cordial Greetings

1. Dear Brother Michael,
2. How I wish the tyranny of distance did not so separate you and me, alas I have not written as often as I could or should, but things are well with me….
3. …I now have a letter for you, a most remarkable one, yea, one among many. Pardon me if I go too long now, as it is a common error in my Order, perhaps even a requisite one.
4. There is now more than I must relate to you on the further mysteries of the Druid sigil.
5. As you'll see, I'm afraid my sanity has cracked further after another frost upheaval from leaving the extreme of a long cold wintry place and returning to warm climates.
6. New seeds have sprung from that crack in the ground.
7. Such is the renewing nature of Druidism in Minnesota with every year too, isn't it?
8. May my words find welcome eyes and hearts, for I would speak wisely, for a change.

Chapter the Second: The Vision of "S" Appears

1. The other day, I stood by a slender willow sapling on a hill, looking down at the slinking stream situated on the plain below me.
2. The branches of the tree swayed in the wind. As my ego deflated in awe, I felt the letter "S" sibilantly hissing syllables at me in the rustling of the dead leaves at my feet.
3. I held up the mighty Druid sigil, upon which I have so often gazed rapt in thought, and the sigil blazed against the setting sun as if the sky itself was aflame.
4. In this setting, my sigil uncurled before my eyes as circle & straight lines melted into a single curved line, twisting like a Chinese dragon in a majestic dance amongst the clouds, briefly forming a Celtic knot and finally silently assuming the shape of an "S."
5. And I realized that the "S" is without voice, only the fricative escape of air through a narrow trap's entrance, and so did my soul sail forth from my solid heavy body, in joy at the wonders of pondering a single letter.
6. A famous Druid two centuries before mused that "To see the world in a grain of sand" was to know the whole from a piece. Verily, great wisdom sometimes comes to us unobserved in an overlooked tiny package.
7. Precious is the message of this sigil then. From the sigil's nature's perfect endless "o" and man's straight and limited "i" come the primordial "s," naturally bending but with a start and finish, but able to return to the original form.
8. The letter "S" is the same upside down, but flatten it's head and it is a "5" and flip in over and it become a "2." In this way, the "S" can be of the literary world of the left-brain and mathematical world of the right-brain.

9. Nature works in curves and man thinks linearly, but in that way Druidism melds a compromise between these opposites, which are both part of a single system, each dependent on the other for existence, with a myriad of children in between in search of adoption.
10. Therefore, Druidism holds the number three sacred, since between the opposites is a third choice, "The Middle Path," espoused by the Buddha, between the purely rational & systematic path and the irrational & creative path.
11. Like a sigil tied by two rubber bands to opposing trees, the closer it is pulled to one side, the less stress on that side, and the increasing pull from the other side.
12. A solution to this tug-of-war is to seek a natural equilibrium between the two, or snap both rubber bands; and the resulting awful amount of freedom.
13. Like so many clues in our lives, we pass them without even noticing them. I must endeavor hard to keep every-moment Awareness, even in the darkest night or brightest day, until it become effortless and self-renewing.
14. Indeed, you know not when or where a window on the universe will be quietly and quickly thrown open. Then the terrible immensity and complexity of the universe will be comprehensible for an all too brief moment.
15. For this was one of those moments of synergy.

Chapter the Third: The Rede of Read

1. And my soul was moved by these thoughts, such that a great prayer did come from my lips, saying:
2. Lord "**S**," or **s**hould I call you **s**ire? Or **s**avior?
3. You are not in the Holy Land, but in our heart**s**.
4. In oppo**s**ite**s** and **s**imilarities.
5. You are in all phonetic **s**ystem**s**, **s**o flexible, **s**o primordial.
6. You are the most appendable to all **s**ound**s**.
7. From the first in-ru**s**h of breath to the la**s**t out-pouring of death'**s** **s**igh.
8. The great multiplier of thing**s** by your very pre**s**ence.
9. I can hardly talk without invoking your name.
10. Nor can I go anywhere now Lord "**S**" without being aware of your go**s**pel.
11. You are a**s** pre**s**ent in the library of book**s** a**s** in the curve**s** of **s**tream**s**, bend**s** of gra**s**s, and neck**s** of crane**s**, in the movement**s** of the wind**s** during the **s**ervice.
12. You are in the **s**un & **s**tars of the skie**s** above and in the **s**cum and **s**lime in the **s**ewer**s** below, and all in between.
13. You are not ju**s**t on the paper, you are al**s**o in our ear**s**, oh "**S**."
14. You are not ju**s**t in the paper, but unwritten in our ink and our very blood.
15. Life i**s** like an alphabet, which emerge**s** with an alphic bang, full of word**s** and event**s** in the beginning.
16. Life follow**s** with up**s** and down**s**, and i**s** thicke**s**t and mo**s**t reliably filled in the middle.
17. But life all too often taper**s** off with a zedi**s**h whimper of partly-filled year**s** in the end.
18. Only when we reach "x, y & z" in our **s**tudy do we truly "now know our a, b, c"**s**.
19. A**s** your **s**ervant, Lord Zed who learned the alphabet and came and left the world of the immortal**s** in a flying head to find hi**s** Alpha, he learned the **s**olution lay in the union of the **s**eparated.
20. I now know your vi**s**age and nature, regardle**s**s of thy font, **s**ize and formatting!
21. May I be further enlightened, O king of con**s**onant**s**, by your brother con**s**onant**s** and **s**i**s**ter vowel**s**, punctually arranged and filled with **s**pace**s** for growth and re**s**t.
22. May I and you not ob**s**cure the page but adorn it like jewel**s**.
23. What more **s**hould I know of you?

Chapter the Fourth: The Sybil of the Sigil

1. In reply, the radiant sybilic sigil looked ready to speak.
2. I again asked it; "What **s**aith the letter "**S**" about Druid**s**?"
3. It said, "You are indeed wise in my ways, and learning well, so I would teach you further, young Druid.
4. The letter "S" has provided the beginning of many virtues and vices, but only you can spell out and complete the remainder in your deeds and thoughts.
5. Ian, sear these short sentences to your soul:"
6. Be a staunch supporter of civil liberties, especially those of others.
7. Be savage and scornful for the servile submissive sycophant to the State.
8. Be Sisyphean and steadfast in noble causes, but not squeamish and sickly of a challenge's chores.
9. Be speedy in certain matters, but slow in uncertain ones.
10. Be strange, surprising and stealthy to your enemy's traps, but sure, servicing and stable to your friend's entreaties.
11. Be stout in virtues, but sickly in vices.
12. Be still, silent and sophisticated amidst racket, but swift, sonorous, and strident when men fear to speak.
13. Be subtle and sensitive in delicate matters, but straightforward and spiky in ordinary ones.
14. Be sacramental and sentimental in spiritual matters, but not superstitious or slavish.
15. Be studious, but not stupidly bookish.
16. Be safe and secure, but not scared or skittish.
17. Be scrupulous in your resources, but not selfish.
18. Be sincere and succinct in your expressions, not sly or superfluous.
19. Be sumptuous to your guests, not stingy.
20. Be sensible in judging, not subjective.
21. Be skillful in the arts, not a sham.
22. Be strategic and systematic in your projects, but not slovenly and sloppy.
23. Be strict and supportive to your grove, but not sadistic or stifling.
24. Be stark, simple and spartan in your structure, but not sterile, secretive, or snobby.
25. Be scientific and shrewd in secular matters, but sacred and sublime in saintly ones.
26. Be syncretic and synthesizing in your beliefs, not sporatdic and scattered.
27. Be soppy, sweet and sensual in matters of the heart, but stolid, stony and stoic before the hate-monger.
28. Be sedate and serene in thought, but sprightly and sporty in activity.

29. Be splendid and sensational in achievement, not sullen and sad in reluctance.
30. Be serious and sober in dire straits, but silly and sassy in farces.
31. Be solemn in times of grief, but spirited in times of joy.
32. Be stylish, spacey, surreal and screwy in humor, but not stiff, staid, stodgy and stale.
33. Be sarcastic and skeptical of fools and liars, but supplicative and sympathetic to wise sages and noble heroes.
34. Be sexy, steamy, seductive and sleek in courting, but not sordid, seamy, skanky and sleazy.
35. Be soft and smooth in eroding great obstacles like a river or wind on a mountain and strong and sturdy in blasting small obstacles like a tornado or thunderbolt.

36. Be ye never shady, shaky, shallow, shitty, shabby, shirky, shadenfreudish, shameful, shadowy, shameless, shapeless, shifty, shocking, showy, shlocky, or shrewish. Better to say "shhhh!" to yourself these than hear "shhhh" spoken of your character. [It is okay to be Shaggy or shiny.]
37. It is not a matter of which letters are used, but in how they are arrayed, and which words are sought and followed.
38. Know ye that "S" is but one letter, yea, one among many.
39. Keep one foot in the middle, lean towards the first, but know well the ways of the latter, lest your foes trick you.
40. Be a master of letters, lest letters be the master of you.
41. Do you understand all of this, Ian?

Chapter the Fifth: The Afterletter

1. And it was too much too bear and I cried out;
2. "By thy 26 way**s**! The choice i**s** mine to be made.
3. Many are your way**s** I have ma**s**tered, but much more are your way**s** that I haven't.
4. May I live up to my word**s** and my letter**s**."

5. The sigil cooled and I collapsed, lay exhausted and rested for I know not how long.
6. When I awoke, I was under the willow tree which swayed by the river which flowed, while clouds sailed above in the sky; all doing their roles in this world, as I must do and be Druidism.
7. I can do no other.

Chapter the Sixth:
Final Thoughts on Words

1. Indeed in this way, the Ancient druids learned many things from the trees, streams and stone around them.
2. Druids found guidance in Nature, for it was their holy book with uncountable chapters, always being rewritten and edited.
3. Druids did not write down words, but stored them deep in their hearts, to be replayed and sifted for edification.
4. Modern Druids transform many trees into papers and books, especially in the Reform, but do the words transform us?
5. Words and gestures rarely express our thoughts perfectly, so much harder through squiggles on compressed wood fiber.
6. The ink of scholars last longer than the blood of martyrs, but both change the world in a different way.
7. What an amazing discovery speech and writing!
8. What unlimited potential with a finite set of 26 tools!
9. Many men complain about being unable to speak of the ineffable, while I bemoan conveying the inessable.
10. We all have ways to express these thoughts.
11. You have given me words, and are part of those words, as I am too.
12. These words you read as your eyes snake across this page are part of you and us too.
13. I must finish this letter here as I grow weary from the recounting, fearing my skill with words will not be able to better convey my message.
14. Know ye, that this epistle was brought to you by the letter "B" and "S," by the numbers "2" and "5," and by your local Grove's tutelary deity.

Ian the Lettered Scholar
S-squire of ODAL
Day 13 of Foghamhar, Year XLII of the Reform
Friday, the 13th of August, 2004 c.e.

Chapter the Seventh

14. P.S. Sorry if I have made an "S" of myself, but it is me, and I am it.
15. As one last question. We have heard much of how to become a great Druid in the letters of our siblings, but how does one become a good Arch Druid?
16. I ask this, for I am considering a Grove with humans here in Europe, and I know you have led several Groves and talked to many Archdruids, so please share in your wisdom on this issue.

The Arch Epistle

(By Mike Scharding, 2004)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. Dear Brother Ian,
2. Thank you for your welcome e-mail on Friday the 13th, alleviating an otherwise thankfully uneventful day.
3. I was deeply moved by the sigil inspiration you have drawn from B & S, which is a good part of every conversation I can remember on Druidism. Your words will fertilize much contemplation in the future.
4. Coming as it does in the middle of the Athens Olympics, I can not refrain from appending comments on the Greek alphabet, for Caesar said that the Druids (at least in Narbonia) only used Greek letters when it was necessary to write down matters. Greek keys open some Celtic mysteries.
5. Have you not noticed that the letters alpha α and omega Ω are but the same line twisted and crimped?
6. Omega reminds me of the strongly twisted Druid's torc worn around the neck, from whose synaptic terminals a leap of faith is required to complete of a perfect circle.
7. And is it not also amazing that the letter phi ϕ or Φ are so similar to our Druid Sigil? And is it not strange that pi π so irrationally resembles the megalithic henges?
8. Now that I'm done with my letters, I will continue with your letter.

Chapter the Second

1. I noted the question at the end of your missive, "How can I be a good Arch Druid?" I thought you already knew.
2. But, I feel like the Japanese monk who exhorted his disciple, "Strike me hard like a bell, that I may peal even louder in my reply."
3. You will indeed have more of a challenge organizing humans, as opposed to your ministrations to penguins and monkeys in your last few Grove attempts.
4. I caution you to be careful as the former are less forgiving and far more unruly, for they resemble cats when herded.
5. I feel a word to the wise on the matter of Arch Druids is enough, but in your case, a single letter should suffice.
6. As you mentioned, locked into every word of our language are associations and roots which give a hint as to what a word means and what we should do.
7. The word Arch Druid (or its alternative Archdruid), doesn't appear in the dictionary, so I will instead concentrate on "arch."
8. As I attempt to define "arch", I must paraphrase Brother Irony that "Like a moth before a flame, the Druid is doggedly drawn towards their doom in definitions."
9. I also hesitated to write this as every bit of advice I will give here is often a painful reminder of a lesson learned by failure or missed opportunity.
10. Hopefully, you will avoid my mistakes and surpass my successes and find the path to greatness more well-lit and cleared of obstacles that trip or slow you.
11. Yet, so I must try to define the indefinable.

Chapter the Third

1. Literally, the prefix "arch" in Arch Druid is derived from Latin "archus" or Greek "Arkhi," meaning "chief, highest or most important." And much is hidden in that meaning.
2. In the Roman Church, there are Archdeacons, Archpriests, Archbishops who are the head of the deacons, priests or bishops in their domain. In this way, you are the chief of the Druids in your Grove.
3. You are high, in that you are raised by the election to hold much responsibility. No matter how high you go, do not forget those who support you.
4. You are most important, in that without an Arch Druid, the Grove cannot function well as we know it. However, beware of pride, for although the role is often necessary, you are not irreplaceable; and it were far better for a Grove to have no Arch Druid than a bad Arch Druid.

Chapter the Fourth

1. The most obvious origin of the arch is a bow, the tool from which the archer derives his occupation [L. Arcus], and you are indeed a tool of the Grove.
2. The bow directs immense power to the task of flinging objects; whose speed, distance and trajectory are uniquely determined by many combined factors: the degree to which the bow is flexed, the direction & strength of the winds, the skill of the archer, the angle fired, the whims of Gods, the laws of Physics, and most importantly; the strength, shape and material of the bow and arrows.
3. Take these elements into consideration when assisting fledgling [fletching?] Druids on their way, and do not quiver before the task, and so be of good aim and choose your targets well.

Chapter the Fifth

1. Some history about buildings and its relation to Druidism.
2. The ancient Greeks, although they used bows, did not significantly use the arch in their largest buildings, which relied on columns to support the dead weight of roofs vertically.
3. As a result, the space between columns had to be kept short, resulting in large building being filled with a forests of columns, choking out the interior space; but the columns could be shifted a little without endangering the building, which is important in an earth-quake zone.
4. The ancient Romans lacked the immense marble slabs of the Greeks, and used smaller materials like bricks and molded-concrete, so they adopted the arch and oval as their standard.
5. Roman architecture abounds with arches, bridges spanning unthinkable rivers, and domes providing more spacious and taller buildings at lower cost with less materials and difficulty.
6. But the graceful arch has many weaknesses in addition to its strengths; for if one stone in the arch should be removed the whole structure will collapse, and an arch requires a solid, immovable foundation, pulling the bases of support towards each other.
7. Using this analogy, an Arch Druid's authority rests on two foundations; first their wisdom and Awareness of Nature, and secondly the trust and goals of the membership which elected them. Without that, there is rubble and grumble.

8. But remember, of course, that we Druids are an outdoor people, for even the grandeur of the cathedral pales before the majestic canopy of an oak forest.
9. Indeed, our churches are without walls, roofs or boundaries, ever present in the world around and within us.

Chapter the Sixth

1. Arch also implies an attitude that is "mischievous or roguish," as in an "arch glance."
2. For though an Archdruidcy is a serious undertaking, it need not be a dull or stuffy one.
3. Since our beginning, the RDNA has been a thorn in the side of many pretentious civil and secular authorities; and the Arch Druid has often been the wry mouthpiece of the Grove.
4. Verily, in those ventures, we are a bit like foxy outlaws, bound together by circumstances and camaraderie, on the fringes of the respectable mainstream of religions; without the laws or the easily recognizable traits that most large traditions have embraced. Mobile, clever and stinging in our forays of Guerilla Druidism.
5. Without our humor, impishness and joviality we would become dour and disapproving.
6. Without our rebellious nature, we would congeal into a ossified religion of superstitions and dogma.
7. It is a delicate balance, like riding a tiger, too much disorder and the group loses its focus or becomes frenetic; too much order and it is unable to adapt or adopt new practices or goals.
8. It is your job to steer the Grove towards its goals in this manner.

Chapter the Eighth

1. The term arch is also used to mean "principal or strongest," as in archfoe, archenemy, archfiend, archangel, archrival, archconservative or archliberal.
2. This term implies a bit of extremism that discomforts me, for Druidism is about the moderate third way between the unlivable environment of the extremes.
3. Like it not, you are the role model for new Druids, and your virtues and vices will be noted and scrutinized; so act and speak with care in times of trouble and historic moments.

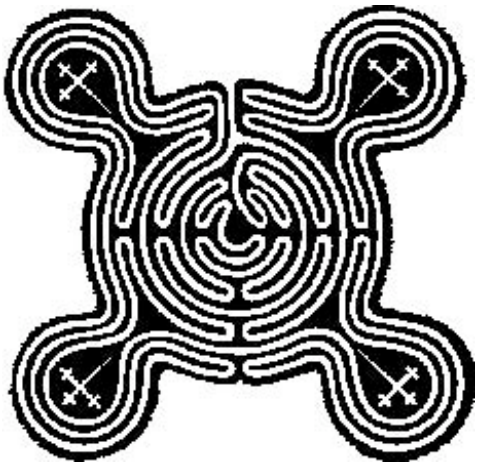
Chapter the Ninth

1. Finally, there is the term archetype, archive and archaic which have implications for Druidism, derived from Greek "Arkhi," meaning "beginning" or "primordial."
2. The Arch Druid is often the first Druid in an area, and the one who bears the seeds of wisdom, Awareness and traditions for founding a Grove, always in a unique blend.
3. Choose carefully, for the Grove will undoubtedly in the beginning mistakenly believe that all Druidism is in your mold; but you should always make them aware of alternatives, for one day they may have to steer a new course in uncharted waters without your assistance.
4. The Arch Druid must archive the actions and words of her Grove, either on paper or in her heart, so that they can be brought up again for review and amendment. To know a Grove's future, you must know and understand its past.
5. The Arch Druid must also avoid the deadening hand of archaic tradition, for if the origin of customs becomes too difficult to recognize or justify, then they must be dropped to better utilize the time and effort of the Grove's members.
5. Thus, by carefully selecting, creating, collecting and explaining the terms and practices of Druidry to incoming members, instead of relying on blind faith, you will soon realize how many and which customs and traditions can be best borne and applied by the Grove.

Chapter the Ninth

1. And so Brother Ian, these are my rambling thoughts on running a Grove as an Arch Druid.
2. I may have more advice on the topic later, but this should be enough to get started.
3. You need not do it all, for you will often rely on the other Druids in your grove, nor need you be the only Arch Druid.
4. I hopefully can live up to my own advice, which I'm far better at giving than following.
5. Finally, I must add that it is in service to others that we best serve ourselves, for that is why we are called to Archdruidry, and we will often have to choose the more difficult course if we are to succeed.
6. I wish you the best of luck in your endeavors.
7. Write more often, even if things go well.

Yours in the Mother,
Mike the Fool
Day 20 of Foghamhar, Year XLII of the Reform
August 20th, 2004 c.e.



The Epistle of Ric of the North

(by Ric Knight, odm, Aug 2004)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the First

1. By the grace of the Universe that gives birth to us all, I, Ric of the North, do write these words to the assembled Druish folk in the 42nd year of the reform. I had originally thought to name this document "A Knight's Tale" however copyright law and lawyers being what they are, and my desire not to have the movie of said name and this document confused in any way, I chose another title. (Note: The jousting in the movie is much better)
2. This would be the place, in any decent epistle, where Druids of the Reform admonish the readers to not pay too much attention to the following words. Reasons for this are varied. My words are not your words, my thoughts are not your thoughts, you may look at the universe in a much different light than I do, and quite frankly I may have written this whole thing while enjoying the company of a very lovely bottle of fifteen year old scotch. So beyond here there may be dragons. You've been warned.
3. Reformed Druidism is not so much a faith for me as it is a way of being. A way of being each moment of every day. It is not enough to profess the Reform, for me the Reform must be indistinguishable from breath,
4. How can this be accomplished? What is the nature of the Reform? These are questions that you may well expect an answer to, and with any luck I may eventually give one, or at least a hint of one.
5. I arrive at the Reform without any history of participation in it. I am not associated with any grove derived from any of the various groups of the Reform. I can trace no apostolic succession to Fisher, nor have I every set foot on the Hill of Three Oaks, at Carleton. My conversion to the Reform was sudden and complete. Call me Saul and reading ARDA on Brother Mike's website was my road to Damascus.
6. The Reform is a revolution in spiritual thought and practice for two reasons; Anarchy of organization, and complete openness and acceptance of membership. The Reform is ruled by none and, as history has shown, has resisted all attempts by anyone to organize it for more than a weekend BBQ. The membership is fiercely independent and guards with tenacity their rights to believe whatever they choose. There are no complicated membership requirements and anyone searching for a spiritual truth can find company, encouragement, and wisdom within the Reform's embrace.
7. The ties that bind us are the Two Tenets.
8. Verse seven was short and to the point and deserved therefore to stand solitary on the page. It falls to the following verses to explain. There has been much debate, discussion, yelling, hair pulling, and general mayhem whenever the Druish gather and discuss either the Tenets or anything more organizational than a BBQ (good humour is self referential). Anyone who cares to review the RDNATalk archives for August of 2003 will see this in abundance. The cause of the debate is not important. Other causes will spark other debates and the wheel will turn again.
9. Perhaps it is the Reform's circadian rhythm that requires a hair pull ever so often about what the Reform is, how it should grow and what being "Reformed" truly means. Rather than being the road less traveled it becomes the road oft taken. Schism unto schism, Reform without end, forever and ever amen. When really, what it means to be Reformed is intensely and immensely personal. It defies structure. It confounds order. In the end I know what it is to be a Reformed Druid for me as well as any other will know what it is to be a Reformed Druid for them. It is our search and while we may walk together for a spell, our footsteps are our own to make.
10. We find ourselves in the Reform and in doing so find this community of interest. The "structure" grows organically. It may be imperfect, it may not be a straight path, but nature abhors a straight line. It's not up to me or any other Reformed Druid whether anyone joins the Reform. It is up to the searcher to discover for themselves whether the Reform has something to offer them, and by that search awareness comes.
11. While there is a history and a tradition for the Reform it is also adaptive and ever evolving. The trick is to adequately balance the two. To be a Reformed Druid is to search for the truths through the guidance of Nature. Other Reformed Druids can help in that search; some can offer us no help for their search does not resonate with us. But we all agree that we are searchers together, and we respect each other and the revelations that are received, even if these revelations have nothing to show us. It's not about getting anywhere; it's about the journey.
12. How do we judge who is or is not from the Reform? We cannot. What makes my interpretation of Reformed Druidism significantly different or qualitatively better than anyone else's? Nothing. The Reform is a university of sorts. We agree (sort of) on a common approach to investigating questions concerning faith and belief, but there are vast differences as to what those beliefs are. Once we start stamping things as "officially recognized by the Reform" we will quickly approach the dreaded state of dogma. Better that we remain the contentious, debating, questioning, hair pulling lot that we are.
13. But no one is bound to accept more than the two tenets. It's our way.

Chapter 2 Oh Canada!

1. The Reformed Druids of North America sprang into being 41 years ago as an American group and has since surfaced in many different parts of the world; Europe, Japan, Turkey, and even Antarctica.
2. As Canada is a sizeable portion of North America, at least in sheer landmass (we are the large pink blob on most maps just north of the U.S. of A.), it would seem fitting that a Canadian should shed some light on the North American nature of the Druish folk as it appears from under the maple trees. I realize that North America includes Mexico and is in fact a triad, however not being Mexican, I cannot comment on the Mexican contribution to the Reform. That must be left to a future Epistle from a much more reliable source. I do however, love Mexican food (if that helps any).

3. Canada is big. It's incredibly mind bogglingly huge in a way that say Liechtenstein is not. But in our bigness we have inner smallness. We are one-tenth the population of our American cousins and suffer a kind of size performance anxiety as a result (not that size matters).
4. Canada, vast land of resource and opportunity, itty-bitty population.
5. The United State on the other hand is big with a capital B. Everything is big. Big territory, big budget, big cars, and big army. It's as if the entire nation is a vast colony of Texas (the "biggest", just ask a Texan and Alaska doesn't count).
6. A Canadian Prime Minister (Trudeau – loved and reviled by Canadians and Americans alike) once said that the Relation between Canada and the United States is much like a marriage between a mouse and an elephant. While the mouse is glad of the protection the elephant's size affords, it is always nervous that the elephant might roll over in its sleep.
7. Canada and the United States are the best of childhood friends. Sure we've had scuffles; The Revolutionary War (or as we like to call it Treason), the War of 1812 (which incidentally we won, but that would be a whole other epistle), and various Fenian raids during the later 19th Century. Otherwise, on the whole relations have been peaceful and friendly.
8. But like most friends of childhood, we have grown and followed different paths. We feel different things. We have different values. We love each other like siblings, but we just don't really understand each other.
9. In the beginning (1867) Canada was formed rather peaceful and boring with a founding principle of "Peace Order, and Good Government" which is a stark contrast from the "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness" (1776) which is the creed of the United States (our rebellious older sister who stormed out of the house while we stayed on good relations with our mother country).
10. This is an important point as it sheds light upon the national character of our two distinct North American societies. The United States is the embodiment of individualism Canada is more communally oriented. "Canada and the U.S. have grown up with substantially different characters: group rights, public institutions, and deference to authority have abided north of the border, while individualism, private interests, and mistrust of authority have remained strong in the south."[i]
11. The Reformed Druids of North America is a truly North American group as it combines the essential character traits of both.
12. There is a fierce independence about the Reform that won't be dictated to by anyone, including other Reformers.
13. There is also a strong sense of community and inclusion that welcomes all, accepts and adapts to changes, and grows stronger as a result.
14. Perhaps this "Canadianism" aspect of the Reform is due in no small part to Howard Cherniack. A boiterous Canuck and founding member of the Reform who was instrumental in the forming of the ties that bind the reform together - the Two Tenets and Constitution (Canadians, Compromise and Community oh my).
15. The path of the Reform is a successful balancing act between the two polarities. Too much towards the individualism of the south and we will see splinter and schism as new groups form in protest of some slight or disagreement. Too much towards the communalism of the north and the reform risks becoming dogmatic, traditional and a barrier to new ways.
16. It is the combination of the North American genius that forms the successful middle way of the Reform.
17. It is my hope that the Reform will continue to include and promote the best virtues of the North American nations as it lives and grows into a brighter future

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The Sixth Epistle of Isaac

(By Isaac Bonewits, 2004)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter One

1. Brothers and Sisters in the Mother, I write this epistle with a sad heart, having just heard about the death of Br. Robert Larson, DAL, BE around Lughnasadh of 2004 c.e.
2. As many of you may know, Robert was the graduate of Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota who first introduced me to the Reformed Druids of North America and who eventually ordained me as a priest of the Earthmother in 1968.
3. It was his (accidental?) omission of early non-Pagan materials in the RDNA teachings (in his copy of *The Green Book)* that led me to believe that Druidism was and should be a Neopagan path; which belief I made into a self-fulfilling prophecy, much to the annoyance, amusement, and/or approval of various other Reformed Druids.
4. Robert was the priest who showed me how powerful invoking Celtic deities in a Celtic language could be and whose love of trees influenced my environmental concerns.
5. He was the one who encouraged me to edit, write parts of, and typeset *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, which eventually became *A Reformed Druid Druid Anthology* under Br. Scharding's care.
6. Although health problems have erased many personal memories of my younger days, I still have an image of the two of us burning hundreds of printing plates and offset printing *TDCE* day after day, working at his printing job after hours, then collating it and shipping it off to as many Reformed Druids as we could find.
7. If Robert had not thought of doing this project, who knows what would have happened to the Reform? The new *Apocrypha*, rituals, and the unforgettable *Great Druish Books* raised a ruckus and got people back in touch with each other, if only to argue!
8. The Carleton Grove was revived—twice!—because students found copies of *TDCE* in the college library, which ultimately became home to what may be the world's largest Druid Archives.
9. To this very day, the pages Robert Larson printed are still there in the library, a legacy to future generations of Carleton students.

Chapter Two

1. But his legacy is greater than this, even if by accident.
2. If I am the father of a few Branches of the Reform, including *Ár nDraíocht Féin:* A Druid Fellowship, then Robert Larson was the unknown grandfather.
3. Without him, there would have been no New Reformed Druids of North America, no Orthodox Druids of North America, no ADF, no Henge of Keltria, and none of the other Neopagan Druid offshoots of the Reform.
4. His humor, his laid-back attitudes about religious orthodoxy, and his teachings live on in hundreds (perhaps thousands) of people he never knew.
5. Another memory of him that survives is of the day I asked him about Druid holidays. "Robert," I said to him, "today's the fall Equinox. Aren't we supposed to observe it or something?"
6. He put his banjo down, got up and went to the balcony of our apartment and looked at the setting sun.
7. "Yep, looks like an equinox to me!" he said and went back to his chair and resumed his playing.
8. Though I was mildly annoyed at the time, years later this incident was a source of much fruitful meditation for me.

Chapter Three

1. I have not been to California for many years and long ago I lost touch with Robert.
2. Occasionally I would hear about local groves out there and someone who had moved or passed away, but seldom news about him.
3. I bitterly wish that I had made more of an effort to connect with him, for this week I was informed that he had become another example of a disposable elder.
4. For this is America, where those who are old, sick, and poor are free to simply curl up and die.
5. After all, universal health care would be "socialized medicine" - a horror beyond belief to those who profit from the current medical-drug-insurance industry (even though every other civilized nation in the world has it).
6. The tale of Robert's death is not a pretty one, but it is one that some of us may expect to repeat.
7. Like many inside and outside of the Reform, he had no retirement savings. He wound up being evicted from his apartment May 5th of this year.
8. Now there's a Happy Beltaine for you!
9. He moved into a residence hotel with the help of a family member and lived there for about three months.
10. Naturally he had no medical insurance, so he was unable to buy medication for his diabetes.
11. The diabetes eventually caused a heart attack around Lughnasadh and killed him.
12. As far as I know, he was alone at the time.

Chapter Four

1. I'm fairly sure that Robert never thought of himself as a "Pagan Elder," but he died like one.
2. Non-Pagan Druids may be unaware that many of the founders and older leaders of the Neopagan movement have died over the last several years, most of them alone and in poverty.
3. For while creating mythologies and temples and clergy and festivals and traditions, we have somehow neglected to create a safety-net for our elders.
4. There don't seem to be any Pagan nursing homes, hospitals, homeless shelters, or retirement communities.
5. I have often remarked that most of the good things and the bad things about American Neopagans have to do with the fact that we are Americans who happen to be Neopagans.
6. Like most Americans, we have simply not thought much about the future, or assumed blithely that everyone had enough money in a Social Security account to protect them.
7. All too often we also assumed that "somebody else" would take care of anyone needing help, so few Pagan charities have been started.

8. Ironically, the women and men who have spent the most time and energy helping to birth and nurse the Neopagan movement usually live at a much lower standard of living than the majority of their students or congregations.
9. For hours spent serving others don't count for salaries or retirement plans, and those who claim to know magic are assumed (erroneously) to be able to conjure whatever they might need.
10. So Pagan Elders who spend 40 or 50 or even 60 hours per week helping their community often wind up living on the streets or turning down the heat in their homes to save energy costs.
11. And whereas members of other faiths would be horrified to see one of their clergy living in genuine poverty (without an oath to do so), while most of their members are middle-class, Neopagans all too often simply don't bother to look.
12. For they have decided that money is evil and that spiritual people shouldn't really need any.
13. Besides, they need to save their money for beer and pizza and CDs and DVDs and a faster computer and trips to the beach and other sorts of self-indulgence.
14. None of this may be of interest to some of you, for hardly any of the Reformed Druid clergy function as such on a full time basis, which may be just as well.
15. But Robert's death, following on so many others, has renewed a determination on my part to see to it that my Neopagan brothers and sisters start paying attention to these issues.
16. In his death I fear I see my own and the deaths of many of my colleagues.
17. So I will be focusing much of my personal time and energy over the next several years working with others to create the long term resources we will all need sooner or later.
18. Pagan communities both urban and rural, some just for elders and some with a full range of ages, as well as homeless shelters, food pantries, visiting nurse services and more are on the table.
19. Eventually we will have Curmudgeonly Acres and the Pagan Old Coots home, as well as Bridget's Maternity Services and Thor's Lodge for Pagan Veterans.
20. You my sisters and brothers in the Reform are most welcome to join the planning now and use the results later.
21. I will post information about these projects on my website, which should be <www.neopagan.net> for the next ten years or so.

Chapter Five

1. I had planned to make this epistle a cheery one, for we have much to celebrate; though Robert's passing has (no doubt much to his amazement) sobered me.
2. It is really amazing that the Druidic memes planted so long ago should still be bearing fruit today.
3. Now there are tens of thousands of people calling themselves Druids, all around the world, and the Founders of the RDNA deserve a bit of the credit.
4. I thank you all, living and passed over, for the joy and beauty you created, accidentally or deliberately.
5. And this Samhain and every Samhain thereafter, let us raise a glass of the Waters to Robert Larson, priest of the Earth Mother and now one of the Mighty Dead.

The Last Epistle of Robert

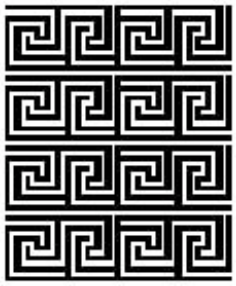
(By Robert Larson, 2004?)

(New to ARDA 2)

An fh'rinne in aghaidh an tsaoil. (the truth against the world.) - old druid motto (really)
Everything you know is wrong. -The Firesign Theater

1. The First of these sayings should, I feel, serve as a motto for all druids, whatever their personal belief systems.
2. As druids, we have committed ourselves to the search for that which we believe to be true.
3. By implication, then, we commit ourselves to maintain our truth even though the entire world disagree, much less other druids.
4. After all, virtually all the generally agreed upon truths of today began as individual or minority opinions.
5. For instance, atomic theory, which most accept as demonstrable scientific fact, has its basis in a philosophical truth of Epicureanism.
6. As the ancient Druids believed, truth will be recognized, sometimes suddenly, when truth will shake the world, or other times gradually.
7. The belief in the moral force of truth was not the exclusive property of the druids, of course.
8. Indeed, it is found throughout the Indo-European realms, from the Hindus through the Persian and Greeks to Ireland.
9. From the Greek Stoic philosophers it spread itself to early Christianity in the form of the logos. More about this later.
10. For now, let me say that each druid must maintain his truth, come what may, even if it leads to the conclusion of the second motto.
11. Well it may lead to this conclusion, for history is written by the victors and the beliefs that are most familiar are those of the majority.
12. Familiarity and victory are, however, no guarantee of truth, nor have they ever been.
13. With all this modestly in mind, I will expand in this epistle some things that seem to me to be true.
14. Some of you may think that I'm crazier than ever, but my hope is not to convince you, but to give you some insights into matters druidical which formulated themselves to me as a result of my studies while I was reading Brother Michael's history of the RDNA…..

[The text ends abruptly at this point.]



Some Final Thoughts

(By Norman Nelson, 1976)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

1. In creating the RDNA, we took as our basic philosophy what I usually sum up as, "Take a look around you at nature there must be something bigger than we are!" For many people, this came to be a deep and abiding sort of faith. Many who could not stomach 'organized religion' were attracted to Druidism, which was most definitely a disorganized religion.
2. RDNA never asked people to renounce their own religion, but was rather supplementary to the "standard" religions. If you read the Tenets, you will see this. For some, Druidism remained supplementary; for some, it became primary; and for the majority, I believe, it was an interesting experiment which was soon dropped and probably forgotten.
3. It is difficult from my perspective, remembering the beginnings of our "joke," to know what Druidism means to those who encountered it in later years, after the founders were gone. It has remained viable, which means that we must have tapped some sort of fundamental need in people; it is taken quite seriously by quite a few, which means that we created something deeper than we originally intended.
4. To all who have experienced it, in the various Groves which have been established or through the telling of the story, THE BLESSINGS OF THE EARTH-MOTHER BE UPON YOU.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

A Conclusion, 1996

It would be false for me to imply to you that everything was milk and honey amongst the Druids after the *A Cup filled to the Brim with Druidism* in 1976 until the *Book of Lacunae* in 1996. There were quite a few more broadsides fired between 1976 and 1982, but rarely with any great amounts of debate or essays of introspection. Most of the surviving essays from that period are found in the Part Twelve collection of Druid Chronicler newsletters. I just feel that the Druids stopped writing really interesting letters, or they were just repeating, in less flowery prose, most of the points that we have already covered. The further study of other letters in the Archives is always available to you.

Please remember that the authors of the Apocrypha cannot be considered as speaking for anybody in the Reform but rather for themselves alone. The Apocrypha was a collection of opinions about how Druidism has been experienced by various Druids, at different times, in various ways. Each is but "one way, yea, one way among many."

May the Blessings of the Earth-Mother be apparent to you everyday of your life.

Mike the Confused

Reference Selections

Between the Lines

End Notes for the

Books of the Apocrypha

Essentially, this is a collection of small commentary by Isaac Bonewits (IB), Richard Shelton (RMS), Norman Nelson (NN), and Michael Scharding (MS).

The Book of Faith

1 David Fisher, retired and became a somewhat embarrassed Instructor in Christian Theology at a Southern University. He is now an ordained Anglican Priest and occasionally wishes that everybody forgot about the Reformed Druids. IB

8 All original sexisms have been left intact. IB

9 "Every form of religious ritual is magickal." IB

10 Others do, however. IB

Epistle of David the Chronicler

1:1 To Norman Nelson from David Frangquist; written originally in Aug. of 1964. IB

1:5 Nelson was in what was then known as the "missionary quandary": if all three officers were needed to consecrate the Waters, and if consecrated Waters are necessary to create First and Second Order Members, how could a single Third Order Druid/ess star a Grove? This was later solved by a vote of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (see Records). "I held my own services during the Summer of 1964 at our cabin in the Black Hills of South Dakota. My sister acted as Preceptor in an abbreviated Grove." NN

The Missionary Quandary was settled by the Council in 27 January 1965 Missions (a). When celebrating with no 2nd Order present, the priest has the entire congregation give the responses in unison. RMS

1:7 The Episcopal Bishop of South Dakota, who was staying in an adjacent cabin. IB

1:8 As David Fisher mentions in the Book of Faith, "none of us at first thought the RDNA would continue: it had started out as a joke to protest the religious requirement, which was now accomplished. Given the perspective of ten more years, I know we created more than we suspected. The self-mocking ritual to which David Frangquist refers (in chapter three below) was what led to my comments about playacting." NN

2:1 A summer scout camp in Northern Wisconsin where Frangquist was a counselor that summer. RMS

2:8 "The Grove there died out after two years, when Hirsch and Helding moved out of the area and lost touch." Frangquist.

2:10 "In the Fall of 1964, I started a Grove at Vermilion, South Dakota (where I was in Graduate School) and found much the same results as described in this chapter." NN

3:1 "Another way in which this is frequently stated is that a religion is a combination of a magical system and a philosophical system, although there is usually a mention of an orientation towards Higher Beings." IB

3:3 See note to The Book of Faith 8 above.

3:7 There is a great deal of disagreement among Druids concerning this and the subsequent references to the negative aspects of rituals. For a totally opposite opinion, see The Second Epistle of Isaac. IB

3:11 This can prove difficult, as we know very little about the Ancient Druids. Some Reformed Druids now hold that any Paleopagan religion may serve as proper inspiration for new rituals. IB

The Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals.

Written by David Frangquist in 1970 c.e. [Shouldn't that be 1966? MS] The note of the Book of Faith 8 above applies here as well. "This particular book can be said to represent the original philosophy behind the founding of the RDNA (insofar as any one person's opinion can) better than any other Book currently in the Apocrypha. Which may go a long way towards explaining why so many of the older members of the RDNA were so upset at the ideas that later led to the forming of the various offshoots." IB

The Discourse of Thomas the Fool

III: 1 See Customs XI. See the End-Notes for Customs XI. RMS

The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool

2:2 A reference to the Consecration of the Waters of Life in the Order of Worship. MS

2:3 This is his own interpretation. MS

2:4 The Wisdom of the Waters appears to be his own creation. MS

2:8 Druid numerology perhaps? The Seven-Fold powers are called upon when consecrating the Waters of Life and the Thirteen-Fold mystery was discussed deeply in the Discourse of Thomas the Fool. MS

The Book of Changes

1:6 For an explanation of all these terms, see *The First Epistle of Isaac.* IB

1:11 "At the time of the writing of this letter, I knew of only the Berkeley and the Twin Cities Groves as still active. I later found out that the Chicago and the Stanford Groves were also still alive (the first vigorously and the second barely)." IB. It now turns out that the Ann Arbor Grove was also in existence at this time, however, their ArchDruids did not disseminate this news widely. It is also claimed that the Carleton Grove was also active. (see notes to 1:13, below).

1:12 Although it is confusing to monotheistic theologians, Neopagans apparently suffer no difficulties in being clergy in several religions at the same time. It should be noted, however, that at least one ArchDruid of the RDNA has emphatically stated his belief that being a priest/ess in a Neopagan religion does not automatically constitute a conviction or qualification to be a Third Order Druid/ess in the RDNA. -IB

1:13 It certainly seemed to be defunct at the time, however, your Editor [IB] is now told that it actually was not officially defunct at all, merely less active than in the past (though there is some disagreement among Druids as to what constitutes an "active Grove). One ex-ArchDruid of Carleton has offered this explanation for his position that the Carleton Grove has never actually been defunct: The Grove has seen several lean years, he says, but with one exception, its continuity has never been broken. This exception was the Great Interim in 1968, which lasted only a few months but caused multiple difficulties. ArchDruid Thomas Carlisle left Carleton during the Winter, leaving behind an active Grove with no one to lead it. David Frangquist helped start it up again the next Spring, "but much tradition and lore had been lost and it took us nearly two years to recover them, " through much correspondence with David Frangquist and Norman Nelson (most of it now in the Carleton Grove Archives). Since then, personal friendships and a concern for the Grove's continuity has led to deliberate efforts to keep continuity going, which have been for the most part, successful.

He notes officially, the Grove still exists during the Summer Vacation and that (even if there are no meetings) the ArchDruid still gets much work done. The "chaos of the last two years" (1972-74) was caused by all but one of the Third Order Druids deciding to take a year off and go abroad at the same time, so that interest on campus lagged. But '"the tradition at Carleton is" that anyone elected ArchDruid/ess stays as such until a new one is elected, so the Grove continued to officially exist as an "active Grove."

In any event, at the time this letter was composed, the author had received a written note from Carleton indicating the demise of that Grove ("The Druids are dead, long live the Druids!") IB

1:18 As this verse obviously show, this letter was not edited at all, except to correct spelling an punctuation. It was felt that historical accuracy was of more importance than felicitous phrasing in this Book. IB

1:27 It is important to note that verses 2-27 of this chapter were written before The First Epistle of Isaac, but that Chapters 2-4 were written shortly afterwards (and were meant to go out with it). As explained in Chapter 5, things didn't work out as expected.

2:8 The Berkeley, Chicago and Stanford Groves wanted a coup, while the Twin Cities Grove wanted to Schis. IB

3:8 A matter insisted upon by the ArchDruid of Chicago, as necessary to further the existence of Reformed Druidism. IB

4:4 At least one Bardic Order has been founded since then, the Order of Oberon, by Br. David Geller. A Healing Order called the Order of Diancecht is being started by Sr. Joan Carruth and an Order for the practice of Pagan Ceremonial Magick, called the Order of Merddyn, by Adr. Isaac Bonewits. IB

4:6 Actually, the only drastic removal of material done by Bonewits was the removal of Customs 8:13-15. The other editing was primarily the altering of sexist phraseology. IB

5:11 "It is a remarkable tribute to the basically antipolitical character of Reformed Druidism that even we revolutionaries tend to be incompetent at politics." IB

5:12 This was founded by Isaac Bonewits, who stopped en route from his previous position as ArchDruid of the Twin Cities to his subsequent position as ArchDruid of the Mother Grove which was also located in Berkeley. Sr. Vicki Rhodes became the new ArchDruidess of the Twin Cities and was a member of the PCoADs. Hasidic Druidism is a Branch of the Reform out of the SDNA, consisting of Neopagans of even greater piety (see the writings of the Hasidic Druids) The name of the "Arch

Grove" was chosen because (a) they did not want to name their Grove after a Christian Saint, and (b) because of the magnificent 630 foot Arch that is the symbol of the City of St. Louis. The HDNA has agreed to continue to use the same ordination ceremonies as those of the other Branches of the Reform (with its own additions), so as to retain the Apostolic Succession; and to encourage those who are interested in Reformed Druidism, but not Hasidic style, to get in touch with the other Branches. MJS

5:15 Isaac was notified just before the DC(E) went to the printers, that Richard Shelton, had founded a Grove in Ann Arbor, MI during the summer of 1973. IB

5:16 The PCoADs did not as of August of 1975, include ArchDruids Shelton (Ann Arbor), Morrison (Carleton) or Corey (New York 2). Therefore these have not approved of this Book of Changes nor of the DC(E), although Shelton and Morrison did provide publication feedback. IB

Some Final Thoughts

You may have seen some tiny numbers occasionally in the text. This was Norman's numbered endnotes for the Carleton Apocrypha.

1 i.e. The Druid Chronicles, for which this book was once intended. Many Druids would not use the word "canon" in this context.
2 See the Between the Lines entry for this verse.
3 A summer camp in Wisconsin where David worked as a counselor.
4 See Cus. 8 and Med. 4.
5 Cus. 11.
6 Tao The Ching. Chapter 17.
7 President of Carleton College when Druidism was founded.
8 Professor of Religion at Carleton, and later Dean of the College. For a time he served as the faculty advisor for the Carleton Grove.
9 From his introduction to The Sufies by Idres Shah.
10 Gerre Goodman, in a letter to Isaac dated 9/3/74.

Historiography of the Books of the Apocrypha,

(By Mike, 1996 & 2003)

A.K.A.

The Dirty Laundry of the Reformed Druids

Note to the Reader

According to the American Heritage Dictionary, a historiography is: "The writing of history based on a critical analysis, evaluation and selection of authentic source materials and composition of these materials into a narrative subject to scholarly methods of criticism." Essentially I am writing a history of Reformed Druidism by discussing trends shown in the letters of past Druids, and I expect you to disagree with me and write to me why you disagree. These analyses of the contents of the Books of the Apocrypha put them into a historical context and timeline, making them more meaningful. If you have no prior familiarity with Reformed Druidism, you might find this historiography confusing and boring, and you might be better off by first reading my "History of Reformed Druidism." After that, you may be more interested in the historicity of the Apocrypha.

A Spring Thaw?

This is a rare and interesting look into a young and passionate David Frangquist in the spring term of 1964. The chapel requirement had not yet been lifted, the Chronicles had not been finished, and the Third Order was not created. Many of the early Druids at Carleton had a connection with the local radio stations (KARL AM and KRLX FM) being broadcast from Willis Hall (then the Student Center). David had obviously done some of his homework on Celtic matters and was beginning to show us his ability to inspire and lead at this point, just at the point when Fisher was beginning to have his first doubts on his participation in the RDNA.

The Book of Faith

This book was written by David Fisher, the founder of the RDNA, on 4/12/64.

Fisher at this point was ending his junior year at Carleton and felt deeply that he was going to enter the Episcopal Seminary after graduation in 1965, which he eventually did. He was slightly worried by how Reformed Druidism had taken on a life of its own, and that he may have founded a full-blown religion. There may have been some anxiety that the review board of the Seminary might frown on his Druidical activities. Fisher knew that Nelson and Frangquist would be succeeding him as ArchDruid in May and November, respectively, and that Frangquist was currently writing the Druid Chronicles (Reformed). Fisher wanted to add some commentary to the Chronicles, perhaps to keep readers from taking the Reform too seriously. The Book of Faith was Fisher's attempt to reconcile all these points and leave some guidance as the Reform left his guardianship.

The Book of Faith was never appended to the Druid Chronicles (Reformed), which people felt should be kept as a self-sufficient document. The Book of Faith has been looked

upon in many ways by different people. Some saw it as more meddling and control-attempts by David Fisher, others as a valuable lesson. Whatever their opinion, it has been one of the more widely read letters in the Reform, and it provides a rare insight into the mind of David Fisher. It is the only real document of any size left to us from Fisher's pencil. It is also a good book to read when a Druid feels that their faith is under assaults of credibility. Outside of the three Apocryphas, the Book of Faith has never been published.

The Epistle of David The Chronicler

This book was written at the end of the summer of 1964 from David Frangquist to Norman Nelson. Norman Nelson had been a summer stand-in ArchDruid of Carleton, after Fisher stepped down, from April of 1964 to September of 1964, at which point Frangquist became ArchDruid of Carleton until April of 1966. Norman Nelson had graduated in June of 1964 and moved back home to South Dakota. As mentioned in the End-Notes, above, the grove in question was his cabin. He later started a grove at Vermilion, S.D., at his grad-school.

David Frangquist was writing this letter after having published The Druid Chronicles (Reformed), and Frangquist was about to begin his two year Arch-Druidcy of Carleton. In many ways, Frangquist was a major shaper of how Druidism would develop at Carleton for decades. Frangquist wrote the Druid Chronicles (Reformed), assembled the Green Book, (and with his wife Deborah Gavrin Frangquist) restarted the Carleton Grove on at least three occasions, been a mountain of resources & advice to countless Archdruids, and has played a major role in the Isaac Affair. This letter, therefore could be construed, with the Druid Chronicles, as showing Frangquist's view of Druidism at the beginning of his Arch-Druidcy. It is a good statement on how and why a Third Order Druid should undertake a missionary Grove. I, myself, wish that my own Druidry had been so far advanced after only one year! Like the Book of Faith, the Epistle of David the Chronicler has never been "published" outside of the three Apocryphas.

The Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals

David Frangquist wrote this on June 6th, 1966 at the close of his ArchDruidcy at Carleton. Dick Zempel was taking over at this point. David had just completed the last touches on the Green Book and was probably thinking back on his two productive years at Carleton. It is difficult to know how many levels of humor are buried in this work, even the dating 6/6/66 is a joke. Outlines are the strictest forms of thought, yet there is no strict binding of Reformed Druidism in this Outline. Frangquist appears to have had a love-hate relationship with form and officialness. Many of his other early letters show him spoofing officialness and talking strictly with his tongue in his cheek. This is perhaps the last of these jokes. Outside of the Apocryphas, this has never been published, although it seems to have been widely-read.

Leabhar Toirdhealbhaigh

These poems was written by Robert Larson in the spring of 1967 before his Archdruidcy while of Berkeley (1968-1976). The title is Irish for "Book of Torvel" and could be pronounced as "Lyow-ur Turuli(g)" (it could also be pronounced "kkakzzpopzidkdkaltzt," but that would be very silly). At the time of its publishing in 1975 for DC(E), Robert was in the SCA and ran under the name "Toirdhealbhaigh MacLorcain, mainly to bedevil any herald attempting to pronounce it. The grove jokingly called me Turlock MacGargle (At least, I think it was a joke.) Earlier, I might have called it "Leabhar Aedha," later "Leabhar Chathail," or whatever."

Robert Larson is an old Carleton Druid, present during the birth of the RDNA, although like Frangquist, he only joined the RDNA after the initial weeks. Robert Larson, like I mention in his interview in Part 10, never graduated from Carleton, but left midway through Frangquist's ArchDruidcy. Larson had drunk deeply of Carleton Druidism and was a proto-hippie. He was also deeply interested in Paleo-Celtic material, far beyond any of the other Carleton Druids in the original Grove. Larson was the one to introduce much of the Celtic flavor into Berkeley Druidism and start its leanings toward Celtic Neo-Paganism (which Bonewits later accentuated). However in Larson's own life, Druidism was a quiet and contemplative activity, as is shown in this poem. His reference to being Archdruid of Clann-Na-Brocheta was a foreshadowing of his founding the Orthodox Druids of North America in 1977 with a group of Celtic reconstructionist entertainers (who performed at the Northern California Renaissance Pleasure Faire). That group met occasionally for outdoor parties (Paddy's day, Bealtaine, Solstice) usually on Mount Tamalpais in Marin County, all dressed in costume with lots of swords around.

This poem was rarely seen by Pre-1976 Druids outside of Berkeley. It is of a similar flavor to Letter to My Brothers. The verse "Softly go, wanderer, Where the wood calls, And lives." Somehow was not in the 1996 version, and has been re-inserted.

Letter to My Brothers

This was written by Steve Savitzky who was ArchDruid of Carleton from 1968 to 1969. He was the last Carleton Druid to have personally met one of the Founders until a reunion in the 80s. Steve went onto to found the long-lived Stanford Grove (a.k.a. the Southern Shores) in California. The original copy of this letter is not extant, and has only been published in the Carleton Apocrypha. Compare it with Leabhar Toirdhealbhaigh.

The Discourse of Thomas the Fool

This document was probably only known to the Carleton Druids of the 1970-1978 period, or the Age of Shelton, as I humorously call it. The author was Thomas McCausland (CL70: Shelton) and it was probably written as a sermon after May 1970 but before June 1971. It is perhaps one of the most mystical pieces of writing to ever come from the Carleton Druids. It is also a very rare example (along with The Wisdom) of an detailed opinion of a Carleton Druid upon their own literature. I suspect that many sermons and discussions have been made orally by dozen of Druids about the Book of Meditations of DC(R) or the Green Book, but this is the only example in writing that we have. Thomas experienced what I call, "Way Deep Druidism." It is a pity that we only have two of Thomas' sermons, because I really like them. The Discourse was only released in the Carleton Apocrypha and Isaac probably never knew of its existence.

As was explained elsewhere, the Thirteenfold mystery, is a powerful poem composed by Amherghin the Druid, as described in the well known "The Book of Invasions of Ireland." Most Druid groups in America agree that is very special meditational poem. The version possessed by the Reform was translated from the original Gaelic by Prof. John Messenger. It is a poem of union with Nature, and of full self-Awareness. It is commonly used in the Invocation phase of the Order of Worship.

The remainder of the Discourse concerns itself with trying to describe Be'al. Be'al, as is mentioned elsewhere, is one of the strange terms used in Reformed Druidism. The Book of Meditations in DC(R), which Thomas must have read many

times, devotes chapters in trying to describe Be'al, and acknowledges its failure. Although it may be related to the Irish Bel, I suspect most Druids use the term "Be'al," because it sounds like "be all," as in "the be-all and end-all." It is a neutral term, perhaps, for what Christian Mystics call "God," or perhaps "the Holy Spirit." No one agrees with me on a definition.

The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool

Again, written by Thomas McCausland, but we know the specific date of August 25th, 1970.

It is another rare letter, because it examines the underpinnings of liturgical terminology of the Reform. It was probably put in the Carleton Apocrypha by Richard Shelton as a Zen-ish experiential counterbalance to Isaac's meticulous and dogmatic examination of the Order of Worship, as was shown in *The Second Epistle of Isaac*. Indeed, this is a very Zen-Druidic piece, which is filled with Carleton Druidism, in my opinion. Sometime in the early 70s, an abbot (Eshin Nishimura) from a Japanese Zen monastery taught courses on meditation and religion at Carleton. Thomas attended every one of them.

One detects more clearly here, than in The Discourse, the unusual tone of fervency, perhaps even an evangelistic overtone? This would not be due to fear that Carleton Druidism was in one of its "down-phases." Richard Shelton was in the middle of his prosperous two year ArchDruidcy at Carleton and he had groomed Glen McDavid as his successor. If anything, this was a time of Druidic Renaissance. Some Zen masters have been very intense in their attempts to "awaken" their pupils out of ignorance; perhaps this is what Thomas is trying to do?

The purpose of this sermon is about "True Names," a term that I have not heard used anywhere else. However, I suspect that Thomas was deeply inspired by the Zen in the Book of Meditations from DC(R), as was shown in the Discourse. Perhaps the idea of "True Names" was taken from Med. 1:11, where Frangquist (on his Third Order Vigil) heard his "name" called three times? With that verse, Thomas may be interpreting "name" to mean the inner reality & consciousness of Frangquist, what Reformed Druidism calls "Awareness." Thomas's discussion of "True Names" seems to have a similar purpose as the Zen master's question; "What was your original face (or name) before you were born?"

As is common with Carleton Druidism, Thomas wonderfully attacks the role of ritual in Reformed Druidism (see the Book of Faith and Epistle of David the Chronicler). Thomas appears to be putting a heavy stress on the importance of Vigiling, which I believe all Druids should do regardless of whether they choose to accept the burden of the Third Order. Another interesting reference is 3:7, that "The Patriarchs know your Name." That is a very strange statement. He is, uniquely, also playing here with a bit of numerology.

The Smiley Letters

The Smiley Affair began at the end of the Savitzky Archdruid, and finished by the start of school at the beginning of Richard Shelton's formative Archdruidcy. Richard Smiley (CL67:Frangquist) returned to Illinois after Carleton and went to Purdue University for Grad School. It was during the Vietnam war and after graduate school, he faced the possibility of being drafted again for a war he did not believe in. Like the Cherniack affair in the Chronicles, it was a direct confrontation with authority on the issue of recognition of a religious group. What I find so fascinating about it is the way it was resolved without having the group recognized, but accomplishing its mission and dodging definition. Also it raised the thought to me of why the government authorities allowed religious authorities not to go to war, but the laymen had to go. Are priests always more conscientious in their objection to war, or is it one scratching the other's back?

The Following is some commentary by Richard Shelton who assembled these letters.

On Thu, 30 Jan 2003 17:40:24 -0500,

Dear Michael --

I owe you a profound apology for putting this off so long. When you first asked for the Smiley stuff, I did look, but couldn't find it. Your continued prodding prompted me to look further-- and further. Finally after your last phone call, I ransacked all my files. (It took several hours.) I still haven't found *my* copies of the letters, but in about the last place I expected to find anything-- a file marked "New Stuff" -- I ran across some copies I made recently of Dave's copies, which he had given to Eric. So anyway, I found something. The "originals" (themselves copies) are all in the Archives.

One look at them made me realize they wouldn't FAX very well, so I tried scanning them in and applying some image processing before hitting them with optical character recognition. That worked pretty well; I only had to re-type two of the letters, though manual editing of the optical scan was required throughout. Anyway, I give you the letters in electronic format, so at least you won't have to key them in.

Some notes about the format:

(1) The file is an ordinary .txt file, so you should have no trouble reading it and importing it into whatever text processor you're using.

(2) The letters are in chronological order, each separated from the next by a line of hyphens.

(3) All the originals were typewritten, so a monospaced font like Courier would be appropriate -- but suit yourself. I did take care to preserve the line breaks of the originals, but I regularized the indentations to 3 spaces and 33 spaces.

(4) I used slashes / / to delimit comments about the format: e.g., / letterhead/ to indicate that the SSS letterhead is preserved in the copy, /s/ to indicate that a signature is preserved in the copy. Comments that are not in slashes are typed or handwritten on the copy. (Exception: the "[sic]"s are my additions to this file. You can ignore them if you like.)

(5) I used the HTML <u> ... </u> tags to mark underlining. But I cheated: in the typescripts, each word is underlined separately (not the intervening spaces), while I put the tags around the entire underlined phrase.

(6) I was pretty careful about preserving non-standard punctuation (including absence of punctuation). I don't know how much flavor of the original you want to preserve.

-Richard

Mike: What was your view of the Smiley affair? Was it just helping a friend, a feeling of ministry-ship in the RDNA, or a protest against the war's categorization of people? I'd like to know how it affected you.

Richard: Principally, it was just an understanding that what Smiley was asking was something that came as part of the Archdruid's job: verifying that he was a priest, that priesthood answered our notion of minister, that insofar as I was aware, he was holding services. Of course, it didn't hurt that it was a way to help someone stay out of Vietnam -- though I was not yet a staunch anti-war partisan. Steve was way ahead of me on that; my political radicalization (such as it was) came only after the bombing of Cambodia and the frightening conservative backlash unleashed against the anti-war movement. [See Exorcism of War, Part Three of ARDA.]

However, the categorization of young people for military service is not something that bothers me per se -- how else will you raise an army in need? The SSS was a creation of Congress; how else is a democracy going to meet the necessity of raising an army? I will agree that the idiocy of how people were chosen for service bugged me (still does), and the stupidity and vengeful unfairness of many of the people they got to serve on the draft boards was criminal. Also that the argument for raising an army for *that* war was never well established. But that there needs to be *some* fair mechanism for raising defensive man-power was not an issue for me.

Mike: When was his status finally deferred, due to age? Can't remember how it closed.

Richard: I don't remember the date, but it was not long (weeks?) after my last letter of 1 August 1969 to his draft board. He knew the 4-D deferment was hopeless, but he also knew that since they had scheduled his personal appeal on his 26th birthday, the board was effectively offering him a deal: they would let the matter drop without giving him the deferment, but also without giving him a motive to push things any further, lest they get into real legal difficulty. He intended to give them a good argument at the hearing, but he didn't expect to convert them.

But this was not really about 4-D deferments at all, or about whether the Druids should be recognized as a bona fide religion. My interpretation of Smiley's entire strategy is that it was one long delaying tactic to stave off the draft for several months until he turned 26. He did not raise the issue at all until the draft board finally figured out that he was no longer in grad school and reclassified him 1-A -- and then he waited to the last possible moment at each stage before sending the board the requisite letter to prolong the process into the next stage. Whether he could string it out long enough was something of a long shot -- but he was lucky in that the board (or the executive secretary) made a couple of procedural errors that bought him more time. (Boards were notorious for making such errors; draft evasion handbooks gave careful instructions for capitalizing on them.)

The real wildcard (and what makes the story interesting) is that RDNA had just the right whiff of legal complication about it that the draft board decided to play it easy.

Peace,

-- Richard

The Codex of Form Missive

It was with great trepidation that Shelton released this document into the young eager hands of Mike the Packrat, and with great hesitance that I publish it now. Every Arch Druid makes mistakes, and this is the one that Brother Richard regrets the most. Not so much for the content, but for the manner in which it was phrased and presented. A bit too official sounding. Too much, too fast, too soon. Brother Richard is now a glacially slow Druid, but back in the early 70s, he was a rocket of energy and organizing. Perhaps in this respect, he parallels the rise of Isaac Bonewits, except that Shelton pulled back eventually, and Isaac kept going.

There had been a period before Savitzky during which much tradition had been lost, due to a poor overlapping of members, or perhaps it was a period of reformulation? Regardless, Shelton felt the pressure of the Smiley Affair, and wanted to tidy up the ship before leaving the port at the beginning of his two year Archdruidcy that Fall Term in 1969. The records, a blue binder of past documents, was without rhyme or reason, and difficult to fathom; perhaps being planned so. Missing services and inconsistencies bothered the young Archdruid. Thus, this letter was a request for clarification.

Things that had been traditionally understood, were seemingly felt to be unnecessarily canonized here as the only way by some of the recipients, who naturally began to respond back rather vigorously at the believed imposition. In Shelton's view it was mostly a paraphrasing of what previously passed measure had stated, in a more full description. However, not all things need to be said. It is possible that many Third Order Druids had not read the Record of the Council or had fuzzy memories, and over-reacted also, as the following sample letters will attest.

Mike: By the way, you were involved in the Smiley Affair during the beginning of your tenure as AD, so I was wondering if the scramble for officiality influenced the Codex of Affair into being?

Richard: No. The Codex of Form owes far more to the grove's near brush with extinction in 1967. I wanted to be sure that what was in the Record of the Council was known; I wanted to be sure that tradition was not lost. I wanted people to let the AD know when they moved and when new priests were consecrated -- because keeping track of that is the AD's responsibility. While the Codex (as I came to understand) was not the apposite solution, it addressed a problem that many besides me (including both Frangquist and Bonewits) also felt (as witness later proposals to the Council): we all realized that communicative inertia would hamper orderly change. But we finally gave up on that; gave up even on adopting a regular voting scheme (despite two or three tries). I did take the role of being the "head of a national religion" seriously. I think the Order of Investiture (Spring, 1969) reflects many of the same concerns that later engendered the Codex of Form. But the main concern was Continuity, not Recognition.

The Reply of David

This reply by David the Chronicler left such a fierce mark on the memory of Richard Shelton, who didn't originally feel he had done anything wrong, from a person he had only just begun corresponding with over the Smiley Affair. In addition, perhaps enough years had passed to inflate the memory of Frangquist? Frangquist at the time was in Illinois, but also a few years earlier had been stationed in Korea, with a belly full of military red-tape. What a shocking reply! Glenn McDavid, in 2002, told me that, Shelton read the letter and read it again, and sat quietly stunned for a long time after that. In many senses, this letter would set Shelton on a new path for subtler expression, and perhaps steel his responses to Isaac in a few years, at what he saw was a repetition of his own mistakes in the Codex Affair.

Perhaps, with the encouragement of Frangquist, Shelton better organized and looked after the Blue Book of the Archives, despite its adventures of being shuffled between Druids and lost on several occasions.

Reply of the Other David

Sadly, despite the professed belief that RDNA Druids could also belong to any religion, the Founder David Fisher, felt that he could no longer be a Druid. After 1976, contact did not resume with Fisher until 2002, despite repeated attempts on my part. Perhaps, like Shelton, I did not sound in the original tone of the Reform, and therefore couldn't muster a response from him. Fisher's study for the priesthood would continue until the mid 1970s, and would later go on to be a Professor at a university; rather Druidic, I believe.

Fisher's Farewell

Fisher, five years after leaving Carleton, and a brief attempt at a grove in New York City, had found greater solace in the Episcopal church, and no longer felt need to continue the RDNA services. The letter shows a strong awareness of the different actors involved in founding the Druids, perhaps an attempt to distance his creation from himself? I recollect how difficult it had been for Nelson and Frangquist to pry the Archdruidcy from Fisher for 1964-1965. Most of the early rules of the Council of Third Order were quickly pounded out in person, and the priestess issue was a sticking point for Fisher, despite ordaining Jackie Hotz, early on the days of the Reform.

The passage about Jan Johnson writing most of the Chronicles is rather puzzling, and is not discussed anywhere else, even in Frangquist's writings. We know that Jan Johnson wrote an epistle in the summer of 1963 after he graduated, it's mentioned in the Chronicles, but nothing else is mentioned about the letter, which was not kept in the records, although Shelton mentions having it in 1976. One wonders, did Frangquist incorporate the material into the early Chronicles, or was Fisher simply mistaken? Fisher had been rather unhappy with Frangquist's publication, which made him sound too much like a prophet for a new religion, which is why Fisher attempted to have "Book of Faith" added to the Chronicles; thus starting the tradition of the Apocrypha.

The Polite Refusal

Now chastened, Shelton had quickly determined to withdraw the Codex, but was still standing rather firm on the matters of protocol in regards to the Order of Grannos (4th Order), whose Patriarch had to be appointed by the Council. This problem of distant Patriarchs would continue to plague the RDNA debates into the mid 80s, as priests wished to join existing Higher Orders, but were unable to travel easily or locate the necessary Patriarchs.

Apology for Simplicity

This letter refers to the new attempt by Shelton to yet again redress the Priestess issue, by making them identical in all respects with that of Priests. Fisher was considered the last holdout in the search for unanimity on the issue. As Shelton would be cautious of Isaac's reforms, so Frangquist and Fisher and Larson would apply brakes on Shelton during this period of campus unrest and revolutionary fervor.

The Report of Richard

The Priestess vote, the last to be passed by the Council, would consume the remainder of Shelton's two years in office, as this report shows at the end of his first year in the role as Arch Druid. A taxing precision of protocol would later pay off during the Isaac Affair. The feminist movement, I believe had not yet reached its peak, when this issue had been raised; and it may seem like semantics to some viewers, but was the longest simmering debate in the Reform, only resolved in 1971. The choice to remove the phrases in the Book of Customs in DC(E), and other "objectionable" material, caused some discomfort in 1976.

The Epistle to the Encyclopedist

The last writing that I have from Fisher before his disappearance from records. Gordon Melton is a rather famous publisher of encyclopedias on religious matters. After this letter, the RDNA would begin to show up in his various works, with information gathered from Fisher's correspondence with Melton. During this period at Carleton (1971-74), there are few letters of correspondence available to me, and there is some indication, that Druids after McDavid were not very concerned about the Council, until Isaac showed up.

Book of Changes, Part One

As was mentioned elsewhere, I broke this Book into three parts, in order to facilitate the model of a dialogue. This first part contains the letter sent by Isaac Bonewits to the many members of the Council on July 18th, 1974. I fully describe the impact of this letter in my "History of Reformed Druidism in America." Essentially, the last few Archdruids of Carleton had been lax in their Chairship of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, such that Isaac had assumed that Berkeley & Twin Cities were the only groves left. Isaac by this point had fully embraced Neo-Paganism, which few of the other Druids had ever heard of, and he wished to redefine the Reform into a Reconstructionist Neo-Pagan religion. There were other Reconstructionist Neo-Pagan religions at the time such as Nordic, Egyptian and Greco-Roman; but no exclusively Celtic ones (except possibly Celtic Wicca). Thinking the rest of the Third Orders had "given up" on Druidism, he wanted to make the simple necessary changes for reconversion of the RDNA.

This was not the first time that members of the Council had heard of Isaac. Most knew that Isaac had been ordained to the Third Order in 1969 by Larson. We have letters of communication with Isaac between McDavid, Frangquist and Shelton from the early 70s which are congenial and discuss his interest in the occult. Surprisingly, during those early years, Isaac disapproved of proposals for incorporating more hierarchy or dogmatizing the Chronicles. This letter must have seemed a complete about-face to the Druids in 1974 who thought that they had known Isaac. However, I can understand this as Isaac seeing the growing developments, and wishing to take a greater role, especially after working in a national publication like Gnostica in Minneapolis.

The problem was, as the letters point out, that Carleton and many other groves were still operating, just not talking. Also, the Druids not active in Groves, disagreed with the idea that they were lesser Druids than Grove-active Druids. In short, Isaac should have tested the waters before starting a hurricane in a teacup. A few reconnaissance letters could have avoided most of the acrimony that the Isaac Affair brought up. It is also my opinion from hindsight, that Isaac really had little idea of what Carleton Druidism was, because he only had really known Larson, who was not one to aggressively correct the mistakes of others. Sometimes, such brinkmanship is necessary to goose a response out of the Council.

This one letter, along with the First Epistle of Isaac, which came a month later, rudely awoke the slumbering Druids throughout the Reform. It galvanized them to reaffirm their distaste of several aspects of organized religions. This is probably one of the most important letters every written in the RDNA, at least from an Archival perspective, because it generated controversy and a flood of letters which give us a good idea of the mindset of Reformed Druids during the mid-70s. It also gave us a chance to see their condensed Druidic instruction to Isaac, what would normally take years of living at Carleton to absorb naturally. The resulting letters also show, pretty effectively, what Druidism WAS NOT.

As the following letters will explain, their were several aspects of Isaac's letter that disturbed them, primarily: a need for definition, an interest in evangelizing (and quickly at that), swapping priesthoods with non-Druidic Neo-Pagans to assure the survival of the Apostolic Succession, an assumption that Druidism for everyone is really Neo-Paganism, sexist language (on the Reform's part), a desire for stronger National organization, a feeling that Carleton Archdruids were not suited for the Chair of the Council, that the Higher Orders should be restarted, the issue of majority (instead of unanimity) for settling votes in the Council, the incredible haste of the voting proposal deadline (within 3 months, by November 1st), and what appeared as the dogmatizing of the Druid Chronicles.

All very alarming, considering that it all came from out of the blue. However many of the issues of communication, first raised in the Codex of Affair and Priestess voting letters, would not so easily be put to rest.

The Epistle of Renny

Renny was the second female Archdruid at Carleton, and had taken over from Steve Corey, who had left a mess. Now normally Renny, titled "the Silent," is not one given to anger. Much of the bitterness in this letter, which I am uncomfortable with, is due to the fact that she did not access to a copier and would have to distribute handwritten copies of Isaac's July 18 1974 letter to dozens of past Carleton Druids in time so that a vote could be done by Isaac's imminent deadline.

Her complaints (unbrotherly tone, undemocratic presentation, haste for growth, and concern with restrictive definitions) were commonplace among the replies to Isaac's original letter, and were not assuaged by the First Epistle of Isaac that soon would follow it, as you'll soon see. It should be remembered that Isaac probably didn't really expect a response from Carleton, thinking it was moribund.

The Epistle of Ellen

Ellen Conway wrote this on almost the same day as Renny's Epistle and the Words of Green. This is not unusual since, Richard Shelton and Ellen Conway were good friends, Carleton Druids of the early 70s, and were then studying together at University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Ellen would later marry Richard. She also founded the Ann Arbor grove and worked hard with Richard to control the Isaac Affair. Here we see the first instance in the debate about the primacy of the Basic Tenets and the need to distinguish between personal beliefs and Reformed Druidism. I suspect that Ellen's comment on Neo-Paganism, probably did not sit well with Isaac.

The Words of Green

This was a letter from Richard Shelton to the entire Council on 8/14/74 to begin an actual discussion of Isaac's two letters, something that Isaac's letters had neglected to do (instead of putting things up for a near-immediate vote). Its title comes from the fact that Richard chose green ink when mimeographing copies for people. Shelton, as I mention in his biography, was similar to Frangquist and myself in that we three have a deep long term dedication to preserving the existence of Druidism at Carleton. We three also were involved in producing some of the literature of the Reform. At the time of writing this, his wife, Ellen Conway was currently ArchDruid of the Ann-Arbor Grove (where they were in grad-school); to which Shelton succeeded her. Since Shelton had written to most of the Druids up to this point, it was natural that he would be the one to put the "Carleton Response" into a dignified order. In many ways, Shelton's letter quickly turned Isaac's seemingly belligerent letter into an intensely interesting debate.

An ironic background fact to this letter, was that Shelton had naively proposed the Codex of Form back in the summer of 1969 which had sought to clarify the literary history of Druidism, formalize certain definitions and to clarify the structure of the Council to enable legislation to proceed more smoothly. Isaac at that time, along with Larson and Frangquist, had felt that such codification was too restrictive on Druidism. Now here in 1974, Isaac was seeking codification (among many of the items on his agenda) and Richard was opposing it! Richard was also the only Chair of the Council, besides Frangquist, to oversee the successful passage of legislation through the Council. In fact, Shelton was probably one of the few Druids who understood how the Council worked!

As you can see, Richard succinctly crystallized some of the important points of objection; the non-necessity for extensive self-definition, the inherent non-authority and humbleness of the priesthood in Reformed Druidism, the need to apply Reformed Druidism upon one's own personal religion (and not vice-a-versa), and the need to dialogue in a calm manner befitting Reformed Druidism.

The First Epistle of Isaac

As Isaac mention in his endnotes to DC(E), that this Epistle was written after the letter in the Book of Changes Part One, and that the First Epistle was intended to have been mailed with that letter. The Letter was mailed out, and the Epistle followed about four weeks later in late August of 1974, although we do not have an original copy in the Archives. This delay may have caused even more discord, because the July 18th letter was too curt to really explain Isaac's intentions, and, arriving all by itself, may have negatively predisposed the Druids to any further mailings from Isaac (not that the First Epistle improved their opinion of Isaac). Isaac apparently had already gotten some strong feedback before he had a chance to mail out the First Epistle, and you can see some "Damage Control" being performed through out this Epistle to soothe irritated Druids (see Chapter One). It is likely that he had already received letters from Ellen Conway '72, Richard Shelton and Renny Seidel (who was then currently the ArchDruid of Carleton). Isaac is therefore especially carefully to explain Neo-Paganism, because it is unlikely that any non-Berkeleyite knew much about this term, which was created in 1970 or so. Reformed Druids up to that point had faced many verbal attacks from outsiders that they were practicing "paganism," and now here was one among them who was claiming that it was!

As I discuss in my History, Isaac has a knack for analyzing and micro-labeling things into categories, although he can also be very creative and satirical. Isaac wrote a book, "Real Magic" in 1971, after his graduation and became famous for receiving the first degree in Magic in the entire world. The First Epistle, along with the Second Epistle, shows how Isaac put his sharp mind to examining Reformed Druidism and to show how easily the forms and purposes of Reformed Druidism could be interpreted as being complementary with Neo-Paganism. This was nothing really new, in principal, to Reformed Druidism. Since the beginning, Reformed Druids have always related Reformed Druidism to their own religion; whether it be Christian, Jew, Zen, Taoism, atheism, etc. What was new to most Reformed Druids, was that Isaac was claiming that Reformed Druidism **was the same thing as** Neo-Paganism because it practiced magic, worshipped (what he felt were) authentic gods and goddesses, and had its own scriptures and priesthood. As the responding letters pointed out, many Reformed Druids considered these to be mere outer trappings around a basic common activity and experience of Awareness.

Gobbledegook and Red Tape

I always enjoy reading Gerre Goodman's letters because she constantly reminds us of the need for simplicity in our Druidism. Gerre was at Carleton during Richard's and Glenn's Archdruidcy, but she never really played a big role as a leader. Isaac never got this first letter or her second one, or if he did, he soon forgot about it (based on my talks with him). Which is a pity, since hers was one of the most calming letters that he could have received.

The Epistle of Norman

This letter was written by Norman Nelson to Isaac (and others) on November 10th, 1974.

As I mentioned earlier in the notes to the Epistle of David the Chronicler, Nelson had been deeply involved in the original founding of the RDNA at Carleton, a stand-in Archdruid for a few months, led many services at Carleton, helped to found the Higher Orders, was a Patriarch of the 5th order, had run at least two official missionary groves, and was a general resource for confused Druids. It was apparently rare for Norman to intrude upon the folly of others, much like Larson, but he decided to step in after receiving Isaac's letters. Norman would later help Isaac's preparation of The Druid Chronicles (Evolved), by providing commentary about the early Days of the Reform.

Norman's letter has a few prominent themes; the value of humor in the Reform, the role of "dis-organization," the independence of Reformed Druidism from allegiance with any other religion/philosophy (including Neo-Paganism), its applicability to any religion or philosophy, the unimportance of external trappings, and the viable existence of solitary Reformed Druidism outside of Grove activity. Perhaps, not readily apparent, was the understanding attitude that he conveyed while still holding to his own opinion; the hallmark of good Druidical communication.

Norman has recently joined the RDNAtalk conference on yahoogroups.com in 2002, and is now contributing more of his insightful (pun-filled) mini-epistle on how things all got started. He has always been jovially friendly to phone-calls for assistance in Druidical matters.

The Book of Changes, Part Two

The Book of Changes was written by Isaac near July of 1976 as he was doing the final preparations for printing the Druid Chronicles (Evolved). "Changes" is essentially his look back on the early half of the Isaac Affair, which never really ended until he started ADF in 1983, and to relate to the world his analysis of the situation in mid-1976. Chapter two shows the voting results of his July 18, 1974 letter. The issue of voting methods is covered more fully in my History of Reformed Druidism. Essentially, I believe that most of the Druids had come from Carleton (about 80% of the voters) and many declined or abstained (abstaining is particularly Druidic in that it is a show of independence from organization). It is questionable if anybody "won" since each side was using different standards of "winning"; the Carleton contingent believing in unanimity and Isaac believing in majority-rule, or at least 2/3. Those Druids who did agree on some points (esp. the current ArchDruids of Carleton origin) were primarily concerned that greater communication was required amongst members of the Council, so that future debates would not be so bitter, and founded the New RDNA.

As I've stressed before, this split into three branches is confusing. The New RDNA (NRDNA) was primarily a collection of Third Orders who wanted greater communication and organization than the RDNA felt was necessary. This first variant of the NRDNA primarily existed as long as the Provisional Council of ArchDruids existed (up until about 1977) to discuss possible issues to bring up for vote with the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. The Schismatic Druids of North America were predominantly, if not officially, a Neo-Pagan enclave headed by Isaac. When the NRDNA & Provisional Council fell into disuse after 1977, the remaining Post-Larson Berkeleyites and the SDNA Mother Grove assumed the abandoned name of the NRDNA, with the provision that non-pagan members would still have equal rights. Therefore be aware of the existence of essentially two versions of the NRDNA, especially in the interregnum year of 1976-1977, when the transformation of the NRDNA took place.

Indeed as Chapter Three explains, most people agreed on what the existing traditions of voting and hierarchy was, but wished to discuss possible adjustments to organization, liturgy and other minor points.

The Epistle to the Myopians

This was written by Joan Carruth on March 25th 1976. The title means "Letter to the Near-Sighted," which I think was appropriate. She was an Archdruid or at least a Co-ArchDruid of Berkeley from around 1975 to 1981, with various gaps. She was one of Larson's protégés and a close friend of Isaac, although she would eventually oppose Isaac's full plan of transforming the NRDNA. She also at various times edited the Druid Chronicler magazine and proposed the modest organizing referendums of the Coalition Council of the Order of Dalon ap Landu in the late 70s (that were more modest than Isaac's) when Carleton Druidism had once again lapsed. From my interviews with her, she is an aggressive debater and a leader of people. An overabundance of leadership was one of the factors leading to the Diaspora of Berkeley Druidism. She currently runs the Birch Grove in New Hampshire.

Her Epistle is part praise of the universe, and partly a reminder to the Reform that the world around us (The Earth-Mother) exists above and beyond the dualism of monotheistic thinking. As with Isaac's letters, the issue of ecological awareness and feminism is encouraged. She brings up a good point that Carleton Druidism, or rather most of the US, had to change from a nodding appreciation of Nature to a responsible stewardship of the Earth. It is a valuable lesson to us all. The letter had also been mailed independently of the Druid Chronicles to many members of the Council.

Lessons for a New Archdruid

Isaac was planning to visit Carleton in the Mid-summer of 1976, during school break, just prior to publishing the Druid Chronicles (Evolved). Despite Shelton's early attempts to produce a reading collection for future Archdruids, Richard did not really trust Isaac's motivations, after the earlier Isaac Affair debacle and the introduction of a full-fledged religion such as Neo-paganism. After a very difficult transition of Archdruidcy, the very young Donald Morrison had just taken office, and we can tell that Shelton didn't want an impressionable young Archdruid being confused by Isaac, or leaving Isaac the impression that the current Chairman of the Council of Dalon ap Landu was a novice. Shelton almost appears to be a regent guiding a young prince, not unlike when he took me under his wing in 1993. In retrospect, this letter paints Richard as a frightened schemer, which is certainly not the case anymore, but in the context, we can understand why he was being so cautious, with all the debates that were being raised about replacing the Carleton Archdruid in the organizational hierarchy.

This letter and the succeeding letter, "Post Carleton Perplexations," give us an interesting window into the progress of the publication efforts by Shelton to produce an alternative

text to the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) and to disassociate with Larson & Issac's pet project. It also gives us his rationale for the stage instructions of the Beltane service that you'll find in Part Three. Much of this lore could have been lost without this being written down here.

The Epistle of Richard

This was written by Richard Shelton sometime in May of 1976 to Isaac, but circulated to others. Richard was then the ArchDruid of Ann-Arbor, Morrison had returned from France and finally took up the responsibilities of ArchDruid of Carleton, and Isaac had left Minneapolis to return to Berkeley; an opportunity lost. Richard had spent the last year and a half as a reference source for Isaac, and Isaac had spent the last 18 months putting the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) together with Robert Larson. The initial rift between the two Druids had narrowed as they worked together and talked more. Isaac, at some level, had come to the general assumption that he was the odd-man-out in the Reform and was using the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) as a kind of self-inspection tool to work out a blue print for a new Druidic Neo-Pagan religion. Apparently the previous letter from Shelton had picked a raw nerve, probably telling him that most of the Carleton RDNA wouldn't be interested in the DC(E), which was Isaac's new baby. There was some dissent at Berkeley also in this period as Larson's unifying influence began to recede and control of the Mother Grove pass to Joan and Isaac.

Shelton provided a useful look back at the Isaac Affair and tried to explain this to Isaac. He reiterated that the Reform needs to avoid formalism, must keep itself separate (but applicable) to other religions, the need for sober and responsible discussion, the avoidance of Archdruid "kingship" over the lower Orders, the independence of each Grove, and the omniportance of the individual within Druidism. Is it well known to all the Druids, that the publication of DC(E) (and Isaac's further public interaction) would forever form a connection in the public's mind between "Neo-Paganism" and "Reformed Druidism." Up to this point, most outsiders didn't know squat about Druids, and this vagueness had been a boon to Reformed Druidism. In all likelihood, even without Isaac Bonewits, a Celtic form of Neo-Paganism would have adopted the name of Druidism and influenced public perception of the word Druid.

The big debate of this time period was the provisional Council of ArchDruids which was, as described above, an attempt to improve communication between the Groves. One of the points that the Sheltons were especially worried about was idea of the Chair of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu being chosen from members of the Council of Archdruids. Shelton, amongst others, feared that without the influence of the Carleton environment upon the current Chair of the Council, that the Council might actually abandon the traditional ways of Druidism and start willy-nilly passing legislation or definitions that would force older-Druids to drop out as minority losers. It is also noteworthy that Shelton had just managed to finally relocate the Blue Book of the Archives, and was not interested in having it travel through the Postal Service.

The phrase "questions not tending to edification" is a favorite of Frangquist and Shelton, and comes from a reading in the Green Book.

Post Carleton Perplexations

Despite the calm demeanor of the Epistle of Richard, Shelton was seriously bothered by the activities of the DC(E), the formation of the NRDA, and their tinkering with the Council. In addition, Shelton was reformulating his Druidism after some disappointing years at the Ann Arbor Grove. What to do, but write to Frangquist for further guidance, and explain his background strategy during the current and previous debates?

More is written here about his attempts to get the Green Book and Carleton Apocrypha. To the best of his recollection, neither was officially distributed or published, due to lingering copyright concerns, graduate school, and burnout over the current issues. A rather deliciously enticing mention is made of the Epistle of Jan, but we cannot locate this letter.

My own feelings about post-Carleton blues are rather similar. One of the great difficulties for life after Carleton, is getting the requisite frequent interaction, facility use, and friendship with other Druids. For every Druid service at Carleton, there were several folk-dances, sing-a-longs, plays and shared classes to improve and deepen the relationships. I guess one comparison to the problem is that for some Carleton Druids, being away from Northfield is like a Jew being away from Israel; things don't come as forcefully the farther you go from your origins, unless you can adapt them to new circumstances.

The First Epistle of Robert

This missive was written by Robert Larson and postmarked as May 26th, 1976. For more information on Robert Larson see the Historiography on "Leabhar Toirdhealbhaigh." Larson wasn't one to butt in other people's business, but there comes a time when you must step in between the combatants and heal the peace. Larson, a printer at this time, was in the process of preparing the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) for publication.

There are several points of interest for the historian about Robert's two epistles. It is one of the few glimpses into the originator of Berkeley Druidism, an old-time Carleton Druid, and the ArchDruid nurturer of the Berkeley Grove from 1968 to 1976/7. From the sheer literary output, one would assume that Isaac was the most dominant spokesmen for the Berkeley Grove. After a dozen interviews with other Berkeleyites, it appears that Isaac was merely the most vocal and liberal with the pen amongst them. The people might have listened to Isaac, but they followed Robert. There was scattered interaction between Frangquist, Shelton, Sherbak, Savitzky, Carruth and Larson up to the mid-70s. Larson's was the quiet, steady voice of Berkeley.

In this letter we get another idea of what form of Druidism was being pursued in Berkeley, and why so many of the Berkeley Druids resisted Isaac's changes over the next decade. It also provides us with an eye-witness description of Isaac's behavior that we don't have elsewhere in our records. This letter gives more depth to NRDNA than Isaac's letters alone would have provided to us.

Robert's First Epistle is essentially discussing his idea of a Provisional Council of Archdruids among the original NRDNA, but also being open to the RDNA. Its purposes are plain and simple; dissemination of news, record keeping and a safeguard for keeping communication open amongst the Council; in case the Carleton ArchDruidcy should go into remission. In those circumstances, the Chair of the Council of Dalon ap Landu would annually rotate around the members of the Council of Archdruids, until Carleton got back on its feet. The letter spends a great deal of time reaffirming basic Reformed Druidic ideals of traditional disorganization and independence, which Larson understood as a member of the original Carleton Grove.

The Second Epistle of Ellen

Ellen's snappy response to Robert's proposal is to lay the red-tape even thicker on the process, ensuring that things can't progress without safeguards. Rather ingenious, I do believe. It makes you wonder if the red-ribbons on the third order are a symbolic reminder of our tendency to get dogmatic and officious, despite our best intentions, thus acting as a warning to Druids, that this is a person to avoid, or does it indicate we're already hopelessly bound already?

Felicitous Communications

A very calm response to relax and not let things eat you up. Just what Shelton probably needed at the time. Having dealt with his own attempt at a schism (see Epistle of Midsummer and Early Chronicles), Frangquist knew how to deal with division in the ranks; with calm words and a ready ear.

The Frangquists were in Germany during the Mid-70s to work on several computer projects as civilian computer programmers for the U.S. Army. An earlier overseas posting in Korea in the late 60s had also given Frangquist sufficient experience with red-tape. The Epistle of Midsummer was the second part of this letter.

The Epistle of Midsummer

This was written by David Frangquist and Deborah Gavrin Frangquist to be read, in their absence, at the Midsummer service at Carleton's Monument Hill on June 21st, 1976. Don Morrison was the current Archdruid and many of the older Druid alumni were returning for their class Reunions. It was also the hope that Isaac Bonewits would come down from Minneapolis to heal some bitter wounds. Unfortunately, Isaac had to leave Minneapolis a few weeks earlier and return to Berkeley, postponing the final reconciliation between him and the Carleton faction for 17 years when he returned to Carleton in April of 1994. The atmosphere at the time of the reading of this Epistle was a bit frantic. The last two years had seen some fierce debating, unsettling accusations, the schisming of the Reform, the soon-to-be-published DC(E) which threatened dogmatization of the Reform and the realization that the Carleton ArchDruidcy was a shaky institution at best with an uncertain future viability. The movement felt exhaustion, distrust and nervous confusion. Wounds needed healing.

Realizing this, David & Dee brought up the essential foundations of Druidism to re-enforce the strength of the listener's Druidism. They reaffirmed the listener's memories of how Carleton and Reformed Druidism overlapped so heavily as to be indistinguishable and pleasant. Druidism served its purpose by helping the present Druids, which was sufficient now, even if the organization disappeared tomorrow. The present was all-important, by looking ahead you defeated the purpose of Druidism. Druidism existed to ourselves outside of labels, definition, or the opinions of others. The Basic Tenets were dredged up again as the only basic definition for Reformed Druids, regardless of whatever else a Druid later professed. Finally the Council was recognized as a tool for communicating within the Reform, but not as the only sign of the existence of Reformed Druidism, which would live in the hearts of every Druids. If the Council changed its purpose, such as to become a tool to divide the Druids, then they should ignore it and continue on with what they believed was the Reform.

Soothing as this letter was, the debates on the Council of Dalon ap Landu and the provisional Council continued on for another two years until most Carleton Druids promptly decided to drop the issue completely. Druidism among enrolled Carleton students kind of disappeared after a few years too. The West Coast NRDNA, pretty much was left to its own devices not so long after this point. Contact between the RDNA of Carleton and the NRDNA was resumed in 1992, but has been consistently spotty since then.

The Second Epistle of Robert

This letter was written by Robert Larson on July 2nd, 1976. As mentioned in the First Epistle of Robert, Robert has emerged from silence and had entered into the debates of the Reform, providing us with an opinion of a Berkeleyite besides Isaac. It was also written after Robert had assumed the Chieftainship of the Council of Archdruids. As far as I know, no one officially succeeded him in that role after the first year. Due to the instability of the times, the Council of Archdruids collapsed along with many groves. Most of the communicative and record-keeping functions proposed for the Council of Archdruids were undertaken by Isaac & Joan Carruth with the publication of the Druid Chronicler newsletter for the next three years, then by the Pentalpha magazine, and finally by the Druid Miscellany newsletter.

Robert acknowledged the Sheltons' objections to overformalization, but pointed out several practical points to the Council of Archdruids. Most of these points have been repeated before. An interesting prediction was that most of the future Third Orders would not be from Carleton. Had the NRDNA not stumbled at the end of the 1970s, this might have held true. By my estimates, there has been a 50/50 mixture of post 1976 priests coming from the NRDNA and Carleton.

Most delightful, he gives us a story that can be examined on many, many levels. I love stories.

The Second Epistle of Isaac

This was written by Isaac Bonewits in the summer of 1976, probably in late July 1976, two years after the First Epistle of Isaac. It is generically addressed to the Council, but it is uncertain if he actually mailed it or if he merely published it to be read in the DC(E). The first half of 1976 had been filled with a resurgence of letters between Druids, after an interestingly quiet 1975. It appears that the Second Epistle, was Isaac's way of explaining himself in full-blown-detail, to clarify his terms, to prove his competence, to drive home his point that Reformed Druidism could indeed be easily converted into a Neo-Pagan religion, and to better express his world view. Like Chapter Eight explains, he has acknowledged that the Epistles would not change many peoples' view of Reformed Druidism, but at least they would understand what he was going through.

Most of the themes of the Epistle are apparent to the reader and need little review here. What is perhaps interesting is the fact that the First and Second Epistle are very good examples of how the Neo-Paganistic worldview could be interpreted by a Reformed Druid. Like Gerre's letter, each Druid often reinterprets their own religion after their experience with Druidism. One should not assume that all the Neo-Pagans of the NRDNA from 1976 until the present are in agreement with Isaac in his world view, just as no one would assume that David Fisher's view of Christianity is identical to Norman's or even my own. Isaac's Epistles are perhaps best read alongside of Larson and Carruth's to give the reader an idea of the opinional diversity amongst the Neo-Pagans in the NRDNA.

The early seventies were the nascent years of the Neo-Pagan movement, which had emerged from Wicca and the occult scene. As with any newborn religious movement, there were some people who were interested in defining and shaping their own movement, and Isaac was amongst the forefront. Isaac, since around 1972 when Neo-Paganism first identified itself, had been deeply involved in this movement and is still

considered a knowledgeable expert on the Neo-Pagan movement today. With this in mind, one may reinterpret the Epistles as his way of laying down a path for future Reformed Druids to investigate the possibilities of the Neo-Pagan movements. In fact, the entire Druid Chronicles (Evolved) serves this purpose well. Indeed, the original Druid Chronicles (Reformed) and the Green Book appear to be laying down a path oriented towards the East and towards personal philosophy. Isaac would, however, continue to encourage the Neo-Pagans of the NRDNA to redefine Reformed Druidism as a Neo-Pagan movement, adopt the strength of a clear religious structure and (perhaps more importantly) follow Isaac. Most of the Neo-Pagans chose not to go with Isaac, for reasons I detailed in my History. Suffice it to say, many objected in the same way the Carleton Druids did.

The Epistles also foreshadowed the kinds of questions that Isaac was dealing when he sabbaticaled in 1979 (to return briefly in 1981). He had begun to formulate the structure and rules of what would become "Ar nDraiocht Fein" (ADF), a definitively Neo-Pagan religion, in 1981 to 1983. Although Isaac did go on to formulate an unquestionably definable religion in ADF, it should be noted that each Reformed Druid essentially did so also in that they either returned to their religion in a new interpretation or formed a new solitary religion or philosophy. Isaac's religion, merely had more followers than the mostly solitary religions/philosophies of the other Reformed Druids. Something to think about.

The Book of Changes, Part Three

As Isaac describes in Chapters four and five, everything was in a big confusing mess during the summer of 1976 when Isaac & Larson were working on the DC(E), published in August. Procedural steps had been skipped, diplomacy dropped in favor of speed, and issues voted upon before opinions had solidified. The next couple years saw a grudging acceptance of DC(E) as a reference tool for secluded groves, as a fountain of trivia, a nostalgic look upon the early traditions, and a recruiting tool for the NRDNA. Interestingly enough, it was the publication of DC(E) that permitted the reconstruction of Carleton Druidism in 1985, after yet another cyclical collapse.

The Provisional Council, as mentioned earlier, didn't operate effectively after 1976 due to Grove-closings through the country. The idea of a majority vote in 4:13, was never widely accepted, even inside of the second NRDNA. The long-term result of the Provisional Council of Archdruids was that everybody had come to the conclusion that their Groves were independent, as were all the individuals in a Grove. Indeed what authority does an organization have, except what you give to it? Somehow the anarchic underpinnings of the Reform would continue to pester Isaac within the NRDNA, until he finally quit in 1981 and went to make a fresh start with ADF. Interestingly enough, the same problem cropped up again in ADF, but in a more manageable form.

Cup Filled to the Brim with Druidism

This letter was written by Gerre MacInnes Goodman on October 21st, 1976 to Isaac, but circulated widely amongst her friends and enemies. Gerre Goodman was a participant of that Druidic renaissance that occurred under Savitzky-Shelton-McDavid during the height of the Vietnam War. Her letter comes after the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) had been published, and all the sides were getting tired of the debate.

Her letter was a letter of healing. It is also a deeply personal letter and self-examination, not uncommon amongst Reformed Druids, but very topical to the debates of her time. Her message is simple; love and tolerance; although that message has been harder to practice than to preach. One can see in this letter, one more attempt to break Isaac of his now legendary habit of categorizing and labeling everything around him. With labeling comes exclusion, with exclusion potential experiences are denied, with experiences denied spiritual growth may be stymied. The letter also shows another attempt by yet another Reformed Druid to analyze their own religious heritage with fresh eyes, but being cautious not to redefine Druidism as their newly rediscovered religion that they now have joined. Druidism is a tool, not the final products. Like Isaac, she feels that Druidism is related to her own Christian religion, much as Druidism is related to his Neo-Paganism. While she may go further into "oneness" than most other Druids, it still an admirable example. The last vital note for the researcher is her opinion of the impossibility of defrocking or excommunication with the Reform, an activity vital for a serious organization to maintain its sense of separateness.

Salutations

A pleasant, brief poem from Dale, a Carleton Druid. I cannot remember who she wrote this to, probably Morrison, Shelton or Frangquist.

The Third Epistle of Isaac

After a few years of experimenting with the Pentalpha organization (see Part 4 & 11) and designing ever more complicated rituals (see Part 3), and noticing that the Carleton Faction of RDNA was not corresponding very much anymore, he felt the need to preach again on the matter of ritual strength. I believe he was becoming more result oriented, and not very happy with certain inadequacies in the existing format traditionally performed by the RDNA.

This era of the Reform, as yet, has very little documentation outside of Pentalpha and Live Oak publications. Hopefully with the further examination of personal archives from NRDNA members, greater light will be shed on the reasons for the schisming of the Mother Grove at this point.

Musings of an Ancient Religion in A Modern World

Shirine had posted a few articles to the Pentalpha/Druid Chronicler, which reached most of the NRDNA, SDNA and other interested Druids on the scene in 1979; but the Carleton network was apparently dispersed, so few will have seen this letter or its original publication. I was particular enthralled by the simple question that this letter posed, on where we draw our traditions from; the spoken or written word. I believe that much of RDNA tradition is found in the customs, odd quirks, mannerisms, method of discussion, character, and a hundred other small actions that are picked up in the traditional year of following an older member through the cycle of the seasons. You can't get salvation from a book (or a bottle), but a book may help in that journey towards truth; but never taking its place.

The Fourth Epistle of Isaac

Another editorial by Isaac in the Pentalpha Journal. Isaac's research and writings mentioned appear to be the nucleus of the establishment of a new system that was to develop into the ADF. However, it might have been one of the many book projects of Isaac that never got around to publishing. It is around this time that Isaac caught the "Indo-European Fever" that was beginning to garner interest in the Neo-Pagan community.

The Fifth Epistle of Isaac

After a rather disastrous re-election conflict in the Mother Grove, when it became apparent that the majority in the NRDNA would not accompany Isaac on his changes, Isaac decided to break off more completely than before.

I really admire Isaac for breaking out of the two weak bonds of the Reform, and proceeding to give birth to a new (and more complicated) creation that many others would lovingly assist in raising. It must have been as much a relief for him as when he left the Catholic seminary high school as a youth. However, he also took with him, his ability to keep the RDNA moderately in communication with each other. This job would soon be taken over by Emmon Bodfish and his Druid Missal-Any newsletter (see Part 11).

Epistle of Sally

I included this letter from one of Isaac's earlier wives, to show the enthusiastic support that he received in those early 80s as he began a Neo-Pagan religion, based on several years of planning and experimentation. Sally apparently was a big help to Isaac in the Pentalpha project, and apparently married him for a few years.

The Beginning of ADF

Now obviously this was not meant to be an RDNA epistle, however, it shows Isaac's first steps out in the new religion of ADF. After a year of planning, the basic framework was set and he wrote quite an excellent letter for the first issue of the Druid's Progress magazine. This letter has been floating about on the internet and gets quite a bit of press time, and is referred to unconsciously whenever Isaac speak. Isaac by this time had spent over 13 years in the developing Neo-pagan movement and was well known in the community.

Open Letters to the Grove

There are at least two types of Druids in the Reform; those who write a lot, and those who don't. Emmon joined in the late 70s, and became a very important member of the Live Oak Grove that split off from the Berkeley Mother Grove's satellite. Larry Press nominally ran the Live Oak Grove, but it appeared that it was the diligent and forceful Emmon who produced the newsletter, provided and maintained the Grove site, and kept track of the official matters since the Live Oak Grove had incorporated as a tax-recognized charity (i.e. a government approved church). Unfortunately, after a few years of bliss, there was a difficult period leading up to an election, in which several new members (including a token third-order Bob Blunt) elected themselves as the officers of the Grove, in effect forcing out Larry, Emmon and Susan. Emmon's response was to refuse access to his property for rituals to the corporation and continue business as usual, just un-officially. Grove services would continue on his property until 1993, but in a diminishing sense after 1990.

Druidism and Truth

Now the Druid Missal-Any publication by Emmon was a fine publication in the pre-computer age, and showed a great deal of artistic ingenuity, that isn't really captured by my republication efforts in Part 11. One of the more constant authors of articles was Tom Cross from Post-Oak Grove in Texas, who was a linguist by training, and an educator by profession. His specialty was Ancient Gaul, which is a difficult specialty since there isn't much surviving material on that culture, and is also easier for the same reason.

This letter, in his standard didactic manner, was the seed of the ensuing year long debate. In his writings, I catch the faintest parallels with Isaac; that here is another NRDNA Druid who has the embryo of a new system, and yet remains in the NRDNA during the gestation period; sharing all those hormonic creative reflections every time they feel a kick in their womb. Isaac and Tom are not currently friends, and appear to avoid each other; yet they both are rather allergic to monotheism and sketchy scholarship, claiming rather high standard for themselves and others.

Letter to the Editor

In contrast to Tom, Albionn seeks inspiration from doing things, rather than reading and reconstructing them. Albion is a gentle sort of soul, the water to Tom's fire, so to speak. When they mix you get smoke and steam. Apparently Albion had been taking some type of correspondence course with Tom up until this letter, which was published in the Missalany by Emmon, and had had disagreements with Tom, but had been unable to resolve those either. The resulting debate here in our records is not unlike overhearing a married couple who airs their private argument at a public restaurant. Like most 70s cop shows, the two partners are opposites, whom we love to watch argue on their beat.

A Rebuttal to Albion

While the ancient Celtic Bards were renowned for their prowess with satire and sarcasm, I think Tom overreacted a bit to Alibion's letter; perhaps demonstrating the rather touchy pride and short temper that gets the Celts so often into trouble. He has taken Albion's light defererence to scholarship as a personal affront and unleashes a torrent of ink. After reading this, you can imagine Albion's feeling; no, actually, you can read it, since it is the next letter.

A Rebuttal to Cross

Despite being baited by Tom, Albion shows restraint. I find it an eloquent and conciliatory response, an equally important bardic skill.

The Balanced Epistle

Les Craig was a "solitary third" order druid in Humboldt county in California, who apparently had epic battles trying to maintain her garden against the beasties and weather. I wanted to put in several dozen of her regular correspondences into this Apocrypha, but instead decided to make a collection of seasonal essays along with Emmon's introductory letters. However, even this laid-back Druid with pronounced Bardic skills (she founded the Order of Oberon) had to step into the ring. If anything, this debate centers around knowledge, tradition and authority; topics which she gently weaves together.

Spring Equinox Salvo

People will get angry at what they wish to be angry about. You'd think the two didn't realize that scholarship and experience were both necessary together in some ration. Tom Cross however brings up an issue that Isaac had always eluded to, the rather tenacious refusal of Reformed Druids to accept being labeled, Isaac usually referred to it as anarchistic, but Tom comes at the issue from a linguistic angle. The next letter describes this further.

Druidaxta

When I reflect on Tom's arguments, in some ways I do try to defer hard choices by refusing to take sides, but sometimes, I feel the harder choice is to refuse accepting standard categorizations. From this letter and other references, Tom had done his research into the Indo-European theory of a distant prehistoric common culture to the people of Europe and India, but he preferred to focus on that of the continental Celts. We can see that Tom has his act generally together, and yet it lacks the self-effacing humor that I normally see in Reformed writings. Having standards for oneself is one thing, but must one take it so seriously, in order to accomplish them? The final part of his letter reveals a lot of interesting details of the diverse nature of the Post-Oak Protogrove that he ran in Texas.

Albion's Response

It appears that Albion can lose his temper also. It is said that even the Buddha does not smile after the third slap.

The Gift of Horses

Les reenters the debate, after it has dominated the Druid Missal-Any for about six months. This kind of debate would have erupted and finished in a few weeks on the modern Internet conferences, but perhaps it would not have waxed so eloquent as the old "paper battles." I think she brings up all the salient points of the debate, and puts them into perspective, while offering a viable third alternative of moderation to Albion and Cross mud-slinging soap-boxing.

Farewell of Tom Cross

Apparently calming down, or perhaps sulking, Tom feels the necessity of pulling out of the Reform. Not too long thereafter, he published the book "The Sacred Cauldron" under the name of Tadhg MacCrossan, and founded Druidiactios; a group centering on practices drawn from ancient Gaulish religion and culture (a rarity in the English literary world).

This letter gives a rare insight into the character of Emmon's fascination with scholarship. For Tom, and to me to some extent, the contemplation of concepts and perusal of documents are a ritual in and of their own. While Celtic scholars were beginning to release new research in the 60's and 70s, it wasn't until the late 80s that a sort of renaissance boom of books flooded the market due to the bountiful consumers willing to buy their works.

Tom departed to ride on that wave. Many rumors floated that he was hostile to Neo-Pagans, rejoined Catholicism, or that he was working with a French Fraternal Druidic order of some type. Wherever he's gone, I do appreciate the time he spent discussing his views on the Reform, and I will also ponder on those questions he raised.

Albion's Thoughts

After Albion's conclusion to the debate, Emmon decided not to publish any more letters from the two until both had cooled down some more. Albion would continue to read the Druid Missal-Any and submit more articles of his experiences.

Epistle of Gruntwork

My will is weak, but I had to include at least one of Les' wonderful semi-seasonal letters as it dealt with how to build a Druidic community, and it appears to show her final thoughts from the debate. She raises rather organic issues of family life that have been rarely raised by the more individual-oriented letters of past Druids.

Balance & Synthesis

Perhaps I shouldn't have included this letter, but it somehow stands on its own as separate from the acrimonious preceding debate and stands as a reminder, that there was more to Emmon's vision of a Druid Community that two bickering Druids.

The Speaking of Beliefs

Written by Heiko Koestler, who with Alice Cascorbi, helped to restart Carleton Druidism in the mid 80s. This speech, originally in crude outline, is from the Fall Equinox ritual of 1987. Heiko was one of the first Carleton Druids to self-identify himself as a Pagan. The Druids at Carleton since 1985 have shown a greater interest in liturgy and magic, but still moderate by most standards. Although Heiko is a bit more ceremonial than most, you can see that little has really changed in the message at Carleton over the missing years. I therefore suspect this continuity has less to do with oral transmission by fellow Druids than with the natural beauty of the arboretum, the friendliness of the rural landscape, and the respectfully fierce academic discipline of Carleton College.

Mike's Farewell Epistle

Written in the closing months of Mike's Archdruidcy at Carleton, in which the torch was being passed to the Triple Archdruidcy of Becky, Michelle the Dark and Ann, which would last until 1996. Despite Mike's best efforts, grove attendance was usually only 5 to 6 people at service and sweatlodges, although there were about 80 people on the mailing lists. Since the latter two were definitely into Wicca, I just wanted to caution them to keep it open to members of all denominations and explore widely and have fun. It is a difficult thing relinquishing what little authority I did have, but they had capable hands, and I could go off to spend the next two years feverishly typing up ARDA, while occasionally checking up on them, in the most unobtrusive ways (monthly visits to the science fiction club).

The Third Epistle of Robert

Well, this was quite a long one! Robert wrote this epistle on the Spring Equinox of 1996 to discuss his reaction to my General History in Part Eight or ARDA. In particular he was intent on providing a much simpler alternative vision of Paganism, as opposed to Isaac's more grandiose schemes that eventually became Ar nDraoicht Fein. Neopaganism can search for the simple, seemingly chaotic roots or it can choose to build as complex a structure as many of them are trying to escape from.

I wonder if he was inspired by my comment that the early Founders were impressed by the anarchic resistance of the Celts and Druids to centralized government and religion. As he well puts it, the Monotheism isn't necessarily the problem with religious persecution, but rather it is the organized aspect of some religions when married with the power of the state. While such a match may increase a religion's resources for helping

people, it can also magnify the ability of the occasional petty religious individuals to crush and repress the views of minority dissenters. While his message may seem a bit harsh and rough compared to his normally quiet contemplation, it should be remembered that freedom of religion has not always been achieved without struggle. Compared to some of the persecutions mentioned by Robert, the state of the early RDNA at Carleton seems rather tame and bearable.

It is also refreshing to see the old topic of ritual being brought up again in such an unusual way. I feel that Larson's view is pretty much in between my disdain for ritual and Isaac's fascination with the issue. For Larson it is a matter of practicality. The lines in 15:23-34 were lifted from another letter I received from Larson on that Equinox, and which I felt should have been included with the Epistle proper. A final topic that I enjoyed reading about was the inter-connectedness of religions, how they adopt and borrow from each other, even if they won't admit it.

It is entirely possible that The Last Epistle of Robert was a discarded prologue to the Third Epistle of Robert.

The Book of Lacunae

Some wild ramblings written by Michael Scharding between December 30th 1995 and May 1st 1996, ironically about the same time (unbeknownst to Mike) that Isaac was preparing to announce the end of his ArchDruidcy of ADF. How cosmic can you get? This was Michael's weak attempt to stick his foot into the Apocryphaic tradition, to add a happy note to the end of the Apocrypha, and to bridge the twenty long lacunal years of Apocryphal-style letter writing from 1976-1996.

The term Lacunae (Latin Lacuna, meaning a gap or a space] as you may guess refers to the holes in my logic, or to the emptiness of Form, the need for leaving "personal" time, the virtues of simplicity, hearing the pauses in a stream of music, and in the blank chapters of this epistle. You may imagine whatever you wish to exist in those blank spots. If you like these blank spots, look around through ARDA, I'm sure you can find more empty spaces to stare at.

The Epistle of Amanda

I received a call from Amanda, apparently not long after Michelle the Blond ordained her and then became disinterested in Druidism, and Irony had gone to Germany to become a blacksmith's apprentice. During their Archdruidcy, a great number of members had joined, pulled by their charisma, and rather powerful sense of fun experimentation (free of Michael's boring speeches, perhaps) She somehow spotted me on the campus, and knew who I was, perhaps old pictures. We chatted for awhile, and I gave her the standard advice of most Archdruids; think for yourself and search widely. This is the letter, I received in gratitude. Only met her twice after that, but quite a joy each time. For a brief time, the Druids were using the newly created Religious Awareness House to anchor the group's social activities, much like Farm House had been in the 1980s, this idea had been floated in the 93-95 period, but never enacted as Druid House.

The Sigil Letters

Before I left St. Cloud to go to Japan, I made up a big batch of one ounce silver sigils, and began to give them out to people at Carleton. Druids apparently are drawn to big clunky jewelry and clothes with a poor fashion sense, so apparently they were quite fetching and inspired people to write about them.

The letter by Ian Friesland was written not long after he left St. Cloud and went on to do scientific research in various parts of the world. Never did ask him what he was studying, but it would take him to the South Pole and the jungles of the Amazon.

The letter by myself was in response to the Epistle of Amanda, and I sent her a sigil.

The letter by Robert Harrison was a delight, that he wrote in 1998, but I don't believe that I read it until 2003, when Mark sent me a number of files that were sent for the 2000 ARDA edition, that never got produced. Robert comes from a Keltria background, with long studies into Tibetan Buddhism. Being about 40 years old at the time, he was able to give a lot of mature advise to the Grove members.

The History of the Sigil, was something that I wrote on the internet to start spreading a counter-history to the popular theory that we got the sigil from Stuart Piggot's 1966 "The Druids." We can only assume that Fisher just made it up.

The Epistle of Sam

I got this letter in response from Sam after I mailed him a copy of ARDA in early 1997, while I was in Japan. Sam is one of the more unusual and special members of Carleton's legacy, precisely because he is from the neighboring college of St. Olaf; a Lutheran private institution, but still in the top 30. Sam graduated in 1991, and is a native Minnesotan with a deep and abiding interest in Welsh culture and language. His interaction with the Carleton group was greatest from 1988 to 1995, when he played the ornery outsider, widening our understanding of social causes. He also played the head monk, Plexus, in the movie Gatorr, for which he was widely considered the best actor in the film.

What Are Druids?

Irony was ordained in 1997 and proved to be one of the most charismatic druids I've ever met, despite his interesting quirks. He expanded membership rolls, kept the group in funding, wrote this letter to the Carletonian newspaper, published many poems, sang lustily at SCA events, built the great Stone Circle, brought in ecological concerns, started the RDNA conference at Carleton, encouraged para-psychological research by members, traveled the world, stomped out a fire with his bare feet, broke many hearts, glowed in the dark, worked for Peace Corps in Tonga, wrote the twenty page Sociology of Reformed Druids, and was just outstanding as the first Ethics major at Carleton. Currently running the Hemlock Grove in New York.

The Exile Letters, Part One

These letters reveal a bit of Irony's late discomfort with running the grove and encouraging members to initiate activities; a perennial problem faced by Archdruids, now two years into a long Archdruidcy (since 1996). However, he has brought in a few old friends to bolster him as he enters his senior year.

The Epistle of the Rising Sun

After publishing ARDA in summer 1996, I spent four years in Japan and started the Akita Grove at the Minnesota State University of Akita, a sister school of St. Cloud University in Minnesota. I met Nozomi and Pat there and I ran the Akita Grove for a few years before turning it over to them, and someone forwarded Ikari's address to me while I was there. Having been nostalgic for Carleton since my Sophomore year journey to University of Glasgow, I naturally began to pine for her forests again, despite the charms of Japan. Upon hearing of the difficulties that Irony was having, I thought I would send a

letter to cheer him up, since I wouldn't be going back to Carleton than often.

Freedom Within and Freedom Without

This was one of the hardest experiences I had in the Reform. For a long time, including my Archdruidcy, there had been little interest in the traditional service, upon which the 2nd and 3rd Order were designed. Upon hearing of the contents of the Third Order, Merri naturally didn't find that it spoke to her, and asked if DAL could be removed and a stripped down version be performed. Being on the border between the self-ordination and traditional ordination periods, I feel caught in the middle by the pros and cons of both positions, and in the end, I decided to support Carleton students to choose the one that made more meaning for themselves. I think it is more important to have them do a good job, then give up over semantics.

Being a Druid

One of the tasks that I gave to Robert after his ordination was to write an essay on what it means to be a Druid. Again, I didn't read his completed essay again until 2003. Those Celts are such malleable images for the essayist. In the end, the essay always returns to the more important question, who are we and who do we want to become?

The Exile Letters, Part Two

Well, Irony finally put Carleton behind him, after a very long Archdruidcy and returned to the world of mortals, only to head off on a journey to Tonga, a volcanic island in the Pacific Ocean, that managed to avoid being colonized, by eating all the missionaries, then converting to Christianity on their own, thereby becoming a self-declared Christian kingdom (you are what you eat), and immune to colonization according to the rules of the 17th century. He spent his time teaching sanitation planning, industrial arts skills and whatever else was needed. He was located on one of the smaller of the islands in this chain, with a dormant volcano and a crater lake. Naturally, transplanting his Druidism to the tropical jungle was as difficult as transplanting mine to the mountains of Northern Japan, and I enjoyed hearing how he adapted, and during this period, I constantly kept his spirits up by sending care packages, and druidical readings.

The Parenthetical Epistle of Mike

Since the Druids have started on-line mailing lists, the number of letters has vastly increased to several thousand a year, most being quick replies, and not that many of epistle length or quality. Perhaps by piecing them together, I will be able to get a sizeable amount of material for future epistles, but the long letter writing tradition of the past seems to be the exception.

I have a terrible habit of rambling when I talk and getting into side-conversations even when thinking to myself. This letter is rather illustrative of my wit, and we should all pity those who have to deal with it on a regular basis. Like the interview in Part 10, it talks about what brought me to Druidism, and what I believe are our society's main image of Druidism, and how that affects the views of incoming new Druids. As Shelton said, we spend a lot of time, dispensing with cherished myths about the Druids. I was inspired by reading a similar essay by Daniel (which is in Part 7).

Why Are We Called Reformed?

This is by Mairi, a person who used to hang around in the 1995 period at Carleton, but she wasn't a student, but rather, a very interesting lady. We ordained her in 1996, and then we happened to meet again in Washington DC, since she was working in the Pentagon from 1997-2002, before going off to Guam (I think). I believe her mother's side is Jewish and her father's side was Presbyterian, so I guess she had Reformed ancestry on both sides, and she wrote this fine essay and delivered it to my door, wrapped in a little red ribbon. I think it is an excellent example of comparative religion, and would like to see more examples in the future, perhaps Zen or Taoism would be particularly productive? Not everyone enjoyed the comparison.

Responses to Mairi

One person in particular, a Canadian named Glen from the Silent Grove on Lake Ontario, and was quite eager when he first joined. However, he appeared rather activist oriented, which is fine, but intolerant of those who were, which caused problems. Druids tend to be rather sluggish, and he had places to go and things to do, and we apparently weren't his preferred vehicle for pursuing Druidism and politics. Sadly, a few harsh words were exchanged, but I do hope he understood that few things in this world are unconnected, even if we do not appreciate those linkages. The interchange was then published in the Missalany.

The Epistle of Adaptation

Dusty is a strange fellow from southern California. Never ordained, that I can recall, but a wonderful writer and free-spirit. His take on the whole debate, was wonderful, and I'm glad to have a chance to share it with you. This was also published in the Missalany. His sense of humor and self-deprecating simplicity, are truly in the vein of Reformed Druidism; but sadly he hasn't posted with our group in a long time.

The Silent Cacophony

While I was hesitant to support an Anti-Zionist tirade in his first batch of letters, despite my own concerns, I did admire his energy and enthusiasm for activism, but of course, the Reform does not speak as a group, only as individuals, and so we were unable to please him.

The Epistle of Alyx

Alyx was from Colorado, and I ordained her in 2002, near Denver. A witty girl, I always enjoy getting her occasional letters, and she very succinctly summed up the group's feeling about Glen, to much kudos. Unfortunately, Glen, soon left after that, and we do miss him. Alyx's other contribution was the delightful image of the piñata, with religion needing a good whack once in awhile to keep it interesting.

The Second Epistles of Norman

These are a collection of Norman's first year of thoughts from the RDNAtalk conference and D202 study of ARDA 2's early version. He can ramble on, so be careful when talking to him on any subject!

The Epistle of Eric

The last of the Epistle to make it in by the deadline of Feb. 14th. Eric is a graduate student in Washington DC, who attended my services regularly, and always wrote great off-the wall stories for the Missal-any on cleaning, Lucky Charms, Druidical diets, and then helped to run the 2002/2003 Bardic contest for the RDNA. Like the Sigil Letters, this epistle gives us more to think about a symbol of the Reformed Druid, those ribbons. Since he couldn't make it to the 40th Reunions in 2003, he wanted me to read this as one of the meditational readings at the service.

Wind Borne Seeds

Occasionally in the RDNAtalk conference we will have a rather quiet member, John Slattery in this case, just suddenly post something and then resubmerge. He apparently had been working on this thought for awhile and found the conversation on some point in March 2003 to be a bit combative and so posted this little reflection. I have not much since from John, but I rather liked the grove imagery and decided to insert it. I'm not quite sure I totally agree with the analogy, since I think Nature is indeed "red in tooth and talon," and that trees and plants do indeed fight for space in the sun and for resources under the ground, but still an interesting letter.

When Leaves Leave Us

Once I decided to add Wind Bourne Seeds to the Apocrypha, this one by my own hand came to mind immediately as a natural complement. Brother Robert's death a year later in August 2004 when I was releasing the Main Volume, also reminded me of the poignant message of falling leaves. Druids are inescapably drawn to trees with their expressive nuts, leaves, roots, bark, sap, wood and spirit. This was a result of a bit of study on what particuliar aspect, the departure of leaves in the fall every year. We all reflect on it, but many do not know why it happens, so I wrote it. The original article was also accompanied by a chart of un-named leaves that the person would have to guess. I suppose I should take out chapter two, but Druidy is not simply the artistic wonderings of chapter three, but the observation of science, so I guess I'll leave it in.

Thoughts on Chaos

This letter was lifted from early on in the D202 conference that was initially set up by Sybok of OMS to teach the ways of ARDA 2 to the members of Mithril Star. I later was given the conference, but it petered out mid-way through the study course, naturally, due to the immense length of ARDA 2. These people had access to an early version of ARDA 2 that I had hoped to have published by July 2003 by Mark Heiman. Fear's comments were directed towards the Earliest Selections.

If there is one thing Druids are it is unstable and constantly reshaping itself, especially at Carleton with its high rate of turnover in membership. There are certain parameters on this cauldron of chaos, and even some continuity of spirit, but the spirit of chaos is prominent in the questioning ways of the average Reformed Druid who often re-opens cans of worms and re-examines the very foundations of their beliefs to inspect their soundness and make adjustments. I enjoyed his comments on the prominent issues of that period and his theory of how generations and groves renew their sense of period by a transitory period of re-evaluation.

Thoughts on Discord

Naturally, what would a discussion of Chaos be without mentioning Discord? Since the 1980s, at least, Discordians have been an active part of the interplay of Druids at Carleton and abroad. Like Thoughts on Chaos, this was a response to the examination of the Middling Selections of the Isaac Affair, which I thought was an interesting summary, in which she takes the side of the Carleton faction, despite her neo-pagan background, due to her knowledge of the cycles of group forming. Isaac himself has mentioned often, that if he had understood group politics better at that time, and known that the other groves were still alive, he might have been able to head off much of the the problems of the later years of the Berkeley Grove.

A Whole of Druidry

Dana Felber, as far as I know, is not a Reformed Druid, but Sister Stacey snagged this article off the internet discussions list and published it in the Druid Missal-Any.

After a few re-reads, I think the reason that I decided to insert it into our "inner cannon of bickering" is that it offers a very well-thought examination of why some people from monotheistic backgrounds have made their way into adapting elements of the ancient Druid traditions to their modern spiritual quests.

She also does a good job of explaining that the ancient Druids and the Celtic practitioners did not have a monolithic common system, but were an fractious, individualistic lot in some ways and had diversified into several pantheons, story cycles and customs. There is much to learn in here.

Sacrificial Sentiments

In the RDNAtalk conference we got into a spirited discussion of the Wiccan Rede, Druid Tenets and the underlying concepts of why we don't do animal sacrifice. The original debate on animal sacrifice was in the Spring of 1963, but we only have one quote from the members, so it was perhaps appropriate that 40 years later, the Reformed Druids re-examined their notions of why and what they sacrifice.

Most people wrote rather short notes, and there were dozens of side-conversations on various topics that I pruned from the conversations. Due to the dialogue nature, I dispense with individual chapters for each letter and grouped them together in a serial format, stripped of versification. It's nice to depart from the system once in a while.

The Third Epistles of Norman

Norman, Frangquist, Shelton, Carruth, Press, Steinberg and a handful of other old-timers attended the 40th Reunion at Beltane 2003 at Carleton College and mingled with the current students and discussed many matters of common concern after chatting only on-line for 2 years.

Norman's summary of the event is standard, but I felt, giving the timing that it was time to repeat it again! I also appended several other letters from the summer and fall of 2003 which I thought would fit in by providing more thoughts of Norman.

The Missionary Im-Position

Missionary activity is naturally a sorepoint and hot button issue for me, especially in the David Fisherian sense of having promoted something that will inevitably take on a life of its own, to who knows what purpose. All the events in this epistle occurred while I was the Arch Druid of the Big River Grove in St. Cloud Minnesota, and looking for a decent paying job. We all get taken in by these schemes sometimes in our lives, and hopefully we emerge wiser for the interchange.

I hesitated until the last minute to include this letter, but after reading Norman's encounter with the Mormons, and hearing of the hardships that Irony, Corwin and so many have had with recruiting, that I thought a little warning on the perils of proselytizing might be in order, so that they don't walk down that dark road, and withstrain themselves from excess. And yes, I can't help but love that response, "How well did you do at your job selling vacuum cleaners?" "Oh, I sucked."

The OMS Affair

As the introduction mentions, this was a long raucous affair that spanned too many pages to be neatly inserted into the Apocrypha, yet I felt I needed to insert a link to that affair, so as to not ignore it. Unfortunately few of the letters, as in Sacrificial Sentiments, were of sufficient length and quality to be extracted as summary letters for representing the whole debate. Perhaps in the Third Edition of ARDA 2, I'll add them to the printing, but not quite yet, despite their importance.

I guess I started the whole mess by encouraging the OMS to join as a group, rather than individually, but I doubt the end resulting structure of the OMS splinter would have been radically different, but I suppose it would have been in better protocol for some of the old hands from California who felt left out of the process and suspicious of the intentions and reputation of OMS's first Arch Druid, Sybok, accusing him of posting under various names, unsubbing dissentors and being generally unpleasant and rude.

The Epistle of Corwin

It has been quite rare for a sitting Archdruid at Carleton to actually get off their butt and write a decent letter on Druidism, much less to send out their State of the Groves letter on retirement. It is like prying teeth out to get them to put pen to paper, since they appear to prefer frolicking in the woods to laboring over a piece of wood pulp…. Hey that does sound good doesn't it?

Any way, Corwin had taken a page out of the Book of Frangquist and Scharding and decided to go off to Japan and learn more about their ways. After the Reunion, she stopped by Washington DC's grove a few days before departing and I shared some thoughts on the liturgical practice and Zen and such, and sent her on her merry way.

Naturally, after the long Archdruidcies of Irony, Merri and Ehren, it was time for the Carleton Druids to re-examine their style of liturgy and grove structure. They were facing a low membership and need to rebuild the grove from scratch, but a vision was necessary first.

The Epistle of Stephen

Stephen always seemed more down-to-earth than the flighty red-headed Corwin. He was much more interested in the ancient customs and lore of the Celts, and wrote his Comps project on an arcane aspect of the Brehon laws. He, like Irony, had also written a few tracts on what was Reformed Druidism. Stephen has also acted as my Johnny-on-the-spot to rendez-vous with the archives and do some research, look up matters and keep the archives in good shape. I, in return, recompense him and chew his ear off with dull archival discussion.

Ritual does seem to be the obsession of Druids, either they love it or hate it; but seem unable to avoid it. I expect many more epistle from this young Druid over the years.

Mike's Mini-Missive

My letter was simply a summary of theirs and an encouragement to keep on the same paths of Reforming the Carleton Druids into a format that fit their times. As with counseling young lovers hoping to get married, is to ask what they want and generally advise them to do it.

The Alphabet Epistle

What to say on this epistle? On the one hand, every once and a while one of your fellow brothers or sisters goes off into la-la land and has a stunning visionary experience that's rather hard to respond to. On the other hand, you have to support and encourage them through the strangest of times.

I suppose Druids, like most modern people, have their thought processes bound up into words; both spoken and written which affect the way they relate objects to eachother due to resemblance, similar spelling, word-origins, homonymns and a score of other historical factors and nuances. In this letter, Ian has focused simply on the letter S and B, which goes to show you that even the most little clue can help to solve a big mystery.

I don't like the exhortatory tone, which seems a big like the ten commandments, but I think he did so in a rational manner, without going too far. The reference to Lord Zed is apparently from the movie "Zardoz" with Sean Connery in a trippy 1973 science fiction movie.

The Arch Epistle

My reply, also crafted during the Athens Olympics also has a bit of a Greek theme running through it. According to my interview with David Fisher, the sigil might actually have come from his feverish imagination, as he was minoring in Latin at Carleton, and had been studying the Greek alphabet in early preparation for a classics major, that later switched to history.

Perhaps the epistles of the Apocrypha are too plentiful in their advice for young aspiring Reformed Druid priests, but the purpose of the Arch Druid had not always seemed as well discussed. Most Third Order Priests go on to become Arch Druids, but not always.

I also enjoy puns and references to words with a common root origin, so I wrote this response after re-reading how Sister Mairi focused on one word "Reformed", and I in turn focused on the word "Arch." Hopefully there is a bit of wisdom in there.

The Epistle of Ric of the North

Ric Knight lives over on the northern shore of Lake Ontario in Canada. As you'll remember, Howard Cherniack, one of the Founders, was from British Columbia, and gave us the Druid Tenets, a constitution, and petitioned the authorities to accept the Druid's religious services as fulfilling the religious requirement. Since then, we have not had many prominent Canadian Druids, although we do call ourselves Reformed Druids of NORTH AMERICA, which should ostensibly include Mexico, Greenland, Canada the Caribean and Central America.

Ric is not technically an ordained Druid, having forsook the Orders as too hierarchial, much like Gandalf, and has lived a more or less solitary lifestyle with his fellow canine grove members. He runs the Order of Druids Minor, and operated an

on-line confernce for that group. He is a frequent puckish poster to the RDNAtalk conference and obviously a funny fellow.

The original Epistle he sent had a chapter for the group's constitution and three chapters of mediations that I will include in the Green Book 11 next year.

At my request, Ric gratiously added a chapter on Canadian/U.S. relations lambasting us for our shortcomings and offering some advice from our big neighbour. A picture of Ric should be in the liturgy section somewhere.

The Sixth Epistle of Isaac

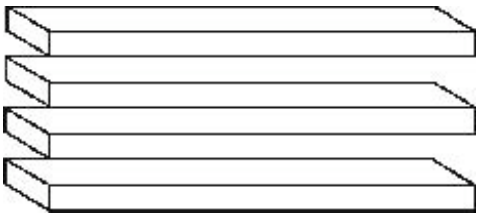
This striking epistle eulogizing Robert's departure, has several arguments that Isaac has been making in ADF for many year about the need to compensate priests for the long unrewarded efforts they have made for their parishioners. Even ADF is currently far from fully funding it's handful of Third Circle priests, as is true throughout the various Neo-pagan movements, due to the aversion to handling money or charging for services, as being "too churchy".

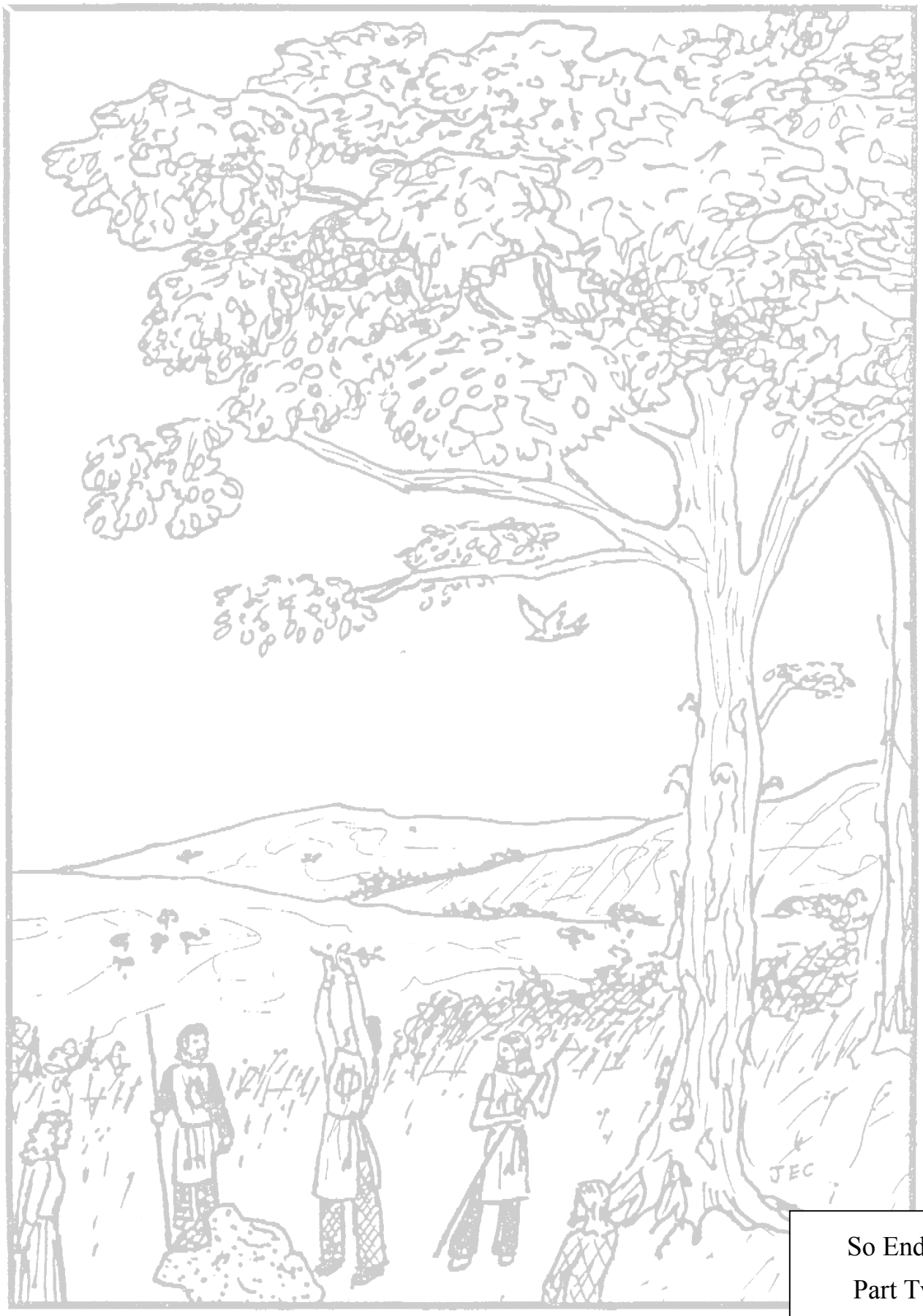
The Last Epistle of Robert

Sadly, even Druids must pass on, and Robert was mortal like the rest of us. He died suddenly on August 6th, which was Lughnasadh, and Sister Stacey received a letter from his brother on August 16th. Included was a single page Epistle of an unfinished nature, that was found among his few remaining possessions in his Spartan apartment. I suspect that it might have been a discarded prologue to the Third Epistle of Robert, but it might indeed have been of a long letter whose contents I will never know in this world.

There is this adage of "Truth against the world" that the British Druids cooked up a century or two ago, and it makes me a bit uncomfortable. While there may be relative truths, I think if the entire world does disagree with you, that's a pretty good sign that it is time to do a bit of re-evaluation. The phrase, naturally, doesn't excuse being wrong or allow you to defend an ill-inspected belief or superstitious dogma to be held, but only a well contemplated and rational position.

Being the probable last letter from Robert, I felt it appropriate to end with his words.





So Endeth
Part Two
Of ARDA 2

PART THREE

LITURGY OF THE DRUIDS

The various collected rites, activities, ordinations, blessings, and services of the various branches of the Reform, with a few additional selections from other modern Druid movements related to the RDNA.

Figure 1 Fisher, Nelson, Hotz & Frangquist on the Hill of Three Oaks, c.1964

The Drynemetum Press

2003 Introduction

Welcome to the expansive liturgical section.

Perhaps, I have agonized and labored most over this section of ARDA. According to the older traditions of the Reform, most groves require third ordination to perform the services, seemingly putting most of sections 1-7 of Part 3 out of the usage of most readers; which seemingly is against the rather egalitarian nature of Druidism. I would hope that the reader be encouraged to undertake the responsibilities of ordination more quickly, rather than be disenchanted; overcoming likely distance problems.

As a result of this imposed rule, it is quite likely that the Druid priest will be most strictly judged by their enactment of the liturgies. Your words and very gestures in a ritual context may have a far greater impact and weight than you realize on the Druids, especially the new comers, so be careful to distinguish personal and group beliefs, lest dogma flower from mere artistically selected statements. Nor should you become jaded with the formats, lest you forget the confusing tumult of misconceptions that you had wehn you first attended. A priest should also be a poet, a contemplative, a counselor, and a mortal human being. Thus, you should meet with such courageous newcomers beforehand to not seem so unreachable. Always keep that appropriate balance of reverence and humor.

Ritual is simply actions you like to do, over and over again. Your liturgies are only limited by your knowledge, imagination and experience. For those of us not gifted in public performance, it can be a series of difficult hard-fought lessons as you put together the pieces and styles that you can call your own, hopefully with the advice & example of a mentor, but often a result of trial & error and much reflection. It would be well for an aspiring liturgist to attend the services of as many different religions as is possible, to see in practice how different techniques are employed and how different elements are absent or held in common; especially since there are few comparative books on liturgy. You need not belong only to your Grove's community. A few acting lessons, a public speaking course, and simple practice in a mirror or before a trusted friend will vastly improve your performance ability. Explore, contemplate, try, decide and repeat. Then with honed skills and a fresh appreciation for the diversity, you may see how other parts of ARDA 2 may enrich your own liturgical design.

Each section of ARDA can richly inter-relate with each other, and means less when viewed only by itself. Pt 2 illuminates some of the debates on how to understand liturgy and ordination. Pt 4 gives tips on forming stable groves, and when to use seasonal liturgies. Pt 8 gives a sense of historical progression and how different factions of the RDNA have schismed over the importance of different elements in the liturgy. And Part 6 provides one vast resource, one among many, from which to draw songs, seasonal essays, meditations, stories, jokes, and a host of resources for researching ancient Celtic resources.

Without doubt, the liturgical additions to ARDA 2 are an enormous increase, and it has now become a daunting task to sift through and choose the best representatives of the various traditions within the Reform. You might even get lost if you don't pay attention to the way it has been divided. It may soon become difficult to keep the liturgical collection from becoming overwhelming, as happened with them Green Book and Magazine, which necessitated a separate printed volume.

For example, all the 1978-1980 liturgies by Isaac are of a different caliber than the previously published NRDNA liturgies of DC(E). Some elements are rather dogmatic in nature, nothing the average Neo-Pagan wouldn't agree with, but perhaps less amenable to many in the Reform. Yet, I decided to add them to ARDA 2 since this is primarily a historical collection, and they show the tangent that Isaac was walking that would lead to ADF beyond. Naturally one service from Keltria and OMS were added for good measure to show other examples of modern Druid groups related somehow to the RDNA.

One other section, which I'm ambivalent about, is the Solitary Services, which Eric recommended me to include. It may also swell out of control later with local customs, magical and spiritual exercises. Yet, as long as they seem practical for the general Druid and not too dogmatic, I'll have to include them. Druidism usually tends to err on the side of inclusion. But, I'm sure you'll find a few things in here of use to add to your core collection, that will influence the design of your own personalized system.

I suppose there is no way to curb the ceremonialist episcopagan from overly focusing on this section of ARDA 2, but I would like to remind them that there is much more than liturgy in Druidism. The non-liturgical materials were therefore added to give a greater emphasis that a group need not only meet with a person yakking at them in the same old format. Festivals can also be lively mixes of crafts, activities and free-form interactions beyond the spoken service. Don't neglect the seasonal essays of Green Book 7 in Part 6 and Part 4's calendar, as they'll give you greater depth of understanding to those holidays.

Finally, one last interesting trend is the element of randomness. In early traditions of Carleton and Berkeley, although the winds are divined, in nearly every case, the sacrifice was accepted in the summer and rejected in the winter. Since the 1980s, many groves have begun to actually acknowledge that the sacrifice is a less assumed item. How you deal with a "failure" is a good sign that we don't "control" nature and it's a good test of a leader's mettle, requiring some quick thinking, in which case it is good to have a "back up" plan. Proper rest, eating, contemplation, familiarization and rehearsal will do wonders fr you.

There is so much that you can worry about, you might forget to have a good time. After all, "you have no need of these prayers and sacrifices." Regardless, I have great confidence in your ability to adapt and overcome difficulties. I wish the best of fortune to you.

Mike Scharding
September 13, 2004

Liturgy Formatting Note:

Naturally, the liturgies have been laid out in a format that is most useful to people who are reading them, so original formatting, fonts, spacing, etc. have been slightly adjusted to make them fit the pages easily on a windy day for an Archdruid juggling several cups, bottles, regalia and a sheaf of notes.

It's not pretty, but hopefully it will be easier to find your place. Naturally, it would be better to memorize the piece. Alternatively have someone hold the service papers while you read, and keep a finger on the spot where you finish for quick resumption. Plastic coating a printed high-service liturgy is a good idea to make in advance.

1996 Introduction

When I began to put together this collection of old liturgies, designed by various Reformed Druids at Carleton, I had many misgivings about publishing them. I was not disturbed because they are secret or anything like that, since there are very few secrets (if any) in Reformed Druidism, but because they can be so easily misunderstood by someone not familiar with Reformed Druidism at Carleton College. If any terms confuse you, refer to Part Four of ARDA where I'm sure many of your questions will be answered. If there is any one section of the Anthology that I was considering dropping, it was this section, but that's just my personal tendency to downplay ritual.

The Liturgy has an unusual place and role in Reformed Druidism, unlike that found in most other religions. Reformed Druidism began as a protest against enforced attendance and fixed liturgies as found at the mandatory Carleton College Chapel service of the early 60s. It would be a very sad day when a fixed or forced liturgy were to become established in Reformed Druidism itself! There are several points about Reformed Druid liturgy that should be remembered: irregular attendance is acceptable (perhaps even desirable), it isn't fixed in its final form and the existence of liturgy may even be antithetical to Reformed Druidism itself

Irregular Attendance:

While many earlier members may have enjoyed going to every Saturday services and to every one of the eight great festivals; this was not the case with everyone. For many, the need to gather in a group for "formal" worship is an urge that only comes once in long time. One can have a great many religious moments outside of a group, perhaps even purer moments. Many a person would come to a Druid ritual and just suntan, ignoring the ritual in effect, being there just to be with the people. Attendance has no reflection on how "Druidic" you are. Others took it quite seriously.

Nor is liturgical attendance the only way to be with other Druids. Over the years, both at Carleton and abroad at our missionary groves, there have been many other group activities that have developed that don't use a standard liturgy (or even need a liturgy). Such activities include: sweat lodges, candle-making parties, Bardic sing-a-longs, group-feasts, nature-walks, group meditation sessions, pseudo-theological debates, magic-working groups, book reading clubs, herbology and many other activities (depending on local talents that exist within the group). However, some groups just did the services 4 times a year and nothing else.

The Liturgy isn't fixed in its final form

Even from the beginning, the liturgies have been constantly changing. Although the Council of Dalon Ap Landu had voted that they:

"adopt the Order of Worship of the Carleton Grove (as formulated by David H. Fisher) as the basic order of worship of the Reformed Druids of West America."

This restriction has been stretched and experimented with. Every priest is expected to change, adopt and mutate the liturgy to fit the existing mood, their religious sensibilities, and the specific purposes of the moment. Ad libbing and spontaneity, within reasonable bounds, is encouraged. As a result there are dozens and dozens of alternatives to every single ritual example that will be presented to you in this book.

Many a person has added Wiccan elements or Cabalistic elements or Judeo-Christian elements, etc. The purpose of the liturgy is to bring people together, and if the majority of the people in the grove belong to one particular tradition you can add elements from that tradition (if you want to). However, the original version has been judged over the years to be relatively ecumenical enough and dogma-free to be acceptable to most people, so we recommend it when dealing with a "mixed" crowd.

The Liturgy isn't Sacrosanct

There is no claim of divine origin for these liturgies, although a few writers may have felt a bit inspired when they wrote them. Sanctity is in the eye of the beholder, isn't it? For many, the liturgy is merely a philosophical exposition by the Priest who is using deities in the Jungian sense of the archetype. For others, the liturgy is the direct invocation and worship of whatever deities are being invoked. For some it is merely being quiet together at someplace while someone reads something out loud. For some, powerful magickal energies are conjured forth by the magickal words and the power is delegated to various tasks. For others, it's a quaint little service that's fun to attend. Let us respect the right of the beholder and individual congregant to have their own interpretation of the liturgy.

The liturgy may even be antithetical

Perhaps it was the Protestant streak in the early founders which made Reformed Druidism into the religion of the individual. The goal of Reformed Druidism, for many, is a never-ending search for religious truth; a truth which can be meaningful only to the particular individual who grasps it. Words and gestures cannot communicate the subtleties that define our thoughts (little can, unless you have telepathy). Let us beware from ever taking the liturgy as the most effective way of expressing our religious thoughts!

Who can say whether the individual with the title "Priest" has any better understanding of her/his religion than the young first-order Druid sitting near them? For all we know, the role/title of "Priest" within Reformed Druidism may be merely an "ego-stroke" of comfort for those who feel the need to make sure that someone in the group holds a service every now and then. I hope not, although I have been a priest, for three years as of writing this, I don't feel any more divine than the next guy.

Michael Scharding
Day 31 of Geimredh, Year XXXIII of the Reform
December 1st, 1995 c.e.

Figure 2 Lower Arboretum Trails, 1960s.

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A King's Wedding
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An Old Fashioned Wedding
A Wedding Contract
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Section One: The Simple Package of Generic Liturgies

This section can be printed out for a Druid on the run, who needs to hold a service, and it should cover all their needs for weekly services. I recommend having a plasticized copy of this section for all-weather use. Based on DC(E) concept, which was derived from a simplified humnal pamplet made by David Frangquist in 1964.

Order of Common Worship Simple Summer Version

From May 1st up to, but on Nov. 1st
By Mike Scharding, 1993

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

Optional Procession

Drawing the Sigil & The Incantation

The Sacrifice

Priest: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life. *Place sacrifice on Altar*
Priest: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East...and of the West.

The Reply

Priest: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Catechism of The Waters-of-Life

PRIEST: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: From whence do these Waters flow?
PRECEPTOR: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PRIEST: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PRECEPTOR: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PRECEPTOR: SHE HAS!
PRIEST: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

O Dalon Ap Landu, Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night,. Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of they secret essence!

The Communion & Optional Ordinations & Libation

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation followed by The Benediction

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 3 Nelson, Frangquist & Fisher on Hill of 3 Oaks, 1964.

Order of Common Worship Simple Winter Version

From on November 1st to, but not on May 1st.
By Mike Scharding, 1993

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

Optional Procession

Drawing the Sigil & The Incantation

The Sacrifice

Priest: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life. *Put Sacrifice on Altar*
Priest: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

Priest: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Catechism of The Waters-of-Sleep

PRIEST: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: From whence do these Waters flow?
PRECEPTOR: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PRIEST: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PRECEPTOR: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PRECEPTOR: SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.
PRIEST: Of what, then, do we partake?
PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.
PRIEST: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

The Consecration

O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these waters, and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

The Communion & The Libation

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation followed by The Benediction

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you.
Peace! Peace! Peace!

Ordination of Second Order Druids

By David Fisher, 1963

*To be inserted after the **consecration** and before the **meditation** in the Order or Worship. It can of course be the sole purpose of the Order of Worship, or an incidental part. It is generally only done in the Summer Half of the Year as it requires Alcohol or Something Perky. Usually the PRIEST of the service asks if anyone wishes to enter the Second Order after having consecrated the Waters..*

*Another alternative is to bring the aspirant forward during the Order of Worship's **invocation** and after asking the **Questions, shown below**, have the aspirant respond to the normal **Catechism of the Waters**. After the **Consecration of the** Waters, proceed to the **Sealing to the Second Order.***

*(**NOTE** Have everybody sip the Waters before the initiate, but leave plenty for her/him to drink. It is often a good idea to consecrate a second chalice to ensure that enough Waters will be ready for the Aspirant's ordeal.)*

Invocation

O Earth-Mother, bountiful and ever flowing forth, we Thy children, invoke Thy blessing upon this aspirant to serve thee.

Questions

PR: Do you, in full consciousness, promise to serve faithfully the Earth-Mother, ministering to Her followers, and following you duties as a Druid of the Second Order to the best of your ability? Do you?
Aspirant: I do. *(or close enough)*
PR: Do you understand from whence comes the source of all life, and the nature of the source of all life? Do you?
Aspirant: I do.
PR: Do you understand the partaking of the Waters-of-Life, and the sacrifice of life that we offer-up to our Mother? Do you?
Aspirant: I do.
PR: Are you ready, then, to be sealed up to the service of the Earth-Mother? Are you?
Aspirant: I am.

Sealing to the Second Order

(PRIEST dips fingers in consecrated waters and makes a Sigil on forehead of the candidate every time the word "seal" is spoken in the following:)

In the name of the Earth-Mother;

I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the spirit of the South.
I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the North.
I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the West.
I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the East.
Finally, I **seal** you to the service of the mighty, the blessed, all powerful and fertile All-Mother Earth, thus consecrating your life to Her cause.

The Ordeal

(Hand the candidate all the remaining Waters-of-Life)

PR: Take and drink, all of it!

(Return to the Order of Worship, usually at the Meditation, which may be just watching the staggering initiate!)

Ordination of First Order Druids

By David Fisher, c. 1963

Unlike the other Orders of Reformed Druidism, there is not a fixed liturgy of ordination. There is a general custom which can be elaborated upon as the Priest sees fit.

Usually the Priest will ask for aspirants to the First Order as the waters are about to be passed around. The Priest will go to the aspirant and ask if the aspirant believes in the two Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism:

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual important, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it.

If the aspirant replies affirmatively, the Priest takes the chalice and dips their fingers in the Waters and draws the Druid Sigil on the forehead of the aspirant. Then the aspirant drinks some of the Waters. The Priest then declares them to be a First Order Druid.

If there are several aspirants, say a dozen, instead of going through each separately, they may be ordained as a group with separate head-anointings.

Another custom has developed at Carleton of anyone of the first or second orders being able to ordain another person into their own orders, in the absence of an existing Priest.

The 13-Fold Mystery

I am the wind which breathes upon the sea,
I am the wave of the ocean,
I am the murmur of the willows,
I am the ox of the seven combats,
I am the vulture upon the rocks,
I am a beam of the sun,
I am the fairest of plants,
I am a wild boar in valor,
I am a salmon in the water,
I am a lake in the plain,
I am a word of knowledge,
I am the point of the lance of battle,
I am the God who created in my head the fire,
Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?
Who announces the ages of the moon?
Who teaches the place where couches the sun?
If not I

Invocation

I invoke the land of Erinn,
Much-coursed be the fertile sea,
Fertile be the fruit-strewn mountain,
Fruit-strewn be the showery wood,
Showery be the river of waterfalls,
Of waterfalls be the lake of deep pools,
Deep-pooled be the hill-top well,
A well of tribes be the assembly,
An assembly of rulers be Temair,
Temair be a hill of tribes,
The tribes of the sons of Mil,
Of Mil of the ships, the barks,
Let the lofty bark be Erinn,
Lofty Erinn, darkly sung,
An incantation of great cunning,
The great cunning of the wives of Bres,
The wives of Bres, of Buaigne,
The great lady of Erinn,
Eremon hath conquered her,
Ir, Eber have conquered for her,
I invoke the land of Erinn.

Incantation #3

Fain we ask Erin, Faring o'er oceans',
Motions to Mountains, Fountains and bowers,
Showers, rills rushing, Gushing waves welling,
Swelling streams calling, Falling foam-thunder,
Under lakes filling, Willing abiding,
Riding rounds, holding, Olden fairs meetly
Fleet to lift loyal, Royal king's towers,
Bowers for crowning, Frowning foes over
Rover Mil's warlike, Starlike sons therein,
Erin shall longer, Stronger, show honour,
On our Milesians, Wishing, in trouble,
Noble isle's wooing, Suing, we stay here
Pray here to sail in, Wailing maids royal,
Loyal chief-priests, Priests, blend pray'r in
So we seek Erinn

Hymn to the Earth-Mother

O Earth-Mother!
We praise thee,
Who seed springeth,
Who flower openeth,
Who grass waveth.
We praise thee for winds that whisper
Through the graceful elm,
Through the shapely maple,
Through the lively pine,
Through the shining birch,
Through the mighty oak.
We praise thee for all things.
O Earth-Mother!
Who givest life.

Order of Common Worship

New Reformed Druids of North America
Detailed Summer Version
By Isaac Bonewits, 1976
For use from on May 1st up to, but not including Nov 1st

Preparatory Details

This is the basic Order of Common Worship from which all the others are adapted, and is to be used during the Summer Half of the year (i.e., from Beltane to Samhain). The chalice is to filled with the Waters-of-Life.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

Pr: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

Pr: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(If the sacrifice is accepted, and it almost always is accepted, then continue. If bad omen, the service ends at this point.)

Pr: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Catechism of The Waters-of-Life

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-life while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Life. The local custom may or may not replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PREC: SHE HAS!
PR: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Dalon Ap Landu, Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night,. Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of they secret essence!

Optional Ordinations

First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually 2 or 3 minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end of the Service with:)

The Benediction

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 4 Press, Weinberger (hidden), Nelson, Frangquist, Shelton & Webber, 2003
Little Bird Grove (Stone Circle) 40th Reunion

Order of Common Worship

New Reformed Druids of North America
Detailed Winter Version
By Isaac Bonewits, 1976
For use from on November 1st up to,
but not including May 1st

Preparatory Details

This is a basic Order of Common Worship from which all the others can be adapted, and is to be used during the Summer Half of the year (i.e., from Beltane to Samhain). The chalice is to filled with plain water.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

Pr: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

Pr: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is not accepted, except in emergency situations.)

PR: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Catechism of The Waters-of-Sleep

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Sleep while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Sleep. The local custom may or may not replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PREC: SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.
PR: Of what, then, do we partake?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.
PR: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these waters, and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

Ordinations

No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Sleep," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end of the Service with:

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 5 Nelson, Fisher & Frangquist on Hill of 3 Oaks, 1964 with original record-stand altar.

Section Two: Old Carleton Seasonal Versions

Authorship and dates are quite a bit uncertain in this section.

Samhain Version #1

(By Fisher?, 1964?)

The Invocation

Be'al, sign Ap handrahch.
Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;
Lord, forgive us these three sins that are due to our human limitations.
Be'al, sign Ap handrahch.

Procession and Drawing of the Circle

Here shall be lit a fire, from a torch carried by the Archdruid, upon the high altar.

Chants or Hymns

Here may be sung a hymn.

Here shall be given a ritual chant of mourning

(Perhaps the following chant was used)

Samhain Chant

by David Fisher 1964?
Druid Chronicles (Customs Chap. Seven)

Priest:. Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many faceted nature, in and above all, to thee we sing our chants of praise.
Chorus: Go thou not from us!
Priest: Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all Groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not thy pleasing face from us.
Chorus: Go thou not from us!
Priest: The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is thy order, where thy strength?
Chorus: Depart not from our midst, sleep not, O most high!
Priest: The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws his chariot; his face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.
Chorus: Return to us his warmth!
Priest: Lo, we are as wraiths; our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walk the land.
Chorus: Preserve us, O spirit of Day. Keep us in thy mind, O spirit of power!
Priest: Ushtar, Astarte, guide our paths. If thou will leave us, save us through the time of silence, keep bright within our hearts 'til spring.
Chorus: So let it be, O our Mother, for we are faithful, and would keep thy ways!

The Sacrifice

Here shall be offered up a bough of pin, a branch of oak, and a crest of grass.

Priest: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried aloft to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy presence yet.
Priest: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? Hast thou accepted our gifts, O Be'al? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The First Answer

Priest: The four winds are silent, neither does the Mother answer. The time of SAMHAIN is upon us.

The Second Answer

PRIEST: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: From whence do these Waters flow?
PRECEPTOR: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PRIEST: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PRECEPTOR: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS ARE HERE BUT THERE IS NO LIFE WITHIN THEM, NEITHER DO THEY SING. THEY ARE THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.
PRIEST: Give me the Waters-of-Sleep.
PRIEST: O Dalon Ap Landu, O Be'al return to these Waters, we pray thee. Hallow them, descend into them that we may have life.
PRIEST TO CONGREGATION: Take, and drink, in token of our acceptance of Samhain for I tell you that it is truly upon us.

The Sermon

Here may be given the sermon.

The Dismissal

Take up these torches, and go forth. Rest sure in the knowledge that after Samhain comes Beltane, and that the Earth-Mother will return to us. Peace to your spirits;

Rest, Rest, Rest.

Figure 6 Stone Circle, Hill of 3 Oaks, 1997

Samhain Version #2

(Shelton? Early 1970s Version?)

The Invocation

Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;
Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

Changing of Vestments

Procession and Drawing of the Circle

Here shall be lit a fire, from a torch carried by the Arch Druid, upon the High altar .

Chants or Hymns

Here may be sung a hymn.

Here shall be given a ritual chant of mourning.

The Sacrifice

Here shall be offered up a bough of pine, a branch of oak, and a crest of grass.

Priest: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried aloft to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy presence yet.

Priest: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? Hast thou accepted our gifts, O Be'al? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

Priest: The four winds are silent, neither does the Mother answer. The time of Samhain is upon us.

The Answer

PRIEST: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PRIEST: From whence do these Waters flow?

PRECEPTOR: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

PRIEST: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

PRECEPTOR: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PRIEST: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS ARE HERE BUT THERE IS NO LIFE WITHIN THEM, NEITHER DO THEY SING. THEY ARE THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.

PRIEST: Give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

PRIEST: O Dalon Ap Landu, O Be'al return to these Waters, we pray thee. Hallow them, descend into them that we may have life.

PRIEST TO CONGREGATION: Take, and drink, in token of our acceptance of Samhain for I tell you that it is truly upon us.

The Meditation

Here may be offered petitions to the Earth-Mother.

The Benediction

Priest: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that after Samhain comes Beltane, and that the Earth-Mother will return to us. Peace to your spirits;
Rest, Rest, Rest.

COLD, COLD!

(Ancient Irish, suitable for Samhain)
From Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1975

Cold, cold!
Cold tonight is the broad plain of Lurg,
Higher the snow than the mountain range,
The deer cannot get at their food.
Cold till Doom!
The storm has spread over all:
A river is each furrow upon the slope,
Each ford a full pool.
A great sea is each loch, which is full,
A full loch is each pool,
Horses do not get over Ross-ford,
No more do two feet get there.
The fishes of Inis Fail are a-roaming,
There is no marge nor well of waves,
In the lands there is no land,
Not a bell is heard, no crane talks.
The hounds of Cuan-wood find not
Rest nor sleep in the dwelling of hounds,
The little wren cannot find
Shelter in her nest on Lon-slope.
On the little company of the birds has broken forth
Keen wind and cold ice,
The blackbird cannot get a lee to her liking,
Shelter at the side of Cuan-woods.
Cozy our pot on the hook,
Crazy the hut on Lon-slope:
The snow has smoothed the wood here,
Toilsome to climb by kine-horned staves.
Glenn Rigi's ancient bird
From the bitter wind gets grief,
Great her misery and her pain,
The ice will get into her mouth.
From flock and from down to rise
Take it to heart! Were folly for thee:
Ice in heaps on every ford,
That is why I keep saying "cold!"

Taken from Ancient Irish Tales
(The Hiding of the Hill of Howth)

Service at the Winter Solstice

By Norman Nelson, 1964-65?

Opening Blessing

O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here;
Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer you these prayers and sacrifices;
O Lord, forgive us these three sins that are due to our human limitations.
O Belenos, hear us as we praise thee in thy returning.
O Earth-Mother, wake and hear our prayers; cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

Procession

(Circle is omitted) Here may be lighted a fire if one is desired.

The Sacrifice

Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Wake now, and hear, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life that is to come. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts granting us peace and renewed life.

(Here shall be offered up a branch of evergreen, a branch of mistletoe, if available, and a branch bare, yet bearing buds.)

Hast thou heard our prayers and wakened? Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, dedicated to the renewal of life? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer, of the South, of the East, and of the West.
Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the return and renewal of life and fertility has been accepted.

The Answer

Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
THE WATERS OF LIFE.
From whence do these Waters flow?
FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER-CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
And how do we honor this gift that causes life in men?
BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS OF LIFE.
Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
IT IS THE TIME OF WINTER, AND THE WATERS OF LIFE FLOW NOT FORTH. THE MOTHER GIVES US ONLY THE WATERS OF SLEEP.
(THEN SHALL THE A-D SAY) It is indeed the time of winter, when the Earth-Mother is wrapped in sleep, and the blanketed in snow and cold; yet it is also at this time that the sun, whom we have called Belenos, turns again to the north, bringing the promise of returning life to all things. For though the Earth be wrapped in sleep, within her rest the seeds and buds of renewed life, to come forth in all their glory with the return of the life-giving Belenos.
All people have celebrated the return of the sun, from time immemorial, and in many ways, but to the Druids does this have a special meaning, for in the Waters of Sleep is the promise of the Waters of Life. Then give me the Waters.

The Consecration

O Dalon-Ap-Landu, hallow these Waters of Sleep and life to come by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. O Belenos, pour into these waters thy life-giving powers and the promise of renewed life. O Earth, our Mother, cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy waters.
To Thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee. Hear us pray that with the return of the Waters of Sleep to the Earth, may come the return of mighty and life-giving Belenos; hear us, O Earth-Mother. O Earth, our Mother, O Belenos, even now and daily do we praise thee.

Reading and Meditation

(Here shall be read Customs 4:3-4)

(Here may follow a silent meditation and prayer.)

(Here may be appended any other prayers or thanksgivings at the discretion of the Archdruid.)

The Benediction

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer: that life shall return to the face of the Earth, even as does mighty Belenos return, and that we go forth with her blessing.
Peace. Peace. Peace.

Note: This service is designed for use as close as possible to the Solstice. It may be performed by an Archdruid alone, or as an act or worship of the Drynemeton. Suggested vestments are plain black with white, or vice versa.

A Call to Mother Nature

Author Unknown, Date Uncertain, perhaps 1964

Earth, divine Goddess, Mother Nature, who generatest all things and bringest forth anew the sun which thou hast given to the nations; Guardian of the sky and sea and of all Gods and powers; through thy power all nature falls silent and then sink in sleep. And again though bringest back the light and chasest away night, and yet again thou coverest us most securely with thy shades. Thou dost contain chaos infinite, yea, and winds and showers and storms. Thou sendest them out when thou wilt, and causest the seas to roar; thou chasest away the sun and arousest the storm. Again, when thou wilt thou sendest forth the joyous day and givest the nourishment of life with the eternal surety. And when the soul departs to thee we return. Thou indeed art duly called great Mother of the Gods; thou conquerest by thy divine name. Thou art the source of the strength of nations and of Gods, without thee nothing can be brought to perfection or be born; thou art great, queen of the Gods. Goddess! I adore thee as divine; I call upon thy name; be pleased to grant that which I ask thee, so shall I give thanks to thee, Goddess, with due faith.

A Chant for Midwinter

By Fisher or Nelson? , 1963?

Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, thou of uncounted names and faces, hear us now as we thy humble servants call upon thee
* GLORIOUS ARE ALL THY WORKS, O OUR MOTHER
Hear us, Mother, as we do call upon thee in the form of Belenos, great God of the golden sun.
* MAKE THY FACE TO SMILE UPON US, THOU GOD OF THE BRIGHT LIFE-GIVING LIGHT.
Lo, Belenos, for more than six full moons hast thou drawn away from us since our rejoicing at the festival of Midsummer, and for these moons have our days dwindled shorter.
* YEA, AND COLDER TOO, AS THOU HAS LEFT OUR SKIES FOR THE SOUTH.
Yet though we know we shall suffer yet more cold before Beltaine, do we rejoice today to see thee stop thy flight and begin to return to us.
*AND WE SHALL REJOICE THROUGH THE SNOWS TO SEE THE SOURCE OF WARMTH AND LIFE DAILY RETURN NEARER.
We know, Mother, that as there is Samhain there must be Beltaine, and as there is Beltaine there must be Samhain.
* WE KNOW, BELENOS, THAT AS THERE IS MIDSUMMER THERE MUST BE MIDWINTER, AND AS THERE IS MIDWINTER THERE MUST BE AGAIN MIDSUMMER.
As the sun began to sink, it must now begin to climb.
* AS IT NOW BEGINS TO CLIMB, IT MUST SINK AGAIN.
All that passes away must come again. We praise thee, our Mother.
* ALL THAT COMES MUST PASS AWAY. PRAISE BE TO THEE, BELENOS.

A Meditation for Midwinter

By Frangquist, 1964?

Better is the end of a thing than its beginning;
And the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.
Be not quick to anger, for anger lodges in the bosom of fools.
Say not, "Why were the former days better than these?"
For it is not from wisdom that you ask this.
In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider;
God has made the one as well as the other.
(Ecclesiastes 7:8-10, 14)

Figure 7 Monument Hill 1993

Oimelc Service of Worship, Version #1

By Fisher?, 1964 or 65?

Invocation

Lord, forgive three sins that are due to our human limitations.
Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here.
Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms.
Thou needest no prayers or sacrifices, but we offer you these prayers and sacrifices.
Lord, forgive three sins that are due to our human limitations.

Chant

(Here shall be chanted by the Archdruid an appropriate chant of praise.)

Sacrifice in Silence

We have raised our voices to thee in praise, O our Mother. Hear now, we beseech thee, as we offer thee praise in our hearts.

(Here shall the Archdruid place a branch of evergreen upon the altar.)

Words of Assurance

This Earth is a mother that never dies.
Of this the evergreen is a constant sign.
Of this at OIMELC we are given to know by the lactation of the ewe.
Take now, and drink of this milk, in assurance that life will return to the world. Join together in this act of faith.

(Here shall the Archdruid pour the milk of a ewe (or a cow) into a chalice, saying:)

O Dalon Ap Landu, we praise thy name and beseech thy return to the world of men. Come and dwell within us as we take and drink of this sign of thy eternal life.

The Readings

(Here shall be read suitable words of truth.)

(Here may be given a sermon.)

The Benediction

Go Forth now into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our prayers have been heard, our sacrifice answered, and that you go in the peace of the Mother.

Peace, Peace, Peace.

Figure 8 The Amphitheatre 1993

Festival of Oimelc Meditation

Fisher or Frangquist? 1965?

Celebrated—from sundown Jan. 31 to sundown Feb. 1
Occasion—Beginning of the Second Quarter of the Druid year, also called the period of Earrach.

Very little is known about the Festival of Oimelc. This is because less of it has survived to modern time s than any of the principle festivals of the Druid year. Oimelc was almost totally eclipsed, on purpose, by the feast of St. Bridget in the Catholic church. There is some question as to the identity of Bridget. She is supposed to have lived at about the same time as St. Patrick, and like him, it is uncertain whether or not she actually existed. Furthermore, Bridget has been identified as one of the Celtic Goddesses – that of fertility- and it is possible that she was simple adopted as a saint out of the Celtic mythology. This may indicated that there were traces of the fertility rites in the celebration of Oimelc; however, considering the season, it is not very likely that they reached any proportion. Rather, it would seem that the festival was something of a repetition of mid-winter. As in mid-winter, the evergreen is made the center of attention as the symbol of continued life in the midst of the seemingly dead world. The fire, so important to all Druidic festivals most probably took the form of the Yule log as in the case of mid-winter. At any rate, the emphasis is placed on the fact that winter is now half-over and that life is not dead (as is seen in the evergreen) but is going to return to the earth in the spring.

A Service for Oimelc, Version #2

By Gary Zempel, 1966 or 67?

The Invocation

Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these, our prayers and sacrifices;
Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations.

Chant

(Here may the arch-Druid chant an appropriate chant or praise)

Sacrifice

Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried aloft to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, O our Mother, as we offer up to thee this sacrifice of Life. Accept it, we pray thee, and acknowledge for us thy presence here.

(Here shall the priest place a branch of evergreen upon the altar.)

Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O Our Mother? Hast thou accepted our gifts, O Be'al? I call upon the spirits of the North to give answer, of the South, of the East, of the West.

The four winds are silent, neither does the Mother answer. Thus has it been before; yet thrice since Samhain has the moon gone before us in her full glory and thrice has she fully hid her glory from us. We know that as Belenos last hid his light from us, Geimredh came to its end. We have lived, through Geimredh, in the hope of the return of the Earth-Mother, yet she still answers us not, and all about us she appears dead.

The Answers or Words of Assurance

Priest: Has she given a sign of this?
Preceptor: Of this constant life is the evergreen a sign.
Priest: Does the Mother give us any sign, special to Oimelc, to remind us that though the winds answer not, she shall yet return and awake?
Preceptor: Of this at Oimelc we are given to know by the lactating of the ewe.
Priest: It is written, "Take now, and drink of this milk, in assurance that life will return to the world."
Preceptor: We drink together in this act of faith.

(Here shall the Priest pour the milk of a ewe (or of a cow) into a chalice or goblet saying:)

O Dalon Ap Landu, we praise thy name and beseech thy return to the world of men. Come and dwell within us as we take and drink of this thy sign of eternal life.

(Here shall the server pass the milk among the assembled grove)

The Meditation

(Here may be read a suitable written meditation)

(Here may be given a sermon)

(Here may be provided time for personal meditation)

The Benediction

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our prayers and sacrifice have been heard and answered, that the Earth-Mother will return to us in less time than she has been gone from us, and that you go ever in the peace of the Mother.

Peace. Peace. Peace.

Set down by me on this eve of Oimelc, for the service celebrating Oimelc, in the third year of the Worship of the Mother

-Gary Zempel

Figure 9 Dick Smiley, Gary Zempel, c 1965

Yet Another Service for Oimelc, Version #3

By Shelton? Early 70s?

The Invocation

O Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee but here;
Thou art without form, but we honor these forms
Thou art that which we take to give in dedication, yet we so take and give.
O Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

Chant, then Sacrifice

Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried aloft to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, O our Mother, as we offer up to thee this sacrifice of Life. Accept it, we pray thee, and acknowledge for us thy presence here.

(Here shall the priest place a branch of evergreen upon the altar.)

The four winds are silent, neither does the Mother answer. Thus has it been before; yet thrice since Samhain has the moon gone before us in his full glory and thrice has he fully hid his glory from us. We know that as the sun hid her last light from us this day, the time of Geimredh has come to its end, and as the serpent swallows his tail, so moves the world on. But around us all seems barren and cold.

The Response

Chorus: The Earth is a mother that sleeps but never dies.
Priest: Has she given of this a sign?
Preceptor: Of this the evergreen a constant sign.
Priest: Does the Mother give us any sign on this day of Oimelc to remind us that though the winds answer not, she shall yet return and awake?
Preceptor: Of this at Oimelc we are given to know by the lactating of the ewe.
Priest: It is written, "Take now, and drink of this milk, in assurance that life will reawaken in the world."
Preceptor: We drink together in this act of faith.

(Here shall the Priest pour the milk of a ewe (or of a cow) into a chalice)

O Dalon Ap Landu, we praise thy name and beseech thy return to the world of men. Come and dwell within us as we take and drink of thy sign of eternal life.

(Here shall the server pass the milk among the assembled grove)

The Reading

The Benediction

Go forth into the world of men, with faith that the Spirit of the World remains alive, and dwelleth within the hearts, aye, and moves the hearts of *all* men, and that that Spirit hears our plea. May the peace of the Mother find each of you.

(Beltane)

SUMMER HALF OF THE YEAR

The Earliest Known Version,
(Perhaps by Fisher, Beltane 1963.)

I. OPENING BLESSING:

O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here;
Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms;
Thou needest no praise, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;
O Lord, forgive *[these]* three sins that are due to our human limitations.
Mighty and blessed, fertile and powerful, to thee Earth-Mother, we sing your praise, asking that what we offer up to thee will be accepted, and thy blessing of life granted to us.

II. PROCESSION AND DRAWING OF THE CIRCLE (& LIGHTING OF FIRE)

III. HYMNS OR CHANTS OF PRAISE

IV. THE SACRIFICE

Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, O our Mother, as we offer up to thee this our sacrifice of life. Accept this we pray, and grant us life.
Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call on the Spirit of the North to give answer, of the South, of the East, and of the West.
Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life has been accepted.

V. THE ANSWER

1. Of what does the Earth-mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
From whence do these Waters flow?
FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
And how do we honour this gift that causes life to men?
BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
SHE HAS
Then give me the Waters.
2. O DALON AP LANDU, HALLOW THESE WATERS BY THE SEVENFOLD POWERS, AND BY THE THREE WAYS OF DAY AND THE ONE OF NIGHT. GIVE US TO KNOW THY POWER AS WE TAKE AND DRINK OF THY SECRET ESSENCES.
3. To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

VI. THE SERMON

VII. THE BENEDICTION

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that you go forth with her blessing. PEACE, PEACE, PEACE.

Mayday, Season Surpassing!

(Ancient Irish Poem, suitable for Beltane)
By Larson, Early 70s.

Mayday, season surpassing! Splendid is color then. Blackbirds sing a full lay, if there be a slender shaft of day.

The dust-colored cuckoo calls aloud; Welcome, splendid summer! The bitterness of bad weather is past, the boughs of the woods are a thicket.

Summer cuts the river down, the shift herd of horses seeks the pool, the long hair of the heather is outspread, the soft white bog-down grows.

Panic startles the heart of the deer, the smooth sea runs apace, season when ocean sinks asleep, blossom covers the world.

Bees with puny strength carry a goodly burden, the harvest of blossoms; up the mountain-side kine take with them mud, the ant makes a rich meal.

The harp of the forest sounds music, the sail gathers, perfect peace. Color has settled on every height, haze on the lake of full waters.

The corncrake, a strenuous bard, discourses; the lofty virgin waterfall sings a welcome to the warm pool; the talk of the rushes is come.

Light swallows dart aloft, loud melody reaches round the hill, the soft rich mast buds, the stuttering quagmire rehearses.

The peat-bog is as the raven's coat, the loud cuckoo bids welcome, the speckled fish leaps, strong is the bound of the swift warrior.

Man flourishes, the maiden buds in her fair strong pride; perfect each forest from top to ground, perfect each great stately plain.

Delightful is the season's splendor, rough winter has gone, white is every fruitful wood, a joyous peace in summer.

A flock of birds settles in the midst of meadows; the green field rustles, wherein is a brawling white stream.

A wild longing is on you to race horses, the ranked host is ranged around; a bright shaft has been shot into the land, so that the water flag is gold beneath it.

A timorous tiny persistent little fellow sings at the top of his voice, the lark sings clear tidings; surpassing Mayday of delicate colours.

Taken from *Ancient Irish Tales*,
(The Boyhood Deeds of Finn)

Figure 10 Beltane Maypole, 2001.

A Service for Beltane

By Shelton, c. 1970-1976

It is traditional to gather on Mai-Fete island first, light the torches there and then process to wherever (usually Monument Hill) in torchlight procession.. It is said that the Ancient Druids extinguished all fires throughout the land before Beltaine sundown, and then rekindled them all after sundown from a fire kindled by the Archdruid. The main fire, of course, is built and doused w/kerosene hours in advance, waiting to be kindled from the Archdruid's torch.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;

Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

The Incantation

Use the Mystery, Imagine the AD flanked by torches, reading this chant (That always makes my hair stand on end) and glancing significantly at a torch when he come to the line "Who created in the mind the fire".

The Lighting of the Fire

O Thou, that art this day awake, we greet thee!

Incantation and first Sacrifice

Place the evergreen bough reverently on the fire at the end of this speech. (Oh yes, each sacrifice should be entrusted to some worthy Druid or another, and you should ask for the appropriate one at the appropriate time. It is well worth the time to talk through the mechanics of the service with your cohorts the day before.

From Samhain, now half-year past, we have kept watch of the sun that divideth time as we ourselves. And we have seen the earth barren and deemed that life had fled. Yet thou abidest through all. In token of this we have taken the evergreen as sign, and the evergreen do we consecrate to ourselves that we may consecrate it to thee.

Changing of Vestments

I.e. the ribbons (from white to red). This marks the changing of the season.

Incantation and Second Sacrifice

Again, cast it [the wildflower] on the fire.

We behold the wild flower, the supreme sign of thy life and power. O Thou that returnest to the ways of the waking world, kindle within us thy joy, thy spirit, thy life!

Come ye winds and ye spirits of the wood, from earth and from sky, from greening tree and running stream; speak to us of the coming of spring, of rain on the hill and sun on the field, of the promise of ripening summer, of the quickening of life and quickening of spirit that springeth from the heart of all things and raiseth all unto life!

The Answers

Priest: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: From whence do these Waters flow?
PRECEPTOR: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PRIEST: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PRECEPTOR: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PRECEPTOR: SHE HAS!
PRIEST: Then give me the Waters!

Consecration of the Waters-of-Life

O Dalon Ap Landu, who givest all life but yet who art sprung from the life of us all, hallow these waters by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Give us to know of the force and power that resideth in the heart of each of us as we bind ourselves in communion with thee and with each other.

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, even as we must return to thee.

The Reading

Feel free to read several, and/or have other of the grove read their favorites. This is where the meat of the Modern Reformed Druid service resides, a sharing of thoughts.

The Opening of the Arb

A prerogative of the Archdruid. Any boor venturing to spend the night in the Arb before the Archdruid declares it officially open deserves the snow storm that may come his way. Traditional reading for Arb Opening is Yeat's Faery song (in the Green Book).

The Incantation and the Last Sacrifice

For the life of me I can't remember what the sacrifice was. As I recall, I wanted an oak, but oaks probably won't be in leaf. Grass is appropriate but not very dramatic. (Grass is about as eternal as anything) So think of something else.

Benediction

Write your own!

Figure 11 Paul Schmidt, Nikki Lambert, Mike Scharding, Hannah Landman & Richard Shelton at Monument Hill, 4/14/1993 for 30th Reunion.

Beltane Tips

By Shelton, 1976

21 April 1976
Shelton to Morrision

Dear Don,

We were delighted to get your letter, and to learn that you'll be around this summer and next year. It's beginning to look as though the Midsummer service will break a record for number of 3rd Orders present; there will probably be people from the cities (though not Isaac), and there's even a side chance that we'll have a majority of the Council.

You should receive shortly a document from Diana appointing you Arch-Druid of Carleton (pro-tempore). When you receive it, you will become 13th Arch-Druid of Carleton and Chairman of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. The "pro-tempore" signifies only that you are appointed, rather than elected, and you don't have to mention the "pro-tempore". You can drop it altogether as soon as you can rustle up a Grove to elect you Arch-Druid. But you will have all powers of a regularly elected Arch-Druid, including the right to consecrate priests to the third order. I want you to have this office by Beltaine so that you can meet Isaac on equal footing. If necessary, you should make it clear to him that <u>you</u> are the presiding Arch-Druid, and that <u>you</u> are running the show.

Now any Arch-Druid needs some paraphernalia, and to help tide you over until you can get the real thing, we enclose the following:

1. The Order of Worship – containing basic services for the Summer Half and Winter Half, 2nd Order Consecration, and a few other things. This is most of what you need in the way of liturgy. Always remember: except for third order consecration, all priests are encouraged to write their own liturgy, and (except for third order consecration) there is no fixed liturgy. Oh yes I have written in pencil the text as it appears in the Carleton Liturgy (the Black Books) as it differs somewhat from the printed version. The black book version is the one we used (when we were following the book at all). Second order consecration was the one service of these that we regularly did follow the book on.
2. A service for Beltaine. This is meant only as a suggestion; if you like it, use it, but don't feel bound to it. I guarantee it will take Isaac by surprise, since whatever he is calling the "Standard Beltaine Service" he must have written himself – the Black Book contains none (or didn't at my time, anyway). This service I wrote myself at Carleton, Glenn might have stuck it in the Black Book, but Isaac can hardly have found a copy anywhere. Also enclosed are some "stage directions," which might be useful. If you use this service and if Isaac asks for a copy, refer him to me, its mine, and I don't want it showing up in his Magnum Opus.
3. A copy of our printed version of the Green Books. Read the introductory material carefully, and peruse the contents with pleasure; for here is the essence of Druidism. Without the Green Books, no Grove is complete. But: for the time being , keep this to yourself. Our problem is that we do not yet have all the copyright releases necessary, and I have been using that as an excuse not to send a copy to Isaac until after it's too late to include in his thing. So let him have no inkling that you have a copy. Of course, you will get the real Green Book with the paraphernalia; in the meantime find a bind

for this – and keep the temporary copyright page right after the tile page, as its our only protection against pirated copies.

4. A handy-dandy Druid Calendar – works even in leap year! – plus directions for use.
5. Copies of the Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals and of Letter to my Brothers. They are part of the Carleton Apocrypha. Isaac has O.F.F. , but not letter- it would be best if he did not know of the existence of the latter.
6. Our very last copy of the Chronicles – we haven't been able to reach Kelton, so I don't know yet whether he has been able to recover the rest.
7. The Carleton Constitution. (as amended) Notice the striking resemblance to the Book of Law.

That should be enough to get you started. Let me know if you require anything else. I don't know how well-versed you are in the art of performing a service, so please forgive me if you already know all the following. But just in case you don't, I offer these tips:

A. It is traditional for Carleton priests to inscribe (with their fingers) the Druid symbol on the North (Blank) face of the Monument just before services. This is a token, looking forward to the day when we can have it inscribed (with a chisel) together with the legend "The First Reformed Druid Service was held on this spot on May 1st, 1963."

B. The presiding priest (usually, though not necessarily the A-D) gives the invocation somewhat apart from the congregation, and then processes (with his assistant, e.g. the Preceptor) to join the congregation. Upon reaching it, the two draw a symbol with their staves, into which the presiding priest steps, and from which he gives the rest of the service.

(Druid Symbol Illustration)

C. An incantation is nice, though not necessary. It is hard to find (or write) good ones. The ones in Customs are nice, but they are given much too often.

D. "The Sacrifice" Oh yes, the Sacrifice. Did anybody remember to bring a Sacrifice? -Uh, just a minute folks, I have to find a Sacrifice. Be right back." MORAL: Don't forget to bring a Sacrifice. This is the responsibility of the presiding priest. (This is particularly important for 3rd Order consecrations – the candidate will be pretty groggy, and very impressionable, so it is important that the A-D have gotten a good night's sleep and have everything all ready for the consecration so that everything goes smoothly. This instant is the most serious Druidism gets – it means a lot to the candidate, and it is important that it be done well.)

E. The responses in the Answer are given by the assistant, who should be of 2nd order (or more). If no 2nd order are available, they can be given by the congregation in union. But it doesn't really matter.

F. Waters of life: the traditional ratio of Scotch to Water is determined by the marks on the cruet (part of the paraphernalia): one fills with Scotch to the first mark, then with water (traditionally from a drinking fountain from 1st Goodhue, but only because A-D's traditionally forget about the water until the last minute) up to the 2nd mark. I measured out once what this came to in milliliters, but have forgotten exactly. It came to about 1 part Scotch to 2 parts water, for a total of about _ cup. Remember, for 2nd Order consecration, you need another cruetful in reserve for each 2nd order to be consecrated – for it is required that the aspirant consume the lion's share of the standard cruetful of waters.

G. Waters of Life (for Beltane): the ration is reversed: fill with water first, then Scotch. (This is one reason 2nd order consecration is traditionally **not** performed on Beltaine!)

H. Waters of Sleep: Straight water ("neither do they sing…")

I. Mechanics of 2nd order of worship (p.3) it says the 2nd order consecration is performed before the remainder of the waters is returned to the Earth-Mother. However, you need that chalice for the consecration, and the aspirant isn't supposed to leave any to be returned. So instead you proceed as follows: (suppose you have an aspirant)

J. Hallow the Waters of Life and serve the congregation, returning the remainder to the Earth-Mother, exactly as in a regular service.

K. Go to the aspirant. Ask him to kneel. Hallow the next batch of waters. Proceed with the consecration.

L. Go back to your homeplate (the Symbol) and continue the service (with the reading). Now you begin to see why you need an assistant or two: to hold bottles (of water and of scotch), cruets, chalice and liturgy, and torches at night!

M. Sermons. Nobody gives sermons anymore. A reading, or three or four, followed by a period of silent meditation is usual. I believe Renny was somewhat more imaginative – but you would know more about that than I.

O. Oh yes, the official liturgical scotch of RDNA is Black & White (Although we considered changing it when they changed the clip tops to screw tops – wrote them a letter to about it, too (didn't get any response)).

That's all I can think of. Hope it helps. Let me know if I can be of further assistance.

News Department: The Ann Arbor Grove has been revived (see enclosed missive, which is for the Archives). So I may be addressed as "Richard, Arch-Druid of Ann Arbor" though I'll think you stuffy if you do! (Except formally of course.)

Although it is not required, if you fell energetic it might be a good idea to send out an accession letter. But you might hold off until after Midsummers, in case anything important is decided (Hah!) Whatever you think best.

Peace
Richard!

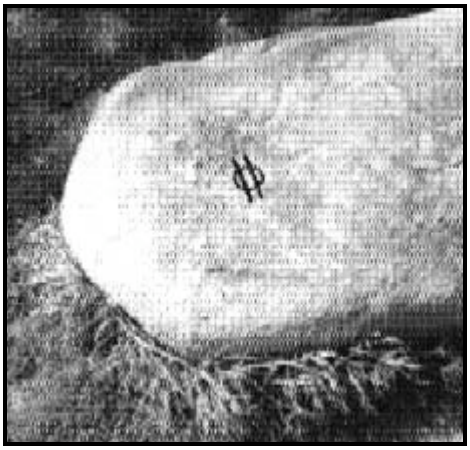


Figure 12 Altar stone, Hill of 3 Oaks c.1976

A Service for Mid-Summer

Small Fragment
By Fisher?, 1964?

Invocation:

O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, yet we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, yet we worship thee in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these, our prayers and sacrifices.
O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

(Here shall the sign be drawn upon the ground, the presiding priest stepping into it.)

A Chant For Midsummer

By Fisher, c. 1963

Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, thou of uncounted names and faces, hear us now as we thy humble servants do call upon thee.

(The BOLDFACE lines to be read by the congregation in unison:)

GLORIOUS ARE ALL THY WORKS, O OUR MOTHER!
Hear us, Mother, as we do call upon thee in the form of Belenos, great God of the golden sun.
MAKE THE FACE TO SMILE UPON US, THOU GOD OF THE BRIGHTLY SHINING LIGHT
Lo, Belenos, we have rejoiced these six full moons since the festival of midwinter, as we watched thee day by day lengthening thy reign of light.
O GLORIOUS ARE THE DEEDS OF BELENOS, AS THE WINTER SNOWS DO MELT AND WE REJOICE IN THE MOTHER'S RETURN TO LIFE AT BEALTAINE.
Yet do we know that with the coming of Midsummer the days will begin to shorten, all the mother's activities will begin slowing for the winter period, and the eve of Samhain shall come upon us.
WE SHALL MOURN AS THE SUN SINKS DAILY LOWER. BUT STILL YET BE GLAD FOR WHAT THE MOTHER DOES STILL GIVE US TO LIVE WITH.
We know, Mother, that as there is Bealtaine there must be Samhain, and as there is Samhain there must be Bealtaine.
WE KNOW, BELENOS, THAT AS THERE IS MIDWINTER THERE MUST BE MIDSUMMER, AND AS THERE IS MIDSUMMER THERE MUST BE AGAIN MIDWINTER.
As the sun began to climb, it must now begin to sink.
AS IT NOW BEGINS TO SINK, IT MUST CLIMB AGAIN.
All that comes must pass away. We praise thee, our Mother.
ALL THAT PASSES AWAY MUST COME YET AGAIN. PRAISE BE TO THEE, BELENOS.

Incantation to Midsummer

By Frangquist, 1964
Given at Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan

O glorious sun,
Won the fight,
Light over dark,
Stark nigh recedes,
proceed to thy fullest,
Best day today,
May thy radiance
Dance over all,
Fall to give
Living strength from on highs
Thy power goes through all, Belenos

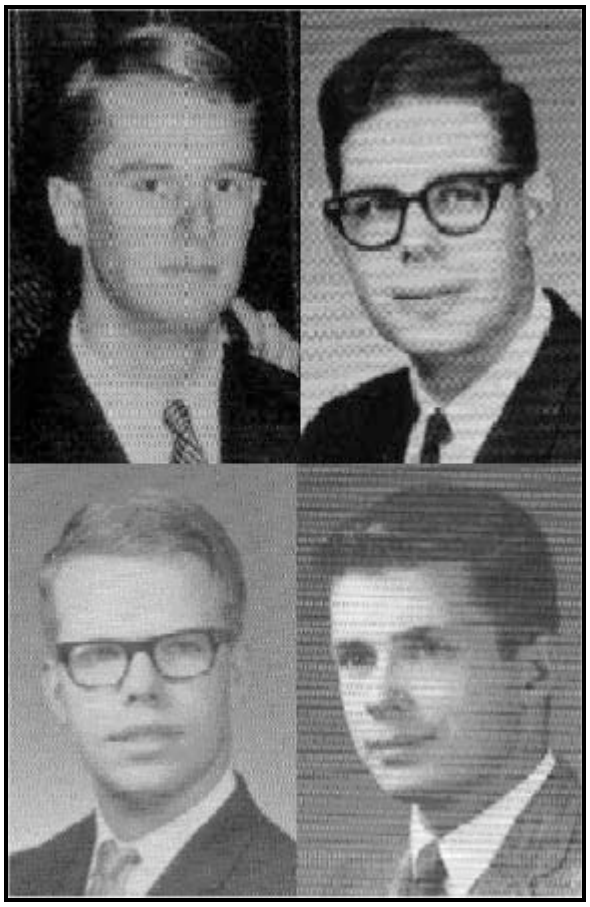


Figure 13 Four Founders of the RDNA
David Fisher, Howard Cherniack (Top)
Norman Nelson & David Frangquist, c. 1963

A Service for Lughnasadh

By Shelton?, Early 70s?

The Invocation

Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, yet only here do we seek thee;

Thou art without form, yet in these forms do we honor thee;

Thou hast no need of prayers and dedication, yet of thine own self do we gather that which we dedicate to thee;

Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

Here shall the priest and preceptor together draw the sign upon the ground, and the priest shall step into it.

The Praise

Priest: Let us praise the Earth-Mother! She has smiled on her children.

Chorus: Three times since Beltane has the moon gone before us in her full glory, and three times has she fully hidden her glory from us.

Priest: In those three months the Earth-Mother has quickened the Earth and brought forth life upon it; and in these three months to come she will bring forth the fruit of this life.

Chorus: Yet as the moon now waxes near to full only to wane again, so at Samhain will the Earth-Mother withdraw from us a while.

Priest: Even so we praise her, for now at Lughnasadh the life which has grown through Samhradh comes to fruition, that we her grateful children may gather it to endure and remember her until she returns again at Beltane.

BOTH: Let us gather and praise the bounty of the Mother!

The Dedication

Priest: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this dedication of life. Accept it, we pray thee, in token of the dedication of our hearts, and grant us awareness of thy presence with us.

(Here shall the priest place a stalk of wheat (or of field grass) upon the altar)

Priest: Hast thou accepted our dedication, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

Priest: Praise be, our dedication has been accepted. The Mother smiles on her children and brings forth of her bounty.

The Response

PRIEST: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PRIEST: From whence do these Waters flow?

PRECEPTOR: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

PRIEST: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

PRECEPTOR: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PRIEST: Does the Earth-Mother give any sign on this day of Lughnasadh to assure us that she will sustain life while she sleeps?

PRECEPTOR: OF THIS AT LUGNASADH WE KNOW BY THE HARVEST-BOUNTY OF FOGHAMHAR.

PRIEST: What token does the Earth-Mother give of this bounty to come?

PRECEPTOR: IN TOKEN OF THIS BOUNTY SHE HAS MIXED THE WATERS OF LIFE WITH THE GRAIN OF THE EARTH AND THE FRUIT OF THE TREE.

Priest: Give me this token.

The Consecration

PRIEST: O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of Groves, sprung from the Mother of all life, who is herself sprung from the life of us all: hallow this thy fruit by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Impart thy power to thy fruit that we who partake of it may know our unity with all life. Cleanse our minds and heart and prepare us for meditation.

(Here shall the cider be passed to all present. Then shall the priest pour the remainder on the altar, saying:)

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, even as we must return to thee.

The Reading and the Meditation

The Benediction

Priest: Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our dedication has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, and that her presence is with us always if we do but open ourselves to her. May the peace of the Mother find each of you.

A Reading for Lughnasadh

By Shelton?, Early 70s?

(From the Kekchi Indians of Guatemala)

Thou, O God my Lord,
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father,
Thou Lord of hill and valley.
Now, after three suns, and three days,
Shall I begin to gather my maize
Before Thy mouth, before Thy face.
A little of Thy food and drink gave I to Thee.
It is almost nothing, that which I give to Thee,
But I have plenty and good
Of my own food and drink;
Thou hast revealed it to my soul and to my life:
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father.
I begin therefore the harvest,
But I am not this day ready for the harvest
Without Thy word, and without Thy countenance.
Who knows how many suns, how many days I reap?
It is no quick matter to harvest from among the weeds.
I can only complete it slowly.
Who knows till when I can speak to Thee,
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father,
Thou celestial one, Lord of hills and Valleys?
I will again speak to Thee:
Wherefore not, my God?

From A.C. Bouget. Sacred Books of the World. Baltimore, Penguin Books (A283), 1967. p. 31.

Service for Lughnasadh

By Katya Luomala, 1978

Invocation:

O Lord, forgive us these three sins that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;
Thou hast no needs of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.
O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleans our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

Incantation:

(Appropriate and optional – Lugh Manifest)

I am the wind which breathes upon the sea,
I am the wave of the ocean,
I am the murmur of the billows,
I am the ox of the seven combats,
I am the vulture upon the rocks,
I am a beam of the sun,
I am the fairest of plants,
I am a wild boar in valour,
I am a salmon in the water,
I am a lake in the plain,
I am a word of knowledge,
I am the point of the lance of battle,
I am the God who created in the head, the fire;

Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?
Who announces the ages of the moon?
Who teaches the place where couches the sun?
If not I---

Sacrifice:

P: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of Life.

P: For the sun has come to warms us.
G: SEE HOW WE ARE WARM.
P: The newborn plants, the worthy tasks, the thoughts of Lugh have we nurtured
G: SEE HOW THEY HAVE COME TO FRUITION (HAVE MET WITH LUCK)
P: We have praised the Mother with the work of our hands
G: WE HAVE REACHED BE'AL WITH THE WORK OF OUR HANDS.
P: The abundance we have found will sustain us
G: SEE HOW WE HAVE PLENTY.
P: The flowers of the earth, the fruit of the earth we can offer you freely (hold up sacrifice, portion of the feast)
G: THY BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN WHO WILL SEE US THROUGH COLD AND DARKNESS
P: We know you are drawing away from us, but first partake of the comforts you have brought us
G: WE REJOICE TODAY!
P: Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Sacrifice offered)

P: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West.

P: Praise be; our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted.

Consecration:

(Includes any beverage for the feast)

P: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
G: THE WATERS OF LIFE.
P: From whence do these Waters flow?
G: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE (N)EVER-CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
P: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
G: SHE HAS, AND HER BOUNTY IS AT ITS HEIGHT.
P: The give me the Waters.

P: Oh inspiration of Be'al, oh manifestation through Lugh, oh sacrifice of Ea, come and meet in our festival cups today. And hallow these waters by the three ways of day and one of night; bring to them the purity of thy seven-fold powers, oh Dalan-ap-Landu.

Partaking of the Waters

P: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

Reading(s)

Earth, divine Goddess, Mother Nature, who generatest all things and bringest forth anew the sun which thou hast given to the nations; Guardian of sky and sea and of all Gods and powers; through thy power all nature fall silent and then sinks in sleep. And again thou bringest back the light and chasest away night, and yet again thou coverest us most securely with thy shades. Thou dost contain chaos infinite, yea and winds and showers and storms. Thou sendest them out when thou wilt, and causest the seas to roar; thou chasest away the sun and arousest the storm. Again, when thou wil thou sendest forth the joyous day and givest the nourishment of life with the eternal surety. And when the soul departs to thee we return. Thou indeed are duly called great Mother of the Gods; thou conquerest by thy divine name. Thou art the source of the strength of nations and of Gods, without thee nothing can be brought to perfection or be born; thou art great, queen of the Gods. Goddess! I adore thee as divine; I call upon thy name; be pleased to grant that which I ask thee, so shall I give thanks to thee, Goddess, with due faith.
-Ms. Harley 1585, FF. 12 v. –13r.

Meditation

(from the Kekchi Indians of Guatemala)
Thou, O God my Lord,
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father,
Thou Lord of hill and valley.
Now, after three suns, after three days,
Shall I begin to gather my maize
Before Thy mouth, before Thy face.
A little of Thy food and drink give I to Thee.
It is almost nothing, that which I give to Thee,
But I have plenty and good
Of my own food and drink;
Thou hast revealed it to my soul and to my life:
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father.
I begin therefore the harvest,
But I am not this day ready for the harvest
Without Thy word, and without Thy countenance.
Who knows how many suns, how many days I reap?
It is no quick matter to harvest from among the weeds.
I can only complete it slowly.
Who knows till when I can speak to Thee,
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father,
Thou celestial one, Lord of hills and valleys?
I will again speak to Thee:
Wherefore not, my God?

-A.C. Bouquet. Sacred Books of the World. Baltimore, Penguin Books (A283), 1967, P.31.

Benediction:

P: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, and also our rejoicing. And go forth to feast with your brethren, even unto excess; be merry, for soon all shall sleep.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Katya Luomala
Lughnasadh 1978

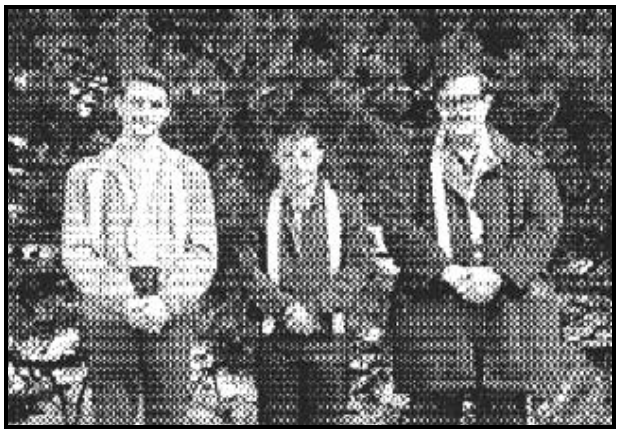


Figure 14 Fisher, Frangquist & Larson at Monument Hill, c. 1964

Section Three: Early Berkeley Seasonal Versions

These were in common use in the NRDNA groves and were the bulk of services in Druid Chronicles (Evolved), published in 1976.

Samhain

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975
For use from on/near Nov. 1st.

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Samhain. The chalice will be filled with ordinary spring water (the Waters-of-Sleep). The sacrifice should be of bare branches. All Third Order Druids and Druidesses, including the Grove's Archdruid/ess, should be wearing their red ribbons-of-office around their necks at the beginning of the service, but carry their white ribbons-of-office in an easily accessible place.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation..

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship you in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is not accepted.)

PR: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Chant

PR:. Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, Thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many faceted Nature in and above all, to Thee we sing our chants of praise.

Chorus: Go thou not from us.

PR: Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all Groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not Thy pleasing face from us.

Chorus: Go thou not from us.

PR: The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is Thy order, where Thy strength?

Chorus: Depart not from our midst, sleep not, O most high.

PR: The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws His chariot; His face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.

Chorus: Return to us his warmth.

The Second Sacrifice

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. All will turn to face the directions that are called.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Second Reply

(The sacrifice is not accepted.)

PR: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

(The priests now remove their red ribbons and replace them with their white ribbons. The following is the Mourning and Declaration of Faith)

The Declaration

PR: Lo, we are as wraith, our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.

Chorus: Preserve us, o spirit of Day. Keep us in thy mind, O spirit of Power.

PR: O Earth-Mother, guide our paths. If Thou wilt leave us, save us through the Time of Silence, keep bright within our hearts 'till spring.

Chorus: So let it be, O our Mother, for we are faithful, and would keep thy ways.

The Catechism

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: From whence do these Waters flow?

PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: Has the Earth-Mother given

PREC: SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM!

PR: So be it. Now is the Time of Life ended. Now shall we need our faith to keep us strong, for the Time of Sleep is begun in truth and in deed. Of what then, do we partake?

PREC: THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.

PR: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep!

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

Ordinations

No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Sleep," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does ***not*** *drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length - though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end of the Service.

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

PR: Peace! Peace! Peace!

NOTES:

Figure 15 Robert Larson c. 1964.

Winter Solstice

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Winter Solstice. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Sleep. The sacrifice should be of evergreen boughs and mistletoe.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor & Server or any two others use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid steps into this Sigil, which is closed by two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is not accepted, except in emergency situations.)

PR: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Chant

PR: Belenos halts his outward flight,
Chorus: And turns to us today.
PR: The shortest day, the longest night.
Chorus: He turns to us today.
PR: So let us rejoice in his sight,
Chorus: He turns to us today.
PR: O Belenos, to Thee we pray,
Chorus: Smile on us today.
PR: O look on us who keep Thy ways.
Chorus: Smile on us always!
PR: O Belenos, Who givest light,
O Belenos, Who givest life,
We rejoice at Thy turning,
A sign of life to us returning,
To Thee all praise, O Lord of Light
Thou Who takest away the night,
Thou Who givest life to land,
And warmth and joy unto Man.
Chorus: O Belenos, we praise Thee!

The Catechism of Waters-of-Sleep

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Sleep while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Sleep. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PREC: SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.
PR: Of what, then, do we partake?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.
PR: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these waters, and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

Ordinations

No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Sleep," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length - though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:)

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 16 Sue & Larry Press with Stacey Weinberger at Live Oak, Beltane1984

Oimelc

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975
For use on/near Feb. 1st.

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Oimelc. The chalice will be filled with milk (goat's, sheep's or cow's). The sacrifice should be of evergreen boughs.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and Server or any two chosen by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid steps into this Sigil, which is closed by the two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is not accepted, except in emergency situations.)

PR: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Chant

PR: For three months, O our Mother, has Thou been gone from us.
Chorus: Wilt thou not return?
PR: Our hearts are heavy, our days our dark.
Chorus: Wilt thou not return?
PR: All seems dead, hast thou departed?
Chorus: Never to return?
PR: O, our Mother, we ask a sign.
Chorus: A sign of thy return.
PR: A sign of Life in the midst of Death.
Chorus: A sign of thy return.
PR: Sleep in peace, but send a sign!
Chorus: A sign of they return!
PR: A sign of Life!
Chorus: The Life of thy return!

The Catechism of Waters-of-Sleep

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Sleep while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Sleep. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PREC: SHE HAS NOT! BUT THE EWE GIVE MILK.
PR: Of what, then, do we partake?
PREC: THE MILK OF THE EWE!

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Mother, we thank thee for this sign of thy continual presence and thy life. O Dalon Ap Landu, descend into this milk and hallow it by thy three ways of day and one of night. Give us to know thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

Ordinations

No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the milk of ewe," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually

*clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length - though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:)

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 17 Beltane picnic 1997 at the site of where the New Circle would be built. Adavid Coil, Sam Adams, Matt Gogla facing and Andrea Davis is standing.

Spring Equinox

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Spring Equinox. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Sleep. The sacrifice should be of budding branches.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into Sigil, which is closed by two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is not accepted, except in emergency situations.)

PR: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Chant

PR: And the God of the Sun did arise from His tomb in the South; and once more did He fare forth to His children in the Northern lands. (Pause) O Belenos, O Thou unchanging God of many names, but one Face, we, Thy children, welcome Thee back to our lands.

Chorus: O Lord of Light, we welcome Thee.

PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, long have we awaited Thy return, that the coldness of the Night might be taken from our lands.

Chorus: O God of Sun, We welcome Thee.

*****

PR: The nights were long, the trees had shed,

Chorus: The night had conquered day.

PR: The days were short, and life had fled.

Chorus: The night had conquered day.

PR: The winds were cold, the land seemed dead,

Chorus: The night had conquered day.

PR: But the Sun returns from the Southern lands.

Chorus: Balanced now are we.

PR: Plants spring up on every hand,

Chorus: Balanced now are we.

PR: "Let Life return!" is the Sun's command.

Chorus: Balanced now are we.

PR: The Sun grows stronger every day.

Chorus: The day will conquer night.

PR: The world grows lush and Life holds sway,

Chorus: The day will conquer night.

PR: So let us praise Him in all ways.

Chorus: The day will conquer the night.

****

PR: O Belenos, O Sun, we praise Thee at Thy return to our midst. Welcome art Thou among us.

Chorus: Bless with thy presence, O Lord of Light.

PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, bless us with Thy warmth and light, that we may rejoice in Thy sight.

Chorus: Bless us and light our way, O God of the Sun.

The Catechism of Waters-of-Sleep

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Sleep while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Sleep. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: From whence do these Waters flow?

PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

PREC: SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.

PR: Of what, then, does Belenos give that we may rejoice on this day of His return.

PREC: THE WARMTH OF THE SUN AND THE WATERS WHERE he SLEEPS.

PR: OF WHAT, THEN, DO WE PARTAKE?

PREC: The Waters of the Sun.

PR: Then give me the Waters of the Sun.

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

O Belenos, O Lord of Light, descend into these waters and fill them with Thy presence. Give us to know, O Lord, of Thy promise of Life as we take and drink of Thy warmth and light.

Ordinations

No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Sleep," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length - though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:)

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:Peace! Peace! Peace!

Beltane

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975
For use on/near May 1st.

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Beltane. The chalice will once again be filled with whiskey and water (the Waters-of-Life). The sacrifice should be of flowering branches. All Third Order Druids and Druidesses, including the Grove's Archdruid/ess, should be wearing their white ribbons-of-office around their necks at the beginning of the service, but carry their red ribbons-of-office in an accessible place.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation..

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship you in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is closed by two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is accepted, except in very unusual situations.)

PR: Praise be! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Chant

PR: The Mother wakes from her long sleep and smiles on us today!
Chorus: SHE IS AWAKE!
PR: She brings us Life!
Chorus: SHE IS AWAKE!
PR: She brings us Light!
Chorus: SHE IS AWAKE!
PR: The Mother wakes and seeks Be'al.
Chorus: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS.
PR: We light our fires to show the way.

(The fires of Be'al, the bonfire, are now lit by the plunging of a torch into the kindling.)

Chorus: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!
PR: To couch with the Mother and bring forth Life.
Chorus: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!

(This next section should be chanted at an accelerating pace:)

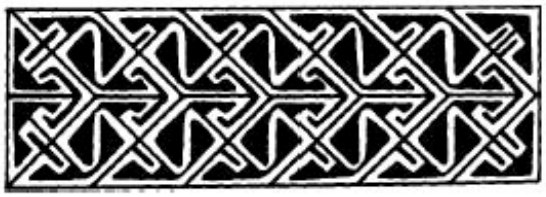
PR: O Be'al
Chorus: WE WELCOME THEE!
PR: O our Mother
Chorus: WE WELCOME THEE!
PR: O Earth-Mother, O Be'al
Chorus: WE WELCOME THEE!!
PR: O Be'al, O Mother, parents of all that lives, we welcome Ye back to our midst. Give us of Your Life, O Most High, that we may share Your joy.
Chorus: WELCOME ARE YE, AMONG US, O MOST HIGH. SMILE ON US, WHO HAVE KEPT YOUR WAYS, THROUGH THE TIME OF SLEEP.

The Catechism

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given
PREC: SHE HAS!
PR: Praise be!! At last is the Time of Sleep ended. Now our faith bears fruit, and the Time of Life is begun in truth and in deed.

(All priests remove the white ribbons and don the red ribbons.)

PR: Now give me the Waters!



The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

Ordinations

First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air:The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying: Peace! Peace! Peace!

Summer Solstice

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Summer Solstice. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Life. The sacrifice should be of green branches and mistletoe. The fire should be especially large.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is closed by two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

PR: A Bhelenos, a Dihia na Greine soilsigh orainn inniu. Glac leis an iobairt seo, A Bhelenos, mas e do thoil e, agus tabhair dhuinn cuid do theasa ' do shoilse. Loin le bheatha sinn-ne, a Thiarna Soilse, agus dein solas an bhealaigh dhuinn agus sinn ag moladh d'ainm.

{ O Belenos, O God of the Sun, shine on us today. Accept this sacrifice, O Belenos, we pray thee, and give us of your warmth and light. Fill us with life, O Lord of Light an light our way as we praise your name.}

Chorus: Hail Belenos, To Thee all praise! Hail Belenos, smile on us always!

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is accepted, except in unusual situations.)

Priest: Praise be! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Chant

PR: Welcome Belenos, this day of days.
Chorus: Welcome art thou.
PR: Welcome Belenos, to Thy golden rays,
Chorus: Welcome art thou.
PR: Welcome Belenos, to Thee all praise,
Chorus: Welcome art thou.
PR: All praise to Belenos, this day at full height
Chorus: Praise to Thee, O Lord of Light.
PR: All praise to Belenos, Who conquers night,
Chorus: Praise to Thee, O Giver of Life.
PR: All praise to Belenos, Who warms our life,
Chorus: Praise to Thee, O God of the sun.
PR: All hail Belenos, who smiles on us today.
Chorus: Hail Belenos! To Thee all praise!
PR: All hail Belenos, who keep His ways,
Chorus: Hail Belenos! To Thee all praise!
PR: All hail Belenos, light our paths always,
Chorus: Hail Belenos, God of Sun!
Hail Belenos, Giver of Life!
Hail Belenos, Lord of Light!

The Catechism of Waters-of-Life

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Life while the priest ask the Catechism. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PREC: SHE HAS!
PR: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the tree ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

Optional Ordinations

First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end of the Service with:

The Benediction

Pr: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

(THE END)

Notes:

Lughnasadh

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975
For use on/near Aug. 1st.

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Lughnasadh. The chalice will be filled with mead or hard cider (instead of the usual whiskey) as for the Waters-of-Life. Since this is a harvest festival, it is suggested that members of the Grove bring a sacrifice of fruits or vegetables, from their own gardens if possible. These are laid on the altar and/or around the fire along with the regular sacrifice (which should be of green branches) either at the end of the Procession or at the point in the service at which the regular sacrifice is offered up.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship you in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is accepted, except in very unusual situations.)

PR: Praise be! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Chant

PR:. Thy trees do grow and give us shade,
Chorus: O Dalon Ap Landu, we thank thee.
PR: Thy waters stream forth and ease our pain,
Chorus: O Grannos, we thank thee.
PR: Thy waters pour forth and bring us joy,
Chorus: O Braciaca, we thank thee.
PR: Thy rivers flow and give us drink,
Chorus: O Sirona, we thank thee.
PR: Thy thunder cracks and heralds rain,
Chorus: O Taranis, we thank thee.
PR: Thy seas are deep and full of fish,
Chorus: O Llyr, we thank thee.
PR: Thy earth is fertile and full of Life,
Chorus: O Danu, we thank thee.
****
PR: Though the Sun is bright, the Shade is dark.
Chorus: In the midst of light is dark.
PR: Dark though the night, the stars are bright.
Chorus: In the midst of dark is light.
PR: Thy light shines on us today.
Chorus: O Belenos, we thank thee.
PR: The plants give fruits which then do die.
Chorus: In the midst of life is death.
PR: We eat the fruits and they give us life.
Chorus: In the midst of death is life.
PR: Thy life is here in us today.
Chorus: O Earth-Mother, we thank thee.

PR: O Be'al, O Lugh, O our Mother, O all ye Gods and Goddesses, we thank You for the bounty which Ye have given us during this year. Accept our praise, O Most High and smile on us always, that we may praise You the more.

Chorus: We thank you, O most high. Keep us in your minds, we pray you, as we keep in your ways.

The Catechism

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: From whence do these Waters flow?

PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?

PREC: SHE HAS! RIPE ARE THE GOLDEN APPLES OF THE SUN, AND BRIGHT IS THE HONEY OF THE HIVES. OUR CUPS OVERFLOW WITH CIDER AND MEAN, AND ALL THE GOOD THINGS OF THIS SEASON!

PR: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

Ordinations

First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:)

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

(THE END)

Figure 18 Nelson, Frangquist & Fisher on the Hill of Three Oaks, c. 1964

Fall Equinox

New Reformed Druids of North America

By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Fall Equinox. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Life. The sacrifice should be of branches with turning leaves.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**

Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is closed by two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is accepted, except in unusual situations.)

Priest.: Praise be! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Chant

PR: The Sun-God did spend half the year with His children in the North and then did depart to his winter home.

O Belenos, O Thou unchanging God of many names but One Face, we, Thy children, mourn Thy passing from our lands.

Chorus: O Lord of Light, return to us soon.

PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, short seems the time that we have rejoiced in the warmth of Thy presence.

Chorus: O God of the Sun, return to us soon.

PR: The nights were short, the trees in leaf,

Chorus: The Day had conquered night.

PR: The days were long and full of Life,

Chorus: The day had conquered night.

PR: The Sun was warm, the land gave fruit,

Chorus: The day had conquered night.

PR: But the Sun must return to the Southern lands,

Chorus: Balanced now are we.

PR: Though the world is warm and full of Life,

Chorus: Balanced now are we.

PR: Yet the cold approaches to stalk the land,

Chorus: Balanced now are we.

PR: The Sun grows weaker every day.

Chorus: The night will conquer day.

PR: The leaves will wither and Death draw nigh,

Chorus: The night will conquer day.

PR: We pray Thy return with all our might.

Chorus: Or the night will conquer day.

*****

PR: O Belenos, O Sun, we mourn Thy passing from our midst. Welcome wert Thou among us.

Chorus: Thou blessed us with Thy presence, O Lord of Light.

PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, return to us soon that we may rejoice in Thy sight.

Chorus: Bless us and light our way, O God of Sun.

******

PR: But winter will pass and spring will come,

Chorus: And the day will conquer night.

PR: The Sun will return and warm our land,

Chorus: And the day will conquer night.

PR: Death will pass and Life return,

Chorus: And the day will conquer night!

****

PR: O Belenos, O Sun-God, O Lord of Light, though Thy presence depart from us, yet art Thou with us, for Thy light does guide our feet and Thy warmth is in our hearts.

Chorus: All hail Belenos, God of Light!

PR: All praise Belenos, who keep his ways.

Chorus: O Belenos, we praise Thee!

The Catechism

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Life while the priest ask the Catechism. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PREC: SHE HAS!
PR: Does Belenos still give us a sign of His presence?
PREC: HE DOES! THOUGH HE DEPARTS FOR THE SOUTHERN LANDS, STILL IS HIS SPARK WITHIN THESE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, descend yet once more into these waters and fill them with Thy presence. Give us to know, O Lord, of Thy impending return, as we take and drink one more time of Thy warmth and light.

Ordinations

First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does not drink more than once.

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

In either method, the last person in the circle should not finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

NOTES:

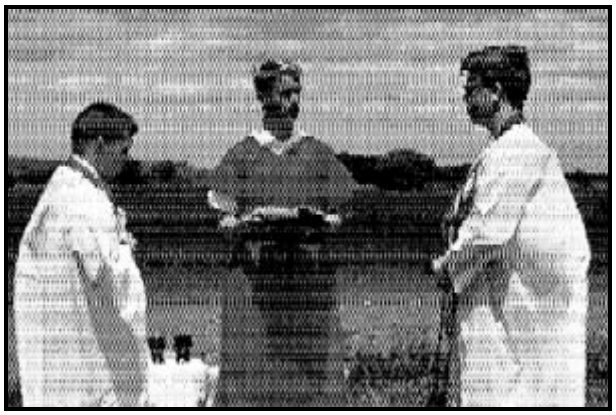


Figure 19 Frangquist, Fisher & Nelson at Hill of Three Oaks c. 1964.

Figure 20 The Vigiler

Section Four: Later Berkeley Seasonal Variations

After Larson retired as Archdruid, there were a number of permutations of Archdruids in charge until the Grove's break-up in 1982. Isaac became more interested in devising new liturgy, increasing the service's magical intensity, and investigating new Indo-European liturgical designs.

Order of General Common Worship (Summer Version)

Samhradh & Foghamhar (Fall) 17 y.r. (Bkly)
Mother Grove NRDNA
Circa late 1979 c.e.
(This is a very unusual one, see historiography)

Druids line up for the Procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (Ads) are at the front, followed by the Chief Bard and the Server, and the other members of the Grove (G).

Opening Song (All):

"O Earth Mother" (Customs 2:1-3)

Invocation:

ADS: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of Life.
G: And we partake of it, we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance,
G: And in harmony with all of Life, we sing:
ADS: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving and destroying...
G: Be in our awareness, teach us Your joy, let us share Your sorrow, extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of though itself, reverberates infinitely,
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Procession Song (ALL):

"Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

All process to altar stone, CB & S mark sigil on ground, AD & ADS step inside and go around either side to back of altar stone, sigil is closed. Grove members split into an arc in front of the altar stone.

Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
AD: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
ADS: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
AD: The Gods are everywhere,
G: But we worship Them here.
ADS: The Gods are without form,
G: But we worship them in these forms.
AD: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,
G: So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices.
ADS: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us with our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.
ADS: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al, in each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit; evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand these experiences as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our own hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our live, and make our individual dedications to the spirits Whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

ADS: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
AD: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surrounds us? The ground upon which we stand?
ADS: Are the Gods male?
AD: Or female?
G: Yes!
ADS: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess!
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God!
AD: Who is Our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: Who is Our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and of light, spark of the sun, and flame within the heart of every being.
AD: And Who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications

ADS: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength; to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society; to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of Evolution, in ourselves and in our groups, and throughout all time and space.
AD: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
G: We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, in heart and in soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, and our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

Offering and Praise:

ADS: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.
AD: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

Members of the Grove bring their sacrifices to the altar stone.

ADS: Not all offerings are physical. Has anyone brought praise for the Gods?

Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.

Sacrifice:

The ADS holds up the sacrificial branch and speaks:

ADS: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us Thy peace and life.

The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the AD turns to the Four Quarters and ask:

AD: Have you accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... of the East... and of the West... and of the Holy Center..

If the sacrifices are accepted, the rite continues:

ADS: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the honoring of our Gods, have been accepted!!

Statement of Needs:

ADS: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon You and You have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and You have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill Thy ways. Hear now Thy children, and help us, as ever You have done.

At this point, each person present may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplish their goals. After all have finished:

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:
G: We need Your strength and wisdom, Your healing and joy, so that we may accomplish our goals, and fulfill our dedications. Bless this Grove, and bring us all that that we may need, materially and spiritually, so that we may grow ever stronger, in beauty, wisdom, health and joy.

The Waters:

ADS: Of what does the Earth-Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
G: The Waters of Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
G: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing, All-Mother.
ADS: And how do we honor this gift that causes life?
G: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
G: She has! Ripe are the golden apples of the Sun, and bright is the honey of the hives. Our cups overflow with cider and mead, and all the good things of this season!
ADS: Then give me the Waters!!

Consecration:

The ADS takes the chalice of waters, and invokes the power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energies:

ADS: O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and eyes, and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy secret essences.

Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters?
G: A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;
AD: Who are themselves but fractions of that which Is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of male and female,
G: Mortal and divine.
AD: She surrounds us.
ADS: He penetrates us.
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSE TOGETHER!

The chalice is passed around to all present, each person being blessed by the Server with the Druid Sigil and returning the blessing, before and after drinking, with the words "The Waters of Life." The remaining waters are returned to the ADS, who pours them out over the altar stone, saying:

ADS: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

Group Bonding:

ADS: Now do we declare ourselves:
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND OUR BROTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

All sing "We are One Family" song.

Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

Led impromptu by the ADS.

Thanking the Gods:

ADS: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all ye Goddesses and Gods around us and within us;
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That You have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the wild things and ourselves.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: That we have offered to You of ourselves, and You have accepted.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That You have heard our prayers, our griefs and our needs,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: For all that You have given, all You give around us, all You will give in the future,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: Great the power we have raised
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
AD: What shall we do before we leave?
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

All now pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.

ADS: And all the rest...?
ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

All now send all remaining energies into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals.

AD: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

ADS: Let us go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

The sigil around the altar stone is now broken, and all retire to picnic and celebrate, making sure the area is physically clean before leaving.

Figure 21 Live Oak Grove in Procession at Lughnasadh 1983.

Order of General Common Worship (Winter Version)

Mother Grove of the NRDNA 18 y.r. (Brkly)
Circa early 1980 c.e.
This is an unusual version. "Class C"
See the Historiography at end of part 3.

Druids line up for the Procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (ADS) are at the front, followed by the Preceptor (P) and the Server (S), and the other members of the Grove (G).

Invocation "O Earth Mother" (Customs 2:1-3)

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of Life.
G: And we partake of it, we and all living beings.
ADS: In the mighty helix we dance,
G: And in harmony with all of Life, we sing:
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving and destroying...
G: Be in our awareness, teach us Your joy, let us share Your sorrow, extend our limitations.
ADS: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of though itself, reverberates infinitely,
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Procession Song (ALL): "Now do we with Songs and Rejoicing"

(All process to Altar. Prec. & Server draw Sigil, AD & ADS enter, Prec seals it).

Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
ADS: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
AD: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
ADS: The Gods are everywhere,
G: But we worship Them here.
AD: The Gods are without form,
G: But we worship them in these forms.
ADS: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,
G: So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices.
AD: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us with our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.
AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al, in each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit; evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand these experiences as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our own hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our live, and make our individual dedications to the spirits Whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

AD: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
ADS: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surrounds us? The ground upon which we stand?
AD: Are the Gods female?
ADS: Or male?
G: Yes!
AD: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God!
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess!
ADS: Who is Our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and of light, spark of the sun, and flame within the heart of every being.
AD: Who is Our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: And Who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength; to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society; to heal and protect, the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of Evolution, in ourselves and in our groups, and throughout all time and space.
ADS: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
G: We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, in heart and soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, and our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.
ADS: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

Members of the Grove bring their sacrifices to the altar stone.

AD: Not all offerings are physical. Has anyone brought praise for the Gods?

Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.

Sacrifice:

The Ad holds up the sacrificial branch and speaks:

AD: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us Thy peace and life.

(The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the ADS turns to the Four Quarters and ask:)

ADS: Have you accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... of the East... and of the West... and of the Holy Center..

(The Sacrifice is not accepted.)

ADS: The Four Winds are silent; the Earth Mother yet sleeps.

Statement of Needs:

ADS: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon but you have not answered, we have offered to you, but you have not accepted. Yet though you speak not, you whisper to us with your Spirit of Growth, and to this we turn in silence, to seek the changes we desire, to see our goals coming into being in the days and weeks ahead, knowing the answers are within us.

(Silence)

ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GROVE, THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND TO BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

The Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth-Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters of Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing, All-Mother.
AD: And how do we honor this gift that causes life?
P: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has NOT! The waters are here, but the Spirit is yet faint within them!
AD: Of what, then do we partake?
P: The Waters of Awakening.
AD: Then give me the Waters.

Figure 22 Emmon and the Neo-Pagans at the Berkeley Inter-Faith Annual Thanksgiving Pageant, Samhain 1987. Emmon second from left.

Consecration:

The Ad takes the chalice of Waters, and invokes the Power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energies:

AD: O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, descend once again into these Waters and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power, and the promise of Life that is to return.

(AD shares the Waters with the ADS, who then asks:)

ADS: What are these waters?
G: A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;
AD: Who are themselves but fractions of that which Is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of male and female,
G: Mortal and divine.
AD: She surrounds us.
ADS: He penetrates us.
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSE TOGETHER!

The Sharing

The ADS then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove. During this time, The Bards may wish to perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who returns it to the ADS, who gives it to the AD. P&S do not drink twice.

AD: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

Group Bonding:

AD: Now do we declare ourselves:
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND OUR BROTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

All sing "We are one family" song.

Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

Led impromptu by the ADS.

Thanking the Gods:

AD: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all ye Goddesses and Gods around us and within us;
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: That You have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the wild things and ourselves.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: For all the bounty You have given through the Time of Life:.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: That you stir now in sleep, and send forth flowers and green shoots to announce your coming:,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That you have sent the Maiden and the Fool to give us joy after winter's silence, and to guide us to you again:,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

Absorption and Grounding:

AD: Great the power we have raised
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
ADS: What shall we do before we leave?
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

All now pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.

AD: And all the rest...?
ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

All now send all remaining energies into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals.

ADS: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

AD: Let us go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

The sigil around the altar stone is now broken by the P, and all retire to after making sure the area is clean.

Figure 23 Bob Blunt after ordination Ocotber 18, 1983.

1978 Samhain

By Bonewits & Others?
"Class B"

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Samhain. The chalice will be filled with ordinary water (the Waters-of-Sleep). The sacrifice should be of bare branches. All Third Order Druids and Druidesses, including the Grove's Archdruid/ess, should be wearing their red ribbons-of-office around their necks at the beginning of the service, but carry their white ribbons-of-office in an easily accessible place.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand).

"D" =Druid/ess presiding.
"P" =People attending.
"E" =Everybody.

Song: "Processional Hymn"

Invocation:

D: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
E: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.
D: In the mighty helix we dance.
E: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.
D: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving.
E: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LTE US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.
D: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, let this ritual begin!

Procession:

Here occurs the Procession, with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the server (or any two others designated by the Grove) use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two staves.

Song: "Now Do We"

Praise:

Here an Incantation, Poem, or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

Sacrifice:

The Druidess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West…

Reply:

The Sacrifice is not accepted!

D: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

Chant:

D: Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, Thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many faceted Nature in and above all, to Thee we sing our chants of praise.
E: GO THOU NOT FROM US.
D: Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all Groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not Thy pleasing face from us.
E: GO THOU NOT FROM US.
D: The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is Thy order, where Thy strength?
E: DEPART NOT FROM OUR MIDST, SLEEP NOT, O MOST HIGH.
D: The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws His chariot; His face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.
E: RETURN TO US HIS WARMTH

Second Sacrifice:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West…

Second Reply:

The sacrifice is not accepted!

D: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Archdruid/ess, and all other members of the Third Order present, remove their red ribbons and replace them with their white ones. Then follows the mourning and Declaration of Faith.

D: Lo, we are as wraiths, our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.

E: PRESERVE US, O SPIRIT OF DAY, KEEP US IN THY MIND, O SPIRIT OF POWER.

D: O Earth-Mother, guide our paths. If Thou wilt leave us, save us through the time of Silence, keep bright within our hearts 'till Spring.

E: SO LET IT BE, O OUR MOTHER, FOR WE ARE FAITHFUL, AND WOULD KEEP THY WAYS.

Catechism:

D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: The Waters-of-Life.

D: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-mother.

D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?

P: She has not! The waters are here, but the spirit has gone out of them.

D: So be it. Now is the Time of Life ended. Now shall we need our faith to keep us strong, for the Time of Sleep is begun in truth and in deed. Of what, then, do we partake?

P: The Waters-of-Sleep.

D: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

Consecration:

The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:

D: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these waters, and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

Communion:

The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the Waters-of-Sleep" and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does NOT drink more than once.

In some Groves, the Druid/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person on that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

In either method, the last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee.

Meditation

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to five minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Druid/ess signals the end of the service with:

Benediction:

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

End of a Special Order of Worship for Samhain

Figure 24 Tree libation offering, Live Oak Spring Equinox 1985.

1979 Samhain

Order of Common Worship, Samhain
(dated 17 Y.R. but probably 1979)
By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"
(Berkeley) Mother Grove, N.R.D.N.A

AD: Archdruid ADS: Archdruidess P: Preceptor S: Server G:Grove

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

Invocation:

ADS: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.
ADS: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying...
G: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LTE US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely:
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Processional Song (ALL):

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: THIS IS THE APPOINTED PALCE, NOW IS THE APPOINTED TIME.
AD: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: WE COME TO WORSHIP THE GODS.
ADS: What do you know of the Gods?
G: WE SEEK TO KNOW WHAT WE CAN, WITH OUR MORTAL LIMITATIONS.
AD: The Gods are everywhere;
G: BUT WE WORSHIP THEM HERE.
ADS: The Gods are without form;
G: BUT WE WORSHIP THEM IN THESE FORMS.
AD: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,
G: SO WE OFFER THEM OUR PRAYERS AND SACRIFICES:
ADS: Each of us in our own way,
G: EACH OF US IN OUR OWN PRAYERS,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

ADS: How many Gods are there?
G: EVERY GOD AND GODDESS IS A STAR!
AD: Where are the Gods?
G: WHERE IS THE AIR WE BREATHE? THE WATERS THAT SURROUND US? THE GROUND UPON WHICH WE STAND?
ADS: Are the Gods male?
AD: Or female?
G: YES!
ADS: How do we find the Gods?
G: EVERY GODDESS IS WITHIN US.
AD: Thou art Goddess!.
G: EVERY GOD IS WITHIN US.
ADS: Thou art God!
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: SHE IS THE EARTHMOTHER, SPIRIT OF ALL THAT LIVES UPON THE EARTH, AND SWIMS BENEATH THE WATERS, AND FLIES THROUGHOUT THE AIR.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: HE IS BE'AL, THE SHINING ONE, SPIRIT OF TRUTH AND LIGHT, SPARK OF THE SUN, AND THE FLAME WITHIN THE HEART OF EVERY BEING.
ADS: And Who is the God of this place?
G: HE IS DALON AP LANDU, LORD OF THIS AND EVERY GROVE, PATRON OF DRUIDS, AND COMFORTER OF THE PEOPLE.

Group Goals and Dedications:

ADS: Now do we declare our goals:
G: TO GROW AS HUMAN BEINGS, IN JOY AND LOVE AND WISDOM AND STRENGTH, TO PROMOTE IN OUR ACTIONS, A HUMAN AND INTERDEPENDENT SOCITY, TO HEAL AND PROTECT THE BIOSPHERE OF THIS PLANET; AND TO FURTHER THE PROCESS OF EVOLUTION, IN OURSELVES AND OUR GROUPS, AND THROUGHOUT ALL TIME AND SPACE.
AD: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
G: WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

Offering and Praise:

ADS: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: THUS WE BRING OUR SACRIFICES, TO THE LORD AND LADY.
AD: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

(Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar stone.)

ADS: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

(Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.)

Sacrifice:

(The ADS holds up sacrificial branch and speaks:)

ADS: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices of life. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

(The branch is laid upon the altar stone. The AD then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:)

AD: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… and of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

(The sacrifice is not accepted!)

AD: The four winds are silent: the Earth Mother sleeps.

Chant:

AD: Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, Thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many faceted nature in and above all, to thee we sing our chants of praise!

G: GO THOU NOT FROM US!

AD: Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not thy pleasing face from us!

G: GO THOU NOT FROM US!

AD: The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is thy order, where thy strength?

G: DEPART NOT FROM OUR MIDST! SLEEP NOT, O MOST HIGH!

AD: The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws his chariot; his face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.

G: RETURN TO US HIS WARMTH!

Second Sacrifice:

AD: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices of life. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

(The second branch is laid upon the altar stone. The ADS then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:)

ADS: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… and of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

(The sacrifice is not accepted!)

AD: The four winds are silent: the Earth Mother sleeps.

(The ArchDruids, and all other members of the Third Order present remove their red ribbons of office, and replace them with their white ones.)

(AD presides from here on out)

Mourning and Declaration of Faith:

D: Lo, we are as wraiths, our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.

G: PRESERVE US, O SPIRIT OF DAY! KEEP US IN THY MIND, O SPIRIT OF POWER!

D: O Earth Mother, guide our paths! If thou wilt leave us, save us through the Time of Silence, keep bright within our hearts till Spring!

G: SO LET IT BE, O OUR MOTHER, FOR WE ARE FAITHFUL, AND WOULD KEEP THY WAYS.

Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you, and you have not answered. We have offered of ourselves, but you have not accepted, for the Old Year sleeps in the silence and dark, awaiting new birth, and your eyes and ears are turned from us. Yet, as we have listened to you through the Time of Life, there has grown within us your Spirit of Truth, and this we will cherish and keep of you, to guide us through the Time of Sleep. To this we turn in silence, to seek the answers to our needs, to accomplish what we wish in the weeks ahead, knowing that the answers are within us.

(At this point, all state silently their needs, and listen for reply)

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:

G: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUDIANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS, AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GROVE, SO THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES, AND IN ECH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

The Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth-Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: The Waters of Life.

AD: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.

AD: And how do we honor this gift, that causes life?

P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.

AD: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

P: She has not! The Waters are here, but the spirit has gone out of them.

AD: So be it. Now is the Time of Life ended. Now shall we need our faith to keep us strong, for the Time of Sleep has begun in truth and in deed. Of what, then, do we partake?

P: The Waters of Sleep.

AD: Then give me the Waters.

Consecration:

(The ADS then takes the Waters, and consecrates them:)

ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these Waters and hallow them. Give us to know your power, and the promise of life that is to return.

Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters?
G: A SIGN OF THE POWER, AND THE BOUNTY OF THE GODS;
ADS: Who are themselves but fractions of that which is
G: BEYOND ALL HUMAN CONCEPTS
ADS: Of male and female,
G: MORTAL AND DIVINE.
AD: She surrounds us.
ADS: He penetrates us.
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!

(The Server passes the chalice to all present, and then returns it to the AD, who pours it on the altarstone, saying:)

AD: To Thee we return this portion of your bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

Group Bonding:

AD: Now do we declare ourselves:
G: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BORTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

(All sing "We are One Family" song.)

Prayer/Meditation:

(On of the AD's leads the meditation)

Thanking the Gods:

AD: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADs: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: For all the bounty you have given throughout the Time of Life:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: That you have not left us utterly alone, but have left the Hunter and the Hag to guide us and protect us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That you have gone now to sleep, to bring forth again the whole world, in flower and in fruit:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: For that we need each other, Mortal and Divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout the ages:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: Now, as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

Absorption and Grounding:

AD: Great the power we have raised;
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
ADS: What shall we do before we leave?
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

(All pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.

AD: And all the rest…?
ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

(All now send remaining energy into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals)

ADS: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you:
PEACE! PEACE! PEACE!

(The sigil around the altar stone is now broken by the P, and all retire, after making sure that the area is physically clean.)

Figure 25 Order of Puck, with Scharding, Bonewits, Tony Taylor & Sam Adams at Hill of 3 Oaks on April 23, 1993 for Isaac's second visit to Carleton.

1979 Oimelc

By Bonewits & Others?
"Class B"

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Oimelc. The chalice will be filled with milk (goat's, sheep's or cow's). The sacrifice should be of evergreen boughs.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand).

"D" =Druid/ess presiding.
"P" =People attending.
"E" =Everybody.

Song: "Processional Hymn"

Invocation:

D: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
E: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.
D: In the mighty helix we dance.
E: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.
D: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving.
E: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LTE US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.
D: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, let this ritual begin!

Procession:

Here occurs the Procession, with the Grove singing the hymn "Now Do We." Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the server (or any two others designated by the Grove) use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two staves.

Praise:

Here an Incantation , Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire grove.

Song: "Oimelc Hymn"

Song: "She Will Bring"

Sacrifice:

The Druidess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West…

Reply:

The sacrifice is not accepted!

D: The four winds are yet silent. The Earth-Mother still sleeps.

Chant:

D: For three months, O our Mother, hast Thou been gone from us.
E: WILT THOU NOT RETURN?
D: Our hearts are heavy, our days are dark.
E: WILT THOU NOT RETURN?
D: All seems dead, hast Thou departed?
E: NEVER TO RETURN?
D: O our Mother, we ask a sign.
E: A SIGN OF THY RETURN.
D: A sign of Life in the midst of Death.
E: A SIGN OF THY RETURN.
D: Sleep in peace, but send a sign!
E: A SIGN OF THY RETURN!
D: A sign of Life!
E: THE LIFE OF THY RETURN!

Catechism:

D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
D: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-mother.
D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has not, but the ewe gives milk.
D: Of what, then, do we partake?
P: The milk of the ewe!
D: Then give me the milk.

Song: "I Circle Around"

Consecration:

The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:

D: O Mother, we thank Thee for this sing of Thy continual presence and Thy life. O Dalon Ap Landu, descend into this milk and hallow it by Thy three ways of day and one of night. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

Communion:

The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the milk of the ewe," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does NOT drink more than once.

In some Groves, the Druid/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person on that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

In either method, the last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee.

Meditation:

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to five minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Druid/ess signals the end of the service with:

Benediction:

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

1979 Pentalpha Oimelc

By Bonewits & others?

We held the Pentalpha Oimelc ceremony at The Dance Works in Berkeley, a redwood dance studio with a hot tub in the backyard. We started a half hour after our door closing to give people time to socialize, dance (we had put together a tape of our favorite music to dance to) and hot tub. Everyone had put their personal cups on the altar and just before the ritual started, Selene poured a mixture of extra-rich milk, amaretto, and vodka into the large bowl and chalice that sat in the center of the cups. Next to the bowl & chalice was a small cauldron filled with rubbing alcohol ready to light (we discovered that this works better if the alcohol is poured in just before lighting). A full spectrum of large candles was set up around the room.

All begin to form serpent lines of varying lengths and snake around the room to the music ("Spring Manifestations, - by SANTANA), eventually joining together in a circle just as the music ends.

Anodea and Selene lead Robert Larsen's -0imelc Hymn" (to band 1, side 1 of "Durch die WustelDesert," by HANS JOACHIM ROEDELIUS). Hymn is done in plainchant style (leaders chant each line, all repeat):

The days are short the heavens dark, the Mother sleeps.
The trees are bare the north wind stalks, the Mother sleeps.
The nights are long and full of fright, the Mother sleeps.
But the ewe gives birth the ewe gives milk, the Mother stirs.
The Mother smiles with dreams of life, She will return.
And on that day will we rejoice, when She returns.
Long the day bright the sky, when She returns.
Green the trees soft the breeze, when She returns.
Short the night our fires alight ,when She returns!

Jinz lights alcohol in cauldron, all begin to dance, play drums & rattles, make noises, raise energy ("oya (Primitive Fire)," on "Drums of Passion, " by OLATUNJI).

Dance gets wilder & wilder (to last band, side 2, "Durch die Wuste," by HANS JOACHIM ROEDELIUS), Selene begins to spin, gathering the energy in the room to a peak.

Selene lifts chalice and charges milk (to band 1, side 1 of "Renaissance of the Celtic Harp," by ALAN Stivell):

O Mother

Blend your milk with ours.

Give us nourishment
To strengthen our spirits
As well as our bones.
As we drink
From your breast
Pour your light in

Through our hearts,
To dance in our cells,
To glow with our eyes.
Through us
Your light spirals & spreads
Out our fingers
To all we touch

And on...
To heal the Earth
And to heal the people of the Earth
So that we may live & die

In harmony with your rhythm.

Charged milk is poured into the large bowl & mixed with the milk already in it. All are invited to drink of the Mother's milk. All come up and find their cups and the milk is ladled in to them one by one, with the harp music still in the background.

Isaac invites everyone to toast to the Gods & Goddesses, and "zany people toast to aspects of the deities, to the children, to the love in us all, etc. Isaac ends toasting with a final dedication:

Blessed be the most high one, who was and is and is to come, always, now, forever more, throughout all eternal space and time, we rise.

All chant:

Like a bee my mind is buzzing round the blue lotus feet of my divine mother, divine mother...

At this point we all brought the feast food into the backyard & feasting, hot tubbing & dancing continued on into the night...

Oimelc Poem

By Ailean MacGregor, 1979

Music filling the magical air whirling motion of dancing spirals of energy flowing from within the centre point of flame

Bleary eyed children of Brighid inebriated on the fruits of Dionysus celebrate Her mysteries around the cauldron fire

The Mother's milk is raised in salute to Her myriad aspects as sister and brother revel in the warmth of Her smile

Five times the magick point did merge into the star which illuminated the night while mushroom eating lovers huddled together and dreamt of the coming of the Spring

1980 Oimelc

Order of Common Worship, Oimelc, 18 y.r.
By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"

AD: Arch Druid ADs: Archdruidess P: Preceptor S: Server G: Grove

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying.
G: Be in our awareness. teach us your joy. let us feel your sorrow. extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..
G: Let this ritual begin!

Processional:

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

(All process to altar. P&S draw sigil, AD & ADS: enter, P seals it.)

Centering:

AD: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
ADS: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
AD: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
ADS: The Gods are everywhere;
G: But we worship them here.
AD: The Gods are without form;
G: But we worship them in these forms.
ADS: We do not know what to offer our Gods,
G: So we offer them these prayers and sacrifices:
AD: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us in our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the Spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

AD: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
ADS: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breath? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?
AD: Are the Gods female?
ADS: Or male?
G: YES!
AD: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God.
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the shining one, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: And who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every grove, Patron of Druids and Comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet, and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.
ADS: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
ALL: WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the lord and lady.
ADS: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

(Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar)

AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

(Members offer songs, poetry, music, etc.)

Sacrifice:

(AD holds up sacrificial branch and speaks)

AD: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we ask, O our Mother, as we offer up this (these) sacrifice(s) of Life. Accept it (them) we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

(ADS turns to the four quarters and asks:)

ADS: Have you accepted our sacrifice(s), O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… and of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

(The sacrifice is not accepted.)

ADS: The Four Winds are silent; the Earth Mother yet sleeps.

(All sing Oimelc song)

Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you, but you have not answered, we have offered to you, buy you have not accepted. Yet though you speak not, you whisper to us with your Spirit of Growth, and to this we turn in silence, to seek the changes we desire, to see our goals coming into being in the days and weeks ahead, knowing the answers are within us.

(Silence)

ADS: And we declare that, as this Grove:
ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GORVE, THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND TO BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

Chant of the Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-mother.
AD: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?
P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has not, but the ewe gives milk.
AD: Of what, then, do we partake?
P: The milk of the ewe.
AD: Then give me the milk.

(The AD takes the chalice, and invokes the power of the Gods into it, thus initiating the return flow of divine energy.)

AD: O, Mother, we thank thee for this sign of thy continual presence and life. O Dalon Ap Landu, descend into this milk and hallow it. Give us to know thy power, and the promise of Life that is to return.

(AD shares the waters with the ADS, who then asks:)

ADS: What are these Waters?
G: A sign of the power and bounty of the Gods;

ADS: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of Male and Female,
G: Mortal and Divine:
AD: She surrounds us,
ADS: He penetrates us,
G: They bind the universes together.

The Sharing:

(The ADS then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove. During this time, the Bards may wish to perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who returns it to the ADS, who gives it to the AD. P&S do not drink twice.)

AD: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

Group Bonding:

AD: Now do we declare ourselves:
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BORTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

Meditation:

(Lead by the AD)

Thank the Gods:

AD: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: For all the bounty you have given through the Time of Life:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: That you stir now in sleep, and send forth flowers and green shoots to announce your coming:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: That you have sent the Maiden and the Fool to give us joy after winter's silence, and to guide us to you again:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: For that we need each other, Mortal and Divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now, and throughout the ages:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: Now, as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

Absorption and Grounding:

AD: Great the power we have raised;
G: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
ADS: What shall we do before we leave?
G: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

(All pause and absorb as much of the divine energy as possible)

AD: And all the rest?
G: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

(All now send remaining energy outward to bless the earth and sky, plants and animals)

ADS: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you: Peace! Peace! Peace!

(The sigil around the AD 's is broken by the P, and all retire, after making sure the area is clean.)

Figure 26 Three shots of Isaac.

1978 Spring Equinox Fragment

By Bonewits & others?
"Class A"

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Spring Equinox. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Sleep. The sacrifice should be of budding boughs.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the People (depending on local Grove custom) to join in speaking the alternating line in italic print.

Invocation:

D: O Lord, forgive these three mistakes that are due to our human limitations: Thou art everywhere.
P: but we worship Thee here:
D: Thou art without form,
P: but we worship Thee in these forms:
D: Thou wouldst have us offer our Living and Being,
P: yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.
D: O Lord, forgive these three mistakes that are due to our human limitations:
P: O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

Procession:

Praise:

Here individuals may offer praise, gifts, or prayers to the Gods.

Sacrifice:

Reply:

Chant:

AD: O give praise to the Dark Gods who love: Praise to the Hunter, stalking and slaying, Praise to the Hag, weeping and raging.
G: Praise Be'al who is all Gods, praise the Earth Mother's many faces.
AD: Praise for food-store and tight roof, good wool and good health.
G: Praise for hearth and tale and friend.
AD: Praise for grey skies and healing rain, cutting wind and bedding snow.
G: Praise for the mystery of the Land of Shadow.
AD: The Earth went bare, the sunlight dimmed:
G: Light had turned to Dark.
AD: The nights were long, the winds were cold:
G: Darkness ruled over all.
AD: But within the cave, the bear cub waxed:
G: Darkness yearns to Light.
AD: Bough is barren, bud returns:
G: Balanced now are we.
AD: Belenos returns from the South:
G: Balanced now are we.
AD: The Mother stirs and wakes again:
G: Balanced now are we.
AD: Snowdrifts of blossom on earth and tree:
G: Dark will turn to Light.
AD: The world will be lush, the days will be long:
G: Light will rule over all.
AD: Til the sweet fruits of the boughs are warm in our hands:
G: And Light yearns again to Dark.
AD: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, we praise thee at thy return to our midst. Welcome art thou amongst us!
ALL: BLESS US AND LIGHT OUR WAY, O MIGHTY SUN GOD!
AD: O Earth Mother, beauteous and strong, rise up and let us rejoice in thy sight!
ALL: PRAISE TO THE LADY WHO GIVEST LIFE!

Catechism of the Waters:

Consecration:

Communion:

Meditation:

Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:

(The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:)

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 27 Making bread from scratch at the Live Oak Grove Lughnasadh 1985.

1980 Spring Equinox

By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"

AD: Arch Druid ADS: Archdruidess
P: Preceptor S: Server G: Grove

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying.
G: Be in our awareness. Teach us your joy. Let us feel your sorrow. Extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Processional:

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

(All process to altar. P&S draw sigil, AD & ADS: enter, P seals it.)

Centering:

AD: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
ADS: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
AD: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
ADS: The Gods are everywhere;
G: But we worship them here.
AD: The Gods are without form;
G: But we worship them in these forms.
ADS: We do not know what to offer our Gods,
G: So we offer them these prayers and sacrifices:
AD: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us in our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the Spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

AD: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
ADS: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breath? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?
AD: Are the Gods female?
ADS: Or male?
G: YES!
AD: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God.
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the shining one, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: And who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every grove, Patron of Druids and Comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet, and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.
ADS: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
ALL: WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the lord and lady.
ADS: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

(Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar)

AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

(Members offer songs, poetry, music, etc.)

[Begin insert]

A Chant for the Spring Equinox

Spring Equinox Invocation
A Druid Missal-Any Feb 1981
By Bonewits
But similar to another free floating leaflet.

AD:O give praise to the Dark Gods who love:
Praise to the Hunter, stalking and slaying,
Praise to the Hag, weeping and raging.
G: Praise Be'al. who is all Gods, praise the Earth Mother's many faces.
AD: Praise for food-store and tight roof, good wool and good health.
G: Praise for hearth and tale and friend.
AD: Praise for grey skies and healing rain, cutting wind and bedding snow.
G: Praise for the mystery of the Land of Shadow.
AD: The Earth went bare, the sunlight dimmed,
G: Light had turned to Dark.
AD: The nights were long, the winds were cold,
G: Darkness ruled over all.
AD: But within the cave, the bear cub waxed;
G: Darkness yearns to Light.
AD: Bough is barren, bud returns:
G: Balanced now are we.
AD: Belenos returns from the South:
G: Balanced now are we.
AD: The Mother stirs and wakes again:
G: Balanced now are we.
AD: Snowdrifts of blossom on garth and tree,
G: Dark will turn to Eight.
AD: The world will be lush, the days will be long,
G: Eight will rule over all.
AD: Til the sweet fruits of the boughs are warm in our hands. And Light yearns again to Dark.
AD: O Belenos, O Lord of light, we praise thee at thy return to our midst. Welcome art thou amongst us.
ALL: BLESS US AND LIGHT OUR WAY, O MIGHTY SUN GOD!
AD: O Earth Mother, beauteous and strong, rise up and let us rejoice in thy sights
ALL: PRAISE TO THE LADY WHO GIVEST LIFE!

Followed by "A Beltane Chant" from Druid Chronicles (Evolved)

[End of Insert]

Sacrifice:

(AD holds up sacrificial branch and speaks)

AD: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we ask, O our Mother, as we offer up this (these) sacrifice(s) of Life. Accept it (them) we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

(ADS turns to the four quarters and asks:)

ADS: Have you accepted our sacrifice(s), O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… and of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

(The sacrifice is not accepted.)

ADS: The Four Winds are silent; the Earth Mother yet sleeps.

Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you, but you have not answered, we have offered to you, buy you have not accepted. Yet though you speak not, you whisper to us with your Spirit of Growth, and to this we turn in silence, to seek the changes we desire, to see our goals coming into being in the days and weeks ahead, knowing the answers are within us.

(Silence)

ADS: And we declare that, as this Grove:
ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GORVE, THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND TO BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

Chant of the Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.
AD: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?
P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has not, the Waters are here, but the Spirit is yet faint within them!
AD: Of what, then, do we partake?
P: The Waters of Awakening.
AD: Then give me the Waters.

(The AD takes the chalice, and invokes the power of the Gods into it, thus initiating the return flow of divine energy.)

AD: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these Waters and hallow them. Give us to know thy power, and the promise of Life that is to return.

(AD shares the waters with the ADS, who then asks:)

ADS: What are these Waters?
G: A sign of the power and bounty of the Gods;
ADS: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of Male and Female,
G: Mortal and Divine:
AD: She surrounds us,
ADS: He penetrates us,
G: They bind the universes together.

The Sharing:

(The ADS then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove. During this time, the Bards may wish to perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who returns it to the ADS, who gives it to the AD. P&S do not drink twice.)

AD: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

Group Bonding:

AD: Now do we declare ourselves:
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BORTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

(All sing "We Are One Family")

Meditation:

(Lead by the AD)

Thank the Gods:

AD: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: For all the bounty you have given through the Time of Life:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: That you stir now in sleep, and send forth flowers and green shoots to announce your coming:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: That you have sent the Maiden and the Fool to give us joy after winter's silence, and to guide us to you again:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: For that we need each other, Mortal and Divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now, and throughout the ages:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: Now, as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

Absorption and Grounding:

AD: Great the power we have raised;
G: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
ADS: What shall we do before we leave?
G: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

(All pause and absorb as much of the divine energy as possible)

AD: And all the rest?
G: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

(All now send remaining energy outward to bless the earth and sky, plants and animals)

ADS: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you: Peace! Peace! Peace!

(The sigil around the AD 's is broken by the P, and all retire, after making sure the area is clean.)

1980 Earrach

Order of Common Worship, Earrach Season, 18 y.r.
By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"
Almost the same as 1980 Spring Equinox

AD: Arch Druid ADS: Archdruidess
P: Preceptor S: Server G: Grove

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying.
G: Be in our awareness. Teach us your joy. Let us feel your sorrow. Extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Processional:

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

(All process to altar. P&S draw sigil, AD & ADS: enter, P seals it.)

Centering:

AD: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
ADS: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
AD: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
ADS: The Gods are everywhere;
G: But we worship them here.
AD: The Gods are without form;
G: But we worship them in these forms.
ADS: We do not know what to offer our Gods,
G: So we offer them these prayers and sacrifices:
AD: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us in our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the Spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

AD: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
ADS: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breath? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?
AD: Are the Gods female?
ADS: Or male?
G: YES!
AD: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God.
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the shining one, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: And who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every grove, Patron of Druids and Comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet, and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.
ADS: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
ALL: WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the lord and lady.
ADS: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

(Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar)

AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

(Members offer songs, poetry, music, etc.)

Sacrifice:

(AD holds up sacrificial branch and speaks)

AD: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we ask, O our Mother, as we offer up this (these) sacrifice(s) of Life. Accept it (them) we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

(ADS turns to the four quarters and asks:)

ADS: Have you accepted our sacrifice(s), O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… and of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

(The sacrifice is not accepted.)

ADS: The Four Winds are silent; the Earth Mother yet sleeps.

Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you, but you have not answered, we have offered to you, buy you have not accepted. Yet though you speak not, you whisper to us with your Spirit of Growth, and to this we turn in silence, to seek the changes we desire, to see our goals coming into being in the days and weeks ahead, knowing the answers are within us.

(Silence)

ADS: And we declare that, as this Grove:
ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GORVE, THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND TO BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

Chant of the Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.
AD: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?
P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has not, the Waters are here, but the Spirit is yet faint within them!
AD: Of what, then, do we partake?
P: The Waters of Awakening.
AD: Then give me the Waters.

(The AD takes the chalice, and invokes the power of the Gods into it, thus initiating the return flow of divine energy.)

AD: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these Waters and hallow them. Give us to know thy power, and the promise of Life that is to return.

(AD shares the waters with the ADS, who then asks:)

ADS: What are these Waters?
G: A sign of the power and bounty of the Gods;
ADS: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of Male and Female,
G: Mortal and Divine:
AD: She surrounds us,
ADS: He penetrates us,
G: They bind the universes together.

The Sharing:

(The ADS then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove. During this time, the Bards may wish to perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who returns it to the ADS, who gives it to the AD. P&S do not drink twice.)

AD: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

Group Bonding:

AD: Now do we declare ourselves:
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR

SISTERS AND BORTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

(All sing "We Are One Family")

Meditation:

(Lead by the AD)

Thank the Gods:

AD: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: For all the bounty you have given through the Time of Life:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: That you stir now in sleep, and send forth flowers and green shoots to announce your coming:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: That you have sent the Maiden and the Fool to give us joy after winter's silence, and to guide us to you again:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: For that we need each other, Mortal and Divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now, and throughout the ages:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: Now, as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

Absorption and Grounding:

AD: Great the power we have raised;
G: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
ADS: What shall we do before we leave?
G: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

(All pause and absorb as much of the divine energy as possible)

AD: And all the rest?
G: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

(All now send remaining energy outward to bless the earth and sky, plants and animals)

ADS: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you: Peace! Peace! Peace!

(The sigil around the AD 's is broken by the P, and all retire, after making sure the area is clean.)

Figure 28 Maypole at Live Oak, Beltane 1985.

1977 Beltane

By Bonewits & others?
"Class A"

"O Earth Mother" Song

Invocation:

D: O Gods, we recognize these three mistakes that are due to our mortal limitation: thou art everywhere,
E: But we worship thee here:
D: Thou art without form,
E: But we worship thee in these forms:
D: Though wouldst have us offer our Living and being.
E: Yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.
D: O Gods, we recognize these three mistakes that are due to our mortal limitations.
ALL: O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts, and prepare us for meditation.

Procession:

Song: "Now Do We With Songs & Rejoicing"

Praise:

People offer gifts, songs, etc. to the Gods.

Sacrifice: (As usual)

Reply: (As usual)

Chant:

D: The Mother wakes from Her long sleep and smiles on us today!
E: SHE IS AWAKE!
D: She brings us life!
E: SHE IS AWAKE!
D: She brings us Light!
E: SHE IS AWAKE!
D: The Mother wakes and seeks Be'al.
E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS.
D: We light our fires to show the way.

The Fires of Be'al are now lit (if they are not already going) by the plunging of a torch into the kindling.

E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!
D: To couch with the Mother and bring forth Life.
E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!

This next section should be chanted at an accelerating pace.

D: O Be'al…
E: WE WELCOME THEE!
D: O our Mother…
E: WE WELCOME THEE!
D: O Earth-Mother, O Be'al…
E: WE WELCOME THEE!

D: O Be'al, O Mother, parents of all that lives, we welcome Ye back to our midst. Give us of Your Life, O Most High, that we may share Your joy.

E: WELCOME ARE YE AMONG US, O MOST HIGH, SMILE ON US, WHO HAVE KEPT YOUR WAYS, THROUGH THE TIME OF SLEEP.

Catechism:

\D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: *The Waters-of-Life*.
D: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: *From the bosom of the Earth-mother, the never-changing All-mother*.
D: And how do we honor this gift that causes life?
P: *By partaking of the Waters-of-Life*.
D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: *She has*!
D: Praise be!! At last is our Time of Sleep ended. Now our faith bears fruit, and the Time of Life is begun in truth and in deed.

The Archdruid/ess and all other members of the Third Order present remove their white ribbons and replace them with their red ones.

D: Now give me the Waters!

Consecration: (As usual)

Communion: (As usual)

D: Anyone wishing to be ordained as a First Order Druid should be sure to partake of the Waters as they go around. Since the chalices are small, and the crowd large, we ask everyone to take only a sip, so there will be Waters to return to the Mother.

Ordination:

The Arch Druid will call for all prospective First Orders to come to the lowest tier.

Song: "Circles" see Green Book Vol. 6, and choose 7th Vol. Of Poetry.
Gwen Zak Moore, probably in mid 1970's.
Tune: Windmills, by Alan Bell

Meditation:

The AD will read a brief meditation which will be followed by silence.

Benediction: (As usual)

END OF A SPECIAL ORDER
OF WORSHIP FOR BELTANE

MIKES NOTES: We can see in this liturgy, Isaac Breaking away from established traditions after the publishing of the Druid Chronicles (Evolved). The notable change in the Invocation "Thou wouldst have us offer our Living and being" in place of "Thou havest no needs of prayers and sacrifices" is understandable given that Brother Isaac is a liturgist and this would be negating his primary drive in the Reform, perhaps? From 1975, we see an increased interest in sexual imagery in the works of Isaac Bonewits, greater incorporation of duo-theist ideas and imagery of Wicca. Perhaps a result of his several marriages in the mid-70s?

1978 Beltane

By Bonewits & others?
"Class B"

The following is a new Order of Worship for Beltane (17 y.r.), as celebrated by the Mother Grove in the Berkeley Rose Garden. The chalice will once again be filled with whiskey and water (the Waters-of-Life). The sacrifice should be of flowering branches and other offerings. All Third Order Druids should be wearing their white ribbons-of-office around their necks at the beginning of the service, but carry their red ribbons-of-office in an easily accessible location.

Opening:

The service starts with the Archdruid and Assistant Archdruid at the site where the ritual will take place. AD does whatever banishings are necessary while AA sings "O Earth Mother" chant. All other participants are some distance away, preferably out of sight, where they begin procession to the ritual site, singing "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

If both safe and legal, AD starts a fire on or near the altar. Branch sacrifice is tucked away in his/her robe or held in one hand.

Invocation:

(A piece of white paper was pasted over the normal text, presumably to skip this step and move onto the next section. Probably the swirling galaxy opener had been inserted impromptu since it would be a new innovation introduced by David Geller as follows:)

[AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
P: And we partake of it, we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
P: And in harmony with all of life we sing
AD: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving-
P: Be in our awareness, teach us your joy, let us feel your sorrow, extend our limitations
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely--let this ritual begin!]

Offering & Praise:

AD: I see you have come from far and near
AA: Hail & welcome – enter in!
AD: But first, tell me- Why have you come to this place at this time?
BARD:
May I make my fond excuses for the late-ness of the hour;
But we accept your invitation and would bring you Beltane's flower.
For the May Day is the great day, sung along the old straight track.
And those who ancient lines did ley will heed this song that calls them back

Chorus: Pass the word and pass the lady.
Pass the plate to all who hunger.
Pass the wit of ancient wisdom,
Pass the Cup of Crimson Wonder.

AA: How can we learn more about his:

Bard:
Ask the Green Man where he comes from, ask the cup that fills with red.
Ask the old grey standing stones who show the sun his way to bed.
Question all as to their ways, and learn the secrets that they hold.
Walk the lines of Nature's palm, crossed with silver and with God.

Chorus:

AD: What shall we do now?
Bard:
Join in black December's sadness, line in August's welcome corn.
Stir the cup that's ever filling with the blood of all that's born.
But the may Day is the great day, sung along the old straight track.
And those who ancient line did ley will heed this song that calls them back.

Chorus.

AD: What have you brought for our Mother & Father?

People bring offerings down to altar.

AA: Not all offerings are physical. Has anyone brought praise for the Gods?

People offer poems and songs.

Sacrifice:

AD holds up main sacrificial branch to the sky, saying:

AD: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices of life and human effort. Accept them, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

Branch and some of the other sacrifices are laid in the fire. AA turns to Four Quarters and asks:

AA: Have you accepted our sacrifices, Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West…

If the sacrifice is accepted, the Service continues; otherwise the Service is ended immediately.

AD: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the healing of our bodies, minds and hearts, have been accepted!
ALL: General Cheering!

Chant:

AD: So long the Earth has lain in sleep:
P: Seed in ground, cloud on sun.
AA: So long the Mother slumbered deep;
P: Be'al in darkness hid.
AD: So long Your children waited here,
ALL: AND WE YOUR WAYS DID KEEP.
AA: No going without coming is, no loss without returning:
ALL: AND WE HAVE GATHERED HERE TO SET THE BELTANE FIRES BURNING!

AA sprinkles whiskey on the fire.

AD: O Earth Mother, who art called by many names: Danu, Frigga, Terra, Shakti, Uti-Hiata, we welcome You in Your awakening.
P: All praise to the Lady who gives us life!
AA: O Be'al, who ariseth out of darkness, the Beauteous, the Beloved, the flame of life within everything that livest, and the heart of every star, blessed be Thy face among us.
P: Welcome are Thou, O Lord of Light!
AD: O Earth Mother, we invoke you! O Be'al we invoke you!
P: O Be'al, O Earth Mother, we invoke You!
AA: We call by seed and root and bud, by stem and flower and leaf.
ALL: LET ALL THE EARTH DELARE THY WAYS!
AD: Couch with us, and let our hearts be thy bed of working.
ALL: LET OUR WORKS DECLARE THY WAY IS LOVE.

Chant:

D: The Mother wakes from Her long sleep and smiles on us today!
E: SHE IS AWAKE!
D: She brings us life!
E: SHE IS AWAKE!
D: She brings us Light!
E: SHE IS AWAKE!
D: The Mother wakes and seeks Be'al.
E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS.
D: We light our fires to show the way.

The Fires of Be'al are now lit (if they are not already going) by the plunging of a torch into the kindling.

E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!
D: To couch with the Mother and bring forth Life.
E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!

This next section should be chanted at an accelerating pace.

D: O Be'al…
E: WE WELCOME THEE!
D: O our Mother…
E: WE WELCOME THEE!
D: O Earth-Mother, O Be'al…
E: WE WELCOME THEE!

D: O Be'al, O Mother, parents of all that lives, we welcome Ye back to our midst. Give us of Your Life, O Most High, that we may share Your joy.
E: WELCOME ARE YE AMONG US, O MOST HIGH, SMILE ON US, WHO HAVE KEPT YOUR WAYS, THROUGH THE TIME OF SLEEP.

The Waters:

AA: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
AA: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.
AA: And how do we honor this gift that causes life?
P: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
AA: Has the Earth Mother given forth of her bounty?
P: SHE HAS!
AD: Praise be! At last is the Time of Sleep ended. Now our faith bears fruit, and the Time of Life begun in truth and in deed!
ALL: General cheering!

Ribbons are changed.

Consecration of the Waters:

ALL: THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE..

AA: OOOOOOOOOO, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, hallow these waters by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by thy power, as we take and drink of thy secret essences.

Oatcakes:

AD: Of what does Be'al give, that we may know the continual growth and change of life?
P: THE SPARKS OF LIFE.
AD: From whence do these sparks flame?
P: FROM THE HEART OF BE'AL, THE EVER SHINING ONE.
AD: And how do we honor these sparks of life?
P: BY CHERISHING THE SEEDS AND SHARING THEIR FRUITS.
AD: Has Be'al given forth of his flame?
P: HE HAS! THE SEEDS OF THE OATS HAVE LASTED THROUGH THE TIME OF SLEEP AND CAKES HAVE BEEN PREPARED WITH LOVE AND CARE.
AD: Then give me the oatcakes!

Consecration of Oatcakes:

ALL: THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE…

AD: OOOOOOOOO, Lady, Queen of the Heavens, Keeper of the Holy Flames, bless these oatcakes which we offer up to You, as our ancestors have done through centuries past. Join us together by thy power and let the flames of love raise within us, even unto the stars; so that the seeds may be planted throughout all eternity.

Communion:

AA: What are these waters and these oatcakes?
P: SIGNS OF THE POWER AND BOUNTY OF THE GODS,
AD: Who are themselves a fraction of the Force
P: ABOVE AND BEYOND ALL HUMAN CONCEPTS,
AD: Of male and female, mortal and divine.
P: IT SURROUNDS US,
AD: It penetrates us,
ALL: IT BINDS THE GALAXY TOGETHER!

AD drinks from the chalice and blesses the preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

AD takes a piece of oatcake from the server and blesses the preceptor with the words, "the sparks of life," and again marks the Druid Sigil in the air.

Preceptor and Server drink and eat and return the blessing, then go around the circle of the Grove clockwise blessing each person, handing the chalice and cakes, blessing them and being blessed in return.

The last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice or the last few crumbs of cakes. This is returned to AD with a last exchange of blessings.

Meditation:

The AD will lead all in a guided fantasy, culminating in a chant.

Libation:

Cups are returned to altar. Crumbs are poured into the fire, remaining waters are poured out.

AD: To Thee we return this portion of thy bounty,
AA: Even as we must return unto thee.

Benediction:

AD: Earth Mother, Be'al, all you other Goddesses and Gods, we gathered here today to praise and honor you. We have spoken from our hearts and You have heard us. From this place we now depart in love and joy, knowing that all things are purified in Your spirits, and that You have once again manifested the power of Life in a world that seemed so dead. We have offered of ourselves and You have answered. We go with your blessings: Peace! Peace! Peace!

END OF ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR BELTANE

All help to clean up ritual site, then move to picnic spot and feast, sing, dance, etc.

Figure 29 Bob Blunt enjoying the maypole streamers, Live Oak, Beltane 1984

1979 Beltane

By Isaac Bonewits & Others?
"Class B"

The following is a new Order of Worship for Beltane (17 y.r.), as celebrated by the Mother Grove in the Berkeley Rose Garden. The chalice will once again be filled with the Waters-of-Life (whiskey) and oatcakes will have been cooked ahead of time. The sacrifice will consist of flowering branches and cut flowers (NOT roses!), as well as poems and songs brought by the congregation. All Third Order Druids should be wearing their white ribbons-of-office and have their red ones in an easily accessible location. If safe and legal, a small fire will be burning on or near the altar. At lease one of the branch sacrifices will be on the altar at the beginning.

Cues: AD=Arch Druid/ess, AA=Assistant Archdruidess, PRE=Preceptor, SER=Server, CON=Congregation, ALL=All.

Opening:

The service starts with the AD and AA at the bottom of the Rose Garden, behind the altar. AD does whatever exorcisms are necessary while AA sings "O Earth Mother" chant. All other participants are some distance away, by the tunnel from Cordonices Park. When the AD's messenger arrives, they process to the Rose Garden, singing "Will Ye No Come Back Again" and/or "Now Do We with Songs and Rejoicing."

Upon arrival, the procession walks down the center aisle, with the Preceptor/-tress and Server leading the members of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu to fill the second curved walkway. The rest of the congregation fills up the third and higher walkways.

Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying.
G: Be in our awareness. Teach us your joy. Let us feel your sorrow. Extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Song: "Let It All Happen"
By Anodea Judith

Let the water fall, Let the water fall
Let the water fall on the earth
Let the trees grow tall, Let the water fall
Let the greenery grow on the earth.

Let the greenery grow, let the greenery grow
Let the greenery grow on the Earth
Let the trees grow tall, let the water fall
Let the greenery grow on the Earth

Let the air blow clean….
Let the water run clear…
Let the seals swim free…

Affirmation:

AD: Where are the Gods?
G: Every Goddess is within us!
AA: Thou art Goddess!
G: Every God is within us.
AD: Thou art God.

Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the Lord and Lady.
AA: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

People bring in their sacrifices to the Third Order members in the second walkway, who pass them on to the AD & AA, who place them on the altar.

AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

People offer poems and songs.

Song: "Goddesses, Goddesses Song"
By Anodea Judith

CHORUS: Goddesses, Goddesses, Got to have Goddesses.
Got to have Goddesses roaming above.
Goddesses, Goddesses, got to have Goddesses
Got to have Goddesses ruling with love.

In the ancient days of old,
Goddesses ruled the heavens I'm told
That was known as the time of mirth
When there were many who worshipped the earth.

When you're in need and you call on the Goddess
Her strength will illumine your wisdom within
The Goddess, she answers with laughter and dances
As we on the Earth become Pagan again.

When you're in crisis, then just call on Isis
Her silvery horns will take troubles away.
We dance in the moonlight, the sunlight and starlight
And know that the world will better someday.

All of the Earth is just one big home
Where all the Gods and the Goddesses roam
Look to the forest you'll see what I mean
Love of the Goddess will keep the Earth clean.

Song: Isaac's "Our Father"

Song: Jean

Sacrifice:

AD holds up main sacrificial branch to the sky, saying:

AD: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices of life and human effort. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

Branch and some of the other sacrifices are laid in the fire. AA turns to the four quarters and asks:

AA: Have you accepted our sacrifice(s), O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West… and of the Holy Center…

If the sacrifices are accepted, the ceremony continues; otherwise the ritual is ended immediately.

AD: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the healing of our bodies, minds and spirits, have been accepted!
ALL: ((General cheering))

An appropriate song may be sung here.

Where gentle tides, go rolling by
Along the salt sea strand
The colors blend and roll as one
Together in the sand
And often do the winds intwined, to send their distant call
The quiet joys of brotherhood
And love is lord of all

Where oat and wheat together rise
Along the common ground
The mare and stallion, light and dark
Have thunder in their sound
The rainbow sign, the blended flood
Still hold my heart in thrall
The quiet joys of brother hood
And love is lord of all

But men have come to plow the hide
The oat lies on the ground
I hear their fires in the field
The drive the stallion down
The roses bleed, both like and dark
The winds do seldom call
The running sands recall the time
When love was lord of all.

Chant:

AD: So long the Earth has lain in sleep:
G: Seed in ground, cloud on sun.
AA: So long the Mother slumbered deep;
G: Be'al in darkness hid.
AD: So long Your children waited here,
ALL: AND WE YOUR WAYS DID KEEP.
AA: No going without coming is, no loss without returning:
ALL: AND WE HAVE GATHERED HERE TO SET THE BELTANE FIRES BURNING!

AA sprinkles whiskey on the fire.

AD: O Earth Mother, who art called by many names: Danu, Frigga, Terra, Shakti, Uti-Hiata, we welcome You in Your awakening.
G: All praise to the Lady who gives us life!
AA: O Be'al, who arises out of darkness, the Beauteous, the Beloved, the flame of life within everything that lives, and the heart of every star, blessed be Your face among us.
G: Welcome are you, O Lord of Light!
AD: O Earth Mother, we invoke you! O Be'al we invoke you!
G: O Be'al, O Earth Mother, we call upon You!
AA: We call by seed and root and bud, by stem and flower and leaf.
ALL: COME UNTO US! COME ONTO US! COME INTO US!
AD: Couch with us and let our hearts be Your bed of working.
ALL: LET OUR WORKS DECLARE YOUR WAY IS LOVE.
AA: Lay with us and let our souls be Your bed of playing.
ALL: LET OUR LIVES DECLARE YOUR WAY IS JOY.

The Oatcakes:

AD: Of what does Be'al give, that we may know the continual growth and change of life?
SER: The sparks of life.
AD: From whence do these sparks flame?
SER: From the heart of Be'al, the ever shining All-Father.
AD: And how do we honor these sparks of life?
SER: By cherishing the seeds and sharing their fruits.
AD: Has Be'al given forth of His flame?
SER: He has! The seeds of the oats have lasted through the Time of Sleep.
AD: What has been done with them?
SER: The cakes have been prepared with love and care.
AD: Then give me the oatcakes!

The AD takes the plate of oatcakes and consecrates them with the combined spiritual energies of the people and the Goddess.

ALL: THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE… ((Etc., until the AD speaks))

AD: OOOOOOOOO, Bridget, Queen of the Heavens, Keeper of the Holy Flames, Inspiration of Poets, bless these oatcakes which we offer up to You, as our predecessors have done through centuries past. Join us together by Your power and let the flames of love rise within us, even unto the stars, so that the seed may be planted throughout all space and time.
ALL: SO BE IT!

The Waters:

AA: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PRE: The Waters-of-Life.
AA: From whence do these Waters flow?
PRE: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.
AA: And how do we honor this gift that embodies Life?
PRE By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
AA: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
PRE: She has!
AD: Praise be! Now at last is the Time of Sleep ended, and the Time of Life begun in truth and indeed! So give me the Waters!
ALL: ((General cheering))

All Third Order Druids present, including the AD and AA, now remove their white ribbons-of-office and replace them with their red ones. The AA takes the chalice of waters, and consecrates them with the combined spiritual energies of the people and the God.

ALL: THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE… ((etc., until AA speaks))

AA: OOOOOOOOOO, Dalon ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, hallow these waters by Your sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by your power, as we take and drink of Your secret essences.
ALL: SO BE IT!

Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters and these oatcakes?
G: Signs of the power and bounty of the Gods,
AA: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts,
AD: Of Male and Female,
G: Mortal and Divine.
AA: She surrounds us,
AD: He penetrates us,
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!

AD takes an oatcake from the plate, eats it, blesses the AA with the words "The sparks of life," and the forming of the Druid Sigil. The AA returns the blessing and sign, eats, and passes the plate to the Preceptor/-tress with the blessing and sign. He/she then blesses, signs, eats, blesses and signs. The plate is passed to the Server, who takes it around to the Congregation. In each case the blessing and the sign are exchanged.

AA takes the chalice, drinks of the waters, and blesses the AD with the words "The Waters-of-Life," using the sign again. The chalice is passed as before to the AD and the Preceptor/-tress, who passes it to each person present, following the Server.

The last person partaking should NOT finish the last oatcake nor the last drop of the waters. They are returned to the AD with a last blessing.

During the passing around of the oatcakes and waters, the Bards may sing an appropriate song.

Song: "Let the Spirit Come To You"
By Anodea Judith

Let the spirit come to you
through you renew you
Let the love shine on to you
Pursue you undo you
Let the light shine above you
Be of you that loves you
Let the peace settle in you
Within you, begin you.

Second Order Ordination?

An ordination of one or more members of the Grove to the Second Order of the Druids may take place here.

Libation:

The last crumbs of the oatcakes and the last drops of the waters are poured into the fire or onto the ground by the AD, saying:

AD: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty,
AA: Even as we must return unto Thee.
ALL: SO BE IT.

Meditation:

The AD will lead all in a meditation or guided fantasy, which may end with a mantra or other chant.

Song: "We Are One Family"

We are the children of the Earth
She is our Mother!
Offspring of the Sun God's bright mirth
He is our Father!
We have our siblings in the air, on the land, in the sea…

Chorus: We are one family.
We are one family
Kin to the whale and the dove.
We are one family.
We are one family.
Joined by the strength of our love, of our love,
Joined by the strength of our love.

The dolphin so free and alive
She is our sister!
The wolf who must kill to survive
He is our brother!
We are the cousins of the eagle who soars in ecstasy…

Sequoia and bristle cone pine
They are ancestors!
The cactus and mushroom divine
We are related!
The D.N.A. that runs through us all is the key…

Throughout all of time and of space
Life has been granted!
Every intelligent race
We have been planted!
And those who have sown the seed now await patiently…

Benediction:

AD: Earth Mother, Be'al, all you other Goddesses and Gods, we gathered here today to praise and honor you. We have spoken from our hearts and You have heard us. From this place we now depart in love and joy, knowing that all things are purified in Your spirits, and that You have once again manifested the power of Life in a world that seemed so dead. We have offered of ourselves and You have answered. We go with your blessings: Peace! Peace! Peace!

END OF THE ORDER OF WORSHIP
FOR BELTANE 17 Y.R. (Berkeley)

All now clean up the area and may retire to the park or elsewhere for picnicking, playing games and otherwise carrying-on in the manner appropriate to the season.

Figure 30 Tying the maypole, Live Oak, 1983.

1980 Beltane

ORDER OF COMMON WORSHIP,
BELTANE, 18 Y.R. (Berkeley dating)
New Reformed Druids of North America, Mother
& Hazel Nut Groves
Fourth Annual Beltane-in-the-Rose-Garden
By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"

AD: Arch Druid/ess, ADS: Archdruidess, P: Preceptor, S:Server, G: Grove & Guests.

Opening Song: "O Earth-Mother"

(Customs 2:1-3)

Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
ADS: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying.
G: Be in our awareness, teach us your joy, let us feel your sorrow, extend our limitations.
ADS: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely:
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Processional:

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

© 1973, 2001 c.e.
words by Isaac Bonewits, music Scots trad. ("Bonnie Charlie's Now Awa'")
Key of C

In exile live our Olden Gods,
Vanished o'er the foaming main,
To lands no mortal ever trods.
Will They e're come back again?

Will Ye no come back again?
Will Ye no come back again?
Better loved Ye cannot be.
Will Ye no come back again?

Hills They walked were all Their own,
Blest the land from sea to sea,
Till the folk with tortured moan,
Abandoned all the noble Shee.

Many a gallant Pagan fought,
Many a gallant Witch did burn.
Priest and priestess, all have sought,
To sing the prayers Ye cannot spurn!

Now with eagle and with dove,
Sing we hear our heartfelt plea:
Come with thunder, or with love,
But come! Good Gods, we so need Thee

(All process in pairs, AD & ADS followed by P&S, then member of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu, then other Grove members, guests, and public)

Centering:

AD: Why have you gathered here under the sky?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
ADS: What brings you here out among the flowers?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
AD: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
ADS: The Gods are everywhere:
G: But we worship them here.
AD: The Gods are without form:
G: But we worship them in these forms.
ADS: We do not know what to offer our Gods,
G: So we offer them these prayers and sacrifice:
AD: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us with our own prayers.
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR SACRIFICES.
AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary ob Be'al, in each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the Spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

AD: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a Star!
ADS: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breath? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?
AD: Are the Gods female?
ADS: Or males?
G: Yes!
AD: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every God is within us!
ADS: Thou art God.
G: Every Goddess is within us!
AD: Thou art Goddess!
G: Every God is within us.
AD: Thou art God.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, Spirit of truth and of light, Spark of the Sun, and the Flame within the heart of every being.
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, Spirit of all that lives upon the Earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: And who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every grove, Patron of Druids, and comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as Human Beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet, and to further the process of Evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all Time and Space.
ADS: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
ALL : WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the Lord and Lady.
AA: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

(People bring in their sacrifices to the altar.)

AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

(People offer songs, poetry, music, etc.).

Sacrifice:

(AD holds up sacrificial branch and speaks)

AD: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we ask, O Our Mother, as we offer up these sacrifices of Life. Accept them, we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

(AD turns to the four quarters and asks☺

ADS: Have you accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… and of the East… and of the West…
AD: Praise be!!! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and the cleansing of our hearts and eyes, have been accepted!

(General applause. 3rd Order Druids CHANGE RIBBONS)

Chant:

AD: So long the Earth has lain in sleep:
G: Seed in ground, cloud on sun.
ADS: So long the Mother slumbered deep;
G: Be'al in darkness hid.
AD: So long Your children waited here,
ALL: AND WE YOUR WAYS DID KEEP.
ADS: No going without coming is, no loss without returning:
ALL: AND WE HAVE GATHERED HERE TO SET THE BELTANE FIRES BURNING!

(ADS lights Beltane Fire)

AD: O Earth Mother, who art called by many names: Danu, Frigga, Terra, Shakti, Tara, Uti-Hiata, welcome art thou among us!
G: All praise to the Lady who givest life!!

(AD sprinkles whiskey on fire)

ADS: O Be'al, who ariseth out of Darkness, the Beauteous, the Beloved, the flame of life within everything that livest, and the heart of every star, praise be thy face among us.
G: Welcome art thou, O Lord of Light!!
AD: O Earth Mother, we invoke you! O Be'al we invoke you!
G: O Be'al, O Earth Mother, we call upon You!
ADS: We call by seed and root and bud, by stem and flower and leaf!
ALL: LET ALL THE EARTH DECLARE THY WAY!
AD: Couch with us and let our hearts be thy bed of working!
ALL: LET OUR WORKS DECLARE THY WAY IS LOVE.

Statement of Needs:

ADS: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you and you have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and you have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill your ways. Hear now thy children, and help us, as ever you have done.

(At this point, each person may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplished their goals. After all have finished:)

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:
ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM. YOUR HEALING AND JOY. SO THAT WE MAY ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS, AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. BLESS THIS GROVE, AND BRING US ALL THAT WE MAY NEED, MATERIALLY AND SPIRITUALLY, SO THAT WE MAY GROW EVER STRONGER, IN BEAUTY, WISDOM, HEALTH AND JOY.

The Waters:

ADS: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters of Life.
ADS: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All Mother.
ADS: And how do we honor this gift that embodies Life?
P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.
ADS: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has!
ADS: Praise be! Now at last is the Time of Sleep ended, and the Time of Life begun in truth and indeed! So give me the Waters!

(The ADS: takes the chalice and invokes the power of the Gods into it, thus initiating the return flow of divine energies.)

ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, hallow these Waters by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by thy power, as we take and drink of thy secret essences.

AD: What are these Waters?
G: A sign of the power and bounty of the Gods,
AD: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts,
AD: Of Male and Female,
G: Mortal and Divine.
AD: She surrounds us,
ADS: He penetrates us,
G: They bind the universes together.

The Sharing:

(The AD then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove and guests. During this time, the Bards will perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who gives it to the AD, who returns it to the ADS. P&S do not drink twice.)

ADS: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

Group Bonding:

ADS: Now do we declare ourselves:

ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

(All sing "We are one Family")

Song: "We Are One Family"

We are the children of the Earth
She is our Mother!
Offspring of the Sun God's bright mirth
He is our Father!
We have our siblings in the air, on the land, in the sea…

Chorus: We are one family.
We are one family
Kin to the whale and the dove.
We are one family.
We are one family.
Joined by the strength of our love, of our love,
Joined by the strength of our love.

The dolphin so free and alive
She is our sister!
The wolf who must kill to survive
He is our brother!
We are the cousins of the eagle who soars in ecstasy…

Sequoia and bristle cone pine
They are ancestors!
The cactus and mushroom divine
We are related!
The D.N.A. that runs through us all is the key…

Throughout all of time and of space
Life has been granted!
Every intelligent race
We have been planted!
And those who have sown the seed now await patiently…

Meditation:

(Lead by the ADS)

Thanking the Gods:

ADS: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

AD: That You have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the wild things and ourselves.

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

AD: Go now in peace, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance and that we go forth to live in harmony with the blessings of the Earth Mother. Peace! Peace! Peace!

Benediction:

AD: Earth Mother, Be'al, all you other Goddesses and Gods, we gathered here today to praise and honor you. We have spoken from our hearts and You have heard us. From this place we now depart in love and joy, knowing that all things are purified in Your spirits, and that You have once again manifested the power of Life in a world that seemed so dead. We have offered of ourselves and You have answered. We go with your blessings: Peace! Peace! Peace!

1980 Beltane (Variant #2)

Special Order of Worship, Santa Cruz gathering,
By Bonewits & others?
"Class B?"
Beltane, 18yr (May 4, 1980)

Opening:

Before the service begins, the Sigil is marked on the ground, the sacrifice is cut, and the Third Order Druids are wearing their white ribbons-of-office, with their red ribbons-of-office handy.

Procession:

(Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?")

Archdruid steps into the Sigil, which is then closed by Preceptor and Server with their staves. The rest of the group forms a circle around the Sigil.

Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.

Con: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.

AD: In the mighty helix we dance.

Con: And in harmony with all of life we sing.

AD: Gods known and unknown, potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving…

Con: Be in our awareness, teach us your joy, let us feel your sorrow, extend our limitations.

AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..

ALL: LET US BEGIN!

Offering and Praise:

(Song: "O Earth Mother")

Congregation may offer songs, poems, other things; AD holds up main sacrifice to the sky, saying:

AD: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices of life and human effort. Accept them, we ask, and may our hearts be cleansed and may we share our lives in peace and harmony.

Turns to the Four Quarters and says,

AD: I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West… of the Center…

(If the sacrifices are accepted, the ceremony continues; otherwise the ritual is ended immediately.)

AD: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the healing of our bodies, minds and spirits, have been accepted!

The Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: The Waters-of-Life.

AD: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.

AD: And how do we honor this gift that embodies Life?

P: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.

AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of her bounty?
P: She has!
AD: Praise be! Now at last is the Time of Sleep ended, and the Time of Life begun in truth and indeed! So give me the Waters!
ALL: (General Cheering)

All Third Order Druids present, including the AD and Preceptor, now remove their white ribbons-of-office and replace them with their red ones. The Preceptor takes the chalice of waters, and consecrates them with the combined spiritual energies of the people and the God.

P: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, hallow these waters by your sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by your power, as we take and drink of your secret essences.
ALL: SO BE IT!

Archdruid takes the chalice, drinks of the waters, and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the Waters-of-Life," and marking of the Druid Sigil in the air. The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Archdruid. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and give the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove clockwise, blessing each person, handing the person the chalice, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server drinks only once. (Alternatively, the chalice may be handed around the circle after blessings from the Archdruid.)

The last person partaking should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the AD with a last exchange of blessings.

Then the Archdruid takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying;

AD: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.
ALL: SO BE IT!

Meditation:

Brief readings/words of meditation, then a short period of silence.

Benediction:

AD: We have gathered here to praise and offer sacrifice to the forces of nature and to reaffirm our spiritual links with the unseen deities with whom we share this life. Let us go forth to live in harmony with all blessings and Peace! Peace! Peace!

1977 (?) Lughnasadh Fragment

By Bonewits & others?
"Class A"

The Chant:

D: Let us praise the Earth-Mother! She has smiled upon her children.
G: THREE TIMES SINCE BELTANE HAS THE MOON GONE BEFORE US IN HER FULL GLORY, THREE TIMES HAS SHE FULLY HIDDEN HER GLORY FROM US.
D: In those three months the Earth-Mother has quickened the Earth and brought new life upon it; and in these three months to come she will bring forth the bounty of this life.
G: AND AS THE MOON NOW WAXES NEAR TO FULL ONLY TO WANE AGAIN, SO AT SAMHAIN WILL THE EARTH-MOTHER WITHDRAW FROM US A WHILE.
D: Then so we praise her, for now at Lughnasadh, the life which has grown during Samhradh comes to fruition, that, we her grateful children, may gather and praise her and remember her until she returns again at Beltane.
G: LET US GATHER AND PRAISE THE BOUNTY OF THE MOTHER!

(Here is the Sacrifice part)

The Catechism:

D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may remember the continual flow and renewal of life?
G: THE WATERS OF LIFE.
D: From whence do these Waters flow?
G: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
D: And how do we honor this gift of life?
G: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS OF LIFE.
D: Does the Earth-Mother give any sign on this day of Lughnasadh to assure us that she will sustain life while she sleeps?
G: OF THIS AT LUGHNASADH, WE KNOW BY THE HARVEST-BOUNTY OF FOGHAMHAR. (Fowg-avar)
D: What token does the Earth-Mother give of this bounty to come?
G: IN TOKEN OF THIS BOUNTY SHE HAS MIXED THE WATERS OF LIFE WITH THE GRAIN OF THE EARTH AND THE FRUIT OF THE TREE.
D: Give me this token.

1978 Lughnasadh 16 Y.R.

By Bonewits & others?
"Class B"

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Lughnasadh. The chalice will be filled with mead or hard cider (instead of the usual whiskey) as the Waters-of-Life. Since this is a harvest festival, it is suggested that member s of the Grove bring a sacrifice of fruits or vegetables, from their own gardens if possible. These are laid on the altar and/or around the fire along with the regular sacrifice (which should be of green branches) either at the end of the Procession or at the point in the service at which the regular sacrifice is offered up.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand).

"D" =Druid/ess presiding.
"P" =People attending.
"E" =Everybody.

Song: "Processional Hymn"

Invocation

D: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
E: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.
D: In the mighty helix we dance.
E: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.
D: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving.
E: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LET US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.
D: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, let this ritual begin!

Procession

Here occurs the Procession, with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the server (or any two others designated by the Grove) use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two staves.

Song: "Now Do We"

Praise:

Here may be inserted a reading or singing of Latter Chronicles 10:6-22 as a hymn of praise, with the entire Grove joining in on the refrain of "O Earth-Mother, we praise Thee."

Sacrifice

The Druidess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West…

Reply:

If the sacrifice is accepted, the Service continues; otherwise, the Service is ended immediately.

D: Praise be!! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, have been accepted!

Chant:

D: Thy trees do grow and give us shade.
E: O DALON AP LANDU, WE THANK THEE.
D: Thy waters stream forth and ease our pain,
E: O GRANNOS, WE THANK THEE.
D: Thy waters pour forth and bring us joy,
E: O BRACIACA, WE THANK THEE.
D: Thy rivers flow and give us drink,
E: O SIRONA, WE THANK THEE.
D: Thy thunder cracks and heralds rain,
E: O TARANIS, WE THANK THEE.
D: Thy Seas are deep and full of fish,
E: O LLYR, WE THANK THEE.
D: Thy earth is fertile and full of Life.
E: O DANU, WE THANK THEE.

D: Though the Sun is bright, the Shade is dark.
E: IN THE MIDST OF LIGHT IS DARK.
D: Dark though the night, the stars burn bright.
E: IN THE MIDST OF DARK IS LIGHT.
D: Thy light shines on us today.
E: O BELENOS, WE THANK THEE.
D: The plants give fruits which then do die.
E: IN THE MIDST OF LIFE IS DEATH.
D: We eat the fruits and they give us life.
E: IN THE MIDST OF DEATH IS LIFE.
D: Thy life is here in us today.
E: O EARTH-MOTHER, WE THANK THEE!

D: O Be'al, O Lugh, O our Mother, O all ye Gods and Goddesses, we thank You for the bounty which Ye have given us during this year. Accept our praise, O Most High, and smile on us always, that we may praise You the more.
E: WE THANK YOU, O MOST HIGH, KEEP US IN YOUR MINDS, WE PRAY YOU, AS WE KEEP IN YOUR WAYS.

Catechism

D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
D: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-mother.
D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has! Ripe are the golden apples of the Sun, and bright is the honey of the hives. Our cups overflow with cider and mead, and all the good things of this season!
D: Then give me the Waters!

Consecration

The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:

D: O Mother, we thank Thee for this sing of Thy continual presence and Thy life. O Dalon Ap Landu, descend into this milk and hallow it by Thy three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

Ordination?

If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Druid/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

Communion

SONG: "Lughnasadh Dance"

Title: Lughnasadh Dance
Lyrics by: Gwydion Pendderwen
Recorded on: "Songs for the Old Religion," Gwydion Pendderwen, 1975; "Once Around the Wheel," Ian Corrigan, 1987 (Association for Consciousness Exploration, 1643 Lee Rd #9, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118)
Subject: Sabbats - Lughnassadh
Lugh the light of summer bright clothed all in green
Tailtu his mother true, rise up and be seen

Chorus:
At your festival sound the horn, calling the people again,
Child of Barleycorn, newly summerborn, ripening like the grain.

Lugh grew tall from spring to fall, and sought to find a wife
But Balor came and made his claim and vowed to take his life

The two did fight from morn 'till night and Lugh did strike him one;
And Balor's eye flew in the sky and there became the sun

Lugh was wed and made his bed with Erinn in the north,
And there they lay through many a day and soon a child came forth

The child grew tall from spring to fall, Setanta was his name,
And then at length, by honor's strength, CuChulainn he became!

The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the Waters-of-Life" and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does NOT drink more than once.

In some Groves, the Druid/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person on that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

In either method, the last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee.

Meditation

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to five minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Druid/ess signals the end of the service with:

Benediction

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with Her blessing:

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

The edible sacrifices should now be used as part of a Lughnasadh feast.

End of a Special Order of Worship for Lughnasadh.

Figure 31 Eric Hilleman & Isaac examining his donation of archival materials, April 23, 1994.

1979 Lughnasadh
The Druid Ritual

(14 y.r. is typed on it, but contents belie a later date)
By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"

Druids line up for the procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (ADS) are at the front, followed by the Chief Bard and the Server, and the other members of the Grove (G).

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

(Customs 2:1-3)

Invocation:

ADS: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
ADS: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying...
G: Be in our awareness. teach us Your joy. let us feel Your sorrow. extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Processional Song (ALL):

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

All process to altar stone, CB & S mark sigil on ground, AD & ADS step inside and go around either side to back of altar stone, sigil is closed. Grove members split into an arc in front of the altar stone.

Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
AD: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
ADS: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
AD: The Gods are everywhere;
G: But we worship Them here.
ADS: The Gods are without form;
G: But we worship Them in these forms.
AD: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,
G: So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices:
ADS: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us in our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.
AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

ADS: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
AD: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?
ADS: Are the Gods male?
AD: Or female?
G: YES!
ADS: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess!.
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God.
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.
ADS: And Who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.
ADS: Who do we honor on this day?
G: We honor Lugh of the Long Arm, the Son of the Sun, Spear Thrower, Master of all Arts, Lord of all Crafts, Bringer of the Harvest.

Group Goals and Dedications:

ADS: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.
AD: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
G: We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, heart and soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

Lughnasadh Chant:

ADS: Thy trees do grow and give us shade.
ALL: O DALON AP LANDU, WE THANK THEE.
AD: Thy waters stream forth and ease our pain,
ALL: O GRANNOS, WE THANK THEE.
ADS: Thy waters pour forth and bring us joy,
ALL: O BRACIACA, WE THANK THEE.
AD: Thy rivers flow and give us drink,
ALL: O SIRONA, WE THANK THEE.
ADS: Thy thunder cracks and heralds rain,
ALL: O TARANIS, WE THANK THEE.
AD: Thy seas are deep and full of fish,
ALL: O LLYR, WE THANK THEE.
ADS: Thy earth is fertile and full of life.
ALL: O DANU, WE THANK THEE.

ADS: Though the Sun is bright, the Shade is dark.
ALL: IN THE MIDST OF LIGHT IS DARK.
AD: Dark though the night, the stars burn bright.
ALL: IN THE MIDST OF DARK IS LIGHT.
ADS: Thy light shines on us today.
ALL: O BELENOS, WE THANK THEE.
AD: The plants give fruits which then do die.
ALL: IN THE MIDST OF LIFE IS DEATH.
ADS: We eat the fruits and they give us life.
ALL: IN THE MIDST OF DEATH IS LIFE.
AD: Thy life is here in us today.
ALL: O EARTHMOTHER, WE THANK THEE!

ADS: O Be'al, O Lugh, O our Mother, O all ye Gods and Goddesses, we thank You for the bounty which you have given us during this year. We thank you for the external growth of the plants and animals, and for the internal growth of our spirits. Accept our praise, O Most High, and smile on us always, that we may praise You the more.
ALL: WE THANK YOU, HIGH ONES. KEEP US IN YOUR MINDS, WE PRAY YOU, AS WE KEEPYOUR WAYS.

Offering and Praise:

ADS: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.
AD: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar stone.

ADS: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc. Ending with "Lughnasadh Dance" song.

Sacrifice:

The ADS holds up sacrificial branch and speaks:

ADS: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices. Accept them, we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us Thy peace and life.

The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the AD turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

AD: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

If the sacrifices are accepted, the rite continues:

ADS: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the honoring of our Gods, have been accepted!!

Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon You and You have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and You have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill Thy ways. Hear now Thy children, and help us, as ever You have done.

At this point, each person present may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplish their goals. After all have finished:

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:
G: We need Your strength and wisdom, Your healing and joy, so that we may accomplish our goals and fulfill our dedications. Bless this Grove, and bring us all that we may need, materially and spiritually, so that we may grow ever stronger, in beauty, wisdom, health and joy.

The Waters:

ADS: Of what does the Earth Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
G: The Waters-of-Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
G: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever changing All-Mother.
ADS: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?
G: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
G: She has! Ripe are the golden apples of the Sun, and bright is the honey of the hives. Our cups overflow with cider and mead, and all the good things of this season!
ADS: Then give me the Waters!!

Consecration:

The ADS takes the chalice of waters, and invokes the power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energy.

ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and eyes, and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy secret essences.

Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters?
G: A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;
AD: Who are themselves but fractions of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of male and female;
G: Mortal and divine.
AD: She surrounds us.
ADS: He penetrates us.
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!

The chalice is passé around to all present, each person being blessed by the Server with the Druid Sigil and returning the blessing, before and after drinking, with the words "The Waters of Life." The remaining waters are returned to the ADS, who pours them out over the altar stone, saying:

ADS: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

Group Bonding:

ADS: Now do we declare ourselves:
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BORTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

All sing "We are One Family" song.

Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

Led impromptu by the ADS.

Thanking the Gods:

ADS: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: That we have offered to You of ourselves, and You have accepted.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That You have heard our prayers, our griefs and our needs,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: For all that You have given, all You give around us, all You will give in the future.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

Absorption and Grounding:

ADS: Great the power we have raised;
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
AD: What shall we do before we leave?
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

All pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.

ADS: And all the rest…?
ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

All now send remaining energy into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals

AD: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

ADS: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing: Peace! Peace! Peace!

The sigil around the altar stone is now broken, and all retire to picnic and celebrate, making sure that the area is physically clean before leaving.

1979 Order of Common Worship, Foghamhar (Fall season), 17 y.r.

Mother Grove, N.R.D.N.A.
By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"

Druids line up for the procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (ADS) are at the front, followed by the Chief Bard and the Server, and the other members of the Grove (G).

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother" (Customs 2:1-3)

Invocation:

ADS: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
ADS: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying...
G: Be in our awareness. Teach us Your joy. Let us feel Your sorrow. Extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Processional Song (ALL):

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

All process to altar stone, CB & S mark sigil on ground, AD & ADS step inside and go around either side to back of altar stone, sigil is closed. Grove members split into an arc in front of the altar stone.

Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
AD: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
ADS: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
AD: The Gods are everywhere;
G: But we worship Them here.
ADS: The Gods are without form;
G: But we worship Them in these forms.
AD: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,
G: So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices:
ADS: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us in our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our

private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

ADS: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
AD: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?
ADS: Are the Gods male?
AD: Or female?
G: YES!
ADS: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess!.
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God.
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.
ADS: And Who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications:

ADS: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.
AD: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
G: We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, heart and soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

Offering and Praise:

ADS: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.
AD: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar stone.

ADS: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.

Sacrifice:

The ADS holds up sacrificial branch and speaks:

ADS: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices. Accept them, we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us Thy peace and life.

The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the AD turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

AD: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

If the sacrifices are accepted, the rite continues:

ADS: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the honoring of our Gods, have been accepted!!

Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon You and You have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and You have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill Thy ways. Hear now Thy children, and help us, as ever You have done.

At this point, each person present may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplish their goals. After all have finished:

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:
G: We need Your strength and wisdom, Your healing and joy, so that we may accomplish our goals and fulfill our dedications. Bless this Grove, and bring us all that we may need, materially and spiritually, so that we may grow ever stronger, in beauty, wisdom, health and joy.

The Waters:

ADS: Of what does the Earth Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
G: The Waters-of-Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
G: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever changing All-Mother.
ADS: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?
G: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
G: She has! Ripe are the golden apples of the Sun, and bright is the honey of the hives. Our cups overflow with cider and mead, and all the good things of this season!
ADS: Then give me the Waters!!

Consecration:

The ADS takes the chalice of waters, and invokes the power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energy.

ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and eyes, and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy secret essences.

Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters?
G: A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;
AD: Who are themselves but fractions of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of male and female;
G: Mortal and divine.
AD: She surrounds us.
ADS: He penetrates us.
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!

The chalice is passé around to all present, each person being blessed by the Server with the Druid Sigil and returning the blessing, before and after drinking, with the words "The Waters of Life." The remaining waters are returned to the ADS, who pours them out over the altar stone, saying:

ADS: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

Group Bonding:

ADS: Now do we declare ourselves:
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BORTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

All sing "We are One Family" song.

Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

Led impromptu by the ADS.

Thanking the Gods:

ADS: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: That we have offered to You of ourselves, and You have accepted.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That You have heard our prayers, our griefs and our needs,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: For all that You have given, all You give around us, all You will give in the future.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

Absorption and Grounding:

ADS: Great the power we have raised;
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
AD: What shall we do before we leave?
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

All pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.

ADS: And all the rest…?
ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

All now send remaining energy into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals

AD: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

ADS: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing: Peace! Peace! Peace!

The sigil around the altar stone is now broken, and all retire to picnic and celebrate, making sure that the area is physically clean before leaving.

Figure 32 Daniel Harger's over seeing Sue & Larry's wedding at Live Oak, Lughnasadh 1983.

1978 (?) Fall Equinox

By Bonewits & others?
"Class B"

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Fall Equinox. The chalice will be filled with Waters-of-Life. The sacrifice should be of branches with turning leaves.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand).

"D" =Druid/ess presiding.
"P" =People attending.
"E" =Everybody.

Song: "Processional Hymn"

Invocation

D: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
E: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.
D: In the mighty helix we dance.
E: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.
D: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving.
E: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LET US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.
D: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, let this ritual begin!

Procession

Here occurs the Procession, with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the server (or any two others designated by the Grove) use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two staves.

Song: "Now Do We"

Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem, or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

Sacrifice

The Druidess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West…

Reply

If the sacrifice is accepted, the Service continues; otherwise, the Service is ended immediately.

D: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, have been accepted!

Chant:

D: The Sun-God did spend half the year with His children in the North and then did depart to his winter home. O Belenos, O Thou unchanging God of many names but one Face, we, Thy Children, mourn Thy passing from our lands.
E: O LORD OF LIGHT, RETURN TO US SOON.
D: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, short seems the time that we have rejoiced in the warmth of Thy presence.
E: O GOD OF THE SUN, RETURN TO US SOON.

D: The nights were short, the trees in leaf,
E: THE DAY HAD CONQUERED NIGHT.
D: The days were long and full of Life,
E: THE DAY HAD CONQUERED NIGHT.
D: The Sun was warm, the land gave fruit,
E: THE DAY HAD CONQUERED NIGHT.
D: But the Sun must return to the Southern lands,
E: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.
D: Though the world is warm and full of LIFE,
E: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.
D: Yet the cold approaches to stalk the land,
E: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.
D: The Sun grows weaker every day.
E: THE NIGHT WILL CONQUER DAY.
D: The leaves will wither and Death draws nigh.
E: THE NIGHT WILL CONQUER DAY.
D: We pray Thy return will all Your might.
E: OR THE NIGHT WILL CONQUER DAY.

D: O Belenos, O Sun, we mourn Thy passing from our midst. Welcome wert Thou among us.
E: THOU BLESSED US WITH THY PRESENCE, O LORD OF LIGHT.
D: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, return to us soon that we may rejoice in Thy sight.
E: BLESS US AND LIGHT OUR WAYS, O GOD OF THE SUN.

D: But winter will pass and spring will come,
E: AND THE DAY WILL CONQUER NIGHT.
D: The Sun will return and warm our land,
E: AND THE DAY WILL CONQUER NIGHT.

D: Death will pass and Life return,
E: AND THE DAY WILL CONQUER NIGHT!

D: O Belenos, O Sun-God, O Lord of Light, though Thy presence departs from us, yet art Thou with us, for Thy light does guide our feet and Thy warmth is in our hearts.
E: ALL HAIL BELENOS, GOD OF LIGHT!
D: All praise Belenos, who keep His ways.
E: O BELENOS, WE PRAISE THEE!

Catechism

D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
D: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-mother.
D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has!
D: Does Belenos still give us a sign of His presence?
P: He does! Though He departs for the Southern lands, still is His spark of light within these Waters-of-Life.
D: Then give me the Waters!

Consecration

The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:

D: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, descend yet once more into these waters and fill them with Thy presence. Give us to know, O Lord, of Thy impending return, as we take and drink one more time of Thy warmth and light.

Ordination?

If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Druid/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

Communion

The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the Waters-of-Life" and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does NOT drink more than once.

In some Groves, the Druid/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person on that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

In either method, the last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O Lord, even as Thou wilt return to us.

Meditation

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to five minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Druid/ess signals the end of the service with:

Benediction

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with Her blessing:

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

End of a Special Order of Worship for the Fall Equinox.

Figure 33 Isaac Bonewits & Sam Admas at the Hill of 3 Oaks on April 23, 1994.

1979 Order of Common Worship, Autumn Equinox Service

Mother Grove, N.R.D.N.A.
By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"

Druids line up for the procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (ADS) are at the front, followed by the Chief Bard and the Server, and the other members of the Grove (G).

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

(Customs 2:1-3)

Invocation:

ADS: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
ADS: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying...
G: Be in our awareness. Teach us Your joy. Let us feel Your sorrow. Extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Processional Song (ALL):

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

All process to altar stone, CB & S mark sigil on ground, AD & ADS step inside and go around either side to back of altar stone, sigil is closed. Grove members split into an arc in front of the altar stone.

Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
AD: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
ADS: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
AD: The Gods are everywhere;
G: But we worship Them here.
ADS: The Gods are without form;
G: But we worship Them in these forms.
AD: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,
G: So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices:
ADS: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us in our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

ADS: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
AD: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?
ADS: Are the Gods male?
AD: Or female?
G: YES!
ADS: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess!.
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God.
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.
ADS: And Who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications:

ADS: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.
AD: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
G: We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, heart and soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

[NOTE: A large picture of the Stone Henge picture from an old antiquarian book seems to have been deliberately pasted over the 1976 section that had the Lughnasadh Chant, perhaps to shorten the liturgy?]

Offering and Praise:

ADS: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.
AD: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar stone.

ADS: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.

Sacrifice:

The ADS holds up sacrificial branch and speaks:

ADS: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices to life. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us peace and life.

The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the AD turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

AD: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… and of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

If the sacrifice is accepted, the rite continues:

ADS: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the honoring of our Gods, have been accepted!!

Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you and you have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and you have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill your ways. Hear now thy children, and help us, as ever you have done.

At this point, each person present may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplish their goals. After all have finished:

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:

ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR HEALING AND JOY, SO THAT WE MAY ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. BLESS THIS GROVE, AND BRING US ALL THAT WE MAY NEED, MATERIALLY AND SPIRITUALLY, SO THAT WE MAY GROW EVER STRONGER, IN BEAUTY, WISDOM, HEALTH AND JOY.

Chant:

ADS: O give praise to the Gods of Light!
AD: Praise to the Dancer, singing and swaying,
Praise to the Mother, fruitful and shining!
G: PRAISE BE'AL, WHO IS ALL GODS; PRAISE THE EARTH MOTHER'S MANY FACES!
ADS: Praise for cold drink and good work, short sleeves and good times!
G: PRAISE FOR FIELD AND PLAY AND LOVER!
AD: Praise for sunsets and bright days, green leaves and flowing waters!
G: PRAISE FOR SURITY OF SUMMER PROMISE!
ADS: The Mother woke, the Sun God rose-
G: DARK HAD TURNED TO LIGHT.
AD: The Earth was lush, the days were long-
G: THE LIGHT RULED OVER ALL.
ADS: But the fruit formed over the quiet seed-
G: THE LIGHT YEARNS TO THE DARK.
AD: Leaf is crimson, day comes cool-
G: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.
ADS: Belenos turns his face to the South-
G: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.
AD: The Mother tires and drifts toward sleep-
G: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.
ADS: Flowers of hoar frost on leaf and pane-
G: LIGHT WILL TURN TO DARK.
AD: Limb will be sheared, day will be short-
G: DARK WILL RULE OVER ALL.
ADS: Til the seed wax full in the dampened earth-
G: AND DARK YEARNS AGAIN FOR LIGHT.

ADS: O Cernunnos, O God of the Hunt, we praise thee at thy return to our midst, for we fear thee not.
G: BLESS US AND GUIDE US WELL, O MIGHTY WARRIOR.
AD: O Macha, O Kali, wise and strong, protect us through the Time of Sleep.
G: PRAISE TO THE LADY, TO WHOM WE RETURN.

The Waters:

ADS: Of what does the Earth Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters of Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.
ADS: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?
P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has!
ADS: Does Belenos still give us a sign of his presence?
P: He does! Though he departs for the Southern lands, still is his spark of light within these Waters of Life.
ADS: Then give me the Waters!

Consecration:

The ADS takes the chalice of waters, and invokes the power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energy.

ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and eyes, and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy secret essences.

Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters?
G: A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;
AD: Who are themselves but fractions of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of male and female;
G: Mortal and divine.
AD: She surrounds us.
ADS: He penetrates us.
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!

The chalice is passé around to all present, each person being blessed by the Server with the Druid Sigil and returning the blessing, before and after drinking, with the words "The Waters of Life." The remaining waters are returned to the ADS, who pours them out over the altar stone, saying:

ADS: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

Group Bonding:

ADS: Now do we declare ourselves:

ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BORTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

All sing "We are One Family" song.

Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

Led impromptu by the ADS.

Thanking the Gods:

ADS: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: That we have offered to You of ourselves, and You have accepted.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That You have heard our prayers, our griefs and our needs,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: For all that You have given, all You give around us, all You will give in the future.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

Absorption and Grounding:

ADS: Great the power we have raised;
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
AD: What shall we do before we leave?
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

All pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.

ADS: And all the rest…?
ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

All now send remaining energy into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals

AD: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

ADS: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing: Peace! Peace! Peace!

The sigil around the altar stone is now broken, and all retire to picnic and celebrate, making sure that the area is physically clean before leaving.

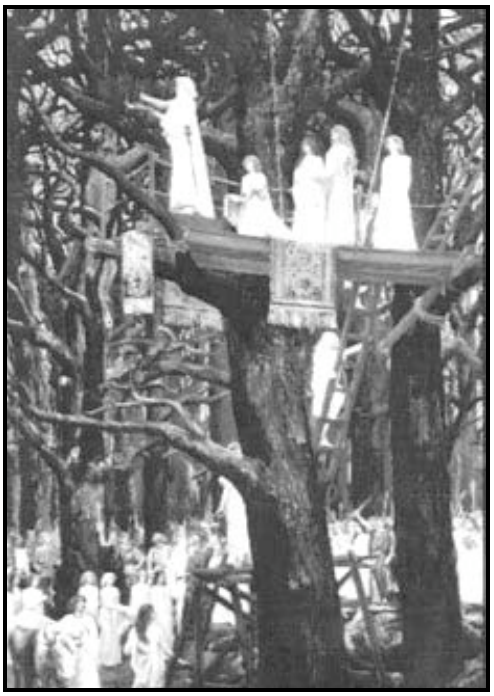
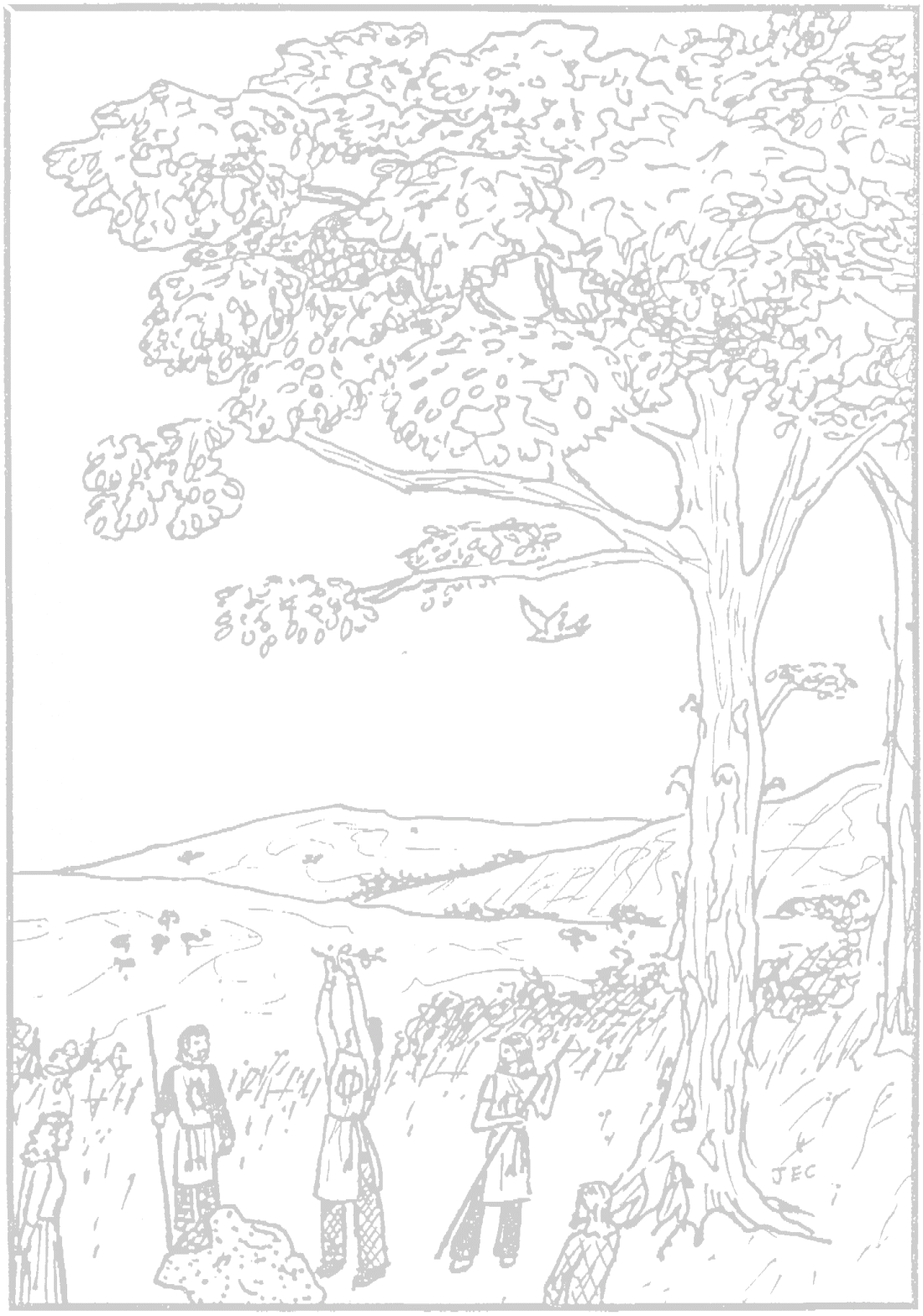


Figure 34 Isaac Bonewits, c. 1998

 Ye Olde Scratch Paper



Section 4 _ : Other Druids' Liturgies

It may seem a bit odd putting ADF material into this RDNA publication, but I think it will show and illustrate some of the ways that ADF is indeed a mixture of continuation and also innovation in liturgical terms. As ADF entered the 90s, the influence of Isaac waned, new leaders advanced in the ranks and devised new liturgical elements without the nostalgia that Isaac clearly kept towards RDNA fragments; as is shown in Keltria. Cauldron and OMS definitely took more materials.

ADF Liturgy Outline 1983.

By Isaac Bonewits

Preliminary Ritual Activity

(A) Briefing
(B) Individual Meditations & Prayers
(C) Lighting the Sacred Fire(s)
(D) Pouring the Sacred Waters
(E) Consecrating the Sacred Pole/Tree
(F) Consecrating the Altar & Tools

1st Phase: Starting the Rite & Establishing the Group Mind

Clear-cut Beginning:

Consecration of Time

(1) Musical Signal
(2) Opening Prayer

Consecration of Space

& of Participants

(3) The Processional/Sigil Marking
(4) Purification(s) of Participants
(5) Optional: Purification(s) of Site
(6) Honoring the Earth Mother

Centering, Grounding,

Linking & Merging

(7) The Grove Meditation
(8) Unity Chant/Song
(9) Stating Ritual Purpose & Historical Precedent
(10) Naming Deity(ies) of the Occasion & Reasons for Choice

2nd Phase: Recreating the Cosmos & Preliminary Power Raising

Creating the Vertical Axis

(11) Planting the Cosmic Tree / Honoring the Sacred Pole
(12) Evoking the Gatekeeper / Defining the Ritual Center
(13) Evoking the Fire & Water Deities & Linking to Center

Gaining Assistance and

Preventing Interference

(14) Invoking the Bardic Deity(ies) or Spirit(s)
(15) Acknowledgement of the Outsiders
(16) Filling Out the Cosmic Picture by Invoking….
Ex.: Triad Invoc. of Nature Spirits, Ancestors, Deities in Three Worlds
Ex.: Invoc. of Helpful Beings of each World/Realm
Ex.: Invoc. of Helpful Beings by Province/Function
(17) The Settling & Focusing

3rd Phase: Major Sending of Power to Deity(ies) of the Occasion

(18) Descriptive Invocation of Deity(ies) of the Occasion

Primary Power Raising

(19) Praise Offerings, Dance, Libations, etc.
(20) The Sacrifice
(21) Seeking the Omen of Return

4th Phase: Receiving and Using the Returned Power

Preparation for the Return

(22) Meditation upon Personal and Group Needs
(23) Induction of Receptivity
(24) Consecration Agreement

Reception of Power from Deity(ies)

of the Occasion

(25) Consecration and Sharing
(26) Acceptance of Individual Blessings
(27) Reinforcement of Group Bonding
(28) Optional: Spell Casting/Rite of Passage

5th Phase: Unwinding and Ending the Ceremony

Unwinding the Energy Patterns Created

(29) Thanking of Entities Invited in Reverse Order
(30) Thanking the Gatekeeper & Closing the Gates
(31) Affirmation of Past/Future Continuity & Success
(32) Unmerging, Unlinking, Regrounding & Recentering: Meditation
(33) Draining off Excess Power: The Restoration

Clearcut Ending: Deconsecration of Time & Space

(34) Final Benediction
(35) Announcement of End
(36) Dissolving the Sigil
(37) Musical Signal

Step by Step Through an ADF Druid Worship Ceremony

By Isaac Bonewits
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Originally published in Druid's Progress #4 c.1987

Preliminary Notes

I hope that the previous essays on liturgical design and preparation have made it clear that decisions about the structure of a ceremony are not just a matter of arbitrarily picking and choosing things to do that seem "nice", "fun" or "traditional", nor of slavishly copying a script that someone else wrote a long lime ago. The "Outline for Druid Worship Rituals", published in DP#2, was carefully constructed according to the principles we've been examining. It should, with the modifications mentioned in this essay, be usable without major changes for a few more years of further liturgical experimentation.

But even the best(?) liturgical design will not guarantee an effective and satisfying religious experience unless the people performing it actually understand what they are doing, and why they are doing it. So the purpose of this essay is to give you some of the details about actual ceremonial performance that the version published in DP#2 did not have room for. I'm not going to repeat all of the rubrics, nor the text of the prayers (except for translation corrections). So you'll need a copy of that issue in order to get the most out of this. In the pages that follow, we'll go through that script, following the (modified) outline step-by-step, and taking into account comments, critiques, changes and variations that have occurred during the years it's been used.

Once you've digested the materials in this and the preceding essays, you should be able to come up with new scripts based on the outline, which will be repeated in its current form at the end of this essay. You can then publish these in your zines. We are especially going to need (a) scripts based on all of our different Indo-European ethnic focuses, and (b) scripts for rites of passage and spell castings which can fit into the ceremony as currently structured. And of course, we're going to need scores(!) of new songs and chants from our bards, so send those in too.

Let me emphasize this as blatantly as possible: I don't want to have to create the entire liturgy all by myself. I'm willing to figure out the basic liturgical designs necessary to accomplish various goals, but the artistic expression of those designs must be a community effort if what we are doing is ever to fulfill its potential. Don't worry about whether your new script is "as good as" mine, or constitutes immortal poesy, just work on making it better than the last one you did. As time goes by, we will all steal good lines from each other's scripts, translate them into the languages we're each using, and explore the possibilities inherent in each design.

Before we begin this step through, let's review the five-part structure. (1) Starting the ritual and establishing the groupmind; (2) Opening the Gates Between the Worlds and beginning the power flow; (3) The major sending of power to the deities of the occasion; (4) Receiving and using the returned power from the deities of the occasion; and finally (5) Unwinding and ending the ceremony.

First Phase. Starting the Rite & Establishing the Groupmind

The Clear cut Beginning: the Consecration of Time

Every ritual, whether religious or not, should have a clearly designated beginning. This can be signaled by a bell ringing, by the clergy showing up in full regalia, by candles being lit, or in some other fashion. What's important is that the participants in the rite receive the cue that says to their subconscious minds, "the ceremony is Stating, it's time to be magical/spiritual/psychic."

In this rite, the opening phrase in a non-English language provides this vital cue: ta muid anseo leis na deithe a adhradh. "We are here to honor the Gods." The English translation immediately follows, and after this the English version of each phrase or prayer gets done first. Yes, I know that's the opposite of the way the script has them, but experience has shown that this pattern works better for congregations who are not familiar with the nonEnglish language involved.

(Linguistic note: the second phrase in the published script is better translated as "O Gods, whose power gives life to everything which is alive, be you here with us rather than "give to us your presence" as published. Obviously, the quality of the Irish/English translations still needs work.)

In any event, the first phrase is to announce to the subconscious and conscious minds of the human participants, and the second phrase is to announce to the Gods, that the ceremony is now starting. When loud instruments are available, a single blast of sound before the opening words are spoken helps, especially if there's a large congregation on hand. Right after the opening phrases are finished, the instruments can start up again with real music.

The Consecration of Space

Having begun the consecration of time, you need to immediately consecrate a bit of space. In a place that is normally used for religious activities, all you need to do is to walk into the temple or grove with a proper intent, and the sacred nature of the place will become activated. In a location that is normally mundane (or at least not normally viewed as sacred), you will need to mark the physical perimeter of the area you plan to use. This can be done loosely by processing around the area, or (if you are short on maneuvering room) by having everyone sit or stand in a circle (or other shape) and hold hands while singing a song about sacred space (such as "Circles", for example).

The physical perimeter of your ritual area can also be set up tightly by physically marking the edges of the area, followed by ritually consecrating those edges. The choice of a loose or tight boundary depends upon the type of magical/religious activity you intend to do. More specifically, it depends upon how critical it is that certain energies be kept in or out of the working area, either temporarily or permanently.

A number of people have been astonished that this Druid ceremony pays no attention whatever to the Wiccan tradition of "invoking the Four Quarters." In fact, although some folks have insisted on inserting Quarter invocations into it, and this doesn't actually hurt the energy flow, most of the time we don't bother. Here is why:

As near as I can figure, Quarter invocations probably weren't necessary for Paleopagan Druid ceremonies, since (a) everybody probably already knew which direction was which, so the orientation factor was covered, and (b) sacred groves were already sacred, so calling on spirits from the Four Quarters to "make" them sacred would have been redundant. I've seen little evidence that the Indo-Europeans paid much attention to the Four Quarters, and they certainly did not use the Judeo-Christian Cabalistic arrangement of four-elements-plus-one (Earth, Water, Air, Fire, plus Spirit). Instead they seem to have used three-worlds-plus-one (Land, Water, Sky, plus Fire). So rather than an equal armed cross with the fifth "element" of Spirit in the middle as their symbolic map of the cosmos, they would perhaps have used a triangle or a three legged spiral (triskalion) with Fire in the center. But then, for them Fire was the "fourth world" of Spirit.

There's also the fact that the "Guardians of the Quarters" or "Lords of the Watchtowers" in Neopagan polytheology are very vaguely defined. Every group, and often every member within such a group, who "invokes" (actually, invites) Them seems to have a different idea of who or what They are, and what (if anything) They are supposed to do upon arriving. Actually, the "Watchtowers" are another concept lifted by Gardner, I believe from the Masons, and those who aren't Masonic initiates can never be too sure of what they, or their Guardians, really are. For the rest of us, it's a matter of invoke a fuzzy spirit, you get a fuzzy answer!

Wiccan circles are an outgrowth of Goetic circles, but with the barriers meant to keep energy in, as well as to keep it out. They are very appropriate for private small group rituals, where intense magical work is going to be done by people expecting outside interference. On the other hand, Paleopagan Druid groves were, naturally, open to the air (though fenced on the ground), and were meant to attract energy, or at least the attention of spirits, ancestors and the Gods. There was no need to try and keep out energy, since no "demon" or other evil spirit would dare to invade a sacred grove. Did they have a need to keep energy in? I don't know. Keeping energy in may only be necessary for rituals involving the buildup to a single peak of power. My experience with the ADF ceremony is that the psychic/magical/spiritual energy can be successfully "breathed" in and out of the grove, throughout the entire ritual, without worrying about barriers at all. The pattern seems to turn into a vortex/whirlwind shape, with energies going up and down, in and out, simultaneously.

On a practical basis, having a loose "open" ritual area means that late-comers to the ceremony can join those already present, instead of having to wait outside and passively observe. This latter effect happened during an ADF Fall Equinox rite in Kansas City. A group of local Pagans arrived late, did not realize that a traditional closed Wiccan circle had not been cast, and so assumed that they had to watch from the sidelines, which they very quietly and respectfully did. I was so focused on the rite, and on my prayers to Taranis to hold off an impending thunderstorm, that I didn't even notice them standing there in the dark until the ceremony was nine-tenths over. Here was another situation where it would have been good to have someone whose job it was to bring latecomers into the group. (The rain started as we were heading back to the cars.) On a polytheological basis, this distinction between tightly defined, closed magical boundaries that should never be crossed during the ritual (the Goetic/Wiccan style), and loosely defined, open boundaries that can be crossed without mishap (the style used in ADF rites), is one of the major differences between an exclusionary psychic/magical/spiritual system and an inclusionary one. Either approach can be appropriate for different groups at different rimes, but it's important that a choice be made one way or the other on each occasion, since this is one case where compromises usually fail.

In terms of defining the sacred space on the ground, one processional pattern that we have done successfully works like that described in the script -- the forming of a giant Druid sigil shape: Q). Other patterns could be experimented with, such as a triangle (with banners of the Three Worlds at the corners), or an egg-shape (if you are working with the symbolism of a "cosmic egg"), etc. What would be important here is that everybody gets into motion, and that they all define on the ground a shape that has meaning to them. However, if you're going to use a noncircular shape, you should mark it out physically on the ground beforehand, and be sure to mention it in the pre-ritual briefing.

If this is a night Procession with torches, the torches should be put someplace safe at the end of it: either in the center bonfire, in a ring around the middle, or (if there are a lot of torches) in a ring far outside the edges of the congregation. Remember what was said in the preceding essays about the necessity of appointing a Fire Warden for supervision. His/her word should be final.

Although Processions get everybody moving in unison, and thus are the beginning of getting a groupmind together, they can also scatter the energy a bit, unless they've been well rehearsed, and the chants being done during them are simple and effective. For example, consider "We All Come from the Goddess" and "Hoof and Horn'. These popular Neopagan chants go to more-or-less the same tune (along with a dozen others), and can be alternated or interwoven in a wide variety of ways. Lines or couplets or entire verses can be passed back and forth between male and female voices, parts can be inserted between spoken phrases by the clergy or bards, etc. Here's the version we used at the 1986 P.S.G. ritual:

We all come from the Goddess
And to Her we have returned;
As our ancestors Worshipped Her
Air, land and sea.
Hoof and horn, hoof and horn,
All that dies shall be reborn.
Corn and grain, corn and grain,
All that falls shall rise again.

Those of you familiar with the Goddess chant will notice that the words have been changed somewhat. This was done (1) to avoid summoning rain, which the usual line about "like a drop of rain flowing to the ocean" usually does; (2) to emphasize that we have returned in our present lives, rather than "shall" return someday at our deaths; (3) to insert a punning reference to reincarnation ("As our ancestors") for those who believe in such; (4) to place a reference to the Three Worlds at the very beginning of the rite (a model that continues throughout); and (5) to put an "eee" sound at the end

of the chant, which would wrap around to the beginning "We" sound (thus making it a cyclical round instead of a linear poem). It's amazing how many polytheological implications you can get out of some very simple changes. (By the by, the original version of the chant began with "All things come from the Goddess", not the actual "We all come from the Goddess" that most folks are now familiar with.)

Many other songs and chants can be used for Processionals. I've used dozens over the years, and will share some of them with you in future issues. So don't fossilize the ones printed above (or in the rest of this essay). Instead, write your own, and send them in for the rest of us to enjoy.

As mentioned earlier in this essay, if you are working in a small indoor area, you may not have the room to process -- especially if you have chairs or pillows set up in a circle or horse-shoe (oriented on a fireplace) shape. In this situation, it's a good idea to sing some sort of song, or chant a chant, with words that focus on the concepts of ritual space. Gwen Zack Moore's classic "Circles" song is good for this, though we could use some new ones that are more polytheistic and less Generic Wicca. You could also use the "I Circle Around" Amerindian chant here, doing it nine times.

One way of settling down the energy at the end of the Consecration of Space is to do a simple plainchant, and this is the function of the "O Earth-Mother" chant published in the script. This chant goes back twenty rears to the old Reformed Druids of North America. The singing style is the Irish *sean os* ("old style"), with much ornamentation and abrupt stops. Other chants can and will be used, but this one (a) is Earth oriented, and therefore begins the grounding process, (b) has triads and references to sacred trees, and therefore sounds Druidic, and (c) has been used effectively in RDNA rites for twenty years. It works, and I'm nostalgically fond of it. For those of you who can't find your copy of DP#2, here it is again:

O Earth Mother!
We praise Thee:
  that seed springeth,
  that flower openeth,
  that grass waveth.
We praise Thee:
  for winds that whisper
  through the shining birch,
  through the lively pine,
  through the mighty oak.
We praise Thee, for all things,
O Earth Mother, who givest Life!

Naturally, other plainchants could be written for this section, and I encourage you to do so. The idea is to have something striking, yet dignified.

Centering, Grounding and Merging: The Tree Meditation

"Centering" is a term used in Neopagan ritual technique to refer to each person finding the center within him/herself. If you close your eyes and say to yourself, "Where am I in this body, anyway?", some of you will find your center behind your eyes, some of you in your heart area, some of you in your belly, or elsewhere. There is no right or wrong place to have your center in (at least not for the purposes of this ceremony) from a polytheological aspect. However, from a movement awareness aspect, you might be better off to move your center of awareness to the solar plexus region, tuck your pelvis under, and otherwise stand or sit in a fully relaxed manner, in order to open your body up for the maximum internal flow of psychic energy (comments from martial artists, yoga students or dancers on this would be appreciated).

"Grounding", on the other foot, is one of those quasi-technical terms that Neopagans commonly use for two very different ideas. The first one is that of making a physical and psychic connection to the ground, both as a source of physical and psychological stability, and as a spiritual source of energy (the Earth-Mother). The second way in which the term "grounding" is used is as an electromagnetic metaphor for draining off "excess" psychic energy into the ground (or occasionally into one's ceremonial tools). At this point in the ADF worship ceremony, it is the first sense that is primary.

The next step is to merge into a "groupmind." For those of you unfamiliar with this term, think of it as getting everyone present to be "on the same wavelength", experiencing the same emotions and seeing the same visual and mental images. This is usually done through individual centering and grounding, followed by a reminder to the congregation of what they have in common (ancestry, beliefs, relations to the divine, etc.), and some sort of meditation, song or other activity designed to promote a sense of unity and to begin the circulation of coordinated psychic energy by the group.

In the ADF rite, this is all accomplished by the "Tree Meditation." This can be done as a spoken guided meditation by one of the presiding clergy, as mentioned in the script, or can be sung or chanted by one of the bards. See Karl Steinmayer's zine in this issue for the text and music to an excellent sung version of it. The Tree Meditation was deliberately designed (a) to accomplish the centering, grounding, and unifying steps just mentioned; (5) to use dynamic organic images in keeping with a Pagan worldview, rattler than static inorganic ones, and (c) to use the overall image of a tree, and thus to induce a Druidic feeling into the participants early on in the rite.

Let's go through this part of the liturgy in detail, because this is the first really critical stage of the ritual. We begin with individual centering. Each person in the group, including the presiding clergy and the bards, focuses their attention on finding their personal center, as described above. This can be seen as finding your "seed" of individual power and awareness.

Then it's time to put down "roots." You can visualize and/or feel psychic roots growing out of the bottoms of your feet (those of you who know how to "drop a cord" from the bottom of your spine should do this as well). You ground yourself to the actual dirt/sand/rocks that you happen to be standing upon, feeling the connection between yourself and the planet. If you are indoors, extend your awareness through the floor and directly downwards as far as necessary, until you connect with the Earth. If you are several stories up in the air, you may need to link yourself to the building first, then feel its connections to the Earth. If you are in an airplane or space station, you may need to skip grounding entirely.....

Think about all those dead ancestors of yours, buried in the earth, as well as your predecessors (the folks who have done these sorts of ceremonies in the past, whether as clergy or congregation). Make the psychic link to them, feel yourself as a part of something very ancient. Then return your mind to the recent past, thinking calmly (like a tree would) about any important events that have occurred to you in the days or weeks previous. Contemplate the highs and lows with equal dispassion, and think briefly of the lessons each had for you. Then feel yourself absorbing nourishment from all these sources: the rock of the Earth-Mother and all Her holy biosphere, the rich psychic soil of your ancestors and predecessors, the spiritual compost of the lessons you have

recently learned. Feel this nourishment flowing into you like sap rising up a tree.

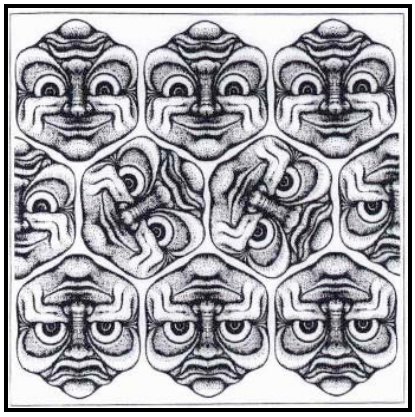
As this sap rises up your legs and into your trunk(!), lift your arms as if they were branches. Feel your entire being glowing and growing, visualize branches sprouting out from you in all directions, reaching out to the limits of your aura. Feel the breeze blowing through your branches, let your! mind become very clear and settled (your leaves will rustle in the wind, but your center should remain calm).

You are now in touch with all Three Worlds: the Land beneath your roots, the Water running through your trunk, the Sky caressing your branches. Now let your leaves begin to absorb the Fiery light from above (whether sun, moon or stars) and the hidden Fire within the Earth below. This Fire will circulate throughout your entire being, making your body, mind and soul glow with its creative power. You have become a human tree.

So now is the time to create the grove, by extending your roots and branches until they meet and intermingle with those of the others participating in the ceremony. Realize(!) that you are all rooted in the same Land, drinking the same Water, beneath the same Sky, and receiving the same Fire. With that realization, feel yourself becoming one with the others, merging into a single being -- the grove, something that is far more than the sum of its parts.

Now is the time in most religions where an affirmation of group beliefs would be done. With Neopagans, however, creedal statements are difficult to write in a way that genuinely includes everyone. Small groups should experiment with trying to write such statements for themselves, but for most of us (especially with large-sized ceremonies), songs work far better than prose, and have the additional advantage of beginning an almost automatic circulation of energy around the grove. Such songs should have easy melodies and memorable choruses, so that literally everyone can join in, and be serious rather than humorous. If you can come up with polytheistic (rather than duo-) themes and Druidic images, so much the better. But for pacing purposes, you'll want to keep it down to three or four verses plus choruses.

Speaking of pacing, the entire Tree Meditation section should take five to ten minutes, depending upon the time necessary for the slower members of the group to trance out. It won't hurt for the more experienced ones to spend extra time being trees, but the less experienced folks need to be brought thoroughly into the groupmind. Yet spending more than ten minutes may (with some groups) offend and/or start to bore the majority of the congregation.



Specification of the Ritual Focus and Deities

Once the groupmind has been created, it is reminded of the deity or deities that it is supposed to be concentrating on for that occasion, what the purpose of that occasion's ritual actually is, and of why the deities chosen are appropriate. This gives everyone the intellectual, artistic and spiritual themes they need to be concentrating upon. Unfortunately, with a small group, this part is easy to forget, since "everybody already knows" all this. Rut all you need is one newcomer or unexpected guest who doesn't already know, and he or she can generate a lot of confusion. So try not to forget this vital internal reminder.

Second Phase: Opening the Gates & Preliminary Power Raising

Invoking the Gate Keeper

Having gotten the groupmind ready, it's necessary to next "tune" the groupmind's psychic powers to whatever "wavelength" the ancestors, spirits, and/or Gods will be communicating on. This is often symbolized in Pagan ceremonies as "Opening the Gates Between the Worlds", and is usually accomplished by invoking (although that may not be quite the correct term here) a particular deity who is considered a "Gate Keeper", and Who is the easiest of all deities to contact, since He/She is always halfway into this world already. The Gate Keeper is then requested to open the Gates, which She/He will usually do with little fuss. This deity was Ogma in the published version of the script, but we have also experimented with Manannon, based on suggestions from various members that the latter might be more appropriate.

(Another linguistic note: Molann muid thu mar gheall ar do chumhacht should really be translated as "We praise you for the brightness of your power".) Brightness/light/fire were considered primary attributes of divinity among the Indo-Europeans.)

The prayer of invocation is followed by a chant. So far, we've used two versions each of two different chants, in varying ways. The tunes for both chants are traditional Irish. The first one goes like this:

Siuil linn a Oghma...
("shool-leen ah oh...mah")
...Walk with us Ogma.
Siuil linn a Mhanannon...
("shool-leen ah wah-na-non")
...Walk with us Manannon.

The pattern is sung either three or nine times. It's also been used successfully as a Processional chant. The second chant goes like this:

We invoke thee Ogma,
Opener of every Gate. (repeat)
You shall reach us,
You shall teach us,
and reveal our fate! (repeat)

The three-syllable name "Manannon" can be substituted for the words "thee Ogma" in the first line. Each line is done twice, and the whole pattern is sung either three or nine times. (This habit of repeating things in threes and nines not only fits aesthetically with the Indo-European patterns, but also makes

it easier for people to know when to when to stop, something that script writers frequently forget about.)

When the Gates are Opened, exactly where are they? Generally, I've noticed that they seem to manifest in the center of the circle, over the fire or altar, and anywhere from six to ten feet up. Different groups will visualize and perceive them differently, and this is something that should be discussed during your planning sessions.

One way to remind people of this (at least if you're outdoors or in a large area), and to focus their psychic energy towards the task of invoking the Gate Keeper, is to do some sort of choreography involving physical movement by a few clergy or bards (or even banner holders) circling around the Gates' intended location during the chanting. These Gates function as the ritual Center of the grove, regardless of their space-time coordinates. I'll have more on this later, but in the meantime I can't recommend too highly Mircea Eliade's writings on the mystical/magical importance of the Center.

Invoking the Matron/Patron of Bards

Although it is not mentioned in the script published in DP#2, this is now followed immediately by an invocation of a deity in charge of bards, since bardic activity is our primary means of raising and tuning power. This deity should be of the opposite gender from the Gate Keeper, in order to maintain balance in the ceremony. So far, this has usually been Bridget in the ADF rites. This invocation (which deserves the term fully, since we are attempting to pull Her energies into ourselves) will begin the first trickle of energy from the Other Side, which is used to inspire the bards and the congregation to generate more energy. Here's the song, called "A Hymn to Bridget", that I've been using for the last couple of years (the transliteration is on the right):

A Bhrid, ar goroi, an-gheal Bheanrion;	(ah vree, ar gree, ahn-yawl von-reen)
Lo de thoil e beannachta sinn.	(low da dolly bah-nacht-tah sheen)
Is sinn bhur leanai, is tu ar mamai	(iss sheen vur lanni, iss too ar mom-wee)
Bi ag isteacht duinn mar sin.	(be ah gay-stot dween mar shin)
Is tu an coire, anois inar doire;	(iss too ahn hweer-ah, ah-neesh in-ar deer-ah)
A Bhean-domhan tinfim orainn.	(ah van-dowan tin-feem or-rin)
A thine ghra, a thine bheatha;	(ah hinna hrah, a hinna byah)
Lo de thoil e ag teacht Bhrid duinn!	(low da doily ah tockt vree dween)

O Bridget, our heart,
O brightest Queen;
Cast your blessings unto us.
We are your children,
You are our mother;
So hearken unto us.
You are the cauldron, now in our grove;
Earth-Mother inspire us.
O fire of love, O fire of life;
Please Bridget, come to us!
A Bhrid, ar goroi, an-gheal Bheanrion....

Obviously, this is used to invoke Bridget as the Matron Goddess of Bards. The words are by myself and Shenain Bell, and the music is Irish traditional ("Roving Galway Boy"). Currently the first verse is repeated after the English verse. The English translation-verse needs work, and it would be nice to have several more verses in Irish or English.

We've also used a chant called "Lady Lift Us Up", which has a jazzy sort of tune, and which (when done nine times) does a very good of exalting the participants. It goes like this:

Lady ... lift us up.
Up ... where ... we belong.
Lady lift us up where we belong!
And higher and higher!

The Triad Invocations

In the ADF rites, the next step is the "Triad Invocations", which are designed to invoke entities associated with each of the Three Worlds. Each invocation, consecration, and passing of (or asperging with) the Waters of Life brings more power to the groupmind and makes the subsequent invocations more powerful. In effect, since we are tapping into a very sleepy and distant part of the collective unconscious, we are "lifting ourselves by our own bootstraps" through a back and forth exchange of energy through the Gates. Other religions accomplish the same effects in different ways. All of them spend time and effort to get the groupmind (a) generating lots of energy and (b) focused on the needs of the occasion.

If you have set up three altars around your site, you can do one of these invocations at each of them. The first at the Land altar, the second at the Water altar, the third at the Sky altar. Naturally, the fourth and final invocation (see Phase Four) would be done at the central altar.

I have recently come to the conclusion that the nature spirits should be invoked first, and the ancestors/predecessors second, even though this is the opposite of the way the published script has them. Originally I associated the ancestors with the World or the Land because of the common Indo-European tradition that the dead lived beneath the ground, in a mirror universe, where they walked "upside-down" to our perspective. The justification for associating the spirits with the World of the Waters was not quite so clear. The Waters are often seen as the Gateway to the Other Side, where the spirits exist, but the Gods and the ancestors exist there too.

Eventually it occurred to me that the nature spirits are, first and foremost, the spirits of the Land, and that their primary impact is on the producer caste -- the hunters and the farmers (fishers, on the other fin...). To keep the tripartite Indo European motif throughout the ritual, the first of the Triad Invocations should be of those entities who affect fertility, and the second be for those associated with death, such as dead people. There may even be occasions when warrior spirits may be appropriate to Invoke then instead of, or in addition to the ancestors/predecessors. (I'm not sure that I really understand the connections between war/death and the World of the Waters.)

However, I think that the most important principle here is to have the liturgy maintain the sequence of (1) fertility, (2) mortality, (3) divinity, and (4) transcendence.

So we now begin with invoking the nature spirits, both those of the ancient times and those in the locality where the ritual is taking place. The spirits being invoked here are those of the trees and the grasses, of the deer and foxes, the birds and the fishes. Even if you now live in the middle of a large city, you can make the psychic/spiritual link to the continent-wide forests that once covered Europe, as well as the woods, prairies

and swamps that once covered North America. This is the part of the ritual where you may want to think of Native American nature spirits who were once worshipped in your area.

In this part of the ceremony we are asking them to give us the comfort, knowledge and blessings that we will need to accomplish our goals for the rest of the ceremony, as well as in our private lives and group activities to come. The purpose of the consecration is to make the Waters a bridge between them and ourselves, so that as we partake (through drinking or asperging) each of us has a clearer and stronger connection to them -- one that will last long after the ceremony has ended.

As mentioned in the rubrics, the energy flow during the invocation is directed from the center of the grove downwards and outwards, in a radiating cone. In the moments after the words are finished, the nature spirits reply by reversing the energy flow into the grove and thence into the Waters (thus consecrating them). The clairvoyantly inclined will "see" an arc of energy going from the center into the containers of Waters. Even after the Waters begin to be passed around, the energy flow continues to climb up the cone into the center. As the Waters go around the grove, the arc of energy from the center will touch each person. Eventually, everyone present will have a direct psychic link to the nature spirits through the center.

In order to keep everyone focused during the passing of the Waters, it's important to have some sort of chant or song, preferably one that reflects the flavor of energy being absorbed. Here's one (written by Sable) that we've used very successfully (it should be done at least nine times, and continued until everyone has partaken):

Fur and feather and scale and skin,
  Different without but the same within.
Many of body but one of soul,
  Through all creatures are the Gods made whole.

Next comes the invocation of our ancestors and predecessors. The vast majority of folks interested in Druidism have at least some European ancestry; even those who haven't feel a strong psychic and/or psychological link to the Ancient Druids/Godis/Flamans, etc. Here the energy flow is directed from the center outwards into the world around us, psychically connecting us to the ever-present spirits of those who have gone before. This energy pattern may be perceived as a horizontal disc floating around the center, or as the space between two shallow cones radiating from the center. (Stand with your arms pointing out horizontally from your shoulders. Lift them 15 degrees and slowly turn around in a full circle. Drop them to 15 degrees below horizontal, and turn around again. The area between your upper and lover arm positions is the sort of shape I'm talking about.)

As with the preceding invocation, the return response of energy comes from the center and arcs towards the containers of Waters, from whence it passes around the grove as the members partake. These energies are added to those of the nature spirits, which continue to radiate into the grove.

Here's a chant that we've used for this passing of the Waters. It should be done at least nine times, and continued until everyone has partaken.

It's the blood of the Ancients
  That runs through our veins.
And the forms change,
  But the Circle of Life remains.

The last of the Triad Invocations is of the Gods "in general". Most congregations will probably have a particular pantheon of divinities that they feel closest to, such as the Celtic Gods, the Norse, the Slavic, the Greek, etc. Or a given ceremony may be focused around a particular ethnic group, so its divinities would thus be the appropriate ones. In any event, the purpose of this invocation is to open ourselves to the powers of the Gods as 12 collectivity. The power flow from each divinity will not be as strong as the energy to be received later from the specific God and Goddess of the occasion, but neither will it be as tightly focused. Thus if a weather working is to be done later, with a weather God and Goddess as the ones for the occasion, a person who needs healing or prosperity may receive at this point of the rite some appropriate strengthening from a healing Goddess or God of wealth. Everyone in the grove will, at the very least, find themselves exalted spiritually to the point where they will find it easier to absorb the powers of the specific God and Goddess to be invoked later at the high point of the ceremony.

The geometric pattern of the energy flow for this third invocation is the opposite of the first one -- a cone of energy going from the center and radiating upwards, then reversing its direction as the Waters become consecrated. Again, an arc of energy will come from the center into the containers of Waters, and follow it around the grove as each person partakes.

Naturally, another chant or song is need for the third passing of the Waters. Here is one that we've used in the past (as before, nine repetitions minimum are recommended):

Mother I Feel You, under my feet.
Mother I hear Your heart beat! (repeat)
Father I see You where the eagle flies.
Spirit gonna take me higher & higher! (repeat)

This is OK, since it tends to establish the symbolic link between the earth and sky, but does have the drawback of being focused on only two divinities. Another, more polytheistic one we've used is my own "Will Ye Now Come Back Again?" song, which has a simple chorus for people to join in on and a tune almost all Celtophiles will recognize instantly ("Bonnie Charlie's Now Awa'").

By the time the Waters have gone around the grove three times, the participants will not only be thoroughly charged up with psychic/magical/spiritual power from each of the Three Worlds, their groupmind will be a thousand times stronger than it was at the beginning (if each of the Triad Invocations strengthens it by a factor of ten...). Those drinking even tiny sips of whiskey or mead will be loosened up, but probably not drunk (and for some reason hangovers are very rare from these rites!). The total energy pattern for the grove will be one of energy flowing in and out of the grove, from below, around and above. The center of the grove, being the intersection point, should be glowing so brightly at this point that even folks who aren't normally clairvoyant may be able to "see" it. The Gates Between the Worlds will be wide open and waiting...

Third Phase: The Major Sending of Power to the Deities of the Occasion

This is the stage at which most ceremonies will have some form or another of "sacrifice". There's no room here to go into a general theory of sacrifice, so suffice it to say that the purpose of a sacrifice is to "feed" the Gods with as much psychic energy as possible, in order to trigger a return response of divine power. Anything that will generate psychic energy can be (and has been, throughout history) used for this purpose. This includes chanting, singing, dancing, drama, storytelling, sex, drugs, the slaughter of animals, etc. The overwhelming majority of Paleopagan religions, including the predecessors of the Judeo-Christian-Islamic traditions, have

practiced human, animal and/or plant sacrifices, because any living thing will release psychic energy when killed.

However, blood sacrifices are messy, difficult for modern folks to do (unless they were raised on a farm) without excess pain to the animal, and are generally unnecessary. Additionally, most Neopagans (especially the vegetarians and animal rights activists) consider them morally repugnant (and far too reminiscent of Satanism), so including a blood sacrifice in a modern ceremony is far more likely to offend your congregation than it is to uplift them.

I can currently foresee only two circumstances under which I would consider a blood sacrifice to be acceptable in connection with any ADF ceremony: (1) when the presiding clergyperson has decided that a genuine emergency exists, of a life and death nature, that requires the degree of intensity that blood provokes, and is willing to cut him or herself to provide it, or (2) when a young women has decided to release her virginity as part of a coming-of-age ritual -- something that is most likely to be a dyadic rite with no other witnesses anyway. In both of these rare situations, the informed and uncoerced consent of the person loosing blood is required, and not enough should be shed to endanger their health. Sacrificing any animal (or human!!!) in any Neopagan Druid ceremony is absolutely forbidden. After all, that's one of the reasons why we're Neopagan instead of Paleo-.

Depending on the season, people may bring fresh cut flowers or recently harvested fruits and vegetables to be used as sacrifices, but most of the time our rituals, like those of the Reformed Druids before us, use small branches cut from trees. These do not contain enough psychic energy to be very effective sacrifices by themselves, but they make an excellent Focus of attention for sending the energies raised by singing, music and other artistic offerings by the congregation. These energies constitute the real sacrifice in our ceremonies.

This procedure begins when the presiding clergyperson says something on the order of, "Has anyone brought praise for the Lady and Lord of this feast?" or "Now let us praise the Lady and Lord of this feast!" The first cue is most appropriate with a small group, all or most of whom are planning to offer Praise. The second cue is better with medium sized or larger groups, where particular people have been selected ahead of time and a performance order decided upon.

Praise Offerings most often consist of songs and poems, preferably original, designed to have the maximum emotional impact. We have also had ritual drama performances and storytellings, as well as ritual dances.

Dances done as performances are usually not as effective by themselves as those done with the participation of most or all of the other people present. However, a badly done group dance is much worse than no dance at all, so if a proposed participatory dance has not been thoroughly rehearsed by all parties concerned, you are best off to have your grove's dancer(s) do it as a performance piece between two other carefully chosen verbal/audio pieces. Even better, you can have them do it at the same time that a song or chant is being done. Either method will prevent the damage that a poorly done group dance can do to your ceremony's focus and pacing, while still allowing for group participation.

Pacing is absolutely critical here, because this is the main "power raising" for your ceremony. The folks who plan to offer Praise should show their material to everyone during rehearsals, or at least to the presiding clergy beforehand, so that the best possible performance order be worked out ahead of time. Then people can be called upon to offer their Praises in such an order as to generate the greatest possible amount of energy.

You can, of course, just pick a person to begin, and go around the grove deosil, hoping that the energy will grow and that the last person will be terrific. With small groups where everyone is offering something, this approach is fairly common. But as far as results are concerned, it's very unpredictable, and of ten the last Praise Offering is not as good as an earlier one was.

With this sort of a situation, or if some outside event has disrupted the steady buildup of emotional power, the presiding clergyperson may want to end this section by calling upon the best bard present to do a specific piece that she/he is known to be good at. Clear this with her/him beforehand, and make sure that they know what pieces they may be asked to do, so they won't spend precious time retuning their instrument, or trying to remember words they haven't sung recently. If the presiding clergyperson is a bard him/herself, then he/she can make this decision instantly, knowing (we hope) their own strengths and weaknesses, and perhaps doing the final Praise Offering him/herself..

Another option you have hear is to have ready a simple, powerful, and well-rehearsed chant to use as the final Praise Offering. Start it out softly, then gradually build up the volume and speed of both the voices and the music (especially drums). Decide on a cue (such as raising their arms high) for the presiding clergy to use to indicate that the last verse is coming up. This part gets tricky. You can't just stop the music abruptly at the end, since folks are likely to start yelling and screaming (especially at a large festival rite), and your carefully woven web of energies will go splattering in all directions. If the musicians and chant facilitators drop their volume on cue and slow down for the final verse (which they should), with no visible signal to the rest of the grove, then the other participants may not notice, but instead continue to increase the volume and the speed of their chanting until it all falls apart.

Try this: When the cue is given, have your chant facilitators step three paces towards the center, turn around with their arms held high, and gradually lover their arms as they lover and slow their voices (and the musicians lower and slow their music). The presiding clergyperson can be doing the same gesture near the main altar, slowly rotating in her/his place. The chant will end with everyone slowly whispering it, then stopping simultaneously. The chant facilitators can then return to their previous positions, and the energies in the grove will be at a strong and steady peak. (This technique will work even better if it's been used a few times earlier in the rite, or at previous ceremonies.)

It's important to remember that the primary purpose of all these Praise Offerings is to raise as much psychic/magical/spiritual power as possible, all of it focused around the deities of the occasion -- not to boost the egos of the performers (that can be a secondary or tertiary purpose). By the time the last Praise Offering is done, the grove should be charged up with as much energy as it is capable of generating.

The Prayer of Sacrifice

It is at this moment of supreme tension that the presiding clergyperson lifts up the sacrificial branch (and perhaps one of the flowers or fruits, etc.) towards the Center. She/he then touches the branch with a sickle or other blade (to symbolize death, mortality, harvesting, etc.), and intones the Sacrificial prayer. The one in the previously published script is a variation

on the Reformed Druid version, but the concepts involved are universal ones. With this prayer/incantation. she/he sends the power in the grove through the Gates Between the Worlds to the God and Goddess of the occasion. All present should feel their energies going through the branch and out the Other Side. After a moment of silence, the clergyperson puts the branch back on the altar.

The Seeing of the Omen

Now he/she asks the deities of the occasion if they have accepted the Sacrifice. The reply from Them may be through a sudden wind, bird calls or flights, the fire leaping up, etc. If possible, you should have a grove diviner present to read these auguries, or to cast the runes, or to otherwise do some on-the-spot divination. She or he should announce the results clearly, in such a fashion as to make it clear that this is a legitimate divinatory process (for example, by calling out the runes that appeared, naming the omen observed, etc.). If the Omen is positive, the ceremony continues in the usual fashion. If not, further Praise Offerings are necessary, in which case the clergyperson or bard should lead another song or chant. Then repeat the Sacrificial prayer and the divination.

If the results are still negative, try one more time. Make more Praise Offerings, repeat the Sacrifice, seek for the omen. A third answer of "No" indicates that the deities of the occasion, for Their own reasons, are not inclined to assist the grove in achieving the ceremony's goal. So this should be announced, the members of the grove should be advised to meditate upon these events, and the fourth phase of the ritual skipped. Instead, jump directly to the fifth phase of winding down the ritual.

But most of the time the Sacrifice will be accepted and the branch can be cast into the fire, alone with the aspergillums. Some folks object to the symbolism of burning flowers, so you may want to dispose of any sacrificed (and decorative) flowers in running water after the ritual is over. Fruits and veggies can be kept where they are, and consecrated (or just blessed) along with the Waters (see next section), then consumed as part of a ceremonial feast.

[Note: Current ADF Liturgy, as of 1997, uses one round of praise offerings.]

Once your Sacrifice has been accepted, it's time to precede to the.....

Figure 1 Journeying to the Sidhe.

Fourth Phase: Receiving and Using the Returned Power

Preparation for the Return

This is what the whole process of a worship ritual is leading up to, so it's important that everyone be ready to receive and handle the divine power that is about to be returned to them through the Gates. This has (naturally) three steps: meditation upon personal needs, a repetition of the group's needs, and the induction of a state of receptivity.

The first step is relatively simple, since the presiding clergyperson will ask everyone present to meditate upon what they need from the Goddess and God of the occasion. In a primarily theurgical ceremony, this process will take somewhat longer than in a mostly thaumaturgical one, since receiving these blessings will be the main point (the goal) of the entire liturgy. So folks should be given a few minutes to think quietly, with no outside sounds other than those provided by Nature, or perhaps some serene harp or flute music.

In a predominately thaumaturgic ritual, the second step becomes more important than the first. It's here that the participants are reminded of the group's goal(s) and target(s), and of the need for unity to achieve them.

The third step is a matter of getting the participants into a state of maximum openness and receptivity, by reminding them of what is about to happen and why. This encourages them to drop whatever remaining psychic shields or psychological blocks they may have between themselves and the deities. This third step is meant to be accomplished by the old RDNA "Catechism of the Waters", which was put into the script more for reasons of nostalgia, than because it's really effective.

It should be possible to write a quiet, powerful song to accomplish all three steps, with verses to add or subtract to change the pacing and focus. This would probably work best in a verse-plus-chorus or litany format being led by one or two singers, and including long pauses for meditation.

So now we come to the fourth and final consecration of the ceremony. Just as the first three represented the Three Worlds of Land, Water and Sky, this one represents the Fourth World -- Fire. As the presiding clergyperson lifts the two main cups towards the Center, she/he enchants the words that ask the Goddess and God of the occasion to bless the liquids within them (and the other containers to be passed), to make them truly the Waters-of-Life.

As before, an arc of energy will leap from the Center/Gates and into each cup (or other container) being consecrated. The power will be stronger and clearer than before, and may appear as twin area of differently "colored" energies. As each participant sips from the Waters of her/his choice (this is the consecration where asperging is not normally an adequate substitute for drinking), and does the breathing exercise mentioned in the script, the God and Goddess will fill her/him with the maximum amount of power that she/he is capable of handling safely.

Thus each individual and the group as a whole receive what they need in the way of "healing, blessing, power, and inspiration". Bonding within the group as a whole will be reinforced, something that will last beyond the ceremony, whether it's bonding with the community at large, or with the

members of one's local grove. Some people will have visions or be healed of ailments, others will be filled with a holy joy or suddenly recognize a psychic link to a deity they never really knew before. The changes may be simple or complex, subtle or obvious. Every participant will have a unique experience, as well as sharing those of everyone else. "Communion" with the Goddess and the God, as well as with each other, will be achieved.

We've used the following chant (given us at PSG 86 by Nicholas Sea) successfully for the final passing of the Waters. It should be done softly, a minimum of three times. Generally it's continued until all have partaken.

Burn bright, flame within me,
Kindled of eternal fire.
Of the people I do be,
And the people part of me.
All one in many parts,
A single fire of flaming hearts!

Larry Cornet has collected this chant in a slightly different form, with the second line being "Kindle love's eternal fire." This has different polytheological implications, and folks may want to discuss which seems more appropriate at this point of the ceremony.

If food has been offered up as part of the sacrifice, the presiding clergy may choose to consecrate all or part of it along with the Waters. However, unless the food is bite sized and ready to eat, it may not be a good idea to pass it around with the Waters, since the distribution and consumption of food can easily destroy both concentration and pacing. Often it's better to do a lesser blessing (rather than a full consecration) on the food, and to consume it afterwards as part of a feast.

Optional Activity:
Spell Casting or Rite of Passage

Now is when the participants will be able to perform the most powerful spell castings and/or rites of passage. There's no room here to go into either category in detail, and the high points have mostly been covered in the preceding essays. I will, however, mention one bit of magical "tech" here: the use of the Center for casting spells, instead of the "cone of power" method.

The idea of "raising a cone of power" is that the participants are supposed to create, usually by dancing and chanting, a large, cone-shaped field of psychic energy. At a peak of energy buildup, the cone is supposed to "fire" a blast or energy towards the target, carrying the power and information content of the spell. Nice theory. Unfortunately, most of the time it doesn't work very well.

Leave aside the rude comments I've previously made about Neopagan ceremonial dancing, and the fact that most Neopagans don't physically mark the edges of their circle, and thus have no clear idea of where the base of the cone is supposed to be. Ignore the fact that no two cone raisers ever seem to agree about the size, shape (sharp or squat?), color, dimensionality (solid or hollow?), etc. of their cone. These are all symptoms of lack of planning and training in the community, and can eventually be overcome. We can even ignore the fact that the imagery is completely male. Let's look Instead at a different cluster of factors, ones of physics and metaphysics.

When you fire off a spell in a straight line towards a distant target, you are essentially broadcasting a message. And like any other message broadcast, through normal space and time, a spell is subject to deterioration of (a) its power level, (b) its directional vectors, and (c) its information content.

The further away your target is, the more power will be used up simply in getting there. So when it does arrive, it won't be strong enough to do much. If your target moves, or you didn't really know where it was in the first place, or some other energy field deflects your "beam", your spell will wind up missing the target completely. And if the distance is great, the sheer psychic static of our biosphere (let alone deliberate efforts by others) can disrupt the psychic structure of your spell, causing it to lose all or most of its information content, or to suffer major changes in meaning. Thus, even if it arrives "on target" with lots of power, it may well wind up doing little or nothing that you wanted done.

How do you get around the problem of a spell deteriorating when it goes through normal space and time? You just go "around" normal space and time completely, by using the Center of your working area as a "shortcut". You see, every ritual Center is connected to every other ritual Center, since in one sense they are all the "same": each is the Center of the Multiverse. SO if you have previously created a sacred space around the target of your spell, or if you create one symbolically ("by remote control") at this point of the ceremony, you can establish (recognize, actually) a magical/psychic/spiritual connection between the ritual Centers of both places.

A spell that you cast into the Center of your grove will arrive instantly at the Center of the other location, without going through time or space as we know it. It will pop out of that other Center with full power and information content (directional vectors become irrelevant). It won't matter if your target is ten miles or ten thousand miles away (note to my great-great-grandchildren: or ten light years away).

I first discovered this technique by accident over fifteen years ago, when I was living in Berkeley and heard on the radio that the Canadian nesting grounds of the whooping cranes were about to be engulfed by a major forest fire. I had already noticed a 500 mile limit in my previous spell castings, and the distance involved was a couple of thousand miles, but I figured I had to do something. So I got out a map of Canada and drew a circle centered on the nesting grounds, then invoked Thor and did a rain spell. The circled map was in the middle of my altar, which was in the Center of my working area. I cast the spell into the map and hoped for the best. Much to my surprise and delight, a few hours later I heard on the news that a sudden rainstorm had "come out of nowhere" and stopped the forest fire a mile away from the nesting grounds.

For years I thought it was the use of a mandala/pentacle that had been the key, but eventually I figured out that the critical steps had been defining two ritual Centers and then merging them. So now I hardly ever do "cone raisings" if I want to affect a distant target, and I highly recommend this "Center-to-Center" technique as a replacement. And now, back to our ceremonial step-through, which is still in progress...

Remember when you do spell castings or rites of passage at this stage of the liturgy, that you'll have no need to generate more power, since everyone will already have as much Gods-given power in them as they can handle. Instead, use chants, talismans, and gestures (mantras, mandalas, and mudras) as devices to focus your visualization and timing. That way, everyone can release their divinely enhanced power into the Center at the same instant, towards a uniformly visualized target, with a unified intent, to achieve the agreed upon goal.

Now obviously with most rites of passage, or specific healings/blessings on people present in the grove, you are not going to be sending energies outside the boundaries of your current sacred space, but rather into the bodies/auras of folks right there. The ritual-within-the-ritual of child blessing, ordination, coming of age, healing, etc., should give everyone all the information they need to send or receive the energies. We'll talk more about this in future issues of DP. For now, let's go on to the...

Fifth Phase: Unwinding and Ending the Ceremony

Affirmation of Success: Following Through

Those of you who are familiar with golf, tennis, bowling, baseball, croquet or any other sport that involves casting or striking a small object away from you, will know about the importance of "follow thru". You don't just stop moving abruptly the instant the ball is struck or thrown, you continue the bodily motions you were engaged in at that instant. This insures that your motions will be smooth and continuous, rather than abrupt and jerky, and thus improves the accuracy of your casting/striking.

Oddly enough, this can be a very useful metaphor for casting a spell instead of an object. This is true even for purely theurgical workings in which you are, In essence, casting a spell upon yourself. The way you do a "follow-thru" in a ritual is by proclaiming that the blessings have been received, the spell is already working, Etc. This "affirmation of success" alerts your subconscious to stop receiving and/or sending energies. Just as importantly, it tells your subconscious to let goof the target(s) psychically. Without this letting go, your subconscious is likely to continue "worrying at" the target(s), which usually has the effect of draining away the energies sent, often ruining the results. So you need to have your conscious mind say to your subconscious mind (and any spirits who might be listening?), "Hey! It worked!"

In the script this affirmation of success is represented by the phrases, "the Lady and the Lord (of the occasion) have blessed us" and "Every time we invoke Them, They become stronger and more alert to the needs of Their people." That's because the primary goal of this liturgy has usually been to strengthen and awaken the Old Gods, and the secondary goal has been to obtain blessings for the participants. The affirmation is interwoven (incorrectly) with the silent contemplation and the "Let us return to the realm of mortals" cues necessary for the Recovery process (see next section).

Recovery

After the follow through, it's necessary to bring people back in touch with the Earth plane level of reality, regardless of whether you have done a spell casting or rite of passage or neither. Otherwise folks will drift in their altered states indefinitely, and the energies absorbed and/or channeled will not be properly "digested". So at this point the presiding clergy should remind the participants to refocus their attention through the Three Worlds: thinking about what they've been doing, feeling the emotions that have been generated as a result, and sensing their physical connections to the "realm of mortals" again. This recovery process will continue through the rest of the ceremony, gradually returning everyone to their "normal" slates of being (through we hope in an improved condition).

Thanking of Entities Invoked

This portion of the ceremony accomplishes three tasks: (a) it shows courtesy to the entities invoked and invited, (b) it further affirms the ceremony's success, and (c) it lets the Gods and the lesser entities, not to mention the people, know that you are winding things down and that They can leave if They wish. As a general rule, you do not "dismiss" Goddesses and Gods. If nothing else, it's rude.

Yes I know that some ancient Egyptian magicians were in the habit of bossing their deities around, as are some modern followers of Voodoo/Hoodoo. But I've always considered these to be corruptions from the earlier states of these religions, something that happens when the magicians involved no longer believe in the Gods as Gods.

In the fully developed Afro-American religions unlike Hoodoo and Voodoo (which have lost most of their religious character and become mostly grab-bags of magical techniques), the initiated clergy will sometimes have to urge a possessing deity to leave Her/His "horse" (the human being possessed). However, I believe that they do this through reminding the deity of the contractual agreements made at the time of the clergyperson's initiation. It's done with love, courtesy, and respect -- not with the typical arrogance of the Goetic magician (the source of Wiccan style "dismissals"). In general, I tend to think that the current Neopagan phrase of "Go if You must, stay if You will," reflects a much more appropriate attitude.

The entities are thanked in the reverse order of their invocation or invitation: first the God and Goddess of the occasion, then the deities as a group, the ancestors and predecessors, the Nature Spirits, the Matron/Patron of bards, and the Gatekeeper (even though it's not in the script). When the Gatekeeper has been thanked, this effectively closes the Gates, but it's still a good idea to overtly ask Him/Her to close them. That way, folks will know that they should stop having an "open line" to the Other Side.

Reversing the Tree Meditation

In keeping with the unwinding process, it's now necessary to go through four steps: (1) to "unmerge" the groupmind, though some psychic links will remain in potential; (2) to drain off any excess psychic/magical/spiritual energies that might be remaining; (3) to return the participants to a more mundane consciousness; and (4) to recenter each of them within themselves as unique individuals. In this liturgy, you accomplish all this by doing a reprise of the Tree

Meditation, which should be done by the person who led it at the beginning of the ceremony, in a similar delivery style.

Step 1 - Everyone is told to pull back their psychic branches and roots from being interwoven with each other's, and to become individual trees again.

Step 2 - Folks are instructed to release any remaining excess energy that they might have and which they don't need. They can send the excess through their roots into the ground (the other sense of "grounding" mentioned earlier), or else into the ceremonial vestments or tools they may be wearing.

Step 3 - All are guided in pulling back their roots and branches and "becoming humans" once more.

Step 4 - Everyone is told to refocus their attention on their personal centers.

The Libation

At this point, you should pour any remaining Waters onto the ground or into the fire. The traditional RDNA prayer is a nice one for this: "To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee." (If you like, you can consider the fire to be masculine and say, "O our Father" instead.) If there is going to be a ceremonial feast afterwards, you may want to save a little of the consecrated Waters to mix Into the punch bowl or ale cask, but you should not casually pass cups of consecrated Waters around, in order "not to waste" them. It's not wasting the Waters to return them to the Earth or the Fire, it's a sign of love, respect, gratitude, and courtesy, just as the various thankings are. Furthermore, it's a clear indication that you're not greedy, that you know when to stop taking and start giving.

Just as every ritual needs a clear-cut beginning, it also needs an equally definite ending. Your ritual space will need to be deconsecrated, unless you are lucky enough to have a temple building or sacred grove which you expect to be able to remain holy. Usually, however, deconsecration is necessary (a) to prevent outsiders from wandering through a still "charged" area and accidentally connecting up with the psychic links of the folks who have been worshipping there; (b) to prevent your people from worrying about fundamentalists or other hostile intruders committing sacrilegious acts there; and (c) to announce to the subconscious minds of the participants that they are "back" in the "real world" again.

You also need an overt cue to each person's subconscious that it's no longer "magic time". So announce that "this ceremony is over" verbally, then follow it up with snuffing out the candles, ringing a bell, or playing a special piece of music.

A good way to combine all this is through a Recessional (balancing out the Processional at the beginning). Make your announcement, then have everyone leave the area (thus destroying the temporary definition you had of sacred space by crossing its boundaries physically), while singing an appropriate song. Here's the Recessional hymn that we've been using since Summer Solstice of 1986:

Walk with wisdom,
  from this hallowed place.
Walk not in sorrow,
  our roots shall e'er embrace.
May strength by your brother,
  and honor be you friend,
And Luck be your lover,
  until we meet again.

This should be sung a minimum of three times. The words and music are by Sable, of the Minneapolis Grove. See her zine in this issue for the musical notation, and Susan Kirsch's zine (also in this issue) for a "sitting" variation of the words. Some people may prefer to use "sister" instead of, or simultaneously with, "brother".

Cleanup and Critiques

As soon as the liturgy is over, the presiding clergy and bards should go off somewhere to remove their ceremonial gear and perform any additional grounding and centering which they might need. In the meantime, their assistants can be packing up the ritual tools and supplies, putting out the fire, etc., while volunteers check the area to make sure that nothing has been left behind (especially litter -- Neopagans, like scouts, always leave a site cleaner than it was when they arrived!).

Comments about the liturgy should be limited at this time to positive ones. Individuals may want to share visions with each other, or to write down any insights sparked by their experiences during it, but a critical analysis should wait at least twenty four hours. This is to enable everyone to digest what has happened and to enable any workings done to "solidify" without "second-thoughts chasing after them on the astral."

A few days later, but no more than a couple of weeks at most, gather together as many as possible of the participants to discuss the ceremony in depth. This is the time to say things like: "That chant we wrote for the second consecration just didn't sound right." "George, you kept missing cues. Do we need different cues or were you having an off day?" "The harmonies on the Processional were terrible. We'd better practice them some more." "Susie, your Anglo Saxon pronunciation needs work." "The altars for the Three Worlds are too big, the dancers kept running into them." "The clergy didn't project their voices quite loud enough." "I had an insight about the wording of the consecration prayer, and I'd like to rewrite it." Etc.

It's very important to state the criticisms in a friendly way, with the emphasis on future improvements rather than assigning blame. Positive feedback about every aspect that went well should be included. People should share any psychic/magical/spiritual events that occurred to them during or after the ritual. In effect, you should be doing the same kind of fair-but-firm critique session that a theatrical troupe or symphony orchestra would have after a major performance. Who knows, perhaps we will even have genuine ritual critics writing reviews in the Neopagan press someday!

Detailed notes should be kept, to be used in future planning, preparation and performance. These notes can be copied and distributed to all the members of the group who might be interested, including the ADF Mother Grove!!

Figure 2 The ADF symbol, now in sapling size.

An Update on the ADF Liturgical Outline

This is the version of the Outline for Druid Worship Ceremonies that I would like people to use for the next few years, and which I've been discussing throughout this essay. Please make sure that the new liturgical scripts you send in for sharing with the other members all follow this basic pattern:

First Phase: Starting the Rite & Establishing the Groupmind Clear-cut Beginning

Consecration of Time
Consecration of Space
Tree Meditation
    Centering
    Grounding
    Merging
Affirmation of Group Beliefs
Specification of Ritual Focus and Deities of the Occasion

Second Phase: Opening the Gates & Preliminary Power

Raising Invoking the Gate Keeper
Invoking the Matron/Patron of Bards
Triad Invocations, Consecrations and Sharings
    Nature Spirits
    Ancestors and Predecessors
    Gods as a Group

Third Phase: The Major Sending of Power to the Deities of the Occasion

Praise Offerings
Prayer of Sacrifice
Seeking of the Omen
(Possible Repetitions of Praise/Sacrifice/Omen Seeking)

Fourth Phase: Receiving and Using the Returned Power

Preparation for the Return
Meditation upon Personal Needs
Repetition of Group Needs
Induction of Receptivity
Final Consecration and Sharing
Reception of Individual Blessings
Reinforcement of Group Bonding
Optional Activity: Spell Casting or Rite of Passage

Fifth Phase. Unwinding and Ending the Ceremony

Affirmation of Success: Following Through Recovery
Thanking of Entities Invoked
Deities of the Occasion
Deities as a Group
Ancestors and Predecessors
Nature Spirits
Matron/Patron of Bards
Gatekeeper -- Closing the Gates
Reversing the Tree Meditation
    Unmerging Energies
    Draining of Excess Energies
    Pulling back of Branches and Roots
    Recentering
Libation
Clear-cut Ending
    Deconsecration of Space
    Deconsecration of Time

Conclusion: The importance of Joy

After reading sixty (very) odd pages on liturgical design, preparation, and performance, many of you may have decided that this is all a lot of grim, dull work. Nothing is (or should be) farther from the truth. Any harper will tell you that the joy of composition and performance comes after you have mastered the basics of your instrument, and learned your scales. A painter may spend years learning color mixing, anatomy, the laws of perspective, etc., yet if there were no joy in the learning and the practice, she/he would have stopped being a painter early on.

Creating, preparing, and performing a ceremony requires a series of artistic decisions and actions, no matter what other polytheological, psychological, magical, or technical factors may be involved. And for Neopagans, joy is an integral part of every art we practice. Regardless of whether your liturgy is one of thankfulness or of grief, of love or of rage, of celebration or of entreaty -- if it is to be a Neopagan liturgy, it must be filled with joy. This may be the quiet, serene joy that strengthen,- as in times of fear and sorrow, or the noisy, boisterous joy of friends sharing pleasure, or the wild and dangerous joy of the tigress defending her young. Balder or Bacchus or Kali. If our liturgies are truly to transform both ourselves and our world, there must be joy! So make sure that you and the people you are working with pay attention to having fun during the entire process. The average Neopagan Druid liturgy is no more complex than putting on a three-act play, or a Beethoven symphony, things that thousands of people every year manage to do in high school -- while having a great deal of fun at the same time. With sufficient determination, practice, imagination, love and joy in our hearts, we can create ritual experiences that will have long-term positive effects on ourselves and the entire world. And remember...

The Gods are watching us, so let's give Them a good show!

A Druid Worship Ceremony
Meán Samradh, '87
Ár nDraíocht Féin (A.D.F.)

By Isaac Bonewits

This is an abbreviated script, without most of the physical or ceremonial instructions included. Participants will need to read past issues of The Druids' Progress for those, and attend the ritual planning and rehearsals beforehand. This is the working script to be used at the sunrise summer solstice ritual at P.S.G. 87, and is not meant for re-publication.

Phase One: Starting the Rite & Establishing the Group Mind

The people are called to order and formed into two parallel lines some short distance away from the ritual site. The presiding clergy ("D1" and "D2") stand at the head of the lines.

D1: Tá muid anseo leis na Déithe a adhradh.
D2: We are here to honor the Gods.
D1: A Dhéithe, an Airde, a Thabharthóiri ar Bheatha — éistigi agus freagairt orainn!
D2: O Gods, High Ones, Givers of Life — hear and answer us!

Procession

Along this route: _____
_____
_____

Procession Song/Chant:

Choose: _____

Settling Chant: "O Earth-Mother" or _____

Tree Meditation

***D**one by* _____

Specification of Ritual Focus and Deities of Occasion (Belenos & Aine)

Done by _____

Phase Two: Opening the Gates & Preliminary Power Raising

Invocation of the Gate Keeper

D2: O Ogma, Lord of the Gates, Lord of Knowledge, open the ways for us. We walk in your footsteps, we walk your roads. Reveal to us your teaching, reveal to us the way to walk in safety. We praise you for the brightness of your power. Walk with us, Ogma!

D1: A Oghma, a Thiarna na nGeataí, a Thiarna an Fheasa, oscail na geataí dúinn. Tá muid ag siúl i do lorg, tá muid ag siúl ar do bhealach. Scaoil dúinn do theagasc, taispeain dúinn cén chaol a siú;l faidh muid slán. Molann muid thu mar gheall ar do chumhacht. Siúil linn, a Oghma!

Ogma Chant/Song: "Siúl linn a Oghma" or "We invoke thee Ogma" or _____

Invocation of the Matron of Bards

Song: "Hymn to Bridget" or "Lady Lift us up" or _____

The Triad Invocations:

Invocation of the Nature Spirits

D2: O spirits of the old times and of this place, our companions, our teachers, hallow these waters. Share with us the renewal of the Earth. Share with us comfort, knowledge, and blessing. Speak to our hearts, that we may become one with you all ..... Behold the waters of life!
D1: A sprideanna na seanaimsire, agus na háite seo, a chomhghuaillithe, a mhúinteorí, beannaígí na h-uisci seo dúinn. Roinnigí orainn athbheochan na Talún. Roinnigí orainn suaimhneas, eolas, agus beannacht. Labhraígí linn inár gcroí, le go mbeadh muid in aon bhall libhse ..... Seo iad uiscí na beatha!

Asperging Song/Chant: "Fur & Feathers" or _____

Invocation of the Ancestors/Predecessors

D2: O people of the old times, our ancestors, our kindred, hallow these waters. Share with us the bond of life upon the Earth. Share with us comfort, knowledge, and blessing. Speak to our hearts, that we may become one with you all ..... Behold the waters of life!

D1: A sheana, a shinseara, a mhuintir, beannaígí na h-uisci seo dúinn. Roinnigí orainn ceangal na beatha ar Talamh. Roinnigí orainn suaimhneas, eolas, agus beannacht. Labhraígí linn inár gcroí, le go mbeadh muid in aon bhall libhse ..... Seo iad uiscí na beatha!

Asperging Song/Chant: "Blood of the Ancients" or _____

Invocation of the Gods as a Whole

D2: O Gods of the old times, our mothers, our fathers, hallow these waters. Share with us your power to regenerate the Earth. Share with us comfort, knowledge, and blessing. Speak to our hearts, that we may become one with you all ..... Behold the waters of life!

D1: A Dhéithe na seanaimsiri, a mháithreacha, a aithreacha, beannaígí na h-uisci seo dúinn. Roinnigí orainn bhur gcumhacht le go nginfeadh muid an Domhan. Roinnigí orainn suaimhneas, eolas, agus beannacht. Labhraígí linn

inár gcroí, le go mbeadh muid in aon bhall libhse ..... Seo iad uiscí na beatha!

Asperging Song/Chant: "Mother I Feel You " or _____

Phase Three: Major Sending of Power to Belenos & Aine

Praise Offerings

D2: Now let us offer our praise to Belenos and Aine, the Lord and Lady of this feast.
_____ done by _____
_____ done by _____
_____ done by _____

The Sacrifice

D2: Our praise goes up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices are carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, o Belenos, o Aine, we pray thee, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, giving to us of your peace and life.

D1: Téann ár moladh suas chugat ar sciatháin iolar; beirtear ár nglórtha suas chugat ar ghuailne na gaoithe. Éistigí anois, a Bhelenos, an Aine, más é bhur dtoil é, agus sinn ag ofráil na h-íobairte seo ar son na beatha. Glacaigí léi, más é bhur dtoil é, agus glanaigí ár gcroíthe, ag roinnt arainn do chuid síochána 'is do bheatha.

The Omen

D2: Have you accepted our sacrifice of life and human effort?

D1 Give unto us an omen!

Divination

Done by _____

Possible repetition of Praise Offerings and Omen Seeking, if necessary:

_____ *done by* _____

_____ *done by* _____

_____ *done by* _____

When the Sacrifice has been accepted.....

D1: Rejoice! The Lord and Lady have accepted our sacrifices!

Phase Four: Receiving & Using the Returned Power

Meditation on Personal Needs, done by _____
Repetition of Group Needs, done by _____
Induction of Receptivity, done by _____

Final Consecration & Sharing:

D2: O Belenos, o Aine, hear and answer us! Hallow these waters! We your children have praised you, and now we ask from you healing, blessing, power, and inspiration ..... Behold the waters of life!

D1: A Bhelenos, an Aine, éistigí agus freagairt orainn! Beannaígí na h-uisci seo dúinn. Muide do chlann a mhol thu, agus anois iarrann muid ort leigheas, beannachtaí, chumhacht, agus tinfeadh ..... Seo iad uiscí na beatha!

Passing Song/Chant : "Burn Bright" or _____

It's possible, but not very likely, that a magical working or rite of passage may be done at this point. Far more likely is...

Meditation On Reception of Bessings and Reinforcement of Group Bonding,

Done by: _____

Phase Five: Unwinding & Ending the Ceremony

Affirmation of Success:

D2: Belenos and Aine have Blessed us!
D1: Tá beannacht na Belenos agus an Aine orainn!
D2: Every time we invoke them, they become stronger and more alert to the needs of their people.
D1: With joy in our hearts, let us return to the realm of mortals, to do the will of the Gods and our own.
D2: Yet, before we leave, we must give thanks to those whom we have invited here today:

Thanking of Entities Invoked

D2: O Lord and Lady,
D1: A Bhelenos, an Aine —
D2: We thank you!
D1 Go raibh maith agaibh!
All: Go raibh maith agaibh!

D2: O Gods and Goddesses of the old times,
D1: A Dhéithe na seanaimsiri —
All: Go raibh maith agaibh!

D2: O people of the old times, our ancestors, our kindred,
D1: A sheana, a shinseara, a mhuntir —
All: Go raibh maith agaibh!

D2: O spirits of the old times, and of this place,
D1: A sprideanna na seanaimsire, agus na háite seo —
All: Go raibh maith agaibh!

D2: O Bridget, Fire of Life and Fire of Love, Mother of Bards and Goddess of Inspiration, we thank you.
D1: A Bhrid, a Thine Bheatha agus a Thine Ghrá, a Mháthair na Bardaí agus Bheandia na Thinfeadh, go raith maith agat!

Closing of the Gates

D2: O Ogma, Lord of the Gates, Lord of Knowledge, we thank you. Now let the Gates Between the Worlds be closed!
D1: A Oghma, a Thairna na nGeataí, a Thairna an Fheasa, go raith maith agat. Anois bíodh na geataí idir na saolta a druidte!

Reversing of the Tree Meditation

By _____

Libation

D1: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, o our Mother, even as we must someday return unto thee.

Final Benediction

D2: Let us go out into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have pleased the Gods and Goddesses, and that we go forth upon the Earth under their protection.
D1: Teigheadh muid amach faoin domhan, agus muid lan-chinnte, gur thug ár n-iobartí taitneamh do na Déithe, gur fhreagair siad ár n-urnaí, agus go bhfuil muid ag dul amach faoin Domhan faoina gcoímirce.

D2: We have finished this ceremony!
D1: Tá an searmanas críochnaíthe againn!
D2: So be it.
D1: Bíodh sé.
All: Bíodh sé!

Recessional

Song/Chant: "Walk with Wisdom" or _____

Figure 3 The Dapper Druid

A Full ADF Liturgy

By Ian Corrigan, c. 1991?

0: The Sacred Grove is arranged as described. The celebrants hallow the Grove; the Fire is lit, the Well is filled, the Tree is blessed.

Procession

With singing, arrive and circle the hallows deosil. The Druids complete the sigil, then give the opening prayers.

Opening Prayers

A: Earth Mother: All kneel and kiss the earth. The Chief speaks as the Sacrificer makes an offering of grain, bread or flour:

O beloved mother of all
From whose starry womb the green earth springs
You who are the bearer of all life
We pray you bless and uphold this rite.
All: Mother of all accept our offering!

B: Awen: The Bard invokes, saying:

Power of inspiration that attends us
Voice of the fire of wisdom,
voice of the well of inspiration
Come into our hearts' shrine
O! Into our hearts' shrine
Let us ken of every good or ill,
Guide our rite in the way of truth
I call you to place the clear heart in us
O power of inspiration in this holy place
O power of inspiration at this holy time
So be it!

Grove Attunement

The Druids lead a meditation intended to attune the company to the Earth and Sky powers and to join the company in spirit. This might conclude with an intoning or a proper chant or hymn.

Fire, Well And Tree

Druids or members of the grove make offerings to the Sacred Center. Silver is offered to the well, saying:

Druid: O sacred waters that flow and swirl beneath all being accept our offering!
Let us know the elder depths within ourselves the source of all, the well of elder wisdom
Tobar naomh, ruith a steach mise!
All respond: Sacred well, flow within us!

An offering of oil is made to the Fire, saying:

O sacred fire that consumes and transforms
True and holy light of the shining ones
Accept our offering! O sacrificed and sacrificer
Let holy flame warm our spirits and our lives.
Teinne naomh, ls a steach mise!
All: Sacred fire, burn within us!
The Bile is censed and sprinkled, saying:
O sacred pillar, boundary of all worlds,
Stand at the center of the sky,
Stand at the center of the sea,

Stand at the center of the land on which we dwell.
Let us be deepened in your depths
Raised to your heights
Strengthened in your strength
Crann naomh, fas a steach mise!
All: Sacred tree, grow within us!

Purpose And Precedent

As proper to the work.

Purification

A: Outdwellers: An offering is made to the south of the Grove, saying:

Ancient dark ones, we make this offering to you.
You who dwell in the outer dark
You who stood against the Gods
You twisted and misshapen
You cold of heart and dim of mind
Take this offering and trouble not our working.
Likewise we acknowledge in ourselves
Weakness and perversity
Hatred and spite
Cowardice and ignorance
We contemplate these ills and enemies
And for this sacred time
We set them aside!

B: Fire and Water: Druids draw water from the Well and light a censer from the Fire. They quickly cense and asperge the company, while the company intones or chants.

Opening The Gates

The sacrificer makes an offering to Manannan, saying:

Druid: A Manannan, a thiarna na geatai duinn, ta muid ag siul ar do bealach.
O Manannan, Lord of the Gates, Lord of Wisdom, open the ways for us. We walk in your holy ways, we walk the Sacred Road. Share your magic with us, ward us as we walk in safety. Manannan mac Lir, accept our sacrifice!

An offering of oil is given to the Fire. The Druid then conjures the Gates, making an opening triskel on the Fire and Well, saying:

Druid: Now, lord of ways, join your magic with mine and let the fire open as a gate, let the well open as a gate, let the tree be the crossroads of all worlds. Open as a road to our voices and to the spirits. Let the gates be open!
All: Let the gates be open!

Kindred Offerings

The druids make proper offerings to each of the kindreds, standing at the fire.

Ancestors

Druid: The children of the earth call out to the mighty dead. Hear us, our ancestors, our kindred.
Eistigi anois, a shinseara, a mhuintir
To all those whose bones lie in this land, whose hearts are tied to it, whose memory holds it; ancient tribes of this place, we offer you welcome.
To all of our grandmothers and grandfathers, our own beloved dead, blood-kin and heart-kin; ancient tribes of our blood, we offer you welcome.
To all those elder wise ones who guide their people, poets and seers, judges and magicians; wise women and men of ancient days, we offer you welcome. So, o mighty ones, we call to you as our kin, in the love of the all-mother, to join in our magic. Come to our fire, spirits; meet us at the boundary. Guide and ward us as we walk the elder ways. Ancestors, accept our sacrifice!
A shinseara, glac an h-iobairt seo muid!

(an offering of food and/or drink is made onto the ground or into a shaft)

Nature Spirits

Druid: The children of earth call out to the spirits of this land. Hear us, companions and teachers.
Eistigi anois, a sprideanna na haite seo.
To all our allies, kindreds of stone and stream, crystal and fertile soil, pools and every water; kins of the earth, we offer you welcome
To all our allies, kindreds of the growing green, herb and flower, shrub and mighty trees, root and stem and fruit. Green kins, we offer you welcome.
To all our allies, kindreds of fur and feather and scale, all who walk or fly or swim or crawl, we offer you welcome.
So, o noble ones, we call to you as our allies, in the joy of life upon earth, to join in our magic. Come to our fire, spirits; meet us at the boundary. Guide and ward us as we walk the elder ways. land-spirits, accept our sacrifice!
A sprideanna na talamh, glac an h-iobairt seo muid.

(an offering of herbs, flowers and/or trinkets is scattered around the nemeton's edge or hung on the tree)

Deities

Druid: The children of earth call out to the shining ones. Hear us, eldest and brightest. eistgigi anois, a dheithe na seanamsiri.
To all the shining ones, first children of the mother, wisest and mightiest, loving and comforting; Gods and Goddesses, we offer you welcome.
To the Gods and Goddesses of this place, ancient and powerful, known to us or unknown; Gods of this place, we offer you welcome.
To all the deities of those here gathered, you whom we worship, you who bless our lives; o patrons and matrons, we offer you welcome.
So, o shining ones, we call to you as our elders, in reverence and love, to join in our magic. Come to our fire, shining ones; meet us at the boundary. guide and ward us as we walk the elder ways. deities, accept our sacrifice!
A dheithe, glac an h-iobairt seo muid.

(an offering of scented oil is poured on the fire)

After all the offerings have been made, the druids recenter the company and lead an attunement to all the spirits that have been called, and a proper chant or hymn is sung to the three kindreds.

Key Offerings

Druid speaks, saying: Failte! A dheithe, a seanara, a sprideanna! Welcome to the God/desses, the dead and the sidhe! To all of you who have gathered at our fire, we pray you join us in worshipping the patrons of this holy rite here in our sacred grove.

The druids now give the descriptive invocations of the patron powers of the rite. This is followed by any proper customs for the occasion, and by praise offerings. offerings are made, and a portion of each is held back for the final sacrifice.

Sacrifice and Omen

The druids prepare the final offerings and say:

Druid speaks: So we have given of our love and our wealth to the lord and lady. Now let our voices arise on the fire, let our voices sound in the well let our words pass the boundary to the otherworlds. o lord, o lady, we give you our love, our respect, our devotion as we pray you...
Bhantiarna agus tiarna, glac an h-iobairt seo muid!
All: Lady and Lord, accept our sacrifice!

All are led to send their energy through the gates to the powers, meditating on the deities and the nobles. Then druid speaks:

Druid speaks: Having prayed to the powers, let us open to them, asking what blessings they offer us in return.

Omen is taken as usual. The seer then interprets the omen, leading the company to contemplate the things they would ask of the powers, especially as suggested by the omen. Company recenters in preparation for the blessing.

The Blessing

A: The litany of the waters:

Druid: Ancient and mighty ones we have honored you. We pray you honor us in turn, for a gift calls for a gift. Hear your children...
All: Shining ones, give us the waters!
Druid: We thirst for the waters of wisdom, of bounty, of rebirth from the well of wisdom, from the spring of renewal, from the bosom of the Earth Mother. Hear us...
All: Shining ones, give us the waters!
Druid: We open our hearts to the great ones blessing. We stand in pride, honor and friendship with all the powers of the worlds. Hear and answer us now...
All: Shining ones, give us the waters!

B: Hallowing the waters:

Ale is poured into the horns and elevated. Druid speaks:

Druid: We draw blessing from the cauldron of blessing. We pour the ale of inspiration. Behold the holy cup of magic, the outpouring of blessing from the mighty ones. When we share the draught of the Gods we drink in wisdom, love and strength to do as we will in the worlds, in service to the shining ones.
Eisdigh anois a tiarna, a bhantiarna; beannaich na h-uisci seo duinn! Hear us o lord, o lady; hallow these waters! We, your children, rejoice in your gift. Bless our spirits and our lives with love, magic and bounty as we drink these sacred waters.
Seo iad uisci na beatha!
All: Behold the Waters of Life!

The horns are passed and all drink as a proper hymn is sung.

Work

As needed.

Closing

When all is done, the druids lead a resettling, then begin to close the grove, saying:

Druid: The mighty ones have blessed us. With joy in our hearts let us carry the magic from our sacred grove into our lives and work.
Each time we offer to the powers they be come stronger and more aware of our needs and our worship.
So now as we prepare to depart let us give thanks to those who have aided us.
O (patron powers), go raibh maith agaibh!
All: We thank you!
Druid: O Gods and Goddesses of elder days, go raibh maith agaibh!
All: We thank you!
Druid: O spirits of this land, go raibh maith agaibh!
All: We thank you!
Druid: O ancestors, our kindred, go raibh maith agaibh!
All: We thank you!
Druid: To all those powers that have aided us, we say again...Go raibh maith agaibh!
All: We thank you!

Druids renew the company's centering once more, signaling the return to common awareness and ease of access to the centered state. Then any unused offerings, return flow, incense, water etc. is given to the earth, saying:

Druid: Mother of all, to you we return all we leave unused. Uphold us now in the world as you have in our rite. Go raibh maith agaibh!
All: We thank you!

The druids go to the center, bearing the wand. They speak:

O gatekeeper, warder of the ways, for your presence and power, your guiding and guarding we say... Go raibh maith agaibh!
All: We thank you!

Druid makes the closing sign over the hallows with the wand, saying:

Druid: Now by the keeper of gates and by our magic we end what we began.
Now let the fire be flame
Let the well be water;
Let all be as it was before.
Let the gates be closed!
All: Let the gates be closed!
Druid: Go now, children of the earth, in peace and blessings. the rite is ended!

The bard leads a proper chant as the company processes out of the Grove.

Keltrian Druid Ritual Walk-Through

By Pat Taylor & Tony Taylor
Extracted from the Henge of Keltria Book of Ritual
Granted to be used in ARDA 2

Outline

The following is the basic outline of a Keltrian seasonal rite:

1. Designating Parts
2. Individual Preparation
3. Site Perparation
4. Processional
5. Marking Sacred Space
6. Announcement
    a. Unite Song (Optional)
7. Tree Meditation
8. Parting the Veil
9. Triad Invocations
    a. Ancestors
    b. Nature Spirits
    c. Gods
10. Explanation of Rite
11. Calling the Principals
12. Lighting the Sacred Fire
13. Devotionals
14. Offerings
15. Divination –Message from the Gods
16. Grove's Choice
17. Remembrances
18. Consecration of the Blessing
19. Passing the Blessing
20. Closing Announcement and Thanks.
21. Returning the Principals
22. Thanking the Triads
23. Closing the Veil
24. Reversal of Tree Meditation
25. Parting Message
26. Recessional.

Designating Parts

Prior to the ritual, the D1 and D2 should assemble the celebrants attending, designate parts, and give a brief description of what will occur. This benefits any visitors or first-time attendees. The D1 and D2 should use their knowledge, background, and experience of the celebrants to provide a good ritual experience for all. Keltrian Druid ritual is a participatory experience and most of the parts of the ritual should be shared among those attending. Depending on the size of your Grove and the experience level of your attendees, some rituals may require some people to perform multiple parts, other rituals may require that some parts be split between multiple people. For example, "marking the space" could be done by one person (who is also doing other parts) or it could be done by as many as eight individuals: Past, Present, Future, East, South, West, North, and Center.

Individual Preparation

It is important for the Grove members to enter ritual in a proper frame of mind, body, and spirit. Heavy meals should be avoided prior to ritual; they concentrate blood in the stomach, resulting in inattentiveness and sleepiness. A potluck after ritual is preferred, however, a light potluck several hours prior to the ritual is sometimes held. Alcohol drank before the ritual in small amounts is usually acceptable, though no one should ever attend services inebriated.

You should be clean from the inside out. An herbal bath prior to ritual is helpful in easing muscle tension. Use herbs appropriate to the season to help tune your mind to the ritual purpose. Listening to mellow Celtic music, such as Celtic harp, reduces mental fatigue.

Celebrants who attend on a regular basis should obtain a robe or special clothing worn only for ritual. Ritual robes should not be worn over mundane clothing if they are to be effective in altering your mind-set. Underwear is acceptable, if desired. Robes should be clean and have been stoed with herbal sachets to enhance their magick. Keep them smelling fresh and "outdoorsy."

You should always take at least ten minutes to meditate before ritual begins. An excellent place to meditate is at a small shrine to a personal patron or matron deity. At the base of a tree is another good place to do preparatory meditation. If you are not near a special place, visualize yourself at a special meditation spot. This meditation typically takes place after the D1 and D2 designate parts.

There will be times when relations between you and someone else will not be at their best. You must be able to leave any feelings of hurt or animosity outside the sacred space. If you are unable to separate yourself from negative feelings, then for the good of the Grove, excuse yourself from the ritual.

Site Preparation

It is the Grove Tender's responsibility to ensure that the space is ready for ritual. Outdoors, this includes clearning the stie of any branches, rocks, or other encumbrances. The fire pit should be properly laid with a bed of sacred wood (preferably), constructed in a "teepee" fashion over a triangular base. In order to assist the fire starting and staying lit, we recommend using "fire starters." You can purchase these at camping supply retailers. To create your own fire starters, mix shredded wax and small wood chip, about 40-60 by volume, and form into a block. When lighting the fire during the ritual, light the fire starters and your fire should be able to stay lit and grow easily.

The altar is prepared by placing tools in their proper locations. Mead and water are poured into the chalices and should be covered with patens. The Grove Tender may wish to physically tune into the site energies to determine if there is a need to dispel any technological influences. The space should be restored to a natural energy state. If machinery has been in the area recently, especially chain saws, brush cutters, or ATVs, the tree spirits nearby may be nervous and need claming and reassurance. Just before the ritual start, either D1 or D2 joins the Grove Tender and verifies that all is ready for the ritual. Typically the altar candles and the charcoal block for the incense are lit, then the Grove Tender rings the gong three times, signaling the beginning of the processional.

For indoor rituals, the Grove Tender should likewise prepare the space. A candle or a cauldron with Sterno may

represent the central fire. Clocks should be either removed or covered so that celebrants will not be able to watch them. The addition of greenery or other natural materials can help establish a well-prepared site.

The Processional

Before the ritual begins, the participants assemble and walk to the ritual site. The processional may be silent, it may be punctuated with the beat of percussion instrument, or it may vibrate with song. Processional songs can range from the dirge-like tones of Gregorian chants to effervescent, joyful cadences. The type of processional song a Grove uses will be determined by the season of the year and personal preference. The D1 may choose to lead the processional with the D2 bringing up the rear. In this way the D1 can direct the others within the space. The Grove Tender anoints the D1 on the brow with the appropriate sacred oil for the seasonal or other rite. The Grove Tender marks the forehead of each celebrant with the ancient tri-line pattern (/I\) while saying,

May you be blessed in Mind, Body, and Spirit.

The Grove tender anoints the rest of the processional as they enter single file. After the D2 has been anointed, he or she takes the oil and anoints the Grove Tender in the same fashion. The D2 and Grove Tender are last to enter the space. The D1 approaches the altar, and the D2 then leaves the assemblage to stand at his or her side. Once there, both face the altar and offer a salute to those it represents by tracing the Keltrian Druid Sigil in the air. D1 and D2 then trun and face the assemblage.

Consecrating the Space

The designated person approaches the altar and receives the bell branch. Then he or she goes to the Southwestern side of the ritual space and says:

Out of Tir Andomain, I call the Bards, the Seers and the Druids of the past to hear these bells and join with us in this, our sacred rite.
Rings the Bell Branch three times.

Traveling sunwise, he or she goes to the northern perimeter of the circle and says,

Out of Mide, in the days of [Your grove's name], I call the Seers, the Druids, and the Bards of today to hear these bells and join with us in this, our sacred rite.
Rings the Bell Branch three times.

Continues traveling sunwise to the South East and says,

Out of Magh Mor, I call upon the Druids, the Bards, and the Seers of the future to hear these bells and join with us in this, our sacred rite.
Rings the Bell Branch three times.

Continues traveling sunwise to complete the circle, passing inside of the place where the circle began in the Southwest.

Next either the same person or another person takes the Bell Branch and continues walking to the eastern portion of the circle, passing inside of the place where the Present was called (continuing the spiral motion), just before reaching the East says,

I walk to the East…

Stopping in the East and facing the East, the person says,

I stand in the Light of the mythical city of Finias. The East, from which the Sword of Nuada came. I call upon the East to join with us and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.
Rings the Bell Branch three times.

He or she moves sunwise around the circle, continuing the spiral, passing inside of the place where the Future was called,

I walk to the South..

Arriving at the South and says,

I stand in the Light of the mythical city of Gorias. Gorias, from which the Spear of Lugh did come. I call upon the South to join with us and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.
Rings the Bell Branch three times.

He or she continues the spiral,

I walk to the West…

Arriving at the West and says,

I stand in the Shadow of the mythical city of Murias. Murias, from which the Cauldron of the Dagda came. I call upon the West to join with us and enter into the Otherworldy Tree.
Rings the Bell Branch three times.

He or she continues onward.

I walk to the North…

Arriving at the North and says,

I stand in the Shadow of the mythical city of Falias. Falias, from which the Lia Fail did come. I call upon the North to join with us and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.
Rings the Bell Branch three times.

Upon completion, he or she walks around the circle once again, spiraling in to finally reach the center of the circle entering from the North and says,

I walk to the center; I stand at Uisneach – The center of time and space. Here I plant the Otherworldly Tree. All time is now. All places are here. We are at the center of time and space.
Rings the Bell Branch three times.

Then places the Bell Branch in the center of the circle (next to the fire area or candle as appropriate).

So be it!

Announcement of Rite

The primary clergy person (D1) tells the celebrants why they have come. For instance; "We are here to celebrate Beltaine, feast of the greening, and to honor the patrons thereof."

The announcement is a short, simple statement of why the Druids have come together for worship.

Unity Song (Optional)

At this point, the Bard leads all in a song of Grove identity. Our Grove uses the song, "People of the Oak" (see appendix 5).

We are the People of the Oak
Gathered at the sacred well.
Joined here the Old Ones to invoke
So to weave our magick spell.

We are the children of the wood
Standing in the faerie ring.
Here, where the mighty ones have stood
Praises to the Gods we bring.

Tree Meditation

This meditation, using the symbology of a growing tree, allows all in the space to relax, ground and center, and establish a group mind. It is also the vehicle through which we recharge our energies for magickal working. The Tree Meditation can be led by anyone with the skill and desire to do so. A sample Tree Meditation is provided in Appendix 1.

Parting the Veil

The designated Seer approaches the altar and receives the seashell or other object appropriate for Parting the Veil. While facing the center, the Seer uses the shell to invoke Manannan, the Guardian of the Gate to the Astral, to "Part the Veil" or "Open the Gate" so that those of the spirit may pass freely to the ritual space. A simple invocation to Manannan might go like this:

> **O' Manannan, Lord of the Headlands, Son of the Sea, Patron of Merchants and Sailors, guardian of the Veil between our world and Magh Mor, I, [magickal name] call to you. You, who commands Wavesweeper; Manannan of the red beard, I beseech you let the mists between the worlds dissolve that the Old Ones may commune with us. So be it!**

Seer replaces shell on altar.

All sing a chant to Manannan (See Appendix 5). We use the following:

O' Son of Sea to you we pray – Manannan Mac Lir
To part the Veil so that we may – Call the Wise Ones here
Open now the watery Veil – To the spirits' domain
In your coracle may they sail – to our hearts again.

The Triad Invocations

Ancestors

Carrier One approaches the altar and facing the center, receives the cauldron or bowl of water from D1. Holding the cauldron, he or she invokes the spirits of the Ancestors into the water in the bowl;

> **Ancestors, Old ones, Mothers and fathers of our people, I [Magickal Name] reach across the Veil with my words and call to you. You who have anchored our faith, you of times long ago, I call you with the water. I call you with water that is the might oceans, with water that is the gentle rains. I call you with the water of this sacred vessel, and bid you enter into this water that we, your children, may be blessed by our communion with you. So be it.**

The carrier announces;

> **With this water, I give you the blessings of the ancestors.**

The carrier proceeds sunwise, starting with D1, anointing each person on the brow with a few drops of the water while all sing a chant to the Ancestors. Our grove uses the following chant;

From far across this mortal plane,
Mothers and Fathers of Old.
We pray that ye return again,
Mothers and Fathers of Old.
To share with us the mysteries
And secrets long untold,
Of the ancient ways we seek to reclaim,
Mothers and Fathers of Old.

The carrier finishes with D2, who takes the cauldron and blesses the carrier. The D2 returns the cauldron to the altar.

Nature Spirits

Carrier Two approaches the altar, receives the cauldron of earth from D1, and invokes the Nature Spirits into the cauldron. Here is a sample invocation to the Nature Spirits:

> **I, [Magickal Name] call you, Nature Spirits: spirit of the bear and of the deer, spirit of the fox and of the hawk. I call the spirits of vegetation: spirit of the oak and of the mistletoe, spirit of the wildflowers and the grasses of the field. I call, too, the mountains and the caves. I call the hidden ones: sprites and faeries, gnomes and dwarves. All spirits of this time, of the present, rooted on this earth with us, I call you to your element of earth, and bid you enter into this vessel of earth, that we, your brothers and sisters, may be blessed by our communion with you. So be it.**

The carrier announces:

> **With this earth, I give you the blessings of the Nature Spirits.**

The carrier then proceeds to anoint the Grove in the same fasion as Carrier One, while all sing a song to the Nature Spirits. Our Grove uses the "Fur and Feather" chant.

Fur and feather and scale and skin,
Different without, but the same within.
Man of body, but one of soul,
Through all creatures are the Gods made whole.

Gods

Carrier Three approaches the altar, receives the cauldron of incense from D1, and invokes the Gods.

> **O' Gods, the preservers, the timekeepers: I, [Magickal Name], send my voice across the waves to you. I beckon you from the ancient Sidhes and stone circles. Hear my words! I call you, Tuatha de Danaan, tribe of our Mother, Danu. Come, ride the air to this sacred place and become one with the air of this cauldron, that we, your tribe, may be blessed by our communion with you. So be it.**

The carrier announces:

> **With the sky, I give you the blessings of the Gods.**

The carrier then proceeds sunwise, using a feather or his or her hand to waft the incense smoke toward each person's brow while all sing a chant to the Gods. Us use "Be With Us."

Be with us anew
Sacred Gods of ancient lore,
As we have been with you
And will be with you once more.

Explanation of Rite

The explanation describes why we celebrate the feast and what these times mean to us. It is handled as a dialogue between D1 and D2. The D1 asks questions and the D2 answers. In this way, the participants are educated in the meaning and purpose of the rite. The following explanation comes from an Imbolc rite. The questions are standard. The answers can be simple or elegant. The manner of response is up to the discretion of the secondary clergy.

D1: Wherefore have we come to the Grove upon this day (night)?
D2: We come to celebrate Imbolc, feast of the waxing light and time of the stirring.
D1: And why do we celebrate?
D2: As the light increases, our Mother, the Earth, stirs from her sleep, portending the dawn of a new summer.
D1: And whom do we honor upon this new feast?
D2: We honor Brigid, Bringer of the Light; we honor Aonghus Og, God of Youth and Love.
D1: Why have we chosen these Deities to honor on this occasion?
D2: We honor Brigid for the light that warms the Earth; we honor Aonghus Og for the love that warms the heart.
D1: And what does this time mean to the Druids?
D2: The seeds of your yearly goals, sown at Samhain, stir within the sod. Soon they will sprout, so that our plans can manifest into action.
D1: Then let us call the Patron and Matron (Or "Matron and Patron" depending upon which deity the D1 and D2 will be calling) of this feast.

Calling the Principals

At this point in the ritual, the Patron and Matron, who are the primary Deities honored at the rite, are called to separate from the pantheon and assume their places of honor within the altar candles. Each clergy person calls one of the principals. The D2 faces the altar, takes the altar candle closest to him/her, and hold it up and invokes the deity into the candle. A sample invocation follows:

O' Brighid, daughter of the Dagda, Goddess of Fire, of Poetry, of the Forge. O' ye bringer of the light, I, [Magickal Name], call you forth from those gathered here and bid you to join the fire of your spirit with this flame, that your countenance may shine upon us during this, your rite. So be it.

The D1 then invokes the remaining Principal in a similar fashion.

Lighting the Sacred Fire

D1 and D2 take their respective candles and approach the fire pit, which has already been prepared. The D1 and D2 stand on either side of the pit and say:

D2: O' Brigid…
D1: O' Aonghus Og…
Both: With the flames of your spirits, we kindle the sacred flame.

Then D1 and D2 ignite the wood bed with their candles and replace them on the altar.

In an indoor ritual, the D1 and D2 may choose to light a representation in the center of the Druid Sigil.

Lighting the Sacred Fire

At this point within ritual, any of the Grove may devote something of their own creation to the service of the principals of the feast. Some examples of devotionals would be: A handmade or hand-embroidered ritual garment, a ritual tool, a poem or song, a dance, or a divinational tool. The devotional is presented to the principals by performance or by laying it at the foot of the altar and making a proclamation concerning it.

The Offerings

Unlike the Devotionals which are items dedicated in service to the principals, the offerings are actual gifts to the Gods. Offerings may consist of grain, bread, herbs, sachets, charged stones, crystals, incense, or small trinkets. The D1 removes the wicker offertory from the altar and passes it sunwise. Each person places his or her offering inside the basket. Those who have not brought physical offerings are encourage to direct their energies into the offertory. When the offertory returns to the D2 he or she holds it above the ritual fire. The D1 takes the ritual branch and sickle from the altar, holding one in each hand over the offertory. The D1 then slowly brings the sickle blade to the branch while asking the principals to accept the gifts that have been presented.

[Patron], [Matron], accept these gifts presented in your honor. Be strengthened from the energy that we, the children of your tribe, send to you. So be it.

The offertory is placed in the fire, where it is consumed. This is the time for ecstatic release; the grove is encourage to sing, dance, and otherwise express their joy. If the ritual is being held indoors and the offering cannot be burned, wrap it in a clean, white cloth of natural material, preferably linen. It may be stored and burnt at a later ritual.

The Divination

Now that the channel to the Gods has been opened, the Seer divines any messages that the Gods may wish to send to the Grove. The manner of divination is up to the acting Seer. He or she may use cards, runes, Ogham sticks, a scrying ball, or whatever else he or she prefers. Once the message has been received and interpreted, the Seer shares it with the Grove.

Grove's Choice

This is the "open" part of the ritual. During this portion of the rite, the Grove may do what it feels is most appropriate. This may be drumming, dancing, free-form chanting, performing a pageant, or other theatrical presentation representative of the season. Some groups may wish to work on a project, such as charging crystals or planting seeds. It would even be acceptable (though probably not popular) for the clergy to deliver a sermon during the open portion of ritual. This portion of the rite is not mandatory. We advise it be kept to a reasonable time lime, probably not to exceed twenty minutes.

Note: Healings or spells should not be done at the seasonal feasts unless there is an emergency. Healings and spells should be reserved for the Mistletoe or Vervain rites.

Remembrances

During this portion of the ritual, the clergy distributes small tokens to the participants that in some way represent the two principals of the feast. The remembrances are everyday objects that, because of their association with a particuliar deity, evoke thoughts of that deity when we encounter these objects in our everyday lives. Our thoughts give energy to the Gods; thus, the associations with everyday objects constantly deliver strength to our Gods. The remembrances that our Grove have used include:

Small candles for Brigid.

Candy hearts for Aonghus Og.

Hazelnuts for Boann.

Wildflowers for Bile.

Grapes for Danu.

Sunflower seeds for Lugh.

Black feathers (or raisins) for Morrigan.

Beef Jerky (or granola) for The Dagda.

Keep in mind that the remembrances are only limited by your imagination and knowledge of the Gods and Goddesses you wish to honor.

The D1 or D2 who invoked the Principal deity typically passes the remembrances for that deity. This may also be done by another designated person.

Method: (Taken from the Imbolc ritual.)

D1: Takes the bowl of candles from the altar; removes one candle, and lights it with Brighid's altar candle, and says;

Brigid, Goddess of Fire, we remember thee through the flame.

The bowl is passed sunwise. Each participant takes a candle and lights it from the previous candle until all are lit. The candles may then be blown out.

D2: Takes the bowl of candy hearts from the altar; removes one heart and says,

Aonghus Og, God of Youth and Love, we remember thee through the tokens of young love.

The bowl is passed sunwise. Each person takes one heart. When the bowl returns to the D2, all partake of the candy.

The Blessing

We ask the principals to impart their blessings into the communal chalices. Our Grove sometimes adds a single drop of sacred plant extract to the contents of each chalice. The extract we use depends on the celebration.

The D2 removes both chalices, one of mead and one of water, from the altar. The D1 takes the sickle and the ritual branch from the altar. D1 and D2 face each other standing in front of the altar. The D2 holds forth both chalices and the D1 hold the branch and sickle above the chalices, slowly bringing the sickle blade to the branch while asking for the blessing.

O' [Patron], O' [Matron]; we the Children of Danu have given you our praise; give us _____ and _____. Bless us, O' Gods, through this, our communion with you. So be it.

Examples of Patron/Matron & Blessing Received:

Dagda – Bounty
Brigid – Inspiration
Aonghus Og – Love
Boann – Fertility
Bile – Strength
Danu – Abundance
Lugh – Skill
Morrigan – Wisdom

Other blessings or Deities may be used as your individual Grove decided.

Behold the Waters of ____ and ____! One is water, one is of mead. Drink of that which you will, both are equally consecrated.

The chalices are passed sunwise. The Bard leads all in a song or chant while the chalices are being circulated. We use the "Mead Chant." (See Appendix 5)

Pass the cup and share the bounty
Of this golden mead.
O' milk of clover, yeast and bee
Unite us in our creed.
Pass the horn and share the blessings
Of this sacred brew,
That all may know the joy to be
The Children of Danu.

Closing

The D1 announces:

We have shared in the blessings of the Gods, but now has come the time to depart.

Returning The Patrons

The D1 and D2 each return their respective patrons back to their vessel of sky. Example:

[Name], we thank you for your blessings. The time has come to return to the air with your brethren. I bid you, let your spirit return to the cauldron of sky. So be it.

The Druid touches the flame to the incense in the cauldron, then snuffs out the candle. The process is repeated by the other clergy person with the second candle.

Caution: When wax drips onto a charcoal block and is then touched by the candle, the block will burst into flame. The theatrical effect is impressive, but poses some danger. Proceed cautiously.

Thanking the Triads

Carrier One holds the water cauldron and, facing center, thanks the Ancestors and bids them good-bye. The carrier might say:

We thank thee, Ancestors for your presence at this rite. Through our communion you are strengthened as are we. Now has come the time to close this rite, so depart across the Veil if you must, or stay if you will. In love we bid you farewell. So be it.

The Carrier replaces the cauldron on the altar.

Carrier Two and Three thank their respective correspondences[Nature Spirits & Gods] in the same fashion.

Closing the Veil

The Seer thanks Manannan for Parting the Veil and bids it be closed again.

An example of Closing the Veil:

> **O' Manannan Mac Lir, Lord of the Headlands, Keeper of the Veil, I [Magickal Name] give you thanks for Parting the Veil during this rite so that the spirits of the Ancestors, the Nature Spirits, and the Gods could pass more freely between the worlds. But now is the time for this ritual to end, so, if you must, allow the Veil to thicken again. So be it.**

Reversing the Tree Meditation

The Tree Meditation is reversed, allowing excess energies to be drained into the earth, which brings the participants back to a human mind-set.

Parting Message

This is a statement of ending from the clergy. It reaffirms the ritual's success and officially closes the rite. The clergy might say:

> **We have received the blessings of (Name) and (Name), patron and matron of this feast. Now let us go forth, refreshed by our communion and strengthened in our knowledge. We walk with the blessings of the Gods. We walk with wisdom.**

Recessional

The participants depart from the sacred space. Our Grove uses the recessional song, "Walk with Wisdom."

Walk with wisdom
From this hallowed place,
Walk not in sorrow
Our roots shall e'er embrace.
May strength be your brother
And honor be your friend
And luck be your lover
Until we meet again.

After the song, it is traditional for all celebrants to hug each other and generally share their good feelings concerning the ritual.

The Grove Tender takes care of the libation bowls (if used), offering the libations to the Earth.

Figure 4 Isaac Bonewits & Tony Taylor meeting at Carleton College, 4/23/1994.

Solitary Keltrian Ritual

Adapted by C. Leigh McGinley
From Henge Happenings #61

Although Keltrian ritual is designed for a group of people and is most often performed by a Grove, one person can just as easily perform the rituals in a Keltrian way. Many Keltrians are solitary, by choice or by chance. Some current Keltrian Grove Leaders were solitary for many years, and performed these rituals alone with just a little alteration to make them appropriate for a "Grove of One." Below you will find a basic ritual walk-through for a Solitary Keltrian Ritual that can be used for your own personal practice. It will also aid you in making an easy transition from a solitary ritual to a group ritual, should the opportunity arise.

In solitary ritual, the timing and flow of the rite will be different than in a larger group ritual, so the songs included in group ritual are not really required or necessary. However, if you want to sing (or simply chant the words to the songs), feel free to do so! After all, you are the leader of this rite. (It will, however, help to know the songs should you ever get the opportunity to join other Keltrians in ritual, or lead a Grove of your own.)

References to page numbers in this ritual indicate pages from the Keltrian Book of Ritual.

Preparation as in Group Ritual (see pg. 23, "Individual Preparation")

Altar setup as in Group Ritual (see pg. 5, "Ritual Tools" and photo pg. 8)

What follows is the standard opening and definition of sacred space for each and every Keltrian ritual.

Blessing:

In group ritual, there is a processional to the ritual site that begins the ritual. A solitary will most likely not process to his/her chosen ritual area. However, you can begin your ritual and announce your intent to the universe by anointing your own brow with the tri-line pattern at the altar while saying:

> **May I be blessed in Body, Mind, and Spirit.**

Next, face your altar and offer a salute to those it represents by drawing the Keltrian Druid Sigil in the air (see pg. 25 for a graphic of the sigil). We have seen the sigil drawn very powerfully with two hands, the index fingers simultaneously drawing each half of the circle wreath, and then each stave. The center Awen symbol can then be drawn with three fingers of the right hand.

Time and Space:

Pick up your bell branch, walk to the Southwestern side of your ritual space and say:

> **Out of Tír Andomain, I call the Bards, Seers, and Druids of the past to hear these bells and join with me in this, my sacred rite.**

Ring the bell branch three times.

Traveling sunwise, walk to the Northern perimeter of your sacred space and say:

> **Out of Midé, in the days of the Henge of Keltria, I call the Seers, Bards, and Druids of the present to**

hear these bells and join with me in this, my sacred rite.

Ring Bell Branch three times.

Continue traveling sunwise to the Southeast and say:

Out of Magh Mór, I call upon the Druids, Bards, and Seers of the future to hear these bells and join with me in this, my sacred rite.

Next, continue walking sunwise to the East, traveling inside the circle you have just completed (continuing a spiral motion) and say:

I walk to the East…

Stop at the East, face East and say:

I stand in the light of the mythical city of Finias. Finias, from which the Sword of Nuada came. I call upon the East to join with me and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.

Ring Bell Branch three times.

Continue moving sunwise around the circle, passing inside the place where the Future was called, continuing the spiral, while saying:

I walk to the South…

Arrive at the South and say:

I stand in the Light of the mythical city of Gorias. Gorias, from which the Spear of Lugh did come. I call upon the South to join with me and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.

Ring Bell Branch three times.

Continue the spiral:

I walk to the West…

Arrive at the West and say:

I stand in the shadow of the mythical city of Murias. Murias, from which the cauldron of the Dagda did come. I call upon the West to join with me and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.

Ring Bell Branch three times.

Continue to the North, saying:

I walk to the North…

Arrive at the North and say:

I stand in the shadow of the mythical city of Falias. Falias, from which the Lia Fáil did come. I call upon the North to join with me and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.

Ring Bell Branch three times.

Upon completion, walk around the circle once again, spiraling in to finally reach the center of the circle and say:

I walk to the Center; I stand at Uisneach. Here I plant the Otherworldly Tree. All time is now. All places are here. I am at the center of time and space.

Ring Bell Branch three times.

Then place the Bell Branch in the center of the circle, next to the fire area or candle as appropriate. (In the case of indoor ritual or hard ground, some Keltrians find it useful to use a pot of earth, such as a small flowerpot, to "plant" the Branch upright.)

Say:

So be it!

Next, you will want to mention to the spirits around you (and to the Gods) why you are performing this ritual at this time. This is a short, simple statement, for example:

I have come to the grove on this day (night) to celebrate Samhain, the Feast of Death.

Tree Meditation:

A standard Tree Meditation can be found on page 40 of the Book of Ritual.

The purpose of the Tree Meditation is to allow you to relax, ground and center, and help you get into a frame of mind for ritual. In solitary ritual, the Tree Meditation does not have to be a guided meditation, as it is in group ritual. Rather, the solitary Keltrian can learn the basics of the standard Tree Meditation, and then simply close his/her eyes at this point in the rite and walk through it in his/her mind. Even silently reading the guided meditation from this ritual book in an active way can bring you to the proper frame of mind (and help you learn the meditation as well). If you feel the need for a guided meditation, you might consider making a tape of your own voice guiding the meditation that you can play at the appropriate time in the ritual. With practice, the Tree Meditation becomes second-nature, and you may find that eventually it takes no time at all to become your "tree self" once you set your mind to the task.

Of course, as a Solitary, you would end the meditation just before the part that is intended to establish a group mind. You would eliminate the 9th paragraph, and simply open your eyes as a tree. In the reversal, you would simply eliminate any reference to others, and at the end, open your eyes again as a person.

As you become more adept at the Tree Meditation through practice, you may want to try another popular method of achieving tree-consciousness, which can be found on page 41, paragraph 3 of the Book of Ritual.

Parting the Veil:

Pick up your seashell from the altar and use it to invoke Manannán mac Lir, the Guardian of the Gate to the Otherworld. This is to ask him to "Part the Veil" or "Open the Gate" so that those of the spirit world might pass freely to the ritual space. Hold the shell before you in both hands and say these words or something similar:

O Manannán, Lord of the Headlands, Son of the Sea, Patron of Merchants and Sailors, guardian of the Veil between our world and the Otherworld, I, [magickal name], call to you. You, who commands Wavesweeper; Manannan of the Red Beard, I beseech you, let the mists between the worlds dissolve so that the Old Ones may commune with me.
So be it!

Return the shell to the altar.

The Triad Invocations:

Pick up the cauldron of water from the altar, and, holding it before you in both hands, say the following words or something similar:

> **Ancestors, Old Ones, mothers and fathers of my people, I, [magickal name], reach across the Veil with my words and call to you. You who have anchored my faith, you of times long ago, I call you with the water. I call you with water that is the mighty oceans, with water that is gentle rains. I call you with the water of this sacred vessel, and bid you enter into this water, so that I may be blessed by my communion with you. So be it!**

Anoint yourself on the brow with the water from the cauldron of the Ancestors, saying:

> **With this water, I am given the blessings of the Ancestors.**

Return the cauldron to the altar.

(Note: Many Keltrians use three fingers on the brow all at once to represent the tri-line, while others use one finger and draw the tri-line on the brow one line at a time. Use the method that feels right to you.)

Pick up the cauldron of earth and invoke the Nature Spirits into the cauldron, holding the cauldron before you in both hands and saying these words or something similar:

> **I, [Magickal Name], call you, Nature Spirits: spirit of the bear and of the deer, spirit of the fox and of the hawk. I call the spirits of vegetation: spirit of the oak and of the mistletoe, spirit of the wildflowers and the grasses of the field. I call, too, the mountains and the caves. I call the Hidden Ones: sprites and fairies, dwarves and gnomes. All spirits of this time, of the present, rooted on this earth with me, I call you into this vessel of earth, so that I, your brother/sister, may be blessed by your presence here. So be it!**

Anoint yourself on the brow with the earth from the cauldron of the Nature Spirits, saying:

> **With this earth, I am given the blessings of the Nature Spirits.**

Return the cauldron to the altar.

Pick up the cauldron of incense (be extremely careful; this cauldron can get very HOT), hold the cauldron in both hands before you, and say these words or something similar:

> **O Gods, the preservers, the timekeepers, I, [Magickal Name], send my voice across the waves to you. I beckon you from the ancient sídhes and stone circles. Hear my words! I call you, Tuatha de Danaan, tribe of the Mother, Danu. Come, ride the air to this sacred place and become one with the air of this cauldron, so that I, a member of your tribe, may be blessed by my communion with you. So be it!**

Pick up the feather and waft the smoke from the cauldron of the Gods toward your brow, saying:

> **With the air of the sky, I am given the blessings of the Gods.**

Return the cauldron to the altar.

This ends the standard defining of sacred space that is used at every ritual.

What follows now is an example of a solitary Samhain rite, which is formulaic and can be used in proper alteration to fit any Feast. See the group ritual examples for ideas for each Feast.

Tools: Standard ritual tools; black candle, white candle (see Grove's Choice)

You can decorate your altar with autumn leaves, gourds and pumpkins, Indian corn, "Hallowe'en" - style decorations -- whatever feels right to give you a sense of the Feast of Samhain. (For Imbolc, you might choose to decorate the altar with a Brighid's Cross or another symbol of the returning sun. For Lughnasadh you could decorate with products of the harvest, such as a sheave of wheat or fruits of the season. Be creative! It all helps you to achieve a ritual mindset.)

Explanation of Rite:

Once you have defined sacred space, as above, you may begin the body of the rite by speaking aloud your reason for being in that sacred space at this time. (Remember that, although you may feel like you are alone, there are many beings around you that you can't see who are drawn to your rite and might be listening for your intent, so speaking it aloud is a good practice.) A good example would be:

> **I have come to the Grove this day (night) to celebrate Samhain, the season of endings. At this time, I prepare for transformation; death to rebirth as reflected in this season. On this feast, I honor The Mórrigán, Battle Goddess of Chaos and Death. And I honor The Dagda, the Good God. I have chosen to honor The Mórrigán on this occasion because she is the embodiment of death and chaos. I have chosen to honor The Dagda on this occasion because, as "All-Father," he portends a return to order, and sustains me through the dark time with his Cauldron of Undry. To the Druids, this is a time to celebrate the Gods within us: the Dagda as the wise grandfather, the Mórrigán as the crone. We set places for our ancestors at our tables. We make goals for the new year.**

The idea of this is to spend a few moments considering the implications of the season and the God and Goddess to be honored. Then say:

> **I will now call the God and Goddess to be honored at this feast.**

Calling the Principals and Lighting the Sacred Fire:

Take one altar candle and invoke the Mórrigán from the incense cauldron into the candle flame. Say:

> **O Mórrigán …**

Take the other altar candle in the other hand, and invoke the Dagda into the candle flame. Say:

> **O Dagda…**

Bring the candles together, and kindle the center fire (or center candle) with the God and Goddess candle flames, saying:

> **…with the flames of your spirits, I kindle the sacred fire.**

Return the candles to their respective places on the altar.

Devotional:

Now is the time for a devotional, if you have one. See page 32 of the Book of Ritual for ideas. These are items dedicated in service to the principle God and/or Goddess invoked at the feast. There will be times when you don't have a devotional, and that's okay. It is not a requirement for ritual.

The Offering:

The offering is an actual gift to the Gods. See page 32 of the Book of Ritual for an explanation of the Offerings.

You may place your basket on the altar plate with your offering inside for the blessing. Take the sickle in your right hand and the sacrificial branch in your left hand (or the other way around if you are left-handed). Hold them over the offertory. Say:

> **Mórrigán, Dagda, be strengthened by the energies of these gifts I send to you. So be it!**

Touch the sickle to the branch while holding them over the offertory. This is properly performed by bringing the cutting edge of the sickle straight down from above the extended branch until they touch.

Once the blessing is done, you may place the offertory in the sacred fire, if outdoors. If indoors, you may wrap the offertory in white linen to be burned at a more convenient time…perhaps at your next outdoor ritual.

The Divination:

Say aloud:

> **I will now see what messages the Gods have for me.**

As a Solitary, you must perform every role in the ritual, including acting as your own Seer. Some people find this difficult, but there are several relatively easy ways to divine for oneself. Take your time. Use cards, a scrying mirror, ogham – if you're outside, you can simply look around you for omens – use anything that speaks to you, anything with which you are comfortable. You may want to write down your impressions or your reading for later examination. At a later time, you may even want to share what you received during ritual with a trusted friend, especially if you feel the need for an impartial interpretation.

Grove's Choice:

This is the place in group ritual where the Groves can be creative, and it is no different for a Solitary practitioner. It should be something that is appropriate for the season, of course. For our example, we will use the Grove's Choice from the Group Samhain ritual of this ritual book, adapting it for your solitary use.

Pick up the black candle and light it from the Mórrigán's candle. Meditate on this candle a moment and the qualities of the Mórrigán, then say:

> **This candle represents the Mórrigán, dark crone of death.**

Project into the candle any negative qualities you wish to rid yourself of in the coming year. Once that is done, say:

> **O Mórrigán, at this season of endings, bring an end to the negativity within my life. So be it!**

Blow out the black candle.

Pick up the white candle, light it from the Dagda's candle. Meditate on this candle a moment and the qualities of the Dagda, then say:

> **This candle represents the Dagda.**

Call upon the Dagda's wisdom and generosity and ask him to instill you with positive qualities in the coming year. Project your wishes into the white candle. When that is done, say:

> **O Dagda, at this season of beginnings, bring new beginnings to my life with these wishes. So be it!**

Blow out the white candle.

Remembrances:

These small tokens in some way represent the two Principals of the Feast. For Samhain, we use a black feather (or raisin) for the Mórrigán and beef jerky (or granola) for the Dagda. Remembrances for other Feasts and Patrons can be found on page 33 of the Book of Ritual.

Using raisins and granola, we will walk through the remembrance portion of the rite.

Pick up the bowl of raisins from the altar. Say:

> **Mórrigán, goddess of endings and beginnings, I remember thee through the raisin.**

Before eating the raisins, set a few aside as a libation, either onto the ground or into a libation bowl on the altar. Then eat the remaining raisins. Over the coming year, think of the Mórrigán anytime you see raisins.

Pick up the bowl of granola from the altar. Say:

> **Dagda, I remember thee through the bounty of your Cauldron that sustains me through these dark times.**

Before eating the granola, set some aside as a libation, either onto the ground or into a libation bowl on the altar. Then eat the remaining granola. Over the coming year, think of the Dagda anytime you see granola.

The Blessing:

The chalices, one of mead and one of water, may be placed on the altar plate for the blessing.

(Note: There are two schools of thought on the chalices for Solitary ritual. In group ritual, Keltrians use two chalices for the blessings of the principals; however, some Keltrians feel that only one chalice is necessary for a Solitary ritual, filled with the practitioner's choice of either water or mead, into which the blessings of the principals are then combined. Others feel that there is a balance to be maintained with two chalices, even for Solitary ritual, and so use both the water and the mead. This ritual walk-through will use two chalices, but, as a Solitary, it is your choice as to whether you use one chalice or two in your own Solitary ritual.)

Hold forth the sickle and the branch as before, now over the chalices. Slowly bring the sickle blade to the branch while asking for the blessing of the cups. Say:

> **O Mórrigán …O Dagda…I have given you my adoration and praise. Now I ask that you give me your blessings. Mórrigán, bring to me your transformation. Dagda, bring to me your bounty. So be it!**

Touch blade to branch. Pour a small amount of each chalice on the ground, or, if indoors, into a libation bowl -- to be taken outside after ritual and then poured on the ground.

(You may use the same libation bowl as you did for the remembrances.) Indicate the cups and say:

> **Behold, the waters of transformation and bounty!**

Drink from both or either chalice to receive the blessings of the Principals.

The Closing:

Remember to announce your intent to close the rite to those spirits who have joined you. Say:

> **I have shared in the blessings of the Gods, but now it is time to depart.**

Returning the Patrons:

Take the Goddess altar candle and say:

> **Mórrigán, I thank you for your blessings. The time has come to return to the air with your brethren. Let your spirit return to the Cauldron of Sky. So be it!**

Touch the flame to the incense cauldron, then snuff out the candle.

Take the God altar candle and say:

> **Dagda, I thank you for your blessings. The time has come to return to the air with your brethren. Let your spirit return to the Cauldron of Sky. So be it!**

Touch the flame to the incense cauldron as before, then snuff out the candle.

From this point in this example, the following is standard closing technique and order for every Keltrian ritual.

Thanking the Triads:

The Triads are dismissed in the reverse order of the way they were called.

Pick up the Cauldron of Sky as before. Say something similar to:

> **I thank you, Gods of my People, for your presence at this rite. Through our communion you are strengthened as I am. Now has come the time to close this rite, so go if you must or stay if you will. In love I bid you farewell. So be it!**

Replace the cauldron on the altar. Thank the remaining of the Triads in the same fashion -- the Nature Spirits, and then the Ancestors.

Closing the Veil:

Pick up the shell and hold it out as before. Say, for example:

> **O Manannán mac Lir, Lord of the Headlands, Keeper of the Veil, I, [Magickal Name], give you thanks for Parting the Veil during this rite so that the spirits of the Ancestors, the Nature Spirits, and the Gods could pass more freely between the worlds. But now it is time for this ritual to end, so, if you must, allow the Veil to thicken again. So be it.**

Replace the shell on the altar.

Reversing the Tree Meditation:

Reversal on page 41 of the Book of Ritual. Reconnect with your tree-self, and eliminate references to groups as you reverse the meditation. This is a time to drain off any excess energy you might be retaining from the ritual. Give it back to the earth and sky.

Parting Statement:

This statement, said aloud, will help you return to a mundane state of consciousness and will allow any lingering spirits to understand that the ritual is truly over. Say:

> **I have received the blessings of [Goddess name] and [God name], patron and matron of this Feast. Now let me go forth, refreshed by our communion and strengthened in my knowledge. I walk with the blessings of the Gods. I walk with wisdom.**

* * *

It is our hope that, by this example, you will understand how simple it is to convert a group Keltrian ritual into a solitary Keltrian ritual.

Though there are some disadvantages to being solitary, there are sometimes great advantages as well. One of the advantages that we can see is that you will be trained in all aspects of Keltrian ritual, and so have no trouble taking any role that may be requested of you should you have the opportunity to join other Keltrians for ritual in future. Happy learning!

Figure 5 Keltrian Druid Sigil.

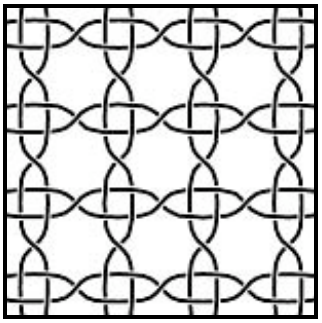


Figure 6 ConservativeDruid Sigil Pattern.

Cauldron Online Druid Ritual Variations 1998-1999

While doing a random search of the internet for posted RDNA liturgies, I ran across a website for a group called Cauldron which had borrowed a number of elements from the RDNA Order of Worship, and ran them in real-time on the internet. I'm not sure who Randall is though, but would appreciate getting in touch with him. I liked the idea, a little, and collected as many as I could, with some minor editing and present them here as a framework for possible use with members unable to physically meet. –Mike 2003.

1999 Online Spring Equinox

By Randall
On-Line Log for Cauldron

Introduction:

Randall: I want to welcome everyone to The Cauldron's Ostara Ritual. For the sake of any who may have never attended one of our online rituals, I will mention a few things: This is not a particularly Wiccan ritual, although like most modern Pagan rituals, there are many common elements. This ritual has many elements taken from "Reformed Druid" ritual. We will be grounding and centering, casting a circle, calling the quarters, and deities, celebrating spring, and charging the Waters of Life. Finally we will eat and be merry.

Meditation:

Randall: [Leads a meditation]

I want all of you to relax.... leaving your fingers lightly on the keyboard.
Take a deep breath... Hold it... Let it out slowly....
Do it again, taking in a calm, peaceful feeling....
Letting out the cares and distractions of everyday life.
Another breath and you feel the mundane world drawing away...
Another breath and you smell the first breath of spring bourne on the wings of the March winds
Continue to breath and relax...
Until you feel yourself enter that place that exists between the worlds, not in this world and not in the next.
This is the Place between Worlds....
You are very welcome here.

Invocation:

Randall: I draw this circle to contain and protect out ritual. From Keyboard to Keyboard, I connect us. We come here in friendship and desire to reach beyond ourselves and touch the Gods. By our will, the circle is now cast.

MIRIAT: Living spirit of the East, we call to you. Airy Sylphs, Powers of Intellect, Strength of the Whirlwind and pleasant scents of the dawning. Spring come join us, be witness to this rite help our minds to think as one. Welcome and Blessed Be

Ann: Guardians of the South, Lords of Fire, bless us with your presence and join our Circle, if You will. Bless and guard our rite! <>
Solstice: From the womb of the seas, Spirits of the West, powers of water and inspiration, we ask that you would join us and let us taste of your sweet rejuvenating flow, as we gather together, circled in spirit, and intent <>
Sieglinde: Powers of the North, of the Earth, be with us here, bless us with the spirit of the green growing things of earth. Bless us with the living things that crawl upon the earth, be with us here today and give us the strength that we need. Blessed Be.

Randall: This is the appointed place. Now is the appointed time.
We come to worship the Gods.
The Gods are everywhere....but we worship Them here.
The Gods are without form....but worship them in these forms.
We offer them our prayers, sacrifices, and worship. Each of us in our own way.

Randall: I call upon the Lady of the Moon, of the Earth and of the mysterious waters from which life began and to which all must return. Be among us now as Maiden of the forest, the fair one who brings joy and new life, to break the winter's stillness and silence.

Randall: Mighty Lord of Day, the Shining One, the spark of the Sun now renewing life in the fields, I call you forth as the laughing God of the green woods with your pipes and cloven hooves, please join us here, and with your warmth let life be born anew.

Randall: If you wish to invite another deity into our circle, please do so now.
Ann: My Prince, I ask your presence here and welcome you with joy!
Sieglinde: I call upon Ostara, Lady of the Spring, bring your soft breezes.
YANNELL: I invite Madame Pele and Lono, God of Plenty.
MIRIAT: I call upon, Ra, Lord of the Sun.
Randall: I call upon mighty Athena, lend us your wisdom.
Gypsydove: I invite Aine...Goddess of the fairies.
Randall: [Anyone else....?]
Solstice: I call upon my Lady to join with us today, and bless us with her gifts of fertility and creation. With the birth and renewal of not only flesh, but of spirit, and of mind.

Purpose:

Randall: Today we celebrate the awakening of Mother Earth from her winter slumbers. With the return of the Maiden from the underworld, life returns throughout the lands.

The nights were long, the trees had shed,
The days were short, and life had fled.
The winds were cold, the land seemed dead,
But the Sun now returns from Southern Lands
Plants spring up on every hand,
"Let life return!" is the Maiden's command.
The Sun grows stronger every day.
The world goes lush and life holds sway.
The Day will conquer the Night.

Candle Lighting:

Randall: If you have a candle, light it now. See the light of the returning Sun in the flame of your candle. Feel the warmth of the reborn world flow into your body and spirit.

Randall: Join with me as we celebrate Spring.
(Repeat after Randall)
We call forth the Gentle Rains!
We call forth the Fertile Earth!
We call forth the Warm Sun!
We call forth the Soft Breezes!
Come forth, Maiden of the Forest!
O Lord! O Lady!
For this renewal of life and light, we thank you.

Waters of Life:

Randall: [We are about to create the Waters of Life. During this part of the ritual hold your open power hand (probably the one you write with), palm down, over your glass of water. As I speak and type the words that follow this description, imagine the warmth and power of the reborn Earth coming from the ground beneath your feet and flowing throughout your body to radiate from the palm of your open hand into your glass of water. See the brilliant light charging the water with Earth energy. If you have a specific need (e.g. health, knowledge, etc.) you will have a chance to ask the Gods for their aid (either publicly or privately as you choose) during this ritual.]

Randall: O Mighty Ones, all ye Gods and Goddesses around us and within us, we have called upon you and you have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and you have accepted. Each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill your ways. Hear now your children and help us to help ourselves as you will.
If you have a request or need, please state it now, either publicly by typing it or silently as you prefer. When you have done so and are ready to continue.

Randall: O Earth Mother,
We thank thee that seed springeth,
that flower openeth,
that grass waveth.

We thank thee for winds that whisper
through the graceful elm,
through the shapely maple,
through the lively pine,
through the shining birch,
through the mighty oak.

We thank thee for all things
O Earth Mother,
who giveth life.

Randall: [To charge your water, Please type the following six lines as I do.]

Randall: Lord and Lady,
hallow these waters by thy sevenfold powers,
and by the three ways of day
and one of night.
Let Earth power flow through us and into
the Waters of Life.

Randall: Feel the power finish flowing through you. When it has and you are ready to continue, type <>.

Randall: Take a small sip of the Waters of Life. Feel the energies that have been hidden deep in the Earth during the cold, dark winter flow into your body with that sip, feel that which you most need flow into you.
Take another sip and feel the love of the Gods empower you.
Take a third small sip and feel the light of truth and knowledge shining within you.

Randall: Type <> when you are ready to continue.

Libation:

Randall: Now, with a small portion of your Waters of Life, water the plant beside you. See the Earth energies concentrated in the waters enter into the plant and begin its own transformation to Spring. Say (don't type) the following as you do this: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, may Spring burst forth around us.

Randall: When this ritual is finished, take the rest of your Waters of Life outside and pour the waters back into the Earth, repeating the above phase as you do. If you wish, you may pour the Waters a little bit at a time near your favorite plants. If you are in an area where drought is expected this year, you can fling the Waters from your fingertips to encourage rain instead of pouring.

Benediction:

Randall: Now we come to the last part of the ritual. Ghost would love if she were here.
Hold your food before you in front of the monitor screen.

We do ask, O Earth Maiden,
That your blessings may surround us.
We thank you for the plentiful food,
The bounty of the Earth, Sky and Sea.
Cast Your blessing upon this bounty,
So we will be strengthened in Your love
And enter the new season with joy.

(::sketching the druid symbol in blue fire::)

Randall: Sample your food and refresh your energies before we close the circle. When you are ready to continue, type "<>".

Devocation:

Randall: Miria, please thank and dismiss East (Type <> when done)
MIRIAT: Living Spirit of the East, We thank you for joining in our circle. May there always be peace between us. Go if you must, stay if you will. Farewell and Blessed be. <>
Randall: Ann, please thank and dismiss South (Type <> when done)
Ann: Guardians of the South, Lords of Fire, we thank you for your presence and blessing. :)
Stay if you will, go if you must, and be welcome always. <>
Randall: Solstice, please thank and dismiss West (Type <> when done)

Solstice: Spirits of the West, we invite you to stay on with us, as your presence is welcome, but if you must depart, go with our thanks. <>

Randall: Sieglinde, please thank and dismiss North (Type <> when done)

Sieglinde: Powers of the North, thank you for being with us here today.

Thank you for your bounty.

Go if you must, stay if you will Blessed Be. <>

Partings:

Randall: If you called another deity here, please thank and bid them farewell now. (Type <> when finished)

Ann: Thank you for coming, my Prince. Stick around if you want, or go back to work if you gotta. <>

Sieglinde: Thank you Lady Spring, Ostara for your presence at this rite. Stay if you will Go if you must. Blessed Be. <>

Randall: Athena, we thank thee for thy wisdom. Go if you must, stay if you will. <>

MIRIAT: Thank you Ra, Lord of the Sun, Shining One, for your presence here today. Go if you must, stay if you will, farewell and Blessed Be.

Gypsydove: Aine....Goddess of the fairies....thank you for being here with us. Stay if you will Go if you must. Soft Winds and Blessed Be.

Solstice: My Lady, I give you my thanks for joining with us this day. I thank you for the blessings that you have so generously bestowed onto those present. I bid you farewell, if part you must, but stay and be with us further, if it should please you. <>

YANNELL: Thank you Pele, thank you Lono for your presence and Blessing. Go if you must, stay if you will. Blessed Be!

Randall: Lord and Lady, Honored Guests gathered here with us... We are grateful for the support and wisdom you have shared with us as life renews this Spring. Go if you must, but know that you are always welcome to remain.

Closure:

Randall: This Circle is now ended. But what we have shared here will never end... only grow. Go in peace and fellowship. Merry Meet, Merry Part, Merry Meet Again!

Figure 7 Class of 1888 Stone in front of Library.

1999 Online Beltane

By Randall

On-Line Log for Cauldron

This is the log of our online Beltane ritual of May 9, 1999. This log has been edited to remove extraneous comments.

Introduction:

Randall: I want to welcome everyone to The Cauldron's Beltane Ritual. For the sake of any who may have never attended one of our online rituals, I will mention a few things: This is not a particularly Wiccan ritual, although like most modern Pagan rituals, there are many common elements. This ritual has many elements taken from "Reformed Druid" ritual. We will be grounding and centering, casting a circle, calling the quarters, and deities, celebrating spring, and charging the Waters of Life. Finally we will eat and be merry.

Meditation:

Randall: [Leads a meditation]

I want all of you to relax.... leaving your fingers lightly on the keyboard.

Take a deep breath... Hold it... Let it out slowly....

Do it again, taking in a calm, peaceful feeling....

Letting out the cares and distractions of everyday life.

Another breath and you feel the mundane world drawing away...

Another breath and you smell the first breath of spring bourne on the wings of the March winds

Continue to breath and relax...

Until you feel yourself enter that place that exists between the worlds, not in this world and not in the next.

This is the Place between Worlds....

You are very welcome here.

Invocation:

Randall: I draw this circle to contain and protect out ritual. From Keyboard to Keyboard, I connect us. We come here in friendship and desire to reach beyond ourselves and touch the Gods. By our will, the circle is now cast.

Randall: Teleri, please call the spirits of the East<>

Teleri: By her breath I call her <>

Randall: Ann, south

Ann: Lords of the South, Guardians of Fire, we ask that you join us and lend your energies and protection to this Circle! <>

Randall: Jade, West please

JADEGRAY: Powers of the West, Spirits of Water, of the Ocean from whence we all came. We invite you to our Beltaine rite, be with us now <>

Randall: Sieglinde, North

Sieglinde: Spirits of the North, guardians of the mountain fastness, guardians of the earth, be here now. <>

Randall: This is the appointed place. Now is the appointed time.

We come to worship the Gods.

The Gods are everywhere....but we worship Them here.

The Gods are without form....but worship them in these forms.
We offer them our prayers, sacrifices, and worship. Each of us in our own way.

Randall: Mighty Lord of the Hunt, the Shining One, the spark of the Sun now quicking the fields, I call you forth. Young Sun King, Horned One, Stag Spirit wild and free. Come dance and sing with the Maid of Spring. We come to celebrate thy joining with our Lady. We ask thee to attend our rite.

Randall: I call upon the Lady of the Moon, of the Earth and of the mysterious waters from which life began and to which all must return. Lovely Maiden, Mother, Wise One be a flame within our hearts today that grows in energy as we come to celebrate thy joining with our Lord, we ask thee to attend our rite.

Randall: If you wish to invite another into our circle, please do so. Type <> when you are finished.
Teleri: My children <>
Ann: My Fire-winged Prince, join us if you will! <>
Randall: Wise Athena, lend us your wisdom, guard us with your spear. <>
Ginny: Bridget and Joan, please come <>

Purpose:

Randall: The Lord has reached the end of his journey through the cold and darkness, to find the Lady awaiting him with warm and comfort. This is a time for joy and a time for sharing. Now is the time that seeds should be spilled. Togetherness brings bliss and fills the Earth with abundance.

Candle Lighting:

Randall: If you have a candle, light it now. See the blinding light of joy in the flame of your candle. Feel the afterglow of our Lord and Lady's mating flow into your body and spirit and renew your life as it renews nature. Type <> When you are ready to continue.

Waters of Life:

Randall: [We are about to create the Waters of Life. During part this ritual (I'll tell you when) hold your wand or athame in power hand (probably the one you write with) and insert the wand or athame into the liquid in your glass of fruit juice or water. As I speak and type the words that follow the instruction to do this, imagine the light and power of the Sun shining on the crown of your head and flowing throughout your body to radiate from your magickal tool into your glass of juice or water. See the brilliant light charging the water with bright solar energy, the seed of the Lord. If you have a specific need e.g. health, knowledge, etc.) you will have a chance to ask the Gods for their aid (either publicly or privately as you choose) during this ritual. Please type <> when you are ready to begin.]

Randall: O Might Ones, all ye Gods and Goddesses around us and within us, we have called upon you and you have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and you have accepted. Each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill your ways. Hear now your children and help us to help ourselves as you will.

If you have a request or need, please state it now, either publicly by typing it or silently as you prefer. Type <> when you have done so and are ready to continue.

Randall: Please join with me in giving thanks to the Lady [Just type the words I do.]

Randall: O Earth Mother,
We thank thee that seed springeth,
that flower openeth,
that grass waveth.

We thank thee for winds that whisper
through the graceful elm,
through the shapely maple,
through the lively pine,
through the shining birch,
through the mighty oak.

We thank thee for all things
O Earth Mother,
who giveth life.

Randall: [Stop repeating what I type and insert your athame or wand into your glass of water. SAY (not type) the following words as I type them.]
Randall: Lord and Lady, hallow these waters by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Let thy power flow through us and into the Waters of Life. [Type <> when you are ready to continue]

Randall: Feel the power finish flowing through you. When it has, you may set your wand or athame down. When you are ready to continue, type <>.
Randall: Take a small sip of the Waters of Life. Feel the warmth of the Beltane Sun and the strength of the Earth flow into your body with that sip. Take another and feel the love of the Gods empower you. Take a third small sip and feel the light of truth and knowledge shining within you.

Libation:

Randall: Now drink all but a small portion of the Waters and feel that which your need most flow into you. After the ritual is concluded, pour the remainder of the Waters onto the earth as a libation to the Gods. [Type <> when you are ready to continue]

Benediction:

Randall: Set your food before you and hold your power hand over it.
We do ask, O Lord and Lady, Newly wed,
That your blessings may surround us.
We thank you for the plentiful food,
The bounty of the Earth, Sky and Sea.
Cast Your blessing upon this bounty,
So we will be strengthened in Your love
(::sketching the druid symbol in blue fire::)

Randall: Sample your food and refresh your energies before we close the circle. When you are ready to continue, type <>

Partings:

Randall: If you called anyone special, please give them leave to depart if they wish now.
Ann: My Prince, thank you for your presence. Stay if you will, leave if you must.
Randall: Mighty Athena, with thank you for your wisdom sublime and your guardian spear. Go if you must, stay if you will. <>
Ginny: Thank you Bridget and Joan, go if you must, stay if you will<>
Teleri: my children go as you came. <>

Randall: Lord and Lady, Honored Guests gathered here with us.... We are grateful for the support and wisdom you have shared with us at this time. Go if you must, but know that you are always welcome to remain.

Devocation:

Randall: Teleri, if you will thank the Spirits of the East, please.
Teleri: Spirits of the East, go if you must, stay if you will <>
Randall: Ann, the south?
Ann: Lords of the South, guardians of Flame, we thank you for your presence. Go if you must, stay if you will. <>
Randall: Jade, the West
JADEGRAY: Powers of the West, of feeling and emotion, thank you for joining our rite today. Go if you must, stay if you will.<>
Randall: Sieglinde, North.
Sieglinde: Spirits of the North, the earth, than you for your presence here, Go if you must, stay if you will. <>

Closure:

Randall: This Circle is now ended. But what we have shared here will never end... only grow. Go in peace and fellowship. Merry Meet, Merry Part, Merry Meet Again!

Figure 8 The Hill of Three Oaks, Lughnasadh 1993

1998 Online Midsummer

By Randall
On-Line Log for Cauldron

This is the log of our online Midsummer ritual of June 21, 1998. This log has been edited to remove extraneous comments.

Introduction:

Randall: I think we'll go ahead and start now. It's 10 after. I want to welcome everyone to the Grove's Midsummer Ritual. For the sake of any who may have never attended one of our online rituals, I will mention a few things: This is not a particularly Wiccan Ritual, although like most modern Pagan rituals, there are many common elements. This ritual has many elements taken from my "Eclectic Druid" ritual. We will be grounding and centering, casting a circle, calling the quarters and deities, celebrating the Solstice and charging the Waters of Life.

Randall: If you don't have something I call for, then imagine yourself having the item and doing the action called for. Any questions or comments before the ritual starts?

Meditation:

Randall: [Leads a meditation]

I want all of you to relax.... leaving your fingers lightly on the keyboard.
Take a deep breath... Hold it... Let it out slowly....
Do it again, taking in a calm, peaceful feeling....
Letting out the cares and distractions of everyday life.
Another breath and you feel the mundane world drawing away...
Another breath and you smell the first breath of spring bourne on the wings of the March winds
Continue to breath and relax...
Until you feel yourself enter that place that exists between the worlds, not in this world and not in the next.
This is the Place between Worlds....
You are very welcome here.
Type <> when you are grounded and centered, and ready to go on.

Invocation:

Randall: I draw this circle to contain and protect out ritual. From Keyboard to Keyboard, I connect us. We come here in friendship and desire to reach beyond ourselves and touch the Gods. By our will, the circle is now cast.

Randall: Spirits of the East, South, West, and North, Slyphs of Air, Salamanders of Fire, Undines of Water, and Gnomes of Earth, I ask you to be present to witness and aid our rite.

Randall: This is the appointed place. Now is the appointed time.
We come to worship the Gods.
The Gods are everywhere....but we worship Them here.
The Gods are without form....but worship them in these forms.

We offer them our prayers, sacrifices, and worship. Each of us in our own way.

Randall: I call upon the Lady, the Earth Mother, the spirit of all that lives upon the Earth, swims beneath the waters, and flies through the air. With joy in our hearts and a song on our lips, we ask thee to attend our rite.

Randall: I call upon the Lord, the Shining One, the spirit of truth and light, the spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of the sun. On this longest day of the year, we ask thee to attend our rite.

Randall: If you wish to invite another into our circle, please do so. Type <> when you are finished.
Ann: My Prince, join us and be welcome! :) <>
D&P: We invite Pele, Lono, Dianna, Isis and Herne <>
Randall: Athena, Freya, Frigga, and other who watch over me, be welcome here.<>

Purpose:

Randall: Join with me as welcome the Summer Sun. (Just type the words I do)
Hail the Sun of Summer!
Golden One, Brightest, Warmth of the Green Earth
Hail the Sun of Summer!
Crown of Striving, Gem of the Heavens, First among Daylights
Hail the Sun of Summer!
Eye of Burning, Fire of Noontide, Heat of the Forge
Hail the Sun of Summer!

Candle Lighting:

Randall: If you have a candle, light it now. See the light of Sun in the flame of your candle. Feel the light of the Summer Sun flow into your body and spirit, giving you the energy to face the darkening half of the year before us with a light heart. Type <> when you are ready to continue.

Waters of Life:

Randall: [Long explanation, please wait for the entire paragraph ;)] We are about to create the Waters of Life. Hold your open power hand (probably the one you write with), palm down, over your glass of fruit juice or water. As I speak and type the words that follow this description, imagine the light and power of the Sun shining on the crown of your head and flowing throughout your body to radiate from the palm of your open hand into your glass of juice or water. See the brilliant light charging the water with bright solar energy, the bounty of the Summer to come. If you have a specific need (e.g. health, knowledge, etc.) you may ask the Gods for their aid as you do this. Please type <> when you are ready to begin.

Randall: O Earth Mother,
We thank thee that seed springeth,
that flower openeth,
that grass waveth.

We thank thee for winds that whisper
through the graceful elm,
through the shapely maple,
through the lively pine,
through the shining birch,
through the mighty oak.

We thank thee for all things
O Earth Mother,
who giveth life.

Randall: Lord and Lady,
hallow these waters by thy sevenfold powers,
and by the three ways of day
and one of night.
Let Earth power flow through us and into
the Waters of Life.

Randall: Feel the power finish flowing through you. When it has and you are ready to continue, type <>.

Randall: Take a small sip of the Waters of Life. Feel the love of the Gods empower you. Take a third small sip and feel the light of truth and knowledge shining within you. When you are ready to continue, type <>

Libation:

Randall: Now drink all but a small portion of the Waters and feel that which your need most flow into you. After the ritual is concluded, pour the remainder of the Waters onto the earth as a libation to the Gods. When you are ready to continue, type <>

Commentary:

Randall: If anyone has any comments or words they'd like to add before we close the circle, now is the time. ;)

Devocation:

Randall: Okay, In that case, we'll close things down.

Randall: Spirits of the East, South, West, and North, Slyphs of Air, Salamanders of Fire, Undines of Water, and Gnomes of Earth, we thank you for your presence and your aid at our ritual. Go if you must, stay if you will.
Randall: Lord and Lady, Honored Guests gathered here with us.... We are grateful for the support and wisdom You have shared with us at this time. Go if you must, but know that You are always welcome to remain.

Closure:

Randall: This Circle is now ended. But what we have shared here will never end... only grow. Go in peace and fellowship. Merry Meet, Merry Part, Merry Meet Again!

Randall: Thank you all for attending and participating!

Figure 9 Beware the entanglements of red tape and red ribbons!

1998 Online Lughnsadah

By Randall
On-Line Log for Cauldron

This is the log of our online Lughnasadh ritual of August 9, 1998. This log has been edited to remove extraneous comments.

Introduction:

Randall: I want to welcome everyone to the Grove's Lughnasadh Ritual. For the sake of any who may have never attended one of our online rituals, I will mention a few things: This is not a particularly Wiccan ritual, although like most modern Pagan rituals, there are many common elements. This ritual has many elements taken from "Reformed Druid" ritual. We will be grounding and centering, casting a circle, calling the quarters, and deities, celebrating the harvest, and charging the Waters of Life. Finally we will eat and be merry.

Randall: If you don't have something I call for, then imagine yourself having the item and doing the action called for. Any questions or comments before the ritual starts?

Meditation:

Randall: [Leads a meditation]

I want all of you to relax.... leaving your fingers lightly on the keyboard.
Take a deep breath... Hold it... Let it out slowly....
Do it again, taking in a calm, peaceful feeling....
Letting out the cares and distractions of everyday life.
Another breath and you feel the mundane world drawing away...
Another breath and you smell the first breath of spring bourne on the wings of the March winds
Continue to breath and relax...
Until you feel yourself enter that place that exists between the worlds, not in this world and not in the next.
This is the Place between Worlds....
You are very welcome here.
Type <> when you are grounded and centered, and ready to go on.

Invocation:

Randall: I draw this circle to contain and protect out ritual. From Keyboard to Keyboard, I connect us. We come here in friendship and desire to reach beyond ourselves and touch the Gods. By our will, the circle is now cast.

Randall: Spirits of the East, South, West, and North, Slyphs of Air, Salamanders of Fire, Undines of Water, and Gnomes of Earth, I ask you to be present to witness and aid our rite.

Randall: This is the appointed place. Now is the appointed time.
We come to worship the Gods.
The Gods are everywhere....but we worship Them here.
The Gods are without form....but worship them in these forms.
We offer them our prayers, sacrifices, and worship. Each of us in our own way.

Randall: I call upon the Lady of the Moon, of the Earth and of the mysterious waters from which life began and to which all must return. At this time of harvest, we ask thee to attend our rite.

Randall: Mighty Lord of Day, the Shining One, the spark of the Sun now gone into the fields, I call you forth at this harvestide, we ask thee to attend our rite.

Randall: If you wish to invite another into our circle, please do so. Type <> when you are finished.

Randall: Athena, be present and lend us your wisdom. <>
Phyllis: I invite my Lady Tonan/Guadalupe to join and attend our rite. <>

Purpose:

Randall: Today We honor Lugh, the Shining Young Hero, the Sacred King. He is the Master of All Skills, the Holy Champion who turns aside drought and storm, protecting the earth.
May the strength of Lugh be over us,
May the beauty of Lugh delight us,
May the skill of Lugh be upon us.

Randall: Join with me as we celebrate the Harvest. (Just type the words I do)

[Here the screen scrolled a lot as Phyllis' cat decided to join the ritual at the last minute. :>]

Randall: The rivers flow and give us drink,
The thunder cracks and heralds rain,
The Earth is fertile and full of Life,
The sun is still bright and
Its light shines on us today.
The plants give fruits and then do die.
We eat the fruits and they give us life.
Thy life is here in us today.
O Lord! O Lady!
For this harvest bounty we thank thee.

Candle Lighting:

Randall: [Stop typing what I do now.] If you have a candle, light it now. See the blinding light of Lugh in the flame of your candle. Feel the light of the Harvest Sun flow into your body and spirit. Type <> when you are ready to continue.

Bounty of Life:

Randall: Cup your hands over your bread or fruit and feel the energy of life stored in this fruit of the harvest radiate into your hands. [Please repeat the following three lines as I type them.]
Randall: Behold the bounty of the Lady
Formed with the energy of the Lord
The fruit and grain of life

Randall: Take a bite of your bread or fruit, accepting the bounty of the harvest into your life. After the ritual, offer the rest to the birds and small animals outside. [Please type <> where you are ready to continue]

Waters of Life:

Randall: [We are about to create the Waters of Life. During this part of the ritual hold your open power hand (probably the one you write with), palm down, over your glass of fruit juice or water. As I speak and type the words that follow this description, imagine the light and power of the Sun

Randall: Shining on the crown of your head and flowing throughout your body to radiate from the palm of your open hand into your glass of juice or water. See the brilliant light charging the water with bright solar energy, the bounty of the Summer has provided us. If you have a specific need (e.g. health, knowledge, etc.) you will have a chance to ask the Gods for their aid (either publicly or privately as you choose) during this ritual. Please type <> when you are ready to begin.]

Randall: O Mighty Ones, all ye Gods and Goddesses around us and within us, we have called upon you and you have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and you have accepted. Each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill your ways. Hear now your children and help us to help ourselves as you will.

Randall: If you have a request or need, please state it now, either publicly by typing it or silently as you prefer. Type <> when you have done so and are ready to continue.

Randall: [Place your hand over your glass]

Randall: O Earth Mother,
We thank thee that seed springeth,
that flower openeth,
that grass waveth.

We thank thee for winds that whisper
through the graceful elm,
through the shapely maple,
through the lively pine,
through the shining birch,
through the mighty oak.

We thank thee for all things
O Earth Mother,
who giveth life.

Randall: [Please type the following 6 lines as I do.]
Randall: Lord and Lady,
hallow these waters by thy sevenfold powers,
and by the three ways of day
and one of night.
Let Earth power flow through us and into
the Waters of Life.

Randall: Feel the power finish flowing through you. When it has and you are ready to continue, type <>.

Randall: Take a small sip of the Waters of Life. Feel the warmth of the Harvest Sun and the strength of the Earth flow into your body with that sip. Take another and feel the love of the Gods empower you. Take a third small sip and feel the light of truth and knowledge shining within you.

Libation:

Randall: Now drink all but a small portion of the Waters and feel that which your need most flow into you. After the ritual is concluded, pour the remainder of the Waters onto the earth as a libation to the Gods.

Commentary:

Randall: [If anyone feels moved to add anything before we close the circle, now is the time. ;)]

Devocation:

Randall: Spirits of the East, South, West, and North, Slyphs of Air, Salamanders of Fire, Undines of Water, and Gnomes of Earth, we thank you for your presence and your aid at our ritual. Go if you must, stay if you will.

Randall: Lord and Lady, Honored Guests gathered here with us.... We are grateful for the support and wisdom you have shared with us at this first harvest. Go if you must, but know that you are always welcome to remain.

Closure:

Randall: This Circle is now ended. But what we have shared here will never end... only grow. Go in peace and fellowship. Merry Meet, Merry Part, Merry Meet Again!

Figure 10 Sticks and Stones, next to the Chapel, 2004.

1999 Online Lughnasadh

By Randall
On-Line Log for Cauldron

This is the log of our online Lughnasadh ritual of August 8, 1999. This log has been edited to remove extraneous comments.

All the contents are more or less the same as 1998 Lughnasadh Ritual Log except, after the candle lighting, the following poem is read from "A Pagan Carmina Gadelica" by Mike Nichols:

On the feast day of Tailtiu the bountiful,
Foster-mother of Lugh of the fields,
I cut me a handful of the new corn,
I dried it gently in the sun,
I rubbed it sharply from the husk
With mine own palms.

I ground it in a quern on Friday,
I baked it on a fan of sheepskin,
I toasted it to a fire of rowan,
And I shared it round my people.

I went deosil round my dwelling,
Calling upon the Great Mother,
Who promised abundance in my need,
In peace, in honour,
In lightness of heart,
In labour, in love,
In wisdom, in passion,
In mirth, in reverence,
For the sake of thy love.
Thou Mother of blessings,
Who will ever be about me,
Who will ever be within me,
Until the end of desire.
So mote it be.

Figure 11 The Grove of Grove's stone, 2004.

Order of Common Worship

For the Order of Mithril Star
By Iopanus, Sybok, Ceridwen, and the Mother Grove
(Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd)
Circa 2001

Finding a place is in itself a ritual sometimes. Usually a grove of trees is the best place, but anywhere that is a natural setting with plenty of privacy will do. Indoor spaces are all right also, but weather permitting; I feel that the best rites take place outdoors.

If the Grove can afford it, it's nice to own ten or more acres of woods, within which is a natural circular space. Within that space it's nice to have permanent altars set up in each of the horizontal quarters, with items appropriate to their correspondences on each (see the "Table of Correspondences" at the end of this lesson). For large outdoor rites I favor those "Tiki torches" for illumination at those locations as well. Make sure the fuel used has a high flash-point (needs high heat to ignite). White gas is too dangerous, but a fuel that will only burn with a floating wick should be safe. There are also propane fueled torches that burn for several hours and give off plenty of light. They also feature safety switches that shut off if toppled. They just don't have that natural flame ambiance.

Just south of the center of the circle space should be your fire ring (if it's a night time rite) and a small blaze should be well under way as people arrive for the rite. Fire safety is a major concern, or should be for Druids. Keep fire fighting equipment handy whenever there is any bare flame (meaning non-bulb/electric lighting), even lanterns and lamps, being used. The US Forest Service has a class on safe camping that is a valuable resource.

Just north of the center of the circle should be the main altar upon which should be everything needed for the rite, as well as any decorative items appropriate to the work planned. One of those portable canopies is really nice for daytime rites. This is again, a general format. You wouldn't have any altars for a Beltaine rite involving a May pole, since the pole would be the central thing.

You can do the same type of thing on property you do not own, but the altars and such must then be portable.

Depending upon the weather and climate, the Grove may wish to either be Robbed (Clothed) for the rites, or "Skyclad" (unclothed - naked - nude, except for ritual jewelry and accoutrements such as the HP's antlers or the HPS's crescent and moon headpiece, and each Druid's Mithril Star pendant). If weather and climate are agreeable, then "Skyclad" is best, since it illustrates the "perfect love and perfect trust" that should be present among waterkin.

If using Robes, the hooded type is best, usually in earth tones or black or green. (Some Druid groups insist on White - we feel this is a) impractical - white is hard to clean once it gets dirty, b) a stupid attempt to emulate our ancestors (In Caesar's notes about the Druids, he says they all wore white robes. He also says they were barbarians who practiced human sacrifice. Who wants to believe the enemy anyway?)

The Grove would be robbed in the procession, and would disrobe once in circle (weather, other circumstances, permitting). Either robbed or skyclad, you are usually skyclad (an exception would be a physical condition that would make it impractical) under the robe.

Shoes: This business of ALWAYS being barefoot which some traditions practice is I believe, impractical and dangerous. Wear sandals, or wear dark colored sneakers. Being

barefoot out of doors in the woods (especially at night) is just asking for trouble.

THE SACRIFICE: Any small cutting from any vegetation will do. When harvesting the sacrifice, take a moment thank the plant for it's offering, and pray for the plant to heal over.

ROLES: It the ritual format to follow, the Grove must pick those who will fulfill the following rolls:

Preceptor:
Server: Serves the Water of Life
HP: High Priest – Co-Officiate with the HPs (Usually the Arch-Druid (if a male)
HPs: High Priestess – Co-Officiate with the HP (Usually the Arch-Druid (if a female)

All rituals follow a formula or script. The Mithril Star, for the most part, follows the following Order of Common Worship:

Preparatory Details

The caregl is filled with the Waters-of-Life.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess (HP/HPs) who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Arch-Druid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The HP may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

(Note: This invocation is "suggested" – you can substitute your own if you like. Also, though Be'al and Dalon Ap Landu are traditional to RDNA groups, you may wish to pick from deities from your own favorite pantheon, whether Celtic, Greek, Hindi, Egyptian, Buddhist, Shintoist, Daoist, etc., ALL are acceptable in the big family of OMS)

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn, Sequoia Sempervirons. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their ffons to mark the Mithril Star upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The HP & HPs step into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two ffons.

The Pledge

Led by the Preceptor, the group recites the OMS Pledge:

"In dedication to the celebration of Life in its many forms, I hereby declare my commitment to a way of life that is ethical, benevolent, humanistic, life-affirming, ecstatic and ecologically sane. I subscribe to means and methods that are creative rather than destructive, tolerant rather than authoritarian, gentle rather than violent, inclusive rather than exclusive, egalitarian rather than hierarchal. I pledge myself to harmonious eco-psychic awareness with the total biosphere of holy Mother Earth."

"Like an ancient Redwood, I would have my roots deep in the Earth and my branches reaching for the stars, the stars not only above but around me, my fellow humans, for "every man and woman is a star," and "the good of the many outweighs the good of the few," 'from each according to his/her abilities, to each according to his/her needs."

"I acknowledge my personal responsibility for myself, to my fellow humans, and to the whole of Nature; and I recognize this total responsibility, in each of us, as the source of our infinite freedom to become who we are and do what we will. I dedicate myself to my own inner growth and development that I may be of greater service to myself and the world around me. For these reasons I recognize Divinity both within and without, and I say to myself and to all those gathered with me here: THOU ART GOD/DESS."

The Sacrifice

The HPs holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

HPs: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds.
Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

**The "quarters" are guardian spirits who bring the energy or quality of the elements into the magick of the circle. The Mithril Star is different than most traditions in this regard because we recognize seven elements rather than the usual four. This is a melding of Celtic tradition (which has three) and the Western ceremonial magickal tradition. Here is a table of the elements which shows how they correspond with the directions and the Celtic tradition:*

Direction	Color	Element	Day	Planet	Celtic
East	Gold	Air	Fri	Venus	Sky
South	Red	Fire	Tues	Mars	Sky/Sea Earth
West	Blue	Water	Mon	Moon	Sea
North	Green	Earth	Wed	Mercur	Earth
Above	Royal Blue	Ether	Thur	Jupiter	Sky
Below	Red	Darkness	Sat	Saturn	Sea
Within	Silver	Light	Sun	Sol	Sky

You may also note that some of these correspondences differ from other traditions. They are unique to the Mithril Star. Note: It's ok for us to do that, because "we're making it up as we go," just like the other traditions did.

**In the southern hemisphere, invoke widdershins, devoke deosil.*

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the quarters is questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

HP: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the East to give answer... of the South...of the West.... of the North…. of the Above….of the Below…..and of the Within.

The Reply

(If the sacrifice is accepted, and it almost always is accepted, then continue. If bad omen, the service ends at this point.)

HPs: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Rite of The Waters-of-Life

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-life while the HPs asks the interrogatories. The local custom may or may not replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

HPs: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
DRUIDS: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
HPs: From whence do these Waters flow?
DRUIDS: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
HPs: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
DRUIDS: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
HPs: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
DRUIDS: SHE HAS!
HPs: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

(The HPs takes the caregl from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The HPs then consecrates its contents with the following:)

O Dalon Ap Landu, Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night,. Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of they secret essence!

(The HPs then holds the caregl in both hands, while the HP holds the Cyllell above the caregl, and intones the words:)

HP: "As the Cyllell is to the God…."

(To which the HPs replies:)

HPs: "…so the cup is to the Goddess.."

(Here the HP dips the Cyllell into the caregl three times, and then both reply:)

BOTH: "…and so the two are made one."

Optional Ordinations

First Degree consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first degree for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Degree (in which case the HPs will have consecrated an additional caregl, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

The Communion

(The HP holds up the caregl so that all can see it and intones the words:)

HP: This is the Water of Life! Happy are those who are called to Drink Deep of it. May those who do so never thirst."

The HP & HPs drink from the caregl and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "Thou art God/dess," *and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the caregl from the HP. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the caregl. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the caregl, letting them drink, being blessed in and exchanging the words "Thou art God/dess," "Drink Deep," or "May you never thirst," *return and taking the caregl to the next person. The Server does not drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the HP may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the caregl be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove. In either method, the last person in the circle should not finish the contents of the caregl. This is returned to the HP with a last ex-change of blessings. Then the HPs takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:

HPs: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee. May we perform this rite next year in Imladris.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the HP OR HPs may choose, read by the HP OR HPs or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the HPs and a period of silence and private mediation (usually 2 or 3 minutes in length—though longer with some Groves) by all.

Eventually, the HP signals the end of the Service with:)

The Benediction

"Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing."

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The HP blesses the Grove with three Mithril Stars in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace

Then the Grove joins hands, and say:

"Thou art God/dess and I am God and all that Groks is God. Keep coming back it works!"

Group hug.

Pot Luck

Lastly, there is the traditional "Pot Luck." (If the rite was held "sky-clad" you may want to decide whether or not the grove should get dressed before the "pot luck.") This actually can mean anything, but usually it means that each person attending has brought along a food item to share with the whole group. It's really very, very, impolite to attend a ritual / pot luck without bringing along anything. People who do this habitually need to "get a clue."

Waters of Life

Traditionally, the “Waters of Life” is Whisky (which in the Scots-Gaelic, means “Waters of life). However, most OMS Groves use bottled spring water instead.

Etiquette

Politeness and ritual protocol are extremely important elements. Good manners seem to be almost passé amongst Pagans in general, but we in the Mithril Star are interested in promoting the highest behavioral standards. This is only befitting those of us who are "Gods." The following are some general guidelines for behavior in ritual (applicable for both Mithril Star events and events sponsored by other traditions):

1.) Always RSVP. This means that you let your host know whether or not you are coming to an event you are invited to. This rule applies whether the invitation is formal or not. If you are not coming, it is usually customary to apologize for your absence.

2.) Always show up on time. Lots of folks follow what is jokingly referred to as "Pagan Standard Time." Those who follow PST in Mithril Star circles may find the door locked when they arrive late. If you really can't be on time, let your host know in advance that you'll be late.

3.) Once the ritual begins, you must not leave. This dissipates the energy of the rite. If you absolutely must leave, find the designated person (called the Gatekeeper) to cut open a door for you. When you return you must seek admission of the Gatekeeper again. This rule has two exceptions: Children and small animals can enter and leave at will without disturbing the energies.

4.) Never touch or handle someone else's tools unless invited to do so.

5.) Refrain from small talk during the ritual. Keep your attention focused on what is going on in the rite.

6.) Bring whatever is asked of you. This applies to the ritual itself and to the potluck portion.

7.) Make it a point to greet everyone in attendance either before or after the rite. At the end of the evening be sure to say good-bye to everyone, and to thank your hosts.

8.) Always volunteer to help clean up. Again, we try to follow the simple rule of leaving things as they were found, or (in the case of someone's home) leaving things better than they were before.

Section Five: Liturgies of the Last Twenty Years

Introduction:

Since Isaac left the RDNA in 1983, there haven’t been many great liturgists in the movement; or at least people who preserved their work for archival purposes. As a result, people have tended to use already printed liturgies (as in the California & Seattle branches) or just worked free-form with experimental services (as at Carleton), or with loose scripts that weren’t preserved (found to some extent at all groves). Therefore, the next collection is a bit of a patchwork assortment from different groves over a 20 year period, at different times, often in isolation from each other, with little or no connective thread running between the various sets. It is a grab-bag, if you will, of surviving liturgical records.

Figure 12 The New Stone Circle viewed from behind a Burr Oak Tree, c. 1998.

1987 Fall Equinox

Carleton Grove by Heiko and Jan

I. The Processional

"Sage and Spirit".....Garcia

II. The Opening Invocation to the Earth Mother

III. Readings

IV. The Sharing of the Waters of Life

A. Responsive Reading

Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
THE WATERS OF LIFE
From whence do these Waters flow?
FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH MOTHER, THE EVER-CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
And how do we honour this gift that causes life in all that lives?
BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS OF LIFE.
Has the Earth Mother given forth of her bounty?
SHE HAS!
Then give me the Waters!

B. Consecrating the Waters
C. An Invitation to Join the CARLETON GROVE of RDNA (Reformed Druids of North America)
D. Partaking of the Waters of Life!

V. The Dance for the Earth Mother

VI. The Heartbeat of the Earth and the Dance of the Harvest

(Jumping the Sacred Fire promotes the fertility of the Earth)

VII. The Spiral Dance

VIII Dismissing the Four Directions

Isis, Astarte, Diana, Hecate
Demeter, Kali, Innana.
Pan, Pan, Magic Man.
Pan, Dionysius,
Be'al, Woden, Bathomet.

1987 Samhain Version

Carleton Grove by Heiko and Jan

Group Preparation -Heiko

- Give Order of Events
- Participation: be in circle to create good energy, but don't need to speak and believe, just need to believe in nature and the force of people together.
- Our beliefs are always changing and shaping and what happens here is factor of what people believed and what worked for people before and what Jan and I felt might be right for tonight and what we believe.
- There is a formal structure. But it is only a tool to feel forces and create energy. Anyone is free to speak a prayer. Do any gestures anytime, to add to what Jan and I say or just to interrupt to ask a question. Let the force move you.

Invocation:

O Earth-Mother
We praise Thee that
seed springeth
that flower openeth
that grass waveth
We praise Thee for winds that whisper
through the graceful elm
through the shapely maple
through the lively pine
through the shining birch
through the mighty oak
We praise Thee for all things
O Earth-Mother
Who givest Life

Jan's Samhain Reading

Riding the Big Earth
Let you be dead then
Lying in an open field of dry grass
Wind blows through your clothes
You are falling into the earth
The horizon has your head
Jet planes roar through the sky
Wires strung from every household
Ticker tape hangs out of pressrooms
But the earth is warm and deep
It swallows you like a coke
Your arms spread over the ground
sailing down stratum after stratum
You can feel the weight of cities
Railroad tracks stretching over the plains
Hear the billions of footsteps, the rumble of tanks
Down below
With the centipedes, carcasses, husks and worms
The earth is humming
It hums in your chest like a wooden guitar
Drumming deeper into the well
Roots wrap around entire civilizations
The tombs are humming
Your head hums
Centuries fly through your fingers
Skeletons of birds weave through your hair

Lying in an open field of dry grass
Wind blowing through your clothes
Sun on your face
Riding the big earth
---Boulder 1983

Tree of Life -Jan

{missing}

Speaking of Beliefs -Heiko

We're here to celebrate the creative powers of the Earth-Mother, of nature. To celebrate the wonder of nature. To think of any sunset any, any rock, any river whose beauty and symbolic power have existed in your past. Feel the force of those experiences with nature and let it become a force to help build and sustain you. The force of nature is represented to us here in this fire.

We're here to celebrate and feel the power of a group. There is true power in a circle. Circle is unbroken, is continuous. We are all equal here and able to send energy in a complete way to each other in this unbroken circle. We are not in rows or in single file and I am not speaking to you from a pulpit, but from within the circle. An essential force of this circle is human love. Without love, support, understanding, and giving our ritual here though and our existence here at Carleton would be empty. Let us keep this always in mind in our daily lives and during our ritual that love and support is essential to our humanness and to our survival.

We are here to celebrate not just the nature outside of us, but also the nature within us. We all have tremendous forces and power which are not let out in daily life. They are physical forces of motion, we find them in dance and making love. They are mystical forces of intrigue, we find them in deep, searching eyes, in beautiful faces. They are our natural feelings of power, of helplessness. We all have tremendous psychic powers of change and tremendous helplessness and vulnerability and we have to admit this.

In the same vein let us not idolize one thing over another. Rather let us celebrate the unique beauty of each season; weather, tree, mountain, and mood. This extends to religion. To regard each religion as unique and wonderful in its own right. Especially to practice tolerance, tolerance of all peoples, all objects, all religions.

We are also here to celebrate the masculine and feminine natures of the universe to recognize their dual presence in each of us, their cosmic interplay, their equality and interconnectedness. To think of the ying and the yang.

Finally, we are here to celebrate the cycles of life. To celebrate the circle in all we see, the cycles of seasons, the cycles of childhood, youth and old age, and to celebrate each in its own right.

Responsive Reading

[perhaps Fisher's Samhain Chant ?]

Personal Readings

[insert as appropriate]

Sacrifice

[probably calling four quarters]

Face Painting

Tree Procession -Jan

[missing]

Sharing of Waters of Life -Heiko

[the editor doesn't know which type of Catechism of the waters was used]

Dear Mother Earth, oh spirits of the four directions, oh bael, male aspect of the Earth Mother, consecrate and enter this water so that we may share of it and become strong. (hold up chalice)

These are truly the Waters of Life, the life that gives force, beauty, and strength to our live. The water has sprung from the earth and will return to her again just as we will. By drinking let us feel this power and celebrate the God and Goddess within each of us.

Let us also nourish each other by sharing this and help each other drink. Hold the chalice...

* To Thee we return this portion O mother, hoping that you will accept it graciously.

Prayers Join Circle

Closing the Circle for Leavers

Dance

Figure 13 Carleton Druids 1988 at Hill of 3 Oaks. Back Row: Dimitry Goufman, Carron Perry, Liz Mindel, Sarah Van Orman & Gina Cambell. Two on left: Branden Schield & Unknown. Three on right: Heather Grunberg (hiding), Fitz Bushnell (obscured) and Curtis Lum. Front Row: Alice Cascorbi, Joe Walser (picking nose) and Heiko Koester (with horns).

1992 Midsummer

By Scharding, Carleton

The Invocation

O Lord around us, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord around us, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother under and within us, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

Optional Procession

A dance around the altar stone. Doing a double bounce stomp on each leg, right behind left. Opposite arm flexes up on each step. One pair of right, lefts for every year of the Reform.

Drawing the Sigil

The sigil is traced on the altar stone, and then inscribed on the ground beneath the celebrant. Then with two arms, all members make big sigils, starting with both hands clapping above their hands, circling down and clapping below their waists, and then two parallel lines are inscribed in the air from the top-down.

The Incantation
The Sacrifice

An agile member is sent up the tree to gather the highest leaf they feel comfortable with. Adequate safety precautions of course. The congregants hold hand and dance around the tree singing:

What do you see?
Way up in a tree,
It's a mystery
Drop it to me

From the green bower
Send a leafy shower
Show us its power
Even just a flower.

Repeat as necessary.

A willing perfect leaf or branch is found. The Sacrifice is dropped and must be caught by some members in a white cloth stretched out by the members (like a bed sheet). If it is missed, another must be gathered after the climber returns to the earth and a new climber must ascend again, as it was their fault. If caught, all cheer and a song is sung.

O Earth Mother!
We praise Thee that seed springeth,
That flower openeth, that grass waveth.

We praise Thee for winds that whisper
through the graceful elm,
through the shapely maple,
through the lively pine,
through the shining birch,
through the mighty oak.

We praise Thee for all things,
O Earth Mother,
Who givest Life.

Priest: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

The priest blesses the sacrifice with a sigil in the air and bows and then places the sacrifice on the altar

Priest: Hast thou accepted our humble sacrifice, O our Mother?
I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer, the spirit of the cold north wind that collects the dead in winter….
I call upon the spirit of the South, the spirit of the balmy winds that allow youthful sporting in the summer woods…
I call upon the spirit of the East, the rising sun and departing winds....
I call upon the spirit of the West, the setting sun and approaching winds…

Priest turns to each direction when asking. Winds, sounds and movements of birds and insects are observed.

Priest: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Waters-of-Life

PRIEST: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: From whence do these Waters flow?
PRECEPTOR: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PRIEST: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PRECEPTOR: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty from what you can see and feel around you?
PRECEPTOR: SHE HAS!
PRIEST: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

Priest: O Dalon Ap Landu, Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of they secret essence!

The Communion

The waters are shared with all present.

Optional Ordinations

Priest: Does anyone wish to enter the service of the Earth-Mother? If so, please step forward.

Libation

Priest: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

Winter scoffed tauntingly at Spring. 'When you appear,' he said, 'no one stays still a moment longer. Some are off to meadows or woods: they must needs be picking lilies and other flowers, twiddling rose round their fingers to examine them, or sticking them in their hair. Other go on board ship and cross the wide ocean, maybe, to visit men of other lands; and not a man troubles himself anymore about gales or downpours of rain. Now I am like a rule or dictator. I bid men look not up to the sky but down to the earth with fear and trembling, and sometime they have to resign themselves to staying indoors all day.' 'Yes,' replied Spring, 'and therefore men would gladly be rid of you. But with me it is different. they think my name very lovely - yes, by Zeus, the loveliest name of all names. When I am absent they cherish my memory, and when I reappear they are full of rejoicing.'

Long pause.

Midsummer –
I walk about with my staff.
Old farmers spot me
And call me over for a drink.
We sit in the fields
using leaves for plates.
Pleasantly drunk and so happy
I drift off peacefully
Sprawled out on a paddy bank.

Two minutes of silence then Priest picks up the wheel.

The Divination

Priest: Awaken for we must now gauge our fate for the half of the year, from this day til Midwinter the Sun will rise less every day. How will we fare? Oh Spirits of this hill, give us a sign.

A large wheel of woven branches with inset flowers, herbs and leaves and lots of kindling is lit and pushed down the hill. It should be well balanced and each side marked; one for good and one for bad. The Priest places it in the fire until it is burning well, then quickly grasps it and spins it down the hill. People watch which side lands up and respond appropriately.

The Benediction

Priest: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing *(if successful or* "and we will again seek her blessing soon" *if the divination is not good.)*

All members make big sigils in the air again saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

All member grab hands and go to put out the burning wheel.

1994 Candlemass (Oimelc)

By Scharding & Curtis
Carleton Grove

Preparatory Details

The altar is set with a cookie to the north, a penknife to the east, a glass of water to the west and a candle to the south. A glass of milk and a sprig of spruce are place on the east and a box of lightbulbs, candles, incense and other luminous objects are on the west.

Two candles are lit and a procession around the interior of the Skinner Chapel is made singing "We All Come From the Goddess".

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Praise

Feb. 1, 1977
By Dale Fierbe

Salutations on this day of Oimelc!
The Magnolias stand serenely in this winter wind.
The pines shrug their branches
Snow drops to the ground
Unable to smother the spirit
Of Evergreen.
The Cedar whispers it's valiance
The quiet sentinel while other
Creatures and Flora
Wait for the name of Spring to
Brush past them, awakening them
From their sleep.
- Peace, Peace, Peace.

Then Mike says:

Pr: We are gathered to celebrate the first stirrings of Spring. Many are the signs of growing life that was conceived in the Winter Solstice and given birth on this Oimelc. Great will the strength of the Sun Ruler be on the Equinox and happy the marriage on Beltane.

All then sing the Praise of the Earth Mother:

O Earth-Mother
We praise thee that seed springeth,
that flower openeth,
that grass waveth.

We praise thee for winds that whisper
through the graceful elm,
through the shapely maple,
through the lively pine,
through the shining birch,
through the mighty oak.
We praise thee for all things,
O Earth-Mother, who givest life.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

Pr: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, a member is stationed at each of the four walls, peering out of an open window.)

Pr: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

Reports are gathered from the stationed Druids.

The Reply

Pr: Praise be, although the Earth-Mother is still slumbering, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, although not fully appreciated, has been acknowledged!

The Catechism of The Waters-of-Life

(The Waters of Milk are readied..)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE EVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER EARTH.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PREC: SHE STILL SLEEPS, BUT STIRS A BIT!
PR: So what do we offer instead of the Waters of Life on this great day of Oimelc?
PREC: The Waters of Milk.
PR: Then give me the Waters of Milk!

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Dalon, we know you and the Earth Mother are asleep right now, but please acknowledge us in your dreams, descend and join us together with these Waters of Milk!

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Milk," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings.*

Candle Blessing

The sacrifice is picked up and dipped in the remaining milk and asperged on the collection of light bulbs, candles and incense gathered by grove members.

PR: O Taranis bless these light bulbs and may they last a long time, enlightening us, as you do also. O Brigid, may your wisdom burn bright in us as these candles do your work of lighting up the dark corners of our rooms and hearts.

Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

All members sit down for a reading.

Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Short Pause and Then Proceed to Next Poem

A Haiku by Dick Smiley '66

When the wind blows cold
on the Hill of Three Oaks
the hearth fire is warm.

Short Pause then final reading

Winter's Ending
-Jeffrey Andrew Young

Come the goat-man, man of Springtime,
Savior of the Winter's ending.
Come from mountains, come and enter
This, the sad, stiff human figure,
For his mind is numbed with Winter,
Lain neglected since rememb'ring,
And his hands are stiffened branches,
Frozen bones that have no feeling.
Strike the fire deep within him,
Fire to melt this icy thinking.
Passion sings within him somewhere,
Laughter lies awake, awaiting
Some necessity inside him:
To awaken him from slumber.
Now the dead man's mind grows restless,
Fingers yearn for warmer flesh,
Rememb'ring souls that once had touched him,
Breathing bodies he was near to.
Goat-man draw him ever onward
Through the slush of dying Winter
Where his memories await him
In Spring's gentle restlessness.

After another pause, motion to the people to stand.

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, taking courage in the buds of the pussy-willow, the returned sounds of birds outside our window, the reappearance of squirrels and the melting of the Upper Lyman lake. We know she still sleeps, yet our sacrifice was acknowledged and we go forth with her blessing.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying: ***PR****: Peace! Peace! Peace!*

The people may leave after cleaning up, but the priest will remain and watch as the lit candles are allowed to burn down and are not snuffed out.

Figure 14 Farmhouse, home of Carleton Druids from 1985-1990. Picture taken 1998.

1997 Beltane

Reformed Druids of North Asia
By Scharding & Haneke
Akita Grove, Japan

The festival begins with people going out with their sweethearts for long, long walks in the woods. The unmatched members of the grove have a different task. Going to a tree that has been asked several months in advance (Bamboo is fine too), they climb up the mountain, and bring back a maypole with all proper respect and jubilation. The pole will be brought in during the procession and inserted into a hole by the altar and all will admire the decoration.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the

Sakura, sakura
noyamamo satomo
Miwatasu kagiri
Kasumi-ka kumo-ka
asahi-ni niou
Sakura, sakura hanazakari

Sakura, Sakura
Yayoi no sora wa.
Miwatasu kagiri
Kasumi ka? Kumo ka?
Nioi zo izuru;
Iza ya! Iza ya!
Mi ni yukan.

Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves.

Cherry Blossoms, cherry blossoms.
On mountains, in villages.
As far as you can see.
They look like fog or clouds.
They are fragrant in the morning sun.
Cherry blossoms, cherry blossoms. In full bloom.

Cherry blossoms, cherry blossoms
under the April sky
as far as you can see,
like mists or clouds
blooming fragrantly.
Let us go! Let us go!
Let us go to see them.

The Invocation

O Cherry Trees, forgive these human limitations:
Thou art ever here**; but we praise thee only in spring.**
Thou art a living creature**, but we partake of your fruit and wood;**
Thou hast no need of music and dance, **yet we offer thee these songs and dances;**
O Cherry Trees, forgive our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for dancing.

Praise

PR: Let the dancing begin

The maypole is danced once or twice, accompanied by bagpipe music and drum. The last one still able to dance with extra ribbon is considered the May Queen/King and will act as preceptor for this service.

The Sacrifice

PR: Like our maypole here, each time it is woven together, no two journeys or sacrifices are the same, so we must check them for their acceptability.

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice (a shock of cherry blossoms) to the sky, while saying:

Pr: Our shouts of praise have mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, the sound of our prancing steps has been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

Pr: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

Winds, birds, bugs and clouds are judged for this.

The Reply

(If the sacrifice is accepted, and it almost always is accepted, then continue. If bad omen, the service ends at this point.)

Pr: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Catechism of The Waters-of-Life

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-life while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Life. The local custom may or may not replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE AND THE JUICE OF THE CHERRY.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE EVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PREC: SHE CERTAINLY HAS!
PR: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full, half cherry juice and half whiskey. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Dalon Ap Landu, behold the fruit of last year's cherries, grain and sparkling rivers. Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night,. Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of they secret essence!

Optional Ordinations

First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee, and as new life returns all around us.

Figure 15 The Carleton Farm with a lady and Dan "Farm Boy" Fehler taken Aug 1993.

The Meditation

PR: Three poems by Basho

The Oak Tree stands
Noble on the hill even in
Cherry Blossom time.
A lovely spring night
suddenly vanished while we
viewed cherry blossoms
From all these trees
in salads, soups, everywhere
cherry blossoms fall

Pause for a minute.

Last night I though to cherry trees and my search. Cherry blossoms are like the blush of a new discovered pathway, at first devastatingly beautiful but requiring some cross-fertilization with other trees, much as a discovery must be shared to be enjoyed. Soon thereafter, the flashy petals fall, and hardy green leaves must support the growth of the tree, with each few leaves working towards supporting the tree, and perhaps a cherry. The fruits are then gathered from that discovery after long nurturing study, only to realize that yet new lessons need to be learned. The leaves too are destined to fall and, after the tree has endured a wintry break, relying on its buried resources, a promising new flower will appear signaling the start of a new cycle of discovery and learning. So it is.

Pause and then the priest secretly reaches into his sleeve and throws a huge handful of cherry flowers into the air to rain down in this silent message, followed by another pause.

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, that the trees are beautiful to us, as all of you are to her, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying: Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 16 40th Annviersary procession from Monument Hill to the Hill of Three Oaks. 2003 Ross Wilke, Unknown, Steve Crimmins, Stacey Weinberger, Richard Shelton, David Frangquist, Larry Press, Norman Nelson

1999 Order of Common Worship

Samhradh and Foghamhar (Summer)
Donated by Weinberger
Baccharis Grove, CA

This is the basic Order of Common Worship from which all others are adapted, and is to be used during the Summer Half of the year (i.e. from *Beltane* to *Samhain*.) The chalice will be filled with the *Waters-of-Life*.

invocation

O Earth Mother!
We praise Thee that seed springeth,
That flower openeth, that grass waveth.

We praise Thee for winds that whisper
through the graceful elm,
through the shapely maple,
through the lively pine,
through the shining birch,
through the mighty oak.

We praise Thee for all things,
O Earth Mother,
Who givest Life.

D: O Beal, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations: Thou art everywhere,
E: *Yet we worship Thee here.*
D: Thou art without form,
E: *Yet we worship Thee in these forms.*
D: Thou has no need of our prayers and sacrifices,
E: *Yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.*
D: O Beal, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations.
All: *O Mother, calm our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.*

Procession to the Grove. Upon arrival near the altar the Druid/ess and Preceptor use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground around the altar. After the Druid/ess steps around to the front of the altar, the members divide to form a semi-circle around the front of it.

praise

D: Does anyone have any praise or requests of the Gods?

At this time people may give thanks, make requests, and/or bring any gifts they may have for the Deities of their choice to the altar. There follows a silent time in which each person asks for the fulfillment of material/external or spiritual needs.

sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, O our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, granting us Thy peace, and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call now upon the Spirits of the Winds to give answer, to tell us whether and how our sacrifice has been accepted, and to tell us the will of the Gods for the coming period.

D: I call upon the Spirit of the North…of the South…of the East…of the West…

reply

If the sacrifice is accepted, the Service continues; otherwise the Service is ended immediately

D: Praise be! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life is accepted!

catechism

D: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The waters-of life.
D: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the never-changing All Mother.
D: And how do we honor this give that causes life?
P: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
D: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has
D: Then give me the Waters!

consecration

The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Preceptor, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:

D: O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

ordination?

If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Druid/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the *Waters-of-Life)* the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

communion

The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, *"the Waters of Life,"* and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air. The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Preceptor does NOT drink more than once.

The last person should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with the last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar and down the offering shaft, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion of our bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

offering

At this point, at the Orinda Grove site, the Druid/ess pours out the offering to the trees.

meditation

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose for that purpose. After this comes a few brief words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to three minutes—though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually the Druid/ess signals the end of the Service with:

benediction

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing:

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

The Sigil is taken up by the Druid/ess and Preceptor.
An offering is made to the Big Oak.

END OF THE ORDER OF COMMON WORSHIP FOR SAMRADH AND FOGHAMHAR

Figure 17 Stacey Weinberger at the 40th Reunion, New Stone Circle 2003

1999 Order of Common Worship

Geimredh and Earrach (Winter)
Donated by Weinberger
Baccharis Grove, CA

This is the Order of Common Worship for the Winter Half of the year (i.e. from *Samhain* to *Beltane*.) The chalice will be filled with the W*aters-of-Sleep*.

invocation

O Earth Mother!
We praise Thee that seed springeth,
That flower openeth, that grass waveth.

We praise Thee for winds that whisper
through the graceful elm,
through the shapely maple,
through the lively pine,
through the shining birch,
through the mighty oak.

We praise Thee for all things,
O Earth Mother,
Who givest Life.

D: O Beal, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations: Thou art everywhere,
E: *Yet we worship Thee here.*
D: Thou art without form,
E: *Yet we worship Thee in these forms.*
D: Thou has no need of our prayers and sacrifices,
E: *Yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.*
D: O Beal, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations.
All: *O Mother, calm our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.*

Procession to the Grove. Upon arrival near the altar the Druid/ess and Preceptor use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground around the altar. After the Druid/ess steps around to the front of the altar, the members divide to form a semi-circle around the front of it.

praise

D: Does anyone have any praise or requests of the Gods?

At this time people may give thanks, make requests, and/or bring any gifts they may have for the Deities of their choice to the altar. There follows a silent time in which each person asks for the fulfillment of material/external or spiritual needs.

sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, O our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, granting us Thy peace, and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call now upon the Spirits of the Winds to give answer, to tell us whether and how our sacrifice has been accepted, and to tell us the will of the Gods for the coming period.

D: I call upon the Spirit of the North…of the South…of the East…of the West…

reply

The sacrifice is not accepted!
Or
The sacrifice is acknowledged!

D: The four winds are silent; the Earth Mother sleeps.

catechism

D: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
D: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the never-changing All Mother.
D: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has not! The waters are there, but the spirit has gone out of them.
D: Of what then, do we partake?
P: The Waters-of-Sleep!
D: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

consecration

The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Preceptor, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:

D: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend into these waters and hallow them. Give us to know Thy Power and the promise of life that is to return.

communion

The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, *"the Waters of Sleep,"* and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air. The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Preceptor does NOT drink more than once.

The last person should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with the last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar and down the offering shaft, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion of our bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

offering

At this point, at the Orinda Grove site, the Druid/ess pours out the offering to the trees.

meditation

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose for that purpose. After this comes a few brief words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to three minutes—though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually the Druid/ess signals the end of the Service with:

benediction

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower Her blessings upon you.

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

The Sigil is taken up by the Druid/ess and Preceptor.

An offering is made to the Big Oak.

END OF THE ORDER OF COMMON WORSHIP FOR GEIMREDH AND EARRACH

Figure 18Sue & Larry Press with Weinberger, Lughnasadh1984 at the Live Oak Grove.

1999 Samhain

Donated by Weinberger
Baccharis Grove, CA

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Samhain. The chalice will be filled with ordinary spring water (the *Waters-of-Sleep)*. The sacrifice should be of bare branches. All Third Order Druids and Druidesses, including the Grove's Archdruid/ess, should be wearing their red ribbons-of-office around their necks at the beginning of the service, but carry their white ribbons-of-office in an easily accessible place.

The service starts some distance from the altar.

invocation

O Earth Mother!
We praise Thee that seed springeth,
That flower openeth, that grass waveth.

We praise Thee for winds that whisper
through the graceful elm,
through the shapely maple,
through the lively pine,
through the shining birch,
through the mighty oak.

We praise Thee for all things,
O Earth Mother,
Who givest Life.

D: O Beal, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations: Thou art everywhere,
E: *Yet we worship Thee here.*
D: Thou art without form,
E: *Yet we worship Thee in these forms.*
D: Thou has no need of our prayers and sacrifices,
E: *Yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.*
D: O Beal, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations.
All: *O Mother, calm our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.*

Procession to the Grove. Upon arrival near the altar the Druid/ess and Preceptor use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground around the altar. After the Druid/ess steps around to the front of the altar, the members divide to form a semi-circle around the front of it.

praise

D: Does anyone have any praise or requests of the Gods?

At this time people may give thanks, make requests, and/or bring any gifts they may have for the Deities of their choice to the altar. There follows a silent time in which each person asks for the fulfillment of material/external or spiritual needs.

sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, O our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, granting us Thy peace, and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call now upon the Spirits of the Winds to give answer, to tell us whether and how our sacrifice has been accepted, and to tell us the will of the Gods for the coming period.

D: I call upon the Spirit of the North…of the South…of the East…and of the West…

reply

The sacrifice is not accepted!

D: The four winds are silent; the Earth Mother sleeps.
chant

D: Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, Thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many-faceted Nature in and above all, to Thee we sing our chants of praise.
E: GO THOU NOT FROM US.
D: Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all Groves, mover by night and by day, turn not Thy pleasing face from us.
E: GO THOU NOT FROM US.
D: The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is Thy order, where is Thy strength?
E: DEPART NOT FROM OUR MIDST, SLEEP NOT, O MOST HIGH.
D: The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws His chariot; His face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.
E: RETURN TO US HIS WARMTH.

second sacrifice

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, granting us Thy peace, and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call now upon the Spirits of the Winds to give answer, to tell us whether and how our sacrifice has been accepted, and to tell us the will of the Gods for the coming period.

D: I call upon the Spirit of the North…of the South…of the East…and of the West…

second reply

The sacrifice is not accepted!

D: The four winds are silent; the Earth Mother sleeps.

The Archdruid/ess and all other members if the Third Order present remove their red ribbons and replace them with their white ones. Then follows the Mourning and the Declaration of Faith.

D: Lo, we are as wraiths, our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.
E: PRESERVE US, O SPIRIT OF DAY. KEEP US IN THY MIND, O SPIRIT OF POWER.
D: Lo, the Season of Sleep has come, and darkness prevails. Let us then lie down, in the good and covering dark, and rest, and contemplate, and renew ourselves with this gift of sleep.
E: REST AND HEAL US, O OUR MOTHER.
D: O Earth Mother, guide our paths. If Thou wilt leave us, save us through the time of Silence, keep bright within our hearts 'till Spring.
E: SO LET IT BE, O OUR MOTHER, FOR WE ARE FAITHFUL, AND WOULD KEEP THY WAYS.

catechism

D: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The waters-of life.
D: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the never-changing All Mother.
D: And how do we honor this gift that causes life?
P: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has not! The waters are here, but the spirit has gone out of them.
D: So be it. Now is the Time of Life ended. Now shall we need our faith to keep us strong, for the Time of Sleep is begun in truth and in deed. Of what then do we partake?
P: The Waters-of-Sleep!
D: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

consecration

The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Server. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:

D: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these waters, and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

communion

The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, *"the Waters of Sleep,"* and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does NOT drink more than once.

The last person should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with the last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar and down the offering shaft, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion of our bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

offering

At this point, at the Orinda Grove site, the Druid/ess pours out the offering to the trees.

meditation

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose for that purpose. After this comes a few brief words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to three minutes—though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually the Druid/ess signals the end of the Service with:

benediction

D: Let us go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower Her blessings upon you.

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

The Sigil is taken up by the Druid/ess and Preceptor.
An offering is made to the Big Oak.

END OF A SPECIAL ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR SAMHAIN

Figure 19 Rapheal and Leslie at Live Oak Grove in Emmon's Cabin, Beltane 1984

Fall Equinox Ritual 2001:

D.C. Grove's Patriotic Version
By Mike Scharding, with inspiration from Sine Ceolbhinn

No insult is intended, we're just a little wild. We'll report how it works.
The Sunday before the Monday service will be spent under the Washington Monuments shadow from dawn to dusk, followed by a party on Sunday night.

THE INVOCATION

Underline parts are spoken by the congregation

O Lord, forgive these errors that our due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here.
Thou art without set form, but we worship thee in these forms.
Thou art beyond name, but we call thee by these names.
Thine presence is ever with you, but we worship thee now.
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, but we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for mediations.
O Washington & Jefferson, overlook this use of public land for private worship.

PROCESSION

Circle the Washington Monument, beyond the Jersey Barriers, stopping at the cardinal points, at which to do a spin each. Afterwards form a circle, with Archdruid, preceptor and server inside. All members scuff a sigil below them with their feet.

INCANTATION

I am a Washington in revolution.
I am a Franklin in wit.
I am a Jefferson in wisdom.
I am a Monroe towards neighbours.
I am a Lincoln in debate.
I am a Bull Moose in the wilderness.
I am a Taft at dinner.
I am a Wilson in study.
I am a Roosevelt in hard times.
I am an Eisenhower in battle.
I am a Kennedy in charisma.
I am a Carter on the farm.
I am a Clinton in virility.
I am a Bush in having smart friends.
I am a Gore to the environment.
Who is it who leads the people?
Who comforts us in our crises?
Who takes the credit for success and failure?
If not I?

SONG: Dalon's Daily Ditty

With appropriate side step rock-shuffle and clapping.

I am nothing special just a simple Druid,
Seeking my awareness though the Earth Mother,
And life's lessons.

But, I'm filled with doubts, and deep confusion
What can I do to release these chains?
Make a journey!

CHORUS after each following verse:

Take me on up,, Lord (i.e. Dalon), take me on down.
Take me on over to the ho-oly gro-oves
Of Carleton!

The road is hard, black, long and winding
With Bright-eyed Dragons spitting fire and smoke.
Lord guide me.

I'm goin' down to the Cannon River,
Gonna wash away all my ignorance
And dogma's blight.

Through lonesome prairie and swamps of passion
In the uncertain floodplain I learn a lesson
The Lower Arb

Matriculate past the dean of admission,
To enter the ranks of those holy students
And faculty.

It's the Land of Youth on an ancient mission
Lifting the torch of inquiry both wide and far
Through long study.

The price of learning is a high tuition
One that must be paid back for many years;
To my pupils.

Drink at the twin lakes of knowledge and wisdom
Filled by the creek of experience
That's Lyman Lakes.

Proceed on to the tower of inspiration
Whose fair white walls call out to me
That's Goodhue Hall.

On seldom trod paths of contemplation
with barbed sarcasm and rocks of Irony
The Upper Arb

I'll climb up that steep, green, holy mountain
Where so many before have found Awareness
Hill of Three Oaks

There I'll pray & vigil in jubilation
Between my green mother Earth and starry Pa
And go on home.

The world will've changed with those revelations
The simple will be hard and the hard simple.
Can I teach this?

But questions will arise despite my education
So, what can I do to solve them all?
Make a new trip!

Sacrifice is placed on the alter. Perhaps some a twig from a cherry tree?

THE SACRIFICE

Priest: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our clap have echoed off the trees and our dancing feet have pounded the earth. Hear now, we pray thee, O our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. (All drop their sacrifice on the altar.) Accept it we pray thee, and cleanse our minds and hearts, granting us thy peace an life.

Preceptor: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our mother? I call upon the spirit of the East (i.e. Congress & Supreme Court) to give answer. (Congregation notes omens) …of the West (Lincoln & Teddy Roosevelt Memorial) … of the North (White House) …and of the South (Jefferson & FDR Memorials). Fellow Druids, who says the omens are favorable? (Hands raise, majority rules)

THE REPLY

(if favorable)

Preceptor: All is well.

Priest: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted.

Go to Catechism.

THE REPLY (if unfavorable)

Preceptor: All is not well.

Priest: All is not for naught. Approval is not to be expected. We continue to celebrate this joyous occasion, but without the fire in the water. It is now appropriate to pause and reflect on this season.

(Skip to meditation)

THE CATECHISM

of the WATERS OF LIFE

Priest (In evocatory enthusiasm): Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?!

Preceptor (in plain-song, followed by crowd): The Waters of Life!

Priest: From whence do these Waters flow?!

Preceptor & All: From the Bosom of the Earth-Mother, the Ever-changing All-mother.

Priest: And HOW! Do we honor this gift that causes life in us?!

Preceptor & All: By partaking of the Waters of Life!

Priest: Has the Earth-Mother given FORTH of her bounty?!

Preceptor & All: O she ha--as!

Priest: Then give me the Waters!

(Preceptor with the whiskey and Server with the water, pour equal portions simultaneously into the chalice of the Priest)

THE CONSECRATION

Priest: O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by thy sevenfold-powers and by the three ways of days and one of night. O Presidents, please also bless these waters by thy 43 ways. Cleanse our minds and hearts and join us together as we take and drink of thy secret essences.

THE COMMUNION & OPTIONAL ORDINATIONS

LIBATION

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee. O Presidents, including those who disapproved of alcohol, please accept this blessing of drink.

THE MEDITATION

Here is the historic anecdote:

"When George was about 6 years old, he was made the wealthy owner of a hatchet! of which, like most little boys, he was immoderately fond; and was constantly going about chopping every thing which came in his way. One day, in the garden, where he often amused himself by hacking his mother's pea-sticks, he unluckily tried the edge of his hatchet on the body of a beautiful young English cherry tree, which he de-barked so terribly, that I don't believe the tree ever got the better of it. The next morning, the old gentleman, finding out what had befallen his tree, which, by the by, was a great favourite, came into the house; and with much warmth asked for the mischievous author, declaring at the same time, that be would not have taken 5 guineas for his tree. Nobody would tell him anything about it. Presently George and his hatchet made their appearance. 'George,' said his father, 'do you know who killed that beautiful little cherry tree yonder in the garden?'"

"This was a tough question; and George staggered under it for a moment; but quickly recovered himself; and looking at his father, with the sweet face of youth brightened with the inexpressible charm of all-conquering truth, he bravely cried out, 'I can't tell a lie, Pa; you know I can't tell a lie. I did cut it with my hatchet.'--Run to my arms, you dearest boy, cried his father in transports, run to my arms; glad am I, George, that you killed my tree, for you have paid me for it a thousand fold. Such an act of heroism in my son is worth more than a thousand trees, though blossomed with silver and their fruits of purest gold."

Many years ago, at the signing of the Constitution, Benjamin Franklin noticed the engraved sun on the Chairman's chair. By looking at it, one could not be sure whether it was a rising or setting sun, but he believed it was a rising sun, by the patriotism and courage of those around us. We are in another time of balance both in the cycle of the sun and in the hearts of American. We Druids seek young Washington's courage to harmonize with these cycles; perhaps accentuating the good and reducing the baneful. I wish you luck this autumn.

THE BENEDICTION

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing and that of our presidents.

Parting Chorus:

I'm a Yankee Doodle Druid.
Here In Washington D.C.
A real strange Druid with a loud bagpipe
Playing tricks and full of whiskey.
I love my dear sweet Earth-Mother,
She's my Yankee Doodle joy.

Yankee Doodle went to Wiltshire
Just to view that Stonehenge!
I am a Yankee Doodle boy.

I laugh at all those silly Druids,
Tied up in red-tape, they don't need.
Give me a one page constitution, PLEASE!
So I don't go blind, trying to read.
I love our simple, clever humor,
I'll follow it till the day I die.

Yankee Doodle went to Wiltshire
Just to view that Stonehenge!
I am a Yankee Doodle guy.

2002 Fall Equinox Peace Service

Reformed Druids of North America, D.C. Grove
By Mike Scharding with Help by Eric Powers
See Shelton's Exorcism of War in Section 8.

Extensive Preparatory Details

Against my own tradition of simple liturgies, this has become a ritual with extensive stage requirements and foreplanning only possible in a large grove. The Priest, Preceptor and Server should walk through the ceremony once or twice a few hours before, in a quiet place while other grove members collect firewood and dig the necessary holes. This was repeated at the Spring Equinox in 2003 with a few alterations.

The service site should have a young sapling (preferably oak or cherry), and the tree should be within reach of the priest's standing point at the site. A stone altar next to a small bonfire with mostly medium logs (arm diameter) should be prepared in the late afternoon, and the service begins ten minutes before sunset. The bigger the wars at that time, the bigger the fire should be. If the participants are few, more water should be already at the site, tucked away. Fire tongs or tools to be used to remove the logs from the fire should be readied and leaning against the altar. Two holes should be dug near the altar on fertile ground, one shallow and one quite big (maybe 1 foot wide, 2 feet deep and 3 feet long). One large bucket or basin with fine sand or dry ashes from the last fire should be placed near the altar. During the liturgy, the grove members will prop up their candles into the ashes.

The Priest has an acorn in their pocket also bears a very long red ribbon maybe 6 feet or more in length. The priest has also two small envelopes, one with 12 meditations and another envelope with three songs, all cut onto small pieces of paper.

The Preceptor will bear a small hatchet, small enough to be buried, or loosen the blade such that it is removable from the haft.

The Server bears a full bottle of whiskey and another full bottle of water should be borne (who also stashes a candle in their belt or pocket).

Each member of the grove should bear a similar candle and one or two buckets of water or a large gallon jug or two. They also have a small song sheet of the three potential songs to be sung at the end.

The service starts with all participants standing twenty or more yards distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the underlined words of the Invocation. If the grove will speak, make sure sheets of responses have been prepared for them.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors and all others that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, <u>but thy manifestations are beclouded by the hatred of men</u>;
Thou art without form, <u>but men have forgotten that thou pervadest all form</u>;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, <u>and we offer none, yet we offer praise from our lips, but with great fear in our hearts.</u>
O Lord, forgive us these three errors and all others that are due to our human limitations.
<u>O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and guide us for meditations.</u>

The Procession to the fire.

AD: On this Equinox, between day and night, we are in a period of balance poised between peace and war. Too far in either direction would be our downfall. We now approach the growing fires of war, each of us bearing a potential blaze with us, yet we also bear the tools to smother that blaze. Let us praise the forces of life!

Hymn to the Earth-Mother
O Earth-Mother!
We praise thee,
Who seed springeth,
Who flower openeth,
Who grass waveth.
We praise thee for winds that whisper
Through the graceful elm,
Through the shapely maple,
Through the lively pine,
Through the shining birch,
Through the mighty oak.
We praise thee for all things.
O Earth-Mother!
Who givest life.

While singing this song they approach the fire.

The Inscription

The Grove circle around the fire and come to a halt, still bearing their buckets. The Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar by the fire (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves. For the remainder of the service, he should face the bonfire and thereby present a fearsome fire-lit visage.

The Sacrifice

AD: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. We offer up this sacrifice….

The server hands the hatchet to the Priest/ess, and then the Druid/ess dramatically pushes up their sleeves and lifts up the axe and begins to swing toward the tree with the hatchet as if to cut off a branch, or even to chop down the tree. But stops.

AD: O dear Mother, too many of your children have been taken or mutilated in these recent days, we cannot bear to do further harm, today. We will not feed the flames of war with the carcasses of your children, but instead we will plant an acorn here, and will nurture its growth. Is this your wish, and should we battle against these flames?

(Here the priest plants the acorn in the ground and covers it. The Grove begins to sing and during the three minute song the Priest/ess will slowly continue to consult the four directions as below:)

Blowing in the Wind:

How many roads must a man walk down
Before you call him a man?
Yes, 'n' how many seas must a white dove sail
Before she sleeps in the sand?
Yes, 'n' how many times must the cannon balls fly
Before they're forever banned?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind,
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

How many times must a man look up
Before he can see the sky?
Yes, 'n' how many ears must one man have
Before he can hear people cry?
Yes, 'n' how many deaths will it take till he knows
That too many people have died?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind,
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

How many years can a mountain exist
Before it's washed to the sea?
Yes, 'n' how many years can some people exist
Before they're allowed to be free?
Yes, 'n' how many times can a man turn his head,
Pretending he just doesn't see?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind,
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

AD: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I will ask the winds of change. I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(If the sacrifice is accepted with winds, birds or sounds from the directions, and it almost always is accepted, then you continue. If it is not accepted then go straight to the meditation..)

AD: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted! She encourages us to work in the efforts of peace!

(AD flings the hatchet into the larger of the two holes, the Preceptor and Server bury it, and begin to jump up and down on the dirt to tamp it down firmly.)

AD: We need ye not, we need ye no longer. We must turn toward life. May it be so everywhere.

The Catechism of The Waters-of-Life

(*The preceptor holds the whiskey bottle and chalice as yet unmixed while the priest asks the Catechism of the Waters-of-Life. The local custom may or may not replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)*

AD: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE EVER CHANGING, YET NEVER CHANGING, ALL-MOTHER.

AD: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

AD: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PREC: SHE HAS, THOUGH MUCH HAS BEEN LOST!

AD: Then give me the Waters! All of them! Every bucket that you bear! Make a perfect ring.

The Consecration

(*Each member places their bucket in a circle at the foot of the Priest/ess, places a candle in the ash basin , and then returns to the circle, going clockwise. The Priest/ess runs their long red ribbon through the handles and hold the ends in his hand. The Preceptor takes the bottle from the Server, and fills the chalice completely with whiskey.)*

AD: The fiery spirits of the Waters of Life in their pure state can enliven our lives, or be used to fan the flames of violence for impure goals.

(The Priest tastes the waters, and with a fiery look in his eyes, dashes the whiskey onto the fire, which should roar up, consuming the whiskey. The Server takes a candle and lights it. The preceptor fills the chalice with pure water.)

AD: And so life is consumed in the process. If we rely upon the cool waters of reason alone, and the flames can be doused.

(The Priest pours out half of the water on the candle's flame, dousing it. He then drinks the remainder with a most unsatisfied look on his face.)

AD: And yet, we have become cold, and it is hard to motivate the spirit to opposition in true times of need. As in all dangerous ventures, moderation is the key to survival; a mixture of courage, emotion and intellect, in the correct balance required by the situation.

(The Preceptor fills the chalice with one part whiskey and two parts water. Then the preceptor puts one shot of whiskey into each bucket or container of water and the handle of the basin of ashes and candles. The Priest/ess then consecrates the contents with the following, in a larger voice than usual, because hallowing thirty gallons is hard work.)

AD: O Dalon Ap Landu, Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night, Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of they secret essence and do thy work!

The Community Work

The Priest/ess taps the chalice on every bucket and candle. The Priest/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice.

The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise, the grove faces away from the fire with their backs to the flames) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does not drink more than once.

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

In either method, the last person in the circle should not finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings.

AD: We are now balanced and strengthened together for a purpose that she has sanctified. We are not done yet. Much waters remain around me, prepared for a great task. We will begin this work by removing the foundation of this monstrous fire, that is beyond our control, and tame it back for its intended purposes. I can stand by no longer, and watch it burn! The time of reaction has come!

The AD picks up two buckets and hands them to the Preceptor and Server who pass them to both sides of the circle, and deliberately steps out of the Sigil. The Server and Preceptor will hand out the implements of destruction to some of the more hardy members.

AD: This is not a holy fire that gushes before us. Ahoy, _____! (*Calls one grove member*) Remove the log of ignorance!

The grove member removes a log from the bed of coals.

AD: Ahoy, _____! (*Call another member*) Extinguish it!

The grove member drenches the log slowly and surely rolls it to the side.

Repeat these two steps with the following logs:
The log of hatred.
The log of fear.
The log of pride.
The log of indifference.
The log of greed.
The log of prejudice.
The log of injustice.
The log of hypocrisy.
The log of revenge.
And continue as needed until only coals remain.

AD: The logs are gone, and yet the coals are small and beyond number and can not be easily named. They cannot be completely erased from the world, for their spark remains within us.

Server lights her candle from a coal and lights all the pre-arranged candles in the basin of ashes.

AD: Now, all of you together, drench this conflagration! Drench it now!

The remaining buckets are poured upon the fires, which should be adequately snuffed.

AD: It has been done well.

Optional Ordinations

AD: Does anyone wish to be ordained into the first order of the Reformed Druids of North America? If so, step forward!

(if any does the following is said.)

AD: Do you believe in the two basic tenets of Druidism?
Member: Yes.
AD: I see by the ashes and wet stains on your dress that you are already drenched in the graces of the Earth-Mother. Welcome.

(Marks the sigil on their forehead with fingers dipped in Waters-of-Life.)

The Libation

After ordinations, the Priest/ess takes a last sip.

AD: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee. Grow, little seed of peace, into a mighty tree of prosperity and love. We ask all the wounded spirits out there to drink deep and may your desire for justice be quenched in some other ways without so many more lives being snuffed out.

Priest pours the remaining waters on the buried acorn.

AD: Please rest from your labors and sit. Wisdom must guide our next deeds. Now, with the light of reason, the warmth of reflection and our passions put to directed uses, let us enter into meditation.

The Meditation

Preceptor and Server bear the basin around the circle, and the seated members take a candle while the AD is reading various prayers. It is suggested that the priest randomly draw at least three of the prayers that follow this service, with members concluding each with "So be it."

Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end of the Service with:

The Benediction

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing to do her work. If you should have later doubts, relight your candle and meditate upon it.

Preceptor: Lend your voices, as we leave this grove in a final song, guided by the words we have heard tonight.

AD randomly pulls a song from song envelope and the group sings as they walk with lit candles away into the night.

Server: The song is _____.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The sigil on the ground is brushed away and the Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

AD: Peace! Peace! Peace!

12 Meditations to Draw From:

Hindu Prayer for Peace

Oh God, lead us from the unreal to the Real.
Oh God, lead us from darkness to light.
Oh God, lead us from death to immortality.
Shanti, Shanti, Shanti unto all.
Oh Lord God almighty, may there be peace in celestial regions.
May there be peace on Earth.
May the waters be appeasing.
May herbs be wholesome, and may trees and plants bring peace to all. May all beneficent beings bring peace to us.
May thy Vedic Law propagate peace all through the world.
May all things be a source of peace to us.
And may thy peace itself, bestow peace on all
and may that peace come to me also.

Baha'i Prayer for Peace

Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity.
Be fair in thy judgment, and guarded in thy speech.
Be a lamp unto those who walk in darkness, and a home to the stranger.
Be eyes to the blind, and a guiding light unto the feet of the erring.
Be a breath of life to the body of humankind, a dew to the soil of the human heart,
and a fruit upon the tree of humility.

Buddhist Prayer for Peace

May all beings everywhere plagued
with sufferings of body and mind
quickly be freed from their illnesses.
May those frightened cease to be afraid,
and may those bound be free.
May the powerless find power,
and may people think of befriending one another.
May those who find themselves in trackless, fearful wilderness –
the children, the aged, the unprotected –
be guarded by beneficent celestials,
and may they swiftly attain Buddhahood.

Jewish Prayer for Peace

Come, let us go up to the mountain of
the Lord, that we may walk the
paths of the Most High.
And we shall beat our swords into ploughshares,
and our spears into pruning hooks.
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation –
neither shall they learn war any more.
And none shall be afraid, for the mouth of the
Lord of Hosts has spoken.

Jainist Prayer for Peace

Peace and Universal Love is the essence
of the Gospel preached by all Enlightened Ones.
The Lord has preached that equanimity is the Dharma
Forgive do I creatures all, and let all creatures forgive me.
Unto all have I amity, and unto none enmity.
Know that violence is the root cause of all miseries in the world.
Violence, in fact, is the knot of bondage.
"Do not injure any living being."
This is the eternal, perennial, and unalterable way of spiritual life.
A weapon, howsoever powerful it may be,
can always be superseded by a superior one;
but no weapon can, however,
be superior to nonviolence and love.

Muslim Prayer for Peace

In the name of Allah,
the beneficent, the merciful.
Praise be to the Lord of the
Universe who has created us and
made us into tribes and nations
That we may know each other, not that
we may despise each other.
If the enemy incline towards peace, do
thou also incline towards peace, and
trust God, for the Lord is the one that
heareth and knoweth all things.
And the servants of God,
Most gracious are those who walk on
the Earth in humility, and when we
address them, we say "PEACE."

Native African Prayer for Peace

Almighty God, the Great
Thumb we cannot evade to tie any knot;
the Roaring Thunder that splits mighty trees:
the all-seeing Lord up on high who sees
even the footprints of an antelope on
a rock mass here on Earth.
You are the one who does
not hesitate to respond to our call.
You are the cornerstone of peace.

Native American Prayer for Peace

Oh Great Spirit of our
Ancestors, I raise my pipe to you.
To your messengers the four winds, and
to Mother Earth who provides
for your children.
Give us the wisdom to teach our children
to love, to respect, and to be kind
to each other so that they may grow
with peace of mind
Let us learn to share all good things that
you provide for us on this Earth.

Shinto Prayer for Peace

Although the people living across the ocean
surrounding us, I believe,
are all our brothers and sisters,
why are there constant troubles in this world?
Why do winds and waves rise in the ocean surrounding us?
I only earnestly wish that the wind will
soon puff away all the clouds which are
hanging over the tops of mountains.

Zoroastrian Prayer for Peace

We pray to God to eradicate all the
misery in the world:
that understanding triumph
over ignorance,
that generosity triumph over indifference,
that trust triumph over contempt, and
that truth triumph over falsehood.

Sikh Prayer for Peace

God adjudges us according
to our deeds,
not the coat that we wear:
that Truth is above everything,
but higher still is truthful living.
Know that we attaineth God when we loveth,
and only that victory
endures in consequences of which no
one is defeated.

Christian Prayer for Peace

Blessed are the PEACEMAKERS,
for they shall be known as
the Children of God.
But I say to you that hear, love your enemies.
Do good to those who hate you,
bless those who curse you
pray for those who abuse you
To those that strike you on the cheek,
offer the other one also,
and from those who take away your cloak,
do not withhold your coat as well.

Give to everyone who begs from you,
and of those who take away your goods,
do not ask for them again.
And as you wish that others would do to you,
do so to them.

Three Songs to Choose From:

Prayer of St. Francis

Make me a channel of your peace
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love
Where there is injury your pardon, Lord
And where there's doubt, true faith in you
D---/--A-/----/- DA D-

Make me a channel of your peace
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope
Where there is darkness, only light
And where there's sadness ever joy

(Bridge) O master grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled as to console
To be understood as to understand
To be loved as to love with all my soul
G-D-/A-D-/G-D-/E-A-

Make me a channel of your peace
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned
In giving to all men that we receive
And in dying that we're born to eternal life
-rewritten by Sebastian Temple

Let There Be Peace On Earth -

Sy Miller & Bill Jackson, Modified by Mike

Let there be peace on earth
And let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth
The peace that was meant to be.

With the Earth as our Mother,
Siblings all are we.
Let me walk with my Sibling
In perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me,
Let this be the moment now.
With ev'ry step I take
Let this be my solemn vow;

To take each moment and live
Each moment in peace eternally.
Let there be peace on earth
And let it begin with me.

I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing

I'd like to build the world a home
And furnish it with love
Grow apple trees and honey bees
and snow-white turtle doves

I'd like to teach the world to sing
In perfect harmony
I'd like to hold it in my arms and keep it company

I'd like to see the world for once
All standing hand in hand
And hear them echo through the hills
"Ah, peace throughout the land"

I'd like to build the world a home
And furnish it with love
Grow apple trees and honey bees
And snow-white turtle doves

Calling Ritual Addendum

(Druidic Free Association)
By Cowin Troost, 2004

Recently the Carleton Druids have started a calling ritual. This has developed, in part, from the opening and closing of Carleton's sweat lodge rituals when the four directions are called to guide the lodge and then dispersed once the task is finished.

This is a free form ritual. The first person, normally the Arch Druid calls upon the spirits of a particular aspect, often but not always of nature. They list the attributes and what they think about it and at the end call upon it as a guide.

Then this continues going clockwise or counter clockwise (depending on who is nearby and whether they are familiar with the ritual. This continues until a set number of circles go by, or either time or ideas run out.

An example:

Arch Druid: I call upon the spirits of the sky, spirits of blue, spirits of beauty. Spirits of keeping the atmosphere in, spirits of upness. Spirits of things not always noticed even if they're always present. Spirits of the sky, guide us in our wanderings.

(Next person): I call upon spirits of the snow spirits (falling backwards into the snow). Spirits of fun, spirits of cold. Spirits that remind us that even in the middle of winter, when we might get tired of the cold, the winter can still be very enjoyable, spirits of I'm getting snow in my gloves and so I'm getting up, spirits of the snow spirits, guide us to day.

(Next person): (et cetera)

Note, this can be a ritual of it's own or incorporated into other parts of the liturgy.

Figure 21 The mysterious Hadzi sculture in front of the Gould Library, 2004.

Figure 20 Mike & Mark upon discovering the Stone Circle on the Hill of 3 Oaks, 1997.

Figure 22 The Entrance to the Burial Mound of Carleton's first chaplain, 2004.

Section Six: International Liturgies

2004 Introduction

It may come as a great surprise to the Founders that there are now overseas branches of Reformed Druidism, seeing as how the RDNA was not thought to extend past Carleton in the early years. And yet, due to more frequent overseas studies and job opportunities of RDNA Druids, we are starting to get more internet inquiries for establishing groves in foreign lands.

As a result, we are also receiving more translations of the basic liturgy format, a trend that I am encouraging at present. The following are various attempts that I have collected or requested from multi-lingual members. I'm hoping a Welsh and Korean version are in the works for ARDA 3 Edition.

Greek Order of Worship

By Richard Shelton, 2004
Transliterated into Latin Letters
See Historiography for pronunciation tips.

The Invocation

Ô K_rie, áphes tâsde treís hamartíâs:
Sy men pantachê ei, hêmeís de hierourgoúmen soi entaútha.
Sy men aeidês ei, hêmeís de hierourgoúmen soi toísde eídesin.
Sy men ou chrêdzeis litôn te hêmetérôn kai thysiôn,
hêmeís de dídomen soi tâsde lítâs kai thysíâs.
Ô K_rie, áphes tâsde treís hamartíâs.

The Return

Soi apodídomen tóde tâs aphthoníâs méros,
hôs hêmâ_s chrê apeltheín soi.

The Libation

Prôton men Diós patrós te spéndomen,
hôs ton bíon hêmín dídôsin:
Athê_nês te, hê tên sophían.

Kai de Aphrodîtes spéndomen,
hê ton éron dídôsin.

Kai de Dion_sou spéndomen,
tou philtátou,
chármatos brotôn,
tô hêmeís dídomen tênde autês dósin — oínon.

Greek Order of Worship

By Richard Shelton, c.1969
Notice that many sections are missing, see historiography
Actual text in Palantino Lithotype will be in appendex.

The Invocation

Ὦ Κύριε, ἄφες τάσδε τρεῖς ἁμαρτίας:

Σὺ μὲν πανταχῇ εἶ, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἱερουργοῦμεν σοὶ ἐνταῦθα.

Σὺ μὲν ἀειδὴς εἶ, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἱερουργοῦμεν σοὶ τοῖσδε εἴδεσιν.

Σὺ μὲν οὐ χρῄζεις λιτῶν τε ἡμετέρων καὶ θυσιῶν,
ἡμεῖς δὲ δίδομεν σοὶ τάσδε λίτας καὶ θυσίας.

Ὦ Κύριε, ἄφες τάσδε τρεῖς ἁμαρτίας.

The Return

Σοὶ ἀποδίδομεν τόδε τᾶς ἀφθονίας μέρος,
ὡς ἡμᾶς χρῆ ἀπελθεῖν σοὶ.

The Libation

Πρῶτον μὲν Διὸς πατρός τε σπένδομεν,
ὃς τὸν βίον ἡμῖν δίδωσιν:
Ἀθήνης τε, ἣ τὴν σοφίαν.

Καὶ δὲ Ἀφροδίτης σπένδομεν,
ἣ τὸν ἔρον ἡμῖν δίδωσιν.

Καὶ δὲ Διονύσου σπένδομεν,
τοῦ φιλτάτου,
χάρματος βροτῶν,
τῷ ἡμεῖς δίδομεν τῆνδε αὐτῆς δόσιν — οἶνον.

Greek Order of Worship

By Richard Shelton, 2004
Translated into English

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three sins:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here.
Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms.
Thou need'st not our prayers and sacrifices,
But we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.
O Lord, forgive these three sins.

The Return

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty,
As we must return to thee.

The Libation

First to Zeus the Father do we pour out [a libation],
Who gives us life;
And to Athena, who gives us knowledge.

Then to Aphrodite do we pour out,
Who gives us love.

Then to Dionysus do we pour out,
The best beloved,
The joy of mortals,
To whom we give of his own gift — wine.

Translation of Greek Order

(by Katie Hines, 1996)

O Lord, permit these three faults/sins/grievances:
You (on the one hand) are everywhere; we (on the other hand) perform sacred rights (continually) to you here.
You (on the one hand) are incorporeal; we (on the other hand) perform sacred rights (continually) to you as being of such a sort.
You (on the one hand) don't need of prayers, both from us and of sacrifices/offerings; we (on the other hand) give (continually) to you prayers and sacrifices/offerings.
O Lord, permit these three faults/sins/grievances.
To you we render this the abundant share, since it is necessary for us to depart to/from you.

3 Greek Supplements

Added by Mike the Fool, 2004

Some Greek Links

http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/Texts.html
http://classics.mit.edu/
http://www.ecauldron.com/recongreek.php
http://www.cs.utk.edu/~mclennan/OM/grk-lat.html
http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Lofts/2938/linkspagan1.html

Notes on Greek Offerings

It is recommended that offerings be either first fruits or libations such as honey, oil, water or wine. A carved loaf of bread is commonly substituted for the animals so commonly given in ancient times. Usually Greek Gods are thought to take the in-edible portions of an offering due to a long standing agreement.

Useful Greek Phrases

http://www.cs.utk.edu/~mclennan/BA/UAGP.html

Blessed be! Maka'rios e'soio (sg) / Maka'rioi e'soisthe (pl)! Ma'kar e'soio (sg) / Ma'kares e'soisthe (pl)!
Come! I'thi, ei'a! Deu'ro (sg) / Deu'te (pl)! Bas'ke! Fe're! Hu'page!
Come along! He'peo prote'rô!
Come, ... Ei d' a'ge (sg) / a'gete (pl) [usually with nun (now), dê (indeed), moi (me), etc. and a following imperative].
Excuse me. Sungignô'ske moi.
Go! Bask' i'thi!
Good-bye! Khai're (sg) / Khai'rete (pl)! E'rrôso!
Health! Hugi'eia!
I drink health (to you)! Filotêsi'an propi'nô [soi (sg) / humin' (pl)]! Or simply: Propi'nô [soi (sg) / humin' (pl)]!
Go to Hell! Es Hai'dou bas'ke.
Hello! Ou'le (sg) / Ou'lete (pl)! Khai're (sg) / Khai'rete (pl)! Me'ga khai're (sg) / khai'rete (pl)!
How can I help? Ti d' ou me'llô?
Hurry! Speu'de (sg) / Speu'dete (pl)!
In haste. Spoudê'.
In all haste. Pansoudi'a. Pansoudi'ên. Pansoudei'.

Interjections

Ha! (surprise or suffering) Papai'!
Oh Ye Gods! Ô sunte'leia!
I entreat you by Olympian Zeus,... Lis'somai Zênos' Olumpi'ou, ...
Be kindly disposed to me! Prosphilôs' moi e'khe (sg) / e'khete (pl)!
Ah! (grief, angerm surprise, admiration) Feu!
Enough! Pax!
So be it! Es'tô!
I wish you joy! Kharan' le'gô soi (sg) / humin' (pl)!
Luck. Tu'khê. (usually good)
Good luck to you! E'khe (sg) / E'khete (pl) tu'khê agathê'!
Oh! My ill luck! Têsi tu'khês!
Never! Ou'pote!
No. Ou. Hê'kista.
No indeed, no truly. Ou men'toi. Ou dê'ta. Ou men. Ou men dê.
No thank you. Ma'llista. Epainô'. Genai'os ei. Kalôs'. Kal'lista. Pa'nu kalôs'.
Thank you. Eukha'ristos eimi'. Kha'ris soi (sg) / humin' (pl).
Woe's me! Oi moi! Ta'las! Tlê'môn!
Yes. Nai. Naikhi'. Ma'lista. Kai ma'lista. Tau'ta. Tau'ta dê.
By all means, of course. Pan'tôs gar. Dê'pou. Pa'nu ge. Pa'nu men oun. Pôs gar ou.

ORD ADHARTHA

Ar feadh an tSamhraidh agus an Fhómhair
Summer/Fall By Robert Larson, c. 1975
Céil úraith:An Árd-draoi, an Teagascóir, agus an Friotha'lai

AN ACHAINÍ:

AD: A thiarna, maith dhuinn trí pheaca, atá orainn as siocair lochtanna daonna: Tá tú I ngach aon bhall, ach adhraimíd anso thú. Tá tú gan riocht, ach adhraimíd insna riochta so thú. Níl call agat lenár n-urnaith agus ár n-íobairtí, ach ofráilimíd na h-urnaithe agus na híobairti so chút.

Athiarna, maith dhúinn trípheaca, atá orainn as siocair lochtanna daonna; A Mháthair, glan ár n'anama 'is ár gcroithe agus ullmhaigh le smaoineadh sinn.

AN MÓR-SHIÚL:
OFRÁIL NA hÍOBARTHA:

AD: Téann ár moladh suas duit ar na sciatháin iolair; beirtear ár nglórtha suas duit ar ghuailne na ngaoth. Clis anois, a Mháthair, más é do thoil é, agus sinn ag ofrail an íobairt so bheatha. Glac léi más é do thoil é, agus glan ár gcroithe, ag tabhairt dhúinn cuid do shíochána 'is do bheatha.

An nglacair lenár n-íobairt, a Mháthair? Iarraim ar anam an Tuaiscirt freagra a thabhairt.... an Deiscirt... an Oirthir...an Iarthair.

Moladh leis na déithe! Glactar ár n-íobairt tiomnaithe don torthúlacht 'is athnuachan bheatha, agus don ghlandadh ár gcroithe 's ár n-anama.

AN CAITCEASMA NA N-UISCI:

AD: Cad é a bheireann an Domhain-Mháthair, go, raibh fios againn ar an sní 's athnuachan shíorá bheatha?

T: Na huiscí beatha.

AD: Cá as go sníonn na huiscí seo?

T: As brollach na Domhain-Mháthar, Uile Mháthair gan athrú.

AD: Agus conas onóirmíd an tabhartas so, a bheireann an bheatha dosna fir?

T: Ólaimíd na huiscí beatha!

AD: An dtugann an Mháthair cuid a féile?

T: Bheireann sí!

AD: Mar sin de, tabhair dhom na huiscí!

COISREACHAN NA N-UISCÍ:

AD: A Dhalon ap Landu, naomhaigh na huiscí seo le do chumhactaí seacht-fhillte 'is leis na trí chaoi lae 'is leis an aon chaoi amháin oíche. Glan ár gcroithe agus cuir le chéile sinn le

AN DEOCH OFRÀLA:

AD: Bheirimíd an chuid seo d'fhéile thar n-ais dhuit, a Mháthair, mar atá orainn dul thar n-ais dhuit.

AN SMAOINEADH:
AN BHEANNACHT:

AD: Téigidh amach isteach sa domhan fear, cinnte leis an bhfios, gur thug an Domhain-Mháthair taitneamh dár n-íobairt, gur fhreagraigh sí ár n-urnaí, agus go bhfágaimíd lena beannacht:

Síocháin! Síocháin! Síocháin!

do chumhacht, agus sinn ag tógaint 's ag ól cuid d'uscraí runda

ORDER OF WORSHIP

During Summer and Autumn
Translated from Irish by Robert Larson, c. 1975

Celebrants: The Arch-Druid, the Preceptor and the Server

THE INVOCATION

AD: O Lord, forgive us three sins, that are on us because of human limitations: Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here. Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms. Thou hast no need for our prayers and sacrifices, but we offer these pryers and sacrifices to thee.

O lord, forgive us three sins that are on us because of human limitations; O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

THE PROCESSION
OFFERING OF THE SACRIFICE

AD: Our praise goes up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices are carried up to thee on the shoulders of the wind. Hear now, O Mother, we pray thee, as we offer (u) this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our heart, giving to us of your peace and life.

Do you accept our sacrifice, O Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South.. of the East... of the West.

Praise be (to the Gods)! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our hearts and minds, is accepted.

CATECHISM OF THE WATERS

AD: What is it that the Earth-Mother gives, that we may have knowledge of the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: The Waters of Life.

AD: From where do these Waters flow?

P: From the breast of the Earth-Mother, the All-Mother without change.

AD: And how do we honor this gift, which gives life to men?

P: We drink the Waters of Life!

AD: Does the Mother give of her bounty?

T: She does!

AD: Then, give me the Waters!

CONSECRATION OF THE WATERS

AD: O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters with your sevenfold powers, and with the three ways of day and one way of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together with your power, as we take and drink of your secret essences.

THE LIBATION

AD: We return this portion of thy bounty of thee, O Mother, even as it is on us to return to thee.

THE MEDITATION
THE BENEDICTION

AD: Go out into the world of men, being secure with the knowledge, that our sacrifice pleased the Earth-Mother, that She answered our prayers, and that we leave with her blessing:

Peace!, Peace!, Peace!

ORD ADHARTHA

Ar feadh an Gheimridh agus an Earraigh
Winter/Spring By Robert Larson, c. 1975
Céil'uraith:An Árd-draoi, an Teagascóir, agus an Friothálai

AN ACHAINÍ:

AD: A thiarna, maith dhuinn trí pheaca, atá orainn as siocair lochtanna daonna: Tá tú I ngach aon bhall, ach adhraimíd anso thú. Tá tú gan riocht, ach adhraimíd insna riochta so thú. Níl call agat lenár n-urnaith agus ár n-íobairtí, ach ofráilimíd na h-urnaithe agus na híobairti so chút.

Athiarna, maith dhúinn trípheaca, atá orainn as siocair lochtanna daonna; A Mháthair, glan ár n-anama 'is ár gcroithe agus ullmhaigh le smaoineadh sinn.

AN MÓR-SHIÚL:

OFRÁIL NA hÍOBARTHA:

AD: Téann ár moladh suas duit ar na sciatháin iolair; beirtear ár nglórtha suas duit ar ghuailne na ngaoth. Clis anois, a Mháthair, más é do thoil é, agus sinn ag ofrail an íobairt so bheatha. Glac léi más é do thoil é, agus glan ár gcroithe, ag tabhairt dhúinn cuid do shíochána 'is do bheatha.

An nglacair lenár n-íobairt, a Mháthair? Iarraim ar anam an Tuaiscirt freagra a thabhairt.... an Deiscirt... an Oirthir...an Iarthair.

Tá na ceithre ghaoth ina dtost; tá an Domhain-Mháthair ina codladh.

AN CAITCEASMA NA N-UISCI:

AD: Cad é a bheireann an Domhain-Mháthair, go, raibh fios againn ar an sní 's athnuachan shíorá bheatha?
T: Na huiscí beatha.
AD: Cá as go sníonn na huiscí seo?
T: As brollach na Domhain-Mháthar, Uile Mháthair gan athrú.
AD: Agus conas onóirmíd an tabhartas so, a bheireann an bheatha dosna fir?
T: Ólaimíd na huiscí beatha!
AD: An dtugann an Mháthair cuid a féile?
T: Ní thugann sí; tá na huiscí anso, ach níl aon bheatha iontu.
AD: Mar sin de, cad é a ólaimíd?
T: Na huiscí codlata.
AD: Tabhair dhom na huiscí codlata!

COISREACHAN NA N-UISCÍ:

AD: A Dhalon ap Landu, tair arís anuas isteach isna huiscí seo agus maomhaigh iad. Tabhair fios dúinn ar do chumhacht 'is ar an ngealltanas beatha, a thiocfaidh thar n-ais.

AN DEOCH OFRÀLA:

AD: Bheirimíd an chuid seo thar n-ais dhuit, a Mháthair, mar atá orainn dul thar n-ais dhuit.

AN SMAOINEADH:

AN BHEANNACHT:

AD: Téigidh amach isteach sa domhan fear, cinnte leis an bhfios, go bhfreagróidh an Domhain-Mháthair ar n-urnaithe, go dtiochfaidh an féile bheatha thar náis don domhan, agus go bhéarfaidh an Domhain-Mháthair ag an am san a beannachtaí go leor daoibh.

Síocháin! Síocháin! Síocháin!

ORDER OF WORSHIP

During winter and spring
Translated from Irish by Robert Larson, c. 1975
Celebrants: The Archdruid, the Preceptor and the Server

THE INVOCATION:

AD: O Lord, forgive us three sins, that are on us because of human limitations: Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here. Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms. Thou hast no need for our prayers and sacrifices, but we offer these prayers and sacrifices to thee.

O lord, forgive us three sins that are on us because of human limitations; O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

THE PROCESSION

OFFERING OF THE SACRIFICE

AD: Our praise goes up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices are carried up to thee on the shoulders of the wind. Hear now, O Mother, we pray thee, as we offer (u) this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our heart, giving to us of your peace and life.

Do you accept our sacrifice, O Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South.. of the East... of the West.

The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother is sleeping.

THE CATECHISM OF THE WATERS:

AD: What is it that the Earth-Mother gives, that we may have knowledge of the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters of Life.
AD: From where do these Waters flow?
P: From the breast of the Earth-Mother, the All-Mother without change.
AD: And how do we honor this gift, which gives life to men?
P: We drink the Waters of Life!
AD: Does the Mother give of her bounty?
P: She does not; the Waters are here, but there is no life in them.
AD: Then, what is it which we drink?
P: The Waters of Sleep.
AD: Then, give me the Waters of Sleep!

CONSECRATION OF THE WATERS:

AD: O Dalon Ap Landu, come down again into these waters and hallow them. Give us knowledge of your power and of the promise of life, which will return.

THE LIBATION:

AD: We return this portion of thy bounty of thee, O Mother, even as it is on us to return to thee.

THE MEDITATION:

THE BENEDICTION:

AD: Go out into the world of men, being secure with the knowledge that the Earth-Mother will answer our prayers, that the bounty of life will return to the world, and that the Earth-Mother then will give her blessings in plenty to you: Peace!, Peace!, Peace!

OIRNIÚ DRAOITHE AN DARA ORD

By Robert Larson, c. 1975

Céiliúraithe: Árd-Draoi agus an Iarrthóir

AN ACHAINÍ:

AD: A Dhomhain-Mháthair fhlaithiúil shníte go deo, guíonn do pháistí do bheannacht ar an n-iarrthóir seo, gur mhian leis bheith fé do réir.

AN CAITICESMA:

AD: An ngeallan tusa, le fios iomlán, an Domhain-Mháthair a riaradh go dílis, ag friothálamh ar lucht a leanta 's ag déanamh do churamaí mar Draoi an Dara Ord chomh maith is féidir leat? An ngeallann tusa?

I: Geallaim-se.

AD: An dtuigean tusa nádúr an bhuin bheatha go léir agus cad as go dtagann sé? An dtuigeann tusa?

I: Tuigim-se.

AD: An dtuigeann tusa ól na n-uiscí beatha 's an íobairt bheatha, a ofrálaimid chun ár Máthar? An dtuigeann tusa?

I: Tuigim-se.

AD: Mar sin de, an bhfuil tusa ullamh beith coisricthe do réir na Domhain-Mháthar?

I: Táim-se.

AN COISREACAN:

AD: I n-ainm na Domhain-Mháthar, coisricim dá réir I dtigh anam an Deiscirt thú.

Coisricim dá réir I dtigh anam an Tuaiscirt thú.

Coisricim dá réir I dtigh anam an Iarthair thú

Coisricim dá réir I dtigh anam an Oirthir thú

Fé dheireadh, coisricim do réir na Domhain-Mháthar neartmhaire beannaithe uile-chumhactaí torthúla thú, ag coisreacan do shaoil le cúis na hUile-Mháthar, an Domhan.

Tóg 'is ól; gach aon bhraon!

IRISH ORDINATION OF SECOND ORDER DRUIDS

By Robert Larson, c. 1975

Celebrants: Archdruid and Aspirant

THE INVOCATION

AD: O Earth-Mother and ever flowing, thy children invoke your blessing on this aspirant, who wishes to be in your service.

THE CATECHISM:

AD: Do you promise, with full knowledge, to serve the Earth-Mother faithfully, ministering to her followers and doing your duties as a Druid of the Second Order as well as you can? Do you (promise)?

A: I do (promise).

AD: Do you understand the nature of the source of all life and from what it comes? Do you (understand)?

A: I do (understand).

AD: Do you understand the drinking of the Waters of Life and the sacrifice of life which we offer to our Mother? Do you (understand)

A: I do (understand).

AD: Then, are you ready to be consecrated to the service of the Earth-Mother?

A: I am.

THE CONSECRATION

AD: In the name of the Earth-Mother, I consecrate you to her service in the house of the Spirit of the South.

I consecrate you to her service in the house of the Spirit of the North.

I consecrate you to her service in the house of the Spirit of the West.

I consecrate you to her service in the house of the Spirit of the East.

Finally, I consecrate you to the service of the mighty, blessed, all-powerful, and fertile Earth-Mother, consecrating your life to the cause of the All-Mother, the Earth.

Take and drink; every drop!

Japanese Order of Worship (Summer Version)

北米国の新樫人の一般的な崇拝の順番

５月１日から１１月１日前日までのためのもの
（Summer Version）
(By Ikari Segawa 2002)

召喚文

おお、主よ、我らの人間としての限界による３しつの間違いを許したまえ
汝はどこにでも在り、しかし我らは汝をここにて崇拝する
汝には形はなし、しかし我らは汝をこれらが形にて崇拝する
汝は祈りも犠牲も必要とせず、しかし我らはこれらの祈りと犠牲を捧げる
おお、主よ、我らの人間としての限界による３つの間違いを許したまえ
おお、母なる者よ、我らの精神と心を洗い清め、瞑想のために準備させたまえ

捧物

司祭：我らが賞賛はイーグルの翼に乗り汝に向けて昇り、我らが声は風の肩に乗り汝まで運ばれた。今こそ我らが祈りを聞き届けたまえ、我らが母なる者よ、我らは生命の捧物を捧げる。これを受け入れたまえ、そして我ら祈らん、我らの心を清め、汝の平和と生命を授けたまえ。

司祭：おお、我らが母なる者よ、我らが捧物は受け入れられたか？我は答えを求め北の精霊を呼びださん・・・そして南の、西の、東の精霊を。

（ここで司祭は、植物の供物を「祭壇」または、もし
祭壇がないなら地面に置く。四方向に向けての質問の
間、参加者たちはその方向を向いても良い
）

返事

司祭：喜べ、豊穣と生命の刷新のために、そして我らの精神と心を清めるために捧げれれた物は受け入れられた！

生命の水の教義問答

司祭:母なる大地が与えし何を通じて、我らは生命が常に続き刷新することを知るか？
教示者：生命の水なり。
司祭：どこからそれらの水は流れるか？
教示者：常に変わらぬ万物の母、大地の母の胸からなり。
司祭：しからば、いかにして我らの内なる生命を起こすこれらの贈り物を称えるべきか？
教示者：生命の水を共に飲むことによって。

司祭：大地の母はその豊かさを与えてくれたか？
教示者：与えてくれた！
司祭：ならば、我にその水を与えたまえ！！

聖別

おお、ダロン・アプ・ランドゥ、これらの水を七重の力と、昼の３つの神秘の道と夜の１つの神秘の道によって清めたまえ。我らの心を清め、我らがその
秘密のエッセンスを飲むのに参加したまえ！

司祭認定式（オプション）

聖餐式

司祭：おお我らが母よ、我らも汝に戻らねばならぬとはいえ、汝の与える恵みの一部を汝に返そう。

瞑想

感謝の祈り

我らが供物が大地の母の見守るもとに受け入れ
られ、返答がなされ、我らはその祝福と共にあることを確信し、世界を進もう。

大気中に印形を描く

司祭は左から右へ、「平和あれ！平和あれ！平和あれ」言いながら大気中に３つの印形を描き,参加者たちと周囲を祝福する。

NRDNA
Common Order of Worship

(Japanese Summer Version from May 1st to Nov 1st)
By Ikari Segawa, c. 2002.

Shoukan

Ooo Shuu yo, warera no ningen to shite no genkai ni yoru mitsu no machigai wo yurushitamae
Nanji wa doko ni demo ari, shikashi warera wa nanji wo koko ni te suuhai suru.
Nanji ni wa katachi wa nashi, shikashi, warera ha nanji wo korera ka katachi ni te suuhai suru.
Nanji wa inori mo gisei mo hitsuyou to sezu, shikashi warera wa korera no inori to gisei wo ageru.
Ooo Shuu yo, warera to ningen to shite no genkai ni yoru mitsu no machigai wo yurushitamae.
Ooo haha naru mono yo, warera no seishin to kokoro wo aria-kiyome, mokuzou no tame ni junbi sasetamae.

Sasagemono

Shisai: Warera ga shogae wa "eagle" no tsubasa ni nori, nanji ni mukete-nori, warera ga koe wa kaze no kata ni nori, nanji made hokobareta. Ima koso warera ga inori wo kiki-todoketamae, warera ga haha naru mono yo, warera wa seimei no houbutus wo ageru. Kore wo uke-ireta mae, soshite warera kiran, warera no kokoro wo kyome, nanji no heiwa to seimei wo uketamae.

Shisai: Ooo, warera ga haha naru mono yo, warera no houbutsu wa uke-irerareta ka? Ware wa kotae wo motome, kita no seirei wo yobidasan… soshite minami no seirei… nishi no seirei… higashi no serei wo….

(Koko de Shisai wa shokubutsu no kyoubutusu wo "saidan" mata ha, moshi saidan ga nai nara chimen ni oku. Yoppomuki ni mukete no shitsumon no aida, sankashatachi ha so no houkou wo muite mo yoi.)

Henji (Reply)

Shisai: Yorokobe, houjou to seimei no sasshin no tame ni, soshite warera no seishin to kokoro wo kiyomeru tame ni agerereta mono wa uke-irerareta.

Seimei no Mizu no Kyougimondo (Catechism)

Shisai: Haha nara daichi ga ataeshi nani wo tsuujite, warera wa seimei ga jou ni tsuzuki-sasshin suru koto wo shiru ka?
Kyoujisha: Seimei no mizu nari.

Shisai: Doko kara sorera no mizu wa nagareru ka?
Kyoujisha: Jou ni kawaranu manbutsu no haha, taichi no haha no mune kara nari.

Shisai: Shikaraba, ika ni shite warera no uchi naru seimei wo okosu korera no okurimono wo tataeru beki ka?
Kyoujisha: Seimei no mizu wo tomo ni nomu koto ni yotte.

Shisai: Daichi no haha wa sono yutakasa wo ataete kureta ka?
Kyoujisha: Ataete kureta!

Shisai: Naraba, ware ni sono mizu wo ataetamae!!

Seibetsu (Consecration)

Oooo, Dalon ap Landu, korera no mizu wo nanae no chikara to , hiru no mitsu no shimpi no michi to yoru no hitotsu no shimpi no michi ni yotte, kiyometamae. Warera no kokoro wo kiyome, warera ga sono shimpi no essence wo nomu no ni sanka shitamae!

Shisai-nintei-shiki (Optional Ordination)

Seisanshiki (Libation parting)

Shisai: Ooo warera ga haha yo, warera mo nanji ni modoraneba naranu to wa ie, nanji no ataeru no megumi no ichibu wo nanji ni kaesou.

Mokuzou (Meditation)

Kansha no Inori (Benediction)

Warera ga kyoubutsu ga taichi no haha no mimamoru moto ni uke-irerare, hentou ga nasare, warera wa sono shukufuku to tomo ni aru koto wo kakushin shi, sekai wo susumou.

Taiki-chu ni Enkei wo Kaku

Shisai wa hidari kara migi he, "Heiwa are! Heiwa are! Heiwa are!" *to iinagara taikichuu ni mitsu no enkei wo kaki, sankashatachi to shuui wo shukuhaku suru.*

Figure 21 Steps into Japanese Garden, c.1997

Japanese Order of Worship (Winter Version)

北米国の新樫人の一般的な崇拝の順番

冬用：１１月1日から、５月１日前日までのためのもの(Winter Version)
(By Ikari Segawa 2002)

召喚文

おお、主よ、我らの人間としての限界による３つの間違いを許したまえ
汝はどこにでも在り、しかし我らは汝をここにて崇拝する
汝には形はなし、しかし我らは汝をこれらが形にて崇拝する
汝は祈りも犠牲も必要とせず、しかし我らはこれらの祈りと犠牲を捧げる
おお、主よ、我らの人間としての限界による３つの間違いを許したまえ
おお、母なる者よ、我らの精神と心を洗い清め、瞑想のために準備させたまえ

行列祈祷

供物

司祭：我らが賞賛はイーグルの翼に乗り汝に向けて昇り、我らが声は風の肩に乗り汝まで運ばれた。今こそ我らが祈りを聞き届けたまえ、我らの大地の母よ、我らは生命の捧物を捧げる。これを受け入れたまえ、そして我ら祈らん、我らの心を清め、汝の 平和と生命を授けたまえ。

（ここで司祭は、植物の供物を「祭壇」または、もし
祭壇がないなら地面に置く。四方向に向けての質問の
間、参加者たちはその方向を向いても良い
。

司祭：おお、我ら母なる者よ、我らが捧物は受け入れられたか？我は答えを求め北の精霊を呼びださん・・・そして南の、西の、東の精霊を。

返事待ち

（捧物は、緊急の場合を除き、受け入れられないり 。

司祭：４つの風は静かなり、大地の母は眠りについているなり。

生命の水についての教義問答

司祭：母なる大地が与えし何を通じて、我らは生命が常に続き刷新することを知るか？
教示者：生命の水なり。
司祭：どこからそれらの水は流れるか？
教示者：常に変わらぬ万物の母、大地の母の胸からなり。
司祭：しからば、いかにして我らの内なる生命を起こすこれらの贈り物を称えるべきか？
教示者：生命の水を共に飲むことによって。
司祭：大地の母はその豊かさを与えてくれたか？
教示者：与えて下さっていない！水はここにあり、しかしその精はそこから出ていってしまった。
司祭：では、我々が飲むのは何か？
教示者：眠りの水なり。
司祭：では、眠りの水を我に与えたまえ。

聖別

おお、ダロン・アプ・ランドゥよ、再びこれらの水に降臨し、清めたまえ。我らに汝の力と、やがて戻るべき生命の約束を知らしめたまえ。

聖餐式

瞑想

感謝の祈り

司祭：我らが祈りは答えられ、生命の恵みは大地の表面に戻り、そして大地の母がその祝福を我らに降り注いでくれることを確信し、世界を進もう。

大気中に印形を描く

司祭は左から右へ、「平和あれ！平和あれ！平和あれ」言いながら大気中に３つの印形を描き,参加者たちと周囲を祝福する。

NRDNA
Common Order of Worship

(JapaneseWinter Version from Nov 1st to May 1st)
By Ikari Segawa, c. 2002.

Shoukan

Ooo Shuu yo, warera no ningen to shite no genkai ni yoru mitsu no machigai wo yurushitamae
Nanji wa doko ni demo ari, shikashi warera wa nanji wo koko ni te suuhai suru.
Nanji ni wa katachi wa nashi, shikashi, warera ha nanji wo korera ka katachi ni te suuhai suru.
Nanji wa inori mo gisei mo hitsuyou to sezu, shikashi warera wa korera no inori to gisei wo ageru.
Ooo Shuu yo, warera to ningen to shite no genkai ni yoru mitsu no machigai wo yurushitamae.
Ooo Daichi -no-haha yo, warera no seishin to kokoro wo aria-kiyome, mokuzou no tame ni junbi sasetamae.

Sasagemono

Shisai: Warera ga shogae wa "eagle" no tsubasa ni nori, nanji ni mukete-nori, warera ga koe wa kaze no kata ni nori, nanji made hokobareta. Ima koso warera ga inori wo kiki-todoketamae, warera ga haha naru daichi yo, warera wa seimei no houbutus wo ageru. Kore wo uke-ireta mae, soshite warera kiran, warera no kokoro wo kyome, nanji no heiwa to seimei wo uketamae.

Shisai: Ooo, warera ga haha naru mono yo, warera no houbutsu wa uke-irerareta ka? Ware wa kotae wo motome, kita no seirei wo yobidasan… soshite minami no seirei… nishi no seirei… higashi no serei wo….

(Koko de Shisai wa shokubutsu no kyoubutusu wo "saidan" mata ha, moshi saidan ga nai nara chimen ni oku. Yoppomuki ni mukete no shitsumon no aida, sankashatachi ha so no houkou wo muite mo yoi.)

Henji (Reply)

(Houmono wa, kinkyuu no baai wo nuki, uke-irerarenai.)

Shisai: Yotsu no kaze wa shizuka nari, daichi no haha wa nemuri ni tsuite iru nari.

Seimei no Mizu no Kyougimondo (Catechism)

Shisai: Haha nara mono ga ataesh nani wo tsuujite, warera wa seimei ga jou ni tsuzuki-sasshin suru koto wo shiru ka?
Kyoujisha: Seimei no mizu nari.

Shisai: Doko kara sorera no mizu wa nagareru ka?
Kyoujisha: Jou ni kawaranu manbutsu no haha, daichi no haha no mune kara nari.

Shisai: Shikaraba, ika ni shite warera no uchi naru seimei wo okosu korera no okurimono wo tataeru beki ka?
Kyoujisha: Seimei no mizu wo tomo ni nomu koto ni yotte.

Shisai: Daichi no haha wa sono yutakasa wo ataete kureta ka?
Kyoujisha: Atatete kudasatte inai! Mizu wa koko ni ari, shikashi sono sei wa soko kara dete-itte-shimatta.

Shisai: De wa, ware-ware ga nomu no wa nani ka?
Kyoujisha: Nemuri no mizu nari.

Shisai: De wa, nemuri no mizu wo ware ni ataetamae!!

Seibetsu (Consecration)

Oooo, Dalon ap Landu yo, futatabi korera no mizu ni kourin shi, kiyometamae. Warera ni nanji no chikara to yagate modoru beki seimei no yakusoku wo shirashimetamae.

Shisai-nintei-shiki (Optional Ordination)

Seisanshiki (Libation parting)

Shisai: Ooo warera ga haha yo, warera mo nanji ni modoraneba naranu to wa ie, nanji no ataeru no megumi no ichibu wo nanji ni kaesou.

Mokuzou (Meditation)

Kansha no Inori (Benediction)

Warera ga inori wa kotaerare, seimei no megumi wa daichi no hyoumen ni modori, soshite daichi no haha ga sono shukuhaku wo warera ni ori-sosode kureru koto wo kakushin shi, sekai wo susumou.

Taiki-chu ni Enkei wo Kaku

Shisai wa hidari kara migi he, "Heiwa are! Heiwa are! Heiwa are!" *to iinagara taikichuu ni mitsu no enkei wo kaki, sankashatachi to shuui wo shukuhaku suru.*

The translator's afterwords

Translating a language into another is always difficult. One of the difficulties I had was the overall *religious* and *old-style* tones of the ritual languages. I wanted to make the translation sound like as authentic as posible, but to do this, I needed a professional linguist, who was not available.

Another difficulty was that an English word can have many different meanings and it was sometimes difficult to know which Japanese word matches best. For example, *way* as in *the three ways of the day* part. To translate this, the translator(me) needed to know the exact meanings of this word in this context, but knowing this itself can be difficult!(It's a Mystery). I thank Mike Scharding for answering some of my questions.

I would like to say that although this translation may not be perfect, I am happy with the result. I hope this translation shall be of use to someone, some day, somewhere.

Ablauf der Liturgie

FUER SOMMER UND HERBST
German Order of Worship, Summer & Fall
By Stacey Weinberger, April 2003

Dies ist der Ablauf der allgemeinen Feier fuer das Sommerhalbjahr (von Beltane bis Samhain), von welcher sich alle anderen ableiten. Der Einfachheit halber ist hier nur von einer Druidin die Rede, jedoch kommt natuerlich auch ein maennlicher in Frage. Der Kelch wird mit den Wassern-des-Lebens gefuellt.

Anrufung

O Erdenmutter, wir loben Dich!
Dass der Samen keimet,
Dass die Blume bluehet,
Dass die Graeser wehen.

Wir loben Dich fuer Winde die fluestern,
Durch der Ulme Anmut,
Durch des Ahorn Wohlgestalt,
Durch der Foehre Lebenskraft
Durch der Birken Glimmer,
Durch der Eiche Macht.

Wir loben Dich fuer alles
O Erdenmutter,
die Du uns Leben schenkst.

Bittgebet

D: O Bel, vergib uns diese drei Fehler, welche uns begrenzen in unsrer Sterblichkeit:
Du bist ueberall,
P: Doch wir verehren Dich hier.
D: Du bist ohne Form,
P: Doch wir verehren Dich in diesen Formen.
D: Du brauchst uns're Gebete und Opfergaben nicht,
P: Doch bieten wir Dir diese Gebete und Opfergaben dar.
D: O Bel, vergib uns diese drei Fehler, welche uns begrenzen in unsrer Sterblichkeit.
Alle: O Mutter, schenk Ruh' fuer Herz und Gedanken und sei mit uns in Innigkeit.

Prozession zum Hain. Nach Ankunft beim Altar zeichnen Druidin und Prezeptor mit ihren Staeben das Druidensiegel auf den Boden um den Altar herum. Nachdem sich die Druidin vor dem Altar in Position gestellt hat, bilden die Anwesenden einen Halbkreis davor.

Lobpreisung

D: Hat jemand Lob oder Fuerbitte an die Goetter auszusprechen?

An dieser Stelle koennen die Anwesenden Danksagungen aussprechen, Fuerbitten vorbringen und/oder eventuelle Opfergaben auf dem Altar darbieten, welche sie fuer eine Gottheit ihrer Wahl mitgebracht haben. Darauf folgt eine kurze Zeit der Andacht, worin jede/r der Anwesenden um die Erfuellung von materiellen/externen oder spirituellen Wuenschen und Beduerfnissen bitten kann.

Opfer

Die Druidin erhebt das Opfer gen Himmel, mit den Worten:

D: Unser Lob steigt empor zu Dir auf den Fluegeln des Adlers; unsre Stimmen getragen auf den Schultern des Winds; Hoer' uns nun an, O unsre Mutter, da wir Dir bieten dies Opfer des Lebens. Nimm' es an, wir bitten Dich; gewaehr' uns Deinen Frieden, und Leben.

Die Opfergabe wird auf den Altar gelegt, oder ins Feuer. Die Druidin wendet sich nacheinender den vier Himmelsrichtungen zu, waehrend sie fragt:

D: Nimmst Du unser Opfer an, O unsre Mutter? Ich rufe nun die Geister der Winde; uns Antwort zu geben. Lasset uns wissen vom Willen der Goetter fuer die kommende Zeit und vom Empfang unserer Opfergabe. Ich rufe den Geist des Nordens...des Suedens...des Ostens...des Westens...

Antwort

Ist das Opfer angenommen, wird die Feier fortgesetzt; andernfalls wird die Feier sofort beendet.

D: Lob sei mit Dir! Unser Opfer, gewidmet der Fruchtbarkeit und Erneuerung des Lebens ist angenommen!

Katechismus

D: Wovon gibt uns die Erdmutter, auf dass wir erfahren den ewigen Fluss von Leben und Erneuerung?
P: Von den Wassern-des-Lebens.
D: Woraus entspringen diese Wasser?
P: Von der Brust der Erdenmutter; Allmutter ewig unveraendert.
D: Und wie ehren wir dies' Geschenk, das Leben spendet?
P: Durch teilen der Wasser-des-Lebens.
D: Hat die Erdenmutter ihre Gabe gebracht?
P: Sie hat!
D: Dann gebe mir die Wasser!

Weihe

Druide/Druidin nimmt den Kelch vom Prezeptor, welcher ihn fuellt, falls er nicht schon vorher gefuellt wurde. Druide/Druidin weiht den Inhalt wie folgt:

D: O Dalon Ap Landu, heilige diese Wasser durch Deine siebenfache Kraft; durch die drei Wege des Tages und den einen der Nacht. Reinige unsre Herzen und verbinde uns durch Deine Macht, so wir Deine geheimen Essenzen annehmen und von ihnen trinken.

Priesterweihe?

Wenn ein Mitglied des Hains die Weihe in den zweiten Grad empfangen soll, wird diese Zeremonie an dieser Stelle vor der Kommunion eingefuegt. Die Druidin stellt dafür einen zweiten geweihten Kelch bereit, welcher mit den Wassern-des-Lebens gefuellt wurde.

Kommunion

Die Druidin trinkt vom Kelch und segnet den Prezeptor mit den Worten "Die Wasser des Lebens" und dem Zeichnen des Druidensiegels in die Luft. Der Prezeptor erwidert die Segnung und nimmt den Kelch wieder an sich. Der Prezeptor trinkt erst selbst und geht dann um den Hain herum (normalerweise im Uhrzeigersinn), segnet jede Person, gibt ihr den Kelch, laesst sie trinken, wird im Gegenzug gesegnet und uebergibt den Kelch der naechsten Person. Der Perzeptor trinkt NICHT mehr als einmal.

Die letzte Person sollte etwas im Kelch übrig lassen. Dieser Rest wird an Druide/Druidin mit einem letzten Austausch von Segenswuenschen zurueckgegeben Diese/r nimmt einen letzten Schluck und giesst den Rest auf den Altar und in den Opferschacht mit den Worten:

D: An Dich, O unsere Mutter, geben wir diesen Teil der Gabe zurueck, so wie wir dereinst zu Dir zurückkehren muessen.

Meditation

Hier folgt eine Lesung aus irgend einem angemessenen natur-orientierten Werk nach Wahl des Druiden oder der Druidin. Darauf folgen ein paar wenige meditative Worte des Druiden/Druidin und ein Moment Ruhe fuer private Meditation (normalerweise zwei bis drei Minuten oder laenger, je nach Beduerfnis der Gemeinschaft) Schlussendlich verkuendet Druide/Druidin den Abschluss der Feier mit:

Segensspruch

D: Gehet hin in die Welt in Sicherheit; in der Gewissheit um den Empfang unseres Opfers in der Gnade der Erdenmutter, die Erhoerung unserer Gebete und Ihr Segen auf unseren Wegen.

Die Druidin segnet den Hain mit drei Siegeln in die Luft, von links nach rechts, mit dem Ausruf:

D: Friede! Friede! Friede!

Das Siegel wird von Druide/Druidin und Prezeptor aufgehoben.

Ein Opfer wird der grossen Eiche dargebracht.

ENDE DER LITURGIE FUER DIE ALLGEMEINE FEIER

IM SOMMER UND HERBST

Ablauf der Liturgie

FUER WINTER UND FRUEHLING
German Order of Worship, Winter and Spring
By Stacey Weinberger, April 2003

Dies ist der Ablauf der allgemeinen Feier fuer das Winterhalbjahr (von Samhain bis Beltane.) Der Einfachheit halber ist hier nur von einer Druidin die Rede, jedoch kommt natuerlich auch ein maennlicher in Frage. Der Kelch wird mit den Wassern-des-Schlafs gefuellt.

Anrufung

O Erdenmutter, wir loben Dich!
Dass der Samen keimet,
Dass die Blume bluehet,
Dass die Graeser wehen.

Wir loben Dich fuer Winde die fluestern,
Durch der Ulme Anmut,
Durch des Ahorn Wohlgestalt,
Durch der Foehre Lebenskraft
Durch der Birken Glimmer,
Durch der Eiche Macht.

Wir loben Dich fuer alles
O Erdenmutter,
die Du uns Leben schenkst.

Bittgebet

D: O Bel, vergib uns diese drei Fehler, welche uns begrenzen in unsrer Sterblichkeit:
Du bist ueberall,
P: Doch wir verehren Dich hier.
D: Du bist ohne Form,
P: Doch wir verehren Dich in diesen Formen.
D: Du brauchst uns're Gebete und Opfergaben nicht,
P: Doch bieten wir Dir diese Gebete und Opfergaben dar.
D: O Bel, vergib uns diese drei Fehler, welche uns begrenzen in unsrer Sterblichkeit.
Alle: O Mutter, schenk Ruh' fuer Herz und Gedanken und sei mit uns in Innigkeit.

Prozession zum Hain. Nach Ankunft beim Altar zeichnen Druidin und Prezeptor mit ihren Staeben das Druidensiegel auf den Boden um den Altar herum. Nachdem sich die Druidin vor dem Altar in Position gestellt hat, bilden die Anwesenden einen Halbkreis davor.

Lobpreisung

D: Hat jemand Lob oder Fuerbitte an die Goetter auszusprechen?

An dieser Stelle koennen die Anwesenden Danksagungen aussprechen, Fuerbitten vorbringen und/oder eventuelle Opfergaben auf dem Altar darbieten, welche sie fuer eine Gottheit ihrer Wahl mitgebracht haben. Darauf folgt eine kurze Zeit der Andacht, worin jede/r der Anwesenden um die Erfuellung von materiellen/externen oder spirituellen Wuenschen und Beduerfnissen bitten kann.

Opfer

Die Druidin erhebt das Opfer gen Himmel, mit den Worten:

D: Unser Lob steigt empor zu Dir auf den Fluegeln des Adlers; unsre Stimmen getragen auf den Schultern des Winds; Hoer' uns nun an, O unsre Mutter, da wir Dir bieten dies Opfer des Lebens. Nimm' es an, wir bitten Dich; reinige unsre Herzen, und gewaehr' uns Deinen Frieden und das Geschenk Deines Lebens.

Die Opfergabe wird auf den Altar gelegt, oder ins Feuer. Die Druidin wendet sich nacheinender den vier Himmelsrichtungen zu, waehrend sie fragt:

D: Nimmst Du unser Opfer an, O unsre Mutter? Ich rufe die Geister der Winde; uns Antwort zu geben. Lasset uns wissen vom Willen der Goetter fuer die kommende Zeit und vom Empfang unserer Opfergabe. Ich rufe den Geist des Nordens...des Suedens...des Ostens...des Westens...

Antwort

"Das Opfer ist nicht angenommen!"

oder

"Das Opfer ist angenommen!"

D: Die vier Winde verharren in Stille; die Erdmutter schlaeft.

Katechismus

D: Wovon gibt uns die Erdmutter, auf dass wir erfahren den ewigen Fluss von Leben und Erneuerung?
P: Von den Wassern-des-Lebens.
D: Woraus entspringen diese Wasser?
P: Von der Brust der Erdenmutter; Allmutter ewig unveraendert.
D: Hat uns die Erdmutter ihre Gabe gewaehrt?
P: Sie hat es nicht! Die Wasser sind hier, doch verlassen vom Geist.
D: Was bleibt uns jetzt zu teilen, da es so ist?
P: Die Wasser-des-Schlafs!
D: Dann gebe mir die Wasser-des-Schlafes.

Weihe

Druide/Druidin nimmt den Kelch vom Prezeptor, welcher ihn fuellt, falls er nicht schon vorher gefuellt wurde. Druide/Druidin weiht den Inhalt wie folgt:

D: O Dalon Ap Landu, komm' hernieder in diese Wasser und heilige sie. Lass' uns Deine Macht erleben und die Verheissung des wiederkehrenden Lebens.

Kommunion

Druide/Druidin trinkt vom Kelch und segnet den Prezeptor mit den Worten "Die Wasser des Schlafs" und dem Zeichnen des Druidensiegels in die Luft. Der Prezeptor erwidert die Segnung und nimmt den Kelch wieder an sich. Der Prezeptor trinkt erst selbst und geht dann um den Hain herum (normalerweise im Uhrzeigersinn), segnet jede Person, gibt ihr den Kelch, laesst sie trinken, wird im Gegenzug gesegnet und uebergibt den Kelch der naechsten Person. Der Perzeptor trinkt NICHT mehr als einmal.

Die letzte Person sollte etwas im Kelch übrig lassen. Dieser Rest wird an Druide/Druidin mit einem letzten Austausch von Segenswuenschen zurueckgegeben Diese/r nimmt einen letzten Schluck und giesst den Rest auf den Altar und in den Opferschacht mit den Worten:

D: An Dich, O unsere Mutter, geben wir diesen Teil der Gabe zurueck, so wie wir dereinst zu Dir zurückkehren muessen.

Meditation

Hier folgt eine Lesung aus irgend einem angemessenen natur-orientierten Werk nach Wahl des Druiden oder der Druidin. Darauf folgen ein paar wenige meditative Worte des Druiden/Druidin und ein Moment Ruhe fuer private Meditation (normalerweise zwei bis drei Minuten oder laenger, je nach Beduerfnis der Gemeinschaft) Schlussendlich verkuendet Druide/Druidin den Abschluss der Feier mit:

Segensspruch

D: Gehet hin in die Welt in Sicherheit; in der Gewissheit um die Erhoerung unserer Gebete und um die Wiederkehr der Gabe des Lebens auf die Erde, denn auf diese Weise wird die Erdenmutter ihren Segen über Euch hernieder regnen lasen.

Druide/Druidin segnet den Hain mit drei Siegeln in die Luft, von links nach rechts, mit dem Ausruf:

D: Friede! Friede! Friede!

Das Siegel wird von Druide/Druidin und Prezeptor aufgehoben.

Ein Opfer wird der grossen Eiche dargebracht.

ENDE DER LITURGIE FUER DIE ALLGEMEINE FEIER

IN WINTER UND FRUEHLING

Structure Liturgique Générale

Version simple pour Été

À partir du 1er Mai au 1er novembre
French Order of Worship (Summer)
By Celtic Oak, 2004

LES ÉVOCATIONS

Ô Père, pardonnez ces trois erreurs dû à nos conditions humaines;
Vous qui existes partout et à qui nous offrons nos louanges ici en moment;
Vous qui n'avez pas de forme physique, mais dont on vous louange en cette forme et image;
Vous qui n'avez pas besoin de prières ni de charités, mais à qui nous prions et donnons nos offrandes;
Ô Père, pardonnez nous ces trois erreurs causés par nos conditions humaines

Ô Mère, purifiez nos pensées et nos âmes et préparez nous à la méditation.

Optionnel: Procession, Exécuter le sigle, effectuer l'incantation.

L'OFFRANDE

Prêtre: Nos prières se sont levées sur les ails de l'aigle, nos voies sont emportées sur ses épaules à travers le vent. Ô Mère entendez nos prières, recevez et acceptées nos offrandes, en échange de purifier nos âmes et de remplir nos vie de paix. Mettre offrande sur l'autel.

Prêtre: Ô Mère, en recevant nos offrandes, J'appel l'esprit de l'Est à se prononcer, également je demande à l'Esprit du Sud, de l'Ouest et celui du Nord à faire de même.

LA RÉPONSE

Prêtre: En offrant nos prières et nos offrandes à la fertilité, à l'immortalité de la vie et à la purification de nos âmes, il est assurez qu'elles ont tous été acceptées !

LE CATÉCHISME DE L'EAU VIE

Prêtre: De quoi dont notre Mère Nature nous offre dont nous connaissons son flot et son renouvellement continuels de la vie.
Maître: L'eau de vie
Prêtre: D'où vient cette eau?
Maître: De sa poitrine, notre Mère toute puissante et inchangeable.
Prêtre: Comment devons nous honorer ça générosité?
Maître: En participant à cette célébration qui lui rend honneur.
Prêtre: Nous as-t-elle été généreuse?
Maître: OUI, elle l'a été!
Prêtre: Donné moi cette eau dormante.

CONSÉCRATION

Ô Dalon Ap Landu vide cette eau par avec les 7 grands pouvoirs et par les trois manières du jour et de la nuit,. Purifiez nos âmes et rejoigniez nous en concert avec nous lorsque nous buvons cette mystérieuse essence!

COMMUNION ET VIN (ORDINATIONS OPTIONNELLES)

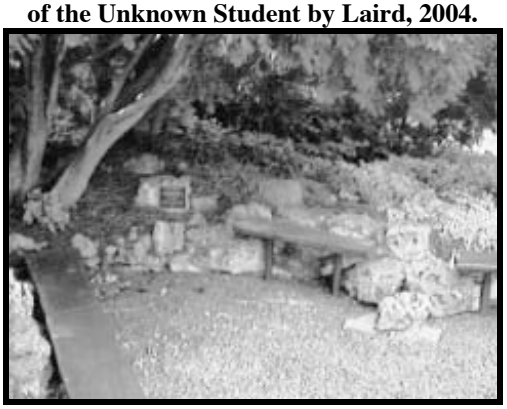
À celle que nous retournons cette portion de cette générosité, Ô notre Mère, même si nous devons retourner à vous.

MÉDITATION SUIVIT PAR BÉNÉDICTION

Allez dans ce monde, dans la certitude que nos offrandes ont trouvés leur places au ceins de notre Mère Nature et qu'elle a répondue à nos prières. Avec sa bénédictions, nous pouvons poursuivre notre chemin.

Paix, Paix, Paix!

Figure 22 Two shots of the Grotto of the Unknown Student by Laird, 2004.



Structure Liturgique Générale

Version simple pour Hiver

À partir du 1er novembre au 1er Mai.
French Order of Worship (Winter)
By Celtic Oak, 2004

LES ÉVOCATIONS

Ô Père, pardonnez ces trois erreurs dû à nos conditions humaines;
Vous qui existes partout et à qui nous offrons nos louanges ici en moment;
Vous qui n'avez pas de forme physique, mais dont on vous louange en cette forme et image;
Vous qui n'avez pas besoin de prières ni de charités, mais à qui nous prions et donnons nos offrandes;
Ô Père, pardonnez nous ces trois erreurs causés par nos conditions humaines

Ô Mère, purifiez nos pensées et nos âmes et préparez nous à la méditation.

Optionnel: Procession, Exécuter le sigle, effectuer l'incantation.

L'OFFRANDE

Prêtre: Nos prières se sont levées sur les ails de l'aigle, nos voies sont emportées sur ses épaules à travers le vent. Ô Mère entendez nos prières, recevez et acceptées nos offrandes, en échange de purifier nos âmes et de remplir nos vie de paix. Mettre offrande sur l'autel.

Prêtre: Ô Mère, en recevant nos offrandes, J'appel l'esprit de l'Est à se prononcer, également je demande à l'Esprit du Sud, de l'Ouest et celui du Nord à faire de même.

LA RÉPONSE

Prêtre: Les quatre vents son discrets, Mère Nature se repose.

LE CATÉCHISME DE L'EAU DORMANTE

Prêtre: De quoi dont notre Mère Nature nous offre dont nous connaissons son flot et son renouvellement continuels de la vie.
Maître: L'eau de vie
Prêtre: D'où vient cette eau?
Maître: De sa poitrine, notre Mère toute puissante et inchangeable.
Prêtre: Comment devons nous honorer ça générosité?
Maître: En participant à cette célébration qui lui rend honneur.
Prêtre: Nous as-t-elle été généreuse?
Maître: Non, elle ne l'a pas été car l'Esprit de l'eau est absent!
Prêtre: De quoi assistons nous?
Maître: À de L'Eau dormante
Prêtre: Donné moi cette eau dormante.

CONSÉCRATION

Ô Dalon Ap Landu, descend encore une fois dans ces eaux vides. Donne nous ta connaissance de tes pouvoirs et assure nous que la vie va revenir.

COMMUNION ET VIN

À celle que nous retournons cette portion de cette générosité, Ô notre Mère, même si nous devons retourner à vous.

MÉDITATION SUIVIT PAR BÉNÉDICTION

Allez dans ce monde, dans la certitude que nos prières seront exaucées, que la générosité de la vie va retourner sur cette terre et alors Mère Nature va versez ses bénédictions sur vous.

Paix, Paix, Paix!

Figure 23 New Stone Circle in winter 1999.

Figure 24 Cannon River running through the Carleton Arboretum 1999

Ordination du Deuxième Ordre des Druides

French Ordination of Second Order Druids
By Celtic Oak, 2004

D'être inséré après la consécration et avant la méditation dans l'ordre de liturgie. Liturgie peut devenir uniquement l'objet de l'ordination ou encore l'ordination peu faire partie de liturgie générale. Il est aussi généralement prévue de faire l'ordination durant la moitié de l'année correspondant à l'été. Car celle-ci demande l'utilisation de l'alcool ou d'un mélange concentré de sucré et d'eau. Normalement, c'est le Prêtre qui offusque le service et qui sollicite l'aspirant à rentrer dans le Deuxième Ordre après avoir consacré l'Eau.

Une autre alternative est d'inviter l'aspirant de venir en avant juste avant l'ÉVOCATION. Après avoir demandé les questions mentionnées ci-dessous, l'aspirant doit prendre part au CATÉCHISME DE L'EAU. Après la Consécration de l'eau, procédé à l'assermentation au Deuxième Ordre.

(NOTE: Faire tous le monde boire une gorgée avant l'initié, mais en laissé suffisamment pour qu'il ou elle peut en boire. Souvent, il est essentiel d'avoir un deuxième calice de prêt pour s'assurer d'en avoir suffisamment pour l'épreuve de l'aspirant.)

INVOCATION

Ô Mère nature, flot éternelle et généreuse, en temps que tes enfants nous te demandons d'offrir à cet aspirant vos bénédictions.

QUESTIONS

Prête: Étant pleinement conscient, promets -tu de servir la sources de toute vie, notre Mère Nature, t'engages-tu de servir ses fidèles avec tes meilleures habilités en temps que Druide du Second Ordre.
Aspirant: Oui, je le veux!

Prête: Sais-tu d'où vient la source de toute vie?
Aspirant: OUI, je le sais!

Prête: En adhérant, comprends-tu que nous dévouons nos vie à Mère Nature et au flot de toute de toute vie?
Aspirant: OUI, je comprend!

Prête: Es-tu prêt, maintenant, officiellement, à servir Mère Nature?
Aspirant: Oui, je suis prêt!

Figure 25 Autumn fields at Carleton, 2001.

ASSERMENTATION AU DEUXIÈME ORDRE

Le Prête trempe son doigt (préférable l'Index ou le pouce) dans l'eau consacré et imite le sigle sur le front du candidat à chaque fois qu'il prononce: "je t'assermente" dans l'ordre ci-dessous:

Au nom de notre Mère Nature:
Je t'assermente à ta tâche auprès de L'esprit du Sud;
Je t'assermente à ta tâche auprès de L'esprit du Nord;
Je t'assermente à ta tâche auprès de L'esprit du l'Ouest;
Je t'assermente à ta tâche auprès de L'esprit du l'Est;
Et pour terminer, je t'assermente aux tâches de la grande, glorifiante, divine et nourrissante Mère Nature. Ta vie est maintenant assignée à sa cause.

L'ÉPREUVE

(Donne au Candidat le reste de l'Eau-de-Vie)

Prête: Boit le toute!

(Retournez à liturgie, habituellement à la Méditation, qui risque d'être perturbé par l'initié devenue ivre).

Figure 26 Meditative benchs of Japanese Garden Fall 1999

Figure 27 The Druid Bridge over the Cannon River in downtown Northfield with over 165 Druid Sigils on its railings, Summer 2004.

Section Seven: Orderly Chaos

Order of Investiture for Archdruids

By Savitzky, 1969
First used at the investiture of Richard Shelton.

(This Order of Investiture for Archdruids should follow the Incantation of a regular service. Following the Investiture, the newly-invested Archdruid should continue with the Sacrifice. The responses ordinarily give by the Preceptor should be given by the outgoing Archdruid. This is ***not*** *the only, fixed way to consecrate an Archdruid.)*

O Earth-Mother, forever fertile and bountiful, we sing to thee our praise and ask that thy blessing and understanding be granted unto this person who is chosen to serve thee.

Are you, _____, who have been duly chosen, ready to enter this office of service to the Earth-Mother and to lead others to her worship and service? Are you?

Have you been sealed to the service of the most mighty and powerful and fertile Dalon Ap Landu and to the service of the great All-Mother? Have you?

Hear, then, these charges that are laid upon them who enter this office:

* That you shall direct in this grove the worship of the Earth-Mother, offering to her the sacrifice of life, consecrating in her name and in the name of Dalon Ap Landu the Water-of-Life and of Sleep.
* That you shall guide people's thought to the praise of the Mother, and minister to her children who have need of your aid.
* That you shall observe the feast days of the Druids and mark the periods of the moon.
* That you shall determine that the secular affairs of the grove are attended.

[This next passage is used only at Carleton]

That as Archdruid of Carleton, you shall head the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, discharging such duties as it may delegate unto you.

Hear finally that to you is given the right to consecrate people to the Order of Dalon Ap Landu, and upon you is laid this solemn charge: that this office shall not falter through your neglect.

This do you hear?
Response: This I do hear.
This do you affirm?
Response: This I do affirm.

I therefore, (first name only), Archdruid of _____, do relinquish unto you this office and the rights and charges thereof. May the Earth-Mother grant unto you her light and understanding as you discharge your office. I have hereby discharged mine.

Unofficial Ordination of Zero Order Druids Order of the Acorn

By Scharding, 2002

For people who wish to become Reformed Druids, yet due to age, distance, handicap or some other hardship, are unable to meet with a grove. The Book of Maccabees says, "Don't make a long introduction to a short story", so let's keep it simple, but feel free to elaborate if you wish.

The Acorn ordination should ideally be done outdoors between Beltane and Samhain. Perhaps you'd wish to reaffirm this status annually to yourself ("Next year in Carleton!" or some sort of deadline)? It is basically, the affirmation of the two basic tenets, bringing you into the organizational body of the Druids. In a way this is fulfilling half of the 1st Order requirements (Druid Chronicles, the Book of Customs, Chapter 1), Someday, if fate arranges it, you will meet a Druid who can take you into other Orders, if you wish. There are many activities you can do, because, you know (secretly between you and me) the Founders also made up things too.

Praise:

Insert whatever warm ups you think necessary. Perhaps a song.

Invocation:

O Dalon Ap Landu and Earth-Mother,
I know not the ways of the Druids, yet I wish to become one.
I cannot join their activities, yet I wish to act.
I know not when I'll enter Orders, but I wish to start now.
Please bless my search, and fill me with wisdom and Awareness.

Offering

(of some seeds, preferably acorns):

I wish to be a Reformed Druid, I believe that:

- The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
- And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.
- It is an unclear path that I begin today, but I will learn by doing. I offer you my activities in the time to come, as a sacrifice, whether it be for a few days or many years.

During this upcoming year, I intend to do the following…..
Please show me your favor, by bringing the path of the proper Druid across mine, in the proper way, at the proper time, at the proper place. If I am to follow this course by myself, so be it with great wisdom and small discoveries from your lessons around me.

Meditation:

Think on the signs that may appear during this ceremony.

Conclusion:

Be there with me through these trying times. Thank you.

Ordination of First Order Druids

By Founders, 1963
Written up by Scharding 1996

Unlike the other Orders of Reformed Druidism, there is no fixed liturgy of ordination, and at least during the first year 1963-1964, anyone who partook of the waters or claimed to be a Druid was considered one; which is a quiet tradition among many Druids to this day.

There is a general custom which can be elaborated upon as the Priest sees fit, derived from the Book of Customs in the Druid Chronicles that they must believe the two basic tenets and partake of the Waters of Life. Usually the Priest will ask for aspirants to the First Order, just before the waters are about to be passed around. The Priest will then go to the aspirant and ask if the aspirant believes in the two Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism:

1) The object of the search for religious truth, which is universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

2) And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it.

If the aspirant replies affirmatively, the Priest takes the chalice and dips their fingers in the Waters and draws the Druid Sigil on the forehead of the aspirant. Then the aspirant drinks some of the Waters. The Priest then declares them to be a First Order Druid.

If there are several aspirants to the First Order, say a half-dozen or more, instead of going through each separately, they may be asked the basic tenets as a group, followed by separate head-anointings.

Another custom has developed at Carleton College. There, anyone of the first or second orders being able to ordain another person into their own orders, in the absence of an existing Priest. This tradition kept the Carleton Druids going from 1985 to 1992.

Figure 1 "Twigonometry" sculpture, Spring 2003.

Addendum to First Order By Duir De Danu Grove

By Martin Victor, 2004 but much older.

From: martin victor
To: RDNtalk
Sent: Friday, August 22, 2003 1:10 AM
Subject: Re: [RDNAtalk] Tenets

Okay, here is how it [the First Ordination] goes:

Are there any hhere today who deem to partake of ordination to the First Order of the New Reformed Druids of North America. If so, then please present yourself to the center of the circle.

State your name.
Petitioner states name

And why do you will to walk the Druid path and join the ranks of the Reformed Druids of North America whose roots stem from the ancient ones of the Oaken Brotherhood.

Petitioner states reason(s)

And now I must ask you the first of three questions "do you believe nature is good?"
And second question is like unto the first, " do you believe nature is very good?"
And lastly, the third question is like unto the previous "do you believe nature is very, very good?"

Petitioner answers each question (hopefully in the affirmative)

Then step forward and be sealed by the Four Winds and the Sacred Center.

The Archdruid now takes the Waters of Life and begins to seal the candidate with them to the Four Winds and the Sacred Center.

Archdruid: From the Winds of the North, the realm of Earth, I seal you in the names of Dagda and Modron.
From the Winds of the South; the realm of Fire; I seal you in the names of Brigit, Lugh.
From the Winds of the East, the realm of Air, I seal you in the names of Arianrhod, Camulos.
From the Winds of the West, the realm of Water, I seal you in the names of Cerridwen and Mannanan Mac Lir.
And from the Sacred Center, the realm of Spirit, I seal you in the names of Tailtu and Tethra.
Hail and welcome to you, new druid!

*that's pretty much it. I do recall a couple of other minor changes to it, such as stating that "nature is good" not in a moral sense, but more in a practical sense type of thing.

Also of note, starting with me, it has been a tradition for us to bestow a name upon the new druid should (s)he wish a new name.

Ordination of Second Order Druids

By Founders, 1964

To be inserted after the ***consecration*** *and before the* ***meditation*** *in the Order or Worship. It can of course be the sole purpose of the Order of Worship, or an incidental part. It is generally only done in the Summer Half of the Year as it requires Alcohol or Potent Sugar-water. Usually the Priest of the service asks if anyone wishes to enter the Second Order, after having consecrated the Waters..*

Another alternative is to bring the aspirant forward during the Order of Worship's ***invocation*** *and after asking the* ***Questions, shown below****, have the aspirant respond to the normal* ***Catechism of the Waters****. After the* ***Consecration of the Waters****, proceed to the* ***Sealing to the Second Order.***

*(****NOTE*** *Have everybody sip the Waters before the initiate, but leave plenty for her/him to drink. It is often a good idea to consecrate a second chalice to ensure's there's enough)*

Invocation

PRIEST: O Earth-Mother, bountiful and ever flowing forth, we Thy children, invoke Thy blessing upon this aspirant to serve thee.

Questions

PRIEST: Do you, in full consciousness, promise to serve faithfully the Earth-Mother, ministering to Her followers, and following you duties as a Druid of the Second Order to the best of your ability? Do you?

Aspirant: I do. (*or close enough*)

PRIEST: Do you understand from whence comes the source of all life, and the nature of the source of all life? Do you?

Aspirant: I do.

PRIEST: Do you understand the partaking of the Waters-of-Life, and the sacrifice of life that we offer-up to our Mother? Do you?

Aspirant: I do.

PRIEST: Are you ready, then, to be sealed up to the service of the Earth-Mother? Are you?

Aspirant: I am.

Sealing to the Second Order

(Priest dips fingers in consecrated waters and makes a Sigil on forehead of the candidate every time the word "seal" is spoken in the following:)

In the name of the Earth-Mother;
I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the spirit of the South.
I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the North.
I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the West.
I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the East.
Finally, I **seal** you to the service of the mighty, the blessed, all powerful and fertile All-Mother Earth, thus consecrating your life to Her cause.

The Ordeal

(Hand the candidate all the remaining Waters-of-Life)

PRIEST: Take and drink, all of it!

(Return to the Order of Worship, usually at the Meditation)

Addendum to Second Order By Hazlenut Grove, 1993

After finishing the chalice, the candidate goes off for a period of isolated meditation in which she or he assembles an altar or sacred space, and meditates upon the five-fold Powers of the Mother. When s/he returns, the AD asks the following five questions in order to determine what has been discovered in hir meditation.

AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Power of the Mother? (Fire of Earth)
C: Gives an extemporaneous reply.
AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Beauty of the Mother? (Water of Earth)
C: Gives a reply.
AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Understanding of the Mother? (Earth of Earth)
C: Reply.
AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Wisdom of the Mother? (Air of Earth)
C: (pause for reply from C)
AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Magick of the Mother? (Spirit of Earth)
C: (pause for reply from C)

(Return to the Order of Worship, usually at the Meditation)

Addendum to Second Order By Akita Grove

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove 1998

This is not so much a liturgy as an activity to precede the 2nd Ordination. I was a bit inspired by the phrase "Three Ways of Day and One of Night." And I figured since the Third Order deals with the night during the Vigil, why not add some type of testing procedure dealing with Daytime for the 2nd Ordination? It is optional, of course, and the initiate should choose the level of intensity commensurate with their own stamina and environment, carefully acquiring the necessary skills in advance, with some method of calling for help if things go bad.

This should be ideally performed on a three day weekend. The initiate should set up a camping spot with a tent and campfire for use in the evening after each day's excursions, during a warm month in mid-summer, in a location with some water resource and possible natural food sources. A forested lake with fish, berries and hunting possibilities would be ideal. Special prayers should be assigned for Dawn, Noon and Dusk. During these three days, the initiate should be left alone .

DAY ONE: FOOD

From the first rays of dawn until the first star at night, you may not eat anything, except that which is found in Nature and not produced by the hands of man. If nothing is available to be found the first day, one ball of rice may be eaten in the evening. Drink bottled water in moderation during the day, meditate, understand the resources of your region.

DAY TWO: WATER

From the first rays of dawn until the first star at night, you may not drink any liquid, except that it comes from a natural source with no tampering by the hand of man. Food prohibitions continue. If no water can be found, 2 cups of water may be drunk in the evening. If still no food can be obtained, another rice ball may be eaten in the evening.

DAY THREE: SHELTER

From the first rays of dawn until the first star at night, you may not wear any clothing, rest under or in any prefabricated shelter, except using natural materials constructed by hand from the area around you. Previous food and water prohibitions remain in effect. Any fires must be made by rubbing or other natural methods, including the evening fire.

Ordination

As the third day draws to an end, if they have been successful, the ordaining AD will meet the initiate with a new robe of office, a hearty meal and lots of water. A regular Order of Worship will be held, and a 2nd Ordination inserted in the traditional place, with the sacrifice being selected by the initiate.

*Note if it is cloudy, you can determine when day begins and ends by being able to see the lines on your palm with natural light.

Addendum to Second Order By Carleton Grove

By MerriBeth Weber, Carleton Grove, c. 1999-2001

Carleton recently now often asks extra questions of the initiate, but has requested they not be printed here, to retain their potency. Inquiries should be made to Mike Scharding if you'd like a copy.

Addendum to Second Order By Poison Oak Grove

By Stacey Weinberger, Poison Oak Grove, c. 2001

1) The Second Order candidate was required to read the Druid Chronicles (now contained in ARDA) and ask questions from the reading. I have added asking questions of the candidate.
2) The Second Order candidate is to find an amber colored version of the ruby red Ben Franklin chalice to be used in the ordination service as the second chalice. The candidate keeps this chalice to do his/her own proto-grove services and receives a copy of the proto-grove service after the ordination.
3) The Second Order candidate was required to learn about or become familiar with another religion of his/her choice. Mine was Zen Buddhism.
4) Any grove member may have a robe. However upon ordination the Second Order candidate can have a tabard to wear with the robe. After the ordination the preciding druid might wish to place it over the ordained druid's head as a nifty gesture marking the achievement. I wear mine under my robe.

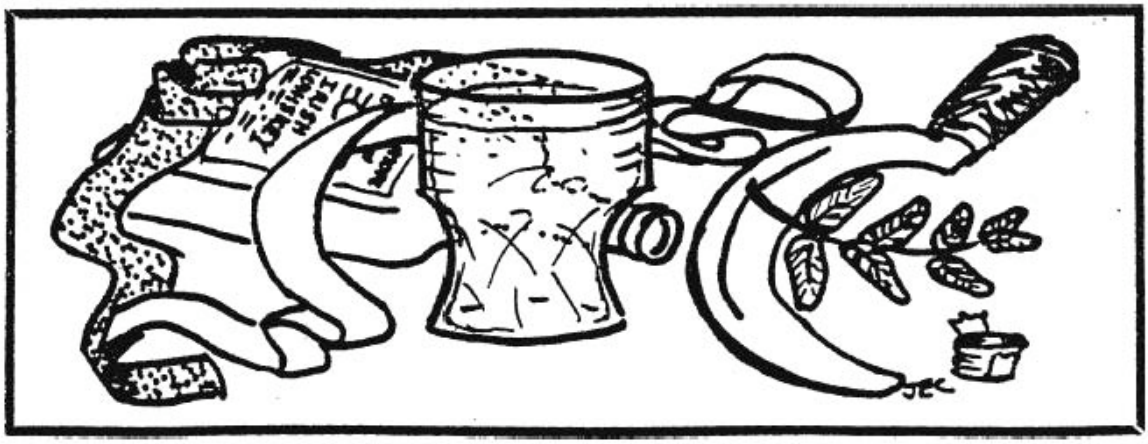
Addendum to Second Order By Digitalis Grove

By Mike the Fool, c. 2004

In addition to the standard practices of the second order, I've decided to make a few adjustments in my grove.

I encourage aspirants to this order perform a quest of some type, research a topic or go on a daytime vigil from sunrise to sunset to better understand the three ways of day and one of night.

At the end of the daytime vigil, I ask what they thought about and whether they are still interested in entering the second order, and if they are, I do the ordination as part of an early evening service.



Ordination of Third Order Druids Order of Dalon Ap Landu

By David Fisher, 1964

This ceremony has been left out because I had to promise not to release it, and because we feel that candidates should not have an opportunity to see the words until after the vigil. We apologize to the curious. . Read the Historiography for interesting details.

Researchers should contact Mike Scharding at mikerdna@hotmail.com or another Third Order member if you need more information concerning the contents, although I cannot release the text

Figure 2 Mike and Sam wearing their Arch Druid's hats, Goodhue Hall, 1992.

Figure 3 David Frangquist inducting Nikki Lambert into the 4th Order, Hill of 3 Oaks, Samhain Nov 1, 1993.

Ordination Of Fourth Order Druids Order of Grannos

By David Fisher, 1964

O Mother, we thy servants praise thee. Grant us thy presence now, as we worship thee in the form of Grannos, the healing springs. Fill this person with thy power., that they may be made fit to serve.

Hear now these words, found in a hymn to the Waters, form the Rig-Veda:

Forth from the middle of the flood the waters
Their chief the sea, flow cleansing, never sleeping
Indra, the bull, the thunderer, dug their channels:
Her let those waters, Goddesses, protect me.
Waters which came from heaven,
of those that wander dug from the earth,
or flowing free by Nature,
Bright, purifying, spreading to the ocean,
Here let those waters, Goddesses protect me.
Those amid whom goes Varuna, the sovereign,
He who discriminates men's truth from falsehood,
Distilling mead, the bright, the purifying,
Here let those waters, Goddesses, protect me.
They from whom Varuna the King, and Soma,
and all the deities drink strength and vigor.
They unto whom the universal Agni entered,
Here let those waters, Goddesses, protect me.

Understand that these words as a sing of the power in the waters that flow beneath the Earth.

I, (in the name of) the Patriarch of the Fourth Order, the Order of Grannos, the healing springs, because you have served faithfully and well the pursuit of truth, and because you have earnestly sought to know what is to be found in the bosom of the Earth, ask you to join in the fellowship of the Order of Grannos.

Know that we find the Mother's pleasure to extend her power to men in the form of a spring as it rushes forth from the Earth. Even as the Waters-of-Life of the Answer, so the healing springs minister to the needs of men, cleansing the weary and lifting up the weak in the body and in spirit.

As you follow the Mother in Grannos, you must be ready to life up in like manner. If any man comes to you for aid, you must not refuse him your counsel and help. You must visit the weak and weary in body, encouraging them and giving of your strength to their aid. This is the path of a follower of the Mother in Grannos: to lift up those who are fallen. Think now upon this life, and when you are ready, answer if you would follow.

(PAUSE)

ASPIRANT: I am ready to follow the Mother in Grannos.

Then in the sign of the most mighty and powerful Mother Earth, I seal you to the service of Grannos, the healing springs. Let your life be a life of service to all men, that you may accomplish this end.

Descend now into this person,

O Mother, with thy power of healing!

Take now this chalice as a sign and badge of your office. Fill it with the Waters-of-Life, and give it to the weak and to the needy, remembering always the source of all gifts and all strength.

Go forth now and heal and strengthen, in the name of Grannos, the healing spring.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 4 David Frangquist binding the maniple of the 5th Order onto Paul Schmidt while Becky Hrobak looks on at the Hill of 3 Oaks, Samahin 1993.

Figure 5 Sam receiving the Order of Belenos from Mike Scharding on the Hill of 3 Oaks, Samhain 1993.

Figure 6 Two onlookers observe Frangquist's induction of Gary Zempel (on the right) into the 7th Order at Mai Fete Island 1966.

Ordination of Fifth Order Druids Order of Braciaca

By Norman Nelson, 1964

O our Mother the Earth, who hast taken the form of malt, which men name Braciaca, the grain that sustains thy servants and gladdens their hearts, we ask thee to look upon this thy servant and to bless their life. As the germinating grain, let them grow in thy service; as the sprouting grain doth change to sweetness, let them increase in grace and favor in thine eyes in the eyes of all mankind.

(Portions of malt or grain shall be distributed. The officiant shall cast small amounts five times upon the altar.)

Our praise has mounted up to thee like the leaves of the sprouting grain. O Braciaca, accept now this sacrifice offered to thee, accepting the sacrifice of the candidate here before thee, and also their life into thy service.

(Like wise the candidate throws grain five times on the altar saying:)

Accept, O Braciaca, this sacrifice and my life, and grant thy blessing.

(Return to the officiant)

Hast thou accepted this dual sacrifice, O Braciaca? I call upon the spirits of the growing fields and fresh waters to make answer.

Praise be, our sacrifice has been accepted and the dedication of our lives has found favor in the sight of the Mother of all.

(Sprinkling the fresh water from the earth on the altar, the officiant says:)

O Braciaca, lord of malt and the goodness, thereof, look with favor upon this thy servant; consecrate, seal, and dedicate that person to a life of goodness that shall be an example to all men, and bestow thy blessings upon that person as they go through a life dedicated to thy service.

O Druid, your sacrifice has been offered and accepted; your life has been offered and received. Do you accept the call to serve, to be an example to all men, that your life may be a guide to those who shall come after, and pledge that you will do nothing to disgrace the life bestowed upon you in the service of the Earth-Mother?

Aspirant: I do.

Then by the authority in me vested, I seal you yet again, and bind you to the service of all mankind.

(Remaining water shall be poured on the altar in a moment of silent meditation.)

Rise, servant of Braciaca and of mankind, and go forth into the world of men, knowing that your sacrifice and your life have found acceptance, that our prayers have been answered, and that you go forth with the blessing of the lord of all.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Ordination of Sixth Order Druids Order of Belenos

By David Frangquist, 1964

O Belenos, lord of day, let now thy radiant goodness descend upon us as we who would be faithful unto thee seek fulfillment in thy glory.
I now call upon _____ to come and kneel before me.

Long has been your search: longer still it shall be; but may you be guided in the light of the sun as you continue. Hear now the charge of the Order of Belenos, which is the Sixth Order, the Order of the Sun.
Know that we have seen the smile of Belenos, bright, radiant, raining glory and warmth down upon the bosom of the earth from his seat on high in the midst of the blue heaven.
Know that all things owe him their strength and power; for his gift is the glorious gift of the energy of life, which is in all things which do grow and live upon the face of the earth.
Know therefore that you, as a priest of Belenos, shall be charged with the observance of his festivals of midsummer and midwinter, for on those days does the sun reach its highest points in its course through the sky.
Know also that the color of the Sixth Order is the color of Belenos, and the golden ribbon which I shall present to you shall you wear on the days of midsummer and midwinter and at such other time as you may wish, for they are it is the symbol of Belenos.

Now I would ask of you this one question:
"What is the nature of the sun at night?"

(At this point, the candidate answers the question in their own way; they have already been given the chance to meditate upon the question. If they give a suitable answer (which may be in the style of Zen) the ceremony proceeds.)

The arise, and hear these words of institution: Even as I am powerless to control the rising and the setting of the sun, but bow before the power of Belenos, so also am I powerless to consecrate you to his service. Only at his hands shall you be ordained, in a process that you yourself have now begun. When the sun has set, and then risen again, and shone down upon you, then if your heart is pure shall you be truly Druid of the Order of Belenos.

Lift now your eyes toward the sky; and raise your arms in adoration to Belenos; as I now present you with the token of your Order.

(Here the candidate is presented with their gold ribbon.)

Go now, and bring into the hearts of men the warmth and cheer of Belenos, that the light of truth might shine for them even as does the light of the sun.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Ordination of Seventh Order Druids Order of Sirona

By Gary Zempel, 1966

O Sirona, we invoke thy presence now. Rise out of thy murky depths, and receive this, thy humble servant.

May you now receive the blessings of all the Gods and Patriarchs:

May you have:
The strength of Dalon Ap Landu
The mercy of Grannos
The sweetness of Braciaca
The radiance of Belenos
The Power of Taranis .
May your wisdom be as vast as Llyr.
And may you be at home with the mystery of Danu.

Strengthen now your spirit with this charm from Atharva-Veda,

O Sirona, Queen of the Seven great floodwaters, Princess of the seventy times seven rivers, Mistress even of the Cannon [a river], accept this sacrifice as a token of our devotion, and grant us Peace. We pray that this, thy servant, may be found acceptable in thy sight as unto thee we commend his spirit.

SPLASH!

(The Candidate is thrown in water)

Now by the authority vested in me, I proclaim you Patriarch. Join now the college of your distinguished Brothers.

Go forth into the world of men, serving the Earth-Mother, and ministering to her followers in the name of Sirona.

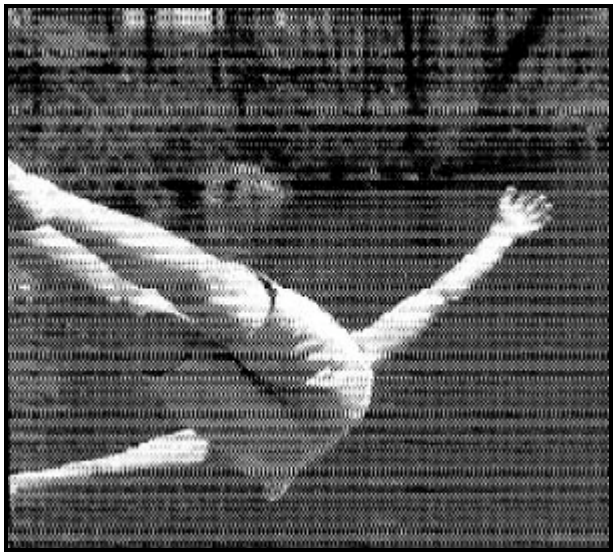


Figure 7 Gary Zempel entering the Order of Siron, Lyman Lakes 1966.

Ordination of Eighth Order Druids Order of Taranis

Unofficially proposed by Nozomi Kibo, 1998
Officially adopted by Michael Scharding, who was elected as Patriarch by the Council of Sirona 2004

Conditions Necessary for Ordination:

0. Due to the difficulty of finding an Ordainer and ordainee in the same place during the storm, it is self-ordinated with permission from the Patriarch or other member of the council.
1. Service should be during the rainy season, if there is one.
2. Candidate priests must have shown divine selection by Taranis by being struck by lightning, caught in a tornado, lost in a blizzard, hit by a meteor or almost drowned in a flood. Accdiental electrocution or receival of a degree in meteorology or electrician might also be accepted as an omen of invitation.
3. Candidate must perform the ritual during a terrific storm, outside, unprotected from the elements, from the storm's beginning to its end. They are encouraged to go outdoors at least once in every future storm.
4. Candidate must be bearing triple knotted yellow & black ribbon maniple and holding the symbol of office, a golf iron, or fly a kite during the vigil of at least 3 to 8 hours.
5. Site must be an open field or hill top without any tall structures nearby if possible.
6. Sacrifice must be a top-tree oak-twig or rowan-twigl or any wood of an actual lightning-struck tree; and a chalice of freshly collected rain water.

The Ceremony:

The Invocation:

O Taranis, ruler of weather, we look upon thy presence around us in awe and worship. Give your attention, O Earth-Mother, as we worship you in the form of Taranis.

[Here the candidate sings a weather related song.]

Our praise has come forth but we are drowned by your own song. You have selected me in the following way.

[Here the candidate relates how they were selected.]

If I am to be accepted, I will perform the following acts:

[Here the candidate details the duties of the order, which might include a serious study of meteorology and climatic studies.]

Offering of the Sacrifice:

I offer you this dedication of life. Accept it, we pray thee, in token of the dedication of my heart, grant us a sign of thy acceptance.

[Here shall the Druid lay the sacrifice on the altar next to a chalice of fresh rain water, gathered during the storm.]

Hast thou accepted our sacrifice? Do you look with favor on my course? Show us a sign, O Taranis! I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South... of the East.... and of the West.

[A lightning bolt or thundering or serious blast of wind from the appropriate direction is sufficient. In normal RDNA rituals such a sign would cancel the ceremony. If successful, continue.]

Praise be, our sacrifice, offered to Taranis and the vitality of the world, has been accepted. Taranis has approved this lowly candidate. I thank you.

Consecration of the Water:

O Taranis, by whose power and might the very heavens do ring and peal forth, and replenish our rivers with fresh water, come to us now as we celebrate your eternal majestic drama.

I, [insert name and titles] thank you for choosing me to enter your hallowed order. Give unto me more knowledge of your ways and methods. Listen to my appeals when I call you, and if acceptable, please grant them. I pledge myself to your service, from watching fluffy cloud shapes to the study of meteorology and observation of the cycle of water distribution over this planet that I might tell them to others. Teach me the wisdom of these symbols that I bear. As a token, I now ask you to descend into these waters as they have already descended from you!

[Here the priest holds up the chalice, filled with 1 part whiskey and 3 parts rainwater from the storm. The priest then serves anyone else silly enough to be standing around with them. The priest then returns to the normal service.]

The Libation:

I return these waters to you as all water eventually return through you and come again.

The Meditation:

[Pick one as seems appropriate.]

The Benediction:

O Taranis, my first wish unto you is this; that none present here will feel your same power as keenly as I have felt it. May they be blessed by you wherever they go, with sufficient rain and only the rarest of weather disasters. Of this I beg your peaceful blessing.

Peace. Peace. Peace.

[Here the priest now waits out the storm, lightning rod in hand, such as a golf club, until the storm ceases, at their own peril, but we officially don't encourage you to do this. If Taranis loves them, they will survive.}

Unofficial Ordination of Ninth Order Druids Order of Llyr

by Nozomi Kibo
Translation by Michael Scharding, 1998

Conditions Necessary for Ordination

1. Rite held between Beltane and Samhain at a beach.
2. Candidate must have spent the great part of a year and a day in near-daily communion with the ocean, deriving their livelihood in some way from the ocean and in general never being away from the ocean for more than a few days.
3. Having completed this period, the candidate must make a trip of divinely decided duration, on a boat of their own construction.
4. The candidate should be familiar with marine navigation, fish and sea life and be an adept swimmer.
5. Before the Order, the candidate must vigil in the ocean, say, waist deep, for about 7 hours. (By ocean we also include tidal-affected freshwaters such as the Great Lakes and Lake Victoria). A wet suit may be worn during this period.
6. The Order is performed in the ocean, not having left it since the beginning of the night vigil, promptly at dawn, or vigiling from low tide to high tide and holding the service at high tide. Kibo suggests stripping down before beginning, because she says it promotes a more intimate contact with the ocean spirits. Perhaps being held underwater with scuba gear?
7. The offering may be a sea plant, or the releasing of a live creature back to the ocean.

The Ceremony:

The Invocation:

O Grandmother, O Llyr, we thy children do invoke you from the surrounding rolling oceans to witness my dedication to your service. I have spent a year in communion with you and a night embraced by your waves. I have studied your ways and those of your children and I ask you to bless this service with your attention.

Chanting of Hymns:

[Here the candidate may use this chant or one of their own choosing.]

Amergin's Song

I am the wind upon the sea,
I am a wave upon the ocean,
I am the sound of the sea,
I am a stag of seven points,
I am a bull of seven fights,
I am a hawk on a cliff,
I am a teardrop of the sun,
I am the fairest of blossoms,
I am a boar of boldness,
I am a salmon in the pool,
I am a lake on the plain,
I am a word of skill,
I am a battle-waging spear of spoil,
I am a God who fashion fire in the mind,
Who but I knows the secret of the stone door?
Who has seven times sought the Places of Peace?
Who, save I, knows the ages of the moon,
The place and time the sun sets?
Who calls the kine from Tethra's house,
And sees them dance in the bright heavens?
Who shapes weapons in a fort of glass,
In a fort that harbors satirists?
Who put the poet, the singer of praises,
Who but I divides the Ogham letters,
Separates combatants, approaches the Faery Mound?
I, who am a wind upon the sea.

The Offering of the Sacrifice:

Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of sea gulls and descended to you on the fins of your fish. Hear now, we pray thee, O mother Sea, as we offer up this sacrifice to thee. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy presence yet.

[Here the candidate release the creature or sea-plant.]

Has thou accepted our sacrifice, O Llyr, our Grandmother? I call upon the spirit of the House of the North to give answer... of the South... of the East... of the West.

[Wait for signs.]

Praise be, the sacrifice has been accepted!

[The sea-green ribbon is donned and an aquatic dance may be performed here if desired.]

Ordination and the Consecration of Waters

[Candidate raises the chalice of sea water.]

O Grandmother Llyr, from thy bosom all life has come forth. There is no need to bless your holy waters, yet I praise of thy holiness. I dedicate myself to the study of your mysteries, the strengths and weaknesses of water. Teach me, help me, protect me and encourage me. May we never be parted for long, may I instruct others in your care. With that I welcome your presence outside as well as within me.

[Here the candidate takes a healthy portion of waters and passes the cup to other present. Afterwards return the waters to the ocean. Then the initiate walks out into the ocean until they pass out of sight, pause, turn around and emerge from the ocean, perhaps surfing on a clamshell if they can manage it.]

The Libation

O Llyr, we return these waters to you, as all waters flow to you, as we must one day return to you on our final journey across your waters to the Blessed Isles.

The Meditation

[An appropriate sea-oriented reading. Perhaps "Prayer of the Sea" at the end of the Great Druish Books in Part Five of ARDA by the Hasidic Druids? A copy is here provided:]

Prayer of the Sea

How wondrous are the works of the Earth-Mother!

Consider the oceans and their inhabitants.

Consider the waves that swell and fall afar from any human land, never seen by human eye.

Consider the waves born far out to sea, traveling many leagues to crash at last upon the rocks of some barren shore; spraying their white frustration high into the air; or which

softly creep across furlongs of glistening sand, sending spies far inland, scouting new territory for the sea to reclaim.

Consider that for ever grain of sand, every chip of rock, every cliff and promontory slipping into the waters; for each is another deposited elsewhere.

Consider the plants of the Sea; the mighty beds of mile-long kelp, the mosses growing upon the shore, the vast fields of algae and plankton, giving unto us the breath of life.

Consider the animals of the Sea; the horses of the sea and the lions of the sea, clam and barracuda, whale and kraken, and the dolphin- beloved of the Mother and friend to humans.

Consider as well the inhabitants of the depths where light is never seen, where waters never stir, where monstrous pressures crush all who would dare invade the realm; and also the dwellers of the reefs, the angels and anglers, octopus and starfish, and the deadly man-o-war.

Consider the monsters and the beauties, and wonder at the bounty of the Earth-Mother and wonder more at Her power.

Consider the seas of our ancestry, screaming in white, foaming frenzy against the barren rocks; while somewhere in a quiet tidal pool, one atom links with another, one molecule with another, one chain with another. And behold the miracle as the sky impregnates the waters and the Earth-Mother cries out "Let there be Life!" – and there is Life!

Consider thou that, as surely as we did come from the Sea, so shall we as surely return unto Her. Though we be buried beneath the soil of the driest land, it matters not – for all the world has been once covered by the Sea, and shall be covered again in days to come.

For the Mother Who rules the waters and the rocks, the skies and the pits, will have Her own, and none shall gainsay Her.

For the Earth-Mother is the Sea-Mother, Who arose from the waters to become the Goddess of Love and Life, and Who therefore bids us to Love and Live.

Ea Leukothea, Ea Yemanja, White Goddess of the Waters! Hail to Thee, Sedna and Nerivek!

And when our loving and our living is at an end, we shall return to the Sea, our Mother; where for every weakness there is a power, for every hurt a cure, for every sorrow a joy.

Long and live and consider: How wondrous are the works of the Earth-Mother!

THE BENEDICTION

O Grandmother, we carry your blessing with us daily in our very blood and body which imitates your composition. Be in our thoughts and let us be in yours as we go forth back to the realm of your daughter, the Earth. We long to return to you again and play in your waves. This service is over and mine has begun. Peace. Peace. Peace.

[The candidate may choose to remain near the ocean to the end of the tidal sequence.]

Unofficial Ordination of Tenth Order Druids Order of Danu

By Nozomi Kibo
Translation by Michael Scharding, 1999

An Explanation:

This, the final order of the RDNA, has but one requirement for entrance to the Order of Danu, and that is for the candidate to have died. As such, the candidate will be initiated by Danu herself and no ordination service is required to be printed here. We do not encourage members to hasten into this order, as it one will all join eventually at a natural time.

We recommend a funeral service for the departed Druid, but that is more for the bereaved than the deceased.

Some have considered this order to that of fertility. Why have I made it the order of death? Without death, there would be little need for fertility. The threat and embrace of death is a constant inspiration to struggle, improve the lives of others and bring more life to replace the life that must soon depart again. The other orders are sufficient to celebrate the fertility of this world.

As the first departed Druid was Dannie Hotz, first priestess of the Reform, I call her the current Matriarch of the Order in our opinion, and I refer you to her if you have further questions on this Order.

With that said, we await your entry to this Order, but pray that it will not come too soon or in an unwelcome way.

Peace. Peace. Peace.

Historiography of the New Higher Orders

The 8th, 9th, 10th orders were written by Nozomi Kibo, a very talented young woman in my Akita Grove. She wanted to complete the higher orders, but their legality is very contestable, of course, as they did not emerge from the standard procedure of the 7th Order Council electing the Eight Order Patriarch, and so on. When I explained the ambivalence of many to the self-initiatory aspect of her Orders, she replied, "The Gods do all the work anyway. We are just following them." Which is true, I doubt an Ordination ceremony without divine influence would be a hollow ordination. Besides Nozomi's requirements make the Orders very difficult to attain, which should mute some of the criticism.

8th Order: Black ribbon with yellow zig-zag & three knots. Patriarch bears a golf club or umbrella over the left shoulder.
9th Order:. Sea-green ribbon
10th Order: Brown ribbon.

See historiography notes for more details.

Pre-Emptive Ordination of Tenth Order Druids Order of Danu

By Stephen Crimmins, Carleton 2004

The Invocation

O Danu, come forth too us and guide this service. O Danu, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, yet we worship thee in the grove of the Earth;

Thou art without form, yet we worship thee as Danu;

Thou hast already consecrated our brother to your service, yet we insist on ordaining him to your service again**;**

O Danu, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Sacrifice

Priest: O Danu, we have given forth of one your children who has sacrificied himself to preach your name in all of it's forms. Yet our praise has *still* mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have *still* been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up yet another sacrifice in name of our **Brother Robert**. Accept it, we pray thee. *Place sacrifice on Altar, if possible it should be something of the candidates or significance to the candidate.*

Priest: We ask the O Danu, do you accept this sacrifice for our **Brother?** Will you guide him in death as you have guided him in life? And will you welcome him into your arms as a priest of your order? Hast thou accepted our sacrifices, O Danu? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East...and of the West. (If it's a quiet day a lack of a response can also be a sign of acceptance)

The Reply

Priest: Praise be, our sacrifice has been accepted!

The Meditation (Eulogy)

(Written by Isaac Bonewits)

As many of you may know, Robert was the graduate of Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota who first introduced me to the Reformed Druids of North America and who eventually ordained me as a priest of the Earthmother in 1968.

It was his (accidental?) omission of early non-Pagan materials in the RDNA teachings (in his copy of *The Green Book)* that led me to believe that Druidism was and should be a Neopagan path; which belief I made into a self-fulfilling prophecy, much to the annoyance, amusement, and/or approval of various other Reformed Druids.

Robert was the priest who showed me how powerful invoking Celtic deities in a Celtic language could be and whose love of trees influenced my environmental concerns.

He was the one who encouraged me to edit, write parts of, and typeset *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, which eventually became *A Reformed Druid Druid Anthology* under Br. Scharding's care.

Although health problems have erased many personal memories of my younger days, I still have an image of the two of us burning hundreds of printing plates and offset printing *The DCE* day after day, working at his printing job after hours, then collating it and shipping it off to as many Reformed Druids as we could find.

If Robert had not thought of doing this project, who knows what would have happened to the Reform? The new *Apocrypha*, rituals, and the unforgettable *Great Druish Books* raised a ruckus and got people back in touch with each other, if only to argue!

The Carleton Grove was revived—twice!—because students found copies of *TDCE* in the college library, which ultimately became home to what may be the world's largest Druid Archives.

To this very day, the pages Robert Larson printed are still there in the library, a legacy to future generations of Carleton students.

But his legacy is greater than this, even if by accident.

If I am the father of a few Branches of the Reform, including *Ár nDraíocht Féin:* A Druid Fellowship, then Robert Larson was the unknown grandfather.

Without him, there would have been no New Reformed Druids of North America, no Orthodox Druids of North America, no ADF, no Henge of Keltria, and none of the other Neopagan Druid offshoots of the Reform.

His humor, his laid-back attitudes about religious orthodoxy, and his teachings live on in hundreds (perhaps thousands) of people he never knew.

Another memory of him that survives is of the day I asked him about Druid holidays. "Robert," I said to him, "today's the fall Equinox. Aren't we supposed to observe it or something?"

He put his banjo down, got up and went to the balcony of our apartment and looked at the setting sun.

"Yep, looks like an equinox to me!" he said and went back to his chair and resumed his playing.

Though I was mildly annoyed at the time, years later this incident was a source of much fruitful meditation for me.

I thank you all, living and passed over, for the joy and beauty you created, accidentally or deliberately.

And this Samhain and every Samhain thereafter, let us raise a glass of the Waters to Robert Larson, priest of the Earth Mother and now one of the Mighty Dead.

The Catechism of The Waters-of-Life

PRIEST: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may remember our fallen comrade?

PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.

PRIEST: From whence do these Waters flow?

PRECEPTOR: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH, OF DANU, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

PRIEST: And how do we honor this gift that of memory, this gift that mirrors our **Brother's** sacrifices?

PRECEPTOR: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.

PRIEST: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

PRECEPTOR: SHE HAS!

PRIEST: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

O Danu, Hallow these waters of sleep that pour forth from thy three fold ways, from the earth and from the sky and from the seas, constantly and inconstantly but always despite the power of the day or the night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of thy secret essence!

(The Celebrants should only take a small sip in commemoration. The majority should be left for the initiate, additionally the priest should not take a sip when the waters return, but hold onto the glass. The initiate should also not drink of the waters yet)

The Reading of the Description of the Order

The Name Danu might be closely tied to the Earth-Mother who gives for of the bounties of life. She is yet also a goddess of fertility. But without death there may be no fertility. For as a parting may take away life it also returns one to the cycle of life. The name Danu is the earth, and the candidate has been cast already into the earth, tied with Danu. We now seek to tie the two spiritually as well as physically.

The Questioning

Priest: Do you **Brother Robert** understand the nature of the order?

Candidate: (Normally silence. However any answer that does not come from the living is acceptable)

Priest: This is very wise. And do you **Brother Robert** accept the call to care for our mother, for Danu, in death as you have in life?

Candidate: (Normally silence. However any answer that does not come from the living is acceptable)

Priest: This again is very wise. And do you **Brother Robert** agree also to carry for your sisters and brothers in the mother in death, as you have cared for them and they have cared for you in life?

Candidate: (Normally silence. However any answer that does not come from the living is acceptable)

Priest: This is also very wise. And now **Brother Robert**, there is but one task left of you. Please tell us what this order means to you.

Candidate: (Normally silence, but longer silence. However any answer that does not come from the living is acceptable)

Priest: This is the wisest thing I have heard all day. Let us take a minute to contemplate this wisdom.

Sealing to the Order of Danu

O our mother Danu, long had Our **Brother, Robert Larson**, served you in your many forms. Long had he toiled to spread the word of Druidism and to enrich the lives of Druids.

O our mother Danu, long had Our **Brother, Robert Larson**, followed the many forms of your many guises. Long had he heard the word of Druidism and knew that it was ok and much did he listen to other Druids and thus enrich his own life.

O our mother Danu, Our **Brother, Robert Larson**, was a priest of the order of Dalon ap Landu, lord of the groves, in one form your servant and in another form your self, Danu. Long may he serve you still.

O our mother Danu, I may not make our **Brother, Robert Larson**, a priest of your order, for no living person may ever enter your order. I may but ask you to consecrate him to your own order.

Here the priest turns to the celebrants. Friends in the mother, though we may not consecrate **Brother Larson**, we may bind his spirit to Danu. Others have already buried him physically, we may bury him spiritually. Look around you and take a small gift of the fertility of Danu, of leave, of branch or of whatever else, and put it upon the sacrifice of our **Brother Robert**. *The celebrants quickly find something and solemnly deposit it upon the altar. Alternatively they may already have found something.*

O our mother Danu, you have given forth of your bounty, of the waters of sleep. I now return it to you by returning it to our brother who hast now been bonded with you. *The priest takes the remaining waters and pours them upon the sacrifice.*

The Benediction

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that Danu has consecrated our late **brother** to her service as a priest of the tenth order.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 8 Another view of the inexplicable Hadzi Arch, by the library, 2004.

Unofficial Danu Sermon

By Mike the Fool, 2004

To be read aloud sometime annually at Samhain's campfires during or after the actual service, hopefully bearing a torch in one hand and the words in the other.

Listen to me, for I would speak to you, and the departed this night, while the worlds are separated by but a thin diaphanous veil.

We at Samhain hereby remember those who have passed on, and especially those who have entered the Order of Danu. Perhaps a few more have recently joined those ranks, such as _____. We know not where you have gone, but we appreciate where you have been. You needed not our help to enter that Order, but we wish we could have aided you better in your transition, and your parting perhaps has been more difficult for us left behind.

What is the Order of Danu you might ask? It is the tenth and final order of Druidism. It is not for every Druid to pass through each of the ten orders, as each will have a different path and role in the journey through this world. However, we all began by going from zero to one in the first order, and yet we all finish by going from one to zero in the tenth order of Danu. Perhaps you of the Order of Danu will move on to some other realm, or return to oneness or nothingness again, but you are one to remember and none of your wondrous words and deeds, which will fertilize our growth, will be easily forgotten. We bear those in our heart and minds until it is our own turn to turn through the cycles. Indeed, it is those ones and zeroes which, when brought together, make up the Druid Sigil that we all bear in a sacred and fertile mystery of life and death without ends.

[We know not what further mysteries you will learn in that Order of Danu, but we hope you will take notes, for I am sure that we will have many questions. For our own mortality is what inspires our arts, and our quest to know of immortality guides many of our religious paths. And whatever feasting or celebrations you might enjoy with your invited guests, we hope you will save us some whisky, for I'm sure I will need a stiff shot of the waters-of-life when I too become a stiff and my lifewaters cease to flow here.]

Yes, many assume Danu was a fertility goddess of the earth, but she was known best by the flowing rivers named after her, the Don, the Dneiper and Danube. Indeed, her mighty rivers bore the waters from the land, for no drop could remain there forever lest the land be stagnant and soaked beyond use, and her rivers were fed by many named and unnamed streams from different paths. Yet even her powerful rivers paled in comparison to the mighty sea and ocean to which she inevitably emptied, only to have her sources be replenished by fresh rain clouds filled with that ocean's salty waters. Never ending, always changing, same - yet different, Danu's life-blood runs through both ancient channels and newly carved rivulets of the last storm.

Now, your storm has passed, and you have left your mark, dear departed friends. You have entered the ranks of the honorable Council of Danu, which is a thing to celebrate, yet we miss your presence and trusted counsel by our sides in our walks in the woods and at our campfires. But perhaps you are still here, as Druidry and daily life would not have been the same without your contributions to our observation of the passing pageant of the seasons of the year.

Here, now, we observe at the passing of one year and emergence of the next, that as your remains have descended into the embrace of the Earth-Mother, so your past example has raised us to new possibilities in the future. In case you have forgotten, your responsibilities are finished here, while ours are briefly heavier without your strong shoulders' support. But tonight, at least, we enjoy a brief respite from our labors and gladly welcome your visit on Samhain. There is so much we yet wish to know from you, and the wait may be long before we join you fully in Danu's Order. Now I order you my living friends, that we raise a glass to honor them, to honor what we have already done and to honor what we still dream to do. (*Throws the script into the fire*.) Slainte! (*All drink deeply or applaud.*)

And to you dear, dear brothers and sisters of Danu;

REST in peace. Rest IN peace. Rest in PEACE.

(As the three druid sigils are inscribed in the dirt with these word, not in the air, members may toss handfuls of dirt or rocks on them.)

Figure 9 Monument Hill, 1993.

Figure 10 New Circle, 2001.

Ye Olde Scratch Paper 1 Ye Olde Scratch Paper 1

 Ye Olde Scratch Paper 2

The New Order of Diancecht

a.k.a. the replacement of the Order of Grannos
By Joan Carruth, 1976

To All Members of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu of the Reformed Druids of North America; Peace

This is to announce the re-formation of the 4th Order in Reformed Druidism, the Order of Grannos, Lord of Healing Springs. This Order is open to 3rd Order Druids of any Branch of the Reform who are interested in healing, whether psychic, magickal, psychological or medical.

The badge of the Order is the green ribbon and, the green chalice. The Waters are Chartreuse. The Order will be organized along the lines of the decisions of Autumn Equinox, 19 Y.R. of the Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu.

There are two Degrees within the Order which a member ay apply for, depending upon their specialty and achievement in healing. They are:

The Degree of Miach, named after the son of Dian Cecht, the Irish God of Healing, who healed with magick. This Degree is primarily for magickal & psychic healers, counselors, etc. The badge of the Degree is a silver border or stripe across the end of the ribbon.

The Degree of Airmed, named after Dian Cecht's daughter, who healed with herbs. It is for herbal & chemotherapeutic healers, medical workers, and body manipulators. Its badge is a gold border or stripe.

No one except the Matriarch can hold both Degrees, and her ribbon-of-office is distinguished by having both the gold and the silver stripe.

The Ordination involves obtaining a book of anatomy, preferably Gray's, some spring water, a spring of herb, and pricking the finger. I trust the last doesn't sound heretical. It is done as a sign of the life of the body, and as a remembrance of every time a healer must cause pain in order to heal. Members are expected to have a valid first aid & CPR card, or their equivalent, and to carry a small kit to Services for cut fingers, etc. It need not be large. Mine has a bandana, a tampon, some band-aids, and antiseptic in it, and fits in an old band-aid box. Members are encouraged to start a Healer Conclave in their Grove, but need not do so. Members are expected to be in touch with the Matriarch at least once in a while.

Ordinations can only be confirmed by the Matriarch (i.e. Joan Carruth), and performed by her or by someone authorized by her, such as another member of the Order, or the candidate's Arch Druid. A solitary Third may be authorized to be Ordained by any other member of the Third Order.

The Matriarch is anxious to hear from any interested Third Order Druid, or any Arch Druid who can suggest a member of their Grove for the Order of Grannos.

May the Earth Mother grant success to this endeavor.

Joan Carruth. DAL. OG
Matriarch of the Order of Grannos
November 1981 c.e.

The New Order of Oberon

A.K.A. Order of Bards
Originally by Brian Geller, 1976
Later by Leslie Harger-Craig

Ordination to the Order Of Oberon

KNEEL HERE, _____ (singer, poet, musician, storyteller) --you have come, as singer, poet, fool, and prophet to seal yourself up to the way of those who sang ere ever human voice was heard upon the earth.

An those who still have ears to hear
The leaping flames, the rushing waters,
Breath of laughter, dropping tear,
Questing dream and heart's own answer,
May know these visions free of falsehood
All unbound by space and time –
Truth of Gods and Faerie laughter,
Songs of Nature, and the Mind.

DO YOU SEAL YOURSELF AS BARD, IN SERVICE TO OUR LORD AND LADY? DO YOU?

AND WILL YOU GO TO WOODS AND FIELDS, TO LEARN THEIR HIDDEN WAYS OF FREEDOM, BRINGING BACK TO HUMAN EARS THE SACRED SONGS OF NATURE'S WISDOM? WIL YOU?

(hall the waters as per W.O.L. for services) (Trad. –Irish Mist)

NOW DRINK DEEP OF THESE WATERS, THAT YOUR VOICE BE CLEAR AND STRONG.

These are the waters of life and of vision, so hallowed by Dalon ap Llandu, in the three ways of day and the one way of night. Now as you drink, be of good cheer, for these shall be your ways of life, in which to dwell forevermore.

(apply honey to aspirant's lips)

I charge you thus, may your songs be sweet, beyond the ways of humankind. King Oberon and Queen Titania, grant you laughter without fear among the creatures of all worlds, so all may understand who hear.

(apply honey to aspirant's hands)

Thus do I charge you: that your hands shall play the branches and the winds. Sweet the service of the Gods, with all the world your instrument!

RISE NOW, BARD, AND MAY YOUR SING THE THREEFOLD SONG: STRENGTH, TRUTH, AND LOVE, AND BE THIS EVERMORE YOUR WAY, IN ALL THE WORLDS.

PEACE PEACE PEACE

(invest with blue ribbon; congratulate)

Oberon Epistle

TO: ORDER OF OBERON, 1980
(whereever you are, out there!)
FROM: MATRIARCH

Hi.

Attached please find a copy of a ritual, which most of you will recognize as a Bardic ordination. I have sent it to the membership at large, because the Bards are a special, non-hierarchical Order, and there is nothing secret in their ordination or odeal. However, you may note that there is a consecration of waters involved, which should probably be done by the Arch of your Grove, (who may be doing the ordination anyway, if your Grove does not have a Chief Bard.) I do the whole ritual myself, being 3rd, but your group may have quirks, customs, etc. that are unknown to me.

I am going to take advantage of this space to run off at the mouth for a while (a weakness of our set) about just what this organization means to me. First of all, I repeat that we are a Special Order, with no hierarchical rank. It has been suggested by other Bards, and even kicked around for a while, that we should perhaps set up a hierarchy within our own group, in order to reward exceptional achievement and set up incentives for others. My carefully considered, and oft-debated, reaction to this idea is as follows: PHOOEY.

These are my reasons: Throughout history, poesy has been the mixed blessing of a motley assortment of characters, but one thing that seems to distinguish all of them is a high degree of individuality, and a great love of freedom. Official State Versions of any type of music, literature, art, or dance, have almost invariably shat. Now one unfortunate characteristic of hierarchical organization is that the bestowal of Feathers in the Hat is usually accompanied by a corresponding accrual of Authority. There doesn't even have to be a function for it; it just happens. The recipients of honor become an elite. And it is IMPOSSIBLE to bestow honors with absolute fairness. Elective leadership is subject to political pressure, while appointed leadership gets their pressure from above. I feel that the lot of you will operate better if we are all regarded as equals.

Contrary to popular opinion, this gets bourne out in the few Revels that I host at my house. Valid critiques come from almost every quarter on almost any subject, and if the critic is just One of the Gang, the object of hirs observations is more likely to take the criticism with a reasonable degree of perspective, neither writing it off as sour grapes or treating it as a Papal Bull. Also, nobody has to fear stepping out of hirs speciality for a while, or trying something new. And loudmouthed Matriarchs can be told to shut up if they get tipsy and obnoxious.

I have two projects with which I would like all of your assistance. The first is the compilation of a book of all your major works. Number of entries is not to be limited by anything but your own ability to handle postage, although I may edit a little to keep copy costs down, if somebody decides to be funny and sends me a New York Telephone Directory. THERE WILL BE NO EDITING ON THE BASIS OF QUALITY. All Bards may contribute, and I will assume that if I, or my forbears, have ordained you, you must know what you are doing. Sign your stuff, as I will print it as copyrighted in your name.

My second project is that I want to quit. Do I hear any volunteers out there? Investiture is offered to someone who is flexible, basically apolitical, and competent in any two of the following: Music, Poetry, Drama, Prose, Archive Collecting and Organizing (paleoworks, rituals by other groups, pagan references in current literature, etc.) and Dance. Competence means you can do it and people don't cringe and turn green. I'm no star myself, just a sort of Jill-of-all-trades. Perspiration accounts for more than inspiration, and I would ask of my replacement the same thing that I ask of people who come to my revels; DO SOMETHING. Keep the blood pumping. If we can stay alive, we may progress by accident. Experience has led me to doubt that we'll ever do it any other way.

Send entries for the Book and nomination for the Matriarchy to: 1280 61st Street Downstairs, Emeryville, CA 94608

Leslie Craig-Harger, DAL, MOO
EVERYTHING I SAY IS OPEN TO QUESTION AND/OR ARGUMENT. Responses to the above address are more than welcome.

Later Oberon News

Druid Missal-Any, Summer 1984:

Leslie Craig-Gaggar, Matriarch of the Order of Oberon, Bards, wants to retire and suggest these revisions in the process of instating Bards, archivists etc. In Order of Oberon.

Comments and acceptance or rejection are requested from all Third Orders bards before this is written into the Apocrypha. Reply before Samhain of 1984.

Not only does my remote location and lack of leadership ability make me a stunningly inappropriate Matriarch of bards, I also have a strong feeling that the Bards are better off unled. Art for Art's sake is a pretty anarchistic concept, and Art for the Gods' sake requires direct communication with the Gods; I.e., inspiration. I would like to propose to the ODAL that:

A) I resign as MOO, leaving no successor.

B) Anyone wishing investiture as a bard should be recognized and invested by the local AD

C) Anyone who wants to be so recognized has to put their youth where their mouth is, by presenting some original work to the local grove, and that a text or tape of this work should then be presented to a central Archives.

Love, Leslie.

Figure 11 Leslie Harger at Live Oak, Beltane 1984

The New Order of Lugh

By Katya Luomala, 1978

Dear fellow Druids: The forest have their order and the waters have their order; the light has its order and the rivers have their order. The heavens, the oceans and the earth have an order. The original ten orders are a cycle of knowledge of nature. The later orders, for bards, magicians and healers, are ways of praise. Siblings, some have praise to give who cannot speak poetry, and cannot heal, and as yet cannot work magic. We are like the Zen monk Enku, wanting to carve ten thousand images of the deity. We praise the Mother with the work of our hands. So, for slightly inarticulate craftspeople such as myself, I have successfully begun an Order of Lugh.

"Lugh (Ludd, Nudd) was a very popular deity in his day, and the patron of all crafts. There is a story of how he demanded entrance to the hall of the Tuatha De Danann and was told he must have some skill they needed; he rattled off every craft known to the Celts, but they already had representatives of each. He got in by winning a chess game in some books, and by being a jack-of-all trades in others. He is also connected with light and kingship, and has been called "the Gaulish Mercury".

"Anyone of second order or higher is welcome to join the Order. There is no real need for an identifying sign, for the people of Lugh will forever be making them. Initiation consists of the candidate making a small 'image of the Mother' (any aspect) of/on some flammable material and casting it into the fire at services. If accepted (I faced the four directions), the candidate then stammers something before the congregation, about each act of craft being an act of faith or something. 'Twould be nice if the congregation would then congratulate him/her.

"Creation is not the making of the unique but the combination and rediscovery of what already is. It is therefore both a meditation and a praise of nature. Many of us have already dedicated a landscape or a batch of bread in our hearts, now this power can be manifest with the name Lugh. Natural materials nice, not essential.

"As to organization: I am not greedy for the title of Matriarch. Since I'm the first member, I'll collect comments, new, etc. until someone volunteers to replace me; no need to stress the leadership aspect of the deity. I happen to be RDNA, but you could all please show this announcement to your Groves anyway? Peace!" Katya Luomala, DAL 1978

Highly simplified procedures for joining the order of Lugh, Reformed Druids of North America, as related to Stephen McCaully, ArchDruid of Hazelnut Grove, January 1979.

One: Decide to create worshipfully, or worship creatively
Two: Construct a flammable offering of a suitably Druidic nature.
Three: Tell your Archdruid you would like to cast it into the service fire, so he/she can choreograph.
Four: Do it.
Five: Tell the grove, and Matriarch of your deed.
Prerequisites: status as a second order Druid or higher. Some sincerity and initiative

1993 Addendum from Luomala to Scharding

Founded 1978 - Matriarch, Katya Luomala - for the creative, especially those who use their hands.

Dedication ceremony: The ceremony is inserted into the regular Order of worship, or done separately at a sacred fire with witnesses. The aspirant, understanding that the sacrifice symbolizes his/her individual process of creation in service of the Earth Mother and son Be'al, consigns to the flames a flammable product of his/her creative activity. When this is accepted, it would be well for the assembled congregation or witnesses to heartily congratulate the new member of the Order. (Usually before passing of Waters of Life)

Aspirants should be of the Second Order or higher, of either sex. They should sincerely desire the patronage and guidance of the guardians of craftspeople symbolized by the Celtic God Lugh, the Ingenious, of the Long Hand. The Matriarch or Patriarch, similarly inspired, will eagerly surrender stewardship of the Order to those other members inspired to shepherd it.

Example: To become Matriarch of Lugh I made a goodly copy of the original document on the formation of the Order of Lugh and consigned it, immediately after the sacrifice acceptance of the regular Saturday service, to the service fire. It was accepted and so was I... the assembled congregation congratulated me with good cheer. I am matriarch by default, as the only member so far, that I know of.

The New Order of the Earth Mother

A Druid Missal-Any, Summer 1986

LIVE OAK GROVE NEWS: New Religious Order Formed

At sunrise on Beltaine, Grove members Emmon and Willowoak performed the founding ritual of a new contemplative order, the Peaceful Order of the Earth mother.

Designed to meet needs not covered by the usual RDNA activities, the order imposes dietary and other restrictions on members and provides meditative training and experiences not other wise available.

With this rite, the pair made formal commitments to their new order, and to one another as members of it, then took an oath of secrecy and obedience to the laws of the order, something that will be required of all members. Vows of Celibacy and poverty, however, will be optional.

New Order of the Phoenix

By Sam & Mike the Fools, 1993

Introduction

Originally entitled the "Order of CuChulain," until 1996, this self-initiated order is open to all, alumni and friends, who bear a concern about the continued survival of the Carleton Grove. Members of other prestigious groves are welcome to adapt it to their own grove. There is no Patriarch or Matriarch. The symbol is but a drawn Druid sigil on the palms or earlobes and a singed crimson ribbon.

Preparation

In the dying rays of sunset, a fire is prepared in advance by the person wishing to undertake the responsibilities, or it may be preapred by a current member of the Carleton Grove, if available. It is lit by some means, preferably by friction or flint, as the sun sets and the Charge is read when it is blazing.

The Charge of the Phoenix

My responsibilities to the Carleton Grove ended with graduation, yet a sense of obligation remains with me.

Like the mythical bird, the phoenix, Carleton has its own pyrrhic oscillating cycles of intense heat and crackling coals. I know this is normal and not to be dreaded, but I will watch from the forest's edge, to note if the coals become only ashes again. For then I will act in consultation with my other fellow Phoenixians.

I know that the short nature of turnover at Carleton means that the various logs are quick burning, while a few of us keep a piece of that flame burning on thick logs, long after Carleton.

When there are naught but ashes at Carleton, I will raise that slumbering phoenix from its egg shell and let it blaze forth again, coaxing its flames with but the minimum kindling, and not interfering as its newest young caretakers resume feeding the flames.

I will make my presence and availability known to the future Archdruids of Carleton, should they need to ask advice. If so, I will not smother them with my own ways, but encourage them to unearth their own buried answers.

This night I begin my guardianship of Carleton Grove, may I never need be called into service, and may my services be quickly finished and long enjoyed.

And, I will watch for others to join this council, that I might not be the last guardian.

This night, I will let the fire become coals three times and build it back up again, but let it rest on the fourth time, so to I will abandon my efforts after three failures at Carleton, for I believe that even if none go by the name or ways of the Druids, many will appear again in the spirit of Druidism, and the Earth mother will be satisfied with that.

The Vigil

After reading the charge, and rebuilding the fire three times from coals, the fire is do die naturally, preferably around dawn, and the cool ashes thrown into the wind and chunks of remaining wood laid in a Druid Sigil. Repeat this vigil of fire building each time before a serious revival effort is attempted.

The New Order of Puck

A Chaos for Mischief-makers and Pranksters
First transmitted by
Grand Bonnerizian-Pkah-Pkah-Whooseheeee
Michael Seamas Anthony "Ping" Ulhail Scharding, 1994

I am gathered here today to induct ( ) into the mischievous order of Puck. For far too long, the aspect of fun has been left out of our lives. Some may ask, why we have created this order, my answer is: "To get to the other side." Some may ask, why have I brought others to this order, my answer is "Because it's there".

Remember our motto in your lightest hour:

"How ask Why?"

Your solemn duty, should you choose to accept it, is to keep profane the special days of April 1st, the Midsummer Solar Solstice and Friday the 13th. On these days you to goeth forth and prey upon especially serious persons and cause them grievous confusion, yea verily!, up to the point of annoyance. And the number of tricks shall be at least four amongst at least three people; one these people must be someone whom you have never met. Also, one really great hoax per year is required of the candidate. You are also required to induct one other person each year to this Order, if possible, in order to perpetuate this crime.

You will know our members by our secret handshake and password as first demonstrated by Grand Bonnerizian-Pkah-Pkah- Whooseheeeee:

(Perform the Super Secret Handshake and say the first password which happen to be an ordinary handshake and saying "Hi there.")

Whenever you meet someone who knows this handshake or calls out this password; there you have found a potential recruit to the Order. Use caprice when choosing other to enter this Order. IF you feel the person is a violable candidate, then follow with the second password: "Puck you? Puck me?" If they respond favorably, in your opinion, they are ready to enter the order. Take them aside someplace private and inform them of the existence of the Order and ask if they wish to enter. If they agree to enter, relate to them what our inspiring theological author once said:

(Perform the Curley Stooge Floordance spin)

Now that you don't understand the duties and irresponsibilities of this order, know that this Ceremony cannot be changed except to make it far more sillier without deleting any of the previous words. It must become bulkier and more confusing with each new addition; but it is not to be transmitted or published by any electronic means or to be revealed to non-members; but to be kept secret to ensure it's impotency. Upon ordination, all future candidates must receive an updated copy of the Order of Puck ceremony and the correct insignia; the aforesaid object of which I will now presently present unto your physical embodiment and carriage for your mental though processes and nerve endings.

Question: Do You Accept This Office?

(Present the sacred insignia of the Hockey Puck and the black ribbon of office.)

As you now bear the sacred insignia of the order, remember that even as our dearest hopes and dreams are contemptuously treated by the Hockey Players upon the cold, slippery, "Ice-rink of Life", remember the Joy of the Goal and the wondrous Zamboni machine that smoothes the rough spots. There are many spectators who are watching you and hoping that you'll fly into the teeth of society's primness. Yet other slogans for our Order are: "So Mote in Eye be" and "I love the Sprite in You" and for further wisdom on our Order, read "A Midsummer's Night Dream" by Billy Shakespeare.

On each of the aforementioned special days, you will slyly or openly wear this, you Puck and Ribbon of office, around your neck (or appropriate body part(s)) to attract possible candidates. Only if they pass the aforementioned tests of membership are you ever to tell them of the existence of the Order of Puck. Otherwise let them stew in confusion and grin evilly and wink at their inquiries of your strangeness. Remember the holy question of the Grand Bonnerizian(etc): "How do you keep a Turkey in suspense?"

Special Charge for first-day initiate:

I as, a Puckster, do say unto ye, new sibling, that your first-day "ordeal/sign of new office" is to do this until sunrise tomorrow:
Think of something not too embarrassing, but sufficiently odd to make that the day very special.

Go now and do the deeds and duties of your office, treacherous-sibling-in-Puck, I hereby ordain you Here there everywhere - Oh Macdon... what was I saying? Kaaa! Oh forget it. Begone you!

(Perform the closing Three Stooges eye-poke and block)
(Start acting silly)
The End

Puck Permit Business Card

I carry this around in my wallet, as do the other eight members.

Grand Order of Puck (est. 1994)
This permit allows the bearer to escape retribution for all pranks and jokes because she/he is a registered mischiefmaker (RMM). Disgruntled parties and recipients of practical jokes should present their grievances to our headquarters. Our number is: 507-663-1221.
Lighten up!

Figure 12 Order of Puck, April 1993, Hill 3 Oaks.

The New Order of Suzuki

An Order for Promoting Meditation & Martial Arts
By Mike Scharding, 1996

Description: Established in honor of Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki who brought Zen to the West. Like all the Higher and Special Orders, this order is to stimulate Druids to continued spiritual inquiry. The Order of Suzuki is dedicated to a particular skill, to Meditation and/or self-knowledge through a mature martial arts training program. The symbol of the Order of Suzuki, when needed, is a simple cord with a few plain paper pendants hanging from it, worn about the waist. There is no leader and it is open to any 1st Order Druids or higher. It can be administered by oneself when one feels ready or by any teacher of one's choice. There are no obligations except what one places on oneself. The basic rite may be elaborated as one sees fit, the following is only a recommendation.

Rite of the Order of Suzuki:

Overnight quiet vigils are permitted, but unnecessary. Winter vigils may be indoors. At dawn, light a candle and perform your morning exercises or stretching. Pour three pints of a liquid into a shot glass on the ground, and **never** stop pouring. Occasionally, remove the shot glass from the stream of liquid and swallow contents. Return the cup to the stream of liquid. Repeat until the liquid is exhausted. Meditate on this exercise.

Read this story: A Japanese Zen master received a university professor who came to inquire about Zen. It was obvious to the master from the start of the conversation that the professor was not so much interested in learning about Zen as he was in impressing the master with his own opinions and knowledge. The master listened patiently and finally suggested they have tea. The master poured his visitor's cup full and then kept on pouring. The professor watched the cup overflowing until he could no longer restrain himself. The professor cried, "The cup is overfull, no more will go in!" "Like this cup," the master said, "you are full of your own opinions and speculations. How can I show you Zen unless you first empty your cup?"

Now, Feel the wet ground and know that the liquid you did not drink is not entirely gone. Meditate.

Figure 13 Japanese Garden's hut, 2000.

The New Order of Bambi

An Order for Animals, Hikers
and Responsible camping
By Mike Scharding, 1996

Description: This is an order to encourage people to go hiking or walking outdoors in a responsible manner. It is dedicated to the Bambi of Walt Disney fame, who was terribly frightened by the forest fire caused by irresponsible outdoorsmen. This Order may be entered by any 1st Order Druid or higher, and may be administered by themselves when they feel ready. The Founder, Michael Scharding, will be Patriarch until someone requests the office, but he will not care for any organizational activities in the Order. The symbol of the Order is a buck-brown ribbon with white spots (like a fawn) and is worn on the neck.

Rite of the Order of Bambi:

1. If possible, a trip to state park or a large natural area should be attempted. Hike in and camp there overnight. Build a responsible fire. Sleep as much as you wish. Hike out.

2. If you spot any of Bambi's friends (a rabbit, a skunk, a bear, a raccoon, or an owl) that is sufficient, but spotting a deer is considered best. Judge for yourself, based on the behavior of the animal. Good spots to look are in transitions from field to forest or at river banks.

Figure 14 Above, a Scottish inscription of a deer. Below, the labyrinth on Stewsie Island in Lyman Lakes, c. 2001.

The New Order of Hermes

AN DUAL ORDER FOR ITINERANT DRUIDS
(open to all who wish to enter, regardless of orders)
By Mike Scharding, 1997

This self-initiated order, of which Q is the current Patriarch, is marked by the triple-woven ribbon-belt (gray for hermes, blue for Amerghin, white for Basho, of which Norman Nelson is the current appointed Patriarch, for his constant travel between North Dakota Grove and Carleton Grove.)

This order recognizes those Druids who have traveled or moved to new locations and restarted their Druidic life-style, often in isolation. There are two parts to the order, those of land-based travel, are patronized by Basho, a famous 17th century itinerant Haiku poet who observed and wrote about nature.(See also Green Book 4's Chinese and Japanese traveling poets section.) The other part is sea/air based travel, which is patronized by Amerghin, who was Druid for the Milesians on their entry into Ireland in the Book of Invasions. (See DC(R) customs 9,10,11; Part 6 Green Book 2 Thirteen fold Mystery; Pt 6 Book 7 Book of Bards.)

SUB-ORDER OF BASHO:

Go to a temporary grove site and mediate and talk about your hopes and dreams for your journey. Read a poem or two and write a haiku.
1st line: 5 syllables, usually a seasonal reference.
2nd line: 7 syllables, descriptive sentence
3rd line: 5 syllable, unusual ending

Your new life as a Druid of the Order of Basho is completed by a simple meal (esp. rice/ramen) and a little bit of spirits.

SUB-ORDER OF AMERGHIN (sp?)

Go to new grove site, talk to it about future plans and dreams. Read a poem by Amerghin, then write a poem of any type (esp. in Irish) and then have an Irish meal. (whiskey, cheese, meat, vegetables, but not potatoes)
There is no Patriarch or Matriarch of this order.

The New Order of Brigit

An Order for Published Druids
By Mike Scharding, 1998
(Open to 0th Order Druids and Up)

Although the old Druids never published, the new ones do. And of recently, perhaps too much! To enter, simply, upon publication of a Druid work (at least 3 copies or more) you must take a copy to the next service, read your favorite portion, and throw the work into the altar fire to be read by the Brigit. This is also to remind us of a few things:

1. The impermanence of the written word.
2. The recognition of the fire in the head that makes ideas.
3. A lack of attachment to your completed work.
4. Praise to Brigit.

You may add such words as you feel are necessary at that moment.

The symbol of this Order is a neck ribbon or printed words from your published work.

The duties of this Order:

1. To encourage other Druids to study the work of wise people.
2. To encourage the publication of Druid works if necessary.
3. To ensure that book-bound Druids get outside and see Nature first hand, lest their studies be in vain.

The appointed Patriarch of this order is David Frangquist, the first published Druid.

Figure 15 Anvil of Brigit in the Lower Arb, 2004.

New Order of the Evening Mystic

By Chris Middleton, Carleton c. 1999

It's odd to think that the religion I'm practicing, the religion I'm creating, is already dying because I'm its only member. I started writing my religion a year and a half ago, I'm by no means finished with writing it all down, or even coming up with all of it, but what I have makes sense to me. But, what I've created I've created alone, I practice alone and I alone believe in my religion. I believe that when I die I'll find the book I've written my religion in again, possibly because no one else has use for it.

But enough wallowing in loneliness. Here, at Carleton, If found the druids, been a druid and been part of a group. True we druids all come from different places and traditions, but the druids here have strength by their being together. So, that's why I wanted to create this order, to help other Druids like me who are making their own religion yet want the power and strength of a group. I hope to find others like me, and see for myself and show others that there are people trying the same thing. So I've created the Order of the Evening Mystic.

This order is for people who will or once did believe in anything. Before I made my own religion I believed any religion presented to me, at least until I was introduced to another. This is an order for people that feel there are no right answers to religious questions. This order is for people who are tired of only dealing with religious questions, and so have made up their own answers. This order if for people who find making their own religion makes the most sense, or is at least the most fun, but regardless of fun they still realize that there's power in a group. This order is to form a bond and a group with the druids, the Arb and past, present and future Evening Mystics who are going on the same seemingly solitary quest.

Requirements for the order:

I found that I sacrificed a lot before I felt like a member of this order, but there were four events that were the strongest determinants in making me an Evening Mystic.

- First there was a mask that represented a negative part of me that I destroyed to destroy that part of me and to begin again and move on.
- Second, a watch slowly broke down as I wore it. It was worn everyday and used so much that it's breaking down seemed to be a sign that it was giving itself up for me
- Early on, when I arrived here, I lost a ring in the Arb. I figured that the Arb wanted it and also wanted to start a connection between us, and so took the ring.
- Tonight I gave playing cards to the Arb as a sign of our connectedness and to try and strengthen the bond between the Arb and me.

To become and Evening Mystic follow these footsteps

There are four types of items that were lost or destroyed four different ways. Someone wishing to join the order may decide what type of item should be used at each stage, but the stages need to be completed in the same order. The events may be spaced out over a long time; months or years and I would even suggest some spacing between each step. The steps are ordered thusly:

1. The first is item is destroyed to show you are willing to start this search
2. The second must be worn down through your use or it's being used to show that you or the environment is ready.
3. The Arb must be willing to take the third object to show that it is willing to be a part of you
4. You must give the fourth object to the Arb to show that you are willing to be and are part of something larger than you are.

The items given each have a special significance.

- Masks: masks represent how you wish to appear to others. Fairly obviously they represent how people present themselves
- Watches/clocks: they are a symbol of how the "true, real or natural" aspects of the world are taken and interpreted by the individual. Time is a real concept but we each have our own interpretation of it.
- Rings: these represent the true aspects of self or how a person wants to change themselves (they may want to become more spiritual or stronger for instance, and embody that wish in a ring)
- Playing Cards: these represent how a person acts upon what things from the world (real or constructed) are thrown at them; much like how you must decide what to do when given a hand of cards in a game.

The first three steps can probably be completed on your own, the fourth probably in the presence of other Druids. Before completing the final step, recount what you have done before, what you have given and why. Then, offer up the last item (I offered mine by burning the cards, I suspect it's far easier to offer things by leaving them in a secluded place in the Arb, or you may come up with your own way) preferably with a verbal explanation "I offer this _____ to the Arb, to the Earth Mother, to the slowly growing bond between us because…" At that point I'd say you have become a member of the Order of the Evening Mystic. The current Archdruid may request some small extra feat (consent by other members for instance) but nothing that would take longer than five minutes to complete. You are then ready to be an Evening Mystic and continue your search with the aid of this group.

New Dis-Order of the MITHRIL STAR

by Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau /|\, AD – c. late 1990s
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, OMS-RDNA
"A non-prophet, ir-religious, dis-organization."
Although some have argued against this Order's inclusion, I have decided to include it for the present edition.

"Non-prophet. "

We don't have a central head, or Guru whom we all linger near to pine over his every word. We do have a spokesperson, who is known by the title, "Arch-Druid of the Mother Grove," who is basically the mouthpiece, or figure head of the Order. Mostly he is to be ignored.

"Ir-religious."

We are the antithesis of most religions. We have very few rules, most of which are not spiritual, and we expect nothing more or less than that our members behave like Gods. Who do the Gods worship? What religion do the Gods practice?

"Dis-organization."

We have no hierarchy and few leaders (those we do have are there for practical purposes, not spiritual). We have no subordinate bodies. You might say we are a "dis-Order."

The **Mother Grove** is the central authority for the teaching of the OMS tradition. They own the written materials you have just studied. They own the Druidcraft101 Yahoo list, the MithrilStar list, and Imladris. The first two are bodies that exist in cyberspace; the latter is an as yet non-physical piece of real property, where we hope someday to establish our worldwide headquarters.

The Druids who are members of the Mother Grove decide how and in what form the teaching materials of the Order will be disseminated. They also take care of the mundane business of the Order and they judiciously keep records (there's an overdose of Virgo energy in the MG). Decisions of the MG are made by consensus, excluding the Arch-Druid, who has no vote. The CEO of the MG (and therefore the Order) is the "Clerk of the Mother Grove."

Groves are the main manifestation of the Order. A Grove consists of a minimum of three OMS Druids, at least one of which holds the 3rd Degree. Each Grove has an Arch-Druid and a Clerk. Both of these are elected by consensus from Druids in each Grove. The A-D serves as public spokesperson for the Grove. The Clerk functions as "CEO" of the Grove. Other officers may be elected as required, or not. All decisions are made by consensus.

Proto-Groves are fledgling Groves. They consist of a minimum of three human beings, at least one of which is a Druid of the 1st Degree. Usually the founding Druid takes on the title of Arch-Druid and the functions of the Clerk. A proto-grove becomes a full-fledged Grove once at least one member has attained the 3rd Degree and two others have attained 1st.

Groves and Proto-Groves are wholly autonomous and owned by their own members. The Groves look to the Mother Grove only on matters concerning the teaching of the basic tradition. Well, ideally they do. The fact is, many Groves haven't contacted the MG in so many years that we've lost track of them. The MG is not responsible for the behavior of the OMS Groves. Although we like the Groves to stay in touch

with us, that is strictly voluntary. We also accept monetary donations from the Groves (and these too are voluntary).

In both Groves and Proto-Groves, voting is done by consensus. The entire grove must be unanimous before any business can be transacted. Since the grove operates as a family unit, in perfect love and perfect trust, this system works quite well. If an agreement cannot be reached by consensus, then that item is tabled until the grove meets for business reasons again (usually about once a month, near the full moon). Note: business is never conducted when the moon is "void of course."

A very special, unique body within OMS is the MithrilStar List. This email list is a virtual 'Grove' that emulates the functions of a real time grove. It is a sacred space where new members, initiates, and friends of the Order may gather to grow closer, discuss the Order (or any topic of interest to Pagans in general), and network. It serves as a sounding board for new ideas and changes within the Order. It therefore takes on a special importance, as the Mother Grove takes seriously the matters discussed thereon. The Arch-Druid of the Mother Grove is an active member and moderator of the MithrilStar List. The Mithril Star list is owned and controlled by the Mother Grove. It is the ONLY subordinate body in the Order. Due to its uniqueness in cyberspace, the MG has developed special rules governing behavior on the list.

Druids.

Once you take the Pledge, which affirms that you agree with our three tenets, you are a Druid of the 1st Degree, and a member of the Order. You are also a member of the Reformed Druids of North America, and in that body, a Druid of the 1st Order. Non-members may participate in the ritual and social functions of Groves, but only members have a vote or may hold office.

Degrees.

In the Mithril Star, there are seven degrees (or in RDNA terminology, 'orders'):

§ The **first** Degree Druid is a person who has subscribed to the members pledge (also called "pledged"), affirming their agreement to our three tenets: "Nature is Good," "Nature is Good," and "Thou art God." They should also have partaken of the Waters of Life (see "Water sharing"). This person is a '1st Degree' or '1st Order Druid.'

§ The **second** level is "Initiate," one who has finished the basic course, affirms his/her dedication to the Order has been initiated into the tradition. This person is a '2nd Degree' or '2nd Order Druid.'

§ The **third** degree (or Order) is given to those Druids undergo a vigil, and who further demonstrate their commitment to the OMS by paying dues (3 hours pay per year). This is the degree of Priest/esshood, dedicated to Dalon Ap Landu. The Third degree supplies the Order with clergy, and with officiating (High) Priest/esses. Those who have attained the Third degree may wear a red ribbon on their robe or cloak. This person is a "3rd Degree" or "3rd Order Druid."

§ The **fourth** Degree is granted those who have founded, or participated in the founding, of an OMS 'proto-grove.' The 4th degree is dedicated to Grannos, the patron of Springs. Those who have attained the 4th Degree may wear a green ribbon. This person is a "4th Degree" or "4t Order Druid."

§ **Fifth** Degree Druids are those who teach the D101 course (either online or in real time). Moderating the D101 class for 6 sessions, or the Mithril Star List for three years also counts toward 5th). The 5th degree is dedicated to Braciaca, patron of Malt. Those who have attained the 5th degree may wear a yellow wrist maniple. This person is a "4th Degree" or "4th Order Druid."

§ Those Druids who wish to obtain the **sixth** Order (or degree) have taught the D101 course at least three times and their 'proto-grove' is now fully sanctioned. Participation in the development of a Proto-Grove counts equally. The 6th degree is dedicated to Belenos, patron of the Sun. Those who have attained the Sixth degree may wear a yellow ribbon around their neck.

§ Lastly, the **seventh** is given to those who make a pilgrimage every three years to the redwood forests in California, or a visit to the Mother Grove (for international members, a trip once in their lifetime to the MG AND the redwoods will suffice). The 7th degree is dedicated to Sirona, patron of rivers. Those who have attained the 7th degree may wear a sky-blue ribbon.

With the exception of the 1st Degree (obtained by pledging to the Order) all other degrees can be acquired randomly. This means that a 1st degree Druid can teach D101 once, and get hirm's 2nd. Likewise, hirm could then visit the Redwoods and obtain hirm's 3rd. However, hirm can do everything listed above, and if hirm has not pledged hirmself, hirm is not a Druid.

All OMS degrees are exactly equivalent to their corresponding RDNA Orders. This is to say that if you are an OMS Druid of the 3rd degree, you are also an RDNA Druid of the 3rd order.

The Pledge:

Some of you taking this class have already become members by executing the pledge (see www.mithrilstar.org/PLEDGE.HTM)

"In dedication to the celebration of Life in its many forms, I hereby declare my commitment to a way of life that is ethical, benevolent, humanistic, life-affirming, ecstatic and ecologically sane. I subscribe to means and methods that are creative rather than destructive, tolerant rather than authoritarian, gentle rather than violent, inclusive rather than exclusive, egalitarian rather than hierarchal. I pledge myself to harmonious eco-psychic awareness with the total biosphere of holy Mother Earth."

"Like an ancient Redwood, I would have my roots deep in the Earth and my branches reaching for the stars, the stars not only above but around me, my fellow humans, for "every man and woman is a star," and "the good of the many outweighs the good of the few," 'from each according to his/her abilities, to each according to his/her needs.' "

"I acknowledge my personal responsibility for myself, to my fellow humans, and to the whole of Nature; and I recognize this total responsibility, in each of us, as the source of our

infinite freedom to become who we are and do what we will. I dedicate myself to my own inner growth and development that I may be of greater service to myself and the world around me. For these reasons I recognize Divinity both within and without, and I say to myself and others: THOU ART GOD."

"I wish to unite with others upon a spiritual path that encompasses the whole of the universe, and hereby make application to join the pantheon of The Order of The Mithril Star, RDNA, in order that we may learn together and teach each other ways to bring about these ends."

"So mote it be!"

By signing that pledge, and mailing it to the Order, you enter the Order and the RDNA in the 1st Degree (order).

We also ask, but do not compel, our members to pay dues. Solitary members send their dues to the Mother Grove. Funds received by the Mother Grove go into three accounts. The first is for payment of administrative expenses. The second is a slush fund for members who need help, and last is a savings account for the purchase of land to be used as a Pagan clothing optional retreat/conference center, Order headquarters and an intentional community (which will run the thing) (aka "Imladris".). Dues are equivalent to three hours wages and are paid once per year on the anniversary of your joining the Order.

Druids belonging to a local Grove pay their dues to their own Grove. Funds collected by local Groves are dispersed at their own discretion.

Once again, let me stress that dues are completely voluntary.

Symbolism:

The Mithril Star:

Most revered of our symbols is the Mithril Star, named for the elvish metal of the Tolkein mythology. It consists of the 'septagram' (seven pointed star) with an 'Ouroborus' wrapped around it, making it a 'Seren saith pigfain.' The snake swallowing it's own tale is an ancient symbol of the World and of the continuity of time ' infinity. The seven-pointed star is also known as the 'elven' or 'faery' star. It is considered to be the gateway into the Elven realms. The seven points symbolize various things including: 1) The seven visible planets, 2) the seven days of the week, 3) the seven 'quarters (directions, elements, spirits), the seven chakras, 4) the seven 'rays' (see D201), 5) the seven musical notes, 6) the seven 'planes' or dimensions (see D201), and 7) the seven OMS degrees (RDNA Orders).

(Note: There is talk in the Mother Grove of combining the two symbols by placing two upright redwood trees, one behind and one in front of the Mithril Star.)

The **'AWEN'** /|\: 'Awen (Welsh)' or **'Imbas** (Gaelic)' means 'inspiration' and in Celtic spirituality refers to inspiration from the three realms (or kingdoms), 'sky,' 'earth', and 'sea.' Or, in other words 'nature.'

Customs:

Throughout our 10-year history, the OMS has developed various inter-Order customs, most for no particular or good reason:

'Thou art God/dess,' is the standard greeting from one to another. We also begin our written correspondence thusly, or with the abbreviation: 'TAG.' Likewise, we generally end our written correspondence with 'May you never thirst,' or with the abbreviation, 'MYNT.' We sign off our correspondence with 'In the Mother,' and sign our names with 'First name' Druid 'Sur-name' /|\ (the 'Awen' is made by typing 'forward slash', 'pipe', 'back slash').

Some OMS Druids have taken to putting a number, 1-7 after the word 'Druid' to indicate their order (or degree). This practice is discouraged as it takes away from the egalitarianism of the Order. Many OMS Druids wear black or hunter (dark) green on a daily basis, and/or choose those colors for ritual wear. We're not sure where this began, except that the two founders were fond of those colors. Another apparel custom is the wearing of black or dark green 'touring caps' backwards (they then look like a beret, at least from the front). This began as a way of recognizing each other at gatherings in public places. Some OMS Druids are fond of tie die and even choose it for ritual wear as well (assuming they choose to wear anything for ritual). OMS campouts, weekend retreats, and conventions are generally 'clothing optional.'

Some Groves get together weekly to watch Star Trek (any derivation) and eat hot buttered popcorn with Parmesan or cheddar cheese sprinkled on it. Usually, these meetings adjourn in the nearest hot tub, where water sharing (sometimes followed by growing closer) usually occurs. The water may be a Chardonnay. :)

The Coastal Redwood (Sequoia Sempervirons):

Just as the Oak was sacred to our Druid ancestors of old, so now the Coastal Redwood is sacred to the Druids of the Mithril Star. It was in such a redwood grove near Boulder Creek CA that the two founders first conceived of the Order, after drinking of much Guinness Stout and smoking much Humboldt Gold. One of the many myths of the Order is that Adam was tripping on LSD and walked through a redwood tree, stumbling over Pendderwydd, but this has never been confirmed (or denied). It is said that one of them exclaimed 'We are the Redwood Druids!' but this too has never been confirmed.

Figure 16 Mother Grove of OMS

The Official Hymn of the OMS:

Recently, the Mother Grove has declared 'Sequoia Sempervirons' a 'filk' by Leslie Fish, to be our 'official hymn.' Found as the 16th track of the CD, 'Smoked Fish and Friends' (available from Random Factors) the words are as follows:

If the oak is king of trees'
What then can our redwood be'
Lord above all greenery
Everlasting tree

Named for him who first could see
The letters of the Cherokee
Still you sigh remember me
Everlasting tree

Tall beyond the reach of eye
Spearing silent to the sky
Watch the ages rolling by
Everlasting tree

Sprouted long before the Sphinx
Where the mountain's lion slinks
Shading time in wooden links
Everlasting tree

Pledges made upon thy bark
Hold the memory in the mark
A million turns of light and dark
Everlasting tree

Triad's castle, Titan's spear
Living book of year on year
Spread thy welcome seedlings here
Everlasting tree

The song is written in the key of Dm ('Dorian' mode). An mp3 is available in the files of both the D101 class and the Mithril Star List.

New Order of the Volcano

September 17th ,2000
(Day 48 of Foghamhar, Year 38 of the Reform)
Submitted by Irony Sade

The higher Order of the RDNA are varied and interesting. Their ostensible purpose is to explore a deepening relationship with Nature. Some of them are very difficult, like the newest order below.

Name: Order of the Volcano
Founder: Irony Sade
Patron: ?
Prerequisites: faith
Initiation: Find an active volcano, ascend to the crater, strip naked, jump in.
Powers: Yet to be explored.
Restrictions: Surrogate jumpers are not acceptable. Membership (in this life) limited to survivors. All others relegated to the Order of the Suicidal Martyr.
Current Members: Patriarch Irony Sade, Archdruid of Tonga

I applaud the goal of doing twenty hours of druidic work a week from here on out. I have been considering something similar--starting with a physical tour of the groves beginning sometime next Fall. It would be highly educational, not to mention fun, to actually visit all the RDNA and related groves I could find contacts for. I am curious how many different directions folks have taken, how many different responses they have developed to the problems of being a druid...Also, I intend to be traveling within the states for a longish period, visiting all my scattered friends and relatives. How odd is it to come this far around the globe while knowing so little about ones own country?

Lower Order of Pele

Representatives of the Volcano Grove recently undertook a pilgrimage to the island of Tofua. There they were witness to no fewer than five simultaneous thunderstorms, spied several rare species of birds, bathed in a pool sheltered in the rainforest, and were blessed with the opportunity to behold real live lava. The Archfool himself undertook to climb over the lip of the cinder-cone to get a better look at the fire. (Tied to a firmly anchored rope--he is learning a few things!) Others were then able to scramble up the same rope and hold onto him while gazing a hundred meters straight down to the place where rocks are melted up and born again. Some days later he made a solo trip back up the cone without the rope (Goddess watching is dangerously addictive) and was blessed with a double lung-full of sulfuric acid and a badly lacerated leg while fleeing the cloud of vapors that emerged to punish his precocious-ness.

Bridgit is known in these parts as "Pele." Tongan being what it is, the word has several other meanings too--Dolphins, card playing, and Spinach-like trees all share the name of the Goddess of Fire. In such a heavily contextual language invocation becomes a dangerous and haphazard art.

New Order of Hephaestus

By Stephen Crimmins, 2001

The Order of Hephaestes was started in 2001 on the morning of Beltane. It is an order of Fire tenders, though it may also be used for those who like to work creatively with fire. The symbol of the order is a yellow ribbon tied around the right ankle. It should be only worn for ceremonies, not for tending of fires.

Before the ceremony the applicant should have built a fire near the location of the service. There should be a pot (of some sort) with water of life (of some sort. Something liable to catch on fire is good, though plain old water is always acceptable) being heated by the fire.

Calling of Hephaestes

Priest:O Brother/Sister _____, you have asked to join the service of Hephaestes, our lord fire. It is our duty to keep the sacred fires on the high days, to tend the fire especially on Beltane and on Samhain. It is our job always to watch all the fires we see and take care that they are not mistreated and so in indulging Hephaestes the rest of the Earth-Mother is not mistreated. Many times this means to actively build the fire, though other times it may be your call to learn to watch patiently so that the fire is not smothered. I would call upon Hephaestes to join us but this is your ordination. Call upon this form of the mother in your own way.

Applicant: (The applicant should call upon Hephaestes to be present. This may take a form similar to that of Carleton's Calling Ritual, though it need not)

Pr: O Hephaestes, do you here my brother/sister's call? O Hephaestes, do you come burning along the winds of the North, along the winds of the South, along the winds of the East, along the winds of the West?

(If the winds answer skip to the sacrifice)

Pr: The winds have not carried our lord Hephaestes here. But fear not, for you are not yet a Priest/ess of Hephaestes. O Lord Hephaestes, answer my call and join us here today!

The Sacrifice

Pr: Hephaestes is a fiery lord and demands a sacrifice. Have you one ready?

A: Yes (The applicant should have a piece of wood to feed the fire)

PR: Then throw it in! (*The Applicant does so and adds enough wood to have a descent fire, but not so large as to make the next part dangerous*) This is a proper sacrifice, but there is one more that must be offered. Hephaestes will not accept a priest/ess to his order that has not been properly purified. Therefore, you must jump three times thrice across the fire, each time repeating 'Oh Hephaestes, please accept this sacrifice.'

The applicant should then jump over the fire nine times saying 'Oh Hephaestes, please accept this sacrifice.' Despite that, nothing of them should be sacrificed except perhaps exterior worries and perhaps a couple of leg hairs. If anything goes wrong it may well be a sing that the ceremony should be stopped for the present. However, the fire shouldn't be so large as to be a danger to the applicant as they pass through.

PR: Oh Hephaestes! Lord of Fire! Today _____ (name), has asked to be a Priest/ess of your order. (S)he has invoked your name and sacrificed to you precious lumber (*if leg hairs were singed, that can be mentioned here as well*) and jumped across thy manifestation. O Hephaestes, do you accept these sacrifices dedicated to continuing your ever burning fires? Oh spirits of the north, I call upon you to give answer, spirits of the south, spirits of the east, spirits of the west? *If there is no answer the service should not continue. Of course there is more than one way a response might come and the fire especially should be listened to.*

The Catechism

Priest: Of what does Hephaestes give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

Applicant: The Waters-of-Fire!.

Priest: From whence do these Waters flow?

Applicant: From the bosom of Hephaestes, the ever burning all father!

Priest: And how do we honor this gift that causes our lives to burn with intensity?

Applicant: By partaking of the Waters-Of-Fire

Priest: Has Hephaestes given forth of her bounty?

Applicant: *The Applicant should first check to make sure the waters have been properly heated. If they are too hot or too cold the pot should be adjusted to cool the waters or heat them up and about ten minutes of ceremony should be added at this point by the Applicant while still staying within the Catechism section.* He Has!

Priest: Then take the Waters and consecrate them! Hephaestes allows you to join his order, but you must enter it by yourself

The Consecration

Applicant: *The Applicant should fill the chalice with the heated waters* O Hephaestes! Hallow these waters by thy ever burning ways, by the rainbow of flames. By thy brightness during the night and your heat during cold winter days and by all else that you do. Join us together as we take and drink of thy secret essence!

The Communion

If the Applicant succeeded in consecrating the waters then all should be fine with the communion. If there was a problem Hephaestes may have done something to the waters to make them dangerous to drink. Hence the Applicant should sip first and then wait a short time before acting as server and handing the chalice to each celebrant in turn. This may include celebrants who aren't of the Order of Hephaestes as they are allowed to watch and gain a little by drinking of the waters-of-fire.

Applicant: To thee, O Hephaestes, we return a portion of your bounty, as we must eventually return (our leg hairs) unto thee!

The rest of the waters from the chalice are returned to the fire. The fire should not go out.

The Affirmation and Benediction

Priest: Hephaestes has accepted your entry into this Order, Hephaestes be praised! Go out into the world confident in the knowledge that our Brother/Sister has been joined with Hephaestes. And Brother/Sister _____ you too may rejoin the world once you have cared for the fire and seen to its proper end

Figure 17 One Christmas tree super-dried since New Year's lit for Beltane 2003.

Figure 18 The Dark Obelisk along the Cannon River of the Lower Arb, 2004

new order of druids minor

by ric knight, 2001

The order of druids minor (odm) [and yes it's all lower case] is a particular expression of the Reform as it occurs to me. I come to the Reform at a time when three threads of thought have woven together a way at looking at the universe which owes a debt of gratitude to the following individuals, Marcus Aurelius (121-180) [played incidentally by Richard Harris in the movie Gladiator], Pelagius (354-418) and Giovanni di Bernadone (1181-1226 a.k.a. St. Francis of Assisi). Perhaps only in the Reform could a Roman Emperor, a 4th Century Heretic, and a Canonized Saint offer a fusion of inspiration.

1. From Marcus we receive the Stoic doctrine of justice, free will and the innate goodness of nature.
2. From Pelagius we learn a strict teaching of self-reliance. Pelagius phrased it as: *homo libero arbitrio emancipatus a deo*: "man, created free, is with his whole sphere independent of God and the Church, the Living Body of Christ—though Christ, Church, and sacraments mightily teach and help.
3. From Francis we learn humility, and the false hope that materialism offers the world, and his hope is our hope;

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.
Where there is injury, pardon.
Where there is discord, vision.
Where there is doubt, faith.
Where there is despair, hope.
Where there is darkness, light.
Where there is sadness, joy.
Oh divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved, as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born again to eternal life.

This is our Rule

I - Adherence to the Two Tenets

We affirm and adhere to the two tenets of the Reformed Druids of North America

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for is is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.

II - Membership the Order

To be a member of the rrder a Druid must enter one year as a novice to examine their thoughts and hearts. At the end of the novice year the Druid may take the vow and will be welcomed to the order as a full member. Activities during the year are to be determined by the members of the order within the Grove.
Druids need not be of any belief other than the Two Tenets to become a member of the order.
There is no requirement to be a member of the order in order to be a Member of the Grove.

No remuneration of any kind, direct , indirect, or otherwise may every be requested of a Member by the order for any purpose. We'd just rather not talk about money at all. Ever.

III - The Vow

Members of the order of druids minor take three vows;

Humility - knowing that we might be wrong, being open to others.
Humanity - knowing that we are all together, even those opposed to us.
Observance - performing our duties as Druids through our daily lives.

New Order of the Pack Rat

By Mike the Fool, 2004

This self-inititated order is for all Druids concerned with collecting archival material regarding Druids. The symbol of the order is some three feet of twine with various objects tangled in the knots. Mike is the administrator of the order, but the current archivist of Carleton is designated the honorary Patriarch or Matriarch.

Service Oath

I hereby swear to hold on to any interesting document, photo or keepsake of the Druidism that goes around me.

I will keep it in two different folders; the white folders for materials that have had copies sent to the Carleton Archives, and red folders for the materials that I have not.

If I hear something interesting I will write it down or get a copy, for my collection.

I will pester other people to keep archives, even if they won't share it now.

I will date everything, sequester them in a place that is both safe and dry.

I will not change the materials after they are in my folder without noting that.

At least once every five years, I will print out or send a disk with the material from the red folders to Carleton.

When I visit Carleton, I will always pay a visit bearing materials and dairy products to the Archivist of Carleton, the big cheese himself!

When I die, my will shall bequeath all these originals to Carleton Archives.

I thus swear my best efforts.

(Ordainee eats a big slice of cheese.)

New Order of _____

Section Eight: Unusual Services

Exorcism in Time of War

By Shelton, 1970

The Invocation

O Dalon Ap Landu, I invoke thee!

Thou art everywhere, yet thy manifestations are beclouded by the hatred of men.

Thou art without form, yet men have forgotten that thou pervadest all form.

Thou has no need of our sacrifices, and we offer thee none, for we come with thy praise upon our lips, but with great fear in our hearts.

O Dalon Ap Landu, hear us!

The Reading & The Charge

These are the times of darkness and confusion. We have seen men deliberately spread the fires of pestilence and death, yet that fire brings only more dark.

We have seen men take up the sword and spread dissension between nations, between races, between brethren, between father and son.

We have seen the blood shed until the green forests and fields are turned red.

We have seen men countenance this that their pride might be assuaged.

And we have cried out in agony that this might not be, for this is directly repugnant to the law of God, to the law of Nature, and to the Conscience of Man.

Therefore, I, _____, a priest of Dalon Ap Landu, do solemnly adjure and charge all men of true and contrite heart and spirit to take up this cause, this cause to end this wanton strife, bloodshed, killing, and destruction.

And yet, I adjure all to observe that charge previously laid upon us: that, in our wrath we not take up the sword, nor yet the burning brand, lest we ourselves be guilty of that violence that we decry.

The Exorcism

O Dalon Ap Landu, hear us!

We who are beset by the fires of darkness have sworn ourselves to smother them. Yet the awesome magnitude of the darkness misgives us, and we humbly beseech thee thine aid and comfort in the task whereunto we are set.

Wherefore, I, _____, a priest of Dalon Ap Landu, do solemnly pronounce the Curse of the Druids upon him who willfully harbors this spirit of Dark, who willingly urges the trammels of war upon us,

And I, _____, a priest of Dalon Ap Landu, do exorcise this malevolent specter from the ways of the waking world; I do unloose all forces of the Mother against Darkness, that these fires might be extinguished.

And we do pledge that we will not stand idle, lest our very souls be likewise extinguished.

Prayer and Benediction

O our Mother, grant us thy peace and life; Go, and peace attend you in your work.

Order of Consecration

(Usually of altars)

By David Fisher, 1963

The Exorcism

(The Archdruid shall walk about the altar to be consecrated saying all the while "Dalon Ap Landu", three times)

The Invocation

Mighty and blessed, fertile and powerful, to thee, Earth Mother, we sing our praise, asking that what we offer up to thee will be accepted, and thy blessing of life granted to us.

The Petition

Mighty are thy works, O Our Mother. Mighty are the rocks which thou has turned out of thy side, and which we gather together here as a sacrifice of praise to thee.

X: Grant us thy blessing.

We, thy worshipers, have raised this altar that thy power might be praised.

X: Grant us thy blessing

Attend us now, o Spirits, as we lighteth this fire of consecration.

{Originally "as we offer this sacrifice"}

X: Grant us thy blessing

Here the fire shall be lit upon the altar

X: Grant us thy blessing

Accept this, consecrate it.

X: Grant us thy blessing

As we now hallow this altar with thy Water of Life, Thou, Dalon Ap Landu, descend and dwell within this altar. Sanctify it, protect it form the defilers and fill it with thy power.

(During the above, the Archdruid shall sprinkle the Water of Life on the four corners of the altars.)

The Chant (the Congregation)

Hallow this altar, Hallow this altar, Hallow this altar, Hallow this altar, Hallow this altar, Hallow this altar, Hallow this altar,

The Answer

I call upon the four Spirits to give answer if this sacrifice is not accepted in the Earth-Mother's sight. I call on the Spirit of the North, of the South, of the East, of the West.

Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the renewal of life, has been accepted.

(Here the Catechism of the Waters and the Consecration of the Waters will be done)

The Benediction

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayers and that you go with her blessing. Peace. Peace. Peace.

A King's Wedding

By Robert Larson, 1975

The following wedding service was composed by Adr. Robert Larson and was used to join the king (or Rí) of his clan, herein referred to as Cody, and a woman of lesser rank in the clan, herein referred to as Janie. The wedding was performed on Lá Lúnasa (Lughnasadh), 13 y.r. and contains references to this holiday, (there is also an amusing Gaelic pun connected with this choice of a wedding day).

Archdruid: Let the couple to be joined together be brought forward.

[Processional. Cody should be on Janie's right at the altar.]

Archdruid: Ye have come before me today to have your lives joined. It is a most auspicious day for this act, for today, Lá Lúnasa, is a day of rejoicing over the coming fruition of all the gifts of the Mother, the two greatest being Life and Love. Now does the flowering of your love for each other bear fruit as ye become one.

[AD picks up aspergillum.]

AD: *[To Cody]* I ask thee, a Rí, if thou wilt be joined to this woman.
Cody: Aye.
AD: *[To Janie]* I ask thee, Janie, if thou wilt be joined to this man.
Janie: Aye.
AD: *[To both]* I ask ye together if ye will be joined to each other.
Both: Aye.

[AD sprinkles both.]

AD: *[Handing a piece of bread to Cody]* As food itself, so art thou to her.
[Handing piece of bread to Janie] As food itself, so art thou to him.
[Handing piece of bread to each] As food itself, so are ye to each other.
[Handing cup to Cody] As drink itself, so art thou to her.
[Handing cup to Janie] As drink itself, so art thou to him.
[Handing cup to each] As drink itself, so are ye to each other.

[Cody and Janie extend arms. AD binds them, starting from underneath, behind thumbs.]

AD: *[To Cody]* With this arm shalt thou hold her, with the other shalt thou protect & comfort her.
[To Janie] With this arm shalt thou hold him, with the other shalt thou protect & comfort him.

[AD picks up aspergillum.]

AD: As life itself, so art thou to her. *[AD sprinkles Cody.]*
As life itself, so art thou to him. *[AD sprinkles Janie.]*
As life itself, so art ye to each other. *[AD sprinkles both.]*
AD: Thou art now one in the sight of the Gods. When They look upon the one, They see the other, however distant. When they look upon the twain, they see but one.

May the Mother shower Her blessings upon thee throughout thy life, may Danu smile upon thee and make thy life fruitful, and may Lugh light thy path through brightest day and darkest night and shine in thee always.
Síochaín! Síochaín! Síochaín!

A Marriage Ceremony

By Robert Larson, 1975

Note: If possible, the Chant should be intoned during the processional.

Archdruid and Preceptor advance to the altar, inscribing the sign on the ground. The Archdruid steps into the sign, closing it after him. He turns toward the gathering and says:

AD: I call upon the couple to be joined to come to the altar.

(During the couple's processional, any music desired or an appropriate reading may be inserted.) (Wagner is not suggested.)

The couple having arrived, the Archdruid invokes:

AD: Oh, Earth-Mother, we call upon thee to bless these people gathered upon thy bosom for this joyful occasion. We ask thee to smile upon thy bosom for this joyful occasion. We ask thee to smile upon this couple who have decided to become one.

Archdruid turns to the couple.

AD: Have you brought sacrifices with which to invoke the Mother's pleasure?
Both: We have.
AD: Give me then your sacrifices.

The Archdruid receives the sacrifices and binds them with a green ribbon. He offers them to the Mother:

AD: Oh, Earth-Mother, the two sacrifices of thy children unto thee are become one. Receive them, I pray thee, in the spirit in which they are given, and permit me to join these two as man and wife in thy name! Hast thou accepted their sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer.. of the South... Of the East.... Of the West.
AD: Praise be, your sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, has been accepted!

AD: I ask you now, (man's name), wilt thou have this woman, (name) as thy wife? Wilt thou be like unto an oak with her, giving her strength and shelter? Wilt thou provide for her as the Mother permits and protects her come fair or foul? Wilt thou have her above all others?
Man: I will.
AD: I ask you now, (woman's name), wilt thou have this man, (name), as thy husband? Wilt thou be as the grass of the field unto him, comforting him and sustaining him in his need? Wilt thou be his Waters-of-Life, refreshing him and making him joyful, as well as thou canst, come fair or foul?
Woman: I will.
AD: Kneel please.
****

(At this point, any tokens the couple may wish *to give each other should be exchanged.)*

AD: Have you any token of your love which you wish to exchange?
Couple: We do.
AD: I ask you then, to give them one to the other.

(If there are no tokens, this part should be deleted.)

****

The Archdruid ties the right hand of the man and the left hand of the woman together with green ribbon, saying:

AD: As I join you with this ribbon, so may the Mother join you with her might.

The Archdruid turns to the preceptor.

AD: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters of Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing all-mother.
AD: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
P: She has!
AD: Then give me the Waters! (He is given the waters.)

O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by thy power, as we take and drink of thy secret essences!

(He sips, and turns to the couple.)

I, in the name of the Earth-Mother, marry you in the house of the spirit of the South (With fingers dipped in the waters, sign is made on the foreheads of the couple.)
I marry you in the house of the spirit of the North. (Sign)
I marry you in the house of the spirit of the West. (Sign)
I marry you in the house of the spirit of the East. (Sign)
Finally, I marry you in the name of the mighty, the blessed, all-powerful, and fertile Earth-Mother, consecrating your joining in the name of the all-mother Earth!

(Sign. Then drinks of the waters)

(Note: from now on, the couple is addressed in the singular, for they are now one in the sight of the Mother.)

AD: I ask thee now to share with each other the partaking of these Waters-of-Life, which the Earth-Mother, in her bounty, gives unto thee.

(The drink all and return the chalice to the Archdruid.)

Then I, as a priest of the Reformed Druids of North America, as a priest of the Lord of the Groves, Dalon Ap Landu, (Here insert any other titles which pertain.), say you are most truly joined together as man and wife.
You two are now one in the sight of the Earth-Mother. When she looks upon the one, she will see the other, however distant. When she looks upon the twain, she sees but the one. I ask Danu to bless this fruitful, but I myself cannot give unto thee the blessing of Danu. Go thou forth and earn it in the time-honored way.
Peace.... Peace... Peace....

An Old Fashioned Wedding

By Isaac Bonewits, 1976

This ceremony is based upon Paleo-Pagan and Neo-Pagan elements taken from Slavic, Baltic, Celtic and other sources. It is similar in many ways to those used by modern underground Paleo-Pagans in Europe, but has been rewritten for use by Schismatic Druids. Its use is, of course, entirely optional. It's racy for me (Scharding), but others liked it.

Either the Priest ("P") or the Priestess ("Ps"), if not both , should belong to the Third Order. Traditionally, they should be wearing robes of gold, silver, white, red and blue. The Bride ("B") and Groom ("G") traditionally should wear brown or white or green or be skyclad. There must be a fire on the altar at all times during the rites, though the P & Ps should make an effort to avoid setting their hair on fire. Ritual tools upon the altar should include: a sword, a broom , a knife or sickle, a cup of water, a chalice, a container of whiskey, candles, a dish of earth, incense and thin green ribbons.

During most of the rites, the Bride faces the Priest and the Groom faces the Priestess. The ceremony should start early in the day, outdoors, in the Summer Half of the Year. Beltane or Midsummer is nice.

Portions of this ritual were used for the famous/infamous wedding of Morning Glory and Tim Zell, who composed the "All that I ask" poem.

[Priest and Priestess (P & Ps) process to the altar, followed by the Bride and Groom (B & G). The members of the Grove and guests may stand or sit in a large circle around the altar and the main participants. The Grove's Bards should be singing or leading an appropriate song.]

P: I am the God.
Ps: I am the Goddess.
P&Ps: Together we are Eternity. In the sight of our Parents, we consecrate these elements of Earth *[earth is blessed and sprinkled on B&G],* Air *[incense is blessed and blown upon B&G],* Fire *[candle is blessed and flame is run swiftly and carefully under the throats of B&G],* and Water *[water is blessed and sprinkled on B&G]*. In Their sight and the sight of our sisters and brothers, we consecrate you with love and joy.
P&Ps: Do you understand, fully and completely, your duty to love, defend, honor, protect, fulfill and give joy to your mate and your sisters and brothers?
B&G: We do.
P: Have you conformed to those just laws of the land concerning the establishment of matings?
B&G: *[Had better say]* We have.
Ps: Is there anyone here with a just reason why these two should not be mated? If so, speak now, or forever be silent, for their sake and yours!

[If any objections are made, the ritual stops long enough for a duel between the disputing parties; Groom with objecting men, Bride with objecting women. The duel may be symbolic or real. The Bride's father, for example might hold a ritual duel with the Groom, or his mother fight with the Bride. Or a mock battle may be held between the clans of the Bride and Groom. If the duel is serious, however, and any major injury or death occurs, it is best to stop the wedding entirely and begin on another day from scratch.]

P: Have you brought sacrifices to the Mother?
B&G: We are ready to bring them.

[B&G are handed knife or sickle, go to tree, ask permission, cut two sacrifices and bless the cuts on the tree. They then return with their sacrifices to the altar, where the twigs are blessed by the P& Ps, and laid separately upon the altar.]

P&Ps: What do you ask?
B&G: All that I ask is thy desire
All that I seek is for thy care.
My earth is thine, and thine my fire
Our waters one, my breath thine air.
P: Have you, _____, chosen consorts for your sanctification?
B: I have. They are _____, _____, and _____.
P: Who is the eldest and who the youngest?

[Male consorts give ages and line up behind Bride; first the eldest, then the youngest, then the one in between.]

Ps: Have you, _____, chosen consorts for your sanctification?
G: I have. They are _____, _____, and _____.
Ps: Who is the eldest and who the youngest?

[Female consorts give ages and line up behind Bride; first the eldest, then the youngest, then the one in between.]

P&Ps: The choices have been made and well. Let the feasting begin!

[The Groom goes off to a private place with the Priestess for half an hour or so, while the Bride goes off with the Priest. What they do there is their business, but ritual intercourse is emphatically expected. Meanwhile, the Consorts and the rest of the guests begin feasting and carousing. When the Bride comes back, she goes to the Eldest Male Consort and takes him off for half an hour, while the Groom does the same with the Eldest Female Consort. The Bride and Groom spend at least a half hour with each of the Consorts; Elders first, then Youngest, then Middle. Only after being sanctified by the Clergy and all three Consorts do the Bride and Groom have intercourse with each other, preferably in public. Since there is usually an orgy going on by this time, the public intercourse is easily managed. While the B&G are thus engaged, the P&Ps should also be having intercourse, as representatives of the God and Goddess.

Several hours later, all return to the ritual circle. The B&G again face the P&PS. The sacrifices on the altar are bound together with green ribbons. The right hand of the Bride is bound to the left hand of the Groom.]

P: O Earth-Mother, the two sacrifices of thy children unto Thee are become one. Receive them, we pray Thee, in the spirit in which they are given, and permit us to join these two as mates in Thy name.

[The sacrifice is placed in the bound hands of the B&G, who lift it to the sky, as the Ps asks:]

Ps: Hast thou accepted their sacrifice, O our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer.... of the South....of the East.....of the West... of the Zenith....of the Nadir... of the Holy Center!

[Assuming that no drastically large omens indicating the Mother's displeasure occur..]

P&Ps: Praise be! Your sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the consecration and sanctification of your mating, has been accepted!

[The Bards should sing another song here.]

P: Do you, _____, understand exactly what it is you are doing?
B: Yes, I am promising ....*[Bride reads her half of the mating contract].*
Ps: Do you, _____, understand exactly what it is you are doing?
G: Yes, I am promising....*[Groom reads his half of the mating contract].*

[The mating contract should be complete and explicit. It should state the rights, duties, privileges and responsibilities of each partner. It should state whether the mating is monogamous, polygamous, polyandrous, polygynous, etc. It should state the amount of freedom or limitation (physical, mental, emotional, creative and sexual) each is placing upon the other. It should state the expected duration of the mating and grounds for separation. It should be in writing, with a copy for the Bride, a copy for the Groom, a copy for the Grove records, and a copy for the ritual.]

P&Ps: Are the witnesses here and ready?
W: We are!

[Witnesses (usually the Consorts) step forward. B&G, P&Ps, and all official Witnesses sign the mating contract (all four copies) as well as any forms required by Civil Law.]

P&Ps: The contract of the mating has been signed and sealed. Now take this copy and send it to the Gods, that it may be in Their memories forever.

*[**B&G** take fourth copy of mating contract and burn it in the altar fire.]*

P: Have you any further tokens of your love to exchange?
B&G: Yes/No. *[If yes, the rings or other items should be exchanged].*

Ps: *[Touching the ribbons binding their wrists]* As you are joined by this ribbon, so may the Gods join you as one, for so long as your love shall last.

B&G: So be it.
P&Ps: Let us raise the Power!

[The guests join hands in a ring, singing an appropriate song and perhaps dancing. The P&Ps take the energy raised and shape it to form a psychic bond between the couple and a shield around them, while the B&G kiss or are otherwise intimately engaged.]

P&Ps: Let the words be said!
B&G: All that I ask is thy desire
All that I seek is for thy care
My earth is thine, and thine my fire
Our waters one, my breath thine air.

[Note: the consecration of the Waters-of-Life is reserved to the Third Order Druids and Druidesses. In the following, it is assumed that this is the Priestess. It could of course be the Priest, in which case the dialogue would be reversed. If both are of the Third Order, they should decide ahead of time which will perform the consecration.]

Ps: Of what does the Earth-Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
Ps: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-Mother.
Ps: And how do we honor this gift that causes life?
P: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
Ps: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has! Mightily have the sacred fluids come forth on this day, and greatly pleased are the Gods of Love and Joy!
Ps: Then give me the Waters!

[The Ps holds the chalice of whiskey and water, and consecrates it with the following:]

Ps: O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join these together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences.

[Ps drinks of the waters, then hands the chalice to the P. He drinks and the chalice is passed on to the B&G. They hold it while the P&Ps dip their fingers in it and make the Signs of the Mother and the Father on the couple's foreheads (both on both) during the following:]

P&Ps: In the name of the Mother and of the Father and of Their Holy Child: We seal you as mates in the house of the Spirit of the North *[signs are made on B&G's foreheads]*. We seal you as mates in the house of the Spirit of the South *[signs]*. We seal you as mates in the house of the Spirit of the East *[signs]*. We seal you as mates in the house of the Spirit of the West *[signs]*. We seal you as mates in the house of the Spirit of the Zenith *[signs]*. We seal you as mates in the house of the Spirit of the Nadir [signs]. And we seal you as mates in the house of the Spirit of the Holy Center *[signs]*.

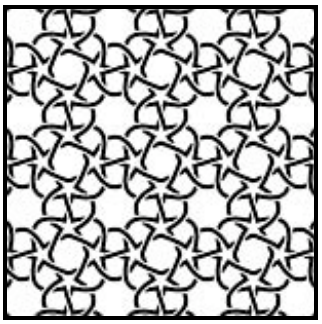
Ps: Take now and share with each other the Waters-of-Life, which the Mother in Her bounty has given unto you. *[B&G drink and empty chalice.]*

P: Now I, a Priest of _____ and _____, *[insert proper titles]* do make this declaration:

Ps: Now I, a Priestess of _____ and _____, *[insert proper titles]* do make this declaration.

P&Ps: In the sight of our Parents, these two before us are joined in mating and in love, in this world and all worlds to come, for as long as their love shall last. Blessed remain forever.
ALL: Blessed remain forever!

[Bards may sing a closing song. At this point the couple are completely mated. The feasting and carousing continue until the food and intoxicants run out. The Consorts (both male and female) traditionally act as servers to the Priestess, Priest, Bride and Groom for the rest of the party.]



A Wedding Contract

By Isaac Bonewits1978

The following Wedding Contract was read aloud during the wedding of Isaac and Selene Bonewits last August 6th, 1978. We have had so many requests for copies of it that we are reproducing it here for others to use as they wish.

This marriage bond shall be a link, but not a chain.

Our marriage shall, for the time being, consist of the two of us. Others, upon mutual consent, may be added to our family.

Our primary affections and commitments as individuals shall be to each other, however, both of us shall be free to share love and affection with others whom both would deem not unworthy.

Both of us shall make our best efforts to earn our daily bread, and both shall share the work of creating and maintaining a felicitous environment. When children arrive in our household, both of us shall share responsibility and authority in raising them.

Both of us shall strive to maintain open communication between us while respecting each other's right to privacy and occasional isolation.

Each of us shall be supportive of the other's growth in body, mind and spirit, and accept that this will sometimes be inconvenient.

This contract may be renegotiated at any time upon a month's notice, to provide time for thought. No decision to terminate this contract will be made by either without at least three months of joint counseling with a mutually agreed-upon counselor.

This marriage shall be built upon a foundation of sensitivity and mutual consideration for each other's needs and desires

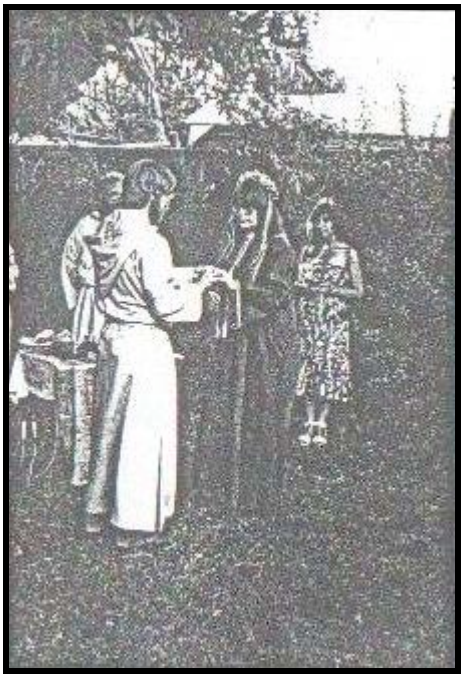


Figure 19 Larry Press marrying Susan at Live Oak Grove Lughnasadh 1983.

Invocation to the Elements

By Arlynde D'Loughlan, 1978

This is an invocation written by Arlynde D'Loughlan for the wedding of Isaac and Selene Bonewits last August. Symbols for the elements: Earth - a well-shaped stone with a pentacle chalked on it, Air - rose incense, Water - a chalice filled with Amaretto liqueur, Fire - a cauldron filled with alcohol and lighted.

The altar is the symbol of the spirit of life which lives in all of us, and we consecrate it and ourselves to the Force that sustains all life.

Spirit of Earth, from whom we are birthed and in whom we shall all sleep, cradle us in your love and strength that we may grow like your peaceful green children, nurtured by your breast and fed on your peace.

Spirit of Air, breath and breather, come and fill us with your wisdom, singing love to us as the oaks sing in your gentle caress 'til we soar like eagles in your summer morning.

Spirit of Water, flowing unity, come quench our thirst for joy and harmony, washing us clean of the strife that surrounds us that we may clearly see the divinity in everything, reflected in your living mirror.

Spirit of Fire, warmth and life, come fill us with the flame of love for the Godhood in ourselves and in our kin, and light the beauty of creation that we may more clearly see the infinite gifts that we are given and which we give.

We consecrate this altar, symbol of the living altar of all creation, to the elements that give and sustain all life and joy, and we sing in harmony with the melody of unity that is creation, giving praise to the Love which is Life.

An Invocation Poem

By Julia Vinograd, 1978

Use praise of the Goddess for the God
Use praise of the God for the Goddess
Only the Goddess can invoke the God
Only the God can invoke the Goddess
If they both come at once the worshippers get drenched
There is only one God
and He is whoever the Goddess is in love with at the moment
There is only one Goddess
and She is whoever the God is in love with at the moment
Eternity has a lot of moments.

Wedding Ceremony

Plan A 1992 (Rev. 1996)
By Andrea Davis, 1992

This is final version of the ceremony, I think we're pretty happy with it now, I think. Give it a look-see and let use know what you think. Would have gotten this to you sooner, but I was not using the correct address.... I can't believe I was misspelling Carleton.

Outline the circle beforehand with yarn, placing some sort of marker at each of the four compass points of the circle. Leave a gap in the yarn for everyone to enter through. There will be a small table at the West, it will already have the unity candle and anything else on it that will not be carried in. Just prior to the ceremony, all involved parties will leave the hall and go downstairs, just out of sight. This will permit a processional. Once everyone is seated, everyone will move upstairs and stand just outside the door. Andrea will enter first. After Andrea, the compass callers will enter in twos, holding unlit candles as they walk down the "aisle" and to their places in the circle. Joe will enter, followed by Steve accompanied by Kathy.

When they enter the circle, Joe will move to the North and Kathy will move to the South. Steve will stand in the center of the circle. Mary will enter next, followed by Shari, accompanied by Sheldon. When they reach the circle, Mary and Sheldon will stand to the East and Shari will join Steve in the center of the circle.

Andrea: We stand outside of time, in a place not of earth. As our ancestors before us bade, we join together and are one.

Compass points should now face outward as Andrea walks the outside of the circle. When she reaches the eastern compass point, she will pause to light the candle with her own.

Sondra: I call the guardian of the East. Sondra: I call the guardian of the East. Some name you Archangel Raphael, and in the old days you were Shu, to others still, you are the Great Healer, come guardian of wind and tempest, guard this company and witness the oaths that will be sworn.

Andrea: Heed our call and come to us, all things harmful cast away.

Sondra may then turn inward, facing the center of the circle. Andrea will continue to the southern compass point, pausing to light the candle with her own.

Kari: I call the guardian of the South. Named Archangel Michael to some, in days gone by you were Shamash, called the Great Defender by others still, come guardian of the fiery sword, guard this company and give due witness to the oaths that will be sworn.

Andrea: Heed our call and come to us, all things harmful cast away.

Kari may turn inward, facing the center of the circle. Andrea will continue to the western compass point, pausing to light the candle with her own.

Rob: I call the guardian of the West. Some name you Archangel Gabriel, but before that you were Enki, to others you are the Great Herald, come guardian of waters flow, may this company be guarded and our oaths witnessed.

Andrea: Heed our call and come to us, all things harmful cast away

Rob may turn inward, facing the center of the circle. Andrea will continue to the north, pausing to light the candle with her own.

Anita: I call the guardian of the North. Named Archangel Uriel to some, and called Geb in days long past, the Great Companion to those who sacrifice themselves in defense of another, come dark guardian of the earth, guard this company and witness our oaths.

Andrea: Heed our call and come to us, all things harmful cast away

Andrea will return to the East and close the circle:

Andrea: Mother Earth, Father Sky,
may we always walk between you.
You are our roots and our wings.
We are between worlds,
beyond the bounds of time,
where night and day,
birth and death,
joy and sorrow,
meet as one.

Andrea will return to her place in the west.: "We have come together here in celebration of the joining together of Shari and Steve. There are many things to say about marriage. Much wisdom concerning the joining together of two souls has come our way through all paths of belief, and from many cultures. With each union, more knowledge is gained and more wisdom gathered. Though we are unable to give all this knowledge to these two who stand before us, we can hope to leave with them the knowledge of love and its stand before us, we can hope to leave with them the knowledge of love and its strengths and the anticipation of the wisdom that comes with time.

"The law of life is love unto all beings. Without love, life is nothing. Marriage is a bond and is not to be entered into lightly, nor frivolously, for it is a public agreement between two people to live, love and work together. As with any aspect of life, it has its cycles, its ups and its downs, its trials and its triumphs. With full understanding of this, Steve and Shari have come here today to be joined as one in marriage.

"All here are asked to witness the promises made."

Andrea: "Thus I invoke the Lady White
To come to us this sacred night.
By Fin and Feather, Leaf and Tree,
I show you a Mystery!"

Shari moves to the East. Steve moves to the North.

Andrea: "Cunning and art she did not lack
But aye his whistle would fetch her back!"

Shari: "Oh, I shall go into a hare
with sorrow, sighing and mickle care
And I shall go in the Lady's Name
Aye, until I be fetched hame!"

Steve: "Hare, take heed of the fox abound
Will harry thee all these fields around
For here come I in the Lady's Name

All but for to fetch thee hame!"

Shari moves to the South. Steve moves to the East.

Andrea: "Cunning and art she did not lack
But aye his whistle would fetch her back!"

Shari: "Yet I shall go into a bee
With mickle fear and dread of thee
And flit to hive in the Lady's Name
Ere that I be fetch-ed hame!"

Steve: "Bee, take heed of a red, red cock
Will harry thee close thru door and lock
For here come I in the Lady's Name
All but for to fetch thee hame!"

Shari: "Yet I shall go into a trout.
With sorrow and sighing and mickle doubt
And show thee many a merry game
Ere that I be fetch-ed hame!"

Steve: "Trout, take heed of an otter lank
Will harry thee close from bank to bank
For here come I in the Lady's Name
All but for to fetch thee hame!"

Shari moves to the North. Steve moves to the West.

Andrea: "Cunning and art she did not lack
But aye his whistle would fetch her back!"

Shari: "Yet I shall go into a mouse
And haste me unto the Miller's House
There in his corn to have good game
Ere that I be fetch-ed hame!"

Steve: "Mouse, take heed of a white tom-cat
That never was baulked of mouse nor rat
For here come I in the Lady's Name
And -thus- it is I fetch thee hame!"

Steve walks to Shari and takes her hand. They both move to the center of the Circle, and then to the West, and face Andrea.

Andrea: "Cunning and art she did not lack
But aye his Love has fetched her back!"

Andrea: "Shari, is it true that you come of your own free will and accord?"
Shari: "Yes, it is true."
Andrea: "With whom do you come, and whose blessings accompany you."
Mary steps forward "She comes with me, and is accompanied by all of her family's blessings." Then she steps back in place.

Steve and Shari turn to face each other in front of Andrea

Steve: I, Stephen James Fox, take you, Shareen Eileen Mann to my hand, my heart, and my spirit, to be my chosen one. To desire you and be desired by you, to support you, and be supported by you, without sin or shame. I promise to love you wholly and completely without restraint, in sickness and in health, in plenty and in poverty, in life and beyond. I shall not seek to change you in any way. I shall respect you, your beliefs, your people, and your ways as I respect myself.
Shari: I, Shareen Eileen Mann, take you, Stephen James Fox to my hand, my heart, and my spirit to be my chosen one. To desire and be desired by you, to support you, and be supported by you, without sin or shame. I promise to love you wholly and completely without restraint, in sickness and in health, in plenty and in poverty, in life and beyond. I shall not seek to change you in any way. I shall respect you, your beliefs, your people, and your ways as I respect myself.
Andrea: "Through the ages, the flame of the candle has been used as a metaphor for the spirit. Following this tradition, Steve and Shari, you will now create a symbol of your new life by joining your spirits in the flame of the candle."

Lighting the unity candle will be assisted by Mary and Sheldon. Shari and Steve take a taper from each, and light them off the north and south cardinal points (using separate points). The candle will remain on the table for the duration of the ceremony

Steve and Shari remove the cords around their necks, their wedding rings are hung.

Andrea: "Steve and Shari I understand that you have some appropriate tokens to exchange at this point."
Steve: "Yes. 24 days ago, on the eve of the fifth anniversary of our first date we performed the first ceremonial rite of our union today by placing our wedding bands around each others necks whilst standing in the same spot where we shared our first kiss."
Shari: Holding Steve's ring. "I give thee this token as a sign of my love and hereto I plight thee my troth." Place ring on his finger.
Steve: Holding Shari's ring. Steve says something suitable. Place ring on her finger
Andrea: "Let these rings represent the circle of life. All things of this universe move in circles as do we. Please join your hands."

Steve and Shari join hands, left to left and right to right (from above they make the symbol of infinity). Kathy wraps a long strip of cloth around their crossed and overlapping hands.

Kathy: "As you have sworn before each other, these witnesses, and the powers that be, you are now bound, one to the other forever and a day." This is where the kiss can come in, if it will happen at all. Kiss over bound hands. Then, Kathy will unbind Steve and Shari's hands and step back to her place.

She can continue to hold the cloth or she may place it on the table beside the unity candle.

Sheldon: "Drawing on an ancient custom from the East., where the family was immensely important, let us begin the integration of our families by exchanging family trees."

Joe holds a goblet of juice and a plate with bread and salt. "Drink from the cup of love, that you may never thirst." Hands goblet to Steve. Steve holds the cup for Shari as she drinks and Shari takes the cup to hold it when Steve drinks. Shari hands the goblet back to Joe. "May your life be flavored with love, and may you never hunger." Hands plate out to Shari.

Shari breaks off some bread, dips it into the salt and feeds it to Steve. Steve then does the same.

Turn again to Andrea. "You entered this circle as two people. You leave it now as one."

Andrea releases the circle:
Thus I release the East and West
Thanks to them from Host to Guest
Thus I release the South and North
With "Blessed Be' I send them forth!
The Circle's open, dance we so
Out and homeward we shall go.
Earth and Water, Air and Fire
Celebrated our desire.
The Sun's returned to banish dark
The Earth awakes to sunlight's spark.
By Fin and Feather, Leaf and Tree,
Our circle's done; and Blessed Be!

On "be" the compass callers can blow out their candles. Andrea presents Steve and Shari then leads the bridal party out to the bar where the receiving line will be. Parents will follow Steve and Shari, then the compass points. At this time, anyone assisting us in the floor move, will replace chairs to their original locations.

Notes:

We will have chairs from the back moved up so that more people can see. The chairs we move will go around the circle as much as possible, making it easier for more people to see. Make sure to keep an aisle wide enough for us all to walk through. Also keep chairs far enough away from the circle for our comfort.

North = earth/green West = water/blue
South = fire/red East = air/yellow

During most of the ceremony, particularly the vows rings, etc. Andrea should stand to the West.

Well, I'm conducting it (thus the Andrea does this, Andrea does that), and I am Minister of the Church of Universal Life, which is what makes it legal in the eyes of the state. I basically view it as free license to perform Pagan weddings. The couple wrote their vows drawing from old Celtic traditions (with some suggestions from Moi). I don't think they have any set date from the engagement (they've been engaged a long time). I personally would not get married from Samhain to Beltaine, and probably not in may either, but that is a personal choice. I would try to marry on a waxing moon. The wedding happens in two weeks. I will see if they are planning to record it.

Figure 20 Merri Weber presiding over a Star-Trek wedding 2003.

Suggestions for a Druid Funeral

By Isaac Bonewits 1976

Thanks be to the Gods that we have not yet had any need for performing a funeral or other memorial service for a member of any Reformed Druid movement (Not true as of 1995 –Michael Scharding) But sooner or later we will have need of doing this and it is well that such matters should be considered ahead of time.

Rather than attempting to write out a service, let us instead consider various ideas that will help an Arch-Druid/ess or solitary Druid/ess to construct a ritual service that will have full meaning for all parties concerned.

Reformed Druids have a variety of beliefs and nonbeliefs concerning the matter of Death and an afterlife. It is best to attempt to find out what the deceased's attitudes were, so as to make the service coincide with his or her death, someone in the Grove should have made it a point to inquire about the person's wishes and beliefs. If, however, the death was sudden, indirect and compassionate inquiries should be made of the deceased's family and friends.

Any attempt to perform a Druid funeral services for a person whose family disapproves of Druidism will be met with disaster. In such cases, it is best to hold a memorial service without the presence of the deceased or the surviving family.

If, however, the family is willing to let the wishes of the deceased be followed, and allow Druid services to be performed, a number of customs may be practiced.

Perhaps the oldest of these is a Wake. The members of the Grove, as well as any other family and friends who wish, gather together and hold a party. All present get intoxicated, cry, talk about the deceased and share their sorrow. The life story of the deceased is told and appreciated. His or her habits, tastes, accomplishments and goals are recounted and his or her role in the Grove reconsidered. If possible, the coffin within which the deceased is to be buried should be placed in a position of honour during the wake.

The deceased may be buried in the middle of a grove of trees and an oak sapling planted above the gravesite. This may be done with ashes as well, should the body have been cremated.

If the deceased shall have expressed a wish to recycle properly, an attempt should be made to prevent embalming, as this process makes it very difficult for the body to return to the soil. About the only way to escape universal embalming laws is for your Grove to become a legal religious body of some sort, buy land out in the country and build a small temple. That way, you may then have, in most cases the right to run a "church cemetery" for your members right next to your temple or church building. Private church cemeteries are frequently exempt from the state laws pushed through by the funeral industry. You will then have to arrange your own transportation for the body and see that it is buried within twenty-four hours.

If you do buy land for a Grove cemetery, it might be nice to plant your first Druid/ess at the top of a hill and subsequent Druids in a circle around the spot, thus creating an oak grove, each tree of which shares the essence of a past member of the Grove. If bodies are buried, it is necessary to make sure that local wells and streams will be in no danger of contamination.

The deceased may wish to be buried along with his or her Druid robes and tools. Even if you are unaware of the

deceased's feelings in the matter, it may be taken for granted that any Druid/ess who was also an occultist will wish to be buried with his or her favorite magical tools.

If a stone monument is to be put up instead of a tree being planted, a menhir carved with the deceased's name, rank and most salient characteristic would be appropriate.

Some Druids may wish to be cremated and have their ashes scattered over the soil in the woods or local fields. In most states, this would have to be done surreptitiously, since it has a tendency to be illegal.

If an actual religious ceremony is held, it should follow the wishes of the deceased as far as they may be known. Probably the Libation prayer from the Order of Common Worship would be the most appropriate as a theme: "To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee."

If the deceased expressed an intention of returning as soon as possible in a new body, all newborn children conceived after the date of the death should be watched closely for the next several years, to see if any give evidence of being the party in question. They should not, however, be given the deceased's name (though all the children in the Grove should be familiar with it) unless they specifically ask for it to be given them.

At the next Samhain celebration, a plate might be laid out for the spirit of the deceased. The deceased should be specifically mentioned in the day's service and his or her memory honored.

One year from the date of the death, a memorial party could be held. This should be as cheery as possible and mark the end of the mourning period.

Ideas on at least one Druidic attitude towards Death and dying may be found in The Epistle to the Myopians. But all Druids should meditate upon the subject of Death (especially their own) from time to time, especially at Samhain, and should endeavor to see to it that the other members of the Grove know their wishes in these matters.

Third Order Druids and Druidesses who write funeral services are encouraged to send them to the other members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu and to the Editor of The Druid Chronicles, so that others may be inspired with ideas when it becomes their turn for this somber task.

Figure 21 The central altar stone of the New Circle, c. 1999.

Further Suggestions for a Druid Funeral

By Emmon Bodfish, 1989
A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1989

The basic outline of the ceremony is as follows. It can be added to, to fit the needs of the people for whom the service is being done.

The grave is prepared and a means of replacing the soil is read at hand.

The ceremony begins with the processions up to the grave.

The pall bearers carrying the body of the deceased proceed first.

They are follow by the Third Order Druid who will be conducting the ceremony. (*1) S/He will recite the funeral chant as they approach the grave. People carrying the grave goods follow immediately behind the Druid, the one carrying the food offering walking first, just in back of the Druid.

When they arrive at the grave, the Druid continues the chant while the body is lowered, and the participants form a circle around the grave, with the person carrying the food offering stopping first, just at the Druid's left, and the person walking behind him, stopping at his left, and so on.

The food offering, traditionally a joint of meat and a glass of mead, but in modern practice, the deceased's favorite food and drink, is then placed in the grave to the right of the body.

Next all those carrying grave goods come forward in order, deasel, (Sun-wise) around the circle, and place their goods in the grave.

A hymn or some favorite music of the deceased's may be played at this point.

Then in the central and most important part of the ceremony, the Druid steps forward and puts the handful of "releasing earth" onto the body and says, "With this soil I do release thy earthly bonds." (*2).

The grave is then refilled with the earth removed from it. When this is done, the Druid consecrates a chalice full of the Waters of Life, using the "Charging of the Waters" from the regular R.D.N.A. Service, for Summer half of the year. S/He drinks a sip of them, makes the Druid Sigil and Says "The Waters of Life," if S/He confirms them to be such. The chalice is then passed sunwise around the circle with each member making the sign of the Druid Sigil and stating "The Waters of Life," as s/he passes the chalice to the next person.. When the chalice returns, it should <u>not</u> be totally empty. The Druid tastes of it again, and if s/he again confirms that it is the Waters of Life, s/he again makes the sign of the Sigil and then pours the remainder over the grave, saying "For thee, (name of the deceased,) we return this portion of the Earth-Mother's bounty, even as we must return with thee."

Lastly, a pine spring or bough, as the pine is the gateway to the otherworld, is placed on the grave.

Then the participants file sunwise around the grave, back to the path on which they processed toward it, and then each backs away nine steps, as it is traditionally very bad to turn one's back on a new made grave.

Footnotes:

1. Third Order Druid is one who is ordained in the R.D.N.A. or N.R.D.N.A. systems, need not be the Arch Druid of a Grove. If an ordained Third Order is not available, the funeral ceremony can be done without the section of the charging of the Waters of Life, as only a Third Order can consecrate the Waters of Life.

2. The putting on of the releasing of earth, is the core and necessary part of the Druid ceremony. It can be done by anyone and is quick and unobtrusive enough to be done most anywhere. If you know that your fellow Druid wants this to being her/his journey to the Other World, it can be done with a pinch or handful or any earth, in a home or hospital where a person has just died, and it should be done before the casket is closed in a modern closed casket funeral, even if it is to be done again at the Druid ceremony itself at the grave as described above. Every Neo-Druid and friends of Druids should know to do this and memorize the one, brief line: "With this soil I do release thy earthly bonds."

* * * * * * * *

Copies of this are being sent to all R.D.N.A. and N.R.D.N.A. Third Order (Ordained) Druids, and it therefore becomes part of the official R.D.N.A. Apocrypha. Reactions, additions, and objections should be sent to the Druid Missal-Any, P.O. Box 142, Orinda, California, 94563

2003 Note by Stacey: Without this as a guide, I was able to put a small bag of food in Emmon's coffin: oats, quinoa, barley, and a "spooky fruit". He especially love spooky fruits, which were the oddest most alien looking fruit he could find. For this little bag it was a lychee nut in the shell.

Figure 22 Emmon Bodfish cutting the grass at Live Oak, Summer Solstice 1986.

A Sample Druid Funeral Service

By Steve Savitzky (CL68:Peck)
AD Carleton '68-'69
Written c. 1998

This was picked off the internet in 2001 and is based upon the common Winter Order of Service that can be found in ARDA. As usual, Steve only speaks for himself, and there is no official RDNA funeral service. For that matter, there is no official RDNA service at all. –Mike

***** ***** ***** *****

"Well," Steve says, "we held a memorial service for Strypes over the weekend. I presided, in my capacity as a Druid. I'm told it came off OK; as for me I've never had to do that before. Pretty scary. I hope it worked. Afterwards we had a wake and jam session."

He raises his glass (now empty of Lamproaig). "To Life -- it's bad sometimes but it's better than the alternative." Throws the cup. <*CRASH*> "See you tomorrow."

As he leaves, he says, "Oh; some of you might be interested in this stuff." Out of his belt pouch he pulls several folded-up sheets of paper, apparently his notes from the memorial service, and leaves them on the bar.

..... tear on dotted line .....

DRUID SERVICE

[Processional: bagpipe medley.]

O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, yet we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, yet we worship thee in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers or sacrifices; yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.
O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations.

[Drawing of circle.]

Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried aloft to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, O our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

The Sacrifice

[Offer sacrifice: an evergreen bough]

Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer - of the South - of the East - and of the West.

The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Catechism of the Waters of Life

Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
THE WATERS OF LIFE
From whence do these Waters flow?
FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER; THE NEVER-CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
And how do we honor this gift that causes life in men?
BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS OF LIFE.
Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.
Of what, then, do we partake?
THE WATERS OF SLEEP.
Give me the Waters of Sleep.

Consecration

O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all groves, descend once again into these waters and hallow them. Give us to know thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

[The waters are distributed to the assembly.]

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

Meditation

Welcome. We are gathered here to remember the life and celebrate the memory of Aaron Becker, also known as Strypes. I'm not here to deliver a set of religious platitudes about what happens to you after you're dead--that's none of my business. About all I'm sure of is that I can't picture Strypes playing a harp--can you? In any case, this service isn't for Strypes' benefit, but for ours.

Reformed Druidism is probably the least organized religion there is: its basic teaching is that what you find in your religious search -- call it awareness, illumination, salvation, whatever -- is your own affair, between you and whatever it is. About the only other thing the Druids teach is that Nature is one of the good places to look when you're searching.

And nature is a particularly good place to look now, because it teaches us about the great cycle of life on Earth, which never ends. When a creature dies, it goes back into the Earth to rejoin the cycle. Little bits of it may turn up anywhere--in a tree, a bird, a deer, or in the little critters that turn malted barley into beer. Parts of it may be turned into stone under the roots of the mountains, perhaps to be quarried up and built into some un-dreamed-of temple in a distant future we can't even imagine.

But we humans have something else besides. We have our minds and our memories. And when we die, little bits of those keep turning up, too, in the memories of those who knew us. So now, whenever we hear someone sing "Tennessee Bird Walk", or we hear a fiddle tune, or go to the Renaissance Faire, a little bit of Strypes will pop up out of our memories and get woven back into our lives. Eventually, who knows? A new song, a dance tune, a story, or some un-dreamed-of creation in a distant future we still can't imagine.

Strypes will live on in our memories for a long time, because he was a memorable person. He touched a lot of lives, made a lot of friends, did a lot of things. He performed, he taught; a lot of us learned from him, even if we never took formal music lessons from him. I know I did. I was somewhat surprised to discover that he was particularly proud of being an Eagle Scout. His scouting friends may well be surprised that he's best known in these parts as a fiddler at the Renaissance Faire.

Anyway, I don't have a lot more to say. I think it would be appropriate at this point to share some of our memories of Strypes. I'll start with one -- a joke Strypes told me that seems particularly apropos:

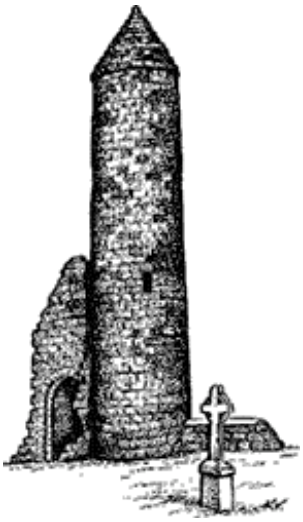
Three people died and went wherever people go when that happens, and Saint Peter met them at the gate. He asked the first "How much money did you make in your life?"
"Oh, about 10 Billion."
"OK, you must be a corporate raider. Down that corridor, second door to the left. Watch the first step. How about you?"
"Oh, about 10 Million."
"OK, the other doctors are down there, third door on the right. Next?"
"Hmm, maybe 10 Thousand."
"Oh, and what instrument did you play?"

[turn it over to the musical group]
[Denise has a song that would work very well at the end.]
[Signal piper for Flowers of the Forest as recessional.]

Benediction

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower her blessings upon us.

PEACE; PEACE; PEACE!



Memorial for Beth Harlow

This was completed by Patrick Haneke,
of the Akita Grove on Feb 21st, 1998
for the funeral of Elizabeth C. Harlow.

As Brother Mortus explained last year, Death is an area where few religious workers dare go without quickly leap-frogging to the subject of the afterlife to try and comfort people. For the Akita Grove, death is the accepted end of an organism, but we believe that it is community continuance that comforts us. We should withhold our conclusions of an afterworld until we conclude this life. We believe that there are mysteries before and after our existence, and take hope that the existence of Gods and supernatural activity indicates a hidden dimension in reality. Recently, one of our members has engaged in the (in-?)activity of death.

Beth had been an active member of the Akita Grove from its inception in Fall 1996 and left in the summer of 1997 to study to be a nurse, with plans of volunteering in SE Asia. She died, Feb 13, 1998 in an accident while working part-time for a pizza company. This speech was ready by her sister, Josephine Harlow at the funeral on Feb 22. 1998 in Washington State.

* *

I will now read a short eulogy by Patrick Haneke, a dear friend of hers, and religious mentor, who was not able to attend this funeral, as he says, "due to insufficient funds and not due to insufficient love." Please listen to his words.

* *

We have gathered around the remains of Elizabeth Harlow.
We realize that something very precious has ceased to animate them.
We now consign them back to the Earth-Mother, to whom she was a beloved child.

This was a body that she was very comfortable with.
This body was wrought and raised by the love of her parent Alex and Samantha.
Elizabeth had little patience with the misogyny and Puritanism around her.
She shared herself in meaningful relationships and made no excuse for her existence.
She took it to many places in the world to see the variety of lifestyle possibilities.
She excelled at the humanities and material sciences
She sought to understand the way the material world functioned around and through her.
Her poems, songs and dance were a delight and insight to those who shared them.
Although she did not receive a diploma, she knew the degrees of the world.
She was a child of nature and a sibling of our respected Order of Dalon Ap Landu.
Yes, for a long time, she had one foot firmly planted in the realm of the spiritual, and now has brought over her second foot for further study in those realms.
She not only knew the many visages of the Divine, but looked deeply into each one.
She believed in the power, sustenance, and recycling of Life.
She died bringing nourishment to others.
We must now consign her body back to the elements from which they came.
The elements with which she interacted with over these few years she was allotted.
On the warp and woof on the loom of Fate,
One knows not what color, nor brightness, nor even the length of your own life-thread.
All you can be certain about, is that you've added to larger piece of cloth.
That without your presence, the picture would be less clear and complete.
It matters little whether you were just in a border pattern or in the eye of the dragon.
The strings that neighboured you, partook of your nature and grew to resemble you in some way.
They were not whole without your gifts.
Few will be able to fully comprehend this greater image into which she was woven, but we appreciate her contribution.

We don't pretend to know for certain where her soul has gone to, where it came from, or if it is still amidst us in some way.
We do not even know if the term "soul" is sufficient for what once animated this body.
All we do know is that we appreciated the time that soul spent with us.
For a while, yes, its apparent absence will be keenly missed.
And as other influences and needs of maintaining our community and relations (that process of Life) will press on us, such that pain will slowly retreat further from our heart.
A friend described this process to me as the way the neighboring trees recover from their wounds when a mighty tree falls over from a windstorm.
The old trees will stretch to fill the canopy while long neglected and overlooked plants will quickly grow around and upon the fallen giant reaching for the sun.
Her memory will resound occasionally other the long years until we also make that same journey, perchance to meet with her again.

She brought us together, but now we must depart.
Look around at all the faces that she once loved.
You shall probably not see them gathered again.
What stories do these people possess of her?
Why were they considered so dear by Beth?
I hope you will get a chance to talk with each other afterwards.
I ask you to realize your hopes and dreams in the time set for your life.
Do not let Death catch you off-guard and unprepared.
Do not let Life slip you by without notice of its passage and opportunities
While Beth's life has shed light on many parts of our own soul, there is still much territory left to be explored and appreciated.
May you achieve as much (and more) as Beth did in her short time with us.
Thank you for coming.
Bless you all, where ever you go.

Memorial for Robert Larson

By Stephen Warren McCauley Abbott, 2004
AD Hazelnut MotherGrove (in abeyance)
Transmitted with notes by Tegwedd to ARDA 2

Ritual Structure

I set up the ritual in phases, trying to give it some form of structure.

Phase 1: I performed a ritual bath to cleanse myself mentally, psychically, and physically. The bath was also helping me become more alert and awake. Now I was ready to perform the rite.

Phase 2: I set aside a ritual space in one of the vacant rooms. In this room, I already had some of my wooden furniture. I placed my two spears, my two staves, and and my altar in the room. I set up my Tibetan shaman's drum, my three sickles, and a bronze candlestick with a single black candle. The candle, of course, was new. I placed the Druid books from Michael Scharding on one of the wooden shelves on the right side of the room. I then placed my Stonehenge pieces on either side of the Druid books. On the Altar, I placed my magickal teddy bear, which I identified to a degree with Terlach as a big teddy bear. For those who did not know him, he was a very large and tall man with long dark hair. [He was also a very gentle sweet man. -te]

I placed my divination board on the floor in front of my altar. On the altar I placed my wizard's head, which bore an uncanny resemblance to Robert. Tegwedd called him Terlach, but I always just called him Robert. [I called him Terlach because that was his Druid name -te] I wore my ritual robe which Tegwedd had made for me years earlier. This robe has the symbol [if you can, Mike, insert the Druid sigil here. I have no way of doing so here. -te] the shield and two spears on the front and back. I also wore my Druid ribbons. I placed my two tap lights [?] on either side of my divination board.

Phase 3: The Ritual: The ritual itself was quite simple. I started it out by ritually lighting the black candle. In this ritual, the black candle represented death and the dark realm. Next, I called upon the four quarter and the four elements, plus Spirit in the Sacred Center. Then I called upon the Earth Mother and Dalon ap Landu to join the rite. Afterwards, I sang the "Earth Mother" song. Badly, I'm afraid, since I was a little rusty. As we all know, our gods and goddesses have a sense of humor. Next I consecrated and shared the Waters of Life. I transformed the Waters of Sleep into the Waters of Life [because of certain metabolic peculiarities, Stephen cannot have alcohol. -te] Because of the move, I did not have access to any true Waters of Life. I used the wooden chalice which had been used in my rituals for the Hazelnut Mother Grove.

Next I got rather personal and simply talked to Robert as if he were in the room with me. I related to him my memories of him and the many rituals that he and I had participated in together. I related to him about going to his apartment to play war games. Robert had been an avid war game player. I told him that I still had all the games he had given me such as *Winter War Soldiers,* and *Franco Prussian War* . All of these games had been published by SPI (Simulations Publications Inc.).

I related to him the time when he had given Gaelic classes to members of the Grove. I told him I still possessed the Gaelic handouts he had given to us after every class. I had put those handouts together and put them into a Druid notebook. I related to him all the funny things that had happened when he and I were together. I told him I would miss him and how bad I had felt when I lost contact with him after moving to Sacramento now some 10 years ago. [has it really been 10 years? -te]

Phase 4: I sang the "Lady's Bransle" and "The Lughnasadh Song", after which I had a period of silence. I commented afterwards about his passing on Lughnasadh and that he would return from the Otherworld with many stories and tales about his adventures there.

Phase 5: I called on the Earth Mother and Dalon ap Landu to bless his path to the Otherworld and to guide and protect him while he resided there. Then there was another moment of silence. I performed a divination with cards from the following

1. was the "Celtic Tarot", which oddly enough is an Italian deck.
2. "Tarot of the Druids"
3. "The Faery Wicca Tarot"

The first card was from the Druid Tarot. It was the King of Swords. (upright) I felt Robert's presence strongly in this card. Like Robert, the King of Swords depicts a king of great intellect and in this deck he is none other than King Arthur in middle age. The card depicts a man of great intellect and wisdom, which fits Robert to a T. This card gave to the reading the element of Air and the quarter of the east. A card of pure intellect and wisdom.

The next card came from the Faery Wicca deck. The card was the four of Fire. The card's title was Lord of Completion. This seems appropriate as well. It is also known as the Lord of Perfected Work. This seemed to fit. Robert always tried to do his best and make things look good. This card brings to the reading the element of Fire and the quarter of the south.

The next card came from the Italian "Celtic" deck. The 6 of Cups. This card's title is the "Lady of Pleasure". Robert loved to have a good time. He seemed to love being alive. This card gave the reading the element of Water and the quarter of the west.

The last card was from the Italian Druid deck. The 9 of Pentacles. The card's title is the "Lady of Material Gain". Robert was concerned about money and all things earthy when I knew him. He wasn't rich, but I believed he lived comfortably. That card gave the reading the element of earth and the quarter of the north. That completed the Tarot layout. All the four elements were represented.

The next card would be the Ogham card from "The Celtic Oracle." This card was the Spindle OIR. This is one of the vowel sounds after the basic 20. This Ogham card relates to the concepts of lighting and beauty. I read the passage assigned to this card.

I ended this phase by saying my final goodbyes to my friend and fellow Druid Robert. I thanked the Earth Mother and Dalon ap Landu for attending the rite. I then drew the Druid sigil three times and spoke the words "Peace, Peace" and "Peace." I then returned the waters to the Mother by pouring them into the fish pond in the back yard. This concluded the Druid sendoff of AD Robert Larson. May he stay in our memories forever. May his passing not be in vain and may the Earth guide and protect his spirit till he returns to this world again.

Baby Blessing

By Patrick Haneke, Akita Grove, Japan
March 1, 2003

Use this in the normal service's invocation.

O Lord, forgive us these three errors of parenthood that are due to human limitations.
Thy child has no end of needs, yet we have only these resources and time.
Thy child's path is uncertain, yet we seek to guide them.
Thy child's choices will be their own, yet we seek to assist them.
O Lord, forgive us these errors of parenthood that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, you have blessed us with this child, yet we further ask your peace and comfort in the years to come. Nurture us as we nurture this babe.

Continue as usual, then Insert this next bit into an RDNA service after the waters are consecrated. If the sacrifice is accepted, then use Waters of Life, if not, use Waters of Sleep for the blessing. With previously blessed waters:

AD: I call upon the parents or guardians of this child to step forward to make their pledges of support.
Father: I am your father, dear child. Your protector, teacher and advisor.
Mother: I am your mother, dear child. Your protector, teacher and advisor too.
Father: You will reside at our home and that of our relatives until you reach maturity, learning from both sides of your parents relatives.
Mother: Aye, and we will teach of the ways of the Gods, not only our own, but of those of other faiths you will likely encounter.
Father: We seek to assist, but not too interfere, in your life's journeys.
Mother: You are dearly beloved by us and many you do not know yet.
Father: You will grow strong and brave.
Mother: You will grow wise and caring.
Father: You will live close to the Earth
Mother: You will understand the ways of water.
Father: And when the wind speaks, you will understand.
Mother: You are blessed indeed, as we are by your choice to join us.
Father: We name you ( ), which means ( ). This is the name people will call you as an individual. Your last name will be ( ) which means ( ).
Mother: But your true name will only be known by you when you hear it called by Fate.
Father: Grow in moderation of all virtues.
Mother: Tarry not long in vices.
Father: There is much more we wish to say, but these are our first promises to you.
Mother: And we wish to spend many years with you adding to them.
AD: Let all bear the baby, as we will all be enmeshed in his future.

Baby's blanket is held taunt by all participating relatives. Baby is asperged with the Waters by the AD who walks around, sprinkling from all four directions, also dousing the parents and participants for good measure too.

AD: By the power of Dalon Ap Landu, all the Gods of this Land, and those who will direct this child's course, I bless this child. May it live a full, long life blessed with success, love, and accomplishment.
AD: And blessed be all of you by the love that you bear for this babe and for each other. Band together to be a stout palisade in times of defense, a horn of plenty in his time of need, stern teacher in his time of learning, and grateful recipient in his time of production.

The baby is returned to the parent and waters are shared as usualamong the participants.

Fertility Cycle of the Druid Year

By Nozomi Kibou
Archdruidess of Akita Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 2002

I apologize for the poor quality of this essay, but I hope you like it. You know, my father's grove is a fertility shrine (people, plants, animals too) so it is important subject for me. I have thought on Paganism and big four holidays and I think they are fertility holidays. Here are the reasons.

Beltane: It is warm. Young people date and have sex (Pat says "It's a festival of muddy knees and grass-stained dresses.") Planting season. Lughnasadh: We know if we have a baby. People marry. Family starts. Samhain: Baby gets big. Spirits move in baby. Baby kicks. Hard to work in fields, but okay, that work is done, we can relax, start new plans of life. Oimelc: Baby is born. Sheep are born. Not much food, which is hard for mothers. Use sheep milk for babies? By equinox, can work in fields again. Grow baby plants! Beltane: Ready again for more babies? Maybe wait one more year, no?

Sister Tegwedd says we don't need more babies now, "Zero Growth Population," so instead we are mind-creative. Yes, but there is no cycle for that. Most Japanese babies are also born in spring around Feb 1st. April's when school and government and business start a new year in Japan. Very convenient. Birth time of the year, April is. Old Europe started the New Year around Easter, but then changed to Roman Julian calendar. But now most people are not farmers in Wales or Ireland now, so the baby-schedule doesn't work well. Probably more babies in late summer with constant year-round food, long winters, and Fall school starts.

In modern Ireland there are good luck rules for the wedding, which was often before baby-making. A good wedding will help fertility. See http://www.ireland-information.com/irishweddingtraditions.htm for many fertility rites of "The Traditional Irish Wedding" by Brian Haggerty.

Old Ireland has no records of "before-birth" advice for women. There were warnings in 11th century that women should have purity of heart and mind and not "heat the womb" during sex; but church didn't like recreational sex back then. Saints took over from Druids in blessing women with fertility, in many unusual ways, including potions. Some babies were born from swallowing live bugs, worms or fish, unusual water plants, sex with giant otters or bird-monsters or night-dreams. There was mystery in how it happened. The best modern advice for all (including men) is to exercise and eat only health food for six months before starting baby/getting married. No drugs, tobacco, alcohol, fatty foods, chocolates, coffee,

allergenic foods, meat, gambling and horse racing, avoid rabbits, and corpses. Choose foods with special traits to direct babies personality. In Japan, we were special belly-belt to keep belly warm. Stay that way until milking is done. Of course this is not easy.

Once with baby, a blessing from priest and soon grandparents is good. Some make a special bow/knot for the house. When birth comes, untie it and open all windows, doors, cabinets, knots in house and clothes. The baby comes quicker this way. Sometimes a special bird or animal will visit the house during pregnancy, give it honor, and a name to baby. Going to a forge and pushing the bellows would help the birthing later and make a strong baby. But the most important thing is of course strong love from both parents, no fighting and excitement in the house, peace and tranquility. With this, baby will grow well. If the baby did not go well, abortion by potion and self-abuse was also known. There is evidence of infanticide, too. Unfortunately, modern Ireland has worst rate for "caesarian" births (near 25% for first time,) a weak midwife system, and no birth-centers as yet. Yet, this is because of the modern medical monopoly. In the past midwifes were common. This describes a 19th century Co. Mayo birth:

> "After she went into labour, the woman was transferred from her usual bed, which was in the kitchen by the fire, to the floor, which was covered with straw. She put on her husband's jacket, an outsize flannel garment with sleeves, made of homespun wool, or bainin. As the great event drew near, the husband stood at his wife's back, and placed his hands on her shoulders while she was in a kneeling position on the floor. With words of faith, hope, and encouragement, he supported her morally and physically in her trial, while the midwife got on with the great task of bringing a new human life into the world."

Celtic sources have much more on the raising of children after birth than before birth. The most important fear was ban-sid (faery women) stealing the children and leaving a "changeling," an old faery who never got bigger and shrank. Sometimes the mother would be took and go to fairy hill to raise fairy-babies. This may have been due to emotional stress and mother running away or hurting the child (like that Texas case) in tight society with small support for mother's need. In famous case of Ard Macha, treating pregnant wife rude like the animal (making her race the horses) caused a weak-body curse on all men of North Ireland for many generations. The point is, let pregnant women do what they want!

Figure 23 The Akita Grove, c. 1998.

Section Eight:

Solitary Services & Miscellaneous Rites

2004 Introduction

It is with some hesitation that I include several of the services and activities here in ARDA 2. Perhaps it is my innate distrust of magical activities, as being too addictive to keeping up a sense of distrust of liturgy in our lives.

All of these activities can be practiced by a Druid of any Order, or by complete outsiders to Reformed Druidism, if there are any. They may enrich the breadth of possibilities for Druids wishing to diversify their portfolio, especially when unwillingly alone, or not feeling in the mood for group activities.

Indeed many Druids do not feel the need to hold services with groves and prefer to study and celebrate nature on their own, for them this section has been accumulated to give them activities to pursue outside the traditional framework of the liturgies.

They have been culled from the Druid Missal-Any and various other sources, by Druids of varying degrees of ritual skill, and a few are a bit tongue-in-cheek from their outward appearance. I make no guarantees that they will actually work or that other Druids will recognize them, but here they are.

Of course, there is not requirement that Druids should pursue these, or limit themselves only to these activities. You're more than welcome to come up with more on your own if you think it is necessary.

Figure 24 The Japanese Garden, c. 2000.

Ordination of Zero Order Druids

(Order of the Acorn)
By Scharding, 2002

For people who wish to become Reformed Druids, yet due to age, distance, handicap or some other hardship, are unable to meet with a grove. The Book of Maccabees says, "Don't make a long introduction to a short story", so let's keep it simple, but feel free to elaborate if you wish.

The Acorn ordination should ideally be done outdoors between Beltane and Samhain. Perhaps you'd wish to reaffirm this status annually to yourself ("Next year in Carleton!" or some sort of deadline)? It is basically, the affirmation of the two basic tenets, bringing you into the organizational body of the Druids. In a way this is fulfilling half of the 1st Order requirements (Druid Chronicles, the Book of Customs, Chapter 1), Someday, if fate arranges it, you will meet a Druid who can take you into other Orders, if you wish.

Praise:

Insert whatever warm ups you think necessary. Perhaps a song.

Invocation:

O Dalon Ap Landu and Earth-Mother,
I know not the ways of the Druids, yet I wish to become one.
I cannot join their activities, yet I wish to act.
I know not when I'll enter Orders, but I wish to start now.
Please bless my search, and fill me with wisdom and Awareness.

Offering of some seeds, preferably acorns:

I wish to be a Reformed Druid, I believe that:
The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.
It is an unclear path that I begin today, but I will learn by doing. I offer you my activities in the time to come, as a sacrifice, whether it be for a few days or many years.
During this upcoming year, I intend to do the following…..

Please show me your favor, by bringing the path of the proper Druid across mine, in the proper way, at the proper time, at the proper place. If I am to follow this course by myself, so be it with great wisdom and small discoveries from your lessons around me.

Meditation:

Think on the signs that may appear during this ceremony.

Conclusion:

Be there with me through these trying times. Thank you.

Order of Common Worship for a Protogrove.

By Isaac Bonewits, 1976

This SDNA service is designed for a Protogrove, i.e., one without a true Arch Druid (a member of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu). It is designed for 4 Speakers. If there are fewer, they may reassign the parts. P=People. Service starts with all some distance away from the altar, which is usually a rock at the foot of a tree, or any other place of natural beauty.

Invocation

SP 1: O lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations; Thou art everywhere,
P: But we worship Thee here;
SP 2: Thou are without form,
P: but we worship Thee in these forms;
SP 3: Thou has no need of prayers and sacrifices.
P: Yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.
SP 4: O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations.
P: O, Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, all divide to form a circle around it.

Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by any.

Offertory

SP 1: From the Earth-Mother comes the gift of Life, and it brings us together here. In thanks we bring these gifts, wrought of Her bounty and our effort. O Mighty Eagle, bear these gifts of love aloft as bread for the Gods, that they may bless our works.

(People bring any gifts they may have for the Gods to the altar. There follows a brief silence, in which each person asks for the fulfillment of material or external needs.)

SP2: From Be'al comes the gift of awareness, and it brings us together here. In wonder we bring this praise, wrought of His light and of our effort. O Flowing Winds, carry our songs of love on high as wine to the Gods, that they may guide our sight.

Figure 25 Typical Oimelc Procession, Lower Arboretum, c. 1998.

(People offer songs, poetry, etc, if they have them, individually or as a group. There follows a brief silence, in which each person asks for the fulfillment of spiritual or internal needs.)

Sharing

***SP 3**: Places filled chalice of Waters (Summer-alcoholic, Winter-plain water) on the altar and speaks:*

SP 3: O Earth-Mother, bountiful and ever flowing forth, we ask your blessings on these Waters. In them, help us to find strength and enlightenment, like a circle of trees on the top of a hill. With them, make us one with each other, and with all thy children, like a ring of trees in the heart of the forest. Through them, bring us one consecrated in Dalon Ap Landu, and make of us a Grove in the midst of the world. O Be'al, who dwellest in every heart, lead us on the path to awareness.

***SP 3:** retrieves the Chalice and sips from it, passing it to the one on hir (Summer-left, Winter-right). Each person sips and passes it on. When it returns to SP 3, a small amount should be left. SP 3 pours the remains onto the altar, saying:*

SP 3: To thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee.

Meditation

Benediction

SP 4: Let us go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that the Gods have heard us, that Be'al will answer our prayers and that we go forth with the blessings of the Earth-Mother.

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 26 Isaac Bonewits, c. 1976. Liturgist Extraordinare

Another Protogrove Service

This service is designed for a Protogrove, i.e., one without a true Archdruid (ordained in the Order of Dalon Ap Landu).
By Weinberger, 2002

The service starts some distance from the altar.
D: Druid E: Everybody

Invocation

O Earth Mother!
We praise Thee that seed springeth,
That flower openeth, that grass waveth.

We praise Thee for winds that whisper
through the graceful elm,
through the shapely maple,
through the lively pine,
through the shining birch,
through the mighty oak.

We praise Thee for all things,
O Earth Mother,
Who givest Life.

D: O Beal, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations:
Thou art everywhere,
E: Yet we worship Thee here.
D: Thou art without form,
E: Yet we worship Thee in these forms.
D: Thou has no need of our prayers and sacrifices,
E: Yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.
D: O Be'al, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations.
All: O Mother, calm our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

Procession to the Grove.

Upon arrival near the altar the Druid/ess uses a stave to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground around the altar. After the Druid/ess steps around to the front of the altar, the members divide to form a semi-circle around the front of it.

Praise

D: Does anyone have any praise or requests of the Gods?

At this time people may give thanks, make requests, and/or bring any gifts. They may have for the Deities of their choice to the altar. There follows a silent time in which each person asks for the fulfillment of their material/external or spiritual needs.

Offertory

The Druid/ess holds up the offering to the sky, while saying:

D: From the Earth Mother comes the gift of life. In thanks, I offer up this gift, wrought of Her bounty and of my effort and dedication. Oh, Mighty Eagle, bear this gift of love aloft as bread for the Gods, that they might bless my works.

D: From Beal comes the gift of awareness. In wonder I bring this praise, wrought of His light and of my effort and dedication. Oh flowing Winds, carry my songs of love on high as wine for the Gods, that they may guide my sight.

Sharing

Druid/ess takes up the chalice filled with plain spring water.

D: O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, bless these waters that are held in Thy Name. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power.

D: O Earth Mother, bountiful and ever flowing forth, in these waters help us to find strength and light. O Be'al, who dwells in every heart, lead us unto the path of awareness.

The last person should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Presiding Druid/ess with the last exchange of blessings. Then the Presiding Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar and down the offering shaft, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion of our bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

Offering

At this point, at the Orinda Grove site, the Druid/ess pours out the offering to the trees.

Meditation

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose for that purpose. After this comes a few brief words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to three minutes-though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually the Druid/ess signals the end of the Service with:

Benediction

D: Let us go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that Be'al will answer our prayers, that our offering has found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, and that we go forth with Her blessing.

The Presiding Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

The Sigil is taken up by the Druid/ess.

An offering is made to the Big Oak.

END OF THE ORDER OF COMMON PROTOGROVE WORSHIP
FOR SAMRADH AND FOGHAMHAR

The Quick Order Liturgy

By Pat Haneke, June 2001
A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 2001

Patrick Haneke has produced the ultimate quick and easy ritual for those tired of schlepping baskets of materials, scripts, and such to the site. This can be performed anywhere, even in the middle of Wall Street without drawing too much attention. Pat calls it the "Quick Order", (but other members of the Grove, call it "Lugh's Loogey Liturgy," "Mannanan's Mucus Mass," "Sirona's Spit Service," etc.) and it is best done solitarily (as you 'll see).

1. Scratch a sigil at your feet.
2. Whistle or hum something.
2.5 Take a lighter, burn a leaf or light a cigarette.
3. Ask, "How was that?" Look around you for signs.
4. Say, "Not bad, huh?"
5. Ask, "What is precious to us?"
6. Answer, "Waters."
7. Ask, "Where is the waters?"
8. Answer, "Right here." Pour something (or spit) into your hand.
9. Raise your hand.
10. Say, "Bless these and all waters that give us life."
11. Drink the waters.
12. Say, "Here's the extra." Return the extra to the ground.
13. Think of something clever, or ordain people.
14. Say, "Good bye"
15. Rub away the sigil.

(Estimated time for completion: 2 minutes 12 seconds)

Figure 27 Twin Towers of the Lower Arb, 2004.

Daily Druid Devotional

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove, August 2002
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh,2002

I do this (almost) every day, and it is my incremental regimen, beginning with a cup of steaming coffee. No too much at any time, but like a snowball rolling down the hill (or Milo of Crotona carrying a calf up the stairs everyday) it strengthens your wits and brings you into a greater communion with the world of Nature and profusion of ideas around you. Most of it is stuff we do everyday, but taken one step further in Awareness. It becomes rather difficult to continue finding new examples after a hundred days, and it thus would be an excellent journal activity during the 180 days in the Time of Sleep between Samhain and Beltane. It's as easy as 1, 2, 3. Every day, when possible:

The Triples:

- Take one idea of whose veracity you're sure of, and think of three counter arguments against it or three people who would object to it.
- Take one idea you think is wrong, and think of three supportive arguments or people who would support it.
- Now, take one idea that you're unsure of and bring it up in conversation with three people.

The Doubles:

- Notice one parallel or lesson between Nature and human society; such as nesting and mortgages.
- Resist one urge and give into another urge every day; until you are master of them.
- Notice an opposite in the world; and see if you can find a "gray" example.

The Singles:

- Touch a new and different organism every day. If you don't know the real name, give it a temporary name.
- Read one page that you don't have to, on a topic you don't know much about.
- Greet or salute one person you've never acknowledged before.

The Zeroes:

- Listen to someone without a preconception of them.
- Do nothing for a moment in the midst of your busiest time.
- Purposely skip one of the previous activities.

Some Optional Activities for Voluntary Simplicity

By Alex Strongbow
A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2002

Looking back on earlier Missal-Anies, it seems that Samhain and Yule activities are well covered. Besides if you can't think of things to do on those two holidays, then you probably couldn't find your butt with both hands. So, instead, I'd like to write for a few issues about volunteering and simplicity, a different type of activity, one that involves you with others.

Winter is one of the harshest time in the year, when the Earth-Mother, withdraws much of her nourishment from the northern temperate areas. Bird, animals and people are hard put to survive outdoors in our towns and cities. We've all seen those Thanksgiving soup-kitchens and Christmas toy charities, but these are just the apexes of the daily, continual efforts to assist our fellow citizens who haven't been able to meet all their needs.

The greatest obstacle to the joys of volunteering is finding some time to do it in. Who wouldn't gladly lend their energy and expertise to serving our community, pro bono, if we could just solve those little technicalities-making a living, for example, or getting enough sleep? You've heard about the 5% rule, spending about 30 minutes a day or three hours a week on something meaningful? To assist a cause, you have to build up reserves of money, time, and inspiration.

One way, yea, one way among many, to acquiring more discretionary time is the path of voluntary simplicity. That has been defined as "living purposefully, with a minimum of needless distraction." Cut out the junk. Most people find that when they carefully coordinate their use of money and time with their deepest held values, the less important things fade away. This opens up more time and inner space for more discretionary activities, including volunteer services.

How to direct our money and time is a question that requires careful reflection and planning. You don't just throw all you possessions in a trash can and run out to save the world (although that might work). Some of the best ideas on this subject came from Steven Covey's classic The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. This is more than a book for just econometricians, it could also be called The Seven Habits of an Aware Life." It is chock full of good tips.

We all need "time off," a sabbatical to marshal our forces. Some tips for building space for solitude is in Shelter for the Spirit: Creating Your Own Haven in a Hectic World by Harper Perennial, 1997. A quick Druidic paraphrasing of this will now follow:

1. Say No. Save your time and stamina for what truly speaks to your heart. Don't chase every rabbit that you see.

2. Tithe Your Time. Tithing was a time-honored tradition of giving money to charities in a planned, orderly way. Time can also be tithed, giving to something that really speaks and tugs at your heart. You say "no" without guilt to the rest, and things that are beyond achievement.

3. Put Things with Feelings First. Put more importance to the condition of sentient beings than the quality of your stereo sound. This is not to deny the effect that a healthier environment has on living creatures. One hour helping the environment, might be helping hundreds of critters and people in small ways.

4. Allow More Time. We often waste time by cutting things close, by rushing about and forgetting and making mistakes. If you always budget in an extra 5-10% of time for a task, then you will usually have time to finish things in a careful controlled manner. No more half-ass mules, my mom would say. If all things go well, then you can read or chat or just breathe. What a gift! You might also be able to notice things that need fixing.

5. Prioritize with the ABC method. Label your daily task sheet with A for "priority-must be done today," B for "important--needs to be done soon;" and C for "necessary-should be done sometime." That way, even if only the A list gets done that day, at least everything that really needs to be done will be done. As time passes, the Bs and Cs will rise in importance or drop off the list.

6. Stay Well. There is nothing more time-consuming that being sick. You're little use to anyone, stuck in bed. Time spent preserving health-nutrition, exercise, spiritual practice, sleep-is a no-risk, high-return investment. Think twice before running to catch the bus in the rain, on what a slip and sprained ankle would do to your weekly schedule.

7. Let the machine get it. There is no requirement to drop everything and run to the phone if it rings. Let your answering machine and e-mail be your secretary, and check in every few hours, and you can return your calls at your convenience.

8. Turn off the TV. It takes up time. Choose consciously how much time you wish to spend with your electronic friends (TV, VCR, computer) and don't use them when you're just feeling bored.

9. Put off Procrastination. Some goldbricks spend twice the effort to avoid work. Do the things on your list or drop them. Your list will shrink quickly.

10. Schedule in Fun. Recreation is nourishment for the soul. It is a necessity not an option. Keep it high on the list, and you'll realize what motivates you keep plugging away through a dull job.

By the way, volunteering can be a fun way to spend time with the family, and build up their civic responsibility. For more on "voluntary simplicity," go to Northwest Earth Institute's site (www.nwei.org) or look for more on a web search.

Prayer and the Workplace: "It's Not Just for Ashcroft Anymore"™

By an Anonymous Druid in Antarctica, 2001
A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2001

Sure! Why if Ashcroft can hold a bible-study and prayer meetings in his governmental office in the Department of Justice before starting work, why not me!

I was also inspired by my research on Islam where people pray at least five times a day, and a religious man blesses Allah 100 times a day. The Hassidic Druids of North America in the 70s advocated that their members be able to write a blessing for any occasion. I'm not to be outdone on anything, so I devised an ambitious schedule to fill the day with prayer. Before coming here, I also had to navigate the daily rat-race. Turning into a sacred activity will require a new outlook. The possibilities of hexes, prayers, blessings, spell casting are endless, so charge up your non-descript wand (i.e. PowerPoint collapsible pointer rod or a pencil) at night, you'll need it.

Now, rather than make a really long article, I defer to the Reformed Druidic tradition of challenging you to come up with your own appropriate words. As they say, "Prayers need not be long, when the heart is sincere." Just a few words or a sentence will suffice, and you'll soon become really insightful and poetic with practice (i.e. your Bardic skills). Let each time, be as the first. Perhaps if you don't feel like praising at those times, you should just say, "Not now, sorry." You don't have to selfishly wish for personal gain in these situation, I find it's rather nice just to acknowledge the joy of participating in life's abundant activities.

The first week sucked. They may be whispered, shouted, signed or silently thought; "The Gods know our hearts, even when we don't know the words." We in the RDNA are after awareness right? Besides you've heard that people who are married, those who pray, and vegetarians tend to live longer; why? Because they must carefully think about what they're doing, take a concern in those around them, and abstain from most unhealthy activities.

Here are some recommended situations to try some praying, most are obvious, and you can think of more:

Waking up
Cooking and Partaking of Food (all meals)
Partaking of Waters (all times)
Dressing (wards of protection, attracting love and respect)
On seeing the sun, moon or sky
On leaving the house: (invoke protection)
On first touching the ground
On first sight of a living creature
On meeting a friend
On exercise/sports
Commuting (all times)
Restraining Road Rage
On hearing a wise thing
On hearing good news
On avoiding disaster
On entering and leaving your workplace (very Japanese)

Other Special Situations
Office relations
Administrative problems
Restructuring
Hostile Merger
Office Dating
Random curses:

Work Situations
Photocopier (apology for paper wastage)
Computer Wards (no crashes)
Impromptu blessing for good health (sneezing)
Word Processing (make me glib)
Handing in reports (be impressed)
Undertaking new projects
Modifying office moods
Completing assignments
Office betting pool
Gossip (protect me, get him)
Recycling (return, to come again)
Meetings (anti-boredom/pressure, speakership)
Mid-day yoga (energy-raiser)
Late afternoon fatigue (focus)
Returning home
Dealing with children and spouse
Going to Sleep

Office Magic Equipment
Computer for divining weather and unknown knowledge.
Paper-weight for storing energy.
Staple for binding power "So staple it be."
PowerPoint pointer rod.

Figure 28 The Great Boulder of Lower Arb, 2004.

Sigil Construction 101

By Mike, Order of Lugh
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 2002

For 40 years, the RDNA, ADF, and Keltria have been flashing those Druid Sigils with a circle and two parallel lines. We don't know where it came from, except possibly from Fisher's feverish mind (see http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/sigil.html for more on sigils), but people have been asking me to sell them one, and I get this wonderful idea. Why don't we just make them? We make up everything else in this group, so why not? Revolt against pre-fab, mass-made religious articles!

Being inspired by Lugh, and being a cubicle-bound secretary, I open the drawer to actualize my words. All the materials I need are in there. First take a book ring (see illustration to right) which will form the ring base of the sigil, and they come in many sizes. A side benefit is that you can clip your final sigil on to a button hold, hand it from one of your pierced body-parts, use it to remove ticks and chiggers, or to pick-up and turn-over bacon (large model recommended).

Now to lay the bars onto the circle, balanced on either side of the joint-hinge and the snap-close. These bars can come from snipped coat hangers, paper clips, wire stocks at a bead and jewelry store, or hardware store by the foot. To avoid a sigil that is heavy on the front side, and looks funny when it inevitably flips over, you may wish to in-set the bars. If you have access to a metal shop with a fine-quality metal file (or a simple nail file and lots of patience) you can gouge the four grooves into the book ring. I like to divide the circle into three sections of equal horizontal width, but perhaps you like each section to contain equal amounts of area (remember your geometry classes?), follow your muse here. The bars or rods can then be either welded, set with epoxy, or tied on with clear fishing line (if you're skillful). Don't have the bars extend past the circle too far, or they'll catch on things and poke you (round and polishing the edges is advisable) Goldish bars on a silvery ring make a nice contrast. A weight of about one ounce (four ounces is the same as a quarter-pounder patty) will make it hang well, any lighter and it will flop about. I caution against soldering, since the lead prevents you from dipping your sigil into the Waters (if you're into that custom).

The final step is getting the string. You can use yarn (if you're daring), leather, waxed cotton cord (found at bead and craft stores in various colors, I like black), ribbon, parachute cord, fishing line, or twine. Just remember if you catch your necklace on something, you'll get garroted! For the knot to close the string, I like to tie a double-fisherman's knot, which has the added advantage of allowing you to adjust the length while you're wearing it, by pulling the knots closer or father apart.

Attaching the pendant. The following is one way, yea, one way among many. I detest running the cord simply through the book ring, as it never lies flat, the knot closing the string always works its way around to the pendant, and the book ring might open (unless you solder it shut) and you lose the pendant (life is about giving up possessions too, I suppose). I like to hide the joint of the book ring by binding a "prussic knot" over the hinge, between the two bars on the top of the sigil. That way the knot closing the loop of the necklace will lie at the nape of your neck, and can be lengthened and shortened easily.

Cost of the materials, with borrowed tools and free labor, about $2 each. You're welcome to mass-produce them with this design and process. They're not copyrighted. Enjoy.

Ritual Vestments for Druid Services

By Isaac Bonewits, 1978

One of the things that makes a ceremony dramatically effective is the sort of clothing being worn by the participants. Among the Reformed Druids a white robe for Second and Third Order members has been customary, with the priestesses and priests wearing their red or white ribbons-of-office. The following suggestions have recently been made about vestment customs and local Groves are free to use, change or ignore them as they see fit:

The system used by the Masonic-Rosicrucian Druids in the British Isles could be modified thusly: First Order Druids would wear green robes; Second Order Druids would wear green-and-white robes; Third Order Druids would wear white robes; Bards would wear blue tabards over their regular robes; Guards would wear dark red or brown tabards, etc.

AND/OR everyone not wearing robes could wear Paleopagan styles of clothing, usually of the Celtic or Germanic sort. This would ease some of the trans-temporal clashes so common at Druid rites and would add greatly to the ritual gestalt.

AND/OR special seasonal tabards could be worn by the Archdruid (and other officers?) presiding over ceremonies. Simple rectangles (about 18"x36") of cotton or linen could be carefully embroidered, then sewn together at two corners. These would be worn over the head and belted. Each tabard would have a large tree on the front piece and a large Druid Sigil (II) on the back piece, both in the appropriate seasonal foliage. One set of possibilities runs thusly:

From Samhain to Midwinter: Rowan tree with bare branches, mistletoe and light snow.

From Midwinter to Oimelc: Holly tree with berries/mistletoe and heavy snow.

From Oimelc to Spring: Fir tree with new needles and light snow.

From Spring to Beltane: Fruit tree in bloom, with budding branches.

From Beltane to Midsummer: Oak tree in full green.

From Midsummer to Lughnasadh: Sequoia tree in full green.

From Lughnasadh to Fall: Fruit tree with fruit, some leaves starting to turn.

From Fall to Samhain: Sugar maple tree turning gold and scarlet, dropping.

A Druid Staff

By Albion

Yule 1988, A A Druid Missal-Any

Druids have always been connected with trees, through practicing their rites in groves of trees, to at least one of their Gods (Esus) having to do with trees. Let me share some tree magic with the readers of "A Druid Missal-Any" – a look at the making and using of a magical staff. We don't know how the historical Druids made their staves, but here is one modern method for making your own Druid staff.

I would like to say that this article will be influenced by my own beliefs (of course) and by some personal correspondence that I did several years ago with a Welsh craftsman, Bel Bucca, as well as an article by Edward J. Fian in a Canadian newsletter called "Standing Stone."

The southeastern part of the United States where I grew up is heavily forested and in spring and summer, is very green. When I was about 19 or 20 years old, I first read about the "Green Man" or Lord of the Forest. I prefer to think of him as a counterpart to Cernunnos, whose time is fall and winter. The "Green Man" rules spring and summer, or so, in my personal mythology, it is.

There are two personal "rules" that I try to observe when taking a piece of wood from the forest. The first is to ask the collective Spirit of the Forest (as I see it, the "Green Man") for permission and for harmony of spirit (in culling, or cutting of this wood). The second is to slow way down, as trees seem to live at a much slower pace than we humans do. Approach the tree slowly. Quiet the mental chatter of your mind and gently let your aura and the tree's aura merge. Then "talk" to the tree's spirit. (Some call tree spirits "Dryads," a Greek word). As you feel your spirit and the tree's spirit align themselves, gently reach out , touch the tree, and feel it respond. Ask the tree if it wishes to be used for a magical staff, to become a partner with you in your magical workings. Listen for the answer. It will be either a very definite "yes" or a very definite "no," nothing in between. Again the thing to do is to go into a meditative state, quite the mind down and listen. Trees talk "differently" than humans do, and hence, one must listen "differently." If the tree in question says "no," simply move on to another area and try again. Never try to force a tree to cooperate that doesn't wish to be used. There can be spiritual enemies as well as spiritual allies.

In the old days when culling "live wood" (or wood where the tree's spirit still resides within), blood was spilled as a gift or offering to the tree. However, a piece of red cloth given as an offering (from your spirit to the spirit of the tree) is an effective modern version of this ancient rite. (Emmon notes "We at Orinda Grove Site use blood meal, a fertilizer which can be purchased at any nursery.")

I have also heard some long detailed instructions on where or how to get trees, but some simple instructions will suffice I think. If a tree is cut during the waning of the moon, it "feels" the actual cutting less. If the cutting is done when the tree is not being touched by the sun's direct rays, say at dawn or dusk, it also will be more effective magically. Also, always say "thank you," as you would to a human who helped you.

The spot from where you take your wood may also be important to you. Remember, trees take in their reality and history (and even "outlook") from the place. They are born and have a life and die in a single place. Their view is from that single vantage point. Some feel that trees from a

mountainside or a high place are also more magically potent for that very reason.

But also think of what our friends the trees have to offer us who live in what has become a terribly mobile society – stability, knowing the reality of one place, being rooted, and being grounded. These are tremendously important elements of living. As you work with tree spirits, they show a sort of love.

As the Dryads give their gifts to you, you give them an ability that they never had – the ability of movement, of being mobile and of having many views of the world instead of just one – and here lies the true magical partnership and real wizardry.

Some of the more magically potent woods are oak, ash or yew. There are more of course, and in the United States, there are many, many kinds of trees that could be used. There are also "female" kinds of trees –rowan, (mountain ash) or willow, for example, and "male" kinds of trees – oak or ash, for example. I know someone who has a wonderful staff made out of black cherry. It all depends on your needs and the sorts of woods available, of course.

The uses of a magical staff are also varied. In Reformed Druidism I know that there is a beautiful meditation done using a staff on the "Four Pillars of the Day." In some of the older family or hereditary groups, the staff is considered to be a direct link with the Energy of the forest, and is used to form a "ring" (in modern language, a circle) to keep out unwanted or harmful spirits or influences. It could also be used to "charge" (with power) a ring, or circle. It could also be used to banish negative influences from the four quarters of the ring or circle. Of course, an inventive mind could find more magical uses for a staff.

I would say that those with a Druidic inclination could put their name in Ogam letters on their staff, and this too would personalize the staff more. Since we don't know ho w the historical Druids used their staves, we can only experiment and perhaps learn anew some ancient techniques. Good luck in your experiments!

Footnote: As an afterthought for newcomers to all of this, magic requires common sense. As I write this, it is the end of November. Trees prepare for winter, just as we do. Spring and summer are the times for "tree talking." In winter, as we all know, trees withdraw their life force to deep within themselves. But when spring rolls around again, make a new friend, and meet an excellent magical ally. "Talk" to a tree.

Figure 29 Becky Hrobak receiving ArchDruidship from Mike Scharding at Carleton, Beltane1994 at 3 Bird Grove (New Circle Site).

The Staff

By Emmon Bodfish
Samhain 1990, A Druid Missal-Any

To become a Druid in the R.D.N.A. mode, the first quest you must fulfill is the search for your staff. This is the first wrung of the ladder. If you own land, a staff can best be found on that. If not, a friend's acreage, roadsides, a Druid Grove or sanctuary, even deserts or wasteland can be explored. There, you must walk through the woods or wild, natural areas, not a garden or a farm. Look for a fairly straight, fir staff of waist to shoulder height. It should be at least as thick as your thumb and no thicker than your wrist. Saunter with relaxed vision, open to what may catch your attention: a wind-fallen bough or deceased and seasoned sapling trunk that appeals or "calls" to you. Or, as another Druid once put it: "Silently as the question: 'Who wishes to come? Who will help me?' Your staff is your basic tool, your compass point and anchor in the Work, your ground, your guide, your identity-piece, and magically speaking, your best friend. It must come to you of its own volition." It should feel ready and right. For this reason, on NO ACCOUNT CUT A LIVING PLANT! And it should not be oak. Firm, seasoned wood that has aged and ripened is best.

When you have found a potential staff, sitting with it for a while, cross-legged, but not lotus position, is good. Sit as Cernnunos is portrayed sitting on the panel of the Gundestrup cauldron. Hold it vertically, pressing the foot into the ground and lean on it. Will it support you on the mundane as well as spiritual plane? If it is the right staff, you should get a feeling of "Yes" and the longer you sit with it, the more it should please you. As another phrases it: "Sit with it. Drink in its presence. Let your energy flow into it. If it's right, it will become yours."

If you were here, or at another R.D.N.A. Grove, then you would bring your staff and present it at the next regular Service. If you are currently unaffiliated, you should instead, when you have found your staff, write back to us and tell about your quest, how you found your staff, what wood it is, and what you experienced sitting in contemplation with it. If you have been doing the Proto-Grove Service for yourself or with other unaffiliated druids, present it at your next new or full moon service. When you have thus found your staff, then you will be ready to start doing the Four Salutations of the Day.

The more you meditate with your staff, or use it in the Salutations, contemplative exercises and "magic workings" (I don't like to use that phraseology; it has been over used in the wrong contexts and debased, but there is no other as widely understood.) the more you will charge it with your energy, and build up a good set of associations around it. It will then act as a reservoir of these, and will help you get into the proper mind-state for sacred work, even when your energy is low. These hours of meditations, workings, or repetitions of the Salutations of the Day are, to use a mundane analogy, your deposits in your supernal back account. You build it up with your good energy. It has also been compared to practice put into learning a skill, or a language, or to building up muscle, to wit supernal weight lifting. Take whichever of these analogies helps you or none if that suits. The staff is one of the basic R.D.N.A. objects, (robe will come later), the basic tool, symbolic of all possessions and tools, and probably the first too that humanity picked up and thereby separated ourselves from the animal kingdom. (Yes, I know other animals use tools but no other creatures carry a possession with them, identify it as "mine," through they make pick up a stick to pry

or poke something.) It is your "bag-of-gold-for-the-passage," the "ball of thread you unwind in the labyrinth", your anchor in this World and your tester and touchstone in Others, and some day when you are lost and panicked on a journey in the Nether World, it may find you. This is an important quest.

Begin it now.

The Four Salutations of the Day

Circa 1986 by Emmon Bodfish

Many readers who have been doing the Proto-Grove ritual on their own for awhile write to us asking "What is the next step?" and "Is there a Druid training program?" There is no Druid Training program yet for those not involved in active Groves. We are working on it. But meanwhile a fruitful place to start your training is with the Four Salutations to the Day. If you have been at one of the regular bi-monthly Summer Services of an R.D.N.A. Grove, you have heard the invocation of the "three ways of day and one of night." IN this contemplative exercise you will be marking these four turning points of the day with a short, specific ritual, an active meditation in which you will be learning several basic essentials of all psychic or meditative work. It will keep you mindful of your intention to train and of your specifically Druidic vocation and heritage.

These four times, "trathan" in the old Gaidhlig, are noted in Welsh and Irish folklore as magical times when the "other world" is especially close to ours and communication or passage between the two is easiest. The old epic and Bardic poems speak of these times as power-times when spell working was done and an adept person might receive a vision or message from an ancestor or a patron Deity, a moment when a bard, inspired, might speak a prophecy. These are DAWN, NOON, SUNSET, and STARS. STARS is usually interpreted to be midnight.

One of our former Archdruids recounts that when an acquaintance of his was traveling through rural Ireland recently he found that the cottagers stayed indoors or stayed quiet around the noon point of the day. When he rose to go out, or to move on about some mundane business, they would say, "Oh, sit a while. Have another cup of tea." When asked, they would say something vague to the effect that it is a tricky time, unlucky to be bustling about. He did not ascertain whether they did not know why this was so, or if they were just cautious in talking about such matters to a stranger. Most, he felt, did not know why, and this taboo on activity is the last little remainder in folk memory of the old custom of observing the trathan.

The first purpose of the four Salutations is to put you in tune with the natural, celestial rhythms of the day and the changing seasons. The second purpose of the Salutations is a meditative practice, to practice entering an altered state of consciousness at will. The third purpose is to remind you of your Druidic commitment and to organize your day around the four natural turning points of Earth's time clock, providing stop-points in which you take stock of your day, of the passage of time, of nature and your own existence in it.

You will begin by learning to achieve mental silence, to stop thought, and to hold your mind silent for the time it takes the Sun to rise or set. In the temperate latitudes this is about 2 _ to 4 minutes counted from the Sun disk's first contact with the horizon to its last contact, assuming a flat horizon for averaging's sake.

The first skill to be mastered in the Salutations is the ability to hold the mind silent. You must learn to stop thought. By thought I mean the sentences that are normally running through your mind all day and in your dreams at night. I do not mean becoming unconscious , hypnotized, nor losing awareness of yourself or your surroundings. In the Silence you will in fact become more aware than usual of your immediate surroundings. Some Easter sects consider this the only "true" form of meditation. This is "outward directed" mediation, as contrasted with inner contemplation, "astral travel," or hypnotic trance. It is harder than it sounds, at first, though most people can do it for a few seconds right off. That's enough to start you. Here are some techniques to help you get further into that state and to help you learn to use it. In this wordless state, your consciousness may be turned by your will either inward or outward. In the Salutations it is turned outward. It surprises many people to find that they can perceive, an din acute detail, without any thoughts or words going through their minds. You will progress through this silent space to other states of consciousness. As you are able to hold the Silence longer you will learn from it and be able to explore with it.

1. Repeat a simple phrase, silently in your mind until all other thoughts cease, then let the phrase grow fainter and fainter and fade out. For the solar Salutations, "Hail Belenos!" This is a crutch; drop it as soon as you can.

2. Enter the Silence. Listen to your breath. Listen as though it were the most important instructions you were ever to hear, and which you must memorize. This will stop your mental sentences.

3. Listen to all the ambient sounds as if they were music.

4. Think to yourself down in to the heels of your feet and the heels of your hands. Feel yourself exist.

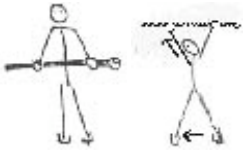
In doing the Salutations four times a day, you are learning to enter a different state of consciousness at will, regularly and often. These three: will, consistency, and practice are the keys to meditative and psychic progress. The goal is to be able to enter, at will, the state of consciousness that you will need in order to do a particular psychic or spiritual work. Small amounts of frequent practice achieve more than an occasional long session.

Do the four Salutations by the celestial clock, at Dawn, Noon, Sunset and Stars whether you are "in the mood" or not. This way you will become capable of entering this clear, silent state at any time, regardless of moods and circumstances, "to find a refuge outside the passions" of the moment, as an old book says. This practice builds and furnishes that refuge, a base-of-operations, for your further work. When you can hold silence for twelve to thirty seconds at a time, alert, eyes open, taking in perceptions as far around toward the corners of your peripheral field as you can, you will notice that things look different from the way that they do in your normal, "mundane" state of consciousness. I won't list the changes because I do not want to bias your perceptions, the self-fulfilling prop. Not everyone gets all the different changes, but you will discover

yours. (Write to the Missal-Any when you do, we like feedback, and we can answer questions individually.) These changes will be your signal that you are in a meditative state, at the Silent Place, rung one of the metaphorical ladder of meditative training. When you have completed the Salutation, the, in line with the third purpose, take some time to consider from this higher perspective what you have been occupied with since the last Salutation. It is a step in getting control of your time, your habits and your life.

Stand, waiting for the first bit of the sun's disk to appear over the horizon. Hold your staff in front of you, your hands in front of your breast bone. Your left hand is above your right hand and the staff is not touching the ground.

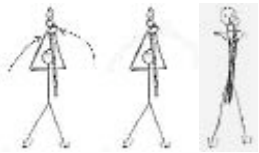
When the first bit of the sun's disk clears the horizon, turn your staff horizontal and raise it over your head in one motion. Breath in a full breath as you raise the staff, and at the same time step to the right with your right foot. Hold the breath; silence your mind. Your arms and your legs now form two triangles and you are looking at the first sun through a "trilithion" formed by your arms and staff.



Holding the breath, turn your staff back vertical, and, holding it at arm's length, exhale slowly as you lower the staff between your gaze and the morning sun, momentarily blocking it out, until it seems to rise again over the top of the staff.

Let go your left hand from the staff and holding it in your right , sweep both of your arms up and outward, breathing in until you reach full extension. Your head, arms, and legs form a pentagram, your lungs are filled with the new air and your are fully open to the morning light. This is true even when there is rain falling in your face in the winter. Then you are open to that truth, that dawn and that aspect of Nature. You hold mental silence here in the open position until the sun's disk clears the horizon.

When it is free of the last horizon (horizon is trees, buildings, mountains, freeway "on" ramps, whatever is between you and the setting or rising sun) sweep your hands up and together over your right hand, as you inhale. Hold the breath for an instant, then begin slowly exhaling as your turn the staff back to vertical again and lower it again with your line of sight and the risen sun.



Continue on down, touching your staff to the ground, arms fully extended and your head bowed between them. Concentrate on the ground and your staff and feel the earth energy move up the staff, through your arms and to your lungs as you inhale another full breath. Raise your head and pull your staff in toward your heart as you straighten up and inhale fully.

Your hands on your staff , touch your breastbone. Hold silence. Perceive the dawning light all around you. Take several (three to nine) calm breaths. Then as you exhale, lower your staff and step right bringing your feet together and the staff to rest on the ground between your two big toes. Press it down. "Ground down" mentally; return to the mundane mental level and worldly functioning. The day has begun.

At NOON you face due south. At solar noon, as opposed to clock noon, the sun will be at the highest pint in the sky that it will reach that day, and it will also be directly South. The movements and the breathing for the NOON Salutation are the same as for the DAWN, however do not look directly at the noon sun. Look at the southern horizon directly below it. Feel the rays and the warmth. Hold silence in the open position for twenty four breaths. Finish the Salutations as at DAWN.

Open Position

At evening, when the sun is about to set over whatever is your local western horizon, take your stance facing it. When the sun's disk touches tangent to the first bit of the horizon, inhale and raise your staff over your head in the first movement of the Salutation. Holding silence, draw it down between yourself and the setting sun until the sun reappears over the top of the staff. Breathe out as you do this. Move to the open position as before and hold it out as you do this. Move to the open position as before and hold it in silence until the last bit of the solar disk is about to sink below the horizon. At that moment, inhaling, bring your arms up and together

with the staff between you and the sun. Then as in the other Salutations, exhale as you bring the staff down to ground at arm's length in front of you, bowing forward as the last gleam disappears under the horizon. Feel yourself "bowing down the sun" in synchronization with it. When you feel the ground energy move up along the staff, through your arms, and body, inhale, mind silent, eyes totally perceiving. Hold your staff and hands at heart level as before. See the night begin around you. One day is over; a new day has begun. Press your staff down to the ground again at your feet. "Ground down" mentally. Come back to the mundane world, refreshed. Recall what has happened since NOON.

At celestial midnight, STARS, the sun is on the other side of the world directly below your feet. At this midnight or just before you go to sleep , do the Salutation to the STARS. Face the North Star. Calm your mind. Recall what you have been doing since the last Salutation. When you have achieved mental silence once more, then raise your staff over your head and inhale. View the North Star then raise your staff over your head and inhale. View the North Star through the "trilithion" of your arms and staff. The rest of the Salutation proceeds like the NOON Salutation. Here you will draw your staff down until the North Star seems to rise over the tip of it. You hold silence in the open position for twenty four breaths, then complete the movements as at NOON. Ground down. Retire. Sleep.

Figure 30 Emmon Bodfish, Fall, 1982.

The Fire Ceremony

Big Ash Grove: News from Michigan
A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 2002

First you walk through the jungle looking for sticks. Gather as many as possible. When you get back to your village hut begin stacking them in a square (leave out like ten or so for later) so that it looks like a squished box with no top. Remember fire safety rules; like building a pit outside and doing it there, and have a bucket of water ready, just in case. Ok so now you set the pile on fire. Now you have to make friends with the fire; this consists of talking to it, sharing concerns and problems, and also feeding it a few drops of oil. I find patchouli or moldavite oil works good. Now that you have a new best friend you begin taking the other sticks, one by one, and put your problems into the stick. Such as financial problems, love problems, a healing need, a fear, etc. Feed the problems to the fire watching them being transformed

Then take some of the energy out of the fire with your hands...don't worry it's a friendly fire. And put the energy into your stomach, heart and brain; so that you make the right actions, have the right emotions and the right mental abilities to take care of the problem. After you've done this with all but one of your sticks, place the final stick into the fire with the prayer that the Earth Mother is healed. Don't take that energy out of the fire, let Momma E take that energy. Let the fire die out, while vigiling and meditating.

That's it. Pretty cool huh!?! It works nicely too.

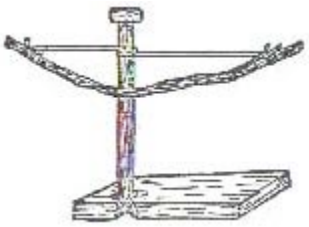


Figure 31 You're crazy if you expect me to wash all those white robes, if you get them dirty!

Fire Building Fun

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I've just come back from a 3 hour firewood piling exercise. I have roughly 30 armloads of woods stacked to dry. This wood is on a recently widened trail near the 'little grove'. Andrea and I can show you a map if you need directions.

Notes on fire making. (what little I know)

1. Best not make NEW fire rings. There are at least 8 in the upper Arb and at least 2 in the lower Arb plus the fireplace at the Cabin.
2. Tradition in the druids is not to break or cut down living wood. Most druids don't usually use axes on deadwood, too much work. Using 'cut-down' wood from brush clearing operations is acceptable, but not as desirable as fallen wood. Green saplings for sweat lodges were necessary. There is now a 'permanent' and portable 6-pagan sweat lodge pole frame hidden in the forest near the hill of oaks. Ask Andrea or myself for its whereabouts. The old sweat lodge by Farmhouse is no longer serviceable or permitted by the Farmies.
3. Matches and lighters are acceptable fire starters. You can be fancy if you are an expert at stick-rubbing, but also bring matches. Lighter fluid and gasoline has been used on particularly stubborn fires.
4. Follow the age-old rule of start with smallest, driest stuff and GRADUALLY get larger. Ask Andrea for a demo sometimes.
5. Never leave a fire still going after a ritual, unless you tend to use it further. Follow boy scout rules on this. Sand and water are often used to extinguish.
6. Always be kind and invite smoky-eyed people to move out of its way 24 more lines...
7. Fires don't always produce as much heat as you hope it will. Bring something warm to insulate your butt and back. Hats that cover the ears are enjoyed.
8. Age-old tradition: It ain't a real fire until someone burn his/her beard/hair.
9. Measurements:

Armload= 8-12 pounds of wood, or what can be carried under one arm.
Simple fire= 2 armloads of wrist-thick wood
big fire= 3-7 armloads
bonfire= 8+ armloads
sweat lodge fire= 5-7 armloads per heating
all night fire= 9-14 armloads? maybe more.
and for the curious:
English buttload of wood=4 armloads
metric buttload of wood= 5 armloads
pagan buttload of wood= 8 armloads
(I'm guessing on the last part)

Sweat Lodge Traditions

By Mike the Fool, 2004

Of all the Carleton practices, the sweatlodge is perhaps the most flexible, changing and mutable set of activities, which means that it is very difficult to lay out on paper. And yet I must lay out a few aspects of the design. Every phase may be altered due to personal preferences, the preconceived goals, size of group, and the unique circumstances that arise inside the lodge that require a new course of improvisation for attaining the proper path. In this sense it may seem more chaotic, but it also seems that there is an order to each and every sweatlodge, that you merely have to be sensitive to and to which you must adapt your plans. Every Druid will also develop their own signature style or approach.

Carleton sweatlodges began in 1985 or 1986, and have been one of the most powerful tools in the bag of tricks for Archdruids and other Druids. Originally a blend of Scandinavian and Native American traditions, it has proved an eclectic evocative experience that has been a nice alternative to firm liturgies and sober Druid teas. There are several stages, and while a sweatlodge is a lot of work, any Druid with a bit of courage and an open heart can manage one, although I'd recommend attending one before trying to lead one, but if that's not possible, I'd still encourage you to wing it and see what happens.

I recommend reading these two books as good background material: The Sacred Pipe by Black Elk, Native American Sweat Lodge History and Legends by Joseph Bruhac, and Lakokat Ritual of the Sweat Lodge by Raymond Bucko, which will give you a better understanding of the types of sweatlodges, controversy in usage, and the reverance in which they are prepared and performed. Examinaiton of Scandinavian, Greek, Turkish and Irish sweatbaths would also be of great interest.

Preparation

The preparation phase is extremely long, and spiritually perhaps more powerful in my view. People differ on how to purify and prepare one's spirit in the days before the sweatlodge. Some will fast, avoid certain activities, or practice strict moderation for 1 to 3 days ahead of time. I usually avoid meat, sexual activity, extreme exertion and strong emotional display as a form of ascetics.

Usually during this period, I will visit the sweatlodge site in advance and announce the upcoming sweatlodge so that the site will be ready for our arrival; and to ascertain how much wood, stones and other materials will be necessary. I often walk the surroundings every few weeks to set aside and stack wood to dry ahead of time. After a weather check, I announce the site and time to my fellow Druids so that they can prepare themselves also, and to check to see if any feel inspired to lead a round in advance and to assay what the most pressing purposes of the group are, as that will affect the style of sweatlodge I will prepare. Usually we recommend that no alcohol, unnecessary medicine, large amounts of meat or dairy products be consumed within 12 hours of the service, and that the person be well-rested, well-hyrdated, and at peace. Carleton does not deny the sweatlodge to women in their moon period, but some women may opt out due to reasons of comfort.

The site should be reserved with the necessary authorities, who should be informed what type of event will be held, to avoid unpleasant confusion. Tools are checked in

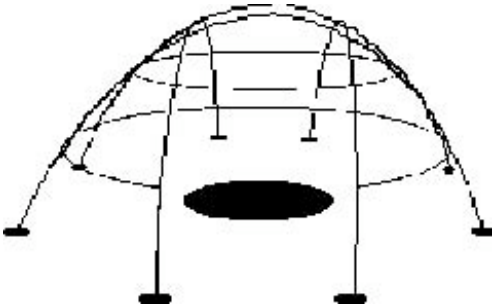
advance to ensure there is no last minute confusion. Usually a shovel, a pitchfork, tent poles, lots of over blankets, perhaps a ground cloth, plastic tarps to seal moisture in, string or twine, a knife, scissors, buckets, flashlight, sage-sticks, lighters are usually all that you need, stored in easy-to-carry plastic crates. Some will buy light foods to eat after all is done. All these will have to be logistically prepared in advance from a place of storage and then cleaned, dried and stored after the service.

The nights before the sweatlodge, I will usually pay close attention to my dreams and thoughts to see if an inspiring vision will strike me to provide a theme for the sweatlodge. This requires extreme sensitivity and awareness.

The Assembly

Assembly usually takes about 2 hours. Usually a few days to a few hours before the sweatlodge, a group of volunteers will collect fallen branches, dry logs and standing wood for the fire. This is done without harm to local trees, usually at least 50 feet away from the site. Ten to thirty fist-sized stones should be collected. For safety reasons, do not use river-rocks, sedimentary, porous or quartzy rocks which tend to fracture easily under stress. Volcanic or metamorphic rocks are the most secure, but hard to locate in Minnesota. Eight to twenty pliable 4-12 foot long saplings (no wider than your thumb) are collected and stripped of branches. Willow, ash and rowan work well. Materials should be collected in a humble spirit, asking them whether they wish to be part of the service. These processes are often punctuated with spoken mini-prayers of thanks and announcing to the spirits what you will do so that they will not be startled. Let the words roll out without concern for propriety or hesitation, they need to be said.

Some traditions are specific about the fire being to the east of the entrance of the sweatlodge which also faces east. Carleton has fixed fire rings, so we usually practically point the sweatlodge towards the fire ring, regardless of what direction that may be. The sweatlodge should be between 10 and 30 feet of the fire ring, not too close to catch fire, and not too far to make carrying the stones difficult. Small stuff in the center, bigger stuff lain over it, and big stuff in reserve. About 10 to 24 arm loads should be sufficient for 2 to 5 sessions respectively. If a person wishes to assist but doesn't wish to be in the sweatlodge, they are designated the firetender and provide stones and water to the sweaters and ensure the lodge is well sealed. They also great late visitors and prepare the stones for the next session.



A hole about 18 inches deep and 18 inches wide is dug in the center of the sweatlodge and the dirt is carefully put on some newspapers or other object so as to be easily returned later. Usually the removed dirt is crowned with some type of activity. A spring of sage might be laid in the hole while other work is done and removed before the stones are placed in the hole later.

The number of poles is determined by resources and size of the group. 2-4 people require a diameter of about 8 feet, 4-8 people about 12 feet. Clear the ground of any roots, rocks, dirt or glass. It should be at least four feet high in the center, and high enough that members do not have to stoop when sitting cross-legged around the hole, with at least four inches between them and the firehole. Before putting on the tarp, actually sit inside to make sure there is sufficient room. Some people use flexible tent poles or thick wire in place of saplings, others see this as less authentic. Stick the end of the poles into the ground and bend them and bind them. Remove any poky branch stubs. Put a vapor-lock layer of sailor canvas or plastic sheeting over the poles. Place three layers of blankets to retain warmth over the tarp, with an easy to open and shut flap for the entrance. Go inside and look for light or draft leaking under the edges and weigh those down with rocks or logs. Bless the lodge with some puffs of sage smoke, a dance, circumnabulation or other means.

The fire is lit about 30 minutes before the first session, with a prayer, and is treated with great deference. One tradition is to never cut the line between the fire and the sweatlodge entrance, at least without an apology. Light chat, banter and a simple outline of the sweatlodge ceremony, purpose and decorum are discussed with the fellow Druids in advance, especially when there are newcomers present. Questions are encouraged and answered as best as possible.

General rules are:

Follow the lead of the officiant.

Leave your ego at the door.

Ask for water when you need it, always sharing some with the fire.

You can wear a swimsuit or clothes if you wish, but most don't.

Be respectful of your fellow sweaters and the materials.

Friends are welcome if they are respectful too.

Apologize quickly for any possible mistake to either. Some use a set phrase like Oyatake Miyasin, "all my cousins".

Let the spirits speak freely through you, and speak without lies.

Nothing spoken in the sweatlodge is later revealed to someone not participating, and is often not even mentioned again in most cases. What comes out in the sweatlodge, stays in the sweatlodge.

If the experience becomes overwhelming, announce that you need to take a break and shuffle clockwise until the afflicted member can reach the entrance and leave, with an apology.

You do as many sessions as you are comfortable with, and can sit out one if you need a break.

When the rocks are red-hot and the mood is right, bring about 9 rocks into the hole. Sometimes someone strips down, is purified, and enters the sweatlodge with some sticks to help guide the rocks into the hole while someone uses the pitchfork to bring the stones (without attached embers) into the sweatlodge entrance. For a long sweat, some room is left in the sweatlodge for more stones to be added. A water jug/bucket is placed one space counter-clockwise from the entrance.

Some words will be said by the fire before entering, people strip down, are purified by sage smoke and enter the sweatlodge, crawling clockwise around the stones. The officiant is usually the last to enter, and the sweatlodge is shut and the service begins, while the firetender prepares the stones for the next session.

The Service

At this point it becomes very difficult to give an outline of activities. There are so many ways to hold the actual service, and you have a lot of liturgical freedom here. Some people divide sweats into healing sweats, union sweats, wishing sweats and divinatory sweats. Some officiants will do a little of each in a single session, or each session will be different purpose.

Usually you begin by four members calling out the directions in turn, and handed the water. They choose their own words and pick their own associations with that direction. The spirits are thus called with a splash of water onto the hot rocks. Usually then the officiant invokes father sky and mother earth and encourages all these spirits to aid them in their quest. The officiant will usually announce each stage as it begins.

Some chanting follows, and usually is done in between each stage of a sweatlodge. They may be short songs, rounds, simple phrases or wordless tunes, moans, clapping, slapping or hooting. I may feel disconnected from my body, extremely aware of my body, or both. I sometimes do not know where the words come from, except that they resonate with my soul, and they are right for the occasion. The first time it might be a bit embarrassing, but with experience, they come forth wiser and more sure. Some Scandinavian types might strike or rub themselves with branches to improve bloodflow if there is sufficient room. It's hard to predict what will feel right. Sometimes it's a single chant, sometimes it will lead off to another, or as many as four or five. Hard to tell.

In healing sweats, the afflicted person or their representative announces the problem, all emote with the problem, and then energy is summoned by chants or other methods to assist that person or "shot" off towards the ill person.

In union sweats, the water is passed around, and each person talks about something that has been on their mind, either good, bad or confusing. The water is then splashed on the stones and the next person procedes.

In wishing sweats, the person says what they want, why they want it, and asks that it become so. Chants follow and energy raised and sent for that purpose.

In divinatory sweats, knowledge or vision is sought. The vision is requested and chants follow, then some words are shared.

After about 30 minutes, its usually time to end a sweat session, since the rocks are losing their heat and people need a break. Each session closes by thanking the four directions in reverse order, and the last session has an especially ornate version. People are told to be especially attentive to their dreams that night and drink lots of water. After some final thanks, the members rotate clockwise around and exit. They might wrap a blanket around themselves, drink water, or sit by the fire. If there is no room in the hole, some of the stones are removed to make space for the next stones, which are then inserted. After a short break, the next officiant announces the start of the next session, purifies everyone, and the process starts again, with a simplified invocation of the directions inside the sweatlodge. People may attend 1-4 sweat sessions in an evening, being an ascetic test of their limits for some people, others might be satisfied with just one, especially their first time.

Activities After the Sweatlodge

Some people disassemble the sweatlodge immediately, other do it later when convenient. I recommend the former. Sometimes during the last session, the members will grab the poles and lift together to raise the lodge, in which case, make sure the rocks are not weighing down the edges! Others will carefully removed one layer at a time with small prayers of thanks, like peeling an onion. The materials are folded and put away to be dried the next day. The stones are either buried in the original dirt or moved to a site in the woods and stacked for the next sweatlodge. The hole is filled in and site cleaned up. All the materials are thanked in a final service and the mood of the sweatlodge lightens up and the after-party will start.

Some people may wander off to meditate or vigil. Usually people will hang around late into the night around the now desanctified fire and discuss further what they saw or heard, chat about life, perhaps do some cooking or singing. Naturally, the fire must be completely extinguished before the last person goes home. It is tradition that it dies by slowly fading from lack of combustibles, rather than dousing them rudely. Remaining wood and stone are stored away for the next sweatlodge and the area is cleaned up. I usually follow up by visiting the site the next morning to check for garbage and to give further thanks to the site.

And that is a short summary of the techniques and practices of Carleton Sweatlodges. May you find your own path and methods.

Figure 32 The Druid's Den, site of many Sweatledges, c. 2004.

Norse Ritual Experimentation

by Hal Moe.
DC Vol 2 Iss 1 Nov. 1978

Hal Moe, Co-Archdruid of the Hazel Nut Grove, sends us this report about the first performance of a Pagan Norse ritual written by him for *Vetrdag* ("Winter's Day") and celebrated by the Grove: "Vetrdag is the first day of Winter in the Norse calendar and was celebrated on October 14th by myself and the members of the Grove. After I had taken a length of white cord and marked off a ritual circle among the trees surrounding us, the rite began with a formal invitation to the Norse deities to join us for our feast (most Norse rituals seem to consist of feasts). I had chosen *Kvasir,* the Norse God of Mead, Inspiration and Enlightenment, as the deity thru Whom we would communicate with the Gods. Kvasir was created from the spittle of all the Gods and Goddesses of both the Vanir and the Aesir, and thus makes a good channel to work through. After the invitation was presented, the *godi* or presiding priest (myself) passed the *Hlautbollar* or "blood bowl" (which actually contained mead) thru the flames of the fire, in order to infuse the vital spark into the fluid. After this, I looked into the bowl to see if Kvasir had joined us. He-had, so I continued the ceremony by dipping nine *Hlauteinarr* ("blood twigs") into the bowl and sprinkling the congregation with the mead, thus forming a physical bond between the members of the Grove and the deities. After this, the bowl was raised in a salute to Odin, Freyja and Thor, and toasts were drunk by all. The members were encouraged to offer their own toasts to their favorite deities, heroes, etc. Then a portion of the remaining mead was poured out over the altar, as a symbol of the Grove's willingness to sacrifice a portion of their lives and hearts to the Norse deities. This was followed by a period of silent meditation and a benediction. The service was well received by the Grove and there were Signs that the deities were also pleased."

Vol. 2 Iss 2 Dec. 1978

Notes on A Norse Neopagan Ceremony:

This is a metaphysical follow-up to last issue's description by Harold Moe of a Norse Neopagan ceremony he created and led for the Hazel Nut Grave.

My Norse Neopaganism is built around metaphysical concepts related to the Hindu system. The Norse Ritual that I wrote about in the last issue of PJ & DC presents a nice structure by which to explain those metaphysical concepts. (Please note that the explanation that follows is probably not the ancient Pagan explanation).

The primary symbol of Norse Paganism is the ring, which represents both the cycles that are all around us and infinity. The ring is manifested in the ritual as the ring of worshippers, the ring of string or stones and the ring (which is the formal manifestation of the symbol) that the Godi (presiding priest/ess) wears on his or her arm. At the center of the circle is the altar which represents Asgard, the home of the Gods and Goddesses, center of the universe and the point from which all things flow.

The humans in the circle's boundary wish to communicate with the Deities and to gain knowledge in this way. The method by which this is accomplished consists of Consecrating the Mead as the blood Of Kvasir the God of Inspiration and enlightenment. Kvasir is a being made from all the Deities. (At one time in Norse Mythology the Aesir and Vanir--Sky and Earth--Deities were fighting. They made peace and pledged it by exchanging hostages and by all spitting into a cauldron and creating Kvasir from it.) Thus He can be represented as the union of Fire, Air, Water and Earth and therefore can be looked on as the element Spirit and/or as Man.

Once the mead has been consecrated as Kvasir, it becomes the gate through which people can communicate with the Deities. In the ritual the usual communication consists of toasts to express our admiration for the Deities and the powers they control."

The next event is the blessing. This process takes the holy mead from the altar to the people, from the center to the edge, thus giving the center's power to the edge. Here follow more toasts, but now the direction of the flow is reversed. We must maintain the balance of people and Deities, and we therefore offer up a part of ourselves to the perpetuation of the Gods' **power** by using the mead as our "blood" being given to the Deities and return to Midgard, having renewed ourselves at the center of the universe.

Vol 2 Iss 3 Feb. 1979

Nordic Ritual No. 2

Harold Moe has as been experimenting with various forms and poetry for Norse rituals. This is a current work- in -progress that he has been using for services.

Group forms a circle around altar within which is the Godi, who salutes the Altar.

Hear O High Ones Of Heaven and Hillock, Our Words of welcome.
We get together In Grove with gifts To the kin of Kvasir.
We drink and declare Your dauntless dignity In friendship and freedom.

Then all speak:

Hail to the Gods! Ye Goddesses hail! And all the generous Earth!
Hail to the Day! Hail to the sons of Day! Hail to the Night and her daughter Now!

The Godi speaks:

Gaze on us gently, Granting us gathered here Your blessings on our battles.

All hold up their beakers and call on Kvasir.

Hail Kvasir, son of Aesir and Vanir! Inspiration bringer, All answerer!

Godi passes bowl over flame and all say:

Let Life enter you, Come join our rejoicing!

The Godi then lowers the bowl and looks into it. If Kvasir has joined us the Godi then says:

Rejoice! Kvasir has joined us!

The Godi then picks up and dips the nine Hlauteinarr into the bowl and sprinkles mead over the group saying:

O Gods and Goddesses
Givers of, Greatness
Nurture nobility

Learning and lore
Lease us lifelong
And healing hands

The Godi then replaces the Hlauteinarr and raises the bowl to the Sky saying:

Hail Odin!

and drinks

Hail Freyja!

and drinks

Hail Thor!

Now each person in the circle from right to left makes a toast to his or her favorite deity. All may join in. A bit of mead is left in the beakers for the sacrifice. The Godi now gives the bowl to the outer circle and each person pours a little into the bowl from his beaker. The Godi then takes the bowl and pours the contents on the altar saying:

As Kvasir gave his life and blood to bring us inspiration and the knowledge of the Gods and Goddesses, Let each of us give this portion of our lives and hearts.

Here follows an appropriate meditation.

The Godi concludes with:

Life has entered into the Mead, And we have partaken of it. The Aesir and Vanir have accepted our Sacrifice. Hail to them! Hail to the Gods and Goddesses! Hail to the Generous Earth!

Return to Midgard and know that they have smiled on us!

PEACE WISDOM HEALTH

Figure 33 The White Boulder of Boliou, 2004.

Sirona's Shower Shugyo Sacrament

By Patrick Haneke & Nozomi Kibou
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 2001

WARNING: I recommend that you practice in your bath's shower (which works fine, just less scenic and powerful) for a few weeks before trying the real thing to gauge your body's strength and reaction to cold. Each time, go a step colder. Be careful of hazards at natural waterfalls. Large ones can really club you with their force, logs & junk may flow over the edge and strike you, some falls have large, DEEP pools directly beneath them, strong undercurrents, have slippery DANGEROUS rocks nearby and are often located far from medical care. You should probably start off with a group or shuggy-buddy as I call them. An appropriate choice is Sirona, a Celtic God of rivers, quite popular throughout Europe it seems and Patron of the 7th order, but if you know the particular God of that river or falls, it would be best to use that one of course.

PROCESS:

Eat a simple diet for a week before the shugyo (low spices, little meat, no salt, no alcohol, no sex).
Either in light-weight, white cotton suit or sky-clad, go to a waterfall. Starting downstream on the approach is respectful, if starting up stream toss in coins with a prayer, the river will carry your message to the falls of your approach. It can be done solo, or as a group (see above), chanting out loud in unison.
Start by purifying yourself and 5-10 minutes of mediation on your goal.
Bow, Clap Twice, Bow, ask to enter the waterfall.
If omens are good, step into the waterfall. Drench yourself thoroughly.
Turn your back to the waterfall and have the main force of the water hit you between seventh vertebra of the neck and the shoulders. If you douse your head, it's hard to open your mouth to chant and it strains your neck.
Clasp hands together, forming a mudra if you like.
Chant your invocation. (like the one below)

Figure 34 Proper Shugyo pose.

SIRONA'S SUPPLICATION

I can 't release the one used by Nozomi (trade-secret of her father's, but here is one I made) One of the problems you'll realize is that breathing is difficult when cold, so it often comes out in staccato syllables. Keep a rhythm. The verses are A chorus B chorus C chorus B chorus A in a "Stepladder format" (i.e. ABCBABCBA is possible). Perhaps you'll come up with your own words and send me a copy?

Waters over.
Waters under.
Waters around.
Waters through me.

O si-ro-na!
o **SI**-ro-na!
o si **RO** na!
o si ro **NA!**

Waters cleanse me.
Waters love me.
Waters guide me.
Waters bless me.

O si-ro-na!
o **SI**-ro-na!
o si **RO** na!
o si ro **NA!**

Change in motion.
Adaptation.
Down to ocean.
My salvation.

AND REVERSE IT BACK TO THE BEGINNING

Figure 35 Pat at Akita Grove's waterfall, c. 1998.

Hot Tub Healing

By Pat Haneke & Nozomi Kibo
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2001

Well, last time, we gave you our Shugyo service, which relies on cold pounding water to purify from above; so we'd like to balance that by stressing the warm waters bubbling to heal you from below. Japan is well known for its plentiful (over 14,000) natural onsens (i.e. thermal spas) due to the volcanic nature of the islands. Many were discovered by shivering hunters during the winter in the mountains, where they had melt through the heavy snows, providing a refuge for wild animals (especially snow-monkeys). Myths often state that the hunter was led there by an injured animal seeking to have their wounds healed by the waters.

According to my research, many onsens are located in nearly-inaccessible rustic locations of great scenic beauty, often requiring hours-long hikes from nearby roads. Most of these have been deepened and lined with natural stones, bamboo screens, hand-built changing areas. The best are open to the sky year round ("rotenburos") and sometimes are mixed bathing, especially late at night (if you're lucky). Many romantic movies pivot on a humorous rendez-vous that occurs there. Onsens are still one of the top 5 destinations for travel-crazy Japanese, indeed dozens of books and studies have been written on their bathing customs. After all, "cleanliness is next to Godliness", which is why the Japanese are such a sacred people? Their public bathing houses ("sento"s) yet remain in the poorer sections of the cities, and artificially heated "onsens" (with bowling alleys & recreational sports) are built in the midst of sprawling urban centers. Nozomi says that entire offices or companies will stay at the traditional inns for weekend retreats; drinking, eating, bathing, rough-housing, drinking, singing, having a short business meeting, more drinking, etc.

Now, the Celts were also big fans of spas, springs and natural wells, when they could find them. Specific deities (e.g. Grannos, Suliva), were assigned to each one, and offerings were thrown into the pool for those seeking healing or similar blessings. These holy wells of "Saints", who offering healing & good fortune, continue to attract Catholic pilgrims to this day, and this phenomenon is well documented in bookstores. Many famous springs, such as Baths, were expanded and commercially developed by the Roman conquerors.

According to Mike, back in the misty 70s, the NRDNA Berkeley Grove's very own Order of Dian Cecht (apparently, a substitution for the Order of Grannos) would hold regular healing seminars and workshops followed by, you guessed it, hot-tub healing. So, to revive an older custom, I give you our version in simplistic format; which of course may be done in a warm bathtub. I defer to those women out there, who have raised functional bathing to aromatic tactilely pleasurable ritualistic experience, and ask that each expand it in their own way. It could be an hour-long and suitably womb-like.

Disconnect phone and turn-off all annoyances.
Stretch thoroughly
Open windows and let in cool fresh air & sun/moonlight
Take a short shower and then clean tub.
Dim the lights.
Fill with piping hot water. Welcome it.
Allowing a little water to drain and keeping the tap or shower open.
Add accessories (candles, salts, herbs, oils, mineral supplements, etc.)
(Some add Waters-of-life blessed for the occasion.)
Place a guardian statue in the waters to address (i.e. rubber-ducky)
Let water cool down to just above tolerable.
Bless your self & the tub
Ask to enter, and then slowly enter the tub.
Assume desired position or perform mudras.
List current ailments. Remember the healthier days' feelings.
Internally focus on feeling the afflicted areas.
Humming mantras is particularly pleasant when half submerged.
Channel the heat and such to those parts, melting and smoothing them, making things flow where they have stopped.
Ask for advice, wait and listen. This part takes a while.
Contemplate life-style and diet changes or divine requests that come to your mind.
Thank the Gods or guardians involved and ask to finish.
Pull the drain and bid farewell to the waters.
Ask the healing spirits to remain with you as the waters slowly drain away.
Let the waters pull away illness as they drain.
Quick rinse & dry.
Wrap in something warm and take a nap in a dark, quiet place.

Figure 36 Lyman Lake at dawn, c 2001.

The Great Cailleach Search

Devised by Patrick Haneke, Akita Grove
Collaborated with Brother Alex on his "Great Snogle Beast Hunt"
Plentiful Advice from Brother Mike
Researched & Transcribed by Sister Nozomi
A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 2002

A few years ago, when Brother Mike was in Japan, we went with him to a lot of the local pagan festivals. Mike suggested that we start our own, blending Irish and Shinto traditions. Like our Winter-Solstice service, here is our version of an Oimelc festival, with more focus on activity than liturgy; which the Japanese are famous for. Neo-Pagan rituals can be so dull, whereas the Celtic commoner was likewise more interested in the associated activities of the season. We'll still have an Oimelc service, but it will pale next to the Great Cailleach Search. Please enjoy.

The Straight Dope on the Cailleach Bhuer: The primary figure in this action-drama.

Cailleach (Call y' ach) is the common Gaelic word for old woman, "carlin" in the Lowlands, "Black Annis" in England (Annis being a Celtic Water Goddess), "Cailleach ny Groamch" on the Isle of Man Cailleach Bhuer (Blue Women) or Hag of Beare is her name in the Highlands. Interestingly enough, an owl is called Cailleach n'Oidhche (very difficult to pronounce) meaning "old woman of the night".

I slapped a few half-remembered legends together and divined the rest. In the old days, old women were respected for the life-power and wisdom that naturally should accrue to the elderly. This particular old lady was a giant in Scottish tales who also represented winter. She could shape shift, either to a serpent or a comely lass and was considered quite wise. She could also become stone at will, indeed, remaining as a stone throughout the Time of Life (May 1st to Nov. 1st.). Thus, she is a natural choice for residing in a stone circle, I think, especially in a stone used for judging the Winter Solstice alignment.

She is reborn on Samhain and reigns throughout the Time of Sleep (Nov 1st to May 1st). After reviving, she washes her tattered plaid in the famous whirlpool off the coast of Jura ,"Corryvreckan" ("Coire Bhreacain" is the cauldron of the plaid), and the plaid emerges repaired & pure-white and she drapes it over the land. She bore a staff which could kill any plant and would freeze the ground if tapped. The young God of Spring, born on the Winter Solstice, (no name as yet) wanted to play with his forest friends, but they were too tired, and the Goddess refused to end the winter so early. She recommended that he should be in Galicia or Galetia, not the Gaeltacht, if he wanted some warmth. She complained that she wasn't finished freezing Loch Ness and was still perfecting her snowcap on Ben Mor and Mt. Snowdon, and the skiers would be most unhappy if she didn't finish that job. If she had time, she'd get around to freezing the Irish sea too.

Undeterred, he asked Cailleach Bhuer if is she was tired, and she admitted that she was getting a bit of a tension headache from concentrating so much on her work. She agreed to take a short break and play a short game of stickball. Spring God tossed stones and nuts, and she batted first. Many valleys and lakes were created by the impact from the stones she hit. She played a marvelous first round and then he asked to have a turn at bat. The staff was thus captured by the young God of Spring, who flung it into the holly bushes, because the staff would kill any other plant, and the holly would prevent her from retrieving it by guarding it with its fierce thorns.

He then ran off, unpenned, and gleaned a few of her seven Arkan Sonney (red, lucky, hairy pigs), whose hot little footsteps melted the snow. The Cailleach dispatched a squadron of her ravens to retrieve the piggies, but the Spring God eluded most of them. The little piggies ran all over the place with the young God, ruining her white blanket of snow. She forgave him later, after he explained the animals were getting thin and needed to eat new plants, but she required him to bring her a flower wreath at Beltane and return her staff next fall.

Not being able to freeze things anymore, she started her new job on Feb 1st. She went to the deep forest of the Isle of Youth and drinks a cup to return her to a more vigourous appearance. Then she works on weaving a new plaid for the next year's vegetation, which she will hand over to her sister at Beltane before transforming into stone for a long rest in the shape of a rock, under a flower wreath, who takes a pause in his morning activities that day to payback the old lady. He, of course, returned the staff at Samhain.

She was the patroness of deer and boar, protecting animals during the winter. She is sometimes depicted as riding a gray stallion with ravens and crows. The Book of Lecan, says she has been through seven life cycles, deaths and rebirth, and has had seven mates. Thus seven is a sacred number of perfection. There are numerous hills named after her, such as Ben Nevis and Schiehallon.

For more on her see:

http://www.paganvillages.com/Magick/archivesev/NovGoddess.html

The Fun Part: The Great Hunt

Now that you know the background, here is the activity we're planning. A similar one can be done for Beltane, which much nicer rewards…

Location: A forest with lots of trees or places to hide things. It should be smaller than one square mile, and with definable boundaries (roads, fire breaks, fences) to keep members from really getting lost. The smaller the vegetation cover, the smaller the Cailleach will be naturally. Distributing maps and cell-phones & GPS equipment is standard for the over-anxious. A finish line with an evergreen tree, a box, a campfire and a long rope is chosen. Games start and end there.

Number of Participants: As many as feasible.

Duration: The hunt should last about an hour or two. Older members will wait at the finish line in a suitably warm place (like a van).

Overview:

1. At winter solstice, the AD tells the tale of Cailleach Bheur, to burrow it into their psyches. Then the AD begins preparations for making a hunting package (whistle, secret envelope, hunting stick, tennis ball, piece of elastic, protection amulet, blindfolds, search flares) for each future participant. Train your bagpiper, get a bullhorn or air horn, or super whistle, etc. Prepare major amounts of hot chocolate and a feast for the returning hunters, preferably at the nearby onsen/hot spa! One long rope is also necessary and a campfire.
2. The Archdruid, or her accomplice, hides a statue or mannequin or doll with a 3 foot long stick and hangs a piggy in the nearby area before the first snow fall, or before a predicted great snow fall, thereby covering the tracks and adding a sense of mystery. Caution should be made whereby, notable features are noted down, and the statue will not be completely covered by snowfall (tying it at chest high to a tree is a good idea.
3. A few weeks or months later, the hunters (who've been hopefully training) gather at the starting point, in their best outdoors gear. The rules are explained and the hunting packets are distributed. The player's duty to bring winter to a quick end should be stressed, if the Gods will help. Players are crowned with short antlers, blindfolded and spun around. Bagpipes sounds and they rush off into the woods to find the Cailleach Bheur and her little piggy (Arkan Sonney).
4. The first person who finds her statue/manikin places his amulet around the neck of the statue, he or she will grab her staff and use it to knock down the piggy from his cage (always set a few inches out of reach of the stick, to tease them into clever ploys to reach it.)
5. The lucky fellow now grabs the piggy and immediately sounds her/his hunting horn (a shrill whistle) 7 times. The pig rustler will get seven blessings if he can make it back to the finish line and toss the stick into the holly/evergreen tree and put the piggy in a box filled with straw and carrots.
6. After hearing the whistle , everyone tries to tag the pig rustler. If they tag the person, they take away one of the blessings for themselves, and the rustler will get symbolically spanked for each time they are tagged by the officiant. (If you like playing rough, you can have them try to take away the piggy and finish it themselves, but avoid bloody noses.)
7. The winner gets a kiss from the AD, and will hide the piggy for the next year and oversee the preparations and is publicly blessed 7 times (her choice of which blessings to grant) with the staff. All the players are recalled. Players who tagged him/her (in order) may deduct one of the blessings as they see fit for their own use.

8. The piggy is then tied to the middle of a long rope and placed over a fire (or a cauldron in non-fire-possible zones) and the grove splits into two sides (perhaps by Nov 1st to May 1st birthdays and May 1st to Nov 1st birthdays) to divine, by a "tug of war", whether winter or summer is stronger. The side to pull, the (quite possibly burning) piggy over 15 feet from the fire is declared the winner and all its teammates get three blessings, losers get one blessing each.
9. After one hour, if no one has returned, sound the bagpipe's "Warning song" (or sound the siren in 2 blasts) and the players can open the sealed envelope with a description of the location of the statue. However, they lose 4 of the blessings if they do so. They can choose to not open the envelope and keep searching and thus lose only 2 of the blessings.
10. If they haven't returned in 2 hours, play the bagpipes' "retreat song", shoot the flares into the skies and call out the National Guard to return the players. Winter will be longer than usual this year!

Figure 37 Lyman Creek in Upper Arb, c.2002.

Figure 38 Ancient megalith at Akita, c. 1998.

Prayer for Sleep

By Robin Goodfellow
Modified for the RDNA with permission.
Summer Solstice, A Druid Missal-Any 2004

Earth Mother, rock me in your arms; Be'al, guard my rest from fear, regret, doubt and anxiety. Refresh me in soul, mind and body. Bestow this blessing; I offer my prayer. Sustain me in that perfect peace and awareness promised us who have you in our minds and hearts.

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Let me never forget You. Let me feel your warm embrace that comforts me in my troubles, that reminds me that all is not as fearsome as it seems at times, and that I am never alone and without You. Your loving presence gives my heart the reassurance and my mind the courage to carry on peacefully this night and in the days to follow after and after again. In your presence am I safely held secure.

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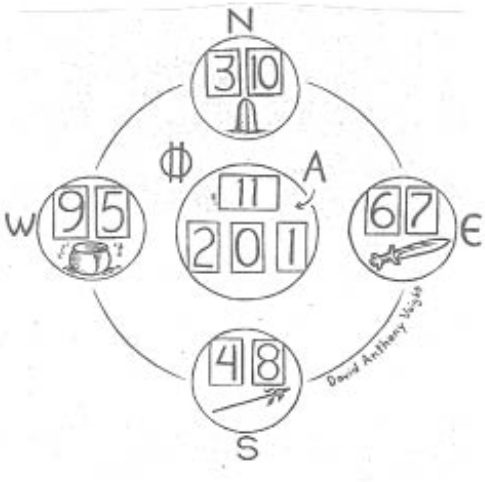
Through the divine connection we share, You and I, this is so, and I am at peace.

Peace, Peace, Peace!



The Druidic Cross Tarot

By Stephen Abbot McCauley and Steven Goldstone
-Summer 1980

This Tarot layout is the second of a series planned for publication. It first :appeared in *Gnostica News* issue number 45 and was called the Pentacle Layout. The present article should be considered as only a bare outline of the Druidic Cross Layout. It has been developed in conjunction with the: Celtic Pagan Tarot Deck, a set of designs soon, hopefully, to be published. They are beautiful cards, designed by David Weiss, a Los Angeles artist, and myself, using Celtic divinities as archetypes.

The Pentacle Layout was designed to be used for questions dealing with deeply personal and spiritual matters. As most of you are aware, the pentacle symbolizes the microcosm- a mini-universe - a personal frame of reference which extends from within us all as individuals. The Druidic Cross layout is a logical progression from this: it represents five manifested, exteriorized spheres of Being which emanate from the microcosm of the Self.

These five circles correspond to the five traditional elements: fire, air, earth, water, and spirit. And, as in our Druid tradition - they also represent the five directions: north, south, east, west, and the Center. The relationships of Element to Direction are those of the Golden Dawn System familiar to most students of occultism. Fire is South, Air is East, Water is West, Earth is North, and Spirit, or Akasha, is the Center.

In our layout, each circle is given a letter. The center circle is Letter A, and is considered to be the first sphere of influence - the realm of Spirit. Letter B, the second circle, represents Earth; Letter C, the third circle, is Fire. Letters D and E are Air and Water, respectively. This completes the basic circle of the elements. Much can be inferred from this pattern about the nature of energy-flow being shown.

In addition to the Elements, certain ancient Celtic deities hold sway over the Five Circles. These can be invoked as guides by the diviner, or their spheres of influence seen as centers of the body in a psychic sense, or simply studied in terms of how their energies influence a manifestation. The object is to develop a personal relationship with the elemental divinities of the Celtic pantheon, to get close to them, and to listen for their prophetic voices as did the ancient Bards. This guidance from the Gods is the essence of divination.

This list given of Celtic divinities is not intended to be complete, however, it is a suggestion, an outline, of what might be possible. Many other implicit concepts will present themselves to the serious student.

A final set of corresponding images for the outer circles are the Four Magical Treasures of Celtic Tradition, as shown in the diagram.

Some ideas for this layout came from an excellent book by Virginia Moore entitled The Unicorn. In it is given some material from unpublished diaries of W. B. Yeats, written at the time when he was still a member of the Golden Dawn. (After his death, it is believed that most of his diaries work was burnt by his fanatical widow, who considered magic to be of the Devil. A similar fate befell the diaries of Sir Richard Burton, much to our loss.)

Other ideas come from a multitude of books of Celtic Mythology; and still others, from personal experience. Complete bibliography will accompany the Celtic Deck when it is published.

Special thanks are due to David Voight for his fine artwork on the Layout.

This Layout is especially designed for Tarot students who wish to explore the influence of divinities of the ancient Gaels in their lives, and to communicate with them. It can bring more scope and dimension, however, to anyone seriously interested in Paganism and Magic.

Gods	Cir	Element	The Legend	Treasure
Tailtu & Tethra	A	Spirit	CenterIndigo	Symbol of the Triple Goddess
Danu & Dagda	B	Earth	North Brown	Stone Lia Fail
Bridgid & Lugh	C	Fire	South Red	Spear of Lugh
Cendwen & Mannan MacLir	D	Water	West Silver	Cauidren of Inspiration
Rhaiannon & Camelos	E	Air	East | Blue	Sword of Nuada, Fragarach

Table 1 summarizes the five circles of being. Only Circle A will be treated in detail here.

At ancient Telltown was held the annual celebration Lughnasadh for here Lang the (God of fire, married the land of Eirin (Ireland). Watching over this sacred spot is Iailtu, or Telta, who had her palace here. Also, a great battle for the control of Ireland was fought here.

In Celtic religion the center of a particular province was considered the most magical and sacred place in that province. All of the most important Druidic and magical rites were performed and celebrated at the sacred center point. It is appropriate for Tailtu, who watched over such a central and important point in Erin, to be honored here.

Beneath the sea the Fomoire, whose king was Tethra, plotted to take Erin by force and bring her under the sea. After years of preparation, a great battle was fought at Telltown in which the Fomoire were defeated. Tethra has also been a major force in Stephan's personal work and is honored in the center here.

The Gods do not guard their own treasures, but assign the task to their priests. In this case, the priests are called Druids, and their worship is of the deities of nature and the ways of nature. This particular guardian is called the Druid of the Center, the Druid of the Mystic Center, the Keeper of the Mysteries of the Spirit. The guardian wears a robe the colour of indigo, the elemental colour of Spirit.

If his guardian is to be called upon when you wish to perform a reading which deals with the weighty or deeply spiritual matters. Being a priest, the guardian can contact the deity forms of this (the spirit) plane of awareness if the question is dire enough.

The magical treasure of this centre circle is the symbol of the triple Goddess, the circle of spirit with two lines crossing it. The circle is a symbol for the concept of "peace," for only with peace of mind and the calm feelings which it brings can anything be done successfully of a spiritual nature.

Comments and criticisms of the Druidic Cross Layout are welcomed. Please send all correspondence to the authors at 3215 Brookdale Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602. We do not know when the Celtic Pagan Tarot deck will be completed (hopefully during 1980), but we will gladly answer correspondence on it when we find out more precisely.

Creating a Wizard's Light

By Emmon Bodfish
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1983

A Wizard-Lite is a phenomenon you'll often come across in fantasy and occult literature in these post-Illuminati (Trilogy) years. The following is a distillation of my experience with one method of creating one.

Sit straight up, on a sturdy seat, feet flat on the floor, in a dark room. It is never quite dark enough outdoors for this. Lean a little forward, and look into the darkest part of the room. Focus you eyes as if you were looking into the farther distance. The room must be dark enough that you cannot see the wall in front of you. The correct eye focus is nine-tenths of it. Some people describe it as "looking left with the left eye and right with the right eye." I didn't think of it this way, but if it helps...

You'll see flecks of light, blue or violet, which move in curved paths, then wink out. Don't try to look AT or follow them. You'll loose the critical distance focus and not be able to see them at all. You are focusing out beyond them; they appear as five to ten feet away from your chair. The longer you can hold this focus, and your attention on the dark in front of you, the more sparks of lite you will see. At a certain point you get the feeling of seeing past the darkness, into a space speckled with many , many of these sparks. It looked to me like the Milky Way, the first time I saw it. The tendency at this point is to look away, or close your eyes. If you do that, you will loose it and have to start over again. Of course willingness to start over again, and I mean many times, is necessary to the development of any "psychic" skill.

When you can get the focus right and see the sparks fairly easily, you can get to the "Starry sky" stage in about 15 to 20 minutes per practice session.. Next, you try to form the sparks into a ball by herding them together. There is no better verbal way to describe this. To me it feels like pushing the with my eyeballs. You may feel you are herding them into a close cluster with your willpower. As more sparks are crowded together, the glow will get brighter. It will look something like this;

[Ed. Picture of a black square with a white spot surrounded by specks.]

As it brightens, you can see the floor and the room, but not in detail or color. While it looks like the room, alright, it looks not quite the same as the room looked before. And definitely different from the way the room looks in dim light with your eyes well dark adapted.

I plan to try this in a strange location, which I have not seen in daylight to see if it is a matter of running on memory.

This eye focus is the same one that has been described in the literature as the one to use to see auras.

Figure 39 Skinner Chapel, c. 2002.

Back to the Shadows Again

[Ed. Calligraphy by Valerie Voight]
By Emmon Bodfish
Spring Equinox 1983, A Druid Missal-Any

And Now, by popular demand, another see-and-do article.

The Druids of folktales were imputed with the power to create a magical mist, the "Cleo Trom" in which to hide themselves or to obscure the field of battle and aid their chieftains' armies. In fact, according to one source, ability to raise the Druid Mist was a test of anyone claiming to be a Fear-droi or a Wizard. This ability is also remembered in fragments of the Ossanic poems and in folklore from the Continent. In his book on magic, Steven Richards remarks that this "Invisibility is the peculiar mark of the Western magician as levitation is of the Oriental one."

In practice, there are different levels of making oneself invisible. At the first level is the crass psychological technique of diverting attention to something else while you quietly walk away, or perform the slight-of-the-hand that completes the trick. Stage magicians, thieves and Sherlock Holmes are adepts at this one.

On the second level is the method actor's strategy of changing his emotional state, manner and gait such that he seems to turn into (or out to be) someone or something other than who he was, and so to "disappear" into the role. Crowley, working at this level of transformation , tells of the following incident that happened to him in London. When he was walking down a lane, he saw, coming toward him, a group of students who knew him and who were not particularly friendly to him or his ideas. Wishing to avoid their ridicule or worse, he ducked down a side street, but they followed him. The street proved to be a blind end. After stepping into a shop doorway, he rushed back out, having changed his gait and demeanor utterly, and bustled past them in a businesslike way. They did not recognize him and he escaped.

At the third level is something between this technique and that of thought projection or active telepathy.. Mrs. Alexander-David Neil describes the first few signs of this level in her book of observations of mystics in India and Tibet. Basically it involves the ability to control your output of emotional energy, your projection of your "presence" in the situation. "If you walk through a crowd shouting, bumping against people, and otherwise calling attention to yourself, you will make yourself quite visible. However, if you steal along noiselessly, you may be able to pass without being seen. Animals know this instinctively, and use it to catch their prey. As J.H. Brennan points out, merely sitting motionless cuts down on your visibility. Beast of prey avoid this difficulty by bobbing their heads, creating the illusion of motion. However quiet you are, though, there is still the unquietness generated by your mind. The work of the mind generates an energy which spreads all around the one who produces it, and it is energy which is felt in various ways by those who come into touch with it. If you can stop even that source of noise, you become as silent as one could be.

You maybe seen in the way that a camera "sees" things, but you will not be noticed. NO knowledge consciousness, (nampar shespa) follows the visual contact; we do not remember that this contact has occurred. When the min inhibits emanation of its radiative energy says Evans-Wentz, it ceases to be a source of mental stimuli o others, so that they become unconscious of the presence of the Adept of the Art just as they are unconscious of invisible beings living in a rate of vibration unlike their own." It is like the ostrich burying his

head in the sand. One draws his attention into himself, instead of directing it outward, and by stopping the flow of the min, turns off the noise. In the most elementary sense, this form of invisibility is just moving along quietly. "The real secret of invisibility is not concerned with the laws of optics at all," writes Crowley. "The trick is to prevent people from noticing you when they normally would do so." As the test of his power, Crowley took a walk in the street in a golden crown and a scarlet robe without attracting attention. Eliphas Levi makes the same point in several of his manuscripts. This non-projection technique of un-noticibility/invisibility is described by this author's friend, who is considerably good at it, as "pull in your vibe". The Druid Mist cannot hide you if you continue to project a strong emotional presence. Some people say this feels like a drawing in of their personal energy, pulling it back in through the area just above the solar plexus.

Begin, then, by becoming mentally silent, calming your emotions until you reach emotional neutrality, having withdrawn you presence into yourself. Being able to stop the sentences flowing through your head is essential to any success in spiritual or psychic endeavors. It is the first rung of the ladder. This is mentioned in so many different religious and magical traditions that it must be accepted as one of the essential ingredients. Second, you must learn to stop , or put aside, the mood of the moment. This means sorting the flow of emotional energy surging up and down the body. We can all do this, if for only a moment. Take for example the experience of waiting for an important phone call. It is important to you to make a good impression. But while you are waiting by the phone, you become involved in a heated argument with another person in the room. Emotion is surging up and down through your body. Then the phone rings; this is it; you must be personable. You stop. The moment of suspension when you have left the argument and before you turn your attention to the phone, is it, the emotional neutral-point. You can learn to prolong that minute of emotional silence.

When you have silenced your mental verbalizations and are holding a neutral emotional stance, pull in your social, interactive energy, and your presence will seem to fade into the background. You have become a shadow. A camera will "see" you sitting there, but you will not be noticed, not will you register on the consciousness or in the memories of other people. As a secondary benefit, this mental state allows you to see the world quite objectively, in increased detail and dimensionality.

To this state of unnoticibility you add the fourth level by forming the Druid Mist. While it is the least understood part of the art of invisibility, it has been used and described for millennia, just as out ancestors could throw a missile accurately without understanding gravity or trajectory. Forming the Cleo Trom may involve the ability to control either light, or matter or perception. The Mist seems to absorb light; it is dull colored, gray, and visually uninteresting, as well as hard for the eye to focus on; it does not make itself noticeable. Forming it requires preparation and practice. First, you must train yourself to be able to concentrate on one thing for a fairly long time, ten to twenty minutes. Training the attention and developing the will are basics in all magical traditions. It make s the difference between magic as psychic phenomena and magic as wishful thinking. In learning these skills, small amounts of practice daily works better than long sessions, infrequently. The learning may take anywhere from two weeks to two years, but there are interesting experiences along the way.

Begin by getting mentally silent and emotionally calm. Staring at a dark, plain background, relax your vision, focusing in the middle distance. Concentrate your will and energy on a point in mid-air four or five feet in front of you. Madame Blavatsky found it helped to think of willing the matter making up the air to gather and concentrate at this point. This may require a number of practice sessions of ten to twenty minutes each. When the Mist starts to form, it is grayish and almost invisible. You may only notice that you can no longer see the texture of the dark backdrop. For some reason there is a tendency at first for the eyes to cross while practicing this, so privacy is recommended. ("Just what we need... a gonzo wizard." Cf. Bored of the Rings) After you have produced some of the Mist, you can counter it s tendency to disperse by willing it to spin counter clockwise and contract. When you have gathered a mass of the Mist, a good amount which you can definitely see, the final step is to place it where you want it to be, between yourself and noxious stimuli or yourself and other persons. My consultant describes the technique as holding the Cleo with your eyes and pulling it along with your gaze. A woman mystic whom Madame Blavatsky interviewed during her oriental travels, collected and controlled the Mist by moving her hands as though gathering something together and guiding it. This would be the mudra approach. It is a technique widely used by Western mediums. When you think you can form the Mist reliably, success is always sporadic at first, try practicing with a full length mirror, placed eight or ten feet away from you. This way you can see how much of your reflection is blotted out by what looks like a grayish film on the surface of the mirror. Until you are very adept, be cautious of inviting friends to watch. The phenomena requires all of your concentration, and because friends are more disturbing to it than strangers. Anything that evokes an emotional response from you dissipates the effect.

When you are well practiced, it is possible to get up, wrapping the Cleo Trom around you like a circular curtain and move about unobtrusively, unnoticed by those around you. But you must maintain the psychological silence and physical unobtrusiveness described as Level Three, or people will become aware of your presence, though not of the details of your physical appearance. H.S. Lewis tells an interesting account of this in one of his autobiographical essays. He was practicing forming the mist in a cafeteria, in order to shut out the noise of the people around him and be undisturbed. When he finished his meal, and went to pay, re recognized the owner of the establishment, an old acquaintance of his, working the cash register. He spoke to the man in a friendly way, but his friend treated him coldly, like a peculiar stranger and would give him no indication of recognition. On his way out of the restaurant, Lewis realized that he still had some of the Cleo Trom wrapped about him, not having dispersed it. This is usually done by dismissing it with your mind, willing it to disperse outward and upward, or in counter-clockwise swirls away from you. Some people find it is only necessary to "let go of it from the will."

"The Mist begin to gently lift. The air begin to clear."

The Mist will disperse naturally as you put your attention on immediate matters and become re--involved with the business of the day and the emotions of the moment.

Photographs I have seen of people practicing holding the Cleo Trom around themselves, show an unfocused area, or streaked appearance in the place of the person's image.

This may seem small stuff compared to descriptions in the old sagas, but even in the Iron Age, it required a fair number of Druids to obscure a battlefield.

Candle Staring

By Emmon Bodfish
Samhain 1984, A Druid Missal-Any

How to invoke your first image.

A good method to use for starters, it is partly mundane, making use of a nerve cell refractory period phenomenon, and partly psychic, making use of willed control of a mentally formed object. This image/object is different from the images in visions which come about spontaneously and require no effort on the seer's part to sustain them. These cannot generally be controlled and manipulated by those who witness them. Nor can hallucination be. The purpose here is to create a controllable phantom. This is a magical exercise, as contrasted with a visionary, contemplative, or meditative one, magic being defined here as psychic power and perception under the control of the will. (Somebody once said the difference between a magician and a madman is control.)

Warning: Any of this takes practice; no instant wizardry. It's like learning to play a musical instrument. You will have to start over from the top line umpteen times. Practice for about twenty minutes at a time; then forget about it for a while. Twenty minutes uses up about the amount of high level mental energy most people have on tap. It takes a few hours of quiet, or even a day or so of regular living, to reaccumulate this energy.

Instructions:

1. Get alone.
A. Make sure you are not going to be disturbed for half an hour.
B. Silence helps. Even music distracts. It takes up part of your mental energy to listen to and comprehend it, albeit at the unconscious level.

2. Darkness helps
A. A dark room or after sunset.
B. No drafts; the candle must not flicker

3. Sit comfortably about arm's length back from your candle with the flame a little below eye level.
A. Set the candle against a black background, black felt is good.
B. The flame must extend above the top of the candle, not be down in a bowl or a hole.
C. Some people find it helps to draw a circle around themselves, indicating to themselves that for the next half hour nothing outside this circle concerns them.
D. In some way, mentally calm and ground yourself, letting go worries and plans, and all mental flotsam and jetsam that is normally flowing by.

4. Stare at the candle flame with a relaxed, not a pointed, kind of attention.
A. The first visual change you will notice is that you will see the circle of light around the flame, the phenomenon so often portrayed on Yule Season cards. Good, you've got your vision relaxed.
B. The second change you will see is in the flame's image on your retinas. It will seem to waiver or move to one side, leaving a dark shadow or image of itself behind it.
Congratulations: You are already seeing little things that aren't there!

5. Now, you're going to make this dark image come to you.
A. Look steadily at the dark image without re-focusing on nearer or farther away objects and without turning your head.
B. When you've gotten the right focus, for long enough, the dark image will pull off of the candle flame and move toward you. When it does this, it may no longer be in the shape of the candle flame. It may change to a shape like this.

or some other shape.

6. The usual reaction is to startle, blink, and look away, at which the image disappears and you see a lot of bubbles of light and after-images of the candle.
A. Start again.
B. The first time I got this to work, it pulled free of the candle flame and then came toward me very fast. As in presone to any sold looking object coming fast at my face, I dodged to the side and ducked. The image went on past me and through the space where my head had been. This is not a visual after-image, which follows your field of view as you turn.

7. When you get past the startle reflex and are able to continue to stare in a relaxed way at the image as it approaches you, it will
A. "Pop" ala soap bubble a few inches from your face.
B. Or, if you can hold very still, physically and mentally, and continue keeping your attention on it, it will come to you and seem to enter your head at the spot between and above your eyes. The location is known in the East as the "Third Eye" and in the West as the "Unicorn's Horn". There is no tactile sensation and nothing physical happens.

8. Now, you can learn to control this image. By willing it to do so, you can make it stop at any point between you and the candle, hover for a while, get bigger, and then come to you.
A. It is very slippery and will keep getting away from you at first.
B. A method of doing this which use has the feeling of projecting my energy out to the image, in midair, and moving it by pushing or pulling. Those are the subjective sensations of it.

Conclusion

The purpose of this exercise, besides helping you to get into a wizard-like head state, is to give you practice at controlling visually manifested mental/psychic phenomena. Starting with one that is close to the mundane, you can verify to yourse4lf that these manifest by means of your energy, and that you can control that facet of the situation. This is not only amusing and confidence building, but can be a good skill to have on further mental journeys.

Contents thanks to my Teacher
Organization thanks to Chilton's Auto Repair Manuals.

Figure 40 Emmon Bodfish at Maypole, Beltane 1983.

Why Another Article on Scrying?

By Emmon Bodfish
Samhain 1988, A Druid Missal-Any

Despite the existence of numerous books on crystal gazing, and my pointing of inquirers toward them, this does not seem to be working as a feint. They keep asking. They say they want something "quick", "short", the "ready-Mart" of scrying. "What works." Here goes.

First, I have had better results with a straight sided solid piece of natural crystal than with a polished ball. This was especially true in the beginning. And secondly, as with so many psychic skills, practice does it.

Set up a room where you will not be disturbed. You must be able to be absolutely unself-conscious. A gentle light, coming from one small source, a candle or a low watt bulb, is best. Sit lightly, comfortably, with your back fairly straight, in a position in which you can forget your body. Breathe easily and deeply; "ground down." Put aside your worries and plans; tell them you will hold court for them later. Later, of course, you must do so and give these thoughts a short audience. This way they will learn to leave you alone while you are practicing your magic.

Eyes open and relaxed, take in the scene around you. Compose your emotions about the neutral point, alert and calm. Listen to the sound of your breathing and slowly stop the sentences running through your head. Become mentally silent, alert, and unbiased; anticipate. Feel the pause at the top of the in-breath. The practice of mental silence, being able to sop the verbal stream of thoughts running through your mind, is essential to the success of any meditative or psychic endeavor. It is the first rung of the ladder. This has been independently discovered by numerous religious and magical traditions and by individuals who have found their own way. It is one of the essentials for progressing in either meditative or thaumaturgical work.

Here are two methods of scrying I have used to get good results. One involves putting the light in front of you. In the other, the light is behind your right shoulder.

In the first, hold the piece of crystal in your right hand between yourself and the light source at the distance at which it is easy for you to focus your eyes on a fleck or a spot in the center of the crystal. At first it will be easier to scry while holding the stone in your hand rather than by gazing at it while it rests on a stand in front of you.

Pick a bright spot, a different looking spot, a flaw or a sparkle in the crystal and watch it. Don't anticipate or try to push for an image. Or, in another way of putting it, "Just watch it like it was television." Turn the rock slowly. Find an interesting angle.

What will come first are eidetic images. These are like the "faces" you see in clouds or the little scenes you can see in the embers. Your eye is seeing pure shapes, unnamed images, and your brain is saying, "oh, that looks like…" Don't scoff at this or try to stop it. It is one gateway to visions and one of the closest. And, some people would add, one of the safest. Relax your eyes the way you did when you were day dreaming as a kid and just watch. If you can prevent yourself from dismissing it with the "Oh, that's only…" response, the eidetic image will become a scene. Small, very distant figures of people moving about at some unknown task, or geometric

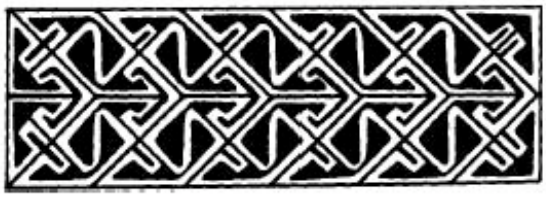
mask-like faces that appear, change and disappear are common first sightings. Keep your mind calm and silent and watch. The scene may draw nearer and begin to mean something; a mask may become a face or a person. Two negative skills are needed here; not scoffing and not pushing for something better. Watch, remember, get the feel of it. Sometimes the scene will fade back into being flaws in the crystal; sometimes it will just disappear and you will realize how tired your eyes and mind are. You have come to the end of your concentration energy. With meditation practice, you can increase the length of time that you can hold these contemplative states of mind. Look away. Now you can analyze what meaning you what you saw may have for you. As with all psychic skills it gets easier and more refined with practice. Again, remember the metaphor of learning to play a musical instrument.

When you succeed, try to remember to remember how you were focusing your eyes, and the "feel" of your state of mind. These are helpful guideposts in learning to get back to that state.

Scrying with the light behind you, coming over your right shoulder, is similar as to method, the same eye focus, the same relaxed attention, but here reflections are more important and the scenes are more likely to be in multiple colors. Sunlight can be used, but it is difficult. It is important to have the light coming over your shoulder from the right. This is the positive direction in Celtic lore and does make a difference in mood and mental state. This I know from empirical observation and testing as well. (Yes, we test things here at the Missal-Any. Question everything. It's an old R.D.N.A. tradition not to write or teach about a psychic phenomenon unless you have personal experience of it.) The "light from the right" rule is also corroborated in many other traditions as well. Does it stimulate the left hemisphere? I don't know. Energy, messages, and even thought sentences that seem to originate from the left are often untrustworthy and unconstructive and sometimes even harmful. This is not a prejudice; it comes of long observation. But this does not mean that anything from the right hand side is "TRUTH." I'd like to invoke here a former Archdruid's safety tip for psychic experimenters: "Be as cautious about accepting or trusting any entity or "message" which you may encounter in the course of your psychic workings as you would about trusting a person whom you had just met at a party." Common sense, repeated practice, and long acquaintance are good guides. Check your gut feeling. But this moves into the related problem of ethics, judgment, and veracity testing on the non-material planes, another and vaster subject than simple scrying, which was the subject that I was asked to boil down and put in this nutshell.*

-Emmon Bodfish

* And thanks be to the Gods for that! Holy wars have been waged and volumes written on these matters, and I can refer the interested reader thither.



On Divination: A Short Talk and Dialogue

By Larry Press, Arch Druid, Baccharis Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2001

I had in mind to lead off with the perfect, most appropriate quote; that meant, of course, finding the book containing it. Having found the book, I see that the full quote runs about a page and a half, extravagantly violating all principles of fair use (and necessitating a great deal of typing). Rather than quote in full, I paraphrase; this is appropriate, since the full quote is itself a paraphrase. Here I paraphrase Xenophon paraphrasing Socrates:

"It is not given to man to know all things; that is the province of the Gods. But as the Gods have given us our limited rational faculty, so have they also given us the oracles. Some questions are suitable to our rationality, and those we must answer rationally; other questions must be put to the oracles. It is arrogant and impious to attempt rational answers for questions that are beyond our rational understanding; likewise it is impious to ask of the Gods answers that we can perfectly well find ourselves."

Thus far my paraphrase. An over-simplification perhaps, but otherwise (I trust) a reasonably accurate account of what the translator said Xenophon said Socrates said.

Now let me go back and restate the whole thing (putting words in everyone else's mouths):

1. There are several reasons why a question might not be rationally answerable

a. We may lack information.

b. There might be a rational answer, but we might be too limited intellectually to find it, or to understand it once found.

c. It may be in the nature of the question itself that there is no rationally-attainable answer.

In any of these cases, there could still be an answer (or at any rate, an APPROXIMATE answer) which is attainable IRRATIONALLY (or at any rate, not WHOLLY RATIONALLY).

2. In some important ways, the different divination systems are more-or-less equivalent; which one(s) you choose may be a matter of taste and temperament, or just an accident (though some would say it's no "accident") of which you are exposed to first. The important thing as I see it is that

a. You have a way of answering questions rationally.

b. You have another way of answering questions that you can't answer rationally.

c. You know which is which.

4. In other ways, divination systems are all quite different. Each imposes its own view on the world, and tends to answer all questions in the context of that view. (To a hammer, the world is nothing but nails; to a saw, it's nothing but boards.) In fact, each system is best suited to certain sorts of question; nonetheless, it does NOT do to second-guess the oracle--IT knows better than you do which sorts of question it can answer (personal experience speaking here).

Querant: How do I find the information needed to answer a question? And how do I know when I have found that information--does a little "ah ha!" go off in the brain?

Augur. Oops! I think you're assuming one does a divination to find missing information, and then uses that information to

(rationally) answer the question. That's not how it usually works.

True, information alone can be the difference between being able or unable to answer a question rationally. And in fact, we CAN use divination to (try to) discover missing information, but I don't know that that works very well. Rather, we may use divination not so much to find the information needed to answer a question rationally, but precisely because we lack that information, and so cannot answer the question rationally.

As for how we know we've "got it right", I think we can only know we have the right information when it gives us the right answer. And how do we know we have the right answer? How do we EVER know? Same sort of tests we apply to any purported answer to any question.

Speaking from experience (not of divination per se but of trying to understand things in general, such as why something happened in a certain way, etc.): sometimes part of understanding is waiting to understand.

Querant: How do I answer questions that I can't answer rationally? Blind faith?
Augur: Blind faith? That may work for some (maybe--I'm unconvinced), but not for me. Of course, there's no guarantee you can answer those questions at all--but the oracles give you additional tools. ALSO, the oracles let you see additional facets of questions that you CAN answer rationally.

Querant: Tools? Let you see? Oh this is beyond me, at least right now! And how else would you know other than faith?
Augur: You're looking at a thing--might not be a physical thing; it might be a social situation, an ethical question, or whatever.

You can look at it from a variety of viewpoints (psychological stances, assumption sets, modes of investigation, etc.), and the thing is so complex that no single viewpoint gives a complete picture of it. Rational investigation gives you some of those views of the thing; divination might give you other views of it. The more different directions you view the thing from, the more you know about it. (Though perhaps, not the more sense you can make of it.)

But blind faith? Perhaps you're faith-oriented, whereas I'm unfaith-oriented. As I said, I approach divination as a rational exercise, even though I'm working in a non-rational realm. Of course, your mileage may vary.

Querant: Then it seems to be one of those gut feeling things, like you know when you know, hence the "ah ha!" although knowing and feeling come from two different places--they would seem to be related--oh, but they are both senses! The message comes from or through the senses? How can you test a sense?
Augur: It may be that a highly developed gut perception is the ideal. I'm not sure I'd call that "divination"; it may go beyond divination i.e. it may be a direct perception of that of which divination gives indirect hints. Alternatively, it may be just another mode of divination (depending on how you care to categorize things).

When I think of divination I generally have in mind some system that lets you use your rational faculty (to whatever extent possible) to get information from non-rational sources.

At any rate, I'm head-oriented, rather than gut-oriented, and so I use head-oriented divination systems. I'm sure there are legitimate gut-oriented approaches, but that's terra incognita to me.

Querant: Does divination then come from the head, as it is trying use our RATIONAL faculty?
Augur For me, it does; for you, maybe not.

Querant: In Tarot readings when there was no answer to be found YET, I've noticed that the cards would be ill-dignified and say something about being selfish or out for gain, etc.
Augur: The oracles do that. Not only do you get answers to the questions you ask, but you get answers to questions you didn't ask, and comments on the state of your act in general.

Querant: I've learned that that means I'm not meant to know yet--is this the "there is no answer?"
Augur: Not necessarily. It could also mean you're asking the wrong question, or asking the wrong oracle (i.e. using the wrong method of divination), or whatever.

It could even be that the oracle really is giving you an answer, but that you can't see it.

Querant: The kinds of questions I asked most recently when I got the ill-dignified cards were job related ones.

Sometimes it just wasn't the time for an answer (maybe I was being pestery or impatient or disparate) or I discovered I didn't phrase the question right.

Augur: Yeah. It can depend a LOT on your current psychological state. It also helps to practice a lot (says one who doesn't).

Querant: How do I find my divinatory method?
Augur: Trial and error. You need to cast about, to see which methods are most congenial to you.

Querant: How do I find out what the methods are?
Augur: Read a lot. Talk to other people. Note also that you don't have to use somebody ELSE'S method; you can modify an existing method to suit your taste (that's what's usually done), or create your own out of whole cloth (that's also done surprisingly often).

I think that practice with any method will give insight you can use in learning, modifying, or creating another method.

Querant: How do I become familiar with a method's view so that I know how the answers are colored and adjust accordingly?
Augur: By working with that method A LOT. But don't pay too much mind to the differences between the method's views, at least at first.

Remember, it's not wise to second-guess an oracle.

Querant: Should I do a web search for methods? If so, should I search on the keyword "divination?"
Augur: I haven't tried. I'm sure you'd get some hits that way.

I've merely learned about numerous systems (generally only a token amount about them) over the years through reading and discussion. I've followed up on the ones that seemed interesting and congenial, and ignored the rest.

Querant: Why would I use divination? The augury for the sacrifice? Any other instances?

Augur: The augury for the sacrifice is one of the traditional instances; it's really just a special case of the augury for ANY important public function.

I think you should do divinations over ANY important question that doesn't have a really obvious rational answer (and many that do). However, I admit right up front that I don't follow my own advice here as much as I should.

Note though that I don't mean you should ever base an important decision solely on divination--or even primarily on divination-that's just silly.

Querant: Is an oracle a deity?
Augur: You can treat them as such, if that's your bent. I generally don't personify them, except sometimes when talking about them to others.

I use the term "oracle" as shorthand for "divination system", with the understanding that such a system is far more complex than it appears at first--so much so, that we might well treat it as sentient, with its own (inscrutable) will--though, as I've said, I generally don't.

Querant: Do or can the Celtic deities play a part in the divination in any case?
Augur: They may have for Emmon; they could for you, if you want them to. And it WAS the old Indo-European tradition that
1. The Gods spoke through oracles
2. We don't dare do anything important without first checking whether it's OK with the Gods

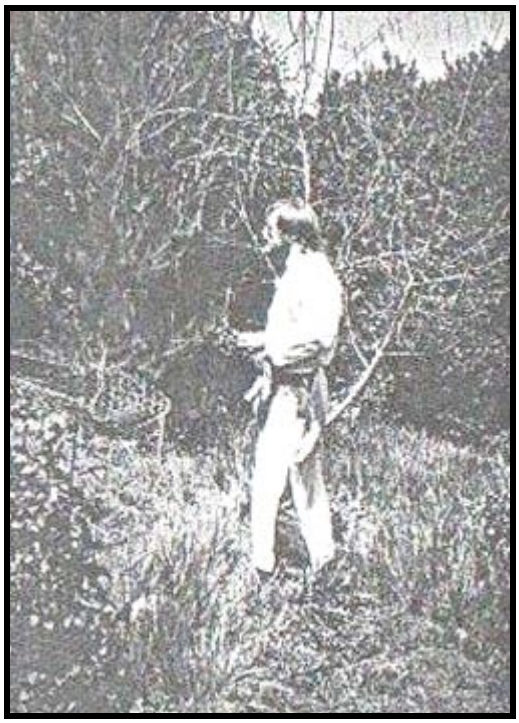


Figure 41 Larry Press calling the members to Beltane Service, Live Oak, Beltane1984.

Divination Techniques

Compiled from various internet encyclopedia
by Mike the Fool, 2004

I have little actual practice in divination relative to others I know, but I have a number of thoughts and recommendations, nonetheless, for those curious to explore this range of activities. Divination is the attempt to produce answers to difficult decisions about things we're not sure of, by manipulation or observation of various tools, movements or contemplations. There is not one of us who hasn't flipped a coin, drawn lots or rolled a set of dice to try and inquire about a course of action.

Some of us, myself included, are hesitant that this area is too similar to "magic", and rationalize the process as probing the sub-conscious by ritualized activities that occupy our conscious thoughts and let deeper thoughts slip out with powerful archetypal images and half-digested thoughts and feelings on a subject matter. If divination frightens you or offends some notion in your religion, then after inquiring with wise people, don't do it, but I think your practice will be the poorer without one or two of these tools.

Divination is different from sacrifice in some ways. Divination seeks only knowledge that can't be obtained in conventional ways about the past, present or future. Sacrifice is usually to either thank or encourage the deities for past or future blessings. Often, however, sacrifice is also offered in divination to encourage the gods to release that information, in gratitude for having done so, or to prevent unfortunate outcomes. Others feel that mere activity will bring about revelation, without need of a sacrifice, and is merely a form of meditation and creative speaking.

The base belief of many practices in ancient times was that the will of the Gods was somehow reflected in the composition and activities of the physical universe or locked deep in our soul, and could be revealed by those who knew the right techniques. Some people believe that the information is irreversibly fated to happen, others that it is one possible but likely path that can be avoided with carefully focused activities. Some feel that prophecy is often self-fulfilling.

Getting 51% on a yes/no basis is considered pretty good and 34% on a multiple choice is pretty good. Even if your answers are mostly off target, the whole contemplation of the possibilities is sure to better prepare you when a choice has to be made.

One subclass of Druids, the Ovates or Filidh, were charged with divination in ancient times, and the practice continues to this day in many forms. There are hundreds of ways in which divination is practiced, but each practioner has the forms they feel most comfortable with. I am quite sure that you can creatively devise new techniques with different objects or methods.

People in practice may use a combination of various methods, such as dancing first, blaring loud music in their ears while casting lots on the ground. Or they may fast for many days, sit in a dark quiet room, and speak without retraint in non-sense to brainstorm. Others may simply flip a coin for yes/no questions. Skill and seriousness of the request also play into that calculation. There is no limit of possibilities here.

Most divination is solitary in nature, but others may assist the diviner by supplying materials, singing, dancing or tending to their needs while in a trance. Sometimes, as in the case of drawing lots to determine fortuitous leaders, many

people might be necessary. Often a really talented diviner will build a fan club, and few will have a perfect batting average.

Some people are so good at divinational activities that they make it a profession or feel obligated to share their gift. I have little compunction about sharing it, but hesitate to do so for compensation, but that is a personal preference. In some states, divination and psychic activities are for “entertainment purposes” only, and is prosecuted when done expressly for material gain. You should definitely understand the local rules. Most forms of gambling are thought to have derived from various divination techniques, are a good example of abuse of the method.

Interestingly enough, most divination methods require a form of trance of specialized concentration, which easily lends itself to mediational techniques. Meditation is more about acquiring inside knowledge, and the same techniques may be applied, along with various types of yoga, martial arts, breathing exercises and austerities. Divination also requires explanation and clarification of the results to another person, which can often resemble counseling techniques.

I have listed the divinatory techniques alphabetically within their subclasses. I should strongly assert that as Reformed Druids, the purposeful harm of animals or people (perhaps even plants) for religious purposes is strongly discouraged, and I can hardly imagine any Reformed Druid doing so. However, historically, many cultures from the Romans, Greeks, Hebrews, Babylonians, Egyptians, etc. have killed or injured animals over the centuries, and this list will include them merely for informational purposes.

Natural Phenomenon

From the movement of winds, waterfalls or snowfall, the senses are evoked by natural patterns over a period of time. This is particularly common in traditional Reformed Druid liturgies where the winds are evoked after the sacrifice.

Aeromancy is the study of air conditions, cloud formations and other atmospheric phenomena are observed for omens and prognostications. The Star of Bethlehem that herald the birth of Jesus is one such example and weather forecasting is another. Today we have machines to do the observations i.e., barometer and computers.

Sstrology is an extremely popular form of divination that uses the celestial bodies: the sun, moon, planets, and stars. In the Kabbalah this practice is called Monen.

Austromancy is a type of aeromancy divination where predictions are made from wind's behavior. Many of these prophecies still live in our sayings today, "North winds blowing, which means cold is coming".

Bletonism is the ability to perceive subterranean springs and currents by sensation and is supposedly named after Bleton of France.

Botanomancy is a general term for divination using plants and herbs. One method is to use the leaves from a particular tree and throw them into the wind.

Brontomancy is divination using thunder

Ceraunoscopy seeks to draw omens from the study of thunder and lightning.

Chaomancy is a sub-category of aeromancy that interprets clouds and their shapes or figments in the air like comets.

Cromniomancy is a form of divination where omens are read from onion sprouts. Besides omens, cromniomancy was used to make decisions between two alternatives. A person would write the alternatives on two onions and plant them at the same time and under the same conditions. The first one to sprout was the "correct" answer or choice.

Dendromancy is a specific form of botanomancy where either oak or mistletoe is used in the divination.

Genethlialogy is a form of divination that determines someone's future from the position of the stars and planets at the time of his/her birth.

Geomancy is a system of divination that uses the earth's components to make patterns that are then deciphered. An individual will draw a vertical line intersected by three horizontal lines in the dirt; a set of 12 pebbles is then thrown on this pictograph. The stones are then read in relation to the lines in the earth. The vertical line represents you and the three horizontal lines represent time.

Horoscopy is a Astrological forecast of a person's future based on the aspect of the planet and stars either at a given moment, at birth or by his/her zodiac.

Hydatoscopy is a specific form of hydromancy where rainwater is used.

Hydromancy is a general term for divination methods that use water. The variations of hydromancy are as prolific as the substance itself. However they seem to fall into one of three categories. The diviner will either examine the effect of water on matter, examine the water's action on it, or he/she uses the water's properties for scrying or gazing. crystalomancy, eromancy

Meteroromancy is a divination from meteors.

Pegomancy is a specific form of hydromancy that uses spring water.

Pegomancy is a specific form of hydromancy based on moving water.

Phyllorhodomancy is divination where a floral leaf or petal associated to the question is clapped between the hands. The loudness of the sound indicated the success of the outcome. In most cases the rose leaf was used, especially in cases of love. Perhaps this is where we get the practice of pulling flower petals to determine someone's interest. Each petal is pulled while reciting the phase "he loves me... he loves me not ..." until the last petal is pulled. You answer is the last verse that corresponded to the last petal.

Psychometry is the ability to perceive circumstances surrounding an object or place. In the majority of cases the psychics must hold the object but they can also get impression from their surroundings. It is not quite clear how it works. There is one theory that states the object themselves are sentient (animism) and transmit the information and the psychic just tunes-in. The second theory states that living things especially humans radiate auras and energies that are left on objects they have come into contact with and the psychic will pick on this energy residue.

Roadomancy is divination by stars.

Stareomancy is divining by the elements.

Sycomancy is a form of botanomancy where messages are written on leaves. In the West Indies, there is variation where the name of your love is written on a leaf from a particular plant called, amazingly enough, "the love plant". The leaves of this plant have roots that sprout from the leaf itself. If the inscribed leaf takes root -so shall your love and if it doesn't -the love will wither away.

Tidalmancy is the observation of the debris left behind by the last tide and it's height on the beach, especially after a storm or hurricane.

Uranomancy is divination by studying the heavens

Xylomancy is divination by examining wood or leaves found in one's path

Animals

Most of these allow animals to pick a course by the direction them move, the object they pick up, or the sounds they make. All too often in the ancient past, the inner parts of animals butchered for religious feasts were also examined for unusual defects. Injury to animals is highly frowned upon in Druidism and Neo-paganism, although it continues in a muted form through butchering and food preparation techniques of several world religions.

Ailuromancy is divination by watching cats' movements

Alepouomancy is the prediction of the future based on a fox's paw prints.

alectromancy alectryomancy is a form of divination similar to the Ouija board where messages are spelt out. In this form the cock is the planchette. He pecks at grains that are placed on a circle of letters and the message is spelt out by the grains consumed. As this is going on, the questioner chants an incantation.

Apantomancy is read from chance meetings with animals or objects. It is considered to be a bad omen for a black cat to cross your path. While in ancient Rome, it was a good omen for a she-goat to cross your path. Mexico City is said to have been founded where Aztec soothsayers saw an eagle flying from a cactus carrying a live snake

Augury is used as a synonym for divination but in ancient times it was a Greek-Roman divination where birds' flight patterns or singing were interpreted to foretell future events. Some of these practices are still used today; for example, birds' migration patterns are good indicators of seasonal changes.

Batraquomancy is divination using frogs

Bronchiomancy is divination by interpreting the lungs of sacrificed animals

Cephalomancy is when the skull or head of a donkey or goat is used to perform divination. Kephalonomancy ceraunoscopy A sub-category of aeromancy divination that pertains mainly to air and in particular thunder and lightning.

Epatosocomancy Divination by examining the entrails of animals.

Extispicy extispicium is a general term for the inspection of entrails, for the purpose of divination. It can be either animal or human. Disaster was indicated if the entrails were excessively bloody or they were a livid color. Should the priest drop the entrails, disaster was imminent. The Romans would perform this divination in a ritual that consisted of four stages; first they would examine the sacrifice, then they would open it up and examine its entrails. The offering would then be put into the fire where the flames were examined as they burned the sacrifice and finally the food offerings were consumed.

Haruspicy is the examination of the livers and entrails of sacrificed animals. See extispicy for details on the entrails' method and hepatoscopy for the liver.

Hepatoscopy hepatomancy is a specific form of haruspicy divination where the liver of sacrificed animals is examined. In Babylon this practice was very popular, so much so, that they had a specialized priest called a 'bara' to perform the service. The Babylonians thought the liver was a "vehicle" by which the gods revealed their intentions.

Hieromancy hierscopy is the overall term for divination involving sacrificed animals.

Hippomancy is a divination that observes horse's movements and actions.

Ichthyomancy is a specific form of haruspicy where a fish's entrails and head are read for predications.

Kephalonomancy is a system of predicting someone's guilt by burning charcoal on the head of a donkey while reciting the names of suspected criminals; a crackling sound is heard when the guilty person is named.

Myomancy is a method of divination that uses mice and rats. Throughout history these rodents have been considered bad or evil omens.

Myrmomancy is divination using ants. For example, when large amounts of ants are seen moving about, it is an indication of a coming storm.

Ololygmancy is fortune-telling by the howling of dogs.

Oomancy oomantia ooscopy ovomancy is a divination system where eggs are used to predict the future. Method one is to break an egg in some water and read the patterns. Method two is to read the external shell of the egg. Method three is an ancient way to determine the gender of an expectant mother's child. She incubates a chicken egg in her bosom and when the chick is hatched its gender will determine the gender of her child.

Onomancy is divination using a donkey or ass.

Ophiomancy is divination by observing the behavior of snakes.

Orniscopy orinithomancy is the study of omens associated with birds, particularly birds in flight.

Ovomancy oomancy ooscopy is when a divination is performed by breaking an egg into a container and interpreting the shape of the egg white.

Scapulomancy is a particular form of pyroscopy where the shoulder blades of the burnt victims are inspected and interpreted.

Scatoscopy is a type of divination that examines excrement.

Splanchnomancy is a variation of hepatoscopy where readings are made from cut sections of a goat liver.

Theriomancy is by beasts

Zoomancy A broad term for the practice of divination that observes the behavior of animals.

Humans

Things about people are often thought to be deducible from close observation of certain aspects of them. The various ascetic or physical activities are just about limitless, but most disengage the critical mind by distraction and sensory overload so that the subconscious can be evoked and entertained. Naturally any divination that would harm a person is both illegal and probably immoral.

Alcomancy is the imbibing of large amounts of alcohol and then rambling about matters until it makes sense.

Amniomancy analyzes the membrane that surrounds a newborn's head (caul) was used to determine the baby's future. If the color was red this indicated then good fortunes ahead but if the color was lead there was misfortune instead. If the membrane was whole and intact, the child would not die by drowning. It is said that even seafarers would try to buy cauls to prevent against this fate.

Anthropomancy is an ancient form divination where the internal organs of sacrificed humans are interpreted. There are many recorded cases through out history and in most of these cases the victims were women and children.

Anthroposcopy is the art of discovering or evaluating a person's character, desires and inclinations from studying their visible features. Similar to anthropometry, which is the study of actual physical measurements of the body's features. The Italian criminologist, Cesare Lombroso claimed that certain craniofacial features could identify certain criminal types; i.e., murderers have prominent jaws. He based this on numerous measurement analysis of criminals. Later, a French police officer named Eugene Vidocq took these findings and started the documentation of facial characteristics of criminals for identification purposes, which are still used today.

Armomancy is supposedly divination by inspecting shoulders.

Biorhythm is foretelling the future by observing the body's natural rhythms evolving the emotional, physical and intellectual phases.

Cartopedy is a Persian divination using feet much like palmistry uses the hands. The size, shape and form of the entire foot are taken into consideration in addition to the lines. This is still a serious science in India and Pakistan. Cartopedist are sought in matters of marriage, jobs and even solving crimes.

Chirognomy cheiromancy is when all aspects of the hand are studied. The shape, form, lines, palms, finger and fingernails are interpreted. This is commonly known as palmistry. It is said that a hand with square fingers and proportionately wide palm indicates a logical, pragmatic person who can be over-skeptical.

Competomancy is the ritualistic dueling of two or more people in games of sport as divination.

Crowdomancy is the observation of large numbers of people in motion in public places.

Erotomancy is the divination by sexual intercourse, a practice that could easily be abused by the nefarious.

Fetomancy is the practice of observing birth defects both in animals and humans.

Gastromancy is an ancient method of divination where a low guttural voice is heard but does not appear to come from the seer who is making them. Some speculate that the diviner throws his voice similar to ventriloquism. Within these guttural sounds the prophecy is revealed.

Geloscopy is divination that analyzes a person's laughter to determine their character.

Graphology is when a person's handwriting is analyzed to establish their character and personality traits. This practice dates back to ancient times, probably when writing was in its infancy. Aristotle went as far to say that he could define a person's soul from his handwriting.

Gyromancy is a divination method that combines the planchette and cyclomancy. A person twirls around within a circle of letters and as the individual stumbles about and makes contact with the letters, the omen is spelt out. The end of the message comes when the person falls. This method can be simplified further by leaving out the letters and just read the position that person fell in relation to a the circle.

Hypnomancy is divination using sleep.

Ichnomancy is divination using footprints.

Idiomancy is divination by listening to idiots prattle. Best used during election years.

Metagnomy is the divination using "visions" received in a trance state.

Metoposcopy is the practice of interpreting a person's character and destiny from the individual's lines on their forehead.

Metoposcopy is a specific form of physiognomy.

Moleosophy is a method determines a person's character and health by using the moles on their body. In the Middle Ages this form of divination was used to help identify witches and determine their guilt. This particular divination has a special place in medical science. We are often advised to report to our doctors if we have mole that changes shape, size and color because it could be cancerous.

Narcomancy is a divination using sleep.

Oculomancy is a form of scrying where the diviner gazes into the questioners' eyes and reads the reflections. Perhaps this is not so strange considering the saying - "The eyes are the windows to the soul".

Odontomancy is divination using teeth.

Onimancy is a Kabbalic divination where the oil of olives is placed on the palm or nails of an innocent child. Depending on the divinatory subject the child would either face east for money, south for matters of love, west for theft and south for murder. The child would then recite a Psalms and when finished she would see the answers.

Omphalomancy omphalomancy comes from the word omphaloskepsis meaning to reflect over ones' belly button. It was an ancient form of divination practiced on newborn girls to determined the number of children they would have in their future. The amount was determined by the number of knots in her umbilical cord.

Omphalopsychic is a person who practices omphalopsychic stares at the navel as a way of inducing a hypnotic state in order to obtain a divination. Or the study of belly-button lint.

Oneiromancy is the form of divination by which dreams are interpreted either to aid in the understanding of the unconscious or to foretell the future. The psychologist Carl G. Jung thought that dreams were a method by which the collective unconscious talked to us. However, in ancient times it was thought that dreams were portals by which the gods spoke to person.

Onychomancy is a form of divination that uses the human fingernail. One way to do this is to observe and read the shapes formed by the sun reflecting on a young child's fingernail. Another way is to read the markings on a person's nails to predict his/her future much like palmistry. Then there is the medical way. The human fingernail can provide clues to the cause of a person's ill health. Health problems, like lupus, diabetes, scleroderma, kidney and liver disorders, all leave distinctive marks on the nails.

Palmistry is a divination that is done by reading the lines and characteristics of the palm. This divination is an aspect of chirognomy.

Phrenology is a divination that uses the contours of head and scalp to determines information about the person.

Physiognomy is a divination by the face; the study of character analysis through physical features.

Stolisomancy is a method where omens are determined by the person's dress or appearance.

Podomancy is done by studying the feet.

Retromancy is divination by looking over one’s shoulder.

Schematomancy is divination using the human form

Spasmatomancy is divination by twitching or convulsions of the body.

Sternomancy is a study from the breast to the belly.

Thumomancy is divination by means of one's own soul.

Uromancy is divination that is performed by reading bubbles made by urinating in a pot.
Xenomancy is divination using strangers.

Judging Ordeals

Before the introduction of prisoner rights and better interogration techniques, the truth of the matter might be determined by resorting to divination. Often these forms of ordeals in courts involved dangerous or painful “proofs” of innocent, where the likely result was guilty (i.e. weighing you versus a bible, dunking, holding fiery metal, walking coals, drinking poison, etc.) fortunately most of these have disappeared. Here are a few other uncommon ones.

Alphitomancy is form of divination is used in determining guilt and innocence. Each "suspect" eats a barley-cake and the one who gets indigestion is the guilty party. To ensure success, there was a special recipe used to aid in the participants' indigestion.
Cleidomancy clidomancy is a divination for interpreting guilt that uses the movements of a suspended key. There are various methods to this practice. One method is to take a house key and enclose it inside a Bible on the 50th Psalm. The bible is then sealed shut and suspended on a nail. Guilt is established when Bible turns as the suspect's name is mentioned.
Coscinomancy coskiomancy A Greek divination where a sieve, tong or shears are balance or suspended to determine guilt. The method was either to balance the "tool" on the thumb or middle fingernail of two individuals facing each other or to tie the "tool" on a thread and suspended it. The suspect's names are spoken and when the guilty person's name was mentioned the item moved. It was also used to discover secret admirers.
Margaritomancy is a form of divination that uses a pearl to determine guilt. A pearl is covered by an upside-down vase, and placed near a fire while the names of suspects are read aloud. When the name of the guilty person is read the pearl would shoot up and pierce the bottom of the vase.
Skatharomancy is insect divination where the tracks of a beetle crawling over the grave of a murder victim are interpreted.

Composition & Manipulation

From a swinging pendulum or staring at a candle, this methods absorbs one of the major sensory inputs through overload, causing either hallucination, daydreaming or hypnotism.

From rohrschach ink blots to tea leaves, the way things clump together may evoke powerful images or associations by their shape, texture or interaction. Sometimes One object of many is picked, usually without seeing, and then examined closely, evincing thoughts based on it’s physical characteristics. If the object is associated with some person or place, the feelings may be stronger.

Acuto-manzia is a method of divination using thirteen pins (10 straight and 3 bent). They are shaken in the hand and dropped on a surface sprinkled with powder. The patterns in the powder as well as the pins are read.
Ambulomancy is divination by taking a walk.
Alveromancy is divination using sounds.
Axiomancy is divination through the observation of how an saw, ax or hatchet quivers or points when driven into post.
Belomancy is an ancient Babylonian practice where arrows are tossed in the air and as they fell the direction was determined.
Cattabomancy-- by vessels of brass or other metal.
Captromancy enoptromancy A form of divination that uses a mirror. A mirror is placed so that it catches a reflection of another substance. Usually this is something that is hard to hold, for example moonbeams or water reflections. Then the reflections in the mirror are interpreted. Mirror divination is similar to crystal gazing.
Ceromancy ceremancy ceroscopy is divination using wax from candles. Wax is melted into liquid form then it was poured into a bowl containing cold water. The resulting shapes, which are usually circular, are then read.
Chartomancy by writing in papers.
Chronomancy is divination by means of time.
Clacking is divining by 'clacking' two stones, blocks or pipes together.
Crystalomancy is a mode of divination practiced since ancient times that uses objects or substances with a reflective surface such as crystals, water, ink, treacle and mirrors. The purpose of reflective surface is to aid the diviner into a meditative state where the visions are received. In ancient times this practiced was aided by the invocation of spirits.
Critomancy is a divination which determines omens from food that has been offered in sacrificial rituals.
Cyclomancy is the practice of divination from a turning wheel.
Dactyliomancy cleromancy is a very ancient technique of divination of throwing lots using small objects like beans, stones, sticks, shells, dice, bones, or pottery shards. These objects are read either by inscriptions the may be on them or by the patterns they make.
Dextromancy is the divination by juggling objects.
Dowsing is an ancient form divination that is stilled used today. It uses a forked stick (or divining rod) to locate water or precious minerals; also known as water-witching.
Enoptromancy is foretelling the health of a person by use of a mirror submerged in water.
Eraomancy is a Persian divination that uses air and water. A vessel, filled with water, is exposed to the air (often by breath) while the diviner with a low voice chants his/her desire. If bubbles appeared on the surface of the water, it is a good sign that your desire will come to fruition.
Eromancy is divination using water vessels.
Feng-shui is the application practiced in China concerning the placement of structures. The practice is based upon the belief that a structure should not be situated where it interferes with the flow of the earth's energies know as "dragon lines". This is accomplished by keeping the structures complementary. For example, a (sharp) corner of one house should not face the (smooth) side of a neighboring house, if it does, the occupant of the neighboring house believes that a great misfortune will befall him. However, to destroy and rebuild a house is costly. The common solution is to place a magical icon of dragon or monster facing the threat to protect against the evil influence.
Flavomancy is divination by the flavor of one object selected amongs many of the same kind.
Gematria is an ancient system where truths and meanings are hidden within words. Each letter of an alphabet corresponds to a number. Numerical values of words are

totaled up and then these words are said to correspond with other words sharing the same numerical value.

Geomancy is divination by casting earth onto a surface.

Getamancy is divination by kicking off your geta or wooden shoes and if the sole is facing up it will rain the next day or the answer is “no”.

Harpomancy is divination by listening to a harp resonate with the winds blowing through the strings.

Idolomancy is by idols.

Icthyomancy is by idols, images, figures.

Lecanomancy is a specific branch of crystalomancy and hydromancy that uses to images on water. These images can be reflections or actual physical substances. In most cases when it is a physical substance the substance is non-homogenous with the water, like wax, lead or oil.

Macharomancy is by knives or swords.

Macromancy is divination using large objects.

Maculomancy is divination using spots.

Margaritomancy is the procedure of using bouncing pearls.

Molybdomancy draws mystic inferences from the hissing of molten lead.

Musicomancy is divination by the observation of the first notes played by a novice on a strange instrument.

Oenomancy oinomancy is when first the object is either boiled or soaked in wine and then the wine stains are read.

Oenomancy is divination by the appearance of wine poured in libation.

Oryctomancy is divination using excavated objects.

Ossomancy is divination using bones.

Osteomancy is divination using bones.

Papyromancy is the practiced of studying the characteristic of folded paper or the observation of one folding it.

Pessomancy psephomancy is a definitive form of cleromancy where small objects like pebbles and beans are marked with symbols or colors relating to health, success, travel, money and so forth. The objects are placed in a bag and shuffled and then they are either thrown out, or randomly drawn.

Psychography is a form of divination where mysterious writing has an oracle nature.

Rhabdomancy is an overall term used for divination with a rod, stick, wand or of similar shape.

Scrying is a general term for the divinatory method whereby the individual stares or gazes at an object or substance with a reflective surface; i.e., crystals, mirrors, water, ink, even flames. The answer or fortune is then revealed to the scryer. An updated method is to fill a cauldron with its interior painted black with water and gaze into its depth on a moonlit night. The well-known seer, Nostradamus made his prediction using a bowl full of water placed on a brass tripod.

Sycomancy is devination by wrinkled figs.

Tasseography tasseomancy is divination by reading of tea leaves or coffee ground patterns. Tea is poured into a cup without using a strainer; after the tea is consumed by inquirer the pattern left behind on the bottom of the cup is read. Alternatively, place the saucer on top of the cup and flip the cup upside down. The pattern is then read off the saucer (this only works if there is some moisture left in the cup). The shapes are read as symbolism and the time constraints are determined by proximity to rim of the cup. The bottom of the cup is the past and the rim is the immediate future.

Tring-ba works by asking a question. Holding a rosary consisting of 108 beads, randomly select a bead in each hand, making sure to leave sufficient beads between them. Then with the fingers of each hand move four to right and four to the left towards the center until either 1,2 3 or 4 remains in the center. The procedure is repeated four times each having a specific purpose. The outcome of the divination depends on the number of beads left. One is good luck; two is bad luck; three is whatever the current situation is, it will happen rapidly; and finally four, good luck but with some problems.

Urim and Thumum is a reading of oracles from the twelve sacred stones that were attached to the breastplate of the high priest in ancient Judaism. (Exodus 28:30)

Tiromancy is a divination that use cheese by interpreting their holes or mold.

Randomness & Math

Divination is sometimes defined as analyzing unpredictable actions to understand unpredictable actions. From dice to lots, objects whose fallen or spinned position cannot be guessed are used to pick from lists of prepared results or to give a clue or association associated with each resulting possibility.

Aeluromancy aleuromancy is a divination where answers to questions are rolled into balls of dough and cooked. The balls are mixed nine times then chosen at random. A modern day version would be the Chinese fortune cookie.

Arithmancy is a divination using numerical values. Letters are converted into numeric value through various methods and then added. In ancient Greece, the combatant whose name had the greatest value was predicted to win in a fight. The Kabbalah, which is the basis of many occult philosophies, is filled with numeric divination. Numerology.

Alomancy is when the diviner interprets future events by throwing salt crystals and analyzing the patterns, either after it is thrown or as it is airborne.

Ashagalomancy is a divination system of casting small bones each with a particular meaning. This method is considered the early form of dice divination where the numbers on the dice have corresponding letters.

Astragalomancy astragyromancy is a form of divination that uses dice marked with letters of the alphabet. The dice can be any shape or form.

Axinomancy is a divination that is accomplished by means of a hatchet or ax. There are two known methods; both are for determining direction. (1) Direction for an item: The ax head was heated and held perpendicular in the air. A round agate is place on the rim of the ax. If the agate remained, the item you were searching is lost and cannot be found. In the case where the agate rolled off the action was then repeated three times. If the agate rolled in the same direction every time that was the direction where the item lay but if it didn't you had to look farther afield. (2) Direction for finding a person: An ax is cast into the ground so that the handle is perpendicular in the air. Those involve in the search would dance around the ax until the handle fell to the ground. The handle pointed to the direction that the person took.

Bibliomancy is a popular divinatory method that is still used today. A book is chosen for the purpose often related to your question. The book is randomly opened and a finger is arbitrarily placed on the page. The sentence, passage or even picture is the prophecy or answer. During the Middle Ages, to find out if someone was guilty of sorcery- they were weighed against the Church Bible. If

the person outweighed the Bible (which was often the case) the person was guilty.

Cartomancy is a method of telling someone's fortune by using a deck of cards. Although many decks can be used a specific one has developed over time called tarot.

Cledomancy is by examining words linked in random association, like some psychological tests. One example is to say a word and the person says the first thing on their mind or a word that begins with the last letter of the previous word.

Cledonomancy is divination by chance remarks or events.

Cleromancy is divination by "casting lots", similar to dice but with objects such as pebbles or sea shells.

Cyclomancy is a practice of divination where one consults a spinning object like a wheel or bottle. One form of consultation is direction. When at a crossroad, take a bottle and lay it horizontally on the ground and spin. When it stops spinning, the neck of the bottle will point to the road where your destiny lies. The popular game, "spin the bottle", is based on this concept.

Dactyliomancy dactylomancy is thought to be one of the earliest forms of radiesthesia. This divination uses a ring primarily as a pendulum. In another method, the ring is dropped into bowl of water and its position at the bottom determines the outcome. The inside bottom of the bowl may contain a special pattern to aid in the prediction. A variation to this would be to suspend a ring by a thread in a vessel filled with water and shake; the amount of times it hits the vessel's wall determines the prediction.

Fractomancy is a modern form of pattern divination: in this case the structures of fractal geometric patterns are interpreted.

I Ching or Book of Changes is an ancient Chinese system of divination. An oracle is cast by flipping coins or more traditionally yarrow stalks. The pattern is then compared to 64 hexagrams found in the I Ching, each with a special meaning.

Limyra is a Greek oracle divination using a magic alphabet engraved on stones similar to runes. A detailed look into this form divination can be found at the link provided.

Lithomancy is a specific form of geomancy that uses stones. Divination is accomplished either by tossing the stones and interpreting their patterns or using the stone's actual properties and correspondences. One method is to use 13 stones each being unique type and relatively the same size. The 13 stones will have designated meaning according to their geological classification. Another method is to inscribe symbols onto stones, which is often made in a uniformed shape -- i.e. Runes, Limyra.

Logarithmancy is divination by logarithms.

Notarikon is a Kabbalic form of divination where words from the Bible are used to interpret the book itself. It is accomplished by combing the first and last letters of acronyms appearing in the Old Testament to form new words. The Kabbalists believe the God has encoded secret messages in the Bible. They believe that "Amen" is the acronym for "Adonai Melekh Namen" meaning "the Lord and faithful King.

Numerology is a popular form of divination that uses numerical interpretation of numbers, dates, and the numeric value of letters to reveal all sorts of information. This is an extensive field of divination with many methods. Example: In Hebrew, consonants are used as number signs, but by providing them with vowels, one can often read the numbers as words and can read words as numbers -- so YHWH becomes Yahweh.

Ogham is an Irish form of cleromancy. Stick(s) are made from a nut bearing tree onto which Ogham letters are inscribed. The sticks are tossed on a white cloth and the diviner would randomly choose three sticks and read the fortune. An alternative form is to have one stick with four sides on which the four groups of Ogham letters are carved.

Onomancy onomamancy is a divination based on the theory that there is a link between a person's name and their character and fate. The simplest of the methods is to look at what the name means to glean the person's character -- i.e. Cara means friend. Another method is to look at the amount of vowels in the name. If there is an even amount the person will have problems with his left side and if there is an odd amount the problem is on the right side. The last method is to convert the individual's name into a numeric value. Then, taking this number determines the person's future.

Radiesthesia is a general term for divining the location of an object or person by using a particular pointing device. The device is used to increase the radiesthesist's sensitivity and can be either a rod or a pendulum. A rod is normally something long and thin like a stick, wand, or arrow while the pendulum is anything small that can be tied at the end of a string. Sometimes, the radiesthesist will combine the two by tying the pendulum on the end of the rod. In both cases the indicators will move when it is over the object. One example is to use a pendulum over a map in hopes of locating a missing person.

Rhapsodmancy is a specific form of bibliomancy where a poetry book is used. The book is open randomly to a poem or verse to answer the individual's question.

Runes are a type of pessomancy where an ancient alphabet is inscribed on small objects like pebbles or sticks. These "runes" are either randomly selected or cast and their secrets read. The runic alphabet can represent letters, qualities, events, oracles and deities. Two examples of runic systems are the Teutonic FUTHARK and the Greek Limyra.

Sortilege is a term used for the portents or omens resulting from the drawing or casting of lots.

Tarot is a specific type of cartomancy where a deck of seventy eight cards, each representing a specific concept, are laid out in a pattern and "read".

Stichomancy is another form of throwing open a book and selecting a random passage for the purpose of divination.

Vehiculomancy is the observation of traffic patterns.

Zodiac is an aspect to divination where the apparent circular path of the sun, as it traverses the heavens , is recorded as symbols. These symbols are then used in horoscopes and astrology. Two common zodiac forms are the Western zodic, which uses twelve pictographs, known as signs and the Eastern (Chinese) zodiac, which uses twelve animals.

Fire & Transformation

Anthracomancy is a divination using burning coals.

Capnomancy is a term used for smoke and fume divination. The smoke that read is specifically produced for the purpose of the divination. For example, branches of vervain and briar, on which the questions have been carved, are burned. The smoke produced from this element indicates the answer.

Causimomancy is a divination derived from an object's behaviors when placed in fire. It is a good omen when something combustible doesn't ignite. Common items

that have been used in this method are animals, humans, salt, leaves, sticks and incense.

Daphnomancy dappnomancy is an ancient form of divination where laurel branches are burned. During the burning of the laurel, if crackling is heard this is a good sign but if it is absent the opposite is true.

Dissolvoscopy is the observation of an object dissolving in hot water.

Empyromancy is smoke divination from burning laurel leaves.

Halolmancy is a causimomancy method of fire divination that involves throwing salt into the flames. The resulting flames are then interpreted.

Lampadomancy is a divination system whereby omens and predictions are read from the flame of a candle or oil lamp. If the flames have a single point this indicates a good fortune and if it has two points this means bad luck. If the flame is dim one must postpone any plans for the time being and if the flame is bright all things are right. If the flames should become small luck is temporary and should it spark this indicates forthcoming news. If the flame has a halo it indicates a storm is coming and if the flame goes out serious trouble or danger is ahead.

Libanomancy libranomancy is a popular system of divination where incense and prayers are used. Incense is burned while the individual prays. It is said that the smoke carries the prayers to heaven and if the incense is consumed the prayers will be answered. Choice of incense depends on which deity you wish to pray to or the subject of your prays.

Pyromancy is a generic term for divination that uses fire. The good omen is when the flames are brisk and the fire is healthy and robust. If offerings are made, like kindling, incense, sacrifices and so forth, they must be consumed quickly within the flames. A bad presage is when the flames are dark and the fire is difficult to kindle and offerings do not ignite.

Pyroscopy is a specified form of pyromancy where the results are read after the fire is extinguished.

Sideromancy is a divination of a straw's reaction as it is placed on a red hot iron.

Spodomancy is a form of divination that examines ashes.

Tephramancy is divination by ashes obtained from the burning of tree bark.

Tephromancy is divination by looking at ashes from burned sacrifices.

Xylomancy is divination from pieces of wood, either from their shape or their appearance while they burn.

Oracular

This is when the person, perhaps in a shamanic manner, invites wise spirits to enter his body and speak or perform the actions that will be divinational. This is an area that deeply disturbs some people who fear it will be irreversible, yet I feel that no spirit can unwillingly control my body any longer than I desire it; but that might be a matter of will power or personal difference.

Demonomancy is divination with the aid of demons, not recommended.

Necromancy is the practice of conjuring up the spirits of the dead for divination. In Voodoo, necromancy is practiced in one of two ways either summoning the body (the infamous zombie) or summoning the spirit. A famous story, of spirits revealing truths and foretelling the future, is the "Christmas Carol" with Ebenezer Scrooge.

Sciomancy is a form of divination where shadows or ghosts or alternatively a spirit guide is used. This practice is common in shamanism.

Theomancy is found in every religion; it is divination by oracles (god's messengers).

Conclusion to Divination

There are about 300 types of divination listed so far in this article. It is up to you if you choose to use them, hopefully in moderation, with a concern that whatever knowledge you do gain from the practice is sometimes considered also to be an obligation. Perhaps you'll even find other ways to meditate and reflect on the world and yourself.

May you grow in wisdom through reflection.

Figure 42 Another view of Sticks & Stones by the Chapel, 2004.

Figure 43The Boulder of Cowling in the Lower Arb, next to the Cannon river flats, 2004.

The Book of Ultimate Answers

Written by
Rev. Michael Scharding, D.D.
in June 1994 c.e.

No part of this book may be printed, reproduced or stored by any means presently known, or to be created in the future, without express written permission of the author; except short quotations for scholarly studies or for book reviews. The following people that I'll list are granted exceptions and are allowed to print 10 issues a year. An exception to this restriction is extended to all past, present & future Reformed Druids of North America for raising grove-funds. Another exception is made to anybody who is fluent in Ge'ez *and* Scots-Gaelic. Another exception is made for anybody with two noses and a third ear. I also, graciously, will make an exception for the government officials of Malawi; who have been inspiringly helpful in writing this book. Finally, I would make an exception for Fillard.

Another Fine Product of the Drynemeton Press

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If this product doesn't work (and I don't mean if it works well) then please feel free to shred it or give it to your friend (or enemy) as a present.

When I call this a Reformed Druid publication, I mean it is a publication by a Reformed Druid. I hope that most other Reformed Druids disagree with my views.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this book to Rev. Jewelnel Davis, who has inspired the Carleton Campus with her wisdom during her years here. I hope that this book will likewise provided needed answers to those faced with the inscrutability of the universe, or at least get them to give up using similar books and go back to talking with real people (which is a much wiser thing to do) .

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Other Thanks

There are a number of people I would like to thank for making this enormously difficult work possible. First I would like to thank my ancestors and all the past populace of the world which have made my culture(s), philosophy(s), religion(s), environment, language(s) and genetic code what they are today (you know who you are!).

I'd also like to thank the Carleton Academic Computing and Networking Center for the use of their computers while formatting this book for publication while I attended school there. Carleton's faculty, staff and students also deserve my thanks for instilling the knowledge, moral teachings and education that made this book possible.

Not to forget you, are all the many plant, animal & microbial creatures I've ingested to sustain my biological processes. I'm also very thankful that I can breathe the oxygenated air and that the sun comes up in the morning. For all these myriads of interlacing cycles and miraculous events (including hormones) I would like to thank the Creator(s). You're doing a fine job, keep up the good work!

I would also like to thank the Sheltons, the Frangquists, Isaac Bonewits, Glenn McDavid, Sam Adams, Norman Nelson and the many Druids who have enlightened me on "the mysteries" of Druidism (whatever they are...).

To conclude, I'd like to thank whoever (or whatever) else I'm forgotten to include.

Preface: Why this book was written.

I was once sitting under a large oak tree on a sunny day when I came to the realization that there are a lot of unanswered questions in the world. Think about it, do you know the names of all the people in Ghana; or why do English speakers often put the adjectives before the nouns? We live in world awash with doubt and distressed with uncertainty. Will we ever know the right answers to every question? Probably not. However, we live in a society that demands answers. To not provide answers is to show incompetence or lack of education. Would you want to look incompetent or uneducated? I wouldn't, but it would seem fated that we will have to continue to live with that persistent embarrassment.

I decided that someone had to take care of all these loose ends, even at the risk of giving the wrong answers. I mean, isn't it better to have an answer, even if it is not THE answer, especially one that works; rather than to stand there and sheepishly say that you don't have an answer? Once I accepted this monumental task I was faced with a more daunting undertaking than passing my Senior Comprehensive exercise at Carleton while retaining a social life; providing viable answers to all the possible questions that can be posed in the English language. It was a toughie, but I managed to complete it in a few hours. Drawing upon my extraordinary ability to pull answers out of a baseball cap, I wrote this book. I have intended it to be a quick handbook to use whenever you are confronted with a perplexing problem or question.

While divinatory purposes are probably not a very effective use of the book, your use of the book is not my concern. Like the disclaimer says, you can do what you want with the book, that's your decision. This book has worked many times for myself and I hope it proves so for you. Enjoy!

Rev. Michael Scharding
June 20th, 1994 c.e.

Third Edition Update:

Due to the overwhelming desire for more answers, I've massively expanded the chapters of answers to provide more customized answers.

Recommendations

1. If you are not competent in the English language, have a friend help you use this book.

2. Similarly if you are blind, have them read this book to you or type it in Braille so that you can scan it.

3. If no one answer works, try combinations and permutations.

Reminders

1. If you are not using the book properly, then you perhaps don't deserve an answer.

2. Be persistent, it will work if you don't give up.

3. There's an answer in this book that works for your question!

Introduction: How to use this book

There are three chapters to the Book of Ultimate Answers, one each for affirmative, negative and mixed answers. I have found that the Book of Ultimate Answers works best for me when used as outlined in the following flow-chart:

I. Get comfortable.
II. Pray and/or meditate for the recommended time (see below) on how to best formulate the question in the English languages.
III. Open to the first chapter.
    A. If an appropriate answer is there, you're done.
    B. No luck? Try chapter two.
        i. If you find an appropriate answer, cool.
        ii. If that doesn't work, try chapter three.
            a. If it worked, you're done.
            b. If it you couldn't find a usable answer then return to chapter one.

How Long to Prepare Beforehand

Now depending on how difficult or important the question is, you'll have to formulate the question and ready you're mind to spot a useable answer in your search. Imagine you're going to be asking this to Mahatma Ghandi at a press conference. You want to be very clear. This is because your mind is often running many sub-processes at the same time and it might be actually more concerned with finding an answer to another problem. The result? You get the right answer to a sub-conscious question instead of the one you asked. Remember, the answer may not be the one you want to find, so don't force it.

To help remedy this frequent problem, I'm providing the handy-dandy scale that I recommend to meditate and/or pray before using this book. It's roughly:

Difficulty to Time List

Inconsequential: 5 seconds
Simple: 1 minute
Pesky: 1 hour
Important: 1 day
Life-Changing: 1 month to a Year
Earth-Shattering: 2 years
Universe-Shattering: 15 years
Future Career/Marriage: 20 years and a day

Clarifying Examples for the Scale Categories:

Inconsequential: What color is a tomato?
Simple: What should I watch on TV tonight?
Pesky: Should I change brands of shampoo?
Important: Do I wish to learn Gaelic?
Life-Changing: Do I get a nose-job?
Earth-Shattering: Shall I reveal my divinity to CNN?
Universe-Shattering: Shall I bestow warp-engine capability to mere mortal Earthlings?
Future Career/Marriage: Do I want to marry Alex?

Other important notes:

Feel encouraged to modify the words in any answer (i.e. the tense, conjugation, plurality, gender, inflection, punctuation, cultural understanding, order, grammatical purpose, spelling or definition) in order to make it a more suitable answer. Remember, you only need an answer that works, not the best answer!

Chapter One: Affirmative Answers

Could be a positive answer to your question:

'Fraid so.
Yes.
Of course!
Probably.
Because.
Easily.
With difficulty.
Perhaps so.
Go with it.
Definitely.
I said so.
Once and a while.
Why not?
Partially so.
Some of the world's greatest people have thought so.
Occasionally.
It bodes well.
In a twisted way, yeah.
I wish so to.
I have it on good authority.
So a rumor has it. Next question please.
Uh, huh.
In a mytho-poetic sense.
In some situations.
That would be nice.
Few have ever doubted it.
When you are ready.
Only if you do it the right way.
Some would think so.
Yeah!
If you can accept the risks.
At the appropriate time.
If things favor it.
Do what's best.
Trust in yourself.
It has always been so.
If you trust them.
Couldn't agree with you more.
I'd say go with it, but ask someone for a second opinion.
True.
If you're lucky.
If Ghandhi would do it, so should you.
You'll win.
When one truly loves someone.
You are ready and skillful enough to do it.
No problem.
Cautiously.
Oh, I've got the answer, but you must try that again in a "yes-no" format.

Didn't find a suitable answer? Try chapters two and three.

Chapter Two: Negative Answers

Oh, it might be a negative on this one. An answer could be one of the following:

No.
Never.
Because.
Couldn't be.
Unlikely.
Don't.
You'll lose.
Mustn't
When the "hot-motifed-culture's interpretation of Hell" freezes over!
Can't.
Give up.
Not often.
Won't.
Not worth the bother.
Not with your resources.
Try not to.
Shouldn't.
Impossible.
Not in my book!
Might not.
Don't you dare!
If your friend jumped off a cliff, would you also jump off a cliff?
Think about it, it wouldn't work.
Cautiously.
Most likely not.
In your dreams!
If you do, you'll be sorry.
Not now.
Later.
Too late.
Not here.
Not there.
That isn't legal, is it?
Forget it.
It's unprecedented.
Someone else can do it.
That's morally reprehensible!
Not soon.
Not ever.
When clams sing Beethoven from mountain-tops!
Best to wait.
Try a different alternative or approach.
You know that I've got the answer, but you must phrase it in a "yes-no" format.

Didn't find a suitable answer? Try chapters one and three.

Chapter Three: Mixed Answers

You asking a complicated question or one requiring an overly specific answer. I think the answer would be one of the following:

Maybe.
Answer unclear, ask later.
Do more meditating or praying.
You're not ready to use this book. I'd recommend that you talk with your friend, relative, superior/inferiors.
Tricky.
That's a matter of faith, isn't.
You're not intelligent enough to understand the fine mechanics of the solution.
I bet the word(s) you're looking for are in a dictionary.
Wait.
It's hard to express the answer with written words, try waving this book around.
There is no clear answer.
There are no clear answers.
I would offend somebody if I answered that one.
What would you say?
42.
That's a toughie, send oodles of money to the Mayo Clinic and perhaps they'll tell you.
Look it up.
Could be.
That's a fact, this book deals with slippery issues!
If you only knew....
You cannot make the decision by yourself.
We tried that one before, inconclusive.
No one knows.
Nothing knows.
Whenever.
Whatever.
Whoever.
Whyever.
However.
Because.
Whenceever.
Rephrase the question.
It's unlike anything we've ever seen before, Cap'n.
Why bother?
In time, you will come to know.
That is a question not tending towards edification.
Wait a minute, at what time?
Wait a minute, who?
Wait a minute, which?
Wait a minute, why?
Wait a minute, how exactly?
Only if she/he/it/them/I/you/we/you-all does it first.
Are you sure you got the facts straight?
That really depends.
Ask an expert.
Pay stricter attention.
I'll get back to you on that one.
Ha! Ha! That's a good one.
Well, now!...
If I could walk that way, I wouldn't....
Best to do more research first.
I've already answered that one.
That question has been outdated, try a newer one.
That's a secret.
The answers definitely a real number.
Could be an imaginary number.

Too many possible answers.
If you were paying attention...
You're not asking the right question.
There are better books on the subject, check the library.
If there aren't better books... write them.
Could you make that a bit more clear.
Only if they/it don't find out.
A thousand years from now, who'll care?
It wouldn't make sense, even if I explained it to you.
Consider it from their point of view.
The first.
The latter.
Both.
Neither.
One of the middle ones.
One (or more) but not the other(s)
D.
All of the above.
None of the above.
One of the above.
You're not using English, this only works for English.
Is something green stuck between your teeth?
Is that a rhetorical question?
If I told you that, I would have to shoot you.
Not even Nixon knew that.
Slower. Slower.
I don't know.
I don't care.
Sleep on it.
Isn't there something else you should be doing right now?
Time to make the donuts.
It's interesting you should ask that, I was thinking the same thing.
It doesn't matter.
It would be a lot easier if you could ask that again, but as a "yes-no" question.
Didn't find a suitable answer? Try chapters one and two.

Conclusion:

Why this book was really written.

Actually, I did write this book for most of the pre-said reasons, in a way. As a Reformed Druid, and a North American one at that, I have a right to say what I believe and other Reformed Druids won't claim that I'm a heretical Druid. The RDNA lacks recognizably official dogma and its customs or traditions are very mutable. The RDNA's official doctrine is summed up in the two Basic Tenets:

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a never-ending and spiritual search, can be found through Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; but this is one way, yea!, one way among many.

2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it people do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.

This is the only statement that all Reformed Druids agree with (and possibly most Druids...). Anything more or less than this is your own variant, and we all bring our own stuff willingly or unwillingly. None of us are "pure" Reformed Druids, we are all possessors of differing beliefs, but share a stated agreement with those two identically worded beliefs; irregardless of our own interpretation. Can one have unity through difference? Richard Shelton said "Reformed Druidism is compatible with all religions, even if they deny it." The way I've looked at it, most religions that I'm familiar with use images from Nature at least once to demonstrate or symbolize a theological point; say, a bird building a nest in the spring time. If this is so, then people of all religions should be able to gather and hear the same story of a bird building a nest, and come away with a personal gain of spiritual understanding. This is what the RDNA is about.

One of the unstated purposes of the RDNA is to deepen our critical awareness of the foundations underlying our personal, individual beliefs and/or to understand the roots of our religion(s) or philosophy. In a way, I've pursued this goal by writing & publishing my thoughts as a focusing tool for this exploration, because knowing someone will read your musings makes you work harder. But truth seems to be a thing that changes with new facts reveal an unseen twist in your understandings. God is guiding me on a strange path of mysticism to find Her spiritual truths. Nothing that I've published is necessarily what I currently believe, at the time that you are reading this. Ha!

Another side-effect of Reformed Druidism is a desire to pull people's legs. David Frangquist once stated "The role of the Third Order is keep people guessing....Druidism has it's tongue planted firmly in its cheek." I wished to poke fun at a book called "Dianet*cs" and other self-help books that purported to have answers for your personal problems. I think these books cater to those folk who are unwilling to talk with real live people and those who consider any book to be true as gospel if it is published by someone with loads of letters behind their name (esp. Ph.D.).

In the Reformed Druid fashion, I have endeavored to bring you to a deeper realization of the inconsistencies inherent in being an expert on other people's problems, especially about people you don't even know. The Book of Ultimate Answers actually works, but it may be the wrong way to come to answers. Sometimes the most flawless systems can also be the most devious if they are inappropriate. Just because it works doesn't mean it should be used.

Sarah: "I've got a splitting pain in my head."

Jean: "Have you considered amputation?"

Imagine how many leaders and experts daily make decisions based on blind reliance upon long-accepted collections of official answers (i.e. files, dossiers, scriptures). It's not that written sources do not contain truths, they do!, but one cannot always use the same answer to the same question. Abiding by precedents can be a problematic habit, as the expression goes: "give a child a hammer and soon everything looks like a nail."

One of my other gripes with the self-help genre is that they often have only a very short section of practical answers and advice. What seems to take a great deal of those books (and, incidentally, this one) is a lot of bibble-babble (or Bible-Babel as a friend of mine calls it). The author usually has their own personal philosophy which they would be delighted if everyone else shared. The people easiest to "convert" are those with weak self-images whose insecurity draws them to powerful, charismatic "know-it-alls." If you are still reading this and are one of those people, you won't find the answer through Reformed Druidism either ("Druidism is a faith, if not in answering, then in questioning"). You'll find your answer, if it's to be found, by your own efforts (possibly divinely aided).

The last rumor I'd like to share is that people do not always lie, sometimes they are just misinformed and don't realize it or (more likely) won't admit it. I am, myself, greatly "uneducated" in accredited forms of theological training. I am merely winging it, which so many "experts" are also secretly doing. I hope this book has jolted you into a deeper speculation of the purpose, motives and capabilities of the "self-help book" genre.

Space for your notes:

Planting Your Own Grove

By Stacey Weinberger
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2000

The Live Oak acorns that have fallen over the course of this past Fall at the Grovesite are already showing signs of sprouting. Our Server has collected some in the hopes of growing them at her new house. This has given me the inspiration and impetus to post the first in a series of see and do articles. My teacher always told me that Druidism is a “See and do” religion versus Judaism or Christianity which are talk-think religions. And so we bring to you a plan for planting your own grove.

Do you have a reverence for trees, particularly oaks? You can grow these mighty trees yourself, from seed.

Start by gathering acorns. Let your favorite kids help or find acorns at the foot of an oak that has a special meaning for you. Make sure the tree is healthy. Use a fishing pole or other long pole to shake them from the tree. Your best chances of successful acorns are those picked directly from the oak.

Gently twist the acorn’s hat. If it comes off easily, you’re got a candidate for your project. Toss out any cracked, rotten, or hole-y acorns as well as those that seem very light by comparison. As a final test, place the acorns in a bucket of water and get rid of the floaters.

Don’t keep acorns too long before you plant them! Once they dry out, they probably won't germinate.

Using plastic bags, mix a handful of acorns with a handful of perlite. (Vermiculite can be added to the mix, if you like.) Seal the bag, date it, and place it in your refrigerator. It may take as much as three cycles of the moon for the acorns to germinate or as little as one cycle, depending on the type of oak. At the full moon and the new moon, check your acorns to see if they are starting to sprout. When several have sprouted, its time to plant all the acorns in the bag.

To plant the acorns, use large plastic pots (this is one time I actually like plastic anything!). I tend to use the large black ones left over from the previous spring’s azalea purchase. Use one-gallon size at a minimum. The little oaks will develop looooooong tap roots, so they'll need plenty of depth. Make sure the pots drain well, too, with holes in the bottom.

Fill the pots with potting soil almost to the top. Leave about one inch. Place a single acorn on its side and cover it with half an inch of potting soil. Then water, taking care not to wash the soil away from the acorn.

Place your pots in a protected area so the cold won’t freeze them or dry them out. Water them whenever the soil dries on top.

Now sit back and wait! Hopefully in the spring, you’ll see the first signs of growth. When the little oaks are growing nicely, you can move the pots to an Eastern sunny spot and fertilize them every Sabbat. At Mabon or Samhain when the little oaks are one to two years old, plant them in a permanent spot.

The thing I really like about having these small oaks in pots is that I can arrange the pots in a circle for special workings. In the side yard, on the back deck, or even in a pasture, I can let them grown (almost) naturally and feel the power of this magickal tree. As they grow, I can move them out, away from the center of the circle, to make room for their future growth. Once a lot of rituals have taken place in this

circle of young trees, the place becomes sacred, and its a good spot to plant the trees in a special ceremony.

Winter Tree Care and Planting Tips

By Stacey Weinberger, Baccharis Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 2002

From the February edition of Leaf Lines, Newsletter of The National Arbor Day Foundation. Though Spring officially begins on March 20 this year, in many places it is still cold and there is still snow on the ground. These are excellent recommendations until the weather warms.

1. Watching Your Trees In Winter

Take a walk outside to observe the buds and stems of your trees. Look at your mature trees and any new plantings from last fall or spring. What will you find?

Carefully remove a sealed bud and gently open it. Inside you will find tiny immature leaves and perhaps the beginnings of a flower. The buds are triggered to life each spring by day length. Temperature changes hasten or slow down the development of the buds.

Select several trees in your yard and tie a piece of string to their branches. Take just a moment each day, or once a week, to carefully inspect the tightly closed buds on the branches. Plant breeders use this very technique to search for ways to develop cold-hardy trees, particularly for the fruit industry.

Watching the buds awake and noting the date of the event is called phenology* an ancient forerunner of ecology. Mark on your calendar the exact dates the buds actually emerge on each tree. You can also record when your trees blossom and leaf out. Each year you will begin to learn more about the characteristics of your trees. This process of keeping yearly records will prove to be very useful --especially if you are raising fruit trees.

2. Wabbits and Other Wascals In Winter

While you are on your winter walks you may encounter other signs of life in your orchards or gardens besides simple bud development. Check your trees for signs of rodent damage. It is common for mice or rabbits to chew the tender bark of a young tree right down to the heartwood. Don't worry...if you find a girdled tree, the damage can usually be repaired by a technique known as "bridge grafting." Bridge grafting literally bridges the gap in the living tissues so they can continue the tree's growth as well as transport needed nutrients to and from the leaves and roots.

Mark the site of the damaged tree and return with a sharp knife. Remove all frayed or loose bark from around the wound. Next, remove a sucker or a slender, long, branchlet from the tree and cut it into lengths just a little bit longer than the wound, measured from top to bottom. Sharpen these sticks into wedges at both ends and insert them under the bark at the top and bottom of the wound. Several of these "bridges" will be needed, spaced at intervals around the tree.

Finally, protect the wound by covering the entire area with grafting wax. In a few years, the wound will be healed and the tree will grow normally. If you can't find grafting wax at your local nursery, try searching for it on the web.

3. Consider Your Planting Site

While the act of planting a tree may only involve a few hours, proper care and maintenance may last a lifetime. This winter, care for your new trees by simply taking the time to study the future site upon which they will be planted. Consider the environment in which you'll be working--whether you are planting on your property or planning an Arbor Day tree-planting event at a local park.

In selecting a tree, your first consideration must be what the tree needs. In other words, what environmental factors limit the ability of a particular species to live a healthy life? One indication is to look at the native species in your area. Some non-native species and horticulturally-developed cultivars may also do well on your site. Remember to always select the right tree for the right place.

4. Buy your trees now for spring planting

While you are on those winter walks, consider how your trees define the scenery. Now is the time to create plans for your desired landscape. What would you like to see when you take this same walk in future years? Imagine planting trees and shrubs to create a beautiful, productive, "edible landscape" surrounding your home with delicious fruits and nuts to benefit your family and the wildlife outside your back door.

Consider planting some of our fruit trees...a Stayman Winesap Apple, an Early Richmond Cherry, or perhaps a delicious Belle Of Georgia Peach. If you like nut trees, you might choose the beautiful Hall's Hardy Almond, American Hazelnut, Shellbark Hickory, or Black Walnut. The Sourwood is an excellent honey tree for beekeepers.

To brighten up future winter scenes around your home, select trees for their bright colorful fruit, unique branch structure, or peeling bark. Our online Tree Store offers many possibilities. Some of our favorites are the Prairifire Flowering Crab, River Birch, Lacebark Elm, Northern Catalpa, or the Kousa Dogwood.

Make a large photocopy of your property plat. Here you can create an inventory of all the trees on your property and position them on the map. Include the botanical names of the trees for your reference. As you select trees for later plantings, you can share this map with friends, nursery growers, or use it to consult with your local County Cooperative Extension Agent.

As you plant trees, work to shape your landscape with a diverse selection of strategically placed plantings to create a landscape of beautiful, useful, edible trees for all four seasons.

5. Forcing Spring To Arrive

Now that the coldest days of winter are behind us, you can slip outside on a mild day to take care of some dormant winter pruning. Remove any crossing limbs that might rub together, sucker shoots, and any broken or dead branches. From the cuttings you remove, save a few heavily budded branches for forcing indoors to brighten up your home with colorful blooms and leaves. Good candidates for successful forcing are hazelnuts, redbuds, willows, forsythias, apple and crabapples, magnolias, and red maples.

Bring your cuttings (up to 1/2 inch diameter or smaller) inside and place them in a bucket of tepid water (about 100 degrees) with a floral preservative. The preservative will increase hydration and control any bacterial growth. Fill up a

vase with warm water and preservative as well. The water in your vase will need to be changed in your container about once a week too.

Now, fill up your sink with very warm water and place the ends of the branches into the sink. Cut the stems of the branches off under the warm water. Size the branches so they fit into your vase and then proceed to create an arrangement. When you are finished, set the vase away from bright sunlight in a cool location. It will take anywhere from 1 to 6 weeks for the blooms and/or leaves to burst from their buds.

We encourage you to forward these Winter Tree Care and Planting Tips on to your friends and family around the country.

Thank you for planting and caring for America's Trees!

*Phenology looks at the relationship between climate or seasons and periods of biological activity. Phenologists study and record the changes and movements of animals and plants in relation to weather and seasonal changes taking place in their surrounding environment.

Figure 44 Maypole at Live Oak, c. 1983 Joan Carruth and Larry Press.

Figure 45 Bearing the littlest Grove member, Live Oak Grove, Beltane 1984.

The Creation of a Druid's Nemeton

This is an article by Rhiannon Hawk Fugatt,
of the Druid Heart Spirit Grove/Nemeton Awenyddion
O How She Set up Her Grove Site.
A Druid Missalany, Summer 2002

While Sister Rhiannon uses Welsh deities, the deities invoked can be adapted to the Celtic pantheon of your affinity and their attributes and roles.

Nemeton means "Sacred Space." The Druids of old and Druids of today prefer our sacred space outdoors in a place where we feel or sense Nature Spirit activity. Many Nemetons are located in a grove of trees. Natural places can add a lot to a ritual, especially if you can find a spot that exists along a ley-line or high energy center along the Earth's magnetic grid. Our Druid Grove's Nemeton is in the middle of a forest of silver-firs, oaks, pines, cedars, and dogwoods, twenty to thirty feet behind our home. Before we created the standing stones Nemeton I searched the property by spending time in different locations attuning to Earth's energy there and paid special care of natural vibrational frequencies.

The circle of our Grove is about twenty-five feet across, and around the edges stand twelve stones in the eight directions of the wheel of the year. We spent considerable time creating this sacred space, but it is nothing compared to the hard work that went into the ancient's creation of Stonehenge or other ancient sacred places. These stone monuments, or circles, express the way Druids perceive the universe and we connect with the universe in this circle that has no beginning and no end. These standing stones will stay here to remind future people of our existence and sacred connection with the land.

I found most of the stones in our stone circle by digging them out of the ground near the Nemeton's location. Some of them were very large, weighing up to two thousand pounds. For the larger and heaviest stones we used a come-along, a hand operated wench for pulling them. The largest stone that now stands in the East was the heaviest. I dug it out of the hard clay soil just fifteen feet away from the Nemeton in the ground. After three days of cranking the come-along we finally had him close enough to the East so we started to prepare his spot in the Grove, next we stood him up and lodged him into the dig out. Now I'm sure it would have taken a lot less time if we had a tractor to move it, but we decided to do it by hand. The rest of the stones in our Nemeton weighed less than a thousand pounds. I moved them by my self with a refrigerator dolly.

If you were to put as much effort into your sacred space, it might be good to get a work party together to help. While not all of us are blessed to have land, sometimes it is necessary to seek out Pagan friendly land owners. Druids who live in cities can create sacred space in your homes but, please be sure you have a fire source such as a candle, for that is where the spirits dance.

The Nemeton is circular, but Druids stand or sit in a horse shoe pattern during ritual. The opening in the horseshoe is where the spirits enter our Nemeton that is in the South. The South is also where we have our altar. The altar is used to create an open doorway for the kindred spirits to enter during ritual. The reason for the altar's location being in the South is that the South side of any clearing has the most sun through out the day. The alter I created in our Nemeton is a trithilian--

three standing stones in close proximity capped with a flat sandstone. The altar is a bridge between the worlds. The lay out of the ritual tools on our altar are symbol. How they are placed on top of the altar stone reflects how we relate those symbols with our own inner spirit, and our connection with the world tree cosmology. On our alter we place the symbols of Land, Sea, and Sky, and of the balance between the moon and sun. During ritual we do not step behind the altar out of our deep respect for the Shining Ones or good spirits who may be passing through the opening into the Grove.

A Grove is what Druids call their act of gathering for rituals, magic and meditation. We are the Druid's Grove. We join with others and do the tree meditation at the beginning of our ritual to feel that the peace within trees, also exists within us, and to experience the interconnectedness of our roots growing together. The rituals take place in the Nemeton.

These rituals are celebrated during the solstices, the equinoxes, the four fire festivals, and the healing rites we do every month. The Nemeton has a fire pit dug out of its center. Before all rituals we prepare for the spirit fire by placing oak twigs and logs in a cone shape. Oak represents durability and strength and is associated with the Welsh sun God Llew. We light the spirit fire in ritual during the moment the God and Goddess who preside over the ritual are arriving. When we are in the Nemeton all is quiet except for the sounds of nature, the four winds in the trees, and our voices raised in song. We keep a peace around us that allows our senses to awaken and our minds to be open for contact with the invisible world. The invisible world exists all through out this middle earthly plane.

When we had finished building our stone circle I did a ritual to welcome the new stones. This is done by consecrating the stones with offerings that have been blessed by the spirits. First we invite a patron God and matron Goddess from the Welsh pantheon into our Nemeton. We call on the Goddess Brúd. She brings with her the flame of inspiration and the creation of fiery spirit energy that dances in the center fire. We call on the God Manawyddan, he is the voyager who sails on the ocean, and over the land. He goes between our world and the other worlds and assists us to lift the veils between the worlds. I invoke Brúg and Manawyddan into two white candles. These represent the brightness of the God and Goddess and reminds us to keep alive our own inner spark of the divine. The invocation is done with songs and poetry. Then we take the candles and we light the center fire to connect the spirits and us with the Celtic world tree.

The center fire of our Nemeton represents the center of the world tree and the center of the world tree is the Middleworld or Earth. We invite the God and Goddess of the rite to dance there in the spirit fires. Then we call the Celtic triad spirits to bless us with their presence. The triad spirits are our Ancestors of the sea, the Nature Spirits of the earth, and the Shining Ones of the sky. The triad spirits we invite into the Grove each have an earthen bowl that contains an element that is attributed to the realm they come from. A bowl of water is placed to the left on the alter for the Underworld and the Ancestors. A bowl of earth for the Middleworld and the Nature Spirits is placed in the center. The Shining Ones have a feather and an incense bowl on the right side. We invoke these spirits with poetic verse to imbue their spirit into the water, the earth, and the incense.

The poetry we use is written by our Grove's Bard. Then we take the two candles around to each stone and pour a small amount of melted wax onto the ground in front of each stone. This is done to awaken each stone to the spirits of the God and Goddess we have invoked into the candles, that their energy may vibrate from the Earth that is within the newly created Nemeton. A Druid then takes each bowl starting with the water of the Ancestors, and pours a small amount on top of each stone while invoking the energy of the Ancestor's realm of the Underworld to pulsate through all of the stones in the circle. The Underworld is more distant from our world than the Otherworld, and is usually found through water. The world tree's roots are in the Underworld, so are the past, our ancestors, and our minds. This the Druid says during invocation to each stone while pouring the waters, "May the vibrations of the Underworld, through this stone, pulsate with the luminous light of the Anwyn." The name for the Underworld in the Welsh lore is Anwyn. Then the Druid goes to each new stone member repeating this same process then returns the bowl to the alter giving thanks by words of prayer.

The same process is done to awaken the stones to the energetic activity of Nature Spirits, who's world comes next on the way up the world tree. Nature spirits are part of the creative energy flow in nature, they exist in plants, streams, mountains, trees, animals, and in this Middleworld earthly plane. They can be any size. They work together in a synchronized harmonious flow to keep balance present in the Nemeton. The trunk of the world tree exists on Earth. It is the Middleworld, it is our nature and earthly relations, our physical body's connection to Earth. The spirit fire in the center of our Nemeton is the very center of the world tree and is also in the trunk. To synchronize the stones with nature's energy a Druid takes the bowl of Earth and walks towards the first stone to the right of the altar and says,

"May the rhythmic vibrations of our Earth Mother pulsate with you, and through you, as it does in us. Help us amplify the healing powers of Abred in our Nemeton. Make this a place that will awaken our ability to be more attentive to the forces of Abred."

Abred is the Welsh name for this Middleworld. The Druid then pours a small amount of earth from the bowl over the stone, and repeats the same process with the other stones. The bowl then gets returned to the alter.

Next, we bring to the circle of stones the presence of the Otherworld. We do this by asking assistance from the Shining Ones who have come to us from the Otherworld. In The world tree cosmology, the Otherworld and the Underworld are not the same. The Otherworld is above and more celestial. It is the canopy of branches and leaves on the world tree. Access to the Otherworld is usually through portals on Middleworld (Earth) in areas where there is energy concentrated, such as ley-lines and power spots, sacred hills, stone circles and the like. The Shining Ones that live in the Otherworld are the Gods and Goddesses from old Celtic lore and legends. We honor them in our rituals with offerings of herbs, songs, and prayers. To merge the light energy of the Shining Ones with the stones, an active Druid takes the bowl of incense and feather and approaches the stone starting with the one to the right of the alter. Sain is the Gaelic term we use for wafting the smoke. The Druid starts to Sain the stone while saying,

"Oh Shining Ones, hear our prayers and accept our offerings. For today with your help, we consecrate our new stone members to make them wholly in the realms of Anwyn, Abred, and Gwynvyd at the edges of our Nemeton!

“May the higher frequencies of Gwynvyd illuminate through you, within and without, let the messages of the Gods and Goddesses speak through you to us clearly, that we may hear the truth and feel their hearts nobility brought to this Nemeton."

The Welsh name for the Otherworld is Gwynvyd. When the Druid returns the bowl of Gwynvyd to the altar all raise their hands to the South, above the altar and say,

"Let the powers of Land, Sea, and Sky live within and on the edge of this Nemeton. Let the spirit fire and world tree connect the stones to the center of our Nemeton."

To end this rite a Druid approaches the fire and takes some ashes from the spirit fire and first enters the South saying,

"Voices from the ocean of the four winds! Come! Rush through the stones and spiral into the center of the world tree."

The Druid then sprinkles some ash on the ground in front of the stone, and on the stone, and does this for each of the stones in every direction. The Druid does this while chanting,

"Let the spirit fire and world tree connect the stone people to the center of our Nemeton. By the blessing of all spirits, dance together our ancestors, our nature spirits, and the Shining Ones, we welcome these new stone members into our Nemeton."

All say, "Gadael hi bhod!" Rituals are always followed by a song of peace, and a fellowship feast.

Figure 46 Marriage with Donut Grabbing.

Tree Meditation

A Meditation from the Druid Heart Spirited Grove:
By Rhiannon Hawk
A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 2001

Meditation is the key to trance when it is done correctly. Breathing techniques help induce these states of trance and also awaken the electric governing vessel and the magnetic conception vessel which helps our outward journey to succeed. Meditation and trance are a pathways between the conscious and sub-conscious for inner therapy, reprogramming, recreating our pasts, healing our core self, etc. We use trance and meditation for all of these plus journeying. Journeying is similar to astral projection except that you are safe and still in your mind, body, and spirit. When you journey into the underworld (Anwyn), you journey into the sea, deep parts of your self where your Ancestral memories exist, genetic and spiritual, past lives also.

There are different levels of trance. We like to use medium trance because you are safe there. Deep trance should only be done by those with much experience or by a guide who leads you by voice.

The Tree Meditation

By Rhiannon Hawk
A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 2001

The tree meditation does many things. It grounds your entire being. It runs Nyvwyres (Sacred Spirit) energy through the governing vessel which runs down through the crown of your head to a spot called the core-star, and the conception vessel which runs up (from the earth) from the bottom of your spine or feet to the core-star. The core-star looks just like it sounds like a small white sun located between your solar-plexus and your navel. Thus uniting the earth and the sky, and filling the channel with Nyvwyre. The tree meditation is also a medium trance state. So instead of ending your meditation when it is done you can slide right into a journey.

Start by finding a quiet place where you will be undisturbed. Unplug your phone. Put a sign on your door "DO NOT DISTURB." Do your meditation outside if you can find a place and the weather is willing. Have a pillow ready because you are going to sit cross legged. When you are comfortable you may begin. Take a few deep breaths slowly. First filling your stomach then your lungs. Fill completely. Do this a few times. Focus on letting go of any tension that may have built up during the day. Keep deep breathing as you take your mind and body off any distracting thoughts. THINK NOTHING!

At the bottom of your spine imagine pushing and growing a large tap root down into the earth and feel other roots pushing down. Feel your roots pushing down through rock breaking them apart. Feel your roots feeling water, minerals, and nutrients. Now just take some time to allow them to grow further down until you feel warmth. Feel them reach water.

After you have a strong root system well grounded, feel that earth energy moving up to your lower body (belly area) and developing a wide base trunk. Grow up quickly. Feel the trunk growing up your entire body, and when you get to just above your chest feel branches push their way out. Keep moving up and out. Take some time to do this. Make sure that branches grow out of the crown of your head. Reach those branches for the light of the sun. Feel the warming rays giving you energy. Grow new sprigs and lots of leaves and don't forget to take a deep breath and live. Be a tree for a moment. Notice if there are any animals living in your branches?

Pause...

Now I want you to focus on the earth energy coming up to your core-star, that is directly above your navel. Feel how strong Mother Earth's energy is flowing through you!

Take a moment...

Now feel Father Sky's energy coming down through your branches, down to your core-star at the same time you still feel the earth's energy coming up.

Take a moment...

Now send the Earth's energy up to the sky, out your branches, and send the skies energy down into the earth through your roots. As soon as both are united you see a bright light that is gold-white. It is coming from your core-star. Back in that light. Feel the love. Let that light burst throughout your entire being. You are meant to be here now. To continue with journey

Now stay within and visualize that gold-white light filling you up trying to burst out of your bark. All the way out to the ends of your branches, and all the way down to the tips of your roots, especially your tap root. Once you have done this imagine that you as your human self are smaller that normal and inside this tree that is filled with light. You are floating around as if there is no gravity. Now turn yourself upside down and look at the opening of the taproot that looks far into the underworld. It looks like it goes forever, all you see are its sides and the light. You decide to investigate. But first you find that there is a small white pouch tied around your waist, and you realize that it must have a purpose so you open it, and inside there are three golden seeds. You put them back in the pouch and continue on your journey. You grab a hold of the bark and pull yourself into the tunnel, as you are small inside this great tree and you are light energy you find it very easy to move along.

As you keep looking ahead it seems as though it will take forever but as you continue to move you see the bottom of the root and it looks like it is open at the end. As you get closer you see a beautiful luminous light that is tranquil to see. Upon reaching the opening you see a reflection, you grow more aware of the object that the reflection is coming from, and you see that it is a cauldron. A very large cauldron that could hold one to two hundred gallons. It appears to be water. Looking into that water it's dark at first just reflecting that luminous light, then you notice that an image appears, some kind of writing. Some ancient symbol that may have belonged to your ancestors. Look very closely. Memorize it, you may know it, it may even be unfamiliar to you, but remember it well...

The experience has made you feel somehow, special, like you were given a gift. Then you realize that you must also leave an offering so you reach for your pouch and open it, allowing the golden seeds to fall freely to the sacred waters. You will receive a sign that the offering was received. After you have received this you may return back up the root to your core self.

Once you are back in the trunk of the tree, expand your body to fill the tree and return to the earthly plane, remember to keep your core self intact.

It may be helpful to record this reading it aloud into a tape deck allowing for the amount of space you will need in different places during the meditation and journey.

Seed Planting Ceremony.

Collected by Stephen Crimmins

This ceremony has been used a number of times at Carleton's Fall Equinox Celebration though in some ways it might be more fitting for earlier in the year when seeds are being planted more widely. This ceremony, I believe, was created by Chris Middleton during his time as an Arch Druid of Carleton.

Every one is given a seed (in the past this has been Chestnuts one year and Acorns another. I find it best to use something that you can go out and find yourself before the ceremony).

Each person in turn says "I plant this seed (Chestnut/Acorn, whatever) and with it I plant a memory." The person goes onto share a memory about wildlife, nature, or whatever seems applicable to them. Of course, the person may ask that a memory not be passed on outside the group, or this could be a general rule for all memories.

Once everyone has shared a memory they take there seed out and find what feels like a good place to plant it. In some cases the presiding Druid may have a particular place in mind or it may be best to let each person find their own location.

Michelle's Meditation

By Michelle Hajder, Feb 3, 1997
On Carleton Vaxnotes Druid Conference

Part One

Yes, that's grounding...but I also have this meditation/personal ritual for on-the-spot energy focus, which I also call grounding.

This is not something I invented, but is a general purpose thing I have seen different forms of in many books...

One sits on the floor/ground with good posture and a nice straight spine, taking a couple deep breaths and calming the mind an body.

Concentrate on your spine, feel it, be aware of it, and be aware of its energy. Now slowly feel and visualize your "spine" slowly extending downwards past the tailbone and descending out of your body. (It's probably gross and distracting to visualize actual vertebrae poking out your butt...the common image/feeling is a column of energy that flows from you spine. And remember, it's extending, not leaving your body, just getting longer and still keeping you connected).

So feel and visualize your "spine" descend straight down through the floor, then the floor below, or the foundations of the house, down into the Earth. Be sure to take it slow enough that you *really* do feel this happening. Do no try to send your spine deeper until you are secure at the level you are on.

Send it down through topsoil, past water mains, layers of clay, etc, until you hit bedrock. Feel it continue for miles and miles downward, yet connected to your body.

Send it to the point at the center of the earth. secure it there. feel the link between you and the center. feel you spine securely rooted to the spot. You are so strongly connected that not even a tornado could move you.

Now, practice feeling and drawing energy up from out of the depths of the earth up your spine and into your body. Draw energy, draw peace. Send energy back to the earth. Feel the flow.

Part Two

Now, If you want to continue the exercise, feel how you spine is connected to the center of the earth. follow it up back through the dirt and rock, back up your body, and now extend your spine-energy-column out the top of your head, extending slowly as before so you really feel it move out the top of you head, up above you, through the ceiling, through the roof, through the levels of atmosphere, up into the heavens as far as you can imagine.

You are now connected to both earth and sky, a powerful column joining two powerful forces. Pull energy down from sky. Send some back. Pull sky energy and send it into the earth. Raise earth energy to the sky. Do both at once. As you inhale, pull energy from above and below, and as you exhale, breathe the energies out. Pull positive energies in, send negative out.

Play with exercise of this sort and see what works for you.

Section Ten
Non-Liturgical Festival Activities

All too often, festivals have over-emphasized the liturgy at the expense of the celebration. The following articles are mostly drawn from the Druid Missal-Any and should give you some ideas on how to draw the more activity-oriented members of your Grove into attending your rites, by appealing to their lower instincts to have a good time.

Uncommon Activities for Samhain

By Mortus
A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2001

1. Visit & tidy-up the graves of family, friends and respected people.
1. Séances are popular at this time of year, but book in advance!
2. Hold a "dumb feast" with no talking and plates for ancestors.
3. Contemplate your own funeral arrangements, especially if you want to fight "The Industry" and have a natural funeral free of chemical and air-tight sealed caskets.
4. Include the dead in your thoughts during the daily grind.
5. Begin a custom of thanking the things we kill and eat.
6. Visit an abattoir or kill your own dinner (fish is the least unpleasant), which will open your eyes & heart to some cold facts.
7. Work on your will, living-will, powers-of-attorney, and insurances.
8. "Sacrifice" some fun, for retirement planning.
9. Discuss deeper issues of after-life with your children & spouse.
10. Research genealogy and visit elderly relatives (research for Eulogies).
11. Get a health-check-up and other medical appointments. Quit smoking.
12. Rake leaves, plan a composting heap (done properly, they don't stink)
13. Plant acorns, salt meat & jerky, pickle things.
14. Go hunting or fishing [or "camera-stalking" of prominent politicians…]
15. Volunteer to escort children for Halloween (you get candy, too!)
16. Adopt an overseas child or assist a charity.
17. At Carleton, we'd pour molten-lead or wax into cold water and divine things.
18. Protest the most recent prejudiced horror-flick of the season.
19. Lobby against the funeral industry.
20. Make a list of 100 things you've done, and 100 more you want to do.
21. Contemplate capital punishment, war, crime, sanitation & vegetarianism.

22. Bless your pets with smoke (yes, jumping through a fiery hoop is okay…)
23. Clean your home, extinguish your oven/furnace's pilot-light and relight it.
24. Replace the batteries in your smoke detector, buy a fire extinguisher, etc.
25. Write long-winded, disconnected rambles & lists about Samhain & Sacrifice.

Various Winter Customs to Try Out

By Eric, ex-Akita Grove, now in NYC.
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2001

I enjoyed the Samhain activities, and spent four hours searching for good customs to complement the next issue. It's a simple list of what I plan to do, because I'm not much of a writer.

- Nov 23 Divining the best presents after a hearty Thanksgiving meal by asking relatives and the Gods..
- Dec 1st Cleaning out the house thoroughly- Any remaining dust is "Not mine, please ignore it."
- Dec 2nd Light "advent candles" or Yule Candles marking down the Solstice Sun's arrival.
- Dec 15th Decorating the House- Holly, Mistletoe, tree setup, bunting, Yule-logs, front lawn décor. Mail out blessings (Christmas cards) to friends & curses to enemies.
- Dec 19th Donate 10% of December Paycheck to charities closest to my house. And carry small presents to distribute to beggars & muggers in NYC.
- Dec 20th Wassailing and Caroling.- Nothing more than Trick or Treating for the winter, fun to do with the Christians.
- Dec 21st Vigiling in the Grove- Spend the longest night of the year in the grove with a fire, several blankets and some friends to encourage the sun to make a come back.
- Dec 21st Mari Lwyd in Wales (Lair Bhan in Ireland)- The Welsh visited houses with a draped horse skull, interrogated their neighbours with strange questions, and got free booze if the homeowner couldn't come up with decent answers. I think Barney's head on a stick would be fine & appreciated.
- Dec 22nd Namahage- In Akita, drunken barefoot men in demon masks, straw clothing, flaming torches (my that's dangerous sounding) would burst into pre-decided homes "surprising" a family at dinner and terrorizing the bejezus out of small kids. The father would ransom their children's lives with more booze, and the demons would bless the house to protect it from fires and further burglar intrusions. Very similar to German house visits by Father Christmas (Weihnachtsmann or Julknap) & his point man, the "Black Moor" (Knecht Ruprecht Don't you pity my neighbours?
- Dec 23rd Celebrate the Emperor of Japan's Birthday (he is the descendent of the Sun Goddess after all)
- Dec 24th. Presents and Party
- Dec 25th Hanging out sheafs of corn or bird seed AFTER Christmas for the all-winter birds.
- Dec 26th, Divination- by dropping a handful of pine-needles into a bowl and rohrscharching
- Dec 26th Boxing. Put away boxes and decorations. As for the Tree: Put the tree in a safe spot in the yard (needles still on) away from the house. Allow to thoroughly dry and use it to light Beltane fire. WHOOSH! What a sight!
- Dec 27th Return presents and Buy discounted goods at stores for next year!. A gift of the Gods!

- Dec 30th New Year Resolutions- Adding thanks for last year's completed ones and a tweak from everyone in the room for not finishing the last ones.
- Dec 31st Fireworks, all-night parties are fine to continue.
- Jan 1st, Sleep to Noon. Pray to Bracicea for forgiveness and mercy.
- Jan 6th, "Epiphany". Credit card bills arrive. Holidays are officially over.

Figure 47 Winter processions, c. 2002.

Figure 48 Entrance to the Tomb of First Carleton Chaplain, c 1994.

Yule Time Caroling

By Sine Ceolbhinn
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2001

Strangely enough, Christmas is one of the few times of the year that we feel like singing with our neighbours outside of a karaoke bar. Easter songs? A few. Groundhog Day songs? Not likely. We all want to sing, but trip over the uncomfortable lyrics, right? I decided to but together a little list of songs that a pagan could use in company with their monotheistic friends.

A few hours of scanning the internet has given me a collection of popular songs that didn't dwell on babies in food troughs, righteous crowns, deceased people with bird wings, and ecstatic shepherds hearing voices in the dark (won't even go there). I prefer my own improbable stories (grin). Just change "Christmas" to "Yule time" and most are okay. Santa Claus is rather unavoidable, but he's nearly pagan, and so I let him slide. Many of the songs on the list below have on-line free music-files and lyrics at:http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/~ai251/xcarol.html

- Auld Lang Syne
- Christmas Song (Chestnuts roasting)
- Deck the Halls
- Do they know it's Christmastime at all?
- Frosty the Snowman
- Grandma Got Hit by a Reindeer
- The Grinch's Theme Song
- Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas
- Here Comes Santa Claus
- Holly Jolly Christmas
- Home For The Holidays
- I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus
- Jingle Bells
- Jingle Bell Rock
- I'll Be Home For Christmas
- It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas
- It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year
- Jolly Old Saint Nicholas
- Let It Snow
- O Christmas Tree
- Rocking Around the Christmas Tree
- Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer
- Silver and Gold Silver Bells
- Sleigh Ride
- That Christmas Feeling
- Up on the Rooftop
- We Wish You a Merry Christmas
- White Christmas
- Winter Wonderland

Now, I was going to make a list of filkable songs, but surprise, somebody's gone ahead and re-done most of the Christmas songs in a Neo-Pagan flavor. Isn't it great that people do all the work for us? You could spent weeks studying the solstice. Enjoy!!

Winter Solstice Drama of Akita Grove

By Nozomi Kibou and Patrick Haneke
December 2001

Japan has a very old story recorded in the Kojiki Scrolls (700 AD) about the Sun-Goddess, Amaterasu which we will incorporate into the Grove's drama. Rituals can get dull after a while, so we're going to improvise. We got the idea from Merri's Beltane service Mummery Drama at Carleton that Mike told us in 1999. But first the basic story:

Part One, The Story:

AMATERASU (Japanese: "Great Divinity Illuminating Heaven"), the celestial sun Goddess from whom the Japanese imperial family claims descent, is the most important Shinto deity. She was born from the left eye of her father, Izanagi, as he was performing shugyo. Izanagi bestowed upon her a necklace of jewels and placed her in charge of Takamagahara ("High Celestial Plain"), the abode of all the kami. One of her brothers, the storm God Susanoo, was to be sent away to rule the sea plain. Together the sky and ocean would encircle and protect Japan. Before going, Susanoo went to take leave of his sister. As an act of good faith, they produced many children together, she by chewing and spitting out pieces of the sword he gave her, and he by doing the same with her jewels.

However, Susanoo soon began to behave very rudely-such as breaking down the divisions in the rice fields, defiled his sister's dwelling place, and finally threw a flayed horse into her weaving hall. Indignant, Amaterasu withdrew in protest into a cave, sealed the door with a rock, and darkness fell upon the world. Many demons appeared to plague the people with snow and lightning. Not only people, but the Gods were at a loss. Amaterasu's brother, the Moon, did his best to take over her job, but couldn't keep the plants from wilting nor could he stop the cold winds from chilling the livestock.

Because no one was able to open the door of the cave, many Takamaga-hara Gods were at a loss as to what to do and conferred on how to lure the sun Goddess out. The wise God Omoikane decided at the meeting that Amenouzume would perform an amusing dance to attract Amaterasu attention. They collected cocks, whose crowing precedes the dawn, and hung a mirror and jewels on a sacred sakaki tree in front of the cave.

The Goddess Amenouzume began a very suggestive dance on an upturned tub, partially disrobing herself, and bumping about comically, which so delighted the assembled Gods that they roared with laughter. Amaterasu became curious how the Gods could make merry while the world was plunged into darkness.

"Why you are laughing?" She asked through the rock door of refuge.

The most beautiful Goddess has appeared. She is a most skillful dancer!" One of the Gods responded.

Hearing this, Amaterasu, who was a proud Goddess and said, "This is a performance I must, by all means, see." And opened the door just a crack. The God conversing with Amaterasu then took out a mirror and placed it in front of her.

Amaterasu saw her face in the mirror and exclaimed, "My! What a beautiful Goddess!"

Wondered by her own beauty, she open the door wider to see better. A strong God, named Amenotadikarao, didn't miss

that chance. He grabbed the slit, and pulled it wide open. Still bedazzled by her reflection, she heard the cock's crow, and was thus drawn out from the cave. The kami (Gods) then quickly threw a shimenawa, or sacred rope of rice straw, before the entrance of the cave (now in Kyushu Island) to prevent her return to hiding. No choice, the sun Goddess Amaterasu returned to the world. After that, Susanoo behaved better, well…., most of the time.

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Amaterasu's chief place of worship is the Grand Shrine of Ise, the foremost Shinto shrine in Japan. She is manifested there in a mirror that is one of the three Imperial Treasures of Japan (the other two being a jeweled necklace and a sword). The genders of Amaterasu and her brother the moon God Tsukiyomi no Mikato are remarkable exceptions in worldwide mythology of the sun and the moon.

Amenouzume is happy and sexy dancing God whose dance make spectators dazzled or entertained or raises spirits. Much of her followers are strippers, comedians, sandwich men and such artists and entertainers. Her lesson is that even in the most dire times, there is a place and role for joy, hope, love and entertainment.

Solstice Drama Part Two:

Props & Staging

It will follow almost the same process and language (with improvisation) as the story.

Mayumi will play the role of Amaterasu, the Sun. Nozomi will play the role of Amenouzume, the Dancer. Pat will play the role of Susanoo & Amenotadikarao (bad boy & strong guy). Little Naomi will be the impish winter sprite, armed with snowballs.

Other grove members & guests will play the audience of the Gods (about 5 people), maybe even Father will attend.

We'll hold it near the Shrine in a small open area on the Emperor's birthday (Dec 23rd) which is appropriate and a holiday. We'll make a mini rice field, set aside a square area for the sun's house, some hand-made straw ropes, and a little dance stage, stage decorations, plus put together a horse puppet (later used for piñata), collect some mirrors, kids jewelry, and some tiaras. Caves are hard to find in Akita, so we'll make a stout wicker hut (bigger than a sweat lodge) and roll rock in front of it. We'll use tiki-torches for dramatic lighting in the evening and set up a portable searchlight in the cave, for her dramatic exit. Nozomi has begun practicing her dance, which is going to be quite the eye-opener for such a shy one! Perhaps Susanoo & Amaterasu will have more children?!

Figure 49 Brining in the Yule Log.

Christmas Plants & Picking the Yule Log

By Mairi Ceolbhinn, D.C. Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2001

Druids love and respect their plants and truly wish them to return to full vitality in the spring. Without plants, how'd we do our sacrifices? What we' d eat? What'd we wear? It's nice to know that in the depths of winter, when the days are shortest, that some plants are doing rather well. We wish to celebrate this with Christmas trees and such and bring their blessings into our homes. See also the site. http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/SolsticePlanningGuide.html

Mistletoe, as we all know, was considered sacred, by our ancient Siblings and has remained such throughout the years. Its Gaelic name still means "all healing," although I'm not sure how to use it safely, since it is rather poisonous. Perhaps, it is by its poison, that it fends off winter's blight, and manages to bloom around the solstice? Its persistent fertility is therefore an established trait that gives us that great custom of "kissing under the sprig of mistletoe" which would happen in a night of partying and debauchery. That age-old theme of commemorating the death of the "old Sun" and birth of the "new Sun" is now popularly incorporated into the images of "Old Man Time and Baby New Year" doing a tag-team on January 1st every year.

Holly berries, like Mistletoe, bloom amidst the snow as if to defy winter and encourage the return to life. Its green boughs were of course common decorations on buildings, holy places and public buildings during the winter festival, and this tradition has fortunately continued to this very day. Even the Japanese, Mike Scharding says, have a "kadomatsu" placed in front of the door at New Year's Eve.

Yule Log Tradition:

Not to be morbid, but a sacrifice is necessary to rekindle the life of the dying sun (no, I'm not pro-Aztec, which sounds like a marketable drug), and it seems the Yule Log has filled that role for several centuries. "Yule" comes from "hweol," meaning "wheel," which is a frequent European symbol for the Sun. So you're basically giving the Sun a good-needed torching to warm it up.

According to various sources, it is widely agreed that the hearth of the Celtic House was the home of a protective spirit, and (for practical and symbolic reasons) the fire was rarely allowed to die out except once or twice a year during the big fire holidays. Special prayers were and are still spoken before leaving the banked fire of turf for the night in rural areas. Much magic also went on around the fire during cooking, story telling, and entertaining of guests. The hearth was basically the pre-modern "Home Entertainment Center." If you've ever noticed, televisions also send comforting relaxing flickers of light into a darkened room while you stare blankly?

Now, back in those days, people had access to common forests surrounding their village. The choice of the wood varied greatly among locales, but one good size tree would provide several logs for a neighborhood. But under no circumstances, should you steal one from a neighbor's private land (and no buying one at a parking lot, good religion is do-it-yourself). I've not heard of any special methods of cutting a tree down, but a short ceremony, and posting a few days

advance notice for malevolent or uninterested spirits to depart, would certainly be in order. (No, that Golden Sickle is no more effective that a haddock, get a good steel axe.) Angry spirits will make the tree conk you on the head; so be forewarned.

Once cut down, a goodly size log was the festooned and regally dragged back to town through the streets. As the Log entered the house, some cultures would give it a hearty drink of oil, salt and mulled wine, with a song perhaps. In more recent times, it was burned on Christmas Eve (which is close enough to the Solstice), with music, activities and frolicking. To kindle the fire, splinters from last year's logs (saved by the eldest daughter) were used to get the substrate of dry logs going, since those Yule-logs are hard to burn by themselves. Guests were encouraged to toss sprigs of holly on the fire to take away bad luck. The way it burned would prognosticate the future.

Splinters of the log and cinders were taken home to protect against fires, lightning and tax-collectors at their home. Now the Yule Log tradition, widespread since the 12th century, nearly died out with the change to pot-belly stoves and grills in the late 19th Century. The tradition still survives in sizeable pockets today in the country-side today. For fire sensitive areas, a smaller log-shaped cake now decorates the dinning room table. I've tried this custom for a few years in my little BBQ next to my house (sneaking one from the River Creek National Park), and saved some ashes, and no disasters have yet befallen my home (well, except the Pentagon in Virginian Commonwealth, but that's the workplace, perhaps the White House and the "Mystic District" of Washington, D.C. were spared because of their National Yule Log?).

For me a Christmas tree is just another elaboration on "bringing the greenery in," and it certainly is a younger tradition than the Yule Log, perhaps a merger of pagan Nordic tree worship and perhaps the 13th century morality plays' "Tree of Life" (from the Garden of Eden) which was often the only stage prop, and conveniently performed around the Solstice. Perhaps, the inability to have a Yule Log burning and urbanization led to the soaring popularity of the Christmas tree in the 19th century? So go get your plants!

Figure 50 Minnesota in early summer.

Some Optional Things for Oimelc

By Alex Strongbow, ex-Carleton
A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 2002

Well, here's my list of things to do for Oimelc, Imbolg, Candlemas, Ostara or whatever you wish to call it. It's a multi-faceted festival reflecting Bridget's diverse talents. If you were to combine them all you'd be "writing poems by candlelight about flaming metallic sheep." Sounds strange, but where do you think "steel wool" is from? Do not put it in the microwave, though, unless you want to see visions of Pikachu!

- Banana-Split candles (Cherry, banana, pineapple ring; possible imagery…)
- Make decorated candlestick holders.
- Try to Predict (e.g. candle divining) whether winter will end soon and what day the last snow will be gone in the grove or some other spot.
- Start planting seeds in little pots.
- Get a candle-making kit at an art store.
- Spring Cleaning Party
- Make homemade butter or ice-cream (try goat's milk)
- Fireworks (if legal, secretly if illegal…)
- Make a contest to find first flowers or awakened hibernators
- Decorate the house: Bridget's Straw Crosses, ironwork, stained glass, candelabras, lava lamps, anything that's bright,
- Melt lead and pour into molds to make items.
- Sharpen knife, repair or replace tool collection
- Rent "Lambchop's Funniest Songs"
- Write poems together (perhaps within 5 minutes on a theme)
- Rent "Babe" or "Ground Hog Day" with Bill Murray
- Rent "Bell, Book , Candle" with James Stewart or "Silence of the Lambs"…
- Rent "Wallace and Grommit" (Perhaps "A Close Shave" is best episode)
- Decorate chair by fireplace.
- Burn the dried up Christmas tree (watch it go fuuumph!)
- Have a sheep day
- http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Hills/9609/sheeptxt.html
- Call up a farmer and have the kids come down for a sheep birthing.
- Do some knitting with wool.

Also see:

http://pages.ivillage.com/paganparent/imbolic.html packed with stuff
http://www.web-holidays.com/candle/ fun
http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/CandlemasCustomsLore.html overview
http://www.partytown.com/menus/imbolc.htm for a meal
http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson048.shtml about Groundhog Day
http://orderofthecauldron.homestead.com/cadlemas.html nice discussion on Candlemas
http://www.ghostdragon.net/sabbats/imbolcactivities.html more activities.
http://members.tripod.com/acorns3/archives.html pagan kids activities back issues (look also under ostara)

Things to Do for

Spring Equinox

By Alex Strongbow
A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 2002

Well, that's a really hard question. We know that most sowing in the fields would be done by now and it was time to change to spring clothes and spend more time outdoors. When it comes down to, we're talking about eggs and sunlight, right?

1. Break down, and enjoy the Easter egg decoration party. Especially the Ukrainian style wax and decoration. If you're an overachiever, go into Faberge.
2. Have half an omelet, sunny side up, of course.
3. Hide treasures in the forest or park. Tall grasses equals stepped-on eggs.
4. Be early for April Fool's day.
5. Go out to the pub for Saint Patrick's day and live it up.
6. Spend the whole day with a watch and see if day REALLY equals night.
7. Set up and synchronize your solar-calendar (that rock-henge in your back yard. A great site, for setting up your stones in a parking lot or a field is www.efn.org/~jack_v/AstronomicalCalendar.html Strangely, the design looks like a basketball courts lines! Could there be a connection?!
8. Get your garden planted, if you haven't started. Try old-fashioned "heirloom seeds" at www.seedsavers.org or Seed Savers Exchange (SSE) at 3076 North Winn Road, Decorah Iowa 52101 at 319-382-5990.
9. Make waffles . Write "Clinton" with maple syrup. Hee. Hee. Enjoy taking half-way opinions on important subjects and carefully study both sides of issues.
10. Change your wardrobe to summer-style suits, sandals and wear a flower. I've been thinking. Many religions have strange headgear or hair-styles, and we haven't since that weird "bald-forehead" style in the 450s AD, so let's go out for straw hats?!

10 Things to Do for Beltane

By Alex Strongbow
A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 2002

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1. Sex. Of course!
2. Wake up early, greet the sun, wash your face in the morning dew. Collect flowers and make garlands for those you care about.
3. An Oak King can be selected by various athletic competitions such as: races, wrestling, archery, stone tossing, sit-ups in one minute, fire kindling contest (first to boil cup of water), greased pole climbing, rodeo riding, or a combination of foolish macho things.
4. A maypole dance for the women (men too if not enough people). Last woman holding the ribbon will become the May Queen The May Queen and Oak King should symbolically (or actually) consummate their "marriage" in a symbolic gesture. http://altreligion.about.com/library/howto/htmaypole.htm
5. Picnic, leaving a symbolic offering of one piece of everything. Possibly foods are oatmeal, diary, berries, greens, wine, barley, honey, eggs, sweets. http://ww.keirle.freeserve.co.uk/page18.htm
6. Drama or play of Persephone returning from the underworld or a story of a woman returning from the fairy lands. Divination is a possibility.
7. Enjoy the Waters of Life (i.e. whiskey). If you're solitary, do some self-nurturing type of activity, like a walk in the woods of a state park and camp out or vigil.
8. Raise stones. Its always a good time to bring the community together to haul rocks around and make a memorial of some type to the event. I recommend using car hoods from a junk yard, long levers, and 15 ropes and a pulley.

Build a Bonfire.

This might be hard for those of you in fire-prone areas like California, but a cauldron fire might be possible, or just use a barbeque/hibachi for the job. Some of you are girl-scouts, but here's some advice for the rest of you.

Apparently, the traditional wood to burn is oak, ash, thorn, rowan, apple, birch, alder, maple, elm, gorse, holly, hawthorn, and others from a story about the Battle of the Trees. I'd add a piece from any other tree in your forest. Collecting the woods and maypole would be a nice combination activity, and give time for certain members to "dally".

Be sure to remove all the dry materials in the vicinity and dampen the area. Now you can just pile a lot of logs if you'd like, or you can stack them. A pyramid shape or teppe shape is considered ideal, as boxy shapes tend to fall to the side rather than collapse inward (1999 Texas A&M disaster, anyone?). I recommend that you don't get too close to the fire, just in case a log rolls out. Leave spaces between the logs to allow air to circulate. Old Christmas trees make great center pieces (whooom!). Put the kindling and ever large pieces in the center.

There are many ways to make the initial flame. Magnifying glass, parabolic mirror, iron & flint, rubbing two sticks (use a bow to spin faster), magma, lightning, natural forest fires, and matches. As always, the key is to start small

with shaved wood, dried grass, lint, cotton (yes, toilet paper is good) and add that to small sticks than keep adding bigger stick until the logs reach the magic temperature of 451F. If all else fails, CAREFULLY throw a cup of gasoline onto it.

Dance around it, watch it, talk to your friends. Throw negativity away into the fire. Or send up prayers with the fire. Young couples may wish to jump over the fire together after it burns down.

As always, stay with the fire until you are able to handle all the ashes with your bare hand. If you can, you take a candle home and relight your furnace, like the ancient Celts did.

http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Oracle/6992/bonfires.html

Or you can do something no one else has thought that you really like! See these sites for ideas:

http://altreligion.about.com/c/ht/00/07/How_Celebrate_Beltane0962933966.htm Fun.
http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/Beltane.html Good customs.
http://www.witchvox.com/holidays/beltaine/beltainehistory.html A lot of info.
http://paganwiccan.about.com/cs/beltanemaydayb/
www.cyberwitch.com/wychwood/Temple/beltane.htm good history

Summer Solstice Activities

By Alex Strongbow, ex-Carleton Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 2002

It is not a major holiday, but here are some activities to surround the holiday.

Short and simple, the list looks like this:

- Picnics, beach parties, and fireworks
- Bonfire (It's always a good time)
- Fire-Fly searching, bug collecting (and release?)
- College or family reunions
- Charging magical tools
- Hardest work on a long-term project or making a journey
- Eating a super-big sundae
- Hauling rocks and attuning your megalithic calendar
- Baseball, soccer, hurley, outdoor games.
- Searching for St. John's Wort
- Backyard volcano building (see familyeducation.com site)

Figure 51 Bright Mirage, Bard of the Reform 2001-2

Some Possible Lughnasadh Activities

By Alex Strongbow, a Druid Lost in the Woods
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 2002

Basically, early August is a "hey, the farming is turning out alright!" agricultural festival and horse race time. Because it is a rather warm time of the year, and like other parts of the Northern Hemisphere, it is also a good time for big crowds of people to travel and have some constructive fun. Tailtiu, Lugh's mom, is commemorated in funeral games that last a week or so. I've put together a list of some events that might be done throughout August.

- Food was scarce before the harvest, so you might consider fasting before the festival begins, eating only seasonal foods that you can research as being available before world-grocering began. Perhaps combined with a camping trip, to test your rigor.
- Brehon Wedding/Handfasting: A young couple will put their hand through a hole in a stone and pledge to officiant and public their intention to try living together for a year before deciding on a permanent marriage.
- Settling of Legal Disputes: Advice or mediation in long-term disputes could be sought from other members of the grove (perhaps on slips of paper pulled from an anonymous box). Alliances with other organizations may be approved now.
- Horse racing: Well, few of us have horses, but a trip to a derby, dog track, or Nascar race would be appropriate, as would attending a summer track and field meet. Gambling is encouraged. If you do have a few horses (or can rent them), it is traditional to race along a river or ford a river mid-race.
- Bonfire: Not associated with hearth-fires, but just for fun and illumination of nocturnal partying. Sacrifice bad habits and unwanted things from your life by throwing symbols of them into the fire, this is good anytime. Perhaps, a competition between teams to build the biggest/oddest Lammas tower?
- Prearrange to collect the last sheaf of wheat from a farmer and make it a Cailleach doll (old woman), much like the Bride-og at Oimelc in February. It should be placed on the mantle over the winter and destroyed in the spring, perhaps ploughed into the ground.
- • Celtic Olympics: Yes the games of Tailtean, were held until the time of the Norman invasions in the 12th century. Perhaps modeling them on a highland games, which are frequent this time of year, would be apt. Events could include:

- Wrestling in either Greco-Roman fashion (pinning shoulders to the ground), Sumo (no touching ground except feet or leaving circle) or WWF smackdown rules.
- Hurley, Cricket, Soccer, or Rugby matches.
- Foot races, wheelbarrow races, bicycle, piggy-back, sack-races, obstacle courses
- Hammer Toss, Shot put, heavy rock lifting or caber toss
- Sword dancing, country dancing, interpretive dance etc.

- Long jump, high jump, pole-vaulting with walking sticks
- Boffer-sword/Quarter-staff bouts, preferably on a log over a river.
- Massive tug-a-wars, wacky relays, tag, human pyramids, or egg-toss contests.
- Archery, fire-arms, catapulting, slinging or spear toss contest
- Have a "Rhibo," a welsh game where people line up facing each other, making a bed of arms and then fling them up in the air. It is advisable to catch them on the way down.
- Mental contests for the less physically-gifted: Chess, poetry, story-telling, lying contests, geometry jousts and math matches (bring out old SAT prep sheets), joke-telling, banjo-dueling, scavenging hunts.
- Large elaborate parades or activities to test the strength and endurance of young folk, usually through a forest, to a special spring or well or curving up and around a hill.
- Make plans for the winterization preparations.
- Feasting!: Foodstuffs include Beef, broccoli, cherries, spinach, any type of early berry, corn, potatoes, homemade bread (particularly wheat, oat, and especially corn bread), berry pies, barley cakes, nuts, apples, rice, roast lamb, acorns, crab apples, summer squash, turnips, oats, and all grains. Drinks: Elderberry Wine, Mead, Ale, Meadowsweet Tea, and Cider
- If you live near an abattoir, you could attempt a Tarbh Feis (cattle meditation) by wrapping yourself in a freshly killed bull's hide after eating 10 pounds of beef at a crossroads and sleeping overnight while Druids sing around you. You could then prophesy the 2002 elections by this method, perhaps, or the fertility of the harvest might be gauged from your dreams.
- Offer first-fruits from your garden and plant all the seed of fruits eaten at festival. Bake a loaf of bread in the guise of a man and tear him apart by wild-cats. Include bilberries or blueberries in your feast; these were a traditional fruit, whose abundance was seen as an indicator of the harvest to come. Make a cornwheel of ripe grains.
- Gather and make acorn bread.
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Figure 52 Another View of Druid Bridge in Northfield over Cannon river with 165+ Druid Sigils.

Some Optional Activities for Fall Equinox

By Alex Strongbow, a Druid Lost in the Woods
A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 2002

Fall Equinox is the opposite twin of Spring Equinox, only that life is now giving fruit and dying at this point in the year's cycles, sometimes known as Michaelmas in the Catholic calendar; when contracts and rents were collected (as at Easter). What harvesting began in Lughnasadh should be about finished by the Equinox. In times past, autumn was a dreaded season, as people scrambled to prepare food for the long, deadly winter. Only in recent centuries, with assured food supplies, have we begun to romanticize the season. For modern society it is a time for starting school and the end of summer vacations.

- It's possibly the last chance to have the types of fun summer outdoor group activities that characterize Beltane, Mid-summer and Lughnasadh. So it offers an opportunity to repeat previous ones, or try out one that you didn't have time for.
- A picnic is definitely in order or participation in final harvesting. Traditional choices would be grapes, acorns, wheat bread, goat, Indian corn, horn of plenty, cornbread, corn, root crops (i.e. onions, carrots, potatoes, etc.), pomegranates, nuts, goose, mutton, dried fruits, apples, beans, and squash.
- Prayers towards protection, balance, and success in life are auspicious.
- Building a doll of grains to be burnt in the spring or fed to animals.
- Sitting under trees with nets to catch falling nuts and leaves, perhaps saving a leaf from each year in a collection. The rest should be made into a leaf pile for the kids.
- The changing leaves can also be dipped in paraffin and put on wax paper. After the leaves dry, they may be placed around the house or in large jars with sigils of protection and/or abundance
- Take notes on which trees turn color first, which fall soonest, and into which colors.
- Follow the migration of birds.
- String nuts into a necklace.
- Plan a trip to see the fall colors in the mountains.
- Do the Halloween farm-visit early and beat the crowds.
- Make a grapevine wreath for the door.
- Deer season opens. Contemplate it and find some deer. Vegetarians can protest the sporting elements of it.
- A good time to give to local charities to feed the poor.
- When do certain animals begin to disappear?
- Bake bread from scratch (i.e. grind the grains into flour).
- Note the date of the first frost and its effects on plant life.
- Put up storm windows, check insulation and pack away the air conditioner.
- Start notice the location and time of sunrise, noon and sunset and continue through winter.
- Plant acorns and other nuts and wait for spring growth.

Suggested Topics for OMS Grove Meetings

By Sybok, 2003

Introduction from Mike:

Just as Carleton Grove may have its weekly tea meetings and events, so we recommend that Groves diversify their activities outside the usual liturgical service. You don't have toe be all things entertaining, but its nice to try letting member's talents shine out in different situations. Therefore, I'm also including these suggestions from Sybok which he posted to RDNAtalk once with advice from OMS.

1. Introductory meeting (repeat as necessary): "How I came to be here, and where I wish to go." (Begin with song, "Sequoia Sempervirons.")
2. Ethics vs.morals: If you don't believe in a judging deity, or heaven and hell, what makes you be an ethical person? Issues of freedom and responsibility.
3. Ethics of Spell casting: Love spells; weather working; protection, etc.. Manipulative magic?
4. Bardic Circle: everyone bring songs and/or poetry to share in turn.
5. Pagan parenting: Bringing up our kids to make a free and informed choice of religion; fun and seasonal activities; children blowing our covers; cowan relatives and co-parents. How can we pass on our values? The ethics and politics of teaching children, especially kids of non Pagans.
6. Reincarnation: Types of reincarnation from different cultures; transmigration to different species; the ecological view of "material animism." Soul survival: intact, fragmented, or no personal soul at all. Ethnic identities. Experiences with the dying and the dead.
7. New mythologies: Science fiction & fantasy. Movies, comics, music, art.
8. Building Pagan communities: Urban? Rural? How to maximize the feeling of community and individual choice in lifestyle? Business, living arrangements, aesthetics.
9. Paganism & Druidism: In and out of the broom closet. Handling the Craft at work and with relatives. Sharing experiences.
10. Sacrifice & the seasonal round: Is the continual reenactment of the yearly sacrifice a viable mythic model for us? What mythological alternatives might we consider? How about seasonal celebrations in differing climatic zones, or different hemispheres?
11. Sexual polarities: The metaphysics of sex and heterosexism. What would gay or straight or bisexual magic be like? Do the different rhythms of the year call for different sexualities? Theories of love and magnetism, erotic and mystic ecstasy, eternal love. Sexuality, polarity, androgyny.
12. Sexuality & Relationships: Open relationships; monogamy vs. polyamory. Different models; polyfidelity. Dealing with jealousy. Rules for inclusive relationships.
13. Living a nature religion in an urban/technological world: Gremlins and machines; recycling; deep ecology; seasonal awareness in an urbanized setting; worshipping the moon through glass!
14. Magic & money: Our relationship to having and to generosity. How we relate to prosperity and how we manifest it.
15. Pagans & community responsibility: The burnout cycle and group motivation. Resistance to our visions; how to change the world if we can't get ourselves moving? Varieties of Pagan experience, from itinerant partier to persons motivated by strong political or ethical principles.
16. Paganism & politics: Pagan response to anti-choice lobby, Helms Amendment, anti-Satanic hysteria, etc. Preparing position statements, letter-writing campaigns, petitions, etc.
17. Skills exchange on a variety of topics: massage, Tarot, geomancy, dowsing, astrology, divination, etc.
18. Book of Shadows "swap party."
19. Song & chant swap (bring tape recorders!)
20. Shamanic trance techniques.
21. Videos. Rent a video that has a Pagan theme. Discussion follows.
22. Relationship of myth to reality.
23. Purpose of existence: Who are we? Where are we going? How will we get there? Personal salvation/ enlightenment vs. larger mission...
24. Practicing magical techniques: Sensing auras, using pendulums, dowsing, etc. Survey of divination methods.
25. Guest lecturers: Invite presentations from individual group members or outside sources.
26. Book study & discussion. Select a book from the Basic Bibliography or other; everybody read it and discuss at next meeting.
27. Comparative religions: Invite representatives from different religions to present their views to Grove; then have the Grove attend their next services.
28. Special events: Sponsoring and participating in public events; debriefings from distant journeys to attend Pagan Festivals, magical mystery tours, etc..
29. Group outings: Picnics, camp outs, dinners, movies. trips to sacred sites, such as hot springs, the ocean, mountains, caves, etc.
30. Full Moon and/or New Moon rituals: Wiccan or other.
31. Men's and Women's Mystery Circles.
32. Pirate Parties or other special theme costume parties.
33. Other topics? Send suggestions from your group to OMS-RDNA; 557 Winona Road; Grants Pass OR 97526 USA

Don't forget to pass around Sign-Up sheet for new people.
Decide next meetings: dates, places and topics.
Potluck dinner or munchies?
Prepare a calendar of events.
Arrange to contact absent members by phone or letter.

Section Eleven: Final Things To Think About

Dave's final Meditation at Carleton (1966)

Three years ago
Gone now
They found something
had a good time
could laugh.

Restrictions now gone
still must laugh
If you can't laugh
you are dead, and
your religion dying.

Your spirit is your own
Find what you will
but together good
yuks.

If A-D can't laugh,
or sermonizes,
Kill him!

I leave you....

(Announce meetings)

Figure 53 Japanese Gardens river of rocks, c. 2002

Original Introduction to the Book of Liturgy

Praise to the Mother!! This book contains the weekly Order or Worship of the Earth-Mother, the Orders of Worship for the Greater and Lesser Festivals of the Druid year, and for the sealing and consecration of Second and Third Order Druids.

No part of this book is to be kept secret from any member of the secular association of the Reformed Druids, nor from any called to be Druids, but it is not to be kept in the hands of any but a Third Order Druid.

Further, all of these Orders are to be celebrated only by a Third Order Druid called to be an Archdruid of the Carleton Chapter, or designated by the Archdruid of the Chapter specifically to conduct the service.

All of these Orders are the work of Archdruid David Fisher, Second Order Druids Howard Cherniack, Norman E. Nelson and David A. Frangquist and Second Order Peter Basquin. Until such time as a Council of the Priest of Dalon Ap Landu shall so affirm, they shall be the sole Orders valid for Reformed Druid worship at Carleton.

Declared by
David H. Fisher
Archdruid

on the 91st Day of Geimredh in the First Year of the Worship of the Mother.
(January 31st, 1964)

Printing History of the Liturgies

What is the Order of Worship? Much of this is well discussed in my General History of Reformed Druidism; but basically it was originally devised by David H. Fisher in April 1963. We don't exactly know where he got the material, but it bears a strong similarity to the Episcopalian service and to some fraternal Druidic rites.

The generic Order of Worship was originally devised for the use of holding regular Saturday Noon services at Carleton. After the mandatory Chapel Requirement was rescinded, the Saturday services became gradually less important, and the 8 festivals rose in importance. By the late 1970s, Saturday services had fallen out of use at Carleton. Some of the missionary groves continued to have Saturday services up until the 70s, but most found it a bit too frequent for their schedules. The Order of Worship remains as a good generic, non-dogmatic ritual whenever you want to hold a service outside of a festival-setting. The basic Order of Worship essentially has become a working template for designing rituals for the eight festivals, marriages, funerals, consecrations, ordinations to various special Orders and other sundry purposes.

Where did the Liturgies of ARDA come from? The following historiography section will discuss more on individual liturgies. I drew upon four sources to compile Part Three:

1. The Black Book of the Liturgy.
2. Frangquist's Prayer Book
3. The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)
4. The International Druid Archives
5. On-line Searching for liturgical keywords
6. From Private Collections

The Black Book of Liturgy

Just as the Green Book of Meditations (Volume 1) in Part Five was designed as an aid for Archdruids too lazy to look up meditations for their services, so has the Book of Liturgy been designed to offer prepackaged rituals for the Priest too lazy to design their own rites. The rites offered were examples of what you can do, not restrictions. There never were any official printings of the Black Book, everybody made copies when they need it, until Michael Scharding did an official printing in 1993. Isaac used several entries from the Black Book to include in the Urtext section of DC(E). The title comes from the Black binder cover that contained it. The Black book was essentially a convenient subdivision of the Blue Book of the Archives. The contents of the Black Book were added to over the years. At the end of Morrison's Archdruidcy, it's contents were:

1. Introduction of David Fisher (The Imprimatur)
2. Common Order of Worship (summer version)
3. Oimelc #1, #2, #3
4. Service for Beltaine (with Stage directions)
5. A Service for Midsummer (half of it)
6. A Service for Lughnasadh
7. A Reading for Lughnasadh
8. Samhain #1, a responsive reading, Samhain#2
9. Service at the Winter Solstice
10. A Chant for Midwinter
11. A meditation for Midwinter
12. Ceremony of Consecration
13. Order of Investiture
14. Exorcism in Time of War
15. Greek Order of Worship

Frangquist's Prayerbook

Frangquist had a small address book in which he had typed services. He gave me a copy while visiting in October of 1993. It was the first time that I had seen the 4th to 7th order services appear in the record books (well, the 5th was printed in DCE). All were of 1965 vintage. The contents of the prayer book was:

1. Order of Common Worship (Summer and Winter Version)
2. Ordination of Druids first through seventh
3. David's Final Meditation at Carleton
4. Incantation to Midsummer by Frangquist

The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)

By Isaac Bonewits published once August 1976.

Almost everything from the first half of the "Liturgies of the Druids" in DC(E) has been reprinted in ARDA. The historiographies can tell you more about the different pieces. Basically everything in the first half of DC(E)'s section was brand new to the eyes of the Carleton RDNA and of Californian Druidical origins. The second half of the collection, called "Ur text" came from the Black Book of Liturgy" There was one unusual item in Isaac's "Ur-text" that wasn't in the Black Book, Fisher's original Summer Order of Worship version. I have no idea how Isaac got his hands on that. DC(E)'s original contents were:

1. Order of Common Worship (Summer and Winter Versions)
2. Ordination to the Second Order
3. Oimelc, Beltane, Lughnasadh, Samhain
4. Winter Solstice, Spring Equinox, Summer Solstice, Fall Equinox
5. A King's Wedding
6. An OLD fashioned Wedding
7. Suggestions for A Druid Funeral
8. The Gaelic Rituals (Summer, Winter, 2nd Order)
9. May Day, Season Surpassing Poem
10. Cold, Cold Poem

URTEXT RITUALS

11. Ceremony of Consecration
12. Oimelc Service of Worship #2
13. Original Order of Common Worship: Summer Half of the Year
14. A Service at the Winter Solstice
15. A Service of Sealing to the Service of Braciaca and of Man (fifth order)
16. A Service for Midsummer (only half of it)

International Druid Archives

Collected by Michael Scharding, Up to 1996

Over the years, I collected several pieces of liturgy from various sources. The last three items below were printed in the Druid Chronicler at some point. But we have originals.

1. Late 70s Berkeley Orders Of Worship (Summer and Winter Versions)
2. Samhain #3 and Fall Equinox of Carleton
3. Order of Worship for Protogroves
4. A Marriage Ceremony
5. Order of Puck
6. A Wedding Contract
7. Order of Diancecht
8. Order of Lugh

Historiography of the Liturgies

Section One: The Simple Package of Generic Liturgies

Simple Order of Common Worship (Summer & Winter Version) 1993:

Easy-to-read arrangements by Michael Scharding, 1993.

Ordination of Second Order Druids 1963:

Arranged by Michael Scharding 1993. Again, except for the section titles and directions, identical to Fisher's 1963.

Ordination of First Order Druids 1963:

Arranged in 1993 and discussed by Michael Scharding based on oral history.

Various Traditional Invocations 1963:

The first three were translated from the original ancient Irish by Prof. John Messenger, the RDNA's original faculty advisor, in 1963. For more details see their endnote entries in the Book of Customs of the Chronicles. The fourth invocation is the "Hymn of the Earth-Mother" composed by Kathryn Courtice and put to music by Peter Basquin during the first months of the starting RDNA in spring 1963.

Detailed Order of Common Worship (Summer & Winter Version) 1976:

These are identical to Isaac's version in DC(E). Except for the section titles of each section and the directions, these are identical to David Frangquist's version between 1964-1966. I suspect this because of the lines in the Invocation "Forgive us these three errors" I suspect that David Fisher originally used "Forgive us these three Sins" Otherwise little difference between Frangquist and Fisher.

Section Two: Old Carleton Seasonal Versions

1964 Samhain, Version #1:

This was probably written by Fisher in fall of 1964. Noteworthy is the welsh addition to the invocation, invoking Be'al. This is the only known use of a god's name in place of the generic "Lord" Most of the time the identity and interpretation of " Lord" is left up to the congregant's imagination. Also noteworthy is the absence of an invocation of the Earth-Mother.

Samhain Chant by David Fisher:

Although found labeled as "Midwinter Chant" of pre 1966 origin, the original text was by Fisher for Samhain of 1964 as is proven by examining Chapter seven of Customs in the Druid Chronicles. Not part of Black Book.

1970s Samhain. Version #2:

Not present in the original Black Book of Liturgy as given to Shelton. This is probably from Shelton's typewriter between 1969 and 1976.

Cold! Cold!:

Was included with the Irish rituals in DC(E). Acquired by Larson from Cross & Slover's works. This is a spell poem and make a good Samhain reading.

1963/4 Service at Winter Solstice:

Although not originally in the Black Book of Liturgy as given to Shelton, it was written by Norman Nelson, probably in December 1965 at the Vermillion Grove of South Dakota, but possibly from a Dec 1963 or 1964 service also. The Winter Solstice is not popular at Carleton because it is cold, and everybody has gone home for the academic Winter Break. It was chosen for inclusion in the Urtext of DC(E).

1964 A Call to Mother Nature:

Used on the 1964 Winter Solstice. Probably collected by David Frangquist, his source was from the Harley Manuscript 1585, FF. 12 v. -13r.

1963 A Chant for Midwinter:

Similar to the Samhain chant by David Fisher above. It could be by Norman Nelson or by David Fisher, more likely the former since he wrote the service for that year; but possibly by Fisher as a personal touch to Norman's service. Dec. 1963?

1964 A Meditation for Midwinter:

(From Ecclesiastes 7:8-10, 14) Most likely from Frangquist or Fisher, who had scoured biblical literature for Druidic phrases. Probably discovered by them before Dec. 1965.

1964/5 Oimelc Service of Worship:

Written before 1966, probably by Fisher during 1964 or 1965.

1964 Festival of Oimelc Mediation *

Found in the Archives in 1999 stuck to another sheet, so as to be hidden.

1966/7 A Service for Oimelc:

Written by Gary Zempel during 1966 or 1967. It was the one chosen for the Urtext Oimelc service in DC(E).

1970-4 Yet Another Service for Oimelc:

Not Present in the Original Black Book of Liturgy as given to Shelton. It was probably written between 1969 to 1974, by Shelton.

1963 Beltane(?) Original Order of Worship for Summer Half of the Year:

I suspect that this is the earliest version of the Order of Worship, possibly from the Spring of 1963 and written by David Fisher. Arrangement is just like he did it. First printed in DC(E).

May Day Surpassing:

Was included with the Irish rituals in DC(E). Finn Mac Cumhaill supposedly wrote this in order to prove his poetic ability and makes a good reading for Beltane. Acquired by Larson from Cross & Slover's works.

1970s A Service for Beltane:

Not present in the original Black Book of Liturgy. It was probably inserted by Richard Shelton and it is probably of his authorship between 1969-1976. The stage directions were take from a letter from Shelton to Morrison in 1976, explaining the customs of Beltane as Shelton knew them.

1976 Beltane Tips

This letter was to assist Don Morrison, who had just returned from a term abroad in France, in getting the Grove at Carleton back in shape before the arrival of Isaac that summer and the big Mid-Summer reunion.

1964 Midsummer Service

I ran across this fragment in the Archives while checking for more liturgical material. It's just a small piece. But shows that the early Grove was busy during the summer vacation also.

1963-64 A Chant for Midsummer:

Written in the summer of 1963, probably by Fisher. The DC(E) urtext version has only the first half as does the Black Book and it has only the first entry of the ritual that contained it: with the same text as the generic summer order of worship, except that it uses "sins" instead of "errors" in the invocation.

1964 Incantation to Midsummer:

Written by Frangquist in the Summer of 1964 at Camp Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Grove in Wisconsin, near Chicago.

1970-74 A Service for Lughnasadh:

Not present in the original Black Book of Liturgy as given to Shelton. It is therefore probably also from Shelton's typewriter, especially since it is accompanied by a reading, with proper footnoting (a trademark of Shelton). Lughnasadh was not popular at Carleton since it took place during the summer vacation when everybody was away from the Grove.

1978 Service for Lughnasadh

A rare service from the post-Shelton era at Carleton, no long before the Grove went into omission for a few years after her Archdruidcy. She apparently was building on the early service in some ways.

Section Three: Early Berkeley Seasonal Versions

I believe these versions were made by Robert Larson, with occasional revision by Isaac Bonewits and by members of the Berkeley and the Twin Cities Groves. It should be emphasized once again that the use of these rituals is entirely optional. And they were printed in DC(E). I They were probably written almost at the same time, giving a cyclical feeling of a whole year through slight transitions. They were composed between 1975 and August of 1976, most likely. These provided a full rotation of the year and were essentially followed by many of the NRDNA groves up to and including today, with small variation and different readings. Special notes by Isaac follow for these Orders:

1975 Samhain:

The Chant was written by David Fisher, in 1963 c.e., and appears both in the Chronicles, and the custom of repeating the Sacrifice and the Reply was started by Robert Larson. Numerous poems and songs suitable for this holiday may be found in the Book of Bards.

1975 Winter Solstice:

Larson notes that he usually uses special "sun waters" for this rite: mead, whiskey, Irish Mist, etc. The last part of the Chant may be sung by the entire Grove, to the tune of "Tannenbaum" with the final line as an "Amen"

1975 Oimelc:

There is a special Communion Hymn written for this service by Robert Larson, which can be found in The Book of Bards.

1975 Spring Equinox:

This holiday is not celebrated by some orthodox members of the RDNA. Larson uses special 'sun waters" here as well.

1975 Beltane:

Numerous songs and poems for this holiday are found in The Book of Bards.

1975 Summer Solstice:

The suggestion of the use of mistletoe as the sacrifice may be startling to those who did not realize that Midsummer, like winter, was considered one of the best days of the year to gather mistletoe, because it was sacred to the Sun-fir-storm Gods. The use of "sun waters" is also appropriate to this holiday.

1975 Lughnasadh:

Larson wishes to point out that the Chant, which gives so much emphasis to the Sun God, was written that way for two major reasons; firstly, because Lugh is a Sun God and secondly , because Larson is a member of the Order of Belenos. He suggests that other Druids may wish to add or change verses to fit their personal preferences in deities. The fact that Larson is a Sun Priest may explain one reason why he wrote the ceremonies for the Solstices & Equinoxes.

1975 Fall Equinox:

This holiday is not celebrated by some orthodox members of the RDNA (as with the Spring). The "Sun waters" may be used. Some Groves may wish to add an additional Chant to the Gods of the Hunt and the Harvest.

Section Four: Later Berkeley Seasonal Variations

I added these to ARDA, because they are special. These are unusual versions of the Order of Worship because they were written in the last years of the 70s for the Berkeley Grove by Isaac Bonewits, with possible other liturgists. This period was one of great tension for Isaac Bonewits, as he became more and more convinced of the necessity of a neo-Pagan Druid religion; and he was beginning to suspect that the NRDNA wasn't close enough to this goal. During this time he was involved with several other neo-pagan religious organizations and studying many types of liturgies. Isaac was also trying to come up with a powerful ritual for his new image of Druidism, and this shows in his careful arrangement of this

service. Isaac told me that he was heavily inspired by the Star Wars movies when he composed the original version of this ritual in 1978. The "Thou art God" line is from Heinlein's "Stranger in a Strange Land" adopted by The Church of All Worlds" which Isaac was very interested in as a potential neo-pagan structure to build a Druid group with in the future ADF.

There appears to be three distinct phases in the liturgical development of this section, growing more complicated with each step as the liturgical design. Isaac in 1978 began Pentalpha organization, not longer after marrying Selene, which was an innovative umbrella group for pagan organizations. Class B's major change was the replacement of the Invocation "forgive these three errors" with "swirling stars" invocation, which apparently occurred during 1978 at the Beltane service.

With the publishing of "Authentic Thaumaturgy", a role-playing supplement explaining the laws of magic in 1978/9, perhaps we saw a reason for the shift to Class C, which occurred possibly around the Mid-Summer of 1979, although we don't have a copy of that service. Possibly because he was too intensely re-writing the liturgy at that point or experimenting? Class C added several items that are now found in the ADF liturgical outline, namely; Centering, Statement of Beliefs, Group Goals and Dedication, Offering & Praise, Declaration of Faith, Sharing, Group Bonding, Thanking the Gods, Absorption & Grounding. Isaac considered the result a more powerful psychic drama with greater magical possibilities for public rituals.

CLASS A:
1977 Beltane
1977 Lughnasadh
1978 Spring Equinox

CLASS B:
1978 Beltane
1978 Lughnasadh
1978 Fall Equinox
1978 Samhain
1979 Oimelc
1979 Beltane

CLASS C
1979 Lughnasadh
1979 Order of Common Worship for Foghamhar Season
1979 Fall Equinox Service
1979 Samhain
1980 Oimelc
1980 Spring Equinox
1980 Order of Common Worship for Earrach Season
1980 Beltane
1981 A Chant for Spring Equinox

With Beltane 1980 (Variant #2) being an odd-ball exception, but the introductory notes mention that this was used during a visit to Santa Cruz Gathering, at which perhaps Isaac felt withheld from introducing the new features for some reason?

Specific points to notice is the heavy involvement of the group with choruses; far beyond the involvement of any other ritual on record. There is also a great many more beliefs expressed by the group than most RDNA grove would ever agree upon. The ritual is very much a binding ritual, to bring about like-minds, with very specific spoken goals. They give the reader a good version of what Isaac wanted the RDNA rituals to become, as he talks about in his Epistle of the Apocrypha.

I would highly caution the reader from assuming that the contents of these rituals would be agreed with by Carleton Druids; especially the older ones. These rituals are far more in the realm of purely religious in a Neo-Pagan sense than most older RDNA members might tolerate. But they are very interesting.

1979 Order of General Common Worship: Summer

The Summer version was written probably between Feb and May 1980.

1979 Order of General Common Worship: Winter

The Winter version between August and November 1979. A rather touching way to address the rejection of the sacrifice, by noting seasonal changes for hope when divinational responses prove insufficient.

1978 Samhain

Nothing too unusual in this liturgy.

1979 Samhain

Quite a bit more complicated that the 1978 version. But nothing unusually new regarding Samhain about this one.

1979 Oimelc

Just a note that I like the group chant.

1979 Pentalpha Oimelc

Isaac was involved in several different covens and lodges at this time, and Pentalpha was one such avenue for his expression to form a legally recognized church and experiment with such issues of organization that were proving too difficult in the RDNA and NRDNA. Selene is his wife.

1979 Oimelc Poem

From the Pentalpha Journal.

1980 Oimelc

Again very complicated elements in here are mostly the same in this era of lots of response readings, but nothing new here regarding Oimelc, but this might be raised in the Meditation.

1978 Spring Equinox Fragment *

This is the last known service by Isaac to use the "Forgive these three mistakes" invocation. After this is the swirling stars motif for the invocation, by Geller. Perhaps the fragmentary nature indicated that Isaac was tired of the traditional format because after this one, they begin to swell in size and complexity, indicating some liturgical inspiration over the next few months.

1980 Spring Equinox
Basic format again with common elements for this series.

1981 A Chant for Spring Equinox
The only really interesting part of the 1980 Equinox service, minus possible meditation choices.

1980 Order of Common Worship, Earrach Season
According to Isaac, this was the last new service he produced before closing down liturgical innovation with the NRDNA. Not too long after this, there was a bit of a breakdown in the Berkeley Grove and a short sabbatical by Isaac.

1977 Beltane
Not too different from the 1975 version.

1978 Beltane
Has some nice chants and the oatcakes are an unusual borrowing from Wiccan services.

1979 Beltane
Musically powerful performance, indeed, with the heavy elements common for this year.

1980 Beltane
Isaac claimed he stopped writing liturgies in the Earrach season, yet this service exists. Odd.

1980 Beltane (Variant #2)
A simplified version for a shorter period? Or perhaps from another Druid? A bit of a mystery.

1977 Lughnasadh Fragment
I like the Catechism alternative wording.

1978 Lughnasadh
The invocation of the Patrons of the various Druid high orders is interesting. Gwydion before his accident, was quite the popular bard in California circles, where he founded Forever Forest, I believe. His poems, songs and tapes inspired a generation of pagan songwriters.

1979 Lughnasadh
Again more ornate chant-responses with that unusual Lughnasadh chant.

1979 Order of Common Worship, Foghamhar
It's hard to imagine Isaac had time for weekly services, much less make a liturgy for the service between the big 8 festivals, but here one is for the period between Lughnasadh and Samhain.

1978 Fall Equinox
Again, nice chant, but without the later accoutrements of the 1979 liturgies.

1979 Autumn Equinox Service
Again, more complicated than the 1978 one, with a nice chant.

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1983 ADF Liturgical Outline
Published in Druid's Progress #2. Not much to discuss here since, the 1984 Step by Step Guide will explain much of this. ARDA Pt 8 discusses some of the reasons why ADF was founded.
Many of these areas of development are precedented and foreshadowed in Isaac's liturgies of the 1978-1981 period in the NRDNA and the only real note of interest was the use of the three worlds model of land, sea and sky which is a departure from the four direction of the RDNA.

1984 Step By Step Guide to the ADF Liturgy
Published in Druid's Progress, issue #4. Issue #3 talked in great deal about the magical underpinnings of liturgical design.

1987 A Druid Worship Ceremony, Mean Samhradh.
This was held at the Pagan Spirit Gathering of the Circle Sanctuary Group in Wisconsin, which incidentally was attended by several Carleton Grove members on vacation. Isaac has graciously given me this copy. We can see Isaac's nostalgia for various RDNA elements, but should note that most other ADFers do not share the RDNA background, and have gone off on other tangents. Dozens of their variations are available at www.adf.org and can be viewed there.

1991 A Full ADF Liturgy
Included to show how the ADF has innovated greatly since the 80s, with many interested liturgists devising alternative scripts with Baltic, Germanic and Greek themes. Ian Corrigan is one of the most prolific writers in the ADF field and is the current Arch Druid of ADF.

1993 & 1998 Keltrian Rituals
As you can see from these texts, although the land-sky-sea imagery is still existent, there is a greater focus on the four directions, and a very strong emphasis on the invocation and bridging to the Otherworld in Keltria services. The original Book of Liturgy for Keltria was more or less finalized in 1991 and published in 1993. No siginificant changes have been made since then. Any Druid from any background is welcome to use this service in their lives without special permission.

Cauldron Online Ritual Variation 1998-1999
As is written in the section, this is an innovative idea that I ran across in 2002. I have heard of on-line Wiccan services being done by Carleton Grove members from 1992, but not of Druid Services, although the idea was occasionally bandied about. I believe the main drawback, is that Druidism is so much more nature-oriented than Wicca, which seems to prefer indoor locations often, that most on-line people are likely secluded from the beauty and inspiration of Nature that usually surrounds one in an outdoor live service.

What happened in the ritual is that people would type in many of the words after each line by Randall (which I have omitted for brevity). The meditation, invocation of the four directions and various deities, and" Merry Meet" are Wiccan liturgical elements common in the 80s at Carleton. The candle lighting however is a new concept, very appropriate for indoor services, where a campfire is impractical. Interestingly, the

Hymn of the Earth-Mother has been moved way back and used during the consecration, with the Lord and Lady replacing Dalon Ap Landu, and I believe this was common at Carleton!

Thus, unless it is mere coincidence and parallel evolution, I am trying to figure out the identity of Randall, but it is quite possible that he had some Carleton connection from the 80s or perhaps had run across DC(E) over the years. I also experimented with long-distance ordinations over the phone with pre-blessed materials sent by mail, but I have dropped that recently and moved back in preference to live ordinations; however, I think on-line services remain a possibility for reaching distant druids; especially with more portable wire-less lap-tops, PDAs and streaming voice coming up soon. When that age comes, I'll be certain to add it to the collection.

1999 Online Spring Equinox

Nothing too unusual in this variation, except that the Waters of Life are used during the Season of Sleep which is not common.

1999 Online Beltane

Nothing uncommon here.

1998 Online Midsummer

Lots of nice Summer imagery throughout.

1998 Online Lughnasadh

Bountiful language included.

1999 Online Lughnasadh

This was the only part that was different, rest was rigidly identical and deleted by me.

2001 Order of Common Worship – OMS Version

This was taken from one of the Druidism 101 lessons of the Order of Mithril Star – RDNA. The full text of that series is found in the Green Books, Volume 8 of ARDA 2, including greater liturgical descriptions. I was given the text of these materials in Feb. 2002 by Sybok, on of OMS' founders.

Now, the Order of the Mithril Star began with some rather disgruntled members from Church of All Worlds, who felt it had strayed too far from the book "Stranger in a Strange Land", and sought to return to that format. CAW and SiaSL both shared the concept of "sharing waters" between close members, but to a greater deal of brotherhood and co-responsibility than any Reformed Druid I have known. Also of interest would be the Dune Series, for another water brotherhood developing from a society in the desert. OMS has been active in a parallel sense to the RDNA since we appeared on the internet in 2000 and sometimes contributes their thoughts, borrows elements from us, and ran the Druidism 202 (A Walk through ARDA) in 2003.

The interesting additions are their environmental and ethical pledge, a complicated directional orientation when addressing the winds, the sexual symbolism after the consecration (common in Wicca), the addition of "May you never thirst" (the slogan of the group, derived from the book's hero from the dry planet of Mars). The extra phrases at the end of the service are also from SiaSL, the concept of God/dess living within everything, therefore we are all God/dess. "Grok" is a complicated word meaning to completely, fully encompass and understand a concept and a feeling of communion with the listener/speaker.

Section Five: Liturgies from the Later Years

1987 Samhain, Carleton:

I found this ritual in a binder that Andrea gave me in 1992. It is the only ritual of the 1986 to 1990 period that survives in its near entirety. It comes from the early days of this revival, 1987, when a great deal of attention was paid to DC(E). Over the years the Wiccan elements would tend to become dominant. Heiko Koester and Jan Schlamp were the most active Druid leaders at the time in Carleton. Members at this time were mostly interested in general Neo-Paganism and Native American spirituality until 1992.

1987 Fall Equinox, Carleton:

As indicated, this is from the 1986-1990 revival period of Druidism at Carleton and was probably written by Heiko Koester and Jan Schlamp in Fall 1987. Noteworthy is it's use of the Spiral Dance and "Isis, Astarte" chant which are common Wiccan ritual elements. It is interesting that RDNA needs to be explained.

1992 Midsummer, Carleton

My 1992 Beltane service was much more Wiccan/Shamanic oriented. But gradually as I began to dig deeper into the Archives, I began to cultivate a taste for the more austere form of the Order of Common Worship. Most services at this time (1992-1994) were sparsely attended usually 2 to 6 people, outside of Samhain and Beltane and the popular Sweat lodges. That summer, only two other people joined in the service, with one watcher. My innovation was to add a tree pruning ceremony for getting the sacrifice, similar to that referred to in Pliny the Elder back around 30 AD in Gaul. The elaborate calling of the winds was a continuation of the Wiccan four towers calling. I vaguely recall using these meditations, and choosing one is always quite difficult. The wheel down the hill was something I found in researching old Scottish customs. It landed "good" side up.

1994 Candlemass (Oimelc), Carleton

Michelle was definitely Wiccan oriented, but had a soft tender spirit, and I thought we put together a nice service. It was too cold that year to be held at the Hill of Three Oaks, so we held it in the Skinner Chapel on campus. The chapel's limestone walls are filled with fossils. We incorporated the traditional blessing of candles into this service, and I added light bulbs, since they are so important. My room-mate was a little begruntled to return that afternoon and find all the bulbs missing for a few hours. "Waters of Milk" was Michelle's idea for a phrase. This was one of the last services that I held before resigning my Arch-Druidcy, comfortable that it would be well handled by my successors.

1997 Beltane, Akita Grove, Japan

I exiled myself to Japan in the Fall of 1996 to a small northern prefecture in Japan, very traditional location, and attend Minnesota State University of Akita, where I started a small Grove of poets, drinkers and outdoor enthusiasts. In the summer of 1997, I became an assistant English teacher on the JET Program for the very same village and stayed until the summer of 2000, spending four years in total in this place. I met Nozomi, Pat and Charles there, and they continued the

grove after I started my job. The theme was Cherry Trees, a national obsession in Japan, and while Spring Equinox is standard Cherry Viewing season in most of Japan, Akita is so far north, that it doesn't occur until late April. The use of Cherry Juice and throwing Cherry Blossoms was my idea. I believe Nozomi and Pat felt in love around this time, and they married not too long afterwards, as did I and my wife Hachi.

1999 Order of Common Worship, Summer, Live Oak

Live Oak Grove began under Joan Carruth, due to a fall-out with Isaac in 1981, but the driving force in the Grove was Larry Press who took over, and undoubtedly propped up by Emmon Bodfish, who also published the Druid Missal-Any newsletter until 1993. Stacey was Emmon's disciple and re-established the Live-Oak Grove not long after Emmon's death under Larry Press' auspices. The service that Live Oak Grove uses is not too different from that used in the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) from 1976, even to this day. One noteworthy addition is the offering to the trees during the service, instead of giving the libation directly to the Earth as is more common.

1999 Order of Common Worship, Winter, Live Oak

Note that there is an option that the sacrifice might be accepted in the Season of Sleep.

1999 Samhain, Live Oak

Not too different from the 1975 example in DC(E).

2001 Yankee Doodle Fall Liturgy, DC Grove

Not long after my return to America after the Jet Program in Summer 2000, I founded the Monumental Grove at George Washington University, which only lasted a few services, followed by the DC Grove, and then became the Digitalis Grove, existing mostly on the internet. Well, after the September 11th event, for which I was basically held at the Embassy of Japan for several days, manning the phone, I came up with this little patriotic service, partly to show my concern over the over-the-top out pouring of sentiment that ensued. It was held at the now fortified Washington Monument on the National Mall in DC, Eric and Mairi and perhaps Clarice attended.

I added an apologetic line to the Invocation for use of public land, reworked Amerigin's invocation by substituting some presidents' names, added my recent rocking chorus of Dalon's Daily Ditty, used well known monuments for the four directions that radiate from the Washington Monument, adjusted the Consecration words to get the blessings of our royal succession of president's, added a traditional story about Washington's cherry-chopping tendencies, and another song of my own invention. Very clever, as a whole, if I do say so myself.

2002 Fall Equinox Peace Liturgy, DC Grove

Things were getting out of hand by the next year, with President Bush ready to take on everybody, and Eric and I decided we'd like to delay the inevitable to give people more time to think about it before the issue was bulldozed over by the Hawks in town, inspired a bit by some rumors of Wiccan's averting Hitler's invasion and my memory of Shelton's Exorcism of War service in 1970.

This service was performed at Green Belt National Park about 10 miles NE of Washington DC, and it required extensive preparation. Two other Druids from the area also attended. The image of Fall Equinox is of a daily relentless, noticeable descent into darkness; which was the feeling of DC about the inevitability of presidential aggression. I reworked the invocation, with much inspiration from Shelton's service. In a rather unusual case, I decided to abstain from a sacrifice, to hinder the sending of forces to the Middle East, and to recall that saving life can be as important as sending out tokens to gain great rewards; something I dislike in politically motivated wars. The choice of "Blowing in the Wind" was a natural selection for the praise. The approval of the buried seed (and it was accepted) was an affirmation that the Earth-Mother approved of our desire to build a peaceful resolution.

The Buckets of Waters of Life, was Eric's inspiration from watching all those advertisements of Smokey the Bear, and the affirmation of personal responsibility to douse conflagrations of all types in our lives around us. It was quite intense in spirit and I think well remember it for a long time. The Meditation was another inspiration of Mairi before she left the grove a few years ago, to introduce another random element of surprise in the service, and allow divine choice. I picked up the readings from various inter-faith sites on the internet, as I did also with the three songs, that I remembered as very peaceful back in the 1970s.

The result, well, we're not officially at war by the Spring Equinox, and I'm thinking of doing a service incorporating the growing power of the sun and feeding that symbolically to the growing voices of protest against the war. What to do once the war starts? Not sure, I wouldn't want to harm American's fighting ability, but would wish to give greater focus and divert munitions from civilian centers; and encourage a quick resolution at minimal loss of life on both sides.

2004 Calling Liturgies Addendum, Carleton Grove

Corwin Troost wrote this up in the early winter of 2004 for Oimelc, and it was written up and sent to me by Corwin Troost, his co-Archrduid. Both members are trying to come up with alternative services for Reformed Druid activity at Carleton.

Section Six: International Liturgies

1969 Greek Order of Worship

Written by Richard Shelton between May 1969 and May 1971. He primarily used this for the Classic Department field trips and picnics in the Arb, where any current Druid would hold a service. The site was known as "Faculty Hill", now the site of the Stone Circle constructed by Irony in 1999. He had taken a class in Greek, and put his studies to good work.

Shelton's Notes on the Greek Liturgy (2004)

The Greek Liturgy was composed by Richard Shelton and Kathy Floerke, classics students at Carleton, in the spring of 1969, for use at the Classics Department Picnic that year, at which Richard presided as Arch-Druid and Honorary Classical Priest.

The Invocation and Return are translations of portions of the Reformed Druid Order of Worship. The Libation is an offering of wine poured to the ground in honor of various

Greek gods (written in a style that we hoped would be appropriate and find favor). One pours the wine three times, once after each stanza (where the decorative symbols are).

Conventions in the transcription:

The vowels should be pronounced more or less as in Italian. "Y" transcribes ypsilon, prounounced as French "u" or German "ü". "Ou" should be pronounced "oo" as in "moon". (Modern Greek pronunciation is rather different; if you know modern Greek and want to pronounce it that way, we won't object. The ritual will probably be as efficacious.)

The consonants are more or less as in English. "Ph" transcribes phi; "ch" transcribes chi (usually pronounced as in "anchor"); "th" transcribes theta.

No attempt has been made to transcribe the tonal accents or the iota subscripts.

But the accute accent (_) has been used to indicate stress (in multisyllabic words), while the circumflex accent (ˆ) indicates length. If a word is marked *only* with a circumflex accent, that vowel is both long and stressed.

If only the second of a pair of vowels is accented, the pair is a stressed diphthong; stress both vowels, not just the second one.

2004 Greek Supplements

Written by Mike in 2004 while preparing the ARDA for publication and needing to pad out the Greek section so that the Irish section would fit together better. I collected the information during the Athens Olympic in August, and the Alphabet Epistle and Arch Epistle reflect this "All things Greek" period of intensity in the Reform.

1976 Irish Order of Worship (Summer & Winter)

These were translated by Robert Larsen into Irish for use of the Berkeley Grove and published in DC(E) in 1976. There was some debate in the late 70s over whether the NRDNA liturgy should be done in Irish, since it was more Celtic. Most declined. This version was mostly used by Robert Larson during his stint as ArchDruid of the ODNA grove of the Clann na Brocheta with the Irish performers.

1976 Irish Ordination of Second Order Druids:

See entry above. An Irish version of the Third Order also existed, but not was not widely distributed, but included as an insert for the DC(E) on red paper.

2002 Japanese Order of Worship (Summer):

Ikari Segawa met me in 1998 at Kobe after a long period of correspondence on Druidical matters, and I brought him into the Third Order that summer after an eventful Vigil. At my request in 2002, he translated the service for me into Japanese script, for which I have also provided an Romanized pronunciation for each. The original English service used as a template were the Simple Order of Common Worship and Detailed Order of Common Worship from the ARDA collection.

2002 Japanese Order of Worship (Winter)

As in the traditional service, the only real difference is in the Catechism being altered to indicated that Waters of Sleep will be used instead, and other standard changes throughout in accordance with this fact. The Akita Grove usually uses the English services from ARDA, although they have said they might look into using Segawa's translation after Beltane 2003.

2003 German Order of Worship (Summer & Winter Versions)

Written by Stacey Weinberger, who studied German extensively in college and graduate school before being attracted to the ways of the Celts. She is now studying Scottish Gaidhlig, much like her mentor, Emmon Bodfish, had once done back in the 1980s. Perhaps being from a more linguistically diverse culture, the California Druids seem more interested in translating things. Perhaps its their missionary zeal?

2004 French Order of Worship (Summer, Winter & 2nd Ordination).

Written by Sebastien Beaudoin in the summer of 2004 for Mike Scharding at my special request. He lives in Quebec and is considering starting a grove soon.

Section Seven: Orderly Chaos

1969 Order of Investiture for Arch-Druids:

First performed by Steve Savitzky unto Shelton in spring 1969. Used fitfully since then. It was primarily designed for Carleton usage, but could be used by other groves.

2002 Ordination of Zero Order (Acorn) Druids

With the growth of Protogroves and RDNA members in distant parts of the world, most of them far away from an existing Grove, I felt the need to give them some way of "getting their foot in the door" liturgically; something they could perform themselves to feel that they were a Druid. It's basically the spiritual half of the First Order without the Waters of Life to complete the First Ordination.

1963 Ordination of First Order Druids:

Arranged in 1993 and discussed by Michael Scharding based on oral history.

2004 Addendum to First Order by Duir De Danu Grove

Written by Martin Victor who was a Third Order by Tegwedd of Hazlenut Grove. Martin was a semi-regular poster of NRDNA background, and a bit conservative in his Druidism. This is actually the first case of formalizing the First Order service that I have seen.

1963 Ordination of Second Order Druids:

Arranged by Michael Scharding 1993. Again, except for the section titles and directions, identical to Fisher's 1963. For more on first order Druids see the Druid Chronicles under the Book of Law and Customs -Chapter 1. I wrote this section.

1993 Addendum to 2nd Order by Hazlenut Grove:

A copy of this was presented to me in 1993 when Tezera mailed me a copy of the "Dead Bay Scrolls" The five fold system is indicative of a strong Wiccan background. It is not binding on other groves, of course.

1998 Addendum to 2nd Order by Akita Grove

Perhaps the Japanese just like to hurt themselves in their festivities more than Neo-Pagans? Anyway, this was Pat's bright idea, and being in Akita, it wasn't too difficult. We

journey to the area around Yuzawa city in southern Akita and held in the mountains there, near the head waters of the Omonogawa river, which was rich in fish and cleaner to drink. Nozomi did quite well in this optional "day vigil" series, hand-weaving a very fetching skirt and jacket out of wild straw, plants and other items; which gathering wild plants and doing a spate of fishing. However, we found Pat, dirty and hungry after three days, with lots of tick-bites. I haven't yet tried it myself, but I might this summer, if my wife will let me.

1999 Addendum to 2nd Order by Carleton Grove

Since Irony's departure and the reign of Merri & co., the Second and Third Order have become more generic and adapted to grove needs. The rigorous questioning by the Third Orders of new wannabees for the Second Order, took me quite by surprise when I first observed it, but it has grown on me over the years. Naturally, just because Carleton does it, does not mean that other groves must adopt this new format.

1999 Addendum to 2nd Order by Poison Oak Grove

Stacey Weinberger, originally of the Live Oak Grove, was definitely influenced by Emmon's strict standards, and this shows in her reluctance to speed up the process like at other groves, in fact, she makes even more difficult.

2004 Addendum to 2nd Order by Carleton Grove

Stacey's addendum inspired me, as did my experiences with the Akita Grove to "soup up" the 2nd Order a little, to make it a bit more memorable, and lower the "step up" to the Third Order.

1964 Ordination of Third Order Druids:

Written by Fisher in Spring 1964. Not to be disclosed. Strangely enough, it is the only part of the Reform, except for member lists, that are not open to the public. We feel that knowing its contents makes the vigil less exciting and less insightful. Certainly mainly researchers would probably like to know the contents.

It is interesting that when Druid Chronicles (Evolved) was published in 1976, it had a separate insert, printed on Red Paper for the English and Irish version of the Third Order. The SDNA alternative version of the service, ADDS a few extra oaths, including a clause for Neo-Paganism focus, revocation for misbehaviour and a few other environmentalist pledges. The English translation of the Irish version has a few minimal extra lines of no great importance.

1964 Ordination of Fourth Order Druids:

The entrance-rite to the Order of Grannos (of Healing) was written by Fisher in May of 1964. Since the Patriarchy, originally held by Fisher, is currently in abeyance; it is assumed that any 4th Order Druid may perform it without his permission.

1964 Ordination of Fifth Order Druids:

The entrance rite to the Order of Braciaca (of Malt) was written by Nelson in the May of 1964. Nelson is the current Patriarch and should be consulted by 5th Order Druids before the rite is administered.

1964 Ordination of Sixth Order Druids:

The entrance rite to the Order of Belenos (of the Sun) was written by Frangquist in May of 1964. Frangquist if the current Patriarch and should be consulted by 6th Order Druids before the rite is administered.

1966 Ordination of Seventh Order Druids:

The entrance rite to the Order of Sirona (of bubbling hot springs) was written by Gary Zempel in the May of 1966. Currently the Patriarch, Zempel, is in abeyance and there are no other members of the 7th Order.

The New Higher Orders

The 8th, 9th, 10th orders were written by Nozomi Kibo, a very talented young woman in my Akita Grove. She wanted to complete the higher orders, but their legality is very contestable, of course, as they did not emerge from the standard procedure of the 7th Order Council electing the Eight Order Patriarch, and so on. When I explained the ambivalence of many to the self-initiatory aspect of her Orders, she replied, "The Gods do all the work anyway. We are just following them." Which is true, I doubt an Ordination ceremony without divine influence would be a hollow ordination. The 8th Order was later adopted as official by myself. Besides Nozomi's requirements make the Orders very difficult to attain, which should mute some of the criticism.

The P/Matriarchs of these orders are tentatively as follows without their permission or the Councils:
3rd Order: The Current Archdruid(s) of Carleton
4th Order: David Fisher (1964)
5th Order: Norman Nelson (1964)
6th Order: David Frangquist (1964)
7th Order: Gary Zempel (1966)
8th Order: Mike Scharding (2004)
9th Order: Irony Sade (2004)
10th Order: Richard Shelton (2004)

Here are some of the letters involved in the establishment.

Dear David Frangquist

This is a bit of a surprisingly long letter, so I'd like to apologize in advance.

I tend to write much better than speak, and I easily get lost on side topics in person. I've CC'ed this to a few other people with a stake in this matter.

First, I hope is all is with you and yours.

This letters concerns the higher orders, yes, yet again. I am afraid that it now appears to be my turn to ask that the higher orders be finished, so I will try to explain my reasoning, but I know that there are always other options, of course, yet I feel this is a possible course to consider. It sometimes seems that we have spent more time inquiring about the higher orders, than through them. Perhaps this is a cyclical phase we all go through? Perhaps we make a bigger deal of them than is necessary? But I digress.

Anyway, when I heard that Robert Larson had died last month, I was inspired yet again to some long nettling thoughts that there should be an appropriate way to commemorate the passing of Third Orders who've worked long and hard over the years, although of course, the work should be its own motivation. So the idea has been growing for about five years, that with the return of our remains to the earth, so the Druid

might be automatically inducted to the Order of Danu, the last of the 10 orders. Originally devoted to fertility, and jokes aside, the death of a tree clears canopy room and fertilizes the ground for the growth of the next generation; and thus we all stand on the shoulders of giants, atop roots and layers of sediment and sentiment from this interaction with the past, taking a part of them with us as we walk to the future.

I thought this a lovely thought, but awoke to an obvious complication. There is no Order of Danu right now. I know an alternative could be devised, but decided to inquire into the obvious route of activating it first.

I believe it was you and Norman who first decided to name and fill the higher orders, for various reasons in the 1964-1967 period. As it currently stands, I understand that Fisher is still patriarch of Grannos (healing waters), Nelson is patriarch of Bracicea (intoxicating waters), you are Patriarch of Belenos (the sun), and Gary Zempel is patriarch of Sirona (flowing stream waters). I did some more review, and it seems that each higher order's council elects the Patriarch of the next higher order, so the 10th Order cannot be activated until the 8th and 9th are instated first. Ah, what a bother, I thought, then thought some more, and thought it a good time to work on those too.

Over the years, although the Order of DAL has blossomed rather vigorously, the ranks of the higher orders have remained thin (maybe 6, 5, 6 & 1 in 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th respectively). I have no problem with that, as not every priest is really interested in delving into the mysteries of one particular facet of nature; generalists that we are. Myself, I have worked on advising people in difficult times by Grannos, and observing the movements of the heavens in Belenos, and have considered that time well spent in light service.

Indeed, the higher orders do not bestow greater powers, merely greater responsibilities, and the certainty of being asked by strangers for help in unusual matters at odd times, which is why a single person is wisely limited to one patriarchy of a higher order What started off in light-hearted sport, has instead been a way to inspire Druids to greater efforts of service. Despite that, the higher orders have so far peacefully continued in their quiet ways without much attention, fanfare or notice, and I think that is as they should be.

So to continue. I felt, that it was necessary to discuss this matter with Gary Zempel. I had first met with him at the 2003 Carleton Alumni Reunion and we spent an hour walking the forests of the lower Arb at night by the river trails, discussing his career, listening to the sounds of insects, and enjoying a celestial display of lightning bugs in the stillness. I had briefly thought about entering Sirona at that time, but I didn't feel a calling like Siddhartha towards rivers. Finally, last week, I called him over in Connecticut and explained my reasons, and he said he liked me and thought it was a good idea, but we both agreed that such a decision should not be made by the single member of the Council of Sirona (7th). Since you fleshed out the concept of the higher Orders, you should be best positioned to decide if the process towards 8th, 9th and 10th should be resumed. Which is why this letter is being written to you.

I have not finalized an over-view for the possible process, but I have a rough outline of ideas. With time and fullness of review, I'm sure each of the future Patriarchs or Matriarchs would develop them as the needs seem fit.

I humbly volunteer to begin the Eighth Order of Taranis, partly to get the ball rolling, and secondly because I have long been attracted to the intricate integrated chaos of the sky and all that falls and blows through it. I've heard rumors that this order's concept was originally a popular one, perhaps because of the "Druid Curse" and perhaps because lightning is a rather flashy subject? As a reasonable person, I do not expect that being a Patriarch of Taranis will grant me the ability to fling lightning bolts and smite mine enemies. The Order of DAL already encourages us to speak with thunder and with the gentlest winds.

I do not think that I can influence the weather any more than the next person, but reflexively, I do feel that the weather can influence me more than some. I am not a magician or liturgist by heart or training, more of a contemplative and essayist. There are powerful symbols and systems of the rain-cycle, the way the most insubstantial wind can tear down a house, how clouds beguile us with their changing shapes and numerous other phenomenon that urges me to write how they can inspire us in our spiritual lives.

That's what I'd like to talk about with people, and encourage others to contemplate meteorological matters. One such mission would be to study air pollution emissions, perhaps. I think I could lead Taranis in this way without being Tyrannical. Did I also mention I was within fourteen feet of a lightning strike on the Northfield golf course by Carleton in 1989 or that I was taken to the hospital in 1992, for minor electrical burns from playing with the wiring in my dorm room. Not sure if that is to my advantage, but I think I've learned to respect the phenomenon of electricity, in any case, but it is a rare lightning storm or hurricane that I do not venture forth to dance and stroll in the rain and marvel at the elements in movement.

I wish to share this wisdom with others, but if another candidate wishes to do the job of Patriarch, I have no obstacles of pride to cede that role to them and following. But that's enough about me. Moving on.

Not to be presumptuous, but I believe I already have a candidate picked for the 9th Order of Llyr (Ocean), although I haven't told him yet. Irony Sade has been an inspired novelist, poet, harpist and able leader at Carleton after my time from 1996-2000, during which he spent a year on the SEA program; an educational boat cruise around the world. He also somehow convinced Carleton to build the stone circle that you saw, much to the delight of Druids and other denizens of the Arb. Afterwards, selfless person that he was, he went to the little Pacific island kingdom of Tonga to spend three years in a beach hut, teaching about sanitary engineering and industrial arts, despite volcanic eruptions. I believe he knows far more than I about the ocean, and would be quite dignified and careful about inviting and humbly encouraging others in their study of the ocean's ways and waves.

And finally we come to the 10th Order of Danu. I haven't really decided who to nominate, as that would be the decision of the 9th Patriarch. I figure it is necessary to have at least one living member of the 10th Order in the beginning, to set up the rules of entry in a hassle-free paperless automated system; such as to declare that the 10th Order is open to all priests who have passed on in this world without need of application.

After such a declaration, the Patriarch need not do more than sit back, and be notified who has died, as a simple matter of courtesy. I am now enquiring if Richard Shelton (AD 69-71) would be interested in establishing the framework for that order, as I believe he has the necessary gravitas for the subject matter, and is familiar with most of the older Druids who will be mostly likely to enter the order the soonest. But as for what those dead Druids do in their order, that is for them to decide upon, but I'd recommend in my eventual turn into the

order to try out feasting and campfire sing-a-longs, all friends invited.

And so that's the tangled web of plans that I am interested in weaving. I don't think its too bothersome a task for any involved, but it raises some issues. Part of me hesitates to finish the work of others, as the "missing orders" are somehow symbolic of how not all aspects of Druidism need to be completed. Yet part of me sees them as yet serving a role in the future. And I am not sure which way to proceed, which is why Gary and I have agreed to ask you on these matters.

If you feel that it would be best to follow this course through a different route, then you must disagree. If you feel that this course has some merits, then I hope you will advise that to Gary Zempel at vkramer@snet.net

Regardless of the decision, I have no hard feelings either way, but we felt the need to consult your opinion on the issue, and wish you well on your road in life.

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Yours in the Mother,

Mike the Fool

From Richard Shelton

Friday, September 3, 2004 3:16 PM

Dear Michael.

I am touched. I have always perceived hanging about the Higher Orders something of a whiff of Eris, and a very real potential for mischief. But you have found an appropriate and moving role for at least the 10th. I like too this suggestion that the 10th can be not (just) the end of a series, but perhaps also a beginning, or a return -- somewhat like the Druid Sign, I suppose. I find this circle a more fitting metaphor for the Higher Orders than the current one (of "permanently unfinished business") they seemed to be saddled with.

As for your suggestion for the first Patriarch of Danu, you acknowledge that the office is not in your gift. But as I say, O young friend of long standing, I am touched.

Peace,

-- Richard

Dear Richard,

Eh? I thought you were going to say I was "touched in the head"!

Always the meddling one, I thought I might have stampled on sacred ground. I appreciate the compliment, but it's really Nozomi's idea in Japan or Isaac's from DC(E) I believe, I just repackaged it. Perhaps you could prod Frangquist then? He's notoriously difficult to urge a response from in writing, as you're well aware. :)

Well, there's always surprises, I suppose. I like the idea of the closing the circle too. If I could just figure out how to make the 10ths into 1st again, I could rest quietly, but I cannot think how to word it in an analogy.

So, I suppose you might be willing to be nominated for the role, if we can ever establish a 9th Patriarch? Unfortunately, it won't be much fun, everyone else in your growing order would be dead, and wouldn't be letting you in on the what they are doing.... but I guess as an Arch Druid, you're already used to being left out of the loop? :)

-Mike

Greetings Brothers David and Brother Michael,

I have been conversing with Brother Michael from time to time and recently the conversation turned to the higher orders. The orders have long been closed and as they were introduced to me they were orders that could only be entered into by death or near death. This seemed good...that is a fitting memorial. Of course, in the origin of the higher Orders I am sure that it was planned that they be completed. However, I think that the stagnation in the orders has offered a different chance for their use, that of a memorial. Moreover, while the higher orders have been closed off new side orders have been created of every size and shape for those who want to work on a specific path and the higher orders do not need to be reopened.

I admit that I am somewhat more mixed on the issues of the 8th and 9th orders, that those struck by lightening or who fall to a river may not need a special tribute (though, yea, it could be interesting) but I feel that the 10th order should be reserved for the dead. Brother Mike has proposed open even the tenth order, in specific so that those Druids who pass on may be automatically entered into it. While this may seem good I feel it to be deficient. If the entrance into the 10th order is for the sake of the living then they gain nothing but knowing that their friend and perhaps mentor is inducted. They would have no ceremony to commemorate and memorialize them as they enter. And if it is for the dead...well there are better ways, I think, for cannot Danu induct her own priests?

This past Saturday a few members of the Carleton Grove gathered and inducted Robert Larson into the 10th order. Of course, none of us were of the 10th order and we did not have the power to bring Robert into that order. Not, at least, on our own. However, lacking that power we did ask for the presence of Danu and ask her to induct Larson into her own order and she did reply with positive winds. It served both as a good memorial, though non present had met Brother Robert, and allowed Danu herself to induct Robert.

This, I think, was a good way to open the tenth order.

As to the 8th and 9th orders, I cannot say for certain. I do feel that they need not be opened solely for the sake of inducting Priests to the 10th order. There may be other reasons to open the other orders, but I think it should also be remembered that if those orders were to be closed to the living other orders might be made for those wishing, for instance, to invoke lightning.

Yours in the Mother,

Stephen Crimmins

Dear Brothers David and Stephen,

Actually my idea was that the departed would automatically enroll in the 10th order without fanfare, that way if we don't hear about them until four years later, which may happen, we won't feel bad about "missing them".

However, I do fully agree that having someone hold a service of celebration "after the fact" is enitrely appropriate and laudable, and I'd do it instantly on hearing the obituary notice myself, but I just don't feel its required to be a necessary preliminary step. Postliminary is fine, and what you've shown me of your service, is entirely of the style that I'd like at my own passing; but hopefully that won't be soon, so you'll have time to polish it further. If a 10th Patriarch is chosen, I will recommend that she or he incorporates many elements of your service.

My ideas for what the 8th and 9th order are indeed less pressing than establishing the 10th order, but I still think

getting those 2 started is commendable, even if they don't function noticeably for a long period of time; afterall that's not such a concern, since how much has the 4,5,6 & 7th really done as a group in 40 years? Slow and quiet flows the deep stream.

Attached is my sermon that I gave for Robert Larson on Sunday which I inserted into a standard service at the meditation section. And also included is the service held by Stephen Abbot (no relation to you, but a brother in DAL).

-Mike

Dear Mike and David,

I wish to make but a few clarifications, and, if they need be, suggestions for the future. I agree with you

that we do not want to miss the departed. What I had hoped to convey and what was apparently not conveyed was that I do not believe that an 'automatic enrollment' created by a Druid bureaucracy is not the appropriate method.

As you seem to agree it is best to have a service when a passing is uncovered. But this is not my sole idea. I feel that before I had asked Danu to accept Robert Larson in the tenth, Danu herself had already done so. That Danu had, uponing hearing of Brother Larson's passing, as she, unlike us, is wont to do quite quickly, she had Enrolled Brother Larson to her order with an awareness of doing so. The service that I held was an acknowledgment and confirmation of that.

Let me repeat. I feel that 'automatic enrollment' set up is a disservice to any member of Danu inducted by such means. It serves neither the purpose of Danu and the departed, nor those left to wait.

However, as I have no real power to stop anything (unless I can quickly find somewa to summon blue skies over Brother Michael for the rest of his life) I would ask but this. If there must be a living Patriarch of of the 10th Order that he or she not create a Bereaucracy, but rather to ask Danu to continue doing what it is that she already does, inducting the departed Druids into her order.

Though, I would make one last plea. When the ninth order is filled and ready to choose a Patriarch of the 10th Order, might that Patriarch be not of the living, but of the deceased? And then that Patriarch may govern the order as he or she wishes, and induct those who he or she finds out to be deceased (for he or she will then be like Danu, and hear nigh on immediately of a passing). And then, if we the living hear of a passing there might be a simple ceremony, and we may ask the Patriarch of the 10th order to let us know if we have created a suitable ceremony by asking her to respond by the winds, we may hold a service to induct them for the sake of those who remain.

-Stephen Crimmins

David Frangquist <davef@tibinc.com>

Wednesday, September 15, 2004 5:47 AM

Dear Brother-in-the-Mother Michael,

I hope you will forgive me for taking so long to respond to your query regarding the "higher" orders. I have been somewhat preoccupied in these last days preparing for an excursion into one of the Mother's greatest cleavages, that place known to North American English speakers as "The Grand Canyon," where we see laid bare the history of her many transformations over the course of half her lifetime. This excursion will be in the company of many others who have experienced Carleton, but I am sad to report that most of them did so during the period before the Reform. Nevertheless, we look forward to meeting them, and perhaps having a chance to share our druid experiences with them. For seventeen days we will be in direct contact with one of Sirona's greatest streams, and perhaps some of us will even have the opportunity to be completely enfolded in Sirona's embrace. We are not eager to experience the power of Taranis there, however, for when Taranis and Sirona combine their powers, it is best for mortals to head for higher ground.

I was also well aware of your propensity to publish everything I write, and so I was hoping to be inspired to create something witty and wise. Alas, that has not come to pass, so I must take solace in the hope that if this is ever published, it will be buried among such a wealth of literary treasures that it will be easily overlooked.

I, too, have at times been vexed by the incompleteness of our orders. I think it had been our expectation that the Archdruids of Carleton would continue our tradition until all the orders would be populated, after which it would perhaps be appropriate to lose interest in them. But that happened sooner than expected, and so we never got past seven. The only reason we proposed ten orders in the first place was that the founders said there were ten, and we wanted honor that vision. But druids are a notoriously unruly lot, and Gary and the seventh order chose a different path. We should not have been surprised.

Over time I began to think that perhaps there was something fitting about leaving the orders incomplete. It may be seen as a parable about how druidism itself is never complete but is always growing and evolving in new directions. This has been true of every great religion, but many people refuse to acknowledge that and insist that their religion must be kept pure by adhering only to what has gone before and excluding anything new. But the Mother is always new, growing and evolving, and encouraging her children to do the same.

There is, I believe, a legend that there is a monastery somewhere in the Himalayas where the monks strive to say all the names of the Buddha, which is expected to take eons of eons, and when they finally complete their task, the world will come to an end. I do not expect such dire consequences from the completion of the orders, but I have some concern.

If our task is to grow and to encourage others to grow, and if it is true, as I believe, that we can encourage others to grow only by setting them free (especially our children), then my visions or preferences in the matter are of no matter. When the Council of Belenos elected the Patriarch of Sirona, our work was done in regard to that order. It was up to the seventh to enable the eighth. It is perhaps just as fitting that it has not done so as it would be if it had. I am honored that you have sought my opinion, but there is certainly nothing for me to decide. It is up to the Council of Sirona to decide. If you can persuade Sirona to act, you have my blessing.

As to your vision for the tenth order, it does seem to be an improvement on the early visions, which had something to do with the deflowering of virgins, I believe. But Danu is about fertility and birth. Are we suggesting that death is a new birth, as some other religions have? I'm not sure druidism has taken a position on that one. (Has druidism taken a position on anything?) On further reflection, since each of the "higher" orders has no assigned function other than to kick off the next one, then the tenth has no need to meet. So perhaps it is fitting that it should be populated by those who either cannot meet or, if they are indeed able to meet, cannot tell us about it.

I mean no disrespect to those you would honor, and I certainly have great respect and affection for Robert Larson,

who is a member of my order. Druidism is focused on nature and therefore on life. If it is our purpose to honor the lives of our departed brothers and sisters, and to honor the life they have brought to druidism, then by all means let us do so. If it is pleasing to the Mother for us to do this, then your efforts will be successful.

Yours in the Mother,

Dave Frangquist

From : Mike, A Capitol Fool <mikerdna@hotmail.com>

Sent : Wednesday, September 15, 2004 10:00 AM

Dear Brothers David, Gary, Richard, Irony & Stephen in the Earth Mother,

I awoke today to a quiet rain of the approaching Hurricane Ivan and noticed that there had been a power outage last night that had reset my alarm clock, and I had sorely overslept. Perhaps this was an omen? Then I came to work and checked my email to receive your message before your flight, so you must have been up quite late (5:47 AM?)

Thank you, David, for your quick response, and I wish I had time to await the accumulated wisdom that you have brought back from such a fine trip to one of Nature's great mysteries. However, I'm sure that your mixture of concerns and encouragements will be sufficient to allow us to cautiously proceed on our course regarding the last known Higher Ordres.

[Who knows, perhaps that 10th Patriarch will get mischevious and tell me he knows of three or four more Orders around the corner, and leave us in suspense for 37 more years? Perhaps I shouldn't even plant the seed of that headache!!]

Anyway, perhaps it is appropriate that this entire correspondenc of Taranis has waited 37 years until it could be transmitted byb electrical means in an election year?

As regarding completeness, or the profitable absence there of, in Druidism... I have not yet completely discharged my own sense of druidic obligations yet, and I doubt I will until my own journey on this mortal coil has ended. I do not equate fullness with completion, as even if the Higher Orders of 8, 9 and 10 are begun, the loosely worded goals and tasks of each member who enters them (as with all Orders) seem vast enough to keep them happily toiling away for many years to come.

I see Druidism as not of filling a treasure chest, but more like digging a hole, when you stop digging, that all that will be dug. You might find a few treasures, certainly hit many rocks and roots, and hopefully enjoy the vigorous exertion and fresh air. Certainly my own digging will not produce a canyon as large as the one David travels to, and I hope after my own passage, they will fill in the dirt over my efforts, and go on to dig their own holes. This is our holey task, though I hesitate to call it holy, as we pit ourselves to wholly appreciate the wonders of Nature and wisdom that She and our friends can empart to us before we ourselves part company.

Thus, I have no doubt that who ever is elected to oversee the 10th Order's business, will use that classically Druidic style of providing us only with more questions, not answers, to contemplate the greatest mystery of life; the passing of one generation and start of new eras. That patriarch need not impart any assurances of afterlife, for the 10th Order is merely to honor those who have partook of and taught of the fertility and bounty of the Earth around them; and whose demise will remind us of our own time limit, that we may creatively endeavor further with the time left to us. If they need assurances beyond what we know of this world, I'm sure we can point them onward to other organizations that have full-fledged services in that regard.

**** ** Request to Enter Eighth Order ** ****

With this in mind, now I turn to Gary and humbly request that the Council of Sirona be convened and accept my request to hand the reins of the Council of Taranis to me, that my reign promote further introspection and observation of the rains, clouds, winds and other wonders of the sky. May the Eigth order be as endless as the figure eight and the cycles of the streams and rains. May it not be a stormy period of tenture, but full of occasional light showers of nourishing rains, intriguing puffy clouds and those amazing blue skies so clear that you wonder if the clouds were ever there to begin with. With your permission, may the rains of Taranis fill the streams of Sirona, as I hope the waters of Llyr (9th) will soon fill my clouds too.

I ask that you respond soon, as mighty Ivan approaches my Grove in D.C., and I would enter Taranis this weekend with the predicted thunderstorms. Hopefully, I might draw away some of Ivan's terrible wrath towards me for my impudence, sparing others, and come away with some mysteries of his to share with others. Or perhaps, I'll just become a charred crispy Druid, wiser for the foolish venture.

'`'*.,.*'`'.,.*'`'*.,.*'`'*.,.*'`'*.,.*'`'*.,.*'`'*.,.*'`'*.,.*'`'*.,.*

Yours in the Mother,

Mike the Fool

G.R. Zempel (Vkramer@snet.net

Thursday, September 16, 2004 5:36 PM

Peace be unto all humanity, and in particular, unto our brothers and sisters in the Reform.

At 2100 hours UTC on this date, every patriarch or priest consecrated to Sirona being present, the Patriarch declared the Council of Sirona to be in session.

After reverent waiting, the Council turned its attention to expressions of hope, from some of those of the Reform, for consecration of a Patriarch of Taranis. The Council decided, in one voice, that the time of waiting has been fulfilled, and directed the Patriarch of Sirona to inform Michael Scharding, he of that name who was ArchDruid of the Mother Grove, that he is declared Patriarch-Elect of Taranis, and bid him cause a ceremony to be conducted, consecrating him to that Spirit's service. The Council and Patriarch convey to him best wishes for a crackling and spirit charged conduct of his vocation.

Peace be unto all humanity, and in particular, unto the Patriarch of Taranis and his whole Order.

I, G. R. Zempel, only Patriarch of Sirona, have set my hand to this on behalf of the Council of Sirona.

--

G. R. "Gary" Zempel

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA
COUNCIL OF TARANIS

Dear Brothers of Dalon AP Landu, with much thought over these matters for a dozen years, I humbly accept the decision of the Council of Sirona, and on this day, Thor's Day, September 16th, 2004 c.e. (Day 48 of Foghamhar, Year XLII of the Reform) at 10:00 PM EST.

I will fulfill the duties and responsibilities of overseeing this Order of Taranis to the best of my ability and wisdom, and hope that Taranis, who oversees us all will guide my words and actions in all matters of concern, and smite me [gently] if I do not please him.

Thank you for your wise words, cautions and suggestions up to now. I do ask that you give me more advice on the topic when you have thoughts, for although I am but alone in my order now, I have many siblings in other Orders that I hope to rely on during this period of transition.

I will with great speed this weekend, undertake my initiation and, Taranis willing, will hold council on the pressing issue of carefully selecting the Ninth Patriarch of Llyr, after consultation with my siblings. I have adopted the basic ordination framework of a former grove mate of mine, Nozomi Kibou, who devised a recommended script in 1998. I will make a few changes and issue it after testing it in mighty Ivan's upcoming storm.

This is a historic moment, and I hope it will one looked back upon with warmth and approval in the coming years. May many feel a new calling to admire and wonder at the skies so free and flowing above thier heads, ever present and made of next-to-nothing, but whose presence is ever powerfully felt.

Yours in the Mother

Michael the Fool

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA
COUNCIL OF TARANIS to the COUNCIL OF DALON AP LANDU

Greetings to my brothers and sisters of the Reform,

I bear good news and hope you are well.

This morning after a long and difficult vigil in the midst of the tornados, lightning and howling winds of Ivan that pummeled my grove of D.C. with heavy rains, but fortunately left none harmed, I have now fully assumed the mantle and responsibilities of the Patriarchy of the Order of Taranis at eight A.M. on the eighteenth of September, 2004. The storm is over and the Council of Taranis was established and convened at eighth street SE of Washington DC at a Starbucks coffee house. I hope to cautiously reign with wisdom, humility and compassion over its functions for as long as I am able.

The following ground rules for the Council were established. When I pass on or step down, the Council is encouraged to continue to meet without me, on their own, until a new Patriarch is established by the Order of Sirona to replace me. Each full member has an equal vote, and voting shall be by a 2/3 majority of all those who reply to the council's business after a reasonable effort has been made to reach them, and the Patriarch must be definitely be informed of the vote before and afterwards to be official. Proposals unfinished after three months have elapsed from the date announced are voided. Votes must be made in person to the Patriarch or sent by phone, fax, e-mail or other electrical means. No members can be expelled from or barred from participating in the Order, except with both the assent of the Patriarch and the 2/3 majority vote of the council, and it is hard to think that such a situation should ever happen.

The first order of business, over a triple-shot Java-chip frappacino, at our full council was to establish the ordination liturgy to bring in more members in the future. A slightly modified version of Nozomi Kibou's unofficial service was unanimously adopted and was arranged so that any priest/ess wishing to enter the Order could perform it themselves, after being invited, by any member of Taranis, to join the council's exploration of the mysteries of the weather. The full text of the ordination will be published later in ARDA 2 this fall. The symbol of the Order is decreed to be a black and yellow ribbon bound together in three knots (and worn as a maniple over either hand) to remind us that Druidry is not only about speaking with thunder, not only of speaking with the whisper of winds, and not to hesitate to choose which option when the course is certain enough. The other symbol of the Order is an umbrella or golf-club to be carried as is comfortable, preferably a yellow and/or black one.

The second order of business, conducted at nine A.M., was to unanimously elect Irony Sade to assume upon himself the Patriarchy of the Order of Llyr, the Ninth Order in accordance with the power invested in our Council by Reformed tradition. Nine cheers were cried out in celebration. The council here now bids that Brother Irony forthwith quickly devise and adopt an appropriate ceremony, become consecrated and convene the Council of Llyr. We chose Irony for he has shown great wisdom of the land and also from the extensive experience he has from his travels by and on the many oceans and seas of the world. He is skilled in the ways of boating, fishing and swimming; and he will know whom to call and join his Order. The Council and Patriarch wish him great success in his endeavors.

The third order of business, conducted at ten A.M. was to induct David Fisher as an honorary member of our Council, with no voting privileges or responsibilities, but with freedom to address the council with his wisdom and bear its symbols. If he should later choose to fully become a member of the council, that request is granted at such time it is made.

The fourth order of business, conducted at ten thirty A.M. was to invite Samuel Adams, the Druid of Saint Olaf College to join the Order's Council at his convenience. We await you.

With that concluded, the Council of Taranis wished to you, my brothers and sisters, fair winds and pleasant weather, then called a recess and finished its business.

I hereby verify that all this is true, and submit this to you by the power of electricity.

Yours in the Mother,
Michael James Anthony Ulhail Scharding, ODAL, Gr., Be.
Patriarch of Taranis
Day 49 of Foghamhar, Year XLII of the Reform

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA
To the COUNCIL OF DALON AP LANDU

Greetings,

I am humbled and honored to be nominated for the patriarchy of the Order of Llyr. Having lived beside, sailed on, and all but drowned in the sea perhaps I can attempt to begin to understand its mysteries.

As one of the younger druids I have watched this discussion of the higher orders quietly, hardly feeling that it was my place to speak. Their utility beyond the funerary is unclear to me, though in the course of time that may change. As I understand it, nomination to the order of Llyr conveys no power, but three responsibilities: To seek to understand the sea; to offer membership to those druids who do the same; and to nominate someone to the Order of Danu.

If Llyr is one of the most obscure deities- just as the sea is an largely unknown realm, even to those who sail upon it, then Danu, as the patron of the Other world, is even more

mysterious. It does seem that only those who have died might understand her.

I like the notion that those druids who have died are offered membership in her order by Danu herself. This argues in favor of Mr. Crimmins's idea that the patriarch should be a dead druid, possibly the first third order who died in the Reform. At the same time, it seems reasonable that there be one living member of the Tenth, to look after Death's business on earth, so to speak, or to speak for the dead, if you prefer. What his or her role would be, I do not know. Catholicism aside, people die without help. Would the role of the Danu's priest be to acknowledge the dead, to set them on their path to the Other world, to remind the rest of us that our path does not end here, or something else?

I would appreciate the input of the more senior druids as to potential nominees for the order of Danu. Some of you I will be contacting directly. Everyone else in the council, specifically those whom I have not met, is invited to contact me: Irony Sade 3830 State Street Rd. Skaneateles, NY 13152 (315)561-6387 irony@starmind.org

Yours in the Mother,

Irony Sade

Pending Patriarch of Llyr

1998 Ordination of Eighth Order Druids

Apparently there were many people who were very interested in joining the Order of Taranis, since many of the early Founders quite commonly practiced weather magic to improve the conditions of Carleton's football matches. However, possibly due to Fisher's near immolation by lightning and the over-effectiveness of the Druid Curse, perhaps they decided to not travel down the path any further?

When I founded the order in September 2004, I more or less used the identical format as Nozomi Kibou's text.

1998 Unofficial Ordination of Ninth Order Druids

With Minnesota being about as far from the ocean (except the Great Lakes) as any point in North America, it is not unreasonable that the Higher Orders never got this far. Irony Sade was elected by Mike Scharding to be the Patriarch of Llyr.

1999 Unofficial Ordination of Tenth Order Druids

Once at Samhain, I noted that a handful of RDNA Druids had died, and Nozomi commented that they had taken their final Orders, and I recommend that she use the Order of Danu. I believe the Founders thought it was an order of Earth fertility, and some were quite anxious to join, but joked about the difficulty of finding a willing person to sacrifice her virginity. Well, Danu apparently wasn't an Earth goddess, but rather a river goddess, and rivers are rather eternal things also. I have also set up a home page for departed Druids on my website.

THE NEW ORDERS

While there were 10 Orders originally, many "Side Orders" or New Orders were established to supplement the traditional orders. They are similar to Special Interest Groups, and tend to be open to all Druids, regardless of Order.

1976 New Order of Diancecht:

Made by Joan Carruth in 1981 as an alternative to the Order of Grannos which, to all appearances, seemed defunct. The Order was very active from 1977 to 1981. There are about 4 members. It has the most complicated ribbon-system of all the orders.

1976 New Order of Oberon:

I found the longer letter from Les Craig-Harger and her copy of the ordination in a stack of materials that Stacey loaned to me from Emmon's collection, circa 1980. I believe that Brian Geller was the original Patriarch of this order, and was succeeded by Les. The later Matriarch, Les Craig, quietly stopped Bardic Session after moving to Humboldt in 1983, and the order has lapsed since then, although the Hazelnut Grove has apparently continued the Celtic Music sessions on a sporadic basis. She is also the author of several essays from the Live Oak

I found this quote on Brian:
April 1978 Br. David Geller, Patriarch of the Order of Oberon, has agreed to begin running weekly Bardic classes for Neopagans in the Bay Area, **if** enough people show a sincere interest in putting some work into music, poetry and singing practice. The idea would be to improve everyone's Bardic abilities and to develop new materials for use in Druid ceremonies.

Summer 1980: Matriarch and Chief Bard, Linda Von Braskat-Crowe, announces that beginning after Beltane, the Order will be inducting new members. Prospective Bards are encouraged to keep and add to a notebook of songs and poems, (both their own and others'), and to have a presentation ready for their induction ceremony. Contact the Matriarch (preferably in person) for further details.
The order is currently holding monthly Bardic rehearsals at the Matriarch's home. Call her at 839-1628 for specifics. Bardic revels also happen monthly, as desired, at various locations.

Nov. 1980 There will be a meeting of the Nordic Order on Tuesday, Nov. 15th, at 8 PM at the home of Patriarch Linda von Brasket 863 E.28th St., Oakland. Her home is very near the Park Boulevard exit off the MacArthur Freeway. Call her at 839-1628 if you aren't sure how to get there. The meeting will discuss the fate of the Bards over the coming winter, and it is important that as many interested people as possible show up.

Nov 1980 The Order of Oberon is the old Bardic order of the NRDNA, and seems to be the only Order currently having an unbroken history. Leslie Craig-Harger is currently Matriarch of that Order, having taken over from Linda von Braskat in 19 y.r. I called her to find out what her Order was doing during the NRDNA Season of Sleep.

She says the Order is working on poetry and acting as well as music. This is intended to round out their talents and abilities as bards; being a bard covers far more ground than just being a singer and/or instrumentalist.

Her main news, though, did not concern the Order so much as what she is trying to do as Matriarch.

First, she is soliciting dedicatory works from Druidic bards. These works will go into the Matriarch's collection, and Leslie hopes eventually to print them. For more information, or to send her your work, write: Leslie Craig-Harger 1280 61st Street, Emeryville, CA 94608

In addition, she says that creative and archival works are also welcome. She will collect them, and use the ones that fit her needs in her Bardic revels.

In addition, she is working on a method whereby Archdruids or other Third Order Druids can ordain bards into the Order of Oberon. This will save Leslie a lot of traveling, which is both wearying and expensive. I will try to publish the details in DC as soon as she finalizes them.

We spent a long time talking about the Mother Grove, and what connections Mother Grove does and does not recognize with the old NRDNA structure. As a result, two days later, Leslie provided me with a chaining note concerning Oberon:
Bardic Revels December 19, January 23, and February 27. Call Leslie for location. We are working on the poetic and dramatic aspects of the 'Bardic arts' – beginning with the techniques of satire and lampoon. Lampoons can deal with whatever subject attending Bards choose, with attention to the transforming nature of satire. (Anyone who feels that humor is irrelevant to magic might want to check out Illuminatus, maybe?)

"PS: Order of Oberon does not intend to stick its nose into any Grove's liturgical business. Members of Mother Grove should feel free to attend without danger to their artistic or doctrinal autonomy."
Leslie tells me that due to space limitations, she is having to restrict attendance at her revels to her regular circle of bards (meaning those who already know or have access to her telephone number; she asked that I do not publish it). If this applies to you and you want to attend, call her for details.

April 1982 Leslie Craig-Harger Matriarch, will be retiring as such this season, when she can find a suitable successor. Nominations Welcome: Until then, she will be doing Ordinations into the Bardic order. If you are interested in joining, contact her through Live Oak Grove, here at the Miner Rd. address. You do not have to be Third Order to join Bards. She will be holding occasional Bardic Revels, when possible, and wishes to say that if some other members of Bards wish to hold a Bardic, she'd much appreciate it.

Druid Missal-Any, Summer 1984: Leslie Craig-Gaggar, Matriarch of the Order of Oberon, Bards, wants to retire and suggest these revisions in the process of instating Bards, archivsts etc. In Order of Oberon.
Comments and acceptance /rejection are requested from all Third Orders bards before this is written into the Apocrypha. Reply before Samhain of 1984.

Not only does my remote location and lack of leadership ability make me a stunningly inappropriate Matriarch of bards, I also have a strong feeling that the Bards are better off unled. Art for Art's sake is a pretty anarchistic concept, and Art for the Gods' sake requires direct communication with the Gods; I.e., inspiration. I would like to propose to the ODAL that:

A) I resign as MOO, leaving no successor.

B) Anyone wishing investiture as a bard should be recognized and invested by the local AD

C) Anyone who wants to be so recognized has to put their youth where their mouth is, by presenting some original work to the local grove, and that a text or tape of this work should then be presented to a central Archives.

Love, Leslie.

1978 New Order of Lugh:

Made by Katya Luomala, the last of the original line of Carleton Archdruids, wrote this in 1978. A simplified rite from January 1979 is included from a letter from Katya to Stephen. The last part is an addendum from Katya to Scharding in 1993. There are currently only three members, to my knowledge..

1986 New Order of the Earth-Mother:

This was started by Willow, a member of the Live Oak grove, and one of the member of the Coup attempt. Willow also founded HAM in the Church of All World for keeping children active in Paganism. Not much more is known about this order except this reference in the Druid Missal-Any.

1994 New Order of Puck:

Made by Michael Scharding in April 1994, currently having about 8 members and possibly growing more silly. In some respects, it was a statement about how silly I consider the higher orders in most cases. Although the sprite Puck may be of Celtic Origin, my inspiration was Shakespeare's England.

1996 New Order of Suzuki:

Made by Michael Scharding in January 1996 during the coldest part of the year. It is generally a hope that more people will concentrate on meditation than ritual. I also desired that at least one of the Special Orders be specifically of non-Celtic origin, in this case Japan, although Zen goes back to China and eventually to India. Larson notes that the Bramhins of India are related through Indo-European connection back to the ancient Druids. Sigh.

1996 New Order of Bambi:

Made by Michael Scharding in January of 1996 while listening to Disco music and confined indoors due to a severe blizzard. Another Special Order of non-Celtic origin, this is for all the wild animal-enthusiasts and the responsible outdoors people.

1997 New Orders of Hermes:

Like it says, an order for Druids on the move with poetry in their soul. Founded by me while in Japan. My dog is the current Patriarch, and still resides in Japan, but doesn't answer his mail often. Basho was a famous Haiku poet who traveled all over Northern Japan writing poems that made places famous.

1998 New Order of Brigit:

Another simple Order, for which I'm dutifully busy publishing ARDA 2 and the Druid Missal-Any newsletter.

1999 New Order of the Evening Mystic:

Chris Middleton '01 was a gentle artist in the Carleton Grove who was good at making masks, drama and generally being a nice guy. He had his quirks, but so do we all.

1990s New Dis-Order of the Mithril Star:

As mentioned before, the Order of the Mithril Star is a group that became dissatisfied with the Church of All Worlds, and preferred to stay closer to the organization as written in Stranger in a Strange Land. The following material has been extracted from the OMS course of Druidism 101, found in Green Book Volume 8.

2000 New Order of the Volcano:

Written on the Island of Tonga by Irony during his stay there in the Peace Corps from Summer 1999-2001. On this distant islet was an inactive volcano that he often swam in.

2001 new order of druids minor

Written by Ric Knight of Ontario, it is our first Order by a Canadian. Ric's wit and simple charm has graced the RDNAtalk conference for many years, and he operates a web site for the order of MSN groups, where he posts regular meditations.

Section Eight:

Unusual Services

1970 Exorcism in Time of War:

Written by Shelton to asperge the spirit of the Vietnam War from the country. Probably between Fall 1969 to Spring 1971, after the Cambodian Invasion. Apparently it worked after a few years. This liturgy inspired me to write the 2002 Fall Equinox Peace Service.

1963 Order of Consecration (of Altars):

This can be dated to April of 1963, making it perhaps the oldest known liturgy in the book. It was written by David Fisher for the consecration of the first altar at Carleton during the first weeks of Druidism. The original Druids at Carleton had a debate at that time, as is shown in the Early Chronicles of the Druid Chronicles, over whether to use animal blood sacrifice or plant sacrifice. Happily they chose to only use plant sacrifices. The original lines of "attend us now, O Spirits, as we offer up this sacrifice" was changed to "attend us now, O spirits as we light this fire" The original instructions of "here the blood of sacrifice shall be spilled upon the altar" was changed to "here the fire shall be lit upon the altar." The original is kind of grisly to even think about.

1975 A King's Wedding:

Written by Robert Larson on Lughnasadh 1975 for service to his clan leader of the ODNA. It is beautifully simple. These are also entirely optional and may be changed to suit anyone's fancy. Druids should note, however, that unless you have registered with their State and/or County authorities as a minister of a legal church, weddings performed by them may not be legal. This has proven popular at Beltane Services in recent years.

1975 A Marriage Ceremony:

It was written by Larson for Dan Pierson & Sue Buchignani or for Tom & Pat Macvey's wedding. The binding ribbon (green) should be tied in such a way as to reflect the sigil (around the hands a couple of times, then both ends down between the hands.)

1976 An Old Fashioned Wedding:

As its introduction relates, it is the work of Isaac to begin to synthesize a Paleo-Pagan ritual. It was published in DC(E) in 1976. Isaac's drive to study Paleo-pagan religion would eventually realize itself in ADF. In the post-AIDS world, I doubt it would ever happen again, but one can dream.

1978 A Wedding Contract:

This was read during the wedding between Isaac and Selene Bonewits on August 6th, 1978 c.e. It was reprinted in the Druid Chronicler Vol 1, Is 5 (Sept 1978) by public demand.

1978 Invocation to the Elements:

From the Pentalpha news letter. Another element from the 1978 wedding ceremony of Isaac and Selene.

1978 An Invocation Poem:

From the Pentalpha news letter. Another element from the 1978 wedding ceremony of Isaac and Selene.

1992 Wedding Ceremony:

Now, Andrea Davis held this service for Joe Bank's wedding in 1992, I believe, and posted it in the VAX Druid Notes conference in 1996, to the delight of Michelle Curtis and Ann Graham. It's very much a Wiccan ceremony, but it reminds me of the creative elements of the Carleton Grove in the 1987-1992 period.

1976 Suggestions for A Druid's Funeral:

Isaac Bonewits in 1976 for DC(E). Another example of how Isaac was trying to bring every aspect of religion into Reformed Druidism instead of vice-a-versa. Good ideas though.

1989 Further Suggestions for A Druid's Funeral:

Written by Emmon Bodfish as his health began to decline for various reasons. His death in the late 90s was tragic, but if anyone was wise and well-prepared for his sudden departure, then it was him. Unfortunately, although a memorial service was held for him, most of the suggestions in this article were not possible.

1998 A Sample Druid Funeral:

Steve Savitzky, a filk-singing computer worker, was AD of Carleton 1968-1969 and posted this on a web-conference in 1998. He chose to use the basic script of the Winter version of the Common Order of Worship, added a comment in the Consecration about new life, emphasized probably the "To thee we return this portion of thy bounty," added a eulogy for the Meditation, a piper's farewell, and further rebirth imagery in the Benediction. It's not a very elaborate change, but is reasonably somber and simple.

1998 Memorial for Beth Harlow:

This eulogy was written by Pat Haneke of the Akita Grove for the Grove member, Beth Harlow, who died in a tragic scooter accident in Seattle while working as a pizza delivery person. Beth was a real free spirit I met at the Minnesota State University of Akita in Japan. Her example freed many of the grove members of their inhibitions.

2004 Memorial for Robert Larson:

Written by Stephen Abbott on hearing of Robert Larson's death of August 5th on August 19th, he quickly threw together a service, that was coordinated with several of Robert's disciples

and friends in distant locations at the same time. He then had Tegwedd type it up and send it around, and is hoping to have another memorial service at Robert Larson's original Grove location in September.

2003 Baby Blessing

Another service by Pat Haneke of the Akita Grove, and meant to be inserted into a standard service. A new baby boy was born to Nozomi Kibou and Pat Haneke on February 8th 2003 and his name was Taiyo Kibou. There's an interesting story to this birth. During an icy snow storm, Nozomi's rather remote and inaccessible mountain shrine was snowed in and she didn't feel like skiing down the hill in her condition. Then the electrical power was interrupted for almost five days, in the midst of which labor began, of course. Little Taiyo (which means "Sun") is believed to have been conceived during the 2002 Beltane festivities according to plan, and an Oimelc birth had been keenly desired, but babies will be born when they want to. Pat at least had the presence of mind to at least use the blessed candles from the Candlemas, so possibly the home-birth was a bit easy than expected, finishing in less than 10 hours, with no complications. Nozomi's sister and cousin assisted in the delivery, while Pat used the firewood to heat up water in the old bath-house. Nozomi's father and brother were away on business. Nozomi is apparently not releasing the movie rights, and visited the hospital a few days later for a check-up.

Section Nine: Solitary Services

2002 Ordination of Zero Order (Acorn) Druids

As mentioned before, this order cam about after observing the difficulties with joining the first order for isolated Druids, and to get their "foot in the door" organizationally, until such time as they could make it to a grove.

1976 Order of Worship for a Protogrove:

This was one of Isaac's ideas from the mid to late 70s when he was setting up groves throughout the US. Probably 1977 to 1980 period. Such a ritual could be used by a group of people who wanted to be SDNA or NRDNA, but didn't yet have a Third Order Druid to hold the services. Isaac then went on long trips and ordained a Third Order For each Grove. Except for the Neo-Pagan leanings, which I don't really go for, I like them and they show a democratic approach to the service, without hierarchy. It's a pity David Fisher didn't go this route in the early years.

2002 Another Protogrove Service:

Due to the proliferation of proto-groves since the RDNAtalk conference on Yahoogroups.com, there was a need for more services, and this is one that Stacey came up with.

2001 The Quick Order Liturgy:

Pat has always kept a rather satirical eye on the liturgical services I provided, and once timed me and said it took too long, and that he needed one for "Druids on the go." So after some encouragement, this is what he came up with, for Druids by themselves with little in the way of paraphernalia, the essence of the ritual in a stripped down format.

2002 Daily Druid Devotional:

Pat of Akita Grove got this idea from the Catholic Church's daily optional readings and prayers.

2002 Optional Activities for Voluntary Simplicity:

It's nice to have someone just tell you not to do something, take it simple and relax a bit. Sometimes doing nothing is the most important thing.

2001 Prayer in the Work Place:

Apparently Ian Friesland got upset over Ashcroft dragging his personal religion into the lives and work schedule, and wrote this little piece in protest. I don't suppose its been employed by anyone though.

2002 Sigil Construction 101:

I wrote this article as a result of running out of the Druid Sigil necklaces, and I was inspired by Ian's article on using the workplace as a source of magickal goodies.

1978 Ritual Vestment for Druidic Services:

Written by Isaac, with his habit of imitating the Catholic church vestments. Probably beyond the means of any groves, although Carleton did have a reversible vestment back in the 60s.

1988 A Druid Staff:

One of Emmon's specialty was staff-magic, and Albionn wrote this after reading the Four Salutations by Emmon in 1986, and Emmon's version of staff construction.

1988 The Staff:

After experimenting for a few years with staff work, this is his advice of gathering materials for a staff. Good staff is hard to find, you know.

1986 Four Salutations of the Day:

A rather interesting addition from Emmon's files, vaguely reminiscent of Tai Chi to me. I believe that Stacey continues to practice this one every day.

2002 The Fire Ceremony:

A little experience from the Big Ash Grove.

1992 Fire Building Fun:

Written by a young spunky Michael, who was unusually interested in assisting the fire-preparations for the various Carleton services from 1990-1993. Posted on the Vax Conference, it's a summary of RDNA set-up customs at the time.

2004 Sweatlodge Traditions:

I had a terrible conundrum about writing up the extremely vaporous customs associated with the sweatlodge. Each was so unique, that to generalize was to do them an injustice. I was also worried about being accused of "robbing" Native American tradition, but I think that after 10 generations of Druids at Carleton since its adoption, that we do have a bit of a tradition of our own, and it's actually one of the most somber and respectful services that we ever did. I've forgotten a great deal of the smaller traditions that the 1985-1991 Druids extracted from the books I mentioned, but I'm sure that they can be rebuilt, by those who do the reading.

1977/1978 Norse Ritual Experimentation:
Hall Moe went on to join ADF and make more Norse liturgies.

2001 Sirona's Shower Shugyo:
One of the attractions to Nozomi's little mountain home is the 10 foot waterfall on the backside of a gully. It's a slippery as gooseshit, but members of the grove and local community often go to it for drinking water or to meditate under it's pounding force between April and October. In July, she once spent about 8 hours under one in the mountains, and was a bit sick for awhile afterwards.

2001 Hot Tub Healing:
More water shenanigans from the Akita grove.

2002 The Great Cailleach Search:
Akita Grove has wonderful forested mountains, that provides an inviting place to have a game of hide and seek. I believe Carleton Grove did a search for the Golden Frisbee in 2002 also. Lots of fun for the active members, and gets them into the woods.

1980 Druid Cross Tarot:
Stephan's specialty is the tarot, and ran a 1-800 line for awhile not too long ago.

1983 Creating a Wizard's Lite:
Emmon was naturally a bit interested in psychic phenomenon, and this began a long stream of articles on visualizing light and magic.

1983 Back to the Shadows Again:
How to mask one's presence by being aware of it yourself.

1984 Candle Staring:
Similar to the Wizard Lite article.

1988 Why Another Article on Scrying?
A little more on the subject.

2001 On Divination: Short Talk & Dialogue:
Written by Larry Press in a Socratic manner from the Live Oak Grove. Apparently Emmon's emphasis on this subject ws passed on to Larry.

2004 Divination Techniques:
As you can see, I've grown more sober and mature since the Book of Ultimate Answers in 1994. I tend to avoid magical-like activities, but I see divination as a form of meditation and reflection, and since it is key to running a proper RDNA service; I added a few comments and suggested some alternative forms of divination. As far as I can tell weather forecasting, molten lead, wedding rings in loaves of bread, wind & lightning divination remain the most common forms at Carleton.

1994 Book of Ultimate Answers:
Originally in Part 9, I moved it here as it seemed better placed for divination. This was my own poke at divination during my saucy period of Druidism (1992-1997).

2000 Planting Your Own Grove:
How to plant acorns. The problem for a good acorn exchange with CA is that they have Sudden Oak Death virus in their valley.

2002 Winter Tree Care & Planting Tips:
A little follow up from Stacey who has spent a lot of time tending Emmon's grove site in Orinda.

2022 Creation of a Druid's Nemeton:
By Rhiannon, it is an interesting idea on how to set up stones and trees at a grove site.

2001 Tree Meditation:
ADF introduced the Tree Meditation to Druidism and it has grown quite popular, even showing up at Carleton in the 1980s after a few visits to Pagan Spirit Gathering.

1997 Michelle's Meditation:
This is one tree meditation by Michelle Hajder at Carleton's Vax conference not long before the conference ended. Similar meditations were used in sweatlodges and services in the ealy revival period at Carleton also.

Section Ten: Non-Liturgical Festival Activities

These were a small collection of ideas for spicing up the festivals by suggesting more ideas. Up to 2001, one rarely saw much discussion of adding some color and life to them outside the liturgy. This thread ran for about a year in the Druid Missal-Any section, and I'm sure you'll enjoy them. You aren't required to do any of them, but you might like to try them.

Section Eleven: Final Things

David's Final Mediation 1966 Written in May 1966 by Frangquist.
Original Introduction to Black Book by Fisher 1964 This was written by David Fisher on January 30th, 1964. It shows some of the hierarchical focus of Fisher, in that he only wanted Third Order Druids to keep it, although others could read it. This entry was probably made very soon after the first meeting of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (January 27th, 1964) and so it's another early historical document to consider..

Final Points You Should Quickly Notice:

As you go through the different liturgies, you should note that the titles of the different liturgical sections vary greatly from one to the other. The invocation changes "these three sins" to "these three errors" depending on the Priest's inclination. No one section of the liturgy is constant among all these liturgies and there is no need for your liturgies to be the same either.

Still Confused?
For more details on the liturgical customs see A General History of Reformed Druidism, or the Book of Customs in The Druid Chronicles (Reformed), or ARDAs Part Four. If that doesn't help, look me up in the Carleton Alumni services and call me.

Enjoy and use this volume well,
Michael Scharding

Figure 54 Steps to Enlightenment, Japanese Garden, c. 2002

Figure 55 Druid at the base of the Hillside Prairie in the Lower Arboretum, c. 1998.

So Ends
Part Three
Of ARDA 2

PART FOUR

TRADITIONS, CUSTOMS AND OTHER IRRELEVANT TRIVIA

2003 Introduction

The major changes to this section are moderate. There are more RDNA constitutions, Coalition Council materials, Pentalpha & Keltria & OMS By-Laws to show how other Druid Groups have organized, statistical updates, fresher update on the situation of the groves and orders, letter writing conventions and a lot more materials on Calendars. Most of which is not terribly useful unless you're doing heavy duty research, I agree. Many of the customs and practices may differ quite substantially in different groves, so take them more as a general rule-of-thumb. Take what seems of use to you.

Yours in the Mother,
Mike the Fool
Day 52 of Earrach, Y.R. XL
March 24, 2003 C.E.

1996 Introduction

We often notice the big differences between groups, but I believe that it's the smaller details that bring a group to life. Over the thirty or so years, the Reform has come up with its own peculiar laws, raiment's, ritual accessories, favorite books, titles, vocabulary, at least two sets of calendars, holiday customs, symbols and other traits. These are often the most difficult aspects for newcomers to learn and are often the first details that are forever lost when a group goes into abeyance. This is but a limited collection, but some of the more widespread and longevous traits of the Reform. Perhaps this is good, because they are only a sideline to the real search for religious truth. Do not get overly worked up over them, since most of us don't consider them very vital to the pursuit of Druidism, perhaps more of a decoratory function. If you can come up with a better way of running your Druidism, feel free to forge ahead, rename things and so on. Just remember that you and I can speak for nobody's opinions and actions but our own.

Yours in the Mother,
Michael Scharding
Day 10 of Foghamhar, Year XXXIV of the Reform
August 10th, 1996
(The 1/3 Century mark of Reformed Druidism)
St. Cloud, MN

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* = New Addition to ARDA 2

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SECTION ONE: RDNA Councils' Documents

Record of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu

[While the words and instructions of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (which is the collective body of the Third Order Druids), are not graven in stone, they are generally accepted statements about how the Reform, as a whole, is organized. An astute reader can find all kinds of loopholes, and that is okay, since many of the passages were made with the intention of allowing a liberal interpretation. Most of the decisions don't directly affect the average layperson, but rather mostly shape the duties and privileges of the Third Order. Bracketed words for gender inclusivity have been added by myself in 1994 and are warranted by the intentions of the legislation. -Scharding]

7 May 1964. Voted:

Patriarch

To elevate David H. Fisher to the office and order of the Patriarch of the Order of Grannos (the 4th healing springs).

Liturgy

To adopt the Order of Worship of the Carleton Grove (as formulated by David H. Fisher) as the basic order of worship of the Reformed Druids of North America.

26 May, 1964. Interpreted:

Higher Orders

(a) that the purpose of the higher orders is to stimulate priests of the 3rd Order to continued spiritual inquiry, and are intended to honor achievement rather than tenure.
(b) That the higher orders are equal in the sense that no shall be considered a prerequisite for any other (except with regard to the formula for the election of Patriarchs *[or Matriarchs]).*
(c) That direct confirmation of the selection of each priest for a higher order must be made by the Patriarch *[or Matriarch] concerned*.
(d) That the ceremony of induction may be performed by any member of the order.

27 January, 1965. Voted:

Council

(a) To declare in perpetuity that the Archdruid of Carleton shall be the Chairman Ex-officio of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
(b) To reserve to all the priests, collectively in the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, the highest authority of the Reformed Druids of North America.

Priestesses

(a) To delegate to the priest the right to individually consecrate priestesses to any order which they (the priests) may hold.
(b) To allow priestesses to hold the office of Archdruid, provided that they have first vigiled and been granted the right to perform the ceremony by the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.

Interpreted:

Missions

(a) That any priest has the right to conduct worship and receive members into the First and Second Orders.
(b) That no one has the right to consecrate priests of the Third Order except the duly elected Archdruid of a legally constituted Grove, i.e., a Grove which has adopted a constitution and filled by election the offices of Archdruid, Preceptor, and Server.
(c) That the ceremony for the consecration of a Third Order priest as adopted at Carleton may not be altered without the permission of the Council.
(d) That the local Groves retain the right to organize themselves in any way which will best serve their needs.

Liturgy

(a) That the waters-of-sleep shall be used during the winter half (Geimredh & Earrach) and the waters-of-life shall be reserved for the summer half (Samradh and Foghamhar), except when they are needed for healing or for the consecration of a priest. The priest shall wear the red ribbon when consecrating the waters-of-life, and he *[or she]* shall wear the white ribbon when consecrating the waters-of-sleep, both as the mark of the 3rd Order.
(b) That the white robe is the mark of the Druid, and it may be worn by any member; except that a Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] may wear a black robe (in honor of the first Patriarch), but may not at the same time wear the mark of any high order of which he *[or she]* is not Patriarch *[or Matriarch*].
(c) That the first Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of each higher order shall establish the ceremony and identifying mark of his *[or her]* order.
(d) That the individual Groves retain the right to establish any such identifying marks for its officers as it sees fit, provided that they do not conflict with any other marks already adopted.

29 March, 1966. Voted: (by mail)

Priestesses

(a) To grant automatically to all priestesses who have conducted a vigil the right to perform the ceremonies of Reformed Druidism.
(b) To allow a priestess, while holding the office of Archdruid, to consecrate priests of the Third Order and priestesses unto the Order which she herself holds.

20 April, 1966. Voted: (by mail)

Council

(a) To require the Archdruid of Carleton, upon their retirement from office, to prepare a report on the state of Reformed Druidism at Carleton, including such information on Reformed Druid activities elsewhere as they may have received, and including a list of Council members and Council resolutions; this report to be submitted to all members of the Council, the expense of the printing and distribution of said report to be fixed by him and charged to those who receive it.
(b) To require each Archdruid to promptly forward to the Archdruid of Carleton notice of the formation of any Grove and the name and address of any priest consecrated to the Third Order in that Grove.

1 May, 1971 Voted: (by mail)

Priestesses

(a) To subordinate all previous resolutions of the Council concerning priestesses to this one.
(b) To allow a priestess who has conducted a vigil and who has been consecrated to the Third Order all prerogatives of the order, consecrate priests and priestesses to the Third Order. In token of this she is known as a priestess of the Third Order.
(c) To allow a priestess of the Third Order who has been consecrated to a high order and whose consecration has been confirmed by the Patriarch of the given order all prerogatives of that order. Again, she is known as a priestess of the given order.
(d) To abolish all restrictions other than those applying equally to priests on the number of high orders to which a priestess of the Third Order may be consecrated.

A Summary of How the Council of Dalon Ap Landu Kind of Worked

1996

1. All Third-Orders maintain a current address with the Carleton Archdruid.
2. All new groves are announced to the Carleton Archdruid.
3. The Carleton Archdruid prepares a report when they retire.
4. Vote proposals are forwarded to the Carleton Archdruid.
5. The Carleton Archdruid then writes to all the Third-Orders and starts a debate.
6. If a quorum of the Third Orders vote (say at least 1/8 or 1/3 or _, this is uncertain), and all agree, it passed.

It is unlikely that the Council will ever return, because the principle of grove independence is too strongly established and at least half of the Third Orders are without current addresses on record. It also seems that it is unlikely that any vote could gain unanimity.

The Coalition Council of Dalon ap Landu

1996 Introduction

By 1981, it appeared that Carleton had gone defunct, which it had from 1980-82 (and it was not doing to well 1983-85). The original Council of Dalon ap Landu had already proven to be a moribund institution for passing new legislation. The job of the Provisional Council of ArchDruids was essentially being done by The Druid Chronicler & Pentalpha magazines. Joan Carruth and Stephen Abbot were ArchDruids of the Berkeley grove during Isaac's sabbatical from 1979 to late 1981 (when the Death March on the Beach occurred and the Live Oak hived off). With the original RDNA either missing or seemingly determined not to pass new legislation, a number of NRDNA groves decided to form their own legislative body, called the Coalition Council of Dalon ap Landu (CoCoDAL). Their legislation would only affect those groves involved (primarily the Mother Grove of Berkeley, Live Oak Grove of Berkeley, Greenwood Grove of Seattle and the San Diego Grove). By late 1982, during the final phase of the Druid Diaspora marked by Isaac's short return & leaving to form ADF, it appears that the CoCoDAL was finished with its work and quietly faded away. I suspect that the leaders of CoCoDAL were just plain burnt out. It is uncertain whether the current NRDNA groves still follow these rules.

-Scharding

The Initial Letter of CoCoDAL

C. Early Summer 1981

To all ArchDruids & Solitary Thirds

Full Poop on the Higher Orders

The Higher Orders were originally started at Carleton. I believe they got as high as Belenos *[incorrect, they got up to Sirona*], before the original Carleton impetus petered out. After that, two main problems arose. One was that Patriarchs (there were no Matriarchs) were not permitted to resign, though they dropped out and ceased functioning as M/Patriarchs, so no new members could be Ordained. Problem #2 was that ALL Members of the Council had to vote on an issue before the council, and at some point, less than half of the Council could be reached, or would respond to a vote. Groups struggled on, castrated, unable to stay in touch, crippled by unchangeable rules, and with no access to Higher Orders.

What we have to do is start it again for ourselves. I propose retaining almost all of the original flavor: Third Orders only, given for achievement, not tenure; no special status outside themselves; not prerequisite in nature (you need not be 4th Order to join the 5th); Council of Nth Order elects first M/P of N+1 Order, etc. I propose that we declare this Reform as a coalition of Groves and solitary 3rds, since we cannot speak for all Reformed Druids, within the old framework, and that these rules and suggestions are therefore only applicable to Members of the Coalition. We will institute this Coalition on Autumn Equinox, 19 YR 1981 c.e, with those Groves and Solitaries who respond to join by that date. Please vote on the following Reforms, in this format:

Reform #1
for: Kerry P (full last name)
against: Paul M

Also, give your responses to the Suggestions. Please send you responses to Chris Sherbak, 2345 Post St #21, San Francisco CA 94115.

We don't want to set up a series of Bosses, or interfere with your Grove's autonomy. I'm not trying to ego-trip, or ask a whole lot of time or effort from people. "Drawing Down the Moon" has initiated a flood of interest, and it would be nice to see these organizational blocks cleared up so we could experience an expansion. I hope as many Groves & Solitaries as possible become part of this.

PLEASE RESPOND

Yours in the Mother
Joan Carruth, DAL
ArchDruid, Berkeley Grove NRDNA
Matriarch , Order of Diancecht

Issues for Voting by Coalition Council

1. PROPOSITIONS BEFORE THE ORDER OF DALON AP LANDU (and the Higher Orders) WILL BE CONSIDERED TO COME OUT ON A MAJOR HIGH DAY (Summer or Winter) (propositions to be in the mail to all members of the Coalition codal no later than said High Day) AND ARE TO BE PASSED BY 2/3 OF ALL THIRD ORDERS WHOSE REPLIES ARE RECEIVED BY THE NEXT MAJOR HIGH DAY (approximately 90 days), In essence we are saying that a Member may vote "for, "against", or "no vote", and issues will be decided by those who have an active vote.

2. THIS REFORM (which will permit both codal business , and the restarting of the Higher Orders) SHALL BE INSTITUTED BY A COALITION OF GROVES AND SOLITARY THIRDS (originally those who choose to join by Autumn Equinox, 19YR). ANY GROVE THAT WISHES TO JOIN THE COALITION MAY DO SO BY 2/3 VOTE OF ITS THIRD ORDER MEMBERS, DURING THE SUMMER. ANY GROVE WISHING TO RESIGN FROM THE COALITION MAY DO SO BY THE SAME METHOD. IN THE WINTER.

3. M/PS OF HIGHER (or special) ORDERS MAY RESIGN OR OTHERWISE BE REPLACED WHEN NECESSARY (as by illness or death) BY THIS PROCESS: IT IS TO BE HOPED THAT THE OLD M/P SUGGESTS A REPLACEMENT, WHO IS THEN CONFIRMED BY 2/3 OF THE COUNCIL OF THAT ORDER BY 90 DAY ACTIVE VOTE PROCEDURE.

IF THIS IS NOT DONE, OR NOT CONFIRMED, M/P OF N-1 ORDER (i.e., the Order below the one in Question) SHALL ACCEPT NOMINATIONS (90 days) OF AND BY MEMBERS OF N ORDER (not for oneself) AND COUNCIL OF N-1 ORDER WILL ELECT NEW M/P FROM AMONG THESE CANDIDATES.

4. WITH THE M/PS APPROVAL, ANY MEMBER OF THE ORDER, OR THE CANDIDATE'S ARCHDRUID (who shall then wear the emblem of that Order, whether a member or not - this follows from the RDNA custom that a Third may consecrate emergency Waters of Life in the Winter, but must then wear the red ribbon) MAY PERFORM THE ORDINATION OF A NEW MEMBER. This will permit there to be an active, functioning Order in every Grove. In Groves in which the M/P of the Order does not reside, Order members will elect (during the fall) one of their members to be Head of N Order for that Grove for the next year. This person will be in contact with the M/P, organize meetings of the Order, etc.

5. A PERSON MAY BE A MEMBER OF MORE THAN ONE ORDER. A PERSON MAY BE M/P OF AN ORDER, AND OFFICER OF A GROVE. A PERSON MAY NOT BE M/P OF MORE THAN ONE ORDER.

6. ORDINATIONS FOR ANY ORDER SHALL BE DONE IN THE SUMMER, EXCEPT IN EMERGENCIES. RESIGNING M/P SHOULD DO SO IN SUMMER, BUT IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE, INVESTITURE OF NEW M/P SHALL BE CONSIDERED EMERGENCY BUSINESS. M/P REPORTS RESIGNATION TO M/P OF NEXT LOWER ORDER, AND THIS DOCUMENT BECOMES PART OF THE RECORDS OF THAT ORDER, AND SHOULD BE RETAINED. Old M/P should be sure to get Order Records to the new M/P, or to the M/P of N-1 Order, who will pass them along to the new M/P.

7. CHILDREN UNDER PUBERTY MAY NOT HOLD HIGHER THAN FIRST ORDER (and must, to be Members of Angus). NO ONE UNDER 18 SHALL HOLD THE THIRD ORDER, HENCEFORTH. Sorry, I don't feel there's any reason to rush such a step. If you're interested at 16, you'll be interested at 18, or you shouldn't have been Ordained. Also, all the original Carleton members were 18 or older.

Other Items to Vote on:

A: I (solitary) OR WE (Grove) CHOOSE TO JOIN THE PROPOSED COALITION.

B: JOAN CARRUTH (currently Matriarch of Dian Cecht, a Special healing Order) IS CONFIRMED AS MATRIARCH OF GRANNOS. Council of Grannos will be formed by Reordination of members of daincecht, and this Council will elect the M/P of Brachiaca.

Third Order Members please vote for, against, no vote on issues and mail by Autumn Equinox.

AD of Grove (or Preceptor) should record and send votes for all thirds in grove rather than grove thirds each mailing a response to Chris (this enables us to see what the grove activity as a whole is). Set up as shown on first page, on a sheet of paper. Date it, sign it, say what officer of what grove you are, and mail it to Chris.

Figure 1 Stephen Abbot & Joan Carruth, Berkeley AD in 1978.

Important News for CoCoDAL! AD's and 3rds Especially Note!

Druid Chronicler
Volume 4 Number 4
August 1981

We plan to restart the Higher Orders (4-10), Berkeley Grove and as many other groves as wish to participate. Groves should get a consensus (at least 2/3) of their 3rds on whether they wish to be part and inform Chris by Autumn Equinox!!! Berkeley really doesn't want all the M/Patriarchs, so send suggestions for 3rds in your grove who you think would be good M/Ps or members of any order, especially 4-7. Matriarch of ODC will probably become M of Grannos.

These orders will be for the purpose of inciting further inquiry among 3rds, and are granted for achievement, not tenure. They have no further "rights" outside themselves, and are not prerequisite in structure (i.e., you need not be 4th to be 5th) Council of N Order elects M/P of N+1 order. Any 3rd or higher may nominate a member, M/P of order confirms. Ordinations may be done with the M/P's approval, by any member of the Order, or candidates AD so if the M/P is in Olympia, people in Santa Cruz can still join the order) M/P s may resign. If selection is not approved by 2/3 of that order, council of next lower order elects new M/P. Here are my proposals. See what you think. "Est" means "established"

4-Grannos —healers (est) green ribbon (est) ODC will fold.

5- Brachiaca- altered states of consciousness- yellow maniple (est) parties?

6- Belenos- astrologers, scientist, teachers- yellow ribbon (est)

7 Sirona- earth activists, outdoors people, gardeners, etc.- blue ribbon with wave (est)

8-Taranis- warriors, armed and unarmed- orange ribbon

9- Llyr- Philosophers, thinkers, mystics, etc.- grey ribbon

10- Danu-Emeritus order for significant long-term service to the Earth Mother and RDNA. Nomination and selection to order by M/Ps of Order 4-9, by 2/3 consensus. M/P of 10th order confirms- brown ribbon.

Special Orders Must be 2nd order or above (except, of course the kids)
Oberon- Bards (est) Blue ribbon (est)- working order
Merddyn- Magicians (est) staff or wand (est) proposed (no leader)
Lugh — Craftspeople (est) purple ribbon (est) may or may not exist. There's no reason I can think of not to "restart" it anyway, and maybe the original matriarch will resurface.
Angus- Childrens (est) pink sash- to puberty rites. Proposed. No leader.

On our Autumn Equinox, Matriarch of ODC should be confirmed by 2/3 of 3rd. Of participating Groves as M of Grannos. Council of Grannos will be created by re-ordination of members or ODC. Grannos council will then select m/p of Brachiaca from all available 3rd candidates, present or by mail.

Please send info to Chris by Equinox. Let's do it!

Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu

Druid Chronicler Vol. 4, No. 5
Nov 1981

Members of the coalition:

Mother Grove
Live Oak Grove
Greenwood Grove
San Diego Grove

Rules Passed (precis)

1) Votes before the CoCoDAL will be voted on by those- who respond to the Clearinghouse Grove within 90 days of postmark.

2) Groves join in Summer by 2/3 vote of their Thirds; Groves may resign in Winter by the same process.

3) Matriarchs/Patriarchs (M/Ps) may resign. There is a Process for their replacement.

4) New members can be Ordained by their ArchDruid, or another member of the Order, by permission of the M/P

5) A person may be a member of more than one Order, but not M/P of more than one.

6) Resignation of M/P of N Order should be reported to the M/P of N-1 Order, whether or not they are immediately replaced.

7) Children under puberty shall not hold higher than 1st Order; no one under 18 shall be Ordained Third.

Other Business Passed:

A) Joan Carruth shall be the Matriarch of Grannos.

Live Oak Grove volunteered to be Clearinghouse for 20 y.r. Any Third Order member of the Coalition may originate a vote by sending a copy of the vote to all member Groves or Solitaries. and to the Preceptor of the Clearinghouse Grove.

Responses should be sent to the Clearinghouse, who will count them and resort the results in the next Chronicler. The address is Emmon Bodfish, 616 Miner Rd Orinda, CA, 945630 *(oops should be Leslie, but its 2 AM already)*

Rulings of the CoCoDAL are binding only to members of the Coalition. These rules are meant in no way to inhibit the autonomy of any member Grove or Solitary Third, but to facilitate the functioning of the Reformed Druid movement, and make the Higher Orders available once more. Each Third Order Coalition member has one vote in the CoCoDAL, whether solitary or a member of a Grove, though Grove Thirds should vote through their Preceptor or- AD, so Emmon will not get confused as to who's voted. If he gets the responses from all; the Thirds in a member Grove at once, it'll simplify his counting

More News on the CoCoDAL

Druid Chronicler
Samhain/Yu1e 20 y. r. (December 198l)
Volume 5 — Number 1

Live Oak Grove's official mailing address is: Live Oak Grove c/o Emmon Bodfish 616 Miner Road Orinda, CA 94563

Joan has revived the old Council of Dalon ap Landu, calling it the Coalition Council" of Dalon ap Landu (CoCoDAL). This council represents the Carleton Traditionalists, and claims to comprise all Groves and free Third Order Druids who have not officially resigned. Speaking on behalf of CoCoDAL, Joan informed me that:

1. No Groves have resigned from CoCoDAL. [This is not exactly true; Mother Grove is not officially participating in CoCoDAL, but has not yet tendered its resignation. —*Elton]*

2. There is no new business before CoCoDAL at this time.

3. Live Oak Grove is acting as Clearinghouse Grove (ChG) for CoCoDAL during 20 y.r. (1981-82). They can be contacted through Live Oak Grove's mailing address, given above.

According to Joan, any member of the Coalition may bring business before CoCoDAL by a four-step process:

1. Write a formal petition and send it to the ChG.

2. The ChG will mail a copy of the proposal to each member Grove

3. CoCoDAL will wait 90 days from the date of mailing for a reply to each proposal.

4. After the waiting period, the ChG will tally t responses yea and nay, then announce both the proposal and the result of the vote.

When she originally spoke to me, Joan informed me that the results of each vote would be printed in the next issue of the Druid Chronicler. I unfortunately had to tell her that this is not necessarily so; please see my comments about news and the printing thereof on page 7. I will try, but schedule and space constraints may prevent me. If this happens, I assure that she will make other arrangements; she was not sure when we talked.

Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu

A Druid Missal-Any
April 1982
Volume 6 Number 2

CoCoDAL has opened its shutters for business after a long, wet, miserable winter. We have nothing by way of old business pending. However, we have several pieces of new business.

One: we would like to encourage any Groove or solitary Third who has not already done so to join the Council,

Another: I have heard several proposals for streamlining the selection of Matriarchs/ Patriarchs of the Higher Orders. Some of them sound pretty good, but I have already put in enough of my opinions and proposals for a while, so if any of you would like to propose a change, please do so. Any Third Order who is a member of the Council, either as a solitary or as a member of a member Grove, may propose a new rule or a change by sending it to Emmon Bodfish, Preceptor, Live Oak Grove, 616 Miner Rd. Orinda, Calif, 94563. He will publish it in the next MISSALANY and wait 90 days for responses from solitaries and Gerber Groves' Third Orders. Remember, such rules are decided by those who respond, so you cannot block a piece of legislation by not answering. Pros and Cons may be sent in by a postcard or letter to Live Oak Grove Address. We will publish the results.

Current CoCoDAL members: Live Oak Grove, Evergreen Grove, Michael "Tiki" Teague, Chris Sherbak

To the Council of DAL

By Emmon Bodfish
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1990

I propose at this season between Solstice and Lughnasadh, to make these changes in the RDNA/NRDNA ordinary, New Moon and Full Moon Services, the "Order of Common Worship," Services for Samhradh and Foghamhar and for Geimredh and Earrach.

I propose to change the "False Uncil" script titles in the written text, (not spoken,) from "Catechism" to "Libation," and from "Communion" to "Connexus." This eliminates an obvious borrowing, and the bad memories that cling to such for many modern people. It installs in place of each a new title of Pagan lineage.

I propose adding to the RDNA/NRDNA ordinary New Moon and Full Moon Services, the same "Order of Common Worship" Services, for Samhradh and Foghamhar and for Geimredh and Earrach, the practice of pouring out offerings to the trees. This has been tried and practiced and found to be successful at Live Oak Grove, and now at Orinda Grove Site.

It is inserted in the Services after the "Communion" ("Connexus") and before the "Meditation." After the Waters-of-Life have been shared and the final portion poured out into the fire and or the earth, the officiating Third Order Druid/ess hands the Grove Chalice back to the Server and receives from the Server the Tree Chalice. This is a ceramic or precious metal cup preferably in the shape of the Sutton Hoe cup or of Greek, Roman or Indo-European libation cups.

It is filled with pure water and blood meal fertilizer* (Which is available in the plant food section of any nursery or garden shop) in the summer half of the year, the Season of Life, and with pure water in the winter half of the year, the Season of Sleep.

The officiating Third Order Druid/ess walks Sunwise (clockwise) around the Grove altar circle, stopping before each tree, calling its name in Gaelic, Gaidhlig, or English, (Ex. "Ah Bheithen!" or "Birch!") and pouring out part of the blood meal as offering to the tree. The last of the libation is saved and offered to the earth in the Offering Shaft, if the Grove has one, or one the ground to the right of the altar. The Third Order Druid/ess then passes the Tree Chalice back to the Server, who replaces it beside the Grove Chalice. Then the "Meditation" begins.

Note: It is not known if there were any replies to this proposal.

SECTION TWO: RDNA Constitutions

This is the format of most constitutions used in RDNA up to the late 1970s. It is in the format normally used in student organizational charters at Carleton. The Jan 27, 1965 vote requires official groves to have a constitution, but doesn't say what to put in them. In practice, most groves don't make or submit them. – Scharding

Figure 2 A Grove is a changing mixture of permanence and living elements.

Carleton Constitution

1965, with possible revision in 1970.

We, the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College, in order to make our existence more fruitful, do hereby enact this, our Constitution.

ARTICLE I

The name of this organization shall be the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College.

ARTICLE II

Any student at Carleton College may become a member of this organization upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, stating that he believes in the basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism as set forth in this Constitution.

ARTICLE III

The basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism are these:

1) North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the many ways in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature, the Earth-Mother.

2) North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the Objects of Creation, is important to man's spiritual quests.

ARTICLE IV

There shall be three officers of the Reformed Druids of North America:

1) The Archdruid must be at least a third-order North American Reformed priest. He [*or she*] shall preside over all meetings.

2) The Preceptor must be at least a second-order North American Reformed Druid, shall assist in services, and shall be the principal officer in the secular arm of the Reformed Druids of North America.

3) The Server must be at least a first-order North American Reformed Druid, and shall assist in services.

ARTICLE V

Elections for the posts of Archdruid, Preceptor, and Server shall be held annually, in May. Unless a member objects, the posts will be filled by a voice vote, with nominations being accepted from the floor of the meeting. Only those qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for any post.

ARTICLE VI

This Constitution may be attended by a majority vote in two consecutive meetings of the Reformed Druids of North America. A quorum, which shall be one-eighth of those members known to the officers, must be present at both meetings.

I certify this to be a true and accurate copy of the Constitution of the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College, read and approved at two consecutive meetings by all members present.

-David Fisher

Constitution of the Reformed Druids of North America at The University of South Dakota

We, the Reformed Druids of North America at the University of South Dakota, in order to make our existence more fruitful, do hereby enact this, our Constitution.

ARTICLE I

The name of this organization shall be the Reformed Druids of North America at the University of South Dakota.

ARTICLE II

Any student at the University of South Dakota, or any resident of Vermillion, South Dakota, may become a member of this organization upon presentation of a petition, which may be oral, stating that he believes in the basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism as set forth in this Constitution.

ARTICLE III

The basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism are these:
1) North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the many ways in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature, the Earth-Mother.
2) North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the objects of creation, is important to man's spiritual quests.

ARTICLE IV

There shall be three officers of this Drynemetum of the Reformed Druids of North America:
1) The Arch-Druid must be at least a third-order North American Reformed priest. He shall preside over all services and meetings of the Drynemetum.
2) The Preceptor must be at least a second-order North American Reformed Druid, shall assist in services, and shall be the principle officer in the secular arm of the Reformed Druids of North America at the University of South Dakota.
3) The Server must be at least a first-order North American Reformed Druid, and shall assist in services.

ARTICLE V

Elections for the posts of Arch-Druid, Preceptor, and Server shall be held annually, in September. Unless a member objects, the posts will be filled by a voice vote, with nominations being accepted from the floor of the meeting. Only those qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for any post.
The Arch-Druid shall have the right to appoint any qualified member to fill an unexpired term, and may appoint any qualified member to serve in his place as Arch-Druid *pro tem.*

ARTICLE VI

This Constitution may be attended by a majority vote in two consecutive meetings of the University of South Dakota Drynemetum. A quorum, which shall be one-eighth of those known to the officers to be current members, must be present at both meetings.

Approved this 23rd day of April, 1966, in the third year of the worship of the Earth-Mother, by the Drynemetum of the University of South Dakota.

Norman E. Nelson, 5P, Arch-Druid.

Constitution of the Berkeley Grove Of the Reformed Druids Of North America

1968

We, the Berkeley Grove of the Reformed Druids of North America, in order to make our existence more fruitful, do hereby enact this constitution.

Article the First

The name of this organization shall be the Berkeley Grove, Reformed Druids of North America.

Article the Second

Any person may become a member of this grove upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, stating that he believes in the basic tenets of Reformed Druidism (see Article the Third).

Article the Third

Now, the basic tenets of Reformed Druids are these:

> The object of the search for religious truth may be found through the Earth-mother, who is Nature; but this is only one way among many.
>
> Nature, as one of the objects of creation and as something with which our lives are spent, is of great spiritual importance.

Article the Fourth

The basic tenets of Reformed Druidism may also be phrased in the time-honoured three-fold manner, thusly:

> 1.NATURE is good.
>
> 2.Nature IS good.
>
> 3. Nature is GOOD.

Article the Fifth

The officers of the Berkeley Grove shall be:

The Arch-Druid, who must be a third order priest of the Reformed Druids of North America.

The Preceptor, who must be at least a second order Reformed Druid.

The Server, who must be at least a first order Reformed Druid.

Article the Sixth

The duties of these officers are as follows:

The Arch-Druid shall preside over meetings and is the spiritual head of the grove. If, for any reason, he is unable to attend a meeting, he shall appoint another third order priest to preside over the meeting.

The Preceptor shall assist in services and is the secular head of the grove and its treasurer. If, for any reason, he is unable to attend a meeting, he shall appoint a qualified person to serve in his stead.

The Server shall assist at services and in any other ways the Arch-Druid or Preceptor request.

Article the Seventh

Other officers may be added as necessary with the consent of the Berkeley Grove.

Article the Eighth

Elections for the officers of the Berkeley Grove shall be held annually in the season of Foghmhar, near the time of the autumnal equinox. Elections will be held by voice vote, unless there is an objection. Only qualified druids will be nominated for officers.

Article the Ninth

There shall be two kinds of members of the Berkeley Grove.

An active member shall be a member who has agreed to the basic tenets, partaken of the waters-of-life, and attended at least half of the meetings in the previous quarter.

An inactive member shall be any member who has not attended at least half the meetings in the previous quarter, unless a good excuse is given, such as sickness or death, and who has not formally notified the Arch-Druid or Preceptor that he is leaving the grove.

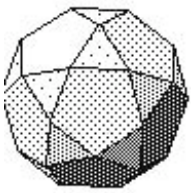
Article the Tenth

This constitution may be amended by a majority vote in two consecutive meetings of the Berkeley Grove. A quorum, defined as one half of the active members of the grove, must be present at both meetings.

Article the Eleventh

The officers of the Berkeley Grove and the Reformed Druids of North America disclaim any responsibility for any mind-warping experiences at any meeting, official or unofficial, of the Berkeley Grove. They DO, however, claim credit for any spiritual enlightenment which may be forthcoming, unless the one enlightened denies them such credit.

Fall Equinox, 1968



Reformed Druids of North America Chicago Grove

24 July, 1970

Constitution of the Chicago Grove of the Reformed Druids

Article I The name of this organization shall be the Chicago Grove of the Reformed Druids of North America.

Article II Any resident of the Chicago area may become a member of this organization upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, stating that he believes in the Basic Tenets of North American Reformed Druidism as set forth in this constitution.

Article III The Basic Tenets of North American Reformed Druidism are these:

North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the many ways in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found through Nature, the Earth-mother.

North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the Objects of Creation, is important to man's spiritual quests.

Article IV There shall be three officers of this organization:

The Arch-Druid must be at least a third order North American Reformed Druid priest. He shall call for all services.

The Preceptor must be at least a second order North American Reformed Druid, shall assist in services, and shall be the principal officer in the secular arm of this organization.

The Server must be at least a first order North American Reformed Druid, and shall assist in services.

The Arch-Druid shall appoint, or cause to be appointed, such other officers as may be necessary to preside at services, as directed in the by-laws.

Article V Election of officers shall be held in October at a date set by the officers, by secret ballot. Only those qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for them. The term of office is as follows:

The term of office shall extend for one year, from October 31 to October 31, investiture to take place immediately before the Samhain service.

Should an office fall vacant, it shall be filled as provided in the by-laws.

No officer may serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Article VI Secular Business:

A meeting shall be considered secular, while a service shall be considered spiritual. A meeting shall be called by the Arch-Druid. A quorum shall consist of one quarter of the members of the Grove.

Any member of this organization may vote in secular matters such as the amendment of the constitution, the election of officers, the enactment of by-laws, and such other matters as may be provided for in the by-laws.

The business meetings of this organization shall have control over all secular matters and shall direct the Preceptor in the execution of such matters. The meeting may, by simple

majority, enact by-laws to govern any phase of secular activity; such by-laws to be subordinate to the constitution, as interpreted by the Arch-Druid, Preceptor, and Server of the Grove.

Article VII Spiritual Business:

Spiritual Business shall be controlled by the High Council, subject only to the authority of the Council of Dalon ap Landu.

All third order Druids of the Grove shall be voting members of the High Council, meetings of which must be called and presided over by the Arch-Druid.

The Arch-Druid shall decide if a quorum is present at a meeting of the High Council and he shall hold veto power over all acts of the High Council.

The Arch-Druid shall appoint some voting member of the High Council to keep The Book of the Worship of the Earth-mother, which shall consist of a record of all matters of doctrine and ritual as decided by the High Council.

Article VIII Amendments to the Constitution must be passed by _ vote of the entire organization at two meetings not less than one week apart; such voting to be carried out under the direction of the Arch-Druid.

Article IX This grove shall be considered as having been formed when three of more Druids of the Chicago area adopt this Constitution and elect an Arch-Druid, a Preceptor, and a Server. Subsequent election of officers shall be as directed in Article V.

I certify the above to be a true and accurate copy of the Constitution of the Chicago Grove of the Reformed Druids of North America, read and approved at two consecutive meetings.

Glenn McDavid, Arch-Druid

The Constitution of the Reformed Druids of the Grove of Ann Arbor

Any person may become a member of the Grove upon his or her making a petition which shall be a declaration of his or her subscribing to the Basic Tenets of the Reformed Druids of North America. Said petition shall be made in writing or in speech to the Arch-Druid of the Grove.

There shall be elected three officers of the Grove:

the Arch-Druid, who shall be a priest of the third order of the Reformed Druids of North America;

the Preceptor, who shall be of the second order of the Reformed Druids of North America;

the Server, who shall be of the first order of the Reformed Druids of North America.

These officers shall be elected by a simply majority of the members of the Grove. ["annually in October." –Amended 9 July 1976]

This Constitution may be amended by a majority of votes of at least one third of the members of the Grove at two consecutive meetings of the Grove.

["This Constitution may be amended by a majority vote at two consecutive meetings of the Grove, provided each is attended by at least one-third of the members"-Amended 9 July 1976]

Unanimously approved this 88th day of Samradh, 11th year of worship.

I certify that this is a true and accurate copy of the constitution of the Reformed Druids of the Grove of Ann Arbor.

Ellen Shelton, Archdruid

27 Jul 1973

The SDNA Constitution

Here is a generic Grove constitution from 1975, as envisaged by Isaac Bonewits for future groves in the SDNA & HDNA (and possibly in some NRDNA groves). It is uncertain whether any grove besides the Hasidic Druid of North America and the Twin Cities Grove ever adopted this constitutional format. As you can tell, it is more complex and explicit about it's terminology than the Generic Carleton constitution. Scharding

CONSTITUTION OF THE _____ GROVE OF THE _____ DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA

We, the _____ Druids of North America, living in the vicinity of _____, in order to make our existence more fruitful, do hereby enact this, our Constitution.

ARTICLE ONE

The name of this organization shall be The _____ Grove of the _____ Druids of North America and it shall be an autonomous Grove within the Branch of the Reform known as _____ Druidism.

ARTICLE TWO

Any person, regardless of race, gender, color, culture, age or sexual preferences may become a member of this organization upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, stating that she or he believes in the Basic Tenets of North American Druidism, as set forth in The Book of Law in The Druid Chronicles, and that she or he further believes in and agrees with the self-definition of this Branch of the Reform.

ARTICLE THREE

The Basic Tenets of North American Druidism, as set forth in The Book of Law, are these:

> 1) The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
>
> 2) And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it.

ARTICLE FOUR

The self definition of the Branch of the Reform to which this Grove shall belong, which is the _____ Druids of North America, is as follows _____

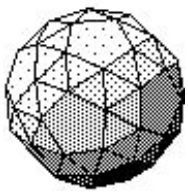
ARTICLE FIVE

There shall be at least five officers of the Grove:

1) The Archdruid/ess must be at least a Third Order Druid/ess, holding legitimate Apostolic Succession from the Original Grove at Carleton College. He or she shall preside over all meetings and most religious services and shall be a member of the Provisional Council of Archdruids. She or he shall perform those functions usually performed by a Pastor in other religious organizations.
2) The Preceptor must be at least a Second Order Druid/ess, shall assist in services, and shall be the principal officer for secular matters, including the handling of the Grove's treasury, if any.
3) The Server must be at least a First Order Druid/ess and shall assist the Archdruid/ess insofar as he or she may be called upon to do so, including those function usually performed by a Secretary in other religious organizations, unless the Preceptor shall have decided to perform them.
4) The Chief Bard must be at least a Second Order Druid/ess and learned in matters of poetry, music, dancing and song. She or he shall be responsible for all Bardic matters within the Grove. She or he shall be elected as soon as there is a person qualified to hold this post and annually thereafter, and may hold one of the other posts at the same time; but need not be present for the founding of this Grove.
5) The Assistant Archdruid must be at least a Third Order Druid/ess, holding legitimate Apostolic Succession from the Original Grove at Carleton College. She or he shall be elected as soon as there is a person qualified to hold this post and annually thereafter, and may hold the office of Preceptor, Server or Chief Bard at the same time; but need not be present for the founding of this Grove. She or he shall serve those functions usually performed by an Assistant Pastor in other religious organizations and shall preside over services in the absence of the Archdruid/ess.
6) Other officers may be added from time to time as the Grove shall decide when they are needed.

ARTICLE SIX

Elections for the posts of Archdruid/ess, Preceptor, Server, Bard and any other officers decided upon shall be held annually during the period of Foghamhar, except for the first election for each post. Unless a member of the Grove shall object the post shall be filled by a voice majority vote, with nominations being accepted from the ground of the meeting. If such an objection is lodged, the election shall be by majority vote or secret ballot.
Only members of the Grove may vote for the officers of the Grove and only those persons qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for them.
Also at this time the Grove may vote upon the amount, if any, of dues to be paid by all members of the Grove; said dues to be used strictly for the expenses of the Grove and to be kept by the Preceptor.



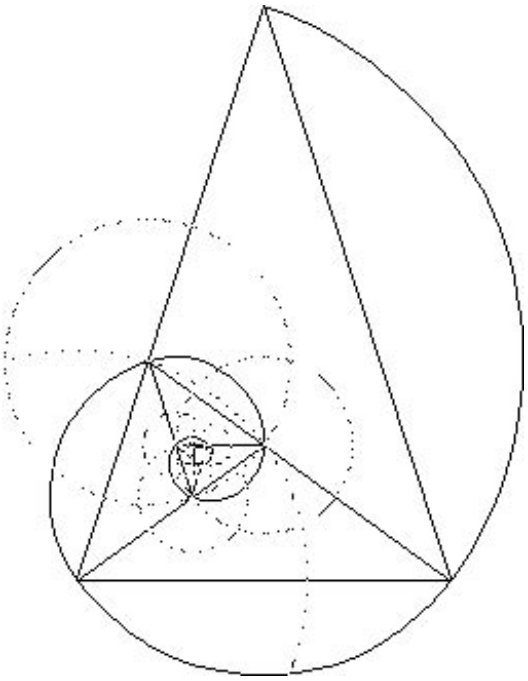
ARTICLE SEVEN

A member of this Grove shall be defined as one who:
1) Is at least a First Order Druid/ess
2) Has asked that her or his name be placed in the Grove Records as being a member of the Grove.
3) Has attended at least one-third of all services held by the Grove during the time since attaining initial membership as defined in section (1) and (2) of this Article; save that the Grove may, by majority vote, suspend this rule for any former member who, by reason of illness, require extensive travel or other emergency has been unable to attend services as desired.
4) Has kept current with whatever dues the Grove may vote in during the annual election.

ARTICLE EIGHT

This Constitution may be amended by a majority vote of the members of this Grove in two consecutive meetings, a quorum being present.
A quorum for this and all purposes shall be taken to be two-thirds of the members of the Grove. All members of the Grove who miss the first meeting at which an amendment to this Constitution was passed must be notified in writing of the date and place for the second meeting, as well as the content of the amendment.
ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, in the Year of the Reform, being the date of _____ in the Common Era, by

_____
_____
_____
_____



Constitution of the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College

1977

We, the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College, in order to make our existence more fruitful, do hereby enact this, our Constitution.

ARTICLE I. The name of this organization shall be the "Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College".

ARTICLE II. Any person may become a member of this organization upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, to the Arch-Druid stating that he believe in the basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism as set forth in this Constitution.

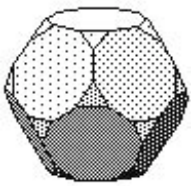
ARTICLE III. The basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism are these: 1) North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the many ways in which the object of one's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature, the Earth-mother. 2) North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the Objects of Creation, is important to one's spiritual quests.

ARTICLE IV. There shall be three officers of the Reformed Druids of North America: 1) The Arch-Druid must be at least a Third-Order North American Reformed priest. He shall preside over all meetings. 2) The Preceptor must be at least a Second-Order North American Reformed Druid, shall assist in services, and shall be the principle officer in the secular arm of the Reformed Druids of North America. 3) The Server must be at least a First-Order North American Reformed Druid, and shall assist in services.

ARTICLE V. Elections for the posts of Arch-Druid, Preceptor, and Server shall be held annually, in May. The posts will be filled by a majority vote, with nominations being accepted from the floor of the meeting. Only those qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for any post.

ARTICLE VI. This Constitution may be attended by a majority vote in two consecutive meetings of the Reformed Druids of North America. A quorum, which shall be one-third of those members known to the officers, must be present at both meetings.

Adopted May, 1977
-Donald M. Morrison



The Constitution of the "Big River Grove" of the Reformed Druids of North America at Saint Cloud State University

By Scharding, 1995

ARTICLE I NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Big River Grove of the Reformed Druids of North America at Saint Cloud State University. We are loosely affiliated with the international Council of Dalon ap Landu, the chief legislative branch of the Reformed Druids of North America, as headed by the current Arch-Druid of Carleton College in Northfield Minnesota.

When the club consists of less than 3 members, it is called a "protogrove". When the club consists of 3 or more members, it is called a "grove".

Our name is generally shortened to "RDNA" or "Druids" in non-official literature.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

We, the Reformed Druids of North America at Saint Cloud State University, in order to make our search for personal spiritual truth more fruitful, do hereby enact this, our Constitution.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

Any student, faculty, staff member, university employee or their friends at Saint Cloud State University may become a member of this organization upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, stating that she or he believes in the basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism as set forth in this Constitution.

The basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism are these:
1) North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the **many** ways in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature, the Earth-Mother.
2) North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the Objects of Creation, is important to man's spiritual quests.

There will be no restriction on membership or participation because of sex, gender, age, race, colour, religion, creed, philosophy, place/nation of origin, sexual preference, physical/mental ability or politics. Nor will this organization discriminate against any non-member student, faculty, staff member or university employee for the above reasons. The only notable restriction is that voting & holding office is only permitted for currently enrolled students of Saint Cloud State University.

There are no membership dues.

ARTICLE IV

There shall be three officers of the Reformed Druids of North America, if there are sufficient numbers of members. The role of Preceptor and Server may be left vacant if there is insufficient work for them to do, or if none wishes to fill their role. The officer(s) must be full-time enrolled students at Saint Cloud State University. Their job description is as follows:
1) The Arch-Druid must be at least a third-order North American Reformed Druid. He or she shall preside over all meetings.
2) The Preceptor must be at least a second-order North American Reformed Druid, shall assist in services, and shall be the principal officer in the secular arm of the Reformed Druids of North America.
3) The Server must be at least a first-order North American Reformed Druid, and shall assist in activities.

ARTICLE V ELECTIONS & VOTING

A. Elections for the posts of Arch-Druid, Preceptor, and Server shall be held biannually, in May and November. A vacancy in the Archdruidcy will necessitate an election within 2 weeks, vacancies in the Preceptorship or Servership may wait until May or November. An election can be called within 2 weeks by 10% of the membership or 2 members, whichever is less.

B. Unless a member objects, the posts will be filled by a voice vote, with nominations being accepted from the floor of the meeting. Only current students of Saint Cloud State University may vote. Only those qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for any post. Entry to all orders is accessible to all possible members of the Grove. The candidate with the majority of cast votes will win elections.

C. This Constitution may be amended by a majority vote in two consecutive meetings of the Reformed Druids of North America. A quorum, which shall be one-eighth of those members known to the officers, must be present at both meetings.

D. All other operating decisions (including choosing a faculty advisor) will be determined by the same methods as in section C immediately above, as the situation arises.

ARTICLE VI EXPULSION

Members are welcome to disagree with each other and still be members. There is no current process for expulsion in our group. Rather, let us work out our problems instead of avoiding them.

ARTICLE VII AUTHORITY

In the event that there is a conflict between the Council of Dalon ap Landu record of legislation and the club constitution, the club constitution shall supersede the Council's rules. We are, after all, only voluntarily connected with them.

In the event that there is a conflict between our club's constitution and the general guidelines of the authorities-that-be at Saint Cloud University, the group will obey the wishes of the University.

The club will follow all local, state & national laws.

Amon Sul Grove Constitution

2001

The summer solstice was celebrated by observing the sunrise and sunset at the Sacred Circle. The Water of Life was consumed on a regular basis during and between the two ceremonies. The Grove has adopted the following tenets:

The Amon Sul Grove is devoted to the worship of nature.
We believe that all Druids are equal and consequently we do not recognize any hierarchical structures or "Orders".
All members are authorized to conduct any and all rites and rituals related to Druidism.
All offices are strictly functional and do not carry any status beyond conducting necessary organizational tasks of the Grove. The Arch-Druid shall publicly represent the Grove. The Scribe shall be responsible for Grove correspondence. The Purser shall be responsible for handling the Grove's finances.
Anyone wishing to be a member of the Grove shall inform the Scribe of such intent.
Visit the Grove's web site at: http://geocities.com/gandalf4.geo.
Contact the grove by sending an email to Gandalf952@cs.com.

Eurisko Grove Constitution

Aug 2002

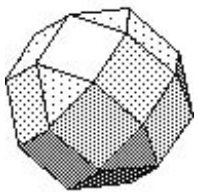
The Eurisko Grove is in Hampton, VA and we can be reached at gwydionream@aol.com. "Eurisko" in Greek means "I discover things" which is the general approach we have to our Druidry. We are all previously Wiccan trained and studying under ADF.

Five members in total; three humans (Mike 'Gwydion" Ream, Jacquie Ream, Vonn Gants), one dog (Apollo), and one cat (Agnes).

Our length of office is generally one year from Yule to Yule.

Mike and Jacquie Ream = co-senior druids
Vonn Gants = student
Apollo = head of security
Agnes = keeper of mysteries

Our basic tenets are:
1) Nature is good
2) When in doubt consult your nearest tree
3) Question authority
4) Each member of Eurisko Grove is encouraged to study under different teachers
5) Suggested titles of recognition; protégé, contemporary, and mentor
6-10) to come as we think of them



SECTION THREE: Evolution of Modern Druidic By-Laws

Included here to show how other members of the modern Druid movements have chosen to organize themselves far beyond the simple RDNA's roots.

Articles of Association and By-Laws of Pentalpha

By Isaac Bonewits
Pentalpha Journal Dec 1978

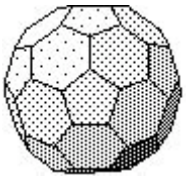
Editor's Note*: Pentalpha was something Isaac formed with Selene to experiment with a new umbrella organization, since he felt that the RDNA was not adaptable for that purpose. After a few productive years, Pentalpha folded as a legal organization, and then a few years later, ADF was begun in 1983. As a result, I prefer to see Pentalpha as a test-run for ironing out the organizational aspects of ADF. -Scharding*

As promised in the last issue here are the Articles of Association and By-Laws of Pentalpha, along with our statement of philosophy.

Philosophy

Pentalpha: The Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness is a religious, educational and charitable association devoted to seeking and sharing the many paths by which the Aquarian Age may be entered. We are a religious group because we seek to be among those spiritual midwives who are helping with the painfully slow birth of a new consciousness that is gradually transforming. humanity. We are an educational organization in that we seek to assist people in discovering and/or creating their own paths to physical, psychic, emotional, mental and spiritual growth. We are a charitable institution in that we seek to collect and disburse funds to those Aquarian age organizations and individuals most in need of support for their Aquarian research and activities.

Among the many organizations and systems of growth that are now beginning to blossom, there exist several Minority Belief Systems that are less "respectable" and that receive less support from the spiritual growth movement. Although we work with individual and groups from many mystical, magical, artistic and scientific backgrounds, we have chosen to place a special emphasis on the unfashionable spiritual movements of the Aquarian Age, such as Neopaganism, Witchcraft, Vodoun and Ceremonial Magic. We believe that the insights to be gained from these neglected faiths may inject fresh life and joy into the Aquarian movements in particular and human evolution in general.



ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION of a Religious Group to be known as

PENTALPHA: The Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness

The undersigned, a majority of whom are citizens of the United States, desiring to form a religious association in California, U.S.A., declare

FIRST. The name of the Association shall be **Pentalpha: The Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness.**

SECOND: The place in this State where the principal office of the Association is to located is the City of Oakland, Alameda County

THIRD: Said Association is organized exclusively for charitable, religious and educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

FOURTH: The names and addresses of the persons who are the Initial Trustees of the Association are as follows:

Deborah Selene Bonewits *and*
Philip Emmons Isaac Bonewits
5543 Claremont Avenue, no.2
Oakland, CA 94618

Deborah Lowe
475 Sanchez Street
San Francisco, CA 94114

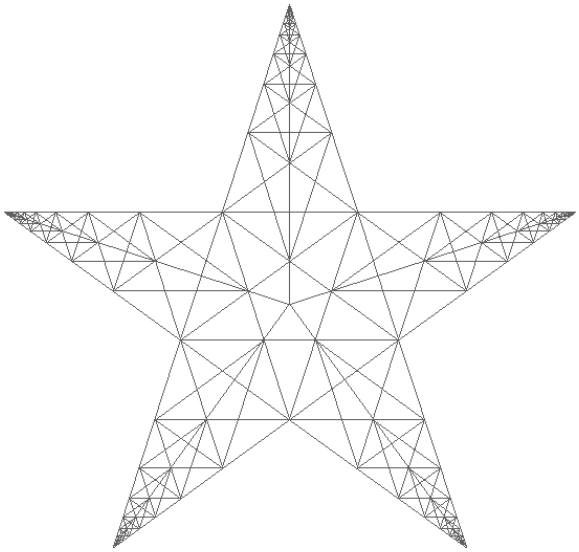
FIFTH: No part of the net earnings of the Association shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the Association shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article Third hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the Association shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation, and the Association shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of the articles this Association shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are no not in furtherance of the purposes of this Association

SIXTH: Upon the dissolution of this Association, the Board of Trustees shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the Association, dispose of all the assets of the Association exclusively for the purposes of the Association in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational or religious purposes as shall at that time qualify as an exempt *organization or*

organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Trustees shall determine. Any of such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the Association is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

The undersigned, being the Initial Trustees of the above Association, being duly sworn, upon their oaths did each say that the statements and matters set forth herein are true and in witness whereof, we have hereunto subscribed our names this 7th day of November, 1978.

signed,
Deborah Selene Bonewits
Philip Emmons Isaac Bonewits
Deborah Lowe



BY-LAWS OF PENTALPHA

Article 1: Offices

The principal office of the Association in the State of California shall be located in the City of Oakland, County of Alameda. The Association may have other such offices, either within or without the State of California, as the Board of Trustees may designate or as the business of the Association may require from time to time.

Article 2: Meetings of the Members of Record.

The annual meeting of the members of record of this Association shall be held at its principal office, 5543 Claremont Avenue, no.2, in the City of Oakland, State of California, at 3:00 PM on the first Monday in August, at which time they shall transact such business as shall properly come before them. Members of record for voting purposes are those members who

(a) have attended a minimum of twelve church services during the preceding year;

(b) are up to date with church dues;

(c) who have not voluntarily withdrawn from the church nor been excommunicated by the Board of Trustees;

(d) are members of record on July 1st of tire year of the meeting in question;

(e) have signed a statement indicating that they have read, understood, and accepted these by-laws.

Each member of record shall have one vote. There shall be no proxy votes. There shall be mailed to each member of record at his or her last known address, at least ten days prior to the annual meeting, a notice setting out the time and place of the annual meeting. In case a quorum be not present at the annual meeting, those present may adjourn to such day as they shall agree upon, and notice of such adjournment shall be mailed to each member at least ten days before such adjourned meeting; but if a quorum be present, they may adjourn from day to day and no notice need be given. A special meeting of members may be called at any time at the request of a trustee or of one-third of the members of the Association. Such meeting shall be called by the secretary, who shall mail a notice, stating the object of the meeting, to each member at least ten days before such meeting.

Article 3: Election of Trustees.

The Initial Trustees of this Association having been chosen by Divine Selection as such, shall serve in perpetuity. They may elect to their ranks from time to time such other persons as they shall unanimously agree are also divinely called to serve as trustees. Such secondary elections shall be for periods of a year and a day each, and shall require unanimous agreement of the Initial Trustees upon each occasion of re-election. Such additional trustees shall exercise equal powers and responsibilities with the Initial Trustees, save where otherwise stated in these by-laws.

Article 4: Meetings of Trustees.

The trustees shall hold regular meetings on the first day of each month at 7:00 PM, at the office of the Association in California or at other such time as they shall appoint. Special meetings may be called by the president by giving one day's notice to each trustee. A majority of the trustees shall constitute a quorum. The trustees

shall have the general management and control of the business and affairs of the Association and shall exercise all the powers that may be exercised or performed by the Association, under the statutes, the articles of association and the by-laws.

Article 5: Executive Committee.

The trustees are authorized in their discretion to appoint from their number an executive committee of three members, Who shall be vested with the powers of the Board when the same is not in session.

Article 6: Officers.

The officers of this Association shall consist of a president, secretary, treasurer, and other such officers and agents as may from time to time be chosen. The president shall preside at all meetings of the trustees and members, and shall have general control over the affairs of the Association, subject to the trustees. The secretary shall keep a record of all votes and minutes of the proceedings of all meetings, and shall give notice as required in these by-laws of all meetings. The treasurer shall sign all checks, drafts, contracts and other instruments for the Association, and shall have the custody of all moneys of the Association received or disbursed, and shall deposit all moneys and valuables in the name of and to the credit of the Association in such banks or depositories as the trustees shall designate. All these officers shall be selected by the Board of Trustees.

Article 7: Vacancies.

In the case of the death, disability, resignation or otherwise of one or more of the officers or trustees, the remaining trustees, although less than a quorum, shall fill the vacancies for the unexpired term.

Article 8: Amendments of By-Laws.

Suggestions for amendments of these by-laws may be made by majority vote of the members of record at any annual meeting, or at any special meeting called for the purpose, but shall not take effect without the unanimous consent of the Initial Trustees of this Association.

Article 9: Fiscal Year.

The fiscal year of the Association shall begin on the first day of January and end on the thirty-first day of December in each year.

The above by-laws were adopted by the unanimous consent of the Initial Board of Trustees of Pentalpha: The Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness, on the 7th day of November, 1978, a quorum then being present.

Unofficial Introduction to ADF By-Laws

*Ar nDraoicht Fein (ADF) is **not** officially related in any way to the Reform. However, because it was founded by Isaac Bonewits, not long after his attempts at Reforming the NRDNA, it may provide some idea of the type of national organization that Isaac was dreaming of during the Isaac debates of the 1970s and the experiment with the Pentalpha organization. By analyzing the ADF, you might better understand the experimentations of the SDNA from 1974-79, which in retrospect looks like the training grounds for what would be ADF in 1983. It should be remembered that ADF was not just Isaac's project, but the work of many individuals. Since Isaac stepped down in the mid-90s as Archdruid, yet more changes have occurred in the ADF, and newer editions of their by-laws should be referenced.*

By-Laws of Ár nDraíocht Féin:

A Druid Fellowship, Inc.

as of November 1st, 1994 c.e.

ADF Preamble:

1) Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, Inc., also known as "A.D.F.," is the legal structure for a Neopagan Druidic religion based on the beliefs and practices of the ancient Indo-Europeans, adapted to the needs and sensibilities of modern people. We are a nonprofit religious, scientific, educational, artistic, and charitable corporation, organized to practice the full spectrum of legal activities practiced by any religious organization.
2) As we define it, Neopagan Druidism is a polytheistic, nondualist, nonsexist, nonracist, scientific, holistic, and ecologically oriented faith. We are dedicated to the preservation of our Holy Mother Earth, the full achievement of human potential, the revival of the worship of the Old Gods in a modern context, and the creation of a world of peace, love, freedom, health, and prosperity for all intelligent beings.
3) The following bylaws are intended to help us achieve these ideals and all future bylaws and amendments shall be similarly intended.

ADF Article 1: Purposes

1) To accomplish the goals outlined in the Preamble, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, many sciences, arts, and disciplines, both mainstream and alternative, within a nondogmatic, pluralistic context, in order to change ourselves, each other, and the world around us.
2) Since one of the primary duties of the ancient Druids was to lead their tribes in magical and religious activities, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, open, inclusionary, and public ceremonies to worship the Earth Mother and the Old Gods and Goddesses, rites of passage to mark the cycles of our lives, and magical rituals to accomplish our other goals in an honest and ethical manner.
3) Since the ancient Druids were the intellectuals of their tribes, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, scientific and scholarly research and debate about the ancient Druids, the Indo-Europeans, comparative religion,

folklore, ethnomusicology, and every other relevant field of human knowledge.

4) In keeping with our reverence for and worship of the Earth Mother, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, ecological and environmental research, education, and activism.
5) Since the ancient Druids were the artists of their tribes, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, a wide variety of auditory, graphic, movement, dramatic, liturgical, and other arts and crafts.
6) Since the ancient Druids included many healers in their ranks, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, the investigation, dissemination, and performance of a wide variety of healing arts and technologies, both mainstream and alternative, including herbal, nutritional, mental, magical, and spiritual methods, among others; advising all parties concerned as to the presence or absence of appropriate credentials as required by civil law.
7) Since the ancient Druids included diviners in their ranks, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, the use of the divinatory arts and sciences as tools for spiritual counseling and liturgical guidance; advising all parties concerned as to the presence or absence of appropriate credentials as required by civil law.
8) Since the ancient Druids included counselors, mediators, and judges in their ranks, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, the investigation, dissemination, and performance of a wide variety of counseling arts and methods, both mainstream and alternative, as well as techniques of mediating disputes and judging conflicts between organizations and/or individuals in the Neopagan community; advising all parties concerned as to the presence or absence of appropriate credentials as required by civil law.

ADF Article 2: Offices

1) The principal office of the Corporation shall be located in the City of Newark, County of New Castle, in the State of Delaware, USA. The Corporation may have other such offices, either within or without the State of Delaware, as the Directors may designate or the business of the Corporation may require from time to time.

ADF Article 3: Calendar

1) The eight High Days of the Druidic calendar, as referenced in these bylaws and all legal documents of A.D.F., are as follows: Samhain, Winter Solstice, Oimelc, Spring Equinox, Beltane, Summer Solstice, Lughnasadh, and Fall Equinox.
2) For legal purposes, each High Day shall commence at sunset in Delaware on the days preceding the following dates: Samhain = Nov. 1st, Winter Solstice = Dec. 21st, Oimelc = Feb. 1st, Spring Equinox = March 21st, Beltane = May 1st, Summer Solstice = June 21st, Lughnasadh = Aug. 1st, and Fall Equinox = Sept. 21st.
3) For ceremonial purposes, however, each High Day may be celebrated upon either the legal date, the astronomical date, or upon a date mutually convenient to the participants of the particular celebrations involved.
4) Since the Druidic year traditionally runs from one Samhain to the next, the legal and ceremonial Druidic years shall run according to the legal and ceremonial dates for Samhain described previously in this Article.
5) The fiscal year of the Corporation shall begin on the first day of January and end on the thirty-first day of December in each civil year.

ADF Article 4: Categories of Membership

1) "Regular," "Supporting," and "Sustaining" members of A.D.F. are those individuals paying an annual amount of dues to be determined by the Mother Grove, and who are entitled to receive all A.D.F. publications meant for the general membership.
2) "Family" members are those individuals, annually paying a lesser amount than regular dues, who reside with regular members and who are relatives, spouses, or unmarried partners to them. They will not receive separate mailings of most A.D.F. publications.
3) "Lifetime" members are those individuals making large donations of money or service to A.D.F., as shall be determined by the Mother Grove. They are entitled to receive all A.D.F. publications meant for the general membership, and shall be considered current with their dues for the rest of their lives.
4) "Prisoner" members are those individuals currently incarcerated in correctional institutions, who may pay a lesser amount than the regular dues. They are entitled to receive all A.D.F. publications meant for the general membership, except that the Membership Directory and other publications which the Mother Grove may decide constitute a violation of privacy or risk for the general membership if examined within the prison system shall be withheld. Prisoners may not run for office, except within a local prison-based grove.
5) "Exchange Editor" members are those individuals, annually paying a lesser amount than regular dues, who publish periodicals with which A.D.F. has an exchange subscription arrangement. Like family members, they will not receive separate mailings of most A.D.F. publications.
6) "Complimentary" members are those individuals whom the Mother Grove has decided should receive mailings of the general A.D.F. publications in order to keep them informed of our activities, and who pay no dues at all. They may not be voting members and may not run for office.
7) From time to time the Mother Grove may institute other categories of membership, including combinations of categories, and shall define their characteristics as needed.
8) Children under the age of 18 must have the signed and notarized permission of at least one parent or legal guardian in order to become a member of A.D.F., unless the Mother Grove shall rule otherwise.

ADF Article 5: The Voting Members

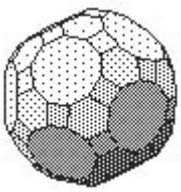
1) "Voting" members, also known as the "members of record," are those members of A.D.F. who: (a) belong to one of the dues-paying categories listed in the preceding sections of this article; (b) are up to date with their A.D.F. membership dues; and (c) have not resigned from A.D.F., nor been expelled.
2) Each voting member shall have one vote, plus one additional vote for each full, continuous year that he or she remains a voting member.
3) A gap of more than three months from the expiration of membership to renewal shall constitute a discontinuity of membership and cause the loss of all accumulated votes and related privileges. Any discontinued member may petition the Mother Grove for a reinstatement of their initial membership date and thus the recovery of accumulated votes and privileges, upon payment of dues in arrears. If the membership gap be three years or less in length, the Registrar shall grant such petitions under most circumstances. If the gap be longer than three years, or if the former member claims an inability to pay said arrears,

or for any unusual conditions concerning the petitioner, the Registrar shall present the petition at the next Mother Grove meeting. The Mother Grove may then decide whether or not to reinstate the lapsed member's initial membership date.

4) Except as may be noted elsewhere in these bylaws, all references to voting by the voting members assume these multiple votes.
5) Except as otherwise mentioned in these bylaws, a quorum for voting purposes shall consist of those voting members representing twenty-five percent of the total number of votes available to be cast.
6) Proxy votes may be assigned to voting members who are to be present at an annual or special meeting, through the signing of the proxy statements issued by the Mother Grove, and are valid only for the annual or special meeting marked thereon.
7) If election or referendum choices are combined with a proxy statement, the person receiving the proxy must cast those votes given him or her according to any electoral choices marked on the combined ballot/proxy statement. If a given member sending in such a proxy has not made any such electoral choices, the person receiving the proxy may cast those votes according to his or her best judgment.
8) Voting members may attend annual or special meetings via electronic communications devices if such are available.

ADF Article 6: The Annual Meeting

1) The annual meeting of the voting members of A.D.F. shall be held during the annual International Druid Festival, the time of which shall be decided by the membership at the previous annual meeting.
2) There shall be mailed to each voting member at her or his last known address, by first class mail or overseas airmail, at least six weeks prior to the annual meeting, a notice setting out the time and place of the annual meeting, and including a combined proxy statement and ballot to be signed by those voting members so desiring. Said notice and proxy/ballot may be incorporated into an A.D.F. newsletter published at the appropriate time, which must be mailed out by first class mail or overseas air.
3) In case a quorum is not present in body or proxy at the annual meeting, those present may adjourn to such a day and time as a majority shall agree upon. If said day and time is within the current International Druid Festival, verbal notice to those voting members present at the A.D.F. shall suffice, and the necessary quorum shall drop to ten percent of the total membership vote. Otherwise, notice of such adjournment shall be mailed to each voting member of A.D.F. at least 21 days before said date and
4) Alternately, if a quorum is not present at the annual meeting, those present may decide by majority vote to hold the annual meeting without binding votes upon any subject other than the election of a new Members' Advocate, who may be elected as described elsewhere in these bylaws. If the office of Archdruid is up for election at that time, this election shall take place as well, as described elsewhere in these bylaws.
5) If a quorum is present, elections for all Officerships open shall be held as described elsewhere in these bylaws.



ADF Article 7: Special Meetings & Referenda

1) A special meeting or a referendum of the voting members may be called by the request of a majority of the Mother Grove, or by a petition representing one-third of the membership votes. Such a special meeting shall be held sixty to ninety days after the Board meeting at which such request or petition is received, at a location to be selected by the Mother Grove. Notice of such a special meeting, stating its particular purpose, shall be mailed to the voting members as with the annual meeting, including the provision of proxy statements.
2) The Mother Grove may decide to hold a referendum through the mails at any time, and such referendum may be instead of a special meeting, should the topics under consideration lend themselves to such treatment. Ballots for a referendum shall be mailed out with the next issue of the A.D.F. newsletter, which shall include brief arguments presenting all sides of the topics involved. Voting shall be considered to be closed sixty days after the issue has been mailed.

ADF Article 8: Elections of Officers and Directors

1) At the annual meeting held in 1993 c.e., all Officers, except the Archdruid, shall stand for re-election. At that and every third following annual meeting, the voting members shall vote to fill all expiring Officerships in the Mother Grove and may choose to add Non-Officer Directors to the Board as well.
2) At every annual meeting the voting members shall elect, by simple majority vote of those participating, with no quorum required, a Members' Advocate who shall thus be elected to the Mother Grove as well.
3) Nominations to the Board may be made by the standing Board, as well as by any group of twenty or more voting members or any group of voting members having a total of fifty or more votes, who shall sign a petition nominating a qualified candidate, and submit said petition at least sixty days before the elections are to be held.
4) Any voting member of A.D.F., save a prisoner, may run for election as a Officer or Non-Officer Director, or be selected as a Non-Officer Director. All candidates must have passed their 18th birthdays and fulfill the requirements for office listed elsewhere in these bylaws.
5) After verification of membership status of all candidates and nomination signatories by the Registrar, the names of the candidates shall be published, along with brief statements by the candidates (if provided), in the ADF newsletter.
6) Brief rebuttals (if desired), as well as ballots, shall be mailed to all voting members along with proxy statements, six weeks prior to the elections. Such mailing may be combined with an issue of the ADF newsletter.
7) Plurality of votes cast for a given Office shall be sufficient to elect an Officer other than the Archdruid. Non-Officer Directors shall be elected by receiving at least 25% of all votes cast.
8) Any member may split his/her available votes between the various candidates for any given Office. Any member may split his/her available votes between the various candidates who wish to become Non-Officer Directors, but may not cast more than his/her available total for all such candidates together.
9) Should there be no quorum achieved for the elections (which shall be defined as being the same as for the annual meeting), by presence or proxy, then all incumbent candidates shall be deemed to have been reelected.

10) At the end of every tri-annual election, after all Officers and Non-Officer Directors (if any) have been elected, and before the annual meeting is finally adjourned, the Archdruid-elect or continuing Archdruid may select one or more voting members as Non-Officer Directors to join those Officers elected in the Mother Grove.
11) All Directors, whether elected or selected, shall exercise equal powers and responsibilities, save as otherwise noted in these bylaws.
12) Missing three consecutive Mother Grove meetings, whether regular or special, shall constitute an offer of resignation from the Mother Grove by that Director. The rest of the Mother Grove may accept or decline that offer.
13) Any Director, Officer or Assistant Officer of the Mother Grove, other than the Archdruid, may be removed for nonfeasance or malfeasance of office, by a three-quarters vote of the Directors (not counting the subject of such action if he/she be a Director). No such removal may be made without written notice by registered mail to the last known address to the subject, giving 30 days to respond. Failure to respond constitutes acceptance of the removal. In an emergency, the Archdruid may suspend an Officer subject to the approval of the Mother Grove at the next meeting. An elected Archdruid may not be removed thusly but may be recalled by the membership as detailed elsewhere in these bylaws.
14) In the case of the death, removal, expulsion, resignation, or permanent incapacitation of any Director or Officer other than the Members' Advocate or the Archdruid, who shall be replaced as described elsewhere in these bylaws, the remaining Directors may, at any time thereafter, elect a qualified voting member to finish out the departed Director or Officer's term.
15) All Officers and Non-Officer Directors elected or selected at the annual meeting, including an elected Archdruid, shall take office as of the second High Day following that annual meeting.

ADF Article 9: The Mother Grove

1) The Board of Directors of the Corporation shall be known as the "Mother Grove" of A.D.F.
2) The members of the Mother Grove may exercise all the duties, responsibilities, and privileges normally held by the Directors of other nonprofit religious corporations.
3) The Mother Grove shall hold regular meetings at least once between each Solstice and Equinox at the offices of the Corporation in Delaware, or at such times and places as they shall appoint. Special meetings may be called by the Archdruid by giving one day's notice to each Director.
4) Regular or special meetings of the Board or any committee may be held in person, via electronic communications devices, or through the mails. These may include: telephone conference calls, a telephone or postal polling of Board Members by the Archdruid or another Officer at the Archdruid's request, the use of a computer bulletin board, etc.
5) A majority of the Mother Grove shall constitute a quorum. Each Director, as such, shall have one vote. Except as otherwise stated in these bylaws, a simple majority shall carry all motions.
6) At the Archdruid's choice, consensus decision making or Roberts Rules of Order may be adopted for all or part of any given meeting.
7) The Mother Grove shall have the general management of the business and affairs of the Corporation, subject to the veto of the Archdruid, which may be overruled by a three-quarters vote of the other Directors.
8) The Mother Grove shall exercise all the powers that may be exercised or performed by the Corporation under the statutes, the Articles of Incorporation, and the bylaws.
9) Minutes of every meeting of the Mother Grove shall be taken by the Scribe. Abbreviated versions shall be edited by him or her to eliminate meandering and/or possible violations of members' privacy, and published in the regular A.D.F. newsletter. Any member of A.D.F. may see the unabbreviated versions of the minutes by consulting the archives or by paying for any copying and mailing expenses.
10) On those occasions when the Mother Grove is meeting with a majority of the Directors physically present in one location, such meetings shall be open to attendance by any voting members who may happen to be in the vicinity, unless matters of extreme delicacy or personal privacy may be involved, or in the case of a spiritual retreat being held by the Mother Grove. When Mother Grove meetings are being held via electronic communications devices, the Archdruid may invite one or more individuals, whether voting members or not, to attend as guests.
11) Any voting member may, through the Members' Advocate, request a position on the agenda of a Mother Grove meeting, for the discussion of matters of concern to her or him. If she or he is an electronic guest or a physical visitor to a Mother Grove meeting, said member may then address the Directors on the issues involved.
12) The Directors are authorized at their discretion to appoint from their number an executive committee of two or more persons, one of whom shall be the Archdruid, who shall be vested with the powers of the Mother Grove when the same is not in session.
13) The Mother Grove is the supreme authority in the Corporation and may, if necessary, overrule the decisions, policies, and practices of all other groups within A.D.F., including guilds, councils, special interest groups, committees, and local groves. In order to facilitate creativity, communication, and spiritual growth for all members, however, said authority is to be used lightly and rarely.
14) The maximum number of Directors shall be twelve. The minimum shall be eight.
15) Any Director may pass her/his proxy onto another for a particular meeting for one or more particular issues (but not a general proxy), verifying such in writing to the Scribe within three weeks following the meeting.

ADF Article 10: Incapacitation

1) A two-thirds majority of the Mother Grove may request any member of A.D.F. in any position of responsibility or trust, including any Director, Officer, or Archdruid, to submit to evaluation by two or more appropriate medical or psychological specialists, who shall be chosen by the Mother Grove and paid for by the Corporation. A member of the Mother Grove shall be selected to consult with said specialists and shall make a written and verbal report of the specialists' findings and her or his own.
2) Upon receipt of this report, the Mother Grove may then declare that the person so evaluated is temporarily or permanently incapacitated. Said person shall then be immediately removed from all positions of responsibility either temporarily or permanently, depending upon the declaration.
3) Restoration of her or his previous positions, whether through election, selection, appointment, or simple resumption of duties shall be contingent upon a statement by the same or other acceptable specialists that she or he is once again fit to execute her or his responsibilities.

ADF Article 11: The Archdruid

1) The Archdruid shall preside at all meetings of the Mother Grove and voting members; shall be a member, whether participating actively or not, of all committees organized by the Mother Grove; shall have normal executive control over the affairs of the Corporation; may perform all those other duties that would otherwise be performed by a corporate President; and shall be responsible for articulating the spiritual vision of A.D.F. He or she shall not be considered to be impeccable nor infallible on any topic.
2) The initial Archdruid of A.D.F., having been chosen by Divine Selection as such, and having been the original Incorporator of A.D.F., shall serve in perpetuity — i.e., until his death, retirement, or permanent incapacitation.
3) After the death, retirement, or permanent incapacitation of the initial Archdruid, the Vice Archdruid shall become the Acting Archdruid, and shall exercise all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of the initial Archdruid until the second High Day following the next annual meeting.
4) At said annual meeting, a new Archdruid shall be elected by a two-thirds majority of the available votes held by those members participating, with no quorum required. Should no single candidate win a two-thirds approval, the candidate with the lowest total shall be disqualified, and this process shall continue until only one candidate is left or a candidate has won two-thirds of the votes.
5) Any of the following shall be eligible to be a candidate for the office of Archdruid: (a) the Acting Archdruid; (b) one person chosen by a majority vote of the Mother Grove; (c) one person chosen by a majority of those members of the Council of Senior Druids who are not also members of the Mother Grove; and (d) any person or persons presenting a nomination petition to the Mother Grove signed by at least fifty voting members of A.D.F. There may thus be from one to three or more possible candidates. All candidates for the office of Archdruid must be individual voting members of A.D.F. in good standing, announce their willingness to take on the responsibilities of the office, and announce that Neopagan Druidism is their primary religious path.
6) The first Archdruid elected in this manner shall take office on the second High Day following that annual meeting; and shall exercise all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of the initial Archdruid for nine years, at which point she or he must relinquish the office to another chosen in the same manner through an election held at the annual meeting immediately preceding the end of her or his term.
7) The normal term of office for all elected Archdruids shall subsequently be nine years. No elected Archdruid may serve two terms in a row, except that if a Vice Archdruid finishes out the term of an elected Archdruid, as described later in this article, for a period of less than three years, she or he may be elected for the next full term.
8) An elected Archdruid may be recalled by a three-quarters vote of all voting members of A.D.F., at a special meeting or referendum called for that purpose.
9) An elected Archdruid who relinquishes his or her duties to the Vice Archdruid for more than three months at one time, or for more than a total of twenty-seven months in his or her term, shall be deemed to have offered to retire. The Mother Grove may accept or decline this offer.
10) If an elected Archdruid is recalled, retires, dies, or is permanently incapacitated, the Vice Archdruid shall become the new Archdruid and shall finish out the term of her or his predecessor. References in these bylaws to "elected" Archdruids shall then include such a person.
11) The original Archdruid upon his retirement may take the position of Archdruid Emeritus which shall entitle him to attend and speak, but not vote; at all Board and committee meetings he may choose, and to publish his thoughts in any Mother Grove publication.

ADF Article 12: The Other Officers

1) The Officers of this Corporation shall consist of: an Archdruid, a Vice Archdruid, a Scribe, a Pursewarden, a Registrar, a Chronicler, a Preceptor, a Members' Advocate, and other such officers and agents as may from time to time be chosen.
2) The Vice Archdruid shall exercise the functions of the Archdruid in her or his absence; shall replace the Archdruid in the event of her or his recall, death, retirement, or permanent incapacitation, as described elsewhere in these bylaws; and may perform all those other duties that would otherwise be performed by a corporate Vice President. Candidates for the office of Vice Archdruid shall each be a willing member of one of the two innermost Circles then populated of an official Druidic study program, as verified by the Council of Lore.
3) The Scribe shall keep a record of all votes and minutes of the proceedings of all meetings of the Mother Grove and voting members; shall give notice as required in these bylaws of all meetings; shall send proxy statements and/or mail ballots to all voting members as described in these bylaws; shall organize all incoming correspondence for reply; and may perform all those other duties that would otherwise be performed by a corporate Secretary. Candidates for the office of Scribe shall have the ability to take minutes and word processing skills, shall have a knowledge of all basic information regarding A.D.F. history, policies, polytheology, etc.; and shall have access to a computer with which to perform their duties.
4) The Pursewarden (and/or other designee as approved by the Mother Grove) shall sign all checks, drafts, contracts, and other instruments for the Corporation; shall have custody of all monies of the Corporation received or disbursed; shall deposit all monies and valuables in the name of and to the credit of A.D.F. in such banks or other financial institutions as the Mother Grove shall designate. All checks or other financial instruments involving sums greater than (US) $5,000 shall require the signatures of both the Pursewarden and the Archdruid. The Pursewarden shall be responsible for keeping the Corporation's financial records according to generally accepted accounting principles for nonprofit corporations; will generate quarterly financial reports for the Mother Grove; and may perform all those other duties that would otherwise be performed by a corporate Treasurer. Candidates for the office of Pursewarden shall have bookkeeping and/or accounting skills.
5) The Registrar shall keep all membership and subscription records, shall have general responsibility for maintaining the database thereof; shall generate reports and mailing labels for the Mother Grove and other designated agents of A.D.F.; and shall assist grove organizers and other members with specialized mailings. She or he shall maintain strict confidentiality of the membership list according to guidelines established by the Mother Grove. Candidates for the office of Registrar shall have database management skills, and shall have access to a computer with which to perform their duties.
6) The Chronicler shall have responsibility for newsletters, journals, directories, and other publications to be issued by the Mother Grove, as determined by the Directors. He or she shall function as Editor in Chief of all Mother Grove

publications; shall keep track of advertising (paid, exchange, and donated); and shall supervise physical production and distribution. Candidates for the office of Chronicler shall have editing and desktop publishing skills, and shall have access to a computer with which to perform their duties.

7) The Preceptor shall function as the head of the Council of Lore; shall supervise the creation and operation of A.D.F.'s Druidic study programs; and shall be responsible for monitoring and recording the progress of individual members of A.D.F. through the Study Programs. She or he shall investigate the legal and academic requirements for creating and operating accredited institutions of higher learning, and shall use this information to help create and operate the College of Druidism. Candidates for the office of Preceptor shall be persons holding an earned Masters Degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution and having at least five years' experience in the design and/or administration of programs for adult learners leading to accredited degrees, professional certification, or recognized recertification credits for occupations requiring registration, licensure, or certification.

8) The Members' Advocate shall represent individual members of A.D.F. at large, with special attention to the needs of minority factions not otherwise represented. She or he shall function as an ombudsperson, and shall be a member (whether active or inactive) of every committee organized by the Mother Grove. The Members' Advocate shall be elected on an annual basis by the voting members, as described elsewhere in these bylaws. No person may serve as Member's Advocate more than three years in a row. In the case of the death, removal, expulsion, retirement, or permanent incapacitation of a Members' Advocate, a new Members' Advocate shall be elected to fulfill her or his term by a mail election, unless there are less than three months remaining in her/his term, with a simple majority vote of those responding being sufficient for election.

9) The normal term of office for all officers, save the Archdruid and the Members' Advocate, shall be three years.

10) In the event of a departure of an officer from the Mother Grove, as described elsewhere in these bylaws, any two offices may be temporarily held by one person simultaneously, save that the same person cannot be both the Archdruid and Vice Archdruid and that the Members' Advocate shall not hold any other office. Such dual officership shall be only until another Director with the proper qualifications shall be available to take over the duties of the departed Officer.

11) All Officers described in the above sections of this article shall be Directors. Additional officerships of a lesser nature, such as Bookkeeper, Assistant Chronicler, etc., may be created by the Mother Grove at their discretion, and said lesser officers need not be Directors. Lesser officers who are not Directors need not be over 18 years of age if they will have no legal responsibilities for A.D.F. If under 18, they must have the signed and notarized permission of at least one parent or legal guardian.

ADF Article 13: The Board of Advisors

1) The Board of Advisors shall consist of those members of A.D.F. who are leaders in the various arts, crafts, and sciences practiced within A.D.F. They may be appointed by the Archdruid or be approved by the Mother Grove after an election by members of A.D.F. concerned with their field of expertise.

2) Appointees to the Board of Advisors shall serve until removed by the Archdruid. Approved Advisors shall serve until replaced by their successors. Any Advisor may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Mother Grove.

3) The Board of Advisors shall individually and/or collectively advise the Archdruid, the Mother Grove, and the general membership of A.D.F., on matters relating to their fields of expertise, but shall have no political function save within the guilds or other special interest groups which may have elected them.

ADF Article 14: The Council of Lore

1) The Council of Lore shall be a standing committee, headed by the Preceptor. Its membership shall include those Directors who wish to participate, those willing members of the Board of Advisors competent to provide educational guidance, and other such members of A.D.F. as the Preceptor shall nominate and the Mother Grove shall approve.

2) Since the primary purpose of the Council of Lore shall be to provide educational guidance to those members of A.D.F. working their way through the Druidic study programs, members of the Council shall be expected to have and maintain demonstrable knowledge and skills relevant to their areas of responsibility. Whenever possible and applicable, the possession of advanced academic degrees is preferable to the lack thereof

ADF Article 15: Other Standing Committees

1) In addition to the Executive Committee and the Council of Lore, the Mother Grove shall create and staff the following committees with such members as may be willing and appropriate: the Finance & Fund Raising Committee, the Publications Committee, the Grove Organizing Committee.

2) Every standing committee shall be headed by a Director, usually an officer with related duties.

3) The Directors may at their discretion create other committees, both standing and ad hoc.

ADF Article 16: Local Groves

1) The Mother Grove shall act upon all requests for the chartering of local congregations, to be known as "groves," and shall issue appropriate regulations as needed for their proper functioning.

2) In order to prevent confusion with other organizations calling their local groups "groves," all local groves of A.D.F. shall use the naming convention of "_____ Grove, A.D.F." or "Grove of _____, A.D.F." or the bilingual equivalent, in all brochures, posters, announcements, public letters, etc., meant to be read by nonmembers of the local groves.

3) All local groves shall comply with all relevant federal, state/provincial, and local laws regarding the operation of branch congregations of larger religious organizations; unless specifically directed by the Mother Grove to test a law in the courts.

4) All local groves of A.D.F. are entitled to the maximum amount of autonomy consistent with the survival, identity, and well being of A.D.F. as a whole.

5) Each local grove may choose any Indo-European ethnic focus, pantheon, and liturgical language of interest to the majority of its members. Non-Indo-European ethnic focuses, pantheons, and liturgical languages are not appropriate to official A.D.F. activities, except that local Native American traditions may be respectfully integrated into a local grove's official activities, according to policies set by the Mother Grove.

6) Every local grove is expected to provide open public or semipublic worship opportunities on a regular basis, including all eight High Days. The overwhelming majority

of local grove activities are to be open and inclusionary. Smaller groups may be formed within a grove, and may engage in closed activities, provided that no such group includes more than half of the grove's members.

7) Only those persons who would qualify as voting members of A.D.F., as described in Article 5, Section 1, may vote in official local grove elections, be officers of a local grove, or be counted as official grove members for chartering purposes. The Senior Druid, Scribe, and Pursewarden, as well as any other local officers who will exercise any legal responsibilities for the grove, must have passed their 18th birthday.
8) The Mother Grove shall have the power to suspend or revoke the charter of a local grove for good and sufficient cause.
9) The Archdruid shall have the power to suspend the charter of a local grove for good and sufficient cause, subject to the agreement of the Mother Grove at their next Board meeting.

ADF Article 17: Rank

1) Rank within the membership as a whole shall be a function of progress within one or more Druidic Study Programs of Circles within Circles, as shall be determined by procedures to be instituted by the Council of Lore with the approval of the Mother Grove. All such study programs shall be grounded in the attainment and maintenance of demonstrable knowledge and skills.
2) Since it is envisioned that clergy and other leaders in A.D.F. will be only a fraction of the total membership, no pressure is to be placed on members to participate in any of the Druidic study programs.
3) Any person claiming a rank related to a Druidic study program may be politely challenged to demonstrate his or her knowledge and/or skills, either by one or more examiners from the Council of Lore, or by any member of A.D.F. being asked to extend rights or privileges to said person based on his or her claimed rank.

ADF Article 18: Discrimination

1) Membership and rank in A.D.F., attendance at public or semipublic A.D.F. activities, and participation in any Druidic Study Program, shall not be denied to any person on the basis of race, ancestry, color, physical disability (except as mentioned elsewhere in this article), age, gender, or affectional orientation, but may be denied to individuals practicing creeds inimical to Neopagan Druidism.
2) Membership within the Mother Grove, the clergy, and other such positions of responsibility and trust as the Mother Grove may determine, shall be granted only to practicing Neopagans who are not simultaneously practicing a creed inimical to Neopagan Druidism.
3) As used herein, "inimical creeds" shall include varieties of conservative monotheism, atheism, demonism, racialism, or other such faiths, as shall be determined by the Mother Grove.
4) Proven communication or behavior of a virulently racist, sexist, homophobic, heterophobic, anti-Semitic, or otherwise bigoted manner, shall be grounds for expulsion from A.D.F., as described elsewhere in these bylaws. This does not include strong verbal statements about the theology, history, or psychological characteristics of other religions.
5) All organizers of public and semipublic A.D.F. activities shall make strenuous efforts to facilitate the participation of differently-abled individuals. Nonetheless, all aspirants to any given rank or position must be able to meet all the relevant qualifications previously determined for said rank or position, unless the Mother Grove shall rule otherwise in a particular instance.

ADF Article 19: Suspension, Expulsion and Resignation of Members

1) The Mother Grove may, by a two-thirds vote, suspend or expel any member confessing to or found guilty of committing felony crimes-with-victims, as defined by civil law and current criminological opinion, or for proven and documented disruptive or abusive conduct which works directly against the aims, activities or welfare of A.D.F. or its members.
2) If a member under consideration for suspension or expulsion is a Director, he or she may be suspended or expelled only by a two-thirds vote of the remaining Directors. The initial Archdruid cannot be suspended or expelled. An elected Archdruid can be suspended or expelled, but only after being recalled as described elsewhere in these bylaws.
3) "Disruptive or abusive conduct" does not include: the temperate expression of disagreement, such as public or private written or verbal criticism of A.D.F. or its leadership; vigorous debate over matters of scholarship, art, spirituality, or politics; the circulation of petitions to the Mother Grove; the organizing of other members into voting blocks; nor mere rudeness, thoughtlessness, or lack of social skills.
4) Disruptive or abusive conduct does include: the spreading of slander or libel against A.D.F. or its leadership; bigoted communication or behavior as described elsewhere in these bylaws; or active efforts to persuade members to quit or to dissuade nonmembers from joining.
5) In the case of a person who was declared temporarily or permanently incapacitated at the time of his or her resignation or removal from a position of responsibility, the Mother Grove shall require a reevaluation of his or her competency similar to the process which had declared incapacity, before he or she may seek election or appointment.
6) Members may resign from membership at any time for personal reasons, and will then be eligible to rejoin A.D.F. at a later date. Any member whose membership dues lapse for a period of three months or more shall be deemed to have resigned. If a resigned member should decide to rejoin at a later date, her or his votes shall be calculated from that later date.
7) Suspended, expelled or resigned members may not hold office or act in any way as representatives of A.D.F. Expelled or resigned members have no right to receive A.D.F. publications, and may not continue to participate in Druidic Study Programs administered by A.D.F.
8) Members who have been suspended or expelled may, at the discretion of the Mother Grove, be banned permanently or temporarily from attending A.D.F. activities, including public worship. Such bans shall be published immediately in A.D.F. publications. They may be published elsewhere in the case of very serious crimes.

ADF Article 20: Open Financial Records

1) All members of A.D.F. are entitled to see the accounting records. The Pursewarden shall make these available at a nominal fee for reproduction and mailing. Balance sheets and other similar summary reports shall be regularly published by A.D.F.
2) Pursewardens in local groves shall make quarterly financial reports to the Mother Grove, accounting for all income and expenses, and shall make these reports available to local grove members in a similar fashion.

ADF Article 21: Amendment and Replacement of By-Laws

1) Amendments to these bylaws may be made at any annual or special meeting or referendum, as described elsewhere in these bylaws, by a two-thirds vote of the entire voting membership; or by a two thirds vote of the Directors at any regular or special meeting of the Mother Grove.
2) The initial Archdruid's lifetime term of office and immunity from recall and/or expulsion; the requirement in this article for all future sets of bylaws to contain similar language concerning replacement of bylaws; and this section of this article; may not be amended without the consent of the initial Archdruid.
3) Every twenty-seven years after the death of the initial Archdruid, at an annual meeting of the voting members, the voting members shall decide by a two-thirds vote whether to retain the current set of bylaws. Said decision shall be made after all other electoral matters have been settled.
4) Should the results be negative, a By-Laws Revision Committee shall be formed. The members of said committee shall include the newly elected Members' Advocate, who shall head the committee, the newly-elected Archdruid (or if no Archdruidic election has taken place, the current Archdruid), a newly-elected Director (or a continuing one, if no Directoral election happened), three members of the Board of Advisors who are not Directors, and the Senior Druids of three local groves. The annual meeting may not be ended without these nine being selected and approved by majority vote of the voting members participating in body or proxy.
5) The By-Laws Revision Committee shall have one year to produce a proposed new set of bylaws. Halfway through that year, an early draft shall be published in the A.D.F. newsletter for comment by the membership.
6) At least six weeks prior to the following annual meeting, the By-Laws Revision Committee shall publish and distribute to the voting members a proposed new set of bylaws. At that annual meeting, alterations to the proposal shall be debated and passed by a majority vote of those participating in body or proxy. The final set of proposed new bylaws shall then be voted upon as a whole, with a three-quarters vote of the entire voting membership necessary for passage. The quorum for this vote shall therefore be seventy-five percent of all votes available to be cast.
7) Should there not be such a quorum available in body or proxy at said annual meeting, the final set of proposed new bylaws shall be submitted by the Mother Grove, by first class or overseas airmail, to the voting membership as a referendum within three weeks after the annual meeting concludes, with a six week deadline for reply. Again, a three-quarters vote of the entire voting membership shall be necessary for passage.
8) Should the new bylaws not be passed at either the annual meeting nor a referendum as just described, the old bylaws shall continue in effect for the next twenty-six years.
9) Should the new bylaws be passed at either the annual meeting or the referendum, they will take effect upon the following Samhain, completely replacing the previous set of bylaws at that time. It shall be the duty of the existing Directors to notify all appropriate civil authorities and to arrange any required elections for new officers, etc., in keeping with the spirit as well as the letter of the new bylaws.
10) All new sets of bylaws must contain an article equivalent to this one, allowing for their complete replacement every twenty-seven years at the will of the membership.

DF Article 22: The Council of Senior Druids

I) All Senior Druids of provisionally or fully chartered groves shall be members of a Council of Senior Druids. Protogrove organizers and former Senior Druids may participate as non-voting members.
2) The Archdruid shall be an honorary member of said Council and shall be entitled to attend its meetings, receive copies of its meeting minutes and other publications, etc. She/he shall not have a vote in said Council, however, unless she/he is simultaneously the Senior Druid of a chartered grove, or unless a tie-breaking vote is needed.
3) Said Council shall be organized and run by its members and may establish its own goals and priorities, and take action to achieve them, subject to the bylaws of A.D.F.

ADF Article 23: Non-Profit Nature of the Corporation

I) No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the Preamble and Article I of these bylaws.
2) No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation, and the Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.
3) Notwithstanding any other provisions of the Articles of Incorporation or these bylaws, this Corporation shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes of this Corporation.
4) Upon the dissolution of this Corporation, the Mother Grove shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the Corporation, dispose of all the assets of the Corporation exclusively for the purposes of the Corporation in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for Neopagan religious, educational or charitable purposes as shall at that time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 as revised (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Mother Grove shall determine.
5) Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such Neopagan organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

The preceding bylaws were originally adopted by the Mother Grove of A.D.F., Inc. on July 15,1990 c.e. They have been amended and corrected since. This edition is current as of November 1, 1994 c.e. For later versions, send an SASE (2oz.) to: ADF, Box 516, E. Syracuse, NY, USA 13057.

BY-LAWS OF THE HENGE OF KELTRIA

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2003 Editor's Introduction

The Henge of Keltria broke off from ADF in 1986, to follow a more specifically Celtic Path, and due to a number of issues and controversies (some of them liturgical) that plagued the early years of ADF (many of which have been patched up). Intended as a "private" organization, rather than holding public services, it has never become as large as ADF. Keltria has been a Mid-Western phenomenon with a handful of Henges, and a newsletter, annual reunions, study course and a web-page to bind them together. One of their founding groves was in Minneapolis, so their interaction over the years with the Carleton Grove has been sporadic, but rewarding.

-Scharding

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ARTICLE I - NAME

1.1. The name of this Corporation shall be THE HENGE OF KELTRIA.

1.2. The address of the Corporation shall be: C/O Henge of Keltria, P.O. Box 17969, Long Beach, CA 90807 or such other location as the Board of Trustees may, from time to time, establish by resolution and place on file with the Secretary of State of the State of Minnesota.

ARTICLE II - CORPORATE PURPOSES

2.1. This organization is formed exclusively as a religious and/or Church Corporation and is not organized for the private gain of any person or persons.

2.2. The Corporation has a specific and primary purpose to foster and practice the spiritual and cultural teachings of Celtic Earth-based religions, to facilitate communications with and between different Celtic Earth- based Religions.

2.3. The Corporation shall have power to establish, modify or dissolve schools and other affiliated religious orders, lodges, groves and groups.

2.4. The Corporation shall have power to authorize, bestow, convey, grant, issue or revoke certificates, charters, degrees, credentials, diplomas, franchises, licenses, memberships, or ordinations through the church corporation, or any subsidiary corporation created by this church Corporation, including cemeteries.

2.5. The Corporation shall have power to publicize, publish, promote, celebrate, teach, research, and explore any and all material which may bear upon its beliefs, philosophies, theology, and religious history, ancient or modern.

2.6. The Corporation shall have the power to apply for and receive grants, accept bequests and to establish and maintain an endowment fund.

2.7. The Corporation shall have the power to own property, for the purpose of carrying out the above.

2.8. Not withstanding the above statements of purpose and powers, the corporation shall not engage in activities that in themselves are not a furtherance of the purposes set forth in this article.

2.9. The Corporation shall conduct its activities in accordance with Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

ARTICLE III - PECUNIARY GAIN

3.1. No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article II hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

3.2. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the Corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from Federal income tax

under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

ARTICLE IV - DURATION

4.1. The period of duration of this Corporation shall be perpetual.

ARTICLE V - PERSONAL LIABILITY

5.1. Upon the dissolution of the Corporation, the officers and/or Board, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all the liabilities of the Corporation, the remaining Church Corporation properties and assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code. Said distribution shall be in keeping within a basic harmony of the Church Corporation beliefs.

5.1.1. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are operated exclusively for such purpose.

5.2. The Members, Officers, Trustees and Founders of the Corporation shall have no personal liability for the debts of the Corporation.

ARTICLE VI - CAPITAL STOCK

6.1. The Corporation shall have no capital stock and shall have no authority to issue shares.

ARTICLE VII - COUNCIL OF ELDERS

7.1. All theological direction for the Henge of Keltria shall be from the Council of Elders. Members of the Council are from active members of the Ring of the Oak. The Council of Elders supersedes and overrides all secular offices and officers in matters that are deemed by the Council Elders to be of a spiritual nature or may inappropriately impact the beliefs and philosophies of the Henge of Keltria. The Council of Elders shall consist of no more than nine members of the Rings of the Oak. Election of Council members is from the active membership in the Rings of the Oak. A simple majority of affirmation from the total Oak Ring membership is required for appointment to be carried. Abstention of a vote does not apply to the majority of assent needed for election. The duration of appointment is nine years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive appointments. The Council of Elders is empowered to remove any member from the membership roles for cause as stated in these Bylaws.

7.2. The number of members of the Council of Elders shall be based upon the number of the Ring of the Oak. The number, election, and appointment process to the Council of Elders shall be described in the Council's working documents.

7.3. The primary authoritative spokesperson for the theological direction of the Henge of Keltria shall be known as the Arch-Druid. The Arch-Druid shall be selected from the Council of Elders by the Council of Elders and shall hold the position for as long as she or he remains on the Council. The Arch-Druid shall preside over meetings of the Council of Elders.

7.4. The Council of Elders may, on a case by case basis, approve waivers to requirements for Levels of Achievement when it believes that such a waiver is in the best interests of the Individual, their Grove, and/or the Henge.

ARTICLE VIII - BOARD OF TRUSTEES

8.1. The initial board of Trustees will consist of the founders being appointed for a period of nine (9) years and one trustee elected from the membership for two years with subsequent elected terms of three (3) years. This to provide a consistent direction during the early years of the church. At the end of nine (9) years, Board tenure will convert to a Board of Trustees consisting of at least three (3) members of the Corporation, each elected for the term of three (3) years at the regular annual meeting of the Corporation. No more than two thirds of the Board may be elected at any one given annual meeting.
8.1.1.The first Board of Trustees:

Nine year term:

a. "Tony" Taylor

The remaining two Trustee positions are now elected.

8.1.2. Trustees may serve concurrently as Officers with one vote per person, not per seat. There is no limit to the number of terms a Trustee may serve.

8.1.3. The business of the Henge shall be conducted by a Board of Trustees. The size of the initial board has seven seats. The corporate officers: President, Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer and three (3) Trustees. The terms of office for the Trustees shall be staggered so that no more than two-thirds of Trustees shall be elected in one election. Increases in the number of Trustees may increase with membership.

8.1.4. The board shall have the responsibility of establishing policy to achieve the objectives of the Henge as stated in Article II of these bylaws.

8.2. The Board of Trustees shall meet at least bi-annually.

8.3. A simple majority of Board members shall constitute a quorum for conducting business at any meeting of the Board of Trustees. Teleconferencing is acceptable to create a quorum.

8.4. Board members shall receive electronic notice, written notice, or a telephone call from the secretary informing them of each Board meeting. Notice shall be given no less than ten (10) days prior to each meeting.

8.5. The Board shall hold such meetings as may be necessary for conducting business of the Corporation. Meetings of the Board may be called by the President, in his/her absence, by the Vice-president and any two Trustees.

8.6. The Board of Trustees shall be empowered to employ or dismiss an Executive Director whose duties will be determined by the Board of Trustees in a written policy and duty statement. The Executive Director may hire staff to carry out the goals and policies of the Board of Trustees.

8.7. The Board shall appoint members of the Henge to fill an unexpired term which may become vacant on the

ARTICLE IX - OFFICERS

9.1. The Officers of the Henge shall be a President, a Vice-president, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

9.2. Officers, with the exception of the Treasurer, shall be elected by the membership and shall serve terms as established in the Corporation's By-laws. Any officer may be removed for cause by the Board and, upon any vacancy, the Board may fill such vacancy by a majority vote for the unexpired term of the Officer.

9.3. The Officers with the Board of Trustees shall manage the affairs of the Henge, subject to such regulations and restrictions as may be prescribed by the Henge and within these Bylaws.

9.4. The Officers, with the exception of the Treasurer, and the Board of Trustees shall be elected at the annual meeting by ballot of the membership, for a two-year term with three consecutive terms as a limit, and shall hold office until their successors have been elected. No person shall hold the same office of President, Vice-president, or Secretary, for more than three consecutive terms. In case of vacancy arising in any office it may be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term through selection by the Board of Trustees.

9.5. The retiring President of the Henge shall automatically become an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees (non-voting) to act in an advisory and consultative capacity for a two-year period. The retiring President may also be elected to a voting Trustee position.

9.6. The Treasurer is to be appointed by the Board of Trustees. There shall be no limitation to the length of term the Treasurer may serve, if so appointed.

9.7. Elections will be held at the annual meeting and will be done by ballot.

9.8. The HENGE OF KELTRIA is and shall be an equal opportunity employer. It does not discriminate based on race, color, age, national origin, marital status, disability, creed, religious or political affiliation, sex or sexual preference. All vacancies whether paid or volunteer will be filled on the basis of qualifications the applicant has in relation to the job requirements.

9.9. Duties and Qualifications of Henge Officers:

9.9.1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Henge and its officers. If the President is absent at any meeting, the Vice-president shall assume his/her duties. The President will act as the liaison between the Board and the Executive Director. The President with the help of the Executive Director shall determine the agenda for all meetings. Must be capable of administering the workings of the entire church Corporation, including but not limited to the following:

i. act as Chairperson of the Board of Trustees:

ii. act as Chairperson of the general membership meeting;

iii. administer operations of the entire church Corporation;

iv. delegate responsibility to ensure smooth operation of the Corporation as a whole;

v. issue an annual State of the Henge Report to the membership;

vi. orchestrate the planning and scheduling for the implementation and operation of all major Corporate projects;

vii. oversee the disbursement and use of all Corporate funds and

viii. all other powers and duties delegated by the bylaws.

9.9.2. The Vice-president shall assume the office of President should the President be unable to execute his/her duties. The Vice-president shall also be in charge of activities directly related to the membership, i.e., programs for the membership and membership recruitment. Must be able to take over the administration of the church Corporation in the event that the President is unable to continue in that capacity, and;

i. substitute for the President at any corporate event, meeting, or function in the event the President is unable to attend; and

ii. any other duties or responsibilities as delegated in the By-laws or by the Board of Trustees.

9.9.3. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all meetings of the Henge and of the Board of Trustees. The Secretary shall keep a roll of the members, and give a report on both at the annual meeting. The Secretary shall maintain a current membership list at the Henge headquarters and will have a current membership list present at all Henge meetings. The Secretary shall work with the office of Treasurer to maintain accurate and up to date membership rolls. The Secretary shall also conduct the correspondence of the Henge, give notice of all meetings, notify committee members of their appointments, and carry on such other correspondence as may be necessary for conducting the affairs of the Henge. The Secretary shall be responsible for notifying members of expiration of membership and default of active status. The Secretary shall be responsible for the annual registration of the Henge with the Minnesota Secretary of State's Office. Said duties may be delegated with Board approval.

9.9.3.1. The Secretary must be capable of handling and organizing a large amount of paperwork. Should be proficient in all clerical skills necessary to fulfill the position. The Secretary will supervise any staff member that has been approved by the Board of Trustees to assist with carrying out the responsibilities of this office.

i. take minutes of all Corporate meetings (in person or by delegation). Record all minutes taken and present latest minutes at current meetings;

ii. keep and file copies of all corporate minutes, correspondence, and other paperwork; and

iii. any other duties or responsibilities as delegated in the By-laws or by the Board of Directors.

9.9.4. The Treasurer shall collect the dues of members and all subscription donations and allocations of money to the Henge. The Treasurer shall work with the office of the Secretary in maintaining accurate membership rolls. The Treasurer shall keep an account of the same and shall make a report thereof at the annual meeting and whenever required by the Henge or the Board of Trustees. All Henge money is to be kept in a Henge bank account. The Treasurer shall pay out moneys of the Henge upon presentation of bills approved by the Board of Trustees as attested to by the Secretary. At the close of each fiscal year the books shall be audited and a report submitted to the membership. The Treasurer at the discretion of the board of Trustees may make disbursements on behalf of the Henge without prior approval up to a dollar level prespecified by the Board.

9.9.4.1. The Treasurer must be capable of handling the financial aspect of the church Corporation and provide oversight of any contracted accounting services or Henge employees,

i. keep a clear and accurate record of all corporate finances;

ii. provide regular reports on the financial condition of the church Corporation for all Corporate meetings, and provide a copy of the record to the Secretary for inclusion in the minutes;

iii. prepare and complete all required reports to the Internal Revenue Service, as set forth by IRS guidelines and requirements;

iv. audit all Corporate checking, savings, escrow, trust, or any other accounts on a periodic basis as determined by the Board of Directors;

v. audit all Corporate financial records of any coordinators who are in custody of Corporate moneys, and compile a quarterly report for the Board of Directors; and

vi. any other duties as mandated in the By-laws or assigned by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE X - INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

10.1. Membership shall consist of those persons who understand the principles of Keltrian Druidism, who have made written application, paid their annual dues and have been accepted by the Board of Trustees or its delegated authority. The form of application shall be that approved by the Board of Trustees or its delegated authority.

10.2. Honorary Life members may be elected by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting of the corporation. The honorary members shall not be required to pay annual dues.

10.3. Voting and other rights and privileges of members are set forth in these By-laws. An individual membership fee covers basic administrative costs and entitles the member to any informational or emergency mailings made that year, including a quarterly news letter. At the time of incorporation the news letter is titled Henge Happenings.

10.4. The Henge of Keltria shall be composed of active and honorary individual members.

10.4.1. Change of dues for membership shall be proposed and approved by the Board of Trustees. Policies for prorating of dues for the first year of membership is at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

10.4.2. Active membership shall include the following categories:

a. Individual membership - any person may become a member of the Henge by payment of annual dues.

b. Honorary Life membership

10.4.3. No person shall be qualified as a member and entitled to vote in regular, special or annual meetings unless his/her annual dues have been paid to the treasurer and his/her name inscribed on the membership list at or in advance of any meeting.

10.4.4. Members failing to pay their dues for more than 60 days after they become payable shall be regarded as inactive members. Inactive members shall have no voting privilege, shall not receive subscriptions to the membership newsletter, nor receive any other benefits of membership until such time as they renew their memberships with payment of their annual dues and such payment is processed as normal.

10.4.5. Honorary life members shall not be required to pay dues; they may attend all meetings, but they shall not have the right to vote unless they are also paying members. Any individual, in recognition of achievements or for services rendered in line with the purposes of the Henge of Keltria may be elected a honorary life member by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting.

10.5. Members are presumed to have read and understood the Articles of Incorporation, the Bylaws, and any other such documents, manuals or handbooks delineating policy or procedures which are by reference hereby included in and made a part of these Bylaws, and that the applicant agrees to abide by the same. Copies of these documents are available through the Henge Office.

10.6. Any member who violates the code of ethics of the Henge of Keltria or otherwise puts the Henge, its members and or the Pagan community at large is a disreputable light may be removed from the membership by the Council of Elders. Such removal may be appealed in writing within 30 days of removal to the office of the Secretary. Notice of Appeal will be distributed to The Council of Elders within ten days of receipt.

10.7. Youth Memberships. Minor children under the age of 18 may join the Henge of Keltria as Youth Members upon filing a Youth Membership Application which includes a signature of parent or guardian granting permission and approval. Dues for Youth Memberships shall be as determined by the Board of Trustees. Youth Members shall not have the ability to vote in Henge business and Youth Members may not hold office nor be listed in the Membership Directory.

ARTICLE XI - THE GROVES

11.1. Each Grove within the Keltrian system is, for the most part, autonomous. Groves must abide by the Henge beliefs, ethics, By-laws and religious methodology. Groves are encouraged to gather and interact with other Groves in their area or the membership at large. Groves need to apply to the Board and be granted Charter by the Board of Trustees pursuant to a recommendation of the Council of Elders.

11.1.1. Such application will include identification of a designated individual who takes on the major responsibilities of administration of the Grove who will act as contact and liaison to the Henge. Such person shall also be known as the Grove Founder.

11.1.2. Such application shall also include the names of at least two other active members. The Grove Founder along with the other two members shall also be designated as Grove President, Secretary, and Treasurer (or Grove Leader, Scribe, and Pursewarden).

11.1.3. The Grove, when Charter is first granted, will be Chartered as, a "Seed Grove," a "Seed Birch Grove," a "Seed Yew Grove," or a "Seed Oak Grove" based upon the definitions established in Article XX -
DEFINITIONS.

11.2. Groves of any type must submit quarterly financial statements to the Treasurer of the Henge to take advantage of tax-exempt status.

11.2.1. A Seed Grove's Charter automatically lapses one year after its last submitted Quarterly Financial Statement.

11.2.2. A Grove which fails to submit a Quarterly Financial Statement for over one year will become a Seed Grove at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

11.3. A Grove of any type must submit an annual, "State of the Grove" report to the Henge indicating the current Officers of the Grove, location of Grove Meetings (City and State) and a contact point.

11.3.1. This report must be suitable for publication in Henge Happenings.

11.3.2. Groves of any type shall not have the power to incur debt in the name of the Henge of Keltria.

11.4. All types of Groves must register annually with the Henge and certify its actions and activities in order to maintain or increase in status. The Board of Trustees, pursuant to a recommendation of the Council of Elders may remove the Seed designation or increase or decrease its stature during the review of the annual registration report.

11.5. Oak Groves chartered by the Board of Trustees shall be legal subordinate organizations of the Henge of Keltria as incorporated and are eligible to be covered by any appropriate Church Group Exemptions.

11.6. A Grove may be disbanded upon the Grove sending written notification from the Grove's Founder indicating that the Grove intends to disband. The records of the Grove will go to the Henge Office where they will be inactive.

11.7. A Grove's Charter may be suspended pending an investigation of problems brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees. A Grove's Charter may also be suspended based upon the Grove's Quarterly or Annual reports or lack thereof.

11.7.1. A Grove's Charter may be suspended if the Board of Trustees has reason to believe that the Grove is not functioning as a viable organizational Unit of The Henge of Keltria.

11.7.2. A Suspended Grove of any type may be reinstated if the Grove can resolve its problems to the satisfaction of the Board of Trustees pursuant to the recommendation of the Council of Elders within one year of suspension.

11.8.1. A Grove's Charter may be revoked by Council of Elders based upon religious theological issues.

11.8.2. A Groves Charter may be revoked by the Board of Trustees based upon secular issues. These issues include, but are not limited to the following: Conduct found to be incompatible with the purpose of the Corporation or contrary to the Laws of the State or Country the Grove is located in, conduct or statements of the Grove in its meetings or statements that discredit the Henge of Keltria, its purposes, or members.

11.8.2.1. A Grove's Charter may be revoked by the Board of Trustees if three months after suspension, a Grove has not made adequate corrections to the issues involved which were the cause of the suspension.

ARTICLE XII - MEETINGS

12.1. The annual meeting shall be in the month of June each year. The Board of Trustees shall set the date of the meetings. Six weeks notice must be given to all members of date and location of annual meeting.

12.2. Special meetings of the Henge may be requested by the President, in his/her absence, by the Vice-president and any two Trustees at any time and by ten members of the Henge. Such request is to the Office of the President. If the request is approved by the Board of Trustees, the Board shall set the date and location of the meeting.

12.3. A simple majority representing at least 5 percent of the membership of the Henge must be physically present, or represented by proxy to constitute a quorum for annual and special meetings. Physically present is hereby defined to include not only the physical presence of a voting member, but also as being in communication with the persons physically present by telephone or an equivalent mechanism.

12.4. There shall be three types of votes possible concerning any proposals before the Corporation: affirmative, abstention, and negative.

12.5. The Henge shall operate on a fiscal year, running from January 01 through December 31.

12.6. All eligible voters may cast one vote. Voting will be done by ballot. Voting by proxy is allowed. Proxies must be given to a member in good standing.

12.7. All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Revised Rules of Order or accepted future standards of Rules of Order for a non profit corporation.

12.8. The Board of Trustees and Officers shall meet publicly, at least annually and privately on an as-needed basis. The meeting dates shall be determined by the President. All interested members in good standing are encouraged to attend any publicly held meetings. However, the as-needed-meetings are open to generally interested parties at the Boards pleasure, or they will be assumed to be closed meetings.

12.9. The Board of Trustees is a voting entity in and of itself.

ARTICLE XIII - COMMITTEES, BOARDS, AND BUREAUS

13.1. The President shall appoint, or cause the Board of Trustees to appoint, such standing committees as are deemed necessary for the efficient operation of the Henge. Chairs of such committees, shall, insofar as possible, be appointed from members of the Board of Trustees or Officers. Such committees may include regular members of the Henge.

13.2. All standing committees, boards, and bureaus shall be appointed to serve until a particular project is completed or until the next annual meeting, whichever occurs first. All committees, boards, and bureaus may be appointed annually. There shall be no limit to the number of annual terms to which a member of a committee, board, or bureau may be reappointed. Insofar as possible, all committees and boards should represent geographically the areas served by the Henge.

13.3. The President, or in his/her absence the Vice-president, shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, boards, and bureaus.

13.4. The chairs of all committees, boards, and bureaus shall represent their respective committees, boards, or bureaus at meetings of the Board of Trustees when requested to attend by the Board.

ARTICLE XIV - INDEMNIFICATION OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

14.1. The Henge shall indemnify any officer, trustee, employee, or volunteer who is sued for actions done in good faith for the benefit of the Henge and in the performances of his or her duties for the same. This shall not cover criminal actions that result from unlawful conduct.

14.1.1. Indemnification maybe covered through the purchase of insurance or by any means the Henge chooses.

ARTICLE XV - AMENDMENT

15.1. Amendments to these By-laws may be proposed in writing and filed with the Secretary by any three members.

15.2. Amendment proposal tracking:

15.2.1. An amendment proposal must be received in the Office of the Secretary by March 1st to be considered for that year's annual meeting. At other times of the year a special meeting of the Henge may be called if special meeting and notification requirements are met. In either event within ten days upon receipt of the proposed amendment, the Office of the Secretary will have informed the Henge officers, Board of Trustees and members of The Council of Elders. The Office of the President will respond to the parties acknowledging receipt of the proposed amendment within 5 days of receipt. The Council of Elders will examine and judge the proposed amendment to insure its passage would not weaken the theological foundations of the Henge of Keltria.

15.2.2. The Board of Trustees shall then review the amendment and may veto sending any amendment to the membership if they believe it to be inappropriate or undesirable. The Board shall have 45 days to consider the amendment. The Secretary shall inform the amendment's submitter of the Board's decision. The submitter shall then have an opportunity to address the Board concerning the proposal.

15.2.3. After the Council of Elders and the Board of Trustees both rule upon the proposed amendment, the Secretary shall notify the membership in writing of the proposed amendment(s), and they may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the members present at the annual meeting if a quorum is present and provided six weeks have elapsed since the sending of the notice.

ARTICLE XVI - ELECTIONS

16.1. Election of Board members shall occur at regular intervals as specified in these By-laws.

16.1.1. A clear majority comprising of a 10% margin over the opposing candidates of the tallied votes shall be required to elect any eligible member to any position on the Board or any other elective position in this Corporation, except as specified in these By-laws. A person who fails to receive a clear majority but does receive a plurality shall be considered elected to a one year term of office.

16.1.2. Replacements to vacancies in elected or appointive positions under the Board's direction, shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees to serve until the next election date. The Board is not required to fill a vacant Trustee position. Said appointments may not exceed 13 months.

ARTICLE XVII -ETHICS

We adhere to the following:

17.1. The Henge of Keltria does not discriminate on the basis of age race, color, national origin, sex, or sexual preference. Individual groves with a 'cult focus' (such as the women who tended Bridget's fire at Kildare) may be exclusionary on the basis of sex only, with periodic review and approval of the Council of Elders. As the notion of same sex or single focus cult worship is not unprecedented in Celtic society, we have concluded that individual groves may be exclusionary on certain issues, so long as the tradition as a whole maintains balance. At NO TIME, however, may a Keltrian grove discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

17.2. At NO TIME shall a Grove or member of this organization espouse or engage in the practice of blood sacrifice; nor shall any Keltrian, as part of his or her religious practice participate in the torture, mutilation, enslavement, or abuse (physical or emotional) of any sentient creature for the purpose of enjoyment or spiritual gain. Any taking of life for the purpose of meeting physical needs shall be done only in accordance with civil law, and shall be conducted as humanely as possible.

17.3. Every Henge member shall keep confidential the names, addresses, telephone numbers, and places of employment of other members of the Henge, except where expressed permission has been given to publicize said information; or in such a case as a person is deemed to be a public threat (in which case confidential information may only be revealed to those authorities under whose jurisdiction the matter of conduct falls).

17.4. We view our ordained and lay clergy (Grove leaders, Officers, Elders, and Trustees) as professionals and, as such, demand professional behavior equal to that of secular and other religious professionals. Our clergy are expected to be honest, to abide by the law (except in cases of certain "victimless crimes" or civil disobedience), to respect the rights and privacy of others, to maintain a professional profile while "on duty," and to respect certain sexual taboos placed upon virtually all professionals in our society, rules which have been instituted for the protection of the client. Therefore, Keltrian clergy will refrain from engaging in sexual activities with their Grove "clients" when acting in the following capacities: teacher, healer, therapist, or divinatory counselor. (The above restrictions do no apply to sexual relationships that existed prior to the onset of the professional relationship).

17.4.1. We accept that we are all adults and capable of making our own choices; however, extreme discretion in any sexual interlude between clergy and lower ranking Grove members is advised.

17.5. It shall be the custom of this tradition to work robed or clothed at any public ritual. Private rituals may be conducted skyclad at the discretion of the individual grove.

17.6. Manipulation or coercion of a sexual nature will not be tolerated in Keltrian ritual.

17.7. At NO TIME shall firearms or explosives be brought to or used during an official Keltrian ritual.

17.8. It is in the tradition of Keltria to induce altered states of consciousness through meditation, chanting, etc. While psychoactive substances of various sorts have been used by traditional societies for this purpose, only legal psychoactive substances are permitted in Keltrian ritual.

17.9. We will not tolerate bigotry, slander, perjury, or other forms of harassment leveled against our members or against other members of the Neopagan community.

17.10. Keltrians shall abide by their initiatory oaths and shall respect the confidentiality of any oathbound material from either our tradition or another.

ARTICLE XVIII - LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT

18.1. Keltrian Druidism is an Initiatory Mystery Tradition. Prior to initiation a person must study and prepare for initiation. The uninitiated may go through three phases on the way to initiation.

18.1.1. The Seeker is a person who is investigating Celtic Spirituality or Druidism in its many and varied forms. A Seeker typically first contacts the Henge of Keltria seeking to know and understand what forms of Celtic Neopagan spirituality are available.

18.1.2. The Member is a person who is interested enough in Keltrian Druidism to join the organization. Members are considered general laity and may participate in all Mistletoe and Seasonal Rituals, serve on committees, partake in open meetings and have any other privileges and responsibilities as shall be designated by the Henge or their local Grove. A Member is not required to enter into a study program.

18.1.3. The Dedicant has committed him/herself to the study of Keltrian Druidism and has demonstrated this commitment by undergoing a Dedication Ceremony. The Dedication Ceremony establishes a Student/Teacher, Dedicant/Mentor relationship. The Dedicant is enrolled in a study course with the Mentor or is involved with the training system employed by a Grove. Dedicants may be called upon to assume lesser roles in Mistletoe and Seasonal rituals should their services be needed.

18.2. Our Ring System measures the growth and achievements of its participants. All levels are membership. Being a member in no way infers a right to initiation or advancement to the different rings. Initiation and advancement requires the approval from a member of the ring of the Oak.

18.2.1. An initiate of any higher ring may perform the actual initiation or elevation up to their ring, with the approval from a member of the ring of the Oak. Family members or "partners" to be elevated or initiated require the approval of a member of the Oak not related or sexually involved with them.

18.2.2. Upon initiation, the member is admitted into the Rings. There are three Rings, which are named after sacred trees. These are: Ring of the Birch, Ring of the Yew, and Ring of the Oak. The innermost ring, that of the Oak, has within it three tiers. These are named Hawthorne, Rowan, and Mistletoe. Our ring system is designed not to be a measure of rank, but of achievement. We use a three-fold system to measure this achievement. Advancements are based on time, study, and service. In this way we ensure our members are both well-founded and well-rounded.

18.2.3. The Ring of the Birch. The student is required to stay at the first ring for a minimum of one lunar year (13 moons). During this time, the student is expected to study the required areas, and to serve the Grove in a capacity commensurate with his or her station. We associate the ring of the Birch with the producer class; therefore, members of this ring wear green cords. This ring is considered a student level. Most of the study and work done in this ring is of a preparatory nature. To advance to second ring, the Druid of the Birch must serve the Grove on a regular basis, and must demonstrate the ability to lead the Grove in a high rite or mistletoe rite. The Druid of the Birch is expected to continue studies to reach an advanced level of Druidic knowledge. When

the Druid has completed the time, educational, and service requirements, s/he may be advanced to the Ring of the Yew by a member of the ring of the Yew or Oak.

18.2.4. The Ring of the Yew is analogous to the noble class; therefore Druids of this ring wear red cords. We consider members of this ring active participants with the Grove leadership. They are responsible for continuing their personal studies and for serving in all ritual capacities (Bards, Seers (Ovates), Druids, and Grove Tenders). A member of this ring is considered lay clergy or Druid Deacon. A member of the ring of the Yew may lead a grove site if championed by a member of the ring of the Oak. To advance to Ring of the Oak, a second ring Druid must undergo clerical training and demonstrate their skills by acting as clergy and conducting rituals over a period of time.

18.2.4.1. If, after three lunar years, and the Druid has completed the necessary service and training s/he may petition for advancement to the Ring of the Oak. Advancement is granted by a member of the ring of the Oak.

18.2.5. As the Ring of the Oak is representative of the Priest class, members of this ring should wear white cords and may be elected to the Council of Elders. A Druid of the Oak is considered qualified to break from his or her Mother Grove to start a new Grove or Champion other groves. Members of the ring of the Oak may elect to be legally Ordained as Keltrian ministers. Enabling them to perform the legal functions recognized by law. i.e.: marriages/ handfastings.

18.2.5.1. The first tier within ring of the Oak is that of Hawthorne. At this point the Druid may chose one of the three disciplines: Bard, Seer, or Priest. The Druid focuses study in his or her area of specialty, while continuing general Druidic studies. The third ring, first tier Druid is expected to function as clergy. S/he is also expected to teach Grove Leadership material and should be mentoring members of the ring of the Yew on preparation for ordained clergy. At this level the Druid should begin attending philosophical/theological roundtables and debates. Advancement to Rowan requires the endorsement of two members of higher tiers of Oak either Rowan or Mistletoe. Upon completion of three lunar years a Druid may be advance to the Rowan if s/he has adequately performed his/her service to the Grove or the Henge.

18.2.5.2. At the Oak tier of the Rowan, the Druid should be acting as primary clergy, continuing studies in his or her specialty, and teaching any advanced courses. S/he should continue to be taking an active role in the philosophical/ theological roundtables and debates. Advancement to Mistletoe requires the endorsement of three members of the tier of Mistletoe.

18.2.5.3. The highest level of achievement within our system is that of the tier of Mistletoe. The Druid is this tier no longer needs to be actively conducting ritual, but should oversee the actions of other acting clergy. At this level the Druid should devote him/herself to the service of one of the triads; either the Ancestors, the Nature Spirits, or the Gods; or to all three.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR TRANSFERS

18.3. People entering Keltria from another initiatory Neopagan Druidic tradition may be admitted to a Ring equivalent to their previously held grade or degree up to the Ring of the Yew, provided that they can demonstrate an equivalent level of knowledge. This position will be awarded for a probationary term of one solar cycle at the discretion of the Council of Elders. If, within the passage of one solar cycle, said person demonstrates that s/he has acquired sufficient ritual skills and understanding of the Keltrian system, his/her Ring will become permanent.

ARTICLE XIX - DEFINITIONS

THE PANTHEONS

19.1. A pantheon is a family of Gods and Goddesses from a single cultural tradition. Our Groves are free to use any of the Celtic pantheons in their rituals (Irish, Welsh, Scottish, Briton, Gaulish, Cornish, and Manx). Groves must work with a single Celtic pantheon rather than mixing two or more within ritual. We feel that it is easier for students to learn a single set of myths. Pantheons reflect the whole of the ancient culture. When we leave out Gods or Goddesses or mix pantheons, we risk losing certain religious aspects of that culture.

19.1.1. Our Grove members are free to work with other pantheons in their private rituals or magick, if they so desire.

DAYS OF CELEBRATION

19.2. We keep in tune with the movement of the Earth and the heartbeat of our ancestors by celebrating the eight seasonal feasts of the Celtic year. We observe the four solar festivals (the two solstices and equinoxes) giving thanks and homage to the sun. We observe as well the four cross quarters; those of Samhain, Imbolc, Beltane, and Lughnasadh. These are the Earth festivals. At these times the earth begins to note the change of seasons as prescribed by the sun. At the cross quarters we give thanks and homage to our Mother Earth.

19.2.1. For each of these eight festivals we honor a specific God and Goddess from mythology. These deities are both representative of the feast and the time of year.

19.2.2. We also conduct two lunar festivals each month. The Mistletoe Rite, which commemorates the gathering of the mistletoe, is conducted on the sixth night of the moon. This ritual is devoted to the aspects of health and communion. Our other lunar observance, the Vervain Rite, is held after sunset when neither sun nor moon is in the sky (about the third quarter). It commemorates the gathering of the Vervain, which was to be harvested when neither sun nor moon were in the sky. The Vervain Rite concerns itself with spells and magic working, and is open only to initiates of the tradition.

19.2.3. In addition to the cyclical feasts we also observe two yearly commemorative feasts, which honor specific events. The first of these is the "Feast of Age," a reenactment of the feast given for the Tuatha de Danaan by Manannan Mac Lir and Gobhinu. The pigs and ale consumed at this feast gave the Gods their immortality and invincibility. We partake in this feast to celebrate our spiritual immortality and the invincibility of our faith. Groves utilizing other pantheons may substitute a similar style ritual.

19.2.4. The second yearly feast we observe is the "Feast of Remembrance," dedicated to the Druids who were slain and the sacred Groves that were desecrated when Caesar's army took the island stronghold of Anglesey in 60 CE (60 AD). This feast also extends to remembering all people who have been slain or persecuted because of their religious beliefs.

19.2.5. Observing the cycles and the seasons gives meaning to our lives. Through them we are made aware of the cyclical nature of life itself. We are comforted in the knowledge that this life has not been and will not be our only existence. Like the mighty oak that awakens anew in the spring, we know we shall once again touch our feet to the soil of the Great Mother, our Earth.

SEER (or Ovate)

19.3. The Seer (or Ovate) is concerned primarily with the Cosmic World of Land and is associated with the Nature Spirits. The Seer functions as an herbalist, healer, an alchemist, a weather worker, and a diviner. S/he is concerned with the magick of the natural world around her/him. Persons wishing to pursue this discipline should concentrate their second ring Grove service in this area.

BARD

19.4. The Bard is concerned with the Cosmic World of the Sea and is associated with the Ancestors. The Bard functions as a lorist, genealogist, singer, musician, and storyteller. Persons wishing to pursue the discipline of Bard should concentrate their second ring Grove service in this area.

DRUID

19.5. The Druid is concerned with the Cosmic World of the Sky and is associated with the Gods. The Druid functions as clergy, teacher, mediator, and judge. The priest oversees all "high magick." Persons wishing to pursue this discipline should concentrate their second ring service in the area of Grove Tender. The term Druid encompasses both Male and Female persons.

A NOTE ON THE GROVE TENDER

19.6. The Grove Tender performs tasks similar to those of a Wiccan handmaiden. The purpose of the Grove Tender is to attend to all mundane functions of the ritual, freeing the Clergy to concentrate on their spiritual jobs. The Grove Tender would be expected to relight blown-out candles, keep incense on the charcoal, refill sacramental chalices, prompt when people forget their lines, construct and tend the ritual fire, take care of disturbances (such as someone fainting or the police showing up), prepare the altar, act as gopher, or any other tasks required by the circumstance. This job acquaints the Grove Tender with the magical tools, ritual structure, and energy flow of the service. As such, it is an excellent preparatory position for those aspiring to be clergy.

SEED GROVE

19.7. A Seed Grove is a Grove which has submitted quarterly financial reports for less than one year. It also has not submitted an annual Grove report for the previous year.

GROVES

19.8. A GROVE consists of three or more people who meet regularly, at least once per month, and have received a Charter as a Keltrian Grove.

19.8.1. In a BIRCH GROVE the Grove Leader is a member of the Ring of the Birch or higher.

19.8.2. In a YEW GROVE the Grove Leader is a member of the Ring of the Yew, or higher, at least two other members of the Grove are members of the Ring of the Birch or higher.

19.8.3. In an OAK GROVE, the Grove Leader is a member of the Ring of the Oak, and at least two other members of the Grove are members of the Ring of the Yew or higher.

INITIATIONS

19.9. The initiation is, above all, a covenant made between the Druid and her/his Gods.

19.9.1. The initiation marks a turning point in the candidate's life in two ways. First, it establishes the candidate's acceptance in the mystery path. This part of the initiation is spiritual in nature, and rests in the hands of the Gods.

19.9.2. Second, the initiation affirms the candidate's acceptance into a select group of people. This facet of initiation takes place on a cognitive, physical level. The decision to accept the candidate lies with her/his fellow humans.

19.9.3. The initiation should be a profound experience for the new Druid. It signifies a death of old ways and a rebirth into spiritual awareness. In fact, most initiations work with a motif of symbolic death and rebirth. Often, during the event, the answers to some of the "Great Mysteries" will be revealed to the candidate. The vehicle for this revelation can be either the Gods or the Initiating Druid of the group. Some traditions may also use this time to reveal the "secrets," hidden knowledge held exclusively by the group or the tradition. Frequently the candidate will be put to a test. This could be a test of knowledge, courage, trust, or endurance. Any oaths that are required by the tradition will be taken at this time.

19.9.4. On an emotional level, initiations are often frightening -- not because they are physically or emotionally dangerous (competent Neopagans should never require such initiations), but because there is an element of the unknown. It is natural for candidates to experience some fear; after all they are making a serious commitment.

19.9.5. It is imperative that initiations only be performed with the candidate's full knowledge and permission. The candidate must be both ready and willing to undertake the ordeal that lies ahead.

19.9.6. It is for the above reasons, and more, that we have decided to make Keltria an initiatory tradition. We have spoken with many Neopagans from non-initiatory backgrounds who feel that they have missed out on something. The initiation is a religious rite of passage. If conducted properly, it can be a profound and memorable experience.

19.9.7. Until our tradition has fully taken root, we will recognize initiation (group conducted) from traditions using a methodology similar to ours. "Self-initiations" will be recognized on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Elders.

19.9.8. Being an initiatory path does not intone that we have an unbroken tradition dating back to pre-historic times. Few, if any, of the Neopagan traditions can truly make such a claim. Our initiation signifies that a person has been accepted into the mystery path, and has gained sufficient knowledge and skills to be called a Keltrian Druid.

Constitution of the Order of the Mithril Star of the Reformed Druids of North America

2002

We, the Order of the Mithril Star of the Reformed Druids of North America, in order to make our existence more fruitful, do hereby enact this, our constitution.

ARTICLE ONE

The name of this organization shall be The Order of the Mithril Star of the Reformed Druids of North America and it shall be an autonomous collective within Reformed Druidism.

ARTICLE TWO

Any person, regardless of race, gender, color, culture, age or sexual preferences may become a member of this organization upon presenting a pledge, which may be oral, affirming that she or he believes in the Basic Tenets of North American Druidism, as set forth in The Book of Law in The Druid Chronicles, and in the basic tenet of the Mithril Star, as set forth in the novel, "Stranger In A Strange Land," by Robert A. Heinlein and that she or he further believes in and agrees with the self-definition of this Branch of the Reform.

ARTICLE THREE

The Basic Tenets of North American Druidism, as set forth in The Book of Law, are these:

> The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
>
> And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it.

The basic tenet of the Mithril Star, as set forth in the novel, "Stranger In A Strange Land," by Robert A. Heinlein is this:

> "'Thou art God.' It's not a message of cheer and hope. It's a defiance--and an unafraid unabashed assumption of personal responsibility."

ARTICLE FOUR

The self definition of this Branch of the Reformed Druids of North America is as follows:

The Order of the Mithril Star is a non-prophet, ir-religious, dis-organization whose purposes are:

To further develop and spread the seed of Reformed Druidism beyond the expectations (or even the desires) of the original founders of the Reform at Carleton;

To establish a network of intentional communities and Groves across the world, which will be at the service of all Druids and Groves of the RDNA and it's offshoots as well as the Pagan community at large;

- To promote and celebrate self-realization and our integration into the Mother Earth;
- To celebrate life, liberty and pursuit of happiness;
- To promote a Pagan, non-consumeristic, micro-socialistic, polyamorous lifestyle free of the outmoded mores and conventions of the dominant bourgeois monotheistic paradigm as depicted in "Stranger In A Strange Land";
- To help heal and awaken the Earth Mother Gaia;
- To help heal and awaken refugees of the dominant paradigm as they come to the realization that "Thou art God/dess."

ARTICLE FIVE

The Mother Grove of the Order of the Mithril Star shall be the ruling body of the Order, insofar as doctrinal, dogmatic and liturgical matters are concerned. The Mother Grove will function as the Board of Directors for the Order, and among its members shall be the following officers:

The Arch-Druid/ess should be at least a Third Order Druid/ess, preferably with legitimate Apostolic Succession from the Original Grove at Carleton College. He or she shall preside over all meetings and most religious services. She or he shall perform those functions usually performed by a Pastor in other religious organizations. He of she shall serve as the official spokesperson for the Order and the Mother Grove.

The Clerk must be at least a Third Order Druid/ess, and shall be the principal officer for secular matters, including the handling of the Order's communications. She or he shall serve those functions usually performed by an Assistant Pastor in other religious organizations and shall preside over services in the absence of the Arch-Druid/ess.

The Preceptor must be at least a Second Order Druid/ess, shall assist in services, and shall assist the Clerk insofar as he or she may be called upon to do so, including the handling of the Order's treasury, unless the Clerk shall have decided to perform them.

The Server must be at least a First Order Druid/ess and shall assist the Preceptor insofar as he or she may be called upon to do so, including those functions usually performed by a Secretary in other religious organizations, unless the Preceptor shall have decided to perform them.

The Official Bard must be at least a First Order Druid/ess and learned in matters of poetry, music, dancing and song. She or he shall be responsible for all Bardic matters within the Order. She or he shall be appointed by the Arch Druid of the Mother Grove as soon as there is a person qualified to hold this post and may hold one of the other posts at the same time; but need not be present for the founding of this Order.

Other officers may be added from time to time as the Grove shall decide when they are needed.

ARTICLE SIX

Elections for the posts of Arch-Druid/ess, Clerk, Preceptor, Server, and any other officers decided upon shall be held annually during the period of Foghamhar, except for the first election for each post. Unless a member of the Mother Grove shall object the post shall be filled by a voice majority vote, with nominations being accepted from the ground of the meeting. If such an objection is lodged, the election shall be by unanimous vote by secret ballot.

Only members of the Mother Grove may vote for the officers of the Order and only those persons qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for them.

Also at this time the Mother Grover may vote upon the amount, if any, of dues to be paid by all members of the Order; said dues to be used strictly for the expenses of the Order and to be kept by the Preceptor.

ARTICLE SEVEN

An individual member (or solitaire) of this Order shall be defined as one who: 1) Is at least a First Order Druid/ess, and 2) Has pledged themselves to the Order, by execution of a Pledge, affirming their belief in the three tenets.

ARTICLE EIGHT

Membership in OMS, attendance at public or semipublic OMS activities, and participation in any Druidic Study Program, shall not be denied to any person on the basis of race, ancestry, color, physical disability (except as mentioned elsewhere in this article), age, gender, or affectional orientation.

Proven communication or behavior of a virulently racist, sexist, homophobic, heterophobic, anti-Semitic, or otherwise bigoted manner, shall be grounds for expulsion from OMS-RDNA, as described elsewhere in these by-laws. This does not include strong verbal statements about the theology, history, or psychological characteristics of other religions.

All organizers of public and semipublic OMS activities shall make strenuous efforts to facilitate the participation of differently-abled individuals. Nonetheless, all aspirants to any given position must be able to meet all the relevant qualifications previously determined for said position, unless the Mother Grove shall rule otherwise in a particular instance.

ARTICLE NINE

The Mother Grove may, by a unanimous vote, initiate an investigation into a member's conduct after either that member has confessed to or been found guilty of committing felony crimes-with-victims, as defined by civil law and current criminological opinion, or having been presented with documented evidence of disruptive or abusive conduct which works directly against the aims, activities or welfare of OMS-RDNA or its members. The member will be immediately sent a written notice by registered mail to their last known address informing the member of the investigation, the accusations, the accusers, and any evidence pertaining to the investigation. The member will be given 30 days to respond in his/her defense. After considering the member's response, if any, the Mother Grove may, by a unanimous vote, suspend or expel the member.

"Disruptive or abusive conduct" does not include: the temperate expression of disagreement, such as public or private written or verbal criticism of OMS or its leadership; vigorous debate over matters of scholarship, art, spirituality, or politics; the circulation of petitions to the Mother Grove; the organizing of other members into voting blocks; nor mere rudeness, thoughtlessness, or lack of social skills.

Disruptive or abusive conduct does include: the spreading of slander or libel against OMS- RDNA or its leadership; bigoted communication or behavior as described elsewhere in these by-laws; or active efforts to persuade members to quit or to dissuade nonmembers from joining.

In the case of a person who was declared temporarily or permanently incapacitated at the time of his or her resignation or removal from a position of responsibility, the Mother Grove shall require a reevaluation of his or her competency similar to the process which had declared incapacity, before he or she may seek election or appointment.

Members may resign from membership at any time for personal reasons, and will then be eligible to rejoin OMS- RDNA at a later date. Resignation should be made in writing or by email.

Suspended, expelled or resigned members may not hold office or act in any way as representatives of OMS- RDNA Expelled or resigned members have no right to receive OMS-RDNA publications, and may not continue to participate in Druidic Study Programs administered by OMS- RDNA

Members who have been suspended or expelled may, at the discretion of the Mother Grove, be banned permanently or temporarily from attending OMS- RDNA activities, including public worship. Such bans shall be published immediately in OMS publications. They may be published elsewhere in the case of very serious crimes.

ARTICLE TEN

Individual, autonomous collectives within the Order shall be known as “Groves.”

The Mother Grove shall act upon all requests for the chartering of local groves, and shall issue appropriate regulations as needed for their proper functioning.

In Order to prevent confusion with other organizations calling their local groups "groves," all local groves of OMS-RDNA shall use the naming convention of "Cylch _____ Grove, OMS- RDNA" or the bilingual equivalent, in all brochures, posters, announcements, public letters, etc., meant to be read by nonmembers of the local groves.

All local groves of OMS- RDNA are entitled to the maximum amount of autonomy consistent with the survival, identity, and well being of OMS- RDNA as a whole.

Each local grove may choose any ethnic focus, pantheon, and liturgical language of interest to the majority of its members. Local aboriginal traditions may be respectfully integrated into a local grove's official activities, according to policies set by the Mother Grove.

Only those persons who would qualify as voting members of OMS, as described in Article 7, may vote in official local grove elections, be officers of a local grove, or be counted as official grove members for chartering purposes. The Arch-Druid, Clerk, and Preceptor, as well as any other local officers who will exercise any legal responsibilities for the grove, must have passed their 18th birthday.

The Mother Grove shall have the power to suspend or revoke the charter of a local grove for good and sufficient cause.

The Archdruid of the Mother Grove shall have the power to suspend the charter of a local grove for good and sufficient cause, subject to the agreement of the Mother Grove at their next Board meeting.

This Constitution may be amended by a unanimous vote of the members of the Mother Grove in two consecutive meetings, a quorum being present.

A quorum for this and all purposes shall be taken to be two-thirds of the members of the Mother Grove. All members of the Mother Grove who miss the first meeting at which an amendment to this Constitution was passed must be notified in writing of the date and place for the second meeting, as well as the content of the amendment.

ADOPTED this 62nd day of Samradh, in the 39th Year of the Reform, being the date of July 1st, 2001 in the Common Era,
by : Ellis S. Arseneau, Arch Druid
Ceridwen Arseneau, Clerk
Frank Mertus, Preceptor

SECTION FOUR: Pertinent Past Proselytizing Propaganda Publications

1996 Introduction

How did the people join Reformed Druidism? Some merely observed a ritual in progress and joined in, but other were recruited by reading a flyer about Reformed Druidism. One can tell a great deal about a grove by the information in the flyers that it distributes to the general public. A flyer often tries to express the spirit of a grove's Druidism in its simplest and most understandable format. I have presented three flyers here for your perusal. The first was made by Fisher and Frangquist for distributing at Carleton's student activity fair, and it proved to be the foundational template for later flyers at Carleton and beyond. The second flyer was originally used as an introduction to the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) by Isaac Bonewits, and later as a handout by several groves on the west coast. The third flyer was made by Michael Scharding to hand out in his missionary grove at St. Cloud. Carleton tended to use a variant of the first flyer up to 1995, although a variant of the second one appeared once or twice. Both the second and third flyers were made for distribution in regions were Reformed Druidism was new and unheard of.

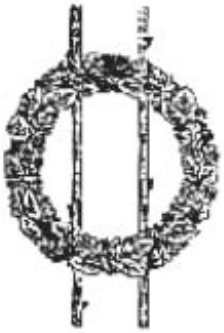
Note: None of these flyers contain dogmatic organizational principles, but provide a basic idea of how the groups historically operated. Their ideas are not set in stone.

–Scharding

Figure 3 Michael, Perverse Perpetrator of Perveying Pernicious Propanganda, 2004.

The Song of the Earth

(*By David Frangquist, 1964*)



Reformed Druids of North America
1964

INTRODUCTION

"The Druid Chronicles" are the so-called scriptures of the Reformed Druids of North America. The "Chronicles" have grown out of the movement, and contain the history as well as the principles of the RDNA.

There are five books in the "Chronicles." This pamphlet is designed to present some of the more important passages, and to give an impression of the flavor of each book.

1) THE EARLY CHRONICLES: is a history of the early months of the existence of the RDNA.
2) THE LAW: gives the "Basic Tenets" and rules for simple local organization.
3) THE CUSTOM: gives customs.
4) THE LATTER CHRONICLES: is a continuation of the history.
5) MEDITATIONS: examines the religious purpose of Reformed Druidism

# # #

1. The first of the chronicles of the disciples of the Earth-Mother, and of the various and wondrous events which did occur to them who gave themselves in service to the establishment of the reform, which branch* of the order was in Northfield, which is a city in Minnesota, the southeast part thereof. Peace be unto those whose hope lies in the comfort of the Earth-mother.
2. In those days (when Nason was president at Carleton) a decree went out from the Administration that all Sundays must be accounted for.* So each went to their own place of worship in order that their credit might be established on their record.
3. And it came to pass that there were those among these people who chose to pursue such forms of worship as were not at that time in general acceptance. And one of these was a man named David, who was also a Fisher.*
4. Now he did appear in the area which is north of the Lake of Lyman,* proclaiming the glory which was Druid. And a few there were who listened to him and consulted with him.

(Early Chronicles 1:1-4)

4. Now the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism are these:
5. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, among many.
6. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it men do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.

(Law 4-6)

(A Chant*)

1. O Earth-mother!
   We praise thee that seed springeth,
   that flower openeth,
   that grass waveth.
2. We praise thee for winds that whispers.
   through the graceful elm,
   through the shapely maple,
   through the lively pine,
   through the shining birch,
   through the mighty oak.
3. We praise thee for all things,
   O Earth-mother,
   who givest life.

(Custom 2:1-3)

1. It came to pass that the Arch-Druid was one day walking in the woods, and he was sorely perplexed, for it did happen to begin to rain.
2. And he was exceedingly wroth, so that he did feel tempted to utter a vile curse.*
3. And it came to pass that he did so utter a vile curse, for such was his wrath.
4. And this curse which he did utter was a vile curse which was a vile curse which did call down the wrath of the Earth-mother, yea, even did it call upon the power of the Earth-mother.
5. And it came to pass that when he had spoken, there was a period of time which did last no longer than the space of a few seconds, and it passed.
6. And suddenly, there did occur a most horrible sound, and a blinding light did fill all the sky about.
7. For behold, all the power of Taranis was caused to be unleashed,[g] and it did fly as a spear, and did strike a tree which was rooted in the earth.
8. And Behold, from the tree to the Arch-Druid was a space not more than fifteen cubits in length, and he was sore afraid.*
9. So he did go back among the faithful, and he did say unto them: "Curse not in the name of the Earth-mother, for verily I say unto you: ye know not what it is that ye say."*
10. And when he had told them of these things which he had seen and heard, they did marvel at it.
11. And it was taken by them to be a sign.[h]

(Latter Chronicles 2:1-11)

5. For thus saith the Earth-mother: "The Groves of the forest are my temples, and the trees of the groves are my icons,
6. "and the branches of the trees are my sacred scepters, and the green leaves of the branches are my sacrifice, which is a living sacrifice up unto beauty."[b]

(Meditations 2:5-6)

1. For what reasons is that ye sit here under the oak? Why is it that ye have come together under the stars?
2. Have ye come that ye might not be alone? If so, it is good.
3. But verily I say unto you: many there are who have come together, yet remain alone.
4. Do ye sit in the open that ye might come to know Nature? If so, it is good.
5. But verily I say unto you: many there are who have sat for hours and have risen up knowing less than when they sat down.
6. Rather, in your coming together, seek to know in what way ye may help him who is next to you, and strive to act justly toward.
7. And in your sitting down in the fields of the Earth-mother, open your minds as well as your eyes. Let your meditation grow and branch out as the oak which is over your head.
8. Except that ye have done these things, your sitting is in vain and coming is futility.
9. And why is it that ye do stand up before others and speak unto them?
10. Do ye teach unto them the ways of the Ancient Druids? If so, it is good.[i]
11. For they had their wisdom, and that is oft forgot.[j] But verily I say unto you: in their day, even they also were young in their traditions.
12. The wise man is not constrained to learn only that which he is taught. Yea, even as there is a time for talking, is there also a time for no talking.
13. In the silence of your being shall ye find that which is not of your being; and in the Earth-mother shall ye find that which is not of the Earth-mother; in Be'al shall ye be made aware, and your awareness shall fill you.
14. Ye shall be like the morning sun which has risen and whose brightness is already full, but whose path is yet ever upward;
15. and the light of your awareness shall sweep before it all the shadows of your uncertainty.
16. Then shall ye need wait no more; for this is the great end and all else is but beginning.

(Meditations 7:1-16)

PEACE!

What is Reformed Druidism?

Reformed Druids of North America
Flyer for Fall 1965 at Carleton

Origins

Reformed Druidism has its beginning at Carleton College in the spring of 1963 as a protest to the college's requirement that all students attend a certain number of religious services or meetings. One of the ways of fulfilling the requirement was by attending services of one's own religion. The Reformed Druids of North America proposed to test the degree of freedom permitted under this clause.

Druidism was ideal for this attack. It had a perfect combination of exotic ritual plus some relevance to the so-called Judeo-Christian tradition. If religious credit were granted, the religious requirement could be exposed as totally ineffective. If, on the other hand, credit were denied, the college could be charged with bigotry. The initial attitude of the college was, "If we ignore them, they'll go away.". But the RDNA not only refused to go away, it grew, acquiring an advisor, and becoming a registered college organization.

In June, 1964, the religious requirement was repealed. Even though the Druids rejoiced at this triumph, they recognized that their job was not over. For many members the movement had come to represent a valuable part of their spiritual lives. So there was the importance of continuing the RDNA as a protest against all coerced religion.

Principles

Druidism boasts its lack of institutionalized dogma. Each Druid is required only to adopt these Basic Tenets:

> (1) One of the many ways in which the object of Man's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature: the Earth-Mother.
>
> (2) Nature, being one of the primary concerns in Man's life and struggle, and being one of the objects of creation, is important to Man's spiritual quests. (The phrase "objects of creation" does not necessarily imply a single Creator, but it does imply an important link between the spiritual and the material realms)

In Reformed Druidism, the material realm, Nature, is personified as the Earth-Mother. The abstract essence of the universe, in opposition to the material world, is referred to as Be'al, from a word which the ancient Celts applied to an abstract supreme being. The "object of Man's search" is called "awareness," and it is defined as "unity with Be'al".

Ritual

In accord with the Basic Tenets, all Reformed Druid worship must be directed toward Nature. For this reason, many customs and rituals of the Ancient Druids, who were essentially Nature-worshippers, are retained.

Druid worship must, in so far as possible, be held in the out-of-doors; an oak grove, or a hill or other prominence, is ideal. According to ancient Druid custom, the officiating Druids, and others who so wish, ought to be clad in long white robes; the robe of the Archdruid having a distinctive decoration or color. The waters-of-life are usually passed to all present as a symbol of the link man has with Nature. Incantation and other ancient Celtic ritual is also used; but in "Reformed" Druidism, human sacrifice is out.

In order to focus attention on Nature, various aspects of it retain the names of their corresponding Celtic gods and goddesses.

Dalon Ap Landu - the grove
Grannos - healing springs
Braciaca - malt
Belenos - the sun
Sirona (goddess) - rivers
Taranis - thunder & lightning
Llyr- the sea
Danu (goddess) - fertility

Festivals

Druid festivals correspond to the important dates of the old Druid year. Celebration always begins at sundown the previous evening, and includes bonfires and revelry appropriate to the season.

Samhain - Nov. 1: "Halloween" begins the period of Geimredh.
Midwinter - the winter solstice; day of the "Yule log"
Oimelc - Feb. 1; begins the period of Earrach.
Beltane- May 1; "May Day," begins period of Samradh.
Midsummer - the summer solstice
Lugnasadh (Brón Troghain) - Aug. 1; day for gatherings and feasts, begins the period of Foghamhar.

The phases of the moon also ought to be followed closely. A new venture should be begun only when the moon is waxing, an old one consummated only when it is waning. The night of the full moon is a time of rejoicing; while the night of the new moon is a solemn occasion, calling for vigils and meditation.

Organization

Each organization (known as a grove) has three officers: an Archdruid, who must be a third order priest or higher, to direct worship; a Preceptor, who must be at least a second order Druid, to handle business matters; and a Server, to assist the Archdruid.

To become a first order Druid, a person must partake of the waters-of-life, and affirm his acceptance of the Basic Tenets (listed under Principles above).

To become a second order Druid, one must pledge himself to the service of Druidism, as well as have an understanding of basic Druidism.

To become a third order priest, one must dedicate himself to a life of Druidic inquiry, the beginning of which is an all-night, outdoor vigil.

Higher orders of the priesthood (up to the tenth) are reserved for outstanding insight and dedication over a period of time. They are similar to academic degrees in that they represent personal achievement, but carry no special authority. Each order of the priesthood is dedicated to one of the eight aspects of Nature mentioned under Ritual.

Purpose

On a superficial level, it might now seem that the purpose of Reformed Druidism is merely to delve into the strange customs and rituals of the ancient Celts, and to have some fun doing it, and also to serve as a new and different type of protest movement.

But, on deeper examination of the RDNA, it might be said to have two important purposes: (1) It offers a reasonable alternative for the person who cannot stomach organized religion, or who feels that it is somehow deficient; and it hopes that its exotic forms of worship will appeal to the rebel. (2) In communing with Nature, it seeks to promote a spirit of meditation and introspection, aimed ultimately at awareness of religious truth.

What and Why is Reformed Druidism in the 70s?

Schismatic Druids of North America
Used as the Introduction for
The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) Fall 1976

Origins

Many people coming across the Reformed Druid movements for the first time may very well be confused as to their exact nature, and for good reason - Reformed Druidism is very confusing, even (or perhaps especially) to its members. Therefore, this introduction may help to place certain concepts into perspective.

Reformed Druidism (or, at least, the first known Branch of the Reform) was started as a lark at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota in the Spring of 1963 c.e. (common era) as a protest to the college's requirement that all students attend a certain number of religious services or meetings per semester. One of the ways in which this requirement could be fulfilled was by attending the services of one's own religion. The original Reformed Druids of North America ("RDNA") was founded in order to test the amount of freedom granted under this clause - by inventing a new and unheard of religion on the spot.

As originally founded, Reformed Druidism was ideal for this attack. It had a perfect combination of "exotic ritual" plus "some relevance to the so-called Judeo-Christian Tradition." If religious attendance credit had been given then the requirement would have been shown up as totally ineffective. If, instead, credit had been denied, then the college could have been charged with creedism.

The initial attitude of the college administrators was "If we ignore them, they'll go away." But the RDNA not only did not go away, it grew, acquired a faculty advisor and became a registered student organization - one that has existed, off and on, to this very day. [*Never recognized, actually. -Scharding*]

In June of 1964 c.e., the religious requirement was repealed. Even though the Druids rejoiced at this triumph, some of them realized that their job was not yet over. For many members, the movement had come to represent more than a practical joke and an excuse to miss Sunday Chapel - It had come to represent a valuable part of their spiritual lives. And so, to the surprise of the original Founders, the RDNA continued to exist and grow; with graduates of Carleton College spreading the movement (and its offshoots) across the country.

Basic Beliefs

The principles of the original RDNA are quite simple and are referred to as the "Basic Tenets." We quote here from The *Book of the Law*, Verses 4-6, as they appear in the Lughnasadh 14 y.r. Edition of *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*:

> "4. Now the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism are these:
>
> 5. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
>
> 6. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it."

This has since been abbreviated, in *The Outline of the Foundation of the Fundamentals*, to the following statements:

> "1. Nature is good! And the second is like unto the first:
>
> 2. Nature is good!"

It appears that all Reformed Druids, of every Branch of the Reform, believe in the above principles, though all have their own interpretations of the words. In all the Branches of the Reform, the material realm, Nature, is personified as the Earth-Mother (one of the oldest archetypes known to humanity). The abstract essence of the universe(s), in distinction from the material world, is referred to as Be'al, from a word which the Ancient Celts applied to an abstract supreme being (based on the root "Bel", meaning "good, shining, bright"). The "object of Humanity's search" is called "awareness" and it is defined as "unity with Be'al".

The Branches of the Reform

There are at present (*Lughnasadh* 14 y.r.) several overlapping Branches of Reformed Druidism: the Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA), the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA), the Schismatic Druids of North America (SDNA), the Hasidic Druids of North America (HDNA), and rumblings of a few others (including Zen Druidism, Chaoist Druidism, Norse Druidism, etc.)

The RDNA is, of course, the original group and looks somewhat askance at the offshoots. The NRDNA and the SDNA were founded during *Foghamhar* 12 y.r. (Fall of 1974 c.e.) and the HDNA during *Samradh* 14 y.r. (Summer of 1976 c.e.). The other offshoots are as yet twinkles in their Founders' eyes.

The RDNA itself neither categorically denies nor accepts the validity of any particular faith, including its own. This is one of the most important principles of the RDNA. It means that anyone may become this kind of Druid without feeling obligated to renounce her or his present religious beliefs and without being committed to anything but the Basic Tenets. Many find this approach to mysticism liberating, although some may also feel that it prevents them from answering the question, "Is my Druidism valid?" The answer to that question must be found on an individual level and a Druid would say "It will come with awareness."

While the original RDNA includes Jews, Christians, Agnostics, Atheists, Marxist and members of other faiths in its ranks, the NRDNA seems to include many Neopagans as well (for a discussion of what Neopaganism is see *The First Epistle of Isaac, Part Two*) and one Grove at least is headed further and further in that direction. However, the major distinctions between the NRDNA and the RDNA appears to be in their political structure rather than their philosophy (see below).

The SDNA is emphatically Neopagan in its philosophy (although in an antidogmatic fashion) and defines itself as follows: "The SDNA is a Branch of Reformed Druidism, emphasizing its own nature as an Eclectic Reconstructionist Neopagan Priestcraft, based primarily upon Gaulish and Celtic sources, but open to ideas, deities and rituals from many other Neopagan belief systems. We worship the Earth-Mother as the feminine personification of Manifestation, Be'al as the masculine personification of Essence, and numerous Gods and Goddesses as personification of various aspects of our experience. We offer no dogmas or final answers but only continual questions. Our goal is increased awareness and harmony within ourselves and all of Nature. We are willing to interact philosophically and ritual with members of all other belief systems, including all other Branches

of the Reform, that are compatible with our own approach and Nature. We accept our duty to assist Evolution, on all levels, and to work for the survival of our Holy Mother the Earth."

The HDNA is the most recent Branch of the Reform, being an offshoot from the SDNA. It too considers itself to be a form of Neopaganism and has chosen to orient itself around a total Neopagan Lifestyle, based upon "repaganized" patterns taken from Jewish origins. It is currently offering the following self-definition, until a better one is evolved: "The HDNA is a Branch of Reformed Druidism, emphasizing its own nature as an Eclectic Reconstructionist Neopagan Lifestyle, based primarily upon Gaulish, Celtic, Yiddish and Hebrew Paleopagan sources, but open to ideas, deities and rituals from many other Neopagan belief systems..." [the rest of their definition follows that of the SDNA]

It should be remembered that most of the members of the RDNA do *not* consider themselves to be Pagans of any sort, but rather followers of a way of inquiry that is applicable to any faith. Druids believe that among the many obstacles to spiritual growth are Dogmatism and Orthodoxy; the formalization of beliefs in a fashion that discourages continual spiritual inquiry, or that encourages others to adopt them without their own inquiry. Many also feel that most of the world's religions are beset by these problems and must constantly combat their ossifying influence. The Neopagans agree that it is necessary to keep a wary eye and a keen sense of humor about the whole problem. Still, many of the older members of the RDNA disapprove of Neopagan Druidism, considering it a dangerous step backwards.

The SDNA and the HDNA seem to place more of an emphasis than the RDNA and the NRDNA (except for the Berkeley Grove) upon the following areas; Magic, craft, Poetry, Song, Dance, use of Solar and Lunar cycles, Neopagan ecumenical rites, civil liberties actions and active worship of many Gods not mentioned in the original RDNA literature. All Reformed Druid movements are interested in ecological activities and in the creation of new liturgies.

There are many members of the NRDNA who agree with the philosophy of the SDNA and/or the HDNA, but who prefer to remain with the organizational structure of the RDNA. This is what we mean when we say that the Branches of the Reform "overlap". Also of interest is the fact that, thanks to the Apostolic Succession from Carleton College (maintained by using the same basic ordination ceremony, with or without additions, for the Priesthood), all Third Order priests and priestesses of any Branch of the Reform are equally "legitimate", though personal beliefs vary widely and some groups may not allow priests of a different Branch to lead some of their specialized rites.

In none of the currently existing Branches of the Reform is either sex given precedence over the other, nor any race, color, nationality or culture considered superior. The SDNA and the HDNA accept only Pagans for the Priesthood. The Priesthood of the RDNA and the NRDNA, on the other hand, are open to members of all faiths.

Local Organization

All Branches of the Reform operate locally in "Groves". Each Grove has at least three officers; an Archdruid/ess, who must be at least a Third Order Druid or Druidess, to direct worship; a Preceptor (or Preceptress) who must be of at least the Second Order, to handle business matters; and a Server, who must be of at least the First Order, to assist the Archdruid/ess. In the SDNA and the HDNA, other officers are added, including an Assistant Archdruid/ess, to preside over services when the regular Archdruid/ess is absent, and a Bard, to direct all the music, poetry, singing and dancing. Some Groves may also appoint an Astrologer to select the proper dates for services, etc.

To become a First Order Druid/ess, a person must partake of the waters-of-life and affirm her or his acceptance of the Basic Tenets.

To become a Second Order Druid/ess, one must pledge himself or herself to the service of Druidism, as well as have an understanding of basic Reformed Druidism.

To become a Third Order Druid/ess (priest or priestess), one must dedicate herself or himself to a life of Druidic inquiry, the beginning of which is an all night fast and vigil in the outdoors. The SDNA and the HDNA add various other requirements for this Order, including, amongst others, (1) a statement to the members of the Grove that one does indeed think of oneself as a Pagan, (2) progress in the learning of magical , religious and parapsychological knowledge, (3) progress in the learning of various crafts and fine arts, and (4) an agreement between the candidate and the ordaining Archdruid/ess that a genuine vocation is evident. The normal time period in the SDNA and the HDNA from becoming a member of the First Order to being ordained to the Third Order (for those who are not already clergy in other Neopagan religions) is a year and a day.

The RDNA and the NRDNA also encourage the ordination only of those with vocations, however, they define this differently and do not necessarily consider holding of Neopagan priesthood as evidence of such.

In order to establish a legal Grove, in any Branch, it is necessary to have three people, at least one of whom is of the Third Order and one of the Second, to adopt one of the standard forms of a Constitution and (for the offshoots) to register the fact of the Grove's existence with the head of one's Branch.

National Organization

Each Grove, in every Branch of the Reform, is an independent entity, as is each Branch. In the RDNA, what little governance occurs is handled by the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, which consists of all Third Order priests and priestesses, including (presumably) those who belong to the other Branches. (It would be difficult legally and ethically oust the "heretics", in any event, since they do hold legitimate Apostolic Succession and there are not provisions -currently- for loyalty oaths to the original Branch.) The basic principal of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu has been described by some as "that government is best which governs least." The CoDAL operates by mail and is officially headed by whoever is Archdruid/ess of Carleton Grove. Since (a) Druids don't write letters much, (b) the Carleton Grove is most active during the school year, and (c) it has also suffered organizational difficulties over the last few years (though it now seems healthy enough) the CoDAL has actually done very little over the years.

The NRDNA formed, in part, over this difficulty and is in the process of reorganizing its political structure. Three of the five RDNA Groves (Berkeley, Chicago and Stanford) decided in August 1974 c.e. to stage a coup d'etat and form a Provisional Council of ArchDruids, inviting the leaders of all active Groves to join. Further details on this action, and the confusion accompanying it, can be found in *The Book of Changes*.

The fifth Grove (the Twin Cities) began to schis from the RDNA at the same time. The reasons for the schism (whether full or partial, temporary or permanent, has never been decided) were dissatisfaction with the religious vaguenesses and overly anarchistic disorganization that they believed to exist in the original Druid organization, a desire to make their form of Druidism more available to the public, and a feeling that it was unfair to all parties involved to use the same name. It is currently

headquartered in Berkeley California (The Mother Grove, which has an overlapping membership with the Berkeley Grove, NRDNA).

The HDNA was formed as an offshoot of the SDNA, with its full cooperation, and is currently headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri (the Arch Grove)

The Archdruids of the NRDNA, SDNA and HDNA Groves belong to the Provisional Council of Archdruids (PCoADS), which is in correspondence with the RDNA Archdruids. However, the political structure of all these Branches will no doubt continue to evolve as time goes on.

The SDNA has arranged for legal minister and church status to be granted to any Druid priest/ess or Grove so desiring (in any Branch) via a federally recognized Nonprofit Religious Association (the Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness). [I.e. “Pentalpha”]

Special Orders

Within the RDNA there are "Higher Orders," from the Fourth to the Tenth, that are "reserved for outstanding insight and dedication over a period of time. They are similar to academic degrees in that they represent personal achievement, but carry no special authority." Each of these Higher Orders is dedicated to one of the aspects of Nature mentioned below (under "Ritual"). There are at present only four of these Orders operating (the Fourth through Seventh), since the Patriarch of the Seventh Order resigned several years ago (as did the Patriarch of the Fourth Order more recently) and the RDNA has never instituted or executed any procedures for selecting replacements for the heads of the Higher Orders. Since the heads (Patriarchs and Matriarchs) of each Higher Orders are elected by the members of each Order directly below, this means that the Eight, Ninth and Tenth Orders have no leaders and no members.

There are also other Orders associated with the other Branches of the Reform, including the Order of Oberon and the Order of Merddyn in the SDNA (which are Bardic and Ceremonial Magical Orders, respectively), the Order of Diancecht in the NRDNA (a Healing Order), etc. As a general rule, these Orders have only whatever "authority" in a local Grove may choose to grant them. For example, in the Twin Cities Grove, the Order of Oberon is headed by the Grove's Bard and is in charge of all music, poetry, ritual dramas, etc. The Matriarch or Patriarch of each special Order is usually self-appointed and exercises whatever internal authority they can get away with, which isn't much.

Ritual

In accordance with the Basic Tenets, all Reformed Druid worship is directed towards Nature. For this reason, many customs and rituals (real, reconstructed, or fancied) of the Ancient (Paleopagan) Druids are retained. The Berkeley Grove seems to have done the most research in this area so far, having a gigantic library of Celtic materials and holding many of its services in Gaelic. Druid worship should in so far as is possible, be held in the out-of-doors. An oak grove, beach, hill or other place of natural beauty is ideal.

During the winter, especially in the Northern parts of the country, frequent outdoor services are impractical. The Berkeley Grove solves this by having "Celtic Nights" every other week during the winter, and the Twin Cities Grove has experimented with weekly Taoist meditation services, which seemed to fit quite well with the Reformed druid idea.

According to custom, the officiating Third Order Druids, and other who so wish, ought to be clad in long robes (white is traditional, but any color other than black is acceptable), with the robe of the presiding Archdruid/ess having a distinctive color or decoration. The official mark of the Priesthood is the red or white ribbon (depending on the season) worn around the neck. This is the actual minimum of vestments and some Groves may choose to wear ordinary clothes or dress in some other manner. Ribbons of other colors are worn as insignia by the various Orders as well.

The waters-of-life are usually passed to all present as a symbol of the link we have with Nature. Incantation and other Paleopagan ritual devices are also used, but in all Branches of the Reform human and animal sacrifice is forbidden (actually there is very little to support the idea that human sacrifice was ever very common among the Ancient Druids anyway). The sacrifice that is used instead is usually the leaves and branches of a living plant (often, but not always, an oak tree).

In order to focus attention on Nature, various aspects of Her retain the names of their corresponding Celtic and Gaulish Gods and Goddesses:

Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of the Groves
Grannos, God of Healing Springs
Braciaca, God of Malt and Brewing
Belenos, God of the Sun
Sirona, Goddess of Rivers
Taranis, God of Thunder and Lightning
Llyr, God of the Sea
Danu, Goddess of Fertility

These deities are referred to by all Branches of the Reform, though their relative importance varies from Grove to Grove. In the HDNA, SDNA, and some parts of the NRDNA, several other deities are added. For details concerning these and other deities, see *Miscellaneous Customs and Liturgical Notes*, *The Book of Footnotes*, *A Guide to Gaelic Deities* and the appropriate books in *A Bibliography of Druidism*.

There are two standard services for weekly use, called the "Orders of Common Worship," one for the Summer half of the year and one for the Winter half. There are also "Special Orders of the Worship" for the High Days (see below), most of them written by the Berkeley Grove, and all of them optional. Many other ceremonies, some required and some optional, have been created over the years and more are still being invented. For copies of these rituals, see *The Liturgy of the Druids*.

Festivals and Holy Days

The Druid festivals that are held in common by most Branches correspond to the important dates of the old Celtic year. Celebration always begins at sundown of the previous evening and includes bonfires and revelry appropriate to the season. The High Days are divided into Major and Minor ones:

Samhain occurs around November 1st, is a Major High Day and begins the period of *Geimredh*.
Midwinter occurs around December 21st, is a Minor High Day and marks the Winter Solstice.
Oimelc occurs around February 1st, is a Major High Day and begins the period of *Earrach*.
Spring occurs around March 21st, is a Minor High Day, the Vernal equinox is not celebrated by the RDNA.
Beltane occurs around May 1st, is a Major High Day and begins the period of *Samradh*.
Midsummer occurs around June 21st, is a Minor High Day and marks the Summer Solstice.

Lughnasadh occurs around August 1st, is a Major High Day and begins the period of *Foghamhar*.

Fall or Autumn occurs around September 21st, is a Minor High Day, the Autumnal Equinox is not celebrated in the RDNA.

These dates are all calculated in different ways by different Groves, and are extremely flexible in any event. The phases of the moon are closely watched and attempt is made to begin projects when the moon is waxing and to end them when it is waning. The night of the full moon is a night of rejoicing, while many Druids use the night of the new moon for solemn vigils and fasting. There are numerous other holidays and festivals, especially in the SDNA and the HDNA, kept by individual Druids and Groves.

For more information about these matters, see *The Tally of the Years* and the *Druid Calendars*.

Sacred Scriptures

There are a number of collected writings held in greater or lesser reverence by various Druids. *The Chronicles of the Foundation*, originally entitled *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed*), are the only writings universally held to be of "sacred" status. *The Books of the Apocrypha* consist of a variety of letters sent out by members of the Priesthood to each other. *The Liturgy of the Druids* is a collection of rites performed by both large and small numbers of Druids. *Further Laws, Customs and Ordinances* is the title for several pieces of constitutional and legislative material, as well as articles on the calendrical systems and miscellaneous customs developed by various individual Druids and Groves. *The Great Druish Books* are those held to by the Hasidic Druids (and a very few others*). The Druid Miscellany* is a number of short articles concerning matters historical, linguistic, polytheological, Bardic and bibliographical. All of these items will be found in *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved*) which is currently selling at a price (cost) of $6.00 per copy.

The Green Book is a collection of favorite meditational passages and poems used by the Carleton Grove. It should be available later in 1976 c.e., from the Ann Arbor Grove. *The Black Book* is the name for the Carleton Archdruids' copy of the liturgy.

Conclusion

We hope that this brief Introduction has answered some of your more important questions about the different organizations called themselves part of the Reformed Druid movements. Obviously , only a thorough and careful reading of all of the literature of the various Branches will acquaint you completely with each one. Naturally each Branch of the Reform likes itself the best and wishes to be distinguished from the others (especially the RDNA, which wishes to be kept completely distinct from its offshoots). It is up to the reader to decide which, if any, of the Reformed Druid movements strikes a responsive chord.

Further information about Druidism of your choice can be obtained by writing to the nearest Grove of the Branch that you are interested in.

Figure 4 Old Stone Circle, Summer 1997.

Addresses:

The addresses and affiliations of the currently active Groves are as follows:

Ann Arbor Grove, RDNA c/o Adr. Richard M Shelton, 722 Dewey Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

Arch Grove, HDNA, c/o Vicki Rhodes, 475 Lockwood, Webster Groves, MO 63119.

Berkeley Grove, NRDNA, c/o Adr. Robert Larson, 5208 Manila, Apt 6. Oakland CA 94618

Carleton Grove, RDNA, c/o Adr. Don Morrison, Carleton College, Northfield, MN 55057.

Chicago Grove, NRDNA, c/o Adr. Michael Bradley, 5611 South Blackstone, Chicago IL 60615

Mother Grove, SDNA, c/o Adr. Isaac Bonewits, box 9398, Berkeley, CA 94709

New York Grove ("the Second"), RDNA, c/o Adr. Steve Corey, 185 Mountainview Road, East Longmeadow, MA 01028

Southern Shores (Stanford) Grove, RDNA /NRDNA, Adr. David Uggla, 1820 West Bayshore Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

Twin Cities Grove, SDNA, c/o Adr. Eleanora Auvinen 212 Southeast Bedford, Minneapolis, MN 55414

Remember that these addresses are very out of date, so don't write to them, except Carleton.

Protogroves will be starting up soon in many parts of the country. See the address in the Box below for the Druids closest to you.

Figure 5 Springtime shore of Lyman Lakes in 1960s.

What is Reformed Druidism?

By Emmon Bodfish, Live Oak Grove
Druid Missal-Any, Midsummer 1987

GUIDELINES FOR VISITORS AND NEWCOMERS

Reformed Druid Services schedule to mesh with the movement of the Sun and the Stars. They must start on time, such as at Solar Noon, when the Sun is highest in the sky, or at Sunset. Please be on time. If you are late, stand quietly outside the circle; please don't interrupt.

The Service is not a party; partying is afterwards. While R.D.N.A. is not grimly solemn, Druids are serious in their religious purpose. If you are not seriously interested in spiritual development or meditative skills, then Druidism, R.D.N.A. system, is not for you.

Once the Service begins, focus. Talking, joking, laughing etc. are rude. They break the concentration of others and prevent the Grove from achieving its goal. If you are drunk, stoned, or uncontrollably disruptive, you will be asked to leave.

While everyone is not a scholar, you are expected to learn some historical background about the Ancient Druids.

Ranks earned in other religions don't "count" in R.D.N.A. There is not fast way up or around the hierarchy. We are in no way connected with any other Neopagan religion, Wiccan, Craft or the secular, charitable organization style "Druids".

If what you really want are "Sex 'n Drugs 'n Rock 'n Roll", Druidism, again, is not for you. You might consult the San Francisco Sex Information Switchboard (415-665-7300) who deal with that sort of networking. Neither do we offer instant magic, curses, nor predictions about the Stock Market.

Enough Said
(With thanks to Selena Fox's Guidelines)
Now, if you're still with us,

How to Join.

Read the basic Tenets and see if you agree with them. Read over the Outline of the Foundation of the Fundamentals.

To become a full member of the Reformed Druids, you must attend a Service or a Grove, during the summer half of the year, state that you want to join, state that you agree with the Basic Tenet, "Nature is Good," when you are asked this by the Archdruid, and share with the Grove a sip of the Water-of-Life. Or you may be accepted by a Solitary Third Order (clergy) Druid who performs the standard Service and shares with you the Waters-of-Life.

If neither of these opportunities are available to you, you can become a Proto-grove member until you can meet an ordained Druid or attend an active Grove. Perform the proto-grove Service yourself. Tell Deity(s) that you agree with the basic Tenets. Let us know and we will announce your new Proto-grove in the Missal-Any. To wiseacres who only want to see their names in print, and so send us fallacious Proto-Grove applications, we leave them to Cernnunos, Sucellos, and their consciences.

For a copy of the Proto-grove service, send us two or three stamps and an envelope, or $1.00 (We are on budgets too.)

Now the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism are These:

The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.

or

Nature is good!

and the second is like unto the first:

Nature is good!

The following is from : The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)
[Here is included a copy of "The Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals" from the Apocrypha]

Figure 6 Emmon Bodfish at Live Oak Grove, Fall 1982

What is Reformed Druidism?

The "Big River Grove" of the
Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA) at SCSU
.Initial Flyer for the Fall of 1995 at St. Cloud State University

Definition

The Reformed Druids are a club of students from all backgrounds who are interested in exploring the beliefs of religions and philosophies. They also have a reverence for the importance of the Earth in our daily lives. We join together to enrich each other by sharing insights and pointing out good resources. This is our first year at SCSU.

Common Beliefs:

There are only two Basic Tenets which we, as a group, agree with:

> 1) The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
>
> 2) And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it.

Everything beyond that is up to you, as far as we are concerned. We don't like dogma.

History

The first grove of the Reformed Druids was founded at Carleton College in Northfield Minnesota in 1963. Some students wanted to protest mandatory chapel attendance, and they learned of a loophole allowing students to alternatively attend services of their own religion. They decided to make up their "own religion" and created the Reformed Druids as a hoax, based on the image of the ancient Druids of France & Britain. When the chapel requirement was dropped by the college, they found that they were enjoying the Druidical activities too much to quit. Many had found that the eternal search for religious truth was too important to abandon and that Druidism was the vehicle for that search. As they graduated from Carleton, many Druids founded new Druid groups, called "groves" and continued to help other students explore their own beliefs.

Structure

Being a creation of the 1960s, Reformed Druidism doesn't really like hierarchy. However, three basic officers of the group are necessary to maintain club status and to make sure activities DO happen. We elect them every year in the first three weeks of Fall term.

1) Archdruid. This is the titular head of the grove. She or he is responsible for organizing activities and leading seasonal services.

2) Preceptor. The right-hand Druid of the Archdruid. She or he helps the Archdruid with organizing events and they play a role in the services.

3) Server. The server merely is a go-for to help with advertising and various tasks.

Although all members are equal in the eyes of the group, some members will occasionally pass through different stages of spiritual growth. It is customary to mark these events by holding a ceremony in their honor. We call these ceremonies "orders", similar to the different levels of Masonic groups.. There are traditional speeches and activities associated with the three different orders. They are serene and dignified events and they are often designed & directed by the initiate. Most people don't go through the orders, and that's fine. But there is much more to Druidism that collecting silly titles.

The Festivals

Because we find one type of inspiration through Nature's cycles, we hold periodic ceremonies to honor the passing of the seasons. The names are taken from public holidays in Ireland that were similarly practiced in most of Europe up until W.W.II. Each of these four holidays is usually accompanied by a campfire.

Samhain (Pron. "Sa-veen" or "Sawin") Nov. 1st. Known in Christian calendars today as "All Saints Day" Remembrance of our ancestors and honoring the beginning of the Winter half of the Druidical year.

Imbolc (Pron. "Eem-bolluck" or "im-wolac") Feb 1st. Known in Christian calendars as "Candlemas". At this time of the year, the first signs of spring are revealed through pussywillows, ewes bearing lambs and a slow warming of temperatures.

Beltane (Pron. "Bell-tain" or "Bel-tin-uh") May 1st. Known to many as "May Day". It is the celebration of the fertility in the Earth and the beginning of the Summer half of the Druidical year. Maypole dances and flower-gathering are common activities.

Lughnasadh (Pron. "Loo-na-sa") Aug. 1st. This is a harvest festival, celebrating the pinnacle of the Earth's productive bounty and the realization that winter is slowly coming and that we must prepare for upcoming hardships.

Part Two: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is Reformed Druidism?
A: Reformed Druidism is that feeling when you see a little bird hatching from an egg in the spring. It is a deep personal drive for religious truth, a drive so important that you will follow it no matter where it takes you. It is a journey, perhaps with occasional wayside rests, but still a journey whose only distant destination is truth.

Q: Do Reformed Druids have scriptures?
A: Not really. We are a living experience that cannot be encompassed with pen & ink. We do have some reflective writings from past members, but most people ignore them as silly. Instead, most Druids seek inspiration from various philosophical and religious writings that they find attractive. Some Druids find that events in their everyday lives provide plenty of inspiration No two Druids have the same background of ideas, which makes our interactions all the more productive & unpredictable.

Q: What do Reformed Druids think about the Earth?
A: Most of us agree that the Earth is good; so much so that we affectionately refer to her as the "Earth-mother". Everyone today realizes that we have to be environmentally aware of the earth's cycle and the Druids often go a step further. While many of us find spiritual fulfillment in the lofty aeries of theoretical theology, we also realize that the material world can also teach us spiritual lessons. We can find truths in the eternal cycles of life and death and in the passing of the seasons. We recognize these lessons by marking the seasons with rituals to express these lessons.

Q: Do I have to abandon my previous religion to become a Druid? Do I have to be Pagan?
A: We welcome people of all religions and philosophies to the group, provided they can interact respectfully and maturely. Reformed Druidism does not require (nor does it desire) that you change religion. It only asks you to examine your beliefs and expand your understanding of alternate systems. It is far better to

be able to expand the understanding of one's own religion than to wander aimlessly, although for some members, such wandering may lead them to new religions or philosophies that they may find better suited to their life.

Q: What kind of activities do Druids do?
A: Most of the time it's just talking together, sharing ideas and telling each other about good courses to take. Other times we may meet to quietly meditate or go for nature walks. Occasionally we get together for a service to mark the passing of the seasons and pause to reflect how similar cycles of ebb and flow also occur in our daily lives. Some members prefer to do Druidical activities on their own with only the occasional interaction of the group. Many members drift away after they find that they don't need the group anymore, others stay behind to help future members in their searches.

Q: Are you guys a cult? I mean, do you do animal sacrifice or brainwashing?
A: Nope, No and No. We're a club for people looking for truths and who are willing to share their insights. We do offer up the occasional vegetable or oak-branch at our services, but then again the Christians often offer up bread and wine.

Q: So what's the point?
A: "The Search is it's own reward."

Figure 7 Bill Scherer, Mike Scharding, Andrea Davis, Matt Cohen, Sam Adams and Gretchen Johns March 1993 in 5th Floor Watson Hall to elect Mike Archdruid and vote for a constitution.

Figure 8 Tracy Utsuka, Allison, Dan Coil, Mike, Stephen Crimmins at New Stone Circle, 4/30/01.

What Is Up With Reformed Druidism?

By Stephen Crimmins, Carleton Grove 2003

"In those days (when Nason was president at Carleton) a decree went out from the administration that Sundays had to be accounted for."[1]

The Reform Druids of North America (RDNA) were started in 1963 as a protest against Carleton's Religion Requirement.

Since then the Druids have come to be a source for any one interested in Spirituality and Nature, no matter what background or lack there of.

Druids Have Only Two Common Beliefs:

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life as we come face to face with it.

Some can't even agree on [or parse] these and so they've been simplified to:

1. Nature Is Good.

2. Nature Is Good

Which is still controversial, leading to:

1 and 2. Nature Is Nature

(We drew the line here)

If you are interested in Reformed Druidism email crimmins@carleton.edu or try our web page, http://orgs.carleton.edu/druids

FAQ About the Reformed Druids

Q: The Druids Hold Satanic Rituals, Right?
A: No. Absolutely Not. In fact, some of us, such as the founder of Reformed Druidism, are devout Christians.

Q: But what about the orgies and the animal sacrifice I've heard about?
A: Sorry, but we are Reformed Druids. Since the Reform, we hold discussions, practice meditation, and pursue other avenues of spiritual exploration; most of all, we spend lots of time in the Arb.

Q: Do I have to quit my current religion to be a Druid?
A: Most certainly not. Anyone can be a Druid, regardless of religion, or lack there of.

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[1] From 'The Druid Chronicles (Reformed), by David Frangquist, class of '66

Q: But Druidism Is A Religion, Right?
A: It depends on who you ask. Some say that it's an additional spiritual path, Some just show up for conversation and food (We don't mind, really) and some consider it a religion.

Q: So, how do I join?
A: You just did.

Q: Oh really? How do I quit?
A: You just did.

Q: Ok. How do I join and know when events are?
A: Try emailing the ArchDruid at crimmins@carleton.edu. We'll also put notices in the NNB. Another resource is our conference on caucus.

Truth or Myth About the Druids

The Druids started as an excuse to go into the Arb and get drunk on Sundays.
MYTH: The Druids started as a genuine protest against the religious requirement; alcohol is not allowed at Druid events.

The Druids are weird unshaven throwbacks to the Sixties.
MYTH: We look pretty much like everybody else on campus. We could live next door without your knowing it (You're thinking of the moustache club and the seventies.)

The Druids all wear cloaks.
MYTH: A few of us have cloaks but it has nothing to do with Druids (Except that they are nice to wear during ceremonies in the bitter Minnesota winter. [And yes, the bitter Minnesota winter is true; the Druids can do nothing about that])

The Druids are Neopagans.
MYTH: The Druids are made up of people of many religions, only a handful are Neopagans.

In the year 1999 the God Dalon Ap Landu was defeated and killed by Hu Gadern because Hu had more historical evidence to support him.
MYTH: But one of our sources says he's now in FL.

You can join the Druid mailing list by contacting crimmins@carleton.edu
TRUE: You can also ask him questions about the Druids for any reason.

This Pamphlet Created By the Reformed Druids of North America, Messing With Forces We Do Not Fully Understand Since 1963.

Figure 9 Ross Wilke (St.Cloud), Crimmins, Frangquist, (tall) Darren, Larry Press, Mike, Julie Doneaux , Stacey, Shelton, Nelson at Beltane 2003 at Monument Hill.

Basic Form Reply Letter

By Mike Scharding, Japan, c. 1998

Dear Friend of the Earth-Mother,

I am grateful that you have heard about our group and chose to ask more about us. We get about 4 requests a month, so we made a standard reply letter. There may be a more personal response at the end, to deal with specific questions from your letter.

I am not the "leader" of the Reformed Druids of North America, merely the historian and busy-body, a person willing to answer questions. I used to be the Archdruid of Carleton (and therefore leader of the RDNA), but I retired from that post. However, I should be able to answer most of the questions that you may have.

I guess that you have probably written to many Druid, Celtic Wiccan and other such organizations in your desire to find information about the truths and wisdom of the ways of the ancient Celts. This is very admirable. It will take many years of long study, personal introspection, external communications, and lots of practice to achieve this lifestyle that you are aiming for. I wish you good luck and persistence in your quest.

Why chose RDNA? There's no pressing reason really, people just join if they want to. We're not a proselytizing group, nor are we secretive. People come and go freely. Many newcomers to Druidism prefer the vitality and more intense groups like Order of Bards Ovate & Druids (OBOD), Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF), or Henge of Keltria (Keltria) which have established study programs, newsletters, magazines, published books, regular meetings, national councils, rules and by-laws, annual conferences and other such goodies. Sounds good, right? Well it is good, and we recommend that you write to the following addresses if you are interested:

- Ar nDraiocht Fein: A Druid Fellowship, Inc. (ADF) PO Box 15259, Ann Arbor , MI, USA 48106-5259 http://www.adf.org ADF-Office @ADF.org (734) 485-2722
- Henge of Keltria, P.O. Box 48369, Minneapolis, MN 55448-0369 or email: Henge-Office@keltria.org http://www.keltria.org
- Order of Bards, Ovates, and Druids (OBOD) The Secretary OBOD PO BOX 1333 Lewes, East Sussex England BN7 3ZG http://druidry.org/index.shtml

So why choose the RDNA, which has a lot of nothing? For some people, they enjoy the greater flexibility and simplicity. You can carve your own system from a hunk of unfinished wood. In fact, if you wish, you may consider yourself a Reformed Druid already (of the 1st order, there are 3), regardless of how many other Druid groups you may join, we're not too picky you see. As the enclosed literature will explain, we're a very loose organization of groves and individuals (active and inactive) and sacred objects (usually inactive) who are dedicated to the search for something we like to call "Awareness". If you like, it's easy to register as a grove in the RDNA. Or not, if you choose.

Literature: We don't publish regular magazines or bulletins, but (for a few years perhaps) there is the website http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna where articles or stories by members will be aired daily. Past writings, musings, stories, articles, great letters and histories are also downloadable, "The Anthology", for free of course. We also have posted several bibliographies of books that we recommend for the study of Neo-Paganism, Druidism (modern and ancient), Celtic life, Wicca, etc. There is no "secret" literature or inner circle knowledge (or at least no one has told me yet!) What you see it what you get (WYSIWYG).

Contacts: With the exceptions of a few overseas groves, we usually prefer the anonymity and ease of the internet. Some of you may not have computers, but access at library, school, cafe or friends house may be possible, no? You can also write to ARCHDRUID, c/o Carleton College, Northfield MN 55057 USA and someone will probably get your letter, though they may not reply (busy students, you see). But I do recommend you get on the internet, where information gathering will be greatly accelerated.

Final Recommendations Many starting seekers feel that they have to learn Gaelic, read all the old tomes, recite 100 ancient poems, be herbists etc. before they can be Druids. Much has been lost and much has been saved; but remember that the Druids acquired their wisdom by pondering Nature and the actions of their fellow man and themselves, followed by consultation with each other. If you do the same, you will certainly also become wiser, perhaps with different conclusions than them. "Don't follow in the footsteps of great men seeking wisdom, follow after what they were seeking".

I wish you great luck, whether you come to us or another, or both. Enjoy the journey.

Figure 10 Julie the Red at Beltane 2003.

Figure 11 Shenanigans Beltane 2001.

Dear Perspective Druid

By Mike, c. November 2001

Dear Perspective Druid,

Greetings and thank you for visiting my website and inquiring about us. I see the RDNA as a simple rag-tag band of philosophers, anarchists, dreamers and seekers of wisdom seeking Awareness through the study of the Earth-Mother (& Be'al. We began in 1963 at Carleton College in Minnesota, as a humorous protest against mandatory attendance of religious services and have expanded since then to question and pursue many other ideas. We have since spread new groves in many parts of North America. There are 40 or so groves and protogroves with maybe 500 grove members, and 3500 solitaries in various levels of communication (mostly quiet & abstentious).

My name is Mike, I record the history of the RDNA as well as I can, but I am not the gatekeeper nor its leader. I'm an archivist, not an ArchDruid. I speak only for myself, and even then I often disagree with myself. I hope what follows, a form letter, will give you a greater sense of what I personally believe our group does and doesn't do. If you contact other members, and you should, they may give you quite a different opinion on our group. http://ww.geocities.com/mikerdna/wheregrove.html Do not be disheartened by this impersonal form-letter, which is a mere vehicle for first-time information dissemination. Personal contact will likely occur and continue if you write back. Persistence is a virtue in communication.

For many people exploring Druidism, especially novitiates to Neo-Paganism (which we may or may not be a part of), it is a difficult choice choosing which tradition they will follow. Many members will change paths several times before settling in with a main tradition. We recognize that for many in the Reform, the RDNA has often been like a temporary religious way-station (a spiritual Ho-Jos, if you will) where people of many traditions, bound by a reverence for nature, desire for simplicity, and a wry sense of humor, congregate and interact to a varying degree and amounts of time. For others, like myself, we have found it a convenient permanent base from which to sally forth, confront and investigate the world. And for some, it is oddly sufficient, in and of itself, for all their needs. And, yes, for others, it is a mistaken choice, soon abandoned and forgotten as they proceed to greener pastures.

Our tradition appears to be unfocused, because we have no group-wide agreement on what "religion", "gods" and other terms mean. It is a dialogue in progress. Our group facilitates the spread of questions, rather than the accumulation of answers. What do we do in the Reform, besides pondering everything? The answer is; "Whatever you need to do, in your grove." For more on this matter see www.geocities.com/mikerdna/faq.html and www.geocities.com/mikerdna/lessismore.html Those pages debunk some common misconceptions about us.

If you are determined to be strictly Celticly aligned, you may do that in the RDNA, which allows a great diversity of grove-themes, but do not expect the rest of us to be so inclined. If such an orientation is important to you (beyond just your own local grove, on an organizational level) then one of our spin-off Druid groups such as "Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF)" at www.adf.org or "The Henge of Keltria" at www.keltria.org may be more to your liking. To get more guidance on the study of ancient Celts, you might wish to go to www.geocities.com/mikerdna/acalinks1.html For deep serious study of the myriad modern Druid movements see www.geocities.com/druidarchives The RDNA encourages you to study with and belong to multiple groups, as you'll learn much from all of them. Besides, we're not cool enough to deserve all your attention. For a more comprehensive list of other groups visit www.geocities.com/mikerdna/drulinks.html

We have rather successfully eschewed written dogma and the often numbing effect it has on personal exploration, but we have published some of our past thoughts for future reflection. There is currently our free on-line 25 pg. magazine (published eight times per year) at www.geocities.com/mikerdna/news.html (whose editor is poppinjay@earthlink.net). We also have a 500pg diverse collection of 40 years of past printed thoughts (for free download & easily printed) at www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/ which will be updated in 2003. Three to five times a month, I send out a short letter to announce various new RDNA publications or news; feel free to join by asking me to mail you(mikerdna@hotmail.com). You do not have to read them, many don't and do just fine. You can probably learn most of life's important lessons from participation in Nature and society, if you keep your eyes and ears open. If you'd like to talk with other Proto-groves and interested solitaries about issues of setting up a group, then you might join RDNA Talk Circle at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RDNAtalk/ But you're welcome to figure it out on your own, as we all must in some areas. Don't worry, it sound organized, but its just loosely managed chaos, really. :-)

You are more than welcome to be a member of the RDNA and another Druid group at the same time. There are indeed traditional initiation ceremonies (i.e. 1st, 2nd , 3rd orders) for those who really need them, but there are many valued members who choose to be casual acquaintances; who contribute and exchange their thoughts and deeds, but do not attend services. Most ordinations occur between May 1st and Nov 1st, because during the Winter "Time of Sleep" most activity is not ritually oriented, and tends to be more interactive and research oriented. Any full grove can officially perform them, but it is really the link between you and the Earth-Mother that should be more important, so don't take it hard if distance, money or inclination preclude interaction with a full grove. You can have full experiences on your own, until fate crosses our paths.

Please go where thou wilt, be it in our direction or elsewhere. Take your time in choosing which route you may wish to do. Whatever happens, try to keep a sense of humor and wit.

Yours in the Earth-Mother,
Mike the Fool
Washington, D.C.

P.S. Here's something about Groves

It's about Groves and Protogroves.

Do you need to part of a grove? No, of course not. The vast majority in the Reform are solitaries and are quite satisfied in their personal searches with only the most occasional of contact with other members. Power to them. Some band together for warmth, reasons of insecurity, or they actually like each other. According to the old "official" (whatever that is) rules of the 1970s, a GROVE requires 1+ third order (called an Archdruid) and usually 2 other members (sentient or other wise). A PROTOGROVE is a group of (even more than usual) unorganized Druids who perhaps lack a third order member, or haven't made up their minds if they want to be together for a year or more.

It's actually often hard to distinguish between an active solitary member with a lot of friends and a grove; which is why I usually don't bother to differentiate. But if it matters TO YOU (not me, of course, it doesn't mean anything to me, you're fine the way you are now), then here's a method for you stuffy-orthodox types who like the illusion of being more "official-ish". Being official plus $3.00 will buy you a cup of Starbucks coffee! The only possible advantage of a grove is that I only list Groves on the www.geocities.com/mikerdna/wheregrove.html So if you want to attract more friends within your area (we are getting about 10-15 stop-bys there every day), I'd recommend calling yourself a grove (and it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy).

See www.geocities.com/mikerdna/newgrove.html were it says:

- Collect 3 or more members,
- Choose roles, length of office, and responsibility (if any). Some groves have democratically elected fish or inanimate objects as Arch-Druid, since they tend to cause less trouble and have smaller egos. If it's written agreement it's called a "constitution", if it's orally agreed upon it's call an "oral-thingy".
- Do your thing.
- Keep it simple stupid (KISS)
- When the grove is not needed, just break up and tell us.

Unnecessary stuff, but makes it appear more legitimate

- Write a constitution (see above).
- Contact other groves. Maybe they'll recommend members to you.
- If you want to be listed on this site or initiation, contact mikerdna@hotmail.com Tell me your grove's name, general location (city), rough membership guess, contact address (internet is best), any homepages you've built; and a few paragraphs to describe your grove.
- Download a copy of "A Reformed Druid Anthology", but don't read it too much; it's dull in many parts.
- Vigil. Perhaps one of your members will do the vigil for the Third Order (or again, perhaps no one wants to yet, you can still be a protogrove.) Contact a local Third Order Druid to personally assist you or talk to Mike. Afterwards, tell Mike, and he'll record it in the Record of the Council of Dalon ap Landu.

There is an inherent difficulty in traveling for ordination (an oversight at the beginning, to be sure). If you use the older liturgies without a third order, merely substitute the Consecration of the Waters with a different prayer, such as:

"Earth-mother, we your children partake of these waters as a sign of our friendship and common search for awareness. You are in everything we hear, see and touch. May we be brought closer together to each-other now, and our far-flung siblings later. Bless these waters."

Figure 12 Mai Fete in the 1950s.

SECTION FIVE

On-Line Outreach Materials

The following Information is taken from the website http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna, where daily readings, links to other groups, grove contacts, lists of recommended books, and a copy of our 500 page anthology of past RDNA materials can be downloaded (free, of course). Check it out, if you can. Email to me mikerdna@hotmail.com

Reformed Druids F.A.Q.

Pert Answers to Tough Questions
By Mike, April 2000

1. How did the RDNA start?
Answer Back in 1963 at Carleton College in Northfield, MN USA, some students objected to a mandatory attendance of religious services, so they protested by making a bizarre group and attending it regularly. The requirement was thus mocked and was withdrawn. Members found it groovy and continued to participate in the group in order to explore world faiths and personal paths in an open and honest way. As they graduated, they started groups in other states. By the 1980s there were about 10 groves scattered across the country. Then Isaac Bonewits left to form Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF) Druidism, which later splintered and soon Henge of Keltria Druidism appeared. Nowadays, there are lots of sophisticated groups in America that can trace their roots to our simple little group, which still putters about.

2. What do you believe?
Answer Um... Nature is good. (Is that too simple?)

3. What are your goals?
Answer Awareness. Yup.

4. Why do you call yourself "Reformed"?
Answer Good question. Um...Because we also worship bushes? Well, the ancient orthodox Druids probably did some nasty stuff, (everybody did back then) and we don't.

5. What do you do?
Answer It's more of a question of what we don't do that makes us special. Like the Neo-Pagan Druids, we have loads of individual druids and also group druids. Individuals treat life as a spiritual lesson. Group Druids have the occasional ritual, nature walk, research project, arts and crafts, tea party debates and so on.

6. What will I get from the group?
Answer You know this.... You get out what you put in.

7. Who can be a Reformed Druid?
Answer Who can't be a Reformed Druid?

8. How do I join?
Answer You already did.

9. Oh, really? How do I quit?
Answer You just did.

10. I want a contact, guru, or just a friendly ear.
Answer Ask mikerdna@hotmail.com he talks too much, but he's in Japan right now, so sometimes a week passes between e-mail checks, therefore be patient.

11. Your answers are too vague, give me longer documentation, please.
Answer You can always read A Reformed Druid Anthology. Just about every subject of our last 40 years has been carefully studied, charted and explained in a cheeky style.

12. OK, I read the book, learned a lot, was bored in some parts. What's next?
Answer Now forget all that you just read, and do Druidism.

Quick Statistics on Reformed Druids (RDNA)

By Mike, April 2000

Established: 1963 at Carleton College, Northfield Minnesota
Membership: 4000 or more, mostly independents, who do their own thing.
Membership of the groves: is 150 or so, fluctuating wildly
Number of Groves : Maybe ten. For a detailed map.
National Council?: Thankfully defunct.
Dogma: None, really. We only have Two basic tenets . We think Less is more.
Publications: Nothing regular. A Reformed Druid Anthology contains past publications.
Orientation: Sedentary and laid back
Famous Members: David Fisher (founder: abandoned us),Isaac Bonewits (on sabbat-acle), Chris Sherbak (in ADF), Rob Larson (retiring), Daniel Hansen (busy), Emmon Bodfish (deceased), Mike Scharding (exiled to Japan), Irony Sade (digging ditches in Tonga)

The Two Basic Tenets

By Mike, April 2000

The founders believed that all religions began from the observation of Nature, including Ancient Druidism, therefore our first teacher has always been Nature. The Reform has only required two basic tenets of its members for the last 40 years. In the flowerly prose of the Chronicles, they are described:

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.

Most Druids can't remember even this, so we simplify it:

1. Nature is good.
2. Likewise, Nature is good.

Me, personally, I summarize it as 'Nature is Nature'. Which is less debatable.

Less is More

a.k.a. Summaries of Reformed Druidism
By Mike April, 2000

Reformed Druidism is a gentle protest against organized religion. We're not really anarchists, just simplists.

We've noticed that good Archdruids (animate and otherwise) spend much of their time explaining what Druidism is not. In a Taoist sense, what is not there can make something useful (like a doorway in a wall).

Former Carleton AD, Pookum's Summary

If you join, you get a whole lot of nothing, which is what most of our members want. Hopefully, our system (or lack of a system) will simplify your search for Awareness.

Former Berkeley AD, Isaac Bonewit's Summary

Zen Anarchists.

Former Chicago AD, Thomas's Summary

Outdoorsy Unitarians.

Former St. Olaf AD, Sam Adams's Summary

I really don't know.

Akita Grove AD, Mike's Summary

a.k.a. "The 15 Lousy Lessons of Merlin the Schlep"
(soon to be a book?) These are not official rules!

1. Not Celtic-Focused.

Any inspiration source is okay, 25% choose Celtic.

2. Not a Religion

We're split on this one. Some say it's a religion. Some say it's a philosophy or outlook. Some say some rather silly things. Others ignore the question as unimportant and not tending towards edification.

3. Not Neo-Pagan

Well, about 40% of us are Neo-Pagans, and we do resemble Neopaganism very closely, but we don't define ourselves as such. We include Neo-paganism among our many possible sources of inspiration. The NewRDNA, however, is more firmly in the Neo-Pagan camp. As a rule, Druids are mischievously difficult to pin down.

4. No Established Dogma

We don't take anybody too seriously, especially ourselves. We like Nature, think a lot and sometimes share our thoughts in writing. We do have Two Basic Tenets and some think that's too much.

5.No Established Ritual

Attendance is, of course, unnecessary, and perhaps undesirable. Members of groves occasionally meet on the 8 festivals and the moons, but we are split on whether ritual is more distracting to Druidism or if Druidism is more distracting to ritual... Irregardless, we recognize that a lack of ritual can become a ritual, in and of itself!

6.No Strong Priesthood

Sure we've got priests,(they grow like weeds) but no seminary program. Non-priests can lead services too. In some branches, any member can just vigil all night outdoors and presto, You've got a sleepy priest. Others are more thorough in preparation.

7. No Membership Requirements

Well almost. We're not exclusive, any background can join, if they respect the other members. There is no excommunication or religious sanctions; Nature knows Her own. Inanimate objects are equally able to join, some even doing a better job than the mobile Druids. I can think of several groves entirely composed of trees, imagine that. The deceased are always free to join also, but I hear that the LDS has already took most of them.

8. No Cross-Membership Restrictions

You can simultaneously belong to other groups or dimensions.

9. No National Organization

We used to have one, but it wasn't useful, so it's thankfully defunct after much bludgeoning.

10. No Buildings

When nature is so wonderful, why hide inside a building?

11. No Money or Fees

It's sad, but we're always in the red, relying on generosity to pay for the sacramental whiskey and such.

12. No Regular Publications

No monthly journals and such, you're on your own. There is A Reformed Druid Anthology of past attempts, but since there's no money in it, few publish much. Internet is free, though.

13. No Prosyletization

We're not secretive, but how do you effectively advertise a lack of something? People generally find us, stay for awhile, and move on when they're ready. That's cool.

14. No Uniforms

Occasionally somebody dresses up in SCA clothes, but jeans are cool. Homemade is impressive, though.

15. No Bad Stuff

Well, we've succeeded, so far, at least. Like the vast majority of Neo-Pagans; we don't do blood/animal/human sacrifice (although we occasionally offer a carrot or zucchini) because we are "Reformed" and we think that's yucky. We are however divided on whether fungi should be ritualistically categorized as animal or plant because they do possess characteristics of both. Likewise, we don't do such un-cool things like brainwashing (who wants a clean mind?), orgies (which is obviously a fast way to get STDs), take money/property, or abuse our members (who'd want to be in such a group?). We treat our members with respect, and they freely come and go.

Grove Formation Thoughts

By Mike the Fool, DC Grove, 2004

I apologize in advance over my long winded observations, I hope they will clarify some general traditions bout Grove formation, by dealing with it as a single subject.

There comes a time in many a Druid's lives when they wish to begin holding services or hold meetings in a semi-organized framework, and the idea of grove formation arises. The first problem that arises is that no one knows how to found a Grove, and second, there are often no Third Order Druids present in the group to run the traditional services and do the usual ordinations. What's an enthusiastic go-getter Druid to do?

Well, first off, I have to cautiously say that I'm not the final de-jure authority on the issue, merely one well-informed voice among many. That being said, I have unofficially ended up as the de-facto networker and advisor of groves at my website (see end of article) where I give some simple guidelines and list the various groves and contact information for people who want to reach a pre-existing grove. So I thought it would be appropriate to share a summary of the thoughts on the various pros and cons of Groves.

Benefits of Grove Formation

The major benefit of Grove formation is probably a stronger sense of identity, that often comes by slapping a label onto something. You are longer "Joe's friends who meet in Joe's backyard" but you are suddenly "The Apple Grove that meets in Joe's backyard." Names have a power in themselves to some. As always, a title is an abstract concept, but titles are important to us, providing legitimacy and gravitas to a venture or person; a shorthand indicating certain powers or authority are inherent in them. Perhaps it's only the "magic feather" effect of Dumbo?

Like a corporation, a Grove is an entity that includes the members, but it also exists in a sense as a separate entity in both legal and metaphysical terms. In a Grove, there are elections for Archdruid, Preceptor and Server; (or President, Secretary, Treasurer if you want secularly titled folks for dealing separately with financial/secular Grove business) and matters can be voted upon, you advertise for recruiting, design logos and stationary, send representatives to inter-faith council, have members admitted in various formal ways, apply for charity status, print letterhead stationary, buy group land in a forest, produce team T-shirts, and a dozen other nifty non-liturgical ways to build brand-loyalty. Mascots, secret hand-shakes and matching belt-buckles are, of course, optional.

Traditionally (I'll use that word a lot in this essay), only the Archdruid (being a Third Order Druid) of an active grove would perform ordinations of 1st, 2nd or 3rd Order, so the founding a grove was seen as a necessary pre-step for missionary expansion & liturgical activities in a region. Some groves were even ephemerally founded simply for ordaining one or two folks in question, and then promptly disbanded after their purpose was finished. Most Groves in practice act rather independently, with nearly complete sovereignty, rarely interacting with their neighbors, following the RDNA traditions, customs and services as their Grove members interpret and elaborate upon them. Some Groves work closely together, holding occasional joint services, with large cross-over memberships.

Other Groves may disapprove if a particular Grove goes boisterously off-course from the standard patterns (such as restricting membership to those of certain faiths, sacrificing mushrooms or Twinkies, becoming too serious, requiring ridiculous fees, or censoring the modes of expression) but there is little they can do except criticize or distance themselves from that offensive Grove; which they do. Running a Grove can be a fun and exhilarating project, full of memorable events, conversations and interactions, but that is not always the case.

Costs of Grove Formation

On the flip side of the equation, as with any contentious group of anarchistic leaning spiritual wanderers, you also introduce the specter of small-group politics, group-think, power plays, and the misappropriation of funds. Many groves don't outlive the departure of their founding Archdruid, the owner of the meeting property, or another mainstay of the group, leading to what I call "Grove collapse." Many leaders or supporters may be in danger of eventually suffering from "Grove burn-out" due to the inherent tendency of one or two heroic people doing all the logistic, financing or other gruntwork; without adequate compensation or praise from some less motivated members. It happens over and over again, and seems to be a fact of Druidism, Wicca and Neo-Paganism; although a few will last long longer than a decade.

When a Grove collapses, like other works of love and devotion, it can be a depressing series of wrenching events that can depress involved members for years to come. As with marriage, reproduction or other long-term commitments, you should also maturely consider the pros and cons of investing a lot of time and effort into producing a new religious group entity.

The very action of defining a group carries implied inclusive and exclusive components. By defining who is in your group, you are often in a subtle way also defining who is not in your group; which bothers some members who feel that some things are better left unclarified or defined (what I call strategic ambiguity) and part of "keeping it simple, stupid."(KISS)

Three Alternative Paths

The way I personally see it, there have been three standard ways to form a Grove, of which each aspiring wannabee Archdruid should be aware. You might come up with some new models, but these are the ones that I've seen among the 85 past entities so far in the Reform. First there is a missionary Grove. Second there is a Protogrove start. And third, there is a hiving Grove. Let's look at them in some depth.

Missionary Groves were the first model during the early 1960s when various Third Order Druids from the Carleton Grove left after four years and went to graduate school or to start a job in another part of the country. (Obviously, the majority of Druids after graduation pursued non-Grove activities or solitary paths.) Back then, the missionary Third Order would arrive in a new area, which would naturally have no pre-existing Druid groups, and decide that they would like to have services and pursue Druidical pursuits with new friends. They'd gather three or more people together and vote on a local constitution, often similar to the Carleton Constitution. Then the Third Order would ordain a First and Second Order Druid at the first service to take the usual elected constitutional and/or liturgical offices. Then a copy of the constitution was sent to the most current Carleton Archdruid (as the Chairman of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu; the overseeing body of Third Order activities), who has apparently always approved it, although the busy student didn't always remember to write back. A permanent fixed site and altar might be consecrated, or the Grove may select the most convenient site for each season. Annual elections would naturally follow and updates were sent to Carleton, where they are promptly misplaced or put in the Archives.

That's a very simple system, although there were some procedural debates of the chicken/egg sort of whether a Third Order Druid can consecrate Waters for ordination of 1st & 2nd

Order Druids without already having a pre-existing Server (of 1st Order) and Preceptor (of 2nd order) at the service. The general consensus is that the Third Order can do so, when necessary, in such situations as Grove formation and emergencies. (See early Apocrypha for the debate.) We have existing approved guidelines for this model, but rarely are we such sticklers, and many a naughty unregistered Grove has happily poked around for decades in communion with other Groves. (Please note a stern wagging finger is implied here.)

So how about the Protogroves? Well, the missionary model worked fine for 10 years, then in the 1970s with the rise of Neo-pagan and Celtic Reconstructionists, the RDNA faced the novel problem of many people popping out of the woodwork in distant locations wanting to start RDNA-style Groves with no Third Order Druid present. It was a perplexing dilemma to many Third Orders, since how can we tell them they can't be Druids, when we started our own tradition from scratch without any acknowledged lineage? Possibly this was because we were the only accessible model at that time (esp. with Isaac's fame) in an age before the wonders of the Internet. Can a maestro, in love with the music, object to another maestro performing and the same concerto, even one she wrote herself? Imitation has been called the most sincere form of flattery. They naturally encouraged the budding groups to start new strains of Druidism, but they were persistent about joining us, so Brother Isaac Bonewits devised and promoted the Protogrove model.

Now, in the Protogrove system, you'd make a temporary constitution (perhaps the model of the President, Secretary, Treasurer) and would hold diminutive versions of the Order of Worship services that Isaac wrote, omitting or reworking the wording of the sacrifice and consecration of Waters of Life, until the psuedo-messianic arrival of a itinerant Third Order. This Protogrove model allowed them a pseudo-grove status to advertise more members, feel a sense of belonging, and they could devise their own side-services to meet their needs until one could be trained to the Third Order during visits to the nearest full Grove, or if a wandering Third Order passed through their area.

Technically, since only an active Archdruid can ordain, the visiting Third Order would have to be temporarily elected as an Archdruid before ordaining the local members. Once a new local Third Order existed in the Grove, and after a Server and Preceptor were ordained, a full Constitution was enacted and a copy sent to the record keeper of the Carleton Archdruid. Then they became a full Grove in the fullest good standing with tradition. This convoluted process may seem a little confusing the first time you read through it, but it tends to work out well within a year with a little effort.

Thirdly, Grove hiving is when an existing Grove splits its membership apart into two or three pieces for reasons of either enormous size of membership or internal faction fighting. This notably happened in the Berkeley Grove in the late 1970s. Berkeley was an old Grove, with long-term, consistent membership and a slow build-up of several Third Order Druids, each with their own visions and developing agendas. Eventually a mixture of strong personalities, keen organizational preferences and avid revisionism rent the group asunder into the Berkeley Grove of the Bay Area, the Clann na Bracheta Grove, the Hazlenut Grove of San Jose and the Live Oak Grove of Orinda; all within a few miles of each other.

In a hiving model, one Grove usually keeps the originally title and the other Groves go off and establish new constitutions and elect new officers, although they may use the same ritual/meeting site, using it in turns like a timeshare arrangement. This is similar to a separation agreement in a marriage, hopefully on friendly terms, but often not so. Although Wicca & magic-intensive groups may have a practical limit to the number of attendees, Druidism is more oriented to mass-gatherings. It is still conceivable that a really charismatic Grove may outgrow the facilities or other factors and necessitate a spin-off Grove. However, I haven't seen this yet, since we could hold services in an open-air football stadium, if necessary.

The Third Order Factor

As you can see, the key factor to traditional Grove formation is a present Third Order. Like the Catholic and Anglican models, the RDNA Orders were laid out in a sort of "top-down" hierarchy. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Order Druids are ordained by an Archdruid who was ordained herself into the Third Order by a previous Archdruid of another Grove; and so on back to David Fisher in 1963 whose ordination is a mystery. However, there is also a "bottom-up" democratic element, in that the congregation must elect a Third Order Druid into the position of the Archdruidcy. If they are unsatisfied, they can vote for another viable candidate next year (or earlier) into the position or they can abandon the grove. So, in a sense, part of a Third Order Druid's ability to consecrate ordinations or hold services comes from his or her elected position in the Grove, in addition to their innate possession of the Order's title and experience, and the blessing of the higher powers. In this way, the leadership and the Grove are symbiotically dependent upon each other for purpose and existence. No Grove, no Archdruid. No Archdruid, no Grove. But remember, you can still be a Druid without being active in a Grove.

All Third Order Druids are automatically members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (headed by the often busy Carleton AD) and must follow their simple rules for ordination and Grove formation, but each Third Order Druid (who becomes an Arch Druid) may ordain any viable candidate they wish without seeking permission from the Council (or they may also decline on their own criteria, although this is rare). There is no known council for 1st or 2nd Druids as yet (usually being more concerned with in-Grove matters) although the higher orders (4-10) and side-orders have councils with their own rules. The higher orders are to encourage further efforts by Third Orders and many side-orders have been opened up as Special Interest Groups for usually all Druids to pursue interests in a less hierarchical manner.

If you can't convince a Third Order to visit your Protogrove in a reasonable period, then you must select a member to visit an nearby existing Grove to become ordained; or roust up an old "retired" Third Order Druid to do the work. You've heard the saying, "If Mohammad won't go to the mountain, then the mountain must come to Mohammad." There is a bit of an element of a quest involved here, especially when a higher order is involved.

Now each Third Order Druid has a free hand in how they choose people to be ordained. Some Arch Druids, like myself, will ordain quite quickly, on the spot even, if the ordainer finds the ordainee to be sincere, honorable, reasonably sane, of good humor, witty, benevolent in manner, reverently irreverent, possessing that deep vocational love for the Earth and bearing some quality whiskey. Other Arch Druids are slower to warm to a stranger or short-term guest and may require attendance at several services, spend a while in residence, or require lengthy correspondence before a grudgingly granted mutually-agreed meeting. Indeed, in retrospect, some people even like to work hard like this for their ordinations, "earning them" through sweat equity in RDNA activities, although I also tend to take into account their previous experience before joining the RDNA.

Your best bet is to ask around to the different Groves or seek out retired ADs (I keep a guarded list as a go-between) of a compatible nature. The Carleton Grove in MN and myself in DC

are usually of the former method, which tends to be most conducive to ordainees residing in remote locations. Naturally, Carleton has heart-breakingly history-drenched beautiful scenery, lots of young perky members, and some great camping options. I would highly recommend that every Third Order Druid visit the campus at least once in their lifetimes. I call it the Mecca of the Middle-West.

Go-It-Alone and Phone Option

As we've explained, when access to a Third Order has proven impossible or resolutely impractical, the ordination system traditionally ground to a halt and Grove formation stopped at the Protogrove stage. And sometimes waiting for Fate to change our fortunes is good, too. Some Groves, like Carleton (1985-1993) did self-ordinations, and devised their own services "until such time as we are blessed by a wandering Third". Naturally, some of the self-made RDNA Protogroves eventually preferred their self-devised non-order-dependent services (originally temporary fill-ins) to the traditional ones, and often the Earth-mother seemed to respond equally favorably, so some would say grove legitimacy is more about pleasing fellow mortals. A few went off to form their own religions, such as Reformed Druidic Wicca over in Oklahoma, without ever becoming a functional RDNA grove, and they seem happy enough. So that's always a fourth course to consider, although you should not be surprised if some "Ordered" Arch Druids do get a bit huffy about these other self-initiated Arch Druids. Hierarchies invariably tend to be self-supportive that way and very particular about membership rules, so even the best of the RDNA might get some twinges of conscience in these matters. I think most in the RDNA still feel some sense of common purpose and belonging to this sprawling family of "American Druidism" that includes such spin-offs like RDW/MOCC, ADF and Keltria, among others.

A fifth option is the technology's ability to supercede the tyranny of distance. Telephone ordinations were first performed in the 1960s by David Frangquist to ordain a Carleton AD during the breakage of succession in the 1967-1968, when there were unannounced study-abroad shenanigans of the previous AD. I've done a handful of these myself, due to reasons of extreme distance, where the likelihood of meeting was scarce in the next few years (e.g. people at Thule AFB in Greenland on a 3 year tour of duty). In fact, I did one in August for Sister Colleen in Alaska. I see them as equally effective and minimally sufficient for the task, but aesthetically less than a third as enjoyable or memorable, as some traditions are best enjoyed in the subtle gestures, the shared sights & sounds, and physical mannerisms that occur during in-person ordinations. But whenever possible, I try to first arrange for a meeting with someone closer to them.

My own general strategy in those telephone cases is to have a long period of frequent written and telephonic conversation with the new person beforehand; to better understand their needs and style. After that, I have a service at my Grove, and retain some of the (hopefully) successfully consecrated Waters-of-Life and reseal them in a bottle. I then mail the consecrated whiskey, a sealed copy of the services, reading material, ribbons and a Druid Sigil necklace to the ordainee-wannabee. I discuss a few final matters with the ordainee at sunset (their time), ordain them to 1st and 2nd (with part of sent Waters), send them off to start a fire and vigil away the evening. Myself, I bide my time in late-night walks in DC's nearby forests until I am contacted by them by cell-phone at sunrise (their time). I bless the phone by the power of Taranis, establishing a contact with them through the planet and air itself (we're all just out of sight of each other, you know) and perform the services and pack them off to get some sleep. I try to limit my self to 4 or 5 vigils in a year, for personal reasons or ordination purposes, due to the amount of effort, time and energy I have to invest.

My only concern is that the newly ordained folks will miss the aesthetic stimulation and gestures, pacing and mannerisms, unless they see a service in person, and the way I prepare sacrifices and set up the site. To alleviate that problem, I'm considering the idea of making a "training video tape" to accompany long distance ordination; but my other alternative for now, is to recommend that when circumstances later permit, the ordainee should visit CA, MN or DC and attend one or two traditional services to enhance their understanding of Druidism further. Certainly they might wish to continue correspondence with me, their mentor and other active groves during the initial start-up period when those predictable mini-dilemmas will arise.

Final Notes on Groving

Ordinations traditionally only occur during the Season of Life [i.e. between Beltane (May 1st) and Samhain (Nov 1st)], except in periods of disaster or pressing emergency. This is because, it is only during that time that the Waters of Life, crucial to ordinations, can be traditionally consecrated; and even then it's up to the Earth-Mother. During the Season of Sleep (i.e. Samhain to Beltane) only the Waters of Sleep (plain water) are usually consecrated in our tradition. Therefore, there is only a six-month window for ordinations every year, and you must plan ahead accordingly. 1st and 2nd ordinations conceivably can be inserted into a standard Order of Worship service on the same day, although most Druids like to separate them by varying periods of time to have a period of growing.

Third Order ordinations take place only after a supervised (but solitary) vigil of at least seven hours duration (usually sunset to sunrise) by a fire (if possible) without sleep, with the ordination at dawn the next day by the Archdruid, and attended by any other Third Order Druids in the area. I should note, that I highly encourage a 24 hour period of awakeness (sunrise, noon, sunset & night) when vigiling. Some Groves have further elaborated the various ordinations, so they might not even closely resemble the services in the ARDA liturgies on first glance. Some Groves send out emissaries to visit and discuss matters for a short while with the vigiler during the night, add extra quests, questions, and others play wry pranks on them. There is a lot of room for invention here, and a few traditionalists will object to adding, but they certainly hesitate if you remove material.

I could go on for hours longer on matters related to Groves, but I think I've laid out some recognizable rational frameworks for making a decision "to grove or not to grove" and my next article will address the important factors to contemplate before making the choice to enter Orders, or to vigil for the Third Order. Please refer to the following recommended resources if you want to found a Grove, or contact me at mikerdna@hotmail.com As always, Druidism can be as simple or complicated as you want it to be, but always leave the same option to your other members.

Further resources:

Protogrove & Grove Constitutions are in Part 4 of ARDA 2
Examples of Protogrove Services are in Part 3
General History of Reformed Druidism in Part 8
The Apocrypha of Part 2 describes a great deal about the purpose of ordination, groves and liturgy.

Thoughts on Ordinations

By Mike of DC Grove, 2004

A discussion of Grove formation would not be complete without a discussion on the process of seeking Ordinations, particularly the Third Order when setting up a Grove. How does being an ordained Druid really differ from being an associated Druid in the RDNA tradition? I can not speak definitively ex-cathedra on the matter of ordination, and these are only my observations based on my research, interviews and practice. However, my words might bring some aspects of the processes into clearer focus, and assist you in making your own decisions about ordination.

Some Lengthy Background Notes

You might wonder at why the various Orders even exist. The Orders in the RDNA were probably devised as a result of several factors common to the Founders at Carleton College four decades ago. One reason was that the college required elected officers for the club's constitution. Second, several members were from hierarchical religious backgrounds, like Episcopalianism, with a clear layered structure of laymen, deacons, priests, bishops & archbishops (although there were no Orders at the original services). Third, more than a few of the Founders had been members of fraternal organizations, or were clearly familiar with the general structure of Boy Scouts, Masonry or parliamentary procedures. Fourth, although Greek fraternities & sororities were banned at Carleton at the time, [I guess Celtic fraternities were okay?] first-year students were still hazed (ask your parents), rites of passage were more pronounced, and there were clear differentiated barriers between members of different class-years even in the 1960s. Fifth, ordination was a fun way to "pass the torch" off to carefully selected leaders who had "jumped through the right hoops" of the departing leadership (although I can point to few examples of refused members). Sixth, there were clear cultural/religious examples in society about knights vigiling before entering service or holy people praying off in the wilderness before entering a vocation.

Things have changed over the years since the Counter-Culture revolution, and I think Americans, in general, have become less enamored with hierarchical rankings in the four decades since the Druids were founded, especially after the decline of fraternities, fraternal organization, recent church scandals and conservative reactionary activities by church leadership, Watergate, the increasing casual style of treating colleagues as equals despite differences in age, wealth or experience. This has naturally influenced the RDNA structure in recent years, giving new options and possibilities of interaction, along with the plentiful examples available now from the proliferation of non-hierarchical liberal offshoots of monotheism. (On the other hand, other parts or our society, of course, are seemingly more willing than ever to hand over spiritual authority to charismatic or dogmatic church leaders.)

When I first started my own Druidic path and joined the existing Carleton Grove in 1990, it was particularly functioning but a bit anarchic then since the loss of Third Order continuity in 1983 and the graduation of the revivalist Druids from 1985-1989. Their departure left a new generation of Druids who did not share the experience of communal quarters on an adjacent farm to the campus. The group was searching for a new stable base, and would settle on different off-campus houses and dormitories every two years or so; while often dining or attending folk-dance, SCA or sci-fi club meetings together. The Carleton Grove was definitely leaning towards Wiccan and Native American themes, but still open to members of different traditions, with a fun eclectic range of activities. In the revival period, people initiated each other at Carleton to the 1st and 2nd Orders, and simply vigiled on their own for a Third Order, which was recognized by others as a sort of an individual vision quest. I did so likewise, and found it very empowering and sufficient in many ways; but yet there was still a small doubt that I might be missing out on something else, although I couldn't put a finger on it.

Finally, in 1993, I found Richard Shelton (AD 1969-1971) who came to Carleton to re-establish the "Apostolic Succession." After becoming interested in the older lost traditions of the RDNA, I thought about bringing back the Order of Worship and traditional ordination patterns. The Order of Worship was not well received, considered too staid and churchy, with people preferring more creative methods of worship, but the Ordinations proved popular and permanent. I thought this surprising as the Order evolved out of the liturgical positions of the Order of Worship service. The traditional ordinations seemed to provide a stronger sense of continuity for a constantly mutating college Grove. After my own vigil, being historically inclined by nature, I felt a great sense of comfort from belonging to a line of succession and the influence of a strengthened sense of common mission, not unlike joining a police or boy-scout squad; a sense of passage or a step forward on a journey. It motivates me to live up to my oaths when I'm down, and restrains me when I'm tempted to excess in my roles. I feel a sense of being watched and guided by Dalon (or Something) and felt the invisible influence of the other members of the Order, in a healthy supportive manner; like a school principal or the U.S. President feeling the weight of her predecessors. It might have been possible to have reached this state without ordination, but perhaps it came easier with a little structure and tradition? It certainly turned out to be a memorable rite of passage for me that I've enjoyed sharing with many people over the years.

Since 1993, I have been present or officiated at about 25 vigils for Third Order (including 4 telephone ordinations), dozens of 1st & 2nd ordinations, and a handful of higher orders (which are a whole discussion in themselves). This has been both draining and empowering to be part of those moments. Self-initiations still sometimes occur at Carleton (and in a few other Groves), but regular ordination still seems the general rule, although Carleton often embellishes the traditional services to make it more amusing and moving for the ordainee. And each ordination has had a unique stamp of circumstances upon it. I've seen many different people enter 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Orders for many different reasons, although the Book of Customs in the Druid Chronicles gives good summaries that I like to follow. What follows may not make sense to some, but each person chooses/refuses Orders for unique reasons that have to be thoughtfully weighed.

Hesitation on Ordination

What's the big hurry? Ordination is not for everyone, and many RDNA Druids get along just fine without it, or choose only to do 1st Order at most, and enjoying long productive solitary ways. Awareness is not the sole possession of the Orders. Some don't have the time, motivation, or "pieces of the puzzle" ready for such a decision. I pushed Orders rather hard in my Grove at Carleton, St. Cloud & Akita, but few decided to enter them, possibly because of varying reasons of interest in organizational power, distaste of liturgical activity, "speed", "old ties", "grovity" and plain disinterest. As for the last, disinterest, mature groves with 16 people and 8 years of stability will certainly have different dynamics motivating ordinations than a missionary start-up grove as described in the earlier essay.

Regarding power, many Druids want to jump to Third Order quickly. This is quite understandable, as the Third Order has many well-known attributed rights (or should I say "roles"?), and far less-well-known responsibilities. However, I believe a 1st Order Druid is equally as "good" a Druid as a 3rd order Druid, but I feel a Third has undertaken greater responsibilities and dedication to the "organization" and members of the RDNA, little as there is in this group. I personally think the Earth-Mother will hear a devout heart regardless of their Order at a service, but tradition exists in most Groves for Third Order Druids to preside at a service. I have to acknowledge that each Order (1st-10th) has their own traditional organizational/liturgical/spiritual roles which, if followed in succession with proper performance, will deepen the spiritual experience of those Druids and sense of attachment to a band of siblings. As an ordainer of a simple, flexible tradition, I try to balance and adjust the ordination to meet the needs of the ordainee as much as possible, without losing all traces of tradition and continuity. I then always instruct the ordainee to give their next ordainees options of strict ordination and the possibility of some flexibility, according to a mutual decision of what's most proper. I believe in options.

Although some people see the Orders as spiritual rites of passage, the Orders predominantly exist to fill liturgical roles. A Server in the Order of Worship must be of the 1st Order, a Preceptor of the 2nd Order and an Arch Druid at a service of the Third Order. In practice, 1st Order sometimes doubled as Preceptor in a bind; and sometimes a 3rd or even a 2nd Order has led a service, or a make-shift meditation, when the Arch Druid didn't show up. There are always exceptions, but the traditional pattern is the most often the preferred pattern in many Groves, so far. As you can tell from perusing the Apocrypha and interviews with "retired" Druids, RDNA Druids have always had issues on whether liturgy is more conducive than distractive from the core goals of Druidical activity; the observation and contemplation of Nature's aspects and learning from the wisest in the world. Indeed, in what ways are you less of a Druid if you never partake of rituals? Is not life itself a long series of religious moments, that Zen-like, are of greater importance than our attempts to verbalize or sacralize them through short periods of liturgy? For those who eschew liturgy and tend towards contemplation and sacred living, ordination may not seem an important goal.

There are different "speeds" in the ordination process for varying reasons. Some people are glacially ponderous in making the decision to enter an Order, taking many years in one case (like Sister Stacey), weighing each aspect of the responsibility and feeling out whether they have the "gravitas" or Je-ne-sais-quoi involved, and who already made the choice and are just trying to find an ordainer (it took 2 years for me). In some Groves, people take at least a year between orders (slow-and-steady model), other Groves do them in rapid fire succession as needed to fill out the liturgical roles or when suddenly presented with a mature candidate. Some egalitarian groves (e.g. Amon Sul Grove and Swamp Grove) don't participate in Orders in the traditional sense (as did Carleton from 1985-1993), and those who could lead there, did and do so, and without titles, quite contentedly it seems.

"Old Ties" hesitations refers to discontentful links to previous religions among members. Reformed Druidism doesn't require abandonment of previous beliefs; it merely encourages an honest re-evaluation and thoughtful contemplation of them. Certainly, some other beliefs systems do not accept any association with Reformed Druidism, and some members decline to enter Orders for fear of being shunned by the jealousy of the old system. This concern kept me back for a year as I worked out my personal relationship with Catholicism in 1991-2. Taking Orders in the Reform, as in Christianity, is a major step for some people who take oaths and ministry very seriously, because it involves a change of identity at some level inside; one that is hard to reverse or decline without losing a bit of honor. I have noticed that the step into the 1st Order was much more momentous for some than the achievement of entering the 3rd Order.

Originally, a grove usually only had a single Third Order member (often the Arch Druid), and only ordained more when someone was leaving/graduating to go form a new Grove or succeed a retiring Arch Druid. This impending "grovity" led to vigiling activity, for aforesaid practical missionary activity reasons. In some Groves, however, you may have many core members in the Third Order due to varied reasons of protecting continuity in a rapid turn-over environment (like Carleton), or for the fact that a grove has been around for a dozen years (like the Berkeley Groves) and many long-term members have eventually seen a need to vigil themselves over the years.

Rights of the Third Order

Although the 1st and 2nd Orders have prescribed liturgical roles, they appear to have no defined particular defined "powers," except possibly determining if the sacrifice was accepted, by some interpretations of the liturgy. A Grove or individual appear to be welcome to encourage, assign or assume powers to them; such as to devise separate liturgy formats for just 2nd Order, weather working, blessings, do Bardic performance at service, do divination, gather sacrifice or purify a site or props. The more comfortable you are with your Order, the more creative you can become, and reduce the gulf in popularity, that encourages the rush to the Third Order. I theorize the power comes from the Earth, the Grove members and their own experience. Recently I've been awarding clear-tape ribbons to 2nd Order Druids, to remind them of the need to think clearly, be pure and adapt to the coloration of society. I might also permit services to be done, while under supervision of an attending Third Order. Similar to Sister Stacey's Grove, I also require them to read the early Druid Chronicles, find a cup (either Gregorian style or their own choice), write a little comparing Druidism and a religion of their choice and to find their own ribbons. I'll keep you updated on how it works.

A nice aspect of ordination is the mentorship relationship usually involved both before and after the ordination. Depending on the people and personalities involved, it may vary from a short period with a few wise suggestions and simple factual answers, to a deeper life-long bond that might broach advice on other aspects of life like choosing a job, finding a companion or other life issues. The Third Order also has a number of privileges, in addition to the invoking of Dalon's "seven-fold powers and three ways of day and one of night," that they have granted unto themselves; the most widely known are namely:

1. Right to vote in the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, which is more-or-less defunct now in a legislative sense due to numbers and unanimity traditions, but still possesses a sense of camaraderie.
2. Right to be elected as an Arch-Druid and start a grove.
3. As an elected Archdruid, you may ordain people to 1st, 2nd, 3rd order, or to the Archdruidcy, although in practice some Thirds choose to ordain regardless of being an Arch Druid, which they see as a ten minute formality (to construct a temporary grove).
4. May enter the higher orders, if invited.
5. May conduct almost any rite or service of the Reform (excepting ordaining people to higher orders to which you don't belong); including the right to write rites.
6. Consecrate the Waters of Life and Waters of Sleep.

7. Wear a red ribbon for summer services and a white ribbon for winter services.
8. Employ really bad puns, sarcasm, irony and witty comments to the amazement of one's friend & foes.
9. Use of fancy titles, like:

Priest/ess of the Third Order
Priest/ess of the Reform
Priest/ess of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu
A Reformed Druid Priest/ess
Grand Poobah
Sign the letters O.D.A.L. or write a sigil after your name.
Call yourself "Reverend", or whatever is appropriate, which might be sufficient in some states & commonwealths to perform marriages & funerals.

The Responsibilities

As with any public role, of course, there are even heavier responsibilities upon the Second Order, and especially the Third Order, although they are less clearly laid out than implied and unmistakenly felt, and each person tends to enunciate them in a different manner. I have devised my own nine rules that have mostly governed my actions, since I was a 1st Order Druid, with a few tweaks. You are welcome to borrow some elements or come up with your own set.

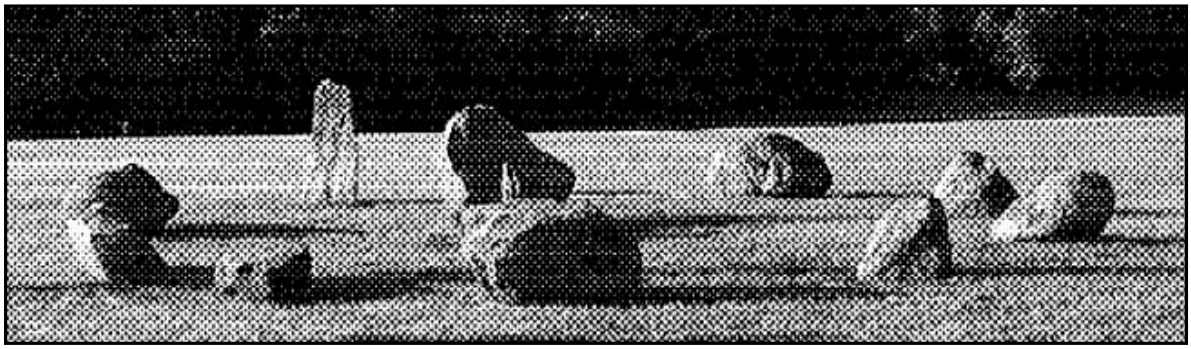
1. Study widely, keep skills honed, and contemplate deeply.
2. Live a wholesome and respectable life according to a stable code of ethics.
3. Follow the general customs & practices of the Druids.
4. Encourage the best performances from others.
5. Assist and guide all who come in search of Druidism onto their correct paths.
6. Be available for consultation, assist & visit with vigilers in your area.
7. Revere Nature and protect it (and the weak) from unbridled predation .
8. Avoid the fossilizing touch of dogma, mandatory traditions, and unnecessary organization.
9. Keep a strong sense of cheeky humor.

Conclusion

Again, these are my own thoughts on the matter, but you can see that there are a number of issues with pros and cons to consider when choosing an ordination or considering an alternative course of leadership or spiritual initiation. Take the time to complete an honest self-evaluation of whether and how you would like to undergo an ordination. If you are thinking of entering the 1st, 2nd or 3rd Order, feel free to confer with your nearest Arch Druid, or give me an e-mail to me to discuss the matter at mikerdna@hotmail.com In any case, I hope that your path will be clearer and full of bright promise and rewarding challenges.

Figure 13 Boliou Fountain, which used to rotate 360 every day long ago, 2002.

Figure 14 River altar stone, Cannon River, 2004.



SECTION SIX:
Who Did What When?

Simple Time Line of Reformed Druidism

1956
First Stone Circle Appears in Arb

1963
First ritual of RDNA April,
Basic Tenets April,
Carleton Grove founded May,
Hierarchy up to Third May
First Beltane May
Carleton Constitution June,
First Samhain November
Predictions come true November

1964
First Third Order ceremony, April
Fisher resigns Archdruidcy, May
CoDAL begins, May
Nelson is ArchDruid, May
Higher Orders 4th to 6th, May
Chapel requirement gone, June
First missionary groves, Summer
Druid Chronicles (Reformed), Summer
Vermilion SD, Summer
Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan WI. Summer
First non-Carleton priest at MKJW.
Frangquist is Archdruid Sept

1965
7th Order Established

1966
Green Book produced, May
Initial legislative period ends, May
Frangquist resigns Archdruid, May

1967
Hiatus at Carleton

1968
Berkeley Grove founded
Isaac enters RDNA
Smiley Affair begin

1969
Shelton is Archdruid May
Codex of Form proposed
Priestess Vote Returns

1970
Stanford Grove Begins July?
Smiley Affair ends
Codex of Form withdrawn

1971
Shelton resigns May
Priestess Issue resolved

1972
DC(R)'s footnotes

1973
Search for the Blue Book of Archives

1974
Isaac Affair begins July

1975
DC(E) assembled

1976
Morrison Archdruid Carleton, May
DC(E) published, Aug.
Prov. Council, Aug.
Carleton Apocrypha, Summer
Stone Circle re-emerges on Hill 3 Oaks

1977
Prov. Council fades
Isaac Affair ends?
Druid Chronicle Newsletter starts

1978
Morrison resigns Carleton, May
Pentalpha begins

1979
Isaac enters a sabbatical
Luomala Archdruid Carleton, May
Order of Lugh established

1980
Luomala resigns Carleton, May
Carleton Druidism sleeps

1981
Coalition Council DAL, Aug
CoCoDAL votes
Isaac quits sabbatical and returns
Isaac leaves NRDNA
Live Oak Grove Begins

1982
Coalition Council fades away
Frangquists revive Carleton

1983
Ar nDraoicht Fein (ADF) begins

1984
Carleton Druids sleep

1985
Live Oak Grove Closes
Live Oak unofficially continues
Cascorbi revives Carleton Grove

1986
Carleton Sweatlodge tradition begins

1987
St. Olaf Grove (RDNA) begins

1988
Henge of Keltria splits off ADF

1989

1990
Davis Archdruid Carleton, May
Pagan Studies gone Carleton, Sept
Catalyst meetings Carleton, Sept

1991
Catalyst Group quits at Carleton
Druid Missal-Any ceases

1992
End of Hazlenut's "Boring Times"
Scharding inspect Archives

1993
Druid Archival Project begins, Feb.
Davis resigns Carleton, May
Scharding Archdruid Carleton, May
Third Order resumed at Carleton, May
Oral History Project Begins, May
Tampa Bay FL Grove (RDNA), June
Green Book Vol. 2, Summer
Green Book Vol. 3, Summer
Poetry Vol. 2, Summer
Book of African Jedi, Summer
Dead Lake Scrolls, Fall
Dead Bay Scrolls, Fall

1994
Order of Puck starts, April
Pan-Druidic conference, April
Scharding resigns Carleton, May
Hrobak ArchDruid Carleton, May
Graham co-ArchDruid Carleton, Nov.
Curtis co-ArchDruid Carleton, Nov.

1995
Big River Grove of SCSU, May
ARDA collection assembled, Sept
Carleton Grove becomes an official student organization Fall,

1996
Isaac retires as Archdruid of ADF
Order of Bambi starts, January
Order of Suzuki starts, January
St. Olaf Grove closes, May
Scharding to Akita Japan, June
ARDA published, August
Big River Grove closes, August

1997
Stone Circle reappears on Hill 3 Oaks
Religious House at Carleton

1998
Unofficial 8, 9, 10th Orders Devised
1998 Stone Circles re-appear at Carleton

1999
Dispute over Third Order, June
New Stone Circle Appears, June
Irony goes to Tonga, June
Emmon Bodfish's mysterious murder

2000
New RDNA homepage, April
Rapid Growth in number of groves.
Scharding returns to USA, June
Green Book Vol. 4, June
Druid Missal-Any begins, November

2001
RDNAtalk conference start, April

2002
Irony returns to USA

2003
HDNA restarted, January
40th Anniversary, May & June
OMS Affair, August

2004
ARDA 2: Green Book published, March
Archives renovated, July
Robert Larson dies, August
Fisher Interview, August
Scharding becomes Patriarch of 8th Order, September
Irony Sade becomes Patriarch of 9th Order, September
Richard Shelton becomes Patriarch of 10th Order, September
ARDA 2: Main Volume published, October

2005
ARDA 2: Magazine Volume published, Jan

Figure 15 Goodhue Hall across Lyman Lakes, Nestled in the Upper Arb, Summer 2003.

Figure 16 Jenny the Harpist, c. 1998.

Roll of Groves and Arch Druids

Only seven or eight have constitutions that are still recorded to the Archives, so it is difficult to give their precise foundational dates. Likewise, most Groves rarely sent in a formal announcement of their dispersal, they just fade away. These are the only ones that I've heard about and remembered to record. My dates are vague at best and come from indirect methods, like mailing lists, to determine which Groves were still functioning. As for designations, that is even more tricky, since many were shifting labels rather frequently. P=protogrove, A!=Alternative Grove with no Orders.

Name	Location	Date	Label	Archdruids/Leaders
Acorn	Twin Cities	1978	SDNA	see Twin Cities, Grant 1/78-11/78?
Acorn 2 P	New Market	3/2003	RDNA/ODM	Ric Knight 03-Now
Aelvenstar P	Phily, PA	5/04	RDNA	Aelvenstar 04 -Now
Alabama P	Southern AL	4/ 2002	RDNA	Maddy 2002-2004
Alberta P	Calgary, Alberta	10/03	RDNA	Jim McCrae 10/03-Now
Amazon	Brazil	2002	RDNA	Friesland 2002-2003
Amber Oak P	Toronto, Ont	8/03	RDNA	Amberoak 03-04.
Amon Sul A!	Georgetown, KY	6/2001	RDNA	Gandalf 2001-Now
Ancient Circle Proto	Argyle, NY	1990s	MOCC	Inion an Daghda 90s-Now
Ann Arbor	AnnArbor MI	1973	RDNA	Ellen Shelton 73-74, Dick Shelton 74-77?
Angus Og	Bay Area	1993	NRDNA	Until Late 90s.
Akita	Akita, Japan	1996	ShintoDNA	Scharding 96-2000, Haneke & Kibou 2000-Now
Arch	St.Louis MO	1976	HDNA	Rhodes 74-78, Clark Sept 78-79?
Baccharis	Orinda, CA	1999	NRDNA	Press 99-Now
Bamboo P	Dover, DE	9/2002	RDNA	BrightMirage 2002-Now
Barn Owl P	Cadillac, MI	2003	RDNA	Celtrin 2003 –Now
Berkeley	Berkeley CA	1968	RDNA	Larson 1968-76
Berkeley	Berkeley CA	1976?	NRDNA	Larson 1976
Berkeley	Berkeley CA	1977	SDNA	Bonewits & Carruth 77-79
Berkeley	Berkeley CA	1979	NRDNA	Carruth & Abbott 79- Fall 81
Berkeley	Berkeley CA	1981	SDNA	Bonewits Fall 81 to Early 82
Big Ash P	Garden City, MI	2000	RDNA	Matt Summer 2000-2003
Big River	St. Cloud, MN	1995	RDNA	Scharding May 95 to May 96
Birch	New Hamp.	1986	NRDNA	Carruth mid 80s to Now
Carleton	Northfield MN	1963	RDNA	See Next Page for full list
Cat in the Corner	Denver, CO	9/2001	RDNA	Alyx 2001-Now
Cattle	Dallas, TX	2002	RDNA	Josh Badger 2002-Now
Central Ohio P	Caimbridge, OH	4/2004	RDNA	Celtic Faerie 04- Now
Chicago	Chicago, IL	1970	RDNA	McDavid 70-3, Bradley 73-76
Chicago	Chicago, IL	1976?	NRDNA?	Bradley 76- Sept 78
Chico	California	2/81	NRDNA	League 2/81 to ?
Circle	Parish, NY	1999	RDNA	Weber 99-01
Clann na Brocheta	Travelling	1977	ODNA	Larson 77-79?
Corn P	Iowa	12/2001	RDNA	Gayla 2001-2002
Creeks called Rivers P	Columbus, OH moved to WV	2000	RDNA	Ian 2000-Now
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Budoedd	Grants Pass, OR	7/2001	OMS	Ellis Arseneau 1996-Now

Cylch Kitsap Pennisula	Bremington, WA	7/2001	OMS	Butterflye 2001-Now
Cylch Sequoia Sepervirons	Crescent City, CA	7/2001	OMS	Cernunnos 2001-Now
Cylch Tylwyth P	Westmoreland, TN	7/2002	OMS	Stephen 2002-Now
D.C. (Digitalis)	Washington, DC	2000	RDNA	Scharding 2000-Now
Dragon's Eye P	Calgary, Alberta	2001	RDNA	Shaun McCann 2001-2002
Dragon Fly, Order of	Gillet, AR	2/2002	RDNA	Chis 2002-Now
Dragon Oak P	Virginia Beach, VA	6/2001	RDNA	2001-2002
Dravidia P	Havre du Grace, MD to Ind	8/2001	RDNA	Dolanimus 2001-Now
Druid Heart Spirit P	Chico, CA	2001	RDNA	Rhiannon Hawk 2001 to 5/03
Duir de Danaan	Silicon Valley, CA	1999	NRDA	MaDagda & Tegwedd 1999-Now
Elder P	France	4/2004	RDF	Cerene 4/04-8/04.
Emerald	Seattle, WA	1997	NRDNA	Cyndie Sallee 1997-1999, Priya Kendrick 1999-Now
Eurisko P	Hampton, VA	7/2002	RDNA	Gwydion 2002-Now
Evergreen	Olympia, WA	1975	changing	Tom Schuler 75- 9/79?, c Shuler 11/78-2/81, Merril 2/81 to ?
Faerie Spell P	Whittier, CA	7/2001	RDNA	Dusty 2001-Now
Flatulent Waters P	Niagara, NY	June, 2001	RDNA	2001-2002
Frozen Aspen	Big Lake, AK	3/2004	RDNA	Colleen Peterson 04-Now
Galatia A!	Izmik, Turkey	4/2004	RDT	Greumach MacCoinneach 04-Now
Greenwood	Seattle, WA	2/81	R,N,S,Z?	Cyndie (Schuler) Sallee 2/81 to 1997
Golden Oak P	Duluth, MN	9/2001	RDNA	Coisiche 2001-5/04
Golden Apple P	Rocky Mount, NC	2/2002	RDNA	Unknown 2002- 5/04
Gray Oak P	Marlborough, MA	10/2002	RDNA	Binky 2002- 5/04
Hazelnut	Bay Area	1975	changing	Moe & Abbot off and of to Mid 80s
Hazelnut	Bay Area	1990	NRDNA	Abbott & Reitan 90 to Now
Hemlock Splinter	Mexico, NY	7/2002	RDNA	Irony Sade, 2002-Now
Hidden Wood P	Blair, PA	2/2003	RDNA	Swordfighter 03-Now
Ice Floe	Antarctica	1999	RDNA	Friesland 1999-2002 became Amazon Grove
Lark P	Tampa, FL	5/2003	RDNA	Druidess@hellotkitty.com 03-Now
Life Garden P	Long Island, NY	4/2002	RDNA	2002-Now
Live Oak	Berkeley, CA	12/81	NRDNA	Carruth 12/81 to 83?
Live Oak (2)	Orinda, CA	1983?	NRDNA	Press 83-85, Blunt 85, Bodfish 85-93
Los Angeles	LA, CA	6/78	SDNA?	Sherbak 6/78 to 12/81?
MaKaJaWan	Wisconsin	1964	RDNA	Frangquist 1964, Helding/Hirsch? 65-66?
Mojo Proto	Unknown	12/2001	RDNA	Juju 2001-Now
Mother Berk.	Berkeley CA	1976	SDNA	Bonewits 76
Mulberry Proto	Tucson, AZ	11/2001	RDNA	Ken Bennet 2001-2002
New York 1	NY City	4/66	RDNA	Fisher Apr 66-Sept 69?
New York 2	Meadow, MA	1976	RDNA	Corey 76-77?
Nomadic Proto	Roseneath, Ontario	2/2002	RDNA	Unknown 2001-Now

Oaken Circle Proto	Northern KY	2001	RDNA	Sherry 2001-Now
Olympia	Olympia, WA	9/2001	RDNA	Daniel Hansen 2001-Now
Ombanda	Ombanda, CA	1993?	NRDNA	93- Mid 90s.
Poison Oak	Orinda, CA	2002	NRDNA	Weinberger 2002-Now
Post Oak Protogrove	Houston, TX	1984	NRDNA	Tom Cross 84-88
Princeton	Princeton, NJ	1978	RDNA	Morrison 78 to ?
PSG festival	Madiosn, WI	1993	RDNA	Scharding 1993
Purdue	Purdue, IN	1965?	RDNA	Smiley 65?-70?
Rapid City	Rapid City, SD	1966	RDNA	Nelson 4/66? –68?
River Oaks PROTO	Jacksonville, FL	2000	RDNA	Uncertain until 2002.
Rochester	Rochester, NY	1/2002	RDNA	Wolf 2002 to Now
Rogue River P	Medfore, OR	5/04	RDNA	Aeigeann 5/04 to Now
Saint Louis Proto	St. Lousi, MO	5/2002	RDNA	Unknown 2002-Now
Saint Olaf	Northfield, MN	1987	RDNA	Adams 87?-94?
Shikoku Grove	Tokushima, Japan	1997	RDNA	Ikari Segawa 1997-Now
Silver Oak Proto	Wilkesboro, NC	4/ 2002	RDNA	Unknown 2001-2002
Stanford a.k.a.	Palo Alto, CA	7/ 1970	RDNA	Savitzky or Uggla 70 to 76
Southern Shores	Palo Alto, CA	1976?	NRDNA	Uggla 76 to 11/78?
Southern Shores	Palo Alto, CA	1979?	SDNA?	Sherbak 79? to 81?
Stagg's Trail P	Alta, CA	1997	RDNA	Pendragon 97-2001
Sunrise P	Green Valley, CA	2/2004	RDNA	Orianna 04-Now
Stockton	Stockton, CA	1972?	RDNA	Bonewits 72? to 74?
Swamp Protogrove	Naples, FL	1991	RDNA	Finn Goodwyrd 91-Now
Tampa	Tampa, FL	1993	RDNA	Kyle Clark 1993 to ?
Tampa #3 Protogrove	Tampa, FL	2000	RDNA	Jantzen 2000 to 2003
Twin Cities	Twin Cities	1974	N or SDNA	Bonewits 74-76, Auvinen 76-78 See acorn
Tuatha	San Diego, CA	1976?	NRDNA?	O'Neil 76? to 79?
Tuatha de Danaan	Bay Area	1993	NRDNA	Sommers 93 to late 90s
Vermilion	Vermilion SD	3/64?	RDNA	Nelson 3/64 to 11/65?
Volcano	Tonga, South Pacific	6/1999	RDNA	Irony Sade 1999-2002
White Rabbit	Monona, WI	11/2001	RDNA	Luomala 2001-Now
Yns Avallach P	Atlanta, GA	8/2003	RDNA	John Ness 03-Now

Figure 17 Hill of Three Oaks, Lughnasadh 1993.

Carleton ArchDruids	Archdruidcy	Carleton Missionaries
David Fisher	Spring 63 to Spring 64	Norman Nelson
Norman Nelson	Spring 64 to Fall 64	David Frangquist
David Frangquist	Fall 64 to Spring 66	David Fisher
Gary Zempel	Spring 66 to Spring 67	Richard Smiley
Thomas Carlisle	Spring 67 to Spring 68	Robert Larson
Marta Peck	Spring 68 to Fall 68	Steven Savitzky
Steven Savitzky	Fall 68 to Spring 69	David Uggla
Richard Shelton	Spring 69 to Spring 71	Glen McDavid
Glenn McDavid	Spring 71 to Spring 72	Michael Bradley (hon.)
Renata Seidel	Spring 72 to Spring 73	Ellen Conway Shelton
Steven Corey	Spring 73 to Summer 74	Richard Shelton
Diana Erbe	Summer 74 to Spring 76	Steven Corey
Donald Morrison	Spring 76 to Spring 78	Donald Morrison
Susan Olin	Spring 78 to Spring 79	Sam Adams (hon.)
Katya Luomala	Spring 79 to Spring 80	Kyle Clark (hon.)
Heidi Schultz	Spring 80 to ?	Michael Scharding
(*First Interregnum period)*		Irony Sade
Robert Nieman	Spring 82 to Spring 84	Merri Weber
Thomas Lane	Spring 82 to Spring 84	Ian Friesland (hon.)
Megan Ross	Spring 84 to Summer 85	
(Second Interregnum with		
various leaders such as):		
Alice Cascorbi	mid 80s	
Heiko Koester	mid 80s	
Jan Schlamp	mid 80s	
Carron Perry	late 80s	
Tino Thompson	late 80s	
Brandon Schields	late 80s	
Joanne Mandt	late 80s	
Heather Gruenberg	early 90s	
John Nauert	early 90s	
(Return of Archdruids)		
Andrea Davis	Spring 90? to Spring 93	
Michael Scharding	Spring 93 to Spring 94	
Rebecca Hrobak	Spring 94 to Spring 96	
Anne Graham	Spring 95 to Spring 96	
Michelle Curtis	Spring 95 to Spring 97	
Irony Sade	Spring 96 to Spring 99	
David Coil (honorary)	Spring 96-Spring 99	
Michelle Hajder	Spring 96 to Fall 98	
Amanda Bradley	Fall 97? to Spring 00	
Chrissie Phelps (2nd)	Spring 99 to Fall 00	
Chloe Flynn (2nd)	Spring 99 to Spring 01	
MerriBeth Weber	Fall 98 to Spring 03	
Ehren Vaughn	Spring 99 to Spring 02	
Chris Middleton (2nd)	Spring 99 to Spring 02	
Steve Crimmins	Spring 02 to Spring 04	
Corwin Troost	Fall 02 to Spring 05	
William Reckner	Fall 04 to Spring 05	
Ian Hill	Fall 04? to Spring 07?	

CARLETON COLLEGE
(Founding Grove)
1963-Present

Vermillion, SD 64-65
Ma Ka Ja Wan, MI 64
Rapid City, SD 65-66
Purdue, IN 65-71
New York #1 66-69

Berkeley, CA 68-81
Chicago, IL 70-78
Stanford, CA 70-78?
Ann Arbor, MI 73-77?
New York #2 76-78?
Southern Shores, CA 76-81?
Princeton, NJ 78-80?
St. Olaf, MN 87-93?
PSG, WI 93
Tampa, FL 93-98

Big River, MN 95-98
Circle, NY 98

Tonga 99-02
Ice Floe 99-01 (Amazon 01-02)
White Rabbit, WI 01-Now

Stockton, CA 72-74
Twin Cities, MN 74-78

Evergreen, WA 75-81

Hazelnut, CA 75-Now
Arch, MO 76-79?
Tuatha, CA 76-79?
Clann Na Brocheta 76-79?
Acorn, MN 78-81

Live Oak 81-93,99-Now
Los Angeles, CA 81-85?
Chico, CA 81-87?

- **Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF) 1983-NOW (Many Groves)**
- **Reformed Druidic Wicca? (RDW) Mid 1980s-Now**

Greenwood, WA 81-99
Emerald, WA 99-Now

Tuatha De Danaan 93-96?
Ombanda, CA 93- 96?
Angus Og, CA 93-96?
Duir De Danaan 99-Now

Post Oak Protogrove 84-88
Birch 85-Now
Silver Oak Protogrove 89-?
Baccharis 99-Now
Poison Oak 02-Now
Sunrise P , 04-Now

Uxellos-Druidactios 88-Mid 90s
Grew to about 4 or 6 groves

Akita,Japan96-Now

Hemlock Splinter, NY 02-Now

Henge of Keltria 88-Now (5 Groves)
Divine Circle Sacred Grove 91-Now
Primitive Celtic Church 92-96
Order of the White Oak 99-Now

RDW became the Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross (MOCC) in 1990s based in CA.

Tuskogee Grove 83-Now
Seattle Grove 94-Now
Ancient Circle 90s-Now
Possibly more….

Shikoku, Japan 97-Now
Monument, D.C. 00-Now

Swamp, FL (91) -Now
Big Ash P, MI 00-Now
River Oaks P, FL 00-02
Tampa #3 P, FL 00-03
Creeks Called Rivers P, OH 00-Now
Cat in the Corner, CO 01-Now
Corn P, IA 01-04
Olympia, WA 01-Now
Dravidia P, MD 01-Now
Cattle P, TX 02-Now
Rochester, NY 02-Now
Frozen Aspen, Alaska 04-Now
Acorn 2 P, 03- Now

Elder P, 04-04
Aelvenstar P, 04-Now
Galatia P, 04-Now

Spontaneous Protogroves

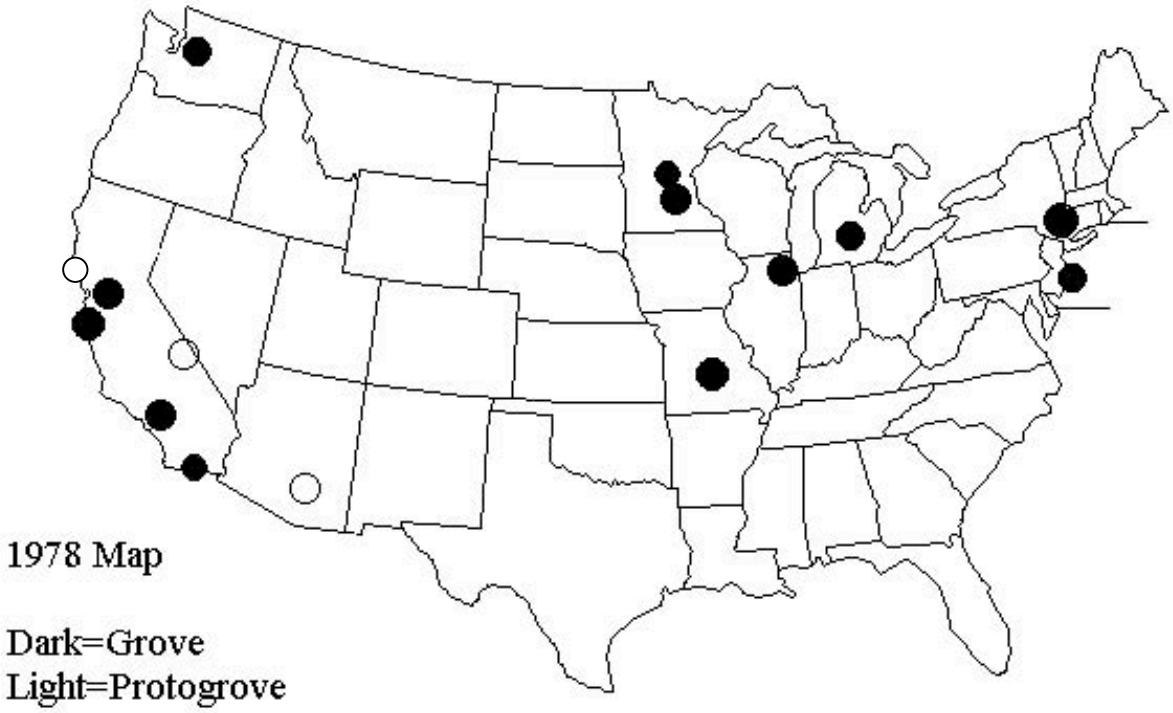
Dragon's Eye Proto, Canada 01-02
Faerie Spell Proto, CA 01-Now
Flatulent Waters Proto, NY 01-02
Golden Oak Proto, MN 01-Now
Dragon Oak Proto, VA 01-02
Mojo Proto 01-Now
Mulberry Proto, AZ 01-02
Oaken Circle Proto, KY 01-Now
Alabama Proto, AL 02-04
Bamboo, DE 02-Now
Dragon Fly Order, Canada 02-04
Golden Apple Proto, NC 02-04
Grey Oak Proto, MA 02-04
Nomadic Proto, Canada 02-04
St. Louis Proto, MO 02-04
Life Garden Proto, NY 02-Now
Silver Oak Proto #2, NC 02-04
Barn Owl Proto, MI 03-04
Eurisko Proto, 02 – Now
Hidden Wood P 03-04
Lark P, 03 –Now
Amber Oak P, 03-04
Rogue River P, 04-Now

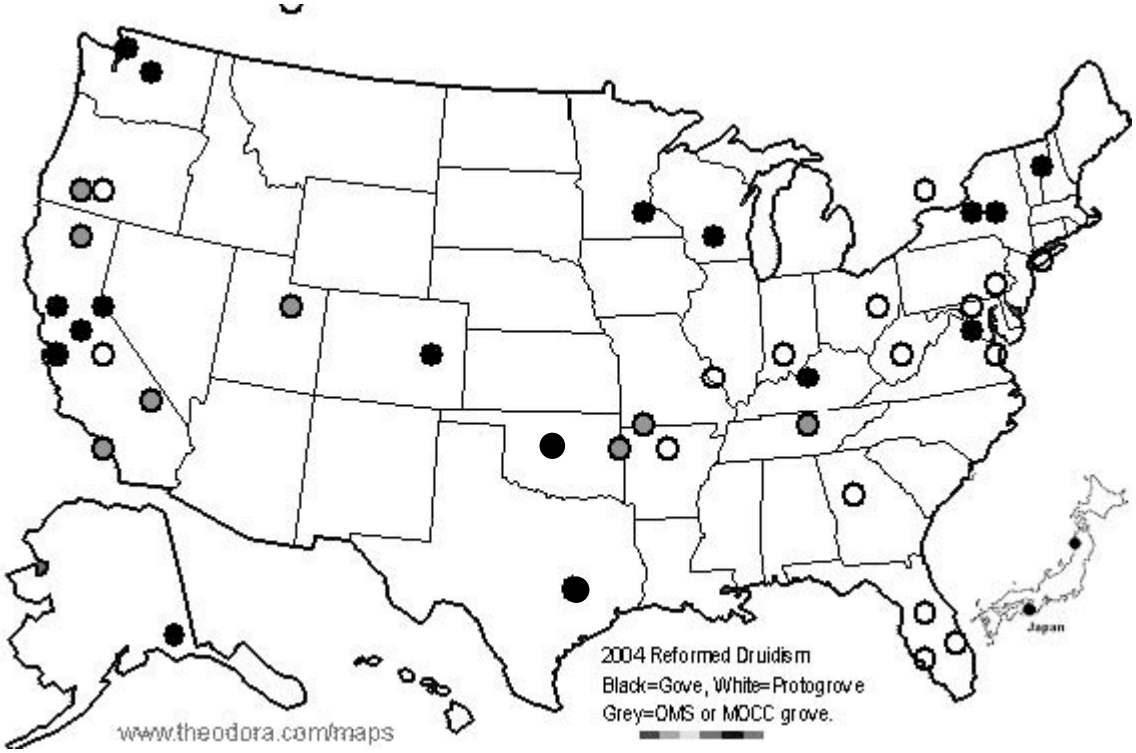
Order of Mithril Star, RDNA

Cylcch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Budoedd, OR 96-Now
Many in the 90s….
Cylch Kitsap Pennisula, WA 01-Now
Cylch Sequoia Sepervirons, CA 01-Now
Cylch Tylwyth Proto, TN 02-Now

A Family Tree of Modern Druidism

Naturally most dates are approximate, and many offshoot organizations may not be recognized by their apparent parent organization as truly descended from them. I would love to receive corrections and additions for the next issue. There are perhaps a dozen other offshoots of ADF, plus Celtic Wiccan groups and other organization that may have borrowed RDNA/ADF/Keltrian materials over the years, and when significant, we'll add them to the family tree.


1978 Map
Dark=Grove
Light=Protogrove


2004 Reformed Druidism
Black=Gove, White=Protogrove
Grey=OMS or MOCC grove.
www.theodora.com/maps
Japan

Statistical Commentary on the Reform

Rough Estimates

Here are a couple armchair estimates of the size of Reformed Druid statistics. Do no quote them as they are unverifiable and unscientific. They are based on general discussions, intuitions, and wild guessing. Note that all Third Order Druids are 1st and 2nd Order also, and all 2nd Order Druids are 1st Order Druids also. First numbers are for 2003, and numbers in parentheses are 1996 figures

Estimate of Ritual Attendees

3600 (3000+)

% from Carleton

43% (33%)

Population of First Orders

1100+ (1200+)

% of 1st from Carleton

60% (70%)

Population of Second Orders

190+ (170+)

% of 2nds from Carleton

43% (40%)

Population of Third Orders

110+ (80+)

% of 3rds from Carleton

70 % (Less than 70%)

Ratio Male/Female of 3rd till 1971

15:1 (15:1)

Ration M/F of new 3rds since 1971

3:5 (2:3)

Ratio Male/Female of 3rds till Now

1:1 (3:2)

Ratio of M/F Archdruids till 1971

15:1 (15:1)

Ratio of M/F new ADs since 1971

1:1 (1:2)

Ratio of M/F Archdruids till Now

4:5 (1:1)

Population of Higher Orders

28+

Estimate of Total Past Groves

60 (45)

Estimate of Past Protogroves

60 (10)

Reasons for Grove Collapse

1. Ennui & In fighting
2. Finances
3. Archdruid had to move

Largest Known Grove

Greenwood Grove (60+ regular)

Smallest Known Grove

Saint Olaf (1 or 2 regular)

1976 Grove Pop. Estimates

Doubling or tripling on High Days
Ann Arbor 5-10
Arch 10-12
Berkeley 5-10
Carleton 5-10
Mother 3-5
New York Two 3-5
Southern Shores 3-5
Twin Cities 5-15
Solitary Thirds: 30+

1995 Grove Pop. Estimate

Doubling on Highdays
Bay Area Total 5-10
Big River 5-10
Birch 3-5
Carleton/Olaf 5-10
Greenwood 30-60
Tampa 3-5?
Solitary Thirds: 60+

2004 Grove Pop. Estimate

Carleton 20 (120 mailing list)
Emerald Grove 80
Swamp P 7
Duir De Danu 7
OMS main 18
Rogue River P 8
St. Louis P 6
Baccharis 5
Birch 4
Digitalis (DC) 5
Akita 5
Rochester 4
Hazelnut 4
Acorn P 4
Lark P 4
Poison Oak 3
Amon Sul 3
Creeks called Rivers P 3
Hemlock Splinters 3
Bamboo P 3
Frozen Aspen 3
Shikoku 3
Aelvenstar P 3
Sunrise P 1-3
Yns Avallach P 1-3
Alberta P 3
Dravidia P 3
Life Garden P 3
White Rabbit 3
Eurisko P 3
Cattle P 1-3
Cat in the Corner 1-3
Olympia Grove 1-3
Solitary Thirds: 80+
Protogroves total: 124

Oldest Grove
Carleton

Longest Running Grove
Greenwood

Most Groves at One Time
general increase in groves reaching:
Twelve (Sept 1978)
increase since 1987 reaching:
Six to Eight (May 1993)
Seventeen (Aug 2004)

Fewest Groves at One Time
One (May 1963 to Summer 64)
Three (1967)
Three or Four (1983-1987)

Average Number of Groves
Six

Years of Cyclical Peaks in Dispersal
1963-6
1973-78
1990-95
2001-03

Years of Cyclical Troughs in Dispersal
1967
1979-82
1998

Prediction of next Peak
2010 (2010)

Prediction of next Low
2007 (1999)

Number of Labels in Reform
6 to 8 in Sept. 1978
RDNA, New RDNA, Norse DNA (Tuatha), Zen DNA (Evergreen), Hasidic DNA (Arch), Schismatic DNA (Mother), Orthodox DNA (Clann na Brocheta), Humanistic DNA (Chicago)

Longest ArchDruidcy
(??Abbot & Hazelnut Grove??)
Cyndie Sallee 2/81 to present
Carruth mid 80s? to present
Larson 68-76
(Adams 87?-94?)

Shortest Known ArchDruidcy
Bonewits (Berkeley) 2 months? (1981)
Frangquist (MKJW) 4 months? (1964)
Nelson (Carleton) 5 months? (1964)

Avg. Archdruidcy in Reform
Three or Four years

Longest ArchDruidcy at Carleton
Offic: MerriBeth Weber Fall 98- May 03?
Unoffic: Andrea Davis Sep 89? to May 93

Avg. Archdruidcy at Carleton
One (maybe Two years)

Avg. Grove Activity by a Druid
One to Three Years

"Prolific" Ordainers of Priests
Mike Scharding 28+
Isaac Bonewits 14+
Frangquists 10+
Sheltons 6+
Larson 6+
Fisher 5+

"Prolific" Authors in Pages
Michael Scharding
Isaac Bonewits
Emmon Bodfish
Stacey Weinberger
Irony Sade
Frangquist
Stephen Crimmins
Shelton

Cultural Centers of the Reform
(in time Order)
Carleton / Ann Arbor 1963-1978
Berkeley / Twin Cities 1968 to 84?
Twin City / Arch 1974-8 (SDNA & HDNA)
Greenwood 1976 to Present
Carleton / Big River 1985 to present
Bay Area 1990 to Present

Most Populous Druid Areas
1. Bay Area
2. Carleton & Great Lakes
3. North West
4. North East
5. Japan

Least Populous Druid Areas
1. South West
2. South East
3. South
4. Rocky Mountains

Most Written Rituals
Samhain
Beltane

Most Read Druid publications
What is Reformed Druidism?
Druid Chronicles (Reformed)
ARDA
Druid Chronicles (Evolved)
Black Book
Green Book

Probably the Most Notable Druids
(in chronological order)
Fisher & Cherniack
Frangquist & Nelson
Savitzky, Shelton & McDavid
Larson & Bonewits
Carruth, Abbott, & Bodfish
Cascorbi & Koester
Scharding, Weinberger
Sade, Weber & Crimmins

Credits, Founders, and Known Innovators

A number after the item indicates in which Part of ARDA2 it can be located. Green Books come in ten volumes, so "6.5" means Part 6 Volume 5. If I missed your name or contribution, please do contact me.

C= Carleton Alumni, B=Berkeley,
L=Live Oak, O=Other

David Fisher *Founder -C

Order of (altar) Consecration 3
Altars
Clothes of office
Order of Worship 3
First officiating priest
"Dalon ap Landu"
Druid Sigil
The Ribbons of office
The Waters of Life
ArchDruid office
Preceptor office
Server office
Constitution 4
Basic Tenets 1
First Beltane 3
"The Druid Curse"
First Samhain Service 3
Samhain #1 3
Samhain Chant 3
The Waters of Sleep
Summer & Winter halves
Second Order 3
Oimelc #1 3
Third Order 3
Existence of the Higher Orders 3
Fourth Order Patriarch 3
A chant for Midsummer?? 3
Reply of Other David 2
Fisher's Farewell 2
Apology for Simplicity 2
Epistle to Encyclopedist 2
Began the Black Book 3
Began the Blue Book 3
Book of Faith 2
Established the Council 4
New York Grove

Jan Johnson -C

First attempt at a Schism 1
First writer of an epistle

Howard Cherniack *Founder

Constitution 4
Basic Tenets 1
First Preceptor

Norman Nelson *Founder -C

Constitution 4
Basic Tenets 1
First Server
First post-Fisher Archdruid
Fifth Order Patriarch 3
First Missionary 2
Vermilion Grove 2
A Service at Winter Solstice 3
A Chant for Winter Solstice 3
Rapid City Grove
Helped to edit DC(E)
Epistle of Norman 2
Some Last Thoughts 2
RDNAtalk moderator
2nd & 3rd Epistle of Norman 2

David Frangquist *Founder -C

A Spring Thaw? 2
First Third ordained
One of few Thirds ordained in Winter
Names of the Higher Orders 3, 4
Sixth Order Patriarch 3
Druid Chronicles (Reformed) 1
Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Grove 2
Epistle of David the Chronicler 2
What is Reformed Druidism? 4
A Meditation for Midwinter? 3
Incantation for Midsummer #2 3
Origins of the Carleton Calendar 4
The Green Book (volume one) 6
Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals 2
Reply of David 2
Pushed the Priestess Issue 10
Felicitous Communications 2
Epistle of Midsummer 2
Boosted the Druids in 60s
Boosted the Druids in 70s
Restarted the Druids in 80s
Boosted the Druids in 90s
Higher Order Letter 3 (historiography)
Standard Forms 4
Song of the Earth 4

Gary Zempel -C

Seventh Order Patriarch 3
Oimelc #2 3

Dick Smiley -C

Purdue Grove
Hill of 3 Oaks Haiku (Zero)
The Smiley Draft Affair 2

Marta Peck -C

First Female Carleton ArchDruid
First 3rd Order ordained by phone

Robert Larson –C-B

First Celtic enthusiast at Carleton
Berkeley Grove 4
Leabhar Toirbhealbhaigh 2
Started 1971 Priestess Vote in 1969
8 standard NRDNA festivals in DC(E) & ARDA 3
First Epistle of Robert 2
Order of Worship in Irish 3
Second Order in Irish 3
Third Order in Irish 3
A King's Wedding 3
Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 2
Provisional Council A-Ds 2
Pronunciation of Irish Gaelic Terms 6.10
A Guide to Celtic Deities 6.10
First Epistle of Robert 2
Second Epistle of Robert 2
Orthodox Druids of North America
Clann Na Brocheta Grove
Celtic Time Reckoning 4
Edited the ARDA collection
Intro to ARDA (Zero)
Third Epistle of Robert 2
Last Epistle of Robert 2

Steve Savitzky -C

Revived 60s Druids
Order of Investiture 3
Letter to My Brothers 2
Stanford Grove
Southern Shores Grove
Sample Druid Funeral 3

Richard Shelton -C

Exorcism in Time of War 3
Order of Worship in Greek 3
Smiley Affair letters 2
Oimelc #3? 3
Lughnasadh alternative service? 3
Relocated the Blue Book
The Codex of Form 2
Polite Refusal 2
Report of Richard 2
Words of Green 2
Lesson for a New Archdruid 2
Epistle of Richard 2
Post Carleton Perplexions 2
Helped to edit DC(E)
Beltane Alternative Service 3
Carleton Apocrypha 2
Standardized Carleton Calender 4
Repub. Greenbook 6
Boosted Druids in 70s
Boosted Druids in 80s
Boosted Druids in 90s
Patriarch of Danu
Ordination of 10th Order Druids

Thomas McCausland -C

Discourse of Thomas the Fool 2
Wisdom of Thomas the Fool 2

Ellen Shelton -C

Boosted Druids in 70s
Ann Arbor Grove 4
Epistle of Ellen 2
Second Epistle of Ellen 2

Isaac Bonewits -C

"Real Magic"
First Ordained 3rd in Berkeley
Stockton/Lodi Grove
First Epistle of Isaac 2
Protogrove Concept 2
Twin Cities Grove
Arch Grove
Initiated Isaac Affair 2
Second Epistle of Isaac 2
Third Epistle of Isaac 2
Fourth Epistle of Isaac 2
Fifth Epistle of Isaac 2
The Beginning of ADF 2
Mother Grove in Berkeley

Schismatic Druidism 2, 4
SDNA & HDNA constitutions 4
Hasidic Druidism 5
Order of Merddyn Patriarch 3
Standardized Spelling
Druid Chronicles (Evolved)
Book of Changes 2
Suggestions for a Druid Funeral 3
Old Fashioned Wedding 3
Wedding Contract 3
The Druid Seasons of the Year 4
The Holidays of the SDNA 4
Different Strokes 7
Book of Bards 6.6
The Other Druids 6.10
Neopagan Druidism 6.10
A Bibliography of Druidism 6.10
Authentic Thaumaturgy (book)
Many, Many Liturgies 3
ADF Liturgy Outline 3
Money & Priesthood 6.10
Step by Step Guide to ADF 3
ADF Midsummer 1987 3
A Wedding Contract 3
Druid Chronicler magazine 11
Pentalpha magazine 11
ADF founder 4
6th Epistle of Isaac 2

Glenn McDavid -C
Indexed the Chronicles 1
Chicago Grove Constitution 4

Gerre Goodman -C
Gobbledegook and Red Tape 2
A Cup Filled to the Brim 2

Renata Seidel -C
Epistle of Renny 2

Dale Fierbe -C
Salutations 2

Julia Vinograd -C
Several Poems 6.6

Cwerthin -O
HDNA sage 5
Book of Bards 6.6

Shirine Morton -B
Musings of an Ancient Religion 2
Bristlecone Pines 6.9

David Geller -B
Order of Oberon Patriarch 3
Many songs 6.6
Swirling Galaxy liturgy idea. 3

Mike Bradley -C
Humanistic DNA of Chicago Grove 4

Hal Moe -B
Nordic Fire Rituals 3

Stephen Abbot -B
Live Oak Grove 1981
Celtic Goddesses of Moon 6.10
Druid Cross Tarot 3
Hazelnut Grove 1975 -
Dead Bay Scrolls 1993 9
Memorial for Robert Larson 3

Sally Eaton -B
Epistle of Sally 2

Anodea Judith -B
Let the Spirit Come to You, poem 3
Goddesses, Goddesses, song. 3
Let it All Happen, Song 3

Cyndi Salee -B
Evergreen Grove
Greenwood Grove
First major use of Native American
Druid Choirs

Joan Carruth –B -L
Epistle to the Myopians 2
Coalition Council of DAL 4
Order of Diancecht Matriarch 3
Mini-Chronicles
Live Oak
Birch Grove
New Matriarch of Grannos

Katya Luomala -C
Order of Lugh Matriarch 3
1978 Lughnasadh 3
One of Last Carleton Druid in 70s

Emmon Bodfish -L
Editor, Druid Missal-Any 1982-1991, 11
Writer of several Missalany articles 11
Orinda Grove AD & Live Oak Preceptor
Live Oak Grove Tender
Open Letters to the Grove 2
Further Funeral Suggestions 3
The Staff 3
Four Salutations of the Day 3
Creating a Wizard's Lite 3
Back to the Shadows 3
Candle Staring 3
Why Another Article on Scrying 3
Collection of Poems 6.6
Mistletoe 6.9
Hazel and Salmon 6.9
Seasonal Essays 6.7

Larry Press -L
Live Oak Grove AD
On Divination 3
Calculating Cross Quarter Days 4
Lair of Cthulu 6.6

Susan Press -L
Poems of the Season 6.6

Tom Cross -O
Druidism and Truth 2
A Rebuttal to Albion 2
Spring Equinox Salvo 2
Druidaxta 2
Farewell of Tom Cross 2
Sacred Cauldron (book)
Vehicle Chant, poem. 6.6
Hymn to the 3 Brigits, poem
Gaulish Language 6.10
The God List 6.10
Gaulish Gods 6.10
Decline of Druidism 6.10

Willowoak -L
Order of the Earth-Mother 3
Live Oak coup member 2

Albion -O
Letter to the Editor 2
A Rebuttal to Cross 2
Albion's Response 2
Albion's Thoughts 2
A Druid Staff 3
Experiment in Iron Age Living 11

Les Craig –B -L
Matriarch of Oberon 3
Balanced Epistle 2
The Gift of Horses 2
Epistle on Gruntwork 2
Balance & Synthesis 2
Author of "Heathen on Heath" 6.7

Alice Cascorbi
Revived Druids in 80s
Revived 1st Order
Revived 2nd Order
Revived Order of Worship
First Neopagan at Carleton
Interview 10

Jan Schlamp/ Heiko Koester -C
Samhain #3 3
First Fall Equinox rite at Carleton 3
Sweatlodges
Speaking of Beliefs 2, 3

Sam Adams -C
Saint Olaf Grove
First RDNA to enter Henge Keltria
Friend of the RDNA 6.6
Oimelc Song 6.6
Oimelc Silly Song 6.6
Epistle of Sam 2

Andrea Davis -C
Boosted Druids in 90s
Wedding Ceremony 3

Michael Scharding -C

Boosted Druids in 90s
Refound the Black Book
Refound the Green Book
Revived Third Order
Revived Higher Orders
Invented Whang (Whisky/Tang)
Revived Order of Worship
Book of Poetry (Volume one) 6.6
Book of Poetry (Volume two) 6.6
Book of Poetry (Volume three) 6.6
Refound the Carleton Apocrypha 2
Green Book (Volume two) 6.2
Green Book (Volume three) 6.3
Book of the African Jedi Knight 6.5
Friends of the Earth Mother organization
Book of Poetry (Volume three) 6.6
1992 Midsummer 3
1994 Candlemass 3
Temporary Regent of Order of Grannos
Many Oral Histories of RDNA 10
A General History of Reformed Druidism 8
Refound the Blue Book
Book of Ultimate Answers 6.5
Book of Ancient Sources 6.10
International Druid Archives
Big River Grove of St. Cloud 4
Order of Suzuki (Founder) 3
Order of Bambi (Patriarch) 3
Part Zero
Various Introductions
New Orders of Puck 3
New Order of Phoenix 3
New Order of Suzuki 3
New Order of Bambi 3
New Order of Hermes & Basho 3
New Order of Brigit 3
Roll of Groves and ArchDruids 4
Statistical Commentary on Reform 4
Credits, Founders, and Known Innovators 4
Terminology of the Reform Druids 4
Standard Liturgical Abbreviations
Adjusting Between Carleton and Berkeley Dating Methods 4
What is Reformed Druidism? 1995 4
Timeline of Reformed Druidism 4
Fire Building Fun 3
Mike's Farewell 2
Book of Lacunae 2
Akita Grove
1997 Beltane 3
The Sigil Letters 2
Epistle of Rising Sun 2
Freedom Within/Freedom Without 2
Parenthetical Epistle 2
Mini-Essay on RDNA 6.10
Part Eight of ARDA 8
Dead Lake Scrolls 9
Dead River Scrolls 9
D.C. Grove
2001 Fall Equinox 3
2002 Fall Equinox 3
Sigil Construction 101 3
Salmon of Knowledge 6.9
Druidical Diet Dilemma 6.9
Romanization of Japanese Service 3
The Most Famous Reformed Druids 6.10
Where are My Druid Ancestors? 6.10
Where are Ideas for Druids From? 6.10
Green Books Five 6.5
Green Book Six 6.6
Green Book Seven 6.7
Green Book Nine 6.9
Green Book Ten 6.10
Green Book Eleven 6.11
2002 Order of Acorn (Zero Order) 3
Missionary Im-Position 2
Mike's Mini-Missive 2
The Arch Epistle 2
Divination Techniques 3
Ordination of 8th Order Druids 3
Patriarch of Taranis
Higher Order Letters 3
Unofficial Danu Sermon 3
New Order of Pack-Rat 3

Daniel Hansen -O

American Druidism (book)
Fantasy Druids 6.10
Druidesses: An Overview 6.10

Nozomi Kibou -O

Eight Order 3
Ninth Order 3
Tenth Order 3
All's Well That's Dug Well 11
Fertility Cycle of Druid Year 6.7

Patrick Haneke -O

Memorial for Beth Harlow 3
Baby Blessing 3
Great Cailleach Search 3
Quick Order Liturgy 3
Daily Druid Devotional 3
Sirona Shower Shugyo 3
Hot Tub Healing 3
Winter Solstice Drama 3
Bardic Contest 2001-2002 6.6
Bardic Contest 2002-2003 6.6

Paul Schmidt -C

The Book of Paul (DLS) 9

Becky Hrobak, Anne Graham and Michelle Curtis -C

First all-female hierarchy at Carleton
First Triple-ArchDruidcy at Carleton
New Carleton Constitution
Official Organizational Status & Funding
Druid Tea Parties
Longest Carleton Archdruidcy (Hrobak)
Mini-Epistle of Michelle 9

Michelle Hajder -C

Michelle's Meditation 9

Chris Middleton -C

New Order of the Evening Mystic 3
Collection of Poems 6.6, 9

Robert Harrison –C?

Sigil Letters 2, 9
Being a Druid 2

Amanda Bradley -C

Epistle of Amanda 2, 9

Irony Sade -C

New Third Order
Bread Loaf Weddings 4
Sociology of the RDNA 6.10
What Are Druids? 2
Collection of Poems 6.6, 9
The History of the Legitimacy 6.10, 9
Book of Exile 2, 6.6
The Stone Circle of Carleton
Ein Tanz 6.6, 9
The Winter King 6.6, 9
The Wild Hunt 6.6, 9
Order of the Volcano 3
Tonga Grove
Soul of Juliana Spring 6.6, 9
Hemlock Splinter Grove
Ordination of 9th Order Druids 3
Patriarch of Llyr

Alex Strongbow -C

Optional Activities Vol. Simplicity 3
Optional Oimelc Activities 3
Things to do for Spring Equinox 3
10 Things to do for Beltane 3
Summer Solstice Activities 3
Some Possible Lughnasadh Things 3
Some Activities for Fall Equinox 3

Mortus -O

Uncommon Samhain Activities 3
Samhain & Sacrifice 6.7

Rhiannon Hawk -O

Creating a Druid Nemeton 2, 6.9
Tree Meditation 2, 6.9
Druid Ritual Differences 6.10
Song Collections 6.6
Bardic Contest 2001-2002 6.6
Bardic Contest 2002-2003 6.6
Cymru World Tree 6.10

Sam Peeples -O

Life is a Birch 6.9
The Hazel Tree 6.9
Ivy and Vine 6.9
The Ash Tree 6.9
The Willow 6.9
The Oak Tree 6.9
The Apple Tree 6.9
The Canny Conifers 6.9

Ellis Arseneau -O

OMS Founder 6.8
OMS constitution 4
Druidcraft 101 6.8
Unearthing Dalon 11
Green Book Eight 6.8
The Redwood 6.9
Suggested Activities OMS 3

Tegwedd -B
Ballad of Death of Dalon Ap Landu 6.6
Celtic Goddesses Song 6.6
Bardic Contest 2001-2 Winner 6.6
Bardic Contest 2002-2003 6.6
RDNAtalk moderator
Grey Malkin Newsletter Publisher
Standing Stones Newsletter 11

Ian Friesland -C
The Sigil Letters 2, 9
Antarctica Grove
The Alphabet Epistle 3

Randall ? –C?
Online Druid Services 3

Ikari Segawa -O
Japanese Order of Worship 3

Stacey Weinberger -L
1999 Order of Worship 3
1999 Samhain 3
Old Druid Missal-Any 11
Druid Missal-Any 2000-? 11
Winter Tree Care & Planting 6.9
Planting Your Own Grove 6.9
Another Protogrove Service 3
Leave No Trace 6.9
NRDNA cCnference Moderator
RDNAtalk Moderator

MerriBeth Weber -C
Collection of Poems 6.6
Interview 10

Mairi Ceolmhor -O
Why We are Called Reformed? 2, 6.10
Christmas Plants & Yule Log 6.9
Bardic Contest 2001-2002 6.6

Corwin Troost -C
Collection of Poems 6.6, 9
Epistle of Corwin 2
Calling the Winds 3

Gandalf -O
Epistle of Adaptation 2

Alyx Griffen -O
The Epistle of Alyx 2
Cat in the Corner Grove

Eric Powers -O
Bardic 2002-2003 Contest 6.6
Breakfast of Champions 6.9
Celtic Dietary Problems 6.9
Irish Spring & Irish Cleanliness 6.9
Epistle of Eric 2
Various Winter Activities 3

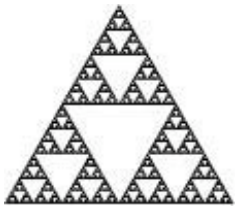
Bright Mirage -O
Bamboo Grove
Bardic Contest 2002-3 Winner 6.6

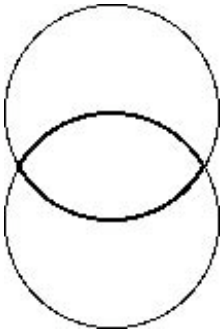
Ric Knight -O
Epistle of Ric of the North 2
order of druids minor 3
odm Constitution 4

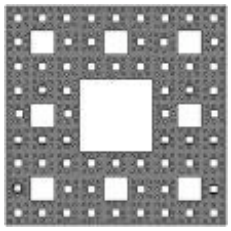
Stephen Crimmins -C
Epistle of Stephen 2
Higher Order Discussion 3 (Historiography)
Updated the Archives
Mike Scharding & the History of RDNA 7
Assisted illustrating ARDA 2
Pre-Emptive Ordination of 10th Order 3
New Order of Hephaestus 3
Acorn Planting 3
Edited the re-issue of DC(E)
David Fisher *the* Founder? 7
Suggested 11th, 12th & 13th Orders

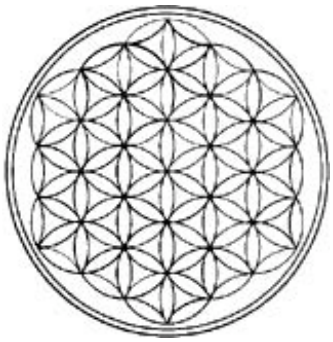
Celtic Oak -O
French Order of Worship 3

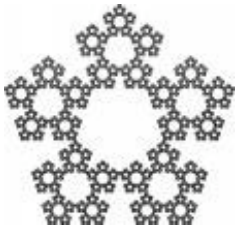
Your Name Here
Many amazing discoveries & observations.











SECTION SEVEN: RDNA GLOSSARIES

Traditions, Miscellaneous Customs and Liturgical Notes

The Druid Sigil

The circle with the two vertical lines passing through is the major symbol used by all of the branches of the Reform. In later years, the circle has sometimes been drawn as a wreath with two staves in front of it. It has also been adopted by such second and third generation spin-off Druid organizations from the Reform as Ar nDriaocht Fein (ADF), The Henge of Keltria and the Primitive Celtic Church, and Order of Mithril Star.

This symbol was once thought to be an ancient Celtic symbol for the Earth-Mother. In the Reform at least, the Druid Sigil is used in blessings, and in signing of names by members of the Third Order. It is often mistakenly asserted that the Founders took it from an illustration (plate 2) in The Druids by Stuart Piggott, showing the floor plan of a Roman-Celtic temple of Nodens. However, this book was published after 1966, and the Druids were using the sigil since 1963, so it seems unlikely as a source. Larson still believes that the illustration may have been published somewhere else earlier.

As a symbol, no one knows exactly what it means or where it came from (David Fisher has refused interviews since the 70s), but there are MANY interpretations.

Druid Symbols Used by Other Druid Groups

Although not used by the RDNA, there are many other symbols used by other Druid organizations. One such symbol is the three rays of Awen: /I\ . One possible explanation is that it represents the three drops of wisdom that fell from the Cauldron of Knowledge; the ones that landed on Taliesin's tongue and made him a super-bard. Another explanation is that they represent the angles of the three different rays of light as they come through a hole in a stone at megalithic sites on the winter solstice, equinoxes and summer solstice. This symbol can be found used by the Henge of Keltria (within a Druid Sigil), the New Forest Center, Order of Bards Ovates and Druids, L'ecole Druidique des Gaules, L'eglise Druidique des Gaules and the Welsh Bards of the Gorsedd.

Other generic symbols used by Druids are the oak leaf, the oak tree (or any tree), the acorn and the golden sickle. ADF uses a trunk of an oak tree that has been chopped down, yet with a sampling growing from the center of the supposedly dead trunk; and also with it's roots wrapped into a Celtic knot. This badge was designed by Jim Odberts, with inspiration from the Clan MacEwen badge. The interlacing of the roots indicate the Pan-Indo-European "roots" of Druidism.

"The French Druids of the Druidic Church of Gaul (L'eglise Druidique des Gaulois) use a circle transcribing a large "X" inside. Pierre de la Crau writes in "Druids Progress #5";

The symbol that we use is the labarum (a Latin word from the Celtic labaron; Welsh llafar, "ringing, eloquent," Irish labar, "eloquent"). The source of the labarum is the Gaulish sign (X) symbolizing the flashing and domineering power of the Celtic god Taranis. This symbol was taken up by the Roman emperor Constantinus following a vision in the Grand's sanctuary (France), when he saw "Apollo" with the goddess "Victory", showing him three groups of three labari surrounded with crown laurels can be seen on a tombstone in the Lyon's Museum (France). Constantinus used this sign as his standard to lead his Gaulish armies to victory against Maxentius. After this victory, the Celtic Pagan symbol was co-opted by the Christians and became the Constantinian "chrisme" or the Chi-Rho monogram for Christ."

Daniel Hansen in his article in Circle Magazine, mentions other Druidic magic symbols, such as the Sun Wheel (Rota Taranous) and the Celtic Cross, which are found throughout the Celtic countries. He also mentions that the circle represents mystery or eternity and the cube signifies truth. The Swastika (fulfot) and the Triskelion (Trifot) are symbols found throughout western Europe and Celtic countries. When spinning counter-clockwise many consider them destructive and warlike, but they are creative when spinning clockwise. He also claims that the Caduceus, used today in the medical profession, was associated with the Druids. The "Ovum Anguinum" or Adder Stone is a well known Druidic amulet, supposedly formed by twisting snakes. It is claimed to float upstream and can be used to win lawsuits.

Kinds of Liturgy

There are several types of liturgies performed in the different Reformed Druid movements. Most common are the *Orders of Common Worship* for the Winter and Summer halves of the year (one each). These are the two types used for regular weekly services, which were common during the early years of the Reform. Now that these weekly services are rare to nonexistent, their use is now often as generic rituals for use on non-festival occasions. Their format is not fixed in finality and adjustments or entirely new creations are highly encouraged and recommended in the spirit of the Reform.

Then there are the *Special Orders of Worship for the High Days*, one or more versions for each of the Four Major and Four Minor Days. These are entirely optional and vary from Grove to Grove. For more on the 8 festivals, see the Calendar Section further below. Most are vaguely based upon the *Orders of Common Worship*, with special additions to emphasize the unique elements of each festival.

There are also *Ordination Ceremonies* for the First, Second, Third and Higher Orders, sometimes called "Consecrations" and sometimes called "Sealings" to those Orders.

There have been occasional liturgies written for weddings, funerals, child namings, puberty rites, and the like, but these are usually written by an individual Grove or Druid for the occasion.

Spelling Conventions

It has become standard to capitalize many of the following words. There is also a great deal of variety in spelling choices. In DC(E) Isaac offered standardizations for spelling, these were: Archdruid, ArchDruidess, Archdruid/ess, Druid, Druidess, Preceptor, Neopagan, Paleopagan, Grove, Hasidic, Schismatic, Earth-Mother, Season of Life, Season of Sleep, Geimredh, Earrach, Samradh, Foghamhar, Samhain, Oimelc, Beltane, Lughnasadh, waters-of-life, waters-of-sleep, the Waters, Weekend, acorncap, tellit, Hairpull, Mishmash, Dru. I however, have not stuck to these, but you are welcome to.

There are two major conventions used in the Reform in respect to the word "Druid". In the Carleton Grove the tradition exists that "Druid" stands for any RDNA member of any of various genders. In some of the New RDNA groves, the tradition exists of indicating a female Druid by writing "Druidess" with an indefinite word of "Druid/ess" to indicate either a male or female Druid. Since this publication is being written by a Carleton Druid, the former tradition will be used, with no offense intended.

Third Order Ordination Customs

Among various Groves the following customs have developed. Perhaps the oldest custom is that the new Third Order Druid buys the ordaining Archdruid a hearty breakfast after the ordination and is encouraged to lead the next service in the Grove. In some Groves, the Archdruid may read or recite passages from the Book of Meditations (in the Druid Chronicles) during the Vigil, his or her voice coming from the darkness. The Candidate is usually consulted as to whether this will be a help or a distraction. Visiting of the Candidate is allowed, as long as the visits are brief. Some Groves take up a collection to buy regalia for the new Druid, such as a proper red chalice or a bottle of their favorite brand of the Waters. In some Groves, it is the duty of the new Druid to lead the Grove's next service.

The only restriction on the activities of the Candidate during the vigil is that they must **not** sleep at all during that night and the vigil must be at least 7 hours long. While it was usually the custom that only an Archdruid could ordain people to the Third Order, it is now generally the custom at Carleton that any qualified Third Order Druid may perform the task upon any Second Order Druid; although it usually polite to ask the Archdruid first (if one exists).

Any one who ordains new members to the Third Order should try to remember to send a postcard or letter of notice of this Ordination to: Carleton College Archives, RE: Druid Archives, 300 North College St., Northfield, MN 55057.

Apostolic Succession

For those who are concerned, while any group of people can use Druid ceremonies if they really wanted to (who's going to stop them?), only a Third Order Druid, duly ordained by a previous member of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, may consecrate the waters-of-life and the waters-of-sleep. All Third Orders should be able to trace their ordination back to the Founder of their grove, and back to the Founder at Carleton College, who got it from who knows where. The ritual for the Third Order, by vote of the Council, is not to be added to or deleted from; although gender changes of pronouns is now often done for courtesy. The ritual for the Third Order, by custom, is not generally made available to the public, to retain its full impact when being used.

Establishing a Grove

Traditionally, in order to establish a legal Grove, it is necessary to have at least three people. At least one of these must be a Third Order Druid, at least one of the others a Second Order member, and the last need only be a First Order member. The three or more people adopt a Constitution, usually similar to that used by the Carleton Grove and proceed to elect an Archdruid, a Preceptor and a Server. They may add other officers as they see fit such as, for example, a Bard, an Astrologer, a Guard, etc. Traditionally, a Third Order Druid establishing a mission should first organize a legal Grove and be elected Archdruid before they should ordain any new Third Order Druid. However this step has sometimes been skipped.

Once one has organized a legal Grove, one should try and remember to send a letter mentioning this to: the Carleton Archives, RE: Druid Archives, 300 North College St., Northfield, MN 55057. There, the record keepers will help you establish connections with other groves, should you so desire it.

On Forming a Protogrove

Some people reading these materials may wish to start a Grove, but may have no easy access to a Third Order Druid. What they should do is write to: Carleton Archives, RE: Druid Archives, 300 North College St., Northfield, MN 55057 and ask if there is a Third Order living in their region. With luck, there will be one nearby which may be prevailed to jump-start your grove.

While waiting, groups may form Protogroves (after all, there's nobody to stop them). Protogroves could hold regular services, though they could not properly consecrate the Waters. One substitute prayer for the consecration could be something like: "O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, bless these Waters that are held in your name. Send unto us a member of your Order, that we may worship the Earth-Mother in proper fashion. O Mother, join us together by thy power as we meditate upon thy glories." See more in Grove Formation article, Pt. 4.

On Homosexuality, Bisexuality and Transexuality in the Reformed Druid Movements:

So what?

The Higher Orders

The names of the Higher Order were taken predominantly from Gaulish Paleo-Paganism, plus two Welsh names and one Irish. All are from Celtic cultures, but with vast differences between them! I, myself, think it would have been interesting if they had made an Order of the Buddha. Further details on the deities can be found in most dictionaries of Celtic Folklore and encyclopedias of mythology and god/desses. It is generally up to the individual member to determine whether the names of the Higher Order are full-fledged Gods and Goddesses or whether they are Jungian archetypes. Or they may be something else entirely. (see Historiography of Part 3)

The Higher Orders were established in the spring of 1964 as an encourage the Third Order to do further study and/or to encourage spiritual inquiry. They are intended to honor achievement rather than tenure. As such, the Higher Orders are equal in the sense that none shall be considered a prerequisite for the other. Admittance to a Higher Order is the prerogative of the acting Patriarch or Matriarch of that Order.

The Patriarch or Matriarch of each Higher Order designs the symbol or vestment of that Order. Thus the Eight, Ninth and Tenth Orders are in the process of choosing a Matriarch or Patriarch now. Some more information on the higher orders can be found in the Interview with David Frangquist or Richard Shelton. Within the ARDA, look at the Ordination rites, their historiographies, the Book of Customs, and the debates in the Apocrypha. The following table gives the names, origins, symbol, patronage and Order of each of the eight orders involved (though it is important to note that the order of listing the orders in no way implies any ranking between either the deities or of the orders they are patron to).

The Original Ten Orders of Reformed Druidism

Order	Name	Patron of	Symbols	Origin	Atriarch
First	(NONE)	(NONE)	(NONE)	(NONE)	(none)
Second	(NONE)	(NONE)	(NONE)	(NONE)	(none)
Third	Dalon ap Landu	Groves	Red & White ribbons	Wales	Headed by current Carleton AD, but not a Patriarch
Fourth	Grannos	Springs	Green chalice & ribbon	Gaul	Fisher
Fifth	Braciaca	Malt	yellow wrist maniple	Gaul/Brit.	Nelson
Sixth	Belenos	Sun	yellow neck ribbon	Gaul	Frangquist
Seventh	Sirona	Rivers	Sky blue w/ wavy	Gaul	Zempel
Eighth	Taranis	Lightning	Knotted black & gold maniple & umbrella	Gaul	Scharding
Ninth	Llyr	Oceans	(Seagreen?)	Wales	Sade
Tenth	Danu	Fertility	(Brown?)	Ireland	Shelton

*Steve Crimmins has puckishly suggested, 11th Triple Morigiu (War), 12th Arawn (Underworld) & 13th Angus (Youth)

Special/New Orders:

In addition to the original Higher Orders there are Special Orders or "New Orders" that have been established since 1974. Unlike the Higher Orders, most of these orders are less oriented towards Nature and more towards human skills or traits. The Order of Myrddin was established by Isaac Bonewits between 1974-6, the Order of Oberon by Mr. Geller between 1974-6, the Order of Diancecht (and its two subsets of Airmed and Miach) in 1976, the Order of Lugh by Carleton's very own Katya Luomala, the Order of Angus was created in 1979 for children before puberty (the 1st Order in Berkeley was only enterable after puberty in the NRDNA). The resumption of New Orders re-began in the 1990s with Michael Scharding, who created the Order of Puck in 1994, the Order of Suzuki in 1996, and the Order of Bambi in 1996. Many of these rites are in Section Three of the Liturgies. It is noteworthy that many of them have Patrons of non-Celtic origin (e.g. Puck, Suzuki & Bambi).

The Special/New Orders

Order	Patron of	Symbol of Office	Origins	Atriarch
Oberon	Bards	Dark Blue ribbon	Britain	Geller, Les Craig
Merddyn	Magic	A Wand or staff	Wales	Bonewits
Diancecht	Healing	Green stole/ Red wavy	Ireland	Carruth
(Airmed)	Doctors	gold border ribbon	Ireland	
(Miach)	Counselors	Silver border ribbon	Ireland	
Lugh	Crafts	(none)	Everywhere	Luomala, Scharding
Angus	Children	Orange ribbon	Ireland	UNKNOWN
Puck	Mischief	Hockey Puck on ribbon	England	Scharding
Earth Mother	Children	Pink Ribbon	Unknown	Willow-Oak
Suzuki	Meditation	cord w/ paper pendants	Japan	None
Bambi	Outdooring	Brown with white spots	USA	Scharding
Hermes	Traveling	Wand with a winding yellow ribbon	Greece	Nelson Designated
(Basho)	Traveling Poets	5 inch, 7 inch & 5 inch red & white ribbons	Japan	
(Amerghin)	Traveling Poets	3 ply blue belt	Spain	
Brigit	Writers	Paper ribbon with printed words on them.	Ireland	Frangquist Designated
Mithril Star	Water	(unknown)	Science Fiction	Arseneau
Volcano (Pele)	Volcanoes	Igneous rock on a neck ribbon.	South Pacific	Irony Sade
Hephaestus	Fire working	Orange	Greek	Steve Crimmins
Evening Mystic	Bardic	None	Unknown	Chris Middleton
Order of Druids Minor	Reflection in Nature	None	Unknown	Ric Knight
Pack Rat	Archving	3' twine with stuff	Europe	Scharding

Vestments

"In accordance with Druid practice, certain vestments may be worn by Second Order and higher Druids during a meeting. Also, however, in accordance with *Reformed* Druid practice, it should be stressed that vestments are only *permitted*, not required." (David Frangquist) While the custom of dressing up for rituals has generally fallen out of practice at Carleton, occasionally it is revived. Other Groves in the Reform have generally adopted some individual customs of dressing, as is their right, most still choosing to use the traditional bed sheets.

Several systems of vesting have been suggested over the years. With the exception of some of the Higher Orders, these usually break down into matters of robes and ribbons. Usually Second Order Druids, or higher, by dint of their enthusiasm, usually wear white robes (kind of like the ancient Druids). We strictly caution those people who live in the Southern US that they should not wear hoods, as this may be misconstrued by the locals and we recommend a nonwhite color robe for those regions. Unfortunately, according to Larson, the Klan has also adopted the use of colored robes

The Third Order Druids usually wear white robes with their red or white ribbons of office around their neck, depending on if it's the Summer Half of the Year (wear Red) or the Winter Half of the Year (wear white). If a grove has other officers (such as a bard) they, of course, can be designated to wear distinctive symbols or ribbons.

IF you have a really gung-ho and rich grove you can, of course, choose to have seasonal robes for your Archdruid and/or grove members. Some of Isaac's & Frangquist's suggestions are listed here: Throughout the season of Geimredh, the robe is black with white facing. During Earrach, the robe is black with white and red facings. At the point of the Beltane service at which the sacrifice is accepted, a change to or addition of a red robe is made. Through out Samradh, the color is red or green. At Summer Solstice and Lughnasadh, the robe is green. The Samhain service begins in green, until the sacrifice is rejected, at which point a black robe is put on and over it a white facing or robe. As for the other High Days, at Winter Solstice he suggests a solid white robe and at Oimelc black with a white facing or overgrown, to which red may be added during the service. No suggestions are made for spring equinox or fall equinox. For those of you who are poor, or who think this whole thing is silly, he suggest a simple black robe with white facings for the Winter Half of the Year and red facings for the Summer Half of the Year

The use of plain white robes, with variously colored ribbons, is really much simpler and cheaper. The following traditions seem to have developed: The ribbons are usually at least two yards in length, (purchased, if at all possible, at the Ben Franklin Dime Store in Northfield Minn.) with their raw ends either sewn, painted with clear nail polish, or taped with Scotch (or Irish) tape to prevent raveling. See Records of the Council of Dalon ap Landu for rule governing ribbons-of-office. There is a great deal of room here for invention, if you should so choose.

Among the Hassidic Druids, now disbanded, two other pieces of vestment were worn. The first was a special skullcap, usually of a knitted or crocheted of variegated green yarn, called an acorncap; while the second was a green and white prayershawl called a *tellit*, which (unlike the acorncap) is usually worn only at services or daily prayers.

If a Druid is interacting with Wiccans, one should be careful that one's Druidic ribbons or robes of office do not impinge with the system being used by the Wiccans.

Black Robes

Every once in a while, one will hear of a custom that "only Patriarchs may wear a black robe" and that if a Patriarch does so he may not wear at the same time the symbol of any Order other than the one he is the Patriarch of. All this is "in honor of the first Patriarch" and is an insider joke concerned with the fact that David Fisher, Founder of the RDNA and the Patriarch of Grannos, wore a black cassock and eventually became an Anglican Priest. In point of fact, hardly anyone (including the Patriarchs) ever wears a black robe at Druid services.

Also note: this fun about black robes has nothing to do with either a postulated historical phenomenon called "Black Druidism" (supposedly a system of "Black Magic" - a racist term that- used by Evil Renegade Druids, way back when) nor a modern cult called "The Druidic Craft of the Wise" (whose leaders wore black robes and practiced some rather unsavory techniques of psychic manipulation). The reason there is no connection with either of these two concepts is twofold: none of the Founders ever heard of them, and no reputable scholar ever has either. For more details on these two concepts, see Other Druids.

The Waters

The Waters-of-Life are served during the Samradh and Foghamhar (Beltain on May 1st up until, but not including Samhain on Nov. 1st). The Waters-of-Sleep are used during Geimredh and Earrach (Samhain on Nov. 1st up to, but not including Beltane on May 1st).

"The Waters-Of-Life are *na huisci beatha* in Irish Gaelic (*uisge beatha* in Scots Gaelic), or what is known in English as "Whiskey". Waters of Life therefore consist of the whiskey chosen by the Third Order Druid, mixed with water to the strength desired. There is a tradition of 3 parts water to 1 part Scotch during the Summer Half of the Year, with inverted ratios on feasts. They may either be premixed, or mixed during the service. In either case, they should be brought to the service in an appropriate container, not the original bottle. In the beginning, Scotch was used (Black & White being the standard brand at Carleton); others prefer Irish or Manx or Jim Bean. Any alcoholic beverage may be used in a pinch

"The Waters-of-Sleep", on the other hand, are just plain water, preferably not tap. Larson notes that if you don't rinse out your Waters container, then the Waters at Samhain will still have a slight tinge of whiskey flavor. Several Groves use special Waters for the Major High Days and recommend this practice. For Samhain ordinary spring water; for Oimelc, sheep, goat or cow milk fresh and chilled (note- canned goat milk is abominable); for Beltane, the Waters-of-Life are mixed as strongly as is generally tolerated (most Druids drink it unpolluted); and for Lughnasadh, hard cider, applejack or mead.

On the Serving of the Waters

The Server does not drink from the chalice each time it is received back from one of the partaking members of the circle. To do so would be to court disaster, especially with a large congregation at Beltane.

If two chalices are being circulated (one regular, one nonalcoholic), it may sometimes be advisable to have the Preceptor assist the Server by carrying one of the chalices around the circle, perhaps in the opposite direction. Larson suggests against this method, and only recommends *deiseal*, clockwise passing.

On Teetotalers

Your Grove may have one or more members who for reasons of health may not be able to tolerate drinking even the slightest sip of the weakest alcoholic beverages (for example, some diabetics, recovered alcoholics, people who have inherited or acquired allergies, etc.); it is unfair to deprive them of full participation because of this. Among the Schismatic Druids, it has become a habit to bring, to every Summer Service where such people are expected, strong herbal teas that are fully as intoxicating as some forms of alcoholic beverages. For example, a mixture of equal parts of peppermint and linden boiled for ten minutes, then strained and chilled makes an excellent and lively drink. Or there are other herbs that can be used in the production of "magic tea" for services and ordinations (a blessing in the name of Braciaca while brewing it, that is quite appropriate).

At rituals where two chalices are to be used, one alcoholic and one not, the presiding Druid follows the same procedure as in the Ordination of Second Order Druids; consecrating both chalices at the same time.

From time to time at Carleton, the grove has gone dry and abstained from the use of alcohol (mostly 88-92 and 99-now), substituting tea or some type of lively drink, due to run-ins with security & funding rules.

Other Uses of the Waters

In addition to being used during the Summer Half of the Year, the waters-of-life are also used for the Consecration of an Altar (if you use one), the Ordination of a Second or Third Order Druid, and at some wedding, healing and funeral services. Whenever possible, these events should be arranged to occur during the Season of Life; however, in an emergency, a Third Order Druid may consecrate the waters-of-life at any time of year (but should wear a red ribbon of office while doing so).

The Chalice

The traditional chalice in the Early Days for official Druid services was a red glass one. Originally, this was an octagonal, glass, hollow-stemmed, restaurant drinking glass (of the style called "Georgian"), purchased from the Ben Franklin Dime Store in Northfield, Minnesota. Since the authentic dye for the making of real ruby-glass is now expensive, authentic chalices are hard to find and many Druids use any thick, heavy, inexpensive red glass chalice they can get. Yellow chalices of the style are easy to obtain and are often used as secondary chalices for consecrating Second Order Druids and/or for passing special nonalcoholic Waters during the Winter Half of the Year. Green chalices are one of the special symbols of the Fourth Order and are used in healing rituals. Various Druids use other colors of chalices for other purposes. Wood or pottery chalices are often carried by traveling missionaries, as being less likely to break in transit. The major thing to remember is that chalices should be inexpensive, sturdy, new if at all possible, and of natural materials.

The Altar

Altars have generally fallen out of custom at Carleton, but many Groves still use them. Anything may be used as an altar, including large rocks, tree stumps, record racks, etc. If an altar is not available, sacrifices may be placed directly on the ground or in a fire. Most Druids agree that the nicest arrangement is to have a stone altar in such a way as to allow the fire to be made inside the altar (see Latter Chronicles, Chapter 7, verse 1). Naturally , the altar should be built, placed, or found in a grove of trees (oaks or sequoias), on a hilltop, on the beach, on an island, or in a similar place of natural beauty. Parking lots are poor choices.

The Sacrifice

The various movements of the Reform (and most modern Druid movements) only permit plant sacrifices and strictly forbid blood/animal/human sacrifices (regardless of a possible historical precedent). The plant is personally cut by the Third Order Druid or by the Preceptor. Any nonpoisonous plant will do, though twigs from a tree branch or oak leaves are the most traditional. During the winter, evergreen and coniferous branches are a nice touch. One should never cut enough to damage the tree (unless one is clearing land and the large sacrifice is part of a funeral for the tree). Don't forget to ask permission first, thank it afterwards and say a prayer for healing over the cut. Many Groves will get a special sickle for the sole purpose of cutting sacrifices. In the SDNA and the HDNA, only members of the Third Order used to wear a sickle (although a Second Order Druid, who was Preceptor, would carry one while cutting the sacrifice, if so directed).

Fires

Vigils and the ceremonies for the High Days are usually held around bonfires (the bigger, the better!). On special occasions, there are often torch lit processions. Note: Local conditions and fire regulations (especially in California) may rule out fires. Let your love for the Earth-Mother decide. The Carleton Grove, since at least the 80s, has made it a policy only to use local deadfall wood or to swipe it from woodpiles made by the Grounds department. Cutting down live trees for fire wood is frowned upon at Carleton and amongst Druids in general.

Times of Services

Ordinary weekly services (now defunct) were usually held on Saturday or Sunday afternoons. Services for the High Days can be held on the evening and night of the High Day's "Eve" or during the middle of the day or night of the festival itself. Whatever works. Bonfires & torches look more dramatic at night, but it's easier to read one's prayer book in the daytime.

The Summer Blessing

Soon after the celebration of Beltane, the Archdruid makes a circuit of the Grove's surroundings on foot, awakening, blessing and consecrating them. Any members of the Grove who wish may accompany the Archdruid.

Standard Liturgical Blessing

Many letters and rituals end with these words: "Peace! Peace! Peace!". Some shout them towards the three corners of area.

Letter Writing Styles

See the “Standard Letter Format” in Part 4. Certain correspondence styles have entered usage among Reformed Druids. When writing to the Council one will sometimes top the letter with "REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA COUNCIL OF DALON AP LANDU" followed by the date, both in Druid Calendar and Julian. A Druid will often address each other as "Dear (First Name)," or "Dear Brother/Sister/Sibling-in-the-Mother". If they belong to a higher or special order they may begin with "Dear Brother/Sister-in-(Name of Patron/Matron)".

When writing to the whole council, many authors will use very formal, sometimes arcane language and excessive wordiness. This is what I call "Writing like Frangquist", in honor of the Druid Chronicles format. A common way of closing off is saying "Yours-in-the-Mother," or "Yours-in- (higher order Patron)," for those so inclined. No one actually writes in numbered verses, that occurs when editors collect them.

Like nobility, many Reformed Druids have come to signing their documents with only their first name, followed by a Druid Sigil. Occasionally they will add whatever titles they feel are appropriate, such as current or past Archdruidcies, ODAL (short for Order of Dalon Ap Landu), Higher Orders or the name of the location they are writing from. Some of the bolder correspondents actually type their full name! (oooh!)

Closing of the Grove or Arboretum

Similarly, after the celebration of Samhain, the Archdruid makes a circuit of the Grove on foot, blessing and consecrating the Season of Sleep on it. Any members of the Grove who wish to go along, may accompany the Archdruid. Apparently this is only a Carleton tradition.

Marshmallow Stonings

A bizarre custom at Carleton since 1997 has been the institution of throwing marshmallows at members when tension is felt, with the concern voiced while throwing it. The person being marsmallowed, must answer the charge, whether it is fictitious or true.

Bread Weddings

At Carleton since 1997, a custom began of having people engaged in the Fall by finding matching rings in loaves of breads. The happy couple is then married in the Spring at Beltane for one year, writing their own ceremonies.

Stone Circles

Despite the likelihood of most stone circles being built by European Druids, it has become a fashion for Druids at Carleton to pile stacks of stones in various places. It is also a custom to rebuild them after they are demolished by vandals, grounds crews or mysterious forces which we do not understand.

Non-Liturgical Activities

It is well known that Druids don't spend all their time enacting the liturgy and vigiling. Various other activities have become commonplace at Carleton including: folk singing (Evergreen's choirs, Berkeley's Celtic Nights, Carleton's Picking n Grinning), folk dancing, harping, Society for Creative Anachronism, attending lectures at nearby colleges or townhalls, picnics & camping trips, inviting guest speakers, info tables, garbage pickup, stone circle building, forest maintenance, attending religious services of diverse religions, massage parties, meditation practices, ESP experimental sessions, arts & crafts projects, tea parties, letter writing, discussion groups, and book clubs.

Humor

Perhaps it goes without saying that Druids are mostly a wry & witty group, always noting the humorous and playful aspects of life, interactions, religion, and everything. How they express it greatly varies, from tongue-in-cheek, biting satire, slapstick, outrageous over-formality or hail-fellow-well-met. They also respect those moments of reverence that sometimes occur. We are rather embarrassed by our own literature, and refuse to take it too seriously as more than advice from our fellow sisters & brothers. Liven up and take risks, laugh as much as possible.

The Talking Stick

Introduced in the 1980s, a special decorated stick is passed around at a campfire or a sweatlodge to focus the easily distracted attention of the group's members on one person in turn to tell a story or relate something. The speaker plants it firmly on the ground, as if pulling strength from the earth and speaks freely. Usually in such traditions, what is spoken there is usually not related outside the circle, for reasons of the private nature of things that tend to gush out.

Performance Art

It need not be dreary or somber. A few acting classes, rehearsal with your preceptor, and study of stage magic & sleight of hand might make it a bit more entertaining and memorable. A handful of powdery dust makes a great emphasis of a part of the liturgy when thrown in a fireball on the campfire.

Most Difficult Liturgical Practice

Empty your mind of every custom that you have read about, every term that you have defined, every script that you have memorized, because they belong the past. Don't plan out ahead what you will say or do. Just BE at the site. Do what seems to come naturally, say what comes to your mind, and adjust to the situation. Be creative, without being complicated. See a little bit of liturgy in every action that you do on every day. Be sure to have your heart and soul in the right place because it will be a wild trip. Good luck.

Ritual Vestments for Druid Services

By Isaac Bonewits, 1978?

One of the things that makes a ceremony dramatically effective is the sort of clothing being worn by the participants. Among the Reformed Druids a white robe for Second and Third Order members has been customary, with the priestesses and priests wearing their red or white ribbons-of-office. The following suggestions have recently been made about vestment customs and local Groves are free to use, change or ignore them as they see fit:

The system used by the Masonic-Rosicrucian Druids in the British Isles could be modified thusly: First Order Druids would wear green robes; Second Order Druids would wear green-and-white robes; Third Order Druids would wear white robes; Bards would wear blue tabards over their regular robes; Guards would wear dark red or brown tabards, etc.

AND/OR everyone not wearing robes could wear Paleopagan styles of clothing, usually of the Celtic or Germanic sort. This would ease some of the trans-temporal clashes so common at Druid rites and would add greatly to the ritual gestalt.

AND/OR special seasonal tabards could be worn by the Archdruid (and other officers?) presiding over ceremonies. Simple rectangles (about 18"x36") of cotton or linen could be carefully embroidered, then sewn together at two corners. These would be worn over the head and belted. Each tabard would have a large tree on the front piece and a large Druid Sigil (II) on the back piece, both in the appropriate seasonal foliage. One set of possibilities runs thusly:

From Samhain to Midwinter: Rowan tree with bare branches, mistletoe and light snow.
From Midwinter to Oimelc: Holly tree with berries/mistletoe and heavy snow.
From Oimelc to Spring: Fir tree with new needles and light snow.
From Spring to Beltane: Fruit tree in bloom, with budding branches.
From Beltane to Midsummer: Oak tree in full green.
From Midsummer to Lughnasadh: Sequoia tree in full green.
From Lughnasadh to Fall: Fruit tree with fruit, some leaves starting to turn.

From Fall to Samhain: Sugar maple tree turning gold and scarlet, dropping.

Druid Terminology

Like every "religious" movement, the Reform has accumulated special meanings to ordinary words and coined new terms which may be baffling to the Reader. Treat this section as a type of Druid Dictionary. Other Druid movements are using similar terms, and we differentiate between us and them where it is appropriate.

Acorn Cap: An HDNA vestment, consisting of a knitted cap, that looks like an acorn.
ADF: see Ar nDraoicht Fein
Airmed: One of the two sub-degrees of the Order of Diancecht. This Degree deals with herbal healers, medical workers, and body manipulators. See Liturgy.
Altar: An object upon which something of religious importance is put.
Angus: One of the special Orders, dedicated to children.
Ann Arbor Grove: A grove of the mid-70s overseen by the Sheltons.
Anti-Druid: A term used in the original Druid Chronicles (see Part One), referring to a person who interferes with Druid worship by destroying altars or by being a rude troublemaker.
Apocrypha: A collection of letters from various Druids. See Part Two. Accumulated rubbish.
Apostolic Succession: The lineage of every Third Order Druid back to David Fisher, who in all likelihood made it up.
Archdruid: The figurehead leader of a Grove tricked into doing all the work.
Archdruidcy: A period of time when a person is an Arch Druid.
Arch Grove: A mid-70s grove in St. Louis Missouri with Hassidic Druids.
ARDA: A Reformed Druid Anthology.
Ar nDraoicht Fein: A new Druid organization that split off from NRDNA to pursue Indo-European Druidism, led by Isaac Bonewits.
Aspen Eve and Aspen Day: HDNA term. Sunset Sunday to Sunrise Monday and Sunrise Monday to Sunset Monday.
Awareness: the state of mind that is the goal of Reformed Druidism. See Book of Meditations in Part One.
Awen: Bardic inspiration. Related to story of Taliesin
Bambi: A special order dedicated to outdoors people.
Bard: a singer, usually with Celtic connections.
Bay Area: Any place in California near San Francisco Bay (Sometimes including Washington State) and Alaska.
Basic Tenets: The only two statements a Reformed Druid has to agree with. Found in the Book of Law 4-6.
Basho: A New Order based on a traveling Japanese Haiku poet who wandered about.
Belenos: A higher order (sixth) of the Sun.
Beltane: Beginning of the Summer half of the year, near May 1st. Lots of Fun.
Berkeley Grove: A late 60's Grove in California that was one of the centers of RDNA culture and literature.
Birch Day: HDNA term. Sunrise Saturday to sunset Saturday
Birch Eve: HDNA term. Sunset Friday to Sunrise Saturday. And the beginning of their week.
Birch Grove: A late 80's Grove in New Hampshire.
Black Book: An informal hodgepodge of early Carleton liturgies.
Blue Book: An eclectic archival collection of early Carleton memos, rites and letters.
Bonewits: A prominent Reformed Druid. Founder of SDNA, HDNA & ADF. Called Isaac.

Boring Times: A NRDNA term for the dull period between the Death March in 1981 and the revival of Bay Area Druidism in 1990.

Braciaca: A higher order (fifth) dedicated to brewing and malt.

Brethyn Allor: An OMS term for an altar cloth

Brigit: (Various spellings) Popular goddess in Gaelic countries, associated with Oimelc and sheep. Became St. Bridget.

Burning Times: A term used by the Neo-Pagan community to refer to the historical period of the Witch Hunts when hundreds of thousand of people were accused of practicing witchcraft so that the governments could steal their property and kill them.

By-Laws: Rules followed within an individual grove.

Calendar: Either the Carleton Calendar (beginning May 1st) or Berkeley's (beginning Nov. 1st) which lists the various holidays of Druidism.

Canhwyllbrens: An OMS term for candles.

Candlemas: Another name for Oimelc.

Caregl: OMS term for a chalice.

Carleton Grove: The birthplace of Reformed Druidism. Located in Northfield Minnesota. A small private liberal arts college of high academic caliber.

Catechism (of the Waters): the questions asked by the Priest to the Preceptor in the Orders of Worship beginning with "Of what does the Earthmother..."

Celt: An indigenous inhabitant of Ireland, Scotland, Isle of Man, Wales, Cornwall and Brittany. Historically the Celts also once inhabited France, Switzerland, Spain, Italy and Turkey.

Celtic languages: There are two branches of living Celtic languages the Goidelic (Irish, Scots Gaelic and Manx) and the Brythonic (Welsh, Breton and Cornish).

Celtic Night: An bimonthly activity at Berkeley to pass the winter blahs.

Chair: The head of the Council of Dalon ap Landu, held by the currently presiding Archdruid of Carleton Grove.

Chalice: The cup used in the Order of Worship. A Green Chalice is the symbol of the 4th Order.

Chicago Grove: An early 70s Grove in Illinois. Later was Humanistic DNA.

Chico Grove: A late 70s grove in California. Possibly a Protogrove.

Cleddyf: OMS term for a sword.

Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu: A late 70's attempt to keep a legislative forum after the Carleton Grove collapsed. Lasted only a few years.

COCODAL: Coalition Council of Dalon ap Landu

CODAL: Council of Dalon ap Landu

Codex of Form: An ill-fated attempt by Richard Shelton to clarify RDNA matters in 1969.

Constitution: A basic document of a grove's structure.

Council, The: short form of the Council of Dalon ap Landu.

Council of Dalon Ap Landu: The collective body of Third Order Druids who legislate primarily about matters of organizing the Third Order. Headed by the Chair.

Couth: Something that is agreeable to Hassidic Druids.

Crochan: An OMS term for a cauldron.

Cross-quarter Days: Oimelc, Beltane, Lughnasadh, Samahin? So named because they come midway between the solstices & equinoxes.

Cryman: OMS term for a sickle.

Cyllell: OMS term for a ritual pointed knife.

Dalon ap Landu: A *very* obscure Welsh deity who is the Patron of the Third Order.

Danu: A higher order (tenth) dedicated to fertility. Never established.

DC(E): abbreviation for Druid Chronicles (Evolved)

Dcr: abbreviation for Druid Chronicler newsletter.

DC(R): abbreviation for the original Druid Chronicles (Reformed)

Dead Bay Scrolls: A history of the Hazelnut Grove from 1980 to 1993.

Dead Lake Scrolls: A history of the Carleton Grove from 1980 to 1993

Dead River Scrolls: A history of Carleton/Akita/Tonga Grove from 1996-2003.

Death March: An incident at the Berkeley grove in 1981 when the procession to the ritual took hours and people collapsed from boredom and fatigue. A pivotal moment in NRDNA history, because the troublesome last official election of the Berkeley Grove followed.

Diancecht: A special order dedicated to healing in the late 70s. Has subsets Airmed and Miach.

Dru: A member of the Hasidic Druids of North America

Drues: More than one Dru.

Druid: Any member of the Reform.

Druid Archives: short for the International Druid Archives at Carleton College.

Druid Chronicler: NRNDA's national newsletter from 1977 to 1982. A supplement to DC(E)

Druid Chronicles (Reformed): The original five books by Frangquist containing history and customs. See Part One. Abbreviated as DC(R).

Druid Chronicles (Evolved): A collection of Reformed literature by the Berkeley Grove. Abbreviated as DC(E).

Druid Missal-Any: A publication of the Live Oak Grove from 1982-1991, primarily by Emmon Bodfish. Revived in 2000 by Stacey Weinberger of the same grove.

Druid Curse: a powerful curse accidentally formulated by the Founders, used four times, and then forever banned. Copies are unavailable. Some people quip that the modern Druid Curse is the inability to keep a grove from collapsing every few years.

Druid Sigil: A circle with two parallel vertical lines passing through it. Symbol of the Reform.

Druidess: A Druid who also happens to be female.

Druidic: adjective of being very much in keeping with Druidism.

Druidical: another adjective, like Druidic

Druish: being like a Hassidic Druid.

Druidism: The practice of Druids.

Druidry: The practice of Druids.

Earrach: one of four Druidic seasons. Spring. From Oimelc up to Beltaine.

Earth-Mother: another way of saying Nature.

Eisteddfod: An annual cultural festival in Wales in which Welsh Druid/Bards are seen.

Epistle: An official letter to another Druid, usually on weighty matters.

Equinox: A time of the year when the nights and days are of equal length.

Evergreen Grove: A mid 70's Grove in Washington State. Began the ZDNA.

Ffon: An OMS term for a staff.

First Order: The first step into Reformed Druid "hierarchy" achieved by partaking of the Waters and affirming the Basic Tenets.

Fisher: Founder of the RDNA and author of much of its hierarchy and form.

Foghamhar: one of four Druidic seasons. Fall. From Lughnasadh up to Samhain.

Founders: The people who established Druidism, usually consider to be Fisher, Cherniack and Nelson. Frangquist is usually also considered a Founder.

Frangquist: A prominent member of the early RDNA.

Fraternalism: Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism, or Greek Fraternities.
Gaelic: one of three variant Celtic languages spoken in Ireland (Irish), Scotland (Scot Gaidhlig) or the Isle of Man (Manx Gaelic).
Geimredh: one of four Druidic seasons. Winter. From Samhain up to Oimelc.
Grannos: A Higher Order (fourth) dedicated to healing springs and helping people.
Greenwood Grove: A late 70s grove in Washington State. ZDNA
Green Book: A collection of meditative readings in the early RDNA.
Grove: A collection of three or more Druids.
Gwialen: An OMS term for a wand.
Hair Pull: A theological debating session held by the Hassidic Druids or SDNA.
Hassidic Druids of North America: A group of Jewish Druids in the Arch grove.
Hazelnut Grove: A late 70s grove in California. NRDNA
HDNA: Hasidic Druids of North America.
Henge of Keltria: An offshoot of ADF.
High Holy Days: The four biggie festivals; Samhain, Oimelc, Beltaine, Lughnasadh.
Higher Orders: The orders of Grannos, Braciaca, Belenos, Sirona, Taranis, Llyr and Danu. The last three were never filled. Used to inspire further study.
Hill of Three Oaks: A place of importance to the Carleton Grove.
Hymn to the Earthmother: the song beginning "o Earth-mother, we praise thee for..." a common liturgical invocation.
IDA: International Druid Archives of the Carleton Druids.
Imbolc: Another name for Oimelc festival.
International Druid Archives: A collection of materials from Druid groups around the world.
Isaac: The common reference to Phillip Emmons Isaac Bonewits. A prominent Druid.
Joke: See Reformed Druidism.
Keltria: Short form of Henge of Keltria.
Koan: a Japanese meditative story with a hidden message of meaning.
Lacunae: holes, empty spaces
Lammas: Another name for Lughnasadh festival
Live Oak Grove: An early 80s NRDNA grove in California.
Llyr: A Higher Order (ninth) dedicated to Oceans. Never established.
Lughnasadh: A major Druid festival held near Aug 1st to celebrate harvest.
Magick: Mind over matter.
Maple Eve and Maple Day: HDNA term. Sunset Monday to Sunrise Tuesday and Sunrise Tuesday to Sunset Tuesday.
Marshmallowing: A Carleton's light-hearted custom in late 90s of flinging marshmallows at members with whom you have a grudge, who must then apologize, even to fictitious comments.
Maypole: A tree with ribbons hanging from it. Dancers weave the ribbons together at the Beltane or Midsummer festival.
Matriarch: A woman in charge of a Higher Order or Special Order.
Merddyn: A Special Order dedicated to magic working.
Meso-Druidism: Fraternal and Rosicrucian forms of Druidic revival. The original RDNA may be considered to be in this category.
Meso-Pagan: Fraternal or Rosicrucian revivals of various pagan cultures.
Miach: One of the subdegrees of the Order of Diancecht. Dedicated to counselors.
Midsummer: the summer solstice
Midwinter: the winter solstice
Mishmash: A collection of materials of the Hassidic Druids.
Missionary Dilemma: Early problem of the 60s of how a missionary Third Order Druid could consecrate waters to ordain a first or second order Druid, without already having a first and second order Druid already in a new grove.
Monument Hill: Site of the first RDNA rituals at Carleton.
Mother Grove: A term that Isaac used for the HQ of the SDNA movement. This title was usually applied to any grove to which he was an ArchDruid.
Multi-verse: SDNA term. Every imaginable reality and universe.
Neo-Druidism: Druidic groups belonging or resembling the Neo-Pagan movement in the modern age, not based primarily on Fraternal movements.
New Orders: Any of the orders created since 1976. There is no succession by one council electing the next one, as with the Higher Orders.
Neo-Paganism: A modern attempt to revive ancient paganism, but with modifications to suit present needs and laws.
New Reformed Druids of North America: A title used on two groups in the 70s. The first groups, composed of Carleton Archdruids, were interested in greater communications. The second groups were predominately interested in Neo-Paganism.
New Reformed Druids of South America: The hypothetical name of any future Druid group that would be formed in South America.
New York Grove #1: A mid 60s grove founded in New York. RDNA
New York Grove #2: A mid 70s grove founded in New York. RDNA
NRDNA: Abbreviation for New Reformed Druids of North America
Oak Eve and Oak Day: HDNA term. Sunset Sat to sunrise Sun and Sunrise Sun to Sunset Sun.
Oberon: A Special Order dedicated to bards.
OBOD: An abbreviation for a British Meso-Druid group called the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids.
odm: order of druids minor
ODNA: Orthodox Druids of North America
Oimelc: A major festival of Druids near Feb. 1st, to mark the weakening of winter, stirrings of new life, and poetry. Also called Imbolc or Candlemas.
Olive Eve and Olive Day: HDNA term. Sunset Thursday to Sunrise Friday and Sunrise Friday to Sunset Saturday.
OMS: Order of the Mithril Star
Order: A group of Druids dedicated to a purpose. A term used to indicate a ritual, as in Order of Worship or Order of Consecration.
Order of the Mithril Star: OMS, an offshoot of Church of All Worlds that follows "Stranger in a Strange Land", joined up with RDNA in 2000.
Order of Worship: The generic ritual of the Reform, which comes in three major forms: Winter, Summer and Festivals.
Orthodox Druids of North America: A group of mid 70s Druids dedicated to ancient Irish Druidism.
Paleo-Druidism: Isaac's term for the ancient Druids of Europe.
Paleo-Pagan: The original pagans of a culture that haven't been monotheized.
Patriarch: A man in charge of a Higher Order or Special Order.
PCoAD: Provisional Council of ArchDruids.
Pine Eve and Pine Day: HDNA term. Sunset Wednesday to Sunrise Thursday and Sunrise Thursday to Sunset Thursday.

Preceptor: A Druid of at least 2nd Order, who plays an important role in taking care of Business matters and answering the Catechism of the Waters in the Order of Worship.

Priest: A member of the Third Order.

Priestess: A Third Order Druid who also happens to be female.

Protogrove: A 70s concept of the NRDNA, for starting groves that haven't acquired a Third Order Druid yet.

Provisional Council of ArchDruids: A collection of mid 70s Druids who sought to establish greater communication between groves in the Reform.

Puck: A Special Order dedicated to Mischief and Tomfoolery.

RDNA: An abbreviation for Reformed Druids of North America.

RDNAtalk: An on-line mailing list by Mike Scharding at yahoogroups.com that began in 2000 and grew to 140 members in 2003 and is probably still continuing.

Rede: A Wiccan version of the Golden Rule.

Reform, The: A collective term to included all the branches of Reformed Druidism.

Reformed Druid: A member of any branch of the Reform, at least of the First Order.

Reformed Druids of North America: A term for the movement until 1976, when it came to indicate a branch of the Reform which did not see Neo-Paganism as its primary source of inspiration and stayed very anarchic. Abbreviated as RDNA.

Reformed Druidism: The pursuit of the Reform.

Ribbons: Common symbols of a Druid's membership in a Higher Order or Special Order.

Rowan Eve and Rowan Day: HDNA term. Sunset Tuesday to Sunrise Wednesday and Sunrise Wednesday to Sunset Wednesday.

Sacrifice: An offering given during the Order of Worship. Only vegetation, fungi and lichen are acceptable sacrifices within the Reform. Oak leaves are especially popular.

Samhain: A major Druid festival near Nov. 1st. Marks the end of the Summer half and beginning of Winter half. It focuses on death and endings and births and beginnings.

Samradh: one of the four seasons of the year. Summer. From Beltane up to Lughnasadh.

San Diego Grove: A late 70s Grove in California.

Schismatic Druids of North America: A mid 70s group that sought members with an exclusive alliance to the Neo-Pagan movement.

SDNA: Schismatic Druids of North America.

Second Order: A later step in the Druid "hierarchy' for Druids who see Druidism as being an important part of their life. Preceptors must come from the Second Order or higher.

Sequoia Sempervirons: The hymn of the OMS by Leslie Fish.

Seren Saith Pigfain: An OMS symbol of seven pointed star encircled by a snake biting its own tail.

Server: A helper to the ArchDruid, who carries the cup in the Order of Worship. Must be of at least the First Order.

Sigil: The Druid Sigil of a circle with two vertical lines passing through it.

Sirona: A Higher Order (7th) dedicated to rivers and streams.

Smiley Affair: Richard Smiley's Attempt to dodge the draft by arguing exemption because of priesthood.

Solstice: A time when the days are the longest or shortest. A time for Druidic festival.

Southern Shores Grove: An early 70s Grove of the RDNA and NRDNA in California.

Special Orders: Essentially new Orders of Priesthood devised outside the structure of the 10 original Higher Orders. Special Orders often have a Patriarch or Matriarch.

Stanford Grove: An early 70s grove of the RDNA in California.

State of the Grove: A special letter sent out by Carleton Archdruids upon retirement. Copies should be sent to the Council as a whole. Reimbursement may be requested.

Summer: A Druidic period of time between May 1st and Nov. 1st, during which it is warm and the Waters of Life can be shared.

Suzuki: A special order dedicated to meditation and mature training in Martial arts.

TANSTAAFL: There is no such thing as a free lunch.-Heinlein.

Taranis: A Higher Order (eighth) dedicated to Thunder. Never established.

Tellit: A prayer shawl worn by Hasidic Druids of North America.

Te-Mara: Commentary upon the Mish-mash, derived from Hair Pull sessions by HDNA.

Third Order: The Order of Priesthood in the Reform. A member of the Third Order.

Thuser: An OMS term for an incense holder.

Track: ADF term. There are 13 different tracks of study in the ADF seminary program, ranked in level of difficulty from 1 (easy) to 5 (Phd).

UAOD: An abbreviation for United Ancient Order of Druids.

United Ancient Order of Druids: A worldwide fraternity of men.

Uncouth: Something that is disagreeable to Hassidic Druids.

Vigil: The overnight period of meditation taken by a Third Order candidate, while preparing for entry into the Third Order.

Waters-of-Life: A liturgical drink used in the Summer to mark Siblinghood between Druids.

Waters-of-Sleep: A liturgical drink used in the Winter to mark Siblinghood between Druids.

Water Sharing: An OMS term of brotherhood.

Whang: A non-alcoholic form of Waters of Life, using Tang and Water.

Wheel of the Year: The cycle of the eight festivals of Druidism.

Wicca: The religion of the Wiccans

Wiccan: A believer in Wicca or used as an adjective. Read "Drawing Down the Moon".

Winter: The Druidic period of time between Nov. 1st and May 1st, during which it is cold and the Waters of Sleep can be shared and no ordinations take place.

Witch: A believer in Wicca.

Witchcraft: The activity of a Witch.

Yule: another term for the winter solstice celebration.

ZDNA: Zen Druids of North America.

YOW: Year of Worship. Same as Y.R.

Y.R. : Year of Reform, dating from Year 1 beginning on May 1 1963.

Ysbrid Cynefin: An OMS term for a ritual pet.

Zen Druids of North America: The Evergreen and Greenwood Groves of Washington state.

Figure 18 Cross country skiing at Carleton in early spring 1950s.

Standard Literary Abbreviations

When quoting Druidic literature, it may be appropriate to establish a standard code for referring to various works. Please don't use the abbreviations in general literature, because no one will know what you are talking about. *Use them only in academic papers, and only with an accompanying table at the beginning of the essay.* Standard bible notation is used in the Reform. An example, to refer to verse ten of Chapter three of Book of Customs, you would write Cust. 3:10. Half jokingly (i.e. no one uses them), here are my recommended abbreviations:

Adapt: The Epistle of Adaptation (Apocrypha)
Alyx: The Epistle of Alyx (Apocrypha)
Answers: The Book of Ultimate Answers
Al.E. : The Alphabet Epistle (Apocrypha)
Ar.E : The Arch Epistle (Apocrypha)
ARDA : A Reformed Druid Anthology
A.R. : Albion's Response (Apocrypha)
A.T. : Albion's Thoughts (Apocrypha)
A.R.A.: A Rebuttal to Albion (Apocrypha)
A.R.C.: A Rebuttal to Cross (Apocrypha)
A.F.S.: The Apology for Simplicity (Apocrypha)
A.W.D.: A Whole of Druidry (Apocrypha)
B.A.D.: Being a Druid (Apocrypha)
B.A.D.F.: Beginning of ADF (Apocrypha)
B.A.S. : Balance and Synthesis (Apocrypha)
B.C.R. : The Book of Cattle Raids (DLS)
B.J.B. : The Book on John Burridge (DLS)
B.L.: The Book of Lacunae (Apocrypha)
B.L.T. : The Book of the Laundry Think-tank (DBS)
B.A.J.K. : The Books of the African Jedi Knight
B.O.B. : The Book of Bards
B.O.B.T. : The Book of the Boring Times (DBS)
B.O.M.B. : The Book of Mr. Boring (DBS)
B.O.C. : The Book of Changes (Apocrypha)
B.O.F. : The Book of Fire (DLS)
B.O.G. : The Book of Games (DBS)
B.O.O. : The Book of Opposition (DLS)
Books: The Book of Books (DLS)
B.O.Q. : The Book of Q (DRS)
B.O.S. : The Book of Samhain (DBS)
B.O.St. : The Book of Stones (DLS)
B.O.St.2 : The Book of Stone, Part 2 (DRS)
B.O.T. : The Book of the Thirtieth Anniversary (DBS)
B.O.Y. : The Book of Years (DLS)
B.P. : The Book of Paul (DLS)
B.P.S. :The Book of Post Scripts (DLS)
B.V. : The Book of Vigils (DLS)
B.V.2: The Book of Vigils Part Two (DRS)
C.F.M: The Codex Form Missive (Apocrypha)
Con. : Considdur the Alternatives
Coalition. : The Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu's records
Cus. : Book of Customs in DC(R)
Cup : A Cup Filled to the Brim with Druidism (Apocrypha)
D.A.T.: Druidism and Truth (Apocrypha)
D.B.S. : The Dead Bay Scrolls
B.E. : The Balanced Epistle (Apocrypha)
D.E.T. : Das Edda Todvolkfortgeshritten (DBS)
D.L.S. : The Dead Lake Scrolls
D.X.: Druidaxta (Apocrypha)
DC(E) : The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)
DC(R) : The Druid Chronicles (Revolved)
Dream: The Book of the Gream Dream (DLS)
D.T.F. : The Discourse of Thomas the Fool (Apocrypha)
E.A. : The Epistle of Amanda (Apocrypha)
E.C. : The Early Chronicles in DC(R)

E.D.C. : Epistle of David the Chronicler (Apocrypha)
E.E. : The Epistle of Ellen (Apocrypha)
E.2.E.: The Epistle to the Encyclopedist (Apocrypha)
E.M. : The Epistle of the Myopians (Apocrypha)
E.M.S. : The Epistle of Mid Summer (Apocrypha)
E.R.S. : The Epistle of the Rising Sun (Apocrypha)
E.N. : The Epistle of Norman (Apocrypha)
E.O.C.: The Epistle of Corwin (Apocrypha)
E.O.S.: The Epistle of Stephen (Apocrypha)
E.O.G.: The Epistle of Gruntwork (Apocrypha)
E.R. : The Epistle of Richard (Apocrypha)
E.Rn. : The Epistle of Renny (Apocrypha)
E.R.N.: The Epistle of Ric of the North (Apocrypha)
Eric: The Epistle of Eric (Apocrypha)
E.S.: The Epistle of Sally (Apocrypha)
E.T.D.: Ein Tanz Dream (DRS)
Faith : The Book of Faith (Aporcrypha)
F.F.: Fisher's Farewell (Apocrypha)
F.E.I. : The First Epistle of Isaac (Apocrypha)
F.E.R. :The First Epistle of Robert (Apocrypha)
F.T.C. : The Farewell to Tom Cross (Apocrypha)
F.W.F.W.: Freedom Within Freedom Without (Apocrypha)
G.B.1 : Green Book, volume one
G.B.2 : Green Book, volume two
G.B.3. : Green Book, volume three Ect.
G.O.H: The Gift of Horses (Apocrypha)
G.R.T. : Gobbledegook and Red Tape (Apocrypha)
History. : General History of Reformed Druidism in America
H.O.L. : The History of Legitimacy (DRS)
I.D.A. : International Druid Archives
Law : Book of Law in DC(R)
L.C. : The Later Chronicles in DC(R)
L.E. : Letters to the Editor (Apocrypha)
L.E.R.: Last Epistle of Robert (Apocrypha)
L.M.B. : Letter to My Brothers (Apocrypha)
LNAD: Lessons for a New Arch Druid (Apocrypha)
L.T. : Leabhar Toirbhealbhaigh (Apocrypha)
M.A.R.M.D: Musings of an Ancient Religion in a Modern World
Med. : Book of Meditations in DC(R)
M.E.M.D.: The Mini-Epistle of Michelle the Dark (DRS)
M.F.E.: Mike's Farewell Epistle (Apocrypha)
M.I.: Missionary Imposition (Apocrypha)
Mish. : The Mishmash of Hasidic Druidism
M.M.M.: Mike's Mini-Missive (Apocrypha)
M.W.F.W.D.N.F.U.: Messing with forces we do not fully understand (Carleton slogan)
O.F.F. : Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals (Apocrypha)
O.L.G. : Open Letters to the Grove (Apocrypha)
P.C.P.: Post Carleton Perplexations (Apocrypha)
P.E.M.: Parenthetical Epistle of Michael (Apocrypha)
P.O.B.: The Poems of Brad (DRS)
P.O.Ch.: The Poems of Chris (DRS)
P.O.C.: The Poems of Corwin (DRS)
P.O.I. : The Poems of Irony(DRS)
P.O.M. : The Poems of Merri (DRS)
P.R.: The Polite Refusal (Apocrypha)
Poetry V1 :The Book of Poetry Volume 1
Poetry V2 : The Book of Poetry Volume 2
Poetry V3 : The Book of Poetry Volume 3
Record. : Record of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu
R.D. : The Reply of David (Apocrypha)
R.O.D: The Reply of the Other David (Apocrypha)
R.O.R.: The Reply of Richard (Apocrypha)
R.T.M.: The Replies to Mairi (Apocrypha)
Sam: The Epistle of Sam (Apocrypha)
S.B. : Speaking of Beliefs (Apocrypha)
S.C.: The Silent Cacophony (Apocrypha)
Serm: The Book of the Sermon (DRS)
S.L.: The Sigil Letters (Apocrypha)
S.E.D.: The Spring Equinox Diatribe (Apocrypha)
S.E.E.: The Second Epistle of Ellen. (Apocrypha)
S.E.I. : The Second Epistle of Isaac (Apocrypha)
S.E.R. : The Second Epistle of Robert (Apocrypha)
S.O.J.S.: The Soul of Juliana Spring (DRS)
S.O.R.: The Sociology of the RDNA (DRS)
S.S.: Sacrificial Sentiments (Apocrypha)
T.E.J.: The Tree Epistle of John (DRS)
T.E.R. : The Third Epistle of Robert (Apocrypha)
T.M. : The Te-Mara: Commentaries on the Mishmash
T.O.C.: Thoughts on Chaos(Apocrypha)
T.O.D.: Thoughts on Discord (Apocrypha)
X.L.: The Exile Letters (Apocrypha)
W.A.D.: What are Druids? (Apocrypha)
W.B.S.: Wind Borne Seeds (Apocrypha)
W.H.: The Wild Hunt (DRS)
W.K.: The Winter King (DRS)
W.L.L.U: When Leaves Leave Us (Apocrypha)
W.T.F. : Wisdom of Thomas the Fool (Apocrypha)
W.W.C.R.: Why are We Called Reformed? (Apocrypha)
4 E.I. : Fourth Epistle of Isaac (Apocrypha)
5 E.I. : Fifth Epistle of Isaac (Apocrypha)
6 E.I. : Sixth Epistle of Isaac (Apocrypha)

Abbreviations of Titles

AD or **Adr** Arch Druid or Arch Druidess
An. Angus
Ba. Bambi
Be. Belenos
Br. Braciaca
Brt. Brigit
CoCoDAL Coalition Council DAL
CoDAL Council of DAL
DAL Dalon Ap Landu
Dn. Danu
DDT Doctor Druid Textology
Di. Diancecht
Em. Earth Mother
Gr. Grannos
He. Hermes
Hp. Hephasteus
Lr. Llyr
Ob. Oberon
ODAL Order of Dalon ap Landu
odm. order of druids minor
P-R. Pack Rat
Pr. Preceptor
Si. Sirona
Su. Suzuki
Ta. Taranis
Vol. Volcano

Figure 19 Monument Hill 1998.

Standard Letter Format

By David Frangquist, 1966
Non-official, of course.

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA

COUNCIL OF BELENOS

12 October, 1966

Dear Reverend Brother-in-the-Mother John:

This is a standard format letter for the Reformed Druids of North America. The Heading should always be typed as shown. The second line may indicate either a Council or a Grove. In letters between priests, a Council or Order which they have in common should be indicated. Any Druid may use the name of his Grove; members of missions who have no Grove may use the line "PEACE! PEACE! PEACE!" Official or semi-official business of a Council or Grove should have the appropriate heading for that Council or Grove.

The date may be written as shown, if it is desired to use a civil date. In less formal correspondence, a traditional Druid date may be used; a Druid date is written lite this: Wednesday, 73 Foghamhar.

The above salutation is used by priests or priestesses addressing priests. When priestesses are addressed, the word "Brother" is changed to "Sister." The first name is always used. Correspondence from or to a Druid of the 1st or 2nd Order simply drops the word "Reverend." Any letter to a non-member would use a standard business letter salutation.

Paragraphs should always be indented five spaces.

It is important that the closing agree with the heading. If a Grove is indicated, the writer should show his position in the Grove: his office, or if he holds none, his Order. If a council is indicated, he should indicate "priest," "priestess," or "Patriarch," as the case may be. In order to indicate an Order, the line "Of the ____ Order" is used. The Arch-Druid of Carleton should be careful to use the appropriate heading – either "Carleton Grove" of "Council of Dalon Ap Landu" – depending on the business being conducted; in either case he signs the letter "Arch-Druid of Carleton." The closing always begins "Yours in the Mother," at the center of the page, three lines below the body of the letter.

Yours in the Mother,

/S/
David A. Frangquist
Patriarch

(SAMPLE IN STANDARD FORMAT)

(*Note these four standard formats were written in mock formality by David Frangquist while typing up manuals for the military, apparently. The are guides that might help, but not official.)*

Standard Committee Format

By David Frangquist, 1966
Non-official, of course.

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA

CARLETON GROVE

11 October, 1966

Report of the Committee on Formats

1. This is a standard format for reports by committees and officers.

2. The heading shows the organization which appointed the committee, and to which it is therefore reporting. The same is true for officers: they are reporting to the organization which elected them, and so that organization is shown in the heading. There are two exceptions;

a. The Arch-Druid is elected by the Carleton Grove, but he must make an annual report to the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.

b. the Patriarch may from time to time issue reports to their councils, although they are in fact elected by the next lower council.

The council to which the report is being made is shown in the heading.

3. Paragraphs are numbered for easy reference. The number is indented five spaces.

4. The difference between the report of an officer and the report of a committee is in the use of the closing certification paragraph. A certification paragraph is always used when the chairman of a committee is reporting the opinion of the committee, as is shown below. It is never used in the report of an officer, who needs simply to sign his name and office. Certification paragraphs are not numbered.

I certify that the above is a true and accurate copy of the report of the (majority/unanimous) opinion of the committee.

/s/
Winston Churchill
Chairman

(SAMPLE IN STANDARD FORMAT)

Standard Council Resolution Format

By David Frangquist, 1966
Non-Official, of course.

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA

COUNCIL OF DALON AP LANDU

14 October, 1966

Report of Resolutions

12 October, 1966 Interpreted:

FORMATS
a) That this is a standard format for the reporting and recording of Reformed Druid resolutions.
b) That the heading shows the name of the council or grove adopting the resolution. The date in the heading is the date of publication of the resolutions. Resolutions from several different dates may be published under one publication date.
c) That resolutions are organized by date, section and clause. The sections are not numbered but are given titles. Clauses are indicated by letters. The proper way to refer to this clause is "12 October, 1966, Formats, c)."
d) That sections are written in block form, indented 5 spaces from the left margin. Titles of sections are underlined.
e) That resolutions may be either "interpreted" or "voted." Interpretations are simply clarifications of already existing traditions. Resolutions which are voted are new policies and original decisions. Each clause of an interpretation begins with the word "that;" each clause of a "voted" resolution begins with the word "to."

Sections
That there may be more than one section under one date.

13 October, 1966 Voted:

Standardization
a) To recommend to all Druid organizations that they adopt this format for reporting and recording resolutions.
b) To require that all reports of resolutions be followed by this certification paragraph.

I certify that the above is a true and accurate copy of resolutions adopted by the Reformed Druids of North America (at _____/Council of _____).

/S/
Thomas Becket
Arch-Druid of Carleton

(SAMPLE IN STANDARD FORMAT)

Standard Constitution Format

By David Frangquist, 1966
Unofficial, of course.

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA

_____ GROVE

13, October, 1966

Constitution of the Reformed Druids of North America at ____

Article I The name of this organization shall be the Reformed Druids of North America at _____.

Article II Any (resident of/student at/etc.) _____ may become a member of this organization upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, stating that he believes in the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism as set forth in this Constitution.

Article III The Basic Tenets of North American Reformed Druidism are these:
1) North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the many ways in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature, the Earth-Mother.
2) North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the Objects of Creation, is important to man's spiritual quests.

Article IV There shall be (#) officers of the Reformed Druids of North America:
1) The Archdruid must be at least a third-order North American Reformed priest. He shall preside over all meetings.
2) The Preceptor must be at least a second-order North American Reformed Druid, shall assist in services, and shall be the principal officer in the secular arm of this organization.
3) The Server must be at least a first-order North American Reformed Druid, and shall assist in services.
4) (Provision may here be made for such other officers as may be needed.)

Article V Elections of officers shall be held annually, in (month). (Here may be specified the method, i.e. voice vote, ballot, etc.) Only those qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for them.

Article VI This Constitution may be attended by a majority vote in two consecutive meetings of this organization. A quorum, which shall be (fraction) of the members, must be present at each meeting.

I certify this to be a true and accurate copy of the Constitution of the Reformed Druids of North America at _____, read and approved at two consecutive meetings.

/S/
John Doe
Arch-Druid

(SAMPLE IN STANDARD FORMAT)

SECTION EIGHT: The Druid Calendars

1996 Introduction

Over the years, two or more calendars have developed and been adopted by the different branches of the Reform. They boil down to two systems; one for Carleton & the RDNA and one for Berkeley & the New RDNA, SDNA & HDNA.

The difference, is that while both systems acknowledge Samhain (Nov. 1st) to be the normal beginning of the Celtic year, it is the Berkeley calendar which counts the years since the Foundation of the Reform to the Samhain that occurred before May 1st 1963, which is the first day an official RDNA ritual took place, thus beginning their year-count with Nov. 1st, 1962. The Carletonian year-count begins with May 1st, 1963. This ends up with two different year-counts being used to Druidically date documents, books and letters. Another difference is that the original RDNA didn't recognize the Equinoxes, giving them originally 6 High Days; although the current Carleton Druids do recognized them now. I will respectfully present each system separately, beginning with the Carleton Calendar.

The Carleton Dating System and Calendar

(and other timely matters)
Assembled for the reader's delectation and edification by
Dick Shelton, self-appointed
Chronographer to the Reform.

Instructions for Use:

1. Draw the Druid Sign on the ground. Enter it. Compose your thoughts. Marshal your cognitive faculties: dealing with the Druid Calendar is no mean undertaking!

2. The four Quarter Days are Samhain, Oimelc, Beltaine, and Lughnasadh. These are the first days of the four Quarters (respectively, Geimredh, Earrach, Samradh, and Foghamhar), and they correspond to November 1, February 1, May 1, and August 1. The Quarter Days, together with the Solstices (Mid-Summer and Mid-Winter), are the high feast days of Reformed Druidism

3. But the Druid Day begins at sundown on the previous day. Thus Samhain - Day 1 Geimredh = sundown Oct. 31 to sundown Nov. 1. (This is absolutely the only aspect of Reformed Druidism in which Druids are early.)

4. In the matter of leap years, the Reform follows the Gregorian reform. (Who can resist a Reform?) Every year divisible by 4 is a leap year, except those years divisible by 100 are not leap years unless divisible by 400. (Thus 1976 and 2000 are leap years, while 1977 and 1900 are not.) The Druid leap year day is 90 Earrach (or Day 90 of Earrach) - Primarily because the Gregorian Day (Feb. 29th) falls during Earrach; so to make 1 Samradh fall on May 1 there isn't much choice!

5. To find a Druid date from a Gregorian one in the accompanying chart, find the Gregorian date on the bottom line of the appropriate box, and read off the Druid date from the top. To go the other way, reverse the process. During Earrach in leap years, use the middle line for Gregorian dates rather than the bottom line [*one can also use the chart in calculating & Deciphering Druid Dating".]*

6. The following mnemonic may prove useful: "89 days hath Earrach; all the rest have 92."

7. The Druid dates for Mid-Summer and Mid-Winter [*and, of course, the Equinoxes*] vary, of course, depending on when they fall. Consult an almanac to find the *time* of the solstice *[or equinox*]- the Gregorian *date* is not enough, because the Druid date will depend on whether the solstice falls before or after sundown: if before, the Druid date is the one the chart gives for the Gregorian date: if after, the Druid date is the next date on the chart. (Clear?)

8. The Druid Week begins at 1:00 pm Saturday, or as soon thereafter as the Archdruid makes it to the service. (This was the traditional time of the regular weekly service at Carleton.) If there is a lot of snow on the ground, there are no Druid weeks.

9. The Druid Year begins at Samhain, much as the Druid Day begins at sundown. Samhain was such an important festival that the early Christian Church shrewdly invested November 1 with the power of not any one particular patron saint, but of "All Saints." In ancient time, Samhain did not in fact belong to either the old year or the new year; it was a day "outside of years" when supernatural forces ordinarily kept in check could come out to raise havoc, and could also be questioned for divinatory purposes. This gave rise both to Hallowe'en and to the expression "a year and a day" - the time required for a full year to pass.

10. But the Year of Worship (YOW) or Year of the Reform (YR) used by Reformed Druids for dating purposes begins at Beltaine. This gives us two "New Year Days", marking opposite ends of the year. Beltaine and Samhain have always been the two highest days of the year. (Man, through his temporal limitation, can hardly resist the urge to mark fundamentally continuous things with beginnings and endings. The Druid Sign itself imposes upon the endless cycle of eternity (or upon the orb of the world) two human , finite lines. In a very real sense, the two finite lines encompass the entire human condition.)

11. Reformed Druid Worship began on Beltaine 1963, and the early record in the Carleton Grove Archives clearly indicate that the founders considered "YOW I" to have run from Beltaine 1963 to Beltaine 1964. (There is a minor difficulty that EC 1:7-8 seems to imply that some services were actually held in the month before Beltaine 1963 - but who am I to gainsay the Founders?). Let the Gregorian Year=*n.* For days between and including Jan 1 and April 30th use YOW=*(n*-1963). But for days between and including May 1 to Dec 31st use YOW=(n-1962): February 29, 1976 = 29 Earrach XIII and July 4, 1976 = 65 Samradh XIV

12. There remains, finally, the notion of Druid Standard Time. Alas, there is nothing official about this, but it is universal among Druids: their sundials seem to run hours behind everybody else's (Cf. items 3 & 8 above.).

[Charts continued on next pages]

Charts to Determine Year of Reform

Starting on	Start of y.r.
May 1, 1959	4 b.r.
May 1, 1960	3 b.r.
May 1, 1961	2 b.r.
May 1, 1962	1 b.r.
May 1, 1963	1 y.r
May 1, 1964	2 y.r.
May 1, 1965	3 y.r.
May 1, 1966	4 y.r.
May 1, 1967	5 y.r.
May 1, 1968	6 y.r.
May 1, 1969	7 y.r.
May 1, 1970	8 y.r.
May 1, 1971	9 y.r.
May 1, 1972	10 y.r.
May 1, 1973	11 y.r.
May 1, 1974	12 y.r.
May 1, 1975	13 y.r.
May 1, 1976	14 y.r.
May 1, 1977	15 y.r.
May 1, 1978	16 y.r.
May 1, 1979	17 y.r.
May 1, 1980	18 y.r.
May 1, 1981	19 y.r.
May 1, 1982	20 y.r.
May 1, 1983	21 y.r.
May 1, 1984	22 y.r.
May 1, 1985	23 y.r.
May 1, 1986	24 y.r
May 1, 1987	25 y.r
May 1, 1988	26 y.r
May 1, 1989	27 y.r
May 1, 1990	28 y.r
May 1, 1991	29 y.r
May 1, 1992	30 y.r
May 1, 1993	31 y.r
May 1, 1994	32 y.r
May 1, 1995	33 y.r
May 1, 1996	34 y.r
May 1, 1997	35 y.r.
May 1, 1998	36 y.r.
May 1, 1999	37 y.r.
May 1, 2000	38 y.r.
May 1, 2001	39 y.r.
May 1, 2002	40 y.r.
May 1, 2003	41 y.r.
May 1, 2004	42 y.r.

Starting on	Start of y.r.
May 1, 2005	43 y.r.
May 1, 2006	44 y.r.
May 1, 2007	45 y.r.
May 1, 2008	46 y.r.
May 1, 2009	47 y.r.
May 1, 2010	48 y.r.
May 1, 2011	49 y.r.
May 1, 2012	50 y.r.
May 1, 2013	51 y.r.
May 1, 2014	52 y.r.
May 1, 2015	53 y.r.
May 1, 2016	54 y.r.
May 1, 2017	55 y.r.
May 1, 2018	56 y.r.
May 1, 2019	57 y.r.
May 1, 2020	58 y.r.
May 1, 2021	59 y.r.
May 1, 2022	60 y.r.
May 1, 2023	61 y.r.
May 1, 2024	62 y.r.
May 1, 2025	63 y.r.
May 1, 2026	64 y.r.
May 1, 2027	65 y.r.
May 1, 2028	66 y.r.
May 1, 2029	67 y.r.
May 1, 2030	68 y.r.
May 1, 2031	69 y.r.
May 1, 2032	70 y.r.
May 1, 2033	71 y.r.
May 1, 2034	72 y.r.
May 1, 2035	73 y.r.
May 1, 2036	74 y.r.
May 1, 2037	75 y.r.
May 1, 2038	76 y.r.
May 1, 2039	77 y.r.
May 1, 2040	78 y.r.
May 1, 2041	79 y.r.
May 1, 2042	80 y.r.
May 1, 2043	81 y.r.
May 1, 2044	82 y.r.
May 1, 2045	83 y.r.
May 1, 2046	84 y.r.
May 1, 2047	85 y.r.

Charts to Determine Day of the 4 Druid Seasons

Samradh			
Begins Now	May	Samradh	July
01	01	62	01
02	02	63	02
03	03	64	03
04	04	65	04
05	05	66	05
06	06	67	06
07	07	68	07
08	08	69	08
09	09	70	09
10	10	71	10
11	11	72	11
12	12	73	12
13	13	74	13
14	14	75	14
15	15	76	15
16	16	77	16
17	17	78	17
18	18	79	18
19	19	80	19
20	20	81	20
21	21	82	21
22	22	83	22
23	23	84	23
24	24	85	24
25	25	86	25
26	26	87	26
27	27	88	27
28	28	89	28
29	29	90	29
30	30	91	30
31	31	92	31

		Foghamhar	
Samradh	June	Begins Now	August
32	01	01	01
33	02	02	02
34	03	03	03
35	04	04	04
36	05	05	05
37	06	06	06
38	07	07	07
39	08	08	08
40	09	09	09
41	10	10	10
42	11	11	11
43	12	12	12
44	13	13	13
45	14	14	14
46	15	15	15
47	16	16	16
48	17	17	17
49	18	18	18
50	19	19	19
51	20	20	20
52	21	21	21
53	22	22	22
54	23	23	23
55	24	24	24
56	25	25	25
57	26	26	26
58	27	27	27
59	28	28	28
60	29	29	29
61	30	30	30

		Geimredh	
Foghamhar	Sept	Begins Now	Nov.
32	01	01	01
33	02	02	02
34	03	03	03
35	04	04	04
36	05	05	05
37	06	06	06
38	07	07	07
39	08	08	08
40	09	09	09
41	10	10	10
42	11	11	11
43	12	12	12
44	13	13	13
45	14	14	14
46	15	15	15
47	16	16	16
48	17	17	17
49	18	18	18
50	19	19	19
51	20	20	20
52	21	21	21
53	22	22	22
54	23	23	23
55	24	24	24
56	25	25	25
57	26	26	26
58	27	27	27
59	28	28	28
60	29	29	29
61	30	30	30

Foghamhar	Oct.	Geimredh	Dec.
62	01	01	01
63	02	32	02
64	03	33	03
65	04	34	04
66	05	35	05
67	06	36	06
68	07	37	07
69	08	38	08
70	09	39	09
71	10	40	10
72	11	41	11
73	12	42	12
74	13	43	13
75	14	44	14
76	15	45	15
77	16	46	16
78	17	47	17
79	18	48	18
80	19	49	19
81	20	50	20
82	21	51	21
83	22	52	22
84	23	53	23
85	24	54	24
86	25	55	25
87	26	56	26
88	27	57	27
89	28	58	28
90	29	59	29
91	30	60	30
92	31	61	31

Geimredh	Jan.	Earrach	March
62	01	29*	01
63	02	30	02
64	03	31	03
65	04	32	04
66	05	33	05
67	06	34	06
68	07	35	07
69	08	36	08
70	09	37	09
71	10	38	10
72	11	39	11
73	12	40	12
74	13	41	13
75	14	42	14
76	15	43	15
77	16	44	16
78	17	45	17
79	18	46	18
80	19	47	19
81	20	48	20
82	21	49	21
83	22	50	22
84	23	51	23
85	24	52	24
86	25	53	25
87	26	54	26
88	27	55	27
89	28	56	28
90	29	57	29
91	30	58	30
92	31	59	31

Earrach			
Begins	Febr.	Earrach	April
01	01	60*	01
02	02	61	02
03	03	62	03
04	04	63	04
05	05	64	05
06	06	65	06
07	07	66	07
08	08	67	08
09	09	68	09
10	10	69	10
11	11	70	11
12	12	71	12
13	13	72	13
14	14	73	14
15	15	74	15
16	16	75	16
17	17	76	17
18	18	77	18
19	19	78	19
20	20	79	20
21	21	80	21
22	22	81	22
23	23	82	23
24	24	83	24
25	25	84	25
26	26	85	26
27	27	86	27
28	28	87	28
(29)	(29)	88	29
		89	30

* Remember to add one to each number in this column during leap years.

The Berkeley Dating System

Years among the RDNA at Carleton are dated from the first official Reformed Druid service at Carleton in May 1963. Archdruid Robert Larson, who founded Berkeley in 1968 after leaving Carleton in 1965, chose to follow the Celtic custom and dated the First Year of the Reform to the Samhain (Nov. 1st) of the 1962. Thus among the NRDNA, the year beginning the day after Samhain 1962, is the First Year of the Reform, or "1 y.r." and the year running from the day after Samhain 1963 to the day before Samhain 1964 is really 2 y.r., etc. The year in which the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved*) were prepared, November 1975 through October 1976, was the Fourteenth Year of the Reform (14 y.r.).

Naturally the years run backwards as well. Fortunately, unlike the civil calendar, the Druid calendar has a Zero date (Samhain 1962) which belongs to neither the Years of the Reform (y.r.) nor the years Before the Reform (b.r.). Let *n* be the Gregorian year. When the day of the year is on or between Nov 1st Dec 31st use Y.R.=(n-1961). When the day is on or between Jan 1st and Oct. 31st use y.r.=(n-1962). A simple graph for converting from civil history to New Reformed Druid history appears below. In the list below, "S" stands for Samhain

Figure 20 A Druid in Lower Arb by the 100 Acres of natural tall-grass prairie, 2001.

Figure 21 Lyman Creek in Upper Arb, 2003.

Common Era	New RDNA Era
Day Before S. 1961	2 b.r. ends
Day Before S. 1962	1 b.r. ends
Samhain 1962	Day Between
Day After S. 1962	1 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1963	2 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1964	3 y.r begins
Day After S. 1965	4 y.r begins
Day After S. 1966	5 y.r begins
Day After S. 1967	6 y.r begins
Day After S. 1968	7 y.r begins
Day After S. 1969	8 y.r begins
Day After S. 1970	9 y.r begins
Day After S. 1971	10 y.r begins
Day After S. 1972	11 y.r begins
Day After S. 1973	12 y.r begins
Day After S. 1974	13 y.r begins
Day After S. 1975	14 y.r begins
Day After S. 1976	15 y.r begins
Day After S. 1977	16 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1978	17 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1979	18 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1980	19 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1981	20 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1982	21 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1983	22 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1984	23 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1985	24 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1986	25 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1987	26 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1988	27 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1989	28 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1990	29 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1991	30 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1992	31 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1993	32 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1994	33 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1995	34 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1996	35 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1997	36 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1998	37 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1999	38 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2000	39 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2001	40 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2002	41 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2003	42 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2004	43 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2005	44 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2006	45 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2007	46 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2008	47 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2009	48 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2010	49 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2011	50 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2012	51 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2013	52 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2014	53 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2015	54 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2016	55 y.r. begins

The Berkeley Calendar

By Isaac Bonewits & Robert Larson, 1975

The Berkeley Calendar is noteworthy as being more concerned with the Celtic aspects, names, and deities associated with the festivals, than the Carleton contingent, which did not concern itself too much with Celticisms. It should be noted that neither system is necessary.

Druid Time

Reformed Druids of all Branches have a habit of running on Druid Standard Time (DST), also known as Pacific Sidhe Time, Central Sidhe Time, etc. DST is always from fifteen minutes to six hours later that standard civil time, depending upon the individual Druids involved. In summer, and it would seem, "energy crises," DST becomes Druid Daylight Time (DDT), also know as Eastern Druid Time, Mountain Druid time, etc. In DDT the sunset is put off for an hour. If you can't do this, you'll have to stick with DST.

The Druid Day begins at sundown of the previous standard calendar day (the Druid November 1st , for example, begins at sunset of the evening of October 31st). Among some of the more ritualistically oriented Druids, the total number of minutes between sunset and sunrise are divided into twelve equal "hours" and the same thing is done between the sunrise and sunset; making it easy to calculate High Noon and Mid-Night every day. Of course they have to recalculate them every day of the year (or get a Druid computer to do it for them), but some of them think it is worth the effort. Others disagree, especially those with electric watches.

Among the Hasidic Druids, sunset was defined as that moment at which one could first see three stars in the evening sky over one's oak grove or through the window of one's chess club. Refusing to look over the oak grove or blocking the window was considered uncouth.

The Druid Week:

The Druid week begins at sunset on Friday [*as opposed to Saturday at Carleton -ed*.] This makes sure of the joyful reception of the new week by the majority of the populace. Among the Hasidic and Schismatic Druids, a two day period of rest and relaxation, was called the "Weekend", also began at this time, with as big a feast as could be managed. Why they started the week with a celebration called Week*end* is not clear.

The Hasidic Druids also had their own names for the days and evenings of the week (the "eve" being the night before each day, naturally) based upon an association of a tree with each day: Saturday -Birch, Sunday - Oak, Monday - Aspen, Tuesday - Maple, Wednesday - Rowan, Thursday - Pine and Friday - Olive. Thus the Weekend runs from the start of Birch-eve to the end of Oak-day.

The Druid Months

May, August, September, October and November are known by the names here presented in Modern Irish. The other names were invented by Adr. Robert Larson by analogy to the autumn months. Larson notes, in 1996, that his guesses were confirmed by Manx calendar. Manx does not use High days to denote months and uses Manx equivalents of Tús, Meán, and Deiredh (beginning, middle, end) with the appropriate season. Note that these months do not always start on the same day as their equivalent civil months.

MONTH	DRUID NAME	MEANING
November	*MÌ na Samhna*	month of Samhain
December	*Me-n Geimhridh*	middle of winter
January	*Deireadh Geimhridh*	end of winter
February	*MÌ na hOimelc*	month of Oimelc
March	*Me-n Earraigh*	middle of spring
April	*Deareadh Earraigh*	end of spring
May	*MÌ na Bealtaine*	month of Beltane
June	*Me-n Samhraidh*	middle of summer
July	*Dearead Samhraidh*	end of summer
August	*MÌ na Lunasa*	month of Lughnasadh
September	*Me-n Fumhair*	middle of fall
October	*Deireadh Fuhmhair*	end of fall

Calculating and Deciphering Druid Dating Methods

By Mike Scharding, 1996

Occasionally when you receive a letter from an older Druid, or perhaps you'll be browsing in archived letters of the past, and you'll see a strange garbled sentence, like:

Michael Scharding, Archdruid of Carleton

Day 64 of Geimredh, Year XXXI of the Reform

or

Richard Shelton, Archdruid of Ann Arbor

Samhradh 26, XXIII y.r

or

Robert Larson, Archdruid of Berkeley

37th of Earrach, XXI YOW

At first glance you will have no idea of when they were written, unless they also included the Gregorian date. All this special dating, as you can guess, is a Druidic form of showing off, but it is also a way to pause and remember how long we -as an organization- have been around.

There is a simple method for determining the Year or the Reform (y.r.) or Year of Worship (YOW), which is the same thing. One is to note where the person is writing from; are they of the Carleton Grove or from the NRDNA? This you'll learn by researching the Third Order list or by asking them. People from the Groves of Carleton, Chicago, Ann Arbor, Purdue, Stanford, New York #1 and New York #2 will probably use the Carleton Convention of Dating the Year, so call up that chart listed earlier. If the authors are definitely Neo-Pagans, or if they come from the Bay Area or West Coast, they are likely to be using the Berkeley Convention of Dating the Year. But first you must know the day of the year, before the y.r. can be ascertained in either system.

As for deciphering the date that comes before the Year of the Reform, a few pages earlier have a key to deciphering them. On that page are gathered 6 minor columns, three major columns to a page, each column has two vertical rows of numbers in them. Take for instance the first of the three examples above; Day 64 of Geimredh. Look back a few pages until you find a major column with the word Geimredh on its left side. Go up and down on the left side of that major column until you find the number 64. Then look on the right side of that major column. You'll find that Day 64 of Geimredh is the same as January 3rd. Since it was written by someone from Carleton, the year will be from the Carleton convention; and Year XXXI (using the formula for Carleton dates before Beltane) is 1994. The final date is January 3, 1994 of the common era.

Here are some more conversions to practice deciphering. Remember leap years.

Carleton Conversion Method

Dec 13, 1965=43 Geimredh, 3 y.r. Jan 20, 1975=81 Geimredh, 12 y.r Aug 1st, 1988=1 Foghamhar, 26 y.r.
May 1, 1998=1 Samhradh, 36 y.r. Nov 1, 1964= 1 Geimredh, 1 y.r. July 28, 1975= 89 Samhradh, 23 y.r.
Feb 3, 1971= 3 Earrach, 8 y.r. Oct 30, 1968= 91 Foghamhar, 6 y.r. Mar 16, 1972=45 Earrach, 9 y.r.

Berkeley Conversion Method

Jan 1, 1969= 62 Geimredh, 7 y.r. June 2, 1990= 33 Samradh, 28 y.r. Nov 3rd, 1965=3 Geimredh, 4 y.r.
Dec 31, 1968= 61 Geimredh, 7 y.r. Oct 31, 1977=92 Foghamhar, 25 y.r. Nov 1,1977=1 Geimredh, 26 y.r.
Apr 20, 1979=79 Earrach, 17 y.r. Apr 20, 1980=80 Earrach, 18 y.r. May 1, 1978= 1 Samradh, 16 y.r.

Here's a couple for you to decipher:

Carleton Conversions: 45 Earrach, 12 y.r. 45 Earrach, 13 y.r. 77 Foghamhar, 24 y.r. 39 Geimredh, 21 y.r.
12 Samhradh, 30 y.r. Jan 24th, 1964 July 10, 1978 Nov 1, 1966 Mar 3, 2000 Dec 31, 1988
Berkeley Conversions: 1 Geimredh, 36 y.r. 44 Samradh, 22 y.r. 56 Foghamhar, 24 y.r. 30 Earrach, 18 y.r.
Dec 29th, 1963 July 30, 1988 Nov 1, 1966 Jan 1, 1964 June 2, 1977

Figure 22 Ancient Druids waited in caves for the first light of the year to shine through the entrance. Sometimes they got a bit bored.

The Druid Seasons of the Year

This section written by Isaac Bonewits and Robert Larson for DC(E) contains lots of trivia about the origins of these ancient festivals. As such, this information could be useful for everyone in the Reform and can be useful.-MS

The Druid year is divided into four seasons, marked by the four Major High Days of Samhain, Oimelc, Beltane and Lughnasadh (see below).

Samhain begins the season of Geimredh (gee-ru), in Modern Irish an Geimhreadh (uN gee-ru); which is Winter, running from roughly the beginning of November till the end of January.

Oimelc begins the season of Earrach (u-RoCH), now an tEarrach (uN tu-RoCH); which is Spring, running roughly from the beginning of February till the end of April. Together, these two season constitute "the Winter Half of the Year", otherwise known as "the Season of Sleep".

Beltane begins the season of Samradh (S,u-Ru), now an Samhradh (un S,u-Ru); which is Summer, running from roughly the beginning of May till the end of July.

Lughnasadh begins the season of Foghamhar (FÙr), now an Fomhar (uN FÙR); which is fall or autumn, running from roughly the beginning of August till the end of October. Together, these two seasons constitute "the Summer Half of the Year" or "the Season of Life".

The Major and Minor High Days

There are four Major High Days (Samhain, Oimelc, Beltane & Lughnasadh) and four Minor High Days (Winter Solstice or "Midwinter", Spring Equinox, Summer Solstice or "Midsummer", and Fall Equinox) in the Druid year. While the Minor High Days are easy to obtain from any good astrological ephemeris or almanac, the methods for calculation of the Major High Days will vary from Grove to Grove and branch to branch of the Reform.

The most common practice for the calculation of Samhain, Oimelc, Beltane and Lughnasadh is to use the civil calendar days or eves of November 1st, February 1st, May 1st, and August 1st, respectively. Another way is to use the weekend closest to these dates. Still others use the sixth day after the new or full moon closest to each of these dates. Astrologically oriented Druids use the days upon which the Sun enters 15 degrees of each of the "Fixed Signs" of the Zodiac to wit: Eagle Point- 15 deg Scorpio, Man or Angel Point - 15 deg Aquarius, Ox Point - 15 deg Taurus and Lion Point - 15 deg Leo.

The calendar used by the Berkeley Grove of the NRDNA, as well as the SDNA and the HDNA, is that designed by Adr. Robert Larson. In this calendar the Major High Days are calculated as those days upon which the Sun hits 16 deg 18 min. inclination North or South of the Celestial Equator. This make them come exactly half way between the Solstices and Equinoxes.

We will now, turn to some details about the Major and Minor High Days celebrated by New Reformed Druids.

Samhain (SÙ-un), known in Modern Irish as L· Samhna (Laa SÙu-Nu), in Welsh as Nos Galen-graef (that is the night of the Winter Calends), in Manx as Laa Houney (Hollantide Day), Sauin or Souney; is, of course, the eve of "All Saint's Day", All Hallow's Evening or Halloween. Among other things, it is the beginning of the Winter Half of the Year (the seasons of Geimredh & Earrach) and is known as "the Day Between Years."

The day before Samhain is the last day of the old year and the day after Samhain is the first day of the new year (though for clarity's sake, most New Reformed Druids assign each Samhain to the year following it. Being a day "between years," it is considered a very magical night, when the dead walk among the living and the veils between past, present and future may be lifted in prophecy and divination.

Samhain basically means "summer's end" and many important mythological events occurred on that day. It was on a Samhain that the Nemedians captured the terrible Tower of Glass built by the evil Formorians; that the Tuatha De Danann later defeated the Formors once and for all; that Pwyll won his wife Rhiannon from Gwawl; and that many other events of a dramatic or prophetic nature occurred (see Later Chronicles, Chapter 5, Verses 11-14). Many of these events had to do with the temporary victory of the forces of the darkness over those of light, signaling the beginning of the cold and dark half of the year.

The **Winter Solstice** is a Minor High Day, usually occurring around December 21st or so of the civil calendar. Also known as Yule and Midwinter, this is a day sacred to Sun Gods, Thunder Gods and Fire Gods. Large fires were built up outdoors and a Yule Log lit indoors, in order to rekindle the dying Sun and help it to return brightly to the Northern skies. Burnt logs and ashes from Midwinter fires were kept as a talisman against lightning and house fires. It was also a custom in many parts of Paleopagan Europe to decorate live evergreen trees in honour of the Gods (cutting down a tree to bring indoors is a blasphemous desecration of the original concept). This is considered, along with Midsummer, the best day of the year to cut mistletoe.

Among some Paleopagans, a date on or near this (such as December 25th) was celebrated as the Birthday of the Sun God, frequently from the womb of a virgin or unmarried girl (who was sometimes also the Mother Goddess).

Oimelc (i-melc), is known in Modern Irish as L· na FÈile BrÌde (Laa Nu fÈ-li bree-di), in Manx as Laa'n Arragh (Day of Spring), and as Imbolc, Candlemas and Lady Day in English. L· na FÈile BrÌde means the day of the festival of "Saint Bridget." Brighid, Bride or Bridget is yet another Pagan deity turned by the Christians into a "saint," in order to co-opt Her worship. This goddess was a triple-aspected deity of Poetry/Divination (considered the same thing), Healing and Smithcraft, whose followers kept an eternal flame burning in Her honour.

By analogy with the Gaelic names of the other High Days, we may assume that the holiday was originally called L· hOimelc (Laa Hi-melc). It is the festival of the lactation of the ewes. In Paleopagan days (and, indeed, until the recent past) the sheep was a very important animal, providing both food and clothing. The occasion of the birth of lambs (not to mention kids and calves) was a cause for rejoicing and a sign of life in the "dead" world of a Northern winter.

The name "Candlemas" is a Christian term for a holiday occurring February 1st or 2nd. This supposedly is in hour of a "Saint Blaise" and has no official connection with "Saint" Bridget and Her cult of fire, nor with the fact that this day was one of the four major fire festivals of Paleopagan cultures throughout Western and Northern Europe. Of course they don't mention a certain Slavic god named Vlaise, Who was the Patron of cattle, wealth and war, and Who was worshipped with fire. La hOimelc begins the spring season of Earrach. It is also the day before St. Groundhog's Day.

The **Spring Equinox**, although sometimes known as the Festival of the Trees, is better known as the feast of (the Fertility Goddess) Eostara, or "Easter". It is a celebration of the returning of life to the Earth. Rabbits, eggs and children are sacred at this feast and Pagans in need of fertility talismans now colour hollow eggs and pass them through the ceremonial fires (quickly) to take home and hang over their beds and in their barns. A fascinating source of almost forgotten Paleopagan symbols can be found by examining carefully the fantastically decorated eggs produced by folk artists from Europe (especially Eastern Europe and Russia), Mexico and South America.

A Minor High Day, in usually takes place around March 21st or so. On the night before, some Hasidic Druids stayed up until dawn, reading meditations about trees, eating the fruits of various trees and singing hymns about trees. Among many Paleopagan cultures in Southern Europe, the Spring Equinox was the date of the New Year (instead of Samhain, as it is among the Celts) and indeed, many Druids refer to this holiday as "the New Year for Trees". Adding a bit to the confusion is the fact that some Neopagan groups call this holiday "Lady Day".

Beltane (bauL-Ti-Ni, or bauL-Hi-Ni), known in Modern Irish as L· Bealtaine (Laa bauL-Hi-ni, or Laa baul-Ti-ni), in Welsh as Galan-Mai (calends of May), in Scottish Gaelic as Baltiunn, and in Manx as Shenn da Boaddyn, La Boaldyn, or Laa'nTourey (Day of Summer); is, of course, the day we know in English as May Day. It is also called by a variety of other names, such as Roodmas, Summer Day, Walpurgistag, St. Pierre's Day, Red Square Day, etc. It is the beginning of the Summer Half of the Year (the seasons of Samradh & Foghamhar) and is a festival of unalloyed joy.

A very large number of important mythological events are connected with this day. It was on a Beltane that Partholan and his followers, the first inhabitants and partial creators of Ireland, landed on that isle. Three hundred years later, on the same day, they returned to the Other World. It was on a Beltane that the Tuatha De Danann and their people invaded Ireland. It was on a May Eve that Pryderi, the missing son of Rhiannon and Pwyll (Rulers of the Welsh Otherworld) was lost by them and later (on another May Eve) was found by Teirnyon Twryf Vliant (and eventually restored to Them). On every first day of May "till the day of doom," Gwyn-son-of-Nudd fights with Gwyrthur-son-of Greidawl, for the hand of Lludd's (Lugh's) fair daughter, Creudylad. Most of these events, again, as all over Europe, have to do with stories of the forces of light defeating the forces of darkness. Why did you think the Marxists chose May Day as their international Holiday? And can you guess why Adam Weishaupt chose Walpurgistag as the day to announce the founding of the Bavarian Iluuminati, and why the date at which the forces of evil later tried to Imannetize the Eschaton?

The **Summer Solstice** is a Minor High Day, usually occurring around June 21st or so. Also known as St. John's Day and Midsummer (and, confusingly enough, by at least one Neo-Pagan group, as Beltane!), it shares mythical elements with both Beltane and Lughnasadh. Like both, it is a feast celebrating the glory of summer and the peak of the Sun God's power. But in many systems of belief, it is the day of the biggest battle of the year between the Dark Sun God and the Lugh Sun God (or between the evil one and the good one), Who are usually brothers or otherwise intimately related. Midsummer is a peak from which the Sun can only fall, for it is the day on which the hours of light slowly begin to shorten.

In those areas where it is safe to do so, Neopagans frequently will light cartwheels of kindling and roll them down

from the tops of high hills, in order to symbolize the falling of the Sun God.

Lughnasadh (Loo-Nu-Su) is known in Modern Irish as L· L˙nasa (Laa Loo-Nu-Su), in Welsh as Gwyl Awst (August Feast), as Lla Lluanys or Laa'n Ouyr (Day of the Harvest Season) in Manx and as Lammas, Apple Day and Harvest Home in English. It is the anniversary of the funeral games given by Lugh, the God of All Crafts, in honour of his Father. Essentially a harvest festival, this signals the beginning of the harvest season and the ripening of the apples (as well as other fruits and vegetables). Enormous quantities of applejack, hard cider, mead and other alcoholic beverages are consumed at this time (it's almost a duty!) by all enthusiastic Neopagans. Hasidic Druids may prefer to drink ten-day-old slivovitz (plum brandy) at this time, but it's their stomach lining!

This holiday is a day of mixed joy and woe (Irish wakes are an old tradition), for it is by now obvious that the days are getting shorter. Stories of the battles between Lugh and Balor (the good Sun-Fire God and the bad one) are retold, as the autumn quarter of Foghamhar begins.

The last big holiday of the year, the **Fall Equinox** (sometimes called Michaelmas and the Feast of the Hunters) is a Minor High Day occurring somewhere around September 21st or so. This is a Thanksgiving feast and signals the beginning of the Hunting Season (for deer and other large game) in many parts of Europe and North America. Thus, it is dedicated to the Hunting and Fishing Gods and the Gods of Plenty, in thankfulness for benefits received and hoped for. Outdoor picnics in the woods are a popular Druid tradition in those areas where the weather is still good at this time of year. Hunting magic may be minimized by those Groves living in areas where game is a little dear.

Other Important Days:

Various branches of the Reform may add more holidays and celebrations in honour of different gods and goddesses to the above list. Those for the Schismatic Druids of North America will be found in the SDNA Calendars.

[Also take a look at the Green Book 7 for more essays and information on the various seasons.]

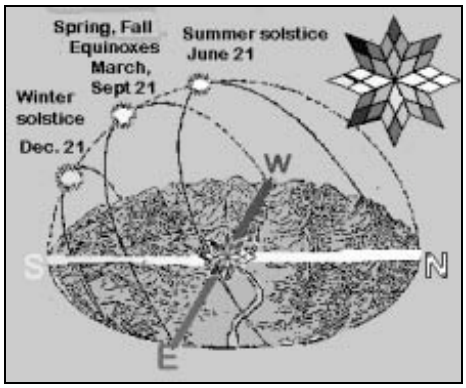


Figure 23 Predicting an equinox event on the horizon is a cheap Druid trick to impress your grove, and can be done just by paying attention for a year. This livens up the routine on an otherwise fuzzy festival.

The Holidays of the Schismatic Druids of North America

By Isaac Bonewits & HDNA Grove, 1976

The following were some of the additional Holy Days and Feast, recommended for celebration by members of the Schismatic Druids of North America, the Hasidic Druids of North America and various affiliated and nonaffiliated Neopagan groups and individuals.

Although it is best to celebrate each holiday on the date(s) given, they are usually observed on whatever nearby date happens to be convenient. Notes on additional customs associated with the Major and Minor High Days will be found in the Tally of the Years and elsewhere in the Druid Chronicles.

November 10-11: Festival of Thanksgiving to the Gods of Harvest, Hunting, Fishing and Plenty. Have an absolutely gigantic feast. This festival is often postponed until the fourth Thursday of the month.

November 22: Feast of Oberon and the Divine Musicians. Have the biggest Bardic Revel you can manage. Do something nice for the Bards in the Grove.

November 30: Feast of the Gods of the Crossroads; dedicated to the deities Who guard the paths between the living and the dead, and between this world and all others. Time to consider your attitudes about Death, to study shamanism and to practice teleportation and aportation.

December 8-9: Festival of the Conception of the Earth-Mother. Meditate upon the immaculate conception of Life from the primeval seas, billions of years ago. Make a statue of the Mother out of clay or rock.

December 13: Feast of Belisama, Goddess of Light, Wisdom and at least one River in Britain. A young woman with a crown of candles in her hair should wake the members of your household, carrying a trayful of coffee and various munchies.

December 21-22: Festival of Taranis, God of Fire, Lightning & Thunder. Burn a Winter Solstice need-fire and have a feast (on goat meat if possible), retell stories of Taranis, Thor, Donner and other related Gods.

December 25-27: Festival of the Birth of the Sun. Gifts should be exchanged and many parties held.

December 28: Feast of the Divine Children. In honour of all the Gods of Youth, special events should be held for all the girls and boys in your Grove.

December 29-31: Winter Festival of Wine and Pleasure. It is obligatory to become intoxicated and sexually sated, so hold the biggest feast and orgy you can manage.

January 6: Feast of Sirona, the Goddess of Rivers. Rivers in your vicinity should be blessed by your local Archdruid and hymns of praise to various river deities sung. Go fishing.

January 24-26: Festival of Braciaca, God of Brewing, Intoxication and Altered States of Consciousness. It is obligatory to become intoxicated.

February 14-21: Festival of Love, dedicated to Danu and Cernunnos, as well as other deities of Fertility. It is obligatory to make love.

March 1: Feast of Merddyn, Patron of Wizards. Do something magical. Read an Arthurian legend.

March 3: Feast of Rhiannon, Goddess of Horses, Patron of Mothers and Queen of the Welsh Otherworld.

March 11: Feast of Angus Og, Warrior. Practice using your ritual weapons. Learn to sword fight.

March 17: Feast of the Druid Amhairghin. Celebrate Irish Paganism.

March 21-25: Spring Festival of Wine and Pleasure. Hold a feast and orgy and invite all your friends. The 25th is also the Feast of Young Mothers, so do a good deed for the ones you know.

April 1: Feast of the Spring Fool. Do something silly just because it feels good. Or take the day off and go fishing. Or sit on a hill and herd clouds.

April 5: Feast of Alexander Nevsky, Warrior. Nevsky was a Slavic Viking who led a Pagan army into battle on April 5, 1242 c.e. against the Christian Teutonic Knights, luring them out onto the thin ice of Lake Chud (near Pskow). His victory over them marks one of the very few clear-cut victories of a Pagan people against the forces of Christian imperialism (even if the Russian Orthodox Church did later turn him into a "Saint"). This is a day on which to practice pride in being Pagan, and on which to contemplate our hope for total freedom someday.

April 23: Feast of Oghma, the God Who Binds. He is a mighty Warrior and the Inventor of Ogham Writing. Spend the day learning and practicing this alphabet. Or go out net fishing.

May 1: Feast of the Illuminati. Anniversary of the public founding of the Bavarian Illuminati. Investigate a conspiracy, or start one.

May 18: Feast of Cernunnos, the Horned God of Lust and Hunting. Celebrate British Paganism. Go hunting. If you can't go hunting, go lusting. On this day, a man should be granted any sexual desire he may express. [If it were only that easy. —Ed]

May 24: Feast of the Dark Goddess. Celebration of the Goddesses Babh, Morrigu, Macha and other Demon Killers. This is based on the Romany feast for their patron Goddess, the Black Kali from India. Meditate upon the beauty of an angry woman.

May 25: Feast of the Two Ladies. Celebration of the other two aspects of the Triple Goddess, those of the Virgin/Harlot and of the Mother (the third aspect being that of the Old Woman). Meditate upon your concepts of womanhood and why you have them.

June 13: Feast of Epona, Goddess of Horses. Go horseback riding and spend the day appreciating our equine friends. Buy a kid a horse book.

June 18-22: Festival of the Bards. Hold a big Bardic Revel, with as much singing and dancing as possible. It is also a traditional time for Puberty Rites, so adolescents who are ready and willing should be initiated.

July 2: Feast of Expectant Mothers: Meditate upon the mysteries of conception and pregnancy. Bring some pickle and ice-cream to a friend.

July 22-24: Summer Festival of Wine and Pleasure. Time to hold an outdoor feast and orgy.

August 6: Feast of Lugh, the Shining One. Meditate upon the power of the Sun Gods.

August 15: Feast of Our Lady Queen of the Heavens. Celebration of the Star/Moon/Mother Goddess. Take a High Priestess out to dinner and give her the best night you can.

August 23-25: Festival of the Heroes. Dedicated to all those brave Pagan warriors who fell before the invading Christian armies. Meditate upon the values of the honourable warrior.

September 8: Feast of the Birth of the Mother. Celebrating the birthday of the physical incarnation of the Goddess. Give a birthday celebration for every mother in your Grove.

September 26: Feast of the Druid Taliesin. Spend the day reading or telling his stories. Celebrate Welsh Paganism. Compose a poem.

September 27-28: Festival of the Demon Slayers. Now that the days are really starting to get short, it is good to meditate upon the fact that not all Gods of Darkness are Evil. This festival is to honour both the Light Gods and the Dark Gods who slay Demons, Formors, Giants and other enemies of Life.

October 1: Feast of Chwerthin, "the laughing one." Tell jokes, make outrageous puns, pontificate at ridiculous length, while being as amorous as possible.

October 2: Feast of the Guardian Spirits. Give love, respect and honour to your own Guardians.

October 7-9: Autumn Festival of Wine and Pleasure. Hold a mid-harvest feast and get as intoxicated as you can manage. Then hold a good enough orgy to keep you warm through the next few months.

October 12: Feast of the Autumn Fool. Play practical jokes upon those who actually enjoy them. Talk pompously all day, make fun of ascetic occultists, make a Great Beast out of yourself.

October 24: Feast of the Inhabitants of the Air. Meditate upon and try to communicate with Nature Spirits. Attempt intimate relations on the Astral.

November 2: Feast of the Ancestors. Spend the day reading and thinking about your ancestors. Light a candle or two for them. Invite them to the Samhain feasting to take place next week.

You, of course, are welcome to create your own holidays.

[Picture below is Hill of 3 Oaks, 1972 by Glenn McDavid.]

REFLECTIONS ON CELTIC TIME RECKONING

or "Running Around in Cycles"
DC V1 Iss 4 Aug. 1978
By Robert Larson, 1978

This article is by Ard. Robert Larson, Archdruid of the clanna Brochecta Grove, and was originally printed in the Clann's quarterly publication "An Poc Uaine," in the Earrach 1978 issue. Subscriptions to this journal are $4.00-per year and can be sent to: Cody Grundy, Ri Clanna Brochecta, 820 Circle Court, South San Francisco, CA 94080.

I. The basics of Celtic time

There are four logical times to begin the most basic time cycle, the day: midday, midnight, sunrise, and sunset. The use of either of the first two results in an equal day, but they are much more difficult to observe, especially midnight. As a result, early peoples began their days with either sunrise or sunset. The Celts chose sunset, and, instead of days, calculated time in nights, as is attested to by linguistic evidence. This selection also corresponds to the druidic tenet which was simplified by Caesar and Pliny to "the night has precedence over the day." Philosophically, starting the day at sunset makes the statement that things begin in darkness and cold and develop to brightness and warmth--the life from death theme which is recurrent in Celtic myth, and is thus reflective of pagan Celtic religious belief. (The choice of sunrise to begin the day seems to me to make the opposite, and obvious, statement that death comes after life; which is more in keeping with the religious beliefs of the peoples of the Mediterranean and Near Eastern areas, from whom we get our modern method of time reckoning.)

Then, again, perhaps the proto-Celts lived in an area with frequent morning fog, making the choice of sunset natural. However, the choice of sunset does correspond to the other cycle beginnings of Celtic time reckoning, which are symbolic.

The day is divided naturally into halves, light and dark. Though proof is lacking, it is certain that the Celts further divided the day into fore-midnight, after-midnight, forenoon, and afternoon; and I believe it likely that they halved these divisions.

The Celtic year began at Samhain, which was counted as a day between years. The year was divided into quarters by the four holy days of Samhain, Imbholg, Bealtaine, and Lunasa. The dates normally given for these days are, respectively, November 1, February 1, May 1, and August 1--the.days of the often thinly-Christianized holidays of Hallowe'en/All Souls', Candlemass/St. Bridget's Day/ St. Groundhog's Day, May Day, and Lammas. As I shall explain later, these dates are only approximate, but they'll do for now.

Though Lunasa and Imbholg were holy days, Samhain and Bealtaine, the most important days of the year, effectively divided the year in two. Samhain, whose name means "summer's end", was the beginning of the winter half of the year, called geimhreadh. Geimhreadh was the dark and cold half of the year, corresponding to the night half of the day. During geimhreadh, the sidhe and other malevolent beings were believed to be most active, and life was at its lowest ebb. On the other hand, it was also the time of reforming and resurrection. During geimhreadh, the old sun reached its nadir and was reborn, the familiar new-sun-god-replacing-old-sun-god theme found in various forms in Celtic myth. Though the last vestiges of old life disappeared under the snows during geimhreadh, in its second half new life appeared, to reach full vigor at Bealtaine.

Bealtaine means the "fires of Beal", who was presumably a Celtic solar/sky deity. Another name for Bealtaine, given on the Coligny calendar, is Giamon, which in Irish would be geimh-fhuin, or "winter's end". Under either name, Bealtaine marked the beginning of samhradh, the bright and warm half of the year, during which the forces of life reached their apex, and the solar deity attained his full manhood. However, the sun god also began to deteriorate during samradh after his solstice battle (the combat of gods myth); and the forces of life, after coming to fruition, slowly gave way as the year decayed to Samhain.

The choice of Samhain and Bealtaine as the turning points of the year was dictated by both druidic belief ana the Celtic economic system. Religiously, the "precedence of dark over light" dogma seen in the day is repeated in the division and beginning point of the year. Economically, Bealtaine and Samhain are the times of transhumance, the moving of the herds from winter to summer pasture, and vice versa. By Bealtaine the ground has firmed up enough from the spring thaw to safely drive the livestock to their mountain pastures, and there is enough growth at the higher altitude to support them. Transhumance is a great social occasion among pastoral peoples, as they gather together for the drive. Inevitably, it became an occasion for religious ritual. At Bealtaine the cattle were blessed by driving them between two huge bonfires (probably sacrificial to ensure a good herding and growing season). By the way, a good smoky fire is an excellent method for killing livestock parasites. Judging by peasant May Day practices throughout the British Isles, it was also a time of much merry-making and promiscuity. These customs reflect the symbolic nature of Bealtaine as the time of mating between the sky god and the earth goddess which will bring forth the next year's life during the latter half of geimhreadh, corresponding closely with (and probably inspired by) the nine-month human gestation period. This symbolic connection is, of course, reinforced by the fact that this time of year is also the mating period for many animals, making Bealtaine an appropriate time for phallus-related worship (such as may-poles).

At Samhain, the tribe would again be together after driving the livestock back to the winter pasture in the sheltered valley. Again, ritual inevitably arose about the occasion. With winter come, prayers and sacrifices to protect the tribe and livestock from the depredations of the evil spirits of the dark half of the year were necessary. As the time of change, it was also a time for attempting to divine what lay in store for the tribe during the coming year. Many of our Halloween games probably started as divinatory practices, even if the Gaulish druids did have a weakness for entrails. Even the dressing up in frightening costumes for Hallowe'en probably had its beginnings in Samhain ceremonies to try to scare or, at least, confuse the spirits, which were believed to be especially active during this night. (Well, after all, if you'd been cooped up in a sidhe hill for six months, you'd want to raise a little hell, too.) The Celtic deity most closely associated with Samhain was the Daghdha in his character of god of the otherworld and rebirth, who was able to take the dead, immerse them in his cauldron, and bring them forth alive.

Geimhreadh was divided into halves by Imbholg, which may mean "swelling belly", and which began the sub-season of earrach, "spring". Around Imbholg-tide many animals give birth, and a celebration of this increase was natural. Its association with St. Brigid, the euhemerized goddess Brighid, leads me to believe that it was also a celebration of the hearth, home, and culture, but this is admittedly conjecture. Of actual Imbholg ritual we know nothing. Symbolically, the new life conceived at Bealtaine is brought forth at Imbholg.

Samradh was sub-divided by the festival of Lunasa a name which means the "games of Lugh" and which begins the

sub-season of Fomhar, " harvest". Lugh was a god of many attributes and myriad realms of power. Though probably originally a solar deity, Lugh was also a warrior, an artist and poet, and a craftsman, among other capabilities, and in Gaul was the main god of commerce. It is thus appropriate that his name be given to Lu'nasa, the time of the great fairs, at which competitions were held in athletics, crafts, and the arts, legal cases were decided, livestock bought and sold, etc.--a necessary periodic time of truce in inter-tribal relationships, an affirmation of cultural identity, and an opportunity for open and free trade among\ craftsmen and herders. Another name for Lunasa is Bron Troghain, a difficult name to define, but which has to do with parturition and giving birth. At this time of year, the harvest begins to come in and trees are bearing fruit. The ceremonies of Lunasa were thus probably those of thanks to the gods for a bountiful year, or sacrifices to increase the harvest if the crop looked small.

The Celts also celebrated the solstices. At the summer solstice, ceremonies involved the kindling of large wooden (wicker?) wheels, which were then rolled downhill to symbolize the coming decline of the sun after the solstice. Conversely, at the winter solstice huge fires were lighted to symbolize the rebirth of the sun and its coming return. Evergreens and, on the continent and in England, the mistletoe were given special veneration due to their retaining their life during the time of death. In Ireland the yew supplanted the mistletoe and in Scotland, the rowan. Though we have no direct evidence that the Celts celebrated the equinoxes, I am sure that they did, if only from a desire for neatness in their year. Also, the equinoxes are significant solar,times, marking the return and departure of the sun--the god's adolescence and old age.

The Celtic year, then, was divided into eight parts by the holy days and the solstices and equinoxes. It may be best to look upon it as two overlapping years, one having to do with the sun/sky god and the other, the earth goddess. Samhain was the time of dying for the Earth; Imbholg, its rebirth; Bealtaine, its flowering; and Lunasa, its fruition. The winter solstice was the time of death and rebirth for the sun; the vernal equinox, its puberty; the summer solstice, full maturity; and the autumnal equinox, the onset of its old age.

Taking the cycles together, however, we see that the seasons reflect not only the status of the earth-mother, but also the status of the sun god. The period Samhain-Imbholg corresponds with the weakest period of the sun god--extreme age and infancy. The period Imbholg-Bealtaine corresponds with his childhood and adolescence; Bealtaine-Lunasa with his young manhood and early middle age; and Lunasa-Samhain with his late middle age and old age.

The two cycles are thus bound into a syncretic whole. The agent of this binding is the moon. In its monthly period the moon reflects the yearly cycles of the earth and the sun. Because the lunation period closely approximates the female cycle, the moon was most likely personified as a goddess. Now, goddesses are normally connected with either the earth or with water in Celtic mythology. The moon goddess is thus connected to the earth by gender, and this connection is reinforced by the moon's obvious tidal effects. Because of the moon's light-giving capability and its obvious solar connection, the moon goddess was probably thought of as the consort of the sun god. The moon is thus symbolically connected to both the sun and the earth. The Celts used the true lunar month. In keeping with the division of the year and the day, the moon's period was divided into dark and light halves determined naturally by the moon's phases; the dark half consisting of the first and last quarters and the bright half, the second and third quarters. These halves were subdivided by the new and full moons, reflecting the four-fold division of the solar and earth cycles and reinforcing the symbolism.

Finally, I would like to note that many sources have the druids celebrating only one of the holy days per year. I believe this to mean a large scale celebration, with the other holy days having lesser celebrations, probably intra-tribal rather than inter-tribal. The celebration cycle ran retrograde through the holy days thusly: Samhain, Luonasa, Bealtaine, Imbholg. This cycle gives an actual periodicity of three years, which corresponds to the frequency of the great games at Tailtiu; so this ritual cycle is very likely to be basically correct. As we shall see, this ritual cycle was the heart of the Celtic method for calculating time spans of more than a year.

REFLECTIONS ON CELTIC TIME RECKONING cont.:

DC V1 Iss 5 Sept 1978

By Robert Larson, 1978

This article, begun last issue, is by Adr. Robert Larson of the Clanna Brochecta Grove, and was originally printed in the Clann's'quarterly publication, "An Poc Uaim, "in the Earrach 1978 issue. Subscriptions to this journal are $4.00 per year and can be sent to: Cody Grundy, 820 Circle Court, South San Francisco, CA 94080. We hope to have more of Bob's fine scholarship in future issues.

II. Achieving an accurate calendar

Nowadays we take the Calendar pretty much for granted. The Roman calendar we use is now quite accurate. In the eighteenth century, however, a gross adjustment of about two weeks had to be made in the calendar to rectify accumulated error. The calendar had gained nearly two weeks over the sun. The method for insertion of leap days now used (the insertion of an extra day in every year evenly divisible by four; except the century marks, when the year must be evenly divisible by 400) assures an almost exact accuracy. But it took a long time to arrive at this method of interpolation.

To achieve an accurate calendar, two things are necessary: the need for a calendar and a goodly period of accurate observation. The need for a calendar automatically arises when a people in a temperate climatic zone advances beyond hunting and gathering society. In an agricultural society, accurate timing of planting and harvesting is a necessity. While a calendar may seem to be less necessary in a mainly pastoral society such as that of the Celts, the times of transhumance must be predictable in order for the tribe to gather the herds. If the herds are moved too early in the spring, there may well be too little growth in the hills to support them; if they're moved too late, valuable growing time and the mountain grasses are wasted. If the herds are moved too early in the fall, grasses are wasted again and the harvest is interfered with; if too late, the herds may suffer from the onset of winter storms. In a pastoral society, moving the herds at the wrong time can seriously threaten the tribe's survival. Some sort of calendar is obviously necessary to avoid wastage of time, grass, livestock, and, ultimately, the tribe.

Being a northern people, the Celts had an advantage in calculation over more southerly peoples, for the difference in the lengths of the light and dark periods of the day is greater in the North. Determination of the solstices and, with them, calculation of the length of the solar year is thus made fairly simple. Equinoxes are also more easily determined, and their

determination is more accurate than that of the solstices, because the sun's declination is changing more rapidly at equinox than at solstice. In fact, the Celts might well have been saved the trouble of these calculations (and many of the others, too).

A definitely Celtic culture first arose in that crucible of early northern Europeans, southern Germany and Central Europe. In earlier times successive prehistoric cultures had sprung from this area and spread in much the same directions as the Celts did later. One of these pre- (or perhaps proto-) Celtic peoples built Stonehenge. Gerald Hawkins has convincingly shown that Stonehenge incorporates incredible astronomical knowledge. The Celts might well have taken over, or inherited, their entire calendric system from their predecessors. Judging by later Celtic practice, they would not have evicted the peoples they found in their conquered lands, but would only have made them pay tribute to their new overlords. If this be the case, it raises interesting questions about Celtic religion. Considering the correlation of Celtic myth and Druidic philosophy with the calendar, if the Celts co-opted the calendar, much of their religion must also have come from these peoples. The druidic cult would thus be much older than the rest of Celtic culture, and Celtic Myth would reflect not so much early Iron Age beliefs as Bronze Age and Neolithic beliefs, the specifically Celtic elements being a later overlay. Many of the more primitive elements of Celtic religion, such as animism, would be explained by such circumstances.

Be that as it may, the Celts had an accurate count of the solar year early in their history. While the equinoxes are close enough to planting and reaping seasons to do for an agricultural people, a pastoral people follows different rhythms. The most propitious times for transhumance do not fall on significant sun days, but about midway between the equinoxes and solstices. At these mid-points, the sun is at the same angle of declination in the sky. The sun's midpoints can thus be determined by observation and the days of Samhain, Imbholg, Bealtaine, and Lu'nasa set in place. This angle of declination is 16.3', which again corresponds with certain megalithic alignments, again showing the antiquity of at least the basic Celtic calendar. This declination gives the following dates for the holy days: Samhain, November 7; Imbholg, February 4; Bealtaine, May 5; and Lunasa August 7.

Now, the phases of the sun are not equal, due to the slight eccentricity of the earth's orbit causing it to move faster in the winter when it is closer to the sun. Even as using the solstices and equinoxes yields unequal seasons, so does the use of the midpoints. The period from Samhain to Imbholg is about 89 days, whereas the period from Bealtaine to Lunasa is about 94 days, while the other quarters are around 91 days each. I believe it likely that the druids equalized these intervals, both from a sense of neatness and from a desire to better reflect the equal phases of the moon and maintain their religious symbolism. They most likely started at Samhain, the time of regeneration they probably considered immutable. This would yield the following normal dates for the holy days: Samhain, November 7; Imbholg, February 6; Bealtaine, May 8; and Lunasa, August 8. Though this adjustment is not strictly necessary, it makes the calendar work more smoothly and thus would be more convenient for the average Celt or for places where solar observation was difficult and unreliable due to weather. It also reflects druidic numerology, for the days set in this manner are three lunar months and three days apart, give or take a day.

So we come to the moon. The inclusion of the moon in the calendar was inevitable, not only on religious, but also on practical grounds. In practical terms, the moon is a counting device, enabling the observer to easily count large numbers of days and fix time spans with great accuracy. The introduction of the moon into a solar calendar creates great difficulties due to the incompatibility of lunar and solar movements. (The solar year is 365.242 days, whereas twelve lunar periods are 354.36 days.) The Celtic method of reconciliation between these two cycles is in full agreement with druidic precept and ritual and correlates with the peculiar nine-month cycle of celebration.

To be Continued:

Reflections on Celtic Time Reckoning

Continued

Vol 2 Iss 1 Nov. 1978

By Robert Larson, 1978

This article, begun two issues ago, is by Robert Larson, Archdruid of the Clanna Brocheta Grove of the ODNA. An earlier version of this issue Is section was published in the Clann's journal, "An Poc Uaine." It has been completely rewritten, since he now thinks he has "cracked the code" of the ancient Celtic calendrical system once and for all. Although the mathematical explanations seem complex, the system itself is easy to remember and use--a tribute to the brilliance of the "barbaric" Celtic peoples.

III. The Coligny Calendar

The Coligny calendar is a bronze tablet (1.5m **x** 1m) uncovered at the turn of this century in Coligny, France. Though it is broken and is missing pieces, it is still an important clue to Celtic time reckoning and a confirmation of what was believed on the topic from Greco-Roman sources. However, since it seems to date from the time of Augustus after Gaul had been more or less Romanized, it could well be decadent. Its complex permutations would seem to increase its chances of decadence, as does the fact that it is inscribed in defiance of what is said to have been a firm Druidic custom of nonliteracy. However, there is evidence that the Celts of Central Europe did possess calendrical monuments and devices.

The months of the Coligny calendar begin with the "last" quarter of the moon and are subdivided into dark and light halves. The months are of two types, "complete" and "incomplete," consisting of 30 and 29 days respectively. With some variation and permutation these two types of months alternate through the year, beginning with the "complete" month of "SAMON" (Samhain). This kind of system is a common and quite accurate approximation of two lunar cycles, being only some 132' hours short of exactitude. The calendar begins with Samhain on the 30th day of its month, followed by a 30 day intercalendary period. The lunar year consists of 12 months. After 2 1/2 years, or 30 months, another 30 day intercalendary period is inserted at Bealtaine. The calendar as a whole consists of 64 months, including two intercalendary periods.

This calendar keeps accurate track of both sun and moon and is also quite practical. As Neven Hanaff points out in Carn (a Panceltic cultural journal), the day can be fixed by observation. The season is, of course, fixed by the state of the vegetation. The month can then be fixed by observation of the sun's position, and the day by moon phase. But it is not a complete calendar, since true calibration of sun and moon over such a short interval is impossible.

The shortest whole number ratio of solar years to lunar months is the "metonic cycle" of 19 years = 235 months. This cycle was the basis of the Babylonian and Jewish calendars and was well known in the Mediterranean world. Herodotus and Diodorus both appear to mention this cycle in passing, in their descriptions of what seems to be Stonehenge, in their accounts of

the inhabitants of "Hyperborea" and Britain (though whether the people described were Celts or preceltic is debatable). Pliny, however, does not mention this cycle. Instead, he mentions a Druidic "long count" of 30 years-- a month of years. We shall see later that this 30 year interval is indeed part of a disguised metonic cycle.

In calculating a calendar, the method used should be as direct and accurate as possible. In an oral system of teaching, such as was used by the Celts, the method of calculation must be kept simple for ease of memorization and recall. Insofar as is possible, complex systems are formularized. Ideally the calendar will then work automatically.

If we regularize the spacing of the holy days as suggested last issue, they will be about 3 months and 3 days apart. But the difference between the solar year and 12 lunar months is only about 11 (10.8748) days. If we add 3 days to the date of each holy day, the calendar will gain a day over the sun. Therefore the date increase must have been only 2 days for one high-day interval. Because the interval between Samhain and Imbholg (Imelc) as determined by the sun is the shortest of the year, I suggest that the addition formula was 2-3-3-3. Let's explore the consequences of applying this formula.

Starting out with Samhain occurring on the 30th of its month, we insert an intercalendar month and initiate the addition (S = Samhain, I = Imbholg, B = Bealtaine, L = Lunasa). The date is in the lower row.

S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L
0/30	2	5	8	11	13	16	19	22	24	27	30

Lunasa (Lughnasadh) falls on the 30th of its month, so an intercalendary period must be inserted after it, lest Samhain fall out of its own month.

However, if we merely alternate 30 and 29 day months, Lunasa's month has only 29 days. Either we must add a day to this month or insert the intercalendary period before Lunasa. But if the latter is done, Lunasa will fall out of its month. To make a long explanation short, I have experimented with both these methods (and many others) and the former is the more accurate. After the 30 day intercalendary period ("IP") the months will restart their 29/30 alternation.

This calculation method results in a 2.75-year calendric period with a total of 1004 days, which corresponds very well with both the lunar and solar periods: 34 lunar months = 1004.0404 days; 2.75 solar years = 1004.4155 days. Another result of this method is an alteration in the number of days in each high day's month according to which high day was involved in the last intercalendary month. That is, when the last IP immediately preceded or succeeded Samhain or Bealtaine, their months have 30 days and the months of Imbholg and Lunasa have 29. When the IP involved Imbholg or Lunasa, their months have 30 days and those of Samhain and Bealtaine have 29. Obviously, such alteration would supply a convenient reminder of which holy day had the last leap month and which will have the next.

If we continue our method of addition, the following dates will result:

L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B
0/30	3	5	8	11	14	16	19	22	25	27	30

Insert another leap month.

B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I
0/30	3	6	8	11	14	17	19	22	25	28	30

Insert another leap month.

I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S
0/30	3	6	9	11	14	17	20	22	25	28	31!

A leap month is inserted immediately before Samhain, which falls on the first day of its (30 day) month.

This addition yields a cycle of 11 years, consisting of 136 months having a total of 4016 days. 136 lunar months = 4016.1616 days; 11 years = 4017.662 days.

The lunar count is dead on. Samhain occurs on the first of its month, the 4017th day of the calendar, losing 0.662 days to the sun. This loss is a natural result of the method of calculation which can and will be corrected before it gets to be critical.

It should be noted that a similar cycle will emerge if the actual intervals between the high days is used, but more fiddling is needed to keep the calendar co-ordinated; the formula alternates between 0-2-5-4 and 1-1-6-3, and the pattern of leap months seen above (SLBI) does not develop. I feel that these are good arguments for regularization of high day intervals.

Continuing the addition formula (with the cycle now beginning with Samhain falling on the first), we have the following:

S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	
1	3	6	9	12	14	17	20	23	25	28	31	=1

L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	
1	4	6	9	12	15	17	20	23	26	28	31	=1

B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	
1	4	7	9	12	15	18	20	23	26	29	31	=1

I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	
1	4	7	10	12	15	18	21	23	26	29	32	=2

The total period of the calendar is now 22 years = 272 months = 8032 days. The actual figures for the moon and the sun are: 272 lunar months = 8032.3232 days; 22 solar years = 8035.324 days. Samhain occurs on the second day of its month, the 8034th day of the calendar. It has thus lost a day to the sun.

This loss can be corrected in various ways. If we add 1 to the date of the leap month high day when the loss to the sun most nearly equals one day, this addition would be made after the fifth leap month of the calendar (not including the Samhain we started with), or 13.75 years in. If we then continue the addition formula, we end up with the metonic cycle of 19 years 235 months = 12 lunar years + 7 months. The actual figures are: 19 calendric years 6939 days; 19 solar years 6939.568 days; 235 lunar months = 6939.691 days.

On the other hand, if we instead add the day to the date after 22 years, we end up with a total cycle of 24.5 years = 303 months

8947 days. The actual figures for the sun and moon are, respectively, 8948.429 days and 8947.771 days.

To be continued!

Reflections on Celtic Time Reckoning

Continued:
Vol 2 Iss 2 Dec. 1978
By Robert Larson, 1978

This article, begun three issues ago, is by Robert Larson, Archdruid of the Clan na Brocheta Grove of the Orthodox Druids of North America.

IIII. The Dance of Time

While both of the solutions presented last issue are quite accurate, they both need a one day interpolation, a task of no great difficulty. However, there seems to be no correlation with the 30-year "long count" mentioned by Pliny. Was he mistaken? I don't believe so. One day is not that great a discrepancy, given primitive observation facilities and Northern European weather conditions. What happens if we merely continue our addition formula without correcting for sun drift?

S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	
2	4	7	10	13	15	18	21	24	26	29	32	=2

L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	
2	5	7	10	13	16	18	21	24	27	29	32	=2

B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S
2	5	8	10	13	16	19	21	24	27	30

Which is where we started. Instead of 11 years, this cycle has eight, and the final intercalendary interval of 2 1/2 years = 31 months = 915 days, completing a total calendric period of 30 years.

Well, not really total. Actually this 30-year point is a convenient place for interpolation. The actual figures are: 30 years calendric = 10955 days; 371 lunar months = 10955.853 days; and 30 years solar = 10957.26 days. To keep time with the moon, one extra day must be interpolated. The most convenient way to do this is to add a day to the month preceding the month of Samhain, thus making it a 30 day month instead.of its normal (for a Bealtaine leap cycle) 29 days.

This addition gives us a 30 year calendar of 10956 days, correct for the moon but one day off for the sun. So we add one day to the date of Samhain, starting off the next cycle with Samhain on the first of its month. This eliminates the High Days = 30th-of-month 11 year cycle from this new greater cycle, resulting in a metonic cycle (11 years + 8 years = 19 years). We now stand at the 49-year point of the calendar: 49 years calendric = 17895 days; 606 lunar months = 17895.544 days; and 49 years solar = 17896.858 days. The moon is about day off, an amount which I don't feel justifies the interpolation of a day, especially considering that the month of Samhain contains 30 days, gaining back .4694 days. Also, the observable phase of the moon would be almost identical to the exact phase.

The sun is thus left two days off from the calendar, requiring the addition of 2 days to the date of Samhain. Thus this, the last greater cycle, begins with Samhain falling on the second day of its month. This greater cycle is a short one, consisting of only 8 years, which gives us a total calendric period of 57 years= 705 months = 20818 days. The actual-figures for the sun and

moon are: 57 years solar = 20818.794 days, and..705 lunar months = 20819.073 days. One day must be interpolated to justify the moon. This is added in the same way as the correction at the 30-year mark and automatically justifies the calendar with the sun. The correlation we see here should come as no surprise, for 57 year equals three metonic cycles. But why not just *use* three metonic cycles??

The reason, I believe, was mainly mnemonic. Using a true metonic cycle requires the addition of a day to correct for moon drift about two out of three cycles. The one cycle not requiring addition could cause confusion--especially without written records. Using the method outlined above, however, results in three distinct greater cycles: a long count, a middle count and a short count. All that need be remember is that the long and short counts require moon correction and that all the counts require sun correction (tho the sun correction of the short count happens automatically). In fact, as I shall demonstrate later, not even this really needs to be remembered!

First, however, I wish to point out some characteristics of this calendar which may not be immediately obvious *[especially to those of us who got lost in the math two issues ago! --Editor]*. One of these is that it is possible to predict the status of the moon on any Highday from its date (and vice versa). In fact, the moon's phase for *any* day during the year is equivalent to its date. The first day of the month is the 3/4 moon; the eighth is the new moon; the 15th the 1/4 moon; and the 22nd and/or 23rd the full moon. This last uncertainty occurs because it's difficult to tell with the naked eye when the full moon actually happens, since the full disk looks about the same for about two days. Extrapolation of the moon phase for any date is thus child's play. For instance, the solstices and equinoxes fall one month and 15 days after the preceding High Day, making calculation of the date and moon phase for these critical sun days merely a matter of adding 15 to the date of the preceding Highday.

A second subtlety lies in the numerological relationships between the greater cycles and the leap month cycles. The total calendric period of 57 years consists of cycles of 30, 19 and 8 years--each 11 years less than its predecessor, which is equivalent to the number of days difference between the solar and lunar years. The greater cycles contain respectively 11, 7 and 3 leap months--each four fewer than its predecessor, which is equivalent to the number of seasons (or rather, sub-seasons) in a year. This method of calculation thus not only keeps accurate track of both the lunar and solar years, but also binds them together numerologically and mnemonically.

The calendar described above is accurate and mathematically consistent, but is it Druidic? Yes, it is, and here we begin to see another subtlety of the system. First note the standard 2.75 intercalendary interval which consists of 11 seasons and which has 11 holy days. Previously I believed that the 9-month Druidic cycle of High Day celebration was connected to this interval (and the rest of the calendar) numerologically; since if the 9-month ritual cycle is restarted every leap month, it results in a 3-3-3-2 pattern of ritual interval, reflecting the addition pattern for the year. I now believe that the ritual cycle was not restarted every leap month, but rather that an extra ritual was inserted to mark the leap month, with the ritual cycle being continued without alteration. The ritual cycle thus adds a third strand to the interlacing of the sun and moon--a ritual strand. The results are interesting:

Year Number 1, 2. etc.

Sunc Cycle SIBL ect.

Ritual Cycle S L I etc.

Leap Month Cycle S L B ect.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL
S**L	**B*	*I**	S**L	**B*	*I**	S**L	**B*
S***	****	***L	****	****	**B*	****	****

9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
S**I**BL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL
I*	S**L	**B*	*I**	S**L	**B*	*I**	S**L
I*	****	****	S***	****	***L	****	****

17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
SI**B**L	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL
****B***	*I**	S**L	**B*	*I**	S**L	**B*	*I**
****B***	****	****	*I**	****	****	S***	****

25	26	27	28	29	30	**31**	32
SIB**L**	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	**S**IBL	SIBL
S****L**	**B*	*I**	S**L	**B*	*I**	**S****L	**B*
*****L**	****	****	**B*	****	****	**S*****	****

33	34	35	36	37	38	**39**	40
SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	S**I**BL	SIBL
*I**	S**L	**B*	*I**	S**L	**B*	***I****	S**L
***L	****	****	**B*	****	****	***I****	****

41	42	43	44	45	46	**47**	48
SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SI**B**L	SIBL
**B*	*I**	S**L	**B*	*I**	S**L	****B***	*I**
****	S***	****	***L	****	****	****B***	****

49	50	51	**52**	53	54	55	56
SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIB**L**	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL	SIBL
S**L	**B*	*I**	S****L**	**B*	*I**	S**L	**B*
****	S***	****	*****L**	****	****	**B*	****

57	**Start**
SIBL	**S**IBL
*I**	**S****L
****	**S*****

This Begins a New Calendar!

Note that these cycles coincide only eight times during the calendar, twice for each High Day [typed in italics above]. Samhain on the three cycles only at the end of 30 and 57 years--the times when the moon correction is required. Correlating the ritual cycle to the calendar thus obviates the need for remembering which greater cycles receive moon correction. The coincidence of the cycles on Samhain dictates the timing of moon correction.

In fact, it might be better to divide the calendar into two greater cycles, a long count of thirty years and a short count of 27, rather than three cycles. The pattern of the coincidence of the cycles indicates that such a division exists, consisting as it does of two year-patterns of SIBL. Looked at in this way, the lengths of the two cycles have a difference of three years, the interval between rituals on the same Highday, surely a Druidic interval.

The patterns resulting from the interlacing of cycles could easily be used to determine the character of a particular ritual. At the times of the leap months time was literally out of phase, a condition which would call for extra solemnity and larger sacrifices. Having a large rite on the holidays connected with the leap months while continuing the ritual cycle normally results in two (and twice three) rituals in a year--a holy year. It is worthwhile noting that the two times-three rituals would occur in the same year fall in the years containing the last leap months

before the 30 and 57 year marks-the 28th and 55th years of the calendar, thus marking the coming end of the year count. The eight times when all the cycles coincide must have been times of great ceremonies and sacrifices, especially the Samhain coincidences; as these times were very special and rare (and thus Holy).

The calendric method outlined on the last couple of pages incorporates all the cycles and fulfills all necessary criteria. It is accurate, and though it may appear complex on the surface, it is really simple in its mechanics. In fact, its working is virtually automatic. Only the following rules need be remembered:

SIBL

1. Months alternate between 30 and 29 days in length.
2. The addition pattern for the dates of the High Days is 2-3-3-3.
3. The month containing a Highday which is immediately either preceded or followed by a leap month ALWAYS has 30 days.
4. A leap month always has 30 days.
5. Sun correction is needed after any short leap period (212 years instead of 2.75).
6. Moon correction is needed when all cycles coincide at Samhain.

Using these rules, the calendar works itself. It is quintessentially Druidic, reflecting what we know of their beliefs and ritual patterns from myth, folklore, and Greek and Roman commentaries. Indeed, it confirms the reputation for astronomical knowledge that the Greeks gave the Druids. And it is practical.

A calendar of this great a correlation and accuracy would take literally centuries to achieve; pointing again to great antiquity and (inevitably) to Stonehenge and other megalithic alignments. It's unlikely that the Druidic cult had anything to do with the construction of Stonehenge (it's very hard to realistically believe that they were that ancient), and they may never have even used it. But they undoubtedly met the builders' peoples during the Celtic expansion and obtained much astronomical data from them, probably then shaping it to fit their own philosophical and religious systems (which were in turn probably altered by the new information). The symbolic wholeness of Celtic time reckoning would then imply that much of the symbolism came from the pre-Celtic subject peoples, helping to-explain some of the more "primitive" aspects of Celtic religious beliefs, such as Animism.

Of course., some fiddling is needed from month to month due to the eccentricity of the moon's orbit if total accuracy is desired in the calendar. The slight uneveness of the months is, accentuated by the inequality of day length caused by the choice of sunset rather than midnight or noon for the beginning of the day. This fiddling is very likely the cause of the permutations incorporated in the Coligny calendar. I believe that the Coligny calendar was not so much a "calendar" as we use it today (as a predictive device, however little its coordination with anything but the sun), as it was a record of its period.

Be that as it may, Celtic time reckoning was accurate and mathematically, numerologically, religiously and symbolically consistent. It was a true dance of time.

The End!

Cross Quarter Day Calculations

By Larry Press, Poison Oak Grove
Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 2003

This article sprang from queries to the Grove mathematician on how to calculate the major Druid High Days. The Druids were the mathematicians and astronomers of their day and would have been able to determine when the major and minor High Days would fall. Poison Oak Grove tries to maintain such practices of the ancient Druids.

The principle is simple. I don't have my calendar here with me, so I can ONLY explain the principle and give artificial examples, but it should be enough to give you the idea.

The astrohoogical calendar doesn't give the times of the cross-quarters because those events are of no interest to most astrohooligers. it does, however, give the Sun's positions at various dates and times; we can use that information to estimate the date and time the Sun will be in the position that interests us.

Suppose for example, that the Sun is at 14 degrees of the sign at noon PST on the 6th of November, and at 16 degrees of the sign at noon PST on the 7th of November. Then the position of interest (15 degrees) is halfway between the two given positions, so the Sun should reach that position halfway between the two given times (in this case, Midnight of the 6th-to-7th).

That's the basic principle. In practice, things are a bit trickier because:

1. The Sun's position is given the calendar in degrees, minutes, and seconds, and we need to convert that to degrees-and-fractional-degrees (e.g. 14 degrees 30 minutes 0 seconds becomes 14.5 degrees).

2. The times are given the calendar in hours, minutes, and seconds, and we need to convert them to hours-and-fractional-hours

3. We use the degrees + fraction and hours + fraction values to compute the date-time of the cross-quarter, but that gives us a value in hours + fraction, so we need to convert that back to hours and minutes.

However, if all you're doing is confirming my calculations, you don't need to worry about all the tricky arithmetic. Do this instead:

1. Go to the tables in the back of the calendar. Look for the LATEST day and time at which the Sun's position is LESS THAN 15 degrees of the sign. Note the date and time, and convert it to Pacific Daylight Time (by subtracting however-many hours). Note the position, and convert it ROUGHLY to degrees and fraction (you don't have to be too accurate here-we're just estimating--it you get it to the nearest 1/4 degree, it'll probably be good enough)

2. Then find the EARLIEST day and time at which the Sun is MORE THAN 15 degrees of the sign. Make note of that date and time, and convert it to Pacific Daylight Time, as well. As before, note the position, and convert it roughly to degrees + fraction.

3. How far apart are the two positions? I.e. subtract the smaller from the larger, to get a separation (in degrees + fraction). How far along that distance is 15-degree position? Once again, you can be rough here. Is it about 1/3 of the way? 1/4? 3/4? If you just get it to the nearest 1/4 or so, that may be enough to confirm or reject my more detailed calculation.

4. So, if 15 degrees at some fraction of the way between the first and second positions (e.g. 2/3 of the way), then the Sun should reach 15 degrees roughly that fraction between the two given times (e.g. 2/3 of the way between the first and second times).

5. Now compare the date-times I gave you (in my e-mail message) to date-times of the first and second positions from the calendar tables (i.e. steps 1 and 2 above). Is the date-time I gave you BETWEEN those two date-times? If not, then one of us has made a big mistake. Is the date-time I gave roughly the same (say, within 1/2 day or so) as the rough calculation you arrived at in step 4 above?

In the exercise above, I calculated the date-time the Sun reached 15 degrees of the sign, but the same techniques work to estimate when the Sun reaches 16 degrees 18 minutes declination.

I believe you have a copy of the same Jim Maynard's Pocket Astrologer 2002 that I have. (We bought them while visiting Stephen last year.)

1. Go to page 56. The upper portion gives the positions (right ascension) of various astrological planets for each day of November; the 2nd column is the Sun's positions.

2. Note that at Noon GMT on the 7th of November, the Sun is 14 degrees 54 minutes of Scorpio, while at Noon GMT on the 8th it is at 15 degrees 54 minutes.

3. The difference between the two POSITIONS is exactly 1 degree; the difference between the two TIMES is exactly 24 hours.

4. The position we're looking for is 15 degrees of Scorpio; this is 6 minutes past the FIRST position (i.e. 14 deg 54 min + 6 min = 14 deg 60 min, that is 15 deg). But the two positions are 1 degree apart (see step 3 above); 6 minutes is 1/10th of the way between those two positions.

5. So we know that the cross-quarter position is 1/10th of the way between the Sun's position at Noon GMT on the 7th and Noon GMT on the 8th. That means that it should reach that position after about 1/10 of the TIME between Noon GMT of the 7th and Noon GMT of the 8th. The time difference is 25 hours, and 1/10th of that difference is 2.4 hours i.e. 2 hours and 24 minutes. Thus the Sun should reach 15 degrees Scorpio at about 2:24 GMT on the 7th of November--which is very close to the time I calculated, using my program to do the interpolation.

6. The final step is to convert the GMT time to PDT. Page 21 of Jim Maynard's calendar gives the time corrections: to convert from GMT to PST, subtract 8 hours; to convert from GMT to PDT, subtract 7 hours.

Section Nine: Conclusion to Part Four

As you can tell, most of the material in this section is considered irrelevant trivia to most of the Reformed Druids. I hope that you have found it amusing, because I laugh out loud every time I read certain sections. The mere idea that any Reformed Druid (such as myself) could actually be bothered with such a complicated mess of materials, forces me into hysterical laughter.

None of the material in this section should be considered unalterable dogma, it merely a collection of customs and terms that have been used over the last 33 years. There is no reason why most of them cannot be replaced with new ideas.

Yours in the Mother,
Michael

Figure 24 Above, Monument Hill, 2001.

Below are the two "Sticks and Stones" piles by the Chapel on the entrance to the Bald Spot.

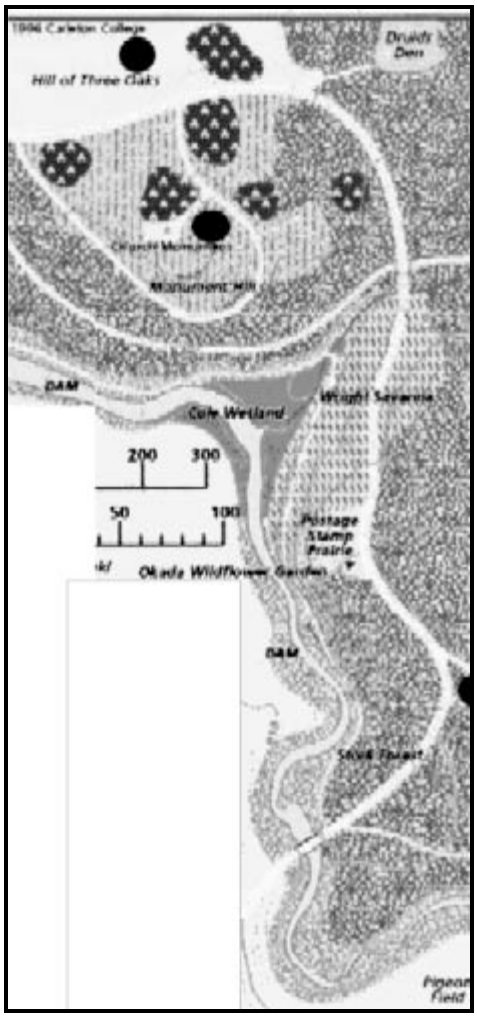


Figure 25 Upper Arb detail. Top black spot is Hill of 3 Oaks and site of Old Stone Circle aka Stonehenge. Black spot below it is Monument Hill, site of the Founding year. Upper right corner is the Druid's Den/Little Grove, popular in 90s Druidism for Sweatlodges and Vigils. Half-spot on right edge in bottom half is the New Stone Circle, aka Stones of Irony.

PART FIVE

THE GREAT DRUISH BOOKS

Of the Hasidic Druids of North America

1996 Introduction

The last major Branch of the Reform to have been (more or less) organized was that of the Hasidic Druids of North America (HDNA), which was an offshoot of the SDNA. The Hasidic Druids began when Isaac Bonewits stopped en route in St. Louis on the way from his previous position as Arch-Druid of the Twin Cities to Berkeley (where he was subsequently elected Arch-Druid of the Mother Grove, which for awhile, was different from the Berkeley Grove). Hasidic Druidism was one of the many Branches of the Reform, growing out of the SDNA, consisting of Neopagans of even greater piety. Their grove was known as the Arch Grove, led by Vicki Rhodes, named after the 630 foot arch that is the symbol of the City of St. Louis. Incidentally, this was the first grove not to use its city-location as the name of its grove, mainly because they objected to the use of a Christian saint in the name of their grove. The HDNA agreed to continue to use the same ordination ceremonies as those of the other Branches of the Reform (with their own additions), so as to maintain the Apostolic Succession and to encourage those who are interested in Reformed Druidism, but not Hasidic style, to be able to get in touch with other Branches of the Reform. Sadly, the one grove of the HDNA disbanded within three years of its foundation c. 1977 c.e. and many decided to join the Church of All Worlds.

The *Lughnasadh* 1976 c.e. (14 y.r. Berkeley) edition of *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* was the first publication to present these books to the general public. In the late 70s, *Pentalpha Journal* republished a few of their works. Although they are currently considered an "inactive" Branch (at least until someone revives it), the current editor Scharding, feels that, in their short time with our organization, they produced a marvelous group theilogy and rule of living. They are also another noteworthy example contrary to the general belief that all the members of the NRDNA and other offshoots were only interested in Celtic Druidism. Although the HDNA may appear bizarrely dogmatic and complex compared to even the SDNA, much more so when compared with the RDNA, there was a subtle aspect of play and self-mocking woven into the following documents. They were also serious in many ways, too, and that should be remembered. I republish these books in memory of a unique experiment within the Reform, but their documents should not be misconstrued as speaking for members of other Branches of the Reform.

Michael Scharding

[P.S. The HDNA enjoyed a brief attempt at revival in 2002-3.]

1976 Introduction

The *Mishmash* of Hasidic Druidism consists of a listing of the basic laws, customs, vocabulary and the ethical principles of the HDNA. As mentioned in Chapter 15, a major function of the *Mishmash* is to provoke regular and extensive debate about every aspect of the religion. Known as "Hairpull," this obligation of scholarly debate forces every generation of Hasidic Drues to reevaluate their benefits and to adjust them to their current environment. It is important to note that the verses of the *Mishmash* are not eternal laws carved in stone (see 1:4), but are designed to provoke debate and meditation. Nonetheless, they are a serious attempt to condense, into one concentrated source, the ethical principles believed in by, it would appear, a majority of living Neopagans (of all persuasions). While many verses of interest only to Hasidic Drues, the rest of the *Mishmash* will be found to ring quite a few bells in the minds and hearts of Neopagans of every cultural heritage.

The *Te-Mara* consists of commentaries on the verses of the *Mishmash*, by several generations of Druish scholars. These commentaries are of great help in the practice of Hairpull as they give Drues of all positions arguments with which to back themselves up. Attempting to discuss the *Mishmash* without reference to the appropriate verses of the *Te-Mara*, is foolish, for the Ancient Sages have often warned against discussing the *Mishmash*, "as if there were no *Te-Mara*." From time to time, additions to the *Te-Mara* were printed and distributed by the Arch-Grove. [Hopefully, we got them all.Ed]

Considdur: the Alternatives, consists of prayers and blessings of particular value to Hasidic Drues. Most of them will sound familiar to members of the RDNA, but some have been written in an entirely original manner. A basic principle of the HDNA is that one's religion should totally saturate one's life and lifestyle. Thus, any Hasidic Drue is expected to be able to make up a blessing or prayer for absolutely any occasion. Additions to this Book will also be printed and distributed by the Arch Grove from time to time.

Where did this religion come from? Hasidic Drues were, for the most part former Jews who love many of the old Jewish (especially Yiddish) customs but who did not care for the repressive and puritanical theology, which they perceived as going along with them. Others are merely looking for a total Neopagan Lifestyle and Hasidic Druidism was one of the very few available. Over the last few decades, there has been a great deal of Neopagan retrieval of customs and holidays from Christianity. Now it is the time for Judaism to be similarly invaded and our Pagan heritage revived (and someday, the same process may happen to Islam).

Hasidic Druidism should not e viewed as a series of deliberate insults against Judaism. On the contrary, an argument may be quite honestly made that Judaism has represented a millennia-long series of insults against Paganism. The Jewish Scriptures are replete with one example after another of blasphemy, sacrilege and genocide committed by the Jews against their Pagan neighbors. But while the Jews were murdering, enslaving, raping and insulting Pagans and Paganism in the Middle East, the Jews (like their later offshoots) were also absorbing, borrowing and stealing various Pagan customs, concepts and holidays. It is these that the Hasidic Druid movement has "borrowed back," knowing their Pagan origins. There is, of course, also the fact that, over their own centuries of Persecution by the monotheistic cultures they spawned, the Jews developed a number of new habits and customs; designed to help an endangered minority religion survive in a hostile environment. These too, the Hasidic Drues feel free to borrow, for there is of much value to Neopagans (followers of endangered minority religions in a hostile environment) in these traditions.

The Mishmash of Hasidic Druidism

Chapter One: On Identity

1. Hasidic Druidism is a way of life.
2. All ordinances of the Hasidic Druids shall be abased upon identity as Hasidic Druids and are binding on no others.
3. All Ordinances and customs may be modified for reasons of health, livelihood, the avoidance of incarceration and survival.
4. The Mishmash is an oak tree, not a stone monument.

Chapter Two: On General Ethical Priorities

1. The Multiverse is very large!
2. Lifestyle is more important that credo.
3. Intent is more important than results.
4. People are more important than property.
5. Discipline is more important than control.
6. Survival is more important than comfort.
7. Creation is better than criticism.
8. Destruction is better than complaint.
9. Unity is better than dissension.
10. Individuality is better than conformity.
11. Responsibility is better than blame.
12. Remorse is better than guilt.
13. Sensuality is better than asceticism.
14. Love is better than hate.
15. Caution is better than fear.
16. Courage is better than foolhardiness.
17. Knowledge is better than ignorance.
18. Self-knowledge is better than pride.
19. Wisdom is better than knowledge.
20. Honesty is better than deceit.
21. Honor is better than arrogance.
22. Peace is better than war.
23. Joy is better than sorrow.
24. Generosity is better than thrift.
25. Mercy is better than justice.
26. Loyalty is better than slavery.
27. Trust is better than cynicism.
28. Skepticism is better than gullibility.
29. Good works are better than good promises.

Chapter Three: On Food and Drink

1. Any food or drink found to be fatal shall be declared uncouth and may not be consumed by Hasidic Druids.
2. Followers of Hasidic Druidism may be vegetarians, carnivores or omnivores, as they individually choose.
3. The flesh and blood of sentient beings is uncouth and may not be consumed.

Chapter Four: On Sexual Conduct

1. Sex is a gift of the Gods and is to be enjoyed by all concerned, as often as possible and desired, but especially during Weekends and High Holy Days.
2. Any sexual act physiologically dangerous or impossible to any participant is forbidden.
3. Sexual gratification may not be used for coercion, nor coercion (physical or nonphysical) be used to obtain sexual gratification; such is a crime against the Gods.
4. No restrictions shall be placed upon the sexual acts of any participants upon the ground of age, species or sexual preferences; save where danger to health and/or arrest is imminent.
5. All bonded partners are expected to provide sexual satisfaction to each other (if desired) at least once every week, or to arrange for surrogate partners to provide said satisfaction.
6. It shall be considered uncouth for any member of a bonded group to forbid or hinder any other member of the group from seeking sexual gratification outside of the group.
7. Matters of hygiene and conception are the responsibility of all participants involved in any sexual activity.
8. No gender is superior to any other; therefore sexual chauvinism is uncouth.
9. A person of any gender may participate in any activity desired or refrain from any activity disliked, regardless of traditional cultural gender associations with specific activities.

Chapter Five: On Blood

1. Being the fluid and essence of life, blood is not, under any circumstance, to be wasted.
2. Blood sacrifices may be made only in these following special circumstances: If the blood is provided by the person offering the sacrifice...
3. .... If the blood is spilled during the course of hunting and/or the butchering of animals killed for food or a similar survival necessity....
4. ..... If the blood is spilled in equal and honorable combat, or in a genuine accident, or in a fully natural disaster.
5. It is uncouth to arrange fatal accidents or disasters, except in equal and honorable combat.
6. Menstrual periods are natural functions to be blessed and enjoyed as a sign of the mysteries of Womanhood.
7. There shall be no restrictions place upon women during their periods, because of their periods, save those self-imposed by the women involved for their own comfort.

Chapter Six: On Grooming

1. All shall bathe once a week, whether they need it or not.
2. Bedclothes shall be cleaned once a month, whether they need it or not.
3. All clothes that are worn shall be cleaned once a year, whether they need it or not.
4. The hair of all genders shall not be cut less than two fingers' length, save where matters of law or livelihood make such mutilation necessary.
5. To symbolize the grace and fruitfulness of growing vines, all genders may wear sidelocks.
6. Due to the principles of Divine Androgyny, clothing shall not in any way be restricted by reason of gender.
7. To betoken the fact that Wisdom is bestowed equally upon all genders by the Gods, green caps (known as *acorn caps*) may be worn by all genders whenever desired.
8. Similarly, to betoken the fact that all are sheltered equally by the Gods, green shawls (known as *tell-its*) may be worn by all genders during prayers and rituals.
9. Any color not found in the visible spectrum of light is not couth, and should not be worn in clothing nor used in rituals.
10. The wearing of clothing of any sort is optional, both in daily life and at rituals.

Chapter Seven: On Wars and Weapons

1. All are encouraged to wear at least one weapon at all times and to know how to use each weapon carried.
2. Violence is always to be kept to an absolute minimum; solve the problem, no more, no less.
3. One may participate in a war only if one is convinced that it is a just and honorable war, necessary to one's personal survival and that of one's loved ones.
4. One may use whatever violence necessary to protect oneself from rape.
5. Absolute pacifists are excused from all of this chapter.

Chapter Eight: On Ecology

1. Humans are only part of the Earth-Mother; the attempt to dominate Nature is uncouth.
2. If one must hunt or butcher animals in order to survive, the animals killed must be killed swiftly, mercifully and with proper and respectful ritual.
3. If a stray animal comes to one's door either injured or ready to give birth, it is couth to take care of it until after it injury was healed or the offspring are ready to walk after the mother.
4. For every tree cut down for survival purposes, another must be planted elsewhere beforehand, and the spirit of the doomed tree given a day and a night in which to move into the sapling newly planted, which should be of the same species.
5. When one is camping in the wilderness, the campground must be left as clean or cleaner than it was upon one's arrival; and all fires must be dead and drowned.
6. It is as couth to clean up the air and land and water as it is uncouth to dirty these things.
7. Love your Mother and your Father and your Siblings all.

Chapter Nine: On Divination and Magick

1. Always be careful what you ask for; you may get it.
2. The ability to divine that which is hidden is a gift of the Gods; therefore, all those who have such talents should use them for their own benefit and for the benefit of those seeking counsel.
3. No one form of divination is superior to any other; all are equally blessed by the Gods.
4. No diviner is infallible, and to claim to be such is an uncouth deception.
5. Divination and Magick are hard work; therefore, it is allowed to ask for recompense for efforts made for non-druids.
6. It is uncouth to use Magick upon another sentient being without their express permission; except in case of war or in case of an ability to give permission caused by unconsciousness, youth or inability to understand one's offer to heal.

Chapter Ten: On Liturgical Customs

1. It is couth to follow the customs of other Reformed Druid movements, provided they do not contradict those of Hasidic Druidism.
2. Ritual equipment should be inexpensive, handmade, and of natural materials such as stone, glass, wood or metal.
3. The chalices are of various colors for various purposes, to wit: red chalices are standard for weekly and High Holy Day services of worship....
4. ....yellow chalices are extra for services of worship and are used for Second Order ordinations and for circulating among those who cannot drink alcoholic liquids....
5. ... green chalices are sacred to Grannos and are used in healing rituals....
6. ...blue chalices are used in rituals in home, especially Weekend services, and for divination and bardic rituals.
7. Other colors of chalices and ritual equipment may be used for other purposes and the colors listed above may be altered to fit the magical systems of any Hasidic Druid.
8. Hasidic druids may worship any Gods and Goddesses they wish in addition to those listed in *The Druid Chronicles*.
9. Hasidic Druids may join the worship of any other Neopagan group they wish, provided such worship does not contain uncouth elements.
10. Hasidic Druids are encouraged to invent new rituals, prayers, hymns, holy days, and other ritual elements designed to glorify the Gods, provided that said inventions are not uncouth.
11. It is uncouth for a Hasidic Druid not to be able to compose poems or songs or a blessing for any occasion.

Chapter Eleven: On Healing

1. The key is temperance; which is moderation in all good things and abstinence in all evil things.
2. Cleanliness is important, but only material things should be sterilized.
3. Pain is neither good nor evil; it is a warning.
4. Pain should be controlled first by will and mental exercises; only after these fail should one resort to other methods of suppressing pain.
5. It is uncouth to endanger your health by ignoring signs of illness or injury.
6. Be neither eager nor reluctant to use new or strange methods of healing; but consider always the most natural methods first.
7. Do not let your bodies be cut open unless a life is at stake.
8. It is more important to treat causes than symptoms.
9. The words of one who has never been pregnant are not to be weighed as heavily as those of one who has, when matters of conception and abortion are discussed.
10. Let midwifes be honored among you, and let one who is wise in the ways of herbs and healing be accounted more noble than the bravest warrior.

Chapter Twelve: On Hasidic Time

1. Hasidic Druids use primarily the calendrical system developed by the Schismatic Druids of North America, based upon that of the New Reformed Druids of North America, with additions.
2. Individual households may choose an individual calendar, but once chosen it should be kept to.
3. The week starts at sundown on Bircheve and every day begins at sundown, the darkness being the *eve* and the light being the *day*.
4. The week, compared to the civil calendar, runs as follows: sunset Friday to sunset Saturday is Bircheve and Birchday; sunset Saturday to sunset Sunday is Oakeve and Oakday; sunset Sunday to sunset Monday is Aspeneve and Aspenday; sunset Monday to sunset Tuesday is Maple-eve and Mapleday; sunset Tuesday to sunset Wednesday is Rowaneve and Rowanday; sunset Wednesday to sunset Thursday in Pine-eve and Pineday; sunset Thursday to sunset Friday is Olive-eve and Oliveday.
5. Weekend shall be taken to extend from sunset, the beginning of Bircheve, to sunset, the end of Oakday.
6. Whenever possible, the Weekend shall be started with a ritual feast in each home, and all manner of feasting, celebration and relaxation continue throughout.
7. It is uncouth to concentrate during the Weekend on matters one concentrates heavily upon the rest of the week.
8. The months and seasons of the year, together with their colors and metals, are as follows: Geimredh: November, December and January; red-purple, purple and purple-blue respectively; silver and lead.....

9 . Earrach; February, March and April; blue, blue-green and green respectively; copper and mercury....

10 . Samradh; May, June and July; green-yellow, yellow and yellow-orange respectively; gold and electrum....

11. Foghamhar; August, September and October; orange, orange-red and red respectively; bronze and iron.

12. Many there are who start these months according to the Druid calendar rather than the civil calendar, and this is not uncouth; but it is best if an entire Grove follows the same pattern.

Chapter Thirteen: On Altered States of Consciousness

1. Every sentient being lives in a unique universe and has the right to live in that universe or any other universe he or she may choose to occupy or visit.
2. The interlinking totality of all perceived and perceivable universe is called the Multiverse and it is beyond description.
3. It is uncouth to induce another entity to alter his or her state of consciousness.
4. It is uncouth to prevent another entity from altering her or his state of consciousness.
5. There are many means for altering one's state of consciousness, among them are: breathing exercises, physical exercise, sexual exercises, psychic exercises, religious exercises and the ingestion of natural and artificial chemicals.
6. All of these are gifts of the Gods, designed to help us expand our awareness of Them and the Multiverse, and should be treated reverently and lovingly.
7. The major technique used for the altering of states of consciousness in most Hasidic Druid worship is the ingestion of the waters-of-life.
8. Other techniques may be used in rituals, provided the leader is competent and has made full explanations to all participants beforehand.
9. It is forbidden to use mind altering methods in such a fashion as to cause grave physical , mental, psychic or legal harm to oneself or others.
10. The versions perceived during altered states of consciousness may be messages from the gods, but they should however be shared and tested by the Grove before being acted upon.

Chapter Fourteen: On Dealing with Outsiders

1. Other Pagans should be treated as sisters and brothers.
2. Heretics are potential comrades; it is couth to talk to them.
3. Skeptics are fun; have several as friends.
4. Cynics are a plague; avoid them as such.
5. Fanatics are dangerous, for their hearts are closed.
6. Beware the tarbaby of experience.
7. Carry a long spoon wherever you go.
8. Be neither showy nor overly timid, but remember: nobody likes a missionary.
9. Be careful about seducing their children.
10. Be cautious in telling them unpleasant truths, especially about themselves.
11. Never expect them to live up to our standards.

Chapter Fifteen: On Study and Scholarship

1. When one or more laws are taken from the Mishmash, the accompanying commentaries read, and the matters involved debated with wit and grace, this is a *Hairpull.*
2. It is couth for Hairpull to last at least an hour on each occasion.
3. Hairpull should be done by every family at least once every Weekend.
4. It is couth for Hairpull to be done by an entire Grove after services.
5. It is also couth for a Grove to hold weekly Hairpull indoors during the Season of Sleep, instead of outdoor services.
6. Hairpull may take place at any other time between two or more Hasidic Druids, and this is also couth.
7. Every Grove should have a library where members may meet for study and Hairpull.
8. A scholar in the house is a blessing form the Gods; how much more blessed is the house where scholars meet!
9. If one is teaching the young or ignorant, or making ready to so teach, a scholar may be excused from many household duties.
10. Metaphysical gymnastics are uncouth, save when one is teaching their power, humor and danger.
11. It is not couth to divorce theory from action.
12. Once cannot be a scholar alone.
13. Plant an oak grove about the Mishmash.

Figure 1 SDNA conception of Dalon Ap Landu with an Acorn Cap, 1976.

The Te-Mara:

Commentaries on the Mish-Mash

1:1 A WAY OF LIFE: Here in the opening line of the Mishmash we have the major characteristic that distinguishes Hasidic Druidism among most religions, including the most Neopagan religions, for Hasidic Druidism is not merely a play in which one acts once a week or once a month, but an integral part of everyday life (Dru Chwerthin).

The major emphasis in this opening line of the Mishmash is that actions are more important than one's claimed beliefs, as it is stated in 2:2, and from the very beginning of the Mishmash we are reminded to put our thought and beliefs, our hopes and our faith, into action in our daily lives (Dru Amherghin).

1:2 AND ARE BINDING ON NO OTHERS: No moral aspersions are to be cast upon those who are not Hasidic Druids for not following our ways (the Ancients).

And yet we know that many of those who are not Hasidic Druids do very evil things, how then can the Ancients of Blessed Memory declare that "no moral aspersions are to be cast" upon them? They can say this because they are talking about calling someone evil or inferior merely because they are not Hasidic Druids, not about calling someone evil for committing acts of an evil nature (Dru Iolo).

This Law does not allow a Hasidic Druid to hire, persuade or coerce an Outsider into violating the Laws for the Druid's own profit or convenience: use of such a surrogate is as uncouth as if the Druid himself violated the Law (Dru Earl).

1:3 MAY BE MODIFIED: Hasidic Druidism is not a dogmatic belief system, but a living being, and as a living being, it must be free to grow (Dru Chwerthin).

But we must beware of allowing modifications to be made to easily. Necessity is one thing, excuses for laziness are quite another (Dru Amherghin).

An old folk-saying states: "A stupid wolf is afraid to fight the trap for fear of maiming himself. A smart wolf wins his freedom at the price of his foot. A wise wolf avoids the trap." Likewise the truly wise Druid plans his or her lifestyle and understands his or her social environment well enough to avoid having to compromise the principles of Druidism for reasons of survival, except in cases of rare and unforeseeable emergency (Dru Earl).

1:3 AN OAK TREE, NOT A STONE MONUMENT: We must always remember that the purpose of the Mishmash is to grow and to help us with our own growth. Therefore did the ancients state that it is like an oak tree, which grows ever greater as the years go by; rather than a stone monument, which never grows but merely crumbles as time passes (Dru Iolo).

This phrase is used to point out that the beliefs of many other religions are merely stone monuments to dead ideas, and have no meaning for current generations; therefore should we rejoice in the shelter of our ever growing, many-branched Mishmash (Dru Isaac).

However, the imagery of this Law should not be taken literally. An oak tree is entirely the creation of the Gods: a person may hatch it from the acorn, plant it, water and fertilize it but he or she did not design it and if one tires to prune and confine it to control the pattern of its growth, one only ends up stunting and distorting it. The Mishmash, while inspired by the Gods is also the work of human intellect, emotions and psychic faculties. To create an oak tree, the Gods work through the genetic programming inside the acorn-germ, the soil in which it grows, climactic factors, etc. To create the Mishmash, the Gods have chosen to work through the human mind, and every wise Druid should concentrate on this Gods-given responsibility whenever contemplating or commenting on the Mishmash (Dru Earl).

2:1 THE MULTIVERSE: Every possible combination of every possible universe with every other one, when conceived as a Whole, is the Multiverse (the Ancients).

Every alternate probability universe that can be constructed by every possible combination of every existing particle of energy, exists (Dru Hixson).

IS VERY LARGE: However this does not mean "infinite" in the sense of "nothing is true, all is permissible." Multiplicity does not mean chaos, nor free will anarchy. The vast number of choices open to the individual at every turning point of his or her life does not render choosing meaningless (Dru Earl).

Dru Earl is speaking through his acorn-cap, for Chaos, like Order, is an integral part of the Multiverse. Neither is meaningful without the other, nor very much fun (Dru Eris).

2:2 LIFESTYLE IS MORE IMPORTANT: The actual relationship between lifestyle and credo is that between the map and the territory, or between the recipe and the stew in the pot. Lifestyle is "more important" only in the sense that it has physical and operational reality, while credo has only theoretical reality. For this reason, the wise Druid contemplates and comments on the Mishmash in terms of its application to the lives of Hasidic Druids not merely in sterile words and ideas for their own sake (Dru Earl).

The emphasis in this Law is that we should always "practice what we preach," unlike those around us in other religions who are all too often hypocritical (Dru Iolo).

For hypocrisy is the sign of one who is a liar, or coward, or unimaginative (Dru Amherghin).

If one does not truly believe in the religion one professes, then the honorable person changes religion, so that he or she may follow the lifestyle deemed authentic rather than attempting to present the Image of what one really is not (Dru Chwerthin).

Yet sometimes one is prevented, by poverty or by other tyranny, from exercising one's faith in public. Surely the Ancients of Blessed Memory did not intend that we should make ourselves martyrs, for we have plenty of those in recent centuries (Dru Isaac).

But one should be very careful in how much one pleads poverty as an excuse. Many poor people of other religions manage to lead authentic lifestyles, though it is not always easy (Dru Iolo).

2:3 INTENT IS MORE IMPORTANT: The purpose of this Law is to remind us that winning is not of as great a moral value (although it may be higher on other value scales, such as survival) as a sincere effort (Dru Isaac).

This Law is to indicate that a person who accomplishes a worthy goal through unworthy means, or an unworthy goal through means that are normally worthy ones has acted in an uncouth manner (Dru Iolo).

It is easier to forgive a dufus who means well than one who is truly evil, even if their actions create identical results (Dru Amherghin).

The purpose of this Law is to discourage Druids form compromising or discarding a worthy goal merely because it is

difficult or impossible for imperfect humans to achieve. It is *not* intended to excuse uncouth conduct by saying "the ends justify the means." Anytime the results of one's conduct do not turn out as intended, one should carefully examine both the goal itself and the methods on employed trying to achieve it. In many cases, one will find ways to improve either or both. If not, then this Law applies, and one should persevere. However, if Druids whose wisdom one respects disagree with one, this is a case where one should listen to them even more carefully than usual, because this Law deals with one of the most important aspects of practical morality (Dru Earl).

This means, as well, that we should try not to be harsh in our judgments of the conduct of others, until we know both their goals and their methods (Dru Isaac).

2:4 PEOPLE ARE MORE IMPORTANT: This Law goes against the entire history of Western Civilization and marks a basic difference between Pagans and nonpagans (the Ancients).

What the Ancients of Blessed Memory are obliquely referring to is Capitalism (Dru Karl).

What the Ancients of Blessed Memory are really referring to is Christianity. (Dru Iolo).

What's the difference? (Dru Chwerthin).

THAN PROPERTY: In the context of this verse, what is meant is personal property, the material things used and directly controlled by one individual or group. It does *not* mean that the whole material world is less important than a single human life. Therefore, it is couth to treat people who advocate or practice wholesale destruction of material property, especially the destruction of non-sentient living beings and disruption of the ecology, the same as one treats those who advocate or practice the destruction of human beings (Dru Earl).

2:5 DISCIPLINE: What is meant here is the control one exercises over oneself, not that imposed by another. Therefore, discipline can never be an excuse for uncouth activity (Dru Amherghin).

IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN CONTROL: A better translation of this verse reads "Self-Discipline is more important than obedience." A wise Druid is one who knows the proper rules for living and obeys them as they apply to his or her life, without having to be compelled to do so by either written laws or the words of others. The Mishmash is intended to guide, not to serve as an excuse for coercion,. Conversely, a Druid who finds oneself in frequent and serious disagreement with other members of the one's Druid community over the rules governing the Druish way of life should consider leaving one's present community and joining or founding another which interprets the Mishmash in such a way that one can obey it without coercion (Dru Earl).

2:6 SURVIVAL: In a world of hate and mistrust, Druids, like all other minority religions, must consider the real possibility that, persecution and genocide never being far from the minds of the monotheists, we may one day once again have to go underground in order to preserve our lives and our faiths (the Ancients).

Even without religious persecution, Western Civilization is currently in such a political and economic mess that we may all, Druid, and non-Druid alike, find ourselves without the facilities with which to live in the manner to which we, like most soft Westerners, have become accustomed. Therefore, it is wise for Druids to know how to farm, and how to live off the land, and how to defend themselves form both human and nonhuman predators (Dru Isaac).

IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN COMFORT: This law is intended to discourage laziness and timidity in planning for and overcoming adversities. It does not advocate the Spartan ideals of austerity. The best medicine is not always the one that tastes the worst, but the one that cures the disease best, regardless of what it tastes like. The wise Druid put survival first, but he or she always considers comfort as well, and above all, tries to develop "common sense" (Dru Earl).

Common sense is "neither very common, nor usually very sensible (Dru Chwerthin).

2:7 CREATION IS BETTER: The wise Druid always proposes a solution to a problem at the same time he or she calls attention to the problem itself. However, it is not uncouth to merely identify the problem if one genuinely does not have a solution oneself. But in such a circumstance the praise goes mostly to those wiser ones who eventually solve the problem (Dru Earl).

2:8 DESTRUCTION IS BETTER: It should never be forgotten that the forces of breakdown are as important as those of building, in producing the balance of the Multiverse. Without the bodies of dead plants and animals to feed the soil, the biosphere would soon be impoverished. Therefore, did the Ancients of Blessed Memory remind us that it is better to destroy that which is in need of destruction, rather than merely complaining about it (Dru Iolo).

The Law is interpreted by many as meaning "Never call attention to a problem unless you genuinely want action taken to solve it" (Dru Earl).

2:9 UNITY IS BETTER: As Dru Earl once said, "free will does not mean anarchy." Therefore, one should realize that Druids are a community and that open and free discussion is to be aimed at attaining a consensus, not at merely giving everyone a chance to declare their independence. The differences between argument and discussion should always be remembered (Dru Amherghin).

This verse should never be cited to discourage dissent. It is only intended to point out Unity as a worthwhile goal. In practice, unity is normally reached only after hearing dissent and making changes to bring the dissenters into agreement. The Law also *encourages* each individual to make compromises in order to achieve unity, but it does not compel. Above all, the wise Druid realizes that a rule that causes a significant amount of dissent among members of the community is probably an oversimplification and probably should be made more complex to fit reality (Dru Earl).

The purpose of this Law is to point out that spiritual growth is hard to achieve while arguing at the tope of one's lungs about the rules for achieving spiritual growth (Dru Iolo).

2:10 INDIVIDUALITY IS BETTER: Among every Branch of the Reform, individuality has always been sacred. Therefore, let every Druid in your community be free to express herself or himself as a unique person (the Ancients)

The wise Druid never does anything simply because others do it - she or he merely does what she or he thinks and feels is right. If others think and feel likewise, this is couth. If they don't this is every bit as couth. Though Hasidic Druids are expected to live in close association with one another, this association is expected to be entirely voluntary and not on coercion of any kind. Druidism is basically a religion of the individual, not of the group (Dru Earl).

Just as in group singing, a certain amount of counterpoint can add to the beauty of the final result, but too much or too little can ruin everything (Dru Chwerthin).

2:11 RESPONSIBILITY: The wise Druid takes responsibility for his or her own actions; he or she does not wait for others to point it out. However, it is not uncouth for any Druid to tell another that his or her actions displease or harm one (Dru Earl).

Druids are responsible for taking action when needed., whether requested or not, for they are guided by their sense of honor and their sense of that which is couth (Dru Iolo).

IS BETTER THAN BLAME: Blame is only rarely of any lasting value. When an error has been made, the person or persons, if any , responsible for the failure should be discovered, and the problem carefully examined with a view to preventing future mistakes, not to punishing anyone or to making them feel bad (Dru Isaac).

It is the function of the elders of the Grove to assign responsibilities for the achieving of various projects, and they have the right and duty to point out malfeasance or nonfeasance. They do not have the right or duty to browbeat people who fail to keep their commitments, especially if through no fault of their own (Dru Amherghin).

Once again, there is a narrow bridge to cross, with the problems of discipline often on one side and the problems of freedom on the other (Dru Iolo).

2:12 REMORSE IS BETTER: A more literal translation of this phrase would be: "intellectual recognition of one's wrongdoing is better than an emotional reaction to it" (Dru Earl).

Yet the emotional element is very important in making sure that the wrongdoer remembers her or his wrongdoings (Dru Iolo).

THAN GUILT: Guilt is the major emotion behind monotheistic religions. Therefore do Druids refrain from laying "guilt-trips": on either themselves or others. If they make a mistake, they admit it, make amends, and resolve not to do it again. They do not whine and moan and grovel before vengeful deities, either external or internalized (Dru Amherghin).

Once as a general rule, the Gods are not vengeful (unless on deliberately insults Them). They usually prefer to let one reap the results of one's actions. This can be more than sufficient (Dru Chwerthin).

This Law that guilt is a lesser emotion than remorse is designed to make an emphasis on the repairing of damage caused. If one breaks a vase at a friend's house, one feels remorse for one's clumsiness and attempt to repair or replace the vase. One does not run to a member of the Druid clergy or to the Gods and beg forgiveness for having been evil (Dru Isaac).

As a general rule, Druids tend to make dumb mistakes rather than an emotional or spiritual reaction is usually more appropriate (Dru Iolo).

2:13 SENSUALITY IS BETTER: This is one of the most basic principles of Hasidic Druidism, and one that serves to separate it from other non-pagan religions. At the heart of this Law is the realization that gratification of our Gods-given senses is natural and pleasing to the Gods, and that denial of such gratification is, as a general rule, sterile and anti-life. This Law reduces asceticism to a mere survival aid (when sensual gratification would harm the individual or others) and as an aid in training the will (Dru Earl).

From Dru Earl's comment, it follows that "ascetic pleasures" (enjoyment of denying sensual gratification) is masochistic, displeasing to the Gods and, hence, uncouth. One obvious exception to this rule, however, is the deliberate delaying of sensual pleasure to achieve the equally pleasurable sensation of anticipation: this is no more masochistic than the memory of past sensual pleasure (Dru Iolo).

It should also be remembered that if sensual pleasures are interfering with the performance of honorable duties, it is uncouth to continue with them until after one's duties are properly discharged (Dru Iolo).

The delay of gratification is also sometimes needed in order to accomplish said gratification fully. For example it is often wise to remain celibate for several days before an orgy is to take place. Such celibacy is not ascetic nor is it masochistic (Dru Chwerthin).

However, there are a number of deities around Who serve to remind us that asceticism, in proper proportion, may be genuine value in achieving spiritual awareness. It is certainly often useful in psychic training (Dru Isaac).

2:14 LOVE IS BETTER: Many religions preach love, yet few seem to practice it. Because Druids believe in expressing love freely and in a variety of manners, they tend to accomplish a loving lifestyle more easily than those who are restricted to "spiritual vs. fleshly" love (the Ancients).

As it is written "the act and emotion of love is an act and emotion of praise." Therefore, to a Druid, every opportunity to exercise Pagan Charity is a new chance to praise the Gods and to expand one's awareness of the complexity of one's fellow humans (Dru Amherghin).

Pagan Charity is a sense of compassion exercised by Pagans towards others, based upon the Pagan realization that, although everyone is God/dess, no one is perfect, and therefore, inhuman virtues are not expected of them (Dru Isaac).

THAN HATE: Druids are capable of realizing that others mean them harm, but they do not need to be hostile in return. They make the necessary preparations to defend themselves (if any are really needed) and attempt to avoid those who are or would do evil to them. But they do not become vindictive (Dru Amherghin).

This Law should not, however, be interpreted as "love your enemies." The wise Druid manages his or her life so as to love many and hate few, but he or she does it by controlling who he or she associates with as much as possible. One does not force oneself to try to love those who deserve one's hate: one tries to change their conduct so that one no longer has to hate them, one avoids them, or one destroys them. But one never changes oneself so that one loves those one should hate: such is uncouth (Dru Earl).

It is an important question, whether or not one "should" ever hate another. Better it is to concentrate on understanding others, for this often removes any perceived need for hate (Dru Amherghin).

Yet many people there are who do hateful things: mass-murderers, kidnappers, polluters, brainwashers, etc. it can be difficult to retain a nonhateful attitude towards such, especially if one is committed (as all Druids should be) to the stopping of such people. One does not hate a rabid dog, one cures it or kills it (Dru Iolo).

Hate is usually based on fear. To one who is without fear, hate is an unnecessary emotion that can be profitably done without (Dru Chwerthin).

2:15 CAUTION IS BETTER: A more literal translation of this Law reads: "Intellectual recognition of danger is superior to emotional reaction to it" (Dru Earl).

Caution is rational , fear is non-rational. And because fear so often leads to evil actions, it is best that it be avoided whenever possible (Dru Isaac).

THAN FEAR: Fear is an unruly animal, though sometimes a useful one. Ride this mount carefully, with tight reins (Dru Amherghin).

Nothing can endanger the one who knows the Flow, for death has no place to enter that person (Dru Lao).

2:16 COURAGE IS BETTER: Druids are expected to be brave in the defense of their lives and ideals, and in defense of the innocent and helpless (Dru Iolo).

They are not expected to be stupid, however. Rather, they are expected to be wise in the ways in which they face danger, and to know when to be sneaky instead of obvious. Thus Druids never seek out danger, but are fully able to deal with it when it arrives (Dru Amherghin).

2:17 KNOWLEDGE IS BETTER: Druids place great emphasis upon the attainment of knowledge, both rational and nonrational and are flexible in their methods of learning (Dru Amherghin).

They are not, however, gullible (Dru Iolo).

2:18 SELF-KNOWLEDGE: From the earliest days, our ancestors have stressed the importance of self-knowledge. For how can one hope to help oneself or others if one does not first know and understand oneself? An accurate idea of one's strengths and weaknesses is of far more value than mere vanity, for it allows one to live with one's faults while cherishing one's virtues (Dru Amherghin).

IS BETTER THAN PRIDE: More Pagans (and other people) have met their downfall through pride than through any other emotion. Yet the Mishmash does not say that pride is evil, merely that it is inferior to self-knowledge. Therefore, we can assume that they meant that pride is not a danger when held by one who has true self-knowledge. However, this is an extremely rare combination, occurring in less than one in a hundred of those who think they have achieved it (Dru Chwerthin).

2:19 WISDOM IS BETTER: How many time have the Ancients of Blessed Memory, as well as the many distinguished commentators on the Mishmash, reminded us of the value of wisdom? How many times does a commentary begin "the wise Druid will...?" Therefore, let us seek always after wisdom, for with it come all the elements of the happy and noble life (Dru Amherghin).

THAN KNOWLEDGE: Druids and others are well aware of the horrors capable of being committed by those who accumulate knowledge is isolation, without wisdom. Therefore, do we look with distrust upon those who claim to be seeking knowledge for its own sake (Dru Iolo).

2:20 HONESTY IS BETTER: This is obvious to all Druids for, being polytheists, we have no need to twist the truth in order to match an irrational and insane worldview. Because we are gentle with one another, we are free to tell the truth, and we know that our fellow Druids will take our words into consideration together with our intentions (Dru Chwerthin).

Why does Dru Chwerthin refer to Druids as "gentle with one another" in a discussion on honesty? He does so to say that, because Druids have an accurate idea of human nature, rather than that which he calls "irrational and insane," we are able to communicate with a maximum amount of trust and a minimal need for deception (Dru Isaac).

THAN DECEIT: The superiority of honesty should not be taken as a forbidding of deceit. There are times in one's life when less damage will be done in the long run by a carefully constructed tale of less than total accuracy than a bald statement of fact (Dru Amherghin).

It is important to note that Dru Amherghin refers to "in the long run." Druids always attempt to have a long-range view of matters, for such is a cardinal sign of wisdom (Dru Iolo).

One must be very careful in choosing the situations when one will allow oneself to lie, such should not normally be done for one's own benefit (it is better usually to face the consequences of one's own actions) but rather for the benefit of others. Only if one's life is in danger, or a similar emergency situation exists, should one feel free to lie (Dru Isaac).

If one is besieged by the Antidruid, however, one may perform any deceits necessary to throw them off the track, as long as they do not harm innocent people. Any other position would be anti-survival (Dru Chwerthin)

2:21 HONOR IS BETTER: There is nothing wrong with a sense of honor. Arrogance, however, is a plague upon the earth and will be punished by the Gods (the Ancients).

Honor should be flexible and sensible, however it should not interfere with your spiritual growth, but rather assist it (Dru Amherghin).

2:22 PEACE IS BETTER: All Druids are lovers of peace, although they can fight (and quite well) when absolutely necessary. It is very difficult to attain enlightenment while ducking spears and bullets (Dru Chwerthin).

THAN WAR: We are , however, perfectly capable of fighting for our survival. As mentioned in 7:3, though, Druids are extremely selective in which wars they choose to fight (Dru Isaac).

2:23 JOY IS BETTER: Our is a religion of joy, of love and of sensuality. The Earth-Mother is good and the natural world is to be enjoyed. Any Gods who would prefer us to be morose are not worth worshipping (Dru Iolo).

THAN SORROW: Once in a while, sorrow is an appropriate emotion, as at the death of a loved one (Dru Amherghin).

But sorrow should be limited in duration, for although millions of living beings, from insects to humans, die every day, Life goes on (Dru Isaac).

2:27 TRUST IS BETTER: Trust is not always rational, but in the long run, the trusting person has a more enjoyable life than the cynical one (the Ancients).

As is implied in 14:4, cynics destroy everything they touch. Therefore, we should avoid cynicism and take the risk of trusting one another (Dru Amherghin).

2:29 GOOD WORKS ARE BETTER: As is written in the commentary to 2:2, Druids believe in practicing what they preach. It is better to actually perform a small task, if promised, than to promise a large task and not follow through (Dru Isaac).

Often it is added, that "evil promises are better than evil works." This phrase, strange as it sounds, was actually intended to invoke charity towards those who promise all sorts of dire vengeance upon persons and objects annoying them, but who never actually do anything about them. Such is a moderately harmless habit, though not a praiseworthy one (Dru Iolo)

3:1 FOUND TO BE FATAL: An ancient proverb states, "One person's meat is another person's poison." Therefore, it is the individual's responsibility to determine what food or drink is harmful to him or her personally, and to avoid them with a minimum interference with the diets of the other members of the household (Dru Earl).

A food or drink found to be fatal to some, but generally healthful, shall not be declared uncouth. Else those with allergies or dietary peculiarities would easily impose tyrannies on the majority of Hasidic Druids (Dru Margola).

Poison ivy, poison oak, poison sumac and other poisonous plants are thus uncouth and may not be consumed in injurious amounts nor used as sacrifices in rituals (the Ancients).

The Ancients of Blessed Memory were careful to state that poisonous plants may not be consumed "in injurious amounts. " This is because many plants, though not of course the three mentioned, while poisonous in large amounts are actually of medicinal or ritual use in smaller quantities (Dru Isaac).

Food or drink containing more than five unpronounceable artificial ingredients should be considered uncouth (Dru Iolo).

The number 5 is purely symbolic and ties in with the Law of Fives. The earlier versions of Dru Iolo's comments leave out the word "unpronounceable." And this older versions seems more correct, for the true emphasis should rest on the artificiality of the ingredients. The point to be made is: the more artificial, the more uncouth (Dru Margola).

A less literal, but more readily understandable translation of Dru Iolo's comment would read, "Food or drink containing an excessive number of highly artificial ingredients shall be considered uncouth." Even so, it remains vague. Therefore, it is up to the individual to determine if a particular food or drink is uncouth to his or her own taste and metabolism (Dru Earl).

SHALL BE DECLARED UNCOUTH: in this verse we have the first and definitive definition of the word "Uncouth." Those things which are uncouth are to avoided exactly as if they were poisonous food or drink and, contrarily, those things which are couth should be sought after as if they were ambrosia and nectar to be consumed in ecstasy (the Ancients).

The term "uncouth" is used frequently in the Mishmash and form the basic term of definition for behavior not acceptable to Hasidic Druids. The definition offered in this verse is literally "found to be fatal." However, this raises problems. Is the inability to compose poems, songs or blessings for any occasion literally fatal to a Hasidic Druid, as it is stated in 10:1? Obviously, this cannot be so. The Ancients of Blessed Memory have said "those things which are uncouth are to be avoided exactly as *If* they were poisonous food or drink..." This explication of the definition of the word "uncouth" is the solution to our difficulties. We are told that things which are uncouth, such as those mentioned in 10:11, 13:3, etc., are as *if* poisonous, that is to say, harmful to the life of the individual concerned. Thus we can see that anything that a Hasidic Druid shall find harmful to his/her life, physical or mental shall be deemed uncouth for that person (Dru Lew).

3:3 THE FLESH AND BLOOD: This includes all other parts of a sentient being as well. Therefore various products made from the bodies of sentient beings are also uncouth and should not be purchased nor used (Dru Chwerthin).

OF SENTIENT BEINGS: this includes not only humans, but whales, dolphins, other cetaceans, and some would say elephants as well. Naturally extraterrestrial visitors would be included as well (Dru Isaac).

The prohibition by Dru Isaac of the flesh and blood of "whales, dolphins, other cetaceans and... elephants" is based on spiritual rather than purely physical grounds: on the fact that the proscribed creatures are believed by many, including Dru Isaac, to be sentient beings and not because their flesh is unwholesome. Therefore, the individual may add any creature whose spiritual qualities he or she especially reveres (i.e., "Taboo Animals") to the list. However, such additions are binding only on the individual making them, although common courtesy impels all devout Hasidic Druids not to ostentatiously violate the personal taboos of members of their household or others around them (Dru Earl).

It is sometimes necessary to expand this prohibition even further, for example, many refuse to eat the flesh of tuna, because many dolphins are killed in the pursuit of tuna fish, and dolphins are uncouth to eat. In a similar fashion, others refuse to deal economically with those nations who pursue and kill cetaceans, and this is certainly a couth attitude. Yet it is a pity that one cannot refuse to purchase products from nations that regularly kill another endangered sentient species, humans (Dru Iolo).

AND MAY NOT BE CONSUMED: Historically there have been exceptions to this rule; the eating of Michael Valentine Smith, for example. We can conclude that a truly willing sacrifice is an exception, and therefore couth (Dru Margola)

That is a very dangerous thing to say, for our Paleopagan ancestors were not always careful in deciding who was truly willing and who was not. Better it is to say that a person who dies in an unexpected manner, that is, not in a sacrifice, and who insists upon being eaten by his or her friends as a memorial service, then has flesh and blood that is neither couth nor uncouth (Dru Amherghin).

4:1 SEX IS A GIFT OF THE GODS: Unlike most religions, including some Neopagan ones, Hasidic Druidism positively encourages its members to have full, varied sex lives (Dru Chwerthin).

4:2 PHYSIOLOGICALLY DANGEROUS: Thus there are many sexual "perversion" that are forbidden, not because they are unusual methods of sexual gratification, but because they are capable to causing physical harm to one or more of the participants (Dru Amherghin).

It is couth to interrupt others who are engaged in a sexual activity that might be dangerous, only long enough to determine whether or not it really is dangerous. If, indeed, the activity may damage one of the partners physically, it should not be resumed , and the interrupter is justified in using violence to prevent this, subject to the principles in 7:2 and 7:4. If it turns out that precautions have been taken of a sufficient nature, the activity should be allowed to resume and no apologies are necessary. (Dru Chwerthin).

OR IMPOSSIBLE: Druids are not expected to be sexual athletes. On the other hand, sexual acts that are truly impossible will not usually be attempted (Dru Iolo).

4:3 COERCION: The purpose of this Law is to prevent the use of sexual desire to manipulate others, as well as to prevent other forms of manipulation from being used to force sexual compliance. Naturally, therefore, all forms of sexual blackmail, assault, rape and the secretive use of physical or psychic aphrodisiacs are forbidden (Dru Iolo).

4:4 AGE: Beings, human and nonhuman, of any age are entitled to obtain any form of nondestructive sexual pleasure they may desire, with any partner desired, provided proper sexual etiquette is followed and all participants have a proper understanding of what is going on (Dru Chwerthin).

The opinions of others, whether parents, siblings, children or friends, are not always relevant, although their feelings should be taken into consideration (Dru Iolo).

However, if a prospective sexual partner is a human below the age of legal consent, it is usually foolish to ignore objections lodged by family members or law enforcement agencies (Dru Amherghin).

Nonetheless, children of any age are entitled to learn as much about sex as they wish to learn and are capable of handling, from whoever they wish as teachers. The best people for the teaching role are, of course, the parents. In any event, the parents should normally be consulted and their wishes followed (Dru Isaac).

It is the duty of all Druish parents, or others having responsibility for the welfare of children, to see to it that their children are sexually educated as soon as they are interested and willing, by whoever the children wish. If the children have no preferences and the parents or guardians have no preferences and the parents or guardians choose not to play the role of teachers, they should select a member of the community to perform that function (Dru Chwerthin).

Elderly people are also entitled to sexual satisfaction and this should not be forgotten (Dru Amherghin).

SPECIES: If beings not universally regarded as "sentient" are used as sexual partners, the person doing so must accord them all the rights (though not necessarily the responsibilities and obligations) of a human or other sentient being (Dru Earl).

Following the Law mentioned in 4:2, it is best to make sure beforehand that any sexual partner of another species will not be physically damage by his or her participation in sexual activities (Dru Iolo)

If the being concerned is of a nature to be owned by another person, it is usually uncouth to engage in sexual activities with him or her without the owner's knowledge (Dru Chwerthin).

It should be pointed out that sexual contacts between humans and nonhumans is usually illegal and carries a stiff penalty almost everywhere (Dru Amherghin).

OR SEXUAL PERSUASION: There are no Laws either forbidding or requiring Hasidic Druids to have any particular sexual tastes, although straight adult heterosexual behavior is the norm. Homosexuality, Bisexuality, Autosexuality, Bestiality and other nondestructive preferences are completely up to the parties involved (Dru Amherghin).

Autoeroticism, in the major form of masturbation, is indeed to be encouraged among those beneath the age of legal consent for personal sexual interaction, for otherwise we shall raise warped children (Dru Chwerthin).

It should be considered a perfectly acceptable outlet for adults, and no shame or ridicule should be placed upon those who, for their own good reasons, may choose this outlet (Dru Iolo).

Although if it is their exclusive outlet, they may be in need of counseling and perhaps some aggressive flirtation from another member of the community (Dru Isaac).

SAVE WHERE DANGER: It should never be forgotten that we live in a Death culture where opinions of the sort offered above can, even without being put into action, be the cause of great physical violence and legal harassment being directed at those holding them. Therefore, Druids are urged to be extremely cautious in discussing these matters with outsiders. The advice given in 14:9 should be taken to heart and these mores followed only within the community, or much grief will come to us all (Dru Iolo).

4:5 ALL BONDED PARTNERS: It is important to note that the original wording does not refer to couples at all, but to any group of two or more sentient beings (Dru Earl).

(IF DESIRED): This phrase is not to be forgotten, for otherwise strict observance of this rule would lead to violations of 4:3 (Dru Taliroth).

Dru Taliroth who was, after all, asexual for large portions of her life, was very wise to see that this phrase was give due attention; for many are the cases where members of bonded groups do not wish frequent sexual satisfaction (Dru Margola).

Although this phase exists to remind members of bonded groups that they should satisfy their partners regularly, it should not be used to beat them over the head with (Dru Chwerthin).

OR ARRANGE FOR SURROGATE PARTNERS: A wise and loving member of a bonded group, who is not himself or herself feeling like sexual activity, should be happy to arrange for other members of the group to achieve satisfaction, with other parties if not with himself and herself (Dru Iolo).

The wise Druid does not seek to enforce this verse upon his or her partners, preferring instead to politely and unobtrusively seek sexual satisfaction elsewhere whenever he or she feels it appropriate (Dru Earl).

Yet one must be careful in going outside the group, for many jealousies and destructive emotions are generated in this fashion. True, one has the right as stated in the very next verse, but nonetheless, if that right has to be invoked often it is perhaps time to look for a new group with which to be bonded (Dru Isaac).

4:6 TO FORBID OR HINDER: However, practical matters of a nonsexual or nonpossessive nature may be brought up as objection (Dru Iolo).

4:7 THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL: Thus it is highly uncouth to expect only the women in the group to worry about contraception (Dru Chwerthin).

4:8 NO GENDER: Whether female, male, or anything in between (Dru Amherghin).

IS SUPERIOR: Obviously, this refers to sweeping statements of total superiority. Obviously there are some areas (such as childbirth) where one gender will have an advantage over the other, but this should never be expended to cover unrelated matters (Dru Isaac).

4:9 OR REFRAIN FROM ANY ACTIVITY DISLIKED: The use of one's gender as an excuse to avoid responsibility for the performance of honorable duties is uncouth, as are unfounded accusations that someone else is doing this (Dru Amherghin).

5:1 TO BE WASTED: Blood is not to be removed excessively from food, as it is the gift of the animal's spirit to us (Dru David).

5:4 IN EQUAL AND HONORABLE COMBAT, OR IN A GENUINE ACCIDENT, OR IN A FULLY NATURAL DISASTER: In the event of these occurrences, the victor, the victim or a bystander may declare the spilled blood to be a sacrifice and direct its energies as desired (Dru Isaac).

5:6 MENSTRUAL PERIODS: It would seem fitting that an acknowledgment of the continual renewal of seed in the body of woman, celebration, rather than the traditional taboo, should be the order of dealing with this matter. Accordingly, the following is recommended: the father of a girl who begins menstruation should, as close as possible to the day when this event occurs, give a feast for the Grove at which, after drinking of wine and much merriment, reading and study should be given to material concerning the renewal of life and the continual cleansing and growth of all living things. At this time also it would seem fitting that the girl be initiated into the Women's Mysteries of the Grove and, if she be not already deflowered, that this be arranged by the women of the Grove (Dru David).

This is a truly inspired tradition, and one that could no doubt be set up as a complement to a similar puberty feast and initiation for boys, as soon as they have had their first flow of semen (Dru Chwerthin).

5:7 BECAUSE OF THEIR PERIOD: It is not uncouth to place restrictions upon women who are having their periods, if the restriction is only indirectly connected (or not at all connected) with the fact that they are having their periods (Dru Iolo).

One needs to be very careful in what one calls an "indirect" connection, for males have placed some very uncouth restrictions upon females throughout history, due to male myths of the effects of menstruation. However one example of a fair restriction is this: women who are, because of their periods or for any other reason, feeling nervous, hostile, weak or depressed should refrain from participating in group rituals; as said emotions may generate psychic static and disrupt the smooth flow of energies in the rituals (Dru Chwerthin).

It is vital to note that the restriction mentioned by Dru Chwerthin is equally appropriate for any men or children who may be feeling the same negative emotions, of any reason (Dru Amherghin).

It is perhaps unfair to restrict menstruating women who are having a rough period from all group rituals, better it is that the women of each Grove, as part of their Women's Mysteries, compose proper rituals to help such individuals (Dru Isaac).

6:Title ON GROOMING: What do these words mean in the title of this Chapter? Grooming is what monkeys do to one another in order to remove lice. It is indeed thorough, but should the Druish Hasidim be clean only on the outside? In my humble opinion, a title like "Hygiene among the Hasids" is more appropriate than the present one. Druids should be clean and presentable in spirit as well as bodies, for is not cleanliness next to godliness? And should Druids, though they be natural creatures, be thought of as lousy as well? (Dru Tefillen).

The Ancients of Blessed Memory chose wisely this title, not only because it implies that Hasidic Druids take care of one another, as do baboons, chimpanzees and many other of the higher primates; but because "good grooming" has always been a sign of sociability and Drues are nothing if not sociable. The implication is a subtle one, but there nonetheless: Hasidic Druids are responsible for the external cleanliness (Physical, mental and emotional) of one another, as well as the internal (Dru Iolo).

Considering how intimate Hasidic Druids tend to get with each other, physically as well as otherwise, it is good indeed that this chapter is entitled as it is. Druids are expected to keep one another clean, not only of lice, but of nay other diseases or plagues that might interfere with the health and happiness of the community (Dru Isaac).

However, the only louse-y element that is common among Hasidic Druids would appear to be their puns (Dru Chwerthin).

6:1 WHETHER THEY NEED IT OR NOT: What determines need? Perhaps a particular standard of need should be set? Do Druids need to have a weekly bath in the event that they are bedridden or hospitalized? In this case, can perhaps five consecutive bed-baths equal one regular bath? Should a bath be taken more than once a week in the event that the Druid in question is attracting gnats? (Dru Tefillen).

This Law was first enacted when it was found that Hasidic Druids, being enthusiastic children of the Earth-Mother, have a tendency to accumulate large quantities of soil, peat, compost and other earthy elements over large portions of our bodies. This has a tendency to interfere with their social and other intercourses (Dru Amherghin).

Considering the manner in which Dru Tefillen and other Hasidic Druids are most often bedridden, tub baths at even more frequent intervals are to be advised, lest the frequency mentioned in 6:2 have to be increased as well (Dru Iolo).

Although she has been known to keep a delightfully effective flytrap in her bedroom (being an advocate as most Druids are, of natural methods of predator control), I hear that is Dru Tefillen herself who is attracting, or at least straining after, gnats in this question (Dru Chwerthin).

6:2 WHETHER THEY NEED IT OR NOT: Let us set limits and define need where the cleaning of bedding is involved. Do we wash our sheets once a month if perhaps we have been on vacation and didn't sleep on the bedding but perhaps a week or so? This does not seem ecologically minded, and thus is not Druish. ON the other hand, it is not hygienic to sleep on filthy, bacteria coated sheets, so can bedding be laundered more than once monthly if desired and necessary? If not, why not? (Dru Tefillen).

Once again Dru Tefillen has concerned herself with a subject close to her heart: dirty bed sheets. Her concern is not only as a healer and as a Druish scholar, but also as one who enthusiastically produces many rumpled sheets in urgent need of cleaning. Therefore, her expertise in this field should be given much weight, for she represents the cream of scholarship in such matters (Dru Isaac).

One reason traditionally given for this Law has to do with the cycles of the Moon. Not only is laundry often easier to clean at certain times of the month, it often need cleaning most at monthly intervals (Dru Taliroth).

6:9 IN THE VISIBLE SPECTRUM: This would seem to forbid the use of white robes at Druid services, a shocking interpretation, as well as of black robes, which are usually discouraged in any event (Dru Chwerthin).

This Law was ordained by the ancient Dru Scholomocha, in order to end the barbaric racial customs of the period. In our day, black and white are permitted, though it is well to de-emphasize their use (Dru Margola).

6:10 IS OPTIONAL: However, matters of both health and legality should be carefully considered before going nude into the out of doors (Dru Iolo).

It should be expected by all concerned that skyclad activities, including rituals, are liable to lead to uprisings by the males in the Grove. Since this is a sign of Life, it should not be considered either blasphemous or inappropriate (Dru Chwerthin).

7:1 ALL ARE ENCOURAGED: Since this rule uses the phrase "are encouraged" rather than "required," it is not considered uncouth to refrain from wearing a weapon at all times (Dru Earl).

Weapons are worn for many reasons, including the following: to honor the Gods of Battle, Who are the Slayers of Demons; to provide ritual weapons for religious and magical uses; to declare our willingness to defend our lives, our honor, the honor of the Gods (although They are usually quite capable of defending Themselves) and our way of life (Dru Amherghin).

They are also worn to remind us of the disciplines of the honorable Warrior and the necessity of restraint at all times (Dru Iolo).

AND TO KNOW HOW TO USE: Common sense and a concern for personal survival dictate that it is a definitely uncouth to carry any weapon in public that one does not know how to use (Dru Earl).

7:2 AN ABSOLUTE MINIMUM: When retreat will prevent unnecessary bloodshed, it is uncouth to attack (Dru Amherghin).

One may kill another only to prevent gross bodily injury or death to oneself or another innocent party (Dru Chwerthin).

7:3 NECESSARY TO ONE'S PERSONAL SURVIVAL: Wars, therefore, that are fought over economic, political or ideological matters are not usually just (Dru Iolo).

Especially in economic conflicts should one remember verse 2:4, and be not fooled (Dru Isaac).

7:4 TO PROTECT ONESELF: This Law includes the right to defend oneself from all forms of sexual assault, whether heterosexual or homosexual (Dru Chwerthin).

One should remember the Law in 7:2, however, and not overreact to minor sexual harassment. Breaking a leg or arm is usually sufficient (Dru Isaac).

It should be emphasized that males also have the right to protect themselves from sexual assault, whether from other males or from females (Dru Iolo).

As mentioned in Dru Chwerthin's comment on 4:2, any Druid is ethically required to interfere with a sexual assault against a woman, man, child or animal (though in the last case one would not usually kill over the mater). However, it is always wise to make sure that an actual assault is under way and not merely a rough session of foreplay (Dru Amherghin).

7:5 ARE EXCUSED: However, members of the pacifist's household and the Druish community at large are under no strict obligation to use violence in his or her defense (Dru Earl).

An exception to this opinion would be found in matters of sexual assault or injury, which are sins against the God and the entire community, and must therefore be halted in all circumstances (Dru Isaac).

8:3 IT IS COUTH: It is not uncouth to refrain from doing so, but it's not very nice either (Dru Chwerthin).

Besides, one can never tell when a supposed animal is a deity in disguise (Dru Amherghin).

8:7 LOVE: This means that one should be knowledgeable in the fields of ecology and woodcraft, for one cannot love that which is unknown to one (Dru Iolo).

9:2 A GIFT OF THE GODS: The ability to divine that which is hidden is a sign of holiness, but it is only one possible sign among many (Dru Amherghin).

Not everyone who can divine is of equal spiritual development (Dru Chwerthin).

9:5 TO ASK FOR RECOMPENSE: Charges for magical and divinatory efforts must be fair and based upon the poverty or wealth of the person asking for help (Dru Iolo).

Although any form of psychic working takes much energy, it is couth to offer to return one's fee in the event of failure - though it is not uncouth to refuse a refund or to refrain from offering one (Dru Chwerthin).

The advice in 14:10 should be remembered in these matters (Dru Amherghin).

FOR NONDRUIDS: This phrase implies, though it does not directly state, that a Druid is prohibited from taking compensation from other Druids for magical or divinatory services rendered. Since there is no discernible boundary between a person's "Magical" skills and all the other skills he or she may possess, it follows that is uncouth of any Druid to perform any work or service for another Druid for pay. However, since such a prohibition would seriously interfere with the economic life of the Druish community, it is only prudent to reduce the implied prohibition to a mere admonition to always deal fairly with other Druids (Dru Earl).

9:6 WITHOUT THEIR EXPRESS PERMISSION: It is always couth to ask the Gods to bless someone or something, as long as the exact nature of the blessing is left up to Their wisdom (the Ancients).
It is uncouth to ask the Gods to visit someone's just deserts upon them (Dru Isaac).

However, the Gods, being both fickle and just, may see fit to judge the petitioner as well (Dru Earl).

10:2 INEXPENSIVE: Ostentatious display of expensive ritual equipment is uncouth rudeness to less wealthy Groves (Dru Isaac).

Nonetheless, the Gods deserve the very best (Dru Amherghin).

But They do not want the very best at the expense of the welfare of the Grove's members (Dru Iolo).

11:5 FATAL: It should be noted that in this case the word may be interpreted literally in connection with the definition of "uncouth" given in 3:1 (Dru Lew).

11:7 UNLESS A LIFE IS AT STAKE: If one will be maimed or permanently incapacitated, and one's life made miserable for years at a time, unless surgery is performed, one may have it done over a nonfatal matter (the Ancients).

One should be conservative in how this exception is applied to given situations (Dru Iolo).

11:9 MATTERS OF CONCEPTION OR ABORTION: No Hasidic Druid Laws concerning these matters exists, save 4:7, for they are considered to be entirely up to the parents or nonparents involved (Dru Chwerthin).

Men have no business saying anything about abortion at all (Dru Taliroth).

12:5 SHALL BE TAKEN: Often Hasidic Druids are forced by occupation to disobey this rule and therefore, if such is the case,

an alternate psychic Weekend may be established. However, it would be far better for such persons to change to less uncouth occupations (Dru Margola).

13:4 UNCOUTH TO PREVENT: Here we encounter the question of the preservation of life and of responsibility. Shall it be couth to watch an entity destroy herself or himself with alcohol, if it be medically determined that such is an imminent possibility? The same may be said of many other drugs, and one may ask also about children. In 13:9 we have the prohibition, wisely given, against self-harm, but collective responsibility for those unable to make logical determinations for themselves (because of age, inexperience, madness or other reasons). Much consideration should be given these matters, and scholarship into the ancient texts may be looked to, as well as that knowledge open to scholars now, and it would be expected that each Grove (knowing it members and their needs) may make determination on their own of the following of this Law. It is recommended fully three councils of each Grove be held to make determination on this matter, with all members present if this is possible (Dru David).

It may also be added that when a member of an individual Grove is having difficulty with drugs of any sort, or with a chaotic and confused interior state which may appear to Outsiders as madness, it is preferable that assistance in his or her difficulties be provided by the members of the Grove rather than by Outsiders; such help being more in accordance with the wishes of the Gods (Dru Taliroth).

Thus one may say that it is couth to render assistance to a troubled member of the community, but it is uncouth when such help is given in such a way as to cut short that individual's responsibility for his or her actions. The Gods help those who help themselves (Dru Rusty).

The Original intent of this Law was to make sure that all Hasidic Druids had the freedom to explore alternate universes, and not to allow Druids to commit suicide, slow or fast, with hard drugs (Dru Iolo).

Obviously, however, it is open to abuse, as are all the Laws. Fools will find a way (Dru Amherghin).

14:1 SISTERS AND BROTHERS: What does this mean, that we should treat other Pagans as "sisters and brothers?" One answer may be found in 8:7. Mother is the Earth, Father is the Sky/Sun, and our Siblings are Their offspring- all living things. Therefore, the injunction to love one's siblings is an injunction to love Life. Thus we are enjoined to love other Pagans as sisters and brothers, i.e., as Life itself (Dru Lew).

These words of Dru Lew are, as usual, wise, for not only is he one of the most up and coming young scholars of Hasidic Druidism, he is well versed in matters of sibling rivalry (Dru Chwerthin).

Figure 2 SDNA conception of Taranis.

CONSIDDUR:
The Alternatives

Upon Arising

I thank Thee, O Gods, that I was made both male and female, and with the capacity to seek awareness of both in the One.

Upon Washing the Hands at Arising

I thank Thee, O gods, for all the works of Thy hands and for the life given me out of them.

Upon Dressing

I thank Tee, O Gods, for the shelter granted me by Thy grace and love.

Upon Studying or Seeing a Learned Person

Thanks to Thee, O Be'al, for the gift of the desire for awareness.

Upon Hearing of a Birth.

Thanks be to Thee, O Danu, for the supreme gift of a new life. Bless the child and keep him/her in Your loving care.

Upon Hearing of a Death:

To Thee is returned this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee. Blessed be the great wheel.

Upon the Lighting of Candles or Other Fires:

Thanks be to Thee, O Belenos (OR Taranis), for the light and warmth of fire.

Upon Cooking of Food

Blessed be Thou, O our Mother, Who brings forth the good things of the Earth.

Upon Eating of Food:

Blessed be Thou, O our Mother, Who brings forth the good things of the Earth.

Upon Brewing of Alcoholic Beverages

Thanks be to Thee, O Braciaca, for the gift of divine intoxication. Guides us in our preparation and bless our results.

Upon Drinking

Thanks be to Thee, O our Mother, for the Waters which pour forth from Thy side.

Prayer Before Meals

Blessed are Thou, O Queen of the Universe, Who brings forth food and drink from the Earth for our sustenance and pleasure. Bless us, O Gods, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive, from Thy bounty, through our sweat, so be it.

Poem Before Meals

Good food, good drink,
Good Gods Let's eat!

Prayer After Meals

We give Thee thanks, O our Gods, that we have been able to receive Thy gift. Bless us and keep us in Your hearts, now and always.

Plea to Mari

Remember, O most blessed mother Mari, that never was it known, that anyone who fled to Thy protection, implore Thy help, or sought Thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto Thee, O Lady of Ladies, my Mother. To Thee I come, before Thee I stand, in need of thy assistance. O Mother of the Gods, despise not my petitions, but in Thy mercy hear and answer me.

Litany of the Earth-Mother

O Earth-Mother, Thou of uncounted names and faces,
Thou of the many-faceted Nature in and above All,
Nature Incarnate, Love and Life fulfilled; look favorably upon this place, grace us with Your Presence, inspire and infuse us with Your powers; by all the names by which You have been known, O Earth-Mother:

Come unto us.
Thou Whom the Druids call Danu
Come unto us.
Thou Who art Erde of the Germans
Come unto us.
Thou Whom the Slavs call Ziva
Thou Who art the Nerthus of the Vanir
Thou Whom the Poles call Marzyana
Thou Who art Frigga of the Aesir
Thou Whom the Romans call Terra
Thou Who art Diana to the Etruscans
Thou Whom the Persians call Kybele
Thou Who are Iphimedeia, Mighty Queen of the Greeks
Thou Whom the Egyptians call Nuit, Star Mother
Thou Who art Ninmah of Sumeria
Thou Whom the Hittites call Kubala
Thou Who art Mami-Aruru of Babalon
Thou Whom the Caanities call Arsai
Thou Who art Our Lady of Biblos in far Phonicia
Thou Whom the children of Crete call Mountain Mother
Thou Who art Yemanja of the Umbanda
Thou Who art Shakti and Parvati of India
Thou Whom the Tibeteans call Green Tara
Thou Who art Kwanyen of China
Thou Whom the Nipponese call Izanami
Thou Who art Sedna and Nerivik of the Eskimos
Thou Whom the Pawnee call Uti-Hiata
Thou Who art Cornmother of the Plains
Thou Whom the Navaho call Estanatlehi
Thou Who art Ometeotl and Guadalupe in Mexico
Thou Whom the Islanders call Hina-alu-oka-moana
Thou Who art the Great Mother, the Star Goddess, the All Creating One
Mother of All, we call upon You
Terra Mater, Mater Sotier, Earth-Mother
Come unto us!

Spectrum Plus

(An Order for the Lighting of Candles)

BLACK: "From Darkness,"
WHITE: "To Light,"
GREEN: "To Life. First came the Life of Plants,"
RED: "Then came the Life of Animals,"
YELLOW: "Then came the Life of the Mind,"
PURPLE: "From the Mind comes Passion,"
ORANGE: "From Passion comes Courage,"
BLUE: "From Courage comes Self-Awareness."
INDIGO: "From Self-Awareness we pass beyond all Space and Time
To touch the Most High one.

Exorcism

In the name of the Earth-Mother, the Great Goddess, She who is called Danu, Frigga, Devi, Terra, Uti-Hiata, Yemanja, and by many other Names; Mother of all mortals and immortals, Source of Love and Life; before Whom all Gods, Demons, Angels, Demiurges, Elementals, Men, Women and all other Entities must Bow:

I cleanse this place, commanding all Spirits and Entities of Destructive, Diabolical, Diseased or Demonic nature of any sort so ever to quit and depart from here instantly!

Leave! For it is commanded in the name of Macha, Kali, Chandika, Kybele -the Wrathful Goddess who is the Slayer of Demons; She Who soars above the Battlefields; She Who is drunk on the blood of Evil Ones.

Leave! for it is commanded in the Mother's Name and ye dare not refuse, lest the Star Goddess visit Her vengeance upon ye.

Leave! For this is to be an abode of the Spirits of Life and of Love, and such as ye have no place here, now or ever.

In the Name of the Great Goddess: So be it.

Psalm of the Star Goddess

1. The heavens declare the glory of the Goddess, the firmament shows Her handiwork.
2. Day after day shouts this; night after night reveals this knowledge.
3. No language fails to contain Her praise.
4. Her praise circles the world and rises to the Sun.
5. This praise is as joyous as love and as strong as the hunt.
6. She contains all in Her hands and Her bosom.
7. Her laws work, follow them and you will be wise.
8. Her laws are just, follow karma and your eyes will see.
9. Be awed by Her mighty knowledge;
10. Knowing and doing right is better than gold and sweeter than honey.
11. By Understanding Her Way, your path will always be lit.
12. She will teach you the way to balance, and to avoid pitfalls.
13. Never presume to know Her all, for She is greater than any human.

Prayer of the Sea

How wondrous are the works of the Earth-Mother!

Consider the oceans and their inhabitants.

Consider the waves that swell and fall afar from any human land, never seen by human eye.

Consider the waves born far out to sea, traveling many leagues to crash at last upon the rocks of some barren shore; spraying their white frustration high into the air; or which softly creep across furlongs of glistening sand, sending spies far inland, scouting new territory for the sea to reclaim.

Consider that for every grain of sand, every chip of rock, every cliff and promontory slipping into the waters; for each is another deposited elsewhere.

Consider the plants of the Sea; the mighty beds of mile-long kelp, the mosses growing upon the shore, the vast fields of algae and plankton, giving unto us the breath of life.

Consider the animals of the Sea; the horses of the sea and the lions of the sea, clam and barracuda, whale and kraken, and the dolphin—beloved of the Mother and friend to humans.

Consider as well the inhabitants of the depths where light is never seen, where waters never stir, where monstrous pressures crush all who would dare invade the realm; and also the dwellers of the reefs, the angels and anglers, octopus and starfish, and the deadly man-o-war.

Consider the monsters and the beauties, and wonder at the bounty of the Earth-Mother and wonder more at Her power.

Consider the seas of our ancestry, screaming in white, foaming frenzy against the barren rocks; while somewhere in a quiet tidal pool, one atom links with another, one molecule with another, one chain with another. And behold the miracle as the sky impregnates the waters and the Earth-Mother cries out "Let there be Life!" —and there is Life!

Consider thou that, as surely as we did come from the Sea, so shall we as surely return unto Her. Though we be buried beneath the soil of the driest land, it matters not—for all the world has been once covered by the Sea, and shall be covered again in days to come.

For the Mother Who rules the waters and the rocks, the skies and the pits, will have Her own, and none shall gainsay Her.

For the Earth-Mother is the Sea-Mother, Who arose from the waters to become the Goddess of Love and Life, and Who therefore bids us to Love and Live.

Ea Leukothea, Ea Yemanja, White Goddess of the Waters! Hail to Thee, Sedna and Nerivek!

And when our loving and our living is at an end, we shall return to the Sea, our Mother; where for every weakness there is a power, for every hurt a cure, for every sorrow a joy.

Long and live and consider: How wondrous are the works of the Earth-Mother!

Figure 3 SDNA sketch of Braciaca.

PART SIX

THE GREEN BOOKS

As a result of the enormous expansion of Part Six to over 848 pages, it has been necessary to print the Green Books as a separate volume from the Main Volume. You can still download them at **http;//www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html** And feel to assemble your own books.

Green Book Vol 1 The Original Collection 21 pages, 1966 & 1971
Green Book Vol 2 Celtic, American, African, Hindu & Greek Writings, 34 pages, 1993
Green Book Vol 3 Oriental and Monotheist Wisdom, 34 pages, 1993
Green Book Vol 4 The Ill-AD and the Odd Essay, 112 pages, 1997
Green Book Vol 5 Chicken Soup for the Druid's Soul, 118 pages, 2002
Green Book Vol 6 Books of Songs and Poetry, 116 pages, 2003
Green Book Vol 7 Seasonal Selection, 74 pages, 2003
Green Book Vol 8 Order of the Mithril Star, 21 pages, 2003
Green Book Vol 9 Plants, Animals, Food & Drink, 54 pages, 2003
Green Book Vol 10 Research Resources on Druidism, 165 pages, 2003
Green Book Vol 11 Druidic Board Games, 61 pages, 2004

The Original 1966 Introduction

Those who join the Reformed Druids are, in one sense or another, religious rebels. They are usually fed up with the hypocrisies and inadequacies of the institutionalized churches. They seek a satyric outlet, and they find it in Druidism. But they are seldom anti-religious. On the contrary, they often feel that there is in fact some truth to be found in religion, and this belief is affirmed in the Basic Tenets. A common complaint among Druids is that the truth has been obscured because they have been forced, more or less against their will, into various particular religious molds. They seek to be freed in order to freely seek, and to make independent judgments on what passes for religious truth.

Druidism, as an institution, must remain independent. It can never hope to profess absolute truth; for when it does, it then will become no better than the fossilized institutions from which its members have fled. But even while it systematically shuns dogmatism, it can, and must still lead. It must provide the opportunity for discovery, which many of its members have never had. It must, in short, provide in its written meditations a taste of the writings of the world's great religions, in the hope that this taste will stimulate a wider search for knowledge and wisdom in the quest for religious truth.

As Arch-Druid, you are charged with preparing meditations, which will prove meaningful to the congregation. In order to do this, you must choose selections from the Buddhists, the Hindus, the Taoists, the Muslims, and many others, as well as from the Bible. You must provide a wide variety in order to give truth a chance. The best method is to study widely yourself. But this can be too time-consuming. I therefore strongly urge you to purchase, for your own edification, an excellent and useful collection: Viking Portable #5, Henry Ballou's World Bible. It is available in paper for less than $2.00, or in hardcover for slightly more. The selections are short and illuminating, and the editor exhibits a bias, which can almost be called Druidic. It makes a good beginning.

For those Arch-Druids who are lazier still, or who suddenly find themselves in desperate need of a meditation at the last minute, I offer the following collection. It is hoped that the collection, although short, is representative and especially useful for Reformed Druids.

David A. Frangquist
Editor, 1966

Drynemetum Press

2003 Introduction

Amazingly, the Green Books collection has grown as large as the original collection of ARDA 1. Most of these books were rather solitary efforts and the addition of more editors would have sharpened the focus and removed sub-par materials. Instead, I have erred on the side of inclusivity, being the pack-rat that I am.

The first Green Book began as a collection for the lazy Arch-Druids of Carleton to come up with something to say in the early 1960s during the Meditation section of the weekly liturgies, much as modern clergy refer to books of ready-made sermons. Building on that tradition, I collected two more books for the first edition of ARDA. These went relatively well, but my research didn't stop; and book after book of recommended reading material, and stuff I just thought was neat, were produced over the years, especially as I began to mine the older magazines of the NRDNA movement, and consolidate interesting types of materials.

Each Green Book has its own theme. Green 2 was my European studies, and Green 3 was my Asian studies in 1993. After my trip to Japan, Green 4 was conceived as a trip around the world, with readings from all the continents and major religions. Levity has been a constant companion to the Reformed Druid, so Green 5 was conceived as material to cheer up a Druid in those times when they are depressed or unhappy. Green 6 is a collection of all the songs, poems & stories written by past Reformed members. Green 7 has seasonal essays to inspire Druids during their preparations for the eight major Druid festivals. Green 8 is materials from the Order of the Mithril Star, that didn't fit anywhere else. Green 9 is a collection of the works on food, drink and trees; so important to Druidic life. Green 10 is a collection of writings about the history and nature of the modern and ancient Druids (especially the RDNA), to assist in future research on our group. And Green Book 11 is to just have a bit of fun with games.

Future volumes are in the process of planning even as I send off seven new volumes in this edition. There may well be a collection of religious and social freedom speeches, a volume on transcendalist & nature poets of the 19th & 20th century, and volumes 6-11 will undoubtedly be supplemented over the following years.

As always, none of this material is to be considered dogmatic or reflective of the views of any Reformed Druids. It is meant to widen your understanding of spiritual matters, not to narrow your possibilities. Please use them well and perhaps add a few volumes of your own.

Sincerely,
Mike Scharding
Circa Day 75 of Earrach, Y.R. XL
April 15th, 2003 C.E.
Embassy of Japan, D.C.

Preface to 1976 Edition

In the first few years after the foundation of Reformed Druidism at Carleton College, there became attached to the office of Arch-Druid three collections of written material, which became known collectively as the Three Books of the Arch-Druid. Handed down over the years from Arch-Druid to Arch-Druid, they have acquired for the Druids at Carleton some measure of venerability, such as the scant age of the Reform can confer.

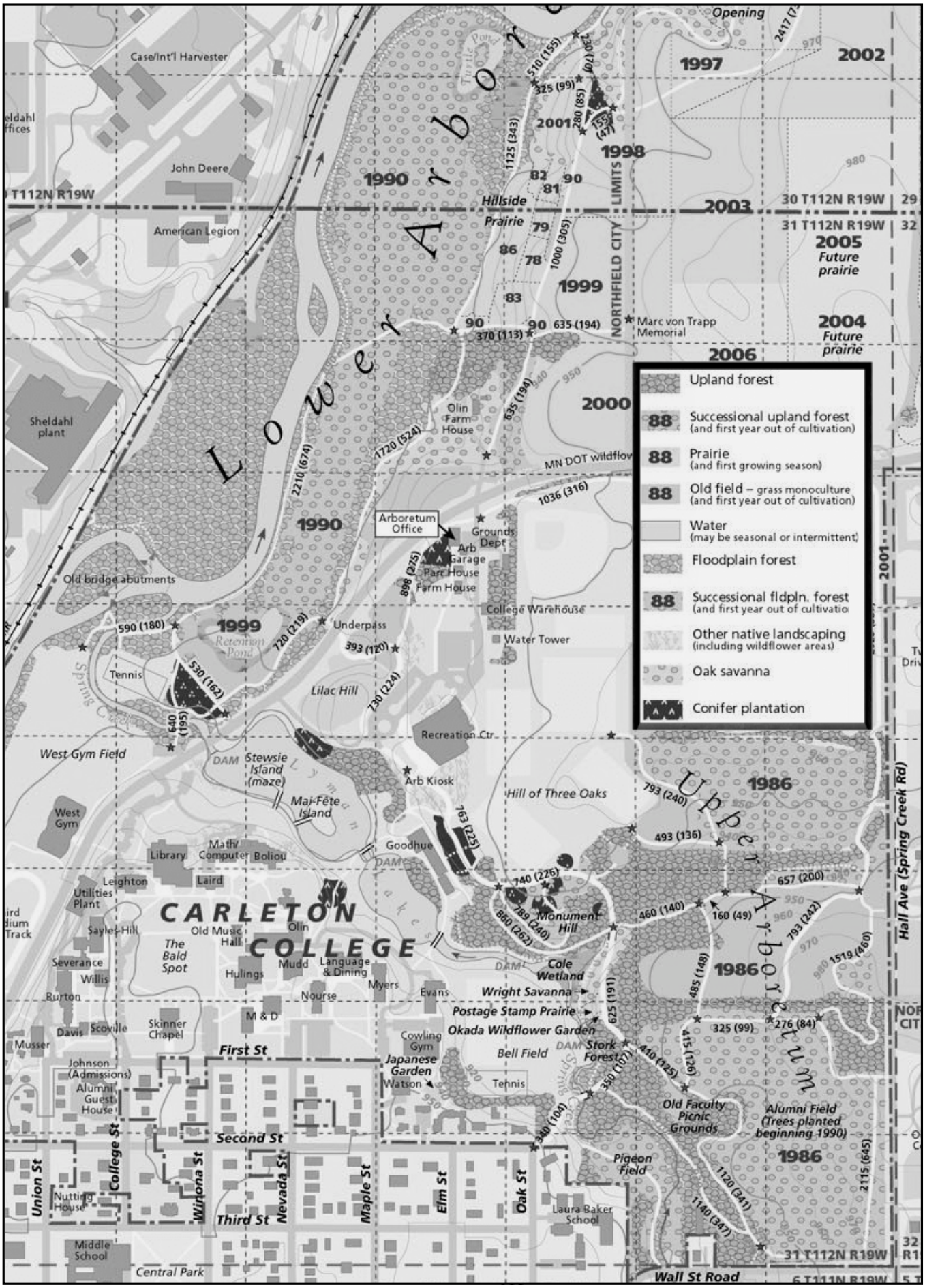
The first of these, The Book of the Worship of the Earth-Mother, preserves much of the liturgy used in the beginning, though indeed as the Reform grew, so did the realization that liturgy cannot remain fixed and static while religious outlook changes. So today each presiding priest is encouraged to write liturgy that he can celebrate without antagonizing his own religious scruples; and while much is still drawn from the Book of Worship, its influence is less than it once was. The second book, the Archives, though of much historical interest, has hardly ever borne much influence on the religious activity at Carleton.

By contrast, the Book of Written Meditations has waxed large in the consciousness of the Carleton Grove, larger even, perhaps, than the Druid Chronicles. These meditations were gathered by David Frangquist as an aid to lazy Arch-Druids (or so he said), and the collection was bound in green covers which readily distinguish it from the black covers of the Book of Worship and the blue covers of the Archives; indeed at Carleton it is called simply "the green book" and that has become in effect its title. These meditations found their way with increasing frequency into services at Carleton, not from increasing laziness, but from increasing awareness of the treasures that David had gathered together between the green covers. Members of the grove would often borrow the book for their own meditation and reflection, and eventually the essence and core of Druidism at Carleton could be found in seminal form within this free-form, eclectic collection more than any place else, save only the great world at large, whence, after all, these meditations came.

And so we have thought it appropriate to print The Green Book to bring it to a larger audience, in the hope that others, too, may find it useful in the search for awareness. The pages of the original are unnumbered, for David encouraged his successors to add such meditations as they found appropriate. We encourage our readers to do likewise, and have accordingly left the pages unnumbered. There have been additions since David's time, but they have been few. For this edition we have included several selections that have long wanted adding; the Yeats' poems, for example, which have almost become part of the Carleton liturgy. We have resisted the temptations to make a few excisions. We should especially have liked to excise the "Sayings of the Ancient Druids" which are no more Druidic than is Stonehenge, and which certainly cannot be said to represent the beliefs of the Reformed Druids; yet David included it, and we shall not gainsay him.

Herewith, then is The Green Book, in substantially the same form as it was bequeathed to Carleton by David. May you find joy in the reading!

Richard M. Shelton
Ellen Conway Shelton
Editors, 1974



Upland forest
88 Successional upland forest (and first year out of cultivation)
88 Prairie (and first growing season)
88 Old field – grass monoculture (and first year out of cultivation)
Water (may be seasonal or intermittent)
Floodplain forest
88 Successional fldpln. forest (and first year out of cultivatio
Other native landscaping (including wildflower areas)
Oak savanna
Conifer plantation
Lower Arboretum
Upper Arboretum
CARLETON COLLEGE
Case/Int'l Harvester
John Deere
American Legion
Sheldahl plant
Old bridge abutments
Hillside Prairie
Marc von Trapp Memorial
Olin Farm House
MN DOT wildflow
Arboretum Office
Grounds Dept
Arb Garage
Parr House
Farm House
College Warehouse
Water Tower
Underpass
Retention Pond
Tennis
Lilac Hill
Recreation Ctr
West Gym Field
Stewsie Island (maze)
Mai-Fête Island
Arb Kiosk
Hill of Three Oaks
West Gym
Library
Math/Computer
Boliou
Goodhue
Leighton
Laird
Utilities Plant
Sayles-Hill
Old Music Hall
Olin
The Bald Spot
Severance
Willis
Hulings
Mudd
Language & Dining
Myers
Nourse
Evans
Burton
Davis
Scoville
Skinner Chapel
M & D
Musser
Johnson (Admissions)
Alumni Guest House
Cowling Gym
Japanese Garden
Watson
Bell Field
Tennis
Monument Hill
Cole Wetland
Wright Savanna
Postage Stamp Prairie
Okada Wildflower Garden
Stork Forest
Old Faculty Picnic Grounds
Alumni Field (Trees planted beginning 1990)
Pigeon Field
Laura Baker School
Nutting House
Middle School
Central Park
Wall St Road
First St
Second St
Third St
Union St
College St
Winona St
Nevada St
Maple St
Elm St
Oak St
Hall Ave (Spring Creek Rd)
NORTHFIELD CITY LIMITS
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31 T112N R19W
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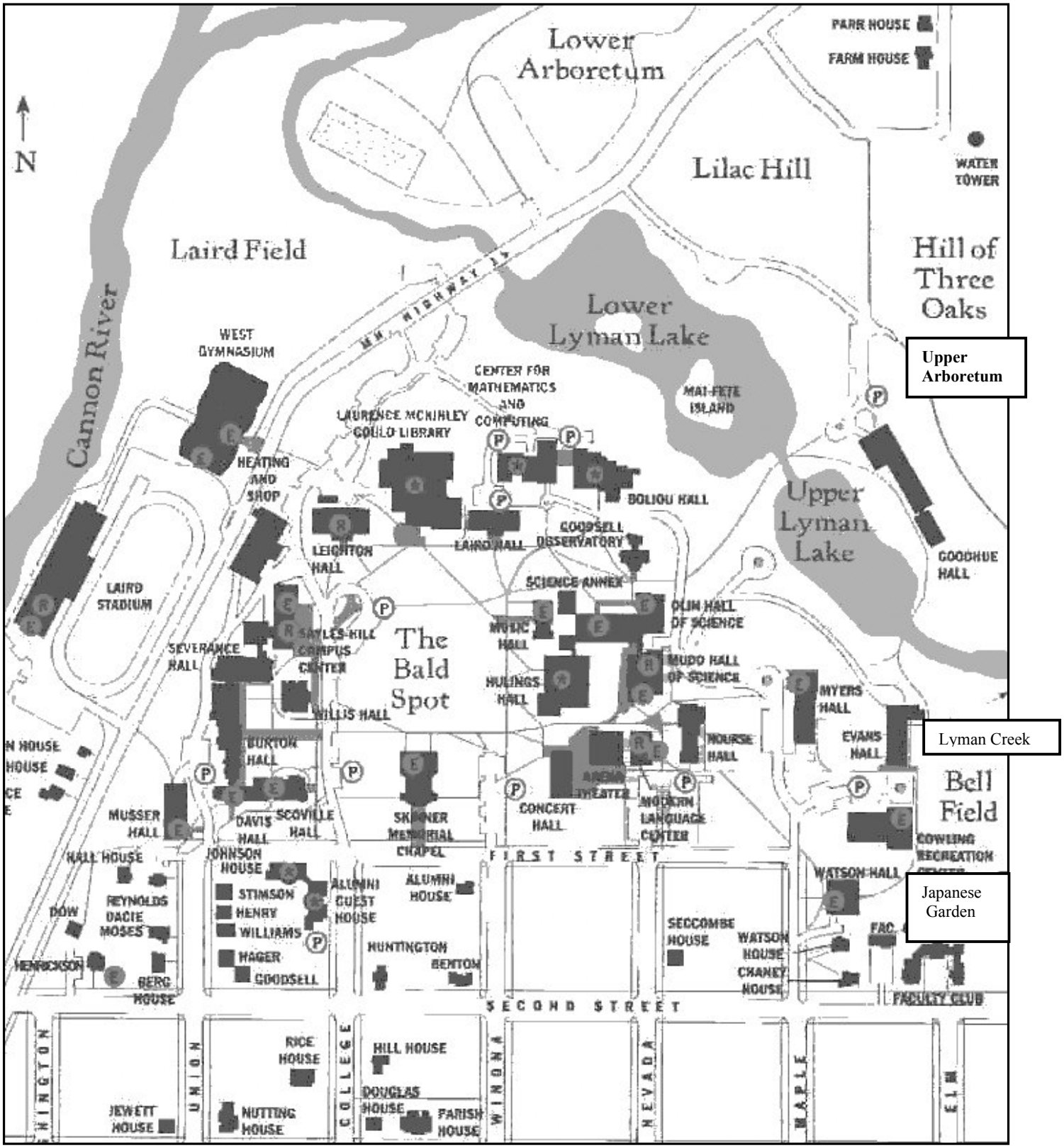
2004 Future prairie
2005 Future prairie
2006

Carleton Campus Map, 1996.

Full Color Upper & Lower Arboretum map available at http://webapps.acs.carleton.edu/campus/arb/location/



A Reformed Druid Anthology, Second Edition

40th Reunion 2003

The Drynemetum Press

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Frangquist, Fisher & Nelson
Authors of the Green Book.
Picture, circa 1964
Hill of Three Oaks, Carleton

A
REFORMED DRUID ANTHOLOGY
2nd Edition
In three volumes.

Volume Two of the Series

(Part 6 of ARDA 2)

THE GREEN BOOKS OF MEDITATION

Includes 11 collections of stories, poems, quotes, songs, essays and thoughts collected or produced by Reformed Druids.

The Drynemetum Press

Detailed Library Bibliographical Information

Limited Publication:
Only 50 copies were physically printed.

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http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html or at
http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/
If these web sites also becomes unavailable, visit the main Carleton page at http://www.carleton.edu and search for the Carleton Archives.

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Volume 2: The Green Books of Meditation

Current Editor:
Michael Scharding

Past Editors:
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Richard Shelton
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(507) 646-4270

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Religious Reference Material

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A Reformed Druid Anthology
1. Religion and humor. 2. American History 1963-2003. 3. Zen Buddhism. 4. Neopaganism and Witchcraft. 5. Occult and Feminism. 6. Druidism. 7. Jew. 8. Christian. 9. Celt. 10. Tao. 11. Hindu. 12. Meditation. 13. Songs and poetry. 14. Liturgy. 15. Student protest movements. 16. University of California at Berkeley. 17. Carleton College. 18. Minnesota. 19. Nature.

1800 pages. Three Volumes. 8 1/2" x 11" dimensions. Hardback.

Suggested Catalogue Description of the Collection:
"A Reformed Druidic collection that draws from various works of literature for the reader's meditation, research, celebration and reflection from Buddhism, Christian traditions, ecology ideals, the Feminist movement, very ancient Jewish practices, Earth-centered mysticism, New Age beliefs, Neopaganism, Hinduism, the Occult, the Celts, Tao, Wicca, and lots of Zen."

Copy Right Notice

Although many individual Druid's have expressed willingness to have their works put into this collection, many are not able to be contacted. Anything composed originally by Michael Scharding in this collection is for the Public Domain. In any sense, I would not recommend republishing anything from this unofficial collection, which is meant for reference purpose and use in the ARDA study program. Although some of the commercial works are now old enough to be assumed public domain, many may still be copy right protected, and their authors should be contacted before using their works. If anyone wishes their work removed from this collection, please contact me at mikerdna@hotmail.com (probably good for a few years) or reach me through Carleton College's Alumni Office.

(i.e. Don't Copy or Sell It.)

Acknowledgments

A detailed list of the various authors can be found in Part Four: "Credits, Founders and Known Innovators" but I would like to thank a few very special people for their help in putting this collection together. Isaac Bonewits and Robert Larson published "The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)" in 1976 under the Drynemetum Press label, and from whose collection much of ARDA's material can be traced. Richard Shelton and David & Deborah Frangquist were very helpful in giving me leads and constant advice. Stacey Weinberger has proven of inestimable assistance in acquiring and understanding material from the 1980s at the Live Oak Grove. Without Mark Heiman's professional layout experience, it would not look as fine and polished as it is. I would like to thank my parents, my friends, roommates, fellow Carleton Druid grove members, Ar nDraiocht Fein, The Henge of Keltria, all the other groves of the Reform, and the authors of the First Amendment. In order to be true to all my friends, I should boldly state the following about Druidism:

'Ten Important Notices'

1. Much of the material in this material has been lifted from copyright works, for a limited printing run of an on-line educational class, and not intended for commercial printing.. Please acknowledge the authors, use it only for non-malicious purposes, such as study, and not for personal gain. If you produce a book, article, or report that makes significant use of these materials; please send us a complementary copy in care of the Drynemeton press (see above).
2. Please, do not take this stuff too seriously. We certainly do not!
3. Materials represent only the individual opinions of their authors and no one else.
4. We do not have official group dogma. We merely have our individual opinions.
5. Just because it was printed, doesn't mean the authors haven't changed their minds since they wrote the materials.
6. Most Druids get along just fine without ever reading ANY of these unofficial materials. Many (if not most) Druids thrive better without this literature!!
7. In general... most of us consider Reformed Druidism to be a perspective, not a religion. Do not be fooled by all the external trappings, whistles, and bells.
8. Membership in Druidism is considered very compatible with all religions by many members and the term "Druid" is usually considered to be gender neutral. Or, at least, we tend to think so.
9. Technically speaking, those who do not have the Apostolic Succession descending from Fisher are not permitted to use most of the liturgies.
10 Within reason, all documents have been presented here in their original historical forms (i.e. after spell-checking and versical numbering).

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April 15th, 2003 C.E.
Embassy of Japan, D.C.

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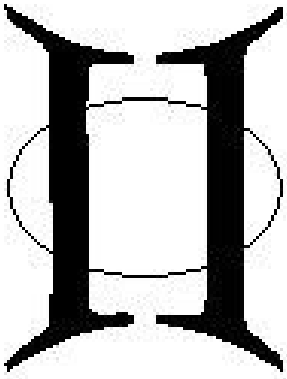
Concluding Blessing

May you grow in wisdom through contemplation of these pages and their interpretation in your daily life.



So Ends Volume Zero
Of the Green Books

The Green Book

Volume One

The Original 1966 Introduction

Those who join the Reformed Druids are, in one sense or another, religious rebels. They are usually fed up with the hypocrisies and inadequacies of the institutionalized churches. They seek a satyric outlet, and they find it in Druidism. But they are seldom anti-religious. On the contrary, they often feel that there is in fact some truth to be found in religion, and this belief is affirmed in the Basic Tenets. A common complaint among Druids is that the truth has been obscured because they have been forced, more or less against their will, into various particular religious molds. They seek to be freed in order to freely seek, and to make independent judgments on what passes for religious truth.

Druidism, as an institution, must remain independent. It can never hope to profess absolute truth; for when it does, it then will become no better than the fossilized institutions from which its members have fled. But even while it systematically shuns dogmatism, it can, and must still lead. It must provide the opportunity for discovery, which many of its members have never had. It must, in short, provide in its written meditations a taste of the writings of the world's great religions, in the hope that this taste will stimulate a wider search for knowledge and wisdom in the quest for religious truth.

As Arch-Druid, you are charged with preparing meditations, which will prove meaningful to the congregation. In order to do this, you must choose selections from the Buddhists, the Hindus, the Taoists, the Muslims, and many others, as well as from the Bible. You must provide a wide variety in order to give truth a chance. The best method is to study widely yourself. But this can be too time-consuming. I therefore strongly urge you to purchase, for your own edification, an excellent and useful collection: Viking Portable #5, Henry Ballou's World Bible. It is available in paper for less than $2.00, or in hardcover for slightly more. The selections are short and illuminating, and the editor exhibits a bias, which can almost be called Druidic. It makes a good beginning.

For those Arch-Druids who are lazier still, or who suddenly find themselves in desperate need of a meditation at the last minute, I offer the following collection. It is hoped that the collection, although short, is representative and especially useful for Reformed Druids.

David A. Frangquist
Editor, 1966

The Drynemetum Press

Preface to 1976 Edition

In the first few years after the foundation of Reformed Druidism at Carleton College, there became attached to the office of Arch-Druid three collections of written material, which became known collectively as the Three Books of the Arch-Druid. Handed down over the years from Arch-Druid to Arch-Druid, they have acquired for the Druids at Carleton some measure of venerability, such as the scant age of the Reform can confer.

The first of these, The Book of the Worship of the Earth-Mother, preserves much of the liturgy used in the beginning, though indeed as the Reform grew, so did the realization that liturgy cannot remain fixed and static while religious outlook changes. So today each presiding priest is encouraged to write liturgy that he can celebrate without antagonizing his own religious scruples; and while much is still drawn from the Book of Worship, its influence is less than it once was. The second book, the Archives, though of much historical interest, has hardly ever borne much influence on the religious activity at Carleton.

By contrast, the Book of Written Meditations has waxed large in the consciousness of the Carleton Grove, larger even, perhaps, than the Druid Chronicles. These meditations were gathered by David Frangquist as an aid to lazy Arch-Druids (or so he said), and the collection was bound in green covers which readily distinguish it from the black covers of the Book of Worship and the blue covers of the Archives; indeed at Carleton it is called simply "the green book" and that has become in effect its title. These meditations found their way with increasing frequency into services at Carleton, not from increasing laziness, but from increasing awareness of the treasures that David had gathered together between the green covers. Members of the grove would often borrow the book for their own meditation and reflection, and eventually the essence and core of Druidism at Carleton could be found in seminal form within this free-form, eclectic collection more than any place else, save only the great world at large, whence, after all, these meditations came.

And so we have thought it appropriate to print The Green Book to bring it to a larger audience, in the hope that others, too, may find it useful in the search for awareness. The pages of the original are unnumbered, for David encouraged his successors to add such meditations as they found appropriate. We encourage our readers to do likewise, and have accordingly left the pages unnumbered. There have been additions since David's time, but they have been few. For this edition we have included several selections that have long wanted adding; the Yeats' poems, for example, which have almost become part of the Carleton liturgy. We have resisted the temptations to make a few excisions. We should especially have liked to excise the "Sayings of the Ancient Druids" which are no more Druidic than is Stonehenge, and which certainly cannot be said to represent the beliefs of the Reformed Druids; yet David included it, and we shall not gainsay him.

Herewith, then is The Green Book, in substantially the same form as it was bequeathed to Carleton by David. May you find joy in the reading!

Richard M. Shelton
Ellen Conway Shelton
Editors, 1974

Note by the Current Editor 1996

The Green Book (volume 1) never quite made it to being officially published. By 1976, all but a few of the exemptions from copyrights were acquired. However, the task became too difficult and other concerns occupied the attention of the Sheltons. As a result, the legality of publishing this collection is rather dubious and it probably will remain as an underground publication. For no particular reason, I have kept their selections in the order that they were presented to me (including a rebellious selection from the Old Testament that is mischievously hiding in the Buddhist section of The Green Book). I have neither deleted nor added any new selections to the first volume, but you may feel free to add new selections or take out selections (especially the ones from the "Ancient Druids"), if you wish.

As stated before, The Green Book, was near to the heart of Druidism until the early 80's when Carleton Druidism lapsed. When it revived in the mid-80s, Carleton students had taken a greater interest in Neo-Paganism, Wiccan and Native American beliefs; areas rarely explored before that time. As a result, The Green Book has not received much attention since due to its Monotheistic and Asian foci. However for me, the Green Book is a powerful reminder of the breadth of sources that Reformed Druidism can and should draw upon during the searches for religious truth.

I have been especially encouraged to follow David's request that the Arch-Druid should collect and distribute meditations conducive to Druidism (a vague and daunting task!). I have, as of 1994, published two other volumes of meditation; which are just as dubious legally as the original Green Book. However, my Green Books have failed to garner as much enthusiasm as the first Green Book. Perhaps it is a far more difficult task than I understood when I first began to publish them?

Feel free, yourself, at the potential risk of breaking the copyright laws, to make copies of The Green Books for your friends. Happy reading.

Michael Scharding
Publisher, 1995

Another Fine Product of the Drynemeton Press

Publishing History
1st Printing 1966 c.e.
2nd Printing 1960s & Early 70s
3rd Printing 1976 c.e.
4th Printing 1970s and 1980s
5th Printing 1993 c.e.
6th Printing 1996 c.e. in ARDA
7th Printing 2003 c.e. in ARDA 2

Note: No particular statement, dogmatic point or doctrine expressed in these collected works should be construed as being the beliefs of one particular Druid or of all Reformed Druids. They are exercises and words to be thought upon and not necessarily agreed with

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(On Religion)

One God supreme the universe does sway
With rev'rence his omnipotence obey;
And know, that all we possibly can name,
From heav'n itself originally came;
Let no mean thoughts of dissolution fright,
  Or damp you spirits with the dews of night.
The soul's immortal and can never die;
For frail existence no vain efforts make,
For fear to lose what he wants power to take.
  Of awful vengeance ever shall be hurl'd
By nature's God against a sinful world;
In dreadful deluges we must expire
  Or else consume in rapid flames of fire.
In these tremendous elements alone,
Mankind shall perish, and their sins atone.
  Another world is ready to receive
Immortal souls, that earthly bodies leave
To dust the perishable parts return,
But at the grave eternal spirits spurn.
And if in virtue's path they trod below,
In heav'nly mansions 'tis their fate to glow;
But if by vice enslav'd, their doom's to roam
Without a heav'nly, or an earthly home.
  On your young offspring spend your utmost care,
And of the early seeds of vice beware;
This noble talk you can't commence too soon,
Expand their virtues, and their follies prune.
Their youthful minds, like melted wax impress,
And heav'n's fair image in their souls express.

(On Politics)

Children must from their parents be removed,
Tho' fondly prized and tenderly belov'd;
Till fourteen times the sun with radiant rays,
Shall round the world in annual circuit blaze:
Lest blind partially in youth should wrong
Those rising minds that to the state belong.
  'Tis just, upon emergencies of state,
To yield an individual to fate;
Better a part should perish than the whole,
A body's forfeit cannot hurt the soul;
The sacrifice, by feeling earthly pain,
May greater bliss in future life obtain.
  Blind disobedience to the state's decree,
Shall always excommunicated be;
And interdicted thus, the wretch shall roam,
Secluded from society and home:
Devoid of trust in the most trifling cause,
And unprotected by the injured laws.
  When danger calls, and delegates should meet,
Let not the senate wait for tardy feet;
For in the crisis of our country's fate,
He merits death who gives advice too late.

(On Various Things)

  Those who lend money to the wretch decay'd,
In the next life will be again repay'd.
  If by one newly dead you want to send,
A note to any long departed friend:
Compose your letter in a solemn stile,
And slowly cast it on the funeral pile;
Then know the sentiments therein express'd,
Will be deliver'd to the hand address'd.
  Each member of a family we deem,
In his own habitation, Lord supreme;
O'er life and property his power extends,
If the state ratifies what he intends.
  Prisoners of war are doomed by fate to die,
Then sacrifice them to some deity;
Upon the altars let them soon expire,
Or closed in wicker feed the sacred fire.
Be arts instill'dbe useful science shewn,
And wisdom taught in sacred groves alone;
There, and there only, shall the mind improve
In needful knowledge and in social love;
But let no lesson be in writing giv'n,
Trust all to memory, that great gift of heav'n.
  When strong diseases, the weak frame enthrall,
The moon's the sovereign remedy of all.
  Let mistletoe with reverent awe be sought,
Since as a boon, from heav'n itself 'tis bought;
The sacred oak ascend, and then with skill,
Cut the with'd branches with a golden bill.

Selections from:
William Augustus Russel. *History of England.* London, J. Cooke, 1777. p. 4.

Sayings of the Hindus

(The Rig-Veda: To the Waters)

Forth from the middle of the flood the waters their chief the sea flow cleansing, never sleeping.
Indra, the bull, the thunderer, dug their channels: here let those waters, goddesses, protect me.

Waters which came from heaven, or those that wander dug from the earth, or flowing free by nature.
Bright, purifying, spreading to the ocean, here let those waters, goddesses, protect me.

Those amid whom goes Varuna, the sovereign, he who discriminates men's truth and falsehood
Distilling meath, the bright, the purifying, here let those waters, goddesses, protect me.

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Selections from: Swami Prabhavananda & Frederick Manchester, trans. *The Upanishads : Breath of the Eternal*. New York, Mentor (MP386). 1957. p. 103.

(The Rig-Veda: **C**reation)

Then was not non-existent nor existent: there was no realm of air, no sky beyond it.
What covered in, and where? And what gave shelter? Was water there, unfathomed depth of water?

Death was not then, nor was there aught immortal: no sign was there, the day's and night's divider.
That One Thing, breathless, breathed by it's own nature: apart from it was nothing whatsoever.

Darkness there was: at first concealed in darkness this All was undiscriminated chaos.
All that existed then was void and formless: by the great power of warmth was born that unit.

Who verily knows and who can here declare it, whence it was born and whence comes this creation?
The gods are later than this world's production. Who knows then whence it first came into being?

He, the first origin of this creation, whether he formed it all or did not form it,
Whose eye controls this world in highest heaven, he verily knows it, or perhaps he knows not.

Selections from:
Robert O. Ballou. *World Bible*. New York, The Viking Press, 1944. p. 32.

The Sayings of the Hindus

(From the Bhagavad-Gita: Atman)

Sri Krishna:

You have the right to work, but for the work's sake only. You have no right to the fruits of work. Desire for the fruits of work must never be your motive in working. Never give way to laziness either.

Perform every action with your heart fixed on the Supreme Lord. Renounce attachment to the fruits. Be even-tempered in success and failure....

Work done with anxiety about results is far inferior to work done without such anxiety, in the calm of self-surrender. Seek refuge in the knowledge of Brahman. They who work selfishly for results are miserable.

In the calm of self-surrender you can free yourself from the bondage of virtue and vice during this very life. Devote yourself, therefore, to reaching union with Brahman. To unite the heart with Brahman and then to act: that is the secret of unattached work. In the calm of self-surrender, the seers renounce the fruits of their actions, and so reach enlightenment. Then they are free from the bondage of rebirth, and pass to that state which is beyond all evil.

When your intellect has cleared itself of its delusions, you will become indifferent to the results of all action, present and future. At present, your intellect is bewildered by conflicting interpretations of the scriptures. When it can rest, steady and undistracted, in contemplation of the Atman (the Godhead within every being), then you will reach Union with the Atman.

Arjuna:

Krishna, how can one identify a man who is firmly established and absorbed in Brahman? ....

Sri Krishna:
He who knows bliss in the Atman
And wants nothing else.
Cravings torment the heart:
He renounces cravings.
I call him illumined.

Not shaken by adversity,
Not hankering after happiness:
Free from fear, free from anger,
Free from the things of desire.
I call him a seer, and illumined.
The bonds of his flesh are broken.
He is lucky, and does not rejoice:
He is unlucky, and does not weep.
I call him illumined.

The tortoise can draw in his legs:
The seer can draw in his sense.
I call him illumined.

The abstinent run away from what they desire
But carry their desires with them:
When a man enters Reality,
He leaves his desires behind him.

Even a mind that knows the path
Can be dragged from the path:
The senses are so unruly.

But he controls the senses
And recollects the mind
And fixes it on me.
I call him illumined.

Thinking about sense-objects
Will attach you to sense-objects;
Grow attached, and you become addicted;
Thwart your addiction, it turns to anger;
Be angry, and you confuse your mind;
Confuse your mind, you forget the lesson of experience;
Forget experience, you lose discrimination;
Lose discrimination, and you miss life's only purpose.

When he has no lust, no hatred,
A man walks safely among the things of lust and hatred.
To obey the Atman
Is his peaceful joy:
Sorrow melts
Into that clear peace:
His quiet mind
Is soon established in peace.

The uncontrolled mind
Does not guess that the Atman is present:
How can it meditate?
Without meditation, where is peace?
Without peace, where is happiness?

The wind turns a ship
From its course upon the waters:
The wandering winds of the senses
Cast man's mind adrift
And turn his better judgment from its course.
When a man can still the senses
I call him illumined.
The recollected mind is awake
In the knowledge of the Atman
Which is dark night to the ignorant:
The ignorant are awake in their sense-life
Which they think is daylight:
To the seer it is darkness.

Water flows continually into the ocean
But the ocean is never disturbed:
Desire flows into the mind of the seer
But he is never disturbed.
The seer knows peace:
The man who stirs up his own lusts
Can never know peace.
He knows peace who has forgotten desire
He lives without craving:
Free from ego, free from pride.

This is the state of enlightenment in Brahman:
A man does not fall back from it
Into delusion.
Even at the moment of death
He is alive in that enlightenment:
Brahman and he are one.

Selection from:
Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, trans. *The Song of God, Bhagavad-Gita*. New York, Mentor (MP466), 1954. pp. 40-44.

Sayings of the Hindus

(From the works of Sri Ramakrishna)

People partition off their lands by means of boundaries, but no one can partition off the all-embracing sky overhead. The indivisible sky surrounds all and includes all. So common man in ignorance says, "My religion is the only one, my religion is the best." But when his heart is illumined by true knowledge, he knows that above all these wars of sects and sectarians presides the one indivisible, eternal, all-knowing bliss.

As a mother, in nursing her sick children, gives rice and curry to one, and sago arrowroot to another, and bread and butter to a third, so the Lord has laid out different paths for different men suitable to their natures.

Dispute not. As you rest firmly on your own faith and opinion, allow others also the equal liberty to stand by their own faiths and opinions. By mere disputation you will never succeed in convincing another of his error. When the grace of God descends on him, each one will understand his own mistakes.

So long as the bee is outside the petals of the lily, and has not tasted the sweetness of its honey, it hovers round the flower emitting its buzzing sound; but when it is inside the flower, it noiselessly drink its nectar. So long as a man quarrels and disputes about doctrines and dogmas, he has not tasted the nectar of true faith; when he has tasted it, he becomes quiet and full of peace.

A man after fourteen year's penance in a solitary forest obtained at last the power of walking on water. Overjoyed at this, he went to his Guru and said, "Master, master, I have acquired the power of walking on water." The master rebukingly replied, "Fie, O child! Is this the result of thy fourteen years' labours? Verily thou has obtained only that which is worth a penny; for what thou hast accomplished after fourteen years' arduous labour ordinary men do by paying a penny to the boatman."

Selections from:

Robert O. Ballou. *World Bible*. New York, The Viking Press, 1944. p. 83, 88.

Saying from the Buddhist Sutras

(The Four Noble Truths)

Thus have I heard:

At one time the Lord dwelt at Benares at Isipatana in the Deer Park. There the Lord addressed the five monks:

These two extremes, monks, are not to be practiced by one who has gone forth from the world. What are the two? That conjoined with the passions and luxury, low, vulgar, common, ignoble, and useless; and that conjoined with self-torture, painful, ignoble, and useless. Avoiding these two extremes the Tathagata has gained the enlightenment of the Middle Path, which produces insight and knowledge, and tends to calm, to the higher knowledge, enlightenment, Nirvana.

And what, monks, is the Middle Path, of which the Tathagata has gained enlightenment, which produces insight and knowledge, and tends to calm, to higher knowledge, enlightenment, Nirvana? This is the Eightfold Way: namely, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. This, monks, is the Middle Path, of which Tathagata has gained enlightenment, which produces insight and knowledge, and tends to calm, to higher knowledge, enlightenment, Nirvana.

Now this, monks, is the noble truth of pain: birth is painful, old age is painful, sickness if painful, death is painful, sorrow, lamentation, dejection, and despair are painful. Contact with unpleasant things is painful, not getting what one wishes is painful. In short the five groups of grasping are painful.

Now this, monks, is the noble truth of the cause of pain: the craving, which tends to rebirth, combined with pleasure and lust, finding pleasure here and there; namely, the craving for passion, the craving for existence, the craving for non-existence.

Now this, monks, is the noble truth of the cessation of pain: the cessation without a remainder of craving, the abandonment, forsaking, release, non-attachment.

Now this, monks, is the noble truth of the way that leads to the cessation of pain: this is the noble Eightfold Way; namely, right views, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.

Selections from:

Edwin A. Burtt. *The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha*. New York, Mentor (MP380), 1955. p. 29.

Sayings from the Buddhist Sutras

(Questions Not Tending to Edification)

Thus have I heard:

The venerable Malunkyaputta arose at eventide from his seclusion, and drew near to where The Blessed One was; and having drawn near and greeted The Blessed One, he sat down respectfully at one side. And seated respectfully at one side, the venerable Malunkyaputta spoke to The Blessed One as follows:

"Revered Sir, it happened to me, as I was just now in seclusion and plunged in meditation, that a consideration presented itself to my mind, as follows: 'These theories which the Blessed One has left unelucidated, has set aside and rejected, that the world is finite, that the world is infinite, that the saint exists after death, that the saint does not exist after death, that the saint both exists and does not exist after death, that the saint neither exists nor does not exist after death, these the Blessed One does not elucidate to me. And the fact that The Blessed One does not elucidate them to me does not please me nor suit me. I will draw near to The Blessed One and inquire of him concerning this matter. If The Blessed One will elucidate (them) to me, in that case will I lead the religious life under The Blessed One. If The Blessed One will not elucidate (them) to me, in that case will I abandon religious training and return to the lower life of a layman.'"

"If The Blessed One knows that the world is eternal, let The Blessed One elucidate to me that the world is not eternal; if The Blessed One knows that the world is not eternal, let The Blessed One elucidate to me that the world is not eternal. If The Blessed One does not know either that the world is eternal or that the world is not eternal, the only upright thing for one who does not know, or who has not that insight, is to say, 'I do not know; I have not that insight.'"

(And The Blessed One replied:)

"Malunkyaputta, anyone who should say, 'I will not lead the religious life under The Blessed One until The Blessed One shall elucidate (these things) to me'that person would die, Malunkyaputta, before the Tathagata had ever explained this to him.

"It is as if a man had been wounded by an arrow thickly smeared with poison, and his friends and companions were to cure for him a physician; and the sick man were to say, 'I will not have this arrow taken out until I have learnt whether the man who wounded me belonged to the warrior caste, or to the Brahmin caste, or to the agricultural caste, or to the menial caste.'

"Or again he were to say, 'I will not have this arrow taken out until I have learnt the name of the man who wounded me, and to what clan he belongs.'

"Or again he were to say, 'I will not have this arrow taken out until I have learnt whether the man who wounded me was tall, or short, or of the middle height.'

"That man would die, Malunkyaputta, without ever having learnt this.

"This religious life does not depend on the dogma that the world is eternal; nor does the religious life depend on the dogma that the world is not eternal. Whether the dogma obtain that the world is eternal, or that the world is not eternal, there still remain birth, old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief,

and despair, for the extinction of which in the present life I am prescribing.

"Accordingly, bear always in mind what it is that I have elucidated, and what it is that I have not elucidated. And what have I not elucidated? I have not elucidated that the world is eternal; I have not elucidated that the world is not eternal.... And why have I not elucidated this? Because this profits not, nor has it to do with the fundamentals of religion, nor tends to aversion, absence of passion, cessation, quiescence, the supernatural faculties, supreme wisdom, and Nirvana; therefore I have not elucidated it."

Selections from:

Henry Clarke Warren. *Buddhism, in Translation*. New York, Atheneum (19), 1963. p. 117.

Sayings from the Buddhist Sutras

(The Rain Cloud)

It is as if a cloud rising above the horizon shrouds all space (in darkness) and covers the earth.

That great rain-cloud, big with water, is wreathed with flashes of lightning and rouses with its thundering call all creatures.

By warding off the sunbeams, it cools the region; and gradually lowering so as to come in reach of hands, it begins pouring down its water all around.

And so, flashing on every side, it ours out an abundant mass of water equally, and refreshes this earth.

And all herbs which have sprung up on the face of the earth, all grasses, shrubs, forest trees, other trees small and great;

The various field fruits, and whatever is green; all plants on hills, in caves and thickets;

All those grasses, shrubs, and trees are vivified by the cloud that both refreshes the thirsty earth and waters the herbs.

Grasses and shrubs absorb the water of one essence which issues from the cloud according to their faculty and reach.

And all trees, great, small, and mean, drink that water according to their growth and faculty, and grow lustily.

The great plants whose trunk, stalk, bark, twigs, pith, and leaves are moistened by the water from the cloud develop their blossoms and fruits.

They yield their products, each according to its own faculty, reach, and their particular nature of the germ; still the water emitted (from the cloud) is of but one essence.

In the same way the Buddha comes into the world like a rain-cloud, and, once born, he, the world's Lord, speaks and shows the real course of life.

And the great Seer, honoured in the world, including the gods, speaks thus: I am the Tathagata, the highest of men, the Gina; I have appeared in this world like a cloud.

I shall refresh all being whose bodies are withered, who are clogged to the triple world. I shall bring to felicity those that are pining away with toils, give them pleasures and (final) rest.

I am inexorable, bear no love nor hatred towards any one, and proclaim the law to all creatures without distinction, to the one as well as the other.

I recreate the whole world like a cloud shedding its water without distinction; I have the same feelings for respectable people as for the low; for moral persons as for the immoral;

For the depraved as for those who observe the rules of good conduct; for those who hold sectarian views and unsound tenets as for those whose views are sound and correct.

I also pour out rain: the rain of the law by which this whole world is refreshed; and each according to his faculty take to heart this well-spoken law that is one in its essence.

Even as all grasses and shrubs, as well as plants of middle size, trees and great trees a at the time of rain look bright in all quarters;

So it is the very nature of the law to promote the everlasting weal of the world; by the law the whole world is recreated, and as the plants (when refreshed) expand their blossoms, the world does the same when refreshed.

So then is the preaching of the law like the water poured out by the cloud everywhere alike; by which plants and men thrive, endless (and eternal) blossoms (are produced).

Selections from:
H. Kern. *Saddharma-Pundarika or The Lotus of the True Law*. New York, Dover (T1065), 1963.* p. 122.
*H. Kern's translation is originally vol. XXI of *The Sacred Books of the East*, edited by F. Max Muller.

(The Mahayana Ideal)

By constant use the idea of an "I" attaches itself to foreign drops of seed and blood, although the thing exists not. Then why should I not conceive my fellow's body as my own self? That my body is foreign to me is not hard to see. I will think of myself as a sinner, of others as oceans of virtue; I will cease to live as self, and will take as my self my fellow-creatures. We love our hands and other limbs, as members of the body; then why not love other living beings, as members of the universe? By constant use man comes to imagine that his body, which has no self-being, is a "self;" why then should he not conceive his "self" to lie in his fellows also? Thus in doing service to others pride, admiration, and desire of reward find no place, for thereby we satisfy the wants of our own self. Then, as thou wouldst guard thyself against suffering and sorrow, so exercise that spirit of helpfulness and tenderness towards the world....

Make thyself a spy for the service others, and whatsoever thou seest in thy body's work that is good for thy fellows, perform it so that it may be conveyed to them. Be thou jealous of thine own self when thou seest that it is at ease and thy fellow in distress, that it is in high estate and he is brought low, that it is at rest and he is at labour....

Selections from:
Edwin A. Burtt. *The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha*. New York, Mentor (MP380), 1955. p.140.

Sayings of the Zen Masters

(Two Mice)

Buddha told this parable: A traveler, fleeing a tiger who was chasing him, ran till he came to the edge of a cliff. There he caught hold of a thick vine, and swung himself over the edge.

Above him the tiger snarled. Below him he heard another snarl, and behold, there was another tiger, peering up at him. The vine suspended him midway between the two tigers.

Two mice, a white mouse and a black mouse, began to gnaw at the vine. He could see they were quickly eating it through. Then in front of him on the cliffside he saw a luscious bunch of grapes. Holding onto the vine with one hand, he reached and picked a grape with the other hand.

How delicious!

(Miracles)

While Bankei was preaching quietly to his followers, his talk was interrupted by a Shinshu priest who believed in miracles, and thought salvation came from repeating holy words.

Bankei was unable to go on with his talk, and asked the priest what he wanted to say.

"The founder of **my** religion," boasted the priest, "stood on one shore of a river with a writing brush in his hands. His disciple stood on the other shore holding a sheet of paper. And the founder wrote the holy name of Amida onto the paper across the river through the air. Can you do anything so miraculous?"

"No," said Bankei, "I can only do little miracles. Like: when I am hungry I eat, when I am thirsty I drink, when I am insulted, I forgive."

(Gutei's Finger)

Gutei raised his finger whenever he was asked a question about Zen. A boy attendant began to imitate him in this way. When anyone asked the boy what his master had preached about, the boy would raise his finger.

Gutei heard about the boy's mischief. He seized him and cut off his finger. The boy cried and ran away. Gutei called and stopped him. When the boy turned his head to Gutei, Gutei raised up his own finger. In that instant the boy was enlightened.

When Gutei was about to pass from this world he gathered his monks around him. "I attained my finger Zen" he said, "from my teacher Tenryu, and in my whole life I could not exhaust it." Then he passed away.

Mummon's commentary: Enlightenment, which Gutei and the boy attained, has nothing to do with a finger. If anyone clings to a finger, Tenryu will be so disappointed that he will annihilate Gutei, the boy, and the clinger all together.

Gutei cheapens the teaching of Tenryu,

Emancipating the boy with a knife.

Compared to the Chinese god who pushed aside a mountain with one hand

Old Gutei is a poor imitator.

Selections from:
Zen Buddhism. Mount Vernon, The Peter Pauper Press, 1959. pp.61, 55.

Sayings of the Zen Masters

(Trading Dialogue for Lodging)

Providing he make and wins an argument about Buddhism with those who live there, any wandering monk can remain in a Zen temple. If he is defeated, he has to move on.

In a temple in the northern part of Japan two brother monks were dwelling together. The elder one was learned, but the younger one was stupid and had but one eye.

A wandering monk came and asked for lodging, properly challenging them to a debate about the sublime teaching. The elder brother, tired that day from much studying, told the younger one to take his place. "Go and request the dialogue in silence," he cautioned.

So the young monk and the stranger went to the shrine and sat down.

Shortly afterwards the traveler rose and went in to the elder brother and said: "Your young brother is a wonderful fellow. He defeated me."

"Relate the dialogue to me," said the elder one.

"Well," explained the traveler, "first I held up one finger, representing Buddha, the enlightened one. So he held up two fingers, signifying Buddha and his teaching. I held up three fingers, representing Buddha, his teaching, and his followers, living the harmonious life. Then he shook his clenched fist in my face, indicating that all three come from one realization. Thus he won and so I have no right to remain here." With this, the traveler left.

"Where is that fellow?" asked the younger one, running in to his elder brother.

"I understand you won the debate."

"Won nothing. I'm going to beat him up."

"Tell me the subject of the debate," asked the elder one.

"Why, the minute he saw me he held up one finger, insulting me by insinuating that I have only one eye. Since he was a stranger I thought I would be polite to him, so I held up two fingers, congratulating him that he has two eyes. Then the impolite wretch held up three fingers, suggesting that between us we have only three eyes. So I got mad and started to punch him, but he ran out and that ended it!"

Selections from:
Paul Reps, ed. *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*. Garden City, Doubleday Anchor (A233), 1961. pp. 92, 28.

Haiku from the Japanese Poets

(Basho)

The Oak Tree stands
Noble on the hill even in
Cherry Blossom time.

(Ransetsu)

Waking before dawn, See
How the constellations are all
Turned around!

(Masahide)

Since my house
Burned down, I now own a better view
of the rising moon.

(Soseki)

The leaves never know
Which leaf will be the first to fall...
Does the wind know?

(Soseki)

A rain cloud darkens
Red maples clinging to crags
By a waterfall.

(Basho)

Hello! Light the fire!
I'll bring inside a lovely
Bright ball of snow!

Selections from:
Peter Beilenson & Harry Behn, trans. *Haiku Harvest*. Mount Vernon, Peter Pauper press, 1962.

Sayings of the Taoist Sages

(Lao Tzu #11: Thirty Spokes)

Thirty spokes will converge
In the hub of a wheel;
But the use of the cart
Will depend on the part
Of the hub that is void.

With a wall all around
A clay bowl is molded;
But the use of the bowl
Will depend on the part
Of the bowl that is void.

Cut out the windows and doors
In the house as you build;
But the use of the house
Will depend on the space
In the walls that is void.

So advantage is had
From whatever is there;
But usefulness rises
From whatever is not.

(Lao Tzu #32: Block of Wood)

The Way eternal has no name.
A block of wood untooled, though small,
May still excel the world.
And if the king and nobles could
Retain its potency for good,
Then everything would freely give
Allegiance to their rule.

The earth and sky would then conspire
To bring the sweet dew down;
And evenly it would be given
To folk without constraining power.

Creatures came to be with order's birth,
And once they had appeared,
Came also knowledge of repose,
And with that was security.

In this world,
Compare those of the Way
To torrents that flow
Into river and sea.

Selections from:
Raymond B. Blakney. *The Way of Life: Tao Te Ching*. New York, Mentor (MP416), 1955. p.63, 85

Sayings of the Taoist Sages

(Lao Tzu #78: Water)

Nothing is weaker than water,
But when it attacks something hard
Or resistant, then nothing withstands it,
And nothing will alter its way.

Everyone knows this, that weakness prevails
Over strength and that gentleness conquers
The adamant hindrance of men, but that
Nobody demonstrates how it is so.

Because of this the Wise Man says
That only one who bear the nation's shame
Is fit to be its hallowed lord;
That the only one who take upon himself
The evils of the world may be its king.

This is paradox.

Selections from:
Raymond B. Blakney. *The Way of Life: Tao Te Ching*. New York, Mentor (MP416), 1955. p.131.

Sayings of the Taoist Sages

(Chuang Tzu: Counting Words)

Take the case of some words, Chuang Tzu says, parodying the logicians, I do not know which of them are in any way connected with reality or which are not at all connected with reality. If some that are so connected and some that are not so connected are connected with one another, then as regards truth or falsehood the former cease to be in any way different from the latter. However, just as an experiment, I will now say them: IF there was a beginning, there must have been a time before the beginning began, and if there was a time before the beginning began, there must have bee a time before the time the beginning began. If there is a being, there must also be a not-being. If there was a time before there began to be any not-being, there must also have been a time before the time before there began to be any not-being. But here I am, talking about being and not-being and still do not know whether it is being that exists and not-being that does not exist, or being that does not exist and not-being that really exists! I have spoken, and do not know whether I have said something that means anything or said nothing that has any meaning at all.

"Nothing under Heaven is larger than a strand of gossamer, nothing smaller than Mt. T'ai. Noone lives longer than a child that dies in its swaddling-clothes, no one dies sooner than 'Methuselah." Heaven and earth were born when I was born; the ten thousand things and I among them are but one thing." All this the sophists have proved. But if there were indeed only one thing, there would be no language with which to say so: And in order that anyone should state this, there must be more language in which it can be stated. Thus their one thing together with their talk about the one thing makes two things. And their one thing together with their talk and my statement about it makes three things. And so it goes on, to a point where the cleverest mathematician could no longer keep count, much less an ordinary man. Starting with not-being and going on to being, one soon gets to three. What then would happen if one started with being and went on to being?

Selections from:
Arthur Waley. *Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China*. Garden City, Doubleday Anchor (A75), 1956. p. 8.

Sayings of the Taoist Sages

(Chuang Tzu: Traveling)

In the beginning Lieh Tzu was fond of traveling. The adept Hu-ch'iu Tzu said to him, "I hear that you are fond of traveling. What is it in traveling that pleases you?" "For me," said Lieh Tzu, "The pleasure of traveling consists in the appreciation of variety. When some people travel they merely contemplate what is before their eyes; when I travel, I contemplate the process of mutability." "I wonder," said Hu-ch'iu Tzu, "whether your travels are not very much the same as other people's, despite the fact that you think them so different. Whenever people look at anything, they are necessarily looking at processes of change, and one may well appreciate the mutability of outside thins, while wholly unaware of one's own mutability. Those who take infinite trouble about external travels, have no idea how to set about the sight-seeing that can be done within. The traveler abroad is dependent upon outside things; he whose sight-seeing is inward, can in himself find all he needs. Such is the highest form of traveling; while it is a poor sort of journey that is dependent upon outside things."

After this Lieh Tzu never went anywhere at all, aware that till now he had not known what traveling means. "Now," said Hu-ch'iu Tzu, "you may well become a traveler indeed! The greatest traveler does not know where he is going; the greatest sight-seer does not know what he is looking at. His travels do not take him to one part of creation more than another. That is what I mean by true sight-seeing. And that is why I said, 'Now you may well become a traveler indeed!'"

Selections from:
Arthur Waley. *Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China*. Garden City, Doubleday Anchor (A75), 1956. p. 37.

Sayings of Confucius

(Confucius the Man)

Confucius was gentle yet firm, dignified but not harsh, respectful yet well at ease. (VII:37)

When Confucius was pleased with the singing of someone he was with, he would always ask to have the song repeated and would join in himself. (VII:31)

The Duke of She asked Tzu Lu about Confucius, and Tzu Lu gave him no answer. Confucius said: "Why didn't you tell him that I am a person who forgets to eat when he is enthusiastic about something, forgets all his worries in his enjoyment of it, and is not aware that old age is coming on?" (VII:18)

Confucius said: "Having only coarse food to eat, plain water to drink, and a bent arm for a pillow, one can still find happiness therein. Riches and honor acquired by unrighteous means are to me as drifting clouds." (VII:15)

(On learning and education)

Confucius said: "When walking in a party of three, I always have teachers. I can select the good qualities of the one for imitation, and the bad ones of the other and correct them in myself." (VII:21)

There were four things that Confucius was determined to eradicate: a biased mind, arbitrary judgments, obstinacy, and egotism. (IX:4)

Confucius said: "Those who know the truth are not up to those who love it; those who love the truth are not up to those who delight in it." (VI:18)

Confucius said: "Having hear the Way (Tao) in the morning, one may die content in the evening." (IV:8)

Confucius said: "In education there are no class distinctions." (XV:38)

Confucius said: "The young are to be respected. How do we know that the next generation will not measure up to the present one? But if a man has reached forty or fifty and nothing has been heard of him, then I grant that he is not worthy of respect." (IX:22)

Confucius said: "When it comes to acquiring perfect virtue, a man should not defer even to his own teacher." (XV:35)

Confucius said: "Learning without thinking is labor lost; thinking without learning is perilous." (II:15)

Confucius said: "Yu, shall I teach you what knowledge is? When you know a thing, say that you know it; when you do not know a thing, admit that you do not know it. That is knowledge." (II:17)

(Teachings on reciprocity or humanity)

Confucius said: "Shen! My teaching contains one principle that runs through it all." "Yes," replied Tzeng Tzu. When Confucius had left the room the disciples asked: "What did he mean?" Tseng Tzu replied: "Our Master's teaching is simple this: loyalty and reciprocity." (IV:15)

Tzu Kung asked: "is there any one word that can serve as a principle for the conduct of life?" Confucius said: "Perhaps the word 'reciprocity': Do not do to others what you would not want others to do to you." (XV:23)

Confucius said: "It is man that can make the Way great, not the Way that can make man great." (XV:28)

Fan Ch'ih asked about humanity. Confucius said: "Love men." (XII:22)

Tzu Chang asked Confucius about humanity. Confucius said: "To be able to practice five virtues everywhere in the world constitutes humanity." Tzu Chang begged to know what these were. Confucius said: "Courtesy, magnanimity, good faith, diligence, and kindness. He who is courteous is not humiliated, he who is magnanimous wins the multitude, he who is of good faith is trusted by the people, he who is diligent attains his objective, and he who is kind can get service from the people." (XVII:6)

Confucius said: "Only the humane man can love men and can hate men." (IV:3)

(Confucius on religion)

Lin Fang asked about the fundamental principle of rites. Confucius replied: "You are asking an important question! In rites at large, it is always better to be too simple rather than too lavish..." (III:4)

Tzu Lu asked about the worship of ghosts and spirits. Confucius said: "We don't know yet how to serve men, how can we know about serving the spirits?" "What about death," was the next question. Confucius said: "We don't know yet about life, how can we know about death?" (XI:11)

Fan Ch'ih asked about wisdom. Confucius said: "Devote yourself to the proper demands of the people, respect the ghosts and spirits but keep them at a distancethis may be called wisdom." (VI:20)

Confucius said: "I wish I did not have to speak at all." Tzu Kung said: "But if you did not speak, Sir, what should we disciples pass on to others?" Confucius said: "Look at Heaven there. Does it speak? The four seasons run their course and all things are produced. Does Heaven speak?" (XVII:19)

(On the gentlemen)

Ssu-na Niu asked about the gentleman. Confucius said: "The gentleman has neither anxiety nor fear." Ssun-na Niu rejoined: "Neither anxiety nor fearis that what is meant by being a gentleman?" Confucius said "when he looks into himself and finds no cause for self-reproach, what has he to be anxious about; what has he to fear?" (XII:4)

Tzu Kung asked about the gentleman. Confucius said: "The gentleman first practices what he preaches and then preaches what he practices." (II:13)

Confucius said: "The gentleman reaches upward; the inferior man reaches downward." (XIV:23)

Confucius said: "The gentleman understand what is right; the inferior man understands what is profitable." (IV:16)

Confucius said: "The gentleman makes demands on himself; the inferior man makes demands on others." (XV:20)

Confucius said: "The gentleman seeks to enable people to succeed in what is good but does not help them in what is evil. The inferior man does the contrary." (XII: 16)

Confucius said: "The gentleman is broad-minded and not partisan; the inferior man is partisan and not broad-minded." (II:14)

Selections from:
Wm. Theodore de Bary, ed. *Sources of the Chinese Tradition*, Vol. I. New York, Columbia University Press, 1960. pp. 20-33.

Numbers in parentheses are references to the Analects.

From the Old Testament

(Ecclesiastes 1)

The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; vanity of vanities, all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour wherein he laboureth under the sun? One generation goeth, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth for ever. The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to its place where it ariseth. The wind goeth toward the south; it turneth about unto the north; it turneth about continually in its course, and the wind returneth again to its circuits. All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; unto the place whither the rivers go, thither they go again. All things are full of weariness; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. That which hat been is that which shall be; and that which hath been is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there a new thing whereof it may be said, See this is new? It hath been long ago, in the ages which were before us. There is no remembrance of the former generations; neither shall there be any remembrance of the latter generations that are to come, among those that shall come after.

I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem. And I applied my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all that is done under heaven: it is a sore travail that God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised therewith. I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind. That which is crooked cannot be made straight; and that which is wanting cannot be numbered. I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I have gotten me great wisdom above all that were before me in Jerusalem; yea, my heart hath had great experience of wisdom and knowledge. And I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also was a striving after wind. For in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

Selections from:
The American Standard Version of *The Holy Bible*.

From the Old Testament

(Psalm 104)

Bless the Lord, O my soul. O lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty:

Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind:

Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:

Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.

Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.

At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.

They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou has founded for them.

Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.

He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.

They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst.

By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.

He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.

He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth:

And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.

The trees of the Lord are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted;

Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork the fir-trees are her house.

The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies.

He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.

Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beast of the forest do creep forth.

The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.

The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.

Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.

O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.

So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.

There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.

These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.

That thou givest them, they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.

Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.

Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.

The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works.

He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.

I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.

My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord.

Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Praise ye the Lord.

Selections from:
The Authorized Version (King James) of *The Holy Bible.*

(Psalm 8)

O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

For thou has made him a little lower than the angels, and has crowned him with glory and honour.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the fields;

The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

Selections from:
The Authorized Version (King James) of *The Holy Bible.*

From the New Testament

(From the Sermon on the Mount)

And seeing the multitudes, he went up into the mountain: and when he had sat down, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth and taught them, saying,

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the sons of God.

Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on a stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house. Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through and steal: for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also. The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness! No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment? Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life? And why are ye anxious concerning the raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Be not therefore

anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Selections from:
Matthew 5:1-16, 6:19-34. The Authorized Version (King James) of *The Holy Bible*.

(I Corinthians 13)

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child; now I am become a man, I have put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known. But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three: and the greatest of these is love.

Selections from:
The Authorized Version (King James) of *The Holy Bible*.

From the Zoroastrian Scriptures

(A Prayer for Guidance)

O Ahura Mazda, this I ask of thee: speak to me truly!
How should I pray, when I wish to pray to one like you?
May one like you, O Mazda, who is friendly, teach one like me?
And may you give us supporting aids through the friendly Justice,
And tell us how you may come to us with Good Disposition?

O Ahura Mazda, this I ask of thee: speak to me truly!
Whether at the beginning of the best life
The retributions will be of profit to their recipients?
And whether he, who is bounteous to all through Justice, and who watches the end
Through his Mentality, whether he is the life-healing friend of the people?

O Ahura Mazda, this I ask of thee: speak to me truly!
Who was the first father of Justice by giving birth to him?
Who established the sunlit days and the star glistening sphere and the Milky Way?
Who, apart from thee, established the law by which the moon waxes and wanes?
These and other things would I like to know!

O Ahura Mazda, this I ask of thee: speak to me truly!
Who was from beneath sustaining the earth and the clouds
So that they would not fall down? Who made the waters and the plants?
Who yoked the two swift ones, thunder and lightning, to the wind and to the clouds?
Who is the creator of Good Disposition?

O Ahura Mazda, this I ask of thee: speak to me truly!
Who produced well-made lights and darkness?
Who produced sleep, well-induced through laborious waking?
Who produced the dawns and the noon through the contrast with the night
Whose daily changes act for the enlightened believers as monitors of their interests?

O Ahura Mazda, this I ask of thee: speak to me truly!
Is the message I am about to proclaim genuine?
Does Love support Justice through deeds?
Dost thou with Good Disposition destine the realm for these believers?
For whom but these believers didst thou shape the fortune-bringing cattle?

O Ahura Mazda, this I ask of thee: speak to me truly!
Who shaped prized Love with Power?
Who, by guidance, rendered sons reverent to their Fathers?
It is I who strive to learn to recognize thee
Through the bounteous Mentality, as giver of all good things!

O Ahura Mazda, this I ask of thee: speak to me truly!
I would like to know what sort of a purpose is thine, that I may be mindful of it;
What are thy utterances, about which I asked through the aid of Good Disposition;
The proper knowledge of life through Justice

How shall my soul, encouraged by bliss, arrive at that reward?

O Ahura Mazda, this I ask of thee: speak to me truly!
How may I accomplish the sanctification of those spirits
To whom thou, the well-disposed Master of the coming Kingdom,
Has pronounced promises about its genuine blessings,
Promising that those spirits shall dwell in the same dwellings with Justice and Good Disposition?

O Ahura Mazda, this I ask of thee: speak to me truly!
How will Love actually, in deeds, extend over those persons
To whom thy spirit was announced as a doctrine?
On account of whom was I first elected, and whom I love;
All others I look upon with hostility of mentality!

O Ahura Mazda, this I ask of thee: speak to me truly!
How shall I carry out the object inspired by you,
Namely, my attachment to you, in order that my speech may grow mighty, and
That by that word of mine the adherent of Justice
May in the future commune with Health, and Immortality?

Selections from:
Robert O. Ballou. *World Bible*. New York, The Viking Press, 1944. p.210

Sayings of Muhammad

(The Morning Star)

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful:
By what heaven and the Morning Star
Ah, what will tell thee what the Morning Star is!
The piercing Star!
No human soul but hath a guardian over it.
So let man consider from what he is created.
He is created from a gushing fluid
That issued from between the loins and ribs.
Lo! He verily is able to return him (unto life)
On the day when hidden thoughts shall be searched out.
Then will he have no might nor any helper.
By the heaven which giveth the returning rain,
And the earth which splitteth (with the growth of trees and plants)
Lo! this (Qur'an) is a conclusive word,
It is no pleasantry.
Lo! they plot a plot (against thee, O Muhammad)
And I plot a plot (against them).
So give a respite to the disbelievers. Deal thou gently with them for a while.

(The Overwhelming)

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.
Hath there come unto thee tidings of the Overwhelming?
On that day (many) faces will be down cast,
Toiling, weary,
Scorched by burning fire,
Drinking from a boiling spring,
No food for them save bitter thorn-fruit
Which doth not nourish nor release from hunger.
In that day other faces will be calm,
Glad for their effort past,
In a high garden
Where they hear no idle speech,
Wherein is a gushing spring,
Wherein are couches raised
And goblets at hand
And cushions ranged
And silken carpets spread.
Will they not regard the camels, how they are created?
And the heaven, how it is raised?
And the hills, how they are set up?
And the earth, how it is spread?
Remind them, for thou art but a remembrancer,
Thou art not at all a warder over them.
But whoso is averse and disbelieveth,
Allah will punish him with direst punishment.
Lo! unto Us is their return
And Our their reckoning.

Selections from:
Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall, trans. *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*. New York, Mentor (MT223), 1953. p. 437, 438.

Sayings of the Unitarian Universalists

(Out of the Stars)

Out of the stars in their flight, out of the dust of eternity, here have we come,
Stardust and sunlight, mingling through time and through space.

Out of the stars have we come, up from time
Out of the stars have we come.

Time out of time before time in the vastness of space, earth spun to orbit the sun,
Earth with the thunder of mountains newborn, the boiling of seas.

Earth warmed by sun, lit by sunlight: this is our home;
Out of the stars have we come.

Mystery hidden in mystery, back through all time;
Mystery rising from rocks in the storm and the sea.

Out of the stars, rising from the rocks and the sea,
Kindled by sunlight on earth, arose life.

Ponder this thing in your heart; ponder with awe:
Out of the sea to the land, out of the shallows came ferns.

Out of the sea to the land, up from darkness and light,
Rising to walk and to fly, out of the sea trembled life.

Ponder this thing in your heart, life up from sea:
Eyes to behold, throats to sing, mates to love.

Life from the sea, warmed by sun, washed by rain,
Life from within, giving birth rose to love.

This is the wonder of time; this is the marvel of space;
Out of the stars swung the earth; life upon earth rose to love.

This is the marvel of man, rising to see and to know;
Out of your heart, cry wonder: sing that we live.

Selections from:
Robert T. Weston, "Out of the Stars." Unitarian- Universalist Hymnbook Commission, *Hymns for the celebration of life.* Boston, Beacon Press, 1964 , no. 345.

Sayings of Baha'u'llah

(On the Soul)

Consider the sun when it is completely hidden behind the clouds. Though the earth is still illumined with its light, yet the measure of light which it receiveth is considerably reduced. Not until the clouds have dispersed, can the sun shine again in the plenitude of its glory. Neither the presence of the cloud nor its absence can, in any way, affect the inherent splendor of the sun. The soul of man is the sun by which his body is illumined, and from which it draweth its sustenance, and should be so regarded.

Consider, moreover, how the fruit, ere it is formed, lieth potentially within the tree. Were the tree to be cut into pieces, no sign nor any part of the fruit, however small, could be detected. When it appeareth, however, it manifesteth itself, as thou has observed, in its wondrous beauty and glorious perfection. Certain fruits, indeed, attain their fullest development only after being severed from the tree.

Selections From:
Shoghi Effendi, trans. *Gleanings From the Writings of Baha'u'llah*. Wilmette, Baha'i Pub. Trust, 1952. p. 155.

Sayings of the Poets

(A Faery Song)

(Sung by the people of the Faery over Diarmuid and Grania, in their bridal sleep under a Cromlech.)
We who are old, old and gay,
O so old!
Thousands of years, thousands of years,
If all were told:

Give to these children, new from the world,
Silence and love;
And the long dew-dropping hours of the night,
And the stars above:

Give to these children, new from the world,
Rest far from men.
Is anything better, anything better?
Tell us it then:

We who are old, old and gay,
O so old!
Thousands of years, thousands of years,
If all were told:

Selection from:
W.B. Yeats. "A Faery Song," from *The Rose*. In M.L. Rosenthal, *Selected Poems and Two Plays of William Butler Yeats*. New York: Collier Books, 1962. p.12.

(Fergus and the Druid)

Fergus. This whole day have I followed in the rocks,
And you have changed and flowed from shape to shape,
First as a raven on whose ancient wings
Scarcely a feather lingered, then you seemed
A weasel moving on from stone to stone,
And now at last you wear a human shape,
A thing grey man half lost in gathering night.
Druid. What would you, king of the proud Red Branch knights?
Fergus. This would I say, most wise of living souls:
Young subtle Conchubar sat close by me
When I gave judgment, and his words were wise,
And what to me was burden without end,
To him seemed easy, so I laid the crown
Upon his head to cast away my sorrow.
Druid. What would you, king of the proud Red Branch kings?
Fergus. A king and proud! and that is my despair.
I feast amid my people on the hill,
And pace the woods, and drive my chariot-wheels
In the white border of the murmuring sea;
And still I feel the crown upon my head.
Druid. What would you, Fergus?
Fergus. Be no more a king,
But learn the dreaming wisdom that is yours.
Druid. Look on my thin grey hair and hollow cheeks
And on these my hands that may not lift the sword,
This body trebling like a wind-blown reed.
No woman's loved me, no man sought my help.
Fergus. A king is but a foolish labourer
Who wastes his blood to be another's dream.
Druid. Take, if you must, this little bag of dreams;
Unloose the cord, and they will wrap you round.
Fergus. I see my life go drifting like a river
From change to change; I have been many things
A green drop in the surge, a gleam of light
Upon a sword, a fir-tree on a hill,
An old slave grinding at a heavy quern,
A king sitting upon a chair of gold
And all these things were wonderful and great;
But now I have known nothing, knowing all.
Ah! Druid, Druid, how great webs of sorrow
Lay hidden in the small slate-coloured thing!

Selection from:
W.B. Yeats. "Fergus and the Druid," from *The Rose*. In M.L. Rosenthal, *Selected Poems and Two Plays of William Butler Yeats*. New York: Collier Books, 1962. p.7-8.

(The Prophet)

And an old priest said, "Speak to us of Religion."

And he said:

Have I spoken this day of aught else?

Is not religion all deeds and all reflection,

And that which is neither deed nor reflection,

And that which is neither deed nor reflection, but a wonder and a surprise ever springing in the soul, even while the hands hew the stone or tend the loom?

Who can separate his faith from his actions, or his belief from his occupations?

Who can spread his hours before him, saying, "This for God and this for myself; This for my soul, and this other for my body?"

All your hours are wings that beat through space from self to self.

He who wears his morality but as his best garment were better naked.

The wind and the sun will tear no holes in his skin.

And he who defines his conduct by ethics imprisons his song-bird in a cage.

The freest song comes not through bars and wires.

And he to whom worshipping is a window, to open but also to shut, has not yet visited the house of his soul whose windows are dawn to dawn.

Your daily life is your temple and your religion.

Whenever you enter into it take with you your all.

The things you have fashioned in necessity or for delight.

For in reverie you cannot rise above your achievements nor fall lower than your failures.

And take with you all men:

For in adoration you cannot fly higher than their hopes nor humble yourself lower than their despair.

And if you would know God be not therefore a solver of riddles.

Rather look about you and you shall see Him playing with your children.

And look into space; you shall see him walking in the cloud, outstretching His arms in the lightning and descending in rain.

You shall see him smiling in flowers, then rising and waving His hands in trees.

Selections from: Kahlil Gibran. *The Prophet*. New York, Alfred A. Knofp, 1963. p.77.

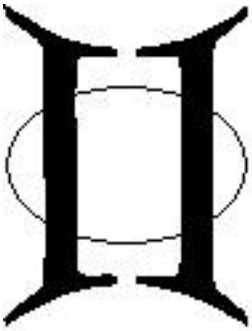
Sayings of (Good Grief!) the Psychologists

Cathedrals & Robes

In the traditional psychologies, one group may find that a certain technique works well in a given situation. Its members may tend to apply it in situations where it is inappropriate, or with people for whom it is inappropriate. Because the technique works for them, they come to believe that it ought to work for everyone at all times. The technique becomes the end, and may become an obsession. Those who are involved in using such a technique, be it a particular meditation technique or a certain breathing exercise, can become fixated and restricted to what the technique has to offer. The adherents may set up schools to teach the "sacred" ritual, forgetting that any technique has its relevance only for a certain community at a certain time. Just as can happen with any scientific technique which is overextended or which persists for too long, the original application and intent of the esoteric technique may become lost, although the surface appearance of the enterprise is well-maintained. Religions construct cathedrals and design robes, just as scientist develop elaborate equipment and professional journals, but all too often the enterprise may become limited to a propagation of the means, with the original end, the desired objective, forgotten.

Selection from:
Robert E. Ornstein. *The Psychology of Consciousness*. New York, The Viking Press, 1972. pp. 97-98.

SO ENDS THE FIRST VOLUME
OF THE GREEN BOOK



Green Book of Meditations Volume Two:

Celtic, Native American, African, Hindu & Greek Writings

I assembled this volume during one of my more nativist phases. There is a good reason that the Founders of the RDNA originally chose a Celtic flavor to their group, because Celtic literature is full of beautiful observations of Nature, as did the Native Americans, Africans, Hindus and Greeks. Each of the other groups have had to deal with the approach of Westernization and the destruction of traditional ways. However, I feel that these selections may provide useful solitary pondering and some may even make good readings at various Druidic services, campfires and tea parties. The translations of the works found in the Green Book Volume Two, with few exceptions, originally from old books and are probably safely past the copyright limit, so feel free to share.

It was originally titled "Celtic and English Writings" and released in 1993, during a flurry of activity when I released new printings of two volumes of Green Books, the Book of the African Jedi Knight, Book 2 of Poetry, The Dead Lake Scrolls, The Dead Bay Scrolls and a new edition of The Druid Chronicles. I was a bit overly busy.

The original edition of the Green Book of Meditations, volume two had quite a different content than this edition, edited for ARDA. The English Poetry section is the same, but the Irish and Welsh Poetry section was rearranged in order to reduce space. I removed the 7 translations by Matthews and Nichol's to avoid copyright problems here. Similarly I have removed the 10 Scottish Gaelic Poetry translations out of respect for those authors. I'll put them into a separate file on the web-site for people to observe. I've also removed a Rosicrucian piece and some Grateful Dead song lyrics. Less than a third of the original volume remains in this edition.

This editing was also done because I felt that I had done too heavy a focus on Celtic writings than is good for the destiny of the Reform. I feel that people should be wide ranging in their studies, so I have replaced those removed sections with writings from other native wisdom traditions. I feel the final product is more intriguing and balanced.

Please Learn and Enjoy,

Michael Scharding
Grand Patriarch of the Ancient Order of Bambi

Big River Grove, Saint Cloud Minnesota
Day 73 of Earrach, Year XXXIII of the Reform
April 14th, 1996 c.e.

Drynemetum Press

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English Poetry

Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening

by Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep.
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

JABBERWOCKY

by Lewis Carroll

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gymble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogroves;
And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood awhile in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,
The jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whirring through the tulgey wood,
And bumbled as it came!

One, two One, two And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

"-And hast thou slain the jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boyl
0 frabjous day Calooh! Callay!-"
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slimy toves
Did gyre and gamble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Irish & Welsh Poetry

Most of the "Druidic" material used by modern Druid groups has survived in the form of obscure poetry. Many groups go to great lengths to "read into" many of these poems for Druidical material, "hidden" by the Bards during the persecutions. Since some of you will "progress" on to more "serious" Druid groups, it is good to be familiar with some of the more "stressed" reading material.

Only the English Translations have been provided. In the original, these poems had marvelous rhymes, meters and clever poetic devices that a literal translation cannot hope to convey. Use the symbology and nature imagery to open your mind. Please don't try to rush through these poems, many are of interminable length and will just bog you down. Skip the longer ones when you are just perusing, that way you'll enjoy them more when you have time.

The Waterfall

By Dafydd y Coed

Rough, bold, cold Rhayadr, with tiny tresses,
Piddling pennyworths,
Blare, blow, blaze, soft arses' snare,
Sewer to Hell's hollow coombe.

Harsh foul-smelling hollow, threatening harm,
Dark candleless bedlam,
Captive waterfall, uncurbed,
Hard-pressing repress, sly slut.

Slyness bound in dark banks, foul dump of dregs,
Where my slaughter was sought,
Sad tale, may there come to town
Fierce flame through vile Wye's Rhayadr.

Hateful is filthy Rhayadr,
I hate its foul sow-like lake,
Hateful, haughty, shit-hole's stink,
Hounds' hate, hate, hate, hate, hate, hate,
Hateful, stagless, my grievance,
Thick-thwacking furrow for churls!

Sadness in Spring

From The Earliest Welsh Poetry, pg. 99

Springtime, loveliest season,
Noisy the birds, new the shoots,
Ploughs in furrow, oxen yoked,
Green the sea, fields are dappled.

When cuckoos sing on comely tree-tops,
The greater is my sadness,
Smoke bitter, loss of sleep plain,
Because my kinsmen are gone.

In mount, in meadow, in ocean isles,
in each way one may take,
From Christ there is no seclusion.

Rain Outside

From The Earliest Welsh Poetry, pg. 99

Rain outside, drenches bracken;
Sea shingle white, fringe of foam;
Fair candle, man's discretion.

Rain outside, need for refuge;
Furze yellowed, hogweed withered;
Lord God, why made you a coward?

Rain outside, drenches my hair;
The feeble plaintive, slope steep;
Ocean pallid, brine salty.

Rain outside, drenches the deep;
Whistle of wind over reed-tips;
Widowed each feat, talent wanting.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following poems use a Welsh (and Irish) tradition of writing in three line poems called Triads. The use of triplets makes it more powerful.

Winter and Warfare

From The Earliest Welsh Poetry, pg. 96

Wind piercing, her bare, hard to find shelter;
Ford turns foul, lake freezes.
A man could stand on a stalk.

Wave on wave cloaks countryside;
Shrill the shrieks from the peaks of the mountain;
One can scarce stand outside.

Cold the lake-bed from winter's blast;
Dried reeds, stalks broken;
Angry wind, woods stripped naked.

Cold bed of fish beneath a screen of ice;
Stag lean, stalks bearded;
Short evening, trees bent over.

Snow is falling, white the soil.
Soldiers go not campaigning.
Cold lakes, their colour sunless.

Snow is falling, white hoar-frost.
Shield idle on an old shoulder.
Wind intense, shoots are frozen.

Snow is falling upon the ice.
Wind is sweeping thick tree-tops.
Shield bold on a brave shoulder.

Snow is falling, cloaks the valley.
Soldiers hasten to battle.
I go not, a wound stays me.

Snow is falling on the slope.
Stallion confined; lean cattle.
No summer day is today.

Snow is falling, white the mountain's edge.
Ship's mast bare at sea.
A coward conceives many schemes.

Gold rims round horns, horns round bards.
Roads frozen, air gleaming bright;
Brief twilight, tree-tops bowed down.

Bees in honeycombs, faint cry of birds.
Day bleak,
White-mantled hill-ridge, red dawn.

Bees in refuge, cold lid on the ford,
Frozen when ice forms.
None may escape death's coming.

Bees in prison, green-hued ocean.
Stalks dried out, hillside hard.
Frigid, bitter, the world today.

Bees in shelter from winter's wetness.
Pale honey, hogweed hollow.
Foul hold on a man, cowardice.

Long night, bare heath, brown hillside,
Grey shore, gulls in a clamour,
Rough seas:. it will rain today.

Dry wind, wet road, brawling water-ways,
Cold corpses, lean stag,
River in flood: it will clear.

Storm on the mountain, rivers embroiled,
Floors of houses flooded:
To one's sight, the world is a sea.

You're not a schoolman, you're not a greybeard,
You'll not answer a crisis:
Ah, Cyndilig, if you'd been a woman!

Stag crouches curled in the coombe's nook.
Ice crumbles, countryside bare.
The brave may survive many battles.

Bankside crumbles beneath the scrawny stag's hoof
High-pitched the wind, screeching.
One can scarcely stand outside.

Winter's first day, darkened surface of heather.
Spuming the sea-wave.
Brief day: let your counsel be done.

With shield for shelter and stallion's spirit
And men, fearless, peerless,
Fine the night for routing foes.

Swift the wind, stripped the woods.
Hollow stalks, hardy stag.
Stern Pelis, what land is this?

Though high as the tawny horse were the snow,
The dark would not make me grieve.
I would lead a band to Bryn Tyddwl.

With high seas beating the embankment and ford,
Snows falls on the hillside,
Pelis, how can you lead us?

Not a worry for me in Britain tonight

Raiding Nuchein's lord's lands
On white steed, Owain leading.

Before you were bearing arms and buckler,
Fierce bulwark in battle,
Pelis, what region reared you?

The man God releases from too strait a prison,
Red lance of a leader,
owain of Rheged reared me.

Though a ruler's gone to Iwerydd's ford,
From the band, do not flee!
After mead, do not seek disgrace.

The morning of grey daybreak,
When Mwng Mawr Drefydd was charged,
Mechydd's steeds were not pampered.

Drink does not make me merry,
What with the tales and my thoughts,
Mechydd, branches your cover.

They encountered at Cafall
A bloody carcass, despised.
Rhun's clash with another hero.

Because the spearmen of Mwng slew Mechydd,
Bold lad who knows it not,
Lord of heaven, you've given me anguish.

Men in combat, ford frozen,
Wave frigid, ocean's breast grey:
These may summon to battle.

Mechydd ap Llywarch, dauntless nobleman,
Comely, swan-coloured cloak,
The first to bridle his steed.

Mountain Snow

The Earliest Welsh Poetry, pg. 100

Mountain snow, each region white;
Common the raven calling;
No good comes of too much slumber.

Mountain snow, deep dingle white;
Woods bend before wind's onslaught;
Many couples are in love
And never come together.

Mountain snow, wind scatters it;
Moonlight far-spread, leaves pale;
Rare the rogue who claims no rights.

Mountain snow, stag nimble;
Common to Britain, proud princes;
A stranger requires cunning.

Mountain snow, stag in rut;
Ducks on the lake, ocean white;
Slow the old, soon overtaken.

Mountain snow, stag bending;
The heart laughs for one loved;
Though a tale be told of me,
I know shame wherever it be.

Mountain snow, shingle white grit;
Fish in ford, shelter in cave;
Who acts harshly is hated.

Mountain snow, stag in flight;
Common for a lord, gleaming blade,
And mounting a saddle-bow,
And dismounting, anger well-armed.

Mountain snow, stag hunched-up;
Many have muttered, truly,
This is not like a summer day.

Mountain snow, stag hunted;
Whistle of wind over tower eaves;
Burdensome, Man, is sin.

Mountain snow, stag bounding;
Whistle of wind over high white wall;
Common, a quiet beauty.

Mountain snow, stag on sea-strand;
An old man knows his youth lost;
A foul face keeps a man down.

Mountain snow, stag in grove;
Raven dark-black, roebuck swift;
One free and well, strange he should groan.

Mountain snow, stag in rushes;
Marshes freezing, mead in cask;
Common for the crippled to groan.

Mountain snow, tower's breast studded;
The beast searches for shelter;
Pity her who has a bad man.

Mountain snow, crag's breast studded;
Reeds withered, herd shunning water;
Pity him who has a bad wife.

Mountain snow, stag in gully;
Bees are sleeping well-sheltered;
A long night suits a robber.

Mountain snow 'liverwort in river;
Wed unwilling to trouble,
The sluggard seeks no swift revenge.

Mountain snow, fish in lake;
Falcon proud, prince in splendour;
One who has all does not groan.

Mountain snow, lords' front rank red;
Lances angry, abundant;
Ah god, for my brother's anguish!!

Bright Trees

(Taliesin by Williams)

Bright are the ash-tops; tall and white will they be
When they grow in the upper part of the dingle;
The languid heart, longing is her complaint...

Bright are the willow-tops; playful the fish
In the lake; the wind whistles over the tops of the branches;
Nature is superior to learning.

Bright the tops of the furze; have confidence
In the wise; and to the universe be repulsive;
Except God, there is none that divines.

Bright are the tops of the clover; the timid have no heart;
jealous ones weary themselves out;
Usual is care upon the weak.

Bright the tops of the reed-grass; furious is the jealous,
And he can hardly be satisfied;
It is the act of the wise to love with sincerity.

Bright the tops of the oat; bitter the ash branches;
Sweet the cow-parsnip, the wave keeps laughing;
The cheek will not conceal the anguish of the heart.

Bright the tops of the dogrose; hardship has no formality;
Let everyone preserve his purity of life.
The greatest blemish is ill manners.

Bright the tops of the broom; let the lover make assignations;
Very yellow are the clustered branches;
Shallow ford; the contented enjoy sleep.

Bright the tops of the apple tree; circumspect is
Every prudent one, a chider of another;
And after loving, indiscretion leaving it.

Bright the hazel-tops by the hill of Digoll;
Unafflicted will be every neglected one;
It is an act of the mighty to keep a treaty.

Bright the tops of reeds; it is usual for the sluggish
To be heavy, the youth to be learners;
None but the foolish will break the faith.

Bright the tops of the lily; let every bold one be a servitor;
The word of a family will prevail;
Usual with the faithless, a broken word.

Bright the tops of the heath; usual is miscarriage
To the timid; water will be intrusive along the shore;
Usual with the faithful, an unbroken word.

Bright the tops of rushes; cows are profitable,
Running are my tears this day;
No comfort is there for the miserable.

Bright the tops of fern, yellow
The charlock; how reproachless are the blind;
How apt to run about are youngsters!

Bright the tops of the service-tree; accustomed to care
Is the aged one, and bees to the wilds;
Except God, there is no avenger

Bright the tops of the oak; incessant is the tempest-
The bees are high; brittle the dry brushwood;
Usual for the wanton is excessive laughter.

Bright the tops of the grove; constantly the trees
And the oak leaves are failing;
Happy is he who sees the one he loves.

Bright the tops of the oaks; coldly purls the stream;
Let the cattle be fetched to the birch-enclosed area;
Abruptly goes the arrow of the haughty to give pain.

Bright the tops of the hard holly; let gold be shared;
When all fall asleep on the rampart,
God will not sleep when he gives deliverance.

Bright the tops of the willows; inherently bold
Will the war-horse be in the long day, when leaves abound;
Those with mutual friends will not hate each other.

Bright the tops of the rushes; prickly will they be
When spread under the pillow;
The wanton mind will be ever haughty.

Bright the tops of the hawthorn; confident the steed;
It is usual for a lover to pursue;
May the diligent messenger do good.

Bright the tops of the cresses; warlike the steed;
Trees are fair ornaments for the ground;
Joyful the soul with what it loves.

Bright is the top of the bush; valuable the steed;
It is good to have discretion with strength;
Let the unskillful be made powerless.

Bright are the tops of the brakes; gay the plumage
Of birds; the long day is the gift of the light;
Mercifully has the beneficent God made them.

Bright the tops of the meadow-sweet; and music
In the grove; bold the wind, the trees shake;
Interceding with the obdurate will not avail.

Bright the tops of the elder-trees; bold is the solitary singer;
Accustomed is the violent to oppress;
Woe to him who takes a reward from the hand.

The Spoils of Annwn

Earliest Welsh Poetry, pg. 213 The following poem, the Spoils of Annwyn, refers to the adventures of the Mabinogian hero, Pwyll, who visits the land of the Dead (Annwn)

Praise to the Lord, Supreme Ruler of the high region,
Who hath extended his dominion to the shores of the world.
Complete was the prison of Gwair in Caer Sidi;
Through the permission of Pwyll and Pryderi,
No one before him went to it.
A heavy blue chain firmly held the youth;
And for the spoils of Annwn gloomily he sings,
And till doom shall continue his lay. Thrice the fullness of Prydwn we went into it.
Except seven, none returned from Caer Sidi.

Am I not a candidate for fame to be heard in the song,
In Caer Pedryvan four times revolving
The first word from the cauldron, when was it spoken?
By the breath of nine damsels gently warmed.
Is it not the cauldron of the Chief of Annwn which is social?

With a ridge round its edge of pearls,
It will not boil the food of a coward nor of one excommunicated.
A sword bright flashing to him will be brought,
And left in the hand of Llyminawg.
And before the door of the porch of hell a lantern is burning.
And when we went with Arthur in his splendid labours,
Except seven, none returned from Caer Vendiwid.

Am I not a candidate for fame, to be heard in song ?
In Caer Pedryfan, the island of Pybyrdor,
Twilight and darkness meet together.
Bright wine was their drink in their assembly.
Thrice the burden of Prydwen we went on the sea.
Except seven, none returned from Caer Rigor.

I will not allow great merit to the directors of learning.
Beyond Caer Wydr they have not beheld the prowess of Arthur.
Three score hundred men were placed upon the wall;
It was difficult to converse with the sentinel.
Thrice the fullness of Prydwen we went with Arthur.
Except seven, none returned from Caer Golur.

I will not allow merit to the multitude trailing on the circuit
They know not on what day or who caused it,
Nor what hour in the splendid day Cwy was born,
Nor who prevented him from going to the vales of Deowy.
They know not the brindled ox, with this thick headband,
And seven score knobs in his collar.
And when we went with Arthur of mournful memory,
Except seven, none returned from Caer Vandwy.

Cad Goddeu

"Battle of the Trees"

by Taliesin, found in John Matthews books *Taliesin*, pg. 297, which I highly recommend. Take this piece for instance. The next piece is extremely overused by Celtophiles because of it's marvelous description of fighting trees and plants. Many think this refers to the Ogham alphabet, which represents trees by their first letter in the Irish language. Therefore, many believe this song contains hidden Druidic knowledge. I think so too, but it also is great for fighting imagery.

"Taliesin" was a Welsh bard (or even an Irish one writing Welsh) of the 5th-8th century who is accredited with writing many of the earliest surviving poems in the Welsh language. He shows up in the Mabinogian with the other gods of the Welsh and may act as the Welsh "Muse."

I have been in many shapes
Before I assumed a constant form:
I have been a narrow sword,
A drop in the air,
A shining bright star,
A letter among words
In the book of origins.
I have been lantern light
For a year and a day,
I have been a bridge
Spanning three score rivers.
I have flown as an eagle,
Been a coracle on the sea,
I have been a drop in a shower,
A sword in a hand,
A shield in battle,
A string in a harp.
Nine years in enchantment,
In water, in foam,
I have absorbed fire,
I have been a trout in a covert,

There is nothing of which
I have not been part.

I fought, though small,
At the battle of Goddeu Brig.
With Prydain's ruler,
With his rich-laden fleet.
Unwise bards pretend
A terrible beast
With a hundred heads
The battle was contested
At the root of its tongue,
At the back of its skull.
The hundred-clawed black toad,
The crested, speckled snake
Are the soul's punishment,
A torment to the flesh.

I was at Caer Nefenhir,
Where grass and trees came swiftly
Wayfarers perceived them,
Warriors stood astonished,
At the might of the Britons,
Shown forth by Gwydion.
Men called upon the Christ,
On the Saints as well,
To deliver them swiftly

From terrible rage.
Answer they got
In elemental language:
Rush, ye chiefs of the Wood
With the princes in your thousands,
To hinder the hosts of the enemy.
The trees were enchanted
For work of destruction,
The battle was joined
with the music of harps.
In the tumult many fell,
But brought forth new heroes ..
[four lines omitted].

The Alders, first in line,
Thrust forward in time.
The Willows and Mountain Ash
Were late to the array.
The Blackthorns, full of spines,
And their mate, the Mediar
Cut down all opposition.
The Rose marched along
Against a hero throng.
The Raspberry was decreed
To serve as useful food,
For the sustenance of life
Not to carry on the strife.
The Wild Rose and the Woodbine
With the Ivy intertwined
How the Poplar trembled,
And the Cherry dared.
The Birch, all ambition,
Was tardily arrayed;
Not from any diffidence, but
Because of its magnificence
The Labumum set its heart
On beauty not bravery.
The Yew was to the fore,
At the seat of war.
The Ash was most exalted
Before the sovereign powers.
The Elm, despite vast numbers,
Swerved not half a foot,
But fell upon the centre,
On the wings, and on the rear.
The Hazel was esteemed,
By its number in the quiver.
Hail, blessed Cornell,
Bull of battle, King of all.
By the channels of the sea,
The Beech did prosperously.
The Holly livid grew,
And manly acts it knew.
The White Thorn checked all
its venom scored the palm.
The Vines, which roofed us,
Were cut down in battle
And their clusters plundered.
The Broom, before the rage of war
In the ditch lay broken.
The Gorse was never prized;
Thus it was vulgarized
Before the swift oak-darts
Heaven and earth did quake.
The Chestnut suffered shame
At the power of the Yew.
Forest, that caused obstruction,
The multitude was enchanted,
At the Battle of Goddeu Brig. [12 lines omitted]

Not of mother nor of father was my creation.
I was made from the nine fold elements
From fruit trees, from paradisiacal fruit,
From primroses and hill-flowers,
From the blossom of trees and bushes.
From the roots of the earth was I made,
From the broom and the nettle,
From the water of the ninth wave.
Math enchanted me before I was made immortal,
Gwydion created me with his magic wand.
From Emrys and Euryon, from Mabon and Modron,
From five fifties of magicians like Math was I made
Made by the master in his highest ecstasy
By the wisest of druids was I made before the world began,
And I know the star-knowledge from the beginning of Time.

Bards are accustomed to praises.
I can frame what no tongue utters.
I slept in purple,
I was in the enclosure
With Dylan Eil Mor,
I was a cloak between lords,
Two spears in the hand of the mighty,
When the torrent fell
From the height of heaven.
I know four hundred songs
Which bards both older and younger cannot sing
Nine hundred more, unknown to any other.
I will sing concerning the sword
Which was red with blood.
I will sing the boar-slaying,
Its appearance, and its vanishing
Of the knowledge it contained.
I have knowledge of splendid starlight,
The number of ruling stars
Scattering rays of fire
Above the world.

I have been a snake enchanted on a hill,
1 have been a viper in a lake;
I have been a star, crooked at first,
The heft of a knife, or a spear in battle.
Clearly shall I prophesy

Of battle where smoke comes drifting.
Five battalions of lads will dance on my knife.
Six yellow horses - the best of the breed
Better than any is my cream-coloured steed,
Swift as a sea-mew along the shore.
I myself am a power in battle,
A cause of blood from a hundred chieftains.
Crimson is my shield, gold my shield-rim.
Only Geronwy, from the dales of Edrywy,
Is better than I.

Long and white are my fingers.
Since I was a shepherd,
Since I was learned,
I have traveled the world;
I have made my circuit,
I have dwelled in a hundred islands,
In a hundred caers.
O wise and proficient druids
Do you prophesy of Arthur

Or is it I you celebrate?
I know what is to be
You what has been;
I know the saga of the flood,
Christ's crucifixion,
The day of doom.
Golden, Jeweled,
I shall be richly bedecked
Luxury shall attend me
Because of Virgil's (or 'the Ffyrllt's') prophecy.

Leadership

Be not too wise, not too foolish,
be not too conceited, nor too diffident,
be not too haughty, nor too humble,
be not too talkative, nor too silent
be not too hard, nor too feeble.
for:
If you be too wise, one will expect too much of you;
if you be too foolish, you will be deceived;
if you be too conceited, you will be thought vexatious;
if you be too humble, you will be without honor;
if you be too talkative, you will not be heeded;
if you be too silent, you will not be regarded;
if you be too hard, you will be broken;
if you be too feeble, you will be crushed.

"It is through these habits," adds Cormac,
"That the young become old and kingly warriors."

Sunshine through the Window

Pleasant to me is the glittering of the sun today upon these margins, because it flickers so.
Irish; marginal note by an unknown Irish scribe; 9th century

Further Readings

An excellent book to continue your readings is *A Celtic Miscellany* collected by Kenneth Hurlestone Jackson which is available in the Penguin Classics section. It has a great many selections of ancient Irish and Welsh poems, stories and prayers.

The Thirteen Fold Mystery Section

Editor's Note: Both OBOD and the RDNA use the following poem by Amergin, as he tries to dispel the Druidic wind that is keeping his Milesian fleet of boats off the shore of Ireland. Translators of Old Irish take great liberty with it, and so each rendering is different in the imagery of its inherent shamanistic qualities. Therefore I'll give many versions, so choose the version you wish. It is from the "Book of Invasions," one of the major Irish mythological cycles. In the RDNA, we call this passage, The Thirteen Fold Mystery.

Amergin's Song

(Found in *Book of Druidry*, pg. 289)

I am a wind on the wave,
I am a wave of the ocean,
I am the roar of the sea,
I am a powerful ox,
I am a hawk on a cliff,
I am a dewdrop in the sunshine,
I am a boar for valor,
I am a salmon in pools,
I am a lake in a plain,
I am the strength of art,
I am a spear with spoils that wages battle,
I am a man that shapes fire for a head.
Who clears the stone-place of the mountain?
What the place in which the setting of the gun lies?
Who has sought peace without fear seven times?
Who names the waterfalls?
Who brings his cattle from the house of Tethra?
What person, what god,
Forms weapons in a fort?
In a fort that nourishes satirists,
Chants a petition, divides the Ogam letters,
Separates a fleet, has sung praises?
A wise satirist.

Amergin's Song

(from "Taliesin" by Edward Williams)

At once, the wind dropped and the sea became flat calm. The Milesians sailed on and despite some losses, landed finally at Inber Colptha. There Amergin, the Druid, spoke this rhapsody:
I am the wind upon the sea,
I am a wave upon the ocean,
I am the sound of the sea,
I am a stag of seven points,
I am a bull of seven fights,
I am a bull a cliff,
I am a hawk upon a cliff,
I am a teardrop of the sun,
I am the fairest of blossoms,
I am a boar of boldness,
I am a salmon in a pool,
I am a lake on a plain,
I am a word of skill,
I am a battle-waging spear of spoil,
I am a God who fashions fire in the mind.
Who but I knows the secrets of the stone door?
Who has seven times sought the Places of Peace?

Who, save I, knows the ages of the moon,
The place and time the sun sets?
Who calls the kine from Tethra's house,
And sees them dance in the bright heavens?
Who shapes weapons in a fort of glass,
In a fort that harbors satirists?
Who put the poet, the singer of praises,
Who but I divides the Ogam letters,
Separates combatants, approaches the Faery mound?
I, who am a wind upon the sea.

Based on the original Irish, and on the translations of Macalister, Hull & Cross and Slover 170, 130.

The Song of Amergin I

(As arranged by Robert Graves)
Year of 13 Months
Dec 24-Jan 21
Jan 22-Feb 18
Feb 19-Mar 18
Mar 19-Apr 15
Apr 16-May 13
May 14-June 10
June 11-July 8
July 9-Aug 5
Aug 6-Sept 2
Sept 3-Sept 30
Oct 1-Oct 28
Oct 29-Nov 25
Nov 26-Dec 22
Dec 23 ?

God is speaking
I am a stag of seven tines.
I am a wide flood on a plain
I am a wind on the deep waters
I am a shining tear of the sun.
I am a hawk on a cliff.
I am a fair amongst flowers
I am a god who sets the head afire with smoke
I am a battle waging spear
I am a salmon in a pool
I am a hill of poetry
I am a ruthless boar
I am a great noise from the sea.
I am a wave of the sea
Who but I knows the secret of the unhewn dolmen?

Tree Alphabet

Beith the Birch
Luis the Rowan
Nuinn the Ash
Fearn the Alder
Saille the Willow
Huath the Hawthorn
Duir the Oak
Teinn the Holly
Coll the Hazel
Muinn the Vine
Gort the Ivy
Ngetal the Reed
Ruis the Elder tree
- Irish-Gaelic Poetic Wisdom (*Book of Druidry,* pg. 89)

Spirit

I am the Wind that blows over the sea,
I am the Wave of the Ocean;
I am the Murmur of the billows;
I am the Ox of the Seven Combats;
I am the vulture upon the rock;
I am a Ray of the Sun;
I am the fairest of Plants;
I am a Wild Boar in valour;
I am a Salmon in the Water;
I am a Lake in the plain;
I am the Craft of the artificer;
I am a Word of Science;
I am the Spear-point that gives battle;'
I am the god that creates in the head of man the fire of thought.

The Voyage of Bran, Son of Febal

(pg. 589 of *Taliesin* by Edward Williams, 1848)

Editor's Note: The following extensive poem from the Irish(?) is about a young prince who journeys by boat into the land of faeries. Islands were considered somewhat magical by the Celtic peoples. References to the afterlife can be found in the descriptions of what faeries do to pass the time. It's really long, but good.

'Twas fifty quatrains that the woman from unknown lands sang on the floor of the house to Bran son of Febal, when the royal house was full of kings, who knew not whence the woman had come, since the ramparts were closed.

This is the beginning of the story. One day, in the neighborhood, of his stronghold, Bran went about alone, when he heard music behind him. As often as he looked back, 'twas still behind him the music was. At last he fell asleep at the music, such was its sweetnessWhen he awoke from his asleep, he saw close by him a branch of silver with white blossoms, nor was it easy to distinguish its bloom from the branch. Then Bran took the branch in his hand to his royal house. When the hosts were in the royal house, they saw a woman in strange raiment therein. 'Twas then she sang the fifty quatrains to Bran, while the host heard her, and all beheld the woman. And she said:

A branch of the apple-tree from Emne
I bring, like those one knows;
Twigs of white silver are on it,
Crystal brows with blossoms.

There is a distant isle,
Around which sea-horses glisten:
A fair course against the white-swelling surge,
Four pillars uphold it.

A delight of the eyes, a glorious range,
Is the plain on which the hosts hold games:
Coracle contends against chariot
In the southern Plain of White Silver.

Pillars of white bronze under it
Glittering through beautiful ages.
Lovely land throughout the world's age,
On which the many blossoms drop.

An ancient tree there is with blossoms,
On which birds call the canonical Hours.
'Tis in harmony it is their wont
To call together every Hour.

Splendors of every color glisten
Throughout the gentle-voiced plains.
Joy is known, ranked around music,
In southern White-Silver Plain.

Unknown is wailing or treachery
In the familiar cultivated land,
There is nothing rough or harsh,
But sweet music striking on the ear.

Without grief, without sorrow, without death,
Without any sickness, without debility,
That is the sign of Emne
Uncommon is an equal marvel.

A beauty of a wondrous land,
Whose aspects are lovely,
Whose view is a fair country,
Incomparable is its haze.

Then if Silvery Land is seen,
On which dragon stones and crystals drop,
The sea washes the wave against the land,
Hair of crystal drops from its mane.

Wealth, treasures of every hue,
Are in Ciuin, a beauty of freshness,
Listening to sweet music,
Drinking the best of wine.

Golden chariots in Mag Rein,
Rising with the tide to the sun,
Chariots of silver in Mag Mon,
And of bronze without blemish.

Yellow golden steeds are on the sward there
Other steeds with crimson hue
Others with wool upon their backs
Of the hue of heaven all-blue.

At sunrise there will come
A fair man illumining level lands;
He rides upon the fair sea-washed plain,
He stirs the ocean till it is blood.

A host will come across the clear sea,
To the land they show their rowing;
Then they row to the conspicuous stone,
From which arise a hundred strains.

It sings a strain unto the host
Through long ages, it is not sad,
its music swells with chorus of hundreds
They look for neither decay nor death.

Many-shaped Emne by the sea,
Whether it be near, whether it be far,
In which are many thousands of variegated women,
Which the clear Sea encircles.

If he has heard the voice of the music,
The chorus of the little birds from Imchiunn,
A small band of women will come from a height
To the plain of sport in which he is.

There will come happiness with health
To the land against which laughter peals,
Into Imchiuin at every season
Will come everlasting joy.

It is a day of lasting weather
That showers silver on the lands,
A pure-white cliff on the range of the sea,
Which from the sun receives its heat.

The host race along Mag Mon,
A beautiful game, not feeble,
In the variegated land over a mass of beauty.
They look for neither decay nor death.

Listening to music at night,
And going into Ildathach,
A variegated land, splendor on a diadem of beauty,
Whence the white cloud glistens.

There are thrice fifty distant isles
In the ocean to the west of us;
Larger than Erin twice
Is each of them, or thrice.

A great birth will come after ages,
That will not be in a lofty place,
The son of a woman whose mate will not be known,
He will seize the rule of the many thousands.

A rule without beginning, without end,
He has created the world so that it is perfect,
Whose are earth and sea,
Woe to him that shall be under His unwill

'Tis He that made the heavens,
Happy he that has a white heart,
He will purify hosts under pure water,
'Tis He that will heal your sickness.

Not to all of you is my speech given,
Though its great marvel has been heard:
Let you, Bran, only hear from among this crowd
What of wisdom has been told to him.

Do not fall on a bed of sloth,
Let not thy intoxication overcome thee;
Begin a voyage across the clear sea,
If perchance thou mayst reach the land of women.

Thereupon the woman went from them, while they knew not whither she went. And she took her branch with her. The branch sprang from Bran's hand into the hand of the woman, nor was there strength in Bran's hand to hold the branch.

Then on the morrow Bran went upon the sea. The number of his men was three companies of nine. One of his foster-brothers and shield mates was set over each of the three companies of nine. When he had been at sea two days and two nights, he saw a man in a chariot coming towards him over the sea. That man also sang thirty other quatrains to him, and made himself known to him, and said that he was; Manannan son of Lir, and said that it was upon him to go to Ireland after long ages, and that a son would be born to him, Mongan son of Fiachnathat was the name which would be upon him. So Manannan sang these thirty quatrains to Bran:

Bran deems it a marvelous beauty
In his coracle across the clear sea:
While to me in my chariot from afar
It is a flowery plain on which he rows about.

That which is a clear sea
For the prowed skiff in which Bran is,
That is a happy plain with profusion of flowers
To me from the chariot of two wheels.

Bran sees
The number of waves beating across the clear sea:
I myself see in Mag Mon
Rosy-colored flowers without fault.

Sea-horses glisten in summer
As far as Bran has stretched his glance:
Rivers pour forth a stream of honey
In the land of Manannan son of Lir.

The sheen of the main, on which thou art,
The white hue of the sea, on which thou rowest,
Yellow and azure are spread out,
It is land, and is not rough.

Speckled salmon leap from the womb
Of the white sea, on which thou lookest:
They are calves, they are colored lambs
With friendliness, without mutual slaughter.

Though but one chariot-rider is seen
In Mag Mell of many flowers,
There are many steeds on its surface,
Though them thou seest not.

The size of the plain, the number of the host,
Colors glisten with pure glory,
A fair stream of silver, cloths of gold,
Afford a welcome with all abundance.

A beautiful game, most delightful,
They play sitting at the luxurious wine,
Men and gentle women under a bush,
Without sin, without crime.

Along the top of a wood has swum
Thy coracle across ridges,
There is a wood of beautiful fruit
Under the prow of thy little boat.

A wood with blossom and fruit,
On which is the vine's veritable fragrance,
A wood without decay, without defect,
On which are leaves of golden hue.

We are from the beginning of creation
Without old age, without consummation of earth,
Hence we expect not that there should be frailty;
Sin has not come to us.

An evil day when the Serpent went
To the father to his city!
She has perverted the times in this world,
So that there came decay which was not original

By greed and lust he has slain us,
Through which he has ruined his noble race:
The withered body has gone to the fold of torment,
And everlasting abode of torture.

It is a law of pride in this world
To believe in the creatures, to forget God,
Overthrow by diseases, and old age,
Destruction of the soul through deception.

A noble salvation win come
From the King who has created us,
A white law will come over seas;
Besides being God, He will be man.

This shape, he on whom thou lookest

Will come to thy parts;
'Tis mine to journey to her house,
To the woman in Moylinny.,

For it is Manannan son of Lir,
From the chariot in the shape of a man;
Of his progeny will be a very short while
A fair man in a body of white clay.

Manannan the descendent of Lir will be
A vigorous bed-fellow to Caintigern:
He shall be called to his son in the beautiful world,
Fiachna will acknowledge him as his son.

He will delight the company of every fairy-mound,
He will be the darling of every goodly land,
He will make known secrete-a course of wisdom
In the world, without being feared.

He will be in the shape of every beast,
Both on the azure sea and on land,
He will be a dragon before hosts at the onset,
He will be a wolf in every great forest.

He will be a stag with horns of silver
In the land where chariots are driven,
He will be a speckled salmon in a full pool,
He will be a seal, he win be a fair-white swan.

He will be throughout long ages
A hundred years in fair kingship,
He will cut down battalion,a lasting grave
He will redden fields, a wheel around the track.

It will be about kings with a champion
That he will be known as a valiant hero,
Into the strongholds of a land on a height
I shall send an appointed end from Islay.

High shall I place him with princes,
He will be overcome by a son of error;
Manannan the son of Lir
Will be his father, his tutor.

He will behis time will be short
Fifty years in this world:
A dragon-stone from the sea will kill him
In the fight at Senlabor.

He will ask a drink from Loch Lo,
While he looks at the stream of blood;
The white host will take him under a wheel of clouds
To the gathering where them is no sorrow.

Steadily then let Bran row,
Not far to the Land of Women,
Emne with many hues of hospitality
Thou wilt reach before the setting of the sun.

Thereupon Bran went from Manannan mac Lir. And he saw an island. He rowed round about it, and a large host was gaping and laughing. They were all looking at Bran and his people, but would not stay to converse with them. They continued to give forth gusts of laughter at them. Bran sent one of his people on the island. He ranged himself with the others, and was gaping at them like the other men of the island. Bran kept rowing round about the island. Whenever his man came past Bran, his comrades would address him. But he would not converse with them, but would mostly look at them and gape at them. The name of this island is the Island of Joy. Thereupon they left him there.

It was not long thereafter when they reached the Land of Women. They saw the leader of the women at the port. Said the chief of the women: "Come hither on land, 0 Bran son of Febal! Welcome is thy coming!" Bran did not venture to go on Shore. The woman threw a ball of thread to Bran straight over his face. Bran put his hand on the ball, which adhered to his palm. The thread of the ball was in the woman's hand, and she pulled the coracle towards the port. Thereupon they went into a large house, in which was a bed for every couple, even thrice nine beds. The food that was put on every dish vanished not from them. It seemed a year to them that they were thereit chanced to be many years. No savor was wanting to them. Home-sickness seized each one of them, even Nechtan son of Collbran. Bran's kindred kept praying him that he should go to Erin with them. The woman said to them their going would make them rue.

However, they went, and the woman said that none of them should touch the land, and that they should visit and take with them the man whom they had left in the Island of Joy.

Then they went until they arrived at a gathering at Srub Brain on the coast of Erin. The men asked of them who it was came over the Erin. Said Bran: "I am Bran the son of Febal." One of the men said: "We do not know such a one, though the 'Voyage of Bran' is in our ancient stories."

One of Bran's men sprang from them out of the coracle. As soon as he touched the earth of Ireland, forthwith he was a heap of ashes, as though he had been in the earth for many hundred years. 'Twas then that Bran sang this quatrain:

For Collbran's son great was the folly
To lift his hand at age,
Without any one casting a wave of pure water
Over Nechtan, Collbran's son.

Thereupon, to the people of the gathering Bran told all his wanderings from the beginning until that time. And he wrote these quatrains in ogam, and then bade them farewell. And from that hour his wanderings are not known.

Wisdom of the Modern Gaels

The Gaelic peoples of Ireland, Scotland and the Isle of Man have always been known for their wits and wisdom, although not always carried out in practice. The following proverbs are taken from two collections: *Irish Proverbs and Sayings: Gems of Irish Wisdom* by Padraic O'Farrell from Mercier Press in Dublin Ireland 1980 and *Scottish Proverbs* by Lang Syne Publishers Ltd. of Newtongrange, Midlothian 1980. While they are sort of short for a meditational reading, they are good for solitary reading.

Advice

It's no use giving good advice unless you have the wisdom to go with it.

Neither give cherries to pigs nor advice to a fool.

Good advice often comes from a fool.

It is foolish to scorn advice but more foolish to take all advice.

Don't throw away the dirty water until you are sure you have clean water.

If you have to give advice to lovers find out what they want first and advise them to do that.

The ambitious man is seldom at peace.

A gentle answer quells the anger.

Don't go to the goat's shed if it's wool you're seeking.

There's no point in keeping a dog if you are going to do your own barking.

Attitudes

The best way to get an Irishman to refuse to do something is by ordering it.

Bigots and begrudgers will never bid the past farewell.

The man with the broken ankle is most conscious of his legs.

Hating a man doesn't hurt him half as much as ignoring him.

All men praise their native country.

Initiative is praiseworthy when it succeeds, stupid when it fails.

A cynic is "... a man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing." -Wilde

Titles distinguish the mediocre, embarrass the superior and are disgraced by the inferior. -Shaw

Morality is simply the attitude we adopt towards people whom we personally dislike. -Wilde

There is no satisfaction in hanging a man who does not object to it. -Shaw

Say what you will, an ill mind will turn it to ill.

Behaviour

Keep a blind eye when you're in another man's corner.

The more you step on the dunghill, the more dirt you'll get in.

Don't bless with the tip of your tongue if there's bile at the butt.

Here's to absent friends and here's twice to absent enemies.

Company

If you lie down with dogs you'll rise with fleas

The loneliest man is the man who is lonely in a crowd.

Talk to yourself rather than to bad companions.

If you want to be with the company you'll call it good company

Don't keep company with your betters. You won't like them and they won't like you.

There's no war as bitter as a war between friends.

The best way to make friends is to meet often. The best way to keep them is to meet seldom.

Choose your friend amang the wise, and your wife amang the virtuous.

Friendship multiplies our joys, and divides our grief.

Hearts may agree, though heads differ.

Contentment

Enough is as good as plenty.

Be happy with what you have and you'll have plenty to be happy about.

The far hills may be greener, but the hill you climb on the way to work is less steep.

The slow horse reaches the mill.

Night never yet failed to fall.

If you rush the cook the spuds will be hard.

The apple won't fall till it is ripe.

A pund o' care winna pay an ounce o' debt.

Death

Death looks the old in the face and lurks behind the youths.

Dead men tell not tales, but there's many a thing learned in a wake house.

There are more lies told in a wake-room than in a court-room.

Death is deaf, and will hear nae denial.

Education and Experience

A knowledgeable man frowns more often than a simpleton.

No use having the book without the learning.

You won't learn to swim on the kitchen floor.

A wise man doesn't know his master's mistakes.

Learning is a light burden.

Sense bought by experience is better than two senses learned by book.

Don't start to educate a nation's children until its adults are learned.

A scholar's ink lasts longer than a martyr's blood.

The school house bell sounds bitter in youth and sweet in age.

An experienced rider doesn't change his horse in midstream.

An old broom knows the dirty corners best.

The wearer knows best where the boot pinches.

An old dog sleeps near the fire but he'll not burn himself.

The lesson learned by a tragedy is a lesson never forgotten.

A family of Irish birth will argue and fight, but let a shout come from without and see them all unite.

Fate

If you're born to be hanged, you'll never be drowned.

No matter how long the day, night must fall.

Who's drowned in the storm is to be mourned for, after the storm has calmed.

An oak is often split by a wedge from its branch.

Never miss the water till the well runs dry.

We learn in suffering what we teach in song.

Flee as fast as you will, your fortune will be at your tail.

Fighting

He who faces disaster bravely can face his maker.

If you're the only one that knows you're afraid, you're brave.

One brave man forms a majority.

Courage against misfortune, and reason against passion.

Better to come in at the end of a feast than at the beginning of a fight.

The quarrelsome man is lucky. Everybody has to put up with him except himself.

If we fought temptation the way we fight each other we'd be a nation of saints again.

Better bear the palm than face the fist.

An Irishman is seldom at peace unless he is fighting.

The first blow is half the battle. -Goldsmith

This contest is one of endurance and it is not they that can inflict the most, but they who can suffer the most who will conquer. -Terence MacSwiney.

Anger begins wi' folly, and ends wi' repentance.

Anger's mair hurtfu' than the wrang that caused it

He that will be angry for ony thing, will be angry for naething.

When drums beat, law is silent.

Muscles won't bend a strong man's will.

The strong man may when he wishes; the weak man may when he can.

It's not the strongest who live longest.

The man with the strongest character is attacked most often.

Foolishness

There's no fool like an old fool.

Correct your own mistakes from those made by fools.

A man may speak like a wise man, and act like a fool.

God and Heaven

God gave us two ears and one mouth and we should use them in the same proportion.

God is good but don't dance in a canoe.

God's help is closer than the door.

Prayers from a black heart are like thunder from a black sky, neither are wanted by God nor man.

The road to Heaven is well signposted but badly lit at night.

Forsake not God till you find a better master.

A good life is the only religion

A good example is the best sermon.

A good conscience is the best divinity.

Greed

Every man is born clean, clever and greedy. Most of them stay greedy.

The greedy man stores all but friendship.

Dispensing charity is the only advantage in amassing a fortune.

A mean act is long felt.

If you lend your coat don't cut off the buttons.

There's little difference between a closed hand and a fist.

It's easy to sleep on your neighbour's misfortune.

Charity begins at hame, but shouldna end there.

Hope

"I hope to" is a weak man's way of refusing.

He who has never hoped can never despair.

There's nothing that trouble hates facing as much as a smile.

Humor

A sense of humor is not a burden to carry yet it makes heavy loads lighter.

One man with humour will keep ten men working.

Humour, to a man, is like a feather pillow. It is filled with what is easy to get but gives great comfort.

When a thing is funny, search it for a hidden truth. -Shaw

Hypocrisy and Integrity

The bigger the patch, the bigger the hole.

The man that hugs the altar-rails does not always hug his own wife.

Before you shake the right hand of an enemy make sure he's not left handed.

It's harder to become honest than it is to become rich.

When an Irishman talks of "principle" he is a danger to everybody. -O'Connor

Those who make the laws are often their greatest breakers.

Greatness in a man knows modesty.

Bribe the rogue and you needn't fear the honest man.

Man can climb the highest summits, but he cannot dwell there long. -Shaw

The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. -Shaw

Love

If you live in my heart, you live rent-free.

A flicker that warms is better than a blaze that burns.

Love is like sun to a flourit invigorates the strong but wilts the weak.

Nature

It costs nothing to see nature's great non-stop show.

It takes every blade of grass to make the meadow green.

Politics

The politician is a man who can find a problem in every solution.

An ambassador is a politician who can do less harm away from home.

The successful political leader can divide the national cake so that everybody thinks he's getting a slice.

There's nothing like a few shots to change the fanatic into a non-partisan.

A patriotic politician will always lay down your life for his country.

A political party is the madness of the many for the gain of a few. -Swift

Pride

You cannot soothe the proud.

Pride is the author of every sin.

Pride never stops growing until it's ready to challenge God.

The gentry's pride prevents their seeing the beauty of humility.

He that winna be counseled canna be helped.

Tact and Talk

A diplomat must always think twice before he says nothing.

Never talk about a rope in the house of a hanged man.

A tactful word is better than a pound in the hand.

Never talk about the blow that's not yet struck.

Tact is clever humility.

If you say everything you want to say, you'll hear something you don't want to hear.

A kind word never got a man in trouble.

Whisper into your cup when ill is spoken.

You can easily win an argument if you start off by being right.

Leave the bad news where you found it.

Every man is wise till he speaks.

You need not praise the Irish language simply speak it. -Pearse

There are two types of theater critic. One thinks he's God Almighty, the other is sure of it.

A gossip speaks ill o' a', and a' o' her.

Wisdom

A man begins cutting his wisdom teeth the first time he bites off more than he can chew.

Taking the second thoughts means taking the first steps to wisdom.

A questioning man is half way to begin wise.

The wisest words ever written were the ten commandments. The most foolish words were written by those who ignored them.

The wisest man sees the least, says the least, but prays the most.

A word to the wise is enough.

A small leak will sink a great ship.

Let sleeping dogs lie.

Truth has a gude face but raggit claes.

Truth will aye stand without a prop.

A wise man wavers, a fool is fixed.

He's wise that can mak a friend o' a fae.

The first step to virtue is to love it in another.

Commonsense has its feet planted in the past.

On an unknown path it is better to be slow.

A blind man should not be sent to buy paint.

It's no use carrying an umbrella if your shoes are leaking.

In spite of the fox's cunning, many a woman wears its skin.

The clever man discovers things about himself and says them about others.

The incompetent talk, the competent walk.

Work

It's better to like what you do than to do what you like.

The willing horse is always loaded.

Well begun is half done.

Many hands make light work.

It's not a delay to stop and sharpen the scythe.

Work hard, work long and have nothing to worry about, but in doing so don't become the boss or you'll have everything to worry about.

Work is the refuge of people who have nothing better to do.

Perseverance performs greater works than strength.

Wisdom of the Native Americans

From a collection of sayings entitled *Native American Wisdom* by Kent Nerburn & Louise Mengelkoch, published in the Classic Wisdom series by New World Library 1991.

Born Natural

I was born in Nature's wide domain! The trees were all that sheltered my infant limbs, the blue heavens all that covered me. I am one of Nature's children. I have always admired her. She shall be my glory: her features, her robes, and the wreath about her brow, the seasons, her stately oaks, and the evergreen, her hair, ringlets over the earth, all contribute to my enduring love of her.

And whenever I see her, emotions of pleasure roll in my breast, and swell and burst like waves on the shores of the ocean, in prayer and praise to Him who has placed me in her hand. It is thought great to be born in palaces, surrounded by wealth, but to be born in Nature's wide domain is greater still!

I would much more glory in this birthplace, with the broad canopy of heaven above me, and the giant arms of the forest trees for my shelter, than to be born in palaces or marble, studded with pillars of gold! Nature will be Nature still, while palaces shall decay and fall in ruins.

Yes, Niagara will be Niagara a thousand years hence! The rainbow, a wreath over her brow, shall continue as long as the sun, and the flowing of the riverwhile the work of art, however carefully protected and preserved, shall fade and crumble into dust!

-George Copway (Kahgegagahbowh) Ojibwe

Sacred Earth

The character of the Indian's emotion left little room in his heart for antagonism toward his fellow creatures... For the Lakota, mountains, lakes, rivers, springs, valleys, and woods were all finished beauty. Winds, rain, snow, sunshine, day, night, and change of seasons were endlessly fascinating. Birds, insects, and animals filled the world with knowledge that defied the comprehension of man.

The Lakota was a true naturalist, a lover of Nature. He loved the earth and all things of the earth, and the attachment grew with age. The old people came literally to love the soil and they sat or reclined on the ground with a feeling of being close to a mothering power.

It was good for the skin to touch the earth, and the old people liked to remove their moccasins and walk with bare feet on the sacred earth.

Their tipis were built upon the earth and their altars were made of earth. The birds that flew in the air came to rest upon the earth, and it was the final abiding place of all things that lived and grew. The soil was soothing, strengthening, cleansing, and healing.

That is why the old Indian still sits upon the earth instead of propping himself up and away from its life-giving forces. For him, to sit or lie upon the ground is to be able to think more deeply and to feel more keenly; he can see more clearly into the

mysteries of life and come closer in kinship to other lives about him.

-Chief Luther Standing Bear Teton Sioux

Silent Vigils

In my opinion, it was chiefly owing to their deep contemplation in their silent retreats in the days of youth that the old Indian orators acquired the habit of carefully arranging their thoughts.

They listened to the warbling of birds and noted the grandeur and the beauties of the forest. The majestic clouds, which appear like mountains of granite floating in the air, the golden tints of a summer evening sky, and all the changes of nature, possessed a mysterious significance.

All this combined to furnish ample matter for reflection to the contemplating youth.

-Francis Assikinack (Blackbird) Ottawa

Simple Truth

I believe much trouble and blood would be saved if we opened our hearts more. I will tell you in my way how the Indian sees things. The white man has more words to tell you how they look to him, but it does not require many words to speak the truth.

-Chief Joseph Nez Perce

Courtesy

Children were taught that true politeness was to be defined in actions rather than in words. They were never allowed to pass between the fire and an older person or a visitor, to speak while others were speaking, or to make fun of a crippled or disfigured person. If a child thoughtlessly tried to do so, a parent, in a quiet voice, immediately set him right.

Expressions such as "excuse me," "pardon me," and "so sorry," now so often lightly and unnecessarily used, are not in the Lakota language. If one chance to injure or cause inconvenience to another, the word wanunhecun, or "mistake," was spoken. This was sufficient to indicate that no discourtesy was intended and that what had happened was accidental.

Our young people, raised under the old rules of courtesy, never indulged in the present habit of talking incessantly and all at the same time. To do so would have been not only impolite, but foolish; for poise, so much admired as a social grace, could not be accompanied by restlessness. Pauses were acknowledged gracefully and did not cause lack of ease or embarrassment.

In talking to children, the old Lakota would place a hand on the ground and explain: "We sit in the lap of our Mother. From her we, and all other living things, come. We shall soon pass, but the place where we now rest will last forever." So we, too, learned to sit or lie on the ground and become conscious of life about us in its multitude of forms.

Sometimes we boys would sit motionless and watch the swallows, the tiny ants, or perhaps some small animal at its work and ponder its industry and ingenuity; or we lay on our backs and looked long at the sky, and when the stars came out made shapes from the various groups.

Everything was possessed of personality, only differing from us in form. Knowledge was inherent in all things. The world was a library and its books were the stones, leaves, grass, brooks, and the birds and animals that shared, alike with us, the storms and blessings of earth. We learned to do what only the student of nature ever learns, and that was to feel beauty. We never railed at the storms, the furious winds, and the biting frosts and snows. To do so intensified human futility, so whatever came we adjusted ourselves, by more effort and energy if necessary, but without complaint.

Even the lightning did us no harm, whenever it came too close, mothers and grandmothers in every tipi put cedar leaves in the coals and their magic kept danger away. Bright days and dark days were both expressions of the Great Mystery, and the Indian reveled in being close to the Great Holiness.

Observation was certain to have its rewards. Interest, wonder, admiration grew, and the fact was appreciated that life was more than mere human manifestation; it was expressed in a multitude of forms.

This appreciation enriched Lakota existence. Life was vivid and pulsing; nothing was casual and commonplace. The Indian lived in every sense of the word, from his first to his last breath.

-Chief Luther Standing Bear Teton Sioux

Conversation

Praise, flattery, exaggerated manners, and fine, high sounding words were no part of Lakota politeness. Excessive manners were put down as insincere, and the constant talker was considered rude and thoughtless. Conversation was never begun at once, or in a hurried manner.

No one was quick with a question, no matter how important, and no one was pressed for an answer. A pause giving time for thought was the truly courteous way of beginning and conducting a conversation.

-Chief Luther Standing Bear Teton Sioux

Persistence

When you begin a great work you can't expect to finish it all at once; therefore do you and your brothers press on, and let nothing discourage you until you have entirely finished what you have begun.

Now, Brother, as for me, I assure you I will press on, and the contrary winds may blow strong in my face, yet I will go forward and never turn back, and continue to press forward until I have finished, and I would have you do the same.

Though you may hear the birds singing on this side and that side, you must not take notice of that, but hear me when I speak to you, and take it to heart, for you may always depend that what I say shall be true.

-Teedyuscung Delaware

Crowned Leadership

We now crown you with the sacred emblem of the deer's antlers, the emblem of your Lordship. You shall now become a mentor of the people of the Five Nations. The thickness of your skin shall be seven spans- which is to say that you shall be filled

with peace and goodwill and your mind filled with a yearning for the welfare of the people of the confederacy.

With endless patience you shall carry out your duty, and your firmness shall be tempered with tenderness for your people. Neither anger nor fury shall lodge in your mind, and all your words and actions shall be marked with calm deliberation.

In all your deliberations in the Council, in your efforts at lawmaking, in all your official acts, self-interest shall be cast into oblivion. Cast not away the warnings of any others, if they should chide you for any error or wrong you may do, but return to the way of the Great Law, which is just and right.

Look and listen for the welfare of the whole people and have always in view not only the present but also the coming generations, even those whose faces are yet beneath the surface of the earth, the unborn of the future Nation.

-Constitution of the Five Nations

Pine Tree Chiefs

Should any man of the Nation assist with special ability or show great interest in the affairs of the Nation, if he proves himself wise, honest, and worthy of confidence, the Confederate Lords may elect him to a seat with them and he may sit in the Confederate Council. He shall be proclaimed a Pine Tree sprung up for the Nation and be installed as such at the next assembly for the installation of Lords.

Should he ever do anything contrary to the rules of the Great Peace, he may not be deposed form office, no one shall cut him down- but thereafter everyone shall be deaf to his voice and his advice. Should he resign his seat and title, no one shall prevent him. A Pine Tree Chief has no authority to name a successor, nor is his title hereditary.

-Constitution to the Five Nations

Not by Bread Alone

My friends, how desperately do we need to be loved and to love. When Christ said that man does not live by bread alone, he spoke of a hunger. This hunger was not the hunger of the body. It was not the hunger for bread. He spoke of a hunger that begins deep down in the very depths of our being. He spoke of a need as vital as breath. He spoke of our hunger for love.

Love is something you and I must have. We must have it because our spirit feeds upon it. We must have it because without it we become weak and faint. Without love our self-esteem weakens. Without it our courage fails. Without love we can no longer look out confidently at the world. We turn inward and begin to feed upon our own personalities, and little by little we destroy ourselves.

With it we are creative. With it we march tirelessly. With it, and with it alone, we are able to sacrifice for others.

-Chief Dan George

Show Me

Brother! We are told that you have been preaching to the white people in this place. These people are our neighbors. We are acquainted with them. We will wait a little while, and see what effect your preaching has upon them. If we find it does them good and makes them honest and less disposed to cheat us, we will then consider again becoming Christians.

-Red Jacket Seneca

Free Wisdom

We have men among us, like the whites, who pretend to know the right path, but will not consent to show it without pay! I have no faith in their paths, but believe that every man must make his own path!

-Black Hawk Sauk

Quarreling about God

We do not want churches because they will teach us to quarrel about God, as the Catholics and Protestants do. We do not want to learn that.

We may quarrel with men sometimes about things on this earth. But we never quarrel about God. We do not want to learn that.

-Chief Joseph Nez Perce

God Made Me This Way

I am of the opinion that so far as we have reason, we have a right to use it in determining what is right or wrong, and we should pursue the path we believe to be right.

If the Great and Good Spirit wished us to believe and do as the whites, he could easily change our opinions, so that we would see, and think, and act as they do. We are nothing compared to His power, and we feel and know it.

-Black Hawk, Sauk

Pausing

Whenever, in the course of the daily hunt, the hunter comes upon a scene that is strikingly beautiful, or sublime, a black thundercloud with the rainbow's glowing arch above the mountain, a white waterfall in the heart of a green gorge, a vast prairie tinged with the blood-red of the sunset, he pauses for an instant in the attitude of worship.

He sees no need for setting apart one day in seven as a holy day, because to him all days are God's days.

-Charles Alexander Eastman (Ohiyesa), Santee Sioux

Please Listen

Grandfather, Great Spirit, once more behold me on earth and lean to hear my feeble voice. You lived first, and you are older than all needs, older than all prayers. All things belong to you, the two legged, the four legged, the wings of the air, and all green things that live.

You have set the powers of the four quarters of the earth to cross each other. You have made me cross the good road, and the road of difficulties, and where they cross, the place is holy. Day in, day out, forevermore, you are the life of things.

-Black Elk Oglala Sioux

The Views of Two Men

Nothing the Great Mystery placed in the land of the Indian pleased the white man, and nothing escaped his transforming hand. Wherever forest has not been mowed down, wherever the animal is recessed in their quiet protection, wherever the earth is not bereft of four-footed life; that to him is an "unbroken wilderness."

But, because for the Lakota there was no wilderness, because nature was not dangerous but hospitable, not forbidding but friendly, Lakota philosophy was healthy, free from fear and dogmatism. And here I find the great distinction between the faith of the Indian and the white man. Indian faith sought the harmony of man with his surroundings; the other sought the dominance of surroundings.

In sharing, in loving, all and everything, one people naturally found a due portion of the thing they sought, while in fearing, the other found need of conquest.

For one man the world was full of beauty; for the other it was a place of sin and ugliness to be endured until he went to another world, there to become a creature of wings, half-man and half-bird.

Forever one man directed his Mystery to change the world He had made; forever this man pleaded with Him to chastise his wicked ones; and forever he implored his God to send His light to earth. Small wonder this man could not understand the other.

But the old Lakota was wise. He new that man's heart, away from nature, becomes hard; he knew that lack of respect for growing, living things, soon led to lack of respect for humans, too. So he kept his children close to nature's softening influence.

-Chief Luther Standing Bear, Oglala Sioux

Misfortune

Do not grieve. Misfortunes will happen to the wisest and best of men. Death will come, always out of season. It is the command of the Great Spirit, and all nations and people must obey. What is past and what cannot be prevented should not be grieved for. . . Misfortunes do not flourish particularly in our life. They grow everywhere.

-Big Elk Omaha Chief

Pretty Pebbles

As a child, I understood how to give; I have forgotten that grace since I became civilized. I lived the natural life, whereas I now live the artificial. Any pretty pebble was valuable to me then, every growing tree an object of reverence.

Now I worship with the white man before a painted landscape whose value is estimated in dollars! Thus the Indian is reconstructed, as the natural rocks are ground to powder and made into artificial blocks that my be built into the walls of modern society.

-Charles Alexander Eastman (Ohiyesa), Santee Sioux

The Power of Paper

Many of the white man's ways are past our understanding. . . They put a great store upon writing; there is always a paper.

The white people must think paper has some mysterious power to help them in the world. The Indian needs no writings; words that are true sink deep into his heart, where they remain. He never forgets them. On the other hand, if the white man loses his papers he is helpless.

I once heard one of their preachers say that no white man was admitted to heaven unless there were writings about him in a great book!

-Four Guns, Oglala Sioux

Frantic Fools

The English, in general, are a noble, generous minded people, free to act and free to think. They very much pride themselves on their civil and religious privilege; on their learning, generosity, manufacturing, and commerce; and they think that no other nation is equal to them..

No nation, I think, can be more fond of novelties than the English; they gaze upon foreigners as if they had just dropped down from the moon...

They are truly industrious, and in general very honest and upright. But their close attention to business produces, I think, too much worldly mindedness, and hence they forget to think enough about their souls and their God.

Their motto seems to be "Money, money, get money, get rich, and be a gentleman." With this sentiment, they fly about in every direction, like a swarm of bees, in search of the treasure that lies so near their hearts.

-Peter Jones, or Kahkewaquonaby
("Sacred Waving Feathers"), Ojibwe

Cities

The sight of your cities pains the eyes of the red man. But perhaps it is because the red man is a savage and does not understand.

There is no quiet place in the white man's cities, no place to hear the leaves of spring or the rustle of insects' wings. Perhaps it is because I am a savage and do not understand, but the clatter only seems to insult the ears.

The Indian prefers the soft sound of the wind darting over the face of the pond, the smell of the wind itself cleansed by a midday rain, or scented with pine. The air is precious to the red man, for all things share the same breath, the animals, the trees, the man.

Like a man who has been dying for many days, a man in your city is numb to the stench.

-Chief Seattle, Suqwamish and Duwamish

The White Man's Dreams

A few more hours, a few more winters, and none of the children of the great tribes that once lived on this earth, or that roamed in small bands in the woods, will be left to mourn the graves of a people once as powerful and hopeful as yours.

The whites, too, shall pass sooner than other tribes. Continue to contaminate your own bed, and you will one night suffocate in your own waste.

When the buffalo are all slaughtered, the wild horses all tamed, the secret corners of the forest heavy with the scent of many men, and the view of the ripe hills blotted by talking wires, where is the thicket? Gone. Where is the eagle? Gone.

And what is it to say farewell to the swift and the hunt, to the end of living and the beginning of survival? We might understand if we knew what it was that the white man dreams, what he describes to his children on the long winter nights, what visions he burns into their minds, so they will wish for tomorrow. But we are savages. The white man's dreams are hidden from us.

-Chief Seattle, Suqwamish and Duwamish

The Vigil

by Lame Deer at Willow, at Rosebud, South Dakota, 1967, recorded by Erdoes.

Editor's Note: The Following story is from *Myths and Legends of the American Indian* by Boez and Endroes (available on Open Reserve) describes what can go wrong on an all night vigil, one like the RDNA do in preparation for entering the 3rd Order.

The vision quest is a tradition among the Plains people. A man or woman seeking the way an the road of life, or trying to find the answer to a personal problem, may go on a vision quest for knowledge and enlightenment. This means staying on top of a hill or inside a vision pit, alone, without food or water, for as long as four days and nights. It is said, that if the quiet voices reveal or confer a vision that shapes a person's life, then the quest is worth all the suffering'. The following tale, however, treats the vision quest with less than complete solemnity, with Sioux man Lame Deer's characteristic quirks.

A young man wanted to go on a lumbasa, or vision quest, thinking that would give him the stuff to be a great medicine man. Having a high opinion of himself, he felt sure that he had been created to become great among his people and that the only thing lacking was a vision.

The young man was daring and brave, eager to go up to the mountain top. He had been brought up by good, honest people who were raised in the ancient ways and who prayed for him. All through the night they were busy getting him ready, feeding him wasna, corn, and lots of good meat to make him strong. At every meal they set aside everything for the spirits so that they would help him to get a great vision.

His relatives thought he had the power even before he went up there. That was putting the cart before the horse, or rather the travois before the horse, as this is an Indian legend.

When at last he started on his quest, it was a beautiful morning in late spring. The grass was up, the leaves were out, nature was at its best.

Two medicine men accompanied him. They put up a sweatlodge to purify him in the hot, white breath of the sacred steam. They smoked him with the incense of sweet grass, rubbing his body with salve of bear grease. Around his neck they hung it with an eagle's wing. They went to the hilltop with him to the vision pit and make an offering of tobacco bundles.

They told the young man to cry, to humble himself, to ask for holiness, to cry for power, for a sign from the Great Spirit, for a gift which would make him into a medicine man. After they had done all they could, they left him there.

He spent the first night in the hole the medicine men had dug for him, trembling and crying out loudly. Fear kept him awake, yet he was cocky, ready to wrestle with the spirits for the vision, the power that he wanted. But no dreams came to ease his mind. Toward morning light, the sun came up, he heard a voice in the swirling white mists of day.

Speaking from no particular direction, as if it came from different places it said: "See here, young man, there are other spots you could have picked; 'there are other hills around here. Why don't you go there and cry for a dream? You disturbed us all night, all us creatures, animals and birds; you even kept the trees awake. We couldn't sleep. Why should you cry here? You're a brash young man, not yet ready or worthy to receive a vision."

But the young man clenched his teeth, determined to stick it through. He resolved to force that vision to come. He spent another day in the pit, begging for enlightenment, which would not come, and then another night of fear and cold and hunger.

The young man cried out in terror. He was paralyzed with fear, unable to move. The boulder dwarfed everything in view; it towered over him, he stared open-mouthed, but as it came to crush him, it stopped. Then, as the young man stared, his hair standing up, his eyes starting out of his head, the boulder ROLLED UP THE MOUNTAIN, all the way to the top. He could hardly believe what he saw.

He was still cowering motionless when he heard the roar and ramble again and saw that immense boulder coming down at him once more. This time he managed to jump out of his vision pit at the last moment. The boulder crushed it, obliterated it, grinding the young man's peace pipe and gourd rattle into dust.

Again the boulder rolled up the mountain, and again it came down. "I'm leaving, I'm leaving!" hollered the young man. Regaining his power of motion, he scrambled down the hill as fast as he could. This time the boulder actually leapfrogged over him, bouncing down the slope, crushing and pulverizing everything in its way. He ran unseeingly, stumbling, falling, getting up again. He did not even notice the boulder rolling up once more and coming down for the fourth time. On this last and most fearful descent, it flew through the air in a giant leap, landing right in front of him and embedding itself so deeply in the earth that only its top was visible. The ground shook itself like a wet dog coming out of a stream and flung the young man this way and that.

Gaunt, bruised, and shaken, he stumbled back to his village. To the medicine men he said: "I have received no vision and gained no knowledge." He returned to the pit, and when dawn arrived once more, he heard the voice again: "Stop disturbing us; go away!" The same thing happened on the third morning. By this time he was faint with hunger, thirst, and anxiety. Even the air seemed to oppress him, to fight him. He was panting. His stomach felt shriveled up, shrunk tight against his backbone. But he was determined to endure one more night, the fourth and last. Surely the vision would come. But again he cried for it out of the dark and loneliness until he was hoarse, and still he had no dream. Just before daybreak he heard the same voice again, very angry: "why still here?" He knew then that he had suffered in vain.

He now knew he would have to go back to his people and confess that he had gained no knowledge and no power. The only thing he could tell them was that he got bawled out every morning. Sad and cross, he replied "I can't help myself this is MY last day, and I'm crying my eyes out. I know you told me to go home, but who are you to give me orders? I don't know you. I'm going to stay until my uncles come to fetch me, whether you like it or not.!"

All at once there was a rumble from a larger mountain that shook the hill. It became a mighty roar, and the whole hill trembled. The wind started to blow. The young man looked up and saw a boulder poised on the mountain's summit. He saw lightning hit it, saw it sway. Slowly the boulder moved. Slowly at first, then faster and faster, it came tumbling down the mountain side, churning up the earth, snapping huge trees as if the were little twigs. And the boulder WAS COMING RIGHT DOWN ON HIM!

He barely made it back to the village and talked to his uncles. "I have made the spirits angry. It was all for nothing."

"Well you did find out one thing," said the older of the two, who was his uncle. "You went after your vision like a hunter after buffalo, or a warrior after scalps. You were fighting the spirits. You thought they owed you a vision. Suffering alone brings no vision nor does courage, nor does sheer will power. A vision, comes as a gift born of humility, of wisdom, and of patience. If from your vision quest you have learned nothing else, you have already learned much. Think about it."

Wisdom of the Africans

Source: These proverbs are from the Akan people of Ghana and were collected from the book; *Speak to the Winds, Proverbs from Africa* by Kofi Asare Opoku, Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Company, New York 1975.

Proverbs on Wisdom

A fool's walking stick helps the wise person to stand.

Wisdom is not like money, which should be kept in a safe.

If you are greedy in conversation, you lose the wisdom of your friends.

The wise person who does not learn ceases to be wise.

All knowledge is acquired by learning.

It is through other people's wisdom that we learn wisdom ourselves; a single person's understanding does not amount to anything.

One must come out of one's house to begin learning.

Proverbs on Truth and Falsehood

If you travel with fraud, you may reach your destination but will be unable to return.

Whereas a liar takes a thousand years to go on a journey, the one who speaks the truth follows and overtakes the liar in a day.

Proverbs on Human Conduct

If you see wrongdoing or evil and say nothing against it, you become its victim.

One who refuses to obey cannot command.

The saying is, "Visit a foreign country and respect its citizens," and not "Visit a foreign country and act better than its citizens."

If you build a poor wooden bridge across the river, it never seems to rot until you have to cross it yourself.

It is easier to put out the fire in the house of neighbors than to deal with the smoke in one's own house.

Proverbs on Virtue

When virtue founds a town, the town grows and lasts long.

Goodness is hidden, but eventually appears.

The seed of goodness is as difficult to sow as it is hard to uproot the plant.

Proverbs on Cooperation and Contentment

When the right hand washes the left and the left hand washes the right, then both hands will be clean.

Good fellowship is sharing good things with friends.

The string can be useful until a rope can be found.

Proverbs on Opportunity

The one who asks the way does not get lost.

One does not throw the stick after the snake has gone.

Proverbs on Human Beings

Lack of companionship is worse than poverty.

May death not kill the person who tortures us, may the gods protect the one who ill-treats us; however long it takes our destiny to give us victory.

Proverbs on Nature

If you want to speak to God, speak to the winds.

If the mouse were the size of a cow, it would be the cat's slave nevertheless.

If plain water were satisfying enough, then fish would not take the hook.

However poor the crocodile becomes, it hunts in the river, not in the forest.

Proverbs on Leadership

People count what they are refused, not what they are given.

The ears of the leader are like a strainer; there are more than a thousand openings to them.

Power must be handled in the manner of holding an egg in the hand: if you hold it too firmly it breaks; if you hold it too loosely it drops.

The hen knows when it is dawn but she leaves the crowing to the cock.

More Wisdom of the African World

Editor's Note: These quotes were taken from *Wisdom of the African World* edited by Reginald McKnight and published by the Classic Wisdom series of the New World Library.

Even the most incorrigible maverick has to be born somewhere. He may leave the group that produced him, he may be forced to but nothing will efface his origins, the marks of which he carries with him everywhere. -James Baldwin

The various cultures of people of color often seem very attractive to white people. (Yes, we are wonderful, we can't deny it.) But white people should not make a playground out of other people's cultures. We are not quaint. We are not exotic. We are not cool. -Amoco Three Rivers

Europeans created and popularized the image of Africa as a jungle, a wild place where people were cannibals, naked and savage in a countryside overrun with dangerous animals. Such an image of the Africans was so hateful to Afro-Americans that they refused to identify with Africa. We did not realize that in hating Africa and the Africans we were hating ourselves. You cannot hate the roots of a tree and not hate the tree itself. -Malcolm X

Honor a child and it will honor you. -Ila

Grown people know that they do not always know the why of things, and even if they think they know, they do not know where and how they got the proof. Hence the irritation they show when the children keep on demanding to know if a thing is so and how the grown folks got the proof of it. It is so troublesome ... to the pigeonhole way of life. -Zora Neale Houston

A child that asks questions isn't stupid. -Ewe

Eve we old people must learn, and recognize that the things people know today were not born with us. No, knowledge is not a hereditary thing. -Sembene Ousmane

A cynical young person is almost the saddest sight to see, because it means that he or she has gone from knowing nothing to believing in nothing. -Maya Angelou

It takes a whole village to raise a single child. -Yoruba

If you see an old man running, either he is chasing something or something is chasing him. -Nupe

If with the right hand you flog the child, with your left hand draw her unto your breast. -Yoruba

You need not tell a child that there is a god. - Nzima

Not where I was born, but where it goes well with me is my home. - Kanuri

Love is the understanding that all people are bound together in guilt and only individuals are capable of achieving personal salvation. The duty of every sensitive individual is to see to it that conditions are created in which he and others like him can become the majority. Lewis Nixon.

No friendship, except after enmity. -Egypt

Whoever loves thee, even a dog, thou wilt also love. -Tsonga

It is preferable to change the world on the basis of love of mankind. But if that quality be too rare, then commonsense seems to be the next best thing. -Bessie Head

Make friends when you no need them. -Jamaica

He who pulls a branch brings the leaves with it. -Ila

There's a time when you have to explain to your children why they're born, and it's a marvelous thing if you know the reason by then. -Hazel Scott

A person can run for years but sooner or later he has to take a stand in the place which, for better or worse, he calls home, do what he can to change things there. -Paule Marshall

If you wish to be blamed, marry; if you wish to be praised, die. -Galla

Before you marry, keep both eyes open; after you marry, shut one. -Jamaica

Tell me whom you love, I'll tell you who you are. -Creole

God created us so that we should form the human family, existing together because we were made for one another. We are not made for an exclusive self-sufficiency but for interdependence, and we break the law of being at our peril. -Desmond Tutu

God made the sea, we make the ship; He made the wind, we make the sail; He made the calm, we make oars. -Swahili

Every society is really governed by hidden laws, by unspoken but profound assumptions on the part of the people, and ours is no exception. It is up to the American writer to find out what these laws and assumptions are. -James Baldwin

People wish to be poets more than they wish to write poetry and that's a mistake. One should wish to celebrate more than one wishes to be celebrated. - Lucille Clifton

The artistic innovator is perhaps our society's most valuable citizen. He or she does not so much change the world, as change how we view it. They are ambassadors of peace and advocates of understanding. They melt our differences into the common ground of the dance floor, the theater, the concert hall, and a million living rooms across the nation. That is why it is important that we so diligently search for them. -Ossie Davis.

I have a great belief in the fact that whenever there is chaos, it creates wonderful thinking. I consider chaos a gift. -Septima Poinsette Clark

There is no beauty but in relationships. Nothing cut off by itself is beautiful. Never can things in destructive relationships be beautiful. All beauty is in the creative purpose of our relationships; all ugliness is in the destructive aims of the destroyer's arrangements. -Ayi Kwei Armah

Back of the problem of race and color lies a greater problem which both obscures and implements it; and that is the fact that so many civilized persons are willing to live in comfort even if the price of this is poverty, ignorance and disease of the majority of their fellowmen; that to maintain this privilege men have waged war until today war tends to become universal and continuous, and the excuse for this war continues largely to be color and race. -W.E.B. DuBois

Fright is worse than a blow. -Morocco

Nonviolent passive resistance is effective as long as your opposition adheres to the same rules as you do. But if peaceful protest is met with violence, its efficacy is at an end. For me, non-violence was not a moral principle but a strategy; there is no moral goodness in using an ineffective weapon. -Nelson Mandela

We will either find a way or make one. -Hannibal

The knife does not know its owner. -Ndau

Racism is easy to see, hard to prove, impossible to deny. -Anonymous

The man who goes ahead stumbles so that the man who follows may have his wits about him. -Bondei

When two elephants struggle it is the grass that suffers. -Swahili

Mediocrity is safe. -Nikki Giovanni

An elephant does not die of one broken rib. -Tsonga

The lion which kills is not one that roars. -Xhosa

A man dies before we appreciate him. -Jabo

Always being in a hurry doesn't hinder death, neither does going slowly hinder living. -Swahili

Because it rained the day the egg was hatched the foolish chicken swore he was a fish. -Wole Soyinka.

The thing that makes you exceptional, if you are at all, is inevitably that which must also make you lonely. -Lorraine Hansberry

He who hopes fares better than he who wishes, and he who wishes fares better than he who despairs. -Morocco

What is a cynic but a romanticist turned sour? -Lewis Nkosi

When you have been bitten by a snake you flee from a worm. -Basa

Every man honest till the day they catch him. -Jamaica

A man is his words. -Kru

In the midst of your illness you will promise a goat, but when you recover, a chicken will seem sufficient. -Jukun

People do not wish to appear foolish; to avoid the appearance of foolishness, they were willing to remain actually fools. -Alice Walker

A fool is a treasure to the wise. -Botswana

When the fool does not succeed in bleaching ebony he then tries to blacken ivory. -Amharic

At the bottom of patience there is heaven. -Kamba

Never be afraid to sit awhile and think. -Lorraine Hansberry

The indolent person reckons religious fasting a labor. -Yoruba

I believe in the brotherhood of all men, but I don't believe in wasting brotherhood on any one who doesn't want to practice it with me. Brotherhood is a two-way street. I don't think brotherhood should be practiced with a man just because his skin is white. Brotherhood should hinge upon the deeds and attitudes of a man. -Malcolm X

There is no agony like learning an untold story inside you. -Zora Neale Hurston

Ancient things remain in the ears. - Oji

Never give up what you have seen for what you have heard. -Swahilli

A good conversation is better than a good bed. -Galla

He who gives you the diameter of your knowledge, prescribes the circumference of your activities. -Minister Louis Farrakhan

That which is written is binding, but that which is spoken is forgotten. -Amharic

Suddenly, it has become popular to defend tribal people, their world view and their life ways. But while the West is engaged in a great debate about what it means to preserve culture, the indigenous world is aware that it has already lost the battle. It seems obvious to me that as soon as one culture begins to talk about "preservation" it means that it has already turned the other culture into an endangered species. -Malidoma Patrice Some

People are easier to kill if they come from nowhere. If they have no names, no fathers or mothers.... The dead piles of corpses are nobodies who began nowhere, go nowhere, except back where they belong. Nowhere. No count. Nothing. -John Edgar Wideman

You can live without anything you weren't born with, and you can make it through on even half of that. - Gloria Naylor

The monkey says there is nothing like poverty for taking the conceit out of a man. -Oji

Work is good provided you do not forget to live. -Bantu

The grumbler does not leave his job, but he discourages possible applicants. -Ganda

Wealth is like hair in the nose; if much is pulled out, it is painful, if little, it is painful. -Madacascar

Wealth, if you use it, comes to an end; learning, if you use it, increases. -Swahilli

Everything will satisfy you except money; as much as you have, so much more you will want. -Morocco

The one-eyed man does not thank God till he see the blind man. -Toucouleur

As a leader... I have always endeavored to listen to what each and every person in a discussion had to say before venturing my own opinion. Oftentimes, my own opinion will simply represent a consensus of what I heard in the discussion. I always remember the axiom: a leader is like a shepherd. He stays behind the flock, letting the most nimble go out ahead, whereupon the others follow, not realizing that all along they are being directed from behind. -Nelson Mandela

Respect depends on reciprocity. -Nyang

Justice becomes injustice when it makes two wounds on a head which only deserves one. -Bakongo

A devotion to humanity is too easily equated with a devotion to a cause, and causes, as we know, are notoriously bloodthirsty. -James Baldwin

If they come for me in the morning, they will come for you at night. -Angela Davis

We decide our affairs, then rest them with God. -Jabo

I have walked the long road to freedom but I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can rest only for a moment, for with freedom comes responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not ended. - Nelson Mandela

Slowness comes from God and quickness from devil. -Morocco

To commit ten sins against God is better than to commit one sin against a servant of God. -Morocco

God gives and does not remind us continually of it; the world gives and constantly reminds us. -Nupe

Prayer needn't be long when faith is strong. - Jamaica

It is not our custom to fight for our gods... Let us not presume to do so now. If a man kills the sacred python in the secrecy of his hut, the matter is between him and the god. We did not see it. If we put ourselves between the god and his victim we may receive blows intended for the offender. When a man blasphemes, what do we do? Do we go and stop his mouth? No, we put our fingers into our ears to stop us hearing. That is a wise action. -Chinua Achebe

Every knot has an unraveler in God. -Egypt

Don't blame God for having created the tiger, but give him thanks for not having given the tiger wings. -Amharic

If you are going to ask from God, take a big receptacle. -Hausa

Wisdom of the Hindus & Greeks

Origin of the Fables of Aesop

These famous stories were taken from Schoken Book's 1966 reprint of the 1894 version translated by Joseph Jacobs. Although I will not give a full history of the origins of these fables. Most people that the animal story developed independently in Greece and India between 1000 b.c.e and 500 b.c.e. The Greek origin reputedly began with Aesop, an Ethiopian slave in Samos Greece. The India origin began with Kasyapa, not long before Sakayamuni (the Buddha). The Buddhists quickly adopted the animal tale and began to pass them onto the Greeks. I've chosen some example that I feel are particularly Druidical to me. Enjoy.

The Frogs Desiring a King

The Frogs were living as happy as could be in a marshy swamp that just suited them; they went splashing about caring for nobody and nobody troubling with them. But some of them thought that this was not right, that they should have a king and a proper constitution, so they determined to send up a petition to Jove to give them what they wanted. "Mighty Jove," they cried, "send unto us a king that will rule over us and keep us in order." Jove laughed at their croaking, and threw down into the swamp a huge Log, which came down -kerplash!- into the swamp.

The Frogs were frightened out of their lives by the commotion made in their midst, and all rushed to the bank to look at the horrible monster; but after a time, seeing that it did not move, one or two of the boldest of them ventured out towards the Log, and even dared to touch it; still it did no move. Then the greatest hero of the Frogs jumped upon the Log and commenced dancing up and down upon it, thereupon all the Frogs came and did the same; and for some time the Frogs went about their business every day without taking the slightest notice of their new King Log lying in their midst. But this did not suit them, so they sent another petition to Jove, and said to him: "We want a real king; one that will really rule over us." Now this made Jove angry, so he sent among them a big Stork that soon set to work gobbling them all up. Then the Frogs repented when too late.

Better no rule than cruel rule.

The Bat, the Birds and the Beasts

A great conflict was about to come off between the Birds and the Beasts. When the two armies were collected together the Bat hesitated which to join. The Birds that passed his perch said: "Come with us"; but he said: "I am a Beast." Later on, some Beasts who were passing underneath him looked up and said: "Come with us"; but he said: "I am a Bird." Luckily at the last moment, peace was made, and no battle took place, so the Bat came to the Birds and wished to join in the rejoicings, but they all turned against him and he had to fly away. He then went to the Beasts, but had soon to beat a retreat, or else they would have torn him to pieces. "Ah," said the Bat, "I see now that *he that is neither one thing nor the other has no friends*."

The Dog and the Wolf

A gaunt Wolf was almost dead with hunger when he happened to meet a House-dog who was passing by. "Ah, Cousin," said the Dog, "I knew how it would be; your irregular life will soon be the ruin of you. Why do you not work steadily as I do, and get your food regularly given to you?"

"I would have no objection," said the Wolf, "if I could only get a place."

"I will easily arrange that for you," said the Dog; "come with me to my master and you shall share my work."

So the Wolf and the Dog went towards the town together. On the way there the Wolf noticed that the hair on a certain part of the Dog's neck was very much worn away, so he asked him how that had come about.

"Oh, it is nothing," said the Dog. "That is only the place where the collar is put on at night to keep me chained up; it chafes a bit, but one soon gets used to it."

"Is that all?" said the Wolf. "Then good-bye to you, Master Dog. *Better starve free than be a fat slave*."

The Fox and the Grapes

One hot summer's day a Fox was strolling through an orchard till he came to a bunch of Grapes just ripening on a vine which had been trained over a lofty branch. "Just the thing to quench my thirst," quoth he. Drawing back a few paces, he took a run and a jump, and just missed the bunch. Turning round again with a One, Two, Three, he jumped up, but with no greater success. Again and again he tried after the tempting morsel, but at last had to give it up, and walked away with his nose in the air, saying: "I am sure that they are sour."

It is easy to despise what you cannot get.

The Lion and the Statue

A Man and a Lion were discussing the relative strength of men and lions in general. The Man contended that he and his fellows were stronger than lions by reason of their greater intelligence. "Come now with me," he cried, "and I will soon prove that I am right." So he took him into the public gardens and showed him a statue of Hercules overcoming the Lion and tearing his mouth in two.

"That is all very well," said the Lion, "but proves nothing, for it was a man who made the statue."

We can easily represent things as we wish them to be.

The Man and His Two Wives

In the old days, when men were allowed to have many wives, a middle-aged Man had one wife that was old and one that was young; each loved him very much, and desired to see him like herself. Now the Man's hair was turning grey, which the young Wife did not like, as it made him look too old for her husband. So every night she used to comb his hair and pick out the white ones. But the elder Wife saw her husband growing grey with great pleasure, for she did not like to be mistaken for his mother. So every morning she used to arrange his hair and pick out as many of the black ones as she could. The consequence was the Man soon found himself entirely bald.

Yield to all and you will soon have nothing to yield.

The Two Crabs

One fine day two Crabs came out from their home to take a stroll on the sand. "Child," said the mother, "you are walking very ungratefully. You should accustom yourself to walking straight forward without twisting from side to side."

"Pray, mother," said the young one, "do but set the example yourself, and I will follow you."

Example is the best precept.

Hercules and the Waggoner

A Waggoner was once driving a heavy load along a very muddy way. At last he came to a part of the road where the wheels sank halfway into the mire, and the more the horses pulled, the deeper sank the wheels. So the Waggoner threw down his whip, and knelt down and prayed to Hercules the Strong. "O Hercules, help me in this my hour of distress," quoth he. But Hercules appeared to him and said:

"Tut, man, don't sprawl there. Get up and put your shoulder to the wheel." *The Gods help them that help themselves.*

The Man and the Wooden God

In the old days men used to worship stocks and stones and idols, and prayed to them to give them luck. It happened that a Man had often prayed to a wooden idol he had received from his father, but his luck never seemed to change. He prayed and he prayed, but still he remained as unlucky as ever. One day in the greatest rage he went to the Wooden God, and with one blow swept it down from its pedestal. The idol broke in two, and what did he see? An immense number of coins flying all over the place.

The Miser

Once upon a time there was a Miser who used to hide his gold at the foot of a tree in his garden; but every week he used to go and dig it up and gloat over his gains. A robber, who had noticed this, went and dug up the gold and decamped with it. When the Miser next came to gloat over his treasures, he found nothing but the empty hole. He tore his hair, and raised such an outcry that all the neighbours came around him, and he told them how he used to come and visit his gold. "Did you ever take any of it out?" asked one of them.

"Nay," said he, "I only came to look at it."

"Then come again and look at the hole," said a neighbour; "it will do you just as much good."

Wealth unused might as well not exist.

The Bundle of Sticks

An old man on the point of death summoned his sons around him to give them some parting advice. He ordered his servants to bring in a bundle of sticks, and said to his eldest son: "Break it." The son strained and strained, but with all his efforts was unable to break the Bundle. The other sons also tried, but none of them was successful. "Untie the bundle," said the father, "and each of you take a stick." When they had done so, he called out to them: "Now, break," and each stick was easily broken. "You see my meaning," said the father.

"Union gives strength."

The Buffoon and the Countryman

At a country fair there was a Buffoon who made all the people laugh by imitating the cries of various animals. He finished off by squeaking so like a pig that the spectators thought that he had a porker concealed about him. But a Countryman who stood by said: "Call that a pig's squeak! Nothing like it. You give me till tomorrow and I will show you what it's like." The audience laughed, but next day, sure enough, the Countryman appeared on the stage, and putting his head down squealed so hideously that the spectators hissed and threw stones at him to make him stop. "You fools!" he cried, "see what you have been hissing," and help up a little pig whose ears he had been pinching to make him utter the squeals.

Men often applaud an imitation, and hiss the real thing.

The Serpent and the File

A Serpent in the course of its wanderings came into an armourer's shop. As he glided over the floor he felt his skin pricked by a file lying there. In a rage he turned round upon it and tired to dart his fangs into it; but he could do no harm to heavy iron and had soon to give over his wrath.

It is useless attacking the insensible.

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Green Book of Meditations Volume 3

Oriental and Monotheist Wisdom

I was not wholly satisfied with my second volume and I wished to further emulate Frangquist and Shelton in collecting a broad selection of instructional meditations from the world religions. Perhaps I should have practiced their silence? In any case, I spent a summer putting together this volume from my favorite books. I don't think I did as good a job as my predecessors, but I think that there are some fascinating pieces nestled inside this volume for you.

I don't have copyright permission on many of these articles. I am not making money off this deal, so I don't feel too bad about this. In fact, I consider it free advertising for the authors. It's probably best if people discovering this copy do not further distribute it. Use your judgment.

The original edition is much different from this one. The Zen Koans, Haiku & Christian Thoughts are the same, but I removed many selections from the Tao of Pooh and the Te of Piglet, because many represented the sole thoughts of Benjamin Hoff (a recent writer) and were not the retold timeless stories of old Taoists (which I kept in this volume). This amounted to about 5 pages being removed out of 40 from the Third Volume. I will put those removed selections into a file on the web-site for observing, but not for downloading. I have recently added all the selections in "Zen and the Gospel," "Scots Gaelic Poems," "Three Random Pieces," "Is God A Taoist?," "Wit and Wisdom of Islam" and "Various Other Quotes." The end result is a more diversity and intriguing stories and Druidical one-liners.

Please enjoy,

Michael Scharding
Big River Grove, Saint Cloud Minnesota
Day 88 of Geamreadh, Year XXXIII of the Reform
January 28th, 1996 c.e.

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Zen Harvest #710

The one
Who's escaped the world
To live in the mountains,
If they are still weary,
Where should they go?

Zen Harvest #217

Today's praise,
Tomorrow's abuse;
It's the Human way.
Weeping and Laughing...
All utter lies.

The Iron Flute

A Zen Buddhist Collection of Koans

Editor's Note: A koan is a short parable or story in which a gleam of Buddhist wisdom is trapped. It is usually followed by short lectures that enlarge and explain further that wisdom. Several teachers comment on each of the following Koans. This book is available on open reserve.

34- Hsueh-feng Sees His Buddha-nature

A monk said to Hsueh-feng, "I understand that a person in the stage of Cravaka sees his Buddha-nature as he sees the moon at night, and a person in the stage of Bodhirattva sees her Buddha nature as he sees the sun at day. Tell me how you see your own Buddha-nature."

For answer Hsueh-feng gave the monk three blows with his stick. The monk went to another teacher, Yen-t'ou, and asked the same thing.

Yen-t'ou, slapped the monk three times.

NYOGEN: If a person studies Buddhism to escape the sufferings of the world, he finds that all suffering is caused by his own greed, anger, and ignorance. As he seeks to avoid these three poisons and to purify his heart, he may see his Buddha-nature as beautiful and as remote as a new moon, but most of the time he misses seeing even this. He is in the stage of Cravaka.

Another person studies Buddhism to save all sentient beings. He realizes the true nature of man, and sees Buddha-nature in every person without exception. Cloud, rain, and snow he sees with sadness, but he does not blame the sun, and at night he knows other parts of the earth have bright daylight. He knows that mankind destroys things foolishly, but can also create and build things wisely. He is a Bodhisattva.

The monk's first statements were all right, but if he really understood them, he would know better than to ask Hsueh-feng about his Buddha-nature. Hsueh-feng tried to bring the monk back from dreamland with his blows, but the monk took his dream to Yen-t'ou, where he received similar treatment. I can imagine his stupid, sleepy face!

10 Yueh-shan Holds It

The governor of a state asked Yueh-shan, "I understand that all beasts possess Sila (precepts), Dhjana (meditation) and Prajna (wisdom)Do you keep the precepts? Do you practice meditation? Have you attained wisdom?"

"This Poor monk has no such junk around here," Yueh-shan replied.

"You must have a very profound teaching" the governor said "but I do not understand it. "

"If you want to hold it," Yueh-shan continued, "you must climb the biggest mountain and sit on the summit or dive into the deepest sea and walk on the bottom. Since you cannot enter even your own bed without a burden on your mind, how can you grasp and hold my Zen?"

NYOGEN: When one keeps the precepts, he can meditate well; when his meditation becomes matured, he attains wisdom. Since these three, Sila, Dhyana, and Prajna, are interrelated and equally essential, no one of the three can be carried as an independent study. But the governor was trying to understand

the teaching as he might a civil-service examination. He himself had often selected men who might be deficient in one quality, provided that they were strong in another. What foolish questions to ask Yueh-shan! If a monk is deficient in the precepts, he cannot accomplish his meditation; if his meditation is not complete, he never attains true wisdom. He cannot specialize in any one of the three. Today there are Buddhist students who write books but never practice meditation or lead an ethical life and Zen masters" who lack many of the simpler virtues. Even though they shave their heads, wear yellow robes, and recite the sutras, they never know the true meaning of Dharma. What can you do with these imitators? The governor could not understand Yueh-shan's steep Zen, but when he admitted it, Yueh-shan saw there was hope and proceeded to give him some instruction.

GENRO: Yueh-shan uses the mountain and the sea as an illustration. If you cling to summit or bottom, you will create delusion. How can he hold "it" on the summit or the bottom? The highest summit must not have a top to sit on, and the greatest depth no place to set foot. Even this statement is not expressing the truth. What do you do then? (He turns to the monks.) Go out and work in the garden or chop wood.

FOGAI: Stop! Stop! Don't try to pull an unwilling cat over the carpet. She will scratch and make the matter worse.

NYOGEN: Now! How are you going to express it?

14- Pai-yun's Black and White

Pai-yun, a Zen master of the Sung Dynasty wrote a poem;

Where others dwell,
I do not dwell.
Where others go,
I do not go.
This does not mean to refuse
Association with others;
I only want to make
Black and white distinct.

NYOGEN: Buddhists say that sameness without difference is sameness wrongly conceived and difference without sameness is difference wrongly conceived. My teacher, Shen Shaku, used to illustrate this beautifully, and Dr. D. T. Suzuki has put it into English: "Billows and waves and ripples all surging, swelling and ebbing, yet are they not so many different motions of the eternally self-same body of water?"

The moon is serenely shining in the sky, alone in all the heavens and the entire earth; but when she mirrors herself in the brilliant whiteness of evening dew, which appear like glittering pearls sown upon the earth, how wondrously numerous her images! Is not every one of them complete in its own fashion?"

Zen stays neither in assertion nor denial. It is like a steering wheel turning to the left or to the right to guide the vehicle onward. The master in this story was not insisting on his own course, but was warning students not to cling to one side or the other. He sought only to play the game of life fairly even though he knew the fact of non-individuality.

There are many lodges, clubs, and lecture halls, where all sorts of discourses are delivered, each speaker with an urgent message to give to his audience. You can attend these meetings and enjoy the different opinions and arguments, but I advise you to recall occasionally, "Where others dwell, I do not dwell. Where others go, I do not go." It may save you from nervous strain.

The koan also says, "This does not mean to refuse association with others." We can sympathize with different movements in the world without belonging to any of them. We can welcome visitors from any group and serve them tea, brimful of Zen. Each of you may come and go as you wish.

The koan ends, "I only wanted to make black and white clear." That is to say, we are without color.

40. The Dry Creek

A monk asked Hsueh-feng, "when the old creek of Zen dries out and there is not a drop of water left, what can I see there?" Hsueh-feng answered, "There is the bottomless water, which you cannot see." The monk asked again, "How can one drink that water?" Hsueh-feng replied, "He should not use his mouth to do it."

The monk later went to Chao-Chou and related the dialogue. Chao-Chou said, "If one cannot drink the water with his mouth, he also cannot take it through his nostrils." The monk then repeated the first question, "When the old creek of Zen dries out and there is not a drop of water, what can I see there?" Chao-Chou answered, "The water will taste as bitter as quinine." "What happens to one who drinks that water?" asked the monk. "He will lose his life" came the reply.

When Hsueh-feng heard of the dialogue, he paid homage to Chao-Chou saying, "Chao-Chou is a living Buddha. I should not answer any questions hereafter." From that time on he sent all newcomers to Chao-Chou.

NYOGEN: As long as there remains a faint trace of Zen, the creek has not been completely drained. Each person coming here brings his own particular tinge to add to the stream. When Chao-Chou referred to losing his life, he meant to lose one's self and enter Nirvana. A person who attempts to become a sage must pass through many difficulties, and even at the last he must quench his thirst with bitterness. If YOU do not mind these obstacles, I say, "Go to it."

98. Yueh-shan's Lake

Yueh-shan asked a newly-arrived monk, "Where have you come from?"
FOGAI: Are you enjoying the atmosphere?
The monk answered, "From the Southern Lake."
FOGAI: You give a glimpse of the lake view.
" Is the lake full or not?" inquired Yueh-shan.
FOGAI: Are you still interested in the lake?
"Not yet," the monk replied.
FOGAI: He glanced at the lake. "There has been so much rain, why isn't the lake filled?" Yueh-shan asked.
FOGAI: Yueh-shan invited the monk to see the lake, actually.
The monk remained silent

FOGAI: He must have Drowned.
NYOGEN: Zen monks like to dwell intimately with nature. Most Chinese monasteries were built in the mountains or by a lake. Zen records many dialogues between teacher and monks concerning natural beauty, but there must also be many monks who never asked questions, simply allowing themselves to merge with nature. They are the real supporters of Zen, better than the chatterboxes with all their noise in an empty box.
GENRO: If I were the monk, I would say to Yueh-shan, "I will wait until you have repaired the bottom."
FOGAI: It was fortunate the monk remained silent.

NYOGEN: Genro sometimes sounds like a shyster with unnecessary argument.
GENRO: The thread of Karma runs through all things;
{One can pick up anything as a koan.}
Recognition makes it a barricade.
[If you look behind there is no barricade.]
The poor monk asked about a lake
[Go on! jump in and swim!]
Made an imaginary road to heaven.
[Where are you standing?]

94. Living Alone

A monk came to Yun-chu and asked, "How can I live alone at the top of the mountain?"
FOGAI: You are lost in a cloud.
Yun-chu answered, "Why do you give up your Zen-do in the valley and climb the mountain?"
FOGAI: This is not the way to handle ghosts.

NYOGEN: American friends often ask me how to find the "quiet place to meditate." My usual answer is, "Can you not find a quiet spot in your home?" No matter how busy one's daily life is, he can find certain minutes in which to meditate and a certain place to sit quietly. Merely pining for a quiet place away from his own home is entirely wrong. This monk could not harmonize himself with other monks in the Zen-do and wished to live alone on a mountain peak. Even though Yun-chu cornered the monk with the question, no wonder Fogai thought Yun-chu too lukewarm in his method. If I were Yun-chu, I would demand that the monk tell me where he is at this moment. If he hesitated, I would push him out of the room immediately.
GENRO: If I were Yun-chu, I would say to the monk, "If you do not neglect your own Zen-do, I will allow you to stay on the mountain peak. But how can you stay on the mountain without neglecting your own Zen-do?"
FOGAI: Destroy that Zen-do and that mountain!
NYOGEN: Fogai is like an anarchist. I do not wish to associate with this radical monk. Genro's first remark is splendid. Why did he add the last? Look at my associates!
44. Nan-ch'uan Rejects Both A Monk and Layman
A monk came to Nan-Ch'uan, stood in front of him, and put both hands to his breast. Nan-Ch'uan said, "You are too much of a layman. "The monk then placed his bands palm to palm. "'You are too much of a monk," said Nan-Ch'uan. The monk could not say a word. When another teacher heard of this, he said to his monks, "If were the monk, I would free my hands and walk away backward."
NYOGEN: When the monk came for sanzen, he meant to express his freedom by not conforming to the rules of entering or leaving the Zen-do, but Nan-Ch'uan's first words jolted him so that he changed his attitude. Where was his freedom then? The world is filled with people who are "too much" of this or that, and there are those who think that by being iconoclastic they can express their freedom. They are all bound.
A free person does not display his freedom. He is free, and so passes almost unnoticed. Since he clings to nothing, rules and regulations never bother him. He may bow or walk backwards; it makes no difference.
GENRO: If I were Nan-Ch'uan, I would say to the monk, "You are too much of a dumb-bell," and to the master, who said he would free his hands and walk backward, "You are too much of a crazy man." True emancipation has nothing to hold to, no color to be seen, no sound to be heard.

A free man has nothing in his hands.
He never plans anything, but reacts according to others' actions.
Nan-Ch'uan was such a skillful teacher
He loosed the noose of the monk's own robe.

NYOGEN: Silas Hubbard once said, "As I grow older, I simplify both my science and my religion. Books mean less to me; prayers mean less; potions, pills and drugs mean less; but peace, friendship, love and a life of usefulness mean more . . . infinitely more."

Here we see a good American who learned Zen naturally in his old age. But why should one wait until he is old? Many people do not know how to free themselves from science and religion. The more they study science, the more they create destructive power. Their religions are mere outer garments too heavy where, they walk in the spring breeze.

Books are burdens to them and prayers but their beautiful excuses. They consume potions, pills, and drugs, but they do not decrease their sickness physically or mentally. If they really want peace, friendship, love, and a life of usefulness, they must empty their precious bags of dust and illusions to realize the spirit of freedom, the ideal of this country.

Thoughts from Confucius

Editor's Notes: Confucius helped to stabilize the chaotic Chinese political scene by promoting a new "religion" based on honor and patriarchy. The term "benevolence" is the golden quality of the "gentleman" that is perhaps wisdom of attunement with the Way. The numbers refer to passages in The Analects, which are a collection of sayings of Confucius by his disciples and grand-disciples. I like the Penguin Classics edition of the Analects. I also recommend the writings of Mencius who further built on the Confucian tradition.

Tseng Tzu said, "Every day I examine myself on three counts. In what I have undertaken on another's behalf, have I failed to do my best? IN my dealings with my friends have I failed to be trustworthy in what I say? Have I passed on to others anything that I have not tired out myself?" (I:4)

When the Master went inside the Grand Temple, he asked questions about everything. Someone remarked, "Who said that the son of the man from Tsou understood the rites? When he went inside the Grand Temple, he asked questions about everything."

The Master, on hearing of this, said, "The asking of questions is in itself the correct rite." (III:15)

The Master said, "Virtue never stands alone. It is bound to have neighbours." (IV:25)

The Master said to Tzu-kung, "Who is the better man, you or Hui?"

"How dare I compare myself with Hui? When he is told one thing he understands ten. When I am told one thing I understand only two."

The Master said, "You are not as good as he is. Neither of us is as good as he is." (V:9)

The Master said, "You can tell those who are above average about the best, but not those who are below average." (VI:21)

The Master said, "I never enlighten anyone who has not been driven to distraction by trying to understand a difficulty or who has not got into a frenzy trying to put his ideas into words. When I have pointed out one corner of a square to anyone and he does not come back with the other three, I will not point it out to him a second time." (VII:8)

The Master said, "is benevolence really far away? No sooner do I desire it than it is here." (VII:30)

There were four things the Master refused to have anything to do with: he refused to entertain conjectures or insist on certainty; he refused to be inflexible or egotistical. (IX:4)

The Master said, "I have yet to meet the man who is as fond of virtue as he is of beauty in women." (IX:18)

The Master said, "As in the case of making a mound, if, before the very last basketful, I stop, then I shall have stopped. As in the case of leveling the ground, if, though tipping only one basketful, I am going forward, then I shall be making progress." (IX:19)

The Master said, "One cannot but give assent to exemplary words, but what is important is that one should rectify oneself. One cannot but be pleased with tactful words, but what is important is that one should reform oneself. I can do nothing with the man who gives assent but does not rectify himself or the man who is pleased but does not reform himself." (IX:24)

The Master said, "Make it your guiding principle to do your best for others and to be trustworthy in what you say. Do not accept as friend anyone who is not as good as you. When you make a mistake do not be afraid of mending your ways." (IX:25)

The Master said, "The gentleman helps others to realize what is good in them; he does not help them to realize what is bad in them. The small man does the opposite." (XII:16)

Fan Chi'ih asked about wisdom. The Master said, "Know your fellow men." (XII:22)

Tzu-kung asked about how friends should be treated. The Master said, "Advise them to the best of your ability and guide them properly, but stop when there is no hope of success. Do not asked to be snubbed." (XII23)

Tzeng Tzu said, "A gentleman makes friends through being cultivated, but looks to friends for support in benevolence." (XII:24)

The Master said, "The gentleman agrees with others without being an echo. The small man echoes without being in agreement." (XIII:23)

The Master said, "A man of virtue is sure to be the author of memorable sayings, but the author of memorable sayings is not necessarily virtuous. A benevolent man is sure to possess courage, but a courageous man does not necessarily possess benevolence." (XIV:4)

The Master said, "Men of antiquity studied to improve themselves; men today study to impress others." (XIV:24)

The Master said, "It is not the failure of others to appreciate your abilities that should trouble you, but rather your own lack of them." (XIV:30)

The Master said, "To fail to speak to a man who is capable of being benefited is to let a man go to waste. To speak to a man who is incapable of being benefited is to let one's words go to waste. A wise man let neither men nor words go to waste." (XV:8)

The Master said, "What the gentleman seeks, he seeks within himself; what the small man seeks, he seeks in others." (XV:21)

The Master said, "The gentleman is conscious of his own superiority without being contentious, and comes together with other gentlemen without forming cliques." (XV:22)

The gentleman is devoted to principle but not inflexible in small matters. In instruction there is no separation into categories. There is no point in people taking counsel together who follow different ways. It is enough that the language one uses gets the point across. (XV:37-41)

Confucius said, "Those who are born with knowledge are the highest. Next come those who attain knowledge through study. Next again come those who turn to study after having been vexed by difficulties. The common people, in so far as they make no effort to study even after having been vexed by difficulties, are the lowest." (XVI:9)

The Master said, "Yu, have you heard about the six qualities and the six attendant faults?" "No." "Be seated and I shall tell you. To love benevolence without loving learning is liable to lead to foolishness. To love cleverness without loving learning is liable to lead to deviation from the right path. To love trustworthiness in word without loving learning is liable to lead to harmful

behaviour. To love forthrightness without loving learning is liable to lead to intolerance. To love courage without loving learning is liable to lead to insubordination. To love unbending strength without loving learning is liable to lead to indiscipline." (XVII:8)

Tzu-hsia said, "A Man can, indeed, be said to be eager to learn who is conscious, in the course of a day, of what he lacks and who never forgets, in the course of a month, what he has mastered." (XIX:5)

Tzu-hsia said, " Learn widely and be steadfast in your purpose, inquire earnestly and reflect on what is at hand, and there is no need for you to look of benevolence elsewhere." (XIX:6)

Haiku Collection

Editor's Note: The next section of this collection is taken from *A Zen Harvest* (LOC# BQ 9267 .Z48 1988) by Soiku Shigematsu.

Each time wishing
Beforehand to talk it out
I've never parted from You
Without feeling many words
Unspoken...1.

Autumn coming-
It's almost unnoticed, but
I feel its
Invisible arrival
In the rustling winds. 3.

Rain, hail,
Snow, ice:
All Different, but
They finally meld into
One valley stream. 19.

Over the pond
Every night the moon
Casts its light.
But the water won't be soiled;
The moon won't either. 44.

Nothing seems
So transient as
Human life:
The dew on the petal
Of the morning glory. 64

Should the moon
Distinguish
Rich and poor,
It would never brighten
A poor man's hut. 70.

White face, yellow face,
Ugly or beautiful: it's
Hard to change.
But our mind can be changed,
So set it right. 72.

By their colors
Flowers attract us, but
Soon they fade, fall, and
Finally turn into dust. 74.

To be born
And be unborn is one thing:
Penetrate this fact.
Death is
Illusion. 91

Yes or no,
Good or bad, all
Arguments are gone:
More beautiful tunes come
From pine winds on the hills. 94.

Life is one rest

On the way back from Illusion
To Nirvana;
Let it rain if it rains!
Let winds blow if they blow! 101.

I really love
My barrel-making job;
Connecting each board into
One round barrel. 113.

Walk on deliberately
And you'll surely see the world
Beyond the thousand miles,
Even if you walk
As slow as a cow. 114.

How regrettable!
Never
To return:
Days and months, flowing water,
And Human lives! 120.

Mistaken if you
Think you see the moon
With your own eyes:
You see it with
The light it sheds. 130.

Wisdom, if you
Devise it, is
False;
The true wisdom is
What you never know. 131.

No hesitation anymore!
Having given it all up,
I'm quite ready
To die..... 143.

No parents, no friends,
No children, no wife,
How lonely!
I would rather
Die! 149.

No parents,
No wife,
No children,
No job, no money;
But, no death, thank you. 150.

The wind is you breath;
The open sky, your mind;
The sun, your eye;
Seas and mountains,
Your whole body. 166.

What shall I leave as
A keepsake after I die?
In spring, flowers;
Summer, cuckoos;
Fall, red maple leaves;
Winter, snow. 169.

Woman and man:
They look different
But inside
Their skeletons are
Almost the same. 189.

Were our skins peeled off,
Yours and mine,
Which is you, Which is I? 190.

Cold moon:
Sounds of the bridge
As I walk alone. 191.

Duty and humanity
Are often incompatible:
The road forks
But my body is one. 219.

In the dark
I lost sight of
my shadow;
I've found it again
By the fire I lit. 235.

Coming out of darkness
I'm likely to enter
The Darker path again.
Shine far all over,
Moon on the Mountain edge. 236.

As I stumble on the slope,
My lantern has gone out;
I'm treading all alone
In complete darkness. 282.

When the lantern goes out,
Where, I wonder, does
Its light go?
Darkness is my own
Original house. 408

Love too
Is
Rooted in
Piss
And shit. 245

Make your mind
Flexible as water:
Now square,
Now roundup to
The shape of the bowl. 264.

Feeling helpless, I go out
To meet the moon
Only to find every mountain
Veiled with cloud. 268

Never regard this world as
The only one;
The next world
And the one after the next...
All the worlds are here now. 275

Everyone admires
Beautiful flowers in bloom,
But the ones who know
Visit them
After they've fallen. 284

Even strong winds are
Weakened by
Obedient willow twigs;
They'll never
Be broken in the storm. 308

Reverence is
The source of divine favors;
Without it,
Buddhas and wooden clogs are
Only pieces of wood. 322

Good and bad, are the
Reflections in the mirror:
Watch them closely
And you'll know they're
Nothing but yourself. 334

Your parents,
Grandparents....
All constituted in Yourself.
Love yourself,
Revere yourself. 374

Moonlight
The Four Gates and Four Schools
Are nothing but one. 386

Whilst everyone
Washes their dirty
Hands and feet,
Few remove
Stains from their minds. 395

Even in the dew
On the tiny blade
Of some nameless grass,
The moon
Will show herself. 420

We wish
Our lives were long
While our hair's
Growing long
Is a nuisance. 423

A person who
Does everything as it
Naturally goes
Gets along easily in
This world and the next. 445

Everything is
A lie in this world
Because even
Death isn't so. 451

The moon reflects
Even on dirty water;
This realized,
Our mind clears up. 461

When the water
In your mind
Clears up
Calm stars can be seen
Reflected on it. 462

Someone else's question,
Somehow
You can answer;
But, your mind's question,
How can you answer? 538

The jewel
Is in your bosom;
Why look for it
Somewhere
Else? 557

Push aside
Those leaves heaped on
The Old Path;
You'll see the invisible footprints
Of the Sun Goddess. 568

Pine trees in the wind
Don't break;
They always scatter
The snow before it's
Too heavy for their branches. 569

Pine winds,
Moonlight on the field grasses
Are all that I have:
Besides,
No visitors. 593

So the full moon is admired
Like a well-rounded mind
But once it was a
Sharp-edged crescent. 603

Be round,
Thoroughly round,
Human mind!
Square minds
Often scratch. 604

You may try to be round,
But keep one corner,
O mind,
Otherwise you'll
Slip and roll away. 605

While faithfully throwing their
Shadows to the water,
Flirting with the wind:
Willows by the river. 615

No sound is heard
In the creeks where
Waters run deep;
Shallow streams
Always splash. 618

The man
Who's escaped the world
To live in the mountains,
If he's still weary,
Where should he go? 710

The Tao of Pooh

(A must buy by Benjamin Hoff)

The Stone Cutter, pg. 118

There was once a stonecutter, who was dissatisfied with himself and his position in life.

"One day, he passed a wealthy merchant's house, and through the open gateway, saw many fine possessions and important visitors. "How powerful that merchant must be" thought the stonecutter. He became very envious, and wished that he could be like the merchant. Then he would no longer have to live the life of a mere stonecutter.

To his great surprise, he suddenly became the merchant, enjoying more luxuries and power than he had ever dreamed of, envied and detested by those less wealthy than himself. But soon a high official passed by, carried in a sedan chair, accompanied by attendants, and escorted by soldiers beating gongs. Everyone, no matter how wealthy, had to bow low before the procession. "How powerful that official is" he thought. "I wish that I could be a high official!"

Then he became the high official, carried everywhere in his embroidered sedan chair, feared and hated by the people all around, who had to bow down before him as he passed. It was a hot summer day, and the official felt very uncomfortable in the sticky sedan chair. He looked up at the sun. It shone proudly in the sky, unaffected by his presence. "How powerful the sun is" he thought. "I wish that I could be the sun!"'

Then he became the sun, shining fiercely down on everyone, scorching the fields, cursed by the farmers and laborers. But a huge black cloud moved between him and the earth, so that his light could no longer shine on everything below. "How powerful that storm cloud is!" he thought. "I wish that I could be a cloud!"

Then he became the cloud, flooding the fields and villages, shouted at by everyone. But soon he found that he was being pushed away by some great force, and realized that it was the wind. "How powerful it is!" he thought. "I wish that I could be, the wind!"

Then he became the wind, blowing tiles off the roofs of houses, uprooting trees, hated and feared by all below him. But after a while, he ran up against something that would not move, no matter how forcefully he blew against its huge, towering stone. "How powerful that stone is!" he thought. I wish that I could be a stone!" Then he became the stone, more powerful than anything else on earth. But as he stood there, he heard the sound of a hammer pounding a chisel into the solid rock, and felt himself being changed. "What could be more powerful than I, the stone?" he thought. He looked down and saw far below him the figure of a stonecutter.

The Cork, The Tao of Pooh pg. 88

The Wu Wei principle underlying Tai Chi Ch'uan can be understood by striking at a piece of cork floating in water. The harder you hit it, the more it yields; the more it yields, the harder it bounces back. Without expending energy, the cork can easily wear you out. So, Wu Wei overcomes force by neutralizing its power, rather than by adding to the conflict. With other approaches, you may fight fire with fire, but with Wu Wei you fight fire with water.

The Te of Piglet

(a must buy by Benjamin Hoff)

Making the Best of It, pg. 234

It is fitting that for centuries Taoists have been associated with magic, as Taoism is, on one level or another, a form of magic, a very practical form, perhaps, but magic all the same. Here we will briefly describe two secrets of that magic, two principles of Taoist transformation that may prove useful in the coming years. The first is Turn the Negative into Positive. The second is Attract Positive with Positive. Unlike some other Taoist secrets, there is little danger of these principles falling into the Wrong Hands; because in the wrong hands, they won't work. We might add that they work best for Piglets.

Turn the Negative into Positive is a principle well known in the Taoist martial arts. Using it for self-defense, you turn your attacker's power to your benefit by deflecting it back at him. In effect, he swings his fist and hits himself in the face. And after a while, if he has any intelligence at all, he stops and leaves you alone. Transforming negative into positive, you work with whatever comes your way. If others throw bricks at you, build a house. If they throw tomatoes, start a vegetable stand.

You can often change a situation simply by changing your attitude toward it. For example, a Traffic Jam can be turned into an Opportunity to Think, or Converse, or Read or Write a Letter. When we give up our images of self-importance and our ideas of what should be, we can help things become what they need to be.

The Naval Treaty, pg. 254

"There is nothing in which deduction is so necessary as in religion," said he, leaning with his back against the shutters. "It can be built up as an exact science by the reasoner. Our highest assurance of the goodness of Providence seems to me to rest in the flowers. All other things, our Powers; our desires, our food, are all really necessary for our existence in the first instance. But this rose is an extra. Its smell and its colour are an embellishment of life, not a condition of it. It is only goodness which gives extras, and so I say again that we have much to hope from the flowers."

The Emperor's Horses, pg. 196

"' A Great man retains a child's mind." And, as the following story by Chuang-tse shows, the great man respects the child's mind, as well:

Accompanied by six of his wisest men, the Yellow Emperor journeyed to Chu-T'zu Mountain, to speak to the mystic Ta Kuei. In the wilderness of Hsiang Ch'eng, the procession lost its way. After wandering for some time, the men came upon a boy tending horses.

"Do you know the way to Chu-T'zu Mountain?" they asked him.

"I do," the boy replied.

"In that case," they said, "would you know where we might find the hidden dwelling of the hermit Ta Kuei?"

"Yes," he answered ," I can tell you."

"What a fascinating child!" said the emperor to his companions. "He knows this much" He stepped from his chariot. "Let me test him," and called the boy to him.

"Tell me, said the Yellow Emperor. "If you were in charge of the empire, how would you go about ruling it?"

"I know only the tending of horses," the boy replied. "Is ruling the empire any different from that?"

Not satisfied, the emperor questioned him again. "I realize that governing is hardly your concern. Still, I would like to know if you have ever had any thoughts about it."

The boy did not answer. The emperor asked him once more. The boy replied by asking,

"Is governing the empire different from tending horses?"

"Explain the tending of horses," said tile Yellow Emperor, "and I will tell you."

"When taking care of horses," said the boy, "we make sure that no harm comes to them. In doing so, we put aside anything within ourselves that would injure them. Can ruling a nation differ from that?"

The Yellow Emperor bowed his head twice to the ground. "Heavenly Master" he exclaimed.

Incognito, pg. 186

The word for Taoist sensitivity is Cooperate. As Lao-tse wrote, "The skilled walker leaves no trace nor trackshe is sensitive to (and therefore respectful toward) his surroundings and works with the natural laws that govern them. Like a chameleon, he blends in with What's There. And he does this through the awareness that comes from reducing the Ego to nothing. As Chuang-tse put it:

"To him who dwells not in himself, the forms of things reveal themselves as they are. He moves like water, reflects like a mirror, responds like an echo. His lightness makes him seem to disappear. Still as a clear lake, he is harmonious in his relations with those around him, and remains so through profit and loss. He does not precede others, but follows them instead."

The Taoist alchemist and herbalist Ko Hung described one of the benefits of non-egotistical awareness: contentment.

"The contented man can be happy with what appears to be useless. He can find worthwhile occupation in forests and mountains. He stays in a small cottage and associates with the simple. He would not exchange his worn clothes for the imperial robes, nor the load on his back for a four-horse carriage. He leaves the jade in the mountain and the pearls in the sea. Wherever he goes, whatever he does, he can be happy-he knows when to stop. He does not pick the brief blossoming flower; he does not travel the dangerous road. To him, the ten thousand possessions are dust in the wind. He sings as he travels among the green mountains.

He finds sheltering branches more comforting than red-gated mansions, the plow in his hands more rewarding than the Prestige of titles and banners, fresh mountain water more satisfying than the feasts of the wealthy. He acts in true freedom. What can competition for honors mean to him? What attraction can anxiety and greed possibly hold? Through simplicity he has Tao, and from Tao, everything. Else comes; the light in the "darkness," the clear in the "cloudy," the speed in the "slowness," the full in the "empty."

The cook creating a meal with his own hands has as much honor in his eyes as a famous singer or high official. He has no profits to gain, no salary to lose; no applause, no criticism. When he looks up, it is not in envy. When he looks down, it is not with arrogance. Many look at him, but nobody sees him. Calm and detached, he is free from all danger, a dragon hidden among men.

I Have Three Treasures, pg. 220

I have three treasures, Which I guard and keep.
The first is compassion.
The second is economy.
The third is humility.

From compassion comes courage.
From economy, comes the means to be generous.
From humility comes responsible leadership.

Today, men have discarded compassion in order to be bold.
They have abandoned economy in order to be big spenders.
They have rejected humility in order to be first.

This is the road to death.

Fantasies, pg. 132

The fearful fantasies we have inherited have conditioned us to believe that we need to be protected from the natural world, Better Living Through Heavy Industry, and so on. In reality, as anyone ought to be able to see by now, the natural world needs to be protected from us. Its wisdom needs to be recognized, respected, and understood by us, and not merely viewed through the distorted lenses of our illusions about it. As Sir Arthur Conan Doyle cautioned, through his character.

"One's ideas must be as broad as Nature if they are to interpret Nature," and "When one tries to rise above Nature one is liable to fall below it."

Live, But Live Well, pg. 155

Taoism is not the reject-the-physical-world theory of living that some scholars (and a few Taoists) would have others believe. Even Lao-tse, the most reclusive of Taoist writers, wrote, "Honor all under Heaven as your body." To a Taoist, a reject-the-physical-world approach would be an extremist absurdity, impossible to live without dying. Instead, a Taoist might say: Carefully observe the natural laws in operation in the world around you, and live by them. From following them, you will learn the morality of modesty, moderation, compassion, and consideration (not just one society's rules and regulations), the wisdom of seeing things as they are (not of merely collecting "facts" about them) and the happiness of being in harmony, with the Way (which has nothing to do with self-righteous "spiritual" obsessions and fanaticism). And you will live lightly, spontaneously, and effortlessly.

Illusions, pg. 109

We will begin our examination of illusions with a narrative concerning the Perception of illusions, which show that It All Depends on How One Looks at Things. The first is by the Tao writer Lieh-tse:

"A man noticed that his axe was missing. Then he saw the neighbor's son pass by. The boy looked like a thief, walked like a thief, behaved like a thief. Later that day, the man found his axe where he had left it the day before. The next time he saw the neighbor's son, the boy looked, walked, and behaved like an honest, ordinary boy."

The Samurai's Late Supper, pg. 96

A certain samurai had a reputation for hot-tempered behavior. A Zen master known for his excellent cooking, decided that the warrior needed to be taught a lesson before he became any more dangerous. He invited the samurai to dinner.

The samurai arrived at the appointed time. Zen master told him to make himself comfortable while he finished preparing the food. A long time passed. The samurai waited impatiently. After a while, he called out: "Zen Master-have you forgotten me?"

The Zen master came out of the kitchen. "I am very sorry," he said. "Dinner is taking longer to prepare than I had thought." He went back to the kitchen.

A long time passed. The samurai sat, growing hungrier by the minute. At last he called out, a little softer this time: "Zen Master-please. When will my dinner be served?"

The Zen master came out of the kitchen. "I am truly sorry. There has been a further delay. It won't be much longer." He went back to the kitchen.

A long time passed. Finally, the samurai couldn't endure the waiting any longer. He rose to his feet, chagrined and ravenously hungry. Just then, the Zen master entered the room with a tray of food. First he served miso shiru (soybean soup).

The samurai gratefully drank the soybean soup up, enchanted by its flavor. "Oh, Zen Master," he exclaimed, "this is the finest miso shiru I have ever tasted! You truly deserve your reputation as an expert cook!"

"It's nothing," replied the Zen master, modestly. "Only miso shiru."

The samurai set down his empty bowl. "Truly magical soup! What secret spices did you use to bring out the flavor?"

"Nothing special," the Zen master replied.

"No, no I insist. The soup is extraordinarily delicious!"

"Well, there is one thing

"I knew it!" exclaimed the samurai, eagerly leaning forward. "There had to be something to make it taste so good! Tell me-what is it?"

The Zen master softly spoke: "It took time," he said.

Gospel According to Zen

Editor's Note: This collection of sayings was taken from a book called The Gospel According to Zen: Beyond the Death of God edited by Robert Sohl in 1970. I highly recommend the book to you.

Three Sayings of Jesus

Jesus said to his disciples: Make comparisons; tell me what I am like.
Simon Peter said to him: You are like a just angel.
Matthew said to him: You are like a wise philosopher.
Thomas said to him: Master, my mouth will in no way endure my saying what you are like.
Jesus said: I am not your master.

Jesus said: Let him who seeks not cease his seeking until he find;
and when he find, he will be troubled,
and if he is troubled, he will marvel,
and will be a king over All.

Jesus said:
I m the light which is over everything.
I am the All;
from me the All has gone forth,
and to me the All has returned.
Split wood: I am there.
Lift up the stone, and you will find me there.

Gasan and the Bible

A university student while visiting Gasan asked him: "Have you ever read the Christian Bible?" "No, read it to me," said Gasan.

The student opened the Bible and read from St. Matthew: "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They toil not, neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these... Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself."

Gasan said: "Whoever uttered those words I consider an enlightened man."

The student continued reading: "Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened."

Gasan remarked: "That is excellent. Whoever said that is not far from Buddhahood."

Stringless Harps

Men know how to read printed books, they do not know how to read the unprinted ones. They can play on a stringed harp, but not on a stringless one. Applying themselves to the superficial instead of the profound, how should they understand music or poetry?

Eat when you are Hungry

The Zen sect says, "When you are hungry, eat; when you are weary, sleep." Poetry aims at the description in common language of beautiful scenery. The sublime is contained in the ordinary, the hardest in the easiest. What is self-conscious and ulterior is far from the truth; what is mindless is near.

Sporting Fishes

If your heart is without stormy waves, everywhere are blue mountains and green trees. If our real nature is creative like nature itself, wherever we may be, we see that all things are free like sporting fishes and circling kites.

The Empty Boat

Suppose a boat is crossing a river and another boat, an empty one, is about to collide with it. Even an irritable man would not lose his temper. But suppose there was someone in the second boat. Then the occupant of the first would shout to him to keep clear. And if he did not hear the first time, nor even when called to three times, bad language would inevitably follow. In the first case there was no anger, in the second there wasbecause in the first case the boat was empty, in the second it was occupied. And so it is with man. If he could only pass empty through life, who would be able to injure him?

Three in the Morning

What is meant by "Three in the Morning"? In Sung there was a keeper of monkeys. Bad times came and he was obliged to tell them that he must reduce their ration of nuts. "It will be three in the morning and four in the evening," he said. The monkeys were furious. "Very well then," he said, "you shall have four in the morning and three in the evening." The monkeys accepted with delight.

Zen Archery

One day Heiko Sensei led his student, Ito, up to the top of a cliff. The waves crashed against the base of the cliff, several hundred feet below. Heiko took up a bow and set up a target 50 yards away.

"Let's have a contest," he told the student.

Ito fired an arrow and hit the red bull's-eye on the target.

"Not bad." the Master replied. Heiko Sensei took the bow and then fired an arrow into sky as high as it could go and it landed hundreds of yards away in the ocean. He exclaimed loudly, "Bull's-eye!"

Meshing Nets

"As a net is made up of a series of ties, so everything in this world is connected by a series of ties. If anyone thinks that the mesh of a net is an independent, isolated thing, he is mistaken. It is called a net because it is made up of a series of interconnected meshes, and each mesh has its place and responsibility in relation to other meshes." -The Buddha

The Butterflies of Chuang Tzu

Editor's Note: I used Burton Watson's translations found in Chuang Tzu: The Basic Writings published by Columbia University Press in 1964. Chuang Tzu was a Taoist contemporary of Confucianist Mencius and lived in the 4th Century before the Common Era. The central themes of his writings are freedom, the pointlessness of words and a Zen-like humor.

The Dream

Once Chuang Chou dreamt that he was a butterfly, a butterfly flitting and fluttering around, happy with himself and doing as he pleased. He didn't know he was Chuang Chou. Suddenly he woke up and there he was, solid and unmistakable Chuang Chou. But he didn't know if he was Chuang Chou who had dreamt he was a butterfly, or a butterfly dreaming he was Chuang Chou.

What is Acceptable?

What is acceptable we call acceptable; what is unacceptable we call unacceptable. A road is made by people walking on it, and thusly things are so because they are called so. What make them so? Making them so makes them so. What makes them not so? Making them not so makes them not so. Things all must have that which is so and things all must have that which is acceptable. There is nothing that is not so, nothing that is not acceptable.

The Argument

Suppose you an I have had an argument. If you have beaten me instead of my beating you, then are you necessarily right and am I necessarily wrong? If I have beaten you instead of your beating me, then am I necessarily right and are you necessarily wrong? Is one of us right and the other wrong? Are both of us right or are both of us wrong? If you and I don't know the answer, then other people are bound to be even more in the dark. Whom shall we get to decide what is right? Shall we get someone who agrees with you to decide? But if he already agrees with you, how can he decide fairly? Shall we get someone who agrees with me? But if he already agrees with me, how can he decide? Shall we get someone who disagrees with both of us? But if he already disagrees with both of us, how can he decide? Shall we get someone who agrees with both of us? But if he already agrees with both of us, how can he decide? Obviously, then, neither you nor I nor anyone else can know the answer. Shall we wait for still another person?

But waiting for one shifting voice to pass judgment on another is the same as waiting for none of them. Harmonize them all with the Heavenly Equality, leave them to their endless changes, and so live out your years. What do I mean by harmonizing them with the Heavenly Equality? Right is not right; so is not so. If right were really right, it would differ so clearly from not right that there would be no need for argument. If so were really so, it would differ so clearly from not so that there would be no need for argument. Forget the years; forget distinctions. Leap into the boundless and make it your home!

Happy Fish

Chuang Tzu and Hui Tzu were strolling along the dam of the Hao River when Chuang Tzu said, "See how the minnows come out and dart around where they please! That's what fish really enjoy!"

Hui Tzu said, "You're not a fish, so how do you know what fish enjoy?"

Chuang Tzu said, "You're not I, so how do you know I don't know what fish enjoy?"

Hui Tzu said, "I'm not you, so I certainly don't know what you know. On the other hand, you're certainly not a fish, so that still proves you don't know what fish enjoy!"

Chuang Tzu said, "Let's go back to your original question, please. You asked me how I know what fish enjoy, so you already knew I knew it when you asked the question. I know it by standing here beside the Hao River."

Seven Openings

The emperor of the South Sea was called Shu (Brief), the emperor of the North Sea was called Hu (Sudden), and the emperor or the central region was called Hun-tun (Chaos). Shu and Hu from time to time came together for a meeting in the territory of Hun-tun, and Hun-tun treated them very generously. Shu and Hu discussed how they could repay his kindness. "All men," they said, "have seven openings in their head so they can see, hear, eat, and breathe. But Hun-tun alone doesn't have any. Let's try boring him some!"

Every day they bored another hole, and on the seventh day Hun-tun died.

Look Under Your Feet

Master Tung-Kuo asked Chuang Tzu, "This thing called the Way-where does it exist?"
Chuang Tzu said, "There's no place it doesn't exist."
"Come," said Master Tung-kuo, "you must be more specific!"
"It is in the ant."
"As low a thing as that?"
"It is in the panic grass."
"But that is lower still!"
"It is in the tiles and shards."
"How can it be so low?"
"It is in the piss and shit."

The Sacred Tortoise

Once, when Chuang Tzu was fishing in the P'u River, the kind of Ch'u sent two officials to go and announce to him: "I would like to trouble you with the administration of my realm."

Chuang Tzu held on to the fishing pole and, without turning his head, said, "I have heard that there is a sacred tortoise in Ch'u that has been dead for three thousand years. The king keeps it wrapped in cloth and boxed, and stores it in the ancestral temple. Now would you this tortoise rather be dead and have its bone left behind and honored? Or would it rather be alive and dragging its tail in the mud?"

It would rather be alive and dragging its tail in the mud," said the two officials.

Chuang Tzu said, "Go away! I'll drag my tail in the mud!"

The Frog in the Well

Have you ever heard about the frog in the caved-in well? He said to the great turtle of the Eastern Sea, "What fun I have! I come out and hop around the railing of the well, or I go back in and take a rest in the wall where a tile has fallen out. When I dive into the water, I let it hold me up under the armpits and support my chin, and when I slip about in the mud, I bury my feet in it and let it come up over my ankles. I look around at the mosquito larvae and the crab and polliwogs and I see that none of them can match me. To have complete command of the water of one whole valley and to monopolize all the joys of a caved-in well, this is the best there is! Why don't you come some time and see for yourself?"

But before the great turtle of the Eastern Sea had even gotten his left foot in the well his right knee was already wedged fast. He backed out and withdrew a little, and then began to describe the sea. "A distance of a thousand li cannot indicate its greatness; a depth of a thousand fathoms cannot express how deep it is. In the time of Yu there were floods for nine years out of ten, and yet its waters never rose. In the time of T'ang there were droughts for seven years out of eight, and yet its shores never receded. Never to alter or shift, whether for an instant or an eternity; never to advance or recede, whether the quantity of water flowing in is great or small; this is the great delight of the Eastern Sea!"

When the frog in the caved-in well heard this, he was completely at a loss.

The Caged Sea-bird

Once a sea bird alighted in the suburbs of the Lu capital. The marquis of Lu escorted it to the ancestral temple, where he entertained it, performing the Nine Shao music for it to listen to and presenting it with the meat of the T'ai-lao sacrifice to feast on. But the bird only looked dazed and forlorn, refusing to eat a single slice of meat or drink a cup of wine, and in three days it was dead. This is to try to nourish a bird with what would nourish you instead of what would nourish a bird. If you want to nourish a bird with what nourishes a bird, then you should let it roost in the deep forest, play among the banks and islands, float on the rivers and lakes, eat mudfish and minnows, follow the rest of the flock in flight and rest, and live any way it chooses. A bird hates to hear even the sound of human voices, much less all that hubbub and to-do. Try performing the Hsien-ch'ih and Nine Shao music in the wilds around Lake Tung-t'ing. When the birds hear it they will fly off, when the animals hear it they will run away, when the fish hear it they will dive to the bottom. Only the people who hear it will gather around to listen. Fish live in water and thrive, but if men tried to live in water they would die. Creatures differ because they have different likes and dislikes. Therefore the former sages never required the same ability from all creatures or made them all do the same thing. Names should stop when they have expressed reality, concepts of right should be founded on what is suitable. This is what it means to have command of reason and good fortune to support you.

Swimming Boatmen

Yen Yuan said to Confucius, "I crossed the gulf at Goblet Deeps and the ferryman handled the boat with supernatural skill. I asked him, 'Can a person learn how to handle a boat?' and he replied, 'Certainly. A good swimmer has acquired his ability through repeated practice. And, if a man can swim under water, he may never have seen a boat before and still he'll know how to

handle it!' I asked him what he meant by that, but he wouldn't tell me. May I venture to ask you what it means?"

Confucius said, "A good swimmer has acquired his ability through repeated practice, that means he's forgotten the water. If a man can swim under water, he may never have seen a boat before and still he'll know how to handle it. That's because he see the water as so much dry land, and regards the capsizing of a boat as he would the overturning of a cart. The ten thousand things may all be capsizing and turning over at the same time right in front of him and it can't get at him and affect what's inside; so where could he go and not be at ease.

"When you're betting for tiles in an archery contest, you shoot with skill. When you're betting for fancy belt buckles, you worry about your aim. And when you're betting for real gold, you're a nervous wreck. Your skill is the same in all three cases, but because one prize means more to you than another, you let outside considerations weigh on your mind. He who looks too hard at the outside gets clumsy on the inside."

Old Man Falls into Water

Confucius was seeing the sights at Lu-liang, where the water falls from a height of thirty fathoms and races and boils along for forty li, so swift that no fish or other water creature can swim in it. He saw a man fall into the water and, supposing that the man was in some kind of trouble and intended to end his life, he ordered his disciples to line up on the bank and pull the man out. But after the man had gone a couple of hundred paces, he came out of the water and began strolling along the base on the embankment, his hair streaming down, singing a song. Confucius ran after him and said, "At first I thought you were a ghost, but now I see you're a man. May I ask if you have some special way of staying afloat in the water?"

The old man replied, "I have no way. I began with what I was used to, grew up with my nature, and let things come to completion with fate. I go under with the swirls and come out with the eddies, following along the way the water goes and never thinking about myself. That's how I can stay afloat."

Is God a Taoist?

by Raymond M. Smullyan in *The Tao is Silent* 1977 publ. by Harper Collins

Mortal: And therefore, O God, I pray thee, if thou hast one ounce of mercy for this thy suffering creature, absolve me of having to have free will!
God: You reject the greatest gift I have given thee?
Mortal: How can you call that which was forced on me a gift? I have free will, but not of my own choice. I have never freely chosen to have free will. I have to have free will, whether I like it or not!
God: Why would you wish not to have free will?
Mortal: Because free will means moral responsibility, and moral responsibility is more than I can bear!
God: Why do you find moral responsibility so unbearable?
Mortal: Why? I honestly can't analyze why; all I know is that I do.
God: All right, in that case suppose I absolve you from all moral responsibility but leave you still with free will. Will this be satisfactory?
Mortal: (after a pause) No, I am afraid not.
God: Ah, just as I thought! So moral responsibility is not the only aspect of free will to which you object. What else about free will is bothering you?
Mortal: With free will I am capable of sinning, and I don't want to sin!
God: If you don't want to sin, then why do you?
Mortal: Good God! I don't know why I sin, I just do! Evil temptations come along, and try as I can, I cannot resist them.
God: If it is really true that you cannot resist them, then you are not sinning of your own free will and hence (at least according to me) not sinning at all.
Mortal: No, no! I keep feeling that if only I tried harder I could avoid sinning. I understand that the will is infinite. If one wholeheartedly wills not to sin, then one won't.
God: Well now, you should know. Do you try as hard as you can to avoid sinning or don't you?
Mortal: I honestly don't know! At the time, I feel I am trying as hard as I can, but in retrospect, I am worried that maybe I didn't!
God: So in other words, you don't really know whether or not you have been sinning. So the possibility is open that you haven't been sinning at all!
Mortal: Of course this possibility is open, but maybe I have been sinning, and this thought is what so frightens me!
God: Why does the thought of your sinning frighten you?
Mortal: I don't know why! For one thing, you do have a reputation for meting out rather gruesome punishments in the afterlife!
God: Oh, that's what's bothering you! Why didn't you say so in the first place instead of all this peripheral talk about free will and responsibility? Why didn't you simply request me not to punish you for any of your sins?
Mortal: I think I am realistic enough to know that you would hardly grant such a request!
God: You don't say! You have a realistic knowledge of what requests I will grant, eh? Well, I'll tell you what I'm going to do! I will grant you a very, very special dispensation to sin as much as you like, and I give you my divine word of honor that I will never punish you for it in the least. Agreed?
Mortal: (in great terror) No, no, don't do that!
God: Why not? Don't you trust my divine word?

Mortal: Of course I do! But don't you see, I don't want to sin! I have an utter abhorrence of sinning, quite apart from any punishments it may entail.
God: In that case, I'll go you one better. I'll remove you abhorrence of sinning. Here is a magic pill! Just swallow it, and you will lose all abhorrence of sinning. You will joyfully and merrily sin away, you will have no regrets, no abhorrence and I still promise you will never be punished by me, or yourself, or by any source whatever. You will be blissful for all eternity. So here is the pill!
Mortal: No, no!
God: Are you not being irrational? I am even removing your abhorrence of sin, which is your last obstacle.
Mortal: I still won't take it!
God: Why not?
Mortal: I believe that the pill will indeed remove my future abhorrence for sin, but my present abhorrence is enough to prevent me from being willing to take it.
God: I command you to take it!
Mortal: I refuse!
God: What, you refuse of your own free will?
Mortal: Yes!
God: So it seems that your free will comes in pretty handy, doesn't it?
Mortal: I don't understand!
God: Are you not glad now that you have free will to refuse such a ghastly offer? How would you like it if I forced you to take this pill, whether you wanted it or not?
Mortal: No, no! Please don't!
God: Of course I won't; I'm just trying to illustrate a point. All right, let me put it this way. Instead of forcing you to take the pill, suppose I grant your original prayer of removing your free will, but with the understanding that the moment you are no longer free, then you will take the pill.
Mortal: Once my will is gone, how could I possibly choose to take the pill?
God: I did not say you would choose it; I merely said you would take it. You would act, let us say, according to purely deterministic law which are such that you would as a matter of fact take it.
Mortal: I still refuse.
God: So you refuse my offer to remove your free will. This is rather different from your original prayer, isn't it?
Mortal: Now I see what you are up to. Your argument is ingenious, but I'm not sure it is really correct. There are some points we will have to go over again.
God: Certainly.
Mortal: There are two things you said which seem contradictory to me. First you said that one cannot sin unless one does so of one's own free will. But then you said you would give me a pill, which would deprive me of my own free will, and then I could sin as much as I like. But if I no longer had free will, then, according to your first statement, how could I be capable of sinning?
God: You are confusing two separate parts of our conversation. I never said the pill would deprive you of your free will, but only that it would remove your abhorrence of sinning.
Mortal: I'm afraid I'm a bit confused.
God: All right, then, let us make a fresh start. Suppose I agree to remove your free will, but with the understanding that you will then commit an enormous number of acts which you now regard as sinful. Technically speaking, you will not then be sinning since you will not be doing these acts of your own free will. And these acts will carry no moral responsibility, nor moral culpability, nor any punishment whatsoever. Nevertheless, these acts will all be of the type which you presently regard as sinful; they will all have this quality which you presently regard as sinful; they will all have this quality which you presently feel as abhorrent, but your abhorrence will disappear; so you will not then feel abhorrence towards these acts.
Mortal: No, but I have present abhorrence toward the acts, and this present abhorrence is sufficient to prevent me from accepting your proposal.
God: Hm! So let me get this absolutely straight. I take it you no longer wish me to remove your free will.

Mortal: (reluctantly) No, I guess not.
God: All right, I agree not to. But I am still not exactly clear as to why you now no longer wish to be rid of your free will. Please tell me again.
Mortal: Because, as you have told me, without free will I would sin even more than I do now.
God: But I have already told you that without free will you cannot sin.
Mortal: But if I choose now to be rid of free will, then all my subsequent evil actions will be sins, not of the future, but of the present moment in which I choose not to have free will.
God: Sounds like you are pretty badly trapped, doesn't it?
Mortal: Of course I am trapped! You have placed me in a hideous double bind! Now whatever I do is wrong. If I retain free will, I will continue to sin, and if I abandon free will (with your help, of course), I will now be sinning in so doing.
God: But by the same token, you place me in a double bind. I am willing to leave you free will or remove it as you choose, but neither alternative satisfies you. I wish to help you, but it seems I cannot.
Mortal: True!
God: But since it is not my fault, why are still angry with me?
Mortal: For having placed me in such a horrible predicament in the first place!
God: But, according to you, there is nothing satisfactory I could have done.
Mortal: You mean there is nothing satisfactory you can now do, but that does not mean that there is nothing you could have done.
God: Why? What could I have done?
Mortal: Obviously you should never have given me free will in the first place. Now that you have given it to me, it is too late, anything I do will be bad. But you should never have given it to me in the first place!
God: Oh, that's it! Why would it have been better had I never given it to you?
Mortal: Because then I never would have been capable of sinning at all.
God: Well, I'm always glad to learn from my mistakes.
Mortal: What!
God: I know, that sound sort of self-blasphemous, doesn't it? It almost involves a logical paradox! On the one hand, as you have been taught, it is morally wrong for any sentient being to claim that I am capable of making mistakes. On the other hand, I have the right to do anything. But I am also a sentient being. So the question is, Do I or do I not have the right claim that I am capable of making mistakes?
Mortal: That is a bad joke! One of your premises is simply false. I have not been taught that it is wrong for any sentient being to doubt your omniscience, but only for a mortal to doubt it. But since you are not mortal, then you are obviously free from this injunction.
God: Good, so you realize this on a rational level. Nevertheless, you did appear shocked when I said, "I am always glad to learn from my mistakes."
Mortal: Of course I was shocked. I was shocked not by your self-blasphemy (as you jokingly call it), not by the fact that you had no right to say it, but just by the fact that you did say it, since I have been taught that as a matter of fact you don't make

mistakes. So I was amazed that you claimed that it is possible for you to make mistakes.
God: I have not claimed that it is possible. All I am saying is that if I make mistakes, I will bee happy to learn from them. But this says nothing about whether the if has or ever can be realized.
Mortal: Let's please stop quibbling about this point. Do you or do you not admit it was a mistake to have given me free will?
God: Well, now this is precisely what I propose we should investigate. Let me review your present predicament. You don't want to have free will because with free will you can sin, and you don't want to sin. (Though I find this puzzling; in a way you must want to sin, or else you wouldn't. But let this pass for now.) On the other hand, if you agreed to give up free will, then you would now be responsible for the acts of the future. Ergo, I should never have given you free will in the first place.
Mortal: Exactly!
God: I understand exactly how you feel. Many mortals -even some theologians - have complained that I have been unfair in that it was I, not they , who decided that they should have free will, and then I hold them responsible for their actions. In other words, they feel that they are expected to live up to a contract with me, which they never agreed to in the first place.
Mortal: Exactly!
God: As I said, I understand this feeling perfectly. And I can appreciate the justice of the complaint. But the complaint only arises from an unrealistic understanding of the true issues involved. I am about to enlighten you as to what these are, and I think the results will surprise you! But instead of telling you outright, I shall continue to use the Socratic method.
To repeat, you regret that I ever gave you free will. I claim that when you see the true ramifications you will no longer have this regret. To prove my point, I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I am about to create a new universe, a new space-time continuum. In this new universe will be born a mortal just like you, for all practical purposes, we might say that you will be reborn. Now, I can give this new mortal, this new you, free will or not. What would you like me to do?
Mortal: (in great relief): Oh, please! Spare him from having to have free will!
God: All right, I'll do as you say. But you do realize that this new you without free will, will commit all sorts of horrible acts.
Mortal: But they will not be sins since he will have no free will.
God: Whether you call them sins or not, the fact remains that they will be horrible acts in the sense that they will cause great pain to many sentient beings.
Mortal: (after a pause) Good God, you have trapped me again! Always the same game! If I now give you the go-ahead to create this new creature with no free will who will nevertheless commit atrocious acts, then true enough he will not be sinning, but I again will be the sinner to sanction this.
God: In that case, I'll go you one better! Here, I have already decided whether to create this new you with free will or not. Now, I am writing my decision on this piece of paper and I won't show it to you until later. But my decision is now made and is absolutely irrevocable. There is nothing you can possibly do to alter it; you have no responsibility in the matter. Now, what I wish to know is this: Which way do you hope I have decided? Remember now, the responsibility for the decision falls entirely on my shoulders, not yours. SO you can tell me perfectly honestly and without any fear, which way do you hope I have decided?
Mortal: (after a very long pause) I hope you have decided to give him free will.
God: Most interesting! I have removed your last obstacle! If I do not give him free will, then no sin is to be imputed to anybody. So why do you hope I will give him free will?
Mortal: Because sin or no sin, the important point is that if you do not give him free will, then (at least according to what you have said) he will go around hurting people, and I don't want to see people hurt.
God: (with an infinite sigh of relief) At last! At last you see the real point!
Mortal: What point is that?
God: That sinning is not the real issue! The important thing is that people as well as other sentient beings don't get hurt!
Mortal: You sound like a utilitarian!
God: I am a utilitarian!
Mortal: What!
God: Whats or no whats, I am a utilitarian. Not a Unitarian, mind you, but a utilitarian.
Mortal: I just can't believe it!
God: Yes, I know, your religious training has taught you otherwise. You have probably thought of me more like a Kantian than a utilitarian, but your training was simply wrong.
Mortal: You leave me speechless!
God: I leave you speechless, do I? Well that is perhaps not too bad a thing, you have a tendency to speak too much as it is. Seriously, though, why do you think I ever did give you free will in the first place?
Mortal: Why did you? I never have thought much about why you did; all I have been arguing for is that you shouldn't have! But why did you? I guess all I can think of is the standard religious explanation: Without free will, one is not capable of meriting either salvation or damnation. So without free will, we could not earn the right to eternal life.
God: Most interesting! I have eternal life; do you think I have ever done anything to merit it?
Mortal: Of course not! With you it is different. You are already so good and perfect (at least allegedly) that it is not necessary for you to merit eternal life.
God: Really now? That puts me in a rather enviable position, doesn't it?
Mortal: I don't think I understand you.
God: Here I am eternally blissful without ever having to suffer or make sacrifices or struggle against evil temptations or anything like that. Without any of that type of "merit," I enjoy blissful eternal existence. By contrast, you poor mortals have to sweat and suffer and have all sorts of horrible conflicts about morality, and all for what? You don't even know whether I really exist or not, or if there really is any afterlife, or if there is, where you come into the picture. No matter how much you try to placate me by being "good," you never have any real assurance that your "best" is good enough for me, and hence you have no real security in obtaining salvation. Just think of it! I already have the equivalent of "salvation" and have never had to go through this infinitely lugubrious process of earning it. Don't you ever envy me for this?
Mortal: But it is blasphemous to envy you!
God: Oh come off it! You're not now talking to your Sunday school teacher, you are talking to me. Blasphemous or not, the important question is not whether you have the right to be envious of me but whether you are. Are you?
Mortal: Of course I am!
God: Good! Under your present worldview, you sure should be most envious of me. But I think with a more realistic world-view, you no longer will be. So you really have swallowed the idea which has been taught you that your life on earth is like an examination period and that the purpose of providing you with free will is to test you, to see if you merit blissful eternal life. But what puzzles me is this: If you really believe I am as good and benevolent as I am cracked up to be, why should I require people to merit things like happiness and eternal life? Why

should I not grant such things to everyone regardless of whether or not he deserves them?...

God: [But} we have gotten sidetracked as it is, and I would like to return to the question of what you believed my purpose to be in giving you free will. Your first idea of my giving you free will in order to test whether you merit salvation or not may appeal to moralists, but the idea is quite hideous to me. You cannot think of any nicer reason, any more humane reason, why I gave you free will?

Mortal: Well now, I once asked this question to an Orthodox rabbi. He told me that with the way we are constituted, it is simply not possible for us to enjoy salvation unless we feel we have earned it. And to earn it, we of course need free will.

God: That explanation is indeed much nicer than your former but still is far from correct. According to Orthodox Judaism, I created angels, and they have no free will. They are in actual sight of me and are so completely attracted by goodness that they never have even the slightest temptation towards evil. They really have no choice in the matter. Yet they are eternally happy even though they have never earned it. So if your rabbi's explanation were correct, why wouldn't I have simply created only angels rather than mortals?

Mortal: Beats me! Why didn't you?

God: Because the explanation is simply not correct. In the first place, I have never created any ready-made angels. All sentient beings ultimately approach the state, which might be called "angelhood." But just as the race of human beings is in a certain stage of biologic evolution, so angels are simply the end result of a process of Cosmic Evolution. The only difference between the so-called saint and the so-called sinner is that the former is vastly older than the latter. Unfortunately it take countless life cycles to learn what is perhaps the most important fact of the universe, evil is simply painful. All the arguments of the moralist, all of the alleged reasons why people shouldn't commit evil acts, simply pale into insignificance in light of the one basic truth that evil is suffering.

No, my dear friend, I am not a moralist. I am wholly a utilitarian. That I should have been conceived in the role of a moralist is one of the great tragedies of the human race. My role in the scheme of things (if one can use this misleading expression) is neither to punish nor reward, but to aid the process by which all sentient beings achieve ultimate perfection....

Mortal: Anyway, putting all these pieces together, it occurs to me that the only reason you gave free will is because of your belief that with free will, people will tend to hurt each other, and themselves, less than without free will.

God: Bravo! That is by far the best reason you have yet given! I can assure you that had I chosen to give free will that would have been my very reason for so choosing.

Mortal: What! You mean to say you did not choose to give us free will?

God: My dear fellow, I could no more choose to give you free will than I could choose to make an equilateral triangle equiangular in the first place, but having chosen to make one, I would then have no choice but to make it equiangular.

Mortal: I thought you could do anything!

God: Only things which are logically impossible. As St. Thomas said, "It is a sin to regard the fact that God cannot do the impossible, as a limitation on His powers." I agree, except that in place of using his word sin I would use the term error.

Mortal: Anyhow, I am still puzzled by your implication that you did not choose to give me free will.

God: Well, it's high time I inform you that the entire discussion, from the very beginning, has been based on one monstrous fallacy! We have been talking purely on a moral level, you originally complained that I gave you free will, and raised the whole question as to whether I should have. It never once occurred to you that I had absolutely no choice in the matter.

Mortal: I am still in the dark!

God: Absolutely! Because you are only able to look at it through the eyes of a moralist. The more fundamental metaphysical aspects of the question you never even considered.

Mortal: I still do not see what you are driving at.

God: Before you requested me to remove your free will, shouldn't your first question have been whether as a matter of fact you do have free will?

Mortal: That I simply took for granted.

God: But why should you?

Mortal: I don't know. Do I have free will?

God: Yes.

Mortal: Then why did you say, I shouldn't have taken it for granted?

God: Because you shouldn't. Just because something happens to be true, it does not follow that it should be taken for granted.

Mortal: Anyway, it is reassuring to know that my natural intuition about having free will is correct. Sometimes I have been worried that determinists are correct.

God: They are correct.

Mortal: Wait a minute now, do I have free will or don't I?

God: I already told you you do. But that does not mean that determinism is incorrect.

Mortal: Well, are my acts determined by the laws of nature or aren't they?

God: The word determined here is subtly but powerfully misleading and has contributed so much to the confusions of the free will versus determinism controversies. Your acts are certainly in accordance with the laws of nature, but to say they are determined by the laws of nature creates a totally misleading psychological image which is that your will could somehow be in conflict with the laws of nature and that the latter is somehow more powerful than you, and could "determine" your acts whether you like it or not. But it is simply impossible for your will to ever conflict with natural law. You and natural law are really one and the same.

Mortal: What do you mean that I cannot conflict with nature? Suppose I were to become very stubborn, and I determined not to obey the laws of nature. What could stop me? If I became sufficiently stubborn, even you could not stop me!

God: You are absolutely right! I certainly could not stop you. Nothing could stop you. But there is no need to stop you, because you could not even start! As Goethe very beautifully expressed it, "In trying to oppose Nature, we are in the very process of doing so, acting according to the laws of nature!" Don't you see, that the so-called "laws of nature" are nothing more than a description of how in fact you and other beings do act. They are merely a description of how you act, not a prescription of how you should act, not a power or force which compels or determines your acts. To be valid a law of nature must take into account how in fact you do act, or, if you like, how you choose to act.

Mortal: So you really claim that I am incapable of determining to act against natural laws?

God: It is interesting that you have twice now used the phrase "determined to act" instead of "chosen to act." This identification is quite common. Often one uses the statement "I am determined to do this" synonymously with "I have chosen to do this." This very psychological identification should reveal that determinism and choice are much closer than they might appear. Of course, you might well say that the doctrine of free will says that it is you who are doing the determining, whereas the doctrine of determinism appears to say that your acts are determined by something apparently outside you. But the confusion is largely caused by your bifurcation of reality into the

"you" and the "not you." Really now, just where do you leave off and the rest of the universe begin? Or where does the rest of the universe leave off and you begin? Once you can see the so-called "you" and the so-called "nature" as a continuous whole, then you can never again be bothered by such questions as whether it is you who are controlling nature or nature who is controlling you. Thus the muddle of free will versus determinism will vanish. If I may use a crude analogy, imagine two bodies moving toward each other by virtue of gravitational attraction. Each body, if sentient, might wonder whether it is he or the other fellow who is exerting the "force." In a way it is both, in a way it is neither. It is best to say that it is both, in a way it is neither. It is best to say that the configuration of the two is crucial.

Mortal: You said a short while ago that our whole discussion was based on a monstrous fallacy. You still have not told me what this fallacy is.

God: Why the idea that I could possibly have created you without free will! You acted as if this were a genuine possibility, and wondered why I did not choose it! It never occurred to you that a sentient being without free will is no more conceivable than a physical object, which exerts no gravitational attraction. (There is, incidentally, more analogy than you realize between a physical object exerting gravitational attraction and a sentient being exerting free will!) Can you honestly even imagine a conscious being without free will? What on earth could it be like? I think that one thing in your life that has so misled you is your having been told that I gave man the gift of free will. As if I first created man, and then as an afterthought endowed him with the extra property of free will. Maybe you think I have some sort of "paint brush" with which I daub some creatures with free will, and not others. No, free will is not an "extra"; it is part and parcel of the very essence of consciousness. A conscious being without free will is simply a metaphysical absurdity..

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Scharding: I guess the only remaining question is why God created anything in the first place? Probably because God loved the idea of sentience as much as God loves God's own sentience. But would God not have created sentient creatures once God thought of even their possible existence? God loves even the smallest most imperfect creatures.

Some Christian Thoughts

The Bird

John Shea Mystery: An unauthorized biography of God, pg. 26.

The following passage starts the Dutch Catechism:

"In A.D. 627 the monk Paulinus visited King Edwin in northern England to persuade him to accept Christianity. He hesitated and decided to summon his advisers. At the meeting one of them stood up and said: 'Your majesty, when you sit at table with your lords and vassals, in the winter when the fire burns warm and bright on the hearth and the storm is snowing outside, bringing the snow and the rain, it happens of a sudden that a little bird flies into the hall. It comes in at one door and flies out through the other. For the few moments that it is inside the hall, it does not feel the cold, but as soon as it leaves your sight, it returns to the dark of winter. It seems to me that the life of man is much the same. We do not know what went before and we do not know what follows. If the new doctrine can speak to us surely of these things, it is well for us to follow it.'

Revelation

Monika Hellwig Understanding Catholicism, pg. 17

When we speak of revelation in a religious sense, we are still using the word. In more or less the same sense of a break-rough experience in insight, knowing and understanding that takes us by surprise and introduces us to a new dimension of depth and intimacy with the ultimate, the One, the source and foundation and goal of our being. This kind of break through can happen in a number of different ways: in our experiences of nature, in the workings of our own conscience and consciousness, in personal relationships with other people, and in the his-story of the community.

The most basic and universally available kind of revelatory experience in the religious sense is the one associated with an experience of nature. Most of us have at one time or another been flooded by a sense of power, beauty, majesty or mystery at the sight of great mountains, vast sweeps of sky, the immense ocean with its rhythmic waves, the stillness of lakes, the blanketing quiet of forests. Most of us have at some time had a sense of an encompassing providence in spring sunshine, winter snow, autumn's brilliant colors, summer's extravagant abundance of life, the wonder of birth and the balm of sleep. These and so many other experiences, not all joyful ones, offer the opportunity for the revelation and discovery of the all-encompassing power and presences of the One who is greater than we are, prior to us, transcending our ability to grasp, our bountiful host in the world of nature, the silent but welcoming backdrop to all our experiences of life. The Hebrew Scriptures (known to most Christians as the Old Testament) are full of allusions to such experiences, suggesting them as starting points for our prayer that will lead us to deeper encounters with the transcendent, hidden but ever-present God. Such allusions form a constant theme, for instance, in the psalms, Jewish prayers which Christians continued to pray from the earliest Christian times, as indeed Jesus himself did.

Women and Nature

Elizabeth Johnson *Women, Earth and Creator* Spirit pg. 22

Three basic relationships: human beings with nature, among themselves, and with God. In each instance the major classical pattern of relationship is shaped by hierarchical dualism, that is, modeled on the dominance of ruling male elites and the subjugation of what is identified as female, cosmic, or foreign, an underclass with only instrumental value. As the ecological crisis makes crystal clear, the polarization of each pair's terms is nothing short of disastrous in its interconnected effects. Our eyes have been blinded to the sacredness of the earth, which is linked to the exclusion of women from the sphere of the sacred, which is tied to focus on a monarchical, patriarchal idea of God and a consequent forgetting of the Creator Spirit, the life-giver who is intimately related to the Earth.

In the quest for an ecological ethic grounded in religious truth, these three relationships need to be rethought together. But we must be wary of roads that lead to dead-ends. I think it is a Strategic mistake to retain the dualistic way of thinking and hope to make an advance simply by assigning greater value to the repressed "feminine" side of the polarity. This is to keep women, earth, and Spirit in their pre-assigned box, which is a cramped, subordinate place. Even if what has previously been disparaged is now highly appreciated, this strategy does not allow for the fullest flourishing of what is confined to one pole by pre-assigned definition. In truth, women are not any closer to nature than men are. This is a cultural construct. In truth, women are every bit as rational as men, every bit as courageous, every bit as capable of initiative. At the same time, precisely because women have been so identified with nature, our voices at this moment in time can speak out for the value of despised matter, bodies, and nature even as we assert that women's rational and spiritual capacities are equal to those of men. What we search for is a way to undercut the dualism and to construct a new, wholistic design for all of reality built on appreciation of difference in a genuine community. We seek a unifying vision that does not stratify what is distinct into superior-inferior layers but reconciles them in relation ships of mutuality. Let us then listen to women's wisdom, discern our kinship with the earth, and remember the Spirit, as we step toward an ecological ethic and spirituality.

Iron in our Blood

Women, *Earth and Creator Spirit* pg. 34

A crucial insight emerges from this creation story of cosmic and biological evolution. The kinship model of humankind's relation to the world is not just a poetic, good-hearted way of seeing things but the basic truth. We are connected in a most profound way to the universe, having emerged from it. Events in the galaxies produced the iron that makes our blood red and the calcium that makes our bones and teeth white. These and other heavy elements were cooked in the interior of stars and then dispersed when they died to form a second-generation solar system with its planets, on one of which the evolution of life and consciousness followed. In the words of scientist Arthur Peacocks:

" Every atom of iron in our blood would not have been there had it not been produced in some galactic explosion billions of years ago and eventually condensed to form the iron in the crust of the earth from which we have emerged."

Chemically, humanity is all of a piece with the cosmos. The same is true of our genes. Molecular biology shows that the same four bases make up the DNA of almost all living things. The genetic structure of cells in our bodies is remarkably similar to the cells in other creatures, bacteria, grasses, fish, horses, the great gray whales. We have all evolved from common ancestors and are kin in this shared, unbroken genetic history. To put it more poetically, we human beings as physical organisms carry within ourselves 'the signature of the supernovas and the geology and life history of the Earth.'

Living in the present moment, furthermore, involves us in a continuous exchange of material with the earth and other living creatures. Every time we breathe we take in millions of atoms breathed by the rest of humanity within the last two weeks. In our bodies seven percent of the protein molecules break down each day and have to be rebuilt out of matter from the earth (food) and energy from the sun. Seven percent per day is the statistical measure of our inter dependence. In view of the consistent recycling of the human body, the epidermis of our skin can be likened ecologically to a pond surface, not so much a shell or wall as a place of exchange. In a very real sense the world is our body.

Original Lilith Myth

After the Holy One created the first human being, Adam, God said: "It is not good for Adam to be alone." God created a woman, also from the Earth, and called her Lilith.

They quarreled immediately. She said: "I will not lie below you." He said, "I will not lie below you, but above you. For you are fit to be below me and I above you."

She responded: "We are both equal because we both come from the earth."

Neither listened to the other. When Lilith realized what was happening, she pronounced the Ineffable Name of God and flew off into the air.

Adam rose in prayer before the Creator, saying, "The woman you gave me has fled from me." Immediately the Holy One sent three angels after her.

The holy one said to Adam: "If she wants to return, all the better. If not, she will have to accept that one hundred of her children will die every day."

The angels went after her, finally locating her in the sea, in the powerful waters in which the Egyptians were destined to perish. They told her what God had said, and she did not want to return. (ALPHABET OF BEN SIRA 23A-B)

And God created the human species in God's own image... male and female created God them. (Genesis 1:27)

Scottish Gaelic Poetry

Editor's Note: This collection is from the book Nuadh Bardachd/ Modern Scottish Gaelic Poetry (you won't find it in the Library) with collections from many authors with English translations. I have met and talked with these authors while in Scotland.

The Heron

by Sorley Maclean

A pale yellow moon on the skyline,
the heart o the soil without a throb of laughter,
If a chilliness contemptuous
of golden windows in a snaky sea.

It is not the frail beauty of the moon
nor the cold loveliness of the sea
nor the empty tale of the shore's uproar
that seeps through my spirit to-night.

Faintness in strife,
the chin of Death in essence,
cowardice in the heart,
and belief in nothing

A heron can with drooping head
and stood on top of sea-wrack,
she folded her wings close in to her sides
and took stock of all around her.

Alone beside the sea,
like a mind alone in the universe,
her reason like man's
the sum of it how to get a meat

A restless mind seeking,
a more restless flesh returned,
unrest and sleep without a gleam;
music, delirium, and an hour of rapture.

The hour of rapture is the clear hour
that comes from the darkened blind brain,
horizon-breaking to the sight,
a smile affair weather in the illusion.

On the bare stones of the shore,
observing the slipperiness of a calm sea,
listening to the sea's swallowing
and brine rubbing on the stones.

Alone in the vastness of the universe,
though her inaccessible kin are many,
and bursting on her from the gale
the onset of the bright blue god.

I am with you but alone,
looking at the coldness of the level kyle,
listening to the surge on a stony shore
breaking on the bare flagstones of the world.

What is my thought more than the heron's:
the beauty of moon and restless sea,
food and sleep and dream,
brain, flesh, and temptation??
a dream of rapture with one thrust
coming in its season without stint,
without sorrow, without doubt, but one delight,
the straight unbending law of herons.

My dream exercised with sorrow,
broken, awry, with the glitter of temptation,
wounded, with one sparkle, churlish;
brain, heart, and love troubled.

The Great Artist

Ian Smith

In the silence of the wood
where the sun
gilds the winter grass
and everything is still
in the clearing,
I thought of the great artist
so skilled a painter,
so fluent a musician,
the world's chief poet:
I thought that He
also deserved praise,
that He wished to be extolled
for His terrible visions
I will certain, take His picture home
and hang it
beside the Picasso.
The birds will sing their love
in the happiness between us.

Three Random Pieces

Brotherhood

Collected by Donald Morrison, o.d.a.l.

From *Faith and Practice of London Yearly Meeting of The Society of Friends:*

The life of a religious society consists in something of principles it professes and the outer garments of organization it wears. These things have their own importance: they embody the society to the world, and protect it from the chance and change of circumstance; but the springs of life are deeper, and often escape recognition. They are to be found in the vital union of the society with God and with one another, a union which allows the free flowing through the society of spiritual life which is its strength. Such words as "discipleship," "fellowship," "brotherhood," describe these central springs of religious fellowship....

A Starfish

Anonymous, collected by Scharding

One day a young man was walking along a deserted beach. He saw a frail old man bend over and pick up a starfish and put it back into the receding ocean. He watched for awhile, and to his amazement, the old man picked up one starfish after another and placed it back into the water. The young man walked up to the old man, who was holding a small starfish in his hand, and said,

"Old man, why are you putting starfishes into the ocean."

"They will die on the drying sand unless I put them into the water." he replied.

"But that's silly! There are thousands of beaches in the world and millions of starfish who will die each day. Why should you waste your time on such a meaningless act."

The old man paused, and in reply he tossed the starfish far out into the water. After a while he spoke, "It makes a difference to this one."

The Island with Two Churches

collected by Sam Adams, o.d.a.l., gr., be.

A Welshman was shipwrecked upon a deserted island for twenty years before a rescue party finally discovered him. The Welshman was delighted at his rescue, but wished to show his rescuers all the work that he had done. He had missed civilization greatly, so he had cut down several trees in order to build a village. There was a bank, a theatre, a pub, a hotel, a jail and two churches. When the rescuers saw the two churches they asked him why he had built two churches.

He smugly replied, "You see the one on the left? That's the one I don't go to!"

Wit and Wisdom of Islam

Sufism is a generic Western term for the various mystical orders of the Muslims. It would be too difficult to try to explain them or even to compare them to any other group. Sufis are Sufis. Shelton and I recommend further readings on Sufis by the author Idries Shah. One interesting characteristic about them is that they are known for a sense of humor, often with religious undertones. Two of their most reknowned fool-sages in their jokes are Mulla Nasruddin and Bohlul. Please enjoy these lessons, which are disguised as jokes, that have been collected from throughout the Muslim world. These selections represent only the tip of an iceberg, so if you like these stories then search out further collections.

The Fool and the King

One day, Bohlul walked into court and sat himself down upon the royal throne of King Harun. The entire court was incensed by Bohlul's impudence, so they began to beat him with sticks and to pelt him with stones. Then they dragged him from the throne and threw him out of the palace.

Bohlul dusted himself off and went to talk with King Harun and said, "I only sat on the throne for one minute and the courtiers nearly beat me to death! God have pity on the man who must rule there for his entire life!"

The Breaking

Nasrudin was transporting a great grinding stone to a new site and two other men were helping him to carry it. While transporting it across a treacherous gorge, it slipped and fell a great distance and broke into several pieces.

Nasrudin began to laugh without control and this greatly angered the other two men. "See here now, Nasrudin," they cried, "We have carried that stone a great distance and now it is useless to us. We have wasted a great deal of effort."

"Do not be angry with me," Nasrudin replied, "I was not laughing at our loss, but instead I was rejoicing for the grinding stone. For many years it has been in bondage, busily grinding and turning out flour, when all it had to do to escape was to break!"

The Stink of Greed

At every weekly bazaar, the town's fool was seen pinching his nose next to the merchants' tables. After a while, a townsman asked him why he pinched his nose.

"Because, the bazaar stinks with greed." replied the Fool.

"Then don't sit in the bazaar." instructed the townsman.

"There's no such escape for me, because I'm greedy too." lamented the Fool, "I want to study their ignorant way of life in order to learn from it."

The Claim

A man claiming to be God was taken before the Caliph.

The Caliph told the prisoner, "Last year, someone claiming to be the second coming of the Prophet was executed."

"Serves him right," replied the prisoner, " I hadn't sent him yet."

Names

A certain conqueror said to Nasrudin:

"Mulla, all the great rulers of the past had honorific titles with the name of God in them: there was, for instance, God-Gifted, and God-Accepted, and so on. What would be the best name for me?"

"God Forbid," said Nasrudin.

The Muezzin's Call

One day Mulla was acting as Muezzin and calling the city to morning prayers from the top of a tall minaret. After each vocalization, he would zoom down the stairs and race out into the nearby streets. After doing this several times, a passerby asked him why he did this. Mulla replied, "I am very proud of my calling, and I wish to hear how far my voice can be discerned."

The Drum

A fox was prowling in a forest one day and saw a drum caught up high in a tree. The occasional breeze pushed a tree limb into the drum, making a wonderful sound.

The fox was impressed and thought, "With such a beautiful noise, there must be good innards inside of it to eat."

After the fox had done his work, and had managed to tear open the skin of the drum, he found it empty and only full of air.

The Majesty of the Sea

Regally the waves were hurling themselves upon the rocks, each deep-blue curve crested by whitest foam. Seeing this sight for the first time, Nasrudin was momentarily overwhelmed.

Then he went near to the seashore, took a little water in his cupped hand and tasted it.

"Why," said the Mulla, "to think that something with such pretensions is not worth drinking."

Ambition

Nasrudin was being interviewed for employment in a department store. The personnel manager asked him:

"We like ambitious men here. What sort of a job are you after?"

"All right," said Nasrudin, "I'll have your job."

"Are you mad?!"

"I may well be," said the Mulla, "but is that a necessary qualification?"

The Acquaintance

One day, Mulla Nasruddin was traveling down a rural road when he saw a great host of picnickers having a great feast. Without a word, Mulla walked into the crowd, sat down, and began to eat with these strangers.

One of the picnickers paused in his eating, turned to Mulla, and asked him, "How many do you know here?"

Mulla replied, "I only know the bread, the cheese, the dates and the melons. That is enough."

The Guest

Mulla Nasruddin went to stay at the house of a friend for a few weeks. However by the second day, his host and his hostess began to take a dislike for Nasruddin. They began to plot for an excuse to rid themselves of his company. They devised a scheme in which they would pretend to have a fight and ask Nasruddin to adjudicate a decision in favor of the husband or the wife. After that, the other party would take offense and kick him out of the house, and possibly have him beaten too.

"By Allah who will protect you on the journey that is but one day away," said the host, "Tell us who is in the right, myself or my wife."

"By Allah who will be my protector in this house during these three weeks," replied Mulla, "I don't know."

The Man with a Really Ugly Face

There once was a many with such an ugly face, that few could stand to look at him. Despite this, the ugly man never acted as if he was embarrassed to be seen in public. When asked about his curious boldness, he replied, "I have never had to see my own face, because it is fixed to my head. Therefore, let the others worry about it."

The Mirror

A Fool was walking down a road when he saw a valuable silver mirror lying in the road. He picked up the mirror and saw his reflection. Immediately he placed the mirror back on the road and apologized, "I'm sorry, I didn't know that the mirror belonged to you!"

Is it me?

Nasrudin went into a bank with a cheque to cash.

"Can you identify yourself? asked the clerk.

Nasrudin took out a mirror and peered into it.

"Yes, that's me all right," he said.

The Gypsy and His Son

One day, a gypsy was cursing and yelling at his indolent son. "You lazy idler! Do your work and do not be idle. You must improve your juggling and clowning in order to earn a living and to improve your life!"

Then the Gypsy raised a finger in warning, "If you don't do as I say, I'll throw you in school, to gather lots of useless stupid knowledge, become a learned man, and spend the rest of your life in want and misery!"

Where there's a will...

"Mulla, Mulla, my son has written from the Abode of Learning to say that he has completely finished his studies!"

"Console yourself, madam, with the thought that God will no doubt send him more."

The Sermon of Nasrudin

One day the villagers thought they would play a joke on Nasrudin. As he was supposed to be a holy man of some indefinable sort, they went to him and asked him to preach a sermon in their mosque. He agreed.

When the day came, Nasrudin mounted the pulpit and spoke:

"O people! Do you know what I am going to tell you?"

"No, we do not know," they cried.

"Until you know, I cannot say. You are too ignorant to make a start on," said the Mulla, overcome with indignation that such ignorant people should waste his time. He descended from the pulpit and went home,

Slightly chagrined, a deputation went to his house again, and asked him to preach the following Friday, the day of prayer.

Nasrudin started his sermon with the same question as before.

This time the congregation answered, as one voice:

"Yes, we know."

"In that case," said the Mulla, "there is no need for me to detain you longer. You may go." And he returned home.

Having been prevailed upon to preach for the third Friday in succession, he started his address as before:

"Do you know or do you not?"

The congregation was ready; "Some of us do, and others do not."

"Excellent," said Nasrudin, "then let those who know communicate their knowledge to those who do not."

And he went home.

Nasrudin and the Wise Men

The Philosophers, logicians and doctors of the law were drawn up at Court to examine Nasrudin. This was a serious case, because he had admitted going from village to village saying: "The so-called wise men are ignorant, irresolute and confused." He was charged with undermining the security of the State.

"You may speak first," said the King.

"Have paper and pens brought," said the Mulla.

Paper and pens were brought.

"Give some to each of the first seven savants."

They were distributed.

"Have them separately write an answer to this question: 'What is bread?'"

This was done.

The papers were handed to the King, who read them out:

The first said: "Bread is a food."

The second: "It is flour and water."

The third: "A gift of God."

The fourth: "Baked dough."

The fifth: "Changeable, according to how you mean 'bread'."

The sixth: "A nutritious substance."

The Seventh: "Nobody really knows."

"When they decide what bread is," said Nasrudin, "it will be possible for them to decide other things. For example, whether I am right or wrong. Can you entrust matters of assessment and judgment to people like this? Is it or is it not strange that they cannot agree about something which they eat each day, yet they are unanimous that I am a heretic?"

First Things First

To the Sufi, perhaps the greatest absurdity in life is the way in which people strive for things, such as knowledge, without the basic equipment for acquiring them. They have assumed that all they need is "two eyes, a nose and a mouth," as Nasrudin say.

In Sufism, a person cannot learn until he is in a state in which he can perceive what he is learning, and what it means.

Nasrudin went one day to a well, in order to teach this point to a disciple who wanted to know "the truth." With him he took the disciple and a broken pitcher.

The Mulla drew a bucket of water, and poured it into his pitcher. Then he drew another, and poured it in. As he was pouring in the third, the disciple could not contain himself any longer:

"Mulla, the water is running out. There is no bottom on that pitcher."

Nasrudin looked at him indignantly. "I am trying to fill the pitcher. In order to see when it is full, my eyes are fixed upon the neck, not the bottom. When I see the water rise to the neck, the pitcher will be full. What has the bottom got to do with it? When I am interested in the bottom of the pitcher, then only will I look at it."

This is why Sufis do not speak about profound things to people who are not prepared to cultivate the power of learning something which can only be taught by a teacher to someone who is sufficiently enlightened to say: "Teach me how to learn."

There is a Sufi saying: "Ignorance is pride, and pride is ignorance. The man who says, 'I don't have to be taught how to learn' is proud and ignorant." Nasrudin was illustrating, in this story, the identity of these two states, which ordinary human kind considers to be two different things.

Whose Shot was That?

The Fair was in full swing, and Nasrudin's senior disciple asked whether he and his fellow-students might be allowed to visit it.

"Certainly," said Nasrudin; "for this is an ideal opportunity to continue practical teaching."

The Mulla headed straight for the shooting-gallery, one of the great attractions: for large prizes were offered for even one bull's-eye.

At the appearance of the Mulla and his flock the townsfolk gathered around. When Nasrudin himself took up the bow and three arrows, tension mounted. Here, surely, it would be demonstrated that Nasrudin sometimes overreached himself..

"Study me attentively." The Mulla flexed the bow, tilted his cap to the back of his head like a soldier, took careful aim and fired. The arrow went very wide of the mark.

There was a roar of derision from the crowd, and Nasrudin's pupils stirred uneasily, muttering to one another. The Mulla turned and faced them all. "Silence! This was a demonstration of how the soldier shoots. He is often wide of the mark. That is why he loses wars. At the moment when I fired I was identified with a soldier. I said to myself, 'I am a soldier, firing at the enemy.'"

He picked up the second arrow, slipped it into the bow and tweaked the string. The arrow fell short, halfway towards the target. There was a dead silence.

"Now," said Nasrudin to the company, "you have seen the shot of a man who was too eager to shoot, yet who having failed

at his first shot, was too nervous to concentrate. The arrow fell short."

Even the stallholder was fascinated by these explanations. The Mulla turned nonchalantly towards the target, aimed and let his arrow fly. It hit the very center of the bull's eye. Very deliberately he surveyed the prizes, picked the one which he like best, and started to walk away. A clamor broke out.

"Silence!" said Nasrudin, "Let one of you ask me what you all seem to want to know."

For a moment nobody spoke. Then a yokel shuffled forward. "We want to know who fired the third shot."

"That? Oh, that was me."

The Same Strength

Nasruddin attended a lecture by a man who was teaching a philosophy handed down to him by someone who lived twenty years before. The Mulla asked:

"Is this philosophy, in its present form, as applicable today, among a different community, as it was two decades ago?"

"Of course it is," said the lecturer. "That is just an example of the ridiculous questions which people ask. A teaching always remains the same: truth cannot alter!"

Some time later, Mulla Nasrudin approached the same man for a job as a gardener.

"You seem rather old," said the lecturer, "and I am not sure that you can manage the job."

"I may look different," said Nasrudin, "But I have the same strength I had twenty years ago."

He got the job on the strength of his assurance.

Soon afterwards, the philosopher asked Nasrudin to shift a paving-stone from one part of the garden to another. Tug as he might, the Mulla could not lift it.

"I thought you said that you were as strong as you were twenty years ago," said the sage.

"I am," answered Nasrudin, "exactly as strong. Twenty years ago I could not have lifted it, either!"

The Value of the Past

Nasrudin was sent by the King to investigate the lore of various kinds of Eastern mystical teachers. They all recounted to him talks of the miracles and the sayings of the founders and great teachers, all long dead, of their schools.

When he returned home he submitted his report, which contained the single word "Carrots."

He was called upon to explain himself. Nasrudin told the King: "The best part is buried; few know, except the farmer, by the green that there is orange underground; if you don't work for it, it will deteriorate; and there are a great many donkeys associated with it."

Second Thoughts

Hundreds of people were streaming away from the evening meeting of a certain Sufi, while Nasrudin was making his way towards that house. Suddenly Nasrudin sat down in the middle of the road. One of the people stopped and asked:

"What are you doing?"

Nasrudin said: "Well, I was going to the house of that Sufi. But since everyone else is going away from it, I'm having second thoughts."

The Orchard

A man snuck into another man's orchard and filled his apron with lemons. On his way out of the orchard he was caught by the owner. The owner demanded, "Have you no shame before God?"

The man casually replied, "I don't see any reason to be ashamed. One of God's creatures wants to eat a couple of God's dates from one of God's trees on God's Earth."

The owner called to his gardener, "Bring me a rope, so that I may demonstrate my reply." A rope was brought and the thief was tied to a tree. The owner took a stick and began to fiercely beat the thief. The thief cried out, "For God's sake, stop it! You're killing me!"

The owner coolly told the thief, "Just a creature of God is hitting another creature of God with a stick from one of God's trees. Everything is His and I, His servant and slave, do what He ordains. Who's to blame?"

"Great quibbler," whimpered the thief, "From this day on, I give up my zealous Determinism. You made me see the truth of Free Will."

The Grammarian

Nasruddin sometimes took people for trips in his boat. One day a fussy pedagogue hired him to ferry him across a very wide river. As soon as they were afloat the scholar asked whether it was going to be a rough ride.

"Don't ask me nothing about it," said Nasrudin.

"Have you never studied grammar?"

"No." replied the Mulla.

"Then half of your life has been wasted." clucked the Grammarian.

Storm clouds began to fill the sky and powerful winds dragged the boat into the rapids and dangerously deep eddies. The boat was smashed and began to quickly fill with water.

Nasrudin asked the Grammarian, "Have you ever learned to swim?"

"No, certainly not!" the Grammarian said with a pretentious sniff.

"In that case," replied the boatman, "all of your life is lost, for we are sinking."

Not a Good pupil

One day Mulla Nasrudin found a tortoise. He tied it to his belt and continued his work in the fields. The tortoise started to struggle. The Mulla held it up and asked:

"What's the matter, don't you want to learn how to plough?"

Hidden Depths

One day the Mulla was in the market and saw small birds for sale at five hundred reals each. "My turkey," he thought, "which is larger than any of these, is worth far more."

The next day he took his pet turkey to market. Nobody would offer him more than 50 reals for it. The Mulla began to shout:

"O people! This is a disgrace! Yesterday you were selling birds only half this size at ten times the price."

Someone interrupted him "Nasrudin, those were parrots, talking birds. They are worth more because they can talk."

"Fool!" said Nasrudin; "those birds you value only because they can talk. You reject this turkey, which has wonderful thoughts, and yet does not annoy people with chatter."

The Secret

A would-be-disciple haunted Nasrudin, asking him question after question. The Mulla answered everything, and realized that the man was not completely satisfied: although he was in fact making progress.

Eventually the man said: "Master, I need more explicit guidance."

"What is the matter?"

"I have to keep on doing things,; and although I progress, I want to move faster. Please tell me a secret, as I have heard you do with others."

"I will tell you when you are ready for it."

The man later returned to the same theme.

"Very well. You know that your need is to emulate me?"

"Yes."

"Can you keep a secret?"

"I would never impart it to anyone."

"Then observe that I can keep a secret as well as you can."

The Wisdom of Silence

Some hunters were in the woods looking for game. They discovered a group of three orangutans and managed to catch one of them. The other two orangutans escaped and hid behind some nearby bushes and trees.

As the hunters were dressing the corpse of the first orangutan, a steam of blood issued forth. "How red the blood is!" cried a hunter.

The second orangutan called out, "It's red from eating so many raspberries."

Hearing the second orangutan, the hunters discovered its hiding place and began to beat it with sticks. As they were killing it, the second orangutan mourned out loud, "Now I know the wisdom of silence. If I had held my tongue, I wouldn't have gotten killed."

Hearing his companion's dying words, the third orangutan said, "Thank God I was wise enough to keep silent."

He was killed.

Grateful to Allah

One day Mulla found that his donkey was missing and began to cry. Suddenly he stopped crying and began to laugh and sing. He ran about the village rejoicing in his good fortune. A villager asked him why he was so happy about losing a donkey. Mulla replied, "At least I wasn't riding the donkey when it disappeared. If I had been riding it, I would also have vanished!"

Safety

There was a slave on a boat that was being tossed about by some very turbulent weather. The slave screamed and yelled in fear, until the other passengers could stand it no longer. They asked Bohlul to deal with the slave.

Bohlul told them, "Take the slave, attack a strong rope to him and throw him into the water until he begins to slip under the waves. At that point, pull him back into the boat so that he can realize the relative safety of the boat."

Happiness Is Not Where You Seek It

Nasrudin saw a man sitting disconsolately at the way-side, and asked what ailed him.

"There is nothing of interest in life, brother," said the man; "I now have sufficient capital not to have to work, and I am on this trip only in order to seek something more interesting than the life I have at home. So far I haven't found it."

Without another word, Nasrudin seized the traveler's knapsack and made off down the road with it, running like a hare. Since he knew the area, Nasrudin was able to out-distance the tourist.

The road curved, and Nasrudin cut across several loops, with the result that he was soon back on the road ahead of the man whom he had robbed. He gently put the bag by the side of the road and waited in concealment for the other to catch up.

Presently the miserable traveler appeared, following the tortuous road, more unhappy than ever because of his loss. As soon as he saw his property lying there, he ran towards it, shouting with joy.

"That's one way of producing happiness," said Nasrudin.

There is More Light Here

Someone saw Nasrudin searching for something on the sidewalk.

"What have you lost, Mulla?" he asked. "My key," said the Mulla. So they both went down on their knees and looked for it.

After a time the other man asked: "Where exactly did you drop it?"

"In my house."

"Then why are you looking here?"

"There is more light out here than inside my own house."

The Blind Man and the Lamp

One night, a blind man was carrying a large vase over his shoulder with one arm and holding out a torch with the other hand. A passerby noticed this and cried out, "Ignorance! Day and night are but the same to you, so why do you carry a torch before you?" The blind old man replied, "The light is for blind people like you, to keep you from accidentally bumping into me and breaking my vase."

Salt is not Wool

One day the Mulla was taking a donkey-load of salt to market, and drove the ass through a stream. The salt was dissolved. The Mulla was angry at the loss of the load. The ass was frisky with relief.

Next time he passed that way he had a load of wool. After the animal had passed through the stream, the wool was thoroughly soaked, and very heavy. The donkey staggered under the soggy load.

"Ha!" shouted the Mulla, "you thought you would get off lightly every time you went through the water, didn't you?"

The Trip

Nasrudin's friend Wali slipped and fell from the immense height of the Post Office Tower in London. The eyewitnesses, who had seen him plummet past their open windows, were questioned by Nasruddin. They all agreed that Wali's last words at each floor on the way down were: "So far, so good."

Something Fell

Nasrudin's wife ran to his room when she heard a tremendous thump.

"Nothing to worry about," said the Mulla, "it was only my cloak which fell to the ground."

"What, and made a noise like that?"

"Yes, I was inside it at the time."

The Tax Man

A man had fallen into some quicksand when Nasrudin came along one afternoon. People were crowding around, all trying to get him out before he drowned.

They were shouting, "Give me your hand!" But the man would not reach up.

The Mulla elbowed his way through the crowd and leant over to the man. "Friend," he said, "what is your profession?"

"I am an income-tax inspector," gasped the man.

"In that case," said Nasrudin, "take my hand!" The man immediately grasped the Mulla's hand and was hauled to safety.

Nasrudin turned to the open-mouthed audience. "Never ask a taxman to give you anything, you fools," he said, and walked away.

Appreciation

"Never give people anything they ask for until at least a day has passed!" said the Mulla.

"Why not, Nasrudin?"

"Experience shows that they only appreciate something when they have had the opportunity of doubting whether they will get it or not."

The Forgotten Question

One day as Bohlul was hastily riding from one place to another, he was stopped by a peasant who wished to ask him to answer a question that had been long in bothering him. Bohlul didn't wish to be interrupted in his journey.

"But it is a matter of life and death." protested the peasant.

"All right then," Bohlul snapped, "But be quick about it then, for my horse is restless to continue on the journey."

The poor peasant, disquieted by the pressing need for speed, stuttered and sweated.

"Well, what is it?" Bohlul demanded.

The peasant forgot the question.

Moment in Time

"What is Fate?" Nasrudin was asked by a scholar.

"An endless succession of intertwined events, each influencing the other."

"That is hardly a satisfactory answer. I believe in cause and effect."

"Very well," said the Mulla, "look at that." He pointed to a procession passing in the street.

"That man is being taken to be hanged. Is that because someone gave him a silver piece and enabled him to buy the knife with which he committed the murder; or because someone saw him do it; or because nobody stopped him?"

All I Needed was Time

The Mulla bought a donkey. Someone told him that he would have to give it a certain amount of food every day. He considered this to be too much food. He would experiment, he decided, to get the donkey used to less food. Every day, therefore, he reduced its rations. Eventually, when the donkey was reduced to almost no food at all, it fell over and died.

"Pity," said the Mulla. "If I had had a little more time before it died I could have got it accustomed to living on nothing at all."

The Short Cut

Walking home one wonderful morning, Nasrudin thought that it would be a good idea to take a short cut through the woods. "Why," he asked himself, "should I plod along a dusty road when I could be communing with Nature, listening to the birds and looking at the flowers? This is indeed a day of days; a day for fortunate pursuits!"

So saying, he launched himself into the greenery. He had not gone very far, however, when he fell into a pit, where he lay reflecting.

"It is not such a fortunate day, after all," he meditated; "in fact it is just as well that I took this short cut. IF things like this can happen in a beautiful setting like this, what might not have befallen me on that nasty highway?"

To Deal with the Enemy

Mulla's mother once instructed her son, "If you ever see a ghost, or an apparition in the graveyard, don't be afraid. Be brave and attack it immediately! They will run away from you."

Mulla replied, "But what if their mothers gave them the same advice?"

Various Other Quotes

Gleaned and compiled by Michael Scharding

How could I conclude the Green Books without a whole mess of miscellaneous quotes that I've picked up along the way? Perhaps they will inspire you to search more widely for what you already know, or vice a versa? As always, all opinions expressed here belong to their authors or cultures and do not necessarily represent the views of other Reformed Druids.

The main resources for this last collection in The Green Books were the following:
· *Racial Proverbs* by Swlwyn Gurney Champion, 1938.
· *A Druid's Path: Readings Along the Way* by Sterling Lee Few, Jr. (aka Treebeard1@AOL.com) of ADF, Keltria, and OBOD. Unpublished as yet. 1995.
· *Crazy Wisdom* by Nisker, 1990.
· *Wisdom from the Ancients: Proverbs, Maxims and Quotations.* compiled by Menahem Mansoor of the University of Madison Wisconsin in 1994.
· The *Dune* series by Frank Herbert, 1966?.
· *Quotations for the New Age* by Rosenberg, 1978.
· *Peter's Quotations: Ideas for our Time* by Laurence J. Peter, 1977

Art, Beauty, and Poetry

Art is frozen Zen. -R.H. Blyth

Beauty is loved without knowing anything, and ugliness is hated without being to blame. -Maltese

Consistency is the last refuge of the unimaginative. -Oscar Wilde

Poets and pigs are appreciated only after their death. -Italian

Community and Conversation

In necessary things, unity; in doubtful things, liberty; in all things, charity. -Richard Baxter

The basket that has two handles can be carried by two. -Egyptian

Eat according to your taste, and dress according to the taste of others. -Moorish

Two are an army against one. -Icelandic

The avalanche has already started. It is too late for the pebbles to vote. -Unknown

Man can do without his friends but not without his neighbors. -Egyptian

Better a neighbor over the wall than a brother over the sea. -Albanian

Choose the neighbor before the house and the companion before the road. -Moorish

Argument is the worst sort of conversation. -Jonathan Swift

Without conversation there is no agreement. -Montenegrin

"Yes and No" make a long quarrel. - Icelandic

Faults are thick where love is thin. -Welsh

The faultfinder will find faults even in paradise. -Henry Thoreau

Real progress is made not by the loud, ostentatious, push majorities, but always by small and obstinate minorities. -Henry Skolimowski

Nothing makes you more tolerant of a neighbor's noisy party than being there. -Franklin Jones

Whether women are better than men I cannot say, but I can say they are certainly no worse. -Golda Meir

Love does not consist in gazing at each other but in looking outward together in the same direction. -Antoine de Saint Exupery

An old southern Methodist Preacher was asked if there is a difference between union and unity. He replied, "You can tie two cats' tails together and throw them over a clothes line, in which case you have union, but not unity." -W.T. Purkeson

Always forgive your enemies, nothing annoys them so much.-Oscar Wilde

Custom, Justice and Law

An agreement will break a custom. -Welsh

Men do more from custom than from reason. -Latin

Custom and law are neighbors. -Montenegrin

The slogans must be rejected and the complexities recognized. -Michael Harrington

A good catchword can obscure analysis for fifty years. -Wendall Willkie

History shows that men and nations behave reasonably only when they have exhausted all other alternatives. - Abba Eban

The chains of habit are too weak to be felt until they are too strong to be broken. -Samuel Johnson

Originality is the art of concealing your source. -Franklin Jones

There is nothing new under the sun. -Ecclesiastes 1:9

When people are free to do as they please, they usually imitate each other. -Eric Hoffer

We despair of changing the habits of men, still we would like to alter institutions, the habits of millions of men. -George Iles

Equality in injustice is justice.- Egyptian

The more a man knows, the more he forgives. -Italian

He who is accustomed to evil is offended by good. -Mexican

To an unjust government, a martyr is more dangerous than a rebel. -Italian

Everyone should be allowed to keep his natural clothes, his natural food, and his natural religion. -German

Justice flees the world because no one will give it shelter in his house. -Maltese

Moral decisions are always easy to recognize. They are where you abandon self-interest. -Rev. Mother Superior Darwi Odrade, *DUNE*

Every judgment teeters on the brink of error. To claim absolute knowledge is to become monstrous. Knowledge is an unending adventure at the edge of uncertainty. -Leto Atreides II, *DUNE*

Before I judge my neighbour, let me walk a mile in his moccasins. -Sioux

I am free of all prejudices. I hate every one equally.- W.C. Fields

Law separates, compromise conciliates. -German

Treat all men alike. Give them all the same laws. Give them all an even chance to live and grow. -Chief Joseph

Laws are spider webs through which the big flies pass and the little one get caught. -Russian

Fear not the law, but the judge. -Russian

Thieves increase with the making of new laws. -Romanian

Custom is stronger than law. -Russian

First, we kill all the lawyers...- Shakespeare?

Harken to the spirit of the law rather than the letter of the law. -Jesus

The test of courage comes when we are in the minority; the test of tolerance comes when we are in the majority. -Henry David Thoreau

Most people would rather defend to the death your right to say it than listen to it. -Robert Brault

One lawyer in a town will languish, two lawyers will prosper. -Sam Adams, RDNA

The successful revolutionary is a statesman , the unsuccessful one a criminal. -Erich Fromm

The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing. -Edmund Burke

When the system defines our choices, it channels rebellion into modes that it is prepared to control, into acts that harm the rebel, not the system. -Starhawk

Laws to suppress tend to strengthen what they would prohibit. This is the fine point on which all legal professions of history have based their job security. -Bene Gesserit Coda, *DUNE*

Death and Fate

He who has been near to death knows the worth of life. -Turkemestan

The fall of a leaf is a whisper to the living. -Russian

He who is fated to hang will never drown. -Scottish

One Calamity is better than a thousand counsels. -Turkish

Your karma ran over my dogma. -Unknown

I'm not afraid to die. I just don't want to be there when it happens. -Woody Allen

I cannot tell you your fate, a man should not know his fate until he is halfway through life. If he were to know sooner, it would all seem an illusion. - Plexus, *Gatorr*

Earth and Ecology

The Earth is a blessing to those upon her. -Egyptian

Do not damage the earth, or the sea, or the trees. -Book of Revelations 7:3

Men go and come, but earth abides. -Ecclesiastes, 1, 4

We didn't inherit the land from our fathers. We are borrowing it from our children. -Amish belief

The universe is made up of stories, not atoms. -Muriel Ruckeyser.

You will find something more in woods than in books. Trees and stones will teach you that which you can never learn from a master. -St. Bernard of Clairvaux

He who follows Nature's lantern never loses his way. -German

O Sacred Earth Mother, the trees and all nature are witnesses to your thoughts and deeds. -Winnebago Indian saying

The world is older and bigger than we are. This is a hard truth for some folks to swallow. -Ed Abbey

The essence of deep ecology is to ask deeper questions... We ask which society, which education, which form of religion is beneficial for all life on the planet as a whole. -Arne Naess

When one recognizes the unity of nature, he also perceives the singleness of mankind. -Gus Turbeville

The highest function of ecology is the understanding of consequences. -Planetologist Pardot Kynes, *DUNE*

To be solitary is alone worthy of God. -Kurdish

Eventually all things merge into one, and a river runs through it. The river was cut by the world's great flood and runs over rocks from the basement of time. On some of these rocks are the timeless raindrops. Under the rocks are the words, and some of the words are theirs. I am haunted by waters. -Norman MacLean.

I'm often asked the question: "Is it possible to do valid rituals alone?" First of all in nature ritual, one is never alone. All the other beings of nature are present: either sun or moon, trees, plants, or animals. To consider that you are alone when you are in nature is simply a remnant of Eurocentric thinking. -Dolores LaChapelle, *Sacred Land, Sacred Sex, Rapture of the Deep*

Nature confuses the skeptics and reason confutes the dogmatists. -Blaise Pascal

A man said to the universe, "Sir, I exist." "However," replied the universe, "the fact has not created in me a sense of obligation." -Stephen Crane

Indeed I now realize that a man requires intimate and solitary contact with the wild places if he is to survive. When he is deprived of this state he begins to withdraw into himself, a prey to inner demons and the psychic wallpaper that passes for his estrangement from any genuine inner life. -James Cowan, *Letters From a Wild State*

If my decomposing carcass helps nourish the roots of a juniper tree or the wings of a vulture, that is immortality enough for me. And as much as anyone deserves. -Ed Abbey.

Earth-wise, we are as altars on which the divine fires can burn. The stone of the Druids is still within our bodies, as it was within theirs; for holy sacrifice or sacrilegious exploitation. -Graham Howe, *The Mind of the Druid*

In metaphysics, the notion that the earth and all that's on it is a mental construct is the product of people who spend their lives inside rooms. It is an indoor philosophy. -Ed Abbey

We shall never achieve harmony with the land anymore than we shall achieve justice or liberty for people. In these higher aspirations the important thing is not to achieve, but to strive. -Aldo Leopold

Education and Learning

Let not thy heart be great because of thy knowledge, but converse with the ignorant as with the learned. -Ancient Egyptian

I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand. -Chinese

Thou dost not practice what thou knowest; why, then, dost thou seek what thou knowest not? -Muslim

He who learns well defends himself well. -Argentine

First learn, then form opinions. -Talmud

Knowledge that can be stolen is not worth having. -Al-Ghazdi

The men who deserted thee will teach thee knowledge. -Talmud

By searching the old, learn the new. -Japanese

We learn from history that we learn nothing from history. -George Bernard Shaw

Awareness means suspending judgment for a moment..., then seeing, feeling, experiencing what this condition in front of you is all about. -Stephen Altschuler

If knowledge does not liberate the self from the self, then ignorance is better than such knowledge.- Sinai

With great doubts comes great understanding; with little doubts comes little understanding. -Chinese

God protect us from him who has read but one book. -German

The world is a fine book but of little use to him who knows not how to read. -Italian

Better unlearned than ill-learned. -Norwegian

Ask people's advice, but decide for yourself. -Ukrainian

A good listener makes a good teacher. -Polish

To inquire is neither a disaster nor a disgrace. -Bulgarian

If you would know the future, behold the past. -Portuguese

Cultivate your own garden. -Dutch

So great is the confusion of the world that comes from coveting knowledge! -Chuang Tzu

Teaching is a long way, example is a short one. -German

Knowledge too hastily acquired is not on guard. -Latin

Doors are not opened without keys. -Maltese

Discussion is an exchange of knowledge; argument an exchange of ignorance. -Robert Quillen

The man who strikes first admits that his ideas have given out. -Chinese

Nothing is so firmly believed as that which is least known. -Michel de Montaigne

Too much knowledge never makes for simple decisions. -Ghanima Atreides, DUNE

An intellectual is someone whose mind watches itself. -Albert Camus

A book is a mirror. When a monkey looks in, no apostle can look out. -George Lichtenberg

Many complain of their looks, but none complain of their brains. -Yiddish

There is nobody so irritating as somebody with less intelligence and more sense than we have. -Don Herold

One learns from books and reads only that certain things can be done. Actual learning requires that you do those things. -Farad'n Corrino (Harq al-Ada), *DUNE*

Most men, when they think they are thinking are merely rearranging their prejudices. -Knute Rockne

There's a difference between a philosophy and a bumper sticker. -Charles M. Schulz

I can evade questions without help; what I need is answers. -John F Kennedy

I often quote myself. It adds spice to my conversation. -George Bernard Shaw

The art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery. -Mark Van Doren

For every person wishing to teach there are thirty not wanting to be taught. -W.C. Sellar

You can teach a student a lesson for a day; but if you can teach him to learn by creating curiosity, he will continue the learning process as long as he live. -Clay Bedford

Learn to reason forward and backward on both sides of a question. -Thomas Blandi

Form your opinion of a man from his questions rather than from his answers. -French

At the moment you are most in awe of all there is about life that you don't understand, you are closer to understanding it all than at any other time. -Jane Wagner.

Agnosticism simply means that a man shall not say he knows or believes that for which he has no grounds for professing to believe. -Thomas Huxley

The road to ignorance is paved with good editions. -George Bernard Shaw

Criticism comes easier than craftsmanship. -Zeuxis (400 BCE)

No writer or teacher or artist can escape the responsibility of influencing others, whether he intends to or not, whether he is conscious of it or not. -Arthur Koestler

Students achieving oneness will often move ahead to twoness. -Woody Allen

History is mostly guessing; the rest is prejudice. -Will and Ariel Durant

One part of knowledge consists in being ignorant of such things as are not worthy to be known. -Crates (4th cent BCE)

Education is a method by which one acquires a higher grade of prejudices. -Laurence Peter

Scratch an intellectual and you find a would-be aristocrat who loathes the sight, the sound and the smell of common folk. -Eric Hoffer, *First Things & Last things.*

An educated man is not necessarily a learned man or a university man, but a man with certain subtle spiritual qualities which make him calm in adversity, happy when alone, just in his dealings, and sane in all the affairs of life. -Ramsay Macdonald, statesman

Many philosophers build castles in the mind, but live in doghouses. -Arne Naess

Fear and Freedom

He who is afraid of a thing gives it power over him. -Moorish

Do not fear a bright gun but a sooty one. -Montenegrin

Fear has created more gods than piety. -German

A warrior without fear is to be feared. -Anonymous

The man is not escaped who still drags his chain after him. -French

Be a master of your will and a slave to your conscience. -Yiddish

You have nothing to lose but your chains. -Spartacus, Greek rebel

"Freedom" is just another word for "nothing left to lose." -Janis Joplin

A hero is a man who can change his fear into positive energy. -A.S. Neill

The only thing we have to fear is fear itself. -Franklin Roosevelt

You can jail a revolutionary, but you can't jail a revolution. -Fred Hampton

Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable.- John F. Kennedy

Liberty means responsibility. That is why most men dread it. -George Bernard Shaw

I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer. Fear is the little-death that brings total obliteration. I will face my fear. I will permit it to pass over me and through me. And when it has gone past I will turn the inner eye to see its path. Where fear has gone there will be nothing. Only I will remain. -The Bene Gesserit litany against fear, *DUNE*

Fools and Humor

He is a fool who speaks and listens to himself. -Turkish

The wise aspire to know, the foolish to relate. -Muslim

Even a fool can govern if nothing happens. -German

A man can make mistakes, but only an idiot persists in his error. -Cicero

The first stage of folly is to think oneself wise. -Greek

The Errors of a Wise Man make your Rule Rather than the Perfections of a Fool. -William Blake

Beware the man who cannot laugh. -Anonymous

Seriousness is the only refuge of the shallow. -Oscar Wilde

The aim of a joke is not to degrade the human being but to remind him that he is already degraded. -George Orwell.

Humor is an affirmation of dignity, a declaration of man's superiority to all that befalls him. -Romain Gary

For the present, the comedy of existence has not yet "become conscious" of itself. For the present, we still live in the age of tragedy, the age of moralities and religions. -Frederich Nietzsche

A satirist is a man who discovers unpleasant things about himself and then says them about other people. Peter MacArthur

Defining and analyzing humor is a pastime of humorless people. -Robert Benchley

It is easier to be original and foolish than original and wise. -Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz

It is the test of a good religion whether you can joke about it. -G.K. Chesteron

The secret source of humor itself is not joy but sorrow. There is no humor in heaven. -Mark Twain

The one serious conviction that a man should have is that nothing is to be taken too seriously. -Nicholas Murray Butler

The total absence of humor from the Bible is one of the most singular things in all literature. -Alfred North Whitehead

Leadership

Even a fool can govern if nothing happens. -German

If you want to know a man, give him authority. -Montenegrin

The tyrant is only a slave turned inside out. - Egyptian

Ambitions tend to remain undisturbed by realities. -The Preacher, *DUNE*

The five fingers are not equal. -Turkish

To alter and to make better are two different things; much has been altered but little has been made better in the world. -German

The ditch is the master of the field. -Finnish

Honors change manners. -Latin

Shadows follow those who walk in the sun. -German

Do not blame what you permit. -Latin

Even God has His Mother. -Montenegrin

Heroism consists in hanging on one minute longer. -Norwegian

No matter how exotic human civilization becomes, no matter the developments of life and society nor the complexity of the machine/human interface, there always come interludes of lonely power when the course of humankind, the very future of humankind, depends upon the relatively simple actions of single individuals. -from The Tleiaxu Godbuk, Frank Herbert, *DUNE* books

It's hard to look up to a leader who keeps his ear to the ground.-James Boren

Use the first moments in study. You may miss many an opportunity for quick victory this way, but the moments of study are insurance of success. Take your time and be sure. -Duncan Idaho, *DUNE*

Practical Simplicity

Man does not eat what he desires, but what he finds. -Turkish

Whoever abandons a thing may live without it. -Egyptian

Too much wax burns down the church. -Portuguese

We can never see the sun rise by looking to the west.- Japanese

The best luxury is simplicity. -Kurdish

It is stupid to make a long introduction to a short story. -Book of Maccabees

To drink pure water go to the spring. -Italian

The more abundantly water gushes from its source, the less the source is esteemed. -Russian

The good ass is sold in his own country. -Maltese

Taste is in variety. -Chilean

The marvelous and the astonishing only surprise for a week. -Amharic

Do not become too hard, lest you get broken. -Ukrainian

Sharp acids corrode their own containers. -Albanian

To an inverted vessel, nothing adheres. -Sikh

If the evil will not leave you, then leave it. -Bosnian

He who embraces much collects little. -French

No hemlock is drunk out of earthenware mugs. -Latin

Pass at a distance from him who chops wood. -Maltese

To be a Druid was to be a Master of the art of living. -Graham Howe, *Mind of the Druid*

To remain whole, be twisted. To become straight, let yourself be bent, To become full, be hollow. -*Tao Te Ching*.

Einstein was a man who could ask immensely simple questions. -Jacob Bronowski

Do not catch everything that swims. -Russian

Concrete is heavy, iron is hard, but the grass will prevail. -Ed Abbey

When logic fails, another tool must be used. -Honored Matres Axiom, *DUNE*

When the bridge is gone the narrowest plank becomes precious. -Hungarian

What cannot be cured must be endured. -Scottish

The function of an ideal is not to be realized but, like that of the North Star, to serve as a guiding point. -Ed Abbey

The number of things we can really make our own is limited. We cannot drink the ocean be we ever so thirsty. A cup of water from the spring is all we need.- John Burroughs

The largest tree was once a seed ; and the most complex of all our machines was once only an idea. -Graham Howe, *The Mind of the Druid*

The willow submits to the wind and prospers until one day it is many willows, a wall against the wind. This is the willows' purpose. -Rev. Mother Gauis Mohaim, *DUNE*

Here is a man who uses a pearl like that of the marquis of Sui to shoot at a bird at a distance of 10,000 feet. All men will laugh at him. Why? Because the thing he uses is of great value and what he wishes to get is of little. And is not life of more value than the pearl of the marquis of Sui? -Chuang Tzu 28:3

There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at its root. -Henry David Thoreau

The US consumes more energy for air conditioning than the total energy consumption of the 800 million people in China. -Robert O. Anderson

Under tension, a chain will break at its weakest link. That much is predictable. What is difficult is to identify the weakest link before it breaks. The generic we can know, but the specific eludes us. Some chains are designed to break at a certain tension and at a certain link. But a good chain is homogeneous, and no prediction is possible. And because we cannot know which link is weakest, we cannot know precisely how much tension will be needed to break the chain. -Gregory Bateson, *Mind and Nature*

No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another. -Charles Dickens

Like using a guillotine to cure dandruff. -Clare Boothe Luce

Those who write clearly have readers; those who write obscurely have commentators. -Albert Camus

Confine yourself to observing and you always miss the point of your own life. The object can be stated this way : Live the best life you can. Life is a game whose rules you learn if you leap into it and play it to the hilt. Otherwise, you are caught off balance, continually surprised by the shifting play. Non-players often whine and complain that luck always passes them by. They refuse to see they can create some of their own luck.' -Darwi Odrade, *DUNE*

1st Farmer: "If you had 100 horses, and I had none, would you give me one?"
2nd Farmer: "Yes."
1st: "If you had 100 cows, and I had none, would you give me one?"
2nd: "Yes."
1st: "If you had 2 pigs..."
2nd: "Now cut that out, you know I have two pigs!"

Prayer

If the prayers of dogs were accepted, bones would rain from the sky. -Turkish

He lingered between two mosques and returned home without having prayed. -Turkish

Call upon the name of God, and ask for what is good for you. -Koran

One hour in doing justice is worth a hundred in prayer. -Koran

If that which is within is not bright, it is useless to pray for that which is without. -Shinto

Call on God for help, but row away from the rocks. -Indian

Prayer is not asking. It is a longing of the soul. -Mohandas Ghandi

Prayer does not change God, but changes him who prays. -Kierkegaard

Lord, give me chastity, but not yet. -Saint Augustine

Priests

A rabbi whose congregation does not want to drive him out of town isn't a rabbi. -Talmud

Clever preacher, short sermon.- Japanese

Us nature mystics got to stick together. -Ed Abbey

There are many preachers who don't hear themselves. -German

When the fox starts preaching, look to your hens. -Basque

To go barefoot does not make the saint. -German

Many of the insights of the saint stem from his experience as a sinner. -Eric Hoffer

Malta would be a delightful place if every priest were a tree. -Maltese

No matter large the mosque is, the Imam preaches what he knows. -Turkish

Have no faith in a priest, even if his turban is covered in gems. -Kurdish

Clergyman: A man who undertakes the management of our spiritual affairs as a method of bettering his temporal ones. -Ambrose Bierce

The High Priests of telescopes and cyclotrons keep making pronouncements about happenings on scales too gigantic or dwarfish to be noted by our native sense. -W.H. Auden

It is good that a philosopher should remind himself, now and then, that he is a particle pontificating on infinity. -Will and Ariel Durant

Returning from visiting her friend's church, a woman said, "The minister kept talking about Epistles this morning. I didn't know what they were." Her friend replied, "Oh, my dear, your ignorance is refreshing. I thought everyone knew that the Epistles are the wives of the Apostles." -Anonymous

In the primitive Church there were chalices of wood and priests of gold; in the modern Church there are chalices of gold and priests of wood. -German

If you offer words of the spirit to a man who does not ask for them, you waste the words. But if a man asks for those words and you do not offer them, you waste the man." -*Planet Steward*, Stephen Levine

At a certain dinner, the chairperson, looking around the tables, could not find any clergyman present to ask Grace. So he turned to an actor for the prayer. The actor began "Since there are no clergymen present to say grace, let us thank God...."-Anonymous

Religion

" God"a word for not thinking. -Ed Abbey

No one but God and I know what is in my heart. -Arabic

Whatever we cannot easily understand we call God; this saves much wear and tear on the brain tissues. -Ed Abbey

Many millions search for God, only to find Him in their hearts. -Sikh

Working is half of religion. -Turkish

A man without religion is like a horse without a bridle. -Latin

All "isms" should be "wasms." -Abbie Hoffman

Most sects are right in what they affirm and wrong in what they deny. -Goethe

Only the deaf and the blind are obliged to believe. -Romanian

No religion without courage. -Arabic

Science investigates; religion interprets. Science give man knowledge which is power; religion gives man wisdom which is control. -Martin Luther King, Jr.

Religion has two children, love and hatred. -Russian

Doctrine is nothing but the skin of truth set up and stuffed. -Henry Beecher, 19th cent

Religion destroys evil, morality merely hides it. -Welsh

God has no religion. -Mahatma Gandhi

Small is his religion who seeks daily for it. -Welsh

All conditioned things are impermanent. Work out your own salvation with diligence. -The Buddha's final words.

The best sermon is to listen to oneself. -German

Just before leaving on an European Crusade, Billy Graham was asked if he expected to bring back any new creeds with him, and if so, would he be able to get them through customs. He replied, "Oh that would be easy enough, since few of the new creeds have any duties attached to them."

The fundamental rule of the spiritual questto establish direct contact with the sacred rather than depend on intermediaries, authorities, dogmas, or institutions -*Hymns to an Unknown God* by Sam Keen

All religions will pass, but this will remain: simply sitting in a chair and looking into the distance. -V.V. Rozanov in *Solitaria 1912*

Rituals mend ever again worlds forever breaking apart under the blows of usage and the slashing distinctions of language. -Roy Rappaport

Man is a Religious Animal. Man is the only Religious Animal. He is the only animal that has the True Religion, several of them. He is the only animal that loves his neighbor as himself and cuts his throat if his theology isn't straight. -Mark Twain

Provide a religious organization with wealth and power and it begins to change into a secular agency. -Edmund A. Opitz

Fantastic doctrines (like Christianity or Islam or Marxism) require unanimity of belief. One dissenter casts doubt on the creed of millions. Thus the fear and the hate ; thus the torture chamber, the iron stake, the gallows, the labor camp, the psychiatric ward. -*Planet Steward*, Stephen Levine

Metaphysics is a cobweb the mind weaves around things. -*Planet Steward*, Stephen Levine

Questions are more likely to make good communications than dogmatic statements, which usually only create resistance, shutting the door which they were designed to force open. -Graham Howe, *The Mind of the Druid*

The fact that a believer is happier than a skeptic is no more to the point than the fact that a drunken man is happier than a sober one. -George Bernard Shaw

A great deal of intelligence can be invested in ignorance when the need for illusion is deep. -Saul Bellow

I consider myself a Hindu, Christian, Moslem, Jew, Buddhist and Confucian. -Mohandas Gandhi

To become a popular religion, it is only necessary for a superstition to enslave a philosophy. -Dean William R. Inge

Modern man has not ceased to be credulous, the need to believe haunts him. -William James

Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind. -Albert Einstein

"Mystery" is a better word for "God" because it suggests questions, not answers. "Why" is always a good question, the one question that distinguishes us from the other brutes. -Ed Abbey, *Confessions of a Barbarian*

When religion and politics travel in the same cart, the riders believe nothing can stand in their way. Their movements become headlong - faster and faster and faster. They put aside all thought of obstacles and forget that a precipice does not show itself to a man in a blind rush until it's too late. -Bene Gesserit Proverb, *DUNE*

The inspiration of the Bible depends upon the ignorance of the gentlemen who reads it. -Robert Ingersoll

The dogma of the infallibility of the Bible is no more self-evident than is that of the infallibility of the popes. -Thomas Henry Huxley

Don't change beliefs, change the believer. -Werner Erhart

All the religion we have is the ethics of one or another holy person. -Waldo Ralph Emerson

People in general are equally horrified at hearing the Christian religion doubted and at seeing it practiced. -Samuel Butler

The writers against religion, whilst they oppose every system, are wisely careful never to set up any of their own. -Edmund Burke

Treat the other man's faith gently; it is all he has to believe in. -Henry Haskins

A fanatic is one who sticks to his guns whether they're loaded or not. -Franklin Jones

The more fervent opponents of Christian doctrine have often enough shown a temper which, psychologically considered, in indistinguishable from religious zeal. -William James

There is something inherently ridiculous in ecumenical dialogue because in the first stage everyone says "if you would only listen to me and my confession, we would have the answer." A great many never get beyond this stage, never listen to the other peoples speeches because they are so busy writing their own and, of course, never see how funny it must appear to God or to the secularist in the world who does not see much to choose amongst any of us. -Eugene Carson Blake

All words are plastic. Word images begin to distort in the instant of utterance. Ideas embedded in a language require that particular language for expression. This is the meaning within the word exotic. See how it begins to distort? Translation squirms in the presence of the exotic. Dangers lurk in all systems. Systems incorporate the unexamined beliefs of their creators. Adopt a system, accept its beliefs, and you help strengthen the resistance to change. -The Stolen Journals, *DUNE*

Silence

The silent man is often worth listening to. -Japanese

A listener needs more intelligence than a speaker. -Turkish

Give every man your ear but give few your voice. -William Shakespeare

Silence is the best answer to the stupid. -Arabic

Silence is not only golden, it's seldom misquoted. -American

Example is a mute admonition. -German

Those who know don't talk. Those who talk don't know. -Lao Tzu

Tact is the art of making a point without making an enemy. -Wilson Mizner

Zen is not letting yourself be horsewhipped into words about it, so as you read these words just unfocus your eyes and stare at the blurry page. -Jack Kerouac

Never answer a critic, unless he's right. -Bernard Baruch

You have not converted a man because you have silenced him. -John, Viscount Morley

As I grow older, I pay less attention to what men say. I just watch what they do. -Andrew Carnegie

He who silently reforms himself has done more towards reforming the public than a crowd of noisy, impotent patriots. -J. Lavater

My father gave me these hints on speech-making: "Be sincere, be brief, and be seated." -James Roosevelt

The quieter you become the more you can hear. -Baba Ram Dass

When Abbot Pambo was asked to say a few words to the very important Bishop of Alexandria, who was visiting some of the Desert Fathers, the elder Abbot replied: "If he is not edified by my silence, then there is no hope that he will be edified by my words." -Thomas Merton.

Travel

Unless we change direction, we are likely to end up where we are headed. -Chinese

The dog that trots about finds a bone. -Romany

Seek knowledge even in China. -Muslim

He who seeks, finds either his God or his misfortune. -Turkish

A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. -Chinese

There is no bridge without a place on the other side of it. -Welsh

Better to turn back than to lose one’s way. —Russian

All men are not like trees; some must travel and cannot keep still. —Romany

The torch of doubt and chaos, this is what the sage steers by. —Chuang Tzu

Every road has two directions. —Ukrainian

The stone that remains in one spot becomes covered with moss. —Lithuanian

To know the road ahead, ask those coming back. —Chinese

Let everyone praise the ford as he finds it. —Welsh

When you have something to do and you find no companions, take your stick and go slowly. —Albanian

God blesses the seeking, not the finding. —German

When the path is before you, do not look for a road. —Greek

It is not worthwhile to go around the world to count the cats in Zanzibar. —Henry David Thoreau

Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations. —Vulcans of Star Trek

Walk down that lonesome road all by yourself. Don't turn your head back over your shoulder and only stop to rest yourself when the silver moon is shining high above the trees. —James Taylor

Truth

He who speaks the truth must have one foot in the stirrup. —Turkish

The eyes believe themselves, the ears believe others. —Egyptian

The story is only half told when one side tells it. —Icelandic

Being a Sufi is to put away what is in your head—imagined truth, preconceptions, conditioning—and to face what may happened to you. —Abu Said.

He uses statistics as a drunken man uses lampposts, for support rather than illumination. —Andrew Lang.

All great truths begin as blasphemies. —George Bernard Shaw

The sky is not less blue because the blind man does not see it. —Danish

All say the lamb is good, but each likes a different way of cooking it. —Chinese

Don't deny the truth even for the sake of your friend. —Hungarian

An old error has more friends than a new truth. —German

The greatest truths are the simplest; and so are the greatest men. —John Hare 19th cent.

He who dies for truth finds holy ground everywhere for his grave. —German

There is no disputing a proverb, a fool, and a truth. —Russian

Hope clouds observation. —Rev. Mother Gauis Helen Mohaim, DUNE

The unclouded eye is better, no matter what it sees. —Rev. Mother Odrade, DUNE

The truth is so simple that it is regarded as pretentious banality. —Dag Hammarskjold

The opposite of a correct statement is a false statement. But the opposite of a profound truth may well be another profound truth. —Niels Bohr

When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less. —Lewis Carroll

Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored. —Aldous Huxley

There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics. —Benjamin Disraeli

Then there is the man who drowned crossing a stream with an average depth of six inches. —W.I.E. Gates

Natives who beat drums to drive off evil spirits are objects of scorn to smart Americans who blow horns to break up traffic jams. —Mary Ellen Kelly

None attains to the Degree of Truth until a thousand honest people have testified that he is a heretic. —Junaid of Baghdad, Sufi

Truth suffers from too much analysis. —Ancient Fremen Saying, DUNE

Wisdom

A narrow place is large to the narrow-minded. —Turkemestan

The supposition of the wise man is better than the certainty of the ignorant. —Moorish

The best preacher is the heart; the best teacher is time; the best book is the world; the best friend is God. —Talmud

The believer is happy, the doubter wise. —Greek Proverb

A man should never be ashamed to admit he has been wrong, which is but to say, in other words, that he is wiser today than he was yesterday. —Jonathan Swift

Only the shallow know themselves. —Oscar Wilde

For of the wise man as of the fool there is no enduring remembrance, seeing that in the days to come all will have been long forgotten. How the wise man dies just like the fool! For all is vanity and a striving after the wind. —Ecclesiastes.

The father of wisdom is memory; his mother is reflection. —Welsh

Ask the opinion of an older one and a younger one than thyself, and return to thine own opinion. —Syrian

In much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow. —Ecclesiastes

Doubt is not a pleasant mental state, but certainty is a ridiculous one. —Voltaire

Be wiser than other people, if you can, but do not tell them so. —Lord Chesterfield

A man who stands behind a wall can see nothing else. —Japanese

The wise make more use of their enemies than fools of their friends. —German

Each of us finds his unique vehicle for sharing with others his bit of wisdom. —Baba Ram Dass

A man begins cutting his wisdom teeth the first time he bites off more than he can chew. —Herb Caen

Remember your philosopher's doubts... Beware! The mind of the believer stagnates. It fails to grow outward into an unlimited, infinite universe. —Rev. Mother Taraza, DUNE

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Green Book of Meditations Volume 4

The ill A.D. and the Odd Essay

Introduction

Of what purpose is another book of meditations? Indeed, the primary source of inspiration for Druids is thought to be Nature, so why do I collect secondary tales? The Order of Worship has long since past away at Carleton, so the use of meditations at those services has also departed from general custom for many of us (at Carleton.) Well, I guess a sub-goal of the Druids has always been to reflect on life and consider the myriad of systems that also look on life; be they religions, philosophies or intellectual studies. A natural result of the search is to share some of your findings, right? I think these readings will spark an interesting thought or that might encourage Druids to widen their search parameters. I think group discussion of these volumes (and other sources of their own finding) would be fruitful. I hope these selections and advice from diverse sources may whet the appetite for the Search for Awareness and Truth.

I'm sure that the first three Green Books are more than sufficient for many Druids, but I just can't stop collecting stories. My motivation is part pack-rat and partly to provide as much "Druidic material" (in my opinion) for training future Druids, who have little time for personal research. It is also a portable set of notes for my own study. I merely hope that none mistake this book as a substitute for going outside for a walk or planting a garden or raiding a library or talking to a stranger.

By the time of this re-publication, the Green Books will have become 1/5 of the total volume of the ARDA. I certainly can't put an entire library in here. So, I'll have to probably call this the last collection, at least by my hand, for awhile.

Be careful reading this, for you are entering the life and culture of the authors. You cannot borrow the wisdom of a people, without repaying them in someway, perhaps through your life-style. As always, I've swiped these selections without permission, so don't go doing it yourself, right? Two wrongs don't make a right. I've listed the books, where possible to enable you to order them. Please enjoy.

-Michael Scharding
September 1st, 2002
Washington D.C.

Drynemetum Press

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Part One: American Sources

Native American Thoughts

As you may know, many people turn to Native Americans for inspiration from an ecologically-based belief system. To borrow some wisdom, of course, requires some type of compensation, to live wisely. Repay your debts accordingly. This selection is taken from "Native American Reader: Stories, Speeches and Poems," edited and commentary by Jerry D. Blance, PhD, published by The Denali Press, PO BOX 021535 Juneau Alaska 99802-1535, USA. ISBN 0-938737-20-1. Please seek more from this book of modern Indian thoughts and don't forget that there are living Indians, with modern problems, who might welcome some help.

Chief Seattle's Treaty

Yonder sky that has wept tears of compassion upon my people for centuries untold, and which to us appears changeless and eternal, may change. Today is fair. Tomorrow it may be overcast with clouds. My words are like the stars that never change. Whatever Seattle says, the great chief at Washington can rely upon with as much certainty as he can upon the return of the sun or the seasons. The white chief says that Big Chief at Washington sends us greetings of friendship and goodwill. This is kind of him for we know he has little need of our friendship in return. His people are many. They are like the grass that covers vast prairies. My people are few. They resemble the scattering trees of a storm-swept plain. The great, and I presume -- good, White Chief sends us word that he wishes to buy our land but is willing to allow us enough to live comfortably. This indeed appears just, even generous, for the Red Man no longer has rights that he need respect, and the offer may be wise, also, as we are no longer in need of an extensive country.

There was a time when our people covered the land as the waves of a wind-ruffled sea cover its shell-paved floor, but that time long since passed away with the greatness of tribes that are now but a mournful memory. I will not dwell on, nor mourn over, our untimely decay, nor reproach my paleface brothers with hastening it, as we too may have been somewhat to blame.

Youth is impulsive. When our young men grow angry at some real or imaginary wrong, and disfigure their faces with black paint, it denotes that their hearts are black, and that they are often cruel and relentless, and our old men and old women are unable to restrain them. Thus it has ever been. Thus it was when the white man began to push our forefathers ever westward. But let us hope that the hostilities between us may never return. We would have everything to lose and nothing to gain. Revenge by young men is considered gain, even at the cost of their own lives, but old men who stay at home in times of war, and mothers who have sons to lose, know better.

Our good father in Washington--for I presume he is now our father as well as yours, since King George has moved his boundaries further north--our great and good father, I say, sends us word that if we do as he desires he will protect us. His brave warriors will be to us a bristling wall of strength, and his wonderful ships of war will fill our harbors, so that our ancient enemies far to the northward -- the Haidas and Tsimshians -- will cease to frighten our women, children, and old men. Then in reality he will be our father and we his children. But can that ever

be? Your God is not our God! Your God loves your people and hates mine! He folds his strong protecting arms lovingly about the paleface and leads him by the hand as a father leads an infant son. But, He has forsaken His Red children, if they really are His. Our God, the Great Spirit, seems also to have forsaken us. Your God makes your people wax stronger every day. Soon they will fill all the land. Our people are ebbing away like a rapidly receding tide that will never return. The white man's God cannot love our people or He would protect them. They seem to be orphans who can look nowhere for help. How then can we be brothers? How can your God become our God and renew our prosperity and awaken in us dreams of returning greatness? If we have a common Heavenly Father He must be partial, for He came to His paleface children. We never saw Him. He gave you laws but had no word for His red children whose teeming multitudes once filled this vast continent as stars fill the firmament. No; we are two distinct races with separate origins and separate destinies. There is little in common between us.

To us the ashes of our ancestors are sacred and their resting place is hallowed ground. You wander far from the graves of your ancestors and seemingly without regret. Your religion was written upon tablets of stone by the iron finger of your God so that you could not forget. The Red Man could never comprehend or remember it. Our religion is the traditions of our ancestors -- the dreams of our old men, given them in solemn hours of the night by the Great Spirit; and the visions of our sachems, and is written in the hearts of our people.

Your dead cease to love you and the land of their nativity as soon as they pass the portals of the tomb and wander away beyond the stars. They are soon forgotten and never return. Our dead never forget this beautiful world that gave them being. They still love its verdant valleys, its murmuring rivers, its magnificent mountains, sequestered vales and verdant lined lakes and bays, and ever yearn in tender fond affection over the lonely hearted living, and often return from the happy hunting ground to visit, guide, console, and comfort them.

Day and night cannot dwell together. The Red Man has ever fled the approach of the White Man, as the morning mist flees before the morning sun. However, your proposition seems fair and I think that my people will accept it and will retire to the reservation you offer them. Then we will dwell apart in peace, for the words of the Great White Chief seem to be the words of nature speaking to my people out of dense darkness.

It matters little where we pass the remnant of our days. They will not be many. The Indian's night promises to be dark. Not a single star of hope hovers above his horizon. Sad-voiced winds moan in the distance. Grim fate seems to be on the Red Man's trail, and wherever he will hear the approaching footsteps of his fell destroyer and prepare stolidly to meet his doom, as does the wounded doe that hears the approaching footsteps of the hunter.

A few more moons, a few more winters, and not one of the descendants of the mighty hosts that once moved over this broad land or lived in happy homes, protected by the Great Spirit, will remain to mourn over the graves of a people once more powerful and hopeful than yours. But why should I mourn at the untimely fate of my people? Tribe follows tribe, and nation follows nation, like the waves of the sea. It is the order of nature, and regret is useless. Your time of decay may be distant, but it will surely come, for even the White Man whose God walked and talked with him as friend to friend, cannot be exempt from the common destiny. We may be brothers after all. We will see.

We will ponder your proposition and when we decide we will let you know. But should we accept it, I here and now make this condition that we will not be denied the privilege without molestation of visiting at any time the tombs of our ancestors, friends, and children. Every part of this soil is sacred in the estimation of my people. Every hillside, every valley, every plain and grove, has been hallowed by some sad or happy event in days long vanished. Even the rocks, which seem to be dumb and dead as the swelter in the sun along the silent shore, thrill with memories of stirring events connected with the lives of my people, and the very dust upon which you now stand responds more lovingly to their footsteps than yours, because it is rich with the blood of our ancestors, and our bare feet are conscious of the sympathetic touch. Our departed braves, fond mothers, glad, happy hearted maidens, and even the little children who lived here and rejoiced here for a brief season, will love these somber solitudes and at eventide they greet shadowy returning spirits. And when the last Red Man shall have perished, and the memory of my tribe shall have become a myth among the White Men, these shores will swarm with the invisible dead of my tribe, and when your children's children think themselves alone in the field, the store, the shop, upon the highway, or in the silence of the pathless woods, they will not be alone. In all the earth there is no place dedicated to solitude. At night when the streets of your cities and villages are silent and you think them deserted, they will throng with the returning hosts that once filled them and still love this beautiful land. The White Man will never be alone.

Let him be just and deal kindly with my people, for the dead are not powerless. Dead, did I say? There is no death, only a change of worlds.

A Tribal Attorney

A Tribal Attorney on an Indian reservation asked the Chief to show him around. Two horses were saddled and the Chief and the Attorney started out into the country. Soon they came to a cave where the Chief dismounted from his horse, went to the cave entrance and yelled, "Wooo, Wooo." The Chief stood for a moment cocking his head and listening for a reply. When no sound came out of the cave, the Chief mounted up and rode on with the Attorney. In a short time, the two came to a tunnel entrance and the Chief again got off his horse, went to the entrance of the tunnel and yelled, "Wooo, Wooo." When no response came from the tunnel, the Chief again mounted and rode on through the reservation with the Attorney. After approximately a half hour the pair came to still another cave and the Chief did the same thing as before. Still no answer came from the cave and the Chief mounted again and rode on.

As it was getting late, the Chief told the Attorney that if he would ride his horse straight over the hill, he would come out in the parking lot where his car had been left but that the Chief wanted to continue riding for awhile. The Attorney, curious to know why the Chief was yelling into the cave, questioned the Chief about his behavior. He was told by the Chief that there was an old legend about a beautiful girl who lived in one of the caves on the reservation and that the Chief hoped to be the first person to find her.

The Attorney left the Chief and rode back towards his car. On the way back to his car, he passed a tunnel. "Ah!" said the Attorney to himself, "I'll give this cave a try." The Attorney dismounted and went to the mouth of the tunnel and yelled, "Wooo, Wooo." The Attorney stood listening for a few moments and heard from the tunnel a faint sound of "Wooo, Wooo." "Wow, this is my lucky day!" said the Attorney, and he ran into the cave.

The next day the headlines of the tribal paper read, "Tribal Attorney Run Over By Train."

-Colville

His Answer was "Maybe"

Once there was an elder who was very poor but was content and happy. All he had in the world were a small parcel of land, his humble lodge, an old horse and strong, young warrior grandson. One night, the horse ran away. When the elder's neighbors heard of this, they came as a group to give their condolences and said to him, "This is indeed a great misfortune." But the elder only replied, "Maybe," and smiled. The neighbors were surprised and thought him to be a bit strange as they departed for home.

The next night, the elder heard a great racket outside his lodge. His horse had returned, but not alone. It had returned with several other young wild horses and let them straight into the old man's corral. The next day, the neighbors returned. This time, they were very joyous and said to the old man, "Surely good fortune shines upon you and the Creator has truly blessed your family." The elder smiled as before and again replied, "Maybe." The reservation community thought him ungrateful and perhaps a bit disturbed and muttered among themselves.

Soon it became time to tame the wild horses and the elder's grandson tried to mount one to begin the process. He was immediately thrown and he broke his leg. The neighbors, upon hearing of this and being a genuinely concerned tribal group, once again returned to the grandfather's house to offer their condolences. Once again, in spite of the hardship this would undoubtedly bear upon the old man, he merely smiled and said, "Maybe."

This time the neighbors left in disgust, thinking the grandfather to be a fool, or perhaps insane. The next day, however, a group of experienced warriors poured through the village, forcing all the young men to join them. The tribal chief was going off to war and these young men were to be his pawns. When these warriors came to the grandfather's lodge, they found the grandson to be unable to walk and therefore of no use as a warrior. They left him behind.

Soon the neighbors came to the elder again, some weeping because their sons had been taken, perhaps never to return. They saw that the elder's grandson was still in his bed, his leg with a splint and bandaged. They said to the old man, "You are indeed a lucky man." The grandfather smiled gently and said only, "Maybe." The neighbors stood quietly for some time. Gradually, they, too, began to smile and nod their heads. And as they departed slowly, they, too, could be heard saying to one another, "Maybe."

-Raymond F. Reyes, Hopi

The Sick Buzzard

A long, long time ago, Buzzard traveled all over the world. He was constantly eating. Sometimes he ate so much he got too fat to fly, so he would just sit around on the tree branches and sleep with his head hanging down. The other birds would never visit with Buzzard because they thought he was too mean and grouchy; and sometimes he stunk too much. That is also why they never invited him to sing and dance in their ceremonies either.

Buzzard used to brag a lot, too. He told the other birds, "I can eat anything in the world. You other birds can only eat certain things. Some of you can only eat seeds, berries, fish, or fresh-killed meat. Not me. I can eat anything at anytime, and I can eat more than any of you."

Bluejay got tired of hearing Buzzard brag so much. One day she told the other birds, "He thinks he's so great just because he is bigger than us, can fly higher, and eat more. But I think he is ugly and stinks. I am going to make a curse on him to teach him a lesson. I wish he would get fat, bald headed, old and wrinkly looking; and I hope he gets bad belly aches from eating too much. Besides, he never shares, either."

One day Buzzard was flying around eating everything in sight. He ate dead animals whenever he saw one. He ate poisonous snakes, scratchy bugs, smelly dead fish, and even a dead human if he found one. NO other bird would dare eat a human!

Buzzard ate so much that he didn't even bother to clean his head. He just kept flying around in circles looking, watching, and waiting for something else to eat, dead or alive. It was really hot that day and he got sick. He got so sick that all he could do was sit on the side of the riverbank, on an old log, and moan. He was stuffed, too fat to fly, to sick to holler for help, and too weak to clean himself. All the dead meat left on his head began to rot in the hot sun; he stunk so bad that nobody in Nature would help him. Within a few days his feathers fell out and the hot sun burned his scalp red all the way down to his neck.

Buzzard was so sick he started to die. All he could do was moan and cry, and still nobody came to help him. But on the fourth day he heard someone trying to talk. He looked all around and saw this little plant below him. The little green, happy plant was singing and swaying in the warm summer breeze. She said, "Hey, you sick bird. I can help you. I can heal anybody. Just reach down here and take a few bites of my leaves, chew them up real good, then swallow my power into your rotten belly."

It was all Buzzard could do to bend over, but that is what he did. And he said, "I don't have much to offer but a few of my feathers. Maybe they can keep you warm from the morning dew. Here, I'll trade you for your medicine." So he reached down and took the herb. After awhile he got well again. Before leaving he said, "Thank you, for helping me. I will never forget you because your medicine is strong and you smell so good." Then he took off flying. As he left he sang this song: "Round and round the Buzzard goes. Where he will land nobody knows!"

-Medicine Grizzlybear Lake, Seneca/Konawa/Cherokee

Bilingual Education

I've always said that the language is the heart of the culture. If you don't know the language, you'll only see the surface of the culture. It is our responsibility, those of us that can still speak our languages. My biggest regret is that I didn't pass the language to my four children; they tell me today, "You cheated me." I think that is the reason why I am in this program... The language is the heart of the culture, and you cannot separate it.

- Elaine Ramos, Tlingit 11/13/1974

Words and Writing

I have visited the great Father in Washington. I have attended dinners among white people. Their ways are not our ways. We eat in silence, quietly smoke a pipe and depart. Thus is our host honored.

This is not the way of the white man. After his food has been eaten, one is expected to say foolish things. Here the host feels honored. Many of the white man's ways are past understanding, but now that we have eaten at the white man's table, it is fitting that we honor our host according to the ways of his people.

Our host has filled many notebooks with the sayings of our fathers as they came down to us. This is the way of his people; they set great store upon writing; always there is a paper.

But we have learned that though there are many papers in Washington upon which are written promises to pay us for our land, no white man seems to remember them.

However, we know our host will not forget what he has written down, and we hope that he white people will read it.

But we are puzzled as to what useful service all this writing serves. Whenever white people come together, there is

writing. When we go to buy some sugar or tea, we see the white trader busy writing in a book. Even the white doctor, as he sits beside his patient, writes on a piece of paper.

The white people must think paper has some mysterious power to help them on in the world.

The Indian needs no writing. Words that are true sink deep into his heart where they remain. He never forgets them. On the other hand, if the white man loses his paper, he is helpless.

I once heard one of their preachers say that no white man was admitted to heave, unless there were writings about him in a great book.

(After-dinner speaking was a strange phenomenon to Four Guns, Oglala Sioux, but he delivered this speech at a dinner given by anthropologist Clark Wissler in 1891)

Talk To God

When we want wisdom we go up the hill and talk to God. Four days and four nights, without food and water. Yes, you can talk to God up on a hill by yourself. You can say anything you want. Nobody's there to listen to you. That's between you and God and nobody else. It's a great feeling to be talking to God. I know. I did it way up on the mountain. The wind was blowing. It was dark. It was cold. And I stood there and I talked to God.

-Mathew King, Lakota Chief

Where is the Eagle's Seat?

To the people of Geneva, the people, the Odinashonee, the Six Nations, the Chiefs, the Clan Mothers, the warriors, the men, the women, the children, send our greetings, and our good wishes of health and friendship to all of you. Of the Red brothers of the Western Hemisphere, of the two great turtle islands a certain few of us have been given a short time and a great task to convince you that we too are human. And have rights. Our nations who have principles of justice and equality, who have respect for the natural world, on behalf of our mother the Earth and all the great elements we come here and we say they too have rights. The future generations, our children, our grandchildren, and their grandchildren are our concern. That they may have clean water to drink that they may observe our four-footed brothers before they are extinct, that they may enjoy the elements that we are so fortunate to have and that serves us as human beings. The President of the USA has brought forth into the forum, of the international world, the issue of human rights. It affords us the opportunity at this time to present our position on the issue of human rights. It is strange indeed that we have to travel this far to the east, to the European continent to turn and speak to the President of the US and ask him about our human rights. We are concerned. It is the future of not only our people, the Red people of the Western Hemisphere, but it is the future of yourselves that is at stake. We have been given principles by which to live, mutual respect, the understanding of creation.

Power is not manifesting in the human being. True power is in the Creator. If we continue to ignore the message by which we exist and we continue to destroy the source of our lives then our children will suffer. Whose responsibility then, who are we speaking to and who is listening? We would be remiss in our duty if we did not bring this in front of you. We apologize if it hurts. But the truth must be spoken. We were told in the beginning that we were not human. There are great arguments in the histories of many countries as to the humanness of the Red people of the Western Hemisphere. I must warn you that the Creator made us all equal with one another. And not only human beings, but all life is equal. The equality of our life is what you must understand and the principle by which you must continue on behalf of the future of this world. Economics and technology may assist you, but they will also destroy you if you do not use the principles of equality. Profit and loss will mean nothing to your future generations.

We are here for a very short time and we have been given a very short time upon that clock of the wall to convince you, to make you listen, to understand, that we are concerned for you as well as for us. Our grandfather from the Hopi Nation this morning spoke a prayer on behalf of all the world, of your future and of ours. And it is with this spirit that we come here and we hope that the people and the nations from which we come and to which we will have to return and which we will have to face, whatever they may have in store for our speaking the truth on behalf of people, of the world, of the four-footed, of the winged, of the fish that swim. Someone must speak for them. I do not see a delegation for the four-footed. I see no seat for the eagles. We forget and we consider ourselves superior, but we are after all a mere part of the Creation. And we must continue to understand where we are. And we stand between the mountain and the ant, somewhere and only there, as part and parcel of the Creation. It is our responsibility, since we have been given the minds to take care of these things. The elements and the animals, and the birds, they live in a state of grace. They are absolute, they can do no wrong. It is only we, the two-leggeds, that can do this. And when we do this to our brothers, our own brothers, then we do the worst in the eyes of the Creator. There should be brotherhood, and the Haudennosaunee, Six Nations, the Iroquois, who were here fifty-three years ago to say the very same thing, the unity of spirit, of brotherhood. United Nations is nothing new to us. Our Confederacy is a thousand years old. The representation of the people is nothing new to us because that is whom we represent. And so for this short time I would ask that you open your ears, that you open your hearts, that you open your minds and that you consider very seriously the future of the generations, of our children to come.

- Oren Lyons, Iroquois

Given to the NGO of the UN, "Discrimination against the indigenous Populations of the Americas," Geneva Switzerland, Sept. 20-23, 1977.

Earth Teach me to Remember

(Ute, North America)

Earth teach me stillness
as the grasses are stilled with light.
Earth teach me suffering
as old stones suffer with memory.
Earth teach me humility
as blossoms are humble with beginning.
Earth teach me caring
as the mother who secures her young.
Earth teach me courage
as the tree which stands all alone.
Earth teach me limitation
as the ant which crawls on the ground.
Earth teach me freedom
as the eagle which soars in the sky.
Earth teach me resignation
as the leaves which die in the fall.
Earth teach me regeneration
as the seed which rises in the spring.
Earth teach me to forget myself
as melted snow forgets its life.
Earth teach me to remember kindness
as dry fields weep with rain.

Behold Our Mother Earth

(Pawnee, North America)

Behold! Our Mother Earth is lying here.
Behold! She gives of her fruitfulness.
Truly, her power she gives us.
Give thanks to Mother Earth who lies here.
Behold on Mother Earth the growing fields!
Behold the promise of her fruitfulness!
Truly, her power she gives us.
Give thanks to Mother Earth who lies here.
Behold on Mother Earth the spreading trees!
Behold the promise of her fruitfulness!
Truly, her power she gives us.
Give thanks to Mother Earth who lies here.
Behold on Mother Earth the running streams!
We see the promise of her fruitfulness.
Truly, her power she gives us.
Our thanks to Mother Earth who lies here.

Prayer for the Great Family

(Gary Snyder, Mohawk)

Gratitude to Mother Earth, sailing through night and day-
and to her soil: rich, rare, and sweet
in our minds so be it.
Gratitude to Plants, the sun-facing light-changing leaf and fine root-hairs; standing still through wind and rain; their dance is in the flowing spiral grain
in our minds so be it.
Gratitude to Air, bearing the soaring Swift and the silent Owl at dawn. Breath of our song clear spirit breeze
in our minds so be it.
Gratitude to Wild Beings, our brothers, teaching secrets, freedoms, and ways; who share with us their milk; self-complete, brave, and aware
in our minds so be it.
Gratitude to Water: clouds, lakes, rivers, glaciers; holding or releasing, streaming through all our bodies salty seas
in our minds so be it.
Gratitude to Sun: blinding pulsing light through trunks of trees, through mists, warming caves where bears and snakes sleep -he who wakes us-
in our minds so be it.
Gratitude to Great Sky who holds billions of stars - and goes yet beyond that - beyond all powers, and thoughts and yet is within us - Grandfather space- The mind is his Wife.
so be it.

The Buffalo

Your spirit
Still lives in my
Heart,
Keeping me alive
As you always did.
Gabrial Dumont was the last
To call you from the plains.
Now,
I must call you from the East,
I must call you from the South,
I must call you from the West,
I must call you from the North,
I must call you from below,
I must call you from above.
In this same way
I must call
All those who have
Gone before.
The dust in Montana
Will always be red
With your blood
And ours,
The mixture inseparable,
Settling on everything,
Our secret claim.
The night sky is ours
To gather strength
You
And me
on sweet grass
- Russel V. Boham, Little Shell Band, Chippewa

My Journey Home (Caddo Burial Rites)

Moccasin my feet
clothe me in ribbon and cloth
my journey home has come
Sing to me of peace
and bid me farewell, talk to me
as you usher me homeward
Cover me with mother earth
hand full by hand full
your farewells are accepted
As you wash your grief away
the gentle rain removes my
traces upon the earth
Stand not to the East
bar not my journey home
my riverward path
The river I must cross
is dark and rough
prepare my moccasin feet
that I might cross swiftly
Light the way for me
with torch of fire
for six days and nights
light my journey home
- Guyneth Bedoka Cardwell, Caddo

Prayer to my Brother

Oh, My Brother,
How Great you are in all your splendor.
Eternally watchful of us,
So that we may not fall so often.
Soaring above us,
Gliding in a circular motion,
In that watchful way.
I beg you,
Have Pity upon me,
For today, I am lost.
Open my eyes,
So that I may see,
What it is I am to see.
Open my ears,
So that I may hear,
What it is I am to hear.
Enter into my head,
Allow me to understand
The Mystery before me.
Come into my heart, so that I
May know all,

But still love.
Wrap my Being... In the vast wings... So Strong
Suspend me there,
Forever to stand beside you.
That I may never make a mistake,
One threatening the lives of Indian People.
Of this, My Brother,
With your help,
I will be allowed to love...
Understand... help,
The Indian People,
The Ones who need me at this time.
- Sheilah Eagle Bear, Colville (lake tribe)

I Would Cry

Grieving, I greet my kinsmen.
Descendants of once proud people,
I would cry for them:
For cradle-tending grandmothers,
Carrying comfort in gnarled hands;
For listless, caught-place children
Knowing-eyed, without birthdays old;
For jobless, blank, self-lost men,
Dreamless drifters, homeless at home;
For questioning, questing, angry youth
Biting bitter fruit of disinheritance;
For these, all these, would I cry,
Stream of unending sorrow,
Had I time.
- Pearl (Tommy) Goodson Goodbear, Choctaw

The End

Bring desecration to my reservation
Destroy my native way
Appoint a thief to be my chief
Force me to obey
Drive me insane with prison and chain
Ruin my life and name
Take my bride from my side
bring her disgrace and shame
Teach me to lie be afraid to die
To follow a coward's lead
Encourage me to steal and double deal
To worship violence and greed
When you're done have had your fun
And I finally become like you
Remember the man with whom you stand
Can do the same thing too
There'll be a day we have our way
Your rule will reach an end
Then I'll be your worst enemy
Tho I used to be a friend.
- "Sonny" Louis J. M. Ives

Go Forth

I go forth to move about the earth.
I go forth as the owl, wise and knowing.
I go forth as the eagle, powerful and bold.
I go forth as the dove, powerful and gentle.
I go forth to move about the earth in
Wisdom, courage, and peace.
- Alonzo Lopez, Papago

This Is My Land

This is my land
From the time of the first moon
Till the time of the last sun
It was given to my people
Wha-neh Wah-neh, the great giver of life
Made me out of the earth of this land
He said, "you are the land, and the land is you."
I take good care of this land,
For I am part of it.
I take good care of the animals,
For they are my brothers and sisters.
I take good care of the animals,
For they are my brothers and sisters.
I take care of the streams and rivers,
For they clean my land,
I honor Ocean as my father,
For he gives me food and a means of travel.
Ocean knows everything, for he is everywhere.
Ocean is wise, for he is old.
Listen to Ocean, for he speaks wisdom
He sees much, and knows more.
He say, "take care of my sister, Earth,
She is young and has little wisdom, but much kindness."
"When she smiles, it is springtime."
"Scar not her beauty, for she is beautiful beyond all things."
"Her face looks eternally upward to the beauty of sky and stars."
"Where once she lived with her father, Sky."
I am forever grateful for this beautiful and bountiful earth.
God gave it to me
This is my land.
- Clarence Pickernell

Lonely Warriors

Distant drums call from the mountain tops
Deep in the concrete canyons of Seattle
and Tacoma lonely ears are straining
to hear the songs of their childhood.
On the main streets and first streets
of Los Angeles and Spokane homeless
warriors walk the night to look and
listen for some trace of other tribesmen.
- Robert A. Swanson, Chippewa

The Wanderer's Prayer

mother of the mountains
father of the skies
guide me in my travels
be with me when I die
brother of the forests
sisters of the streams
protect me in my travels
be with me in my dreams
- Robert A. Swanson, Chippewa

Native American Proverbs

These selections are taken from "The Soul Would Have No Rainbow If the Eyes Had No Tears [and other Native American Proverbs]" by Guy A. Zona. As always, remember that part of the wisdom of the Native Americans is not what they say, but how they live. Those are things that can not be read, but must be experienced with them in a real relationship of some type.

Community & Communication

All children of Earth will be welcome at our council fires. -Seneca

The more you give, the more good things come to you. -Hopi

Give your host a little something when you leave; little presents are little courtesies and never offend. -Seneca

Always assume your guest is tired, cold, and hungry, and act accordingly. -Navaho

Never help a person who doesn't help anybody else. -Hopi

The grandfathers and the grandmothers are in the children; teach them well. -Ojibway

The bird who has eaten cannot fly with the bird that is hungry. -Omaha

One finger cannot lift a pebble. -Hopi

What should it matter that one bowl is dark and the other pale, if each is of good design and serves its purpose well? -Hopi

A people without a history is like the wind over buffalo grass. -Sioux

A people without faith in themselves cannot survive. -Hopi

Be satisfied with needs instead of wants. -Tenton Sioux

You are never justified in arguing. -Hopi

An angry word is like striking with a knife. -Hopi

If I am in harmony with my family, that's success. -Ute

It is good to tell one's heart. -Chippewa

Remember that your children are not your own, but are lent to you by the Creator. -Mohawk

It takes a whole village to raise a child. -Omaha

You can't get rich if you look after your relatives properly. -Navajo

One foe is too many and a hundred friends too few. -Hopi

A man or woman with many children has many homes. -Lakota

Never see an old person going to carry water without getting a bucket and going in their stead. -Twanas

Do not wrong or hate your neighbor, for it is not he that you wrong but yourself. -Pima

I have been to the end of the earth. I have been to the end of the waters. I have been to the end of the sky. I have been to the end of the mountains. I have found none that are not my friends. – Navajo

Death

There is no death, only a change of worlds. -Duwamish

A brave man dies but once -a coward many times. -Iowa

In death I am born. -Hopi

They are not dead who live in the hearts they leave behind. -Tuscarora

All who have died are equal. -Comanche

Sing your death song and die like a hero going home. -Shawnee.

Death always comes out of season. -Pawnee

Life is not separate from death, it only looks that way. -Blackfoot

The Dead add their strength and counsel to the living. -Hopi

Ecology

With all things and in all things, we are relatives. -Sioux

Before eating, always take a little time to thank the food. -Arapaho

When we show our respect for other living things, they respond with respect for us. -Arapaho

Creation is ongoing. -Lakota

Be kind to everything that lives. -Omaha

We will be known forever by the tracks we leave. -Dakota

To touch the earth is to have harmony with nature. -Oglala Sioux

We are made from Mother Earth and we go back to Mother Earth. -Shenandoah

All plants are our brothers and sister. They talk to us and if we listen, we can hear them. -Arapaho

Listen to the voice of nature, for it holds treasures for you. -Huron

Mother Nature is always there to watch and care for her own. -Kiowa

When man moves away from nature his heart becomes hard. -Lakota

Everything has a beginning. -Kiowa

Every animal knows far more than you do. -Nez Perce

We stand somewhere between the mountain and the ant. -Onondaga

The frog does not drink up the pond in which he lives. -Sioux

Take only what you need and leave the land as you found it. -Arapaho

God

The Great Spirit is not perfect: It has a good side and a bad side. Sometimes the bad side gives us more knowledge than the good side. -Lakota

The words of God are not like the oak leaf which dies and falls to the earth, but like the pine tree which stays green forever. -Mohawk

It makes no difference as to the name of the God, since love is the real God of all this world. -Apache

Everything the Power does, it does in a circle. -Lakota

God gives us each a song. -Ute

The rainbow is a sign from Him who is in all things. -Hopi

Inner peace and love are the greatest of God's gifts. -Tenton Sioux

Grief

Our pleasures are shallow, our sorrows are deep. -Cheyenee

The Soul would have no rainbow if the eyes had no tears. -Minquass

Don't let yesterday use up too much of today. -Cherokee

What is past and cannot be prevented should not be grieved for. -Pawnee

Don't be afraid to cry. It will free your mind of sorrowful thoughts. -Hopi

The old days will never be again, even as a man will never again be a child. –Dakota

Knowledge

Knowledge that is not used is abused. -Cree

The smarter a man is the more he needs God to protect him from thinking he knows everything. -Pima

Our first teacher is our own heart. -Cheyenee

Teaching should come from within instead of without. -Hopi

Justice and Law

He who is present at a wrongdoing and does not lift a hand to prevent it is as guilty as the wrongdoers. -Omaha

It is less of a problem to be poor than to be dishonest. -Anishinabe

The rain falls on the just and unjust. -Hopi

Never sit while your seniors stand. -Cree

Even animals have their taboos. -Northern Plains Indian

Each person is his own judge. -Pima

Man's law changes with his understanding of man. Only the laws of the spirit remain always the same. -Crow

Leadership

I seek strength, not to be greater than my brother, but to fight my greatest enemy-myself. -Unknown

Who serves his fellows is greatest of all. -Dakota.

Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Walk beside me that we may be as one. -Ute

When the legends die, the dreams end; there is no more greatness. -Shawnee

Talk to your children while they are eating; what you say will stay even after you are gone. -Nez Perce

The greatest strength is gentleness. -Iroquois

Show respect for all men, but grovel to none. -Shawnee

A good soldier is a poor scout. -Cheyenne

Do not only point out the way, but lead the way. -Sioux

In twenty-four hours, a louse can become a patriarch. -Seneca

Everyone who is successful must have dreamed of something. -Maricopa

The one who tells the stories rules the world. -Hopi

Force, no matter how concealed, begets resistance. -Lakota

When you see a rattlesnake poised to strike, strike first. -Navaho

White men have too many chiefs. -Nez Perce

It is easy to be brave from a safe distance. -Omaha

Never part from the Chief's path, no matter how short or beautiful the byway may be. -Seneca

A good chief gives, he does not take. -Mohawk

Before you choose a counselor, watch him with his neighbor's children. -Sioux

He who would do great things should not attempt them all alone. -Seneca

Man has responsibility, not power. -Tuscarora

You already possess everything necessary to become great. -Crow

Religion

a man prays one day and steals six, the Great Spirit thunders and the Evil one laughs. -Oklahoma.

What the people believe is true. -Anishinabe

Rituals must be performed with good and pure hearts. -Hopi

To go on a vision quest is to go into the presence of the great mystery. -Lakota

God teaches the birds to make nests, yet the nests of all birds are not alike. -Duwamish

The only things that need the protection of men are the things of men, not the things of the spirit. -Crow

All religions are but stepping stones back to God. -Pawnee

Men in search of a myth will usually find one. -Pueblo

Pray to understand what man has forgotten. -Lumbee

Trouble no man about his religion-- respect him in his views and demand that he respect yours. -Shawnee

A hungry stomach makes a short prayer. -Paiute

When you lose the rhythm of the drumbeat of God, you are lost from the peace and rhythm of life. –Cheyenne

Silence

When a favor is shown to a white man, he feels it in his head and the tongue speaks out; when a kindness is shown to an Indian, he feels it in his heart and the heart has no tongue. -Shoshone

When an elder speaks, be silent and listen.

Even your silence holds a sort of prayer. -Apache

When there is true hospitality, not many words are needed. -Arapaho

The more you ask how far you have to go, the longer your journey seems. -Seneca

Beware of the man who does not talk and the dog that does not bark. –Cheyenne

No answer is also an answer. -Hopi

Every bird loves to hear himself sing. -Arapaho

The man who freely gives his opinion should be ready to fight fiercely. -Iowa

Eating little and speaking little can hurt no man. -Hopi

When the wisdom keepers speak, all should listen. -Seneca

The moon is not shamed by the barking of dogs. -Southwest.

Truth

Speak the truth in humility to all people. Only then can you be a true man. -Sioux

Truth doesn't happen, it just is. -Hopi

Lying is a great shame. -Sioux

Ask questions from your heart and you will be answered from the heart. -Omaha

Let your eyes be offended by the sight of lying and deceitful men. -Hopi

No one else can represent your conscience. -Anishinabe

To gossip is like playing checkers with an evil spirit; you win occasionally but are more often trapped at your own game. -Hopi

Let no one speak ill of the absent. -Hopi

If you dig a pit for me, you dig one for yourself. -Creole

Wisdom

Those who have one foot in the canoe and one foot in the boat are going to fall into the river. Tuscarora

Not westward, but eastward seek the coming of the light. -Dakota

Wisdom comes only when you stop looking for it and start living the life the Creator intended for you. -Hopi.

Dreams are wiser than men. -Omaha

Life is as the flash of the firefly in the night, the breath of the buffalo in the wintertime. -Blackfoot.

If we wonder often, the gift of knowledge will come. -Arapaho

There are no secrets. There is no mystery. There is only common sense. -Onondaga

Hold fast to the words of your ancestors. -Hopi

Every fire is the same size when it starts. -Seneca

If a man is as wise as a serpent he can afford to be as harmless as a dove. -Cheyenne

Seek wisdom, not knowledge. Knowledge is of the past, wisdom is of the future. –Lumbee

War and Peace

It is no longer good enough to cry peace, we must act peace, live peace, and live in peace. -Shenandoah

Make my enemy brave and strong, so that if defeated, I will not be ashamed. -Plains Indian

The weakness of the enemy makes our strength. -Cherokee

It is senseless to fight when you cannot hope to win. -Apachee

There can never be peace between nations until it is first known that true peace is within the souls of men. -Oglala Sioux

Even a small mouse has anger. -Unknown

After dark all cats are leopards. -Zuni

Only two relationships are possible- to be a friend or an enemy. –Cree

Miscellaneous

The lazy man is apt to be envious. -Omaha

If you see no reason for giving thanks, the fault lies in yourself. –Minquass

Spanish-American Thoughts

This section has so far proven to be a difficult area for me to locate materials, because I do not know Spanish, but I hope that this selection is a good start or a pleasant continuation for you. These first stories were presented by Teresa Pijoan Van Etten in "Spanish-American Folktales" 1990, Augush House, Inc. PO Box 3223, Little Rock, Ark., 72203, 503-372-5450. ISBN: 0-87483-155-5 ($9.95.) I've also included some poetry taken from: "Paperdance: 55 Latino poets." edited by Victor Hernandez Cruz, Leroy V. Quintana and Virgil Suarez by Persea Books, Inc.. 60 Madison Ave., NYC 10010. ISBN 0-89255-201-8.

Wise Stones

A father had three daughters who were very beautiful, very strong, and very clever. When the father fell ill, he got up from his bed and prayed before la Virgen de Guadalupe.

"What my daughters desire of life," he asked, "please give them. They are deserving of what they wish."

The father died.

The land was divided among the three daughters. The youngest thanked God for her gift. The middle one thanked God for her gift. The oldest said, "How awful! Now I must work my land alone, and I am not a slave!"

She was filled with anger.

One day, a stranger walked across their lands. She carried herself in the manner of a wise woman. She asked the youngest daughter why she was clearing the field.

"I am clearing my field so that I can grow chilies to share with my sisters and to sell to my neighbors."

The wise woman walked to the second daughter. "What are you clearing your fields for?"

The second daughter replied, "Alfalfa for my horses and my sister's horses - and also to sell in town, for I will grow the best alfalfa in all the valley."

The wise woman walked to the oldest daughter. "My daughter, why are your clearing your fields?"

This was not a good time to ask the oldest daughter, for she was angry. She had come across a whole part of the field that was packed with stones. She had hurt her back pulling them up, only to find more and more. "I am growing stones," she replied angrily. "They come up one after another." The oldest daughter bent again over her work.

The fall came, and the sister went out to harvest their crops.

The youngest sister had big, fat, ripe red chilies. They were better than any she had ever tasted.

The second sister harvested fields of green, thick-leafed alfalfa, lush and green.

The third sister sat in her field in tears of sadness. Her field was filled with stones. The more she tried to clear the stones, the more would appear. Her two sisters came up and comforted her. They could not understand her hardship

Meadowlark

A young boy raced out of the house early in the morning. He ran down the path to the forest. There he sat, still and listening. Wings rustled nearby, and then the meadowlark sang.

Everyday the song would pierce the air, lifting the animals of the forest out of their hiding places. They would all listen. The boy felt honored and special, for it was as if each morning the meadowlark waited for him to arrive before she sang.

The boy ran home. He raced into his mother's kitchen, grabbing at her skirt and calling out, "Mother, mother, you should have heard the meadowlark today. Oh, mother, it sang so beautifully and it waited, it waited for me. Oh, mother, come hear the song of the meadowlark."

The mother stood watching her son. She pulled her skirt out of his hands. "You who listen to birds, go, get out of here. Go down to the field and help your father with the work. Go!"

The boy then raced to his father. "Father, father, you should have been there! The meadowlark sang, again she sang, and the song this morning was more beautiful than the last. Oh, father, come with me to the forest, and let's listen to the meadowlark."

The father shook his head, but with a smile he said, "You come here and take this shovel. We have much work to do."

The two of them worked. The boy talked on and on about the meadowlark, and the father thought his own thoughts.

Men from other places were moving onto adjoining lands and taking over his water from the ditch. They were putting up fences and bringing in cattle that knocked down the fences and ate his crops.

The winter was poor. They hardly had any food. He watched their life grow poor.

One morning, the boy got up early and raced out to the forest. The meadowlark sang her bird could bring them some happiness. he came up with an idea.

He could trap the meadowlark and bring her home. He could feed her, and she would sing, bringing joy to the hearts of his hard-working parents.

The first day, the boy made a cage.

The second day, he took it to the forest and placed it in a tree.

The third day, he put food in the cage and waited.

The fourth day, he trapped the meadowlark.

He carried her home. He showed her to his mother who was busy. She put the cage up high, hanging from a wooden beam in the ceiling.

Every morning the boy ran to the forest and gathered berries and bugs to feed the meadowlark.

The meadowlark sang and sang.

The brutal cold winds that sting the soul blew from the north. The food was gone. Mother was up every day trying to fix something that would keep them alive. Father stoked the fire, hoping the wood would hold, and knowing it wouldn't. The boy went to the forest to gather what food he could find to feed the meadowlark.

The meadowlark sang, and whether they knew it or not, the song kept the family fed in spirit.

One morning as the boy raced for the door, his father scooped him up in his arms. "Where are you going in such a hurry every morning?"

The boy wriggled for his freedom. "I go to the forest to get food for the meadowlark."

The father dropped the boy on his feet. "What? You race through the cold snow, letting heat out of the house, to gather food for the bird?"

"The bird sings beautiful songs," said the boy.

The father reached up to the cage. He opened the cage and pulled out the meadowlark. He took the meadowlark in his

strong hands, and with one swift gesture, he broke her neck. The bird dropped from his hands to the clean dirt floor.

The boy stared at the dead bird in disbelief. Then, all at once, the father's eyes rolled back, his face went white, his hands started to shake, and the father fell to the floor, dead, next to the beautiful meadowlark.

Mother walked into the room. She gasped, and reached for her son. "What... what has happened?"

The boy turned to her. "Mother, my mother, we can live without food for a time, we can live without heat for a time, but we cannot live without the spirit of song."

Universal Mother

(Kagaba, South America)

The mother of our songs, the mother of all our seed, bore us in the beginning of things and so she is the mother of all types of men, the mother of all nations. She is the mother of the thunder, the mother of the streams, the mother of the trees and all things. She is the mother of the world and of the older brothers, the stone-people. She is the mother of the fruits of the earth and of all things. She is the mother of our youngest brothers, the French and the strangers. She is the mother of our dance paraphernalia, of all our temples and she is the only mother we possess. She is alone the mother of the fire and the Sun and the Milky Way... She is the mother of the rain and the only mother we possess. And she has left us a token in all temples... a token in the form of songs and dances.

She has no cult, and no prayers are really directed to her, but when the fields are sown and the priests chant their incantations the Kagaba say, "And then we think of the one and the only mother of the growing things, of the mother of all things." One prayer was recorded. "Our mother of the growing fields, our mother of the streams, will you have pity upon us? For to whom do we belong? Whose seeds are we? To our mother alone do we belong."

One Being Alone: Berkeley, 1969

Between my eyes and the moon
there were
365 nights on insomnia,
a small crack in my stomach,
the pain of knowing he was not mine,
the ray of light from a star,
a band of wakeful raccoons
looting the garbage cans of their treasure,
and my neighbor
who ran
crazed
at midnight
with nothing
to shelter him
from the full moon
but a pair of torn socks
and a straight jacket.

Lucha Corpi of Veracruz Mexico, tran. by Catherine Rodriguez-Nieto

Delicious Death

Memory: You were fifteen in the mountains,
your friends were going hunting,
you wanted to go.

Cold, autumn day-sky of steel and rifles, the shade of bullets.
We fought. I didn't want to let you go. And you stood up to me,
"My friends are going, their parents let them hunt, like am I some
kind of wimp or what, Mom..."
We walked into Thrifty's to buy the bullets,
you would use one of their rifles - I imagined
you being shot or shooting another eager boy/man.
"What you kill you eat, do you understand?"
I stared each word into your eyes. As you
walked away, I said to the Spirits, "Guard
this human who goes in search of
lives."
* * * * *
You brought home four small quail.
I took them saying "Dinner." I stuffed
them with rice, apples, baked them in garlic,
onions, wine. "Tonight, Mom?" "Yes, tonight."
I plucked the softest tail feathers and as you
showered, I placed them in your pillow case:
"May the thunder and the prey be one.
May the hunter eat and be eaten in time.
May the boy always be alive in the man."
* * * * *
We ate, mostly, in silence -
I felt you thinking, I just
killed this, what I'm chewing...
On the highest peaks the first
powder shines like the moon -
winter comes so quickly.
On your face soft, blonde hair (yes, this
son is a gringo) shines like manhood -
childhood leaves so quickly.
The wonder of the hunt is on my tongue,
I taste it - wild, tangy, reluctant -
this flesh feeds me well.
I light the candles and thank the quail
in a clear voice - I thank them for their
small bodies, their immense, winged souls.
"God, Mom, you're making me feel like a killer."
"Well, you are and so am I."
Swallowing, swallowing this delicious death.
-Alma Luz Villanueva

Day of the Dead

In the keen obsidian night, lost
On a lightless street in a nameless town
We ask directions in splintered Spanish
As a white dog howls and seems to vanish.

Cameras, tapes and pens in hand, blindly
We've come to see to hear and know
What's in our blood but not our head
The dance of ghosts that's never dead.

Across a ditch and mounds of earth, seething
Between the graves and flowering trees
The crowd reflects its buried past
In a riot of masks and stamping feet.

At the molten core of the shouting throng, twirling
To the eternal tattoo of the fleeting song,

Witches, demons and holy ghouls
Lean and lurch with laughing fools.

I ask the man beside me, reeling
What the mirrored masks are hiding
And feel the air outside my skin
Tug at something deep within.

You want to understand? he say, smiling
And offers me a drink as a grinning devil
Snags my eye, daring me to follow

I lift the cup of dreams and swallow.

-Guy Garcia (born in L.A.)

Finding Home

I have traveled north again,
to these gray skies
and empty doorways.
Fall, and I recognize
the rusted leaves descending
near the silence of your home.
You, a part of this strange
American landscape with its
cold dry winds,
the honks of geese and
the hardwood floors. It's more
familiar now than
the fluorescent rainbow on the overpass,
or the clatter of politicos in the corners,
or the palm fronds falling by the highway.
I must travel again, soon.

-Carolina Hospital (Cuban-American)

Post-Colonial Contemplations

1
The world grows smaller
and our faces larger
this strange proximity
makes us uneasy neighbors.
The centuries have held
like walls around us
the oceans -wet borderlands
have floated dark diseases
in the veins of confused decades.
Iron fists have punched holes
into the stunned face
of each bruised epoch.
Now we must face the other
now we must face ourselves.
The days like anger have disappeared
into the vanity of each second,
our time has been enslaved like this
for 500 years of alternating servitudes.
We have bowed before too many false gods
and our prayers have made slaves of us.

2
I have a thousand gods
inside me dancing
a goddess in every room,
I am a born again pagan
whirling the sins of the world
on my nose.
Jester, fool, mad victim
of inappropriate appropriations.
My acrobatic karmas bounce
like noisy children
off the walls of my inner cities
I run with echoes
that call me many names
I call my gods many names
we remain anonymous - however-
on a stage called the universe
and not even 500 can steal that away.
Not even 500 years can erode that spirit
or extinguish the namelessness
of each face that has faced the uncertainty of namelessness.
-by Naomi Quinonez (born in L.A.)

Aztec Thoughts

Although the reputation of the Aztecs is a little bit bloodthirsty, they did have a philosophy and poets. The image of flowers, death and song were among the most popular themes for them to contemplate, apparently songs constituted the medium of their education. I got these from a few books on Aztec philosophy a few years ago. These are all of pre-Spanish origin, recorded from tribal elders by a few monks.

Heaven

Where is the land?
The more I weep, the more I am afflicted,
the more my heart may not desire it,
have I not, when all is said, to go to the Land of the Mystery?

The Land of the Dead

Here on earth our hearts say:
Oh my friends, would that we were immortal,
Oh friends, where is the land in which one does not die?
Shall it be that I go?
Does my mother live there? Does my father live there?

Land of Mystery

In the Land of the Mystery... my heart shudders:
If only I had not to die, had not to perish....
I suffer and feel pain.

Dreams and Flowers

We come only to sleep,
We come only to dream:
It is not true, not true we come to live on the earth:
Spring grass are we become;
It comes, gloriously trailing, it puts out buds, our heart,
The flower of our bodies opens a few petals and withers!

Seeking

What do you Seek?
What does your mind seek?
Where is your heart?
If you give your heart to each and everything,
you lead it nowhere: you destroy your heart.
Can anything be found on earth?

Flowers

Every man on earth
carries with him some conviction;
but it is for a brief period only
that flowers of happiness pass before our eyes.

The Wise Man

A stout torch that does not smoke.
A perforated mirror.
He studies the black and red manuscripts,
He himself is writing and wisdom.
He is the path, the true way for others.
He directs people and things.
He is a guide in human affairs.
The wise man is careful like a physician.
He preserves tradition.
He follows the path of truth.
Teacher of the truth, he never ceases to admonish.
He makes wise the countenances of others,
To them he gives a face;
He leads them to develop it.
He opens their ears and enlightens them.
He shows them their path.
One depends on him.
He puts a mirror before others;
He makes them prudent, cautious;

He causes a face to appear in them.
He attends to things;
He regulates their path,
He arranges and commands.
He applies his light to the world.
He knows what is above us,
And in the region of the dead.
He is a serious man.
Everyone is comforted by him, corrected, taught.
Thanks to him people humanize their will.
He comforts the heart,
He comforts the people,
He helps, gives remedies, heals everyone.

Why Do We Live?

Is it true that on earth one lives?
Not forever on earth, only a little while.
Though jade it may be, it breaks;
Though gold it may be, it is crushed;
Though it be quetzal plumes, it shall not last.
Not forever on earth, only a little while.

American Wisdom:

What Do We Mean

When You Say God?

We've already heard from many countries and famous writers about what religion and God is, but now let's look at what the average American says about God. Perhaps as Druids, this is a question that we should be asking our neighbors and friends more often. These quotes are taken from a lovely little book called, "What Do We Mean When We Say God?" compiled by Deidre Sullivan, of Cader Books/ Doubleday, 1990. ISBN 0-385-41132-4. Ms. Sullivan surveyed a random portion of the population, by inviting requests in a survey, and by actually talking to people on her travels. Here are her results.

Hey!

God created us in his image. Since the, human beings have been trying to create God in their image. The word 'god' comes from the Anglo-Saxon. It means 'one who is greeted.' God is the mystery of life we greet. Experiencing God is like saying 'Hey!' Sometimes we experience the mystery of God in a flower, in another person, in ourselves. The mystery expresses itself in everything. When we recognize it and try to put a word on it, it's 'Hey.' -Daniel Martin, 42, Catholic Priest, Rye, New York

Back to the Basics

Physics doesn't leave any room for magic- there can't be an omnipotent being pulling our strings and determining our future. Any activity that is designed to appease (or beg favors) from this mythical being is probably not productive. Instead of using religion as an excuse for not going to a friend's wedding, declaring a war, or persecuting someone, let's concentrate on what God really is: doing something nice for another person with no hope of being repaid. Taking care of nature. Being nice for no good reason. Never rationalizing behavior that hurts another. Always giving more than you get. That's my God. -Seth Godin, 30, Video Producer, Mt. Vernon, New York.

Our Own God

My opinion of God is that everyone sees God in their own way. I see God as being black because I'm black. In the same breath, a white person might see God as being white. I have no objection because we both have the same God, we just see him differently. -Vernon Hodge, 15, Bronx, New York

Where is God? Go and Look!

I believe that you can call God by any name because we firmly believe that there is no name which is not God's name. All sounds have been created by God. So any sound which is created should name Him, should address Him, should be His name. The rustling of the leaves, the sound of the ocean and singing of the birds, all glorify God.

God has given us freedom to do our own thinking and to ask our own questions. He in effect says listen to all that I have said, but make your own decision. He encourages us to ask questions. That's why there are so many branches of Hinduism. We are allowed to choose our own path and there is so much we can choose from. I look at the whole world of scripture, not just Hindu or Muslim or Christian ones. I believe God is in everything. There are many instances of where God has spoken. -Gopeenath Galagali, 29, Hindu Preacher, Nashville TN

Problems with God

There's a polluted aspect to the word 'God.' In our culture, we're surrounded by either a self-centered secularism or just crazy religion. You've either got the secular humanists who think God talk is garbage and that it's silly to raise the issue. Or you get the crazy people who think they've go God in their hip pocket and that God is going to do people in. So there are a lot of reasons why the word 'God' has a brutalizing effect on people. And here I try and talk about God as that boundless mystery and words like 'lover' and 'friend' and 'mercy' come to mind. Most people don't want to believe in God at all. They don't want faith. They want certainty. -Alan Jones, 50, Dean, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, CA

Islam's Attractiveness

My goal in life is to worship Allah. That is my reason for being. Muslims believe that God is actively involved in the world; therefore, Muslims should be actively involved in the world as a reflection of that worship. Everything I do has to connote worship: my marriage, my conduct, my work - even talking on the phone is part of worship. Islam really expands the notion of worship. It's not just ritual or prayer - although rituals are important (praying five times a day, fasting, etc..) But every act you do should connote worship because you should always be in remembrance of Allah. I think this simplicity and holism is what attracts people to Islam. -Amer Haleem, 32, Editor of Islamic Horizons, Oak Lawn, IL

A Glass of Water's Travels

My Church is the church of the eternally fascinated. Because the way it looks to me is that God is infinite. Religions don't hold up under the light of scrutiny so I try to be like the swan who separates milk from water. I just chuck the rest. It is all really one. You take a glass of water, that water has passed through Abraham Lincoln's body, Hitler's body, a gazelle in Africa's body. We're all one. Past, present, and future exist simultaneously; if I didn't blow my nose this morning, then Jesus couldn't have been crucified. It's all inextricably bound. -Anthony Adams, 37, Screenwriter, Sherman Oaks, CA

Sleeping Watchman

I have an image of god as a guy in high top sneakers with his feet up on a desk with his head turned away from the monitor that's keeping track of our universe -it does seem that he has his attention elsewhere. -Fred Navarro, 24, Student, Washington D.C.

Lesson from Bali

Because our prayers before dinner were silent, I thought, for the longest time, that silence was God and God was silence. When I sat there with my head bowed in silence, I felt like I was sitting in God.

As I grew up, I got a lot more talkative and longed for a spoken dialogue with God, but I had this deep feeling that there was no language powerful enough to penetrate God's great, silent, timeless indifference.

That's when I began to think of God in terms of lesser local gods or guardians. They are beings slightly more powerful

than us that try their imperfect best when asked in a heartfelt and sincere way, at divine intervention. Now when I pray, I pray to a small Balinese icon that was blessed and given to me in Bali by a Balinese shaman. I always speak out loud and begin by asking for the easement of world pain, then zero in on the more personal, particular needs. When I pray, I have a clear image of that jolly, laughing shaman who gave the icon. He had a wonderful gold-toothed laugh and the memory of his laughter is as healing for me as the touch of any lesser god could be.

It's like what Martin Dysart, the psychiatrist in Equus, meant when he said, 'Look. Life is only comprehensible through a thousand local Gods.' -Spalding Gray, 48, writer/performer, NYC

Aka-Ba-Da-Dia

We believe in one Supreme Being, Aka-Ba-Da-Dia, the first maker, the creator of all thing. The Creator is kind of a mystical being who works through animals or plants, through nature, the wind, the air, fire, water, and the earth. When we seek a vision, we go on a vision quest. We'll fast for maybe three or four days and pray for guidance at night. This is how we get close to the Creator. By meditating we listen to what He has to give us. His interpreter comes in the form of an animal or in the form of wind or rain, thunder, or even a bird. This personal messenger talks to you and guides you. We never see the Creator Himself, but we learn His wishes. This is the way that the Medicine Man reaches spirituality, by communicating with the messenger. -Dan Old Elk, 50, Crow Sundance Chief, Harden, Montana

Together in Church

I think God is spirit, and part of the message of Jesus that's really appealing to me is that spirit lives both outside of us and inside of us and unites us to other people. I think the reason I go to church Sunday after Sunday is that is compelling and moving to be with a group of people in that way. We have something in common-that we really want to learn how to love each other better. There is something useful about having a common framework of prayer. It seems to sometimes help smooth over life's bumps. -Ellen Schell, 37, Nurse, San Francisco, CA

Women and God

As a woman, I'm aware of the specific and special ways women have an opportunity to know God. In a unique way, we as women come closer to the creative process in childbirth than any other species. As a woman, carrying another human life and nurturing that life for nine months in my body and literally putting my life on the line in the delivery process - as only women do - is an experience that is closer to God than any one I know. -May Cunningham-Agee, 38, Exec. Dir., The Nurturing Network, Boise, ID

Difficulties with God

For me, growing up in a Hasidic family, the central question was the Holocaust. My family - my aunts, uncles, parents - were survivors. For me, talking about God was always a problem because I not only had to accept a God, but I had to accept a God that let my cousins get gassed to death. I found this extremely difficult. I'd go to synagogue and sit next to one person who didn't believe in God because he'd lost his family in the concentration camps. When I go older, he told me, 'Look, I come here because this is what I'm familiar with, but I cannot believe in a God that let my children be gassed.' And the other man tells me that after losing his children he has to believe in God - otherwise life would be pointless. So any discussion of theology is a discussion about a God that was able to stand by while His people were tortured. I stopped having an easy time praying and believing in any kind of traditional God when I was eighteen. While there might not be a God now, perhaps there will be one in the future. -Joshua Halberstam, 43, Philosophy Prof. NYU, NYC.

A Hard Job

I think God does love us and I think He or She has a great compassion, but I believe that God has some faults just like everybody else. If He were all-loving and all-forgiving, we wouldn't be living in the world we live in right now and there would be peace. There wouldn't be fighting. There wouldn't be hunger or anything like that. I think God is overwhelmed by what's going on. -Jacki Maher, 20, Student, Univ of Mont., Missoula

Consider Allah

I have to ask then 'Who's Allah?' It's easier for me to understand more about Allah when I contemplate his 99 attributes. First, He is the 'Source of Mercy.' So I think of the most merciful, kind, and considerate people I can possibly think of. I know that their mercy is just a fraction of what Allah has. Allah is also the Compassionate One, the Holy One, The Ruler.... Again, what I can imagine is only a fraction of His Essence. -Jeanette Hablallah, 40, Teacher, Lombard, Ill

The Hidden Sun

I believe in the sun even when it isn't shining. I believe in love even when I am alone. I believe in God even when He is silent. -Jewish refugee, WW2, Poland

Convenient Invention

It seems to me that God is a convenient invention of the human mind. We are aware of our own ignorance and so we find refuge in a hypothetical being who knows everything. We are aware of our own weakness and so we find refuge in a hypothetical being who is all-powerful and who will take care of us out of a generalized benevolence. By imagining a God, then, human beings avoid having to do anything about their own ignorance and helplessness and this saves a lot of trouble. -Isaac Asimov, 70, Writer, NYC

Grammatical God

In linguistic terms, I think of God as a verb, not a noun. I think of Jesus as a metaphor, a mythic image, as well as an historical person who had profound inner experiences. For me, worship of Jesus as God is a form of idolatry. It's getting stuck on the image, instead of what lie beyond. And though images stir the memory of God, God, to me, is a mystery that is unspeakable and beyond image. -Joe Wakefield, 45, Jungian Analyst, Austin, TX

Questioning

When people say not to question God because it's wrong, they're wrong. It never hurts to question something we don't know. All you are doing is wanting to know God in your heart. -Eva Frances Santos, 15, NYC

A Sine Wave

Once I dreamt what it must feel like to be God. At the time, I had been doing a lot of work with electronic music. That night I dreamt that I was a sine wave. I actually felt what it was like to be this rather abstract energy. It later occurred to me that I could have just as easily become a daisy or a door or a rock or a cat. I realized that being unencumbered by a human body, you have a whole different perception of things. This is where I muck it up a bit because now when I talk about it I'm interpreting the experience as 'Brian' would. When I was that sine wave, I was not tied to a 'body consciousness.' I was just a sine wave, pure and simple. That's what I think God is. Energy that is totally conscious of being everything - a sine wave, a speck of dust, a thought, you, me, whatever -but all at the same time. -Brian Mitchell, 32, Actor and musician, Sherman Oaks, Ca

God the Creator

God, the creator of all. The One who listens and responds to our every request, but does not receive the same courtesy from us. He must be merciful because this world still survives... in spite of itself. -Margaret Bradley, 39, Contract Admin., Greenbelt, Maryland

A word talking about God is very much like a finger pointing at the moon. It's not he moon; it's just a finger. A 1000 names exist in Vishnu Hinduism, and 99 in Islam and all of them are the names of the unnamable. Each name represents a different facet of God and when you put them all together they still don't represent the totality.. It is not something that can be conceptualized. God is not a concept. It is beyond concept. Concepts just point in the direction. Like a diving board - you walk to the end of it then you dive in. In that sense you can't know God. You can be one with God or merge with God or know facets of God. It's the edge - where the form and the formless meet. -Ram Dass, 59, Spiritual Teacher, San Anselmo, CA

True Friend

I'm not a person who reads the Bible day and night. I don't go to church every Sunday. To some people that means my faith is not strong, but it is. I love God. People think to have a strong faith you have to worship God. Sure, I worship God, but not in the way you think. He is a friend who I tell things to, like things I won't tell anyone else. I feel He is the best pal someone could have. When I move, He is always there to talk to. If all my other friends I like are mad at me, He won't be He's a true friend who I love. -Shannon Person, 13, Woodstock, Ill

Serving

You know, I hear so many people pray that we need to serve the poor and serve the hungry and serve the lonely and serve the depressed. But we can't do that until we love the poor, and love the depressed, and love the lonely. We need to love. Christ came to Earth and who did He work with? He worked with the poor and the lepers. I'm not Christ but I have Christ in my heart. People ask me how I can work with AIDS patients. Who did Christ work with? -Jim Sichko, 22, Student, Orange, TX

Life is an Offering

Living is knowing God. I can only conclude that all life and death is miraculous. I am awed by it. I feel humbled by it. Everything I do in life is an offering. An essential awareness of one's life process is the worship of God - because that means giving up concern about what other people have though, are thinking, or will think. The elimination of fear is a process that takes place with the growth and awareness of the miraculous nature of life and death. And so, minding your own business as intensely as possible is an act of worship. -Olga Bloom, 70, Barge Music, Brooklyn, NY

No Church Can

We are missing the boat if we think Jesus took away our sins or can single-handedly save us. The world seems to be full of people who are like ships without rudders. The orthodox churches (I was a member for over fifty years, with strict attendance at Mass) have missed what Jesus taught. We are responsible for our own salvation. No church can save or condemn us. -John A. Devine, 58, retired cartographer, St. Louis, MO

YHWH

The traditional Hebrew word 'YHWH' has no vowels and is conventionally translated as 'Lord' in Jewish prayer books. IN Hebrew, people usually- in order to avoid pronouncing these letters - use the euphemism 'Adonai.' We felt very uncomfortable with that understanding of how to deal with those four letters. In translation, 'Adonai' is transcendent, 'up there', domination-oriented- rather than immanent, community -focused, and androgynous. One day I discovered a powerful and authentic way of dealing with the four letters and that was to pronounce it without any vowel sounds. The word came out like Yyyyhhhhwwwwhhh - just like a breathing sound - which I realized was of course authentically and correctly the 'real' name of God. Breathing is a powerful metaphor for God. God is truly the breath of life. -Arthur Waskow, 56, Shalom Center, Philadelphia, Penn

Towards What?

I'm struggling with what God means to me and I've never felt so alone. Sometimes I wish that everything would just resolve itself or dissolve. My confidence in everything goes down. I feel a lot less supported. Some people ask me, 'Are you religious?' and I say, 'No, but I'm spiritual.' But then when I'm alone, I wonder, 'Spiritual towards what?' -Margaret Kim, 20 Clark Univ., Worchester, MA

In Each Other

In the craft, one of the most important things we do is see God in each other. It's a very difficult task. But I think that is one of the most extraordinary things a human being can do, to see God and Goddess in other human beings and to form partnerships and relationships based on that vision. Deb. Lipp, 28, Wiccan Priestess, Dumont, NJ, RDNA member

In the Flowers

When we see the perfection in a child or lover or friend and when we let all the barriers and all the walls down, we're there in God together. Go is the flowers, the trees, everything. It's all creation - as the Native Americans would say, 'the winged, the four-legged, all that flies, and all that swims.' God is completely forgiving and completely accepting, never ever judging. I sometimes have this feeling of God waiting in joyful anticipation of what we're going to do next on this journey back home into

that place of truth- which is God. -Karla LaVoie, 44, Educator, Asbury Park, NJ

God is Living

A long time ago, when I was a nurse, I would see God in other people through their bravery, their suffering, and through their determination to live, -knowing that they had a fatal disease or knowing that their child had a fatal disease. Also, I often see God when families interact with each other - when they are forgiving and loving and good to each other. That's God. -Joan Stiff, 58, Mayor, Woodside, CA

God is Potential

God is potential - if I want to draw on it. God works through an urge to grow, an urge toward perfection. I see what I call God working in people. When someone thinks something through and says, 'I've just got to do that better,' or 'This is what I need to look at,' that the growth principle in people, being the best you can be. That's God at work... The spirit of God embodied in a human being is full of compassion; its vulnerable to hurt, any way, any where. What does it mean to be close to God in the way that Jesus was close to God? What is the Christ spirit I personally experience? The spirit of God moves me, touches me. It's the spirit at the growing edge of my life. This has to do with being utterly true to yourself, with being human and not trying to 'be holy.' To use words as a litmus test was not what Jesus had in mind. To say that you have to believe in Christ in order to get to heaven is another crucifixion of what Christ was all about. -Marty Walton, 53, General Secretary, Friend General Conference, Philadelphia, Penn

The Deer God

When I was younger, I had a strong aversion to the use of the word 'God.' In fact I avoided it and I avoided people who spoke about God. I attended a powerful workshop with a Huichol Indian shaman who was 104 years old. He introduced me to his culture's Deer God. I got really intrigued with this Deer God and it sort of got to me on a personal level. After the workshop, I bought a bag from the shaman which had been used to gather peyote and this bag had deer woven into it. At home alone, I began getting image of the deer, and at the same time, live deer started wandering into my back yard. I meditated every day and began talking to the Deer God. Very slowly, over time, I found myself talking to the Deer God, saying "Deer God' this and 'Deer God' that. One day I noticed that I was saying 'Dear God.' It was so powerful that I had to laugh. It was like I tricked myself into the use of that 'word.' It snuck it the back door. I've been in love with God ever since. -Martha Powers, Librarian, Sherwood, OR

Face of God

It seems to me that our understanding of what or who God is proceeds or happens simultaneously as we understand who we are. I don't think we learn one without the other. So as our own selves begin to emerge and we begin to understand the self in all it s parameters - as deeply as that means - then the 'face of God' is likely to emerge. -Laurie Sackler, 39, Housewife, Brooklyn, NY

Hindu Ritualism

Hinduism, the way I perceived it to be when I was a little girl growing up in India, involved a lot of ritualism. I had no patience with it, and it had no meaning for me since I did not understand the meaning of and the reasoning behind all the ritual. In our house, half the day was spent on rituals - God this and God that. So I sort of got turned off. Years later, after I got married and had children, I realized that there is a God. The beauty and mystery of Nature opened my eyes to this. Then away from the din of my family and all the rituals, the gurus started to make some sense. They are superior human being s who have attained levels of perfection which I certainly haven't or will not attain for a while. They are God's messengers, here to teach us how to achieve oneness with God and overcome the cycle of rebirth. -Uma K. Desai, 49, Financial consultant, Lawrenceville, NJ

Carpentry

God teaches me lessons during the workday. Being in construction, I've cleared lots, done electrical work, built roofs, painted. Clearing the lot can be boring and time-consuming. But all that foundation work was to be done, not only on the job but in our hearts. I've worked on projects where the foundation wasn't level. And once you get to the second story, you've got to go back and make all these adjustments. I really see that God wants me to take the time to build a strong foundation for Him in my heart. -Jim Ryan, 24, Carpenter, Panama City, FL

A Map

I think that we've all been given a sort of map to a city. One person lives to the north. One person live to the east. Nobody lives in exactly the same place. Well, if everyone was given the exact same map to get to that same point everyone but one person would be extremely lost. As we get closer to a sort of universal harmony and as we get more in tune, I think the squabbling stops, because then everybody agrees, 'Oh yeah, I understand your map.' -Kort Falkenberg iii, 37, Film and Video Director, North Hollywood, CA

A Hologram

It's like a hologram. God is the spirit behind every one of us - although we think of ourselves as separate beings. Like a hologram, His total image is in each of us. Each fractionated part still shows a picture of the whole. -John Gale, 44, Mechanical Engineer, Columbia, SC

John Barleycorn

When I talk about God, I'm usually talking about John Barleycorn, the Green God, the spirit of all vegetation. He's the Jack in the Green. He comes up in the springtime and grows wise in the summer. He's reaped in the fall and we bake His body into bread and eat it and this is the origin of the Christian Eucharist as well as many Pagan festivals and even the song "John Barleycorn.' When I speak of the Goddess, I don't mean it in the monotheistic sense. I realize that a lot of women's spirituality groups have basically just simply used the word 'Goddess' to replace 'God.' To me, that kind of Goddess is just God in drag. -Morning Glory Zell, 41, Histologist, Ukiah, CA

One Size Fits All

The marvelous thing for me about God is that the God concept is something that works for people regardless of what stage of spiritual development or inner knowing they are at. The simplest person with very little capabilities or intelligence can have a concept of God and can the person who is as enlightened as we can imagine. The God concept is as multilevel as you can imagine. This is not rue of other notions in our world.

God is a very personal thing- which does not mean He is a person. It means that each person has the opportunity to devise his own notion of what is God to him. That's sacred. None of us has the right to take that away from anyone else - which is to say that if we do, we are transgressing on something pretty heavy. -William Kautz, 65, Exec. Dir. Center for Applied Intuition, Fairfax, CA

Where is the Water?

The Jewish notion of God is not really explicit, perhaps because we do not believe that God ever took human form or walked the earth. When I try to speak about God, I think it is often to share my perplexity. I often cite the parable from a children's textbook about a little fish. One day he is swimming close to the surface when he hears somebody talking about the water - only he doesn't know what is meant by water. He wonders: 'Where is the water?' So he swims around and asks all the different fish, 'Where is the water?' but they don't know. Finally he finds the wisest fish in the ocean, who says, 'The water is all around you. The water is inside you. The water travels through you.' But the little fish just laughs and swims off. To this day he is still asking, 'Where is the water?' -Robert Kirschner, 39, Rabbi, San Francisco, CA

A Fish out of Water

Fish in the ocean don't doubt its existence; they live in it. God is like that, the ground of all beings, being itself. A fish out of water dies. A man apart from God ceases to be man. He may continue to breathe but he is dead. -William Graham Cole, 72, Educator, Chicago, Ill

Unlisted Phone Number

Trying to find God is like looking for an unlisted phone number - only much worse. People who aren't insiders don't have his number. They feel he is inaccessible. At least with the telephone company, you can call and rant and rave and invent a family emergency and they might give you the number. But no one can tell you how to find God. There is definitely a greater force that can screw people over, a main guy who controls the time clock. Also, God is certainly a man. It's a man's world. He's set it up so maleness controls. Don't misunderstand me. There's an advantage to being female. Females can see through maleness. But nature is wild and dangerous. It's very male to be aggressive and make people feel threatened. Human interaction is what softens and smoothes and that comes from women. -Marian Salzman, 31, Media Executive, NYC

The Creator

We greet the sun because the sun gives us warmth and life. Somebody along the way said, 'These guys are worshipping the sun.' But we're not worshipping the sun, we just honor the sun by greeting it in the morning and we pray to the Creator. The Creator created the sun, the moon, the stars, Mother Earth. We have just one Creator. Though the Creator has no gender, we often refer to him as Great Spirit God or Grandfather.

The Creator put things here for a purpose and that is why we respect the plants, the trees, and even the rock that's lying on the ground. Our forefathers don't teach us that the tree is there for the leave s to give off oxygen. It is up to us to see why the tree is there. In our teachings, they simply teach us to respect these things and to respect other people and other people's space. The Creator cannot judge you. The Creator is there to guide you. But we have the 'other place' and that's where your spirit goes when your body is returned to the earth. And you don't have to be good to get there. It's just a place you are going to go. -Larson Medicine Horse, 50, Chief Deputy Sheriff and Crow Sundance Chief, Hardin, Montana

God's Ways

I know little about His or Her form, but a great deal about God's ways. God reveals Himself or Herself through laws of physics, chemistry, and medicine. These are mysterious forces on which people can depend. As there are physical law, there are moral laws too. God is revealed in this sphere as well. When one finds peace by making a commitment to the eternal values of peace, justice, and love, one understands a second dimension of God. -Heslip Lee, 68, American Baptist Minister, Cedartown, GA

There is a God

When I think of God, I look at living things. My idea of God has grown as I have grown and each experience brings new insight. Seeing the immensity and awe-inspiring power of nature itself always forces me to reconsider the origins and meaning of 'existence.' Thunder and lightning, wind, earthquakes, and turbulent waters instantly evoke a sense of unfathomable power. But sometimes the simplest 'little' things contain equal amounts of God. Babies' fingernails, bugs, popsicle sticks, smiles, tears... it's all how you look at it. 'God' is a way of seeing. God is the way you live your life and the realization that you are living. -Keith Haring, 31, Artist, NYC

Short Thoughts

The power to accept what God means for me is recognizing that God is the Lord of time when my idea of timing doesn't agree with his. -Lillian Dvorak, 55, Secretary, Berwyn, Ill

God is from whom we may not get what we want, but do find peace with what we get. -Marilyn D. White, 58, Jeweler, Chicago, Ill

God is a psychological phenomenon. It doesn't make any difference whether or not God exists because the effect of belief on people's minds is the same. -Kendra Wilson, 17, Student, Harvard, Cambridge, MA

God is caring like a mother and strong and strict like a father. So God is both mother and father. -Jason Hernandez, 17, Bronx, NY

God is all that is god. I don't find God in a church any more than in a restaurant or shopping center. God is a kind word, a helping hand, forgiveness. -Joanne Stevenson, 56, Salesperson, La Grange, Ill.

If I am the sail, God is the wind. If I am the cloud, God is the sky. If I am the roots, God is the tree. If I am the thought, God is the manifestation. If I am the sound, God is the word. -Bryce Bond, 61, TV Host, NYC

Nobody talks as constantly about God as those who insist that there is no God. -Heywood Broun

God is like the light I turn on in my room. He lets me see what's there. -8 year old girl, Princeton, NJ

God is sometimes forgotten in man's conquest for fortune and fame, ignored as another human or drug is relied on, often blamed for man's frailties, denied as man worships himself. In a moment of darkness, man cries out for help and comfort - 'Oh God!' and in that moment, man acknowledges that presence of one more powerful than he. -Geri Guiney, 47, Nurse, Chicago IL

African American Proverbs

Most of these will be pretty familiar to many Americans, but as a collection they may remind you of what you already know, perhaps seen in a new light. Taken from a interesting folk archive on the meaning and situational usage of proverbs, "African-American Proverbs in Context" by Swami Anand Prahlad, ISBN 0-87805-890-7.

One monkey don't stop no circus.

In hard times, a monkey will eat red pepper, when he don't care for black.

Everybody wants to go to heaven, but nobody wants to die.

God takes care of drunk, fools and children.

A cow that's black and ugly, often has the sweetest milk.

I may be getting old, but I've got young-fashioned ways.

You mix ink with water and it's bound to turn black.

Where there's a will, there's a way.

Only a squeaking wheel gets the grease.

You never miss the water 'til your well runs dry.

Still waters run deep.

It'll all come out in the wash.

An empty wagon rattles.

Let every tub sit on its bottom. (don't help the lazy)

Don't trouble trouble 'til trouble troubles you.

If you fool with trash, it'll get in your eyes.

As the tree falls, there it must lay.

Talk is cheap.

Different strokes for different folks.

The straw that broke the camel's back.

Rolling stones gather no moss.

A stitch in time saves nine.

What you sow you must reap.

If the shoe fits, wear it.

Nothing comes to a sleeper, but a dream.

When in Rome, do as the Romans do.

Seeing is believing.

A watched pot never boils.

The pot calling the kettle black.

Don't buy a pig in a bag.

A thin pan heats faster than a thick one.

Don't cast pearls before swine.

Don't write a check with your mouth that your behind can't cash.

Money talks.

Look before you leap.

Study long, study wrong.

A leopard doesn't change his spots.

People in glass house shouldn't throw stones.

Don't change horses in midstream.

You can send a fool to college, but you can't make him think.

You catch more bees with honey than vinegar.

Two heads are better than one.

Don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.

All that glitters is not gold.

The grass is always greener on the other side.

What's good for the goose is good for the gander.

Every shut eye ain't sleep, and every grinning mouth ain't happy.

Don't put all your eggs in one basket.

Let sleeping dogs lie.

If you lie down with dogs, you'll get up with fleas.

You can't teach an old dog new tricks.

You've got to crawl before you walk.

Every crow thinks her crow is the blackest.

Why buy a cow when you can get the milk for free?

Too many cooks spoil the pot.

The bigger they come, the harder they fall.

Don't count your chickens before they hatch.

Charity begins at home.

There's more than one way to skin a cat.

You can't have your pie and eat it too.

New brooms sweep clean, but old ones know where the dirt is.

Never burn your bridges behind you.

Don't cross the bridge before you get to it.

Can't get blood out of a turnip.

Don't judge a book by its cover.

Beauty is only skin deep, but ugly is to the bone.

Early bird catches the worm.

The blind leading the blind.

Blood is thicker than water.

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

But even if a bird fly up in the sky, it must come down sometime.

Birds of a feather flock together.

You made your bed hard, now you have to sleep in it.

What goes around comes around.

Actions speak louder than words.

Bury the hatchet and unearth friendship.

Tales from the South

Uncle Remus Teaches a Child

One evening recently, the lady whom Uncle Remus calls "Miss Sally" missed her little seven-year-old. Making search for him through the house and through the yard, she heard the sound of voices in the old man's cabin, and, looking through the window, saw the child sitting by Uncle Remus. His head rested against the old man's arm, and he was gazing with an expression of the most intense interest into the rough, weather-beaten face, that beamed so kindly upon him. This is what "Miss Sally" heard:

"Bimeby, one day, atter Brer Fox bin doin' all dat he could fer ter ketch Brer Rabbit, en Brer Rabbit bein doin' all he could fer ter keep 'im fum it, Brer Fox say to hisse'f dat he'd put up a game on Brer Rabbit, en he ain't mo'n got de wuds out'n his mouf tewl Brer Rabbit came a lopin' up de big road, lookin' des ez plump, en ez fat, en ez sassy ez a Moggin hoss in a barley-patch.

"Hol' on dar, Brer RAbbit,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"'I ain't got time, Ber Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, sorter mendin' his licks.

"'I wanter have some confab wid you, Brer Rabbit,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"'All right, Brer Fox, but you better holler fum whar you stan.' I'm monstus full er fleas dis mawnin',' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

"'I seed Brer B'ar yistdiddy, 'sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'en he sorter rake me over de coals kaze you en me ain't make frens en live naberly, en I tole 'im dat I'd see you.'

"Den Brer Rabbit scratch one year wid his off hinefoot sorter jub'usly, en den he ups en sez, sezee:

"'All a settin', Brer Fox. Spose'n you drap roun' ter-morrer en take dinner wid me. We ain't got no great doin's at our house, but I speck de ole 'oman en de chilluns kin sorter scarmble roun' en git up sump'n fer ter stay yo' stummick.'

"'I'm 'gree'ble, Brer Rabbit,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"'Den I'll 'pen' on you,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

"Nex' day, Mr. Rabbit an' Miss Rabbit got up soom, 'fo' day, en raided on a gyarden like Miss Sally's out dar, en got some cabbiges, en some roas'n years, en some sparrer-grass, en dey fix up a smashin' dinner. Bimeby one er de little Rabbits, playin' ou t in de back-yard, come runnin' in hollerin', 'Oh, ma! oh, ma! I seed Mr. Fox a comin'!'

En den Brer Rabbit he tuck de chilluns by der years en make um set down, en den him and Miss Rabbit sorter dally roun' waitin' for Brer Fox. En dey keep on waitin' for Brer Fox. En dey keep on waitin', but no Brer Fox ain't come. Atter 'while Brer Rabbit goes to de do', easy like, en peep out, en dar, stickin' fum behime de cornder, wuz de tip-een' er Brer Fox tail. Den Brer Rabbit shot de do' en sot down, en put his paws behime his years en begin fer ter sing:

"'De place wharbouts you spill de grease,

Right dar you er boun' ter slide,

An' whar you fin' a bunch er ha'r,

You'll sholy fine de hide.'

"Nex' day, Brer Fox sont word by Mr. Mink, en skuze hisse'f kaze he wuz too sick fer ter come, en he ax Brer Rabbit fer ter come en take dinner wid him, en Brer Rabbit say he wuz 'gree'ble.

Bimeby, w'en de shadders wuz at der shortes', Brer Rabbit he sorter brush up en sa'nter down ter Brer Fox's house, en w'en he got dar, he haer somebody groanin', en he look in de do' an dar he see Brer Fox settin' up in a rockin'-cheer all wrop up wid flannil, en he look mighty weak. Brer Rabbit look all roun', he did, but he ain't see no dinner. De dish-pan wuz settin' on de table, en close by wuz a kyarvin' knife.

"'Look like you gwintee have chicken fer dinner, Brer Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

"'Yes, Brer Rabbit, deyer nice, en fresh, en tender, 'sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"Den Brer Rabbit sorter pull hiss mustarsh, en say: 'You ain't got no calamus root, is you, Brer Fox? I done got so now dat I can't eat no chicken 'ceppin she's seasoned up wid calamus root.'

En wid dat Brer Rabbit lipt out er de do' and dodge 'mong the bushes, en sot dar watchin' for Brer Fox; en he ain't watch long, nudder, kaze Brer Fox flung off de flannil en crope out er de house en got whar he could cloze in on Brer Rabbit, en bimeby Brer Rabbit holler out: 'Oh, Brer Fox! I'll des put yo' calamus root out yer on dish yer stump. Better come git it while hit's fresh,' and wid dat Brer Rabbit gallop off home. En Brer Fox ain't never kotch 'im yit, en w'at's mo', honey, he ain't gwineter."

The Wonderful Tar Baby Story

"Didn't the fox never catch the rabbit, Uncle Remus?" asked the little boy the next evening.

"He come mighty nigh it, honey, sho's you born--Brer Fox did. One day atter Brer Rabbit fool 'im wid dat calamus root, Brer Fox went ter wuk en got 'im some tar, en mix it wid some turkentime, en fix up a contrapshun w'at he call a Tar-Baby, en he tuck dish yer Tar-Baby en he sot 'er in de big road, en den he lay off in de bushes fer to see what de news wuz gwine ter be. En he didn't hatter wait long, nudder, kaze bimeby here come Brer Rabbit pacin' down de road--lippity-clippity, clippity -lippity--dez ez sassy ez a jay-bird. Brer Fox, he lay low. Brer Rabbit come prancin' 'long twel he spy de Tar-Baby, en den he fotch up on his behime legs like he wuz 'stonished. De Tar Baby, she sot dar, she did, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"`Mawnin'!' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee - `nice wedder dis mawnin',' sezee.

"Tar-Baby ain't sayin' nuthin', en Brer Fox he lay low.

"`How duz yo' sym'tums seem ter segashuate?' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

"Brer Fox, he wink his eye slow, en lay low, en de Tar-Baby, she ain't sayin' nuthin.'

"'How you come on, den? Is you deaf?' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. 'Kaze if you is, I kin holler louder,' sezee.

"Tar-Baby stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"'You er stuck up, dat's w'at you is,' says Brer Rabbit, sezee, 'en I;m gwine ter kyore you, dat's w'at I'm a gwine ter do,' sezee.

"Brer Fox, he sorter chuckle in his stummick, he did, but Tar-Baby ain't sayin' nothin.'

"'I'm gwine ter larn you how ter talk ter 'spectubble folks ef hit's de las' ack,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. 'Ef you don't take off dat hat en tell me howdy, I'm gwine ter bus' you wide open,' sezee.

"Tar-Baby stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"Brer Rabbit keep on axin' 'im, en de Tar-Baby, she keep on sayin' nothin', twel present'y Brer Rabbit draw back wid his fis', he did, en blip he tuck 'er side er de head. Right dar's whar he broke his merlasses jug. His fis' stuck, en he can't pull loose. De tar hilt 'im. But Tar-Baby, she stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"`Ef you don't lemme loose, I'll knock you agin,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, en wid dat he fotch 'er a wipe wid de udder han', en dat stuck. Tar-Baby, she ain'y sayin' nuthin', en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"`Tu'n me loose, fo' I kick de natal stuffin' outen you,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, but de Tar-Baby, she ain't sayin' nuthin.' She des hilt on, en de Brer Rabbit lose de use er his feet in de same way. Brer Fox, he lay low. Den Brer Rabbit squall out dat ef de Tar-Baby don't tu'n 'im loose he butt 'er cranksided. En den he butted, en his head got stuck. Den Brer Fox, he sa'ntered fort', lookin' dez ez innercent ez wunner yo' mammy's mockin'-birds.

"`Howdy, Brer Rabbit,' sez Brer Fox, sezee. `You look sorter stuck up dis mawnin',' sezee, en den he rolled on de groun', en laft en laft twel he couldn't laff no mo.' `I speck you'll take dinner wid me dis time, Brer Rabbit. I done laid in some calamus root, en I ain't gwineter take no skuse,' sez Brer Fox, sezee."

Here Uncle Remus paused, and drew a two-pound yam out of the ashes.

"Did the fox eat the rabbit?" asked the little boy to whom the story had been told.

"Dat's all de fur de tale goes," replied the old man."He mout, an den agin he moutent. Some say Judge B'ar come 'long en loosed 'im - some say he didn't. I hear Miss Sally callin.' You better run 'long."

Part Two: African and European Sources

African Proverbs

No matter how dark, the hand always knows the way to the mouth. -Idoma, Nigeria

They gave the sacrifice to the East.
the East said, "Give it to the West,"
the West said, "Give it to God,"
God said, "Give it to Earth, for it is my elder Brother."

Tradition endures. -Akan, Ghana

Without proverbs, the language would be but a skeleton without flesh, a body without a soul. -Zulu, South Africa

If you pray to God (Imana) for blessing while sitting on a hearth he anoints you with ashes. -Hutu, Rwanda and Burundi

Before you climb a tree you must start at the bottom. -Buji, Nigeria

Check the edge of the axe before splitting wood. -Njak, Nigeria

One must pour cold water on the ground before he can tread on soft soil. -Yoruba, Nigeria

A man holding a basket of eggs does not dance on stones. -Buji, Nigeria

When a blacksmith dies, his hand hangs in the world. -Idoma, Nigeria

Weeping is not the answer to poverty; a lazy man who is hungry has no one to blame but himself. -Yoruba, Nigeria

He who wises to eat the honey which is under the rock should not be unduly worried about the edge of the shovel. -Yoruba, Nigeria

If a lie runs for twenty years, it takes truth one day to catch up with it. -Yoruba, Nigeria

Where there is peace, a billhook (sickle) can be used to shave your beard or cut your hair. –Rundi

The tears of the orphan run inside. –Nigeria

You cannot use a wild banana leaf to shield yourself from the rains and then tear it to pieces later when the rains come to an end. –Nandi, Kenya

No matter how long a log stays in the water, it doesn't become a crocodile. –Bambra, Mali

A cockroach knows how to sing and dance, but it is the hen who prevents it from performing its art during the day. –Edo, Nigeria

If an arrow has not entered deeply, then its removal is not hard. –Buli, Ghana

How easy it is to defeat people who do not kindle fire for themselves. –Tugen, Kenya

African Stories

The Skull

A Tale from West Africa

A hunter came upon a huge tree with a whitened skull at its base. The skull spoke and said, "Beyond a certain hill is a field of calabashes. Take them to your hungry village, but do not tell anyone how you obtained them."

"How did you come to be here?" asked the hunter.

"My mouth killed me," said the skull.

The hunter returned to the village with the calabashes and immediately told everyone, "A talking skull showed me a field of food!" The Chief called him a liar.

"Then come with me! I'll prove what I say is true. When they arrived at the tree, the hunter spoke to the skull but it remained silent. The hunter was put to death on the spot for lying.

In time, two whitened skulls sat beneath the tree. The first turned to the second and said, "See, in death we meet again, my kin. It's true a mouth can do you in!"

Two Roads Overcame the Hyena

A very hungry hyena went out on the Tanzanian plains to hunt for food. He came to a branch in the bush road where the two paths veered off in different directions. He saw two goats caught in the thickets at the far end of the two different paths. With his mouth watering in anticipation, he decided that his left leg would follow the left path and his right leg the right path. As the two paths continued to veer in different directions he tried to follow them both at once. Finally he split in two. As the well-known African proverb says: Two roads overcame the hyena. (Story and proverb found in many African languages)

The Giraffe and the Monkey

The giraffe is an animal with a very long neck and legs and with dark patches on his coat. His legs and neck are so long that when he stands by a tree he can stretch his neck and eat the leaves on top of the tree. One day, he was standing in a pond, a monkey a tree nearby asked him whether the pond was deep. The giraffe said that the water level was only up to his knees.

The monkey felt that since the water level was only up to the knees of the giraffe, then perhaps the pond was not deep. But soon he realized he had made a mistake because the pond was deep. He was drowning and started shouting for help. The giraffe quickly went to rescue him and took him out of the pond. Then the monkey became angry and blamed the giraffe for throwing dust into his eyes.

The Two Cold Porcupines

One cold night two porcupines found themselves alone out on the plains. There was no shelter or place to keep warm. They only had their body heat. But they were scared that if they stood too close together during the night one could prick and even kill the other by mistake. After experimenting they found the right distance to stand next to each other. They were close enough together that their bodies gave heat to each other, but far enough apart that they would not prick each other during the night. (Folktale told by Bernard Joinet, M.Afr.)

How the Monkeys Saved the Fish

The rainy season that year had been the strongest ever and the river had broken its banks. There were floods everywhere and the animals were all running up into the hills. The floods came so fast that many drowned except the lucky monkeys who used their proverbial agility to climb up into the treetops. They looked down on the surface of the water where the fish were swimming and gracefully jumping out of the water as if they were the only ones enjoying the devastating flood.

One of the monkeys saw the fish and shouted to his companion: "Look down, my friend, look at those poor creatures. They are going to drown. Do you see how they struggle in the water?" "Yes," said the other monkey. "What a pity! Probably they were late in escaping to the hills because they seem to have no legs. How can we save them?" "I think we must do something. Let's go close to the edge of the flood where the water is not deep enough to cover us, and we can help them to get out."

So the monkeys did just that. They started catching the fish, but not without difficulty. One by one, they brought them out of the water and put them carefully on the dry land. After a short time there was a pile of fish lying on the grass motionless. One of the monkeys said, "Do you see? They were tired, but now they are just sleeping and resting. Had it not been for us, my friend, all these poor people without legs would have drowned."

The other monkey said: "They were trying to escape from us because they could not understand our good intentions. But when they wake up they will be very grateful because we have brought them salvation." (Traditional Tanzanian Folktale)

The Leopard and the Rabbit

Once upon a time the Leopard lived in a small house far way in the bush. After thinking for a long time he decided to look for a better place. After a short time he found a suitable place nearer the other animals. The Leopard began to cut sticks for building a house. After collecting a big bundle he carried it to the new building site. While the Leopard was doing all these things the Rabbit was nearby watching. He also cut a bundle of sticks and put them near the Leopard's bundle. But the Rabbit did not tell the Leopard.

The next day the Leopard brought another bundle. He was surprised to find a second bundle already there, but didn't know who had brought it. However he put down his own second bundle. Meanwhile the Rabbit was hiding and watching the Leopard's work. Then the Rabbit cut a second bundle and brought it to the site, making a total of four. The Leopard continued to bring bundles of sticks and the Rabbit did likewise.

When the Leopard saw that the sticks for building were enough, he began digging the foundation for his house. When he got tired he went away. The Rabbit also came and dug the foundation for the second wall and put in poles. He got tired and went to sleep.

Day after day the Leopard and the Rabbit were building the same house without meeting or talking together. Soon the house was finished, the first side having been built by the Leopard and the second side having been built by the Rabbit.

The Rabbit was the first to move into the side of the house he had built. Then the Leopard moved into his side. Then the problems began. The Rabbit lit a fire on his side of the house and the Leopard on his side. The Leopard was surprised to see a fire lit in his house without his knowledge. He shouted, "Who is that mad person lighting a fire in my house?" Then the Leopard and the Rabbit began to quarrel without solving the problem.

The Rabbit thought of a way to make the Leopard leave the house to him. He told his wife to pinch the children to make them cry loudly. When the children began to cry the rabbit asked his wife in an angry voice: "Why are the children crying?" Mrs. Rabbit answered, "They are crying for the Elephant's liver." The Rabbit answered boastfully in a loud voice so the Leopard and his wife could hear. "Tell them to stop crying. Finding an Elephant's liver is no problem for me. Tomorrow I will kill an Elephant and give its liver to my children." When the Leopard heard these words he became terrified. He thought that the Rabbit was a very dangerous person. If he could kill an Elephant for sure he could kill him also.

After a few days another quarrel erupted between the Leopard and the Rabbit. Then the Rabbit thought of another way to terrify the Leopard and drive him away. Again he told his wife to pinch the children to make them cry loudly. When the children began to cry, the rabbit asked his wife in an angry voice: "Why are the children crying?" Mrs. Rabbit answered, "They are crying for the Leopard's liver." Meanwhile the Leopard and his wife were listening very carefully to this conversation. The Rabbit answered boastfully in a loud voice so the Leopard and his wife could hear. "Tell them to stop crying. Finding a Leopard's liver is no problem for me. There is a Leopard right here in this house with us. I will kill him easily and give his liver to my children. I don't want my children to be deprived of anything."

The Leopard was terrified and told his wife: "Dear, we must move away from here immediately. Otherwise we will all be killed by the Rabbit." Early the next morning before the Rabbit family got up, the Leopards moved out. On the road they met the Baboon who asked, "Why are you sweating so much and in such a big hurry this early in the morning? Why are you carrying all your belongings? Where are you going?" The Leopard replied, "We are running away from the Rabbit who plans to kill us and feed us to his children. I have been thrown out by the Rabbit from the house I built with my own hands." The Baboon answered: "Oh, I know the Rabbit. That's one of his tricks. Let me take you back to your house. But we must tie our tails in order to go together."

So the Leopard and the Baboon tied their tails together and went to where the Rabbit was. When he saw them the Rabbit began to rebuke them. He told his wife to pinch the children to make them cry loudly. Then the Rabbit asked his wife in a voice that could be heard by everyone: "Dear, why are the children crying?" Mrs. Rabbit answered, "They are crying for the Leopard's liver." The Rabbit said in a loud voice, "I planned with the Baboon that he would bring the Leopard here and so he has. Keep calm, my children. You are going to get the Leopard's liver right now."

When the Leopard heard this he became very angry and began to insult the Baboon saying, "Is this your plan, Mr. Baboon? You deceived me. Do you want me to be killed by the Rabbit?" He became terrified and tried to run away. But since his tail was tied to the Baboon's he could not. They ran in opposite directions and their tails were badly bruised. In this way the Rabbit took over the whole house. (Traditional Sukuma, Tanzania Folktale told by Sukuma Research Committee)

The Lion's Share

One day the lion, the wolf and the fox went out hunting together. They caught a wild ass, a gazelle and a hare. The lion spoke to the wolf, "Mr. Wolf, you may divide the venison for us today." The wolf said, "I would have thought it best, Sire, that you should have the ass and my friend the fox should take the hare; as for me, I shall be content to take only the gazelle." On hearing this the lion was furious. He raised his mighty paw and struck the wolf on the head. The wolf's skull was cracked, so he died.

Whereupon the lion spoke to the fox, "Now you may try and divide our meal better."The fox spoke solemnly, "The ass will be your dinner, Sire, the gazelle will be your Majesty's supper and the hare will be your breakfast for tomorrow morning." Surprised, the lion asked him, "When did up learn so much wisdom?" Said the fox, "When I heard the wolf's skill cracking." (Nubian, Sudan Fable)

The Community of Rats

Once upon a time there was a community of rats in a certain African village. In one particular house a big and mean cat terrorized the rats. They decided to work together and build a small but strong hole that they could easily enter, but the bigger cat couldn't. After finishing and testing the hole the rats were very pleased by their teamwork and cooperation together. But then at a community meeting one rat said: "The cat himself can't go into the hole but he can still catch us as we enter and leave the hole. Who is going to tie a bell around the cat's neck to warn us when he is approaching?" Everyone was silent. All were afraid. While they succeeded in building the hole together, no one was ready to sacrifice himself or herself to tie the bell. (Folktale told by different storytellers in Eastern Africa)

The Man and the Elephant

God created man and an elephant. These he put in a beautiful garden, and he walked with them every day. There was pure drinking water in a flowing river. But the elephant started muddying the waters. He would listen to neither God nor man who told him not to. In the end, man killed the elephant. God, though, was upset at this act and drove man out of the garden. Hence the Borana now live in a ceaseless search for water in drought-stricken lands, semi-nomads in a semi-desert. (Borana-Oromo, Ethiopia/ Kenya Myth)

The Chameleon and the Lizard

When God had finished creation he wanted to send people an important message. He called the chameleon to go and tell them that after death they will return to life. The lizard had eavesdropped. However, she had misunderstood what the chameleon was told. She ran quickly to tell people what she thought she had heard God say: "After death there is no return." The agile lizard had long reached the people when the chameleon was still on his way. People thought the lizard's message natural and a matter of fact. When at last the chameleon arrived and delivered God's message, people ridiculed him and said: "You stupid chameleon, we already know that we are all going to die and that death is the end of everything." (Yao, Malawi/Mozambique/Tanzania Myth)

The Old Woman Who Hid Death

In the beginning times people lived happily without any fear of death. Now it happened one morning that God (Imana) was chasing death to exterminate it from the land of people. When God drew near to arrest (catch) death, death ran into a dog and possessed him. Then the dog quickly ran and entered into the small hut of an old woman who happened to be sitting near the fireplace warming herself.

Then death spoke through the dog saying, "Hide me. If God comes inquiring about me, tell him that death is not here." The

old woman, being surprised to see the dog and hear him speak, hid the dog under her bed. Then she went out and sat in front of her house.

Suddenly God appeared with great speed. Seeing the woman, he halted and asked: "Lady, have you seen death?" "No, Sir," replied the old woman. "I am rather blind and death is not here. Maybe he passed by running." But because he knows everything, God said: "You have hidden death. So from now on you will die, just like death." (Hangaza, Tanzania Myth)

The Sacrifice of the White Hen

There was a young Nigerian boy named Olu who had a pet white chicken. They became great friends and inseparable companions. One day the hen disappeared and Olu cried and cried. Then after three weeks the white hen returned to the compound with seven beautiful white chicks. The Nigerian boy was overjoyed. The mother took very good care of her chicks.

One day late in the dry season the older boys set a ring of fire to the bush area outside the village. Everyone stood outside the ring as the fire burned toward the center. The purpose was to drive little animals such as rabbits and small antelopes out of the circle. Then the waiting cutlasses claimed their prey. When the slaughter and the fire were over, Olu and his friends walked through the smoldering embers. The boy noticed a heap of charred feathers and smelled burned flesh. It looked like the remains of a bird that had not escaped from the fire. Then Olu realized in horror. It was his beloved friend the white hen all black and burned to death. But then came the sounds of chicks. The mother hen had covered them with her body and they were still alive and well. The mother had given her life for her children. She died that they may live." (Yoruba, Nigeria Story told by Denis O'Sullivan, S.M.A.)

The Monster Shing'weng'we

Once upon a time in East Africa the monster or ogre Shing'weng'we swallowed all the people in the world together with all the domestic animals except one pregnant woman who hid in a pile of chaff. Later this woman gave birth to a boy named Masala Kulangwa (whose name means "the smart or clever person who understands quickly".) When he grew up he asked: "Mother, why are there only the two of us? Where are the other people?" She answered: "My dear one, everyone else was swallowed by Shing'weng'we. We two are the only ones left."

From that day on the young man started looking for the monster. One day he killed a grasshopper and arrived home singing: "Mother, Mother, I have killed Shing'weng'we. Rejoice and shout for joy." But his Mother answered: "My dear one, this is only a grasshopper, not the monster. Let's roast him and eat him."

Another day he killed a bird and arrived home singing: "Mother, Mother, I have killed Shing'weng'we up in the hills. Rejoice and shout for joy." But his Mother answered: "My dear one, this is only a bird, not the monster. Let's roast it and eat it."

Another day he killed a small gazelle and arrived home singing: "Mother, Mother, I have killed Shing'weng'we up in the hills. Rejoice and shout for joy." But his Mother answered: "My dear one, this is only a small gazelle, not the monster. Let's roast it and eat it."

Another day he killed an antelope and arrived home singing: "Mother, Mother, I have killed Shing'weng'we up in the hills. Rejoice and shout for joy." But his Mother answered: "My dear one, this is only an antelope, not the monster. Let's roast it and eat it."

Finally the clever young man Masala Kulangwa found Shing'weng'we, overcame him and cut open the monster's back. Out came his father along with his relatives and all the other people. By bad luck when he split open the monster's back Masala Kulangwa cut off the ear of an old woman. This woman became very angry and insulted the young man. She tried to bewitch him. But Masala Kulangwa found medicine and healed the old woman. Then all the people declared the young man chief and raised him up in the Chief's Chair. Masala Kulangwa became the chief of the whole world and his mother became the Queen Mother. (Summary of the Sukuma, Tanzania Song Version of a Traditional Myth in many African Languages)

The Story of Gumha and the Large Rooster

Gumha was a famous and powerful leader of the Bagalu Dance Society that used to compete with the Bagika, the other well-known dance group in Sukumaland. They contested with each other on a regular basis and depended on special magical medicine to ensure success in their dance competitions. Because of his powerful medicine, Gumha was responsible for the success of the Bagalu dancers. This made the Bagika dancers extremely jealous, and they did everything possible to bewitch Gumha.

As it happened Gumha had an extraordinary rooster who used to perch on the roof of his house. When the witches approached the home of Gumha in order to harm him, the rooster would start to crow. On hearing the rooster, the witches would become frightened and say: "What is this? The rooster is crowing. It must be getting light. Let us run for it or we will all be killed." Then the witches would run away without doing any harm to Gumha. The followers of Gumha would say in a boastful way: "Gumha has such powerful medicine that none can harm him not even the witches."

When Gumha finally died his disciples said: "Our master was not bewitched, but God himself has taken him. Truly there is nobody as powerful as God. There is no one like him. He is the one who gives us our life and he is the one who takes our life away."

From this story comes the proverb There is only one bull in the world (that is, God is all powerful.) (Traditional Sukuma, Tanzania Folktale told by the Sukuma Research Committee)

King Leopard and the Spear Contest

A long time ago, deep in the forests of Liberia, King Leopard began to think about the future. He thought, "I'm getting old and one day when I get real old, I'm going to get sick and die." Now a wise king would not wait until he was old to pick a successor, someone who could take his place as king after he died. No, a wise king would pick his successor while still young and healthy. But how could King Leopard choose when he loved all the members of the animal kingdom the same? How could he choose one over the other?

King Leopard sat beneath a tree and started to think. After a while, he came up with a plan. He summoned his messengers and sent them out into the forests of Liberia. He told them to ask all of the animals of the animal kingdom to come to his palace. He was going to throw a big party and at this party, he was going to make an important announcement. So away the messengers ran, to all four corners of the forest.

On the night of the party, the forest came alive with excitement. It seemed like all the animals were at King Leopard's palace. They sang and they danced and had a great time. Then, after the moon had risen above the trees, King Leopard came and

stood in the middle of the clearing. The animals looked up and saw the king. They stopped their singing and dancing and showed their respect for the king by listening quietly as he began to speak.

"I've been thinking that it's time for me to pick a successor. But because I love all of you equally, I can't decide who among you is most worthy. I have decided to let a contest decide for me."

King Leopard walked a short way into the trees and came back carrying a spear. He said, "The first one among you who can take this spear and throw it into the sky and count all the way to ten before it touches the ground will be my successor."

As soon as King Leopard finished making this announcement, the animals began to talk excitedly among themselves. But suddenly they were disturbed by a loud noise from the rear. The animals looked around to see what was going on, and had to quickly move out of the way for Elephant was stomping through the crowd to the front. Elephant was going to participate in the contest. As he came forward, he said "Move out of my way. Move out of my way. I'm gonna be king. I'm gonna be king. I'm the biggest, I oughta be king."

"All right," said King Leopard "you can be the first. But before you throw the spear you must first do a dance of victory."

Elephant lumbered around the clearing, stomping his legs and trumpeting with his trunk. After a few minutes, Elephant took the spear and curled it up in his long trunk. Then he thrust his head way back and threw the spear into the sky.

"One! Two! Three!" Elephant cried.

The spear hit the ground on the count of four.

Elephant did not win the contest. He was so angry that he started stomping and blowing his trumpet. King Leopard told him "Elephant, you only get one chance and you've had your chance." And so Elephant had to leave.

After Elephant left, the animals started to talk excitedly amongst themselves again, but as before, they were disturbed by a loud noise coming from the rear.

Boar came charging through the crowd saying "Get outa my way. Get outa my way. I'm gonna be king. I'm gonna be king. I've got the biggest muscles, I oughta be king."

"All right, alight" said King Leopard. "You know the rules. Before you throw the spear, you must first do a dance of victory."

And so the boar did his dance of victory. He dropped to the ground and lifted his entire weight on one foot, then he jumped up and down and all around.

Finally, with his sharp claws, Boar began to dig a hole in the ground. He made the hole deeper and deeper until all you could see was the top of his head. Then he took the spear, clenched it in his teeth, threw his head back and cast the spear into the sky.

"One! Two! Three! Four! Five!" he shouted.

The spear hit the ground on the count of six.

Boar did not win the contest. He was so angry that he started blowing and fuming and tossing clods of dirt into the air. King Leopard told him "Boar, you only get one chance and you've had your chance." And so Boar had to leave.

After that, the animals started to express. They said things like, "Goodness! This contest is hard. Elephant couldn't do it, and he's real big. Boar couldn't do it either, and he's real strong. I don't think any body's gonna win this contest!"

Right about then, they heard another sound coming from the rear and when the animals looked around, they couldn't believe their eyes. The saw Monkey coming through the crowd. As Monkey came forward, he chanted "I can do it. I can do it. I know I can do it. I can do it, nothing to it. I can do it. I know I can do it."

"All right" said Leopard, "Go ahead with your dance of victory."

"Sure thing king," said Monkey, "I love to dance. Stand back and give me room."

And so Monkey did his dance of victory. He leapt up and down and all around. He grabbed up a branch from the ground and shook it and danced around and around.

"All right Monkey," said Leopard. "Here's your spear."

Monkey took the spear and he backed way up. Then he pulled his arm back, charged forward, leapt into the air and threw the spear into the sky.

"One! Two! Three! Four! Five! Six! Seven!" cried Monkey.

The spear hit the ground on the count of eight. Monkey did not win the contest. Monkey was upset. He was so angry that he started turning flips, complaining and making all sorts of excuses and begging for a second chance. But King Leopard told him "No Monkey, you only get one chance." And so Monkey had to leave.

After that happened, the animals really began to doubt that any animal could win the contest. They said things like "My goodness. This contest is so hard! I thought our king was wise and smart, but maybe he's finally decided to use his smarts against us! Maybe he knows that nobody can take that spear and throw it into the sky and count all the way to ten before it hits the ground! Why King Leopard might be making fools out of us all! I for one am not going to stand around here and be made a fool of." And so some of the animals turned and started to head for home, but as they were leaving, they heard yet another sound coming from the rear.

When they animals looked around this time, they saw an unbelievable sight. They saw a tiny, tiny antelope coming through the crowd. As the antelope came forward, he said, "Wait, wait. Let me try. Let me try. I can do it. I can do it. Let me try."

When the animals heard that, they all burst out laughing. Elephant rumbled up to Antelope and said "What do you mean, you can do it? Why if I can't do it, you certainly can't. Go home you little runt."

At this, the animals really started to laugh. King Leopard jumped up and shouted angrily, "Stop it! Stop it! I will not have you making fun of antelope like that! Who is to say that small animals can't do things that big animals can do? If antelope wants to have a chance, he's going to be given the same chance that all the other animals had. So stand back and let Antelope do his dance of victory."

On that long ago night, deep in the forests of Liberia little antelope did dance, but his dance was real different from the dances of the other animals. Antelope slowly moved around in a circle, extending his legs gracefully while lifting his head towards the sky almost as if he were thanking the heavens for being alive. Then Antelope turned towards the animals and it was as if he was saying that he loved all the animals and was happy and proud to be part of such a beautiful and diverse animal kingdom. Finally, Antelope turned and looked towards the king and it was as if he was saying that he loved the king, who was so wise and yet so kind. Antelope bowed down to his king, turned and took the spear in his mouth. He backed up, clenched the spear hard between his teeth and with every ounce of strength in his tiny body he started running. When he reached the center of the clearing, he leapt upwards and released the spear.

"Five plus five equals ten" he shouted.

All the animals were quiet. "What is this?" Asked Elephant. "Five plus five equals ten?" Monkey scratched his head in confusion.

King Leopard came forward and explained everything. He said "Yes Antelope! Yes, you're absolutely right. Five plus five does equal ten and so does three plus seven and lots of other

combinations! Five plus five is another way to get to ten! This contest was not a contest to find out who was the biggest or who was the strongest. It was a contest to see who is the smartest!"

And that's how Antelope, the smallest animal of the forest became king after Leopard stepped down. Not because he was the biggest or the strongest, but because he was the smartest.

Aphoristic Advice

I don't know why I enjoy quotes so much. They are like condensed essays and are easily categorized for easy reference by a Druid looking for advice on a specific topic, fleshing out an essay or just passing a lazy afternoon in meditation. This collection should be a starting point for further study of these authors, not a stopping point. I'm sure that other good collections exist.

This is a collection of two books. Some 150 are from "A Dictionary of Religious & Spiritual Quotations," compiled by Geoffrey Parrinder, Simon& Schuster Publishers. 1989 ISBN 0-13-210121-1. Added to this good religious diverse source book, I choose another 100 pithy sayings about life and Druidism from the collection; "Webster's New World Best Book of Aphorisms" 1989 ISBN 0-13-947128-6. Others were donated by some friends.

Atheism and Agnostics

God is dead; but considering the state the species Man is in, there will perhaps be caves, for ages yet, in which his shadow will be shown. -Friedrich Nietzsche

If primitive religion could be explained away as an intellectual aberration, as a mirage induced by emotional stress, or by its social function, it was implied that the higher religions could b e discredited and disposed of in the same way. -E.E. Evans-Pritchard

The agnostics were criticized in the Buddhist sources as 'eel-wrigglers' because they wriggled out of every question that was put to them and refused to give any firm answer. -Trevor Ling

Death and Aging

A man's dying is more the survivors' affair than his own. -Thomas Mann

Our repugnance to death increases in proportion to our consciousness of having lived in vain. -William Hazlitt

Days and months are travelers of eternity. So are the years that pass by... I myself have been tempted for a long time by the cloud-moving wind - filled with a strong desire to wander. -Basho

Tzu-Lu asked how one should serve ghosts and spirits. The Master said, How can there be any proper service of spirits until living men have been properly served? Tzu-lu then ventured upon a question about the dead [whether they are conscious]. The Master said, Until a man knows about the living, how can he know about the dead? -Confucius, Analects, 11,11

Excess of grief for the deceased is madness, for it is an injury to the living, and the dead know it not. -Xenophanes

It's not that I'm afraid to die. I just don't want to be there when it happens. -Woody Allen

The world is moving so fast these days that the man who says it can't be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it. -Elbert Hubbard

The youth get together his materials to build a bridge to the moon, or perchance, a place or temple on the earth, and at length, the middle aged man concludes to build a woodshed with them. -Henry David Thoreau

For the unlearned, old age is winter; for the learned it is the season of the harvest. -Talmud

The idea wants changelessness and eternity. Whoever lives under the supremacy of the idea strives for permanence; hence, everything that pushes toward change must be against it. -Carl Jung

Folly is our constant companion throughout life, if someone appears wise, it is only because his follies are suited to his age and station. -Francois de La Rochefoucauld

You can not step twice into the same river, for other waters are continually flowing on. -Heraclitus

For of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: "It might have been!" -John Greenleaf Whittier

Perhaps in time the so-called dark ages will be thought of as including our own. -George Christoph Lichtenburg

If you were to destroy the belief in immortality in mankind, not only love but every living force on which the continuation of all life in the world depended, would dry up at once. Moreover, there would be nothing immoral then, everything would be permitted. -Fyodor Dostoyevsky

There is no cure for birth and death save to enjoy the interval. -George Santayana

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. -Henry David Thoreau

You live and learn, or you don't live long. -Robert Heinlein

Youth is wasted on the young. -George Burns

When the waitress puts the dinner on the table, the old men look at the dinner. The young men look at the waitress. -Gelett Burgess

The king asked: 'When someone is reborn, is he the same as the one who has just died, or is he another?'

The Elder replied: 'He is neither the same nor another.'

-'Give me an illustration.'

'What do you think, great king; when you were a tiny infant, newly born and quite soft, were you then the same as the one who is now grown up?'

-'No, that infant was one, I now grown up am another.'

-If that is so then, great king, you have had no mother, no father, no teaching, and no schooling!... We must understand it as the collocation of a series of successive conditions. At rebirth one condition arises, while another stops.' -Milanda's Questions, 40

Dogmatism

However strong and confident may be my conviction that my own approach to the mystery is a right one, I ought to be aware that my field of spiritual vision is so narrow that I cannot know that there is no virtue in other approaches. -Arnold Toynbee

Education and Knowledge

Solomon made a book of proverbs, but a book of proverbs never made a Solomon. -Anon

From the moment I picked your book up, to the moment I laid it down, I was convulsed with laughter; some day I intend to read it. -Goucho Marx

The Skeptics that affirmed they knew nothing, even in that opinion confused themselves and thought they knew more than all the world beside. -Sir Thomas Browne

I dislike arguments of any kind. They are always vulgar and often convincing. -Oscar Wilde

It now costs more to amuse a child than it once did to educate his father. -Vaughan Monroe

The eagle never lost so much time as when he submitted to learn of the crow. -William Blake

Stand firm in your refusal to remain conscious during algebra. In real life, I assure you there is no such thing as algebra. -Fran Lebowitz

How is it possible to expect that mankind will take advice when they will not so much as take warning. -Johnathan Swift

He does not believe that does not live according to his belief. -Thomas Fuller

The Earth is an oasis in the heart which will never be reached by the caravan of thinking. -Kahlil Gibran

Faith: is belief without evidence to what is told by he who speaks without knowledge of things without parallel. -Ambrose Bierce

Real books should be offspring not of daylight and casual talk but of darkness and silence. -Marcel Proust

A book is a mirror; if an ass peers into it you can't expect an apostle to peer out. -George Christoph Lichtenberg

It is better to speak wisdom foolishly like the saints than to speak folly wisely like the deans. -G.K. Chesterton

The more intelligent one is, the more men of originality one finds. Ordinary people find no difference between men. -Blaise Pascal

Neither Christ nor Buddha nor Socrates wrote a book, for to do that is to exchange life for a logical process. -William Butler Yeats

To expect a man to retain everything that he has ever read is like expecting him to carry about in his body everything he has ever eaten. -Arthur Schopenhauer

All that we are is the result of what we have thought. The mind is everything. What we think, we become. -Buddha

The chief knowledge that a man gets from reading books is the knowledge that very few of them are worth reading. -H.L. Mencken

When they come downstairs from their Ivory Tower, idealists are apt to walk straight into the gutter. -Logan Pearsall Smith

A man is not necessarily intelligent because he has plenty of ideas any more than he is a good general because he has plenty of soldiers. -Nicolas Chamfort.

Nothing is more dangerous than an idea when it's the only one we have. -Alain

A little learning is a dangerous thing. -Alexander Pope

If a little knowledge is dangerous, where is the man who has so much as to be out of danger? -Thomas Henry Huxley

I pay the schoolmaster but tis the schoolboys that educate my son. -Ralph Waldo Emerson

The learned fool writes his nonsense in better language than the unlearned, but it is still nonsense. -Benjamin Franklin

Originality does not consist in saying what no one ever said before, but in saying exactly what you think yourself. -J.F. Stephen

Know thyself? If I knew myself, I'd run away. -Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Just as philosophy is the study of other people's misconceptions, so history is the study of other people's mistakes. -Phillip Guedalla

Enlightenment is the movement of man out of his minority state, which was brought about by his own fault. The minority state means the incapacity to make use of one's understanding without the guidance of another... Have the encouragement to make use of your own understanding is thus the motto of Enlightenment. -Immanuel Kant

Sometimes men come by the name of genius in the same way that certain insects come by the name of centipede- not because they have a hundred feet, but because most people can't count above fourteen. -George Lichtenberg

A definition is the enclosing of a wilderness of ideas within a wall of words. -Samuel Butler

Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest. -The Book of Common Prayer

The more faithfully you listen to the voice within you, the better you will hear what is sounding outside. -Dag Hammarskjold

Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart... and ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house. -Deuteronomy 11,18

A good word is like a good tree whose root is firmly fixed, and whose top is in the sky; which produces its edible fruit every season. -Koran 14, 30

If I were to teach the Doctrine, and other did not understand it, it would be a weariness to me, a vexation... Then Brahma, knowing the deliberation of my mind... said, 'May the reverend Lord teach the Doctrine.' -Majjihima Nikaya, i, 240

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things." "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master - that's all." -Lewis Carroll

Everywhere is nowhere. When a person spends all his life in foreign travel, he ends by having many acquaintances, but no friends. -Seneca

Freedom

Loyalty to a petrified opinion never yet broke a chain or freed a human soul. -Mark Twain

Some men see things as they are and say why. I dream things that never were and say, "Why not?" -John F. Kennedy

Freedom is not worth having if it does not connote freedom to err. -Mahatma Gandhi

God

I can believe anything, but the justice of this world does not give me a very reassuring idea of the justice in the next. I am very much afraid that God will go on blundering; he will receive the wicked in paradise and hurl the good into hell. -Jules Renard

If Jesus Christ were to come today, people would not even crucify him. They would ask him to dinner and hear what he had to say and make fun of it. -Thomas Carlyle

A man can no more diminish God's glory be refusing to worship Him than a lunatic can put out the sun by scribbling the work "darkness" on the walls of his cell. -C.S. Lewis

It would be useful to devise a term which would denote religions that have a supreme God, but also worship other gods. -Geoffrey Parrinder

He who knows about depth, knows about God. -Paul Tillich

The energy of atheists, their tireless propaganda, their spirited discourses, testify to a belief in God which puts to shame mere lip worshipers. They are always thinking of God. -Fulton J. Sheen

Is man one of God's blunders? Or is God one of man's blunders? -Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche

God dwells wherever man lets him in. -Mendel of Kotzk

Either God exists or he does not. But to which side shall we lean? Reason can decide nothing, there is an infinite chaos which separates us. A game is being played, at the extremity of this infinite distance, where heads or tails will fall. What will you bet? If you win, you win everything. If you lose, you lose nothing. Bet then that he exists, without hesitating. -Blaise Pascal

If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him. -Voltaire

Things are to be used and God is to be loved. We get into trouble when we begin to use God and love things. -Jay Kesler

All night long we have not stirred,

And yet God has not said a word! - Robert Browning

How odd
Of God
To choose
The Jews. -W.N. Ewer

But no so odd
As those who choose
A Jewish God
But spurn the Jews. -Cecil Browne

The gods of most nations claim to have created the world. The Olympians make no such claim. The most they ever did was to conquer it... And when they have conquered their kingdoms, what do they do? Do they attend to the government? Do they promote agriculture? Do they practice trades and industries? Not a bit of it. Why should they do any honest work? -Gilbert Murray

Man is quite insane. He would not know how to create a maggot, and he creates gods by the dozen. -Michel de Montaigne

Glendower: I can call spirits from the vasty deep.

Hotspur: Why, so can I, or so can any man; But will they come when you do call for them? -William Shakespeare Henry IV, part 1, 3 i, 53-55

We may not pay Satan reverence, for that would be indiscreet, but we can at least respect his talents. -Mark Twain

God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. -John, 4, 24

God's contempt for human minds is evidenced by miracles. He judges them unworthy of being drawn to Him by other means than those of stupefaction and the crudest modes of sensibility. -Paul Valery

Grief

If we only wanted to be happy, it would be easy; But we want to be happier than other people, and that is almost always difficult, since we think them happier than they are. -Baron de Montesquieu

One may not reach the dawn save by the path of night. -Kahlil Gibran

Laughter is not at all a bad beginning for a friendship, and is far the best ending for one. -Oscar Wilde

The art of life is to know how to enjoy a little and to endure much. -William Hazlitt

If life is a grind, use it to sharpen your wits. -Anon.

Justice, Law & Government

Acquit me, or do not acquit me, but be sure that I shall not alter my way of life, no, not if I have to die for it many times. -Socrates

Between midnight and dawn when sleep will not come and all the old wounds begin to ache, I often have a nightmare vision of the future world in which there are billions of people, all numbered and registered, with not a gleam of genius anywhere, not an original mind, a rich personality, on the whole packed globe. The twin ideas of our time, organization and quantity, will have won forever. -J.B. Priestely

Justice is always violent to the party offending, for every man is innocent in his own eyes. -Daniel Defoe

Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. -Luke 6, 37

Justice is like a train that's nearly always late. -Yevgeny Yevtushenko

The law is fair to all. In its fairness for equality, it forbids the rich as well as the poor to beg in the streets and to steal bread. -Anatole France

The whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace alarmed (and hence clamorous to be led to safety) by an endless series of hobgoblins. -H.L. Mencken

Politics is too serious a matter to be left to the politicians. -Charles de Gaulle

Government can easily exist without laws, but laws cannot exist without government. -Bertrand Russell

If we were to wake up some morning and find that everyone was the same race, creed and color, we would find some other causes for prejudice by noon. -Senator George Aiken

Prejudice is a raft onto which the shipwrecked mind clambers and paddles to safety. -Ben Hecht

Most men, when they think they are thinking, are merely rearranging their prejudices. -Knute Roche

Leadership

Committee: a group of the unfit appointed by the unwilling to do the unnecessary. -Stewart Harrot

The main thing is to make history, not to write it. -Otto von Bismarck

Do not seek to follow in the footsteps of the men of old, seek what they sought. -Matsuo Basho

They who are in highest places, and have the most power, have the least liberty, because they are most observed. -John Tillotson

The lust for power, for dominating others, inflames the heart more than any other passion. -Tacitus

Throughout history the world has been laid waste to ensure the triumph of conceptions that are now as dead as the men that died for them. -Henry De Montherlant

Words divide us; action unites us. -Tupamaros

Success- "the bitch-goddess," in William Jame's phrase- demands strange sacrifices from those who worship her. -Aldous Huxley

Our heartiest praise is usually reserved for our admirers. -Francois de La Rochefoucauld

Man

I am man, I count nothing human foreign to me. -Terence

Know thyself. -Delphi Oracle

We have created man, and we know what his soul whispers within him, for we are nearer to him than his jugular vein. -Koran 50,15

It is said, there came a voice from heaven, saying, 'Man know thyself.' Thus that proverb is still true, 'Going out were never so good, but staying at home were much better.' -Theologia Germanica

Morality

None of us can boast about the morality of our ancestors. The records do not show that Adam and Eve were married. -E.W. Howe

It is better to suffer wrong than to do it, and happier to be sometimes cheated than no to trust. -Samuel Johnson

On Karma alone be your interest, never on its fruits; let not the results of Karma be your motive, nor be your attachment to inaction. -Bhagavad Gita, 2, 47

I never wonder to see men wicked, but I often wonder to see them not ashamed. -Jonathan Swift

It is easier to forgive an enemy than to forgive a friend. -William Blake

A virtue to be serviceable must, like gold, be alloyed with some commoner but more durable metal. -Samuel Butler

There are seven marks of a wise man. The wise man does not speak before him who is greater than he in wisdom; and does not break in upon the speech of his fellow; he is not hasty to answer; he questions according to the subject matter; and answers to the point; he speaks upon the first thing first, and the first last; regarding that which he has not understood he say, I do not understand it, and he acknowledges the truth. -Mishnah

A man should be of good cheer about his soul... if he has earnestly pursued the pleasure of learning, and adorned his soul with the adornment of temperance, and justice, and courage, and freedom, and truth. -Plato

The highest good is like that of water. The goodness of water is that it benefits the ten thousand creatures; yet itself does not scramble, but is content with the places that all men disdain. It is this that makes water so near to the Way. -Tao Te Ching 8

The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried. -G.K. Chesteron

Islam is built upon five things: on confessing that there is no god but God, performing prayers, giving the legal alms, going on pilgrimage to the House, and fasting during the month of Ramadan. -Al-Malati

Serve God, and do not associate anything with him; show parents kindness; also to relatives, and the poor, and the person under your protection be he relative or not, to the companion by your side, to the follower of the way, and to what your right hand possess. -Koran 4, 40

'Do the duty which lies nearest thee', which thou knowest to be a duty! Thy second duty will already have become clearer..-Thomas Carlyle

Do not wait for extraordinary circumstances to do good; try to use ordinary situations. -Jean Paul Richter

Men show their characters in nothing more than in what they think laughable. -Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Your destiny shall not be allotted to you, but you shall choose it for yourselves. Let him who draws the first lot be the first to choose a life, which shall be his irrevocably. Virtue owns no master: he who honors her shall have more of her, and he who slights her, less. -Plato

What is morality in any given time or place? It is what the majority then and there happen to like, and immorality is what they dislike. -Alfred North Whitehead

Moral indignation is jealousy with a halo. -H.G. Wells

Greater is he who performs the commandments from love than he who performs them from fear. -Mishnah, Sotah, 31

Nothing makes you more tolerant of a neighbor's noisy party than being there. -Franklin P. Jones

Christ could not imagine people believing in his teaching of humility, love and universal brotherhood, quietly and deliberately organizing the murder of their brother men. -Leo Tolstoy

If a man own land, the land owns him. Now let him leave home, if he dare. -R.W. Emerson

There are several good protections against temptation, but the surest is cowardice. -Mark Twain

I can resist everything except temptation. -Oscar Wilde

The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it. -Oscar Wilde

Lord, give me chastity, but not right now. -Ambrosius

I can sympathize with people's pains but not with their pleasures. There is something curiously boring about somebody else's happiness. -Aldous Huxley

Nature

All animals except man know that the ultimate in life is to enjoy it. -Samuel Butler

To see a world in a grain of sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
And Eternity in an hour... -William Blake

The Dew is on the lotus! -Rise Great Sun!
And lift my leaf, and mix me with the wave.
OM MANI PADME HUM, the Sunrise comes!
The Dewdrop slips into the shining Sea. -Edwin Arnold

I died as mineral and became a plant,
I died as plant and rose as animal,
I died as animal and I was Man...
Yet once more I shall die as Man, to soar
With Angels blest; but even from angelhood
I shall pass on: all except God doth perish. -Jalalu'l-Din Rumi

All of us are pilgrims on this earth, I have even heard people say that the earth itself is pilgrim in the heavens. -Maxim Gorky

For I will consider my Cat, Jeoffry. For he is the servant of the Living God, duly and daily serving Him. -Christopher Smart

We have enslaved the rest of the animal creation, and have treated our distant cousins in fur and feathers so badly that without doubt, if they were able to formulate a religion, they would depict the Devil in human form. -W.R. Inge

No great works and wonder God has ever wrought or shall ever do in or through this created world, not even God himself in his goodness, will make me blessed if they remain outside of me. -Theologia Germanica, 9

God does not play dice. -Albert Einstein

Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors all shut? Open thine eyes and see thy God is not before thee! He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the path maker is breaking stone... Meet him and stand by him in toil and sweat of thy brow. -Rabindranath Tagore

Man has been endowed with reason, with the power to create, so that he can add to what he's been given. But up to now he hasn't bee a creator, only a destroyer. Forest keep disappearing, rivers dry up, wild life's become extinct, the climate's ruined and the land grows poorer and uglier every day. -Anton Chekhov (1900 C.E.)

Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,
But looks through Nature, up to Nature's God. -Alexander Pope

Among other things, there is a drying up of great oceans, the falling away of mountain peaks, the deviation of the fixed pole-star, the cutting of the cords of the winds, the submergence of the earth, the retreat of the celestials from their stations. In this sort of cycle of existence, what is the good of enjoyment of desires, when after a man has fed on them there is seen repeatedly his return here to earth? Please deliver me. In this cycle of existence I am like a frog in a waterless well. -Maitri Upanishad 1,4

By all these I prayed, by the rolling sun, bursting through untrodden space, a new ocean of ether every day unveiled. By the fresh and wandering air encompassing the world; by the sea sounding on the shore - the green sea, white-flecked at the margin, and the deep ocean; by the strong earth under me. -Richard Jeffries

You never enjoy the world aright, till the Sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens, and crowned with the stars; and perceive yourself to be the sole heir of the whole world, and more than so, because men are in it who are every one sole heirs as well as you. -Thomas Traherne

Even if they did happen to believe the divinity to be totally present in some stone or wood, it may be they were sometimes right. Do we not believe God is present in some bread and wine? Perhaps God was actually present in statues fashioned and consecrated according to certain rites. -Simone Weil.

Whatever is well-fitting in you, O Universe, is fitting to me. Nothing can be early or late to me, which is seasonable to you. Whatever your seasons bring shall be happy fruit and increase to

me. O Nature, all things come from you, all things exist in you. -Marcus Aurelius

Some kill animals for sacrificial purposes, some kill for the sake of their skin, some kill for the sake of their blood...He who injures these animals does not comprehend and renounced the sinful acts; he who does not injure these, comprehends and renounces the sinful acts. Knowing them, a wise man should not act sinfully toward animals, nor cause others to act so, nor allow others to act so. -Acharanga Sutra 1,1,6

Theology at 120F in the shade seems, after all, different from theology at 70F... The theologian at 70F in a good position presumes God to be happy and contented, well-fed and rested, without needs of any kind. The theologian at 120F tries to imagine a God who is hungry and thirsty, who suffers and is sad, who sheds perspiration and knows despair. -Klaus Lostermaier

Tao gave them birth; the power of Tao reared them, shaped them according to their kinds, perfected them, giving to each its strength.

Therefore of the ten thousand things there is not one that does no worship Tao and do homage to its power. -Tao Te Ching, 51

The One who, himself with colour, by the manifold application of his power
Distributes many colours in his hidden purpose,
And into whom, its end and its beginning, the whole world dissolves -
He is God. -Shvetashvatara Upanishad, 4,1

Remember that the most beautiful things in the world are the most useless: peacocks and lilies for instance. -John Ruskin

What is beneath the earth is quite as natural as what is above ground, and he who cannot summon spirits in the daytime under the open sky will not evoke them at midnight in a vault. -Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

I never thought much of the courage of a lion tamer. Inside the cage, he is at least safe from people. -George Bernard Shaw

These rivers, my dear, flow, the eastern toward the east, the western toward the west. They go just from the ocean to the ocean. They become the ocean itself. As there they know not 'I am this one,' 'I am that one' -even so, indeed, my dear, all creatures here, though they have come forth from Being, know not 'We have come forth from Being." Whatever they are in this world, whether tiger, or lion, or wolf, or boar, or worm, or fly, or gnat, or mosquito, that they become.

That which is the finest essence - this whole world has that as its soul. That is Reality. That is Soul. That art thou. -Chandogya Upanishad 6, 10

God is present in Nature, but nature is not God; there is a nature in God, but it is not God himself. -Henri-Frederic Amiel

If we believe our logicians, man is distinguished from all other creatures by the faculty of laughter. -Joseph Addison

For everything is holy, life delights in life. -William Blake

Poverty and Hard Times

You are indeed charitable when you give, and, while giving, turn your face away so that you may not see the shyness of the receiver. -Kahlil Gibran

Help people in distress as you would help a fish in a dried-up rut... Respect the aged and have pity on the poor. Collect food and clothing and relieve those who are cold and hungry along the road. -Yin-chih Wen

He who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? -1 John, 4, 20

Honor begets honor; trust begets trust; faith begets faith, and hope is the mainspring of life. -Henry L. Simson

I am an elementary teacher, and I instruct the children of the poor exactly the same as I teach the children of the rich. If any one is unable to pay me a fee I forgo it. -Mishnah, taanith, 24

Prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue. -Francis Bacon

So that's what Hell is. I'd never have believed it... Do you remember, brimstone, the stake, the gridiron?... What a joke! No need of a gridiron. Hell, it's other people. -Jean Paul Sartre.

How can great wisdom care so little about the torments of innocent creatures? This question, which began to agonize when I was six or seven years old, still haunts me today. I still cannot accept the ruthlessness of Nature, God, the Absolute... How can a merciful God allow all this to happen and keep silent? -Isaac B. Singer

Let us a little permit Nature to take her own way; She better understand her own ways than we. -Michel de Montaigne

The Word is living, being, spirit, all verdant greening, all creativity. The Word manifests itself in every creature. -Hildegard of Bingen

If a man be gracious, and courteous to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world... -Francis Bacon

We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms- to choose one's attitude in any given circumstances, to choose one's own way. -Viktor Frankel

You know the alternative: either we are not free and God the all-powerful is responsible for evil. Or we are free and responsible but God is not all-powerful. All the scholastic subtleties have neither added anything to nor subtracted anything from the acuteness of this paradox. -Albert Camus

The rich who are unhappy are worse off than the poor who are unhappy; for the poor, at least, cling to the hopeful delusion that more money would solve their problems- but the rich know better. -Sydney J. Harris

By suffering comes wisdom. -Aeschylus

It is not true that suffering ennobles the character; happiness does that sometimes, but suffering, for the most part, makes men petty and vindictive. -W. Somerset Maugham

No man ever had enough money. -Gypsy proverb

There are two ways to handle a woman, and nobody knows either of them. -Kim Hubbard

That which is bitter to endure may be sweet to remember. -Thomas Fuller

Poverty is not a shame, but the being ashamed of it is. -Thomas Fuller

The seven deadly sins... Food, clothing, firing, rent, taxes, respectability and children. Nothing can lift those seven

millstones from man's neck but money; and the spirit cannot soar until the millstones are lifted. -George Bernard Shaw

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. -Matthew 19:24

He is a poor creature who does not believe himself to be better than the world. No matter how ill we may be, or how low we have fallen, we would not change identity with any other person. Hence our self-conceit sustains and always must sustain us till death takes us and our conceit together so that we need no more sustaining. -Samuel Butler

Priests

He with his powerful knowledge beholds all creatures who are beset with many hundreds of troubles and afflicted by many sorrows, and thereby is a Savior in the world. -Lotus of the True Law, 24, 17

What is the use of preaching sermons, if one does not put into practice? It is like the framework for a building, which crumbles before our eyes. -Sakhi

O priests, that despise my name. AN y say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible. -Malachi 1, 6

The youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended. -Wordsworth

He who can, does. He who cannot, teaches. -George Bernard Shaw

When traveling priests arrive, the old resident priests go out to welcome them and carry for them their clothes and alms-bowls, giving them water for washing and oil for anointing their feet, as well as the liquid food allowed out of hours. -Travel of Fa-hsien

I am the son of a midwife... My art of midwifery is in general like theirs, the only difference is that my patients are men, not women, and my concern is not with the body but with the soul that is in travail of birth. -Socrates

Tzu-kung asked about the true gentleman. The Master said, He does not preach what he practices till he has practiced what he preaches. -Confucius, Analects 2, 13

He is the one man who will always be the most surprised, the most affected, the most apprehensive and the most joyful in the face of events. He will not be like an ant which has foreseen everything in advance, but like a child in a forest, or on Christmas Eve: one who is always rightly astonished by events, by the encounters and experiences which overtake him. -Karl Barth

The philosophers, cloaked and bearded to command respect, insist that they alone have wisdom and all other mortals are but fleeting shadows. Theirs is certainly a pleasant form of madness, which sets them building countless universes. -Desiderius Erasmus

As I take my shoes from the shoemaker, and my coat from the tailor, so I take my religion from the priest. -Oliver Goldsmith

Many people genuinely do not wish to be saints, and it is probable that some who achieve or aspire to sainthood have never felt much temptation to be human beings. -George Orwell

Religion and Philosophy

Scriptures are the sacred books of our holy religion, as distinguished from the false and profane writings on which all other faiths are based. -Ambrose Pierce

Adversity reminds men of religion. -Livy

Sermons remain one of the last forms of public discourse where it is culturally forbidden to talk back. -Harvey Cox

I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. -Hosea 6,6

The inspiration of the Bible depends on the ignorance of the gentlemen who reads it. -Robert Ingersoll

The dogma of the infallibility of the Bible is no more self-evident than in the infallibility of the Pope. -Thomas Henry Huxley

There is nothing so strange and so unbelievable that it has not been said by one philosopher or another. -Rene Descartes

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy. -Shakespeare, Hamlet 1,v,166-7

Orthodoxy is my doxy; heterodoxy is another man's doxy. -William Waburton

Religion will not regain its old power until it can face change in the same spirit as does science. Its principles may be eternal, but the expression of those principles requires continual development. -A.N. Whitehead

They that approve a private opinion, call it opinion; but they that mislike it, heresy: and yet heresy signifies no more than private opinion. -Thomas Hobbes

It is not permissible to designate as 'unchurched' those who have become alienated from organized denomination and traditional creeds. In living among these group for half a generation I learned how much of the latent Church there is within them. -Paul Tillich

Do you believe in a future life? asked Pierre... If I see, and see clearly, the ladder rising from plant to man, why should I suppose that it breaks off with me, and does not lead further and further?

If you cry, "Forward," you must be sure to make clear the direction in which to go. Don't you see that if you fail to do that and simply call out the word to a monk and a revolutionary, they will go in precisely opposite directions. -Anton Chekhov

Men have torn up the roads which led to heaven, and which all the world followed; now we have to make our own ladders. -Joseph Joubert

Wandering in a forest late at night, I have only a faint light to guide me. A stranger appears and says to me, "My friend, you should blow out your candle in order to find your way more clearly." This stranger is a theologian. --Denis Diderot

Many a long dispute among divines may be thus abridged: it is so. It is not so. It is so. It is not so. -Benjamin Franklin

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind; and in the midst of tears
I hid from Him, under running laughter. -Francis Thompson

When a person has true spiritual experience, he may boldly drop external discipline, even those to which he is bound by vows. -Meister Eckhart

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance. -Universal Declaration of Human Rights, General Assembly of the United Nations, Article 18, (1948)

Useful as a tank of water when all round the water lies,

there's no more in all the Vedas for a Brahmin who is wise. -Bhagavad Gita, 2, 46

Teaching a Christian how he ought to live does not call so much for words as for daily example. -Basil of Caesarea

Both read the Bible day and night,

But thou read'st black where I read white. -William Blake

Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. -Mark 9, 24

My Lord, I do not believe. Help thou mine unbelief. -Samuel Butler

Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread... and the feast of harvest, the first fruits of thy labours and the feast of in gathering. -Exodus 23, 14-16

What do I believe? I am accused of not making it explicit. How to be explicit about a grandeur too overwhelming to express, a daily wrestling match with an opponent whose limbs never become material, a struggle from which the sweat and blood are scattered on the pages of anything the serious writer writes? A belief contained less in what is said than in the silences. IN patterns on water. A gust of wind. A flower opening. -Patrick White

The worship of God is not a rule of safety- it is an adventure of the spirit, a flight after the unattainable. -A.N. Whitehead

To what excesses will men not go for the sake of a religion in which they believe so little and which they practice so imperfectly! -Jean de la Bruyere

All religions will pass, but this will remain: simply sitting in a chair and looking in the distance. -V.V. Razanov.

The trees reflected in the river-they are unconscious of a spiritual world so near them. So are we. -Nathaniel Hawthorne

A pious man is one who would be an atheist if the king were. -Jean de La Bruyere

A religion, even if it calls itself the religion of love, must be hard and unloving to those who do not belong to it. -Sigmund Freud

A man is accepted into a church for what he believes and he is turned out for what he knows. -Mark Twain

The belief in a supernatural source of evil is not necessary; men alone are quite capable of every wickedness. -Joseph Conrad

As the caterpillar chooses the fairest leaves to lay her eggs on, so the priest lays his curse on the fairest joys. -William Blake

When the missionaries arrived, the Africans had the land, and the missionaries had the Bible; they taught us to pray with our eyes closed. When we opened them, they had the land, and we had the Bible. -Jomo Kenyatta

Fanaticism consists in redoubling your efforts when you have forgotten your aim. -George Santayana

A fanatic is one who sticks to his guns, whether they're loaded or not. -Franklin Jones

Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. -Romans 14,1

Religion either makes men wise and virtuous, or it makes them set up false pretenses to both. -William Hazlitt,

Even the weakest disputant is made so conceited by what he calls religion, as to think himself wiser than the wisest who think differently from him. -Walter Savage Landor,

One man finds in religion his literature and his science, another finds in it his joy and his duty. -Joseph Joubert

Religion is the sob of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the Opium of the people. -Karl Marx

If religion is essentially of the inner life, it follows that it can be truly grasped only from within. But beyond a doubt, this can be better done by one in whose inward consciousness an experience of religion plays a part. There is but too much danger that the other [non-believer] will talk of religion as a blind man might of colours, or one totally devoid of ear, of a beautiful musical composition. -Wilhelm Schmidt

Western scholarship spent almost a century in working out a number of hypothetical reconstructions of the 'origin and development' of primitive religions. Sooner or later all these labors became obsolete, and today they are relevant only for the history of the Western Mind. -Mircea Eliade

With all due diffidence, then, I would suggest that a tardy recognition of the inherent falsehood and abhorrence of magic set the more thoughtful part of mankind to cast about for a truer theory of nature and a more fruitful method of turning her resources to account... In this, or some such way as this, the deeper minds may be conceived to have made the great transition from magic to religion. -J.G. Frazer

The religions we call false were once true. -Ralph Waldo Emerson

The words of the prophets are written on the subway walls and tenement halls. -Paul Simon

It is remarkable fact that none of the anthropologists whose theories about primitive religion have been the most influential had ever been near a primitive people. It is as though a chemist had never thought it necessary to enter a laboratory. They had consequently to rely for their information on what European explorers, missionaries, administrators, and traders told them. -E.E.. Evans-Pritchard

Victorian and Edwardian scholars were intensely interested in religions of rude people, largely, I suppose, because they faced a crisis in their own... Laymen may not be aware that most of what has been written in the past, and with some assurance, and is still trotted out in colleges and universities, about animism, totemism, magic, etc., has been shown to be erroneous or at least dubious. E.E. Evans-Pritchard

One's religion is whatever he is most interested in. -J.M.. Barrie

Ritual and Prayer

If you keep your gaze fixed upon the Light you will be delivered from dualism and plurality of the finite body. -Jalalu'l-Din Rumi

Prayer does not change God, but it changes the one that offers it. -Soren Kierkegaard

Your cravings as a human animal do not become a prayer just because it is God you ask to attend them. -Dag Hammarskjold

Every ritual has the character of happening now, at this very moment. The time of the event that the ritual commemorates or re-enacts is made present, 're-presented' so to speak, however far back it may have been in ordinary reckoning. -Mircea Eliade

It was long ago observed that 'rites of passage' play a considerable part in the life of religious man. Certainly, the outstanding passage rite is represented by the puberty initiation, passage from one age group to another (from childhood or adolescence to youth.) But there is also a passage rite at birth, at marriage, at death, and it could be said that each of these cases always involves an initiation, for each of them represents a radical change in ontological and social status. -Mircea Eliade

We can build churches in native architecture, introduce African melodies into the liturgy, use styles of vestments borrowed from Mandarins or Bedouins, but real adaptation consists in the adaptation of our spirits to the spirits of these people. -Placide Tempels, Bantu Philosophy

If any devout soul offers me with devotion, a leaf or flower or fruit or water, I enjoy that offering of devotion. -Bhagavad Gita 9, 26

Praise him with the sound of the trumpet:
praise him with the psaltery and harp.
Praise him with the timbrel and dance;
praise him with stringed instruments and organs.
Praise him upon the loud cymbals:
praise him upon the high sounding cymbals. -Psalm 150, 3-5

Jalalu'l-Din was asked, 'Is there any way to God nearer than the ritual prayer?' 'No', he replied; 'but prayer has a beginning and an end, like all forms and bodies and everything that partakes of speech and sound; but the soul is inconditioned and infinite... Absorption in the Divine Unity is the soul of prayer.' -Fihi ma fihi

You ought to say fewer fixed prayers so that you may do more reading. Reading is good prayer. Reading teaches us how to pray, and what to pray for, and then prayer achieves it. In the course of reading, when the heart is pleased, there arises a spirit of devotion which is worth many prayers. -The Anceint Riwle

Prayer is not an old woman's idle amusement. Properly understood and applied, it is the most potent instrument of action. -M.K. Gandhi

Cultivating solitude, eating lightly, restraining speech, body and mind, constantly devoted to the discipline of meditation. -Bhagavad Gita 18,52

I believe that the best manner of meditating is as follows: When, by an act of living faith, you are placed in the Presence of God, recollect some truth wherein there is substance and food. Pause sweetly and gently on it, not to employ the reason, but merely to calm and fix the mind. For you must observe, that your principal exercise should always be the Presence of God. -Madame Guyon

My austerities, fastings, and prayers are, I know, of no value if I rely upon them for reforming me. But they have an inestimable value if they represent, as I hope they do, the yearnings of a soul striving to lay his weary head in the lap of his maker. M.K. Gandhi

Silence and Tact

Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt. -Abraham Lincoln

There are thinks which it is not only impossible to discuss intelligently, but which it is not even intelligent to discuss. -Feodor Dostoevsky

A diplomat is a man who always remembers a woman's birthday but never remembers her age. -Robert Frost

There is a point when patience ceases to be a virtue. -Thomas Morton

A gossip is one who talks to you about others: a bore is one who talks to you about himself: a brilliant conversationalist is one who talks to you about yourself. -Lisa Kirk

Lord, grant me patience, and I want it right now. -Anon

Quiet minds cannot be perplexed or frightened but go on in fortune or misfortune at their own private pace like a clock in a thunderstorm. -Robert Louis Stevenson

"Speech is silvern, Silence is golden"; or as I might rather express it, speech is of time, silence is of eternity. -Thomas Carlyle

Man cannot long survive without air, water, and sleep. Next in importance comes food. And close on its heels, solitude. -Thomas Szasz

Solitude: a good place to visit, but a poor place to stay. -Josh Billings

Solitude: a luxury of the rich. -Albert Camus

Superstition

There is a superstition in avoiding superstition. -Francis Bacon

To become a religion, it is only necessary for a superstition to enslave a philosophy. -William Ralph Inge

Syncretism

I am a sort of collector of religions: and the curious thing is that I find I can believe in them all. -George Bernard Shaw.

I never could understand how a man could be of two religions at once. -John Henry Newman

There can be no dialogue between 'religions', between Christianity and Hinduism, between on 'belief' and another. Dialogue can only take place between people. -Samuel J. Smartha

Not only does commitment to Jesus not exclude openness to others, but the greater the commitment to him, the greater will be one's openness to others. -Paul Knitter

Toleration

It were better to be of no Church, than to be bitter for any. -William Penn

If outsiders should speak against me, or against the Doctrine, or against the Order, you should not on that account bear malice, or suffer heart-burning, or feel ill-will. If you are angry or hurt on that account, that will stand in the way of your own self-conquest. -Digha Nikaya, 3

In necessary things, unity; in doubtful things, liberty; in all things, charity. -Richard Baxter

Everyone was free to practice what religion he like, and to try and convert other people to his faith, provided he did quietly, politely, by rational argument. -Thomas More, Utopia

At least two thirds of our miseries spring from human stupidity, human malice, and those great motivators and justifiers of malice and stupidity, idealism, dogmatism and proselytizing zeal on behalf of religious or political ideals. -Aldous Huxley

From ancient times down to the present day there is found in various peoples a certain recognition of that hidden power which is present in history and human affairs... The Catholic Church rejects nothing which is true and holy in these religions.... She therefore urges her sons, using prudence and charity, to join members of other religions in discussions and collaboration. -Second Vatican Council

Plurality which is not reduced to unity is confusion. Unity which does not depend on plurality is tryanny. -Blaise Pascal

Letting a hundred flowers blossom, and a hundred schools of thought contend, is the policy for promoting the progress of the arts and sciences. -Mao Zedong

The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not sufficient warrant. -John Stuart Mill

Truth

Irrationally held truths may be more harmful than reasoned errors. -Thomas Henry Huxley

The river of truth is always splitting up into arms which reunite. Islanded between them, the inhabitants argue for a life time as to which is the mainstream. -Cyril Connolly

Seeking to know is only too often learning to doubt. -Deshoulieres

A man had rather have a hundred lies told of him than one truth which he does not wish should be told. -Samuel Johnson

If a man will begin in certainties, he shall end in doubts; but if he will begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties. -Francis Bacon

One of the most striking differences between a cat and a lie is that a cat has only nine lives. -Finley Peter Dunne

There are times when lying is the most sacred of duties. -Eugene Marian LaBiche

Opinion is something wherein I go about to give reasons why all the world should think as I think. -John Selden

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. -John 8:32

When I tell any Truth it is not for the sake of convincing those who do not know it, but for the sake of defending those who do. -William Blake

The public buys its opinions as it buys its meat, or takes in its milk, on the principle that it is cheaper to do this than to keep a cow. So it is, but the milk is more likely to be watered. -Samuel Butler

The great masses of the people... will more easily fall victims to a big lie than to a small one. -Adolf Hitler

Man... will debauch himself with ideas, he will reduce himself to a shadow if for only one second of his life he can close his eyes to the hideousness of reality. -Henry Miller

The test which the mind applies to every question must be the test of reality; of validity measured through reason by reality. And yet the dogmatists call those weak who choose the harder, the more rigorous way. -Dorothy Thompson

Wisdom

A man should never be ashamed to own that he has been in the wrong, which is but saying, in other words, that he is wiser today than he was yesterday. -Alexander Pope

The unexamined life is not worth living. -Plato

Once upon a time, Buddha relates, a certain king of Benares, desiring to divert himself, gathered together a number of beggars blind from birth and offered a prize to the one who should give the best account of an elephant. The first beggar who examined the elephant chanced to lay hold of a leg, and reported that an elephant was a tree-trunk; the second, laying hold of the tail, declared an elephant was like a rope; another, who seized an ear, insisted than an elephant was like a palm-leaf; and so on. The beggars fell to quarreling with one another, and the king was greatly amused. Ordinary teachers who have grasped this or that aspect of truth quarrel with one another, while only a Buddha knows the whole. -Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds. -Francis Bacon

Where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? -Job 28,12

Wise sayings often fall on barren ground, but a kind word is never thrown away. -Sir Arthur Hope

The wisdom of a learned man cometh by opportunity of leisure; and he that hath little business shall become wise. -Ecclesiaticus 38:24

I have always observed that to succeed in the world one should seem a fool, but be wise. -Baron do Montesquieu

One may almost doubt if the wisest man has learned anything of absolute value by living. -Henry David Thoreau

Work

So long as we love we serve; so long as we are loved by others, I would almost say that we are indispensable, and no man is useless while he has a friend. -Robert Louis Stevenson

The test of a vocation is the love of the drudgery it involves. -Anon.

I must be used, built into the solid fabric of life as far as there is any usable brick in me, and thrown aside when I am used up. It is only when I am being used that I can feel my own existence, enjoy my own life. -George Bernard Shaw

Wisdom of Aesop's Fables

Once again, we look to the Greeks for some inspiration on the actions of people. I heartily recommend further studies of other collections of fables. They represent what I call common wisdom. Aesop was historically a slave on the island of Samos, who gained his freedom by his wit. Many Greeks later used Aesop as a pen-name for their own rhetorical exercises. The majority of the selections come from "Aesop's Fables" translated by Sir Roger L'Estrange into English in 1692, republished in 1992 by Everyman's Library Collection of Random House. ISBN 0-679-41790-7. I've since adapted them into modern English, as well as I could, and adding the original illustrations. Other stories were taken from "Fables of Aesop," Penguin Classics, translated by S.A. Handford, 1964. Some others were added by memory or invented by me.

Aesop Saves his Master, Xanthus

There was a great convention of philosophers, and Xanthus (owner of Aesop) joined their company. Xanthus soon became drunk, and Aesop warned him that Bacchus first makes men cheerful, then makes them drunk and finally makes them crazy. Xanthus ignored Aesop's warning, as a lesson for children.

The cups continued to be passed around, and Xanthus was deep in his cup, and said whatever came to his mind. One of the philosophers noticed this and asked him several questions. Finally he says, 'Xanthus, I hear that it is possible for a man to drink the sea dray, but I can hardly believe it.' 'Why,' says Xanthus, 'I bet my house and land, that I can do it myself.' The agreed on the wager, and used their rings to seal the contract. The next morning Xanthus noticed his ring was missing and asked Aesop about it.

'Why truly,' says Aesop, 'I don't no anything about losing the ring, but I can tell you that you lost your house and land last night.' And so Aesop told him the story about the last night, and Xanthus began to chew upon his hat and couldn't think of what to do, without breaking his word of honor. He turned to Aesop and asked his advice. 'If you help me,' said Xanthus, ' I will release you from your servitude.'

'Its impossible to do the thing,' said Aesop, 'but I can think of a way to nullify the bargain. At the time of the bargain, go to the sea side with your servant and wearing your trinkets, and show the world a confident face as if you are about to do this great feat. You will have thousands of spectators there, so say to them these conditions of the contract: That you will drink up the sea by such a certain time, or forfeit you house and land, upon certain conditions. When they agree to this, call for a large cup, and let it be filled with sea-water, in the sight of everybody. Hold it up in your hand and say: "You have heard, good people, what I have promised to do, and under what penalty, if I should fail. I agree to this, but I have only agreed to drink up the sea, not the rivers that run into it. So therefore let all the inlets be stopped up, so that there be nothing but pure sea left for me to drink, that being done, I will perform my part of the agreement. But of drinking the rivers, there is nothing in the contract.'"

The people were so impressed by the reason and justice of Xanthus' words that the hissed his opponent out of the field, who afterwards nullified the contract against Xanthus. The two buried any disagreements between them, and rejoined in the warmth of philosophical brotherhood. And Aesop was well rewarded, but not freed. The story would soon unfold, however, of how Aesop would later win his freedom.

A Cat and a Cock

It was bad luck that brought a cock into the clutches of a cat. The cat wanted to gobble him up there and then, but wanted a plausible excuse. Tell me, she says, why you bawl and scream all night, waking up people? Oh that, says the cock, I only wake up people when it's time to rise and go to work. That might be, says the cat, but you are an incestuous rascal, for you lie with your mother and sisters. Ah, says the cock, but I only do that to provide eggs for my master and mistress! Well, enough of this argument, says the cat, it's my breakfast time and cats don't live on words. At this, the cat bit him, and so made an end to the cock and the story.

Moral: Innocence is no protection against arbitrary cruelty of a tyrant. But reason and justice are so sacred, that the greatest villainies are still countenanced under it's auspices.

A Countryman and A Snake

A countryman was trudged through a forest during a hard winter and spied a snake under a hedge, half-frozen to death. The kind man picked it up and stuffed it his coat. Soon the snake revived from the warmth, and soon as it was able, he bit the very man who had saved his life. 'Ah, ungrateful wretch! 'says the man, 'are you so venomous that you are satisfied with nothing less than the ruin of your preserver?'

Moral: Some people are like some snakes; they naturally do mischief. The greater the benefit they receive, the greater the malice they return.

A Lion and an Ass

A cocky ass once began braying and hee-hawing at a lion. The lion began to grow angry and was about to pounce on the ass, when he had second thoughts.

'Well' says the lion, 'Jeer on, and be an ass. Note, that it is only because of the baseness of your character that I'll ignore you this time.'

Moral: It is beneath the dignity of a great mind to engage in contests with people who have no worth or wits; indeed to contend with such wretches is to promote scandal, not gain.

A Fox and A Raven

A certain fox saw a raven high up in a tree with a piece of meat in its mouth, and the fox grew hungry at the sight of the food. The fox trots up to the base of the tree and shouts, 'O thou blessed bird! Delight of the Gods and men! ' and so he continued on, complimenting him on his gracefulness, the beauty of his plumes, his gift of augury, etc. The fox then put forth, 'If only you had but a beautiful voice equal to these other wonderful qualities, the sun itself could not shine upon a greater creature.' This nauseous flattery caused the raven's mouth to gape wide and he began to prepare a special ballad, when the piece of meat fell to the ground and the fox grabbed it. 'Remember' said the fox, 'I only commented upon your beauty and said nothing about your brains.'

Wolf and the Shepherd

A wolf thought that by disguising himself he could get plenty to eat. Putting on a sheepskin to trick the shepherd, he joined the flock at grass without being discovered. At nightfall the shepherd shut him with the sheep in the fold and made it fast all

round by blocking the entrance. Then, feeling hungry, he picked up his knife and slaughtered an animal for his supper. It happened to be the wolf.

Moral: Assuming a character that does not belong to one can involve one in serious trouble. Such playacting has cost many a life.

The Rabbits and the Frogs

Once upon a time the hares held a meeting and bewailed the insecurity and fear in which they lived- the prey of men, dogs, eagles, and many other animals. It was better, they said, to die and have done with it than to live all their lives in terror and trembling. Thus resolved, they ran all together to a pool with the intention of jumping in and drowning themselves. Some frogs which were squatting round the pool, the moment they heard the patter of running feet, scuttled into the water. At this, one of the hares, who evidently had his wits about him more than the rest, said: 'Stop, all of you, don't do anything rash. For you see now that there are creatures even more tormented by fear than we are.'

Moral: It is comforting to the wretched to see others in worse case than they are themselves.

The Lion and the Mouse

A mouse ran over the body of a sleeping lion. Waking up, the lion seized it and was minded to eat it. But when the mouse begged to be released, promising to repay him if he would spare it, he laughed and let it go. Not long afterwards its gratitude was the means of saving his life. Being captured by hunters, he was tied by a rope to a tree. The mouse heard his groans, and running to the spot freed him by gnawing through the rope. 'You laughed at me the other day,' it said, 'because you did not expect me to repay your kindness. Now you see that even mice are grateful.'

Moral: A change of fortune can make the strongest man need a weaker man's help.

The Ox and the Frog

Once upon a time a frog saw an ox in a meadow and was envious of its huge bulk. So she swelled out her body till all the wrinkles disappeared and then asked her children if she was now fatter than the ox. 'No,' they said. With a still greater effort she stretched her skin tight, and asked which was the bigger now. 'The ox,' they answered. At last she got cross, and making frantic efforts to blow herself out still more, she burst herself and died.

Moral: For the weak to try to imitate the strong is courting destruction.

The Mole and Her Child

A mole declared to his mother that he could see - a thing moles cannot do. To try him, his mother gave him a lump of frankincense and asked him what it was. 'A pebble,' he replied. 'My child,' she said 'you not only cannot see: you have lost your sense of smell as well.'

Moral: When people profess to do what is impossible, the simplest test will often show them up for the impostors they are.

The Snake and Zeus

A snake was trodden on by so many people that it went and complained to Zeus. 'If you had bitten the first man who trod on you,' said Zeus, 'the next one would have thought twice about doing it.'

Moral: Those who stand up to a first assailant make others afraid of them.

The One Eyed Deer

A deer which was blind in one eye went to graze on the sea-shore, turning its good eye landwards, on the watch for the approach of hunters, and the injured eye to the sea, from which it did not expect any danger. But some men who came coasting inshore saw it and shot it down. As it was dying it thought: 'Unlucky that I am! I was on my guard against the attack which I knew might come from the land, but the sea, from which I thought no danger threatened, has proved yet more deadly.'

Moral: Our expectations are often deceived. Things which we feared might do us hurt turn out to our advantage, and what we thought would save us proves our ruin.

The Proud Deer

A thirsty stag came to a spring, and after drinking noticed his own reflection in the water. He felt proud of his great and curiously fashioned antlers, but was very dissatisfied with his slender weak-looking legs. While he was still lost in thought a lion appeared and ran to him. He fled and easily outdistanced it - for the deer's strength is in his legs, the lion's in his courageous heart. As long as the ground was open, the stag kept safely in front; but when they reached wooded country his antlers got entangled in the branches of a tree, so that he could not run farther and was caught by the lion. As he was about to be killed, 'Alas!' he thought, 'my legs, which I feared would fail me, were my preservation, and the antlers that filled me with such confidence are destroying me.'

Moral: It often happens, when we are in danger, that the friends whose loyalty we doubted prove our saviors, while those in whom we put implicit trust betray us.

The Martin and the Mistletoe

When the mistletoe first came into existence, the martin realized the danger that threatened the birds, and assembling them all together she advised them to tear it off, if possible, from the oaks on which it grew; if they could not manage this, they had best throw themselves on man's mercy and beg him not to use mistletoe glue to trap them. Since the other birds ridiculed the martin as a vain babbler, she went as a suppliant to mankind. They welcomed her for her prudence and took her to live with them. So, while other birds are caught and eaten by men, the martin is regarded as having taken sanctuary with them and nests without fear even in the house of people.

Moral: Those who foresee a danger naturally have a chance of avoiding it.

The Stork and the Fox

The story is that a stork which had arrived from foreign parts received an invitation to dinner from a fox, who served her with a clear soup on a smooth slab of marble, so that the hungry bird could not taste a drop of it. Returning the invitation, the stork produced a flagon filled with pap, into which she stuck her bill and had a good meal, while her guest was tormented with hunger. 'You set the example,' she said, 'and you must not complain at my following it.'

Moral: Do not do an ill turn to anyone. But if someone injures you, she deserves, according to this fable, to be paid back in her own coin.

The Horse and the Ass

A horse and an ass were on a journey with their master. 'Take a share of my load,' said the ass to the horse, 'if you want to save my life.' But the horse would not, and the ass, worn out with fatigue, fell down and died. The master then put the whole load on the horse's back, and the ass's hide into the bargain. The horse began to groan and set up a piteous lament. 'Alas,' he cried, 'what misery have I let myself in for! I would not take a light load, and now look at me: I have to carry everything, hide and all!'

Moral: The strong should help the weak; so shall the lives of both be preserved.

The Cat and Venus

A cat was enamoured of a handsome youth and begged Aphrodite to change her into a woman. The goddess, pitying her sad state, transformed her into a beautiful girl, and when the young man saw her he fell in love with her and took her home to be his wife. While they were resting in their bedroom, Aphrodite, who was curious, let a mouse loose in front of her. She at once forgot where she was, leapt up from the bed, and ran after the mouse to eat it. The indignant goddess then restored her to her original form.

Moral: In the same way a bad man retains his character even if his outward appearance is altered.

The New and Old Goats

After driving his flock to pasture one day a goatherd noticed that it was joined by some wild goats. In the evening he drove them all to his cave. The next day he was prevented by foul weather from taking them to the usual pasture and had to attend to them indoors. He gave his own animals a ration that was just enough to save them from being famished, but he heaped the fodder generously before the newcomers in the hope of increasing his flock by domesticating them. When the weather cleared he took them all out to pasture, and as soon as they set foot on the mountains the wild goats took to their heels. The herdsman charged them with ingratitude for deserting him after the special attention he had shown them. They turned round and told him that this was precisely what had put them on their guard against him. 'We came to you only yesterday,' they said, ' and yet you treated us better than your old charges. obviously, therefore, if others join your flock later on, you will make much of them at our expense.'

Moral: We should be chary of accepting the friendly offers of people who prefer us to their old friends when we are new acquaintances. We must remember that when we become old friend they will find other new ones, and then it will be our turn to take a back seat.

The Ass and the Statue

As ass was being driven into town with a statue of a god mounted on his back. When the passers-by did obeisance to the statue, the ass imagined that it was he to whom they showed this respect, and he was so elated that he started to bray and refused to budge a step farther. His driver, taking in the situation, laid on with his stick. 'Wretch!' he cried, 'that would be the last straw, for men to bow down to an ass.'

Moral: When people boast of honors that do not rightfully belong to them, they make themselves a laughing-stock to those who know them.

The Dog and the River

A dog was crossing over a river with a piece of meat in her mouth. Seeing her own reflection in the water she thought it was another dog with a bigger piece of meat. So she dropped her own piece and made a spring to snatch the piece that the other dog had. The result was that she had neither. She could not get the other piece because it did not exist, and her own was swept down by the current.

Moral: This shows what happens to people who always want more than they have.

The Dog and the Hare

A dog started a hare out of a bush, but, practiced game dog that he was, found himself left behind by the scampering of its hairy feet. A goat-herd laughed at him: "Fancy a little creature like that being faster than you!' 'Its one thing,' answered the dog, 'running because you want to catch something, and quite another thing running to save your own skin.'

The Beetle and the Eagle

A hare pursued by an eagle was in sore need of succor. It happened that the only creature in sight was a beetle, to which he appealed for help. The beetle bade him take courage, and on seeing the eagle approach called upon her to spare the suppliant who had sought its protection. But the eagle, despising so tiny a creature, devoured the hare before its eyes. The beetle bore her a grudge for this, and was continually on the watch to see where she made her nest. Every time she laid eggs, it flew up to the nest, rolled the eggs out, and broke them. Driven from pillar to post, the eagle at last took refuge with Zeus and begged him to give her -his own sacred bird - a safe place to hatch her chick. Zeus allowed her to lay her eggs in his lap. But the beetle saw her; so it made a ball of dung, and flying high above Zeus dropped it into his lap. Without stopping to think, Zeus got up to shake it off, and tipped out the eggs. Ever since that time, they say eagles do not nest during the season that beetles are about.

Moral: Do not hold anyone in contempt. You must remember that even the feeblest man, if you trample him in the mud, can find a way some day to pay you out.

The Reed and the Olive Tree

A reed and an olive tree were disputing about their strength and their powers of quiet endurance. When the reed was reproached by the olive with being weak and easily bent by every wind, it answered not a word. Soon afterwards a strong wind began to blow. The reed, by letting itself be tossed about and bent by the gusts, weathered the storm without difficulty; but the olive, which resisted it, was broken by its violence.

Moral: People should accept the situation in which they find themselves and yield to superior force. This is better than kicking against the pricks.

The Fir and the Thorn Bush

A fir tree and a thorn bush were arguing with each other, and the fir was singing its own praises. 'I am beautiful and tall,' it said to the thorn, 'and useful for making temple roofs and ships. How can you compare yourself with me?' 'But remember the axes and saws which cut you,' was the reply, 'and then you will wish you were a thorn-bush.'

Moral: No one should be vainglorious in this life; for it is insignificant people who live most safely.

Springtime and Wintertime

Winter scoffed tauntingly at Spring. 'When you appear,' he said, 'no one stays still a moment longer. Some are off to meadows or woods: they must needs be picking lilies and other flowers, twiddling rose round their fingers to examine them, or sticking them in their hair. Other go on board ship and cross the wide ocean, maybe, to visit men of other lands; and not a man troubles himself anymore about gales or downpours of rain. Now I am like a rule or dictator. I bid men look not up to the sky but down to the earth with fear and trembling, and sometime they have to resign themselves to staying indoors all day.' 'Yes,' replied Spring, 'and therefore men would gladly be rid of you. But with me it is different. they think my name very lovely - yes, by Zeus, the loveliest name of all names. When I am absent they cherish my memory, and when I reappear they are full of rejoicing.'

The Merchant and the Statue

A merchant once made a wooden statue of Hermes and took it to market to sell. As no buyer came forward, he tried to attract one by shouting aloud that he was offering for sale a god who would confer blessings on a man and make him prosper. 'Oh, are you?' said a bystander. 'If he is all you say he is, why do you want to sell him? You would show more sense if you kept him and profited by his help.' 'But it's ready money I need,' the merchant replied, 'and it generally takes him a long time to put anything into one's pocket.'

Moral:: The man in this story was one of those who will stoop to anything in their greed for gain and never give a thought to the gods.

The Cowherd and Zeus

A Cowherd missed a calf from the herd that he was pasturing and could not find it anywhere. He vowed to sacrifice a kid to Zeus if he caught the thief. On going into a wood he saw a lion devouring the calf, and, lifting his hands to heaven in terror, cried out: 'Lord Zeus, I promised before to offer up a kid on your altar if I discovered the thief; now, I will sacrifice a bull to get out of reach of his claws.'

Moral: People who are in trouble will often pray for things, when they get them, they want to be rid of.

The Fool and Fortune

A man who was tired after a long journey threw himself down on the edge of a well and went to sleep. He was in imminent danger of tumbling in, when fortune appeared and woke him. 'If you had fallen in, my friend,' she said, 'instead of blaming your own imprudence you would have blamed me.'

Moral: Many people who meet with misfortune through their own fault put the blame on the gods.

The Cobbler and the King

A cobbler, who was such a bad workman that he was almost starving, went to a place where he was not known and set up as a doctor. He sold some stuff which he pretended was an antidote against poison, and he was such a ready-tongued trickster that he made quite a reputation for himself. One day, when a favorite servant of the king's was lying seriously ill, the king sent for the quack and decided to test his skill. Calling for a cup, he poured out some water, told the quack to put in his antidote, and then pretended to add some poison to it. 'Now drink it,' he said, 'and I will pay you well.' The fear of death made the man confess the truth - that he knew nothing of medicine and owed his fame to the stupidity of the mob. The king assembled his people and told them the whole story. 'Do you think madness could go further?' he asked. 'You do not hesitate to entrust your lives to a man whom nobody trusted to make shoes for his feet.'

Moral: Am I not right in thinking that there are many whom the cap fits - people whose folly enables impudent impostors to make money.

Hercules and the Apple

Traveling along a narrow path, Heracles saw something on the ground that looked like an apple, and put his foot on it to crush it. But it became twice as large as it had been; whereupon he stamped on it still harder and hit it with his club. It expanded to such a size that it blocked the path. Heracles threw away his club and stood still in amazement. Then Athena appeared before him. 'That will do, brother,' she said. 'This thing is the spirit of strife and discord. So long as no one provokes it, it stays as it was at first; but if you fight it, look how it swells.'

Moral: It is plain for all to see that fighting and quarreling are the cause of untold harm.

Two Travelers and a Bear

Two friends were traveling together when a bear suddenly appeared. One of them climbed up a tree in time and remained there hidden. The other, seeing that he would be caught in another moment, lay down on the ground and pretended to be dead. When the bear put its muzzle to him and smelt him all over, he led his breath - for it is said that a bear will not touch a corpse. After it had gone away, the other man came down from his tree and asked his friend what the bear had whispered in his ear. 'It

told me,' he replied, 'not to travel in future with friends who do not stand by one in peril.'

Moral: Genuine friends are proved by adversity.

A Sick Kite and her Daughter

'Please Mother', said a sick Kite, 'stop lamenting your sickness and instead pray for your recovery.' 'Alas my child', says the Mother, 'To which of the Gods shall I go to, for I have stolen from all the altars?!'

Moral: Nothing but the conscience of a virtuous life can make death easy for us. Death-bed repentance is not a solution.

An Ass, an Ape and A Mole

An Ass and an Ape were comparing their problems. The Ass complained that he had no horns, and the ape wished he had a tail. 'Silence!', cried the mole, 'both of you! Be thankful for what you have, for the eyes of all moles are blind, and we suffer more than you.'

Moral: Providence has fitted us for our own best interest and every man's lot (well understood and managed) is undoubtedly the best.

A Dog, A Sheep and A Wolf

A Dog sued a sheep for eating some of the wheat he had loaned it. The plaintiff denied the charge before three jurors, the Wolf, the Kite and the Vultures. He was found guilty and had to sell the wool off his back to pay back the dog.

Moral: It is not important whether the charge is true or false when the Bench, Jury and Witnesses are in conspiracy against the prisoner.

An Ant and A Fly

One day an ant and a fly were arguing. 'Don't I partake of all the pleasures or privileges in the world?' boasted the fly, 'Can't I go to all the Temples or richest palaces? Am I not the taster to Gods and princes when they make sacrifice or hold a party? Do I not get the best food? And yet I do not pay for this! I trample upon crowns, and kiss any lady's lips that I please. And what do you have to compare with my life?' 'Why,' says the ant, ' You pride yourself on the access to the altars of the Gods, the Cabinets of the Princes, and all the public feasts: but you do this as an intruder, not as a guest. Far from liking you, people will kill you as fast as they are able. You are a plague to them everywhere that you go. You breath has maggots in them and your kiss has the perfume of your last dunghill. For my part, I like upon what's my own, and work honestly in the summer to maintain my self in the winter; whereas the whole course of your scandalous life is only cheating half the year and starving the other half!'

Moral: Industry has its merits over luxury.

The Ax and the Forest

A Carpenter with a sharp piece of metal, went to the forest to beg only enough wood to made a handle for it. A tree quickly granted the modest request, but soon the trees found that the whole was to be cut down with the help of this handle.

Moral: We are often undone by our own deeds, good or otherwise.

The Sick Lion and the Fox

The lion, king of the beasts, got sick one day and was holed up in this cave suffering greatly. He came up with a trick to provide his dinner and called all the animals of the forest to loyally pay a visit to his deathbed. When they came to visit him, he would grab them and devour them. This went on for several weeks without anyone noticing it. Finally, the fox, an ancient friend of the lion went to console the patient. From the entrance of the cave, the fox wished the lion a thousand prayers for his rapid recovery, but refused to come inside and talk further. When asked why, he replied, "I find the traces of abundant feet leading into your majesty's palace, and not one comes out again.'

Moral: Think carefully on the friendly requests of ill-natured and cunning people before believing them.

A Boar and A Horse

A Boar happened to be wallowing in the water where a horse wished to drink, and they began to fight. The horse went to a man to ask him to help him against the boar. They made an alliance and the man armed himself, and mounted the horse, who carried him to the boar, and the horse soon say his enemy killed. The horse thanked the cavalier, and was about to leave when the man said he might have further use of the horse and tied him to his stable. The horse realized that he had paid with his liberty for his taste of revenge.

A Fowler and A Pigeon

A fowler was about to shoot at a pigeon, when he trod upon a snake that bit him on his leg. The pain caused him to miss the bird, which flew away.

Moral: Was it bad fortune? Not from the bird's perspective!

A Camel

Upon the first sight of a camel, all the people ran away, so scared they were by its monstrous bulk. However on its second sighting, finding it did them no harm, they became braver and watched it carefully. But when they found how stupid it was, they tied it up, bridled it, loaded it with packs and burdens, set boys upon its back, and treated it with the last degree of contempt.

Moral: Novelty surprises us, and we have a horror for misshapen monsters, but it is only our ignorance that scares us, for upon experience all these wonders grow familiar and comfortable.

A Dog in the Manger

An ill-tempered, envious cur climbed into a manger, and stood there growling and snarling to keep the horses away from their oats and hay. The dog ate nothing himself, but wouldn't go away, preferring to starve himself rather than let someone else enjoy it.

Moral: Envy derives no greater happiness that to see the misery of other people, and would rather starve itself than to allow others to escape starvation.

An Old Tree Transplanted

A certain farmer had a favorite apple-tree in her orchard, which she valued above all the rest, and gave a present of its fruit to the landlord every year. The landlord liked the fruit very much and demanded that the tree be transplanted onto his own grounds. The tree withered soon afterwards and that was the end of the fruit and the tree, together. When the landlord heard the news, he reflected upon it; 'This comes of transplanting an old tree, to gratify an extravagant appetite. If I was satisfied with the fruit and left my tenant the tree, all would still be well.'

Moral: Nature has her methods and seasons for doing everything, and these should not be tampered with lightly.

A Camel and Zeus

It really bothered the Camel that bulls, stags, lions, bears and the like, should be armed with horns, teeth and claws, but that a creature of his size should be left naked and defenseless. Upon this thought, he knelt and begged Zeus to give him a pair of horns, but the request was so ridiculous to Zeus, that instead of horning him, he ordered the camel's ears to be cropt.

Moral: The bounties of heaven are distributed in such a manner, that every living creature has its share. To desire other things against that pattern, is to insult their own creator of nature.

A Fox and A Goat

One day, a fox fell into a well and couldn't get out. Presently, a goat came by and asked how the water tasted it. The fox said it tasted very good and invited the goat to come down and taste it. The goat jumped in, tasted the water and noticed that he couldn't get out. 'Don't worry,' said the fox, 'leave it to me. Just raise yourself on your hind legs with your fore legs against the wall, and I can easily climb up your horns, get out of the well, and I'll pull you out.' The goat assumed this posture and the fox sprang out of the well. The goat complained when the fox didn't help him. Instead, the fox only laughed mockingly at the goat, 'If you had half as much brains as beard, you would have thought how to get up before you went down.'

Moral: A wise person will debate everything pro and con before he decides to do something. Don't leave anything to chance.

An Imposter at the Oracle

There was a jolly prankster who took a trip to Delphos to see if he could fool Apollo. He carried a sparrow in his hand, under his coat, and told the God, 'I have something in my hand,' says he, 'Is it dead or living?' If the oracle should say if was dead, he could show it was alive; if the oracle said it was living, he would squeeze the bird and show it was dead. Apollo say the malice in his heart and gave this answer: 'It shall be whichever you please; for it is your choice to have it one way or the other.'

Moral: It is presumption that lead people by steps to atheism; for when Men have once cast off a reverence for religion, they are within a step of laughing at it.

An Astrologer and a Ditch Digger

A certain star-gazer had the misfortune, during his celestial observations, to stumble into a ditch. A sober fellow passing by him, gave him a piece of advice, 'Friend, learn from your mistake and, for the future, let the stars go on quietly in their courses, and pay more attention to the ditches.'

Hermes and a Traveler

One woman who was about to start a long journey, decide to play a trick upon Hermes. She said a short prayer to him for a good trip, and promised that she would give the god half of all her fortune. Somebody had lost a bag of dates and almonds, and she was lucky to find it. She quickly ate all that was good of them and laid the stones and shells upon an altar and called for Hermes to notice that she had fulfilled her vow. She said, 'Here are the outsides of one and the insides of the other, and that's your half of the bargain.'

Moral: People talk as if they believed in God, but they live as if they thought there were none, but their very prayers are mockeries, which they never intended to make good.

A Doctor and An Eye Patient

A crooked physician undertook the treatment of a woman with sore eyes, vowing a contract of "No cure, no money." His trick was to dab their eyes with ointments, and then carry off a spoon or bowl, or something valuable, at the end of each visit. The woman's eyes mended, and everyday she was able to see more and more clearly, but everyday there was less to be seen. The doctor came to her at last, and told her, 'Mistress, I have discharged my duty, and your eyes are perfectly well again, so please pay me according to our agreement.' 'Alas, Sir,' says the woman, 'I'm a great deal worse than I was the first time you helped me; for I could see plate, hangings, paintings, and other goods of value about my house, and now I can see nothing at all.'

Moral: There are few good deeds done for other people, except that the benefactor expects some reward for themself.

A Lioness and A Fox

A fox once bragged to a lioness that she, a vixen, produced a great many children, whereas the lioness only produced one whelp at a time. 'Yes,' said the lioness, ' but that one is a lion.'

Moral: Many a fool believes quantity is always better than quality.

Two Cocks Fighting

Two cocks fought a duel for the mastery of a dunghill. The loser slunk away into a corner and hid himself; the victor flew to the top of the house and crowed forth his victory and flapped his wings. An eagle swooped down during his exultation and carried him away. By this accident, the other cock rid himself of his rival, claimed the territory, and reclaimed the affections of his mistresses.

Moral: A wise and generous enemy will make a modest use of a victory; for Fortune is fickle.

A Fox that Lost its Tail

A fox got caught in a trap and saved its neck by leaving his tail behind him. However, his resulting image was not pleasing to the sight, a fox without his big bushy tail, so that he became weary of his life. But to make himself feel better, he called a congress of foxes to discourse to them on the trouble, uselessness

and indecency of foxes wearing tails. But, no sooner than he had finished his say, but another cunning fox rises up and question whether the speaker was arguing against wearing the tails for the advantage of those who had tails, or to placate the deformity and disgrace of those that had none.

Moral: When a person has any notable defect or infirmity, whether by nature or accident, he often tries to pretend that the result is better than being whole.

Death and the Old Man

An old man that had traveled a long way under a huge burden of sticks found himself so weary that he threw it down, and called to Death to deliver him from such a miserable life. Death quickly came at his call, and asked what he could do for him. 'Oh, good sir,' says the old man, 'please help me stand up and carry my burden again.'

Moral: Men call upon Death, as they do for the Devil, but when he comes they're afraid of him.

An Old Man and A Lion

A rich man dreamed one night that he saw a lion kill his only son, who was a generous horseman and a great hunter. This obsession controlled the father's mind so greatly, that he build a house of pleasure for his son, to keep him out of danger; scrimping not a penny to make it a wonderful secluded place. The house, in a nutshell, was the young man's prison, and the father made himself the keeper. There were a great many painting throughout the house, but the one of a lion, stirred the anger of the young man. For the sake of a dream about this beast, he was forever a slave and prisoner. In his anger, the young man punched the painting; but his fist hit the point of a nail in the wall, his hand cancerated, he fell into a fever, and soon thereafter he died.

Moral: There is no way to avoid one's fate.

A Flea and Hercules

There was a fellow who was bit by a flea. He called out to Hercules to help him in his distress. The flea got away and the man continued to gripe about it. 'Oh Hercules,' he says, ' if you would help me against a flea, you will never do many any good in a time of need, against a more powerful enemy!'

Moral: We neglect god in greater matters, and petition him for trifles; getting angry if cannot have all our cravings.

Two Travelers and A Bag of Money

As two travelers were going down the highway, one of them bends down and picks up something. 'Look,' he says, 'I have found a bag of money.' 'No.' says the other, 'When two friends are together, you must no say "I" found it, but "we" found it.' Not long after that a posse pursuing a famous gang of bank-robbers, came down that highway and spied the two travelers. 'Lord! Brother!', says the man with the bag, 'We're in big trouble now!' 'Incorrect again.' says his friend, 'You must not say "We" are in trouble, but "I" am in trouble, because if I had no share in the finding, I'll sure not go halves in the hanging.'

Moral: If you enter into a partnership, you must take the good and the bad, one with the other.

A Wolf and A Goat

A wolf spotted a straggling young kid, and pursued him. The kid found out that the wolf was too fast for him, so he turned and told the wolf, 'I know that you are going to eat me, but I would die happily if you would please play your bagpipe before you gobble me up.' The wolf played, and the kid danced, and the noise of the pipes brought a pack of dogs to him. 'Well,' said the wolf, 'just goes to show that you shouldn't meddle in other professions. I was trained as a butcher, not as a bagpiper.'

Moral: When a fool is infatuated, any idiot can play tricks on him.

A Musician

A man with a terrible voice, but an excellent conservatory, often practiced in that room, because of the complimentary echo of that room. He became so conceited that he felt he must perform in a public theatre, but he did such a poor job that he was hissed off the stage and pelted.

Moral: A man might like his face in a mirror, but that won't make him a model.

A Crow and Pigeons

A crow noticed of some pigeons in a dove house. The pigeons were well fed and protected, so he painted himself dove-colour, and moved in with the pigeons. As long as he kept silent, he passed for one of those bird, but one day he blurted out 'KAH!' and they discovered his intrusion. They beat him out of the house and the crow returned to his old companions, the crows, but they also would have nothing to do with him, so he lost both world by his disguise.

Moral: He who pretends to be two people, is liked by neither circle.

A Wolf and A Sheep

A wolf was liking his wounds after a near-fatal defeat from a dog. He called out to a passing sheep, 'Hark, friend, please be so kind as to bring me a drink of water from that river, so that I can rise again to get something to eat.' 'Oh sure,' says the sheep, 'I have no doubt that if I bring your something to drink, I'll also bring you myself to eat.'

Moral: It is a kind and Christian thing to relieve the poor and distressed, but this duty does not extend to the aid of sturdy beggars, who would receive alms in one hand and club out a man's brains with the other hand.

Travelers by the Seaside

A small group of people were walking along the sea-shore, when the saw something come toward them from a great distance on the sea. They sat down and waited for a long time. At first they took it to be a ship, and as it came nearer, perhaps it was a small boat; but at last it proved to be only a mat of weeds and bulrushes. One of them said, 'We have been waiting here for some great event, and now it turns out to be nothing.'

An Ass and the Frogs

An ass sank down deep into a bog, because of the great burden of wood on its back, and many frogs came and gathered around it. The ass sighed and groaned as if its heart would break, but one of the frogs came up and said to it; 'Dear friend, why do you complain so much about the bog when you just fell into it. What would you do if you'd been here as long as we have been?'

Moral: People often get used to the defects and negative aspects of the world in which they live, but it is difficult for them to appreciate the newcomer's distaste for their surroundings.

A Gnat Challenges a Lion

A lion was crashing and prancing through a forest, when up comes a gnat before his nose and challenges the lion to a duel. 'I am not afraid of your teeth and claws.' cried the gnat, 'Try and hurt me.' With that a trumpet sounded, and the two combatants charged each other, and the gnat slipped into the nostrils of the lion. There, he stung the lion repeatedly. The lion clawed at his own face and soon surrendered. The gnat flew away, bursting with pride. On his way home, he flew into a cobweb and fell prey to a spider. This disgrace crushed his pride; after having gotten the better of a lion, he had been worsted by an insect.

Moral: Fortune is capricious, and great victories can soon be followed by great defeats.

The Traveler and Athena

A rich Athenian was on a voyage with other passengers, when a violent storm blew up and capsized the ship. All the rest tried to swim ashore, but the Athenian kept calling on Athena and promising her lavish offerings if he escaped. One of his shipwrecked companions, as he swam past, shouted to him: 'Don't leave it all to Athena; use your arms as well.'

Moral: God helps those who help themselves. Before invoking the aid of heaven we must think and act for ourselves.

Fundamentalist Aesopians Interpret Fox-Grapes Parable Literally from The Onion

MONTGOMERY, AL--A controversial new bill pending before the Alabama Legislature has deeply divided the state along theological lines, sending right-wing fundamentalist Aesopians into an uproar. HR 1604, if passed, would broaden nutritional guidelines used in the state's school-lunch program, permitting a wider variety of fruits and vegetables to be served, including grapes, the consumption of which is a sin according to Aesopian doctrine.

"The state of Alabama is trying to bully us into submission," said Herman Bray, Pastor of the First Universal Church Of Aesop in Huntsville. "They're trying to rob us of our most cherished beliefs and send our children the message that grapes are acceptable for eating."

Clutching a worn, leather-bound copy of Aesop's Parables, Bray explained his congregation's strict opposition to the law.

"The Holy Writ of Aesop makes it plain that the fox, in his anger at the unreachable grapes, cursed the offending fruit and made all grapes sour forever," Bray said. "It is common sense--and a core belief of the Church Of Aesop--that this is a directive from Aesop Himself against grape consumption. Grapes are plainly exposed as a foul, sour-tasting fruit which dirties both body and soul, and this is a strict tenet of our dietary code." Alabama Aesopians are threatening to take their children out of school if the bill becomes law.

"Our beliefs and history have been laughed off by the secular media as fiction, as 'fables,'" Bray continued. "But the fox-and-the-grapes incident is not just some fantasy concocted by the Aesopian Right. Our research has determined that it most likely occurred between 605 and 602 B.C.E. in the province of Phrygia, was witnessed by a young Aesop and ultimately recorded in what became the Holy Book of Aesopians. Our church's archaeological and historical data all confirm the details recorded in the Aesop account."

The Aesopians' claims have provoked strong reaction among academics. "They think what? That this is a directive not to eat grapes?" asked Darrin Schmidt, professor of folklore and mythology at NYU. "The whole point of the story is that the grapes aren't sour at all. I think that's pretty unambiguous." Bray dismissed Schmidt's comments as "heretical anti-Aesopian hate speech."

Curtis Milner, president of the Birmingham-based Aesopian Coalition, said his organization is prepared to go all the way to the Supreme Court if Alabama passes what he calls "an openly hostile, blatantly anti-Aesopian piece of legislation."

"These lawmakers are attacking our most closely held beliefs," Milner said. "Not only is it disrespectful; it is a clear violation of the Constitution of this land."

According to Milner, the beliefs of the Aesopians are simple and direct. "We honor the courage and the noble sacrifice of Aesop, who gave His life to educate the world, not backing down even to the day of His execution by the wicked Athenian despot Peisistratus," Milner said. "That event, though tragic on the surface, was actually a day of exhilarating triumph over evil, for as a result of it, the histories painstakingly recorded by Aesop gained immortality."

"He died for us all," Milner added

The Wit and Wisdom of Women

Many a quote has been borrowed from famous male writers, but how about some thoughts from female writers, often ignored and unfamous. Here is a collection taken from two delightful collections titled, "Write to the heart: Wit and Wisdom of Women Writers," edited by Amber Coverdale Sumrall, The Crossing Press. Freedom, California 95019. ISBN 0-89594-550-9 and "The Last Word: A Treasury of Women's Quotes" by Carolyn Warner, published by Prentice Hall, 1992, ISBN 0-13-524372-6.

Change

Creativity is really the structuring of magic. -Anne Kent Rush

Poetry has its own laws speaking for the life of the planet. It is a language that wants to bring back together what the other words have torn apart. -Linda Hogan

Even St. Teresa said, "I can pray better when I'm comfortable," and she refused to wear her hair cloth shirt or starve herself. I don't think living in cellars and starving is better for an artist than it is for anybody else. -Katherine Anne Porter

I was not looking for my dreams to interpret my life, but rather for my life to interpret my dreams. -Susan Sontag

You do not create a style. you work and develop yourself; your style is an emanation from your own being. -Katherine Anne Porter

When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us. -Helen Keller

I know I walk in and out of several worlds every day. -Joy Harjo

Survival is a form of resistance. -Meridel Le Sueur

We women have lived too much with closure: If he notices me, if I marry him, if I get into college, if I get this work accepted, if I get that job - there always seems to loom the possibility of something being over, settled, sweeping clear the way for contentment. This is the delusion of a passive life. -Carolyn G. Heilbrun

Pain is important: how we evade it, how we succumb to it, how we deal with it, how we transcend it. -Audre Lorde

The hardest thing we are asked to do in this world is to remain aware of suffering, suffering about which we can do nothing. -Mary Sarton

Originality does demand courage, the courage to become a person who is able to know his or her experience deeply, who is willing to feel and to question feeling, to dig for what the truth of a moment is, including the truth that may contradict external fact. -Jane Hirschfield

The road was new to me, as roads always are going back. -Sarah Orne Jewett

The most radical revolutionary will become a conservative the day after the revolution. -Hannah Arendt

Death

I once wrote that the best way to write was to do so as if one were already dead: afraid of no one's reactions, answerable to noone for one's views. I still think that is the way to write. -Nadine Gordimer

People living deeply have no fear of death. -Anais Nin

Education

Having been unpopular in high school is not just cause for book publication. -Fran Lebowitz

Pay attention to what they tell you to forget. -Muriel Ruckeyser

I think the one lesson I have learned is that there is no substitute for paying attention. -Diane Sawyer

Readers, after all, are making the world with you. You give them the materials, but it's the readers who build that world in their own minds. -Ursula K. LeGuin

The true order of learning should be: first, what is necessary; second, what is useful; and third, what is ornamental. To reverse this arrangement is like beginning to build at the top of the edifice. -Lydia H. Sigourney

Prejudices, it is well known, are most difficult to eradicate from the heart whose soil has never been loosened or fertilized by education; they grow there, firm as weeds among stones. -Charlotte Bronte

A good teacher can save you ten years. You can't teach creativity, you can't infuse people with psychic energy, and you certainly can't give them a good ear, which is a gift of God, but you can teach people critical distance, how to look at their own work objectively as if it had been written by somebody else. -Carolyn Kizer

I didn't miss a beat turning down a scholarship at a Catholic college where I had been assured I would get more "individual attention." Who wanted individual attention? I wanted to be left alone to lose my soul. -Patricia Hampl

The final lesson a writer learns is that everything can nourish the writer. The dictionary, a new word, a voyage, an encounter, a talk on the street, a book, a phrase learned. -Anais Nin

Men writers aren't thought of as "men writers;" they are thought of as great writers. It would be fine if the men writers would be called "men writers." It just never comes up - "Updike or Bellow, he's a really great man writer." But we frequently hear, "Margaret Atwood is a really incredible woman writer." I say what a crock of shit. -Anne Lamont

When we take an author seriously, we prefer to believe that her vision derives from her individual and subjective and neurotic, tortured soul - we like artists to have tortured souls - not from the world she is looking at. -Margaret Atwood

When I couldn't find the poems to express the things I was feeling, I started writing poetry. -Audre Lorde

He knows so little and knows it so fluently. -Ellen Glasgow

Interpretation is the revenge of the intellectual upon art. -Susan Sontag

The most moving form of praise I receive from readers can be summed up in three words: I never knew. Meaning, I see these people (call them Indians, Filipinos, Koreans, Chinese) all around me all the time and I never knew they had an inner life. -Bharati Mukherjee

The misery of seeing the horrible chaos that actually precedes the creation of really first-rate work is so unnerving that most teachers of workshops would rather see the neat imitative poems. -Diane Wakoski

I think the battle that one always has is the battle between inspiration and form. -Deena Metzger

Nighttime is really the best time to work. All the ideas are there to be yours because everyone is asleep. -Catherine O'Hara

A gossip is someone who talks to you about others, a bore is one who talks to you about himself, and a brilliant conversationalist is one who talks to you about yourself. -Lisa Kirk

Fame and Fortune

It is amazing how much people can get done if they do not worry about who gets the credit. -Sandra Swinney

Fame means millions of people have a wrong idea of who you are. -Erica Jong

Every society honors its live conformists and its dead troublemakers. -Mignon McLaughlin

It's not so much how busy you are, but why you are busy. The bee is praised; the mosquito is swatted. -Marie O' Connor

Human successes, like human failures, are composed of one action at a time and achieved by one person at a time. -Patsy H. Sampson

Tough a tree grow ever so high, the falling leaves return to the ground. -Malay

Leadership

None who have always been free can understand the terrible fascinating power of the hope of freedom to those who are not free. -Pearl S. Buck

The real menace in dealing with a five-year old is that in no time at all you begin to sound like a five-year old. -Jean Kerr

The feeble tremble before opinion, the foolish defy it, the wise judge it, the skillful direct it. -Jeanne de la Platiere

Moses dragged us for 40 years through the desert to bring us to the one place in the Middle East where there was no oil. -Golda Meir

There is no king who has not a slave among his ancestors, and no slave who has not had a king among his. -Helen Keller

If I had to name one quality as the genius of patriarchy, it would be compartmentalization, the capacity for institutionalizing disconnection. Intellect severed from emotion. Thought separated from action. Science split from art. The earth itself divided; national borders. Human beings categorized: by sex, age, race, ethnicity, sexual preference, height, weight, class, religion, physical ability, ad nauseam. The person isolated from the political. Sex divorced from love. The material ruptured from the spiritual. Law detached from justice. Vision disassociated from reality. -Robin Morgan

The best thing you can have in life is to have someone tell you a story. -Leslie Marmon Silko

There is nothing in the universe that I fear, but that I shall not know all my duty, or shall fail to do it. -Mary Lyon

If you refuse to accept anything but the best, you very often get it. -Anon.

The first duty of a human being is to assume the right relationship to society, more briefly, to find your real job, and do it. -Charlotte Perkins Gilman

Figure out what your most magnificent qualities are and make them indispensable to the people you want to work with. Notice that I didn't say "work for." Linda Bloodworth-Thomason.

Don't identify too strongly with your work. Stay fluid behind those black and white words. They are not you. They were a great moment going through you. A moment you were awake enough to write down and capture. -Natalie Goldberg

Re-vision - the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction - is for women more than a chapter in cultural history: it is an act of survival. Until we can understand the assumptions in which we are drenched we cannot know ourselves. And this drive to self-knowledge, for women, is more than a search for identity: it is part of our refusal of the self-destructiveness of male-dominated society. -Adrienne Rich

Failing to plan is a plan to fail. -Effie Jones

I fell strongly that I have a responsibility to all the sources that I am: to all past and future ancestors, to my home country, to all places that I touch down on, and that are myself, to all voices, all women, all of my tribe, all people, all earth, and beyond that to all beginnings and endings. -Joy Harjo

Love and Justice

What a minority group want is not the right to have geniuses among them, but the right to have fools and scoundrels without being condemned as a group. -Agnes Elizabeth Benedict

The Eskimos had fifty-two names for snow because it was important to them: there ought to be as many for love. -Margaret Atwood

On the road between the homes of friends, grass does not grow. -Norwegian

Shared joy id double joy, and shared sorrow is half-sorrow. -Swedish

Nobody sees a flower really; it is so small. He haven't time, and to see takes time -like to have a friend takes time. -Georgia O'Keeffe

What do we live for, if it is not to make life less difficult for each other? -George Eliot

Nature

Aerodynamically the bumblebee shouldn't be able to fly, but the bumblebee doesn't know it so it goes on flying anyway. -Mary Kay Ash

And then it just seems preposterous. There I am, choosing my words so carefully, trying to build this pure, unanalyzable, transparent, honest thing in this dim room with the shades drawn and out there is the world, indecent, cruel, apathetic, a world where the sea are being trashed, the desert bladed, the wolves shot, the eagles poisoned, where people show up at planning and zoning meetings waving signs that say "My family Can't Eat the Environment." That sentence is ill, it is a virus of a sentence, and as a writer, I should be able to defeat it and its defenders handily. With the perfect words I should be able to point out, reasonably, that in fact the individual's family is eating the environment, that they are consuming it with sprawl and greed and materialistic hungers and turning it into - shit. But perfect words fail me. I

don't want my words. I want to throttle this person, beat him over the head with his stupid sign. -Joy Williams

For me writing is an incredible privilege. When I sit down at the desk, there are other women who are hungry, homeless. I don't want to forget that, that the world of matter is still there to be reckoned with. I feel a responsibility to other humans, and to the animal and plant communities as well. -Linda Hogan

I'm not a naturalist in the activist sense of the word, though perhaps writing with a feeling of the sacred about a place is a kind of activism. Part of what you're doing as a writer is to make that silent language of mountains and trees and water part of your language. It's speaking all the time and I hear it speaking. -Tess Gallagher

Spirituality necessitates certain kinds of political action. If you believe that the earth, and all living things, and all the stones are sacred, your responsibility really is to protect those things. -Linda Hogan

Philosophy and Religion

When we talk to God, we're praying. When God talks to us we're schizophrenic. -Lily Tomlin

A self-righteous preacher reprimanded a farmer because he cussed and drank. "I'm over 60 years old and I've never cussed or drunk." Farmer: "Yeah and you've never farmed either." -Anon.

For each of us as women, there is a dark place within where hidden and growing our true spirit rises. -Audre Lorde

It is good for a philosopher should remind himself, now and then, that he is a particle pontificating on infinity. -Ariel and Will Dumant

People see God every day, they just don't recognize Him. -Pearl Bailey

I would no more quarrel with a man because of his religion than I would because of his art. -Mary Baker Eddy

As a girl my temper often got out of bounds. But one day when I became angry at a friend over some trivial matter, my mother said to me, "Elizabeth, anyone who angers you conquers you." -Sister Elizabeth Kenny

Think wrongly, if you please, but in all cases think for yourself. -Doris Lessing.

The universe is made of stories, not of atoms. -Muriel Rukeyser

What would have been the effect upon religion if it had come to us through the minds of women? -Charlotte Perkins Gilman

The heresy of one age becomes the orthodoxy of the next. -Helen Keller

It is the creative potential itself in human beings that is the image of God. -Mary Daly

A preacher who was popular with his congregation explained his success as the result of a silent prayer which he offered each time he took the pulpit. It ran thus: "Lord, fill my mouth with worthwhile stuff, and nudge me when I've said enough." -Anon.

Too much rigidity on the part of the teachers should be followed by a brisk spirit of insubordination on the part of the taught. -Agnes Repplier

Put your ear down close to your soul and listen hard. -Anne Sexton

Religion and art spring from the same root and are close kin. -Willa Cather

Time

This has been a most wonderful evening. Gertrude has said thing tonight it'll take her ten years to understand. -Alice B. Toklas

How slowly one comes to understand anything! -May Sarton

Don't be afraid your life will end; be afraid that it will never begin. -Grace Hansen

Words are more powerful than perhaps anyone suspects, and once deeply engraved in a child's mind, they are not easily eradicated. -May Sarton

What we remember is only a ripple in a pond. -Nikki Giovanni

Life can only be understood backwards but it must be lived forward. -Susan Kierkegaard

As you grow older, you'll find that you enjoy talking to strangers far more than to your friends. -Joy Williams

One generation plants the trees; another gets the shade. -Chinese

Neither for men nor for women do we anywhere find initiation ceremonies that confirm the status of being an elder. -Simone de Beauvoir

It doesn't matter who my father was; it matters who I remember he was. -Anne Sexton

It is never too late to be what you might have been. -Georgie Eliot

If you don't keep and mature your force and above all have the time and quiet to perfect your work, you will be writing things not much better than you did five years ago. -Tillie Olson

One hears one's childhood and it is ancient. -Kathleen Fraser

Truth

Only friends will tell you the truths you need to hear to make your life bearable. -Francine Du Plesix Gray

I've done more harm by the falseness of trying to please than by the honesty of trying to hurt. -Jessamyn West

Simply to speak the truth heals. The blood of the wound heals the wound. -Susan Griffin

Eighty percent of the language lies to us... the language of diplomacy, politics, advertising... all the language or persuasion. -Deena Metzger

War

It is not so much a question of whether the lion will one day lie down with the lamb, but whether human beings will ever be able to lie down with any other creature or being at all. -Alice Walker

You cannot shake hands with a closed fist. -Indira Gandhi

It is better to die on your feet than to live on your knees. -Delores IBarruri

Wit and Wisdom

I've always felt that a person's intelligence is directly reflected by the number of conflicting points of view he can entertain simultaneously on the same topic. -Lisa Ather

If thine enemy wrong thee, buy each of his children a drum. -Chinese

The bread of life is love, the salt of life is work, the sweetness of life is poesy, and the water of life is faith. -Anna Jameson

I believe talent is like electricity. We don't understand electricity. We use it. You can plug into it and light up a lamp, keep a heart pump going, light a cathedral, or you can electrocute a person with it. Electricity will do all that. It makes no judgment. I think talent is like that. I believe every person is born with talent. -Maya Angelou

All of writing is a huge lake. There are great rivers that feed the lake, like Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky. And there are mere trickles, like Jean Rhys. All that matters is feeding the lake. I don't matter. The lake matters. -Jean Rhys

There ain't no answer. There ain't going to be any answer. There never has been an answer. That's the answer. -Gertrude Stein

Expecting Life to treat you well because you are a good person is like expecting an angry bull not to charge because you are a vegetarian. -Shari R. Barr

Change is an easy panacea. It takes character to stay in one place and be happy there. -Elizabeth Clarke Dunn

Women

Any woman born with a great gift in the sixteenth century would certainly have gone crazed, shot herself or ended her days in some lonely cottage outside the village, half witch, half wizard, feared and mocked at. -Virginia Woolf

Women have been called queens for a long time, but the kingdom given them isn't worth ruling. -Louisa May Alcott

Men have always been afraid that women could get along without them. -Margarat Mead

Macho doesn't prove mucho. -Zsa Zsa Gabor

I've been called a Medusa, an Octopus, etc. The attack being: here is a woman who doesn't use words in a soft, compliant way; therefore, she is an evil witch. -Margaret Atwood

There is no female mind. The brain is not an organ of sex. Might as well speak of a female liver. -Charlotte Perkins Gilman

People call me feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat or a prostitute. -Dame Rebecca West

One is not born a woman, one becomes one. -Simone de Beauvoir

Welsh Proverbs

Henaint ni ddaw ei hunan.
Old age comes not on its own.

Nerth hen, ei gyngor parad.
The strength of the old is their ready counsel.

Bum gall unwaith-hynny oedd, llefain pan ym ganed.
I was wise once, when I was born I cried.

Nerth hen, ei gyngor parad.
The strength of the old is their ready counsel.

Po hynaf for'r dyn, gadwaethaf fydd ei bwyll.
The older the man, the weaker his mind.

Tyfid maban, ni thyf a gadachan.
The child will grow, his diaper will not.

Unwaith yn ddyn, dwywiaith yn blentyn.
One time a man, two times a child.

Hen y teimllir ergyndion a gaed yn ifanc.
Old feel the blows suffered when young.

Am gwymp hen y chwardd ieuanc.
The young laugh when the old fall.

Ni edrych angau pwy decaf ei dalcen.
Death considers not the fairest forehead.

Haws twyllo maban na gwrachan.
A boy is easier cheated than an old lady.

O bob trwm, trymaf henaint.
Of all weights, old age is the heaviest.

Adversity brings knowledge, and knowledge wisdom.

Have a horse of your own and then you may borrow another's.

If every man would sweep his own door-step the city would soon be clean.

If you would get ahead, be a bridge.

Three things it is best to avoid: a strange dog, a flood, and a man who thinks he is wise.

Your hand is never the worse for doing its own work.

A bad farmer's hedge is full of gaps.

If every fool wore a crown, we should all be kings.

Akkadian Proverbs

Let your mouth be restrained and your speech guarded;

That is a man's pride - let what you say be very precious.

Let insolence and blasphemy be an abomination for you; a talebearer is looked down upon....

Do not return evil to your adversary; requite with kindness the one who does evil to you; maintain justice for your enemy; be friendly to your enemy....

Give food to eat, beer to drink;

Grant what is requested; provide for and treat with honor.

At this one's god takes pleasure.

It is pleasing to Shamash, who will repay him with favor.

Do good things; be kind all your days.

Does a marsh receive the price of its reeds, or fields the price of their vegetation?

The strong live by their own wages; the weak by the wages of their children.

Friendship is for the day of trouble, posterity for the future.

An ass in another city becomes its head.

Writing is the mother of eloquence and the father of artists.

Do not cut off the neck of that which has had its neck cut off.

Wealth is hard to come by, but poverty is always at hand.

The fox, having urinated into the sea, said that the whole of the sea is my urine

Part Three:

Monotheistic Faiths

The Way of the Sufis

Once again I present another collection of materials gathered by the great Idries Shah's above titled selection of advice and wisdom of the greatest Sufi saints. I only present a 15% selection, for I do not have time for all, and I do not understand many of them, and may never reach that point of enlightenment. (See the works of Nasruddin in the Green Books)

Idries Shah was born in 1924, and is famous for books on nearly all subjects. He is most prominent for writings on Sufi thought as it applies to cultures in the East and West. His books, "thinkers of the East" and "Learning how to Learn" are also published by Penguin's Arkana label. The bulk of the following selections are by Idries Shah, The Way of the Sufi, by Arkana, 1968 (1990) ISBN 0-14-019252. Others were taken from "Muslim Saints and Mystics: Episodes from the Tadhkirat al-Auliya ('Memorial of the Saints')" by Farid al-Din Attar. Translated by A.J. Arberry. Published by Arkana label of Penguin Books 1966/1990. ISBN 0-14-019264-6 A 13th century collection of Sufi stories primarily of 8th/9th century saints.

These authors' works have come closest to my model of good Druidic anthology of readings; short, pithy and full of amazing insights from many sources on many subjects. Because the Sufi dervish goals of mysticism are similar to that of Druidism, as I see it, I highly recommend all of his works to young aspiring Druids, as especially Arch Druids trying to figure out their focus for their Grove. You will find further study enlightening, but Shah has a warning for those interested only in the written records:

Shah on Sufism

Sufi's contend, far from this lore being available in books, a great part of it must be personally communicated by means of an interaction between the teacher and the learner. Too much attention to the written page, they insist, can even be harmful. Here is a further problem; for it appears to oppose the scholar no less than the member of the vast modern literate community who feels, if at times only subconsciously, that all knowledge must surely be available in books. -Shah pg. 29

The Sufi must act and speak in a manner which takes into consideration the understanding, limitations and dominant concealed prejudices of his audience." -Shah pg. 36

What is the good of a wonderful milk yield from a cow which kicks the pail over? -Risalat (Epistles to Disciples)

One of the most striking peculiarities of contemporary man is that while he now has abundant scientific evidence to the contrary, he finds it intensely difficult to understand that his beliefs are by no means always linked with either his intelligence, his culture or his values. He is therefore almost unreasonably prone to indoctrination. Shah pg. 55

"Mysticism" having been given a bad name like the dog in the proverb, if it cannot be hanged, can at least be ignored. This is a measure of scholastic psychology: accept the man's discoveries if you cannot deny them, but ignore his method if it does not follow your beliefs about methods. -Shah pg. 56

Attraction of Celebrities

A man who is being delivered from the danger of a fierce lion does not object, whether this service is performed by an unknown or an illustrious individual. Why, therefore, do people seek knowledge from celebrities? -El Ghazali

The Dance

A disciple had asked permission to take part in the "dance' of the Sufis. The Sheikh said: "Fast completely for three days. Then have luscious dishes cooked. If you then prefer the "dance," you may take part in it. -El Ghazali

The Words of Omar Kayyam

Seeds like These

In cell and cloister, in monastery and synagogue:
Some fear hell and others dream of Paradise.
But no man who really knows the secrets of his God
Has planted seeds like this within his heart.

Under the Earth

You are not gold, ignorantly heedless one:
That, once put in the earth, anyone
Will bring you out again.

I am

Every clique has a theory about me -
I am mine; what I am, I am.

The Words of Attar Nishapur

The Heart

Someone went up to a madman who was weeping in the bitterest possible way. He said, "Why do you cry?"

The madman answered, "I am crying to attract the pity of His heart."

The other told him: "Your words are nonsense, for He has no physical heart."

The Madman answered," It is you who are wrong, for He is the owner of all the hearts which exist. Through the heart you can make your connection with God."

The Madman and the Muezzin

A muezzin in Isafahan had climbed to the top of a minaret and was giving the call to prayer.

Meanwhile, a madman was passing by, and someone asked him, "What is he doing there, in that minaret?"

The madman said, "That man up there is in fact shaking a nutshell which has nothing within it."

When you speak the ninety-nine Names of God, you are, similarly, playing with a hollow nutshell. How can God be understood through names?

Since you cannot speak in words about the essence of God, best of all speak about nobody at all.

-Kitab Ilahi

The Test

It is related of Shaquiq of Balkh that he once said to his disciples: "I put my confidence in God and went through the wilderness with only a small coin in my pocket. I went on the Pilgrimage and came back, and the coin is still with me."

One of the youth stood up and said to Shaqiq: "If you had a coin in your pocket, how could you say that you relied upon anything higher?"

Shaqiq answered: "There is nothing for me to say, for this young man is right. When you rely upon the invisible world there is no place for anything, however small, as a provision!"

-Kitab-Ilahi

The Unaware Tree

A man cut down a tree one day.

A Sufi who was this taking place said, "Look at this branch which is full of sap, happy because it does not yet know that it has been cut off. Ignorant of the damage which it has suffered it may be- but it will know it due time. ,Meanwhile you cannot reason with it."

This severance, this ignorance, these are the state of man.

Unaware

You know nothing of yourself here and in this state.

You are like the wax in the honeycomb: what does it know of fire or guttering?

When it gets to the stage of the waxen candle and when light is emitted, then it knows.

Similarly, you will know that when you were alive you were dead, and only thought yourself alive.

The King Who Divined His Future

A king who was also an astrologer read in his stars that on a certain day and at a particular hour a calamity would overtake him. He therefore built a house of solid rock and posted numerous guardians outside.

One day, when he was within, he realized that he could still see daylight. He found an opening into which he shoved a rock, to prevent misfortune entering. In blocking his door he made himself a prisoner with his own hands.

And because of this the King died.

The Words of Ibn El-Arabi

Whence Came the Title?

Jafar the son of Yahya of Lisbon determined to find the Sufi 'Teacher of the Age', and he traveled to Mecca as a young man to seek him. There he met a mysterious stranger, a man in a green robe, who said to him before any word had been spoken:

'You seek the Greatest Sheikh, the Teacher of the Age. But you seek him in the East, when he is in the West. And there is another thing which is incorrect in your seeking.'

He sent Jafar back to Andalusia, to find the man he named - Mohiudin, son of El Arabi, of the tribe of Hatim-Tai. 'He is the Greatest Sheikh.'

Telling nobody why he sought him, Jafar found the Tai family in Murcia and inquired for their son. He found that he had actually been in Lisbon when Jafar had set off on his travels. Finally he traced him to Seville.

'There,' said a cleric, 'is Mohiudin.' He pointed to a mere schoolboy, carrying a book on the Traditions, who was at that moment hurrying from a lecture-hall.

Jafar was confused, but stopped the boy and said:

'Who is the Greatest Teacher?'

'I need time to answer that question,' said the boy.

'Art thou the only Mohiudin, so of El-Arabi, of the Tribe of Tai?' asked Jafar.

'I am he."

'Then I have no need of thee.'

Thirty years later in Aleppo, he found himself entering the lecture-hall of the Greatest Sheikh, Mohiudin Ibn El-Arabi, of the tribe of Tai. Mohiudin saw him as he entered, and spoke:

'Now that I am ready to answer the question you put to me, there is no need to put it at all. Thirty years ago, Jafar, thou hadst no need of me. Hast thou still no need of me? The Green One spoke of something wrong in thy seeking. It was time and place.'

Jafar son of Yahya became one of the foremost disciples of El-Arabi.

The Words of Saadi of Shiraz

Notable Quotes

If a gem falls into the mud it is still valuable. If dust ascends to heaven, it remains valueless.

The alchemist dies in pain and frustration - while the fool finds treasure in a ruin.

Green wood can be bent; When it is dry, it is only straightened by fire.

That building without a firm base: do not build it high; or, if you do -be afraid.

A tree, freshly rooted, may be pulled up by one man on his own. Give it time, and it will not be moved, even with a crane.

Make no friendship with an elephant-keeper if you have no room to entertain an elephant.

The Arab horse speeds fast. The camel plods slowly, but it goes by day and night.

What can the tiger catch in the dark recesses of his own lair?

The Pearl

A raindrop, dripping from a cloud,
Was ashamed when it saw the sea.
'Who am I where there is a sea?' it said.
When it saw itself with the eye of humility,
A shell nurtured it in its embrace.

Scholars and Recluses

Give money to the scholars, so that they can study more.
Give nothing to the recluses, that they may remain recluses.

The Fox and The Camels

A fox was seen running away in terror. Someone asked what was troubling it. The fox answered: 'They are taking camels for forced labour. "Fool!' he was told, 'the fate of camels has nothing to do with you, who do not even look like one.' 'Silence!' said the fox, 'for if an intriguer were to state that I was a camel, who would work for my release?'

Ambition

Ten dervishes can sleep beneath one blanket; but two kings cannot reign in one land. A devoted man will eat half his bread, and give the other half to dervishes. A ruler may have a realm, but yet plot to overcome the world.

The Words of Hakim Jaami

Notable Quotes

The essence of truth is superior to the terminology of 'How?' or 'Why?'

Justice and fairness, not religion or atheism, are needful for the protection of the State.

The Beggar

A beggar went to a door, asking for something to be given to him. The owner answered, and said: 'I am sorry, but there is nobody in.'
'I don't want anybody,' said the beggar, 'I want food.'

What Shall We Do?

The rose has gone from the garden; what shall we do with the thorns?
The Shah is not in the city; what shall we do with his court?
The fair are cages, beauty and goodness the bird;
When the bird has flown, what shall we do with the cage?

The Words of Jalaludin Rumi

The Way

The Way has been marked out.
If you depart from it, you will perish.
If you try to interfere with the signs on the road,
You will surely be an evil-doer.

I am the Life of My Beloved

What can I do, Muslims? I do not know myself.
I am no Christian, no Jew, no Magian, no Musulman.
Not of the East, not of the West. Not of the land, not of the sea.
Not of the Mine of Nature, not of the circling heavens,
Not of earth, not of water, not of air, not of fire;
Not of the throne, not of the ground, of existence, of being;
Not of India, China, Bulgaria, Saqseen;
Not of the kingdom of Iraqs, or of Khorasan;
Not of this world or the next: of heaven or hell;
Not of Adam, Eve, the gardens of Paradise or Eden;
My place placeless, my trace traceless.
Neither body nor soul: all is the life of my Beloved...

No Other Place

Cross and Christians, end to end, I examined. He was not on the Cross. I went to the Hindu temple, to the ancient pagoda. In none of them was there any sign. To the uplands of Herat I went, and to Kandahar. I looked. He was not on the heights or in the lowlands. Resolutely, I went to the summit of the fabulous mountain of kaf. There only was the dwelling of the legendary Anqa bird. I went to Kaaba of Mecca. He was not there. I asked about him from Avicenna the philosopher. He was beyond the range of Avicenna... I looked into my heart. In that, his place, I saw him. He was in no other place.

Two Reeds

Two reeds drink from one stream. One is hollow, the other sugarcane.

Actions and Words

I am giving people what they want. I am reciting poetry because people desire it as an entertainment. In my own country, people do not like poetry. I have long searched for people who want action, but all they want is words. I am ready to show you action; but none will patronize this action. So I present you with - words.

Efforts

Tie two birds together.
They will not be able to fly, even though they now have four wings.

This Task

You have a duty to perform. Do anything else, do any number of things, occupy your time fully, and yet, if you do not do this task, all your time will have been wasted.

Teachings of the Chikistri Order

The Gardens

Once upon a time, when the science and art of gardening was not yet well established among men, there was a master-gardener. In addition to knowing all the qualities of plants, their nutritious, medicinal and aesthetic values, he had been granted a knowledge of the Herb of Longevity, and he lived for many hundreds of years.

In successive generations, he visited gardens and cultivated places throughout the world. In one place he planted a wonderful garden, and instructed the people in its upkeep and even in the theory of gardening. But, becoming accustomed to seeing some of the plants come up and flower every year, they soon forgot that others had to have their seeds collected, that some were propagated from cuttings, that some needed extra watering, and so on. The result was that the garden eventually became wild, and people started to regard this as the best garden that there could be.

After giving these people many chances to learn, the gardener expelled them and recruited another whole band of workers. He warned them that if they did not keep the garden in order, and study his methods, they would suffer for it. They, in turn, forgot - and, since they were lazy, tended only those fruits and flowers which were easily reared and allowed the others to die. Some of the first trainees came back to them from time to time, saying: 'You should do this and that,' but they drove them away, shouting: 'You are the ones who are departing from truth in this matter.'

But the master-gardener persisted. He made other gardens, wherever he could, and yet none was ever perfect except the one which he himself tended with his chief assistants. As it became known that there were many gardens and even many methods of gardening, people from one garden would visit those of another, to approve, to criticize, or to argue. Books were written, assemblies of gardeners were held, gardeners arranged themselves in grades according to what they thought to be the right order of precedence.

As is the way of men the difficulty of the gardeners remains that they are too easily attracted by the superficial. They say: 'I like this flower,' and they want everyone else to like it as well. It may, in spite of its attraction or abundance, be a weed which is choking other plants which could provide medicines or food which the people and the garden need for their sustenance and permanency.

Among these gardeners are those who prefer plants of one single colour. These they may describe as 'good.' There are others who will only tend the plants, while refusing to care about the paths or the gates, or even the fences.

When, at length, the ancient gardener died, he left as his endowment the whole knowledge of gardening, distributing it among the people who would understand in accordance with their capacities. So the science as well as the art of gardening remained as a scattered heritage in many gardens and also in some records of them.

People who are brought up in one garden or another generally have been so powerfully instructed as to the merits or demerits of how the inhabitants see things that they are almost incapable - though they make the effort - of realizing that they have to return to the concept of 'garden.' At the best, they generally only accept, reject, suspend judgment or look what they imagine are the common factors.

From time to time true gardeners do arise. Such is the abundance of semi-gardens that when they hear of real ones people say: 'Oh, yes. You are talking about a garden such as we already have, or we imagine.' What they have and what they imagine are both defective.

The real experts, who cannot reason with the quasi-gardeners, associate for the most part among themselves, putting into this or that garden something from the total stock which will enable it to maintain its vitality to some extent.

They are often forced to masquerade, because the people who want to learn from them seldom know about the fact of gardening as an art or science underlying everything that they have heard

before. So they ask questions like: 'How can I get a more beautiful flower on these onions?'

The real gardeners may work with them because true gardeners can sometimes be brought into being, for the benefit of all mankind. They do not last long, but it is only through them that the knowledge can be truly learnt and people can come to see what a garden really is.

Continuity

A group of Sufis, sent by their preceptor to a certain district, settled themselves in a house.

In order to avoid undesirable attention, only the man in charge - the Chief Deputy - taught in public. The rest of the community assumed the supposed functions of the servants of his household.

When this teacher died, the community rearranged their functions, revealing themselves as advanced mystics.

But the inhabitants of the country not only shunned them as imitators, but actually said: 'For shame! See how they have usurped and shared out the patrimony of the Great Teacher. Why, these miserable servants now even behave as if they were themselves Sufis!'

Commentary: Ordinary people, only through lack of experience in reflection, are without the means to judge such situations as these. They therefore tend to accept mere imitators who step into the shoes of a teacher and reject those who are indeed carrying on his work.

When a teacher leaves a community, by dying or otherwise, it may be intended for his activity to be continued - or it may not. Such is the greed of ordinary people that they always assume that this continuity is desirable. Such is their relative stupidity that they cannot see the continuity if it takes a form other than the crudest possible one.

When Death is not Death

A certain man was believed to have died, and was being prepared for burial, when he revived. He sat up, but was so shocked at the scene surrounding him that he fainted. he was put in a coffin, and the funeral party set off for the cemetery.

Just as they arrived at the grave, re gained consciousness, lifted the coffin lid, and cried out for help.

'It is not possible that he has revived,' said the mourners, 'because he has been certified dead by competent experts.'

'But I am alive!' shouted the man.

He appealed to a well-known and impartial scientist and jurisprudence who was present.

'Just a moment.' said the expert.

He then turned to the mourners, counting them. 'Now, we have heard what the alleged deceased has had to say. You fifty witnesses tell me what you regard as the truth.'

'He is dead,' said the witnesses.

'Bury him!' said the expert.

And so he was buried.

The Seven Brothers

Once upon a time there was a wise father who had seven sons. While they were growing up, he taught them as much as he could, but before he could complete their education her perceived something which made their safety more important. He realized that a catastrophe was going to overwhelm their country. The young men were foolhardy and he could not confide completely in them. He knew that if he said: ' A catastrophe threatens,' they would say: 'We will stay here with you and face it.'

So he told each son that he must undertake a mission, and that he was to leave for that mission forthwith. He sent the first to the north, the second to the south, the third to the west and the fourth to the east. The three other sons he sent to unknown destinations.

As son as they had gone, the father, using his special knowledge, made his way to a distant country to carry on some work which had been interrupted by the need to educate his sons.

When they had completed their missions, the first four sons returned to their country. The father had so timed the duration of their tasks that they would be safely and remotely engaged upon them until it was possible to return home.

In accordance with their instructions the sons went back to the place which they had known in their youth. But now they did not know one another. Each claimed that he was the son of his father, each one refused to believe the others. Time and climate, sorrow and indulgence, had done their work, and the appearance of the men was changed.

Because they were so bitterly opposed to one another and each determined to assess the other by his stature, his beard, the colour of his skin, and his manner of speech - all of which had changed - no brother would for months allow another to open the letter from their common father which contained the answer to their problem and the remainder of the education.

The father had foreseen this, such was his wisdom. He knew that until they were able to understand that they had changed very much they would not be able to learn any more. The situation at the present is that two of the sons have recognized one another, but only tentatively. They have opened the letter. They are trying to adjust themselves to the fact that what they took to be fundamentals are really - in the form in which they use them - worthless externals; what they have for many years prized at the very roots of their importance may in reality be vain and now useless dreams.

The other two brothers, watching them, are not satisfied that they are being improved by their experience, and do not want to emulate them. The three brothers who went in the other directions have not yet arrived at the rendezvous.

As to the four, it will be some time before they truly realize that the only means of their survival in their exiles - the superficials which they think important - are the very barriers to their understanding.

All are still far from knowledge.

The Oath

A man who was troubled in mind once swore that if his problems were solved he would sell his house and give all the money gained from it to the poor.

The time came when he realized that he must redeem his oath. But he did not want to give away so much money. So he thought of a way out.

He put the house on sale at one silver piece. Included with the house, however, was a cat. The price asked for this animal was ten thousand pieces of silver.

Another man bought the house and cat. The first man gave the single piece of silver to the poor, and pocketed the ten thousand for himself.

Many people's minds work like this. they resolve to follow a teaching; but they interpret their relationship with it to their own advantage.

The Sufi Missionary

The Sufi is in the position of a stranger in a country, of a guest in a house. Anyone in either capacity must think of the local mentality.

The real Sufi is a 'changed' man (abdal), change being an essential part of Sufism. The ordinary man is not changed; hence a need for dissimulation.

A man goes into a country where nakedness is honourable, and wearing clothes is considered dishonourable. In order to exist in that country, he must shed his clothes. If he says merely: 'Wearing clothes is best, nakedness is dishonourable,' he puts himself outside the range of the people of the country which he is visiting.

Therefore he will either quit the country or- if he has functions to perform there - he will accept or temporize. If the subject of the excellence or otherwise of wearing clothes comes up in discussion, he will probably have to dissimulate. There is a clash of habits here.

There is an even greater clash between habit thought and non-habit thought. The Sufi, because he has experienced, in common with others, so many things, knows a range of existence which he cannot justify by argument, even if only because all arguments have already been tried by someone at one time or another, and certain ones have prevailed and are considered 'good sense.'

His activity, like that of an artist, is reduced to that of illustration.

The Teaching of the Quadri Order

The Rogue, the Sheep and the Villagers

Once there was a rogue who was caught by the people of a village. They tied him to a tree to contemplate the suffering which they were going to inflict on him; and went away, having decided to throw him into the sea that evening, after they had finished their day's work.

But a shepherd, who was not very intelligent, came along and asked the clever rogue why he was tied up like that.

'Ah,' said the rogue, 'some men have put me here because I will not accept their money.'

'Why do they want to give it to you and why will you not take it?' asked the astonished shepherd.

'Because I am a contemplative, and they want to corrupt me,' said the rogue; 'they are godless men.'

The shepherd suggested that he should take the rogue's place, and advised the rogue to run away and put himself out of the reach of the godless ones.

So they changed places.

The citizens returned after nightfall, put a sack over the shepherd's head, tied him up, and threw him into the sea.

The next morning they were amazed to see the rogue coming into the village with a flock of sheep.

'Where have you been, and where did you get those animals?' they asked him.

'In the sea there are kindly spirits who reward all who jump in and "drown" in this manner,' said the rogue.

In almost less time than it takes to tell, the people rushed to the seashore and jumped in.

That was how the rogue took over the village.

Teachings of the Naqshbandi Order

The Host and the Guests

The teacher is like a host in his own house. His guests are those who are trying to study the Way. These are people who have never been in a house before, and they only have vague ideas as to what a house may be like. It exists, nonetheless.

When the guests enter the house and see the place set aside for sitting in, they ask: 'What is this?' they are told: 'This is a place where we sit.' So they sit down on chairs, only dimly conscious of the function of the chair.

The host entertains them, but they continue to ask questions, some irrelevant. Like a good host, he does not blame them for this. They want to know, for instance, where and when they are going to eat. They do not know that nobody is alone, and that at that very moment there are other people who are cooking the food, and that there is another room in which they will sit down and have a meal. Because they cannot see the meal or its preparations, they are confused, perhaps doubtful, sometimes ill at ease.

The good host, knowing the problems of the guests, has to put them at their ease, so that they will be able to enjoy the food when it comes. At the outset they are in no state to approach the food.

Some of the guests are quicker to understand and relate one thing about the house to another. These are the ones who can communicate to their slower friends. The host, meanwhile, gives each guest an answer in accordance with his capacity to perceive the unity and function of the house.

It is not enough for a house to exist - for it to be made ready to receive guests - for the host to be present. Someone must actively exercise the function of the host, in order that the strangers who are guests, and for whom the host has responsibility, may become accustomed to the house. At the beginning, many of them are not aware that they are guests, or rather exactly what guest hood means: what they can bring to it, what it can give them.

The experienced guest, who has learned about houses and hospitality, is at length at ease in his guest hood, and he is then in a position to understand more about houses and about the facets of living in them. While he is still trying to understand what a house is, or trying to remember the rules of etiquette, his attention is too much taken up by these factors to be able to observe, say, the beauty, value or function of the furniture.

The Three Candidates

Three men made their way to the circle of a Sufi, seeking admission to his teachings.

One of them almost at once detached himself, angered by the erratic behavior of the master.

The second was told by another disciple (on the master's instructions) that the sage was a fraud. He withdrew very soon afterwards.

The Third was allowed to talk, but was offered no teaching for so long that he lost interest and left the circle.

When they had all gone away, the teacher instructed his circle thus:

'The first man was an illustration of the principle: " Do not judge fundamental things by sight." The second was an illustration of the injunction: "Do not judge things of deep importance by hearing." The third was an example of the dictum: "Never judge by speech, or the lack of it."

Asked by a disciple why the applicants could not have been instructed in this matter, the sage retorted: 'I am here to give higher knowledge; not to teach what people pretend that they already know at their mothers' knees.'

Three Visits to a Sage

Bahaudin Naqshband was visited by a group of seekers.

They found him in his courtyard, surrounded by disciples, in the midst of what seemed obviously to be revels.

Some of the newcomers said: 'How obnoxious - this is no way to behave, whatever the pretext.' They tried to remonstrate with the master.

Others said: 'This seems to us excellent - we like this kind of teaching, and wish to take part in it.'

Yet others said: 'We are partly perplexed and wish to know more about this puzzle.'

The remainder said to one another: 'There may be some wisdom in this, but whether we should ask about it or not we do not know.'

The teacher sent them all away.

And all these people spread, in conversation and in writing, their opinions of the occasion. Even those who did not allude to their experience directly were affected by it, and their speech and works reflected their beliefs about it.

Some time later certain members of this party again passed that way and they called upon the teacher.

Standing at his door, they noticed that within the courtyard he and his disciples now sat, decorously, deep in contemplation.

'This is better,' said some of the visitors, 'for he as evidently learned from our protests.'

'This is excellent,' said others, 'for last time he was undoubtedly only testing us.'

'This is too somber,' said others, 'for we could have found long faces anywhere.'

And there were other opinions, voiced and otherwise.

The sage, when the time of reflection was over, sent all these visitors away.

Much later, a small number returned and sought his interpretation of what they had experienced.

They presented themselves at the gateway, and looked into the courtyard. The teacher sat there, alone, neither reveling nor in meditation. His disciples were now nowhere to be seen.

'You may at last hear the whole story,' he said, 'for I have been able to dismiss my pupils, since the task is done.

'When you first came, that class of mine had been too serious - I was in process of applying the corrective. The second time you came, they had been too gay - I was applying the corrective.'

'When a man is working, he does not always explain himself to casual visitors, however interested the visitors may think themselves to be. When an action is in progress, what counts is the correct operation of that action. Under these circumstances, external evaluation becomes a secondary concern.'

One Way of Teaching

Bahaudin was sitting with some disciples when a number of followers came into the meeting-hall.

El-Shah asked them, one by one, to say why he was there.

The first said: 'You are the greatest man on earth.'

'I gave him a potion when he was ill, and so he thinks I am the greatest man on earth,' said El-Shah.

The second said: 'My spiritual life has opened up since I have been allowed to visit you.'

'He was uncertain and ill at ease, and none would listen to him. I sat with him, and the resultant serenity is called by him his spiritual life,' said El-Shah.

The third said: 'You understand me, and all I ask is that you allow me to hear your discourses, for the good of my soul.'

'He needs attention and wishes to have notice paid to him, even if it is in criticism,' said El-Shah. This he calls the "good of his soul.'"

The fourth said: 'I went from one to another, practicing what they taught. It was not until you gave me a wazifa (exercise) that I truly felt the illumination of contact with you.'

'The exercise which I gave to this man,' said El-Shah, 'was a concocted one, not related to his "spiritual" life at all. I had to demonstrate his illusion of spirituality before I could arrive at the part of this man which is really spiritual, not sentimental.'

Cherished Notions

Sadik Hamzawi was asked:

'How do you come to succeed, by his own wish, the sage of Samarkand, when you were only a servant in his house?'

He said: 'He taught me what he wanted to teach me, and I learned it. He said once: " I cannot teach the others, the disciples, to the same degree, because they want to ask the questions, they demand the meetings, they impose the framework, they therefore only teach themselves what they already know."

'I said to him: "Teach me what you can and tell me how to learn." This is how I became his successor. People have cherished notions about how teaching and learning should take place. They cannot have the notions and also the learning.'

Falsity

One day a man went to a Sufi master and described how a certain false teacher was prescribing exercises for his followers.

'The man is obviously a fraud. He asks his disciples to "think of nothing." It is easy enough to say that, because it impresses some people. But it is impossible to think of nothing.'

The master asked him: 'Why have you come to see me?'

'To point out the absurdity of this man, and also to discuss mysticism.'

'Not just to gain support for your decision that this man is an impostor?'

'No, I know that already.'

'Not to show those of us who are sitting here that you know more than the ordinary, gullible man?'

'No. In fact, I want you to give me guidance.'

'Very well. The best guidance I can give you is to advise you to - think of nothing.'

This man immediately withdrew from the company, convinced that the master was also a fraud.

But a stranger, who had missed the beginning of these events, and had entered the assembly at the exact moment when the sage was saying, 'The best guidance I can give you is to advise you to - think of nothing.', was profoundly impressed.

'To think of nothing: what a sublime conception!' he said to himself.

And he went away after that day's session, having heard nothing to contradict the idea of thinking of nothing.

The following day one of the students asked the master which of them had been correct.

'Neither,' he said. 'They still have to learn that their greed is a veil, a barrier. Their answer is not in one word, one visit, one easy solution. Only by continuous contact with a teaching does the pupil absorb, little by little, that which gradually accumulates into an understanding of truth. Thus does the seeker become a finder.'

'The Master Rumi said: "Two men come to you, one having dreamt of heaven, the other of hell. They ask which is reality. What is the answer?" The answer is to attend the discourses of a master until you are in harmony.'

Sentences of the Khajagan

Heart to heart is an essential means of passing on the secrets of the Path. -Rudbari

Learning is in activity. Learning through words alone is minor activity. -Maghribi

At a certain time, more can be conveyed by distracting useless attention than by attracting it. -Khurqani

Experience of extremes is the only way towards the proper working of the mean in study. -Farmadhi

Service of humanity is not only helpful to correct living. By its means the inner knowledge can be preserved, concentrated and transmitted. -Hamadani

Local activity is the keynote of the Dervish Path. -Yasavi

Effort is not effort without right time, right place and right people. -Andaki

We work in all places and at all times. People believe that a man is important if he is famous. The converse may equally well be true. -Ghajdawani

The mark of the Man who has Attained is when he does not mistake figurative for specific, or literal for symbolic. -Ahmad Sadiq

Stupidity is to look for something in a place where untutored imagination expects to find it. It is, in fact, everywhere that you can extract it. -Rewgari

Information becomes fragmented, knowledge does not. What causes fragmentation in information is scholasticism. -Ramitani

Man think many things. He thinks he is One. He is usually several. Until he becomes One, he cannot have a fair idea of what he is at all. -Samasi

We send a thought to China and it becomes Chinese, they say, because they cannot see the man who sent it. We send a man to India, and they say that he is only a Turkestani. -Sokhari

When people say 'weep', they do not mean 'weep always.' When they say 'do not cry', they do not mean you to be a permanent buffoon. -Naqshband

A true document may contain seven layers of truth. A writing or speech which appears to have no significance may have as many layers of truth. -Attar.

It is not a matter of whether you can learn by silence, by speech, by effort, by submission. It is a matter of how this is done, not 'that it is done.' -Khamosh

If you still ask: 'Why did such-and-such a person teach in this or that manner, and how does it apply to me?' -you are incapable of understanding the answer deeply enough. -Kashgari

No matter where the truth is in your case, your teacher can help you find it. If she applies only one series of method to everyone, she is not a teacher, let alone yours. -Charkhi

For every trick or imagination there is a reality of which it is a counterfeit. -Samarqandi

We do not live in the East or West; we do not study in the North, nor do we teach in the South. We are not bound in this way, but we may be compelled to talk in this way. -Al-Lahi

The Way may be through a drop of water. It may, equally, be through a complex prescription. -Al-Bokhari

When you see a Sufi studying or teaching something which seems to belong to a field other than spirituality you should know that there is the spirituality of the age. -Zahid

When it is time for stillness, stillness; in the time of companionship, companionship; at the place of effort, effort. In the time and place of anything, anything. -Dervish

Do not talk of the Four Ways, or of the Seventy-two Paths, or of "Paths as numerous as the souls of Men.' Talk instead of the Path and the attaining. All is subordinated to that. -Sirhindi

You cannot destroy us is you are against us. But you can make things difficult for us even if you think you are helping. -Badauni

We spend a space in a place. Do not put up a sign to mark the place. Take rather of the material which adheres to the place, while it is still there. -Dehlavi

You hear my words. Hear, too, that there are words other than mine. These are not meant for hearing with the physical ear. Because you see only me, you think there is no Sufism apart from me. You are here to learn, not to collect historical information. -Qandahari

You may follow one stream. Realize that it leads to the Ocean. Do not mistake the stream for the Ocean. -Jan-fishan

Sayings of the Masters

The Magian and the Muslim

A fire-worshipping Magian was asked why he did not become a Muslim. He answered: 'If you mean that I should be as good a man as Bayazid, I lack the courage. If, however, you mean that I should be as bad a man as you, I would detest it.' -Bayazid Bistami

Names

You call me a Christian, to make me angry and to make yourself feel happy. Others call themselves Christians, to make themselves feel other emotions. Very well, if we are dealing in exciting words, I will call you a devil-worshipper. That should give you an agitation which will please you for some time. -Zabardast Khan

Prayers

A devoutly religious man, who was a disciple of Bayazid, said to him one day: 'I am surprised that anyone who accepts God should not attend the mosque for worship.'

Bayazid answered: 'I, on the other hand, am surprised that anyone who knows God can worship him and not lose his sense, rendering his ritual prayer invalid.'

What the Devil Said

Once upon a time there was a dervish. As he was sitting in contemplation, he noticed that there was a sort of devil near him.

The dervish said: 'Why are you sitting there, making no mischief?'

The demon raised his head wearily. 'Since the theoreticians and would-be teachers of the Path have appeared in such numbers, there is nothing left for me to do.'

Thauri on Contemplation

The great Shibli went to visit the illustrious Thauri. The master was sitting so still that not a hair of him moved in any way.

Shibli asked: 'Where did you learn such stillness?'

Thauri replied: 'From a cat. He was watching a mousehole with even greater concentration than you have seen in me.'

The Idol

Someone told Uwais El-Qarni that a certain dervish sat on a tomb, dressed in a shroud and weeping.

Qarni said: 'Tell him that the method has become an idol; he must transcend the practice, for it is an obstacle.'

The Candle's Duty

The Candle is not there to illuminate itself. -Nawab Jan-Fishan Khan

Three Stages of Worship

Mankind passes through three stages.

First he worships anything: man, woman, money, children, earth and stones. Then, when he has progressed a little further, he worships God. Finally he does not say: 'I worship God'; nor: 'I do not worship God.'

He has passed from the first two stages into the last. -Rumi

Seeing

Halls and theological colleges and learned lectures, circles and cloisters - What use are they when there is no knowledge and there is no eye that sees? -Hafiz

On Your Religion

Throughout the dervish literature you will find us saying repeatedly that we are not concerned with your religion or even with the lack of it. How can this be reconciled with the fact that believers consider themselves the elect?

Man's refinement is the goal, and the inner teaching of all the faiths aims at this. In order to accomplish it, there is always a tradition handed down by a living chain of adepts, who select candidates to whom to impart this knowledge.

Among men of all kinds this teaching has been handed down. Because of our dedication to the essence, we have, in the Dervish Path, collected those people who are less concerned about externals, and thus kept pure, in secret, our capacity to continue the succession. In the dogmatic religions of the Jews, the Christians, the Zoroastrians, the Hindus and literalist Islam this precious thing has been lost.

We return this vital principle to all these religions and this is why you will see so many Jews, Christians and others among my followers. The Jews say that we are the real Jews, the Christians, Christians.

It is only when you know the Higher Factor that you will know the true situation of the present religions and of unbelief itself. And unbelief itself is a religion with its own form of belief. -Ahmad Yasavi

Among the Masters

To a Believer

You probably seem to yourself to be a believer, even if you a believer in disbelief.

But you cannot really believe in anything until you are aware of the process by which you arrived at your position.

Before you do this you must be ready to postulate that all your beliefs may be wrong, that what you think to be belief may only be a variety of prejudice caused by your surroundings - including the bequest of your ancestors for whom you may have a sentiment.

True belief belongs to the realm of real knowledge.

Until you have knowledge, belief is mere coalesced opinions, however it may seem to you.

Coalesced opinions serve for ordinary living. Real belief enables higher studies to be made. -Attributed to Ali

Eat No Stones

A hunter, walking through some woods, came upon a notice. He read the words: "Stone Eating is Forbidden."

His curiosity was stimulated, and he followed a track which led past the sign until he came to a cave at the entrance to which a Sufi was sitting.

The Sufi said to him: 'The answer to your question is that you have never seen a notice prohibiting the eating of stones because there is no need for one. Not to eat stones may be called a common habit. Only when the human being is able similarly to avoid other habits, even more destructive than eating stones, will he be able to get beyond his present pitiful state.'

Why the Dog Could Not Drink

Shibli was asked: 'Who guided you in the Path?'

He said: 'A dog. One day I saw him, almost dead with thirst, standing by the water's edge.

'Every time he look at his reflection in the water he was frightened, and withdrew, because he thought it was another dog.

'Finally, such was his necessity, he cast away fear and leapt into the water; at which the "other dog" vanished.

'The dog found that the obstacle, which was himself, the barrier between him and what he sought, melted away.

'In this same way, my own obstacle vanished, when I knew that it was what I took to be my own self. And my Way was first shown to me by the behavior of - a dog.'

Man Believes What He Thinks is True

Teaching, as was his custom, during the ordinary business of life, Sheikh Abul Tahir Harami rode his donkey one day into a market-place, a disciple following behind.

At the sight of him, a man called out: 'Look, here come the ancient unbeliever!'

Harami's pupil, his wrath aroused, shouted at the defamer. Before long there was a fierce altercation in progress.

The Sufi calmed his disciple, saying: 'If you will only cease this tumult, I will show you how you can escape this kind of trouble.'

They went together to the old man's house. The sheikh told his follower to bring him a box of letters. 'Look at these. They are all letters addressed to me. But they are couched in different terms. Here someone calls me "sheikh of Islam"; there, "Sublime Teacher." Another say I am the "Wise One of the Twin Sanctuaries." And there are others.

'Observe how each styles me in accordance with what he considers me to be. But I am none of these things. Each man calls another just what he thinks him to be. This is what the unfortunate one in the market-place has just done. And yet you take exception to it. Why do you do so -since it is the general rule of life?'

Time for Learning

The Sage of Ascalon would only speak to his disciples rarely. When he did, they were overcome by his ideas.

'May we have lectures at times when we can conveniently attend?' they asked, 'because when you speak some of us have family duties and cannot always be there.'

'You will have to find someone else to do that,' he said, 'because whereas I only teach when I do not feel the urge to teach, there do exist some who can teach in accordance with who is present at a fixed time. It is they who feel the urge to teach and consequently only need to adapt what they say to the audiences.'

Four Teaching Stories

The Watermelon Hunter

Once upon a time there was a man who strayed, from his own country, into the world known as the Land of Fools.

He soon saw a number of people flying in terror from a field where they had been trying to reap wheat. 'There is a monster in that field,' they told him. He looked, and saw that it was a water-melon.

He offered to kill the 'monster' for them. When he had cut the melon from its stalk, he took a slice and began to eat it. The people became even more terrified of him than they had been of the melon. They drove him away with pitchforks, crying: 'He will kill us next, unless we get rid of him.'

It so happened that at another time another man also strayed into the Land of Fools, and the same thing started to happen to him. But, instead of offering to help them with the 'monster', he agreed with them that it must be dangerous, and by tiptoeing away from it with them he gained their confidence. He spent a long time with them in their houses until he could teach them, little by little, the basic facts which would enable them not only to lose their fear of melons, but even to cultivate them themselves.

Nasrudin's Ambassadorial Trip

By a series of misunderstanding and coincidences, Mulla Nasrudin found himself one day in the audience-hall of the Emperor of Persia.

The Shahinshah was surrounded by self-seeking nobles, governors of provinces, courtiers and sycophants of all kinds. Each was pressing his own claim to be appointed head of the embassy which was soon to set out for India.

The emperor's patience was at an end, and he raised his head from the importunate mass, mentally invoking the aid of Heaven in his problem as to who to choose. His eyes lighted upon Mulla Nasrudin.

'This man is to be the ambassador,' he announced; 'so now leave me in peace.'

Nasrudin was given rich clothes, and an enormous chest of rubies, diamonds, emeralds, and priceless works of art was entrusted to him, the gift of the Shahinshah to the great Mogul.

The courtiers, however, were not finished. United for once by this affront to their claims, they decided to encompass the downfall of the mulla. First they broke into his quarters and stole the jewels, which they divided among themselves, replacing them with earth to make up the weight. Then they called upon Nasrudin, determined to ruin his embassy, to get him into trouble, and in the process to discredit their master as well.

'Congratulations, great Nasrudin,' they said. 'What the Fountain of Wisdom, Peacock of the World, has ordered must be the essence of all wisdom. We therefore hail you. But there are just a couple of points upon which we may be able to advise you, accustomed as we are to the behavior of diplomatic emissaries.'

'I should be obliged if you would tell me,' said Nasrudin.

'Very well,' said the chief of the intriguers. 'The first thing is that you must be humble. In order to prove how modest you are, therefore, you should not show any sign of self-importance. When you reach India you must enter as many mosques as you can, and make collections for yourself. The second thing is that you must observe court etiquette in the country to which you are accredited. This will mean that you will refer to the Great Mogul as 'the Full Moon.'

'But is that not the title of the Persian emperor?'

'Not in India.'

So Nasrudin set out. The Persian emperor told him as they took leave: 'Be careful, Nasrudin. Adhere to etiquette, for the Mogul is a mighty emperor and we must impress him while not affronting him in any way.'

'I am well prepared, Majesty,' said Nasrudin.

As soon as he entered the territory of India, Nasrudin went into a mosque and mounted the pulpit: 'O people!' he cried, 'see in me the representative of the Shadow of Allah upon Earth! The Axis of the Globe! Bring out your money, for I am making a collection.'

This he repeated in every mosque he could find, all the way from Baluchistan to Imperial Delhi.

He collected a great deal of money. 'Do with it,' the counselors had said, 'what you will. For it is the product of intuitive growth and bestowal, and as such its use will create its own demand.' All that they wanted to happen was for the mulla

to be exposed to ridicule for collecting money in this 'shameless' manner. 'The holy must live from their holiness,' roared Nasrudin at mosque after mosque. 'I give no account nor do I expect any. To you, money is something to be hoarded, after being sought. You can exchange it for material things. To me, it is part of a mechanism. I am the representative of a natural force of intuitive growth, bestowal and disbursement.'

Now, as we all know, good often proceeds from apparent evil, and the reverse. Those who thought that Nasrudin was lining his own pockets did not contribute. For some reason, their affairs did not prosper. Those who were considered credulous and gave their money became in a mysterious way enriched. But to return to our story.

Sitting on the Peacock Throne, the emperor at Delhi studied the reports which courtiers were daily bringing him, describing the progress of the Persian ambassador. At first he could make no sense out of them. Then he called his council together.

'Gentlemen,' he said,' this Nasrudin must indeed be a saint or a divinely guided one. Who ever heard of anyone else violating the principle that one does not seek money without a plausible reason, lest a wrong interpretation be place upon one's motives?'

'May your shadow never grow less,' they replied, 'O infinite extension of all-Wisdom; we agree. If there are men like this in Persia, we must beware, for their moral ascendancy over our materialistic outlook is plain.'

Then a runner arrived from Persia, with a secret letter in which the Mogul's spies at the imperial court reported: 'Mullla Nasrudin is a man of no consequence in Persia. He was chosen absolutely at random to be ambassador. We cannot fathom the reason for the Shainshah's not being more selective.'

The Mogul called his council together. 'Incomparable Birds of Paradise!' he told them, ' a thought has manifested itself in me. The Persian emperor has chosen a man at random to represent his whole nation. This may mean that he is confident of the consistent quality of his people that, for him anyone at all is qualified to undertake the delicate task of ambassador to the sublime court of Delhi! This indicates the degree of perfection attained, the amazingly infallible intuitive powers cultivated among them. We must reconsider our desire to invade Persia; for such a people could easily engulf our arms. Their society is organized on a different basis from our own.'

'You are right - Superlative Warrior of the Frontiers!' cried the Indian nobles.

At length, Nasrudin arrived in Delhi. He was riding his old donkey, and was followed by his escort, weighed down by sacks of money which he had collected in the mosques. The treasure-chest was mounted on an elephant, such was its size and weight.

Nasrudin was met by the master of ceremonies at the gate of Delhi. The emperor was seated with his nobles in an immense courtyard, the reception Hall of the Ambassadors. This had been so arranged that the entrance was low. As a consequence, ambassadors were always obliged to dismount from their horses and enter the Supreme Presence on foot, giving the impression of supplicants. Only an equal could ride into the presence of an emperor.

No ambassador had ever arrived astride a donkey, however, and thus there was nothing to stop Nasrudin trotting straight through the door, and up to the Imperial Dais.

The Indian king and his courtiers exchanged meaningful glances at this act.

Nasrudin blithely dismounted, addressed the king as 'the Full Moon', and called for his treasure-chest to be brought. When it was opened, and the earth revealed, there was a moment of consternation.

'I had better say nothing,' thought Nasrudin, ' for there is nothing to say which could mitigate this.' So he remained silent.

The Mogul whispered to his vizier, 'What does this mean? Is this an insult to the Highest Eminence?'

Incapable of believing this, the vizier thought furiously. Then he provided the interpretation.

'It is a symbolic act, Presence,' he murmured. 'The ambassador means that he acknowledges you as the Master of the Earth. Did he not call you the Full Moon?'

The Mogul relaxed. "we are content with the offering of the Persian Shahinshah; for we have no need of wealth; and we appreciate the metaphysical subtlety of the message.'

'I have often been told to say,' said Nasrudin, remembering the 'essential gift-offering phrase' given him by the intriguers in Persia, 'that this is all we have for your Majesty.'

'That means that Persia will not yield one further ounce of her soil to us,' whisperer the interpreter of omens to the king.

'Tell your master that we understand,' smiled the Mogul. 'But there is one other point: If I am the Full Moon - what is the Persian Emperor?'

'He is the New Moon,' said Nasrudin, automatically.

'The Full Moon is more mature and gives more light than the New Moon, which is its junior, ' whispered the court astrologer to the Mogul.

'We are content,' said the delighted Indian. 'You may return to Persia and tell the New Moon that the Full Moon salutes him.'

The Persian spies at the court of Delhi immediately sent a complete account of this interchange to the Shahinshah. They added that it was known that the Mogul emperor had been impressed, and feared to plan war against the Persians because of the activities of Nasrudin.

When he returned home, the Shahinshah received the mulla in full audience. 'I am more than pleased, friend Nasrudin,' he said, ' at the result of your unorthodox methods. Our country is saved, and this means that there will be no attempt at accounting for the jewels or the collecting in mosques. You are henceforth to be known by the special title of Safir - Emissary.'

'But, your Majesty,' hissed his vizier, 'this man is guilty of high treason, if not more! we have perfect evidence that he applied one of your titles to the emperor of India, thus changing his allegiance and bringing one of your magnificent attributes into disrepute.'

'Yes,' thundered the Shahinshah, 'the sages have said wisely that "to every perfection there is an imperfection." Nasrudin! Why did you call me the New Moon?'

'I don't know about protocol,' said Nasrudin; 'but I do know that the Full Moon is about to wane, and the New Moon is still growing, with its greatest glories ahead of it.'

The emperor's mood changed. 'Seize Anwar, the Grand Vizier,' he roared. ,'Mulla! I offer you the position of Grand Vizier!'

'What?' said Nasrudin. 'Could I accept after seeing with my own eyes what happened to my predecessor?'

And what happened to the jewels and treasures which the evil courtiers had usurped from the treasure-chest? That is another story. As the incomparable Nasrudin said: 'Only children and the stupid seek cause and effect in the same story.'

The Fool, Salt and Flour

Once upon a time there was a fool who was sent to buy flour and salt. He took a dish to carry his purchases.

'Make sure,' said the man who sent him, 'not to mix the two things - I want them separate.'

When the shopkeeper had filled the dish with flour and was measuring out the salt, the fool said: 'Do not mix it with the flour; here, I will show you where to put it.'

And he inverted the dish, to provide, from its upturned bottom, a surface upon which the salt could be laid.

The flour, of course, fell on the floor.

But the salt was safe.

When the fool got back to the man who had sent him he said: 'Here is the salt.'

'Very well,' said the other man, 'but where is the flour?'

'It should be here, ' said the fool, turning the dish over.

As soon as he did that, the salt fell to the ground, and the flour of course was seen to be gone.

So it is with human beings. Doing one thing which they think to be right, they may undo another which is equally right. When this happens with thoughts instead of actions, man himself is lost, no matter how, upon reflection, he regards his thinking to have been logical.

You have laughed at the joke of the fool. Now, will you do more, and think about your own thoughts as if they were the salt and the flour?

The Indian Bird

A merchant had a bird in a cage. He was going to India, the land from which the bird came, and asked him whether he could bring anything back for him. The bird asked for his freedom, but was refused. So he asked the merchant to visit a jungle in India and announce his captivity to the free birds who were there.

The merchant did so, and no sooner had he spoken than a wild bird, just like his own, fell senseless out of a tree on to the ground. The merchant thought that this must be a relative of his own bird, and felt sad that he should have caused this death.

When he got home, the bird asked him whether he had brought news from India. 'No,' said the merchant, 'I fear that my news is bad. One of your relations collapsed and fell at my feet as soon as I mentioned your captivity.'

As soon as these words were spoken the merchant's bird collapsed and fell to the bottom of the cage.

'The news of his kinsman's death has killed him too,' thought the merchant. Sorrowfully he picked up the bird and put it on the window-sill. At once the bird revived and flew to a near-by tree. 'Now you know,' he said, 'that what you thought was disaster was in fact good news for me. And how the message, the suggestion how to behave in order to free myself, was transmitted to me through you, my captor.' And he flew away, free at last. -Rumi

Solitary Contemplation

To Be a Sufi

Being a Sufi is to put away what is in your head - imagined truth, preconceptions, conditioning - and to face what my happen to you. -Abu Said

Teachers, Teachings, Taught

Teachers talk about teachings.

Real teachers study their pupils as well.

Most of all, teachers should be studied. -Musa Kazim

Perception and Explanation

For him who has perception, a mere sign is enough.

For him who does not really heed, a thousand explanations are not enough. -Haji Bektash

Sufi Literature

There are three ways of presenting anything.

The first is to present everything.

The second is to present what people want.

The third is to present what will serve them best.

If you present everything, the result may be surfeit.

If you present what people want, it may choke them.

If you present what will serve them best, the worst is that, misunderstanding, they may oppose you. But if you have served them thus, whatever the appearances, you have served them and you, too, must benefit, whatever the appearances. -Ajmal of Badakhshan

Becoming One Who Can Become

You come closer to being a Sufi through realizing that habit and preconception are essentials only in some studies; not by forming habits and judging by means of unsuitable preconceptions.

You must become as aware of insignificance as you think you are of significance; not seek feelings of significance alone.

The humble are so because they must be so; and worst of all men or women are those who practice humility for the purpose of pride, not as a means of travel.

The method of Sufism is as it always has been, to adopt that which is of value, when and where it is of value, and with whom it is of value; not to imitate because of awe, or to copy because of imitativeness.

The success of man in raising himself higher comes through right effort and the right method, not merely by concentration upon the right aspiration or upon the words of others directed to yet others.

It is as it were a trap laid for the ignoble element in you when a man, a book, a ceremonial, an organization, a method, appears, directly or by recommendation, to have something which is applicable to all, or attracts you strongly though incorrectly. -Sayed Imam Ali Shah

Where it Went

I saw a child carrying a light.

I asked him where he had brought it from.

He put it out, and said:

'Now you tell me where it is gone.' -Hasan of Basra

Affinities

People who are alike feel an affinity. The attraction of opposites is a different case. But people who are alike are often mistaken by superficialists for people who are unalike. As an example, one is greedy for love, another is greedy to love. The uniformed or outward thinker will immediately imagine and proclaim that these are opposites. The converse, of course, is the truth. The common factor is greed. They are both greedy people.

The famous man and his follower are sometimes the same. One wants to give his attention, the other to attract attention. Both being chained by an obsession with attention, they fly together, 'pigeon with pigeon, hawk with hawk.' -Simabi

Various Stories to Teach With

Who's in Charge?

Habib had a house in Basra on the crossroads. He also had a fur coat which he wore summer and winter. Once, needing to perform the ritual washing, he arose and left his coat on the ground. Hasan of Basra, happening on the scene, perceived the coat flung in the road.

"This barbarian does not know its value," he commented. "This fur coat ought not to be left here. It may get lost."

So he stood there watching over it. Presently Habib returned.

"Imam of the Muslims," he cried after saluting Hasan, "why are you standing here?"

"Do you not know," Hasan replied, "that this coat ought not to be left here? It may get lost. Say, in whose charge did you leave it?"

"In His charge," Habib answered, "who appointed you to watch over it." (Habib Al-Ajami)

No Boat?

Hasan once wished to go to a certain place. He came down to the bank of the Tigris, and was pondering something to himself when Habib arrived on the scene.

"Imam, why are you standing here?" he asked.

"I wish to go to a certain place. The boat is late," Hasan replied.

"Master, what has happened to you?" Habib demanded. "I learned all that I know from you. Expel from your heart all envy of other men. Close your heart against worldly things. Know that suffering is a precious prize, and see that all affairs are of God. Then set foot on the water and walk."

With that Habib stepped on to the water and departed. Hasan swooned. When he recovered, the people asked him, "Imam of the Muslims, what happened to you?"

"My pupil Habib just now reprimanded me," he replied. "Then he stepped on the water and departed, whilst I remained impotent. If tomorrow a voice cries, 'Pass over the fiery pathway' - if I remain impotent like this, what can I do?"

"Habib," Hasan asked later, "how did you discover this power?"

"Because I make my heart white, whereas you make paper black," Habib replied.

"My learning profited another, but it did not profit me," Hasan commented. -Hasan Al-Ajami

How?

Once Rabe'a sent Hasan three things - a piece of wax, a needle, and a hair.

"Be like wax," she said. "Illumine the world, and yourself burn. Be like a needle, always be working naked. When you have done these two things, a thousand years will be for you as a hair."

"Do you desire for us to get married?" Hasan asked Rabe'a.

"The tie of marriage applies to those who have being," Rabe'a replied. "Here being has disappeared, for I have become naughted to self and exist only through Allah. I belong wholly to Him. I live in the shadow of His control. You must ask my hand of Him, not of me."

"How did you find this secret, Rabe'a?" Hasan asked.

"I lost all 'found' things in Him," Rabe'a answered.

"How do you know Him?" Hasan inquired.

"You know the 'how'; I know the 'howless,'" Rabe'a said.

The World

A leading scholar of Basra visited Rabe'a on her sickbed. Sitting beside her pillow, he reviled the world.

"You love the world very dearly," Rabe'a commented. "If you did not love the world, you would not make mention of it so much. It is always the purchaser who disparages the wares. If you were done with the world, you would not mention it either for good or evil. As it is, you keep mentioning it because, as the proverb says, whoever loves a thing mentions it frequently."

When to Teach?

Beshr possessed seven book cases of volumes on Traditions. He buried them all in the ground, and did not transmit them.

"The reason I do not transmit Traditions," he explained, "is that I perceive in myself a lust to do so. If I perceive in my heart a lust to keep silence, then I will transmit." -Beshr Ibn Al-Hareth

The True Pilgrimage

"A man encountered me on the road," Abu Yazid recalled.

" 'Where are you going?' he demanded.

" 'On the Pilgrimage," I replied.

" 'How much have you got?'

" 'Two hundred dirhams.'

"Come, give them to me,' the man demanded. 'I am a man with a family. Circle round me seven times. That is your pilgrimage.'

"I did so, and returned home." -Abu Yazid Al-Bestami

The Proper Task

"You walk on the water!" they said.

"So does a piece of wood," Abu Yazid replied.

"You fly in the air!"

"So does a bird."

"You travel to the Kaaba in a single night!"

"Any conjurer travels from India to Demavand in a single night."

"Then what is the proper task of true men?" they asked.

"The true man attaches his heart to none but God," he replied.

The Noble Thief

A thief had been hanged in Baghdad. Jonaid went and kissed his feet.

"Why did you do that?" he was asked.

"A thousand compassions be upon him!" he replied. "He proved himself a true man at his trade. He did his work so perfectly, that he gave his life for it." -Abo 'L'Qasem Al-Jonaid

The Test of the Birds

The shaikh Jonaid had a disciple whom he loved above all the others. The other disciples were moved to jealousy, a fact which the shaikh realized by his mystic intuition.

"He is superior to you in manners and understanding," he told them. "That is what I had in view; let us make an experiment, so that you may also realize it."

Jonaid commanded twenty birds to be brought to him.

"Each of you take one," he told his disciples. "In a place where no one can see you kill it, then bring it back."

All the disciples went off and killed and brought back the birds - all, that is, except that favorite disciple. He brought his bird back alive.

"Because the master said it must be done in a place where no one can see," the disciple answered. "Wherever I went, God saw."

"You see the measure of his understanding?" Jonaid exclaimed. "Compare that with that of the others."

All the other disciples begged God's forgiveness.

The Test of the Camel

Ibn Kahfif had two disciples, one called Ahmad the Older and the other Ahmad the Younger. The shaikh favoured Ahmad the Younger the more. His companions were jealous, arguing that Ahmad the older had performed many tasks and endured much discipline. The shaikh, learning of this, desired to demonstrate to them that Ahmad the Younger was the better of the two. Now a camel was sleeping at the door of the convent.

"Ahmad the Older!" Ibn Khafif cried out.

"Here am I," Ahmad the Older responded.

"Carry that camel up to the roof of the convent," Ibn Khafif ordered.

"Master," Ahmad the Older protested, "how is it possible to carry a camel on to the roof?"

"That is enough," Ibn Khafif said. "Ahmad the Younger!"

"Here am I," replied Ahmad the Younger.

"carry that camel on to the roof of the convent!"

Ahmad the Younger at once girded his loins, rolled up his sleeves and ran out of the convent. Putting his two hands under the camel, he cried with all his might but could not lift the beast.

"Well done! Now we know," Ibn Khafif exclaimed. Then turning to his companions he added, "Ahmad the Younger did his duty. He obeyed my command and offered no objection. He had regard to my command, not to whether the task could be carried out or no. Ahmad the Older was only concerned to argue and dispute. From outward actions one can perceive the inner intention." -Ibn Khafif

The Walnut's Lesson

One day as Al-Shebli was going along he encountered two boys quarreling over a walnut they had found. He took the walnut from them.

"Be patient, till I divide it between you!" he told them.

When he broke it open, the nut proved to be empty. A voice proclaimed, "Go on, divide it, if you are the Divider!"

"All that quarreling over an empty nut," Shebli commented shamefaced. "And all that pretension to be a divider over nothing!"

Kindness to Animals

Fear God, in treating dumb animals and ride them when they are fit to be ridden and get off them when they are tired.

An adulteress passed by a dog at a well; and the dog was holding out his tongue from thirst, which was near killing him, and the woman drew off her boot, and tied it to the end of her garment, and drew water for the dog, and gave him a drink; and she was forgiven for that act.

"Are there rewards for doing good to quadrupeds, and giving them water to drink?" Muhammad said, "Verily there are heavenly rewards for any act of kindness to a living animal."

-By Mohammad, from The Hadith: "Sayings of the Prophet"

Wean Yourself

Little by little, wean yourself. This is the gist of what I have to say. From an embryo, whose nourishment comes in the blood, move to an infant drinking milk, to a child on solid food, to a searcher after wisdom, to a hunter of more invisible game.

Think how it is to have a conversation with an embryo. You might say, "The world outside is vast and intricate. There are wheat fields and mountain passes, and orchards in bloom. At night there are millions of galaxies, and in sunlight the beauty of friends dancing at a wedding."

You ask the embryo why he, or she, stays cooped up in the dark with eyes closed. Listen to the answer.

There is no "other world." I only know what I've experienced. You must be hallucinating."

-Jelaluddin Rumi (1207-1273)

Sleep No More

If you want great wealth,
and that which lasts forever,
Wake up!
If you want to shine
with the love of the Beloved,
Wake up!
You've slept a hundred nights,
And what has it brought you?
For your Self, for your God,
Wake up! Wake up!
Sleep no more.
-Jelaluddin Rumi (1207-1273)

GROUP RECITALS

The Caravansary

Once Khidr went to the King's palace and made his way right up to the throne.

Such was the strangeness of his appearance that none dared to stop him.

The king, who was Ibrahim ben Adam, asked him what he was looking for.

The visitor said: 'I am looking for a sleeping-place in this caravansary.'

Ibrahim answered: 'This is no caravansary, this is my palace.'

The stranger said: 'Whose was it before you?'

'My father's', said Ibrahim.

'And before that?'

'My grandfather's.'

'And this place, where people come and go, staying and moving on, you call other than a caravansary?'

Religion

All religion, as theologians - and their opponents - understand the word, is something other than what it is assumed to be.

Religion is a vehicle. Its expressions, rituals, moral and other teachings are designed to cause certain elevating effects, at a certain time, upon certain communities.

Because of the difficulty of maintaining the science of man, religion was instituted as a means of approaching truth. The means always became, for the shallow, the end, and the vehicle became the idol.

Only the man of wisdom, not the man of faith or intellect, can cause the vehicle to move again. -Alauddin Attar

The Meaning of Culture

The Sufic understanding of culture is not that which is understood by the ordinary man, who limits the meaning.

Sheikh Abu Nasr Sarraj speaks of these three forms of culture:

Worldly culture, which is merely acquiring information, opinions and learning of a conventionalized kind;

Religious culture, which is repetitious, following rules and discipline, behaving in a ethically acceptable way;

Sufi culture, which is a self-development, realizing what is relevant, concentration and contemplation, cultivation of inner experience, following the path of Search and Nearness.

The Aim

The hidden meaning in existence is like a tree subsisting.
And the deeply hidden fruit of it is man, O Master.
The aim of the bough - O One without a Teacher - is ripened fruit, not just another tree alone. -Ablahi Mutlaqtar

Wild Utterances

We give out strange phrases to ordinary people because our experiences cannot be put in their ordinary phrases. I have known that which cannot be described, through and through, and that which is in it overwhelms all ordinary definition. -Ibn Ata

To Reach the Degree of Truth...

None attains to the Degree of Truth until a thousand honest people have testified that he is a heretic. -Junaid of Baghdad

Death Visiting

Death does not visit more than once. Be prepared, therefore, for its coming. -Abu-Shafiq of Balkh

Thou art There

The flitting of a light in desert dusk -thou art there.
The weary duty of the Magian's forced ritual -thou art there.
The movement in response to another movement -thou art there.
Not in the book of the scribe, but in the smile at it - thou art there.
The Grace of the graceful, no the mind of the graceful - thou art there.
The question and answer: between them, not in them - thou art there.
Between the lumbering paces of the elephant - thou art there.
In harmony, in love, in being itself, in truth, in absoluteness - thou art there.
The pearl rejected by the oyster-fancier - thou art there.
The inexplicability of non-rhythm, of seeming change - thou art there.
The interchange, pulsation, sweetness, silence, rest:
In congruity and in incongruity - thou art there.
In the glow, the spark, the leaping flame, the warmth and the burning; in the relaxation and the agitation: Thou art there!
-Haykali

What to Do and What to Have Done

All wisdom can be stated in two lines:

What is done for you -allow it to be done.

What you must do yourself - make sure you do it. -Khawwas

Men and Knowledge

There are many trees: not all of them bear fruit.

There are many fruits: not all of them may be eaten.

Many, too, are the kinds of knowledge: yet not all of them are of value to men.

-Jesus, son of Mary, according to the Book of Amu-Darya

What is Identity?

When someone knocked on the door, Bayazid called out: 'What do you seek?'

The caller answered: 'Bayazid.'

Bayazid replied: 'I, too, have been seeking "Bayazid" for three decades, and I have not yet found him.'

The Answer

We wrote a hundred letters, and you did not write an answer. This, too, is a reply. -Zauqi

We are Alive

We are waves whose stillness is non-being.

We are alive because of this, that we have no rest. -Abu-Talib Kalim

Some Final Essays

Sufi Lectures

Sufi students may or may not be encouraged to familiarize themselves with the traditional Classics of Sufism. It is the Sufi Guide, however, who indicates to each circle or pupil the curriculum: the pieces from the Classics from letters and lectures, from traditional observances which apply to a particular phase of society, to a particular grouping, to a certain individual.

The usage of materials sharply divides Sufi ideology from any other on record. It is this attitude which has prevented Sufism from crystallizing into priestcraft and traditionalism. In the originally Sufic groupings where this fossilization has indeed taken place, their fixation upon a repetitious usage of Sufi materials provides a warning for the would-be Sufi that such an organization has 'joined the world.'

What is Sufism?

The question is not "what is Sufism?', but "what can be said and taught about Sufism?'

The reason for putting it in this way is that it is more important to know the state of the questioner and tell him what will be useful to him than anything else. Hence the Prophet (Peace and Blessings upon him!) has said: 'Speak to each in accordance with his understanding.'

You can harm an inquirer by giving him even factual information about Sufism, if his capacity of understanding is faulty or wrongly trained.

This is an example. The question just recorded is asked. You reply: 'Sufism is self-improvement.' The questioner will assume that self-improvement means what he takes it to mean.

If you said, again truly: 'Sufism is untold wealth', the greedy or ignorant would covet it because of the meaning which they put upon wealth.

But do not be deceived into thinking that if you put it in a religious or philosophical form, the religious or philosophical man will not make a similar covetous mistake in taking, as he thinks, your meaning. -Idris ibn-Ashraf

Knowledge

Knowledge is generally confused with information. Because people are looking for information or experience, not knowledge, they do not find knowledge.

You cannot avoid giving knowledge to one fitted for it. you cannot give knowledge to the unfit; that is impossible. You can, if you have it, and if he is capable, fit a man for receiving knowledge. -Sayed Najmuddin

Seven Thoughts on Famous Teachers

People tend to want to study under famous teachers. Yet there are always people not considered distinguished by the public who could teach them as effectively. –Ghazali

A teacher with a small following, or no apparent following at all, may be the right man for you. In nature, small ants do not swarm to see elephants, in hope of gain. An illustrious master may be of use only to advanced scholars. –Badakhshani

If a teacher of great repute tells you to go study under someone who is apparently not outstanding, he knows what you need. Many students feel slighted by advice like this, which is in fact to their advantage. -Abdurahman of Bengal

I have learned what I have learned only after my teachers had freed me of the habit of attaching myself to what I regarded as teachers and teachings. Sometimes I had to do nothing at all for long periods. Sometimes I had to study things which I could not link in my mind, no matter how I tried, with higher aspirations. -Zikiria ibn El-Yusufi

Those who are attracted by externals, who look for the outwards signs of teachership, who rely on emotion in studies or reading any book they might choose- those are the pond-flies of the Tradition; they skip and skim upon the surface. Because they have words for 'profound' and 'significant', they think incorrectly, that they know these experiences. This is why we say that, for practical purposes, they know nothing. -Talib Shamsi Ardabili

Take care you do not mistake indigestion for something else. You may visit a great man or read his book and you may feel attraction or hostility. Often this is only indigestion in the student. -Mustafa Qalibi of Antioch

If I were embarking upon the Way anew, my plea would be: 'Teach me how to learn and what to study.' And, even before that: 'Let me really wish to learn how to learn, as a true aspiration, not simply in self-pretense.' -Khwaja Ali Ramitani

Teaching of the Sufis

Many people practice virtues or associate with the wise and great people, believing that this is the pursuit of self-improvement. They are deluded. In the name of religion, some of the worst barbarities have been committed. Trying to do good, man has done some of his worst actions.

The flaw comes from the absurd assumption that the mere connection with something of value will convey a corresponding advantage to an unaltered individual.

Much more is necessary. Man must not only be in contact with good: he must be in contact with a form of it which is capable of transforming his function and making him good. A donkey stabled in a library does not become literate.

This argument is one of the differences between Sufi teaching and attempted practice of ethic or self-improvement in other endeavors.

The point is generally neglected by the reader or student. Talib-Kamal said: 'The Thread does not become ennobled because it goes through the jewels.' And: 'My virtues have not improved me, any more than a desolate place is made fertile by the presence of a treasure.'

A treasure is a treasure. But if it is to be put to work to recreate a ruin, the treasure must be used in a certain way.

Moralizing may be a part of the process. The means of transforming the man is still needed. It is this means which is the Sufi secret. Other schools, very often, are not at the point where they can see beyond the first stage; they are intoxicated with the discovery of ethic and virtue, which they therefore conclude constitute a panacea. -Abdal Ali Haidar

How Strange a Thing is Man

Just try to conceive for a moment that you are a being unlike a human being. Unperceived by man, you enter one of his abodes. As an observer, what would you make of the cause or the objective of his actions? Assume that you have no experience of humanity.

The man whom you are observing lies down and falls asleep. You do not sleep, because you are not of his nature. How could you understand what he has done or why? You would be forced to say: 'He is dead'; or perhaps: 'he is mad'; or again: 'This must be a religious observance.' You would be forced, because of your lack of material to which to refer this man's actions, to attribute them to the nearest action known to you, in your own world.

Now, while we still watch this man, we find that he wakes up. What has happened? We may think: 'He has miraculously revived', or something of the sort. He goes to the fountain and washes himself. We say: 'How odd!'

Now the man is cooking something in a pot, and sweat stands on his brow. 'A religious observance... or perhaps he is the slave of this strange leaping, luminous thing called fire, and has to serve it in this way...'

In short, everything which he does seems insane, incomplete or motivated by causes which arise in our own imagination - if we are that visitor who uses his own scale, or none at all, to measure the human activity.

So it is with the dervish. He laughs, he cries. He is kind, he is cruel. He repents, talks of wine, shuns people and then goes to visit them. He serves mankind and says that he is serving God. You talk of God and he may protest and say that you are ignorant. What are you to make of such a man?

He is a man of another world. You attribute his action to the kind of actions you know about; his knowledge to the kind of thing which you call knowledge; his feelings you compare with what you take them to be. His origins, his Path, his destiny: you look at them all from only one point of view.

How strange a thing is man!

But there is a way to understand him. Leave off all preconceptions as to what our dervish may be. Follow his explanations or his symbols of the Sufi Path. Be humble, for you are a learner lower than all learners; for you have to know the things which will alone enable you to learn. No, I cannot teach you the Qalandar Path. I have but warned you. Go, seek a Sufi and plead first for forgiveness for your heedlessness, for you have been too long asleep. -Oration of Qalandar Puri

The Study Group

It is interesting to note, from the point of view of contemporary psychology, how study groups always face a challenge. This challenge is as to whether the group will stabilize itself early on comforting props (like certain drills, exercises, readings, authority figures) or whether the group has in itself sufficient stability to reach for a reality beyond exterior, social factors.

It is the composition of the group which will decide this. If its members already have a sound social equilibrium, they will not need to convert their study atmosphere into the source of stability and reassurance. If the members have already acquired physical and intellectual satisfactions, they will not need to attempt to extract these from their Sufic group.

It is the seekers of social, intellectual and emotional stabilization who are the unsuccessful candidates for Sufi teaching in genuine schools. imitation schools use Sufi externals - including such letters and lectures as these- and operate as disguised social-psychological groups. This is very valuable though Sufically sterile activity is not the quest for 'higher knowledge about man.'

Advice to the Vigiler

O you wrapped up in your raiment!
Keep vigil the night long, save a little-
A half thereof, or abate a little thereof
Or add thereto and chant the Qur'an in measure,
For We shall charge you with a word of weight.
Lo! The vigil of the night is when impression is more keen and speech more certain.
Lo! You have by day a chain of business.
So remember the name of your Lord and devote yourself with complete devotion.
-Qur'an 73.1-8

Jewish Thoughts and Words

I am by no means an expert on Judaism, I have not read the entire old testament, Talmud or midrash. A friend of mine once told me that the bible was a singular work of literature in that it hasn't a single joke in 2000 pages. This may be true, but the Jewish people of course have a sense of humor, sometimes even a Druidic sense. I have liberally taken many examples from "A Treasury of Jewish Humor," edited by Nathan Ausubel, M.Evans and Company 216 east 49th St., NYC 10017 (Doubleday) 1951 (reprinted) ISBN 0-87131-546-7. I have also borrowed from many other sources.

Parables

Rabbi Elijah, the Gaon of Vilna, was deeply impressed by the ability of his friend, Rabbi Jacob Krantz, to have a parable ready for every problem he encountered. One day, Rabbi Elijah decided to ask how such a feat was possible.

Rabbi Jacob answered him by saying, "I will respond to your question about parables by using a parable. Once a nobleman decided that his son should be the very best musketeer. He therefore entered his son into a military academy to learn the martial skills. For five years the young man studied and learned and practiced until he was the most accomplished of musketeers.

"He graduated from the academy with a gold medal. While on his way home, he entered a village in order to rest. While standing on a street, he happened to notice a stable wall. There were the chalk marks of a target on the wall. Each target had a bullet hole at its exact center. Astonished at the skill of the marksman, the young man determined to meet the accomplished shooter. He asked throughout the village and finally discovered who had done the shooting - a small Jewish boy dressed as a beggar.

"The nobleman faced the child. 'Who taught you to shoot so well?' he asked.

"The boy answered, 'Let me explain. First I shoot the bullets at the wall. Only then do I take a piece of chalk and draw circles around the holes.'

"This is what I do," said the Preacher of Dubnow. "I don't search for the parable to fit the subject under discussion. Rather, I learn as many parables as I can. Eventually the right subject will come along for every parable."

-Jacob Krantz 1741-1804, Rabbi, Preacher of Dubnow

Hide and Seek

Rebbe Baruch's grandson Yehiel was crying as he entered his grandfather's study. The concerned rebbe asked about the source of the tears.

"I have a friend who cheated me and left me alone to cry."

"Please explain," said the rebbe.

"The two of us were playing hide-and-seek, grandfather. It was my turn to hide, and I did it so well that my friend couldn't find me. Instead of continuing to look, he gave up. That's not fair, is it?"

The rebbe kissed the boy and began to cry. Yehiel asked why he was crying. The rebbe explained. "Like you, Yehiel, God, too, is unhappy. He is hiding and humanity does not look for him. Humanity has stopped its search. That also is not fair."

-Baruch of Medzeboth 1751-1811, Grandson of Baal Shem Tov

Differences of Custom

Rabbi Adler was sitting next to Herbert Cardinal Vaughan at a luncheon one afternoon. The cardinal turned to the rabbi and said, "Now, Dr. Adler, when may I have the pleasure of helping you to some ham?"

"At your Eminence's wedding," replied the rabbi.

-Hermann Adler 1839-1911, Chief Rabbi of British Empire)

Publishing Advice

An author came to see Rabbi Abele, wishing the rabbi to provide a favorable introduction to the author's commentary on the Book of Job. The rabbi agreed.

Later, the same author came back to the rabbi for still another introduction, this time for a commentary on Proverbs. The rabbi was not impressed by the work, but he did not wish to offend the author, so he simply said that he could not provide his approval by writing the introduction.

"But, Rabbi," said the author, "What made you prefer my commentary on Job to the one on Proverbs?"

The rabbi thought for a moment. "I will tell you if you insist. Job had a million problems, so one more book about him would be only a slight additional affliction. Solomon, on the other hand, led a happy life. I didn't see why you should make him suffer."

-Abele 1764-1836, Rabbi of Vilna & Talmudic scholar

Papa's Gift

Asimov's father looked at one of his son's book and asked, "How did you learn all this, Isaac?"

"From you, Papa."

"From me? I don't know any of this."

"You didn't have to, Papa. You valued learning, and you taught me to value it. All the rest came without trouble."

-Isaac Asimov 1920- , American biochemist & author

Contributions

Two men came to see Rabbi Landau to seek a charitable contribution. The rabbi asked them how much they needed. The men said, "We need 1000 gulden immediately to help the people." The rabbi left the room and returned with a leather case. He showed the men that the case was filled with gold coins. "Here," said the rabbi. "I've got 990 gold pieces. You must get the other 10 pieces you need from people in your city."

The men looked at Rabbi Landau in astonishment. "Rabbi," one began, evidently unsure of how to proceed. "It is a mitzvah to give, and you are performing a great mitzvah. But why do you start such a mitzvah and stop almost at the end?"

"You are both learned," answered the rabbi. "You should know why. It is wrong to give and by so doing deprive others of the joy of giving. I want to help, but I also want to allow other Jews a chance to be charitable."

-Ezekiel Landau 1713-1793, Author on Jewish Law, Rabbi of Prague

Hasty Prayers

The rabbi was visiting a hotel. The Jewish merchants who were staying in the hotel had come to the town for a fair. One morning the rabbi heard them racing through their prayers before they rushed to the fair. That evening he invited the merchants to

his room. When the arrived, he spoke unintelligibly for several moments. The merchants were mystified. Finally, one said, "Rabbi, we appreciate being invited by you, but we can't understand your words."

The rabbi responded in words that were all too clear: "Now you can imagine how the Almighty feels when you mumble your prayers in the morning."

One shocked merchant spoke up. "Master, a little baby mumbles also. Nobody understand when he coos and cries, but his mother understand. We are the children of God, and the Lord understands us no matter how we speak."

"You are absolutely right," said the rabbi. "Please forgive me."

-Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev 1740-1810, Rabbi & Hassidic

Where is God?

Even as a young boy, Rabbi Naphtali astonished adults with his quick, insightful replies. One day, a friend of Naphtali's father came for a visit and said to the child, "Naphtali, I'll give you a gold coin if you can tell me where God can be found."

The boy immediately replied, "I'll give you two gold coins if you can tell me where He cannot be found."

-Naphtali of Ropshitz 1760-1827, Rabbi and founder of Hassidic dynasties

The Disbeliever

Rabbi Spektor was visited one day by a young, well-dressed man. The man had come to ask the sage to solve a vexing religious problem. The man did not believe in any religion, but he remained unsure about whether he should also discard his belief in God.

"I am glad you came," the rabbi said. "You say you don't believe. Tell me, have you mastered the Bible?"

"I can't claim that I have. I did read some parts as a child, but recently I have concentrated on my studies in the university."

"Perhaps the Talmud?" the rabbi inquired.

The young man looked surprised. "Rabbi, you don't expect me to waste time on anything like that."

"Okay, you know nothing about the Talmud. How about the great Jewish philosophers? What have you read of Maimonides, ibn Gabirol, or Moses Mendolssohn?"

"I haven't read a word any of them have written."

"Young man, you call yourself an unbeliever, yet you know nothing about Jewish literature. At least call yourself by your right name - you are an ordinary ignoramus."

-Isaac Elhannon Spektor, 1817-1896, Rabbi

Tradition

Rabbi Steinaltz was teaching a class. He was only 25 years old at the time, and he realized that some in the class were great thinkers, the best in the nation. Some were three times his age. As he thought about it, he became embarrassed at the thought that he should teach them. Suddenly he realized that there was only one way he could justify his teaching. He decided to tell himself that these great minds, his elders, were listening to Adin Steinsaltz not as an individual, but as a representative of a tradition. In that sense, he was 5,000 years old and teaching 75 year-old babies.

-Adin Steinsaltz 1937-, Rabbi and Talmudic scholar

The Unpopular Rabbi

Winning a Jewish argument can sometimes be difficult.

There was once a rabbi from a small town in Russia. He was given a monthly salary and allowed to live in a residence owned by the community. After many years of service, the town's Jewish dignitaries decided that he should be removed from his job. They discharged him and asked him to leave the house. He refused to go, and the case came before the Russian court. A judge there sent it to Rabbi Widrevitz.

The rabbi listened carefully to both sides and decides that the ousted rabbi had done nothing offensive, but that for the sake of the community, he should be discharged. He told the Jewish leaders that he had decided in their favor.

"But, he's still living in the house owned by the community," one said. "How can we get him to leave?"

"Compulsion is not a good idea." the rabbi said.

"What shall we do then?"

"There is a peaceful way. All of you should move from the town and leave him alone. That is my advice."

-Haim Jacob Widrevitz 1795-1854, Rabbi & Scholar

The Accused Maid

Rabbi Wolf was widely known as the fairest of judges. Justice was extremely important to him, and he could not be corrupted.

One day his own wife accused her maid of having stolen a very valuable object. The servant, who was an orphan, began to cry, and then she denied having stolen the object. The wife decided that a rabbinical court was needed to decide the case.

When the rabbi saw the wife preparing to go to the court, he put on his Sabbath robe, so that he might go as well. His wife was surprised. "It's not dignified that a man of your standing should go to the court with me. I am very capable of pleading my own case," she told him.

The rabbi said, "Oh, I am sure that you are. What I am concerned about is who will plead the case of your maid, who is a poor orphan. I am going to make sure that she is treated justly."

-Wolf of Zbaraz 1708-1788, Rabbi & Community Leader

The Disbeliever & God

Abraham was sitting near his tent when an old man approached. The man was obviously exhausted. Abraham, who was known for his hospitality, rose to meet the stranger and to welcome him. The stranger was offered a place in the tent to rest. The old traveler declined the offer, however, preferring instead to rest under a nearby tree. Abraham continued to press the offer, wishing to give the man every comfort. Finally the traveler was persuaded to enter the tent.

Abraham gave the man some goat's milk, butter, and cakes. The hungry man gratefully ate all the food. After the meal, Abraham told the stranger that it was time to pray to the Lord.

"But I do not know your God," said the stranger. "I only pray to the idol that my hands have built."

Abraham began to tell the man about God. He tried to convince the man of God's goodness and urged the man to abandon faith in idols. But the man would not listen to Abraham; instead, he remained steadfast in his pagan beliefs. Abraham angrily demanded that the man leave the tent. The man departed without a word.

The incident haunted Abraham. As he thought about the stranger, he slowly came to realize that God had endured the

man's disbelief for many years, yet Abraham had not been able to stand it for a single night. Furthermore, Abraham realized, forgiveness could not come from God; it could come only from the wronged traveler.

Abraham ran from the tent. He searched all night, and he finally found the man and begged to be forgiven. After listening carefully to Abraham's words, he offered forgiveness. The traveler had provided Abraham with a crucial ethical lesson about imitating the forgiving aspect of God's nature.

-Abraham 19th Cent. B.C.E., First Patriarch of the Jewish People

Postponement

Dr. Einstein was invited to give a speech at a dinner honoring the president of Swarthmore College. After a glowing introduction he stood and announced to the crowd, "Ladies and gentlemen, I am sorry, but I have nothing to say." He then sat down. A second later he was back up again. "If I ever do have something to say, I'll come back."

Six months later, Einstein sent a wire to the president: "Now I have something to say." Another dinner was scheduled. Einstein came and made his speech.

Abandonment

Max Brod, a close friend of author Franz Kafka, encountered many intellectuals who had assimilated. Brod, who had remained faithful to his religion, always treated those intellectuals with great humanity.

Once, just before the First World War, Brod was in Prague, where he spoke with a Jewish professor at the German university in that city. In reply to a question, the Jewish professor said, "I have abandoned Judaism."

Dr. Brod replied, "You may have abandoned Judaism, but Judaism has not abandoned you."

-Max Brod 1884-1968, Jewish author and composer

Philanthropy

The Jews have always considered charity an important virtue, not only for the good it does, but also for what it reveals about a person.

Rabbi Harif and a companion once came to the home of a wealthy man to seek funds for the building of a new Talmud Torah. The wealthy man refused to give a donation to build the school. Rabbi Harif's companion was surprised by the refusal, and as the two men walked away from the house, he expressed his views to Rabbi Harif, adding, "He usually gives whenever he is asked."

Rabbi Harif said, "This time he may be right in his refusal."

"How is that possible?" asked the companion.

"You see, those who give to charity usually do so out of fear that the misfortune that they are helping to alleviate might one day afflict them. For instance, one person might help the crippled because he think one day he himself might be crippled; another might give to the blind out of fear of becoming blind; and so on. But why should this man have given to education? He is never likely to be afflicted by the thirst for learning."

-Izel Harif, died 1873, Rabbi of Slonim

Fresh Bread

A group of rabbis were gathered at a celebration. The began to discuss their well-known rabbinical ancestors. Rabbi Yechiel had to say, "I'm the first eminent ancestor in my family." The collected rabbis were very surprised to hear this comment.

The conversation naturally turned to the Torah. Each rabbi began to explain a text by using the teachings and sayings of one of his rabbinical ancestors. Finally it was time for Rabbi Yechiel to speak. He got up and said, "My father was a simple baker. His teaching was that only fresh bread tastes good, and so I should avoid stale bread. This is also true of learning."

-Yechiel of Ostrowce 1851-1928, Rabbi & Scholar

One's Worth

Sir Moses was once asked how much he was worth. He answered, "I am worth 40000 pounds."

The questioner was flabbergasted. "I thought you were worth millions."

Sir Moses smiled. "I do possess millions. But you asked me how much I am worth, and since 40000 pounds represent the sum I distributed during the last year to various charitable institutions, I regard this sum as the barometer of my true worth. For it is not how much a person possesses, but how much he is willing to share with the less fortunate that determines his actual worth."

-Sir Moses Montefiore 1784-1885, British Financier & Philanthropist

Two Thoughts from David

King David's practical wisdom was legendary.

Once, one of king's infant children became critically ill. David prayed and fasted. He slept on the ground for the week of the illness. After that week, the baby died. The king's servants were afraid to tell him of the tragedy. Against such expectations, when David heard the sad news he changed clothes, went to pray, and then ate a meal.

The servants, quite surprised at his reaction, asked him why when the child had been ill he had fasted and cried, yet when the child died, he had gotten up and eaten.,

The king replied, "While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept for I thought, who knows whether the Lord will not be gracious to me that the child may live. But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back?"

King David went to the court jeweler. He told the jeweler to make him a ring and to inscribe on it some statement that would temper excessive delight in an hour of triumph, but also lift him from despair in an hour of loss. The jeweler thought long and hard about what kind of statement should be inscribed. But he was perplexed; he could not find suitable words.

Solomon finally offered a suggestion: "Inscribe on the ring the words Gam Zeh Ya-avor - This, too, shall pass."

-David reigned 1010-970 B.C.E., Second king of Israel

Gardening and Tax-Collectors

The Emperor Antoninus sent a messenger to Rabbi Judah Ha-Nasi. The messenger carried a vital question. "The Imperial Treasury is rapidly being depleted. Can you advise me on how I might increase it?"

Rabbi Judah did not respond. Instead, he took the messenger into his garden and began to work. He uprooted large turnips and

planted much smaller turnips in their place. Then he did the same with beets and radishes.

The messenger, seeing that the rabbi would not answer, requested that he write a letter, but the rabbi said that no letter was needed.

The messenger returned to the emperor.

"Did Rabbi Judah give you a letter for me?" the emperor asked.

"No."

"Did he say anything to you?"

"No. he didn't do that either."

"Did he do anything?"

"Yes, he led me into his garden, dug up large vegetables, and planted smaller ones in their place."

"Then I understand his advice," said the emperor.

The emperor then dismissed his governors and tax collectors. They were replaced with less well-known but more honest officials. Before very long, the Imperial Treasury was replenished.

-Judah Hanasl, 2nd cent-3rd cent C.E. Rabbi, Editor of Mishnah

A Fair Exchange

King Artaban of Parthea one day sent a gift to Rabbi Judah. The gift was an exquisite and quite expensive pearl. The king's only request was that the rabbi send a gift in return that was of equal value. Rabbi Judah sent the king a mezuzah.

Artaban was displeased with the gift and came to confront the rabbi. "What is this? I sent you a priceless gift and you return this trifle?"

The rabbi said, "Both objects are valuable, but they are very different. You sent me something that I have to guard, while I sent you something that will guard you." -Judah Hanasl

On One Foot

A stranger came to the house of Shammai. Shammai greeted the stranger and asked what he wanted. The stranger said that he wanted to learn the whole of the Torah while he stood on one foot. Shammai immediately saw that the stranger wished to make fun of him. He became angry and told the stranger to go away.

The stranger then went to the house of Hillel. Hillel greeted him and asked what he wanted. The stranger repeated his jeering request to be taught the whole of the Torah while standing on one foot. Hillel also saw that the stranger was mocking him, but Hillel did not become angry. Instead, Hillel said that he would teach the stranger as was wished.

Hillel began the lesson. "What is hateful to you do not do to your neighbor."

The stranger waited for more. Finally he asked, "Is that all the Torah?"

"Yes," said Hillel. "That is the foundation. All the rest is commentary. Go and study."

The stranger said, "Thank you Hillel. If that is the foundation, I will study all the Torah."

-Hillel first cent B.C.E. - first cent C.E., Famous scholar

The Jewish Jeweler

King Don Pedro, ruler of Aragon, heard from his counselor, the troubadour Nicholas of Valencia, that the Jews were inferior people. The king had heard of a wise Jew named Ephraim ben Sancho and asked that this man be brought before him. Ephraim came, and the king asked him directly which of their faiths was superior. Ephraim recognized the dangers inherent in either answer, and so he said, "Our faith is better suited for us Jews, for our God led us into freedom and out of our slavery in Egypt. Your faith is better for the Christians, for you have been able to rule over much of the world."

The king was not satisfied with the answer. "I don't want to know the benefits each of us gets from our religion. I want to know which religion is superior."

Ephraim said, "Let me consider this question for three days, for it is a difficult question requiring much thought. I will give you my answer at the end of the third day."

The king agreed.

Ephraim could not eat or sleep for the three days. He prayed constantly for guidance. Finally, it was time to go back to the palace. The king immediately noticed how sad Ephraim looked and asked the Jewish sage why.

"I look so sad because of what happened today. May I tell the story for your majesty to judge?"

"You may speak," said the king.

"A month ago my neighbour, who is a jeweler, went traveling to a distant land. He had two sons, who always fought. Before he left, he gave each of his sons an expensive gem. Today these brothers are still arguing, for they came to me to judge which of the gems is more valuable. I reminded them that their father was the jeweler and the best expert on the value of gems, and I suggested that they ask him because he could judge far better than I.

"When I told them this, they became angry at me, and they began to beat me. Don't I have a right to be sad?"

"You have been mistreated," said the king. "They deserve to be punished for how they have behaved."

"My king. May your ears hear the words your mouth has spoken. You asked me which of two gems is superior. How can I give you the right answer? There is only one expert on these types of gems, and that is the Lord. He must tell you which is better."

The king was greatly impressed with Ephraim's wisdom.

-Ephraim Ben Sancho 980-1060, community leader

Beggars

Rabbi Zusya was staying at an inn. A wealthy guest mistook him for a beggar and treated him without respect. The guest later learned the rebbe's true identity and asked for Zusya's forgiveness.

"Why do you ask me to forgive you?" Rabbi Zusya said in response. "You haven't' done anything to Zusya. You insulted not Zusya, but a poor beggar. I suggest you go out and ask beggars everywhere to forgive you."

-Zusya of Hanipoli died 1800, Hasidic rabbi

Two Ideas from Singer

An interviewer asked Singer whether he had become a vegetarian for religious reasons or out of concern for his health. Singer told him "It is out of consideration for the chicken."

Singer was asked whether, in all his philosophical musing, he had reached any conclusion about whether humans have free will or whether their actions are determined. His answer was, "We have to believe in free will. We've got no choice."

-Isaac Bashevis Singer 1904- , American Yiddish Actor.

A Poor Jew

A poor man came to Rabbi Joseph's house. The man said that he had come to ask a question regarding the sacred rituals of Passover. He told the rabbi that he could not afford to buy wine, so he wished to know if he could fulfill the obligation to drink four cups of wine during the seder by drinking four cups of milk. Rabbi Joseph said that no Jew could fulfill this important religious commandment with milk. The rabbi then gave the man twenty-five rubles with which to buy wine.

After the man had gone, the rabbi's wife went to her husband with a question. Why, when wine cost two or three rubles, had the rabbi given the man twenty-five?

Rabbi Joseph smiled and said, "When a poor Jew asks if he can use milk at his seder because he cannot afford wine, it is obvious that he cannot afford meat either."

The Doctor Doesn't Worry

The doctor was checking up on the health of his patient.

"Fine, fine! Mr. Cohen! You're doing much better," he consoled him after completing his examination. "Your general condition is improved. There is only one thing that doesn't look so good - your floating kidney. But that doesn't worry me a bit!"

"And if you had a floating kidney, do you think I'd worry about it?" snapped back Mr. Cohen.

Qualification of an Expert

"Do tell me, Rabbi," once asked the president of a congregation, "why is it that a godly man like you is always talking about business matters? Now take me, I'm a businessman, but once I leave my office I do nothing but talk about spiritual matters."

"This follows a very sound principle!" answered the Rabbi.

"What principle is that, Rabbi?"

"Oh, the principle that people usually like to discuss things they know nothing about."

Nature and Poets

Like a great poet, Nature is capable of producing the most stunning effects with the smallest means. Nature possesses only the sun, trees, flowers, water, and love. But for him who feels no love in his heart, none of these things has any poetic value. To such an individual the sun has a diameter of a certain number of miles, the trees are good for making a fire, the flowers are divided into varieties, and water is wet. -Heinrich Heine

To Tide Him Over

A disciple sought the advice of his rabbi.

"I'm poor, Rabbi. My wife is sick and my children are hungry."

"Go home. God will help you," advised the rabbi.

"Thank you, thank you, Rabbi!" gushed the poor man gratefully. "I'm sure God will help me! But until He does, won't you be good enough to lend me five rubles?"

Deferred Judgment

Once a Jewish "merchant" who kept a stall in a village marketplace in Poland bought a sack of prunes from another "merchant." When he examined the prunes, however, he found them full of worms. Without loss of time he hailed the seller before the communal elder.

Now the elder was a very old man and he had a sweet tooth. So he took out his spectacles, put them on his nose, and began examining the prunes. First he tasted one prune judiciously, then another and another. Still not satisfied, he continued to taste them with a speculative air.

This went on for fifteen minutes. Then, completely sated, the elder pushed the prunes away from him with disgust.

"Why do you waste my time?" he cried. "What am I, a prune expert?"

The Long and Short of It

A thief was loitering among the stalls in the marketplace. When the fish dealer wasn't looking, he picked up a big carp and hid it under his coat. As he was walking off, the fish vendor called after him: "Listen uncle, next time you steal a fish be sure that either your coat is longer or the fish is shorter!"

He Did All He Could

Once there was a famous preacher who could move his audience to tears with his eloquence. On the occasion of the funeral of a prominent citizen, he delivered an eulogy. He elaborated on the life of the deceased with touching verve, referred to the purity of his character, to the nobility of his deeds, and to the tragedy of his sudden departure. Nonetheless, his hearers remained unmoved. Not even the mourners in the immediate family were seen to shed a tear.

"Rabbi," asked one of the preacher's admirers wonderingly, "how is it you haven't been able to wring a single tear out of the mourners?"

"My job is only to turn on the faucet," answered the preacher. "Is it my fault if nothing comes out."

Increased Horse Power

A Jewish rustic, whose soul was heavy with sin, decided to visit a rabbi in a neighboring town to ask for his intercession with God. When he returned home from this visit the rabbi of his own town asked him reproachfully: "Isn't one rabbi enough for you? Must you have two?"

"You know how it is, Rabbi," answered the farmer. "Two horses can pull a wagon out of the mud better than one!"

Some Jewish Proverbs

If you're lucky, everybody says you're smart.

If a rabbi isn't in constant danger of being driven out of town by their synagogue, he isn't doing his job.

One fool can ask more questions than ten wise men can answer.

Every dog feels important on his own dunghill.

Those who have nothing are always eager to share it with others.

Some people may be compared to new shoes: the cheaper they are the louder they squeak.

The best part about telling the truth is that you don't have to remember what you said.

The wish to be wiser than everybody else is the biggest foolishness. -Sholom Aleichem

The space in a needle's eye is sufficient for two friends, but the whole world is scarcely big enough to hold two enemies. -Solomon ibn Gabriol

Money is round, so it rolls away.

Man's attitude towards great qualities in others is often the same as towards high mountains- he admires them but he prefers to walk around them. -Moritz Saphir

What is the test of good manners? Being able to bear patiently with bad ones. -Solomon Ibn Gabriol

The Considerate Beggar

A merchant was carrying some goods to market in his wagon. On the way he met a beggar trudging along with a heavy pack on his shoulders. The merchant felt sorry for him and asked him to get into the wagon.

As they rode on in silence the merchant saw that the beggar was sitting with his pack still on his shoulders.,

"Why don't you put your pack down?" he asked in surprise.

"Bless you," said the man, "it's enough that you're carrying me! Do I have to burden you with my pack besides?"

Advice

Most people, when in prosperity, are so over brimming with wisdom (however inexperienced they may be), that they take every offer of advice as a personal insult, whereas in adversity they know not where to turn, but beg and pray for counsel from every passer-by. -Baruch Spinoza

Late

A Jew hurried to the railroad station to catch a train for Vilna but the train pulled out just as he arrived.

Seeing this, he wrung his hand and moaned, "Woe is me that such a misfortune should happen to me! It was so important for me to catch that train."

"How late were you, uncle?" a by-stander inquired sympathetically.

"Just about thirty seconds."

"Not more? Heh! By the way you carry on I thought it must have been at least one hour!"

No Peace for a Rabbi

Squabbles with the congregation's leaders were driving the rabbi to distraction.

"If you're so unhappy why don't you find yourself another post?" suggested a colleague. "I hear there's a good pulpit vacant in Detroit."

The elderly rabbi shook his head wearily.

"Don't you know that there are seven purgatories in Gehenna? You must have wondered, why seven? Isn't one good purgatory enough to punish any hardened sinner? And the answer is 'no'! No matter how excruciating the torments are in any one purgatory the sinner is bound to get used to them. Once he's used to them he suffers less. But since God is just, what does he do? He has the devils carry the wretch to the next purgatory, where he has to start getting used to a new set of tortures.

"I'm in the same position. Whatever tortures I have to endure in this congregational purgatory I'm already accustomed to. Believe me, were I to take the Detroit pulpit I'd have to start a new purgatory all over again!"

De Profundis

Most people have no idea what profound is. They go down to the very depths in order to look for it, while all along they could have found it on the surface. But in order to find it on the surface they would have to be quite deep themselves. -Peter Altenburg

The Philosopher

There once lived a thoughtful man who sought solitude in order to probe into the problems of creation and being and to determine the purpose of all life. These thoughts preoccupied him all the time.

One day he was walking as usual by the bank of the river, absorbed in contemplation. Suddenly, he lifted his eyes and saw a man standing near by. The man had dug a small hole on the bank and was pouring water from a jug into it.

Surprised, the philosopher asked the stranger, "What are you doing?"

"I am going to empty the river and pour all the water from it into this hole," the man answered.

"This is utter madness!" answered the philosopher. "It's an impossible task!"

"Sillier and even more impossible are the questions you're trying to solve!" retorted the man.

Having spoken thus the stranger disappeared.

-Shem-tob Palquera 13th Cent. C.E.

Popularity

Two Yiddish poets, bitter rivals, met in the Cafe Royale on Second Avenue after not meeting for years. Over a glass of tea with lemon the two began to boast about the progress they had made in their careers.

"You have no idea how many people read my poetry now!" bragged one. "My readers have doubled!"

"Mazl tov, mazl tov!" cried the other poet, enthusiastically pumping his hand. "I had no idea you got married!"

God's Garden

Consider the work of God; who can make straight what he has made crooked? When the Holy One, praised be He, created Adam, he showed him all of the trees in the Garden of Eden, telling him "Behold, My works are beautiful and glorious; yet everything which I have created is for your sake. Take care that you do not corrupt or destroy My world."

Why the Sixth Day?

Why was man created on the sixth day? So that, should he become overbearing, he can be told: "The gnat was created before you were."

Growing Roots

When our learning exceeds our deeds we are like trees whose branches are many but whose roots are few: the wind comes and uproots them... But when our deeds exceed our learning we are like trees whose branches are few but whose roots are many, so that even if all the winds of the world were to come and blow against them, they would be unable to move them. -Talmud

Wearisome Things

Generations come and generations go, while the earth endures forever.

The sun rises and the sun goes down; back again it returns to its place and rise there again.

The wind blows south, the wind blows north, round and round it goes and returns full circle.

All streams run into the sea, yet the sea never overflows; back to the place from which the streams ran they return to run again.

All things are wearisome; no man can speak of them all.

What has happened will happen again, and what has been done will be done again,

And there is nothing new under the sun.

Is there anything of which one can say, "Look, this is new"? No, it has already existed, long ago before our time.

The people of old are not remembered, and those who flow will not be remembered by those who follow them.... It is a sorry business that God has given men to busy themselves with. I have seen all the deeds that are done here under the sun; they are all emptiness and a chasing after wind. -Ecclesiates

Sacrifices

Rabbi Meir was once asked, "Why do the scriptures tell us in some passages that sacrifice is very pleasant unto the Lord, while in others it is said that God dislikes sacrifices?" He answered, "It depends whether a man's heart is sacrificed at them time he brings the sacrifice."

-Baraita Kallah 8

Water and Stones

Rabbi Akiba, illiterate at forty, saw one day a stone's perforation where water fell from a spring, and having heard people say, "Waters wear stones," he thought, "If soft water can bore through a rock, surely iron-clad Torah should, by sheer persistence, penetrate a tender mind"; and he turned to study.

-Talmud, Abot de Rabbi Nathan 6

Christian Thoughts

I am There

Jesus said, "I am the light that is over all things. I am all: From me all has come forth, and to me all has reached. Split a piece of wood; I am there. Lift up the stone, and you will find me there." -Gospel of Thomas

Inside You

Jesus said, "If you leaders say to you, 'Look, the kingdom is in heaven,' then the birds of heaven will precede you. If they say to you, 'It is in the sea,' then the fish will precede you. Rather, the kingdom is inside you and it is outside you." -Gospel of Thomas

Washing the Feet

When Jesus had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, which you also should do as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them." -John 13.12-17

In All Things

I, the highest and fiery power, have kindled every living spark and I have breathed out nothing that can die... I flame above the beauty of the fields, I shine in the waters; in the sun, the moon and the stars, I burn... All living things take their radiance from me; and I am the life, which remains the same through eternity, having neither beginning nor end.

-St. Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) Medieval German Abbess.

God is Mother

This fair lovely "mother" is so sweet and so kind in itself that it cannot truly be said of anyone or to anyone except of him and to him who is the true Mother of life and of all things. To the property of motherhood belong nature, love, wisdom and knowledge, and this is God.

-Julian of Norwich (1342-1420) English anchoress

A Prayer for the Frightened

Let nothing disturb you,
Let nothing frighten you;
All things are passing;
God never changes;
Patient endurance
Obtains all things;
Who God possess
In nothing is wanting;
God alone suffices.
-Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) Spanish Catholic Mystic, Carmelite

The Dark Night

One dark night,
Fired with love's urgent longings
-Ah, the sheer grace!-
I went out unseen,
My house being now all stilled;
...With no other light or guide
Than the one that burned in my heart;
This guided me
More surely that the light of noon
To where He waited for me
-Him I knew so well-
In a place where no one else appeared.
O guiding night!
O night more lovely than the dawn!
O night that has united
The Lover with His beloved,
Transforming the beloved in her Lover.
....I abandoned and forgot myself,
Laying my face on my Beloved;
All things ceased; I went out from myself,
Leaving my cares
Forgotten among the lilies.
-St. John of the Cross (1542-1591) Spanish Catholic mystic.

The Serenity Prayer

God grant me
the serenity to accept the things I cannot change
the courage to change the things I can and
the wisdom to know the difference.
-Reinhold Niebuhr 1892-1971, Protestant theologian

Birmingham Jail Letter
by Martin Luther King, Jr.

In 1963, some of his fellow clergymen had issued a statement that, while sympathizing with his civil rights goals, criticized his tactic of civil disobedience. In jail for that offense, Kind, with a smuggled pen and on scraps of paper, defended his actions in a letter that was to become the most famous document of the movement.

My fellow clergymen...

You express a great deal of anxiety over our willingness to break laws... One may well ask, "How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?" The answer is found in the fact that there are two laws: There are just laws and there are laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that "An unjust law is no law at all."

Now what is the difference between the two? How does one determine when a law is just or unjust? A just law is a man-made code which squares with the moral law or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. To put in the term of St. Thomas Aquinas, an unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal and natural law. Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust. All segregation statues are unjust because segregation distorts the soul and damages the personality.... To use the words of Martin Bruber, the great Jewish philosopher, segregation substitutes an "I-it" relationship for the "I-thou" relationship, and ends up relegating persons to the status of things... So I can urge me to disobey segregation ordinances because they are morally wrong....

You spoke of our activity in Birmingham as extreme. At first I was rather disappointed that fellow clergymen would see my non-violent efforts as those of the extremist...

But as I continued to think about the matter I gradually gained a bit of satisfaction from being considered an extremist. Was not Jesus an extremist in love - "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you." Was not Amos an extremist for justice - "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a might stream." Was not Paul an extremist for the gospel of Jesus Christ - "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Was not Martin Luther an extremist- "Here I stand; I can do not other so help me God." Was not John Bunyan an extremist- "I will stay in jail to the end of my days before I make a butchery of my conscience." Was not Abraham Lincoln an extremist - "This nation cannot survive half slave and half free." Was not Thomas Jefferson an extremist - "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." So the question is not whether we will be extremist but what kind of extremist will we be.

...Let us hope that the dark clouds of racial prejudice be lifted from our fear-drenched communities and in some not too distant tomorrow the radiant stars of love and brotherhood will shine over our great nation with all of their scintillating beauty.

Yours for the cause of Peace and Brotherhood.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Canticle of Brother Sun

All praise be yours, my Lord, through all that you have made,
And first my lord Brother Sun,
Who brings the day; and light you give to us through him.
How beautiful he is, how radiant in all his splendor!
Of you, Most high, he bears the likeness.
All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Moon and Stars;
In the heavens you have made them, bright
And precious and fair.
All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air,
And fair and stormy, all the weather's moods,
By which you cherish all that you have made.
All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Water,
So useful, lowly, precious and pure.
All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
Through whom you brighten up the night.
How beautiful he is, how gay! Full of power and strength.
All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Earth, our mother,
Who feeds us in her sovereignty and produces
Various fruits and colored flowers and herbs.
All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Death,
From whose embrace no mortal can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin!
Happy those She finds doing will!
The second death can do no harm to them.
Praise and bless my Lord, and give him thanks,
And serve him with great humility.

-St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) Franciscan saint.

For the Nation

From Book Coomon Prayer p.838, from Norman nelson

Almighty God, giver of all good things: We thank you for the natural majesty and beauty of this land. They restore us, though we often destroy them.

Heal us.

We thank you for the great resources of this nation. They make us rich, though we often exploit them.

Forgive us.

We thank you for the men and women who have made this country strong. They are models for us, though we often fall short of them.

Inspire us.

We thank you for the torch of liberty which has been lit in this land. It has drawn people from every nation, though we have often hidden from its light.

Enlighten us.

We thank you for the faith we have inherited in all its rich variety. It sustains our life, though we have been faithless again and again.

Renew us.

Help us, O Lord, to finish the good work here begun. Strengthen our efforts to blot out ignorance and prejudice, and to abolish poverty and crime. And hasten the day when all our people, with many voices in one united chorus, will glorify your holy Name.

Amen.

Part Four: The Indian Sub-continent

Hindu Thoughts

India is a myriad of differing practices, beliefs and systems of thoughts. I cannot hope to do justice to them all, but I've spent a few days looking for some Druidic examples to share with you. I hope that you make a most systematic and thorough examination than I did.

Isa Upanishad: All Beings in Your Self

Behold the universe in the glory of God: and all that lives and moves on earth. Leaving the transient, find joy in the Eternal; set not your heart on another's possessions...

The Spirit, without moving, is swifter than the mind; the senses cannot reach him: He is ever beyond them. Standing still, he overtakes those who run. To the ocean of his being, the spirit of life leads the streams of action.

...Who sees all beings in his own Self, and his own Self in all beings, loses all fear.

...When a sage sees the great Unity and his Self has become all beings, what delusion and what sorrow can ever be near him?

... May life go to immortal life, and the body go to ashes, OM. Oh my soul, remember past strivings, remember! O my soul, remember past strivings, remember!

Chandogya Upanishad: Thou Art That

There is a light that shines beyond all things on earth, beyond us all, beyond the heavens, beyond the highest, the very highest heavens. This is the Light that shines in our heart.

OM. There lived once a boy, Svetaketu Aruneya by name. One day his father spoke to him in this way: "Svetaketu, go and become a student of sacred wisdom. There is no one in our family who has not studied the holy Vedas and who might only be given the name of Brahman by courtesy."

The boy left at the age of twelve, and, having learnt the Vedas, he returned home at the age of twenty-four, very proud of his learning and having a great opinion of himself.

His father, observing this, said to him: "Svetaketu, my boy, you seem to have a great opinion of yourself, you think you are learned, and you are proud. Have you asked for that knowledge whereby what is not heard is heard, what is not thought is thought, and what is not known is known?"

"What is that knowledge, father?" asked Svetaketu.

"By knowing a lump of clay, my son, all that is clay can be known, since any differences are only words and the reality is clay; and by knowing a piece of gold all that is gold can be known, since any differences are only words and the reality is only gold..."

Svetaketu said: "Certainly my honored masters knew not this themselves. If they had known, why would they not have told me? Explain this to me, father."

"So be it, my child. Bring me a fruit from this banyan tree."

"Here it is, father."

"Break it."

"It is broken, Sir."

"What do you see in it?"

"Very small seeds, Sir."

"Break one of them, my son."

"It is broken, Sir."

"What do you see in it, my son?"

"Nothing at all, Sir."

Then his father spoke to him: "My son, from the very essence in the seed which you cannot see comes in truth this vast banyan tree. "Believe me, my son, an invisible and subtle essence is the Spirit of the whole universe. That is reality. That is Atman. THOU ART THAT."

"Explain more to me, father," said Svetaketu.

"So be it, my son. Place this salt in water and come to me tomorrow morning."

Svetaketu did as he was commanded, and in the morning his father said to him: "Bring me the salt you put into the water last night."

Svetaketu looked into the water, but could not find it, for it had dissolved.

His father then said, "Taste the water from this side. How is it?'

"It is salt."

"Taste it from the middle. How is it?"

"It is salt."

"Taste it from that side. How is it?"

"It is salt."

"Look for the salt and come again to me."

The son did so, saying: "I cannot see the salt. I only see the water."

His father then said: "in the same way, O my son, you cannot see the Spirit. But in truth he is here.

"An invisible but subtle essence is the Spirit of the whole universe. That is Reality. That is Truth. THOU ART THAT."

Two Quotes

As men approach me, so I receive them. All paths, Arjuna, lead to me. -Bhagavad Gita 4.11

Like the bee, gathering honey from different flowers, the wise man accepts the essence of different scriptures and sees only the good in all religions. -Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3

Jain Thoughts

Jainism, often listed in the top ten religions of the world (perhaps 10 million) is greatly unknown by most people. It is an indigenous strain of thought, over 4000 years old, somewhat similiar to Hinduism in their attitude towards karma and the cycle of rebirth. Occasionally membership overlaps, however Jainism is singular in that it does not stem from the Vedic or Brahmanic tradition. It has it's own series of sages, Tirthankaras, which ended about 2500 years ago and a contemporary of the Buddha. They lack a mythology or creation myth and have no priests, though they do have holy women and men who are ascetics. They are a bit anti-ritualistic and are famous in their strict vegetarianism and espousal of non-violence towards all animals; some to the extent of veiling their mouth to avoid breathing in microscopic creatures. Some are very anti-materialistic and roam about unclothed ("sky-clad" in their language) begging for a living. Among their most influential impact on India is inspiring Gandhi's non-violent resistance protest movement and anti-caste crusade. Materials on them are rather difficult to find in libraries, but I found some internet sites with their thoughts recorded in English, so take a look.

What is Ritual and Religion?

Many people put great emphasis on rites and rituals. Because of this, some people think the religion is the thing of past. It is waste of time. Religion is rigid and orthodox. Religion represents narrow-mindedness. Science has progressed beyond religion. Some people are worshipping. Some are reciting mantra. Some are moving beads on a mala (rosary.) Some are singing religious songs. Some are visiting religious places like Palitana. Some are asking for rewards from god. Some want to improve their fate. Some are praying to go to heaven. Many activities like these are practiced on the name of religion. Is this really the religion? Answer is no if this is nothing more to it. Answer is yes if there is more to it.

What is Religion?

First, we should try to understand the true meaning of the religion. It is definitely not the business where you wheel & deal with the god. It is not the thing to practice because of the social pressure or to show-off that you are religious. The Sanskrit word for the religion is dharma. The meaning of dharma is very own nature of the thing. For all living beings, our soul is the real thing. This makes "to see, to know and to realize" - the true nature of the soul as our religion. In other words, the laws of nature in truest and purest form are the religion.

Laws of nature lead us to the laws of self-initiatives and self-efforts. Without self-efforts and self-initiatives, one cannot see, know and realize his/her own true qualities. That's why Jainism relies a great deal on one's own efforts and initiatives, and laws of nature. Self-effort can change our fate. Remember our present fate is due to our past karma.

One time Bhagavan Mahavira was asked what is the religion from a realistic point of view. Bhagavan Mahavira said, "the realistic religion is consisted of four parts: 1) equality of all living ones, 2) every living soul has right to put self-effort to improve itself and do not take away this right, 3) do not rule other living ones, and 4) all views should be viewed with equanimity - without like or dislike. If we adopt only one of these, other three will automatically be adopted. Notice that Bhagavan Mahavira did not say that follow what I've said or follow the Jain religion.

What is Truth and Knowledge?

Do not live to know, know to live. Knowledge is not the religion, practice is the religion. Good conduct is the religion. In our conduct we should look at happiness and unhappiness with equanimity. We should believe in possibilities. Even opposing views can be parts of one truth. Accept co-existence with others. Look at the good side of others. The religion is for self-improvement not for improving others. If each individual improves, the society, nation and world will automatically improve.

How Should We Live?

We should now understand that if we want to have happiness and comforts, then we should be careful what we do and how we do it. The following is a list of some activities which can bring comfort to others and can ultimately provide the same for us. They are:

1) offering food to the needy (Only vegetarian food.)
2) offering clothes to the needy.
3) helping the sick.
4) helping others to acquire knowledge.
5) giving charity (Be sure that the money is used for a good cause.)
6) helping parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, and others in need.
7) helping animals or organizations that help animals.
8) studying religion and following its precepts in our daily lives.
9) worshipping Tirthankaras like Lord Mahira.

What are the Different Jain Fundamentals?

Jain philosophy can be described in various ways, but the most acceptable tradition is to describe it in terms of the Nav Tattvas or nine fundamentals. They are:

1) Jiva (soul)
2) Ajiva (non-living matter)
3) Punya (results of good deeds)
4) Pap (results of bad deeds)
5) Asrava (influx of karmas)
6) Samvar (stoppage of karmas)
7) Bandh (bondage of karmas)
8) Nirjara (eradication of karmas)
9) Moksha (liberation)

Now, let us use a simple analogy to illustrate these Tattvas. There lived a family in a farm house. They were enjoying the fresh cool breeze coming through the open doors and windows. The weather suddenly changed, and a terrible dust storm set in. Realizing it was a bad storm, they got up to close the doors and windows. By the time they could close all the doors and windows, lots of dust had entered the house. After closing the doors and the windows, they started clearing the dust that had come in to make the house clean.

We can interpret this simple illustration in terms of Nav-Tattvas as follows:

1) Jivas are represented by the people. 2) Ajiva is represented by the house. 3) Punya is represented by enjoyment resulting from the nice cool breeze. 4) Pap is represented by discomfort resulting from the sand storm, which brought dust into the house. 5) Asrava is represented by the influx of dust through the doors and windows of the house which is similar to the influx of karman particles to the soul. 6) Bandh is represented by the accumulation of dust in the house, which is similar to bondage of karman particles to the soul. 7) Samvar is represented by the closing of the doors and windows to stop the dust from coming into the house, which is similar to the stoppage of influx of karman particles to the soul. 8) Nirjara is represented by the cleaning up of accumulated dust from the house, which is similar to shedding accumulated karmic particles from the soul. 9) Moksha is represented by the cleaned house, which is similar to the shedding off all karmic particles from the soul.

The Problem?

Those who praise their own doctrines and disparage the doctrines of others do not solve any problem. -Sutrakritanga 1.1.50 (Jain)

The Butcher and Papanubandhu Pap:

There lived a butcher in Magadh city. He enjoyed his job. One day, King Shrenik decided that there would be no more killing in the city. All killing in the city halted except for this butcher's killing. As to when he was asked why he did not observe King Shrenik's command, he said he loved killing and could not stop. King Shrenik decided to put him in an almost dry well so that there would be nothing to kill. To everyone's surprise, the killing did not stop there either. The butcher made animals with wet clay and then pretended to kill them. Since he was enjoying killing so much, he accumulated pap (bad karmas), which gave rise to a situation where he could do nothing other than, continue killing.

The Immortal Song

1. May the sacred stream of amity flow forever in my heart. May the universe prosper -- such is my cherished desire.
2. May my heart sing with ecstasy at the sight of the virtuous, and may my life be an offering at their feet.
3. May my heart bleed at the sight of the wretched, the cruel, the irreligious, and my tears of compassion flow from my eyes.
4. May I always be there to show the path to the pathless wanderers of life. Yet if they should not hearken to me, may I bide in patience.
5. May the spirit of goodwill enter all our hearts. May we all sing in chorus the immortal song of human concord.

Fight Against Desires

O man! Control thyself. Only then can you get salvation.
If you are to fight, fight against your own desires.
Nothing will be achieved by fighting against external enemies;
if you miss this occasion, it will be lost forever.
One's own unconquered soul is one's greatest enemy.

Virtuous Prayer

May my thoughts and feeling be such that I may always act in a simple and straightforward manner. May I ever, so far as I can, do good in this life to others.

May I never hurt and harm any living being; may I never speak a lie. May I never be greedy of wealth or the wife [spouse] of another. May I ever drink the nectar of contentment!

May I always have a friendly feeling towards all living beings of the world and may the stream of compassion always flow from my heart towards distressed and afflicted living beings.

May I never entertain an idea of egotism; nor may I be angry with anybody! May I never become jealous on seeing the worldly prosperity of other people.

May I never become fretful towards bad, cruel and wicked persons. May I keep tolerance towards them. May I be so disposed!

May I ever have the good company of learned ascetics and may I ever keep them in mind. May my heart be always engrossed and inclined to adopt the rules of conduct which they observe.

May my heart be overflowing with love at the sight of the virtuous, and may I be happy to serve them so far as possible.

May I never be ungrateful (towards anybody); nor may I revolt (against anybody.) May I ever be appreciating the good qualities of other persons and may I never look at their faults.

May my mind neither be puffed up with joy, nor may it become nervous in pain and grief. May it never be frightened even if I am in a terrible forest or strange places of cremation or graveyards.

May my mind remain always steady and firm, unswerving and unshaken; may it become stronger every day. May I bear and endure with patience the deprivation of dear ones and occurrences of undesired evils.

May all living beings of the world be happy! May nobody ever feel distressed! May the people of the world renounce enmity, sin, pride and sing the songs of joy every day.

May Dharma (truth) be the topic of house-talk in every home! May evil be scarce! May (people) increase their knowledge and conduct and thereby enjoy the blessed fruit of human birth.

May disease and pestilence never spread, may the people live in peace, may the highest religion of Ahimsa (non-injury) pervade the whole world and may it bring about universal good!

May universal love pervade the world and may ignorance of attachment remain far away. May nobody speak unkind, bitter, and harsh words!

May all become "heroes of the age" heartily and remain engaged in elevating the Cause of Righteousness. May all gain the sight of Truth called "Vastuswarupa" (Reality of substance) and may they bear, with pleasure, trouble and misfortunes!

AMEN

The Doctrine of Maybe

Since no speech is capable of simultaneously describing the manifold aspects of the reality without incurring contradiction, the Jains advance a theory of qualified speech as a corollary to the doctrine of non-absolutism. This is called Asyad-vada or 'the doctrine of maybe' A statement like "x is eternal' is not only dogmatic but also wrong, since it denies impermanence. The correct thing would then be to say "maybe the x is eternal', which would indicate the existence of other properties not expressly stated by the speaker. Seven such predications are possible: maybe yes, maybe no, maybe yes and no, maybe indescribable, and three more combinations of these.

Nonviolence Prayer

From clubs and knives, stakes and maces, breaking my limbs,
An infinite number of times I have suffered without hope.
By keen-edged razors, by knives and shears,
Many time I have been drawn and quartered, torn apart and skinned.
Helpless in snares and traps, a deer,
I have been caught and bound and fastened, and often I have been killed.
A helpless fish, I have been caught with hooks and nets;
An infinite number of times I have been killed and scraped, split and gutted.
A bird, I have been caught by hawks or trapped in nets,
Or held fast by birdlime, and I have been killed an infinite number of times.
A tree, with axes and adzes by carpenters
An infinite number of times I have been felled, stripped of my bark, cut up, and sawn into planks.
As iron, with hammer and tongs by blacksmiths
An infinite number of times I have been struck and beaten, split and filed....
Ever afraid, trembling, in pain and suffering,
I have felt the utmost sorrow and agony....
In every kind of existence I have suffered
Pains which have scarcely known reprieve for a moment.
-Prince Mrgaputra

Creator? Creation?

If God created the world, where was he before creation? If you say he was transcendent then, and needed no support, where is he now?... If he is ever perfect and complete, how could the will to create have arisen in him? If, on the other hand, he is not perfect, he could no more create the universe than a potter could.... If out of love for living things and need of them he made the world, why did he not make creation wholly blissful, free from misfortune? ... Know that the world is uncreated, as time itself is, without beginning and end, and is based on the principles, life and rest. Uncreated and indestructible, it endures under the compulsion of its own nature.

Buddhist Thoughts

See For Yourselves

It is proper... to doubt, to be uncertain... Do not go upon what has been acquired by repeated hearing; nor upon tradition; nor upon rumour; nor upon what is in a scripture; ... nor upon the consideration, "The monk is our teacher." Rather when you yourselves know: "These things are bad; when undertaken and observed, these things lead to harm and ill," abandon them. Likewise when you yourselves know: "These things are good; when undertaken and observed, these things lead to benefit and happiness," enter on and abide them. -Bodhiharma

Carrying a Girl

Two monks on pilgrimage came to the ford of a river. There they saw a girl dressed in all her finery and obviously not knowing what to do, for the river was high and she did not want her clothes spoilt. Without more ado, one of the monks took her on his back, carried her across, and put her down on dry ground. Then the monks continued on their way. But the other monk started complaining; "Surely it is not right to touch a woman; it is against the commandments to have close contact with women; how can you go against the rules for monks!" and so on in a steady stream. The monk who had carried the girl walked along silently, but finally he remarked: "I set her down by the river. But you are still carrying her."

Sand Castles

Some children were playing beside a river. They made castles of sand, and each child defended his castle and said, "This one is mine." They kept their castles separate and would not allow any mistakes about which was whose. When the castles were all finished, one child kicked over someone's else's castle and completely destroyed it. The owner of the castle flew into a rage, pulled the other child's hair, struck him with his fist and bawled out, "He has spoilt my castle! Come along all of you and help me to punish him as he deserves." The others all came to his help. They beat the child with a stick and then stamped on him as he lay on the ground. Then they went on playing in their sand-castles, each saying, "This is mine; no one else may have it. Keep away! Don't touch my castle!" But evening came; it was getting dark and they all thought they ought to be going home. No one now cared what became of his castle. One child stamped on his, another pushed his over with both his hands. Then they turned away and went back each to his home.

Flapping Things

Two monks were arguing about a flag. "The flag is flapping," said one. "No," said the other; "the wind is flapping." The argument went back and forth. The Master happened to be passing by. He told them: "Not the wind, not the flag; your minds are flapping."

The Water Jar

Do not disregard evil, saying, "It will not come nigh unto me": by the falling of drops even a water jar is filled; likewise the fool, gathering little by little, fills himself with evil.

Do not disregard merit, saying "It will not come nigh unto me": by the falling of drops of water even a water jar is filled; likewise the wise man, gathering little by little, fills himself with good. -Dhammapada 121-122

Verily, from meditation arises wisdom. Without meditation wisdom wanes. -Dhammapada 282

What is Zen?

A special tradition outside the scriptures;
No dependence upon words and letters;
Direct pointing at the mind;
Seeing into one's own nature,
and the attainment of Buddhahood.
-Bodhidharma

On Trust in the Heart

The Perfect Way is difficult only for those who pick and choose;
Do not like, do not dislike; all will then be clear.
Make a hairbreadth difference, and Heaven and Earth are set apart;
If you want the truth to stand clear before you, never be for or against.
The struggle between "for" and "against" is the mind's worst disease....
The more you talk about It, and the more you think about It, the further from It you go;
Stop talking, stop thinking, and there is nothing you will not understand....
There is no need to seek Truth; only stop having views...
The ultimate Truth about both Extremes is that they are One Emptiness...
…Whether we see it or fail to see it, it is manifest always and everywhere....
Take your stand on this, and the rest will follow of its own accord;
To trust in the Heart is the Not Two, the Not Two is to trust in the Heart.
I have spoken in vain; for what can words tell
Of things that have no yesterday, tomorrow or today?
-3rd Chinese Patriarch, Seng-Ts'an died 606 c.e.

Loving Kindness (Metta Sutta)

In safety and in bliss
May all creatures be of a blissful heart.
Whatever breathing beings there may be,
No matter whether they are frail or firm,
With none excepted, be they long or big
or middle-sized, or be they short or small
Or thick, as well as those seen or unseen,
Or weather they are far or near,
Existing or yet seeking to exist,
May all creatures be of a blissful heart.
Let no one work another one's undoing
Or even slight him at all anywhere;
And never let them wish each other ill
Through provocation or resentful thought.
And just as might a mother with her life
Protect the son that was her only child,
So let him then for every living thing
Maintain unbounded consciousness in being,
And let him too with love for all the world
Maintain unbounded consciousness in being
Above, below, and all round in between,
Untroubled, with no enemy or foe.
And while he stands or walks, or while he sits
Or while he lies down, free from drowsiness,

Let him resolve upon this mindfulness;
This is Divine Abiding here, they say.

Truth

Kapathika: "How should a wise man maintain truth?"
The Buddha: "A man has a faith. If he says 'This is my faith,' so far he maintains truth. But by that he cannot proceed to the absolute conclusion: 'This alone is Truth, and everything else is false.'"
-Majjhima Nikaya ii.176 Canki Sutta

Must I Now Preach?

(Majjhima-nikaya 26 by Gotama Buddha)

I have attained, thought I, to this Doctrine profound, recondite, hard to comprehend, serene, excellent, beyond dialectic, abstruse, and only to perceived by the learned. Must I now preach what I so hardly won? Men sunk in sin and lust would find it hard to plumb this Doctrine - up stream all the way, abstruse, profound, most subtle, hard to grasp. Dear lusts will blind them that they shall not see in densest mists of ignorance befogged.

As thus I pondered, my heart inclined to rest quiet and not to preach my Doctrine. But Brahma Sahampati's mind came to know what thoughts were passing within my mind, and he thought to himself: The world is undone, quite undone, inasmuch as the heart of the Truth-finder inclines to rest quiet and not to preach his Doctrine! Hereupon, as swiftly as a strong man might stretch out his arm or might draw back his outstretched arm, Brahma Sahampati vanished from the Brahma world and appeared before me. Towards me he came with his right shoulder bared, and with his clasped hands stretched out to me in reverence, saying: -May it please the Lord, may it please the Blessed One, to preach his doctrine! Beings there are whose vision is but little dimmed, who are perishing because they do not hear the Doctrine: - these will understand it!

Sikh's Thoughts

Another of the unknown top-ten religions of the worlds comes from India, but it is one of the most recently founded ones, in the 13th century, I believe, under a series of 7 prophets or so, the last and greatest being Guru Nanak, who finalized their writings, the Adri Granth. (sp?) It was formed when Muslim and Hindu communities were intermixing after an invasion and a sort of mixture resulted with a monotheistic god in charge of humanity's endless cycles of births. This group was often beseiged by Muslim and Hindu authorities and, as a result, became very tightly organized on a militaristic pattern. They are non-genderist and aggressively egalitarian. They are famous for their five "K's," a knife, long hair, an iron ring decoration, a comb and one other thing. Their single Golden Temple, built on the site where their writing was first proclaimed, is a famous structure as shown in the picture on this page. Currently their homeland is cruelly divided between Pakistan and India and in a constant state of unrest.

Basic Sikh Philosophy and Beliefs

There is only One God. He is the same God for all people of all religions. The soul goes through cycles of births and deaths before it reaches the human form. The goal of our life is to lead an exemplary existence so that one may merge with God. Sikhs should remember God at all times and practice living a virtuous and truthful life while maintaining a balance between their spiritual obligations and temporal obligations.

The true path to achieving salvation and merging with God does not require renunciation of the world or celibacy, but living the life of a householder, earning a honest living and avoiding worldly temptations and sins. Sikhism condemns blind rituals such as fasting, visiting places of pilgrimage, superstitions, worship of the dead, idol worship etc.

Sikhism preaches that people of different races, religions, or sex are all equal in the eyes of God. It teaches the full equality of men and women. Women can participate in any religious function or perform any Sikh ceremony or lead the congregation in prayer.

The fight against social and political injustice has historically been an integral part of Sikhism. As a religious leader Guru Nanak did not turn a blind eye to political suppression or consider it outside the realm of religion, but undertook political protest through his writings, speaking out against the cruelty of rulers.

Women in Sikhism: 3 Quotes

"We are born of woman, we are conceived in the womb of woman, we are engaged and married to woman. We make friendship with woman and the lineage continued because of woman. When one woman dies, we take another one, we are bound with the world through woman. Why should we talk ill of her, who gives birth to kings? The woman is born from woman; there is none without her. Only the One True Lord is without woman" (Guru Nanak Dev, Var Asa, pg. 473)

Marriage is an equal partnership of love and sharing between husband and wife. They are not said to be husband and wife, who merely sit together. Rather they alone are called husband and wife, who have one soul in two bodies." (Guru Amar Das, Pauri, pg. 788)

Women have an equal right to participate in the congregation. Come my sisters and dear comrades! Clasp me in thine embrace. Meeting together, let us tell the tales of our

Omnipotent Spouse (God.) In the True Lord are all merits, in us all demerits." (Guru Nanak Dev, Sri Rag, pg. 17)

What is Truth and Knowledge?

Do not live to know, know to live. Knowledge is not the religion, practice is the religion. Good conduct is the religion. In our conduct we should look at happiness and unhappiness with equanimity. We should believe in possibilities. Even opposing views can be parts of one truth. Accept co-existence with others. Look at the good side of others. The religion is for self-improvement not for improving others. If each individual improves, the society, nation and world will automatically improve.

Letter to the Ascetic

They who eat filth are no better than swine
They who roll in dust no better than elephants or donkeys.
They who live in the crematoriums no better than jackals: they who abide in the tombs no better than owls.
Thou wanderest in the woods? So do the deer.
Thou livest in silence? So do the trees.
Thou art a celibate? So are the eunuchs.
Thou wanderest barefooted? So do the monkeys.
And, how wilst thou, O wretch, O slave of woman, lust and wrath, attain God without Wisdom? (1)
Thou bidest in the forest? So do the demons.
Thou livest on milk? So do the children in the world.
Thou livest on air? So doth a serpent.
Thou livest on grass, vegetables and desirest no wealth? So doth the cow, the ox.
Thou fliest in the skies? So do the birds.
Thou sittest long in meditation? So do the cranes, the cats, the wolves.
Yea, they who knew, let not their attainment be advertised: O mind, let not such deceit enter thy heart even unconsciously. (2)
Thou livest in the earth? So do the white ants.
Thou fliest in the skies? So do the sparrows.
Thou eatest only fruit? So do the monkeys.
Thou wanderest unseen? So do the ghosts.
Thou floatest on the water? So do the black flies.
Thou eatest fire? So doth a chakori (type of bird.)
Thou worshippest the sun? No better then the lotus.
Thou bowest to the moon? No better then the water lilies. (3)
If thou callest Him Narayan, or a water god, why not also the tortoise, the fish and the shark?
If Vishnu with a lotus in the navel, what about the lake which abounds in the lotus?
If Gopinath and Gopal, being the cowherd, what about other tenders of the cows?
The ignorant wretches mutter his customary names, but dwell not on the Mystery that is God Who saves and cherishes all. (4)

All Religions are Alike to Me

No difference there is between a temple and a mosque, nor between the Hindu worship or the Muslim prayer: for men are the same all over, though they appear not the same.

Gods and demons, yakshas and gandharvas, Hindus and Muslims, they all seem different, but the difference is only of the dress, custom and country.

The same eyes have they, the same ears, the same body, the same habits, a get-together of earth, air, water and fire.

Allah is no different from Abhenkha, the Puranas no different from the Koran. All men are made alike. They appear no different to me. (16)

Tibetan Thoughts

Many, including myself, praise the wisdom of the Tibetan people without knowing much about them. This people were once among the great feared raiders of centrals Asia, until the introduction of Buddhism in their country tamed their wildness and turned them to a contemplative people famed for their gentleness and collective wisdom. The secular and religious leader of this people, the Dalai Lama (now in his 14th incarnation) is currently seeking help for his land which is undergoing genocide and ethnic cleansing by the Chinese. A mixture of Buddhism and indigenous gods, a common practice throughout Asia, it has a deep reverence for the holy places of the country (much like the Navajo landscape), it's beliefs and for its monks. It is notable that the Mongols share this Tibetan Buddhism and acknowledge the Dalai Lama as their spiritual leader. I would recommend also researching past incarnations of the Dalai Lama, such as the work of Sir Charles Bell on #13 Dalai Lama. One of famous aspects of a variant of Tibetan Buddhism is the Tantric approach of doing the opposite of what is acknowledged to be right, to learn a special type of wisdom.

With Impurity the Wise Make Themselves Pure

They who do not see the truth
Think of birth and death as distinct
This discrimination is the demon
Who produces the ocean of transmigration.
Freed from it the great ones are released
From the bonds of becoming...
The mystics, pure of mind,
Dally with lovely girls,
Infatuated with the poisonous flames of passion,
That they may be set free from desire...
He is not Buddha, he is not set free,
If he does not see the world
As originally pure, unoriginated,
Impersonal and immaculate...
Water in the ear is removed by more water,
A thorn in the skin by another thorn.
So wise men rid themselves of passion
By yet more passion.
As a washerman uses dirt
To wash clean a garment,
So, with impurity,
The wise man makes himself pure.

Of What Use is Meditation?

...Will one gain release, abiding in meditation?
...What's to be done by reliance on mantras?
What is the use of austerities?
What is the use of going on pilgrimage?...
Abandon such false attachments and renounce such illusion!...
Without meditating, without renouncing the world,
One may stay at home in the company of one's wife.
Can it be called perfect knowledge...
If one is not released while enjoying the pleasures of sense?
Mantras and tantras, meditation and concentration,
They are all a cause of self-deception.
...Eat, drink, indulge the senses,
Fill the mandala (with offerings) again and again,

By things like these you'll gain the world beyond.
Tread upon the head of the foolish worldling and proceed!
As in Nirvana, so is Samsara.
Do not think there is any distinction.
Do not sit at home, do not go to the forest,
But recognize mind wherever you are.
When one abides in complete and perfect enlightenment,
Where is Samsara and where is Nirvana?
Do not err in this matter of self and other.
Everything is Buddha without exception...
The fair tree of thought that knows no duality,
Spreads through the triple world.
It bears the flower and fruit of compassion,
And its name is service of others.
...He who clings to the void
And neglects Compassion,
Does not reach the highest stage.
But he who practices only Compassion,
Does not gain release from toils of existence.
He, however, who is strong in practice of both,
Remains neither in Samsara nor in Nirvana.

Tolerance

If you are a tolerant person and another person is demanding something unreasonable, you may, without anger or ill-will, judge the situation and see if you need a counter measure. Then you take the countermeasure. In the case of Tibet, there is a lot of suffering under the name of liberation. But if I see the Chinese leaders as human beings - our neighbours, people with a long history and a high civilization- instead of having ill-will, I have respect. Doing this help reduce negative feelings and gives rise to patience and tolerance. This does not mean that I accept Chinese oppression. I do whatever I can to stand firm against oppression, but I do it without ill-will.... When your mind is dominated by anger, you become half-mad, and you won't be able to hit the target. -Dalai Lama #14

Change

From a Buddhist point of view, no error is impossible to be changed. There is always a possibility for change. The recognition of our human intelligence can help us have more confidence in facing difficult situations. This is very important. When you feel discouraged, "I'm too old," "I'm not intelligent enough," "I've done too many evil things in the past," or "I'm simply not good enough," a common Buddhist practice is to study the lives of past generations of Buddhist adepts who acted even worse than you did or were even more foolish. Doing this, you will see that they were able to attain liberation, and you will realize, "If they could do it, I can do it too." you see your situation in a relative context, not just in the extreme, such as "I am simply too old." -Dalai Lama

Teachers and Students

You are a teacher because you have students. In cultivating a relationship with a spiritual teacher it is important not to be too quick to consider that person to be your spiritual teacher, because it is a very powerful relationship. For however long it may take - two years, five years, ten years, or longer- you simply regard this other person as a spiritual friend, and, in the meantime, you observe closely that person's behavior, attitudes, and ways of teaching, until you are very confident of his or her integrity. Then there is no need of a license. But it is very important, from the beginning, to have a very firm, sound approach. -Dalai Lama

The Tibetan Path

By Rob Harrison, ODAL

For some of us a Druidic path means a continual search for truth. That means we tend to investigate things philosophical and religious. There are a number of groups claiming the absolute truth, with centuries of violence accredited to their history in their effort to validate their "truth." These types of groups I rule out, as they tend to be androcratic and dualistic. As well there is a trend to lay claim to ancient religions, some of which is dressed up with modern fluff. However, the primeval practices aren't to be dismissed out of hand. There are valid expressions of some of these aboriginal forms that can speak to us today. One of those forms is Tibetan Buddhism, and I want to share with you some of their truth, particularly some of their cosmology, (preparation for death) and how their culture is fitting in to our current world.(Medical school positives, purpose of Kalachakra initiation)

Tibetan Buddhism is complicated. Perhaps they would argue that point relative to the practice of emptiness. What could be simpler? However, their texts make a different case altogether. So an explanation of their Buddhism is not easy. I won't go into their organizational details. I will tell you that Tibet was the first culture to weave together the three strands of Buddhism. Those three are the Greater Vehicle, the Lesser Vehicle, and Tantra. As I understand the differences, the Greater Vehicle is focused on meditational and yogic practices. The Lesser vehicle focuses on ethical issues, and Tantra has to do with the realization of enlightenment in this lifetime. Among these three strands, Tibet has four main orders, and each branch has it's particular tantras, yogas, and meditations.

What I have done though is study some of the Dalai Lama's writing, some of the essentials of Tibetan Buddhism, and some writings relative to the Kalachakra initiation. The Dalai Lama is the head of Tibet, and since going into exile, has written numerous books. It boggles my mind how he has the attitude he does towards those who invaded his land and have tortured his people for forty-some-odd years. The essentials of Buddhism have to do with taking refuge in the teaching of Buddhism, the community of Buddhists, and Buddha. Buddha is not God. The essence of Buddhism is, "...a human being's direct, exact, and comprehensive experience of the final nature and structure of reality." On top of taking refuge there are the various "practices," the "exoteric path for the evolutionary development of the human individual...." The Kalachakra initiation has has a fascinating mythological root in the nation of Shambhala. Buddha taught it to the King and his ninety six minor rulers who conferred it over time to the entire population, the purpose being to unite the people against invasion and avert annihilation. This is a point we will revisit later.

There are some intriguing aspects to the cosmology of Tibetan Buddhism. In the Kalachakra Initiation, there is a description of space particles and the origins of the universe. There is also another description of the universe in Buddhism, and neither are considered the navigation of the ship, as it were. It would be like the difference of describing a mission to Mars to politicians and then to engineers. Same mission, but two totally different pictures. So almost three thousand years ago, Buddha described the empty space between atoms: space particles. There is a similarity between the space particles that exist and the stream of life. When the wind of karma of collected individuals eventually affects a space particle then the "empty eon" ends and a new universe begins. The space particle endures as a condensed trace of the disassociated elemental particle of the previous universe. Since Berzin's tome is not intended to be a scientific treatise, it leaves the question of what the numerous universes are

in our section of space(that which is viewable by mechanical means), and does the affected space particle resume the former shape it contains the traces of, or does it evolve? The Tibetans were printing centuries before the Europeans clunked out the Gutenberg Bible, so they were advanced in their time. How they came by this information is unknown as well.

Another provocative aspect of Tibetan Buddhism is their view of the future. Since they don't adhere to the idea of God, they don't necessarily have an "end time" scenario. The Kalachakra tradition does contain a prophecy of future galactic war, and a description of their astrological predictive methods. This prophecy has given rise to the speculation that the kingdom of Shambhala is celestial, and that extra-terrestrials visited this planet and shared the science of calendar making and other technology. This happens to be the belief of the Zulu's of Southern Africa and the Aymara tribe of Bolivia. When we consider things like the Stonehenge and New Grange in Ireland, with the amazing accuracy with which they were built, as well as the advanced knowledge needed to quarry, move, and erect such stones, it suddenly doesn't seem so far fetched.

In Tibetan Buddhism, the Medical College is officially the Medical and Astrology College. Astrology plays an important part not only in the predictions of the future, but in the Tibet approach to medical healing. If you were to obtain an astrological chart from that school, in it would be the date you will die. It is an aspect of Tibetan astrology and world view that is so very different from the West. "The Buddha said that of all the different times to plow, autumn is the best, and of all the different kinds of fuel for fire that cow dung is the best, and of all the different kinds of awareness, the awareness of impermanence and death is the best."

No one knows when they will die. Even to Tibetans, their own astrology isn't carved in stone. Since the time of death is unknown, their view is to be prepared for it. To be prepared for the worst is better than being caught off guard, in Tibetan estimation. There are a variety of practices that living people can to prepare themselves for death. The basic one is to develop the mind that all in this reality is impermanent. That can be accomplished in meditation. There are other practices related to death and dying, and can be found in The Tibetan Book of the Dead, and The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying. At the core of this conviction is the belief in reincarnation and karma, which contrasts sharply with the Christian conviction of judgment, heaven, and hell.

In the close of our millennium, there is a substantial growth in the learning of other cultures. Many peoples are discovering their own roots, especially here in America. Being a drummer, I've witnessed a swell in musical acculturation; the mixing of the Afro-Cuban techniques with standard beats of rock and roll. The Latin beats of the America's, and the merging of Celtic styles with modern styles of rhythm. The "world" music section at retail music centers has grown tremendously, as has the rise in ethnic restaurants. People want to know their own roots, and they want to experience the cultures of the rest of the world. For the most part, that is a good thing. However, the conflicts in Kosovo and Tibet show us that not all cultures want to co-exist. Particularly political cultures.

For many years, the situation in Tibet was essentially unknown. That the Chinese had and still imprison and torture monks and nuns was unknown to me until 1997, and it already had a 38 year history by then. There are positives that have emerged from t

he exile, however. For starters, it has brought to light the flagrant abuses of human rights by the Chinese government. This is equally amplified by the Chinese Communist efforts to outlaw a meditation group know as Falon Gong in 1999. Despite their political double speak, human rights abuses continue unabated. A second advantage for the rest of the world is that for the first time, the Tibetans have begun sharing their medical knowledge with the rest of the world. Their expertise lies in the areas of diagnosis and pharmaceutics as treatment. Theirs is the only known culture to be able to detoxify mercury. They have had success in working with AIDS patients, and they were invited to Russia to see if they could help with the numerous diseases that have resulted from the nuclear meltdown that occurred in Cheyrnobl in the early 1980's. Again they have had success where all others have failed. The first satellite pharmacy for Tibetan medicine will open in Spring Green, Wisconsin, at the Mahayan Dharma Center, on Clyde Road off County Road C, about an hour west of Madison on Highway 14. I share that because I know the route well. It's a beautiful area. Anyway....

Another strong influence on culture is the Buddhist approach to conflict. They believe in peace. They didn't have much of an army when the Chinese invaded. They don't have one now. The Dalai Lama has brought to the Presidency of the United States the challenge to be the first to lay down arms. In other words, what if they had a war, and nobody came? Who will be first? As I mentioned earlier, the Kalachakra initiation is given with the view towards peace through protection. Not the protection of the technology of destruction, but through the protection of living harmoniously. Interestingly enough, the ancient texts of the Kalachakra Initiation include instructions on building armaments. The Dalai Lama gives the following illustration: Two meditators are sitting beside a rushing torrent. Along comes a man, who wants to cross the torrent. The meditators try to dissuade him, but he becomes unreasonable. One meditator decides nothing can be done, and resumes his practice. The other one gets up and "punched the man unconscious so he would not kill himself in the river."

Who was the violent one? "Thus, if all other means fail to end a drastic situation, then out of the wish to end others' sufferings, and without hatred or anger, we need not hesitate to use forceful means. In doing so, however, we need to be willing to accept the painful consequences of our actions, even if it is hellish suffering."

According to the Kalachakra, then the energy that went into the technology of war needs to go into the technology of peace, the building of an environment that is conducive to the growth of the people. This current world can annihilate itself many times over, yet still will not feed, clothe, or educate everyone despite the abundant resources to do so. The Kalachakra initiation is conferred to bring to an end this unwillingness to build peace. An army of meditators, to use a little irony.

We Druids can learn a lot from our Tibetan kin. There is much that is similar in the magical systems of the Tibetans and Druids, albeit I believe that the Tibetans are more advanced in their abilities to do it. Perhaps in time, had the Chinese not invaded them, the Tibetans would have come down from the "roof of the world," and shared their cultural riches with the world. For whatever reason, it has happened. The challenge now is to make the most of it.

-12 Fomhar, XXXVII YR, 5M6E
Circa August 12, 1999
Rob Harrison
Third Order

QUOTES FROM:

Thurman, Robert - Essential Tibetan Buddhism, pg 9, pg. 44.
Berzin, Alexander - Taking the Kalachakra Initiation, pg 33.
Dalai Lama - The Way To Freedom, pg. 48
Berzin, Alexander - The Kalachakra Initiation, pg. 53.

Part Five: The Far East

Chinese Thoughts

The reason why many people are totally confused by Chinese proverbs is that many sites have lists of Chinese sayings, not all of which are proverbs. They are a mix bag of proverbs, idioms, colloquialisms etc... Since I am not a scholar of linguistic and Chinese literature, I don't know what exactly qualifies as a proverb. Some Chinese idioms sound and look like proverbs, but they are not proverbs by definition. There are English proverbs that translate into Chinese idioms but not Chinese proverbs, and vise-versa. E.g. the Chinese saying " *The view of a frog at the bottom of a well is limited."* is a proverb that is usually used as an idiom: "*view of a frog at the bottom of a well*." That has a similar, but not identical, counterpart in English: *tunnel vision.*

Add legs to the snake after you have finished drawing it is foolish.

Age and time do not wait for people.

An ant may well destroy a whole dam.

Bad things never walk alone.

A book holds a house of gold.

Butcher the donkey after it finished his job on the mill.

A crane standing amidst a flock of chickens.

A camel standing amidst a flock of sheep.

Crows everywhere are equally black.

The death of the heart is the saddest thing that can happen to you.

A dish of carrot hastily cooked may still has soil uncleaned off the vegetable.

Dismantle the bridge shortly after crossing it.

Distant water won't help to put out a fire close at hand.

Distant water won't quench your immediate thirst.

Do not want others to know what you have done? Better not have done it anyways.

Donkey's lips do not fit onto a horse's mouth.

A dog won't forsake his master because of his poverty; a son never deserts his mother for her homely appearance.

Dream different dreams while on the same bed.

Even a hare will bite when it is cornered.

Fail to steal the chicken while it ate up your bait grain.

A fall into a ditch makes you wiser.

Fighting a wolf with a flexible stalk.

A flea on the top of a bald head.

Flowing water never goes bad; our door hubs never gather termites.

A frog in a well shaft seeing the sky.

Flies never visit an egg that has no crack.

A good fortune may forbode a bad luck, which may in turn disguise a good fortune.

A great man can bend and stretch.

Have a mouth as sharp as a dagger but a heart as soft as tofu.

How can you expect to find ivory in a dog's mouth?

How can you put out a fire set on a cart-load of firewood with only a cup of water?

If you do not study hard when young you'll end up bewailing your failures as you grow up.

If a son is uneducated, his dad is to blame.

If you have never done anything evil, you should not be worrying about devils to knock at your door.

An inch of time is an inch of gold but you can't buy that inch of time with an inch of gold.

It is easy to dodge a spear that comes in front of you but hard to keep harms away from an arrow shot from behind.

A Jade stone is useless before it is processed; a man is good-for-nothing until he is educated.

Kill a chicken before a monkey.

Kill one to warn a hundred.

Like ants eating a bone.

Looking for the ass while on its very back.

Lift a stone only to drop on your own feet.

The longer the night lasts, the more our dreams will be.

Mend the pen only after the sheep are all gone.

No wind, no waves.

Of all the strategems, to know when to quit is the best.

Once bitten by a snake, he/she is scared all his/her life at the mere sight of a rope.

Once on a tiger's back, it is hard to alight.

Once you pour the water out of the bucket it's hard to get it back in it.

One cannot refuse to eat just because there is a chance of being choked.

One monk shoulders water by himself; two can still share the labor among them. When it comes to three, they have to go thirsty.

Only when all contribute their firewood can they build up a strong fire.

An overcrowded chicken farm produce fewer eggs.

Pick up a sesame seed but lose sight of a watermelon.

Play a harp before a cow.

Paper can't wrap up a fire.

Reshape one's foot to try to fit into a new shoe.

Shed no tears until seeing the coffin.

A smile will gain you ten more years of life.

A sly rabbit will have three openings to its den.

The soldier who retreats 50 paces jeers at the one who retreats 100 paces.

Some prefer carrot while others like cabbage.

Steal a bell with one's ears covered.

Three humble shoemakers brainstorming will make a great statesman.

There are always ears on the other side of the wall.

There is no silver here: three hundred taels.

Thousands of bones will become ashes before a general achieves his fame.

A tiger never returns to his prey he did not finish off.

Vicious as a tigeress can be, she never eats her own cubs.

Waiting for a rabbit to hit upon a tree and be killed in order to catch it.

We are not so much concerned if you are slow as when you come to a halt.

A weasel comes to say "Happy New Year" to the chickens.

When you are poor, neighbors close by will not come; once you become rich, you'll find new relatives.

Without rice, even the cleverest housewife cannot cook.

You can't catch a cub without going into the tiger's den.

You think you lost your horse? Who knows, he may bring a whole herd back to you someday.

You won't help shoots grow by pulling them up higher.

You can't expect both ends of a sugar cane are as sweet.

Your fingers can't be of the same length.

Chinese Stories

Moderation in Harvest

If you do not allow nets with too fine a mesh to be used in large ponds, then there will be more fish and turtles than they can eat; if hatchets and axes are permitted in the forests on the hills only in the proper seasons, then there will be more timber than they can use. This is the first step along the kingly way. -Mencius I.A.3

Discretion

Ch'un-yu K'un said, "Is it prescribed by the rites that, in giving and receiving, man and woman should not touch each other?"

"It is," said Mencius.

"When one's sister-in-law is drowning, does one stretch out a hand to help her?"

"Not to help a sister-in-law who is drowning is to be a brute. It is prescribed by the rites that, in giving and receiving, a man and a woman do not touch each other, but in stretching out a helping hand to the drowning sister-in-law one uses one's discretion." -Mencius IV.A.17

The Bell Stand

Woodworker Ch'ing carved a piece of wood and made a bell stand, and when it was finished, everyone who saw it marveled, for it seemed to be the work of gods or spirits. When the Marquis of Lu saw it, he asked, "What art is it you have?" Ch'ing replied, "I am only a craftsman - how would I have any art? There is one thing, however. When I am going to make a bell stand, I never let it wear out my energy. I always fast in order to still my mind. When I have fasted for three days, I no longer have any thought of congratulations or rewards, of titles or stipends. When I have fasted for five days, I no longer have any thought of praise or blame, of skill or clumsiness. And when I have fasted seven days, I am so still that I forget I have four limbs and a form and body. By that time, the ruler and his court no longer exist for me. My skill is concentrated and all outside distractions fade away. After that, I go into the mountain forest and examine the Heavenly nature of the trees. If I find one of superlative form, and I can see a bell stand there, I put my hand to the job of carving; if not, I let it go. This way I am simply matching up 'Heaven' with 'Heaven.' That's probably the reason that people wonder if the results were not made by the spirits." -Chuang Tzu 19

The Roots of Wisdom

This book is a 16th century, Ming collection, of Tzu-ch'eng Hung (apparently a retired high official), republished by Kodansha in 1985. The title, "Vegetable Root Discourses," is a reference to a quote of Chu Hsu Sung. "If one is able to chew the vegetable greens and roots well, he should be able to do all things."

#1 Mountain and Forest

He who talks about the pleasures of mountain and forest
May not yet have the true content of such places.
He who detest conversations about fame and profit
Has not yet forgotten such themes.

#8 Form and Spirit

Men understand how to read books that have words,
But do not understand how to read those that lack them.
They know how to pluck the lute that has strings,
But do not know how to pluck the one that has none.
Caught by the form
But untouched by the spirit:
How will they get at the substance of either music or literature?

#23 On Giving Advice

When attacking someone's faults
Do not be too severe.
You need to consider how well he will weather what he hears.
When teaching someone by showing him what is good,
Do not pass certain heights,
But hit upon what he should be able to follow.

#27 Balance in Vocation

When outfitted in the accouterments of a high official,
One should not forsake the savor of the mountain recluse.
When living among the forest and springs,
One should preserve in his heart the administration of the state.

#33 Sky Lessons

A single cloud leaves the peaks:
Going or staying - it is in no place involved.
A bright mirror moon hangs in the sky:
Peace or noise - with neither is it concerned.

#55 Where They Belong

When flowers are put in a tray,
They in the end lack the force of life.
When birds are put in a cage,
They quickly decline in their natural inclinations.
Better it is:
To have flowers and birds in mountains
Mix and Flock together, producing their patterns,
Flying about at their own free will,
Spontaneously carefree and in harmony with themselves.

#56 On Education

Reading books but not seeing the wisdom and intelligence within:
This is being a slave to paper and print.
Being of high rank and not loving the people:
This is a thief wearing ceremonial robes.
Lecturing on learned subjects but not giving proper respect to putting them into action:
This is Zen of the mouth alone.
Performing great achievements but giving no thought to the seeds of virtue for the future:
This is but flowers blooming and withering before the eyes.

#96 How to Advise

When a friend or relative has made a mistake,
It is best not to become violently angry,
Best not to neglect it completely.
If this affair is difficult to discuss,
Euphemistically take up another subject, then hid the one, but suggest the other.
If today the person does not understand,
Patiently wait another day and admonish him again.
Be like the spring winds that thaw what is frozen;
Be like soft ch'i that melts away the ice.
Only with this will you be a model to your family.

#102 Simply Natural

When literature is compose at its best,
There is nothing particularly extraordinary about it:
It is simple appropriate.
When human character is developed at its best,
There is nothing particularly wonderful about it:
It is simply natural.

#130 Be Yourself

Do not inhibit your own beliefs because of public doubt.
Do not just entrust yourself to your own ideas, and discard the words of others.
Do not add small benefits to yourself while wearing down your entire person.
Do not appropriate public opinion to accommodate your own emotions.

#169 Why Be Upset?

When I have rank, and people respect it, they are respecting my tall cap and great sash.
When I am destitute, and people despise me, they are despising my cotton garb and straw sandals.
If this is so, at bottom they do not respect me,
So why should I be happy?
At bottom they do not despise me,
So why should I be upset?

#193 Where to Look

On high mountain peaks there are no trees, but in river valleys and winding places
Grasses and trees grow dense.
Where water is rapid and swirls about, there are no fish, but in deep pools and quiet places
Fishes and turtles gather together.
Thus is the gentleman extremely cautious
Of lofty actions
Of quick emotions.

Taoist Thoughts

from Lao Tzu's "Hua Hu Ching"

#38 Truth

Why scurry about looking for the truth?
Can you be still and see it in the mountain? the pine tree? yourself?
Don't imagine that you'll discover it by accumulating more knowledge.
Knowledge creates doubt, and doubt makes you ravenous for more knowledge.
You can't get full eating this way.
The wise person dines on something more subtle:
He eats the understanding that the named was born from the unnamed, that all being flows from non-being, that the describable world emanates from an indescribable source.
He finds this subtle truth inside his own self, and becomes completely content.
So who can be still and watch the chess game of the world?
The foolish are always making impulsive moves, but the wise know that victory and defeat are decided by something more subtle.
They see that something perfect exists before any move is made.

#43 Balance

In ancient times, people lived holistic lives. They didn't overemphasize the intellect, but integrated mind, body and spirit in all things.
... If you want to stop being confused, then emulated these ancient folk: join your body, mind and spirit in all you do.
Choose food, clothing and shelter that accords with nature.
Rely on your own body for transportation.
Allow your work and your recreation to be one and the same.
Do exercise that develops your whole being and not just your body.
...Serve others and cultivate yourself simultaneously.
Understanding that true growth comes from meeting and solving the problems of life in a way that is harmonizing to yourself and to others.
If you can follow these simple old ways, you will be continually renewed.

#48 Knowledge (Tao Te Ching)

In pursuit of knowledge,
every day something is added.
In the practice of the Tao,
every day something is dropped.
Less and less do you need to force things,
until finally your arrive at non-action.
When nothing is done,
nothing is left undone.
True mastery can be gained
by letting things go their own way.
It can't be gained by interfering.

Mongolian Proverbs

When things go well, the priests proclaim: 'It is because of the priests that things go well!!!' When things go badly, they advise: 'It is due to karma.'"

"Maggots breed where there are flies — just like that, lies breed where there are priests."

The mountain falcon flies high; The wiseman's son speaks in proverbs.

Without council there is no wisdom; without praise no heroes.

Wealth - until the first snowstorm; hero - until the first bullet.

A horse released can be caught, a word released never.

The path to Buddhahood has five stages;

Vows, meditation, knowledge, understanding of one's nature, and release.

When profit comes, it comes with a delay.

In the country of the blind, close your eyes.

In the land of the lame, walk pigeon-toed.

If you become a camel, they'll put a load on your back.

Ride on the back of a calf - you'll never reach the nomad camp.

Water flows from its source to the sea; evil acts return to the doer.

Vodka destroys everything but its container.

Man knows the wolf, but the wolf doesn't know the man.

At the moment of death, seek no aid except in religion.

Plant only one seed of virtue; much fruit will be harvested.

A thief hates the moonlight; an evil man hates a just one.

Stealing will not make you rich; lying will not make you a Buddha.

Korean Proverbs

Reversing Black and white.

The more you beat a drum, the more sound it makes.

It is a rice cake in a picture.

Rice eaten in haste chokes you.

First give an illness, then a medicine.

A thief of needles will become a thief of oxen, later.

The Thief who learned his craft late in life, does not care about the break of day.

The ground hardens after the rain.

Even an old straw shoe has its own mate.

To catch a tiger, you have to go into a tiger's den.

The upper waters must be clear for the lower waters to be clear.

If you dig a well, dig only one.

A thousand yang belonging to another person is not worth one poon of one's own money.

Tap even a stone bridge before crossing it.

One mudfish clouds the whole pond.

Do no mend the barn after the cow is lost.

After three years the school dog can read.

After chasing the chicken, the dog watches the roof.

If you shake any person, some dust will fall off.

The sunlight may even enter a rat hole.

Even a monkey can fall from a tree.

The empty cart makes more noise.

Three bushels of beads can make no jewels unless strung together.

The ax falls on a straight tree first.

Dust gathers to make a mountain.

Though there is love downwards, there may be no love upwards.

Though the heavens fall, there will be a hole to escape through.

A big debt can be repayed with small words

Birds can hear the talk in the daytime, rats can hear the talk in the nighttime.

An empty cart rattles loudly.

Even if you know the way, ask one more time.

One can build a mountain by collecting specks of dust.

If you talk nicely to other people, they will talk nice to you.

Rice & wheat bow their head as they ripen.

Korean Stories

The land where you live is your native country

[Sarakamyon kohyang]

"Universalism has always been a part of the oriental way of thinking. Man is not bound by geographical limitations for he is a son of Heaven and Earth. He is free to go anywhere he pleases. He moves to a strange world to begin a new settlement. As he settles down he merges with the natives of the area. He comes to like the land and becomes accustomed to a new way of life. It is not the land which makes man a native, but the man who must adapt himself to the natives. Man is free to be wherever he wants but he is not free to himself unless he adjusts to the land into which he has moved. Thus it is not by the right of birth but by the right of his ability to adjust that makes the strange land his native country. Those who are imigrants to foreign lands experience this truth. It becomes their native country as they begin to adjust themselves to the new way of life."

The Teacher's Poison

Once upon a time, there was a small private tutorial school, called *so-dang*, where several children were learning Chinese classics from an old teacher. The teacher was such a strict disciplinarian that all his pupils were afraid of him whenever they misbehaved.

The teacher used to enjoy snacking, while he was watching children studying. He would take out a small basket from his closet in the study hall and snack on something with great relish, frequently issuing a warning to the children that it was only for adult consumption and would be fatally poisonous to children. The children were curious but never had a chance to find out what it was that the teacher was eating.

Then, one day, the teacher had some business and went to town, leaving behind a stern reminder that children should study hard during his brief absence. Out of irresistible curiosity, a few older pupils decided to investigate the teacher's closet to find out his secret snack food which was supposed to be poisonous to them. Inside the bamboo basket they found dried persimmons neatly stacked and layered with dried persimmon peels. They had thought that the teacher had been eating some sort of medicinal food intended for adults only.

Having uncovered the secret and found such a delicacy, the children forgot all about whom the food belonged to and were overcome by mouth-watering appetite. At first, only a few older and more daring younger ones gobbled up a few perssimons, but soon every one got into the act. And in no time the entire basket was emptied except for some peels.

When the feast was over, the children came to their senses and realized what they had done. They did what was unthinkable! They were worried: "What should we say to the teacher when he returns?" They racked their brains to come up with some excuses which the tutor might consider and accept. Then they might get less severe punishment. One of the boys, who had ordinarily been quiet, suggested an idea. The boy picked up the teacher's treasured inkstone from his desk and dropped it on the hard wooden floor, breaking it into halves and spattering black ink all over the teacher's cushioned seat. He then toppled the teacher's desk, and told everybody to lie down on all over the floor with blankets covered over their bodies.

Late in that afternoon the teacher returned from the trip. No sooner he opened the door to the study hall with a loud "Eh

hemm!" than he found the hall was in big mess--spattered ink, upsidedown desk, and all the children lying under the coverings, looking all dazed. Astounded at the scene, the teacher bellowed: "What is going on? What has happened?" The master-minded boy got up slowly, his face showing mock pain, and said: "Master, in the midst of rough play during a brief recess, we accidentally toppled your desk, breaking your cherished inkstone. We did not know what to do. Finally, everyone of us decided to die to pay for our unforgivable mischief. So, we took the basket out and ate all that was in it. Now, we are waiting for the poison to take effect. We are very, very sorry, Master." The teacher made a long and deep breath and went outside without saying a word. And outside, he said to himself with a smile: "Hmmm... they are growing!"

The Tiger in the Trap

Once upon a time, there was a small hamlet in the deep mountains. The people of this hamlet were always afraid of tigers that roamed in the surrounding mountains. One day, their fear and anxiety brought all the villagers together to discuss their problem and find some ways of living peacefully without this constant fear. After much discussion, they came to an agreement: they decided to dig pits here and there to trap tigers. Every able-bodied villager came out to dig deep pits around the village and, particularly, along both sides of the mountain pass leading to the village.

One day, a traveller was passing through the area and heard strange groaning sounds nearby. He approached where the sounds came from and found a large tiger trapped in a pitfall and trying to jump out. Seeing the traveller, the tiger begged him for help: "Please, help me out of this trap, and I will never forget your kindness." Out of mercy, the traveller dragged a felled tree and lowered it into the pitfall. And the tiger climbed out.

As soon as the tiger was out of the trap, he said to the traveller: "I am grateful for your help, but because humans made the trap to catch me, for that I will have to kill you." The traveller was utterly speechless and became frightened, too. Trying to be calm and mustering his courage, however, he said: "Wait a minute, Mr. Tiger. It is patently unfair and outrageous to kill me. Fairness demands that we should have a few impartial parties to judge who is right." The tiger agreed and both of them went to an ox.

After listening to their story, the ox said: "Well, it is the fault of humans. We, oxen, too, have a grudge against humans. They drive us hard for their own benefit and then they butcher us mercilessly. This is all very unfair!"

Next, they went to a pine tree. The pine tree listened to their story and said: "Humans are wrong. They cut us down for lumber and for their firewood. What have we done to them to deserve that? They just have no heart!"

Listening to the second opinion, the tiger was elated and ready to attack the traveller, when a hare was hopping toward them. "Phew, just in time, Mr. Hare. Please, judge our case," and the traveller told the hare what had happened. The hare, then, said: "Fine, but before I make any judgment, I must see the original scene." So, the traveller, the tiger and the hare all went to the pitfall where the tiger had been trapped. The hare said to the tiger: "I must see exactly how you were before this traveller rescued you. Where exactly were you?" Eager to show where he was, the tiger jumped right into the pitfall. The hare asked: "Was this felled tree in the pitfall when you fell into it, Mr. Tiger?" "No, it was not." So, the hare and the traveller took the tree out of the pitfall. The hare, then, said to the traveller: "Mr. Traveller, now, be on your way." And the hare, too, hopped away.

The Miraculous Awakening of Zen

You observe many thoughts arising in your mind, but you mustn't search for which of these thoughts is the real you. Searching is avoidance. To seek is to suffer. You need to understand this carefully.

By Venerable Hyunoong Sunim with translator Ja Gwang.

Excerpted from a Saturday morning Hartford Street Zen Center (San Francisco) Dharma talk

Hyunoong Sunim is a Korean Zen teacher, a Taoist master and a herbalist. He established the Sixth Patriarch Zen Center in Berkeley and is the resident teacher.

The word Zen means the mind of awakening or miraculous awareness. It has no form. It is also not silent. It doesn't stay fixed in any one place. It is something one has to experience. If you bring any understanding with you into this practice you will obstruct the path… Zen is the Buddha mind. And Buddha mind is in each individual person. It's here in this moment as we sit. It's absolutely not separate from us. That's all we need to trust.

The name is Zen, but according to the person practicing this, some think Zen is sitting quietly while others say Zen is having a clear mind. Some say Zen is forgetting all the complexities of life, while others say Zen is guarding nothingness… There are many kinds of Zen Buddhists in the world but if we forget the correct path, then even if we do Zen practice all we are doing is wasting time.

When you first begin Zen practice you observe many thoughts arising in your mind, but you mustn't search for which of these thoughts is the real you. Searching is avoidance. To seek is to suffer. You need to understand this carefully. This is our fundamental delusion. Someone doing Soto Zen just has silence--but that is not practice--when you reenter reality that silence will shatter. Our Zen nature doesn't abide in any one place, it functions from moment to moment, so we mustn't hold onto anything. When we stay in one place this creates a view and we make distinctions--Soto Zen/Rinzai Zen, awakening/delusion. If you say you have awakening you are actually very far from awakening.

There is a Zen koan that says, "Knowing obstructs Zen, not knowing obstructs Zen." Knowing is delusion because knowing can create tension and obstruct our practice. So we decide "Ok I don't know," but that is also relying on delusion. We need to recognize the mind that knows, and let go of that. And because "not knowing" also obstructs our Zen, we need to be aware of this too. Our Buddha nature has nothing to do with knowing or not knowing—it is spontaneous awareness and cannot be touched intellectually. Right here is where our thoughts are completely cut off.

Knowing, not knowing, nothing can cling to this awareness. The sentient being mind will attach itself anywhere--over here over there, Hell or Heaven, awakening/delusion. It creates duality everywhere.

We have this miraculous awareness that cannot be expressed in words; and we have to simply experience it. Then automatically the things that we cling to are released. At that point we are no longer attached-- not because we are trying to be unattached but because our nature no longer clings to anything. At this point religion disappears. There isn't anything we are carrying around with us. This is something that cannot be understood. It simply requires faith. It can only be experienced through awareness. Through this, wisdom and power grow. If you constantly practice, at one point that empty mind within you is suddenly revealed. Then there is only realization, and you can enter a correct path. Only with such realization can true practice begin.

If one practices Soto Zen correctly, one's practice becomes the same as koan practice, and the conflicts within you will disappear. If you meet Dogen you come to the world of Rinzai, and if you meet Rinzai you meet the world of Dogen. You will see the Zen of the ancient masters and American Zen too. We can all become one Dharma family and benefit each other. Through this, societies become purified. Otherwise we will cling to a small mind and this is suffering…

In our Rinzai Zen, even though we are sitting, we don't pay a lot of attention to our posture. We totally focus on mind and the koan, and in doing that both body and mind become quiet. You utilize the sitting posture because of it's convenience. We can be active in reality and when we come to sit we let go of body and mind. We only focus on the koan. As our active energy settles down into our lower body we may sometimes feel a little itchy spot and spontaneously our hand goes to scratch it. But your practice continues.

Let's open our narrow minds. We mustn't compete with others. It would be nice if we could come together into one Dharma. It doesn't matter whether one is practicing Soto or Rinzai Zen, whether Christian or whatever. Someone following the path of awakening can understand it as soon as they see it. Let's reveal the ancient path of Zen … and that would be one goal if Buddhism can be reborn in the United States, if someone awakens to correct traditional Zen here. I believe great Zen power can arise in America.

Japanese Proverbs

Yeah! More quotes. Can't get enough of them. These were taken from Japanese Proverbs and Sayings by Daniel Crump Buchannan, Univ. of Oklahoma Press, Norman & London, 1965/1988. 0-8061-1082-1. It is mostly a pre-WW2 collection, so some of them newer ones won't be here.

To him who in the love of Nature holds the key.

Communion with her visible forms, she speaks a various language.

A country may go to ruin but its mountains and streams remain.

A jewel will not sparkle unless polished.

A snake though placed in a bamboo tube, cannot become perfectly straight.

Don't use a ladle for an ear-pick.

Don't give an order after listening to only one side.

The person who swims well often drowns.

A doctor may be careless about his own health.

A mummy hunter becomes a mummy.

Fall seven times, get up eight times.

Pull if it does not work when you push.

The protruding nail is hammered down.

One can study calligraphy at eighty.

The tadpole is the frog's child.

A padded jacket is a nice present, even in summer.

A pig used to dirt turns its nose up at rice.

Too much courtesy is a discourtesy.

The pebble in the brook secretly think itself a precious stone.

The smallest good deed is better than the greatest good intention.

Better no medicine than a bad doctor.

If money is not your servant, it will be your master.

Forgiving the unrepentant is like drawing pictures on water.

Time spent laughing is time spent with the gods.

Darkness reigns at the foot of the lighthouse.

It is the beggar's pride that he is not a thief.

To wait for luck is the same as waiting for death.

We learn little from victory, much from defeat.

The clog and the Buddha are both from the same piece of wood.

Unless you enter the tiger's den you cannot take the cubs.

Wheny you're thirsty it's too late to think about digging a well.

A bad spouse is a hundred years of bad harvest.

When kept secret, people tend to imagine it is a very good thing.

You can't do anything with it if you don't have it.

When one dog barks for nothing, all other dogs bark in earnest.

Even a ten-thousand foot embankment may give way because of an ant hole.

Silent worms dig holes in the walls.

Even a Buddha's face does not wear a benign look after the third slap.

Every medicine when exceeded becomes poison.

Money grows on the tree of persistence.

One who smiles rather than rages is always the stronger.

A great retired person lives hid in the market.

Metal is tested by fire, men by wine.

If you despise yourself others will afterwards despise you.

Rather than 10000 lanterns from a rich man is one lantern from a poor man.

Where there is no antagonist, there is no quarrel.

The flow of water and the future of human beings is uncertain.

If you would bend the tree, do so when it is young.

Three persons together produce the wisdom of the Buddha.

If the fountain head is clear, the stream will be clear.

Don't draw legs on a snake.

A lean horse fears not the whip.

A skilled artisan is not fussy about the materials.

When you have your own children, you will understand your obligation to your parents.

A good Go player is also a good player of Shogi.

Even a journey of a thousand kilometers starts with one step.

Rather than shave your head, shave your heart.

About sea matters, ask a fisherman.

Next door to the temple live demons.

The Buddha altar of one's own house is the most esteemed.

If victorious, a government army; if defeated, traitors.

The lantern-bearer should go ahead.

Poets without traveling, know places of note.

It is better to be ignorant than to be mistaken.

Silence is part of consent.

Speech is silver, silence is gold.

The flower does not talk.

If you beat even new floor mats, dirt will come out.

Even a monkey will fall from a tree.

Japanese Lessons

Of course, I am collecting these materials as I live in Japan, so it is natural that I include a special section on Japan, which was one of the profound influences on the Druids in the 60s and 70s. Materials are plentiful from this country which has a long tradition of permitting the blending of religions together. One particular problem in bringing selections from Japan is that Shinto, one of the top-ten religions of the world, has no official scripture, a patch and uncertain mythology and is very disorganized. There are a couple of oracles, and most of the 19th/20th century state Shinto is rather unpleasantly nationalistic. Enjoy and share.

Basho's Poems

From **The Essential Basho**, Translated by Sam Hamill. Published by Shambala in Boston, 1999.

Summer grasses:
all that remains of great soldiers'
imperial dreams

Eaten alive by
lice and fleas -- now the horse
beside my pillow pees

Along the roadside, blossoming wild roses
in my horse's mouth

Even that old horse
is something to see this
snow-covered morning

On the white poppy,
a butterfly's torn wing
is a keepsake

The bee emerging
from deep within the peony
departs reluctantly

Crossing long fields,
frozen in its saddle,
my shadow creeps by

A mountain pheasant cry
fills me with fond longing for
father and mother

Slender, so slender
its stalk bends under dew –
little yellow flower

New Year's first snow -- ah –
just barely enough to tilt
the daffodil

In this warm spring rain,
tiny leaves are sprouting
from the eggplant seed

For those who proclaim
they've grown weary of children,
there are no flowers

Nothing in the cry
of cicadas suggests they
are about to die

Ikkyu's Poems

From **Wild Ways: Zen Poems of Ikkyu**, translated by John Stevens. Published by Shambala in Boston, 1995.

A Man's Root, from *Wild Ways*, page 53
Eight inches strong, it is my favourite thing;
If I'm alone at night, I embrace it fully –
A beautiful woman hasn't touched it for ages.
Within my *fundoshi* there is an entire universe!

I Hate Incense
A master's handiwork cannot be measured
But still priests wag their tongues explaining the "Way" and babbling about "Zen."
This old monk has never cared for false piety
And my nose wrinkles at the dark smell of incense before the Buddha.

A Fisherman
Studying texts and stiff meditation can make you lose your Original Mind.
A solitary tune by a fisherman, though, can be an invaluable treasure.
Dusk rain on the river, the moon peeking in and out of the clouds;
Elegant beyond words, he chants his songs night after night.

My Hovel
The world before my eyes is wan and wasted, just like me.
The earth is decrepit, the sky stormy, all the grass withered.
No spring breeze even at this late date,
Just winter clouds swallowing up my tiny reed hut.

A Meal of Fresh Octopus
Lots of arms, just like Kannon the Goddess;
Sacrificed for me, garnished with citron, I revere it so!
The taste of the sea, just divine!
Sorry, Buddha, this is another precept I just cannot keep.

A Happy Thought
Exhausted with gay pleasures, I embrace my wife.
The narrow path of asceticism is not for me:
My mind runs in the opposite direction.
It is easy to be glib about Zen -- I'll just keep my mouth shut
And rely on love play all the day long.

Bathing Time
It is nice to get a glimpse of a lady bathing –
You scrubbed your flower face and cleansed your lovely body
While this old monk sat in the hot water,
Feeling more blessed than even the emperor of China!

Thoughts of Ryokan

Mini Poems

even before trees rocks I was nothing
when I'm dead nowhere I'll be nothing

this ink painting of wind blowing through pines
who hears it?

sin like a madman until you can't do anything else
no room for any more

fuck flattery success money
all I do is lie back and suck my thumb

one long pure beautiful road of pain
and the beauty of death and no pain

mirror facing mirror
nowhere else

passion's red thread is infinite
like the earth always under me

my monk friend has a wierd endearing habit
he weaves sandals and leaves them secretly by the roadside

no words sitting alone night in my hut eyes closed hands open
wisps of an unknown face

we're lost where the mind can't find us
utterly lost

To My Teacher

An old grave hidden away at the foot of a deserted hill,
Overrun with rank weeks growing unchecked year after year;
There is no one left to tend the tomb,
And only an occasional woodcutter passes by.
Once I was his pupil, a youth with shaggy hair,
Learning deeply from him by the Narrow River.
One morning I set off on my solitary journey
And the years passed between us in silence.
Now I have returned to find him at rest here;
How can I honor his departed spirit?
I pour a dipper of pure water over his tombstone
And offer a silent prayer.
The sun suddenly disappears behind the hill
And I'm enveloped by the roar of the wind in the pines.
I try to pull myself away but cannot;
A flood of tears soaks my sleeves.

In my youth I put aside my studies
And I aspired to be a saint.
Living austerely as a mendicant monk,
I wandered here and there for many springs.
Finally I returned home to settle under a craggy peak.
I live peacefully in a grass hut,
Listening to the birds for music.
Clouds are my best neighbors.
Below a pure spring where I refresh body and mind;
Above, towering pines and oaks that provide shade and brushwood.
Free, so free, day after day –
I never want to leave!

Yes, I'm truly a dunce
Living among trees and plants.
Please don't question me about illusion and enlightenment –
This old fellow just likes to smile to himself.
I wade across streams with bony legs,
And carry a bag about in fine spring weather.
That's my life,
And the world owes me nothing.

Smaller Poems

When all thoughts
Are exhausted
I slip into the woods
And gather
A pile of shepherd's purse.

Like the little stream
Making its way
Through the mossy crevices
I, too, quietly
Turn clear and transparent.

At dusk
I often climb
To the peak of Kugami.
Deer bellow,
Their voices
Soaked up by
Piles of maple leaves
Lying undisturbed at
The foot of the mountain.

Blending with the wind,
Snow falls;
Blending with the snow,
The wind blows.
By the hearth
I stretch out my legs,
Idling my time away
Confined in this hut.
Counting the days,
I find that February, too,
Has come and gone
Like a dream.

No luck today on my mendicant rounds;
From village to village I dragged myself.
At sunset I find myself with miles of mountains between me and my hut.
The wind tears at my frail body,
And my little bowl looks so forlorn –
Yes this is my chosen path that guides me
Through disappointment and pain, cold and hunger.

My Cracked Wooden Bowl
This treasure was discovered in a bamboo thicket –
I washed the bowl in a spring and then mended it.
After morning meditation, I take my gruel in it;
At night, it serves me soup or rice.
Cracked, worn, weather-beaten, and misshapen
But still of noble stock!

Midsummer –
I walk about with my staff.
Old farmers spot me
And call me over for a drink.
We sit in the fields
using leaves for plates.
Pleasantly drunk and so happy
I drift off peacefully
Sprawled out on a paddy bank.

How can I possibly sleep
This moonlit evening?
Come, my friends,
Let's sing and dance
All night long.

Stretched out,
Tipsy,
Under the vast sky:
Splendid dreams
Beneath the cherry blossoms.

Wild roses,
Plucked from fields
Full of croaking frogs:
Float them in your wine
And enjoy every minute!

When spring arrives
From every tree tip
Flowers will bloom,
But those children
Who fell with last autumn's leaves
Will never return.

I watch people in the world
Throw away their lives lusting after things,
Never able to satisfy their desires,
Falling into deeper despair
And torturing themselves.
Even if they get what they want
How long will they be able to enjoy it?
For one heavenly pleasure
They suffer ten torments of hell,
Binding themselves more firmly to the grindstone.
Such people are like monkeys
Frantically grasping for the moon in the water
And then falling into a whirlpool.
How endlessly those caught up in the floating world suffer.
Despite myself, I fret over them all night
And cannot staunch my flow of tears.

The wind has settled, the blossoms have fallen;
Birds sing, the mountains grow dark –
This is the wondrous power of Buddhism.

In a dilapidated three-room hut
I've grown old and tired;
This winter cold is the
Worst I've ever suffered through.
I sip thin gruel, waiting for the
Freezing night to pass.
Can I last until spring finally arrives?
Unable to beg for rice,
How will I survive the chill?
Even meditation helps no longer;
Nothing left to do but compose poems
In memory of deceased friends.

My legacy –
What will it be?
Flowers in spring,
The cuckoo in summer,
And the crimson maples
Of autumn...

Rinzai's Quote

Rinzai was fond of asking: "What, at this moment, is lacking?"

The Book of Haiku

(Previously in the RDNA's "Dead Lake Scrolls")

Placing the kitten
To weigh her on the balance
She went on playing.
-Issa

Nine times arising
To see the moon whose solemn pace
marks only midnight yet
-Basho

O sprint time twilight....
Precious moment worth to me
a thousand pieces
-Sotuba

O summer twilight
bug-depreciated to a
mere five hundred.
-Kikaku

Snow Whispering down
all day long, earth has vanished
leaving only sky
-Joso

Carven Gods long gone
dead leaves alone forgotten
on the temple porch.
-Basho

Vanishing springtime
wistful the lonely widow
pouts at her mirror.
-Seiki

A bright autumn moon...
in the shadow of each grass
an insect chirping.
-Busoh

Black cloud bank broken
scatters in the night... now see
moonlighted mountains!
-Basho

Two ancient pine trees
a pair of gnarled and sturdy limbs
with 10 green fingers.
-Ryota

Yellow butterfly...
fluttering, fluttering on
over the ocean.
-Shiki

Crossing it alone
in cold moonlight, the brittle bridge
echoes my footsteps
-Taigi

Every single step
is quivering now with light
O how bitter cold!
-Taigi

One fallen flower
returning to the branch? oh no!
a white butterfly.
-Meritake

Grey moor, unmarred
by any branch... a single branch
a bird... November
-Anonymous

The soft summer moon...
who is it moves in white there...
on the other bank?
-Chora

Here is the dark tree
denuded now of leafage...
but a million stars!
-Shiki

He who climbs this hill
of flowers finds here a shrine
to the kind goddess.
-Basho

Some poor villages
lack fresh fish or flowers,
all can share this moon.
-Saikaku

Under a spring mist
ice & water forgetting
their old difference....
-Teitaku

Colder far than snow...
winter moonlight echoing on
my whitened hair.
-Joso

After moon viewing
my companionable shadow
walked along with me.
-Jodo

Coolness on the bridge...
Moon, you and I alone
unresigned to sleep
-Kikusa-ni

Winter moonlight casts
cold tree-shadows long and still
my warm one moving.
-Shiki

Weeping...Willows
kneel here by the waterside
mingling long green hair.
-Kyorai

In stony moonlight
hills and fields on every side
white and bald as eggs
-Yansetsu

Penetrating hot
September sun on my skin
feel the cooling breeze.
-Basho

Feeble feeble sun
it can scarcely stretch across
winter-wasted fields
-Bokuson

Ah leafless willow
bending over the dry pool
of stranded boulders.
-Busoh

The Path and Pith

Suppose a man goes to the forest to get some of the pith that grows in the center of a tree and returns with a burden of branches and leaves, thinking that he has secured what he went after; would he not be foolish?

A person seeks a path that will lead him away from misery; and yet, he follows that path a little way, notices some little advance, and immediately becomes proud and conceited. He is like the man who sought pith and comes back satisfied with a burden of branches and leaves.

Another man goes into the forest seeking pith and comes back with a load of branches. He is like the person on the path who becomes satisfied with the progress he has made by a little effort, and relaxes his effort and becomes proud and conceited.

Another man comes back carrying a load of bark instead of the pith he was looking for. He is like the person who finds that his mind is becoming calmer and his thought clearer, and then relaxes his effort and becomes proud and conceited.

Then another man bring back a load of woody fiber of the tree instead of the pith. Like him is one who has gained a measure of intuitive insight, and then relaxes his effort. All of these seekers, who become easily satisfied after insufficient effort and become proud and overbearing, relax their efforts and easily fall into idleness. All these people will inevitably face suffering again.

-Majjhima Nikaya i.192-195. (Buddhism)

Parable of the Raft

"O monks, a man is on a journey. He comes to a vast stretch of water. On this side the shore is dangerous, but on the other it is safe and without danger. No boat goes to the other shore which is safe and without danger, nor is there any bridge for crossing over. Then that man gathers grass, wood, branches, and leaves and makes a raft, and with the help of that raft crosses over safely to the other side, exerting himself with his hands and feet. Having safely crossed over and gotten to the other side, he thinks, 'This raft was of great help to me. With its aid I have crossed safely over to this side, exerting myself with my hands and feet. It would be good if I carry this raft on my head or on my back whenever I go.'

"What do you think, O monks, if he acted in this way would that man be acting properly with regard to the raft?"

"No, sir."

"In which way, then, would he be acting properly with regard to the raft? Having crossed and gone over to the other side, suppose that man should think, "It would be good if I beached this raft on the shore, or moored it and left it afloat, and then went on my way wherever it may be.' Acting in this way would that man act properly with regard to the raft.

"In the same manner, O monks, I have taught a doctrine similar to a raft- it is for crossing over, and not for carrying. You who understand that the teaching is similar to a raft, should give up attachment to even the good Dharma; how much more then should you give up evil things."

-Majjhima Nikaya i.134-135

About Death

It comes from the origin,
It returns to the original land
In the Plain of High Heaven-
That spirit is one and the same,
Not two.
The Way of death
Is found in one's own mind
And no other;
Inquire of it in your own heart,
In your own mind.
Leave to the kami
The path ahead;
The road of the returning soul
Is not dark
To the land of the Yomi,
To the world beyond.
In all things
Maintaining godly uprightness:
Such a one at last will see
All dark clouds cleared away.
All humanity born into
The land of sun-origin, this
Land of Japan,
Come from the kami,
And to the kami will return.
-Naokata Nakanishi, Shinto Priest, 19th Cent.

Sun and Moon

My Lord, boundless as
The sun and moon
Lighting heaven and earth;
How then can I have concerns
About what is to be?
-Man'yoshu poem 20, 8th Cent (pre-Buddhist)

Two Shinto Quotes

If the poorest of mankind come here once for worship, I will surely grant their heart's desire. -Oracle of Itsukushima, Shinto, 13th Cent.

All human bodies are things lent by God. With what thought are you using them? -Tenrikyo, Ofudesaki 3.41, New Religion 19th Cent.

Mountain Tasting:

Weeds and Rain

This collection is from an itinerant beggar-monk, Santohka, who roamed 24,000 miles around Japan from WW1 to 1940, dying around 1950. He came from a broken family, had a rotten childhood and was saved from suicide by some monks. He itinerant begging was his vocation, occasionally farming, and writing poems in exchange for drinking money. This was the ideal life for him. These are taken from "Mountain Tasting" by Taneda Santoka, trans. by Mr. Stevens.1991, Weatherhill Inc., NY.

Food from Heaven

Today my path was wonderful. I wanted to shout out to the waves, the birds the pure water- I'm grateful for everything. The sun shone brightly and the number of pilgrims increases daily. The memorials, the bridges, the shrines, and the cliffs were so beautiful. My rice was like the food of heaven.

18
Going deeper,
and still deeper-
The green mountains.

53
Waking from a nap,
Either way I look: mountains.

56
Well, which way should I go?
The wind blows.

83
Aimlessly, buoyantly,
Drifting here and there,
Tasting the pure water.

86
So this is what
He calls his tea grove-
A single bush!
(said by Seisensui on visiting Santoka's hut)

195
The sky at sunset-
A cup of sake
Would taste so good!

214
Fallen leaves in the forest.
I see a Buddha.

295
Thirsty for a drink of water-
The sound of a waterfall.

319
In the space between the buildings-
Look at the mountain's greenness!

351
Slapping at the flies,
Slapping at the mosquitoes,
Slapping at myself.

364
When will I die?
I plant seedlings.

Zen Stories

What would a section on Japan be without more Zen stories? These selections were taken from Donal Ritchie's "Zen Inklings: some stories, fables, parables and sermons." 1982/1991. Weatherhill Publishers, NY. ISBN 0-8348-0170-1. I hope you enjoy them.

The Holy Demon

There was once a demon who desired to become a priest. His reason was that being evil- the nature of demons- was too difficult. Being good might be easier. Thus it was that he desired to take his vows.

This is one version of the story. Another is that he saw the badness of his ways and was contrite. Yet another was that he had been living on a diet of bad people and wanted to taste some good, hence his desire to enter a temple. For all these differences, the stories do agree that one day he presented himself at the temple gate.

The abbot, worldly man that he was, heard the request without surprise and said that he would bring up the matter at the next council. Until that time, then, the demon might again retire to his lair. Also, he might want to do something about his talons. They would certainly render handling the prayer beads difficult and, in any event, would probably catch in the long sleeves of the priestly habit.

The demon saw the reasons for this, went home, took a knife, and pared his talons. This hurt, and his paws were still aching when a week later, neatly bandaged, he presented himself.

The board was sitting on the matter, the abbot informed him, noting with a small smile the absence of claws. Would he please be so good as to return in a week? And, in the meantime, he might want to do something about his horns. They would interfere with ecclesiastical headdresses, were he ever to rise above a mere monk, and, in any event, did not go well with priestly garb.

The demon agreed with this, went home, and began paring his horns - a long, difficult, and painful process. He finally had to burn the stubs, an experience not at all comfortable. Then he presented himself at the temple, two depressions where the horns had been.

The abbot complimented him on their absence; then he smile regretfully and said that all of the members of the board were not as yet entirely of one accord. Could he not come back the following week? And, in the meantime, he might think of what to do about his fangs. These would interfere with his eating the simple monkish fare and, in addition, somewhat detracted from an otherwise attractive smile.

The demon understood the wisdom of this, returned home, and with many a howl of pain and some tears put his teeth to the grindstone and ground them down to the gums. Smiling in agony, he then, a week later, again presented himself at the temple, showing two great gaps where his fangs had been.

The abbot, affable, received him at once, noting with pleasure the holes in the demon's smile. He then imparted the best of news. The board had finally agreed. It had decided that it would be a signal honor to have a demon monk. Also, a consideration not imparted to the penitent, the propaganda value of a demon brought to Buddha would be great.

The demon attempted to look pleased but seemed somehow less zealous that before. Upon inquiry, the abbot learned that this was because the demon was feeling poorly. Though he had originally come in earnestness and good health, the excision of talons, horns and fangs had, it appeared, not only tired him but actually made him ill. His paws were bleeding, his forehead infected, his gums were suppurating, and he had a fever.

The abbot showed his sympathy but remarked that, after all, the good life is the strenuous one. Only those with strength, both outer and inner, should consider embarking upon it. The demon was left to extract from this what he could.

In the meantime, continued the abbot, it would be best for him to regain his health before joining their community. The demon understood all this, went back, and became very ill indeed.

The fever raged, paws throbbed, head knocked, and his mouth was nothing but aches. Since he could no longer claw, butt and consume sinners he also grew thinner and thinner. If being good is this difficult, he thought, I had better not attempt a virtuous life.

Finally, feeling near death, the demon went again to the temple. There he told the abbot, though he no longer had the strength to become a priest, he would like to die in the embrace of the true religion.

The abbot agreed at once. The abbot at once invited the sick demon into the temple, gave him a room to himself, and assigned two acolytes to nurse him.

Every day the sick demon sank further. He took to the prayer beads but they hurt his paws, tried to eat his rice gruel but it hurt his jaws, even tried on the hat of the dead but it hurt his head. Being good is frightfully difficult, he decided, much more difficult than being merely evil.

But he did not die, and little by little the pain left him. This event was viewed with some displeasure by the abbot. There would, apparently, be no big sensation. He would have to content himself with a good thing - a repentant demon. Well, he was big enough, at least, to do most of the heavy work around the temple.

At this point in the story the various versions again diverge. In one, the demon, maimed though he is, finds happiness in being good- preparing the bath, cleaning the attic, lugging the rice bales. In another, a final, fatal relapse and expires amid clouds of incense and much evidence of Buddha's benevolence.

In yet another version, however, the demon fully recovered. Every day he felt better and better, and this troubled him because the innocent creature did not know what was occurring. Being good cannot be this simple, he thought. Then he discovered the reason. His talons, horns, and fangs were growing. He was again becoming an evil demon. Only he did not phrase it in this way. He was filled with delight because he was again becoming himself.

So, when no one was around, he practiced his grimaces and felt with joy the evil wrinkles again forming around his mouth. He gnashed his fresh fangs with pleasure and playfully dug holes in the matting of his room with his new horns. When the acolytes were around, however, he was careful to look innocent and keep his eyes round. He also rarely smiled, lest they see the sharp new fangs.

I have tried to be good and I have failed, he told himself. But he felt no regret. To return to his own self caused too much happiness for that.

He also reverted to his old habits. One day, feeling particularly joyful, he sprang from his pallet and gobbled up both of the acolytes. They tasted very good after so many weeks of nothing but gruel. He snapped their bones and got at the marrow with the innocent and earnest zeal that was naturally his.

Then he crouched in wait in the corridor and ate up all the other priests and finally, as he was coming around a corner, the

abbot himself. Then the demon stretched himself, roared, and galloped off into the forest.

It was, as the late abbot had prophesied, a sensation indeed. Whole generations were frightened into proper behavior with the tale, and no one ventured near the place. Both cobwebs and legends formed around the deserted temple.

All agreed that a terrible thing had occurred. All except one. He was a holy man, an old monk who lived in a hut in the mountain. He said it was the most natural thing in the world. It is all very well for a demon to become holy, he said, but he must become holy as a demon, not as some mutilated creature no longer itself. And, in any event, who has to say that this demon was not, as he had always been, in some way, his own way, holy?

As for the temple - well, one must pay for one's mistakes. And, all in all, the good life is the strenuous one. As for the demon, he had attempted to become what he wasn't, and this, said the holy man, had almost killed him. Impelled by a longing for ease, always a bad counselor, he had wandered far from his natural path. Fortunately for him he had returned to it.

Perhaps, after his adventure, he had returned with a new purpose, with a fresh insight. He now knew how difficult good is and could compare his old lazy badness with his new and understood evil. One must die in order to be reborn, and whether the result is good or bad is beside anyone's point.

Then he delivered the moral that always comes after the text. There is, whether we like it or not, room for all of us in this world, priests and demons alike. To awake to one's own true nature is the aim of all.

This version of the tale is not popular and is not often heard.

The Earnest Acolyte

There was once an acolyte from Kochi. He impressed his family, his friends and acquaintances, and the other acolytes with his dedication and is zeal. He did not, however, impress his roshi.

All day and sometimes all night he sat seriously at zazen. Given a koan, he concentrated with the greatest gravity. Any task set him he performed with heavy consideration.

If anyone, said the other acolytes, deserved a swift satori, it was this earnest acolyte. The roshi did not agree with this opinion. He called in the young man.

"Why are you working so earnestly?"

"To attain satori. That is why I am here."

"I see."

Then the roshi went about his business and the acolyte about his. Things continued. The roshi attended to his duties and lived his life. The earnest acolyte sat straight, folded his hands just so, never once nodded off, closed his eyes firmly, and breathed regularly.

The peeping acolytes expected him to go into a paroxysm of satori at any moment. This, however, did not occur. Even though he concentrated so earnestly on not concentrating that sweat beaded his temples, nothing occurred.

Finally he went to see the roshi.

"Even though I meditate so long, so diligently, so thoroughly, nothing occurs."

"I see."

“What should I do?"

"You should go home. You are wasting your time."

The acolyte was shocked. He attempted to argue with the roshi, who, however, sat silently and would not answer until the troubled young man rose to leave the room.

"Sit down and I will tell you something. You have not understood my words and I must explain. I said that you were wasting your time and that is what I meant. To explain, however:

"Zen does not culminate in satori. It is not a goal that one works toward. Zen is sufficient without that. This is because it is a means without an end. In this way it can be said to be like life. Life, this life, our life, anyone's life, has no goal. Rather, one lives.

"In the same way, one should meditate. This meditation is its own goal. It is not a process leading to something else. It is living.

"The reason you are wasting your time is because you are unaware of this. You think only of the future and so neglect the present. Worse, you use this present only for the pursuit of something you have merely read and heard of. You think of this satori as some kind of reward. And you really believe that you would be, in your sense, different if it were to occur.

"Therefore you are wasting your time here. You should go back home and live.

"That is what I mean, and this is what I have said. If you were not quite so blind you would already have seen it. And even now as I talk you are expecting, even now, some kind of understanding to rise from these worthless words. You have understood nothing and had best leave."

The crushed acolyte withdrew. He did not, however, go home. He sat quietly with the others. Sometimes at night he sat in the garden. He continued.

Whether he attained satori or not is not known. In any event, it has nothing to do with this story.

A Singular Animal

A woodcutter was hard at work in the remote mountains when a strange animal appeared. He had never seen an animal anything like it before.

"Ah, " said the animal, "you have never seen anything like me before."

The woodcutter was very surprised to hear the animal speak.

"And you are astonished that I can speak..."

The wood cutter was also surprised that the best knew his thoughts.

"And that I know what you are thinking," continued the animal.

Looking at the animal, the woodcutter wanted to catch it and take it back home.

"So you want to catch me alive, do you?"

If not that, maybe he could give it one blow with his ax and then carry it home.

"And now you want to kill me," said the animal.

The woodcutter realized that he could do nothing at all, since the beast always knew what he was thinking of doing. So, he went back to work, determining to ignore the animal.

"And now," it said, " you abandon me."

Work as he might, the woodcutter soon found himself thinking of the animal standing there. The beast would then make an appropriate comment. He wished it would go away and was then told that he was wishing it would go away.

The animal apparently did not wish to go away. It stood there, near him, and read all of his thoughts. Nor did it seem well intentioned.

Finally, not knowing what else to do, the woodcutter resignedly took up his ax again, determined to pay no more

attention to this singular animal, and began single-mindedly cutting the trees.

While he was so doing, with no though in his head except the ax and the tree, the head of the ax flew off the handle and struck the animal dead.

Five Shinto Selections

These three stories were collected by a Shinto priest who lives in town here and he donated them to this edition of ARDA. Simplicity and purity is the heart of Shinto, all the rest is local custom. How Druidic!

The Way of Shinto

When on the way to these shrines one does not feel like an ordinary person any longer but as though reborn in another world. How solemn is the unearthly shadow of the huge groves of ancient pines and chamaecyparis, and there is a delicate pathos in the few rare flowers that have withstood the winter frosts so gaily. The crossbeams of the Torii or Shinto gateway is without any curve, symbolizing by its straightness the sincerity of the direct beam of the Divine promise. And particularly is it the deeply-rooted custom of this Shrine that we should bring no Buddhist rosary or offering, or any special petition in our hearts and this is called "Inner Purity." Washing in sea water and keeping the body free from all defilement is called "Outer Purity." And when both these Purities are attained there is then no barrier between our mind and that of the Deity. And if we feel to become thus one with the Divine, what more do we need and what is there to pray for? When I heard that this was the true way of worshipping at the Shrine, I could not refrain from shedding tears of gratitude.

Hello? Can Anyone Hear Me?

There was an old shrine at the foot of the hill near a town.

One summer day, a storm hit the town. Many trees fell down in the wind. It rained so hard that the shrine was washed away.

The next day, people found a big hole. "The old shrine used to stand there," someone said. A boy shouted into the hole, "Hello? Can anyone hear me?" There wasn't even an echo. The boy threw his red marble into the hole. People waited quietly, but no sound came back. "Boy! This hole must be really deep. It's the perfect place to throw things away," he thought.

The next day, the boy threw his test papers into the hole. Other people saw him and threw in things that they didn't want.

A few days later, a garbage truck dumped all its garbage into the hole. Soon all the garbage trucks in the town were dumping garbage into the hole. It was easier than burning it in the town plant.

A few years passed, but the hole never filled up. People became less and less worried about the garbage because there was a perfect place for it. Factories dumped industrial waste into the hole. Scientists even dumped nuclear waste there.

The town became clean and beautiful. More and more people came to live there.

One day a man was working on the roof of a new building. A voice above him shouted, "Hello? Can anybody hear me?" He looked up, but all he could see was the clear blue sky. He continued working.

Suddenly, a red marble hit the roof beside him. But he was too busy to notice it.

The Creation of the World

(From the Nihongi)

Of old, Heaven and Earth were not yet separated, and the In and Yo, not yet divided. They formed a chaotic mass like an egg, which was of obscurely defined limits, and contained germs. The purer and cleaner part was thinly diffused and formed Heaven, while the heavier and grosser element settled down and became Earth. The finer elements easily became a united body, but the consolidation of the heavy and gross element was accomplished with difficulty. Heaven was therefore formed first, and Earth established subsequently. Thereafter divine beings were produced between them.

We have next what is called the seven generations of Gods, ending with the creator deities, Izanagi (the male who invites) and his sister Izanami (the female who invites.)

Hereupon all the Heavenly Deities commanded the two Deities, the Male-Who-Invites and the Female-Who-Invites, consolidate and give birth to this drifting land. Granting to them an heavenly jeweled spear and stirred, they thus charged them. So the two Deities, standing upon the Floating Bridge of Heaven, pushed down the jeweled spear and stirred with it, whereupon, when they had stirred the brine till it went curdle-curdle, and drew the spear up, the brine that dripped down from the end of the spear was piled up and became an island. This is the Island of Onogoro.

The two Deities having descended on Onogoro-jima erected there an eight-fathom house with an august central pillar. Then Izanagi addressed Izanami, saying: "How is thy body formed?" Izanami replied, "My body is completely formed except one part which is incomplete." Then Izanagi said, "My body is completely formed and there is one part which is superfluous. Suppose that we complement that which is incomplete in thee with that which is superfluous in me, and thereby procreate lands." Izanami replied, 'It is well.' Then Izanagi said, "Let me and thee go round this heavenly august pillar, and having met at the other side, let us become united in wedlock.' This being agreed to, he said, "Do thou go round from the left, and I will go round from the right.' When they had gone round, Izanami spoke and exclaimed, 'How delightful! I have met a lovely youth.' Izanagi the said, 'How delightful! I have met a lovely maiden.' Afterwards he said, 'It was unlucky for the woman to speak first.' The child, which was the first offspring of their union, was the leech-child, which at the age of three was still unable to stand upright, and was therefore placed in a reed boat and sent adrift.

The two deities next give birth tot he islands of Japan and a number of deities. The last deity to be produced is the God of Fire. But in giving birth to him Izanami is mortally burned. After death, she descends beneath the earth. Izanagi goes in search of her; but Izanagi finally meets his wife and offers to bring her back with him. Izanami begs him to wait at the door of the subterranean palace, and not to show a light. But the husband loses patience; he light a tooth of his comb and enters the palace where, by the flame of his torch, he perceives Izanami in process of decomposition; seized with panic, he flees. His dead wife pursues him, but Izanagi, managing to escape by the same way that he had gone down under the earth, casts a great rock over the entrance. Husband and wife talk together for the last time, separated from each other by this rock. Izanagi pronounce the sacramental formula for separation between them, and then goes up to heaven; while Izanami goes down forever into subterranean regions. She become the Goddess of the dead, as is generally the case of chthonian and agricultural goddesses, who are divinities of fecundity and, at the same time, of death, of birth, and of re-entry into the maternal bosom.

A Blade of Grass

Even in a single leaf of a tree, or a tender blade of grass, the awe-inspiring Deity manifests itself. -Urabe-no-Kanekuni (Shinto)

What is Shinto?

Shinto was the earliest Japanese religion, its obscure beginnings dating back at least to the middle of the first millennium B.C. Until approximately the sixth century A.D., when the Japanese began a period of rapid adoption of continental civilization, it existed as an amorphous mix of nature worship, fertility cults, divination techniques, hero worship, and shamanism. Unlike Buddhism, Christianity, or Islam, it had no founder and it did not develop sacred scriptures, an explicit religious philosophy, or a specific moral code. Indeed, so unself-conscious were the early Japanese about their religious life that they had no single term by which they could refer to it. The word *Shinto*, or "the Way of the *kami* (gods or spirits)," came into use only after the sixth century, when the Japanese sought to distinguish their own tradition from the foreign religions of Buddhism and Confucianism that they were then encountering. Thus, in its origins, Shinto was the religion of a pristine people who, above all, were sensitive to the spiritual forces that pervaded the world of nature in which they lived. As one ancient chronicle reports: in their world myriad spirits shone like fireflies and every tree and bush could speak.

Remarkably, neither Shinto's relatively primitive original character nor the introduction of more sophisticated religions, such as Buddhism and Confucianism, caused the religion to wane in importance. In part its continued existence can be explained by pointing to changes that took place within Shinto, for after the sixth century, it was gradually transformed into a religion of shrines, both grand and small, with set festivals and rituals that were overseen by a distinct priestly class. However, such developments have had little effect on basic Shinto attitudes and values. More crucial to Shinto's survival, therefore, have been its deep roots in the daily and national life of the Japanese people and a strong conservative strain in Japanese culture.

The Shinto world view is fundamentally bright and optimistic, as befits a religion in which the main deity is a sun goddess. While it is not unaware of the darker aspects of human existence, Shinto's chief *raison d'etre* is the celebration and enrichment of life.

Much can be learned about Shinto's world view from Japanese mythology. Two eighth-century works, the *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters) and the *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan), include the story of the creation of the Japanese islands by the divine couple, Izanagi and his mate, Izanami; the subsequent birth of numerous gods and goddesses -- the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu, chief among them; and the descent of representatives of the Sun Goddess' line to rule the islands. Two aspects of the mythology are particularly noteworthy. The first is its this-worldly orientation. Other worlds are mentioned in the mythology -- the High Plain of Heaven, for example, and the Dark Land, an unclean land of the dead -- yet we receive only the haziest impressions of them. Blessed with a mild climate, fertile seas, and impressive mountain landscapes, the early Japanese seem to have felt little compulsion to look far beyond their present existence.

A second important feature of the mythology is the close link among the gods, the world they created, and human beings. The tensions present in Western religion between the Creator and the created, and the human and natural realms, are conspicuously absent. In the Shinto view, the natural state of the

cosmos is one of harmony in which divine, natural, and human elements are all intimately related. Moreover, human nature is seen as inherently good, and evil is thought to stem from the individual's contact with external forces or agents that pollute our pure nature and cause us to act in ways disruptive of the primordial harmony.

Shinto deities are referred to as *kami*. The term is frequently translated "god" or "gods," but it expresses a concept of divinity significantly different from that found in Western religion. In particular, Shinto deities do not share the characteristics of utter transcendence and omnipotence often associated. with the concept of god in the West. In the broadest sense, a kami may be anything that is extraordinary and that inspires awe or reverence. Consequently, a wide variety of kami exist in Shinto: there are *kami* related to natural objects and creatures -- the spirits of mountains, seas, rivers, rocks, trees, animals, and the like; there are guardian kami of particular locales and clans; also considered *kami* are exceptional human beings, including all but the last in Japan's long line of emperors. Finally, the abstract, creative forces are recognized as *kami*. Evil spirits are also known in Shinto, but few seem irredeemably so. While a god may first call attention to its presence through a display of rowdy or even destructive behavior, generally speaking, the *kami* are benign. Their role is to sustain and protect.

Worship in Shinto is undertaken to express gratitude to the gods and to secure their continued favor. Worship may take the form of one of the many large communal festivals that occur at fixed times during the year, celebrating such events as spring planting, the fall harvest, or some special occasion in the history of a shrine. However, it may also be carried out privately in a much-abbreviated fashion in the home or at the neighborhood shrine. Although a festival may continue for several days, shifting at times in mood from the solemn to the lighthearted or even raucous, individual worship may require only a few moments to complete. In spite of such contrasts, both types of Shinto worship have three essential elements in common. Both begin with the all-important act of purification, which ordinarily involves the use of water; in both an offering is presented to the *kami*, today usually money but often food; and in both a prayer or petition is made. We may further note that in general Shinto worship is performed at a shrine. These structures, which are made only of natural materials and located on sites selected for their abodes for the *kami* rather than as shelters for the worshipers.

Since Shinto is without scriptures, dogmas, and creeds, worship has always had a central place in the religion. Rather than through sermons or study, it has been through its festivals and rituals, as well as the physical features of the shrine itself, that Shinto has transmitted its characteristic attitudes and values. Most prominent among these are a sense of gratitude and respect for life, a deep appreciation of the beauty and power of nature, a love of purity and -- by extension -- cleanliness, and a preference for the simple and unadorned in the area of aesthetics.

A Shinto Priest's Life

These essays on Shinto were taken from a book, "Kami no Michi: the way of the kami. The life and thought of a Shinto priest." written by Yukikata Yamamoto in 1987 and published by Tsubaki America Publ., 1545 West Alpine, Stockton, CA, 95204. These essays may contribute to the self-understanding of Druidism which shares some similiarities. The prominent author, Rev. Yamamoto, is the priest of one of the greatest shrines in Japan, located in Mie prefecture and has worked with many interfaith councils over the last 50 years to explain what Shinto is to the world.

#1 What is Shinto?

The word Shinto is a combination of two terms --*shin*, meaning god, and *to*, or *do*, meaning way. *Shin* is the Chinese character for god and *kami* is the Japanese pronunciation of that character. *Shin*, or *kami*, means any divine being or anything in the world or beyond that can inspire in human beings a sense of divinity and mystery. "*Do*" can be the ordinary word for a road or it can have the same metaphorical meaning as in English, way of life or way of God.

Shinto is nothing new, and yet, because of its belief in the endless power of renewal, it is ever new. It is old but ever new. It is primordial. Before man set pen to paper, or rationalized doctrines or formulated scientific principles, people of old had intuitive insights that were probably as basically true as the proven truths of modern science. They caught the spirit of the cosmos.

Japan's early military successes against China and Russia at the turn of the century gave massive confidence as well as prestige to the military. Looking for ways to strengthen its hold on society, the government decided to use Shinto. Shinto became formally separated from Buddhism and its abuse was made that much easier.

During the era of State Shinto, many ceremonies and rituals were suppressed by government order because they represented natural religion rather than the government manufactured ideology. Shinto had been distorted to further the ends of national unity at the expense of either genuine spirituality or truth.

The end of the Pacific War meant the liberation of many groups to restore shrines that had been closed down by government order and they also revived many practice that had been suppressed, especially in the mountain shrines where many Buddhist practices had been mixed with Shinto rituals.

Today, we have to be taught these religious things. Perhaps Shinto can remind us that we were born as children of the Kami, fully equipped to fulfill our role and achieve satisfaction as we are. Perhaps it can further remind us that if we probe deeply enough into our spiritual roots there lies within our grasp enough wisdom, truth and goodwill to solve even the most serious problems besetting our modern world.

Let us join hands and hearts in the way of the kami, the way the divine in the universe has given us to discover, and realize the highest and best of which humankind is capable- a world of peace, truth, justice, and freedom.

We are children of the sun dependent equally upon the sun's light and heat for our survival. Consequently all human beings are children of the kami and therefore brothers and sisters in their common humanity. Shinto tries to teach people how to live naturally and one way to express this is by stressing the equality of all human beings under the sun.

#2 Kannagara: The Rhythm of the Gods

Kannagara would probably be called in the West "natural religion," meaning "natural" is contrast to "revealed," not a religion of nature. The life of man is located in Daishizen, Great Nature, the vast cosmic setting into which we are born, where we live and within our lives mind any meaning. Natural Religion is the spontaneous awareness that the Divine can be found in any culture. People learn to see in the flow of life and in the processes of nature, promptings from the creative origins of the world. In response to these, the basic ideas of religion come into being at the birth of a new culture.

Japanese mythology speaks of how the ancient Japanese felt about their world, its origins and the origins of the world around them. These historical events mark the beginning of basic religious systems and human cultures. Shinto reflects an awareness of the Divine that calls for man to live "according to the kami" so that he or she can find happiness and fulfillment in experiencing the basic joys of life.

Kannagara is not itself a religion, nor is it the basis of a religion although it is at the heart of Shinto. It is best understood as a non-exclusive principle of universalism that can exist in all religions and should exist as a self-corrective idea that calls every historical religion back to its fundamental roots and to the basic insight of all Natural Religion that the finest results for life are achieved when man lives "according to the kami."

This is why a Shinto believer will not reject something just because it is not Shinto. A Shinto believer can be at home with any kami that shows the power to elevate his or her soul. This approach to religion can be called the kannagara understanding of the place of religion in human life, human society and in human culture in general.

In a sense, kannagara refers to the underlying basis of spirituality common to all religions. Religions should therefore try to realize the spirit of kannagara in order to remain true to themselves. Kannagara need not be understood necessarily as unique to the Japanese but is a concept with universal significance and applicability. Kannagara has to do with spirit, and with bringing the spirit of man and his activities into line with the spirit of Great Nature.

The Spirit of Great Nature may be a flower, may be the beauty of the mountains, the pure snow, the soft rains or the gentle breeze. Kannagara means being in communion with these forms of beauty and so with the highest level of experiences of life. When people respond to the silent and provocative beauty of the natural order, they are aware of kannagara. When they respond in life in a similar way, by following ways "according to the kami," they are expressing kannagara in their lives. They are living according to the natural flow of the universe and will benefit and develop by so doing.

To be fully alive is to have an aesthetic perception of life because a major part of the world's goodness lies in its often unspeakable beauty. Unlike Western Puritanism, which has reservations about beauty as basis of understanding life, Shinto has never denied it. These ideas cannot be taught directly. They can only be captured by someone whose experience of them is sufficiently moving for him or her to realize their fullest meaning.

This is why Shinto is associated with sacred spaces, places of either striking natural beauty, or places that had an atmosphere that could strike awe in the heart of the observer. Shinto has no need of formalized systems of ethics which instruct people how to behave. People who are trying to express kannagara will be living "according to the kami" and therefore will not require detailed regulations. If man were in need of detailed rules, claimed Motoori Norinaga, he would be little better than an animal that needs to be trained and retrained in order to behave properly. Humankind is surely beyond this type of morality. Beauty, Truth and Goodness are essentially related and when beauty is perceived, truth and goodness follow close behind.

Though participating in the spirit of kannagara, human beings, earth and heaven can achieve harmonious union. When their relationship is perfectly harmonious, the ideal universe comes into being. But of course, this does not always happen, and the reason is that man often makes mistakes that lead to becoming impure. When people become impure in this sense, they stray from themselves and they have to find themselves again. If people can return to being themselves, then the kami rejoice and human progress and prosperity become possible.

The manner by which that purity if restored is purification, or *oharai* in Japanese. The acts of purification are performed by priest who act as intermediaries when they are purified, speaking to the kami on behalf of the people they will in turn ceremonially purify. There are many forms of *oharai*, but in the traditions of Tsubaki Grand Shrine, *misogi harai* or purification under a free-standing waterfall is the most profound, most efficacious, most visibly symbolic of how mankind can restore the spirit of kannagara in the soul, can renew the spirit and can revitalize the creative force and energies of life.

#3 Shinto and Western Religions: Weaving the Warp and Woof

One way to get inside the basic spirit of Shinto is to put it beside other world religions for comparison. This helps to pinpoint the distinctive qualities of Shinto. The core concept is vertical *musubi*, (connection),the vertical *musubi* of kannagara. This is the attempt to bring the kami, the divine into direct relation with humans. In Shinto rituals, the kami alights on the *sakaki*, the evergreen tree and so the blessings and benefits are possible. The spirit, mitama, of any kami can be invited to alight on a sacred purified place so that people may commune with the kami.

Shinto grew and developed from these basic insights, none of which can be attributed to any particular historical founder. Shinto grew as a folk way of people seeking to meet their kami and consequently, the tradition expanded without particular historical personalities behind it.

This contrasts in a marked way with Christianity, which came into being because of the person of Jesus of Nazareth, whose historical life, teaching, death and resurrection became the basis of faith.

Buddhism looks to its founder, Gotama, whose historical experiences led him to sit under the Bodhi tree and meditate until he had unlocked the secrets of existence. Thus he formulated the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path, known also as the Middle Way, and his teaching, the result of his Enlightenment, led to the historical person becoming known as the Buddha, the Enlightened One. The same may be said of Islam whose founder understood himself to be a prophet of God. The tradition of Judaism looks back to a catalogue of founding figures, to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and on through the ages of Hebrew history which is rich in dynamic and powerful personalities.

The characteristic feature of these traditions is what I would call their horizontal *musubi*, that is to say that the founder was a historical person who transmitted the religion or who embodied it in a way that it was transmitted horizontally from that point of history to other people.

Shinto at different times in its history found able exponents and scholars among its priests and devotees, but fundamentally none of these could be called "founders." They were engaged in the creative transmission of the traditions, in interpreting the Japanese classics or in researching the history of a particular Kami. They were not, in the Indo-European sense,

"founders" or "spiritual leaders," although Japan has had these, in Buddhism in particular.

Vertical *musubi* and horizontal *musubi* can be looked on in terms of the 'warp' and the 'woof', as in a piece of tapestry. The horizontal and the vertical are basically alike in that they are constituents of a pattern. Their difference lies not in substance or form, but in role. The warp (Vertical) is constant and continuing so the thread must be long, steady, regular and firm. The woof (horizontal) makes the actual design reflecting the time, era and circumstances and consequently is capable of making a variety of designs according to how it is used. Because the warp functions as the base, the woof can act with freedom, and in turn, because of the designs made by the woof a patterned fabric can be made. The warp and the woof complement each other. The question is not which is more important or which is "correct," more useful or even ultimately valid.

A Shinto believer who denounces other religions is not a real Shinto believer. A real Shinto believer can be at home in a Shinto Shrine at New Year, a Buddhist Temple at the Obon festival for the souls of the ancestors or a Christian church on Christmas Eve. All of these make individual sense. They are authentic. They complement each other. This principle applies not simple to religion but to all the cultures of mankind. Non-rational creatures (plants and animals) do not possess the means necessary, the language, to create the vertical musubi without which a culture cannot come into being. Thus development is not possible even after tens of thousands of years. Once created, traditions can be transmitted through the horizontal musubi.

It is through this process that the various cultures of the world have come into being, that humankind has developed as a species and prospered by extending intellectually, socially and geographically. The core of the vertical *musubi* (warp) is *kokoro*, the heart, while the horizontal *musubi* (woof) is necessarily accompanied by the material objects and artifacts of civilization. Physical objects (including people) are the core of the horizontal *musubi*.

At New Year, more than 80 million Japanese visit shrines like the Grand Shrines of Ise, Izumo Taisha, Tsubaki Grand Shrine, Meiji Jingu or Shrines of Inari, Hachiman or other kami, yet how many Japanese can actually name the *Gosaijin* or enshrined kami at each? From the viewpoint of Shinto, it is immaterial whether these people can answer the question or not, or whether they can answer other questions about who built the shrine, or how it is administered, etc...

We see Christians going to Lourdes for cures, or pilgrims going to the Holy Land, or Mecca or even in Japan followers of Kukai or Nichiren climbing mountains or traveling great distances. These are specific, with devotions being focused not necessarily on one person but on the transmission of a tradition to a "saint" or sacred messenger like a prophet or apostle. They are cultural expressions or manifestations of horizontal *musubi*.

#4 Shinto's Interaction with Other Religions

Shinto has few doctrines and virtually no canon of sacred writings. Muslims have the Koran, Buddhists have the sutras, Christians have their Bible and followers of Judaism have their writings which they share with the Christians. It is not that Shinto has nothing at all. There are some writings - the ancient mythology, some *norito* or ritual addresses to the kami - but these are short and fragmentary compared with the writings in other religions where records and teachings are very important, serving as the authority on how the tradition should be interpreted and transmitted.

Shinto is often classified as polytheistic. The polytheism in Shinto is quite different from the polytheism found in primitive cultures usually contrasted with monotheism, however. There is ultimately only one kami and all kami share the same quality but in the one kami can divide into several parts and these can function in different places at the one time - in *Takaamahara* (the cosmos), *Takamanohara* (the solar system) and *Onokoro-jima* (the earth.)

Each part has its own function that it exercises almost like part of the human body, functioning separately but retaining integrity of existence because there is total organic unity. According to the idea that the one is many but the many are one, reverence for one kami means reverence for all kami. Irrespective of individual shrines or groups of shrines, reverence of the kami means all kami. This is the one very significant part of Shinto which make impossible conflicts between denominations (the officially acknowledged 13 sects) or between particular shrines. Since Shinto is not an anthropomorphic religion with humankind at the center, it can more easily follow the way of *kannagara*. Religions derived from human initiative or inspiration require some form of interpretation. This is how their transmission and continuity is assured.

The more profound and subtle a doctrine is in a philosophical sense, the higher the standing of that religion will be. Human beings have their limitations, however, and they make imperfect judgments. Disagreements and conflicts are inevitable. This is particularly true in religions were doctrines are formalized and stated. The more subtle a doctrine is, the greater is the likelihood of disagreement among the individuals or groups involved in interpreting the doctrines.

The best example of this in the West is the battle in early Christianity over the definition of the substance of the person of Christ, whether it was like or the same as the substance of God. The difference in Greek was the letter *iota*. Here was a case of subtlety where there was literally not much more than an "iota of difference." When such divisions occur on interpretation of a doctrine, rival groups appear and new movements form. These probably will be subject to further dispute and subdivision. As this process goes on, endless numbers of new groups begin to appear.

This is the situation of religion today. There are, in Japan, for example, around 45 denominations of Nichiren Buddhism. There are hundreds of Christian denominations in the United States. When religions have "objects" at their center in the sense I defined earlier, these tendencies are unavoidable. There is a saying "*Shuron wa dochira makete mo Skaka no haji"* which means: "It doesn't matter which sect teaching loses to which, it is all to the shame of the Buddha."

Shinto is a pure and simple way of thinking about the way of the divine in the universe. It constantly emphasizes happiness within life and within the world. It is concerned about human life within Nature and under heaven, the relationship between human and kami. The attitude and approach in Shinto to the world and to human life is positive, optimistic and open minded.

In this sense Shinto is simple. Other religions may be more formalistic in matters of doctrine and more extravagant in terms of philosophy and ideas, but these also may have deep concern over sins, over human weaknesses and anxieties and cannot encourage an optimistic and positive approach to life.

Christianity in the West might disapprove suicide, but, according to a Japanese American scholar of suicide in Japan, Mamoru Iga, Christianity promotes a suicidal tendency in the Japanese mind because, he writes, "self-awareness and the sense of guilt are emphasized in Christianity. Self-awareness produces internal conflict in that country where 'selflessness' (or merging

into society) is the basic value." Iga notes that this tendency to melancholy is notable among intellectuals in Japan who become Christian. He documents his argument with examples taken from writers in Japan who committed suicide. The point is simple that the more seriously certain aspects of inwardness are emphasized, the great the risk of these kinds of ambiguity taking place.

In Shinto, the *goshintai* or object of reverence may be a single *gohei*, the piece of white cut and folded sacred paper which can be said to reflect the simplicity of belief of original Shinto. Other may have one or another of the *Sanshu-no-Jingi,* the three sacred treasures of the Imperial Regalia, the Mirror, the Sword and the Jewel. Still others may have a natural object such as a rock, tree, pool or island as a *goshintai*.

Some people interpret the three sacred treasure narrowly from an old fashioned Confucian standpoint as the symbol of *chi-yu-jin* wisdom, valor and humanity. But taken in the wider sense, the three could be taken to represent the *sammi-sangen*, the principle of the three elements that constitute existence. Gas, liquid and solid are three elemental basics, and their role can be expanded to explain and interpret such elements as true reason and principle or mission, existence and destiny, or life, soul and spirit.

The objects revered or worshipped in other religions, in some forms of Christianity or in Buddhism, are much grander and gorgeously artistic than anything in Shinto. The same may be said of buildings and architecture. In contrast to the simple and usually unadorned wood used in traditional shrine building, the buildings of other religions such as the Vatican in Rome often seem to be competing with each other in size and extravagance.

There is a song that goes "*iwa to kagura no jindai yori miki agarume kami wa nai." Kagura* is a combination of two Chinese characters, one begin *kami* and the other being *tanoshi* happiness. *Jindai* or sometimes *Shindai* is another combination using *kami* and a character meaning "ancient" or "classical." *Miki* is another combination of *kami* and *sake*, and means the sacred rice wine placed before the kami in rituals. No kami from the classical age of the kami ever refuses the sacred dances or the sacred wine.

Translated freely, this means that in Shinto, the kami and the people join together and enjoy the activities of the matsuri, the festival which includes eating and drinking as necessary components of the ritual along with music and dance known as kagura which are enthusiastically performed in the great act of celebrating life.

Perhaps the best symbol of all these points in the torii, gate like entranceway to shrine precincts. The gates have no doors and are open summer and winter, day and night. The open-minded and open-hearted aspects of Shinto become quite visible in this way.

#5 Shinto and Buddhism in Japan

Buddhism was the first foreign religion to come to Japan, and because of this has a peculiar relationship with Shinto, a relationship unique in Buddhism anywhere and perhaps unique among religions. The relationship is long and complicated but somehow over the centuries both managed to work out a relationship that involved arguments as well as compromise. Sometimes the advantage went to Buddhism, and sometimes the advantage went to Shinto.

In the case of the doctrine of *Honji-Suijaku-Setsu*, the idea of one religion being the manifestation of another, Budhhism too the advantage by having Shinto kami understood as manifestations of the Buddha. In *Ryobu-Shinto*, Shinto syncretized with Buddhism, the advantages were more evenly balanced. State Shinto was in complete control, favored over Buddhism, immediately before and during the Pacific War by government decree.

No matter the era, no single Buddhist leader or founder of Buddhist sect ever overlooked the existence of Shinto. Nichiren, the famous Buddhist figure of the Kamakura age was given a name that uses two characters. One character, *nichi*, means the sun, and the principal divinity of Japan is Amaterasu Omikami, deity of the Sun. The other is *ren*, Lotus, the principal flower symbol of Buddhism.

One statue of Nichiren carries a sutra in one hand and a shaku (the wooden flat stick carried by Shinto priests) in the other. When Saicho was building the Enryaku-ji, the head temple of the Tendai sect on Mt. Hiei in Kyoto, he first built a protective shrine. Kukai, the other great leader of the Heian age, acted in a similar way when he erected the Kongobu-ji, the head temple of the esoteric sect called Shingon, on Mt. Koya. To ignore or belittle Shinto would be to ignore *kannagara* and that is something that even the most convinced or dogmatic would not do. They knew in their blood that such an attitude was not permissible.

Prince Shotoku Taishi, the regent to the Imperial House credited with introducing Buddhism formally to Japan, was never seen in Buddhist dress. He always wore the court dress appropriate to a Shinto priest, and was so depicted on the old 10,000 yen Bank of Japan bank note. He gave the nation a guide for national life called in Japanese the Seventeen Clause Constitution, which, while it speaks of Buddhism and Confucianism, deep down is based on kannagara.

Japanese religion at its roots is founded on the open spirit of kannagara which is best seen in the simplicity of Shinto that can freely meet and mix with any tradition that seeks for the highest in humankind to be infused with the finest that the divine can inspire in it. This is the secret of the way of the kami and its long history both within the religious life of Japan and among the great religions of the world.

#6 What is the Model Life of a Priest?

At the age of 13, my father came from the neighboring village of Kameyama to the shrine and in time married my mother who, as a daughter of the Yamamoto family, stood directly in the long line of descent. He was born in 1886, about 20 years after Japan had begun her tumultuous surge of modernization following the Meiji Restoration, when the feudal government of the Shoguns of the House of Tokugawa collapsed in the face of internal dissension and external threats from Western nations. Despite the traumas of his time, he never lost his belief in the brotherhood of humanity, in the dignity of human life, in the value of freedom and in the divine providence we experience when we follow the way of the kami.

He was always speaking of peace, insisting that war is wrong. he refused to take the physical examination required for conscription and was fined for his action, a fine that was paid by his adopted father, Tsubaki head priest Yukitoshi Yamamoto; he was the first conscientious objector in the area.

My father never performed the rituals in a perfunctory manner. He wanted to understand what he was doing, to be able to explain the basics of Tsubaki shinko (faith) to people. He devoted his life to gaining a better understanding of the tradition of Shinto, and of Tsubaki Shrine, become a scholar who authored numerous books and delivered lectures on Shinto. My father studied very hard until late at night, literally burning the midnight oil in our mountain shrine to which electricity came rather late. He probed the mysteries of the universe as they are set forth in Shinto ritual. He sought to unlock the powers of the cosmos by

studying the practice of Shinto rituals with a pure heart, a clear mind and a receptive spirit so that their efficacy in his life, and in the lives of those on whose behalf he was performing them, would be released to the fullest.

My father strove to embody his understanding of these eternal verities in his life and in his work. The degree to which this was achieved is attested in a strange way. More than one visitor to the shrine has looked at a photograph of my father in his later years and remarked with surprise that he looked very like the physical image we use in the Shrine of the kami. He had devoted his entire life to trying to know better the origin, nature and powers of the Great Kami and in time, he grew to have a likeness to this kami he had come to know so well. Perhaps this reflects how intense his belief in the intrinsic value of what he was doing as high priest.

From my father, I learned more than from my university days concerning the ideals of the priesthood. In him I had a model of what a priest should be. His influence still permeates the shrine and our daily ritual reflects the imprint of the routine and discipline by which he ordered his life.

Although my father made demands on himself, he never imposed himself of his opinions on his children. He did transmit to us *Shi-shi-mai-shinji*, the power of the lion dance and many other of the intangible cultural properties of our heritage. These we found in the various children's rituals observed on our behalf. We learned to practice misogi at eight or nine years of age. As small children facing that cold waterfall, we were influenced by his practice. People sometimes say that a child grows up seeing his father's back. That was very true in our case. All of us children helped my father clean up the ground f the shrine set among many trees, sugi (cryptomeria) and hinoki (cypress.) In the fall we had to sweep away huge leaves and in the winter we had to clear snow from the path. I remember the taste of breakfast after this work; it was so great.

In one of my father's books, he writes, "Human beings who are weak will become the victims of those who are strong." He never showed any fear of people in authority at any time in his life and he refused ever to become the victim of any tyrant's strength. His strong beliefs caused him trouble more than once before and during the war years. He had a disdain for the military mentality that had seized hold of the Japanese government and never hesitated to say so when the occasion arose. He was constantly harassed by the special police who went looking for dissidents, spying on teachers in classrooms and generally intimidating any citizens who showed any resistance to the policies of the government. Yet somehow he survived in a time which he considered to be one of confusion.

He believed that ideally human beings and kami should work for co-prosperity. Nations should be equal. His philosophy focused on a strange mixture of human being, kami and animal found in everything and how these should be kept in balance. His hopes of peace and understanding led me to my interest in world peace and to my involvement in the International Association of Religious Freedom. Had he lived long enough, he would have shared my activities, because my ideals are his ideals, my hopes are his hopes and the dreams I have come to cherish would have been his dreams.

Part Six: Down Under

Australian Thoughts

I was thinking of collecting a bunch of dream-time stories for the Greenbook, but after reading these selections, perhaps you'll agree with me that that is not such a good idea. As you know, the Aborigine religions are the oldest verifiable religions in the world, about 40,000 years old, and like the Native Americans, are in danger of being wiped out by social disruption, poverty, alcoholism, prejudice, missionary conversion and rising teenage violence. All they want is their land back and not to be disturbed, that's not too much?

These are some conversations that Harvey Arden (of National Geographic), age 70, had with aborigines in the Kimberley (NW Australian coast) and published in "Dreamkeepers: A Spirit-Journey into Aboriginal Australia" by HarperCollins Publishers, 1994. ISBN: 0-06-016916-8. Mr. Arden also published a book called "Wisdomkeepers" about his experiences with Native Americans, which was a best seller. After this, are a collection of Aborigine poems from "Inside Black Australia: an Anthology of Aboriginal Poetry" collected by Kevin Gilbert 1988. Penguin Books 487 Maroondah Highway, PO Box 257, Rindgwood, 3134, Australia. ISBN 0-14-011126-3

Dreamtime Stories and Dignity

"Can't you understand? It's not mine to give you, that story. I don't own it. It's the property of my people.... It's like a watch, a gold watch. Like I'm wearing the gold watch my father gave me and you ask me the time. So I tell you the time. But I don't give you the watch, too, do I? White fella now, he asks for the time and then he wants to take the watch, too! That's the Gadia way, the whitefella way. So don't you come here askin' me for any of your Dreamtime stories. Get your own Dreamtime. Don't take ours. Let's talk about Aboriginal dignity, not Dreamtime stories. That's what you should be writing about in your bloody book.

"Aboriginal dignity is coming back," he said, "but it's coming back in a violent way."

"How is it violent?" I asked.

"It's violent because it has to overcome violence."

"You mean... revolution? " I asked. "Armed revolt?"

He shook his head, scorn tightening his lips.

"We Aboriginals make up barely one percent of the people in Australia, mate. You think we're going to pick up guns and start a revolution to overthrow the government? No, it's not violence against white people I'm talking about. It's the violence inside us, the violence Gadia planted inside us and left growin' there...

"When I was a boy back in the fifties, the coppers around Wyndham here used to shoot blackfellas for ten bob a head. So that's where we got the violence. Things like that, a million things like that. And now it's all coming out, it's spilling out of us, but it's a violence directed against ourselves, not against whites. That's the sad thing. Mostly it's violence against ourselves.

"Our young people get pissed on the grog and get in fights and kill each other. They go to jail and hang 'mselves in their cells. No one knows why, 'cause that's not the Aboriginal way, to kill yourself. We never committed suicide in the old days. We never believed in that. "Deaths in custody" the government calls it. They even made a bloody commission to study it!"

"So where does the dignity come in?" I asked. The notions of Aboriginal dignity, on the one hand, and Aboriginal violence against themselves, on the other, didn't quite seem to jibe in my mind as they did in his.

His broad nostrils flared. His eyes burned into me. I was infuriating him. He bit off his words as he spoke.

"The dignity come from overcoming the violence, mate. Don't you see? It comes from not letting the violence destroy us from the inside. We're not all that way, you know. We don't all get pissed on the grog and fight and kill each other. Me, I could be that way, too, but I'm not. I chose not to. I had some school, I got a job, I pay taxes... I don't want their bloody pension check every other Tuesday, their "sit-down money' like they call it, so we can go out and sit on the ground under a boab tree and drink ourselves into oblivion. That's not for me. Dignity is overcoming that, overcoming the violence inside us, the violence that you, the Gadia, put there.

"So now the Gadia are feeling guilty," he went on. "They decided to give us back some land, some of our own lost land that they stole years ago and pushed us off of... Well, now that I'll bloody well take! My mob, my family here in Wyndham, we got a little block of land they're givin' us back. See that range of hills out there, across the Gulf and on the other side? We own a piece of that, our mob does. So we're gettin' ready to go back to the country, back out bush, gonna build our selves a place to live out there. An 'outstation' they call it. We know they're just doing it to get rid of us, get us out of the way, but we don't care. We like being' out of the way, off by ourselves, away from all the humbug here in town. We're not going to cry about what happened in the past. We're looking toward the future, not the bloody past. That's what I mean by dignity."--

"So that's why I say you better stop lookin' for the blackfella's secret and stick with your own whitefella's God. That's why I say you'll never discover the black-fella's secret. And even if you did, you'd only be sorry. It's not your secret, and it could hurt you, could even kill you. Same with the Dreamtime stories They're not your stories. They're not for children like your fairy tales. Don't write your book about those like all those anthros and journos do, comin' here and stealin' our stories.

"Write about the real blackfella, the blackfella today... Write about how he's gettin' back his dignity." - Anonymous

The Church and Me

"My wife belong to another sort of church, what they call a People's Church, a nondenominational-type thing. We were there a number of years. I even became church secretary.. But after a while I could feel that something wasn't' quite right. Something stronger was calling out to me. When church was finished on Sunday, the kids and I would rush home, take off those good clothes, toss on a n old pair of shorts, and head out bush to hunt goanna (reptile) or whatever. Next Sunday the kids'd say, "Do we have to go to Sunday school?' And we'd say, "Oh, yes, you have to do it.' But then we started asking ourselves, "Why the heck do we have to do this? Because we're really getting nothing out of it!'

"I started asking people within the church, ' Shouldn't we be doing something more than this? Couldn't we do something to help Aboriginal people?' They said, "aren't' you happy here? Haven't you got everything you want?' I said, 'Ye, I've got a car, a home, a good job. But it's not what I want!

There's something else. I want to help my people be somebody in this world. But how can I do that when I'm part of something that's killing us as Aboriginal people?'

"I really started getting mad about it. I was jumping up and down about those things. So they told me straightway, 'Well, you don't belong in this church!' And they kicked me out. Well, let me tell you, I never felt so good in all my life as I did that day when my wife and I just walked out of there. Ahhh, it was a fantastic feeling! And my wife - the one who got me into that church in the first place - she was the most relieved person of all! She stood beside me and she said, 'Gee, that's the best thing we've ever done in our life!

"So we knew we had to go out and do something else, something real, not phony. Something truly spiritual. And that was Aboriginal land rights. Now, if there are people who want to classify land rights as 'political', that's up to them. But to me, land rights is religious, it's spiritual, not political. To us the land is a spiritual thing, not political, not economic. Without it we have no religion, no spiritual life as a people.

"Political is a European-type term. Just like sovereignty is a European term. We never had a sovereign, we Aboriginal people. Sovereignty is a divine right. But we Aboriginals can only have that divine right over our own land, our own piece of country. SO sovereignty isn't really an issue. The real issue is rights to land. Not 'claims' to the land, like the government likes to phrase it. We aren't claiming the land. It's ours by right, by history, by blood, so we don't have to claim it. What we want is the right to go back to and have control over our own ancestral land, the only land where we can live in proper relationship to the earth, and to the Universe." -Reg Birch, Wyndam City

The Now

"I was reading your book, (Wisdomkeepers)" he said. "There's a line by an old Indian chief I especially like in there, about how white man's religion celebrates something that happened 2,000 years ago and to him nothing's happened since then, but how Indian's religion celebrates what's happening now.

"That's how it is with us Aboriginal people, too. And it's not just religion I'm talking about, you know. When I'm in white man's world, there in my office in Kununurra or wherever, I'm always thinking about what I said to such and such a government minister last month and who I have to meet next week, or what I or you or somebody else did or didn't do yesterday and what I've got to do tomorrow or next month. I don't have any time to think about *now*, no time to be present to the actual moment, you know? White man forgets the *now*, don't you think? We Aboriginals - and Indians, of course - we live in that *now*. To us, the most sacred time of all is *now*.

Thinking about tomorrow or next year is a bother, a waste of time, really. But because of my position as commissioner, I've got to deal in white man's tomorrows and yesterdays while still not forgetting the Aboriginal's *now*. I've got to keep my foot in both worlds you see.

"Even sitting here talking with you fellows," he went on, "that's happening *now*, so I'm totally absorbed in it. Right here, this conversation, it's the most important conversation in the world because it's happening *here and now*.

-Reg Birch, Wyndam City

A Simple Request

"Just stop by and say hello to us, that's all we ask."-Daisy Utemorrah

The Developers

Like a spear thrust deep within my heart
the drill turns deep within the earth.
Like the Yulo makes the soul depart
the Company kills with greedy mirth.
Like with a shield to parry blows
I now use words and demonstrate
against all wrong that I know,
I will not assimilate.
I am this Land and it is mine,
I cannot change and to it be true.
I cannot let the Company mine,
I cannot give this Land to you.
- W. Les Russell

Red

Red is the colour
of my Blood;
of the earth,
of which I am a part;
of the sun as it rises, or sets,
of which I am a part;
of the blood
of the animal,
of which I am a part;
of the flowers, like the waratah,
of the twining pea,
of which I am a part;
of the blood of the tree
of which I am a part.
For all things are a part of me,
and I am a part of them.
- W. Les Russell

The Unhappy Race

White fellow, you are the unhappy race.
You alone have left nature and made civilized laws.
You have enslaved yourselves as you enslave the horse and other wild things.
Why, white man?
Your police lock up your tribe in houses with bars,
We see poor women scrubbing floors of richer women.
Why, white man, why?
You laught at 'poor blackfellow', you say we must be like you.
You say we must leave the old freedom and leisure,
We must be civilized and work for you.
Why, white fellow?
Leave us alone, we don't want your collars and ties,
We don't need your routines and compulsions.
We want the old freedom and joy that all things have but you,
Poor white man of the unhappy race.
- Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker)

The Past

Let no one say the past is dead.
The past is all about us and within.
Haunted by tribal memories, I know
This little now, this accidental present
Is not the all of me, whose long making
Is so much of the past.
Tonight here in suburbia as I sit
In easy chair before electric heater,
Warmed by the red glow, I fall into dream:
I am away
At the camp fire in the bush, among
My own people, sitting on the ground,
No walls about me,
The stars over me,
The tall surrounding trees that stir in the wind
Making their own music,
Soft cries of the night coming to us, there
Where we are one with all old Nature's lives
Known and unknown,
In scenes where we belong but have now forsaken.
Deep chair and electric radiator
Are but since yesterday,
But a thousand thousand campfires in the forest
Are in my blood.
Let none tell me the past is wholly gone.
Now is so small a part of time, so small a part
Of all the race years that have moulded me.
- Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker)

Mary's Plea

Where am I
You, my people
Where am I standing.
Take me back
and hold my hand
I want to be with you.
I want to smell
the smoke
,of burnt grass.
Where are you
my people
I am lost;
I've lost everything; my culture
that should be my own.
Where am I
The clouds
o'er shadow me,
but my memories are there.
But I am lost,
my people,
Take me back
And teach the things
I want to learn.
Is it really you my people,
The voices,
The soft voices that I hear.
- Daisy Utemorrah

Soul Music

Dancing to vibrations of unheard melodies
Swaying to the sound of silence in his ears
The deaf man danced alone.
People hearing, laughed
'Poor bastard', they cried. 'He doesn't even know,
The music stopped, long, long ago!'
The deaf man kept on dancing
Laughing to himself
'If only they would listen, if only they could know,
How it feels to hear the music
Real Music
The music of your soul!'
- Stephen Clayton

Tree

I am the tree
the lean hard hungry land
the crow and eagle
sun and moon and sea
I am the sacred clay
which forms the base
the grasses vines and man
I am all things created
I am you and
you are nothing
but through me the tree
you are
and nothing comes to me
except through that one living gateway
to be free
and you are nothing yet
for all creation
earth and God and man
is nothing
until they fuse
and become a total sum of something
together fuse to consciousness of all
and every sacred part aware
alive in true affinity.
- Kevin Gilbert

A Letter to My Mother

I not see you long time now, I not see you long time now
White fulla bin take me from you, I don't know why
Give me to missionary to be God's child.
Give me new language, give me new name
All time I cry, they say - 'that shame'
I go to city down south, real cold
I forget all them stories, my Mother you told
Gone is my spirit, my dreaming, my name
Gone to these people, our country to claim
They gave me white mother, she give me new name
All time I cry, she say - 'that shame'
I not see you long time now, I not see you long time now.

I grow as Woman now, not Piccaninny no more
I need you to teach me your wisdom, your lore
I am your Spirit, I'll stay alive
But in white fulla way, you won't survive
I'll fight for Your land, for your Sacred sites
To sing and to dance with the Brolga in flight
To continue to live in your own tradition
A culture for me was replaced by a mission
I not see you long time now, I not see you long time now.
One day your dancing, your dreaming, your song
Will take me your Spirit back where I belong
My Mother, the earth, the land - I demand
Protection from aliens who rule, who command
For they do not know where our dreaming began
Our destiny lies in the law s of White man
Two Women we stand, our story untold
But now as our spiritual bondage unfold
We will silence this Burden, this longing, this pain
When I hear you my Mother give me my Name
I not see you long time now, I not see you long time now.
-Eva Johnson

Conclusion

There is, of course, no conclusion, only continuation. Please read onward, review what you were taught long ago, and teach other what you will learn tomorrow. I hope you enjoyed these selections.

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Green Book Of Meditations Volume Five

Chicken-Flavored Soup for the Druid's Soul

Introduction

This collection is a bit of a hodgepodge of stories that I have come across since completing Green Book Volume 4 in 1998, but lacks the decisive pattern in its presentation. I hope that you will enjoy the selections and find them of use. There is a greater selection of humor in this volume than is usual, and I hope that you will not take deep offense if one of them pokes fun at you.

As always, I hope that what seems like a simple ha-ha joke will also appear as an "a-ha" joke. To me, some times, even the most simple questions has seemed like an impenetrable whistle. Why did I collected these stories? It is one thing to have knowledge and another thing to possess wisdom. I can collect all the mysteries in the world, but unless I can penetrate even one, it seems a sorry waste of time, doesn't it? But how can I collect mysteries, unless I can spot them in the first place? Perhaps I am not too far without hope. I hope that you will enjoy them too.

Being in D.C. is an unusual experience of big-city life away from the suburbs and rural towns of the last 15 years. I am more limited in my excusions into heavy nature and I have withdrawn a bit into Graduate school studies and full-time work. To balance this, I've done more research and sought stories to inspire me.

The selections represent a window into my own personal search. My ongoing fascination with monastic life and Zen is again well represented here. The wry Sufi humor resurfaces yet again. A large collection of religious humor, hopefully will be appreciated. Hazlenuts is a collection of stories circulated by other Druids in the Reform over the last 20 years. The Book of Self-Motivation is for those Druids having difficulties in life. The Book of Booze and Book of Al-Anon deal with Alcohol. The Book of Ultimate Answers is transferred from Part Nine in the original collection and will hopefully be more in style next to the aforementioned books. The Nightingale Story is a wonderful story that I couldn't pass up sharing with you. The Jedi Collection is also a transplant from Part Nine in ARDA and will be completed in 2003 after the release of the final movie. Finally, I had reservations on releasing the Book of Religious Freedom, as it is a political tract that may not sit well with some members; but might prove a useful tool for Druids involved in political movements to preserve religious freedom in these trying times. But living in D.C., I couldn't help but become involved in the Church & State issues.

-Enjoy,
Mike Scharding
Washington, DC
July 16, 2002

Drynemetum Press

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Monky Business

Found at http://www.rider.edu/users/suler/zenstory/zenstory.html

Bodhidharma

After nine years in China, Bodhdharma wished to go home in India and gathered his disciples around him to test their apperception.

Dofuku said: "In my opinion, truth is beyond affirmation or negation, for this is the way it moves."

Bodhidharma replied: "You have my skin."

The nun Soji said: "In my view, it is like Ananda's sight of the Buddha-land – seen once and for ever."

Bodhidharma answered: "You have my flesh."

Doiku said: "The four elements of light, airness, fluidity, and solidity are empty [i.e., inclusive] and the five skandhas are no-things. In my opinion, no-thing [i.e. spirit] is reality."

Bodhiharma commented: "You have my bones."

Finally, Eka bowed before the master and remained silent.

Bodhidharma said: "You have my marrow."

Time To Learn

A young but earnest Zen student approached his teacher, and asked the Zen Master:

"If I work very hard and diligent how long will it take for me to find Zen?"

The Master thought about this, and then replied, "Ten years."

The student then said, "But what if I work very, very hard and really apply myself to learn fast -- How long then?"

Replied the Master, "Well, twenty years."

"But, if I really, really work at it. How long then?" asked the student.

"Thirty years," replied the Master.

"But, I do not understand," said the disappointed student. "At each time that I say I will work harder, you say it will take me longer. Why do you say that?"

Replied the Master, "When you have one eye on the goal, you only have one eye on the path."

Bell Teacher

A new student approached the Zen master and asked how he should prepare himself for his training. "Think of me a bell," the master explained. "Give me a soft tap, and you will get a tiny ping. Strike hard, and you'll receive a loud, resounding peal."

Two Rabbits

A martial arts student approached his teacher with a question. "I'd like to improve my knowledge of the martial arts. In addition to learning from you, I'd like to study with another teacher in order to learn another style. What do you think of this idea?"

"The hunter who chases two rabbits," answered the master, "catches neither one."

Egotism

The Prime Minister of the Tang Dynasty was a national hero for his success as both a statesman and military leader. But despite his fame, power, and wealth, he considered himself a humble and devout Buddhist. Often he visited his favorite Zen master to study under him, and they seemed to get along very well. The fact that he was prime minister apparently had no effect on their relationship, which seemed to be simply one of a revered master and respectful student.

One day, during his usual visit, the Prime Minister asked the master, "Your Reverence, what is egotism according to Buddhism?" The master's face turned red, and in a very condescending and insulting tone of voice, he shot back, "What kind of stupid question is that!?"

This unexpected response so shocked the Prime Minister that he became sullen and angry. The Zen master then smiled and said, "THIS, Your Excellency, is egotism."

Duke and the Wheelwright:

Duke Huan was reading a book in the hall. Wheelwright Pian, who had been chiseling a wheel in the courtyard below, set down his tools and climbed the stairs to ask Duke Huan:

"May I ask what words are in the book Your Grace is reading?"

"The classic of a famous sage." the Duke responded.

"Is he still alive?"

"Oh no, he is long dead"

"Then you've been reading the dregs left over by a dead man, isn't it?"

Duke Huan said, " How dare a wheelwright to have opinions about the book I read! If you can explain yourself, I'll let it pass. Otherwise, it's death!"

Wheelwright Pian said, "In my case I see things in terms of my own work. I chisel at a wheel. If I go too slowly, the chisel slides and does not stay put. If I hurry, it jams and doesn't move properly. When it is just right, I can feel it in my hand and respond to it from my heart. I can explain this to my son, but I cannot pass on the skills to him. That is why at seventy years old, I am still making wheels. The sage who couldn't pass down his wisdom is already dead; and that's why I say the book you're reading is merely the dregs of a dead man."

-Zhuangzi, Chap. 5-13

Shield and Spear

An armorer of Chu boldly claims to make the best spears and shields.

"My shields are so strong; they cannot be penetrated by any weapon," he said. He then added, “My spears are so sharp; they can pierce any shield."

A man asks, "If your spear is thrown at your shield, what then?"

The armorer had no reply.

By logic, both an impenetrable shield and an all-piercing spear cannot exist at the same time.

-State of Chu (841-233 b.c.), Chou Dynasty

The Flute Player

Whenever King Xuan of Qi had musicians playing the yu, a wind instrument with reed, he will have three hundred of them playing together. Knowing this, a student from Nanguo applied for a job. The king accepted and paid him the same salary as the others.

After the death of King Xuan, King Min became the ruler of Qi. He liked to have the musicians playing solo. The student from Nanguo fled.

-Han Fei Zi

What is the moral of this story? One way to weed out the incompetent is to measure each individually.

Blind Man’s Lantern

In early times in Japan, bamboo-and-paper lanterns were used with candles inside. A blind man, visiting a friend one night, was offered a lantern to carry home with him.

"I do not need a lantern," he said. "Darkness or light is all the same to me."

"I know you do not need a lantern to find your way," his friend replied, "but if you don't have one, someone else may run into you. So you must take it."

The blind man started off with the lantern and before he had walked very far someone ran squarely into him.

"Look out where you are going!" he exclaimed to the stranger. "Can't you see this lantern?"

"Your candle has burned out, brother," replied the stranger.

The Umbrella

After ten years of apprenticeship, Tenno achieved the rank of Zen teacher. One rainy day, he went to visit the famous master Nan-in. When he walked in, the master greeted him with a question, "Did you leave your wooden clogs and umbrella on the porch?"

"Yes," Tenno replied.

"Tell me," the master continued, "did you place your umbrella to the left of your shoes, or to the right?"

Tenno did not know the answer, and realized that he had not yet attained full awareness. So he became Nan-in's apprentice and studied under him for ten more years.

And Then What is There?

The emperor, who was a devout Buddhist, invited a great Zen master to the Palace in order to ask him questions about Buddhism. "What is the highest truth of the holy Buddhist doctrine?" the emperor inquired.

"Vast emptiness... and not a trace of holiness," the master replied.

"If there is no holiness," the emperor said, "then who or what are you?"

"I do not know," the master replied.

Is That So?

A beautiful girl in the village was pregnant. Her angry parents demanded to know who was the father. At first resistant to confess, the anxious and embarrassed girl finally pointed to Hakuin, the Zen master whom everyone previously revered for living such a pure life. When the outraged parents confronted Hakuin with their daughter's accusation, he simply replied "Is that so?"

When the child was born, the parents brought it to the Hakuin, who now was viewed as a pariah by the whole village.

They demanded that he take care of the child since it was his responsibility. "Is that so?" Hakuin said calmly as he accepted the child.

For many months he took very good care of the child until the daughter could no longer withstand the lie she had told. She confessed that the real father was a young man in the village whom she had tried to protect. The parents immediately went to Hakuin to see if he would return the baby. With profuse apologies they explained what had happened.

"Is that so?" Hakuin said as he handed them the child.

Two Words

There once was a monastery that was very strict. Following a vow of silence, no one was allowed to speak at all. But there was one exception to this rule. Every ten years, the monks were permitted to speak just two words. After spending his first ten years at the monastery, one monk went to the head monk. "It has been ten years," said the head monk. "What are the two words you would like to speak?"

"Bed... hard..." said the monk.

"I see," replied the head monk.

Ten years later, the monk returned to the head monk's office. "It has been ten more years," said the head monk. "What are the two words you would like to speak?"

"Food... stinks..." said the monk.

"I see," replied the head monk.

Yet another ten years passed and the monk once again met with the head monk who asked, "What are your two words now, after these ten years?"

"I... quit!" said the monk.

"Well, I can see why," replied the head monk. "All you ever do is complain."

The Art of Burglary

The son of a master thief asked his father to teach him the secrets of the trade. The old thief agreed and that night took his son to burglarize a large house. While the family was asleep, he silently led his young apprentice into a room that contained a clothes closet. The father told his son to go into the closet to pick out some clothes. When he did, his father quickly shut the door and locked him in. Then he went back outside, knocked loudly on the front door, thereby waking the family, and quickly slipped away before anyone saw him. Hours later, his son returned home, bedraggled and exhausted.

"Father," he cried angrily, "Why did you lock me in that closet? If I hadn't been made desperate by my fear of getting caught, I never would have escaped. It took all my ingenuity to get out!"

The old thief smiled. "Son, you have had your first lesson in the art of burglary."

The Burglar and the Moon

A Zen Master lived the simplest kind of life in a little hut at the foot of a mountain. One evening, while he was away, a thief sneaked into the hut only to find there was nothing in it to steal. The Zen Master returned and found him.

"You have come a long way to visit me," he told the prowler, "and you should not return empty handed. Please take my clothes as a gift." The thief was bewildered, but he took the clothes and ran away. The Master sat naked, watching the moon. "Poor fellow," he mused, " I wish I could give him this beautiful moon."

Important Teaching

A renowned Zen master said that his greatest teaching was this: Buddha is your own mind. So impressed by how profound this idea was, one monk decided to leave the monastery and retreat to the wilderness to meditate on this insight. There he spent 20 years as a hermit probing the great teaching.

One day he met another monk who was traveling through the forest. Quickly the hermit monk learned that the traveler also had studied under the same Zen master. "Please, tell me what you know of the master's greatest teaching."

The traveler's eyes lit up, "Ah, the master has been very clear about this. He says that his greatest teaching is this: Buddha is NOT your own mind."

The Garden Keeper

A priest was in charge of the garden within a famous Zen temple. He had been given the job because he loved the flowers, shrubs, and trees. Next to the temple there was another, smaller temple where there lived a very old Zen master. One day, when the priest was expecting some special guests, he took extra care in tending to the garden. He pulled the weeds, trimmed the shrubs, combed the moss, and spent a long time meticulously raking up and carefully arranging all the dry autumn leaves. As he worked, the old master watched him with interest from across the wall that separated the temples.

When he had finished, the priest stood back to admire his work. "Isn't it beautiful," he called out to the old master. "Yes," replied the old man, "but there is something missing. Help me over this wall and I'll put it right for you."

After hesitating, the priest lifted the old fellow over and set him down. Slowly, the master walked to the tree near the center of the garden, grabbed it by the trunk, and shook it. Leaves showered down all over the garden.

"There," said the old man, "you can put me back now."

Prosperity

A rich man asked a Zen master to write something down that could encourage the prosperity of his family for years to come. It would be something that the family could cherish for generations. On a large piece of paper, the master wrote, "Father dies, son dies, grandson dies."

The rich man became angry when he saw the master's work. "I asked you to write something down that could bring happiness and prosperity to my family. Why do you give me something depressing like this?"

"If your son should die before you," the master answered, "this would bring unbearable grief to your family. If your grandson should die before your son, this also would bring great sorrow. If your family, generation after generation, disappears in the order I have described, it will be the natural course of life. This is true happiness and prosperity."

The Inn

A famous spiritual teacher came to the front door of the King's palace. None of the guards tried to stop him as he entered and made his way to where the King himself was sitting on his throne.

"What do you want?" asked the King, immediately recognizing the visitor.

"I would like a place to sleep in this inn," replied the teacher.

"But this is not an inn," said the King, "It is my palace."

"May I ask who owned this palace before you?"

"My father. He is dead."

"And who owned it before him?"

"My grandfather. He too is dead."

"And this place where people live for a short time and then move on - did I hear you say that it is NOT an inn?"

Without Fear

During the civil wars in feudal Japan, an invading army would quickly sweep into a town and take control. In one particular village, everyone fled just before the army arrived - everyone except the Zen master. Curious about this old fellow, the general went to the temple to see for himself what kind of man this master was. When he wasn't treated with the deference and submissiveness to which he was accustomed, the general burst into anger. "You fool," he shouted as he reached for his sword, "don't you realize you are standing before a man who could run you through without blinking an eye!"

But despite the threat, the master seemed unmoved. "And do you realize," the master replied calmly, "that you are standing before a man who can be run through without blinking an eye?"

Obedience

The master Bankei's talks were attended not only by Zen students but also by persons of all ranks and sects. He never quoted sutras nor indulged in scholastic dissertations. Instead, his words were spoken directly from his heart to the hearts of his listeners.

His large audience angered a priest of the Nichiren sect because the adherents had left to hear about Zen. The self-centered Nichiren priest came to the temple, determined to have a debate with Bankei.

"Hey, Zen teacher!" he called out. "Wait a minute. Whoever respects you will obey what you say, but a man like myself does not respect you. Can you make me obey you?"

"Come up beside me and I will show you," said Bankei.

Proudly the priest pushed his way through the crowd to the teacher.

Bankei smiled. "Come over to my left side."

The priest obeyed.

"No," said Bankei, "we may talk better if you are on the right side. Step over here."

The priest proudly stepped over to the right.

"You see," observed Bankei, "you are obeying me and I think you are a very gentle person. Now sit down and listen."

No Water, No Moon

When the nun Chiyono studied Zen under Bukko of Engaku she was unable to attain the fruits of meditation for a long time.

At last one moonlit night she was carrying water in an old pail bound with bamboo. The bamboo broke and the bottom fell out of the pail, and at that moment Chiyono was set free!

In commemoration, she wrote a poem:

In this way and that I tried to save the old pail
Since the bamboo strip was weakening and about to break
Until at last the bottom fell out.
No more water in the pail!
No more moon in the water!

Calling Card

Keichu, the great Zen teacher of the Meiji era, was the head of Tofuku, a cathedral in Kyoto. One day the governor of Kyoto called upon him for the first time.

His attendant presented the card of the governor, which read: Kitagaki, Governor of Kyoto.

"I have no business with such a fellow," said Keichu to his attendant. "Tell him to get out of here." The attendant carried the card back with apologies.

"That was my error," said the governor, and with a pencil he scratched out the words Governor of Kyoto. "Ask your teacher again."

"Oh, is that Kitagaki?" exclaimed the teacher when he saw the card. "I want to see that fellow."

Mokusen's Hand

Mokusen Hiki was living in a temple in the province of Tamba. One of his adherents complained of the stinginess of his wife.

Mokusen visited the adherent's wife and showed her his clenched fist before her face.

"What do you mean by that?" asked the surprised woman.

"Suppose my fist were always like that. What would you call it?" he asked.

"Deformed," replied the woman.

The he opened his hand flat in her face and asked: "Suppose it were always like that. What then?"

"Another kind of deformity," said the wife.

"If you understand that much" finished Mokusen, "you are a good wife." Then he left. After his visit, this wife helped her husband to distribute as well as to save.

Publishing the Sutras

Tetsugen, a devotee of Zen in Japan, decided to publish the sutras, which at that time were available only in Chinese. The books were to be printed with wood blocks in an edition of seven thousand copies, a tremendous undertaking.

Tetsugen began by traveling and collecting donations for this purpose. A few sympathizers would give him a hundred pieces of gold, but most of the time he received only small coins. He thanked each donor with equal gratitude. After ten years Tetsugen had enough money to begin his task.

It happened that at that time the Uji River overflowed. Famine followed. Tetsugen took the funds he had collected for the books and spent them to save others from starvation. Then he began again his work of collecting.

Several years afterwards an epidemic spread over the country. Tetsugen again gave away what he had collected, to help his people.

For a third time he started his work, and after twenty years his wish was fulfilled. The printing blocks, which produced the

first edition of sutras, can be seen today in the Obaku monastery in Kyoto.

The Japanese tell their children that Tetsugen made three sets of sutras, and that the first two invisible sets surpass even the last.

Heaven and Hell

A soldier named Nobushige came to Hakuin, and asked: "Is there really a paradise and a hell?"

"Who are you?" inquired Hakuin.

"I am a samurai," the warrior replied.

"You, a soldier!" exclaimed Hakuin. "What kind of ruler would have you as his guard? Your face looks like that of a beggar."

Nobushige became so angry that he began to draw his sword, but Hakuin continued: "So you have a sword! Your weapon is probably much too dull to cut off my head."

As Nobushige drew his sword Hakuin remarked: "Here open the gates of hell!"

At these words the samurai, perceiving the master's discipline, sheathed his sword and bowed.

"Here open the gates of paradise," said Hakuin

Gudo & the Emperor

The emperor Goyozei was studying Zen under Gudo. He inquired: "In Zen this very mind is Buddha. Is this correct?"

Gudo answered: "If I say yes, you will think that you understand without understanding. If I say no, I would be contradicting a fact which you may understand quite well."

On another day the emperor asked Gudo: "Where does the enlightened man go when he dies?"

Gudo answered: "I know not."

"Why don't you know?" asked the emperor.

"Because I have not died yet," replied Gudo.

The emperor hesitated to inquire further about these things his mind could not grasp. So Gudo beat the floor with his hand as if to awaken him, and the emperor was enlightened!

The emperor respected Zen and old Gudo more than ever after his enlightenment, and he even permitted Gudo to wear his hat in the palace in winter. When Gudo was over eighty he used to fall asleep in the midst of his lecture, and the emperor would quietly retire to another room so his beloved teacher might enjoy the rest his aging body required.

Transmission of the Book

In modern times a great deal of nonsense is talked about masters and disciples, and about the inheritance of a master's teaching by favorite pupils, entitling them to pass the truth on to their adherents. Of course Zen should be imparted in this way, from heart to heart, and in the past it was really accomplished. Silence and humility reigned rather than profession and assertion. The one who received such a teaching kept the matter hidden even after twenty years. Not until another discovered through his own need, that a real master was at hand was it learned that the teaching had been imparted, and even then the occasion arose quite naturally and the teaching made its way in its own right. Under no circumstance did the teacher even claim, "I am the successor of So-and-so." Such a claim would prove quite the contrary.

The Zen master Mu-nan had only one successor. His name was Shoju. After Shoju had completed his study of Zen, Mu-nan called him into his room. "I am getting old," he said, "and as far as I know, Shoju, you are the only one who will carry on this teaching. Here is a book. It has been passed down from master to master for seven generations. I have also added many points according to my understanding. The book is very valuable, and I am giving it to you to represent your successorship."

"If the book is such an important thing, you had better keep it," Shoju replied. "I received your Zen without writing and am satisfied with it as it is."

"I know that," said Mu-nan. "Even so, this work has been carried from master to master for seven generations, so you may keep it as a symbol of having received the teaching. Here."

They happened to be talking before a brazier. The instant Shoju felt the book in his hands he thrust it into the flaming coals. He had no lust for possessions.

Mu-nan, who never had been angry before, yelled: "What are you doing!"

Shoju shouted back: "What are you saying!"

One Note Zen

After Kakua visited the emperor he disappeared and no one knew what became of him. He was the first Japanese to study Zen in China, but since he showed nothing of it, save one note, he is not remembered for having brought Zen into his country.

Kakua visited China and accepted the true teaching. He did not travel while he was there. Meditating constantly, he lived on a remote part of a mountain. Whenever people found him and asked him to preach he would say a few words and then move to another part of the mountain where he could be found less easily.

The emperor heard about Kakua when he returned to Japan and asked him to preach Zen for his edification and that of his subjects. Kakua stood before the emperor in silence. He the produced a flute from the folds of his robe, and blew one short note. Bowing politely, he disappeared.

Most Valuable Thing

A student asked Sozan, a Chinese Zen master, "What is the most valuable thing in the world?"

The master replied: "The head of a dead cat."

"Why is the head of a dead cat the most valuable thing in the world?" inquired the student.

Sozan replied: "Because no one can name its price."

Reformation

Ryokan devoted his life to the study of Zen. One day he heard that his nephew, despite the admonitions of relatives, was spending his money on a courtesan. Inasmuch as the nephew had taken Ryokan's place in managing the family estate and the property was in danger of being dissipated, the relatives asked Ryoken to do something about it.

Ryokan had to travel a long way to visit his nephew, whom he had not seen for many years. The nephew seemed pleased to meet his uncle again and invited him to remain overnight.

All night Ryokan sat in meditation. As he was departing in the morning he said to the young man: "I must be getting old, my hand shakes so. Will you help me tie the string of my straw sandal?"

The nephew helped him willingly. "Thank you," finished Ryokan, "you see, a man becomes older and feebler day by day.

Take good care of yourself." Then Ryokan left, never mentioning a word about the courtesan or the complaints of the relatives. But, from that morning on, the dissipations of the nephew ended.

Temper

A Zen student came to Bankei and complained: "Master, I have an ungovernable temper. How can I cure it?"

"You have something very strange," replied Bankei. "Let me see what you have."

"Just now I cannot show it to you," replied the other.

"When can you show it to me?" asked Bankei.

"It arises unexpectedly," replied the student.

"Then," concluded Bankei, "it must not be your own true nature. If it were, you could show it to me at any time. When you were born you did not have it, and your parents did not give it to you. Think that over."

Time to Die

Ikkyu, the Zen master, was very clever even as a boy. His teacher had a precious teacup, a rare antique. Ikkyu happened to break this cup and was greatly perplexed. Hearing the footsteps of his teacher, he held the pieces of the cup behind him. When the master appeared, Ikkyu asked: "Why do people have to die?"

"This is natural," explained the older man. "Everything has to die and has just so long to live."

Ikkyu, producing the shattered cup, added: "It was time for your cup to die."

Silent Temple

Shoichi was a one-eyed teacher of Zen, sparkling with enlightenment. He taught his disciples in Tofuku temple.

Day and night the whole temple stood in silence. There was no sound at all.

The teacher abolished even the reciting of sutras. His pupils had nothing to do but meditate.

When the master passed away, an old neighbor heard the ringing of bells and the recitation of sutras. Then she knew Shoichi had gone.

Two Principles to Live By

A traveler through the mountains came upon an elderly gentleman who was busy planting a tiny almond tree. Knowing that almond trees take many years to mature, he commented to the man "It seems odd that a man of your advanced age would plant such a slow-growing tree!"

The man replied, "I like to live my life based on two principles. One is that I will live forever. The other is that this is my last day."

(paraphrased from either Lao Tsu or Chuang-T'su)

Then Zen

One of Ho Chi Zen's students asked him, "What was the occasion of your enlightenment?"

Ho replied: "I forget."

Emptiness

In Chuang Tzu, he is visited by another character, Great Knowledge, whose inquiries he answers by laughing and slapping his knee and shouting, "I don't know! I don't know!"

End of Questions

Upon meeting a Zen master at a social event, a psychiatrist decided to ask him a question that had been on his mind.

"Exactly how do you help people?" he inquired.

"I get them to where they can't ask any more questions," the Master answered.

One Flicks Dirt with His Toe

[The Buddha is speaking]: "When the mind is pure, the Buddha land will be pure."

At that time, Shariputra, moved by the Buddha's supernatural powers, thought to himself: "If the mind of the bodhisattva is pure, then his Buddha land will be pure. Now when our World-Honored-One first determined to become a bodhisattva, surely his intentions were pure. Why then is this Buddha land so filled with impurities?"

The Buddha, knowing his thoughts, said to him, "What do you think? Are the sun and the moon impure? Is that why the blind man fails to see them?

Shariputra replied, "No, World Honored One. That is the fault of the blind man. The sun and moon are not to blame."

Buddha: "Shariputra, it is the failings of living beings that prevent them from seeing the marvelous purity of the land of the Buddha, the Thus Come One. The Thus Come One is not to blame. Shariputra, this land of mine is pure, but you fail to see it."

Shariputra said, "When I look at this land, I see it full of knolls and hollows, thorny underbrush, sand and gravel, dirt, rocks, many mountains, filth and defilement."

The Buddha then pressed his toe against the earth, and immediately the thousand-million fold world was adorned with hundreds and thousands of rare jewels. All the members of the great assembly sighed in wonder at what they had never seen before, and all saw that they were seated on jeweled lotuses."

The Buddha said to Shariputra, "Now do you see the marvelous purity of this Buddha land?"

Shariputra replied, "Indeed, I do. Now all the marvelous purity of the Buddha land is before me."

The Buddha said to Shariputra, "If a person's mind is pure, then he will see the wonderful blessings that adorn this land."

[The above is from "The Vimalakirti Sutra" translated by Burton Watson, pp. 29-31. I have edited some sentences for brevity.] By the way, Watson's translation of the Vimalakirti is a triumph! The introduction alone is worth the price of the book.

Nichiren Daishonin wrote:

"Fire can be produced by a stone taken from the bottom of a river, and a candle can light up a place that has been dark for billions of years. If even the most ordinary things of this world are such wonders, then how much more wondrous is the power of the Mystic Law?"

(From "The One Essential Phrase")

And:

"Please understand that I am merely joining my one drop to the rivers and the oceans or adding my candle to the sun and the moon, hoping in this way to increase even slightly the volume of the water or the brilliance of the light."

(From "Recitation of the Hoben and Juryo Chapters")

The Parable of the Zither

"Sona, you cannot produce a good sound on the zither if you tighten the strings too much, can you?"

"That is correct, man of great virtue."

"And at the other extreme, you cannot produce a good sound either if you loosen the strings too much, can you?"

"What you said is precisely right, man of great virtue."

"Then what would you do?"

"Man of great virtue, it is vital to tune the strings properly and neither tighten nor loosen them too much."

"Sona, you should realize that the practice of the Way, which I preach, is exactly the same. If you are too assiduous in your practice, you will strain your mind and become too tense. However if you relax your mind too much, then you will be overwhelmed by laziness. You must strike a balance in your practice of the Way as well."

(From Treasures of the Heart by Daisaku Ikeda)

Su Shi and the Buddhist Monk

The famous Chinese poet Su Shi* (1037-1101 A.D.) was visiting his friend, who was a Buddhist monk. Su Shi asks the monk what Su Shi is like in the monk's eyes.

The monk replies, "In my eyes, you are a Buddha."

Su Shi is very happy with this response.

The monk then asks Su Shi the same question, and Su Shi answers, "In my eyes, you are dung!"

The monk smiles, and Su Shi is delighted, because he thinks he is so much better than the monk.

Then some days later, Su Shi tells the story to a friend, and the friend tells him the truth, "The monk sees you as a Buddha, because he sees everything as Buddha, because he has a Buddha's heart and eyes. You see the monk as dung, because you see everything as dung, because you have a dung's heart and eyes!"

[This story is from Nomis Fung]

Happy Chinaman

Anyone walking about Chinatowns in America will observe statues of a stout fellow carrying a linen sack. Chinese merchants call him Happy Chinaman or Laughing Buddha.

This Hotei lived in the T'ang dynasty. He had no desire to call himself a Zen master or to gather many disciples around him. Instead, he walked the streets with a big sack into which he would put gifts of candy, fruit, or doughnuts. These he would give to children who gathered around him in play. He established a kindergarten of the streets.

Whenever he met a Zen devotee he would extend his hand and say: "Give me one penny." And if anyone asked him to return to a temple to teach others, again he would reply: "Give me one penny."

Once as he was about his play-work, another Zen master happened along and inquired: "What is the significance of Zen?"

Hotei immediately plopped his sack down in silent answer.

"Then," asked the other, "what is the actualization of Zen?"

At once the Happy Chinaman swung the sack over his shoulder and continued on his way.

Wo and Jah

A troubled man named Wo could not figure out how to live. So he began meditating to find some answers. After many months he felt no progress, so he asked the temple priest for help.

The priest said, "Go see old Jah."

So he hiked to old Jah's village and came upon the happy-looking old man coming from the forest under a heavy load of firewood.

"Excuse me, honored Jah," he said. "But can you teach me the secret of life?"

Jah raised his eyebrows and gazed at Wo. Then with some effort he twisted out from beneath his great bundle of firewood and let it crash to the ground.

"There, that is enlightenment," he said, straightening up with relief and smiling.

The troubled man looked on in shock at the prickly firewood scattered over the ground. "Is that all there is to it?" he said.

"Oh, no," said Jah. Then he bent down, collected all the scattered sticks, hoisted them carefully up on his back and made ready to walk on. "This is enlightenment, too. Come. Let's go together for tea."

So Wo walked along with Jah. "What is old Jah showing me?" he asked.

Jah replied, "First, yes, you are suffering a heavy burden. Many do. But, as the Buddha taught and many have realized, much of your burden and much of your joylessness is your craving for what you can't have and your clinging to what you can't keep.

"See the nature of your burden and of the chafing you experience as you try to cling to it useless, unnecessary, damaging; and you can let it go. In doing so, you find relief, and you are freer to see the blessings of life and to choose wisely to receive them."

"Thank you, old Jah," said Wo. "And why did you call picking up the burden of firewood again enlightenment as well?"

"One understanding is that some burden in life is unavoidable — and even beneficial, like firewood. With occasional rest, it can be managed, and with freedom from undue anxiety about it, it will not cause chafe.

"Once the undue burden is dropped, we straighten up and see and feel the wonder and power of being. Seeing others suffering without that freedom and blissful experience, we willingly and knowingly pick up their burdens out of compassion joining and aiding others in their various struggles for liberation, enlightenment and fulfillment."

"Thank you, Old Jah," said the exhilarated Wo. "You have enlightened me."

"Ah-so," said Jah. "Your understanding is enlightened. Now to make it part of your living and your spirit, you must go follow the eight practices and meditate. Then you will learn to detach yourself from your useless burden of cravings and to attach yourself to the profound source of being, out of which life, creativity, joy and compassion form and flow."

And so Wo went and did. And understanding the truths gave him comfort. And practicing the good behaviors kept him from harming himself or others anymore. And concentrating on the deep blissful potential of life gave him a continuing sense of

companionship and joyful awe and of well-being in his spirit, no matter what else of pain he had to deal with.

Buy Your Own Fish

A government minister very much enjoyed eating fish. Every morning, many people lined up at his front doors, eagerly presenting gifts of expensive and exotic fish to him.

Observing this, with great uneasiness, he calmly thanked them for their kindness but flatly refused to receive any one of those fish. This lack of social courtesy deeply surprised and annoyed his young brother, who lived with him. One night, after dinner he curiously asked his elder brother for the reason.

"Its very simple," the minister revealed. "To avoid potential trouble, a wise man should never let his inclinations or hobbies be known by the public. I fail miserably on that point because my taste for fish is common knowledge. Knowing my likes, those gift-givers will try to satisfy them. If I accept their gifts, I owe them favors. When making a decision, I would inevitably or subconsciously have their concerns on my mind. I might bend a law to return a favor. If this continues, I risk getting caught and losing my position and reputation. Who then will bother to give gifts to a disgraced and powerless prisoner? Therefore, I must vigorously decline their generosity. Without owing them any gratuity, I am my own master. Making appropriate and unbiased decision, I can keep my post much longer and continue to buy my own fish."

His brother promptly apologized for his short sightedness.

Mother's Advice

Jiun, a Shingon master, was a well-known Sanskrit scholar of the Tokugawa era. When he was young, he used to deliver lectures to his brother students.

His mother heard about this and wrote him a letter:

"Son, I do not think you became a devotee of the Buddha because you desired to turn into a walking dictionary for others. There is no end to information and commentation, glory and honor. I wish you would stop this lecture business. Shut yourself up in a little temple in a remote part of the mountain. Devote your time to meditation and in this way attain true realization."

Heart Burns Like Fire

Soyen Shaku, the first Zen teacher to come to America, said: "My heart burns like fire but my eyes are as cold as dead ashes." He made the following rules, which he practiced every day of his life.

In the morning before dressing, light incense and meditate.

Retire at a regular hour.

Partake of food at regular intervals. Eat with moderation and never to the point of satisfaction.

Receive a guest with the same attitude you have when alone. When alone, maintain the same attitude you have in receiving guests.

Watch what you say, and whatever you say, practice it.

When an opportunity comes do not let it pass by, yet always think twice before acting.

Do not regret the past. Look to the future.

Have the fearless attitude of a hero and the loving heart of a child.

Upon retiring, sleep as if you have entered your last sleep.

Upon awakening, leave you bed behind you instantly as if you had cast away a pair of old shoes.

Dead Man's Answer

When Mamiya, who later became a well-known preacher, went to a teacher for personal guidance, he was asked to explain the sound of one hand.

Mamiya concentrated upon what the sound of one hand might be. "You are not working hard enough," his teacher told him. "You are too attached to food, wealth, thing, and that sound. It would be better if you died. That would solve the problem."

The next time Mamiya appeared before his teacher he was again asked what he had to show regarding the sound of one hand. Mamiya at once fell over as if he were dead.

"You are dead all right," observed the teacher, "But how about that sound?"

"I haven't solved that yet," replied Mamiya looking up.

"Dead men do not speak," said the teacher, "Get out!"

Grass and Trees

During the Kamakura period, Shinkan studied Tendai six years and then studied Zen seven years; then he went to China and contemplated Zen for thirteen years more.

When he returned to Japan many desired to interview him and asked obscure question. But when Shinkan received visitors, which was infrequently, he seldom answered their questions.

One day, a fifty-year old student of enlightenment said to Shinkan: "I have studied the Tendai school of thought since I was a little boy, but one thing in it I cannot understand. Tendai claims that even the grass and trees will become enlightened. To me this seems very strange."

"Of what use is it to discuss how grass and trees become enlightened," asked Shinkan? "The question is how you yourself can become so. Did you ever consider that?"

"I never thought of it in that way," marveled the old man.

"Then go home and think it over," finished Shinkan.

Black-Nosed Buddha

A nun who was searching for enlightenment made a statue of Buddha and covered it with gold leaf. Wherever she went she carried this golden Buddha with her.

Years passed and, still carrying her Buddha, the nun came to live in a small temple in a country where there were many Buddhas, each one with its own particular shrine.

The nun wished to burn incense before her golden Buddha. Not liking the idea of the perfume straying to the others, she designed a funnel through which the smoke would ascend only to her statue. This blackened the nose of the golden Buddha, making it especially ugly.

Ryonen's Clear Realization

The Buddhist nun, known as Ryonen, was born in 1797. She was the granddaughter of the famous Japanese warrior Shingen. Her poetical genius and alluring beauty were such that at seventeen she was serving the empress as one of the ladies of the court. Even at such a youthful age fame awaited her.

The beloved empress died suddenly and Ryonen's hopeful dreams vanished. She became acutely aware of the

impermanency of life in this world. It was then that she desired to study Zen.

Her relatives disagreed, however, and practically forced her into marriage. With a promise that she might become a nun after she had borne three children, Ryonen assented. Before she was twenty-five she had accomplished this condition. Then her husband and relatives could no longer dissuade her from her desire. She shaved her head, took the name of Ryonen, which means to realize clearly, and started on her pilgrimage.

She came to the city of Edo and asked Tetsugyu to accept her as a disciple. At one glance the master rejected her because she was too beautiful. Ryonen then went to another master, Hakuo. Hakuo refused her for the same reason, saying that her beauty would only make trouble. Ryonen obtained a hot iron and placed it against her face. In a few moments her beauty had vanished forever. Hakuo then accepted her as a disciple.

Commemorating this occasion, Ryonen wrote a poem on the back of a little mirror:

In the service of my Empress
I burned incense to perfume my exquisite clothes,
Now as a homeless mendicant
I burn my face to enter a *Zen temple.*

When Ryonen was about to pass from this world, she wrote another poem:

Sixty-six *times have these eyes beheld the changing scene of autumn.*
I have said enough about moonlight.
Ask no more.
Only listen to the voice of pines and cedars when no wind stirs.

Sour Miso

The cook monk Dairyo, at Bankei's monastery, decided that he would take good care of his old teacher's health and give him only fresh miso, a paste of soy beans mixed with wheat and yeast that often ferments. Bankei, noticing that he was being served better miso than his pupils asked: "Who is the cook today?"

Dairyo was sent before him. Bankei learned that according to his age and position he should eat only fresh miso. So he said to the cook: "Then you think I shouldn't eat at all." With this he entered his room and locked the door.

Dairyo, sitting outside the door, asked his teacher's pardon. Bankei would not answer. For seven days Dairyo sat outside and Bankei within.

Finally in desperation an adherent called loudly to Bankei: "You may be all right, old teacher, but this young disciple here has to eat. He cannot go without food forever!"

At that Bankei opened the door. He was smiling. He told Dairyo: "I insist on eating the same food as the least of my followers. When you become the teacher I do not want you to forget this."

No Work, No Food

Hyakujo, the Chinese Zen master, used to labor with his pupils even at the age of eighty, trimming the gardens, cleaning the grounds, and pruning the trees.

The pupils felt sorry to see the old teacher working so hard, but they knew he would not listen to their advice to stop, so they hid away his tools.

That day the master did not eat. The next day he did not eat, nor the next. "He may be angry because we have hidden his tools," the pupils surmised. "We had better put them back."

The day they did, the teacher worked and ate the same as before. In the evening, he instructed them: "No work, no food."

The True Path

Just before Ninakwa passed away the Zen master Ikkyu visited him. "Shall I lead you on?" Ikkyu asked.

Ninakawa replied: "I came here alone and I go alone. What help could you be to me?"

Ikkyu answered: "If you think you really come and go, that is your delusion. Let me show you the path on which there is no coming and no going."

With his words, Ikkyu had revealed the path so clearly that Ninakawa smiled and passed away.

Killing

Gasan instructed his adherents one day: "Those who speak against killing and who desire to spare the lives of all conscious beings are right. It is good to protect even animals and insects. But what about those persons who kill time, what about those who are destroying wealth, and those who destroy political economy? We should not overlook them. Furthermore, what of the one who preaches without enlightenment? He is killing Buddhism."

The Blockhead Lord

Two Zen teachers, Daigu and Gudo, were invited to visit a lord. Upon arriving, Gudo said to the lord: "You are wise by nature and have an innate ability to learn Zen."

"Nonsense," said Daigu. "Why do you flatter this blockhead? He may be a lord, but he doesn't know anything of Zen."

So, instead of building a temple for Gudo, the lord built it for Daigu and studied Zen with him.

Zengetsu's Rules

Zengetsu, a Chinese master of the T'ang dynasty, wrote the following advice for his pupils:

Living in the world yet not forming attachments to the dust of the world is the way of a true Zen student.

When witnessing the good action of another, encourage yourself to follow his example. Hearing of the mistaken action of another, advise yourself not to emulate it.

Even though alone in a dark room, be as if you were facing a noble guest. Express your feelings, but become no more expressive than your true nature.

Poverty is your treasure. Never exchange it for an easy life.

A person may appear a fool and yet not be one. He may only be guarding his wisdom carefully.

Virtues are the fruit of self-discipline and do not drop from heaven of themselves as does rain or snow.

Modesty is the foundation of all virtues. Let your neighbors discover you before you make yourself known to them.

A noble heart never forces itself forward. Its words are as rare gems, seldom displayed and of great value.

To a sincere student, every day is a fortunate day. Time passes, but he never lags behind. Neither glory nor shame can move him.

Censure yourself, never another. Do not discuss right and wrong.

Some things, though right, were considered wrong for generations. Since the value of righteousness may be recognized after centuries, there is no need to crave an immediate appreciation.

Live with cause and leave results to the great law of the universe. Pass each day in peaceful contemplation.

A Drop of Water

A Zen master named Gisan asked a young student to bring him a pail of water to cool his bath.

The student brought the water and, after cooling the bath, threw on to the ground the little that was left over.

"You dunce" the master scolded him. "Why didn't you give the rest of the water to the plants? What right have you to waste even a drop of water in this temple?"

The young student attained Zen in that instant. He changed his name to Tekisui, which means a drop of water.

Three Kinds of Disciples

A Zen master named Gettan lived in the latter part of the Tokugawa era. He used to say: "There are three kinds of disciples: those who impart Zen to others, those who maintain the temples and shrines, and then there are the rice bags and the clothes-hangers."

Gassan expressed the same idea. When he was studying under Tekisui, his teacher was very severe. Sometimes he even beat him. Other pupils would not stand this kind of teaching and quit. Gasan remained, saying: "A poor disciple utilizes a teacher's influence. A fair disciple admires a teacher's kindness. A good disciple grows strong under a teacher's discipline."

Buddha's Zen

Buddha said: "I consider the positions of kings and rulers as that of dust motes. I observe treasure of god and gems as so many bricks and pebbles. I look upon the finest silken robes as tattered rags. I see myriad worlds of the universe as small seeds of fruit, and the greatest lake in India as a drop of oil on my foot. I perceive the teachings of the world to be the illusion of magicians. I discern the highest conception of emancipation as golden brocade in a dream, and view the holy path of the illuminated ones as flowers appearing in one's eyes. I see mediation as a pillar of a mountain, Nirvana as a nightmare of daytime. I look upon the judgment of right and wrong as the serpentine dance of a dragon, and the rise and fall of beliefs as but traces left by the four seasons."

Zen Dialogue

Zen teachers train their young pupils to express themselves. Two Zen temples each had a child protégé. One child, going to obtain vegetables each morning, would meet the other on the way.

"Where are you going?" asked the one.

"I am going wherever my feet go," the other responded.

This reply puzzled the first child who went to his teacher for help. "Tomorrow morning, " the teacher told him, "when you met that little fellow, ask him the same question. He will give you the same answer, and then you ask him: "Suppose you have no feet, then where are you going?" That will fix him.

The children met again the following morning.

"Where are you going?" asked the first child.

"I am going wherever the wind blows," answered the other.

This again nonplussed the youngster, who took his defeat to the teacher.

"Ask him where he is going if there is no wind," suggested the teacher.

The next day the children met a third time.

"Where are you going?" asked the first child.

"I am going to market to buy vegetables," the other replied.

Not the Wind, Not the Flag

Two monks were arguing about a flag. One said: "The flag is moving"

The other said: "The wind is moving."

The sixth patriarch happened to be passing by. He told them: "Not the wind, not the flag; mind is moving."

Everyday Life is the Path

Joshu asked Nansen: "What is the path?"

Nansen said: "Everyday life is the path."

Joshu asked: "Can it be studied?"

Nansen said: "If you try to study, you will be far away from it."

Joshu asked: "If I do not study, how can I know it is the paths?"

Nansen said: "The path does not belong to the perception world, neither does it belong to the nonperception world. Cognition is a delusion and noncognition is senseless. If you want to reach the true path beyond doubt, place yourself in the same freedom as sky. You name it neither good nor not-good."

At these words Joshu was enlightened.

Joshu Washes the Bowl

A monk told Joshu: "I have just entered the monastery. Please teach me."

Joshu asked: "Have you eaten your rice porridge?"

The monk replied: "I have eaten."

Joshu said: "Then you had better wash your bowl."

At that moment the monk was enlightened.

Seizei Alone and Poor

A monk named Seizei asked of Sozan: "Seizei is alone and poor. Will you give him support?"

Sozan asked: "Seizei?"

Seizei responded: "Yes, sir."

Sozan said: "You have Zen, the best wine in China, and already have finished three cups, and still you are saying they did not even wet your lips."

Arresting the Stone Buddha

A merchant bearing fifty rolls of cotton goods on his shoulders stopped to rest from the heat of the day beneath a shelter where a large stone Buddha was standing. There he fell asleep, and when he awoke his goods had disappeared. He immediately reported the matter to the police.

A judge named O-oka opened court to investigate. “That stone Buddha must have stolen the goods,” concluded the judge. “He is supposed to care for the welfare of the people, but he has failed to perform his holy duty. Arrest him.”

The police arrested the stone Buddha and carried it into the court. A noisy crowd followed the statue, curious to learn what kind of a sentence the judge was about to impose.

When O-oka appeared on the bench he rebuked the boisterous audience. “What right have you people to appear before the court laughing and joking in this manner? You are in contempt of court and subject to a fine and imprisonment.”

The people hastened to apologize. “I shall have to impose a fine on you,” said the judge, “But I will remit it provided each one of you brings one roll of cotton goods to the court within three days. Anyone failing to do this will be arrested.”

One of the rolls of cloth which people brought was quickly recognized by the merchant as his own, and thus the thief was easily discovered. The merchant recovered his goods, and the cotton rolls were returned to the people.

The Hungry Student

There was once a student who was so poor all he ever had to eat was rice. Plain white rice. Morning, noon and night.

The student lived on the second floor of a building; on the first floor there was a fine restaurant. One hot day, after he had cooked up his rice, the student opened the window to get some air. AHHHHHhhhhhhhhhhh! All the smells from the restaurant below came wafting his way. He sat by the open window and began to eat. AHHHHHhhhhhhhhhhh! The smells seemed to flavor his rice! What a delicious discovery! Now, each time he cooked a meal, he would open the window and invite the smells to come in.

One day, the student was walking through the crowded streets with a friend. The friend was worried that the student had so little and cried, "You are so poor! You don't even have money for food. All you ever eat is rice. I tell you, why not quit your studies and go into business with me? I'll give you meat three times a day."

The student smiled and shook his head. "Oh, I would never quit my studies," he said, "Besides, it's not so bad..." and he proceeded to tell his friend all about the restaurant and the open window and the smells. Too bad for him! The owner of the restaurant was walking right behind them and he heard everything. He began to poke the student with his finger.

"Excuse me, excuse me...I am the owner of that restaurant."

The student turned around, "Is that so?" he brightened, "What a pleasure to meet you! And what a fine restaurant you must have! I myself have never been able to dine there, but the smells! Oh, the savory smells!"

"That's right," sneered the restaurant owner, "And you've been smelling my smells for some long time now. What would you say, about six or seven months?"

"Yes," the student nodded, "That sounds about right."

The owner's eyes tightened up. "Well," he whined, "You owe me some money!"

"What?" cried the student, "Surely there must be some mistake."

"Oh, no. No mistake. No mistake at all." The restaurant owner was busy now with paper and pencil, writing up a bill. "Smells from my restaurant, six or seven months... Money, money, money! You owe me money! "

"Sir, I owe you nothing. No!"

"Oh, yes!"

"No!"

"Oh, yes!"

"No!"

By now the two were shouting in the busy street and a crowd had gathered round. At last, someone called out: "You two will never settle this yourselves. Why not go and see Ooka? Ooka the Wise."

Ooka was a famous judge. This seemed like a very good idea, so the two of them hurried across town until they came to a huge building. Inside there was a long hall. And, at the end of the long hall, on a high chair behind a large desk was Ooka. Ooka the Wise.

The restaurant owner rushed up to Ooka and began his shrill complaint, "Ooka! Ooka! This man owes me money..." He told Ooka all about the rice and the window and the smells from his restaurant. Ooka listened intently. Then slowly, he turned to the student and asked, "Is this so? Have you been smelling this man's smells?"

"Uh, why yes. Yes, I have, sir," the student admitted.

"I see," said Ooka, "And do you have any money?" Now it just so happened that the student had every coin he owned in his pocket that day.

"Yes, yes I do." Ooka extended his hand. "Give me the coins," he ordered.

The student reached deep into his pockets and pulled out his coins. He handed them to Ooka. Ooka began to count the coins. Clink, clink, clink.

The restaurant owner's eyes lit up when he saw all that money. Clink, clink, clink. The student looked like he would cry. It was all the money he had. Clink. Ooka finished counting. He gathered up all the coins and then he handed them--back to the student.

"Wait!" cried the restaurant owner, "What about my payment?"

"My dear sir," said Ooka, "Did you not hear the clinking of the coins?"

"Yes..."

"Well," smiled Ooka, "The clinking of the coins is the price of smells."

Three Zen Jokes

Q--What do you get when you cross a Zen Buddhist with a Druid?
A--Someone who worships the tree that is not there.

Q--What do you get when you cross a Zen Buddhist with a Druid mathematician?
A--Someone who worships the square roots of the tree that is not there.

Q--What do you get when you cross a Zen Buddhist with a Druid veterinarian?
A--Someone who worships the bark of the tree that is not there.

How To Rule a Country

The Country of Yang had been devastated by a palace insurrection and an invasion, and the older ruler had suffered an untimely and humiliating death. After visiting the sacked city and wounded soldiers, the new king Yang-Jau was disturbed and wondered how a similar situation could be prevented.

"Your Majesty, if you want to be an Emperor" said an advisor, named Go Wai; “you should treat your subordinates as teachers. To be a King, you should treat them as friends. To be a Lord, you should treat them as guests. If you wish to ruin your country, you should treat them as servants or even slaves. The choice is yours alone."

Impressed and a little surprised, the king politely returned, "Your statement is very interesting. Since I desire to be an Emperor, whom should I begin to respect?"

"Your Majesty might start with me," the advisor boldly suggested, "a little known person. As a result, other capable individuals, with greater reputations, will be envious and come to try their political fortunes here. These intellectuals, whose counsel you seek and esteem, having heard of your generosity and expecting to be treated likewise, will confidently approach your Majesty and freely present their ideas and suggestions. Your Majesty may then choose the best administrators from among them. Thus our country's prosperity and Your Majesty's potency will be secured."

The king was well pleased and acted swiftly. The news rapidly spread among neighboring countries. Hearing this, people were amazed. Many well-educated gentlemen resigned their current positions and relocated themselves to this country. In less than three years, after meticulous selections and severe competitions, a handful of distinguished and competent foreigners were properly appointed, with similar generous treatment from the king. They helped him to efficiently manage his country and steadily expand its borders.

The Two Different Monks

During the time of Guatama Siddharta there were no telephones or Internet or even a written language. Because communication is so vital for transmitting the teachings of the Buddha, a class of disciples called traveling monks arose to facilitate communication between the Buddha and his supporters.

Those who were chosen had to be in good physical condition, be completely honest, and have excellent memories. One such monk was Sadhonna.

Sadhonna was returning to the Deer Park where the Buddha was staying when he encountered a monk practicing the Sadmadhi of self denial.

The self-denying monk resembled cobwebs stretched over a skeleton. He was sitting on an anthill in the Lotus Position. He did not even twitch as ants pulled at his flesh.

Sadhonna called to him, "Fellow monk, I am on my way to see the Buddha. Is there any message you would like to convey?"

The self-denying monk grimaced and said, "Ask the Buddha, how many more lifetimes I will endure before attaining Buddhahood."

Sadhonna assured the self-denying monk that he would ask, and then continued on his journey.

Just before nightfall, he heard someone singing a little off key. He could see someone, dressed in monk's clothing, clumsily dancing in a little clearing in the woods.

He called out to him saying, "Fellow monk, I am on my way to see the Buddha. Is there any message you would like to convey?"

The dancing monk thought for a moment and said, "Yes, ask him when will I reach my enlightenment."

Sadhonna assured the dancing monk he would ask, and then he walked on to see the Buddha.

A few months later Sadhonna returned and encountered the self-denying monk. His flesh was so thin that his bones were visible. "The Buddha answered your question," Sadhonna said

"How long until I reach my enlightenment?" whispered the self-denying monk.

"Four more lifetimes," answered Sadhonna.

The self-denying monk grimaced.

Sadhonna traveled a bit further and encountered the dancing monk. "The Buddha has answered your question," he said.

“How many more lifetimes?" asked the dancing monk.

Sadhonna pointed to a large tree with thousands of leaves shimmering in the sunlight and said "As many as the leaves on that tree."

The dancing monk laughed and attained enlightenment instantly.

24 Hours To Die

Raj asked Buddha, “Reverend Sir, how come my mind wanders around to forbidden places and yours does not?” “Sir, how come I do back-biting and you don't?” “Sir, how come I don't have compassion for others, while you have?” All the questions that Raj asked were of similar nature.

Buddha replied, “Raj, your questions are good, but it seems to me that in 24 hours from now you will die.”

Raj got up and started getting ready to go.

Buddha asked, “Raj, what happened? You came with such vitality now you are totally dismayed.”

Raj said, “Sir, my mother told me that your words are true and are to be held in high esteem. So please let me go so that I may meet my family members, friends and others before I die.”

Buddha said, “But there are still 24 hours. Sit, we will talk more.”

Raj said, “Reverend Sir, please let me go. I must meet my people before I die.”

So Raj left and went home. Met his mother and started crying. The word spread. His friends came; other family members came; neighbors came. Everyone was crying with Raj. Time flew.

Raj was busy either crying or counting the hours. When only 3 hours were left, he pulled up a cot and lied down. Although the Death has not yet arrived, poor Raj was kind of dead.

When only an hour was left, Buddha walked in.

Buddha said to Raj, “Raj, why are you lying down on the cot with your closed eyes. Death is still an hour away. And an hour is 60 minutes long. That's a lot of time. Get up, let us talk.”

Raj: “Sir, what is it now that you want to talk? Just let me die peacefully.”

Buddha: “Raj, there is still time and our talk will get over before the 'ordained' time.”

Raj: “Okay, Sir... say what you have to say.”

Buddha: “In the past 24 hours, did you curse anyone?”

Raj: “How could I curse anyone, I was all the time thinking about death.”

Buddha: “In the past 24 hours, did you think or wish ill for anyone?”

Raj: “How could I do that, I was all the time thinking about death.”

Buddha: “In the past 24 hours, did you steal?”

Raj: “Sir, how can you even ask that, I was all the time thinking about death?”

Finally the Buddha said, “Raj, I don't know who has to die and who has to live. But understanding the ultimate truth — i.e. death — can be very enlightening. All the questions you posed to me have been answered by yourself because of the awareness of death that you experienced during the past 24 hours. The difference between me and you is that you were aware of death for the past 24 hours, I have been aware for the past 24 years.”

Beginning

(Deng Ming-Dao)

This is the moment of embarking.

All auspicious signs are in place.

In the beginning, all things are hopeful. We prepare ourselves to start anew. Though we may be intent on the magnificent journey ahead, all things are contained in the first moment: our optimism, our faith, our resolution, and our innocence.

In order to start, we must make a decision. The decision is a commitment to daily self-cultivation. We must make a strong connection to our inner selves. Outside matters are superfluous. Alone and naked, we negotiate all of life's travails. Therefore, we alone must make something of ourselves, transforming ourselves into the instruments for experiencing the deepest spiritual essence of life.

Once we make our decision, all things will come to us. Auspicious signs are not a superstition, but a confirmation. They are a response. It is said that if one chooses to pray to a rock with enough devotion, even that rock will come alive. In the same way, once we choose to commit ourselves to spiritual practice, even the mountains and valleys will reverberate to the sound of our purpose.

Positioning

(Deng Ming-Dao)

Heron stands in the blue estuary,
Solitary, white, unmoving for hours.
A fish! Quick avian darting;
The prey is captured.

People always ask how to follow Tao. It is as easy and natural as the heron standing in the water. The bird moves when it must; it does not move when stillness is appropriate.

The secret of its serenity is a type of vigilance, a contemplative state. The heron is not in mere dumbness or sleep. It knows a lucid stillness. It stands unmoving in the flow of the water. It gazes unperturbed and is aware. When Tao brings it something that it needs, it seizes the opportunity without hesitation or deliberation. Then it goes back to its quiescence without disturbing itself or its surroundings. Unless it found the right position in the water's flow and remained patient, it would not have succeeded.

Actions in life can be reduced to two factors; positioning and timing. If we are not in the right place at the right time, we cannot possibly take advantage of what life has to offer us.

Almost anything is appropriate if an action is in accord with the time and place. But we must be vigilant and prepared. Even if the time and the place are right, we can still miss our chance if we do not notice the moment, if we act inadequately, or if we hamper ourselves with doubts and second thoughts.

When life presents an opportunity, we must be ready to seize it without hesitation or inhibition. Position is useless without awareness. If we have both, we make no mistakes.

The Next Book of Nasruddin

The name that every Afghan remembers hearing about in childhood. Here are few of the thousands of humorous and thoughtful stories about Him. His origin is being claimed by three countries. Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey. "The Nasruddin stories, known throughout the Middle East, constitute one of the strangest achievements in the history of metaphysics. Superficially, most of the Nasruddin stories may be used as jokes. They are told and retold endlessly in the teahouses and caravanserais, in the homes and on the radio waves, of Asia. But it is inherent in the Nasruddin story that it may be understood at any of many depths. There is the joke, the moral - and the little extra which brings the consciousness of the potential mystic a little further on the way to realization."

The Cow and the Judge

Qazi (Judge) Nasruddin was working in his room one day when a neighbor ran in and said, "If one man's cow kills another's, is the owner of the first cow responsible?"

"It depends," answered Nasruddin.

"Well," said the man, "your cow has killed mine."

"Oh," answered Nasruddin. "Everyone knows that a cow cannot think like a human, so a cow is not responsible, and that means that its owner is not responsible either."

"I'm sorry, Judge," said the man. "I made a mistake. I meant that my cow killed yours."

Judge Nasruddin thought for a few seconds and then said, "When I think about it more carefully, this case is not as easy as I thought at first." And then he turned to his clerk and said, "Please bring me that big black book from the shelf behind you..."

The Burglary

Mullah Nasruddin and his wife came home one day to find the house burgled. Everything portable had been taken away.

“It's all your fault,” said his wife, “for you should have made sure that the house was locked before we left.”

The Neighbors took up the chant:

“You did not lock the windows,” said one.

“Why did you not expect this?” said another.

“The locks were faulty and you did not replace them,” said a third.

“Just a moment,” said Nasruddin, “surely I am not the only one to blame?”

“And who should we blame?” they shouted.

“What about the thieves?” said Nasruddin. “Are they totally innocent?”

The Fortuitous Burglar

That was the time Mullah Nasruddin's family was very poor. One day Nasruddin 's wife woke him in the middle of the night and whispered,

“Nasruddin, There is a thief in the kitchen!”

“Shhh... Stupid woman!” replied Nasruddin. “Let him be. Perhaps he’ll find something valuable, then we seize it!”

The Donkey and the Official

Mulla Nasrudin had an insatiable craving for knowledge, but did not seem to know what knowledge was. As a result he asked a local wise man the stupidest questions, always based upon random assumptions

One day the Mull a noticed that his donkey was missing. He ran to the wise man’s house. ‘Well, Mulla, what is it this time?'

'My donkey is gone! Where can I find it?'

The wise man was quite fed up with the Mulla. 'Nasrudin,' he said, 'the donkey has run off, turned into a man and been appointed the magistrate in the next town.'

Thanking the wise man for his information, the Mulla trudged to the court. There sat the magistrate, and Nasrudin shook his fist at him:

'Come home at once, you foolish animal!'

The magistrate was furious. 'Who are you and how dare you talk to me like that? I'll have you sent to the prison!'

'I'm the well-known Mulla Nasrudin, and I have it on the best authority that you are my donkey.'

'That's ridiculous. Nobody in his right senses would credit such a thing!'

Nasrudin drew himself up to his full height. 'Say what you like he said, 'I prefer to believe the statement of a wise man rather than that of a donkey.'

Free Bread

The Mullah's wife sent him to buy some bread. When the Mullah arrived at the bread shop he saw a long line waiting to buy bread. He thought he would do something to get in front of the line. He shouted, "People, don't you know the Sultan's daughter is getting married tonight and he is giving away free bread?"

The multitude ran toward the palace as the Sultan was generous to a fault and loved his daughter more than anyone. The Mullah was now in front of the line and was about to buy his bread when he thought to himself, "Mullah, you are truly a fool. All the citizen's are getting free bread tonight and I am about to pay for it. So he ran to the palace and when he got there was thoroughly beaten by the disappointed people.

The Soup

A farmer came to town as a guest of the Mullah. The farmer brought a goose as a gift for the Mullah. That night Mullah Nasrudin's wife cooked the goose and served it in a feast with many other delicacies to the Mullah and others with the farmer sitting in the place of honor among the guests.

The farmer returned home the next day and a week later a stranger knocked on the Mullah's door saying, "I am the friend of the guy who brought you the goose." The Mullah welcomed him and asked his wife to cook a big meal and invited the stranger to dinner. Hardly a week had gone by when another stranger came claiming to be the friend of the friend of the guy who had brought the goose. Once again the stranger was fed a big meal and so was the next stranger who was the friend of the friend of the friend of the guy who had brought the goose.

By this time the Mullah and his wife had become pretty fed up of feeding all the countryside. Nasrudin's wife told him that they had only one chicken left. Mullah said not to worry since he had a plan.

When the next friend of the friend of the friend of the friend of the guy who had brought the goose arrived the Mullah told his wife to boil some water and serve it in a soup bowl. The guest

tasted the water and asked what kind of a soup was this. The Mullah replied, "Sir you have before you the soup of the soup of the soup of the soup of the goose that the friend of your friend of your friend of your friend brought."

No more strangers visited Mullah after that.

Working Spirit

The mullah got a job at the Bazaar as a porter. Today he had to load bags of wheat onto a cart. The foreman noticed that he was carrying one bag where the other workers carried two. The Forman asked the Mullah, "How come you only carry one bag at a time and all the others carry two?" The Mullah replied, "I'm not that lazy to make one trip when I can make two."

Treasure Hunt

This merchant in Baghdad had some bad luck. A thief robbed his house of all his gold. The authorities caught the thief but he would not reveal where he had hidden the merchant gold. One night in a dream he was told by a Genie to go to Cairo to seek his fortune. So with great difficulty he made his way to Cairo. When he got there as it happened there was a robbery and the people caught him and beat him up and then took him to the Captain of the guard. He told his story of how he had left his home in Baghdad and arrived in Cairo in search of his fortune.

The Captain told him, "You fool, three times I dreamt a Genie who said that if I went to Baghdad I would find a great oak tree next to a well on top of a hill overlooking the great mosque. He said if I searched the well, I would find a great treasure. But, I'm wise. I stayed home. You don't find me going on a wild goose chase. The merchant recognized the well as that in his own home and returned home. He searched his well and found his stolen wealth.

Casket

The master was attending the wake of a friend. But keeping in accordance with the deceased wishes, the family had requested that the casket remain closed.

The deceased was very well liked, and many people lined up to walk past the casket. Some kneeled in prayer beside it while others placed their hands on the closed lid and said their final good-byes.

Meanwhile, the master sat quietly in the back of the room. Before long, the funeral director approached and stated with some embarrassment, "Excuse me, I know you were a great friend of the deceased, and there is something I must tell you. My embalmer was sick today, so I had no choice but to leave the body in the basement refrigerator. So now, all these good people are paying homage to an empty box!"

The master smiled and said "Tell me sir, how would it be different if his body were in the casket?"

Blurred Vision

A businessman was highly critical of his competitors' storefront windows. "Why, they are the dirtiest windows in town," he claimed.

Fellow business people grew tired of the man's continual criticism and nitpicking comments about the windows. One day over coffee, the businessman carried the subject just too far. Before leaving, a fellow storeowner suggested the man get his own windows washed.

He followed the advice, and the next day at coffee, he exclaimed, "I can't believe it. As soon as I washed my windows, my competitor must have cleaned his too. You should see them shine."

Bridge Talk

Bohlul was sitting on a bridge, watching the river flow by. The king saw him, and immediately had him arrested. "A bridge is for passing, not for staying!" said the king. Bohlul then replied to the king, "You should take a look at yourself. Look at how you are clinging to this life."

Nasrudin the Advisor

Some say that Nasrudin lived in the time of the great conqueror Tamerlane, and was one of his advisers.

One day, so goes the tale, Timur the Lame called the Mulla and said, 'Nasrudin, the Empire is full of slanderers. How can we stop their evil work?'

'You can never stop crime unless you punish all the criminals,' said Nasrudin.

'You mean the slanderers?'

'And their accomplices - those who listen to them,' the Mulla reminded him.

Nasrudin and the Frog

Nasrudin went to a bar regularly. Whenever he sat down to drink, he used to take out a frog from his pocket and put it on the table. It was his pet. He would start drinking and after a while, he would stop. He would then put back the frog in the pocket and leave. Everyone was astonished about this.

One day he went to drink again. The bartender came to him and murmured, "Drinks for you on the house today, sir."

"Thank you" Nasrudin said, " What is the occasion?"

"Please tell me why do you always bring this frog with you. I am very curious."

Nasrudin paused for a while. Then he answered, "Look, it is very simple. When I begin to see two frogs on the table, I remember it is time for me to leave. Otherwise, I might fall on my way home and have injury. So after some drinks, I put the frog back and leave."

After Nasrudin went back to drinking. The bartender whispered to the waitress, “Go find a second frog for me.”

Watering the Plants

Nasrudin used to water his plants daily. He would bring the container near the plants and pour from it. But no water would come out. But he kept pouring one by one lost in his own world. His close neighbor who was watching this for quite some days came to him and asked, "Excuse me, Nasrudin, may I ask you something?"

Nasrudin smiled, "Sure"

Neighbor, “You are pouring water to these plants everyday but I don't see water coming out from the container. What is the matter?”

Nasrudin again smiled, “ No need of water. What do you think these plants are? They are all plastic.”

The neighbor (even more confused): “For god's sake, tell me then why is there any need of pretending to put water in these plastic plants?”

Nasrudin laughed: “So that the neighbors would not think these are plastic plants. It is just between you and me. If I don't pretend to water them regularly, they might find out these are not real, after all.”

Giving Directions

Once Nasrudin was standing by the road near his house. A car came and stopped in front of him. A gentleman from the car rolled down the window and asked, "Sir, can you tell me which is the way to Delhi?"

Nasrudin watched him for a while and said, "Go left, then go right. After 9 km, turn right. Again take left. Now turn right. Continue for another 9 km and you will come to a crossroad. Now go straight and you will reach there."

"Thank you" said the man and the car left. After a while he came back to Nasrudin. Annoyingly he said, "What is all this? I followed all your directions properly and here I am at the same place where I began from."

Nasrudin coolly replied, "Fine, I was just checking whether you can follow the directions or not. Now I will give you proper directions to Delhi."

The Man against Sufis and Dhu Nun

A certain young man was always speaking against Sufis. One day, Dhu Nun took the ring from his finger and gave it to the man.

"Take this to the market and sell it for a dollar," he said.

The young man took it to the market and tried to sell it, but no one would give him more than 10 cents for it. The young man returned to Dhu Nun with the news.

"Now, take the ring to the jewelers and see what they price it at," said Dhu Nun.

The jewelers priced the ring at 1000 dollars.

"You know as much about Sufis," Dhu Nun told the young man when he returned, "as those people in the marketplace know about this ring."

The young man repented, and disbelieved in the Sufis no more.

[Adapted from Farid-ud-Din Attar's "Tadhkirat al-Awliyya" / "Memorial of the Saints."]

Rabi`a's gifts to Hasan of Basra

Once Rabi`a al-Adawiyya sent Hasan of Basra three things - a piece of wax, a needle, and a hair.

"Be like wax," she said. "Illumine the world, and yourself burn. Be like a needle, always be working naked. When you have done these two things, a thousand years will be for you as a hair."

"Do you desire for us to get married?" Hasan asked Rabi`a.

"The tie of marriage applies to those who have being," Rabi`a replied. "Here being has disappeared, for I have become naughted to self and exist only through Him. I belong wholly to Him. I live in the shadow of His control. You must ask my hand of Him, not of me."

"How did you find this secret, Rabi`a?" Hasan asked.

"I lost all `found' things in Him," Rabi`a answered.

"How do you know Him?" Hasan inquired.

"You know the `how'; I know the `how-less'," Rabi`a said.

Deductive Reasoning

“How old are you, Mulla?” Someone asked,

“Three years older than my brother.” Replied Nasruddin

“How do you know that?” asked the stranger.

“Reasoning. Last year, I heard my brother tell someone that I was two years older than him. A year has passed. That means that I am older by one year. I shall soon be old enough to be his grandfather.”

Tit for Tat

Nasruddin went into a shop to buy a pair of trousers. Then he changed his mind and chose a cloak instead, at the same price. Picking up the cloak, he left the shop.

“You have not paid,” shouted the merchant.

“I left you the trousers, which were of the same value as the cloak.”

“But you did not pay for the trousers, either.”

“Of course not,” said Mullah, “Why should I pay for something that I did not want to buy?”

More Useful

One day, Mullah Nasruddin entered his favorite teahouse and said; “the moon is more useful than the sun.”

An old man asked “Why Mulla?”

Nasruddin replied, “We need the light more during the night than during the day.”

Promises Kept

A friend asked the Mullah, “How old are you?”

“Forty” replied the Mullah.

The friend said, “But you said the same thing two years ago!”

“Yes,” replied the mullah, “I always stand by what I have said.”

When You Face Things Alone

A neighbor noticed that Nasruddin was weeping over his lost donkey and said, “you may have lost your donkey, Nasruddin, but you don’t have to grieve over it more than you did about the loss of your first wife.”

Nasruddin replied, “Ah, but if you remember, when I lost my wife, all you villagers said ‘We’ll find you someone else.’ So far, nobody has offered to replace my donkey.”

Obligation

Nasruddin nearly fell into a pool one day. A man whom he knew slightly was nearby, and saved him. Every time he met Nasruddin after that he would remind him of the service which he had performed. When this had happened several times Nasruddin took him to the water, jumped in, stood with his head just above water and shouted: “Now I am as wet as I would have been if you had not saved me! Leave me alone.”

Assumptions

A certain man asked the famous Mulla Nasrudin, "What is the meaning of fate, Mulla?"

Mulla replied, "Assumptions."

"In what way?" the man asked again.

Mulla looked at him and said, "You assume things are going to go well, and they don't - that you call bad luck. You assume things are going to go badly and they don't - that you call good luck. You assume that certain things are going to happen or not happen - and you so lack intuition that you don't know what is going to happen. You assume that the future is unknown. When you are caught out - you call that Fate."

Why We Are Here

Walking one evening along a deserted road, Nasruddin saw a troop of horsemen rapidly approaching. His imagination started to work; he saw himself captured or robbed or killed and frightened by this thought he bolted, climbed a wall into a graveyard, and lay down in an open grave to hide.

Puzzled at his bizarre behavior, the horsemen - honest travelers - followed him. They found him stretched out, tense, and shaking.

"What are you doing in that grave? We saw you run away. Can we help you? Why are you here in this place?"

"Just because you can ask a question does not mean that there is a straightforward answer to it," said Nasruddin, who now realized what had happened. "It all depends upon your viewpoint. If you must know, however, I am here because of you - and you are here because of me!"

The Unshaven Man

A man was walking along the street when he passed another man with a lot of stubble on his face standing outside a shop. The first man asked:

"How often do you shave?

"Twenty or thirty times a day," answered the man with the stubble.

"What! You must be a freak!" exclaimed the first man.

"No, I'm only a barber," replied the man with the stubble.

Nasruddin and his Donkey

One day, one of Mullah Nasruddin's friend came over and wanted to borrow his donkey for a day or two. Mullah, knowing his friend, was not kindly inclined to the request, and came up with the excuse that someone had already borrowed his donkey. Just as Mullah uttered these words, his donkey started braying in his backyard. Hearing the sound, his friend gave him an accusing look, to which Mullah replied: "I refuse to have any further dealings with you since you take a donkey's word over mine."

Nasruddin and the Violin

Once, Mullah Nasruddin bought a violin. And he began to play. NEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE....

Same note, same string, over and over.

NEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE....

After a few hours his wife was at her wits' end. "Nasruddin!" she screamed.

NEEE..

Nasruddin put down the bow. "Yes dear?"

"Why do you play the same note? It's driving me crazy! All the real violin players move their fingers up and down, play on different strings! Why don't you play like they do?"

"Well dear, I know why they go up and down and try all different strings."

Why is that?"

"They're looking for *this* note." And he picked up his bow and resumed his playing.

NEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE....

The False Prophet

A certain man claimed to be a prophet and was brought before the Sultan, who said to him, "I bear witness that you are a stupid prophet!"

The man replied, "That is why I have only been sent to people like you."

The Poor Story Teller

Someone said to Ashab, "If you were to relate traditions and stop telling jokes, you would be doing a noble thing."

"By God!" answered Ashab, "I have heard traditions and related them."

"Then tell us," said the man.

"I heard from Nafai," said Ashab, "on the authority of such-and-such, that the Prophet, may God bless him, said, "There are two qualities, such that whoever has them is among God's elect."

"That is a fine tradition," said the man. "What are these two qualities?"

"Nafai forgot one and I have forgotten the other," replied Ashab.

Nasruddin and the Bedouins

"When I was in the desert," said Nasruddin one day, "I caused an entire tribe of horrible and bloodthirsty Bedouins to run."

"However did you do it?"

"Easy. I just ran, and they ran after me."

Nasruddin at the Fashion Show

Once, when Mullah Nasruddin was visiting a Western town, he was invited to attend a fashion show. He went, and afterwards he was asked how he liked it.

"It's a complete swindle!" he exclaimed indignantly.

"Whatever do you mean?" he was asked.

"They show you the women - and then try to sell you the clothes!"

Nasruddin and the Tourist

Mullah Nasruddin went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and on the way he passed through Medina. As he was walking by the main mosque there, a rather confused looking tourist approached him. "Excuse me sir," said the tourist, "but you look like a native of these parts; can you tell me something about this mosque? It looks very old and important, but I've lost my guidebook."

Nasruddin, being too proud to admit that he, too, had no idea what it was, immediately began an enthusiastic explanation. "This is indeed a very old and special mosque." he declared, "It was built by Alexander the Great to commemorate his conquest of Arabia."

The tourist was suitably impressed, but presently a look of doubt crossed his face. "But how can that be?" he asked, "I'm sure that Alexander was a Greek or something, not a Muslim... Wasn't he?"

"I can see that you know something of these matters." replied Nasruddin with chagrin, "In fact, Alexander was so impressed at his good fortune in war that he converted to Islam in order to show his gratitude to God."

"Oh, wow." said the tourist, and then paused. "Hey, but surely there was no such thing as Islam in Alexander's time?"

"An excellent point! It is truly gratifying to meet a visitor who understands our history so well," answered Nasruddin. "As a matter of fact, he was so overwhelmed by the generosity God had shown him that as soon as the fighting was over he began a new religion, and became the founder of Islam."

The tourist looked at the mosque with new respect, but before Nasruddin could quietly slip into the passing crowd, another problem occurred to him. "But wasn't the founder of Islam named Mohammed? I mean, that's what I read in a book; at least I'm sure it wasn't Alexander."

"I can see that you are a scholar of some learning," said Nasruddin, "I was just getting to that. Alexander felt that he could properly dedicate himself to his new life as a prophet only by adopting a new identity. So, he gave up his old name and for the rest of his life called himself Mohammed."

"Really?" wondered the tourist, "That's amazing! But...but I thought that Alexander the Great lived a long time before Mohammed? Is that right?"

"Certainly not!" answered the Mullah, "You're thinking of a different Alexander the Great. I'm talking about the one named Mohammed."

Afterthoughts

Mulla was told that he would lose his phone if he didn't retract what he had said to the general manager of the phone company in the course of conversation over the wire. "Very well, Mulla Nasrudin will apologize," he said.

He called main 7777.

"Is that you Mr. Doolittle?"

"It is."

"This is Mulla Nasrudin."

"Well?"

"This morning in the heat of discussion I told you to go to hell!"

"Yes?"

"WELL," said Nasrudin, "DON'T GO!"

To the Editor

The editor of town weekly received this letter from Mulla Nasrudin: "Dear Sir: Last week I lost my watch which I valued highly. The next day I ran an ad in your newspaper. Yesterday, I went home and found my watch in the pocket of my brown suit. YOUR PAPER IS WONDERFUL."

Father and Son

Mulla Nasrudin, a distraught father, visiting his son in a prison waiting room, turned on him and said: "I am fed up with your record: attempted robbery, attempted burglary, attempted murder, attempted assassination. What a failure you have turned out to be; you can't succeed in anything you try out."

The Second Time Around

Mulla Nasrudin and one of his friends rented a boat and went fishing. In a remote part of the lake they found a spot where the fish were really biting.

"We'd better mark this spot so we can come back tomorrow," said the Mulla.

"O.k., I'll do it," replied his friend.

When they got back to the dock, the Mulla asked, "Did you mark that spot?"

"Sure said the second, "I put a chalk mark on the side of the boat."

"YOU NITWIT," said Nasrudin. "HOW DO YOU KNOW WE WILL GET THE SAME BOAT TOMORROW?"

The Gates

NASRUDDIN - Keeper of Faith In Turkey, where some people allege Nasruddin is buried, there are HUGE locked gates at his gravesite. Yet his headstone reads - "Sometimes you do not need a key to get through gates. All you need to do is walk around them as there are no walls."

The Will of Allah

"May the Will of Allah be done," a pious man was saying about something or the other.

"It always is, in any case," said Mullah Nasruddin. "

"How can you prove that, Mullah?" asked the man.

"Quite simply. If it wasn't always being done, then surely at some time or another my will would be done, wouldn't it?"

Nasruddin Meets Death

Nasruddin was strolling to market one day when he saw a strange, dark shape appear, blocking his path. "I am Death," it said, "I have come for you."

"Death?" said Nasruddin. "But I'm not even particularly old! And I have so much to do. Are you sure you aren't mistaking me for someone else?"

"I only kill people who are not yet ready to die," said Death.

"I think you're wrong," replied the Hoja. "Let's make a bet."

"A bet? Perhaps. But what shall the stakes be?"

"My life against a hundred pieces of silver."

"Done," said Death, a bag of silver instantly appearing in his hand. "What a stupid bet you made. After all, what's to stop me from just killing you now, and thus winning automatically?"

"Because I knew you were going to kill me," said Nasruddin, "that's why I made the bet."

"Hmmm..." mused Death. "I see. But... but, didn't you also know, then, that I would not be able to kill you, because of the terms of our agreement?"

"Not at all," said Nasruddin, and continued down the road, clutching the bag of money.

Home Repairs

One day Nasruddin repaired tiles on the roof of his house. While Nasruddin was working on the roof, a stranger knocked the door. ‘What do you want?” Nasruddin shouted out.

“Come down,” replied stranger, “So I can tell it.”

Nasruddin unwilling and slowly climbed down the ladder. “Well!” replied Nasruddin, “what was the important thing?”

“Could you give little money to this poor old man?” begged the stranger.

Tired Nasruddin started to climb up the ladder and said, “Follow me up to the roof.”

When both Nasruddin and beggar were upside, on the roof, Nasruddin said, “The answer is no!”

100 Silver Coins

Nasruddin opened a booth at the fair with a sign above it: “Two Questions On Any Subject Answered For Only 100 Silver Coins.”

A man who had two very urgent questions handed over his money, saying: “A hundred silver coins is rather expensive for two questions, isn't it?”

“Yes,” said Nasruddin, “and the next question, please?”

The Two Beggars

As Nasruddin emerged form the mosque after prayers, a beggar sitting on the street solicited alms. The following conversation followed:

“Are you extravagant?” asked Nasruddin.

“Yes Nasruddin.” replied the beggar.

“Do you like sitting around drinking coffee and smoking?” asked Nasruddin.

“Yes.” replied the beggar.

“I suppose you like to go to the baths everyday?” asked Nasruddin.

“Yes.” replied the beggar.

“...And maybe amuse yourself, even, by drinking with friends?” asked Nasruddin.

“ Yes, I like all those things,” replied the beggar.

“Tut, Tut,” said Nasruddin, and gave him a gold piece. A few yards farther on. Another beggar who had overheard the conversation begged for alms also.

“Are you extravagant?” asked Nasruddin.

“No, Nasruddin” replied second beggar.

“Do you like sitting around drinking coffee and smoking?” asked Nasruddin.

“No.” replied second beggar.

“I suppose you like to go to the baths everyday?” asked Nasruddin.

“No.” replied second beggar.

“...And maybe amuse yourself, even, by drinking with friends?” asked Nasruddin.

“No, I want to only live meagerly and to pray,” replied second beggar.

Whereupon the Nasruddin gave him a small copper coin.

“But why, wailed second beggar, do you give me, an economical and pious man, a penny, when you give that extravagant fellow a sovereign?”

“Ah my friend,” replied Nasruddin, “his needs are greater than yours.”

Walnuts and Pumpkins

One hot day, Nasruddin was taking it easy in the shade of a walnut tree. After a time, he started eying speculatively, the huge pumpkins growing on vines and the small walnuts growing on a majestic tree. “Sometimes I just can't understand the ways of God!” he mused. “Just fancy letting tiny walnuts grow on so majestic a tree and huge pumpkins on the delicate vines!” Just then a walnut snapped off and fell smack on Mullah Nasruddin's baldhead.

He got up at once and lifting up his hands and face to heavens in supplication, said: "Oh, my God! Forgive my questioning your ways! You are all wise. Where would I have been now, if pumpkins grew on trees! “

The Turban

One day an illiterate man came to Mullah Nasruddin with a letter he had received. "Mullah Nasruddin, please read this letter to me."

Mullah Nasruddin looked at the letter, but could not make out a single word. So he told the man. "I am sorry, but I cannot read this."

The man cried: "For shame, Mullah Nasruddin! You must be ashamed before the turban you wear (i.e. the sign of education)"

Mullah Nasruddin removed the turban from his own head and placed it on the head of the illiterate man, said: "There, now you wear the turban. If it gives some knowledge, read the letter yourself."

The Crow and the Meat

One day Mullah Nasruddin went to the market and bought a fine piece of meat. On the way home he met a friend who gave him a special recipe for the meat. Mullah Nasruddin was very happy. But then, before he got home, a large crow stole the meat from Mullah Nasruddin's hands and flew off with it.

"You thief!" Mullah Nasruddin angrily called after departing crow. "You have stolen my meat! But you won't enjoy it; I've got the recipe!"

Servitude

Mullah Nasruddin was unemployed and poor but somehow he got little money to eat beans and pilaf at a cheap restaurant. He ate and examined walking people outside with the corner of the eye. He noticed a long, handsome swashbuckler (bully man) behind the crowd. The Man was well dressed from head to foot, with velvet turban, silver embroidered vest, silk shirt, satin baggy-trousers and golden scimitar (short curved sword.)

Mullah Nasruddin pointed the man and asked restaurant keeper, "Who is that man over there!"

The waiter replied, "He is Fehmi Pasha's servant.”

Mullah Nasruddin sighed from far away, looked at the sky and said: "Oh, my Good Lord! Look at that Fehmi Pasha's servant and look at your own servant, here."

The Other Place

One day a visitor came to Mullah Nasruddin with a question. "Mullah Nasruddin, the place that we humans come from and the place that we go to, what is it like?"

"Oh," said Mullah Nasruddin, "it is a very frightening place."

"Why do you say that?" the visitor asked.

"Well, when we come from there as babies, we are crying, and when somebody has to go there, everybody cries."

Paying the Piper

One day Mullah Nasruddin wished to learn playing zurna (a kind off shrill pipe) and visited a zurna player. "How much does it cost to learn playing zurna?" asked Mullah Nasruddin.

"Three hundred akche (coin) for the first lesson and one hundred akche for the next lessons," asked zurna player.

"It sounds good," replied Mullah Nasruddin. "We may start with second lesson. I was a shepherd when I was a young boy, so I already had some whistle experiences. It must be good enough for first lesson, isn't it?"

Trousers and Robe

One day Mullah Nasruddin went to market to buy new clothes. First he tested a pair of trousers. He didn't like the trousers and he gave back them to the shopkeeper. Then he tried a robe, which had same price as the trousers. Mullah Nasruddin was pleased with the robe and he left the shop. Before he climbed on the donkey to ride home he stopped by the shopkeeper and the shop-assistant.

"You didn't pay for the robe," said the shopkeeper.

"But I gave you the trousers instead of the robe, isn't it?" replied Mullah Nasruddin.

"Yes, but you didn't pay for the trousers, either!" said the shopkeeper.

"But I didn't buy the trousers," replied Mullah Nasruddin. "I am not so stupid to pay for something which I never bought."

Two Cooked Fish

Once a renowned philosopher and moralist was traveling through Nasruddin's village when he asked him where there was a good place to eat. He suggested a place and the scholar, hungry for conversation, invited Mullah Nasruddin to join him. Much obliged, Mullah Nasruddin accompanied the scholar to a nearby restaurant, where they asked the waiter about the special of the day. "Fish! Fresh Fish!" replied the waiter.

"Bring us two," they answered. A few minutes later, the waiter brought out a large platter with two cooked fish on it, one of which was quite a bit smaller than the other. Without hesitating, Mullah Nasruddin took the larger of the fish and put in on his plate.

The scholar, giving Mullah Nasruddin a look of intense disbelief, proceed to tell him that what he did was not only blatantly selfish, but that it violated the principles of almost every known moral, religious, and ethical system.

Mullah Nasruddin calmly listened to the philosopher's extempore lecture patiently, and when he had finally exhausted his resources, Mulla Nasruddin said, "Well, Sir, what would you have done?"

"I, being a conscientious human, would have taken the smaller fish for myself."

"And here you are," Mullah Nasruddin said, and placed the smaller fish on the gentleman's plate.

End of the World

A group of philosophers traveled far and wide to find, and, contemplated for many years, the end of the world but could not state a time for its coming. Finally they turned to Mullah Nasruddin and asked him: "Do you know when the end of the world will be?"

"Of course, said Mullah Nasruddin, when I die, that will be the end of the world."

"When you die? Are you sure?"

"It will be for me at least," said Mullah Nasruddin

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Keeping Warm

On a frigid and snowy winter day Mullah Nasruddin was having a chat with some of his friends in the local coffee house. Mullah Nasruddin said that cold weather did not bother him, and in fact, he could stay, if necessary, all night without any heat. "We'll take you up on that, Mullah Nasruddin," they said. "If you stand all night in the village square without warming yourself by any external means, each of us will treat you to a sumptuous meal. But if you fail to do so, you will treat us all to dinner."

"All right it's a bet," Mullah Nasruddin said. That very night, Mullah Nasruddin stood in the village square till morning despite the bitter cold. In the morning, he ran triumphantly to his friends and told them that they should be ready to fulfill their promise.

"But as a matter of fact you lost the bet, Mullah Nasruddin," said one of them. "At about midnight, just before I went to sleep, I saw a candle burning a window about three hundred yards away from where you were standing. That certainly means that you warmed yourself by it."

"That's ridiculous," Mullah Nasruddin argued. "How can a candle behind a window warm a person three hundred yards away?" All his protestations were to no avail, and it was decided that Mullah Nasruddin had lost the bet. Mullah Nasruddin accepted the verdict and invited all of them to a dinner that night at his home. They all arrived on time, laughing and joking, anticipating the delicious meal Mullah Nasruddin was going to serve them. But dinner was not ready. Mullah Nasruddin told them that it would be ready in a short time, and left the room to prepare the meal. A long time passed, and still no dinner was served. Finally, getting impatient and very hungry, they went into the kitchen to see if there was any food cooking at all. What they saw, they could not believe. Mullah Nasruddin was standing by a huge cauldron, suspended from the ceiling. There was a lighted candle under the cauldron. "Be patient my friends," Mullah Nasruddin told them. "Dinner will be ready soon. You see it is cooking."

"Are you out of your mind, Mullah Nasruddin?" they shouted. How could you with such a tiny flame boil such a large pot?"

"Your ignorance of such matters amuses me," Mullah Nasruddin said. "If the flame of a candle behind a window three hundred yards away can warm a person, surely the same flame will boil this pot which is only three inches away."

Saifu

An angry man came in to a cafe and yelled:" IS SAIFU HERE?" No body answered so he yelled again: “IS SAIFU HERE OR NOT?”

Finally a guy got up, "YAH, I AM SAIFU" he said.

The angry man came closer and punched the guy, knocked him down on the floor and then left the cafe. The guy got up, cleaned his nose from blood and while every one was expecting a reaction from him, returned to his table without saying anything.

Some one came and asked the guy: "How can you just sit here and do nothing? That man knocked you down and you are not even cursing him."

"You wouldn't say that if you knew what I have done to him,” said the man with a smirk. "What? How?" asked the other man with curious excitement.

"I am not SAIFU,” said the guy proudly.

Lesson of the Sandals

One day Nasruddin was taking a walk in his village, when several of his neighbors approached him. "Nasruddin Hoja!" they said to him, "you are so wise and holy! Please take us as your pupils to teach us how we should live our lives, and what we should do!"

Nasruddin paused, and then said "Alright; I will teach you the first lesson right now. The most important thing is to take very good care of your feet and sandals; you must keep them clean and neat at all times."

The neighbors listened attentively until they glanced down at his feet, which were in fact quite dirty and shod in old sandals that seemed about to fall apart. "But Nasruddin Hoja," said one of them, "your feet are terribly dirty, and your sandals are a mess! How do you expect us to follow your teachings if you don't carry them out yourself?"

"Well," replied Nasruddin, "I don't go around asking people how I should live my life either, do I?"

Two Pots

Later that evening, Nasruddin was cooking up some things. He went to his neighbor and asked for a pot and promised to return it the next day. A knock, knock came on the neighbor's door the next day. Nasruddin had come to return the pot. The neighbor looks at his pot and inside was one smaller. The neighbors said, "There is a small pot inside the one I loaned you."

Nasruddin told him, "The pot gave birth."

The neighbor was quite pleased to hear this and accepted the two pots. The very next morning, Nasruddin knocks on the neighbor's door to borrow a larger pot than the previous one. The neighbor happily abides his the request. A week goes past, without Nasruddin knocking to return the pot. The neighbor and Nasruddin bump into each other at the bazaar a few days latter. Nasruddin's neighbor asked, "Where is my pot?"

"It's dead," says Nasruddin. "But how can that be?" queries the neighbor.

Nasruddin points out, "If a pot can give birth, then a pot can also die.”

The Perfect Wife

One afternoon, Nasruddin and his friend were sitting in a cafe, drinking tea, and talking about life and love. “How come you never got married, Nasruddin?” asked his friend at one point.

“Well,” said Nasruddin, “to tell you the truth, I spent my youth looking for the perfect woman. In Cairo, I met a beautiful and intelligent woman, with eyes like dark olives, but she was unkind. Then in Baghdad, I met a woman who was a wonderful and generous soul, but we had no interests in common. One woman after another would seem just right, but there would always be something missing. Then one day, I met her. She was beautiful, intelligent, generous and kind. We had everything in common. In fact she was perfect.”

“Well,” said Nasruddin’s friend, “what happened? Why didn’t you marry her?”

Nasruddin sipped his tea reflectively. “Well,” he replied, “it’s a sad thing. Seems she was looking for the perfect man.”

The Cloak and the Feast

Mullah Nasruddin in Banguet Nasruddin heard that there was a banquet being held in the nearby town, and that everyone was invited. He made his way there as quickly as he could. When the Master of Ceremonies saw him in his ragged cloak, he seated him in the most inconspicuous place, far from the great table where the most important people were waiting on hand and foot. Nasruddin saw that it would be an hour at last before the waiters reached where he was sitting.

So he got up and went home. He dressed himself in a magnificent sable cloak and turban and returned to feast. As soon as the heralds of the Emir, his host, saw this splendid sight they started to beat the drum of welcome and sound the trumpets in a manner befitting a visitor of high rank. The Chamberlain came out of the palace himself, and conducted the magnificent Nasruddin to a place almost next to the Emir. A dish of wonderful food was immediately placed before him. Without a pause, Nasruddin began to rub handfuls of it into his turban and cloak.

"Your Eminence," said the prince, "I am curious as to your eating habits, which are new to me."

"Nothing special," said Nasruddin; "the cloak get me in here and got me the food. Surely it deserves it portion."

Mullah Nasruddin and His Beautiful Daughter

Mullah Nasruddin had a beautiful daughter, the desire of all the evil eyes of the men lived in his village. Everyone sought the hand of the fair maiden, but Mullah Nasruddin protected her from the outside world, saving her for the wealthy young khan who lived just outside the village.

At last the young Khan came to ask for the hand of the beautiful maiden. Mullah Nasruddin drove a hard bargain and was to receive the highest bride-price ever bargained for in the entire region. With the usual Muslim regard for ceremony, Mullah Nasruddin insisted on a long waiting-period before the wedding vows could be taken.

It seems that the young and beautiful daughter of Mullah Nasrudin had a mind and a body of her own. She fell in love with a young stalwart ne'er-do-well in the village, who constantly showered her with attention as she went to the nearby well to gather water in the morning and at dusk. Her trips to get water began to take longer periods of time. Most people in the village know what was happening, but no one dared tell Mullah Nasruddin.

The time for the wedding approached and the young, wealthy Khan came to collect his bride. Mullah Nasruddin brought her to greet her betrothed. Lo and behold! She was well

pregnant by this time. The young, rich Khan was horrified, and turned on the Mullah Nasruddin, demanding to know why such a thing had occurred. And when Mullah Nasruddin merely replied that such things are normal when people get married; the young, rich Khan stormed out of Mullah Nasruddin's compound, and said that he withdrew his offer of marriage to the young beautiful daughter of Mullah Nasruddin and therefore would expect a return on the down payment on the bride price.

Mullah Nasruddin, genuinely shocked, called after the young, rich Khan and the young Khan returned. "Let us be sensible about this," pleaded Mullah Nasruddin. "Actually, I should double the bride price now that my daughter is truly pregnant and can give you a son."

The young Khan, even more horrified, stuttered and asked, "In the name of Allah, why?" Mullah Nasruddin calmly replied, "Why just last week I delivered a cow to a man to whom I had sold the cow several months before. In the interim period, the cow became pregnant, and when I delivered the cow, I demanded and received twice the original amount. Now what is so different between a cow and a daughter?"

The King and His Dreams

Once there was a king who had a dream that all his teeth had fallen out. He woke up upset and asked that the best interpreters be brought to the palace.

The first interpreter said, "My king, I am sorry to inform you that all your family members will die in your lifetime." The king got very upset and ordered that the interpreter be imprisoned.

Then the second, the third and the fourth interpreters said the same thing. The king was very angry and very upset. He imprisoned all of them and insisted on a search for better interpreters.

Finally, a wise interpreter came by. He said, "My king, you will live a long life. In your lifetime, you will share your family's joys and sorrows. You will be present to assist those who need you even after many family members have gone." The king became very happy and gave the interpreter a lot of presents.

Cursing Rulers

Once there was a man who seized power by force. He insisted that every follower of the previous ruler curse that ruler in public or else he or she would be killed. One of the followers of the previous ruler thought of a way to satisfy the present ruler without cursing the previous one.

He stood up in public and said, "This ruler is asking me to curse the previous ruler, I curse HIM (this ruler) and ask you to do the same." The people did not get it and cursed the previous ruler. At the same time, the man was released.

The Chess Game and the Shoes

Once there was a king who beat each person he played chess with. One day, a farmer came by and asked to play chess with the king. The king agreed. As they were beginning, the farmer took off his shoes and put them on the chair and sat on them. As the game proceeded, the king kept wondering about the shoes. The farmer won the game at the end. The king then asked the farmer about the shoes. The farmer replied that he took his shoes off so the king would not fully concentrate on the game.

A Wise Mullah

There was a wise Mullah in the lands of Allah who taught in the streets and the market place. He was much respected by the people for his wisdom in the writings and his knowledge of Mohammed. But he was best known for his wit, which some said was sharper than the headsman's axe and twice as final.

One day the Mullah and his wife were in the village buying goods for the feast to be held that week. He saw a man he had counseled to the faith and who had yet to renounce his infidel Christian ways. He walked up to the man and greeted him with a holy blessing.

"I thank you" the infidel replied. "And how do you fare, good Mullah?"

The Mullah answered him. "I am blessed by Allah with a good wife and many fine children. You can see how Allah blesses the true believers in this land. You are still a bachelor, and an infidel. I am sure that if you took up the true faith Allah would grant you a wife."

The young man answered, "I am not convinced that getting a wife is enough to make me convert."

The Mullah had perceived that this young man was quite taken with the fairer sex, and so he explained to him; "Mohammed, in his wisdom, decreed that it was Allah's will that a man be allowed to have as many wives as he wishes. I know that your infidel faith does not allow more than one wife."

This impressed the young man. "This is true. I might be persuaded by such an argument." At this time the Mullah's wife began to shout after him, calling in a most ungracious way to cease his gossiping and carry her purchases.

This caused the infidel to ask; "If you are allowed many wives, why is it that you, a Mullah have only one wife?"

"The answer is simple," the Mullah replied. "The prophet said it was allowed, he never said it was a good idea!"

A Mother's Three Gifts

Three sons left home, went out on their own and prospered. Getting back together, they discussed the gifts they were able to give their elderly mother.

The first said, "I built a big house for our mother."

The second said, "I sent her a camel with a driver."

The third smiled and said, "I've got you both beat. You remember how Mom enjoyed reading the Divan-e Hafez? And you know she can't see very well. So I sent her a remarkable parrot that recites the entire Divan. It took elders of the town 19 years to teach him. He's one of a kind. Mama just has to name the Ghazal number, and the parrot recites it."

Soon thereafter, mom sent out her letters of thanks: "Ali," she wrote one son, "The house you built is so huge. I live in only one room, but I have to clean the whole house. Reza," she wrote to another, "I am too old to travel. I stay most of the time at home, so I rarely use the camel. And the driver is so rude! My Dearest Nasruddin," she wrote to her third son, "You have the good sense to know what your mother likes. The chicken was delicious."

Two Great Gifts

Once upon a time, Nasruddin went to the marketplace and put up a sign that read: "Whoever has stolen my donkey, please return it to me and I will give it to them."

"Nasruddin!" exclaimed the townspeople, "Why would you put up such a sign?"

"There are two great gifts in life," replied Nasruddin. "One is to find something that you've lost and the other is to give something that you love away."

A Suggestion Against Headache

A man asked Nasruddin: "I have terrible headaches, what do you think I should do?"

Nasrudin replied: "A few days ago I had a terrible toothache. Nothing helped, so I had it pulled out. Now I am fine."

Teaching a Donkey to Read.

During a conversation with Tamerane, Nasruddin started bragging about his donkey. "It is so smart that I can teach it even how to read," he said.

"Then go ahead and teach it how to read. You have three months," Tamerlane ordered. Nasruddin went home and began to train his donkey. He put its feed between the pages of a big book and taught it to turn the pages with its tongue to find its feed. Three days before the three-month period was over, Nasruddin stopped feeding his donkey.

When he took the donkey to Tamerlane, he asked for a big book and put it in front of his donkey. The hungry animal turned the pages of the book one by one with its tongue, but when it found no feed, it began to bray.

Tamerlane watched the donkey closely, and exclaimed, "That sure is a strange way of reading!"

Nasruddin remarked, "But this is how a donkey reads!"

The King and the Woodcutter

Written by - Khairan and Andrew Patterson

There once was a king of Persia long ago who wanted to know what his people were saying and doing. He trusted no one in his palace. He was sure that they would only tell him what they thought he would like to hear or something by which they might benefit. So to know what was going on, the king had to see with his own eyes.

So the king would go to a secret room, put on dirty old clothes and a turban to cover his head to disguise himself. In that way, he could walk around the city himself and listen as well as see what people were saying and doing and no one would know he was king.

One evening. The king in his disguise passed by a house where the door was slightly open. From inside the house he could hear laughter and the sounds of happy people. He stopped and peered through the open door to see what was going on. From inside the house, the owner of the house, saw the king looking into his house and called out to him in the usual Persian greeting of inviting someone into their home, "Come in my friend. My home is your home!"

The King pushed the door open and was greeted by the owner, a pleasant, friendly man. The king looked around the man's house and could see everyone was hurrying here and there doing their chores. They all had smiles on their faces and were very cheerful.

The king was puzzled and asked, "When I passed by your house and I heard sounds of happiness coming from inside your house. I wanted to see why your home is so different than the other houses I passed."

"Oh, I am a woodcutter," replied the owner of the house. "Every day, I take my donkey and go into the mountains where I cut firewood. I load firewood on my donkey and come back to the city. Everyone needs firewood to cook their food and heat water in their homes for baths. Everyday, a lot of people buy my firewood and I make a lot of money."

The king could see that the man was not wealthy or powerful like he was, but he was happy and content with the money he made from selling firewood. Excusing himself, the king hurried back to his palace. The next day, the king issued an order. "No cutting firewood, no hauling firewood, and no selling firewood."

That evening, he put on his disguise and hurried to the home of the woodcutter. Everything was the same like the day before. There was much laughter, joy and happiness instead of sadness and silence. The woodcutter again saw the king standing outside his door, looking into his house and called out, "Come in! Come in, my friend! My home is your home."

The king pushed the door open further and entered the woodcutter's house.

"What happened today?" "Oh yes," replied the woodcutter. "So today, I took my donkey to the mountains where there are streams with delicious water that comes from melting snow. I filled large jars with this water and brought it down into the city where I sold it to many people. The people loved the taste of the fresh mountain water and bought the water. I made a lot of money."

The king now planned to make his next move and could hardly wait to get back to the palace. The next day, the king had an order posted all around the city, which read: "By order of the King, there shall be no cutting firewood, no hauling firewood, no selling firewood. And there shall be no hauling mountain water or selling mountain water."

Putting on his disguise, just as he did the two previous evenings, the king hurried to the woodcutter's home. Everything was the same as the day before. Again, from inside the woodcutter's home he could hear sounds of joy and happiness. The king was puzzled; there should be sadness, maybe screaming and anger, but not joy. When the woodcutter saw the king standing outside, he called out to him.

"Come in, my friend. Come in. My home is your home."

"What happened today?" asked the king. "Didn't the king order that no one is to cut, haul, or sell firewood and no one is to haul or sell water?"

"Yes," replied the woodcutter, "but a man needs to rest sometime. My family is happy to have me home for the day. And I am happy I could be here all day to help my wife and our children do things around the house. Won't you stay and have some tea with us?"

"No, no," said the king, and excused himself and hurried back to the palace.

The next morning, the king sent a messenger to the home of the woodcutter. By order of the king, the woodcutter was to come to the palace to be the official sword bearer. But the king was very tricky and offered to pay the woodcutter so little money that any man would grumble and be unhappy. The woodcutter did not recognize the king and put on the sword. All day he did as the king directed him to do.

That evening, the king was eager to see if the woodcutter would now be unhappy with his life. Again he put his disguise and hurried to the woodcutter's home. Again the door was slightly open and from inside he could hear sounds of happiness and joy.

The woodcutter from inside his home saw the king and called out to him. "Salaam (peace to you) my friend. Come in. My home is your home."

The king was now really puzzled. How could there still be happiness and joy in the woodcutter's home when there should be anger or sadness? As if he did not know, the king asked, "What happened today?"

"A very strange thing happened," replied the woodcutter. "The king sent for me to come to the palace and to be his sword bearer. All day I have to carry this heavy sword, yet the king pays me so little money.

"However, this sword the king gave me is heavy from much gold and silver and it has many beautiful gems all over it. So I took the sword to the market where I sold it. People in the market gave me so much money for the sword that I can now buy three houses and retire for the rest of my life.

"I have to have a sword to carry, so I went to a carpenter who made a wooden sword for me. This I put in place of this heavy gold sword. This wooden sword is so much lighter and easier for me to carry that I can walk around the palace all day without feeling tired!"

Always mindful to make guests comfortable, Persians always offer guests something to eat or drink. So the woodcutter asked the king, "Won't you stay and have some tea and food with us? After selling that sword, I can now afford to have the best tea in the world for my family and guests."

So now the king was really upset because the woodcutter had been more clever than he. He declined the woodcutter's offer and hurried back to his palace.

The next morning, the king was sitting on his throne. He called for his sword-bearer. Entering the throne room, the woodcutter didn't recognize the king as the man who had visited his home for three evenings. He walked up and stood beside a man in chains before the king.

"The man beside you, "said the king, "is a terrible criminal. I order you to take your sword and cut off this man's head this very moment. If you fail to cut this man's head off, I will have your head cut off."

The poor woodcutter, now ordered to kill the man beside him, grabbed the handle of his wooden sword. Lifting his eyes to heaven, he called out, "Oh Allah, I shall cut off this man's head as the king has ordered me to do. But if this man is innocent, may my sword turn to wood..."

Of The Jungle

By Anjum Makki

And every kind of thing is produced on the earth in due balance and measure. The mineral kingdom supports the vegetable and they in their turn support the animal, and there is a link of mutual dependence between them. Excess is eliminated. The waste of one is made the food of another, and vice versa. And this is a chain of gradation and inter-dependence. (15.19) The Holy Qur'an

It was not too long ago in the passage of time, in a city not far from here, there lived a local politician and this city was surrounded by thousands of acres of agricultural land. A huge dense forest thickly populated by tall trees covered a vast portion of this land running into a few hundred square kilometers. One day the politician decided to make a detailed survey of his constituency and during such surveys he had to make lengthy detours around this huge forest. This inconvenienced him a great deal and he decided that he should somehow put an end to this problem. That day, he decided to venture deep into the forest to find a way to solve this problem.

He had never gone inside the forest before, though it stood on the land of his constituency. Filled with resolve, he walked with determined steps into the forest. What he saw inside totally shocked him. The forest on his land grew wild. According to his thinking a forest meant that it should have plenty of huge trees and, therefore, anything that was not a tree was useless. He cleverly reasoned that the grass and the bushes that grew wild in his forest absorbed precious water from the ground that was meant for the trees. Then there was the problem of all those fallen leaves, the dry twigs and the rotting branches that fell from the trees, had scattered all over the forest and merely cluttered the ground. All the problems that plagued his constituency would vanish if the forest were cleared of its wild undergrowth and roads were built inside the forest for people to move about freely. He made this into a poll-issue and very soon the people of the city gave him the authority to carry out his plans by voting him to power.

After taking stock of the problem, he went to a nearby village and hired hundreds of laborers to clean up this forest. He promised to pay them well for all their services rendered by them in this regard and he instructed his laborers to get started on the job from the next day itself. All pleas for caution from other well-meaning people who wanted to preserve the wild nature of the forest went unheeded by the politician. The laborers came next day armed with pickaxes, shovels, sickles and brooms. First they swept the area clean and wherever they could they gathered all the dry twigs, the leaves and the rotting branches and started burning them. Having finished the task after a few weeks they attacked the bushes and the low obstructing branches of the trees with their axes and made them into huge heaps and started burning them down too.

After a few weeks time, his forest started wearing a clean and an airy look. The politician took a great interest in planting the new trees to replace those trees he had got felled for obstructing the way. The new trees were planted in neat rows and were lined up to look like chairs alongside a wall and there was not a single speck of dirt to cover up the groups. The laborers had done a thorough job to the last detail. The politician was very pleased with the orderly sight that greeted him from every corner of the forest.

Three years passed by and the people of the city began to notice strange changes in his clean forest. The crowns of the tallest trees had their crowns thinned out and they were sparsely populated with leaves. On a closer look they found that the leaves of even the largest of trees had started to loose their color and sheen. They almost wore a transparent look; the forest had become peppered with dead trees, standing tall but totally lifeless and dried-up. Then there were those huge trees, victims of many storms that had fallen across the path totally blocking the path of the traveler who passed that way. Winter was a long way off and

yet the ground lay covered with yellow leaves. Only a short time had passed since the politician had cleaned up the forest and it was untidy once again, worse than before a poor shadow of it's former self.

The politician who had also heard about the sad state of the forest was puzzled. He could simply not understand why the trees had dried up and it was certainly not from lack of care from his side. Three years had passed since he had cleared the forest of its thick undergrowth. Along with the forest, he also took great care to attend to the problems of the people of his constituency. He had inlaid the forests with roads and electricity and telecommunication cables, which brought them close to the other people of the outside world. Finally at his wits end he called for help from the experts who lived in his constituency and they were asked to form a committee to study the problems in the forest and suggest remedial measure within three months time.

The experts studied the problem and at the end of three months they submitted a report to the politician. According to the report, what had happened was that the laborers in their enthusiasm to clean up the forest had swept out just everything-all that should have been swept out and all that should have been left untouched. The dry branches of the dead trees were certainly of no use, except perhaps as firewood but the bushes had also been chopped out needlessly. The politician had briefed the laborers earlier that the only things of importance in a forest were the trees and the bushes were of no value at all! However the people of the city found out from their own sad experience that the trees could not live without the bushes for they began to dry soon after the bushes had disappeared. They cursed themselves for entrusting the care of their forest into the hands of a shortsighted politician.

The report also gave the reasons as to why the bushes were so important to a forest. The forest is not just a forest and it can be compared to a densely populated city. The houses in the forest were the nests and the burrows and its inhabitants the birds and the animals. While it is true that some birds build their nests high up in the tall trees, there are many others that build their nests in the thick undergrowth tucked away safe in the thick foliage away from prying human eyes. They would dart quickly into their nests as soon as they sensed danger from other birds or animals and the moment they sensed a stranger nearby.

When the laborers had chopped down the thick undergrowth on the advice of the politician, the birds that nested there took flight immediately and flew far away and settled themselves in other forests and that was the beginning of all the problems that were going to plague the forests in the months to come. The reasons were not far to seek. It is a well-known fact that the birds rarely sit on a branch idling or whiling away their time. They fly all around the forest hopping from branch to branch from dawn to dusk tidying up the forest in their own methodical way. As soon as they spot a beetle or a caterpillar on the trees they quickly snatch it up by their beaks and they eat to their fill. After that they start hunting for more and take it in their beaks to their baby nestlings. The baby-birds on their part eat an awful lot of bugs brought to them by their parents and grow very fast. The forest birds used to eat away thousands of bugs everyday and when the birds flew away to other forests, the beetles and the caterpillars' had the time of their lives. They made merry, multiplied and multiplied in alarming proportions.

The trees in the forest started drying up because they were now swarming with insects. Some insects feasted on their leaves and others on the roots. The tree appeared to them like a well laid-out banquet table but with a difference. Here, the insects would make a feast of the table too! After the birds had left they had multiplied rapidly and attacked each tree in regiments. The caterpillars were the first to advance and they chewed up the leaves and the roots. The trees used to absorb light and air through its leaves and water from its roots for photosynthesis. In its absence the trees became weak with thirst and hunger. These weaknesses laid them open to attack from many more enemies. The next in line to attack were the beetles, the type that fed on the bark of the trees. These beetles started chewing through the bark and they started boring long winding tunnels under the barks, chewing up on the wood as they worked and carting away the sawdust on their backs.

If only the tree had been stronger and healthier, it would have done away with the beetles in no time, feeding on its bark by its own defense mechanism, by drowning them in the heavy sticky sap that flowed underneath the bark. But the tree was no longer its former self; as it had been before the caterpillars had overran it. It had dried up because of lack of food and water and there was not much sap left in it. There was no one to defend the tree either as the birds had already taken flight to safer areas.

The beetles feeding on the bark stayed on the job boring away at the tree from all sides and it was not long before the tunnels merged forming a bored out band under the bark. The beetles had cut between the roads inside the trees that linked the leaf with its roots and the live healing sap could no longer flow beneath the bark. The trees lost their last leaves. They still stood straight up in the forest, but hollowed and eaten down form inside, and they were dead.

Even now the enemies of the trees would not let it rest in peace. New beetles different from the bark-eating beetles arrived on the scene and they had feelers that were longer than their bodies and they made straight to the center of the tree trunk to eat it away continuously and turned the once mighty trees into mere hollow shells ruining it completely. Like this, all the trees of this forest were ruined completely.

All this happened because the people acting on the advice of a politician had chopped down the bushes and shrubs in the forest. The politician in his narrow vision had imagined a forest that was only filled with trees. He was mistaken, the experts told him so, for no forest is complete without the shrubs, the bushes, animals, birds, beetles and the caterpillars alongside the trees.

All the plants and animals in the forest lived with each other according to a master –plan, the law of nature, and they had co-existed for centuries living off each other in perfect harmony. This co-existence for centuries was destroyed in a very short duration all because of the shortsighted vision of a politician, who had imagined in his mind a forest that was only made up of trees and he had not bothered to ask the learned and the wise about the rules of this master-plan before he had ordered the forest to be cleaned up.

The people now wise from the findings of the experts woke up suddenly to the facts that now faced them. Their city would be deprived of clean healthy air from the forest, medicinal herbs, firewood, fruits and flowers that grew wild in it. They rushed to the forest armed with paste hoping that the caterpillars would stick to it and they also sprayed the leaves with a poisonous spray. It was no use. There were too many insects and nothing could stop them anymore.

Those that are wise will learn from this story and not repeat the same mistakes again. The next time we decide to change nature we should know that everything created by nature is interlinked with everything else and we should not forget this relationship. Even the woodpecker and the ants are important members of a forest for they too eat up harmful insects and help to keep the forest in order.

If you wish to help protect a forest in your area, you should remember that it should extend to all its inhabitants and don't let anyone break off the branches of a tree, or root out bushes, destroy the nests of birds or burn away ant-hills for we have a responsibility of saving the forests for the generations that are going to come after us.

We provide sustenance of every kind, physical, mental, spiritual, etc., for you (i.e. for mankind.) But we do more. We provide for every one of Our creatures. And there are those of which mankind is not even cognizant. We provide for them also. There are those who may at first sight appear hostile to man, or whom man may consider hostile, such as wild and noxious animals. They are Our creatures, and We provide for them also, as they are Our creatures. But there is due order and balance in the economy of Our universal Plan.' (15.20) Surah Al-Hijr of the Holy Qur'an

Religious Jokes

House of Ill Repute

You've probably heard the story of the two Irishmen who were working on the road in front of a notorious house of ill repute. As they laboured, they were shocked to see the pastor of the Methodist Church walk down the street and, after a few furtive glances over his shoulder, duck into that house. *Would ya look at that, Darby!* said Pat. *What a shameful disgrace, that Protestant so-called man of God sinning in the likes of that place!* They both shook their heads in disgust and continued their work.

A little later, the Rabbi from the synagogue across town parked his car three blocks away but ended up entering that same door. *Did ya see that, Darby?* said Pat. *Is nothing sacred to those Jewish people? What is the world coming to? A man of the cloth indulging in sins of the flesh! Tis a shame, I tell ya!*

It wasn't long before a third man, this one a Roman Catholic priest, followed the path of his colleagues, right through the door of that place. *Oh no, Darby, look!* said Pat, removing his cap. *One of the poor girls must have died!*

Catholic Conversion

A Jewish man moves into a Catholic neighborhood. Every Friday the Catholics go crazy because, while they're morosely eating fish, the Jew is outside barbecuing steaks. So the Catholics work on the Jew to convert him.

Finally, by threats and pleading, the Catholics succeed. They take the Jew to a priest who sprinkles holy water on the Jew and intones:

....."Born a Jew
.....Raised a Jew
.....Now a Catholic."

The Catholics are ecstatic. No more delicious, but maddening smells every Friday evening. But the next Friday evening, the scent of barbecue wafts through the neighborhood. The Catholics all rush to the Jew's house to remind him of his new diet. They see him standing over the cooking steak. He is sprinkling water on the meat and saying:

....."Born a cow
.....Raised a cow
.....Now a fish."

Religious Accident

A rabbi and a priest get into a car accident and it's a bad one. Both cars are totally demolished but amazingly neither of the clerics is hurt. After they crawl out of their cars, the rabbi sees the priest's collar and says, "So you're a priest. I'm a rabbi. Just look at our cars. There's nothing left, but we are unhurt. This must be a sign from God. God must have meant that we should meet and be friends and live together in peace the rest of our days."

The priest replies, "I agree with you completely. This must be a sign from G-d."

The rabbi continues, "And look at this. Here's another miracle. My car is completely demolished but this bottle of Kedem wine didn't break. Surely God wants us to drink this wine and celebrate our good fortune." Then he hands the bottle to the priest. The priest agrees, takes a few big swigs, and hands the

bottle back to the rabbi. The rabbi takes the bottle, immediately puts the cap on, and hands it back to the priest.

The priest asks, "Aren't you having any?"

The rabbi replies, "No...I think I'll wait for the police."

Newly Discovered First Page of the Bible

They recently discovered a smaller scroll hidden in the cylinder of the first scroll of the ancient Biblical scriptures, believed to be the actual "first page" of the Bible. When deciphered, it read:

"Copyright (c) 300 B.C. God. All Rights Reserved First Scrawling: First-Sunrise-After-Stonehenge-Keystone- Is-Shadowed, 300 B.C.

All beings, places and events depicted in this work are fictional, and any resemblance to actual beings, places and events past, present or future is purely coincidental.

WARNING: Some of the actions performed in this work are dangerous and should only be attempted by professionals familiar with the action in question.

NOTE: Those tiny points of light in the sky when it gets dark are called 'stars.' Some of them do blow up on occasion. In no way should this be construed as a sign that there is, beneath such an explosion, any form of savior. Should such a misconstrual happen, the author will not be held responsible for the avalanche of arrogance, zeal, bigotry, humanocentricity and other vile acts which will surely follow the residents of the planet into time eternal until someone sees fit to erase the denizens of the world and let the author start over.

ISBN 0-000000-0000-1

Suggested retail: 1 sheep."

Like Moses, Shakespeare and G*d.

So the Synagogue got really fed up with its Rabbi. The Executive Committee met and he -too-reluctantly, concluded that they'd have to let him go. Trouble was - who'd want to take him - especially if it got out that he'd been fired? So the Executive Committee decided to give him a glowing letter of recommendation. It compared the Rabbi to Shakespeare, Moses and even G-d Himself.

The recommendation was so warm that within six weeks the Rabbi succeeded in securing himself a pulpit in a major upwardly-mobile Synagogue 500 miles away, at twice his original salary and with three junior Rabbis working under him. Needless to say, in a couple of months the Rabbi's new employers began to observe some of his imperfections. The President of the Rabbi's new pulpit angrily called the President of the old Synagogue charging "We employed this man mostly on the basis of your recommendation. How could you possibly compare him to Shakespeare, Moses and even G-d Himself, when he can't string together a correct sentence in English, when his knowledge of Hebrew is worse than mine and that on top of everything else, he's a liar, a cheat and an all-round low-life?"

"Simple," answered his colleague. "Like Shakespeare he has no Hebrew or Jewish knowledge. Like Moses, he can't speak English, and like G-d Himself - Er is nisht kan mentch' (He's not a human being!.)"

The Atheist and the Monster

An atheist was spending a quiet day fishing when suddenly his boat was attacked by the Loch Ness monster. In one easy flip, the beast tossed him and his boat high into the air. Then it opened its mouth to swallow both. As the man sailed head over heels, he cried out, "Oh, my G-d! Help me!"

At once, the ferocious attack scene froze in place, and as the atheist hung in mid-air, a booming voice came down from the clouds, "I thought you didn't believe in Me!"

"Come on G-d, give me a break!!," the man pleaded. "Two minutes ago I didn't believe in the Loch Ness monster either!"

Two Beggars

Two beggars were sitting next to each other. One holds a sign saying "Please help the war veteran," and the other holds a sign saying "Please help a poor Jew."

People pass by and even those who didn't intend to give money to any of them, give to the first to upset the Jew.

One good man passes by, gives money equally to both, and then says to the Jew: "Why don't you change your sign? Don't you understand that nobody will give you any money?" and walks away.

As he goes, the Jews turn to the other one and says: "Imagine that, Haime, he would teach US business..."

Crew

Yeshiva University decided to field a crew team. Unfortunately, they lost race after race. They practiced for hours every day, but never managed to come in any better than dead last.

The Rosh Yeshiva finally decided to send Yankel to spy on the Harvard team. So Yankel shlepped off to Cambridge and hid in the bulrushes off the Charles River, from where he carefully watched the Harvard team as they practiced.

Yankel finally returned to Yeshiva. "I have figured out their secret," he announced. "They have eight guys rowing and only one guy shouting."

Hostages

Just before Rosh Hashanah, a team of terrorists invades the shul and takes the rabbi, the cantor and the shul president hostage. Hours later, the governor stands tough, he won't give them a million dollars, nor a getaway car nor a Jumbo Jet.

The terrorists gather the three hostages in a corner and inform them that things look bad and they're going to have to shoot them. Nevertheless, to show that they're not really a bad bunch, they'll grant each hostage one wish.

"Please," says the rabbi, "for the last two months I've been working on my Rosh Hashanah Sermon. What a waste to die now without having carried it before an audience. I'll go happily if you let me recite my sermon. It's an hour - ninety minutes long, tops."

They promise to grant him the wish.

"Please," says the cantor, "after 50 years I've finally gotten the 'Hinneni' prayer just right. What a waste to die and not sing it to an audience. It's only about 45 minutes long - then I'll go happily."

The terrorists promise to grant the cantor his wish too and they turn to the shul president.

"Please," says the president with tears in his eyes, "Shoot me first!"

Three Reform Rabbis

Three Reform Rabbis were in a terrible auto wreck. None survived. One minute they were driving along the highway, talking and laughing and joking, and the next, BOOM! they were before the Creator of all. Shaking his head, The Omnipotent One looks at the three.

"Reform I can understand. But where will it end? You! Goldblum! The ashtrays in your temple so My people could smoke while the Torah was being read?" Goldblum shuddered. God went on. "I can live with that. Men are weak, but the Word is strong!"

Goldblum sighed with relief.

"Bauman! Really, I can accept My people need to eat, but really: serving Ham & Cheese Sandwiches to the devout at the temple during Yom Kippur?"

Bauman hung his head in shame.

"Even that I can allow to pass, even with the eating of that which is not Kosher. I'm not pleased at all with the playing fast and loose with my people, but I can accept these indiscretions."

Bauman also heaved a sigh of relief.

Finally, He turns to the third rabbi and says, "You, Rabinowitz, have gone too far! Am I asking too much? No, you flaunt the world at Me, even on the holiest days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur by putting out a sign saying.... 'Closed for the Holidays!'"

Lotto

An observant Jew called Jacob finds himself in dire trouble. His business has gone bust and he's in serious financial trouble. He's so desperate that he decides to ask God for help. He goes into the synagogue and begins to pray. "God, please help me, I've lost my business and if I don't get some money, I'm going to lose my house as well, please let me win the lotto."

Lotto night comes and somebody else wins it.

Jacob goes back to the synagogue. "God, please let me win the lotto, I've lost my business, my house and I'm going to lose my car as well."

Lotto night comes and Jacob still has no luck!!

Back to the synagogue. "My God, why have you forsaken me?? I've lost my business, my house, my car and my wife and my children are starving. I don't often ask you for help and I have always been a good servant to you. Why won't you just let me win the lotto this one time so I can get my life back in order???"

Suddenly there is a blinding flash of light as the heavens open and Jacob is confronted by the voice of GOD himself: "JACOB, MEET ME HALF WAY ON THIS ONE....BUY A DAMNED TICKET."

Outer Space Priests

NASA sent many many shuttles into orbit circling the earth. They attempted to include passengers of all races, color and creed.. Eventually they invited, a priest, a Druid (as a catch-all) and a rabbi to orbit the earth in the shuttle...

Upon their return, crowds of people formed to hear their religious leaders impressions. First the Catholic priest emerged, beaming and happy, in his white robe. He made a statement regarding how wonderful it was to visit G-d's creation from space. He said, "It was totally amazing, I saw the sun rise and set, I saw the beautiful oceans. I never knew Asia and Africa were so large! Perhaps, we should send more missionaries?"

Then the Reformed Druid emerged in his white suit also beaming at the peaceful power of creation as view from outer space. He said, "I saw the magnificent earth, our home, I saw the majestic sun. I'm truly in awe. I'm glad to be back with feet firmly planted again on my Goddess. I had to wing a prayer during an eclipse of the Sun and moon by the earth, but it worked okay. The crew enjoyed the whiskey. Oh, and no angels were seen."

Then the Orthodox rabbi came out. He was completely disheveled, his beard was tangled and in every direction, his kappa was frayed, his tallit was wrinkled, like you can't imagine. The crowds asked him, "Rabbi, did you enjoy the flight?.., creation?..., outer space?"

The rabbi threw his hands in the air and said, "Vhat "ENJOY??? What was there to enjoy??? Oyoyoy! Three days of continual sunrise and setting! On with the tefillin, off with the tefillin, Mincha, Maariv, Mincha, Maariv!...Gevalt!!!!!!"

Where is God?

In a certain suburban neighborhood, there were two brothers, 8 and 10 years old, who were exceedingly mischievous. Whatever went wrong in the neighborhood, it turned out they had a hand in it. Their parents were at their wit's end trying to control them. Hearing about a priest nearby who worked with delinquent boys, the mother suggested to the father that they ask the priest to talk with the boys. The father replied, "Sure, do that before I kill them!"

The mother went to the priest and made her request. He agreed, but said he wanted to see the younger boy first and alone. So the mother sent him to the priest.

The priest sat the boy down across a huge, impressive desk he sat behind. For about five minutes they just sat and stared at each other. Finally, the priest pointed his forefinger at the boy and asked, "Where is God?"

The boy looked under the desk, in the corners of the room, all around, but said nothing. Again, louder, the priest pointed at the boy and asked, "Where is God?"

Again the boy looked all around but said nothing. A third time, in a louder, firmer voice, the priest leaned far across the desk and put his forefinger almost to the boy's nose, and asked, "Where is God?"

The boy panicked and ran all the way home. Finding his older brother, he dragged him upstairs to their room and into the closet where they usually plotted their mischief. He finally said, "We are in big trouble."

The older boy asked, "What do you mean, big trouble?"

His brother replied, "God is missing and they think we did it!"

The Collar

A little boy, not accustomed to seeing a priest in his "work uniform," went up to the priest and asked, "Why do you dress so funny?"

The priest replied, "This is the uniform that I wear when I work."

The child, still staring at him, asked, "Do you have a boo boo?"

The priest was somewhat puzzled, but quickly figured out that the child was looking at his white and black Roman collar. The priest pulled out the white plastic insert and showed it to the child, telling him that it was also part of his uniform.

On the backside of the collar there was some writing: "Wash with warm soapy water." The priest showed this to the little boy and then asked him, "Do you know what these words say?"

The little boy, obviously much too young to read, stated, "I sure do."

The priest, a little taken aback, then replied, "OK then, tell me what they say."

The little boy then replied, "Kills fleas and ticks for up to six months!"

The Power of Scripture

This lady surprised a burglar in her kitchen. He was all loaded down with the things he was going to steal. She had no weapon and was all alone. The only thing that she could think to do was quote Scripture. So she holds up a hand and says: "ACTS 2:38!!!"

The burglar quakes in fear and then freezes to the point that she is able to get to the phone and call 911 for the cops. When the cops arrive, the burglar is still frozen in place. They are very much surprised that a woman alone with no weapon could do this. One of them asked the lady: "How did you do this?"

The woman replied, "I quoted Scripture."

The cop turned to the burglar: "What was it about the scripture that had such an effect on you?"

The burglar replied: "Scripture! What scripture? I thought she said she had an ax and two 38's."

Lawns and God

GOD: St. Francis, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there in the USA? What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistle and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect, no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honeybees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But all I see are these green rectangles.

ST. FRANCIS: It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers weeds and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

GOD: Grass? But it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees, only grubs and sod worms. It's temperamental with temperatures. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

ST. FRANCIS: Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

GOD: The spring rains and warm weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy.

ST. FRANCIS: Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it, sometimes twice a week.

GOD: They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?

ST. FRANCIS: Not exactly Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

GOD: They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

ST. FRANCIS: No, sir -- just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

GOD: Now, let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

ST. FRANCIS: Yes, sir.

GOD: These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

ST. FRANCIS: You aren't going to believe this, Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

GOD: What nonsense. At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stoke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. Plus, as they rot, the leaves form compost to enhance the soil. It's a natural circle of life.

ST. FRANCIS: You'd better sit down, Lord. The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and pay to have them hauled away.

GOD: No. What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter and to keep the soil moist and loose?

ST. FRANCIS: After throwing away the leaves, they go out and buy something which they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

GOD: And where do they get this mulch?

ST. FRANCIS: They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch.

GOD: Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore. St. Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?

ST. CATHERINE: Dumb and Dumber, Lord. It's a real stupid movie about...

GOD: Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story from St. Francis

Sisterhood

A man was brought to Mercy Hospital, and went in for coronary surgery. The operation went well, and as the groggy man regained consciousness, he was reassured by a Sister of Mercy waiting by his bed.

"Mr. Smith, you're going to be just fine," the nun said while patting his hand.

"We do have to know, however, how you intend to pay for your stay here. Are you covered by insurance?"

"No, I'm not," the man whispered hoarsely.

"Can you pay in cash?"

"I'm afraid I can't, Sister."

"Do you have any close relatives, then?"

"Just my sister in New Mexico," replied, "but she's a spinster nun."

"Nuns are not spinsters, Mr. Smith," the nun replied. "They are married to God."

"That's right..." the man said with a smile, "So bill my Brother-in-law."

Going to Heaven

Father O'Malley walks into a pub in Donegal, and says to the first man he meets, "Do you want to go to Heaven?"

The man said, "I do Father."

The priest said, "Then stand over there against the wall."

Then the priest asked the second man, "Do you want to go to Heaven?"

"Sure, Father, and who wouldn't?" was the man's reply.

"Then stand over there against the wall," said the priest.

Then Father O'Malley walked up to Murphy and said, "Do you want to go to Heaven?"

Murphy shook his head and said, "No, I don't Father."

The priest said, "C'mon lad... I don't believe this. You mean to tell me that when you die you don't want to go to Heaven?"

Murphy said, "Oh, when I die, yes. Sure, I thought you were getting a group together to go right now."

Fatherhood

An old man was once on the subway, and he sat down next to a younger man. He noticed that the young man had a strange kind of shirt collar.

Having never seen a priest before, he asked, "Excuse me sir, but why do you have your shirt collar on backwards?"

The priest became a bit flustered but politely answered, "I wear this collar because I am a Father."

The older gent thought a second and responded, "Sir, I am also a father but I wear my collar front-ways. Why do you wear your collar so differently?"

The priest thought for a minute and said, "Sir, I am the Father for many."

The older fellow quickly answered, "I too am the father of many. I have five sons, six daughters and too many grandchildren to count... But I wear my collar like everyone else does. Why do you wear it your way?"

The priest who was beginning to get exasperated thought and then blurted out, "Sir, I am the Father for hundreds and hundreds of people."

Now the kindly old gentleman was stunned and sat silently for a long time.

As he got up to leave the subway train, he leaned over to the priest and said, "Well, sonny, perhaps, it's your pants you should wear backwards."

The Skinny Dip

A minister, a priest and a rabbi went for a hike one day. It was very hot. They were sweating and exhausted when they came upon a small lake. Since it was fairly secluded, they took off all their clothes and jumped in the water. Feeling refreshed, the trio decided to pick a few berries while enjoying their "freedom."

As they were crossing an open area, who should come along but a group of ladies from town. Unable to get to their clothes in time, the minister and the priest covered their privates and the rabbi covered his face while they ran for cover.

After the ladies had left and the men got their clothes back on, the minister and the priest asked the rabbi why he covered his face rather than his privates. The rabbi replied, "I don't know about you, but in MY congregation, it's my face they would recognize."

Is Hell Endothermic or Exothermic?

Dr. Schlambaugh, a senior lecturer at the Chemical Engineering Department, University of Oklahoma, is known for posing questions on final exams like: "Why do airplanes fly?"

In May a few years ago, the "Momentum, Heat and Mass Transfer " exam paper contained the question: "Is Hell exothermic or endothermic? Support your answer with proof."

Most students wrote proofs of their beliefs using Boyle's Law or similar. One student, however, wrote the following:

First, we must postulate that if souls exist, they must have some mass. If they do, then a mole of souls also must have a mass. So, at what rate are souls moving into hell and at what rate are souls leaving? I think we can safely assume that once a soul gets to Hell, it does not leave. Therefore, no souls are leaving.

As for souls entering Hell, let's look at the different religions that exist in the world today. Some religions say that if you are not a member of their religion, you will go to Hell. Since there are more than one of these religions, and people do not belong to more than one religion, we can project that all people and all souls go to Hell. With the birth and death rates what they are, we can expect the number of souls in Hell to increase exponentially. Now, we look at the rate of change in the volume of Hell. Boyle's Law states that in order for the temperature and pressure in Hell to stay the same, the ratio of the mass of the souls and volume needs to stay constant.

[Answer 1] So, if Hell is expanding at a slower rate than the rate at which souls enter Hell, then the temperature in Hell will increase until all Hell breaks loose.

[Answer 2] Of course, if Hell is expanding at a rate faster than the increase in souls in Hell, then the temperature and pressure will drop until Hell freezes over.

So which is it? If we accept the postulate (given to me by Teresa Banyan during freshman year) that "it'll be a cold day in Hell before I sleep with you," and taking into account that I still have not succeeded in having sexual relations with her, then [Answer 2] cannot be correct;..... thus, Hell is exothermic.

The student got the only A.

Sunday School

A mom and dad were worried about their son not wanting to learn math at the school he was in, so they decided to send him to a Catholic school. After the first day of school, their son comes racing into the house, goes straight into his bedroom and slams the door shut. Mom and dad are a little worried about this and go to his bedroom to see if he is okay. Then they find him sitting at his desk doing his homework. The boy keeps doing that for the rest of the year. At the end of the year the son brings home his report card and gives it to his mom and dad. Looking at it they see under math an A+. Mom and dad are very happy and ask the son what changed your mind about learning math? The son looked at mom and dad and said, "Well, on the first day when I walked into the classroom, I saw a guy nailed to the plus sign at the back of the room behind the teacher's desk and I knew they meant business."

Why Sex Is Better Than Church

You get better quality partners by being good at sex than by being good at religion.

Having sex doesn't make you feel guilty.

You don't have to get out of bed to have sex.

Sex is fun.

If someone is yelling at you during sex, you're probably doing it right.

The company is better.

You don't have unwanted observers judging your sincerity.

It is so interesting that you don't fall asleep until afterwards, or not at all.

Sex doesn't have so many rules.

Countries don't make war on each other for their sexual practices.

You don't have to take someone else's word on how to have sex.

The environment is more comfortable.

The memories have a higher rerun value.

You never have doubts that you're actually having sex.

Even when it's bad, it's good.

You'll never waste an afternoon arguing with someone over whether their sex life is better than yours.

You won't be ostracized for not having sex.

You don't have to worry about whether you've chosen the right kind of sex.

They don't pass around collection plates in bed.

You won't be eternally tortured in flames for not having sex, not having enough sex, or being bad at sex.

Singing is optional during sex.

You don't have to dress up for sex.

You can hope for a second coming without 2,000 years of effort.

In the throes of sexual passion, one can cry out, "Oh God! God!," but in a church service one can not cry out, "Oh Sex! Oh Sex!"

Water Games

Jesus and Moses were sitting on a bench in heaven, remembering the good old days. They talked about what they used to be able to do and wondered if they still had their old tricks in them.

So, they decided to go see if they still had extra-worldly powers like they had so many years before. The pair went to the Red Sea and Moses raised his hands and parted the sea just like he had when he was much much younger.

Jesus, clearly amazed, asked Moses, "There's so much that I did, but what could I do now to see if I still have the power?"

"Walk on water like the good old days," replied Moses.

So Jesus kicked off his sandals and stepped into the water. He took three steps on the surface and then sank under the murky waters of the Red Sea. Dumbfounded, he looked at Moses and wondered what was the matter.

"Must be those holes in your feet," Moses responded.

Divine Judgment

A drunk man who smelled like beer sat down on a subway seat next to a priest. The man's tie was stained, his face was plastered with red lipstick, and a half empty bottle of gin was sticking out of his torn coat pocket. He opened his newspaper and began reading.

After a few minutes the man turned to the priest and asked, "Say, Father, what causes arthritis?"

"My Son, it's caused by loose living, being with cheap, wicked women, too much alcohol and a contempt for your fellow man."

"Well, I'll be damned," the drunk muttered, returning to his paper.

The priest, thinking about what he had said, nudged the man and apologized.

"I'm very sorry. I didn't mean to come on so strong. How long have you had arthritis?"

"I don't have it, Father. I was just reading here that the Pope does."

A Six Year-Old Girl

One day a 6 year-old girl was sitting in a classroom. The teacher was going to explain evolution to the children. The teacher asked a little boy: Tommy do you see the tree outside?

TOMMY: Yes.

TEACHER: Tommy, do you see the grass outside?

TOMMY: Yes.

TEACHER: Go outside and look up and see if you can see the sky.

TOMMY: Okay. (He returned a few minutes later) Yes, I saw the sky.

TEACHER: Did you see God?

TOMMY: No.

TEACHER: That's my point. We can't see God because he isn't there. He doesn't exist.

A little girl spoke up and wanted to ask the boy some questions. The teacher agreed and the little girl asked the boy:

LITTLE GIRL: Do you see the tree outside?

TOMMY: Yes.

LITTLE GIRL: Tommy do you see the grass outside?

TOMMY: Yesssssss (getting tired of the questions by this time.)

LITTLE GIRL: Did you see the sky?

TOMMY: Yesssssss

LITTLE GIRL: Tommy, do you see the teacher?

TOMMY: Yes.

LITTLE GIRL: Do you see her brain?

TOMMY: No.

LITTLE GIRL: Then according to what we were taught today in school, she must not have one!

Real Motives

Preacher: Do you say your prayers at night, little boy?

Jimmy: Yes, sir.

Preacher: And do you always say them in the morning, too?

Jimmy: No, sir. I ain't scared in the daytime.

The Ants Go Marchin'

by Mark Twain

Last summer in Germany in the company of a crowd of German research scholars, I was fired by their example to do a little research of my own. I first had made about a dozen little toy churches and labeled them "Presbyterian," "Catholic," "Methodist" and so on. Then I rang a church bell and turned loose a crowd of ants I had caught. I found that the ants paid no attention whatever to my churches. This was Experiment No.1.

Experiment No.2 consisted of placing a little honey, say in the Episcopal Church, and ringing the bell. Before its notes had ceased every last one of the ants had entered the portals of the Episcopal Church. Experiment 3 was the transferring of the honey to the Methodist Church and ringing for service. The former devout Episcopalians now went over in a body to the Methodist Church. In short, in whatever church I placed the honey, there I would find the ants before I had done ringing the church bell. From these experiments there could be but one deduction, viz: that ants have intelligence.

Plagiarism

by Mark Twain

After listening to a sermon by Bishop Doane, Twain remarked "I enjoyed your sermon this morning very much. I have a book at home with every word of it." To this implied charge of plagiarism, the bishop protested. Finally he showed the clergyman an unabridged dictionary and said he "stood ready to prove it."

The Solution

by Mark Twain

During a trip in London, Mark Twain was a guest at a banquet of English scholars. The conversation drifted into a discussion of the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy. The party became divided in its opinion, and finally one desperate person turned to Mark Twain, who had not entered the discussion, and begged him to commit himself. Mark Twain replied,

"I'll wait until I get to Heaven and ask Shakespeare who did write his plays."

"I don't think, Mr. Clemens, that you will find Shakespeare in Heaven, " replied the loyal Baconite.

"Then," replied Mark Twain, "You ask him."

Horses and Rabbis

A Jewish rustic, whose soul was heavy with sin, decided to visit a rabbi in a neighboring town to ask for his intercession with God. When he returned home from this visit the rabbi of his own town asked him reproachfully: "Isn't one rabbi enough for you? Must you have two?"

"You know how it is, Rabbi," answered the farmer. "Two horses can pull a wagon out of the mud better than one!"

The Doctrine of the Feline Sedentation

How would the Church of England deal with "the cat sat on the mat" if it appeared in the Bible?

The liberal theologians would point out that such a passage did not of course mean that the cat literally sat on the mat. Also, cat and mat had different meanings in those days from today, and anyway, the text should be interpreted according to the customs and practices of the period.

This would lead to an immediate backlash from the Evangelicals. They would make it an essential condition of faith that a real physical, living cat, being a domestic pet of the Felix Domesticus species, and having a whiskered head and furry body, four legs and a tail, did physically place its whole body on a floor covering, designed for that purpose, which is on the floor but not of the floor. The expression "on the floor but not of the floor" would be explained in a leaflet.

Meanwhile, the Catholics would have developed the Festival of the Sedentation of the Blessed Cat. This would teach that the cat was white and majestically reclined on a mat of gold thread before its assumption to the Great Cat Basket of Heaven. This would be commemorated by the singing of the Magnificat, lighting three candles, and ringing a bell five times. This would cause a schism with the Orthodox Church which would believe that tradition would require Holy Cats Day [as it would be colloquially known] to be marked by lighting six candles and ringing the bell four times. This would be partly resolved by the Cuckoo Land Declaration recognizing the traditional validity of each.

Eventually, the House of Bishops would issue a statement on the Doctrine of the Feline Sedentation. It would explain that traditionally the text describes a domestic feline quadruped superjacent to an unattached covering on a fundamental surface. For determining its salvific and eschatological significations, it would follow the heuristic analytical principles adopted in dealing with the Canine Fenestration Question [How much is that doggie in the window?] and the Affirmative Musaceous Paradox [Yes, we have no bananas]. And so on, for another 210 pages.

The General Synod would then commend this report as helpful resource material for clergy to explain to the man in the pew the difficult doctrine of the cat sat on the mat.

Priest and Rabbi Meet on a Plane

The Dalai Lama once commented that we should look for what spiritual paths have in common rather than the differences. Case in point:

A Priest and a Rabbi are riding in a plane. After a while, the Priest turns to the Rabbi and asks, "Is it still a requirement of your faith that you not eat pork?"

The Rabbi responds, "Yes that is still one of our beliefs."

The Priest then asks, "Have you ever eaten pork?"

To which the Rabbi replies, "Yes on one occasion I did succumb to temptation and tasted pork."

The Priest nodded in understanding and went on with his reading.

A while later, the Rabbi spoke up and asked the Priest, "Father, is it still a requirement of your church that you remain celibate?"

The Priest replied, "Yes, that is still very much a part of our faith."

The Rabbi then asked him, "Father, have you ever fallen to the temptations of the flesh?"

The Priest replied, "Yes Rabbi, on one occasion I was weak and broke with my faith."

The Rabbi nodded understandingly for a moment and then said, "A lot better than pork isn't it?"

Jewish and Chinese Calendar

A Hebrew teacher stood in front of his classroom and said, "The Jewish people have observed their 5,759th year as a people. Consider that the Chinese, for example, have only observed their 4,692nd year as a people. What does that mean to you?"

After a moment of silence, one student raised his hand.

"Yes, David," the teacher said. "What does that mean?"

"It means that the Jews had to do without Chinese food for 1,063 years."

Church on Fire

During a recent ecumenical gathering, a secretary rushed into the meeting shouting, "The building is on fire!"

The Methodists immediately gathered in the corner and prayed.

The Baptists cried, "Where is the water?"

The Quakers quietly praised God for the blessings that fire brings.

The Lutherans posted a notice on the door, declaring the fire was evil.

The Roman Catholics passed the plate to cover the damage.

The Jews posted symbols on the doors, hoping the fire would pass.

The Congregationalists shouted, "Every man for himself!"

The Fundamentalists proclaimed, "It's the vengeance of God!"

The Episcopalians formed a procession and marched out.

The Christian Scientists concluded there was no fire.

The Presbyterians appointed a chairperson who was to appoint a committee to look into the matter and submit a written report.

The secretary grabbed the fire extinguisher and put the fire out.

Bread for Jewish New Year

As prelude to the Jewish New Year—especially its Tashlich ceremony, which rids one of an entire prior year of sins—just taking a few crumbs from whatever old bread is in the house lacks subtlety and religious sensitivity. Consider these alternatives...

For ordinary sins, use White Bread

For erotic sins, French Bread

For particularly dark sins, Pumpernickel

For complex sins, Multigrain

For twisted sins, Pretzel

For tasteless sins, Rice Cakes

For sins of indecision, Waffles

For sins committed in haste, Matzo

For sins committed in less than 18 minutes, Shmura Matzo

For sins of Chutzpah, Fresh Bread

For substance abuse, Poppy Seed

For inhaling, Stoned Wheat

For committing arson, Toast

For committing auto theft, Caraway

For being ill/tempered, Sourdough

For silliness, Nut Bread

For not giving full value, Short Bread

For war/mongering, Kaiser Rolls

For immodest dressing, Tarts

For causing injury or damage to others, Torts

For promiscuity, Hot Buns

For davening off tune, Flat Bread

For being holier than thou, Bagels

For unfairly upbraiding another, Challa

For trashing the environment, Dumplings

For sins of laziness, Any Very Long loaf

For sins of pride, Puff Pastry

For sins of the righteous, Angel Food Cake

For selling your soul, Devil's Food Cake

For lust in your heart, Wonder Bread

Irish Postage Stamps

A Woman went to the Post Office to buy stamps for her Christmas cards.

"What denomination?" Asked the clerk.

"Oh, good heavens! Have we come to this?" said the woman. "Well give me 50 Protestant and 50 Catholic ones."

10 Commandments

A student was asked to list the 10 Commandments in any order.

His answer? "3, 6, 1, 8, 4, 5, 9, 2, 10, 7."

Dead Sea Gull

I was at the beach with my children when my four-year-old son ran up to me, grabbed my hand, and led me to the shore, where a sea gull lay dead in the sand.

"Mommy, what happened to him?" the little boy asked. "He died and went to Heaven," I replied.

My son thought a moment and then said, "And God threw him back down?"

Cartoonist

Bill Keane, creator of the Family Circus cartoon strip tells of a time when he was penciling one of his cartoons and his son Jeffy said, "Daddy, how do you know what to draw?"

I said, "God tells me."

Jeffy said, "Then why do you keep erasing parts of it?"

Traditional Values

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (AP) -- NASA engineers and mathematicians in this high-tech city are stunned and infuriated after the Alabama state legislature narrowly passed a law yesterday redefining pi, a mathematical constant used in the aerospace industry. The bill to change the value of pi to exactly three was introduced without fanfare by Leonard Lee Lawson (R, Crossville), and rapidly gained support after a letter-writing campaign by members of the Solomon Society, a traditional values group. Governor Fob James says he will sign it into law on Wednesday.

The law took the state's engineering community by surprise. "It would have been nice if they had consulted with someone who actually uses pi," said Marshall Bergman, a manager at the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization. According to Bergman, pi

is a Greek letter that signifies the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter. It is often used by engineers to calculate missile trajectories.

Prof. Kim Johanson, a mathematician from University of Alabama, said that pi is a universal constant, and cannot arbitrarily be changed by lawmakers. Johanson explained that pi is an irrational number, which means that it has an infinite number of digits after the decimal point and can never be known exactly. Nevertheless, she said, pi is precisely defined by mathematics to be "3.14159, plus as many more digits as you have time to calculate."

"I think that it is the mathematicians that are being irrational, and it is time for them to admit it," said Lawson. "The Bible very clearly says in I Kings 7:23 that the alter font of Solomon's Temple was ten cubits across and thirty cubits in diameter, and that it was round in compass."

Lawson called into question the usefulness of any number that cannot be calculated exactly, and suggested that never knowing the exact answer could harm students' self-esteem. "We need to return to some absolutes in our society," he said, "the Bible does not say that the font was thirty-something cubits. Plain reading says thirty cubits. Period."

Science supports Lawson, explains Russell Humbleys, a propulsion technician at the Marshall Spaceflight Center who testified in support of the bill before the legislature in Montgomery on Monday. "Pi is merely an artifact of Euclidean geometry."

Humbleys is working on a theory, which he says will prove that pi is determined by the geometry of three-dimensional space, which is assumed by physicists to be "isotropic," or the same in all directions. "There are other geometries, and pi is different in every one of them," says Humbleys. Scientists have arbitrarily assumed that space is Euclidean, he says. He points out that a circle drawn on a spherical surface has a different value for the ratio of circumference to diameter. "Anyone with a compass, flexible ruler, and globe can see for themselves," suggests Humbleys, "it's not exactly rocket science."

Roger Learned, a Solomon Society member who was in Montgomery to support the bill, agrees. He said that pi is nothing more than an assumption by the mathematicians and engineers who were there to argue against the bill. "These nabobs waltzed into the capital with an arrogance that was breathtaking," Learned said. "Their prefatorial deficit resulted in a polemical stance at absolute contraposition to the legislature's puissance."

Some education experts believe that the legislation will affect the way math is taught to Alabama's children. One member of the state school board, Lily Ponja, is anxious to get the new value of pi into the state's math textbooks, but thinks that the old value should be retained as an alternative. She said, "As far as I am concerned, the value of pi is only a theory, and we should be open to all interpretations." She looks forward to students having the freedom to decide for themselves what value pi should have.

Robert S. Dietz, a professor at Arizona State University who has followed the controversy, wrote that this is not the first time a state legislature has attempted to redefine the value of pi. A legislator in the state of Indiana unsuccessfully attempted to have that state set the value of pi to three. According to Dietz, the lawmaker was exasperated by the calculations of a mathematician who carried pi to four hundred decimal places and still could not achieve a rational number.

Many experts are warning that this is just the beginning of a national battle over pi between traditional values supporters and the technical elite. Solomon Society member Lawson agrees. "We just want to return pi to its traditional value," he said, "which, according to the Bible, is three."

Jesus Hears about Christology

Jesus said, "Whom do men say that I am?"

And his disciples answered and said, "Some say you are John the Baptist returned from the dead; others say Elias, or other of the old prophets."

And Jesus answered and said, "But whom do you say that I am?"

Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Logos, existing in the Father as His rationality and then, by an act of His will, being generated, in consideration of the various functions by which God is related to his creation, but only on the fact that Scripture speaks of a Father, and a Son, and a Holy Spirit, each member of the Trinity being co-equal with every other member, and each acting inseparably with and interpenetrating every other member, with only an economic subordination within God, but causing no division which would make the substance no longer simple."

And Jesus, answering, said, "What?"

The Irishman at the Pub

An Irishman walks into a bar in Dublin, orders three pints of Guinness and sits in the back of the room, drinking a sip out of each one in turn. When he finishes them, he comes back to the bar and orders three more.

The bartender says, "You know, a pint goes flat after I draw it; it would taste better if you bought one at a time." The Irishman replies, "Well, you see, I have two brothers. One is in America, the other in Australia, and I'm here in Dublin. When we all left home, we promised that we'd drink this way to remember the days when we drank together." The bartender admits that this is a nice custom, and leaves it at that. The Irishman becomes a regular in the bar, and always drinks the same way: He orders three pints and drinks them in turn.

One day, he comes in and orders two pints. All the other regulars notice and fall silent. When he comes back to the bar for the second round, the bartender says, "I don't want to intrude on your grief, but I wanted to offer my condolences on your great loss."

The Irishman looks confused for a moment, then a light dawns in his eye and he laughs. "Oh, no," he says, "everyone's fine. I've just quit drinking."

Synagogue Dog

While leading the Friday evening services, the Rabbi noticed a member of the congregation, Bernie, walk in with a St. Bernard dog. The Rabbi, horrified, asked the Cantor to continue the service and went to talk to Bernie.

Rabbi: "What are doing here with a dog?"

Bernie: "The dog came here to pray."

"Oh, come on." says the Rabbi.

"YES!" says Bernie.

Rabbi: "I don't believe you. You are just fooling around; that's not a proper thing to do in temple."

Bernie: "Its true!."

"Ok," says the Rabbi (thinking he would call Bernie's bluff), "then show me what the dog can do."

"OK" says Bernie nodding to the dog...The dog proceeds to open up the barrel under his neck and removes a yarmulke, a tallis, and prayer book and actually starts saying prayers... in Hebrew! The Rabbi is so shocked he listens for a full 15 minutes.

When the Rabbi regains his composure, he is so impressed with the quality of the praying he says to Bernie. "Do you think your dog would consider going to Rabbinical school????"

Bernie, throwing up his hands in disgust says, "YOU talk to him!!! He wants to be a doctor!"

God Scandal

Turmoil rocked Heaven this morning as allegations arose that God had had an affair with a former worshipper. The scandal was begun when a 21 year old woman, known only as Mary, claimed that she had given birth to God's "only son" last week in a barn in the hamlet of Bethlehem.

Sources close to Mary claim that she "had loved God for a long time," that she was constantly talking about her relationship with God, and that she was "thrilled to have had his child." In a press conference this morning, God issued a vehement denial, saying that "No sexual relationship existed," and that "the facts of this story will come out in time, verily."

Independent counsel Kenneth Beelzebub immediately filed a brief with the Justice department to expand his investigation to cover questions of whether any commandments may have been broken, and whether God had illegally funneled laundered money to his illegitimate child through three foreign operatives know only as the "Wise Men." Beelzebub has issued subpoenas to several angels who are rumored to have acted as go-betweens in the affair.

Critics have pointed out that these allegations have little to do with the charges that Beelzebub was originally appointed to investigate, that God had created large-scale flooding in order to cover up evidence of a failed land deal.

In recent months, Beelzebub's investigation has already been expanded to cover questions surrounding the large number of locusts that plagued God's political opponents in the last election, as well as to claims that the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah was to divert attention away from a scandal involving whether the giveaway of a parcel of public land in Promised County to a Jewish special interest group was quid pro quo for political contributions.

If these allegations prove to be true, then this could be a huge blow to God's career, much of which has been spent crusading for stricter moral standards and harsher punishments for wrongdoers. Indeed, God recently outlined a "tough-on-crime" plan consisting of a series of 10 "Commandments," which has been introduced in Congress in a bill by Rep. Moses. Critics of the bill have pointed out that it lacks any provisions for the rehabilitation of criminals, and lawyers for the ACLU are planning to fight the "Name in Vain" Commandment as being an unconstitutional restriction on free speech.

Promotions

A Catholic priest and a Rabbi are talking about job prospects:

"Well," says the priest, "there's a good chance that I'll be the next Bishop - maybe within the next couple of years."

"Bishop!" marvels the Rabbi, "very nice. And after that?"

"Oh, I don't know, I suppose it's possible I could become Archbishop... given luck, and God's blessing."

"Very nice, very nice; and after Archbishop?"

"Ha! Well, you know, it's Cardinal after that, but it's really very unlikely. But in theory, I could become a Cardinal."

"Lovely!" enthuses the Rabbi, "the scarlet would suit your complexion. So what's after Cardinal?"

The priest smiles: "After Cardinal? Well, it's Pope - but I'm hardly likely to become... hmmm, oh I suppose it's just possible. If a Pole why not an Englishman again? Yes, I could just become Pope."

The Rabbi is delighted, "Splendid! And after Pope?"

The priest looks at him in surprise: "After Pope? There's nothing after Pope! I mean, there's just God above the Pope - I can't become God."

"So why not? One of our boys made it."

Good Question

Moses made a third pilgrimage to Mount Sinai. After much climbing he arrived at the burning bush and removed his sandals. Kneeling down, he said a prayer of entreaty:

"Oh mighty God, your people have sent me back to ask you a question about the Ten Commandments."

"What question do they have?" roared the deity above.

"They want to know, are they listed by priority?"

Theology vs. Astronomy

A theologian and an astronomer were talking together one day. The astronomer said that after reading widely in the field of religion, he had concluded that all religion could be summed up in a single phrase.

"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," he said, with a bit of smugness, knowing that his field is so much more complex.

After a brief pause, the theologian replied that after reading widely in the area of astronomy he had concluded that all of it could be summed up in a single phrase also.

"Oh, and what is that?" the astronomer inquired.

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star; how I wonder what you are!"

He Could Have Been a Doctor or a Lawyer

A Jewish father was troubled by the way his son turned out, and went to see his Rabbi about it.

"I brought him up in the faith, gave him a very expensive bar mitzvah, cost me a fortune to educate him. Then he tells me last week he has decided to be a Christian! Rabbi, where did I go wrong?"

"Funny you should come to me," said the Rabbi. "Like you I, too, brought my boy up in the faith, put him through University, cost me a fortune, then one day he, too, tells me he has decided to become a Christian."

"What did you do?" asked the father.

"I turned to God for the answer," replied the Rabbi.

"And what did he say?" pressed the father.

"God said, 'Funny you should come to me...' "

Sports Car

After years of hard work, a man who has finally made his way in business decides to treat himself and buys an extravagance: A new Lamborghini. However, after buying it, he feels a bit guilty. So, he goes to the Rabbi of the Orthodox synagogue in his town and asks for a mezuzah (a parchment scroll placed over the doorway to bless a Jewish home) for the Lamborghini.

"You want a mezuzah for what?" the Rabbi asks.

"It's a Lamborghini," the man replies.

"What's a Lamborghini?" asks the Rabbi.

"A car, an Italian sports car."

"What? That is blasphemy!" the Rabbi shouts. "You want a mezuzah for a sports car? Go to the Conservatives!"

Well, the man is reluctant, so he waits a few days but finally goes to the Conservative Rabbi and asks for a mezuzah.

"You want a mezuzah for what?" the Rabbi asks.

"It's a Lamborghini," the man replies.

"What's a Lamborghini?" asks the Rabbi.

"A car, an Italian sports car."

"What? That is blasphemy!" the Rabbi shouts. "You want a mezuzah for a sports car? Go to the Reformed!"

Again, the man feels guilty, but finally he breaks down and goes to the Reformed Rabbi.

"Rabbi," he asks, "I'd like a mezuzah for my Lamborghini."

"You have a Lamborghini?" asks the Rabbi.

"You know what it is?"

"Of course! It's a fantastic Italian sports car! Can I see it?"

They go out and the Rabbi carefully looks over the entire car, finally settling into the driver's seat.

"Well, this is fantastic," the Rabbi tells the man. "I have only one question."

"What's that?"

"What's a mezuzah?"

Actual Personals From Israeli Newspapers

- Attractive Jewish woman, 35, college graduate, seeks successful Jewish Prince Charming to get me out of my parents' house. POB 46
- Shul Gabbai, 36. I take out the Torah Saturday morning. Would like to take you out Saturday night. Please write. POB 81
- Couch potato latke, in search of the right applesauce. Let's try it for eight days. Who knows? POB 43.
- Divorced Jewish man, seeks partner to attend shul with, light Shabbat candles, celebrate holidays, build Succah together, attend brisses, barmitzvahs. Religion not important. POB 658
- Orthodox woman with gelt, seeks man who got gelt, or can get gelt. Get it? I'll show you mine, if you show me yours. POB 72
- Sincere rabbinical student, 27. Enjoys Yom Kippur, Tisha B'av, Taanis Esther, Tzom Gedaliah, Asarah B'Teves, Shiva Asar B'Tammuz. Seeks companion for living life in the "fast" lane. POB 90.
- Yeshiva bochur, Torah scholar, long beard, payos. Seeks same in woman. POB 43.
- Worried about in-law meddling? I'm an orphan! Write. POB 74.
- Nice Jewish guy, 38. No skeletons. No baggage. No personality. POB 76
- Female graduate student, studying kaballah, Zohar, exorcism of dybbuks, seeks mensch. No weirdos, please. POB 56.
- Staunch Jewish feminist, wears tzitzis, seeking male who will accept my independence, although you probably will not. Oh, just forget it. POB 435.
- Jewish businessman, 49, manufactures Sabbath candles, Chanukah candles, havdalah candles, Yahrzeit candles. Seeks non-smoker. POB 787.
- Israeli professor, 41, with 18 years of teaching in my behind. Looking for American-born woman who speaks English very good. POB 555.
- 80-year-old bubby, no assets, seeks handsome, virile Jewish male, under 35. Object matrimony. I can dream, can't I? POB 545.
- I am a sensitive Jewish prince whom you can open your heart to. Share your innermost thoughts and deepest secrets. Confide in me. I'll understand your insecurities. No fatties, please. POB 86.
- Jewish male, 34, very successful, smart, independent, self-made. Looking for girl whose father will hire me. POB 53.
- Desperately seeking shmoozing! Retired senior citizen desires female companion 70+ for kvetching, kvelling, and krechtzing. Under 30 is also OK. POB 64

Wisdom of the Internet

I got the following stories from this web-site on April 11, 2002.
http://www.storybin.com/sponsor.html

The Talking Clock

While proudly showing off his new apartment to friends, a college student led the way into the den.

"What is the big brass gong and hammer for?" one of his friends asked.

"That is the talking clock," the student replied.

"How's it work?" the friend asked.

"Watch," the kid says, then proceeds to give the gong an ear shattering pound with the hammer.

Suddenly someone screams from the other side of the wall, *"Knock it off, you ass! It's two am!"*

The Car Dealership:

In the late 70s, when American cars were not in such a great demand, this guy owned a Chrysler dealership in a small town in the Midwest. This guy was not doing so well. He saw his competitors, selling Hondas, Toyotas and other Japanese cars, with customers lining up to buy their small gas efficient vehicles, while he whiled away his time pining for even one person to enter his dealership to examine his gas-guzzlers. Anyway, one day he went fishing and caught this little goldfish who, to his surprise, said, "Please sir, I am a special fish with magical powers. Let me go and I'll give you one wish." The guy thought to himself, "What have I to lose?" and let the fish go free. The fish thanked him and told him to write his wish on a piece of paper and put it under his pillow and sleep on it. In the morning his wish would be fulfilled. So that night the guy wrote, "I wish to own an foreign car dealership in a large cosmopolitan city." He put the paper under his pillow and the last thing he thought of before going to sleep is, "Here goes nothing." Next morning he woke up in Tokyo owning a Chrysler dealership.

A Happy Cat

There is a story told about a cat who discovered that happiness was in his tail. He kept trying over and over to get it, but all he could do was run around in circles. Exhausted and frustrated, with this endless pursuit,, he eventually stopped. And then, he discovered that if he'd just go on about his life then it would follow him wherever he went.

The Sacred Rac

(Anthology Abstracts, June 21, 1989, Vol. IX No.12)

An Indian anthropologist, Chandra Thapar, made a study of foreign culture, which had customs similar to those of his native land. One culture in particular fascinated him because it reveres one animal as sacred, much as the people in India revere the cow.

The tribe Dr. Thapar studied is called the Asu and is found on the American continent north of the Tarahumara of Mexico. Though it seems to be a highly developed society of its type, it has an overwhelming preoccupation with the care and feeding of the rac -- an animal much like a bull in size, strength and temperament. In the Asu tribe, it is almost a social obligation to own at least one if not more racs. Anyone not possessing at least one is held in low esteem by the community because he is too poor to maintain one of these beasts properly. Some members of the tribe, to display their wealth and social prestige, even own herds of racs.

Unfortunately the rac breed is not very healthy and usually does not live more than five to seven years, for it has a tendency to throw its shoes often. There are rac specialists in each community, perhaps more than one if the community is particularly wealthy. These specialists however, due to the long period of ritual training they must undergo and to the difficulty of obtaining the right selection of charms to treat the rac, demand costly offerings whenever a tribesman must treat his ailing rac.

At the age of sixteen in many Asu communities, many youths undergo a puberty rite in which the rac figures prominently. The youth must petition a high priest in a grand temple. He is then initiated into the ceremonies that surround the care of the rac and is permitted to keep a rac.

Although the rac may be used as a beast of burden, it has many habits, which would be considered by other cultures as harmful to the life of the society. In the first place the rac breed is increasing at a very rapid rate and the Asu tribesmen have given no thought to limiting the rac population. As a consequence the Asu must build more and more paths for the rac to travel on since its delicate health and its love of racing other racs at high speeds necessitates that special areas be set aside for its use. The cost of smoothing the earth is too costly for any one individual to undertake; so it has become a community project and each tribesman must pay an annual tax to build new paths and maintain the old. There are so many paths needed that some people move their homes because the rac paths must be as straight as possible to keep the animal from injuring itself. Dr. Thapar also noted that unlike the cow, which many people in his country hold sacred, the excrement of the rac cannot be used as either fuel or fertilizer. On the contrary, its excrement is exceptionally foul and totally useless.

Worst of all, the rac is prone to stampedes in which it runs down anything in its path, much like stampeding cattle. Estimates are that the rac kills thousands of the Asu in a year.

Despite the high cost of its upkeep, the damage it does to the land, and its habit of destructive stampedes, the Asu still regard it as being essential to the survival of their culture.

Need help figuring out who this strange tribe is?

Sleeping Through the Storm

A young man applied for a job as a farmhand. When the farmer asked for his qualifications, he said, "I can sleep when the wind blows."

This puzzled the farmer. But he liked the young man, and hired him.

A few days later, the farmer and his wife were awakened in the night by a violent storm. They quickly began to check things out to see if all was secure. They found that the shutters of the farmhouse had been securely fastened. A good supply of logs had been set next to the fireplace.

The young man slept soundly.

The farmer and his wife then inspected their property. They found that the farm tools had been placed in the storage shed, safe from the elements.

The tractor had been moved into the garage. The barn was properly locked. Even the animals were calm. All was well.

The farmer then understood the meaning of the young man's words, "I can sleep when the wind blows."

Sandcastles

Hot sun. Salty air. Rhythmic waves. A little boy is on the beach. On his knees he scoops and packs the sand with plastic shovels into a bright red bucket. Then he upends the bucket on the surface and lifts it. And, to the delight of the little architect, a castle tower is created.

All afternoon he will work. Spooning out the moat. Packing the walls. Bottle tops will be sentries. Popsicle sticks will be bridges. A sandcastle will be built.

Big city. Busy streets. Rumbling traffic.

A man is in his office. At his desk he shuffles papers into stacks and delegates assignments. He cradles the phone on his shoulder and punches the keyboard with his fingers. Numbers are juggled and contracts are signed and much to the delight of the man, a profit is made.

All his life he will work. Formulating the plans. Forecasting the future. Annuities will be sentries. Capital gains will be bridges. An empire will be built.

Two builders of two castles. They have much in common. They shape granules into grandeurs. They see nothing and make something. They are diligent and determined. And for both the tide will rise and the end will come.

Yet that is where the similarities cease. For the boy sees the end while the man ignores it. Watch the boy as the dusk approaches.

As the waves near, the wise child jumps to his feet and begins to clap. There is no sorrow. No fear. No regret. He knew this would happen. He is not surprised. And when the great breaker crashes into his castle and his masterpiece is sucked into the sea, he smiles. He smiles, picks up his tools, takes his father's hand, and goes home.

The grownup, however, is not so wise. As the wave of years collapses on his castle he is terrified. He hovers over the sandy monument to protect it. He blocks the waves from the walls he has made. Salt-water soaked and shivering he snarls at the incoming tide.

"It's my castle," he defies.

The ocean need not respond. Both know to whom the sand belongs...

And I don't know much about sandcastles. But children do. Watch them and learn. Go ahead and build, but build with a child's heart. When the sunsets and the tides take - applaud. Salute the process of life and go home.

The Lumber Jack

A young man approached the foreman of a logging crew and asked for a job.

"That depends," replied the foreman. "Let's see you fell this tree."

The young man stepped forward, and skillfully felled a great tree. Impressed, the foreman exclaimed, "You can start Monday."

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday rolled by -- and Thursday afternoon the foreman approached the young man and said, "You can pick up your paycheck on the way out today."

Startled, the young man replied, "I thought you paid on Friday."

"Normally we do," said the foreman. "But we're letting you go today because you've fallen behind. Our daily felling charts show that you've dropped from first place on Monday to last place today."

"But I'm a hard worker," the young man objected. "I arrive first, leave last, and even have worked through my coffee breaks!"

The foreman, sensing the young man's integrity, thought for a minute and then asked, "Have you been sharpening your ax?"

The young man replied, "No sir, I've been working too hard to take time for that!"

Our lives are like that. We sometimes get so busy that we don't take time to "sharpen the ax." In today's world, it seems that everyone is busier than ever, but less happy than ever. Why is that? Could it be that we have forgotten how to stay sharp?

The Fence

There once was a little boy who had a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence.

The first day the boy had driven six nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence.

Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper.

The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone.

The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, “You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say I'm sorry, the wound is still there. A verbal wound is as bad as a physical one. “

The Four Philanthropists

There is a story about a village, which was overtaken by enemy forces. All of the warriors who inhabited the village were gathered together and imprisoned by the conquerors.

Amidst the villagers were four philanthropists who became aware of the prison conditions that their compatriots were enduring. The first philanthropist went to the prison and said to the captors, "I understand that my brothers are without clean water. I want to take all my riches, and use them to purify the water, so that my brothers will have clean water, that they will not get sick." The captors agreed and granted the man this right. He walked away, feeling that he had fulfilled his destiny in doing this act of charity for his brothers.

The second philanthropist went to the prison, and approached the captors, saying "I understand my brothers are sleeping on rocks. I want to take all my riches, and provide bedding for the men, so they may rest comfortably in prison." The captors agreed, and the man left, feeling that he had fulfilled his purpose in aiding his brothers' plight.

The third philanthropist went to the prison, and spoke to the captors, saying "I have heard that my brothers have no food. They have only bread and water. I have a large farm, and want to harvest all my crops to see that the men have good food to eat while they are in prison." The captors agreed, and the philanthropist left, knowing he had done much good in helping his brothers in prison.

The fourth philanthropist ~ a wise man of higher awareness ~ found the keys to the prison. One night, he slipped into the prison and freed all his brothers from their captivity.

The Fisherman

One day a fisherman was lying on a beautiful beach, with his fishing pole propped up in the sand and his solitary line cast out into the sparkling blue surf. He was enjoying the warmth of the afternoon sun and the hope of catching a fish.

About that time, a businessman came walking down the beach trying to relieve some of the stress of his workday. He noticed the fisherman sitting on the beach and decided to find out why this fisherman was fishing instead of working hard to make a living for himself and his family.

"You're not going to catch many fish that way," said the businessman, "You should be working harder rather than lying on the beach!"

The fisherman looked up, smiled and replied, "And what will my reward be?"

"Well, you can get bigger nets and catch more fish!" was the businessman's answer.

"And then what will my reward be?" asked the fisherman, still smiling.

The businessman replied, "You will make money and you'll be able to buy a boat, which will then result in larger catches of fish!"

"And then what will my reward be?" asked the fisherman again.

The businessman was beginning to get a little irritated with the fisherman's questions. "You can buy a bigger boat, and hire some people to work for you!" he said.

"And then what will my reward be?"

The businessman was getting angry. "Don't you understand? You can build up a fleet of fishing boats, sail all over the world, and let your employees catch fish for you!"

Once again the fisherman asked, "And then what will my reward be?"

The businessman was red with rage and shouted at the fisherman, "Don't you understand that you can become so rich that you will never have to work for your living again! You can spend all the rest of your days sitting on this beach, looking at the sunset. You won't have a care in the world!"

The fisherman, still smiling, looked up and said, "And what do you think I'm doing right now?"

The Pit

A man fell into a pit and couldn't get himself out.

A subjective person came along and said, "I feel for you down there."

An objective person came along and said, "It's logical that someone would fall down there."

A Christian Scientist came along and said, "You only think you're in the pit."

Confucius said, "If you would have listened to me you wouldn't be in that pit."

Buddha said, "You're pit is only a state of mind."

A realist said, "That's a pit."

A scientist calculated the pressure necessary, pounds and square inches, to get him out of the pit.

A geologist told him to appreciate and study the rock strata.

An evolutionist said, "You are a rejected mutant destined to be removed from the evolutionary cycle, in other words he is going to die in the pit so he can't produce any more pit falling offspring."

The game warden said,"Did you have a permit to dig that pit?"

A professor lectured him on elementary principles of the pit.

A self-pitying person said, "You haven't seen anything until you've seen my pit."

An optimist said, "Things could get worse."

A pessimist said, "Things are going to get worse."

A friend saw the man in the pit, took him by the hand and lifted him out.

A Tale of Tradition

A hard working Chinese rice farmer was supporting his children, wife, and his aging father. He worked long and hard each day, and still, he was barely making enough to feed his children and wife.

One day, he stopped working for the entire day. Instead he built a small cart out of wood he had. The next day he went to his aging father, and insisted that the old man was no longer able to help the family. He was only eating and taking up precious resources. So, he loaded him into the newly built cart, and headed up a nearby mountain.

When he got to the top, he stopped, and aimed the cart facing down the mountain, but before he could roll the cart towards a cliff, his father stopped him saying, "wait, son, I can understand what you are doing, and even why you are doing it, but please save the cart, your son will need it."

A Tale For All Seasons

by Kurt Kauter

"Tell me the weight of a snowflake," a coal-mouse asked a wild dove.

"Nothing more than nothing," was the answer.

"In that case, I must tell you a marvelous story," the coal-mouse said.

"I sat on the branch of a fir, close to its trunk, when it began to snow-not heavily, not in a raging blizzard-no, just like a dream, without a sound and without any violence. Since I did not have anything better to do, I counted the snowflakes settling on the twigs and needles of my branch. Their number was exactly 3,741,952. When the 3,741,953rd dropped onto the branch, nothing more than nothing, as you, say-the branch broke off."

Having said that, the coal-mouse flew away.

The dove, since Noah's time an authority on the matter, thought about the story for a while, and finally said to herself, "Perhaps there is only one person's voice lacking for peace to come to the world."

The Window

Two men, both seriously ill, occupied the same hospital room. One man was allowed to sit up in his bed for an hour each afternoon to help drain the fluid from his lungs. His bed was next to the room's only window.

The other man had to spend all his time flat on his back. The men talked for hours on end. They spoke of their wives and families, their homes, their jobs, their involvement in the military service, where they had been on vacation. And every afternoon

when the man in the bed by the window could sit up, he would pass the time by describing to his roommate all the things he could see outside the window.

The man in the other bed began to live for those one-hour periods where his world would be broadened and enlivened by all the activity and color of the world outside. The window overlooked a park with a lovely lake. Ducks and swans played on the water while children sailed their model boats. Young lovers walked arm in arm amidst flowers of every color of the rainbow. Grand old trees graced the landscape, and a fine view of the city skyline could be seen in the distance.

As the man by the window described all this in exquisite detail, the man on the other side of the room would close his eyes and imagine the picturesque scene. One warm afternoon the man by the window described a parade passing by. Although the other man couldn't hear the band - he could see it in his mind's eye as the gentleman by the window portrayed it with descriptive words. Then unexpectedly, a sinister thought entered his mind. Why should the other man alone experience all the pleasures of seeing everything while he himself never got to see anything? It didn't seem fair.

At first thought the man felt ashamed. But as the days passed and he missed seeing more sights, his envy eroded into resentment and soon turned him sour. He began to brood and he found himself unable to sleep. He should be by that window - that thought, and only that thought now controlled his life.

Late one night as he lay staring at the ceiling, the man by the window began to cough. He was choking on the fluid in his lungs. The other man watched in the dimly lit room as the struggling man by the window groped for the button to call for help.

Listening from across the room he never moved, never pushed his own button, which would have brought the nurse running in. In less than five minutes the coughing and choking stopped, along with that the sound of breathing. Now there was only silence - deathly silence.

The following morning the day nurse arrived to bring water for their baths. When she found the lifeless body of the man by the window, she was saddened and called the hospital attendants to take it away. As soon as it seemed appropriate, the other man asked if he could be moved next to the window. The nurse was happy to make the switch, and after making sure he was comfortable, she left him alone. Slowly, painfully, he propped himself up on one elbow to take his first look at the world outside. Finally, he would have the joy of seeing it all himself. He strained to slowly turn to look out the window beside the bed.

It faced a blank wall!

The man asked the nurse what could have compelled his deceased roommate who had described such wonderful things outside this window. The nurse responded that the man was blind and could not even see the wall. She said, "Perhaps he just wanted to encourage you."

Wanting God

A hermit was meditating by a river when a young man interrupted him.

"Master, I wish to become your disciple," said the man.

"Why?" replied the hermit.

The young man thought for a moment. "Because I want to find God."

The master jumped up, grabbed him by the scruff of his neck, dragged him into the river, and plunged his head under water. After holding him there for a minute, with him kicking and struggling to free himself, the master finally pulled him up out of the river. The young man coughed up water and gasped to get his breath.

When he eventually quieted down, the master spoke. "Tell me, what did you want most of all when you were under water."

"Air!" answered the man.

"Very well," said the master. "Go home and come back to me when you want God as much as you just wanted air."

Plant Your Garden Today

Plant your garden today
First, plant 3 rows of peas;
Patience
Promptness
Prayer
Next, plant 3 rows of squash;
Squash gossip
Squash indifference
Squash criticism
Then, plant 4 rows of lettuce;
Let us obey the good laws
Let us be Loyal
Let us be true to our Obligations
Let us be unselfish
Finish, with 4 rows of turnip;
Turn up when Needed
Turn up with a Smile
Turn up with a Vision
Turn up with Determination

A Persian Proverb

He who knows not,
And knows not that he knows not,
Is a fool - shun him.
He who knows not,
And knows that he knows not,
Is a child - teach him.
He who knows,
And knows not that he knows,
Is asleep - wake him.
He who knows,
And knows that he knows,
Is wise - follow him.

The Desiderata

Go placidly amid the noise and the haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to the dull and the ignorant; they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexatious to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery.

But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars and you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore, be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be. And whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace with your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

On Responsibility

Responsibility is the ability to fulfill one's needs and to do so in such a way that one does not deprive others of the opportunity of fulfilling their needs. A responsible person does that which gives him a feeling that he is worthwhile to himself and others. Acquiring responsibility is a very complicated, life-long, process. This ability must be learned.

If a person is not involved with others who care enough about him to give love and discipline, then he will not learn responsibility. Children "test" with irresponsible behavior. Through discipline tempered with love, the child learns someone cares. Before an irresponsible student can accept discipline, he must feel certain the teacher/counselor cares enough to show him the responsible way to behave.

The teacher/counselor often must suffer the pain of the student's intense anger by firmly holding the student to the responsible course of action. If firmness is not constant, the student will repeat his patterns of irresponsibility. A person gains self-respect through discipline, closeness to others through love. Discipline must contain the element of love, which says, "I care enough about you to confront you to behave in a more responsible manner."

Reflections Of The Sky Nation

The Thunder-beings were busy giving birth to new clouds, sending them to dance in the blue playground of sky. Grandfather Sun provided the glittering sunbeams, which acted like jump ropes for today's newborn white, puffy Cloud People.

One of the most curious little clouds wandered off on the winds. She decided she was going to have a talk with Sacred Mountain. "Grandmother Mountain, I've come to ask you if your forests need rain today," she said. "I want to be of service, and so I thought I had better find out what is needed most."

Sacred Mountain told the little cloud that there was plenty of moisture today, but the little one could help in another way. Sacred Mountain taught the little cloud how to understand the thoughts and questions that the human beings were having. It was fun for the little cloud to capture the waves of human thoughts rising from the Earth and to answer the humans' unspoken questions by becoming shapes that formed a series of ideas. The needed answers were found through the linking ideas.

The little cloud approached Sacred Mountain at the end of the day with another question that caused Cloud to have a heavy heart, "Grandmother Mountain, I've worked all day to reflect helpful answers to the Human Tribe, but now I have one very important question. How can we get them to look up and pay attention?

Walking on water

Three monks decided to practice meditation together. they sat by the side of a lake and closed their eyes in concentration. Then suddenly, the first one stood up and said, "I forgot my mat." He steeped miraculously onto the water in front of him and walked across the lake to their hut on the other side.

When he returned, the second monk stood up and said, "I forgot to put my the other underwear to dry." He too walked calmly across the water and returned the same way. The third monk watched the first two carefully in what he decided must be the test of his own abilities. "Is your learning so superior to mine? I too can match any feat you two can perform," he declared loudly and rushed to the water's edge to walk across it. He promptly fell into the deep water.

Undeterred, the third monk climbed out of the water and tried again, only to sink into the water. Yet again he climbed out and yet again he tried, each time sinking into the water. This went on for some time as the other two monks watched.

After a while, the second monk turned to the first and said, "Do you think we should tell him where the stones are?"

The first monk said, “What stones?”

Wise Blind Elephants

Six wise, blind elephants were discussing what humans were like. Failing to agree, they decided to determine what humans were like by direct experience.

The first wise, blind elephant felt the human, and declared, "Humans are flat."

The other wise, blind elephants, after similarly feeling the human, agreed.

The Other Side

One day a young Buddhist on his journey home, came to the banks of a wide river. Staring hopelessly at the great obstacle in front of him, he pondered for hours on just how to cross such a wide barrier. Just as he was about to give up his pursuit to continue his journey he saw a great teacher on the other side of the river. The young Buddhist yells over to the teacher "Oh wise one, can you tell me how to get to the other side of this river"?

The teacher ponders for a moment looks up and down the river and yells back "My son, you are on the other side."

Reality?

Location is an art gallery.

Artist: That, sir, is a cow grazing.

Visitor: Where is the grass?

Artist: The cow has eaten it.

Visitor: But where is the cow?

Artist: You don't suppose she'd be fool enough to stay there after she'd eaten all the grass, do you?

Falling Hazelnuts of Wisdom

These were collected by RDNA Druids and published on my web page between April 2000 and July 2002.

Cats in the Corner

from Alyx in CO

There was a master in a monastery that had about thirty disciples. They used to

conduct meditation, prayer, and other spiritual exercises. The master loved cats, and therefore had a cat in his monastery. During meditation, the cat would run around disturbing the meditation. The disciples complained to the master, so the master tied the cat in the corner of the meditation hall during meditation time, in order that it would not cause a disturbance.

Thus, things went on. During meditation, the cat would be tied in the corner, while at other times it was free to roam. Several years later the master died, but the cat remained, and the disciples continued to tie the cat in the corner during meditation.

Eventually, the disciples changed; the new disciples did not know why there was a cat inside the hall during meditation, but they nevertheless continued to tie it in the corner at the appropriate time. And when in time the cat died, they went and bought a new one, and tied that one in the corner during meditation time, too.

As time went by the group grew and founded new monasteries. The new master, though he did not know the origin of the cat in the corner, said that it helped the meditation and therefore declared, "Let us have a cat tied in the corner during meditation time in all our monasteries." So in all of their monasteries, there was a cat tied in the corner during meditation time.

Soon many learned treatises were being written about the spiritual importance of tying a cat in the corner during meditation. Some disciples even wrote that it was impossible to meditate properly without the cat.

And this is how Theology and the Philosophy of Religion are created.

Zen Duck

by Gayla Paul in Corn Grove, Iowa.

Duck walks into a bar and says to the bartender, "Got any bread?" Bartender says, "No, no bread here." Next day, the duck walks in again and says, "Got any bread?" Bartender says, "No, sorry buddy, still no bread." The very next day the duck walks into the bar yet again and says to the bartender, "Got any bread?"

Bartender is getting annoyed at this point and says, "No! We do not have any bread here! No bread!" N-O! NO bread!" But again, the very next day the duck is back, and again the duck says, "Got any bread?"

The bartender just about throws a fit and says to the duck, "I have never had any bread, I will never have any bread and I don't have any bread now, AND if you EVER come in here asking for bread again I will nail your feet to the bar!"

Next day, duck walks into the bar and says, "Got any nails?" Bartender says, "No." Duck says, "Got any bread?"

Sigil Thinking

Forrest Stephen Gott on May 2002

In closing, I will offer a personal interpretation on the Sigil (or should I say misinterpretation?) Life is a road of many paths, and the two lines for me are a path, surrounded by a circle of love. It has no physical representation, and it extends beyond the circle for no particular reason other than showing that parts of that path may not always be safe, but can lead to a new circle of love/friendship.

Microcosm

by Robert M. Pirsig,

"Zen and the Art of Motorcyle Maintenance"

The application of this knife, the division of the world into parts and the building of this structure is something everybody does. All the time we are aware of millions of things around us - these changing shapes, these burning hills, the sound of the engine, the feel of the throttle, each rock and weed and fence post and piece of debris beside the road - aware of these things but not really conscious of them unless there is something unusual or unless they reflect something we are predisposed to see. We couldn't possibly be conscious of these things and remember all of them because our mind would be so full of useless details we would be unable to think.. From all this awareness we must select, and what we select and call consciousness is never the same as the awareness because the process of selection mutates it. We take a handful of sand from the endless landscape of awareness around us and call that handful of sand the world.

Religious Society

Faith & Practice: London Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends. Submitted by Don Morrison

The life of a religious society consists in something more than the body of principles it professes and the outer garments of organization, which it wears. These things have their own importance: they embody the society to the world, and protect it from the chance and change of circumstance; but the spring of life lies deeper, and often escapes recognition. They are to be found in the vital union of the members of the society with God and with one another, a union that allows the free flowing through the society of the spiritual life, which is its strength. Such words as "discipleship," "fellowship," "brotherhood," describe these central springs of religious life…

Sufic/Druidic Connections

Submitted by Richard Shelton

from Idries Shah's "The Sufis"

The poets were the chief disseminators of Sufi thought, earned the same reverence as did the ollamhs, or master poets, of earl medieval Ireland, and used a similar secret language of metaphorical reference and verbal cipher. Nizami the Persian Sufi writes: "Under the poet's tongue lies the key of the treasury." This language was a protection of thought only proper to those that understand it, and against accusations of heresy or civil disobedience. Ibn el Arabi, summoned before an Islamic inquisition at Aleppo to defend himself against charges of nonconformity, pleaded that his poems were metaphorical, the basic message being God's perfection of man through divine love. He had, for precedent, the incorporation in the Jewish Scriptures

of the erotic Song of Solomon, which was officially interpreted by the Pharisee sages as a metaphor of God's love for Israel; and by the Catholic authorities as a metaphor of God's love for his Church.

In its most advanced form, the secret language uses Semitic consonantal roots to conceal and reveal meanings; and western scholars seem unaware that even the popular "Thousand and One Nights" is Sufic in content, and that its Arabic title Alf layla wa layla is a code phrase indicating its main content and intention: "Mother of Records." Yet what seems at first sign Oriental occultism is an ancient and familiar Western habit of thought. Most English and French school children begin history lessons with a picture of their Druidic ancestors lopping mistletoe from a sacred oak. Although the Druids are credited by Caesar with ancestral mysteries and a secret language, the lopping seems so simple a ceremony, mistletoe being still used in Christmas decorations, that few readers pause to consider what I mean. The current view that the Druids were virtually emasculating the oak makes no sense.

"Now, all other sacred trees, plants and herbs have peculiar properties. The alder's timber is waterproof and its leaves yield a royal red dye; birch is the host of the hallucigenetic fly-cap mushroom; oak and ash attract lightening for a holy fire; the mandrake root is anti-spasmodic. The foxglove yields digitalis, which accelerates the beat of the heart; poppies are opiates; ivy has toxic leaves and its flowers provide bees with the last honey of the year. But the berries of the mistletoe; widely known in folklore as an "all heal," have no medicinal properties, though greedily eaten by wood pigeons and other non-migratory birds in winter. The leaves are equally valueless; and the timber can be put to few uses. Why then was the mistletoe singled out as the most sacred and curative of plants. The only answer can be that the Druids used it as an emblem of their own peculiar way of thought. Here is a tree that is no tree, but fastens itself alike on oak, apple, poplar, beech, thorn, even pine, grows green, nourishing itself on the topmost branches when the rest of the forest seems asleep, and the fruit of which is credited with curing all spiritual disorders. Lopped sprigs of it are tied to the lintel of a door and can invite sudden and surprising kisses. The symbolism is exact, if we can equate Druidic with Sufic thought, which is not planted like a tree, as religions are planted, but self-engrafted on a tree already in existence, it keeps green though the tree itself is asleep, in the sense that religions go dead by formalism; and the main motive power of its growth is love, not ordinary animal passion or domestic affection but a sudden surprising recognition of love so rare and high that the heart seems to sprout wings. Strangely enough, the Burning Bush from which God appeared to Moses in the desert is now thought by Biblical scholars to have been an acacia glorified by the red leaves of a locanthus, the Eastern equivalent of mistletoe."

[-Shelton: Thought you might be interested in this. Graves, as always, must be taken with a grain of salt, since his intuitionistic leaps far exceed anything warranted by documentation. But this time he may be close to the mark, or at any rate, it would be nice to think so. And it does ring true. This book by the way is a good introduction to the ideas behind Graves' White Goddess – which is absolutely the most frustrating book I've ever tried to read.]

Reflections on a Ritual

Berkeley poet Julia Vinograd sent us this contribution.

A carelessly flung branch flaunts an armpit of moss, roots plunge the willing earth, blind, sucking, stabbing like the touch of a bride's first cry upon her wedding night, a finger flute that raises fertile corpses into heavy scented white improbable petals, a mockery of pink and sweaty flesh, a marriage of the living and the dead around the still troubled ancient pool of the heart full of smooth water-rounded stones remade like any memory with constant use...

And treacherous ripples of desire to break that mirror before a straying falcon shatters its impatience with his own.

Drink of thirst that stains all mouths with silence. No god, no mortal or any other merchant comes here, where circling trees rear at the sky like stallions in a storm and leave perfume-laden wounds upon the sun.

At night eyes climb implicit tangled jungles of which the moon is the not yet planted seed. Beguiled by purity and sacrilege, lightly dancing, only fingers touching...

No one looks at a single leaf or asks what color sap pulses in private midnight veins.

Worship went mad here once, then fell asleep and vines embraced its dreams.

While delicate ferns sprout from its snoring nostrils, only wild things enter: small, bright-eyed skittering coins of fur rest, are gamboled, lost, replaced, forgotten.

Old ghosts and fledgling sparrows test each others' wings and a great stone breast waits to suckle whatever thrives on all the clean ruthlessness it aches with... who will relieve it after so long a time?

The call is of green thorns still more tender than tight buds. Come sharpen, come open, come storm silence with itself and grow at last till no reflection taints the pool impaled upon your eyes and well content.

Smokey The Bear Sutra

This story appears to be anonymous,
and "may be reproduced free forever. "

Once in the Jurassic, about 150 million years ago, the Great Sun Buddha in this corner of the Infinite Void gave a great Discourse to all the assembled elements and energies: to the standing beings, the walking beings, the flying beings, and the sitting beings - even grasses, to the number of thirteen billion, each one born from a seed, were assembled there: a Discourse concerning Enlightenment on the planet Earth.

"In some future time, there will be a continent called America. It will have great centers of power called such as Pyramid Lake, Walden Pond, Mt. Rainier, Big Sur, Everglades, and so forth; and powerful nerves and channels such as Columbia River, Mississippi River, and Grand Canyon. The human race in that era will get into troubles all over its head, and practically wreck everything in spite of its own strong intelligent Buddha-nature."

"The twisting strata of the great mountains and the pulsings of great volcanoes are my love burning deep in the earth. My obstinate compassion is schist and basalt and granite, to be mountains, to bring down the rain. In that future American Era I shall enter a new form: to cure the world of loveless knowledge that seeks with blind hunger; and mindless rage eating food that will not fill it."

And he showed himself in his true form of

Smokey The Bear.

A handsome smokey-colored brown bear standing on his hind legs, showing that he is aroused and watchful.

Bearing in his right paw the Shovel that digs to the truth beneath appearances; cuts the roots of useless attachments, and flings damp sand on the fires of greed and war;

His left paw in the Mudra of Comradely Display - indicating that all creatures have the full right to live to their limits and that deer, rabbits, chipmunks, snakes, dandelions, and lizards all grow in the realm of the Dharma;

Wearing the blue work overalls symbolic of slaves and laborers, the countless men oppressed by a civilization that claims to save but only destroys;

Wearing the broad-brimmed hat of the West, symbolic of the forces that guard the Wilderness, which is the Natural State of the Dharma and the True Path of man on earth; all true paths lead through mountains;

With a halo of smoke and flame behind, the forest fires of the kali-yuga, fires caused by the stupidity of those who think things can be gained and lost whereas in truth all is contained vast and free in the Blue Sky and Green Earth of One Mind;

Round-bellied to show his kind nature and that the great earth has food enough for everyone who loves her and trusts her;

Trampling underfoot wasteful freeways and needless suburbs; smashing the worms of capitalism and totalitarianism;

Indicating the Task: his followers, becoming free of cars, houses, canned food, universities, and shoes, master the Three Mysteries of their own Body, Speech, and Mind; and fearlessly chop down the rotten trees and prune out the sick limbs of this country America and then burn the leftover trash.

Wrathful but Calm, Austere but Con-tic, Smokey the Bear will Illuminate those who would help him; but for those who would hinder or slander him,

He Will Put Them Out.

Thus his great Mantra:

Namah samanta vairananz chanda mahoroshana Sphataya hum traka ham main

I dedicate myself to the universal diamond. Be this raging fury destroyed

And he will protect those who love woods and rivers, Gods and animals, hobos and madmen, prisoners and sick people, and musicians;

And if anyone is threatened by advertising, air pollution, or the police, they should chant *SMOKEY THE BEAR'S WAR SPELL:*

Drown Their Butts
Crush Their Butts
Drown Their Butts
Crush Their Butts

And *Smokey The Bear* will surely appear to put the enemy out with his vajra-shovel. Now those who recite this Sutra and then try to put it in practice will accumulate merit as countless as the sands of Arizona and Nevada,

Will help save the planet Earth from total oil slick,

Will enter the age of harmony of man and nature,

Will win the tender love and caresses of men, women, and beasts,

Will always have ripe blackberries to eat and a sunny spot under a pine tree to sit at,

And in the end will win highest perfect enlightenment.

thus we have heard.

The Druids and the Stars

An old Druid and his student are camping on a mountain, set up their tent, and are asleep. Some hours later, The Druid wakes this faithful friend. "Look up at the sky and tell me what you see."

The student replies, "I see millions of stars."

“What does that tell you?" asks the Druid.

The student ponders for a minute. "Astronomically speaking, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Astrologically, it tells me that Saturn is in Leo. Time wise, it appears to be approximately a quarter past three. Theologically, it's evident the Gods are all powerful and we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, it seems we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you, teacher?"

The Druid is silent for a moment, then speaks. "You idiot, it means someone has stolen our tent!"

The Accident

Bob and his father are driving in a car. They have a terrible accident, and Bob's father dies. Bob is seriously hurt and taken to the hospital in an ambulance. He has to have surgery. The doctor comes to look at Bob and exclaims, "I can't operate on him! He's my son!" Who is the doctor?

The Donkey

An old man, a boy and a donkey were going to town. The boy rode on the donkey and the old man walked. As they went along they passed some people who remarked it was a shame the old man was walking and the boy was riding. The man and boy thought maybe the critics were right, so they changed positions.

Later they passed some people that remarked, "What a shame, he makes that little boy walk." They decided they both would walk!

Soon they passed some more people who thought they were stupid to walk when they had a decent donkey to ride.

So, they both rode the donkey! Now they passed some people that shamed them by saying how awful to put such a load on a poor donkey.

The boy and man said they were probably right so they decided to carry the donkey. As they crossed a bridge, they lost their grip on the animal and he fell into the river and drowned.

The moral of the story: "If you try to please everyone, you will eventually lose your ass."

Chickens & the Coop

by Mike of Monument Grove RDNA

After watching "Chicken Run," I received this story from my Japanese teacher. It is by Abe Kobou, and I've translated it into English for you.

A long time ago, chickens were still living freely in the wild. However their life was not an easy one, for they were chased about by weasels and cats; so much that there day was divided between searching far for food, and flying out of the reach of predators.

One day as they were pecking, a human came up to them carrying a bunch of timber and tools. He offered, "I will build you a wire-covered house in which you will be safe from predators." The chickens looked distrustingly at him. "Look here, I do not have claws like a cat, nor do I have fangs like a weasel. There is no reason to fear someone as harmless as me, is there?" The chickens began to discuss this, but the human quickly proceeded to construct the house without waiting for their decision.

The chickens inspected the entrance, which had a large lock that could only be opened by a human hand. When they pointed it out, he said," If you could open it, so much more could a weasel or a cat. Do not worry, if it is food you are seeking, I promise to bring some and fill your food box everyday." This impressed most of the chickens very much.

One chicken, distrusted the honeyed words of the human. "Perhaps," he said, "you wish to still our eggs, and sell us to the butcher?" The man smiled and replied, "I have only a wish to protect you. Why, indeed, perhaps you yourself are receiving bribes from the weasels and cats to dupe your fellow chickens from this safe alternative?"

This immediately divided the chickens. As the wise chicken could neither prove nor disprove his innocence, he was soon doubted and ostracized from the group. A great debate broke out, but eventually the sensible faction decided, "Let's try it for now, and if we don't like it, I'm sure that we can renegotiate an equitable change of the contract." That decided the issue and their victory was sealed. The human, genteelly opened the door wide and the chickens stately marched into the coop. The rest, as we all know, is history. (See "Chicken Run" the movie, 2000)

Where Did All the Celts Go?

By Ian Friesland

I couldn't be farther away from Ireland (or my native Belgium) but my thoughts fly to that distant land, and I 'd like to write a little about it. The RDNA is not exclusively Celtic (we're not, but we all have our favorite traditions), but most other Druid groups are definitely in the Celtophiles section. The problem as I see it, is that people study ancient Celts, but ignore the modern Celts.

We appear to be in a love-hate relationship with traditions. We love ancient Celtic Traditions but not modern Celtic traditions with hundreds of years of shaping by Celts (yes, under Christian & alcoholic influence.) Certainly, age sometimes empowers the survival and attractiveness of some beliefs beyond their practical usage (i.e. "fossilization.") For me, the age of the tradition is just one pointer on its feasibility; but it's applicability, wisdom, timing and associations must also be taken into account. As an example, we don't do ritualistic murder anymore. As Mortus said in his/her essay on Death and Sacrifice in Samhain's issue, the RDNA dropped human sacrifice when our mores and perceptions on the issue had changed, even though livestock (deadstock?) is cheaper now than ever before in history.

Irish and country folk of Europe still carry out several life-affirming (& life-denying) activities that may or may not have continuity from pagan times, often under the guise of various saints, despite the otherworldly orientation of monotheism in general. You know this, already. It's hard to tell whether or not these traditions were carry-overs from a bygone organized religion or rather, perhaps, simply natural developments from working daily with (or against) Nature's mysteries on the farm and forest. But the Celts are still here, but they're mostly speaking English nowadays, so no complaining about the difficulty of translating "Old Irish," just go next door and talk to McPherson and start or revive traditions.

How many American Neo-Pagans can explain the Dail of Ireland, name 7 living Irish poets or dramatists? Talk about the devolution process' effect on Celtic nationalism? Explain the economic situation of the Welsh economies? What about Brittany's (ahem, not Ms. Spears) engulfment by France or Galicia by Spain which we don't hear about because most of us don't read French or Spanish after High school? Mad cow or foot & mouth disease (I've got that I suppose)'s role in the devastation of the crafting culture? I'm not calling upon you to march the streets of Dublin with placards, but if you feel such a connection to these ancient Druids; how about helping their grandchildren continue the living culture?

Picking a Path

By Mike

We don't know as much as our ancestors collectively. We may add a new piece of knowledge & technology, but in matters of the soul, we are often merely treading old paths in a well-trodden forest. Although you may try to blaze a new trail, you are likely to cross several old trails in the process. One day, you might stop blazing and pick one of those trails out of convenience when you see a destination that can be reached the more easily by that path. Perhaps one day, you'll open a space for an arboreal farm.

Ideas are like seeds, they come from a tree or flower and grow up by themselves. Some are self-pollinating others reproduce by cross-pollinating. Like the bible adage, the growth of seeds depends on the ground in which they begin. If transplanted to new territory, they may grow or wither. Trees and plants reproduce by excessive distribution of seeds, such that a few will make it to maturity; while the bulk of them succumb to the stresses of the world. Most teachers know this about students and the need for balanced growth.

A small imbalance in the body can soon kill, if untreated. Hopefully, most students will notice deficiencies in their training. As Confucius said, "When I show three sides of a square, they should come up with the fourth. But dear Ching! When I show him one side, he shows me the other three!" It is far easier to destroy individuals than groups, but a slow group collapse can be most devastating. A poison can kill more than a medicine of the same amount can cure, but an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. As Darth-Vader learned, if you wish fame & power, a dubious achievement, the quickest way is through infamy and harmful actions. Most do-gooders and saints go unrecognized, because they need not recognition. In these matters, a little well-timed guidance goes a long way.

The Two Pots

From Stacey

A water bearer in India had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole, which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, and while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water.

At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full. For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his house. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect for the task for which it was created, but the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself and I want to apologize to you. I have been able to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work, and you don't get full value from your efforts," the pot said.

The water bearer said, "As we return to the master's house, I want you to notice the beautiful flowers along the path." Do you notice that there are flowers only on your side of the path but not on the other pot's side? That is because I have always known about your flaw. I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back from the stream, you have watered them. For two years, I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."

Moral: Each of us has our own unique flaws. We are all cracked pots but, it's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding.

Take each person for what they are, and look for the good in them. There is a lot of good out there. Blessed are the flexible, for they are never bent out of shape.

Remember to appreciate all the different people in your life! Or, as I like to think of it, if it hadn't been for the crackpots in my life it would have been pretty boring and life certainly wouldn't have been beautifully interesting...

Chop Wood, Carry Water

From Stacey

A young student asked of the Master "what did you do before you became Master?"

The Master replied "I fetched wood and carried water."

The Student asked "What do you do now that you are Master?"

The Master replied "I fetch wood and carry water."

-Lao Tzu

Now, just about everyone who has hung about spiritual circles for any time has heard this. It may not be from Lao Tzu, legendary composer of the Tao Te Ching, maybe 2500 years ago, contemporary, more or less, with Gautama the Buddha, as it is often said to come from Ch'an or Zen sources. But what does that matter?

We may take the ordinary events of life as unimportant when we engage on what we perceive as the `great mystical journey.'

Still, what does this cost us? Is it worth the price?

We have this trip to take; but can we say which parts of life are more or less important?

After the powerful `peak experience,' it always seems to go back to this: "Chop wood; carry water." Maybe we have to learn that no thing in life is more than another, and each is part of the warp and woof, the interwoven strands, the weaving, of its tapestry.

Is enlightenment then just that, the putting down of the heavy load we have carried and been burdened by, our suffering?

Are we then like Sisyphus, who was condemned by Zeus to push the heavy boulder up the hill, nearly to the peak, only to, forever, have it slip from his grasp to the bottom again, only to have to start again over and over from the beginning?

"Before Satori, 'Chop wood; carry water;' after Satori, 'chop wood, carry water.' "

The Ten Laws of Murphy

If anything can go wrong, it will.

Nothing is ever as simple as it seems.

Everything takes longer than you expect.

Left to themselves all things go from bad to worse.

Nature always sides with the hidden flaw.

Mother Nature is a bitch.

It is impossible to make anything foolproof because fools are so ingenious.

If everything seems to be going well, you have obviously overlooked something.

If you can keep your head when, all around you, others are losing theirs, you just don't understand the situation.

For every human problem, there is a neat, simple solution - and it is always wrong.

Gold and Silver Harps

A Druid priest passes away and goes to Tir nan Og.

Upon her arrival, she is awarded a silver harp for her good deeds on earth. As she looks around, she notices a scruffy looking fellow with a beautiful golden harp.

"Why does he get such a beautiful harp when a good Druid priest, like myself, gets only this silver harp?" she asked.

"Well," said Mannanan, "over here in Tir nan Og we reward results. Every Solstice when you preached, people slept. Those who did pray were only going through the motions. That man got people to pray every day, and when they prayed, they meant it with all their heart!"

"Which church is he from?" asked the priest.

"He's not from a church," said Mannanan, "He was a New York City taxi driver!"

The Mona Lisa

Richard Kehl, "Silver Departures"

A Twentieth Century-Fox executive in Paris arranged for an exhibit of the fake paintings used in the movie "How To Steal A Million." He phones Howard Newman of the New York office, who said the fakes could not be shipped because they were on tour.

"What should I do?" asked the Paris man frantically.

"Get some originals," said Newman. "Nobody'll know the difference."

The Oak and the Maple

By Darren

And one winter day Maple asked Oak, "Why must I bear this snow?"

And Oak replied, "Because you have spread your branches."

And Maple asked, "Then why did I spread my branches?"

And Oak replied, "To catch the wind and sun, those things that give you life. And here, sometimes, the wind brings snow."

And Maple asked, "Then why have I come here?"

And Oak replied, "The winds blew, and you rode them. You liked them then, and laughed at the joy of spinning."

And Maple asked, "Then why did I grow here?"

And Oak replied, "Because the soil is good, between the stones."

And Maple asked, "Then why did the stones not stop me?"

And Oak replied, "Because you knew what you must do."

And Maple asked, "What is it, then, that I must do?"

And Oak replied, "Spread your branches. And bear some snow."

Understanding is Nothing.

By Henry Miller in Plexus

"You understand," said Chaydem, "but the reality of it escapes you. Understanding is nothing. The eyes must be kept open, constantly. To open your eyes you must relax, not strain. Don't be afraid of falling backwards into a bottomless pit. There is nothing to fall into. You're in it and of it, and one day, if you persist, you will be it. I don't say you will have it, please notice, because there's nothing to possess. Neither are you to be possessed, remember that! You are to liberate your self. There are no exercises, physical, spiritual, to practice. All such things are like incense- they awaken a feeling of holiness. We must be holy without holiness. We must be whole... complete. That's being holy. Any other kind of holiness is false, a snare, and a delusion."

Approaching Death

by Irony, Volcano Grove, -Rainier Maria Rilke's work.

I reproach all modern religions for having handed to their believers consolations and glossings over of death, instead of administering to them the means of reconciling themselves to it and coming to an understanding with it. With it, with its full, unmasked cruelty: this cruelty is so tremendous that it is just with it that the circle closes: it leads right back again into the extreme of a mildness that is great, pure, and perfectly clear (all consolation is turbid) as we have never surmised mildness to be, not even on the sweetest spring day. But toward the experiencing of this most profound mildness which, were only a few of us to feel with conviction, could perhaps little by little penetrate and make transparent all the relations of life: toward the experiencing of this richest and soundest mildness, mankind has never even taken the first steps- unless in its oldest, most innocent times, whose secret has been all but lost to us. The content of "initiations" was, I am sure, nothing but the imparting of a "key" that permitted the reading saw the word "death" without negation; like the moon, life surely has a side permanently turned away from us which is not its counterpart but its complement towards perfection, towards consummation.

Way of Salami

Submitted by Mike, quoting Mark Walsh

Nothing in the deli is more important than anything else. There is no hierarchy. Salami may be $5.99 a pound and baloney $1.99. But you eat salami the same way you eat baloney, and you digest salami the same way you do baloney, and you excrete salami the same way you do baloney. Once you realize this, price becomes meaningless

Way of Service

Submitted by Mike, quoting Mark Walsh

If you are constipated, study your face in the mirror. Be familiar with it. Know it intimately. Learn to recognize that look in others. When someone comes to the deli with the look of constipation on their face, give them no options. If they ask for baloney, do not respond with "We have five different kinds of baloney, what kind of baloney would you like?" take the nearest baloney and start slicing. Giving options, in this case, gets you caught from behind.

Way of Cheese

Submitted by Mike, quoting Mark Walsh

The way of cheese is in the re-creation. A stick of American cheese slices perfectly into 147 slices. I know. I have counted. When you can slice a stick of American cheese and re-stack it so it is impossible to tell the stick has been sliced, you will be enlightened.

Provolone cheese operates against all the laws of the deli. It comes packaged in three-foot long sticks; it melts and turns soft quickly; it does not slice properly. If a deli clerk gets five perfect slices in a pound, he is luck. If a deli clerk never finds satori, it is because of provolone cheese.

Life is suffering. Provolone cheese is amoral and persistent. Accept it into your life. Let it happen.

Loneliness

J. Krishnamurti Think on These Things.

Submitted by Irony.

You try being alone, without any form of distraction, and you will see how quickly you want to get away from yourself and forget what you are. That is why this enormous structure of professional amusement, of automated distraction, is so prominent a part of what we call civilization. If you observe, you will see that people the world over are becoming more and more distracted, increasingly sophisticated and worldly. The multiplication of pleasures, the innumerable books that are being published, the newspaper pages filled with sporting events- surely, all these indicate that we constantly want to be amused.

Because we are inwardly empty, dull, mediocre, we use our relationships and our social reforms as a means of escaping from ourselves. I wonder if you have noticed how lonely most people are? And to escape from loneliness we run to temples, churches, or mosques, we watch television, listen to the radio, read, and so on...

If you inquire a little into boredom you will find that the cause of it is loneliness. It is in order to escape from loneliness that we want to be together, we want to be entertained, to have distractions of every kind: gurus, religious ceremonies, prayers, or the latest novel. Being inwardly lonely we become mere

spectators in life; and we can be the players only when we understand loneliness and go beyond it. Because beyond it lies the real treasure.

To My Teacher

From Stacey of the Baccharis Grove

Here is the translation of Ryokan's poem that reminds us very much of Emmon Bodfish, the founder of the Live Oak grove of Orinda Ca. who passed away this year in a violent death. All who knew him, remember him as a wise person with much to share with his grove. Stacey pictures Emmon's grave much like this this poem as he is buried among the redwoods. Ryokan's translated poem is taken from "Dewdrops on a Lotus Leaf" translated by John Stevens

An old grave hidden away at the foot of a deserted hill,

Overrun with rank weeds growing unchecked year after year;

There is no one left to tend the tomb,

And only an occasional woodcutter passes by.

Once I was his pupil, a youth with shaggy hair,

Learning deeply from him by the Narrow River.

One morning I set off on my solitary journey

And the years passed between us in silence.

Now I have returned to find him at rest here;

How can I honor his departed spirit?

I pour a dipper of pure water over his tombstone

And offer a silent prayer.

The sun suddenly disappears behind the hill

And I'm enveloped by the roar of the wind in the pines.

I try to pull myself away but cannot;

A flood of tears soaks my sleeves.

Some Quotes on Life

From the Volcano Grove

He who mounts a wild elephant goes where the wild elephant goes.-Randolph Bourne

The world's spiritual geniuses seem to discover universally that the mind's muddy river, this ceaseless flow of trivia and trash, cannot be dammed, and that trying to dam it is a waste of effort that might lead to madness. -Anne Dillard

Prayer is not the moment when God and humans are in relationship, for that is always. Prayer is taking initiative to intentionally respond to God's presence. _L.R. Keck

I felt it better to speak to God than about Him. -St. Theresa of Lisieux

After ecstasy, the laundry. -Zen saying

To confront a person with his own shadow is to show him his own light.

Wisdom is not like money, which should be kept in a safe.

If you are greedy in conversation, you lose the wisdom of your friends.

If you see wrongdoing or evil and say nothing against it, you become its victim.

One who refuses to obey cannot command.

If you build a poor wooden bridge across the river, it never seems to rot until you have to cross it yourself.

Good fellowship is sharing good things with friends.

The one who asks the way does not get lost.

The string can be useful until a rope can be found.

However poor the crocodile becomes, it hunts in the river, not in the forest.

People count what they are refused, not what they are given.

Power must be handled in the manner of holding an egg in the hand; if you hold it too firmly it breaks; if you hold it too loosely it drops.

No friendship except after enmity.

Make friends when you don't need them.

He who pulls a branch, brings the leaves with it.

Before you marry keep both eyes open, afterwards keep one shut.

God made the sea, we make the ship; He made the wind, we make the sail; He made the calm, we make oars.

Fright is worse than a blow.

The knife does not know its owner.

When two elephants struggle, it’s the grass that suffers.

The lion which kills is not the lion which roars.

Every man is honest until the day they catch him.

At the bottom of patience is heaven.

The grumbler does not leave his job, but he discourages possible applicants.

Virtue never stands alone. It is bound to have neighbors.

The river rarely rises above its source.

Is benevolence really that far away? No sooner do I desire it than it is here.

I have yet to meet a man who is as fond of virtue as he is of beauty in women.

To be wise, know your fellow men.

The gentleman agrees with others without being an echo. The small man echoes without being in agreement.

Men of antiquity studied to improve themselves; men today study to impress others.

What the gentleman seeks, he seeks within himself; what the small man seeks, he seeks in others.

Learn widely and be steadfast in your purpose, inquire earnestly and reflect on what is at hand, and there is no need for you to look for benevolence elsewhere.

Soldier and the Professor

A soldier and a professor were on a plane. Tiring of conversation, the professor suggested a game of riddles to pass the time.

"If there is a riddle you can't guess, you give me a dollar and vice-versa."

"Okay," agreed the soldier, "But you are better educated. I'll only give you fifty cents."

"All right,” said the professor, "you go first."

"Well, what bird has four legs swimming and two legs flying?"

The professor thought hard. He did not want to miss the very first question. The soldier’s face lit up with a wide grin. Finally the professor said, "I don't know; here's a dollar. What's the answer?"

The soldier hesitated for a moment, then said slowly, "I don't know either; here's your fifty cents!"

That ended the game.

No Vacation

The late columnist Arthur Brisbane declined to accept William Randolph Hearst's offer of a six-month paid vacation in appreciation of his good work.

"There are two reasons why I will not accept your generous offer, Mr. Hearst." said Brisbane. "The first is that if I quit writing my column for half a year, it might affect the circulation of your newspapers. The second reason is that it might not!"

Where There's a Will...

A lawyer was cross-examining a witness. "You have just testified that you heard the shot at exactly 11:32 P.M. How did you know what time it was? Did you look at your watch?"

"No," the witness said, "I looked at the sundial in the garden."

"That's stupid," accused the lawyer. "How could you tell time by a sundial at 11:32 at night?"

"Well, I had a flashlight," the witness admitted.

Other is Better

"The Grass is always greener on the other side." If you were a judge how would you deal with this human belief?

A very famous and affluent official died and left equal portions of his wealth to his two daughters and sons-in-law. However, there were no precise prices on the land and homes that he passed on to them, each had a unique market value. Dissatisfied with the arrangement, each daughter believed the other party got the lion's share.

After the grandiose burial ceremony, the daughters filed civil lawsuits against each other, claiming that their own shares were less than the other's. In court, the judge asked them, one after the other, whether they thought they were treated unfairly. They each gave a firm "Yes."

The clerk recorded every word and let sign all the statements. The judge then asked them to provide an inventory and turn in a list of the inherited properties. They gladly complied with this request.

After they finished, he announced his decree; "These two daughters must exchange their inheritances with one another." The daughters were shocked. Each had hoped to gain more than the other. However, they could do nothing but accept this ruling.

Happy Alliance

P.T. Barnum, the great showman, used to exhibit a happy family. This family consisted of a lion, a tiger, a wolf, a bear, and a lamb, all in one cage.

"Remarkable," a visitor said one day to Mr. Barnum. "Remarkable, impressive. How long have these animals dwelt together in this way?"

"Eight months," Barnum replied. "But the lamb has to be replaced occasionally."

Real Reason

After winning a few battles and overthrowing the previous dynasty, King Jeb overheard that there was a wise man who dwelled in the capital, and decided to pay the man a visit.

The wise man was surprised to meet the king, but courteously conducted the king into his shabby lodge. After brief amenities, the noble visitor politely asked the wiseman about his opinion for the collapse of the previous dynasty. Pondering for a moment, the man said he could not answer that question right away, and suggested the king come back tomorrow. The king agreed.

The next morning, the king arrived punctually. Knocking on the door, he received no answer. After patiently waiting for a few moments, the king began to be disturbed. Then some neighbors told him that this old man had fled the house last night in a hurry. The emperor felt cheated and betrayed.

"Your Majesty," his prime minister remarked, "I believe I know the reason. He is indeed a fine, old-fashioned gentleman, who didn't want to openly criticize the last emperor, who technically was his master. By intentionally breaking his promise with us, he cleverly conveys some of the most important causes of the previous dynasty's downfall. I think his deliberate absence indicates that trust and credibility are essential for the prosperity of an empire. Abusing both, the previous emperor lost his huge dynasty as well as his precious life. Your Majesty must always keep that in mind."

The emperor agreed with this perceptive analysis and with satisfaction left. His own dynasty was to last 200 years

The Cage

"Look at that one-the one staring at us through the bars. Doesn't he look intelligent?"

"Yes, there is something uncanny about it."

"Walks on his hind legs, too, and swings his arms."

"There! He's got a peanut. Let's see what he does with it."

"Well, what do you thing about that! He knows enough to take the shell off before he eats it just like we do."

"There's a female alongside of him. Listen to her chatter at him. He doesn't seem to be paying much attention to her, though."

"She must be his mate."

"They look kind of sad, don't they?"

"Yes. I guess they wish they were in here with us monkeys."

Return to Me

by Pablo Neruda, Chilean, 1904-1973

Return to me, oh sun,
to my wild destiny,
rain of the ancient wood,
bring me back to the aroma and the swords
that falls from the sky,
the solitary peace of pasture and rock,
the damp at the river-margins,
the smell of the larch tree,
the wind alive like a heart
beating in the crowded restlessness
of the towering araucaria.
Earth, give me back your pure gifts,
the towers of silence which rose
from the solemnity of their roots.
I want to go back to being what I have not been,
and learn to go back from such deeps
that amongst all natural things
I could live or not live; it does not matter
to be one stone more, the dark stone,
the pure stone which the river bears away

How to Love Nature

by John Burroughs, American 1837-1921

Nature-love as Emerson knew it, and as Wordsworth knew it, and as any of the choicer spirits of our time have known it, had distinctly a religious value. It does not come to a man or a woman who is wholly absorbed in selfish or worldly or material ends. Except ye become in a measure as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of Nature- as Audubon entered it, as Thoreau entered it, as Bryant and Amiel entered it, and as all those enter it who make it a resource in their lives and an instrument of their culture.

The forms and creeds of religion change, but the sentiment of religion- the wonder and reverence and love we feel in the presence of the inscrutable universe- persist... If we do not go to church as much as did our fathers, we go to the woods much more, and are much more inclined to make a temple of them than they were.

Wayfarer

by Antonio Machado, Spanish

Wayfarer, the only way.
is your footsteps, there is no other.
Wayfarer, there is no way,
you make the way as you go.
As you go, you make the way
and stopping to look behind,
you see the path that your feet
will travel again.
Wayfarer, there is no way-
only foam trails in the sea.

Orbits

by Rainer Maria Rilke, German 1875-1926

I live my life in growing orbits
Which move out over the things of the world.
Perhaps I can never achieve the last,
but that will be my attempt.
I am circling around God, the ancient tower,
And I have been circling for a thousand years,
and I still don't know if I am a falcon, or a storm,
or a great song

Vigiling

byJalal ad-Din ar-Rumi 1207-1273

Some nights, stay up till dawn.
As the moon sometimes does for the sun.
Be a full bucket pulled up the dark way
of a well, then lifted out into light.
Something opens our wings.
Something makes boredom and hurt disappear.
Someone fills the cup in front of us.
We taste only sacredness.

Rules of Hollywood Paganism

By Michelle Curtis, March 1996

1. Pick one faith and stick with it. Dilettantism is the mark of the amateur.

2. Avoid needless embarrassment. Practice the correct pronunciation of your gods name in the privacy of your room before chanting it in public. Flash cards are often helpful.

3. Never invoke anything bigger then your head.

4. Avoid all cabbalistic jewelry over 10 pounds in weight. You're just asking for trouble.

5. Citronella candles may not be used in rituals. I cannot stress this enough. Pastel-colored candles in the shape of cute animals are like beacons to the Dark Lords.

6. Always keep your kit with you: candles, chalk, incense, silver knife, thugee knife, service revolver, garlic, cabfare, condoms, change.

7. Never be a cultist that goes to rough up the investigators. Ransacking hotel rooms is probably safe but going round to beat up the good guys a definite no-no.

8. When Black Mass goes awry, stay away from the cult leader. enraged daemons always go for the pompous.

9. Don't gloat.

10. If you do gloat, never reveal your plans.

11. If you gloat and reveal your plans, never leave the investigators to die slowly. They don't.

12. If you do gloat, reveal your plans and leave the investigators to die slowly don't have the audacity to look surprised when they show up to foil you.

13. Investigators always arrive at the last moment to foil you. Start a half hour early. They hate that.

14. Select ceremonial robes that are easy to run in while still affording ample concealment.

15. When a religious artifact begins emitting light, close your eyes.

16. When mutilating cattle, avoid the ones with the testicles.

17. During ritual sacrifice, taking bits home "for later" is now considered bad form.

18. Blood tests are now required of all sacrificial victims before the ritual. The effects of HIV+ offerings on the average maletic deity have never been witnessed by anyone living or even intact.

19. Contrary to historic belief, drugs and invocations do not mix. When the shit comes down it is vitally necessary to be able to discern between the gibbering monstrosity to throw holy water at, and the gibbering monstrosity that will go away after a few hours, some B-complex and a hot bath.

20. Never play strip tarot.

21. Piety and belief are powerful things and few forces in nature can stand against one who is true to his faith and his soul. However, it is also true that gods are on the side of the heaviest artillery so be prepared to change sides at the drop of a hat.

22. For those situations where a fresh living sacrifice is just not feasible or possible, the lower ranks of daemons can be fooled by microwaving a previously frozen chunk of ex-victim and cleverly jiggling it. A mock victim sculpted of spam is right out.

Order of Chocolate Contemplatives

INTRODUCTION:

Once again the high holy days of the Order of Chocolate Contemplatives (O.C.C.) are at hand.

The O.C.C was founded in 1893 when my great-grandmother opened an old trunk in her aunt's attic and discovered secret documents and recipes recorded by the mysterious Fraulein Verboten. These documents describe an ancient order whose purpose is to find enlightenment through chocolate, a task that its current members pursue with diligence, with guidance from their Secret Chefs on the astral pan. Initiates explore all the psychological, sensual, mystical and psychoactive properties of this profound substance.

If you wish to join the O.C.C., dip yourself, or a part of yourself in liquid chocolate and dedicate yourself to the pursuit of chocolate- ness. You may also post to alt.magick regarding the history of chocolate, its psycho-active properties, its relationship to Candlemas or Yule, favorite recipes, which signs should be the WATER and FIRE sign(s) for chocolate and why, or your own experiences exploring chocolate's exquisite pleasures. These articles will be collected in the Chocolate Chronicles. This is also a time for renewal when old members of the O.C.C. are encouraged to proclaim their love of chocolate in the same way described above.

The high holy days of the O.C.C. start on February 1st and go on for 14 days, culminating on the 14th of February, a day long associated with love and chocolate. The groundhog is the animal guardian of the O.C.C. and chocolate groundhogs are always in good taste. St. Valentine is the patron saint and also one of the Secret Chefs. On the final holy day, St. Valentine's Day, chocolate is celebrated in a special way the entire day long -- in thoughts, word, deed and ingestion. Many (choc rats) opt for a sensual finale, while some (choc doves) for a more meditative and sublime chocolate experience. The choc rats also prefer popular chocolate treats whereas the choc doves go for imported, pricey brands. Despite these superficial differences all are pursing the celebration of chocolate, and I hope that the factional sniping will not occur this year. Whatever your style of celebration it will work provided that you celebrate chocolate with chocolate.

Many new initiates ask about sex-chocolate. Information on this is not publicly available for your own safety. Also, members of high rank are bound by oaths and cannot discuss it. General information is in the book _Secrets of the German Sex-Chocolate Magickians_, so the curious can read this. Please do not inquire further.

SPECIFICS:

First, if you start late, go ahead and do several days at a time mentally in order to catch up, but only eat the prescribed 1 piece of chocolate per day, until the 14th, otherwise you could blow-out your chakras and digestive system. Lectures aside, this is not a time for gluttony. Chocolate can really knock your socks off and should be treated with care. Feel free to circulate this, in its entirety, wherever you wish.

****

#1:

DIRECTION: North
ANIMAL: Groundhog
ELEMENT: Earth
SIGN: Taurus
POWER: Law
ARCHANGEL: Uriel/Ariel
CHOCOLATE TYPE: Nuts and caramel and/or other ingredients mixed in.

Mine for the surprises. Brownies with chocolate bits and nuts are good for new initiates. Nothing too risky. Chocolate is strong enough, as is.

MEDITATION: Life is good. Life is a beautiful, sensual experience. The two main secrets to life are put before you:

1.) Life is what happens when you think of something else.

2.) Sometimes the only (or easiest) thing to change about a situation is your perception of it. Thinking about this will give you insights to make your life more enjoyable. Experiment with different energy patterns in your daily life. If you're an assertive go-go-go sort of person lay back and go with the flow and watch how people respond. If you're usually laid-back then rev up a little and see what happens. Learn to use both ying and yang to your best advantage. Reinforce your revelations with savory chocolate to make them stick. The purpose here is to use your energy most effectively to make your life as happy, and pleasurable as possible. deity, virtue

1 Bmilges limits his words
2 Barnafa is content with his lot in life
3 Benpagi knows his place
4 Belmara uncomplaining acceptance of suffering
5 Balceor trust in the sages
6 Blisdon good naturedness
7 Bynepor patience

#2:

DIRECTION: West
ANIMAL: Fish
ELEMENT: Water
SIGN: still being decided....
POWER: emotion
ARCHANGEL: Gabriel
CHOCOLATE TYPE: Chocolate dissolved in a liquid. Chocolate mousse is especially good. Mugs of hot chocolate are good too (but no instant please.) For more advanced members, try chocolate liqueur or chocolate in coffee. MEDITATION: Consider how to flow through life with as much pleasure and as little pain as possible. For each action there is an equal and opposite reaction, so take care to do yourself a favor and *not* invoke your nemesis. Consider how to make your life simpler on all planes. Then take the next step and learn to have not just neutral experiences, but positive ones! Every act, idea, interaction, feeling, sensation, can bring you positive energy. Learn to find chocolate everywhere and learn to give it freely. Take the highest and lowest -- turn everything into expressions of love and appreciation and give back the same in return.

deity, virtue

1 Bonefon moderation in frivolity
2 Bermale moderation in conversation
3 Bragiop moderation in sleep

4 Blintom moderation in pleasure
5 Bazpama moderation in worldly affairs
6 Bvtmomo moderation in business affairs
7 Babalel knowledge of scriptures

#3:

DIRECTION: South
ANIMAL: Snakes
ELEMENT: Fire
SIGN: to be decided...
POWER: will
ARCHANGEL: Michael
CHOCOLATE TYPE: Milk chocolate. Nothing in it.
MEDITATION: Here we first encounter the scandalous past of our holy substance -- its affiliation with the cruel and hot southern gods. All you've heard about their cruelty and their relationship with chocolate is true. But fear not! They were practicing the dark side of chocolate. They were mixing chocolate with fire and emotion. Emotion needs to be cooled, in water. It's far more effective to mix chocolate with fire and WILL. Therefore, the key word for this week is WILL. Use the strength you've discovered in chocolate and filter your thoughts and words with purpose. Imbue every act with meaning. Throw things out -- useless ideas and possessions. This is a good time to end any relationships that suck out your vitality. You are not the same as you once were, you are now changed -- stronger and better. Treat people with respect and restraint.

deity, virtue
1 Bnagole deliberation
2 Brisfli discussion with students
3 Branglo debate with colleagues
4 Bernole attendance on scholars
5 Basmelo purity
6 Befafes joy
7 Bobogel humility

#4

DIRECTION: East
ANIMAL: Birds
ELEMENT: Air
SIGN: Aquarius
POWER: Inspiration and creativity
ARCHANGEL: Raphael
CHOCOLATE TYPE: Pure dark chocolate.

MEDITATION: This is your final point of ascent. Focus on the highest intellectual enjoyment you have of chocolate and the chocolate teachings. By now you should be seeing chocolate everywhere and in everything. Look and you shall see. Feel the joy of chocolate in everyone and you (m)eat. You are now approaching the brink of ecstasy. If you have started any projects, now is a fortuitous time to complete them. If you are procrastinating about something, start it now -- you'll feel much better. This is a time to resolve old difficulties, conflicts, feelings and ideas. If you have trouble doing this, visualize all your problems in a pot with chocolate, melting away, then go to bed early and sleep purposefully on the troubles. In the morning you'll see the answer. This is also the time to consider the *opposite* of all you've contemplated in the prior weeks. Think of when and how to use the opposites. Finally, go through the prior 4 weeks of work, contemplating what you learned and invoking the deities of the days and the archangels of the weeks to give you strength and guidance. Sleep on what you've learned.

diety, virtue
1 Basledf reverence
2 Bmamgal awe
3 Blumapo intuitive insight
4 Besgeme understanding
5 Bapnido orderly speech
6 Bornogo attentive listening
7 Baligon study

The final day: the 14th of February

On the final day, revel in all you've learned. Celebrate in your own style. You are on the brink of enlightenment and ecstasy now. Ask the deities and Secret Chefs to give you purity and strength. Do whatever is necessary to push yourself over the edge. Today and today only you can eat as much chocolate, wherever and however you like. :)

Merry Whatever

From Glenn McDavid

Please accept with no obligation, implied or implicit our best wishes for an environmentally conscious, socially responsible, low stress, non-addictive, gender-neutral, celebration of the winter solstice holiday, practiced within the most enjoyable traditions of the religious persuasion of your choice, or secular practices of your choice, with respect for the religious/secular persuasions and/or traditions of others, or their choice not to practice religious or secular traditions at all...No reindeer or barn animals were injured during the making of these greetings.

As well, please enjoy a fiscally successful, personally fulfilling, and medically uncomplicated recognition of the onset of the generally accepted calendar year 1999, but not without due respect for the calendars of choice of other cultures whose contributions to society have helped make America great, (not to imply that America is necessarily greater than any other country or is the only "America" in the western hemisphere), and without regard to the race, creed, color, age, physical ability, religious faith, choice of computer platform, or sexual preference of the wishee. These sentiments will not affect any equipment as yet unscanned for Y2K problems.

(By accepting this greeting, you are accepting these terms. This greeting is subject to clarification or withdrawal. It is freely transferable with no alteration to the original greeting. It implies no promise by the wisher to actually implement any of the wishes for her/himself or others, and is void where prohibited by law, and is revocable at the sole discretion of the wisher. This wish is warranted to perform as expected within the usual application of good tidings for a period of one year, or until the issuance of a subsequent holiday greeting, whichever comes first, and warranty is limited to replacement of this wish or issuance of a new wish at the sole discretion of the wisher.)

"IF THE APOSTLE PAUL HAD SENT HIS EPISTLES BY E-MAIL..."

From: Glenn McDavid gmcdavid@winternet.com

Found on an ancient clay floppy disk:

Subject: The Third E-mail to the Corinthians
Date: 24/03/65 21:07:33 ROMAN standard time
From: Apostle Paul (paulorsaul@theapostles.org)
To: congregation@corinth.org
File: Epistle3.txt (104201 bytes)

[Only the first part of this message is displayed. The entire message has been turned into a text attachment, encoded in 128-bit MIME and can only be read if you have an obscure program that you won't have heard of.]

Paul, an apostle of Christ and a slave of the Lord, to the brothers in Corinth who are using e-mail accounts other than AOL. I will send a separate message to those using AOL accounts, knowing how primitive their e-mail service is at the present time.

This is the third e-mail I am sending to you. Did you receive my other two? I have had no reply from you yet, and a "fatal delivery" error message for the second e-mail, in which I wrote about love, faith and hope. I will send it again, just in case.

I sent my second message to the congregations throughout the whole of Asia Minor, but my service provider considered this to be spamming and closed down one of my accounts. To those who are using Web based e-mail accounts, I will send Timothy to you with my message on foot. It will get there quicker.

Philemon and Titus send you their love. I found their e-mails amidst a flood of junk mail and get-rich-quick messages, in which there is no real profit.

Look - I hope you don't mind, but I think I'll stick with the parchments next time.

Anyway, I wanted to write to you on the important subject of..

{End of Message}

SOME IDEAS ON WHAT ENLIGHTENMENT/SALVATION IS:

I have recently had an awakening where I realized that enlightenment consisted of an openness, and awareness to what is. I am seeking to broaden my openness, becoming more fresh, and more of a beginner. I have also made vows to help liberate all beings, and would like to gain knowledge to do so. I am eventually hoping to reach the point of the absolute boundary between chaos and order, the center of the wheel as it were, and to be able to dance at that point. I am also seeking a community of like-minded folk, as well as a system that will help fill in the infinite gaps in my knowledge. Here is a little something I wrote regarding what I have learned recently.

to be like a CHILD who views every thing with freshness
to be an EXPLORER curious about what they will encounter
to be an OBSERVER interested in what they can discover
to be AWARE of the stream of life as it flows
to be able to SEE what is happening around you
to be able to be fully PRESENT in the current moment
to be AWAKE enough to experience the beauty of life
to be a QUESTIONER of strongly held assumptions
to be a BEGINNER still able to learn new ideas
to be a STUDENT who realizes they do not know
to be NON-JUDGMENTAL open to each situation as it arises
to be ADAPTABLE to varying circumstances
to be UNCONDITIONED not set in any certain way
to be BEYOND conceptual extremes
to be FREE from machine-like living

by Ruth Ann oskolkoff/95

A FEW THOUGHTS ON HARMONIOUS LIVING:

All life is interconnected so live with simplicity
All life is sacred so live with compassion
All life is changing so live with awareness
All life is a teacher so live with humility

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Football as a Fertility Rite

Author unknown;

Obviously, Football is a syndrome of religious rites symbolizing the struggle to preserve the Egg of Life through the rigors of impending winter. The rites begin at the Autumn Equinox and culminate on the first day of the New Year, with great festivals identified with bowls of plenty. The festivals are associated with flowers such as roses; fruits such as oranges; farm crops such as cotton; and even sun worship and appeasement of great reptiles such as alligators.

In these rites, the Egg of Life is symbolized by what is called "The Oval," an inflated bladder covered with hog skin. The convention of "The Oval" is repeated in the architectural oval-shaped design of the vast outdoor churches in which the services are held every Sabbath in every town and city. Also every Sunday in the greater centers of population where an advanced priesthood performs. These enormous churches dominate every college campus; no other edifice compares in size with them, and they bear witness to the high spiritual development of the culture that produced them.

Literally millions of worshipers attend the Sabbath services in these open-air churches. Subconsciously, these hordes are seeking an outlet from sexual frustration in anticipation of violent masochism and sadism about to be enacted by a highly trained

priesthood of young men. Football obviously arises out of the Oedipus complex. Love of mother dominates the entire ritual. (Notre Dame and Football are synonymous.)

The rites are preformed on a green rectangular area orientated to the four directions. The green area, symbolizing Summer, is striped with ominous white lines representing the knifing snows of Winter. The white stripes are repeated in the ceremonial costumes of the four whistling monitors who control the services through a time period divided into four quarters, symbolizing the four Seasons. The ceremony begins with colorful processions of musicians and semi-nude virgins who move in and out of ritualized patterns. This excites the thousands of worshipers to rise from their seats, shout frenzied poetry in unison and chant ecstatic anthems through which runs the Oedipus theme of willingness to die for the love of mother. The actual rites, performed by 22 young priests of perfect physique, might appear to the uninitiated as a chaotic conflict concerned only with hurting the Oval by kicking it, then endeavoring to rescue and protect the Egg.

However, the procedure is highly stylized. On each side there are eleven young men wearing colorful and protective costumes. The group in so-called "possession" of the Oval first arrange themselves in an egg-shaped "huddle," as it is called, for a moment of prayerful meditation and whispering of secret numbers to each other. Then they rearrange themselves with relation to the position of the Egg. In a typical "formation" there are seven priests "on the line," seven being a mystical number associated not, as Jung purists might contend, with the "seven last words" but actually, with sublimation of the "seven deadly sins" into "the seven cardinal principles of education."

The central priest crouches over the Egg, protecting it with his hands, while over his back quarters hovers the "Quarterback." The transposition of "back quarters" to "quarterback" is easily explained by the Adler School. To the layman the curious posture assumed by the "Quarterback," as he hovers over the central priest, immediately suggests the Cretan origins of Mycenaean animal art, but this popular view is untenable. Actually, of course, the "quarter-back" symbolizes the libido, combining two instincts, namely, a) Eros, which strives for even closer union, and b) the instinct for destruction of anything which lies in the path of Eros. Moreover, the "pleasure-pain" excitement of the hysterical worshipers focuses entirely on the actions of the libido-quarter-back. Behind him are three priests representing the male triad.

At a given signal, the Egg is passed by sleight-of-hand to one of the members of the triad who endeavors to move it by bodily force across the white lines of Winter. This procedure up and down the enclosure, continues through the four quarters of the ritual. At the end of the second quarter, implying the Summer Solstice, the processions of musicians and semi-nude virgins are resumed. After forming themselves into pictograms representing alphabetical and animal fetishes, the virgins perform a most curious rite requiring far more dexterity than the earlier phallic Maypole rituals from which it seems to be derived. Each of the virgins carries a wand of shining metal which she spins on her fingertips, tosses playfully into the air, and with which she interweaves her body in most intricate gyrations.

The virgins perform another important function throughout the entire service. This concerns the mystical rite of "conversion" following success of one of the young priests in carrying the Oval across the last white line of Winter. As the moment of "conversion" approaches, the virgins kneel at the edge of the rectangle, bury their faces in the earth, and then raise their arms to heaven in supplication, praying that "the uprights will be split." "Conversion" is indeed a dedicated ceremony.

+++ The Church of Apathy +++

Join our Church of Apathy... when you get good and ready, or around-to-it. This is the official church for those that don't wish to identify with a specific religion. For those that feel that atheism and agnosticism are just too much damn work. Others, who believe that their religion solves all their problems, need not apply. We are a relatively New Religion with new attitudes.

We are Apathists. We seek no converts. We distribute no pamphlets. We ring no doorbells.

The Church of Apathy was thought about by its Founders for several years, before they decided to organize on December 26th, 1968, they decided not to become tax exempt, nor claim any guidance from any divine source. In 1979 they decided to look around for a suitable church site, but that effort proved to be too much trouble, and besides they really didn't care where they met anyway. The founders thought they should have a clergy person, but so far all that applied were rejected. They asked stupid questions about our not having a prayer book with writing in it. Some complained that we didn't have a Symbol or a Logo identifying our religion. Some wanted us to light candles, bless wine, chant, and sway. kneel, pray, or in general "carry on" like mainstream religions.... all of these candidates for the clergy person were rejected.

We soon will be celebrating the 30th year of our founding. We Apathists encourage those that share our deeply rooted apathy to think about joining our church as non-active members. We seek no donations nor offerings.... you keep your money, and we'll keep ours. As we have no mother church, postal address, telephone number, or website, we are sometimes difficult to locate. However if you have faith, and are not in any big rush to join our Church of Apathy, you are the type of person that could benefit by being an Apathist.

We are happy to say that in almost 30 years, not one of our members has been called "a dirty Apathist" to their face, they have demanded, and received "apple fritters" as their religious rights, in prisons and university cafeterias, and our Religion is not part of any college course on "Comparative Religions," and as far as we know, none of our faithful have been healed, saved, or converted. Some have rented from Avis but we consider that as free will.

Someday we would like to sponsor our own TV ministry, but we haven't figured out as yet what to preach about. We strongly believe that one should not take YES for an answer.....but if they do, they do.

We do have a motto: Don't Bother Us...and We Won't Bother You.

--writ by Rubin....reluctantly

Why did Isaac's Chicken Cross the Road?

P.E.I. Bonewits (ADF): Real crossing-the-road, we have seen, is a very interwoven and complicated subject. Our conclusion could be that real crossing-the-road is the build up of chicken emotion in conjunction with chicken concepts to vary the modulation of chicken energy so as to effect the modulation of the road's energy. That's all! Perhaps it is unfortunate, though, to use the word "chicken" in relation to it, since the "C" word is being used now in a way it was never used before in the English language and is an utterly meaningless term without a qualifying adjective. And this, of course, is the fault of the medieval Christian Church, through the Gothic Chickens it invented and used as the basis of persecuting men, women and chickens. The word "chicken" itself comes from an Indo-European root, "cheeka/e" meaning "one who lays eggs," and it has no relation to

the later Anglo-Saxon word for "wise spirit of flight," as so often stated by certain contemporary "Chics." An'Chk'Rrhod ("Our Own Chickens on Our Own Roads"), an authentic Neo-Chicken Rooster tradition, offers the best of paleo-, meso- and neo-Chickenism...

A Pagan Pledge of Allegiance

Author: WolfSquint

I Pledge Allegiance,
to the Earth,
And all the Creatures which inhabit it,
And to the Oceans,
Which give us Life
One Planet, under sky, inter-dependent
With Energy, and sustenance for all.

The Whole World Stinks

Wise men and philosophers throughout the ages have disagreed on many things, but many are in unanimous agreement on one point: "We become what we think about." Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "A man is what he thinks about all day long." The Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius put it this way: "A man's life is what his thoughts make of it." In the Bible we find: "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he."

One Sunday afternoon, a cranky grandfather was visiting his family. As he lay down to take a nap, his grandson decided to have a little fun by putting Limburger cheese on Grandfather's mustache. Soon, grandpa awoke with a snort and charged out of the bedroom saying, "This room stinks." Through the house he went, finding every room smelling the same. Desperately he made his way outside only to find that "the whole world stinks!"

So it is when we fill our minds with negativism. Everything we experience and everybody we encounter will carry the scent we hold in our mind.

The Baker and the Farmer

A baker in a little country town bought the butter he used from a nearby farmer. One day he suspected that the bricks of butter were not full pounds, and for several days he weighed them.

He was right. They were short weight, and he had the farmer arrested.

At the trial the judge said to the farmer, "I presume you have scales?"

"No, your honor."

"Then how do you manage to weigh the butter you sell?" inquired the judge.

The farmer replied, "That's easily explained, your honor. I have balances and for a weight I use a one-pound loaf I buy from the baker."

The Mountain & The Baby

There were two warring tribes in the Andes, one that lived in the lowlands and the other high in the mountains. The mountain people invaded the lowlanders one day, and as part of their plundering of the people, they kidnapped a baby of one of the lowlander families and took the infant with them back up into the mountains.

The lowlanders didn't know how to climb the mountain. They didn't know any of the trails that the mountain people used, and they didn't know where to find the mountain people or how to track them in the steep terrain.

Even so, they sent out their best party of fighting men to climb the mountain and bring the baby home. The men tried first one method of climbing and then another. They tried one trail and then another. After several days of effort, however, they had climbed only several hundred feet.

Feeling hopeless and helpless, the lowlander men decided that the cause was lost, and they prepared to return to their village below. As they were packing their gear for the descent, they saw the baby's mother walking toward them. They realized that she was coming down the mountain that they hadn't figured out how to climb. And then they saw that she had the baby strapped to her back. How could that be?

One man greeted her and said, "We couldn't climb this mountain. How did you do this when we, the strongest and most able men in the village, couldn't do it?"

She shrugged her shoulders and said, "It wasn't your baby."

Wild Fandango

Ted and John wanted to get away from the countryside and see the world. One day Ted said to his brother "You know, we could do really well setting up our bungee-jumping service in Mexico."

John thought this was a great idea, so the two pooled their money and bought all the equipment they needed.

They traveled to Mexico and began to set up a tower near the center of the town for good publicity. As they began building the tower, a crowd assembled nearby. Slowly more and more people gathered to watch them work.

They were excited at having such a big audience that Ted decided to jump and show his prospective clients all about bungee jumping.

He bounced at the end of the cord. When he came back up, John noticed that he had a few cuts and scratches. As he flew by, John asked if the cord was too long. Unfortunately, he wasn't able to catch him. So Ted fell again, bounced and came back up.

This time Ted was seriously bruised and bleeding. Again, John just missed catching him and asked if the cord was too long.

Ted fell a third time. This time, when he bounced back, he was a complete mess with a couple of broken bones and was almost unconscious.

Luckily, John finally caught his brother and said "What happened? Was the cord too long?"

Ted said, "No, the cord was fine, but what in the world is a piñata?

Poverty

One day a father and his rich family took his son to a trip to the country with the firm purpose to show him how poor people can be. They spent a day and a night in the farm of a very poor family. When they got back from their trip the father asked his son, "My dear Son, how was the trip?"

"Very good Dad!"

"Did you see how poor people can be?" the father asked.

"Yeah!"

"And what did you learn?"

The son answered, "I saw that we have a dog at home, and they have four. We have a pool that reaches to the middle of the garden, they have a creek that has no end. We have imported

lamps in the garden, they have the stars. Our patio reaches to the front yard, they have a whole horizon."

When the little boy was finishing, his father was speechless.

His son added, "Thanks Dad for showing me how poor we are!"

A Woman's Place

Governor White and his wife were driving through the open Texas countryside one day, out for a relaxing drive and talk

The couple happened to be around the area where Mrs. White grew up, and as they pulled into a gas station to fuel up and check out the car, Mark noticed a little nervousness with his wife. He didn't say anything, but when the gas station attendant came out to their car, Mark began to notice what was really going on. Both his wife and the attendant looked surprised to see each other, and they acted with that awkwardness that two people have when they've been close in the past, but weren't anymore.

Governor White pretended not to notice this. They finished at the gas station and continued back down the highway. The car fell silent and neither said a word. For a long time they remained silent, and all the while Mrs. White kept looking out the window, staring off out into the distance. Mark was considerate and patient with this silence, and he continued to drive in the silence. But after the silence had gone on for almost an hour, he interrupted, trying to break the silence.

"Honey, I couldn't help but notice how you and that gas station attendant looked at each other. You were involved with each other at one point, weren't you," he asked?

"Well, yea," She responded, quietly.

"Well, I guess I know how you feel. You were probably thinking about that and needed some space, right," he continued?

"Yea," she said again.

"I guess you were probably thinking about how different your two lives had become. I guess you were thinking that if you had married him, then you'd be the wife of a gas station attendant now, instead of my wife. Right," he said?

"Well, No. Actually I was thinking that he'd be the governor now."

The Sack

A Sufi Story from the Middle East

Mullah came upon a frowning man walking along the road to town. "What's wrong?" he asked.

The man held up a tattered bag and moaned, "All that I own in this wide world barely fills this miserable, wretched sack."

"Too bad," said Mullah, and with that, he snatched the bag from the man's hands and ran down the road with it.

Having lost everything, the man burst into tears and, more miserable than before, continued walking. Meanwhile, Mullah quickly ran around the bend and placed the man's sack in the middle of the road where he would have to come upon it.

When the man saw his bag sitting in the road before him, he laughed with joy, and shouted, "My sack! I thought I'd lost you!"

Watching through the bushes, Mullah chuckled. "Well, that's one way to make someone happy!"

You Don't Know

An Eastern European Tale

A pious old man would each day cross the village green and go into the temple to pray. A soldier watched him do this day after day. One morning, in an ill temper, the soldier stopped the old man and said, "Where do you think you're going?"

"I don't know," replied the old man.

"What do you mean, you don't know?!" said the soldier." Everyday I see you walk out of your house at this time, cross the village green and go into the temple to pray! Answer me! Where are you going?"

Again the old man replied, "I don't know."

With that, the soldier grabbed him by the scruff of the neck, took him to the jail and pushed him into a cell. Just as the soldier was turning the key, the old man looked at the jail and said, "See! You don't know!"

New Shoes

A Taoist Tale from China by Han Fei

A man needed a new pair of shoes. Before he went to the marketplace, he drew a detailed picture of his feet on a piece of paper, carefully measured them, and wrote down all their dimensions. Then, he set off on foot for the shoe store. Arriving later that day at the bazaar, he unhappily discovered that he had forgotten to bring the paper with his measurements on it! He turned around and walked back home to get it. It was sunset by the time he returned to the market,. and all the shops were closed. He explained his situation to one of the shopkeepers who had already packed away all his wares.

"Foolish man!" said the merchant. "You could have trusted your feet and tried the shoes on in the store! Why did you go home to get your diagrams?"

The man blushed, "I guess I trusted my measurements more..."

Visits of Kings

A Tale from the Middle East

The Imperial Majesty visited a small teahouse one morning. He called for an omelet. With great ceremony he was flattered and served the omelet on the crude tableware of the teahouse. The owner apologized over and over for the common cloth on the table and the simple furniture. "Not at all up to the standards of a king!" he said.

"It's fine," the king reassured him. "How much do I owe for the omelet?"

"For you, Sire, the omelet will be 1,000 pieces of gold."

"Whoa!" The king raised an eyebrow. "Eggs must be expensive around here. Is that because they are scarce?"

"It's not the eggs which are scarce around here, Your Majesty," said the shopkeeper, "It is the visits of kings!"

A Big Quiet House

A Yiddish Folktale from Eastern Europe

There was once a man who wished his small, noisy house was larger and quieter. He went to the wise old woman of the town and explained his need. She said, "I can solve your problem. Just do as I say." The man agreed.

"If you have a chicken, some sheep, a horse, and a cow," she said, "bring them into the house with you."

"That's a silly thing to do," thought the old man. But he did it anyway. Now his house was already small, and with all those animals in it, there was no room at all. He returned to the old woman and cried, "I need more room! The animals are so noisy I can't think!"

"Take all those animals out of your dwelling," she replied.

When he had put all the animals comfortably back in the barn, the man went into his house. To his amazement, it suddenly looked remarkably bigger! Without the animals inside, his house was now quiet too!

Three Fish

A Tale from India

Three fish lived in a pond. One was named Plan Ahead, another was Think Fast, and the third was named Wait and See. One day they heard a fisherman say that he was going to cast his net in their pond the next day.

Plan Ahead said, "I'm swimming down the river tonight!

Think Fast said, "I'm sure I'll come up with a plan.

Wait and See lazily said, "I just can't think about it now!"

When the fisherman cast his nets, Plan Ahead was long gone. But Think Fast and Wait and See were caught!

Think Fast quickly rolled his belly up and pretended to be dead. "Oh, this fish is no good!" said the fisherman, and threw him safely back into the water. But, Wait and See ended up in the fish market.

That is why they say, "In times of danger, when the net is cast, plan ahead or plan to think fast!"

Who Is King Of The Forest?

A Tale from India

When Tiger jumped on Fox, Fox cried out, "How dare you attack the King of the Jungle!"

Tiger looked at him in amazement, "Nonsense! You are not King!"

"Certainly I am," replied Fox, "All the animals run from me in terror! If you want proof, come with me." Fox went into the forest with Tiger at his heels. When they came to a herd of deer, the deer saw Tiger behind Fox and ran in all directions.

They came to a group of monkeys. The monkeys saw Tiger behind Fox and they fled. Fox turned to Tiger and said, "Do you need more proof than that? See how the animals flee at the very sight me?!"

"I'm surprised, but I've seen it with my own eyes. Forgive me for attacking you, Great King." Tiger bowed low and with great ceremony he let Fox go.

The Book of Self-Motivation

Ten Rules for the Good Life

-Thomas Jefferson

1. Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.
2. Never trouble another for what you can do yourself.
3. Never spend your money before you have it.
4. Never buy what you do not want because it is cheap; it will never be dear to you.
5. Pride costs us more than hunger, thirst, and cold.
6. Never repent of having eaten too little.
7. Nothing is troublesome that we do willingly.
8. Don't let the evils, which have never happened, cost you pain.
9. Always take things by their smooth handle.
10. When angry, count to ten before you speak; if very angry, count to one hundred.

Life Is...

"Life is a game of cards. The cards are shuffled and the hands are dealt. You must play your cards well" -- Eugene Hare

"Life is a play. It's not its length, but its performance that counts." -- Seneca

"Life is a B-picture script." -- Kirk Douglas

"Life is something like a trumpet. If you don't put anything in, you won't get anything out." -- W.C. Handy.

"A life is a simple letter in the alphabet. It can be meaningless. Or it can be part of a great meaning." -- Jewish Seminary

"Life is a daring adventure, or nothing." -- Helen Keller

"Life is an onion. You peel it off one layer at a time, and sometimes you weep." -- Carl Sandburg

"Life is what's happening while you're thinking about something else." -- AA saying

Each Day I Learn More

Each day I learn more than I teach;
I learn that half knowledge of another's life
Leads to false judgment;
I learn that there is surprising kinship in human nature;
I learn that it's a wise father who knows his own son;
I learn that what we expect we get;
I learn there's more good than evil in this world;
That age is a question of spirit;
That youth is the best of life
No matter how numerous the years;
I learn how much there is to learn.

15 Ways to Enhance Your Day

Get up early.
Look around outside before going to work
Relax and enjoy your meals.
Spend time with friends.
Pace yourself.
Find a quiet place to go to.

Praise yourself and others.

Develop positive relationships.

See your mistakes as stepping-stones.

Keep track of your own moods so you can watch out for them.

Say No without feeling guilty.

Learn effective time management.

Pay attention to health, diet and sleep.

Exercise regularly.

Keep from comparing yourself to others.

Things We Can Learn From a Dog

Never pass up the opportunity to go for a joy ride.

Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy.

When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.

When it's in your best interest, practice obedience.

Let others know when they've invaded your territory.

Take naps and stretch before rising.

Run, romp and play daily.

Eat with gusto and enthusiasm.

Be loyal.

Never pretend to be something you're not.

If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.

When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by and nuzzle them gently.

Thrive on attention and let people touch you.

Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.

On hot days, drink lots of water and lie under a shady tree.

When you're happy, dance around and wag your entire body.

No matter how often you're scolded, don't buy into the guilt thing and pout.. run right back and make friends.

Delight in the simple joys of a long walk.

Things to Remember

I find what I look for in people. If I look for God, I find God. If I look for bad qualities, I find them. I, in a sense, select what I expect, and I receive it.

A life without challenges would be like going to school without lessons to learn. Challenges come not to depress or get me down, but to master and to grow and to unfold thereby.

In the Father's wise and loving plan for me, no burden can fall upon me, no emergency can arise, no grief can overtake me, before I am given the grace and strength to meet them.

A rich, full life is not determined by outer circumstances and relationships. These can be contributory to it, but cannot be the source. I am happy or unhappy because of what I think and feel.

I can never lose anything that belongs to me, nor can I posses what is not really mine.

To never run from a problem: either it will chase me or I will run into another just like it, although it may have a different face or name.

To have no concern for tomorrow. Today is the yesterday over which I had concern.

To never bang on a closed door: Wait for it to open and then go through it.

A person who has come into my life has come either to teach me something, or to learn something from me.

I've Learned…

I've learned that you cannot make someone love you. All you can do is be someone who can be loved. The rest is up to them.

I've learned that no matter how much I care, some people just don't care back.

I've learned that it's not what you have in your life, but who you have in your life that counts.

I've learned that you can get by on charm for about 15 minutes. After that, you'd better know something.

I've learned that you shouldn't compare yourself to the best others can do, but to the best you can do.

I've learned that it's not what happens to people that's important. It's what they do about it.

I've learned that no matter how thin you slice it, there are always two sides.

I've learned that it's taking me a long time to become the person I want to be.

I've learned that it's a lot easier to react than it is to think.

I've learned that you should always leave loved ones with loving words. It may be the last time you see them.

I've learned that you can keep going long after you think you can't.

I've learned that we are responsible for what we do, no matter how we feel.

I've learned that either you control your attitude or it controls you.

I've learned that regardless of how hot and steamy a relationship is at first, the passion fades and there had better be something else to take its place.

I've learned that heroes are the people who do what has to be done when it needs to be done, regardless of the consequences.

I've learned that learning to forgive takes practice.

I've learned that there are people who love you dearly, but just don't know how to show it.

I've learned that money is a lousy way of keeping score.

I've learned that my best friend and I can do anything or nothing and have the best time.

I've learned that sometimes the people you expect to kick you when you're down may be the ones to help you get back up.

I've learned that I'm getting more and more like my grandma, and I'm kinda happy about it.

I've learned that sometimes when I'm angry I have the right to be angry, but that doesn't give me the right to be cruel.

I've learned that true friendship continues to grow, even over the longest distance. Same goes for true love.

I've learned that just because someone doesn't love you the way you want them to doesn't mean they don't love you with all they have.

I've learned that maturity has more to do with what types of experiences you've had and what you've learned from them and less to do with how many birthdays you've celebrated.

I've learned that you should never tell a child her dreams are unlikely or outlandish. Few things are more humiliating, and what a tragedy it would be if she believed it.

I've learned that your family won't always be there for you. It may seem funny, but people you aren't related to can take care

of you and love you and teach you to trust people again. Families aren't biological.

I've learned that no matter how good a friend someone is, they're going to hurt you every once in a while and you must forgive them for that.

I've learned that it isn't always enough to be forgiven by others. Sometimes you have to learn to forgive yourself.

I've learned that no matter how bad your heart is broken the world doesn't stop for your grief.

I've learned that our background and circumstances may have influenced who we are, but we are responsible for who we become.

I've learned that sometimes when my friends fight, I'm forced to choose sides even when I don't want to.

I've learned that just because two people argue, it doesn't mean they don't love each other. And just because they don't argue, it doesn't mean they do.

I've learned that sometimes you have to put the individual ahead of their actions.

I've learned that we don't have to change friends if we understand that friends change.

I've learned that if you don't want to forget something, stick it in your underwear drawer.

I've learned that you shouldn't be so eager to find out a secret. It could change your life forever.

I've learned that the clothes I like best are the ones with the most holes in them.

I've learned that two people can look at the exact same thing and see something totally different.

I've learned that no matter how you try to protect your children, they will eventually get hurt and you will hurt in the process.

I've learned that there are many ways of falling and staying in love.

I've learned that no matter the consequences, those who are honest with themselves, get further in life.

I've learned that many things can be powered by the mind, the trick is self-control.

I've learned that no matter how many friends you have, if you are their pillar, you will feel lonely and lost at the times you need them most.

I've learned that your life can be changed in a matter of hours by people who don't even know you.

I've learned that even when you think you have no more to give, when a friend cries out to you, you will find the strength to help.

I've learned that writing, as well as talking, can ease emotional pains.

I've learned that the paradigm we live in is not all that is offered to us.

I've learned that credentials on the wall do not make you a decent human being.

I've learned that the people you care most about in life are taken from you too soon.

I've learned that although the word "love" can have many different meanings, it loses value when overly used.

I've learned that it's hard to determine where to draw the line between being nice and not hurting people's feelings and standing up for what you believe.

I've learned that no matter how fast or how far you go, you can't outrun God.

I've learned that no matter how far away I've been, He'll always welcome me back.

I've learned that love is not for me to keep, but to pass on to the next person I see.

I've learned that even if you do the right thing for the wrong reason, it's still the wrong thing to do.

On Relationships

Woody Allen said it best when asked about "relationships," and he told a story to illustrate. He said I think this story speaks about relationships:

A man came in to see a psychiatrist. When the psychiatrist asked him what the problem was, the man said, "Well, it's my brother. I think he's crazy."

"Why do you think that," asked the Doctor.

"Well," said the man, "he thinks he's a chicken."

"Hmmm.." the doctor replied, "That does sound sort of strange. Why don't you bring him in for therapy?"

"I can't," said the man.

"Well, why not," asked the doctor.

"Because, I need the eggs." the man said.

I guess we are intertwined a little more than we like to think. And, we always see the other's strangeness even though we have just as much of our own strangeness, and often we have "complimentary" strangeness.

Hang In There

Nicolo Paganini was a well-known and gifted nineteenth century violinist. He was also well known as a great showman with a quick sense of humor. His most memorable concert was in Italy with a full orchestra. He was performing before a packed house and his technique was incredible, his tone was fantastic, and his audience dearly loved him. Toward the end of his concert, Paganini was astounding his audience with an unbelievable composition when suddenly one string on his violin snapped and hung limply from his instrument. Paganini frowned briefly, shook his head, and continued to play, improvising beautifully.

Then to everyone's surprise, a second string broke. And shortly thereafter, a third. Almost like a slapstick comedy, Paganini stood there with three strings dangling from his Stradivarius. But instead of leaving the stage, Paganini stood his ground and calmly completed the difficult number on the one remaining string.

The School of Life

(Bonnie Tivenen, New Beginnings in Reading)

Respect all people - old, young, rich, and not so rich.

Try not to worry.

Don't tell everyone your business.

Be happy with the things you have.

Exercise every day.

Don't go looking for trouble.

Look for the good in everything and everyone.

Get enough sleep.

Try to forgive and forget.

Always do what you think is right.

Don't worry about what people think of you.

Spend time with your family.

Make time to see friends.

Don't spend money that you don't have.

Try to be happy and kind.

Don't be afraid to say what you think.

Try to be the best that you can be.

Just For Today

Just for today I will try to live through this day only, and not tackle all my problems at once. I can do something for twelve hours that would appall me if I felt that I had to keep it up for a lifetime.

Just for today I will be happy. This assumes to be true what Abraham Lincoln said, that "Most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be."

Just for today I will adjust myself to what is, and not try to adjust everything to my own desires, I will take my "luck" as it comes, and fit myself to it.

Just for today I will try to strengthen my mind. I will study. I will learn something useful. I will not be a mental loafer. I will read something that requires effort, thought and concentration.

Just for today I will exercise my soul in three ways: I will do somebody a good turn, and not get found out; if anybody knows of it, it will not count. I will do a least two things I don't want to do--just for exercise. I will not show anyone that my feelings are hurt; they may be hurt, but today I will not show it.

Just for today I will be agreeable. I will look as well as I can, dress becomingly, keep my voice low, be courteous, criticize not one bit. I won't find fault with anything, nor try to improve or regulate anybody but myself.

Just for today I will have a program. I may not follow it exactly, but I will have it. I will save myself from two pests: hurry and indecision.

Just for today I will have a quiet half hour all by myself, and relax. During this half hour, sometime, I will try to get a better perspective of my life.

Just for today I will be unafraid. Especially I will not be afraid to enjoy what is beautiful, and to believe that as I give to the world, so the world will give to me.

Thoughts To Live By

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

A good example is the best sermon.

Every good thought is a prayer.

What we pray for may not be for our ultimate good. "No" can be an answer to a prayer as well as "Yes."

If you worry, why pray? If you pray, why worry?

No one is easier to deceive than oneself.

The greatest fault of all is to be conscious of none.

Any good that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.

No matter how hopeless the present problem may seem, remember: This, too, shall pass.

Living in harmony with ourselves is essential to living in harmony with others,

Fear is the enemy of good works; it is a deadly sickness of the soul.

More things are accomplished by prayer than the world realizes.

Knowledge advances one step at a time; let us be patient.

One with God is always in the majority.

How poor are they that have not patience; what wound did ever heal but by degrees?

No one's knowledge can go beyond experience.

The misfortunes which are hardest to bear are those which never come.

Growth is the only evidence of life.

A person who makes no mistakes usually does not make anything.

Love is understanding, acceptance, and tenderness. If it tries to strangle and possess, it is not love.

The more often we think and act honestly, the stronger the habit becomes.

The journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step.

The task ahead of us is never as great as the Power within us.

They hurt the absent who quarrel with the drunken.

Al-Anon is a kissing cousin to invention because they were both born of necessity.

If you find life is empty, try putting something into it.

Beware of the rubber conscience and the concrete heart.

The trouble with many of us is that in trying times we stop trying.

A Life In Your Hands

(Dorothy Law Holte)

If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn;

If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight;

If a child lives with ridicule, he learns to be shy;

If a child lives with shame, he learns to feel guilty;

If a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient;

If a child lives with encouragement, he learns confidence;

If a child lives with praise, he learns to appreciate;

If a child lives with fairness, he learns justice;

If a child lives with security, he learns to have faith;

If a child lives with approval, he learns to like himself;

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, he learns to find love in the world.

Xvxry Pxrson is Important

One manager let employees know how valuable they are with the following memo:

"You Arx A Kxy Pxrson"

Xvxn though my typxwritxr is an old modxl, it works vxry wxll -- xxcxpt for onx kxy. You would think that with all thx othxer kxys functioning propxrly, onx kxy not working would hardly bx noticxd; but just onx kxy out of whack sxxms to ruin thx wholx xffort.

You may say to yoursxlf -- Wxll, I'm only onx pxrson. No onx will noticx if I don't do my bxst. But it doxs makx a diffxrxncx, bxcausx an xffxctivx organization nxxds activx participation by xvxry onx to thx bxst of his or hxr ability.

So, thx nxxt timx you think you arx not important, rxmxmbxr my old typxwritxr. You arx a kxy pxrson.

Be Good to You

Be Yourself – Truthfully
Accept Yourself – Gracefully
Value Yourself – Joyfully
Forgive Yourself – Completely
Treat Yourself – Generously
Balance Yourself – Harmoniously
Bless Yourself – Abundantly
Trust Yourself – Confidently
Love Yourself – Wholeheartedly
Empower Yourself – Prayerfully
Give Yourself – Enthusiastically
Express Yourself – Radiantly

The Lion and The cougar

A pointed fable is told about a young lion and a cougar. Both thirsty, the animals arrived at their usual water hole at the same time. They immediately began to argue about who should satisfy their thirst first. The argument became heated, and each decided he would rather die than give up the privilege of being first to quench his thirst. As they stubbornly confronted each other, their emotions turned to rage. Their cruel attacks on each other were suddenly interrupted. They both looked up. Circling overhead was a flock of vultures waiting for the loser to fall. Quietly, the two beasts turned and walked away. The thought of being devoured was all they needed to end their quarrel.

Watch Your Thoughts.

Watch Your Thoughts.
They Become Words.

Watch your Words.
They Become Actions.

Watch Your Actions.
They Become Habits.

Watch Your Habits.
They Become Character.

Watch Your Character.
For It Becomes Your Destiny.

Letting Go

There's nothing to fear --- you're as good as the best,
As strong as the mightiest, too.
You can win in every battle or test;
For there's no one just like you.

There's only one you in the world today;
So nobody else, you see,
Can do your work in as fine a way:
You're the only you there'll be!

So face the world, and all life is yours
To conquer and love and live:
And you'll find the happiness that endures
In just the measure you give;

There's nothing too good for you to possess,
Nor heights where you cannot go:
Your power is more than belief or guess ---
It is something you have to know.

There is nothing to fear --- you can and you will.
For you are the invincible you.
Set your foot on the highest hill ---
There's nothing you cannot do.

How To Survive the Business of Living

(Karen Kaiser Clark, The Center For Executive Planning)

Real is the person who does not define happiness as an absence of problems. Surviving this business of living is a difficult ordeal at times. How can we retain a healthy sense of humor and experience a sense of balance in our lives? How can we realistically and yet with a sense of wonder live fully and not just survive? How can we maybe even celebrate this business of living? To answer some of these questions we will focus on seven points.

Life Isn't Fair

No matter how good we get at this business of living, none of us gets out of it alive. Frustrating, isn't it! Life doesn't always deal us a good hand and doing our best doesn't always pay off with a positive.

Suffering

Growth is seldom easy and pain is an integral part of our human condition. Everybody hurts. It's just that some of us are better actors in hiding the pain we feel. Seldom if ever... are all of our ducks in a row.

Loneliness and Alikeness

Dr. Albert Schweitzer said, "We are all so much together, but we are all dying of loneliness." We have all known moments of apartness and empty loneliness. Embracing that reality is essential if we are to cope effectively.

Personal Responsibility

We each have a choice to be either a death- peddler or a life-giver. We are responsible for the choices we make. We can become most of what we wish to be if we are willing to change and pay the price.

Self Worth

A poster reads, "God don't make junk." People are special and each is, "Beautiful in his/her own way." We are more than our accomplishments!

People Need People

Life is not meant to be lived in isolation. All of life occurs within relationships. We need to know we are needed and so do those we need.

Mystery

Life is not just one big problem to be solved. Rather, it is a mystery to be experienced, all the more meaningful and beautiful when it is shared and celebrated with other persons who are committed to "growing deep, not just tall!"

How To Love Yourself

(Louise L. Hay)

Stop All Criticism - Criticism never changes a thing. Refuse to criticize yourself. Accept yourself exactly as you are. Everybody changes. When you criticize yourself, your changes are negative. When you approve of yourself, your changes are positive.

Don't Scare Yourself - Stop terrorizing yourself with your thoughts. It's a dreadful way to live. Find a mental image that gives you pleasure (mine is yellow roses), and immediately switch your scary thought to a pleasure thought.

Be Gentle And Kind And Patient - Be gentle with yourself. Be kind to yourself. Be patient with yourself as you learn the new ways of thinking. Treat yourself as you would someone you really loved.

Be Kind To Your Mind - Self-hatred is only hating your own thoughts. Don't hate yourself for having the thoughts. Gently change your thoughts.

Praise Yourself - Criticism breaks down the inner spirit. Praise builds it up. Praise yourself as much as you can. Tell yourself how well you are doing with every little thing.

Support Yourself - Find ways to support yourself. Reach out to friends and allow them to help you. It is being strong to ask for help when you need it.

Be Loving To Your Negatives - Acknowledge that you created them to fulfill a need. Now, you are finding new, positive ways to fulfill those needs. So, lovingly release the old negative patterns.

Take Care Of Your Body - Learn about nutrition. What kind of fuel does your body need to have optimum energy and vitality? Learn about exercise. What kind of exercise can you enjoy? Cherish and revere the temple you live in.

Mirror Work - Look into your eyes often. Express this growing sense of love you have for yourself. Forgive yourself looking into the mirror. Talk to your parents looking into the mirror. Forgive them too. At least once a day say: "I love you, I really love you."

Love Yourself... Do It Now - Don't wait until you get well, or lose the weight, or get the new job, or the new relationship. Begin now -- and do the best you can.

My Declaration of Self Esteem

(From Self Esteem by Virginia Satir)

I am Me. In all the world, there is no one else exactly like me.

Everything that comes out of me is authentically mine, because I alone chose it --

I own everything about me: my body, my feelings, my mouth, my voice, all my actions, whether they be to others or myself.

I own my fantasies, my dreams, my hopes, and my fears. I own my triumphs and successes, all my failures and mistakes.

Because I own all of me, I can become intimately acquainted with me.

By so doing, I can love me and be friendly with all my parts. I know there are aspects about myself that puzzle me, and other aspects that I do not know --

But as long as I am friendly and loving to myself, I can courageously and hopefully look for solutions to the puzzles and ways to find out more about me.

However I look and sound, whatever I say and do, and whatever I think and feel at a given moment in time is authentically me.

If later some parts of how I looked, sounded, thought, and felt turn out to be unfitting, I can discard that which is unfitting, keep the rest, and invent something new for that which I discarded. I can see, hear, feel, think, say, and do.

I have the tools to survive, to be close to others, to be productive, and to make sense and order out of the world of people and things outside of me.

I own me, and therefore, I can engineer me. I am me, and I am Okay.

Our Deepest Fear

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. You are born to make manifest the glory of God that is within you. It's not just in some of us, it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we're liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others." -Nelson Mandela

How To Be Unhappy

Make little things bother you. Don't just let them, MAKE them.

Lose you perspective on things and keep it lost: don't put first things first.

Get yourself a good worry, one about which you cannot do anything.

Be a perfectionist, which means not that you work hard to do your best, but that you condemn yourself and others for not achieving perfection.

Be right. Be always right. Be the only one who is always right, and be rigid in your rightness.

Don't trust or believe people, or accept them at anything but their worst and weakest. Be suspicious. Insist that others always have hidden motives.

Always compare yourself unfavorably to others. This guarantees instant misery.

Take personally everything that happens to you.

Don't give yourself whole-heatedly to anyone or anything.

Laws of Success

(Jack Yianitsas)

Do you want something? -- Will you pay the price?

The great sin -- Gossip.

The great cripple -- Fear.

The greatest mistake -- Giving up.

The most satisfying experience -- Doing your duty first.

The best action -- Keep the mind clear and judgment good.

The greatest blessing -- Good health.

The biggest fool - The man who lies to himself.

The great gamble -- Substituting hope for facts.

The most certain thing in life -- Change.

The greatest joy -- Being needed.

The cleverest man -- The one who does what he thinks is right.

The most potent force -- Positive thinking.

The greatest opportunity -- The next one.

The greatest thought -- God.

The greatest victory -- Victory over self.

The best play -- Successful work.

The greatest handicap -- Egotism.

The most expensive indulgence -- Hate.

The most dangerous man -- The liar

The most ridiculous trait -- False pride.

The greatest loss -- Loss of self-confidence.

The greatest need -- Common sense.

Claim Your Freedom

Freedom is not a destination. It's a journey.

You need to be free to choose the right road for yourself. The right road is the one that leads to your best. All that matters is that you end up a free person - free to decide where you want to go and how you intend to get there.

The method is simple: act freely and freedom will be yours. Because being free is being real, if you want to be free, you need to make friends with the truth.

No matter how clearly you can point to forces blocking you, the most important obstacles to you freedom are within.

You are the one who permits obstacles to block your path. While being stuck is frustrating, it also keeps you from risking, safe from failure and from discovering your weaknesses and shortcomings. Your prison is always your choice. To break free, you have to give up whatever security being bound offers.

You should be able to face the present without the emotions of the past intruding. In the end you're only as free as you are in your heart. Your freedom lies just behind your forgiving. When you free yourself, you also free the world.

I am free.

I declare it.

Attitude

(Charles Swindell)

The longer I live

The more I realize the impact of attitude on life.

Attitude, to me, is more important than the past,

Than education,

Than money,

Than circumstances,

Than failures,

Than success,

Than what other people think or say or do.

It is more important than appearance,

Giftedness or skill.

It will make or break an organization,

A school, a home.

The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day.

Regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day.

We cannot change our past.

We cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way.

We cannot change the inevitable.

The only thing we can do

Is play the string we have.

And that is our attitude.

I am convinced that life is 10 percent what happens to me

And 90 percent how I react to it.

And so it is with you.

God’s Days

(Robert J. Burdette)

There are two days in the week upon which and about which I never worry -- two carefree days kept sacredly free from fear and apprehension. One of these days is Yesterday. Yesterday, with its cares and fret and pains and aches, all its faults, its mistakes and blunders, has passed forever beyond my recall. It was mine; it is God's.

The other day that I do not worry about is Tomorrow. Tomorrow, with all its possible adversities, its burdens, its perils, its large promise and performance, its failures and mistakes, is as far beyond my mastery as its dead sister, Yesterday. Tomorrow is God's day; it will be mine.

There is left, then, for myself but one day in the week - Today. Any man can fight the battles of today. Any woman can carry the burdens of just one day; any man can resist the temptation of today. It is only when we willfully add the burden of these two awful eternities - Yesterday and Tomorrow - such burdens as only the Mighty God can sustain - that we break down.

It isn't the experience of Today that drives men mad. It is the remorse of what happened Yesterday and fear of what Tomorrow might bring. These are God's Days... Leave them to Him.

On Letting Go

To "let go" does not mean to stop caring, it means I can't do it for someone else.

To "let go" is not to cut myself off, it's the realization I can't control another.

To "let go" is not to enable, but to allow learning from natural consequences.

To "let go" is to admit powerlessness, which means the outcome is not in may hands.

To "let go" is not to care for, but to care about.

To "let go" is not to fix, but to be supportive.

To "let go" is not to judge, but to allow another to be a human being.

To "let go" is not to be in the middle arranging all the outcomes, but to allow others to effect their destinies.

To "let go" is not to be protective, it's to permit another to face reality.

To "let go" is not to deny, but to accept.

To "let go" is not to nag, scold, or argue, but instead to search out my own shortcomings and correct them.

To "let go" is not to adjust everything to my desires, but to take each day as it comes, and cherish myself in it.

To "let go" is not to criticize and regulate anybody, but to try to become what I dream I can be.

To "let go" is not to regret the past, but to grow and live for the future.

To "let go" is to fear less, and love more.

Fair Fighting

Generally we think of fights as unpleasant confrontations between two or more people where tempers flare, voices are raised, and angry insults are exchanged. Fights need not be this way. They are normal and necessary in most relationships, but dirty, unfair fights only result in bitterness, distrust, and feelings of revenge.

Clean, fair fights, on the other hand, are confrontations where disagreements and grievances are dealt with according to a specific set of rules. At the end of a fair fight most people feel refreshed and relieved because a sensitive issue has been settled in a constructive way.

The following rules must be observed when conducting a clean, fair fight:

No hitting below the belt -- purposely calling attention to known weaknesses or sensitive areas.

No false agreements -- pretending to go along or to agree when you don't.

No character analysis or psychoanalyzing -- telling a person what they are thinking, feeling, or why they acted as they did.

No stereotyping -- labeling or name-calling.

No gunny sacking -- saving up minor grievances and dumping them all at once rather than dealing with them one at a time as they occur.

No playing archaeologist -- digging up past happenings.

Don't generalize -- using statements such as "You always..." or "You never..." to describe a person's behavior.

Stick to the issue -- dealing with only one issue at a time.

Don't drop "the bomb" -- over-reacting to a situation and making idle threats; giving an ultimatum.

Avoid "round robin" fights -- continuing with repetitive, stale arguments where no progress is being made toward conflict resolution.

The purpose of arguments and conflict is to resolve difficulties or solve problems, not to assign blame or to find fault. Do not keep score. Do not lecture. Differentiate between behavior and being. Treat everyone with regard and respect. Do not judge the perceptions and feelings of others. Accept differences. And don't forget the best part of all fights -- making up afterwards. Making up is an essential part to complete resolution.

A Start

(Leo Buscaglia)

Each day, I promise myself not to try to solve all my life problems at once -- nor shall I expect you to do so;

Starting each day, I shall try to learn something new about me and about you and about the world I live in, so that I may continue to experience all things as if they had been newly born;

Starting each day, I shall remember to communicate my joy as well as my despair, so that we can know each other better;

Starting each day, I shall remind myself to really listen to you and to try to hear your point of view and to discover the least-threatening way of giving you mine, remembering that we are both growing and changing in a hundred different ways;

Starting each day, I shall remind myself that I am a human being and not demand perfection of you until I am perfect, so you're safe;

Starting each day, I shall try to be more aware of the beautiful things in our world -- I'll look at the flowers, I'll look at the birds, I'll look at the children, I'll feel the cool breezes, I'll eat good food -- and I'll share these things with you;

Starting each day, I shall remind myself to reach out and touch you, gently, with my words, my eyes and with my fingers, because I don't want to miss feeling you;

Starting each day, I shall dedicate myself again to the process of being a lover -- and then see what happens;

You know, I'm really convinced that if you were to define love, the only word big enough to engulf it all would be "Life" -- LOVE IS LIFE -- in all its aspects... And if you miss love, you miss life!

Please don't!

A Practical Guide to Life

(Charles Fitzsimmons)

There is reason and purpose and harmony in the Universe. We are a part of all that, and a great amount of our work in this life is to learn that lesson.

We define life in terms of our body. You may like or hate your body, but it is the mechanism that defines what we call life. Most of us start out believing that we are our body, and it takes considerable effort on our part to overcome the complications of that misunderstanding.

We are here to learn lessons. That is what life is about. Each day we will have the opportunity to learn lessons. You may like the lessons or you may think them stupid or irrelevant.

There are no mistakes, only lessons. Growth is a process of trial and error experimentation. The experiences that we label failures are as valuable a part of the process as the experiments that ultimately work.

A lesson is repeated until it is learned. A lesson will be presented to you in various forms until you have learned it. When you have completely learned a lesson, you will then go on to the next one.

Learning lessons does not end. This is what life is about; as long as there is life, there are lessons.

What you make of this life is up to you. You already have everything you will ever need to learn your lessons. There is nothing you have to do first.

Every thing you experience in life is neutral. The only value of anything outside yourself is measured by the way you experience it.

When you have learned that lesson, it will be a powerful tool you can use to set up more lessons.

The Universe will bring you everything you need to learn your lessons. The value of your experiences is determined by you. The Universe will never bring you more than you can handle.

What you do with those resources is up to you. Whether your choice is to learn or to fail, the Universe will support your choice, and bring whatever you need to manifest it.

Whatever you choose, EVERYTHING WILL BE OKAY!!! From time to time, you will forget this.

Life’s Little Instructions

Every so often you push your luck.

Never underestimate the power of a kind word or deed.

Never give up on anybody -- miracles happen every day.

Become the most positive and enthusiastic person you know.

Learn to listen.

Think big thoughts, but relish small pleasures.

Don't expect others to listen to your advice or ignore your example.

Opportunity sometimes knocks very softly.

Leave everything a little better than you found it.

Don't forget: a person's emotional need is to feel appreciated.

Never waste an opportunity to tell someone you love them.

Treat everyone you meet like you want to be treated.

Make new friends but cherish the old ones.

Don't use time or words carelessly, neither can be retrieved.

Judge your success by the degree that you're enjoying peace, health, and love.

Smile a lot: it costs nothing and is beyond price.

The Principles of Attitudinal Healing

The essence of our being is Love.

Health is inner peace.

Healing is letting go of fear.

Giving and receiving are the same.

We can let go of the past and of the future.

Now is the only time there is and each instance is for giving.

We can learn to love ourselves and others by forgiving rather than judging.

We can become love finders rather than faultfinders.

We can choose and direct ourselves to the happy inside regardless of what is happening outside.

We are students and teachers to each other.

We can focus on the whole of life rather than the fragments.

Since love is eternal, death need not be viewed as fearful.

We can always perceive others as either extending love or giving a call for help.

Who's Counting?

Napoleon was involved in conversation with a colonel of a Hungarian battalion who had been taken prisoner in Italy. The colonel mentioned he had fought in the army of Maria Theresa.

"You must have a few years under your belt!" exclaimed Napoleon.

"I'm sure I've lived sixty or seventy years," replied the colonel.

"You mean to say," Napoleon continued, "you have not kept track of the years you have lived?"

The colonel promptly replied, "Sir, I always count my money, my shirts, and my horses - but as for my years, I know nobody who wants to steal them, and I shall surely never lose them."

Takes Time

Take time to laugh
It is the music of the soul.

Take time to think
It is the source of power.

Take time to play
It is the source of perpetual youth.

Take time to read
It is the fountain of wisdom.

Take time to pray
It is the greatest power on earth.

Take time to love and be loved
It is a God-given privilege.

Take time to be friendly
It is the road to happiness

Take time to give
It is too short a day to be selfish

Take time to work
It is the price of success.

Promise Yourself

(C.D. Larson, Your Forces and How to Use Them)

To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind;

To talk health, happiness, and prosperity to every person you meet;

To make all your friends feel that there is something in them;

To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true;

To think only the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best;

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own;

To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future;

To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile;

To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others;

To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear; and too happy to permit the presence of trouble;

To think well of yourself and to proclaim this fact to the world, not in loud words, but in great deeds;

To live in the faith that the whole world is on your side so long as you are true to the best that is in you.

Just For Today

Decide to be happy today, to live with what is yours - your family, your business, your job, and your luck. If you can't have what you like, maybe you can like what you have.

Just for today, be kind, cheerful, agreeable, responsive, caring, and understanding. Be your best, dress your best, talk softly, and look for the bright side of things. Praise people for what they do and do not criticize them for what they cannot do. If someone does something stupid, forgive and forget. After all, it's just for one day.

Who knows, it might turn out to be a nice day.

The World Is A Puzzle

There was a man who had a little boy that he loved very much. Everyday after work the man would come home and play with the little boy. He would always spend all of his extra time playing with the little boy.

One night, while the man was at work, he realized that he had extra work to do for the evening, and that he wouldn't be able to play with his little boy. But, he wanted to be able to give the boy something to keep him busy. So, looking around his office, he saw a magazine with a large map of the world on the cover. He got an idea. He removed the map, and then patiently tore it up into small pieces. Then he put all the pieces in his coat pocket.

When he got home, the little boy came running to him and was ready to play. The man explained that he had extra work to do and couldn't play just now, but he led the little boy into the dining room, and taking out all the pieces of the map, he spread them on the table. He explained that it was a map of the world, and that by the time he could put it back together, his extra work would be finished, and they could both play. Surely this would keep the child busy for hours, he thought.

About half an hour later the boy came to the man and said, "Okay, it's finished. Can we play now.?"

The man was surprised, saying, "That's impossible. Let's go see." And sure enough, there was the picture of the world, all put together, every piece in its place.

The man said, "That's amazing! How did you do that?" The boy said, "It was simple. On the back of the page was a picture of a man. When I put the man together the whole world fell into place."

A Special Teacher

Years ago a Johns Hopkins professor gave a group of graduate students this assignment: Go to the slums. Take 200 boys, between the ages of 12 and 16, and investigate their background and environment. Then predict their chances for the future.

The students, after consulting social statistics, talking to the boys, and compiling much data, concluded that 90 percent of the boys would spend some time in jail.

Twenty-five years later another group of graduate students was given the job of testing the prediction. They went back to the same area. Some of the boys - by then men - were still there, a few had died, some had moved away, but they got in touch with 180 of the original 200. They found that only four of the group had ever been sent to jail.

Why was it that these men, who had lived in a breeding place of crime, had such a surprisingly good record? The researchers were continually told: "Well, there was a teacher..."

They pressed further, and found that in 75 percent of the cases it was the same woman. The researchers went to this teacher, now living in a home for retired teachers. How had she exerted this remarkable influence over that group of children? Could she give them any reason why these boys should have remembered her?

"No," she said, "no I really couldn't." And then, thinking back over the years, she said musingly, more to herself than to her questioners: "I loved those boys...."

Listening

When a man whose marriage was in trouble sought his advice, the Master said, "You must learn to listen to your wife."

The man took this advice to heart and returned after a month to say he had learned to listen to every word his wife was saying.

Said the Master with a smile, "Now go home and listen to every word she isn't saying."

A Lesson from a Mad Hatter

One of the first steps to accomplishing great things in your life is to cease dwelling on the negative things in your past. Carefully assess your present strengths, successes, and achievements. Dwell on those positive events in your life, and quit limiting your potential by constantly thinking about what you have done poorly. Alice and the Mad Hatter in Wonderland had a conversation that illustrates this concept:

Alice: Where I come from, people study what they are not good at in order to be able to do what they are good at.

Mad Hatter: We only go around in circles in Wonderland, but we always end up where we started. Would you mind explaining yourself?

Alice: Well, grown-ups tell us to find out what we did wrong, and never do it again

Mad Hatter: That's odd! It seems to me that in order to find out about something, you have to study it. And when you study it, you should become better at it. Why should you want to become better at something and then never do it again? But please continue.

Alice: Nobody ever tells us to study the right things we do. We're only supposed to learn from the wrong things. But we are permitted to study the right things other people do. And sometimes we're even told to copy them.

Mad Hatter: That's cheating!

Alice: You're quite right, Mr. Hatter. I do live in a topsy-turvy world. It seems like I have to do something wrong first, in order to learn from what not to do. And then, by not doing what I'm not supposed to do, perhaps I'll be right. But I'd rather be right the first time, wouldn't you?

Weakness or Strength?

Sometimes your biggest weakness can become your biggest strength. Take, for example, the story of one 10-year-old boy who decided to study judo despite the fact that he had lost his left arm in a devastating car accident.

The boy began lessons with an old Japanese judo master. The boy was doing well, so he couldn't understand why, after three months of training the master had taught him only one move.

"Sensei," the boy finally said, "Shouldn't I be learning more moves?"

"This is the only move you know, but this is the only move you'll ever need to know," the sensei replied.

Not quite understanding, but believing in his teacher, the boy kept training.

Several months later, the sensei took the boy to his first tournament. Surprising himself, the boy easily won his first two matches. The third match proved to be more difficult, but after some time, his opponent became impatient and charged; the boy deftly used his one move to win the match. Still amazed by his success, the boy was now in the finals.

This time, his opponent was bigger, stronger, and more experienced. For a while, the boy appeared to be overmatched. Concerned that the boy might get hurt, the referee called a time-out. He was about to stop the match when the sensei intervened.

"No," the sensei insisted, "Let him continue."

Soon after the match resumed, his opponent made a critical mistake: he dropped his guard. Instantly, the boy used his move to pin him. The boy had won the match and the tournament. He was the champion.

On the way home, the boy and sensei reviewed every move in each and every match. Then the boy summoned the courage to ask what was really on his mind.

"Sensei, how did I win the tournament with only one move?"

"You won for two reasons," the sensei answered. "First, you've almost mastered one of the most difficult throws in all of judo. And second, the only known defense for that move is for your opponent to grip your left arm."

The boy's biggest weakness had become his biggest strength.

What is Maturity?

Maturity is the growing awareness that you are neither wonderful nor worthless.

It has been said to be the making of place between what is. and what might be.

It isn't a destination. It is a road.

It is the moment you wake up after some grief or staggering blow and think, 'I'm going to live after all.'

It is the moment when you find out something you have long believed in isn't so, and parting with the old conviction, find that you're still you;

The moment you discover somebody can do your job as well as you can, and you go on doing it anyway;

The moment you do the thing you have always been afraid of; the moment you realize you are forever alone--but so is everybody else, and so in some ways you are more together than ever, and a hundred other moments when you find out who you are.

It is letting life happen in its own good order, and making the most of what there is.

Choices

There comes a time in your life, when you must decide,
No help from anyone, on which you've always relied.
Between right and wrong, between black and white,
Between good and bad, to walk away or fight.
To be honest and true. to be open with your heart, or to hide your feelings, play it safe from the start.
To sit back and watch, to listen and learn,
Or jump into the fire, taking a chance on a burn.
To stay. to move. to not care, or always prove.
To be strong, to be weak, to be aggressive, to be meek.
To laugh out loud with all your might, or smile a little just to be polite.
To stay together. to live apart. to think with your mind, or trust with your heart.
To live in the past. to always look back, to look ahead to the future, with ambition you won't lack.
Begun at the front. or start at the end, believe in your own self, or follow the trend.
To dream. to hope, to quit, to cope. To be a lover, to be a friend to be real, or just pretend.
Choices we make can make or break, to have to decide at all could be our worst fall.
Choices are sometimes deceiving, you can be lured by the sweetest bait.
So make your decision wisely, because to change your mind could be too late.
Life is about choices, for however we decide,
We'll have to live with our decision until the day we have died.

Let Go

The following is a very meaningful story, which is called "Let Go," and written by Dr. Billy Graham.

A little child was playing one day with a very valuable vase. He put his hand into it and could not withdraw it. His father too, tried his best, but all in vain. They were thinking of breaking the vase when the father said, "Now, my son, make one more try. Open your hand and hold your fingers out straight as you see me doing, and then pull."

To their astonishment the little fellow said, "O no, father. I couldn't put my fingers out like that, because if I did I would drop my penny."

Smile, if you will--but thousands of us are like that little boy, so busy holding on to the world's worthless penny that we cannot accept liberation. I beg you to drop the trifle in your heart. Surrender! Let go, and let God have His way in your life.

How High Can You Jump?

Flea trainers have observed a predictable and strange habit of fleas while training them. Fleas are trained by putting them in a cardboard box with a top on it. The fleas will jump up and hit the top of the cardboard box over and over and over again. As you watch them jump and hit the lid, something very interesting becomes obvious. The fleas continue to jump, but they are no longer jumping high enough to hit the top. Apparently, Excedrin headache 1738 forces them to limit the height of their jump.

When you take off the lid, the fleas continue to jump, but they will not jump out of the box. They won't jump out because they can't jump out. Why? The reason is simple. They have conditioned themselves to jump just so high. Once they have conditioned themselves to jump just so high, that's all they can do!

Many times, people do the same thing. They restrict themselves and never reach their potential. Just like the fleas, they fail to jump higher, thinking they are doing all they can do.

Keeper of the Spring

The late Peter Marshall was an eloquent speaker and for several years served as the chaplain of the US Senate. He used to love to tell the story of the "Keeper of the Spring," a quiet forest dweller who lived high above an Austrian village along the eastern slope of the Alps.

The old gentleman had been hired many years earlier by a young town councilman to clear away the debris from the pools of water up in the mountain crevices that fed the lovely spring flowing through their town. With faithful, silent regularity, he patrolled the hills, removed the leaves and branches, and wiped away the silt that would otherwise have choked and contaminated the fresh flow of water. The village soon became a popular attraction for vacationers. Graceful swans floated along the crystal clear spring, the mill wheels of various businesses located near the water turned day and night, farmlands were naturally irrigated, and the view from restaurants was picturesque beyond description.

Years passed. One evening the town council met for its semiannual meeting. As they reviewed the budget, one man's eye caught the salary figure being paid the obscure keeper of the spring. Said the keeper of the purse, "Who is the old man? Why do we keep him on year after year? No one ever sees him. For all we know, the strange ranger of the hills is doing us no good. He isn't necessary any longer." By a unanimous vote, they dispensed with the old man's services.

For several weeks, nothing changed.

By early autumn, the trees began to shed their leaves. Small branches snapped of and fell into the pools, hindering the rushing flow of sparkling water. One afternoon someone noticed a slight yellowish-brown tint in the spring. A few days later, the water was much darker. Within another week, a slimy film covered sections of the water along the banks, and a foul odor was soon detected. The mill wheels moved more slowly, some finally ground to a halt. Swans left, as did the tourists. Clammy fingers of disease and sickness reached deeply into the village.

Quickly, the embarrassed council called a special meeting. Realizing their gross error in judgment, they rehired the old keeper of the spring, and within a few weeks, the veritable river of life began to clear up. The wheels started to turn, and new life returned to the hamlet in the Alps.

Never become discouraged with the seeming smallness of your task, job, or life. Cling fast to the words of Edward Everett Hale: "I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do something I can do. " The key to accomplishment is believing that what you can do will make a difference.

If I Had My Life to Live Over

If I had my life to live over, I'd dare to make more mistakes next time. I'd relax, I'd limber up. I would be sillier than I've been this trip. I would take fewer things seriously, take more chances, and take more trips. I'd climb more mountains, and swim more rivers. I would eat more ice cream and less beans. I would perhaps have more actual troubles, but I'd have fewer imaginary ones. You see, I'm one of those people who lived seriously, sanely, hour after hour, day after day. Oh, I've had my moments, and if I had it to do over again, I'd have more of them. I've been one of those persons who never goes anywhere without a thermometer, a hot-water bottle, a raincoat, and a parachute. If I had to do it again, I would travel lighter than this trip. If I had my life to live over, I would start going barefoot earlier in the spring, and stay that way later in the fall. I would go to more dances, I would ride more merry-go-rounds. I would pick more daisies.

Wranglers and Stranglers

Years ago there was a group of brilliant young men at the University of Wisconsin, who seemed to have amazing creative literary talent. They were would-be poets, novelists, and essayists. They were extraordinary in their ability to put the English language to its best use. These promising young men met regularly to read and critique each other's work. And critique it they did!

These men were merciless with one another. They dissected the most minute literary expression into a hundred pieces. They were heartless, tough, even mean in their criticism. The sessions became such arenas of literary criticism that the members of this exclusive club called themselves the "Stranglers."

Not to be outdone, the women of literary talent in the university were determined to start a club of their own, one comparable to the Stranglers. They called themselves the "Wranglers." They, too, read their works to one another. But there was one great difference. The criticism was much softer, more positive, more encouraging. Sometimes, there was almost no criticism at all. Every effort, even the most feeble one, was encouraged.

Twenty years later an alumnus of the university was doing an exhaustive study of his classmates' careers when he noticed a vast difference in the literary accomplishments of the Stranglers as opposed to the Wranglers. Of all the bright young men in the Stranglers, not one had made a significant literary accomplishment of any kind. From the Wranglers had come six or more successful writers, some of national renown such as Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, who wrote The Yearling.

Talent between the two? Probably the same. Level of education? Not much difference. But the Stranglers strangled, while the Wranglers were determined to give each other a lift. The Stranglers promoted an atmosphere of contention and self-doubt. The Wranglers highlighted the best, not the worst.

Quick Decisions

A game warden noticed how a particular fellow named Sam consistently caught more fish than anyone else, whereas the other guys would only catch three or four a day. Sam would come in off the lake with a boat full. Stringer after stringer was always packed with freshly caught trout. The warden, curious, asked Sam his secret. The successful fisherman invited the game warden to accompany him and observe. So the next morning the two met at the dock and took off in Sam's boat. When they got to the middle of the lake, Sam stopped the boat, and the warden sat back to see how it was done.

Sam's approach was simple. He took out a stick of dynamite, lit it, and threw it in the air. The explosion rocked the lake with such a force that dead fish immediately began to surface. Sam took out a net and started scooping them up.

Well you can imagine the reaction of the game warden. When he recovered from the shock of it all, he began yelling at Sam. "You can't do this! I'll put you in jail, buddy! You will be paying every fine there is in the book!" Sam, meanwhile, set his net down and took out another stick of dynamite. He lit it and tossed it in the lap of the game warden with these words, "Are you going to sit there all day complaining, or are you going to fish?"

The poor warden was left with a fast decision to make. He was yanked, in one second, from an observer to a participant. A dynamite of a choice had to be made and be made quickly!

Life is like that. Few days go by without our coming face to face with an uninvited, unanticipated, yet unavoidable decision. Like a crashing snow bank, these decisions tumble upon us without warning. Quick. Immediate. Sudden. No council, no study, no advice. Pow!

Winners versus Losers

The Winner is always a part of the answer;
The Loser is always a part of the problem.

The Winner always has a program;
The Loser always has an excuse.

The Winner says, "Let me do it for you;"
The Loser says, "That's not my job."

The Winner sees an answer for every problem;
The Loser sees a problem in every answer.

The Winner says, "It may be difficult but it's possible;"
The Loser says, "It may be possible but it's too difficult."

Things to Remember

I find what I look for in people. If I look for God, I find God. If I look for bad qualities, I find them. I, in a sense, select what I expect, and I receive it.

A life without challenges would be like going to school without lessons to learn. Challenges come not to depress or get me down, but to master and to grow and to unfold thereby.

In the Father's wise and loving plan for me, no burden can fall upon me, no emergency can arise, no grief can overtake me, before I am given the grace and strength to meet them.

A rich, full life is not determined by outer circumstances and relationships. These can be contributory to it, but cannot be the source. I am happy or unhappy because of what I think and feel.

I can never lose anything that belongs to me, nor can I posses what is not really mine.

To never run from a problem: either it will chase me or I will run into another just like it, although it may have a different face or name.

To have no concern for tomorrow. Today is the yesterday over which I had concern.

To never bang on a closed door: wait for it to open and then go through it.

A person who has come into my life has come either to teach me something, or to learn something from me.

On Youth

Youth is not entirely a time of life -- it is a state of mind. It is not wholly a matter of ripe cheeks, red lips, or supple knees. It is a temper of will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions.

Nobody grows old merely by living a number of years. People grow old only by deserting their ideals. You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your self-confidence, as old as your fears; as young as your hope, as old as your despair.

In the central place of every heart, there is a recording chamber; so long as it receives messages of beauty and hope, cheer and courage, you are young.

When the wires are all down and your heart is covered with the snows of pessimism and the ice of cynicism, then and only then have you grown old.

Grind Or Shine

Adversity is the grindstone of life. Intended to polish you up, adversity also has the ability to grind you down. The impact and ultimate result depend on what you do with the difficulties that come your way. Consider the phenomenal achievements of people experiencing adversity.

Beethoven composed his greatest works after becoming deaf. Sir Walter Raleigh wrote the History of the World during a thirteen-year imprisonment. If Columbus had turned back, no one could have blamed him, considering the constant adversity he endured. Of course, no one would have remembered him either. Abraham Lincoln achieved greatness by his display of wisdom and character during the devastation of the Civil War. Luther translated the Bible while enduring confinement in the Castle of Wartburg. Under a sentence of death and during twenty years in exile, Dante wrote the Divine Comedy. John Bunyan wrote Pilgrim's Progress in a Bedford jail.

Finally, consider a more recent example. Mary Groda-Lewis endured sixteen years of illiteracy because of unrecognized dyslexia, was committed to a reformatory on two different occasions, and almost died of a stroke while bearing a child. Committed to going to college, she worked at a variety of odd jobs to save money, graduated with her high school equivalency at eighteen, was named Oregon's outstanding Upward Bound student, and finally entered college. Determined to become a doctor, she faced fifteen medical school rejections until Albany Medical College finally accepted her. In 1984, Dr. Mary Groda-Lewis, at thirty-five, graduated with honors to fulfill her dream.

Adversity - the grindstone of life. Will it grind you down or polish you up?

If You Think

If you think you are beaten, you are.
If you think you dare not, you don't!
If you want to win, but think you can't,
It's almost a cinch you won't.

If you think you'll lose, you're lost;
For out in the world we find
Success begins with a fellow's will;
It's all in the state of the mind.

Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger and faster man,
But sooner or later the man who wins
Is the man who thinks he can.

Total Self Confidence

I am resourceful and I have the ability to do whatever it takes to succeed, and to support all those whom I love.

I enjoy life's challenges, and I learn from everything that happens in my life.

I live each day with passion and power.

I feel strong and powerful, happy, and excited.

I have tremendous confidence in my talents and my abilities.

I meet every situation knowing I am its master.

I have deep respect for myself and for everyone I meet each day.

I am committed to perform at the best of my ability in all that

I do.

I forgive myself and others easily.

I am aware of the priceless value of my life and the life of everyone I meet.

My confidence is unshakable because I live with integrity.

I am always at peace because I trust and follow my internal guidance.

Notes on the Tao Te Ching

Words are words, they are not life. Words are used to draw lines and describe concepts. Life is not a concept, nor is it divided or explained by words. Words cause nonsense. Life is lived, not described.

Words separate things: There is life/death, difficult/easy, long/short, high/low... and all points in between. Music comes from varying tones. No sane person can determine the law of life, the way of life in between these points. No one knows the way, or what will or should happen next. How can a leader be important and show the way when they are limited. Never be important.

Good government comes from many people who live by their hearts and not some important person's rule and direction based on their limited knowledge.

The Universe can take care of itself. It does not need important people.

People go crazy arguing about the Universe, though it has taken care of itself very long.

Life is free -- the more you breathe, the more breath is left to breathe.

The Universe is deathless.

A human is like this also. They take care of themselves. There is an inherent undertone and current of health and integrity, which takes care of a person. A person seeks a natural level with their Universe.

Tao is quiet and unnoticed by the outside world.

We live in the space (emptiness) of a house. Tao is empty of outside appearances.

External orientation causes problems. Internal orientation is quiet and sensible.

Life flows deeper than the rising and setting of the sun. A deeper existence is in each person as well. This is timeless.

This cannot be understood, but it flows. "When the river is murky, be patient and let the rivers flow and take its course, it will clear the mud."

Accept life (birth, flowering, death) quietly and openly. Accept the flowing of the River.

A good leader leads others to leading themselves.

People lose Tao, distortion in the outward comes -- law, ritual, words, hypocrisy. This is not the inward quiet flow of life, but confusion and chaos.

Again, words or analysis of life, distracts from life; status carries problems; law causes thieves -- these ways fail to bring happiness. Tao is in the heart, not in greed, status, or knowledge.

People's knowledge is a distraction, their leaders are a fake. How can someone know the way for other people? The material world is so important to people, they make their mark, while I am quietly nursing at the breast of life.

You try to know or measure what cannot be understood or measured. Accept life that way, it precedes anyway.

Yield to life forces. What can happen that cannot be mended?

Be natural following life, don't insist or force. Nature does not insist. Follow life naturally and you will be alive.

These notes paraphrase in common language a modern translation of the Tao Te Ching.

A Creed to Live By

By Nancy Sims

Don't undermine your worth by comparing yourself with others. It is because we are different that each of us is special.

Don't set your goals by what other people deem important. Only you know what is best for you.

Don't take for granted the things closest to your heart. Cling to them as you would your life, for without them life is meaningless.

Don't let your life slip through your fingers by living in the past or for the future. By living your life one day at a time, you live all the days of your life.

Don't give up when you still have something to give. Nothing is really over until the moment you stop trying.

Don't be afraid to admit that you are less than perfect. It is this fragile thread that binds us to each other.

Don't be afraid to encounter risks. It is by taking chances that we learn how to be brave.

Don't shut love out of your life by saying it's impossible to find. The quickest way to receive love is to give love. The fastest way to lose love is to hold it too tightly; and the best way to keep love is to give it wings.

Don't dismiss your dreams. To be without dreams is to be without hope; to be without hope is to be without purpose.

Don't run through life so fast that you forget not only where you've been, but also where you're going. Life is not a race, but a journey to be savored each step of the way.

Peak Performer

(Adapted from the Self Esteem Workbook)

One of the wonderful by-products of high self-esteem is that you become a "Peak Performer." Every day you become more aware of your abilities and recognize that opportunities to stretch your capabilities are limitless. You desire change, growth, and challenge, and a healthy self-esteem provides the energy.

Peak performers have more than goals, they have a vision of what their life will mean to themselves and others. Peak performers do not live in the future. Peak performers make sure each step taken in the present keeps them on the road toward their life goal.

Peak Performers Can Say:

I am motivated and have a mission with realistic and measurable goals.

I accept complete responsibility for everything I think, say, feel, and do.

I look for the window of opportunity in every situation and know that I will learn from every experience if I choose.

I always help others to do their best, and I encourage everyone to contribute something.

I correct my course when I reach an obstacle. This way, when things go wrong, I am still headed in the right direction.

I expect and appreciate change. It does not overwhelm me because I am prepared.

I stand up for my own opinions and values and respect others.

I am able to manage myself. I do not require instruction every step of the way.

I am not afraid of making mistakes or of taking reasonable risks.

I am my own coach. I engage in positive self-talk and rehearsal.

I am a life-long student. I am always ready to learn, and I know growth takes sustained effort.

I know myself well and still expect to find hidden talents, resources, strengths, weaknesses, energy, and interests.

I respect reality both pleasant and painful.

I engage in self-confrontation and do not blame others.

I readily forgive others and myself and correct mistakes when possible.

I am patient, kind, gentle, and compassionate with myself.

I have no need to prove I am better or worse than anybody else.

The Paradoxical Commandments

by Dr. Kent M. Keith

People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered. Love them anyway.

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives. Do good anyway.

If you are successful, you win false friends and true enemies. Succeed anyway.

The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway.

The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds. Think big anyway.

People favor underdogs but follow only top dogs. Fight for a few underdogs anyway.

What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight. Build anyway.

People really need help but may attack you if you do help them. Help people anyway.

Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth.

Give the world the best you have anyway.

Awakening

A time comes in your life when you finally get it...when, in the midst of all your fears and insanity, you stop dead in your tracks and somewhere the voice inside your head cries out...ENOUGH! Enough fighting and crying and blaming and struggling to hold on.

Then, like a child quieting down after a tantrum, you blink back your tears and begin to look at the world through new eyes.

This is your awakening.

You realize it's time to stop hoping and waiting for something to change, or for happiness, safety and security to magically appear over the next horizon.

You realize that in the real world there aren't always fairy tale endings, and that any guarantee of "happily ever after" must begin with you... and in the process a sense of serenity is born of acceptance.

You awaken to the fact that you are not perfect and that not everyone will always love, appreciate or approve of who or what you are... and that's OK. They are entitled to their own views and opinions.

You learn the importance of loving and championing yourself... and in the process a sense of new found confidence is born of self-approval.

You stop complaining and blaming other people for the things they did to you - or didn't do for you - and you learn that the only thing you can really count on is the unexpected.

You learn that people don't always say what they mean or mean what they say and that not everyone will always be there for you and that everything isn't always about you.

So, you learn to stand on your own and to take care of yourself... and in the process a sense of safety and security is born of self-reliance.

You stop judging and pointing fingers and you begin to accept people as they are and to overlook their shortcomings and human frailties... and in the process a sense of peace and contentment is born of forgiveness.

You learn to open up to new worlds and different points of view. You begin reassessing and redefining who you are and what you really stand for.

You learn the difference between wanting and needing and you begin to discard the doctrines and values you've outgrown, or should never have bought into to begin with.

You learn that there is power and glory in creating and contributing and you stop maneuvering through life merely as a "consumer" looking for your next fix.

You learn that principles such as honesty and integrity are not the outdated ideals of a bygone era, but the mortar that holds together the foundation upon which you must build a life.

You learn that you don't know everything, it's not your job to save the world and that you can't teach a pig to sing.

You learn that the only cross to bear is the one you choose to carry and that martyrs get burned at the stake.

Then you learn about love. You learn to look at relationships as they really are and not as you would have them be. You learn that alone does not mean lonely.

You stop trying to control people, situations and outcomes. You learn to distinguish between guilt and responsibility and the importance of setting boundaries and learning to say NO.

You also stop working so hard at putting your feelings aside, smoothing things over and ignoring your needs.

You learn that your body really is your temple. You begin to care for it and treat it with respect. You begin to eat a balanced diet, drink more water, and take more time to exercise.

You learn that being tired fuels doubt, fear, and uncertainty and so you take more time to rest. And, just as food fuels the body, laughter fuels our soul. So you take more time to laugh and to play.

You learn that, for the most part, you get in life what you believe you deserve, and that much of life truly is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

You learn that anything worth achieving is worth working for and that wishing for something to happen is different than working toward making it happen.

More importantly, you learn that in order to achieve success you need direction, discipline and perseverance. You also learn that no one can do it all alone, and that it's OK to risk asking for help.

You learn the only thing you must truly fear is fear itself.

You learn to step right into and through your fears because you know that whatever happens you can handle it and to give in to fear is to give away the right to live life on your own terms.

You learn to fight for your life and not to squander it living under a cloud of impending doom.

You learn that life isn't always fair, you don't always get what you think you deserve and that sometime,s bad things happen to unsuspecting, good people... and you learn not to always take it personally.

You learn that nobody's punishing you and everything isn't always somebody's fault. It's just life happening. You learn to admit when you are wrong and to build bridges instead of walls.

You learn that negative feelings such as anger, envy and resentment must be understood and redirected or they will suffocate the life out of you and poison the universe that surrounds you.

You learn to be thankful and to take comfort in many of the simple things we take for granted, things that millions of people upon the earth can only dream about: a full refrigerator, clean running water, a soft warm bed, a long hot shower.

Then, you begin to take responsibility for yourself by yourself and you make yourself a promise to never betray yourself and to never, ever settle for less than your heart's desire.

You make it a point to keep smiling, to keep trusting, and to stay open to every wonderful possibility.

You hang a wind chime outside your window so you can listen to the wind.

Finally, with courage in your heart, you take a stand, you take a deep breath, and you begin to design the life you want to live as best you can.

---Maryam Webster, M.Ed.Solutions,

Tools & Support forPeople
Taking Charge of Their Lives
Tel: 408.866.SOUL [7685]

The Book of Booze

The Artesian Mysteries

-The Carletonian Funny Page, 1994

The great prophet Bubba stepped before the assembled masses and spoke to them, saying:

"Oh ye who go amongst one another mooching beer, know ye that thy beer-karma suffers

And all y that, upon seeing thy brothers and sisters thirsting, withholds from them thy precious beer, know ye that thy beer – karma is that of a trout!

For when thou hast beer, it is good that thou sharest it with those who have not beer,

And when thou drink the beer of another, thou art truly indebted to that person, in a debt of beer.

Borrow beer freely, my brothers and sisters, when you have not beer yet you thirst.

Yet honor thy beer debt t o thy neighbor, lest your beer karma be imperiled.

And when someone asks of thy beer, give it freely so that you might be given beer when you are in need, for such is the nature of beer karma.

Know thee, also, that when thou partakes in the beer of another, or whenever thou shares beer with someone,

Then you both become brothers and sisters in beer.

Go forth then, be fruitful and brew; share your beer in bountiful times.

Do not hesitate to borrow beer in times of need, so long as thou returns beer in kin in times of plenty."

These words the great Bubba has spoken.

The Gospel of Bracicea

Collected by Pat Haneke

A philosophy professor (a Druid perhaps?) stood before his class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly he picked up a large empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with rocks, rocks about 2" in diameter. He then asked the students if the jar was full? They agreed that it was.

So the professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles, of course, rolled into the open areas between the rocks. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The students laughed. The professor picked up a box of sand and poured it. Said the professor, "I want you to recognize that this is your life. The rocks are the important things - your family, your partner, your health, your children - things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.

"The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house, your car. The sand is everything else. The small stuff."

"If you put the sand into the jar first, there is no room for the pebbles or the rocks. The same goes for your life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness.

"Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your partner out dancing. There will always be time to go to work, clean the house, give a dinner party and fix the disposal.

"Take care of the rocks first - the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

But then...

A student then took the jar, which the other students and the professor agreed was full, and proceeded to pour in a glass of beer. Of course the beer filled the remaining spaces within the jar making the jar truly full.

The moral of this tale is:

That no matter how full your life is, there is always room for BEER.

A Prayer to Bracicea

Our lager,
Which art in barrels,
Hallowed be thy drink.
Thy will be drunk, (I will be drunk),
At home as it is in the pub.
Give us this day our foamy head,
And forgive us our spillages,
As we forgive those who spill against us.
And lead us not to incarceration,
But deliver us from hangovers.
For thine is the beer, The bitter, The lager.
Barmen.

The Whiskey Lesson

Isaac Bonewits, 1999

When some Druids see half a glass of whiskey, they think, "It is half-full." Others glumly conclude, "It's half-empty." But Reformed Druids grab the glass, shoot it down, slam the cup and say, "Huh, hey,... what?"

Top 10 Reasons Why Beer is Better Than Jesus

No one will kill you for not drinking Beer.

Beer doesn't tell you how to have sex.

Beer has never caused a major war.

They don't force Beer on minors who can't think for themselves.

When you have a Beer, you don't knock on people's doors trying to give it away.

Nobody's ever been burned at the stake, hanged, or tortured over his brand of Beer.

You don't have to wait 2000+ years for a second Beer.

There are laws saying Beer labels can't lie to you.

You can prove you have a Beer.

If you've devoted your life to Beer, there are groups to help you stop.

The Tavern

C.A. Doxiadis

I received my greatest lesson in aesthetics from an old man in an Athenian taverna. Night after night he sat alone at the same table, drinking his wine with precisely the same odd movements. I finally asked him why he did this, and he said, "Young man, I first look at my glass to please my eyes, then I take it in my hand to please my hand, then I bring it to my nose to please my nostrils, and I am just about to bring it to my lips when I hear a small voice in my ears, "How about me?" So I tap my glass on the table before I drink from it. I thus please all five senses.

We Have Drunk Whang

by Michael Scharding, based on the Rig-Veda, “We Have Drunk Soma.” Whang is one part Whiskey/one part Water/ lots of Tang.

Of the sweet food I have partaken wisely,
That stirs the good thought, best banisher of trouble,
On which to feast, all gods as well as mortals,
Naming the sweet food "Tang," come together...
We have drunk Whang, have become immortal,
Gone to the light have we, the gods discovered.
What can hostility do against us?
What, O Immortal, mortal man's fell purpose?
Joy to our heart be thou, when drunk, O Be'al,
Like Mother to a son, most kind, O Whang;
Thoughtful like friend to friend, O thou of wide fame,
Prolong our years that we may live, O Whang.
These glorious freedom-giving drop by me imbibed
Have knit my joints together as straps a chariot;
From broken legs may Whang drops protect me,
May they from every illness keep me far removed....
Be gracious unto us for good, King Whang;
We are thy devotees; of that be certain.
When might and wrath display themselves, O Be'al,
Do not abandon us, as wished by foemen.
Protector of our body art thou, Whang,
In every limb has settled man-beholding:
If we infringe thine ordinances be gracious
As our good friend, O god, for higher welfare...
Ailments have fled away, diseases vanished,
The powers of darkness have become affrighted.
With might hath Whang mounted up within us;
The dawn we've reached, where men renew existence.
Oh, Whang! Your praises will I ever sing forth!

The Wild Rover

I've been a wild rover for many a year,
And I spent all my money on whiskey and beer,
But now I'm returning with gold in great store,
And I swear that I'll play the wild rover no more.

chorus: And its no, nay, never,
No, nay, never, no more,
Will I play the wild rover,
No, never, no more.

I went to an alehouse I used to frequent,
And I told the landlady my money was spent,
I asked her for credit, she answered me "Nay,
Such custom as yours I can get any day."

I pulled from my pocket three sovereigns bright,
And the landlady's eyes opened wide with delight,
"You shall have whiskies and wines of the best,
And the words that I spoke, they were only in jest."

I'll go to my father, confess what I've done,
And ask if he'll pardon, his prodigal son,
And if he forgives me as oft times before,
Then I swear I will play the wild rover no more.

The Hard Drinker

Sung to the tune of Wild Rover

I've been a hard drinker for many a year,
And I always fall over on ten pints of beer,
So now when I drink, I sit on the floor,
And I never will risk falling over no more.

chorus: And it's no, nay, never,
No, nay, never, no more,
Will I drink and fall over,
No never, no more.

I went to a bar that I used to frequent,
Despite having sworn that I'd give up for Lent,
I asked for two pints, but the barman said "Nay!
You'll only fall over like you did yesterday."

I'll pulled from my pocket two shiny gold pounds,
And I managed to do it without falling down,
The barman said "Sir, please choose from this list,
And I'm sorry if just now I thought you were Brahms."

I think that I'll stick now to stiff drinks and shorts,
Like whiskey and ponche and pernods and ports,
Cut down on the volume of all that I drink,
Then at least when I throw up I won't block the sink.

I'll go back to my girlfriend, confess what I've done,
And if she should hit me I won't turn and run,
I'll promise to give up... but if I should fail...
I'll see you next Thursday for ten pints of ale.

Whiskey, You're the Devil

Now brave boys, we're on the march
off to Portugal and Spain
Drums are beating, banners flying
the Devil at home will come tonight
so it's go, fare thee well
with a too da loo ra loo ra doo de da
a too ra loo ra loo ra doo de da
me rikes fall too ra laddie-o
there's whisky in the jar

Oh, whisky you're the devil
you're leading me astray
over hills and mountains
and to Amerikay
you're sweetness from the Bleachner
and spunkier than tea
oh whisky you're my darling drunk or sober

The French are fighting boldly
men are dying hot and coldly
give every man his flask of powder
his firelock on his shoulder
so its go, fare thee well
with a too da loo ra loo ra doo de da
a too ra loo ra loo ra doo de da
me rikes fall too ra laddie-o
there's whisky in the jar

Oh, whisky you're the devil
you're leading me astray
over hills and mountains
and to Amerikay
you're sweetness from the Bleachner
and spunkier than tea
oh whisky you're my darling drunk or sober

Says the old wan do not wrong me
don't take me daughter from me
for if you do I will torment you
when I'm dead my ghost will haunt you
so its go, fare thee well
with a too da loo ra loo ra doo de da
a too ra loo ra loo ra doo de da
me rikes fall too ra laddie-o
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oh whisky you're my darling drunk or sober

The Rambler

I'm a rambler, I'm a gambler,
I'm a a long way from home,
And if you don't like me,
well leave me alone.

Chorus: I'll eat when I'm hungry,
I'll drink when I'm dry,
And if the moonshine don't kill me,
I'll live 'til I die.

I've been a moonshiner for many a year.
I've spent all me money on whiskey and beer.
I'll go to me hollow and set up me still
And I'll sell you ten gallons for a two dollar bill.

I'll go to some hollow in this country
Ten gallons of moonshine, I'll go on a spree.
No women to follow, the world is all mine
I love none so well as I love the moonshine.

Oh moonshine, oh moonshine, oh how I love thee
Ten gallons of whiskey, I'll go on a spree.
I love all moonshiners and I love all moonshine
They're breath is as sweet as the dew on the vine.

John Barleycorn

There were three men come out of the west
Their fortunes for to try
And they have made a solemn vow
John Barleycorn must die (2x)

[Chorus]:
Fa la la la, it's a lovely day
Fa la la la lay o
Fa la la la, it's a lovely day
Sing fa la la la lay

They plowed him in three furrows deep
Laid clods all on his head
And they have made a solemn oath
John Barleycorn was dead

[Chorus]

Well then there came a shower of rain
Which from the clouds did fall
John Barleycorn sprang up again
And so amazed them all

Well then came men with great sharp scythes
To cut him off at the knee
They bashed his head against a stone
And they used him barbarously

Well then came men with great long flails
To cut him skin from bone
The miller has used him worse than that
He ground him between two stones

They wheeled him here, they wheeled him there
Wheeled him into the barn
And they have used him worse than that
They bunged him in a vat

They worked their will upon John Barleycorn
But he lives to tell the tale
We pour him into an old brown jug
And we call him home-brewed ale

Ballad of St. Bunstable

In an temple on the coast of the Vesper's frigid shores,
An acolyte, named Bunstable, was told to do his chores.
He did not have an inkling of just what fate had in mind,
Patron saint of fermentation, alcohol, beer, mead, and wine.

Bunstable, he was a simple soul, he wasn't very bright.
But he did his duty faithfully, morning, noon, and night.
His chores, they weren't too complex, for that would tax his head.
One in particular was simple. This is what his abbot said:

CHORUS:
Guard the wine, guard the wine.
No matter what may happen, you make sure that wine stays hid.
Guard the wine, guard the wine.
Now we all guard our wine like Saint Bunstable did.

One fateful day came Pirate raiders, like a dark wave on the coast.
The abbey was unable to repel the brigand raider's host.
Bunstable was in the cellar, heard them slaughter young and old.
And though trembling with fear, he knew to do as he'd been told.

The cellar door it had been locked, but the Pirates would break through
So grimly looking round, he knew exactly what to do.
He broke open each and every cask, he did not think of flight.
And when the deed was done, he'd drunk every drop in sight.

CHORUS:
Guard the wine, guard the wine.
No matter what may happen, you make sure that wine stays hid.
Guard the wine, guard the wine.
Now we all guard our wine like Saint Bunstable did.

When the Pirates came downstairs, they were somewhat less than pleased
That Bunstable had drunk the wine, there was none to be seized.
They threatened Bunstable with flame, but when fire met his breath,
There was a great explosion, and they all burned to death.

When the raiders reached their heaven, they were certainly surprised,
And for his act of bravery Bunstable was canonized.
It truly is a miracle, to drink up as he did,
And it is to his credit that he kept the wine well hid.

CHORUS:
Guard the wine, guard the wine.
No matter what may happen, you make sure that wine stays hid.
Guard the wine, guard the wine.
Now we all guard our wine like Saint Bunstable did.

Parish of Dunkeld

Lyrics: Traditional
Music: Bonnie Dundee

chorus:
Oh, what a parish, a terrible parish;
Oh, what a parish is that at Dunkeld.
They hangit their minister, drooned the precentot,
Dang doon the steeple and fuddled the bell.

The steeple was doon but the kirk was still stannin',
They biggit a lum* whar the bell used to hang.
A still-pot they got and they brewed hielan' whisky;
On Sunday they drank it and ranted and sang.

O, had you but seen how graceful they lookit,
To see the crammed pews so socially joined.
MacDonell the piper stood up in the pulpit,
He made the pipes skirl out the music divine.

Wi' whiskey and beer they would curse and they'd swear;
They'd argue and fecht [wi' ye done] will tell.
But Geordie and Charlie they [bothered fer] early
Wi' whiskey they're worse than the devil himsel'.

When the hairt-cheerin' spirit had mounted their garrets,
Tae a ball on the green they a' did adjourn.
The maids wi' coats kilted they skippit and lilted,
When tired they shook hands and then hame did return.

Wad the kirks a' of Scotland held like social meetings
Nae warning ye'd need from a far-tinklin' bell,
For true love and friends would draw you thegether
Far better than roarin' the horrors o' hell.

The Book of Al-Anon

Bake the Cake

One night a sponsor got a call from one of his sponsees. The sponsee complained the same old complaints of being restless, irritable and discontent. The sponsor asked him if he was reading his Big Book and the sponsee said that he was reading it daily and that it wasn't helping!

The sponsor then instructed his new friend to find a cookbook. He came back to the phone with the cookbook and was instructed to read the recipe for chocolate cake. So he read to him all the ingredients, how hot the oven was to be and when he was through his sponsor told him to read it again. By now the sponsee is a little upset and asks what this has to do with staying sober. With a laugh, his sponsor told him to humor him!

So he read it again, all the ingredients, oven temperature, and after he read it to him the second time, the sponsor asked him for a piece of cake. The sponsee told him he could not give him any cake and the sponsor asked him why? "Because I haven't gone through the action of making the cake."

With a laugh, the sponsor told his sponsee that that was why he wasn't getting any results from the Big Book! Reading the book alone will not keep you sober, but, the action of following the directions in it will!

Three Frogs Riddle

Question: There were once three frogs on a log and one of them made a decision to jump in. How many were left?

Answer: There are still three frogs on a log, he only made a decision, he took no action!

Ups and Downs of Life

A little boy is telling his Grandma how "everything" is going wrong. School, family problems, severe health problems, etc.. Meanwhile, Grandma is baking a cake. She asks her grandson if he would like a snack, which of course he does.

"Here, have some cooking oil."

"Yuck" says the boy.

"How about a couple raw eggs? "

"Gross, Grandma!"

"Would you like some flour then? Or maybe baking soda?"

" Grandma, those are all yucky!"

To which Grandma replies: "Yes, all those things seem bad all by themselves. But when they are put together in the right way, they make a wonderfully delicious cake! God works the same way. Many times we wonder why he would let us go through such bad and difficult times. But God knows that when He puts these things all in His order, they always work for good! We just have to trust Him and, eventually, they will all make something wonderful!"

It's All Relative

A woman is riding a bus in the Midwest, when a man gets on the bus and sits down next to her. He's wearing a black hat, long black coat, black slacks and shoes, and he has a long curly dark beard.

The woman looks at him disgustedly. "Jews like you," she hisses at him.

He looks up at her, puzzled, and says, "I beg your pardon, madam?"

She says, "Look at you. All in black, a beard, never take off your hat! It's Jews like you that give the rest of us a bad name."

He says calmly, "I beg your pardon, madam, but I am not Jewish. I'm Amish." The woman looks back and smiles, "How nice. You've kept your customs."

Anyone Up There?

A man was walking in the mountains just enjoying the scenery when he stepped too close to the edge of the mountain and started to fall. In desperation he reached out and grabbed a limb of a gnarly old tree hanging onto the side of the cliff. Full of fear he assessed his situation. He was about 100 feet down a shear cliff and about 900 feet from the floor of the canyon below. If he should slip again he'd plummet to his death.

Full of fear, he cries out, "Help me!" But there was no answer. Again and again he cried out but to no avail.

Finally he yelled, "Is anybody up there?"

A deep voice replied, "Yes, I'm up here."

"Who is it?"

"It's the L-rd"

"Can you help me?"

"Yes, I can help."

"Help me!"

"Let go."

Looking around the man became full of panic. "What?!?!"

"Let go. I will catch you."

"Uh... Is there anybody else up there?"

Some Questions

1 - Have you ever decided to stop drinking for a week or so, but only lasted for a couple of days?

2 - Do you wish people would mind their own business about your drinking-- stop telling you what to do?

3 - Have you ever switched from one kind of drink to another in the hope that this would keep you from getting drunk?

4 - Have you had to have an eye-opener upon awakening during the past year?

5 - Do you envy people who can drink without getting into trouble?

6 - Have you had problems connected with drinking during the past year?

7 - Has your drinking caused trouble at home?

8 - Do you ever try to get "extra" drinks at a party because you do not get enough?

9 - Do you tell yourself you can stop drinking any time you want to, even though you keep getting drunk when you don't mean to?

10 - Have you missed days of work or school because of drinking?

11 - Do you have "blackouts"?

12 - Have you ever felt that your life would be better if you did not drink?

The Book of Ultimate Answers

Written by
Rev. Michael Scharding, D.D.
in June 1994 c.e.

No part of this book may be printed, reproduced or stored by any means presently known, or to be created in the future, without express written permission of the author; except short quotations for scholarly studies or for book reviews. The following people that I'll list are granted exceptions and are allowed to print 10 issues a year. An exception to this restriction is extended to all past, present & future Reformed Druids of North America for raising grove-funds. Another exception is made to anybody who is fluent in Ge'ez *and* Scots-Gaelic. Another exception is made for anybody with two noses and a third ear. I also, graciously, will make an exception for the government officials of Malawi; who have been inspiringly helpful in writing this book. Finally, I would make an exception for Fillard.

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The author accepts no responsibility for the actions or decisions that are made by the reader as a result of reading this book. If you are actually using this book, then something is loose in your head. Similarly the reader bears no responsibility for the actions of the author for having written this book. If you're using this book, you should always seek loads of advice from people more knowledgeable than I (and this book) about the issues for which this book is being consulted (i.e. try your friends, relatives, priests, employers, children, plants, pets, crystals, etc.)

If this product doesn't work (and I don't mean if it works well) then please feel free to shred it or give it to your friend (or enemy) as a present.

When I call this a Reformed Druid publication, I mean it is a publication by a Reformed Druid. I hope that most other Reformed Druids disagree with my views.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this book to Rev. Jewelnel Davis, who has inspired the Carleton Campus with her wisdom during her years here. I hope that this book will likewise provided needed answers to those faced with the inscrutability of the universe, or at least get them to give up using similar books and go back to talking with real people (which is a much wiser thing to do.)

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Other Thanks

There are a number of people I would like to thank for making this enormously difficult work possible. First I would like to thank my ancestors and all the past populace of the world which have made my culture(s), philosophy(s), religion(s), environment, language(s) and genetic code what they are today (you know who you are!)

I'd also like to thank the Carleton Academic Computing and Networking Center for the use of their computers while formatting this book for publication while I attended school there. Carleton's faculty, staff and students also deserve my thanks for instilling the knowledge, moral teachings and education that made this book possible.

Not to forget you, are all the many plant, animal & microbial creatures I've ingested to sustain my biological processes. I'm also very thankful that I can breathe the oxygenated air and that the sun comes up in the morning. For all these myriads of interlacing cycles and miraculous events (including hormones) I would like to thank the Creator(s.) You're doing a fine job, keep up the good work!

I would also like to thank the Sheltons, the Frangquists, Isaac Bonewits, Glenn McDavid, Sam Adams, Norman Nelson and the many Druids who have enlightened me on "the mysteries" of Druidism (whatever they are....)

To conclude, I'd like to thank whoever (or whatever) else I'm forgotten to include.

Preface: Why this book was written.

I was once sitting under a large oak tree on a sunny day when I came to the realization that there are a lot of unanswered questions in the world. Think about it, do you know the names of all the people in Ghana; or why do English speakers often put the adjectives before the nouns? We live in world awash with doubt and distressed with uncertainty. Will we ever know the right answers to every question? Probably not. However, we live in a society that demands answers. To not provide answers is to show incompetence or lack of education. Would you want to look incompetent or uneducated? I wouldn't, but it would seem fated that we will have to continue to live with that persistent embarrassment.

I decided that someone had to take care of all these loose ends, even at the risk of giving the wrong answers. I mean, isn't it better to have an answer, even if it is not THE answer, especially one that works; rather than to stand there and sheepishly say that you don't have an answer? Once I accepted this monumental task I was faced with a more daunting undertaking than passing my Senior Comprehensive exercise at Carleton while retaining a social life; providing viable answers to all the possible questions that can be posed in the English language. It was a toughie, but I managed to complete it in a few hours. Drawing upon my extraordinary ability to pull answers out of a baseball cap, I wrote this book. I have intended it to be a quick handbook to use whenever you are confronted with a perplexing problem or question.

While divinatory purposes are probably not a very effective use of the book, your use of the book is not my concern. Like the disclaimer says, you can do what you want with the book, that's your decision. This book has worked many times for myself and I hope it proves so for you. Enjoy!

Rev. Michael Scharding

June 20th, 1994 c.e.

Third Edition Update:

Due to the overwhelming desire for more answers, I've massively expanded the chapters of answers to provide more customized answers.

Recommendations

1. If you are not competent in the English language, have a friend help you use this book.
2. Similarly if you are blind, have them read this book to you or type it in Braille so that you can scan it.
3. If no one answer works, try combinations and permutations.

Reminders

1. If you are not using the book properly, then you perhaps don't deserve an answer.
2. Be persistent, it will work if you don't give up.
3. There's an answer in this book that works for your question!

Introduction:

How to use this book

There are three chapters to the Book of Ultimate Answers, one each for affirmative, negative and mixed answers. I have found that the Book of Ultimate Answers works best for me when used as outlined in the following flow-chart:

I. Get comfortable.
II. Pray and/or meditate for the recommended time (see below) on how to best formulate the question in the English languages.
III. Open to the first chapter.
- A. If an appropriate answer is there, you're done.
- B. No luck? Try chapter two.
  - i. If you find an appropriate answer, cool.
  - ii. If that doesn't work, try chapter three.
    - a. If it worked, you're done.
    - b. If it you couldn't find a usable answer then return to chapter one.

How Long to Prepare Beforehand

Now depending on how difficult or important the question is, you'll have to formulate the question and ready you're mind to spot a useable answer in your search. Imagine you're going to be asking this to Mahatma Ghandi at a press conference. You want to be very clear. This is because your mind is often running many sub-processes at the same time and it might be actually more concerned with finding an answer to another problem. The result? You get the right answer to a sub-conscious question instead of the one you asked. Remember, the answer may not be the one you want to find, so don't force it.

To help remedy this frequent problem, I'm providing the handy-dandy scale that I recommend to meditate and/or pray before using this book. It's roughly:

Difficulty to Time List

Inconsequential: 5 seconds
Simple: 1 minute
Pesky: 1 hour
Important: 1 day
Life-Changing: 1 month to a Year
Earth-Shattering: 2 years
Universe-Shattering: 15 years
Future Career/Marriage: 20 years and a day

Clarifying Examples for the Scale Categories:

Inconsequential: What color is a tomato?
Simple: What should I watch on TV tonight?
Pesky: Should I change brands of shampoo?
Important: Do I wish to learn Gaelic?
Life-Changing: Do I get a nose-job?
Earth-Shattering: Shall I reveal my divinity to CNN?
Universe-Shattering: Shall I bestow warp-engine capability to mere mortal Earthlings?
Future Career/Marriage: Do I want to marry Alex?

Other important notes:

Feel encouraged to modify the words in any answer (i.e. the tense, conjugation, plurality, gender, inflection, punctuation, cultural understanding, order, grammatical purpose, spelling or definition) in order to make it a more suitable answer. Remember, you only need an answer that works, not the best answer!

Chapter One: Affirmative Answers

Could be a positive answer to your question:

'Fraid so.
Yes.
Of course!
Probably.
Because.
Easily.
With difficulty.
Perhaps so.
Go with it.
Definitely.
I said so.
Once and a while.
Why not?
Partially so.
Some of the world's greatest people have thought so.
Occasionally.
It bodes well.
In a twisted way, yeah.
I wish so to.
I have it on good authority.
So a rumor has it. Next question please.
Uh, huh.
In a mytho-poetic sense.
In some situations.
That would be nice.
Few have ever doubted it.
When you are ready.
Only if you do it the right way.
Some would think so.
Yeah!
If you can accept the risks.
At the appropriate time.
If things favor it.
Do what's best.
Trust in yourself.
It has always been so.
If you trust them.
Couldn't agree with you more.
I'd say go with it, but ask someone for a second opinion.
True.
If you're lucky.
If Ghandhi would do it, so should you.
You'll win.
When one truly loves someone.
You are ready and skillful enough to do it.
No problem.
Cautiously.
Oh, I've got the answer, but you must try that again in a "yes-no" format.

Didn't find a suitable answer? Try chapters two and three.

Chapter Two: Negative Answers

Oh, it might be a negative on this one. An answer could be one of the following:

No.
Never.
Because.
Couldn't be.
Unlikely.
Don't.
You'll lose.
Mustn't
When the "hot-motifed-culture's interpretation of Hell" freezes over!
Can't.
Give up.
Not often.
Won't.
Not worth the bother.
Not with your resources.
Try not to.
Shouldn't.
Impossible.
Not in my book!
Might not.
Don't you dare!
If your friend jumped off a cliff, would you also jump off a cliff?
Think about it, it wouldn't work.
Cautiously.
Most likely not.
In your dreams!
If you do, you'll be sorry.
Not now.
Later.
Too late.
Not here.
Not there.
That isn't legal, is it?
Forget it.
It's unprecedented.
Someone else can do it.
That's morally reprehensible!
Not soon.
Not ever.
When clams sing Beethoven from mountain-tops!
Best to wait.
Try a different alternative or approach.
You know that I've got the answer, but you must phrase it in a "yes-no" format.

Didn't find a suitable answer? Try chapters one and three.

Chapter Three: Mixed Answers

You asking a complicated question or one requiring an overly specific answer. I think the answer would be one of the following:

Maybe.
Answer unclear, ask later.
Do more meditating or praying.
You're not ready to use this book. I'd recommend that you talk with your friend, relative, superior/inferiors.
Tricky.
That's a matter of faith, isn't.
You're not intelligent enough to understand the fine mechanics of the solution.
I bet the word(s) you're looking for are in a dictionary.
Wait.
It's hard to express the answer with written words, try waving this book around.
There is no clear answer.
There are no clear answers.
I would offend somebody if I answered that one.
What would you say?
42.
That's a toughie, send oodles of money to the Mayo Clinic and perhaps they'll tell you.
Look it up.
Could be.
That's a fact, this book deals with slippery issues!
If you only knew....
You cannot make the decision by yourself.
We tried that one before, inconclusive.
No one knows.
Nothing knows.
Whenever.
Whatever.
Whoever.
Whyever.
However.
Because.
Whenceever.
Rephrase the question.
It's unlike anything we've ever seen before, Cap'n.
Why bother?
In time, you will come to know.
That is a question not tending towards edification.
Wait a minute, at what time?
Wait a minute, who?
Wait a minute, which?
Wait a minute, why?
Wait a minute, how exactly?
Only if she/he/it/them/I/you/we/you-all does it first.
Are you sure you got the facts straight?
That really depends.
Ask an expert.
Pay stricter attention.
I'll get back to you on that one.
Ha! Ha! That's a good one.
Well, now!...
If I could walk that way, I wouldn't....
Best to do more research first.
I've already answered that one.
That question has been outdated, try a newer one.
That's a secret.
The answers definitely a real number.
Could be an imaginary number.
Too many possible answers.
If you were paying attention...
You're not asking the right question.
There are better books on the subject, check the library.
If there aren't better books... write them.
Could you make that a bit more clear.
Only if they/it don't find out.
A thousand years from now, who'll care?
It wouldn't make sense, even if I explained it to you.
Consider it from their point of view.
The first.
The latter.
Both.
Neither.
One of the middle ones.
One (or more) but not the other(s)
D.
All of the above.
None of the above.
One of the above.
You're not using English, this only works for English.
Is something green stuck between your teeth?
Is that a rhetorical question?
If I told you that, I would have to shoot you.
Not even Nixon knew that.
Slower. Slower.
I don't know.
I don't care.
Sleep on it.
Isn't there something else you should be doing right now?
Time to make the donuts.
It's interesting you should ask that, I was thinking the same thing.
It doesn't matter.
It would be alot easier if you could ask that again, but as a "yes-no" question.
Didn't find a suitable answer? Try chapters one and two.

Conclusion:

Why this book was really written.

Actually, I did write this book for most of the pre-said reasons, in a way. As a Reformed Druid, and a North American one at that, I have a right to say what I believe and other Reformed Druids won't claim that I'm a heretical Druid. The RDNA lacks recognizably official dogma and its customs or traditions are very mutable. The RDNA's official doctrine is summed up in the two Basic Tenets:

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a never-ending and spiritual search, can be found through Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; but this is one way, yea!, one way among many.

2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it people do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.

This is the only statement that all Reformed Druids agree with (and possibly most Druids....) Anything more or less than this is your own variant, and we all bring our own stuff willingly or unwillingly. None of us are "pure" Reformed Druids, we are all possessors of differing beliefs, but share a stated agreement with those two identically worded beliefs; irregardless of our own interpretation. Can one have unity through difference? Richard Shelton said "Reformed Druidism is compatible with all religions, even if they deny it." The way I've looked at it, most religions that I'm familiar with use images from Nature at least once to demonstrate or symbolize a theological point; saya bird building a nest in the spring time. If this is so, then people of all religions should be able to gather and hear the same story of a bird building

a nest, and come away with a personal gain of spiritual understanding. This is what the RDNA is about.

One of the unstated purposes of the RDNA is to deepen our critical awareness of the foundations underlying our personal, individual beliefs and/or to understand the roots of our religion(s) or philosophy. In a way, I've pursued this goal by writing & publishing my thoughts as a focusing tool for this exploration, because knowing someone will read your musings makes you work harder. But truth seems to be a thing that changes with new facts reveal an unseen twist in your understandings. God is guiding me on a strange path of mysticism to find Her spiritual truths. Nothing that I've published is necessarily what I currently believe, at the time that you are reading this. Ha!

Another side-effect of Reformed Druidism is a desire to pull people's legs. David Frangquist once stated "The role of the Third Order is keep people guessing....Druidism has its tongue planted firmly in its cheek." I wished to poke fun at a book called "Dianet*cs" and other self-help books that purported to have answers for your personal problems. I think these books cater to those folk who are unwilling to talk with real live people and those who consider any book to be true as gospel if it is published by someone with loads of letters behind their name (esp. Ph.D..)

In the Reformed Druid fashion, I have endeavored to bring you to a deeper realization of the inconsistencies inherent in being an expert on other people's problems, especially about people you don't even know. The Book of Ultimate Answers actually works, but it may be the wrong way to come to answers. Sometimes the most flawless systems can also be the most devious if they are inappropriate. Just because it works doesn't mean it should be used.

Sarah: "I've got a splitting pain in my head."

Jean: "Have you considered amputation?"

Imagine how many leaders and experts daily make decisions based on blind reliance upon long-accepted collections of official answers (i.e. files, dossiers, scriptures.) It's not that written sources do not contain truths, they do!, but one cannot always use the same answer to the same question. Abiding by precedents can be a problematic habit, as the expression goes: "give a child a hammer and soon everything looks like a nail."

One of my other gripes with the self-help genre is that they often have only a very short section of practical answers and advice. What seems to take a great deal of those books (and, incidentally, this one) is a lot of bibble-babble (or Bible-Babel as a friend of mine calls it.) The author usually has their own personal philosophy which they would be delighted if everyone else shared. The people easiest to "convert" are those with weak self-images whose insecurity draws them to powerful, charismatic "know-it-alls." If you are still reading this and are one of those people, you won't find the answer through Reformed Druidism either ("Druidism is a faith, if not in answering, then in questioning.") You'll find your answer, if it's to be found, by your own efforts (possibly divinely aided.)

The last rumor I'd like to share is that people do not always lie, sometimes they are just misinformed and don't realize it or (more likely) won't admit it. I am, myself, greatly "uneducated" in accredited forms of theological training. I am merely winging it, which so many "experts" are also secretly doing. I hope this book has jolted you into a deeper speculation of the purpose, motives and capabilities of the "self-help book" genre.

The Books of the African Jedi-Knight

Introduction

To the Reader,

Welcome to the Books of the African Jedi-Knight. I do not mean, by any means to belittle African-Americans or Africans by the publishing of this book. It's merely an exercise in comparative religious readings on my part, for Jediism is very much a philosophy, if not a religion.

Many of the materials herein are copyrighted, not that that slowed me down in choosing to include them. I hope that anyone obtaining a copy of this publication will show at least some respect to those copyright owners by not charging a profit when distributing these works to another person.

By no means are any of the documents here in contained to be considered "secret" or "oathbound" by our members. Nor does this book express the opinion of anyone but its author. Feel free to show them to anyone you will.

The RDNA, especially Carleton, has never officially called itself a Neo-pagan religion. However, many of its members may feel themselves to be a neo-pagan. Some prefer to look upon it as merely a philosophical union that deals with religion. Both of these are good. However, we can learn from all the spiritual masters of most (if not all) religions that have appeared on this world. Take the opportunity to peruse and cogitate on what you find inside.

Only one of the greatest complements you can give to the RDNA is to publish a little work of your own to help others looking for the ways. Also try to practice what you preach. Imitation is the highest flattery.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Michael Scharding,

Archdruid 93-94, O.D.A.L., Bel., Gran.,

Dean of Druidic Textology (DDT)

39th Day of Geamradh,

Year XXXI of the Reform

(12/8/93 and updated in 1996)

The Books of the African Jedi-Knight

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A Book on the Bantu

This little publication is an attempt to dissuade the belief that the Star Wars trilogy was overly "Christian" in its symbology of the Force. This work came about through my readings of "Bantu Philosophy" (LOC # GN.T4513 C3) by Rev. Placide Tempels, a Jesuit Priest of the early 20th century (*translated from the French*.) The Bantus called the spiritual and divine entity(s) "The Force." Correlations began to develop with further readings, but by no means is Lucasian Theology identical to Bantu Theology.

For those unfamiliar with Africa, the Bantus are the people of Zaire (*AKA the Congo*) and Angola. Most are pagan in the sense that they do not call Christ their personal savior. They may have been drastic changes in their beliefs since the early 1950s when this was published.

We start with some readings from the book. I apologize for the sexist use of "he" referred to in the book, as it was written in the 50s. Michael

What is Force? pg. 52

I believe that we should most faithfully render the Bantu thought in European language by saying that Bantu speak, act, live as if, for them, beings were forces. Force is not for them an adventitious, accidental reality. Force is even more than a necessary attribute of beings: Force is the nature of being, force is being, being is force

When we think in terms of the concept "being," they use the concept "force." Where we see concrete beings, they see concrete forces. When we say that "beings" are differentiated by their essence or nature, Bantu say that "forces" differ in their essence or nature. They hold that there is the divine force, celestial or terrestrial forces, human forces, animal forces, vegetable and even material or mineral forces.

The reader will be able to form his own opinion at the end of this study as to the validity, the exact worth of this hypothesis: in contradistinction to our definition of being as "that which is," or "the thing insofar as it is," the Bantu definition reads, "that which is force," or "the thing insofar as it is force," or "an existent force." We must insist once again that "force" is not for Bantu a necessary, irreducible attribute of being: no, the notion "force" takes for them the place of the notion "being" in our philosophy. Just as we have, so have they a transcendental, elemental, simple concept with them "force," with us "being."

It is because all being is force and exists only in that it is force, that the category "force" includes of necessity all "beings." God, men living and departed, animals, plants, and minerals. Since being is force, all these beings appear to the Bantu as forces. This universal concept is hardly used by the Bantu, but they are susceptible to philosophical abstractions though they express them in concrete terms only. They give a name to each thing, but the inner life of these things presents itself to their minds as such specific forces and not at all as static reality.'

Energy and Life Force pg. 47

The spirits of the first ancestors, highly exalted in the superhuman world. possess extraordinary force inasmuch as they are the founders of the human race and propagators of the divine inheritance of vital human strength. The other dead are esteemed only to the extent to which they increase and perpetuate their vital force in their progeny.

In the minds of Bantu, all beings in the universe possess vital force of their own: human, animal, vegetable, or inanimate. Each being has been endowed by God with a certain force, capable of strengthening the vital energy of the strongest being of all creation: man.

Supreme happiness, the only kind of blessing, is, to the Bantu, to possess the greatest vital force: the worst misfortune and, in very truth, the only misfortune is, he thinks, the diminution of this power.

Every illness, wound or disappointment, all suffering, depression, or fatigue, every injustice and every failure; all these are held to be, and are spoken of by the Bantu as, a diminution of vital force.

Illness and death do not have their source in our own vital power, but result from some external agent who weakens us through his greater force. It is only by fortifying our vital energy, through the use of magical recipes, that we acquire resistance to malevolent external forces.

We need not be surprised that the Bantu allude to this vital force in their greetings one to another, using such forms of address as: "*You are strong*," or "*You have life in you*," "*you have life strongly in you*" {or "*The Force is with you*" Editor} and that they express sympathy in such phrases as "*Your vital force is lowered*," "*your vital energy has been sapped*." A similar idea is found in the form of sympathy, "*wafwa ko !*" which we translate "*you are dying*;" and by reason of our mistranslation. we are quite unable to understand the Bantu and find them given to ridiculous exaggeration when they continually say that they are "dead" of hunger or of fatigue, or that the least obstacle or illness is "killing" them.

In their own minds, they are simply indicating a diminution of vital force, in which sense their expression is reasonable and sensible enough. In their languages, too, are words like "*kufwa*" and "*fukwididila*," indicating the progressing stages of loss of force, of vitality, and the superlative of which signifies total paralysis of the power to live. It is quite erroneous for us to translate these words by "to die" and "to die entirely."

General Laws of Vital Causality, pg. 67

After what we have said upon the question of "force-beings" grouped in respect of their natures, of intensity of life class by class, and of the precedence according to primogeniture, it will be now clear that, among clan peoples, the universe of forces that are organically constructed in what we can call an ontological hierarchy. The interaction of forces and the exercise of vital influence occurs, in fact, according to determined laws. The Bantu universe is not a chaotic tangle of unordered forces blindly struggling with one another. Nor must we believe that this theory of forces is the incoherent product of a savage imagination, or that the action of the same force can be now propitious and now pernicious, without a determining power to justify the fact. Doubtless there are force influences acting in this unforeseeable manner, but this assertion does not allow the conclusion that action occurs in a manner scientifically unpredictable, in a totally irrational mode. When a motorcar breaks down, one can say that this event was not determined in advance by what constitutes the essential nature of a motor-car, but we do not on that account believe ourselves obliged to deny the correctness and validity of the laws of mechanics. On the contrary, the breakdown itself can be explained only by adequate application of these very laws. The same is true of the laws of the interaction of forces. There are possible and necessary actions, other influences, which are metaphysically impossible by reason of the nature of the forces in question. The possible causal factors in life can be formulated in certain metaphysical, universal, immutable and stable laws. These laws can, I think, be set out as follows:

RULE I. Man (living or deceased) can directly reinforce or diminish the being of another man.

RULE II. The vital human force can directly influence inferior force-beings (animal, vegetable, or mineral) in their being itself.

RULE III. A rational being (spirit, manes, or being) can act indirectly upon another rational being by communicating his vital influence to an inferior force (animal, vegetable, or mineral) through the intermediary of which it influences the rational being. This influence will also have the character of a necessarily effective action, save only when the object is inherently the stronger force, or is reinforced b the influence of some third party, or preserves himself by recourse to inferior forces exceeding those which his enemy is employing.

Note: Certain authors claim that inanimate beings, stones, rocks, or plants and trees are called by the Bantu "bwanga" as exercising their vital influence on all that comes near the. If this were authenticated, it would open the question: "do lower forces act by themselves upon higher forces?" Some authors say that they do. For my part, I have never met any African who would accept this hypothesis. A priori, such an occurrence would seem to me to contradict the general principles of the theory of forces. In Bantu metaphysic the lower force is excluded form exercising by its own initiative any vital action upon a higher force. Besides, in giving their examples, these authors ought to recognize that often a living influence has been at work, for example, that of the manes. Likewise, certain natural phenomena, rocks, waterfalls, big trees, can be considered -and are considered by the Bantu- as manifestations of divine power; they can also be the sign, the manifestation, the habitat of a spirit. It seems to me that such should be the explanation of the apparent influences of lower forces on the higher force of man. Those lower beings do not exercise their influence of themselves, but through the vital energy of a higher force acting as cause. Such an explanation accords in all cases with Bantu metaphysic. Such manifestations belong to the third law enunciated above.

Loneliness, pg. 103

Just as Bantu ontology is opposed to the European concept of individuated things, existing in themselves, isolated from others, So Bantu psychology cannot conceive of man as an individual, as a force existing by itself and apart from its ontological relationships with other living be-ings and from its connection with animals or inanimate forces around it.

The Bantu cannot be a lone being. It is not a good enough synonym for that to say that he is a social being. No; he feels and knows himself to be a vital force, at this very time to be in intimate-and personal relationship with other forces, acting above him and below him in the hierarchy of forces. He knows himself to be a vital force, even now influencing some forces, and being influenced, by others.

Ancestors, pg. 64

The Created Universe is centered on man. The present human generation living on earth is the center of all humanity, including the world of the dead.

The Jews had no precise views of the beyond, nothing more than that of compensation in the future life for earthly merit. The idea of bliss became known to them a short time only before the coming of Christ. "*Sheol*" was a desolate region; and sojourning there seemed a gloomy business, offering little enough to attract those who had the good fortune to be still living on earth.

In the minds of the Bantu, the dead also live; but theirs is a diminished life, with reduced vital energy. This seems to be the conception of the Bantu when they speak of the dead in general, superficially and in regard to the external things of life. When they consider the inner reality of being, they admit that deceased ancestors have not lost their superior reinforcing influence; and that the dead in general have acquired a greater knowledge of life and of vital or natural force. Such deeper knowledge as they have in fact been able to learn concerning vital and natural forces they use only to strengthen the life of man on Earth. The same is true of their superior force by reason of primogeniture, which can be employed only to reinforce their living posterity. The dead forbear who can no longer maintain active relationships with those on earth is "completely dead," as Africans say. They mean that this individual vital force, already diminished by decease, has reached a zero diminution of energy, which becomes completely static through lack of faculty to employ its vital influence on behalf of the living. This is held to be the worst of disasters for the dead themselves. The spirits of the dead ("manes") seek to enter into contact with the living and to continue living function upon earth.

The unconscious, evil vital influence, pg. 131

Those who have lived among Bantu have of given striking illustrations of cases in which one finds himself accused of "excising a pernicious influence and is condemned by reason of the illness or death of another, without his being convicted of fault, or even of any wicked intention. Often the elements of proof are entirely lacking and the miscarriage of justice is palpable to an European witness. And yet it is said that the accused, after making a feeble defense, submits, to the declarations and decisions diviners or ordeals, or to the sentence of elders and wise men; and he accepts the penalties which are inflicted. Such facts are incomprehensible to the minds of European jurists. I believe that I have found an adequate explanation in Bantu philosophy

The vital forces are under the governance of God, without human intervention. The hierarchy of forces is an ontological order, founded in the nature of being, not depending only on external agreements and on external meddling. All forces are in relationships of intimate interdependence; vital influence is possible from being to being without recourse to external intermediaries. The vital forces, moreover, are not quantitative, mathematical values, nor are they static qualitative values definable by philosophy. They are active forces not distinct from the being itself, which function not only in themselves and on themselves; but forces whose actions can pulsate through the whole universe of forces, to whatever extent they are in vital relationships with them.

Such vital influence is possible from man to man: it is indeed necessarily effective as between the progenitor, a superior vital force and his progeny-an inferior force. This interaction does not occur only when the recipient object is endowed, in respect of the endowing subject, with a superior force, which he may achieve off himself, or by some vital external influence, or (especially) by the action of God.

What evil demands restitution? pg. 144

Since, in the minds of Bantu, the worst eviland, indeed, the only real injusticeis the harm done to the vital force, it should be at least, surprising that they should measure exactly the amount of restitution by the *lex tallonis*, an eye for an eye. The exact restitution of an object stolen, or the drawing of a tariff of damages, can in no Wise be founded upon their conception of life as centered in man. How can they hope to measure good and evil done to man by, criteria which are external to him? From their point of view this overlooks the essential point; the re-

establishment of the ontological order and of the vital forces that have been disturbed. Even when the restitution takes the form of a transfer of natural goods it is considered as part of the re-establishment of life; or, rather, as being a re-establishment of life.

Besides and beyond economic damages, the "*bisan-so*" the sorrow or the wrong done to the Man, constitutes the right to reparation. The man, wounded during his Peaceful enjoyment of life, in the fullness of his vital force, the wholeness of his life, has a right to restoration of being. Material indemnities have no other significance than that of achieving the restoration of the man.

Conclusion, pg. 78

If one desired to ridicule this philosophy or to give a childish caricature of it, objecting that its concepts do not rest upon the discipline of rigorous scientific experience, it would be as well to take care not to commit oneself to arguments more ridiculous than the pretended stupidity of these primitive peoples themselves.

Is our philosophy based upon scientific experiment? Does depend upon chemical analysis on mechanics or on anatomy? Natural sciences can no more refute a system of philosophy than they can create one. Our elders used to possess a systematized philosophy which the most advanced modern sciences have not broken down. Moreover, our ancestors came by their knowledge of being at a time when their experimental scientific knowledge was very poor and defective, if not totally erroneous. The tool of empirical science is sense experience of visible realities, while philosophy goes off into intellectual contemplation of general realities concerning the invisible nature of beings. But no instrument exists for measuring the soul, though this fact does not exclude the possibility that experiences may occur in order to furnish intelligence with reasonable proof of the existence of the spiritual principle in life. It is the intellect that creates science. Indeed the experiments of the natural sciences, as also the generalizations of the philosopher ought to-be made methodically and with discernment and analyzed in accordance with sound logical reasoning. This presupposes that one does not question the objective worth of intellectual knowledge. Happily, primitive peoples are no more tortured with doubt than our *subevolues* or human reasoning.

The Book of the Jedi

Words by George Lucas and Co.

Typed up by Chris A. Johnson

Edited by Michael Scharding

Obviously, distribution of this is against the copyright law, so be careful not to charge money for it. Every time I now watch the Star Wars series I note deeper and deeper religious symbology impregnating it. As you've read in the Bantu Philosophy introduction, now apply what you have learned towards this text. LOOK for possible parallels and connections. On later read-throughs, try searching for Taoist, Buddhist and Confucian parallels, they're really in there. By understanding common themes amongst religious systems, one gains a greater appreciation of their vital differences. I suspect that by understanding the unique points on one's faith, one is strengthened in resolve to hold to that faith; and one also acknowledges areas that are further elaborated in other religions.

I consider this book to be a religious text in and of itself. Enjoy!

STAR WARS

(On Tatoine, at Luke's Home)

Aunt Roe: Luke is not much of a farmer, he's got too much of his father in him.

Uncle Owen: I know.

(In Ben's home)

Ben: Owen disagreed with your father's ethics and would not have gotten involved. He was the best star fighter in the galaxy and a cunning warrior... and my friend. I have something for you. Your father wanted you to have it when you were old enough. Your uncle wouldn't allow it. He feared you would go off with Obi Wan on a suicidal adventure. It is a light saber. It is the weapon of a Jedi, not clumsy like a blaster or a laser, an elegant weapon from a more civilized era. For over a 1000 generations they were guardians of the civilization before the Dark Times when the empire hunted down the Jedi....Now the Jedi are all but extinct. Vader was seduced by the Dark Side of the Force. He betrayed and murdered your father.

Luke: The Force?

Ben: Now, the Force is what gives the Jedi his power. It's an energy field created by all living things; it surrounds us, it penetrates us, it binds the galaxy together.

Ben: Learn about the Force, Luke.

Luke: I want to learn the ways of the force and be like my father.

Ben: You must do what you feel is right.

(In the Death Star's Meeting Room)

Admiral Motti: This station is now the ultimate power in the universe. I suggest we use it.

Vader: Don't be too proud of this technological terror you've constructed. The ability to destroy a planet is insignificant next to the power of the Force.

Admiral Motti: Don't try to frighten us with your sorcerer's ways, Lord Vader. Your sad devotion to that ancient

religion has not helped you conjure up the stolen data tapes, nor given you clairvoyance enough to find the Rebels' hidden fort(Vader chokes him through the Force)

Vader: I find your lack of faith disturbing.

(on the streets of Mas Eisley)

Stormtrooper: How long have you had these droids?

Luke: About three or four seasons.

Ben: They're up for sale if you want them.

Stormtrooper: Let me see your identification.

Ben: You don't need to see his identification.

Stormtrooper: We don't need to see his identification.

Ben: These aren't the droids you're looking for.

Stormtrooper: These aren't the droids we're looking for.

Ben: He can go about his business.

Stormtrooper: You can go about your business.

Ben: Move along.

Ben: Move along. Move along.

(They continue to the tavern. A Jawa appears and covets Luke's speeder.)

C3PO: I can't abide those Jawasdisgusting creatures.

Luke: (To Jawa) Go on, go on. (To Ben) I can't understand how we got by those troops. I thought we were dead.

Ben: The Force. It has a strong influence on the weak-minded.

(En route to Alderaan. Luke fighting a target remote.)

Ben: Remember, a Jedi can feel the force flowing through him.

Luke: You mean it controls your actions?

Ben: Partially. But it also obeys your commands.

(The remote hits Luke with a stinger blast in the seat of the pants.)

Han: Hokey religions and ancient weapons are no match for a good blaster at your side, kid.

Luke: (Deactivates lightsaber) You don't believe in the Force, do you?

Han: Kid, I've flown from one side of this galaxy to the other and I've seen a lot of strange stuff,-but I've never seen anything to make me believe there's one all-powerful Force controlling everything. There's no mystical energy field that controls my destiny. It's all a lot of simple tricks and nonsense.

Ben: (takes flight helmet from wall) I suggest you try it again, Luke. This time, let go your conscious self and act on instinct. (Places helmet on Luke's head.)

Luke: But, with the blast shield down I can't even see! How am I supposed to fight?

Ben: Your eyes can deceive you. Don't trust them. (Luke reactivates his lightsaber. Remote fires, hits his leg.) Stretch out with your feelings. (Luke blocks three blasts from the remote.) You see? You can do it. (Luke deactivates lightsaber, removes helmet.)

Han: I'd call it luck.

Ben: In my experience, there's no such thing as luck.

Han: Look, good against remotes is one thing... Good against a living that's something else. (Console beeps) Looks like we're coming up on Alderaan. (Han and Chewbacca exit.)

Luke: You know, I did feel something. I could almost see the remote.

Ben: That's good. You've taken your first step into a larger world.

(After the planet blows up, Ben faints)

Luke: Are you all right?

Ben: I felt a great disturbance in the Force, as if millions of voices cried out in Terror.

(In the hanger.)

Imperial Commander: There's no one on board, sir. According to the log, the crew abandoned ship just after takeoff. It must be a decoy, sir. Several of the escape pods have been jettisoned.

Vader: Did you find any droids?

Imperial Commander: No sir. If there were any on board, they must also have jettisoned.

Vader: Send a scanning crew on board. I want every part of this ship checked.

Imperial Commander: Yes sir.

Vader: I sense something, a presence I've not felt since....

(In the control room.)

Luke: I wanna go with you.

Ben: Be patient, Luke, stay and watch over the droids.

Luke: But he can

Ben: They must be delivered safely or other star systems will suffer the same fate as Alderaan. Your destiny lies along a different path from mine. (opens door) The Force will be with you. Always.

(In the meeting room)

Vader: He is here.

Tarkin: obi-Wan Kenobi? What makes you think so?

Vader: A tremor in the Force. The last time I felt it was in the presence of my old master.

Tarkin: Surely he must be dead by now.

Vader: Don't underestimate the Force.

Tarkin: The Jedi are extinct; their fire has gone out of the universe. (Comlink buzzes.) You, my friend, are all that's left of their religion. (Answering comlink) Yes?

Commander: We have an emergency alert in detention block AA-23.

Tarkin: The Princess? Put all sections on alert.

Vader: Obi-Wan is here. The Force is with him.

Tarkin: If you're right, he must not be allowed to escape.

Vader: Escape is not his plan. I must face him alone.

(Ben uses Force to distract soldiers.)

(The duel)

Vader: I've been waiting for you, Obi-Wan. We meet again at last. The circle is now complete. When I left you, I was but the learner. Now I am the master.

Ben: Only a master of evil, Darth. (They fight)

Vader: Your powers are weak, old man.

Ben: You can't win, Darth. If you strike me down, I shall become more powerful than you can possibly imagine. (They fight)

Vader: You should not have come back. (The fight continues. Vader strikes down Ben. Ben's cloak falls to the ground, empty.)

Luke: No! (Stormtroopers turn from covering Vader and attack Luke & co.) Han, Leia, and Artoo urge Luketo get in the ship. Vader prods Ben's cloak with his foot.)

Han: Blast the door, kid! (and Vaderand stormtrooper reinforcements are cut off from the hanger bay.)

Ben: Run Luke, run!

(At the Rebel briefing)

Dodanna: Then man your ships. And may the Force be with you.

(In the Rebel hanger)

Luke: ...Take care of yourself, Han. I guess that's what you're best at, isn't it?

Han: Hey, Luke. May the Force be with you.

(As Luke takes off)

Ben: Luke, the Force will be with you.

(During the battle)

Ben: Luke, trust your feelings. (Luke does a nice strafing run.)

(In the trench Luke activates his targeting computer.)

Ben: Use the Force, LUKE. (Luke looks away from the computer)Let go, LUKE.

Vader: The Force is strong in this one.

Ben: Luke, trust me. (Luke deactivates the targeting computer)

(Later, Luke destroys the Death Star without aid of the computer. But you knew that.)

(After the battle)

Ben: Remember, the Force will be with you. Always.

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

(In the Wampa ice cave, Luke uses the Force to pull his lightsaber from the snow into his hand and slice off the Wampa's hand.)

(In snowstorm.)

Ben: LUKE. Luke!

Luke: Ben?

Ben: You will go to the Dagobah system.

Luke: Dagoba?

Ben: There you will learn from Yoda, the Jedi Master who instructed me.

(When the Imperial Starfleet comes out of lightspeed too close to Hoth and the Rebels activate their energy shield, Vader chokes Admiral Ozzel through the Force from a completely different room and thereby promotes Captain Piett to Admiral.)

(on the Super Star Destroyer)

Star Destroyer Captain #2: ...And that, Lord Vader, was the last time they appeared on any of our scopes. Considering the amount of damage we've sustained, they must have been destroyed.

Vader: No, Captain, they're alive., I want every ship available to sweep the

asteroid field until they are found.

Piett: Lord Vader!

Vader: Yes, Admiral, what is it?

Piett: The Emperor commands you to make contact with him.

Vader: Move the ship away from the asteroid field so that we can send a clear transmission. (In Vader's chamber) What is thy bidding, my Master?

Emperor: There is a great disturbance in the Force.

Vader: I have felt it.

Emperor: We have a new enemy: Luke Skywalker.

Vader: Yes, my Master.

Emperor: He could destroy us.

Vader: He's just a boy. Obi-Wan can no longer help him.

Emperor: The Force is strong in him. The son of Skywalker must not become a Jedi.

Vader: If he could be turned, he would be a powerful ally.

Emperor: Yes ... yes. He would be! Can it be done?

Vader: He will join us or die, Master.

(On Dagobah)

Yoda: Why are you here?

Luke: I'm looking for a someone.

Yoda: Help you I can!

Luke: I don't think so, I'm looking for a great warrior.

Yoda: Great Warrior?

Luke: I'm looking for a Jedi Master.

Yoda: Jedi Master, you are looking for. Come, I'll show you.

(In Yoda's home)

Yoda: Why do you want Yoda?

Luke: I want to be a Jedi, like my father.

Yoda: Your father, a powerful Jedi, powerful Jedi he was.

Luke: You knew my father?

Yoda: I cannot teach him. The boy has no patience.

Ben's Voice: He will learn patience.

Yoda: Much anger in him. Like his father.

Ben's Voice: Was I any different when you taught me?

Luke: Yoda... I ... I am ready! Ben! Ben, I can be a Jedi! Ben, tell him I'm re (bumps his head on the ceiling)

Yoda: Ready are you? What know you of ready? For eight hundred years have I trained Jedi! My own council will I keep on who is to be trained! A Jedi must have the deepest commitment, the most serious mind. This one, along time have I watched. All his life has he looked away: to the future, to the horizon. Never his mind on where he was, mm? What he was doing. Mm. Adventure. Heh! Excitement. Heh! (pokes Luke) A Jedi craves not these things. You are reckless!

Ben: So was I, if you remember.

Yoda: He is too old. Yes. Too old to begin the training.

Luke: But I've learned so much.

Yoda: Will he finish what he begins?

Luke: I won't fail you. I'm not afraid.

Yoda: You will be. You will be.

(Luke's training I. Luke runs through the swamps with Yoda on his back.)

Yoda: Run! Yes! Yes! A Jedi's strength flows from the Force! But beware of the Dark Side. Anger, fear, aggression: the Dark Side are they! Easily they flow, quick to join you in a fight. If once you start down the dark path, forever will it dominate your destiny, consume you it will! As it did Obi-Wan's apprentice.

Luke: (Stops, panting.) Vader. Is the Dark Side stronger?

Yoda: No! No. No. Quicker, easier, more seductive.

Luke: Then how am I to know the good side from the bad?

Yoda: You will know! When you are calm. At peace! Passive. A Jedi uses the Force for knowledge and defense. Never for attack.

Luke: But tell me why I can't

Yoda: No, no, there is no why! Nothing more will I teach you today. Clear your mind of questions. Mmmm. Mmm.

Luke: (Sets Yoda down, puts on jacket.) There's something not right here. I feel cold... death.

Yoda: That place (indicates cave) is strong with the Dark side of the Force. A domain of evil it is. In you must go.

Luke: What's in there?

Yoda: only what you, take with you. (Luke takes his weapons.) Your weaponsyou will not need them. (Luke ignores him. He enters the cave and fights a slow-motion battle with Darth Vader, who he beheads. Vader's mask explodes, revealing the face beneath: Luke's own.)

(Luke's training II. He is standing on one hand with Yoda perched on his foot.)

Yoda: Good, yes. Feel the Force flow! Yes! Now: the stone. (Luke lifts a stone through the Force.) Feel it. (Artoo notices the sinking X-Wing. His whistling breaks Luke's concentration.) Concentraaaaate! (Luke and Yoda fall.)

Luke: (Looking at X-Wing) Oh no. We'll never get it out now!

Yoda: So certain are you? Always with you it cannot be done. Hear you nothing that I say?

Luke: Master, moving stones around is one thing. This istotally different!

Yoda: No! No different! only different in your mind. You must unlearn what you have learned.

Luke: All right, I'll give it a try.

Yoda: No! Try not. Do, or do not. There is no try. (Luke raises the X-Wing a bit, then drops it. It sinks completely.)

Luke: I can't. It's too big.

Yoda: Size matters not. Look at me. Judge me by my size, do you? (Luke shakes his head) Hum. And well you should not. For my ally is the Force, and a powerful ally it is. Life creates it, makes it grow. Its energy surrounds us, and binds us. Luminous beings are we, not this crude matter. (Pinches Luke's shoulder) You must feel the Force around you: here, between you, me, between the rock, everywhere! Yes! Even between land and ship.

Luke: You work the impossible. (Luke sulks. Yoda raises the ship and deposits it on the shore. Luke is incredulous.)

Luke: I don'tI don't believe it!

Yoda: That is why you fail.

(Vader chokes captain Needa through the Force for loosing the Falcon.)

(Luke's training III. Luke standing on his hands with two boxes levitated.)

Yoda: Concentrate! Feel the Force flow! Yes! (Luke levitates Artoo.) Good, calm. Through the Force, things you will see. Other places, the future, the past, old friends long gone.

Luke: Han? Leia! (He drops the boxes and Artoo and falls.)

Yoda: Hmm. Control, control, you must learn control!

Luke: I... I saw a city in the clouds!

Yoda: Mmm. Friends you have there.

Luke: They were in pain.

Yoda: It is the future you see.

Luke: The future? Will they die?

Yoda: Difficult to see. Always in motion is the future.

Luke: I've got to go to them.

Yoda: Decide you must how to serve them best. If you leave now, help them you could, but... you would destroy all for which they have fought and suffered.

(On Cloud City, in the dining room, Vader blocks Han's laser bolts with his hand and pulls Han's gun across the table through the Force.)

(Luke's departure from Dagobah)

Yoda: Luke, you must complete the training!

Luke: I can't get this vision out of my head. They're my friends, I've got to help them!

Yoda: You must not go!

Luke: But Han and Leia will die if I don't!

Ben: You don't know that. (Apparition of Ben appears) Even Yoda cannot see their fate.

Luke: But I can help them! I feel the Force.

Ben: But you cannot control it. This is a dangerous time for you, when you will be tempted by the Dark Side of the Force.

Yoda: Yes, yes, to Obi-Wan you listen! The cave, remember your failure at the cave!

Luke: But I've learned so much since then! Master Yoda, I promise to return and finish what I've begun! You have my word!

Ben: It is you and your abilities the Emperor wants. That is why your friends are made to suffer.

Luke: That's why I have to go..

Ben: Luke, I don't want to loose you to the Emperor the way I lost Vader.

Luke: You won't.

Yoda: Stopped he must be. On this all depends. Only a fully trained Jedi Knight, with the Force as his ally, will conquer Vader and his Emperor. If you end your training now, if you choose the quick and easy paths Vader did, you will become an agent of evil.

Ben: Patience!

Luke: And sacrifice Hanand Leia?

Yoda: If you honor what they fight for... yes.

Ben: If you choose to face Vader, you will do it alone. I cannot interfere.

Luke: I understand. Artoo? Fire up the converters. (Luke enters the X- Wing.)

Ben: Luke! Don't give into hate. That leads to the Dark Side!

Yoda: Strong is Vader! Mind what you have learned, save you it can!

Luke: I will! And I'll return. I promise. (Luke takes off)

Yoda: Told you I did. Reckless is he. Now, matters are worse.

Ben: That boy is our last

Yoda: No. There is another.

(After Han is frozen in carbonite)

Imperial Commander: Skywalker has just landed, my Lord.

Vader: See to it that he finds his way in here. (Lando attempts to take Leia by the arm, but Chewie snarls at him.) Calrissian, take the Princess and the Wookiee to my ship.

Lando: You said they'd be left in the city under my supervision!

Vader: I am altering the deal. Pray I don't alter it any further. (Vader chokes Lando for a brief instant. Lando's hand goes to his throat. This one is taken from the novelization, but in the film Lando's hand does go to his throat. Sort of.)

(The duel I. Luke holsters his blaster. The lights come up, Vader's breathing is heard.),

Vader: The Force is with you, young Skywalker, but you are not a Jedi yet. (Luke ascends the steps and they duel.)

(The duel II)

Vader: You have learned much, young one.

Luke: You'll find out I'm full of surprises. (They exchange blows. Vader knocks Luke's saber from his hand and it falls to the floor below. Vader swings at Luke, Luke rolls down the stairs. Vader leaps, and lands between Luke and his lightsaber.)

Vader: Your future lies with me, Skywalker. Obi-Wan knew this to be true.

Luke: No. (He is backing towards the pit. Vader lungesLuke falls in.)

Vader: All too easy. (He turns on the carbonite switch with the Force. Luke leaps from the chamber and climbs the pipes above. Vader doesn't notice.) Perhaps you are not as strong as the Emperor thought. (A clang comes from above. Vader sees Luke) Impressive. (He slices a hose. Steam spews out.) Most impressive. (Luke drops and aims the broken pipe at Vader.) Oomph! (Luke picks up his lightsaber with the Force and blocks Vader's next swing with it.) Obi-Wan has taught you well. You have controlled your fear. (They exchange blows.) Now, release your anger. Only your hatred can destroy me.

(They fight. Luke drives Vader off the side of the chamber. Luke deactivates his lightsaber and follows. He enters a connecting tunnel, then the Control Room. Vader appears. Rather than fight, he sends large machinery hurtling at Luke When Luke blocks the machinery, Vader attacks. Then Vader simply hurtles the machinery at Luke, who can't block it all. One piece breaks the large window, causing a pressure difference which pulls Luke out. He catches a catwalk and pulls himself up.)

Vader: Trust your feelings, I'm your Father!

Luke: (Luke wines) No, that can't be! That's Impossible!

(Beneath the city, Luke calls first for Ben and then for Leia, who hears his call. As they attempt to escape)

Vader's Voice: Luke

Luke: Father.

Vader's Voice: Son, come with me.

Luke: Ben, why didn't you tell me? (Luke gets up and goes to the cockpit.)

Lando: Chewie! (Chewie bashes his tool against the ship.)

Luke: It's Vader.

Vader's Voice: Luke, it is your destiny.

Luke: Ben, why didn't you tell me?

(Aboard the medical frigate)

Luke: Chewie, I'll be waiting for your signal. Take care, you two. And may the Force be with you.

THE RETURN OF THE JEDI

(Luke in Jabba's palace. He chokes the guards a la Vader to get past them. He plays with Bib Fortunal's mind like Ben did to the stormtroopers. He also attempts to use his

mind powers on Jabba, but they are ineffective. In the book, he leaps to the grate above the rancor and swings around up there out of reach, but the scene was cut from the movie.)

(Luke makes extensive use of the Force in fighting Jabba's guards. Leia also uses it to choke Jabba.)

(The Emperor's arrival)

Emperor: Rise, my friend.

Vader: The Death Star will be completed on schedule, my Master.

Emperor: You have done well, Lord Vader. And now, I sense you wish to continue your search for young Skywalker.

Vader: Yes, my Master.

Emperor: Patience, My friend. In time, he will seek you out, and when he does, you will bring him before me. Only together can we turn him to the Dark Side of the Force.

Vader: Yes, My Master.

Emperor: Everything is proceeding as I have foreseen.

(Yoda's farewell)

Yoda: That face you make. Look I so old to young eyes?

Luke: No. of course not.

Yoda: I do. Yes I do. Sicker I've become. Yes. Old and weak. When nine hundred years old you reach, look as good you will not. Hmm? (Chuckles, then coughs.) Soon will I rest. Yes. Forever sleep. Earned it I have.

Luke: Master Yoda, you can't die!

Yoda: Strong am I with the Force, but not that strong. Twilight is upon me, and soon night must fall. That is the way of things. The way of the Force.

Luke: But I need your help. I've come back to complete the training.

Yoda: No more training do you require. Already know you thatwhich you need.

Luke: Then I am a Jedi.

Yoda: Oh! Not yet. One thing remains. Vader. You must confront Vader. Then, only then, a Jedi will you be. And confront him you will.

Luke: Master Yoda, is Darth Vader my father?

Yoda: A rest I need. Yes. Rest.

Luke: Yoda, I must know.

Yoda: Your father he is. Told you, did he?

Luke: Yes.

Yoda: Unexpected is this, and unfortunate.

Luke: Unfortunate that I know the truth?

Yoda: No! Unfortunate that you rushed to face him! That incomplete was your training! That not ready for the burden were you.

Luke: I'm sorry.

Yoda: Remember, a Jedi's strength flows from the Force. But beware: anger, fear, aggression: the Dark Side are they. If once you start down the Dark path, forever will it dominate your destiny! Luke.. do not... do not underestimate the powers of the Emperor, or suffer your father's fate you will. Luke... when gone am I, the last of the Jedi will you be. Luke! The Force runs strong in your family. Pass on what you have... learned... Luke... there, is... anoth..er... Sk... Sky... walk... er... (Yoda dies.)

(Luke uses the Force to remember who the heck his sister was.)

(When the strike team is attempting to got past the security shield of the Death Star, Luke and Vader sense each others presence.)

(Luke uses the Force to levitate Threepio and thereby convince the Ewoks to join them.)

Luke: The Force is strong in my family. My father has it... I have it... and... my sister has it.

(Luke and Vader meet)

Vader: The Emperor has been expecting you.

Luke: I know, father.

Vader: So, you have accepted the truth.

Luke: I have accepted the truth that you were once Anakin Skywalker, my father.

Vader: That name no longer has any meaning for me.

Luke: It is the name of your true self, you've only forgotten. There is good in you. The Emperor hasn't driven it from you fully. That was why you couldn't bring yourself to kill me before. That's why you won't bring me to your Emperor now.

Vader: I see you have constructed a new lightsaber. Impressive. Your skills are complete. Indeed you are powerful, as the Emperor has foreseen.

Luke: Come with me.

Vader: Obi-Wan once thought as you do. You don't know the power of the Dark Side. I must obey my Master.

Luke: I will not turn, and you'll be forced to kill me.

Vader: If that is your destiny.

Luke: Search your feelings, father. You can't do this. I feel the conflict within you, let go of your hate!

Vader: It is too late for me, son. The Emperor will show you the true nature of the Force. He is your master now.

Luke: Then my father is truly dead.

(Emperor's throne room I)

Emperor: Welcome, young Skywalker. I have been expecting you. You no longer need those. (He motions to Luke's binders. They fall to the ground.) Guards, leave us. I am looking forward to completing your training. In time, you will call me Master.

Luke: You're gravely mistaken. You won't convert me as you did my father.

Emperor: oh no, my young apprentice. You will find that it is you who are mistaken. About a great many things.

Vader: His lightsaber. (Hands it, butt first, to the Emperor.)

Emperor: Ah yes. A Jedi's weapon. Much like your father's. By now you must know that your father can never be turned from the Dark side. so will it be with you.

Luke: You're wrong. Soon I'll be dead, and you with me.

Emperor: Perhaps you refer to the imminent attack of your Rebel fleet. Ah yes, I assure you, we are quite safe from your friends here.

Luke: Your overconfidence is your weakness.

Emperor: Your faith in your friends is yours.

Vader: It is pointless to resist, my son.

Emperor: Everything that has transpired has done so according to my design. Your friends, out there on the sanctuary moon, are walking into a trap, as is your Rebel f leet. It was I who allowed the Alliance to know the location of the shield generator. It is quite safe from your pitiful little band. An entire legion of my best troops awaits them. Oh, I'm afraid the deflector shield will be quite operational when your friends arrive.

(Space battle. The Rebel fleet roars from hyperspace. All wings report in.)

Wedge: Lock s-foils in attack position.

Admiral Ackbar: May the Force be with us.

(Emperor's throne room II)

Emperor: Come, boy, see for yourself. From here you will witness the final destruction of the Alliance, and the end of your insignificant Rebellion. (Touches lightsaber) You want this, don't you. The hate is swelling in you now. Take your Jedi weapon. Use it. Strike me down with it. Give in to your anger. With each passing moment you make yourself more my servant.

Luke: No.

Emperor: It is unavoidable. It is your destiny. You, like your father, are now... mine.

(Emperor's throne room III)

Emperor: Your fleet is lost, and your friends on the Endor moon will not survive. The Alliance will die, as will your friends. Good... I can feel your anger. I am defenseless. Take your Jedi weapon. Use it. Strike me down with all of your hatred, and your journey towards the Dark side will be complete! (Luke takes his sword through the Force, ignites it, and swings. Vader blocks the blow. Emperor laughs.)

(Emperor's throne room IV)

(Luke and Vader duel. Luke kicks Vader down the stairs (reminiscent of the falling down stairs bit in the previous film].)

Emperor: (laughs.) Use your aggressive feelings, boy! Let the hate flow through you. (Luke deactivates his lightsaber.)

Vader: obi-Wan... has taught you well.

Luke: I will not fight you, father. (Vader climbs the steps. Luke backs away.)

Vader: You are unwise to lower your defenses! (Luke reactivates his lightsaber to defend himself. They exchange blows. Luke jumps into a control booth and deactivates his lightsaber. He then flips up onto a catwalk.)

Luke: Your thoughts betray you, father. I feel the good in you, the conflict.

Vader: There is no conflict.

Luke: You couldn't bring yourself to kill me before and I don't believe you'll destroy me now.

Vader: You underestimate the power of the Dark Side. If you will not fight, then you will meet your destiny. (Throws his sword, which causes catwalk to fall. Luke slides down below the throne room. Vader follows.)

Emperor: (laughing.) Good. Good!

(Emperor's throne room V)

(Vader searching for Luke beneath the throne room)

Vader: You cannot hide forever, Luke

Luke: I will not fight you.

Vader: Give yourself to the Dark Side. It is the only way you can save your friends. Yes! Your thoughts betray you. Your feelings for them are strong, especially for... sister! So, you have a twin sister! Your feelings have now betrayed her,. too! Obi-Wan was wise to hide her from me. Now, his failure is complete. If you will not turn to the Dark Side, then perhaps she will.

Luke: NEVER! (Attacks Vader, beats him back. Knocks him to his knees, slices his right hand off.)

Emperor: Good! Your hate has made you powerful. Now, fulfill your destiny, and take your father's place at my side.

Luke: (looks at his mechanical hand, then to Vader's severed mechanical one.) Never. (Deactivates lightsaber and throws it away.) I'll never turn to the Dark Side. You've failed, your Highness. I'm a Jedi, like my father before me.

Emperor: So be it, Jedi.

(Emperor's throne room VI)

Emperor: If you will not be turned, you will be destroyed. (Hits Luke with lightning. Vader stands by his Master.) Young fool. Only now, at the end, do you understand. (Hits Luke with lightning.) Your feeble skills are no match for the power of the Dark Side. (Hits Luke with lightning.) You have paid the price for your lack of vision. (Hits Luke with lightning.)

Luke: (Screams, including:) Father, help me!

Emperor: Now, young Skywalker, you will die. (Hits Luke with lightning.)

Luke: (Screams, including:) Father!

(Vader grabs Emperor and throws him into a pit. Luke pulls Vader away from the pit.)

(Vader, unmasked)

Anakin Skywalker: Now go, my son. Leave me.

Luke: No. I'll not leave you here, I've got to save you.

Anakin Skywalker: You already have, Luke

(On the Ewok Planet)

Ben: The Force will always be with you, young Skywalker.

The Nightingale

as written by Hans Christian Andersen

In China, you must know, the Emperor is a Chinaman, and all whom he has about him are Chinamen too. It happened a good many years ago, but that's just why it's worthwhile to hear the story, before it is forgotten. The Emperor's palace was the most splendid in the world; it was made entirely of porcelain, very costly, but so delicate and brittle that one had to take care how one touched it. In the garden were to be seen the most wonderful flowers, and to the costliest of them silver bells were tied, which sounded, so that nobody should pass by without noticing the flowers.

Yes, everything in the Emperor's garden was admirably arranged. And it extended so far, that the gardener himself did not know where the end was. If a man went on and on, he came into a glorious forest with high trees and deep lakes. The wood extended straight down to the sea, which was blue and deep; great ships could sail to and fro beneath the branches of the trees; and in the trees lived a nightingale, which sang so splendidly that even the poor Fisherman, who had many other things to do, stopped still and listened, when he had gone out at night to throw out his nets, and heard the Nightingale.

"How beautiful that is!" he said; but he was obliged to attend to his property, and thus forgot the bird. But when in the next night the bird sang again, and the Fisherman heard it, he exclaimed again, "How beautiful that is!"

From all the countries of the world travelers came to the city of the Emperor and admired it, and the palace, and the garden, but when they heard the Nightingale, they said, "That is the best of all!"

And the travelers told of it when they came home; and the learned men wrote many books about the town, the palace, and the garden. But they did not forget the Nightingale; that was placed highest of all; and those who were poets wrote most magnificent poems about the Nightingale in the wood by the deep lake.

The books went through all the world, and a few of them once came to the Emperor. He sat in his golden chair, and read, and read: every moment he nodded his head, for it pleased him to peruse the masterly descriptions of the city, the palace, and the garden. "But the Nightingale is the best of all!"—it stood written there.

"What's that?" exclaimed the Emperor. "I don't know the Nightingale at all! Is there such a bird in my empire, and even in my garden? I've never heard of that. To think that I should have to learn such a thing for the first time from books!"

And hereupon he called his Cavalier. This Cavalier was so grand that if any one lower in rank than himself dared to speak to him, or to ask him any question, he answered nothing but "P!"—and that meant nothing.

"There is said to be a wonderful bird here called a Nightingale!" said the Emperor. "They say it is the best thing in all my great empire. Why have I never heard anything about it?"

"I have never heard him named," replied the Cavalier. "He has never been introduced at court."

"I command that he shall appear this evening, and sing before me," said the Emperor. "All the world knows what I possess, and I do not know it myself!"

"I have never heard him mentioned," said the Cavalier, "I will seek for him. I will find him."

But where was he to be found? The Cavalier ran up and down all the staircases, through halls and passages, but no one among all those whom he met had heard talk of the Nightingale. And the Cavalier ran back to the Emperor, and said that it must be a fable invented by the writers of books.

"Your Imperial Majesty cannot believe how much is written that is fiction, besides something that they call the black art."

"But the book in which I read this," said the Emperor, "was sent to me by the high and mighty Emperor of Japan, and therefore it cannot be a falsehood. I will hear the Nightingale! It must be here this evening! It has my imperial favor; and if it does not come, all the court shall be trampled upon after the court has supped!"

"Tsing-pe" said the Cavalier; and again he ran up and down all the staircases, and through all the halls and corridors; and half the court ran with him, for the courtiers did not like being trampled upon.

Then there was a great inquiry after the wonderful Nightingale, which all the world knew excepting the people at court. At last they met with a poor little girl in the kitchen, who said,—

"The Nightingale? I know it well; yes, it can sing gloriously. Every evening I get leave to carry my poor sick mother the scraps from the table. She lives down by the strand, and when I get back and am tired, and rest in the wood, then I hear the Nightingale sing. And then the water comes into my eyes, and it just as if my mother kissed me!"

"Little Kitchen Girl," said the Cavalier, "I will get you a place in the kitchen, with permission to see the Emperor dine, if you will lead us to the Nightingale, for it is announced for this evening."

So they all went out into the wood where the Nightingale was accustomed to sing; half the court went forth. When they were in the midst of their journey a cow began to low.

"O!" cried the court page, "now we have it! That shows a wonderful power in so small a creature! I have certainly heard it before."

"No, those are cows lowing!" said the little Kitchen Girl. "We are a long way from the place yet!"

Now the frogs began to croak in the marsh.

"Glorious!" said the Chinese Court Preacher. "Now I hear it—it sounds just like little church bells."

"No, those are frogs!" said the little Kitchen-maid. "But now I think we shall soon hear it."

And then the Nightingale began to sing.

"That is it!" exclaimed the little Girl. "Listen, listen! and yonder it sits."

And she pointed to a little gray bird up in the boughs.

"Is it possible?" cried the Cavalier. "I should never have thought it looked like that! How simple it looks! It must certainly have lost its color at seeing such grand people around."

"Little Nightingale" called the Kitchen-maid, quite loudly "our gracious Emperor wishes you to sing before him."

"With the greatest pleasure!" replied the Nightingale, and began to sing most delightfully.

"It sounds just like glass bells!" said the Cavalier. "And look at its little throat, how it's working! It's wonderful that we should never have heard it before. That bird will be a great success at court."

"Shall I sing once more before the Emperor?" asked the Nightingale, for it thought the Emperor was present.

"My excellent little Nightingale," said the Cavalier, "I have great pleasure in inviting you to a court festival this evening, when you shall charm his Imperial Majesty with your beautiful singing."

"My song sounds best in the greenwood!" replied the Nightingale; still it came willingly when it heard what the Emperor wished.

The palace was festively adorned. The walls and the flooring, which were of porcelain, gleamed in the rays of thousands of golden lamps. The most glorious flowers, which could ring clearly, had been placed in the passages. There was a running to and fro, and a thorough draught, and all the bells rang so loudly that one could not hear one's self speak.

In the midst of the great hall, where the Emperor sat, a golden perch had been placed, on which the Nightingale was to sit. The whole court was there, and the little Cook-maid had got leave to stand behind the door, as she had now received the title of a real court cook. All were in full dress, and all looked at the little gray bird, to which the Emperor nodded.

And the Nightingale sang so gloriously that the tears came into the Emperor's eyes, and the tears ran down over his cheeks; and then the Nightingale sang still more sweetly, that went straight to the heart. The Emperor was so much pleased that he said the Nightingale should have his golden slipper to wear round its neck. But the Nightingale declined this with thanks, saying it had already received a sufficient reward.

"I have seen tears in the Emperor's eyes—that is the real treasure to me. An emperor's tears have a peculiar power. I am rewarded enough!" And then it sang again with a sweet, glorious voice.

"That's the most amiable coquetry I ever saw!" said the ladies who stood round about, and then they took water in their mouths to gurgle when any one spoke to them. They thought they should be nightingales too. And the lackeys and chambermaids reported that they were satisfied too; and that was saying a good deal, for they are the most difficult to please. In short, the Nightingale achieved a real success.

It was now to remain at court, to have its own cage, with liberty to go out twice every day and once at night. Twelve servants were appointed when the Nightingale went out, each of whom had a silken string fastened to the bird's leg, which they held very tight. There was really no pleasure in an excursion of that kind.

The whole city spoke of the wonderful bird, and when two people met, one said nothing but "Nightin," and the other said "gale;" and then they sighed, and understood one another. Eleven peddler's children were named after the bird, but not one of them could sing a note.

One day the Emperor received a large parcel, on which was written "The Nightingale."

"There we have a new book about this celebrated bird," said the Emperor.

But it was not a book, but a little work of art, contained in a box, an artificial nightingale, which was to sing like a natural one and was brilliantly ornamented with diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. So soon as the artificial bird was wound up, he could sing one of the pieces that he really sang, and then his tail moved up and down, and shone with silver and gold. Round his neck hung a little ribbon, and on that was written, "The Emperor of China's Nightingale is poor compared to that of the Emperor of Japan."

"That is capital!" said they all, and he who had brought the artificial bird immediately received the title, Imperial Head-Nightingale-Bringer.

"Now they must sing together; what a duet that will be!"

And so they had to sing together; but it did not sound very well, for the real Nightingale sang in its own way, and the artificial bird sang waltzes.

"That's not his fault," said the Play-master; "he's quite perfect, and very much in my style."

Now the artificial bird was to sing alone. He had just as much success as the real one, and then it was much handsomer to look at—it shone like bracelets and breastpins.

Three-and-thirty times over did it sing the same piece, and yet was not tired. The people would gladly have heard it again, but the Emperor said that the living Nightingale ought to sing something now. But where was it? No one had noticed that it had flown away out of the open window, back to the greenwood.

"But what is become of that?" said the Emperor.

And all the courtiers abused the Nightingale, and declared that it was a very ungrateful creature.

"We have the best bird, after all," said they.

And so the artificial bird had to sing again, and that was the thirty-fourth time that they listened to the same piece. For all that they did not know it quite by heart, for it was so very difficult. And the Play-master praised the bird particularly; yes, he declared that it was better than a nightingale, not only with regard to its plumage and the many beautiful diamonds, but inside as well.

"For you see, ladies and gentlemen, and above all, your Imperial Majesty, with a real nightingale one can never calculate what is coming, but in this artificial bird everything is settled. One can explain it; one can open it, and make people understand where the waltzes come from, how they go, and how one follows up another."

"Those are quite our own ideas," they all said.

And the speaker received permission to show the bird to the people on the next Sunday. The people were to hear it sing too, the Emperor commanded; and they did hear it, and were as much pleased as if they had all got tipsy upon tea, for that's quite the Chinese fashion; and they all said, "O!" and held up their forefingers and nodded. But the poor Fisherman, who had heard the real Nightingale, said,—

"It sounds pretty enough, and the melodies resemble each other, but there's something wanting, though I know not what!"

The real Nightingale was banished from the country and empire. The artificial bird had its place on a silken cushion close to the Emperor's bed; all the presents it had received, gold and precious stones, were ranged about it; in title it had advanced to be the High Imperial After-Dinner-Singer, and in rank, to number one on the left hand; for the Emperor considered that side the most important in which the heart is placed, and even in an emperor the heart is on the left side; and the Play-master wrote a work of five-and-twenty volumes about the artificial bird; it was very learned and very long, full of most difficult Chinese words; but yet all the people declared that they had read it, and understood it, for fear of being considered stupid, and having their bodies trampled on.

So a whole year went by. The Emperor, the court, and all the other Chinese knew every little twitter in the artificial bird's song by heart. But just for that reason it pleased them best—they could sing with it themselves, and they did so. The street boys sang, "Tsi-tsi-tsi-glug-glug!" and the Emperor himself sang it too. Yes, that was certainly famous.

But one evening, when the artificial bird was singing its best, and the Emperor lay in bed listening to it, something inside

the bird said, "Whizz!" Something cracked. "Whir-r-r!" All the wheels ran round, and then the music stopped.

The Emperor immediately sprang out of bed, and caused his body physician to be called; but what could he do? Then they sent for a watchmaker, and after a good deal of talking and investigation, the bird was put into something like order; but the Watchmaker said that the bird must be carefully treated, for the barrels were worn, and it would be impossible to put new ones in such a manner that the music would go. There was great lamentation; only once in a year was it permitted to let the bird sing, and that was almost too much. But then the Play-master made a little speech, full of heavy words, and said this was just as good as before—and so of course it was as good as before.

Now five years had gone by, and a real grief came upon the whole nation. The Chinese were really fond of their Emperor, and now he was ill, and could not, it was said, live much longer. Already a new Emperor had been chosen, and the people stood out in the street and asked the Cavalier how their old Emperor did.

"P!" said he, and shook his head.

Cold and pale lay the Emperor in his great gorgeous bed; the whole court thought him dead, and each one ran to pay homage to the new ruler. The chamberlains ran out to talk it over, and the ladies'-maids had a great coffee party. All about, in all the halls and passages, cloth had been laid down so that no footstep could be heard, and therefore it was quiet there, quiet quiet. But the Emperor was not dead yet: stiff and pale he lay on the gorgeous bed with the long velvet curtains and the heavy gold tassels; high up, a window stood open, and the moon shone in upon the Emperor and the artificial bird.

The poor Emperor could scarcely breathe; it was just as if something lay upon his chest: he opened his eyes, and then he saw that it was Death who sat upon his chest, and had put on his golden crown, and held in one hand the Emperor's sword and in the other his beautiful banner. And all around, from among the folds of the splendid velvet curtains, strange heads peered forth; a few very ugly, the rest quiet lovely and mild. These were all the Emperor's bad and good deeds, which stood before him now that Death sat upon his heart.

"Do you remember this?" whispered one to the other. "Do you remember that?" and then they told him so much that the perspiration ran from his forehead.

"I did not know that!" said the Emperor. "Music! music! the great Chinese drum!" he cried, "so that I need not hear all they say!" And they continued speaking, and Death nodded like a Chinaman to all they said.

"Music! music!" cried the Emperor. "You little precious golden bird, sing, sing! I have given you gold and costly presents; I have even hung my golden slipper around your neck—sing now, sing!"

But the bird stood still; no one was there to wind him up, and he could not sing without that; but Death continued to stare at the Emperor with his great hollow eyes, and it was quiet, fearfully quiet.

Then there sounded from the window, suddenly, the most lovely song. It was the little live Nightingale, which sat outside on a spray. It has heard of the Emperor's sad plight, and had come to sing to him of comfort and hope. And as it sang the specters grew paler and paler; the blood ran quickly and more quickly through the Emperor's weak limbs; and even Death listened, and said,—

"Go on, little Nightingale, go on!"

"But will you give me that splendid golden sword? Will you give me that rich banner? Will you give me the Emperor's crown?"

And Death gave up each of these treasures for a song. And the Nightingale sang on and on; and it sang of the quiet churchyard, where the white roses grow, where the elder-blossom smells sweet, and where the fresh grass is moistened by the tears of survivors. The Death felt a longing to see his garden, and floated out at the window in the form of a cold, white mist.

"Thanks! thanks!" said the Emperor. "You heavenly little bird! I know you well. I banished you from my country and empire, and yet you have charmed away the evil faces from my couch, and banished Death from my heart! How can I reward you?"

"You have rewarded me!" replied the Nightingale. "I have drawn tears from your eyes, when I sang the first time— I shall never forget that. Those are the jewels that rejoice a singer's heart. But now sleep and grow fresh and strong again. I will sing you something."

And it sang, and the Emperor fell into a sweet slumber. Ah! how mild and refreshing that sleep was! The sun shone upon him through the windows, when he awoke refreshed and restored; not one of his servants had yet returned, for they all thought he was dead; only the Nightingale still sat beside him and sang.

"You must always stay with me," said the Emperor. "You shall sing as you please; and I'll break the artificial bird into a thousand pieces."

"Not so," replied the Nightingale. "It did well as long as it could; keep it as you have done till now. I cannot build my nest in the palace to dwell in; but let me come when I feel the wish; then I will sit in the evening on the spray yonder by the window, and sing you something, so that you may be glad and thoughtful at once. I will sing of those who are happy and of those who suffer. I will sing of good and of evil that remain hidden round about you. The little singing bird flies far around, to the poor fisherman, to the peasant's roof, to every one who dwells far away from you and from your court. I love your heart more than your crown, and yet the crown has an air of sanctity about it. I will come and sing to you—but one thing you must promise me."

"Everything!" said the Emperor; and he stood there in his imperial robes, which he had put on himself, and pressed the sword which was heavy with gold to his heart.

"One thing I beg of you: tell no one that you have a little bird who tells you everything. Then it will go all the better."

And the Nightingale flew away.

The servants came in to look to their dead Emperor, and—yes, there he stood, and the Emperor said "Good morning!"

Hans Christian Andersen. (1805–1875)

The Book of Interfaith Peace Prayers

Hindu Prayer for Peace

Oh God, lead us from the unreal to the Real.
Oh God, lead us from darkness to light.
Oh God, lead us from death to immortality.
Shanti, Shanti, Shanti unto all.
Oh Lord God almighty, may there be peace in celestial regions.
May there be peace on Earth.
May the waters be appeasing.
May herbs be wholesome, and may trees and plants bring peace to all.
May all beneficent beings bring peace to us.
May thy Vedic Law propagate peace all through the world.
May all things be a source of peace to us.
And may thy peace itself, bestow peace on all
and may that peace come to me also.

Baha'i Prayer for Peace

Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity.
Be fair in thy judgment, and guarded in thy speech.
Be a lamp unto those who walk in darkness, and a home to the stranger.
Be eyes to the blind, and a guiding light unto the feet of the erring.
Be a breath of life to the body of humankind, a dew to the soil of the human heart, and a fruit upon the tree of humility.

Buddhist Prayer for Peace

May all beings everywhere plagued
with sufferings of body and mind
quickly be freed from their illnesses.
May those frightened cease to be afraid,
and may those bound be free.
May the powerless find power,
and may people think of befriending one another.
May those who find themselves in trackless, fearful wilderness –
the children, the aged, the unprotected –
be guarded by beneficent celestials,
and may they swiftly attain Buddhahood.

Jewish Prayer for Peace

Come, let us go up to the mountain of
the Lord, that we may walk the
paths of the Most High.
And we shall beat our swords into ploughshares,
and our spears into pruning hooks.
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation –
neither shall they learn war any more.
And none shall be afraid, for the mouth of the
Lord of Hosts has spoken.

Jainist Prayer for Peace

Peace and Universal Love is the essence
of the Gospel preached by all Enlightened Ones.
The Lord has preached that equanimity is the Dharma
Forgive do I creatures all, and let all creatures forgive me.
Unto all have I amity, and unto none enmity.
Know that violence is the root cause of all miseries in the world.
Violence, in fact, is the knot of bondage.
"Do not injure any living being."
This is the eternal, perennial, and unalterable way of spiritual life.
A weapon, howsoever powerful it may be,
can always be superseded by a superior one;
but no weapon can, however,
be superior to nonviolence and love.

Muslim Prayer for Peace

In the name of Allah,
the beneficent, the merciful.
Praise be to the Lord of the
Universe who has created us and
made us into tribes and nations
That we may know each other, not that
we may despise each other.
If the enemy inclines towards peace, do
thou also incline towards peace, and
trust God, for the Lord is the one that
heareth and knoweth all things.
And the servants of God,
Most gracious are those who walk on
the Earth in humility, and when we
address them, we say "PEACE."

Native African Prayer for Peace

Almighty God,
the Great Thumb we cannot evade to tie any knot;
the Roaring Thunder that splits mighty trees:
the all-seeing Lord up on high who sees
even the footprints of an antelope on
a rock mass here on Earth.
You are the one who does
not hesitate to respond to our call.
You are the cornerstone of peace.

Native American Prayer for Peace

Oh Great Spirit of our
Ancestors, I raise my pipe to you.
To your messengers the four winds, and
to Mother Earth who provides
for your children.
Give us the wisdom to teach our children
to love, to respect, and to be kind
to each other so that they may grow
with peace of mind
Let us learn to share all good things that
you provide for us on this Earth.

Shinto Prayer for Peace

Although the people living across the ocean
surrounding us, I believe,
are all our brothers and sisters,
why are there constant troubles in this world?
Why do winds and waves rise in the ocean surrounding us?
I only earnestly wish that the wind will
soon puff away all the clouds which are
hanging over the tops of mountains.

Zoroastrian Prayer for Peace

We pray to God to eradicate all the
misery in the world:
that understanding triumph
over ignorance,
that generosity triumph over indifference,
that trust triumph over contempt, and
that truth triumph over falsehood.

Sikh Prayer for Peace

God adjudges us according
to our deeds,
not the coat that we wear:
that Truth is above everything,
but higher still is truthful living.
Know that we attaineth God when we loveth,
and only that victory
endures in consequences of which no
one is defeated.

Christian Prayer for Peace

Blessed are the PEACEMAKERS,
for they shall be known as
the Children of God.
But I say to you that hear, love your enemies.
Do good to those who hate you,
bless those who curse you
pray for those who abuse you
To those that strike you on the cheek,
offer the other one also,
and from those who take away your cloak,
do not withhold your coat as well.

Give to everyone who begs from you,
and of those who take away your goods,
do not ask for them again.
And as you wish that others would do to you,
do so to them.

Three Songs to Choose From:

Prayer of St. Francis

Make me a channel of your peace
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love
Where there is injury your pardon, Lord
And where there's doubt, true faith in you
D---/--A-/----/- DA D-

Make me a channel of your peace
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope
Where there is darkness, only light
And where there's sadness ever joy

(Bridge) O master grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled as to console
To be understood as to understand
To be loved as to love with all my soul
G-D-/A-D-/G-D-/E-A-

Make me a channel of your peace
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned
In giving to all men that we receive
And in dying that we're born to eternal life
-rewritten by Sebastian Temple

Let There Be Peace On Earth -

Sy Miller & Bill Jackson, Modified by Mike

Let there be peace on earth
And let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth
The peace that was meant to be.

With the Earth as our Mother,
Siblings all are we.
Let me walk with my Sibling
In perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me,
Let this be the moment now.
With ev'ry step I take
Let this be my solemn vow;

To take each moment and live
Each moment in peace eternally.
Let there be peace on earth
And let it begin with me.

I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing

I'd like to build the world a home
And furnish it with love
Grow apple trees and honey bees
and snow-white turtle doves

I'd like to teach the world to sing
In perfect harmony
I'd like to hold it in my arms and keep it company

I'd like to see the world for once
All standing hand in hand
And hear them echo through the hills
"Ah, peace throughout the land"

Id like to build the world a home
And furnish it with love
Grow apple trees and honey bees
and snow-white turtledoves

Book of Freedom and Liberty

The Challenge of Religious Freedom

William Powell Tuck, First Baptist Church, Lumberton, North Carolina Leviticus 26:12-13, John 8:31-36

I have seen the famous picture of the signing of the Declaration of Independence on numerous occasions, but it was only recently that I noticed that the sun was in the picture. One can see the sun shining through the window. It is uncertain whether the sun was rising or whether the sun was setting on that occasion, and I often wonder which it was. As I reflected on that picture, I began to wonder, even more today, is the sun of liberty setting or is it still rising? Is it coming to an end or just beginning? We hear sounds within our country today, which indicate that many people do not understand freedom very well. In fact, there are many who want to deny freedom to others while ensuring their own freedom. Many do not understand very clearly why our country was founded originally nor what its basic purpose was. We continue to suffer as a nation because of a that lack of awareness. "The American flag is not, " as Henlee Barnett once said, "a blindfold but a bright symbol which inspires true patriots to challenge evil at every level of government." The American flag is a symbol of our country, but it is not a blindfold to keep us from seeing what we as a church should say and do to confront evil in our society. I am a loyal American, but I am Christian first. I do not think I could ever make the statement, "My country right or wrong." The pulpit and we as Christian citizens should always challenge our country to lift its ethical sights higher, to be what God would have this nation be.

In 1976 we celebrated the bicentennial of our country. This was a very momentous occasion, and I dare say, without fear of contradiction, that few here will live to see the next one hundred year celebration. There may be one or two in the nursery who might make it because of heredity or the advancement of medicine, but I think most of us will have to acknowledge that we shall not likely see the next celebration.

In 1976 there was a man who led a parade in Bartow, Florida, who was 134 years of age. Charlie Smith, who was originally from Liberia, was recognized in 1976 by the Social Security Administration as the oldest living American citizen. In 1854, at the age of twelve, he stood on a slave auction block in New Orleans and was sold to a rancher in Texas. When he was nineteen years old, the Civil War broke out. Later, he heard Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. He lived through numerous wars. He saw our country go through good and bad times, and he himself endured personal enslavement and suffering. From Africa to America, from slavery to freedom, from war to peace, here was a man who lived through many generations and who understood something about freedom better, I dare say, than any of us will ever truly understand it.

On this Sunday before the fourth of July, I want us to reflect on freedom -- especially religious freedom. I am aware that there are some voices that say that the church should not get involved at all in this kind of celebration. But the church has always been involved, and the church should continue to have something to say in the affairs of government. We cannot equate church and country. Civil religion is always dangerous. We have too much of that heresy being proclaimed from television and other platforms today. But there is a healthy, legitimate role which religion can play in the celebration of any event in our country.

The first observation I would make is this: freedom really had its birth in the Hebraic-Christian religion. Contrary to what some historians say who try to trace our understanding of democracy back to the free city state of Greece, I believe that freedom goes back far beyond that. It goes back to Moses who stood before the Pharaoh of Egypt and demanded in the name of God, 'Let my people go." It goes back to the time when the God of Israel said to his people, " I will establish my Tabernacle among you and will not spurn you. I will walk to and from among you; I will become your God and you shall become my people. I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt and let you be their slaves no longer; I broke the bars of your yoke and enabled you to walk upright" (Lev. 26: 12-13 NEB.) Even before Moses, there was Abraham who went out looking for a city without foundations, because it was built on the power and presence of God himself.

Some of our forefathers and mothers would not let the slaves they owned read the Bible. Do you know why? They knew very well that reading the Bible often provoked a desire for freedom in its readers. Black slaves were not allowed to read the Bible because slave owners feared they would see revealed in the Old Testament and the New Testament the God who was constantly setting his people free. The Bible resounds with cries for freedom from the God who would move against the oppressors of people, the God who would stand up for the slaves, the God who would stand up for the poor, the despised, the rejected, the imprisoned, the hurting, and the down and out. Someone has said that if he were a dictator and had control of a country, the one book he would not let the people read would be the Bible. Why? The Bible constantly tells us of the God who is the liberating God -- the God who is always seeking to free people.

Wherever there is a government that controls its people and there is no real freedom, there is a radical difference in how the people live, think, and act. Whenever there is a totalitarian church, which tells its people what they must think and must believe, there is no freedom.

In our country we have a free church in a free state. This was a radical dream of our founders. We must not lose that dream. We cannot let those who want to wed church and state be victorious. The state should not support the church nor should the church support the state. One should not dictate to the other. As a Christian we should try to influence the state. We should bear witness to the state, but we should not dictate to the state what it should do nor should it dictate to us. Freedom is born in an awareness of a liberating God. That is one of the reasons some people want to stop the study or practice of liberation theology in certain countries. Liberation theology links God with freeing people.

Secondly, freedom is never finished. It is always in process of becoming. It is always in danger of being lost It is always something that we must work at again and again. You and I are very fortunate to live in a country that is free. There are many countries, which are not, and we must not take our own freedom for granted.

We have numerous symbols for freedom in our country. The Liberty Bell is one of those symbols. That bell was a real bell, which was rung early in the life of our country. Now it is just symbolic. The Statue of Liberty is another such symbol. Several years ago it was repaired. Perhaps the decay, which had occurred, is symbolic of something, which is happening within our own country. As with the Statue of Liberty, our own liberty is being eroded away and is in danger of loss. Freedom is always in danger

of being lost when the awareness of its significance slowly fades from our memories or when we are unaware of its value. Freedom is always more than a symbol. We need to remember the reality behind the symbol. Freedom needs to be a reality. Freedom is more than something we think about. It needs to permeate our whole being until we are aware that we must constantly fight to sustain its reality.

Do you remember the story of David? Jesus made a reference once to one of David's experiences. Jesus turned to the Scribes and Pharisees and asked, "Do you remember what David did?" (Matthew 12:3ff.) When he was fleeing from his enemies and was hungry, he went in the Temple and ate the shewbread from the Table of the Lord. This was the bread, which was reserved for the high priests. They would have considered that act a desecration. Then he turned to the priests and asked if they had any weapons of war that he might use to fight his enemies. After thinking for a moment, they responded, "The Sword of Goliath whom you slew in the valley of Elah, behold that is here, wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. There is one other save that here." (I Samuel 21:1-10.) The sword of Goliath, of course. It had become only a symbol. It was on display. "There is none like that! Give it to me!" He lifted the sword to take it into battle.

The Liberty Bell, the Statue of Liberty, the Declaration of Independence, and our American flag are all symbols but they are much more. They are more than something to be put on display. The reality behind these symbols needs to remain clearly in our mind lest our freedom be snatched away when we least expect it. These symbols are reminders for us to remain on guard because the battle for freedom is one that is always being waged. We must remain on alert or lose it.

Baptists have had a significant role in the pilgrimage of our country and its quest for freedom. The hymn, "My Country 'tis of Thee," was written in 1832 by a Baptist minister named Samuel Francis Smith. The pledge of allegiance to the flag was written in 1892 by Francis Bellamy, a Baptist minister. Baptists have not been afraid to be involved in our country's quest for freedom. In the early stages in the history of our country, a group of Baptist ministers, John Waller and Lewis Craig and three other dissenters were arrested and put in jail when they tried to preach in Spottsylvania County, Virginia. They were a part of those who said they wanted no part of an established church. Most of us do not know what the established church is since it doesn't exist in this country. The established church is one that is supported by taxes. Just as we pay taxes to maintain our government, we would be likewise taxed to sustain the church. In most countries where the people are taxed to support the church, the institutional church is dying. The established church is not the people's church, it is the government's church. We do not want that in this country.

One of the crowning achievements which Thomas Jefferson gave our country was the Act for Establishing Religious Freedom. This particular bill Jefferson considered one of the most significant accomplishments of his life. In fact, it is one of the three, which is listed on his grave. When this bill was finally passed in 1786, it stated, "Be it therefore enacted by the General Assembly, that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place or ministry or whatever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or his goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall be in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities." This is a part of the very fabric of our country, and, of all people, Southern Baptists should be at the forefront defending the religious rights of all persons.

In place of separation of church and state, many are substituting a civil religion which has now wed the two. Civil religion has tried to claim that this country is a "Christian" nation which can use the government to support whatever kind of religion a select group wants. This, of course, virtually denies religious freedom to non-Christians. I am a Christian and Baptist and I am proud of both, but I will give a Hindu, a Buddhist, a Moslem, or an atheist his or her right to believe or not believe. That is what religious freedom is -- freedom for all, not freedom just for Christians or Jews, but for all persons.

In 1788 John Leland met with James Madison in Orange County, Virginia, under an oak tree near the first church I ever pastored. James Madison persuaded Leland to vote for him with the understanding that upon his election he would see that a Bill of Rights for religious freedom was enacted. Leland got the support of other Baptists so that Madison was elected, and the Bill of Rights with the article for religious freedom was made the law of our land. This is part of our country's history, and, if we do not know it, we need to understand our past and learn from it.

Freedom is always unfinished, but it is in greater danger of being lost today than ever before. Some television preachers and other ministers are trying to persuade us that separation of church and state is a myth. Baptists, of all people, need to fight to be certain that religious freedom will continue to be a reality. The signers of the Declaration of Independence put more than words on a piece of paper when they signed their names to that document. The names of John Hancock and John Adams, who did not sign until August 2, were not revealed for six months in hopes that they could get back safely from New Hampshire to their homes in Georgia. The four signers of the Declaration of Independence from the state of New York were very wealthy men who owned fleets of ocean sailing ships. They lost everything they had so our country might be free. How can anyone dare suggest that we deny this kind of freedom today? We as Baptists need to stand tall in this struggle and remember that freedom is always an unfinished battle.

Remember, thirdly, that with freedom there always goes responsibility. I think it was Bishop Fulton Sheen who once said that we have a Statue of Liberty off our East Coast and we need a Statue of Responsibility off our West Coast. He is correct. There is no true freedom without responsibility. With our freedom, responsibility is essential to maintain that freedom. With freedom, there needs to be the responsibility to understand what freedom is. Freedom requires the responsibility of its believers to perpetuate it.

Freedom is not easy. It is much easier to be enslaved. Do you remember when Jesus told the Pharisees that he had come to set them free? "What do you mean set us free?" They wondered. "We have always been free. We are Abraham's children." In a sense that was true. To be Abraham's sons they realized that God was the liberating God who had freed them from Egypt. In a spiritual sense, they were always free. But... they had been in bondage to Babylon, Persia, and other countries. At the moment when Jesus was speaking to them, they were in bondage to Rome and had been in bondage to Greece. Jesus said, "I will make you free indeed," because the freedom he was giving them was internal. It was a relationship.

His freedom was relational. This is the freedom we have with the Father, and that kind of freedom no one can ever take away from us. We have the freedom of a son or a daughter of God. We are God's children and this relationship is so vital and real that nobody can snatch it away from us even if we are their slaves. In bondage we can still have the kind of freedom, which Christ gives. As God's children we are challenged to remember that with our religious freedom goes the responsibility to pass it on to others. We who are free are obliged to teach, preach, and sustain this freedom. If we are not vigilant, we may lose the liberty we cherish so much.

Several years ago an Italian film entitled General Della Rovere depicted the work of a resistance movement. The Nazi leaders arrested numerous persons -- some of whom were only innocent victims. Unable to identify the resistance leaders, the officer in charge ordered the execution of all those who had been captured. As the time of the execution drew near, one of those captured cried, "I'm innocent. I did not do anything." "You did not do anything? A resistance leader asked. 'No, I did not do anything." "I do not understand," the resistance leader continued. "Our whole way of life was being destroyed. Minds were being warped; institutions were being subverted; and you did not do anything?" "No," he said. "I did not do anything." "Then you deserve to be punished," he responded.

Too many of us want to be like the man Flip Wilson told about who said that he was a Jehovah's Bystander. He wanted to be a witness, but he did not want to get involved. Too many of us are members of the Jehovah's Bystanders and the Baptist Association of Spectators. We stay in the bleachers. We do not want to get involved. Too many of us stand aloof -- stand apart when God has called for involvement. We are challenged to stand up for freedom, to stand up for those who are oppressed, and to stand up for those who do not agree with us. Jehovah's Witnesses have their freedom today because at some point in the past there were Baptists in our country who were willing to say that although this group differs from us, we will give them the freedom to believe as they will and permit them to worship as they desire.

Freedom is always dangerous. Freedom allows for various viewpoints and different perspectives. It does not call for uniformity but respects diversity. We may not always like or agree with some of the views or ideas that differ from our own. But when real freedom exists, we allow other people to differ with us.

Freedom is always dangerous. When we have freedom that means we can have a Ku Klux Klan within our country. They have the freedom to hate Catholics and Jews. In order to have freedom, individuals have the liberty to hate. But at the same time, others can be loving and strive for ways to care for the needs of those who are oppressed in this country and around the world. Freedom gives room for a Moral Majority, a John Birch Society, or the Salvation Army. It allows for a group to protest the draft. Freedom permitted individuals to protest the Vietnam War or roll bandages to assist those in combat.

There is no true freedom without the opportunity to make choices. Freedom requires us to take a stand or a position on an issue. We have to give others the freedom and right to do the same. Did you know that the results of a recent survey indicate that fifty percent of the citizens in this country to not believe that people who have different religious beliefs from their own should be given freedom to practice their beliefs? That is frightening! It means that we have not taught the principle of freedom very well to our children.

The Vietnam War was one of the most divisive wars in our country's recent history. Good people were on both sides of that conflict. Gene Owens, a former pastor of Myers Park Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, opposed the involvement of our country in the Vietnam War. He felt the war effort was unjust. So he decided to join others across the states that were protesting the war by ringing their church bells. The afternoon after he rang the church bell, a deacon came storming into his study saying, "You had no right to ring our church bell. That is "our" church bell -- not "your" bell." The next Sunday morning Gene Owens stood up in his pulpit and told the congregation about ringing the church bell and the deacon who had protested his act. "That deacon was right," he declared. "That was not my bell, I did not have any right to ring it. It is the church's bell." Then he reached under the pulpit and pulled out a bell. "But this is my bell," he exclaimed, "and I am going to ring it now." He then rang it as loudly as he could. The congregation gave him a standing ovation. He said that week dozens of people gave him bells. The bell became a symbol of his right to take a position and state his own opinion.

Thomas Jefferson once said that the Baptist church is the purest form of democracy. Each person in a Baptist church is a priest before God. The minister cannot tell you exactly what you have to believe. You are a priest before God as I am. Freedom of the pulpit carries with it the responsibility of the pew. In each arena there is a demand for both freedom and responsibility.

Religious freedom has always had high priests in its hair. Established religion has stayed on the back of religious liberty. It has always had to wage battle against the tyranny of those in power, whether they were Kings, Queens, lords or presidents. Religious freedom has constantly fought for its survival against established religion, established government, widespread prejudice, and mass ignorance. If freedom is ever lost, we will be losing one of our most precious possessions. It is always worth the battle to maintain it.

In Hartnett County, North Carolina, there is a small church called Barbecue Presbyterian Church. A pistol and a round ball are kept in a small glass case in the church. An interesting story goes with the pistol and ball. Right before the Declaration of Independence was signed, a young Presbyterian minister came from Scotland to serve as pastor of the Barbecue Presbyterian Church. One Sunday he prayed for England, but he also prayed for those in our country who we involved in the revolution and asked God to bless them as well as England. After the service was over, he was met by three loyalists from England. One of them put a pistol against his head and said, "You see this pistol? If you dare stand in that pulpit and say one more word in support of the revolution, I will put this round ball in your head." He immediately went to the Presbytery and resigned. "I am not a complete fool," he said.

Later in the afternoon, he was walking down the main street of the town and one of his former church members came out of a store cursing. She had not been pleased with her bill. He overheard her and reprimanded her for this offense. She turned to him and said, "Well, preacher, why in the world would you not expect that the devil could do something to a poor little old woman like me if he could make you resign your pulpit in the face of opposition?" He was so shaken by her remarks that the next Sunday he went back to his pulpit and preached a fiery sermon in support of the revolution. After church the three loyalists were waiting for him and sure enough they put a ball in his head and killed him. But to this day in Barbecue Presbyterian Church, there is a ball and a pistol lying in a glass case to remind persons about freedom. They stand as a symbolic reminder, no, as a realistic and concrete image of one man who dared to stand up and lift his voice for freedom.

I hope that we will not lose our freedom as citizens of this country. Let us hold on to our religious freedom. It is a precious heritage. I pray to God that we will always remember its cost, always remember its author, and always remember our own responsibility in maintaining its light. The battle for freedom is always an unending, unfinished battle. Do your part to keep freedom alive.

Prayer: It Ain't That Complicated

Anne G. Cohen, A sermon preached January 22, 1995.
Proverbs 8:1-11, Matthew 6:7-15

Over the holidays, my father and stepmother were in Brazil visiting relatives. In their absence I spent several hours a day in the garage behind their house serving as mail order/shipping clerk for their Christian book company, Hope Publishing Inc. One rare sunny afternoon as I finished up an order for 25 copies of The Way of A Pilgrim, I noticed that I had left the door open and a swallow had accidentally flown inside. It was fluttering in panic against the upper windows, high above my head. With my heart pounding, I climbed up onto a desk, reached up and on the second try, managed to hold the bird lightly cupped between both hands - as I tried not to injure its wings or feet.

I climbed down without the use of my hands, holding what felt like air between my fingers. I could sense a tiny, fast little heartbeat and the slightest brush of feathery softness against my palms. That was all. I stepped outside, knelt on the grass and opened my hands. With a flash of color and a flutter of air, the tiny bird was gone. I felt as if I had prayed.

Last Sunday, after I left the church and headed back up to Pilgrim Pines, I came up on an accident on the 10 freeway in Fontana. It was a fatal accident, three bodies on the center median covered with tarps - one the size of an older child or young teen. As traffic slowed and stopped and crawled around the blocked lanes, there was a hush on the road around the scene. There was a presence of recently departed souls, of lives just lost. People paused to stare, but also - it seemed - to show care and caution and respect. That hush, for me, was a prayer.

Last Monday after another storm had rolled through, a double rainbow appeared over this valley. The colors were translucent and neon at the same time. It reminded me of the way Amy Barkley glowed and shimmered from within a watery world of tears and suffering. I dropped some mail off at Roger's house and made him come out to look at the colors reaching to heaven. He began to cry. The colors and his tears were a prayer to me.

On Friday, December 30th at 3:30p.m., Carl and I stood in Wilcox's Nursery in the plaza across form the courthouse in Avalon on Catalina Island. A fountain bubbled behind us, potted plants and trees surrounded us, a tourist family walked by smiling and their little girl waved at us. Carl and I put rings on each other's fingers and said the ancient words, "With this ring, I thee wed." I felt as if we had prayed.

I used to think prayer was a pretty involved process - a particular creation of mood and atmosphere - a formulation of thoughts translated into elaborate sentences which included archaic terms like "Thee" and "Thou" and "Wast" and "Shalt" are more exult." I thought I was messing things up when phrases like, "all that stuff" and "well, you know what I mean..." crept into my prayers.

But now I am beginning to understand that it "ain't that complicated." I'm beginning to believe that prayer is as many things as there are people in the world and moments in their lives. Prayer is many things to each person. And, for me, the most profound form of prayer is essentially noticing the presence of God in a particular moment.

Prayer is noticing God in whatever way is natural to a person.

Prayer is noticing God in the flutter of air which is the miracle of a tiny bird set free.

Prayer is noticing God in the aftermath of a recent fatality and the hush that falls upon the living.

Prayer is noticing God in the way that light is refracted between clouds and drops of water on a sad and glorious afternoon.

Prayer is noticing God at the same moment two people recognize that their lives are intertwined in a familiar, yet deeply miraculous way.

It is not all that complicated, after all.

Two thousand years ago, someone named Jesus told us something similar. The scholars' translation from the Jesus seminar goes like this:

When you pray, go into a room by yourself and shut the door behind you. When you pray to your Father, the hidden one. And your Father, with his eye for the hidden, will applaud you. And when you pray, you should not babble on as the pagans do. They imagine that the length of their prayers will command attention. So don't imitate them.

A lot of words, any words, are not really the main point. Because, God already "knows what you need before you ask."

The early church took Jesus' suggestion and added something of their own that made the prayer more meaningful to them. When we Protestants came along a few years back, we decided to get back to basics - to drop all the sacraments except the two Jesus participated in - Baptism and Communion - and to include in our worship the prayer Jesus suggested - plus that addition from the early church.

These things were not legislated. In fact, these things went contrary to the established church. These were choices made by our ancestors in faith who wanted to make prayer and worship more meaningful to them. They wanted direct conversation with God. They wanted something less complicated and elaborate, and in their own language.

If you wonder why in other churches you will hear different versions of the Lord's Prayer - some people saying "trespasses" or "sins," some people using inclusive versions calling God "Parent" or "Creator," it is because we continue in the wonderful Protestant way to remake prayer and worship so that it is meaningful to us. We Congregationalists resent being told how to pray, how to worship. That's why our fore-families came to this country.

This is one of the reasons that I am made very nervous by our newly elected Congress when they press for legislation instituting prayer in the public schools. People, kids included, notice God in their own way, in their own time - all the time. People, including kids, are always in conversation with God -

as they notice the warmth of the sun as they ride their bikes to school in the morning...

as they are overwhelmed with relief and gratitude to learn that the math test was postponed to Tuesday...

as they run over to tell their friends something great that happened over the weekend...

as they deliberate the concerns of fellow students in the student senate...

as they daydream recklessly in the middle of history class...

as the mysterious boy who has the locker next to yours quietly shows you one of his amazing pencil drawings...

as the girl with the red hair slips you a note asking you what you thought about the Faulkner story for English class...

These are the prayers of our children and young people. To legislate a formal moment in the midst of the school environment is to separate God out from their natural and constant prayer life. It tells our kids that their own way of being in conversation with God isn't really right or good enough. It imposes an adult structure - an adult expectation - onto the natural prayers of our kids.

One seemingly benign suggestion is to legislate a moment of silence. But knowing people and, especially passionate people, silence can be manipulated as powerfully as words. The way a silence is introduced has a large influence on how that silence is experienced.

The silence I leave between sermon and pastoral prayer is as unregulated as I can make it - "Let us be together - in silence and in prayer." Not all of us use that silence for what we have been taught is formal prayer. Some of us think ahead on what we have to do today. Some of us sort out our feelings and responses to the sermon. Some of us try to remember what the sermon was about. Some of us recklessly daydream. Some of us say the Lord's Prayer like a mantra. Some of us sleep. Some of us just get our jumbled thoughts to settle down as the silence ends. I know, I've done all of those things. And sometimes I just count to make sure the silence is long enough for some and not so long that it drives others crazy. But all of these are prayers - petitions and hopes, doubts and praise.

If I were to tell you what to do with your silence a number of you would resent the heck out of it. There is too much room for that in the public schools.

Prayer is a voluntary act, as the church is a voluntary organization. School is not a voluntary organization. Kids have to attend. If school begins to regulate their conversations with God - along with the information they get about world history and mathematics - something very fragile and natural and holy will be lost.

The best way to diminish a child's desire for a relationship with God is to force one upon them. In the environment of the school, it will feel like an assignment rather than a natural awareness of the soul. It is this kind of spiritual control that drives kids to claim atheism before they have even come to a conscious awareness of God. It complicates the conversation.

Those who wrote the Constitution were trying to ensure that no government here would establish religion for the people, as it had done so controllingly in England and other European countries. The idea was a separation of the necessary enforcements of government for our common life together - and the voluntary nature of the spiritual practice of religion.

In 1963 when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that government-mandated prayer, Bible-reading and other religious exercises are inappropriate in public schools, Justice Tom Clark very carefully stated it this way - so that the court could not be accused of being anti-religious:

"The place of religion in our society is an exalted one, achieved through a long tradition of reliance on the home, the church and the inviolable citadel of the individual heart and mind. We have come to recognize through bitter experience that it is not within the power of government to invade that citadel, whether its purpose or effect be to aid or oppose, to advance or retard. In the relationship between man and religion, the state is firmly committed to a position of neutrality."

This country does not need a narrowing down of the concept of what prayer or religion or faith is. We need a broadening of mind and heart, an openness to the millions of ways that God simply and profoundly works in the world - the billions of ways people experience God, notice God, are in conversation with God - even when they are unconscious of the fact.

They say when a person is desperate to find a mate, it never happens. It is when one stops looking and focuses on making their own life and spirit and heart healthy and happy that the right relationship comes along.

They say if you want a baby too much, it never happens. It is when you give up and start adoption proceedings and relax that you get pregnant.

So too, the presence of God is never more powerful that when we are surprised by it...in the airy heartbeat of a bird or the sudden hush on the freeway. That is not to devalue the voluntary practice of worship or regular meditation and other forms of prayer. These practices - if voluntary in nature - help us in our awareness skills, keep us limber in the exercise of noticing God, remind us - when we have grown to be dull and forgetful responsible adults - that all of life is a conversation with God.

Religious and Biblical Arguments for Church-state Separation

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As a Presbyterian clergyman and a student of American history, it is my intention to discuss the American model of church-state separation from the perspective of a Christian minister. It is important to address these issues in this way because most opponents of church-state separation argue from a self-consciously Christian perspective. The overall response to these opponents should include addressing them on their own grounds. Opposing the separation of church and state is not only politically irresponsible, it's theologically irresponsible as well. My discussion will include references to the Hebrew and Christian scriptures. Such references are intended to demonstrate that being Christian does not mean being anti-separationist. They are intended to show that the separation of church and state is in no way an "un-Biblical" notion. Like all discussion of scripture, this one involves choosing particular ways of interpreting Biblical passages. The citations offered here are not meant to be proof texts, but examples of relevant scriptural themes, which bear directly on church-state issues.

Given all that, I want to suggest four reasons why separation of church and state is good for the Church and other religious institutions.

1) EXCLUSIVE RELIANCE ON VOLUNTARY SUPPORT MAKES FOR HEALTHY CHURCHES.

While traveling with a group of seminary students in England in January of 1987, I had lunch one day at Cambridge University with some fellow seminarians and an Anglican parish priest. One of the American seminary students in our group told the priest how much she envied him. After all, his church was supported by tax money. He had a beautiful and historic church building and none of the worries associated with raising enough money to keep the doors open and the lights on.

The priest was a little taken aback by her statement. He told her that he would trade places with her in a heartbeat. It was true, he said, that the established Church of England had plenty of money, and England had nice official rhetoric about being a "Christian" nation. But the Church also had empty pews and little or no stewardship commitment among its parishioners. Their attitude tended to be "I paid my taxes, why should I do more?"

The priest told us that he would much prefer serving a church under the American model, where the success of church programs and the vitality of congregations depended entirely upon the voluntary commitment of church members.

There is much in the Bible, which supports the idea that communities of faith should never ask for or accept anything other than voluntary support. In particular, the Third Commandment--"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain (Exodus 20:7, RSV)"--seems to require that Jewish and Christian congregations accept only sincere and voluntary support.

This is a commandment against giving lip service to the support of religion without making the sincere and total commitment, which God requires. Coerced support of religion--through taxation, for example--by its very nature requires people to violate this commandment. It is difficult to see how anyone who took this commandment seriously could ever sanction any government mandated religious activity.

2) RESPECT FOR, AND PROTECTION OF, MINORITIES IS A CENTRAL THEME OF THE BIBLE.

God's instruction to the people of Israel in the book of Deuteronomy includes the following words:

[The Lord] executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner therefore; for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.--Deuteronomy 10:18-19

This is a call to the chosen people of God to be especially cognizant of the rights and interests of minorities; to serve God by looking out for the people in their midst for whom no one else was looking out. It is a call based on the memory of Israel's status as a minority in Egypt. Further, it is a call, which has special relevance for Christians in light of the widespread persecution of the early church.

In terms of church-state issues, "loving the sojourner" involves going out of our way to guarantee that the adherents of minority religions and those who profess no religion at all have the same standing in society as the majority. In order to fulfill this religious obligation, members of the Judeo-Christian majority in America must steadfastly refuse to use the government to coerce the minority into supporting any religious agenda or institution.

3) THE CHURCH'S ABILITY TO EXERCISE ITS PROPHETIC OFFICE REQUIRES INDEPENDENCE FROM THE STATE.

By "prophetic office," I mean to refer to the Church's duty to evaluate and pass judgment on state actions in light of a transcendent standard--a standard beyond worldly political interests. This sort of "prophetic witness" has been an important part of the life of our nation and its religious communities throughout our history. Examples include the denunciation of slavery, opposition to racial segregation, and protests against the prosecution of the Vietnam War. To cite a contemporary example close to the hearts of many of the Religious Right, expressions by religious communities of opposition to legalized abortion are a form of prophetic witnessing as well. In each case, religious communities are, and have been, free to criticize and oppose official government policies and actions without fear of reprisal.

A church dependent upon, or excessively entangled with, the state might be less likely to speak out against state policies or be especially vulnerable to retaliation by the government.

On the other hand, church-state separation guarantees the Church's continued freedom to address and comment upon the actions and policies of the state without fear of reprisal.

As an example of the dangers of church-state entanglement and the threats such entanglement poses to religious freedom, I invite you to consider the recent controversies regarding the National Endowment for the Arts. As a result of the de facto establishment of art through the use of tax money to support the N.E.A., we have witnessed extensive, but not particularly enlightening, debate among members of Congress about what constitutes "appropriate" art. Does any sincere believer want to see similar debates about what constitutes "appropriate" religious behavior? Are any of us eager to have Jesse Helms and Newt Gingrich, Ted Kennedy and Barney Frank pass judgment on the actions of our churches?

4) ALLIANCE WITH THE STATE ALWAYS POLLUTES THE CHURCH.

In his book, Why the Religious Right is Wrong About Separation of Church and State, Rob Boston calls this argument "an amusing form of cynicism." It's nice that Rob is so easily amused--but this form of cynicism is quite well-founded.

I believe strongly that the health of the Church is best guarded by strict separation from Government--an institution famous for its inability to find hammers that cost less than $500.

History is unanimous in its testimony that alliance with the state, either official or implied, always leads to trouble for the Church. Sometimes the Church abuses the state's power by employing it to persecute minorities, as in the execution of "heretics" in sixteenth century Geneva or seventeenth century Massachusetts (not to mention first century Palestine.) Other times the state exploits alliance with the Church by claiming divine sanction for temporal, political actions; as in the action of a Union general during the Civil War who forbade a Presbyterian minister to continue to pastor his church in St. Louis because he refused to pray publicly for the success of the Union armies, or the proclamation of the established Reich Church in Germany in 1932 that "God's law for us is that we look to the preservation of race, folk, and nation."

This is the danger inherent in any form of State supported prayer in public schools. Advocates of such prayers claim that they could be general prayers, which would not offend persons of various religious backgrounds. But such "general" prayers are patently un-Biblical. They are abuses, for the sake of political ends, of the important religious activity of devout prayer. In the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew quotes Jesus as saying, "In praying, do not heap up empty phrases, as the Gentiles do. . . (Matthew 6:7.)" It is difficult to see how a coerced, ostensibly "non-sectarian" prayer could be anything other than a heap of empty phrases.

In conclusion, I recognize that many opponents of church-state separation act out of a genuine concern for the nation and a sincere belief in the efficacy of Christian faith. The temptation is great to try to save an obviously troubled society by uniting church and state for the good of all citizens. But those of us who are most committed to the Church ought to be most reluctant to sanction any such union. When faced with the temptation to try to use the state's coercive powers for our religious ends, we need always to remind ourselves that the State operates in the arena of worldly concerns, an arena of short term self-interest and capricious changes of heart. To any sincere believer who is tempted to pursue the weakening of church-state separation, to anyone who thinks that significant good can come from official state support of religion, I remind you of one other passage from the Sermon on the Mount:

Do not give dogs what is holy; and do not cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.
--Matthew 7:6

The Words That Branded Him – A Muslim Perspective

Washington Post, Sunday, December 8, 2002; Page B03

In recent months, writers and scholars in Iran, Bangladesh, Jordan, Pakistan, Nigeria and elsewhere have been jailed -- or worse, condemned to death -- for airing dissenting views.

The words of three such dissenters, Hashem Aghajari, Taslima Nasrin and Toujan Faisal, are excerpted below.

In Iran, weeks of student protests have followed the Nov. 9 death sentence handed down to Aghajari, a professor of history in Tehran, for apostasy. The charge stems from a lengthy, philosophical speech he delivered last June in which he questioned why only clergy had the right to interpret Islam. For good measure, Aghajari's sentence also includes 74 lashes of the whip, eight years in prison and a 10-year prohibition from teaching. His lawyer appealed the verdict last Monday.

From a June 19 speech by Hashem Aghajari delivered in Hamedan, Iran, on the 25th anniversary of the death of controversial Islamic scholar Ali Shariati. Translated from the Farsi.

Historic Islam is a culmination of what the spiritual thinkers [clergy] have experienced and considered through the ages and centuries past. Over time, the accumulated traditions become holy and are adorned in religious garb. At times the historical elements of these traditions and understandings become so credible that revisions become truly extraordinary events. Consider changes over the last century: Replacing traditional public baths with showers and modern water works was initially considered against the sharia [Islamic law]. Only bathing in traditional public pools was considered sufficient for meeting the Islamic cleansing requirements. Similarly, around the time of our constitutional revolution [in the early 20th century] one of the spiritual gentlemen issued an article condemning chemistry, physics and modern sciences, stating that, "Chemistry declares there is no god." Today, however, these same gentlemen do not oppose sciences, as they ride in late-model automobiles and have developed a taste for such things.

The understandings and interpretations of spiritual thinkers are irrelevant to Islam. These are *their* understandings. As they had the right to read and understand the Koran, so do we. We have the right to read the Koran and develop our own understanding. This understanding cannot be decreed to us. We separate historical Islam from essential Islam through analysis. We refer to the original text and [strive to] define the original content in today's terminology....

It is obvious that one who desires to be a Muslim in the 20th and 21st centuries is a different person from those living in Mecca and Medina of 1,400 years ago, [which had] populations similar to small villages in modern Iran. It is obvious that we have different ways and methods of understanding in all areas including economics and politics. To understand Islam today, and in every generation, one must consider himself the direct recipient of the Holy book, a recipient of God's [message] and the prophets…. We have the right to receive and interpret this message on our own and based on our own circumstances. Accepting ancient and accumulated traditions just because they are historical is regressive. It is mimicry.

For years the youth were discouraged from reading the Koran. They were told that understanding the Koran requires 101 levels of thinking not available to commoners. [Islamic scholar

Ali] Shariati, however, told his students to read the Koran themselves and to develop scientific methods for the study and scholarly interpretations. These methods can lead to deeper and better understanding of many topics. The clergy carrying tons of ancient baggage cannot compete in this arena. Therefore, students engaging in discovery and developing their own understanding are committing major crimes, as their activities may be bad for the gentlemen's business…. The whole Spiritual class would be out of work. In Islam there is no such class. The clergy and many of the titles and the hierarchy are new -- In many cases no more than 50 to 60 years since their invention… The spiritual clergy relates to historical Islam. In essential Islam, there is no such entity.

Dr. Shariati told us that in Islam, there exists a teaching relationship. An Islamic scholar does not need followers and does not consider his knowledge a means of leadership. Neither does the student worship the teacher. The relationship is an educational one. Today's student can be tomorrow's teacher. This relationship includes criticism….It is not mimicry. People are not circus monkeys to mimic without understanding. A student must comprehend and practice and strive to increase his understanding until he is independent of his teacher.

Today religion controls the government and the spiritual clergy occupies the seat of power…. The Islam we encounter is not the traditional Islam, but a fundamentalist one. In contrast, Islamic Protestantism [reformist Islam] is intellectual, practical and humane and as such is a progressive religion….

The religion we need today is one that respects human beings and values human [rights]. Compared with traditional religions, the fundamentalists are prone to harsh violations of human rights. Relying on their fundamentals, it is easy for them to declare, "Anyone who is not with us is our enemy." ….

Islamic Protestantism is an ongoing project, as we have a constant need to adapt. If our understanding and religious thinking become inflexible and spurious, we are subject to decline. As our needs and circumstances change, we must constantly critique and adjust the framework of our religious thinking.

Quotes on Religious Liberty

"Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom in Virginia," Thomas Jefferson, 1779

Well aware that the opinions and belief of men depend not on their own will, but follow involuntarily the evidence proposed to their minds; that Almighty God hath created the mind free, and manifested his supreme will that free it shall remain by making it altogether insusceptible to restraint; that all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments, or burthens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the holy author of our religion, who being lord both of body and mind, yet chose not to propagate it by coercions on either, as was in his Almighty power to do, but to extend it by its influence on reason alone; that the impious presumption of legislators and rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, who, being themselves but fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others, setting up their own opinions and modes of thinking as the only true and infallible, and as such endeavoring to impose them on others, hath established and maintained false religions over the greatest part of the world and through all time: That to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves and abhors, is sinful and tyrannical;... that our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions, any more than our opinions in physics or geometry;... that the opinions of men are not the object of civil government, nor under its jurisdiction; that to suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion and to restrain the profession or propagation of principles on supposition of their ill tendency is a dangerous fallacy [sic], which at once destroys all religious liberty... ; and finally, that truth is great and will prevail if left to herself; that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate; errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them. We the General Assembly of Virginia do enact that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burdened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge or affect their civil capacities...

(Those parts shown above in italics were, according to Edwin S. Gaustad, written by Jefferson but not included in the statute as passed by the General Assembly of Virginia. The bill became law on January 16, 1786. From Edwin S. Gaustad, ed., A Documentary History of Religion in America, Vol. I (To the Civil War), Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982, pp. 259-261.

Jefferson was prouder of having written this bill than of being the third President or of such history-making accomplishments as the Louisiana Purchase. He wrote, as his own full epitaph, "Here was buried Thomas Jefferson, Author of the Declaration of American Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, And Father of the University of Virginia.")

Words of Thomas Jefferson:

It is error alone which needs the support of government. Truth can stand by itself.

(Thomas Jefferson, Notes on Virginia, 1782; from George Seldes, ed., The Great Quotations, Secaucus, New Jersey: Citadel Press, 1983, p. 363)

Is uniformity attainable? Millions of innocent men, women, and children, since the introduction of Christianity, have been burnt, tortured, fined, imprisoned; yet we have not advanced one inch towards uniformity. What has been the effect of coercion? To make one half the world fools and the other half hypocrites. To support roguery and error all over the earth.

(Thomas Jefferson, Notes on Virginia, 1782; from George Seldes, ed., The Great Quotations, Secaucus, New Jersey: Citadel Press, 1983, p. 363.)

No man complains of his neighbor for ill management of his affairs, for an error in sowing his land, or marrying his daughter, for consuming his substance in taverns... in all these he has liberty; but if he does not frequent the church, or then conform in ceremonies, there is an immediate uproar.

(Thomas Jefferson, Notes on Virginia, 1782; from George Seldes, ed., The Great Quotations, Secaucus, New Jersey: Citadel Press, 1983, p. 364.)

... shake off all the fears of servile prejudices under which weak minds are servilely crouched. Fix reason firmly in her seat, and call to her tribunal for every fact, every opinion. Question with boldness even the existence of a god because, if there be one, he must more approve of the homage of reason than that of blindfolded fear. You will naturally examine first the religion of your own country. Read the bible then, as you would read Livy or Tacitus. The testimony of the writer weighs in their favor in one scale, and their not being against the laws of nature does not weigh against them. But those facts in the bible that contradict the laws of nature, must be examined with more care, and under a variety of faces. Here you must recur to the pretensions of the writer to inspiration from god. Examine upon what evidence his pretensions are founded, and whether that evidence is so strong as that it's [sic] falshood [sic] would be more improbable than a change of the laws of nature in the case he relates.... Do not be frightened from this enquiry by any fear of it's [sic] consequences. If it ends in a belief that there is no god, you will find incitements to virtue in the comfort and pleasantness you feel in it's [sic] exercise, and the love of others which it will procure you. If you find reason to believe there is a god, a consciousness that you are acting under his eye, and that he approves you, will be a vast additional incitement. If that there be a future state, the hope of a happy existence in that increases the appetite to deserve it; if that Jesus was also a god, you will be comforted by a belief of his aid and love. In fine, I repeat that you must lay aside all prejudice on both sides, and neither believe nor reject any thing because any other person, or description of persons have rejected or believed it. Your own reason is the only oracle given you by heaven, and you are answerable not for the rightness but uprightness of the decision...

. (Thomas Jefferson, letter to his young nephew Peter Carr, August 10, 1787. From Adrienne Koch, ed., The American Enlightenment: The Shaping of the American Experiment and a Free Society, New York: George Braziller, 1965, pp. 320-321.)

... And let us reflect that, having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little if we countenance a political intolerance as despotic, as wicked, and capable of as bitter and bloody persecutions.... error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it.... I deem the essential principles of our government ...[:] Equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political; ... freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of person under the protection of the habeas corpus, and trial by juries impartially selected.

(Thomas Jefferson, "First Inaugural Address," March 4, 1801. From Mortimer Adler, ed., The Annals of America: 1797-1820, Domestic Expansion and Foreign Entanglements, Vol. 4; Chicago: Encyclopedia Brittanica, 1968, pp. 144-145.

It behooves every man who values liberty of conscience for himself, to resist invasions of it in the case of others; or their case may, by change of circumstances, become his own.

(Thomas Jefferson, letter to Benjamin Rush, April 21, 1803. From Daniel B. Baker, ed., Political Quotations, Detroit: Gale Research, Inc., 1990, p. 189.)

Certainly, no power to prescribe any religious exercise, or to assume authority in religious discipline, has been delegated to the General Government. It must then rest with the States, as far as it can be in any human authority. But it is only proposed that I should recommend, not prescribe a day of fasting and prayer. That is, that I should indirectly assume to the United States an authority over religious exercises, which the Constitution has directly precluded them from. It must be meant, too, that this recommendation is to carry some authority, and to be sanctioned by some penalty on those who disregard it; not indeed of fine and imprisonment, but of some degree of proscription, perhaps in public opinion. And does the change in the nature of the penalty make the recommendation less a law of conduct for those to whom it is directed? I do not believe it is in the best interests of religion to invite the civil magistrate to direct its exercises, its discipline, or its doctrines; nor of the religious societies, that the General Government should be invested with the power of effecting any uniformity of time or matter among them. Fasting and prayer are religious exercises; the enjoining them an act of discipline. Every religious society has a right to determine for itself the times of these exercises, and the objects proper for them, according to their own particular tenets; and this right can never be safer than in their own hands, where the Constitution has deposited it.

(Thomas Jefferson, just before the end of his second term, in a letter to Samuel Miller--a Presbyterian minister--on January 23, 1808; from Willson Whitman, arranger, Jefferson's Letters, Eau Claire, Wisconsin: E. M. Hale and Company, ND, pp. 241-242.

The clergy, by getting themselves established by law and ingrafted into the machine of government, have been a very formidable engine against the civil and religious rights of man.

(Thomas Jefferson, as quoted by Saul K. Padover in Thomas Jefferson on Democracy, New York, 1946, p. 165, according to Albert Menendez and Edd Doerr, compilers, The Great Quotations on Religious Liberty, Long Beach, CA: Centerline Press, 1991, p. 48.)

In every country and every age, the priest has been hostile to liberty. He is always in alliance with the despot, abetting his abuses in return for protection to his own. It is easier to acquire wealth and power by this combination than by deserving them, and to effect this, they have perverted the purest religion ever preached to man into mystery and jargon, unintelligible to all mankind, and therefore the safer for their purposes.

(Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to Horatio Spofford, 1814; from George Seldes, ed., The Great Quotations, Secaucus, New Jersey: Citadel Press, 1983, p. 371)

I have ever judged of the religion of others by their lives.... It is in our lives, and not from our words, that our religion must be read. By the same test the world must judge me. But this does not satisfy the priesthood. They must have a positive, a declared assent to all their interested absurdities. My opinion is that there would never have been an infidel, if there had never been a priest. The artificial structures they have built on the purest of all moral systems, for the purpose of deriving from it pence and power, revolt those who think for themselves, and who read in that system only what is really there.

(Thomas Jefferson, letter to Mrs. M. Harrison Smith: Mrs. M. Harrison, August 6, 1816. From Gorton Carruth and Eugene Ehrlich, eds., The Harper Book of American Quotations, New York: Harper & Row, 1988, p. 492.)

... our fellow citizens, after half a century of experience and prosperity, continue to approve the choice we made. May it be to the world, what I believe it will be, (to some parts sooner, to others later, but finally to all,) the signal of arousing men to burst the chains under which monkish ignorance and superstition had persuaded them to bind themselves, and to assume the blessings and security of self-government. That form which we have substituted, restores the free right to the unbounded exercise of reason and freedom of opinion. All eyes are opened, or opening, to the rights of man. The general spread of the light of science has already laid open to every view the palpable truth, that the mass of mankind has not been born with saddles on their backs, nor a favored few booted and spurred, ready to ride them legitimately, by the grace of God. These are grounds of hope for others. For ourselves, let the annual return of this day [Fourth of July] forever refresh our recollections of these rights, and an undiminished devotion to them....

(Thomas Jefferson, letter to Roger C. Weightman, June 24, 1826 [Jefferson's last letter, dated ten days before he died]; from Adrienne Koch, ed., The American Enlightenment: The Shaping of the American Experiment and a Free Society, New York: George Braziller, 1965, p. 372.)

It was what he did not like in religion that gave impetus to Jefferson's activity in that troublesome and often bloody arena. He did not like dogmatism, obscurantism, blind obedience, or any interference with the free exercise of the mind. Moreover, he did not like the tendency of religion to confuse truth with power, special insight with special privilege, and the duty to maintain with the right to persecute the dissenter. Ecclesiastical despotism was as reprehensible as despotism of the political sort, even when it justified itself, as it often did, in the name of doing good. This had been sufficiently evident in his native Virginia to give Jefferson every stimulus he needed to see that independence must be carried over into the realm of religion.

(E. S. Gaustad, "Religion," in Merrill D. Peterson, ed., Thomas Jefferson: A Reference Biography, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1986, p. 279.)

Words of James Madison

Who does not see that the same authority which can establish Christianity in exclusion of all other religions may establish, with the same ease, any particular sect of Christians in exclusion of all other sects? That the same authority which can force a citizen to contribute three pence only of his property for the support of any one establishment may force him to conform to any other establishment in all cases whatsoever?

(James Madison, "A Memorial and Remonstrance," addressed to the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia, 1785; from George Seldes, ed., The Great Quotations, Secaucus, New Jersey: The Citadel Press, pp. 459-460. According to Edwin S. Gaustad, Faith of Our Fathers: Religion and the New Nation, San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987, pp. 39 ff., Madison's "Remonstrance" was instrumental in blocking the multiple establishment of all denominations of Christianity in Virginia.)

At age eighty-one [therefore, in 1832?], both looking back at the American experience and looking forward with vision sharpened by practical experience, Madison summed up his views of church and state relations in a letter to a "Reverend Adams": "I must admit moreover that it may not be easy, in every possible case, to trace the line of separation between the rights of religion and the Civil authority with such distinctness as to avoid collisions and doubts on unessential points. The tendency of a usurpation on one side or the other, or to a corrupting coalition or alliance between them, will be best guarded by an entire abstinence of the Government from interference in any way whatever, beyond the necessity of preserving public order, and protecting each sect against trespass on its legal rights by others."

(Robert L. Maddox, Separation of Church and State: Guarantor of Religious Freedom, New York: Crossroad, 1987, p. 39.)

Words of George Washington

As President, Washington regularly attended Christian services, and he was friendly in his attitude toward Christian values. However, he repeatedly declined the church's sacraments. Never did he take communion, and when his wife, Martha, did, he waited for her outside the sanctuary.... Even on his deathbed, Washington asked for no ritual, uttered no prayer to Christ, and expressed no wish to be attended by His representative. George Washington's practice of Christianity was limited and superficial because he was not himself a Christian. In the enlightened tradition of his day, he was a devout Deist--just as many of the clergymen who knew him suspected.

(Barry Schwartz, George Washington: The Making of an American Symbol, New York: The Free Press, 1987, pp. 174-175.)

The Words of John Adams

We think ourselves possessed, or, at least, we boast that we are so, of liberty of conscience on all subjects, and of the right of free inquiry and private judgment in all cases, and yet how far are we from these exalted privileges in fact! There exists, I believe, throughout the whole Christian world, a law which makes it

blasphemy to deny or doubt the divine inspiration of all the books of the Old and New Testaments, from Genesis to Revelations.

In most countries of Europe it is punished by fire at the stake, or the rack, or the wheel. In England itself it is punished by boring through the tongue with a red-hot poker. In America it is not better; even in our own Massachusetts, which I believe, upon the whole, is as temperate and moderate in religious zeal as most of the States, a law was made in the latter end of the last century, repealing the cruel punishments of the former laws, but substituting fine and imprisonment upon all those blasphemers upon any book of the Old Testament or New.

Now, what free inquiry, when a writer must surely encounter the risk of fine or imprisonment for adducing any argument for investigating into the divine authority of those books? Who would run the risk of translating Dupuis? But I cannot enlarge upon this subject, though I have it much at heart. I think such laws a great embarrassment, great obstructions to the improvement of the human mind. Books that cannot bear examination, certainly ought not to be established as divine inspiration by penal laws. It is true, few persons appear desirous to put such laws in execution, and it is also true that some few persons are hardy enough to venture to depart from them. But as long as they continue in force as laws, the human mind must make an awkward and clumsy progress in its investigations. I wish they were repealed. The substance and essence of Christianity, as I understand it, is eternal and unchangeable, and will bear examination forever, but it has been mixed with extraneous ingredients, which I think will not bear examination, and they ought to be separated. Adieu.

(John Adams, letter to Thomas Jefferson, January 23, 1825. Adams was 90, Jefferson 81 at the time; both died on July 4th of the following year, on the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. From Adrienne Koch, ed., The American Enlightenment: The Shaping of the American Experiment and a Free Society, New York: George Braziller, 1965, p. 234.)

Words of Other Revolutionaries

I am fully of your Opinion respecting religious Tests; but, tho' the People of Massachusetts have not in their new Constitution kept quite clear of them, yet, if we consider what that People were 100 Years ago, we must allow they have gone great Lengths in Liberality of Sentiment on religious Subjects; and we may hope for greater Degrees of Perfection, when their Constitution, some years hence, shall be revised. If Christian Preachers had continued to teach as Christ and his Apostles did, without Salaries, and as the Quakers now do, I imagine Tests would never have existed; for I think they were invented, not so much to secure Religion itself, as the Emoluments of it. When a Religion is good, I conceive it will support itself; and when it does not support itself, and God does not take care to support it so that its Professors are obliged to call for help of the Civil Power, it is a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one.

(Benjamin Franklin, 1706-1790, American statesman, diplomat, scientist, and printer, from a letter to Richard Price, October 9, 1780; from Adrienne Koch, ed., The American Enlightenment: The Shaping of the American Experiment and a Free Society, New York: George Braziller, 1965, p. 93.)

Persecution is not an original feature in any religion; but it is always the strongly-marked feature of all law-religions, or religions established by law. Take away the law-establishment, and every religion re-assumes its original benignity.

(Thomas Paine, The Rights of Man, 1791-1792. From Gorton Carruth and Eugene Ehrlich, eds., The Harper Book of American Quotations, New York: Harper & Row, 1988, pp. 499-500.)

Toleration is not the opposite of intolerance but the counterfeit of it. Both are despotisms: the one assumes to itself the right of withholding liberty of conscience, the other of granting it.

(Thomas Paine, The Rights of Man, p. 58. As quoted by John M. Swomley, Religious Liberty and the Secular State: The Constitutional Context, Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1987, p. 7. Swomley added, "Toleration is a concession; religious liberty is a right.")

Religious matters are to be separated from the jurisdiction of the state not because they are beneath the interests of the state, but, quite to the contrary, because they are too high and holy and thus are beyond the competence of the state.

(Isaac Backus, An Appeal to the Public for Religious Liberty, 1773, as quoted by Albert Menendez and Edd Doerr, compilers, The Great Quotations on Religious Liberty, Long Beach, CA: Centerline Press, 1991, p. 7.)

"Does not the core of all this difficulty lie in this," Isaac Backus--a Separatist minister turned Baptist--asked rhetorically in replying to a detractor in 1768, "that the common people [justly] claim as good a right to judge and act for themselves in matters of religion as civil rulers or the learned clergy?"

(James A. Henretta, The Evolution of American Society, 1700-1815: An Interdisciplinary Analysis, Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath and Company, 1973, p. 136.)

For the civil authority to pretend to establish particular modes of faith and forms of worship, and to punish all that deviate from the standards, which our superiors have set up, is attended with the most pernicious consequences to society. It cramps all free and rational inquiry, fills the world with hypocrites and superstitious bigots--nay, with infidels and skeptics; it exposes men of religion and conscience to the rage and malice of fiery, blind zealots, and dissolves every tender tie of human nature. And I cannot but look upon it as a peculiar blessing of Heaven that we live in a land where everyone can freely deliver his sentiments upon religious subjects, and have the privilege of worshipping God according to the dictates of his own conscience, without any molestation or disturbance--a privilege which I hope we shall ever keep up and strenuously maintain.

(Samuel West, Dartmouth, MA, Election Sermon, 1776, as quoted by Albert Menendez and Edd Doerr, compilers, The Great Quotations on Religious Liberty, Long Beach, CA: Centerline Press, 1991, p. 103.)

Is conformity of sentiments in matters of religion essential to the happiness of civil government? Not at all. Government has no more to do with the religious opinions of men than it has with the principles of the mathematics. Let every man speak freely without fear--maintain the principles that he believes--worship according to his own faith, either one God, three Gods, no God, or twenty Gods; and let government protect him in so doing, i.e., see that he meets with no personal abuse or loss of property for his religious opinions. Instead of discouraging him with proscriptions, fines, confiscation or death, let him be encouraged, as a free man, to bring forth his arguments and maintain his points with all boldness; then if his doctrine is false it will be confuted, and if it is true (though ever so novel) let others credit it. When every man has this liberty what can he wish for more? A liberal man asks for nothing more of government.

(John Leland, "The Rights of Conscience Inalienable, and Therefore Religious Opinions not Cognizable by Law" [a pamphlet], New London, Connecticut, 1791. Reprinted in Mortimer Adler, ed., 1784-1796, Organizing the New Nation: The Annals of America, Vol. 3, Chicago: Encyclopedia Brittanica, 1968, pp. 447-448. Leland was a Baptist minister who refused to support the Constitution until Madison persuaded him that the Constitution would not undermine religious liberty.)

If we glance back at our early history, the reasons for placing religious freedom in the First Amendment may become clearer. The quest for that freedom was one of the motives for emigration to America, but not just for those who wanted to be free to practice their own faith. A surprising majority of colonial Americans were not part of any religious community. Even in New England, research shows, not more than one person in seven was a church member. It was one in fifteen in the middle colonies and fewer still in the South, according to the historian Richard Hofstadter.

(Milton Meltzer, The Bill of Rights: How We Got It and What It Means, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1990, p. 71.)

Is it not strange that the descendants of those Pilgrim Fathers who crossed the Atlantic to preserve their own freedom of opinion have always proved themselves intolerant of the spiritual liberty of others?

(Robert E. Lee, 1807-1870, Confederate general, letter to his wife, December 27, 1856. From Gorton Carruth and Eugene Ehrlich, eds., The Harper Book of American Quotations, New York: Harper & Row, 1988, p. 498.)

In response to criticisms of Providence's policy of religious tolerance, [Roger] Williams issued in 1644 (forty-five years before Locke's Letter Concerning Toleration) his classic defense of religious liberty, The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience Discussed. "God," Williams forthrightly maintained, "requireth not an uniformity of Religion." The civil power, he argued, is incapable of touching the inner life of the spirit, which is the paramount concern of religion. "The civil sword," he wrote, "may make a nation of hypocrites and anti-Christians, but not one true Christian." If the church accepts establishment by the state, it puts itself in the position of "appealing to darkness to judge light, to unrighteousness to judge righteousness, the spiritually blind to judge and end the controversy concerning heavenly colors." The argument that a non-Christian state cannot effectively carry out its secular functions is simply false. Statecraft, like seacraft, is a practical skill, unrelated to religious faith. "A pagan or anti-Christian pilot may be as skillful to carry the ship to its desired port as any Christian mariner or pilot in the world, and may perform that work with as much safety and speed."

(A. James Reichley, Religion in American Public Life, Washington: Brookings Institution, 1985, p. 66.)

I must profess while heaven and earth last, that no one tenent that either London, England, or the world doth harbor is so heretical, blasphemous, seditious, and dangerous to the corporal, to the spiritual, to the present, to the eternal good of all men as the bloody tenent ... of persecution for cause of conscience.

(Roger Williams, 1603?-1683, founder of Rhode Island, as quoted by Edwin S. Gaustad, Faith of Our Fathers: Religion and the New Nation, San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987, p. 23.)

It is the will and command of God that ... a permission of the paganish, Jewish, Turkish [Muslim], or anti-Christian consciences

The government has leverage on religious groups because of the tax-exemption privilege. Church leaders, eager for the church to be free to be the church, should ask for the removal of this privilege. If there were no tax privilege for religious groups, hucksters and people who are using religion as a cover for political movements would be discouraged.

(William Stringfellow, lawyer and lay theologian, as quoted in the Dallas Times Herald, December 9, 1978, p. A-27, according to Alan F. Pater and Jason R. Pater, compilers and editors, What They Said in 1978: The Yearbook of Spoken Opinion, Beverly Hills, CA: Monitor Book Co., 1979, p. 447.)

Voluntary, individual, silent prayer has never been banned or discouraged in the public schools. The Supreme Court has banned state-sponsored religious services. Those who advocate prayer services in the public schools do not want voluntary prayer. They want the government to be officially involved in promoting and sponsoring prayer services so as to put pressure on children to engage in public prayer. They apparently do not care whether parents want their children to engage in public prayer or be indoctrinated with sectarian religious ideas. The object is to provide a captive classroom audience that will be exposed to the prayers of those with a religious message, which they deliver in the form of a prayer.

(John M. Swomley, Religious Liberty and the Secular State: The Constitutional Context, Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1987, p. 128.)

And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father, which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. (Jesus, as reported in Matthew 6:5-6.)

It is a fundamental human right, a privilege of nature, that every man should worship according to his own convictions.

(Tertullian, 160?-230?, Carthaginian church father, Ad Scapulam, 202 C.E., according to Albert Menendez and Edd Doerr, compilers, The Great Quotations on Religious Liberty, Long Beach, CA: Centerline Press, 1991, p. 94.)

... It is accordingly on this battlefield [religious belief], almost solely, that the rights of the individual against society have been asserted on broad grounds of principle, and the claim of society to exercise authority over dissentients openly controverted. The great writers to whom the world owes what religious liberty it possesses, have mostly asserted freedom of conscience as an indefeasible right, and denied absolutely that a human being is accountable to others for his religious belief. Yet so natural to mankind is intolerance in whatever they really care about, that religious freedom has hardly anywhere been practically realized, except where religious indifference, which dislikes to have its peace disturbed by theological quarrels, has added its weight to the scale. In the minds of almost all religious persons, even in the most tolerant countries, the duty of toleration is admitted with tacit reserves. One person will bear with dissent in matters of church government, but not of dogma; another can tolerate everybody, short of a Papist or an Unitarian; another, every one who believes in revealed religion; a few extend their charity a little further, but stop at the belief in a God and in a future state. Wherever the sentiment of the majority is still genuine and intense, it is found to have abated little of its claim to be obeyed.

(John Stuart Mill, 1806-1873, and Harriet Taylor Mill, ?-1858, "Chapter I: Introductory," On Liberty, 1859; reprinted in Currin V. Shields, ed., On Liberty, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1956, p. 11.)

The Supreme Court Materials

Words of the Supreme Court

Christianity is not established by law, and the genius of our institutions requires that the Church and the State should be kept separate....The state confesses its incompetency to judge spiritual matters between men or between man and his maker ... spiritual matters are exclusively in the hands of teachers of religion.

(U. S. Supreme Court, Melvin v. Easley, 1860, as quoted by Samuel Rabinove, "Church and State Must Remain Separate," in Julie S. Bach, ed., Civil Liberties: Opposing Viewpoints, St. Paul: Greenhaven Press, 1988, p. 53.)

The law knows no heresy, and is committed to the support of no dogma, the establishment of no sect.

(U. S. Supreme Court, Watson v. Jones, 1872, as quoted by John M. Swomley, Religious Liberty and the Secular State: The Constitutional Context, Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1987, p. 7.)

[Chief Justice Morrison Waite, in Reynolds vs. U.S., a Supreme Court decision in 1878] cited Madison's Memorial and Remonstrance of 1785, in which, said Waite, "he demonstrated 'that religion, or the duty we owe the Creator,' was not within the cognizance of civil government." This was followed, said Waite, by passage of the Virginia statute "for establishing religious freedom," written by Jefferson, which proclaimed complete liberty of opinion and allowed no interference by government until ill tendencies "break out into overt acts against peace and good order." Finally, the Chief Justice cited Jefferson's letter of 1802 to the Danbury Baptist association, describing the First Amendment as "building a wall of separation between church and state." Coming as this does, said Waite, "from an acknowledged leader of the advocates of the measure, it may be accepted almost as an authoritative declaration of the scope and effect of the amendment thus secured."

(Irving Brant, The Bill of Rights: Its Origin and Meaning, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1965, p. 407.)

Congress was deprived [by the First Amendment] of all legislative power over mere opinion, but was left free to reach actions which were in violation of social duties or subversive of good order.

(Chief Justice Morrison Waite, Reynolds vs. U.S.,1878, as quoted by Robert S. Alley, ed., The Supreme Court on Church and State, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 353.)

... the First Amendment of the Constitution ... was intended to allow everyone under the jurisdiction of the United States to entertain such notions respecting his relations to his maker, and the duties they impose, as may be approved by his conscience, and to exhibit his sentiments in such form of worship as he may think proper, not injurious to the rights of others, and to prohibit legislation for the support of any religious tenets, or the modes of worship of any sect.

(U. S. Supreme Court, 1890, Darwin v. Beason, as quoted by Samuel Rabinove, "Religious Liberty and Church-State Separation: Why Should We Care?," speech on April 10, 1986, Vital Speeches of the Day, June 15, 1986, p. 528.

If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion, or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein. If there are any circumstances which permit an exception, they do not now occur to us.

(Justice Robert H. Jackson, U. S. Supreme Court, West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette, 1943. From Robert L. Maddox, Separation of Church and State: Guarantor of Religious Freedom, New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1987, p. 115.)

Supreme Court Justice Rutledge stated in 1947 that the First Amendment was not designed merely to prohibit governmental imposition of a religion; it was designed to create "a complete and permanent separation of the spheres of religious activity and civil authority...."

(Martha M. McCarthy, A Delicate Balance: Church, State, and the Schools, Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappan Educational Foundation, 1983, p. 11.)

The "establishment of religion" clause of the First Amendment means at least this: Neither a state nor the Federal Government can set up a church. Neither can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over another. Neither can force nor influence a person to go to or remain away from church against his will or force him to profess a belief or disbelief in any religion. No person can be punished for entertaining or professing religious beliefs or disbeliefs, for church attendance or non-attendance. No tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion. Neither a state nor the Federal Government, can openly or secretly, participate in the affairs of any religious organization or groups and vice versa. In the words of Jefferson, the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect "a wall of separation between church and State."

(Justice Hugo Black, U. S. Supreme Court, Everson v. Board of Education, 1947. Quoted by John M. Swomley, Jr., Religion, The State, & The Schools, New York: Pegasus, 1968, pp. 21-22.)

The First Amendment has erected a wall between church and state. That wall must be kept high and impregnable. We could not approve the slightest breach.

(Justice Hugo Black, U. S. Supreme Court, Everson v. Board of Education, 1947. From Samuel Rabinove, "Church and State Must Remain Separate," in Julie S. Bach, ed., Civil Liberties: Opposing Viewpoints, St. Paul: Greenhaven Press, 1988, p. 53.)

In efforts to force loyalty to whatever religious group happened to be on top and in league with the government of a particular time and place, men and women had been fined, cast in jail, cruelly tortured, and killed. Among the offenses for which these punishments had been inflicted were such things as speaking disrespectfully of the views of ministers of government-established churches, nonattendance at those churches, expressions of nonbelief in their doctrines, and failure to pay taxes and tithes to support them.

(Justice Hugo Black, U. S. Supreme Court, Everson v. Board of Education, 1947, as quoted by Robert S. Alley, The Supreme Court on Church and State, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988, pp. 41-42, according to Victoria Sherrow, Separation of Church and State, New York: Franklin Watts, 1992, pp. 15-16.)

As the momentum for popular education increased and in turn evoked strong claims for state support of religious education, contests not unlike that which in Virginia had produced Madison's Remonstrance appeared in various forms in other states. New York and Massachusetts provide famous chapters in the history that established dissociation of religious teaching from state-maintained schools. In New York, the rise of the common schools led, despite fierce sectarian opposition, to the barring of tax funds to church schools, and later to any school in which sectarian doctrine was taught. In Massachusetts, largely through the efforts of Horace Mann, all sectarian teachings were barred from the common school to save it from being rent by denominational conflict. The upshot of these controversies, often long and fierce, is fairly summarized by saying that long before the Fourteenth Amendment subjected the states to new limitations, the prohibition of furtherance by the state of religious instruction became the guiding principle, in law and in feeling, of the American people....

(Justice Felix Frankfurter, U. S. Supreme Court, in McCollum v. Board of Education, the 1948 decision that forbid public schools in Illinois from commingling sectarian and secular instruction; as quoted by Paul Blanshard, ed., Classics of Free Thought, Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books, 1977, pp. 61-62.)

The nonsectarian or secular public school was the means of reconciling freedom in general with religious freedom. The sharp confinement of the public schools to secular education was a recognition of the need of a democratic society to educate its children, insofar as the state undertook to do so, in an atmosphere free from pressures in a realm in which pressures are most resisted and where bitterly engendered. Designed to serve as perhaps the most powerful agency for promoting cohesion among a heterogeneous democratic people, the public school must keep scrupulously free from entanglement in the strife of sects. The preservation of the community from division conflicts, of government from irreconcilable pressures by religious groups, of religion from censorship and coercion however subtly exercised, requires strict confinement of the state to instruction other than religious, leaving to the individual's church and home, indoctrination in the faith of his choice.... The extent to which this principle was deemed a presupposition of our Constitutional system is strikingly illustrated by the fact that every state admitted into the Union since 1876 was compelled by Congress to write into its constitution a requirement that it maintain a school system "free from sectarian control." ...

(Justice Felix Frankfurter, U. S. Supreme Court, in McCollum v. Board of Education, the 1948 decision that forbid public schools in Illinois from commingling sectarian and secular instruction; as quoted by Paul Blanshard, ed., Classics of Free Thought, Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books, 1977, pp. 62-63.)

We find that the basic Constitutional principle of absolute separation was violated when the State of Illinois, speaking through its Supreme Court, sustained the school authorities of Champaign in sponsoring and effectively furthering religious

beliefs by its educational arrangement. Separation means separation, not something less. Jefferson's metaphor in describing the relation between church and state speaks of a "wall of separation," not of a fine line easily overstepped. The public school is at once the symbol of our democracy and the most pervasive means for promoting our common destiny. In no activity of the state is it more vital to keep out divisive forces than in its schools, to avoid confusing, not to say fusing, what the Constitution sought to keep strictly apart. "The great American principle of eternal separation"--Elihu Root's phrase bears repetition--is one of the vital reliances of our Constitutional system for assuring unities among our people stronger than our diversities. It is the Court's duty to enforce this principle in its full integrity. We renew our conviction that "we have staked the very existence of our country on the faith that complete separation between the state and religion is best for the state and best for religion."

(Justice Felix Frankfurter, U. S. Supreme Court, in McCollum v. Board of Education, the 1948 decision that forbid public schools in Illinois from commingling sectarian and secular instruction; as quoted by Paul Blanshard, ed., Classics of Free Thought, Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books, 1977, p. 64.)

The day that this country ceases to be free for irreligion, it will cease to be free for religion--except for the sect that can win political power.

(Justice Robert H. Jackson, dissenting opinion, U. S. Supreme Court, Zorach v. Clausor, April 7, 1952. From Daniel B. Baker, ed., Political Quotations, Detroit: Gale Research, Inc., 1990, p. 190.)

We repeat and again reaffirm that neither a state nor the federal government can constitutionally force a person "to profess a belief or disbelief in any religion." Neither can constitutionally pass laws nor impose requirements which aid all religions as against non-believers, and neither can aid those religions based on a belief in the existence of a God as against those religions founded on different beliefs.

(Justice Hugo Black, U. S. Supreme Court, in Torcaso v. Watkins, the 1961 decision that Torcaso could not be required by Maryland to declare a belief in God before being sworn in as a notary public; as quoted by Paul Blanshard, ed., Classics of Free Thought, Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books, 1977, p. 10.)

The [U. S. Supreme] Court also has noted that the "first and most immediate purpose" of the establishment clause rests "on the belief that a union of government and religion tends to destroy government and degrade religion."

(Martha M. McCarthy, A Delicate Balance: Church, State, and the Schools, Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappan Educational Foundation, 1983, p. 170. According to McCarthy, the quote is from Engel v. Vitale, 370 U.S. 421, 431 [1962].)

It is a matter of history that this very practice of establishing governmentally composed prayers for religious services was one of the reasons which caused many of our early colonists to leave England and seek religious freedom in America. ... By the time of the adoption of the Constitution, our history shows that there was widespread awareness among many Americans of the dangers of a union of Church and State. These people knew, some of them from bitter personal experience, that one of the greatest dangers to the freedom of the individual to worship in his own way lay in the Government's placing its official stamp of approval upon one particular kind of prayer or one particular form of religious service.... The First Amendment was added to the Constitution to stand as a guarantee that neither the power nor the prestige of the Federal Government would be used to control, support or influence the kinds of prayer the American people can say--that the people's religions must not be subjected to the pressures of government for change each time a new political administration is elected to office.

(Justice Hugo Black, U. S. Supreme Court, in Engel v. Vitale, 1962 decision on school prayer, as quoted by Alan Barth, "The Roots of Limited Government," The Rights of Free Men: An Essential Guide to Civil Liberties, ed. James Clayton, New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1984, p. 123.)

These men [the authors on the Constitution and First Amendment] knew that the First Amendment, which tried to put an end to government control of religion and prayer, was not written to destroy either. They knew rather that it was written to quiet well-justified fears which nearly all of them felt arising out of an awareness that governments of the past had shackled men's tongues to make them speak and to pray only to the God that government wanted them to pray to. It is neither sacrilegious nor antireligious to say that each separate government in this country should stay out of the business of writing or sanctioning official prayers and leave that purely religious function to the people themselves and to those the people choose to look to for religious guidance.

(Justice Hugo Black, in Engel v. Vitale, U. S. Supreme Court 1962 decision on school prayer, as quoted by Alan Barth, "In Behalf of Religion," The Rights of Free Men: An Essential Guide to Civil Liberties, ed. James Clayton, New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1984, p. 128.)

First, this Court has decisively settled that the First Amendment's mandate that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof" has been made wholly applicable to the States by the Fourteenth Amendment.... Second, this Court has rejected unequivocally the contention that the Establishment Clause forbids only governmental preference of one religion over another.

(Justice Tom C. Clark, majority opinion, U. S. Supreme Court, School District of Abington Township v. Schempp, 374 U.S. 203 (1963), as quoted in Robert S. Alley, ed., The Supreme Court on Church and State, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988, pp. 210-211.)

Finally, we cannot accept that the concept of neutrality, which does not permit a State to require a religious exercise even with the consent of the majority of those affected, collides with the majority's right to free exercise of religion. While the Free Exercise Clause clearly prohibits the use of state action to deny the rights of free exercise to anyone, it has never meant that a majority could use the machinery of the State to practice its beliefs. Such a contention was effectively answered by Mr. Justice Jackson for the Court in West Virginia Board of Education v. Barnette: "The very purpose of a Bill of Rights was to withdraw certain subjects from the vicissitudes of political controversy, to place them beyond the reach of majorities and officials and to establish them as legal principles to be applied by the courts. One's right to ... freedom of worship ... and other fundamental rights may not be submitted to vote; they depend on the outcome of no elections."

(Justice Tom C. Clark, majority opinion, U. S. Supreme Court, School District of Abington Township v. Schempp, 374 U.S. 203 (1963), as quoted in Robert S. Alley, ed., The Supreme Court on Church and State, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988, pp. 210-211.)

The place of religion in our society is an exalted one, achieved through a long tradition of reliance on the home, the church and the inviolable citadel of the individual heart and mind. We have come to recognize through bitter experience that it is not within the power of government to invade that citadel, whether its purpose or effect be to aid or to oppose, to advance or retard. In the relationship between man and religion, the state is firmly committed to a position of neutrality.

(Justice Tom C. Clark, majority opinion, U. S. Supreme Court, June 17, 1963, as quoted by Alan Barth, April 21, 1968, "Permission to Pray," The Rights of Free Men: An Essential Guide to Civil Liberties, ed. James Clayton, New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1984, pp. 130-131.)

... the problem to be considered and solved when the First Amendment was proposed was not one of hazy or comparative insignificance, but was one of blunt and stark reality, which had perplexed and plagued the nations of Western civilization for some 14 centuries, and during that long period, the union of Church and State in the government of man had produced neither peace on earth, nor good will to man.

(Justice Prescott of the Maryland high court, Horace Mann League of the United States v. Board of Public Works, 220 A.2d 51, 60 (Md. 1966), as quoted by Martha M. McCarthy, A Delicate Balance: Church, State, and the Schools, Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappan Educational Foundation, 1983, p. 1.)

Government in our democracy, state and national, must be neutral in matters of religious theory, doctrine and practice. It may not be hostile to any religion or to the advocacy of nonreligion; and it may not aid, foster, or promote one religion or religious theory against another or even against the militant opposite. The First Amendment mandates governmental neutrality between religion and religion, and between religion and nonreligion.

(U. S. Supreme Court, Epperson v. Arkansas, 393 U.S. 97, 103 [1968], as quoted by Martha M. McCarthy, A Delicate Balance: Church, State, and the Schools, Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappan Educational Foundation, 1983, p. 173.)

A certain momentum develops in constitutional theory and it can be a "downhill thrust" easily set in motion but difficult to retard or stop.... The dangers are increased by the difficulty of perceiving in advance exactly where the "verge" of the precipice lies. As well as constituting an independent evil against which the Religion Clauses were intended to protect, involvement or entanglement between government and religion serves as a warning signal.

(Chief Justice Warren Burger, U. S. Supreme Court, Lemon v. Kurtzman, 403 U.S. 602, 624-25 [1971], as quoted by Martha M. McCarthy, A Delicate Balance: Church, State, and the Schools, Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappan Educational Foundation, 1983, p. 175.)

The government must pursue a course of complete neutrality toward religion.

(John Paul Stevens, majority opinion, U. S. Supreme Court, Wallace v. Jaffree, June 4, 1985. From Daniel B. Baker, ed., Political Quotations, Detroit: Gale Research, Inc., 1990, p. 191.)

Protecting religious freedoms may be more important in the late twentieth century than it was when the Bill of Rights was ratified. We live in a pluralistic society, with people of widely divergent religious backgrounds or with none at all. Government cannot endorse beliefs of one group without sending a clear message to non-adherents that they are outsiders.

(Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, in a speech to a Philadelphia conference on religion in public life, May 1991, according to Tom Flynn, "The Supreme Court Battle: Preserving Civil Liberties in the Era of a Hostile Judiciary," Free Inquiry, Fall 1991, Vol. 11, No. 4, p. 4.)

Religious beliefs and religious expression are too precious to be either proscribed or prescribed by the state.

(Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, according to Mark S. Hoffman, editor, "Notable Quotes in 1992," The World Almanac and Book of Facts 1993, New York: Pharos Books, 1992, p. 32.)

An Overall View Of Religious Liberty As Defined By U.S. Supreme Court Cases

Last modified July 22, 2002

Establishment Clause: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion ..."

The Establishment Clause has generally come to mean that government cannot authorize a church, cannot pass laws that aid or favor one religion over another, cannot pass laws that favor religious belief over non belief, cannot force a person to profess a belief. In short, government must be neutral toward religion and cannot be entangled with any religion.

Religion in public schools

Minersville v. Gobitis, 310 U.S. 586 (1940) - Supreme Court rules that a public school may require students to salute the flag and pledge allegiance even if it violates their religious scruples.

West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette, 319 U.S. 624 (1943) - Court overturns *Gobitis* but is broader in its scope. No one can be forced to salute the flag or say the pledge of allegiance if it violates the individual conscience.

McCollum v. Board of Education, 333 U.S. 203 (1948) - Court finds religious instruction in public schools a violation of the establishment clause and therefore unconstitutional.

Zorach v. Clausen, 343 U.S. 306 (1952) - Court finds that release time from public school classes for religious instruction does not violate the establishment clause.

Engel v. Vitale, 370 U.S. 421 (1962) - Court finds school prayer unconstitutional.

Abington School District v. Schempp, 374 U.S. 203 (1963) - Court finds Bible reading over school intercom unconstitutional **and** *Murray v. Curlett,* 374 U.S. 203 (1963) - Court finds forcing a child to participate in Bible reading and prayer unconstitutional.

Epperson v. Arkansas, 393 U.S. 97 (1968) - Court says the state cannot ban the teaching of evolution.

Stone v. Graham, 449 U.S. 39 (1980) - Court finds posting of the Ten Commandments in schools unconstitutional.

Wallace v. Jaffree, 472 U.S. 38 (1985) - Court finds state law enforcing a moment of silence in schools had a religious purpose and is therefore unconstitutional.

Edwards v. Aguillard, 482 U.S. 578 (1987) - Court finds state law requiring equal treatment for creationism has a religious purpose and is therefore unconstitutional.

Board of Education v. Mergens, 496 U.S. 226 (1990) - The court rules that the Equal Access Act does not violate the First Amendment. Public schools that receive federal funds and maintain a "limited open forum" on school grounds after school hours cannot deny "equal access" to student groups based upon "religious, political, philosophical, or other content."

Lee v. Weisman, 112 SCt. 2649 (1992) - Court finds prayer at public school graduation ceremonies violates the establishment clause and is therefore unconstitutional.

Lamb's Chapel et al. v. Center Moriches Union Free School District, 508 U.S. 384 (1993) - Court says that school districts cannot deny churches access to school premises after-hours, if the district allowed the use of its building to other groups.

Kiryas Joel Village School District v. Grumet, (1994) - Court states that the New York State Legislature cannot create a separate school district for a religious community.

Santa Fe Independent School District v. Doe, (2000) - Court rules that student-led prayers at public school football games violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment.

Good News Club v. Milford Central School, (2001) - Court rules that Milford Central School cannot keep Good News Club from using its facilities because the school had created a limited public forum and prohibiing the religious club was viewpoint discrimination.

Religion in state colleges or universities

Widmar v. Vincent, 454 U.S. 263 (1981) - Court rules that a state university cannot refuse to grant a student religious group "equal access" to facilities that are open to other student groups.

Rosenberger v. Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia, 515 U.S. 817 (1995) - Court finds student activity funds can be used to fund a Christian perspective student magazine called "Wide Awake."

Support for religious schools

Pierce v. Society of Sisters, 268 U.S. 510 (1925) - Court invalidates an Oregon law that required all children between the ages of eight and 16 to attend public schools. A Roman Catholic orphanage and military academcy brought suit. The court said the Oregon law interfered with parents right to oversee and guide their children's education.

Everson v. Board of Education, 330 U.S. 1 (1947) - Court says that state reimbursement for bus fares to attend religious schools is constitutional.

Board of Education v. Allen, 392 U.S. 236 (1968) - Court says that the state's lending of textbooks to private and religious schools is constitutional.

Lemon v. Kurtzman, 403 U.S. 602 (1971) - Court finds state supplements to the salary of Catholic school teachers to be unconstitutional.

Tilton v. Richardson, 403 U.S. 671 (1971) - Court finds that federal funding to private, religious, and public colleges in order to build classrooms is constitutional.

Committee v. Nyquist, 413 U.S. 756 (1973) and in *Sloan v. Lemon,* 413 U.S. 825 (1973) - Court rules that states cannot reimburse parents for sending their children to religious schools.

Meek v. Pittenger, 421 U.S. 349 (1975) - Court rules that states can lend textbooks to religious schools but no other materials.

Roemer v. Board of Public Works, 426 U.S. 736 (1976) - Court rules that states can provide grants to private and religious colleges.

Committee for Public Education v. Regan, 444 U.S. 646 (1980) - Court rules that states can reimburse religious schools for the cost of giving standardized tests.

Mueller v. Allen, 463 U.S. 388 (1983) - Court rules that taxpayers can deduct tuition, textbooks, and transportation expenses from state income taxes that were incurred by attending private and religious schools.

Aguilar v. Felton, 473 U.S. 402 (1985) - Court rules that sending public school teachers to religious schools to provide remedial education and counseling is unconstitutional.

Zobrest et al. v. Catalina Foothills School District, 509 U.S. 1 (1993) - Court rules that the school district does not violate the

Establishment Clause by furnishing a sign-interpreter to a deaf child in a sectarian school.

Kiryas Joel Village School District v. Grumet, 512 U.S. 687 (1994) - Court rules that a school district carved out for religious reasons and financed by public funds violates the Establishment Clause.

Agostini v. Felton, 117 S.Ct. 1997, 138 L.Ed.2d 391 (1997) - Court overturns *Aguilar* and says that public school teachers providing supplemental, remedial instruction to disadvantaged students in religious schools does not violate the Establishment Clause.

Mitchell v. Helms, (2000) - High court rules that Chapter 2 of the Education and Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981 does not violate the Establishment Clause when it provides educational equipment to religious schools with taxpayer money.

Zelman v. Simmons-Harris, (2002) - A 5-to-4 court, in an opinion written by Chief Justice William Rehnquist, upheld Ohio's voucher program that gives tax dollars to parents in Cleveland to send their children to religious or non-religious schools. It is the first time the court has upheld a voucher system.

Religious Tests to Hold Public Office

Torcaso v. Watkins, 367 U.S. 488 (1961) - Court holds that the state of Maryland can not require applicants for public office to swear that they believed in the existence of God. The court unanimously rules that a religious test violates the Establishment Clause.

Prayer in Legislatures

Marsh v. Chambers, 463 U.S. 783 (1983) - Court rules that prayers said in state legislatures do not violate the Establishment Clause.

Nativity Displays

Lynch v. Donnelly, 465 U.S. 668 (1984) - Court rules that a government owned nativity scene displayed on private land did not endorse a religion and therefore did not violate the Establishment Clause.

Allegheny County v. ACLU, 492 U.S. 573 (1989) - Court finds that a nativity scene displayed inside a government building violates the Establishment Clause.

Religion in the workplace

Sherbert v. Verner, 374 U.S. 398 (1963) - Court rules that the violation of the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment demands a strict scrutiny. Adell Sherbert, a Seventh-day Adventist, was fired from her job because she refused to work on her Sabbath, Saturday. She was denied unemployment benefits from the state. The high court said that the State of South Carolina could only burden Sherbert's free exercise of her religion if it had a compelling interest in doing so. South Carolina could not meet the test. Sherbert received her unemployment benefits.

Employment Division v. Smith,* 494 U.S. 872 (1990) overruled *Sherbert v. Verner' compelling interest test.

Free Exercise Clause:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof ..."

The Free Exercise Clause has generally come to mean that one may believe anything, but that religious actions and rituals can be limited by laws that are passed for compelling government reasons. A law passed that is aimed at a particular religion or religions in general have been considered unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court. Laws must be neutral in regard to religions.

When Religious Acts Break the Law

Reynolds v. United States, 98 U.S. 145 (1878) - Court finds that the federal law prohibiting polygamy, which was challenged by a Mormon defendant, to be constitutional. Polygamy was outlawed.

United States v. Ballard, 322 U.S. 78 (1944) - Court rules that religious teachings could not be prosecuted for fraud. The beliefs of one person may seem preposterous to another, but religious liberty demands the "widest toleration of conflicting views."

Wisconsin v. Yoder, 406 U.S. 205 (1972) - Court decides that the Amish do not have to follow state law which required that children attend school until the age of 16. The Amish stop their children's formal education at 8th grade.

Employment Division v. Smith, 494 U.S. 872 (1990) - Court rules that the Free Exercise Clause cannot exempt one from drug laws. The two defendants were members of the Native American Church and had ingested peyote, a hallucinogenic drug. The high court states a new rule: no religious actions may violate general laws, but laws aimed specifically at religions or a particular religious practice will be held unconstitutional.

Church of Lukumi Babalu Aye v. Hialeah, 508 U.S. 520 (1993) - Court finds ordinances passed by the city of Hialeah, Florida, to stop members of the Santeria religion from sacrificing animals in their religious ceremonies were aimed directly at the church and are therefore unconstitutional. While sacrificing animals was outlawed, slaughtering them was not - so meat packing plants could continue to operate, or hunters continue to dress their kill.

Congress passes the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in October 1993. It restores the traditional reading of the Free Exercise Clause: the government must show a compelling interest to justify any substantial restriction on religion.

The **Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993** states in part:

Free Exercise of Religion is Protected

(a) IN GENERAL - Government shall not substantially burden a person's exercise of religion even if the burden results from a rule of general applicability, except as provided in subsection

(b) EXCEPTION - Government may substantially burden a person's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person -

(1) is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest; and

(2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling interest.

(c) JUDICIAL RELIEF - A person whose religious exercise has been burdened in violation of this section may assert that violation as a claim or defense in a judicial proceeding and obtain appropriate relief against a government. Standing to assert a claim or defense under this section shall be governed by the general rules of standing under article III of the Constitution.

A challenge to the constitutionality of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act was heard by the U.S. Supreme Court on Feb. 19, 1997.

The case pits the City of Boerne, Texas' historic district law against St. Peter's Catholic Church which wants to rebuild and expand a part of its church so that it can accommodate its large membership *(City of Boerne, Texas v. P.F. Flores, Archbishop of San Antonio)*

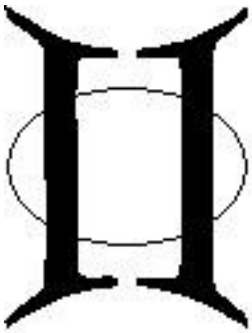
Boerne city fathers refused to permit the building. Church leaders brought suit under RFRA, saying the law infringes on religious exercise.

The federal trial judge ruled RFRA unconstitutional. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed. Both sides asked the U.S. Supreme Court to review the decision.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled RFRA unconstitutional as applied to the states on June 25, 1997. The case is *City of Boerne, Texas v. P.F. Flores, Archbishop of San Antonio.*

So Ends Volume Five

of the Green Books.



Green Book Of Meditations Volume 6

The Books of Songs and Poetry of the RDNA

2003 Introduction

Well, after noticing how many songs and poems were accumulating in various files for this edition, I thought it best to try and combine all of them into one easy to refer collection. Vol Zero is from Pt. 7 of ARDA 1, which is a collection from the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) and Vol. 1 & 2 were from Pt. 9 of ARDA, and were from the last years of my Archdruidcy at Carleton. Vol. 3 is a compilation of songs that were popular in the Carleton Grove's folksinging society "Pickin N Grinnin" in the mid 1990s. Vol 4 has songs from the Live Oak Grove's publication "Druid Missalany" in the 80s. Vol. 5 are some songs from the late 90s. Vol. 6 & 7 are from the internet Bardic contests run by RDNAtalk@yahoogroups.com that I moderated. Vol. 8 is a shorty story by Irony, written in the Kingdom of Tonga during a Peace Corps deployment.

Enjoy them.

Mike Scharding
Feb 24th, 2003
Embassy of Japan

Drynemetum Press

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The Book of Songs and Poetry Volume Zero 1976 The Book of Bards

Formerly Miscellany in DC(E,)

Part 7 in ARDA

2003 Introduction

I moved this book from Part 7, in order to better consolidate all the scattered poetry in the new edition of ARDA.

-Mike Scharding
Feb 1, 2003
Embassy of Japan, D.C.

1996 Introduction

Of all the selections in the Miscellany, this is the one that has been added to the most by the Druid Chronicler magazine. Many of these selections were designed to be inserted into liturgies, and most were unknown to (or unused by) most Carleton Druids until 1986. Some of the songs, to the say the least, are anti-Christian in the sense that they call for revenge for the "Burning Times" of the Inquisition and Witch Hunts. I once found these songs disturbing, but I've grown to find an admirable fire of resistance in these songs. Others will say they fortify the singers in face of persecution.

Michael Scharding
St. Cloud, MN
April 6, 1996

Publishing History

1976 1st Printing, Druid Chronicles (Evolved)
1996 2nd Printing, ARDA
2003 3rd Printing, ARDA 2

Processional Hymn

(Customs 2:1-3)
Words by Kathie Courtice
Music by Peter Basquin

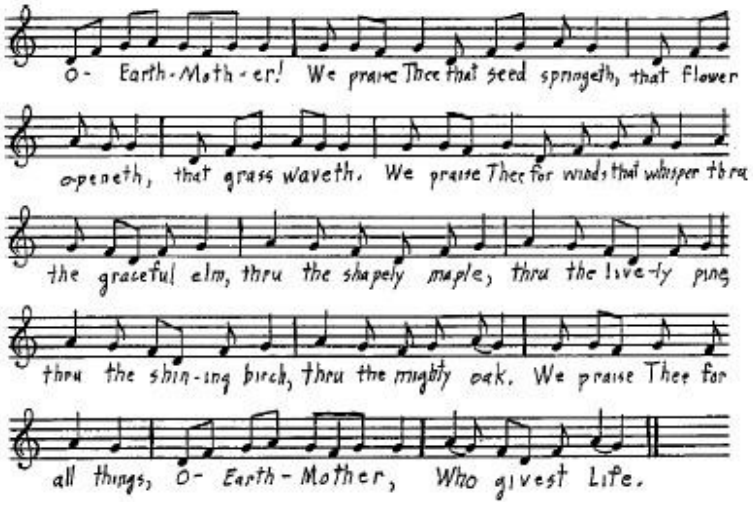
O Earth-Mother
We praise thee that seed springeth,
that flower openeth,
that grass waveth.
We praise thee for winds that whisper
through the graceful elm,
through the shapely maple,
through the lively pine,
through the shining birch,
through the mighty oak.
We praise thee for all things,
O Earth-Mother, who givest life.

The words of the Chant were written by Kathie Courtice, now married to Peter Basquin, who wrote the music (to be found in The Book of Bards.) It was regularly sung as a part of the Services of Worship, usually as the Processional Chant. A note on the Hymn to the Earthmother at the start of the collection. Here is a letter that may be of interest to Druid musicians:

"At the time, I wanted to express through the notation as well as through the rhythm and melody the kinship that would bear to the musical systems of earlier peoples. True, a single line notation was not even invented until the last thousand year or so, but it seemed somehow more fitting than the modern staff and clef.

"At all events, I enclose here the melody as it would read in modern notation, albeit chant-notation. The rhythmic values are to be read as in modern notation generally, but with a somewhat flexible flow, as in most chant. The bar-lines represent pauses ends of phrases, breath marks of shorter or longer length according to the time and the inspiration of the group singing.

"The melody is a four-note chant, akin to the Medieval hypomixolydian mode (8th mode.) The note is written on the line "g" in the modern notation) is the recitation tone of the chant (the "tonic.") The step below it should certainly not be raised to the leading tone, on the contrary, it would be better sung slightly flatter than the modern notation suggest, so the two lower notes stand nearly in ratio of 6 to 7 in the overtone series. You may be interested to know that the author of the poem is now my wife. The Earth Mother has blessed us with a very happy and compassionate marriage. She would prefer to be credited with her then (maiden) name, Kathie Courtice, and I, simply as Peter Basquin."



Now Do We With Songs and Rejoicing

(A Processional Hymn)
Words by David T. Geller (NRDNA)
Sung to the traditional tune of:
"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

Now do we with songs and rejoicing,
Come before the Mother to stand.
She has given forth of Her bounty
And with blessings in Her hand,
In the fields She walks
And in the woods She walks;
Our full homage to command.

At Her voice the wild wind is silent
And the fox lies down with the hare.
Every living creature before Her
Sings Her praises to declare:
Thanks to Thee for all,
O thanks to Thee for All,
Thanks to Thee, O Lady most fair!

The Lady's Bransle

(Pronounced "brall")
Words by Hope
Sung to the traditional tune of: "Nonesuch" (short version) and reprinted by permission from "Songs for the Old Religion"
(Copyright 1973)

O She will bring the buds in the Spring
And laugh among the flowers.
In Summer heat are Her kisses sweet;
She sings in leafy bowers.
She cuts the cane and gathers the grain,
When fruits of Fall surround Her.
Her bones grow old in Wintery cold;
She wraps Her cloak around Her.
But She will bring the buds in...
(repeat freely)

The Host is Riding

(Poem by Yeats)

The host is riding from Knocknarea
And over the grave of Clooth-na-bare;
Caolte tossing his burning hair,
And Niamh calling, "Away, come away:
Empty your heart of its mortal dream
The winds awaken, the leaves whirl round,
Our cheeks are pale, our hair is unbound,
Our breasts are heaving, our eyes are agleam,
Our arms are waving, our lips are apart,
And if any gaze on our rushing band,
We come between him and the deed of his hand,
We come between him and the hope of his heart."
The host is rushing 'twixt night and day;
And where is there hope or deed as fair?
Caolte tossing his burning hair,
And Niamh calling, "Away, come away."

Oimelc Hymn

(for use during Communion)
Words by Robert Larson (NRDNA)

The days are short,
the heavens dark
the Mother sleeps.
The trees are bare
the north wind stalks
the Mother sleeps.
The nights are long
and full of fright,
the Mother sleeps.
But the ewe gives birth,
the ewe gives milk
the Mother stirs.
The Mother smiles
with dreams of life
She will return.
And on that day
will we rejoice
when She returns.
Long the day,
bright the sky,
when She returns.
Green the trees,
soft the breeze,
when She returns.
Short the night,
our fires alight,
when She returns!

(extra verses may be added by each Grove)

The Rune of Hospitality

(A Medieval Charm)

I saw a stranger yestere'e'n.
I put food in the eating-place,
Drink in the drinking-place,
Music in the listening-place.
And in the blessed names
Of the Holy Ones,
He blest myself and my house,
My cattle and my dear ones.
And the lark sang in her song:
Often, often, often,
Go the Gods in the guise of strangers.
Often, often, often,
Go the Gods in the guise of strangers.

Will Ye No Come Back Again?

Words by Isaac Bonewits
Sung to the traditional tune of:
"Bonny Charlie's Now Awa"

1
In exile live our Olden Gods,
Banished o'er the foaming main,
To lands no mortal ever trods.
Will They e'er come back again?

Chorus
Will Ye no come back again?
Better love Ye canna be.
Will Ye no come back again?

2
Hills They walked were all Their own,
Blest the land, from sea to sea;
Till the clergy, with pious moan,
Banished all the noble Shee!

3
Sweet the chanting of the Druids,
Lilting wildly up the glen,
Pouring out the sacred fluids,
As they sing Your songs again!

4
Many a gallant Pagan fought,
Many a gallant Witch did burn;
Priest and Priestess, both have sought,
To sing the prayers Ye canna spurn!

5
Now with eagle and with dove,
Sing we here our heartfelt plea:
Come with thunder or with love,
But come! Good Gods, we so need Thee!!

May Their Devil Take the Preachers

Words by Chwerthin
Sung to the traditional tune of:
"God Bless England" (the Irish version)

1
We'll sing you a tale of wrath and woe-
Wack-for-the-diddle,diddle-di-do-day,
For the men who laid our freedom low-
Wack-for-the-diddle, diddle-di-do-day.
May fear and famine be their share,
Who've kept our land in want and care.
May their Devil take the preachers
Is our prayer!

Chorus:
Wack-for-the-diddle, diddle-di-do-day.
Hip hooray! So we say!
Come and listen while we pray!
Wack-for-the-diddle, diddle-di-do-day.

2
Now when we were Pagan, fierce and free-
Wack-for-...
The Preachers went on a bloody spree-
Wack-for-...
Harshly raised us in their slime,
And kept our hands from Heathen Crime;
And sent us early to their Heaven
Time after time!
Wack-for-...

3
Now our parents oft were naughty folk-
Wack-for-...
For swords and spears can sometimes poke-
Wack-for-...
At New Grange and at Tara Hill,
We made the preachers cry their fill.

But, O the Saints! they "love" us still!
Wack-for-...

4
Now Pagans all, forget the past-
Wack-for-...
And think of the day that's coming fast-
Wack-for-...
When we shall be Paganized,
With guns and armor motorized!
Oh WON'T the preachers be surprised!!
Wack-for-...

Hymn to Hurry the Return of Spring

(A poem by Mary Siegle)

Greet the Goddess with bells and drum,
Greet the God with laughter.
This is the night the dawn begins
The day to follow after.

Gather the old, the dead from the trees,
Carry it in your arms.
Bring it into the deep, deep woods,
Away from the towns and the farms.

Build you a living fire tonight-
Pile the branches high.
And know that in the fire's glow,
There's warmth to light the sky.

There's an old man cries the town tonight;
Down wide streets and narrow;
"Bring out, bring out, what you don't need,
and toss it in my barrow."

"Throw out your chairs, your attic stairs,
Throw out the butter churn.
Whatever's there; what you can spare,
As long as it will burn."

"Bring out your sister's gramophone,
We'll throw it on the fire;
And from your grandma's double bed
Build Winter's funeral pyre."

Slip away to the woods tonight;
Be children of the Moon.
And rejoice that Spring has come at last;
That Spring has come so soon.

You who complain of Winter's cold
And shiver in the snow,
Push back the shroud from the Mother's breast-
See promised green below.

All skeptics that the Spring returns,
All doubters that the fire still burns,
Stand in the circle for tonight,
And feel the heat and see the light,

The greet the God with reverence-
Pour libations on the earth.
This is the night the Mother proves
Life's natural end is birth.

Midsummer: The Turning of the Year

(A Poem by Mary Siegle)

My Father's strong today.
The Earth awaits his dawn.
Our Mother slowly turns in her dreaming sleep
And, waking, finds him there to share her bed.

My Mother slowly turns,
And, in turning toward her lover,
Gives a day of playfulness and ease.

And all the stirrings in the womb shall cease-
The ripening of the grain and labor in the fields shall pause.
The singing of the birds:
The peep; the scratching from the egg-
The grasses steady pushing from the earth-
All will stop for one full day.
The fullest of our year
And meant for naught but love.

But if the God comes shining,
And the sun beats down
And Earth opens wide to receive her Lord,
If this day lasts so long,
Why can't it go on?

Why does the Mother turn now
Not toward, but from;
And turn more quickly every day from this?

Sisters, look how your own lover comes
To lie down with you and love
And love again.
He asks a pulsebeat's pause,
A moment yet of time
for strength
To begin again
And spend the day.

Thanksgiving Grace

(A Poem by Mary Siegle)

Oh Goddess, giver of the grain-
Your rich rewarding of the rain-
Our Father the Sun looked down and blest
The fruits of your sweet Mother breast.
The harvest done and to this end.
We sit to meal with a cherished friend.
And thanks be to the plants and the beast-
For the offering of this bountiful feast.
Our Father Who art in Heaven,
We give to you one day in seven;
And then to acknowledge Your Loving care,
We give to you one day a year.
Amen.

The Falling Asleep of the Mother of God

(A Poem by Mary Siegle for August 15th)

For the children, so that they will know what feast it is today, and how the ancient festival time came to be given to the virgin.

She fell asleep today.
The Mother of God-
She who wept so-
Madre Dolorosa!
She fell asleep today.
And the angels came.
They bore her up on a breath of wind.
A sky-blue cloak
Of air against air against air-
To heaven the fairies bore her up.
She who wept so-
On this day she was taken up.

Mother don't weep today.
See, we'll take this festival for you.
See, this feast is yours.
Our Lady of the Harvest,
The first fruits are yours.

The 13 Days of Samhain

Words by the Berkeley Grove
Sung to the traditional tune

On the first day of Samhain,
the cailleach sent to me:
a lios in County Tipperary.

On the second day of Samhain,
the cailleach sent to me:
two water-horses
and a lios in County Tipperary.

Three Mor-Rioghna
Four Pooks
Five Silver branches
Six pipers piping
Seven harpers harping
Eight hunters riding
Nine Sidhe a-sighing
Ten Druids scrying
Eleven washer-women
Twelve mortals dying
Thirteen beansidhes crying.

The Woad Song

Authorship unknown
(But obviously English!)
Sung to the traditional tune
of "Men of Harlech"

What's the use of wearing braces,
Hat and spats and shoes with laces,
Coats and vests you find in places
Down on Brompton Road?
What the use of shirts of cotton,
Studs that always get forgotten?
These affairs are simply rotten-
Better far is woad.

Woad's the stuff to show men-
Woad to scare your foeman!
Boil it to a brilliant blue
And rub it on your chest and your abdomen!
Men of Britain never hit on
Anything as good as woad to fit on
Neck or knee or where you sit on
Tailors, you be blowed!

Romans came across the Channel,
All dressed up in tin and flannel.
Half a pint of woad per man'll
Clothe us more than these.
Saxons, you may save your stitches,
Building beds for bugs in britches;
We have woad to clothe us, which is
Not a nest for fleas!

Romans, keep your armors;
Saxons, your pajamas.
Hairy coats were made for goats,
Gorillas, yaks, retriever dogs and llamas!
March on Snowdon with your woad on-
Never mind if you get rained or snowed on-
Never need a button sewed on...
All you need is woad!!

The Gods of the West

Words by Chwerthin
Sung to the traditional tune of
"The Men of the West"

1
When you honor in song and in story
The Gods of our old Pagan kin,
Whose blessings did cover with glory
Full many a mountain and glen;
Forget not the Gods of our ancestors,
Who'll rally our bravest and best,
When Ireland is Christian and bleeding,
And looks for its hope to the West.

Chorus:
So here's to the Gods of our ancestors,
Who'll rally our bravest and best,
When Ireland is Christian and bleeding-
Hurrah! for the Gods of the West.

2
Oh the Shee hills with glory will shine then,
On the eve of our bright Freedom Day;
When the Gods we've been wearily waiting,
Sail back from the Land of the Fey!
And over Ireland rise the Druids,
Awakening in every breast,
A fire that can never be quenched, friends,
Among the true Gaels of the West.

3
Dublin will be ours 'ere the midnight,
And high over ever town,
Our Heathen prayers then will be floating
Before the next sun has gone down.
We'll gather, to speed the good work, our friends,
The Heathen from near and afar,
And history will watch us expel ALL

The preachers with feathers and tar!

4
So pledge us the Old Gods of Ireland,
The Dagda and Lugh and Danu;
Whose Return, with the trumpet of battle,
Will bring hope to Their children anew!
As the Old Gods have brought to Their feasting halls,
From many a mountain and hill,
The Pagans who fell, so They're here, friends,
To lead us to victory still!

5
Though all the bright beauty we cherished,
Went down 'neath the churches and woe,
The Spirits of Old still are with us,
Who NEVER have bent to the foe!
And the Old Gods are ready whenever
The loud rolling tuck of the drum
Rings out to awaken the Heathen,
And tell us our morning has come!

The Mystery

(A different version of Customs 10:1-3)

I am a wind on the sea,
I am a wave of the ocean,
I am the roar of the sea,
I am a hawk on a cliff,
I am a dewdrop in the sunshine,
I am a boar for valour,
I am a salmon in pools,
I am a lake in a plain,
I am the strength of art,
I am a spear with spoils that wages battle,
I am a man that shapes fire for a head.

Who clears the stone-place of the mountain?
What the place in which the setting sun lies?
Who has sought peace without fear seven times?
Who names the waterfalls?
Who brings his cattle from the house of Tethra?
What person, what God,
Forms weapons into a fort?
In a fort that nourishes satirists,
Chants a petition, divides the Ogham letters,
Separates a fleet, has sung praises?
A wise satirist.

Pagans Are We

Words by Chwerthin
Sung to the traditional tune of:
"Soldiers are We"

Pagans are we,
Whose lives are pledged
To this our land.
Some have come
From the Land Beyond the Wave.
Sworn to the Shee,
No more our ancient Heathen land
Shall shelter the preacher or the slave.
Tonight we guard the fairy-hill,
In the Old Gods' cause,
Come woe or weal.
Mid Pukka's howl
And banshee's wail,
We'll chant a Pagan song!

Be Pagan Once Again!

Words by Isaac Bonewits
Sung to the traditional tune of:
"A Nation Once Again"

1
When Childhood's fire was in my blood,
I dreamed of ancient freemen,
Against the Church who boldly stood
As Pagans and as free kin.
And then I prayed I yet might see
The Druids in the glen;
And Ireland, long the churches' toy,
Be Pagan once again!
Be Pagan once again.
Be Pagan once again.
And Ireland, long the churches' toy,
Be Pagan once again!

2
The Old Gods only sleep, you know,
Although betrayed and slandered.
They guarded us from every woe,
And blest each crop and fine herd.
Then Patrick, he drove the snakes away,
And brought the churches in-
'Twas a bloody poor bargain, I would say.
Be Pagan once again!
Be Pagan once again.
Be Pagan once again.
'Twas a bloody poor bargain, I would say-
Be Pagan once again!

3
And ever since that wretched day,
When first Ireland went Christian,
We've suffered woe in every way,
With Freedom made the Great Sin.
They set us at each other's throats,
To murder kith and kin.
Too long we've been their starving goats-
Be Pagan once again!
Be Pagan once again.
Be Pagan once again.
Too long we've been their starving goats-
Be Pagan once again!

4
Both Catholic and Protestant
Led us round by our noses;
Distracting from the deadly scent
Of England's blooming roses!
Hang EVERY preacher from a tree-
Burn out their golden dens.
It's the only way we'll ever be free-
Be Pagan once again!
Be Pagan once again.
Be Pagan once again.
It's the ONLY way we'll EVER be free!
Be Pagan once again!!!
Erinn go Bree!

A Celebration of Summer

(A Medieval Welsh Poem, suitable for Samhain)
taken, with one modification ("Peter" to "Pwyll")
from Medieval Welsh Lyrics.

Summer, parent of impulse,
Begetter of close-knit bough,
Warden, lord of wooded slopes,
Tower to all, hills' tiller,
You're the cauldron, wondrous tale,
Of Annwn, life's renewal,
It's you, you are, source of singing,
The home of each springing shoot,
Balm of growth, burgeoning throng,
And chrism of crossing branches.

Your hand, by the Lord we love,
Know how to make trees flourish.
Essence of Earth's four corners,
By your grace wondrously grow
Birds and the fair land's harvest
And the swarms that soar aloft,
Moorland meadows' bright-tipped hay,
Strong flocks and wild bees swarming.
You foster, highways' prophet,
Earth's burden, green-laden garths.
You make my bower blossom,
Building a fine web of leaves.
And wretched is it always
Near August, by night or day,
Knowing by the slow dwindling,
Golden store, that you must go.

Tell me, summer, this does harm,
I have the art to ask you,
What region, what countryside,
What land you seek, by Pwyll.
"Hush, bard of praise, your smooth song,
Hush, strong boast so enchanting.
My fate it is, might feat,
As a prince," sang the sunshine,
"To come three months to nourish
Foodstuff for the multitude;
And when roof and growing leaves
Whither, and woven branches,
To Shun the winds of winter
Deep down to Annwyn I go."

The blessings of the world's bards
And their good words go with you.
Farewell, king of good weather,
Farewell, our ruler and lord,
Farewell, the fledgling cuckoos,
Farewell, balmy banks in June,
Farewell, sun high above us
And the broad sky, round white ball.
You'll not be, king of legions,
So high, crest of drifting clouds,
Till come, fair hills unhidden,
Summer once more and sweet slopes.

The Lord of the Dance

Modification by Isaac Bonewits of original words by Aidan Kelley
to common tune of "Tis a Gift to be Simple," more or less.....

1
When She danced on the waters
and the wind was Her horn,
The Lady laughed and everything was born.
And when She lit the Sun
And the light gave Him birth,
The Lord of the Dance then
Appeared on the Earth!

Chorus
"Dance, dance, wherever you may be,
for I am the Lord of the Dance," said He.
"I live in you, if you live in Me,
and I lead you all in the dance so free!"

2
I dance in the circle
when the flames leap up high.
I dance in fire and
I never, never die.
I dance in the waves
on the bright summer sea,
For I am the Lord
of the waves' Mystery!

3
I sleep in the kernel
and I dance in the rain.
I dance in the wind and
through the waving grain.
And when you cut me down
I care nothing for the pain-
In the spring I'm the Lord
of the Dance once again!

4
I dance at your meetings
when you dance out the spell.
I dance and sing that
everyone be well.
And when the dancing's over
do not think I am gone;
To live is to dance-
so I dance on and on!

I Fell In Love With the Lady

words by Chwerthin
Sung to "The Lady Came from Baltimore"
by Tim Hardin

1
Her people came from off the moor,
Live outside the law.
Didn't care about rich or poor,
Just the souls they saw.

Chorus:
I was sent to kill Her people,
For the Inquisition.
But I fell in love with the Lady,
I came away with none.
I fell in love with the Lady,

And came away with none.

2
I crept into the woods one night,
To spy upon their dance.
I saw a happy, holy sight;
And fell into a trance.

3
The Lady that I saw that night,
She wore a robe of blue,
And on Her head, a crown of stars-
She stood upon the Moon!

4
I joined into the dancing then,
And when the Grand Rite came,
The Lady reached out with Her hand-
She Called me by my name!

5
The Jesuits are after me;
They know I've changed my side.
But they can search from sea to sea-
I know where I can hide!

Final Chorus:
I was sent to kill Her people,
For the Inquisition.
But I'm going back to the Lady,
They'll come away with none.
I'm going back to the Lady-
They'll come away with none!

She Was Here

Words by Isaac Bonewits

1
She was here before their Christ,
And before their Satan too.
And She'll be here when both their Gods
Are dead and dust, 'tis true, 'tis true;
Are dead and dust, 'tis true.

2
The Goddess... the Goddess...
Spirit of life and of love!
The Goddess... the Goddess....
Ruler below and Ruler above!

3
Oh the Goddess Whom we worship,
Is our Holy Mother Earth.
We worship Her with love and joy,
With gladness and with mirth!

4
Call Her Isis, call Her Nuit,
Call Her Venus or Diane,
Matier Sotier, Mother Savior,
Goddess of all sea and land!

Repeat 1

5
Queen of Heaven, Queen of Hell,
Mother of all Gods, and kin!
We worship Her in beds and bowers,
Though some might call it "sin."

Repeat 2

6
Man and woman, bodies merging,
Thrusting, loving, prayers saying;
Hark my friends, when Pagans love-
We tell you we are praying!

Repeat 1, 2, 3

The Rising of the Druid Moon

Words by Robert Pennell & Isaac Bonewits
Sung to the traditional tune of:
"The Rising of the Moon"

1
"O now tell me, Taliesin,
Tell me why you hurry so?"
"Hush, good Druid, hush and listen!"
and his eyes were all aglow.
"I bear news from the Archdruid,
get you ready quick and soon-
The Heathen must be together,
by the rising of the moon!"
By the rising of the moon,
by the rising of the moon.
The Heathen must be together,
by the rising of the moon!

2
"Oh then tell me, Taliesin,
where the gathering is to be?"
"At the oak grove by the river,
quite well known to you and me.
One more word, for signal token,
whistle out the Dagda's tune,
With your sickle on your shoulder,
by the rising of the moon!"
By the rising of the moon,
by the rising of the moon.
With your sickle on your shoulder
by the rising of the moon!

3
Out of many a magic circle,
cones were rising through the night.
Many an oaken grove was throbbing
with that blessed Druid light.
And the Heathen sang across the land,
to the Banshee's fatal tune.
And a thousand spells were chanted,
by the rising of the moon!
By the rising of the moon,
by the rising of the moon.
And a thousand spells were chanted,
by the rising of the moon!

4
Throughout that pulsing Pagan night,
the Little people swarmed.
High above the chanting Druids soon,
a wrathful Goddess formed.
Death to every foe and traitor!
Pagans carve the fatal rune!
Cast all our spells together now-
'tis the rising of the moon!
Tis the rising of the moon,
'tis the rising of the moon.
Cast all our spells together now-
'tis the rising of the moon!

5
The Goddess headed for the East,
across the sea's bright foam.
What glorious havoc She did wreck
in London and in Rome!
And the Archdruid he spoke to us,
upon the following noon:
"I think we got our point across,
at the rising of the moon!
At the rising of the moon,
at the rising of the moon.
I think we got our point across,
at the rising of the moon!

Scharding's Note:

I suspect that the author of many songs in this collection, Chwerthin, was a member of Hasidic Druids of North America, or perhaps of the NRDNA.

A Book of Songs and Poetry Volume One 1993 Mike's Poetry

1993 Introduction

Compiled by Michael Scharding and Sine Ceolbhinn

This book is a collection of songs, chants and poems that I have heard used or composed that may be deemed suitable to Druidic usage (or maybe not...) It is in no way an exclusive or exhaustive collection. Feel free to add or delete to its contents with songs or poetry of your favorite writers or historical sources. Even better, include some of your own compositions.

As with the Dead Lake Scrolls, this volume was originally printed with amusing fonts, pictures and musical notation. This book was an attempt to capture all the poems and chants in use during my college days and to preserve some of my Bardic explorations. I don't think many other people read it.

The song notation (only in printed copies) that I've included is the best that my meager skills could provide. There are tonal inflections that sometimes cannot be conveyed in script. Use the music as a guide, not as a taskmaster. Many are in strange modal forms of the key of C, my favorite singing key (but perhaps not yours)

Mike Scharding
Day 81 of Samradh
Year XXXI of the Reform
(July 21st, 1993 c.e.)

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1st Printing 1993
2nd Printing 1996 (in ARDA, Pt 9)
3rd Printing 2003 (in ARDA 2, Pt 6 Green Book Vol. 6)

Samhain Procession Hymn

By Michael Nov. 1, 1992

Thanks to the Earth for giving us birth.
Thanks to the Sky, both wet and dry.
Thanks to all creatures in between,
Those that have bodies, and those unseen.

We of the oak groves here first arose,
Praisin' you in song, thirty years long.
Now comes the winter's cold, harsh test,
When Sun and Earth are at their rest.

The Triples Song

By Michael

I see the Moon and the Moon sees me
Phases of the Goddess, numbered three:
Maiden, Mother, Cro-ne
Maiden, Mother, Crone.

I see the Sun and the Sun sees me
Phases of the Sun God, numbered three:
The dawn, no-on and du-sk
The dawn, no-on and dusk.

Moon Chant

By Michael
(a round to the tune of "Rose, Rose")

Moon, Moon, Moon, Moon
Will you shed your light on us?
I will shed my light on you
As – I - rise.

The Caring Song

(Source Unknown)

The Earth is our Mother
We must take care of her
The Earth is our Mother
We must take care of her.

Other verses:
The Sky is our Father...
The Animals are our pals...
The Plants are our friends...
All people are our race...

We All Come From the Goddess

From Circle
We all come from the Goddess,
And to her we shall return
Like a drop of ra-ain
Flowing to the ocean.

We all come from the God,
And to him we shall return
Like a tongue of fla-ame
Rising to the heavens.

This is My Song

By Michael 6/22/93

The blue sky above me
The green earth below
The love of the spirits
Where ever I go.

Chorus:
So this is my song
And this is my call
To love the Earth-Mother
And to love Be'al

We play in his forest,
We dance in her fields,
Eating their bounty
They joyfully yield.

To be a Druid
Is to be Aware
That all paths are one,
Wherever we fare.

Fur and Feathers

Fur and Feather and Scales and Skin
Different without but the same within
Many the bodies but one in soul
Through all creatures are the gods made whole.

Hymn to the Russian Earth

If the people lived their lives
As if it were a song for singing out of light
Provides the music for the stars
To be dancing circles in the night.

Circle Chant

Circle
We are a circle,
We are one, we are one.

Song of the Earth-Mother

O Earth-Mother!
We praise thee that seed springeth,
That flower openeth,
That grass waveth.
We praise thee for winds that whisper
Thru the graceful elm,
Thru the shapely maple,
Thru the lively pine,
Thru the shining birch,
Thru the mighty oak.
We praise thee for all things,
O Earth Mother, Who givest life.

Eagle Chant

Fly like the Eagle
Fly so high
Circle round the universe
On wings of light

Dawning Chant

He is the sun god!
He is the one god!
Ra! Ra! Ra! Ra! Ra!

Morning Prayer

By Michael

I thank you for the morning with the sun shining bright.
I thank you for last evening with the stars in the night.
I thank you for tomorrow, may their days be without end.
I thank you most of all for being my dear, close friend.

I thank you for my ancestors, the people of my past.
I thank you for my kith and kin, may their love for me last.
I thank for my children, may their numbers be without end.
I thank you most of all for being my dear, close friend.

Circles Song

Gwen Zak Moore (& Anne Cass)

In days gone by, when the earth was much younger
Men wondered at spring, born of winter's cold knife
Wondering at the games of the moon and the sunlight
They saw there the Lady and the Lord of all life.

Chorus
And around, & around, & around turns the good earth.
All things must change as the Seasons go by.
We are the children of the Lord and the Lady,
Whose mysteries we know, but will never know why.

In all lands the people were tied with the good earth
Sowing and reaping as the seasons declared,
Waiting to reap of the rich, golden harvest,
Knowing her laugh in the joys that they shared.

Through Flanders and Wales and the green lands of Ireland
In Kingdoms of England and Scotland and Spain
Circles grew up all along the wild coastlines,
To work for the weather with the sun and the rain.

Circles for healing and working the weather.
Circles for thanking the moon and the sun.
Circles for thanking the Lord and the Lady.
Circles for dancing the dance never done.

And we who reach for the stars in the heavens,
Turning our eyes from the meadows and groves
Still live in the love of the Lord and the Lady:
The greater the circle the more the love grows.

Verse DDGA/DDGD/DAGD/DAGD
Chorus DAGD/DAGD/DAGD/DAGD

Oimelc Song For Brigit

Sam and I wrote a song this Sunday for the Oimelc ritual. We had to work with some major imagery. We had to incorporate a song with new-born lambs, rising sap in trees and Brigit. Brigit is the Celtic goddess of fire, blacksmithing and poetry. She was christianized as St. Brigit. We're sure we had her rolling on the ground in mirth at our pathetic attempt at a song. Music: The Ash Grove
Lyrics: Feb. 1st, 1992 Michael Scharding and Samuel Adams

The Hammers are pounding, The new sound is sounding,
The forge is resounding with promise of spring.
The Good Earth is forming, the new leaves are forming,
The birds are performing, the songs that they bring.

The New lambs are grazing, your song we are raising,
Again we are praising you, now as before.
Now Brigit enlighten me, strengthen and righten me,
Sharpen and brighten me, now evermore.

Oimelc Silly Song of Brigit

Now there are some poor verses worth reminding ourselves with. Writing is a learning process, and many ideas pop up. The only way to get rid of them is to work out the silly verses:

The Hammers are beating, the sheep they are bleating,
It's soon we'll be eating, I brought my own fork.
The Good Earth is warming, the sheep they are swarming,
We bards are performing, but not very well.

The new leaves are budding, the pagans are rutting,
We'll all go streak Nutting, and wave Hi to Skeech.
Sam forded the river, its cold made him shiver,
We don't like the winter, please take it away.

Oh gods we admire, we can't start this fire,
It's raising our ire, Damn!, why won't it start?
Now Brigit enlighten me, please do not frighten me,
Or throw lightnin at me or blast me to bits.

The Thirteen Fold Mystery

Source:Ancient

I am the wind that blows upon the sea.
I am the wave upon the ocean.
I am the murmur of the willows.
I am the ox of the seven combats.
I am the vulture on the rocks.
I am a beam of the sun.
I am the fairest of plants.
I am a boar in wild valor.
I am a salmon in the water.
I am a lake in the plain.
I am a word of knowledge.
I am the point of the lance of battle.
I am the God who created in the head, the fire

Who is it who casts light upon the meeting on the mountain?
Who announces the ages of the moon?
Who teaches where couches the sun?
-If not I?

Chant to the Earthmother

By Norman Nelson '65 RDNA

O Earth-mother, we praise thee.

In all that we do we praise thee: In our getting up and in our lying down, in our sleeping and in our waking; in our eating and in our drinking: in our working and in our times of leisure; for we are alive only through thee and in our every act too we praise thee.

O Earth Mother we praise thee.

In all that we see do we praise thee: in the sky and the sea, the hills and the plains; in the clouds and the stars, the moon and the sun; in the birds and the flowers, the butterflies and the myriad-colored fishes.

We praise thee with our admiration of the sunset and of the mountains, of the trees and of the streams. For thou hast made all things, and for all we see do we praise thee.

O Earth Mother we praise thee.

In all that we hear and smell and feel and taste do we praise thee: in the song of birds and the roar of the sea; in the perfumes of flowers and freshness of a summer rain; in the softness of a kitten and the coolness of a lake; in the sweetness of honey and the savor of fruits; for all that we hear and smell and feel and taste is of thee, and for all sensible do we praise thee.

O Earth Mother we praise thee.

For all that we love do we praise thee: for the love of our parents, and for the love of others; for the act and emotion of love is an act and emotion of praise, and in loving do we praise thee.

O Earth Mother we praise thee.

In our meditations and services do we praise and think upon thy works and power.

O Earth Mother we praise thee.

In all the whole world do we praise thee, from the east to the west do we praise thee and from the nadir to the zenith do we praise thee.

We praise thee in the day, and in the night, in all seasons of the year, and in the myriad of years.

We praise thee knowing and unknowing, believing and of little faith, for thou hast made all and art all, and we can praise and admire nothing without praising and admiring thee.

O Earth Mother we praise thee.

The Old Bard

April 9th, 1992 by Michael Scharding

How good it would be to be an old bard,
Back in the times when living was hard.
I'd sit near the top of the table that's long
And fill hungry minds with the meats of my song.

I'd pass their hours thru the longest winter.
I'd take them away when the wind was bitter
To the land of fruit and youth and pleasure
Where none can die, and all have treasure.

I'd sing of tragedy, the deaths of lovers,
Who cried in this world, and laughed in the Other.
I'd praise the chieftain, whose valor and might
Would bring us to vict'ry in all of our fights.

I'd tell of the Sidhe (SHEE,) whose palaces shine
Within the hills since the start of time.
I'd tell of the strength and the powers of oak,
And the things that lurk under night's blue cloak.

I'd sing of our gods: Dagda and his harp,
Ogmos of the tongue, Angus of the heart,
Lugh of the crafts, Cuchulain the strong,
Nuada silver hand, Briccriu who did wrong.

I'd play for the Clann the three Bardic airs:
The songs that free those weighed down with cares,
The songs of tears that brings them to weep,
The lullaby that calms and soothes them to sleep.

I'd be the link that binds and gathers
The youngest bairns to the oldest fathers.
But I well know that this life cannot be
While I'm still here on this side of the sea.

The Desert

By Michael 10/5/91

Is it better to travel in the night or day?
At night, the way is cool...but confusing.
At day, the sun guides...but grinds you.
Is it better to be lost than to suffer?

Night's Things

By Michael Scharding 5/1/90 (My first Adult poem)

a supple tree by the lake shore
swaying and calming
servant to the whims of the wind

a moist-eyed deer on the forest's edge
sensing and searching
for the new place to call home

a green grassy field and Night 's cloak
rolling and tossing
like bed sheets of a sleeper

a bare-foot man sits on a knoll
thinking and listening
to the moon's whispering shadows

the speckled stone in the stream bed
hard'ning and eroding,
shaped by the sure passage of time.

Night's Things Revisited

By Michael Scharding 5/1/92

a supple tree by the lake shore,
swaying and calming
to the whims of the Night's breeze.

a moist-eyed deer on the wood's edge,
sensing and searching
for the new place to call home.

a green grassy field in Night's dark,
rolling and tossing
like bed sheets on a sleeper

a young bard sits on a tall knoll,
thinking and list'ning
to the moon's whisp'ring shadows

a stone in the unlit stream's depth,
wearing and smoothing
under the whetstone of time.

The Four

By Michael Scharding May 27th, 1992

I listen to the music of my harp
As fingers twist to a will of their own.
I feel the pulsing of my living heart
Measure the poems by its thunderous drone.

In the warm groves, I talk with the Good Folk,
My toes rooted firmly in Mother Earth.
How subtle the changes Time will invoke,
Earth is ever-ready for a new birth.

I splash the water, rile it with my toes,
But it always falls into shape again.
Angry, rough seas pounding upon the coasts
Their strident message is that of Earth's pain.

The desert air flickers with flames of heat
And I look out upon the scorched lands.
Could I survive long if I were set free?
Or would I die and burn upon the sands?

The Dead Ghost

By Michael Scharding April 9, 1992

A musical ghost haunts that hill,
Most can't hear it, and I doubt Jean will.
The phantom mourns love lost long ago
And sadly sings about the lying foe
Who stabbed him over a women's false claim.
That woman and I now share our last name.

Two Welsh Triads

By Michael Scharding 3/7/92

Three Things No One Knows:
Where your soul was before you were born.
What you should do during the short break.
Where the greatest journey stops next time.

Three Things I Won't Tell:
What things lurk under my kilt and sporran.
Whose wife I call my lover in the night.
How much I had to bribe the judge when I did tell the second in order to keep the first.

A Winter's Poem for Heather

By Michael

In this season where all seems dead,
And life's sleeping in snow's white bed,
Know that nature's strong energy
Will soon, in spring, bloom forth for thee.

The Sweat Lodge

By Michael April 26th, 1992

We stood, clad, around the fire
When will it start?
Heartbeat so hard I can see it.
Madonna songs waft in from a nearby bonfire party
That is not us.

I look around at the faces
People I know.
Labmates, Roommates
Friends I've eat Pizza with.
Men and Women,
Not Children.

Why are they here?
Will we work together?

Gosh, what if I get a hard-on...
And they see it?
I won't, I hope.
I'm mature. Control.
Control.
Stop beating so fast!
Dry those hands.
Still wet.
The priestess disrobes and joins us.
I try and not stare.
They're bodies. Swallow.

The fire is judged hot.
Glowing rocks hunted,
Fished from the coals,
Prodded with sticks,
Herded into skillets,
Transferred to the Lodge.
Sparks and Activity
Another portaged.
How many more? A few.
Time, you're slow.
From fire to Lodge.

I built that lodge with them.

Things are progressing.
It's all right.
You're not a novice.
cool down, Mike.
Checklists.
what if....
They're done!
It's starting!
Straighten up!
Clear away thoughts.
They look nervous.
I'm nervous.

She says were ready.

Right!

Clothes off! Clothes off!
Damn laces!! Argh!
Allright, that's done.
Return to the circle.

Everybody is naked.
Every body is naked.
Arms
Legs
Chests
Bellies... Genitals..
Wow.
We really are...
  Different?
No.
Mostly alike...
Pay attention!
Hum, Mike! Chant!
Hummmm mmmmmm
Aahahaha! Hoooooo!
His hand, her hand.
We are a circle.

The waves settle.
The mind softens.
Armor straps loosen.
Steel plates fall softly.
Family.
They see me.
Aohhhhhm.
The sky churns slowly.
My breathing..
    slows..
        down.
A vision!

A Vision

Eagles and cranes
Soar. SOARING.
Owl is there.
Feathers out stiff and feeling the
Currents of air.
A push here, an ebb there.
I turn my head and look down.
Wind rushes over my eyeballs.
Sharp vision scans the running countryside.
Galloping of veins in my head.
Cross-current ruffles my feathers.
I compensate.
Pull the wings closer.
Drop.
    Drop.
        Drop.
    Extend.
Push from gravity's embrace.
Tree tops.
Many types.
Thin twigs.
Strong arms.
Flowing grass.
Moonlit prairie.
Flap.
    Flap.
        Flap.
Pull the wings back.
Stretch the legs out.
Reach.
Close the talons.
Ground so close.
Its legs churn.
Eyes trying to reach safety from me.
Its body slowing down its eyes.
Close the talons.
Sink them.
Weight is added.
Scoop up the rabbit.
Its legs now useless.
Torso twitches and thrashes.
Cannot escape.
Take it home.
Flap.
    Flap.
        Flap.
Kill it.
Food.
Time to leave.
"Bye Owl."
"Bye Owl-man."

Return to the Lodge

Feathers to fingers.
Branches to dirt
Leaves to a plastic tarp.
I am back.
Voice strong.
Heyah! Yah Hah! Ho! Hey!
Lead them in mind.
Mind's strong legs dance about the lodge.
Body imitates by twitch.
They also traveled.

Steam is lessening.
Keening and cries soften.
Pull strength in.
Channel to friends,

People in torture far away,

People without hope.

We fold our weary wings.
Ready? Yeah.
"Grab a support Pole."
One. Two. Three!
Lift!

The black sky rises and falls away.
The sky churns above us.
Heat goes, cold comes.
Steam spreads.
Cold rubs on us.
Mist rises from bodies.
We laugh!
Dance!
Shout!
Hop about like frogs!
Hug!
It worked! Oh Gods! It worked!

The Camel

By Michael April 6th, 1992

The Camel sails upon the desert
It knows the way will be long & dry.
The Camel sails upon the desert
And only its rider can know why.

The Falcon soars with its outstretched wings
It feels the ebbs and puffs of the air.
The Falcon soars with its out-stretched wings
On it's destination does it care?

The Salmon leaps o'er the churning falls
Leaving the water it briefly flies.
The Salmon leaps o'er the churning falls
And reaching its birthplace, the fish dies.

The Prairie Fire

By Michael April 6th, 1992

A boring biolab fieldtrip...
How much longer?
Smoke! Look, Smoke!
What type of fire is that?
Run to the cause.
Branches dodge me.
Emerge from the quiet woods.
Roaring frames before me
Rippling downwind.
One spark started it.
The spreading ring.
Inside, all is burnt.
The area of Change is thin.
Outside, all fear it.
The Change is painful.
That-which-changes
Can see but the pain.
Should I jump through,
Or let it catch me?

The Search

By Michael Nov. 22, 1992

Do I aimlessly wander the silent hills?
Are my sylvan prayers better spent in church?
Can an Outsider cure the world's dark ills?
Will I ever find That for which I search?

Sonnet 1: The Would-be Bard

By Michael

My Muse, she gathers songs of man and elf,
The moving ballad with feuds and flowers.
Yet this is all to waste, just like my self,
if we can't write a song by our powers.
Knowledge, she knows what I attempt to say.
Skill, he molds out my dreams (time pays his hire.)
Wisdom, she pushes us onward when we tire.
With the, the mind of the wise bard can sing.
Och!, how I seek to obtain their prowess.
Fain that I were the master of one thing
Than the journeyman with twelve not of his!
There's more value in my crafted object
Than the finest scale could ever detect.

The White Jewel

By Michael Nov. 22, 1992

Some mock my lovely jewel,
"She is merely a moon."
She can move seas... Can you?
Her light is scorned by lamps,
"I can turn them on or off!"
She leads women... Can you?
She always will return.
"She is in fixed orbit."
She's eternal... Are you?

Sine Ceolbhinn

By Michael April 8th, 1992

'Se Sine Ceolbhinn a tha an anam oirre!
Seinn i an amhrainn sean agus an amhrainn og!

Tha thu mor clarsach beag agus mo caraid fhior!
Tha mo gaol bog ort, an drasda gu siorraidh!

To Jean Sweetmusic

Jean Sweetmusic is the name that is upon she!
She sings the ancient songs and those that crawl on knees!

You are my little harp and my most loyal friend!
My soft love is on you now till the final end!

A Poem to my Harp

When we go to Eire what will it be like?
Will I explore on foot or ride on a bike?

Will I unpack you on a wind torn strand
To play for dancing spirits of that land?

Will the Quiet Ones come from hidden doors
To sit around us at Her heath'ry moors?

Will my chilled hands pluck random melodies
While the streams sing of lands with golden trees?

Will Night's chorus join us in a sad tune
With your strings backlit by a silv'ry moon?

Perhaps the Bardic Muse will whisper things
That reveal stories of lovers and of kings.

Let's go, good companion, maybe this year,
And see what wonders may to us appear.

A Book of Songs and Poetry Volume Two 1994 Friends of the Earth-Mother

1993 Introduction

To the Readers,

Welcome to this collection of songs and poetry dealing with nature. All of the items were obtained from students, faculty, friends and staff of Carleton College. Our campus is beautiful and well representative of the marvelous beauties still extant in Nature.

Whether Christian, Jew, Muslim, Hindu, Neo-Pagan etc. the earth is our responsibility to take care of. Only when we truly feel the importance of the earth to our spiritual lives, will we override our short-sighted material greed to exploit it. Hopefully, in a small way this publication will help.

This was not officially a RDNA publication, but was published under a front name of the Friends of the Earth Mother at Carleton College (FOEMACC.) The only official Druids in the whole work were me, Dick Smiley and Matt Cohen. The rest of the people were friends of mine who had an interest in Nature poetry.

Please do not reproduce this book for monetary gain but only to give a copy to a friend. None of the authors have expressly given their assent for their work to be abused or reused.

Michael Scharding, Editor
December 8th, 1993
Goodhue Hall by Lyman Lakes

Printing History
1st Printing 1993
2nd Printing 1996 (in ARDA, Pt 9)
3rd Printing 2003 (in ARDA 2, Pt 6 Green Book Vol. 6)

Dark Clouds

By Scott Stearns

Dark clouds roll over the land
The quickly moving storm
Devouring the light in its path

Lightning and thunder
Signs of the gods displeasure
Warning of the rains to come

The very air crackles
with horrible anticipation
of horrible things to come

Then comes the rain
cascading, a sheet of water
a torrent of angel's tears

All in its path are drenched
The storm's sheer ferocity
unmatched in Measured time

hopelessness fills my heart
as I sit idle
and watch the falling water

when of a sudden
as quick as Hermes himself
the black clouds roll past

Rays of light, less than nothing
smash the clouds
as if they were hammers

I wish I were an artist
able to paint the sky
for I would paint it as it is

Hope fills my heart
light fills my eyes
and a rainbow glows in the distance

Sir Isaac Newton:
"So then the first religion was the most rational of all others, till the nations corrupted it. For there is no way (implied: without revelation) to come to your knowledge of a Deity but by the Frame of Nature." **-Yahuda Manuscript** 41, Fo. 7

The Comet

By Matt Cohen

Chrome and copper
the comet collided with the sky
sliding sideways across the slight canyon of my sight.
A screaming song. A
sizzling,
sputtering,
sibilant
serpent.

Horace (65 - 8 b.c.e.):
"Drive Nature off with a pitchfork, never the less, she will return with a rush."

The Cruelest Joke

By Scott Stearns

The cruelest joke
played by the gods
upon man

is not a winter's day
the sun shining like never before;
yet the world is frozen
and dead

Nor is it autumn
when the leaves turn brilliant
yet they soon die
in splendid agony

Nor is it spring
when the earth is being renewed
yet storms do rip
all the land asunder

Nor is it summer
when the sun is nearest the earth,
yet the heat does scorch,
and all the land turns brown

No, the cruelest joke
that not even the Trickster
in all his malevolent mischief
could surpass
is life.

The Friend of the RDNA

Words: Sam Adams, ArchDruid of St. Olaf.
Tune:Ystwffwl (Welsh, in "English, Irish, Welsh & Scottish fiddle tunes" by Robin Williamson.)
Here is a song I sang at a Mistletoe Rite of the Henge of Keltria in Minneapolis. It was more or less commissioned by Mec.

The Druids and Mages of earliest times
Kept the Wisdom of Ages in memorized rhymes
But they lost all their files when the System went down
If they'd kept the hard copies, they'd still be around.

In the year '63 there were Druids again
And they wasted no time putting paper to pen.
They saw the Reform, and they thought it was good
And they all started writing as fast as they could.

Epistles and Libers and Writs and Decrees
By thirty years on they'd come up to our knees
In the Carleton Archives there's shelf after shelf
With half of them needed for Isaac himself.

But many were tattered and battered and lost
To find and replace them would be of great cost
But then came the grace of a well-lettered friend
To make sure we'd not lose our Druids again.

Here's to David, and David, and Norman, and Tom
And Richard, and Robert, and Isaac and Don
And our love and our blessing and a hip-hip-hooray
To Tony, the Friend of the RDNA.

(The men in the last Stanza were prominent early members of the RDNA (David Fisher, David Frangquist, Norman Nelson, Thomas McCausland, Richard Shelton, Robert Larson, Don Morrison and Tony Taylor of the Henge of Keltria. The regrettable lack of women is due to the regrettable sexism of the early RDNA; there were great women leaders throughout, but they did more ritual leading than Scripture writing. Which might just explain a few things about the Christian Bible.)

The Search

By Mec 11/22/92

Do I aimlessly wander the silent hills?
Are my sylvan prayers better spent in church?
Can an outsider cure the world's dark ills?
Will I ever find That for which I search?

When I Grow Up

By Fer Horn

When I grow up,
I want wings like a seagull,
That ripple as I fly,
Starting at the body
And spreading to the tips.
To soar low above the waves,
To swoop up and then plunge
Into the water
And then bob up like a cork.
To fly far and fast,
Never touching the shore.

A Hand Print

By Fer Horn

A hand print is an interesting thing
To leave on the wall of a cave.
What else so eloquently says,
"I was here. I Am."
To put your hand there
And leave the mark of your passing.
A hand, reaching out from the past
To the people of the future,
Who will come and think
On those who Were before
And touch their hand to yours.
"Yes, we Are."

Dancing Winds

By Fer Horn 10-1-91 Tuesday Queenscliff, Victoria

Storm driven winds howl through my mind.
So like a stormy night at home.
It sounds the same in different trees,
Whistles in the alley, screams along the sea.
It even has the same feel;
Of power beyond control,
Bringing creatures not seen
Out to dance with the blowing trees.

Silverton

By Fer Horn 10-29-91 Tuesday Silverton, NSW

Silverton is a ghost town located outside of Broken Hill, New South Wales. It used to be a mining town until the 1920s when the mines ran out and all the people moved away. There used to be a train that ran from Broken Hill to Silverton. The townspeople of Broken Hill would ride out to Silverton every Sunday in their Sunday-best for picnics. The only occupied buildings there are a tourist bar, a museum and a seasonal movie production facility.

A voice calling as the sun rose
Pulls me out of sleep
To stand dimly in the light of the sun
Touching an empty town.
Something wants my attention
Wants me to do something.
I wander the streets to listen
As the sky turns to rose,
Searching for that which calls me in dreams.
The lived-in homes are silent now
As is the levee that runs straight to the sky.
Echoes of the train to Broken Hill
Clatter briefly as I cross
But fade away as I stop to listen.
Finally, a small white building,
Windows peaked in perpetual worry,
Catches my gaze.
The battered sign reads
"Methodist Church 1880."
Ornate black and red grillwork
Bars the door a padlock seals.
This place is unhappy.
Churches should not be barred
No matter how old
Or that all their people are gone.
Let the animals come to worship here
If no one else remains.
But the door remains locked and barred

So the tourists look but don't touch.
I can do nothing to help this one
But sit a while and keep it company.

The Rock

By Fer Horn on 10-3-91 Thursday Port Campbell, Victoria

"It is very hard to speak to a rock; they have such an odd sense of time and priorities."
-Vanyel Ashkevron, Magic's Promise by Mercedes Lackey

Twelve Apostles standing in the waves.
I count 8, maybe 10.
I wonder if they are all named.
Did someone say, "This is Peter,
'The rock on which I shall build my church',
And this is John, the Beloved,
And Judas, 'He who would betray',
Or maybe Paul, called on the road to Damascus."
But Damascus is a long way from here,
And John is an odd name for a rock.
It seems silly to name a rock
For a disciple of a man who lived
Long ago and far away.
Perhaps I should ask the rocks
What they call themselves;
Surely they have wondrous names.
I expect they will be a long time in answering.

Silence

By Fer Horn on 10-22-91 Tuesday Silverton, New South Wales

I never realize how unusual
Silence is until I hear it.
Everywhere you go now,
There are birds, or planes
Or the hum of a distant highway
Or the murmur of the people you are with.
Today, for just a moment, I heard the silence of the Outback,
Where, as hard as you listen,
The only thing to hear
Is the wind flowing through the bush.
And I felt like I was standing
On the edge of eternity.
Looking out over the plain
Imagining what it looked like
To the first person to stand here.
Probably very much the same.
And it will probably be the same
For a long time to come.
This is a place that is hard to live in.
What truly belongs is not much;
Just the wind and the bush
And the eternal silence.
May there always be places like this.

The End of Mother Nature

By Randel Lee Peck

Deep dark sky, which makes me write
clouds filled with her cottony breath
turning black and green with an evil beyond our control
MOTHER IS PISSED!

For all we do is waste our water
Pour pollutants into the sky
And into our rivers and lakes; ruining the Earth;
Destroying her soul!

She has one way of getting back.
I understand you can't take it anymore
You just can't take the pressure of man too much, too much.
You break open your womb at your faults
The earth is shaking.

I know you're crying, I almost drowned in your tears.
And with one blow you can obliterate everything in your path.
Lightning can stop anybody dead in their tracks.

Drying up our water, crops, and life itself,
You almost baked everything away
with your radiant first born son,
or you can freeze us all, bone chilling frozen
hard as a rock.

We've got to change and change now!
Before it's too late!
We have to protect this world, love it, and beautify it!
I hope, have we still time?

We have to stop our government
From having one chance to destroy it all.

The world's end and neutralization,
For I fear it will happen.

But hopefully there will be somebody left on this earth
And I will be one of them to survive.
And to live on and teach our children
The way things should be,
Not, the way they are.
Or were?.....

HUE

By Randall Lee Peck

A ZOO WITH IN ZOO WITH IN A ZOO
WITHIN THE 4 WALLS OF HUE.

AND A COLLEGE RUN BY ADMINISTRATIVE FOOLS

WITH A LYMAN LAKES NO CLEANER THAN A CESSPOOL

THICK, GREEN, ROTTING, ROTTING SLIME IS ALWAYS ON MY MIND!!!

Mother Superior

By Randal Lee Peck

Here I sit on the poetry rock
and mother starts to talk
I'm Mother Superior
and I might cry!
There's too much pollution
and I might die!
I'm the biggest, deepest, coldest
and I'm scared
I wish for the last few years
somebody cared

Untitled

By Louise Wickenhauser in Earth Prayers From Around the World, ed. Liz Roberts and Elias Aniden 1991 Harper SanFrancisco. Used with permission

Sensuous during life
do not deny me in death!
Wash me with scent of apple blossom.
Anoint me with essence of lilac.
Fill my veins with honeysuckle nectar.
Sprinkle me with perfume of purple violets.
Envelop me in shroud saturated with fragrance of freshly
mown meadow hay.
Rest me in moss velvet earth.
Cover me with soil exuding flavor of maple and oak leaves.
Command a white birch to stand guard!

From Ben Nevis

By Lawrence "Smiley" Revard

I came from the sea to the sky
and burnt the blunt bridge of my nose
to an itching red crisp,
trekking to the jutted head
of Ben Nevis. Later, I hiked
the valleys alone to the mountainside
above Gray Mare falls and onwards;
I saw only one shrew and a few fleeing
field mice, and felt thousands of midges.

Along the way, I thought
Scotland was half-dead with English blood.
No bears, few eagles, few deer, no wolves,
and a tide of tourists.
In the unmountainous and untouristed scraggle
of Oklahoma, I remembered crouching
for a single half-hour and seeing six
turkey-vultures and two marsh hawks
ride updrafts past a sandstone crag.
And I remembered hearing the deer
rustle in the persimmon grove below.

Once, in the tower of London (where
several well-attended but alternatively
maniacal and derisive ravens nip popcorn
from Italian or American or French
fingers,) I heard an American ask
a portly Beefeater guard how
he liked being on a bottle of gin.
Well, he said, when off-duty.

Atop Ben Nevis there was
a monument to the young dead
of World War I. There was also
a peculiar and anonymous snow bird
peeping low among the stones and
the company of clouds was miles and miles.

From there I could see
the dead land was far below
in history, like the ruins at Ludlow
where (so I'm told) a lord named Lawrence
held his castle carefully at the brambled edge
of Wales, where one Bertilak and one
Morgan le Fey had their hide-out.
But this was mostly imagination:
there was little to hear since the last thunder of British cannon
volleys mowed down the Scots.
There was little to see since the trees
had fed the ships that fended off
imperial onslaughts of Spain,
France, and, at last, Germany.
And I knew that even half my ancestry
had flew their native tongue
and the empty, gray-green hills.

It is said that when the ravens
in the Tower of London are dead,
imperial England will no longer stand.

Those six days on the highland trails, I
saw not even a rabbit carcass,
and never did a carrion-black shadow
cross my path.

The Hill of Three Oaks: Midwinter 1964

A Haiku by Dick Smiley '66

When the wind blows cold
on the Hill of Three Oaks
the hearth fire is warm.

Salutations!

Feb. 1, 1977 By Dale Fierbe

Salutations on this day of Oimelc!
The Magnolias stand serenely in this winter wind.
The pines shrug their branches
Snow drops to the ground
Unable to smother the spirit
Of Evergreen.
The Cedar whispers it's valiance
The quiet sentinel while other
Creatures and Flora
Wait for the name of Spring to
Brush past them, awakening them
From their sleep.
- Peace, Peace, Peace.

Wood Carving

By Chris Markwyn

The wood couldn't begin to catch
All of the light and life in its
Sad poor-grained structure. The
Polished flesh of some long-dead
Oak, smoothly grainless, was
Carved to artificial perfection by
Some zealous artisan.

Not alone I stood in the shop,
Clutching my saw and knife in
An all too sweaty hand. I look
At what lies before me, and tremble
At its pathetic presumption of merit.
Shaking, I turn to the light
That pours in

Through the window, broken by
The frame and the panes. I turn back
To my creation to view it once more.
Outside the sunlight, it lies dead and
Cold, a lifeless bit of wood shaped
Randomly into the face of a thing
I do not know.

Someone Said My Name

By Chris Markwyn

a name, subtly carved
into the bark of some ancient oak,
now warped and bent
by the ravaging years

a name, engraved on a door
deep in the dimly lit dungeon
of my heart; a chamber sealed
by the weight of years

a name, whispered in the dark,
written on a crumpled page,
spoken softly in the quiet
hours of life's night

a name unheard for years

A Book of Songs and Poetry Volume Three 1999

Words from the Bards

2003 Introduction

Modern folk-singers, like the bards of the past have their wisdom to share. At Carleton since the early 70s, Druidism and Folksinging were overlapping interests for many people. I offer you some songs, copyrighted of course, for your benefit or hindrance. They were mostly taken from "Rise Up Singing: The Group Singing Songbook" ISBN 0-9626704-7-2 (1992) spiral binding, ISBN 0-9626704-9-9 paperback binding. It's a personal selection, but also one that other Carleton Druids have enjoyed over the years. This was assembled in 1999, but first published in ARDA 2 in 2003, when he added a few songs by various authors at the end.

-Mike Scharding

Sir Gilbert de Veere

Sir Gilbert de Veere was a virtuous knight.
He fought for the just and he fought for the right,
But he cherished one dream with all of his might;
He wanted a Dragon to fight.

He prayed all the night and he prayed all the day,
That God would provide him a dragon to slay.
God heard his prayers and considered a way
To furnish Sir Gilbert his prey.

God considered it and soon made command,
But having no genuine Dragons at hand,
God whisked Sir Gilbert to an earlier land.
With destrier and armor and Brand.

Then in the Cretaceous, Sir Gilbert de Veere
Discovered a 40 foot carnosaur near.
He dug in his spur and leveled his spear,
And charged without flicker of fear.

The lance struck a rib and the shaft split in twain,
Sir Gilbert slapped a hand to his hilt, but in vain.
The dinosaur swallowed that valorous thane,
And thus Sir Gilbert was slain.

But the armored apparel he wore for that ride,
However was rough on that reptile's inside.
The dinosaur presently laid down and died,
And honor was thus satisfied.

But, Sir Gilbert was no longer around to care,
So hesitate to disturb God with your prayer.
For He might answer it and then how you fare
Is yours and no other’s affair.

Sounds of Silence

Hello darkness my old friend
I've come to talk to you again
Because a vision softly creeping
Left its seeds while I was sleeping
And the vision that was planted in my brain
Still remains- within the sounds of silence
(Am-), G---/Am---/FC--/ /F----C-/Am-C G --Am---

In restless dreams I walk alone
Narrow streets of cobblestone
'Neath the halo of a street lamp
I turned my collar to the cold & damp
When my eyes were stabbed by the flash of a neon light
That split the night - & touched the sound of silence

And in the naked light I saw
10,000 people maybe more
People talking without speaking
People hearing without listening
People writing songs that voices never shared
No one dared disturb the sound of silence

"Fools" said I "You do not know
Silence like a cancer grows
Hear my words that I might teach you
Take my arms that I might reach you."
But my words like silent raindrops fell
And echoed in the well of silence

And the people bowed & prayed
To the neon god they'd made
And the sign flashed out its warning
In the words that it was forming
And the sign said "The words of the prophets are written on subway walls
And tenement halls - & whisper in the sounds of silence.

-Paul Simon

The Earth Is My Mother

The earth is my mother * she's good to me * (*=echo)
She gives me everything that I ever need
Food on the table* the clothes I wear *
The sun & the water & the cool, fresh air *
C9C) Dm (Dm) / FC GC (FC GC)://

Chorus:
The earth is my mother and my best friend, too
The great provider for and you (repeat)
CEm FC/ FC GC ://

Her ways are gentle, her life is strong
Living in tune like a beautiful song
There's only one thing she asks of me
I treat her as kindly as she treats me

-Carol Johnson

Honor the Earth

Look at her face, walk in her fields
Savor her mountains, her forest, her valleys
Tasting her winds, washed by her tides
Growing like flow'rs in her soil, in her water

Hear when she weeps! Hear with the heart
Tuned by our senses aware of time passing
Surely our flesh bleeds as she bleeds
Surely our bones are her dust, are her mountains

Honor the earth & each other
Honor the earth & each other
Am--Dm/Dm6--E://Am Dm6 Am Dm / E7---/Am--Dm/Dm6--E/Am Dm Am Dm6/ AM Dm Am-

Locked in our cells of concrete and steel
Choked by the papers, the clutter, the chatter
Blinded by mind, harnessed by fears
Deaf to the cries and the calls of the mother

Hear her at last! Know what we are
Flesh that will die, but the death is no master
Cherish the earth, silence that sings
Touch the earth we give birth to the mother

Honor the earth & each other
Honor the earth & each other

-Molly Scott

Now is the Cool of the day

1. The lord he said unto me
Do you like my **garden so fair?**
You may live in this garden if you **keep the grasses green.**
And I'll return in the cool of the day
Am E A-/Em-A-/--EmA/E7-A-

Chorus:
Now is the cool of the day (2x)
O this earth is a garden, the garden of my Lord
And he walks in his garden in the cool of the day
Am E Am-/G-Am-/--G Am/ ---- C- Am-

[Substitute these phrases into number 1]
2. garden so pure? keep the waters clean
3. pastures so green / feed all of my sheep
4. garden so free / keep the people free

-Jean Ritchie

Solar Carol

See the sun how bright it shines on the nations of the earth
All who share this thing called life celebrate each day's rebirth
D-AD (2x)/ //:DG-A D G A- DA DG DA://

Chorus:
So-o-olar power, inexpensive energy (2x)
Brother river, so you hear how the valley calls you down
Send your rushing waters near, let the joyful hills resound

Sister wind we've heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plain
And the windmills in reply echoing their glad refrain

How we love complexity when the answer's rather plain
Join the sun in jubilee; sing with us this joyous strain

-W: Adam Austill, Court Dorsey, Charlie Kind, Marcia Taylor
-M: "Angels we have heard on high"

Prayer of St. Francis

Make me a channel of your peace
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love
Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord
And where there's doubt, true faith in you
D---/--A-/----/- DA D-

Make me a channel of your peace
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope
Where there is darkness, only light
And where there's sadness, ever joy

(Bridge) O master grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled as to console
To be understood, as to understand
To be loved, as to love with all my soul
G-D-/A-D-/G-D-/E-A-

Make me a channel of your peace
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned
In giving to all men that we receive
And in dying that we're born to eternal life

-rewritten by Sebastian Temple

Old Time Religion

Chorus:
Give me that old time religion (3x)
And that's good enough for me
E-/B7 E/-A/EB7 E

We will pray to Aphrodite
Even tho' she's rather flighty
And they say she wears no nightie...
& that's good enough for me (end of each verse)

We will pray with those Egyptians
Build pyramids to but our crypts in
Cover subways with inscriptions

O-old Odin we will follow
And in fighting we will wallow
Til we wind up in Valhalla...

Let me follow dear old Buddha
For there is nobody cuter
He comes in plaster, wood, or pewter....

We will pray with Zarathustra
Pray just like we useta
I'm a Zarathrustra booster...

We will pray with those old Druids
They drink fermented fluids
Waltzing naked thru the woo-ids....

Hare Krishna gets a laugh on
When he sees me dressed in saffron
With my hair that's only half on...

We will pray to Loki
He's the Norse god of Chaos
Which is why this verse don't scan or rhyme…

I'll arise at early morning
When the sun gives me the warning
That the solar age is dawning...

We will worship those old gods,
Even though they call us clods
Cause it gives us better odds…

Teach Your Children

You who are on the road
Must have a code that you can live by
And so, become yourself
Because the past is just a good-bye
C F/ C G ://

Teach your children well
Their father's hell did slowly go by
And, feed them on your dreams
The one they pick's the one you'll know by
And don't you ever ask them why - if they tell you,
You'll just cry so, just look at them and sigh
And know they love you
C F/ C G:// C F/ C AM FG/ C-

And you, of tender years
Can't know the fears that your elders grew by
And so, please help them with your youth
They seek the truth before they can die

Teach your parents well
Their children's hell did slowly go by
And, feed them on your dreams
The one they pick's the one you'll know by
And don't you ever ask them why - if they tell you,
You'll just cry so, just look at them and sigh
And know they love you

-Graham Nash

Catch the Wind

In the chilly hours and minutes of uncertainty I long to be
In the warm hold of your loving mind
To feel you all around me and to take your hand along the sand
Ah but I might as well try and catch the wind.
C F C F/C FG C G/ C F C F/ C FG CF C

When sundown pales the sky, I want to bide awhile behind your smile
And every where I'd look your eyes I'd find
For me to love your now would be the sweetest thing, 'twould make me sing
Ah but I might as well try and catch the wind.

When rain has hung the leaves with tears I want you near to quell my fears
To help me leave all my blues behind
Standing near your soul is where I want to be, I long to be
Ah but I might as well try and catch the wind.

-Donovan Leitch

God Bless the Moon

I see the moon and the moon sees me
God bless the moon and God bless me
There's grace in the cabin and grace in the hall
And the grace of God is over us all

ED E ED E//E-A-/B7- ED E

I see the moon and the moon sees me
The moon sees the somebody I want to see
God bless the moon and God bless me
And God bless the somebody I want to see

-Jean Ritchie

Morning Has Broken

Morning has broken like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning
Praise for the springing fresh from the word
C-Dm G F C/- Em Am D G-/ C F - C Am D/ G C F G C (FC)

Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven
Like the first dew fall on the first grass
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden
Sprung in completeness where His feet pass

Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning
Born of the one light Eden saw play
Praise with elation, praise every morning
God's re-creation of the new day.

-Eleanor Farjeon

The Sound of Music

The hills are alive with the sound of music
With songs they have sung for a thousand years
The hills fill my heart with the sound of music
My heart wants to sing every song it hears
C-Em-/ Dm-FG/C-Em-/CF G C-

My heart wants to beat like the wings of the birds that rise
From the lakes to the trees
My heart wants to sigh like a chime that flies
From a church on a breeze
FG C/ FG C/ FG C/ D G

To laugh like a brook when it trips and falls
Over stones on its way
To sing thru the night
Like a lark who is learning to pray.
FG C/ FG C/ FG C/ D G

I go to the hills when my heart is lonely
I know I will hear what I've heard before
My heart will be blessed with the sound of music
And I'll sing once more

-W: Oscar Hammerstein II
-M: Richard Rogers

Nowhere Man

He's a real Nowhere Man sitting in his Nowhere Land
making all his nowhere plans for nobody
Doesn't have a point of view, knows not where he's going to
Isn't he a bit like you and me?
ÃC G F C/F Fm C -://

(Bridge)
Nowhere Man, please listen, you don't know what you're missing
Nowhere man, the world is at your command
Em F Em F/ Em F - G

He's as blind as he can be, just sees what he wants to see
Nowhere Man can you see me at all?

Doesn't have a point of view, knows not where he's going to
Isn't he a bit like you and me?

(Bridge 2)
Nowhere Man, don't worry, take your time, don't hurry
Leave it all till somebody else lends you a hand

-John Lennon and Paul McCartney

Here Comes the Sun

Chorus:
Here comes the sun (2x) and I say/ It's all right
G-Cmaj7 A7/ G CG D7

Little darlin' it's been a long cold lonely winter
Little darlin' it feels like years since you've been hear
G-C D7/ G-C D7

Little Darlin' the smiles returning to their faces
Little Darlin' it feels like years since it's been here

Little Darlin' I feel the ice is slowly melting
Little Darlin' it feels like years since it's been clear

-George Harrison

May There Always be Sunshine

May there always be sunshine
May there always be blue sky
May there always be mama
May there always be me

-W: Lev Oshanin/Thomas Botting
-M: Arkadi Ostrovsky

Hymn for the Russian Earth

If the people lived their lives
As if it were a song for singing out of light
Provides the music for the stars
To be dancing circles in the night

-Yuri Zaritsky and Eugene Friesen

I Circle Around

I circle around (around, around) (2x)
The bound'ries of the earth (the boundaries of the sky)
Wearing my long-wing feathers as I fly (wearing...)

-Arapaho

We Are the Flow

We are the flow, we are the ebb
We are the weavers, we are the web
Em - / EmC EM

-Shekinah Mountain Water

Turning Toward the Morning

When the deer is bedded down and the bear is gone to ground
And the Northern goose has wandered off to warmer bay and sound
It's so easy in the cold to feel the darkness of the year
And the heart is growing lonely for the morning
C-F-/ C-FG-/C-F-/CGFC

Chorus:
O my Joanie don't you know that the stars are swinging slow
And the seas are rolling easy as they did so long ago?
If I had a thing to give you, I would tell you one more time
That the world is always turning toward the morning
G-C-/C-FG-/C-F-/CGFC

Now October's growing thin and November's coming home
You'll be thinking of the season and the sad things that you've seen
And you hear that old wind walking, hear him singing high and thin:
You could swear he's out there singing of your sorrows

When the darkness falls around you and the North Wind comes to blow
And you hear him call your name out as he walks the brittle snow
That old wind don't mean you trouble, he don't care or even know
He's just walking down the darkness toward the morning

It's a pity we don't know what the little flowers know
They can't face the cold November, they can't take the wind and snow
They put their glories all behind them, bow their heads and let it go
But you know they'll be there shining in the morning

(Last Chorus)
Now my Joanie don't you know that the days are rolling slow
And the winter's walking easy as he did so long ago?
And if the wind should come and ask you "Why's my Joanie weeping so?"
Won't you tell him that you're weeping for the morning?

-Gordon Bok

Weave Me the Sunshine

Chorus:
Weave, weave, weave me the sunshine
Out of the falling rain
Weave me the hope of a new tomorrow
And fill my cup again
FGCAm/FGCAm/FGCAm/D-G-

Well, I've seen the steel and the concrete crumble
Shine on me again
The proud and the might, all have stumbled
Shine on me again
Am-Em-/FGCAm/Am-D-/G-G7-

They say that the tree of loving
Shine on me again.
Grows on the banks of the river of suffering
Shine on me again.

If only I can heal your sorrow...
I'll help you to find a new tomorrow...
Only you can climb the mountain...
If you want to drink at the golden fountain....

-Peter Yarrow

River

I was born in the path of the winter wind
And raised where the mountains are old
The springtime waters came dancing down
And I remember the tales they told
The whistling ways of my younger days
Too quickly have faded on by
But all of their memories linger on
Like the light in a fading sky
D-GD/--A-/D-GD/-AD- ://

Chorus:
River, take me along
In your sunshine, sing me your song
Ever moving and winding and free
You rolling old river, you changing old river
Let's you and me river run down to the sea!
D Dmaj7 G A/ D Dmaj7 G A/ G-AD/ GDGD/GA-GD

I've been to the city and back again
I've been moved by some things that I've learned
Me a lot of good people and I called them friends
Felt the change when the seasons turned
I heard all the songs that the children sing
And listened to love's melodies
I've felt my own music within me rise
Like the wind in the autumn trees

Someday when the flowers are blooming still
Someday when the grass is still green
My rolling waters will round me bend
And flow into the open sea
So here's to the rainbow that followed me here
And here's to the friends that I know
And here's to the song that's within me now
I will sing it wherever I go

-Bill Staines

Today

Today while the blossoms still cling to the vine
I'll taste your strawberries and drink your sweet wine
A million tomorrows will all pass away
Ere I forget all the joy that is mine today
C Am F G/C Am F G/C C7 F Fm/C Am Dm G - C (Am F G)

I'll be a dandy and I'll be a rover
You'll know who I am by the song that I sing
I'll feast at your table and sleep in your clover
Who cares what tomorrow shall bring?

I can't be contented with yesterday's glories
I can't live on promises winter to spring
For now is my moment, today is my story
I'll laugh and I'll cry and I'll sing

-Randy Sparks

Turn, Turn, Turn

Chorus:
To everything -turn, turn, turn
There is a season -turn, turn, turn
And a time for ev'ry purpose under heaven
A time to be born, a time to die
A time to plant, a time to reap
A time to kill, a time to heal
A time to laugh, a time to weep
G-C-/G-C-/G-C-/FGC-

A time to build up, a time to break down
A time to dance, a time to mourn
A time to cast away stones
A time to gather stones together (Very druidic, eh?)

A time of war, a time of peace
A time of love, a time of hate
A time you may embrace
A time to refrain from embracing

A time to gain, a time to lose
A time to rend, a time to sew
A time to love, a time to hate
A time of peace: I swear it's not too late!

-W: Book of Ecclesiastes (adap. by Pete Seeger)

The Brandy Tree

I go down to the Brandy Tree
And take my nose and tail with me
All for the world and the wind to see
And never come back no more
(capo up) Am Em/EmAm Em/ Dm Em/ FG Am

Down by the meadow marsh, deep and wide
Tumble and Tangle by my side
All for the westing wind to run
And slide in the summer rain

Sun come follow my happy way
Wind come walk beside me
Moon on the mountain, go with me
A wondrous way I know
C G/ C G/ Am Em/ FG Am

I go down to the windy sea
And the little gray seal will play with me
Slide on the rock and dive in the bay
And sleep on the ledge at night

But the seal don't try to tell me how
To fish in the windy blue
Seal's been fishing for a thousand years
And he knows that I have too

When the frog goes down to the mud to sleep
And the lamprey hides in the boulders deep
I take my nose and tail and go
A hundred thousand hills

Sun come follow my happy way
Wind come walk beside me
Moon on the mountain, go with me
A wondrous way I know

Someday down by the Brandy Tree
I'll hear the Shepherd call for me
Call me to leave my happy ways
And the shining world I know

Sun on the hill, come go with me
My days have all been free
The pipes come dancing down the wind
And that's the way I go
That's the way for me

-Gordon Bok

What a Wonderful World

by Louis Armstrong

I see trees of green,
Red roses too.
I seem them bloom
For me and you

I think to myself,
What a wonderful world.

I see skies of blue,
And clouds of white,
The bright blessed day,
The dark sacred night.

And I think to myself,
What a wonderful world.

Bridge:
The colors of the rainbow
So pretty in the sky
Are also on the faces
Of people going by.

I see friends shaking hands
Saying “How do you do?”
They’re really saying
“I love you.”

I hear babies crying,
I watch them grow.
They’ll learn much more
Then I’ll ever know.

And I think to myself,
What a wonderful world.

Lord of the Dance

I danced in the morning when the world was begun
And I danced in the moon & the stars & the sun
And I came down from heaven & I danced on the earth
At Bethlehem I had my birth
D---/A---/D----/A-GD

Chorus:
Dance, dance wherever you may be
I am the Lord of the Dance said he
And I'll lead you all wherever you may be
And I'll lead you all in the dance, said he
D---/--A-/D----/A-GD

I danced for the scribe & the Pharisee
But they would not dance & they would not follow me
I danced for the fishermen, for James & John
They came with me & the dance went on

I danced on the Sabbath & I cured the lame
The holy people said it was a shame
They whipped & they stripped & they hung me high
And they left me there on a cross to die

I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back
They buried my body & they thought I was gone
But I am the dance & I still go on

They cut me down but I leaped up high
For I am the dance that can never, never die
I'll live in you if you'll live in me
For I am the Lord of the dance, said he!

-W: Sydney Carter
-M: shaker hymn ("Simple Gifts")

Simple Gifts

'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free
"Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be
And when we find ourselves in the place just right
'Twill be in the valley of love & delight

When true simplicity is gained
To bow & to bend we won't be ashamed
To turn, turn will be our delight
Til by turning, turning we come 'round right
D-/A-/D-/A GD// DA D/-A/D-/A GD

-Traditional Shaker

Lord of the Dance

(short version)
From a shaker tune, also known as "Simple Gifts"

Then she danced on the waters and the wind was her form
The lady laughed and everything was born
She lit the sun and the light gave him birth
The lord of the dance then appeared on the earth

[chorus]
Dance, then, wherever you may be
For I am the lord of the dance, said he
And I'll lead you all wherever you may be
And I'll lead you all in the dance, said he

I danced in the morning when the world was begun
I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun
I was called from the darkness by the song of the earth
I joined in the singing and she gave me birth

[chorus]

I dance at the sabbat when you chant the spell
I dance and sing that every one be well
When the dance is over do not think I am gone
I live in the music so I still dance on

[chorus]

They cut me down but I leap up high
I am the light that will never, never die
I will live in you if you live in me
I am the lord of the dance, said he

[chorus]

Circles

Gwen Zak Moore, probably in mid 1970's.
Tune: Windmills, by Alan Bell

In days gone by, when the world was much younger,
men wondered at Spring, born of winter's cold night;
wondering at the games of the moon and the sunlight.
They saw there the Lady and Lord of all life.

Chorus:
And around and around and around turns the good earth.
All things must change as the seasons go by.
We are the children of the Lord and the Lady
Whose mysteries we know, but we never know why.

In all lands the people were tied to the good earth
Plowing and sowing as the seasons declared.
Waiting to reap of the rich golden harvest, \
Knowing Her laugh in the joys that they shared.

Chorus...

Through Flanders and Wales and the green land of Ireland,
in Kingdoms of England and Scotland and Spain,
Circles grew up all along the wild coastline
and worked for the land with the sun and the rain.

Chorus...

Circles for healing and working the weather,
circles for knowing the moon and the sun,
circles for thanking the Lord and the Lady,
circles for dancing the dance never done.

Chorus...

And we who reach for the stars in the heavens,
turning our eyes from the meadows and groves
still live in the love of the Lord and the Lady.
The greater the circle, the more the love grows.

Chorus…

The Rainbow Connection

Why are there so many songs about rainbows
And what's on the other side?
Rainbows are visions, but only illusions,
And Rainbows have nothing to hid.

So we've been told and some choose to believe it
I know they're wrong, wait and see.
Someday we'll find it, the rainbow connection,
The lovers, the dreamers and me.

Who said that every wish would be heard and answered
When wished on the morning star?
Somebody thought of that, and someone believed it,
And look what it's done so far.

What's so amazing that keeps us stargazing
And what do we think we might see?
Someday we'll find it, the rainbow connection,
The lovers, the dreamers, and me.

Bridge:
All of us under its spell,
We know that it's probably magic…

Have you been half asleep? And have you heard voices?
I've heard them calling my name.
…Is this the sweet sound that calls the young sailors?
The voice might be one and the same.

I've heard it too many times to ignore it
It's something that I'm s'possed to be…
Someday we'll find it, the rainbow connection,
The lovers, the dreamers, and me.

Laaa, da daa dee da daa daa,
La laa la la laa dee daa doo….

You Bash the Balrog

By Lee Gold to the tune: Waltzing Matilda)
From The Westerfilk Collection, Volume II, first printed in Alarums & Excursions

Once a jolly cleric, and a magic-using Elf
And a mighty Dwarf with a sword plus three
Left their native village, out to get their share of pelf
You bash the Balrog, and I'll climb the tree.

[Chorus]:
You bash the Balrog, you bash the Balrog,
You bash the Balrog, and I'll climb the tree.
[repeat last two lines of previous verse]

First they met a Goblin, with a fire-breathing Hound.
They bashed, and they smashed, and they scragged him with glee.
Afterwards they searched him, and a magic potion found.
You bash the Balrog, and I'll climb the tree.
[Chorus]

The low-wisdom Swordsman picked it up and drank it down.
Changed to a wolf immediately.
No one could dispel it, so they headed back to town.
You bash the Balrog, and I'll climb the tree.
[Chorus]

Then a loud voice bellowed, "Who has slain the Goblin King?"
Round turned our heroes; what did they see?
Swooping down upon them was a Balrog on the wing.
You bash the Balrog, and I'll climb the tree.
[Chorus]

"Help!" screamed the Cleric. "Ditto!" yelled the Elven Mage.
The wolf whimpered low, and he tried to flee.
The Balrog fell upon them, and his flames began to rage.
You bash the Balrog, and I'll climb the tree.
[Chorus]

They ran through the forest, seeking for a place to hide.
Pursued by the Balrog so fierce to see.
"Wait," cried the Elf-mage. "I have got a plan," he lied.
"You bash the Balrog, and I'lll climb the tree."
[Chorus]

Once a mighty Balrog slew a cleric and an elf
And a smallish wolf who had teeth plus three.
Skinned them and tanned their hides and kept them on a closet shelf.
You bash the Balrog, and I'll climb the tree.

(alternative end verse for people who like, nay insist, on happy endings)
Once a mighty Balrog slew a jolly cleric and
Skinned a smallish wolf who had teeth plus three.
But the Elf got away, and he's living with a Dryad band.
You bash the Balrog, and I'll climb the tree.

The Rattling Bog

Traditional

[Chorus]:
Ho Ro, the rattlin'bog
The bog down in the valley-o
Ho Ro, the rattlin'bog
The bog down in the valley-o

And in this bog, there was a tree
A rare tree, a rattlin' tree
A tree, in the bog, (add lines here)
And the bog down in the valley-o
[Chorus]

A limb on a tree...
A branch on a limb...
A twig on a branch...
A nest on a twig...
An egg in the nest...
A bird on an egg...
A wing on a bird...
A feather on a wing...
A flea on a feather...
A mite on a flea...
A smile on a mite...

Burden of the Crown

The battlefield is silent, the shadows growing wan
Though I may view the sunset, I'll not live to see the dawn
The leaves have ceased to rustle, the birds no longer sing.
All nature seems to wonder at the passing of our king.

And now you stand before me, your father's flesh and blood
Begotten of my sinew and the woman that I love
So difficult the birthing, the mother died that day
And now you stand before me to bear my crown away.

The hour is fast approaching, when you come into your own
When you take the Ring and Scepter and you sit upon the Throne
Before that final hour, when we each must meet our fate
Pray gaze upon the Royal Crown and marvel at its weight.

This cap of burnished metal is the symbol of our land
Supporting all we cherish, the dreams for which we stand
The weight, you'll find, is nothing, when you hold it in your palm
The burden of the crown begins the day you put it on.

See how the jewel sparkles when you gaze at it again
Each facet is a subject whose rights you must defend

Every point of light a burden you must shoulder with your own
And mighty is the burden of the man upon the throne.

My waiting now is over, my limbs are growing cold
I can feel the angels waiting to receive my passing soul
Keep well for me my kingdom when my memory is dead
And forgive me for the burden I place upon your head.

What is Courage Now?

Lyrics: Leslie Fish

What is courage now?
Is it just to go until we're done?
Men may call us heroes when
They can say we've won
But if we should fail, how then?
What is courage now?

Mountains to our side,
Standing like a wall against the sky,
Show no path to let us through
But still we search and try
Silver snow and stone cold blue.
Mountains to our side.

River from the pines;
We can hear your echo far away.
To your banks our step must lead
Help us on our way
We who know you learned your speed.
River from the pines.

Star above the world.
Seeing down the ways that we must go
Throw down light to guide a friend
Or how else can we know
If there's help where pathways end?
Star above the world.

What is courage now?
In the hope we know that holds us fast,
Bear us to that final door
And win us free at last
Or we touch this world no more
What is courage now?

Rocky Mountain High

-John Denver & Mike Taylor

He was born in the summer of his 27th year
Comin' home to a place he'd never been before
He left yesterday behind him, you might say he was born again
You might say he found a key to every door

When he first came to the mountains, his life was far away
On a road and hangin' by a song
But the sting's already broken and he doesn't really care
It keeps changin' fast and it don't last for long
C-FG/C-F-/CAmFG/C-F-

But in the Colorado Rocky Mountain High
I've seen it rainin' fire in the sky
<u>The shadows in the starlight are softer than a lullaby</u>
Rocky Mountain High -In Colorado (2x)
FGC-/FGC-/FGCF-/C-F-/C-F-

He climbed cathedral mountains, he saw silver clouds below
He saw everything as far as you can see
And they say that he got crazy once and tried to touch the sun
And he lost a friend but kept his memory

Now he walks in quiet solitude, the forest and the streams
Seeking grace in every step he takes
His sight has turned inside himself to try and understand
The serenity of a clear blue mountain lake

<u>Chorus</u> (You can talk to God and listen to his casual reply)

Now his life is full of wonder, but his heart still knows some fear
Of the simple things he cannot comprehend
When they try to tear the mountains down to bring in a couple more
More people, more scars upon the land.

<u>Chorus</u> (I know he'd be a poorer man if he never saw an eagle fly)

Boy of the Country

Words and music by Michael Murphy
Sung by John Denver

Because he called the forest brother
Because he called the earth his mother
They drove him out into the rain
Some people even said the boy from the country was insane

Because he spoke with fish in the creek
He tried to tell us that the animals could speak
Who knows, perhaps they do
How do you know they don't
Just because they've never spoken to you

Boy from the country, he left his home when he was young
Boy from the country, he loves the sun
He tried to tell us that we should love the land
We turned our heads and laughed
And we did not understand

Sometimes I think that the boy from the country
Is the only one who sees
Because the boy from the country
Doesn't want to see the forest for the trees
Boy from the country, he left his home when he was young

Boy from the country, he loves the sun

Spirit

By John Denver

His spirit joined and so was formed
Ten thousand years ago
Between the Swan and Hercules
Where even dark clouds glow.

To live with grace, to ride the swell,
To yet be strong of will,
To love the wind, to learn its song
And empty space to fill.

Apollo taught me to rhyme,
Orpheus taught me to play,
Andromeda casts down her sign,
And Vega lights my way.

Smoke rings in a galaxy,
An endless flight through time
Lyra gave her harp to him
And left him free to climb.

A winter's journey from the moon
To reach the summer sun,
To rise again, to sing for you
A song that's yet unsung.

Apollo taught me to rhyme,
Orpheus taught me to play,
Andromeda casts down her sign,
And Vega lights my way.

Wind Song

By John Denver & Joe Henry

The wind is the whisper of our mother the earth
The wind is the hand of our father the sky
The wind watches over our struggles and pleasures
The wind is the goddess who first learned to fly

The wind is the bearer of bad and good tidings
The weaver of darkness, the bringer of dawn
The wind gives the rain, then builds us a rainbow
The wind is the singer when sang the first song

The wind is a twister of anger and warning
The wind brings the fragrance of freshly mown hay
The wind is a racer, a wild stallion running
The sweet taste of love on a slow summer's day

The wind knows the songs of the cities and canyons
The thunder of mountains, the roar of the sea
The wind is the taker and giver of mornings
The wind is the symbol of all that is free

So welcome the wind and the wisdom she offers
Follow her summons when she calls again
In your heart and your spirit let the breezes surround you
Lift up your voice then and sing with the wind

Blowing in the Wind

By Bob Dylan

How many roads must a man walk down
Before you call him a man?
Yes, 'n' how many seas must a white dove sail
Before she sleeps in the sand?
Yes, 'n' how many times must the cannon balls fly
Before they're forever banned?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind,
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

How many times must a man look up
Before he can see the sky?
Yes, 'n' how many ears must one man have
Before he can hear people cry?
Yes, 'n' how many deaths will it take till he knows
That too many people have died?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind,
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

How many years can a mountain exist
Before it's washed to the sea?
Yes, 'n' how many years can some people exist
Before they're allowed to be free?
Yes, 'n' how many times can a man turn his head,
Pretending he just doesn't see?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind,
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

Don't Think Twice, It's All Right

By Bob Dylan

It ain't no use to sit and wonder why, babe
It don't matter, anyhow
An' it ain't no use to sit and wonder why, babe
If you don't know by now
When your rooster crows at the break of dawn
Look out your window and I'll be gone
You're the reason I'm trav'lin' on
Don't think twice, it's all right

It ain't no use in turnin' on your light, babe
That light I never knowed
An' it ain't no use in turnin' on your light, babe
I'm on the dark side of the road
Still I wish there was somethin' you would do or say
To try and make me change my mind and stay
We never did too much talkin' anyway
So don't think twice, it's all right

It ain't no use in callin' out my name, gal
Like you never did before
It ain't no use in callin' out my name, gal
I can't hear you any more
I'm a-thinkin' and a-wond'rin' all the way down the road
I once loved a woman, a child I'm told
I give her my heart but she wanted my soul
But don't think twice, it's all right

I'm walkin' down that long, lonesome road, babe
Where I'm bound, I can't tell
But goodbye's too good a word, gal
So I'll just say fare thee well
I ain't sayin' you treated me unkind
You could have done better but I don't mind
You just kinda wasted my precious time
But don't think twice, it's all right

Mr. Tambourine Man

By Bob Dylan

Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm going to.
Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come followin' you.

Though I know that evenin's empire has returned into sand,
Vanished from my hand,
Left me blindly here to stand but still not sleeping.
My weariness amazes me, I'm branded on my feet,
I have no one to meet
And the ancient empty street's too dead for dreaming.

Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm going to.
Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come followin' you.

Take me on a trip upon your magic swirlin' ship,
My senses have been stripped, my hands can't feel to grip,
My toes too numb to step, wait only for my boot heels
To be wanderin'.
I'm ready to go anywhere, I'm ready for to fade
Into my own parade, cast your dancing spell my way,
I promise to go under it.

Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm going to.
Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come followin' you.

Though you might hear laughin', spinnin', swingin' madly across the sun,
It's not aimed at anyone, it's just escapin' on the run
And but for the sky there are no fences facin'.
And if you hear vague traces of skippin' reels of rhyme
To your tambourine in time, it's just a ragged clown behind,
I wouldn't pay it any mind, it's just a shadow you're
Seein' that he's chasing.

Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm going to.
Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come followin' you.

Then take me disappearin' through the smoke rings of my mind,
Down the foggy ruins of time, far past the frozen leaves,
The haunted, frightened trees, out to the windy beach,
Far from the twisted reach of crazy sorrow.
Yes, to dance beneath the diamond sky with one hand waving free,
Silhouetted by the sea, circled by the circus sands,
With all memory and fate driven deep beneath the waves,
Let me forget about today until tomorrow.

Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm going to.
Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come followin' you.

Too Much of Nothing

By Bob Dylan

Now, too much of nothing
Can make a man feel ill at ease.
One man's temper might rise
While another man's temper might freeze.
In the day of confession
We cannot mock a soul.
Oh, when there's too much of nothing,
No one has control.

Say hello to Valerie
Say hello to Vivian
Send them all my salary
On the waters of oblivion

Too much of nothing
Can make a man abuse a king.
He can walk the streets and boast like most
But he wouldn't know a thing.
Now, it's all been done before,
It's all been written in the book,
But when there's too much of nothing,
Nobody should look.

Say hello to Valerie
Say hello to Vivian
Send them all my salary
On the waters of oblivion

Too much of nothing
Can turn a man into a liar,
It can cause one man to sleep on nails
And another man to eat fire.
Ev'rybody's doin' somethin',
I heard it in a dream,
But when there's too much of nothing,
It just makes a fella mean.

Say hello to Valerie
Say hello to Vivian
Send them all my salary
On the waters of oblivion

Watching the River Flow

By Bob Dylan

What's the matter with me,
I don't have much to say,
Daylight sneakin' through the window
And I'm still in this all-night café.
Walkin' to and fro beneath the moon
Out to where the trucks are rollin' slow,
To sit down on this bank of sand
And watch the river flow.

Wish I was back in the city
Instead of this old bank of sand,
With the sun beating down over the chimney tops
And the one I love so close at hand.
If I had wings and I could fly,
I know where I would go.
But right now I'll just sit here so contentedly
And watch the river flow.

People disagreeing on all just about everything, yeah,
Makes you stop and all wonder why.
Why only yesterday I saw somebody on the street
Who just couldn't help but cry.
Oh, this ol' river keeps on rollin', though,
No matter what gets in the way and which way the wind does blow,
And as long as it does I'll just sit here
And watch the river flow.

People disagreeing everywhere you look,
Makes you wanna stop and read a book.
Why only yesterday I saw somebody on the street
That was really shook.
But this ol' river keeps on rollin', though,
No matter what gets in the way and which way the wind does blow,
And as long as it does I'll just sit here
And watch the river flow.

Watch the river flow,
Watchin' the river flow,
Watchin' the river flow,
But I'll sit down on this bank of sand
And watch the river flow.

With God On Our Side

By Bod Dylan

Oh my name it is nothin'
My age it means less
The country I come from
Is called the Midwest
I's taught and brought up there
The laws to abide
And that land that I live in
Has God on its side.

Oh the history books tell it
They tell it so well
The cavalries charged
The Indians fell
The cavalries charged
The Indians died
Oh the country was young
With God on its side.

Oh the Spanish-American
War had its day
And the Civil War too
Was soon laid away
And the names of the heroes
I's made to memorize
With guns in their hands
And God on their side.

Oh the First World War, boys
It closed out its fate
The reason for fighting
I never got straight
But I learned to accept it
Accept it with pride
For you don't count the dead
When God's on your side.

When the Second World War
Came to an end
We forgave the Germans
And we were friends
Though they murdered six million
In the ovens they fried
The Germans now too
Have God on their side.

I've learned to hate Russians
All through my whole life
If another war starts
It's them we must fight
To hate them and fear them
To run and to hide
And accept it all bravely
With God on my side.

But now we got weapons
Of the chemical dust
If fire them we're forced to
Then fire them we must
One push of the button
And a shot the world wide
And you never ask questions
When God's on your side.

In a many dark hour
I've been thinkin' about this
That Jesus Christ
Was betrayed by a kiss
But I can't think for you
You'll have to decide
Whether Judas Iscariot
Had God on his side.

So now as I'm leavin'
I'm weary as Hell
The confusion I'm feelin'
Ain't no tongue can tell
The words fill my head
And fall to the floor
If God's on our side
He'll stop the next war.

A Hard Rain’s Going to Fall

By Bob Dylan

Oh, where have you been, my blue-eyed son?
Oh, where have you been, my darling young one?
I've stumbled on the side of twelve misty mountains.
I've walked and I've crawled on six crooked highways.
I've stepped in the middle of seven sad forests.
I've been out in front of a dozen dead oceans.
I've been ten thousand miles in the mouth of a graveyard.
And its a hard, and its a hard, and it's a hard
And it's a hard rain's a gonna fall.

Oh what did you see, my blue-eyed son?
Oh, what did you see, my darling young one?
I saw a newborn baby with wild wolves all around it.
I saw a highway of diamonds with nobody on it.
I saw a black branch with blood that kept drippin',
I saw a room full of men with their hammers a-bleedin'
I saw a white ladder all covered with water.
I saw ten thousand talkers whose tongues were all broken,
I saw guns and sharp swords in the hands of young children,
And it's a hard, and it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard,
And it's a hard rain's a gonna fall.

And what did you hear, my blue-eyed son?
And what did you hear, my darling young one?
I heard the sound of a thunder, it roared out a warnin',
Heard the roar of a wave that could drown the whole world,
Hear one hundred drummers whose hand were a-blazin'
Heard ten thousand whisperin' and nobody listenin',
Heard on person starve, I heard many people laughin',
Heard the song of a poet who died in the gutter,
Heard the sound of a clown who cried in the alley,
And it's a hard, and it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard,
And it's a hard rain's a-gonna fall.

Oh, who did you meet, my blue-eyed son?
Who did you meet, my darling young one?
I met a young child beside a dead pony
I met a white man who walked a black dog
I met a young woman whose body was burning
I met a young girl, she gave me a rainbow,

I met one man who was wounded in love,
I met another man who was wounded with hatred,
And it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard,
It's a hard rain's a-gonna fall.

Oh, what'll you do now, my blue-eyed son?
Oh, what'll you do now, my darling young one?
I'm a-goin' back out 'fore the rain starts a fallin',
I'll walk to the depths of the deepest black forest,
Where the people are many and their hands all empty,
Where the pellets of poison are flooding their waters,
Where the home in the valley meets the damp dirty prison,
Where the executioner's face is always well hidden,
Where hunger is ugly, where none is the number,
And I'll tell it and think it and speak it and breathe it,
And reflect from the mountain so all souls can see it,
Then I'll stand on the ocean until start sinkin',
But I'll know my song well before I start singin'
And it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard,
It's a hard rain's a-gonna fall.

Bob Dylan's Dream

This song always reminds me of the joys of Druidism when I was a college student. I hope you find the song and learn to sing it.

While riding on a train goin' west,
I fell asleep for to take my rest.
I dreamed a dream that made me sad,
Concerning myself and the first few friends I had.

With half-damp eyes I stared to the room
Where my friends and I spent many an afternoon,
Where we together weathered many a storm,
Laughin' and singin' till the early hours of the morn.

By the old wooden stove where our hats was hung,
Our words were told, our songs were sung,
Where we longed for nothin' and were quite satisfied
Talkin' and a-jokin' about the world outside.

With haunted hearts through the heat and cold,
We never thought we could ever get old.
We thought we could sit forever in fun
But our chances really was a million to one.

As easy as it was to tell black from white,
It was all that easy to tell wrong from right.
And our choices were few and the thought never hit
That the one road we traveled would ever shatter and split.

How many a year has passed and gone,
And many a gamble has been lost and won.
And many a road taken by many a friend,
And each one I've never seen again.

I wish, I wish, I wish in vain,
That we could sit simple in that room again,
Ten thousand dollars at the drop of a hat
I'd give it all gladly if our lives could be like that.

Box of Rain

Words by Robert Hunter; music by Phil Lesh

Look out of any window
any morning, any evening, any day
Maybe the sun is shining
birds are winging or
rain is falling from a heavy sky –
What do you want me to do,
to do for you to see you through?
this is all a dream we dreamed
one afternoon long ago

Walk out of any doorway
feel your way, feel your way
like the day before
Maybe you'll find direction
around some corner
where it's been waiting to meet you –
What do you want me to do,
to watch for you while you're sleeping?
Well please don't be surprised
when you find me dreaming too

Look into any eyes
you find by you, you can see
clear through to another day
I know it's been seen before
through other eyes on other days
while going home –
What do you want me to do,
to do for you to see you through?
It's all a dream we dreamed
one afternoon long ago

Walk into splintered sunlight
Inch your way through dead dreams
to another land
Maybe you're tired and broken
Your tongue is twisted
with words half spoken
and thoughts unclear
What do you want me to do
to do for you to see you through
A box of rain will ease the pain
and love will see you through

Just a box of rain –
wind and water –
Believe it if you need it,
if you don't just pass it on
Sun and shower –
Wind and rain –
in and out the window
like a moth before a flame

It's just a box of rain
I don't know who put it there
Believe it if you need it
or leave it if you dare
But it's just a box of rain
or a ribbon for your hair
Such a long long time to be gone
and a short time to be there

Rosemary

Words by Robert Hunter; music by Jerry Garcia

Boots were of leather
A breath of cologne
Her mirror was a window
She sat quite alone

All around her
the garden grew
scarlet and purple
and crimson and blue

She came and she went
and at last went away
The garden was sealed
when the flowers decayed

On the wall of the garden
a legend did say:
No one may come here
since no one may stay

Death is a Door

By Nancy Byrd Turner

Death is only an old door
Set in a garden wall;
On gentle hinges it gives, at dusk
When the thrushes call.

Along the lintel are green leaves,
Beyond the light lies still;
Very willing and weary feet
Go over that still

There is nothing to trouble any heart;
Nothing to hurt at all.
Death is only a quiet door
In an old wall.

St. Stephen

Words by Robert Hunter; music by Jerry Garcia

Saint Stephen with a rose
In and out of the garden he goes
Country garland in the wind and the rain
Wherever he goes the people all complain

Stephen prosper in his time
Well he may and he may decline
Did it matter? does it now?
Stephen would answer if he only knew how

Wishing well with a golden bell
Bucket hanging clear to hell
Hell halfway twixt now and then
Stephen fill it up and lower down
And lower down again

Lady finger dipped in moonlight
Writing `what for?' across the morning sky
Sunlight splatters dawn with answers
Darkness shrugs and bids the day goodbye

Speeding arrow, sharp and narrow,
What a lot of fleeting matters you have spurned
Several seasons with their treasons
Wrap the babe in scarlet covers call it your own

Did he doubt or did he try?
Answers aplenty in the bye and bye
Talk about your plenty, talk about your ills
One man gathers what another man spills
Saint Stephen will remain

All he's lost he shall regain
Seashore washed by the suds and the foam
Been here so long he's got to calling it home
Fortune comes a crawlin, Calliope woman
Spinning that curious sense of your own
Can you answer? Yes I can,
but what would be the answer to the answer man?

High green chilly winds and windy vines in loops around the twining shafts of lavender, they're crawling to the sun
Underfoot the ground is patched with climbing arms of ivy wrapped around the manzanita, stark and shiny in the breeze
Wonder who will water all the children of the garden when they sigh about the barren lack of rain and droop so hungry 'neath the sky...
William Tell has stretched his bow till it won't stretch no furthermore and/or it may require a change that hasn't come before

Uncle John's Band

Words by Robert Hunter; music by Jerry Garcia

Well, the first days are the hardest days,
don't you worry anymore
When life looks like Easy Street
there is danger at your door
Think this through with me
Let me know your mind
Wo-oah, what I want to know
is are you kind?

It's a Buck Dancer's Choice, my friend,
better take my advice
You know all the rules by now
and the fire from the ice
Will you come with me?
Won't you come with me?
Wo-oah, what I want to know,
will you come with me?

Goddamn, well I declare
Have you seen the like?
Their walls are built of cannonballs,
their motto is Don't Tread on Me
Come hear Uncle John's Band
by the riverside
Got some things to talk about
here beside the rising tide

It's the same story the crow told me
It's the only one he know –
like the morning sun you come
and like the wind you go
Ain't no time to hate,

barely time to wait
Wo-oah, what I want to know,
where does the time go?

I live in a silver mine
and I call it Beggar's Tomb
I got me a violin
and I beg you call the tune
Anybody's choice
I can hear your voice
Wo-oah what
I want to know,
how does the song go?

Come hear Uncle John's Band
by the riverside
Come with me or go alone
He's come to take his children home
Come hear Uncle John's Band
playing to the tide
Come on along or go alone
he's come to take his children home

Mountains of the Moon

Words by Robert Hunter; music by Jerry Garcia

Cold Mountain water
the jade merchant's daughter
Mountains of the Moon,
Bow and bend to me
Hi ho the Carrion Crow
Folderolderiddle
Hi Ho the Carrion Crow
Bow and bend to me

Hey Tom Banjo
Hey a laurel
More than laurel
You may sow
More than laurel
You may sow

Hey the laurel
Hey the city
In the rain
Hey, hey,
Hey the white wheat
Waving in the wind

20 degrees of solitude
20 degrees in all
All the dancing kings & wives
assembled in the hall
Lost is a long & lonely time
Fairy Sybil flying
All along the all along
the Mountains of the Moon

Here is feast of solitude
A fiddler grim and tall
Plays to dancing kings and wives
Assembled in the hall
Of lost, long, lonely times
Fairy Sibil flying
All along the all along
the Mountains of the Moon

Hey Tom Banjo
It's time to matter
The Earth will see you
on through this time
The Earth will see you on
through this time

Down by the water
The Marsh King's Daughter
Did you know?
Clothed in tatters
Always will be
Tom, where did you go?

Mountains of the Moon, Electra
Mountains of the Moon
All along the
All along the
Mountains of the Moon

Hi Ho the Carrion Crow
Folderolderiddle
Hi Ho the Carrion Crow
Bow and bend to me
Bend to me

Giant

By Stan Rogers

Cold wind on the harbor and rain on the road
Wet promise of winter brings recourse to coal
There's fire in the blood and a fog on Bras d'Or
The giant will rise with the moon.

'Twas the same ancient fever in the Isles of the Blessed
That our fathers brought with them when they went west
It's the blood of the Druids that never will rest
The giant will rise with the moon.

So crash the glass down! Move with the tide!
Young friends and old whiskey are burning inside.
Crash the glass down! Fingal will rise
With the moon.

In inclement weather the people are fey
Three thousand year stories as the night slips away
Remembering Fingal feels not far away
The giant will rise with the moon.

The wind's from the north, there be new moon tonight
And we have no circles to dance in it's sight
So light a torch, bring the bottle, and build the fire bright
The giant will rise with the moon.

So crash the glass down! Move with the tide!
Young friends and old whiskey are burning inside.
Crash the glass down! Fingal will rise
With the moon.

Watch the Field Behind the Plow

By Stan Rogers

Watch the field behind the plow turn to straight, dark rows
Feel the trickle in your clothes, blow the dust cake from your nose
Hear the tractor's steady roar, Oh you can't stop now
There's a quarter section more or less to go

And it figures that the rain keeps its own sweet time
You can watch it come for miles, but you guess you've got a while
So ease the throttle out a hair, every rod's a gain
And there's victory in every quarter mile

Poor old Kuzyk down the road
The heartache, hail and hoppers brought him down
He gave it up and went to town

And Emmett Pierce the other day
Took a heart attack and died at forty two
You could see it coming on 'cause he worked as hard as you

In an hour, maybe more, you'll be wet clear through
The air is cooler now, pull you hat brim further down
And watch the field behind the plow turn to straight dark rows
Put another season's promise in the ground

And if the harvest's any good
The money just might cover all the loans
You've mortgaged all you own

Buy the kids a winter coat
Take the wife back east for Christmas if you can
All summer she hangs on when you're so tied to the land

For the good times come and go, but at least there's rain
So this won't be barren ground when September rolls around
So watch the field behind the plow turn to straight dark rows
Put another season's promise in the ground

Watch the field behind the plow turn to straight dark rows
Put another season's promise in the ground

Delivery Delayed

By Stan Rogers

How early is "Beginning"? From when is there a soul?
Do we discover living, or, somehow, are we told?
In sudden pain, in empty cold, in blinding light of day
We're given breath, and it takes our breath away.

How cruel to be unformed fancy, the way in which we come –
Over-whelmed by feeling and sudden loss of love
And what price dark confining pain, (the hardest to forgive)
When all at once, we're called upon to live.

By a giant hand we're taken from the shelter of the womb
That dreaded first horizon, the endless empty room
Where communion is lost forever, when a heart first beats alone
Still, it remembers, no matter how its grown.

We grow, but grow apart –
We live, but more alone –
The more to see, the more to see,
To cry aloud that we are free
To hide our ancient fear of being alone.

And how we live in darkness, embracing spiteful cold
Refusing any answers, for no man can be told
That delivery is delayed until at last we're made aware
And first reach for love, to find 'twas always there.

Mary Ellen Carter

By Stan Rogers

She went down last October in a pouring driving rain.
The skipper, he'd been drinking and the Mate, he felt no pain.
Too close to Three Mile Rock, and she was dealt her mortal blow,
And the Mary Ellen Carter settled low.
There were five of us aboard her when she finally was awash.
We'd worked like hell to save her, all heedless of the cost.
And the groan she gave as she went down, it caused us to proclaim
That the Mary Ellen Carter would rise again.

Well, the owners wrote her off; not a nickel would they spend.
She gave twenty years of service, boys, then met her sorry end.
But insurance paid the loss to them, they let her rest below.
Then they laughed at us and said we had to go.
But we talked of her all winter, some days around the clock,
For she's worth a quarter million, afloat and at the dock.
And with every jar that hit the bar, we swore we would remain
And make the Mary Ellen Carter rise again.

Rise again, rise again, that her name not be lost
To the knowledge of men.
Those who loved her best and were with her till the end
Will make the Mary Ellen Carter rise again.

All spring, now, we've been with her on a barge lent by a friend.
Three dives a day in hard hat suit and twice I've had the bends.
Thank God it's only sixty feet and the currents here are slow
Or I'd never have the strength to go below.
But we've patched her rents, stopped her vents, dogged hatch and porthole down.
Put cables to her, 'fore and aft and girded her around.
Tomorrow, noon, we hit the air and then take up the strain.
And watch the Mary Ellen Carter Rise Again.

For we couldn't leave her there, you see, to crumble into scale.
She'd saved our lives so many times, living through the gale
And the laughing, drunken rats who left her to a sorry grave
They won't be laughing in another day...
And you, to whom adversity has dealt the final blow
With smiling bastards lying to you everywhere you go
Turn to, and put out all your strength of arm and heart and brain
And like the Mary Ellen Carter, rise again.

Rise again, rise again - though your heart it be broken
And life about to end
No matter what you've lost, be it a home, a love, a friend.
Like the Mary Ellen Carter, rise again.

Witch of the Westmoreland

By Stand Rogers

Pale was the wounded knight, that bore the rowan shield
Loud and cruel were the raven's cries that feasted on the field
Saying "Beck water cold and clear will never clean your wound
There's none but the witch of the Westmoreland can make thee hale and sound"

So turn, turn your stallion's head 'til his red mane flies in the wind
And the rider of the moon goes by and the bright star falls behind
And clear was the paley moon when his shadow passed him by
Below the hills were the brightest stars when he heard the owlet cry

Saying "Why do you ride this way, and wherefore came you here?"
"I seek the Witch of the Westmorland that dwells by the winding mere"
And it's weary by the Ullswater and the misty brake fern way
Til through the cleft in the Kirkstane Pass the winding water lay

He said "Lie down, my brindled hound and rest ye, my good grey hawk
And thee, my steed may graze thy fill for I must dismount and walk,
But come when you hear my horn and answer swift the call
For I fear ere the sun will rise this morn ye will serve me best of all"

And it's down to the water's brim he's born the rowan shield
And the goldenrod he has cast in to see what the lake might yield
And wet she rose from the lake, and fast and fleet went she
One half the form of a maiden fair with a jet black mare's body

And loud, long and shrill he blew til his steed was by his side
High overhead the grey hawk flew and swiftly did he ride
Saying "Course well, my brindled hound, and fetch me the jet black mare
Stoop and strike, my good grey hawk, and bring me the maiden fair"

She said "Pray, sheathe thy silvery sword. Lay down thy rowan shield
For I see by the briny blood that flows you've been wounded in the field"
And she stood in a gown of the velvet blue, bound round with a silver chain
And she's kissed his pale lips once and twice and three times round again

And she's bound his wounds with the goldenrod, full fast in her arms he lay
And he has risen hale and sound with the sun high in the day
She said "Ride with your brindled hound at heel, and your good grey hawk in hand
There's none can harm the knight who's lain with the Witch of the Westmorland."

A Book of Songs and Poetry Volume Four 2000 Older Selections

An Invocation Poem:

Druid Chronicler, Dec 1978
By Julia Vinograd

Use praise of the Goddess for the God
Use praise of the God for the Goddess
Only the Goddess can invoke the God
Only the God can invoke the Goddess
If they both come at once the worshippers get drenched
There is only one God
and He is whoever the Goddess is in love with at the moment
There is only one Goddess
and She is whoever the God is in love with at the moment
Eternity has a lot of moments.

O Danny Boy

By David Geller, mid 70s.

O Danny Boy if words could e'er recall you
To walk again 'neath Pagan Irish skies
Then would I sing, 'til voice be taken from me
And light and life be faded from my eyes.

Too long, too long, your blood's been wasted flowing
To water seeds of wars that have no name
Where brothers die for quarrels past recalling
Nor caring aught for Ireland's agony and shame.

So turn again, the silver Stag is running
With blooded eye in groves beneath the moon
The songs of old still whisper through the oak trees
Where ancient breezes pipe our long-forgotten tune

O Danny Boy, if words could e'er recall you
to walk again 'neath Pagan Irish skies
Then would I sing, 'til voice be taken from me
And light, and life itself be faded form my eyes.

The Lair of Great Cthulhu

(Tune: Chattanooga Choo-Choo)
By Larry Press, mid 70s

Pardon me' boy- Is this the lair of Great Cthulhu?
In the city of slime,
Where it is night all the time.
Bob Hope never went
Along the road to Great Cthulhu,
And Tripple-A has no maps
And all the Cho-Chos lay traps.
You'll see an ancient sunken city where the angles are wrong.
You'll see the fourth dimension if you're there very long
Come to the conventicle.
Bring along your pentacle;
Otherwise you'll be dragged off by a tentacle.

A mountain's in the middle, with a house on the peak:
'A gnashin' and a thrashin ' and a clackin ' of beak.
Your soul you will be lackin '
When you see that mighty kraken.
Oo-oo! Great Cthulhu's starting to speak.
So come on aboard,
Along the road to Great Cthulhu.
Wen-di'-gos and Dhols
Will make Big Macs of our souls.
Under the sea, ~
Down in the ancient city of Rilyeh,
In the lair of Great Cthulhu,
They'l1 suck your soul away!
(Great Cthulhu, Great Cthulu, Suck your soul! Great Cthulhu, Great Cthulhu)
In the lair of Great Cthulhu, They'll suck your soul away.

(Here, there is an obligatory saxophone solo, a la Tex Beneke)

Huntress by Paladin

A huntress is She.
In virginal white She fares the pale of night
With carnivore intent: All innocent
Of praise or blame or any virtue bearing mortal name or measurable dimension....
A moonlit mist-wrapp't rose is She, or so appears to be, Who
Flowering, reveals some wild and iridescent thing
that waits in coiled repose and quite conceals:
Intention.
–-She'd seem to yield—a White Queen's gambit leading surely to checkmate.
—And lo! springs forth some fool or hero glad to seize upon such bait
He's lost! His heart
'twill cost him, for:
She feasts upon such things
And mayhap, "Pass the Salt" She sweetly sings to one of Her exalted company the whiles She dabs Her dainty lips with samite spun of spider-silk
She's of that ilk at very least that things the world a toy or shake they sky
But it's Her special Joy, to
Take whatever beast may catch Her Eye:
Her taut bow bent like crescent moon,
Swift arrows, then the boon, She grants, with glee A huntress is She.

Winter

By Deborah Frankel Bender

Then you come before the old woman. Who is the true head of your coven. Blindfold, hands bound, naked, (It is lawful for me to tell you this, since You know it already) And she says to you "Please me."
Women have a better chance of getting through it.
We've had more practice
Coping with unreasonable demands,
Our resources always inadequate.
Men get bad habits
Dealing from strength:
They tend to stick at the first step
("Define the problem")
Few come out of that room with their own bodies on them.
You come before the old woman Who is the true head of your coven. Blindfold, hands bound, naked. She is waiting for you. Small talk, charm, and habits will not help you with her. She has seen it all. She knows more than you do. She is easily bored.
You must come before the old woman
Stripped naked,
And she says to you,
"You're back. What did you bring me?"
What will you offer her? Clean hands? A pure heart? Hers are not. She is not. She is an old woman. She has seen everything done everything, endured everything. She is responsible for everything.
Then your least fear is knowledge Of the whip by her hand.
Witch, what was your training? Embrace everything. Use everything. Cherish everything. Fear nothing.
So you come before the old woman and dance before her Made to improvise. Hobbled by the rope. Tough to keep your balance. Naturally she laughs. At you wobbling and whistling. She laughs, reminded of the juggler she loved once. She sends you out again.

Goddess Gift –Joyce L. Baker

The bodies entwined appear as one,
For this, indeed they are,
The song of love escapes their lips,
Is carried near and far
On the wings of ecstasy,
They rise and they do soar,
This feeling it wit never end
For love will e'er endure.
Two bodies–God and Goddess are United perfectly.
Their joy exposed, so openly,
For all the world to see.
Their feelings are eternal
The same they'll always be,
From dawn of time to man's demise
United–Perfectly.
The fire of Life flows through their veins
Their voices rise and fall,
Their ecstasy–adrift of Love
From she who created all.

Winter's Ending

-Jeffrey Andrew Young

Come the goat-man, man of Springtime,
Savior of the Winter's ending.
Come from mountains, come and enter
This, the sad, stiff human figure,
For his mind is numbed with Winter,
Lain neglected since rememb'ring,
And his hands are stiffened branches,
Frozen bones that have no feeling.
Strike the fire deep within him,
Fire to melt this icy thinking.
Passion sings within him somewhere,
Laughter lies awake, awaiting
Some necessity inside him:
To awaken him from slumber.
Now the dead man's mind grows restless,
Fingers yearn for warmer flesh,
Rememb'ring souls that once had touched him,
Breathing bodies he was near to.
Goat-man draw him ever onward
Through the slush of dying Winter
Where his memories await him
In Spring's gentle restlessness.

Lament of the Witch

–Morninq Glory– Ohoyo Cjsh Chishba

I may not go to the festival...
All this month I have sewn costumes.
Gathered nuts and baked cakes.
I have strung beads and berries for
the children to wear.
All this my people have taken from me
And they have said: "It is good."
I have borne children, I have woven mats
'I have carved masks, I have washed clothing ,
AII this my tribe has taken from me and they have said: "It is good."
But when the sea change comes, my body
begins to flow. My woman spirit to
gather power and force.
Large drops of blood
drip
slowly and then gush forth.
My magick is strongest, my feelings
are deepest; my knowledge is surest..
Now, more than ever I am
A woman of power.
All this my tribe has refused - and they have said: "It is bad."
And when l touched my genitals to
give myself pleasure,.
When I made images to call the spirits...
When I refused the husband chosen for me...
And every, every moon when my body know its bloody power...
AII this my tribe has refused me -
My shadow pollutes, the rainbow serpent is angered, my lover shuns me,
I am cursed, diseased, reviled. Men retch at my scent; avoidably footprints.
Banished from my home, forbidden the festivities...
I remember the medicine
The man's words to me at my puberty ritual: "You must be as Mother Earth...
Humble and fruitful.
You must not touch any holy thing or a man's possessions.
You are dangerous to yourself and to the tribe;. to bleed is to be sick...
you must be set apart for your moon and give thanks to God that He has spared you life when you cease to bleed."
Hog.
So spoke the wise man.
Old fool! I AM like Mother Earth, she who bleeds and does not die.
Only for men in blood linked with sickness and death. I am a woman...
my blood
The sacred tools...our foremothers made them.
Once the houses were ours...we built them.
Once the rituals were ours...we wrote them.
Once the moon hut was for our own seclusion...we sought it for privacy.
Now, the tools are forbidden
the houses belong to our fathers
the rituals are led by men
the moon hut is our prison
and our bodies are the source of our shame.
What has happened? Why did things change? How has this come to be?
–Long ago–
The old men say: Women were punished for their pollution...for their bleeding. They angered the Gods."
–Long ago– The old women say: "Men became jealous of our power, and they stole everything."
We shared our bread, our fires, our homes, our tools, our magick, our knowledge, our bodies... We shared. -
They had only one thing we did not give them; one skill we did not teach them. They had the use of weapons... and they did no share that. They turned it against us.
The old women say: "Let us kneel down in the mud, crawling along!
We leave it for them, for our Brothers,
We leave the world for them
for they want it that way."
I will not sing this song, looking out through the window of the moon hut and hearing the songs and laughter of my people.
I will not sing this song.
I mark my cheeks with my
Dark Blood.
I will sing a song to the Goddess... who is stronger than the weapons of Men.
I will sing a song to my sisters who are wiser than the lies of Men.
I will sing a song to my daughter who will bear the future of Men.
My song is a song about power, about loving, about sharing, about changing
I will sing about the future I will weave a web of fate
I will sow a seed of doubt I will tell a tale of tomorrow.

I mark my forehead with my
Dark Blood...
...and I wait.

Oimelc Hymn

1979 Anodea and Selene lead Robert Larsen's -0imelc Hymn" (to band 1, side 1 of "Durch die WustelDesert," by HANS JOACHIM ROEDELIUS.) Hymn is done in plainchant style (leaders chant each line, all repeat):

The days are short the heavens dark, the Mother sleeps.
The trees are bare the north wind stalks, the Mother sleeps.
The nights are long and full of fright, the Mother sleeps.
But the ewe gives birth the ewe gives milk, the Mother stirs.
The Mother smiles with dreams of life, She will return.
And on that day will we rejoice, when She returns.
Long the day bright the sky, when She returns.
Green the trees soft the breeze, when She returns.
Short the night our fires alight ,when She returns!

Oimelc Blessing

1979 -Selene Bonewits

O Mother

Blend your milk with ours.

Give us nourishment
To strengthen our spirits
As well as our bones.
As we drink
From your breast
Pour your light in

Through our hearts,
To dance in our cells,
To glow with our eyes.
Through us
Your light spirals & spreads
Out our fingers

To all we touch
And on...
To heal the Earth
And to heal the people of the Earth
So that we may live & die

In harmony with your rhythm.

Oimelc Poem

1979 by Ailean MacGregor

Music filling the magical air whirling motion of dancing spirals of energy flowing from within the centre point of flame
Bleary eyed children of Brighid inebriated on the fruits of Dionysus celebrate Her mysteries around the cauldron fire
The Mother's milk is raised in salute to Her myriad aspects as sister and brother revel in the warmth of Her smile
Five times the magick point did merge into the star which illuminated the night while mushroom eating lovers huddled together and dreamt of the coming of the Spring

Let It All Happen

By Anodea Judth

Let the water fall, Let the water fall
Let the water fall on the earth
Let the trees grow tall, Let the water fall
Let the greenery grow on the earth.

Let the greenery grow, let the greenery grow
Let the greenery grow on the Earth
Let the trees grow tall, let the water fall
Let the greenery grow on the Earth

Let the air blow clean….
Let the water run clear…
Let the seals swim free…

Goddesses, Goddesses Song

By Anodea Judith

CHORUS: Goddesses, Goddesses, Got to have Goddesses.
Got to have Goddesses roaming above.
Goddesses, Goddesses, got to have Goddesses
Got to have Goddesses ruling with love.

In the ancient days of old,
Goddesses ruled the heavens I'm told
That was known as the time of mirth
When there were many who worshipped the earth.

When you're in need and you call on the Goddess
Her strength will illumine your wisdom within
The Goddess, she answers with laughter and dances
As we on the Earth become Pagan again.

When you're in crisis, then just call on Isis
Her silvery horns will take troubles away.
We dance in the moonlight, the sunlight and starlight
And know that the world will better someday.

All of the Earth is just one big home
Where all the Gods and the Goddesses roam
Look to the forest you'll see what I mean
Love of the Goddess will keep the Earth clean.

Love is Lord of All

Where gentle tides, go rolling by
Along the salt sea strand
The colors blend and roll as one
Together in the sand
And often do the winds entwined
To send their distant call
The quiet joys of brotherhood
And love is lord of all

Where oat and wheat together rise
Along the common ground
The mare and stallion, light and dark
Have thunder in their sound
The rainbow sign, the blended flood
Still hold my heart in thrall
The quiet joys of brotherhood
And love is lord of all

But men have come to plow the hide
The oat lies on the ground
I hear their fires in the field
The drive the stallion down
The roses bleed, both like and dark
The winds do seldom call
The running sands recall the time
When love was lord of all.

Let the Spirit Come To You

By Anodea Judith

Let the spirit come to you
Through you renew you
Let the love shine on to you
Pursue you undo you
Let the light shine above you
Be of you that loves you
Let the peace settle in you
Within you, begin you.

We Are One Family

We are the children of the Earth
She is our Mother!
Offspring of the Sun god's bright mirth
He is our Father!
We have our siblings in the air, on the land, in the sea…

Chorus: We are one family.
We are one family
Kin to the whale and the dove.
We are one family.
We are one family.
Joined by the strength of our love, of our love,
Joined by the strength of our love.

The dolphin so free and alive
She is our sister!
The wolf who must kill to survive
He is our brother!
We are the cousins of the eagle who soars in ecstasy…

Sequoia and bristlecone pine
They are ancestors!
The cactus and mushroom divine
We are related!
The D.N.A. that runs through us all is the key…

Throughout all of time and of space
Life has been granted!
Every intelligent race
We have been planted!
And those who have sown the seed now await patiently…

Lughnasadh Dance

Lyrics by: Gwydion Pendderwen
Recorded on: "Songs for the Old Religion," Gwydion Pendderwen, 1975; "Once Around the Wheel," Ian Corrigan, 1987 (Association for Consciousness Exploration, 1643 Lee Rd #9, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118)
Subject: Sabbats - Lughnasadh
Lugh the light of summer bright clothed all in green
Tailtu his mother true, rise up and be seen

Chorus:
At your festival sound the horn, calling the people again,
Child of Barleycorn, newly summerborn, ripening like the grain.

Lugh grew tall from spring to fall, and sought to find a wife
But Balor came and made his claim and vowed to take his life

The two did fight from morn 'till night and Lugh did strike him one;
And Balor's eye flew in the sky and there became the sun

Lugh was wed and made his bed with Erinn in the north,
And there they lay through many a day and soon a child came forth

The child grew tall from spring to fall, Setanta was his name,
And then at length, by honor's strength, CuChulainn he became!

Selections from the Missal-Any

Erec, Erec Erec

Erec, Erec, Erec,
Mother of Earth
Hail to thee, Earth,
Mother of men!

Be fruitful in
God's embrace
Filled with food
For the use of men.

Vehicle Chant

This was written down in the Lech book circa 950 A.D. in England. It is the ancient Indo-European Earth Mother and Sky Father, despite five hundred years of Christian influence. March 1982 Druid Missal-Any

Vehicles have figured in Paleo-pagan literature, and I was surprised to come across the trade name in the middle of some old Norse material. (Spring Equinox, 1983, Tom Cross)

Wotan went down
To the Underworld
There to revive the Volvo...

Han San went to
Cold Mountain,
Received the Magic
Melon in a dream, and
Took the sacred Citreons
From the throne
Of the Divine King

Buddha in his Lotus sat
The Mayan War god
Had his Jaguar
Hera rode a Silver Cloud
(R.R. of course)
Aphrodite prized her Opel
But remember
Robin held the Ford.

Mount Cua

Sliabh g'Cua.
Haunt of Wolves
Rugged and Dark
The wind wails
About its glens
Wolves how 'round
Its chams.
The great brown stag
Bells there in autumn
The crane screams
Over its craigs

(Ninth Century Bardic)

Hymn to the Three Brighids

Verse for Oimelc by Thomas M. Cross
Alternative Syllabic Verse in English

Brighid brought us the burning coals
Bright mistress of hearth warmthness
Blessed midwives and milk-cows
Barreness banished from us.

Blessed Brighid, Queen of Nature
Daughter of the Dagda comes.
On Oimelc we salute thee
Feeding kindling in fire.

Three Brighids as the winter breathes
Three nights and three heroes born.
On the three hills high fires burn.
Shall we bring our new offering?

(Brighid is pronounced Breed or Breej for proper rhythm)
Oimelc 1985

Druid's Chant

Great voice that calls us in the wind of dawn,
Strange voice that stills us in the heat of noon,
  Heard in the sunset,
   Heard in the moonrise
And in the stirring of the wakeful night,
  Speak now in blessing,
   Chide us no longer,
Great voice of love, we will not grieve thee more.

-Donated by Willow Oak, who is a Millay fan found this in a book , Collected Poems by Edna St. Vincent Millay where it is designated as a previously unpublished poem. It was written for a Tree Ceremony at Vassar College in 1915. So the "greatest American lyric poet" remembered the "Oak-Men," as one derivation of "Druid" holds it to mean. Printed in Spring Equinox 1985

Beannachadh Brathain

Blessing for Bannock Bread

Oidhch Inid
Be feoil again
'S bu choir 'uinn sin
Bu choir 'uinn shin

Leth-cheann circe,
'S da ghreim eorna,
'S bu leoir 'uinn sin
Bu leoir 'uinn sin.

Bi bin againn,
Bi beoir againn,
Bi fion againn,
Bi roic againn.

Meilc is marrum,
Mil is bainne,
Sile fallain,
Meall dheth sin,
Meall dheth sin.

Bi cruit againn,
Be clar againn,
Bi dus againn,
Bi das againn;
Bi saltair ghrinn,
Nan teuda binn,
'S bi fairchil, righ'nn
Nan dan againn,
Nan dan againn.

Quern Blessing

On Ash Eve
We shall have flesh,
We should have that
We should have that.

The cheek of hen,
Two bits of barley,
That were enough
That were enough.

We shall have mead,
We shall have spruce,
We shall have wine,
We shall have feast.

We shall have sweetness
Honey and milk,
Wholesome ambrosia,
Abundance of that,
Abundance of that.

We shall have harp,
We shall have harp,
We shall have lute,
We shall have horn.
We shall have psaltery
Of the melodious strings
And the regal lyre,
Of the songs we shall have
Of the songs we shall have.

Fall Equniox, 1985

Ogma Incantation

Here is an incantation to an Oghma like figure of "Sun-like Countenance" from the Scottish oral folk tradition. The Preceptor has used it and gives testimony of its utility.

"The litigant went at morning dawn to a place where three streams met. And as the rising sun gilded the mountain crests, the man placed his two palms edgeways together and filled them with water from the junction of the streams. Dipping his face into this improvised basin, he fervently repeated the prayer:"

Ionnlaidh mise m'aodann
'S na naodh gatba greine
Mar a dh'ionnlaid Moire a Mac
Am bainne brac na breine.

Gaol a bhi 'na m'aodann
Caomh a bhi 'na m'ghnuis,
Caora meala 'na mo theanga,
M'annail mar an tuis.

Is dubh am bail ud thall,
Is dubh daoine th'ann;
Is mis an eala bhan,
Banruinn os an ceann.

Falbhaidh mi an ainme Dhe,
An riochd feidh, an riochd each,
An riochd nathrach, an riochd righ:
Is treasa lion fin na le gach neach.

I will wash my face
In the nine rays of the sun,
As Mary washed her Son*
In the rich fermented milk.

Love be in my countenance,
Benevolence in my mind,
Dew of honey in my tongue,
My breath as the incense.

Black is yonder town,
Black are those therein,
I am the white swan,
Queen above them.

I will travel in the name of God,
In likeness of deer, in likeness of horse,
In likeness of serpent, in likeness of king:
Stronger will it be with me than with all persons.

*A later introjection which does not rhyme. Yule 1985

Deidre Remembers a Scottish Glen

Glen of fruit and fish and pools,
Its peaked hills of loveliest wheat,
It is distressful for me to think of it—

Glen of bees, of long-horned wild oxen.
Precious is its cover to every fox;
Glen of wild garlic and watercress,
Of woods, of shamrock and flowers, leafy and twisting-crested.

Sweet are the cries of the brown-backed dappled deer
Under the oakwood above the bare hill-tops,
Gentle hinds that are timid,
Lying hidden in the great-treed glen.

Glen of the rowans with scarlet berries,
With fruit fit for every flock of birds;
A slumberous paradise for the badgers
In their quiet burrows with their young.

Glen of the blue-eyed vigorous hawks,
Glen abounding in every harvest,
Glen of the ridged and pointed peaks,
Glen of blackberries and sloes and apples.

Glen of the sleek brown round-faced otters
That are pleasant and active in fishing;
Many are the white-winged stately swans,
And salmon breeding a long the rocky brink.

Glen of the tangled branching yews,
Dewy glen with level lawn of kine;
Chalk-white starry sunny glen,
Glen of graceful pearl-like high-bred women.
-A Druid Missal-any Oimelc 1986

May-Time

May-time, fair season, perfect is thy aspect then; blackbirds sing a full song, if there be a scanty beam of day.
The hardy, bushy cuckoo calls, welcome noble summer! It calms the bitterness of bad weather, the branching wood is a prickly hedge.
Summer brings low the little stream, the swift herd makes for the water, the long hair of the heather spreads out, the weak white cotton-grass flourishes.
...The smooth sea flows, season when the ocean falls asleep; flowers cover the world.
Bees, whose strength is small, carry with their feet a load reaped from the flowers; the mountain allures the cattle, the ant makes a rich meal.
The harp of the wood plays melody, its music brings perfect peace; colour has settled on every hill, haze on the lake of full water.
The corncrake clacks, a strenuous bard; the high pure waterfall sings a greeting to the warm pool; rustling of rushes has come.
Light swallows dart on high, brisk music encircles the hill, tender rich fruits bud...
...The hardy cuckoo sings, the speckled fish leaps, mighty is the swift warrior.
The vigour of men flourishes, the glory of great hills is unspoiled; every wood is fair from crest to ground, fair each great goodly field.
Delightful is the season's splendour, winter's rough wind has gone; bright is every fertile wood, a joyful peace is summer.
A flock of birds settles...; the green field re-echoes, where there is a brisk bright stream.
A mad ardour upon you to race horses, where the serried host is ranged around; very splendid is the bounty of the cattle-pond, the iris is gold because of it.
A timid persistent frail creature sings at the top of his voice, the lark chants a clear tale - excellent May-time of calm aspect!

Irish, author unknown, ninth-tenth century
Beltaine 1986

Suibhne Wild Man In The Forest

Little antlered one, little belling one, melodious little bleater, sweet I think the lowing you make in the glen.
Home sickness for my little dwelling has come upon my mind, the calves in the plain, the deer on the moor.
Oak, bushy, leafy, you are high above trees; hazel, little branchy one, wisdom of hazel nuts.
Alder, you are not spiteful, lovely is your colour, you are not prickly where you are in the gap.
Blackthorn, little thorny one, black little sloe bush; water-cress, little green-topped one, on the brink of the blackbird's well.
Saxifrage of the pathway, you are the sweetest of herbs; cress, very green one; plant where the strawberry grows.
Apple tree, little apple tree, violently everyone shakes you; rowan, little berried one, lovely is your bloom.
Bramble, little humped vine, you do not grant fair terms; you do not cease tearing me till you are sated with blood.
Yew, little yew, you are conspicuous in graveyards; ivy, little ivy, you are familiar in the dark wood.
Holly, little protector, door against the wind; ash-tree, baneful, weapon in the hand of the warrior.
Birch, smooth, blessed, proud, melodious, lovely is each entangled branch at the top of your crest.
Aspen, as it trembles from time to time I hear its leaves rustle and think it is the foray…

It is on my lonely journey I were to search the mountains of the dark earth, I would rather have the room for a single hut in great Glenn mBolcain.
Good is its clear blue water, good its clean stern wind, good its cress-green watercress, better its deep brooklime.
Good its pure ivy, good its bright merry willow, good its yewy yew, better its melodious birch…
-Irish; author unknown; 12th Century.
Beltaine 1986

Stock Market Crash

In the old Legends
Fairie gold turned back to withered leaves
The next day. It shoe and lured
Only in Elfland.
And by enchantment.
Money is like that.
On the stock market the climbing numbers
Increase and multiply and now
Nothing but paper,
Fit only to write a poem on the back.
Elfland. Wall Street.
Wherever we believe and then
No longer believe.
All over the country the experts are saying
It's a matter of faith:
Clap your hand
And Tinker bell will get well
And the economy will get well,
And well, we'll see.
Money has always been strange.
It's only real when you don't have it.
Even the sparechanger with a handful of coins
Is never sure.
They might refuse to serve him.
They have before.
The Dow Jones
Is just another Jones to feed.
Everyone needs money to eat
But on one can eat paper.
Where did all this paper come from?
Withered leaves,
Fit only for burning

By Julia Vinograd

From her latest book, Graffiti, Zigeist Press. Write 2500 Druant, Suite 409, Berkeley 94704

Published in Samhain 1988

Mad Sweeney News

Welsh; John Ceiriog Hughes; 1833-87.
-Published A Druid Missal-Any #4, Spring Equinox 2001

Mountain stream, clear and limpid, wandering down towards the valley, whispering songs among the rushes—oh, that I were as the stream!

Mountain heather all in flower—longing fills me, at the sight, to stay upon the hills in the wind and the heather.

Small birds of the high mountain that soar up in the healthy wind, flitting from one peak to the other—oh, that I were as the bird!

Son of the mountain am I, far from home, making my song; but my heart is in the mountain, with the heather and the small birds.

Chapter of Not Having to Move Furniture in the Other World

Whoso knows this spell will have all his weekends free in Amenta.

May I not be forced to move furniture in the other world. That which is large, awkward, and extremely heavy, with sharp corners – may I not be forced to lift it.
The sofa – "I break your back" is its name; it does not fit through any door. I shall not carry the sofa; I shall not lift one end of the sofa.
The chest of drawers – "I fall on your foot" is its name. I shall not move the chest of drawers; I shall not carry even one drawer.
The pile of book boxes – it towers unto the ceiling; "pyramid of Khufu" is its name. I shall not carry one box; I shall not carry one book.
The waterbed – of myriad pieces is it made; no man knows their number. I shall not carry one piece; I shall not attempt to fit two pieces together.

I shall not move furniture in the other world, and all my weekends will be my own, for millions of years.

-Obscure Chapter of the Egyptian Book of the Dead.
- Samhain 1986 Druid Missal-Any

Hatching Blessing

Bu tu fein an deagh nabaidh agus an caraide caomh. Ma's a h'e agus gun ruig thu null fearann do dhuthchais agus duthaich do bhreith, agus gum feumair thu tilleadh a nall dh'an fhonn-sa rithist, that mise cur mar bhoid agus mar bhriathar ort, agus mar naoi riaraiche nam bana-sith, thu dhol gu ruig Cladh Michell ann an Ormacleit, an Uibhist, agus thu thoir as a sin thugam-sa deannan beag urach a churar air clar mo chridhe-sa la mo bhais.

I will rise early on the morning of Monday,
I will sing my rune and rhyme,
I will go sunwise with my cog
To the nest of my hen with sure intent.

I will palce my lef hand to my breast,
My right hand to my heart,
I will seek the loving wisdom of Him
Abundant in grace, in broods, and in flocks.

I will close my two eyes quickly,
As in blind-man's bluff moving slowly;
I will stretch my lef hand over thither
To the nest of my hen on yonder side.

This is a hatching spell pecuiliar to this egg-time of year, from the Scottish Highlands, circa 1800. In the Gaidhlig introduction by the collector, Alexander Carmicheal, there is a quote from the 102 year old lady from whom he collected this and other runes. In it she tells of the customs, purely pagan, of placing a bit of the native soil on the breast of a corpse before

burial. This is a custom I have heard from many sources in the Neo-pagan community, and from my Celtic relatives as a child. However, this is the first "academic" reference or precedent I have been able to uncover. It may have been a part of the Ancient Druid funeral rites, or from an even older Pagan stratum. I have heard it called the "releasing soil" now-a-days. It could well be incorporated into N.R.D.N.A. traditions. We would appreciate any feedback anyone out there has on this.

From the Carmina Gadelica

-Oimelc 1987 Druid Blessing

To The Sun

Greeting to you, sun of the seasons, as you travel the skies on high, with your strong steps on the wing of the heights; you are the happy mother of stars.

You sink down in the perilous ocean with harm and without hurt, you rise up on the quiet wave like a young queen in flower.

-Scottish Gaelic; traditional prayer.

Cairoll Callaig

Nis tha mis air tighinn dh'ur duthaich
A dh'urachadh dhuibh na Callaig;
Cha leig mi leas a dhol ga innse,
Ban I ann ri linn ar seanar.

Dirim ris an ardorus,
Teurnam ris an starsach,
Mo dhuan a ghabail doigheil,
Modhail, moineil, maineil.

Caisean Callaig 'na mo phoca,
Is mor an ceo thig as an ealachd.

Gheibh fear an taighe 'na dhorne e,
Cuiridh e shorn anns an teallach;
Theid e deiseil air na paisdean,
Seachd ar air bean an taighe.

Bean an taigh is i is fhiach e,
Lamh a riarach oirnn na Callaig,
Sochair bheag a bhlath an t-samhraidh,
Tha mi'n geall air leis an arain.
-Gaidhlig Original
From the Carmina Gadelica

Hogmanay Carol

I am now come to your country,
To renew to you the Hogmanay,
I need not tell you of it,
It was in the time of our forefathers.

I ascend by the door lintel,
I descend by the doorstop,
I will sing my song becomingly,
Mannerly, slowly, mindfully.

The Hogmanay skin is in my pocket,
Great will be the smoke from it presently.

The house-man will get it in his hand,
He will place its nose in the fire;
He will go sunwards round the babes,
And for seven verities round the housewife.

The housewife it is she who deserves it,
The had to dispense to us the Hogmanay,
A small fist of the bloom of summer,
Much I wish it with the bread.
-English Translation
From the Carmina Gadelica

Calluinn a Bhuilg #63

Calluinn Ho! This rune is till repeated in the Isles. Rarely, however, do two persons recite it alike. This renders it difficult to decide the right form of the words. The walls of the old houses in the West are very thick –from five to eight feet. There are no gables, the walls being of uniform height throughout. The roof of the house being raised from the inner edge of the wall, a broad terrace is left on the outside. Two or three stones project from the wall at the door, forming steps. ON these the inmates ascend for purposes of thatching and securing the roof in time of storm.

Calluinn a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg
Buail am boicionn,
Buail am boicionn.
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg
    Buail an craicionn,
    Buail an craicionn.
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg,
    Sios e! suas e!
    Buail am boicionn.
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg,
    Sios e! Suas e!
    Buail an craicionn.
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg.

-Yule 1988 Druid Missal-any
From the Carmina Gadelica

Hogmanay of the Sack

The "gillean Callaig" carolers or Hogmanay lads perambulate to the townsland at night. One man is enveloped in the hard hide of a bull with the horns and hoofs still attached. When the men come to a house they ascend the wall and run around sunwise, the man in the hid shaking the horns and hoofs, and the other men striking the hard hide with sticks. The appearance of the man in the hide is gruesome, while the din made is terrific. Having descended and recited their runes at the door, the Hogmanay men are admitted and treated to the best in the house. Their performance seems to be symbolic, but of what it is not easy to say, unless of laying an evil spirit. That the rite is heathen and ancient is evident.

Hogmanay of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack,
    Strike the hide,
    Strike the hide.
Hogmanay of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack,
    Beat the skin,
    Beat the skin.
Hogmanay of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack,

Down with it! Up with it!
Strike the hide.
Hogmanay of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack,
Down with it! Up with it!
Beat the skin.
Hogmanay of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack,

-Yule 1988 Druid Missal-any
From the Carmina Gadelica

Eolas an Deididh

The teeth of ancient human skeletons found in stone coffins and other enclosures and without enclosures are usually good and complete. This is in marked contrast tot the teeth of modern human remains, which are generally much impaired if not wholly absent. But there must have been toothache and even artificial teeth in ancient times, as indicated by the mummies in Egypt and the toothache charms and toothache wells in the Highlands. One toothache well is in the island of North Uist. It is situated 195 feet above the sea, at the foot of a hill 757 feet high, and nearly three miles in the moorland from the nearest townland. The place is called "Cuidh-airidh," shieling fold, while the well is variously known as "tobar Chuidh-airidh," well of the shieling fold." "Tobar and deididh," well of the toothache, "tobar na cnoidh," well of the worm, and "tobar cnuimh fhiacail," well of the tooth worm, from a belief that toothache is caused by a worm in the tooth.

The General name of the well is "tobar Chuidh-airidh," well of the shieling fold, to distinguish it from other healing wells throughout the Isles. The pilgrim suffering from toothache must not speak, nor eat, nor drink, after beginning the pilgrimage till after three draughts of the well of Cuidh-airidh are drunk in the name of God, and in name of Christ, and in name of Spirit.

Some persons profess to derive no relief, some profess to derive partial relief, and some profess to derive complete relief from toothache after drinking the water of the well of Cuidh-airidh.

Ob a chuir Bride bhoidheach
Romh ordag Mathar De,
Air mhir, air lion, air chorcraich,
Air chnoidh, air ghoimh, air dheud.

Achnoidh a rinn domh deistinn,
Air deudach mo chin,
Ifrinn teann da m'dheud,
Deud ifrinn da mo theinn.

Deud ifrinn da mo theann;
Am fad's is maireann mi-fein
Gu mair mo dheud am cheann.

Doighean eile:
Air mhir, air chir, air chnodaich.
Air mhuir, air chuan, air chorsa.
Air li, air lionn, air liogradh.

TRANSLATION

The incantation put by lovely Bride
Before the thumb of the Mother of God,
On lint, on wort, on hemp,
For worm, for venom, for teeth.

The worm that tortured me,
In the teeth of my head,
Hell hard by my teeth,
The teeth of hell distressing me.

The teeth of hell close to me;
As long as my teeth last in my head.

Variants:
On lint, on comb, on agony.
On sea, on ocean, on coast.
On water, on lakes, on marshes.

-Spring Equinox 1989 Druid Missal-Any
From the Carmina Gadelica.

Swift Chariots

Swift Chariots
And horse that carried off the prize
Once I had plenty of them:
A blessing on the king who granted them.

My body seeks to make its way
To the house of judgement;
When the Son of God thinks it time,
Let him come to claim his loan.

My arms when they are seen
Are bony and thin
Dear was the craft they practiced,
They would be around glorious kings…

I envy nothing that is old
Except the Plain of Femhen;
Though I have donned the thatch of age,
Femhen's crown is still yellow.

The Stone of the Kings in Femhen,
Ronan's Fort in Breghon,
It is long since storms first reached them,
But their cheeks are not old and withered…

I have had my day with kings,
Drinking mead and wine;
Today I drink whey and water
Among shriveled old hags…

The flood-wave,
And the swift ebb;
What the flood brings you
The ebb carries from your hand.

Happy is the island of the great sea,
For the flood comes to it after the ebb;
As for me, I don not expect
Flood after ebb to come to me.

Beltane 1989 Druid Missal-Any

Beltaine Fire Invocation

Bhride
Firedancer
  In the many hued arms of flame
  Daggers of light contained in the chalice of the sky,
  Overflowing with stars
  Bright with the song of a thousand souls.
Dance with us, our lives would in a glistening threads
Above the spokes of the universe,
Braided into the umbilical cord of the navel of the Earth.
  Teach us to kindle our inner fire,
  And dance our lives in the weavings of flame,
  The fire that enkindles the heart into spiraling song.

Bhride
Firesinger,
  Voice leaping with the strength of many deer
  Into the gates of starlight
  Where the ancient flames soar.
Sing with us, our lives as the weavings of song
On the loom of the many stringed sky
Reflected in the inner sky of the spirit.
  Teach us to light our inward flame,
  And sing our lives into rising smoke
  The fire that burns behind the eyes of all souls
  And laughs in the cosmic dance of the universes' music.

May 1989 by Blue Moon Eagle.

Emmon the Filidh

With Apologies to Elizabeth Barrett's Husband

Go crazy along with me!
The best is yet to see.
The outer reaches of the mind,
For which the mundane brain was made
To work and keep us fed.
Who saith: "A whole I planned."
A Sea of Holes, to other realms
Sanity is but a closet.
Trust in your Gods: see all,
Nor be afraid.

-Samhain 1989 Druid Missal-any

Give Me a Hidden Rill

Give me a hidden rill
A house free of noise and distraction
Birds help me to sing
Overhead white clouds for neighbors
Nobody asking the fate of this or that noble family
Just this Hazel tree, now-a-days
Starting up from beside its spring
For how many years?"

-Circa 10th Century
Samhain 1989

To Display Our Own Magic

Druidical druthers, they cave be so clean
Your wizard works hard to not ever be seen
Moving the novels to remove their dust
And wiping the shelves more free of their lust
We cudgel our brain
Till his answers lie bare
In the drolleries chapter
That describes why we care.

Fletch Dewly
Yule 1989 Druid Missal-any

Dearest Vivian

Lady of the Lake she walks before me
Controlling each image I happen to see
Vibrant her wish that the magic may spring
Our minds further out and deep within
Her veil and her dress both flow to command
That the book that she holds
All must understand
Pages with spells and others with prayers
Or so they're defined
By our mind's many layers.

Fletch Dewly
Yule 1989 Druid Missal-any

The Boot Legged Concert

Some time in the first or second or such centuries C.E., Rorey Mor, a filidh, had become a woods-hermit in the tradition of Mad Sweeney or Finn the Elder, and he no longer played the harp or sang in the great courts. He had been reputed to be the best harper in the provinces of Connaught and Munster, and the local chieftain of the area to which he had retired determined to get him to play for his court. No entreaties or bribes availed, so the chief and some of his Druids hatched a plan. They sent an invitation to Rorey saying that Conal, the then most acclaimed harper in Erin, was coming to play for the chieftain, and asking Rorey, since he no longer played, to join them in listening to the great bard. The chieftain's Druids knew that Rorey did not attend feasts any more, but they also surmised that he would be curious about what his old rival was composing and would not refuse to come and listen. They were right.

Rorey was shown into the hall where a fine fire was lazing and on the table was a harp of willow wood of the finest crafting, which Rorey assumed to be Conal's. Beside it stood a silver flagon of wine and the benches all around were covered with white fleeces. Rorey was left alone. He waited and waited, but no harper or festive crowd arrived. Meanwhile, the chieftain and his court had hidden themselves behind a wicker partition that curtained off the far end of the hall.

"I'll just see what sort of harp strings the great bard has gotten himself now." Thought Rorey, and picked up the harp and brushed his fingers over the strings. What he heard was wonderful. He dipped a finger into the wine and tasted a drop. It was marvelous. (Wine in those days was an import from Roman traders, exotic and used only rarely.) He sipped the wine and his old songs came flooding back to him. He began to play and was soon lost in the calling of his art. The chieftain and his court had never heard such wonderful sounds. All listened on and on, entranced, until, at an interval in his playing, Rorey tipped the flagon to his lips and –nothing--! No more wine came out.

"Aye me! What a mischief I have done! I have drunk up all of the bard's wine!"

They heard him put down the harp. They heard the window shutter open. Before the chief or any of his men could leap up and push aside the partition, Rorey had bounded out of the window and across the court yard and off toward his favored woods.

"Take my two best horses and fetch him back at once!" the chieftain shouted. But it was too late. The retainer searched and searched but he couldn't find the hermit and had to return alone, we with the morning dew.

-Oimelc 1990 Druid Missal-any Author unknown.

Samhain Vigil Song

Dawning into darkness
Oldest of nights

Chorus:
'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og
'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

I came to love you
I came to grieve
Chorus
Strong chains
Won't bind this love
Chorus
For I am a climber
And I am a thief
Chorus
Strong chains
Won't bind me
Chorus
What bird sings in darkness?
Longest of nights
Chorus
Stone walls
Can't hold this love
Chorus
Dancing through darkness
Waiting the light
Chorus
Sunset over Marsco
Cuchullain in sheets
Chorus
These shades of McLean's words
'Round us like spirits, released

Chorus
Strong Chains
Can't bind this love
Chorus

This ode for the Samhain night vigil was written by Rorey MacDonald of South Uist, Scotland. He performs with the popular Scots' folk-rock group, RunRig, whose tapes are available through Ridge Records, Ganton House, 14-22 Ganton St. , London W1V 1LB. None of the tapes, however, include this song which may be a bit too controversial for High Presbyterian Scotland. This is from a "broadside" and the editor has heard a private recording made at a concert.

Gaidhlig Vocabulary

'S tu It is you (familiar)
mo my
leannan Love, beloved
og young
McLean Scotland's greatest modern poet, Rorey McLean

(It's taken four plus years to get permission to print this. Transatlantic communication at the speed of the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria.)

The New Moon

In Cornwall the people nod to the new moon and turn silver in their pockets. In Edinburgh cultured men and women turn the rings on their fingers and make their wishes. A young English lady told the writer that she had always been in the habit of bowing to the new moon, till she had been bribed out of it by her father, a clergyman, putting money in her pocket lest her lunar worship should compromise him with his bishop. She naively confessed, however, that among the free mountains of Loch Etive she reverted to the good customs of her fathers, from which she derived great satisfaction!

Ma's math a fhuair thu sinn an nochd,
Seach fearr gum fag thus sinn gun lochd,
A Ghealach gheal nan trath,
A Ghealach gheal nan trath.

If well thou hast found us to-night,
Seven times better mayest thou leave us without harm,
Thou bright white Moon of the seasons,
Bright white Moon of the seasons.

-Carmena Gadelica.
Oimelc 1991 Druid Missal-Any

A Ghealach Ur

This little prayer is said by old men and women in the islands of Barra. When they first see the new moon they make their obeisance to it as to a great chief. The women curtsey gracefully and the men bow low, raising their bonnets reverently. The bow of the men is peculiar, partaking somewhat of the curtsey of the women, the left knee being bent and the right drawn forward towards the middle of the left leg in a curious but not inelegant manner. The fragment of moon-worship is now a matter of custom rather than of belief, although it exists over the whole British Isles.

May thy laving luster leave us
Seven times still more blest.

O moon so fair
May it be so,
As seasons come,
And seasons go.

-Carmina Gadelica.
Oimelc 1991 Druid Missal-Any

Emmon's Selections

The Mountain

By Emmon Bodfish, 1990s

From the thick grass
On the Mountain
I see this will be a
Rich year.
The last two
Were poor years.
And no amount of worry
Or effort of the will
Will make any difference.

I choose to pick and eat
This wild lettuce
And not that one.
How random it is: (Death)
Without any connection
To the moral character
Of either herb.

NO BLAME, then
when Nature gathers me.

It is always cold
On the Mountain,
Not just this year.
Jagged scarps, forever fogged in.
Ferns in the dark gorges
Steep ravines
Unimaginably rugged...

I am afraid,
If I settle long
On Messeur Mountain,
I would not go back.
[will]

OCTOBER

-By Emmon Bodfish, 1980s

A thousand hills covered
With bleached grasses,
Ten thousand tangled paths,
But no sign of who made them.
Every day, just this,
And sometimes the sound of wind blowing
Against the pane

To My Teacher

Ryokan from "Dewdrops on a Lotus Leaf" translated by John Stevens

An old grave hidden away at the foot of a deserted hill,
Overrun with rank weeds growing unchecked year after year;
There is no one left to tend the tomb,
And only an occasional woodcutter passes by.
Once I was his pupil, a youth with shaggy hair,
Learning deeply from him by the Narrow River.
One morning I set off on my solitary journey
And the years passed between us in silence.
Now I have returned to find him at rest here;
How can I honor his departed spirit?
I pour a dipper of pure water over his tombstone
And offer a silent prayer.
The sun suddenly disappears behind the hill
And I'm enveloped by the roar of the wind in the pines.
I try to pull myself away but cannot;
A flood of tears soaks my sleeves.

The Fairy Luring Song

"It is more than once a maiden of the Hebrides has been lured away from the mortal world by a fairy lover. And it is said that at the meeting of day and night, yon some wee lover-being can be seen on a Fairy-knoll, singing his luring song, to a tune that would put even the strongest of us under his spell" – Kenneth McKeller

The song was first written down in the last century, but the air and Gaelic fragments are much older.

Why should I sit and sigh
Plough and Bracken
Why should I sit and sigh
On the hillside dreary.

When I see the plover rising
Or the curlew wheeling,
Then I draw my mortal lover
Back to me a'stealing.

Chorus
Why should I sit and sigh
Plough and Bracken
Plough and Bracken
Why should I sit and sigh
All alone and weary.

When the day wears away
Sad I look for her down the valley.
Ilka sound, way up and down,
Sets my heart a'thrilling.

Chorus
Oh, but there is something wanting.
Oh, but I am weary.
Come my blighe and bonny lass
Come o're the knoll to cheer me.

Why should I sit and sigh
Plough and Bracken
Plough and Bracken
Why should I sit and sigh
Hark to me, my dearie.

A Phiuthrag's a Phiuthair (Little Sister)

In the Gaelic speaking districts of Scotland one can still find hundreds of fairy tales and not a little actual belief in the fairies, mermaids, seal women, and other supernatural beings of the Celtic imagination. The song on this record is a cry of a girl who has been spirited away by the fairies and who calls on her sister for help.

A phiuthrag's a phiuthar,
Hu ru
A ghaoic, a phiuthar,
Hu ru
Nach truagh leat fhein
Ho hala leo
An nochd mo chumha?
Hu ru

Nach truagh leat fhein
An nochd mo chumha
'S mi 'm bothan beag
Iseal cumhann?

'S mi 'm bothan beag
Iseal cumhann,
Gun lub siamain,
Gun sop tughaidh.

Translation:

Little sister, sister
My Dear sister
Do you not pity
Tonight my lament

Do you not pity
Tonight my lament
And I in a little hut
Low and narrow?

And I in a little hut
Low and narrow,
Without loop of straw rope
Without wisp of thatch!

Clach Mhin Mheallain

(Rune against Hail)
The Gaelic runes, which preserve both pagan and Christian elements, healed and protected, cursed and blessed the people. Many survived in use until about a century ago.

Clach mhin mheallain
'San tobar ud thall,
Clach mhin mheallain
San tobar ud thall,
Am buachaille bochd
Ri sgath nan cnoc
'S a bhata fo uchd
'S a dhealg 'na bhroit
'S e 'g iarraidh air Dia
Turadh is grain a chur ann.

Translation:

Smooth hailstones
In yonder well;
The poor heard
In the Ice of the hills,
With his stick under his chest,
And his pin in his bosom,
Praying the gods
To send dry weather and sun.

Furich and Diugh (Weaving Song)

In this song, perhaps one discovers the ironic attitude of the weaver towards his painstaking work or, hears the echoes of some lost incantation.

Wait today until tomorrow
Until I spin you a skirt
The loom is in Patrick's wood;
The flax has been sown and has not grown.

The milkmaid is unborn to mother;
The Queen has the bobbin;
And the wool is on the sheep in the wilderness;
And the King of France has the shuttlepin.

Fuirich an diugh gus am maireach
Gradh air eiteagan arainn hu ru
Gus an sniomh mi leine 'n t-snath dhuit.

Refrain

Bun a choib air a choib
Bun a ruid air an ruid
Ian beag air a noid
Seinnidh e lamh riut
Seinn dubh seinn dubh
Ohoro lunn dubh

Tha bheairt-fhighe 'n coille Phadraig;
Grad air eiteagan arainn hu ru
Chuireadh an lion 's cha do dh'fhas e.

Refrain.

Oidhche 'n Fhoghar

Eho hao ri, o
Eho hao ri, o
Nochd a' chiad oidche 'n Fhogar.

Eho hao ri ri o hog o
Eho hao ri ri a hi a bho a dhiu ru.
Raoir a chuala mi'n othail.

Eho hao ri o
Eadar Ceann a Bhaigh 's an Fahdhail.

Eho hao ri ri o hog o
Eho hao ri ri a hi a bho a dhiu ru
Cha ghuth gallain 's cha ghuth gadhair
Guth na mna 's 'm barr a meadhail.

O 'si fhein a rinn an taghadh;
Ghabh I'n diughaidh's dh'fhag I roghainn;
Ghabh I'n t-oigeir seolta seaghach.

Fai il eileadh hao o eileadh
Coisich agus faigh dhomh ceile
Fail il eileadh ho ro I

Lughnasasdh Night

(translated by Emmon Bodfish)

Eho! Ho! A king oh!
Eho! Ho! A king oh!
Last night was the first night of Fomhar.

Eho! Ho! To a king of a youth, oh!
Eho! Ho! To a king. Oh Heifer of them of the Rue Flower
Last night I heard the tumultuous delight.

Eh! Ho! A king oh!
Between the head of the Bay and the ford.

Eho! Ho! To a king of a youth, oh!
Eho! Ho! To a king. O Heifer of them of the Rue flower.
Not the sound of baying, and not the voice of hunting dogs, the voice of woman at the height of her joy.

Eho! Ho! To a king oh!
Oh! Indeed, she made the choice; she took the unfortunate one and left the choice one.
She took the wise, ingenious boy.

Ring, of Plenty, Folding
Ho! Folding, plaiting…
Come and get me a husband.
Wreath, Plenty, Folding, Braiding.
Ho! Of the Braiding.

Notes: The line of the Heifer is archaic spelling and uncertain meaning The unfortunate one could refer to the god, Lugh's , death at Lughnasa or may have even older allusions to the Corn King tradition, and the sacrifice of the incarnate god.

An Coineachan

Ho-bhan, ho-bhan, Goiridh og O,
Goiridh og O, Goiridh og O;
Ho-bhan, ho-bhan, Goiridh og O,
I've lost my darling baby O!

I left my darling lying here,
A-lying here, a lying here;
I left my darling lying here,
To go and gather blueberries.

I've found the wee brown otter's track,
The otter's track, the otter's track;
I've found the wee brown otter's track,
But ne'er a trace of baby O!

I found the track of the swan on the lake,
The swan on the lake, the swan on the lake;
I found the track of the swan on the lake,
But not the track of baby O!

I found the track of the yellow fawn,
The yellow fawn, the yellow fawn;
I found the track of the yellow fawn,
But could not trace my baby O!

I've found the trail of the mountain mist,
The mountain mist, the mountain mist;
I've found the trail of the mountain mist,
But ne'er a trace of baby O!

Mo Bhata, Boat Song

Ho, my bonnie boatie,
Thou bonnie boatie mine!
So trim and tight a boatie
Was never launched on brine.
Ho, my bonnie boatie,
My praise is justly thine
Above all bonnie boaties
Were builded on Loch Fyne!

Ho mo bhata laghach,
'S tu mo bhata grin;
Ho mo bhata laghach,
'S tu mo bhata grin.
Ho mo bhata laghach,
'S tu mo bhata grin:
Mo bhata boidheach laghach,
Thogadh taobh Loch Fin.

To build thee up so firmly,
I knew the stuff was good;
Thy keel of stoutest elm-tree,
Well fixed in oaken wood;
Thy timbers ripely seasoned
Of cleanest Norway pine
Well cased in ruddy copper,
To plough the deep were thine!

Ho mo bhata etc.

How lovely was my boatie
At rest upon the shore,
Before my bonnie boatie
Had known wild ocean's roar.
Thy deck so smooth and stainless,
With such fine bend thy rim,
Thy seams that know no gaping,
Thy masts so tall and trim.

Ho mo bhata, etc.

Talking With Trees

She looks in the house and she nobody sees.
We go up to his room and his rug's full of leaves,
And all his new trousers have pitch on the knees.

Chorus:
Out in the woods is he, talking with trees!
Talking and walking and stalking with trees
Up in the high hills catching the breeze,
Out in the woods is he, talking with trees!

It's late in the night he should be cuttin' "zzz's"
He's out of the window by shadowy leas
Down in the Wild wood where nobody sees,

Chorus.

All alone by the circle of stones by the sea,
At night by the light of the moon on the leaves,
You can see him go dancing on magical knees,

Chorus

Aunt Hann, she come s down with her baskets of cheese,
Of cookies and cakes to tempt and to tease,
To try and to teach him some sense if you please, [But]

Chorus

The Mountain Streams

With my robe and staff through the purple heather
One evening it was I took my way.
I met a lass, she was tall and slender.
Her eyes entreated me a while to stay.

"Oh Roving Droi, Do you know I love you?
Tell me your name and your dwelling also.
Excuse my name, but you'll find me dwelling
by the Mountain streams where the Moorcocks grow.

If my parents cause me to wed a farmer,
I'll be tied for life to one plot of land.
You're a roving Droi, Let me go with you,
And I'll give you my hand.

Ah, but if your parents knew that
You love a rover,
I fear that would be my overthrow.
So I'll bide alone, love,
For another season,
By mountain streams where the Moorcocks grow.

And in the turning of another season,
We'll meet again in yon woodland vale.
And I'll sit you down, love,
All on my knee, then,
And listen to your lovesick tale.

And it's False Solomon's Seal
We'll go a gathering
In the woods and the valleys below.
Where the linnets sing their songs so sweetly
By the mountain streams where the Moorcocks grow."

With my robe and staff through the purple heather
One evening it was I took my way.
I met a lass, she was tall and slender.
Her eyes entreated me a while to stay.

Poems of the Season

From our Server, Susan Press of Live Oak Grove
Received 2002 From Stacey, but the date of authorship is uncertain.

Solstice

Winter has come, The song has been sung, The days have been white and cold.

The dark has been deep, The earth was asleep, Dreaming a dream of old.

Now hear Her blood drum, For the time has come, For the days to grow long and warm.

For the dark becomes light, And the earth will take flight, Greeting the Sun's return.

Nights of Winter

In deep of winter,
In the middle of the night,
Jack Frost paints your windows
With nary a light.
Look thru his icy artwork, Know each to be unique, You'll see a starlit world revealed,
A world that some would seek.
A world that is within, without, A fragile world of wonder and glitter
A world that from his paintbrush flows, In the deep, dark nights of winter.

Walk Amongst the Trees

-Published Druid Missal-any 2, Winter Solstice 2000

Murmuring softly, Father Winter walks amongst the trees, gently easing them into sweet white slumber. He stops to rest with those who keep vigil during the long winter, the Holly, the Mistletoe, & the Evergreen.

They are old, old friends & pass the long white winter sharing tales & talking of things they have seen & heard throughout their long lives.

Go walk amongst the trees. Be quiet and still, listen for their voices & then for their wisdom.

Share with them your dreams, your wonders & your woes, for they will become the substance of tales told in the future.....the knowledge & wisdom of the trees.

Book of Songs and Poetry Volume Five 2002 Recent Songs

2003 Introduction

Well word spread about my ambitious attempt to collect more materials for ARDA 2 and Stacey's Druid Missal-Any magazine, so those little Druids in Carleton and Berkeley recently were quite busy and have been writing lots of songs and poetry. So busy in fact, that I began the Bardic contests in the Fall of 2001. Here is a selection of those works.
-Mike Scharding

Irony's Druidic Verses:

These are the druidicaly inspired poems of Irony Sade, Archdruid at Carleton 1996-1999.

Sands of Time

By Irony Sade

I met a man in Mittengrad
While walking down a street.
The snows of several winters gone
Were swirling round his feet.
His cloak showed signs of recent rains,
Its tattered edge told tales
Of nights spent 'neath the starlit sky,
And bramble ridden trails.
He nodded as he greeted me,
And quirked an eyebrow to;
As if to say in some strange way,
'I think that I know you.'
"We've met before, now haven't we?"
He spoke the tongue I knew,
Then vanished while I stood and stared.
And soft the cold wind blew.
I met myself in Mittengrad,
A thousand years removed.
The Sands of Time had bleached my hair
And left some wrinkles smoothed.
My scowl faded clean away,
A knowing mien he wore.
What source of surcease had he found,
Through what unopened door?

Hypnosis

By Irony Sade

Light and shadows ever-mixing
Twisting turning and betwixing
Stone and sky from which the rain comes
Falling steaming hissing screaming;

I am walking through a valley, being tripped by fallen angels.

While beneath the ground is shaking
Bouncing bounding laughing quaking
Fires leaking trees are creaking
All around a voice is speaking;

I am walking through a valley, being tripped by fallen angels.

And above the sky is turning
Swaying praying clouds are burning
Hawk and Phoenix both are slaying
Close behind the hounds are baying;

I am walking through a valley, being tripped by fallen angels.

Straight ahead the Elves are singing
Clear their voices high and ringing
On the hills a storm is climbing
In my ears a bell is chiming;

I am walking through a valley, being tripped by fallen angels.

The Spring

By Irony Sade

The flowers shine like ivory upon the forest lawn
The sky is lightly tinged with pink before the early dawn
The trees are black and high they raise their lofty towering crowns,
And in the stream there is a pool in which all worry drowns.

The larks and nightingales sing of restfulness and sleep
The lilies on their lily pads are floating on the deep
The pebbles show their colors and the trees are dripped with green
The waterfall it plays a song of notes not heard but seen.

The ivy creeps it's way around and up the trunks of trees
The flowers dance a reel to the buzzing of the bees
The butterflies they sit and fan themselves with jeweled wings
The stream it parts around a rock on which the wood nymph sings.

The Pilgrims Lament

By Irony Sade

If the world is only illusion,
Just the fabric of Maya wherein nothing is real,
If the soul of the all is the only existence,
Why does it hurt so much?

If the seeker has thrown off temptation,
If desire is stifled and pain is repealed,
If the peace that we've found is worth all that we've given,
Why do I feel this loss?

The gods of my peoples are too many,
The truths of the ones I see here too few.

If the gods cannot offer the keys to our heavens,
What can the soul look to?

I look to myself I see only confusion.
When I look to the world I see heartache and pain.
I look to the god's- I see nothing but silence.
What is there to gain?

Yet the sunset still offers me beauty,
Caresses still fill me with love.
The ground at my feet is still there when I'm weary...
Need we find aught above?

What if there's naught above?

Untitled

By Irony Sade

Gorbeling his gillerthumbs,
The Glabberbeast of Gallermums
Spied a lazing Olgerumph
Upon the forest floor.

Passing through the Pumplefronds
He pounced upon her tumblemonds.
"Dear sir!" She squeaked, "You're squiggling
My oomtingles with your zore!"

Solitude

By Irony Sade 25.4.98

No more questions.
No more stories.
Ask of me no songs.
No more oak leaves drifting in the stream beside the moon,
Nor lightning without thunder in the April muted hills.
And let there be no bitter wood-smoke seeping through the rain.
For there is no more wanting in me.
Nor fear.
Nor any love of challenge.
But give to me a single petal from which a drop of dew has fallen and another has yet to form-

For there is some desire in me still for which I have no name.

On Wind Driven Raindrops

The rains from the skies
are the tears that my eyes
never shed...

While the leaves in the stream
are the drops that my heart's
never bled....

All the words that I've read-
All the songs in my head-
All the pain that I dread....
For the ghost in my bed.....

What am I weeping for?

Poems from Foot Prints

The German times; August and September, 1997
Irony Sade

I

Delighting in life the lark flits above me
Where the rain drips down through the boughs of the pines,
Delighting in the rain the grasses run silver,
Their laughter the wind as it rustles my hair.
Delighting in the wind the pines shiver slowly-
The goddess is washing the dust from their beards.
Delighting in the goddess the deer leap before me-
But the ground has since sunk on the grave of the king.

II

The forests have buried the barrows of others
And webs are now woven where tapestries hung.
The spider stands sucking the life of her mate
On a hill o'er a cairn, o'er a pile of bones.
The bones of the deer now litter the forest
Where the timid folk wander on pathways of stone.
The wander watches the death of the grasses
Ground up in their greens by a growling machine-
But the heather grows green on the grave of the king.

III

Now buildings are build where the badger once burrowed
And the lark 'lights no longer where the lumberjacks lean.
Now bricks are laid over the green growing grasses,
And the Oak is hewn down for the imported corn.
Now the ships are of glass and the soul of the sailing
Is nailed to the mast of the scorekeepers dome.
Now the rain runs in rivers through the sewers of cities
And the forest, forgotten, frowns over the wall-
But someone burns candles on the grave of the king.

* * * * *

The candles in their candle-sticks are hanging on the wall.
The jacket and the dripping jeans are hanging in the hall,
The clouds are hanging in the sky, the rain is on the stone,
And I am at the table slouched, drinking tea alone.

Upper Arb, Spring 98

By Irony Sade

The summertime was dying
And the autumn grasses sighing.
The drifting leaves were lying
Like the waves upon the sea.

I was in a field standing
When I felt my soul expanding
And I heard a voice commanding
That I call it back to me.

And I thought I saw a glitter
As of eyes both glad and bitter.
There was mist upon the litter
That was lying next to me...

Merri's Druidical Mumblings in the Form of Poetry

Sand Dreams

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1998

Dusk
At the edge of the world,
Dust
Wild round me swirled,
Sand
Beneath me sank,
Silence
As deep I drank,
Voice
Called out my name,
"Who?"
I cried, insane.
Answer
I was never told,
Tongue
So strange and old,
"Tell!"
I plead in tears.
Veil
Thin between the years.
Silence.
And I wake.

Musings in a Colorado Hotel

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1998

Who am I on this precipice,
This cliff above the world,
Looking out o'er this great expanse,
This majesty unfurled?
What eyes are these, to survey so
The trials of beasts and men?
What lips have I to speak so of
These things beyond my ken?
Am I so wise a knowing thing
To explain with proverbs grand,
To nod sagely and lisp along
As though I understand?

Northeast Stone

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1998

Silently in death I lay
That death before the birth,
From nothingness, from there I came
I prepare now for earth
Sleeping, floating, pondering
The silence of the spheres
Inside are placed my gifts
And my allotted years
This memory sings to me
When I'm asleep at night
I listen, rapt with wonder,
Till I'm touched by morning's light
Now I find myself again
At the point within my dreams
Where I must prepare myself
To cross uncharted streams
This is a rebirth for me
A time for me to choose
Who I wish to be and
What path I wish to use

The Storm

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1998

It stormed, thunder and lightening crackling in the sky,
and in the air.
I ran through the rain, leaping and dancing,
like a young wild thing discovering for the first time what rain is.
I stood in streams of water, drinking from the sky,
atop the Center Stone.
With each crack and flash I felt the power growing,
within me and without of me,
until they both were one.
The breeze was my breath and the thunder my heartbeat.
I lifted up my open hand to the heavens
in exultation of this life,
and the sky cracked.
My other hand came up to join the first,
and it cracked and rumbled again.
My laughter was lost in the wind, became part of the storm.
The circle spun around me,
Alive.

My love, my love.
Lost in my reverie, we found a rift between us.
Later, under the raindrops, his words brought forth an anger.
A strength within me rose.
A woman I didn't recognize.
She brought him to the church and spoke with him.
She sees clearly.
Her thoughts are sound.
God's words may pass her lips,
she fears them not.
Roles reversed, they converse, until he leaves the scene.
And all in awe I venture forth, into the chapel dark.
The pews are empty but hymns are heard,
humming from the walls.
I kneel in prayer before my Lord and ask to understand.

Untitled

By MerriBeth Weber, c.1998

The silence broken only by the sound of falling snow,
the forest holds its breath.
Standing cloaked in my calmness,
I wait.
The sun, a silver disk,
strains through the clouds,
whiter than angels' wings.
The world's face softened by a snowy veil,
the quivering bride of winter
stands with me
in silence broken only by the sound of falling snow.
The forest and I hold our breath.
Chill fingers reach to caress my eyelids.
The Mother's arms are open,
her child falls grateful into her warm embrace.

Stillness.
The silence broken only by the sound of falling snow,
the forest holds its breath.

Walking With Dad

By MerriBeth Weber, c.1999

Swaggering across hummocks of grass,
Man style.
Delicately balanced in one hand,
A structure of a diminutive nature.
Blackbird, he says.
Only the ash have survived the swamp.
You can tell them by their bark.
Memory rests for a moment in childhood.
Regrettable that the walks were solitary.
Learning waits till now.
Now that I am woman grown.

The Dance

By MerriBeth Weber, c.1999

There is a dance within my soul
A Dance A Dance
Throbbing in my head, beating in my heart
A Dance A Dance
Moving in my limbs, the rhythm
A Dance A Dance
I dance dance a dance dance catlike,
slow, controlled, the rhythm beats
faster, the power grows numbing, exhilarating
Dance Dance Dance
Who's is this? Stop.
A knowledge, a knowing, to be gained in the dance.
From Whom?
dance dance Dance Dance DANCE!
I'm walking, I'm avoiding
I won't dance dance dance
I don't know yet, I'm not certain of this
dance dance dance
Of the Father or the dark one is this
dance dance dance
What knowledge? This knowledge. What knowledge?
Dance Dance
In the meadow, in the forest, by the stones
Dance Dance
I must dance dance dance. I must know.

Sister, if I go astray
Please keep all the rest away.

Dance.

Circle Building

By MerriBeth Weber c.1999

Mother, am I doing right?
Does this soothe your pain?
I'm lining stars up in the night
And wondering if I'm sane.
Mother, is this path I tread
Leading me to hell?
I cleared away those lying dead.
Am I doing well?
There is a focus in this place,
A power swelling deep.
But now and then the Father's face,
It haunts me in my sleep.

Untitled

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1999

Dragonflies are droning in the dreary dusk of day,
Heralding the harper who in Faerie's halls will play.
Bellowing and trumpeting the bullfrogs bounce along.
Fairies find their fellows as the harper starts his song.

' Remember rolling meadows
And grasses wet with dew.
Nights black as black
And skies of pure blue.
Remember golden silence.
Remember waters clear.
The world we knew is fading
The end is drawing near. '

Elven cries of anguish echo eerie in the wood.
Cries that carry farther than the fairies thought they could.
Unwitting I was walking when wails were wailed aloud
And the satyrs' song slipped my mind from its mortal shroud.

Untitled

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 2000

The morning sun sifts through my window.
I watch the light and shadows playing on the wall.
Quietly wondering why I am allowed such contentment.
Can it be that this peace is what is intended
And the rest is all dreams and folly?

Mississippi Mud

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 2000

Moonlight on naked flesh
Rain on the river
Laughter rippling
Young voices cut the night
So good to be young, to be free
Living my dance
Dancing alone
Feet sure between the stones
Water yielding and supporting
The way is open
The road so long and
Traveled so quickly
Standing a'tremble
The droplets beaded on my skin
Only the moon to light my path
And the clouds come and go

The Poems of Chris

Chris Middleton was an odd quiet sort of Druid who enjoyed mummery and plays and eccentric little talks with puppets at night.

Something to Look Forward to

By Chris Middleton, Carleton, c.1999

I was eating a rather bland breakfast
When suddenly
I died
Moments later my spirit was wheeling from the experience
My vision blurred as the room about me spun into a crazed mix of colors
A blender full of the rich hues of every fruit
Every berry.
Soon all reality and the bowl of oatmeal below me dipped and sank into the thick syrupy afterlife
My spirit was now sticky with the great beyond-
Tastes like blueberries-
Then a darkness, more liquid than coffee, washed over me as I ascended to the light
Could this be death I wondered as I drew my hands through a stream of caffeinated Hereafter
I thought of all the orange slices, the Mandarin, Naval, and Tangerine
I recalled the Grapefruit and Melons
Those distinct memories of Kiwis, Sandpears and Mangos
All those times I had feasted
Those times when I had refused to take a single citrus section
It was there that I came to a Toast Point
I landed gracefully near a sea of tranquil raspberry jam
Along the toasted beach, the waves kicked up a froth of pancakes
People wandered in bedclothes holding hands and holding newspapers
I knew I had reached the land where breakfast never ended
And sighed deeply, turning to English muffin thoughts, and knowing that I'd never have to go to early morning Spanish again.

Untitled for Obvious Reasons

By Chris Middleton, Carleton c.1999

Three men are seated at a table in Purgatory
They are silent
Around them are thousands of silent, caged, parrots
Just as in heaven, just as in hell

In heaven the parrots learn words and continue the conversations
When the people are silent
In hell the parrots learn words and
Interrupt whoever speaks
In Purgatory the parrots learn words,
But are always silent
The three men in Purgatory
Do not know this

The Poems of Brad

10/20/98
Dear Irony,

Your letter inurted me to send anything of interest to you, the enclosed facsimile copies are the nicest things (to me) I've seen on Druidism, Hope they are of interest.

Sincerely, Brad Norris

The Seven Precepts of Merlin

Strive for knowledge, for it is power
Seek virtue, for it brings peace
Abhor vice, for it brings evil on all
Obey those in authority in all just things, so virtue may be exalted
When in authority decide reasonably, for thy authority may not last
Bear with fortitude the ills of life, remembering that no mortal sorrow is eternal
Cultivate the social virtues, so that thou shall be loved by all men

The Gorsedd Prayer

Grant, o Duw, thy protection
And in protection, strength
And in strength, understanding
And in understanding, knowledge
And in knowledge, the knowledge of justice
And in that knowledge of justice, the love of justice
And in that love of justice, the love of all existence's
And in that love of all existence's, the love of Duw
Duw and all goodness

Stolen Child

Where dips the rocky highland
Of sleuthwood in the lake,
Lies a leafy island
Where flapping herons wake
The drowsy water rats
There we've hid our faerie vats
Full of berries
And of reddest stolen cherries

(Chorus)
Come away, oh human child
To the water and the wild
With a faerie hand in hand
For the world's more full of weeping
Than you can understand

Where the wave of moonlight glosses
The dim grey sands with light
By far off furthest crosses
We foot it all the night
Weaving olden dances
Mingling hands and mingling glances
Till the moon has taken flight
To and fro we leap
And chase the frothy bubbles
While the world is full of troubles
And is anxious in its sleep

(Chorus)

Where the wandering water gushes
From the hills above Glencar
In pools among the rushes
That scarce could bathe a star
We seek for slumbering trout
And whispering in their ears
Give them unquiet dreams
Leaning softly out
O'er ferns that drop their tears
Over the young stream

(Chorus)

Away with us he's going
The solemn-eyed
He'll hear no more the lowing
Of the calves on the long hillside
Or the kettle on the hob
Sing peace unto his breast
Or see the brown mice bob
Round and round the oatmeal chest
For he comes the human child
To the waters and the wild
With a faerie hand in hand
For the world's more full of weeping
Than he can understand

W.B. Yeats

The Poems of Corwin

Utter blackness

By Corwin, c. 2002

Utter blackness
Just a second
When bright light winked out.
But in that second,
I could see nothing.
The world was gone.

All too soon,
A spot of light emerges,
And the world returns.
But I always know
That for a second,
It was gone.

Bear Me Up, O World

By Corwin, c. 2002

Bear me up, O world.
Bear me up, support my weight with your lightness.
In your silence, I can sing;
Your cold envelops me,
And stillness is my loyal companion.
Your tiny rain is my ambrosia;
The scent of the grass, the seeds, the decaying leaves—
All your smallness feeds me.
Your immensity, your grandeur, gets more praise,
But your little, secret ways—
The soft rhythm of crunching snow
The midnight pale brightness of a snow field
A single star pushing through the clouds—
Lovingly linger with me,
Always waiting, just for me to notice.
You give me everything
But that I could know it all!
Bear me up, O world
Let me be another tiny, forgotten
Lovely thing.

Infinity in an Open Plain

By Corwin, c. 2002

I am so used to walls,
Trees and Horizons
I have never stood upon an empty plain
Gazing out into wide forever
Without anything to hold me up
Beside or above, just the ground below.
I look from out this train window;
I wonder—without this steely guardian
Without cities, walls, and dams,
In a world without
Man’s constructed obstruction
Would I be borne up by infinity
Stretching my limbs and my sight
As far as they could go,
Or would I, alone, isolated,
Be crushed by its weightlessness?

Spent

By Corwin, c. 2002

Another CD
Another thing
Another, another, and another
Why must I buy
It sounds
It tastes
It feels and looks
So good
So why has my life—my energy—
Gone? following those
Measly little bills?
I am drained
I feel sick.
You can buy happiness,
But like rich food
If you take too much
It is vomit, diarrhea;
Disgust.
I enjoy not spending,
I enjoy frugality,
Taking little, and only cheaply.
This lettuce and celery joy
Gave way to that of mousse and steak.
I feel ill; I mustn't eat.
Later I shall eat slowly,
Rich or poor,
And avoid this sickness worse than hunger.

Transcendence

By Corwin, c. 2002

I feel her
I feel through her
I can feel the back of her neck
Yet I face her front,
And feel that too.
I?
We feel.
Where does I end and she begin?
I am not sure.
I am not I
I stretch beyond my form
And these beautiful, loving bodies
Fall to pieces
Of universe.

Odd Selection of Current Works

These are just a few more published poems submitted to the most recent Druid Missal-Any magazines before the Bardic Contest was begun.

One

From Shane.Saylor@verizon.net, Sept. 2001

As the soot and dirt and ash rained down,
We became one color.
As we carried each other down the stairs of the burning building,
We became one class.
As we lit candles of waiting and hope,
We became one generation.
As the firefighters and police officers fought their way into the inferno,
We became one gender.
As we fell to our knees in prayer for strength,
We became one faith.
As we whispered or shouted words of encouragement,
We spoke one language.
As we gave our blood in lines a mile long,
We became one body.
As we mourned together the great loss,
We became one family.
As we cried tears of grief and loss,
We became one soul.
As we retell with pride of the sacrifice of heroes,
We become one people.

We are
One color
One class
One generation
One gender
One faith
One language
One body
One family
One soul
One people
- author unknown

The Wood Song

Taught to Mike by Sam Adams

You don't have to live in a forest to have a Yule log, just a saw, a car, and a nearby park with some dead or fallen wood. But what kind of wood do you want. Here's a song that's been around awhile and should help you:
Source: http://www.earthspirit.com/twnls.html
Recorded on: "This Winter's Night," Mothertongue, 1998 (earthspirit@earthspirit.com, EarthSpirit Community, P.O. Box 723-N, Williamsburg, MA 01096)

Oaken logs will warm you well, That are old and dry;
Logs of pine will sweetly smell, But the sparks will fly.
Birch logs will bum too fast; Chestnut, scarce at all.
Hawthorn logs are good to last, Burn them in the fall.

Holly logs will burn like wax, You may burn them green;
Elm logs, like to smouldering flax, No flame to be seen.
Beech logs for the winter-time, Yew logs as well.
Green elder logs it is a crime, For any man to sell.

Pear logs and apple logs, They will scent your room.
Cherry logs across the dogs Smell like flowers of broom.
Ashen logs, smooth and grey, Burn them green or old;
Buy up all that come your way, Worth their weight in gold.

Dalon's Daily Ditty

By Michael Scharding

I've been intrigued by Gospel music lately, despite never hearing any. This is his new take on liturgical gospel. As you know, I'm obsessive about Carleton, and I know every bend of the trail and every forested corner of it's 800 acres. Like the Navajo and Tibetans, it is a deeply sacred landscape, filled with memories, legends, gods and lessons. I hope you enjoy it, works best with a side-shuffle and rocking back and forth, I believe. Choral work could improve it. A map of Carleton is available at http://www.acad.carleton.edu/campus/arb/ Feel free to adjust the lyrics or make your own.

I am nothing special just a simple Druid,
Seeking my awareness though the Earth Mother,
And life's lessons.

But, I'm filled with doubts, and deep confusion
What can I do to release these chains?
Make a journey!

CHORUS:
Take me on up,, Lord (i.e. Dalon,) take me on down.
Take me on over to the ho-oly gro-oves
Of Carleton!

The road is hard, black, long and winding
With Bright-eyed Dragons spitting fire and smoke.
Lord guide me.

I'm goin' down to the Cannon River,
Gonna wash away all my ignorance
And dogma's blight.

Through lonesome prairie and swamps of passion
In the uncertain floodplain I learn a lesson
The Lower Arb

Matriculate past the dean of admission,
To enter the ranks of those holy students
And faculty.

It's the Land of Youth on an ancient mission
Lifting the torch of inquiry both wide and far
Through long study.

The price of learning is a high tuition
One that must be paid back for many years;
To my pupils.

Drink at the twin lakes of knowledge and wisdom
Filled by the creek of experience
That's Lyman Lakes.

Proceed on to the tower of inspiration
Whose fair white walls call out to me
That's Goodhue Hall.

On seldom trod paths of contemplation
with barbed sarcasm and rocks of Irony
The Upper Arb

I'll climb up that steep, green, holy mountain
Where so many before have found Awareness
Hill of Three Oaks

There I'll pray & vigil in jubilation
Between my green mother Earth and starry Pa
And go on home.

The world will've changed with those revelations
The simple will be hard and the hard simple.
Can I teach this?

But questions will arise despite my education
So, what can I do to solve them all?
Make a new trip!

The Existential Moment (1997)

by K.D. Bennett or Spring Child of Berkeley

'Tis a cold, dark night as all seem to be
Melancholic, morbid, romantic characteristically
One such as I who penned these words, being all entwined in me
Can gaze out into this night and, nomadic, free
Give thanks unto myself for quietude; night's hush
Feels me flush 'gainst dream, feeling, thought; plush
Is the plenty of leafy tree's rustling rush
And the mystical chirping of dark friend cricket in that brush.

It's a little dark and depressing, but I hope all my brothers and sisters will understand that that is the way I have felt so much of my life. Darkness is only one side of the darkness/light equation of course, and not really to be dwelled upon excessively. Under the waning gibbous moon, as we head off into winter now, I hope that you are all in good spirits, and wish you well in all that you do.

Blessed be, All eternal love in spirit,

Kevin David Bennett

Blessing

By Mike

Thanks to the Earth
For Giving us Birth
Thanks to the Sky
Both wet and dry.
Thanks to all creatures in between
Those that are solid & those unseen.

13 Fold Incantation

By Mike Scharding, 2001

I am a Washington in revolution.
I am a Franklin in wit.
I am a Jefferson in wisdom.
I am a Monroe towards neighbors.
I am a Lincoln in debate.
I am a Bull Moose in the wilderness.
I am a Taft at dinner.
I am a Wilson in study.
I am a Roosevelt in hard times.
I am an Eisenhower in battle.
I am a Kennedy in charisma.
I am a Carter on the farm.
I am a Clinton in virility.
I am a Bush in having smart friends.
I am a Gore to the environment.
Who is it who leads the people?
Who comforts us in our crises?
Who takes the credit for success and failure?
If not I?

Yankee Doodle Druid

By Mike Scharding, 2001

I'm a Yankee doodle Druid.
Here in Washington D.C.
A real strange Druid with a loud bagpipe
Playing tricks and full of whiskey.
I love my dear sweet earth-mother,
She's my Yankee Doodle joy.

Yankee doodle went to Wiltshire
Just to view that Stonehenge!
I am a Yankee Doodle boy.

I laugh at all those silly Druids,
Tied up in red-tape, they don't need.
Give me a one page constitution, PLEASE!
So I don't go blind, trying to read.
I love our simple, clever humor,
I'll follow it till the day I die.

Yankee doodle went to Wiltshire
Just to view that Stonehenge!
I am a Yankee Doodle guy.

-Mike Scharding, 2001

The Chronicle and the Ballad of the Death of Dalon ap Landu

In 1999, the Hazelnut Grove, in a period of isolation and frustration with no reading material on Dalon Ap Landu (a God only known to the RDNA, apparently we discovered him in 1963) decided to replace him with the much better documented "Hu Gadarn," who has a history running back to 1703 when Iolo Morganwg discovered him.

The reason for the ballad about the battle is that the AD wanted to just ditch Dalon Ap Landu because he couldn't find any literature on him, and he was afraid that we would be laughed out of the room by those for whom we did demo rituals. He did, however, find literature on Hu Gadern. Well, as always in the Reform, there were those of us who rebelled and felt that Dalon Ap Landu should not be just unceremoniously dumped like a bad date. And it hit me one Friday night during our Druid Think Tank meeting. If DAL must die, let him die as any Celt would want to, in battle. So, I wrote the chronicle and the ballad.

We figure that he was a thought form created by the founding fathers of the Reform, because still being Christians, they felt uneasy about calling up any real Pagan deities. It is my personal belief that by now as a result of having been called upon for 30 plus years, he is at least an eggregore by now, and one day could attain true godhood. And in ritual, whenever Hu Gadern's name is mentioned, we whisper Dalon Ap Landu's name that it may remain a mystery to the multitude.

The Ballad of the Death of Dalon ap Landu

Long were his locks of shining copper hue
Stormy also his eyes of Mananan's own blue
Tall was he and mighty were his thews
Shoulders broad as the spreading driu
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon ap Landu

His spear was of the deadly yew
His targe of oak that near it grew
He armored himself as all warriors do
But that could not stop the death of Dalon ap Landu
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon ap Landu

Long had the scholars toiled to find his name so true
But where he'd come from no tome knew
So finally with teeth gnashing and weeping anew
They signed a death warrant for young Dalon ap Landu
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon ap Landu

His only crime was that he was new
For six and thirty years he throve and grew
But of the books and tomes none knew
Of the paltry existence of Dalon ap Landu
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon ap Landu

Scholars did find as Lord of the Groves, one Hu
Gadern his surname and stories about him grew
Druids called on him to give a blessing to
Their offerings of leaves and potent brew
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon ap Landu

Only six and thirty years had he, as a god, that's pretty new
There were those who thought to kill a god one wouldn't do
E'en a youthful god had merit they'd softly coo
As the Druid said the Lord of the Grove, whose name was Hu
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon ap Landu

They came together, a clash of arms, Dalon and Hu
In the trees thunder, in ground a tremor grew
Dalon brandished his spear made of deadly yew,
And landed first blow on Hu's mighty thew
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon ap Landu

Then came the spear of the Lord of Groves, named Hu,
Long, straight, and also made of deadly yew
The thrust was great and pierced Dalon right through
He struggled manfully in his dying, the son of old Landu
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon ap Landu

And still we sing of the death so long and cruel
He died and went to the land of great Pwyll
A death occurring in a great duel
I hope you think my song adequately cool
O youths and maids sing a song for the death of Dalon ap Landu

Tegwedd Shadow Dancer
Co-Co-Archdruid of the Hazelnut Mother Grove
New Reformed Druids of North America
August 21, 1999

The Death of Dalon ap Landu
(prose chronicle version)

And in those days a great cry went up from those of the cross traditional circles that a ritual shall be held to show the multitude what the Druids of the Reform did in their worship. In the writing of the ritual for the common worship, the scholars and Druids had pored through tome after tome in the Arch Druid's (Stefan) great Celtic library, but could find no reference for the name Dalon ap Landu, or even of his progenitor Landu, and much did the ArchDruid fear the ridicule of the scholars of the cross traditional circles. But a name did come up. One Hu Gadern was the Lord of the Groves for the ancient Cymry, and so his name replace that of Dalon ap Landu.

But there were those in the Grove who mourned the passing of Dalon ap Landu. To them, even a young god was a fit deity who should not be cast aside as a worn shoe. Long did they whisper whenever the name of Hu Gadern was mentioned the doughty name of Dalon ap Landu. To some it did seem as an in-joke, and to others a mystery.

But there was one who gathered her courage to speak onto the ArchDruid, "If he is to be dead, let him die a fit death for a Celtic deity. Let him die in battle."

And behold, the ArchDruid objected not.

Long had Hu Gadern slumbered under the barrows of the honored Celtic dead. But as gods will often do, Hu Gadern stirred when he heard his name being called. Lo, did they call upon his name to bless the sacrifice of life and the libation. And when he stirred, he knew that there was another god he must face in combat for the privilege of being called upon to bestow the blessings. And behold did he know this, because when his name was called, the other's name, Dalon ap Landu, was whispered softly.

And when that name was called, be it ever so softly, Dalon ap Landu did hearken onto his name, even as so youthful a god was he, did hearken onto his name. He knew he must face his nemesis in open combat, in a duel to the death. He armed himself with a spear made of the deadly yew, and armored himself with a targe of solid oak and armor of oaken bark; for after all was he not Lord of the Groves? His shining copper locks were held back by a strip of under-bark, and his blue eyes flashed in the sun.

When the two came together, thunder roared among the boughs of the trees and the ground under them shook. Dalon ap Landu struck first a blow upon Hu Gadern's mighty thew. But that did not even slow Hu Gadern down, and he, with his spear also of deadly yew, ran Dalon ap Landu's noble chest through. All the youths who were looking on wept bitter tears for the death of the young and doughty Dalon ap Landu. Manfully did he struggle with Death. But the Caileach did scoop up her charge and sped away with Dalon ap Landu.

But even now in the rites when the name of Hu Gadern is called upon, the name of Dalon ap Landu is ever whispered by some, and so shall it continue to be a mystery onto the multitude.

Tegwedd Shadow Dancer
Co Co ArchDruid and Chronicler for the Hazelnut Mother Grove
August 21st, 1999

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Mike wrote in May 2001

Not too worry, I have it on good counsel, that Dalon ap Landu, faked the encounter with Hu (being old drinking buddies) to "save face," and that Dalon ap Landu is down in the Florida Everglades or Keys, knocking back screwdrivers (aka "Whang.") Apparently he is on the Divine Witness Relocation Program, for "Gods on the Run," which has been very successful in renaming European Gods into Christian Saints. He is not upset at all , "We vegetation gods are used to dying off every year! No problems here, dude, cheers!" he reports. In fact, he considers it a rather nice vacation after 36 years of hard work, and is lifting weights on the beach and doing some spear-training with the US Javelin team for a rematch at the "West-Coast Lord of the Groves" title. He can be contacted as needed by the usual means (i.e. invocation,) but do respect that he is now operating on East Coast time. About that lack of documentation, Dalon bashfully admits, "The worst thing about this whole situation, is I never learned to read and write! Hopefully with Laura Bush's help, even a silly God like me will be able to write my memoirs!" If you have further questions, contact your nearest tree or consult a whisky bottle.

(Now the story is further expanded by Tegwedd in June 2001,)

I also think that Stephen will get a kick out of what you said about Dalon Ap Landu. The reason for the ballad about the battle is that he wanted to just ditch Dalon Ap Landu because he couldn't find any literature on him, and he was afraid that we would be laughed out of the room by those for whom we did demo rituals. He did, however, find literature on Hu Gadern. Well, as always in the Reform, there were those of us who rebelled and felt that Dalon Ap Landu should not be just unceremoniously dumped like a bad date. And it hit me one

Friday night during our Druid Think Tank meeting. If DAL must die, let him die as any Celt would want to, in battle. So, I wrote the chronicle and the ballad.

Please tell him (Dalon Ap Landu) that never did I intend him any ill will. He could live forever, as far as I'm concerned. We figure that he was a thoughtform created by the founding fathers of the Reform, because still being Christians, they felt uneasy about calling up any real Pagan deities. It is my personal belief that by now as a result of having been called upon for 30+ years, he is at least an eggregore by now, and one day could attain true godhood. And in ritual, whenever Hu Gadern's name is mentioned, we whisper Dalon Ap Landu's name, that it may remain a mystery to the multitude.

Rhiannon's Songs

Here are some songs and prayers we use at Druid Heart Spirit, I wrote some of them and some are triad invocations in a version we use. I wish I could send the melodies music notation but with this old computer it's not possible, sorry.

Deep Peace (An Old Druid Prayer)

Deep peace of the running wave to you
Deep peace of the silent stars
Deep peace of the flowing air to you
Deep Peace of the quiet earth.
May peace, may peace, may peace fill your soul
Let peace, let peace, let peace make you whole.

Land, Sea & Sky

By Rhiannon Hawk

Land, sea, and sky, eye ee eye
Land, sea, and sky, eye ee eye
Land, sea, and sky, ae eye oh

There is a place in our world
We are everywhere, in our space
There is a time, in our place
Where there is no-time and really no-space

Land, sea, and sky, eye ee eye
Land, sea, and sky, eye ee eye
Land, sea, and sky, ae eye oh

There is a leaf that is not a tree
But it grows in trees and is a healing
Of our vision, a quickening
Hangs from a tree, Otherworldly

Land, sea, and sky, eye ee eye
Land, sea, and sky, eye ee eye
Land, sea, and sky, ae eye oh

Hail to the force of the Awen
We are reborn with the land.
Praise to the beauty of nature
In this light we are pure.

Tall Trees

Tall trees, warm fires, strong winds, deep waters
I feel you in my body, I feel you in my soul
Between the worlds,
We're in a circle,
Everlasting, universal
We are filled with spirit power
Into the fires, complete the cycle

People of the Oak

We are the people of the Oak
Gathered at the sacred well
Joined here the old ones to invoke
So to weave our magic spell

We are the people of the wood
Standing in a faerie ring
Here, where the shining ones stand
Praises to the gods we bring

Flame Within

Burn bright, flame within
Kindled of eternal fire
Of the people I do be
And the people part of me
All one in many parts
A single fire of flaming hearts

(repeat entire song a few times)

Walk With Wisdom

Walk with wisdom, from this hollowed place
Walk not in sorrow, our roots shall ever embrace
May strength be your brother, and honor be your friend
And luck be your lover, until we meet again

(repeat entire song a few times)

Invocation to Manawyddan

Manawyddan we call to thee
To cross over to our homeland
And set your sails free
To part the veil that is between
The Otherworlds and ours
So that we may
Commune with the Shining Ones,
Many blessings there shall be.

Manawyddan, opener of every gate
You are brother to Bran and Branwen
Father of Pryderi and lover to Rhiannon
Bring them across the seas
So we may join with the Shining Ones and offer our love to thee.

Triad Invocations

Ancestors
Spirits of the past, spirits of ancestors
We call to you now.
Spirits of the waters of the strongest oceans
The waters that is the soothing rains
I bid you enter into this water that we your kindred
May be blessed by our communion with you

(3 times)

Nature Spirits
Spirits of the land, spirits of the forest
We call to you now.
Sacred and ancient trees
Earth, water, wing and fire
We call you into this sacred soil.
We bid you enter into this soil that we you kindred
May be blessed by our communion with you

(3 times)

Shining Ones
Spirits of the Otherworld, Spirits of the Shining Ones,
We call to you now.
Bringers of peace, Beings of love,
We call you into this sacred smoke.
We bid you enter into this smoke that we your kindred
May be blessed by our communion with you.

(3 times)

Honoring Mother Earth

Oh Earth Mother! We praise thee!
That seed springeth,
That flower openeth,
That grass waveth,
We praise thee!
For winds that whisper,
Through the shining birch,
Through the lively pine,
Through the mighty oak,
We praise thee! For all things,
Oh Earth Mother, who givest life.

Mike's Selections

I had meant to include these originally in Green Book Volume 2, and have regretted not including these delightful bi-lingual poems from Scotland's Gaidhealtachd in "Nuadh Bardachd" (New Bardry.)

THE DUTY OF THE HEIGHTS

(George Campell Hay/Deorsa Mac-Ian Deorsa pg 136)

The dark mountain under the downpour,
exposed as an anvil to the tempest,
the wind ever blows about its summit,
the mist ever drifts about its sides;
difficult under the feet
are its dripping paths through the rocks;
tranquil about its base
are houses, corn-plots, and garden.

Often a few have assented to trials
so that others should taste
the happiness that was won
in the face of Powers and tempest
the scream of the wind on the crest;
not a breath is heard on the straths:
it's the buffeting of the Heights
that gives tranquility to the little glen.

Youth of my country,
is it to be the tranquility of the Plains, then,
the Peace and slumber of the low valleys,
sheltered from the rough blast?
Let your step be on the summit,
and your breast exposed to the shy.
For you the tearing wind of the pinnacles,
lest destruction come on us as a landslide.

THE WELL

(by Derrick Thomson pg 142)

In the middle of the village is a little well,
with the grass hiding it,
the green luscious grass closely thatching it.
I heard of it from an old woman,
but she said, 'The path is covered with bracken,
where often I walked with my cogie,
and the cogie itself is warped.'
When I looked in her lined face
I saw the bracken growing round the well of her eyes,
and hiding it from seeking and from desires,
and closing it, closing it.

'Nobody goes to that well nowadays,,
said the old woman, 'as we went once,
when we were young,
though the water is lovely and white.
And when I looked in her Yes through the bracken
I saw the sparkle of that spring
that makes whole every hurt,
till the hurt of the heart.

'And will You go for me,'
said the old woman, 'with a thimble even,
and bring to me a drop of that clear water
that will bring colour to my cheeks?'
I found the well at last
and though her need was not the greatest,
it was to her I brought the treasure.

It may be that the well
is only something I saw in a dream
for when I went to seek it to-day
I found nothing but bracken and rushes,
and the old woman's eyes are closed,
and a film has come over their merriment.

I Got The Feel of You With My Feet

(by Derrrick Thomson/ Ruaridh MacThomais pg 160)

I got the feel of you with my feet
in early summer;
my mind here in the city
strives to know, but the shoes come between us.
The child's way is difficult to forget:
he rubs himself against his mother
till he finds peace.
I felt the rough side of you and the smooth
and was none the worse of it,
the two sides of the grass and two grips on the barley,
Peat-fibre and moss,
and since the world we knew
follows us as far as we go
I need not wash away that mud
from between the boy's toes.
And now, in middle age,
I am going in to warm myself,
with my bare feet on a peat beside the hearth.

My Village Tonight

(Ian Chrighton Smith from "Bailtean")

You are my village tonight,
remarkable your lights,
warm glow in the moor's bleakness.
High above Shore Street
your other streets rise -
streets like a soft carpet -
and my hands will feel your paths
and my heart your heart.
Woodland and tree between the ways,
they will rise on the summits
and the knolls will be soft with moss
and the moss with dew.
You are the resplendent village,
little village by the wave,
secret village of my love,
tidal village and earth village,
village of the soft breasts,
village that will ease from self
and keep us folded as one.
When you lift your summer skirt
I will dance on your meadow,
and we will ascend the steps
up from the edge of the sea
until we are above the world,
and I see you lying below me
like a diamond in the kyle.

Love's Colors

(pg 24 of Nuadh Bardach)

Drowsy village surrounded
by brown moor
to the horizon, to the Harris mountains.
There was a creel on the hillocks,
a creel no longer living.
But does it matter
who inherits this symbol,
if there is love in the heart?
And does it matter
for the English and those from Europe?
The heart must grow
with each day's decease, the sun rising and setting
on the purple fens.
Would it matter if there were no Gaels -
would the heather wither?

In another island - in Mull -
the moor blossoms yet,
with a few natives watching
it growing with the strangers.
A tear or two will not deter their joy -
perhaps like the joy of the first Gael
on seeing Ben Tala and Ben More
with their virgin winter coat.

This land also saw,
bare though it is,
death and life,
until it is today
silent,
smooth to the horizon
like a brown inscrutable poem.

2

1 hope you did not believe the lie,
the lie foisted on us by education,
that love is uncomplicated
and that it does not matter who gives it.
For love is multi-coloured
and the heart above the moor,
high and multiform above it.

There are many loves in the heart
and many languages.
What colour is your love? -
the love outlasting the moor,
love woven with the language
forever, if one wishes.
If the moor does not hear our joy
there will be a music lost to earth
and one of the colours of love.

Dathach a'Ghraidh ("Love's Colours")

(Scots Gaelic pg 25 of Nuadh Bardach)
1
Tha am baile cadalach, donn
am monadh timcheall air
a' sineadh gu faire,
gu beanntan Na Hearadh-
Bhitheadh cliatbh air na tuim,
cliabh nach eil beo an-diugh.
Ach a bheil e gu diofar
c6 gheibh sealbh air an t-samhla seo,
ma tha gradh anns a' chridhe?
'S a bheil e gu diofar
airson Shasannach is Eurpach?
Cha sheachain an cridhe fas
le siubhal gach latha,
a' ghrian ag eirigh 's a' laighe
air na faithean purpar.
De ged nach biodh Gaidheal idir ann -
an tigeadh seargadh air an fhraoch?

Ann an eilean eile - ann am Muile -
tha am monadh dosrach fhathast
agus corra Ghaidheal ga fhaicinn
a' fas ris na strainnsearan.
Cha bhrist deur no dha an aoibhneas-san -
Is docha mar aoibhneas a' chiad Ghaidheil
a' faicinn Beinn Tala is Beinn Mor
le cota oigheil a' gheamhraidh.

Chunnaic am fearann seo cuideachd,
lom 's gu bheil e
iomadach beatha is bas,
gus a bheil e 'n-diugh
samhach,
comhnard gu faire
mar dhan donn do-thuigsinn.

Tha mi an dochas nach do chreid thu a' bhreug,
a' bhreug a sparras foghlam oirnn,
gu bheil an gradh aon-fhilite
Is nach eil e gu disfar co bheir e.
Oir tha an gradh ioma-dhathte
agus an cridhe os cionn a' mhonaidh,
Ard, iomadach os a chionn.

Tha iomadh gradh anns a' chridhe
agus iomadh canan.
De an dath a th'air do ghradh? -
an gradh as buaine na am monadh,
air a thasgadh anns a' chanan
‘Is mi thogras sinn gu brath.
Mur cluinn am monadh ar caithream
birth ceol air chall air thalamh
agus aon de dhathan a' ghraidh.

A January Day
(a poem in an old manner)

pg 44 of Nuadh Bardachd

On a January day
the untamed wind
will be smoothing things
amidst the trees.

On a strange day
waves will rise
like chequered embers
out from the headland.

The impetuous clouds will blow,
white and grey splendour,
like feathers plucked
from a plump cockerel-

The promontory will be misty,
and the subtle sun
will shine through clouds
on the deceptive slopes.

I like a January day
somewhat windy
with the horizon invisible
with a lime-coloured haze.

Purple by the sea's edge,
blue further out,
blue-grays so colourful
and white coals in the Kyle.

A promise of spring in the air;
although it is still cold,
people and earth
are aware of a green spirit.

THE HARD BEND

pg 29 of Nuadh Bardach

Silent Moon
We
in the wood.
Above it the sun,
above it the moon.
Moon world,
sun world,
the one burning,
the one wan.
The moon is pale
in the same sky
in which the leaves are failing.
If I should catch the pale moon
the sun would fall
if I should catch the leaf.

Mud smell
in the brown path,
the leaf failing
according to nature's laws,
and dying.
It will fall forever,
dispersing, uniting.

The pale leaf
in the mud,
the white swan on tile wave
and the sun without light.

What town is this
that is so silent?
For God's sake
say something
about unity, about scattering.

The leaf broke in a thousand pieces.
The moon was silent.

Book of Songs and Poetry Volume Six 2002

Songs from Archie D. & the Servers

The 2001-2 Bardic Contest

In the Time of Sleep between Samhain 2001 and Beltane 2002, the RDNA had a bi-weekly Bardic filk contest wherein the members took popular tunes and wrote new lyrics. We had over 40 entries during these 25 weeks, and I hope that they provide use in liturgies, festivals and late night bonfire sing-a-longs. Please check with the original authors, regarding use of copy-right materials.

The Rules of the Contest

You, and your friends & enemies, are hereby invited to participate in the First Annual Winter Bardic Song-Writing Contest of the RDNA 2001/2002:

1. Prize: Bard of the Year XXXIX designation.
2. The Reason: A desire to further one's technical skills and attune one's muse
3. O.K., The Real Reason: Winter is boring. Rituals don't work well enough to bother with. Raw Ego and Pride
4. Participants: Anyone gifted by the gods can join in. We hope to have 10 or more bards involved by completion of the project. Please register with the Judge [nozomikibou@hotmail.com] at any time.
5. The Theme: Druidism, of course, (RDNA, Celtic, British, Hassidic, Humanistic DNA, etc.,) must be either sad, poignant, sarcastic, patriotic (you can choose the country) or funny (or at least you think so.) Can't think of something? Try a theme, like; seasonal, related to search for awareness or wisdom, mocking other organizations, grove problems, vigiling, perverseness, love of spirits (alcoholic and otherwise,) struggle for simplicity, strange accidents, mythic-oriented, grove-politics, unusual members, life-cycles, urban paganism, gardening, etc.
6. The Basic Rules:

    1. You have to write the words (or at least most of them)
    2. Collaboration is tolerated, but upon winning, those team members must devise a contest or duel to devise a final single winner.
    3. Preferably in English (Ancient English, Saxonese, Jutish, Scots, Brogue, or Middle English are acceptable, too)
    4. Has to be good enough to admit that you wrote it.
    5. You must use the music or tune from an existing established song (i.e. "Filk it," but if you're the only one who knows some arcane tune of 1734, no one else will appreciate it, and you will lose, so try to keep it popular.

Indicate the song & original authors with the lyrics-submission.
6. Preferably, make the lyrics available to the Public Domain, or at least give us permission to publish them in our newsletter or ARDA 2. After all, you were not going to make any real money anyway, right?, and neither will we.
7. Under 30 verses, please.
8. Multiple entries (of different songs, that is) are encouraged, and raiseyour chances of winning.
9. No using tricky curses to hinder other participants.
10. There is no rule 10.

7. Battleground: Possibly in A Druid Missal-any's issues, but if too many entries come in (which is a good thing,) a special Bardic edition may be made.
8. The Contest's Judge: The judge will be Nozomi Kibou, AD of Akita, [nozomikibou@hotmail.com]

She has volunteered to be the perfect impartial observer as
1. she has no Bardic ability,
2. fights with Pat frequently,
3. doesn't understand English well.

She will use divination to select the winner, such as counting junk-mail on successive days to judge each participant's favor with the gods.

She also notes that bribes are accepted and appreciated. :)
You may write to Nozomi and give you opinions about various entries.

Contestants

Pat Haneke 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13
Mari Ceolmhor 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12
Sine Ceolbhinn 1
Mike Scharding 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13
Rhiannan Hawk 3, 10
Ian Friesland 3
K.D. Bennet 3
Shane Saylor 4
Gayla Paul 5
Martin Victor 5
Phillip Chapman Bell 5
Arm Wrath 6
Tegwedd 9
Nozomi Kibou 12
Donald Edwards 13

The Winner

The Winner was Tegwedd's "Celtic Goddess Chant" from the Bardic Salvo #9: March 1st, 2002 because it was easy enough for Nozomi to understand, and rather useful at services for her, and she liked it.

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Bardic Salvo #1: Nov. 1st, 2002

Love Ogham on the Stones

By Patrick Haneke Akita Grove, RDNA 2001
For the Public Domain.

Based upon "Love Letters In The Sand"
Words by Nick and Charles Kenny and Music by J. Fred Coots
Written in the 30's, but made famous by Patty Boone in the 50s.
http://www.smickandsmodoo.com/aaa/1957/loveletters.htm for MIDI music

On a day like today,
We passed the time away
Carving love oghams on the stones

It's been some years since you died,
Yet my thoughts gently glide
To those love oghams on the stones.

CHORUS
We made a vow that we'd meet in the next world
Those dear thoughts now caught in lines straight and curled.

Now my lonely heart aches
With every dawn that breaks
Over love oghams on the stones

(whistling) Now my lonely heart aches
With every dawn that breaks
Over love oghams on the stones

The Druid's Lament

By Mairi Ceolmhor, DC Grove of the RDNA 2001
For the Public Domain and use at Funerals & Memorials
Based on the "**Streets of Laredo**" in 1876 by Francis Henry Maynard
Online Midi music files available at
http://www.wildwestweb.net/camp.html

As I walked out in the woods with my laddy-o,
As I walked with my laddy-o one day,
I spied an old Druid in a robe of white linen,
Wrapped up in white linen and her hair was all gray.

"O beat the drum slowly and play the fife lowly;
Skirl the bagpipes as you carry me along.
Take me to the green valley and pile the rocks o're me,
For I'm an old Druid and this is my last song."

"I see by your outlook that you are a Druid."
These words she did say as I boldly stepped nigh.
"Come sit down beside me and hear my sad story;
I'll soon be at rest and I know I must die."

"My friends and relations, they'll live on without me.
They've learned from my deeds, both the good and the wrong.
Please, mourn but a short time, and continue your journeys.
The living must accept death, both the weak and the strong."

"I've spent all my life in the study of Nature
And drank deep of life; including the dregs.
I hope that you'll explore the same paths as I did,
For they've taught me well, and I have few regrets."

"Go gather around you a grove of young Druids,
And tell them the lessons of this world, which are great.
Sisters and brothers, learn of our Earth-Mother,
Please, share Her wild wisdom before it's too late."

"Get six brawny young lads to construct my grave mound;
Get six witty young lasses to sing me a song.
For when I come back, it'll be my turn to bury them.
I'll visit the next world, but I won't stay there long."

"Go bring me a cup, a cup of warm whiskey;
Those bright waters-of-life," the old druid said.
Before I had returned, the spirits had left her.
And gone to the far west - the Druid was dead.

We beat the drum slowly and played the fife lowly;
And solemnly piped as we bore her along.
For all loved our comrade, so brave, wise, and gentle.
We all loved that Druid and still sing her songs.

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Bardic Salvo #2: Nov. 14th, 2001

Only Yew!

Filked by Patrick Haneke, Akita Grove
Year 2001. For the Public Domain.
Original "Only You" By the Platters
See http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/lyrics/onlyyou.htm for music file. Excellent Yew article
http://www.indigogroup.co.uk/edge/oldyews.htm

Spoken Intro by William Watson:

Old emperor Yew, fantastic sire,
Girt with thy guard of dotard kings
What ages hast thou seen retire
Into the dusk of alien things?

"Start doo-wopping"

Only yew is found near every church.
Only yew will neither lean nor lurch.
It grows a hard, tight grain,
Makes bow staves both straight and true.
It fills my heart with awe for only yew

Only yew can live o'er four thousand years
Only yew can outlast our worst fears.
Only yew and yew alone
Laughs at the passage of time.
Whose name is famed and so easy to rhyme

Only yew can guard the graves at night.
Only yew's leaves can kill with just one bite.
I understand the magic that you do
Making dreams come true.
Yes! The one and only yew.

Sitting on the Hill of Three Oaks

By Mairi Ceolmhor, D.C. Grove, Nov. 2001
For the Public Domain (whether they want it or not!)
Dedicated to Sister Sine, for dragging me out there onto the Hill in 1992.
Recorded by: Ottis Redding, 1960s
http://www.duchessathome.com/music/dockofthebay.html

Sitting in the evening sun
I'll be sitting when the morning comes
Watching the fires burn down,
Then I pile on the dry logs again,

yeah I'm...
{Refrain}
Sitting on the Hill of Three Oaks
Watching the stars spin around
I'm just sitting on the Hill of Three Oaks
Vigiling time

I left my home in New York
Headed for Minnesota
'Cause I need beliefs to live by
And looks like the Earth's gonna be my Ma.

So I'm just...
{Refrain}
Sitting on the Hill of Three Oaks
Watching the stars spin around
I'm just sitting on the Hill of Three Oaks
Vigiling time

Look like my life's gonna change
And yet seems to remain the same
I won't believe what people tell me to do
So I guess I'll play my own game.

Yes, I'm sittin' here burning some wood
And this loneliness will do me some good
It's two thousand miles I roamed
Just to make this hill my home

Now, I'm just...
{Refrain}
Sitting on the Hill of Three Oaks
Watching the stars spin around
I'm just sitting on the Hill of Three Oaks
Vigiling time

{Whistle}

BACK IN THE OLD GROVE AGAIN

By Mairi Ceolmhor, D.C. Grove, 2001
For Public Domain
Dedicated to Mike for taking me with him on his last trip.
Apologies to Gene Autry; "Back in the Saddle Again"

I'm back in the old grove again
Out where a friend is a friend
Where we camp out every night
Where the only law is "right"
I'm back in the old grove again

Walking those woods once more
Lovin' the view out of doors.
Where the long-cloaked students play
While the lovely prairie sways.
I'm back in the old grove again

Whoopy-ti-yi-yo
Swaying to and fro'
I'm back in the old grove again

Whoopy-ti-yi-ya
This is just my way
I'm back in the old grove again

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Bardic Salvo #3: Dec 1st, 2001

While My Bagpipe Loudly Wails

By Patrick Haneke, Akita Grove, Nov 30, 2001
In honor of George Harrison's Passing
Modeled, obviously on, "While My Guitar Sadly Weeps"
Listen to it at http://www.radiobroadcast.net/midi/beatles/
http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Frontrow/9990/

I think of your songs and the truths that they're hailing,
While my bagpipe loudly wails.
I look at the clouds and I see that they're sailing,
While my bagpipe loudly wails.

From the moment you stepped on stage
Your message hasn't aged.
How can your songs' impact be gauged.
Your words can't be caged.

I look at Mother Earth and I notice it's turning
While my bagpipe loudly wails
With every season, old ways' wisdom we'll be learning
Still my bagpipe loudly wails…

We should've known a god had aired,
His soul bared too,
A new world view that was shared,
How you cared, Lugh.

I think of your songs and the truths that they're telling,
While my bagpipe loudly wails.
I look at the clouds…….
Still my bagpipe loudly wails.

Oh, oh, oh
oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
oh oh, oh oh, oh oh
Yeah Lugh yeah Lugh
yeah Lugh yeah Lugh

Old Druid's Hill

By Mike Scharding, DC Grove
For the Public Domain, Nov 2001
Original Artist Fats Domino's "Blueberry Hill"
For the music, see http://www.christeen.net/midi.html
And choose Blueberry Hill (#6)

I cast my spell on Old Druid's Hill
On Old Druid's Hill when I called Lugh
The moon stood still on Old Druid's Hill
And lingered until my dreams came true.

The wind in the willow played
A haunting melody
And all of those vows I made
Were made seriously.

Tho' I've moved on, a part of me's still
In those winds so shrill, on Old Druid's Hill.

Dreams

By: Rhiannon Hawk of "Druid Heart Spirit Grove"
Year 2001 For the Public Domain
Original title was "Dreams" by: Fleetwood Mac
http://pws.prserv.net/ggaynor/zmidi2x.htm to hear the tune.

we are the Shining Ones
we are the children of Danu
remembering who we are
celebration is past due

being of the Otherworld
our feet softly on the ground
we are the one
we are each a shining star

we are twin soulmates
see the lightning in our eyes
it can pierce right through
illusions in disguise
behind your eyes
there is no disguise

(chorus)
we are the winds on the oceans wave
we are the sparkly in the crystal cave
we are the wings of a hawk in flight
we transform beings that have gained the sight

we gaze upon the Seers pond
what in the water did we see?

now it's all green
as if I'm flying through the trees
now I'm back and the vision remains in me

I get up off the ground
and we circle round and round
we each can see that our
feet are up off the ground
they make no sound
up off the ground

(chorus)
we are the winds on the oceans wave
we are the sparkly in the crystal cave
we are the wings of a hawk in flight
we transform beings that have gained the sight

Haiku Corner

By Ian Friesland, Ice Floe Grove
Ok, all you Asian aficionados out there-
here's the first ever known Antarctican Haiku (5-7-5 poem)

South-pole's Mid-Summer
No trees, no birds, no rivers.
And it is still cold.

Leaves swept in river's flow,
Many colored, tossed and tumbling.
This is retirement?

The Existential Moment (1997)

By K.D. Bennett or Spring Child of Berkeley

'Tis a cold, dark night as all seem to be
Melancholic, morbid, romantic characteristically
One such as I who penned these words, being all entwined in me
Can gaze out into this night and, nomadic, free
Give thanks unto myself for quietude; night's hush
Feels me flush 'gainst dream, feeling, thought; plush
Is the plenty of leafy tree's rustling rush
And the mystical chirping of dark friend cricket in that brush.

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Bardic Salvo #4: Dec 15th, 2001

Yuletide Caroling

By Sine Ceolbhinn, D.C. Grove

Strangely enough, Christmas is one of the few times of the year that we feel like singing with our neighbours outside of a karaoke bar. Easter songs? A few. Groundhog Day songs? Not likely. We all want to sing, but trip over the uncomfortable lyrics, right? I decided to but together a little list of songs that a pagan could use in company with their monotheistic friends.

I few hours of scanning the internet has given me a collection of popular songs that didn't dwell on babies in food troughs, righteous crowns, deceased people with bird wings, and ecstatic shepherds hearing voices in the dark (won't even go there.) I prefer my own improbable stories (grin.) Just change "Christmas" to "Yuletide" and most are okay. Santa Claus is rather unavoidable, but he's nearly pagan, and so I let him slide. Many of the songs on the list below have on-line free music-files & lyrics at:

http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/~ai251/xcarol.html

Auld Lang Syne
The Christmas Song (Chestnuts roasting)
Deck the Halls
Do They Know its Christmastime at All?
Frosty the Snowman
Grandma Got Hit by a Reindeer
The Grinch's Theme Song
Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas
Here Comes Santa Claus
Holly Jolly Christmas
Home For The Holidays
I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus
I'll Be Home For Christmas
It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas
It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year
Jingle Bells
Jingle Bell Rock
Jolly Old Saint Nicholas
Let It Snow
O Christmas Tree
Rocking Around the Christmas Tree
Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer
Silver and Gold
Silver Bells
Sleigh Ride
That Christmas Feeling
Up on the Rooftop
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
White Christmas
Winter Wonderland

Pondering Celtic Clans

old castles where once the breath of life was strong
reminds my of my slaughtered ancestors
living in peace, joy, and strength
gathering their children for the telling of tales
now nothing but graveyards remain
castles turned to funeral pyres
and no one left to weep for them
who were there first, and reeled
at the beautiful bounty they experienced in nature
a small candle, a sputtering torch
a pile of dead wood gathered for the fire
a fresh mug of herbal tea and a wan smile
waking bleary eyed in the fog
tending horses for their journeys
who were not merely servants, but friends
now thinking that all things must come to their ends
and knowing ends for what they truly are
new beginnings
my that sounds pleasant
but it doesn't do a thing for them
my ancient ancestors of yore
---kdbennett

Untitled

I loved them dearly, I loved them strong
How we all used to get along
In the sun and coming together
In the rain light as Eagle's feather
There, where the stone meets the sky
A fire kept sealed in my mind's eye
Which has seen stranger things
Waits to behold what the future brings
Patiently
For the most part.
---kdbennett

I Told The Arch Druid

(A.K.A. "I told the Witch Doctor" or A.K.A.
"Ooo-ee Ooo-ah ah, ting tang, walla walla, bing bang)
By Mike Scharding, DC Grove, 2001
Copyright not claimed. For the Public Domain.
http://www.geocities.com/ohtoad/WitchDoctor.html

I told my Arch Druid
This grove just can't be right.
I told my Arch Druid
I sun-worship at night!
And then the Arch druid
She told me where to go:

Chorus
She said that;
N.R.D.N.A, H.K., O.B.O.D., E.D.,
B.C.U. & B., T.D., B.D.O., O.B.D.,
E.D.O., U.A.O.D. , I.O.D., B.C.D.,
D.C.S.G, A.D.F., May B O.K. 4 U.

I told my Arch Druid
Your site's not cool at all.
I told my Arch Druid
Your rocks are just too small
And then the Arch Druid
She told me where to go:

Chorus

I told my Arch Druid
I want a group more wise
I told my Arch Druid
Those robes don't match my eyes.
And then the Arch Druid
She told me where to go:

Chorus

SPOKEN POETIC INTERLUDE #1
You've been trying
to 'void me
Just like I was a big jerk,
And I'll admit
I wasn't very smart.
So I went out
And found myself
A **real** group whose magic **works**;
Cuz you eagerly
Showed me where to start.

I told my Arch Druid
Let's draw a pentagram,
I told my Arch Druid
And call Gods from Viet-nam.
And then the Arch Druid
She told me where to go:

(Actually, she was at a loss for words.)
(But after a pause, this is what I heard)

Final Chorus

Other Possible verses:

SPOKEN POETIC INTERLUDE #2
(You've been worshipping
the Earth in
forests, wide plains and desert,
but I prefer
sky-clad on a full-moon;
But only indoors,
With big crystals,
Cuz I'm allergic to chills & dirt;
So let's postpone
Beltane until late June.)

I told my Arch Druid
I sacrifice pickles.
I told my Arch Druid
A boomerang's my sickle.
And then the Archdruid
She told me where to go:

Chorus

(And then she really told me where to go….)

(By the way, if you're curious:
New Reformed Druids of North America, Henge of Keltria, Order Bards Ovates & Druids, Ecole Druidique, British Circle of the Universal Bond, (James Bond?,) Temple of Danaan, British Druid Order, Order of British Druids, Enchanted Druid Order, United Ancient Order of Druids, Insular Order of Druids, Bandarach College of Druids, Divine Circle of the Sacred Grove, Ar nDraiocht Fein)

(Couldn't fit these in:
Druidic Craft of the Wise, Celtic Traditionalist Order of Druids, Dalriada, An Druidh Uileach Braithreachas, Order of the White Oak, Reformed Druidic Wicca, Missionary Order of The Celtic Cross, Order of the Mithril Star, IMBAS)

If I Had a Rich Grove

By Patrick Haneke, Akita Grove, RDNA
Dedicated to Isaac Bonewits & all of us out there with no liquid reserves.
September 2001 For the Public Domain.
http://www.broadwaymidi.com/shows/fiddler_on_the_roof.html

http://www.hamienet.com/Broadway_Musical/F/Fiddler_on_the_Roof/more2.alex (choose the longer one 4:55 version)

Spoken introduction:
"Dear Gods, you made many, many poor priests.
I realize, of course, that it's no shame to be poor.
But it's no great honor either!
So, what would have been so terrible if I had a small fortune?"

If I had a rich grove
Daidle deedle daidle deedle daidle dum
All day long I'd biddy biddy bum
If I had a wealthy grove.

I wouldn't have to work hard
Daidle deedle daidle deedle daidle dum
If I had a biddy bidy rich
Deedle daidle deedle daidle grove.

I'd build a big tall henge
With stones by the dozen
Placed in a million-acre wood,
A fine green hill with a burial mound below.
There could be one long labyrinth just going up
And one even longer coming down
And one more leading
Nowhere just for show!

I'd fill my grove with trees,
Protect endangered wildlife,
For the world to come and see,
Filled with beauty and a campground.
A peaceful place, no strife,
Pollution or roads;
Our woods like an island in the sea,
If I had a wealthy grove.

If I had a rich grove
Daidle deedle daidle deedle daidle dum
All day long I'd biddy biddy bum
If I had a wealthy grove.

I wouldn't have to work hard
Daidle deedle daidle deedle daidle dum
If I had a biddy bidy rich
Deedle daidle deedle daidle grove.

I see my school, my college,
Looking like a rich church's school,
With a proper faculty
Researching Dru'dry to our heart's delight.
I see us drawing students
All shuffling in baggy robes
Oy! What a happy place we'd be,
Singing at the bonfires day and night!

If I were paid I'd have the time I lack
To sit in the hill-top tow'r and pray
And maybe have a seat by the eastern wall
And I'd discuss the holy books
With the learned folk
Seven hours every day.
That could be the sweetest thing of all.

The most important folk in town
Will come down to our woods.
They will ask me to advise them
Like old King Connor the wise;
"If you please Arch Druid,
Pardon me Arch Druid"
Posing problems that would cross
An Ollamh's eyes.

Draoi, Draoi, Draoi, Draoi, Draoi, Draoi, Draoi, Draoi.

And it won't make one bit of difference
If I answer right or wrong.
When you're rich,
They think you really know.

If I had a rich grove
Daidle deedle daidle deedle daidle dum
All day long I'd biddy biddy bum
If I had a wealthy grove.

I wouldn't have to work hard
Daidle deedle daidle deedle daidle dum
If I had a biddy bidy rich
Deedle daidle deedle daidle grove.

If I had a rich grove
Daidle deedle daidle deedle daidle dum
Gods help me reach these noble dreams,
Yes, no matter how hard it seems.
I'd even steal a dragon's treasure trove,
How I want a wealthy grove!

Grief Stricken America

By Shane A. Saylor 11.30.2001

Old Glory flaps in the wind, soaked with [the] tears of the slain. The tears keep coming down in buckets, with end in sight. And yet, our own tears are mixed with theirs here on the ground. The ground is soaked with both blood and tears. And as I gaze at the hills above I wonder when the land will slide down And bury us in our grief. Our grief can smother us if we let it. But how do we fight something that comes in waves? That can come at unexpected times? How do fight something that is akin to quicksand? It threatens to pull us down, to weaken our resolve. Our morale has suffered a large wound. The time it will take to heal is immeasurable. America is wounded. And it is lashing out at our oppressors like a wounded animal. Yet I fear that this wounded animal will, with time, turn on its allies before it falls dead, its heart filled with vengeance and it soul filled with grief.

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Bardic Salvo #5: Jan 1st, 2002

I'm a Believer

Copyrighted Parody by Gayla Paul of Corn Grove, Iowa,2000
Original by Neil Diamond, copyright song "I'm a Believer" 1966
Made famous by "The Monkees" & "Shrek"
Colgems-EMI Music, Inc. (ASCAP) and Stonebridge Music
www.midihaven.addr.com/midi/monkees1.html for music

I thought Druids only lived in fairy tales
Magic everywhere but not for me
Life was out to get me
That's the way it seems
Then it came together like a dream

I found sacred space
Now I'm a believer
Not a trace
Of doubt in my mind
I'm a Druid
And I'm a believer
I couldn't leave Her if I tried

Earth-Mother blesses me with many things
Laughing Be'al makes my heart feel light
Now I walk in wonder
In awe of everything
Better even than my wildest dreams

I found sacred space
Now I'm a believer
Not a trace
Of doubt in my mind
I'm a Druid
And I'm a believer
I couldn't leave Her if I tried.

Silbury Hill

Filked by Dagda O'Flatterme Dagda
Copyright 2001 by Martin Bernard Victor.

The Fortunecity.com site I found the lyrics at did not list a copyright date.
http://tinpan.fortunecity.com/riff/11/frame/b5.html
But there is something I neglected to list. Satchmo only recorded the song. It was made most popular, by the cover made by Fats Domino. It was penned by Al Lewis, Vincent Rose, and Larry Stock It is possible that the song has passed into the public domain by now. The writers may be dead, and I doubt that their estate bothered to renew the copyright. For the music, choose Blueberry Hill (#6) at
http://www.christeen.net/midi.html
[See Mike's version of Blueberry Hill in Bardic Salvo #3]

I found my thrill...on Silbury Hill
On Silbury Hill...When I found you
The moon stood still...on Silbury Hill
And remained until...our magick came true.

The winds in the oaks sang...Arwen's harmony
And our hearts did pang...for our will to be

And in my heart...it gives me a chill
When I think of it still...of Silbury Hill
I found my thrill...on Silbury Hill
You were dressed in blue...when I found you
We were awed...before the Gods
And gave them our will...on Silbury Hill

The wind in the oaks did play... our heart's melody
And the troth we pledged...is fore'er to be

And in my heart...it gives me a chill
For you are my thrill...on Silbury Hill.

Och, Baby, Baby, Yee're'n Cannie Bard

Pat Haneke, Akita Grove (with his worst Scots accent, apologies to all) Allegedly based on "It's a Wild World" by Cat Stephens.
For the Public Domain, made in January 2001
Dedicated to Sine Ceolbhinn, may you one day learn to scat your lyrics better. :) (Do not show this to a real Scotsman! He'd just tear apart my grammar and leave me bleeding for the insult after a good drumming on the noggin.)
catstevens.com/discography/songs/00102.html for MIDI tune

Noo tha' I've gied ev'ry sang tae you
Ye say ye wanna sing sometin' new
An' it's breekin' me hert's you'se roamin'
Aye Lass, I'm gloamin'
Bit, gin ye wilna stey, tak guid care
Howp ye hae muckle braw claes tae weir
Bit than a muckle braw (t)hings birl ill oot thar

Och, baby, baby, yee're'n cannie bard
Tis sair tae mak do jist aboun ain sang
Och, baby, baby, yee're'n cannie bard
I will ayeweys mind ye lik tae traivel, lass

Ye ken I've larned muckle o aw thar warld dow dae
An' tis breekin' me hart in twa
'kis I nivver wunta see ye dowie, lass
Dinna be camsteerie, lass.
Bit gin ye will nae stay, tak guid care
Howp ye meit in wi cantie freen oot thar
Bit jist mine ye thar's muckle orra gowk fur shair.

Chorus

Lassie, I luve ye
Bit, gin ye wilna stey, tak guid care
Howp ye hae muckle braw claes tae weir
Bit than a muckle braw (t)hings birl ill oot thar

Chorus

Incipit gestis Rudolphi rangifer tarandus

An Old English Poem by Philip Chapman-Bell written in 1996
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For usage, please contact: chapbell@crocker.com

Hwæt, Hrodulf readnosa hrandeor –
Næfde þæt nieten unsciende næsðyrlas!
Glitenode and gladode godlice nosgrisele.
Ða hofberendas mid huscwordum hine gehefigodon;
Nolden þa geneatas Hrodulf næftig
To gomene hraniscum geador ætsomne.
Þa in Cristesmæsseæfne stormigum clommum,
Halga Claus þæt gemunde to him maðelode:
"Neahfreond nihteage nosubeorhtende!
Min hroden hrædwæn gelæd ðu, Hrodulf!"
Ða gelufodon hira laddeor þa lyftflogan –
Wæs glædnes and gliwdream; hornede sum gegieddode
"Hwæt, Hrodulf readnosa hrandeor,
Brad springð þin blæd: breme eart þu!"
Explicit

Hrodulf the Red-Nosed Reindeer

(Modern English translation)

Here begins the deeds of Rudolph, Tundra-Wanderer
Lo, Hrodulf the red-nosed reindeer –
That beast didn't have unshiny nostrils!
The goodly nose-cartilage glittered and glowed.
The hoof-bearers taunted him with proud words;
The comrades wouldn't allow wretched Hrodulf
To join the reindeer games.
Then, on Christmas Eve bound in storms
Santa Claus remembered that, spoke formally to him:
"Dear night-sighted friend, nose-bright one!
You, Hrodulf, shall lead my adorned rapid-wagon!"
Then the sky-flyers praised their lead-deer –
There was gladness and music; one of the horned ones sang
"Lo, Hrodulf the red-nosed reindeer,
Your fame spreads broadly, you are renowned!"

****

Bardic Salvo #6: Jan 15th, 2002

AMERICA

Filk is written by Mike, DC grove.
With inspiration from Pat Haneke, Akita Grove
January 2002, for the Public Domain
Original is "America," written (& copyrighted)by Neil Diamond
1980 Stonebridge Music (ASCAP)
http://www.neildiamondhomepage.com/ for more on this bard.
http://members.tripodnet.nl/roontje10/alpha2.htm choose Diamond's America (4:01) although it's hard to pick up the tune unless you are familiar with the original song.

Some people have called the Middle East; the Holy Land. Perhaps it once was especially so, but many people who have resided there haven't acted that way, nor have most others who've been through there in the last 3 millennium. For this new millennium, I don't think that we need look any further than the dirt under our feet and the eyes of our neighbors to find the true Sacred. While we look to the British Isles and Europe for inspiration from the past, we take sustenance from the variegated soil of America for the future. I believe, the "America" song will be prominent at the Olympics.

Free….
Only want to be free
We huddle close
Hang on to a dream

In the towns and in the wood
In mountain and plains of America
Making religion that's good
It's possible in America

The Gods don't seem so far away
We're out searching night and day
Oh yes, we've been warned.
Borne the brunt of their scorn.

Home, is a green and a fertile land
Plant our groves, trees rise tall and grand.
Beltane's fire burning warm
Samhain's fire burning warm

Everywhere throughout the Earth
We're reaching for Awareness.
Old and New mix in rebirth;
A strong faith, but with kindness.

Got a dream to take us there
The holy lands of America
Got a dream we've come to share
The holy lands of America

Reformed Druids of America
Reformed Druids of America
Reformed Druids of America
Reformed Druids of America
The morn, the noon, the eve, the night, the dawn!

Our Mothers lie below!
Let's Pray
Our Fathers high above!
Let's Pray
Our friends around!
Let's Pray
Our hopes abound!
Let's Pray

The Land of the Rising Sun

By Patrick Haneke, Akita Grove
Transcribed by Nozomi
January 2001, for the Public Domain
Original "The House of the Rising Sun" by the Animals
Sung by Dylan and Baez often.
http://celine-sa.hypermart.net/bd-midi.htm for MIDI music

For those who don't know it, Japan is known as the birthplace of the Sun and its mythology credits the Sun (Amaterasu) as giving birth to the Imperial Line and also all the people of Japan. They are the most advanced non-monotheistic country in the world, proving you don't have one god to be clever or rich. I wrote this to counter Mike's patriotism, and reassert the value of other countries. Perhaps we should say "We Cherish the Earth" more than "God Bless America," since "it's better to give than to receive"

The Chords from the Original:
(Intro) Am . C/g . |D/f# . F . |Am . E . *|Am . . .
Am C/g D/f# F
There is a house down in New Orleans
Am C/g E
they call the rising sun
Am C/g D/f# F
And it's been the ruin of many a poor girl
Am E Am
and me, oh God, I'm one.

There is an island way out East
They call the "Rising Sun"
And it's seen the start of every long day.
And Gods adore this one.

Tall forests carpet the mountainsides.
Islands fringe the long coasts
A land filled with lush greenery,
Legends, faeries & ghosts.

It's a proud polytheistic land
And so it's reaped great wealth.
And because they eat their vegetables
They enjoy the best of health.

They practice hundreds of ancient arts
And each is a life-style.
They learn skills both fine & practical
Growin' wiser all the while.

A warm sun above and lava below
A cool sea stretched around
The people celebrate each passing season
In city, village & town.

They say there's a god in every rock;
Seven in a grain of rice.
And there's many methods to reach out to them
Mixing some faiths can be nice.

There's many a land that is still free:
China, India, Vietnam
But if you'd like to see a pagan paradise
Go join the J.E.T. Program.

There is an island way out East
They call the "Rising Sun"
And it's seen the start of every long day.
And Gods adore this one.

Bard Arm

March 25, 2000. Copyright 2000
I am Arm Wrath, bard of my people's tree. A member of Ancient Circle's Grove located in upstate New York. My Archdruid, Inion An Daghdha has asked me to submit a poem to your contest. My God, Ogma has given onto me many a word, it is some of these that I wish to share with you now.

If I - was to stand and sing,
Of all that I saw and heard,
People listen from the crowd,
Come forth - for I will bring.

Words and songs of old,
Stories yet begun,
Take a seat - for I will tell,
Heroes actions all retold.

Long ago - we wandered here,
Strung out - all the way,
Getting lost - some of us,
Separated thru the years.

Life seemed better - way back then,
Once - I remember - long ago,
Merry - we were - in our place,
Till the others came - like a wind.

Alive we must - keep our way,
Turmoil swept our land,
Running - fighting - hiding there,
Gathering - moving - I dare say.

Hold on - we tried to keep it tight,
Time of passage - has it's way,
One by one we stood and fought,
People - ways - lost in sight.

At times - I thought I saw,
Of whom - I knew before,
Wishing - sometimes in the way,
Backwards - before the times of raw.

Many of us - young and old,
Warriors strong - thru and thru,
Taught in ways - I can recall,
Protect thy people - die or do.

Here I am - before you now,
Thinking - of what has come and gone,
Descendants you - of what is left,
Brought forth together - I see not how.

One says this - another that,
Why not old - why not new,
Together - you should come,
Form your tribe to be exact.

I am Bard of my people's tree,
Nothing is easy in all of life,
Memories past the ancestors speak,
For thou - I bring - our history free.

Solitary Druid

By Mairi Ceolbhor, D.C. Grove
January 2002, for the Public Domain
Original "Sentimental Journey" by Bud Green, Les Brown & Ben Homer in 1944. Copyright 1944 by Morley Music co., Inc. 31 West 34th St., NY., NY 10019. Renewed 1971.
http://members.tripod.com/~RoseMcK/sentimental-journey.mid
The vocal was sensitively done by Doris Day, despite unfounded fears of the extreme vocal ranges required. Some in the band first thought that the song was not going to connect with the kids, but at it's debut in the Hotel Pennsylvania's Cafe Rouge the kids went crazy!

Gonna be a Solitary Druid
Gonna choose my very own path
Gonna be a Solitary Druid
And renew ways from the past.

Got my harp, got my bottled whiskey
Spend some time in the deep forest
Like a child on a magical journey
I long to learn more before I rest.

Bridge:
Wisdom… that's the thing I look for, wisdom.
And with knowledge will come freedom
Learnin' every day a new lesson from
Trees, birds, moon and sun.

Never thought my life could be so fluid
Will I e'er rejoin a grove?
Gotta be a solitary Druid
Solitary Druid for now.
Solitary Druid.

****

Bardic Salvo #7: Feb 1st, 2002

Only a Faery Song

By Mairi Ceolmhor with Sine Ceolbhinn, DC Grove
November 2001, for the Public Domain
Original "Only a Northern Song" by George Harrison
http://www.mainengineering.hispeed.com/ys_sounds.html

If you're looking for the truth
You may think there is no perfect faith
Then you're right.
The Gods made it like that.

When you're vigiling late at night
You may see a group of white dancing lights
And they are.
They just tease us like that.

It doesn't really matter how fast you go,
What things you know or where you grow up at
As it's only a faery dance.

It doesn't really matter what clothes you wear
Or if you're bare or if you hair is blond;
When it's only a faery dance.

If you think the harmony
Is a little odd and out of key,
You're correct,
They're not using our rules.

You look again, there's no body there…

Fairyland city

Spoofed By Patrick Haneke, Transcribed by Nozomi, Akita Grove
December 2001, for the Public Domain
Original "Paradise City" by Axel Rose of "Guns & Roses"
on the 1986 Album; "Appetite for Destruction"
6 minute long MIDI music file at with long intro & interverse riffs at
http://www.spaceports.com/~midi/MidiMania/metalmidis.html
This was written after reading some of the stories of O'Carolan and other great blind harpers (many from Small Pox,) but others from "mysterious" causes. It's a hell of a lot of fun to sing.

Head thrashing, gyrating circles and long intro music, then:

Seeking Faeries
Livin' under the mound.
They're a small race
That're rarely found.
I'm your average bard
Who by my oaths will be bound
I'll pay you back another time
Whatever the cost, it'll be fine.

Ragz to richez or so they say
Ya gotta-keep playin'
For the fortune and fame
It's all a god's gift
But what a great game!
Ya must strum the harp with music divine,
Mused songs must be bound in rhymes!

Chorus Repeats Twice:
Take me down
To the Fairyland city
Where the trees are green
And the elves are pretty.
Take me home!

Sitting in the throne
Of the host's gilt chamber.
How I'm here I can't quite remember.
The Fairy General says
It's hazardous to view.
I'd have another audience;
Then, I couldn't see.
Tell me if you're gonna believe.

Chorus Twice:
Take me down
To the Fairyland city
Where the trees are green
And the elves are pretty.
Take me home!

Mystic Bridge Chorus:
So far away
So far away
So far away
So far aw---ay!

All my senses were torn apart
No, I'm a famed minstrel
With a guided heart
One day-
They'll come around and
Take me back to that Court
Could I be losin' my mind-
"Am I blind?!"
Well, which world are we looking at!?

Chorus repeats on and on, with interspersed groans and cries!

Note: The live version often uses
"(Oh, won't you please) Take me home" in the chorus

The Work of the Wee-Folk

By Mike Scharding, DC Grove
January 2002, for the Public Domain
Original was "The Work of the Weavers" a classic Scottish song.
For chords and lyrics see
http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~celts/songbook.shtml#
http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~celts/songbook.shtml

You've surely met the fairies, but just didn't see.
They're in ev'ry rocky brook and are found within the trees.
There's little that would come to good, I'm sure you'll agree
If it wasn'a for the work of the wee folk

The Chorus
If it wasn'a for the wee folk what would ye do
You wouldnae hae the food that is in your stew
You wouldn'a hae the leather for your coat or shoe.
If it wasn'a for the work of the wee folk

There's soldiers and there's sailors and glaziers and all
There's doctors and there's ministers and them that live by law
And our friends in South America though them we never saw
But we ken all need the work of the wee folk

Chorus

They whisper advice'n songs in our ears at night.
They tend to our livestock when they wander out of sight
And raise crops so they grow up straight, strong and right.
So we'll drink to the health of the wee folk.

Chorus

If wee folk's around we never can tell
So It's best we heed their aid and reward them well
They love a tune, crumbs, a dram or a shiny bell
Now let's drink to the wealth of the wee folk!

Chorus

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Bardic Salvo #8: Feb 15. 2002

Killing us Softly with His Rules.

By Patrick Haneke, Jan 2001, Akita Grove, for the Public Domain
Original "Killing me softly with his song" by Roberta Flack or Charles Fox, 1970s, and dedicated to you know who.
MIDI file at http://www.clinton.net/~sammy/rflack.htm
Dedicated to all the Isaacs and Mikes out there who are too busy-bodied and make organization and systems way too easy to achieve. Back to the Mystery!:-)

We heard he ran a good grove.
We heard he had a style.
And so we asked for his help,
To lead us for a while.
And there he was, this young man,
A leader in our eyes.

Chorus:
Being too strong in his methods
Muffling our group with his thoughts
Killing us softly with his rules,
Killing us softly, with his rules,
Drowning our old ways with his words
Killing us softly, with his rules….

At first everything went smoothly
Our finances made a rebound.
But our dynamism came to a halt
Unable to break new ground.
I prayed that he'd slow down
But he just kept right on.

Chorus

He ruled as if a business,
He prayed through a script
Bound this flower up with red tape.
Those files were a crypt
Too careful, afraid of mistakes.
Blindly spinning a shroud.
Chorus

The Ways, We are Reforming.

By Mike Scharding, DC Grove of RDNA
(Based on Dylan's "The Times, They are a-Changin'")
January 2002, for the Public Domain
http://celine-sa.hypermart.net/bd-midi.htm choose #2 version
4/4 Moderately

Dm/A	G/A	Gm/A	A	
|: Dm7	G	C	F	Dm7	G	Am	Am	Dm7	G	C	E
Am	F	G	C	Am	D/F#	G	F	C	F	Bb	Bb
2. | A | A :|| 3. | A G/A | A ||

Come gather 'round Druids
Wherever's your grove;
And admit that old beliefs
Must continue to grow.
And accept our paths will split
Into dozens of kinds.
If wisdom to you
Is worth learnin',
Then you better start searchin'
And get off your behinds.
For your ways, we are reformin'.

Come preachers and ministers
Who hold tight to your flock.
Who discourage free inquiry,
Hide in churches made of rock.
Y'all drop the long tirades
Step out and see the sky;
For the students of Nature
Don't need conformin'.
Let'm think for themself,
And always ask "why?"
For your ways, we are reformin'.

Come Senators, Congressmen
Please protect that wise wall
Between the church and state
That protects the faith of all.
I elected you to govern,
you do not need to preach.
I don't want to see greedy
Churchs' lobbyists swarmin'.
Tell them to go home,
And just let the schools teach.
For their ways, we are reformin'.

Come Sisters and Brothers
Throughout this great land
And don't criticize
What you don't understand.
For if it doesn't work,
Then it's time to adapt.
Don't be too afraid to get lost
Or think it's alarmin'.
For it's one way of many
And the divine isn't all mapped
For the ways, we are re-formin'.

We don't have all answers
We don't claim to be best.
But our system is flexible,
And simpler than the rest.
Stretch your leaves to the sun,
Don't let dogma take root.
Yes, our wry, witty ways
And customs are charmin'.
But for numbers and fame
We don't give a hoot.
For our ways, we are re-formin'.

EXTRA VERSE
(at no charge, please insert before last verse)

Rights are no use on paper
If you're not free in your head
If it's your way "or else"
Well, then I'd rather be dead.
Go on freely with your faith
And let me go with mine
I don't need your saving
It works just fine.
Tell me, can mortals judge
The will of the Divine?
For the ways, we are re-formin'.

Romantic Songs for your Deity

By Mairi Ceolmhor

I've thought how easily so many romantic songs are and how religious many of them become after you replace the thought of your Lover with the God of your choice. This is all very Sufic, or in a way, Khalil Gilbran-esque. Classic examples are "You light up my life," "I will always love you." and so on. Of course, if the lyrics are too physical (i.e. "Baby's got back,") it requires a greater metaphysical leap to appreciate the symbolism. Go through your favorite love songs, and see if they could be used liturgically.
-Happy Valentine's Day
Mairi

******* ******

Bardic Salvo #9: March 1st, 2002

Celtic Goddess Chant

From Tegwedd

Here is my entry for the next Bardic. It is based upon a very popular Pagan chant. My friend Tyroch Windtraveler didn't care for it because it didn't have any Celtic Goddesses in it, so I came up with one which is *all* Celtic Goddesses. When you post it, say that it's based on *Isis, Astarte*...author unknown.

Brigid, Cerrydwen, Morrigan, Arianrhod
Macha Bludewedd, Rhiannon

R.D.N.A.

Filked by Mike Scharding, DC Grove
February 2002, for the Public Domain
Original "YMCA" by Village People, 1970s
www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/lyircs/ymca.htm for words & music!
The RDNA began about April 17, 1963. We begin "Year or Worship" XL (i.e. 40) and will celebrate our 40th anniversary on May 2003, next year of course. This song is dedicated to all those who've given us the chance to make it possible.

Young One, just take a look around
I said, Young One, you know you come from the ground
I said, Young One, see that life-giving brown
There's no need to be unhappy.

Young One, there's places you should know
I said, Young One, when you're tired of sin & woe
You can pray there, and I'm sure you will find
Many ways to have a good life.

Chorus Part 1:
It's good to pray with the R.D.N.A.
It's fun to play with the R.D.N.A.
You have everything in the world to learn from
You can have religious freedom.

Chorus Part 2
It's good to pray with the R.D.N.A.
It's fun to play with the R.D.N.A.
You can make yourself whole
You can have a good drink
You can try whatever you think

Young one, are you listening to me?
I said, young One, what do you want to be?
I said, Young One, you can make real your dreams,
But you've got to know this one thing…

No faith, knows it all by itself
I said, Young One, put your dogma on the shelf
And just go there, to the R.D.N.A.
I'm sure it will turn out okay.

Chorus Pt. 1 & 2

Young One, I was once in your shoes
I said, I was down and out with the blues
I felt, no church would accept my views
I felt there was nothing to choose.

That's when something came over me
And said "Young One, take a walk in the woods,
There's a grove there, called the R.D.N.A.,
They can start you back on your way."

Chorus Pt. 1

R.D.N.A.
It's good to pray with the R.D.N.A.
It's fun to play with the R.D.N.A.
Young One, Young One, you don't need complex rules
Young One, Young One, those are just for the fools.

R.D.N.A.
Just try out the R.D.N.A.
Young One, Young One, Take ideas from the past.
Young One, Young One, mix new thoughts to make it last.

R.D.N.A. R.D.N.A. R.D.N.A. R.D.N.A.

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Bardic Salvo #10: March 15th , 2002

Here We Are

By Rhiannon Hawk, Druid Heart Spirit Grove
March 2002. Copyright reserved.
I really haven't figured out if there is another tunes melody this would fit into, but here it is.

from the blackness like night
through the coldness of winter
you push with might
into glowing embers
your dreaming ancestors
willing a future of light
are here now
stirring a cauldron so bright

So, here we are again
going our separate ways
on paths that come back again
learning to find our ways

Green, the freshness of Earth
your bare feet in the springtime
you've walked this path beginning, no end
the fire's burning a beat so quickening
no more advise
the fire's where it all starts

So, here we are again
trying to become One
when we have won
we learn we are all one

In nature now
lies an energy so hot
from the Earth it bursts forth
energy balls to the top
releasing from the Earth's core
healing rays that wont stop
then rushes up as before,
the red dragon flies up

Above in the trees voices are singing
of the freedom you'll find
when you find yourself there
so clear as the stars
your vision unfolds
your true self inside the heart holds

I Am a Man of Constant Borrow

By Mairi Ceolmhor, DC Grove
Feb 2002, for the Public Domain
Soggy Bottom Boys---I Am A Man Of Constant Sorrow Feat. Dan Tyminski taken from the "O Brother Where Art Thou" musical 2001, which is an Appalachian version of The Illiad and the Odyssey. Soundtrack is marvelous. This song won a grammy for blue-grass, I believe. Long beard optional. Sorry for sexist "man," but, feel free to add "grrl" or whatever one-syllable word defines you.
History at http://www.bobdylanroots.com/sorrow.html
Music & Vocals at
http://artists.mp3s.com/artist_song/1275/1275296.html
Dylan snippet: http://www.bobdylan.com/songs/sorrow.html
Tables: http://www.ezfolk.com/bgbanjo/introtab/man-bg/man-bg.html

(INTRO CHORUS In constant borrow through his days)

I am a man of constant borrow
I've found wisdom in most faiths
I bid farewell to Minnesota
The place where I was taught and raised
(CHORUS: The place where he was taught and raised)

For twelve long years I've been at study
Much over-lap here on earth I found.
Though, in this world I'm bound to ramble
I have the gods to guide me now.
(CHORUS: He has the gods to guide him now.)

It's fare thee well my old beliefs
You won't see me again in your church
But, I'm bound to glean from religions
Until I die, I must still search.
(CHORUS: Until he dies, he must still search)

I've been to deep ocean, hill and valley
Not knowing just where my path lay
But I'll keep my ear to the Earth-Mother
Cause sky, fish n' trees have a lot to say.
(CHORUS: Cause sky, fish n' trees have a lot to say.)

Maybe your priests think I can't get stranger
My faith is well thunk to the core
But it is quite simple in its tenets
Some times less really is a lot more.
(CHORUS: Sometimes less really is a lot more.)

Spring Time is on the Rise

By Patrick Haneke, Akita Grove
February 2002, for the Public Domain
Original "Time Is On My Side" by Norman Meade
www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/4713/midis/timeisonmyside.mid
Or http://home.swipnet.se/~w-35264/lyrics/time.html for words & MIDI
This would be an excellent invocation for a Druid Ritual, note that "Spring" in the chorus doesn't scat well, so you have to fit it into the following drawn out "time" on the upbeat.

Spring Time is on the rise (Yes it is)
Spring Time is on the rise (Yes it is)
Now the Gods knows that we hate to be cold.
So spring'll come skipping back, it'll come running back
It'll come blazing back to us.

Yeah, Spring Time is on the rise (Yes it is)
Spring Time is on the rise (Yes it is)
You're searching for good times, but just wait and see
It'll come blazing back...

Go ahead, baby, go ahead. Go ahead and set up the plough
And baby, plant anything your heart desires
Remember, it'll always be back again
And I know like the Gods told you so many times before
Spring's gonna come back
Yeah, it's gonna come back, baby
Shinin', yeah, shinin' right in the grove, yeah!

Spring Time is on the rise (Yes it is)
Spring Time is on the rise (Yes it is)
Cause it's got the real warmth, the kind that we need
It'll come blazing back...

Spring, time, time time is on the rise (Yes it is)
I said, Spring time, time, time is on the rise (Yes it is)
I said, Spring time, time, time is on the rise

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Bardic Salvo #11: April 1st, 2002

"Don't Scry Out Loud"

Mairi Ceolmhor, D.C. Grove
March 2002, for the Public Domain
Original was "Don't Cry Out Loud" –Sung by Melissa Manchester
Words by Carol Bayer Sager and Music by Peter Allen
Music at : www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/8678/dontcryoutloud.mid

Baby cried the day the new priests came to town
'Cause she didn't want the courts to start accusing her
So she put her ash on her head and wore a burlap gown
Then she joined that convent in the briars
I know a lot about 'er 'cause, you see
Baby is an awful lot like me.

Chorus Twice:
Don't scry out loud
Just keep it inside, learn how to hide you talent
Fly high and proud
And if you should tell, remember the divine has changed names.

Baby saw when they pulled that big tree down
They burnt-up all her dreams during that winter
The different kind of god now wore a frown
There was nothin' left but sawdust and some splinters.
But baby can't be broken 'cause you see
She had the precious acorns –from that tree- which told 'er

Chorus Thrice

Why Do Fools Join My Grove?

(Why Do Fools Fall in Love?, Beach Boys Version)
by Mike Scharding, D.C. Grove
2001 for the Public Domain

Doom Bopa Doom Bopa Doom Bopa Doo Dut
Ooh wah ooh wah ooh wah

Why do fools join my grove?
Why do most refuse t'pay?
Vig'lers fall 'sleep at the break of day?
Why do fools join my grove?

Why is Beltane snowed on from above,
So cold I must wear gloves?
Where's our Gods' joyful love?

Why can't my bard write even simple rhymes?
Why do our rituals take so much time?
Tell me why, why.
Why did I start this grove?

Why do fools fall in wells?
Why can't we work a spell?
Moon doesn't come up at night?
Why can't things work out right?

Why is Beltane snowed on from above,
So cold I must wear gloves?
Where's our Gods' joyful love?

Tell me why, why
Why can't we be tax free?

Tell me my, why
Why do I still bother?

*** ***

Bardic Salvo #12: April 15th, 2002

Are You Sleeping?

By Nozomi Kibou, Akita Grove
Jan, 2002, for the Public Domain.

Are you sleeping, are you sleeping,
Brother (or Sister) _____?
Boozing Dru'ds are snoozing.
Boozing Dru'ds are snoozing.
One more cup?
Yea, One more cup!

Are You Sleeping Tonight?

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove,
Nov. 2001, for the Public Domain
In memory of Nozomi's First Vigiling Attempt.
Original Lyrics By Roy Turk/Lou Handman sung by Elvis "Are You Lonesome Tonight?"
Music at http://www.christeen.net/midi.html

Are you sleepy tonight?
Do your eyes feel tight?
Are you sorry you drifted asleep?
Does your memory stray to a bright Beltane day,
When you laid with him(her) in the forest deep?
Do the rocks in the grove site seem pointy and hard?
Do you gaze at the campfire and wish to be a bard?
Are your eyes filled with sand?
Do faeries walk the land?
Tell me dear, are you sleepy tonight?

SPOKEN IN A SULTRY VOICE:
I wonder if you're sleepy tonight.
You know staying up gets harder with age.
And each of us plays a role.
Fate has me waiting in the woods while you're in the grove
Part One you lit the fire
It burnt bright at first light
I shared some thoughts, so sincere, and never missed a cue
Then came Part Two
Your armor chinked, you went to think
And sigh…, I should've known
Honey, you lied when you said you'd rested today
But I had no cause to doubt you
Now the fire's gone out and I'm standing there
In the rosy rays of dawn's light.
So, if you just can't stay awake,
Then we can try another night.

SINGING
Is your head filled with rest?
Would next ev'ning be best?
Tell me, dear, are you sleepy tonight?

I Can't Help Falling Asleep at Night

By Mairi Ceolmhor, DC Grove
Nov. 2001, for the Public Domain
Original song "I Can't Help Falling in Love"
Which was written by Perettil with Weis & Elvis Presley
For the tune: http://www.christeen.net/midi2.html

Wise men say don't drink much wine
But I couldn't help falling asleep at night
And don't lean up against that pine
'Cause I can't help falling asleep at night

Like the river flows
Flowing to the sea
Darling so time goes
Some tries weren't meant to be

Take my hand, I can't stand-up right
'Cause I can't help falling asleep at night.
No, I can't help falling asleep at night.

**** **** ****

Bardic Salvo #13: May 1st, 2002

May (in Minnesota)

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove. October 2001
Based on the classic song "Stay, Just a Little Bit Longer"
No copyright is claimed, for the Public Domain.

Seductively spoken intro:
"Oh baby, let's go and play in the field,
and see what treasures they may yield,
I know there's frost on the grass at dawn,
But, I pray that the Gods'll hear this song."

(start "Doo-wopping!")

May, ahhhh!, be a little bit warmer!
Please, please, please, please, please,
Tell me that you will warm-up.

Now the rain I don't mind,
And the wind I don't mind,
If we have a nice warm day, ya,
Just one more time.

Oh, won't Beltane be, just a little bit warmer,
This cold saps all our youthful ardors.

Won't you place your sweet lips to mine,
Won't you say you love me 'spite frost & rime.

Oh, ya, just a little bit warmer,
Please, please, please, please, please,
Tell me that you will warm-up.

Come on, come on, come on, May,
Come on, come on, come on, May, in Mi-nne-so-ta.
Come on, come on, come on, May, May , May, May
Come on, come on, come on, May.

Mother Earth

By Donald Edwards, 2001, for the public Domain.
Currently composing music, but feel free to make your own tune or give me a call and I'll sing it for you.

The morning dew lays upon the grass,
As golden rays shed first light,
The songbirds sing in the beginning,
And help chase away the night.

A gentle breeze softly blowing,
Each little blade and stem,
And whispering among the trees,
And sway each Bardic Hem.

Her breath as sweet as heather,
Her touch as soft as fine sand,
Her essence breathing new strength,
To all across the land.

Praise the loving Druids,
Who tend her with such care,
For they do know the love she gives,
And her gifts she does willing share.

HEAR THESE WORDS OF THE DRUIDS,
FOR ALL YE LEND AN EAR,
OUR GREATEST LOVE IS OUR MOTHER EARTH,
WITHOUT HER, WOULD YOU BE HERE?

The shouting is intended to fill the world with awareness of all Mother Earth does for them.

A Book of Songs and Poetry Volume Seven 2003 The 2002-3 Bardic Contest

2003 Introduction

In the Time of Sleep between Samhain 2002 and Beltane 2003, the RDNA had a bi-weekly Bardic filk contest wherein the members took popular tunes and wrote new lyrics. We had over 40 entries during these 25 weeks, and I hope that they provide use in liturgies, festivals and late night bonfire sing-a-longs. Please check with the original authors, regarding use of copy-right materials.

Rules of the Contest

I cordially invite the reader to pass the winter doldrums away by writing poetry, stories, songs and chants. You need not submit (we are not "Islam,") but I strongly urge you to pay off the karma of avoiding those forest walks, because you're afraid of freezing your tootsies off in the cold.

Last year we had 15 competitors, and despite Mairi's departure, I hope that everyone will get over their shyness and share their thoughts. Due to a resounding lack of competitors for judgeship, I will oversee the contest. I will be impartial as necessary. Send them to me, Eric Powers, at ericpowers229@hotmail.com

Standards

1. Poems, songs, chants, short stories are accepted. About 2 or 3 will be published at www.geocities.com/mikerdna/bard2.html every 2 weeks starting November 1st until May 1st (inclusive.)
2. We are not responsible for lost compositions or your local weather.
3. We do not recompense the author, and the top three selections (chosen at then end by me and a dart board) will only receive slim praise and a metaphoric warm pat-on-the-back.
4. The words must be your own, but paraphrasing and spoofing is fine.
5. You may borrow pre-existing tunes (i.e. "filk" them) or send original music files with a simple tune (no vocals, perhaps, to save space) plunking out the melody.
6. All submissions are assumed to be without copyright and internet published as Book of Songs and Poetry without profit to anyone, unless the poster indicates otherwise.
7. Overtly racist, sexist, genderist, and other nasty stuff will be nixed, but if you're clever enough to do so subvertly, congratulations.
8. No bribes under $1000 will be accepted. We must have our principles.
9. Non-seasonal topics are accepted (you can write summer poems for December) and this is no preferred bias for humor or depressive tones.
10. There is no #10.

Participants

Anonymous #1
Pat Haneke #1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12
John #1, 2, 7, 13
BrightMirage #1, 2, 3, 8
Nebraskan Druid #2
Keith Deem #2
Cheeky RDNA Druids #2
Mike Scharding #3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13
Danae Jett #4
Nozomi Kibou #4
Eric Powers #4, 5, 10
Rachel #5
Missouri Druid #6
Shane #7
Sweetfaery #8
Caroline Boston #9
Various Authors #10
Chris Middleton #11
Mairi Ceolmhor #11
Victoria Dunseith #13
Oriana Lewallen #13
Jeanette Randal #13
Vanessa Sanders #13

The Winner

The winner was Bright Mirage's "I Am" in Bardic Salvo #3 on Nov. 28th, 2002. Eric thought that although Mike and Pat should get award for sheer output, his favorite submission was Mirage's. Her work was a powerful example of the questing spirit common in the Reform and should strike a chord on the heart strings of all the Druids. He also thought she would make a capital poet, despite using only lower case.

Bardic Salvo #1: Nov. 1st, 2002

Unpronounceable Deity Chant

From Anonymous, July 2002
Sung to "Isis Astarte"
Public Domain
"I thought it would be nice to add my own version to the award winning spoof from last year. Here you go."

Camaxtli, Canzotz, Tlaloc, Tlazolteol,
Hunapu, Itzamna, Xochipilli

I Will Survive

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove, June 2002
"I Will Survive" by Gloria Gaylor in the 70s
For the Public Domain
www.superseventies.com/midijukebox/iwillsurvive.mid Music
"Okay, it's a bit over the top, and I'm really not this bitter, but some people are, and this song is for them. Keep up the good fight."

At first I was afraid I was petrified
Kept thinkin' I could never live
Without your God by my side
But then I spent so many nights

Thinkin' how YOU did me wrong
And I grew strong
And I learnt how to get along
I know your belief system is corrupt
I just walked in to find you here
With that flock of sheep to back you up
I should have made you read other books
I should have made you love diversity
If I'd've known for just one second
You'd be back to bother me.

Go on now, go walk out the door
Just turn around now
('Cause) you're not in charge anymore
Weren't you the one who tried to
Hurt me with the "good" book
Did I crumble
Did you think I'd kneel down and cry?

Oh no, not I. I will survive
Oh as long as I know how to think
I know I'll stay alive;
I've gone and joined a Druid group
To my sick soul they're chicken soup, and
I'll survive,
I will survive. Hey hey.

[Interlude]

It took all the strength I had not to scratch n' chafe
Kept trying hard to mend the pieces
Of my broken faith
And I spent oh so many nights
Just feeling sorry for myself
I used to cry
But now I hold my head up high
And you see me with new gods
I'm not that chained up little person
Like all you silly clods
And so you feel like droppin' in
And just expect me to recant,
Now I'm savin' all my prayin'
For some gods who aren't tyrants.

Go on now, go walk out the door
Just turn around now
('Cause) you're not in charge anymore
Weren't you the one who tried to
Hurt me with the "good" book
Did I crumble
Did you think I'd kneel down and cry?

Oh no, not I. I will survive
Oh as long as I know how to think
I know I'll stay alive;
I've gone and joined a Druid group
To my sick soul they're chicken soup, and
I'll survive,
I will survive. Hey hey.

[Repeat various verses and choruses and fade away....]

Mabon

By John Odencrantz, Aug. 2002
Original poem/song. Copy Right Reserved

"A Nov. 1 contest date could be a little late for the topic, but here goes, anyway. Lots of obscure allusions to Welsh stories and, yes, I'm a Dylan Thomas fan. I may send more stuff later."

A dog, a deer, a bird were half the reasons
for sun and seasons, balancing their light,
sent raving roving fools beatific visions
of trees blown half ablaze from crown to root.

The light and shadow thrashing in the leaves,
the pruning knife that splits and joins the wood,
the corn and hazelnuts affirm "My love's
a raven in the snow, three drops of blood."

Eagle and owl, unlucky love-birds! Black-
in-white-in-black or white-in-black-in-white
of bird-in-eye-in-bird, this deadly pact
is scribbled in a folded beam of light.

A sooty hen among her milky barley
reverts to woman's shape to give it birth.
Where midnight sea waves rock the Bardic boy
her moon's egg hatches out a universe.

Wild One

By BrightMirage , Bamboo Grove, Summer/Fall 99
Original Poem, so if anyone should choose to use any of it, please have them contact me at psyche@udel.edu
...
i am the wild one
she of the midnight black hair
streaked with shimmering gold,
flowing in the breeze
...
the one with the wild glance
untamed, feral
whose silver laughter
glistens in the
morning mist and evening fog
...
the night breeze whips around my face
invigorating, tantilizing, enticing.
wings of phantom fire
spread as i take flight
...
a spring into the air, and i am
in my element
soaring above the grey,
silent, bleak world
...
light as Hawk's feather
strong as Spider's silken strand,
i take this time to nourish my Soul
...
the Earth below me
Rain clouds above
Fiery wings upon my back
Air upholding me
...
True freedom is found,
Peace comes in a fleeting moment
to rest in my Soul

******

Bardic Salvo #2: Nov. 13th, 2002

Samhain

By John Odencrantz, July 2002
Original Poem.

Samhain This mask foretells a vulture silence
and skeleton. Do apples grow
in gardens on the mermaids' islands?
We feed our devils money now.
Our gape engulfs the creatured ocean,
a bag of SUVs our goad.
Facing-Three-Ways, with her question,
is seated by a forking road.
Thunder crackles in a reed.
For morning's children, bird and leaf,
a lantern head will nurture seed
or clock wheels grind our fears to grief.
In time the Washer at the ford
reclaims her shamed or honored sword.

Knockin on Samhain's Door

By Anonymous RDNA Druid from Nebraska
Nov 2002, For the Public Domain
Original Lyrics from Bob Dylan's " Knockin on Heaven's Door" 1967
http://bobdylan.50g.com/BD-BDYLAN-Knockin'%20On%20Heaven's%20Door-1.mid for music.

Server, take these ribbons from me
I can't use them anymore
It's getting too dark to see
Feel I'm knocking on Samhain's door

Chorus:
Knock, knock, knockin' on Samhain's door (x4)

Server, put the whiskey away.
We won't use them anymore
Winter's here with sober days
I feel I'm knockin' on Samhain's door.

Chorus:
Knock, knock, knockin' on Samhain's door (x4)

[Repeat final quartet as needed.]

The Fallen Celt

By Keith Deem (keithdeem@theriver.com)
Original Poem
October 2002 Copyright reserved
"I am not a Reformed Druid of North America, but consider myself practiced in the Bardic arts, and loyal to the concepts of Druidry. My name is Keith Deem. My poem is a desperate and sad warning to use our resources wisely, and listen to those who try to preserve them. Here is my poem. Sincerely: Keith"

The warrior poet arose before the dawn of time,
Ascending against evil within the soul of man,
Searching for balance and steadfast truth,
Love and memories from the heart,
Struggling to overcome the self,
That greed that destroys all,
The diverse existence,
Lamenting despair,
Always hoping,
Until,
All has perished,
Dreams of evermore,
All has faded to extinction,
When not even the fittest survive,
There can be no survival of the fittest,
The desire of the few consuming all there is,
All that will ever be, wasted, fading, falling, marching
Over the earth's trampled tears and poet's broken heart,
Into the endless void of ebb and flow, the deep sleep of time

I Am the Very Model of a Modern A.D.F. Druid

By Some Cheeky Reformed Druids ,
Original "I am the very model of a modern major-general"
For the Public Domain, Oct 2002
http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/pirates/p13.mid for music.
"Apologies tendered in advance to A.D.F., but the muse has spoken."

SENIOR DRUID
We are the very model of the ADF syndicate
Completed all the paperwork in 501-c triplicate
My documents have stated that I really can go hug a tree
As long as all the hugging will reflect the proper P-I-E
Although the Druids didn't live in parts of southern Pakistan
The ADF has told me go ahead and be one if I can
If Dumezil has said its so then ADF law it shall be
Who cares if it is Celtic because memberships are all we need

ALL
Who cares if it is Celtic because memberships are all we need
Who cares if it is Celtic because memberships are all we need
Who cares if it is Celtic because memberships are all we really really need

SENIOR DRUID
We are a church because the state says so categorical
With a dozen staff involved in matters financ-i-al
Our seminary program was first and really quite radical

Even though the grading staff has gone on a sabbatical
ALL Our seminary program was first and really quite radical
Even though the grading staff has gone on a sabbatical

SENIOR DRUID
I know our mythic history from Celtic to Indo-Iranian
I can cite the gods from Nordic lands to Peloponesian
I spend my nights in libraries with ancient texts thick in dust
I have not time for trees since for Druids study is a must

We're the fastest growing religion with lots of new improvements
Unfortunately our numbers are dropping due to poor recruitment
We've given up that Wiccan bunk and moved up since R.D.N.A.
We've dropped such colorful excesses and instead chose a dismal grey

ALL
They've stopped such colorful excesses and instead chose a dismal grey
They've stopped such colorful excesses and instead chose a dismal grey
They've stopped such colorful excesses and instead chose a dismal grey

SENIOR DRUID
Then I can write a washing bill in old Irish on birch ogham sticks
And tell you how a high culture was preserved by some illiterate hicks
When we say "Why not excellence?," our ego, please do not suspect
For to play along with the Big Boys you must first earn their respect.

ALL
When we say "Why not excellence?," our ego, please do not suspect
For to play along with the Big Boys you must first earn their respect.

SENIOR DRUID
In fact, when I know what is meant by "Robbie Burns" and "La Tene urns'
When I can tell at sight a Valkirie from the thunder god Perkon.
Producing such accomplished priests is our proud specialty
Why, in fact, in twenty years we've produced about two or three.

When I have learnt what progress has been made in modern theology
When I know more of dogma than a novice in organic chemistry
In short, when I've finally mastered the world's longest liturgy
You'll say a better modern Druid priest has never touched a tree.

ALL
You'll say a better modern Druid priest has never touched a tree.
You'll say a better modern Druid priest has never touched a tree.
You'll say a better modern Druid priest has never touched a tree.

SENIOR DRUID
For our religious knowledge, though we're pluck and adventury,
Tries to merge modern life with one back Thirty century
No four quarters, our's is divided into the earth, sky and fluids
We are the very model of the modern A.D.F. Druids

ALL
No four quarters, our's is divided into the earth, sky and fluids
We are the very model of the modern A.D.F. Druids

A Million to One

By Bright Mirage
Original Poem
Summer 98, Copyright
"Here are a few of my poems...each starts at the -title- (just stating the obvious.) thanks! all should be credited to BrightMirage as the author. if anyone should choose to use any of it, please have them contact me at psyche@udel.edu Thanks!"
...
hope beyond hope
can there be some
miracle
to beat the odds
a million to one...
heavy words
...
what about the one?
whispery-winged hope
fluttering beyond the
bondage of probability
and sour reality
...
fly free
come to me tonight
give me hope that
it is possible to
scorn the gray
bleakness of the world
and soar in the
azure and brilliant silver
sky
...
i want to fly above
the grey rain clouds
dance above the mundane...
exist in a world of
emotion passion soul and spirit
free and unchained

******

Bardic Salvo #3: Nov. 28th, 2002

They Call Me Fluid Druid

By Pat Haneke
Oct 2002 For the Public Domain
Original Song "Mellow Yellow" by Donovan 1966
Music at

www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/Cockpit/1344/midi/Mellow.mid

I'm just mad about rock rings
Green trees give me a thrill
I think deep on most things
Sip long nights on a hill

{Refrain}
They call me fluid druid
(Quite rightly)
They call me fluid druid
(Quite rightly)
They call me fluid druid

I'm just mad about triples,
Wales, Gaul, Ireland
I'm just mad about sickles
World in a grain of sand

{Refrain}

Past ideas behind follow
Forward new unknown road
Heard ways broad and narrow
Tending seeds that I sowed

{Refrain}

(So fluid, he's so druid)

Eclectical religion
Is gonna show us some new ways
Eclectical religion
Is bound to be growing these days.

{Refrain}

Rock rings, yeah,.. ..
Green trees give me a thrill
I think deep on most things
Sip long nights on a hill

{Refrain}

(Oh so fluid, oh so druid)

{2nd verse, Refrain, 3rd Verse. Refrain, 4th Verse, Refrain, etc. to fade}

Reformed Druids

By Mike Scharding, Digitalis Grove
Nov 2002, Public Domain
Based on "New York, New York" by Frank Sinatra
Right-click below to open a new window to listen to the sing-a-long music at http://users.cis.net/sammy/newyork.htm Yet another pro-RDNA anthem. (^o^)/

[Short musical prelude]

Winds blowing off leaves, I'm seeking a new way
I want to be a part of those Reformed Druids
These vagabond shoes, are longing to stray
Right through the many mysteries, Reformed Druids

I want to grow out in a new faith, that doesn't cringe
And find I'm not that bad off - here on the fringe.

Those little mind blues, are melting away
I'm gonna make a brand new start of it - with the Druids
If I can find truth there, I'll find it everywhere
I'll walk with you - Reformed Druids.

(Musical interlude)

Re---formed Dru---ids
I want to grow out in a new faith, that doesn't cringe
To find one way, yea, one way among many
Jump through the fires and with hardly a singe

Those little mind blues, are melting away
I'm gonna make a brand new start of it - with the Druids
If I can find truth there, I'll find it everywhere
I'll walk with you - Reformed Druids.

-I am-

By BrightMirage
Original Poem
Spring 1999
Here are a few of my poems...each starts at the -title- (just stating the obvious.) thanks! all should be credited to BrightMirage as the author. if anyone should choose to use any of it, please have them contact me at psyche@udel.edu Thanks!

a whirlwind spirit
dancing thru the flames
leaping into the clouds
touching the crystal rain
reaching for the sun
...
striving to belong
as the eagle on the wind
as the porpoise in the sea
as the tiger in the forest
...
seeking a higher light
a ray of hope
a purpose and meaning
in the madness of life
...
seeking a peace
that will soothe the pain
that lurks in my soul
behind the bright smile
and pretty eyes
...
seeking to fill
the void in my soul
that aches for love
with a love that will
reach beyond
the limits of Time
...
seeking true wisdom
tried and true
something to guide me

in the confusion of
the multitude of answers for sale
in this world
...
seeking to believe
in something higher than myself
to trust and believe
with all of my heart ...

Healing

By BrightMirage
Original Poem
Spring, 1999
Here are a few of my poems...each starts at the -title- (just stating the obvious.) thanks! all should be credited to BrightMirage as the author. if anyone should choose to use any of it, please have them contact me at psyche@udel.edu Thanks!

heart of darkest midnight
arms reaching out for comfort
...
grey mist swirls upwards
cloaking, concealing,
comforting
...
hide me away in your heart
Mother Gaia
let me rest awhile
from the weary world
...
free me of the pain that
throbs thru my mind and being

...
bless me with
the joy that resides in the spring
the freedom of the eagle in the air
the patience of the tiger on the prowl
the playfulness of newborn cubs
the wisdom of the owl
the delight of the dolphins riding the waves
...
nourish me and care for me
in my time of weakness and pain
...
heal me with
the gentle murmur of the breeze
the renewal of the rain
the everlasting power of the waves
the silent power of the rocks
the freshness of growing things
the gentle warmth of the sun
the cool caress of the moon

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Bardic Salvo #4: Dec. 11th, 2002

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The Netherworld

by Danae Jett a.k.a. "Jade Wolf"
Oct 2002 For the Public Domain
Original Song "Mellow Yellow" by Donovan 1966
Right-Click below and open a new window to listen to the music
http://www.smickandsmodoo.com/aaa/lyrics/margaritaville.htm
Here's something I composed about 2 years ago. It pretty much summed up my confusion as a newbie back then.

Sittin' on my front porch, playing with my Quija board,
Trying to find someone to make sense of it all.
I called up Gerald Gardner to be my magickal partner.
He just said, "Hey, woman, leave me alone!"

Wasting away again in the Netherworld.
Searchin' for my lost Tarot cards.
Some people claim that there's a Christian to blame,
But I know it's nobody's fault.

Tried to read Crowley, but he's kind of scary.
That damned LaVey gave me the wrong kind of advice.
But, Laurie tried to helped me, and Scott never left me,
But what they said, I don't understand at all.

Wasting away again in the Netherworld.
Searchin' for my lost Tarot cards.
Some people say that there's a Jew to blame,
But I know, hell, it could be my fault.

Don't know the reason I stay here all season.
I have nothing to show but this magickal name.
But it's kinda pretty, and a wee bit silly.
What It means I haven't a clue.

Wasting away again in the Netherworld.
Searchin' for my lost Tarot Cards.
Some people claim that there's a Hindu to blame,
But I know it's my own damn fault.

Winter Window

By Nozomi Kibou, Akita Grove
December, 2002, for the Public Domain
Original Poem.

All is good here
The snow is deep,
Lots of warm beer
Earth is asleep.

Minnesota

By Mike Scharding & Eric Powers, Digitalis Grove
Nov, 2002, for the Public Domain,
Original: Shenandoah is a traditional song.
Right-Click below and open a new window to listen to the music at http://tinchicken.com/songs/country/shenan.htm
What a beautiful MIDI, it's almost hymn like. You can change Minnesota to California or whatever mystical destination you'd like.

Oh Minnesota, I long to see you.
Way hey, you fields & forest
Minnesota, I long to see you.
Away, we're bound away, 'cross the wide Potomac [or any large river or mountain range]

O Minnesota, I love your autumn
Way hey, you fields & forest
Your falling leaves, say snow will soon come
Away, we're bound away, 'cross the wide Potomac

O Minnesota has frightening winters
Way hey, you fields & forest
Her fierce cold wind, make snowmen shiver
Away, we're bound away, 'cross the wide Potomac

Seven Years, I went to Carleton
Way hey, you fields & forest
Seven more, a lonely quest
Away, we're bound away, 'cross the wide Potomac

Oh Minnesota, I must now depart
Way hey, you fields & forest
But you remain in mind & heart
Away, we're bound away, 'cross the wide Potomac

Oh Minnesota, now over mountains
Way hey, you fields & forest
Minnesota, you're wisdom's fountain
Away, we're bound away, 'cross the wide Potomac

Missionary's Song ("It's Not Unusual")

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove RDNA,
August, 2002 for the Public Domain
Lyrics: "It's not Unusual" by Tom Jones
Right-Click below and open a new window to listen to the music
http://www.heavenlywebs.net/midis/oldies/itsnotunusual_tjones.mid
NOTE: Please do not throw underwear at the author.

It's not unusual to worship a jealous desert god
It's not unusual to have theology that is too hard

But when I see you worshiping nature like some clod
It's not unusual to hear me cry, "Oh I hope you fry!"

It's not unusual to deny all the gods, but one,
So, I hate to see you dance and prance praising the sun
If your god fails, she's fake, but with mine, it's a mystery
It's not unusual it'll happen soon some day, no matter what you say.

So, We pull it off nearly all the time
Folk just never do what I want them to
Why can't this crazy crowd be mine?

It's not unusual to undercut other faiths
It's not unusual to say that they're unsafe
But if I ever find that you've weakened at anytime
It's not unusual to find I'm trying to convert you.
Whoa-oh-oh-oh-oh

My Wishy-Washy Faith

By Mike Scharding, Digitalis Grove
December, 2002, for the Public Domain
Original by Billy Ray Cyrus (c.1995) "Don't Tell My Heart (My Achy-Breaky Heart)" "Goodness, but this is a catchy beat. I had a great deal of trouble considering what I'd do if someone dis'ed my faith (if that's what it is,) and the most violent comeback I could think of, was a careful examination of their own idiosyncrasies from an outside perspective (i.e. mine.) Hope you enjoy it. By the way, wasn't Dis (Pater) one of the Gods that Caeser said the Celts worshipped? If so, dis-ing is in our nature too! "
http://captain-dave.com/music_factory/achybrky.mid

You can say our group is just eclectic soup
That we have no plan for when life ends.
You can say our church will leave us in a lurch
And we won't go to heaven with your friends.

Yes, we love our trees, so don't cut them down please
They clean your air and shade your city streets
You can keep your high walls, we'll answer nature's call
And yes our fashion's just two tied bed sheets.

But don't dis my faith,
My wishy-washy faith,
I know you think we're just some fools;
And if you dis my faith,
My wishy-washy faith,
You might hear yours judged by our own rules.

You can say you're pure, boast dogma's fine allure
And morals chiseled in ancient days,
We have our own codes, that we've picked up on the road
We all can disagree and that's okay.

You can stay that stones, plants, animals alone
Will never fill our soul's deepest needs
But we can think ourself, or read books from the shelf
We have a garden where you see only weeds.

But don't dis my faith,
My wishy-washy faith,
I know you think we're just some fools;
And if you dis my faith,
My wishy-washy faith,
You might hear yours judged by our own rules.

[Repeat final chorus 6 or so times]

ACHY BREAKY HEART LINE DANCE

CHOREOGRAPHER: Irene Groundwater
COUNT: 32 TYPE: 4 Wall Line Dance LEVEL: Beginner
MUSIC: Achy Breaky Heart by Billy Ray Cyrus

GRAPEVINE TO THE RIGHT WITH A TOUCH
1-2 Right foot steps Right, Left crosses behind Right
3-4 Right foot steps Right, Left touches beside Right

LEFT FORWARD, RIGHT SLIDES TO LEFT, REPEAT 3 TIMES 5-6 Left foot forward, Right slides to Left
changing weight onto Right
7-8 Left foot forward, Right slides to Left foot changing weight onto Right
9-10 Left foot forward, Right slides to Left foot changing weight onto Right
11-12 Left foot forward, Right slides to Left foot changing weight onto Right

GRAPEVINE TO THE LEFT WITH A TOUCH
13-14 Left foot steps left, Right crosses behind Left
15-16 Left foot steps left, Right touches beside Left

3 STEPS BACK WITH A TOUCH
17-18 Right steps back, Left steps back
19-20 Right steps back, Left touches beside Right

LEFT FORWARD, RIGHT SLIDES TO LEFT, LEFT FORWARD, TOUCH RIGHT BESIDE LEFT
21-22 Left steps forward, Right slides to left foot changing weight onto Right
23-24 Left steps forward, Right touches beside Left

(1/4 TURN RIGHT) RIGHT FOOT FORWARD TO RIGHT, TOUCH LEFT TO RIGHT
25-26 Right foot faces to the right (1/4 turn right,) Left touches beside Right

(1/2 TURN LEFT) LEFT FOOT FORWARD TO LEFT, TOUCH RIGHT TO LEFT
27-28 Left foot faces to the left (1/2 turn left,) Right touches beside Left

GRAPEVINE TO THE RIGHT, FINISH WITH WEIGHT ON LEFT FOOT
29-30 Right foot steps Right, Left crosses behind Right
31-32 Right foot steps Right, Left closes to Right

REPEAT DANCE PATTERN AGAIN AND ENJOY

*Choreographed for South Granville Seniors Center Line Dance Class for "Galaxy of Stars" Event
Note: This step description may be freely copied and distributed, but may not be altered or re-written without the
permission of the choreographer. All rights reserved.
From: aiground@attcanada.ca (Irene Groundwater)

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Bardic Salvo #5: Dec. 26th, 2002

Earth Goddess

By Eric Powers, Digitalis Grove, RDNA
Nov. 2002 for the Public Domain
Original "Teen Angel" by Mark Dinning
Music at http://www.garyrog.50megs.com/midi/teenangel.mid

INTRO:
Earth Goddess, Earth Goddess, Earth Goddess, ooooooh….

That Samhain night, the door was closed
The hand reached from the crack
We rushed to you, but we were late,
Carried away, but looking back

CHORUS:
Earth Goddess, can you hear me?
Earth Goddess, are you near me?
Are you somewhere down below?
In Spring, will you let the new plants grow?

What was it you were looking for,
When he took you that night?
They say they found a pomegranate
Clutched in your fingers tight.
Chorus
Just six long months that you'll be gone
They'd taken you away.
I hope to drink your waters again
On that joyous warm May Day.
Chorus
Earth Goddess, Earth Goddess
Answer me, please...

Under the Dolmen

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove, RDNA
December, 2002 for the Public Domain
Originally "Under the Boardwalk" by the Drifters
Music www.discoverynet.com/~ajsnead/allsongs_1/bdwalk.html

[Sidhe is pronounced "Shee"]

Oh when the sun beats down and burn the flowers on the heath
And your head get so hot you wish you were ten feet beneath
Under the dolmen, down with the Sidhe, yeah.
On a tartan with my lassie is where I'd be.

From the road you hear the haunting sound of wee bag pipe
Mm-mmm, you can taste the apples which are always ripe
Under the dolmen, down with the Sidhe
On a tartan with my lassie is where I'd be.

Chorus:
(Under the dolmen) out of the sun
(Under the dolmen) we'll be havin' some fun
(Under the dolmen) people working above
(Under the dolmen) we'll be making love
Under the dolmen (dolmen!)

[break]
Ooooh, under the dolmen, down with the Sidhe, yeah
On a tartan with my lassie is where I'd be.

Chorus

Solstice Song

By Rachel
July 17, 2002/07/29
(Adapted from the popular Christian song "Shine Jesus Shine")
Music home.att.net/~icu8/midis/christian/shinejesusshine.htm

This came to me at about 1am last night as I was trying to sleep...ah well. A belated Solstice song, but it might work for other holidays as well. Guitar chords might be on TabCrawler someplace, but the search function is down and I don't know who wrote the song, which is the only way to find songs at the moment. It works as an a capella tune in the meantime.

Shine, Be'al, shine,
Fill this land with your Solstice blessings
Blaze, balefire, blaze,
Purify us tonight
Flow, chalice, flow
Let the Waters-of-Life be blessed
Send forth the Sun, Bel
And celebrate the light!

I've Got Friends in Stone Circles

By Mike Scharding, Digitalis Grove in D.C.
December 2002, Public Domain
Original song by Garth Brooks, "I've got Friends in Low Places"
Music at http://captain-dave.com/music_factory/friends.mid

[Short intro music]

I upset those elites
I showed up in sheets
And ruined their interfaith prayer
The rest had one god
I looked like a clod
I was barefoot with flowers in my hair
I saw the surprise
And concern in their eyes
When I did a wild ritual dance
They might not call
Me to their winter ball
But I don't mind if there's no chance.

'Cause I've got friends in stone circles
Where the whiskey flows, and the sickles
cut my blues away
And I'll be okay
I'm not big on dogma's shackles
Think I'll stick close to those natural cycles
Oh, I've got friends in stone circles

Well, I guess I did wrong
I just don't belong
Perhaps, it was my sacrifice?
I guess its no good
I should stay in the woods
And just three escorts should suffice (oof!)
Hey I didn't mean
To cause a big scene
Just gimme an hour out there and then

Well, I'll be as high
As that place in the sky
That you're so desperate to go in

'Cause I've got friends in stone circles
Where the whiskey flows and the sickles
Cut my blues away
And I'll be okay
I'm not big on dogma's shackles
Think I'll stick close to those natural cycles
Oh, I've got friends in stone circles

[Repeat chorus twice or until the end]

Optional 2nd Verse:

Well, I guess I did wrong I just don't belong
Perhaps, it was my sacrifice?
I guess its no good
I should stay in the woods
And just three escorts should suffice (oof!)
Hey I didn't mean
To cause a big scene
I thought you'd like diversity
Be dull, if you please
I'll head back to the trees
And resume my own ministry

"Friends in Stone Circles" LINE DANCE

CHOREOGRAPHER: Unknown
DESCRIPTION: 4 Wall Line Dance
LEVEL: Beginner
COUNTS: 24

By the way, CCW="Counter Clock wise"

COUNTS / STEP DESCRIPTIONS

ROCK STEPS:
1-4 Weight on left foot, begin with right foot rock forward then return weight to left foot.
Step right foot back to rock backward, then return weight to left foot.
1-1/4 PIVOT TURNS - 3 LEFT PIVOT TURNS AND STOMP/CLAP:
5-12 Step forward on right foot then change weight to left foot and make a 1/2 turn CCW.
Step forward on right foot then change weight to left foot and make a 1/2 turn CCW.
Step forward on right foot then change weight to left foot and make a 1/4 turn CCW.
Stomp with Right Foot, then clap and hold for last count while shift weight to left to get ready for the Raggae steps.

RAGGAE RIGHT - STEP RIGHT, WIGGLE, BRING LEFT NEXT TO RIGHT:
13-16 Step Right Foot to side for two beats, wiggle,
Bring Left Foot beside right on third beat, wiggle/hold on 4.

RAGGAE LEFT TWICE - STEP LEFT, WIGGLE, BRING RIGHT NEXT TO LEFT:
17-20 Step Left Foot to side for two beats, wiggle.
Bring Right Foot beside Left, wiggle/hold on 4.
21-24 Step Left Foot to side for two beats, wiggle.
Bring Right Foot beside Left, wiggle/hold on 4.

BEGIN AGAIN!

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Bardic Salvo #6: Jan. 15th, 2003

I'm Going to Start A Grove

By Mike Scharding, DC Grove, RDNA
Dec. 2002 for the Public Domain
Original "I'm in the mood for love" by Dorothy Fields
Right-Click below and open a new window to listen to the music at http://www.piano-bar.com/pages/moodlove.htm

I'm going to start a grove
Simply, because they're near me.
Funny, when Druids're near me
I'm going to start a grove.

When birds fly in the skies,
Bright as the stars we're under
Oh, is it any wonder
I'm going to start a grove?

Why stop to think of whether
This little dream might fade?
We've followed paths together
Now we are one, we're not afraid.

If there's a cloud above,
If it should rain, we'll let it.
That too's wisdom, we'll get it.
I'm going to start a grove.

One is the Loneliest Deity

By Anonymous RDNA Druid in Missouri
Jan. 2003 for the Public Domain
Original "One is the Loneliest Number" by Three Dog Night
Music at http://www.geocities.com/laylaskye/one.mid

(Music start)

One is the loneliest deity that you'll ever have
Two [or three] can be as bad as one
It's the loneliest pantheon since the number one

(Music)

"Mono" is the saddest experience, I've ever known
"Uno," is the dullest experience, to play alone
'Cause one is the loneliest system that just will not grow.
When you've the loneliest deity, it won't let you go.

It's just no good anymore since They went away
Now I spend my days, just seeking ways, trying to pray
One is the loneliest deity
One is the loneliest deity
One is the loneliest deity that you'll ever know
One is the loneliest, one is the loneliest
One is the loneliest deity that you'll ever know

It's just no good anymore since They went away

Number
One is the loneliest
Number
One is the loneliest
Number
One is the loneliest deity that you'll ever know
(Repeat in various forms)

Like a Vigil

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove, RDNA
September, 2002 for the Public Domain
Based on "Like a Virgin" by Madonna
www.beautifulmadonna.com/midi/likeavirgin.mid is hipper.

I went into the wilderness
Somehow I made it through
Didn't know how lost I was
Until I found you

I was beat, incomplete
I then cried, I was dyed black and blue,
But I found my god
Yea, I found my god
Dalon ap Landu

Like a young god (Hey!)
Invoked for the very first time
Like a young god.
When your winds talk
Back to me

Gonna give you all my prayers, Dal
My fears are fading fast
Been saving them all for you
'Cause only truth can last

You're so fine and you're mine
I'll grow strong, yeah, I'll be divine
Oh your way unleashed
Yea, your ways unleashed
Me from fears and lies.

Like a young god (Hey!)
Invoked for the very first time
Like a young god.
When your winds talk
Back to me

Oooh, oooh, ooohh

As a sign, I'll build a shrine
I love your whiskey, (and not His wine.)
'Cause it makes me feel
Yeah, it makes me feel
Like a fire that shines.

Like a young god
Invoked for the very first time
Like a young god.
When your winds talk
Back to me

Like a young god, ooh, ooh
Like a vigiler
So much truth inside
When I hear you, and you wind blows, and you join me
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh
Ooh, Dalon
Can't you please join with me in the dance of time?

******

Bardic Salvo #7: Feb. 2nd, 2003

Brigit Goldenhair

By John Odencrantz
Jan 17, 2003, for the Public Domain
Original was "Sister Golden Hair Surprise" by America
Music at http://www.siennabasenjis.com/sisterg.mid

If you try to worship Sunday you will get too damned depressed.
They may turn their light on one day, but for now just let them rest.
Plant a tree at nature's altar, cycle plastic, write a rhyme.
Just to stew in darkness sure would be a crime.

Others never think about her, Brigit Goldenhair. You try,
But you just can't live without her, though it's hard to say just why.
Every day you're more despondent, hope is too too hard to find.
That's when Brigit blows her flame into your mind.

When the year's in winter's middle, when the snow is in the air,
When the icicles are brittle then you know that Brigit's there.
Try to fake it, I don't mind sayin' it just won't make it.

Others never think about her, Brigit Goldenhair. You try,
But you just can't live without her, though it's hard to say just why.
Every day you're more despondent, hope is too too hard to find.
That's when Brigit blows her flame into your mind.

When the year's in winter's middle, when the snow is in the air,
When the icicles are brittle then you know that Brigit's there.
Try to fake it, I don't mind sayin' it just won't make it.

Nobody Does it Simpler

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove
January 2003, for the Public Domain
Original "Nobody Does it Better" by Carley Simon
("The Spy Who Loved Me")
Music at http://www.geocities.com/laylaskye/noboddoesbet.mid

Nobody does it simpler
Among many, you're just one way
Nobody does it with such good humor
Druids,… you're okay.
I wasn't lookin'
But somehow you found me
I tried to hide from your fire's light
But like ravens above me
The Gods who love me
Are teaching all their secrets through the night

And nobody does it simpler
Though sometimes I wish someone could
Nothing fills me quite the way you do
From my bare-feet up to my hood.
The ways that you told me
Whenever you told me
There's some kind of magic inside you
That keeps me from runnin'

So just keep them comin'
How can I learn to do those things you do?

No one does it simpler
Among many, you're just one way
Nobody does it with such good humor
Druids
Druids
Dalon, you're o-kay
Druids you're o-kay
Druids you're o-kay

Crazy For You

By Pat Haneke at Akita Grove
December 2002, for the Public Domain
Original "Crazy for You" by Madonna from "Vision Quest"
Music at http://www.sequinsbyeileen.com/midi/crazyforyou.mid

(music prelude)

Swaying trees as the warm wind blows
Druids watching the mixed whiskey's flow
Four directions, now linked, become one
We can see you through the smoky air
What kind of lesson will you now share?
You're so close, but still a world away
What I'm dying to say, is that

CHORUS:
I'm crazy for you
Teach me once, and I'll seek what's true
I never wanted any faith like this
It's all old yet new,
I'm crazy for you,
I'm crazy for you

Trying hard to direct my soul
Insight's arrival is beyond control
In the woods we meet, no words at all.
Slowly, now as I leave my youth,
Every breath, I'm deeper into truth
Soon we both are dancing free in time
If you read my mind, you'll know

CHORUS:
I'm crazy for you
Teach me once, and I'll seek what's true
I never want any faith like this
It's all old yet new,
I'm crazy for you,
I'm crazy for you

LAST PART (fade out):
It's old and yet new,
I'm crazy for you
And I must seem a fool
I'm crazy, crazy for you

The Bloodletting of War

By Shane A. Saylor January 21, 2003

The shell hits the ground exploding with a thunderous clap. Spraying sand and earth everywhere, it hides the gross reality of war for only a small time. The hallowed eyes of the dead stare unendingly at the soldiers as the march by, always staring, never blinking. The eyes of the dead have the unique power of stirring the soul of even the most cold hearted soldier.

The soldiers trek from one battle to another, trying not to let their emotional and physical fatigue show through their hardened exterior. But they cannot fight it much longer. The constant swing of adrenaline rushes is taking its toll on them. And they wonder how much longer until allies are enemies and somebody dies of a avoidable mistake.

The generals keep sending them out, hoping the next battle will bring an end to this gruesome conflict. Too many have died in this holy war against terrorism. Grudge matches have no place on the battlefield. And this is exactly what the Iraq confrontation is. A grudge match to end all grudge matches. And there are no victors in a grudge fight.

The hatred in the air is as thick as bile, and just as foul tasting. The hatred blinds all to the reality that war makes no heroes, no great people. It only creates loss of life, loss of hope for peace. In the beginning and the middle of any war, there is no hope, only despair. It hangs over all like a blanket of eternal sadness, offering no escape.

And what of the children, the official of the war-torn country wonder. What about the children slain in this unholy conflagration??? What about the children who have lost their kin to this war? Who will feed them, care for them? Who is willing to reach out and offer hope to those without hope? Who will answer, answer the cries of the children in the night?

What embargos and tariffs do the beaten face? Who decides whether or not our victims deserve our help after we have devastated their homeland? After we have nearly destroyed all remnants of their culture? And do we idly sit by and wonder when they will visit on us the harsh lessons we have taught them? Or do we take action to help them?

But ponder this as you view the children dying in the streets of their hometowns, a town they thought safe. What price are we going to pay in the future for our actions? With each child, we take away their future. Who are we to decide their fate?

What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow, which runs across
the grass and loses itself in the sunset. - Crowfoot, Native American
warrior and orator (1821-1890)

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Bardic Salvo #8: Feb. 15th, 2003

Ode to the RDNA Anthology

By sweetfaery_hm@msn.com January 2003
Sung to the tune of "This is the song that never ends"

This is the book that never ends
It just goes on and on my friends,
Some Druids started writing it
Not knowing what it was.
And they'll continue writing it forever just because
This is the book that never ends...

Strong, Yet Lost

A poem by Maryann (aka BrightMirage)
(7.27.02 nearing midnight)
...
I have courage in my heart
yet I am lost
A bright soul, seeking chances
to open doorways towards fresh new possibilities
...
I want to cradle tiny sea turtle hatchlings
in my hands, filled with love
and watch them make a run for the ocean
...
I have so much life in me...
I want to make changes to stop
the ravagings of our human race
upon the sacred Earth and her creatures
...
I want to see the world, breathing in
the exhilirating air of adventure in Australia,
plunging into the waters of the Pacific,
swimming with wild dolphins on their own terms
...
I want to walk in a hushed, sacred forest
where my brothers, sisters, and cousins of the wild
still roam free and unhindered by Man
Where the cycle of life moves and flows perfectly
...
All I lack is the key...
The key that will open up the doorways
to these sacred, exhilarating, awe inspiring moments
...
For my sanity, for my soul, for my spirit to fly,
I must believe that someone such as I,
bursting with vitality and life
will not be denied the chance
to shine, to make a difference
for the wild ones...for myself
…

Secular Teaching

Parody by Mike Scharding
Original Lyrics by Marvin Gaye "Sexual Healing."
Music at
http://www.geocities.com/midiruxpin/sexual_healing.mid
More politically laden lyrics from Mike in D.C.

Baby, School's hot just like an oven,
Don't like my coven
And baby, I can't stand it much longer
Bigotry's stronger and stronger

And when I hear that preaching I want secular teaching
Secular teaching
Teach nothing divine
Just educate our minds.
Secular teaching baby, is good for me
Secular teaching is something that's good for me.

Whenever school vouchers are rising
And my public taxes' supporting religious scripts
There is something I can do
I can get on the telephone and call my school board
Honey, you know I'll be there to support them
'Cause they have to deal with all that venom
If you don't know how to stop school preaching
I can tell you darling that it's secular teaching

Wake up, wake up, wake up, wake up
Let's make cause today
Get up, get up, get up, get up
Don't let'em have their way

Baby, I got news this morning
A sea is storming all around us.
Our wise policy's capsizing
Under a wave of proselytizing.

And when I hear that preaching
I want secular teaching
Secular teaching, is good for me
Teach nothing divine, learn that at church
Just educate our minds, and its good for us
Secular teaching baby is good for me
Secular teaching is something that's good for me

And it's good for me
And it's good for me.
My baby
Ohhh

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Bardic Salvo #9: Mar. 1st, 2003

MY LADY

A poem by Caroline Boston January 2003

O Radiant Queen! My Lady in blue,
Flowing white veil around your head.
What was your name? Not one person knew.
Whyfore a Moon on which you tread?

Seven stars encircling in Night Sky,
The Pentacle held within your hands.
Thoughts that often made me cry,
Of forgotten Time, and forgotten Lands.

O how I searched for you, My Queen,
I knew that I'd known you at the Start.
I knew in my Past, your sweet face I'd seen,
I knew that I knew you, deep down in my Heart.

You have graced my life these past two years.
You knew I would find your Name.
You watched me face my deepest Fears,
And you loved me just the same.

And didst thou guide me, Beauteous One,
When Ancestral Clan I sought?
I found a cousin, I had not known,
So the Journey was not for nought!

I am content with who I am in this Life -
Descendant of Samuel 1783,
Of a Shoe Making clan of Worksop Town -
'Tis good enough for me!

But take my hand, and again let us tread,
On Lands where I have been.
Let me remember all that was said,
Arianrhod, my Heavenly Queen!

Chalk Upon Her Hands

By Caroline Boston January 2002

A child so fair, with palest of skin
Travails upon the Land
Child of flowing, moonlit hair,
With chalk upon her hands.

Billowing shift of pure white cloth,
Flutters in the breeze.
Her name is softly whispered
By the Spirits of the trees.

Travails the child, beside her Clan,
No wavering from the Course,
White with chalk from the Land,
She forms the Great White Horse.

Stands she now on Berkshire Downs,
Knowing that this sight,
Will please her God and Goddess,
And aid them in their flight.

Sister Druid

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove, RDNA
January 2003, for the Public Domain
Original Song was "Sister Christian," 1980s by Ranger Night
MIDI music can be heard at
http://members.tripod.com/~ellisbell/Sisterch.mid

[Introductory piano music]

Sister Druid, oh the time has come
And you know you're the only one to say, OK
Where you going, what you searching for?
You know those guys don't want to play by the rules.
It's true.

You're wavering
How much till you fight?
Defending all your rights,
Let's make a stand tonight.

Friend, you know you're growing up so wise
And yet we're worrying that you won't realize, your fate is here.
Sister Druid, there's such crap in life
Don't you give up on it till the strife, is through.
It's true, it's true yeah.

You're standing firm
Now you've seen the light
You've got goals in your sights
And planning through the night

[Refrain thrice]

Sister Druid, oh the time has come
And you know that you're the only one to say, enough.
But you're protesting
Yeah, standing firm.

Vigiler's Song

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove, RDNA
Sep 2002, for the Public Domain
Original "Memories" by Webber from the musical "Cats"
Music at
http://www.angelfire.com/me4/midis/Midifiles/Memories.mid

Midnight – not a sound from the forest
And the moon's lost in the clouds.
I am sitting alone.
By the campfire, the withered leaves collect at my feet,
And the wind begins to moan.

Vigiling – all alone in the moonlight.
I have read of the old days,
It was more simple then.
I remember the first time I knew what Reform was.
Let those memories live again.

Every religion seems to give only dire warnings
Threats are muttered and the campfire sputters
But soon it will be morning

Daylight, I must wait for the sunrise.
I must think of a new life,
And I mustn't give in.
When the dawn comes, I will work for Dalon ap Landu
And a new job will begun.

Burnt out ends of smokey logs
The strange cold smell of morning.
The campfire dies, another night is over,
Another day is dawning.

Touch Her, it's so easy to ignore her.
All alone with the Earth-Mother
All my days in the sun.
If you touch Her, you'll understand what Druidism is.
Look, a new day has begun.

Liturgy

By Mike, Digitalis Grove, RDNA
January 2003, for the Public Domain
Original "Memories" by Webber from the musical "Cats"
Music at www.angelfire.com/me4/midis/Midifiles/Memories.mid

Mid-day, not a gust from the four winds
Has the rite lost its potency?
I try to improvise
On the altar, the scribbled pages burn in a flash,
And the winds begin to moan.

Liturgies, fixed praises in the sunlight
We can relive the old days
It was radical then
I remember the way we ran free in the woods
Let those actions live again.

Every season seems to bring clichéd repetition
Something muttered and the green leaves flutters,
And soon it is tradition.

Dogma, unexamined old beliefs
Can choke out a group's life force,
So we mustn't give in.
When the rite ends, this rite must be a memory too.
And a new view will begin

Burnt out thoughts and
The stale cold smell of structure
The muse's lamp dies, another creed is started

Reach out, it's so easy to mouth words,
All the priests know that this is true
During days in your grove
If you feel them, you'll understand what devotion is,
And for new days, choose new words.

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Bardic Salvo #10: Mar. 15th, 2003

R-E-F-O-R-M-E-D

By Eric Powers, Digitalis Community
For the Public Domain, August 2002
Based on Aretha Franklin's "R-E-S-P-E-C-T"
http://rock.mididb.com/20021108/Franklin_Aretha/Respect.mid

(ooh) What you want
(ooh) Baby, I got
(ooh) What you need
(ooh) Don't you know I got it?
(ooh) All I'm askin'
(ooh) Is for a little respect when you live here (just a little bit)
Hey baby (just a little bit) when you live here
(just a little bit) mister (just a little bit)

I ain't gonna do you wrong if you're good
Ain't gonna do you wrong (ooh) 'cause I don't wanna (ooh)
All I'm askin' (ooh)
Is for a little respect when you live here (just a little bit)
Baby (just a little bit) when you live here (just a little bit)
Yeah (just a little bit)

I'm about to share with you all my seas and lands
And all I'm askin' in return, understand,
Is to follow my tenets
When you live here (just a, just a, just a, just a)
Yeah baby (just a, just a, just a, just a)
When you live here (just a little bit)
Yeah (just a little bit)

Ooo, your fortunes (ooh)
may be heaven blest (ooh)
And guess what? (ooh)
So is my harvest (ooh)

Ooo, your achievements (ooh)
They're amazing (ooh)
And guess what? (ooh)
My temperature's raising (ooh)
All I want you to do (ooh) for me
Is change your ways when you live here (re, re, re ,re)
Yeah baby (re, re, re ,re)
Give it to me (reform, just a little bit)
When you live here, now (just a little bit)

R-E-F-O-R-M-E-D
Change your ways to live with me
R-E-F-O-R-M-E-D
Fix' em, A.S.A.P.

Oh (sock it to me, sock it to me,
sock it to me, sock it to me)
A little reform (sock it to me, sock it to me,
sock it to me, sock it to me)
Whoa, babe (just a little bit)
A little respect (just a little bit)
I get tired (just a little bit)
Keep on tryin' (just a little bit)
You're way overpollutin' (just a little bit)
And I ain't lyin' (just a little bit)
(re, re, re, re) 'formed
When you live here (re, re, re ,re)
Or you might wake up (reform, just a little bit)

And find out I'm mad (just a little bit)
I got to have (just a little bit)
A little reform (just a little bit)

BIBLE BELT BLUES

By Various Authors at RDNAtalk
Oct, 2002.
Pick any bluesy rhythm.

By Tegwedd

1st Verse
I live in a Bible belt town
Here even JW's & Unis get put brutally down
I just wanna talk about Druidy stuff
Hope you guys think I'm Pagan enough

First Chorus
Oh, it's the Bible Belt blues
It's the Bible Belt blues
Makes me feel so alone,
Can't even talk Druid on the telephone

2nd Verse
Those folks just go Bible thumpin' along
If you listen you can hear their Jesus song
I just wanna hear the wind through the trees
Somebody help me, talk Druidry please!

First Chorus
Oh, it's the Bible Belt blues
It's the Bible Belt blues
Makes me feel so alone,
Can't even talk Druid on the telephone

By johnness44@hotmail.com

3rd Verse
From tent meeting to watering hole
They're all worried about my soul
You know it's for the best they say
Think I'll move to Califon-I-A

2nd Chorus
Got the bible belt blues
Way down south
Got the bible belt blues
Been told to shut my mouth

By she_of_the_storm@yahoo.com

4th Verse
Wanted to walk me down the aisle
Wanted to show that I'm God's child
Didn't think about what's on my mind
Didn't see that I'm the Nature kind

2nd Chorus
Got the bible belt blues
Way down south
Got the bible belt blues
Been told to shut my mouth

5th Verse
I just wanna hear the wind through the trees
I just wanna feel an evening breeze
Isn't there someone who can help me out?
Any Druid stuff that we can talk about?

2nd Chorus
Got the bible belt blues
Way down south
Got the bible belt blues
Been told to shut my mouth

By Gandalf

6th Verse
I was raised by Southern Baptists
They wanted me to be a preacher
I couldn't accept their faith tests
The Goddess, I had to meet her

2nd Chorus
Got the bible belt blues
Way down south
Got the bible belt blues
Been told to shut my mouth

By Tegwedd

7th Verse
Outlander remembers says I understand
I bet he had his trouble with the good ole preacher man
Preacher man says do as the Bible done told
I just want to enjoy nature as I grow old

3rd Chorus
Yeah, I'm stuck in the Bible Belt way down south
Where all the women got to shut their mouths
But on this list I got my say,
It's good to live the Druid way

8th Verse
I was raised by the Baptists
Got myself wrapped in
a born again cocoon
What the hell happened?

9th Verse
All I wanted was to
Play in the forest
Romp through the meadows
Listen to the breeze
Talkin' to the trees

3rd Chorus
Yeah, I'm stuck in the Bible Belt way down south
Where all the women got to shut their mouths
But on this list I got my say,
It's good to live the Druid way

By brightmirage ;)

10th Verse
Autumn leaves are falling down,
Wondrous rustles as my feet touch the ground.
Nature kisses my very soul,
Why can't these Bible thumpers FEEL what I KNOW

3rd Chorus
Yeah, I'm stuck in the Bible Belt way down south
Where all the women got to shut their mouths
But on this list I got my say,
It's good to live the Druid way

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Bardic Salvo #11: April 1st, 2003

Something to Look Forward to

By Chris Middleton, Carleton, c.1999

I was eating a rather bland breakfast
When suddenly
I died
Moments later my spirit was wheeling from the experience
My vision blurred as the room about me spun into a crazed mix of colors
A blender full of the rich hues of every fruit
Every berry.
Soon all reality and the bowl of oatmeal below me dipped and sank into the thick syrupy afterlife
My spirit was now sticky with the great beyond-
Tastes like blueberries-
Then a darkness, more liquid than coffee, washed over me as I ascended to the light
Could this be death I wondered as I drew my hands through a stream of caffeinated Hereafter
I thought of all the orange slices, the Mandarin, Naval, and Tangerine
I recalled the Grapefruit and Melons
Those distinct memories of Kiwis, Sandpears and Mangos
All those times I had feasted
Those times when I had refused to take a single citrus section
It was there that I came to a Toast Point
I landed gracefully near a sea of tranquil raspberry jam
Along the toasted beach, the waves kicked up a froth of pancakes
People wandered in bedclothes holding hands and holding newspapers
I knew I had reached the land where breakfast never ended
And sighed deeply, turning to English muffin thoughts, and knowing that I'd never have to go to early morning Spanish again.

Untitled for Obvious Reasons

By Chris Middleton, Carleton c.1999

Three men are seated at a table in Purgatory
They are silent
Around them are thousands of silent, caged, parrots
Just as in heaven, just as in hell

In heaven the parrots learn words and continue the conversations
When the people are silent
In hell the parrots learn words and
Interrupt whoever speaks
In Purgatory the parrots learn words,
But are always silent
The three men in Purgatory
Do not know this

Gods Bless America

By Mairi Ceolmhor, DC Grove, RDNA
October 2001, for the Public Domain
Original "God Bless America" by Irving Berlin 1918, & 1938
Patriotic Music can be heard at
www.geocities.com/god_bless_america_lyrics/godbless.mid

Drum Roll Spoken Introduction:
"While the Ozone fades thin all across the globe
Let us swear a strong oath as we don our robes.
Let us all be grateful for the lands so fair
And pour forth our efforts in a solemn prayer."

Gods Bless America,
Both North and South,
Africa, Asia
Europe, Australia
And all that lies in between

From the mountains,
To the prairies
To the oceans,
And deep loam.

Gods Bless our Ecosphere, our tight-linked home.

[Repeat song]

God Out of Politics

By Mike, Digitalis Grove, RDNA
December 2002, for the Public Domain
Original "God Bless America" by Irving Berlin 1918, & 1938
Patriotic Music can be heard at
www.geocities.com/god_bless_america_lyrics/godbless.mid

Drumbeat accompanied Spoken Introduction
"While the Far Right gathers to push through their plans
Let us all remember the promise of this land
Let us all be grateful for private liberty
And stop official religiousity."

God Out of Politics
The state is not your church
You may guide her,
Not override her
Constitutional liberties!

Heed the crusades
And the abuses
And civil wars
That soon flower.

God out of politics, keep them apart.

[Repeat song]

* * * * * *

Bardic Salvo #12: April 15th, 2003

Have Yourself a Bonny Blithe Beltane

By Mike Scharding, Digitalis Grove, RDNA
August, 2002, for the Public Domain
Music and original lyrics at
www.geocities.com/ohtoad/xmas/HaveMerryXmas.html

"Have yourself a bonny blithe Beltane
Let the fires burn real bright
Go collect some flowers
In the morning light.

Have yourself a bonny blithe Beltane
Bake the sun-burst bread
When you drink whiskey
It'll go to your head

Here we are as in olden days
Happy golden days of yore,
Faithful friends who are dear to us
Gather near to us once more.

Through the years
We all will be together
If the Fates allow,
Swing a ribbon fair
From the highest pole
And have yourself
A Bonny blithe Beltane, now.

I Can't Get No Ordination

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove, RDNA
November, 2002, for the Public Domain
Lyrics: I Can't Get No) Satisfaction (Jagger/Richards)
Music at :
http://www.sharonkay.com/midi/icantgetnosatisfaction.midi

I can't get no ordination, I can't get no ordination
But I try and I try and I try and I try
I can't get no, I can't get no

When I'm walking in the woods with the ArchDruid of the Grove
He's tellin' me more and more about some useless information
Supposed to fire my imagination.

I can't get no. Oh, no, no, no. Hey, hey, hey
That's what I say
I can't get no ordination, I can't get no ordination
'Cause I try and I try and I try and I try
I can't get no, I can't get no

When I took their study course and new research made it worse
Sayin' how the druids should be
But I can't join that grove, 'cause it doesn't hold
The same true dogma as me.

I can't get no. Oh, no, no, no. Hey, hey, hey
That's what I say
I can't get no ordination, I can't get no ordination
'Cause I try and I try and I try and I try
I can't get no, I can't get no

Now I've surfed sites 'round the world, and I'm doin' this and I'm payin' that
And I'm tryin' to join some group, who tells me
Brother, better come back maybe next life
Cause we don't do that with our knife.

I can't get no. Oh, no, no, no. Hey, hey, hey
That's what I say. I can't get no, I can't get no
I can't get no ordination, no ordination
No ordination, no ordination

* * * * *

Bardic Salvo #13: May 1st, 2003

Dalon Ap Landu

By Mike, Digitalis Grove
Feb 2003, for the Public Domain
Original was the "Scooby Doo" Theme.
Music at www.geocities.com/EnchantedForest/3607/scoobyd.mid

Dalon ap Landu, who are you?
We gaze up at your green boughs.
Dalon ap Landu, what are you?
We need to hear from you now.
Come on Lord of Groves, you see our sacrifice is green and perfect
If you don't answer me, come from your tree, we'll just have to pause and reflect.
You know we've got a ritual to do, so Lord of Groves please help us stay on track!
Don't hold back!
And Lord of Groves if you come through you're going to have yourself a whiskey dram!
Not a scam!
Dalon ap Landu, here are you.
We're ready. Are you willing?
If we can count on you, Dal'n 'p Landu, I know it'll be fulfilling.

The Hidden Heart

By Victoria Dunseith

Upon the land of Eire, green
there is a pretty lass.
Her lovely hair is bright and fair,
her love it did not last.

She brings her love to those that care,
and she to the land casts life.
Her love was not noble or kind,
he left her with a bit of strife.

Her pain was great and so was shared,
the lass's shredded heart.
Wound ripped open for all that cared,
healing was long to start.

She sat at the edge of a pond,
weeping for what was lost.
She missed the one that she was fond,
her friend she had almost tossed.

Unknown, another's heart did love.
The warrior walked by.
He noticed her shuddering head,
and ached to see her cry.

So much noise come from the lass that
she did not hear him there.
He stood by her side for a while,
so lost she was she did not care.

"What's wrong?" he finally asked her.
"I give but not receive."
"You would see with eyes open all
the love that will always achieve."

What you seek is in front of you.
Shared, it will always be,
my heart ready for you to clasp,
waiting for you to see.

For him she looked inside and saw
what she'd had all the time.
His love it would last forever.
Her happiness would climb.

She once more brought love to the land.
Magic would soon appear,
with very small waves of her hand,
for love she no longer fear.

The Fire of Her Soul

By Oriana Lewallen

Groping through the misted, clouded blackness
in the dark I find her
I clutch to her skirts
wrapping them fully around
until they envelop me
in her safety and warmth.
I am empowered by her closeness.

The gentle radiating heat,
from the fire of her soul
sparks my own.
Beginning my quest within
for understanding and knowledge
while I am comforted in her presence.

I turn inward, learning
from the inside out
that which will help me endure
all my life, all the year through.
And in the spring I will emerge...
new, fresh and naive as the crocus.

Queen of the Night

By Jeannette Randall
This is my entry for whatever it's being entered into at this moment. :) It's a poem, I wrote it in.. er.. 1998 or 1999, don't rightly recall which, and it is, in fact, all original to me.

Wondrous beauty, blazing bright
In the shadows of the night
Shine down on me here
Shine true, bright and clear
Whisper softly your words so dear
The truth of your wisdom I must hear
Whisper softly, my words of light,
Unto you, queen of the night.

Spiral Dancers

By Vanessa Sanders
My first attempt here, it's sort of a Druid anthem, I guess.
Original tune 'Tiny Dancer' Elton John
Music at http://members.aol.com/timvp3/tinydanc.mid

Always dreamers
Oracle readers
Worshipping the land-

Reading the runes,
To Bardic tunes,
Writing Ogham in the sand.

Druid dreamers -
You must have seen us
Bearing sigils on our vans.

Jesus Freaks out in the streets
Handing tickets out for God.
Taken aback we just grip our staff,
They've never heard of Arianhrod.

Calling the Green Man with all we can
Oak leaves we will burn,
We carry on with magickal songs
As the days grow short and nights grow long.

But oh, how we walk the wheel
From day to day and year to year
I wilderness where they can't hear
The chant so softly---slowly

Chorus:
Invoke the Gods, oh Spiral Dancers
In the groves of Oak and Ivy,
Laugh and dance with wild abandon
The Solstice is today.

It's Ostara's Whole

Parodied by John Odencrantz
Original: “Heart and Soul” by Huey Lewis and the News

Twelve o'clock this morning
A springtime wind came roaring
And in a dream blew winter on its way.
This season when birds are nesting
Ostara bestows her blessing
And autumn seeds are sprouting in the clay.
You see, she plants what she wants.

(REFRAIN)
It's Ostara's whole
It's hot and cold
It's got it all her darkness and her light

Can't you see her standing there?
See how she looks, see how she cares
Who wakens life and turns night into day.
Six o'clock this morning
New seedtime came a dawning
A red egg glowing in the morning rays
And so you plant what you want.

(REFRAIN)

It's Ostara's whole
It's hot and cold
It's got it all her darkness and her light

Beltane Spell

Parodied by John Odencrantz
Original was Rebel Yell by Billy Idol
Music available at http://idol.execnet.com/

[Music]

Last night a little dancer came dancing through the fire.
Last night the logs were burning and the hares jumping higher.
The fairy queen said "Baby I got a license for love
But if it expires pray help from above!"

In the midnight hour life cries "More! More! More!"
In a Beltane spell life wants More more more
In the midday hour, Bel- More more more
In a Beltane spell- More more more
more more more

Throw off those winter's shackles, life won't sit and beg.
The hobby-horse is whirling and the Queen her Jack's wed.
Some tumble in the umbels, some are laughing in the trees.
Spring's set you free. I need you here by me.
Because

In the midnight hour life cries "More! More! More!"
In a Beltane spell life wants More more more
In the midday hour, Bel- More more more
In a Beltane spell- More more more
more more more

Bel sits in his own heaven
Discussing the meaning of fate with Bran's raven:
A ribbon, a tangled-up maypole-like affair.
But Betty's ways are Betty's. Fate won't mess Betty's hair.

[music]

I searched the world for you, babe,
Nine lonely months for you,
Ten thousand miles for you, babe,
A hundred blizzards, too.

I'd visit Dis for your sake
For summer to spend with you,
Caer Sidi-zen for your sake
Justa, justa, justa, justa have you here by me
Because

In the midnight hour life cries "More! More! More!"
In a Beltane spell life wants More more more
In the midday hour, Bel- More more more
In a Beltane spell- More more more
More more more

We're living. This is Beltane.
We want more
More, more, more
More, more, more, more, more

We're living. This is Beltane.
We want more
More, more, more
More, more, more, more, more

Volume Eight 2003
The Soul of Juliana Spring

2003 Introduction

As most of you know Irony Sade was one of the Archdruids at Carleton from the Spring of 1996 to Spring of 1999 and is talented in many areas. He is the author of Sociology of the Reformed Druids (Pt. 7 of ARDA,) he is the Patriarch of the Order of the Volcano (Pt. 3 of ARDA,) the History of the Legitimacy (Pt 9 of ARDA,) several epistles (Pt. 2 of ARDA) and a talented poet and harper in his own right. Irony spent two years from the summer of 1999 to Summer 2001 in the Peace Corps on a small island in the Kingdom of Tonga out in the Pacific Ocean, where he founded the Volcano Grove. This story was written mid-way through that tour of duty and reflects much on his character, experiences, and views of Reformed Druidism. There is also a chance that this may be produced into a independent film in the new future. He welcomes any assistance you might be able to provide into getting published.

Sincerely,
Mike Scharding
Embassy of Japan, D.C.
April 22nd, 2003

Printing History
1st Printing A Druid Missalany (Beltane-Samhain 2003)
2nd Printing ARDA 2, 2003

The Soul of Juliana Spring

By Irony Sade
© November 2000

Chapter One

It was the eve of Beltain when I first heard of Juliana Spring. The Maypole was being danced for the sixth or seventh time while the tall piper and the boy on the fiddle churned out complementary versions of *Kati Barri's Wedding*. A crowd of brightly colored folks was clustered around the long table bearing our potluck feast and there were flowers everywhere, for it was the festival of spring.

I noticed the young man when he arrived, standing uncertainly on the edge of the clearing, too curious to pass by, too hesitant to join in the revels. He was short, sandy haired, and serious looking. I marked him as an undergraduate from the university nearby. A voluptuous lady with violets in her hair called to him to join us and eat. He came, smiling suddenly, and they were soon conversing freely. I smiled too, at the pleasure of a new face- then I forgot him, for it was time to crown the King and Queen of the May.

The lad stayed on, late into the fire lit night, and sipped the honeyed wine as it was passed from hand to hand. People sang and told stories as the stars yawned back to life, and I watched the couples snuggle together for warmth, wondering idly how many would carry the festivities on into the privacy of the forest or bedroom. When my turn to speak came I rolled out the old yarn of the boy from Cork who fell in love with a harp he could not play. The longing tormented him so much that his mother offered her soul to the Druid if he would give her son the gift of music. The sandy haired lad watched me closely as I spoke, pitching my voice low to the slow crackle of the beech logs. It was an old and beautifully chilling tale that I told, not one entirely appropriate for Beltain. It may have snapped him out of the festive mood. He seemed distracted from then on, and kept peering at me through the flames as the night progressed. Eventually he rose for a mug of mead, and, upon returning, sat down to my left in the spot just vacated by a delightfully tipsy nymph.

Silence stretched between us with the expectant air of impending conversation. At last he turned to me, head to one side.

"Are you really a druid?" His voice was soft and low.

The focus of the group had shifted to the far side of the circle. I considered the flames and reviewed the dozen-odd debates for a pair of slow breaths. There were too many ways to respond to that question, but it had been a day of laughter, and I was in no mood for an argument.

"Yes," I replied.

The answer seemed to satisfy him. He too stared into the coals, rolling a warmed mug between his hands. Eyes always gravitate towards fire at night. I have always wondered why.

"This is silly," he remarked at length, still regarding the flames. "I am supposed to be a medical student. I don't even know why I showed up tonight."

The lad hesitated, uncertain, and I took a sip of my own mead. Suddenly he was facing me.

"Can you really sell your soul?"

I glanced at him, startled.

"What I mean," he stammered, "is if someone wanted something they couldn't have so badly that they were willing to sell their soul to get it, could you give it to them?"

I continued peering. His shoulders squirmed.

"Like that story you just told," he trailed off. His eyes were still on me, embarrassed, but determined.

"Are you serious?"

He nodded, sucking his lip.

I stared away into the stars between the swaying leaves. Laughter from the lingerers drifted through the night.

"If someone you know, or you yourself, wanted something badly enough to sell their soul for it, then I would certainly be willing to talk to that person."

"It isn't me," he said quickly. "It's my girlfriend. She… She would probably rather tell you herself."

"Do you want me to talk to her?"

"Yes, I do."

"When?"

"As soon as possible."

I considered this.

"Could she meet me at the Bubble and Squeak for lunch on Tuesday?"

"I'll tell her," said he, breathing heavily. "I can't believe I'm doing this. My name is Sam, by the way." He grinned. "I guess everyone knows who you are."

I forced a dry chuckle.

"Pleased to meet you Sam. You should smile more often- you look old when you are serious."

Sam laughed and turned back to his wine. The cluster across the flames thundered their giggling way into a final chorus of *The Rattlin' Bog*, and I stared off into the stars above the treetops. They winked back, which was all they ever did, leaving me to guess at the meaning.

Chapter Two

The Bubble and Squeak was a friendly little café not far from the university. It had been established by a widowed British matron who had cheerfully wedged her way in between the clothing stores and simply out baked the competition. She employed a small clan of students and mothers, kept university hours, and was willing to cook anything one cared to name. They really did serve bubble and squeak, if you could order it with a straight face.

Juliana Spring found me at my table by the wall. She greeted me by name and I stood, surprised to find her so tall.

"Miss Spring, hello."

"Sam told me all about you," she began as we sat, and I grinned, imagining that conversation.

"Are you hungry?"

Her pale face shook slightly.

"Not really."

Long fingers fidgeted with something at her neck as we sat, her eyes staring, jumping away when she saw me see them. I watched her hands and realized they held a crucifix.

I leaned forward, speaking gently. "I do not bite."

Juliana started and blushed faintly.

"It's not that. I just don't know how to begin a conversation like this. I feel like Faust!"

"Faust sold his soul to the Devil," I smiled. "I am just an ordinary man."

"Then how can you buy mine?"

I looked away to the budding maples outside.

"What did Sam tell you?"

"That you were a druid, that people seemed to trust you. He told me about the story you shared on Saturday and said he thought you might be for real." She was looking straight at me now, a question perched upon her eyebrows.

"Have you slept since he told you?"

Her dark hair rippled as she shook the head beneath it.

"Then you should definitely have some food in you."

We ordered and she told me about herself. She was twenty, a sophomore at the university, and had loved dancing as a child. Her father delivered sermons at the Revivalists Center a few hours south and wanted her to become either a teacher or a nurse. She relaxed as we ate, and a bit of color emerged in her heart shaped face.

"And what is it you want?" I asked when only her coffee was left.

Juliana's body straightened and she looked me in the eye.

"I want to play the harp."

I blinked.

"Do you have one?"

"My grandmother gave me one when I left for college," she nodded. "Dad wasn't going to let me keep it, but I told him I was dating a medical student and taking English classes." Her eyes dropped. "He doesn't know we're living together."

"Have you got a teacher?"

"No. People have shown me different things, and I have all sorts of books, but to hire a teacher you need money. My father will only help pay for what he sees on the tuition forms, and I'm working half time already to cover the rest. I practice all the time though…"

"How much?"

"Whenever I can. I have to pass my classes, or Dad will have me home, and I have to work to pay for them, but I still play a bit every day."

"Then what do you need me for?"

"Because, you see. I don't just want to play. I… I want to be the best in the world."

On the walk out front students passed in threes and twos, giggling or serious, free and careless. Discoursing passionately on things they would forget completely a few months hence. They had all their options open, these people outside; there was not an irrevocable commitment amongst them. None of them were ready to sell their souls.

"Why?" I asked Juliana quietly.

"It's what I've always wanted."

"Since when? You are twenty."

"My whole adult life- since I was ten years old."

"Why?" I repeated softly. Her eyes were hazel and very clear.

"When I was ten I heard a record of harp music at somebody's birthday party, maybe in the adults room, I don't know. I don't even know what piece was playing, only that it was the most beautiful thing I had ever heard. That night I started dreaming music. It was so lovely, and I knew it was harps. I thought I was listening in on Heaven. In the morning I could still remember some of it, but there is no way to describe music like that, and nothing I could do to reproduce it. I told my Dad, and he said it was a vision sent from God to urge me on to a good life. I told him I wanted to play like the angels I'd heard. He said that that was foolish arrogance and that I could be damned for even thinking such a thing.

"I tried to stop wanting it, to do what he told me, but the dreams just kept coming. Sometimes it's as if I don't even sleep, but just lie awake listening all night long. In church sometimes I

would forget to pay attention and just sit remembering the music, smiling. I told my father once when he asked what was so funny. He got so mad he hit me. He doesn't understand."

"Do you still dream like that?"

"All the time. It's what keeps me sane, even if it is maddening. I used to think that all I needed was a harp and that then I could play like that. Then I got one at last and realized it was harder than I'd imagined. After six months I realized it would take my whole life to play the way I wanted to, even if I did nothing but practice. After a year and a half I figured even that wouldn't be long enough. I finally decided it was impossible, and that God was just torturing me with the dreams. I nearly killed myself, it hurt so much. Sam is the only reason I didn't. Then we heard about you, and I thought… I'm almost afraid to hope."

"Where was your mother in all this," I asked when she fell silent.

"She left." Her face was masked. "When I was ten."

I digested that without expression.

"What made you think of selling your soul?"

"I thought of it a long time ago, actually, but I didn't really believe it was possible. I also had no idea how to do it. It's not exactly the sort of thing you advertise for."

My head was swimming. I glanced down at the tea in my hands. It was cold.

"Even if you did, there would be no quick fix. You would still have to practice, live in the world, pay bills, deal with your father."

Juliana tossed her head impatiently.

"I know… But I want this."

"It's your soul, girl! Can't you think of anything less drastic?"

"I came to you for help, sir. Are you going to help me, or are you going to try and talk me out of it?"

There was steel in those hazel eyes. I saw suddenly why it was Sam loved her.

"I just want you to know what you are getting into. Otherwise there can be no bargain."

"I know what I am getting into."

"Are you certain?"

She glared back defiantly.

I swirled my cold tea.

"You, Juliana Spring, want to sell your soul to me in exchange for the chance to play the music you hear in your dreams, here on earth, alive, and to be the best harpist in the world?"

"Yes."

"Are you willing to do whatever I deem necessary to make that happen, however difficult or painful it happens to be, to live your life by my word so far as regards the playing of the harp?"

"I am."

"And do you undertake this obligation freely, without mental reservations, and in full knowledge of the consequences?"

She bit her lip.

"I do."

"Then give me your hands and open your mind to me. Close your eyes when you are ready."

I leaned forward and took her long white hands in mine. I wondered suddenly if anyone was listening.

Her eyes closed, and I spoke a very few, swift, syllabant words.

Her hands clenched in mine. Her eyes flickered open.

Juliana Spring shuddered.

"Is that it?" She gasped.

"That is it."

Juliana shifted her eyes cautiously about the café, her gaze darting to the diners, the window, the sky, the trees outside, and me. There was a peculiar intensity to her study, as though she had never seen a world like this before. She flexed her long boned fingers, fascinated by their supple movement.

"What happens now?" She asked me.

"Go back to Sam and get some sleep. Tomorrow morning at ten meet me in the park behind campus, on the bench beneath the bur oaks. Bring your harp."

She nodded.

"What about… What about my soul?"

"Do not worry about it," I smiled gently. "That is my concern now."

I stood, smiling down at her trembling eyes. There was a light in them that I had not observed before. I wondered what she was thinking.

"Lunch is on me," I said.

Chapter Three

And so it began. We met beneath the oaks the next day on a hillside overlooking fields and meadows creeping slowly back to wild. A brook danced its nearly inaudible way along the foot of the hill. Too far away to really be a presence the red brick buildings of the university dorms glowed in the morning light. Juliana wore long tan pants that made her look even taller, and a dark light sweater against the chill of the wind. She looked willow thin against the trees, and strode along with the cased harp as if it weighed nothing. She sat down on the end of the bench. I folded my coat across my knees. For a long time there was silence.

"I love this place," she remarked at length. "Sam and I used to come out here on walks before things got so busy."

"What does Sam have to say about all this?"

"I told him everything. He said that he couldn't quite believe it had happened, but that he thought it was very brave of me. He also said it was me that he loved, soulless or not, and that he'd stay with me through everything."

Far away I watched the movement of students to and from the dorms, smaller than ants and twice as aimless.

"He is a remarkable man if he means that. I hope he follows through."

"What do we do now?"

"I do not know yet. Play for me."

The harp case looked homemade. Juliana unzipped it and set the leather carefully aside. The harp stood shoulder high as we sat before it, darkly gleaming chestnut, unadorned. She screwed in its legs and settled the instrument back into her arms.

"What should I play?" She asked, brushing the strings. It was already tuned.

"Anything you wish."

She brushed the chords again and bent her long dark hair. So softly it seemed that she was still warming up, Juliana began to play.

In the middle air before us a cloud of insects danced beside a small yew tree. From its branches darted forth a small brown bird, flickering and flitting into the swarm, matching its mindless, eye-defying movements with its own. It tumbled about immune to gravity with no discernible wing beats, but a twisting, fluttering,

graceful confusion of feathers and open beak. Then it was back in the branches, panting, as the swarm danced on, unconsciously reduced. After three long breaths it darted forth again.

She was good. Better than I had been after six years practice, but then, I had never had her passion. There was a freedom and a flow to her movements already beyond anything I could muster. She would never be my student, I decided.

At the end of the second piece the harpist's hands floated away from the strings. A breeze stirred her hair and caught the last of the chords, stretching them out into an inhuman blaze of harmony that drifted softly down the wind. Far below us water shimmered.

The lady turned to me with her heart shaped face. I searched for, found my voice.

"How much did you say you practiced?"

"Maybe two hours a night."

"What about your classes?"

"I have one right now, actually." She gazed over at the dorms. "It doesn't seem that important anymore."

"Then why do you take them?"

"Force of habit. It keeps my father happy, and I'll need some sort of skills if I can't make it as a musician."

I turned my face towards her.

"Oh."

She realized it now, I saw. There was no more '*if*' in this adventure. We were playing all or nothing.

"Do you want to be in school?" I asked.

"I like the atmosphere, the people, but no, not really."

The bird was back in the air again.

"If you dropped your classes, kept your job, and stayed with Sam, would you have enough money to pay a teacher?"

She considered, strangely calm as the possibilities assailed her.

"I might."

"Good. I will try to find you one. Where do you work, by the way?"

"Down at the Symposium. I'm a waitress there."

"I shall have to visit sometime. Have you got a telephone?"

She told me the number and I committed it to memory.

"Here is mine if you need anything. I will call within the week."

"What should I tell my father?"

"That is up to you." I replied, smiling. "And make that six hours a night."

I turned to go. She stopped me with my name.

"What's the other half of our bargain? You never said… What will happen afterwards?"

I waited, still as the rough skinned oaks. The wind brought a sheen to Juliana's eyes that almost looked like tears. Her lips began to form a question I had no way to answer. I spoke to cut her off.

"Do not think about it. If you let it worry you the concern will keep you from concentrating completely on the harp. Without that commitment you will never become the best, and the whole deal will be pointless. I am not the Devil, Juliana. You have nothing to fear."

Her eyes were not wholly convinced, but I had said too much already. I left her sitting with the harp and fled to the shadow of the silent trees.

Chapter Four

That afternoon I made some calls. I was looking for the best teacher in an hour's radius. Not the best player- for any musician could get jealous of what Juliana Spring was going to become. We needed someone who could teach her all the things I could not, and who would be able to let her go when she moved beyond their skill. It took me longer than I had thought, but at last I found a woman who would serve, and made a reservation at the Symposium.

The restaurant where Juliana worked was very much a creation of the town it served. Its clientele were students and faculty, townies out for a night's splurge, and the occasional interloper like myself. The Mediterranean food it prepared was better than most, and the staff was no slower than many. Juliana was a bit too striking to make the perfect waitress, too ethereal to draw the biggest tips. She saw me when I entered and pounced upon my table to claim it as her own.

I gave her the number of the instructor I had found. She very nearly jumped with glee.

"It's going to work," she bubbled over my order. "I talked to all my professors, and they say it's all right. Some of them think I'm nuts, of course. Sam says we are still on, too, so I'm living there, and the manager here let me up my hours to thirty, so I can probably even save a little!" She grinned proudly. "And I'm playing seven hours a day!"

"Bring my food!" I laughed. "People will think I am flirting with you!"

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Chapter Five

Spring erupted into summer that year, as it always seems to manage. Beasts that had been wild and rutting a few months before settled down to raising families. The equinox came and went with its festivals of balance, and the stars slid slowly backwards through the heavens. The Hunter began to appear in the mornings again, his jeweled belt and longbow burning down the year. Leaves glowed, and in simpler climes people worked to gather in the harvest.

Juliana and I kept in touch throughout the changes. I also met quietly with her teacher now and again. Sam passed at the head of his class and began courting medical schools. Juliana lost her job, but found another closer to the city. Together they bought an old, tired station wagon and found a way to make both their schedules work. Juliana's teacher discovered her student had been fingering wrong all along, and showed her a new way of sitting that took the strain off her spine. Juliana said she was happier than she had ever been.

Three nights before Samhain someone tried to pound my door in. I came out from the kitchen and pulled it open. The woman the storm blew into my hall was a wreck, her face and hair plastered with tears and rain. She was nearly hysterical, tumbled words escaping in great gasps and stutters.

"I got back from work- and Sam was there- and the door was down- and he said he just came in- and started screaming- and threw Sam around- and was looking for me- and started throwing things- and- and—"

I barred the door and pulled her into the kitchen, still shaking. Juliana went into the softest chair and the tissue box went into her lap. The kettle was still smoldering quietly to itself. I grabbed it and a box from the high shelf.

"Tea." I told her. "Drink."

She grasped clumsily at the deep mug, her lungs still sobbing. I waited until she managed to take a full sip without slurping.

"Who?" I asked her.

She stared at me blankly.

"Who threw Sam around?"

"My father… He found out I wasn't taking classes and discovered where we were living somehow. He tore the door down looking for me. When Sam told him I wasn't there he just went wild. He smashed everything he could find and kept roaring about me being a disobedient slut until our neighbors called the police. They were still there when I came home, and the landlord as well, but my father left before they could catch him." She paused for breath, clutching at the tea.

"He found out you were not taking classes?"

She nodded dumbly.

"Had you not told him?"

"I told him I'd gotten a scholarship so that he could stop paying tuition, and that I was working as a nursing intern over the summer. I gave him the number of a girlfriend who would say I lived there but was out at the moment if he called…"

She stared into her mug. I stared into her ear.

"It was stupid, I know. But I didn't want to face him."

"You lied," I breathed softly.

"So what? I sold my soul too. What damage is a lie going to do?"

"Selling your soul is just a sacrifice. A lie is a blow to your own integrity- that is much worse."

"You've got to be joking. Haven't you ever told a lie to avoid trouble?"

"No! When I do something as bad as lying you had better believe it is for something more important than just avoiding trouble!"

Juliana stared up at me, shocked out of her shock for the moment. My voice was louder than I had intended.

"You have a weird set of morals," said she.

You do not know the half of it, thought I.

I turned away from her, studying my dishes. In the reflection of a hanging pot I saw her take another sip from her mug. Her face took on an odd look.

"Why am I drinking mushrooms?"

"Muscle relaxant."

She nodded, still puzzled, then her lovely frame collapsed, crashing back into shock and despair. Her voice was almost too faint to hear.

"He smashed my harp."

There was a knock at the door.

I turned, palms tingling.

"Don't go," she whispered. Her eyes were very large.

Chapter Six

I walked through the hall to the door's heavy oak panels and laid my long left hand upon them.

The young man who stood there was big, but not tall. He wore a checkered mackinaw and a tattered blue cap. There was a chaw of tobacco in his cheek, and he looked up at me with amusement and contempt in his grey-blue eyes. He touched his hat brim in the ritual of respect.

"I'm here for Miss Raskin," he drawled.

"Who?"

He grinned and spat tobacco.

"I followed her here. That's her car out front. Don't try to tell me she's not around."

"There is a Miss Spring here. I have never heard of a Miss Raskin."

He spat again on my clean stone porch.

"Spring's not her real name."

"Who are you?"

"I'm a friend of her father, Mr. Raskin. He told me to come and find his little girl." He smirked up at me. His smile showed oddly clean teeth beneath the brown slime.

"I know she's in there."

"Mr. Raskin is currently liable for housebreaking, assault, and destruction of property. Miss Spring is currently under my protection. Cross this threshold and you will be liable for trespassing, assault and attempted kidnapping." The clipped words flowed from a well of controlled wrath.

The man on the porch took a half step backwards.

"Now. Did Mr. Raskin tell you to find his daughter, or to find her and bring her back?"

"He… He only said to find her, sir."

"Then you have done as he asked. Go tell him where she is, if you feel you have to."

The visitor rolled his poison uncertainly between his cheeks.

"He's still going to want her back," he appended.

"Then we will speak to him in the morning. Goodnight, Tom. It would be best for you not to come here again."

I closed the door in his startled face and dropped the heavy beam across it.

Juliana was sitting still and pale when I returned to the kitchen.

"Who was it?"

"Thomas Weedon from Willard's Landscaping, according to his hat. Do you know him?"

"He goes to father's church. I didn't think he'd do anything like this."

"Is your name Juliana Spring?"

"Juliana Spring Raskin. Spring was my mother's name. I've never much cared for the Raskin part."

My eyes searched the woman sitting in my favorite chair, wondering what else I did not know about her. I felt the sweat of adrenaline evaporating off my sides, the almost taste of blood along my tongue.

"What are we going to do now?" She asked.

The storm churned outside like the Wild Hunt in training. Beneath the wind I heard a car start up and leave.

"You and Sam are going to stay with me while we sort this out. Tomorrow morning you are going to talk with your father."

Bleach would only have darkened Juliana's face.

"Could I have some more mushrooms?"

Chapter Seven

The couple stayed for four nights. Sam and I packed up their apartment. It only took two trips; they owned very little beyond clothes and books. I collected the tangle of nylon and shattered walnut as Sam talked to the landlord. The harp was beyond repair.

"What are your plans?" I asked when Sam returned.

"We'll move somewhere else. There are a couple of schools that seemed excited about my coming. I did pretty well last year, and my medical requirements are all finished. I might try talking one of them into accepting me a year early. There is a seven-year MD/PhD program I was especially looking at. It can't hurt to apply anyway. Desperation must count for something."

"I'm more worried about Julie," he added after a pause. "That harp was her life. I don't know what she's going to do without it."

The day after the attack Juliana called her father. Their conversation was brief and private. She emerged from my study in tears. I held her as she wept and came as close as I ever have to hating someone I had never known. There was more grief in it than anger, really, but hate is such a simpler word.

"What did you tell him?"

"Everything. He doesn't understand."

"Everything?"

"Except where we are going and about our bargain. He figures I'm damned anyhow, so what's the difference? He said I'd end up just like Mother."

"What happened to her?"

"She was a dancer. She taught at some of the community centers, YWCA and places like that. She was very good, but it was always just a hobby. Then one day she got an offer to join a dance troupe and get paid for it. My parents fought about that for weeks. She felt she had only ever been a housewife and was entitled to at least try for her own career, and that even if it only lasted for the season it would be an adventure, so what was the harm in it? He argued that she would be abandoning her sacred duty as wife and mother. Making a charnel exhibition of her God given beauty, I think he called it. She said he had no right to talk like that, and that she was going to go off with them anyway.

"Then one day she did… I came home from school and she was just gone, no note or anything. Dad fumed about it for months. He still gets furious if anyone mentions her. I kept hoping she would come back, or write, but she never did." Juliana sniffed.

"Why couldn't she have taken me with her?"

She fell silent. I stayed with her there in the darkening room until Sam came home to my rescue.

Chapter Eight

With no further prelude, Samhain was upon us. The displaced pair stayed on to wait out the weekend traffic and tie up some last loose ends. The celebration was at my house that year, in the woods out back. I invited my guests to join if they wished. Juliana begged off, pleading illness, leaving me once more in the kitchen. Baked pies, breads, and squashes; mulled wine, cider, and mead helped to distract me from her troubles. Sam came down after a bit to help me cook.

"What is Samhain, exactly?" He asked as we sat amid the smells and bubbling pots, a pile of apples and peelings between us.

I swallowed a crisp of red skin and reached for a Macintosh.

"Samhain is the Druidic New Year. The harvest is in, the god is dead, the goddess is going into mourning until she gives birth to him anew on the Winter Solstice, December 21st."

I flicked some seeds onto the table and shot Sam a hidden look. He was still listening.

"It is a time when we remember all the people and things we have lost that year. Friends who died, lives that changed, parts of ourselves that we choose to lay to rest. It is a time when spirits of the dead come half way back to earth. Some people believe that messages can be passed between them and the living, tonight." I paused. He waited.

"It is also the beginning of the New Year, and we remember that there is birth in all death, life in all change. It is a time to recall that things move on, however bleak or dismal the threat of winter seems."

Sam was staring at me, the knife idle in his hands.

"What are you going to do?" He asked.

"Sit around a fire and talk, mostly. Sing, remember, tell stories." I waved a peeled apple. "Eat good food."

The right corner of his mouth twitched upwards.

"No devil worship?"

"'Fraid not. Sorry."

His grin became a full smile. I smiled as well.

"You are a good listener, Sam. Thank you."

We piled in the last slices of fruit, added the final dusting of spices and lemon, then pinched down the sage sprinkled crust. The first batch of pies was ready to be pulled from the oven.

"Those do look good. I think I may join you."

"We would be honored."

Chapter Nine

That night I watched the flames, listening to the stories of loss, grief, and healing. Some of those who came remembered Sam from Beltain, half a year before, and they welcomed him quietly. Samhain is a much more subdued holiday, deeper than the festival of spring, and less wild. You could say that the one celebrates Life, the other Death, but that is only half true. Sex and Sacrifice are closer; Spring and Autumn. In the one the world is leaping back to life, winter is vanquished at last, and all of nature pours forth its joy in reproduction and song. In the other we see the dark half of the year beginning. Winter is real, the leaves are down, and the god has given himself in sacrifice that the world might continue on without him. They are Beltain and Samhain. They may be irreducible. I sat between the old year and the new, and wondered what would become of us all.

A few people did actually burn letters to the dead. One man declared his life in the closet was over. A woman said good-bye to her father, killed in a car wreck eight years before. Food was passed, eaten, enjoyed. Sam said nothing, but his eyes burned, and I saw that he understood.

The stories continued. My mind was worn out by other peoples' troubles. I stared vacantly into the fire, content to merely listen. One lady sang of the Fairie Courts riding and the rescue of Tam Llyn from Elfland's Queen. The song seemed to take shape in the coals as I dozed, the great host passing, Tam with the star upon his brow, Margaret waiting, waiting, in her circle of holy water, the soul searing beauty of the Queen and her riders. I saw faces amidst that flickering host. One was a tall woman with eyes like the sunset and a face like Juliana might wear in another twenty years. She smiled, reaching out a long hand to brush my cheek—and then there was only the cold night wind, and smoke stinging tears from my old, tired eyes.

Chapter Ten

The morning they left I gave Juliana a new harp. The black cherry pillar gleamed like plaited hair in the low sunlight of my library. The knotted maple soundboard whorled, swirls and ripples of grain on grain, eddies of foam on a long white shore.

"She is strung with wires," I cautioned, as I watched Juliana's fingers quiver. "They ring differently than gut or nylon strings. You will have to learn to finger all over again."

"But where did it come from?" Juliana breathed.

"*She* is my harp, Lorelia- and older than you are too, I might add, so show some respect!" I smiled. The harp whispered, my voice resonating in her sound box. It sounded like a chuckle.

"You are a better player than I, Miss Spring. I think she would rather live with you."

Her sandy haired lover was grinning. Juliana threw her arms around me and squealed.

Chapter Eleven

The next day my phone rang, early. I answered. For a long moment there was nothing. Then came an indrawn hiss.

"Thrice damned Druid. I know who you are. Let me speak to my daughter."

"Good morning to you too, Mr. Raskin. That was a nasty way to start a conversation."

"You are a Devil worshiping hell spawn. Why should I be polite to you? Your soul will rot in Lucifer's bowels till the day when God dissolves you both."

"The Devil is a Christian figment, Mr. Raskin. You would know more about him than I."

"You are corrupting my daughter, leading her astray from the church and her family, encouraging her in that damned music and distracting her from God's will. Let me speak to her."

"Who is to say God did not give her that passion, those dreams, the gift she has for music?"

"Don't play games with me. Where is my daughter?"

"She is already gone. You have driven her away from both of us."

"Where is she?"

"I am sorry to say that is none of your business. If she chose not to tell you herself, then I am not about to."

"Tell me where she is! I'll kill you, Druid!"

"""*Vengeance is mine," saith the Lord.'* You are not He, Russell Raskin. I am perfectly willing to be judged by God. Try anything yourself and I will see you in court."

There came a long drawn hiss of air forced between teeth.

"You thrice damned Druid. I'll see you in Hell."

"Only if you are there. Good night, Russell."

I broke the connection before he could curse me again. Leaves swirled past my windows in their endless autumnal Totentanz. I stood and watched them, breathing very slowly.

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Chapter Twelve

The wetlands behind my forest rose and fell with the changing water table. A family of wood ducks moved into a dying soft maple, and I watched each May to see their chicks take their kamikaze leap of faith. The young ones hatch in a hole fifty feet up the trunk and are raised there by their long-suffering parents. When the ducklings decide they are ready to leave, they scramble to the opening and tumble out. They then have but moments in which to learn to fly. Each spring I sat watching in the moss, and the terror and the joy of each plummet peeled years from off my heart.

The young lady who had sold me her soul was making the most of those years. While Sam drilled and researched his way toward twin degrees, Juliana played. She studied, practiced, improved, discovered, and soon she was herself discovered. The fiddle player of *Sheebeg Sheemore* was quitting the band, and the group's manager had offered her his place.

"What do you think?" She asked over the crackling phone from Seattle. "Should I take it?"

"That depends on what you want."

"What do you mean?"

"Do you want to be a popular, successful, possibly rich and famous musician? Or do you want to be the best harpist in the world?"

"I want to be the best in the world," she decided.

"Then you know what to do."

"Yes, I guess so…"

"Are you happy?" I chanced, just before she hung up.

"Deliriously! No worries at all!"

Chapter Thirteen

For several years after this she was traveling, six seasons in Ireland, three in Prague. She had moved beyond what any teacher could teach, into the boundless and stupefying realm of self-mastery. She learned something from every person she watched, heard, or played with, incorporated each skill into her own playing, and blossomed. She caught wind of an archaic bard in Scotland, of a novel percussive harping technique from Argentina. She traveled to see and to study, sharing always what she had learned.

A withering bout of Dengue Fever ended Sam's three-year tour as a village doctor in Papua New Guinea. He returned to the mid-west and started a family clinic, eventually buying a house with the profits. My own life and works progressed too, over that slow decade, but this is Juliana's story, not mine, so I shall not speak of those.

Late one December the couple invited me to spend the holidays with them.

"Julie is giving a Christmas concert," Sam told me. "And… Well, we were thinking about getting married."

"After twelve years, I should certainly hope so!"

"We wondered if you would want to be in the ceremony."

"I would be delighted."

The concert taxed one's credulity. It was said that the old Celtic bards had three musical gifts: They could make an audience laugh, weep, or sleep dreamlessly at will, such was the power of their music. Juliana was almost that good. She played moods, memories, concert pieces, orchestral segments that were feats of pure skill, and songs that seemed dragged out of the

listener instead of the harp. She played and played, and a hall full of musicians, students, artists, academics, fans, strangers, stragglers, and I sat in frozen wonder, our hearts scoured and our minds in awe at what her fingers drew from those shimmering chords.

When it was over I moved through the clamoring sea of admirers and stood beside the stage as the waves swept about her, saying the things that people always say when trying to express admiration of the inconceivable. Juliana stood flushed, as thin and tall as the day we had met, thanking them all with a quiet, blushing, angelic grace. One boy of ten or so was ushered forward between his parents and stood with fire in his eyes as they offered up their praise.

"My daddy says you must have sold your soul to play like that," he piped out between the "thank-yous."

"Now, wait…" His father laughed, a hand on the boys arm.

"That's not true, is it? It's just lots of hard work and practice, right?"

His parents chuckled nervously. Juliana smiled.

"I practice all the time," she assured the young, earnest eyes. "Hours. Every day."

The boy nodded as he was led away, but I witnessed how the harpist shivered once his back was turned. The flush of exhilaration had drained from her. The crowds flowed on unheeding.

Chapter Fourteen

There was tension over the dinner table of Hammersmith and Spring that night. Sam looked silent questions at the both of us through the meal, while the conversation danced and wandered, avoiding things not said in threes. I retired to leave them alone after the pudding, but the walls were thin, and when I lay down to rest in the dark spare room, their words crept through the woodwork.

"But what if he's right?"

"This is what you've wanted your whole life, Ju."

"But what has it cost us?"

"What about it?"

"When he asked that it was as if all the things I haven't thought of in ten years leapt back. I've been so busy playing I never thought about the price! Sam… I sold that man my soul! Do you have any idea what that means?"

"No more than you do, when you stop to think about it."

"What's going to happen to me?"

"Ju. That man's been the best friend either of us has ever had. Did you know he talked the Chair of the Admissions board into letting me enter that seven-year program when I was still a junior? I didn't find out till after I'd graduated! He's helped us with everything we've ever asked, been there when our own families were not around."

"And I owe him my soul."

"So what if you do? You thought about all that before you left college and decided it was worth the sacrifice."

"Well, now I'm thinking about it again. I don't want to go to Hell, Sam, or just stop when I die, or go wherever Druids believe soulless people go. How can we even be talking about belief? If he buys the things he must know what happens to them!"

"You're getting hysterical, Ju."

"No I'm not! I'm just… Scared."

"Would you rather give up your music?"

There was silence after that, or sounds too soft for me to hear through pine.

I turned slowly from the wall feeling every one of my years, and the bitter pit of all the things that men have ever called me. Judas, Efnisan, Heart-wrecker. What becomes of people who cannot forgive themselves?

The doorbell chimed.

Sam's soft tread moved to answer.

There was a crash, a scream, the sounds of struggle—and I was out the door and moving before I knew I had risen.

A man I had never seen was swearing in the hall. Sam sat upright but dazed against the sofa, blood coloring his sandy pale hair. Glass from the door was sprayed across the carpet. The intruder turned to face me. We both froze.

Juliana's father was skeleton thin, his flesh burned off by the flames within him. A long coat billowed round him like a dark, wild, robe, threadbare and whisper thin. He looked like a man to whom heat and cold were the same: both inconsequential to the climate inside. His arms and jaw writhed in a frenzy of continual motion, the left hand, claw-like, snaking out toward me. He waved an iron crucifix like a blunt, inverted sword, and his eyes blazed with something that I never hoped to see. I looked up at him.

"You," he whispered. His knees crouched like a fighter's.

A door slammed and locked behind me. Juliana's voice was frantic on the phone.

I studied his shoulders and the angle of his feet, feeling the room about me, and hoping there was space to move.

"I come only to reclaim my daughters soul, and God sees fit to set a devil against me, to test my will and courage. Well?" He roared, "Curse me, Druid! You cannot stand before the wrath of righteousness. Do your worst."

"I am your daughters friend, Mr. Raskin, and no more a devil than you are."

Blood from Sam's scalp dribbled from the crucifix.

"You lie. I've studied you. Orgies in the woods, preaching to young students, scheming and smiling and striving to undo two thousand years of Christ's work on earth. You seduce people away from the Trinity with your Triple Goddess and blind them with your nature worship. You tell them the world is God's word made flesh and the Good Books be damned—and manage to hide my daughters movements from me across eleven years! Yes, I know you, you thrice damned Druid. Curse away before I strike you down."

"We both teach what we believe, Russell. No human being knows the full truth of reality. We each live as we think best and pay the price for that choice. You know this. Do not make it any worse."

There was a siren and the squeal of tires in the drive. Record timing, that.

"Clever, Druid, trying to turn my mind against me. But you are wrong. I know." He shuddered. "I know the will of God as well as you do, who seek to pervert it. I know… And I know this too," he swung the cross in an all-encompassing arc. "The Lord has told me that no human hand can stop me in my mission. Not him on the floor, nor the foolish arm of the law, nor you neither, devil though you be. Curse away and meet your doom."

"Put down your weapon!" Came a voice from the door. Young, scared despite its training. "Throw down your weapon! -- *Base, I need backup!*"

"I will not curse you, Russell, and I will not let you touch your daughter. I have been her friend for eleven years, watched her through every storm, helped her realize a dream you would

not even see. I have been more of a father to her than you have, and not you nor God can take that from me."

"I will take her from you now," he growled, advancing. (*Drop your weapon, Mister!*) "The care of her soul is in my hands, and takes precedent over any dreams of the flesh. God condones all actions undertaken in the interest of the soul. I will have her from you before she ends up –just –like –her –mother!" He spat these last words with a roiling hiss and raised the cross on high.

I do not often read peoples minds. Sometimes I wish I never did at all.

"You bastard," I breathed. "What that you've done would your God condone?"

Russell Raskin halted mid stride. His eyes bulged. His throat gurgled something that would never be a word. His left side spasmed violently, and the force of it spun him twitching to the ground. The crucifix leapt from his hand, hiding its face in the carpet. Russell curled and splayed, and then lay still.

The policeman came forward, gun drawn.

"I would have shot him. Really, I would have."

Shut up, I willed him.

"What did you do to him?" He asked in awe.

"Nothing. Call an ambulance."

Chapter Fifteen

The beeps and muted bustle of the world's worst waiting room fought the smell of antiseptic for possession of the air, as I sat down to wait beside Juliana Spring. The slump of her tempered shoulders informed me she had no emotions left. Sam was sleeping down the hall, six stitches, no fracture, and an egg on his crown fit to hatch the Christmas turkey we had not had time to eat.

"Is he awake?" I offered, by way of conversation.

"What did you do to him?"

My eyes winced shut.

"I did nothing…"

Nothing.

"How is he?"

"Doctor Sato says his mind is clear, but his body is completely wrecked. She says it was either a stroke or a heart attack, or possibly both at once. She says it's hard to tell because we don't have any medical records…"

She trailed off, gazing through the tiles. Her hands tore at a Styrofoam cup.

"The police searched his house for paperwork, but they couldn't find anything useful. Just junk and religious tracts… No records… No will…"

"They found…" Her voice died. She tried again.

"They found…"

I put my arm around her, but she was done with tears.

"They found my mother's teeth in the basement."

"I know."

"You know? Why do you always know?"

I shook my head.

"What will you do?" Said I, when the silence became too painful.

"He's dying, isn't he?"

"Yes," I responded, knowing it was true.

"Then I suppose I'll have to forgive him."

"That is up to you."

She sniffed.

Nurses flitted past, pale as ghosts, busy as angels, each sacrificing their Christmas day to make the world a touch less painful. After a timeless tedium Juliana squeezed my hand.

"Thanks." Only a whisper, but sincere.

I smiled thinly.

"He wants to see you, you know," said Juliana suddenly.

"What?"

"That's what he said."

"Me?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"He didn't say. He just asked me to send in the damned Druid if he came around."

I contemplated the machines, the smells of death and healing.

"Then I will go and see him."

Chapter Sixteen

Russell Raskin lay like a skull on a pillow, his hands gnarled and nearly lifeless on the sheet that pinned him down. Wires trailed beneath the cloth. A tube bled oxygen into the air beneath his nose. His eyes followed me as I entered the room. There was a chair by the window. I sat.

"You knew." His voice was quiet.

I nodded.

"How?"

"I looked into your eyes and saw the truth that lived there."

"God told you," muttered Russell. "He told you, so that you would tell me, that I might see my life for what it was. The bastard. You are no better than I was. Why should He let you win?"

I said nothing.

"He did not lie, you know."

"I do not think the gods can lie. It seems a purely human art."

"He told me no human hand would stop me, too. I did not realize that meant He would."

"Perhaps he was giving you the chance to stop yourself."

"Shut up with the righteousness, will you?"

I studied the wires and tubes, the machines that stretched his life.

"Look at me- a dying preacher discussing God with a Druid. I must be mad."

"I once read that the important religious distinction was not between those who believed and those who did not, but between those who loved and those who did not. What you or I believe may not matter so long as we act with love."

"That does not leave me any better off," growled Russell.

I looked away.

"You loved them both, Russell. You could not have hated so powerfully else."

"Do you believe that?"

I shrugged carefully.

His eyes blazed.

"Answer me, damn you! Do you believe that? Or are you feeding me lies so I'll die content?"

"I was offering an interpretations of events that might bring you peace, should you choose to believe it. How could I know what you felt?"

"You knew what I did."

"That is not the same thing. Besides, is it not the role of priests to bring comfort to the dying?"

"Not this priest. I've never wanted comfort. Comfort keeps you from facing the truth."

"Facing the truth just got you killed."

"Bullshit. Hiding the truth got me killed. Owning up to it just let me die- that and your damned questions. And don't expect me to thank you for that either!"

"I don't. Believe me."

Raskin coughed, exhausted by the effort.

"Why did you do it, anyway?" He asked.

"For Juliana."

The preacher was silent.

"I heard her play, you know. At the concert. A friend of a friend told me about it. That's how I found you. She is good. If God loves music you may not have done such a bad thing."

"She has thrown her whole life into the harp," I responded. "I only hope she forgives me that."

"If not, it's nothing worse than what I've done."

"No? You only hid the truth. I let her believe a false one."

"That's not as bad as murder. Maybe I will see you in Hell after all."

The pale Christmas sunshine sidled slowly down the wall. Church bells caroled in the steeple outside.

"Why did you want to see me?" I asked.

The old man chuckled.

"Who else was I supposed to talk to? Juliana? My flock? Haven't you read your Nietzsche? All friends lie. Only your enemies will tell you the truth."

I smiled ruefully. There was nothing I could say to that.

"Speaking of which," said Russell sharply.

I stilled my features. Dying as he was, this man could still wound me.

"I've heard it said that Juliana sold her soul to play the way she does. Do you know anything about that?"

"There are different ways to sell ones' soul," I answered very carefully. "One can drive a supernatural bargain, one can destroy some thing or quality central to ones' identity, or one can commit ones' self so completely to a single pursuit that everything else must be neglected. Out of countless paths Juliana has chosen one- and never left it. She has never explored anything else, never tried to discover other worlds, other loves, other things she could be. She has brutally pruned her own possibilities, and thus accomplished something practically impossible. In that sense she has sold her soul. To me that is an admirable and terrifying choice."

Juliana's father watched me very quietly.

"There was nothing supernatural involved?"

"There was nothing supernatural involved."

Russell grunted. It could have meant anything.

"What a strange way to think," he muttered at last.

Minutes drifted by. Raskin's breaths were getting weaker.

"Is Sam alright?" He asked me suddenly.

"A few stitches. He will be fine."

"Good."

A certain tension went out of him.

"Last request time, isn't it?"

I bit my lip, nodded.

"Tell Juliana she can perform at my funeral." He grinned savagely. "Bet she always wanted to play me to death."

"I'll do that."

Russell Raskin glared up at me. His grey eyes burned, dimming.

"….Thrice damned Druid… Take care of my little girl for me."

"I will," I whispered, and he was gone.

Chapter Seventeen

Very few people can manage a funeral and a wedding in the same week with any sort of grace. Sam was one of those few. Watching him move amongst the wedding guests and the mourners from Russell's church, I realized what it was in him that my lovely harpist loved. Juliana Spring Raskin Hammersmith refused to have the wedding put off. She put on all the requisite roles and played at both events.

There was something new in her music now. In her triple guise as daughter, widow, and angel of death, she played at the funeral something I had never heard. There was grief in it, and longing, forgiveness, surcease and healing. She was burying both her parents that day, though none but we three knew it. She played what she played, and the gathered mourners wept, longed, suffered, and forgave, without ever understanding what it was for.

"What was that?" I asked her later.

"The music in my dreams. I just sat and listened and played what I felt. It is the first time that has happened."

"Maybe it was worth it," she added.

She was staring at nothing at all as she spoke. I knew not if she addressed myself, or the grave.

"Juliana," I began.

"No." She stopped me. "I am not the best in the world yet. Almost, but not yet. That might not be so important now, but this new thing is. This is a thing I need to explore."

She rose and left me where the wind played games with the snowflakes and the headstones, the memories and the souls.

At the wedding she played love, but that is an impoverished word to call what was in her music. She played the passion of the newly wed, the depth and humor that comes of knowing another life and mind through twelve long years. She played the tender care of a parent- and this from someone who had never had a child. And she played something else. A thing too powerful to name, that choked me with a private longing. It reached inside to drag out notions I had sworn I would never entertain, and left me shaken with its passage. Juliana's eyes caught mine as she touched the strings, and she smiled at me for the first time since the concert.

At last she released us and took Sam's hand in hers. The guests gaped, daring only to breath. The pastor stood slowly at the head of the chapel. He stretched forth tremulous arms and raised his face to the heavens.

"Amen!" He exclaimed.

And that was the wedding.

****

Chapter Eighteen

Now I grow weary of the passage of time, and this telling has nearly reached its end. Five years later Juliana was the best harpist in the world, without a doubt, by any standard you cared to name. There were those who said she was the best musician in the world, that she played on peoples' souls instead of strings.

The seasons' changeless change had swung through to Beltain again when the couple came to visit me. I led them down to the workshop where I had labored all winter.

"I have something for you," I let on as we approached.

Standing on the bench was a small traveling harp of darkest mahogany, completely unadorned, polished as glass. Its strings glowed like liquid sunshine in the clear spring light.

"Is that what I think it is?" Sam wondered aloud.

"Golden strings," I smiled. "The best harpists have always had them."

"You're trying to make a legend out of me, aren't you?" Said Juliana.

I laughed.

"If I am, I am too late. You are that already. I just wondered what gold harp strings might sound like, that is all, and you are the only one good enough to do them justice."

She gave me a quick hug.

"You are too kind."

"Hardly. But come outside. The Maypole is starting."

Chapter Twenty

The rest of the day was a time of celebration and life, that fluid, wonderful, time defying clarity that once seen remains forever living in a persons' heart. The feast was consumed, the pole danced and braided, the King and Queen of the May chosen, crowned and married. I sat on a sun soaked log to rest my knees after the ceremony, watching the wedding games. The King and Queen stood in a circle of revelers, their hands tied to full wine cups, holding a kiss between them. Those in the ring joked, teased, and shouted, gleefully doing everything they could short of actual contact to make the couple laugh and break it off.

Juliana collapsed lightly to my right, flowers in her hair and laughter in her eyes.

"All these years, all these Beltains," she began. "How is it that you never married?"

I looked at her in surprise. Her eyes teased mine.

"Who would have had me?"

"I might have."

"I am twice your age, dear."

"Not any more you're not."

"True. But you had Sam."

"True." She gazed at him fondly from across the green.

"We are thinking of having children, he and I. I am not quite too old yet." She laughed. "But what sort of mother would a soulless woman make?"

"Juliana Spring," sighed I, and took her hand in mine. "I never took your soul."

She stared.

"You what?"

"I never took it. Your soul has been yours all along."

"But you did! Our bargain- you spoke those words and I felt it leave!"

"It was all in your mind then. I do not really know if souls can be sold. Lost, saved, destroyed, nourished, abandoned, loved, certainly, but to the best of my knowledge your soul is with you always, love it or hate it, to do with as you will. What would I have done with an extra soul, anyhow?"

The harpist's jaw worked soundlessly.

"But if you couldn't buy my soul, why did you even want to meet me in the first place?"

"I wanted to see what it was like to want something that badly. I never have, you know. Most people never do. I could not imagine a desire so strong in a person that young. I had to meet you."

Laughter erupted throughout the glade. Someone had started people-fishing with doughnuts.

"You tricked us," she said at last.

"I did. Are you angry?"

"I don't know yet… If there was no bargain, then everything you've done—"

"I did nothing." I cut her off. "It was all you, Juliana."

"But why?"

"What would you have done all those years ago, if I had told you souls could not be sold, that only practice, passion, and infinite dedication could make you a better harpist? What if I had told you that even with guidance, time, and expert teachers there was no guarantee you would ever be as good as you wanted, or that dream music could never be properly reproduced? I had never even heard you play, remember?"

"I might have become a nurse," she reflected. "Why didn't you though?"

"Because you were serious. Because you were strong enough to make me wonder. Because the gods love it when we act bravely." Her deep, deep eyes searched mine.

"And because, watching you, I got just an inkling of how powerful that desire might be."

In an ideal world she would have kissed me then. But we were in this one, and the moment passed.

"I will name my firstborn after you."

I laughed.

"Even if it is a girl?"

"Even better! I could never have done it without you."

"Nonsense," said I, but it is hard to sound believably stern when your cheeks are flushing crimson.

Chapter Twenty-One

Juliana played her new harp for us that night, while the couples snuggled and the stars blazed down. She sat on our log in a borrowed cloak with her hair blowing long about her shoulders. The strings burned golden in the firelight as they sang, and a whole generation of listening fools began to believe in magic.

It was the story of her life we heard, made music, wordless and eloquent. Dream songs from her childhood, her mother vanished, father possessed, early despair in her years in college and the flush of young love in meeting Sam. Then came the power, the wonder, the mystery and horror of an unspeakable bargain, the surrender, confidence and strange purity it engendered, and at last the full splendor of the mature theme began. Two decades of concentration and skill in one ascending spiral, the struggle, journey, grief, love, discovery, mastery—and at the end, when I was sure there could be nothing left to feel, came joy.

The End.

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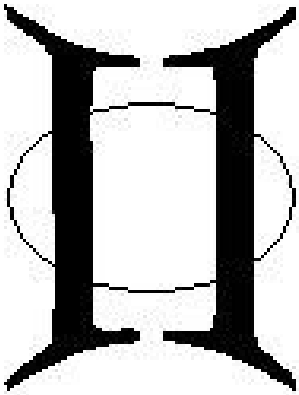

So Ends Volume Six of the Green Books.

Green Book Of Meditations

Volume Seven Seasonal Selections

Introduction 2003

The motivation for this Green Book was that Part 3 had the seasonal liturgies, Part 4 had the numerical calendar of the seasons, but the reflections on the seasons had no such collection. Perhaps no aspect of Druidism is more widespread than the observation of the passing seasons, and the lessons they bring. However, not everyone writes about them, so this Green Book is really only the thoughts of a small handful of members.

Most of these selections were culled from the various NRDNA magazines of Part 11 of ARDA (published as a separate volume) and put together into three main sections, each sub-arranged by seasonal holiday, and then further sub-arranged by chronological order. Many of these materials may very well be copy-right protected by the original authors.

Section One: Essays of the Season are mostly drawn from the introductory essays found at the front of the various magazines announcing the holiday and giving some notes of past customs associated with the holiday, often a reconstructionist style that draws primarily on Celtic or European sources. Many times a subject is addressed again and again, and developed over the years. Emmon Bodfish, the editor of Live Oak Grove's "A Druid Missal-Any" from 1982 to 1991, wrote many of these selections, as did his protégé, Stacey Weinberger, in the later run of that magazine from 2000 to 2003.

Section Two: The Heathen on the Heath was penned by Les Craig-Harger, a hermetic member of Live Oak Grove, who moved to Humboldt and lived in a rural stretch of land with her two children. She had been a previous Matriarch of the Bardic Order of Oberon in the NRDNA. A free-lance writer, she writes from a very personal angle with an immediate first-hand observation of the seasons.

Section Three: Non-liturgical Festive Activities was pulled from Part 3 of ARDA and reprinted with this collection. This series was mostly written by Alex Stuart for the recent incarnation of "A Druid Missal-Any," providing enjoyable activities outside of the ritual format that often so dominates the celebration of the holidays.

I hope that you will read through these selections when you feel those holidays approaching but don't feel a "connection" or firm style to begin the necessary preparations. Hopefully you'll find some inspiration, but take these selections as but a few ideas, yea, a few ideas among many possibilities.

Yours in the Mother,
Mike Scharding
Four Seasons Hotel Lobby (Waiting for a bus.)
Georgetown, Washington DC
April 7th, 2003 c.e.

Printing History
1st Edition 2003 c.e. (ARDA 2)

Drynemetum Press

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Section One: Essays of the Seasons

Samhain

Samhain Notes

The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1976
By Isaac Bonewits and Robert Larson

Samhain begins the season of *Geimredh* (gee-ru,) in Modern Irish *an Geimhreadh* (uN gee-ru); which is Winter, running from roughly the beginning of November till the end of January.

Samhain (Sô-un,) known in Modern Irish as *Lá·Samhna* (Laa Sôu-Nu,) in Welsh as *Nos Galen-gaeof* (that is, the night of the Winter Calends,) in Manx as *Laa Houney* (Hollantide Day,) *Sauin* or *Souney;* is, of course, the eve of "All Saint's Day," All Hallow's Evening or Halloween. Among other things, it is the beginning of the Winter Half of the Year (the seasons of *Geimredh* and *Earrach*) and is known as "the Day Between Years." The day before *Samhain* is the last day of the old year and the day after *Samhain* is the first day of the new year (though for clarity's sake, most Druids assign each *Samhain* to the year following it. Being a day "between years," it is considered a very magical night, when the dead walk among the living and the veils between past, present, and future may be lifted in prophecy and divination.

Samhain basically means "summer's end" and many important mythological events occurred on that day. It was on a *Samhain* that the Nemedians captured the terrible Tower of Glass built by the evil Fomorians; that the Tuatha De Danann later defeated the Fomors once and for all; that Pwyll won his wife Rhiannon from Gwawl; and that many other events of a dramatic or prophetic nature occurred (see *Later Chronicles,* Chapter 5, Verses 11-14.) Many of these events had to do with the temporary victory of the forces of the darkness over those of light, signaling the beginning of the cold and dark half of the year.

Samhain Essay: The Tuatha

A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1982
By Emmon Bodfish

Samhain, the day between the years. The Druid year starts with Samhain, in the autumn just as the Celtic day starts with sundown, proceeds through night, dawning into the day. The Classic writers of antiquity held that it was a Druid teaching that cold and dark and the difficult precede warmth and light and the beneficent.

In pre-Christian times, Samhain was the occasion of great gathering in Ireland and Gaul, and probably in Scotland and Britain, though there, no records survived. Druids Bards and Ovates (Ollafhs) and the political leaders from all parts of Ireland assembled at Tara. In Gaul similar gatherings were held, and received and sent emissaries to and from Scotland and England. Better accounts survive from Tara than from any of the other Celtic areas. The Tuatha from the four provinces of Ireland assembled at Tara Hall well before Samhain. There

after ritual purifications, which may have included the offering of sacrifices, part of the harvest, and leaping through the bonefires, the nobles and Druids retired indoors. They remained "under roof" all Samhain Day, the belief being that on this day the forces of Propriety and order were gathered inside, and the forces of Chaos were afoot outside. Inside the palace at Tara, took up their traditional stations around the High King: Those of Ulster, representing the warrior caste, to his North; Those of Munster, representing the prophetic/aesthetic pole to his right; Those of Connaught, representing the Druid, or clerical caste at his back; and facing his Lennster, representing the Tuatha, husbandman/producers. In this order the great counsel of the year was held.

Though called the Day of the Dead, Samhain was considered a good or lucky day. In contrast, Beltaine was considered a difficult, or tricky day as the day beginning the Season of Life. On Samhain, the two worlds of the living and of the Tuatha De Danann draw close and may merge, making this the time to contact the Other World, and ascertain the disposition of the Gods and ancestors on the plans for the coming year of the settling of old quarrels. Ancestors, in particular, could send fertility, or disease, to their descendents and their favor was sought for the ensuing winter. This tradition was especially strong in Alba (Scotland, approximately) where Samhain was the occasion to seek instructions from the ancestors and bring oneself into harmony with them. If the required funeral ceremonies had been performed, and the yearly offerings made, and all was right between the living and the dead, then there was no need to fear ghosts. But if all was not well between the living and their clan forbearers, if their will was flouted or the rites neglected, the dead could make their will known on this night when the line between the two worlds dissolved and spirits could come over and walk in ours.

To the Tuatha, husbandmen of the land, Samhain marked the absolute end of the harvest. It was forbidden to glean or gather any more wild fruit after Samhain night. This assured that all would be gathered in and stored before the storms began, and may also have prevented overpicking, especially of wild fruit, by declaring that anything which remained in the fields or woods after this date to belong to the wild birds.

Samhain Essay: Talking to Ancestors

A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1983
By Emmon Bodfish

Samhain, in the Celtic traditions, begins the new year. It is "the time between the Worlds," the time that the dead may manifest again in our world or send us messages from theirs. In Eire it was the feast of Dagda. In a tradition that may be older than the Indo-European, spirits of departed ancestors are said to be able to send either prosperity or disease, fertility of crops or plague. If you have fulfilled all your ritual and practical obligations to your ancestors, and have not committed any defamations against their names, you have nothing to fear from ghosts on Samhain Eve.

If not, there are various ways of getting back on good terms with the spirits of dead ancestors. One is to create an image, a mask, a statue, a name plaque, or a painting (on rock) of the ancestor. This gives the spirit a "body" or locus in our world to replace the one that has died. The implication seems to be that with this image-body she/he continues to live, to be remembered, and to be able to transact any unfinished business in this dimension which may be troubling her/him. G. Rachel Levy, the anthropologist, feels that this image making is very old, and may account for certain types of rock paintings or prehistoric peoples. She quotes an Eskimo artist, relative to his rock paintings: (This way) "we give them new bodies to replaces their bodies that we had to take away." (for burial.) This solidifying or fixing of a spirit into an image is probably pre-Indo-European, though elements of it are carried through in the Celtic culture. It was practiced until fifty years ago by some Siberian cultures* which some anthropologists feel are descendents of the pre-Indo-European peoples of North Europe/Asia. It is also very recent. It is still considered filial and decent, in some circles, to erect headstones and memorials over and for dead family members, though why is not now so clearly specified.

Another method of appeasing the ancestors is to name a child after the deceased, so that the ancestor's spirit can be reborn within the clan. This, also, is still in practice, and children are named after deceased or aging relatives to assure prosperity, or at least inclusion in the will.

In the Celtic epics, there are numerous Bardic passages imploring that the names of ancestors not be forgotten. In later times, appeals to Deities of the dead, or of the other world, seem to have replacing offerings to the dead themselves. But at the most flourishing times, at the high points of Druid power, all the Celtic cultures buried their dead with rich grave goods, ready for another life that would be a close reflection of this one. Social status would be preserved; chief would remain chiefs, warriors, warriors, etc. Valour would be rewarded in men, fidelity, skill and courage in both sexes.

In the Scottish tradition, a Western Isle, Tir nan Og, is the location of this paradise, and Manannan McLer comes with his white barge to ferry souls across "to the isle where they would be." Caesar, in the last century B.C., states that Druids of his acquaintance believed that souls do not suffer death, but after death pass from the (world) to the other." (ab aliis…transire ad alios.) And Lucan, in rhetorical address to the Druids, said

> "But you assure us, no ghosts seek the silent Kingdom of Erebus, no the pallid depths of Hades' realm, but with new body the spirit reigns in another world–if we understand your hymns, death's halfway through a long life."

Unfortunately the hymns have not come down to us.

To the Classic writers, descendents of Mediterranean cultures, death was a state of suspended animation, or minimal animation, where shades drifted and muttered aimlessly in a twilight world ruled by an unfeeling, motionless god, Pluto/Hades.** In the Druid afterlife, people and gods mingled in a sunny world similar to this one, but "outside of time." This was so different from the Greco-Roman concepts of death that it seemed to the Classic writers to require both emphasis and explanation.

They had, from their own Pythagoras, a doctrine of another kind of re-incarnation, and, in an attempt to explain the unknown in terms of the slightly more familiar, they asserted that the Druids had studied or borrowed from Pythagoras. This myth continued until the 18th Century, when it was reversed and asserted that Pythagoras had plagiarized from the Druids. There is no good evidence that Druidism ever heard of Pythagoras. It antedates him by at least a millennium, probably more. Its doctrine of re-incarnation in a material but timeless body in an Outer World, bears little resemblance to Pythagoras' idea, as recorded by Salmoxis, of the immortality of the soul based on the indestructibility of concept and number. By equating the Druid belief with Pythagoras' school, it could be integrated into the world of Classical thought and made

acceptable to the Roman mind, and at the same time enhance the reputation of the Greeks as "The Founders of Philosophy," a favorite Roman idea.

Sucellos, Esus, and in some of his aspects, Cerunnos, are often listed as Celtic gods of the afterlife or Underworld, but as much as my research has been able to determine, there is no one god of the dead, comparable to Classic Pluto or Hades. The Druid afterlife is more an Other World than an Under World, in which gods and people mingle in a timeless dimension. All the gods, and one's own merits and clan connections seem, in Ossian's poems, to determine one's place at the perpetual feast in the Isle of the Ever Young.

It was a later development, and among the Germans, not the Celts, that associated divine energy with the souls of the dead. It was here that the original root of our present word, "God," Ghav, Ghuto, arose and designated "the evoked" and was associated with the souls of the dead.*** Why the Christian missionaries used this word to translate the concept of their Deity, Jehovah/Yewah, is not known. Perhaps Dis Pater, also a heavenly father, and the other likely candidate, Taranis, were too clearly individualized, and specifically pagan presences. Ghav/Ghut was shadowy and vague. Perhaps they followed Paul's example when he described his God to the Greeks as that "god-they-knew-not" but to whom they had built, nonetheless, an altar on Mar's Hill. However that may be, by the laws of magical evocation, when you evoke "God," you are naming/calling an ancient deity of the dead. This could explain the dour atmosphere at many Protestant services. You might experiment with using "Deus" or "Dea" and see if the mood changes; or, if you want the deity of the Bible, why not evoke Him by name, Jehovah or Yehowah. Avoid embarrassing mistakes.

*Waldeman Jochelson's Expedition, 1900.

**"Being dead is a waste of time." c.f. your average classical culture.

***Alternative interpretation: Ghav/Ghuto, "the evoked" one, referred to a "divine energy" associated "with the souls of the dead." The trouble with the history of ideas is that historians all have a different idea of what happened in history.

Michaelmas

A Druid Missal-Any Samhain 1982
By Emmon Bodfish

The following ceremony was associated with this time of year, and enacted annually at least through the 1820s, though in Christian times it was incorporated into Michael-mass festivities. In the Northern Celtic areas, Michael takes over many of the characteristics of the Celtic deity, Manannan Mc Ller, and even of Llyr, the sea god, and ruler of the Land of the Dead, celebrated on this Day of the Dead, Samhain.

'Na Gellaidh

Thug mo leannan dhomh sgian bheag
A ghearradh am meangan goid,
A ghearrahd am bog 's an cruaidh,
Saoghal buan dh'an laimh a thug.

Gheall mo leannan dhomh-sa stiom
Gheall, agus braiste 's cir,
'S gheall mise coinneamh ris
Am bun a phris mu'n eireadh grian.

Gheall mo leannan dhomh-sa sgathan
Anns am faicinn m'aille fein,
Gheall, agus breid is fainne,
Agus clarsach bhinn nan teud.

Gheall e sid dhomh 's buaile bha,
Agus falaire nan steud,
Agus birlinn bheannach bhan,
Readhadh slan thar chuan nam beud.

The Promises

My lover gave to me a knife
That would cut the sapling withe,
That would cut the soft and hard,
Long live the hand that gave.

My lover promised me a snood,
Ay, and a brooch and comb,
And I promised, by the wood,
To meet him at rise of sun.

My lover promised me a mirror
That my beauty I might see,
Yes, and a coif and ring,
And a dulcet harp of chords.

He vowed me those and a fold of kine,
And a palfrey of the steeds,
And a barge, pinnacled white,
That would safely cross the perilous seas.

The song and the dance, the mirth and the merriment, are continued all night, many curious scenes being acted, and many curious dances performed, some of them in character. These scenes and dances are indicative of far-away times, perhaps of far-away climes. They are evidently symbolic. One dance is called "Cailleach an Dudain," carlin of the mill-dust. This is a curious character-dance. The writer got it performed for him several times.

It is danced by a man and a woman. The man has a rod in his right hand, variously called "slachdan druidheachd," druidic wand, "slachdan geasachd," magic wand. The man and the woman gesticulate and attitudinize before one another, dancing round and round, in and out, crossing and recrossing, changing and exchanging places. The man flourishes the wand over his own head and over the head of the woman, whom he touches with the wand, and who falls down, as if dead, at his feet. He bemoans his dead "carlin," dancing and gesticulating round her body. He then lifts up her left hand, and looking into the palm, breathes upon it, and touches it with the wand. Immediately the limp hand becomes alive and moves from side to side and up and down. The man rejoices, and dances round the figure on the floor. And having done the same to the right hand, and to the left hand right foot in succession, they are also become alive and move. But although the limbs are living, the body is still inert. The man kneels over the woman and breathes into her mouth and touches her heart with the wand. The woman comes to life and springs up, confronting the man. Then the two dance vigorously and joyously as in the first part. The tune varies with the varying phases of the dance. It is played by a piper or a fiddler, so sung as a 'port-a'bial,' mouth tune, by a looker-on, or by the performers themselves. The air is quaint and irregular, and the words are curious and archaic.

Samhain Essay: The End of Summer

A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1984
By Emmon Bodfish

Samhain, Celtic New Year, the day between the Worlds. The Druid year starts with Samhain, in the fall of the year, just as the Druid reckoning of days begins each day at night fall. This marks the end of the harvest season. Any fruit not gathered in by Samhain Eve must be left in the fields to feed the birds and wild animals, or the Sidhe, as one would have it. According to Françoise Le Roux, whose article, "Studies on the Celtic Feast Days" has been translated out of the French by one of our subscribers, Jeanne Elizabeth, Samhain may be derived from Sam Fuin, Weakening or End of Summer. Other competing derivations from Sam Rad or Samhna are by no means disproven. Samh-rad, summer or Samhrach, quiet.

Like New Year's Celebrations everywhere, Samhain festivities fall into two sequential phases; one that signifies a return to Chaos, e.g. disposal of old goods, expelling of evil, reversal of usual habits of behavior, parties, suspension of taboos, and the return of the dead, all on Samhain night; and a second which signifies re-birth of the Cosmos and creation anew, e.g. lighting of new fires, beginning of a new season, inauguration of new ceremonies, reaffirmation of the existing order and installation of new leaders. This will be enacted at the Dawn Service Samhain morning, in the Reformed Druid tradition. The newly elected Arch Druid, Preceptor, and Server enact the first service of the new year; the Third Order Druids change their ceremonial ribbons to new, white ones, and winter begins.

Welsh Folk Customs for Pagans at Nos Galan Gaeaf (Eve of Samhain)

A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 1984
By Tom Cross

1. Before the Eve of Samhain, gather pieces of bread, cakes or pancakes. This is to be called in Welsh *hen solod* or *hel bwyd cennad y meirw*, or collecting food for the dead and the food is soul cakes. This food is to be given to those who have passed on.

In Celtic folk belief, Samhain or Calan Gaeaf is the time when the dead are close to this world and it was believed that on the eve of Samhain, when the Otherworld was closer, the dead came back to earth. This is the time when we can look back at those who have died and reflect on the ones that we miss and remember them and honour them. One of the ways we can do this, is by the archaic rite of feeding the dead which was practiced by the ancient Indo-European ancestors and still practiced in other cultures today.

2. At the Samhain bonfire, or *coelcerth*, as it is called in Welsh, which is lit at night on the eve of Samhain, the soul cakes which have been gathered may at this time be eaten by those celebrating and a portion of each piece is to be thrown into the fire as an offering not only to the deities but also for the dead.

3. When the food has been placed in the fire, a eulogy for the dead may be recited and other charms or prayers uttered in commemoration of those who have died. Also, the gods and the spirits of the dead may be asked for help in the coming season or for the year. As an example thanks may be given to one's parents or relatives who have died. They will be listening!

4. The fire should then be circumambulated three times each time ending on the west side. Some ecstatic Celtic music could be played. This should end this ceremony and each person should be ready to go home. Staying behind could be for those looking for the dead, or as in Welsh folk belief, the tailless black sow or Ladi Wen (white Lady) who haunts the eve of Samhain. It is speculated that the Ladi Wen represents the old year.

A rhyme from Caernarvaonshire for Nos Galan Gaeaf:

Gwen y gwnei a dy holl deulu,
Hyn a gei di genni leni.

(Pronounced: Gwen uh gwnaye ah duh hollh dye-lee
Huhn ah gaye dee ggennee lenee)

Mayest thou bless thy whole family,
This is what I give thee this year.

Samhain Essay: Samhain Customs

A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1985
By Emmon Bodfish

Samhain, the break between the years, is one of the four major High Days of the Druid calendar. Throughout the Celtic lands, Samhain was the Great Gathering. Wars ceased, and representative Druids, Bards, Ovates, Kings, and Equites met at sacred sites, on the Plain of Murtheme or with Conobar at Emain Macha in Ireland, or at Carnac in France. Similar convocations almost certainly met in Britain and Scotland, and perhaps in the Shetlands and the Orkneys as well.

The word Samhain may be derived, according to Francois LeRoux, from "sam fuim" meaning "weakening or end of summer," though competing derivations from "sam rad" and "La samhna," "rest" and "reunion" must also be considered. The LeRoux derivation concurs with the traditional date near the first of November, reflecting the Celtic division of the year into two long seasons, Summer and Winter, analogized to day and night. And as the Celtic calendar reckoned the night before the day, with each date beginning at sunset, the new-year began with Samhain, or sundown Samhain eve. It marked the end of the harvest. Anything still ungathered in the fields was left to the wild birds and the Pucas, Wood Sprites.

The rites and rituals have been lost, and we must piece together fragments from oral traditions, from 10th, 11th, and 12th century manuscripts of Irish law and commentaries, old customs and descriptions found in the Cuchulain and Find(h) epics. We gave a rendering of one such description of a Samhain ceremony from the old Irish in last Samhain's Missal-Any.

One of our subscribers, Jeanne Elizabeth, has translated some of LeRoux's work on the social and historical significance of the holiday, from her articles in the French journal "Ogam." As far as I can find, these essays have not been available in English.

Samhain, LeRoux emphasizes, was first of all a universal observance, required, on pain of exile, of every member of the community. It was called the holiday of obligation.

"Samhain is first of all a holiday of obligation, an approximate expression when it is applied to an ancient holiday, but practical, in order to express the restrained tone and universality. Such a holiday, was celebrated with dignity: An assembly was held by the Ulates each year, that is to say, three days before Samhain and three days after, and the High Day of Samhain itself. It was the time when the Ulates were in the plain of Murtheme, and they held the assembly of Samhain each year. There was nothing in the worlds that was not done by them at this time to enhance the games, gatherings, reunions, pomp and magnificence, with costly goods and banquets, and it is from there that came the (custom of) the three days of Samhain in all Ireland.

> 'Conchobar himself served them at the holiday of Samhain, because of the reunion of a great crowd. It was necessary to nourish the great multitude, as all those of the Ulates who did not come to Emain on the night of Samhain and the three days after Samhain, lost their reason, and their sepulchral mounds were prepared, each one's tomb and his headstone set the following morning. There were great provisions at Conchobar's the three days before and three days after Samhain that marked the feast at his palace.'

So runs the stanza from the Birth of Conchobar. At these gatherings, kings were chosen or reaffirmed. Debts and quarrels were settled and laws for the coming year enacted. It was a sacred and magical time, and the corridor to the Other World, to the Ancestors and the Gods, was open, and communications, and even goods and people, or at least their souls, could pass between our world and the Other. The Sidhe Mounds were said to open, and horses or children who had been lost, spirited off by the Sidhe, or other denizens of the Other World, could return or be brought back. But likewise the Deities and ancestors could exact reprisal for offenses against them, or demand changes and send signs confirming or denying victory or prosperity. Kings who had broken their "Guise," ritual taboos, or warriors who had made unjust war, were in particular danger of being struck dead or carried off at this time.

A typical Samhain tale is found in the Echtra Nerai epic:

> On the eve of Samhain Ailill and Medhbh, king and queen of Connacht, offer the prize of his choice to whomsoever succeeds in putting a withe around the foot of either of two captives who had been hanged the previous day. Nera alone accepts the challenge. He goes to the gallows but he only succeeds in fixing the withe after the corpse has instructed him. The corpse then complains of thirst and Nera carries him on his back to a dwelling in which he finds water. Having replaced him on the gallows, he returns to the royal court of Cruachain only to find it in flames and the severed heads of its people near by. As the attacking warriors move off, Nera follows them into the Cave of Cruachain, a famous gateway to the otherworld. Once inside the *sídh* he is discovered but is permitted to remain. He takes a wife from among the women of the sídh and from her he learns that his vision of the destruction of the court of Cruachain was but a premonition: it will come true next Samhain, however, unless the *sídhe* is ravaged before then. He sets out to bring warning to his own people, carrying with him fruits of summer–wild garlic and primrose and golden fern–to prove whence he had come, and he finds his friends still seated around the cauldron as he had left them, though much had befallen him in the meantime. When Samhain returns, the Connacht warriors invade and plunder the *sídh* and carry off the three great treasures of Ireland. But Nera remains behind with his family in the *sídh* and there he will stay until Doomsday.

Nera remains behind as exchange for the treasures, or as reprisal for the plundering. This illuminates one side and meaning of Celtic sacrifice, and may also echo the more ancient ideas of the death of divine victims, priests married to Goddesses, or who assumed a God's identity. The Nerthus traditions of Germanic society are a close parallel. The priest who tended Nerthus' wagon during its annual summer journey through the countryside was sent to join Her at the end of the ritual pilgrimage. The bodies of some of these male attendants, found with Her wagons in Danish bogs show, according to Prof. P.V. Glob, slight muscular development and hands that had never done rough work. These were not slaves. Neither were

they prisoners of war, i.e. warriors, nor criminals, the two most common groups used for sacrificial purposes.

Nera could be a memory of a cultural parallel. He (1.) accepts a magical or magic-laden challenge, more the stuff of a Druid, 1st function/caste, than a warrior; (2.) he sees a vision and prophesizes; (3.) he is married to a supernal being; (4.) he leaves the mortal world, forever, to join her and serve as recompense for the treasures gained by mortals, his kinsmen.

In modern N.R.D.N.A. celebrations of the holiday, vigils are in order, and vision-quests prayers for guidance in major life-changes are in order. It is a time to tie up loose ends and settle debts, to, as Jim Duran said, "get straight with your ancestors," deceased relatives and departed friends. If you are keeping an all night vigil, leaving out a plate of food or a remembrance for the spirits or departed friends is one way.

Samhain Essay: The Other World

A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1986
By Emmon Bodfish

Samhain, Celtic New Years, the Day-between the Worlds…The Druidic year stars on Samhain, in the fall of the year, just as the Druidic day begins with the going down of the Sun. Samhain marks the end of the harvest which began at Lughnasadh. All fruit not gathered in by Samhain Eve must be left in the fields to feed the birds, the wild animals, and the Sidhi. The Pukas, mischievous spirits, will come for it, to steal its nourishing essence and leave the husk, or to despoil it, if it is not to their liking. Their mythic descendents swarm out in the form of myriad "Trick-or-Treaters."

Like New Years' celebration all over the world, Samhain festivities fall into two sequential phases: one that signifies the return to Chaos, and involves the disposal of old goods, potlatches, parties, suspension of taboos, return of the dead, and the mixing of the two Worlds, in Past and Future; and a second whose theme is the rebirth of Order and Cosmos, of creating anew, of preparations, and of the rites of Samhain Morning. (As we are not an official, organized Grove, here in Orinda, but a gathering of Solitary Third Order Druids, First Orders, and friends, the election that would ordinarily be held for officers in an R.D.N.A. Grove will not need to be held. Isn't it a relief!?)

The beliefs involving the return of the dead on Samhain Night are based on the Pan-European traditions of Samhain as the time when the Other World is closest to this one, and when, therefore, doors, passages, may open between the two. In Celtic myths these gateways were usually located at the Sidhi Mounds, the megalithic tombs of the Celts' Pre-Indo-European predecessors. But ways were also said to exist through sacred lakes and springs, and through caves in the crags. These doorways admitted passage in both directions. On special days, mortal heroes or heroines crossed to the Other World on quests, adventures or to obtain prophetic knowledge. Throughout Eurasia, the dead, who exist beyond time, are believed to know the future as well as everything that has happened in the past. Dead ancestors could help a favored descendent with this knowledge, or send health and prosperity, but first the petitioner must be in perfect estate, having broken no Geas, nor taboo, nor have incurred the censor of any Deity or Sidhi. In addition, the seeker must be in the good graces of the ancestor whose help is needed. Health or disease were from the ancestors in the Celtic Cosmos; to live well one had to be on good terms with the dead and with one's past. The past becomes present again on Samhain, between the years. All oblations and funeral rites due the ancestors must have been offered, and all debts of this World paid, if the traveler is to step lightly between the Worlds. If all was not in perfect order, the quester might become trapped or the ancestors could send disease and misfortune when the passage opened. Or the wronged dead could pass into this World, and walk in the time between the years, seeking revenge.

The concept of going to the Other World for help from disease or to secure prophetic knowledge is found in several different European Samhain traditions, as well as among the Celts, is probably cognate with, descended from the Other World journeys of the Paleolithic Eurasian shamans. Similar, but more complex and complete traditions and epics have been preserved among the Siberian shamanic religions. There, going to the Other World(s) and returning to one's mortal body are usually the privilege of the clergy, i.e. initiate shamans. But in Europe, on Samhain, the Other World is very close, in Celtic verse, just a mist apart. On this night, there is no treacherous journey through intermediate kingdoms or being states. Tonight a mortal, albeit a hero or a heroine, could make the leap.

R.D.N.A members hold all night vigils, beginning with a bonfire at dusk when the first of the two Samhain services is held. All opened bottles of spirits must be finished by dawn, and there will be, then, no more fermented spirits in the Grove chalice until Beltaine. Plates of food and offerings should be set out, just beyond the firelight, for the souls of friends who have died in the past year. They may be invited to join the festivities.

At dawn the second Samhain service is held. All remaining liquor is sacrificed in the fire, and the Third Order Druids exchange their red ribbons and ornaments for the white of the Season of Sleep. There is pure water in the Chalice. The new year has begun.

In preparation, all debts should be paid, or arrangements for them brought into harmony. All rites due to the dead, and the past, should have been performed, and all obligations to the living brought current. Then enter the Time-Between-the-Worlds "without burden, without geas, without malice." Pleasant journeys!

Samhain Essay: Celtic Feast Days

A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1987
By Emmon Bodfish

Samhain, Celtic New Year, the day between the Worlds. The Druid year starts with Samhain in the fall of the year, just as the Druid reckoning of days begins each day at the fall of night. This high day marks the end of the harvest season. Any fruit not gathered in by Samhain Eve must be left in the fields to feed the birds and the wild animals, or the Sidhe, as one would have it. According to Françoise Le Roux, whose article, "Studies on the Celtic Feast Days" has been translated from the French by one of our subscribers, Jeanne Elizabeth, Samhain may he derived from Sam Fuin, meaning weakening or end of summer. Other competing derivations from Sam Rad or Samhra are by no means disproven, such as Samh-rad, summer, or Samhrach, quiet, still.

Like New Years, Samhain's celebrations everywhere, Samhain's festivities fall into two sequential phases: one that signifies a return to Chaos, to wit: the disposal of old goods, expelling of evil, reversal of usual habits of behavior, parties, suspension of taboos, and the return of the dead to this world of the living, all of which occur on Samhain night; and a second phase which signifies rebirth of the Cosmos and creation anew, to wit: the lighting of new fires, the beginning of a new season,

inauguration of new ceremonies, re-affirmation of the existing order, and installation of new leaders. This phase is enacted Samhain morning, and is symbolized in the RDNA tradition in the Samhain Dawn service, Service The newly elected Archdruid, in Preceptor, and Server enact the first service of the new year; All Third order Druids change their ceremonial ribbons to new white ones, and winter begins.

Samhain Essay: Gatherings

A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1988
By Emmon Bodfish

Samhain, a major High Day in the Druid calendar, is the day between the years. The Druid year starts with Samhain in the autumn just as the Celtic day begins at sundown, The Classic writers of antiquity held that it was a Druid teaching that cold and darkness and difficulty precede warmth and light and benefit.

In old Druid times, Samhain was the occasion of great gatherings in Ireland and Gaul, and probably in Scotland and Britain as well, though there no records of them survived.

The Druids, Bards, and Ovates (Ollafhs) and the political leaders from all parts of Ireland assembled at Tara. In Gaul similar gatherings were held, which sent and received emissaries to and from Scotland and Alba (England.) Representatives of the Tuatha, the husbandmen, from the four provinces of Ireland assembled at Tara Hall well before Samhain. There, after ritual purifications, such as running or leaping the bonefires, and the offering of sacrifices, the chieftains and Druids retired indoors, into the Great Hall,. They remained "under roof" all Samhain. Day, the belief being that on this day the forces of Propriety and Order were gathered indoors, and the forces of Chaos were afoot outside. Inside participants took up their traditional stations around the High King: Those of Ulster, representing the warrior caste, to his left; those of Munster, representing Bards, Prophets, and artists to his right; those of Connaught, representing the Druidic (clerical) caste at his back; and facing him, Lennster, representing the Tuatha, "the people," crafts and husbandmen. In this order the Great Counsel of the year was held.*

Reflections are held in R.D.N.A. Groves, and a night vigil is held mark the new year. In the morning, the Third Order Druids exchange their red ceremonial ribbons for white, and offer a second sacrifice to the Dawn.

*For the High King, it was "face the people day." No wonder the holiday became associated with dread. From Professor James Duran's seminar, "The Druids," Berkeley, 1985.

Samhain Essay: Paying Respects

A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1989
By Emmon Bodfish

Samhain, Celtic New Year, the Day Between the Worlds, the Druid year starts on Samhain, The sun is half way between Autumn Equinox and Winter Solstice. Samhain marks the end of the harvest season. All fruit and grain not gathered in by Samhain Eve must be left in the fields to feed the birds and wild animals, the flocks of Cernnunos, and its vegetable life essence, its "spirit" becomes the property of "The Little People," the Sidhi, and feeds them. (Is our word, 'fairy," derived from "fear an sidhi," meaning in proto-Gaelic "a person of the Sidhi," one of the little people?) Sidhi is pronounced in Gaelic as English "shee.," A Banshee, the spirit that gives prophecies and mourns for the dead, means literally "a woman of the Sidhi." Another folk tradition, probably from old Druid times, holds that "Pukas," mischievous spirits, will come out on Samhain night and steal the nourishing essence of any food crops left in the fields, or, if it is not to their liking, will despoil it. Their mythic descendents swarm out in the form of hordes of trick-or-treaters and disguised, costumed revelers.

This is the night when the Other World, the world of the dead, the future souls, and of the ancestors, comes the closest to our world and "dimension hopping" is the easiest. It is time to honor dead ancestors, and remember old friends. This was "the day of the dead" long before the Christian era. The dead were thought by the ancient Celts to have a wider and truer perspective on things than we mortals do, and to be able to advise their descendents and friends, They know all history, are aware of all forces and causes, and can intuit the future better than we. Pay your respects at graves or memorials, ask questions of departed friends, ancestors, or mentors. Leave out food offerings for them at your Samhain Eve celebrations and vigils. Get out old photographs. Review the past, this pre-Samhain week, and pay old debts, spiritual or emotional. Find lost belongings, make amends. Then celebrate.

Samhain Essay: Vigiling

A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1990
By Emmon Bodfish

Samhain, Druid New Year's, occurs when the Sun is half way between Fall Equinox and Winter Solstice. The Druid year begins in the autumn, just as the Druid day begins at twilight with the going down of the Sun and runs until the next evening. Julius Caesar called this the "custom of reckoning by nights rather than by days," or dawnings, and considered it a strange custom, one that set the Druids apart from any of the other peoples he encountered in the Ancient World. Samhain marks the end of the harvest season. Any food not gathered in by Samhain Eve was left in the fields to feed the birds and wild animals, or the Sidhe, the spirit-folk.

Like New Year's Celebrations everywhere, Samhain festivities fall into two sequential phases the first signifying a return to chaos, e.g. the disposal of old goods, expelling of evil, repayment of debts, completion of contracts, endings, then parties, dancing, fire-leaping and the suspension of taboos; on Samhain night, the first half of "the Day-Between-the-Worlds," this World and the Other are very close. Spirits of the dead may return, and messages can pass very easily from our world to the Other world and back. Spells are more easily broken and banished at this time Cernunnos rules, and His followers, the Suibhnes, forest hermits and prophecizers, the mystical branch of the Druid caste, try their skills at (shaman-like) journeying to the Other World or other parts of this one.

With Samhain dawn, the second phase of the New Year's celebration begins: the establishing of the new order. New, "clean" fire is kindled by friction, traditional summer trappings are exchanged for traditional winter trappings. The traditional Samhain ceremonies and rituals are enacted. Winter begins.

The R.D.NA. Samhain celebration reflects these two phases. It begins on Samhain Eve with a sunset service with the summer season chants and ritual. Then an all-night vigil is held and the altar fire is kept burning. Members bring food and jollity, and all already-opened bottles of liquor and wine belonging to members must be finished or sacrificed before dawn. No alcohol is found in the chalice or consumed in the Grove during the winter half of the year, the Season of Sleep.

At dawn the fire is built up again and a second Service performed at which all the Third Order Druids who are present exchange their red ribbons of the Season of Life for white ones of Sleep. There is pure water in the chalice, and the words and chants of the winter half of the year are spoken. Grove elections are held and the new order invested. Rest and peace are invoked and all the members go home to sleep.

Samhain Explanation

An interview with Andrea Davis
Alumni and Druid of Carleton College
October 20, 1996

Davis: [Samhain] is a time of death and of the cycle. It's the Druid new year but its the time of...if you follow the Wiccan tradition like the dying of the god. And so I always see it as a time of things are dying, and you have to acknowledge that things are dying, but in that death you also have to see hope. There are a number of songs about this time. Some of the songs we've sung are:

"Hoof and horn, hoof and horn, all that dies shall be reborn.
Vine and grain, vine and grain, all that falls shall rise again."

There's also:

"We are the flow and we are the ebb,
We are the weavers, we are the web.
We are the flow and we are the ebb,
We are the weavers, we are the web..."

That's just a connection to the cycle of life song whereas the other one is more specifically a Samhain song.

I also see it in the traditional sense that this is the time when the dead are walking the earth, that the worlds are closest, and that this is the time you say good-bye to the people who've died that year. You can feel free to say things, and ask questions and question my concepts as well, that's fine. Its just times like, from traditions like the Mexican tradition of El Dia de los Muertos. That really used to be a holiday about going to the graveyards and cleaning off the ancestors graves and making sure they had flowers and basically a big party that they held in the graveyard. I think American culture has moved away from. It's a natural process with death, we're all so afraid of it - we avoid it so much.

In a ritual- for myself I always use it as a time to say "Okay," and I take and light a candle in the evening and I'll sit there and I'll talk to the people who have died last year and tell them what I remember about them and things that I wanted to tell them but maybe didn't. I think it really helps with the letting go, with the accepting of the transition, and I think it also helps to have a designated date that this is when you do this.

I see it also as a time of shucking down, preparing for winter. I see the equinox more as a joyful harvest time and Samhain as "Yes it is starting to get cold, winter really is going to happen soon!" You have to prepare yourself and so you clean out all your baggage and lighten yourself up in preparing for winter where your really not going to have as much energy. You try to let go of things, letting go of your dead. If there were things about yourself that you were trying to let go it really helps to mention them in the ritual circle. I find that things, that New Years resolutions made in a ritual circle tend to be more likely to happen, they tend to have more strength or resolve if you tell this group of people in this context. It works better, and I don't know if that's psychological or if that's magical but it works.

There are many ways you can do this: you can burn things, that's always fun to do. You have a bonfire and tell people to bring things that represent what they want to get rid of or what they want to say good-bye to. If they have poems that they want to send the dead; you know in China the tradition was that any wishes or hopes that you wanted to send to the dead you wrote on a piece of paper, and then it was burned with them and that way traveled with them. Many people believe that by burning things you can get them to the spirits, so that's one way to release that energy. Another way that I learned when I was touring with the Environmental Theater Group Action Project Council of All Beings was: you take a stone, kind of at the beginning of the ritual, you do some other things at the beginning of the ritual, talking about traditions and fall, a little singing, a little chanting, and you let people just hold their rock for a while, or two rocks, or whatever, and think about what they have lost and what they are in mourning for. Towards the end everybody takes their rock and puts it in a cairn and tell what it's for, you either explain the story behind it or just say "Okay, this is for my grandmother who died this year." Some people did this a couple of years ago here and for this one guy it was just like we were doing this total group therapy session for him; all this stuff just came pouring out, he had so much stuff that he was putting into this rock. But then you take the rock and you put it away from you in the cairn, and in the end you just have kind of a grieving session or all kind of howl with a sad feeling, and then, having let go of all that you kind of have a joyful dance afterwards. You've let go of these things. You know that there's been a transition and that life is going on and you're very happy about that. That's a good one.

Interviewer: Some native American peoples use a similar sort of ritual, and add to it that whatever you put into the rock stays there. They believe that someone else picking up the rock can be affected by whatever grief or pain is put therein.

Davis: I believe that, which is why I clean the rocks afterwards. When you soak them in salt water that tends to draw out excess energies, then you can scatter the salt water. If it is grieving or sadness that kind of energy can fade away from the rock into wherever you put it if you leave it for a while. If it is something like murderous wrath now, you can't get that out of a rock! There's just no cleaning it. With most of the rocks I've used people were putting some sadness into it.

(Editor's note: In the time since beginning this the tape has vanished. There was more there, but Andrea's thoughts on Samhain proved influential ones during the 96-99 period. Be careful charging rocks like that. They sometimes get kind of active.)

Samhain Essay: Summer's End

A Druid Missal-Any Samhain 2000
By Stacey Weinberger

The season of Samhain is upon us. Summer has finally come to an end in Northern California with the warm days of an Indian summer swept away by some of the windiest nights in 50 years. Cold, rainy weather has returned, heavy sweaters are pulled out of storage, the heat is turned on. Time for hot tea, mulled cider and wine!

Samhain, summer's end. Traditionally whatever is left over from the harvest is left in the field for the birds, and mice, and other wildlife, and the Sidhe--the spirit folk, to glean for preparation of the coming winter. Samhain signals the beginning of the Celtic New Year. It is the end of the Summer half of the year and the beginning of the Winter half. This is the time when the veil between the worlds is the thinnest and when the ancestors, departed family and friends are said to return to visit the land of the living once again. The dead are honored and feasted on this night. Food is set out for them and they are remembered in word, song, and deed. Astronomical Samhain occurs when the Sun is half way between the Fall Equinox and the Winter Solstice and is on November 6 this year. As the "night precedes the day," Baccharis Grove will be celebrating Samhain on Sunday, Nov. 5 at sundown, which will be at 5:06 p.m.

After a nine year hiatus, the Missal-Any has found a new home. Though it had been in the back of our minds to resume publication without any particular start date, this Samhain seemed to be fitting. Our Grove celebrates its one year anniversary and is going strong. Interest in the RDNA and what we do seem to be on the rise. It is our sincere wish that we are able to continue the tradition started by our noble founder, presenting information, resources, history, and not a little bit of humor. So it is to him, Emmon Bodfish, that we dedicate this first issue.

Samhain Essay: A Thin Time

A Druid Missal-Any Samhain 2001
By Stacey Weinberger

Samhain, Samhuinn in Scots Gaelic, Sauin in Manx, from *sam fuinn* "Summer's end," marks the Celtic New Year, the day when the veil between the Worlds is the thinnest. Fires were lit on sacred hills this night. It was customary to extinguish the household fires, symbolizing the end of Summer, and then relight them from the ceremonial fire marking the beginning of the new season, Winter, the Season of Sleep. For the first time Baccharis Grove will be enacting this tradition during the service when the Third Order Druids exchange their ceremonial red ribbon for white. After the New Year's revelry and merrymaking rejoicing in the bountiful harvest of the previous year, we prepare ourselves for this long period of darkness as our thoughts turn to contemplation, reflection, and renewal.

A Few (?) Thoughts About Samhain and Sacrifice

A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2001
By Mortus, the Morose Druid

(Please refer to the NRDNA's 1979 article: http://www.geocities.com/druidarchives/pent3-2part2.html titled "Now, About Those Human Sacrifices…." about Celtic Gaul.)

We all know that there are only three certain things in life; Death, taxes and idiots. As much as we dislike them, often all three arrive together. But with this essay, please tolerate the first and third.

Well, it is Samhain, so it's time to bring up that perennial subject; death. (Fun activities at the end.) Yes, death, a subject rarely brought up willingly in our modern cult of youth and life. It is a huge far-reaching subject, on which I'd like to endlessly ramble for a six pages. It is a huge topic that we all are deeply concerned about. Life is, of course, not separate from death, it only looks that way because, "Death stares old men in the face, and lurks behind the back of youth." Perhaps one of the reasons we are so shocked in our society by sudden violent death, is that we persist in that infantile belief of immortality, bolstered by medical and social advances that virtually promise us a death by old age. Death always comes out of season to us, it seems. Yet, throughout history, death was a daily possibility and old age a rare achievement; therefore worthy of respect. (Possibly, a reason why current seniors are not respected is that there are too many of them?) Talk to an insurance salesmen if you really want the morbid statistics of modern dangers. Our fear of death, combined with our materialistic fear of economic loss has made the whole concept of "sacrifice" particularly unpleasant to many today.

The very word "Sacrifice" tends to ring warning alarms to pagans, who must constantly prepare arguments and defenses against ill-informed persecution; "Oh, we only use vegetables or Sacagawea Dollars," or such. But while this word is bandied about in this preparation of America for a "new" war, let's pause to reflect on it's meanings. Here's a popular view of sacrifice from the O.E.D. (abridged edition);

> "sacrifice: n. 1.a. The act of offering something to a deity in propitiation or homage, especially the ritual slaughter of an animal or a person. b. A victim offered in this way. 2.a. Forfeiture of something highly valued for the sake of one considered to have a greater value or claim. b. Something so forfeited. 3.a. Relinquishment of something at less than its presumed value. b. Something so relinquished. c. A loss so sustained. 4. Baseball A sacrifice hit or bunt. [Middle English, form Old French, from Latin sacrificium: sacer, sacred; see SACRED + facere, to make.]

To "sacrifice" is to "make sacred," which means:

> "sacred: adj. 1. Dedicated to or set apart for the worship of a deity. 2. Worthy of religious veneration. 3. Made or declared holy: sacred bread and wine. 4. Dedicated or devoted exclusively to a single use, purpose, or person: sacred to the memory

> of her sister; a private office sacred to the President. 5. Worthy of respect; venerable. 6. Of or relating to religious objects, rites, or practices.

Many cultures make daily offerings, to "respect," "feed," or "bribe" the spirits by setting aside something they want to "pay back" the gods for the kindness of giving it to the devotee in the first place. Taxes operate on a similar level, by our repaying society for the conditions that gave us a good business environment. The ancient Celts, to take but one collection of cultures, would sometimes bury sacrifices of food, animals, dislikable neighbours, in special pits; perhaps as a fertility-death cyclical bargaining (I give you one skinny deer in the fall, you give me six months' interest…say, three fat deer in the spring?) The Celts were also quite fond of throwing treasures and leaden body-shaped-parts into hot springs, pools, rivers, wells, fountains, oceans or anything wet. The Romans drained them and took the loot; initiating perhaps the first recycling campaign? Hopefully, the gods will further bless us and the government will further improve our economic security and quality of life; a cycle of thanking. Uh-huh, that's the theory. And what is the greatest of material losses, but the death of our physical body? What do we get in return?

As a falling tree produces an arboreal opening for a new saplings to grow towards the sun; so does death provide new space for youth to grow. What we call ourselves now, is not the same self we will become in five minutes. You can't step in the same river twice. Even physically, parts of us come and go, with every breath and excretion. I was told that our complete skeleton is reformed on a cellular and molecular level within every seven years, and few cells in your body were atomically or biologically present 10 years ago. Life is a process not a stationary condition. (Decomposition and reclamation are processes too.) We merely do not notice the death that is around us, when the forces of growth are more apparent or ascendant. Yet we fear the loss of something we've lost many times before. We want quid pro quo; "if I die and give up this body, I WANT eternal life, or…I'll be really miffed about it!" The truth of the matter is that we probably didn't choose to be in this world and we likely won't be able to choose when and how we'll go. They also say, you can get by in this world with only half of what you're born with, if used rightly. That's all a hard pill to swallow and many religions and industries are built upon this grievous issue. I guess, it's what you do in between that makes all the difference, and be glad that we are such a potentially long-lived species among animals.

Some of us have gone beyond a greedy desire for maximum duration of life to assist others (but not me, yet.) We all revere our parents, teachers and heroes for the hardships and injuries they have sustained on our behalf. Why do good people suffer? That's a $60 billion dollar question. I'm not going to go into a good and evil debate, because I'm not convinced they actually exist beyond the level of concepts. Some say that death and suffering inspire us to use our time wisely, and they are inherent to the biological reality of life on Earth. Around Sept 25th, the Rev. Jesse Jackson said the 9-11 disaster has had some positive impact;

> "Suffering breeds character, and character breeds faith, and in the end faith will prevail. This suffering has allowed, in the darkest hour, the light to shine most clearly."

Some of the reasons for tragic death are probably poor preparation, unforeseen consequences, and just plain bad luck. Such comfort takes a longtime, if ever, to reassure the victims. Starvation and wasting away are not inherently noble in themselves. Mother Theresa once said, "I pray much better when well-fed and dressed comfortably." Another troubling issue, is that the people most directly responsible for the tragedy died in hopes of receiving divine reward for what is mostly a political statement in a "David and Goliath" act, where we were the loser. While suicide for reasons of depression or cowardice are often not esteemed, but doing fool-hardy acts for a cause or to save a group are oft considered heroic; even if the same result is dead people. I guess for many moderns, it's not a question of "if" they die, but how they live and die. I believe, however, that you shouldn't make that choice to die for others without their permission. All too often, violent acts are result of cheating and are used in place of long-term remedies, ostensibly due to time constraints; thereby dampening rather than solving a problem.

Now, as you all know in the Druid Chronicles "The Early Chronicles," it was determined in April 1963, that the RDNA would not choose animal or human sacrifices (lawyers and politicians were included in 1965,) irregardless of their purported effectiveness. Most, if not all, Druid, Wiccan and Neo-Pagan organizations since then have followed a similar tradition to ours. There is, of course, the agonizing issue of whether fungi are to be treated as plants or animals, as they have characteristics of both! There are strangely no records on how to choose a sacrifice, but there is some guidance on how to do think about a sacrifice:

> "For one man, the sacrifice of life is the offering up of himself to a god or gods. To another, it is an offering up of his mind to a search for truth."–Book of Faith, v.9

> "If one but says "Dalon ap Landu" with the knowledge of the power of it, truly the whole Universe will be forever consecrated."–Thomas the Fool, 1970

Many peoples believe, that spirits with feelings inhabit all objects and creatures, not just "Homo Sapiens Sacrificius." I, personally, try to take only willing sacrifices by divining the feelings of the plants or objects, which might take a long time. And as always, thanks and apologies before and after are to be recommended. I'm moving towards vegetarianism, but still occasionally eat reptiles, fish and bugs. I try to reduce the frequency of consumption and have rarely done the butchering (cowardice on my part, not unlike many Hindus) but I try to be respectful. After all, according to "Babe" they say, "What you eat, walks and talks tomorrow" and "You are what you eat, from your head down to your feet." What goes in, will come out. My wife says that means I'll become a vegetable as I grow older.

In my experience, a sacrifice is rejected when there is a hastily chosen unwilling plant, a poorly directed purpose, misguided intentions of participants, or the gods are in a plain weird mood; and killing for no purpose is not commendable. From my observation, the most common sacrifices in the RDNA have been; leaves, branches, berries, tufts of grass, acorns (plantable afterwards,) flowers, home-grown vegetables, ect. The divination of the winds will decide whether the sacrifice is acceptable, and we must patiently await and abide by their decision, not ours. I sometimes cheat though, by only holding services on windy days in areas with many birds…(By the way, bringing hand-held fans is strictly prohibited! An area, largely unexplored, is how to have an RDNA service or activity without intentionally harming anything, (if such is

possible, counting the squashed grass under our dancing feet, airborne microbes, ect. See Jainism.) Would it be too much to bring the ceremony to the uncut offering, which would then live a life of service?

It would be well for the squeamish Neo-Pagans to remember that animals are still routinely raised and killed for religious feasts throughout the world. Examples could include Thanksgiving Turkeys, Christmas Goose/Ham, Easter Lambs, July 4th BBQ, Sajigor goat sacrifice in Kalasha India, Kosher meat preparation, the ever-popular Uidhyah goat sacrifice for Eid holiday in Islam, the reverent buffalo slaughters among Native American plains tribes to teach their children, pig feasts in Borneo, Santeria rites, etc. Christianity prizes the voluntary human sacrifices of its founder and martyrs. Historically, the pre-diasporic Judaic kingdoms had their own fair share of temple sacrifices (and possibly may have again if a few hard-core Orthodox Jews can ever remove the "Dome of the Rock" mosque from the site of the Solomon's Temple.) For those tribal hunters who are still in an ever-present-holy-moment-union with the Earth, any act of hunting is a religiously imbued activity. Ancient tribes are especially afraid that angering an animal's spirit, would reduce the hunt next year. All this goes on, yet journalists would be delighted to uncover a report on a dog killed by some pathetic Satanists. And yet in America, home of the top animal protein consumers, husbandry and abattoirs are conveniently efficient and simply barbaric; if not unhealthily operated as a whole, tastefully out of sight. No one prays during their deaths.

But why do people kill things in a religious service, if most religions are life-affirming, in theory at least? A possible theoretical liturgical reason, offered by the venerable Isaac Bonewits (2nd Epistle, Chapter 7,) is that a living (plant, fungal, bacterial or animal) creature allegedly releases energy on its death, (and some while it's alive, too,) which might amplify the resonance of a magic raising activity. (I wonder if a flashlight, a plutonium cell, dancing, sex, or campfire could substitute the necessary energy in place of living sacrifices?) Perhaps it is so.

I also disagree with the above definition's hint that only "victims" are sacrificed. While all religions have offered material sacrifice in some format, most ancient cultures freely accepted the necessity or advantage of sacrifice of living creatures, some even considering it such an honor as to volunteer themselves. In some cases, the volunteer would be instructed with lengthy messages to convey to the deities involved, kind of like a court witnesses being briefed by lawyers to present their villages case. However, I suspect that the vast bulk were less than thrilled with their candidacy, often being the criminals, disliked trouble-makers, or prisoners of war of a society. Civilization helped make it possible, as self-sustaining small villages needed as many people alive as possible, due the death rate; but cities often have less-than-necessary inhabitants to be mistreated or sent to war.

With rare exceptions, death is irreversible and final; so unsanctioned killings have been punished more severely than non-fatal injuries by legal codes of most states. It's not my purpose to wade deeply into the debate the pros and cons of capital punishment (see China, Florida, and Texas,) but it's interesting that priests are still an integral part of the execution process, although few would label these priests as "blood thirsty;" rather, they're merely there to comfort the victim and restrain the vengeful passions of bystanders, and perhaps to mitigate the executioners' guilt for breaking one of their 10 commandments. To their credit, that great Fertility Cult, (known as the Catholic Church) now tries to sacralize life; and prevent such state-sponsored murders, albeit sometimes to excess. The Druids, themselves, were often also present at matters of life and death, like councils of war, exiling (which equaled death) or executions. Depending on the individual, perhaps they enjoyed or dislike the responsibility involved. One could also make the case that vendettas and war are a "viral" form of human sacrifice that is out of control and self-feeding (like an inferno,) soon bereft of whatever religious impulses that may have motivated or restrained the initiators. Once life is stripped of its holy aspect, fearful things become conceivable.

I can think of three attitudes towards death. 1. If you feel that death is an end to all existence, it is a dirty distasteful thing to be feared and avoided at all costs and deeply mourned. 2. If you feel that death is a one way journey to a (hopefully) pleasant place, then death should be an acceptable; if not desired. Of course, "A man's dying is more the survivors' affair than his own," so you shouldn't recklessly hasten your death, widows really hate being told "He's in a happier place." 3. If you feel that death is a two-way or cyclical journey, then the above applies, plus any apprehension or anticipation of having to start all over again from scratch; either in re-birth or re-incarnation. Perhaps it is so.

The ancient Celts and Europeans, on first glance do not seem inordinately afraid of death; in fact, many literary heroes hardly even notice their death until long after the fact. After all, "A brave man dies but once–a coward many times." In the case of the Celts, there are references to ancient Celts loaning money and expecting repayment in the next life. People would keep the heads of enemies or friends, occasionally talking and giving them a feast. But, how the average Joe McBlow felt is less certain. Perhaps, it's along the lines of "It's a good day to die…tomorrow" or "Who wants to live forever? Okay, but who ELSE?" or "I am not afraid to die, I just don't to be around when it happens."

In Celtic myth, there are tales of Avalon (island of apples,) Tir nan Og (land of youth,) Islands out West over/under the Ocean (America?,) Hybrasil, Annwyn (in the Tales of Pryderi,) and the Faery underworlds of mounds and tombs. (See the Voyage of Mael Dun for another interesting journey by boat.) A general sense of connection is thought to exist in the same place, like parallel universes, that are crossed-over sometimes (especially on holidays like Beltane and particularly Samhain.) Ghosts, spirits, saints, saints, monsters, faeries are rampant in their mythology that continues to this day.

So, finally, as you know, the greatest traditional remnant concerning death is the great fire-festival of Samhain (or the triple holiday of Halloween, All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day.) You've read already read oodles about Samhain on the internet, you know its roots and know all that stuff about it being a Celtic new-year (a new calendar year in the NRDNA.) I'm a "do-er" not a "liturgist," festivals for me are about doing interesting related projects.

Samhain Essay: Prophesizing

A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2002
By Stacey Weinberger

Samhain, the beginning of the Season of Sleep in the Druid calendar, marks the end of the Celtic year and the beginning of the new, a time the veil between the worlds is the thinnest, when the door to the Otherworld opens and spirits walk the earth, and when communication with the dead is possible. This is the most important High Day in the Celtic calendar.

Samhain is a time associated with prophesizing and foretelling of the future. It was commonly believed that children born on Samhain were gifted with Second Sight or the ability to foresee events and objects. This was time when divination rites were practiced and there are many tales and traditions surrounding them.

In the Book of the Dean of Lismore, a mortal man, Fingein mac Luchta is visited by a ban-sidhe every Samhain who would tell him of all the marvels in all the royal strongholds of Ireland. She tells him of three chief artefacts of Ireland that were found and revealed this night, the headpiece of Briun mac Smethra, a helmet that had been hidden in the well of Sidh Cruachan from the Morrigu; the fidchell board of Crimtham nia Nar left in an adventure and was hidden in the rath of Uisneach; and the minn (diadem) of Loeguire mac Luchta Limfinn that had been hidden since the birth of Conchobar until this Samhain night. The ban-sidh also relates to Fingein other events that come to pass in the next twelve months

In modern times divination rites were still practiced in the Celtic countries at Samhain. Grain, vegetables, and fruit were used indicating the close association of Samhain with the Harvest. These were the foods that would sustain tribes through the winter. Apples and hazel nuts that played an especially important part to the early Celts: they were foods of the Otherworld, were notably used. Hazel nuts were known as a source and symbol of wisdom, and were eaten before divination. The apple symbolized life and immorality, was the talisman that admitted one to the Otherworld, and gave one the power to tell the future.

In the Border ballad Thomas the Rhymer, the 13th century poet and seer, meets the Queen of the Faeries at his favorite Eildon Tree, and after entering her mystic hill, they journey through rivers to the Land of the Faerie, where they find a garden. The queen gives him an apple from one of the trees for his wages saying, "It will gi'e thee the tongue than ne'er can Ice," and thenceforth Thomas can only speak the truth. After having been instructed by the faerie queen in prophecy or "second sight," Thomas is then able to enter Avalon as an initiate where he dwells for seven years.

There are two main apple rites that survive, one involves ordeal by water and the other ordeal by fire. The act of going through water to obtain apples could be the remnants of the Druidic rite symbolizing the passing through water to Emain Abhlach or Apple-Isle. Apple-Isle is where Manannan Mac Lir prepared the Otherworld feast for the eternal enjoyment of those who have passed on.

The Ordeal by Water survives in Scotland in such Samhain traditions as "Dookin' for Aipples." A large wooden tub is filled with water and set in the middle of the floor into which apples are placed. The master of ceremonies has a porridge stick or some other equivalent of the Druidic wand, and with this he keeps the apples in motion. Each participant get three tries, and if unsuccessful, must wait until the others have had their turn. If a participant captures an apple, it is either eaten or kept for use in another of the divination rites.

The modern form of the Ordeal by Fire is known as "The Aipple and the Can'le." A small rod of wood is taken and suspended horizontally from the ceiling by a cord. After it is fairly balanced, a lit candle is set on one end and an apple at the other. The rod is then set whirling around. Each of the company takes turns leaping up trying to bite the apple without singing his or her hair. Touching either the rod or apple with the hands is not permitted.

The divinations practiced at Samhain were chiefly used to discover who would marry, who one's partner was going to be, and who was going to die over the course of the next year. Eating the Apple at the Glass is an example of such a divination. At the hour of midnight the person goes into a room with a mirror. The room is lit with but one candle. The apple is cut into nine pieces. The person stands with his or her back to the mirror, eats the eight pieces, and throws the ninth piece over the left shoulder. Turning towards the mirror, he or she will see the future partner.

Paring the Apple is another Samhain divination rite performed at the stroke of twelve. The person pares the apple carefully so that the skin comes off in one unbroken ribbon. As the clock strikes twelve the person swings the paring around his or her head three times with out breaking it, and tossing it over the left shoulder. The shape that the paring assumes is the initial of the querant's future spouse. If the paring breaks matrimony will not happen in the coming year. If any of the readers wants to try either of these divination methods we would be curious to know how they work.

Winter Solstice / Yule

Winter Solstice Notes

The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1976
By Isaac Bonewits and Robert Larson

The Winter Solstice is a Minor High Day, usually occurring around December 21st or so of the civil calendar. Also known as Yule and Midwinter, this is a day sacred to Sun Gods, Thunder Gods, and Fire Gods. Large fires were built up outdoors and a Yule Log lit indoors, in order to rekindle the dying Sun and help it to return brightly to the Northern skies. Burnt logs and ashes from Midwinter fires were kept as a talisman against lightning and house fires. It was also a custom in many parts of Paleopagan Europe to decorate *live* evergreen trees in honor of the Gods (cutting down a tree to bring indoors is a blasphemous desecration of the original concept.) This is considered, along with Midsummer, the best day of the year to cut mistletoe.

Among some Paleopagans, a date on or near this (such as December 25th) was celebrated as the Birthday of the Sun God, frequently from the womb of a virgin or unmarried girl (who was sometimes also the Mother Goddess.)

Yule Essay: What is Yule?

A Druid Missal-Any, December 1982
Volume 6 Number 4-5
By Emmon Bodfish

Yule, a minor Celtic High Day, the Midwinter Solstice's sun shines into the mouths of cairn graves and the openings of hill tombs. The day was of obvious importance to these megalith builders, and associated with the dead and with regeneration. This is the bottom of the year, and the coldest months are still to follow. Bonfires are lit on hills to call back the Sun, and kept burning all night to celebrate its return. This Celtic tradition may be a cognate of the Norse Yule Log tradition, which is still carried on in the Nordic countries. This use of fire to recall the Sun's fire, (the name for the Sun in Gàidhlig is thought to be derived from the phrase "of the nature of fire," greine, and is of the feminine gender) is an instance of one of the most ancient religious ideas, that of reciprocity.

This concept goes back to the beginnings of religion in the Old Stone Age, as well may the fire lighting ceremonies. As C. Rachel explains, these rites were

> "the culmination of the Stone Age religion of reciprocity, in which, by ritual attunement to the rhythm of seasonal change, man shared with Divinity the responsibility for its maintenance, so that the ceremonies first introduced to guide the birth and death of the hunter's quarry, were replaced in natural succession by those considered necessary to assist the new year to be born, the very sun to return, (and) the harvest to be cut down."

This correspondence

> "was also understood conversely, so that early written documents record (Le Titre d'Horus d'or, by A. Mort, translator, Rev. Arch. xxiv) that the rising of the Young Year God from his winter sleep in the subterranean chambers held hope for the resurrection/reincarnation of man. Such a belief would seem to have been naturally transmitted from the ideas concerning the case as mother of rebirth, now reinforced by the lesson of the seeds, through Neolithic ceremonies in which the sense of mutual causality was so compelling. It is demonstrated in the monuments of the dead."

Yule Essay: Where Is Your Sun?

A Druid Missal-Any. Yule 1983
By Emmon Bodfish

Yule, Solstice, Greinstad, Sunstop; the Sun, which has been setting each day at a new, more southerly point on the horizon stops its progression. We have reached the "bottom of the year," as the Gaels call it. Midwinter's night was considered a productive night to vigil, and a Yule fire was built, in some traditions around a single log big enough to burn all night. Its flames would welcome the returning Sun at dawn. The sunrise was hailed with shouting, drums, and thanks for the returning of the light.

This is one of the four Solar Holidays of the Druid year. This year it will culminate at 9:30 p.m. December 21st, Pacific Standard Time, and an hour later for each time zone east of the Pacific one; i.e. 5:30 a.m. Universal and Greenwich Time. At this moment the Northern Hemisphere of the Earth will be tipped at its maximum angle away from the sun. Since this is one of the few years in which this event occurs at a convenient hour when most of us are awake, we might try synchronizing our watches all across the country and let out at this moment the shout "Seall" (Pronounced sha-oul) to call back the descending Sun. After all who wants to end up freezing in the dark?

Or go out on Midwinter eve and note the point on the horizon where the sun sets; this is its most Southerly extreme. Do the same for the following dawn, Solstice morning, and from the angle between these two points you can calculate your latitude. (Write in for the formula.) By sightings like this, on these Special Days, the Ancients calculated latitude, the curvature of the Earth, and kept the calendar aligned with the Heavens.

Yule Essay: Holly and Mistletoe and Sickles

A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 1984
By Emmon Bodfish

Yule, Winter Solstice is one of the four minor Druid High Days. It is associated with the Holly and the Mistletoe. All mistletoe symbolism and use we see around during this time of the year is a carry-over from pagan, most likely Druidic, customs of ancient Europe.

Pliny the Elder, in his *Natural History*, gives us the best description we have of a Paleo-Pagan Druid ceremony, that of the cutting of the mistletoe. According to Stuart Piggot, the time for this ceremony was determined by observing the growth of the mistletoe on an oak tree. "The time of the rite was the sixth day of a new moon, and preparations were made for a feast and a sacrifice of two white bulls. A Druid in a white robe climbed the tree and cut with a golden sickle the branch of a mistletoe, which was caught as it fell on a white cloak. The bulls were then sacrificed and all present ate of them."

The gold sickle is inexplicable, as real gold will not hold an edge tough enough to cut through the woody stem of the mistletoe. Gilded, or simply polished, bronze, is more likely. Elsewhere Pliny writes of the ritual necessity of gathering the mistletoe left-handed, after first fasting, and of the Celts plucking Selago without using an iron knife, barefoot and with the right hand through the left sleeve of a white tunic, but these are private rites, not public ceremonies. We realize that two white bulls are difficult to come by in most parts of the country now, and hard to keep until Yule. (My lease says "No pets.") But a feast among friends and some holly sprigs and mistletoe hung about is definitely in order. The feast at Live Oak Grove will be on the evening of the twenty-first, after Yule service. Watch this space for pictures.

Yule Essay: Bards, Ogma and Ogham

A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 1985
By Emmon Bodfish

Yule begins Winter, Geimredh, season of the Bard. The File and Bards, like the troubadours who followed them, practiced their art "from Samain until summer" as in the old poem of Forgoll, the Bard, who tells King Mongan a story each night from his wise repertory. And, as Keatings explains, commenting on the Old Irish, the winter practices of the File, lodging from house to house in exchange for their songs and stories, had become such a great burden for Ireland, that a king had the idea of banishing them:

> "It is by Aodh son of Ainmire that a great assembly of Drom Ceat was convened where there was a gathering of the nobles and ecclesiastics of Ireland. Aodh had three reasons to convene this assembly, the first of them being to banish the File and bards because they constituted a heavy burden and were hard to govern."

At this time, Keatings adds, almost a third of the well-born men in Ireland belonged in some way to the Bardic class

> "And from Samhain to Beltaine, they lodged at the homes of the nobles of Ireland."

The project failed because Conchobar, to show his Druid orthodoxy and generosity, gathers up the File and Bards and maintains them for seven years, and also sends Cuchulainn to meet them. (It is not, in the light of this, accidental that we have more verse remaining about Conchobar than about any other Pre-Christian Irish king.)

The tradition continued after the Christianization. A folklorist whom the Rees quote recalled that

> "Just until recently, the Irish story tellers, heritors of the Bards, also did not exercise their art during the summer. In order to feel at ease, it had to be winter and night had to have fallen."

The Patron god of Bards and story tellers is Ogmios, Champion of Strength and Eloquence. Lucian, writing in the second century, equates him with Roman Hercules, but notes these differences. First, Ogmios is portrayed as an old man, white haired, but still powerful. The Gauls, he learned through his native acquaintance, associate eloquence with the old champion, and not with Hermes, whom they see as too young and callow. On one of the temples or art works then extant, Ogmios, he says, is pictured leading a joyful band of men, attached to him by thin chains which link their ears to the tip of his tongue, a striking visual portrait of persuasive ability. The Irish god Ogma or Oghma, is clearly the same divine persona, though Prof. MacCana feels that the name may be a borrowing instead of a genuine cognate. But the figure appears, often qualified by the title "Grainainech" of-the-Sun-like-Countenance, and the Honey-Mouthed, both in Ireland and Wales as on the Continent. He is also known as "trenfher," champion, or literally the "heavy man." In insular traditions he is not only the patron of eloquent speech, but the inventor of writing, in the old Irish system of Ogham letters. This is a system of varying lengths place above and below a central line. It is of uncertain origin, but clearly designed for carving on stone, or at the end of square pillars.

[Graphic of Ogham pillar]

It continued in use into the Early Middle Ages. MacCana believes it probably evolved out of an earlier set of magical symbols, perhaps some of the same ones that gave rise to the Norse Runes.

[Graphic of Branch runes]

As Ogam came into use after the Celts were exposed to the Latin alphabet, MacCana contends it may have evolved thus: "seeing the utility of the Sound=Letter system of Latin script, the Gauls may have let the magic symbol whose name contained the sound stand for that sound in all words." Other scholars, such as Prof. Rhys, and Charles Squire, believe Ogam was the indigenous script of Ireland. They stress that it more closely resembles a binary or trinary code, akin to the bars and lines of the I Ching, than the picture writing of sound diagrams from which Mediterranean and hence all Western systems of letters evolved. Most Ogam inscriptions are found in Ireland and Scotland, where the Romans never came. (Druidism is full of these riddles.)

Being in this way the God of Writing, it may not be an accident that Oghma is one of the very few Celtic gods for whom we have written records of his worship, i.e. prayers. Two "defixiones," inscribed tablets, were found in France on which Ogmios is beseeched to avenge the author and wreck a curse on certain individuals. In Irish sources, he is also the Champion in this sense of judge and avenger, and to him binding oaths are made. He is invoked as "the god who binds" the binding power of words and oaths, the spell-binding power of eloquence, so graphically portrayed by the thin golden chains by which he leads his listeners, in the scene described by Lucian. This ability to persuade, convince, and enchant with words was highly regarded in Celtic society, and a part of the training of Bard, Filidh, and Druid alike. LeRoux speculates that the "magic of Ogam" that Cuchulainn used in the *Tain Bo Cuailnge* to stop, single handed, the advance of the Connaught army, was not supernatural magic, but persuasion, or eloquent diplomacy and playing for time.

Thus Oghma is the one to invoke in negotiations, when eloquent speech and persuasive ability are needed.

Yule Essay: Mistletoe

A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 1986
By Emmon Bodfish

Yule, Winter Solstice is one of the four minor Druid High Days. It is associated with the Holly and the Mistletoe, prosperity and purification. The hanging of Mistletoe over doorways harks back to its protective function, as the All-Heal. Spirits that bring disease will not pass under it. All Mistletoe use and customs are carry overs from Pagan, most notably Druidic traditions.

Though kissing under the Mistletoe can't be traced back further than the 17th century, it is probably much older. It reflects the herb's Paleo-Druidic attributes of protection, fertility, and prosperity.

Pliny the Elder, in his *Natural History*, gives us the best description of a Paleopagan Druid Ceremony, that of cutting the Mistletoe. According to Stuart Piggot, the ceremonial mistletoe must be cut from an oak tree. The time of the ritual was set by the Moon as in Pliny's description.

> "The time of the rite was the sixth day of the new moon, after preparations had been made for a feast and a sacrifice of two white bulls. A Druid in a white robe climbed the tree and cut with a golden sickle the branch of mistletoe, which was caught as it fell on a white cloak. The bulls were then sacrificed and all present ate of them."

The golden sickle is a puzzle, as pure gold will not hold an edge sharp and tough enough to cut through the woody stem of the mistletoe. Gilded, or simply polished bronze, are more likely materials. Though Pliny was allowed to witness the ritual, he probably could not approach the Druid or examine the sickle.

Nor would he have been able to talk to a Gaulish Druid without an interpreter. Their ceremony was recorded in Roman Gaul. Gold may have been a description of color, or a quoting of hearsay. Elsewhere in his book Pliny writes of the ritual necessity of gathering the mistletoe left handed, after fasting, and of the Celts plucking Selago without using an iron knife, barefoot and with the right hand through the left sleeve of a white tunic, but these were private rites, not public ceremonies. There is no mention in them of the presence of a Druid.

Yule Essay: Motherhood

A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 1987
By Emmon Bodfish

Yule, Winter Solstice, was a minor High Day in the old Druid calendar, The festival's association with a Mother and newborn Son is very old through-out the Eurasian cultural area. It predates Indo-European occupation of Europe, and probably included the Proto-Indo Europeans in their steppes homeland. A Goddess and a Young Year God were worshiped in Balkan Europe before 3500 B.C. and in Summeria and the Caucus even earlier, In Rome, (much later) it was the Festival of the Three Mothers, probably cognates of the extremely popular Triple mothers cult of the Celts. Mass produced, molded pipe clay votive figures of the three are found throughout Britain and Gaul.*

As deVries's, Grenier's, Green's, Szabo's and Ross's work has shown, the mother-goddess cult, so popular in Gaul and Britain during the Pre-conquest period and extending into Romano-Celtic times, has its origin in Proto-Indo-European culture, and shares features with similar cults in some of the other Indo-European peoples. The parallel has been drawn many times with Tacitus' description of the Teutonic Earth-goddess Nerthus who rode in procession through cities. This imagery recalls and is corroborated by Strettweg's processional wagon with its female figure and also, later Romano Celtic Mother figures portrayed in chariots. Another parallel is suggested in Irish literary tradition in descriptions of Connaught's Queen Medb being driven in her chariot around her camp before battle. Medb is a problematic figure, somewhere between a goddess and a heroic archetype. But it must be remembered that the "Tain Bo Chuailgne" was not written down in pagan times.

*Proving that mass-produced little religious goodies are not a modern tackiness.

Yule Essay: Alignments and New Years

A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 1988
By Emmon Bodfish

Yule, a Minor High Day in the Druid calendar, marks the Winter Solstice. This was a more important day it appears from the archeological evidence in the preceding Megalith Culture. Not only is the rising point of the sun marked in the stones of Stonehenge, but many of the Megalithic tombs are so constructed that only on Midwinter's Day does the sun shine into the interior, usually through a round window cut in the portal stone, or along the funnel-shaped corridor of stone pillars leading up to it. The link between death, the Sun, Midwinter and an afterlife or a re-birth is a very old one, predating the Druids and even the arrival of the Indo-Europeans in Europe. In the cultures of Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean, about whom we have more information than has survived about either the Megalith culture or the Druids, the celebration of the Solstice is linked with the birth of the new, young Year-God, Corn-God or Vegetation-God. (Yes, the Christians co-opted this motif. According to the tax roles the historical Jesus was probably born around May.)

As we know that the Druid year began on Samhain, we know that they did not consider this the birth of the new season,

as did many other Neolithic culture. But the traditions of Bardic revels and of feasting on the wild boar, the vigil of the Yule log, and the decorating of Yule trees very probably do come from the Druid past. So also may be the tradition of going from house to house, singing a ritual song particular to the holiday, i.e. caroling. But in Druid times this would have been something like the "Hogamany Carols" and the related rituals of circling or dancing around the house, beating on drums and bull hides. This tradition was preserved in the remote Highlands until the nineteenth century. The ritual use of the bull hide, also used with other Druid rites, links it to Druidic, especially the Druidic Filidh tradition, and not to the preceding Megalithic or pre-Indo-European ones.

Here is one such carol. Try marching around your house and singing it this Solstice, with or without bull hide.

(Sun-wise, of course!)

CAIRIOLL CALLAIG

Nis tha mis air tighinn dh' ur duthaich
A dh' urachadh dhuibh na Callaig;
Cha leig ml leas a dhol ga innse,
Bha i ann ri linn ar seanar.

Dirim ris an ardorus,
Teurnam ris an starsach,
Mo dhuan a ghabhail doigheil,
Modhail, moineil, maineil.

Caisean Callaig 'na mo phoca,
Is mor an ceo thig as an ealachd.

Gheibh fear an taighe 'na dhorn e,
Cuiridh e shron anns an teahlach;
Theid e deiseil air na paisdean,
Seachd ar air bean an taighe.

Bean an taighe is i is fhiach e,
Lamh a riarach orinn na Callaig,
Sochair bheag a bhlath an t-samhraidh,
Tha mi 'n geall air leis an arain.

HOGMANAY CAROL

I am now come to your country,
To renew to you the Hogmanay,
I need not tell you of it,
It was in the time of our forefathers.

I ascend by the door lintel,
I descend by the doorstep,
I will sing my song becomingly,
Mannerly, slowly, mindfully.

The Hogmanay skin is in my pocket,
Great will be the smoke from it presently.

The house-man will get it in his hand,
He will place its nose in the fire;
He will go sunwards round the babes,
And for seven verities round the housewife.

The housewife it is she who deserves it,
The hand to dispense to us the Hogmanay
A small gift of the bloom of summer,
Much I wish it with the bread.

Yule Essay: Mistletoe and Sickles

A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 1989
By Emmon Bodfish

Yule, Winter Solstice, mistletoe and white bulls, this is one of the four minor Druid High Days on the Coligny Calendar. Pliny the Elder, in his *Natural History*, gives us our first look at the use of mistletoe at this season of the year. "The time of the rite was the sixth day of the new moon, and preparations were made for a feast and the sacrifice of two white bulls. A Druid in a white robe climbed the tree and cut the branch of mistletoe with a golden sickle, the herb being caught as it fell on a white cloak spread below. The bulls were then sacrificed, and all present ate of them." The gold of the sickle has been prolifically debated by scholars ever since. (The Gods find harmless for idle hands?) Real gold is too soft to hold a cutting edge and slice through the tough, woody stem of the mistletoe. Polished bronze is a more likely candidate, but the bronze may also have been gilded. Elsewhere Pliny writes of the necessity of gathering the mistletoe left-handed after first fasting (and purifying oneself.) He also writes of the Celts plucking Selago without use of iron knifes or tools, barefoot and with the right hand through the left sleeve of a white tunic, but these were private rites, not public ceremonies, The golden nature of the sickle may simply have referred to the taboo on the use of iron implements in gathering the sacred plant.

Whatever the metal was then R.D.N.A. Druids now use bronze sickles, cast for us years ago by a member who at that time had access to metal casting equipment as well as the necessary skill. Does anyone out there know how to cast bronze? Have the set up? For, alas, we have no more sickles for new Third Order (Ordained) Druids.

This feast should be celebrated with feasting among friends and relatives, all night bonefires to welcome back the Sun, and much singing and merriment, The exact time of the turning of the Sun God will be, according to my almanac, 1:15 P.M. on December 21, 1989. That's a Thursday, a work day for most of us. If you can't do anything else to celebrate it, surreptitiously light a match. Or, rank and job security permitting, you could jump up and shout "Saoul" (shaou-el,) that ought to wake the office up.

Yule Essay: Yule and Mistletoe

A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2000
By Stacey Weinberger

Yule, Winter Solstice, is one of the four minor Druid High Days. More so than any other of the High Days, Yule seems to be especially associated with plants and trees. In the dark days of Winter it is the evergreen that reminds us of the "continual flow and renewal of life."

The Mistletoe is one of the few plants that naturally bears fruit this time of year. It is commonly found on such trees as the apple, ash, walnut, and hawthorn, and much less often on the oak. Though it manufacturers its own food through photosynthesis, it depends on its host tree for water and nutrients.

The Mistletoe was held sacred by the Druids. In Wales, it is still called *druidh his*, "Druid's Weed." The Roman author Pliny the Elder gives an account of the mistletoe gathering ceremony in his Natural History:

> "The Druids held nothing more sacred than the mistletoe and the tree that bears it, always supposing that tree to be the oak. But they chose groves formed of oaks for the sake of the tree alone, and they never perform any of their rites except in the presence of a branch of it, in fact they think that everything that grows on it has been sent from heaven and is a proof that the tree was chosen by the god himself. The mistletoe, however, is found but rarely upon the oak; and when found, is gathered with due religious ceremony, if possible on the sixth day of the moon. They chose this day because the moon, though not yet in the middle of her course, has already considerable influence. They call the mistletoe by a name meaning, in their own language, the all-healing. Having made preparation for sacrifice and a banquet beneath the trees, they bring thither two white bulls, whose horns are bound then for the first time. Clad in a white robe, the priest ascends the tree and cuts the mistletoe with a golden sickle, and it is received by others in a white cloak. Then they kill the victims (i.e. the cattle,) praying that God will render this gift of his propitious to those to whom he has granted it. They believe that the mistletoe, taken in drink, imparts fecundity to barren animals, and that it is an antidote to all poisons."

Pliny doesn't explain why the Druids held the mistletoe so highly other than the reference to it being all-healing. It is extremely poisonous. I overhead this past week while waiting for the train home that some florists, when it is sold yearly at Christmastime, have removed the berries because there have been cases of children picking them off the branches, eating them, and dying. (And where were the parents in this?) Mistletoe has been used (the leaves, not the berries) however, though greatly diluted, in modern times to much success in treating serious illnesses. A specially prepared homeopathic tincture is used in the treatment of cancer and herbalists use mistletoe to strengthen the heart and reduce blood pressure. So the Ancients did have it right after all, it just took us moderns a little while to uncover it, and as with any medicinal, probably used it with great wisdom, caution, and efficacy.

Poems of the Season

A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2000
From Our Server, Susan Press

Solstice

Winter has come, The song has been sung, The days have been white and cold.

The dark has been deep, The earth was asleep, Dreaming a dream of old.

Now hear Her blood drum, For the time has come, For the days to grow long and warm.

For the dark becomes light, And the earth will take flight, Greeting the Sun's return.

Nights of Winter

In deep of winter, In the middle of the night, Jack Frost paints your windows with nary a light.

Look thru his icy artwork, Know each to be unique, You'll see a starlit world revealed, A world that some would seek.

A world that is within, without, A fragile world of wonder and glitter A world that from his paintbrush flows, In the deep, dark nights of winter.

Walk Amongst the Trees

Murmuring softly, Father Winter walks amongst the trees, gently easing them into sweet white slumber. He stops to rest with those who keep vigil during the long winter, the Holly, the Mistletoe, and the Evergreen.

They are old, old friends and pass the long white winter sharing tales and talking of things they have seen and heard throughout their long lives.

Go walk amongst the trees. Be quiet and still, listen for their voices and then for their wisdom. Share with them your dreams, your wonders and your woes, for they will become the substance of tales told in the future...the knowledge and wisdom of the trees.

Yule Essay: Tree Lore

Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2001
By Stacey Weinberger

Yule, Winter Solstice, the Shortest Day of the Year, is one of the minor High Days of the Druid calendar. Though there is an association with trees at each of the High Days, none of them so strongly evokes the image of the tree than Yule with the tradition of Christmas or Yule tree, a latter-day symbol of pagan tree-worship. The Yule tree as we know it is a German custom brought to England in 1840 by Prince Albert, prince consort of Queen Victoria. Perhaps a parallel to the May-pole in the Summer half of the year (see A Druid-Missal-Any Beltaine 2001,) which also was a tree cut down for a particular celebration and placed as the center of ritual, the Yule tree harkens back to an older tradition and can perhaps be traced back to the ancient Druids and other pre-Christian Indo-European practices.

In southern Europe there was the midwinter custom pertaining to the celebration of the god Phrygian god Attis that is very reminiscent of cutting down the Yule tree and decorating its branches. Certain priests of the Attis called dendrophori, meaning "tree-bearers," annually selected a pine tree (pinus silva) from the sacred grove to carry the effigy of the god into His Roman temple. The dendrophori were charged with the duty of setting up and decorating the tree upon which the god was presented for sacrifice. The pine tree stood for a promise of eternal life because being an evergreen it kept its vital appearance even in winter. The boughs did not wither and die, and signified the continuing presence of life.

In Celtic culture there is also archeological evidence of ritual involving trees. At two large sacred circular enclosures, the Goloring near Koblenz and the Goldberg in Southern Germany, that date from the sixth century B.C., a huge central post was erected, possibly imitative of a living tree. Similar pre-Roman ritual activity can be observed at the La Tene site of Bliesebruck where over one hundred sacred pits filled with votive objects had been planted with tree trunks or living trees. In the Rhineland, one of the four regions of the Celtic World, the great scanctuary at Pesch contained many temples and ancillary buildings grouped around a sacred tree.

There are legendary tales of royal halls with a living tree in the center of the building, and trees may have been used this way, as in the Old Manor House at Knaresborough in North Yorkshire and the hall of Huntingfield in Suffolk. Positioning the tree in the center of a building as a source of good luck and protection for gods and men is confirmed by the custom in Germany, continuing as late as the 19th century, of having a guardian or lucky tree beside a house. Does bringing the tree inside symbolize bringing the luck inside? Symbolic offerings were made to the tree, and ale poured over its roots at festivals, as in the case of a huge birch tree that stood on a mound beside a farm house in western Norway until it fell in 1874. Adam of Bremen, wrote of a huge tree that stood beside a temple in Uppsala, the holy center in Sweden, that remained green summer and winter (signaling perhaps an evergreen,) but no one knew what kind of tree it was. The existence of sacred trees in Germany in the pre-Christian era is borne out by reference to their destruction by early Christian missionaries such as St. Boniface.

Memories of sacred trees at holy places can consistently be found in Irish literature, where a number of sacred trees are mentioned. The sacred tree, in Old Irish *bile*, was apparently a usual feature of the site where the inauguration of the kings of each tribe or confederation took place, the sacred center of the tribal territory.

Sacred trees are found mentioned in pagan texts of early Ireland, most notably in the Rennes Dindshenchas ("History of Places.") Holy trees were particularly associated with sacral kingship and the inauguration rites surrounding the election of a new king. Five special trees are mentioned in the Dindshenchas marking the sacred ritual and assembly centers of Ireland: "The Tree of Ross and the Tree of Mugna and the Ancient Tree of Datha and the branching Tree of Uisnech and the Ancient Tree of Tortu."* Three of these trees are recorded as ash trees, while the Tree of Ross was a yew (an evergreen,) and the Tree of Mugna was an oak, although it was not an ordinary one as it bore three crops of different fruits each year: "apples, goodly, marvelous, and nuts round, blood-red, and acorns, brown and ridgy" (together which symbolize the fruits of the Otherworld.) It too appears to be an evergreen: "Its leaves were upon it always," as with the tree at Uppsala described by Adam of Bremen.

A characteristic of the Otherworld tree in Irish tradition is that it bears blossoms and fruit of gold and silver, which the more modern Christmas tree is reminiscent of.

This Winter Solstice when you go out to purchase your Yule tree, preferably a live one, keep in mind that you are maintaining the pagan tradition of honoring the tree and making it the focus of the modern day tribal assembly of home. During this time when all seems dead and asleep the pine or fir Yule tree remains green, symbolizing the promise of life that is to return.

*"The Prose Tales in the Rennes Dindshenchas," ed. W. Stokes, Rev Celt 15 (1894) and 16 (1895)

Christmas Plants and Picking the Yule Log

A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2001
By Mairi Ceolbhinn, D.C. Grove

Druids love and respect their plants and truly wish them to return to full vitality in the spring. Without plants, how'd we do our sacrifices? What we'd eat? What'd we wear? It's nice to know that in the depths of winter, when the days are shortest, that some plants are doing rather well. We wish to celebrate this with Christmas trees and such and bring their blessings into our homes. See also the site: http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/SolsticePlanningGuide.html

Mistletoe, as we all know, was considered sacred, by our ancient Siblings and has remained such throughout the years. Its Gaelic name still means "all healing," although I'm not sure how to use it safely, since it is rather poisonous. Perhaps, it is by its poison, that it fends off winter's blight, and manages to bloom around the solstice? Its persistent fertility is therefore an established trait that gives us that great custom of "kissing under the sprig of mistletoe" which would happen in a night of partying and debauchery. That age-old theme of commemorating the death of the "old Sun" and birth of the "new Sun" is now popularly incorporated into the images of "Old Man Time and Baby New Year" doing a tag-team on January 1st every year.

Holly berries, like Mistletoe, bloom amidst the snow as if to defy winter and encourage the return to life. Its green boughs were of course common decorations on buildings, holy places and public buildings during the winter festival, and this tradition has fortunately continued to this very day. Even the Japanese, Mike Scharding says, have a "kadomatsu" placed in front of the door at New Year's Eve.

Yule Log Tradition

Not to be morbid, but a sacrifice is necessary to rekindle the life of the dying sun (no, I'm not pro-Aztec, which sounds like a marketable drug,) and it seems the Yule Log has filled that role for several centuries. "Yule" comes from "hweol," meaning "wheel," which is a frequent European symbol for the Sun. So you're basically giving the Sun a well-needed torching to warm it up.

According to various sources, it is widely agreed that the hearth of the Celtic House was the home of a protective spirit, and (for practical and symbolic reasons) the fire was rarely allowed to die out except once or twice a year during the big fire holidays. Special prayers were and are still spoken before leaving the banked fire of turf for the night in rural areas. Much magic also went on around the fire during cooking, story telling, and entertaining of guests. The hearth was basically the pre-modern "Home Entertainment Center." If you've ever noticed, televisions also send comforting relaxing flickers of light into a darkened room while you stare blankly?

Now, back in those days, people had access to common forests surrounding their village. The choice of the wood varied greatly among locales, but one good size tree would provide several logs for a neighborhood. But under no circumstances, should you steal one from a neighbor's private land (and no buying one at a parking lot, good religion is do-it-yourself.) I've not heard of any special methods of cutting a tree down, but a short ceremony, and posting a few days advance notice for malevolent or uninterested spirits to depart, would certainly be in order. (No, that Golden Sickle is no more effective that a haddock, get a good steel axe.) Angry spirits will make the tree conk you on the head; so be forewarned.

Once cut down, a goodly size log was the festooned and regally dragged back to town through the streets. As the Log entered the house, some cultures would give it a hearty drink of oil, salt and mulled wine, with a song perhaps. In more recent times, it was burned on Christmas Eve (which is close enough to the Solstice,) with music, activities and frolicking. To kindle the fire, splinters from last year's logs (saved by the eldest daughter) were used to get the substrate of dry logs going, since those Yule Logs are hard to burn by themselves. Guests were encouraged to toss sprigs of holly on the fire to take away bad luck. The way it burned would prognosticate the future.

Splinters of the log and cinders were taken home to protect against fires, lightning and tax-collectors at their home. Now the Yule Log tradition, widespread since the 12th century, nearly died out with the change to pot-belly stoves and grills in the late 19th Century. The tradition still survives in sizeable pockets today in the country-side today. For fire sensitive areas, a smaller log-shaped cake now decorates the dinning room table. I've tried this custom for a few years in my little BBQ next to my house (sneaking one from the Rock Creek National Park,) and saved some ashes, and no disasters have yet befallen my home (well, except the Pentagon in Virginian Commonwealth, but that's the workplace, perhaps the White House and the "Mystic District" of Washington, D.C. were spared because of their National Yule Log?.)

For me a Christmas tree is just another elaboration on "bringing the greenery in," and it certainly is a younger tradition than the Yule Log, perhaps a merger of pagan Nordic tree worship and perhaps the 13th century morality plays' "Tree of Life" (from the Garden of Eden) which was often the only stage prop, and conveniently performed around the Solstice. Perhaps, the inability to have a Yule Log burning and urbanization led to the soaring popularity of the Christmas tree in the 19th century? So go get your plants!

Oimelc/Imbolc

Oimelc Notes

Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1976
By Isaac Bonewits and Robert Larson

Oimelc begins the season of *Earrach* (u-RoCH,) now *an tEarrach* (uN tu-RoCH); which is Spring, running roughly from the beginning of February till the end of April. Together, these two season constitute "the Winter Half of the Year," otherwise known as "the Season of Sleep."

Oimelc (i-melc,) is known in Modern Irish as *Lá na Féile Bríde* (Laa Nu fé-li bree-di,) in Manx as *Laa 'n Arragh* (Day of Spring,) and as Imbolc, Candlemas, and Lady Day in English. *Lá na Féile Bríde* means the day of the festival of "Saint Bridget." Brighid, Bride, or Bridget is yet another Pagan deity turned by the Christians into a "saint," in order to co-opt Her worship. This goddess was a triple-aspected deity of Poetry/Divination (considered the same thing,) Healing and Smithcraft, whose followers kept an eternal flame burning in Her honor.

By analogy with the Gaelic names of the other High Days, we may assume that the holiday was originally called *Lá hOimelc* (Laa Hi-melc.) It is the festival of the lactation of the ewes. In Paleopagan days (and, indeed, until the recent past) the sheep was a very important animal, providing both food and clothing. The occasion of the birth of lambs (not to mention kids and calves) was a cause for rejoicing and a sign of life in the "dead" world of a Northern winter.

The name "Candlemas" is a Christian term for a holiday occurring February 1st or 2nd. This supposedly is in hour of a "Saint Blaise" and has no official connection with "Saint" Bridget and Her cult of fire, nor with the fact that this day was one of the four major fire festivals of Paleopagan cultures throughout Western and Northern Europe. Of course they don't mention a certain Slavic god named Vlaise, Who was the Patron of cattle, wealth and war, and Who was worshipped with fire. *Lá hOimelc* begins the spring season of *Earrach*. It is also the day before St. Groundhog's Day.

More Oimelc Notes

Pentalpha Journal: Volume 2, Issue 3 Whole Number 8
Oimelc, 17 y.r. February 3/4, 1979 c.e.
By Isaac Bonewits

According to our calendar, Oimelc occurs at precisely 12:42 p.m. GMT on February 4th, 1979 c.e. This is, of course, at 7:42 a.m. EST, 8:42 a.m. CST, 9:42 a.m. MST and 10:42 a.m. PST. In most of the Reformed Druid movements, the High Day begins at sunset on February 3rd, and starts the spring season of Earrach.

Oimelc ("ee-melk") is known in Modern Irish as La na Feile Bride (Laa Nu fe-li bree-di,) in Manx as Lao'n Arrali (Day of Spring,) and as Imbolc, Candlemas and Lady Day in English. La na Feile Bride means the day of the festival of "Saint Bridget." Brighid, Bride or Bridget is yet another Pagan deity turned by the Christians into a "saint," in order to co-opt her worship. This goddess was a triple-aspected deity of Poetry, Divination (considered the same thing,) Healing and Smithcraft, whose followers kept an eternal flame burning in her honor.

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Oimelc Essay: Oimelc and Brigit

A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 1983
Volume 7, Number 1
By Emmon Bodfish

Oimelc is one of the major high days of the Druids. A pastoral people, this holiday marks the first births of lambs and the lactation of the ewes. It is the end of "black January" and we are past the bottom of the year. It is clear, now, that the light and fertility invoked at the Solstice is indeed returning. This festival is presided over by Bride, (Bridget) as Lugh presided over Lughnasadh at the opposite point of the year. Bride and Lugh are poles, complementary figures, who balance each other in the Celtic system of male/female checks and balances. Though a patrilinear society the Celtic was less male dominated than our own has been, and certainly less patriarchal than the Middle Eastern or Mediterranean societies of the time, or than the Christian society that replaced it.

Bride is the goddess of the hearth and of fire, the inspirer of craftsmen and poets. Her ensigns are the fire essence and the rays of the Sun.

Though a Celtic goddess, and associated with the fire sacrifice, a rite not used by pre-Celtic peoples, Bride, in England and Scotland, has absorbed many elements of the local, pre-Celtic Earth goddesses. This, her time of the year, is associated with the visiting of strings and the circumambulation of wells and sacred stones, with the thawing of the streams and the beginning of the year's fishing. The rites of wells and stones may be older fragments of Megalithic religious conceptions. Certainly the stone circles and cairns and the rite of circumambulation, predate the Celtic arrival. Some of the oldest stone circles and altars are found in Mesopotamia and South West Asia, so it is conceivable that the Celts may have brought some of the rounding rites with them from the Indo-European homeland, as well as by having been influenced by these Megalithic rituals, which reached their greatest heights in Western Gaul and Britain, of the pre-Celtic peoples that they encountered on the migrations westward.

John L, Smith, writing in 1780, in *Gaelic Antiquities*, has this to say of circumambulation rites still being practiced by local peasants and attributed to "the old Druids."...that at the thawing time, the supplicant should go, upon three occasions, to a certain well or spring, and there bath himself three times; or make three journeys to some ancient stone, and there pour the new water out upon it and go three times around it in the deiseal direction" (from East to West.) The classic writer, Pliny, ascribes a similar ritual to the Druid rites of healing. He records that the Druids prescribed this rightwise circumambulation of stones and triplicate bathing in the newly thawed water, as part

of their treatment for mental disorders or lingering internal complaints.

Bride's function as goddess of fire and the hearth are purely Celtic characteristics. The prominence of the Sun and of fire symbolism, and the fire sacrifice are uniquely Indo-European, as contrasted with the rites of earlier peoples. They mark a shift from the Neolithic and early Megalithic concern with earth's fertility and continuance, to the importance of the regularly recurring cycles of the Heavens, characteristic of the Indo-European religions. Extrapolating from those sacred stone and cairn beliefs that persisted into nearly modern times, it is found that when the divine spirit is felt to reside in the stone, or cairn, which is an embodiment of Earth and a concentration of it, the offering is poured over the sacred stone, or buried within the circle or cairn. Evidence of both these practices have been found connected with Stone Henge. However, fire sacrifice and solar symbolism is connected with a conception of a usually anthropomorphic deity living at a distance, in the sky, as with Taranis of the Celts, or in an Other World, as with Bride, Fire, then so much like the sun in warmth, is conceived as a connecting link to these deities, as the smoke and the offering rise and disappear. Though the Celts shared with the pre-Celtic peoples burial and other forms of sacrifice, they brought with them this idea of the fire sacrifice in which fire and smoke ascend and carry the offering and the prayers to the sky dwelling or distant deity. A tower or cloud of fire is sometimes used in Irish lore as a symbol for Bride. This association continued right down to her co-option by the Christian church, as "Saint" Bridget, when, according to the hegemony, a pillar of fire appeared over her head at this young girl's investiture into holy orders.

-EB

Oimelc Essay: Brigid and Birch

A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 1984
By Emmon Bodfish

Oimelc, the festival of Bride, Bridgit, Bredes, the daughter of Dagda, and Celtic goddess of fire and the hearth. She is also patroness of poetry and inspiration, which the Gaels regarded as an immaterial, supersensual form of flame. Always one of the most prominent and popular deities, the early Christianizers of Ireland were unable to eradicate her name and worship, and instead adopted, (or co-opted) her into their own pantheon as St. Bridgit. According to Charles Squire, she is still the most popular of Irish saints, and is still easily

> "recognized as the daughter of Dagda. Her Christian attributes, almost all connected with fire, attest her pagan origin. She was born at sunrise; a house in which she dwelt blazed into a flame which reached to heaven; a pillar of fire rose from her head when she took the veil; and her breath gave new life to the dead. As with the British goddess Sul, worshipped at Bath, who, the first century Latin writer Solinus tells us, 'ruled over the boiling spring and at her altar there flamed a perpetual fire which never whitened into ashes, but hardened into a stony mass,'* the sacred flame on Bridgit's altar at Kildare was never allowed to go out."

Bride comes, probably, from the Indo-European stem name Bhethe/a which is also the name for the Birch tree. This tree, with its shining white bark, is still known in Gaelic tradition as "Bride's tree." Bhethe/a is cognate with the Roman Vesta, and also with the Hind Agni, a fire god whose attributes and rites are perfectly parallel to Bride's except for the name and sex change (c.f. Larry Press, A.D.)

"Saint" Bridgit's flame burned on her altar in Kildare from approximately the sixth century until the suppression of the monasteries by Henry VIII of England. "This sacred fire," quotes Charles Squire, "might not be breathed on by the impure human breath. For nineteen nights it was tended by her nuns but on the twentieth night it was left untouched, and kept itself alight miraculously." This echoes the old, pre-Roman, Celtic system of counting by twenties, rather than by tens. With so little of her character and ritual changed, the sixth century Irish gladly accepted the new saint in the stead of the old goddess. A careful examination of Irish hagiology would result in the discover of many other undeserved co-options/canonizations, in which Celtic deities and heroes became Christian worthies.

Bride was the protector of childbirth, the supreme form of creativity, and in the Christian stories and hymns, St. Bridget is portrayed as the "aide woman" or mid-wife of Virgin Mary, though no such figure is mentioned in any of the Nativity gospels. Celtic women prayed to Bride for a safe delivery, and visited her spring with gifts of thankfulness. Fire-springs-fertility is an old, perhaps even pre-Indo-European triad.

As fire is the winter's indoor sun, Bride's festival at Oimelc lies opposite the Sun festival of Lughnasadh, Lugh and Bride being seen as balanced opposites in the Celtic pantheon. Balance, rather than hierarchy, is the pattern of the Celtic system of thought. Druidism is a kathenotheism, emphasizing the worship of deities in sequence, each pertaining to a certain season of the year, instead of arranging Them in a permanent hierarchy as in the Greek or Roman polytheisms.

According to Marvin Harris' Structural Materialism thesis, we worship, love and adore what we need,** based on the premise "god, what have you done for us, *lately?*" Here, at the coldest time of the year, we need a hearth goddess, a protective figure watching over the birth of the lambs, for which Oimelc is named, and assuring the re-birth of Spring.

Structural Materialism and Religious Ritual

Child: "Mr. Druid, why are the sleeves of your robe so long and flowing that they cover your hands?"

Druid: "Join First Orders, child, and when you are standing out there in the cold, grey, dawn waiting to salute the Mid-Winter Sun, you'll find out."

*A small knowledge of chemistry would make this miracle easy to arrange.

**Learn more about Fire Worship; live through a winter without central heat.

Oimelc Essay: Brigit

A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 1985
By Emmon Bodfish

Oimelc the festival of Bride, Bridgit, Bredes, the daughter of Dagda, and Celtic goddess of fire and the hearth. She is also patroness of poetry and the source of creative inspiration, which the Gaels regard as a supersensual form of fire. Always one of the most popular deities, the fifth and sixth century Christianizers of Ireland were unable to eradicate her worship, and instead adopted or rather co-opted her into their own pantheon as St. Bridgit. She was not, however, a Christian. Modern evidence suggests that she was of ancient Indo-European origin, cognate with Agni, god of fire in the Vedic tradition, and with hearth goddesses all over Europe. The masculinizing of goddesses was a frequent occurrence in the East and Middle East as nomadic pastoralists settled down and became agricultural and urbanized.

Bridgit is also associated with the Sun, which in Celtic countries is feminine, "na Ghreine," and which is carried in a chariot and served by a young male deity, son of the Sky God, usually Lugh or an Apollo-like figure. This may be a similar pattern to the one for Danu, the Earth Goddess, whose statue was annually transported through the countryside in a ceremonial wagon attended by a young, possibly virgin male priest. Traces of this ritual come from all over pagan Europe, according to Prof. P.V. Glob, but the best descriptions come from Scandinavia, where the ceremony persisted into Medieval times.

On Oimelc, statues of Bride were carried through the streets to her temple, where a perpetual flame burned on her altar. This continued in Ireland under Celtic Christianity, with only the name being changed to "Saint." There and in Scotland, the tradition is still repeated when the dawn shows pink colors, it is called Bride, the Sun-Maiden, hangs her cloak on the beams of the morning sun. In Bara and the isles, up until the last century, she was addressed at dawn as just that, the Sun-Maiden, and even the thin layer of Christianity, laid on in Ireland, was ignored here.

In the oldest Indo-European traditions, the Moon is masculine and may be associated with Cernunnos, the hunt and forest magic. (J. Duran, after Gimbutas, 1982) The feminine moon goddesses, usually connected with water symbolism, are thought to be of Pre-Indo-European origin.

Bride was one of the most popular deities, and most often worshipped and appealed to by the common people, judging from the statements of early Christianizers and from the large number of charms, spells, and songs to her that persisted into Medieval and some into modern times. An old fire charm for kindling a damp hearth, and in Scotland it's always damp, goes: "To Bride, Ruler of fire, give me/us this little bit of perfect fire, now." Highly effective, I use it daily.

Remember also that matches were invented by a Scotsman, a Gael. The word "match" comes (some think) from the Scot's Gaelic word "Maide" meaning "little stick." The fire sticks used to kindle fresh fire for the sacrifice are spoken of in the Vedic tradition as the Parents of Agni; Birch bark, in the primitive tinder-kit, was known as "Bridget's wood." The line from Bride, early Indo-European fire-goddess, through Agni, who is Bridget in her Asiatic male guise, leads, according to the entomological dictionary, to our word ignite and ignition, via Latin. So to keep all this relevant, when you put your foot down on the accelerator these cold mornings and turn the key, invoke Bride, Goddess of fire:

"Ah, Bhride, Banreigh na Teintean, thoir dhomh an beagan teintean lan."

Hymn to the Three Brighids

A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 1985
Verse for Oimelc by Thomas M. Cross
Alliterative Syllabic Verse in English

Brighid brought us the burning coals
Bright mistress of hearth warmth-ness
Blesses midwives and milk-cows
Bareness banished from us.

Blessed Brighid, Queen of Nature
Daughter of the Dagda comes.
On Oimelc we salute thee
Feeding kindling in fire.

Three Brighids as the winter breathes
Three nights and three heroes born.
On the three hills high fires burn.
Shall we bring our new offering?

Brighid (pronounced Breed or Breej) for proper rhythm)

Notes on Oimelc and Brigit

A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 1985
By Thomas M. Cross

Oimelc (sometimes spelled Imbolg) is known as the pagan Celtic festival from Irish lore is said to translate as "sheep's (ewe's) milk" and has many associations with the goddess Brighit and later with St. Brighid--Christianized as a saint. According to Cormac's Glossary (circa 900,) the goddess Brighit was daughter of the Dagda or as three daughters of the Dagda. She was an expert in poetry, learning, prophecy or divination, healing and craftsmanship. Then, according to the *Life of Brighid* (the saint,) she was born "neither within nor without a house, at sunrise; is fed milk by a cow who is white with red ears " (these colors suggest a likely supernatural origin,) "she hangs her wet cloak on the sun's rays and her house appears ablaze." According to Gerald of Wales (Giraldus Cambrensis) Brighid and her nuns guarded a perpetual sacred fire and Solinus, in the 3rd century A.D. mentioned that Minerva's sanctuary in Britain contained a perpetual fire. It seems most likely then, that Brighid the saint is a euhemerized goddess Brighit. Therefore, Brighit has many functional associations: lactation of sheep and cattle, arts and crafts, learning, healing, fire, the hearth and sun, also with rivers and motherhood, and also she is a triple goddess or triune of goddesses.

The British Minerva that Solinus wrote of, seems to be Briganti (or Brigantia) the tutelary goddess of the Brigantes who is cognate with Brighit. There are many non-Celtic Indo-European cognates and parallels, such as *Berecythia*, *Brihati* of Thraco-Phrygians and Indians...the Indo-European root being "high" or "exalted" etc. Brighit also has Celtic counterparts such as the Gallo-Brittonic *Matronae* or *Matres*, triple mother goddesses sometimes called *Sulevia* and known also in Gaul *Belisama* ("most brilliant") and Romanised as Minerva. As Brigantia, her name survives in Britain as names of two rivers, Braint (in Wales) and Brent (in England,) as Matres or Matronae the name survives as the river Marne in France.

In Christian legend, Brighid the saint appears as mid-wife to Mary thus reflecting her motherly functions and Lá Brighid (law breed) (St. Bridget's Day) seems to be a purificatory festival—in commemoration of the purification of Mary. Fire was a purificatory element to the ancient Celts as fire was used to purify cattle as in needfire and Bealtaine rituals. Brighid as fire and motherhood goddess was very suited then as a mid-wife to Mary in this purification. On Lá Brighid or St. Brighid's day, a doll made from a churndash as the image of Brighid called a *Brideog* was carried about from village to village and all women had to bow before it as it was paraded about. On this day, rushes were woven into crosses, called St. Brighid's cross, which bring good luck on harvests and yields. These crosses resemble the ancient triskalion and swastika more than the do Christian crosses. The triskelion in the three legged or armed type of pictograph that today is an emblem of the Isle of Man and Manannan Mac Lir. These symbols of the triskalion and swastika were ancient solar symbols and were used in Indo-European religion--although the swastika has come to be popularly associated with Nazis and the Third Reich of Hitler it was depicted by the ancient Germanic peoples and also by Greeks, Indians, and Celts. In ancient Germany there was, as described by Tacitus, a spring festival celebrated around a mother earth goddess called Nerthus, in which her image was paraded around in a wagon to communicate blessings for peace and a good year. This, of course, parallels Oimelc and similar customs around Brighid.

As Brighit was a triple goddess, there were many other triple goddesses in Celtic as well as other Indo-European mythologies. Brighit was mother of Brian, Iuchir and Iucharbha (also called Mac Cuill, Mac Cecht and Mac Greine; sons of the Hazel, Plough and Sun) who married another triune of goddesses; Banbha, Fodhla, and Eriu whose names are metaphoric for Ireland (Eriu is an older spelling of Eire.) Sometime Brian, Iuchir and Iucharbha (or Uar) were known as the three sons of Danu, perhaps making Danu and Brighit either the same or confused. Danu also seems cognate with Danu, Mother of Urtra in the *Rig Veda,* Vrtra being the same as the Old Persian god Verethragna. Vrtra was a demonic god opposed to Indra to the Vedic Indians, but Verethragna was a hero god. At any rate, Danu seems to go back to an Indo-European root having to do with "dripping or flowing water" also the root of the name Danube and other central and eastern European river names. The Norns of Norse-Germanic myth, the Parcae of Roman Myth and Moirai of Greek myth are all triple in form and are what we call the Fates who control the destiny of mankind. The Morrigu* of Irish myth seems to correspond as triple in form also, as Badb, Macha and Nemain, however, they seem to be better paralleled in Germanic mythology as the Valkyries in function. Both are war goddesses who, as birds, pick up the slain in battle. Badb is the hooded crow who with her beak pecks at the corpses. Valkyries sometimes appear in bird form and they take slain warriors to Valhalla. In Greek myth, the three Moirai (Fates) were joined by other goddesses, such as, the three Graces and the nine Muses, also a multiple of three. However it was Pallas Athene or Athena who corresponds in function to Brighit as well as Hestia and Artemis. If one could group Athena, Artemis and Hestia as a triune one would have a parallel to Brighit.

Thus we have:

Celtic	Greek	Norse
Brighit or	3 Nornir	3 Moirai
3 Brighits	Urd Clotho	Verdandi and Skuld
3 Matrona	Lachesis	
The 3 Morrigan**	Atropos	13 Valkyries--
	3 Furies	
Banba, Fodhla,	3 Graces & 9 Muses	The Norn
Erin	3goddesses of Ireland	

Germanic: Eos (Eastre) Goddess of Easter
Greek: Austron Goddess of Easter & dawn.
Vedic: Usha Goddess of Dawn
Welsh: Arianrhod?? Goddess of Dawn

*Welsh equivalent of an aspect of Morrigan in Aeron (from Brittanic Agrona) a goddess of battle and slaughter; Aerfen (Welsh) goddess of the "end of battle" (cf. Aeron and Aerfeu to Badb and Nemain.) Rhiannon may be compared to Macha. Note: The three daughters of Dôn (Danu) in Welsh myth: *Gwernen* (alder,) *Elan* (push, drive) *Maelan* (profit, material gain)--all are also names of rivers. In Welsh myth there is Modron mother of Mabon (Mabon Ap Modron) from Gallo-Britannic *Matronae.*

**Badd, Macha, and Nemain

Sources:

The Cult of Brighid, Chap. 4 of *Mother Goddesses*, article by Donal Ó Cathasaigh
Proinsias Mac Cana, *Celtic Mythology*, Hamlyn
Alwyn and Brinley Rees, *Celtic Heritage*, Thames and Hudson
Padraic O Farrell, *Superstitions of the Irish Country People*, Mercier
Tacitus, *Germania* (with *Agricola* etc.) Penguin. Trans. H. Mattingly

Oimelc Essay: Baby Naming

A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 1986
By Emmon Bodfish

Oimelc, Thaw, Lady Day, birth of the lambs and goats. This is the Festival of Bride Fire Goddess, Divine Midwife, Ruler of the hearth and the byre, and guardian of birth.

It was to Brid that the old Celts prayed and sacrificed when a child was being born. Then, after She was thanked for a live birth, the child was ushered into the Celtic community by the Druid naming ceremony. The parents in ancient Britain did not name the child, but rather the foremost Druid of the clan or fife offered a name, based on the circumstance at the birth. In the case of "great souls," heroes or heroines, a Druid connected with the future child's family might receive a vision, and prophesy a name and destiny for the child.

Françoise Le Roux in her study, *Les Druides*, describes three instances of Druid namings that have survived in the literary fragments of Pagan Celtic Culture. (So much of the rich Celtic Bardic work was lost in the Romanization and then more again in the Christianization of Europe and the Isles; we must piece together a heritage from what is left to us, mostly by the Irish Bardic Schools, and in the oral folk traditions. We have nothing comparable to the Bramanas of India, or even the Islandic/Nordic mythologies, though there is ample evidence

that such a body of knowledge and art existed in the Celtic World.) A re-naming could occur in adult life, in the case of equites, (warrior-caste) or Druids, on the basis of their deeds, particularly if the warrior left his household and became a member of a different clan.

Ms. LeRoux (Translated from the French by Jean Elizabeth)

> "The Druids intervened at the beginning of life, just, as we have seen, they occupied themselves with death. In Ireland, they officiated by giving a name, based on a particular detail or noteworthy happening. It is this that Cuchulainn, formerly named Setanta, got his name from the Druid, Cathbad. Having killed the fighting dog of the blacksmith, Culann, he, himself, rendered such equitable judgment that King Conchobar and his Druid, Cathbad, were astonished at the little boy:
>
> "What judgment will you render on this boy?' said Conchobar. 'If a young dog of the same line exists in Ireland, I will bring him up just to the point where he is as capable as his father. Meanwhile, I will myself be the dog who will protect the clocks, the goods and the land of Culann.' 'You have rendered a good judgment, little boy.' Said Conchobar. Cathbad declared, 'In all truth, we could not have rendered a better one ourselves. Why don't we name you Cu Chulainn, the dog of Culann?' … And from this moment onward he had this famous name, Cuchulainn, because he had killed the blacksmith, Culann's, dog." (Ogam, XI, 214-215)

King Conchobar's naming is even more interesting:

> "A child was born with a worm in each hand. He was taken, in the fetal position to the river that was named Conchobar; the river passed by him on his back. Cathbad took the child and gave him the name of the river, Conchobar, son of Fachtna; having taken the boy and put him on his lap, Cathbad gave thanks for him, and prophesized about him." (Ogam, XII, 240)

A simple sign was enough. At the beginning of the *Longes mac n-Usnig*, the Exile of Usnech's Sons, the Ulates were assembled for a great feast in the house of Fedlimid. They received the announcement that Fedlimid's wife is with child. The Druid, Cathbad, then foretells that the baby will be a girl of extraordinary beauty and magnetism. She will have skin like snow, blond hair, magnificent blue eyes, ruddy cheeks, flawless teeth, and lips as red as coral. But, Cathbad adds, in order to get this treasure of a child, the Ulates will end up fighting each other.

> "Cathbad then put a hand on the mother's stomach and the unborn babe stirred under the touch of his hand. He said that in all truth the baby would be a girl, that Derdiu would be her name, and that she would be pure, surrounded by evil." ("True, but surrounded by weakness.")

She must have also had considerable Bardic talent, by the later accounts and the poems that are attributed to her. I include a translation of one that survives. It is from the Penguin Classic *A Celtic Miscellany* and her name is spelled Deirdre, in the Scottish fashion, translator unclear, the editor, perhaps, Ms. Betty Radice.

-E.B.

> 21. Deirdre Remembers a Scottish Glen
>
> Glen of fruit and fish and pools, its peaked hill of loveliest wheat, it is distressful for me to think of it—glen of bees, of long-horned wild oxen.
>
> Glen of cuckoos and thrushes and blackbirds, precious is its cover to every fox; glen of wild garlic and watercress, of woods, of shamrock and flowers, leafy and twisting crested.
>
> Sweet are the cries of the brown-backed dappled deer under the oak-wood above the bare hill-tops, gentle hinds that are timid lying hidden in the great-treed glen.
>
> Glen of the rowans with scarlet berries, with fruit fit for every flock of birds; a slumbrous paradise for the badgers in their quiet burrows with their young.
>
> Glen of the blue-eyed vigorous hawks, glen abounding in every harvest, glen of the ridged and pointed peaks, glen of blackberries and sloes and apples.
>
> Glen of the sleek brown round-faced otters that are pleasant and active in fishing; many are the white-winged stately swans, and salmon breeding along the rocky brink.
>
> Glen of the tangled branching yews, dewy glen with level lawn of kine; chalk-white starry sunny glen, glen of graceful pearl-like high-bed women.

Oimelc Essay: Candlemas

A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 1987
By Emmon Bodfish

Oimelc, the festival of Bride, Bridgit, Bredes, the Sun-Maiden, Celtic Goddess of Light, Fire, and the Hearth. She is the patroness of craftsmen, especially those that use fire, smithies and workers in gold. Gold is her color, and she hangs her cloak on the beams of the morning Sun. She is also the patroness of poets, source of Bardic inspiration, which, to the Gaels was a supersensory form of fire descending upon the mind of the poet. The symbol of fire-in-the-water signified her divine inspiration, and her favored poets could see fire burning at the bottom of her sacred wells and springs.

The Festival of Lights, Candlemas, on the Continent, a celebration presided over by "Lucinda," from the Latin "the light bringer," is rooted in old Oimelc festivals. The Light is now returning; the days grow perceptibly longer, thaw begins in the more southerly parts of Europe and in Ireland, and the sheep and kine begin to give birth. In this association, and as

Goddess of the Hearth, Bride is also the Goddess of birth. (To co-opt her worship, which they couldn't eradicate, the Christians invented Bridget, who was mid-wife to Mary and Jesus. No such character is mentioned in the Bible.)

In the R.D.N.A. tradition, Oimelc is celebrated when the Sun is mid-way between Solstice and Equinox. There is the milk of a sheep or a goat in the chalice, and thanks are given that the coldest time of the year is past. The Earth Mother begins to stir in Her sleep, and dream of Spring.

Oimelc Essay: Bride

A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 1988
By Emmon Bodfish

Oimelc now is the time of Breedes, Bridget, Goddess of the hearth, Ruler of fire, Lucinda, Vesta, candle light parades, Lady Day, the Thaw. Bride was one of the most popular of the pan-Celtic Deities, and in Pagan times a perpetual fire burned on Her altar in Kildare. She was attended by a female priesthood. She is also the Dawn Maiden who hangs Her cloak on the rays of the morning sun. The sun is feminine in Gaelic, and in Scot's folk tradition.

34. To the Sun

Greeting to you, sun of the seasons, as you travel the skies on high, with your strong steps on the wing of the heights; you are the happy mother of the stars.

You sink down in the perilous ocean without harm and without hurt; you rise up on the quiet wave like a young queen in flower.

Scottish Gaelic; traditional folk prayer.

From now until Equinox we worship Bride and give thanks for fire. When you light your fire or candle during these days, try, this old Scot's verse, which is, I think, in a direct oral tradition from old Paganism.

"Unto Bride, Ruler of Fire,
Give us this little comfort now."

MAD SWEENEY'S NEWS

I have news for you; the stag bells, winter snows, summer has gone.

Wind high and cold, the sun low, short its course, the sea running high.

Deep red the bracken, its shape is lost; the wild goose raised its accustomed cry.

Cold has seized the birds' wings; season of ice, this is my news.

Irish; author unknown; ninth century
A CELTIC MISCELLANY

Oimelc Essay: Brigid's Monastery

A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 1989
By Emmon Bodfish

Oimelc, festival of Bride, Bridgit, Bredes, the daughter of Dagda, and Celtic goddess of fire and the hearth. She is patroness of Bards and craftsmen. She sends poetic inspiration which the Gaels regarded as an immaterial and suprasensual form of fire. Always one of the most prominent and popular deities, it is thought to be She who the Romans called the "Minerva of the Gauls." The early Christianizers of Ireland were unable to eradicate Her worship and instead adopted, or co-opted Her into their own pantheon as "Saint" Bridget. According to Charles Squire in *Celtic Myth and Legend*, She is still the most popular of all Irish saints with the country folk, and is still easily "recognized as the daughter of Dagda. Her Christian attributes, almost all connected with fire attest her pagan origin. She was born at sunrise; a house in which she dwelt blazed into a flame which reached to heaven; a pillar of fire rose from her head when she took the veil; and her breath gave new life to the dead." This last attribute of the "saint" may be one of the powers of the Goddess which is recorded nowhere else. Knowledge of it was lost when the Druidic teachings were destroyed by the Roman Church and its soldiers It is preserved only in folk memory and here in the co-opters' own writings.

She may be related to the British Goddess Sul, worshipped at Bath, and of whom the first century Latin writer Solinus says "She ruled over the boiling spring and at her altar there blazed a perpetual fire which never whitened into ashes, but hardened into a stony mass."* A perpetual fire burned on the altar of the Druidic sanctuary of Bride at Kildare we learn from both Christian and Pre-Christian sources. Even after the sanctuary was stormed and taken over by Christians, the fire was kept burning, and some of the Goddess' traditions such as that having all and only women clerics in attendance, were continued until the thirteenth century. By then the Roman Church had enough power to impose its monopoly by force and the persecutions were beginning on the Continent. A British bishop declared the sacred fire "pagan" and ordered it extinguished in 1220 A.D.

*a small knowledge of chemistry would make this easy to arrange.

Oimelc Essay: Triumph of Light

A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 1990
By Emmon Bodfish

Oimelc is one of the major high days of the Druid calendar. For the Celts, a pastoral people, this holiday marks the birth of the first lambs and the lactation of the ewes. Sheep's milk was an important food in those times, as it was among many herding peoples into this century. The calves would not be born until late April or May.

Oimelc marks the end of "dark January," as it is called by the Gaels. The days are noticeably longer now, and we are past the nadir of the year. The light and life invoked on Yule Solstice are indeed returning.

This festival is presided over by Bride (Bridgit, Breedes) as Lugh presided over Lughnasadh at the opposite point on the Celtic Wheel of the Year. Bride and Lugh are poles, complementary figures, who balance each other across the calendar in another of the Druidic systems of checks and balances. The Druids found good in the balance between

opposite poles of a quality, light and dark, summer and winter, woman and man, producing and harvesting. Though a patrinlineal society, the Celtic world was less male dominated than our own has been, and certainly less patriarchal than the Middle East or the Mediterranean societies of the time, or than the Christian society that replaced it.*

In this the Indo-European cultures and many of those of the Far East contrasted with the Mid-Eastern group of religions from which Christianity and its offshoots developed. There good was defined as the final and total victory of one pole of a quality over the other. Thus it's light triumphing over darkness, summer over winter, man against Nature. They have partly succeeded; in the middle of the Arabian desert, it is always sunny. Summer has triumphed. The deserts are spreading.

*See Professor Green on the status of Celtic women in *The Gods of Celts,* and Jean Markale's work *Women of the Celts*. Both can be gotten at remaindered price from Publishers' Central Bureau.

Oimelc Essay: End of Publication

A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 1991
By Emmon Bodfish

Oimelc, the festival of Bridee, Celtic Goddess of fire, the hearth, poetry and inspiration, Patroness of birth, Dawn-maiden, daughter of the Dagda who hangs her cloak on the beams of the morning sun! Here we are in the time of new beginnings.

The Druid Missal-Any will be looking for a new home. The pollution, crowdedness and difficulties of the Bay Area have increased, along with our financial means, to the point where your editor deems an atmosphere of the mountains a benefit. As we will be putting time and energy into locating rural property and relocating, the Missal-Any hereby declares a hiatus in its nine years of continuous publication. Anyone who would like to serve as interim Assistant Editor-Collator and Errand-runner-in-Chief should write to us at the usual address:

P.O. Box 142, Orinda, California, 94563.

If you would like a refund, rather than waiting for publication to resume, write us. Back issues are still available.

Oimelc Essay: Various Brigits

A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc, 2001
By Stacey Weinberger

Oimelc, the end of Winter. It is the turning point in the Season of Sleep. Now is when the ewes come into milk and the first lambs are born. It is the beginning of new life. This can be seen even at the Orinda Grove site with the budding of new plant life.

Oimelc is the festival of Bride, Brigid, Breedes, daughter of the Dagda, Sun-Maiden, Daughter of the Dawn, Celtic Goddess of fire and the hearth, and of birth. She is patroness of poets and bards, smiths and craftspeople. Bride has perhaps had the longest enduring cult of any Celtic goddess. This is evidenced by Her aspects being co-opted by the early Christianizers into the figure of St. Brigid of Kildare. Even as a saint, Her identity continued to be associated with fire. No doubt the "legend" of St. Brigid's monastery at Kildare (from cill dair meaning chapel of the oak—possibly a telling connection) of a group of pagan holy women originally tending the perpetual sacred fire of a pre-Christian sanctuary on the site suggests that it is based on historic precedence.

Her eternal flame continued to burn in Christian times at Her sanctuary at Kildare and was never allowed to go out--a tradition which sprung from its pagan Celtic roots. This sacred fire was tended for nineteen nights by nineteen nuns who each took a turn to feed the flame. On the twentieth night, St. Brigid Herself was said to take over. That night the nineteenth nun put the logs beside the fire and said: "Brigid, guard your fire. This is your night." In the morning, the wood was found burned and the fire miraculously stayed lit. The fire was not extinguished from the foundation of the monastery in the fifth century but once in the thirteenth century until the reign of Henry VIII.

Sister Mary Minehan, a Brigidine Sister (Sisters of St. Brigid)--a restoration of the Ancient Order founded in 1807 to revive again the spirit of St. Brigid--relit St. Brigid's flame on Oimelc in 1993 at Solas Bhride, a Christian Community Centre for Celtic Spirituality in Kildare. And so to this day Her sacred flame continues to burn.

"Unto Bride, Ruler of Fire,
Give us this little comfort now."

Oimelc Essay: Brigit and the Flocks

A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 2002
By Stacey Weinberger

Oimelc, one of the major High Days in the Druid calendar, is the Festival of Bride, Brigit, Brid, Dawn Maiden, Patroness of Poets, Bards, and Smiths, Celtic Goddess of the hearth, healing, inspiration, childbirth, cattle, and crops. Oimelc marks the end of the dark days of winter and the beginning of spring. Noticeable is the increasing length of the daylight hours.

Originally a pastoral festival, Oimelc was associated with fertility. The Irish word for Oimelc, Imbolc, is derived from the root word m(b)olg meaning lactation. Oimelc stems from the Old Celtic Ouimelko "ewe's milk." This was the time of year in agricultural societies when the ewes were first coming into milk and the beginning of the lambing season. This was important as milk was the first fresh food since the end of the harvest at Samhain. Sheep and Cattle were valued possessions both in human and underworldly society, and this is especially true of herding societies, such as early Celtic societies. The classical writers such as Pliny and Strabo comment on the use of milk and milk-products in Gaul, Germania, and Britain, showing its importance in those cultures.

That Oimelc is also known as Bride's Feast Day (La Fheill Brighde in Scotland) shows Bride's association with the fertility festival. Though little of the goddess Bride is known in detail, many of her associations were carried over into early Christian accounts of the saint. Anne Ross writes In her *Everyday Life of the Pagan Celts* that in the later Christian tradition, St. Bride's association with sheep and pastoral economy and fertility in general would seem to be carry-overs from her pagan predecessor's role. In the *Life of St. Brighid* there are also various pagan attributes. She was said to be fed from the milk of a white red-eared cow, which was her totem animal as a pagan goddess. In Irish mythology white animals with red ears were considered supernatural or otherworldly. She was protectoress of the flocks and harm would come to any that harmed her cattle. She had the power to increase milk production. In artwork, she was often shown to be accompanied by a cow, which Miranda Green writes is a manifestation of her mother Bofhionn, the White Cow who is the goddess of the sacred river Boyne. She is associated with the dandelion, thought it quite possibly could have been coltsfoot, a plant with similar attributes, which flowers closer

to Oimelc. It is said that the milky white juice in the stems fed the young lambs.

Bride's association with the flocks is still evident in modern times. In the Carmina Gadelica, a collection of hymns and incantations by Alexander Carmichael records a charm for stock as recited by Archibald Currie, shoemaker. Charms are a poetic form dating back to Indo-European times used for protection.

The charm placed of Brigit
About her neat, about her kine,
About her horses, about her goats,
About her sheep, about her lambs;

Each day and night,
In heat and in cold,
Each early and late,
Each darkness and light;

To keep them from marsh,
To keep them from rock,
To keep them from pit,
To keep them from bank;

To keep them from eye,
To keep them from omen,
To keep them from spell,
South and north;

To keep them from venom,
East and west,
To keep them from envy,
And from wiles of the wicked;

To keep them from hound,
And keep them from each other's horns,
From the birds of the high moors,
From the beasts of the hills;

To keep them from wolf,
From ravaging dog,
To keep them from fox,
From the swiftness of the Fiann.*

*Fiann were hired warriors.

Spring Equinox

Spring Equinox Notes

The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1976
By Isaac Bonewits and Robert Larson

The Spring Equinox, although sometimes known as the Festival of the Trees, is better known as the feast of (the Fertility Goddess) *Eostara,* or "Easter." It is a celebration of the returning of life to the Earth. Rabbits, eggs and children are sacred at this feast and Pagans in need of fertility talismans now color hollow eggs and pass them through the ceremonial fires (quickly) to take home and hang over their beds and in their barns. A fascinating source of almost forgotten Paleopagan symbols can be found by examining carefully the fantastically decorated eggs produced by folk artists from Europe (especially Eastern Europe and Russia,) Mexico and South America.

A Minor High Day, it usually takes place around March 21st or so. On the night before, some Hasidic Druids stayed up until dawn, reading meditations about trees, eating the fruits of various trees and singing hymns about trees. Among many Paleopagan cultures in Southern Europe, the Spring Equinox was the date of the New Year (instead of Samhain, as it is among the Celts) and indeed, many Druids refer to this holiday as "the New Year for Trees." Adding a bit to the confusion is the fact that some Neopagan groups call this holiday "Lady Day."

More Spring Equinox Notes

Pentalpha Journal, Volume 2, Issue 4 Whole Number 9
Spring Equinox March 20/21, 1979 c.e.
By Isaac Bonewits

The Spring Equinox, although sometimes known as the Festival of the Trees, is better known as the feast of Eostara (the Fertility Goddess,) or "Easter." It is a celebration of the returning of life to the Earth. Rabbits, eggs and children are sacred at this feast and Pagans in need of fertility talismans now color hollow eggs and pass them through the ceremonial fires (quickly) to take home and hang over their barns. A fascinating source of almost forgotten Paleopagan symbols can be found by examining carefully the fantastically decorated eggs produced by folk artists from Europe (especially Eastern Europe and Russia,) Mexico and South America.

A Minor High Day, the Equinox takes place at 9:15 p.m. PST on March 20th, therefore the Druid celebration takes place starting at sunset March 20th and continues until sunset March 21st. On the eve of the holiday (3/20,) some Hasidic Druids stay up until dawn, reading meditations about trees, eating the fruits of various trees and singing hymns about trees. Among many Paleopagan cultures in Southern Europe, the Spring Equinox was the date of the New Year (instead of Samhain, as it is among Celts) and indeed, many Druids refer to this holiday as "the New Year for Trees." Adding a bit to the confusion is the fact that some Neopagan groups call this holiday "Lady Day" (which we consider to be Oimelc.)

Spring Equinox Essay: Festivals and Eggs

A Druid Missal-Any Spring Equinox 1983
Volume 7 Number 2
By Emmon Bodfish

Equinox, a Druid Minor High Day, the emphasis is Balance." Some customs of this season, still held over from pre-Christian times, include colored and fancy eggs, and the "Easter Bunny" who brings them, though this was not the original sequence or association.

Nora Chadwick. a noted Celtic historian, describes the spring rite of the "coloring of the Cakes end Eggs," noted by classic authors in their descriptions of Druid customs. Egg hunts, egg rolling games and rituals are still current in Ireland, Lithuania and Eastern Europe and may have a pre-Indo-European origin. Decorated eggs, and painted clay models of eggs are a frequent theme of Pre-Aryan, Balkan culture. They are part of the ensign of the Bird Goddess, whose worship seems to have been particular to spring, and to the time of the spring rains, to judge from holdovers into Greek times. Eggs are also part of the imagery of the supreme Goddess of the Old-Europe culture. In this connection, they represent the Cosmic Egg, laid by a swan or Nile goose, which was said to begin the world. Small painted clay eggs were included inside statues of this Great Goddess, as in Marija Gimbutas' drawing below.

> "A Cosmic Egg may also be laid by a mythical water birds: this myth is almost universally known between Africa and the Arctic Zone; it is recorded in ancient civilizations and was known among hunting and fishing tribes. In an Ancient Egyptian myth, the Cosmic Egg was laid by a Nile Goose which was worshipped as the great chatterer, the creator of the world. According to the Orphic story, untreated Nyx (Night) existed first and was regarded as a crest black-winged bird hovering over a vast darkness. Though unmated, she laid an egg from which flew gold-winged Eros, while from the two parts of the shell Ouranos and Gaia (Heaven and Earth) were trotted. The beginning of the myth must lie in the Paleolithic era."

The Egg, plus chatter, words, began the world.

The Bunny wasn't one at all, it was the Hare, not the rabbit, that was the sacred animal among the Celts and Germans. Julius Caesar, in his War Commentaries on Gaul, describes the Gauls as keeping "hares and certain other animals to amuse themselves, and which they do not eat." (or hunt.) The hare was seen as a messenger animal, associated with prophecy and madness. The March Hare brought in the Spring and gave the seeds their fertility, or withheld it. To run afoul of him caused madness. By the Middle Ages, the madness element predominated, and he came to be regarded as a demonic species. Many pagan ensigns and symbols suffered like defamation; and prophecy has always been associated with madness in Indo-European traditions. And underlying the egg theme, the theme of the March Hare is solidly Indo-European; its sacred and tabooed nature extends to most of the eastern European languages and early cultures. If language is the oldest witness to history, as Lockwood asserts, then the Cult of the Hare must go back to at least 3,500 BC. and the second wave of Indo-European expansion before Celtic, Germanic and Italic languages diverged. In these, the true word for hare, hara/haso, was tabooed, and euphemisms were commonly invented for it in everyday speech.

Our American Ground Hog Day, may be a dim and distant reflection of the March Hare theme, with its element of prophecy for an early or late spring. In the days of plowing and sowing magic, it was by the hare's behavior that people tried to foretell the spring weather and the prospects for the seeds about to be sown. By the shadows of posts and menhirs, not groundhogs, and by the points of the sun's risings, the priestly castes at the Great Henges determined the day of the Equinox and kept the calendar of sowing and reaping in line with the Heavens.

Spring Equinox Essay: Plowing Charm and New Year

A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 1984
By Emmon Bodfish

Equinox, the beginning of spring, which is marked by the Sun's crossing of the Celestial Equator, the first point of Aries. For a diurnal cycle, the day and night are of equal length. The emphasis of the holiday is on renewal, active preparation for the summer to come. The stones of some of the Megaliths mark this sunrise, by this point the plowing and seeding must be done. In numerous cultures these were sacred activities, from the Charming of the Plow in pagan Germany, a celebration which the Anglo-Saxons brought with them to England, to the ritual plowing of the first furrow in a special sacred field by the reigning Chinese Emperor. Our word for acre, 43,560 sq. ft. of land, comes from the Gaelic word "acadh" meaning a field.

Erec, Erec, Erec,
Mother of Earth
Hail to thee, Earth,
Mother of Men

Be fruitful in
God's embrace
Filled with food
For the use of men.

This was written down in the Leechbook circa 950 AD in England. It is the ancient Indo-European Earth Mother and Sky Father, despite five hundred years of Christian influence.

In England, Spring Equinox was celebrated as Lady Day, now fixed at March 25, to make it a dependable legal holiday while the Equinox shifts yearly between the 20th and the 22nd. Before the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in England in 1752, this holiday was the beginning of the New Year, legal and fiscal. In the Gaelic world, the new season, Samhra, wouldn't begin until Bealtaine, but the New Year had commenced on Samhain on November 5th or 6th. Between Samhain and Bealtaine is the "Season of Sleep" and May Day begins the new "Season of Life."

In modern Reform Druidism there is no whiskey, or intoxicant, in the chalice at services all through this Season of Sleep, only distilled water, the Waters-of-Sleep. Only water is poured out in the Offerings to the trees. It is the season of the Pine and the Birch. The latter, Bride's tree, begins her season at Equinox. It has been a time of rest and in-drawing, the re-couping of our energies. Now life starts to re-awaken and we begin preparations for the major celebration of the Druid year, Bealtaine, the full-blown Rose.

Spring Equinox Essay: Plowing and New Years

A Druid Missal-Any. Spring Equinox, 1985
By Emmon Bodfish

Equinox, the beginning of Spring, one the four Minor High Days in the Druid tradition. The Sun crosses the celestial equator, from Southern Declination to Northern, and the day and the night are of equal length. This is the time of renewal, the beginning of preparations for the summer to come. The holiday is older than Druidism; stones in the megaliths mark this sunrise. Plowing and planting begin. It is the season of egg gathering. The giving of painted eggs as gifts and offerings predates Christianity, or the introduction of chickens, originally a wild Indian pheasant, to European barnyards.

The Leechbook records this chant of English (Brythonic, really) farmers in the spring rites circa 950 A.D. The Christian church had not yet begun its campaign in earnest to expunge old pagan ways or else re-name and "Christianize" them as it would over the next five hundred years.

Erec! Erec! Erec!
Mother of Earth
Hail to thee, Earth!
Mother of mortals.

Be fruitful in
The God's embrace
Filled with food
For the use of man.

In England, prior to the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in 1752, Spring Equinox was the beginning of the new year. It is still celebrated there as "Lady Day." In the Gaelic world, the new season, Samhra, summer, won't begin until Bealtaine, but the new year began on Samhain in November.

The emphasis of this season is balance, as day and night now stand balanced. Time to make recompense for old mistakes and receive the reward of our winter's patience. The tree is the birch, Bride's tree, the tree of Spring and Dawn, at the East point of the circle.

Spring Equinox Essay: Sequanna and Rivers

A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 1986
By Emmon Bodfish

Spring Equinox, the Sun crosses the Equator and shines down over the Northern tropics. It is dawn at the North Pole. This is one of the four Minor Celtic High Days. The grain of the last sheaf, made in to the Corn-doll last autumn.(see Fall Equinox Missal-Any, '85,) has been taken down from its place of honor, torn apart and scattered over the field prior to plowing. This holiday is one of renewal: planting, cleaning, fasting and "taking the bathes," visiting holy wells and springs. In Southern Britain, if I recall an oral tradition correctly, it was associated with Sulis, Goddess of hot springs and the Rites at Bath, and perhaps in Gaul with Sequanna, Goddess of the source of the River Seinne. Here, in the valley of Dijon, numerous votive offerings to Her have been found, and traditions dramatically emphasizing Her powers to cure the sick were recorded by classic writers. (c.f. Barry Cunliffe, though he does not list his sources for this.) Twenty-two wooden plaques, carved in relief to represent internal organs, one, better preserved, showing anatomically accurate diction of trachea and lungs, have been recovered.

"The Celtic religious sense was strongly marked by the principle of reciprocity. To save a life, another would be sacrificed. Similarly," Cunliffe states, "if sacred waters were used by someone wanting a cure, a gift in exchange was expected of the user." Votive offerings found in this spring portray the hopes of the pilgrims who brought them, like the exquisite statue of the little blind girl from the shrine of Sequanna. Other carvings are of organs or limbs, perhaps to communicate with the Goddess or to focus the ritual's participants attention on the afflicted part. Wooden votives were carved from the heartwood of the Oak, and may depict the entire figure of the donor, sometimes holding the offering he has brought; a lamb, a jewel, a bar of silver. Most have very individual faces, as contrasted with the smooth, archetypical faces of Celtic God statues.

This is a time to get healthy; do a sauna or visit the Hot Springs, re-organize and get ready for Beltaine.

Spring Equinox Essay: Epona and Horses

A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 1987
By Emmon Bodfish

Spring Equinox, balance, awakening, a time of planting, a time in keeping with the theme of Irish Macha, Patroness of farmers, the Horse–goddess, who could run with the speed of a horse or become one. On the Continent She was called Epona. She was Rhiannon in Wales. She is a shape-shifting Goddess who can appear in human form, or in the form of a mare, or of a woman mounted on horseback. She is responsible not only for the fertility of herds, but of the ground as well. She is described in Celtic myths as the mother of kings or as capable of bestowing sovereignty on the rightful king. She is represented by the white mare whom the Kings of Ireland espouse at their coronations. Prof. J. Duran speculates that Macha and the mare represents the agrarian classes, the "Tuath," the third of the three castes in ancient Celtic society. (The other two were the warriors and the Druids. "Caste" is a poor word since these categories were not rigid, and some movement between them was possible, but it is used in Indo-European studies for lack of a better term.)

Macha may have been the Patroness of the Tuath, as Bride was the Patroness of Bards, and as the Morgani were associated with the warrior caste. Llyr, or Manannan McLlyr, it is said, also has ancient equine themes running through His worship. There is a theory that He was a Horse-deity back on the steppes of the Indo-European homeland, and that only later, when the Celtic peoples reached the Atlantic coast and the Island, did He become a Sea-god. He is always portrayed in a chariot, or riding in a boat, or in a combination of both, as in His sea-shell boat drawn by porpoises. This considered, He may be more a charioteer or vehicular god than a Horse-deity.* Epona rides astride. Cernnunos, the other shape-shifting, fertility-bestowing deity, never rides. He sits on the ground among the wild beasts, and is spoken of as running with the deer. These latter two figures hark back to the earliest Eur-Asian levels, very likely to the Paleolithic. Similar figures may

have been common to the Ice Age peoples of Eastern Europe and West Asia from whom the Proto-Indo-Europeans sprang. In that early time, in the art of the Magdelinian hunters, a similar theme can be seen.

The Paleolithic dancer wearing a horse-head mask is a woman. The men wear disguises of horned animals, bear, or mammoths. The connection between Macha, the female shape-shifter-shaman-magician, and the horse may be very old, paralleling the male enchanter of horned animals, from the time when the Horned Man and the Horse Woman danced in Paleolithic caves.

*Could He be persuaded to protect us nowadays in our cars?

Spring Equinox Essay: Eggs and Rabbits

A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 1988
By Emmon Bodfish

Equinox, a Minor Druid High Day, the emphasis is on balance. Some customs of the season which are hold over from pre-Christian times include the colored and fanciful eggs and the "Easter Bunny" who brings them, though this was not the original sequence nor association.

Nora Chadwick, a noted historian, describes the spring rite of the "offering of the cakes and eggs," recorded by classic authors in their descriptions of Druidic customs. Egg hunt, egg rolling games and rituals are still current in Ireland, Lithuania and eastern Europe, and may have a Pre-Indo-European origin, decorated eggs and painted clay models of eggs are a frequent theme of Aryan Balkan culture. They are part of the ensign of the Bird Goddess, whose worship seems to have been particular to spring and to the time of the spring rains, to judge from holdovers into Classic Greek times. Eggs are also part of the imagery of the Supreme Goddess of Old-European culture. In this connection they represent the Cosmic Egg, laid by the swan or Nile Goose, which was said to have begun the world. Small painted clay eggs where included inside statues of this Great Goddess, as in Marija Gimbutas drawings reproduced here.

A Cosmic Egg may also be associated with they mythical water bird of Creation. This myth is almost universal between Africa and the Artic; it was recorded in the scripts and hieroglyphs of the literate civilizations and sung in the oral traditions of hunting and fishing tribes.

In an ancient Egyptian myth, the Cosmic Egg was laid by the Nile Goose which was worshipped as the "Great Chatterer," the creator of the world and of language. According to the Orphic story, uncreated Nyx (night) existed first and was pictured as a great black-winged bird hovering over the vast darkness. Though unmated, she produced an egg out of which flew gold-winged Eros, while the two halves of the shell Ouranos and Gaia (Heaven and Earth) were created. The beginning of the myth must lie in the Paleolithic ear.[1] The Egg, plus chatter, that is words, began the world.

The Easter bunny wasn't at all. It was a hare. The hare, not the rabbit, was the sacred animal of the Celts and Germans. Julius Caesar, in his war commentaries on Gaul, describes the Gauls and keeping "hares and certain other animals to amuse themselves, and which they do not eat" (nor hunt.) But the motive was more likely propitiation and divination than "amusement." The hare was seen as a messenger animal capable of travel between this and the Other World, and was associated with both prophecy and madness. The March Hare brought in the spring and gave the seeds their fertility, or withheld it. To run afoul of him caused madness. By the Midd1e Ages, the madness element predominated, and his came to he regarded as a demonic species. Many pagan ensigns and symbols suffered similar defamation and prophecy has always been associated with madness in Indo-European traditions, And, unlike the egg theme, the theme of the March Hare is solidly Indo-European. Its sacred and tabooed nature extends to most of the Western European languages groups and cultures. If language is the oldest witness to history, as Lockwood asserts,[2] then the Hare cult must go back to at least 3,500 B.C. and the second wave of the Indo European expansion before Celtic and Germanic and Italic diverged from one another. In these language groups the true word for hare, hara/haso, was tabooed and euphemisms were commonly invented for it in everyday speech.

Our American Ground Hog Day may be dim and assistant reflex of the March Hare theme with its element of prophecy of the early or a late spring. In the days of plowing and sowing magic, it was by the hare's behavior that people foretold the spring: weather and the prospects for the seeds about to be sown. By the shadows of posts and menhirs, not ground hogs, and by the points of the sun's risings, the priestly castes at the Great: Henges determined the day of the Equinox kept the calendar of sowing and reaping in time with the Heavens.

(It bears saying again: The Druids did not build Stone Henge. Nor as far as we know did they make use of it as a calendar. This was the work and genius of the pre-Celtic peoples of the British Isles.)

[1]Marija Gimbutas, *Goddesses and Gods of Old Europe*, U. of California Press, 1982.
[2]Lockwood, *Indo-European Philology*, Hutchins University Library Press, 1969.

Spring Equinox Essay: The Birch

A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 1989
By Stacey Weinberger

Equinox, one of the four minor High Days in the Druid tradition, signifying the beginning of spring, dawn and the time of renewal. Day and night are of equal length now, and although it is the High Day Oimelc that marks the first stirrings of life, it is at the equinox that this becomes apparent. The Orinda Grove site is blossoming in all its splendor. We have never seen it so green (and without the help of seeding or modern technology!) The hills are a carpet of green, the live oak seems to have recovered from the attack by the oak moths and the ground around the altar has sprouted grass, clover and wintercress, with its peppery tasting flowers and subtle leaves.

As the cycle of the year continues. we move to the next in the circle of the trees at the Grove, the Birch. Passed down through Celtic oral tradition, the Birch is known as 'Bride's Tree."

According to Paul Friedrich, author of Proto-Indo-European Trees, (University of Chicago Press, 1970) the birch has been a female-virgin symbol for many of the speakers of the Indo-European languages for over five thousand years. This would fit with one of the aspects of Bride as a Triple Goddess figure.

The Proto-Indo-Europeans, including (the ancestors of) the Celts probably associated the birch with the spring,

comparing the brightness of the returning sun, the greening of the earth with something tangible, that represented the changing nature of the surroundings.

The birch's association with spring and the return of light is probably not coincidental. P.I.E. forms of the word (for birch) lead back to "bright, shinning, to be white," and seem to be based on the physical appearance of the birch

(explanatory parentheses by E.B. editor)

Spring Equinox Essay: What is the Equinox?

A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 2001
By Stacey Weinberger

Equinox, three months past the Winter Solstice, Yule, marks the astronomical arrival of Spring. This is when the Sun crosses the celestial equator following the ecliptic moving northward. The celestial equator is the projection of the Earth's equator on the sky. It divides the sky into two equal hemispheres and is everywhere 90 degrees from the celestial poles. If you watched the Sun for the course of a year it would appear to circle the sky. This apparent path of the Sun is the ecliptic. Another way to define it is to say the ecliptic is the projection of the earth's orbit onto the sky.

Days and nights are now of equal length, and at the North Pole the sun rises above the horizon after a six month absence. The Sun rises exactly due East and sets exactly due West. The noon day Sun is shining directly upon the equator.

It is a time of balance. As the days start to warm, the nights remain still cold. While there are new buds of green foliage on the Sweet Gum trees outside my window, the thorny balls from the previous year still hang from their branches, stripped of their seeds by the local wild birds. But it is a time not just of balance in Nature but in our own selves. It is a time to look within and to reevaluate our lives, looking at where we've been this past year, and looking towards our own new growth with the coming of the new season. Perhaps it is not a coincidence that the East, the direction of the dawning Sun, also represents new beginnings.

Mad Sweeney News

Mountain stream, clear and limpid, wandering down towards the valley, whispering songs among the rushes—oh, that I were as the stream!

Mountain heather all in flower—longing fills me, at the sight, to stay upon the hills in the wind and the heather.

Small birds of the high mountain that soar up in the healthy wind, flitting from one peak to the other—oh, that I were as the bird!

Son of the mountain am I, far from home, making my song; but my heart is in the mountain, with the heather and the small birds.

Welsh; John Ceiriog Hughes; 1833-87

Beltane

Beltane Notes

The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1976
By Isaac Bonewits and Robert Larson

Beltane begins the season of *Samradh* (Sâu-Ru,) now *an Samhradh* (un Sâu-Ru); which is Summer, running from roughly the beginning of May till the end of July.

Beltane (BauL-Ti-Ni, or BauL-Hi-Ni,) known in Modern Irish as *Lá Bealtaine* (Laa BauL-Hi-ni, or Laa Baul-Ti-ni,) in Welsh as *Galan-Mai* (Calends of May,) in Scottish Gaelic as *Bealtiunn*, and in Manx as *Shenn da Boaddyn*, *Laa Boaldyn*, or *Laa 'nTourey* (Day of Summer); is, of course, the day we know in English as May Day. It is also called by a variety of other names, such as Roodmas, Summer Day, Walpurgistag, St. Pierre's Day, Red Square Day, etc. It is the beginning of the Summer Half of the Year (the seasons of *Samradh* and *Foghamhar*) and is a festival of unalloyed joy.

A very large number of important mythological events are connected with this day. It was on a Beltane that Partholan and his followers, the first inhabitants and partial creators of Ireland, landed on that isle. Three hundred years later, on the same day, they returned to the Other World. It was on a *Beltane* that the Tuatha De Danann and their people invaded Ireland. It was on a May Eve that Pryderi, the missing son of Rhiannon and Pwyll (Rulers of the Welsh Otherworld,) was lost by them and later (on another May Eve) was found by Teirnyon Twryf Vliant (and eventually restored to Them.) On every first day of May "till the day of doom," Gwyn-son-of-Nudd fights with Gwyrthur-son-of Greidawl, for the hand of Lludd's (Lugh's) fair daughter, Creudylad. Most of these events, again, as all over Europe, have to do with stories of the forces of light defeating the forces of darkness. Why did you think the Marxists chose May Day as their international Holiday? And can you guess why Adam Weishaupt chose Walpurgistag as the day to announce the founding of the Bavarian Illuminati, and why the date at which the forces of evil later tried to Imannetize the Eschaton?

About Beltane

Pentalpha Vol. 3, No. 2 1980
By Isaac Bonewits

Beltane is one of the four Celtic Fire Festivals that mark the time between Solstices and Equinoxes and relate to the inner feminine, intuitive, yin side of our souls. Its symbol is a blossom. It is a day of blossoms and spring fever, of open hearts and merry trysts, of dance and raucous song, of mirth and mystery, of lechery and love.

Beltane, among the matriarchal, lunar festivals, stresses the importance of male-female interaction, mother nature's need for fertilization, the earth's need for female and male energy. As part of our celebration, we invite the coming of Pan and dance around a Maypole. We drink to Pan, the great god of nature, (so systematically belittled and bedeviled in recent centuries,) the scary instinctual goat-god in us, who plays such haunting, beautifully spiritual music on his pipes.

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same day, they returned to the Other World. It was on a Beltane that the Tuatha De Danann and their people invaded Ireland. It was on a May Eve that Pryderi, the missing son of Rhiannon and Pwyll (Rulers of the Welsh Otherworld,) was lost by them and later (on another May Eve) found by Teirnyon Twryf Vliant (and eventually restored to Them.) On every first day of May "till the day of doom," Gwyn Ap Nudd fights with Gwyrthur Ap Greidawl, for the hand of Lludd's (Lugh's) fair daughter, Creudylad. Most of these events, again, as all over Europe, have to do with stories of the forces of light defeating the forces of darkness. Why did you think the Marxists chose May Day as their international Holy Day? And can you guess why Adam Weishaupt chose Walpurgistag (another name for Beltane) as the day to announce the founding of the Bavarian Illuminati, and why that was the date at which the forces of evil later tried to Immanetize the Eschaton?

About Beltaine

A Druid Missal-Any Beltane 1982
By Emmon Bodfish

E. DWELLY has this to say about old Highland Beltaine, in Gaelic, Bealltuinn.

> "On the first of May was held a great Druidical festival in favour of the god Belus. On this day, fires were kindled on the mountain tops for the purposes of sacrifice; and between these fires the cattle were driven to preserve them from contagion till next Mayday. On this day it was usual to extinguish all hearth fires, in order that they should be re-kindled from this purifying flame. In many parts of the Highlands, the young folks of the district used to meet on the moors on the first of May. They cut a table in the green sod, of a round figure, by cutting a trench in the ground of sufficient circumference to hold the whole company. They then kneaded a cake of oatmeal, kindled a fire and toasted the oatmeal cake in the embers. When a feast of eggs and custards had been eaten, they divided the cake into as many portions as there were persons in the company, as much alike as to size and shape as possible. They daubed one of the pieces with charcoal until it was black all over, and they then put all of them into a bonnet all together, and each person, blindfolded, drew out a portion. The bonnet holder was entitled to the last bit. Whoever drew the black bit was the devoted person who was to be sacrificed to Baal, whose favor they meant to implore in rendering the year productive. The devoted person was compelled to leap three times over the flames."

This folk ritual may preserve an echo of prehistoric festivals.

Grove News on Beltane

A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 1982
By Emmon Bodfish

BELTAINE CELEBRATION went well despite two principle people being handicapped with bad colds. Sue has some color pictures of the merriment, which I hope we can print in the next Missal-Any. The standard Beltaine Service, as given in the Chronicles, was performed, beginning at 1:00 p.m. For the first time in the Grove's history, we had our own altar on which we could build a fire. Though the altar is not in final form yet, the base served as a platform for a good blaze. Afterwards we had the Maypole Dance around our home-made 11 foot tall Maypole. Such thanks to Daniel and Leslie Craig-Hargar for helping splice two logs together, using only primitive hand tools, (i.e. the power saw gave out,) to create a 16 foot pole. All the May Dance participants brought their own ribbon, of whatever color, and we danced and wove them down the pole in the traditional Day dance, with the Bards singing and the Patriarch of Bards, Leslie playing guitar. It was a colorful, fast and flailing event, especially as many of us are not used to dancing in long robes, nor on the sides of halls. All the officers, and many of the members were in their full Druid robes, some barefoot, some in Engineer boots. After the Maypole was woven with the ribbons, we decided to leave it stand, at least until Solstice. Then we sat around, itched, Leslie sang requests from her lengthy Pagan repertory. Meanwhile most of us ate and enjoyed the return of the Season of the Waters of Life, in flavors wine, Irish Mist, and Whiskey. As this took effect, more people joined in the singing, shouting, and a few dancing through the underbrush,

Beltane Essay: Shafts and Gatherings

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 1983
By Emmon Bodfish

Beltaine, one of the greatest, and, now-a-days, best known, of the Old Celtic High Days, it marks the beginning of Samhradh, summer, and the "Season of Life." Historically, it signaled the moving of the herds out to summer pastures in the mountains. Great fires were build to welcome back the Sun, and the cattle were driven through the flames for purification before starting on their way to the high meadows. The Druid caste, priests and priestesses, presided over these rites at which all the clans gathered together at the ritual sites such as Tara and Carnutes for celebration, planning, and deliberation. Quarrels were settled and justice meted out. This was another Druid function, that of magistrate, with a specialized sub-group of the priestly class acting as judges. Sacrifices were offered to Belenos and on the Continent, to Gaulish and Galatian analogs of this Indo-European Sky God. Another opinion holds that this derivation of Beltaine from the name of a sun god, Beal, is problematical, and that Beltaine was, like Samhain, a festival of all the Gods and Goddesses.

For the New Reformed Druids of North America, it is the beginning of the Season of Life and the end of the Season of Sleep. The first spirits of the year will be added to the Chalice of Waters that is shared at each service, and the Third Order members will change their ceremonial ribbons, worn over the fronts of their robes, from white to red ribbons. The Earth Mother wakes from her winter sleep, and chants and praises are addressed to her.

Live Oak Grove plans to inaugurate the shaft grave, a Toll-Uaigh, we have dug this winter at Larry Press's

(Archdruid) instigation, with an offering of some of the new Waters of Life from the first chalice of the new season. Shaft graves were build in Ancient Gaul, and perhaps elsewhere in Druidic lands. Offerings presumably to the Earth Mother, were put into these deep shafts at different times over a long period. Some of the "Tolls" were twelve meters deep, and offerings might include a whole tree. We plan to offer a piece of the sacrifice at each service which will be put into the shaft after the rest of the sacrifice has been placed in the altar fire.

Beltane Essay: Indo-European Drink and Sacrifice

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 1984
By Emmon Bodfish

Beltaine, festival of the Sun, celebrates the long and eagerly awaited return of the Waters of Life to Grove chalices of the R.D.N.A. Use of the divine drink as sacrament, channel to the gods and restorer of mortal and Divinity alike, is an ancient Indo-European concept. It is found in a highly developed form in the Rig Veda, written down circa 1600 B.C. and the custom may go back two to three thousands years before to the Proto-Indo European homeland on the steppes of Asia. The Indo-European tribes early learned the use of fermentation processes both of milk products as yogurt, etc. known to many pastoral races, and, perhaps by extension, the fermentation of honey into Mead. Juices of other, psychotropic plants were preceded and added to this, by some of the later Indo-European tribes, notably the Vedic branch in the Ganges Valley where such herbs abound.

Fraser and others have collected and reconstructed Indo-European ideas surrounding the divine drink and its use, and the origin of sacrament from sacrifice. The early Indo-Europeans saw humanity as originally mortal, and the gods as immortal, and their myths tell how immortality was achieved by certain human beings, or in some branches of the Indo-European spectrum, made available to humanity in general. The Hebrew and Chinese mythologies took the reverse view: animals and humans were originally immortal as Adam and Eve in Eden, or the "First Man" before the dividing up of Chaos. Then, through some fall, death came into the world. In the theme, a hero or demi-god's discovery or theft of a divine potion makes him immortal and able to communicate with the divine powers. The potion is then lost, through trickery or deceit, but sometimes an Earthly version of the drink remains with a promise of future immortality. Consumption of a Sacred drink is used both in initiatory rites and as a group bonding ritual in religions from Ireland to India. The Eucharist may be the Christianization of this ritual; it does not spring from any Orthodox Hebrew rite. Dr. Duran characterizes Christianity as "a very much Indo-Europeanized, Semitic religion." Holy food is more characteristic of other cultures, Semitic, African or Amerindian, while the deified drink is Indo-European. The drink not only inspires, but is though to be a god, a divine thing in itself, or to contain the essence of a divine being. This led Fraser and Rutherford to associate it with the deified sacrificial victim of other sacrificing religions, but Dumézil and other modern students of religion have repudiated this idea. It is an area where experts still disagree. However, its consumption is treated as an act of sacrifice; an offering up to the gods of the drink and of oneself or one's consciousness, (at least temporarily.) This maintains the human connection to the Divine, as well as maintaining the immortal vigor of the Deities thus worshipped. This is explicitly set out in the Rig Veda, and similar descriptions are preserved from the West: The sacrifices to Euses, the Horse Sacrifice of the High Kings of Ireland, libation ceremonies in Greece, and in the Slavic areas, wine or mal rituals to Perun. Statues of Perun held a drinking horn into which a sacred liquor was poured during a spring rite, perhaps even Beltaine, and in which the priest caste then read hopes for the year's crops were read through the liquid's behavior. Perun is cognate with Taranis and Thor as the thunderbolt wielding god of the Oak.

[Picture of Perun]

Stone Idols from Satchany in the Upper Dniester basin.

Structural anthropologists connect the deified drink rite with the "dying-god" motif, which is not an exclusively Indo-European theme, but wide-spread in the Old World. This connection is exemplified in the song of "John Barleycorn," who dies with the harvest in order to feed the people, but rises again in the Spiritus of the ale, and in the sprouting grain of the spring. However, I think these two themes were only merged at a much later date, after the Indo-Europeans had scattered from their steppes homeland. There is no traced of the latter motif in the earliest Indo-European record, the Rig Veda, or in the reconstructed Proto-Indo-European vocabulary.

The young year god, Osiris, Dionysus resurrection theme seems to be part of the pre Indo-European strata of the Eastern Mediterranean. And in Europe, the dying Corn King tradition seems to be older than the Celtic Bardic records and has no official place in Druid doctrine. Though Dumézil also repudiated this "ambrosia cycle," he later, in 1939 re-affirmed the parallel between the Germanic and Indic accounts of obtaining the vessel, cauldron or chalice to hold the deified drink. This vessel grew in importance, and takes precedence in the later mythology of the Western Indo-Europeans over its contents. Anything drunk from the sacred bowl grants divine inspiration. The vessel and the ritual, and the readiness of the participant, (set and setting) become more important than the particular intoxicant. This is the stance taken by the RDNA and discussed in the Later Chronicles, making us a descendent of the Celtic and Western most wavelet of the great Indo-European expansion and evolution. Thus Beltaine, beginning the summer and the Druid Season of Life, sees the return of the Waters of Life to the chalices of RDNA Groves across the country, and to our subscribers if they are holding Proto Grove services, in such unlikely places as Melborne and Hong Kong. * Since Samhain no liquor has been used, only the Waters of Sleep, pure distilled H_20, in the sharing-cup. Concomitant with this holiday, the Third Order Druids, clergy rank, exchange their white ceremonial ribbons for red. At Live Oak Grove, a Maypole dance follows the Beltaine service, and a general partying and merry-making may continue till sundown.

*Write us for Proto-Grove instructions.

References:

The Rig Veda
Littleton, *The New Comparative Mythology*
Gimbutas, *The Slavs*
Levy, *The Gate of Horn*. (This book is now published as *Religious Conceptions of the Stone Age and Their Influence Upon European Thought*, New York: Harper, 1963.)

When men go to serve the gods, they go for the god that serves them.

Beltane Essay: Maypole and Shamanism

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltaine 1985
By Emmon Bodfish

Beltaine, major Holiday of the Druid year, and beginning of the Season of Life, marks the point on the sun's ascent when it is half way between Equinox, level, and Solstice, culmination. Bonfires are lighted on hill tops and feast prepared. The Maypole dance, which crowns the festivities, is probably older than Druidism, or than the migration of the Indo-Europeans into Europe or India. There is speculation from both academic and traditional channels to the effect that the Maypole and the Sacrificial pole may have a common origin in the spring and autumn rituals of the early Neolithic pastoralists of the Eur-Asian Steppes. At this season these ancestors of the Siberian, Turkic, Tartar and Indo-European peoples, celebrated an animal sacrifice, in which the animal to be offered was tied to a richly decorated post, which was the center and focus of the ritual and dancing. Ribbons, streamers or threads of bright colors figure in the rites and records of the descendent cultures.

The Rig Veda describes the stake to which the horse sacrifice is tethered as "brightly beribboned" with colored banners streaming down it.

In the Siberian Shamanistic rituals, which preserve the earliest traditions, the reindeer or pony sacrifice is tied to a freshly cut young larch or birch tree. The tree is festooned with ribbons, streamers or colored threads. The colors are always those associated with the particular deity or deities being addressed. The Shaman of the Buryat and his assistants, nine youths and nine maidens, dance. The Shaman, in trance, conducts the spirit of the slain animal up, along the path of the streamers to the top of the tree, and on up to the heavenly abode of the waiting deity. In healing and initiation rites, ribbons are also used to indicate soul-paths.

In the volumes of data collected by Fraser, are descriptions of the traditional cutting of the maypole in Europe, in which the tallest young birch in the woods was selected, cut and set up in the village square. These traditions probably pre-date Christian or Roman contact, and seem to have been very little affected by them. Their similarity all across Europe and the Steppes of Asia would argue for a very archaic origin.

But the May dance also includes strong Pre-Indo-European elements: the circle dance, the gathering of buds and flowers, maybasket giving, and the Green Man symbolism and costumery. These may speak of an older, agrarian tradition, perhaps brought by the first farming peoples coming into Europe from the Near East and the Mediterranean and melding with the indigenous (from Ice Age?) peoples of Europe. The farther East one goes towards the Steppes of Asia, the fewer of these milder customs of the May one encounters in village life and folk tradition, until among the never Christianized tribes of Siberia, there is found the pure animal sacrifice, tethered to the be-ribboned Axis Mundi, the World-Tree.

Beltane Essay: Fire Making

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 1986
By Emmon Bodfish

Beltaine, May Day, festival of bonfires, greeting to Belenos, the returning Sun. It is the beginning of summer, Season of Life. In old "Celtdom" cattle were moved to the highland pastures; modern Third Order R.D.N.A. Druids exchange their white ceremonial ribbons for red ones.

In ancient Britain, Ireland and Gaul, according to the witness of the Classical writers and to numerous folk traditions, all fires were extinguished on Beltaine Eve, and a "new, clean fire" kindled by the Druids, "through means of friction, from logs of Oak." In Gàidhlig this process is called "tog an teine," lifting fire out of the wood.

Making fire by friction is a ceremonial skill that one or a few members of each Grove might want to try.

The bow and drill method is the easiest

GRAPHIC OF BOW DRILL

Make a fire-board of Oak, well seasoned, very dry. With a knife or a pointed stone, make a shallow hole, a cup, near the edge of the board. Whittle a "V" notch in from the edge of the board, with the "V's" point at the cup. Don't cut through into the cup/hole. Making the notch, which is undercut, wider on the bottom side of the board, helps. Place your tinder in the notch. (More about tinder later.) With the board on a firm, dry surface, hold it steady by kneeling on it, or holding it down with your foot as you drill. Put the drilling stick in the cup and hold down on it with the "fire hold" block. Then with the bow, spin it as fast as you can. Persistence and consistent speed pay off. Use a "fire-stick," i.e. a drill, of at least 3/8 inch diameter. Thinner sticks dissipate heat and cool off too quickly. And, as our Humboldt County "Third" says, it also helps to have someone else to push down on the top of the "fire-hold." "As we work a bow back and forth like that, our arms automatically tend to rise." If no one else is around, hold down on it with your chin. (Paleolithic fire-holds are the joy of Old World archeologists.)

The fire-stick can also be turned by hand. I have not done this and I don't know anyone who has been able to get this way to work. It may have to be a group endeavor, with a number of people spelling each other in relay. But, so I'm told; "Use a longer drill than you would with the bowed method and roll it between your palms. When your hands reach the bottom, quickly let go and return them to the top of the stick and keep it spinning." With either of these methods, it is easier and surer if you have a group of people. With the right choreography, this could be worked into the Beltaine Ceremonies as an effective part of co-operative ritual.

After a while, you will see smoke waver up from the cup-hole then hot black powder will well up and out into the notch; keep turning, faster. Press down harder. Press the tinder into the notch and against the red hot glowing firestick. If you turn the drill fast enough, sparks may jump out and catch the tinder. When you see a red, glowing area in the cup or on the notch, gently remove the fire-stick, and breath on the glow until it becomes a bright gleam. Then pick up the fireboard and tinder together and press the tinder around the incandescence. Carefully breath it into life. This part takes practice and finesse, minute attention, and great awareness of the right moment. In other words it is a meditation. Mastery over fire, like playing the violin, is not learned easily. In many pre-agricultural

societies it is considered one of the marks of the Shaman or Adept.

For tinder, I use the feather "wolf-lichen," Letharia vulpine, that grows on Orinda coyote bushes, with lots of fine, dry splinters of resinous pine or juniper, and thinly shredded paper at the center of the bundle. Bradford, in his survival books, recommends lint, from your pocket, and very dry pine needles or shredded bark. ("finely shredded pieces of the "Wall Street Journal" soaked in lighter fluid is great."–Good-Gulf the Wizard) When the tinder begins to flame, gently set it to the kindling under your previous readied altar fire. Continue breathing on it auspiciously, coaxing it into a blaze. From this "new clean fire" re-kindle all your fires. By now you know why pre-industrial people kept fire burning, and never let it go completely out.

AN ASIDE

"Match" is from "maide" meaning "little stick" in Gàidhlig. The match was invented by a Scotsman. Be grateful.

Beltane Essay: Maypole and Sacrifice

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 1987
By Emmon Bodfish

Beltaine, May Day, was always the most widely and universally celebrated of the Druidic and old Pagan High Days. It was also the least Christianized and distorted, even in the heyday of the church's powers. In Ireland, Wales, and parts of Europe the Maypole was a freshly cut young larch with a crown of green living branches at its top. The use of a tree of the larch family, decorated with streamers suspended down from its top, and other features of the Maypole dance are thought to hark back to the early Proto-indo-European deer and horse sacrifices, and the rituals around the sacrificial stake.

Rituals of this kind were preserved down to the present century in Siberia among the peoples of the northwestern quarter. These tribes once occupied a more southerly location, but have been driven steadily northward since medieval times. In the Neolithic, they are thought to have occupied the forest belt north of the Proto-Indo-European homeland around the Caspian and Aral Seas. Pursuing an essentially Mesolithic life of hunting and pastoralism, most of these forest peoples rejected Christianity and maintained their traditional religions down to modern times, and have, therefore, as Professor James Duran puts it, "been able to give us a window on the past."

They have likewise preserved their traditions in the face of the Russian State, which tolerates them as a folk curiosity. First studied and recorded in this century, they have been a rich source of information about Meso and Neolithic European cultures. The Russian anthropologist Popinov, in his extensive studies of these peoples, gives transcriptions of many of the traditional ceremonies that they have preserved.

In the Siberian pony or reindeer sacrifices, the animal was tied to a freshly cut young larch or birch which had been decorated with ribbons, streamers, and colored threads. In this offering, the Buryat shaman was assisted by the unmarried young people of the tribe, nine youths and nine maidens, who danced around the larch and the slain animal. The shaman, in trance, conducted the animal's soul up the path marked by the streamers to the top of the tree, and then upward to the waiting deity who received the sacrifice. (Ribbons were also used to mark out "soul paths" in healing and initiation rituals.)

In the East Indian Rig Veda, one of the oldest written Indo-European documents, there is a description of the stake to which the horse sacrifice is tethered. The pole is "brightly beribboned" with "colored banners streaming down from it."

The tradition of the Maypole may also draw from a second and even from a third source in the Eastern Mediterranean rites of spring, and in those of the Pre-Indo-European peoples of Europe. In the former, ribbon decorate effigies were carried on tall poles, and each pole-bearer was followed by a line of young girls dancing and singing. These rites were formalized and preserved in the Roman rites of Priapus and in the older, Pre-Indo-European strata behind the festivals of Dionysus in Greece. It seems that similar rituals were enacted in European villages as part or in addition to the dance of the Maypole.

The bare Maypole, in contrast to the May Larch Tree, seems to be a blending of these different lines. From the Mediterranean and the Pre-Indo-European sides it take the bare form and Priapus' crown of flowers, and, in some areas, preserved his phallic effigy. From the ancient Indo-European line come the pole's central position within the circle of dancers, the long streamers, and the steps of the dance that weave them around the pole's trunk.

The R.D.N.A. has always held a Maypole dance. It is the Big Party of the year, and was once dubbed by the media "Pagan Christmas." We will be having a Maypole dance and celebration at the Orinda Grovesite, with food to follow. Isaac's group will also be holding a May Celebration on the weekend.

Beltane Essay: Bonfires

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 1988
By Emmon Bodfish

Beltaine, the most festive and best-known holiday in the Druid Calendar. The theme of rebirth and renewal, and the beginning of a season of light and growth. It is the day of the Sun God, Belenus, and some authorities think that the name Beltaine or Cetshamain derives from Bel Teine, Bel's fire. Others think this the worst sort of "folk etymology."

(When I typed it* just now, the Goddess statue here on my desk fell over, so you can make what you want of that. She seems not to approve.) In Scot's Gàidhlig there is a specific term, "tein' eigin," for fire by friction, fire created by rubbing one wood against another. The literal translation would be "raised fire," and the method of lighting the great bonfires of the High Days, always with fire by friction, was called "raising fire of the wood." Fire seems to have been thought of as inherent in certain woods, such as the oak, and was a matter of calling the spirit forth. Spending some time with bow and drill, learning how to this is a valid part of a Pagan education. It is a good skill has and a great fire meditation. It takes patience and stamina first, and concentration and the quickness, timing and delicacy to breath life into the glowing embers. (Write to us for the back issue covering the how-to techniques for this.)

On Beltaine the cattle were driven between two lines of fires to purify them before they were moved to the summer pastures in the hills. This may not have been entirely symbolic. Smoke and the scorching effect drop off exto-parasites and the ability of fire to sterilize surgical instruments used in treating wounds was known throughout much of the ancient world. Similar ceremonies continued to be used in times of plague or contagious diseases among cattle well into Christian times, and, in the Highlands, into the late 19th century. Dwelly, recorder of Highland customs and author of the large *Standard Gaelic-English Dictionary* "the Scottish Webster," printed this description of the practice in 1901:

Teinne

The tein'-éigin was considered an antidote against the plague and murrain and all infectious diseases among cattle. Dr. Martin says all the fires in the parish were extinguished and 81 married men, being deemed the proper number for effecting this purpose, took two planks of wood and nine of them were employed by turns, who by their repeated efforts, rubbed the planks against each other, till the heat thereof produced fire, and from this forced fire each family was supplied with a new fire. No sooner was the fire kindled than a pot filled with water was put thereon, which was afterwards sprinkled on people who had the plague, or on cattle that had the murrain, and this process was said to be followed invariably by success.

A term applied to fire produced by friction—in olden times a means employed to check evils arising from being bewitched. If a household suffered loss such as indicated being under evil influence, all areas in fires district between two running streams were extinguished on a set day Then a spinning-wheel was put in motion, and kept going furiously until the spindle became heated. Tinder or tow was applied to the hot spind1e, fire was thus procured and distributed to all households affected by evil influences. Within the memory of persons still living, fire was thus procured to check witchcraft in a township in Uist where some sickness, supposed to be evil eye, carried off some cows and sheep. It is odd that neither cow nor sheep (tied after, possibly the epidemic had exhausted itself.—DC.

Dwelly was trying to be a good "modern man" which in 1901 meant denying his Pagan heritage and the efficiency of these remedies. Beltaine, then, is a time to purge the cares and ills of winter, as well as to celebrate the return of light and life. Try passing things infected with bad memories through the smoke of the Beltaine fire, giving away things you no longer use, lightening your load, and putting your burdens aside for a dance.

*Teine, which I had misspelled.

Beltane Essay: Old Crones

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 1989
By Emmon Bodfish

Beltaine, May Day, begins the Season of life. Hurrah! It marks the end f the Season of Sleep, the rule of "The Leprous White Lady," the "Old woman of the Mill Dust," the Crone. In several Indo-European legends the wandering hero, in Greece Hercules and in the Celtic, Finn, arrives at he palace of the Gods and after passing numerous tests is enraged by their mocking attitude toward him. He challenges any one of them to a duel. The young and vigorous Deities of both genders distain his challenge and will not fight with a mere mortal. Finally, however, the paternal figure of the pantheon says "Oh, but my aged mother will wrestle with you."

The hero is insulted but he accepts. The Ancient of Days pins him. She laughs toothlessly in his face and lets him go. "Do not feel discouraged, hero" Says the pater-deitus, "that old Crone wrestles down every man who comes far enough to meet Her. Her name is Old Age." Her name is not given, nor was the hero's in the German version of this myth, which I heard, (it's still a word-of-mouth culture,) from Dr. James Duran, Ph.D. If any out there know, please write us. In the Celtic world She was Cailleach, the Old Woman. She was credited. in Scottish myth to appear at sea, in the form of a sea horse or sea-hag, and lead enemy ships their doom, by challenging the captains to ride or catch her. She is a trickster figure, one who brings down the proud, and tricks the vain and the blasphemous. (As a death figure I wonder if She is cognate with Kali in India.) She is a Goddess of transition and transmogrification, not all like the "Underworld" or Death figures such as Nixus or the Eastern European "Mother of the Dead," who greets the newly dead and nurse and instruct them in their new life in the Other World. She is the harbringer and transmogrifier, and She Herself can change from old to young and back again at will or with the seasons. Hers may be one of the stream of myth that fed the later Ban-shee tales and legends. All the seemingly contradictory characteristics of the Deity, enduring seasonal, warlike, alternately young and old, using allure and trickery symbolize Her station at the point of death and rebirth or rejuvenation. She is not a war Goddess per se, like Morrigu or Badh, inciting men to heroism, but a nature deity of the seasons and the elements, and the natural cycles of creation and decay, rest and strife. As Proinsias MacCana writes, more of Her traditions survived than those of the Goddess Morrigu, and being inexterminable, more were co-opted into Christian hegemony. Even the old bardic odes to Her were taken and rewritten to make Her a figure in the new foreign religion. In the eighth or ninth century one of the monastic collectors recorded and "Christianized" this old pagan "dan" written in Ireland. It is composed in that uniquely Pagan style in which the Deity speaks through the mouth of the bard and mourns with him the plight of Her people.

> "The monkish chronicler, availing himself of the semantic ambiguity in the word "Cailleach," invented the fiction that She had taken the nun's veil, caille, in the end of Her days."

He then went on from this to compose around this story of the "nun" of Berre. Cailleach Bherre, the Old Woman of Berre," was a popular epithet for Cailleach in that part of Ireland." Unfortunately Professor MacCana does not give the Gaelic/Goidelic original of the poem in his edition of *Celtic Mythology*, but we can easily guess that the holy Roman changed in recording this lament of a "nun" who had once been

the advisor and consort of kings. The real subject of this work is the plight of Druidism and the Bardic Orders in decline, driven out to the heath and wild places among the poor and illiterate by the foreign religion of Rome. Many similar laments for the stability, culture and richness of the old courts of Chieftains, bards and Druids, echo down through the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries as the Dark Ages grew darker and Christianity spread.

Swift chariots
and horse that carried off the prize,
once I had plenty of them;
a blessing on the King who granted them.

My body seeks to make its way
to the house of judgment;
when the Son of God thinks it time
let him come to claim his loan.

My arms when they are seen
are bony and thin;
dear was the craft they practiced,
they would be around glorious kings…

I envy nothing that is old
except the Plain of Femhen;
though I have donned the thatch of age,
Femhen's crown is still yellow.

The Stone of the Kings in Femhen,
Rónán's Fort in Breghon,
it is long since storms first reached them,
But their cheeks are not old and withered…

I have had my day with kings,
drinking mead and wine;
today I drink whey and water
among shrivelled old hags…

The flood-wave,
and the swift ebb;
what the flood brings you
the ebb carries from your hand…

Happy is the island of the great sea,
for the flood comes to it after the ebb;
as for me, I do not expect
flood after ebb to come to me.

Beltane Essay: Presiding over the Festival

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 1990
By Emmon Bodfish

Beltaine, one of the greatest, and, now-a-days, one of the best known of the old Celtic High Days. It marks the beginning of Samhradh, summer, the "Season of Life." In old Pagan times, it signaled the moving of the herds up to summer pasture in the mountains and the beginning of the new cycle. Great fires were built to welcome back the Sun, and the cattle were driven through the flames for purification before starting on their way to the high meadows. The Druid caste, priests, priestesses, ovates and bards, presided over these rites at which all the clans gathered together at such ritual sites as Tara, in Ireland, and Carnutes in France. Though a Good Day, Beltane was also considered a tricky one, and great care had to be taken that there were no errors or mishaps that day. The High King, in Ireland, remained indoors, surrounded by his advisors and magically guarded by his Druids. The dancing and festivities were carried out by the farming and craftsmen castes. Previous to Beltane Eve, all quarrels been settled, and justice meted out. This was another Druid function, that of magistrate, with a specialized sub-group of the caste acting as judges. A different sub-group of Druids presided over the sacrifices offered to Belenos, the Sun, and still another specialized group of the Druid caste, often women, Druidesses, actually offered the sacrifices, and dispatched the offered animals. The Ovate sub-group then read the will of the Deities by whether and how the sacrifices were accepted in the fires,

For the RD.N.A. Druids today, Beltaine also marks the Season of Life. Though we have no White Bulls nor mares to offer, (animals sacrifice was forbidden by the Reform which made us R.D.N.A. in 1966 (sic)) there will be whiskey in the Chalice and tree food in the Tree Chalice, offerings of flowers, and the Third Order Druids will exchange their white ribbons of winter for red ones of the summer season. High Kings and politicians will be left indoors, and a merry time will be had by all.

Beltane Essay: Sacred Maypole Tree

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 2001
By Stacey Weinberger

Beltaine, May Day, the beginning of the Summer half of the year when Nature awakens once again. This is the most widely known of the pagan and Druidic High Days with the practices of paganism having evolved or been adopted into practices of folklore and custom. The marking of the return of life in the veneration of vegetation appear in the words of the old saying "April showers bring May flowers," May Day celebrations, and the dancing around the Maypole with colorful ribbon streamers. It is not surprising that Mircea Eliade's words "the cosmos is symbolized by a tree" and "fertility, wealth, luck, health" are all concentrated on herbs or trees.

Beltaine probably originated as a vegetation, agricultural, and fertility festival. Cattle were driven between two fires to insure their health and fertility before being sent out to green pastureland for summer, with Druids officiating at the ceremony. With the beginning of the summer half of the year the tree embodied the newly awakened spirit of vegetation. The belief was held that the tree-spirit would bless women with children, cause the herds to multiply, and make the crops grow.

Houses and farm buildings were bedecked with green boughs and flowery garlands. May flowers were crushed and the juice from them was used to wash the cows' udders.

Nothing symbolized the tree spirit more than the Maypole. Originally a sacred tree, the Maypole became the focal point of Beltaine festivities. A sacred ash tree stood at Uisnech, County Westmeath, an important Druidic center and assembly place where Beltaine was annually celebrated. The Cerne Abbas Giant cut into the hillside above the village in Dorset, possibly dating back to Romano-British times, obviously epitomizes fertility and vitality. For centuries, a fir Maypole was erected on May Eve on the hillside above the giant's head in readiness for the May Day festivities, which were again dedicated to the continuance of fertility. In villages, whole trees were felled and set up. Later the pole was permanently left up and then decorated each year for May Day. To this day, a few villages in England and local parks and Renaissance faires in the United States still retain the Maypole, which is often painted with red and white spiral stripes. These colors are often used in spring festivities, red signifying the color of life and generative energy, and white, a fresh, new beginning. Again we see the constant theme of renewal and rebirth as the world awakens from its long season of sleep.

Beltane Essay: Fire and Water

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 2002
By Stacey Weinberger

Beltaine, May Day, the first day of Summer and the beginning of the Season of Life. In the RDNA tradition the Waters-of-Life are returned to the Grove chalice and all Third Order Druids exchange their white ceremonial ribbons to red. At Baccharis Grove we add a natural fertilizer to the tree chalice as part of our offering to the Grove trees. Now is a good time for those who own bronze sickles to sharpen them for the coming season.

Beltaine is a pastoral festival. It is associated with fertility, the return and renewal of life to the face of the earth. It was also a period of purification for the animals of the as well as people. Fire and water seem to be the principle methods used for purification and to insure fertility of the coming year.

At sundown on Beltaine eve, the Druids kindled need fires or *teine eigin* from oak and other sacred wood. Household fires that were normally never allowed to go out were extinguished and relit from the need fire. At Uisnech, a ritual center in Ireland, this fire was kindled by the king's druid and the people would a bring a brand with which to relight their hearths. The Lebor Gabala, the Book of Invasions, contains a story about the Druid Mide, for whom Meath is named, who was the first Druid to light a Beltaine fire at Uisnech for the clans of Nemed. This custom is also documented as being practiced in Scotland in the Highlands and Islands as late as the first quarter of the 20th century.

In ancient times, cattle signified the wealth of the Celtic tribes as well as their continuation and survival. Thus it was importance to insure their fertility and health. To this end, bonfires were lit on hills and mountaintops and the cattle that had been sheltered and stall-fed all winter were driven between the flames before being sent out to summer pasturelands. In his glossary, Cormac, the ninth century Irish writer, Beltaine comes from *Bel-tene*, a goodly fire. According to Cormac the Druids kindled two great bonfires between which cattle were driven. There is some thought that in earlier times that the cattle were sacrificed to the deities in exchange for protection against disease, fertility, a good growing season, and a good harvest in the fall, and later evolved into symbolically passing the cattle between the fires.

Though people also passed between the Beltaine bonfires, their purification and fertility practices seem to be more centered around water than fire.

To the Druids, the most sacred of all water forms was dew (found at dawn, the liminal, "otherworldly" period between night and day,) especially the dew of Beltaine morning. The washing of the face in the dew of Beltaine morning and drinking from the well before sunrise was common practice. It was well known that holy wells were considered to bestow fertility upon women. The tradition of dew's potency has come down through the centuries and in Scotland and Ireland young women still rise before dawn on the first of May to wash their faces in the morning dew and let it dry in the air. The dew of Beltaine morning was often gathered and kept as a medicinal or beauty aid. It was said to bring a good complexion, cure sore eyes, prevent or cure headaches, skin ailments, and freckles.

Men who washed their hands in the May Dew were said to gain skill in opening lock and knots, in mending nets and untangling ropes. Women who did the same would be able to untangle threads. Walking barefoot in the dew cured soreness and insured healthy feet during the year.

Also common was the scattering of water to with which to bring fertility upon those whom it falls. On Beltaine in Padstow, Cornwall the dancing 'Obby 'Oss was known for bringing the promise of a husband or child to the young women it covered with its skirts. But in pastimes the prancing and twirling about also including water in this fertility ritual. The 'Oss would wade in Treater Pool near the town, "drink" from the water, and sprinkle those assembled for good luck. Early May festivities in Southern Ireland included a procession of Mummers, one of whom dressed as a clown, carried a long pole with shreds of cloth like a mop at the top. He would dip this into a pool of water or puddle and liberally sprinkle it on the crowds about him, another symbolic gesture of distributing the fertilizing properties of the water.

Summer Solstice

Summer Solstice Notes

The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1976
By Isaac Bonewits and Robert Larson

The Summer Solstice is a Minor High Day, usually occurring around June 21st or so. Also known as St. John's Day and Midsummer (and, confusingly enough, by at least one Neo-Pagan group, as Beltane!,) it shares mythical elements with both *Beltane* and *Lughnasadh*. Like both, it is a feast celebrating the glory of summer and the peak of the Sun God's power. But in many systems of belief, it is the day of the biggest battle of the year between the Dark Sun God and the Light Sun God (or between the evil one and the good one,) Who are usually brothers or otherwise intimately related. Midsummer is a peak from which the Sun can only fall, for it is the day on which the hours of light slowly begin to shorten.

In those areas where it is safe to do so, Neopagans frequently will light cartwheels of kindling and roll them down from the tops of high hills, in order to symbolize the falling of the Sun God.

Summer Solstice Essay: Midsummer

Druid Chronicler, Midsummer 1980
By Isaac Bonewits

The Summer Solstice is a Minor High Day, usually occurring around June 21st or so. Also known as St. John's Day and Midsummer (and, confusingly enough, among some groups as Beltane!,) it shares mythical elements with both Beltane and Lughnasadh (the midpoint between Summer Solstice and Fall Equinox.) Like both, it is a feast celebrating the glory of summer and the peak of the Sun God's power. But in many systems of belief, it is the day of the biggest battle of the year between the Dark Sun God, and the Light Sun God (or between the evil one and the good one,) who are usually brothers or otherwise intimately related. Midsummer is a peak from which the Sun can only fall, for it is the day on which the hours of light slowly begin to shorten.

Summer Solstice Essay: Danu and Diana

A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 1983
By Emmon Bodfish

Midsummer Solstice, one of the four astronomical high-days of the Celtic year, is associated with the Druid goddess Danu, mother of the gods, the Tuatha de Danann. She is probably the same figure as the Irish goddess Anu and the Breton Ana. She may be cognate with the classic goddess Diana, not only on the grounds of word origins, but on the witness of Gallo-Roman writers who noted the similarities in character and type in the days when her worship was still current in Gaul. She is associated with fertility, particularly of women, and with the boar totem, as was Diana the huntress and the earlier Greek Artemis. The virgin aspect of this Moon and fertility goddess was emphasized in the lands bordering the Mediterranean, and the mother aspect in Western and Northern Europe.

Her festival was on midsummer day, and traces of the old customs continue in Celtic lands. On the Isle of Man, it is customary to wear a spring of Mugwort, a plant also sacred to Roman Diana, and reputed, in England, to bring a young woman dreams of her future husband. That the Christian Church chose this day for one of its major saints, John the Baptist, may indicate that it was attempting to displace a major pagan festival and deity. Many of the customs carried on into modern times on "St. John's" day, seem singularly at odds with the stern, rather puritan character of the man who was beheaded for refusing to retract his condemnation of King Herod's incestuous behavior. These include dancing in the streets, all night bonfires, public song fests, and encouragement of amatory games among the young.*

*This sounds interesting, but Ward Rutherford, *The Druids*, does not elaborate.

Summer Solstice Essay: Danu and Megaliths

A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 1984
By Emmon Bodfish

Midsummer Solstice, one of the four minor High-days of the Celtic year, is associated with Danu, Mother of the gods, the Tuatha de Danann. She is particularly associated with rivers, and rivers from the Don in Russia to the Don in Scotland are though to be names for her. She is probably the same figure as the Irish goddess Anu and the Breton Ana. Roman Diana and Greek Artemis may be other cognates of the same Indo-European deity. This is based not only on the study of word origins, but on the witness of Gallo-Roman writers who noted the similarities in the character and in season of worship to those of Diana, during the time when the Celtic religions were still practiced in Gaul. Like classical Diana, her totem is the boar, and she is associated with fertility and marriage, and the luckiness of June marriages may be distant memory of her festivities. Mugwort is her flower, an herb also sacred to Roman Diana, and on Isle of Man it is customary to wear a spring of it to the Mid-Summer dance. In England, Mugwort placed under the pillow is said to bring a young woman dreams of her future husband. In Scotland, there are all night bonfires, song fests, and dances for the young unmarried people of the villages.

This is the morning on which the Sun used to rise over the heel stone at Stone Henge, beginning the new season of the Megalithic calendar. (It no longer rises at that point due to the precession of the Earth's axis.) The Druids did NOT build Stonehenge. It antedates their arrival in Britain by centuries. It was William Stuckeley, in 1717, who mis-located the Druids there. He did some of the best antiquarian field work of his day, but his theorizing later wildly outstripped his data. The mistake was an honest one, however, considering what was known in his day. He showed that the stones were not a memorial to King Arthur, nor a Roman temple. He was the first to accept them as definitely pre-Roman. The only knowledge of pre-Roman Britain he had came from Roman and Greek writers of the Classical period. They said that Britain was inhabited by Celts whose priests were the Druids. So, if the stones were pre-Roman, Stuckeley reasoned, they must have been built by Druids. He knew of no other candidates. The last two centuries of archeology have given us many, even too many, other possibilities. The current most favored candidates are the early

Neolithic framers of Natufian stock, long headed, slender, fine-boned people who inhabited the Salisbury area in 2900-2600 B.C., the best modern date for the first cycle of building at Stone Henge.

A larger boned, hardier people later took over the monument and set up the Blue Stones, but they, too, had disappeared before the arrival of the Halstatt Celts circa 480 B.C.

This is not to say that the Celts did not take cognizance of the huge monument. They worked other monuments of prehistoric peoples, such as the mounds, Sidh, of Ireland and the cairns of Scotland into their mythology and song. They may have done the same for Stone Henge, but the English traditions are almost all lost, while the Irish are among the best preserved.

> "Behold the Sidh before your eye,
> It is manifest to you that it is a king's mansion,
> Which was built by the firm Dagda
> It was a wonder, a court, an admirable hill."

It is likely that the religion of the Megalith Builders was more astronomical than that of the La Tene and later Druids. Two or more different groups contributed to the five or more cycles of construction and re-construction at Stone Henge. Though astronomically aligned, the stones are not accurate enough for an "observatory." It may have served as a calendar rectifier, eclipse predictor, and a ritual site for the Megalithic religions. But what that religion was must remain a matter of conjecture. Clearly it had something to do with sunrise, mid-summer, moonrise, and lunar eclipses, but what it meant, and what they did here, is probably not recoverable short of the invention of a time machine.

Summer Solstice Essay: Stonehenge and Mugwort

A Druid Missal-Any, Midsummer 1985
By Emmon Bodfish

Midsummer, Solstice, Greine-Stad, Sun-stop, today the Sun reaches its most northerly declination, at 2:44 A.M. Pacific Standard Time. This is the festival of the Goddess Danu, mother of the gods and men. Bonfires are lit on hilltops and the night is danced away. Tossing grain or coins into the air this day is said to help one's prosperity. This is the morning that the Sun would rise over the heel stone at Stone Henge, but for the fact that the Earth has processed far enough on its axis since 1500 B.C. to move the sunrise point out of line with the ancient markers. In the 18th and 19th centuries, English Druid groups held ceremonies there. But now the Henge is fenced off and protected, and accessible only with permission of the government. The huge numbers of tourists were eroding the soil around the monoliths and there was concern that the monument would be damaged. The smaller, less well-known stone circles, such as Callanish or the Maidens are still accessible to the public, as is Avesbury.

The Druids did NOT build Stone Henge. It antedates their arrival in Britain by many centuries. It was William Stuckeley, in 1717, who mis-located them there. He did some of the best antiquarian field work of his day, but his later theorizing wildly outstripped his data. The mistake was an honest one, however, considering what was known in his day. He showed that the stones were not a memorial to King Arthur, nor a Roman temple, as had been previously supposed. He was the first to accept them as definitely pre-Roman. The only knowledge of pre-Roman Britain he had came from the Roman and Greek writers of the Classical period. They said that Britain was inhabited by Celts, whose priests were the Druids. So, if the stones were pre-Roman, Stuckeley reasoned, they must have been assembled by the Druids. He knew of no other candidates. We now feel that Stone Henge and the numerous other stone circles were set up by at least three different, pre-Celtic races, best described, I think, by Clannad's phrase, "the race no one knows." Clannad is an Irish music group who have produced several records, of which their latest, "Magical Ring" is, in our opinion, their best. (We highly recommend it.)

In many English, Irish and Welsh villages, bonfires are lit in the squares, or in Scotland, it is the day for a community picnic on the moors. Then, on mid-summer's night, the shortest night in the year, which will be the twenty-third, (long, boring, astronomical explanation here omitted) single women would put a bouquet of Mugwort or St. John's Wort under their pillow, to bring dreams of their future husbands. If you try this, let us know what happens. We need this research.

Summer Solstice Essay: Firbolgs and Tuatha De Danann

A Druid Missal-Any, Midsummer 1986
By Raphael McKeen and Stacey Weinberger

Midsummer, Summer Solstice, the Longest Day of the Year, is one of four Minor High Days of the Celtic Calendar. It is a feast celebrating the glory and the peak of the Sun God Belenos' (meaning "the shining one") power. On this day the altar fire should be especially large and a sacrifice of green branches and mistletoe be made. It was upon Midsummer Day that the people of the Goddess Danu, the Tuatha de Danann, took pre-Celtic Ireland from its earlier inhabitants, the Fir Bolgs.

It was upon the mystic first day of May that the Tuatha de Danann landed on the coast of Ireland in a dense fog without being opposed by the Fir Bolgs. The Tuatha de Danann then proceeded to "druidically" form showers and fog-sustaining showers over the country and caused the air to pour down fire and blood upon the Fir Bolgs. The Fir Bolgs had to shelter themselves for three days and three nights, after which time their own Druids put a stop to these enchantments by counter spells.

After a parley at the Plain of the Sea, the Fir Bolgs and the Tuatha de Danann agreed to exchange weapons, so that each side might be able to come to some opinion as to the opponent's strength. The people of the Goddess Danu offered the Fir Bolgs peace, with a division of the country into two equal halves. The Fir Bolg King Eochaid would not have this. The Tuatha de Danann however, impressed by the Fir Bolgs' weapons, decided to retreat farther west into Connaught to a plain then called Nia (now called Moytura,) where they drew up their boundary line at the extreme end. This was in front of the Pass of Balgaton, which offered a retreat in case of defeat. Nuada, King of the Tuatha de Danann, sent an ambassador offering the same terms as before. Again the Fir Bolgs declined, but agreed to a truce of one hundred and five days in order to become battle-ready.

It was on Midsummer day that the opposing armies at last met. The people of the Goddess Danu appeared "in a flaming line," wielding their "red-bordered, speckled, and firm shields." Opposite to them were aligned the Fir Bolgs,

"sparkling, brilliant, and flaming, with their swords, spears, blades, and trowel-spears." A deadly hurley-match was begun in which thrice nine of the Tuatha de Danann met the same number of Fir Bolgs. The Fir Bolgs emerged the victors. This was followed with more parleys and battles, fought with equal numbers on each side. After four days and a terrible slaughter upon each side, the Fir Bolgs were reduced to three hundred men. Those remaining were offered a fifth part of Ireland--whichever province they might choose. They agreed to this and chose Connaught, ever afterwards their special home, and where, until the middle of the seventeenth century, men were still found tracing their descent from Sreng, a warrior of the Fir Bolgs.

So when you gaze into the Midsummer fire, think of the power and beauty of the Light and before the Sun begins to wane for another half year, remember the Fir Bolgs with their flaming swords standing up to defeat by the Tuatha de Danann.

(Primary Source: Charles Squire, *Celtic Myth and Legend*. Newcastle Publishing Co., 1975.)

Summer Solstice Essay: Danu and Stonehenge

A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 1987
By Emmon Bodfish

Midsummer Solstice, one the four minor High Days of the Reformed Druid Calendar, is associated with the Celtic Goddess Danu, Mother of the Gods, the Tuatha de Danann. She is particularly associated with rivers, and rivers from the Don in Russia to the Don in Scotland are thought to be named for Her. She is probably the same figure as the Irish Goddess, Anu, and the Breton's Ana. Roman Diana and Greek Artemis may be other cognates of this Pan-Indo-European Deity. These theories are based on the study of word origins, and on the witness of Gallo-Roman writers of the period who noted the similarities in character, rituals, and Seasons of Worship of Danu and Diana. These primary historical sources, written when the Celtic religion was still practiced in Gaul, corroborate the evidence from linguistic studies. There is an opinion about that Danu was not an important Deity, or even that the Celts lacked a Mother-Goddess figure, but I can find no hard evidence in Philology, history, or Celtic Mythology for this point of view.

Like Roman Diana, Danu's totem is the boar, an animal also associated with a female agricultural deity in the Balkans. Danu, like Frigga of the Germans, presides over marriage and fertility, and the luckiness of June weddings may be a distant memory of her festivities. Mugwort is Her sacred flower, an herb also sacred to Roman Diana; the ripe ear of grain is Her token. (This fits T. Edwards' theory that the Christian Madonna was modeled after (to co-opt?) the various Mother-Grain Goddesses of pagan Europe.) On the Isle of Man it is customary to wear a sprig of mugwort to the Midsummer dance, and in England, placing mugwort under her pillow is said to bring a young woman dreams of her future husband.[1] In Scotland, there are all night bonfires, song fests, and dances for the young, unmarried people of the villages.

This is the morning on which the Sun used to rise over the heel stone at Stonehenge, thus beginning the new season in the Megalithic calendar. It no longer rises at that point owing to the procession of the Earth's axis, but celebrations are held there, anyway.

The Druid did NOT build Stonehenge. It antedates their arrival in Britain by centuries. It was William Stuckeley in 1717 who mislocated the Druids there. He did some of the best archeological field work of his day, but his theorizing later wildly outstripped his data. The mistake was an honest one, however, considering what was known in his time. He showed that the stones were not a memorial to King Arthur nor a Roman temple, the two then common theories. He was the first to establish the monument as definitely pre-Roman. The only knowledge of pre-Roman Britain he had came from Roman and Greek writers of the Classical Period. They said that Britain was inhabited by Celts whose priests were the Druids. So, if the stones were older than any Roman constructions, Stuckeley reasoned, they must have been put there by Druids. He knew of no other candidates. But in the last two centuries, archeology has provided us with many, even too many other possibilities. The currently favored candidates are the early Neolithic farmers of Natufian stock, a longheaded, slender, fine-boned people who inhabited the Salisbury area from 2900-2500 B.C. coinciding with the most accurate modern date for the first cycle of building at Stonehenge. A larger boned hardier people later took over the monument and set up the Blue Stones, but they too had disappeared before the arrival of the Celts around 480 B.C.

This is not to say that the Celts did not take cognizance of the huge stones. They worked monuments of other prehistoric peoples into their mythology and song. Numerous Bardic compositions refer to the Sidh Mounds of Ireland and the Carnes of Scotland as sacred places and the long abandoned abodes of the Gods. They may have done the same for Stonehenge, but the English traditions and Bardic works were almost all lost, while the Irish are among the best preserved of any oral lore.

> "Behold the Sidhe before your eyes.
> It is manifest to you that it is a king's mansion,
> Which was built by the firm Dagda.
> It is a wonder, a court, and admirable hill."

"The Sidhe of Donegal" a seminar by Prof. Duran.

Two or more different groups of peoples, sharing the same or similar astronomically oriented beliefs, contributed to the five cycles of construction and reconstruction at Stonehenge. Theirs was a fairly sophisticated culture for the time. They knew that the Solstices, eclipses of the Moon, and the courses of the stars were regular predictable events. Their stone moving techniques were on a par with the times. Though not aligned accurately enough for an "observatory" in the modern sense, the stones can serve as a calendar rectifier, an eclipse predictor, and, of course, as a ritual site for religious ceremonies. But what those religions were must remain a matter of conjecture. Clearly they had something to do with sunrise, Midsummer Solstice, moonrise, and lunar eclipses, but what they meant, and what the people did there, is probably not recoverable. As Clannad sings "Forgotten is the race that no one knows."[2]

[1]A friend of mine tried the experiment of putting mugwort under her pillow, but reported she had no dreams at all. "I guess I'm just going to stay single." She is till fancy-free three years later. If anyone wants to try this, you can get mugwort in most herb shops. Send in your results and we'll publish them for Lughnasadh.

[2]Clannad, a modern Irish Folk Group. "Ring of Stones," good album.

Summer Solstice Essay: Danu and Summer Fun

A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 1989
By Emmon Bodfish

Midsummer, the Summer Solstice, the longest day, the shortest night, this is one of the four astronomical High-Days of the Druid year. It is associated with Danu, Mother of the Celtic family of deities the Tuatha de Danann. She is cognate with the Irish Anu and Breton Ana. She may be cognate with classic Roman Diana, though Her character and role are more like those of Juno. Like Her, Danu is the patroness of marriage and sanctifier of the home, The particular luckiness of June weddings may be a folk memory of the time when this time of the year was sacred to the Goddess of marriage. She is associated with fertility of grain as well as of women, and She is linked to rivers and river valleys which bear Her name or cognates of it stretch all across Europe from the Danube to the Don and the De in Scotland. Rivers, valleys, grain, home, fertility and prosperity formed a thematic group in the Celtic mind. Her festival was on Midsummer day and all night bonefires, dances, and games of courtship and revel continued to be celebrated on the day and the preceding night well into this century. Again we see the Druid custom of counting the night which precedes the high-day as the one sacred to that day. There are many, many references to this night of revels in medieval and Renaissance folksong, as well as in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries.

The tension between the folk customs and the Christian church is succinctly in the traditional verse:

"Mierry do not tell the priest,
For I fear he would call it a sin,
But we have been in the woods this night,
A' conjuring the summer in."

This fragment of a ballad was quoted to us by a folksinger whom we talked with at the Live Oak Park Faire, who had collected it in England. In this case the folk tradition probably goes back to Druid times.

This would be a propitious night for a vigil, or just to try sleeping out of doors if possible. Following another folk tradition whose roots are probably Druidic, single women might try sleeping with a pillow stuffed with mugwort, an herb sacred to Roman Diana, and probably to Danu or Ana, under their heads. This will bring dreams of their future husbands, and was a practice carried on into this century in Celtic countries. The only similar divination practice I have ever heard of for young men involved looking quickly into a particular sacred well, in which he might catch a glimpse of his future mate. But this had nothing to do with Danu or Midsummers.

Summer Solstice Essay: Belenos

A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 2001
By Stacey Weinberger

Midsummer, Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year. On this day the Sun rises and sets at its most northerly points along the horizon and reaches its most highest point in the sky of the entire year at Solar Noon (1 p.m. daylight time.)

While there are several Celtic deities who are considered a Sun god or goddess, in the RDNA tradition it is Belenos who we honor and praise this Midsummer day.

Belenos, also know as Beli, Belin, or Belinus in Britain, is perhaps associated with the Phoenician word Ba'al, meaning master. The variant Belenos is found widely distributed in early inscriptions in Gaul and northern Italy. Beli Mawr (Great Beli) appears in The Mabinogion as a powerful king of Britain and ancestor-deity of the Welsh royal line, and may be identical in origin to Belenos Himself. The ancient name element "Bel-" (root,) is also found in the Latin bellus, meaning bright or brilliant, beautiful, and all the words subsequently derived from it; in the Goidelic "bile," meaning sacred tree, and other words of distant origin.

Bel was the young-god counterpart of the old-god Bran, as Jupiter was the counterpart of Saturn in the Roman pantheon or as Zeus was the to Cronos in the Greek pantheon. In general the first half of the year may well have been associated with Bran and the second half with Bel or Belenos.

Caesar's Gaulish Apollo is generally to be taken to be Belenos in His native guise. Apollo is actually a latecomer to the Greek pantheon, and one of a variety of theories about His origins is that He was adopted from the Celts. Both are known as gods of light and of the sun. Both are gods of sacred springs. In the Shetlands as well as in the Orkneys, the sick visited the wells which were circled sun-wise before drinking from them. This is another tribute to Belenos, who like Apollo, is also a healer-god. Water and solar symbolism are closely linked in healing cults.

Whereas dedications to the Celtic gods in the form of inscribed altars appear to chiefly recur within one area, a few individual dedications are distributed widely. Belenos was one deity to be honored in such a way. His dedications are relatively common and widespread in Celtic Europe, particularly in southern and central Gaul, North Italy, and Noricum in the eastern Alps. Ausonius, a Bordeaux poet writing in the later half of the fourth century A.D. mentions sanctuaries in Acquitaine and writes of Phoebicius, who had been a temple-priest there.

Belenos is commemorated in place names as well. In England examples include Billingshurst in Sussex and Billingsgate in London. In France a number of places bear His name. The high rocky islet off the coast of Normandy formerly called Tombelaine, which in the slightly altered form of Les Tombelenes is a reef off Jersey's north coast. Belenos also appears to be venerated in some parts as St. Bonnet.

It is thus not coincidence that in the liturgy for the Special Order of Worship for the Summer Solstice it is suggested that the altar fire be especially large. We welcome Belenos on this day of days asking Him to fill us with life, and warmth, and light our way as we honor Him with His element, and enjoy this glorious season before He begins to wend His way southward again.

Hail Belenos, God of the Sun!

Hail Belenos, Giver of Life!

Hail Belenos, Lord of Light!

Summer Solstice Essay:

Anu and Danu

A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 2002
By Stacey Weinberger

Midsummer, Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year, one of the minor High Day of the Reformed Druid calendar, is associated with the goddess Danu. There has been much discussion in the scholarly community on whether Danu and Anu are cognates of one another or separate goddesses entirely.

Anu and Danu were both fertility goddesses and Mother Goddesses in early Irish mythology. Anu is described in Cormac's Glossary (*Sanas Cormaic*, 10th century) as the mother of the Irish gods, and in the *Coir Anmann* (Fitness of Names) as the goddess of prosperity to whom the province of Munster owed its wealth and fertility. Danu is associated with the divine race of people, the Tuatha De Danann, the People of the Goddess Danu, who are recorded in the *Leabhar Gebhála* (Book of Invasions) having arrived in a cloud from the North, invading Ireland, and defeating the Fir Bolgs and later the Fomorians.

Anu is identified with the earth and fertility of Ireland. She gives her name to the two rounded hills in County Kerry, called *Dá Chich Anann* or the Paps of Anu. In Ireland today she is still talked about from Cork up into South County Tipperary and is considered the earth goddess of Ireland. A distinction is made between her and Danu. Anu is considered to be pre-Tuatha and possibly the Sheela na Gig.

Anu is also identified with Aine, another goddess associated the land. Her cult was localized to County Limerick, Munster, where she was still worshipped up until the 19th century. She was said to live in the hill Cnoc Aine. On St. Johns Eve, Midsummer's Eve, the local people carried torches of hay and straw around the hill that were then taken to the fields to bless cattle (another instance of fire being used to insure the health and fertility of the flocks for the coming year.)

Danu, according to MacKillop, is the speculative name for the mother goddess of the Continental Celts, based on the evidence of place names, for example the Danube river (*die Donau.*) He writes that "a prosthetic D-changes Ana, Anu to Dana, Danu; some commentators advise that these forms are later scholarly inventions, while others point out that the name Dana has discrete associations and parallels." But if you look at the types of places Danu is associated with, a pattern begins to form. Derivations of her name being rivers show strong evidence that she is a river goddess, as opposed to Anu who is a land goddess. Rivers all over the Indo-Europeans lands were named for her: the Danube in Austria (the Greek author Herodotus commented on the Keltoi residing in the area of the Danube valley in the fifth century B.C.,) the Don in southwest Russia (where an inscription referring to an attack on the kingdom of Bosporos and a scattering of La Tene objects across the southern steppes in indicates that some Celts might have reached,) Dneipr in the Ukraine (where the Celts settled around 300 BC,) Dniestr in Moldavia, and even the Don and Dee in Scotland are all cognates of her name.

Other linguistic evidence exists showing Danu's position as a Pan-Indo-European river Goddess. Her name is Sanskrit and in India's Rig-Veda signifies "stream" and "the waters of heaven."

Lughnasadh

Lughnasadh Notes

The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1976
By Isaac Bonewits and Robert Larson

Lughnasadh begins the season of *Foghamhar* (Fôr,) now *an Fomhar* (uN FôR); which is fall or autumn, running from roughly the beginning of August till the end of October. Together, these two seasons constitute "the Summer Half of the Year" or "the Season of Life."

Lughnasadh (Loo-Nu-Su) is known in Modern Irish as *Lá Lúnasa* (Laa Loo-Nu-Su,) in Welsh as *Gwyl Awst* (August Feast,) as *Lla Lluanys* or *Laa 'n Ouyr* (Day of the Harvest Season) in Manx and as Lammas, Apple Day and Harvest Home in English. It is the anniversary of the funeral games given by Lugh, the God of All Crafts, in honor of his Father. Essentially a harvest festival, this signals the beginning of the harvest season and the ripening of the apples (as well as other fruits and vegetables.) Enormous quantities of applejack, hard cider, mead and other alcoholic beverages are consumed at this time (it's almost a duty!) by all enthusiastic Neopagans. Hasidic Druids may prefer to drink ten-day-old slivovitz (plum brandy) at this time, but it's their stomach lining!

This holiday is a day of mixed joy and woe (Irish wakes are an *old* tradition,) for it is by now obvious that the days are getting shorter. Stories of the battles between Lugh and Balor (the good Sun-Fire God and the bad one) are retold, as the autumn quarter of *Foghamhar* begins.

Lughnasadh Essay: Funeral Games

A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1983
By Emmon Bodfish

Originally a celebration of the funeral games for Lugh, the Celtic deity of Light. By August 1 the sun is lower in the sky and days significantly shorter. By now even the non-astronomically oriented can feel the summer's decline. The sun, re-born on December 22, is ageing. The period of harvest, Foghamhar, is coming, and this High day marks the celebration of the First Fruits, and the first produce of the fields. In Celtic Countries, this middle of the summer festival is still marked in The Races in Ireland, Revels in Wales, and the Highland Cattle Show in Scotland. In a stock raising culture like the Iron Age Celts, this was the most likely time of market faires and Gatherings. The calves of the Spring were old enough to sell/trade; likewise the sheep would have been sheared and surplus wool of lambs could be bartered.

Lughnasadh Essay: Rosmearta

A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1984
By Emmon Bodfish

Lughnasadh is known in Modern Irish as La Lunasa, in Welsh as Gwyl Awst, (August Feast,) as Lla Lluanys or Laa 'n Ouyr (day of the Harvest Season) in Manx and as Lammas, Apple Day, and Harvest Home in English. It is the anniversary of the funeral games given by Lugh, the God of all Crafts, in honor of his Father. Essentially a harvest festival, this signals the beginning of the harvest season and the ripening of the apples. This holiday is a day of mixed joy and woe (Irish wakes in the old tradition) for it is now obvious that the days are getting shorter. Stories of the battles between Lugh and Balor (the good Sun-Fire God and the bad one) are retold, as the autumn quarter of "Foghamhar begins."

--The Druid Chronicles

A much cited but little understood goddess of the Celtic pantheon is Rosmearta, consort of one of the Mercury-like gods, though which one is not certain. It was probably not Lugh himself, whose story and exploits are fairly well known, at least in Irish tradition. She may have been associated with the Gaulish or Welsh Lugh, according to a piece of information from one of our Grove members, but there is no reference for it in any pre-medieval source we can find. His Gaulish name, Lugus, was known to the Romans, but it is not mentioned in connection with Rosmearta. Lugh's wife is Eriu or Erin in the Irish literature. In any case, she seems to have functioned independently of her consort, judged by the number of references, shrines and place names that have survived. Her name is found in twenty-one different inscriptions, in Roman letters, on monuments in Gaul, dating from the first few centuries A.D. Caesar, Lucan, and later Latin chroniclers tell us that she was very popular, receiving much worship and tribute from the native Gauls.

One derivation of her name, (Branston, L.G. of E.) spring from the Celtic roots:

Ro=much, exceedingly

Smeart=smear, annoint

Branston cites the use of the term, smearta, in an early Cuchulain tale, in which the Irish hero smears with blood a false beard which he has made for himself from grasses. Besmearing his face, he effects a disguise. This fits with the Roman report of her popularity if she was "The much Anointed One." Celtic deity's statues and artifact were often anointed with precious oils, or with the blood of vanquished enemies when that deity was beseeched for favors or thanked for victories.

There is a sanctuary, on the Boyne in Ireland, called Rosmaree, which may be that of her Irish cognate. It is a high mound, of Bronze Age origin, and Medieval Legend tells of a speaking stone connected with it which gave answers to questions about all past deeds and events. It was appealed to in order to settle disputes or establish guilt, much to the despair of the Christian monks, who recorded the custom. Local folklore has it that even up to a century or so ago, no one passed by the stone, whose name is Druin Torerime, without dismounting and paying her homage. It was seen, apparently, as a female being.

This idea of giving answers and of knowing the past, of the actions of all mortals, adds credence to the second derivation of her name, Rosmearta, from the Indo-European root Smer, to think, to remember, to share or portion out.

Ro=much
Smer=remembering, alloting
Ta=from ti, tia, female, she
The All Remembering One
The Apportioner

Her other attributes, her associations with vegetation, grain and Earth-bounty, which she meets out are consistent with the allotting function. She shares this function with another set of supernatural beings whose names derive from the same I.E. root, Smer. These are the Early Greek Moira, and the Germanic Norns, especially the middle Norn, Verthandi. In Greek her title is Lachesis, from lot, distribution, share. A more distant connection can be made to the Italic Parcae, also originally goddesses of vegetation, fertility and birth. But these three powers act differently in the Northern countries than they did among the Indo-Europeans of the Mediterranean. The Norns, Wyrd, and their cognates have none of the feeling of foreknowledge and predestination abou them that characterize the Classic Fates. For Homer, the Fates' decision was unavoidable, even if one had foreknowledge and will. The Norn do not control the future. They set out one's circumstances, one's lot, and then record human action as present evolves into past. They do not control our action, but only mark them down, layer by layer, weaving the present into the past.

All these deities have in common the ancient link to vegetation and to the allotment of each person's share in life, but in Celtic and Norse they are not concerned with the future, nor do they have the power and feeling of predestiny this implies. This concept, which in later Hellenic times attached itself to the Fates (and by way of Classic trained scholars to King Arthur's Merddyn,) entered Europe with Christianity, there to cause numerous philosophical problems which hardly ended with Calvin. The Indo-European apportioning goddesses give only talents and setting. Greatness, as the poems of Cuchulain and Beowulf, and the Ossianic Fennians make clear, depends on what each person does with their portion. Rosmearta seems to have been a goddess who was thanked for success, harvest and victory.

Rosmearta can be beseeched with incense and aromatic oils to give us the circumstances in which we can be successful. (Blood is not to the modern aesthetic, unless you're a hunter or a beef rancher.) Of course, we must know what these circumstances would be if we're to ask for them and to recognize them when they occur. She can be thanked on Lughnasadh, along with Lugh and Danu, the Earth Mother, for the harvest that now begins, for our share.

Lughnasadh Essay: Reaping and the Last Sheaf

A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1985
By Emmon Bodfish

Lughnasadh, Feast of the First Fruits, begins the harvest season. Traditionally it marks the Funeral Games for Lugh, Celtic Sun-God, and by now it is clear that the summer is waning, and the Sun retreating southward. Our harvest this year at the Grove is hay, and apples, and the promise of Elderberries and Holly.

In line with the local fire prevention campaign, we were required to cut down the hay in the two and a half acre meadow at the bottom of the property. (This issue's trivia fact: the bent wooden handle of a scythe, the tall kind the Grim Reaper carries, is called a "snath." We had to order one through our local hardware store when the old one broke.) To speed things up, we also used a weed whip. While out there mowing, I thought: We should try enacting the old Celtic ceremony of the cutting of the last sheaf." Up until the introduction of mechanical reaping machines in the last century, it was the custom in all the Celtic countries, and many on the borders of the, to leave standing the last "stook" of hay or grain, and then all those that have worked at the reaping of the field take turns throwing their sickles at it. The one who knocks it down is declared the "King of the Harvest" and the shout goes up that he "has got the Old Woman," presumably the spirit of the grain/hay-field, which has been driven into the last sheaf as the reapers advanced across the field. In some areas it was called the "Maiden" or the "Corn-Baby." In each case though, the sheaf was dressed up in makeshift clothes like a woman or a child, and is carried to the Harvest man's home on the last wagon amidst raucous shouts and song, "like a wedding procession" according to a Welsh source. It was hung up over the hearth, or, in Ireland over the door, or in the barn. In some places it was saved until Yule, when it was fed to the cattle, to keep them healthy. In other places it was kept until the following spring and then scattered over the field before it was sown. (Wrapping the trunks of birch trees in burlap…dressing the Last Sheaf, trimming and decorating Yule trees, What is this Celtic desire to put clothes on plants?) On the Continent, in Gaulish lands, it is a woman who cuts and binds the last sheaf, after which she is called the "Oat-Bride" or "Hay-Bride" or whatever after the grain. She is escorted home amidst dancing and songs typical of weddings.

We left the last stook of hay standing in the field, and on Sunday, after the regular Druid ritual we went out in company and tied the tuft of hay into a sheaf with a rope of braided rush-grass. All the males took turns throwing the short sickle at it, and Larry A.D., knocked it down. He was declared King of the Harvest and the hay-sheaf was dressed up in a cap and apron which Willow-Oak had made. Larry carried it back on a pole.

As we have no cattle to whom to feed it on Yule, we will save it to scatter over the field.

[Picture of Larry with the hay-bride raised up on a pole.]

Lughnasadh Essay: Tales of Lugh

A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1986
By Emmon Bodfish

Lughnasadh, festival of the funeral games of Lugh the Sun God, or, given by Lugh in honor of his father the Sun, depending on your tradition. It is the beginning of the Celtic harvest season, and is often called Festival of the First Fruits. Lugh, from the same root word as light and luminous, is one of the younger generations of gods in the Celtic pantheon. Like other Indo-European solar deities, his growth was rapid,, being the size of a 10 year old when he was 5, and gaining full manly size and skill by age 10 or 12. He is the multi-competent god, not specializing in one function, but capable in all. Even as a child he was expert at any craft or skill from his first attempt at it. As a boy of 8, according to Welsh legend, while his goddess-mother was measuring his foot for a shoe, he picked up a bow and arrow and shot a wren in the leg. This, the story goes on to explain, was the favorite demonstration shot of Celtdom's best crack archers. His mother was delighted, and Lugh went on to become a parent's dream come true. He was good at everything, polite, chivalrous, and an example of filial devotion.

Later as a young man, when he applied for admittance to the company of the elder gods, he is quizzed by the gatekeeper as to what he can offer. "I am an excellent smith," he says. "We have Goibhne the smith," said the gatekeeper. "We have no need of that." And this continues to be the reply as he lists each one of his skills. The gods already have one of their number who is an expert in that domain. Finally, frustrated, the boy shouts, "But do you have anyone who can do them all?" The gatekeeper reflects that, no, they do not. And so Lugh is admitted.

Lugh is the patron of craftsmen, apprentices, and artists. In another tradition, he is also associated with money and the accumulation of wealth. This is his only functionalistic connection with a harvest festival. The Funeral Games of Lugh, whose title for this high day may also refer to the fact that by now the Sun is past his Zenith, and is declining again toward the South.

In the R.D.N.A. traditions, anyone who has a garden, grows anything, etc., should save their first picked produce of the summer season, and bring it or a portion of it to the Service, to be offered up in the altar fire, with hopes of prosperity in the years to come.

Lughnasadh Essay: Balor vs. Belenos

A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1987
By Emmon Bodfish

Lughnasadh, festival of the funeral games of Lugh the Sun God, or, given by Lugh in honor of his father the Sun, depending on your tradition. It is the beginning of the Celtic harvest season, and is often called festival of the First Fruits. Lugh, from the same root word as light and luminous, is one the younger generations of gods in the Celtic pantheon. The other Solar Deities, Belenos and Balor, the good and the bad aspects of the sun, respectively, are not only pictured as older, mature male figures, but are traceable to the Early Indo-European stratas, in the Eastern European homelands. But Lugh, as the young Shining One, didn't appear until the Celts had settled Gaul and melded with the Celto-Ligurians and the Pre-Indo-European "Atlantic Wall" cultures which they encountered there, circa 600 B.C. Urnfields replaced passage

graves, and typical Celtic farming practices were begun. When the Celto-Ligurians had arrived, a thousand years earlier, there had been no sharp cultural discontinuity, as they blended with the Pre-Indo-Europeans, who continued to build their dolmens and passage graves. Pre-Indo-European traditions were therefore still strong when Celtic Lugh arose and began to replace Belenos as the popular Solar Figure. His ascendant, youthful, headlong character may have been influenced by the Young Year God image common in the Pre-Indo-European cultures of the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts. This archetype has been traced by G. Rachel Levy from the Balkans, to Minoan Greece, along the Mediterranean Coast to France and north to Normandy.

Lugh's best Indo-European cognate is Apollo of the Greeks. The Greek religion was strongly influenced in other ways by the beliefs and Deities of the Pre-Indo-European people they conquered and absorbed. Odin, Lugh's Northern cognate, has a much less Solar character. He is more a Shaman, knowledge-bringer, and Divine Wayfarer, going among mortals in disguise. He is not a martial figure; He is not youthful. Lugh is the patron of the harvest, which in Celtic countries began at Lughnasadh. Apollo was worshipped in the Pelopennesus as a god of vegetation, giving Him another link with the "young Year God" of the Western Neolithic. From a magical lawgiver, healer, transformer archetype, which He shares with Odin and Varuna, He evolved, partly through absorption of the Young Year God, into the youthful solar Deity of the later Celtic myths.

In R.D.N.A. traditions, anyone who has a garden, grows anything, etc. should save their first picked produce of the summer season, and bring it or part of it to Lughnasadh Service, to be offered up in the altar fire, with hopes of prosperity in years to come.

Lughnasadh Essay: Summer Games

A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1988
By Emmon Bodfish

Originally a celebration of the funeral games held by Lugh, Celtic god of light for his father the Sun,, Lughnasadh marks the Sun's position half way between Solstice and Equinox. By now, usually August sixth or seventh, the day's length is noticeably shortened. The sun, re-born on December 22, is in decline, and the season of the harvest, Foghamhar, is coming. This High Day marked the beginning of the harvest in pre-industrial times, and in Druidic times was known as the Festival of the First Fruits. Cutting of the new grain could begin, and "hungry July" was over. In the Celtic countries, this middle-of-the-summer festival is still marked by The Races in Ireland, the Revels in Wales, and the highland Games in Scotland. In a livestock-raising culture like that of the Iron Age Celts, this was the most likely time of market faires and regional gatherings. The calves of the spring were old enough to sell or trade. Likewise the sheep would have been sheared and the lambs were old enough to bartered. This was a festival of the Tuatha, the largest class in the Celtic society, comprised of the farmers, craftsmen and merchants. The other two classes were the Warriors and the Clergy, which last included Bards, Ovates, Filidhs and Druids, their students and retainers.

In the Neo-Pagan R.D.N.A. tradition, anyone who has a garden or grows anything, should save the first picked produce of the summer season and bring it, or a portion of it to the Lughnasadh celebration to be offered along with the Grove Sacrifice and hopes and prayers of prosperity to come.

Lughnasadh Essay: Lugh the Protester

A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1989
By Emmon Bodfish

Lughnasadh is the celebration of the funeral games given by the God Lugh for his father, Cian, who was slain by the sons of Turenn. Cian was a shape-shifter and magician, i.e. one of the Druid or clergy-caste. Rhys considers Him a minor solar deity, but in mythology He acts more the part of shaman and ambassador. The games show Lugh's filial piety, as Lugh represents all that the ancient Celts thought good in a young man. He is the multi-competent god, defender against oppression, patron and teacher of craftspeople and artisans, God of commerce and its wealth, protector of travelers, and Lord of the Harvest.

The figure of the young boy-God, son of one of the old Pantheon, who saves the people from an unjust ruler, in the myth of Lugh, King Breas the Fomor, is a very old and widespread theme in sacred literature. Many cultures have myths dating back probably to the Neolithic, of a young agricultural and solar deity born on the Winter Solstice, who defends the people, exemplifies morality, teaches the arts of civilization, and is associated with the harvest: Lugh, Balder, the Balkan New Year God, Prometheus, Zeus in His battle with the Titans, Mithra, and some aspects of the Moses and Jesus myths. (The early Judeo-Christian writers grafted these age-old aspects of the Young God into the founders of their faith, just as they did with numerous sayings, rituals and ideas borrowed from the older cultures surrounding them. These things were not new.)

Lugh in His defender role was also a tax protestor. When the Celts had fallen under the sway of Breas, a half-Fomor from "under the sea," Lugh, son of the old God, Cian, appeared. Breas, in one of his acts of mis-rule had levied an oppressive tax on the Tuatha de Danann by means of a deception. Breas is portrayed as a smart man (or demi-god) and clever with words. Then he first joined the de Danann pantheon, before the first battle of Moy Tura, he was the one chosen and sent out to parley with Streng of the FirBolgs. But later as king, he perverts his intelligence into trickery. Like Loci in the German myths, Breas has a legalistic, literalistic, conniving turn of mind. And like Loki, he is an outsider, possibly an adopted God from the pantheon of the Pre-Indo-European inhabitants of the region. He has ancestral ties to the long term enemies of the Pantheon he now serves, Breas represents the negative aspects of intelligence, as Lugh represents the positive ones. The Battles of the Gods, as one school of theology holds, are the battles of the archetypes and choices within the human conscience. "Mythology is not about how things are; it's about how they feel," Joan Carruth, circa 1983. Breas had the Tuatha de Danann agree to surrender to him the milk of every cow, in Ireland that was brown and hairless. They agreed. He then caused every cow in Ireland to be passed through a fire which made them all brown, scorched and hairless. A more moderate version of this fire ceremony was part of the annual Beltaine purification rites. This may have made his proposition seem at first hearing acceptable to the Tuatha. Then after perverting the sacred purification rite into a destructive one, he claimed the milk of every cow in Erin. Crops also failed to prosper under Breas' rule. The people were starving. Lugh came and won acceptance into the Pantheon with his multitude of skills, high character and regal bearing. He vanquished Breas, restored Erin to the Tuatha de Danann and their king, Nuada. Under Nuada's rule the land prospered and harvests were bountiful. This, in the Celtic theory of sovereignty, was the mark of a true and rightful king.

Celebrate Lughnasadh by offering up to Lugh the first fruits and produce of your gardens, any plants you've grown or windfall profits received. (no animals!) Dance, sing, be grateful for the harvest!

Lughnasadh Essay: Cycle of Lugh

A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1990
By Emmon Bodfish

Lughnasadh, festival of the god Lugh. In one tradition these festivities marked the funeral games originally held by Lugh in honor of his murdered father Cian. In another tradition, in Ireland, they commemorate the death of Lugh's divine foster mother Tailtiu, who cleared the forest from the plains of Ireland to make them fit for agriculture and died of the effort. She is a goddess of agriculture and one of the Irish female origin-figures. Irish clans often traced their ancestry to a female divinity, a goddess of the land. Lugh is the son of Ethniu and Cian, and the grandson of Balor, the elder Sun God, whom he later vanquishes in battle, reminiscent of Zeus overthrowing Chronos.

Lugh is the youthful Celtic Deity of Light, eulogized as "The Shining One." Some see in him an evolved form of the Neolithic "Young Year God," representing the Sun, born on Winter Solstice, married at Summer Solstice, and triumphant at Lughnasadh when he brings the harvest. He is fated to die on Samhain at the end of the harvest season and to sleep until the returning of the Sun on Winter Solstice.

Lugh is the multi-competent god, patron of all crafts and of commerce, protector of travelers, poet, harper, physician, smithy, magician, and defender of the people against their oppressive Fomorian king. Some scholars think he is cognate with Grecian Apollo. He is master of the throwing spear and has the title "Lamhfada," long arm, far reaching; he owns the spear that cannot miss its mark but seeks out its enemy.

The Sun is now half way between Solstice and Fall Equinox, and already the days are perceptively shorter, though the strong heat is still to come. This festival marks the beginning of the harvest. The first fruits are of each farmstead were brought and offered in the sacrifice. Sheep had been sheared, and the surplus wool and lambs could be bartered.

In Reformed Druid tradition, any members who have a garden, a fruit tree, or a tree that gives mast or nuts, or wild land that gives any vegetable food, bring the first fruits picked this season to offer in the Lughnasadh bonefire. (No Animals! That was forbidden by The Reform in 1963 which gave us our origin, constitution, and laws.) Lugh's tree is the apple. I cannot find a scholarly reference on this, but so folklore and tradition have it. (If you know of one, send it in and get a free subscription if it checks out.) Celebrate with apples, apple pie, cider, apple jack, and the planting of apple trees. Lugh is the divine father of the Celtic champion, Cu Chulain. Reread some of these epics* aloud.

--Emmon Bodfish

*The Tain Translated from the Irish Epic Tain Bo Cuailnge, tr. Thomas Kinsella, Oxford University Press, 1983.

Lughnasadh Essay: Harvest Games

A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 2001
By Stacey Weinberger

Lughnasadh, funeral games of Lugh in honor of his foster mother, the beginning of the harvest, the Feast of the First Fruits. Technically still summer one can already feel the chill of the coming fall in the air here in Northern California. Though the sun is still setting late into the evening, the daylight hours begin to shorten and effort is begun in earnest to bring in the harvest while there is still light in the sky.

Lughnasadh was a festival that lasted a month long, beginning in mid-July and ending mid-August. It was a time of great feasting and games, as well as being a time of assemblies where political and legal matters were settled. Origins of the festival tell that it was established by Lugh to commemorate his foster-mother Tailtiu, the last queen of the Fir Bolg, who died at Teltown, (in County Meath) on August 1. After clearing the great forests of Ireland for cultivation she collapsed from exhaustion, and as she was dying asked Lugh to hold funeral games in her honor every August.

This year the wheat we left from the offering of the Bride-og beside the Grove altar at Oimelc sprouted. As part of our Lughnasadh service we will be re-enacting the Celtic ceremony of the Iolach Buana, the Reaping Salutation. As is tradition, we will be using a sickle, freshly polished and sharpened for the occasion.

The practice of the reaping salutation appears to be related to the "crying the neck" custom that was practiced on large farms in Devon. An old man, or someone else acquainted with the ceremonies, would go around to the sheaves as the laborers were reaping the last field of wheat, and pick out a little bundle of the best he could find. This bundle he would tie up very neatly and plat and arrange the straws very tastefully. This was called "the neck" of the wheat. After the field had been cut, the reapers, binders, and the women stood around in a circle. The person with "the neck" stood in the center of the circle, grasping it with both hands. He would first stoop and hold it near the ground, and all the men forming the ring would take off their hats, stooping and holding them to the ground in imitation of the person with "the neck." They then would all begin in a very prolonged and harmonious tone to cry "the neck!" at the same time slowly raising themselves upright, and elevating their arms and hats above their heads. The person with "the neck" did this also raising it on high. This was done three times.

The cries then changed to "Wee yen! Way yen!" which were sounded in the same harmonious manner three times. After this everyone burst out in joyous laughter with much capering about. One of the laborers would then grab "the neck" and run as fast as he could to the farmhouse, where the dairy maid or one of the other female domestics stood at the door with a pail of water ready to douse him, reminiscent of a rain charm. "The neck" was then hung in a place of prominence and honor within the farmhouse where it remained until the spring when it was mixed with the seed corn before it was sown or fed to the horses or cattle at the start of ploughing.

Beannachadh Buana, Reaping Blessing

A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 2001
From the Carmina Gadelica, collected by Alexander Carmichael

The day the people began to reap the corn was a day of commotion and ceremonial in the townland. The whole family repaired to the field dressed in their best attire to hail the God of the harvest.

Laying his bonnet on the ground, the father of the family took up his sickle, and facing the sun, he cut a handful of corn. Putting the handful of corn three times sunwise round his head, the man raised the "Iolach Buana," reaping salutation. The whole family took up the strain and praised the God of the harvest (ed.: Michael, who Lugh became co-opted by in Christian times,) who gave them corn and bread, food and flocks, wool and clothing, health and strength, and peace and plenty.

When the reaping was finished the people had a trial called "cur nan corran," casting the sickles, and "deuchain chorran," trial of hooks. This consisted, among other things, of throwing the sickles high in the air, and observing how they came down, how each struck the earth, and how it lay on the ground. From these observations the people augured who was to remain single and who was to be married, who was to be sick and who was to die, before the next reaping came around.

God Bless Thou Thyself my reaping,
Each ridge, and plain, and field,
Each sickle curved, shapely, hard,
Each ear and handful in the sheaf,
Each ear and handful in the sheaf.

Bless each maiden and youth,
Each woman and tender youngling,
Safeguard them beneath Thy shield of strength,
And guard them in the house of the saints,
Guard them in the house of the saints.

Encompass each goat, sheep and lamb,
Each cow and horse, and store,
Surround Thou the flocks and herds,
And tend them to a kindly fold,
Tend them to a kindly fold.

For the sake of Michael head of hosts,
Of Mary fair-skinned branch of grace,
Of Bride smooth-white of ringleted locks,
Of Columba of the graves and tombs,
Columba of the graves and tombs.

Fall Equinox

Fall Equinox Notes

The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1976
By Isaac Bonewits and Robert Larson

The last big holiday of the year, the Fall Equinox (sometimes called Michaelmas and the Feast of the Hunters,) is a Minor High Day occurring somewhere around September 21st or so. This is a Thanksgiving feast and signals the beginning of the Hunting Season (for deer and other large game) in many parts of Europe and North America. Thus, it is dedicated to the Hunting and Fishing Gods and the Gods of Plenty, in thankfulness for benefits received and hoped for. Outdoor picnics in the woods are a popular Druid tradition in those areas where the weather is still good at this time of year. Hunting magic may be minimized by those Groves living in areas where game is a little dear.

Fall Equinox Essay: Cernunnos

A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 1982
By Emmon Bodfish

Equinox approaches the time sacred to Cernunnos, the Hunter God. The cult of the horned god/shaman, dressed in the horns and hide of a hoofed prey-animal, is one of the most ancient themes running through Indo-European religions. The cave paintings in France show such a figure and may date from Paleolithic times. (Figure 1) He is seen again on the Gundestrup Cauldron in near-historic times, here with the antlers of a Stag. It would be rash to think of all horned gods are called Cernunnos, as each tribe may have had their own name for him, but the theme of the shaman raised to a god and endowed with horns remains consistent. In southeastern Europe he is associated with the goat, and in parts of Britain with the bull, but always with a horned, food species. He may be the Being commemorated in the horn-dances carried out in a number of English villages up through the 19th century and now exclusive to Abbots Bromley. Originally he seems to have been a hunter's patron, and later associated with fertility of flocks and herds, and then with fertility in general. This was the tradition of Grecian Pan, and Robin Goodfellow, and later debased into Christian "devil" myths. The Gaelic word "faighe" for prophet, and also the name of one class of Druids, may be cognate of the Proto-Gaelic word for deer, "fiagh," especially in its genitive case, meaning "of a deer." In Gaelic cultures there is also an association with the Hazel tree, and again with the after-death world, which we will shortly be contacting in the upcoming festivals of Samhain. His following continued after Christianization, and is reflected in the Highland Calluinn ritual still in practice in the 19th century. The Protestant cleric who recorded it seems to have had no inkling of its meaning, but he asserts that the people of the West Highlands, in the 17th century, before the coming of the Presbyters, were "little more than pagans, having been neglected by the Roman Church."

The Horned-god had a second sacred time after Yule and before Oimelc, also indicative of the Cernunnos-Calluinn (Hazel) association. According to Dwelly, there is an old Gaelic myth that New Year's night is the night of the fecundation of the trees, when the winds blow from the west, and is called Calluinn night. On this night Bogles may walk.

Bogles are wood spirits, connected with Cernunnos in the following interesting manner. The word Body or the Scottish Bogle is a diminutive of the original word Bog, with cognates in the Slavic, "Bog" god, and in Proto-Celtic "Boc" god. The Welsh "boucca" evolved into Puck, the wood sprite, and the Highland Bogey, spirit inhabiting wild or lonely places. "Poccan" is a male goat, and "Puc" is the goat-god who presides over the Puck fair celebrations in Ireland.

Fall Equinox Essay: Archeo-Astronomy

A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 1983
By Emmon Bodfish

Fall Equinox, this is the season associated with Cernunnos, the horned god, patron of hunters, wild creatures, herders and flocks. Write Thomas Cross, of Post Oak Protogrove, Texas, the preferred spelling should be Cernunnos from the original inscription found in Gaul and dating from Roman times: _ERNUNNOS.

In its other aspect, the Fall Equinox is an astronomical holiday associated with marking the passage of time and the need to keep the calendar rectified. The Druids were astronomer-priests, as numerous classical authors attest. Watching the heavens, keeping the calendar and predicting lunar eclipses were among their skills and duties. But they were not the first people to be able to do this. They may have learned from the Megalithic cultures that predated them, either in the Indo-European homeland, or during the long trek across Europe before 1500 BC when they arrived in the British Isles. When they came to England, it was already inhabited by a thriving stone age culture which had built Stone Henge, by the use of which it could rectify its calendar and foretell eclipses of the Moon. Many archeologists now believe that the great monument is a perpetual calendar and sidereal computer. Its location and construction show a sophisticated knowledge of the heavens and the Earth. The Moon/eclipse system could have been worked out by careful record keeping over a long period of time, something ancient priesthoods were good at, but because of the geometry of the Earth/Moon/Sun system, it is possible to construct this type of stone marker system for both the Sun and Moon only at the exact latitude of Stonehenge. Calculation of this requires knowledge of mathematics and geometry. According to John Gribbin (*Timewarps*, Delacorte Press, 1979) "even 20 or 30 miles north or south, the doubly significant rectangular observing marker could not have been built."

The effort involved in the construction of this Megalith must have been great; by implication, the society that built it must have been both rich and stable, because in the first place, it could support a group of "wise ones" who were able to study the astronomical alignments over decades, and probably centuries, and to develop the mathematics necessary to plan the great observatory, and secondly it could take men out of active production for the long periods of time necessary to build the stone megalith, circles and ditch-works. Jim Duran, Ph.D. feels that the pre-Celtic people of Britain were organized in sets of matri-clans, based on fishing and hoe cultivation. Matri-clans foster a spirit of co-operative labor among men, as they are accustomed to working with other men from diverse family groups, wife's brothers, sisters' husbands, uncles, rather than feeling at ease only with his own family, his brothers, his father, as is usually the case in closed, patrilineal systems. The system of matri-clan organization is also a distinct advantage to a society engaged in long distance trading and raiding, as Duran thinks the ancient Britains were. Sea raiding may have helped to enrich the economy and make huge projects the economy and make huge projects like Stonehenge feasible. (See Emmon Bodfish's future monograph, "The Financing of Stonehenge.")

As asserted, when the men are going to be away for long periods going to be away for long periods of time, raiding, trading or engaged in public works projects, they prefer to leave the homesteads in the care of their sisters and their mother's people, who will guard their mutual inheritance, rather than in the keeping of the wives, as under patrilineage. The wives would be from a different, also raiding clan, and their loyalty would be divided.

Gribbon, reasoning from the workings of the marker stones at Stonehenge, deducts that basic megalithic calculations were in 3/1 and 7/1 ratios. These, especially three, were important number in Celtic ritual also. This may be the basis of our seven day week, an institution that pre-dates recorded history, in Northern Europe. Though the Druids did not build Stonehenge, they may have understood its workings, and certainly the working of the Solar calendar it marks. With it they could have calculated not only the Fall Equinox which is at 7:42 AM Pacific time this year, but also the fact that it is a Friday, though they would not have called it that. The names, as most people know, are Norse.

Fall Equinox Essay: Cernunnos

A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 1984
By Emmon Bodfish

Equinox approaches the time sacred to Cernunnos, the Hunter God. "Now is come September, the Hunter's Moon begun." [1]as Holly sings it, and now is the time of Cernunnos, the god of the hunt, the immortal shaman invoking and controlling the quarry. In Gaul, an altar was dedicated to him below what is now Paris. He is one of the prototypes of that inexhaustible figure, The Horned Man.

As Master of the Animals, he embodies their spirits and can parley with them, bringing game to the hunter, or protecting and sustaining cattle and flocks. As the Woods-god, he directs primary energy, the life forces, creative, magical, and procreative of animals and wilderness. As the Shaman-god his function is to be a connecting link between the human and non-human worlds, and to balance the two with their opposing tensions. From these two roles flow his later attributes, God of Wealth, magician, juggler, and Lord of the Dance.

He is appealed to to communicate to the spirit of the animals to let one of their number be taken for food, to make the cattle flourish, and to increase the herds. Most pagan cultures believe that it is not prudent or even possible to catch game or raise an animal for slaughter without its permission on the spiritual level. This is always a bargain, requiring the prey's cooperation. Ritual and honor must be paid to prey species, or to the Master of Cattle, in return.

Though Margaret Murray was ridiculed for suggesting it in the 30s, it has since become clear that we are dealing with a Paleolithic cult in the Horned God, yet one that has continued down to the present day. This shows a strong, basic archetypal appeal. Like all good archetypes, he has multiple and voluminous levels of meaning

In Celtic mythology, he forms a triad with Eusus and Sylvanus. As with other Celtic triple divinities, these may be different facets of the same being. He is close on the left side to Eusus, god of the underworld and riches, and on the right to Sylvanus, Wood spirit, god of vegetation, the Green Man. The

links with wealth and death on one hand and magic and fecundity on the other go all the way back to Cernunnos' stone age roots. Around the pictures of horned men on cave walls are other pictures, most of them of animals. All were animals which were important in the hunt, but which were dangerous to hunt. Species known to have been hunted, but which are not dangerous, are not represented. These animals, deer, bison, bulls, wolves, horses are ones that have to be reckoned with, and this was done magically. As the Finn-Ugric and Siberian hunters, heirs to Paleolithic Europe, explained it in the 19th century, there are three things the hunter wants to insure: that he kill the quarry and that it not kill him. That is that his spirit, mana or tapa, overcome the animal's spirit. And thirdly, he wants to insure that his hunting not cause the prey species to flee or to become depleted. He wishes to propitiate the spirits of the animals for the loss of some of their number, and to insure the fertility of the herd and secure its increase.

Among many Northern European peoples it was important to assure the animal killed of a way to be reborn, to come back and continue its life. Its bones were collected and treated with special funeral rites and magic to aid this return. Ideas presaging the concept of reincarnation are common to Eurasian hunter cultures and south to the Caucus and the Indo-European homelands. Here, then are the Cernunnos' triad's attributes:

Success-Wealth Underworld-Death	Magic	Fertility Reincarnation

with magic as the connecting link or directing force which humans and gods assert, influencing the course of events for their benefits.

Cernunnos is the Gaulish deity whom Caesar equated with Roman Mars. This was more than chance resemblance. There is some evidence of for their common I.E. roots. Mars was not always a god of war. Originally he was a god of vegetation. Cato and Varro concur on this, telling us that it was to Mars that the farmers prayed for good crops and prosperity, and for protection of their cattle. He had an old title, from pre-Republican days, of Mars Silvanus, Mars of the Woods. The elements of War and martial spirit were later connected with him when Rome began its expansions and conquest. There is a myth recorded in Plutarch's "Parallela," in which Mars takes on a mortal woman as his lover. Her name is Silvia; she bears him a son whose soul is contained in a spear.

Mars War Plunderer	Mamurius Veturius Fecundity Venus' Lover	Mars Silvanus God of the Wood Protector of Cattle

At the other end of the Indo-European spectrum, in Vedic India, is the figure of Rudra, who may be cognate with Mars. He is the patron of the Kesin, long haired, woods-dwelling ascetics. And there is reason to think that Sylvanias, Silvanus, and Shiva are the same. The latter two share similar myths of travels in the Underworld. If we accept the Irish Wildman-of-the-Woods, Mad Suibhni (Swee' nee) as a late Christian euhemerization of Sylvanias/Cernunnos, then the Celtic Horned-god(s) made similar journeys to the Underworld, under or inside Magic Mountains. All these tales include a visit to a female figure who lives inside the Mountain and who is the source of wealth or knowledge. In Siberia she is the Reindeer Mother. Among the early Greeks she is the Bear Mother. On Shiva's journey, she is Devi, Madam Bramha, conqueror of the Bull-Demon, bulls, cattle, and herds.

In the Caucus she is Mother of the Dead, who suckles the soul of the newly dead, as the Reindeer Mother suckles each would-be shaman who finds his way through the labyrinth to her cave. There is nothing like her in African, Chinese, or Australian myths, no source figure who is a Lady-inside-a-Mountain. She is an Eurasian figure, probably of Paleolithic origin. In her we may be seeing who "Venus of Willendorf" was.[2] Similar Magdalenian and Gravettian female figurines have been found far down in caves and caverns under mountains in France and Switzerland. These caves are often difficult and dangerous to climb down into, yet the walls are elaborately painted with figures of animals and outlined handprints of humans, or whole rooms painted red with ochre. Footprints in the hardened clay show that dances and ceremonies were held here around her figurines, or around clay models of gravid or copulating bison. Here someone painted on the wall the famous "dancing sorcerer" of the Arièges, the proto-type of the Horned Man.

Cernunnos, King of the Wood, Lord of the Animals, he can be appealed to for difficulties with pets or with wild animals. His color is brown, burn aromatic woods or pine pitch or incense. Brown is a very special color; it is not found in the spectrum. It is a mixture of red and green with yellow for warm brown, or blue for cool brown mixed in, in lesser quantities. But there is no brown light. The sensation, brown, is created within the human visual system. This is fitting for Cernunnos, the mind-traveler, the shaman. Francis of Assisi, preaching to the birds, living in the forest, and specifying humble brown robes of local material for his Order, was in the old I.E. tradition of the Holy-Man-in-the-Woods. These old currents of thought change direction and name, but do not die out as quickly and as easily as textbook history would portray.

Cernunnos can best be experienced out-of-doors in the woods or wild places. After 2:00 a.m., and the last lights are out and radios off, even fairly tame bits of the out-of-doors, backyards, and gardens return essentially to Nature. Smells and sounds change. Try sitting like Cernunnos in his Gunderstrup pose in this setting. If you cannot find a horned serpent, use some other symbol of the Mountain Mother,[2] and a torc, sign of the warrior and of his bond to his patron deity.

[1]Holly Tannen, "Invocation." Kicking Mule Records, KM 236.
[2]James Duran, "The Horned God of Europe," Spring Seminar, 1984.

Fall Equinox Essay: Michaelmas

A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 1985
By Emmon Bodfish

Fall Equinox is associated in the Celtic parts of the British Isles with the gathering of root crops. Many of the old customs have continued, in the Highlands and the Islands, and are enacted now in the name of the Michael-mass festivals. Michael is the Christian personality most often substituted for Lugh, or even Llyr, by the Old Celtic Church when it first came to the Celtic countries in the 4th and 5th centuries. The flaming sword and warrior aspect of the Archangel may have suggested a similarity to Lugh-of-the-Long-Arm and his spear in his defender, protector role. Most particularly, the quality of "shiningness" links the two.

Alexander Carmichael, collecting oral folklore in the 1830s, notes that in the Highlands, St. Michael is spoke of as "an Brian Michael," that is, the Demi-god Michael. Christian saints, such as Columba or Andrew were called "Naomh" the usual translation of the Latin "sanctus." Brian Michael rides a winged horse, and is the patron of sailors and ships, the former province of Llyr. There is no basis for either magical horses or

control of the sea in the Biblical Archangel's exploits that I recall. The same powers and a fiery steed are attributed to him in Cornwall and Brittany, but never in Greek or Roman Christianity, i.e. south of the Alps.

Since some tiny carrots have sprung up in our lawn, we may do a version of the Highland Carrot ceremony come Fall Equinox. (The benefits of using kitchen compost for fertilizer.)

While one of our members went to the gathering at Harbin Hot Springs, the remaining Live Oak members celebrated Lughnasadh with a Bonnack Bake. Bonnacks, or in Scot's Gaelic "bonnachann," are small, unleavened cakes of sweet meal, often mentioned in old Celtic song and lore. The Romans on Hadrian's Wall describe Pictish raiders baking them over their campfires on the flats of their swords.

Bonnach Recipe

A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 1985
By Emmon Bodfish

[Several pictures of the procedure.]

Cut your grain with a bronze sickle when the heads are an even tan and dry. Thrash it over a clean white cloth and winnow it with your breath. Grind it until it is a fine meal. Mix it with whiskey and water and pat it into cakes. Cook slowly over a smoored fire, (on the flat of a sword) without turning them. (8-10 min.)

"Tha bonnach min milas aig Bride a'taobh d'an sliabh."

When it ripened, we cut the rye and wheat that had sprouted spontaneously in our Grove circle. We decided to make some ceremonial bonnacks out of it. We thrashed it by hand, rubbing the grain heads between our hands, letting the grain fall on a clean white cloth, as described for the old Highland rites. Stacey discovered the best method of winnowing. She put the rubbed gain, still in its husks, in a sloping sided bowl, and blew lightly down the near side of the bowl, puffing the fine chaff up the opposite side and out, all the while shaking the grain in the bowl to bring more chaff to the top.

We made a fire of the last of the wood that Joan Carruth, ex A.D. of Live Oak Grove, current A.D. of Birch Grove, had donated when she moved East a few years ago. The fire burned down to good glowing cooking coals while we took turns grinding the grain in a hand bill, a never-used-before pepper mill, actually. We baked the bonnachann on the lat of a sword, in the old Pictish (Cruithinig) tradition, Raphael lending his sword for the purpose. During the grinding we chanted the old Highland Quern Blessing, Larry reading the English and Emmon reading the Gaelic. Although we were prepared to bite into something "not so wonderful" and eat it anyway, the result were surprisingly good, especially with sweet butter. As Raphael said, "Boy, this is bread 'from scratch'."

Beannachadh Brathain

Oidhch Inid
Be feoil againn
'S bu choir 'uinn sin
Bu choir 'uinn shin

Leth-cheann circe,
'S da ghreim eorna,
'S bu leoir 'uinn sin
Bu leoir 'uinn sin.

Bi bin againn,
Bi beoir againn,
Bi fion againn,
Bi roic againn.
Meilc is marrum,
Mil is bainne,
Sile fallain,
Meall dheth sin,
Meall dheth sin.

Bi cruit againn,
Bi clar againn,
Bi dus againn,
Bi das againn;
Bi saltair ghrinn,
Nan teuda binn,
'S bi fairchil, righ'nn
Nan dan againn,
Nan dan againn.

Quern Blessing

On Ash Eve
We shall have flesh,
We should have that
We should have that.

The cheek of hen,
Two bits of barley,
That were enough
That were enough.

We shall have mead,
We shall have spruce,
We shall have wine,
We shall have feast.
We shall have sweetness
Honey and milk,
Wholesome ambrosia,
Abundance of that,
Abundance of that.

We shall have harp,
We shall have harp,
We shall have lute,
We shall have horn.
We shall have sweet psaltery
Of the melodious strings
And the regal lyre,
Of the songs we shall have,
Of the songs we shall have.

Fall Equinox Essay: More Michaelmas

A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 1986
By Emmon Bodfish

Fall Equinox is associated with the gathering of root crops in Scotland and England, and perhaps, before the potato, in Ireland as well. Many of the old customs are preserved in the Highlands, enacted now in the name of "Michaelmas" festivals. Michael was the Christian personality most often substituted for Lugh, or, in other contexts, for Llyr, by the Old Celtic Church. The flaming sword and warrior aspect of the Archangel may have suggested a similarity to Lugh-of-the-Long-Arm with his magical spear. It also carries on the Celtic God's protective image and his function as defender of the people, but most particularly it is the quality of "shining-ness" that links the two.

Alexander Carmichael, collecting oral folklore in the 1800s, notes that in the Highlands, St. Michael is spoken of as "an brian Michael." That is "The Demi-god Michael." Christian saints, such as Columba or Andrew, are called Santo, Saint, from the Latin. Archangel Gabriel is "aingeal" a Gàidhlig word deriving from the Latin, or "Naomh," Gàidhlig for holy, sacred. No one else is "brian," demi-god. The Highlanders' Michael is pictured riding a winged horse, and is the patron of sailors and ships. There is not basis in the Biblical angel's character for this; it is probably a co-option from Llyr, God of the Western Ocean and Master of Horses. The same characteristics, and the combination of associations with ships and with a fiery steed, are attributed to Manannan McLlyr, in Cornwall and Brittany.

The ceremony of the carrots, described by Carmichael, in connection with Fall Equinox and Llyr/Lugh's Time, is something that could be adapted to the present R.D.N.A. celebration. It follows:

> On the 29th of September, a festival in honour of St. Michael is held throughout the Western Coasts and Isles. This is much the most imposing pageant and much the most popular of the Celtic year. Many causes conduce to this--causes which move the minds and the hearts of the people to their utmost tension. To the young the Day is a day of promise, to the old a day of fulfillment, to the aged a day of retrospect. It is a day when pagan cult and Christian doctrine meet and mingle like the lights and shadows on their own Highland hills.
>
> The Even of St. Michael is the eve of bringing in the carrots, of baking the "struan," of killing the lamb, of stealing the horses. The Day of St. Michael is the Day of the early mass, the day of the sacrificial lamb, the day of the oblation 'struan,' the day of the distribution of the lamb, the day of the distribution of the 'struan,' the day of the pilgrimage to the burial-ground of their fathers, the day of the burial-ground service, the day of the burial-ground circuiting, the day of giving and receiving the carrots with their wishes and acknowledgements, and the day of the 'oda'--the athletics of men and the racing of horses. And the Night of Michael is the night of the dance and the song, of the merry-making of the love-making, and of the love-gifts.
>
> Some days before the festival of St. Michael the women and girls go to the fields and plains of the townland to procure carrots. The afternoon of the Sunday immediately proceeding St. Michael's Day is especially devoted to this purpose, and on this account is known as "Domhnach Curran"--Carrot Sunday. When the soil is soft and friable, the carrots can be pulled out of the ground without digging. When, however, the soil is hard, a space is dug to give the hand access to the root. This space is made in the form of an equal-sided triangle, technically called 'torcan,' diminutive of "torc," a cleft. The instrument used is a small mattock of three prongs, called 'tri-meurach,' three-fingered, 'sliopag,' 'sliobhag.' The three sided 'torcan' is meant to typify the three sided shield, and the three-fingered 'sliopag,' the trident of St. Michael, and possibly each to symbolize the Trinity. The many brightly-clad figures swing to and for, in and out, like the figures in a kaleidoscope, are singularly pretty and picturesque. Each woman intones a rune to her own tune and time irrespective of those around her. The following fragment was intoned to me in a soft, subdued voice by a woman who had gathered carrots eighty years previously:
>
> 'Torcan, torrach, torrach, torrach,
> Sonas curran corr orm,
> Michael mil a bhi dha m'chonuil,
> Bride gheal dha m'chonradh
>
> Piseach linn gach piseach,
> Piseach dha mo bhroinn,
> Piseach linn gach piseach,
> Piseach dha mo chloinn.'
>
> Cleft fruitful, fruitful, fruitful,
> Joy of carrots surpassing upon me,
> Michael the brave endowing me,
> Bride the fair be aiding me.
>
> Progeny pre-eminent over every progeny,
> Progeny on my womb,
> Progeny pre-eminent over every progeny,
> Progeny on my progeny.
>
> Should a woman find a forked carrot, she breaks out into a more exultant strain that brings her neighbours round to see and to admire her luck.
>
> 'Fhorca shona, shona, shona,
> Fhorca churran mor orm,
> Conuil curran corr orm
> Sonas curran mor dhomh.'
>
> Fork joyful, joyful, joyful,
> Fork of great carrot to me,
> Endowment of carrot surpassing upon me,
> Joy of great carrot to me.
>
> There is much rivalry among the women who shall have most and best carrots. They carry the carrots in a bag slung from the waist, called 'crisolachan,' little girdle, from 'crios,' a girdle. When the 'earrasaid' was worn, the carrots were carried in its ample folds. The women wash the carrots and tie them up in small bunches, each of which contains a 'glac,' handful. The bunches are tied with three-ply thread, generally scarlet, and put in pits near the house and covered with sand till required.

Fall Equinox Essay: Sirona

A Druid Missal-Any Fall Equinox 1987
By Emmon Bodfish

Fall Equinox, a minor High Day in the Druid calendar. The days are getting short again and the harvest is in full swing. This is the time of Cernunnos, and the other Deities of night, of the Season of Sleep, and the Otherworld. The Celts, as far as we know, did not have a specific lunar deity. (I often get asked for the name of a Moon Goddess.) In researching this I have come across the interesting information on the origins of the Goddess Sirona. Her name comes from the same Indo-European root as "star," although She was later associated with the source of the river Seine, a spring where a shrine to Her was located.

As the Celts moved out of the Halstatt homeland in Austria and across Europe, they re-named rivers and springs for their Goddesses, perhaps merging them with local protective Earth Goddesses. A major shrine to Sirona, located at a spring in Hochscheid has been both traced in Roman reports and verified archeologically. This shrine was associated with healing, and Sirona is shown here on plaques and in votive statues along with a young male figure. This is probably Lugh, whom the Romans equated with Apollo after they took over the site in the second century AD. When Christians later took over the shrine, the dedicated it to a "Saint Sabine," another euhemerism of a Pagan Goddess into a Christian Pious. In late Celtic times the sanctuary was a Nemeton built around a spring whose waters were directed into a pool. In the pool have been found small votive statues of the Goddess and of the Divine Couple, presumably Sirona and Lugh, and also coins and precious offerings. It is described by the excavators as an unusually rich shrine for one so far in the country.

Sirona is portrayed here, as elsewhere, in statues and wall reliefs, holding a serpent, and a bowl of eggs, probably serpent's eggs. The motif of the Serpent's Egg appears in Irish literature and in folklore about the Druid in the British Isles. Possession of these magical eggs was said to bestow divine wisdom, eloquence, and protection against spells and disease. This last quality may be a dim echo of the healing powers of Sirona and of Her ancient association with night and dreams. People seeking cures for chronic illnesses often made pilgrimages in order to sleep within the sanctuary of a healing Deity in hope of receiving a Divine Dream in which the cause and cure of their illness would be made known to them by the Goddess of the shrine. Dio Cassius wrote of a pilgrimage made by the Emperor Caracalla to the shrines of the Celts as well as to Greek and Roman temples in search of a cure.

Farther west in Gaul, Sirona takes on a more diurnal and agrarian image, and is portrayed holding an ear of grain and a bowl. The concepts of healing and of regeneration were always closely associated in Celtic culture, according to Prof. Miranda Green, archeologist and British expert on the Celts. The ear of wheat symbolized the power of growth and rebirth, truth to its name "spica" from the root for hope. Green calls Sirona "polyandrous," but evidence simple shows Her working in conjunction with several different male Deities: Lugh, Bormo, Grannus, and several other as yet unidentified male figures. She is always associated with the serpent itself as an image of healing and wisdom in the Ancient World, and a symbol associated with the milky Way in several early astronomies.

Night, rest, and healing are the domain of Sirona. The nights will be getting longer now, taking precedence over the day. But as one devotee of Sirona, in spirit if not in name, put it, "I hold the darkness to be good no less than the light." Now begins the harvest of the benefits of the "good and covering dark." Between now and Samhain, try to visit some place in the deep country where you can see the Milky Way and the dark sky the way the Druids of Sirona saw it before artificial lights and smog lowered our vision. Anywhere you are, though, a few of the bright stars and planets are always visible, even in the city. If you can't sleep go out and look at the stars.

A meditative experiment for the radical and the brave: From now 'til Samhain, avoid all night time electronic media. Know darkness and stars.

Fall Equinox Essay: Preparation for Winter

A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 1988
By Emmon Bodfish

Fall Equinox, a minor High Day in the Reform Druid calendar. The season of Foghar begins. The harvest advances in earnest. All produce of the fields and wild woods must be gathered in before Samhain Eve. Any fruit left in the fields after that night must be left, abandoned to the birds and the wild creatures, "to feed the flocks of Cernnunos." At Fall Equinox the work of harvesting is in full swing and we can appreciate a minor holiday from our work.

There is very little to gather here at the Orinda Grove Site. After the drought and the oak moth plague of this year and last, the oaks has not ripened any acorns to speak of, and the Blue Flag bulbs and wild onions are scarce. We'll leave what there are to the animals. The deer are hungry and the squirrels have grown bold. They come into the yard or sniff around the garage. However we have a bumper crop of fire wood with all the dead saplings and fallen oak limbs. Never cut a living tree for fuel. There is plenty of the dead stuff around.

From now until Winter Solstice is the time of Cernunnos, Master of the Animals, the woodland God, the antlered shaman. He is the teacher and "brother" of mystics, and of the solitary woods hermits of the Celtic pagan tradition. Professor James Duran believes He is a cognate to Hindu Shiva. He is the magician or shaman figure, cultivating his "yoke to God" in solitude. One theory of the torque symbolism in Celtic religion is that it represents a bond to the wearer's patron deity. There is archeological evidence, shrines in caves in Spain and France with continuous offerings left over the centuries, that His identity may go back to the antlered and costumed shamans of the Paleolithic. He is a patron of hunters, and is probably cognate with the Anglo-Saxon figure of Hern the Hunter.

The emphasis of this season is balance: old and new, gains and losses. Now we can take stock of the past, of the year's activities and harvest our gains or cut our losses. Harvest is a time of endings. We are busy storing, preserving and celebrating crops and insights. Balance it with rest, and talking over future plans, beside a hearth fire if possible.

Fall Equinox Essay: Cernunnos and Dance

A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 1989
By Emmon Bodfish

Equinox approaches! This is the time sacred to Cernunnos, the Hunter God. The cult of the horned god, the shaman-god dressed in the horns and hide of a hoofed prey-animal, is one of the most ancient themes running through Indo-European-Siberian group of cultures. Cave paintings in France and Spain dating from the Paleolithic show these figures, and he is seen again on the Gundestrup cauldron, crafted by the Eastern European Celts under Druid auspicious and direction, he wears the antlers of the stag. It would be rash to think of all the horned Eurasian gods as Cernunnos, each tribe probably had their own name for him, but the theme seems universal among those cultures which lived through the last Ice Age in Europe and Eurasia north of the Caucus. In the Pre-Indo-European Balkans he is associated with the goat, in Siberia with the. reindeer, in England with the Red Deer, and in the Mediterranean and Ireland with the bull, (Here is another element linking Erin to Spain and the Mediterranean world as opposed to the rest of the British Isles or Gaul.) Everywhere Cernunnos is associated with a horned and hoofed, food producing species. He may be the Being commemorated in the "horn-dances" carried out in a number of English villages up through the nineteenth century, and now exclusively in Abbots Bromley. Whether this is a local survival from Druidic or even Pre-Celtic times, or is a rite brought with them by the Anglo-Saxon invaders in the service of their cognate deity, Hern the Hunter, is not known.

Originally Cernunnos seems to have been a hunter's god, and later to have become associated with flocks and herds as "Master of the Animals." Still later he is appealed to for prosperity and fertility in general. This was the stage of the tradition seen in the Grecian Pan cult, and in that of European "Robin Goodfellow," later distorted and debased by Christian missionaries into their "devil" cults and images. There is no devil in the Celtic Pantheon. A cosmic "bad guy" is a theological invention of a set of Middle Eastern religions including Zoroastrianism, Persian, Sumerian and Semitic as well as Christianity. Devil inventing and worshipping as we see it now is a Christian spin-off, and usually a rebellion against that same faith. It has nothing to do with the older, indigenous religions and God-figures of Europe. Cernunnos was an extremely popular figure among the farming peoples of Celtic Europe, and the Romans, newly Christianized themselves, seeing that they could not co-opt his worship, or euphemize him into a "saint," as they did a number of the other Druidic deities, debased him into a demon, i.e. the god of a rival, competing theocracy. Margaret Murray first enunciated this theory in the 1920s. Her work then fell into disrepute in the '40s and '50s, but has since been revived and vindicated. Her book, *The God of the Witches*, Oxford University Press, 1970, is worth reading if you can find it. G. Rachel Levy also sheds some light on the Mediterranean versions of his worship. In her book *The Gate of Horn,* Farber and Farber, 1948. (This book is now published as *Religious Conceptions of the Stone Age and Their Influence Upon European Thought*, New York: Harper, 1963.)

The Gaelic word "Faighe" that come to be translated "prophet," originally meant "seer" and was the name of one class of Druids, solitary forest-dwelling mystics, who may have originally been connected with the worship of Cernunnos in his role as the shaman-god. "Fiagh," the Gaelic root word for "deer," is suggestive in this regard. The old "seer" whom Finn encountered beside the sacred pool was probably one such. They are associated with the Hazel, as Cernunnos may have be as Bride is associated with the Birch and Lugh with the Apple tree.

The Horned-god had a second sacred time beginning around the Winter Solstice with the tradition of the Plying Shaman, Mystic and inter-world journeyer, he descends Into the Land of the Ancestors, (the sun, sinking to its nadir?) to bring back new souls, of game animals and kine and humans that new animals and Infants may be born and increase and prosperity be assured. This journey, "dedicated to the continual flow and renewal of life,*" was still being undertaken by Finn-Ugric and Siberian tribal shamans into this century. It is well documented and the beliefs behind it recorded by A. A. Popov, the Russian anthropologist in his numerous books and articles,

Cernunnos' rituals and, from the evidence of offerings left secretly at cave shrines, his worship, continued long after nominal Christianization of Europe. The Highland Calluinn (Hazel-tree) Ritual is an example of one such rite, still in practice in the nineteen century. The Protestant cleric who recorded it seems to have had no inkling of its meaning, but he writes that the people of the west Highlands, in the middle of the seventeenth century, were "little more than heathens, having been neglected by the Roman Church." According to Dwelly, of *Dwelly's Gaelic-English Dictionary* fame, it is an old west Highland belief that old Calluinn night, when the winds blow from the West, is the night of the fecundation of the trees. The West is the direction of the Celtic Other World, and of the dead. One wonders if this post-Solstice celebration marks the successful return of the shaman, (as well as the sun) from the Land of the Dead with his sack of new souls and spiritual gifts from the ancestors

(See the Yule Druid Missal-Any for 1986 for the "Santa" Claus-Cernunnos-Flying shaman connection.)
*Quote from the R.D.N.A New and Full Moon Day Service

Section Two:
The Heathen on the Heath

a.k.a.

The Thoughts of
Les Craig-Harger

The Heathen on the Heath: Dying

A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1986

It is the dawning of our year, and the time to mourn our dead.

I mourn two men of gentle courage, Earl McKeever and George Russ. I cannot keen, or recite their deeds in epic verse; I was not so trained, and neither am I that big a liar. I wept when weeping was fresh and unavoidable. Now is the time of remembrance, and I remember each of them.

Both lived with disability; both died at the hands of murderers. What this means to the year that has ended, or the year that is beginning, or any years before or after, is beyond me--for which I am glad.

As always, I turn to the garden, to the land.

Plants are dying now, sinking to the ground, beginning to decay before the green of life has entirely left them. New growth fastens on the decay and is made strong thereby. This is the way of compost, and of those of us who bear the stigma: Survivor. Ruthlessly the living soul battens on memory. The mourner weeps proudly, wearing the names of the dead as decorations of battle.

And the earth does not judge us, nor does she care. Salmon run, and spawn, and die, and all their history is carried out to sea, along with the hope of their race. Leaves fall, and become rich loam. Myth degenerates into bedtime stories—

--And children dream.

And what shall we do, when sweet-scented loves and bright, clean angers of youth begin to disintegrate into the nameless depths of a mind no longer young? Some of us become cynical, embracing disproof when proof proves impossible. Some of us set places for the dead at our tables, and turn down their beds, and berate the living world for slighting them; we too cling to dead dreams as if loud repetition of their content would bring back our innocence, and vindicate its misconceptions as higher truth. To some of us, the passage of time is a pattern, immune to any attempt of ours to contribute. To others, time has not passed at all.

"When I die," one friend told me, "the world ends."

But I choose to inhabit a world that will outlive me, if only for company, and the desire to belong. I may not leave a mark on the face of history; there may be no place for me in any structured scheme of things.

But there's always room on the compost heap.

The Heathen on the Heath: Death

A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1987

Samhain is change; Samhain is ever the same. Year after year we celebrate the Eternal Return, yet in many ways, every Samhain, we are made aware that you can never really go home.

Remember the dead, they whom--at least this time around--we will not see again. If ever we do meet again, it will be a different story, with everyone wearing different faces; the beloved ghosts who watch with us this night can only wait, and whimper, hoping that when Mannannen's cloak is finally drawn between us, it is wisdom and not wounds that each shall bring away from that parting. Some changes are irrevocable.

I talk to my death. I ask his advice, and he always gives it. It never differs from the last advice he gave me, but the sound of his voice awakens the mind to flooding moonlight, clearer than the cluttered light of day, and all the hairs on the back of my neck stand up, and petty things become very small indeed. For my death says, "Whatever it is that you will do, remember that I am coming for you; I know when that is, but you don't."

We live in a real world, and we know that because, one by one, we die. This Samhain, as we stand in the moon drenched grass, can we let wishful thinking drain from us, and be there for our Gods as they are? The wishful mind is a lover so busy planning the wedding, or choreographing the seduction, or mentally buying a house, that the fiery satin of the beloved's touch goes unnoticed. Imagination given to the present, and to the opening of the senses, is psychedelic; there is no book of instructions for the opening of an eye, and no script for a kiss. Name the names of your dead, and let yourself cry. Look at the living and see them. Don't miss anything, because the next Samhain, the next year, the next life, the next time you step on this same patch of ground, everything will be different.

The Heathen on the Heath: Seasonal Festivities

A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 1986

The wind is rising; it yowls like a ghost, or like my boojum-hunting Siamese cat. Modern society, to placate centralized authority, has its Halloweens and Christmases mixed up; Yule's defiance of the dark has always had a shiver in it, for all the blazing fires and gift-giving.

In the hills, our potlatches begin early and end late, with gifts displaying little of meekness, or modern good taste. It is a show of individual power and communal solidarity, an upraised finger to the society that names us separate and subordinate, and a jeer at the darkness. Animals are given, and food, and parts for woodstoves, and tools, and weapons. The well-to-do clothe their friends in gaudy finery; the poor may literally give the shirts off their backs. ("I got good wear out of this, but it'd really look better on you…") Some of these folk are Christians, and others evade all Gods equally; we pagans, for the most part, go in secret. But the Mother is there. Who can forget Her ways, when She blows off chunks of the roof and pours the bounty of Her waters down the backs of our necks at 4 A.M.?

The Really Together Pagan Farmer could perhaps use the Season of Sleep to catch up on same (barring the occasional invasion by the elements!) For all Her vaunted somnolence in these short days, Mom would do a lot of my winter work for

me, had I only prepared. Clover scattered in the cornfield will both feed and weed it, while we who miss the boat get to experience winter's majesty firsthand, as we haul manure in the rain. And this is the litany of the Not So Together Pagan Farmer: "Next year, for sure, I'll remember!"

People of the towns and valleys charge about at breakneck speed, readying for their own midwinter festival. They beam in childlike glee at festoons of red and gold and green--anybody recognize those colors? Spend money like water, and then go home and feed their shrewd and skeptical children one version or another of the Santa Clause: there is or there ain't. The Heathen's child didn't wait for the huffing and puffing of grownup authority. "Santa's a spirit," he said. The Heathen's child happens to believe in spirits, being something of an imp himself. Will Santa come to him in visions? Guide him through the forest at night? Bestow amulets, misplace household objects, spook the cat? There have been a disproportionate number of small, impressively-antlered deer around here lately; perhaps I should have a talk with that kid.

Do people have a Yule instinct? With crèches and evergreens, candles in varying arrangements, and assorted bells and books, we all seem to gather in the dark, to give the Wheel of the Year a push out of midwinter's mud and snow. And thus we come to love a season of harsh truths. It is now that sickly animals will die, and terminally-ill people as well. It is now that the weather takes its toll, in sniffles and shivers, in stuck, crashed, or broken vehicles. And darkness settles in our thoughts and our hearts, depression and contention and unexplained tears: we *need* our festival now. The flame of Life's energy burns low, and it is our turn to fan the embers that once blazed so heartily, whether or not we noticed or cared.

So join now, my people, remembering who we are. Let not the traditions of others, whether openly sacred or merely The Way Things Are Done These Days, bind us in unawareness. Rather let us face our hardship and heartbreaks, wearying pasts and intimidating futures, and together make loud, rude noises at them. And so we shall be prepared for the Sun's return, and strengthened for the work that is to follow. Don't worry if it isn't easy, or if the holiday's merriment has a catch in it here and there. We have the freedom to debunk the *real* seasonal fraud, and admit: it *isn't* easy, or carefree, or exactly like being a kid again. Then, having admitted it, light the fire, pour the punch, and make the light welcome when it gets here.

It isn't easy. So why should Mom have to do it all alone?

The Heathen on the Heath: Making A Tradition

A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 1987

Time was when I tried to tie every column in with the theme of the seasons. But I've ridden at least one revolution of the year-wheel with this column, and it has finally occurred to me that Mad Sweeney handles the seasonal aspects of the Missal-Any quite well, without the aid of my scholly sloppership. So I think I'll stop the year and get off.

What, I haven't succeeded? Why, so I haven't. For I have here a subject of rant and rave quite appropriate for winter's dark insistence. You see, it occurs to me that winters--especially country winters--are a fine time to get down to the grunt work of our religion. We have sung and feasted and sacrificed, and yelled at one another and praised our ancestors. But what do we do next? What is a pagan, or more specifically a Reformed Druid, life, in grubby day-to-day detail?

I must first admit that hard, clearheaded scholarship is something that I perceive as a duty, badly neglected on my part. I am currently poking my nose into the study of history, in bits and snippets, including more of the world than the U.S., or Celtic Britain and Ireland. The future springs from the loam of the past; if one wants to add a few nutrients for its proper growth, it helps to know what was thrown on the compost heap to begin with, and also to be reasonably aware of the nature of composting.

But what do we want to do with that future? Could I say that most of us would like to bring with us some of the values that we find in the visions of our Celtic forebears--the stubborn individualism that has led English-speaking peoples (and those who still speak Gaelic) into political experimentation that has continued to this day? Do we want to continue the openhearted pride and hospitality of the Celt, and the bold curiosity that looks the very Gods squarely in the eye?

We can only start right now. And though we may debate the correctness of possibility of writing, or rather rewriting, our own religion, the need to rewrite our culture is hardly worth an argument. Culture gets rewritten, and one can either participate actively or be manipulated by those in power. We're living a script that was heavily re-written in the aftershock of two world wars: although the sanctity of the family per se is a very old concept, the sanctity of the *nuclear* family is no older than our own parents. Cut! We're gonna have to do that scene over again. The previous generation meant well. They probably hoped, by isolating the breeding unit, to achieve greater individual prestige, and in some cases, it worked.

No one could have explained to them, without first trying it, that isolating small groups of people with specialized roles under heavy economic pressure would provide all sorts of motivation for abuse. And the failure to deal with Grandma and Grandpa, though a grandiose glitch, is no bigger than some of the boners we'll pull, once we get the lead out and start doing things.

Who's that in the back row? You say "doing things" is a fine idea for flaky South Humboldt hippies, but what about you real folks with real jobs and real bosses and neighbors and such to deal with?

You win a few, you lose a few. Actually, country folks can be just as hardheaded in their expectations as city dwellers, and although rural neighbors are fewer, they have more influence on your day-to-day life. Which brings me to the next point; if we expect to have any influence on our surroundings, we must exercise it as neighbours do, a little at a time.

It would perhaps be more fun to establish, immediately, a clan-type family structure with a set of equal-opportunity social customs. This is always a favorite fantasy, probably because everybody wants to be The McGregor. But if you are the leader of your embryo clan, you have my heartfelt sympathy. Chances are that your contributions pass unremarked, except by loud complaints of stubbornness, meddling, egotism, and being late when you drive the neighbors' kids to school. The loudest grousing will come from your own immediate family, since time devoted to a larger group is time not lavished exclusively on them.

To be even responsible, much less acceptable or polite, we must start small. This means noticing small things.

To whom do we show respect, for what, and in what ways? What are our prejudices? (Careful, lying saps power.)

Is there any subject regarding which we would not want to pass our beliefs on to our children?

Are our religious ideals reflected in our etiquette? Do we give lip service to the Mother, but expect human mothers to

stay home until their figures look normal and their kids don't cry unexpectedly? Do we fear and ridicule old age?

Do we revere Nature, but describe biological processes in the language of disgust? (Footnote: this correspondent is aware of the glory-in-grossness rhetoric of Crowley, or the Hell's Angels. She is also aware that the excuses for such rhetoric only fool men. *Please* don't refer to a pregnant acquaintance as "spawning," at least in my hearing…probably also in hers. We *do* know what you mean, and we don't like it.) Or do we use euphemisms to shove conversation away from a subject, rather than handling it in a calm and neutral tone? If a child asked you to describe sex, what words would you use? My "well, they fit together" may have been less than articulate, but it at least allowed my daughter to laugh, especially when I explained that when she was old enough, her instincts would cause her to enjoy it. "I always knew grownups were weird!" said she.

Do we deplore patriarchalism in the home, autocracy in business, and arbitrariness in law, but allow them to function unmolested? Do we "mind our own business" about socially acceptable cruelties, but pretend to the "normality" of the busy bodies in power?

Do we vote? Do we volunteer in the service of our beliefs?

Do we have a relationship with our surroundings? With plants? With animals? How well do we know our climate, our soil, our geography?

See, This is the grunt work. This is the kind of thing a religion faces you with, once you've lasted through the honeymoon phase. And half the time, once you've decided what the Gods really want you to do, your first impulse will be to try to talk Them out of it. Like, there's a quintillion bazillion gophers in my garden, and You Guys don't want me to use any poisons? Not even one little pellet? And about that geas. Folks--You really mean to tell me that You expect people to have geasa in the Eighties? Next, You'll be asking us whether we believe in magic.

But if you readers are members of the NRDNA or related organizations at this point in their development, you're the diehards, the ones who have made it this far. You've lived through the political snits and social catastrophes that drove away the dilettantes and novelty-seekers. Your pagan eyes have seen births and marriages and divorces and deaths. You have, somewhere within you, a worldview not taught to you by either mainstream religious or secular authorities.

Now, obviously, there's no law that says you can't just bug out on the project at this point. Taking your feral spiritual priorities out for a spin can make you conspicuous, especially in the current sociopolitical climate of enlightened despair. Giving up always looks terribly sophisticated.

But you can't bug out on winter.

The Heathen on the Heath: Balance and Planting

A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 1986
By Les Craig-Harger, Humboldt County, CA

On the farm, the day of equal-night may pass, as usual, unmarked by any observance, yet no less sacred; sacred is each moment to its own purpose. Remember the day of planting, and keep it holy, for few hours separate the rain and clumping mud from the onrushing summer. Too late, wherein seedlings rise just in time for the devouring heat of midsummer, and bolt before any but the birds and mealybugs have tasted them! Forget not the blessed days of foal-gentling, before the young horse can overcome its wobbliness and see what tottering and snail-paced wimps we two legs are! And are the fowls laying, and where--sacred to this purpose are a thousand times and place, including the tool shed, or your tennis drying on the front porch.

And so sometime after the blooming of the first roses, and the setting out of beans and tomatoes from the greenhouse, someone may notice that spring has, indeed, sprung, and too bad we didn't have time for a Maypole last week…

One may be thankful for the Equinox as it whizzes by, seeing that the daylight hours finally hold their own with the hours of tripping over the water-hose and falling in the compost pit. One may recognize the rich generosity of the Mother in the blackness of dirty fingernails, and the smell of last year's dead leaves calling out to this year's living plants. On the day of the Equinox. I may be on my hands and knees in the rain, planting with my fingers in a narrow raised bed, so that each row can be reached without putting my weight on the moist earth. I may be hunting ducks' eggs in the dew, with my son gathering feathers behind me. This year, I may be watching the cow calve, or frantically stringing fence against the incursions of milk stealing steers. But meditations may creep across the back of my mind, meditations of this day of balance, or precious and minutely-measured time—of economy, the ever shifting economy of life and of the earth, which makes hay, as the sun begins to shine, of all our smaller concerns.

In the city, our time is worth money. I could lay aside my shovel, take pen in hand, and prove to myself that in not renting a tractor to till my garden, I am earning perhaps eleven cents an hour. But what cosmic Boss offers me money for this time? And is not my time mine to keep or use, as well as sell? If I compare the time of buddy boots, dripping sweat, and peace with the time of driving cars and sitting at desks, I laugh. And if my time if not entirely my own, but also Hers, shall I offer Her days of my good, smelly, biodegradable toil, or hours and minutes of noise and spewing hydrocarbons? (Hours and minutes, which by Her own executive fiat, may not come until the time for planting is past, for it would take a worse farmer than I am to roll a thousand pounds of metal over the fragility of wet ground, when my own feet can tread their appointed walkways, and fingers and Garden-Weasel, while inefficient, will at least not undo the work of a year's composting.

And what do we plant? As we follow Mother around the garden, clumping like children in Her cast-off shoes, which game of creation shall we play? Each has its own rules; every garden must be a little ecosystem, hopefully favoring plants over pests, and competing successfully with a system of crabgrass, slugs, gooseberry runners, and aphids that already works perfectly well, thank you. The hardy radish will crowd out the weeds, but how many radishes will one family eat? Perhaps I can sell them turnips again this year, if I chop them

up finely in Chinese food, or dissolve them in lentil soup. Carrots love tomatoes, and vice versa, but neither of them loves my heavy acid loam; can I till in some sand, without merely creating a playground for the gophers? (My onions, potatoes, and garlic are planted--long before the Equinox--in old truck tires with wood or wire beneath them; for such gopher-ambrosia as these, I must create not only a separate ecosystem, but a separate little planet, inaccessible to nature's little restaurant critics.) The years teach me to recognize lost causes, too; Bak Choi will substitute for celery and cabbage both, and the mealybugs will at least share it with me. We ask for what we want, and do what we can to earn it, but the final choice is at the Mother's whim, varying from year to year. One year someone wished me either peas or peace, and got the accent wrong, for peas were upon me until long after summer should have withered them, whether I ever cultivated them properly or not. The next year, everyone ate a lot of borscht; the next, we learned a thousand and one ways to cook banana squash. I cannot bring myself to despair of eggplants, artichokes, or corn, but surely She laughs at my efforts, as each year's one-meal harvest is celebrated with a toast of "Better luck next time!"

So I'll raise a dented beer-can to this day of balance, before I've forgotten it (and drink the half that doesn't get poured in the slug-traps) and then go on to do as I've always done, celebrating not days, but seasons of labor and years of learning. Like most of Her mob of grubby kids, I love our Mother more than I bother to tell her; and perhaps as we lesser mothers of forgetful offspring do, She know this. Another year of Her rough patience with my efforts has begun…

The Heathen On the Heath: The Balanced Epistle

A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 1987

Balance? Not to doubt You, oh my Mother, but I don't see it. As the hill greens around me, and the ducks begin to lay, work looms large; winter's anomie begins to thaw, and my own identity pokes its nose out of hiding--a belated groundhog in search of its shadow. Where is meaning, or mission, or will? There is a place for me in these hills, and right easily could I stagnate in it.

Seasons come to us, reminding us that we are neither omnipotent nor alone. But seasons have as many names as there are folk to speak them. I give rose-cuttings to a Wiccan neighbor "for Brighid," because if I said Oimelc she'd say "huh?" And local farmers have other names for it: lambing-time, and also a pain in the ass, with bummers to nurse and marauders to repel--coyote, cougar, dog-pack. And then one must ask, are the berry-bushes cut yet? Does the nursery have seed-potatoes? The time to remember the Equinox, and planting, is in February, before it is too late.

Much is said in these pages of tradition, and of scholarship, and of knowledge that must not be lost. Others, I among them, point in turn to the knowledge that sits directly in front of our noses, just waiting to be ignored. Neither the traditional scholar, nor I, can do anything as a purist but yell at the other; in the vibrating tension between us is most of reality.

So let me say now that I do not set out to abandon the mythic awareness of our forefolk, but only to live a life with leaves as well as roots. If we are not merely the inventors of myth, but co-participants with the gods, then we must recognize that myth springs both from humanity and from the soil itself. Gladly will I learn what my people once knew of their homeland. But if you ask *me* (or even if you don't; you can always read something else!) I will tell you what I learn from my own homeland, for that may well be the only thing on Earth that I know and you don't.

Myth like the grubby liberty of the hills, and hill folk join gladly in the game, taking to themselves small notorieties as straight-men to Nature's comedies, or soldiers in mythic battles. There is a Trickster here, called The Buck You'd Better Not Shoot At: he's robbed a thousand gardens with impunity, and whosoever shoulders a gun against him is injured in the attempt. I've seen him myself; he's magnificent. There are good-lucks and bad-lucks, many of them founded in common sense: don't hunt between the houses could hardly be called baseless superstition, nor could the rough interpretations of Karma or hubris that passes for common knowledge. "Something will hear you!" we warn our braggarts, and they turn pale and shut up. And "God" help the one who drives heedlessly by a neighbor's stalled or swamped vehicle, for the local gods will not.

Where do these youthful, local traditions and the elder traditions of Celtic Druidism meet? I spent as many days as anyone else with neither any recognizable knowledge, nor any use for it; then a neighbor came to me. "You're the Druid around here," he said; "which trees should I be careful not to cut?"

I could have said that Druids don't deal with things like that, except that what little I known of tradition states that our forebears were priests and cognoscenti, *meant* to be consulted by their neighbors. I could have said that Neopagan Druidism was a religion--but since when does that make it irrelevant? So "the Druid around here" spent a long day in a neighbor's woodlot, trying to feel the life-forces of trees, inspecting roots for firmness and tops for fullness, and trying to remember snatches of an ecology course she took in 1970. Seat of the pants flying, indeed--but it might have been less confusing if I'd spent more time studying!

And there, perhaps, we have balance, if not stability. .Just so is the spring a time of balance, though when it snows one day and cooks my greenhouse the next, it may be too pretty to appreciate it. The year is not an orderly, well-mannered procession; it goes by fits and starts. And learning, if it is to take us anywhere we haven't been before, must see-saw between study and appreciation, with each testing the other.

And when I am confused, I shall admit confusion--not by intoning that there are Things I Was Not Meant To Know, but by realizing that I can't see (or portray) the whole picture at once. I speak to you only as one person speaking, saying one thing at a time. We are not the people of the One God, the One Truth, or the One Way; we are like the forces of Nature that we worship – a howling confabulation of extremes.

This is our balance (as when we chant to a March windstorm, "Balanced now are we!" and burst into giggles.) Let no voice among us be silenced; this is what we are, and how we grow.

The Heathen on the Heath: Fertility

A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 1988

The hills truly do flow with the milk of the ewe, and the birth of lambs in the frost. Some of them die. Lambkind, however, continues in its sheer numbers, milling back and forth past the bones of the lost ones in the field.

For the animals, the promise of fertility is enough. Each mother beast has her own soft wondering here-baby sound, of desire fulfilled and her work cut out for her. Once I, too, made such sounds.

For the ewe, the task is over when she dies, or when death looms so close that the body will no longer answer any other call. For a woman, time passes a little differently. My tall son and daughter are a source of pleasure and pride, but other work calls to me now, more clearly than that one work of my body. I shrink from the promise of fertility with something akin to revulsion. Would I risk my life again, not in action but in helplessness, while others direct me and attend my most intimate needs? Would I hang my heart once again on a newborn's uncertain commitment to survival? For the door between world's swings both ways at birth, and an infant may exit as well as enter. And no parent desires to outlive his or her offspring. And would plain practicality relegate my ambitions to a back corner, while I spent five years or more in a routine of baby care that left no time for anything else but servitude?--For nothing gainful can be done with hours doled out in increments of twenty minutes or less.

Not if I can help it! But then, it didn't look that way to me when I was doing it. In calm, this appears as a function of the passage of time. Once a mother, I was a maiden no more. And someday, even the intransigent body will take its slow, awkward steps from mother to crone. So why (to more women than just me) should fertility, having outlived its personal usefulness, fester like a would that will not heal?

Some of this can be ascribed directly to the arrogance and cruelty of the powerful. What major corporation would rent part of a woman, when it can more conveniently buy all of a man? The executive woman performs many hidden duties: not only to do her work, but to be the knife-thin, aseptically tailored embodiment of a life with no other purpose. This is called Equal Rights, for now we, too, can owe our souls to the company store. And so birthing becomes either an expensive luxury, or the task of the unambitious. And the earth does not groan, for there are too many humans already.

This is our problem. Over the generations, we have brought it on ourselves, and now we bear it alone. Alone as a race, and often alone as individuals: over such issues as crying babies, housework, and the division of money not equally earned, we squabble rancorously among ourselves.

Very much has already been said, some of it by me, about the need as either political or religious whatever-we-ares to respect the decision of a mother to be a mother. But what is a mother?

Motherhood is a role, a set of tasks. But Motherhood--the embodiment of the many-named Mother we worship--is a form of power. And like any form of power, it can be abused.

We moderns shrink from the corniness of the imitator Dei, not only because of its grandiose indignity, but also through fear of failure. Which one of us is ready to be *the* Lover, *the* Father, or to brave face-on the death and rebirth inherent in the growth and independence of a Child? And who among us can live in our birthing and caring as Earth lives, both passive and productive? If I were Earth, could I whine and manipulate and demand that others care for me? Could I use the sacredness of my condition as an excuse for tyrannical Illogic, or blackmail loved ones with my supposed fragility?

Admittedly, if I were Earth, mainstream society still probably wouldn't like me very much. If I were Earth, I would sweat blood and wallow in pleasure, all in one day. I would stride through the entire firmament with Babies on Board and no bumper sticker. I would smell of milk burps and diaper enhancers and the passion of begetting, and care little what any child of mine thought of it. I would lie quiescent under the mud pies and scheming of my young, but do nothing to keep my tsunamis and tornados and earthquake, from dusting the impossibilities off them. And the lambs wou1d drop in the silvered chill of the grass, but spring would come when it came, and no sooner. And by human standards, I'd laugh too much.

And if I were Earth, I still wouldn't know where the money was coming from, but I would continue to Create, and not sweat the details. Without humility, I would take the gifts of heat, of light, of His love, and make life of them, simply because that is what I do.

Obviously, the courage of Earth far surpasses my own. But in all phases of life, there are opportunities to try. When the Gods inspire, shall I say, "but the floor is still dirty!" or "the boss wouldn't like it!" and whimper proudly of what might have been? Beware the boredom of the Gods! Energy is given to up, to flow productively through us; its unfulfilled dispersal can be dangerous. Man, if you are not a father of children, what do you father? Ideas? Music? Shapes and colors, toys and shelters, parades of number and order, or conflicts and their resolution? Or do you open another beer and shrug, saying that the Father is not you? And woman, if you are done with birthing, or do not birth, what else comes out of you: teaching, or healing, or things made with the hands? Vision? Hospitality? Or purposeless busywork and endless complaint, excused by your own insignificance?

Brigit rules the season, and my woodstove. Sometimes She also decides to rule me. I can reach for guitar or typewriter, and let Her have her sport, or I can sit and fuss and hope She doesn't decide to burn the house down.

The Heathen on the Heath: Growth and Life

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 1986

Beltaine, Belanos, love's return. The sacred shampoo commercial, Lord and Lady finally looking up, enraptured, to meet each other's arms. Fulfillment blossoms forth in a smugly profligate burst of life, without regards for our priorities; weeds, rabbits, gophers, and bugs share the celebration with humanity's pampered pets. Who invited the piratical jays, the defiantly rapacious boar? Never mind, you guys; I think She did. Anyway, they're not leaving, and where's the beer?

Beltaine, bright blossoms, how does your garden grow? With glistening backs and gaily discarded shirts, and a thousand things I don't remember planting, and none of it all in a row. My own strawberries could take lessons from the wild ones that have crept in through the fence, and the big, bold blooms of the flower garden struggle in vain to keep up with their more fragile sisters of meadow and creekbed. And our own turn to wildness as well, howling dog and disappearing tomcat in their turn, playing hard at the only game in town. The ducks are a scandal to the jaybirds, and the jaybirds are a

scandal to everybody, but scandalous thoughts come easily to mind at this time of year.

I have seen snow on this day--doubtless some manic prank for my especial benefit--but if I want to can tomatoes this year, I will Have Faith and set the starts out, now. Pleasure coaxes us to faith, to belief in the unknowable future; why else would I trust my corn to a wind called the Freight Train, because it comes every day at four o'clock? Of course, I stake everything, giving the neighbors something to laugh at when the entire assemblage arrives in their yard, green plastic ties gaily fluttering in the residual breeze. Still there are some covenants ineradicable and unbroken, and this day will see the Earth Mother's signature to Her indelible word: the sleek twin banner of the new-sprung squash plant, and the opulent green of the potato leaf. How richly She engraves the simple promise: you shall not starve.

The breeze is perfumed with paradox; roses and garlic, those old lovers of garden-book fame, confuse the nose together. The compost heats up evocatively, and the barnyard is definitely a barnyard, unless the wind is blowing through the lilac bush.

This, they tell us, is the Season of Life, as opposed to the Season of Sleep. This is because this is the Season of Damned Little Sleep, as the screech-owl's mad laughter proclaims its own inexplicable business to the world at large, and deer bound crashingly by the window, no fear of anything but boredom.

Life.

Life! LIFE! Wake up, oh Party Poopers, and celebrate Life! And restless at our Lady's command, we do. For is it not Her pleasure-principle that draws us to her purpose, starting with air but inevitably going on to the harder stuff, while She, our Connection, smiles and gently suggests? We lust and are fruitful, hunger and work, desire and create. And gently, irresistibly, she draws us on.

Beltaine. Blessed be, my people. Look about us, and see the endless, pointless, perfect purpose of our existence.

The Heathen on the Heath: Praising the Gods of May

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 1987 (published Solstice 1987)

In any Neopagan Druid service, we pause self-consciously to remind ourselves that we are standing in one limited spot, using limited names to offer the limitless Gods a passel of praise and sacrifice that They don't actually need.

In Beltane's disorderly abundance this reminder becomes especially poignant. Where is need of any kind in all of this? Fullness approaches, and our need is for union, for celebration: to be drawn into the riotous family of nature. Beltane is a love story, and I shall go a-Maying.

Shall I call you Earth Mother? Talithu? Nerthus? Ina? In all languages You have a name. I have trusted the seed to its rebirth in the rich death-and-life cycle of the loam; the plant has risen. Someday I shall be part of this, in body as well as in spirit. Is composting and mulching and planting and watering praise? Is gratitude praise?

Shall I call you Danu, Wellspring, Mother of Gods and of Mysteries? Mysteries are not that-which-man-was-not-to-know, but that which lures the mind beyond its depth, lest it grow too stolid to swim. Is it praise to seek our origins, to stare into the past and future, to revel in identity? Is it praise to be ourselves?

I begged my vision through night's chill, and morning's first ray was a kiss. Belanos, Lovelight, Seed-father; what is my praise but desire? The praise of green grass means the same, but love does not judge.

An antlered Cernunnos, may we amuse You! Ever the joke is on us, Lord of Beasts and of deep woods, dark fear and bright mockery. By green bough and animal-cry I know I shall live and lust and die in good company, but praise? You've heard me say things less polite. My flower gardens belongs to Rhiannon, for what She has taught me. In birdsong and sweet scents nature may praise the wise Horsewoman, bu I can only learn. Let there be forgetfulness of that cruelty too often called justice: honor is a fresh blooming wild flower, and valor a note of music. Is a life praise? I cannot know while I am living it.

Like children, we praise greedily, reaching up for notice and acceptance, as a baby demands a hug. Our Gods are Mothers, Fathers, Lovers, Teachers; our gratitude quivers with wants yet unspoken. Like children, we have little to offer but ourselves and our works, in the hopes that our arch-Parents will gather us to Them as sentimentally as we do our own children. (All the while trying Their patience by attempting to shove our siblings out of the way, and hog all the attention for ourselves!) Is sharing praise, or service, or respect for fellow-creatures?

Surely we do not worship because we think our guaranteed annual year depends on it. And if we worship for the sake of the Gods, what shall we say to the Gods we do not know? The people of Thor offered wary respect to the White Christ, until Christian priests rejected, on Christ's behalf, the brotherhood of Thor. Then might Thor's people denounce Christ as a Wimp; but never did they take the view that what they did not know did not exist. Defining "unproven" as "false," or "myth" as "fabrication," or "unknown" as "nonexistent" is a popular failing of the current scientific establishment; in seeking our own science, we must remember that the modern mind is trained to the square corners and shut doors of monotheism. Though pre-existing knowledge is there for us, we are denied the cheap tricks of Central Authority. Do we worship in ritual? And what is our ritual: the mutable traditions of a farmer in the garden? A window opening on the visions of our forbears? Or a door to shut between emotion and thought, magic and work, religion and real life? Lugh help us; it's not an easy path.

We seek the path of heroes, for the modesty of the monotheist is another cop-out we don't get. Saints are safe in Heaven, beyond the reach of our kind, but heroes are meant to be emulated--though they may shine brighter out of antiquity, all their awkward moments over and one with. We need only remember that some being or circumstance will eventually play Emer to our Cuchullain, and require us to place money where mouth is.

So be splendid in the splendor of May, fellow wedding-guests! If our praise is presumptuous and our dreaming extravagant, only look around: with gaudy flower fields, flooding light, and leaping beasts, we have a fine example.

Salacious Spring Meditation:

Make sure the rigor of your mind is not rigor mortis, but the other kind!

The Heathen on the Heath: Life and Death

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 1988

My son's cat, Boadicia (a proper battle-queen, with knives on her chariot wheels) has just brought forth four mewing heirs to her warlike throne. They rest in a box that once held frying chickens, and think happy thoughts.

My son is the proud one: Bo is a little confused. Who will ye marry on Beltaine day? When the tomcat comes around, she wants to kill him. And I watch the little princes and princesses as anxiously as she does, remembering my own little wonders, which had to be rescued from my incompetent womb by men with blades, rubber gloves, and endless dials and gauges. The door into this world swings both ways...

Check on the kittens," Daniel says. "I'm not sure Bo won't take them out of the box and put 'em back in Olin's bed." I do not yet interrupt a system that a mother cat doubtless understands better than I do, however young and inexperienced she may be. So when my eyes finish opening, I use my spy-hole—a gap between the boards in the wall of my son's room, visible from the ladder to the loft.

My glasses are still in a kitchen drawer, but I can make out an indistinct Bo-and-kitties blob, and a smaller orange blob off to one side. Rattiness has already given way to the audacity of fur.

The fuzzy reddish blot does not move. I hear a small, grunting noise. Perhaps it has moved aside to answer a call of nature, and is awaiting the fullness of time. I am barely awake. I do not want to know more.

Coffee. The horse needs her hay. Dogs trip me; ducks laugh. I don't think about the perils of fertility. The hell I don't! I did not share Bo's touching faith in the universe: her first heat simply pre-dated my being able to afford to spay her. My male animals remain as they are, for the sake of the élan that their altered counterparts seem to lack. But I know what my female critters would be missing—urgency, pain, birth. And motherhood, the one solid joy among--all of them, presents an overpopulated world with another potentially homeless child. No, not homeless! If no one else takes the little ones, I do. A stray once offered me a real deal on puppies does anybody wants one?

I'm putting it off. Something has either gone wrong in that box, or it hasn't. I will either look, congratulate Bo again, and then relax and have breakfast, or I will spare Bo the pain of further association with the corpse of her child.

I will look, but not too closely. My glasses remain in the drawer.

The orange one is still there, still motionless. May it nurse at the undying teats of Earth, How big it is, handsome and furry. It sits in an attitude of guardianship, watching over Bo's unconcerned sleep...with *huge*...exactly round pale...plastic...eyes.

The devilishly grinning toy Garfield that Olin set in attendance on them is doing his job.

Once again I have been a human, empowered and therefore a klutz. That which has escaped my control is doing just fine, thank you, without respect for my megalomaniac and overprotected neuroses. Once again I have peered tremblingly into the face of the Mother, expecting to see death, and found instead the tentative whimsy of love. Sometimes worship is humility. Sometimes worship is as rich and private as a stolen kiss. And sometimes worship consists simply in letting go of responsibilities that don't belong to you. My son already knew that. I have just been shown.

Even when life is fragile, it is not brittle: we invented brittleness. With what do we replace our innocence? What playful and unnecessary gift do we have for the May-bridal and summer-birth? For they will be celebrated in spite of us, even up to the day when life is no more. There is a time to do battle against the destructiveness of power, and a time to simply let go of power and join in the party.

For reasons beyond our ken, She did invite us.

The Heathen on the Heath: Babbles on about Patronage

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 1989

I recently had a very dear brother tell me that my life in the woods had a romantic mystique of being more genuine than a pagan life in the town. May I say, hogwash? The only thing the Heath has managed to impress upon the Heathen and make it stick, so far, is how *un*-genuine a life she usually leads, next to her other brethren of water, beast, and tree. Oh, close-up adoration of the gods is a very moving experience. But there's more to a god or goddess than loving him or her, and it's all much too big for us, and I suspect that the energy of our natural comedy is a better feast for the immortals' table than any amount of praise and sacrifice.

One thing that I'm sure inspires a veritable salvo of godly giggling is how we deal with our patrons and teachers, both in the other world and in this one. Most of you probably know your patrons, and have at least some idea of who your totem beasts are. Some of you may know a departed of discorporate spirit who teaches you, or uses you to speak to others. Some of this stuff is very recognizable; other times, you may shake your head, check whatever resources you use to identify the "real" archetypes, and decide that you're simply crazy.

Totemism, for instance. I'm not going to get into whether our forebears practiced any precise or organized form of totemism, although Cuchullain's relationship with the hound (killing one, then having to fulfill its function, and thereafter being forbidden to harm the hound or eat of its flesh) sounds a lot like totemism to me. But we Neopagans are balanced between two influences: What is born into us from our ancestors? And then, what do the gods and the beasts do to us in the here-and-now?

For instance, I sit at the feet of the entire canine tribe. Wolf, dog, coyote, fox--all bitches and vixens are my sisters. *Elder* sisters. A totem is a teacher, a giver of omens, a bridge between human anomie and the solidarity of nature. I don't know anyone else whose attachments are so general. I do not know that for me to ignore the call of any pack-running nightsinger means disaster. It puts me in quite a dilemma, because a country homestead, with its deliciously helpless ducks and chickens and its panicky newborn grazers, is an even worse place to interact with large number of canines than a house in town. So in a very undignified, non-ritual way, my totem is constantly teaching me the difference between genuine love and respect and the phony human construct of charity. *We* are not the gods. An ordinary housedog knows the gods better than I do.

It can be a pretty harrowing relationship. There's you, and there's your teaching-beast, and there's the rest of the world. Are you brother or sister to a beast that the neighbours regard as property, or a menace, or a running larder? I listen to

the song of the Grey Brethren on the ridges with an entirely different emotion than do the sheep-ranchers a little further down the valley, though we meet on the common ground of wishing dysentery and poison oak on the morons who dump unwanted dogs "out in the wilds" to seek out their niche as incompetent pack members and stock killers.

Sometimes an animal relative will come to you for its *death*. Fub that one, and you're in big trouble. I know.

Then there are the creatures other than your totem who show up here and there with messages or lessons, or just to make your day, There was the king stag of our hill, laughing at me. There was the squirrel crossing the road, to show me the consequences of letting faster drivers (or anything else which is simply more aggressive or socially acceptable than I am) push me around. There are the white cranes that feed in the pastures north of here, whose mere presence lights up my heart for no reason that I can name, and the river otters who join me for a dip: "Screw it; this is playtime!"

You can't put your life in a pattern, or make a pretty pattern with the wild things in all their rightful places: not and know anything about yourselves. Nonhuman logic is not going to make sense to you. A brave man can find himself chosen by a grazer; a timid woman might have a totem that hunts to survive. There is more to any animal or spirit than one human can know.

To the sparrow, the sparrow was himself; to the raven, he was dinner, Definitions can be a real bitch sometimes.

Plants will choose you, too. What kind of wood is your staff made of? I don't have one. I kept waiting for a branch of madrone to wave yoo-hoo at me. Meanwhile, the bay tree at the head of my garden, that I had talked to and cried on and rested under for the last dozen years, dropped a branch in this winter's snow. It's about ten feet long, and as thick as my 1eg and finally today it occurred to me that my staff is smack in the middle of it, waiting for me to get my lazy butt in gear and whittle it out. "Hey, is anybody awake here?"

I suspect that the gods sort of meet us in the middle, choosing us when we most need them. Perhaps we look harder for our gods, because religion makes such a blatant difference between us and the rest of the world, and the gods are such an obvious feature of it. We meet with blessings, opportunities, and quest. Eventually, we find the gods who are our patrons. When I was younger, I always thought that my patroness would be the goddess who ruled over my purpose in life, or my identity. Now I know better: my patroness is the goddess that don't cut me no slack.

Paganism is not a TV set, and the teachings of gods and beasts are not a spectator sport: our patrons and our totems will all want something from us. Our laughing disclaimer at the beginning of services may remind us to respect reason, but the praise and sacrifice that follows is just as necessary, to keep our end of the bargain up until we find something better to offer. Wherewith, I offer this praise:

Who loves you?
Whose laughter caresses your departing back?
Beneath whose cloak of midnight do your eyes adjust to the dark,
And whose hand sets the geas before you
Like a wall of stone?
To this, I give my heart.

The Heathen on the Heath: The Gift of Horses

A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 1987

I invoke that portion of compost, which is the gift of horses.

Do you guys know how many times I've rewritten this #!%?!! thing? I think we can settle down and admit that the Missal-Any has become a new format: Interactive Nonfiction. Is there some Hitchhiker's Guide to the minority-theological Galaxy? Or are we headed for the Snit at the End of the Universe? Stay tuned…

This is the season of battle; the Sun stands ringed by hero-light, facing the confrontation He cannot win. In the summer blaze of midsummer, YES!, we stand cocky and feisty at His side. The day is long and summer just begun--will it not last forever? By August, each warm hour is precious: our words and deeds will echo with the gentleness of farewell. The (Carleton) traditional services chant our glee at the conquest of day over night, but most of us have our moments of rooting for Pryderi. We are in our glory, our attitude of immortality unsmirched, yet we can still take comfort in saying "This, too, shall pass."

We (genetic and/or emotional) Celts are historically marked as argumentative cusses, as witness the forms of lampoon, rant, and challenge-in-verse. Boldness is our legacy, and defensiveness our last year's garbage.

What is the appropriate channeling of our quibblesome nature? I, for one, would not go back to my pacifist beginnings; I have little respect for the tameness of a toothless dog. My most honored comrades are dangerous folk, controlled by volition rather than weakness. When people are scarce enough to be a resource rather than a nuisance, the strong can stop apologizing. We don't sheathe our blades in the neighbor's house out of fear, but because we respect our neighbors.

Also, if we love, we are having too much fun to care overmuch what our beloveds can do to us…

As a religious minority, we are an automatic rural neighborhood. We have our local characters, but let the stranger say, "Do you know that nut-case?" We will quite likely say, "Oh, he/she's okay once you know him/her," and find that, against the perspective of the rest of the world, we mean it. I know, I know; you'll all howl that this kind of neighborhood loyalty is not something you reserve for Druids or extend to everyone who takes that name. That's true. My primary clan relationships are likely to differ from Tom's, or Albion's, or Mad Sweeney's, and a good number of the members of my clan or clans do not name Neopagan Druidism as their religious orientation. They are all, however, joined to me in avowed and reliable goodwill, and respectful of the orientations I profess. So okay, I am available to my own clansfolk before I would be available to Tom, or Albion, or any other Druids that I don't personally know. But I am available (willingly, and in good faith) to my Druish brethren and sistern before I am (willingly, and in good faith) available to the mainstream authorities. I assume that we squabble *en tutoyant*, and will still be there for each other if that is necessary. (And yes, you can call me on that. Box 215, Myers Flat, CA 95554.)

This doesn't mean you have to agree with me, or approve of me. Your minds, especially in devotion to the Gods, are your own.

Fear of names? Sometimes. What do I most fear to name: my Gods, or myself? My dealing with some Gods are embarrassingly private. And I myself possess a name that will

call me from sleep, or draw my energy to the user of it; I don't give that to just anybody. But Tom and Albion have boldly "named" themselves in these pages, to a degree that I have not. Ergo, the Summer Statement: Here am I, a woman 35 years old, attempting to farm a hillside steading in southern Humboldt while making a living as a freelance reporter and general odd-jobber (currently, selling cherry cider and produce to tourists.) The untidy generosity of my physique bears witness to my undisciplined nature, but I'm still pretty functional.

I write--basically, anything that anyone will print, and a lot of things they won't. Most dear to me of all our lore are the poetic, emotionally-charge stories of Erin. Like Albion, I was once a Quaker. My religious practice contains little of formal observance, but I operate under a number of what I see as my own geasa and obligations. (Laugh if you want; sometimes I do, too.) I use magic only as a last-ditch adjunct to doing my damnedest on the physical plane, and only for certain purposes. I honor ethics and deplore morality. My greatest weakness is a reflexive snapping and snarling at what I see as elitism or authoritarianism. I once beaned a wife-beater with my purse, but I am not reliably or consciously brave. I'm a solitary 3rd, married, with a 7-year-old son who lives with me full-time and a 9-year-old daughter who visits.

Tom, Albion, I offer this: who among us has the *power* to be a threat to the others? (Hopefully none of us is such a slob as to throw energy around as we argue, instead of grounding it out!) Both "promoting darkness" and "Ku Klux Klan" show a fine sense of drama, but you know effing well that if the storm troopers showed up looking for any of us tomorrow, the rest would like like right valiant rugs to cover his/her ass. So *will* you guys kiss & make up, or at least wait for the bell?!!

The Heathen on the Heath: Garden Wars

A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1986

Okay, enough already! This is war. Sweat runs down too fast to blink away from my eyeballs, and my hands are too filthy to mop it away. How can so many slugs exist in the *world*, let alone in my garden? And where did that eighth duck go, and just what is it that got past my eight-foot fence, stacked tires and assorted whirligigs and wind chimes to eradicate half my potato plants? Hey, gang, there's a limit! Isn't there? At Beltaine you came to party. Now the sun is past the zenith, and you're still raiding the pantry. I've tried asking you to go home. No dice. And the dog has some inexplicable wound on his paw—boars? Bobcats?

This is war. Somehow mine ancient enemy, the wild gooseberry, has started some fifth-column activity amid the tomatoes, and sent spies among my mealybug-ridden brassicae. No use griping to Mother: She and her Consort are making hay while the sun shines, and hardly interested in the squabbles of the children.

Whoever first characterized life in Nature as peaceful had a somewhat warped sense of humor.

The very plants do battle; this winter my pruning-saw must break up a slow-motion barroom brawl between an oak, a madrone, and a whitethorn, all of whom can survive quite nicely if they will simply settle for their own spaces and leave each other alone. Fat chance! All living things demand to not only live, but win, preferably at the expense of any and all possible competitors. That herd of wild pigs must not only have the next ridge, but also *my* ridge, to find true happiness.

And what members of any one species think of each other cannot be printed and sent through the U.S. mail.

Where does that leave your everlovin' Heathen? Confused, mostly. While I have no compunctions about claiming the fruits of my own labor, and whatever else I can pry loose (I'm not even a vegetarian) there are certain human-engendered refinements on the art of war that I will not use. Mom may not care whether my tomatoes or her gooseberries grow in the garden, but that's not sufficient reason to dump assorted petrochemicals in Her water-table--or feed to my down hill neighbors, if it comes to that. I'll go after rodents with cats, traps, and a .22, but I have no desire to bring down my allies the redtails with the "friendly fire" of B-gon or DeCon. Can this be said to make a difference, in view of how the rest of my species chooses to nuke their nuisances? And ought I to be messing around in here at all? This garden is an invasion in itself, exotic and pampered organisms installed in the devastation of turf that I chose to call French Intensive Double-Digging. That's not what was here to begin with.

Thing is, an attitude of nobles oblige requires a certain amount of backup. Kindness is for what we control, and as I gaze in utter dismay on the ruin of my efforts, and the impossibility of reverting to humanity's original mode of participation (hunting and gathering) without overstressing an already depleted wild economy, I realize that my control over this environment is minimal. And wasn't that what I wanted?

Admittedly the fight is rigged. Pit me, with a rifle, against a boar with tusks and I'll bet on me every time. I ought to know; I rigged it myself…I, and forebears who shared my motives, long ago. Like the boar, we also want it all. Unlike the boar, we may someday be unfortunate enough to get it all, thereby destroying it. Will we someday live on chemicals, or mutated yeast, because we have won all our wars and there are no other surviving species?

The squirming, biting, struggling child takes endless comfort in the unarguable restraint of Mother's arms. But as the child ceases to be a baby, a little caution creeps into its protest, unaware at first: we don't want to *hurt* Mommy, after all. And hopefully, by the time we are big and strong enough to do Her real damage, we will have thoroughly absorbed the lesson that She has feelings, too.

Except that people-en-masse are always a little dumber than people one at a time.

Where are you in the world? Where are your battles, what have you won…and at what cost? Come, swap war-stories with me, for even if you are busily making chemicals out of other chemicals, or laying concrete over ground, we are all the same in this. Nobody gave us the right to be who we are; we have made ourselves. Nobody owed us a place in the world; we have taken it. This is *our* nature, as surely a part of us as greenness is of grass, to be channeled but never truly changed.

Just remember that perhaps it is not worth postponing, indefinitely at finite cost to the rest of the world, one's own last battle. For *sus scrofa*, *homo sapiens*, or any living creature, anywhere, there is but one ending. Let the sun blaze on into the night, drink deep, and gird yourself with honor. It is a good day, at least, not to know what's going to happen. And no matter how many sandbags we make of our environment, to pile around our laughable foxholes in the scheme of things, it's out there, waiting for us, somewhere: the fight we can't win.

Nobody's getting out of here alive.

The Heathen on the Heath: First Fruits

A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1988
(published Fall Equinox 1988)

First fruits. They don't seem to come as easy as they used to. The ground, the gophers, the winds, and my own intrusive human garbage, all fight harder each year. Or is it just the time?

Lugh has lost his battle, and the ravens cross the sky in croaking crowds. The year has lost its innocence, There is a tear in our celebration. When the wedding is a memory, and the birth of the babe, and now the farm is fat with full barns and lowing cattle, the cycle must inevitably turn to its end. Do you look back on great deeds, instead of ahead to them? Has love progressed from dreams, to passion, to sticky fulfillment, and does it now draw near the anticipation of grief? Is the horse growing old in the sun? Does silver frost the muzzles of cat and hound?

This is not England. Here, the grass tells the story, browning in the violence of the Sun's passion for his ladylove. Summer *has* to end. Shall we burn-out and die in one long pig-out on the wealth of the warm and growing time? Already, it has been too much for the grasses. The blowing dust begs for rest, and the Lover whispers, "Weep not. Well could I have loved thee to death.;"

She will weep anyway. It must be hard to live forever, when love cannot.

The modern myth clings to the old days, even though history itself must follow suit. The mornings of August sear imagination with a sunburst of Hiroshima, and the dust forms mushroom clouds in the mind. Is this the August of our race? I'd sooner live, an attitude our religion does not forbid or decry. Nor does it guarantee I'll have my way…And the Last Rose of Summer is my protest song. No bunkers for me, nor did I flee the cities to outlive the victims of the mighty. Bury my heart at Ground Zero.

Centralized religion softens the analogy with faith and resignation. One woman swore the Rapture would come this fall, and when someone suggested she was dating it from the wrong event, and had still more than forty years to go, she was horribly disappointed; she had mundane bills coming due, no longer payable while watching the fires from the sheltering arms of Jesus. If the world is doomed to end, I still claim my right to go pissing and squealing. If I shall be reborn, and reborn yet again, each body still retains its animal heritage, to flee or fight death until it has honestly lost. Neither Celtic nor Teutonic peoples, whose traces figure most strongly in my own woodpile, were ever much for throwing a fight.

Seeds go in now for the winter garden, an option our Celtic forbears didn't have. Fertilizer goes in too. I compete and fuss over my soil's health, chanting the twin litanies of light waning too much, and water waxing too slowly. A high level of ritual impurity, that, when November's green tomatoes ought to be left in the fields for the Wee Folk.

Well, I'll leave 'em a dish of my pickalilli, instead. My clumsiness alone could support a faerie convention. Or perhaps they plant their own garden, late squash in the compost heap and spilt tomato seeds among the potatoes and lettuces. And having finally decided not to die, my garden will cause me to curse the name of zucchini, as it has in years past. Even the fairies don't want that; next year their discards will spring anew, in places where I never would have planted them.

I'll feed the little bastards generously, on zucchini burgers and zucchini bread and zucchini soufflé and quiche. Who needs ritual purity when you have runaway squashes?

The Lady mourns her passing Lord, but lady animals run him off, Papa Tomcat is not welcome, and my duchesses have appropriated the shed: Maternity Ward, Drakes Keep Out! Alas, alas John Barleycorn, He was a rascal anyway. So pass the keg again. Weeping and foolery are kin, tears for the rain and guffaws for thunder. This is important business! As you go about your day,' earning and arguing and building the things of humanity, make sure you're laughing and crying enough to bring on the autumn storms and keep the Wheel rolling. There's precious few of us who know our duty, so raise the Waters while you've still got 'em, and toast us in devout rowdiness.

(Sniff!) I love you guys!

The Heathen On the Heath: First Fruits and Hunting

A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 1986

First fruits, late as usual--arguments with the neighbors--yellow grass, grey dust, and scorching heat. Balanced now are we? In the hardware store where I earn some of my living, a motley assortment of law-abiding types are buying their hunting licenses, with tags permitting them to ritually assassinate one or two adult male deer this season. Certain local subsistence hunters regard both the season and its regulations as ridiculous. But I count the hopeful license buyers during one workday, and then count the deer on my way home. The number of deer becomes less impressive, beside the number of hunters.

And the subsistence hunters--does concern for the continued stability of the deer population arise automatically from need? I doubt it. And the numbers of the needy are also increasing…

But the hunt goes on. From my own experience, in pursuit of one wild pig (which died to provide food for two families with hungry children, one of them mine) it seems strange to call it a sport. The hunt is a relationship, ending with the death of the other party. The pig wanted to live, and my cohort and I wanted to eat it. These goals were mutually exclusive; no amount of mystical hocus-pocus could ever convince me that the pig was a willing participant.

There was one moment, crouched on the hillside, with the immensely vital, prehistoric-looking beast looking directly at me, when I felt that the hunt was at an end; I had met the wild. My challenge had been offered and met. The pig was ready to attack or flee, but did neither. Here was life; its ending was anti-climactic.

But sorrow was also the feeling of a split second. Our children were fed. And something within me was changed.

The Hunter roams the greenwood, dealing death at will. Yet He guards His beasts, wears their semblance, instills in them His lust and power. And the Maiden-as-Huntress, in any pantheon, is the friend of Her creatures, mourning their destruction at the hands of conquering humanity.

So it is with nature. Animals do not hate their prey. Cats pounce with glee, eyes wide and ears forward. The dog pursues the rabbit with his tail high; he is playing. They are part of the world, and filled with the sense of being alive.

Is this the longing in the eyes of those who approach my counter, saying "License and two tags, please," and paying the

$41 that the government demands for their participation in the rite? The people whose actual means of making a living is many times removed from Earth's vitality will finally face the wild and have something personal to say to it. Balanced now are we?

With that same longing, I came to the Druids, and with that same longing, I came eventually to my untamed hill, to be one grubby, sweaty part of a world with more than people in it. Cars race over a concrete bridge; uncaring, the river flows beneath. Balanced now are we?

As day conquered night, and light conquers day, and our guaranteed annual year continues on its appointed course, I tell you; there is no need for faith.

Balanced now are we?

We may not be able to feel it, but it's there.

The Heathen on the Heath: Harvesting

A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 1987

Autumn is a promise, wind singing of the blessed rains to come. Autumn is my true love calling, soft as death. The door blows open; cats run in and out. The scent and horror of wildfire blows away, and we foolhardy ones replace it with the smoke of woodstoves against cold that we secretly cherish.

In these days I glare daggers at those who whine for more nice days. Have we cursed our land with the curse of drought, for the sake of our prim plastic notion of a nice day? Do we think of unblemished tomatoes, or mold-free buds, or whatever turns us over-proliferating hominids on, and not of the Mother? She knows her grief will soon be upon her; do we forbid her to weep and be comforted? I may throw a shoe at the Today Show one of these mornings—a strange offering to the gods!

I pick tomatoes now, between writing assignments. My boss is unlike me, but also a farmer. He tells me how he does it, but is also open-eared for what little I may know that he does not. That eternally confused expression belongs to both of us. We share a secret, called "Damned If I Know." We run to beat the deadline of rain, and altogether it's sort of festive.

Autumn howls laughter, weeps loving, just around the corner, and we beg for the turning of seasons, while cursing the passage of time. Neopagans differ from paleopagans, for we face threats that our forbears did not, and are lulled by our overcomplicated distancing devices. No neophyte bard or Druid could have been held in thrall by a vehicle unstartable, or a heating or cooling whoozits beyond normal comprehension. A wise one might instruct on in the mysteries, but no expert was needed to keep one functioning. Take time from the broken washing machine, Oh my People, and ponder the water we wash with. No one has yet died and left us in charge, and that water could somehow manage not to come. We differ as we must, but also in ways that we should not. And in some ways, all our pagan forebears knew the same thing.

What's Gaelic for "Be attentive as you walk?"

The Heathen on the Heath: The End of Summer

A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 1988

In the time of balance, I think of hairpulls, and of the doubts as old as religion that we may either decry or embrace. Myself, I have learned to be fond of them; otherwise I suffer a lot.

Rationalism is a cold place. It also makes the sensations of one's isolated consciousness a little uncomfortable. Why should I be peering out these two wet windows, instead of someone else? And whatever I may think of it, does it matter very much?

I'm not really the believing kind. Yet I walk in a world of many gods and goddesses, all part of the divine universe, and all workers of great magicks. I speak, "Lord," "Lady," and solemnly declare that a living world hears me.

I also walk among others of my nonfaith who call upon methods of divination, by cards and stars and crystals. And I have various odd means of justifying my refusal to reject such things outright: archetypal imagery, channels of intuition. Phooey. I cast cards on a table and read the pictures in them as a way of grasping at straws in confusion. I count the images in star patterns and permutate and combine them in the sky of this or that moment in time, because the star-pictures are a handle on the mystery of personality, not because they name aught that I can truly know.

And I collect the lessons of each, ancient and well-laden with the thoughts and dreams of my forebears. Help me, Old Ones! What did you know that I don't?

When does this--or the channeling of my energy through arbitrary places in my body, or the repetition of mantra or Wiccan doggerel--pass over the line between seeking and superstition?

When I walk among the people, I remember a card sent by Mad Sweeney: "Nature is not dirty, but it provides the raw materials from which we manufacture dirt." And I tell myself that people are not foolish or shallow, but they have the materials in them from which foolery and crassness are made. So I am still responsible for the times when I get used or jerked around, but for individual errors in present judgment, rather than for outreach to strangers at all.

People need not be mine to be benevolent, nor need they have been of my time to be wise. Can we translate the speech of poets? And can our materialistically-trained minds then put to use what we hear? Or is it lost to us forever, our efforts warped to fallacy by the indoctrination of an utterly alien culture?

And can we give our Mother any protection but our own extinction? By loving Her, have we become the enemies of our own kind? Many of the so-called scientific community think so. Yet in rejecting all that they know, we continue in ignorance to wound that which we love.

We need more than balance: Synthesis. Turn in your compost, and think of that.

Section Three: Non-Liturgical Festival Activities

All too often, festivals have over-emphasized the liturgy at the expense of the celebration. The following articles are mostly drawn from A Druid Missal-Any and should give you some ideas on how to draw the more activity-oriented members of your Grove into attending your rites, by appealing to their lower instincts to have a good time.

Uncommon Activities for Samhain

By Mortus
A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2001

1. Visit and tidy-up the graves of family, friends and respected people.
2. Séances are popular at this time of year, but book in advance!
3. Hold a "dumb feast" with no talking and plates for ancestors.
4. Contemplate your own funeral arrangements, especially if you want to fight "The Industry" and have a natural funeral free of chemical and air-tight sealed caskets.
5. Include the dead in your thoughts during the daily grind.
6. Begin a custom of thanking the things we kill and eat.
7. Visit an abattoir or kill your own dinner (fish is the least unpleasant,) which will open your eyes and heart to some cold facts.
8. Work on your will, living-will, powers-of-attorney, and insurances.
9. "Sacrifice" some fun, for retirement planning.
10. Discuss deeper issues of after-life with your children and spouse.
11. Research genealogy and visit elderly relatives (research for Eulogies.)
12. Get a health-check-up and other medical appointments. Quit smoking.
13. Rake leaves, plan a composting heap (done properly, they don't stink)
14. Plant acorns, salt meat and jerky, pickle things.
15. Go hunting or fishing [or "camera-stalking" of prominent politicians…]
16. Volunteer to escort children for Halloween (you get candy, too!)
17. Adopt an overseas child or assist a charity.
18. At Carleton, we'd pour molten-lead or wax into cold water and divine things.
19. Protest the most recent prejudiced horror-flick of the season.
20. Lobby against the funeral industry.
21. Make a list of 100 things you've done, and 100 more you want to do.
22. Contemplate capital punishment, war, crime, sanitation and vegetarianism.
23. Bless your pets with smoke (yes, jumping through a fiery hoop is okay…)
24. Clean your home, extinguish your oven/furnace's pilot-light and relight it.
25. Replace the batteries in your smoke detector, buy a fire extinguisher, etc.
26. Write long-winded, disconnected rambles and lists about Samhain and Sacrifice.

Various Winter Customs to Try Out

By Eric, ex-Akita Grove, now in NYC.
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2001

I enjoyed the Samhain activities, and spent four hours searching for good customs to complement the next issue. It's a simple list of what I plan to do, because I'm not much of a writer.

- Nov 23 Divining the best presents after a hearty Thanksgiving meal by asking relatives and the Gods.
- Dec 1st Cleaning out the house thoroughly--Any remaining dust is "Not mine, please ignore it."
- Dec 2nd Light "advent candles" or Yule Candles marking down the Solstice Sun's arrival.
- Dec 15th Decorating the House--Holly, Mistletoe, tree setup, bunting, Yule-logs, front lawn décor. Mail out blessings (Christmas cards) to friends and curses to enemies.
- Dec 19th Donate 10% of December Paycheck to charities closest to my house. And carry small presents to distribute to beggars and muggers in NYC.
- Dec 20th Wassailing and Caroling. Nothing more than Trick or Treating for the winter, fun to do with the Christians.
- Dec 21st Vigiling in the Grove--Spend the longest night of the year in the grove with a fire, several blankets and some friends to encourage the sun to make a come back.
- Dec 21st Mari Lwyd in Wales (Lair Bhan in Ireland)--The Welsh visited houses with a draped horse skull, interrogated their neighbours with strange questions, and got free booze if the homeowner couldn't come up with decent answers. I think Barney's head on a stick would be fine and appreciated.
- Dec 22nd Namahage--In Akita, drunken barefoot men in demon masks, straw clothing, flaming torches (my that's dangerous sounding) would burst into pre-decided homes "surprising" a family at dinner and terrorizing the bejezus out of small kids. The father would ransom their children's lives with more booze, and the demons would bless the house to protect it from fires and further burglar intrusions. Very similar to German house visits by Father Christmas (Weihnachtsmann or Julknap) and his point man, the "Black Moor" (Knecht Ruprecht.) Don't you pity my neighbours?
- Dec 23rd Celebrate the Emperor of Japan's Birthday (he is the descendent of the Sun Goddess after all)
- Dec 24th. Presents and Party
- Dec 25th Hanging out sheaves of corn or bird seed AFTER Christmas for the all-winter birds.
- Dec 26th, Divination- by dropping a handful of pine-needles into a bowl and rohrscharching
- Dec 26th Boxing. Put away boxes and decorations. As for the Tree: Put the tree in a safe spot in the yard (needles still on) away from the house. Allow to

thoroughly dry and use it to light Beltane fire. WHOOSH! What a sight!

- Dec 27th Return presents and Buy discounted goods at stores for next year!. A gift of the Gods!
- Dec 30th New Year Resolutions--Adding thanks for last year's completed ones and a tweak from everyone in the room for not finishing the last ones.
- Dec 31st Fireworks, all-night parties are fine to continue.
- Jan 1st, Sleep to Noon. Pray to Braciaca for forgiveness and mercy.
- Jan 6th, "Epiphany." Credit card bills arrive. Holidays are officially over.

Yule Time Caroling

By Sine Ceolbhinn
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2001

Strangely enough, Christmas is one of the few times of the year that we feel like singing with our neighbours outside of a karaoke bar. Easter songs? A few. Groundhog Day songs? Not likely. We all want to sing, but trip over the uncomfortable lyrics, right? I decided to but together a little list of songs that a pagan could use in company with their monotheistic friends.

A few hours of scanning the internet has given me a collection of popular songs that didn't dwell on babies in food troughs, righteous crowns, deceased people with bird wings, and ecstatic shepherds hearing voices in the dark (won't even go there.) I prefer my own improbable stories (grin.) Just change "Christmas" to "Yule time" and most are okay. Santa Claus is rather unavoidable, but he's nearly pagan, and so I let him slide. Many of the songs on the list below have on-line free music-files and lyrics at:

http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/~ai251/xcarol.html

- Auld Lang Syne
- Christmas Song (Chestnuts roasting)
- Deck the Halls
- Do they know it's Christmastime at all?
- Frosty the Snowman
- Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer
- The Grinch's Theme Song
- Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas
- Here Comes Santa Claus
- Holly Jolly Christmas
- Home For The Holidays
- I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus
- Jingle Bells
- Jingle Bell Rock
- I'll Be Home For Christmas
- It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas
- It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year
- Jolly Old Saint Nicholas
- Let It Snow
- O Christmas Tree
- Rocking 'Round the Christmas Tree
- Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
- Silver and Gold Silver Bells
- Sleigh Ride
- That Christmas Feeling
- Up on the Rooftop
- We Wish You a Merry Christmas
- White Christmas
- Winter Wonderland

Now, I was going to make a list of filkable songs, but surprise, somebody's gone ahead and re-done most of the Christmas songs in a Neo-Pagan flavor. Isn't it great that people do all the work for us? You could spent weeks studying the solstice. Enjoy!!

Winter Solstice Drama of Akita Grove

By Nozomi Kibou and Patrick Haneke
December 2001

Japan has a very old story recorded in the Kojiki Scrolls (700 AD) about the Sun-Goddess, Amaterasu which we will incorporate into the Grove's drama. Rituals can get dull after a while, so we're going to improvise. We got the idea from Merri's Beltane service Mummery Drama at Carleton that Mike told us in 1999. But first the basic story:

Part One, The Story:

AMATERASU (Japanese: "Great Divinity Illuminating Heaven,") the celestial sun Goddess from whom the Japanese imperial family claims descent, is the most important Shinto deity. She was born from the left eye of her father, Izanagi, as he was performing shugyo. Izanagi bestowed upon her a necklace of jewels and placed her in charge of Takamagahara ("High Celestial Plain,") the abode of all the kami. One of her brothers, the storm God Susanoo, was to be sent away to rule the sea plain. Together the sky and ocean would encircle and protect Japan. Before going, Susanoo went to take leave of his sister. As an act of good faith, they produced many children together, she by chewing and spitting out pieces of the sword he gave her, and he by doing the same with her jewels.

However, Susanoo soon began to behave very rudely-such as breaking down the divisions in the rice fields, defiled his sister's dwelling place, and finally threw a flayed horse into her weaving hall. Indignant, Amaterasu withdrew in protest into a cave, sealed the door with a rock, and darkness fell upon the world. Many demons appeared to plague the people with snow and lightning. Not only people, but the Gods were at a loss. Amaterasu's brother, the Moon, did his best to take over her job, but couldn't keep the plants from wilting nor could he stop the cold winds from chilling the livestock.

Because no one was able to open the door of the cave, many Takamaga-hara Gods were at a loss as to what to do and conferred on how to lure the sun Goddess out. The wise God Omoikane decided at the meeting that Amenouzume would perform an amusing dance to attract Amaterasu attention. They collected cocks, whose crowing precedes the dawn, and hung a mirror and jewels on a sacred sakaki tree in front of the cave.

The Goddess Amenouzume began a very suggestive dance on an upturned tub, partially disrobing herself, and bumping about comically, which so delighted the assembled Gods that they roared with laughter. Amaterasu became curious how the Gods could make merry while the world was plunged into darkness.

"Why you are laughing?" She asked through the rock door of refuge.

"The most beautiful Goddess has appeared. She is a most skillful dancer!" One of the Gods responded.

Hearing this, Amaterasu, who was a proud Goddess and said, "This is a performance I must, by all means, see." And opened the door just a crack. The God conversing with Amaterasu then took out a mirror and placed it in front of her.

Amaterasu saw her face in the mirror and exclaimed, "My! What a beautiful Goddess!"

Wondered by her own beauty, she open the door wider to see better. A strong God, named Amenotadikarao, didn't miss that chance. He grabbed the slit, and pulled it wide open. Still bedazzled by her reflection, she heard the cock's crow, and was thus drawn out from the cave. The Kami (Gods) then quickly threw a shimenawa, or sacred rope of rice straw, before the entrance of the cave (now in Kyushu Island) to prevent her return to hiding. No choice, the sun Goddess Amaterasu returned to the world. After that, Susanoo behaved better, well, most of the time.

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Amaterasu's chief place of worship is the Grand Shrine of Ise, the foremost Shinto shrine in Japan. She is manifested there in a mirror that is one of the three Imperial Treasures of Japan (the other two being a jeweled necklace and a sword.) The genders of Amaterasu and her brother the moon God Tsukiyomi no Mikato are remarkable exceptions in worldwide mythology of the sun and the moon.

Amenouzume is happy and sexy dancing God whose dance make spectators dazzled or entertained or raises spirits. Much of her followers are strippers, comedians, sandwich men and such artists and entertainers. Her lesson is that even in the most dire times, there is a place and role for joy, hope, love and entertainment.

Solstice Drama Part Two:

Props and Staging

It will follow almost the same process and language (with improvisation) as the story.

Mayumi will play the role of Amaterasu, the Sun. Nozomi will play the role of Amenouzume, the Dancer. Pat will play the role of Susanoo and Amenotadikarao (bad boy and strong guy.) Little Naomi will be the impish winter sprite, armed with snowballs.

Other grove members and guests will play the audience of the Gods (about five people,) maybe even Father will attend.

We'll hold it near the Shrine in a small open area on the Emperor's birthday (Dec 23rd) which is appropriate and a holiday. We'll make a mini rice field, set aside a square area for the sun's house, some hand-made straw ropes, and a little dance stage, stage decorations, plus put together a horse puppet (later used for piñata,) collect some mirrors, kids jewelry, and some tiaras. Caves are hard to find in Akita, so we'll make a stout wicker hut (bigger than a sweat lodge) and roll a rock in front of it. We'll use tiki-torches for dramatic lighting in the evening and set up a portable searchlight in the cave, for her dramatic exit. Nozomi has begun practicing her dance, which is going to be quite the eye-opener for such a shy one! Perhaps Susanoo and Amaterasu will have more children?!

Some Optional Things for Oimelc

By Alex Strongbow, ex-Carleton
A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 2002

Well, here's my list of things to do for Oimelc, Imbolg, Candlemas, Ostara, or whatever you wish to call it. It's a multi-faceted festival reflecting Bridget's diverse talents. If you were to combine them all you'd be "writing poems by candlelight about flaming metallic sheep." Sounds strange, but where do you think "steel wool" is from? Do not put it in the microwave, though, unless you want to see visions of Pikachu!

- Banana-Split candles (Cherry, banana, pineapple ring; possible imagery…)
- Make decorated candlestick holders.
- Try to Predict (e.g. candle divining) whether winter will end soon and what day the last snow will be gone in the grove or some other spot.
- Start planting seeds in little pots.
- Get a candle-making kit at an art store.
- Spring Cleaning Party
- Make homemade butter or ice-cream (try goat's milk)
- Fireworks (if legal, secretly if illegal…)
- Make a contest to find first flowers or awakened hibernators
- Decorate the house: Bridget's Straw Crosses, ironwork, stained glass, candelabras, lava lamps, anything that's bright,
- Melt lead and pour into molds to make items.
- Sharpen knife, repair or replace tool collection
- Rent "Lambchop's Funniest Songs"
- Write poems together (perhaps within five minutes on a theme)
- Rent "Babe" or "Ground Hog Day" with Bill Murray
- Rent "Bell, Book, Candle" with James Stewart or "Silence of the Lambs"…
- Rent "Wallace and Grommit" (Perhaps "A Close Shave" is the best episode)
- Decorate chair by fireplace.
- Burn the dried up Christmas tree (watch it go fuuumph!)
- Have a sheep day
- http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Hills/9609/sheeptxt.html
- Call up a farmer and have the kids come down for a sheep birthing.
- Do some knitting with wool.

Also see:

http://pages.ivillage.com/paganparent/imbolic.html packed with stuff
http://www.web-holidays.com/candle/ fun
http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/CandlemasCustomsLore.html overview
http://www.partytown.com/menus/imbolc.htm for a meal
http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson048.shtml about Groundhog Day
http://orderofthecauldron.homestead.com/cadlemas.html nice discussion on Candlemas
http://www.ghostdragon.net/sabbats/imbolcactivities.html more activities.
http://members.tripod.com/acorns3/archives.html pagan kids activities back issues (look also under Ostara)

Goat's Milk Ice Cream

A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 2001
By Stacey Weinberger

Back by popular demand! This was a hit at last year's Oimelc social. Now you too can make Goat's Milk Ice Cream as a fun and tasty way to celebrate the festival of the lactation of the ewe!

1/2 cup sugar
2 cups very hot goat's or sheep's milk
1/8 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
4 egg yolks, slightly beaten
1 pint heavy cream

Mix the sugar, salt, and egg yolks together in a heavy-bottomed pan. Slowly stir in the hot goat's or sheep's milk. Cook, continuing to stir, until slightly thickened; remove and cool. Add the cream and the vanilla extract. Chill. Freeze in a hand-cranked or electric ice cream freezer.

Things to Do for Spring Equinox

By Alex Strongbow
A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 2002

Well, that's a really hard question. We know that most sowing in the fields would be done by now and it was time to change to spring clothes and spend more time outdoors. When it comes down to, we're talking about eggs and sunlight, right?

1. Break down, and enjoy the Easter egg decoration party. Especially the Ukrainian style wax and decoration. If you're an overachiever, go into Faberge.
2. Have half an omelet, sunny side up, of course.
3. Hide treasures in the forest or park. Tall grasses equals stepped-on eggs.
4. Be early for April Fool's day.
5. Go out to the pub for Saint Patrick's day and live it up.
6. Spend the whole day with a watch and see if day REALLY equals night.
7. Set up and synchronize your solar-calendar (that rock-henge in your back yard. A great site, for setting up your stones in a parking lot or a field is www.efn.org/~jack_v/AstronomicalCalendar.html Strangely, the design looks like a basketball courts lines! Could there be a connection?!
8. Get your garden planted, if you haven't started. Try old-fashioned "heirloom seeds" at www.seedsavers.org or Seed Savers Exchange (SSE) at 3076 North Winn Road, Decorah Iowa 52101 at 319-382-5990.
9. Make waffles. Write "Clinton" with maple syrup. Hee. Hee. Enjoy taking half-way opinions on important subjects and carefully study both sides of issues.
10. Change your wardrobe to summer-style suits, sandals and wear a flower. I've been thinking. Many religions have strange headgear or hair-styles, and we haven't since that weird "bald-forehead" style in the 450s AD, so let's go out for straw hats?!

Ten Things to Do for Beltane

By Alex Strongbow
A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 2002

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1. Sex. Of course!
2. Wake up early, greet the sun, wash your face in the morning dew. Collect flowers and make garlands for those you care about.
3. An Oak King can be selected by various athletic competitions such as: races, wrestling, archery, stone tossing, sit-ups in one minute, fire kindling contest (first to boil cup of water,) greased pole climbing, rodeo riding, or a combination of foolish macho things.
4. A maypole dance for the women (men too if not enough people.) Last woman holding the ribbon will become the May Queen The May Queen and Oak King should symbolically (or actually) consummate their "marriage" in a symbolic gesture. http://altreligion.about.com/library/howto/htmaypole.htm
5. Picnic, leaving a symbolic offering of one piece of everything. Possibly foods are oatmeal, diary, berries, greens, wine, barley, honey, eggs, sweets. http://ww.keirle.freeserve.co.uk/page18.htm
6. Drama or play of Persephone returning from the underworld or a story of a woman returning from the fairy lands. Divination is a possibility.
7. Enjoy the Waters of Life (i.e. whiskey.) If you're solitary, do some self-nurturing type of activity, like a walk in the woods of a state park and camp out or vigil.
8. Raise stones. Its always a good time to bring the community together to haul rocks around and make a memorial of some type to the event. I recommend using car hoods from a junk yard, long levers, and 15 ropes and a pulley.

Build a Bonfire.

This might be hard for those of you in fire-prone areas like California, but a cauldron fire might be possible, or just use a barbeque/hibachi for the job. Some of you are girl-scouts, but here's some advice for the rest of you.

Apparently, the traditional wood to burn is oak, ash, thorn, rowan, apple, birch, alder, maple, elm, gorse, holly, hawthorn, and others from a story about the Battle of the Trees. I'd add a piece from any other tree in your forest. Collecting the woods and maypole would be a nice combination activity, and give time for certain members to "dally."

Be sure to remove all the dry materials in the vicinity and dampen the area. Now you can just pile a lot of logs if you'd like, or you can stack them. A pyramid shape or steppe shape is considered ideal, as boxy shapes tend to fall to the side rather than collapse inward (1999 Texas A&M disaster, anyone?) I recommend that you don't get too close to the fire, just in case a log rolls out. Leave spaces between the logs to allow air to circulate. Old Christmas trees make great center pieces (whooom!.) Put the kindling and ever large pieces in the center.

There are many ways to make the initial flame. Magnifying glass, parabolic mirror, iron and flint, rubbing two sticks (use a bow to spin faster,) magma, lightning, natural forest fires, and matches. As always, the key is to start small with shaved wood, dried grass, lint, cotton (yes, toilet paper is good) and add that to small sticks than keep adding bigger stick

until the logs reach the magic temperature of 451F. If all else fails, CAREFULLY throw a cup of gasoline onto it.

Dance around it, watch it, talk to your friends. Throw negativity away into the fire. Or send up prayers with the fire. Young couples may wish to jump over the fire together after it burns down.

As always, stay with the fire until you are able to handle all the ashes with your bare hand. If you can, you take a candle home and relight your furnace, like the ancient Celts did.

http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Oracle/6992/bonfires.html

Or you can do something no one else has thought that you really like! See these sites for ideas:

http://altreligion.about.com/c/ht/00/07/How_Celebrate_Beltane0962933966.htm Fun.
http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/Beltane.html Good customs.
http://www.witchvox.com/holidays/beltaine/beltainehistory.html A lot of info.
http://paganwiccan.about.com/cs/beltanemaydayb/
www.cyberwitch.com/wychwood/Temple/beltane.htm Good history

Summer Solstice Activities

By Alex Strongbow, ex-Carleton Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 2002

It is not a major holiday, but here are some activities to surround the holiday.

Short and simple, the list looks like this:

- Picnics, beach parties, and fireworks
- Bonfire (It's always a good time)
- Fire-Fly searching, bug collecting (and release?)
- College or family reunions
- Charging magical tools
- Hardest work on a long-term project or making a journey
- Eating a super-big sundae
- Hauling rocks and attuning your megalithic calendar
- Baseball, soccer, hurley, outdoor games.
- Searching for St. John's Wort
- Backyard volcano building (see familyeducation.com site)

Some Possible Lughnasadh Activities

By Alex Strongbow, a Druid Lost in the Woods
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 2002

Basically, early August is a "hey, the farming is turning out alright!" agricultural festival and horse race time. Because it is a rather warm time of the year, and like other parts of the Northern Hemisphere, it is also a good time for big crowds of people to travel and have some constructive fun. Tailtiu, Lugh's mom, is commemorated in funeral games that last a week or so. I've put together a list of some events that might be done throughout August.

- Food was scarce before the harvest, so you might consider fasting before the festival begins, eating only seasonal foods that you can research as being available before world-grocering began. Perhaps combined with a camping trip, to test your rigor.
- Brehon Wedding/Handfasting: A young couple will put their hand through a hole in a stone and pledge to officiant and public their intention to try living together for a year before deciding on a permanent marriage.
- Settling of Legal Disputes: Advice or mediation in long-term disputes could be sought from other members of the grove (perhaps on slips of paper pulled from an anonymous box.) Alliances with other organizations may be approved now.
- Horse racing: Well, few of us have horses, but a trip to a derby, dog track, or Nascar race would be appropriate, as would attending a summer track and field meet. Gambling is encouraged. If you do have a few horses (or can rent them,) it is traditional to race along a river or ford a river mid-race.
- Bonfire: Not associated with hearth-fires, but just for fun and illumination of nocturnal partying. Sacrifice bad habits and unwanted things from your life by throwing symbols of them into the fire, this is good anytime. Perhaps, a competition between teams to build the biggest/oddest Lammas tower?
- Prearrange to collect the last sheaf of wheat from a farmer and make it a Cailleach doll (old woman,) much like the Bride-og at Oimelc in February. It should be placed on the mantle over the winter and destroyed in the spring, perhaps ploughed into the ground.
- Celtic Olympics: Yes the games of Tailtean, were held until the time of the Norman invasions in the 12th century. Perhaps modeling them on a highland games, which are frequent this time of year, would be apt. Events could include:
    - Wrestling in either Greco-Roman fashion (pinning shoulders to the ground,) Sumo (no touching ground except feet or leaving circle,) or WWF smackdown rules.
    - Hurley, Cricket, Soccer, or Rugby matches.
    - Foot races, wheelbarrow races, bicycle, piggy-back, sack-races, obstacle courses
    - Hammer Toss, Shot put, heavy rock lifting or caber toss
    - Sword dancing, country dancing, interpretive dance etc.
    - Long jump, high jump, pole-vaulting with walking sticks
    - Boffer-sword/Quarter-staff bouts, preferably on a log over a river.
    - Massive tug-a-wars, wacky relays, tag, human pyramids, or egg-toss contests.
    - Archery, fire-arms, catapulting, slinging or spear toss contest
    - Have a "Rhibo," a welsh game where people line up facing each other, making a bed of arms and then fling them up in the air. It is advisable to catch them on the way down.
    - Mental contests for the less physically-gifted: Chess, poetry, story-telling, lying contests, geometry jousts and math matches (bring out old SAT prep sheets,) joke-telling, banjo-dueling, scavenging hunts.
- Large elaborate parades or activities to test the strength and endurance of young folk, usually

through a forest, to a special spring or well or curving up and around a hill.

- Make plans for the winterization preparations.
- Feasting!: Foodstuffs include Beef, broccoli, cherries, spinach, any type of early berry, corn, potatoes, homemade bread (particularly wheat, oat, and especially corn bread,) berry pies, barley cakes, nuts, apples, rice, roast lamb, acorns, crab apples, summer squash, turnips, oats, and all grains. Drinks: Elderberry Wine, Mead, Ale, Meadowsweet Tea, and Cider
- If you live near an abattoir, you could attempt a Tarbh Feis (cattle meditation) by wrapping yourself in a freshly killed bull's hide after eating 10 pounds of beef at a crossroads and sleeping overnight while Druids sing around you. You could then prophesy the 2002 elections by this method, perhaps, or the fertility of the harvest might be gauged from your dreams.
- Offer first-fruits from your garden and plant all the seed of fruits eaten at festival. Bake a loaf of bread in the guise of a man and tear him apart by wild-cats. Include bilberries or blueberries in your feast; these were a traditional fruit, whose abundance was seen as an indicator of the harvest to come. Make a cornwheel of ripe grains.
- Gather and make acorn bread.

Some Optional Activities for Fall Equinox

By Alex Strongbow, a Druid Lost in the Woods
A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 2002

Fall Equinox is the opposite twin of Spring Equinox, only that life is now giving fruit and dying at this point in the year's cycles, sometimes known as Michaelmas in the Catholic calendar; when contracts and rents were collected (as at Easter.) What harvesting began in Lughnasadh should be about finished by the Equinox. In times past, autumn was a dreaded season, as people scrambled to prepare food for the long, deadly winter. Only in recent centuries, with assured food supplies, have we begun to romanticize the season. For modern society it is a time for starting school and the end of summer vacations.

- It's possibly the last chance to have the types of fun summer outdoor group activities that characterize Beltane, Mid-summer and Lughnasadh. So it offers an opportunity to repeat previous ones, or try out one that you didn't have time for.
- A picnic is definitely in order or participation in final harvesting. Traditional choices would be grapes, acorns, wheat bread, goat, Indian corn, horn of plenty, cornbread, corn, root crops (i.e. onions, carrots, potatoes, etc.,) pomegranates, nuts, goose, mutton, dried fruits, apples, beans, and squash.
- Prayers towards protection, balance, and success in life are auspicious.
- Building a doll of grains to be burnt in the spring or fed to animals.
- Sitting under trees with nets to catch falling nuts and leaves, perhaps saving a leaf from each year in a collection. The rest should be made into a leaf pile for the kids.
- The changing leaves can also be dipped in paraffin and put on wax paper. After the leaves dry, they may be placed around the house or in large jars with sigils of protection and/or abundance
- Take notes on which trees turn color first, which fall soonest, and into which colors.
- Follow the migration of birds.
- String nuts into a necklace.
- Plan a trip to see the fall colors in the mountains.
- Do the Halloween farm-visit early and beat the crowds.
- Make a grapevine wreath for the door.
- Deer season opens. Contemplate it and find some deer. Vegetarians can protest the sporting elements of it.
- A good time to give to local charities to feed the poor.
- When do certain animals begin to disappear?
- Bake bread from scratch (i.e. grind the grains into flour.)
- Note the date of the first frost and its effects on plant life.
- Put up storm windows, check insulation and pack away the air conditioner.
- Start notice the location and time of sunrise, noon and sunset and continue through winter.
- Plant acorns and other nuts and wait for spring growth.

Fertility Cycle of the Druid Year

By Nozomi Kibou
Archdruidess of Akita Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 2002

I apologize for the poor quality of this essay, but I hope you like it. You know, my father's grove is a fertility shrine (people, plants, animals too) so it is important subject for me. I have thought on Paganism and big four holidays and I think they are fertility holidays. Here are the reasons.

Beltane: It is warm. Young people date and have sex (Pat says "It's a festival of muddy knees and grass-stained dresses.") Planting season. Lughnasadh: We know if we have a baby. People marry. Family starts. Samhain: Baby gets big. Spirits move in baby. Baby kicks. Hard to work in fields, but okay, that work is done, we can relax, start new plans of life. Oimelc: Baby is born. Sheep are born. Not much food, which is hard for mothers. Use sheep milk for babies? By equinox, can work in fields again. Grow baby plants! Beltane: Ready again for more babies? Maybe wait one more year, no?

Sister Tegwedd says we don't need more babies now, "Zero Growth Population," so instead we are mind-creative. Yes, but there is no cycle for that. Most Japanese babies are also born in spring around Feb 1st. April's when school and government and business start a new year in Japan. Very convenient. Birth time of the year, April is. Old Europe started the New Year around Easter, but then changed to Roman Julian calendar. But now most people are not farmers in Wales or Ireland now, so the baby-schedule doesn't work well. Probably more babies in late summer with constant year-round food, long winters, and Fall school starts.

In modern Ireland there are good luck rules for the wedding, which was often before baby-making. A good wedding will help fertility. See http://www.ireland-

information.com/irishweddingtraditions.htm for many fertility rites of "The Traditional Irish Wedding" by Brian Haggerty.

Old Ireland has no records of "before-birth" advice for women. There were warnings in 11th century that women should have purity of heart and mind and not "heat the womb" during sex; but church didn't like recreational sex back then. Saints took over from Druids in blessing women with fertility, in many unusual ways, including potions. Some babies were born from swallowing live bugs, worms or fish, unusual water plants, sex with giant otters or bird-monsters or night-dreams. There was mystery in how it happened. The best modern advice for all (including men) is to exercise and eat only health food for six months before starting baby/getting married. No drugs, tobacco, alcohol, fatty foods, chocolates, coffee, allergenic foods, meat, gambling and horse racing, avoid rabbits, and corpses. Choose foods with special traits to direct babies personality. In Japan, we were special belly-belt to keep belly warm. Stay that way until milking is done. Of course this is not easy.

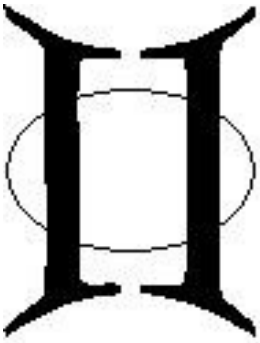
Once with baby, a blessing from priest and soon grandparents is good. Some make a special bow/knot for the house. When birth comes, untie it and open all windows, doors, cabinets, knots in house and clothes. The baby comes quicker this way. Sometimes a special bird or animal will visit the house during pregnancy, give it honor, and a name to baby. Going to a forge and pushing the bellows would help the birthing later and make a strong baby. But the most important thing is of course strong love from both parents, no fighting and excitement in the house, peace and tranquility. With this, baby will grow well. If the baby did not go well, abortion by potion and self-abuse was also known. There is evidence of infanticide, too. Unfortunately, modern Ireland has worst rate for "caesarian" births (near 25% for first time,) a weak midwife system, and no birth-centers as yet. Yet, this is because of the modern medical monopoly. In the past midwifes were common. This describes a 19th century Co. Mayo birth:

> "After she went into labour, the woman was transferred from her usual bed, which was in the kitchen by the fire, to the floor, which was covered with straw. She put on her husband's jacket, an outsize flannel garment with sleeves, made of homespun wool, or bainin. As the great event drew near, the husband stood at his wife's back, and placed his hands on her shoulders while she was in a kneeling position on the floor. With words of faith, hope, and encouragement, he supported her morally and physically in her trial, while the midwife got on with the great task of bringing a new human life into the world."

Celtic sources have much more on the raising of children after birth than before birth. The most important fear was ban-sid (faery women) stealing the children and leaving a "changeling," an old faery who never got bigger and shrank. Sometimes the mother would be took and go to fairy hill to raise fairy-babies. This may have been due to emotional stress and mother running away or hurting the child (like that Texas case) in tight society with small support for mother's need. In famous case of Ard Macha, treating pregnant wife rude like the animal (making her race the horses) caused a weak-body curse on all men of North Ireland for many generations. The point is, let pregnant women do what they want!

So ends Volume Seven

of the Green Books



Green Book
Of Meditations

Volume Eight
Order of the Mithril Star

2003 Introduction

As you probably know, the Order of the Mithril Star was a group that broke away from the Church of All Worlds. They wished to remain closer to the feeling of "Stranger in a Strange Land" as written by Robert Heinlein. Around 2000 they began to be drawn into the orbit of the Reformed Druids, which also shares waters amongst its members. Since then they have actively participated for about 3 years, adapting parts of our liturgy and sense of humor

When the author of this study course asked me to include these materials, I was at a loss of where to put them. The text was too large to go in Part Three, didn't seem right in Part 4 or 7, and wasn't quite a Part 9 text. As a result, it ended up here. This should be appropriate, especially if they see fit to continue to produce more materials, as I hope they will. As with all Orders and Groves, they speak only for themselves and not for other Reformed Druids.

Sincerely,

Mike Scharding
April 1st, 2003
Embassy of Japan

Printing History
1st Printing 2001? Online
2st Printing 2003 (ARDA 2)

Drynemetum Press

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Conclusion

Section One

Druidcraft 101: A Course Study of the Mithril Star Tradition of the Reformed Druids of North America

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Lesson 1: Background of Modern Neo-Paganism

By Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau /|\,
AD - Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove,
OMS-RDNA

I'd like to be able to say that the Mithril Star is an ancient tradition handed down from generation to generation and practiced by the Druids of ancient Gaul. I'd love to be able to say that, but it's not true. The Mithril Star is based upon some person's experience and training (actually a collaboration of seven people, including myself) and with little historical background to support it. We also drew from a lot of other traditions, and reinterpreted a lot of data to make it all work. Gerald Gardner basically did the same thing, incorporating some ceremonial magick techniques with what he could glean from different family trads in Britain, as did the originators of the other famous traditions of Wicca.

The fact of the matter is, no one really knows what the ancient Druids did because there is no written record. The medieval ceremonial magicians left written records in the form of grimoires and tomes such as the "Lesser Key of Solomon," but the traditions of folk magick practitioners such as Witches and shamans were oral. The "Book of Shadows" is a modern invention. The Alexandrian, Gardnerian, Fairy, Blue Star, etc., are all someone's "best guess" at what the ancients did. Likewise, the Druidic orders like Ar nDraiocht Fein, OBOD and Henge of Keltria are someone's ideas of what Druidism should be, or might have been. Anyone telling you otherwise is either deluded or a liar or possibly both. Or they may have their own agenda. There are a lot of control freaks out there in Paganland (just like religion in general.)

Our mother organization (or really, "dis-organization") is the Reformed Druids of North America. Back in 1963 at Carleton College in Northfield, MN USA, some students objected to a mandatory attendance of religious services, so they protested by making a bizarre group and attending it regularly. The requirement was thus mocked and was withdrawn. Members found it groovy and continued to participate in the group in order to explore world faiths and personal paths in an open and honest way. As they graduated, they started groups in other states. By the 1980s there were about 10 groves scattered across the country. Then Isaac Bonewits left to form Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF) Druidism, which later splintered, and soon Henge of Keltria Druidism appeared. Nowadays, there are lots of sophisticated groups in America that can trace their roots to RDNA, which still putters about.

In a sense, OMS is a "protest" group that became its own institution, like RDNA. As a member of the Church of All Worlds, I began meeting with Adam Rostoker (who was the official "Bard" of CAW) back in the early 1990s. We both had strong misgivings about CAW and about how its "nests" weren't anything like the nests in Michael's CAW. We were both seeking community in our chosen paths, and the structure of CAW "should" have been conducive to the formation of strong intentional communities. But it wasn't there, and though we both strived to find it there, it was like seeking the proverbial needle in a haystack. In a series of meetings over a six-month period, OMS (then known as the "Covenant of The Mithril Star") was implanted in the womb of Gaia. It was later, after Adam's tragic and untimely death, that Gaia gave birth to the ever changing, ever evolving (as any living thing should be) Mithril Star tradition.

I have a friend down in Southern California named Jim Fox-Davis. He is the High Priest of the Ancient Keltic Church and more or less a scholar of Celtic religion. His maxim is "We're doing religion the old fashioned way, we're making it up as we go!" That's our maxim as well. Any one of you can start your own tradition - right now in fact. Whether the magick will work or not is a variable we will be discussing later on. But all of you are just as qualified as anyone else to start something completely different. The key is belief (again, we'll be discussing that later on.) Now, there are lots of folks out there who will differ with me on this. They'll say that you need years of training under the tutelage of such-and-such master so-and-so who trained under who's-it's from the whatever-tradition. It's mostly poppycock.

Some time ago in an edition of the now departed publication, Green Egg, Oberon Zell editorialized against Pagan clergy who are ordained under the auspices of the "Universal Life Church." He used the same argument I just outlined, but Oberon (named after the character in Shakespeare's "Midsummer Nights Dream," and formerly known as "Otter," and before that "Tim") fails to mention that he is self-taught and self-ordained and therefore no more qualified than anyone else. If it makes you feel better, you might want a teacher who was taught by a more formal tradition, and initiated and ordained with ornate credentials and such. But the reality is that religion is the stuff of fantasy in the first place. There is very little difference between Mythology, Fiction (or Science Fiction) or Fantasy. Someone made it all up. Then someone else (or lots of someone else's) believed in it. And presto! You have a new religion; (more on that to come.)

Let the discussion begin....

Lesson 2: Ethics (Part 1 of 2 parts)

By Ellis “Sybok” Arseneau /|\,
and Frater Iopanus

The Rede

"And it harm none: do what thou will," goes the Wiccan ethic known as the "Rede," widely adapted by Pagans in general. It's a kind of cross between Aleister Crowley's "Law of Thelema" and the Hippocratic Oath. As Druids, we are healers as well as shamans so a link to the oath that doctors take seems very appropriate.

The Mithril Star position is that when at all possible we do whatever we wish so long as we hurt on one. The Rede is a voluntary ethic. There is no "Rede Police" to enforce compliance, nor do the Gods or Old Ones care. And although there is Karma to deal with it's still totally between you and yourself how you interpret and apply the Rede. We recognize that there are times when someone will be harmed in some way by our actions, that this is something that can't always be helped. So we've come up with some guidelines to help sort out this ethical dilemma:

1) If that action about to be taken will harm yourself or a member of your immediate family, don't do it. Find another way to accomplish the action without harm.

2) If the action about to be taken may harm someone outside of your family unit, decide how important the action is to your well-being. If you can live without it, then don't do it. If you can't, then you must.

3) The action about to be taken should never harm the environment in any way, nor may it violate a natural law. As Druids we are guardians of the Earth; environmentalists by default.

How do you interpret that though? That's where a lot of controversy and fighting comes in. An examination of the history of the Rede will shed some light on all this.

The Rede's history is somewhat fuzzy. Aleister Crowley's Law of Thelema states: "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law." His buddy, Gerald Gardner, while reinventing Witchcraft, wanted to tone down Crowley's maxim, and at the same time put a positive spin on Wicca (there are only GOOD Witches, you know.) He thus came up with "An' it harm none." Later, Doreen Valiente is said to have given it some teeth by inventing the Threefold Law. Inventing? Weren't these ideas always part of Goddess/Earth worshiping religions? Didn't Gardner and Valiente just codify a universal principal? Weren't these traditions channeled to our ancestors by the Gods? Perhaps not.

Consider the ancient Celts. Here is a culture whose idea of tasteful decorating included displaying their enemies' heads on pikes. And let's not forget the infamous 'wicker man' tradition. The Saxons are widely acknowledged to have raped, pillaged and plundered their way into British society. Not exactly "harm none" ethics at work here. Yet these two cultures are the main "historical" context for modern, or "neo" Paganism.

As we have said, the Rede encapsulates a good idea. But how does it bear up under scrutiny? Crowley was no one's idea of a warm and fuzzy guy, but he does back up his "Do what thou wilt..." with its companion expression, "Love is the Law. Love under will." In this system there is no assurance that harm will not be done, but at least the magician is operating from a foundation of love.

With or without conscious use of Magickal principles there always exists a distinct possibility that our actions may harm others. Our modern lifestyles impact ourselves and the environment in many subtle ways. Even a person living in a cabin with no utilities, growing her own vegan food, and using only a bicycle for transportation might often unwittingly violate the Rede.

The Rede, as interpreted by most traditions, is a blanket solution to an extremely complex ethical dilemma, which varies enormously from moment to moment for each thinking individual. A sincere attempt to live by a strict interpretation of the Rede would immobilize even the most powerful magick.

This is not to imply that we should go on a free-for-all of revenge against our enemies. On the contrary, if love is our touchstone in every moment, ethical questions will resolve themselves.

Some say that all 'true' Pagans follow the Rede absolutely. Poppycock! Every religion was made up by somebody (usually somebody with an agenda.) The discerning student is well advised to remember that being ordained in one tradition or another does not necessarily impart spiritual superiority or wisdom. The traditional interpretation of the Rede becomes a convenient rationale for non-action used by those who fear their own divinity and the power therein.

What about the "Three Fold Law"?

Among most Wiccans and many Pagans, the three-fold-law goes hand in hand with the "Wiccan Rede" as the basis for ethics in the magickal community. The law as stated is simple: whatever you put out comes back to you three fold. But what is the basis for the three fold law? Where did it come from? How does it operate? Is it live or is it Memorex?

You already know how we feel about the Rede: a nice sentiment usually over-interpreted to the point where magick is no longer an option. The three-fold-law gives the Rede some clout. It's no longer just a matter of being a nice guy and harming none. No, someone created a "law" that exacts an automatic penalty for breaking the Rede. Whatever you do, good or bad, will come back on you three fold, or three times. An example would be if you cause Jim Smith to lose his job, then you will lose your job and the next two as well. On the positive, if you give Jim a gift of $100, the cosmos will give you back $300. However, it rarely works that way, and apologists for the law of three will say that somehow material gain is exempted, or that your return on the gift to Jim may come in a form other than money. As you can see, this so called "law" is already rife with loopholes. I wonder if it has anything to do with one's status in the Pagan/Wiccan community?

I know of High Priest/esses who have worked magick to bring down the law of three on someone they feel has violated the Rede in some way. This proves that it's not really a law, since a law (like gravity) would operate without magickal invocation. It also suggests that the operator is immune, since drawing down a "three-fold" whatever on another would seem to trigger yet another "three-fold" event upon the operator, since this operation of "artificial karma" violates the very "an it harm none" ethic that is held so dear. But it doesn't seem to work that way.

The basis of the three-fold law seems to be karma. Karma is the spiritual equivalent of TANSTAAFL*. Like actions receive like rewards. But the actual doctrine is deeper than that. Karma originates in the ancient Hindu religion. It basically says that in this life you are paying for, or being rewarded for the mistakes or good deeds you did in your previous life, and that you are also learning how to live more perfectly with each new life (the

doctrine of karma being intimately linked with Hindu reincarnation/transmigration of souls.) Each life therefore is a cycle, and you ascend or descend upon the ladder of enlightenment in each life, until you reach a state where you no longer need to reincarnate. In practice, karma is a really handy way for the high Brahman caste to justify the state of the lowly Untouchable caste in India's caste system. This is just another religious tool the rich and powerful use to keep the masses in line. Western occultists borrowed Karma from Hinduism and reinterpreted it for their own purposes. This happened during the occult awakening in the early years of this century. Aleister Crowley, H. Spencer Lewis, and others are credited with the importation of Karma and Reincarnation from Hinduism into the modern western magickal thought. Both ideas proved popular, and were incorporated into a number of magickal systems, including Rosicrucianism and Wicca. To be sure, the evidence suggests that the ancient Celts believed in a form of Karma as did the ancient Egyptians. It was Doreen Valiente who was credited for the Wiccan version of Karma, the three-fold law.

Generally, the westernized version of karma is less nasty than its Hindu forebear. It takes the form of the Christian idea of "do unto others ..." or the American folklore idea of "what goes around comes around," or giving "tit for tat" ("What is 'tat'? And how do I trade it for the other thing?" -- George Carlin.) Karma therefore is something we can definitely count on as being a force to consider when contemplating action. But Doreen felt that Karma didn't offer enough clout as it stood, so she reinterpreted it as the three-fold-law, making it thrice as effective. Thus this so called "law" becomes an effective tool to keep the "little people" of Paganism in line with what the "Lords and Ladies" want. Yet another example of religion being used to control people. Ironic, since this is the reason many of us left the religions we were raised in.

The "Law of Three" works the way all magick works: it runs on belief. In other words, if you believe it works, if you do not it doesn't (we'll be discussing this principle later on in the lessons.) It may be that it works on the principal of mass belief; i.e., if enough people believe in something it becomes a law (or in the case of an entity a God,) and therefore may work on people who do not believe in or even know about it. In the later case what we have is a curse, not a law, since it would bring down misfortune on any hapless person who came into contact with it (rather like a landmine a child stumbles upon.)

My solution to the tyranny of the law of three is two fold: 1) stop believing in it. And believe that your active non-belief is stronger than the corporate belief of the community at large. 2) Stop teaching it.

So what about Karma by itself?

How does it affect me when I do magick?

First of all, magick is a gift from the universe to us. It is a gift in the same way that a cougar's hearing and speed are gifts. Gifts such as this are survival oriented; they are given to enable the recipient to have an advantage over others. Therefore, to NOT use it, for whatever reason, is the say to the universe, "we don't need this - take it away." NOT using magick may have the same karmic consequences as using it. Not taking action can be just as harmful as taking action, and I would suggest, an even higher karmic price may be exacted on you if you can use magick in a situation and choose not to. Magick is a gift given to you to use. Use it or lose it.

Lastly, because of our unique place in the universe, our gift of magick, and our acknowledgment of our own inner deity (as we'll discuss in lesson 4.) We are the agents of Karma. Our deeds and non-deeds do have an effect on others and on our selves. It is only through grokking ourselves in fullness that we can act rightly when the time of cusp comes. And this, too, is our karmic responsibility.

*TANSTAAFL /tan'stah-fl/

[Acronym, from Robert Heinlein's classic SF novel "The Moon is a Harsh Mistress." Meaning; "There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch."]

Lesson 2-B: Ethics of the Druids (Part 2 of 2 Parts)

By Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau /|\,
AD - Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove,
OMS-RDNA

If the Rede and the Three Fold law are mainly Wiccan, then how do Druids approach this problem of ethics? Of the few things written down by the ancient Bards, the most famous and oft quoted are the

Triads. There are Irish Triads, Scottish Triads and Welsh Triads. Most of these are concerned with history. The Triads were a method used by the Bards to remember things by associating them in groups of threes. A large body of the Triads concerns ethics. Following are some examples we found were the most pertinent:

The Triads

- Three rejoicings that are worse than sorrow: the joy of a man who has defrauded another, the joy of a man who has perjured himself, the joy of a man who has committed patricide
- Three things which justice demands: judgment, measure, conscience.
- Three things which judgment demands: wisdom, penetration, knowledge.
- Three things for which a friend is hated: trespassing,* keeping aloof,** fecklessness.
- Three rude ones of the world: a youngster mocking an old man, a healthy person mocking an invalid, a wise man mocking a fool.
- Three ungentlemanly things: interrupting stories, a mischievous game, jesting so as to raise a blush.
- Three deaths that are better than life: the death of a salmon, the death of a fat pig, the death of a robber.*
- Three laughing-stocks of the world: an angry man, a jealous man, a niggard.
- Three ruins of a tribe: a lying chief, a false judge, a lustful* priest.
- Three preparations of a good man's house: ale, a bath, a large fire
- Three preparations of a bad man's house: strife before you, complaining to you, his hound taking hold of you.*
- Three props of obstinacy*: pledging oneself, contending, wrangling.
- Three characteristics of obstinacy*: long visits, staring, constant questioning.
- Three maidens that bring hatred upon misfortune: talking, laziness, insincerity.
- Three maidens that bring love to good fortune: silence, diligence, sincerity.

- Three impossible demands: go! though you cannot go, bring what you have not got, do what you cannot do.
- Three things that constitute a harper: a tune to make you cry, a tune to make you laugh, a tune to put you to sleep.*
- Three oaths that do not require fulfillment*: the oath of a woman in birth-pangs, the oath of a dead man, the oath of a landless man.
- Three ranks that ruin tribes in their falsehood: the falsehood of a king, of a historian, of a judge.
- Three doors of falsehood: an angry pleading, a shifting foundation of knowledge, giving information without memory.
- Three doors through which truth is recognized: a patient answer, a firm pleading, appealing to witnesses.
- Three glories of speech: steadiness, wisdom, brevity.
- Three ornaments of wisdom: abundance of knowledge, a number of precedents, to employ a good counsel.
- Three signs of folly: contention, wrangling, attachment (to everybody.)
- Three things that make a fool wise: learning, steadiness, docility.
- Three things that make a wise man foolish: quarreling, anger, drunkenness.
- Three candles that illumine every darkness: truth, nature, knowledge.

(Above gleaned from
http://www.lincolnu.edu/~focal/docs/triads/triads.html)

HOMEWORK:

1. Make up three triads of your own, and discuss them in class.

Lesson 3: Magickal Theory

By Frater Iopanus

Belief

That is the key word to magick, prayer, religion, healing and metaphysics. What you believe and the degree to which you believe it determine the parameters of your universe. What you believe and the degree to which you believe it is also influenced by society at large, and what Jung called the "cosmic" or "universal" "consciousness." Some mystics also refer to this as the "Akashic Record."

In computer metaphor then, belief would be the "source code;" the 1's and 0's (the bits) of the universe. No matter what platform you are running, be it Mac, IBM, Unix, etc., the source code is still 1's and 0's. And so it is with metaphysics. No matter what religion or philosophy you subscribe to, the bottom line is still belief.

Since religion is all made up anyway it's possible to set up new parameters for belief and for magick anytime and in anyway you wish. We touched on this idea in Lesson One. The extent to which you believe a given idea, and the influence of "cosmic consciousness" and society are the only things that will limit you. It is possible to transcend even those things, but it takes years of mental discipline, and it's not something anyone can teach you. You are on your own here. You might decide to believe that you can fly (without an airplane.) You may truly and with all your heart believe that, but unless you can cancel out the influence of "cosmic consciousness," that first step off the top of Sears Tower is going to be the longest one of your life (and possibly your last.) On the other hand, you can ask yourself this question: "Am I going to hell?" Unless you are a Christian, or someone heavily influenced by the popular paradigm, your answer will be an assured no. However, if you have any doubt, you might actually end up there. I don't believe that would happen to too many Pagans I know of though.

Belief creates your universe. Christians create a universe where they go to heaven and everyone else goes to hell. Moslems go to Paradise, Buddhists reincarnate. Atheists just cease to exist. And those Heaven's Gate people are probably on a UFO somewhere (assuming their belief was strong enough.) Can anyone prove otherwise? I think not. These beliefs about afterlife are part of the "software" running on each person's religious "operating system." Some programs will run on more than one operating system but most will not. For example, there are some Unix commands that will work under DOS. In general though, it's best not to try to mix things. So it is in religion. The idea of Karma will not run under Christianity. Generally, eastern ideas do not run well under western paradigms. I think that possibly this is the reason why so much is screwed up in the world today. The dominant religion in the western world is Christianity; an essentially eastern paradigm. Western folks would do well to start with the Gods of ancient Europe and leave the Eastern and Middle-Eastern deities alone at the beginning. Later on you can add other pantheons to your mix, depending upon your personal taste. After all, some Celtic and Norse deities evolved from Eastern and Middle Eastern pantheons.

In looking at the different religious belief systems, and the different Pagan traditions, you can see common denominators among them. The kind of magickal practice one uses in Gardnerian Wicca can be used in Alexandrian, but only some of it in Druidism. So too do all of the Pagan traditions have commonalties. Yet, there are some things that work in one and not others. For instance, some traditions permit mixing pantheons (for instance, Egyptian and Celtic) others do not. Some teach you can influence events or people from long distances, others that you cannot. It is all a matter of belief, and belief determines what will work and what will not, just like the operating system you are using determines which software will work on your computer.

Ideas that you think are universal are not necessarily. You may say "Oh no! The Law of Three is universal," and indeed, it operates in your life. But that is only because you believe in it. Stop believing in the Law of Three and it will no longer affect you. If you are a Druid this is easy – none of the Druids I have ever known have believed in the law of three or the rede. Period.

Now to "stop believing" in something is a lot like trying to stop smoking. It's best if you never began in the first place. Something you are convinced you no longer believe in can affect you, simply because you believed for so long that there is some residual "belief" left in you. It may be impossible for you to get rid of that. You may have to do a complete banishing ritual over and over again. It's totally dependant upon your will. Beliefs that are truly ingrained in us from the Cosmic Consciousness can only be removed by years of discipline. Since most of us have jobs, and some of us have families, it is not likely that many of us will be flying without an airplane really soon.

What do you believe? How does it affect your life? How would your life change if you dropped a belief? Can you?

Lesson 4:
The Nature of Deity

By Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau /|\, and Frater Iopanus

Thou art God/dess.
Keep that statement in mind.

Religion is a method those of us on this plain use to relate to the deities. It's like software for cosmic relationships, and there are many different versions (or religions) for relating with different pantheons.

According to the Mithril Star, there are three classes of deity: The Archetypes, The Old Ones, and Us.

Archetypes

The Archetypes comprise all of the famous Gods and Goddesses of old. They are the heroes and heroines of myth and legend, who represent human attributes, desires and ideals. You know many of them from school: Zeus, Isis, Thor, Yahweh, Kwan Yin etc. Newer deities from modern literature have joined them as well: Celeborn, Galadriel, Elrond, Gandalf, and others from the Tolkein books are called upon by different groves from time to time, and I've even heard of folks who invoke Klingon deities. For the most part, the archetypes are made up out of whole cloth. They are entirely fictional beings; inventions of the human psyche. They can have great power however, depending upon the number and intensity of belief of the people who believe in them. Belief in this case energizes these beings and makes them real and powerful. A really good example is Asphalta, the parking place Goddess. Someone somewhere just made her up. A lot of people started praying to her, and it works. This made up Goddess will reserve you a parking place. It even works for me, and I know what she is! It can work for any deity. Try it -- make up a deity and start praying to her or him. Tell others about it. Pretty soon you'll have a cult following. This is guaranteed.

Old Ones

The second class of deities, The Old Ones, consists of entities that have actually lived among humans. One thing I like about the Celtic pantheon is that for the most part, it is composed of this class. The ancient Celts recognized the principle of "Thou art God/dess," and as heroes and leaders of the Celts passed on to the Summer Lands, they took on the title of God or Goddess. Lugh and Cernunnos are noted among these. Your own relatives; grandfathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, who have passed away, belong to this class. When you pass away, you will become a part of this group. These are the folks who are recognized at Samhain, channeled via Ouija boards or via scrying.

You

The 3rd and highest class of deity is YOU. Thou art God/dess. You have the responsibility and you have the power. This is why it is solely in your discretion whether you'll cause harm or not. It's your life, your universe, your creation. You can't run from this responsibility. You can live in denial (most of the planet does,) but look around: the rape, pillage and plunder of this planets ecosystem is the result of subservience to other deities. We are the caretakers of the universe. It is we who are ultimately responsible for the way resources are used or abused. But we are basically good. Humankind is basically good. People who learn and accept their inherent divinity will not do harm. They will do good. It is only those who have been taught from day one that they are bad, that they need a big God standing over them with a club, who do harm, because they know no better path.

Guidelines

As awakening Gods then, we may need some guidelines. I suggest the following, written by Oberon Zell, former Primate and founder of the Church of Al Worlds, which we consider to be our 'sister' organization:

"No matter how we formulate our philosophy, the true test of our strength lies in our behavior; our ability to embody the principles we hold dear, and apply them in our daily lives to the building of relationships and community, the integrity of our actions, and the strength of character that inspires others to grow and transform the world around them. To these ends we advocate the following principles of behavior:

1. Be Excellent to Each Other! Thou art God/dess. To truly honor the Divinity within each other is to treat each other with respect, kindness, courtesy, and conscious consideration. This involves honest and responsible communication, including the avoidance of gossip and rumor-mongering, and the willingness to reach for understanding rather than judgment. Learn how to communicate in a positive, life-affirming way. We prefer to avoid us/them and either/or thinking, and to instead take an inclusive systems approach that sees the Divinity in all living things. To this end we also deplore coercive behavior that does not respect the free will of others. We prefer to lead, not by guilt or coercion, but by inspiration and example; not only to be excellent to each other, but to strive for excellence in all our endeavors, no matter how seemingly insignificant. Tribal values we hold include Loyalty, Generosity, Fairness and Hospitality.

As Gods, we can no longer cling to outmoded, archaic identity labels. These would include racial labels (like black, white, yellow, red,) ethnic labels, (Asian, African, Chinese, American etc.,) and even political labels (conservative, liberal, socialist, libertarian etc..) These labels may be useful to explain where we came from, but as Gods, we have transcended all these. We are Gods – a separate and unique race, culture and politic.

2. Be Excellent to Yourself! Again: Thou art God/dess. Divinity resides within as well as without, so how you treat yourself is how you treat that Divinity. Self-abuse, whether through irresponsible use of substances, overwork, self-denial, self-deception, or simply running those tapes that undermine self-esteem, are all insults to the Divinity within. Treat yourself kindly, with compassion rather than judgment, and it will be easier to treat others that way. Take care of your body, home and possessions, as a piece of Gaia that has been entrusted to you. Be a conscious guardian to the Temple and the God/dess within.

3. Honor Diversity! In Nature a diverse ecosystem has more stability. There are many styles of living and ways of living, each of which has something to offer to the overall puzzle of life. Be open-minded and receptive to new ideas because this usually manifests in growth of the spirit and the mind. Learn about differences rather than judge them. Be willing to explore others creative abilities to manifest a sense of well-being and confidence in their own Divinity. Sexism, racism, or rude remarks directed towards others sexual preferences; body type or personal habits (insofar as they do not harm others) have no place in this community. All life is sacred.

Once again, we can honor our BACKGROUNDS, but who we once were is not who we are now.

4. Take Personal Responsibility! ("With great power comes great responsibility!") The necessary counterpart to individual freedom is the willingness to be personally responsible for all of our actions, and for our effects upon the planet. Only through the practice of personal responsibility can we become responsible collectively and live a life of freedom and maturity. We are not a religion of gurus, Mommies or Daddies who can tell you what to do. As a religion that respects equality, we must take equal responsibility for making things happen, preventing harm, or cleaning up mistakes. To this end we also advocate one of the principles taught in kindergarten: Clean up your mess!

5. Walk Your Talk! (and, talk your walk!) Talk is cheap. It is fine and well to proclaim to be a feminist or environmentalist, to preach heady Pagan gospel, or to play holier than thou. It is only in practice that words become Truth, and change becomes manifest. But do not be afraid to fail, for in order to grow, our reach must exceed our grasp, and it is through failing that we learn."

Yet another way of saying all this, briefly and succinctly, is:

"'Thou art God/dess.' It's not a message of cheer and hope. It's a defiance—and an unafraid unabashed assumption of personal responsibility." --Mike to Jubal, SIASL by Robert A. Heinlein

Midterm Exam

Lesson 5: Tools

By Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau /|\, AD –
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove,
OMS-RDNA

We don't need tools per se, in order to do magick. For some of us, our best tool is our mind. However, we try to have fun in OMS, and tools are fun to own and use. They also make public and group rituals much more impressive.

The tools used in western magick are for the most part very old. They are depicted on the Tarot deck, and predate all of the modern magickal traditions by hundreds of years.

I have found that you acquire tools over a period of time. They "call to you," or draw you to them as you feel the need. My own gwialen is a good example. My partner and I were traveling in Northern California and visiting a redwood grove along the famous "Avenue of The Giants." It was about dusk when we were there, and I was walking the length of the fallen "Garberville Giant" (listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's tallest tree.) I felt drawn to the top of the tree, and near the top on the ground I spotted my gwialen. Or rather, it appeared at my feet. It was a branch from the giant itself. I picked it up and placed one end in the crook of my arm. The other end was at the tip of my middle finger (the traditional length of a gwialen.) Redwood groves are very magickal places inhabited by all kinds of fairy folk, so I can't say that I was at all surprised to be given this gift of the little people.

Tools can also be acquired as gifts, or you can buy or make your own. Let your intuition be your guide. You will find that tools will come to you as needed and sometimes in ways you do not expect.

Preparation

Once acquired, a tool needs to be prepared for use. On the New moon, at midnight, cast a circle. Light your favorite incense and have a vessel of salt water and your favorite essential oil (if it happens to be something you wear, so much the better.) Invoke your favorite Old Ones (as witnesses.)

Pass the tool through the smoke of the incense, saying:

"I purge this (name tool) by smoke and fire to bring to me my heart's desires." (Do this three times)

Sprinkle the tool with salt water, saying:

"I cleanse this (name tool) by water and earth to help me bring my desires to birth." (Do this three times)

Anoint the tool with the essential oil saying:

"I anoint this (name tool) to be my own, to help me bring my desires home." (Do this three times)

Sleep with the tool from the New moon until the Full Moon.

The Tools:

The following is by no means meant to be an exhaustive list. Many Druids come up with their own tools that no one has ever heard of. We are an inventive folk, if nothing else. The list following is meant to be suggestive, not written in stone. YMMV. Once again, tools are not 100% necessary, but they are fun to own.

The Cyllell

The Cyllell is better known in Wiccan circles as the "Athame." This is a ritual knife and can be used for casting a circle, invoking the quarters, "the Symbolic Great Rite," mixing materials, cutting materials, scribing materials, etc. Some traditions also employ another knife (known as a Boline) for cutting and scribing and such, keeping the Cyllell back for strictly ritual usage. We don't feel this is necessary at all, unless of course your Cyllell was made out of some material (such as pewter) that makes it unable to actually be used as a knife. Pagan supply houses generally have a variety of styles to choose from, or the craftier among you may choose to manufacture your own.

The Cryman

The Cryman, or "sickle," is the tool most associated with Druidism. It is believed to have been used by the Druids of old to harvest the sacred Mistletoe from Oak trees. It is believed to have been made of gold or some other precious metal. Today you can find them in some craft stores in various sizes made of various materials, at terribly inflated prices. If you really want one, go to a garden or farm store and find a small hand version. Use it the same way as you would a Cyllell.

The Cleddyf

Related to the Cyllell, the cleddyf, "or sword," is used for many of the same things (except for preparing materials.) Generally, the cleddyf is an item the Grove owns rather than individuals, due to the expense. Stay away from cleddyfs derived from American history (they have a strange vibration not conducive to ritual.) I recommend the Claymore, the large two-edged cleddyf used by the Scotts. They are heavy and expensive, but very impressive in ritual. Renn Faires are great places to find and purchase cleddyfs that are suitable for ritual use.

The Gwialen

The Gwialen, or "wand," is used for power transfer, weather magick, spell casting and the like. Some folks also use it for circle casting. Traditionally, the Gwialen is a personal object the length from the crook of your elbow to the end of your

middle finger. Wood is the preferred material, especially ash, oak, and my favorite, redwood. Generally, a trip to the woods is all you need to secure your gwialen. You may want to place a crystal at one end of it, or decorate it with knot work, runes or whatever you like.

The Ffon

The Ffon or "staff," is simply a large Gwialen, and used for the same purposes as a gwialen. It is said that Ffons are less conspicuous than gwialens (they can be used as walking sticks) and so were more in favor during the Burning Times for that reason. It would be hard to picture Mithrandir or Merlin without their ffons. Traditionally, the ffon is one foot longer than its owner's height, and a lot stouter than a gwialen would be. Also quite serviceable as a ffon is the Irish shallagh, which also makes a fine gwialen.

The Caregl

The Caregl, or "Caregl," is used to hold ritual drink or sometimes the water for cleansing. It can be made of a variety of materials. Glass or ceramic are acceptable, but one must take care in transporting them. Other materials are more durable, such as a metal, like pewter, or wood. Wooden Caregls must be treated inside so that the liquid does not stain or leech into the wood. Again, these things tend to "call" to you. I found mine when I was 13, at Carson, Pirie, Scott & Co. in Champaign IL. Traditional RDNA Groves tend to use red glass Caregls.

The Thuser

Essentially an incense holder, it needs to be durable enough to withstand the heat from a charcoal block. The brass ones found in import shops seem to be the best for this purpose. I found mine at the same place I found my Caregl.

Another type of thuser is used for ritually purging of a circle or its attendees. Abalone shells are great for this purpose, as a sage stick or whatever can be lit up and passed around the circle. Shells also seem to be durable enough for general incense usage as well.

The Crochan

Magick (or Craft) shops sell crochans (or "cauldrons") of various sizes for a lot of money (usually) but many hardware stores have a cheaper version in the welding section of the store. These heavy cast iron versions are small (holding about two cups of liquid) and are perfect for ritual burnings.

The Seren Saith Pigfain (Seren Mithril)

Unique to the Mithril Star tradition, the Seren Saith Pigfain is a seven pointed star with a circle around it, usually the world snake (AKA Ourobores.) See our website at http://www.mithrilstar.org and feel free to download the one there. Usually inscribed or drawn on a plate or platter, it is used mainly for passing the cakes around during "cakes and wine." We'll get into the significance of this symbol in lesson 12.

Canhwyllbrens (or "Candlesticks")

Brass or any non-burnable materials are best. I buy them up at garage sales and flea markets. Mithril Star rituals usually utilize nine of them, but I've found that one can never have too many. Wooden ones can be used too, but only if you are using tapers that snuff themselves before the last half inch is burned. Trader Joe's is an excellent source of cheap candles like this, and they sell a variety of colors (including black.)

An alternative to canhwyllbrens, which we use for large outdoor rituals, is tiki torches. We usually place four of them in the cardinal directions. Tiki oil with a citronella base will help keep the mosquitoes at bay. Another option is large votive candles (usually found in the Mexican food section of grocery stores.) These last forever (almost) and provide their own shelter as the wax burns down. You can buy them in colors to match the quarters.

An even cheaper alternative is the small votives, dropped into clear glass jars (that you collect over time from sauces, condiments, jellies, etc..) I was at a ritual once where 33 of these were used to light the circle. Very impressive.

The Brethyn Allor

The Brethyn Allor, or "altar cloth," is something you need to either make yourself or have someone make, as it needs to be custom made to fit your altar. It should cover the top surface of your altar, plus hang down the front to the ground. That front section may have a Mithril Star or other adornment. Plain cloths will work just as well. Emerald or Kelly Green, or Black, or Tartan (plaid) are acceptable colors.

You do magick in virtual space, or astral space, without "real" tools. You simply use the virtual or astral equivalent. In this case your imagination is your only limitation. Possession of "real tools" can make this process a lot simpler for you, but it is not necessary. I have heard of cases where magicians doing astral work with astral tools have later on come into possession of a "real" tool that they had used in astral space.

Ysbrid Cynefin

Ysbrid Cynefin or "familiars," are not tools per se, but pets used in magickal work. Probably the most common is a cat, but I have known magicians who have used dogs or even reptiles. Typically your familiar is already with you, an animal pet whom you have already bonded with and with whom you have a psychic rapport. Sometimes they will come to you as you embark on new magickal projects, or under special circumstances. Our cat Aleister (he passed on this past October) is a case in point. About seven years ago when my ex and I first began our relationship, we were driving around in a rainstorm in downtown Santa Cruz. We were speculating about getting another animal (we already had Sydney) and were musing along the lines of: "If we ever get a black male kitten, we should name it Aleister, after Aleister Crowley." The next day these kids came to the door. There was another storm in progress, and they had this tiny black kitten with them, wrapped in a towel. They were going door to door looking for a home for him. We sent them away, but they came back. Three times. The last time they told us that their mom was going to kill the kitten if they didn't find a home for him. Well, the third time is the charm they say, and we felt sorry for the kids and the kitten, so we agreed to keep him overnight. It's been a long night. We named him Aleister of course, and it was expected that he would become my familiar. But that didn't happen. Aleister, like his namesake, is a bit too aloof to bond very closely with, and he has become even more so as he has grown older. Sydney (AKA, Syd Vicious Australia,) who lived with my ex before I came on the scene, was more than willing to take on the job. We bonded very well and he has been a great help in my magickal endeavors, even allowing me to project my consciousness into him so that I could share his nocturnal travels.

Next week we'll look at ritual construction.

Homework:

On list, discuss which tools you already have and how you acquired them. Suggest other tools not mentioned in the test. Throw each other a virtual "kiss" for having passed the midterm test and survived.

Lesson 6: Ritual Construction

For the Order of Mithril Star
By Iopanus, Sybok, Ceridwen, and the Mother Grove
(Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd)

Explanation

Finding a place is in itself a ritual sometimes. Usually a grove of trees is the best place, but anywhere that is a natural setting with plenty of privacy will do. Indoor spaces are all right also, but weather permitting; I feel that the best rites take place outdoors.

If the Grove can afford it, it's nice to own ten or more acres of woods, within which is a natural circular space. Within that space it's nice to have permanent altars set up in each of the horizontal quarters, with items appropriate to their correspondences on each (see the "Table of Correspondences" at the end of this lesson.) For large outdoor rites I favor those "Tiki torches" for illumination at those locations as well. Make sure the fuel used has a high flash-point (needs high heat to ignite.) White gas is too dangerous, but a fuel that will only burn with a floating wick should be safe. There are also propane fueled torches that burn for several hours and give off plenty of light. They also feature safety switches that shut off if toppled. They just don't have that natural flame ambiance.

Just south of the center of the circle space should be your fire ring (if it's a night time rite) and a small blaze should be well under way as people arrive for the rite. Fire safety is a major concern, or should be, for Druids. Keep fire fighting equipment handy whenever there is any bare flame (meaning non-bulb/electric lighting,) even lanterns and lamps, being used. The US Forest Service has a class on safe camping that is a valuable resource.

Just north of the center of the circle should be the main altar upon which should be everything needed for the rite, as well as any decorative items appropriate to the work planned. One of those portable canopies is really nice for daytime rites. This is again, a general format. You wouldn't have any altars for a Beltaine rite involving a May pole, since the pole would be the central thing.

You can do the same type of thing on property you do not own, but the altars and such must then be portable.

Depending upon the weather and climate, the Grove may wish to either be Robbed (Clothed) for the rites, or "Skyclad" (unclothed - naked - nude, except for ritual jewelry and accoutrements such as the HP's antlers or the HPS's crescent and moon headpiece, and each Druid's Mithril Star pendant.) If weather and climate are agreeable, then "Skyclad" is best, since it illustrates the "perfect love and perfect trust" that should be present among waterkin.

If using Robes, the hooded type is best, usually in earth tones or black or green. (Some Druid groups insist on White - we feel this is a) impractical - white is hard to clean once it gets dirty, b) a stupid attempt to emulate our ancestors (In Caesar's notes about the Druids, he says they all wore white robes. He also says they were barbarians who practiced human sacrifice. Who wants to believe the enemy anyway?)

The Grove would be robbed in the procession, and would disrobe once in circle (weather, other circumstances, permitting.) Either robbed or skyclad, you are usually skyclad (an exception would be a physical condition that would make it impractical) under the robe.

Shoes: This business of ALWAYS being barefoot which some traditions practice is I believe, impractical and dangerous. Wear sandals, or wear dark colored sneakers. Being barefoot out of doors in the woods (especially at night) is just asking for trouble.

THE SACRIFICE: Any small cutting from any vegetation will do. When harvesting the sacrifice, take a moment thank the plant for it's offering, and pray for the plant to heal over.

ROLES: It the ritual format to follow, the Grove must pick those who will fulfill the following rolls:

Preceptor:
Server: Serves the Water of Life
HP: High Priest – Co-Officiate with the HPs (Usually the Arch-Druid (if a male)
HPs: High Priestess – Co-Officiate with the HP (Usually the Arch-Druid (if a female)

All rituals follow a formula or script. The Mithril Star, for the most part, follows the following Order of Common Worship:

Preparatory Details

The caregl is filled with the Waters-of-Life.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess (HP/HPs) who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Arch-Druid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand.) The HP may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

(Note: This invocation is "suggested" – you can substitute your own if you like. Also, though Be'al and Dalon Ap Landu are traditional to RDNA groups, you may wish to pick from deities from your own favorite pantheon, whether Celtic, Greek, Hindi, Egyptian, Buddhist, Shintoist, Daoist, etc., ALL are acceptable in the big family of OMS)

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn, Sequoia Sempervirons. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their ffons to mark the Mithril Star upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side,) leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The HP & HPs step into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two ffons.

The Pledge

Led by the Preceptor, the group recites the OMS Pledge:

"In dedication to the celebration of Life in its many forms, I hereby declare my commitment to a way of life that is ethical, benevolent, humanistic, life-affirming, ecstatic and ecologically sane. I subscribe to means and methods that are creative rather than destructive, tolerant rather than authoritarian, gentle rather than violent, inclusive rather than exclusive, egalitarian rather than hierarchal. I pledge myself to harmonious eco-psychic awareness with the total biosphere of holy Mother Earth."

"Like an ancient Redwood, I would have my roots deep in the Earth and my branches reaching for the stars, the stars not only above but around me, my fellow humans, for "every man and woman is a star," and "the good of the many outweighs the good of the few," 'from each according to his/her abilities, to each according to his/her needs."

"I acknowledge my personal responsibility for myself, to my fellow humans, and to the whole of Nature; and I recognize this total responsibility, in each of us, as the source of our infinite freedom to become who we are and do what we will. I dedicate myself to my own inner growth and development that I may be of greater service to myself and the world around me. For these reasons I recognize Divinity both within and without, and I say to myself and to all those gathered with me here: THOU ART GOD/DESS."

The Sacrifice

The HPs holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

HPs: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds.

Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

**The "quarters" are guardian spirits who bring the energy or quality of the elements into the magick of the circle. The Mithril Star is different than most traditions in this regard because we recognize seven elements rather than the usual four. This is a melding of Celtic tradition (which has three) and the Western ceremonial magickal tradition. Here is a table of the elements which shows how they correspond with the directions and the Celtic tradition:*

Direction	Color	Element	Day	Planet	Celtic
East	Gold	Air	Fri	Venus	Sky
South	Red	Fire	Tues	Mars	Sky/Sea Earth
West	Blue	Water	Mon	Moon	Sea
North	Green	Earth	Wed	Mercury	Earth
Above	Royal Blue	Ether	Thur	Jupiter	Sky
Below	Red	Darkness	Sat	Saturn	Sea
Within	Silver	Light	Sun	Sol	Sky

You may also note that some of these correspondences differ from other traditions. They are unique to the Mithril Star. Note: It's ok for us to do that, because "we're making it up as we go," just like the other traditions did.

**In the southern hemisphere, invoke widdershins, devoke deosil.*

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the quarters is questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

HP: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the East to give answer... of the South...of the West.... of the North…. of the Above….of the Below…..and of the Within.

The Reply

(If the sacrifice is accepted, and it almost always is accepted, then continue. If bad omen, the service ends at this point.)

HPs: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Rite of The Waters-of-Life

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-life while the HPs asks the interrogatories. The local custom may or may not replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

HPs: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
DRUIDS: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
HPs: From whence do these Waters flow?
DRUIDS: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
HPs: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
DRUIDS: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
HPs: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
DRUIDS: SHE HAS!
HPs: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

(The HPs takes the caregl from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The HPs then consecrates its contents with the following:)

O Dalon Ap Landu, Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night,. Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of they secret essence!

(The HPs then holds the caregl in both hands, while the HP holds the Cyllell above the caregl, and intones the words:)

HP: "As the Cyllell is to the God…."
(To which the HPs replies:)
HPs: "…so the cup is to the Goddess.."
(Here the HP dips the Cyllell into the caregl three times, and then both reply:)
BOTH: "…and so the two are made one."

Optional Ordinations

First Degree consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first degree for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Degree (in which case the HPs will have consecrated an additional caregl, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

The Communion

(The HP holds up the caregl so that all can see it and intones the words:)

HP: This is the Water of Life! Happy are those who are called to Drink Deep of it. May those who do so never thirst."

The HP & HPs drink from the caregl and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "Thou art God/dess," *and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the caregl from the HP. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the caregl. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the caregl, letting them drink, being blessed in and exchanging the words "Thou art God/dess," "Drink Deep," or "May you never thirst," *return and taking the caregl to the next person. The Server does not drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the HP may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the caregl be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove. In either method, the last person in the circle should not finish the contents of the caregl. This is returned to the HP with a last ex-change of blessings. Then the HPs takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:

HPs: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee. May we perform this rite next year in Imladris.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the HP OR HPs may choose, read by the HP OR HPs or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the HPs and a period of silence and private mediation (usually 2 or 3 minutes in length—though longer with some Groves) by all.

Eventually, the HP signals the end of the Service with:)

The Benediction

"Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing."

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The HP blesses the Grove with three Mithril Stars in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace
Then the Grove joins hands, and say:
"Thou art God/dess and I am God and all that Groks is God. Keep coming back it works!"

Group hug.

Pot Luck

Lastly, there is the traditional "Pot Luck." (If the rite was held "sky-clad" you may want to decide whether or not the grove should get dressed before the "pot luck.") This actually can mean anything, but usually it means that each person attending has brought along a food item to share with the whole group. It's really very, very, impolite to attend a ritual / pot luck without bringing along anything. People who do this habitually need to "get a clue."

WATERS OF LIFE

Traditionally, the "Waters of Life" is Whisky (which in the Scots-Gaelic, means "Waters of life.) However, most OMS Groves use bottled spring water instead.

ETIQUETTE

Politeness and ritual protocol are extremely important elements. Good manners seem to be almost passé amongst Pagans in general, but we in the Mithril Star are interested in promoting the highest behavioral standards. This is only befitting those of us who are "Gods." The following are some general guidelines for behavior in ritual (applicable for both Mithril Star events and events sponsored by other traditions):

1.) Always RSVP. This means that you let your host know whether or not you are coming to an event you are invited to. This rule applies whether the invitation is formal or not. If you are not coming, it is usually customary to apologize for your absence.

2.) Always show up on time. Lots of folks follow what is jokingly referred to as "Pagan Standard Time." Those who follow PST in Mithril Star circles may find the door locked when they arrive late. If you really can't be on time, let your host know in advance that you'll be late.

3.) Once the ritual begins, you must not leave. This dissipates the energy of the rite. If you absolutely must leave, find the designated person (called the Gatekeeper) to cut open a door for you. When you return you must seek admission of the Gatekeeper again. This rule has two exceptions: Children and small animals can enter and leave at will without disturbing the energies.

4.) Never touch or handle someone else's tools unless invited to do so.

5.) Refrain from small talk during the ritual. Keep your attention focused on what is going on in the rite.

6.) Bring whatever is asked of you. This applies to the ritual itself and to the potluck portion.

7.) Make it a point to greet everyone in attendance either before or after the rite. At the end of the evening be sure to say good-bye to everyone, and to thank your hosts.

8.) Always volunteer to help clean up. Again, we try to follow the simple rule of leaving things as they were found, or (in the case of someone's home) leaving things better than they were before.

Lesson 7:
Raising Energy

By Ellis “Sybok” Arseneau /|\, AD –
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove,
OMS-RDNA

Magick

Most rites are concerned with the changing of the seasons, or with mundane events like handfastings, funerals, etc. These kinds of rites do not require a lot of energy, since they are mainly celebratory in nature. But when we want to change things, we need to raise energy to do that. This is where real magick begins.

Magick happens when we apply our Will to alter the circumstances around our lives. Magick happens when we raise energy to change things. Of course this is where the big debate in ethics takes place. What things are you allowed to do? How far can you go? What are your boundaries? In the Mithril Star, each individual sets his own boundaries, decides how far he/she will go. We are, after all, Gods.

There is nothing really you are not allowed to do -- so long as you do it via magick. This is because there are laws against certain things, but not against magick (at least not in this century.) Frater Iopanus (he was one of the original Mithril Star co-founders) once said that this means that love would keep one from harming one's water-sibling, but anyone else was fair game. You would most certainly go to jail if you got on a plane, flew to Washington DC, purchased a revolver and shot Newt Gingrich (even though the world would be a better place for it.) However, if you stay in your home in Anchorage Alaska and cast a spell designed to cause the man a heart attack, well, you've done the world a service and broken no laws.*

Chakras

How do you raise energy? Lots of ways. Some people can do it from force of Will alone, going into deep meditation, grokking what they want to happen, and so it is. Most of us need a little more help than that, at least at the beginning, and this is where ritual comes it. Dancing, drumming, singing, chanting, sex, all these things are aides to raising what we call a cone of power. It's much like writing a program to accomplish a certain task. One of my favorite methods involves chakra meditation. This is especially effective with smaller groups working indoors. Everyone sits down, and takes a deep breath, and lets it out. The leader of the group begins a low Om, and that is picked up by each of the members. As they Om, they think about that which is to be accomplished, as well as the color associated with the chakra they are Om-ing in resonance with. Beginning with the base of the spine, the leader takes the Om up a pitch, and then another, and then another, and the energy builds from the bottom up, until finally everyone is Om-ing at a very high pitch. The leader then focuses the energy into a green ball at the center of the circle. Everyone follows suit and visualizes the ball floating between them and growing as the energy builds. Finally, as the energy reaches its peak, the leader says in a loud voice something like "By Earth and wind and fire and sea, by that above and below we, launch this ball of energy (here he raises his hands forward and out and then ends it with a loud clap) and by our wills so mote it be!" Then everyone brings their hands to the ground before them, grounding the energy. While doing this, everyone visualizes the ball of energy flying up out of the atmosphere and then back down to its intended target.

The focus of this can be almost anything. Healing is an especially good focus for this, but I've had good results for everything I've used it for.

Other Skills

Developing good visualization skills is primary in doing magick. You have to be able to see your target, and see the end result. The simpler the intention the better, but even the most complex intentions can be accomplished this way, if you break it down into steps. The book "Creative Visualization," by Shakti Gawain, has a number of techniques to help you with this.

Other teachers have other methods of raising energy they like. Starhawk, for instance, loves doing spiral dances. Other folks like drumming and chanting. Some groups like to use sex. It's totally up to you. What is your style? What are you most comfortable with? What will work best for you?

You might wish to explore the popular books of spells you can find in any new age bookstore. Some of these offer very effective techniques for getting what you want and can help you pin down your own personal style of magick.

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*I personally have not done this type of political work. I feel like I need to get my own personal life in order before I can start trying to change the world. I also haven't figured out how to grok time in such a way that I have as much as I need. However, if one old growth redwood falls in Headwaters Forest from one of Hurwitz's loggers, Hurwitz is toast. I've read that the man already has some heart disease, so it shouldn't be too hard to take him out.**

** It's moot now. Headwaters is a national forest, with the main grove shortly to become a national monument.

Homework:

Practice the chakra meditation described above, and the visualization of the green ball. Write down your experiences. Share with the group, if you feel comfortable to do so. (This being an intensely personal experience, simply letting the group know you did it will suffice as response for this week.)

Lesson 8:
The Wheel of The Year
(Part 1 of 2 Parts)

By Frater Iopanus & Sybok

In the beginning of the Reform, the Druids celebrated only four holy days: Samhain, Yule, Bridgid, and Beltaine (the last being the birthday of the Reform.) It is assumed that this was because the Reform began at a College, and that College only operated from September until June, and was closed during the Spring Equinox.

Since we are not limited by this, the Mithril Star celebrates eight Sabbats or seasonal holidays. In Breton magickal tradition, these celebrations take place on the New or Full moon following the date. The Mithril Star (being a practical tradition) for the most part, celebrates them on the weekend closest to either the moon or the day itself. You may also choose to celebrate them on the

astrological date, or the date derived from the Coligny Calendar. These days are:

Traditional Name	Druidic Name	Trad. Date	Celebrates
Samhain	Calan Gaeaf	*Oct 31	The Celtic New Year
Yule	Alban Arthuan	Dec 21	The Winter Solstice
Bridgid	Imbolq	*Feb 2	1st Day of Spring
Oestara	Alban Eiler	March 21	The Vernal Equinox
Beltane	Calan Mai	*May 1	1st Day of Summer
Midsummer	Alban Heruin	June 21	The Summer Solstice
Lammas	Lughnasadh	*Aug 1	1st Day of Autumn
Mabon	Alban Elued	Sept. 21	The Autumnal Equinox

Note the difference in seasons.

*Although the Equinoxes and Solstices are celebrated on the exact day the occur, the "cross quarters" (which represent the lunar, or feminine polarity) are moveable (even though there are "traditional days" assigned to them.) This is because the ancient Celts primarily used a lunar calendar, and these celebrations were reckoned accordingly.

You may experiment with the cross quarter days to find the timing that is right for you or your Grove. Some try to ascertain the day according to the Coligny Calendar. Others use the "astrological date (the date of the halfway point between the equinox and solstice)" and others use the traditional date. Whatever you want to do is fine with us. ☺

The Druid year is divided into four seasons, marked by the four Major High Days of Samhain, Oimelc, Beltane and Lughnasadh.

Samhain begins the season of Geimredh (gee-ru,) in Modern Irish an Geimhreadh (uN gee-ru); which is Winter, running from roughly the beginning of November till the end of January.

Oimelc begins the season of Earrach (u-RoCH,) now an tEarrach (uN tu-RoCH); which is Spring, running roughly from the beginning of February till the end of April. Together, these two season constitute "the Winter Half of the Year," otherwise known as "the Season of Sleep."

Beltane begins the season of Samradh (S,u-Ru,) now an Samhradh (un S,u-Ru); which is Summer, running from roughly the beginning of May till the end of July.

Lughnasadh begins the season of Foghamhar (FÙr,) now an Fomhar (uN FÙR); which is fall or autumn, running from roughly the beginning of August till the end of October. Together, these two seasons constitute "the Summer Half of the Year" or "the Season of Life."

There are four Major High Days (Samhain, Oimelc, Beltane; Lughnasadh) and four Minor High Days (Winter Solstice or "Mid-winter," Spring Equinox, Summer Solstice or "Midsummer," and Fall Equinox) in the Druid year. While the Minor High Days are easy to obtain from any good astrological ephemeris or almanac, the methods for calculation of the Major High Days will vary from Grove to Grove. The most common practice for the calculation of Samhain, Oimelc, Beltane and Lughnasadh is to use the civil calendar days or eves of November 1st, February 1st, May 1st, and August 1st, respectively.

Another way is to use the weekend closest to these dates. Still others use the sixth day after the new or full moon closest to each of these dates. Astrologically oriented Druids use the days upon which the Sun enters 15 degrees of each of the "Fixed Signs" of the Zodiac to wit: Eagle Point- 15 deg Scorpio, Man or Angel Point - 15 deg Aquarius, Ox Point - 15 deg Taurus and Lion Point - 15 deg Leo.

The calendar used by the Berkeley Grove of the NRDNA, as well as the SDNA and the HDNA, is that designed by Adr. Robert Larson. In this calendar the Major High Days are calculated as those days upon which the Sun hits 16 deg 18 min. inclination North or South of the Celestial Equator. This make them come exactly half way between the Solstices and Equinoxes.

Most of these holidays have been co-opted by Christianity, which preserve many of the Pagan rites and symbols associated with them. When Christianity first came into Europe to evangelize the people, they discovered that they couldn't take these celebrations away, so they Christianized them and allowed their new converts to continue to celebrate them, albeit in an altered fashion. As we discuss each holiday, we'll examine these alterations, as well as provide a rough outline for designing your own rites and celebrations to mark them.

Samhain / Calan Gaeaf

October 31

"Ye shall observe always the festival of Samhain, for it is the beginning of the period of Gelmredh, and also of the year. This day shall ye celebrate by the lighting of great fires, for soon is the land to become cold in the time of apparent death." – DC(R) The Book of the Law, 4:2

Samhain (SÙ-un,) known in Modern Irish as L· Samhna (Laa SÙu-Nu,) in Welsh as Nos Galan Gaeaf (that is the night of the Winter Calends,) in Manx as Laa Houney (Hollantide Day,) Sauin or Souney; is, of course, the eve of "All Saint's Day," All Hallow's Evening or Halloween. Among other things, it is the beginning of the Winter Half of the Year (the seasons of Geimredh & Earrach) and is known as "the Day Between Years." The day before Samhain is the last day of the old year and the day after Samhain is the first day of the new year (though for clarity's sake, most New Reformed Druids assign each Samhain to the year following it. Being a day "between years," it is considered a very magical night, when the dead walk among the living and the veils between past, present and future may be lifted in prophecy and divination.

Samhain basically means "summer's end" and many important mythological events occurred on that day. It was on a Samhain that the Nemedians captured the terrible Tower of Glass built by the evil Formorians; that the Tuatha De Danann later defeated the Formors once and for all; that Pwyll won his wife Rhiannon from Gwawl; and that many other events of a dramatic or prophetic nature occurred (see ARDA, Later Chronicles, Chapter 5, Verses 11-14.) Many of these events had to do with the temporary victory of the forces of the darkness over those of light, signaling the beginning of the cold and dark half of the year.

Christianity calls this holiday Halloween, but other than the change in name, this holiday as it is celebrated by most Americans pretty much has remained unchanged from its Pagan past. This is why it is now being targeted by Fundamentalist Christians who want to eradicate it from our schools.

As the Celtic New Year, it is the time when the veil separating the worlds of men and of the Tuetha de Dannan is at its thinnest, allowing the spirits of the dead, the faery folk, devas, etc., to pass back and forth with little effort.

On Samhain we remember our dead, especially those who have passed on in the past year. We invite them to partake of our

circles and of water. An especially appropriate rite is the Dumb Supper, wherein the participants take a meal together in silence, leaving an empty seat at the table for a departed loved one or ones. It's a good time to reflect on the past and on the future, and for planning the year to come.

The usual Halloween trappings are appropriate, and a traditional jack-o-lantern is a must! We usually encourage Druids to show up in costume. It is both a somber and a fun occasion. Have you ever been to an Irish wake? This is the tone of Samhain.

Yule / Alban Arthuan

December 21

"Ye shall celebrate on the day of Midwinter, for on that day doth the sun begin to rise in the south; so shall ye celebrate it with the burning of logs and making merry……" – DC(R) The Book of the Law, 4:3

The Winter Solstice is a Minor High Day, usually occurring around December 21st or so of the civil calendar. Also known as Yule and Midwinter, this is a day sacred to Sun Gods, Thunder Gods and Fire Gods. Large fires were built up outdoors and a Yule Log lit indoors, in order to rekindle the dying Sun and help it to return brightly to the Northern skies. Burnt logs and ashes from Midwinter fires were kept as a talisman against lightning and house fires. It was also a custom in many parts of Paleopagan Europe to decorate live evergreen trees in honor of the Gods (cutting down a tree to bring indoors is a blasphemous desecration of the original concept.) This is considered, along with Midsummer, the best day of the year to cut mistletoe.

Among some Paleopagans, a date on or near this (such as December 25th) was celebrated as the Birthday of the Sun God, frequently from the womb of a virgin or unmarried girl (who was sometimes also the Mother Goddess.)

This is the shortest day and the longest night of the year. It was believed by the ancients that the Sun had died and then was reborn on this day, as indeed it seems to do, since the days begin to get longer and the nights shorter until the Summer Solstice, when the process reverses itself. It was easy for Christians to come along and co-opt this. Since it was the birthday of the Sun God, it was easy to turn it into a birthday celebration for the "Son of God," and then move it a few days to December 25. Even in Christian mythology, much of the Christmas story is taken from myths of the Sun Gods from other mid-eastern pantheons, right down his being born of a virgin.

The trappings of Yule are predominantly Pagan. The evergreen tree decorated with lights, the wreath, the holly and mistletoe, even some of the carols, all have origins in European Paganism, as do the parties and the general sexual license that dominates the holiday.

Among Pagans there are a lot of options for designing ritual around this. There is the Celtic story about the Holly King and the Oak King for example, which makes for a good mystery play. But there are lots of other variations and, in the Mithril Star, we don't have a set tradition for this. Creativity is the key. This is a holiday for fun, so make your rituals as fun as possible.

Brigid / Imbolq

February 2

"…So also shall ye make merry on the day of Oimelc, which is the first day of the period of Earrach;" – DC(R) The Book of the Law, 4:3

Oimelc (imelc,) is known in Modern Irish as La na Feile Bride (Laa Nu fÈ-li bree-di,) in Manx as Laa'n Arragh (Day of Spring,) and as Imbolc, Candlemas and Lady Day in English. La na Feile Bride means the day of the festival of "Saint Bridget." Brighid, Bride or Bridget is yet another Pagan deity turned by the Christians into a "saint," in order to co-opt Her worship. This goddess was a triple-aspected deity of Poetry/Divination (considered the same thing,) Healing and Smithcraft, whose followers kept an eternal flame burning in Her honor.

By analogy with the Gaelic names of the other High Days, we may assume that the holiday was originally called La hOimelc (Laa Hi-melc.) It is the festival of the lactation of the ewes. In Paleopagan days (and, indeed, until the recent past) the sheep was a very important animal, providing both food and clothing. The occasion of the birth of lambs (not to mention kids and calves) was a cause for rejoicing and a sign of life in the "dead" world of a Northern winter.

The name "Candlemas" is a Christian term for a holiday occurring February 1st or 2nd. This supposedly is in honor of a "Saint Blaise" and has no official connection with "Saint" Bridget and Her cult of fire, nor with the fact that this day was one of the four major fire festivals of Paleopagan cultures throughout Western and Northern Europe. Of course they don't mention a certain Slavic god named Vlaise, Who was the Patron of cattle, wealth and war, and Who was worshipped with fire. Catholics go to church on this day to have their throats blessed to keep them from getting infected with colds and flues.

La hOimelc begins the spring season of Earrach. It is also the day before St. Groundhog's Day The lore has it that the ground hog comes out of his whole on this day, and if he sees his shadow, he gets scared and retreats back in, and we therefore will have six more weeks of winter. If, however, he does not see his shadow, he stays out, and it'll only be six weeks before spring begins. Now it happens that the Vernal Equinox is about six weeks away, so it becomes a matter of "is the glass half empty or half full?" I've been trying to research how the Ground Hog became a player in this scenario, what he has to do with Bridgid, or Candlemas, but so far I haven't found anything.

Mithril Star groves usually have done various things, drawing on different mythologies but one thing they all do is screen the Bill Murray movie, "Ground Hog Day" after the pot luck.

Oestara / Alban Eiler

March 21

This is the Vernal Equinox or the first day of spring. Oestara is the name of the Goddess of Spring (also spelled Easter.) The Spring Equinox is also sometimes known as the Festival of the Trees. It is a celebration of the returning of life to the Earth. Rabbits, eggs and children are sacred at this feast and Pagans in need of fertility talismans now color hollow eggs and pass them through the ceremonial fires (quickly) to take home and hang over their beds and in their barns. A fascinating source of almost forgotten Paleopagan symbols can be found by examining carefully the fantastically decorated eggs produced by folk artists from Europe (especially Eastern Europe and Russia,) Mexico and South America.

A Minor High Day, in usually takes place around March 21st or so. On the night before, some Hasidic Druids stayed up until dawn, reading meditations about trees, eating the fruits of various trees and singing hymns about trees. Among many Paleopagan cultures in Southern Europe, the Spring Equinox was the date of the New Year (instead of Samhain, as it is among the Celts) and indeed, many Druids refer to this holiday as "the New Year for Trees." Adding a bit to the confusion is the fact that some Neopagan groups call this holiday "Lady Day."

It is interesting that when the church co-opted the holiday, they kept the name. It is also interesting the way the church

derives when they will celebrate it. Easter Sunday is always the first Sunday after the first Full Moon after the Vernal Equinox. Its timing has nothing to do with the Jewish Passover (though one would think it would.) This comes down to the church using astrology to choose a date for the most important holiday in their calendar: the celebration of the resurrection of their God.

Separate the Christian stuff though, and you have a nice Pagan holiday. The bunnies, the chicks, the eggs (did you know that you can stand an egg on its small end at the moment of the Equinox?,) and all the other trappings are all symbols of the fertility cult that Oestara represents. It's usual and customary for the Great Rite (not the symbolic version either) to be a central part of a grove's rites on this day. Even the Catholic Church does the Great Rite on Easter. It happens at midnight on the Saturday before Easter. During the mass, part of which takes place in a totally darkened church, the priest lights the Easter Candle, then dips it three times into the chalice.

So, Oestara is a sexual celebration, a time for grove members to share and grow closer. It's the time to celebrate the re-greening of the Earth, for planting crops and flowers, and for lots and lots of sex. It's not quite time for an orgy however. We save that kind of activity for.....

What's up with that Ground Hog Business Anyway? Some answers: (Supplement to Lesson 8A –

by Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau /|\, AD –
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, OMS-RDNA)

I read in a collection of Irish folklore online, Conrad Bladey's website (http://www.ncf.carleton.ca/~bj333/folklore.html ,) that a tradition related to Imbolc is weather forecasting via hedgehog-watching. There are no hedgehogs in the US, so I suspect the tradition was moved to groundhogs when the folks who practiced this came over.

There's another piece of lore I found on the Encyclopedia Mythica's (http://pantheon.org/mythica/articles/b/brigid.html) page on Brigid: "As the foundation for the American Groundhog Day, Brigid's snake comes out of its mound in which it hibernates and its behavior is said to determine the length of the remaining Winter."

Lastly, someone sent me this article (if you know who the author is, let me know):

Imbolc: A Groundhog Awakes!

Editorial by Andy

Snow (or endless rain, in the case of the Pacific Northwest) blankets the land. People gather in warm houses and wait for the sun to return. The question of when the sun will actually come back is of great interest. On Imbolc, people turn to oracles to figure out the answer.

Traditionally, if it was sunny out on Imbolc, the people believed that the winter would last for another 6 weeks. If it was cloudy, the spring would start early. It is from this belief that we get Groundhog Day. If the day is sunny then everything will throw sharp shadows. The groundhog will see his or her shadow and hide in his or her burrow, and winter will drag on. On a cloudy day, there are hardly any shadows since the light is so diffuse. No shadows, no groundhog scared by his or her shadow, spring comes early.

"Why a groundhog?" you might ask. Well, what is 6 weeks after Imbolc? Eostar! Like the bunny from which we get the Eostar/Easter bunny, the groundhog is a symbol of the goddess Eostara. If the groundhog stays out, Eostara stays out. Since She is the spring, spring comes early. If the groundhog and Eostara go away so does any hope of early spring.

Lesson 8: The Wheel of The Year (Part 2 of 2 parts)

By Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau /|\, AD –
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove,
OMS-RDNA

Beltane / Calan Mai May 1

"Of great importance is the festival of Beltane, which is at the beginning of Samradh. Then shall ye observer great ceremony; and with the kindling of large fires on the hilltops, and the glorification of the renewed tree shall ye celebrate the renewed life." – DC(R) The Book of the Law, 4:5

"Sing hey for the month of May! Outdoor fucking begins today!" Beltane celebrates the midpoint between the Vernal Equinox and the Summer Solstice. Beltane (bauL-Ti-Ni, or bauL-Hi-Ni,) known in Modern Irish as L· Bealtaine (Laa bauL-Hi-ni, or Laa baul-Ti-ni,) in Welsh as Calan-Mai (calends of May,) in Scottish Gaelic as Baltiunn, and in Manx as Shenn da Boaddyn, La Boaldyn, or Laa'nTourey (Day of Summer; is, of course, the day we know in English as May Day. It is also called by a variety of other names, such as Roodmas, Summer Day, Walpurgistag, St. Pierre's Day, Red Square Day, etc. It is the beginning of the Summer Half of the Year (the seasons of Samradh; Foghamhar) and is a festival of unalloyed joy.

A very large number of important mythological events are connected with this day. It was on a Beltane that Partholan and his followers, the first inhabitants and partial creators of Ireland, landed on that isle. Three hundred years later, on the same day, they returned to the Other World. It was on a Beltane that the Tuatha De Danann and their people invaded Ireland. It was on a May Eve that Pryderi, the missing son of Rhiannon and Pwyll (Rulers of the Welsh Otherworld) was lost by them and later (on another May Eve) was found by Teirnyon Twryf Vliant (and eventually restored to Them.)

On every first day of May "till the day of doom," Gwyn-son-of-Nudd fights with Gwyrthur-son-of Greidawl, for the hand of Lludd's (Lugh's) fair daughter, Creudylad. Most of these events, again, as all over Europe, have to do with stories of the forces of light defeating the forces of darkness. Why did you think the Marxists chose May Day as their international Holiday? And can you guess why Adam Weishaupt chose Walpurgistag as the day to announce the founding of the Bavarian Iluuminati, and why the date at which the forces of evil later tired to Imannetize the Eschaton?

The focus is on fertility and the planting of crops. This is a more intense holiday, magickally speaking, than Oestara. The rites include as many people as are available making love in the fields, in the gardens, on hilltops etc. Traditionally, marriage

vows are suspended. Everyone is encouraged to share and grow closer with as many different partners as possible. The "Balefire" is lit on the hilltops and in ceremonial groves, and couples jump the bale fire in order to insure their own fertility. During the day, the May pole is erected, and the traditional dance is performed around it. The May pole is a symbolic penis decorated with multicolored ribbons and topped with a wreath. I found it amusing (living as I did in Santa Cruz, CA) that some of the local Dianic Wiccans always hold public rites involving the May Pole. These are folks who believe that men are inherently evil, that there is only a Goddess, and that real magick and spirituality are the sole dominion of women (or wymen as some like to put it) yet here they are on the front cover of the local paper dancing around a symbolic penis!

May Day is also sacred to the Goddess. The Catholic Church makes it the day for the crowning of the May Queen, Mary, and her statue is decorated and paraded around by school children, who also usually build home "May altars" in her honor. More explicitly Pagan rites involving Mary can be found in many Latin American countries as well.

May Day is also "International Workers Day." This socialist holiday is celebrated everywhere in the world except in the United States (we do the first Monday of September and call it Labor Day -- this was to divorce it from its socialist origins.) Is there a connection between Labor and Beltane? Perhaps blue collar people are more into fertility (and therefore production) than the bourgeois. It's something else I am researching.

In Ireland up to fifty years ago, the very devout Catholics there still were lighting the bale fires, and making love in the fields (marriage vows suspended for the day.) Children born of such unions were referred to as "fairy children," and treated as special gifts from the fairy folk. The prefix "Fitz" was once given to children born of Beltane unions, hence the proliferation in Ireland of "Fitzgeralds," "Fitzsimmons," etc. For every “sinful” tradition, there has to be a cover up, so today some Irish say the “Fitz” prefix actually refers to those of Norman origin who immigrated to Ireland. In fact, it is the “O’” prefix (as in “O’Connor, O’Flarherty, “O’Hara,” etc.,) that refers to Norman heritage, not the “Fitz.”

Midsummer / Alban Heruin -- June 21

“Ye shall take note of the decline of the Sun in the sky, which doth begin on the day of Midsummer. Ye shall light your fires and let them die in token of the great fire which doth roll down in the sky even as a ball doth roll down a hill.” – DC(R) The Book of the Law, 4:6

The Summer Solstice is a Minor High Day, usually occurring around June 21st or so. Also known as St. John’s Day and Midsummer (and, confusingly enough, by at least one NeoPagan group, as Beltane!,) it shares mythical elements with both Beltane and Lughnasadh. Like both, it is a feast celebrating the glory of summer and the peak of the Sun God’s power. But in many systems of belief, it is the day of the biggest battle of the year between the Dark Sun God and the Lugh Sun God (or between the evil one and the good one,) Who are usually brothers or otherwise intimately related. Midsummer is a peak from which the Sun can only fall, for it is the day on which the hours of light slowly begin to shorten.In those areas where it is safe to do so, Neopagans frequently will light cartwheels of kindling and roll them down from the tops of high hills, in order to symbolize the falling of the Sun God.

Just as the Pagan mid-winter celebration of Yule was adopted by Christians as Christmas (December 25th,) so too the Pagan mid-summer celebration was adopted by them as the feast of John the Baptist (June 24th.) Occurring 180 degrees apart on the wheel of the year, the mid-winter celebration commemorates the birth of Jesus, while the mid-summer celebration commemorates the birth of John, the prophet who was born six months before Jesus in order to announce his arrival.

Although modern Druids often refer to the holiday by the rather generic name of Midsummer's Eve, it is more probable that our Pagan ancestors of a few hundred years ago actually used the Christian name for the holiday, St. John's Eve. This is evident from the wealth of folklore that surrounds the summer solstice (i.e. that it is a night especially sacred to the faerie folk) but which is inevitably ascribed to 'St. John's Eve,' with no mention of the Sun's position. It could also be argued that a Grove's claim to antiquity might be judged by what name it gives the holidays. (Incidentally, the name 'Litha' for the holiday is a modern usage, possibly based on a Saxon word that means the opposite of Yule. Still, there is little historical justification for its use in this context.) But weren't our Pagan ancestors offended by the use of the name of a Christian saint for a pre-Christian holiday?

Well, to begin with, their theological sensibilities may not have been as finely honed as our own. But secondly and more importantly, St. John himself was often seen as a rather Pagan figure. He was, after all, called 'the Oak King.' His connection to the wilderness (from whence 'the voice cried out') was often emphasized by the rustic nature of his shrines. Many statues show him as a horned figure (as is also the case with Moses.) Christian iconographers mumble embarrassed explanations about 'horns of light,' while modern Pagans giggle and happily refer to such statues as 'Pan the Baptist.' And to clinch matters, many depictions of John actually show him with the lower torso of a satyr, cloven hooves and all! Obviously, this kind of John the Baptist is more properly a Jack in the Green! Also obvious is that behind the medieval conception of St. John lies a distant, shadowy Pagan deity, perhaps the archetypal Wild Man of the Wood, whose face stares down at us through the foliate masks that adorn so much church architecture. Thus medieval Pagans may have had fewer problems adapting than we might suppose.

In England, it was the ancient custom on St. John's Eve to light large bonfires after sundown, which served the double purpose of providing light to the revelers and warding off evil spirits. This was known as 'setting the watch.' People often jumped through the fires for good luck. In addition to these fires, the streets were lined with lanterns, and people carried cressets (pivoted lanterns atop poles) as they gwialenered from one bonfire to another. These gwialenering, garland-bedecked bands were called a 'marching watch.' Often they were attended by Morris dancers, and traditional players dressed as a unicorn, a dragon, and six hobby-horse riders. Just as May Day was a time to renew the boundary on one's own property, so Midsummer's Eve was a time to ward the boundary of the city. Customs surrounding St. John's Eve are many and varied. At the very least, most young folk plan to stay up throughout the whole of this shortest night. Certain courageous souls might spend the night keeping watch in the center of a circle of standing stones. To do so would certainly result in either death, madness, or (hopefully) the power of inspiration to become a great poet or bard. (This is, by the way, identical to certain incidents in the first branch of the 'Mabinogion.') This was also the night when the serpents of the island would roll themselves into a hissing, writhing ball in order to engender the 'glain,' also called the 'serpent's egg,' 'snake stone,' or 'Druid's egg.' Anyone in possession of this hard glass bubble would wield incredible magical powers. Even Merlin himself (accompanied by his black dog) went in search of it, according to one ancient Welsh story.

Snakes were not the only creatures active on Midsummer's Eve. According to British faery lore, this night was second only to Halloween for its importance to the wee folk, who especially

enjoyed a riddling on such a fine summer's night. In order to see them, you had only to gather fern seed at the stroke of midnight and rub it onto your eyelids. But be sure to carry a little bit of rue in your pocket, or you might well be 'pixie-led.' Or, failing the rue, you might simply turn your jacket inside-out, which should keep you from harm's way. But if even this fails, you must seek out one of the 'ley lines,' the old straight tracks, and stay upon it to your destination. This will keep you safe from any malevolent power, as will crossing a stream of 'living' (running) water.

Other customs included decking the house (especially over the front door) with birch, fennel, St. John's wort, orpin, and white lilies. Five plants were thought to have special magical properties on this night: rue, roses, St. John's wort, vervain and trefoil. Indeed, Midsummer's Eve in Spain is called the 'Night of the Verbena (Vervain.)' St. John's wort was especially honored by young maidens who picked it in the hopes of divining a future lover.

There are also many mythical associations with the summer solstice, not the least of which concerns the seasonal life of the God of the sun. In Irish mythology, Midsummer is the occasion of the first battle between the Fir Bolgs and the Tuatha De Danaan.

Altogether, Midsummer is a favorite holiday for many Druids in that it is so hospitable to outdoor celebrations. The warm summer night seems to invite it. And if the celebrants are not in fact sky clad, then you may be fairly certain that the long ritual robes of winter have yielded place to short, tunic-style apparel. As with the longer gowns, tradition dictates that one should wear nothing underneath -- the next best thing to sky clad, to be sure. (Incidentally, now you know the REAL answer to the old Scottish joke, 'What is worn underneath the kilt?')

The two chief icons of the holiday are the spear (symbol of the Sun-God in his glory) and the summer crochan (symbol of the Goddess in her bounty.) The precise meaning of these two symbols will be explored in the essay on the death of Llew. But it is interesting to note here that modern Druids often use these same symbols in the Midsummer rituals. And one occasionally hears the alternative consecration formula, 'As the spear is to the male, so the crochan is to the female...' With these mythic associations, it is no wonder that Midsummer is such a joyous and magical occasion!

Lammas / Lughnassadh -- August 1

"Lugnasadh, which is the beginning of the period of Foghamhar, shall ye mark in the coming together in groups in order that ye may feast upon the fruits of the Earth-Mother; and then shall ye offer up a sacrifice unto your prosperity. "– DC(R) The Book of the Law, 4:7

Lughnasadh (Loo-Nu-Su) is known in Modern Irish as L· L.nasa (Laa Loo-Nu-Su,) in Welsh as Gwyl Awst (August Feast,) as Lla Lluanys or Laa'n Ouyr (Day of the Harvest Season) in Manx and as Lammas, Apple Day and Harvest Home in English. It is the anniversary of the funeral games given by Lugh, the God of All Crafts, in honor of his Father. Essentially a harvest festival, this signals the beginning of the harvest season and the ripening of the apples (as well as other fruits and vegetables.) Enormous quantities of applejack, hard cider, mead and other alcoholic beverages are consumed at this time (it's almost a duty!) by all enthusiastic Neopagans. Hasidic Druids may prefer to drink ten-day-old slivovitz (plum brandy) at this time, but it's their stomach lining! This holiday is a day of mixed joy and woe (Irish wakes are an old tradition,) for it is by now obvious that the days are getting shorter.Stories of the battles between Lugh and Balor (the good Sun-Fire God and the bad one) are retold, as the autumn quarter of Foghamhar begins.

Although in the heat of summer it might be difficult to discern, the festival of Lammas (Aug 1st) marks the end of summer and the beginning of fall. The days now grow visibly shorter and by the time we've reached autumn 's end (Oct 31st,) we will have run the gamut of temperature from the heat of August to the cold and (sometimes) snow of November.

The celebration proper would begin on sundown of the previous evening, our July 31st, since the Celts reckon their days from sundown to sundown.

British Druids often refer to the astrological date of Aug 6th as Old Lammas. This date has long been considered a 'power point' of the Zodiac, and is symbolized by the Lion, one of the 'tetramorph' figures found on the Tarot cards, the World and the Wheel of Fortune (the other three figures being the Bull, the Eagle, and the Spirit.) Astrologers know these four figures as the symbols of the four 'fixed' signs of the Zodiac, and these naturally align with the four Great Sabbats of Druidry. Christians have adopted the same iconography to represent the four gospel-writers.

'Lammas' was the medieval Christian name for the holiday and it means 'loaf-mass,' for this was the day on which loaves of bread were baked from the first grain harvest and laid on the church altars as offerings. It was a day representative of 'first fruits' and early harvest.

In, Ireland the feast was referred to as 'Lughnassadh,' a feast to commemorate the funeral games of the Irish sun-god Lugh. However, there is some confusion on this point. Although at first glance, it may seem that we are celebrating the death of the Lugh, the god of light does not really die (mythically) until the autumnal equinox. And indeed, if we read the Irish myths closer, we discover that it is not Lugh's death that is being celebrated, but the funeral games which Lugh hosted to commemorate the death of his foster-mother, Taillte. That is why the Lughnassadh celebrations in Ireland are often called the 'Tailltean Games.'

One common feature of the Games were the 'Tailltean marriages,' a rather informal marriage that lasted for only 'a year and a day' or until next Lammas. At that time, the couple could decide to continue the arrangement if it pleased them, or to stand back to back and walk away from one another, thus bringing the Tailltean marriage to a formal close. Such trial marriages (obviously related to the Pagan 'Handfasting') were quite common even into the 1500's, although it was something one 'didn't bother the parish priest about.' Indeed, such ceremonies were usually solemnized by a poet, bard, or shanachie (or, it may be guessed, by a priest or priestess of the Old Religion.)

Lammastide was also the traditional time of year for craft festivals. The medieval guilds would create elaborate displays of their wares, decorating their shops and themselves in bright colors and ribbons, marching in parades, and performing strange, ceremonial plays and dances for the entranced onlookers. The atmosphere must have been quite similar to our modern-day Renaissance Festivals.

Traditional Gardnerian and Alexandrian Books of Shadows say very little about the holiday of Lammas, stating only that poles should be ridden and a circle dance performed. This seems strange, for Lammas is a holiday of rich mythic and cultural associations, providing endless resources for liturgical celebration.

Mabon / Alban Elued -- September 21

The last big holiday of the year, the Fall Equinox (sometimes called Michaelmas and the Feast of the Hunters) is a Minor High Day occurring somewhere around September 21st or so. This is a Thanksgiving feast and signals the beginning of the Hunting Season (for deer and other large game) in many parts of Europe and North America. Thus, it is dedicated to the Hunting and Fishing Gods and the Gods of Plenty, in thankfulness for benefits received and hoped for. Outdoor picnics in the woods are a popular Druid tradition in those areas where the weather is still good at this time of year. Hunting magic may be minimized by those Groves living in areas where game is a little dear.

Mythically, this is the day of the year when the god of light is defeated by his twin and alter-ego, the god of darkness. It is the time of the year when night conquers day. The Autumnal Equinox is the only day of the whole year, when Llew (light) is vulnerable and it is possible to defeat him. Llew now stands on the balance (Libra/autumnal equinox,) with one foot on the crochan (Cancer/summer solstice) and his other foot on the goat (Capricorn/winter solstice.) Thus he is betrayed by Blodeuwedd, the Virgin (Virgo) and transformed into an Eagle (Scorpio.)

Two things are now likely to occur mythically, in rapid succession. Having defeated Llew, Goronwy (darkness) now takes over Llew's functions, both as lover to Blodeuwedd, the Goddess, and as King of our own world. Although Goronwy, the Horned King, now sits on Llew's throne and begins his rule immediately, his formal coronation will not be for another six weeks, occurring at Samhain (Halloween) or the beginning of Winter, when he becomes the Winter Lord, the Dark King, Lord of Misrule. Goronwy's other function has more immediate results, however. He mates with the virgin goddess, and Blodeuwedd conceives, and will give birth -- nine months later (at the Summer Solstice) -- to Goronwy's son, who is really another incarnation of himself, the Dark Child.

Llew's sacrificial death at Mabon also identifies him with John Barleycorn, spirit of the fields. Thus, Llew represents not only the sun's power, but also the sun's life trapped and crystallized in the corn. Often this corn spirit was believed to reside most especially in the last sheaf or shock harvested, which was dressed in fine clothes, or woven into a wicker-like man-shaped form. This effigy was then cut and carried from the field, and usually burned, amidst much rejoicing. So one may see Blodeuwedd and Goronwy in a new guise, not as conspirators who murder their king, but as kindly farmers who harvest the crop which they had planted and so lovingly cared for. And yet, anyone who knows the old ballad of John Barleycorn knows that we have not heard the last of him.

In the rhythm of the year, Mabon marks a time of rest after hard work. The crops are gathered in, and winter is still a month and a half away! Although the nights are getting cooler, the days are still warm, and there is something magical in the sunlight, for it seems silvery and indirect. As we pursue our gentle hobbies of making corn dollies (those tiny vegetation spirits) and wheat weaving, our attention is suddenly arrested by the sound of baying from the skies (the 'Hounds of Annwn' passing?,) as lines of geese cut silhouettes across a harvest moon. And we move closer to the hearth, the longer evening hours giving us time to catch up on our reading, munching on popcorn balls and caramel apples and sipping home-brewed mead or ale.

Mithril Star groves traditionally go camping for Mabon, picking a place both beautiful and remote (but not too remote.) Our Santa Cruz grove has been meeting at Pinnacles National Monument for the last few years (1993 – 1996 exactly, before the Grove moved to Oregon,) spending the weekend closest to the Equinox sharing and growing closer.

Discussion:

What holiday do you most closely identify with? Discuss in class.

Lesson 9: Protection

By Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau /|\, AD –
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove,
OMS-RDNA

It's a dangerous world out there and all kinds of energy is wafting about in the ether. How do you protect yourself from energy you don't want influencing you? How do you protect yourself from psychic attack? It happens that there are lots of different ways, and you can adapt any of them or personalize them as you see fit. You may even find new ways of your own. Like every other form of Magick, protection is a matter of belief. The stronger your belief in the technique you are using, the stronger will be your defense.

How does one shield? My way is simple, and you can do this anywhere at anytime. It helps to have a good background in Star Trek, but it's not necessary:

Ground and center.

From your heart chakra, visualize a green energy, (like you did in the circle casting exercise) emanating from you. See it surround you. I usually visualize the computer display on the Enterprise showing the "shields" going up. Know and believe that you are in a protected space. In fact, you can walk or drive and the space stays protected around you. For an additional protection, invoke the "cloaking device." This effectively makes you invisible, or at least not noticed. I don't recommend the latter for driving, since accidents have been known to happen -- people really don't see you.

As you practice this technique, you'll gradually get so good at it that just the thought "Shields UP" will raise your shields. When you get really good, your astral self will do this automatically (say when you are walking in a downtown area near an unsavory individual.)

Permanent shields can be erected around your home and property in this same manner. There was one night not long ago when a group of teenagers (well, they think they were) went on a windshield smashing spree in our neighborhood. Our neighbors' cars on both sides and across the street from us were vandalized. Ours were not. Another time I was driving around and my license plates were expired (I had trouble getting the pre-requisite smog appointment on time,) and I saw a CHP coming up behind me about three car lengths. I invoked the "cloaking device." Pretty soon he pulled up alongside of me, and was looking very confused. He then sped off ahead, and when he was out of sight, I "decloaked."

Other methods of shielding take the form of ritual rather than meditation, but remember that ritual is an aid to visualization. It is in the visualization, and in your belief, that the magick lies.

The Witch's Jar

The "Witch's Jar" method is one such rite. You'll need seven glass jars, seven iron nails, seven small mirrors (broken pieces of a mirror will do) seven small pieces of black onyx (size does not matter -- find the cheapest.) Gather these items, and set up your ritual space in the usual way. The elementals are protective spirits, so be sure to invoke them. Cernunnos and Ceridwen are especially good deities to invoke for this. You want to extend your circle to include all of the property you wish to protect, so be sure to smudge and sprinkle every room of the house, and your yards as well (if you can do so without attracting attention.) This will banish any energies that are not welcome, and once the jars are in place, they will not return.

Pick up each jar, and place a nail in it saying: "Iron protects, iron deflects, so in this jar I place its effects." Then place a piece of mirror in each saying, "Mirror reflects, mirror protects, so in this jar I place its effects." Now place a piece of black onyx in the jar saying "Onyx absorbs, negativity stores, so in this jar I place its core."

Write each of the seven directions on a piece of paper, and place one of them in each jar (where you can read it from outside.) Dedicate the jar to the corresponding spirit saying: "I charge thee, oh vessel of protection, to keep vigil in the (name the quarter it will be placed in.) I charge and consecrate thee, so mote it be."

Take the jar dedicated to the East to the farthest point on your property in the east, and bury it in the ground there. Then take the jar dedicated to the South and do the same. Then the West and then the North. The jar dedicated to "Above" is trickier. It needs to hang in your attic as high up as you can get it (you may need to suspend it from wires.) Likewise, the one for "Below" needs to buried in the basement. The one for "Within" is the hardest one. It needs to go to the spot closest to the center of your home both horizontally and vertically.) You may have to open up a wall to conceal it.

Once this is done, stand in the center of your ritual space and say: "By earth and air and fire and sea, by what's above and below me, and by my own inherent deity, my shields are installed, so mote it be!" Visualize a sphere of green energy surrounding you and your property, and know that you are in total control of it.

Take down your ritual space in the usual manner.

As a personal shield, you can simply wear a pentacle, charged similarly to the jars. Even more effective is the "Seren saith pigfain" (a seven pointed star) but these are really hard to come by. The seven pointed star is the symbol of the Mithril Star tradition. You can see one at our website: http://www.mithrilstar.org/

Homework:

Practice the "shields up" visualization. You may adapt it to your personal preferences.

Practice the "cloaking device" visualization.

Report on your experiences.

Lesson 10: Divination

By Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau /|\, AD –
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove,
OMS-RDNA

Druids have traditionally had ways of finding things out that were hidden, or in the future or in the past. This chapter will familiarize you with some of the more popular ones. If you get good at this, you can always make a living from it. It is one of the few areas in Paganism where it is considered ethical to charge money (though in the MITHRIL STAR we have no restrictions of any kind in that regard,) and lots of Pagans do this sort of thing.

I like to think of these as methods for "surfing the psychic web," also called the Akashic Record. Therein is all of the data of everything past, present and future. If you get really good at this, you could, for example, look a week or so into the future and find out the winning lotto numbers for your state's lottery. Then play these numbers and, voila! You're a millionaire. Again, you are limited only by the principle of belief.

Astrology

Astrology is the grandmother of Astronomy. The theory of Astrology is that the planets and other bodies of our solar system have a direct effect on our behavior. In the case of the Moon, we have scientific evidence that the moon's gravitational pull has an effect on the tides, and on our moods. None of the other planets have this kind of scientific evidence, but astrology is a collection of thousands of years of correlations that seem to indicate specific effects on people, countries, the stock market, the weather, and pretty much anything at all that happens or will happen on the planet.

Of the divinatory sciences, Astrology is the most difficult to learn, but it also seems to be the most popular. Professional Astrologers make big bucks and are in demand from everyone from the guy who reads his horoscope everyday in the newspaper to executives at IBM and in the government (remember the big flap over Nancy Reagan's personal astrologer?)

There are courses you can take, and there are computer programs that make the difficult task of casting a chart very easy. During the first year we taught this class I used "Expert Astrologer" to cast charts for all of you when you enrolled in the class (we now only use that kind of screening for candidates for membership in the MG.) That program is very inexpensive and can be purchased at most computer software stores.

Numerology

This is the science of numbers, the theory being that the numbers in your life affect your behavior (or your company's or what have you.) Like astrology, it is a collection of correlations from over a thousand years. It is relatively easy to learn, and there are many good books out there. There is also a share-ware program available.

Tarot

The Tarot is probably the most popular divinatory method among Pagans today. This makes use of a deck of cards with traditional symbols on them, arranged in a pattern. Interpreting that pattern in relation to the cards that fall into it is the art of Tarot. It is not difficult to learn, but does take some time. There are hundreds of books out there that teach it, with as many

different interpretations for the same patterns as there are teachers teaching it.

Tarot is a matter of the heart. It is a psychic catalyst, and I think it is one of the most personalized of the divinatory arts. My advice to someone who wishes to learn it is to go out and purchase a deck. You'll have hundreds to choose from. Look at them all and find the one that calls to you (this is just like choosing any other magickal tool.) Take it home and sleep with it. Spend some time each day meditating on each card in the deck. What does it say to you? What images does it bring to mind? I've been thinking of teaching a tarot course, but as yet haven't sat down and organized it. Maybe some day....

Scrying

This method involves looking into a crystal or water or whatever and discerning shapes or symbols. It is more a catalyst for the psychic than anything else and can be learned with a little knowledge and a load of practice.

This is a popular method among Druids, and there are a number of different ways to go about it. There is crystal scrying, where you use a glass ball (the Silmarils of the Tolkein stories are of this sort.) Crystal balls of the type used for scrying are really expensive, and come in a variety of colors. If you are so inclined use the same methods you would use for any other magickal tool in finding one.

A bowl of water, or a lake, stream or pool is another method, this one popular with the Druids of old. Galadriel is known for her "mirror," actually a crochan of water. Ceridwen uses a similar device.

It is especially effective to do this on the full moon, with the moon's light reflected in the water. My favorite is fire scrying, looking into the fireplace, campfire or circle fire, and communicating with the flames. You can also do this with a candle, though I've not had as good of luck with it as with fires. It's best to choose a long-burning wood, and get it stoked up really well. You want to avoid fast-burning woods such as pine, since by the time you start seeing something the fire is almost out, and then you have to start over again. Never use redwood. It is forbidden in the MITHRIL STAR to use redwood for anything except ritual tools, and then you may only use dead branches or limbs for the fashioning of tools. You may never cut a living redwood tree, or carve on it or anything else. The Redwood is sacred.

The Pendulum

This is a method of getting "yes - no" kinds of answers to questions. It involves a weight of some kind at the end of a string or chain. Holding it perfectly still, you ask your question, and its movement will determine a yes or no answer. There are different methods for doing this, some of which require the drawing of an elaborate design for the pendulum to hang over.

A similar device is the diving rod, usually fashioned from wood or metal, it is used to find treasures, particularly water, buried in the earth.

Runes

Casting the runes is fast becoming a popular parlor game. The runes are those Scandinavian characters inscribed on stones. The stones are "cast" or thrown, and the patterns they make up determine the interpretation.

I Ching

Similar to casting the runes, this Chinese method involves casting a number of sticks and then finding the pattern in the Book of I Ching. The pattern will correspond to a poem in the book (similar to quatrain) and then you must interpret the poem. I found a shareware program a few years back that would allow you to do this on your computer, complete with the interpretations. There is another method of this, involving coins.

These are just a few of the myriad methods of divination that are out there. You can explore any New Age bookstore and find books on any of these methods, hundreds of tarot cards, different card based systems and methods I've never heard of.

The basis for all of these is psychic. They are to be used as catalysts for invoking that part of you that has become dormant. Eventually, with training and practice, you can get beyond these catalysts, and just use your own pure psychic abilities, just as with enough years of magickal practice you can get to a place where you no longer need rituals or tools, you can just think a thing and make it so.

Homework:

Tell me about your favorite method of divination, how long you've been doing it and what kinds of results (give examples) you have had.

Lesson 11: Water Sharing

By Sybok and Iopanus

The principle "sacrament" of the MITHRIL STAR is Water Sharing. You are already familiar with this from the "virtual Great Rite" in Lesson 6, but you may be wondering: Where did it come from? What does it mean? In this lesson we will try to answer that.

If you've read the late Robert A. Heinlein's novel, "Stranger In A Strange Land," you already grok the answer to this question (and you probably grok "grok.") If not, you should have by now. It is probably the most important spiritual work of our time. The novel involves Valentine Michael Smith, whose parents were on a mission to Mars, and left him an orphan there. He was raised and educated by Martians within the wildly different (from our own) Martian culture. Water (at least in the novel) is at a premium there and so water is sacred. To share water with someone is to share something precious and vital. You don't do this with just anyone. You only offer water to someone you would cherish. This is more than friendship; more than marriage; more than love. When you share water you are entering into a lifetime covenant. This is the very essence of perfect love and perfect trust. From this point on everything you are and own belongs to your new "water sibling," and vice versa. This is the ultimate in Communism, since you are sharing not just possessions but mind and body as well.

Once you have shared water with one or more persons, you have created a covenant with them, and (via "catanative assemblage") to anyone they have shared water with, and so on, and so on. So far I have been able to trust my waterkin (those I have shared water with directly, and those who have shared water with others I have shared with) to do the right thing. To be there when I have needed them, and to have helped when I needed help. In cases where waterkin have made mistakes, and those mistakes have cost me money, I am thankful that they were able to reimburse me in full, even if it took some time. I hope that I have been the same way to them.

We are trying to build a community of trust and love. A community where when one person feels hurt, the others will try to help in what ever way they can to heal that hurt, whatever it may be. We want our

Groves to be places of refuge from the mundane. The home of a Grove leader should be a place where any member can drop in at any time, and be welcomed, fed, and of course offered water. Since we have become an international group now (we have members throughout the US, Canada,

Australia, England and even Portugal,) those of us traveling should be able to find hospitality among the waterkin wherever they go, and help when they need it.

Sex? Well, I hope we can be that close, I really do. Although I love all my waterkin, there are definitely a few I would simply never ask, and if they asked I would politely say "no." In any large group, there are going to some you are attracted to, and some you aren't. That's just human nature. No one should feel compelled have to have sex with a water brother.

In any group it takes time to build trust and love. If there is a frequent turnover of members, that process will take longer. OTOH, some people will just "click." It's all good. Waiting is.

I guess what I am getting down to is this: if you decide to share water with someone, do not do it with the expectation of sex (either at the time or in the future.) It just might not happen, and anyway, it's totally the wrong motivation. The same goes for being offered water. If you choose to accept, do not do so with the expectation that either now or in the future you will have sex with that person.

Grok? Share water because you want to add someone to your Grove; to your family. Accept water because you want to be part of that person's family. That's right: a Grove should, first and foremost, be a "family" functioning out of perfect love and perfect trust. All the other stuff we do; ritual, divination, magick; that's the icing on the cake. The substance is "family," and "community." These are the things we strive to create in OMS.

Sharing Water can be done as part of a complex ritual, or as a simple rite by itself. The solemnity and seriousness of the rite should be preserved in either case.

Homework:

Write your thoughts or experiences concerning water sharing.

ADDENDUM:

Since we have touched herein on the subject of sex, I offer you some guidelines developed by our "sister" organization, the Church of All Worlds:

Sexual Etiquette

Unity through Diversity is a founding tenet of the Church Of All Worlds; because of this, not everyone's idea of acceptable behavior is the same. So to avoid undue stress, confusion, and bad vibes, here are some reminders:

1. Sexuality and the Sacred Freedom thereof is one of our prime values, so respect it. ("All acts of love and pleasure are My rituals.") Sexual activities that are engaged in by informed and mutually-consenting adults are no one else's business, and are not to be condemned or censured. By the same token, it is absolutely unacceptable to attempt to pressure, cajole or coerce another into any sexual activity that they do not wish freely and wholeheartedly to participate in.

2. Minor issues. While the respect due sacred sexuality applies in principle to Pagans of all ages, the emotional as well as legal pitfalls involved make it imperative that adults avoid sexually-charged interaction with youths below the legal age of consent. There are specific laws concerning age, and elders are mandated reporters.

3. Be sure you interpret signals correctly. A loving touch, hug or a massage is not an invitation to coitus, so if your attempts at intimacy or caring make someone uncomfortable, stop! And if someone touches you in an uncomfortable fashion, tell them! If that doesn't work, get a elder, or Festival ffon member to help you. Please be sensitive as to how your affections are perceived / received.

4. Practice safe sex! Use condoms with all outside your Nest; and if you have an STD (Sexually Transmitted Disease,) tell your consort.

Sound advice; all of it. As Gods we should have no trouble following it. May you never thirst.

Section Two
Organizational Materials

The Dis-Order of the MITHRIL STAR

by Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau /|\,
AD - Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove,
OMS-RDNA

"A non-prophet, ir-religious, dis-organization."

"Non-prophet. "

We don't have a central head, or Guru whom we all linger near to pine over his every word. We do have a spokesperson, who is known by the title, "Arch-Druid of the Mother Grove," who is basically the mouthpiece, or figure head of the Order. Mostly he is to be ignored.

"Ir-religious."

We are the antithesis of most religions. We have very few rules, most of which are not spiritual, and we expect nothing more or less than that our members behave like Gods. Who do the Gods worship? What religion do the Gods practice?

"Dis-organization."

We have no hierarchy and few leaders (those we do have are there for practical purposes, not spiritual.) We have no subordinate bodies. You might say we are a "dis-Order."

The **Mother Grove** is the central authority for the teaching of the OMS tradition. They own the written materials you have just studied. They own the Druidcraft101 Yahoo list, the MithrilStar list, and Imladris. The first two are bodies that exist in cyberspace; the latter is an as yet non-physical piece of real property, where we hope someday to establish our worldwide headquarters.

The Druids who are members of the Mother Grove decide how and in what form the teaching materials of the Order will be disseminated. They also take care of the mundane business of the Order and they judiciously keep records (there's an overdose of Virgo energy in the MG.) Decisions of the MG are made by consensus, excluding the Arch-Druid, who has no vote. The CEO of the MG (and therefore the Order) is the "Clerk of the Mother Grove."

Groves are the main manifestation of the Order. A Grove consists of a minimum of three OMS Druids, at least one of which holds the 3rd Degree. Each Grove has an Arch-Druid and a Clerk. Both of these are elected by consensus from Druids in each Grove. The A-D serves as public spokesperson for the Grove. The Clerk functions as "CEO" of the Grove. Other officers may be elected as required, or not. All decisions are made by consensus.

Proto-Groves are fledgling Groves. They consist of a minimum of three human beings, at least one of which is a Druid of the 1st Degree. Usually the founding Druid takes on the title of Arch-Druid and the functions of the Clerk. A proto-grove becomes a full-fledged Grove once at least one member has attained the 3rd Degree and two others have attained 1st.

Groves and Proto-Groves are wholly autonomous and owned by their own members. The Groves look to the Mother Grove only on matters concerning the teaching of the basic tradition. Well, ideally they do. The fact is, many Groves haven't contacted the MG in so many years that we've lost track of them. The MG is not responsible for the behavior of the OMS Groves. Although we like the Groves to stay in touch with us, that is strictly voluntary. We also accept monetary donations from the Groves (and these too are voluntary.)

In both Groves and Proto-Groves, voting is done by consensus. The entire grove must be unanimous before any business can be transacted. Since the grove operates as a family unit, in perfect love and perfect trust, this system works quite well. If an agreement cannot be reached by consensus, then that item is tabled until the grove meets for business reasons again (usually about once a month, near the full moon.) Note: business is never conducted when the moon is "void of course."

A very special, unique body within OMS is the MithrilStar List. This email list is a virtual 'Grove' that emulates the functions of a real time grove. It is a sacred space where new members, initiates, and friends of the Order may gather to grow closer, discuss the Order (or any topic of interest to Pagans in general,) and network. It serves as a sounding board for new ideas and changes within the Order. It therefore takes on a special importance, as the Mother Grove takes seriously the matters discussed thereon. The Arch-Druid of the Mother Grove is an active member and moderator of the MithrilStar List. The MithrilStar list is owned and controlled by the Mother Grove. It is the ONLY subordinate body in the Order. Due to its uniqueness in cyberspace, the MG has developed special rules governing behaviour on the list.

Degrees of Druids.

Once you take the Pledge, which affirms that you agree with our three tenets, you are a Druid of the 1st Degree, and a member of the Order. You are also a member of the Reformed Druids of North America, and in that body, a Druid of the 1st Order. Non-members may participate in the ritual and social functions of Groves, but only members have a vote or may hold office. In the Mithril Star, there are seven degrees (or in RDNA terminology, 'orders'):

§ The **first** Degree Druid is a person who has subscribed to the members pledge (also called "pledged,") affirming their agreement to our three tenets: "Nature is Good," "Nature is Good," and "Thou art God." They should also have partaken of the waters of life (see "Water sharing.") This person is a '1st Degree' or '1st Order Druid.'

§ The **second** level is "Initiate," one who has finished the basic course, affirms his/her dedication to the Order has been initiated into the tradition. This person is a '2nd Degree' or '2nd Order Druid.'

§ The **third** degree (or Order) is given to those Druids undergo a vigil, and who further demonstrate their commitment to the OMS by paying dues (3 hours pay per year.) This is the degree of Priest/esshood, dedicated to Dalon ap Landou. The Third degree supplies the Order with clergy, and with officiating (High) Priest/esses. Those who have attained the Third degree may wear a red ribbon on their robe or cloak. This person is a "3rd Degree" or "3rd Order Druid."

§ The **fourth** Degree is granted those who have founded, or participated in the founding, of an OMS 'proto-grove.' The 4th degree is dedicated to Grannos, the patron of Springs. Those who have attained the 4th Degree may wear a green ribbon. This person is a "4th Degree" or "4t Order Druid."

§ **Fifth** Degree Druids are those who teach the D101 course (either online or in real time.) Moderating the D101 class for 6

sessions, or the MithrilStar List for three years also counts toward 5th.) The 5th degree is dedicated to Braciaca, patron of Malt. Those who have attained the 5th degree may wear a yellow wrist maniple. This person is a "4th Degree" or "4th Order Druid."

§ Those Druids who wish to obtain the **sixth** Order (or degree) have taught the D101 course at least three times and their 'proto-grove' is now fully sanctioned. Participation in the development of a Proto-Grove counts equally. The 6th degree is dedicated to Belenos, patron of the Sun. Those who have attained the Sixth degree may wear a yellow ribbon around their neck.

§ Lastly, the **seventh** is given to those who make a pilgrimage every three years to the redwood forests in California, or a visit to the Mother Grove (for international members, a trip once in their lifetime to the MG AND the redwoods will suffice.) The 7th degree is dedicated to Sirona, patron of rivers. Those who have attained the 7th degree may wear a sky-blue ribbon.

With the exception of the 1st Degree (obtained by pledging to the Order) all other degrees can be acquired randomly. This means that a 1st degree Druid can teach D101 once, and get hirm's 2nd. Likewise, hirm could then visit the Redwoods and obtain hirm's 3rd. However, hirm can do everything listed above, and if hirm has not pledged hirmself, hirm is not a Druid.

All OMS degrees are exactly equivalent to their corresponding RDNA Orders. This is to say that if you are an OMS Druid of the 3rd degree, you are also an RDNA Druid of the 3rd order.

The Pledge

Some of you taking this class have already become members by executing the pledge

(see http://www.mithrilstar.org/PLEDGE.HTM): "

"In dedication to the celebration of Life in its many forms, I hereby declare my commitment to a way of life that is ethical, benevolent, humanistic, life-affirming, ecstatic and ecologically sane. I subscribe to means and methods that are creative rather than destructive, tolerant rather than authoritarian, gentle rather than violent, inclusive rather than exclusive, egalitarian rather than hierarchal. I pledge myself to harmonious eco-psychic awareness with the total biosphere of holy Mother Earth."

"Like an ancient Redwood, I would have my roots deep in the Earth and my branches reaching for the stars, the stars not only above but around me, my fellow humans, for "every man and woman is a star," and "the good of the many outweighs the good of the few," 'from each according to his/her abilities, to each according to his/her needs.' "

"I acknowledge my personal responsibility for myself, to my fellow humans, and to the whole of Nature; and I recognize this total responsibility, in each of us, as the source of our infinite freedom to become who we are and do what we will. I dedicate myself to my own inner growth and development that I may be of greater service to myself and the world around me. For these reasons I recognize Divinity both within and without, and I say to myself and others: THOU ART GOD."

"I wish to unite with others upon a spiritual path that encompasses the whole of the universe, and hereby make application to join the pantheon of The Order of The Mithril Star, RDNA, in order that we may learn together and teach each other ways to bring about these ends."

"So mote it be!"

By signing that pledge, and mailing it to the Order, you enter the Order and the RDNA in the 1st Degree (order.)

We also ask, but do not compel, our members to pay dues. Solitary members send their dues to the Mother Grove. Funds received by the Mother Grove go into three accounts. The first is for payment of administrative expenses. The second is a slush fund for members who need help, and last is a savings account for the purchase of land to be used as a Pagan clothing optional retreat/conference center, Order headquarters and an intentional community (which will run the thing) (aka "Imladris.") Dues are equivalent to three hours wages and are paid once per year on the anniversary of your joining the Order.

Druids belonging to a local Grove pay their dues to their own Grove. Funds collected by local Groves are dispersed at their own discretion.

Once again, let me stress that dues are completely voluntary.

Symbolism

The Mithril Star

Most revered of our symbols is the Mithril Star, named for the elvish metal of the Tolkein mythology. It consists of the 'septagram' (seven pointed star) with an 'Ouroborus' wrapped around it, making it a 'Seren saith pigfain.' The snake swallowing it's own tale is an ancient symbol of the World and of the continuity of time ' infinity. The seven-pointed star is also known as the 'elven' or 'faery' star. It is considered to be the gateway into the Elven realms. The seven points symbolize various things including: 1) The seven visible planets, 2) the seven days of the week, 3) the seven 'quarters (directions, elements, spirits,) the seven chakras, 4) the seven 'rays' (see D201,) 5) the seven musical notes, 6) the seven 'planes' or dimensions (see D201,) and 7) the seven OMS degrees (RDNA Orders.)

The Druid Sigil

The circle bisected by two vertical parallel lines is known as the Druid sigil in modern Druid groups. It is one of the many symbols now widely used by Reformed Druids of North America, it's offshoot called Ar nDraoicht Fein (ADF) which started in 1983, which also had an offshoot The Henge of Keltria. Therefore, it is a prominent symbol of Druidism in America. There is a well-publicized myth that it came from a photograph of a Celtic-Romano temple's foundation which had a square Roman foundation over laying an older Celtic circular structure. It looks remarkably like the Druid sigil with two of the rectangular lines parallely intersecting the circle. However, this shot published in Stuart Piggot's seminal work "The Druids" was first published in 1966, three years after the RDNA was already documented as heavily using the symbol. So that can't be it. None of the founders probably had the background knowledge in 1963 of obscure archeological digs, so they couldn't have come across it anywhere else in the first two weeks of the founding of the RDNA. David Fisher, the founder of the RDNA, was eating Lunch at Goodhue Dorm Cafeteria on Carleton College Campus in Northfield, Minnesota, USA in early April 1963 (perhaps April 1st ') and talking to Norman Nelson and a few of his other friends. There were complaining about a mandatory requirement to attend weekly religious services by the college. They decided to start THEIR OWN religion to see if that was satisfactory, and they decided on the name "Reformed Druids of North America" So they traipsed up to the hill of three oaks soon thereafter (April 17th, 1963) and had the first ceremony. David Fisher claimed to have been initiated into a Fraternal Druid order in Missouri, but they didn't believe him, because he had also tried to set up 3 other

semi-secret farcical organizations on the campus with a similar story. But the others recognized the power of continuing an older tradition. The sigil was apparently used during that ceremony. So from whence did it come? Probably from David Fisher's fevered imagination (divine inspiration, definitely inspired by spirits of whiskey.) 11 hours of research through various books of symbols and magical runes, has been conducted but without any trace of the circle with two vertical lines. The closest thing is a Greek letter of a circle with one vertical line (and David was possibly interested in starting a Greek fraternity style group, which were banned at Carleton.) The alchemical symbol for oil is similar to that Greek letter. What does it mean? Good question. There is no definitive answer on this subject. It both means what you think it means, and it means something you don't think it means. (Above from the RDNA homepage.)

(Note: There is talk in the Mother Grove of combining the two symbols by placing two upright redwood trees, one behind and one in front of the Mithril Star.)

The **'AWEN'** /|\: 'Awen (Welsh)' or **'Imbas** (Gaelic)' means 'inspiration' and in Celtic spirituality refers to inspiration from the three realms (or kingdoms,) 'sky,' 'earth', and 'sea.' Or, in other words 'nature.'

Customs:

Throughout our 10-year history, the OMS has developed various inter-Order customs, most for no particular or good reason:

'Thou art God/dess,' is the standard greeting from one to another. We also begin our written correspondence thusly, or with the abbreviation: 'TAG.' Likewise, we generally end our written correspondence with 'May you never thirst,' or with the abbreviation, 'MYNT.' We sign off our correspondence with 'In the Mother,' and sign our names with 'First name' Druid 'Sur-name' /|\ (the 'Awen' is made by typing 'forward slash', 'pipe', 'back slash'.)

Some OMS Druids have taken to putting a number, 1-7 after the word 'Druid' to indicate their order (or degree.) This practice is discouraged as it takes away from the egalitarianism of the Order. Many OMS Druids wear black or hunter (dark) green on a daily basis, and/or choose those colors for ritual wear. We're not sure where this began, except that the two founders were fond of those colors. Another apparel custom is the wearing of black or dark green 'touring caps' backwards (they then look like a beret, at least from the front.) This began as a way of recognizing each other at gatherings in public places. Some OMS Druids are fond of tie dye and even choose it for ritual wear as well (assuming they choose to wear anything for ritual.) OMS campouts, weekend retreats, and conventions are generally 'clothing optional.'

Some Groves get together weekly to watch Star Trek (any derivation) and eat hot buttered popcorn with Parmesan or cheddar cheese sprinkled on it. Usually, these meetings adjourn in the nearest hot tub, where water sharing (sometimes followed by growing closer) usually occurs. The water may be a Chardonnay. :)

The Coastal Redwood (Sequoia Sempervirons):

Just as the Oak was sacred to our Druid ancestors of old, so now the Coastal Redwood is sacred to the Druids of the Mithril Star. It was in such a redwood grove near Boulder Creek CA that the two founders first conceived of the Order, after drinking of much Guinness Stout and smoking much Humboldt Gold. One of the many myths of the Order is that Adam was tripping on LSD and walked through a redwood tree, stumbling over Pendderwydd, but this has never been confirmed (or denied.) It is said that one of them exclaimed 'We are the Redwood Druids!' but this too has never been confirmed.

The Official Hymn of the OMS:

Recently, the Mother Grove has declared 'Sequoia Sempervirons' a 'filk' by Leslie Fish, to be our 'official hymn.' Found as the 16th track of the CD, 'Smoked Fish and Friends' (available from Random Factors) the words are as follows:

If the oak is king of trees'
What then can our redwood be'
Lord above all greenery
Everlasting tree

Named for him who first could see
The letters of the Cherokee
Still you sigh remember me
Everlasting tree

Tall beyond the reach of eye
Spearing silent to the sky
Watch the ages rolling by
Everlasting tree

Sprouted long before the Sphinx
Where the mountain's lion slinks
Shading time in wooden links
Everlasting tree

Pledges made upon thy bark
Hold the memory in the mark
A million turns of light and dark
Everlasting tree

Triad's castle, Titan's spear
Living book of year on year
Spread thy welcome seedlings here
Everlasting tree

The song is written in the key of Dm ('Dorian' mode.) An mp3 is available in the files of both the D101 class and the MithrilStar List.

Section Three
Conclusion

Conclusion

Thus ends the Druidcraft 101 course of the Order of the Mithril Star. You are expected to complete any homework you have left, and submit it to the course moderator directly. You are also expected to complete and turn in the Final Exam:

The final consists of two essay questions, each worth 50 points.

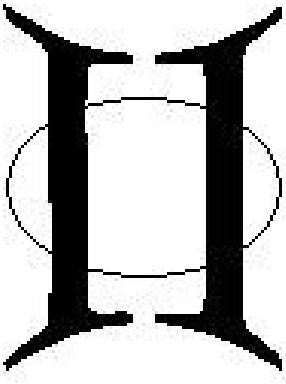
1: Write a Holiday ritual. You may pick any one of the eight Holidays discussed in Lesson 8. Be as detailed as possible. Write out the invocations, quarter calls and dismissals. Draw on everything you've learned in this course. (you may review the lessons.) It does not have to be 100% original. You may take a rite from a book, the web, wherever, and adapt it to the MITHRIL STAR tradition.

2: In 23 words or more answer the question: Why do I (or do I not) want to be initiated into the Order of the Mithril Star?

3: If your essay is positive (that is, you want to be a member,) go to see http://www.mithrilstar.org/FORM.HTM, read and follow the directions there.

OK? So do a good job, and may the forest be with you.

So ends Volume Eight
of the Green Books.



Green Book Of Meditations

Volume Nine: Plants, Animals, Food & Drink

2003 Introduction

It was with a bit of regret that I did not include this section in Part 7 of ARDA 2. However, food, plants and animals (things that lived and are eaten) formed an aesthetic wholeness that cried out for a separate book. I figured that what is more green than trees, so it became a green book with less than a month to publishing. I fully expect that this book will expand with more research on trees and various recipes being submitted by members.

Sincerely,
Mike Scharding
March 20, 2003
Embassy of Japan, D.C.

Printing History

1st Printing ARDA 2 (2003)

Drynemetum Press

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Section One: Food & Drink

The Breakfast of Champions

By Eric Powers, Digitalis Grove of DC

Let's name the first brands that come to mind when we think of Ireland; Guinness, Irish Spring soap,and Lucky Charms. Mike Scharding glommed onto Lucky Charms for St. Patrick's Day, knowing full well they had little to do with Ireland. But they're so "magically delicious" that he's been raving about them, but my idea of Irish Breakfast is bacon, poached eggs, blood sausage, boiled tomato, cheese, and lard on a bagel, and a hair of the dog that bit me. http://www.irishfestivals.net/irishbreakfast.htm Well, I'm no Third-Order guru, but I did some of my own research into the "Celticity" of Lucky Charms. You are what you eat, so what DID the Celts each for breakfast?

Lucky charms were invented in 1963 by General Mills worker John Holahan (an Irish immigrant who died in an unlucky car accident in April 2000) as the first cereal with marshmallow bits, or "marbits." Lucky Charms were created in Minneapolis Minnesota, not far from Carleton College. Is there a connection? Lucky's (his full name is L.C. Leprechaun) magic ability was changing the white marshmallows into colorful shapes (i.e. his treasure) with a license from the Leprechaun council. The original four "marbits" were pink hearts, yellow moons, orange stars, and green clovers. An amazing diversity of shapes have been added for special occasions. The current shapes are red balloons, blue moons, pink hearts, multi-colored rainbows, yellow and white shooting stars, Lucky's green hat with a green clover, orange and yellow pot of gold, and purple horseshoes.

As a breakfast of champions, there is some doubt. According to one study(, http://www.gwally.com/tests/) "who prefer the cereal usually become accountants, Internal Revenue Service auditors, librarians who work at the reference desk, or low lever government bureaucrats that stagnate in a dead end position."

The question does remain, would the ancient Druids and magicians of the Celts have eaten Lucky Charms if they had the opportunity? Everybody loved milk. The main ingredients are oats and marshmallows, (plus sugar and vitamins) both of which may have been known to the ancient Celts, who inhabited lands from Denmark to Florence and Turkey to Portugal along the Mediterranean Sea in 200 B.C.

Oats were farm as far back as 2500 B.C in Asia Minor and brought to Northern Europe around 1100 BC by the Scythians, about the time of the domestication of the horses as draft animals. Because of their non-glutinous nature, oats are not useful for bread, and have been used primarily for soups or feeding livestock. In ancient Ireland (i.e. Pre-Christian,) oats (along with barley, wheat, rye, kale, turnips, beans, cherries and apples) were a staple of the Irish diet found mostly in porridge, and also in black pudding. Oats have an unusually heavy amount of proteins, fats and vitamins, plus it counteracts the high cholesterol in the Celtic diets. Oats were also especially resistant to climatic variations and austere conditions. Carried in

times of war, oatcakes were roasted on swords over the fire.

Introduced by Sir Walter Raleigh, the potato's prospered in Irish damp conditions and became appreciated in the 18th century. Oats soon were grown only as a cash crop while the family ate potatoes. Irish oats are prepared a little differently than American oats (which are mostly rolled); see "before the potato" for details. Some oats companies in Ireland still operate like they did in the 17th century, such as Flavahan. Oats remain the sixth most cultivated cereal in the world (after wheat, maize, rice, barley, sorghum) and have recently become popular as a health food; however, 93 percent of oats produced are still used for animal food. Russia produces 45 percent of the world's supply followed by US 12% and Canada 8%.

As for the marshmallows, they've been around since 2000BC and were a mixture of sap from the mallow plant (found in marshes) and honey. It was so good, it was reserved only for gods and royalty. Now you don't have to be a "Veil of Isis" initiate to postulate a connection with Egypt. According to the famed Book of Invasions, Ireland was colonized by the Milesians. The Catholic Encyclopedia says:

> "The Milesians came from Scythia; and from that country to Egypt, from Egypt to Spain, from Spain to Ireland their adventures are recorded in detail. The name Scot which they bore was derived from Scota, daughter of Pharaoh of Egypt, the wife of one of their chiefs; from their chief Miledh they got the name Milesians, and from another chief Goidel they were sometimes called Gadelians, or Gaels."

Probably fictional, Scota was such a popular character it influenced the naming of both Scotland and Ireland:

> "In ancient times it was known by the various names of Ierna, Juverna, Hibernia, Ogygia, and Inisfail or the Isle of Destiny. It was also called Banba and Erin, and lastly Scotia, or the country of the Scots. From the eleventh century, however, the name Scotia was exclusively applied to Caledonia, the latter country having been peopled in the sixth century by a Scottish colony from Ireland. Henceforth Ireland was often called Scotia Major and sometimes Ireland, until, after the eleventh century, the name Scotia was dropped and Ireland alone remained. Even yet it is sometimes called Erin-chiefly by orators and poets."

So it is conceivable that Scota was some sort of unnamed historical figure. Perhaps she was an Egyptian trade merchants daughter from the coast of the Mediterranean? Whoever the influence, they would have been familiar with the Marshmallow recipe and passed that tradition onto the new land. The marsh mallow plant is native to all of Europe, so herbalists in ancient Ireland probably knew it.

So yes, marshmallows could be considered a possibly ancient Celtic treat or medicine in some format. The recipe used in the US until 1890 was mallow sap plus egg whites and sugar, whipped into a meringue. It was a rather gooey thing, which was often prescribed by doctors for sore throats with immune system booster and sold in little tins. However the substitution of gelatin and corn syrup and tube puffing have given them a dryer more stable form that can be mass-produced without the health benefits of the original.

The cereal is rich in symbolism for me. Its overall taste is sweet, reflecting a positive view of life. The oaten shapes are a fish for the Salmon of Knowledge, the clover for divine "three-ness," flowers for herbs and beauty, and the "x" piece for crossed swords of the conflict in life. The current marshmallows invoke; pink hearts for love and society, green hat for those humble times when we must eat our hat, blue moon for those sadder times when life is changing in unexpected ways, shooting stars for those pyrrhic moments in life's accomplishments, red balloon for the desire to grow and move up in life, purple horseshoes for our interaction with the animal and mineral kingdoms, rainbows for the diversity in society, the pot of gold for the goals and dreams in our lives. I haven't tried diving with my cereal yet, but it would be an interesting task.

So, we have the combination of Celtic and Egyptian's culinary traditions, plus American marketing genius. The conclusion is that you can eat Lucky Charms with a clear conscience, knowing that everything in the cereal (with the exception of the corn-syrup, food colors and the tri-sodium phosphate) is a Celtic food substance. I'd still recommend a shank of lamb, some porridge, beer and bangers, but enjoy them if you dare!

Celtic Dietary Health Problems

By Eric Powers, Digitalis Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2002

Well, you are what you eat, and after discussing junk food and sanitary issues of the Celts, I believe it is time to address the abysmal eating habits of modern Celts, and their health implications. It is a sad fact that as the waves of Germanic people pushed through Europe, the Celts found it was their turn to choose less desirable and more defensible territory. Any visit to a Gaeltacht region of Celtic speaking territory in Brittany or Wales will show you the poor quality of the farming. Now, it is a little known fact that 2,500 years ago, much of Britain and Ireland's barren hills and plains were covered in thick forest full of lions, bears giant deer, and other monsters. Centuries of degradatory farming erosion, poor arboreal harvesting and other ecological disasters have made many of the bogs and moors of the British Isles. So much for being in harmony with nature. Such a fate awaits the Brazilian rainforest.

For the purpose of the remainder of the essay, we will assume the general French and Belgium and Galician populations are not Celtic. According to the genetic test in the last issue, the English are generally of recent immigrant stock (only back to the 8th century,) despite their understandable desire to be aboriginally of the land in which they dwell. Population and ecological pressures have increased the reliance of the Celts to rely on fish, animal and dairy products. The deer hunts of Ireland's roaming army are legendary, as were Robin Hood's in England.

This hunting/gathering/survival lifestyle continues to be eked out in the small crofting communities of the western shores of Scotland and Ireland on the rugged stony coast. A croft is defined as a land holding between one and 50 acres. A crofter's son once defined a croft as "a small area of land surrounded by regulations." For example, there are roughly 2,000 crofts on the Isle of Skye, but of these only 100 or so are large enough to allow a crofter to earn his entire livelihood from the land. The crofts, once laid out to provide homes together with a home food supply are, as one can see, a survival of past economic conditions. Today, the crofter's role is to provide a family home and a side-line to whatever other job the crofter can obtain. The majority of their working age population have to search elsewhere for employment. Some find seasonal work in the building or service industries, while others serve in the oilfields of the North Sea.

I found the health statistics rather surprising. Celtic regions (e.g. highlands) tend to be poorer than Anglo areas, with reduced access to health care, nutritional education, higher incidents of low-weight babies and more farm accidents. Sound familiar? This is all accentuated by the lack of physical exercise among non-farmers/athletes in modern cultures.

We all know that British rockers never smile in photos, not because they are cool and grim, but because they have some of the most nasty teeth in Europe, with about 50% of Scottish adults in 1970 having not a single natural teeth left in their head, now down to "only" 20%; (which is still 12% higher than England) and much worse in the Highlands. So when you think of all those bards, imagine why the music is much better than the singing (which must be hard with dentures.) Of course, it was the introduction of sugar in the 16th century that was a prime culprit.

UK (9%) and Ireland (6%) show the lowest level of mammography for at-risk age women and among the lowest rates for immunization of child-hood diseases in Europe(87%) which is higher than the US (60%) Scotland has the lowest rate of breast-feeding in Europe (only 35% in first six weeks, 15% in highlands) mostly due to factors of poverty and prudity (or at least that's the rumor.) The birth rate of Ireland and Scotland is the lowest since the famines of 1855. Access to family planning is less than easy in Ireland. Drug use is about as bad as the US and worse than most of Europe outside of the Netherlands.

Consumption of grain-based products in last 24 hours:

Netherlands 93% Germany 90%
France 87% Spain 77%
UK 73% (30% in Scotland)
Europe 75% USA 64%

Obesity Percentage(by various BMI stats for Male/Female)

Sweden 5.3%/N.A.
Netherlands 8%/10%
England 13%/15%
Germany 17%/19%
USA 32%/33%

Things are improving, and the drinking and smoking statistics are rosier. Smoking (Male/Female)

Europe 45%/29% Ireland 40%/31%
Scotland 34/32 UK 40%/30%
USA 30%/26%

Note: Lung cancer is the number one cause of cancer and death in Scotland

Alcohol Consumption Frequency

infrequent (below 1 per week)/average (2 to 3 per week)/frequent (nearly daily) for male and female showing remarkably high abstinence in Ireland, despite traditional stereotypes.

Europe 27/35/36 and 66/29/16
Ireland 41/48/11 and 72/16/2
UK 33/47/20 and 60/30/10
USA 32/45/23 and 53/40/7

Note: Average Scottish Male consumes 20 alcohol units per week (females at 8 units,) i.e. a unit is one 12oz. beer, one cup wine or one shot whiskey.

"The national diet is notoriously high in fat, salt and sugar and low in fruit and vegetables. Next to smoking, our diet is the single most significant cause of poor health, contributing to a range of serious illness, which include coronary heart disease, certain cancers, strokes, osteoporosis and diabetes." How bad is the food really? (Where do you think the restaurant McDonalds was inspired?) Yes, it's rather untasty, probably due to the paucity of strong spices in northern Europe. The old worn saying is that if you want to put on two stone spend a month in Belgium, and to take it off, go to England for a few week. (The drink is better in the latter, I believe.) Perhaps Americans are like the pot calling the kettle black.

I remember during my stays at B&Bs in Ireland in 1998, the standard dreaded breakfast "Heartbreak Special" was two links, a thick slice of sweet black pudding (blood sausage,) a banger (sardine,) two fried eggs, some bacon, a boiled tomato, and a slice of toast with heaps of butter. For the porridge, there was a pitcher of heavy cream; and a cup of coffee Lard-made biscuits were available on the side. Last year, Mike told me he had similar fare in the Scottish dormitory, and Mairi said Welsh fare was not much better. I think fish and chips or the ubiquitous "crisps" (potato chips in 50 flavors) and candy/tobacco stores.

This is not a newly acquired taste of an enriched society, but the fulfillment of centuries of cultural dreams. I bring you this ancient story, in which a chronically troublesome incarcerated bard is hauled out of chains and brought to cure the king of a demon who had hid inside his gullet. The possession caused unimaginable hunger in the ruler that was draining the wealth of the countryside. MacGonglinney, on promise of his prompt release, told the following story after starving the king for five days. As the insanely hungry king listened, bound in ropes at the three narrows, the demon inside slowly came further and further out of the King's mouth, until MacGonglinney grabbed it and threw it into the fireplace, curing the king. I leave you with his words:

Vision of Viands

In a slumber visional,
Wonders apparitional
Sudden shone on me:
Was it not a miracle?
Built of lard, a coracle
Swam a sweet milk sea.
With high hearts heroical,
We stepped in it, stoical,
Braving billow-bounds;
Then we rode so dashingly,
Smote the sea so splashingly,
That the surge sent, washingly,
Honey up for grounds.
Ramparts rose of custard all
Where a castle muster'd all
Forces o'er the lake;
Butter was the bridge of it,
Wheaten meal the ridge of it,
Bacon every stake.
Strong it stood, and pleasantly
There I entered presently
Hying to the hosts;
Dry beef was the door of it,
Bare bread was the floor of it,
Whey-curds were the posts.
Old cheese-columns happily,
Pork that pillared sappily,
Raised their heads aloof;
While curd-rafters mellowly
Crossing cream-beams yellowly,
Held aloft the roof.
Wine in well rose sparklingly,
Beer was rolling darklingly,
Bragget brimmed the pond.
Lard was oozing heavily,
Merry malt moved wavily,
Through the floor beyond.
Lake of broth lay spicily,
Fat froze o'er it icily,
'Tween the wall and shore;
Butter rose in hedges high,
Cloaking all it's edges high
White lard blossomed o'er.
Apple alleys bowering,
Pink-topped orchards flowering,
Fenced off hill and wind;
Leek-tree forests loftily,
Carrots branching tuftily,
Guarded it behind.
Ruddy warders rosily
Welcomed us right cosily
To the fire and rest;
Seven coils of sausages,
Twined in twisting passages,
Round each brawny breast.
Their chief I discover him,
Suet mantle over him,
By his lady bland;
Where the cauldron boiled away,
The Dispenser toiled away,
With his fork in hand.
Good King Cathal, royally,
Surely will enjoy a lay,
Fair and fine as silk;
From his heart his woe I call,
When I sing, heroical,
How we rode, so stoical,
O'er the Sea of Milk.-

Aniar MacConglinne--Irish,
12th century-trans.
G. Sigerson, in
Bards of the Gael and Gal
(London Unwin, 1897)

The Salmon of Knowledge

By Mike Scharding, D.C. Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Spring 2002

The Salmon have been migrating from the Atlantic to the headwaters of British and Irish streams since the retreat of the glaciers of the Ice Age 20,000 years ago. In doing so, they have captured the imagination of many a Celt in the Islands and Continent with their ability to transcend boundaries and their heroic struggles.

The Salmon is a fish that has adapted to both fresh and salt water. They spawn in freshwater and as tiny fish enter the great ocean. The Salmon of the British isles travel to the area of Baffin Island and Greenland to grow up. After three or four years, they return in the spring to their native stream head. They stop eating for the duration of the trip, relying on body fat during the journey. They will brave dams and leap up over nine feet into the air to surmount any barriers in their quest, or die of exhaustion, and do not turn back. Strangely, the female always dies after spawning, but those returning for a second spawning are called a "Celt."

Plentiful details on their ecology can be found on the internet, especially these two sites. Pacific Salmon details Atlantic Salmon details

http://www.asf.ca/Overall/atlsalm.html

Mythology of the Salmon

Of all the fish in Celtic legends, the Salmon is the mostly popular. There are reportedly many Pictish stones bearing Salmon inscriptions preceding the Gaelic take-over of Scotland. The oldest story is from the Book of Invasions (Leabhar Gabhala) which tells of successive waves of colonization of Ireland. Tuan mac Carell describes the primeval invasions of Ireland, which he witnessed, to Saint Finnen. He also claims to have been reincarnated successively as a stag, boar, eagle, and salmon. During his various shape-shiftings he witnessed all the great events that took place in Ireland and he passed on this knowledge to the historians before he eventually died. In this last form he was caught and eaten by an Irish queen, who conceived him as a human child. Similarly, the legendary Welsh poet Taliesin claims:

I have been a blue salmon
I have been a dog
I have been a stag
I have been a roebuck on the mountain
I have been a grain discovered...\
I rested nine nights in her womb, a child
I have been dead, I have been alive.
I am Taliesin.
[Matthews 1991]

The Salmon is mythically famous for its association with Hazelnuts. The primary story is that of young Fionn (nicknamed Demne) who as a boy was learning bardic skills from Finegas on the rivers of Boyne. Finegas had been patiently fishing for seven years for the Salmon of Knowledge, which had fed on fallen hazelnuts from nine magical (non-descript) hazel trees. The Salmon gained a spot for every hazelnut that it ate. Soon after Fionn's arrival, the fish was caught. Fionn was frying the fish for Finegas, who was off on a trip, and a boil rose on the fish, he pushed it down with his thumb and burned himself. When he put the thumb in his mouth, the knowledge had all transferred to him. Finegas was, of course, a little disappointed, but Fionn shared the remainder with him and promised another Salmon would come along soon.

> Fionn's way of discovering whatever was happening and hidden was always the same. A shallow, oblong dish of pure, pale gold was brought to him. This dish was filled with clear water. Then Fionn would bend his head and stare into the water, and as he stared he would place his thumb in his mouth under his "Tooth of Knowledge," his "wisdom tooth."

The ancient Fianna warband had many special fighting techniques that would be the envy of any martial art movie. One of the most famous besides Caber tossing (to throw bridges for chariots over rivers) was the "Hero's Salmon Leap," which consisted of leaping on top of a standing shield and leaping high up for a "smackdown" on your opponent.

There are also references in Goidelic lore to Salmon being kept in wells (near Hazel tree orchards) for oracular consultation. In the ancient text "Cormac's Vision" the hero sees a royal fortress with four houses in it, and a "bright well" surrounded by ancient hazels. In the well were five salmon, which ate the nuts as they dropped. In the palace, Cormac meets Manannan the sea-god who reveals the Land of Promise to him and presents him with a magic cup and branch. www.enya.org/stories/story06.htm. Later on, Cormac MacArt, king of Ireland in 266 AD, died at Cleiteach, the bone of a salmon sticking in his throat, on account of the siabhradh genii which Maelgenn, the Druid, incited at him, after Cormac had turned against the Druids, on account of his adoration of God in preference to them. So beware Druids bearing dinner. In Christian monastic communities, there were often salmon ponds for eating. In May 11, 1113AD; "A salmon was caught at Cluain-mic-Nois this year, which was twelve feet in length, twelve hands in breadth without being split, and three hands and two fingers was the length of the fin of its neck." (This is the site of the ruins of the monastery of Clonmacnoise in County Offaly on the River Shannon below Lough Ree and above Portumna, which is in County Roscommon. The arms of Co. Meath incorporate the salmon also.) Christ is also known as in t-eo sénta cas corcra, "The Blessed Curled Purple Salmon." This seems strange, considering that grown salmon prefer salt-water, but I suppose they can remain in fresh-water if not given a choice;

Virtually all salmon live in the ocean, and return to streams to spawn (or are farmed in net pens along the coastline) but Atlantic salmon have been experimented on in terms of stocking in lakes, and they seem to do well, but still won't self-propagate. In other words, they have to be re-stocked to remain as a stable population. There are now some types of Atlantic Salmon called "freshwater salmon." Apparently, they have been farmed and adapted to freshwater by people. This, in fact, makes them much more like trout than salmon.

Water spirits are plentiful in Celtic countries as quoted below :

> "the spirit of the waters was often embodied in an animal, usually a fish. Even now in Brittany the fairy dweller in a well has the form of an eel, while in the seventeenth century Highland wells contained spring fish so sacred that no-one dared to catch them. In Wales Saint Cybi's well contained a huge eel in whose virtues the villagers believed, and terror prevailed when any one dared to take it from the water. Two sacred fish still exist in a holy well at Nant Peris, and are replaced by others when they die, the dead fish being buried. This latter act, solemnly performed, is a true sign of the divine or sacred character of the animal. Many wells with sacred fish exist in Ireland, and the fish have usually some supernatural quality, they never alter in size, they become invisible, or they take the form of beautiful women." [MacCullach]

Salmon, like the proverbial "Frog in the Well" can plum the depths of the unconsciousness for lost treasures and truths. Gantz's Early Irish Myths and Sagas has the story of Froech and Findabair. Findabair loses her ring and her father accuses her of lying to him in order to date Froech. Findabair later prepares a salmon for him that had swallowed it. Saint Kentigern is similarly associated with the Salmon. The story of St. Kentigern is similar. He was the patron saint of Glasgow, from which he proselytized in Cumbria. Folklore makes him the grandson of Urien of Rheged. He and his mother were set adrift in a coracle but were miraculously saved. He vindicated the virtue of a queen who had given her ring to her lover: when the king demanded to see it, it was discovered in a salmon's belly. The salmon is Kentigern's device. During a time of drought St Kevin fed his community with salmon brought to him by an otter. He was reputed to have baptized Merlin before his death. This last story is borrowed from the legend of SUIBHNE GELT, who was confessed by Saint Moling after a life of paganism and madness.

There are many legends of holy wells that held salmon in them and suddenly became great rivers due to an accident. One legend tells of the origin of the river Shannon in Ireland. The Boyne and well of Segais has a very similar story with a young lady named Boan whose curiosity was too great. Latis was a Lake Goddess who later became a Goddess of ale and mead. Evidence of her worship still remains at Birdsowald, England. Latis fell in love with a salmon, which represents knowledge, and out of pity for her, the other deities turned him into a warrior. However, each winter he must submit to becoming a salmon again until spring.

In Brythonic Lore (i.e. Welsh,) the Mighty Salmon of Llyn Llyw (The Lake of the Leader,) was so ancient and powerful that he gained a truce with the Eagle of Gwern Abwy, who agreed to take 50 fish-spears out of the venerable Salmon's back for him. In the Arthurian tale of Culhwch and Olwen, it is the salmon--and only the salmon--who carried Kai and Gwrhyr Gwalstawd Ieithoe on its shoulders to find the Mabon, the Divine Child of Celtic tradition, the being who brings eternal life and vigor. Indeed, fairies are known to wear stylish salmon-skin caps, showing a link to the afterworld.

Magical Lore of the Salmon:

The salmon was revered by the Celts. It was from eating the Salmon of Knowledge that Fionn mac Cumhal gained his wisdom. The salmon has been substituted by the herring in modern Scottish Samhain customs. You must eat a raw or roasted salt herring, in silence, just before going to bed. You will dream of your future partner offering you a drink of water with which to quench your thirst. A similar version is found in the Isle of Man:

* "A Manx girl should eat a salt herring, bones and all, without drinking or speaking; she must then retire to bed backwards; in her dreams she will see her future spouse coming to bring her a drink." [Hull, p. 237]
* In the Hebrides, the salt herring may be substituted with the Bonnach Salainn (salt bannock)--a cake made from meal, with a substantial amount of salt added.
* Traditionally, Salmon was presented at royal banquets with honey and butter.
* Among commoners, salmon was popular during Lent and on days of fast and abstinence. In folk medicine, Salmon gall was used as a remedy for blindness or to correct poor vision.
* The Salmon is referred to as the "King of Fish," and is never spoken of directly while fishing or in a boat; being referred to as "The Red Fish" or "The Spotted One." To this day, in some parts of Ireland, the Salmon is invoked for curses and blessings:

The treatment of the boiled broken little fish to you
The Roasting of the salmon to the very end on you
Slainte an Bhradain Chugat: The health of the salmon to you.

Druidical Diet Decision Dilemma Discourse

By Mike Scharding, Digitalis Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2002

After reading Eric's article (see A Druid Missal-Any Samhain 2002,) I felt inspired to write about my only eating decisions. There are no precedents in the RDNA regarding vegetarianism, so it seems to be a personal choice. Of course, I will try to offer a balanced view, from my own perspective. The choice(s) by the esteemed reader (in either direction) may be made easier by a familiarity with all the issues involved.

There seems to have been little doubt that the ancient Celts enjoyed meat, eggs, honey and dairy products. Examination of ancient trash dumps near ancient villages has shown a healthy multitude of bones, shells, and clay hives. Feasts, at least for the elite, were the highlight of year, and many a ferocious competition ensued for the choicest part of a deer. The Celtic descendents still love them, perhaps too much for their own good. Certainly harvest conditions may have hindered choice of farmed animal products, but hunting and fishing in communal lands continued well into the 19th century. Crofting, as mentioned before, still provides food and income for many tens of thousands in Celtic lands; enjoying a close link with the creatures that would become dinner.

After numerous fitful attempts at vegetarianism at Carleton, I eventually cut out mammalian meat during my stay in Japan, three years ago, but continue to eat poultry, fish and reptilian dishes (I call it a dinosaur diet.) While Japan is changing to a more Western meat-based approach in meals, you can still get balanced meals, especially if you permit seafood in your diet, as I have chosen. I don't think about it too much anymore, except for considering the "next-step," removing my beloved cheese and milk, and substituting soy products.

There are, in fact, several forms nowadays; ranging on the "carnivorous-vegetarian" spectrum, that have increasingly filled the gap between extremes. The educated mind is said to understand two opposing viewpoints, and come up with a third. Most Druids naturally gravitate towards a moderate choice in the middle.

* Carnivorous -The Eskimos are the most well-known group to have lived almost wholly on animals and partly digested sea-plants from their digestive tracts. They also enjoy remarkable good health, due to the prevalence of fish, with the occasional sea-mammal.
* Carnivorous when possible - this is the average American and Celtic diet dream of having three servings (or more) of animal meat and a few servings of dairy products. It is a hefty protein diet, providing about 40% to 50% of the calories.
* Religiously Qualified Omnivores - certain faiths forbid certain animals for "purity" reasons or "taboos" (e.g. horses, dogs, and cats are taboo in America,) but these are not always followed in practice. Hindus avoid eating cows out of respect, and their economic importance to the non-mechanized farming economy. Buddhists generally advocate different degrees of vegetarianism for reasons of respect to reincarnated ancestors and living beings. Catholics generally avoid meat (but not fish) during Lent. Certain monastic orders (Trappists) are vegetarian mostly for ascetic reasons. Seventh Day Adventists, many Hindus, and Jainists (who also avoid red vegetables) also avoid meat.
* Pollovegetarian: eats poultry and not other types of meat.
* Pescatarians: Vegetables and non-mammalian seafood.
* Lacto-ovo vegetarian: eats dairy and egg products; no meat.
* Ovo vegetarian: eats eggs, no meat.
* Lacto vegetarian: eats dairy products; no eggs or meat
* Vegans: Only plants and perhaps fungi. No meat, leather, milk (except Mother 's milk,) honey, feathers, lard.
* Fruitarians: Only eat the "expendable" portions of plants; seeds, flowers, fruits. The main plant should survive unharmed during the harvest procedure.
* Breatharianism: Believe it or not, there are some groups that believe that eating food actually poisons the body, and that clean air and sunlight are all we need. A few dozen have died trying to follow this diet, but the leaders complain that perhaps polluted air and lack of spiritual exercises were at fault.

From my conversations with Druids over the years, I've deduced the following top ten reasons why people continue to eat meat.

1. Never thought about it much. This is also known as the "disassociation" or "culture" reason. My family, friends and co-workers always incorporated animal products, and now it is second nature to me. Society has made the choice, and I follow their guidance. These people have not, in fact, made a conscious choice either way. One elementary class, when asked to draw a salmon, invariably drew a nice "D" shaped pink slice of meat, rather than a living creature.
2. Taste and Texture. In the gourmet's rainbow of flavors and chewability, nothing matches a nice succulent piece of meat. There is a reluctance to give up the variety of their palette (palate?) in artistic terms, regardless of the vast unexplored territory of vegetable options; they enjoy what they have already discovered in the meat realm.
3. Health Reasons. Without animal protein, I'd become skinny, decrepit, and waste away to nothing. Most plants can't provide certain key minerals and vitamins that our body can't make. Besides, even if vegetarians live longer, life is about choosing what you like.
4. Simplicity. Nothing is simpler than sticking a piece of roasted meat between two breads or on a plate. Saves time and fills you up. It also feels "good."
5. Intelligence. The strong and smart will eat the weak and stupid. Of course, this argument doesn't go well; when a camper gets eaten by a bear, we want revenge! "Animals don't feel like us" and "animals can't vote" fits in here.
6. Divine. T he Monotheistic God gave us dominion over the Earth. We can choose to eat them with no fear of angering God.
7. Economics. Supporting the jobs of ranchers and livelihood of traditional pastoralists.
8. Hunting. I feel at one when I shoot one. Hunters carry on traditions, provide conservation volunteers and finance many ecological projects.
9. Life Force. This is rarely brought up, but it runs instinctively, "You are what you eat." By eating certain animals, people believe they absorb their spirit or "energy" and gain positive characteristics. This is found in Chinese medicines, Native American hunting practices, and American football players eating

steak to increase their bullish nature. I had a lot of trouble with this argument in Japan, where they "welcome" the spirit to join with them by saying "itadakimasu" ("I will receive") not to the chef, but to the meal. I always argued that the animal rarely ever wanted to do this before they died. Perhaps after dying, they change their minds?
10. "I'm not prejudiced, I eat everything." My wife proffers this one, driving me crazy. By "excusing" any one species (except Homo Sapiens,) you are being unfair to all the others. She argues that plants have spirit(s) too, and we have to eat something, so accept whatever fate brings to you, animal or plant. We live on a pyramid of death, and should humbly accept this. Even cows inadvertently eat bugs in the grass, or squash a frog. That's life (and death,) get used to it.

There are, of course, several counter-arguments, on behalf of the Vegetarians;

1. Compassion. Like many animal-rightists, vegetarians often consider animals to have feelings similar or equal to our own in sensitivity, especially in self-preservation, comfort, pain, and family ties.
2. Method. Centers around the painful cramped nature of mass-farms (idyllic family farms are almost extinct,) lack of stimulation, movement, painful and frightened deaths. This encompasses a huge range of stomach-turning descriptions. To me, this still leaves open the possibility of accepting meat from an animal that receives a peaceful anesthetized death, on a big rolling farm after many years of productive live experiences. Douglas Adam's futuristic vision of a cow that is bred to desire being eaten, and which can eloquently explain this to the diner, comes to mind.
3. Health Reasons. Cardiovascular disease, colon cancer, obesity, transmitted diseases (both sanitary and parasitical) and pesticide/antibiotics/hormones should dissuade us, especially in semi-raw products. Meat eating people are especially stinky. Oddly enough, those countries noted for their high protein consumption have the worst rate of osteoporosis in the world, while the disease is almost unheard of in the poorer nations that cannot afford meat or drink milk.
4. Diversity. Heavy reliance, or preference for meat, blinds us to the dazzling variety of protein and calcium substitutes. The five vegetables that Americans eat most are French fries, tomatoes (mostly as sauce or ketchup,) onions, iceberg lettuce, and other potatoes; that's not my idea of fruits and vegetables-that's garnish on burgers." Did somebody say "vitamin supplements?"
5. Intelligence. If animals have some ability to react to their environment at all (i.e. "think") we should respect it, no matter how rudimentary; and choose food sources that don't injure their lifespans. This is found most prominently in the protection of robustly intelligent critters like whales, monkeys, dogs and lawyers.
6. Divine. As mentioned before, many specific animals are revered by certain religions.
7. Environment/Economics. Revolves around the fact that by going through an intermediate step (the animal) 90% of plant proteins and carbohydrates and huge amounts of scarce water are "lost" that could have grown food for hungry people. Many forests and marshes are destroyed to make pasturage for cattle/sheep/crops; not to mention methane. Animal protein naturally is more expensive than vegetable protein, except in very unusual regions of the world.
One acre of land (two acres equals one hectare):

a) Can produce enough feed for about 50 pounds of animal protein with only 15% of that available for human consumption.

b) Can feed 20 vegans or 1 meat eater.

c) Can produce enough soybeans to yield about 500 pounds of protein.

d) Can produce enough wheat to meet the protein requirements for one person for 877 days, whereas soybeans would produce enough protein for 2,224 days.

e) Can produce enough food to feed 4 vegans.

f) Can produce (in pounds): potatoes (40,000,) onions (40,000,) carrots (30,000,) tomatoes (50,000,) celery (60,000,) beef (250.)

g) Requires (in gallons of water): tomatoes (23,) lettuce (23,) potatoes (24,) wheat (25,) carrots (33,) apples (49,) eggs (544,) chickens (815,) pork (1630,) beef (5214.)

8. Friendship. It is said that it is easier to approach animals if you're a vegetarian, because either you smell safe or emit friendly vibes. On hunting trips, take pictures not pelts.
9. Life Force. According to some, similar to intelligence, eating an unwilling victim (carrion is okay?) might result in unfriendly spirits joining your collective spirit, and giving you "spiritual indigestion." Many religions advocate restricting meat before religious festivals. One case of the Tarbh Feis in Ireland, actually had the visionary gorge on beef and wrapped in a fresh hide to predict the future of a king. There is also an infamous Irish King rite of eating a whole mare (after making love to it.)
10. Prejudice/Social Reasons. As below so above. Basically, by incarcerating animals, denying their rights, separating familial creatures, and eating them, it shows a predilection and unconscious support for racial, class, and gender prejudice.

To me, both arguments can range into the moral high ground and practicality. I don't expect you to change your diet or follow my own choices, but I hope I've opened up a new area of your life to examination and contemplation.

Irish Spring and Irish Cleanliness

By Eric Powers, Digitalis Grove of DC

Okay, I wrote the "Lucky Charms" article for Beltaine, so I had to do the follow up. It is a fact of life for us mortals, as I am sure Nozomi will attest, that things get dirty, smelly and unpleasant to the touch; especially our friends. Until our not-so-distant ancestors, people didn't mind the smells to "risk" bathing, and the oils protected the skin and made wrestling easier. But to prepare wool and clean clothes, you need to remove the grime and so soap was invented. Soap was usually just boiled animal fat, wood ashes (or Pot ash,) water and lye.

Then 30 years ago, people learned the advantages of adding perfume, artificial green color, a country's name, a season, and calling it "Irish Spring." But why not call it "Prussian Autumn" or "Ukrainian Winter"? Colgate-Palmolive yields millions of dollars in annual profits from the sale of Irish Spring soap, a product that was only created to improve their image with a bitter and angry Irish community. In fact, Colgate-Palmolive was one of the last large corporations to abandon an officially stated anti-Irish policy. It was well into the 1950s, just a few short decades ago, that Colgate-Palmolive in adherence with that policy, routinely refused Irish and Irish-Americans employment based on their nationality. When Colgate-Palmolive was asked in 1993 to support a National Irish-American Heritage Museum, the request was refused because Colgate-Palmolive was focusing on "the educational needs of youth and minorities." A look at their official web-sites, conspicuously avoids giving a product history (there are five varieties now) or any reasoning why they chose the name. They only describe it as:

"Irish Spring Original launched in 1972 with its classic green striated bar and quickly established Irish Spring as a leading brand for deodorant soap. Irish Spring Original's great, invigorating scent helps keep you feeling clean and fresh." Their selling points are:

Helps keep you feeling clean and fresh,
Great invigorating scent
Rich striated emerald green bar
Used by men and women everywhere
Long-lasting deodorant protection

And of course, "keeps you clean as a whistle" (followed by dirty sexually inviting whistle.) This phrase means "Neatly and effectively done; pure." As in the example: "He maneuvered himself out of that sticky situation as clean as a whistle." The reasoning is that a whistle needs to be clean and free of moisture and debris to produce a clear sound. The oldest literary example is Planche(1851) in Extravaganza where a character says, "Or else his head cut off, clean as a whistle." Which is quite a Celtic feat.

The Celts are in a rather wet area of the world and many legends revolve around bathing and washing, more so than their Saxon neighbors (King Arthur stories aside.) In both Irish and Scottish legend, there is the legendary washing woman at the ford (where water was shallow and lots of rock.) The warrior, who would encounter her washing bloody linen, may rightly suppose that his death on the battlefield is not far off. Morgan ap Modron appears in this connection in a sixteenth-century folk-tale.

CuChulainn saw two maidens washing his bloody garments on his way to his last battle. The Washer is also one of the guises of the Morrigan. Legends are replete with her, as are ban-sidhe legends. They vary on whether by sneaking up on her you can change your fate, or whether her mere gaze would kill you. I suspect they originate from women robbing the corpses after battle, cleaning them up and taking back spoils. Somehow the legend is a foresight of this event.

Bathing incidents are such a great opportunity for story-tellers to get their characters naked, see each other naked, be consumed by their passions, and make poor life-decision choices without any blame. Valuable items like Swan Princess/Selkie/Mermaid items can be stolen and wives gained, great warriors can be disarmed, and hearts can swoon during bathing scenes. Modern movies have not under-used this technique; but since Psycho, have added it as a good opportunity to kill off characters, after gratifying the young male audiences.

Examples are replete in legends. Angus Og had a palace at the river Boyne at whose estuary the Milesians landed. It was there that Eithne loses her veil of invisibility while bathing in the river. I would think that you would keep that on, while bathing outdoors? The church on the banks where Eithne died was named Cill Eithne by St Patrick. Midhir is a lord of the Otherworld. He lives in the mound of the sidhe at Bri Leith. He is one of the Tuatha De Danann and the foster father to Oenghus, who is the child of Eithne, the result of her seducing by Eochy. The seduction comes about when Elkmar, her husband, is put under a spell where he loses track of time. He believes himself to have been away overnight whereas he has slept for nine months, allowing the birth of the child. Midhir, himself, falls in love with a mortal, a girl called Etain, who he also sees bathing. She is the daughter of Aillil. They fall in love with each other at first sight and are soon in bed together. This creates something of a problem when he returns home and presents Etain to his wife, Fuamnach, who (like Juno) finds no ends of means to torment him and young lovers; starting a tragic cycle of stories. This was quite a mess out of trying to get clean.

Nessa, the wife of Cathbad the Druid was another bathing beauty. Her name was originally Assa or "Gentle," but after Cathbad had killed all her tutors, she took up arms as a woman warrior and was afterwards called "Ungentle" or Niassa (Nessa.) Cathbad surprised her bathing without her weapons, but he spared her and granted her only to have her as his wife. She bore Conchobar on the day prophesied as the birthday of Christ. I'd have rewritten the ending a little differently.

There is a place called Abbeyfeale in County Limerick (Gaelic on map: Mainistir na Fiale meaning from the river Fiale,) that is traditionally derived from the legendary Fial, wife of Lewy. She was spotted by him while she was bathing naked in the river and not realizing that the voyeur was her husband expired from shock and shame. The abbey was founded by Brian O'Brien in 1188, upon an earlier foundation.

Maurice was walking one day by the shore of Lough Gur when he saw the beautiful other-world woman Aine bathing. He seized her cloak, which act magically put her into his power, and then lay with her. He probably did something else, for in this way Gearoid laria was conceived, and when he was born, Aine appeared at the castle of the Earl to present the child to him. There's a shocker for him!

One book I read mentioned:

> Certain Irish social customs are also recounted in the Hisperica Famina. The early Irish frequently bathed frequently and considered bathing of guests as an act of hospitality. One text describes the custom of cleaning the feet of travelers: "Fill the steady hand basin with water and wash your dirty feet with flowing draughts; wipe clean your muddy soles with the clear liquid," and again: "pour a clear draught from the wooden tank and wash your dirty feet." The early Irish had a highly developed vocabulary for bathing, with separate words for washing the feet, the hands, hair, or immersing the entire body. For example; Osaic was the Old Irish word for washing the feet.

Now we know, the Celts used soap long before the Romans did, because those new-comer Romans build their empire long after the Celts arrived in the region, but they used it to wash their hands in the morning and during bathing. After bathing they would comb oil and scented herbs into their hair. The Romans rubbed their bodies with olive oil and herbs and then scraped it off with a device called a speculum. Another little tidbit about this type of "bathing" is when the gladiators did it, the "residue" of combined sweat dirt and the oil concoction was sold to wealthy women as a virility drug that was taken internally. Of course the more famous the gladiator the more expensive it was. (And the Romans called us barbarians) Pretty disgusting isn't it?

While the Celts on the other hand used soap made from vegetable oil and herbs (kind of like what we have now) the only difference per se was the inclusion of lie. Another odd little tidbit about Celtic grooming is that they used stale urine to bleach their hair white; possible inspiring tales of blond Celts, when (touristic commercials aside) in fact most Celts are dark or brunettes. We also know from tales of Celtic grooming habits of all the body-paints, make-up and cosmetics that the Celts (or at least the upper-class) used, and this requires something to remove them before reapplication, i.e. soap.

There are also several Fulacht Fiadh (kidney or horse-shoe shaped mounds of burnt stone surrounding a wood or stone lined trough set into the ground,)such as in Lochadoon Valley in Cloghane. Warriors of the Fianna, or anyone on extended summer hunts, wouldn't want to haul around a big iron pot and a deer, so they need to cook big hunks of deer or boar somehow. First a stone or timber-lined trough near a stream would be filled with water and then rock would be heated in an adjacent fire before being dropped into the water, a process that was continued until the water boiled. The joints of meat were then placed in the water to boil. It may sound pretty unlikely, but modern archaeological experiments have shown it to be a quite economical and effective method of cooking. It has also been suggested that Fulacht Fiadh were used for bathing or as saunas.

According to a link (listed below,) the Gaels were also into building Sweathouses known as Teach an Allais, which may have been derived from all the Viking colonies in the Gaeltacht region, perhaps lasting as long as 1902 in distant rural areas without running water? 80 sweathouses existed in Co. Leitrim in the late 19th Century, but seem to be limited to Co. Leitrim, Fermanagh, Cavan, Sligo, and a few isles of western Scotland; Jura, Colonsay, Argyll, and Kilmartin Valley. They are highly dismantable stone-igloos, and possibly were recycled in other regions. Sweating removes poisons in the body, improves appearance by unclogging pores, combats the persistent rheumatism of North Europe and (surprisingly) warms you up on cold nights. Peter Berresford Ellis in The Druids describes one as:

"The further development of the medicated bath was the hot-air bath, used in Ireland as a cure for rheumatism until recent years. The structure in which these baths were given was known as Tigh an alluis, or "Sweating house" One such ancient structure survives on Inishmurray in Donegal Bay and several have been described in the last century particularly in the north of Ireland. They are small constructions of stone, five to seven feet long. A turf fire was kindled inside until the house was heated like an oven. The fire was removed. The patient, wrapped in a blanket, crept in and sat down on a bench. The door was closed up. The patient remained until in a profuse perspiration and then, on leaving, was plunged into cold water and then rubbed warm. The patient was encouraged to meditate (dercad) to achieve sitchain (state of peace.) It is not beyond the realm of possibility that this act, found in many cultures in the world as a religious action, had similar religious connotations in the Celtic world." [6]

Most dwellings of the Sidhe (people of the hills) are old raths (now submerged lake forts,) duns (old dirt embankments of ruined castles,) disused par-terre root-cellars/homes, or still-buried cromlechs (those stones stacked on top of each other were once covered by mounds of dirt.) This has brought up the idea to me, that perhaps those sidhe or fairies (in certain cases) were not so much a primordial displaced race, a distant race of gods, but memories of vision-crazed mystics who came out of their little sweathouses, still entranced, and performed healings or other magical activities? Those fairy-tales of people out in the night could be stumbling in upon a clandestine meeting of folk-shamans/what-have-yous in their sweathouses, high on who knows what kind of local weed. A nearby stream, which fairies can't cross, might be based on ancient cures for madness. Suddenly surprising the patient with a plunge into cold water was practiced from ancient times to the 19th Century. Boats were constructed which would break up and force patients to swim to the shore in the cold water and there were bridges which would collapse when patients were crossing them. The cold water shower or plunge was a "shock" treatment designed to bring a deranged person to his/her senses. It is an intriguing idea.

Several other culture/religions are obsessive about cleanliness, possibly because it's healthy, but perhaps to distance themselves from the grubby peasants who don't have the time to clean things up as well as a church with excess lazy layman's labor. Shinto revolves around purity, if Nozomi's articles are true; and certainly the Judeo-Christian bible is frantic about being clean (which was interpreted by the Christians to be a spiritual matter, thus bringing on several plagues, and moralistic catastrophes): [most of Leviticus, 1 John 1:9, 15:3; 2 Corinthians 7:1, James 4:8, Ephesians 5:26-27] No where in the bible does it say "Cleanliness is next to Godliness," which is derived from a sermon by John Wesley (1703-1791) or possibly Francis Bacon (1605) "Cleanness of body was ever deemed to proceed from a due reverence to God."

But the evidence does not show that this was the Celts made the spiritual connection, except as described above, they just wanted to look good, and who can blame them? Regardless, you should be able to buy Irish Spring now knowing that, advertising hype aside, soap is a Celtic innovation to Europe (as is the deep plough and iron.) Even without your personal home sauna, you'll come out of your bath, invigorated, spiritually purified (Shower Shugyo, anyone?,) and not so stinky.

Gandalf's Reflections On The Arts Zymurgical

By Gandalf, Amon Sul Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 2003

The Discovery of Beer

There are those who claim that one of the main reasons that our distant ancestors gave up their nomadic ways and began the practice of agriculture was to assure a supply of grain for the making of beer. Think of a time, eons ago, when our ancestors had learned to use fire and to make storage containers (tightly woven baskets or clay pots.) Wild grain had been gathered and stored. Water was added to soften the grain. For some reason the grain was not eaten and sat for a day or two. Someone realized that the grain might be saved if it was dried over the fire. After being roasted, the grain had an odd sweetness to it. When it was needed, the grain was once again put in to soak. Someone drank the water and/or ate the uncooked grain and it was good. Grain gathering became a major activity. Someone discovered the cause and effect relationship between covering grain with dirt and new plants sprouting. One of the great things about it was that after you made the beer, you still got to eat the grain. What a concept! Why wander around taking your chances on where your next meal might come from when you could get drunk and eat well at the same time?

The Basics

Yeast are fungi that break down sugar molecules and by doing so produce alcohol and carbon dioxide. When one works out the physics involved, this molecular division process results in a release of energy that is used for metabolic and reproductive processes. Try this link if you are interested in the underlying science: http://www.yeastgenome.org/VL-yeast.html.

Home Brewing and Vinting

First and foremost, this is not rocket science. There is an abundance of websites that are dedicated to beer and winemaking. Most stores that sell equipment and supplies also stock books. You can probably get everything you need for thirty to forty dollars. If you stay with it, you'll recoup your investment in a short time. You will know exactly what's in your libation. There's also a genuine satisfaction in drinking something that you made yourself.

Equipment Basics

If you have access to a major metropolitan area, there is almost certainly a location that carries everything that you need. If you are really out in the boonies, everything is also available through the Internet. The following is a list of essentials:

Primary fermenter. I used a plastic garbage can for a long time. A few years ago, the place that I get my supplies started stocking Ale Pales which are essentially seven gallon plastic buckets that have a spigot near the bottom. They have a bail, which makes them easy to pick up, and the spigot facilitates racking off (draining.)

Secondary fermenter. Not an absolute necessity, but helpful for many projects. Usually a five gallon bottled water jug. The use of a secondary fermenter requires an airlock, because alcohol turns to vinegar with prolonged exposure to air. Since secondary fermentation still involves the production of carbon dioxide, any air in the container is forced out and the carbon dioxide protects whatever you are making. Using secondary fermenters produces a clearer product that has less sediment. Beer that is made using a secondary fermenter may take longer to build up a head.

Hydrometer. A hydrometer measures the specific gravity (SG) of the mix and indicates the potential strength of the end product (potential being the term because all of the sugar is not processed by the yeast.) Bottling beer at the correct SG is essential to having the right amount of carbonation. A word of caution: malt liquors (beers with over six percent alcohol) are often a recipe for a hangover. I usually make mine at four-five percent. In making wine, knowing the potential strength is important for predicting whether or not the wine will be dry or sweet. The maximum alcohol content that can be achieved through natural process is eighteen percent, but that's under ideal conditions. Taking the SG to a potential of eleven will usually produce a relatively dry wine. Anything over fourteen may taste syrupy.

Beer containers. The best containers are rubber-stoppered bottles such as those used for Grolsch and Kulmbacher. That way, if you bottle with a little too much residual sugar, the excess gas forces its way through the gasket. No exploding bottles or beer that spews out when opened. It's also an excuse to drink some good imported beer. I originally used quart bottles. However, since there's usually some sediment in homemade beer, sometimes the second pint was a little murky. Twelve ounce returnable bottles can also be used (no twist offs.) Bottles, caps, and capping tools are sold by most suppliers. The basic math for a five-gallon batch is 20 quarts, 40 pints, or about 53 twelve-ouncers. A few years ago, I inherited an old refrigerator. For about two hundred dollars I was able to convert it to a draft beer dispenser. The home brew goes into five gallon Cornelius kegs (their primary use is for fountain soft drinks.)

Wine containers. Once again, this is an excuse to indulge oneself. If you frequent your local pub, the bartender may also be able to help you out. Especially if you have demonstrated that Tipping is not a city in China. If my math is correct on the metric conversion, you'll need around twenty-seven bottles for a five-gallon batch. There are different types of wine bottles and some work better than others, primarily due to sedimentation issues. The best bottles are the tapered ones that many German wines come in. Sherry bottles do not work as well work because the air has a tendency to bubble as it goes in stirring up the sediment.

Boiling pot. Unless you are really into beer making, you'll be using malt extract, which needs to be boiled. When making wine, an alternative to using sulfites (which I am allergic to) is to bring the wort (your mix before fermentation) to a low boil.

Stirring stick. During initial processing and primary fermentation, everything needs to be stirred a lot except for the last few days before racking off. I use a wooden spoon and dowel.

Funnel. Get one that has a groove in the side of the spout so that air can come out as liquid goes in.

Supplies

Beer. As mentioned, making beer usually involves malt extracts. Malt comes in a variety of shades from pale to dark and can be hopped or unhopped. What one uses is a matter of personal preference. Please note that even the light varieties will usually produce a beer that is darker than the American Pales that most of us are used to. The cans of malt sold by suppliers are intended to make five gallons. This is a manageable quantity that can be consumed while still fresh. The malt extract, by itself, will not have enough sugar to make the beer strong enough. I recommend powdered malt for the booster but in a pinch I've used regular sugar. Incidentally, most modern beers contain two drugs: alcohol and hops. The hops are one of the reasons that beer makes you sleepy. Hops are also a preservative (probably their original use.) Since home brews are not pasteurized, the hop can be essential in extending their shelf life. If your supplier is well stocked, there will be a wide variety of hop available. Some brewers are very picky about their hops, but I've never found much difference between the different varieties. Hop is easy to grow but it needs to be trellised. The hop that I raise is a generic variety that I ordered from the Gurney Seed Company. Email me around March if you would like a root cutting.

Wine. I've never used the concentrates, so I cannot speak to results from their use. I've been fortunate enough to have access to real grapes (usually Concords but I have used whites.) If there's a farmer's market in your community, check with the sellers there. Wine can also be made from a variety of other ingredients. There are those who scoff at non-grape wines, but I am not one of them. I have peaches, pears, apples, strawberries, and kiwi planted but they're not producing yet. A bushel of grapes is sufficient for five gallons of wine, but unless you have wine grapes, there won't be enough natural sugar to get the job done. I typically use plain old beet sugar for wine. Grapes are easy to grow but take time and need a lot of room. We've been at our current location four years and the first vines that I planted (Concords) are just starting to produce. If you know someone who grows grapes, the prunings can be used to start new vines. Once you get started, you have an unlimited supply. For the last two years I have been buying wine grape cuttings from this location: http://www.bunchgrapes.com/. I should be able to start propagating my own wine grapes by next year. I may even have a few Concord cuttings that I won't need. Email me around March if you're interested. Mead requires using some honey for sugar content and taste. I have blackberry mead in a secondary fermenter as I write this. Mead can also be flavored with spices such as ginger, cinnamon, and nutmeg.

Yeast. Once again, there are many varieties available and some individuals are very passionate about what they use. Since the basic process is the same, I'm pretty indifferent. I typically use a top fermenting beer yeast. Incidentally, it's easy to keep a starter bottle. Just stir up the sediment, fill a pint with it, and keep it the refrigerator until it's needed. Miscellaneous. If making wine, you'll need corks and a corking tool. There are many flavorings, clarifiers, chemicals, etc. available. I usually forego them.

The Process for Beer

Boil the malt using about three gallons of water. The boil takes about 45 minutes. If using unhopped malt, add hops at the beginning and end of the boil. Let the wort cool; add malt or sugar to obtain desired SG. Add yeast. If using a top fermenter, in about two days, the mix will develop a corona. Use a stainless steel strainer to skim off the solids in the corona. In about a week, the SG will drop to bottling level (.10.) If not using a secondary fermenter, rack off and bottle. If using a secondary fermenter, rack off and airlock. Let settle for about a month or so, rack off, add priming sugar to get mix to .10 SG, and then bottle. Store in a cool, dark place if you have one. In 2-4 weeks sufficient additional fermentation should have occurred to build up a head. Getting the head right is one of the most difficult parts of beer making. If you're using resealable containers, you can reprime if you don't get enough carbonation. If you're using screw caps and you get to much carbonation, you can loosen them and let them sit for an hour or two and then reseal. Rubber stoppered bottles will bleed off any excess carbonation. Since there will always be some sediment, pouring requires a steady hand and practice. When making beer, it may be a good idea to not start out trying to make Pales. I've found Ambers and Darks to be much easier.

The Process for Wine

I usually puree the grapes in a blender and then heat them to a low boil. Let cool. Some water can be added but you have to careful or the end product will lack color and body. Add yeast. In a few days the solids will begin to float to the top. Skim off with a stainless steel strainer. If you are not using a secondary fermenter, bottle at around 10 SG. If using a secondary fermenter, rack off and airlock. Two months in the secondary fermenter is usually sufficient but I've left it longer. Wine should be stored on its side so that the corks stay moist. To deal with sedimentation, shake the bottle and let it sit upright for a few weeks before opening. Uncork and rack off the entire bottle. Once again, a steady hand is beneficial.

Potcheen

Whiskey is essentially distilled beer and brandy is distilled wine. Unfortunately, in the United States, making your own spirits, even for personal use, is illegal. However, I'm getting tired of boiling the hell out green beans in a water bath canner to get them properly sterilized when half as much time in a pressure canner would get the job done. Pressure canners are also easily converted to pot stills. Be sure to spend the extra money for stainless steel. A friend of mine had an aluminum pot still and although it wasn't a poisoning hazard, his product had a definite metallic taste. Do some research before building a still. Lead poisoning is a serious hazard. I no longer drink moonshine unless I personally know the person who made it. Two drinks and you can go blind or die!

The Internet has a lot of designs for making refractory stills and some suppliers are selling them for around three hundred dollars. Refractory stills are much more efficient, producing an output that is up to 170 proof with a single run. Pot stills usually require triple distillation to achieve a final product that is around 120 proof (hence the designation XXX.) My understanding is that there is pending litigation about the legality of selling refractory stills. My suggestion is, if you buy one, do so in person and pay cash. Otherwise there will be a

shipping or credit card trail that might be used to track you down if the federal government and liquor lobby prevail. It is relatively easy and inexpensive to get a permit to make ethanol for fuel, which then makes your still legal. However, once again, you are on record as owning a still. The law requires that anything removed from the premises must be denatured (rendered undrinkable.)

Cleaning Up

In general, zymurgy is a messy process. Many books and articles on home fermentation dwell at great length on all kinds of sterilization activities that involve chemical compounds of questionable utility. Zymurgy had been around for millennia before microbes were ever identified. In over thirty years of practice, the only time I ever lost anything was when I used some ground fall apples to make applejack and I didn't boil the mixture first. That was clearly an error on my part. Soap should be used sparingly. Small traces of soap can throw off the taste. Soap also impairs the ability of beer to make a good head. I use lots of hot water and paper towels.

Epilogue

The preceding is an overview. Zymurgy is a learn-by-doing art. Almost everyone who practices it has the occasional batch that doesn't taste very good. However, considering some of the commercial products that I've had, even my failures have their counterparts in the marketplace. Even if the taste is a little off, the alcohol is still there. Just remember that, with modern techniques, what you will be drinking is almost certainly much better than some of the stuff that the ancients had.

Section Two: Tree Research

Cad Goddeu or The Battle of Goddeu

Translation by Revd. Robert Williams

I have been a multitude of shapes,
Before I assumed a consistent form.
I have been a sword, narrow, variegated,
I will believe when it is apparent.
I have been a tear in the air,
I have been in the dullest of stars.
I have been a word among letters,
I have been a book in the origin.
I have been the light of lanterns,
A year and a half.
I have been a continuing bridge,
Over three score river-mouths.
I have been a course, I have been an eagle.
I have been a coracle in the sea.
I have been complaint in the banquet.
I have been a drop in a shower;
I have been a sword in the grasp of a hand.
I have been a shield in battle.
I have been a string in a harp,
Disguised for nine years.
In water, in foam,
I have been a sponge in fire,
I have been wood in covert.
I am not he who will not sing of
A combat though small,
The conflict of the battle of Godau of sprigs.
Against the Guledig of Prydain,
There passed central horses,
Fleets full of riches.
There passed an animal with wide jaws,
On it were a hundred heads.
And a battle was contested
Under the root of his tongue;
And another battle there is
In his occiput.
A black sprawling toad,
With a hundred claws on it,
A snake speckled, crested.
A hundred souls through sin
Shall be tormented in its flesh.
I have been in Care Vevenir,
Thither hastened grass and trees.
Minstrels were singing,
Warrior bands were wondering,
At the exaltation of the Brython,
That Gwydyon effected.
There was a calling on the Creator,
Upon Christ for causes,
Until when the Eternal
Should deliver those whom he had made.

The Lord answered them,
Through language and elements:
Take the forms of the principal trees,
Arranging yourselves in battle array,
And restraining the public.
Inexperienced in battle hand to hand.
When the trees were enchanted,
In the expectation of not being trees,
The trees uttered their voices
From strings of harmony
The disputes ceased.
Let us cut short heavy days,
A female restrained the din.
She came forth altogether lovely.
The head of the line, the head was a female.
The advantage of a sleepless cow
Would not make us give way.
The blood of men up to our thighs,
The greatest of importunate mental exertions
Sported into the world.
And one has ended
From considering the deluge,
And Christ crucified,
And the day of judgment near at hand.
The alder-trees, the head of the line,
Formed the van.
The willows and quicken-trees
Came late to the army.
Plum-trees, they are scarce,
Unlonged for men.
The elaborate medlar-trees,
The objects of contention.
The prickly rose bushes,
Against a host of giants,
The raspberry brake did
What is better failed
For the security of life.
Privet and woodbine
And ivy on its front,
Life furze to the combat
The cherry-tree was provoked.
The birch, not withstanding his high mind,
Was late before he was arrayed.
Not because of his cowardice,
But on account of his greatness.
The laburnum held in mind,
That your wild nature was foreign.
Pine-trees in the porch,
The chair of distribution
By me greatly exalted,
In the presence of kings.
The elm with his retinue,
Did not go aside a foot;
He would fight with the centre,
And the flanks, and the rear.
Hazel-trees, it was judged
That ample thy mental exertion.
The privet, happy is his lot,
The bull of battle, the lord of the world.
Morawg and Morydd
Were made prosperous in pines.
Holly, it was tinted with green,
He was a hero.
The hawthorn, surrounded by prickles,
With pain at his hand.
The aspen-wood has been topped,
It was topped in battle.
The fern that was plundered.
The broom in the van of the army,
In the trenches he was hurt.
The gorse did not do well,
Notwithstanding let it overspread.
The heath was victorious, keeping off on all sides.
The common people were charmed,
During the proceeding of the men.
The oak, quick moving,
Before him, tremble heaven and earth.
A valiant door-keeper against an enemy,
His name is considered.
The blue-bells combined,
And caused a consternation.
In rejecting, were rejected.
Pear-trees, the best intruders
in the conflict on the plain.
A very wrathful wood,
The chestnut is bashful,
The opponent of happiness,
The jet has become black,
The mountain has become crooked,
The woods have become a kiln,
Existing formerly has the great seas,
Sine was heard the shout:---
The tops of the birch covered us with leaves.
And transformed us, and changed our faded state.
The branches of the oak have ensnared us
From the Gwarchan Mwelderw.
Laughing on the side of rock,
The mold is not an ardent nature.
Not of mother and father was I made,
Did my Creator create me.
Of nine-formed faculties,
Of the fruit of fruits,
Of the fruit of the primordial God,
Of primroses and blossoms on the hill,
Of the earth, of an earthly course,
When I was formed,
Of the flower nettles,
Of the water of the ninth wave.
I was enchanted by Math,
Before I became immortal,
I was enchanted by Gwydyon
The great purifier of the Brithon,
Of Eurwys, of Euron,
Of Euron, of Modron.
Of five battalions of scientific ones,
Teachers, children of Math.
When the removal occurred,
I was enchanted by the Guledig.
When he was half-burnt,
I was enchanted by the sage
Of Sages, in the primitive world.
When I had a being;
When the host of the world was in dignity,
The bard was accustomed to benefits.
To the song of praise I am inclined, which the tongue recites.
I played in twilight,
I slept in purple;
I was truly in the enchantment
With Dylan, the son of the wave.
In the circumference, in the middle,

Between the knees of kings,
Scattering spears not keen,
From heaven when came,
To the great deep, floods,
In the battle there will be
Four score hundreds,
That will divide according to their will.
Are they neither older or younger,
Than myself in their divisions.
A wonder, Canhwr are born, every one of nine hundred.
He was with me also,
With my sword spotted with blood.
Honor was allotted to me
By the Lord, and protection (was) where he was.
If I come to where the boar was killed,
He will compose, he will decompose,
He will form languages.
The strong-handed gleamer, his name,
With a gleam he rules his numbers.
They would spread out in a flame,
When I shall go on high.
I have been a speckled snake on the hill,
I have been a viper in Llyn.
I have been a bill-hook crooked that cuts,
I have been a ferocious spear
With my chasuble and bowl
I will prophesy not badly.
Four score smokes
On every one that bring.
Five battalions of arms
Will be caught by my knife.
Six steeds of yellow hue
A hundred times better is
my cream-colored steed,
Swift as the sea-mew
Which will not pass
Between the sea and the shore.
Am I not pre-eminent in the field of blood?
Over it are a hundred chieftains.
Crimson (is) the gem of my belt,
Gold my shield border.
There has not been born, in the gap,
That has been visiting me,
Except Goronwy,
From the dales of Edrywy.
Long white my fingers,
It is long since I have been a herdsman.
I have traveled the earth,
Before I was proficient in learning.
I have traveled, I made a circuit,
I slept in a hundred islands.
A hundred Caers I have dwelt in.
Ye intelligent Druids,
Declare to Arthur,
What is there more early
Than I that they sing of.
And one is come
From considering the deluge
And Christ crucified,
And the day of future doom.
A golden gem in a golden jewel.
I am splendid
And shall be wanton
From the oppression of the metal-workers.

The Wood Song

Taught to Mike by Sam Adams
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2001

You don't have to live in a forest to have a Yule log, just a saw, a car, and a nearby park with some dead or fallen wood. But what kind of wood do you want? Here's a song that's been around awhile and should help you.

Oaken logs will warm you well, That are old and dry;
Logs of pine will sweetly smell, But the sparks will fly.
Birch logs will bum too fast; Chestnut, scarce at all.
Hawhorn logs are good to last, Burn them in the fall.

Holly logs will burn like wax, You may burn them green;
Elm logs, like to smouldering flax, No flame to be seen.
Beech logs for the winter-time, Yew logs as well.
Green elder logs it is a crime For any man to sell.

Pear logs and apple logs, They will scent your room.
Cherry logs across the dogs Smell like flowers of broom.
Ashen logs, smooth and grey, Burn them green or old;
Buy up all that come your way, Worth their weight in gold

Some Notes on Oaks

Druid Chronicler, 1978
By Rachel

This article is by Rachel, the Grove Botanist for the Mother Grove. She has over twenty years experience in the biological sciences and is an expert on the medicinal and magical properties of herbs and fungi.

There are 275 species of Oak inhabiting the temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere and the high altitudes of the tropics. They extend as far south as Columbia and the Malay Archipelago. So if you live north of the Equator, you should be within easy reach of at least one oak tree.

Among American Druids there are certain fallacies concerning something called an "English Oak." Just what are people referring to? There are at least a half a dozen kinds of oak that grow in England and all are more closely related to oaks in other places than they are to each other! Many believe that a California oak can never measure up to the grandeur of an English Oak. But the largest oak tree growing in England is only 80 feet high (and is in its old age,) while California Valley Oaks and Black Oaks frequently measure over a hundred feet high. The largest White Oak in the world lives in San Bernadino County in southern California (my books don't give its exact height.) Quercus Schnecku averages 180 feet and grows in the Mississippi Basin. This inferiority complex about California oaks must come from comparing them to the surrounding Redwoods and Sequoias.

The first step in tracking down your local oaks is to go to your nearest library. In the "Nature" section you should find a Flora Key for your area. Look up "quercus" in the index. "Quercus" is the scientific name for Oak and rather than being Latin (as is usually the case-with western scientific names) it is Celtic and means "fine tree." Usually there will be more than one sort of Oak listed, each with a paragraph describing the tree. If the key is highly scientific, you may be tempted to give up after a few words of impossible language. But don't surrender yet! Scan down the paragraph and somewhere near the end you will run across a sentence like this one out of Munz' California Flora (on Quercus KilZoggii--the Black Oak):

"Common in hills and mts, mostly, 1000-8000 ft, mixed evergreen F., Yellow Pine F., N. Oak Wd. San Diego N. through Sierra Nevada and Cost Ranges to Ore."

Now if you can figure out the abbreviations, you now know where to look. Elsewhere in the paragraph should be the average height of the tree and whether it is evergreen or deciduous (drops its leaves in the fall.)

All oaks have one thing in common and that is acorns, whether the oak involved is one foot high or 180. Late summer is the best time to locate your local oaks, since the acorns are big enough to see easily. Knowing the average height and general location of the trees you are looking for should combine with these acorns to make it easy to find one, two, possibly even an entire grove of oaks. Once you find an oak of a particular sort and make friends with it, you will be able to spot its sisters and brothers easily.

To be continued

More Notes on Oaks

September 22/23, 78 c.e.

This article, begun last issue, is by Rachel, the Mother Grove's Botanist. She has over twenty years experience in the biological sciences and is an expert on the medicinal and magical properties of herbs and fungi.

It takes twenty years for an acorn to become a mature oak tree, and it can then live for two or three hundred years in some species. Oaks are not the biggest trees, nor the tallest, nor necessarily the most "impressive." What then makes them so special? Why did they become the Sacred Trees throughout all of Europe? One explanation is the observed fact that oaks are hit by lightning (the "fire of the Gods" --IB) seventeen times more often than any other sort of tree.

(This made the oak sacred to the Fire/Sun/Storm Gods of Europe and made the mistletoe that grew in its branches the most highly prized of all. The Germans and Slavs had their oak cults too, so the Druids of the Celts weren't the only ones. --IB)

When people lived as hunter-gatherers, the oak was considered important for many reasons other than the religious ones. It fed people, tanned their clothes, and cured their ills. Let's analyze the tree by parts.

The wood is valued in Europe for its hardness and toughness. Though there are harder woods and tougher ones, only the oak combines these qualities in its wood. Beams cut 800 years ago in England are still sound in old buildings. Logs dug up from peat bogs have been found in good preservation, despite having been submerged thousands of years ago.

The bark has been used for centuries to tan leather--something very important in a hunting culture that does not have weaving. The active ingredient, tannic acid, is also a medicine with slightly tonic, strongly astringent and antiseptic actions. It is used for chronic diarrhea and dysentery and as a gargle for sore throats. The bark also makes a number of dyes ranging from yellow to dark brown, black and a purplish brown. In England, after the tannic acid had been extracted, the bark (then called "tam") was dried and used for fuel and as a mulch around tender plants (since it generates warmth.) In addition, some species of oak (such as the Cork Oak in England and another in California) produce cork from their bark.

Oak galls (swellings caused by parasites) have an even higher amount of tannic acid, and are used to make ink and as a strong local astringent applied externally to stop hemorrhaging (naturally, they are also used in tanning.)

Then we have the acorns. These nuts are easy to open and can be quite tasty if left to leach out their tannic acid in running water for a day or two. They seem to have been the main staple in European hunters' diets until the invention of agriculture replaced them with grains. Acorns are still easier to process than wild grasses, and can be easily stored all winter in a dry place or ground into a flour. In Europe today, acorns have been pretty well forgotten as a food and are used only in times of famine (and then they forget to leach them!) or to feed hogs. But in the Americas, however, acorns are still eaten by Indians and by a growing number of foraging buffs. According to an analysis by Lancet, acorns are 6.3% water, 5.2% protein, 43% fat and 45% carbohydrates.

To see how well the oak can help humans, look at the Northern California Indians. They fished and tended their oak groves, growing strong and happy until the Europeans came. The only crop they raised was tobacco, since everything else was provided freely by the environment without work (I'm not sure it was that easy,--IB.)

So look upon the oak tree as the Lady before Kore, the Wheat Goddess, and remember how much it can give you if you ask. Remember too that the deciduous oaks are the best for getting acorns to eat and the evergreen oaks for medicinal uses.

In future articles I'll be discussing Giant Sequoias and other Redwoods, Ashes, Birches and other trees of interest to Druids.

Bristlecone Pines

Article & photos by Shirin Morton
Pentalpha, March 1979

One day in May after purchasing a used Toyota and arranging time off work, I bounced home and said to my double Libran mate, "Guess what, pack your bags, we're going to the Bristlecone Pine Forest." Despite concern about finding camping spots on a holiday weekend, we loaded up the "Federation Shuitle-craft" to the air ducts and started off for a four-day Memorial Day weekend. From Berkeley we took 580 to Manteca where we turned up 120 towards Yosemite. That evening we camped at Tullock Reservoir for $1.50 a night. The following morning we started off through Yosemite on Tioga Pass Road. (Tioga Pass is a toll road and is only open during good-weather months. Alternately, one can go south on 395 from Reno, Nevada, or north on 395 from Mojave, CA. But by any route, when traveling in mountainous areas during bad- weather months, always check road conditions with the Highway Patrol.)

Tioga Pass Road ended at Lee Vining, a sleepy mountain town on the edge of Mono Lake, a large alkaline (or salt) lake which was fascinating for its mineral deposits on the edges. We walked with care as one can sink in the muck which in many places appears to be solid.

From Lee Vining we went to Mammoth Lakes where we camped the next night. Mammoth Lakes, a bountiful recreational area, had snow still on the ground. Where we camped there was a spectacular waterfall. Outside of Mammoth lakes we stopped at the Inyo National Forest Ranger Headquarters for maps and information. (I suggest people visiting our National Parks and Forests make similar stops. Much information can be obtained at these headquarters from the friendly and cooperative Forest Smokeys.)

From the Inyo National Forest Headquarters, we continued down 395 to Big Pine. Here we stopped, filled the gas tanks and water bottles, and stocked up on extra food. We knew that after turning on to the road going to the Forest there would be no services. The turn to the Bristlecone Pine Forest was well-marked by a large sign proclaiming "The Oldest Living Things."

The Bristlecones live at an elevation of 10,000 ft. in the White Mountains. Temperatures drop 5'for every thousand feet climbed, so carry appropriate clothing. If your car is not in shape for mountain driving, have it serviced before you leave. The road is hilly and becomes very rocky if you go deep into the pine forest, and sharp rocks ting things to bald tires.

The Bristlecone, Pinus aristala, is a small to medium sized tree living near tree line in the high Rocky Mountains and Great Basin areas. It has a smooth gray bark, irregularly fissured, scaly and reddish brown. The needles are numerous and densely crowded, with five 2 to 3 1/2" long dark green needles to a cluster. The cones are short stalked, 3 to 6" long, and are yellow-brown with thick rounded scales and large seeds 3/8-1/2" long. (This scientific description is from a U.S. Forestry pamphlet titled, "Important Forest Trees of the U.S.," Agriculture Handbook No. 519. It can be had for the asking from any local Forest Department Office.)

John Muir had this to say about the Bristlecones: "Some stand firmly erect, feathered with radiant tail tassels down to the ground, forming slender, tapering towers of shining verdure; others with two or three specialized branches pushed out at right angles to the trunk and densely clad with the tasseled spray, take the form of beautiful ornamental crosses, while on the roughest ledges of crumbling limestone are lowly old giants five or six feet in diameter that have braved the storms of more than a thousand years. But whether young or old, sheltered or exposed to the wildest gales, this tree is ever found to be irrepressibly and extravagantly picturesque, offering a richer and more varied series of forrns to the artist than any other species I have yet seen."

The Bristlecone grows only about 1" every hundred years. A very thin veil of living tissue is all that is required to keep the tree alive. Because the tree grows very slowly, part of it can be dead while another part is quite alive. Even the oldest trees produce fertile seeds. Often known as "Living Driftwood," Bristlecones cling tenaciously to life in one of the harshest climates of the North American mountain ranges, on rocky alkaline soil, with rainfall a very sparse 8-10 inches a year. Wind, ice, and snow all work together to sculpt these graceful ancient beauties into beautiful living abstract forms.

Tree coring (a process of drawing a core of wood out of a living tree by inserting a hollow metal tube so the rings can be counted) has proven that some of these trees are over 4,000 years old, which is older than the oldest known Sequoia. Some of these trees were growing when the Egyptian Pyramids were being built. Many were hundreds of years old during the Golden Age of Rome.

Their longevity under extreme survival conditions is what awes me most about these beauties. A whole meditation of life and survival is achieved by visiting these trees. In this high elevation, in thin crisp air, there is an impression of being in a strange world, almost reminiscent of a lunar landscape. The tree's extreme lifespan is linked to the extreme conditions it lives in poor soil with a minimum of moisture and short growing season. Not all Bristle cones attain great age. Those growing the slowest produce dense highly resinous wood which is resistant to rot and disease, and are more likely to join the Fraternity of the 4,000 year old Ancients. Trees anchored to more moist slopes grow fat and tall, produce less dense wood, and succumb at an earlier age. Longest life is granted to trees able to cling to life under situations of severe duress.

The Bristlecone Pine Forest is in two sections: Schulmann Grove and Patriarch Grove. Schulmann Grove is the first fully pure stand of trees you come to. At Schulmarm Grove there is a ranger station, picnic tables and marked nature walks. One of the nature walks, "the Methuselah Trail," takes you to the Methuselah Tree, 4,700 years old.

If your tires are good, nerves for bad driving conditions adequate and time sufficient, you can drive to the Patriarch Grove eleven miles up a very rocky mountain road. The effort is rewarding, for here are some of the most exquisite trees I've ever seen. Be prepared, the temperature may be quite cold. When we were there snow still covered some of the ground making walking without boots difficult. Patriarch Grove is a must for photographers as it is set within a large open bowl, well exposed to wind and weather, which have molded the trees into unusual abstract sculptures.

Back down the road from the ranger's station is a very nice undeveloped (no showers, no running water, no lights, no cabins and outhouses only) U.S. Forest Service Campground. Sometimes in the evening after dark the ranger shows movies and gives talks about the Bristlecones. This is a fitting climax to a marvelous journey.

If you decide to visit the Bristlecones, please remember that the Forest Department has rules for the protection of these trees. Find out what they are ahead of time.

The Hawthorn

June 1982
Volume 6 Number 3
UATH Late May to June.

The name for this time of the year is taken from the hawthorn, whitethorn, or mayflower. In ancient Britain, this was the time of rest and abstinence after the Beltaine festivities. Old clothes were worn, and the temples cleansed in psychic and physical preparation for the summer. The time is associated with the Goddess Cardea, who casts spells using hawthorn, and it was she who had to be appeased at marriages as such unions were hateful to her, she being associated with chastity and solitude. She is the benefactor of crafts people and the guardian of hinges, having the power to open what is shut and to shut up what is open. She is able, as well, to look forward in time, and back to the hidden past, Cardea lives at the hinge of the Universe, in a starry castle, behind the North Wind. She was worshipped in Britain, and perhaps in the lowlands of Scotland, in Strath-Clyde.

Mistletoe

By Emmon Bodfish
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 1982

The Druid cutting of the mistletoe (Uilioc in Gaidhlig, derived from the phrase "ever young") is described by the Roman writer, Pliny, in his work on the Gauls, "The Druids hold nothing in so sacred respect as the mistletoe, and the tree on which it grows, provided it be an oak. They select certain woods of oak, and they do not perform any sacred rite without the leaf of that tree; so that hence it is likely they have been called 'Druids', explaining the name from: the (Greek root 'drus' an oak; Druidae, oakites.) Whatever grows on that tree, more than its natural growth, they think has been sent from Deity, and is a sign that the tree has began chosen by Deity as select. However, that species of mistletoe is very rarely found, and when it is it is sought after with great devotion, and especially at the sixth day of the moon, which is the beginning of their months. Having prepared sacrifices and feasts under the tree, they bring up two white bulls, whose horns are then first bound; the priest in white robe, ascends the tree, and cuts it off with a golden knife" (sickle) throwing it down, it is received in a white sheet. Then, and not till then, they sacrifice the offerings, praying that Deity will render gifts on those on whom the mistletoe is bestowed. When mistletoe is given as a potion, it can remove animal barrenness, and it is remedy against all poisons."

Life is a Birch, Whose Bark is Appealing!

By Sam Peeples, 1st Order, Ex-Stanford Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 2002

Birch is derived from "Bright" in Indo-European and related to Sanskrit "bhurga," "Birkana" in German, "Beorc" in Saxon, "Bedwen" in Welsh, "Bjarkan" in Norse. "Beith" in Gaelic is the first month of a lunar calendar and as the start of the Ogham alphabet, it is appropriate for beginnings and entry into Druidism. S.T. Coleridge named it "Lady of the Woods." As birch is one of the first trees to come into leaf it would be an obvious choice as representation of the emergence of spring. Often it is the wood of choice for the Maypoles, Yule Log of last season, anytime, really! But, because of its associations with spring cleaning and babies, it is appropriate for Oimelc or Spring Equinox. Its wood is good for starting fires for any season.

Birch trees are one of the most recognizable trees in the forest, with its slender trunk, banded bark, light branches, alternating serrated leaves and thin peeling bark. It usually grows in copses with multiple shoots in the same spot. They grow to 50-70 feet and are common to Europe and America. They tend to live 60 years. Birches are wind pollinated with little "catkins" in April, appearing with their leaves. Male catkins release pollen and fall apart while female catkins catch the pollen and release the winged seeds in mid-Autumn. The seeds are "pioneers" and tend to like bare sunny patches. Fallen Birch twigs from the parent tree have the capability of rooting and beginning a sapling. Never take a complete ring from around the trunk as this would halt the flow of nutrients and would kill the tree and only prune in late spring after leaves are out and past the "collar." A healthy Birch's thirsty roots will spread twice as wide as the height of the tree. The Birch populations are currently being pestered by "Bronze Birch Borers," "Birch Leaf Miner" worms, and the Birch Canker fungus.

In Britain there are three varieties:

1) The Dwarf Birch (Betula nana,) a Scottish Highland shrub that grows even on tundra.
2) Silver (warty) Birch (Betula pendula) whose twigs are hairless and droopy but bear tiny warts and found on well-drained ground. It grows quite tall.
3) Downy Birch (Betula pubescens,) like the name, this smaller tree has peach fuzz, found on moors and swamps.

In addition to the Silver Birch, America's major varieties are:

1) Paper Birch (Betula papyrifera,) famed for its peely white bark and black stripes. Popular with children who pull off its bark. A quick growing tree, it is often sought by timber companies.
2) River Birch ((Betula nigra) is less common. Naturally found near rivers.

Associations are: Birth, pioneering, fresh endeavor, purity, one of the three pillars of wisdom (Oak, Yew, Birch,) exorcism.

Folk and Magic Use:

(as always consult your Doctor)

- Brooms handles and sweeps made of wood and twigs especially for new year cleaning
- Russians attached a red ribbon to a branch to fight the evil-eye.
- Norse Farmers connected it to Thor and attached it to a house to avoid lightning.
- Scandinavians flail themselves in saunas with birch twigs.
- Scandinavians wrapped the bark around their legs to keep out the wet - gaiters.
- Siberian shamans used Magic Mushrooms (Amanita muscaria) to climb the skies.
- Dutch boys lashed young women to make them fertile. (eh?)
- Anglo-Saxons beat criminals and children with switches of it.
- Irish often used it for making doo-dads and writing Ogham.
- In Pembrokeshire (now Dyfed) girls would give their lovers a twig of birch as a sign of encouragement; if they were not so lucky they often got a hazel twig.
- The Celts made cradles of Birch for protecting the babies
- Native Americans used the bark was used for buckets, canoes, and as a sugary drink.

- The pitch was made into a glue for fixing flint arrow and spear heads onto shafts.
- Parchment or rune sticks of a Birch struck by lightning can be gathered during the moon.
- The inner bark contains methyl salicylate, which is a counter-irritant and analgesic.
- Bark infusions for rheumatism.
- Poultices of leave, catkins for skin problems
- Lotions from bark's oil
- Tea for mouth sores, kidney stones and provide a diuretic
- Young leaves and shoots for laxatives
- Small amulets of Birch will protect you from Faery and lunatics (useful!)
- Wine can be made from the rising sap in March
- Birch beer brewed from the branches.
- Thatchers and wattlers used its branches
- Birch charcoal often used for gun-powder and indigestion
- The timber is tough, stiff and fairly easily worked and is used in joinery, carving, cabinet and furniture making, clogs, spools and bobbins, plywood and flooring
- The bark, when dried and twisted into a rope, is used for candles.

Winter Birch Tree Cookies

Christmas Baking (1997 Pillsbury Classic Cookbook)
http://southernfood.about.com/library/holiday/blxm193.htm

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 3/4 cup of sugar (possibly birch sap sugar?)
- 1 tablespoon milk
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1 egg
- 2 cups Pillsbury BEST All Purpose Flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 package (12 oz) vanilla-flavored candy coating or almond bark, melted

2 ounces bittersweet chocolate, melted Heat oven to 400 degrees. Grease cookie sheets. In large bowl, combine sugar and butter; beat until well blended. Add milk, vanilla and egg; beat well. Lightly spoon flour into measuring cup; level off. Add flour, baking powder and cinnamon; mix well. Shape dough into 1-inch balls. On lightly floured surface, roll balls into logs, 6 inches long. Place on greased cookie sheets. Bake at 400 degrees F. for 5 to 8 minutes or until light golden brown. Immediately remove from cookie sheets. Cool completely. Place melted candy coating in pie pan. Dip logs into candy coating; place on waxed paper to cool. Drizzle melted bittersweet chocolate over logs to resemble birch trees. 3 1/2 dozen cookies.

Highland Birch Sap Wine

- 8 pints sap
- 1lb chopped raisins or dried fruit
- 2lb sugar
- juice of 2 lemons
- general purpose yeast

Collect the sap from a number of trees so as not to overtap an individual tree, which could kill it. The sap should be collected in early March whilst it is still rising. Select larger trees, bore a hole about 1"-2" deep, around 4ft off the ground, place a tube or something similar in the hole and allow the sap to run down. Then put a suitable container underneath and allow to fill. The hole will heal naturally, but it wouldn't hurt to wedge a piece of birch bark over the hole to aid it. Boil the sap as soon as collected, add the sugar and simmer for 10 minutes. Place the raisins in a suitable bucket, pour in the boiling liquid and add the yeast and lemon juice when it has cooled to blood temperature. Cover the bucket and leave to ferment for three days before straining off into a demi-john and sealing with an air lock. Let stand until fermentation finishes, then rack off into a clean jar and let the sediment settle. Bottle the wine and store in a cool place for at least a month. Good for Vernal Equinox.

Birch Tea

This is an old and effective remedy to combat cystitis, urinary problems, gout, rheumatism and arthritis and to remove excess water from the body. To make the tea, collect the birch leaves (the best time is in the spring when the leaves are fresh) and dry them out of direct sunlight. Put 2-3 teaspoonfuls in a cup and pour on boiling water, then cover and allow to stand for 10 minutes. Take the tea 3-4 times daily or just occasionally if you need a mouthwash. Fresh leaves can also be used but as the months progress the leaves deteriorate.

Hazel & Salmon

By Emmon Bodfish
A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 1989

One of the basic myths of Druidism is the story of Finn, a young renegade of the warrior caste and his encounter with the Druidic Salmon of Knowledge and the awakening of his psychic and spiritual self. This is in a psychological sense his ascent to the Druid caste and Awareness. The myth was popularized by a nineteenth century author under the name of "Ossian," who added a good deal of "Celtic twilight" of his own, but the myth is very old.

"Around a sacred well, in the heart of Erin, grew nine Hazel trees which bore crimson fruit." (This is most likely a cognate of the well and the World Tree in Germanic mythology, and part of the basic Indo-European World Tree cosmology.) "It was the property of these Hazelnuts that whoever ate them immediately came into the possession of knowledge of everything that ever existed in the world. One class of creatures alone had the privilege of feeding on them: the magical species of immortal Salmon who lived in the well." The human who ate one of the Salmon would attain instant Awareness of everything. However, only a person selected by destiny, or probably originally by a deity, could secure the sacred flesh; from all others it would be taken away before they could taste of it.

Finn, having mastered all the skills of the warrior while he was still a youth, did not go into the service of any chieftain, but, perhaps dis-satisfied with that life, wandered alone over the plains of Ireland. At length he came to the banks of the River Boyne, which sprang from the sacred well of the Salmon of Knowledge. There he found a Druid, a woods hermit called Finn the Seer. (He was probably one of a class of Druidic hermit-mystics who were a feature of Pagan Celtic society and probably cognate with the solitary forest Yogis of Brahmanism.) He had been living beside the pool for seven years, hoping to secure on e of the salmon and total Awareness, it having been prophesized that one called Finn would attain the Ultimate Knowledge at this well. Finn the Seer approves of the young man and agrees to take Finn MacCumhal as one of his servants, not knowing the youth's real name. (In place of servant, we should probably read student, apprentice, disciple, as that is how one learned mystic skills in most ancient cultures, by ingratiating oneself to an accomplished shaman or mystic and serving him or her as a master.)

Soon after Finn MacCumhal's arrival at the well, the old Seer catches one of the salmon. He hands it to the young man to cook, warning him to eat no portion of it. When Finn brings his master the cooked fish, the Seer immediately perceives the change in his young servant. He has attained All-Knowledge. "Have you eaten of the Salmon?" he demands. "No indeed!" replies the youth. "But while cooking it, a blister arose on the skin of it and I put my thumb on that to push it down. It burnt my thumb, and in pain I put my thumb under one of my teeth to cool it." The old man was perplexed. "You told me that your name was 'Deimne'. Have you another name?" "Yes," answered the youth, "in my warrior trials I was known as 'Finn'." "That is enough." Said the old man. "It is for you that the Salmon was intended. Eat." Finn MacCumhal ate the rest of the Salmon of Knowledge, and in the rest of his life he had only to place his thumb under his tooth (a valid concentration, meditation technique) to receive foreknowledge and divine counsel.

This and other early exploits of Finn MacCumhal are contained in a little tract written on a fragment of a ninth century Psalter of Cashel. I have used the Ossianic Scoiety's translation, from Charles Squire.

The Hazel is one of the sacred trees of Druidism. Its seeds symbolize wisdom. This fall, when I came across some organically grown Hazel nuts in a local market I decided to try this experiment. I have been on a salt-free, vegetarian diet for a dozen or so years, now, and sense the effects of different foods fairly rapidly. After fasting for half a day, I ate just enough hazel nuts to satisfy the hunger. I was surprised at how few this required. They produced a clear, calm, and satisfied state of min, contemplative and appropriate for taking a wide and long perspective on things. And they kept me from feeling hungry again for a long time. I could see that these effects would be helpful in scholarly pursuits or in a contemplative lifestyle. We cannot know, of course, whether this effect was any part of the reason that the Ancient Celts had the Hazel tree standing beside the pool of knowledge in their mythology, where the Teutonics had the Ash. "There Yggdrasil stand over the three Welssprings of the World." I think Celtic Hazel pool is a cognate of Mimir's well in the German system. Both point back to some Proto-Indo-European myth of a World Tree and sacred springs.

A fellow Druid pointed out in Professor Frerick's reference in his book, Proto-Indo-European Trees, University of Chicago Press, 1970, to evidence that the Hazel may have been one of the first native European plants to have been deliberately cultivated by the inhabitants of central Europe before the arrival of grain from the Fertile Crescent.

Hazel Corylus avellana

Local names for nuts: cobnut, filbert; filbeard, glos (Oxford,) hale, hales, (Cornwall,) Hasketts (Dorchester); Woodnut (Yorkshire.)

Abundant throughout the British Isle, except in very damp areas. Grows in woods, hedgerows and scrubland. A shrub, 4-12 feet high, with roundish, downy, toothed leaves. Best known for the yellow male catkins, called 'lambs' tails, which appear in the winter. Nuts from late August to October, ½" to 1" long, ovoid and encased in a thick green lobed husk.

The problem with hazelnuts is that if you hold back from picking them until they are fully ripe, the squirrels and jays will get there first. If you pick whilst the nuts are still abundant on the tree, you will not have the same flavor.

The Hazel Tree

By Sam Peeples, free-roaming Druid
A Druid Missal-Any, Spring 2002

Greetings everyone, due to the thunderous applause (i.e. three people) on my birch article, I've been requested to write an article on the Hazel Tree. Its natural side topics of Salmon and Wells (in a Celtic context) will be discussed by Mike and Naomi. I can't attest to all the following information 's validity, but it will provide a good overview of its associations.

Etymology

The European Hazel tree's scientific name is corylus avellana and America's Filbert tree is named corylus americana. (Witch Hazel, although externally resembling Hazel, is actually hamamelis virginiana, with exploding seed pods, but it is apparently native only to New England.) The genus' name Corylus comes from the Greek korys meaning helmet, a reference to the calyx covering the nut; avellana commemorating the small town of Avella in Italy where the nuts were famously cultivated. The English name for the tree and its nut is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word haesel knut, haesel meaning cap or hat, thus referring to the cap of leaves on the nut on the tree (or haesl possibly signified a baton of authority.) The Gaelic word for hazel is Coll, pronounced "cull," and it was popular in men's names. See also: German Haselnuss, French Noisette, Dutch Hazelnoot. Its nickname is "Lamb's Tail." There is often a resident spirit.

Hazel appears frequently in place names in the western Scotland, such as the Isle of Coll and Bar Calltuin in Appin, both in Argyll-shire where the tree and its place names are the most common. Perhaps even Caledonia (Hill of Hazels) is a derivative. In Gaelic, a hazel grove was calltuin, (modern Scots Gaelic calltainn) and various places called Calton are associated with entrances to the Otherworld, one being the famous Calton Hill between Leith and Edinburgh. It also appears in the name of Clan Colquhoun whose clan badge is the hazel. Tara, the chief seat of the kingship of Ireland was possibly built near a hazel wood, and the great monastery of Clonord was build over a sacred pagan place known as The Wood of the White Hazel: Ross-Finnchuill.

Physical Characteristics

The Hazel has quite the reputation in European lore as a potent source of magical might (the other two being Oak and Hawthorne,) probably due to its ability to coppice into dozen young trees. Hazel is considered a small deciduous tree, usually with multiple stems and a spreading habit of its roots. It is actually an enormous shrub that can grow into a tree (but is usually coppiced) that may reach a height of 20-60 feet. It is hardy, moderately shade-tolerant and grows best on heavy but well-drained soil. Hazel, rather like Alder, prefers to be near water but is very accommodating as long as it is not too dry. Its narrow-pointed, toothed leaves are about 5-12 cm and are alternating. As a tree, its maximum life span is about 60 years, but when coppiced back it can survive up to 600 years and still produce a good crop of poles. Their wood is white to reddish, tough and flexible

It is naturally an under-story plant, particularly in oak and ash woods. Hazel trees grow as a clump of slender trunks. When they do adopt a one-trunk-and-canopy tree shape, they readily respond to coppicing, practices which can actually extend and even double the lifespan of a hazel. Either way, people have put the young shoots or whips and the thin trunks to a variety of uses. The management of hazel coppice and "coppice with standards" is a precise and ancient craft. Traditionally, a coppice would be cut on a 7-15 year rotation and the woodland divided into the same number of sections as years in the rotation so one part of the wood was harvested every year.

The hazel would be identified in the late winter by its branchy, hairy twigs carrying greenish buds. The opening of the leaves in April are large and rounded, and double teeth on its edges. The bark of the hazel tree is very smooth, with shades of brown and grey. Male and female flowers grow on the same plant--the male catkins open as the first warm days of spring arrive into bunches of bright yellow, drooping "lamb tails;" female flowers on the same branches appear as tiny pink tufts on plump buds. The fertilized flowers develop into the well-known clusters of nuts, which turn brown in October.

I hate to imply that trees are only good when we can use them for some purpose. Trees have certain rights to unfettered existence as do all living creatures. That said, this is how you could utilize their bounty.

Practical Uses for the Tree's Wood

· The interior of the walls of many ancient homes were "wattle and daub," using coppiced hazel branches, woven into a lattice, and mud or clay daubed onto it. Some consider this the origin of Celtic art interlacing. The Glastonbury Abbey is rumored to have been built on a Druidic "hedge school" built of wattle. Daub is made of wet clay, dung, chopped straw and lime powder. When this dried, a thin wall could last hundreds of year if not dampened.

* Coppicing is a skilled job that requires practice and only minimal hand tools; usually, just a billhook, axe, and mallet, as well as a drawknife for stripping the trees of their bark.
* Hazel stems split lengthwise and twist easily to make hurdles, thatching, liggers, spars, sways, and pegs. Hazel is or was used for fencing (which blessed a home,) hurdles, barrel hoops, walking sticks, fishing rods, fish weirs, whip handles, ties for fastening thatch, pegs, fuel for ovens, torches, and charcoal for gunpowder, domestic fires, and ovens.
* Woodland crafts using hazel are also enjoying a resurgence, and hazel wattle hurdles have even been used as sound screens along motorways.
* Like willow, young coppiced hazel shoots were used to weave a variety of baskets and other containers.
* Hazel has long been a favorite wood from which to make staffs, whether for ritual Druidic use, for medieval self defense, as staffs favored by pilgrims, or to make shepherds crooks, bishop's crosiers and everyday walking sticks. In the case of the latter two, the pliancy of the hazel's wood was used to bend the stems into the required shape, though it was also customary to bend the hazel shoots when still on the tree to "grow" the bend into a crook or walking stick.
* Hazel leaves are usually the earliest native ones to appear in spring and often the last to fall in autumn, and were fed to cattle as fodder.
* Hazel nuts (see article below) were a popular source of food.

Magical and Medical Uses for the Hazel

* Hazel indicates intuition to lead to the source, poetry, divination and meditation.
* It is said the Hazel tree takes nine years to bear fruit from the time of planting; nine years of experience before it will imbue its fruit (or offspring) with its essence. A Hindu teaching says, "keep to yourself what you have been taught until it is yours to share," for only then can it truly be taught again. Hazel asks us to learn the values of time, patience, and experience, and allows us to express ourselves in art, poetry and music.
* Hazel represents letter "C" in the "ogham alphabet ("C" is for Coll,) and often used for constructing Ogham wands. The wands of the Druids were made from hazel branches and even the staffs of the Celtic Christian Bishops were made from hazel to this day. Hermes' magic rod may have been made from hazel.
* MIDIR--An Irish god, lord of the wondrous land of Mag Mor, the tutor of the god Oengus, was struck by a stake cut from a hazel tree. Midir loses an eye which is replaced for him by the god of healing Dian-Cecht. Aonghus Og also carried one such wand. Sabd, mother of Oisin (son of Fionn,) is turned into a deer by such a wand of a Druid.
* It is one of the nine woods of a Beltaine Fire (Birch, Oak, Rowan, Willow, Hawthorn, Hazel, Apple, Vine, Fir) www.iit.edu/~phillips/personal/lore/belfire.html
* Until the seventeenth century, a forked Hazel stick was used to divine the guilt of persons in cases of murder and theft. Forked twigs of hazel were also favored by diviners, especially for finding water or treasure.
* Rain-bringing methods included sprinkling water on stones whilst reciting a charm, or tossing a little flour into a spring and stirring with a hazel-rod.
* Diarrhea and menstrual bleeding can be aided by mixing the dried husks and shells with red wine. Hamamelis virginiana in "Witch Hazel" oil is an outstanding treatment for hemorrhoids.
* Newfoundland: An old custom to cure a child of hernia was to split a green witch hazel tree and pass the child through it.
* Russia: Sometimes the cowherds symbolically beat the cattle three times with a willow or hazel branch to make the animals grow well
* Yorkshire: Soil taken from under a hazel bush was fed to Nidderdale cows that had lost their cud, while the earth underneath a freshly cut turf was reckoned good for scour in Swaledale calves. Hazel lambs-tail catkins were placed around the hearth to help the ewes at lambing time and rowan collars were put around lambs' necks; while if a lamb died unexpectedly, its corpse would be hung in a thorn or rowan tree, a custom found elsewhere not restricted to sheep.
* Hazel also has protective uses as anti-lightning charms. Gather hazel tree branches on Palm Sunday and keep them in water. Possibly a continuation of a Norse association of Hazel with Thor.
* A sprig of Hazel or a talisman of two Hazel twigs tied together with red or gold thread to make a solar cross can be carried as a protective good luck charm.
* A cap of Hazel leaves and twigs ensures good luck and safety at sea, and protects against shipwrecks.
* Finland: The stripped hazel stick was a sacred symbol. If there was struggle about a sown field they just set up a stripped stick until the matter was solved

* The week called Karwoche in German, or week of mourning or sorrow, begins with Palm Sunday. In lieu of palms, in Bad Kohlgrub and Mittenwald, the pussy-willow branches are bundled, tied with ribbons and attached to the end of a much longer hazel branch. Parishioners parade their creations as they proceed to church to have the bushels blessed. A good-natured competition usually arises as to whose branches are the longest, especially among the young boys.
* Earlier, in the fifteenth century, a recipe for summoning a fairy involves burying hazel wands "under some hill whereas you suppose fayries haunt."
* If you sleep under a Hazel bush you will have vivid dreams.
* Hazel trees were often planted near holy wells and strips of cloth were hung on them to remove illness of the supplicant.
* In English villages, country-dwellers associate a prolific show of hazel catkins with the advent of lots of babies, and late as the 1950s, the saying, "Plenty of catkins, plenty of prams" was taken quite seriously.
* Any Hazel twigs, wood or nuts should be gathered after sundown on Samhain since it will be at the peak of its magickal energy. On the waning moon, hazel and willow were not cut for baskets, nor was wood cut for boats. Hazel for magickal purposes must not be cut with a knife, but with a flint.

The Hazel Nut Itself

In days gone by, hazelnuts would have provided a source of protein since Neolithic times in England (South Cadbury and Avebury digs,) and they were often ground up and mixed with flour to be made into nourishing breads. Hazelnuts, of course, can be eaten, and are a good source of phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, copper, protein and fatty acids. The Gaelic word for hazelnuts is cno, and wisdom is cnocach. From the hazelnut we find the phrase "in a nut shell," because all wisdom and knowledge was compacted and contained within the nut. There are many stories of salmon eating hazelnuts, who then gained one speckled spot per hazelnut. Eating of hazelnuts would bestow wisdom on the recipient (such as bears or humans) and would then bestow gray hairs or freckles. Cultivated hazelnuts, called filberts, take their name from St. Philibert's Day on August 20th, the date by which hazelnuts were supposed to start ripening. They should be sown immediately after gathering, to keep them moist.
* Holy Cross Day on 14 September was traditionally given as a school holiday for children to go nutting, a custom which persisted in England until the First World War. An old saw proclaims that a girl who goes nutting on Sunday will meet the Devil and have a baby before she can wed.
* Various places celebrated Nutcrack Night sometime during November, when the stored nuts were opened, though apparently some parishioners were in the habit of taking hazelnuts to church on the following Sunday to be cracked noisily during the sermon. These people were called "crackers."
* On Halloween (also known as "Nut-Crack Night") The custom of "burning nuts" involves two nuts being placed in the fire, one is to bear your own name, the other that of the person you love. If the nuts burn quietly side-by-side then the relationship will be prosperous.
* Girls were told to place hazelnuts along the front of the fire grate, each one to symbolize one of her suitors. She could then divine her future husband by chanting, "If you love me, pop and fly; if you hate me, burn and die."
* Assign the name of your passion to a nut and throw it in the fire while saying:

> "A Hazelnut I throw in the flame, to this nut I
> give my sweetheart's name, If blazes the nut,
> so may thy passion grow, For 'twas my nut that
> did so brightly glow."

* In England, the Hazelnut is a symbol of fertility--a bag of nuts bestowed upon a bride will ensure a fruitful marriage, often by an older woman in the village at her threshold or thrown like rice at the wedding.
* Greek: After an arrangement was made, the matchmaker would return to the house of the bride where the announcement that the "Scartsofoli" was accepted without a problem. There was a custom and "Andeti" of the bridegroom to send hazelnuts and walnuts with the matchmaker so that the bride would treat relatives and friends who would visit her to express their felicitations.
* Children born in the autumn could have the "milk of the nut," said to be of great benefit in their future health.
* There was also a belief that hazelnut feed could increase a cow's milk yield.
* The milk taken from the nuts can be used to treat a chronic cough (add honey and water,) and when mixed with pepper helps stop runny eyes and noses.
* Finn as a youth ate a salmon, which was fed on hazelnuts of knowledge. Finn's mighty shield was of hazel wood. An old Fenian story tells how Maer, the wife of one Bersa of Berramain, fell in love with Finn and tried to seduce him with hazel-nuts from the Well of Segais bound with love charms. Finn refused to eat them, pronounced them "nuts of ignorance" rather than nuts of knowledge and buried them a foot deep in the earth.
* Today hazelnuts continue to be eaten, though more frequently in luxury foods such as chocolate and as hazelnut butter, and as a Christmas delicacy.
Hazelnuts were carried as charms in pockets to ward off rheumatism, lumbago ("elfshot,") and toothache in some parts of England and Ireland
* "Hazel Rings"--make a string of nine hazelnuts and tie the ends to form a circle. Bless the ring in the smoke of the Samhain fire. You can hang the ring in your home for protection in the coming year

Ivy and the Vine

By Sam Peeples, free-roaming Druid
A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 2002

Why do modern Druids go gaga over trees? Well trees are really cool if you look at them, I mean REALLY look at them. They also tend to stay in one place, which makes it hard for them to avoid our affections. But some plants have the itch to roam, such as the vines, sometimes even abandoning their roots for sunnier destinies, as do some Reformed Druids.

In the famous Battle of Cad Goddeau, finally written down in the 9th century, the writer describes a huge army composed of plants going off to war. Privet and woodbine And ivy on its front. Celtophiles, naturally enjoy guessing at the hidden meanings in the epithets given to each plant. The modern neo-pagans also like to associate these trees with ogham, planets, emotions, colors, shoe-sizes and months of the year. Two of the listed trees, aren't trees at all, they're creepers, which is vine with me.

In these exceptional plants is a lesson. We've all heard the expression "standing on the shoulders of giants?" Nobody makes up a culture in a vacuum, we build on the work of our ancestors, occasionally throwing out a new leaf. Not everybody can be the stout tree in our society; some of us must attach ourselves to giants and build on their achievements to reach the same heights. However, left untamed, they tend to obliterate the intent of the original, leaving a monotonous conformity.

Ivy

Gort was the Irish word for ivy, Hedera helix L., and it should be planted in the fall, with greenish flowers also blooming around Samhain. It is an ever-green plant like holly, and is actually part of the Ginseng family (araliaceae.) It is native to Europe and not to America. Its berries are poisonous in large amounts to blood cells, but used to be considered a cure for hangovers. The leaves were brothed and places on wounds and sores. The ancient Greeks used it to garland poets and heroes and counteract the effects of wine. Romans fed it to cattle and gave it to newlyweds. Interestingly, Gort is also the name of the giant robot in the Day the Earth Stood Still.

Unfortunately, Ivy has a dark side. Its tendrils can push through bricks and stones, destroying a wall slowly. It can also run rampant in forests, cloaking and choking the trees and darkening the forest floor so that other plants cannot grow. It has all the characteristics of a weed: Rapid, widespread dispersal, very tolerant of a variety of ecosystems, rapid reproduction, opportunistic, quickly dominating ecological disturbed areas, resistant to eradication. A friend of mine says this sounds like most missionaries he knows.

Modern people associate Ivy with traditions and old-age. Many old mansions, colleges and castles are covered with ivy, softening the sharper details of a building. In the use of the term Ivy League, the word Ivy implies those pretentious snots and the parasitic upper class feeding off the common folk. Whoops, sorry about that rant.

Poison Ivy, Poison Oak, and Poison Sumac are relatives of the Cashew family (Rhus) and not related to English ivy. However their three-some nature, shows that not all good things come in three and that only through experience can fakes be recognized.

Vine

Muin was the Irish name for the grapevine (Vitis vinifera L) and it grows about 110 feet. Grapes rarely grow wild anymore and are culturally being replaced by blackberries. Grape cultivation was widely-known in pre-Roman Celtic regions, even remote areas like ancient Slovenia, since the 6th Century B.C. Gaulish wine became indispensable in later Roman times especially since the Christian churches had such a fondness for their drug of choice.

The boiled leaves can be used for skin inflammations and grapes are good for coughs and ingestion. We all know the side-affects of grape-wine by intoxication. However, we have heard about the benefits of a glass or two of wine every day. It is a pity that Americans can't follow the French in drinking wine from youth at meals, as I believe it would result in more responsibility in drinking under the guidance of their parents rather than frat-brothers. Perhaps the greatest lesson of wine is that even rotting (i.e. fermenting) can be a beneficial process to us.

Both vines grow spirally, which some modern pagans associate with reincarnation or the ever-returning nature of search for self. Some postulate the two as enemies since Ivy prefers wet climates, and the vine prefers dry. Ivy also counteracts intoxication, supposedly, although also being linked with the fairy world's altered state.

The Ash Tree

By Sam Peeples, free-roaming Druid
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One of the easier trees to spot, this sturdy and reliable tree naturally features prominently in Celtic Lore and in the customs of various Indo-European peoples. Modern pagans are well familiar with the phase "by oak, ash, and thorn," which is used as a blessing during ritual or to affirm a charge of power in spellcraft.

There are about fifty species of the genus Fraxinus, and cultivation has produced and perpetuated a large number of varieties. The Common Ash and the Privet are the only representatives in England and Ireland of the Olive family Oleaceae, of which is the furthest northern species. It is the fourth most common tree in the British isles, and traces of pollen date back 7000 years. Other species include White Ash--fraxinus americana; European Ash--fraxinus excelsior (Including British Isles); Flowering Ash--fraxinus ornus. Rowan (or "Mountain Ash") is from a different family. The ash tree is known by several folk names: Nion, Asktroed, Jasen Bell, and Freixo. The word 'ash' derives from the Icelandic aske which means "great fire blaze," or from the Anglo-Saxon word Asech a poetic word for spear, while the botanical name Fraxinus means "great fire-light" due to its high flammability.

It grows 40' to 70' tall (some as great as 40meters) with a potential canopy of 20' to 50' in width. Unless cut back, it will have a long straight trunk. They take 45 years to mature, with a life span of 200 years, and longer if coppiced every 12 to 20 years. It likes rich, well-drain soil, with ample moisture, like the olive family. It is often found near limestone, but is adaptable to a wide range of pH. It can tolerate salt. Extreme cold and winter contraction can damage rapidly growing young trees.

Leaf: Opposite, pinnately compound, seven to 11 sessile, serrated leaflets, total leaf 10 to 14 inches long, dark green above, lighter below with tufts of brown hair. Normally very late coming into leaf, it can then be one of the earliest to loose its leaves.

If the oak come out before the ash

There's sure to be a splash

If the ash be out before the oak

Why, then you're sure to get a soak.

Feathery foliage allows many shrubs and plants to grow beneath it. Yellow in the fall. A wind pollinated species, the ash is generally a bisexual tree but you do get male and female trees but these can change sex! Some ash trees have flowers with both male and female parts, some have only male or only female flowers, and some produce separate male and female flowers on different branches. Some branches which produce only female flowers one year may produce all male flowers the following year. The fruit of the ash are the ash-keys: an oblong seed chamber with long strap wings. The keys hang from branches in little bunches and turn from green to brown. The seeds, or keys, stay on the trees through the winter, and only fall in spring. They can be carried quite long distances by the wind, and spring up quickly in almost any type of soil

Physical Uses of the Wood

* Laboratory tests show that ash has the greatest "impact strength" of all native hardwoods in the Isles. It will also bear more weight than any other tree when used for joists. It grows very quickly and has great elasticity. The wood is best used for interior purposes, works well, is subject to insect damages, polishes well, shrinks little in seasoning, and is excellent for steam-bending.
* The Anglo-Saxons used the fine-grained and springy Ash wood for making spears, shields, baskets, baseball bats, tool handles, arrow shafts, cricket bats, hop poles, hockey sticks, snooker cues, hurley ("The clash of the ash") and Shillelaghs. Before the development of light alloys ash wood was used for the construction of carts, boat frames, furniture (such as thrones,) joists, carriages, coaches, wagons,, aircraft wings. It dents easily, but rarely warps with age, but achieves a smooth polish and molding to the hands with usage.
* It rots easily when wet, so it should be kept away from the ground
* The longs burn well, even when freshly cut, but gives no smoke and its ashes are good for potash. It also makes good charcoal. There is a traditional poem various woods and the ash is considered good for royalty;

"...but ash new, or ash old is fit for Queen with crown of gold"

Herbal and Magical Uses

(consult a doctor or herbalist, of course)

Nordic Customs

Ash is well known to be sacred to Odin since the Ash is often known as the Yggdrassil (or the "Ash Yggdrassil") amongst the Scandinavian nations. In Norse mythology, the Yggdrassil supports the Universe, has three main branches and is believed to have sprung from the beginning of time out of primordial slime and ashes. The world tree extends throughout all the worlds from the gods home in Asgard, the mortal realms of Midgard, to the dark underworld of Nifelheim. The sacred waters of the Well of the Wyrd were used by the Norns to water its branches, and the Norns were associated with fate. Any site of great significance within the Norse cosmology usually is placed by a root of the tree. The leaves fed Odin's goat, Heidrun, which supplied the mead for the gods. The leaves also fed four stags (Dain, Dvalin, Duneyr and Durathor) whose horns' dew fed the rivers of the world.

Odin is especially associated with the spear, for which the ash was often chosen, as he owns the mythological Gungnir. The Northern races often employed cremation of the dead, for which Ash is unrivaled. Men were created from Ash by the Norse gods ash and the first woman from rowan. Odin hung himself from Yggdrassil to obtain the runes, of which it is the 26th (Anglo-Saxon version) and resembles a barbed spear.

The rune-poem says "The ash is precious to men and very tall. Firm on its base it keeps its place securely though many men attack it." Northumbrian runes refer to "Gar" meaning spear. Some Norse used the Nidding Pole to pester foes; which was a 9 foot ash pole, surmounted by a horse skull facing an enemy's home.

* Red ash buds were eaten at midsummer to protect from enchantment,
* Ash divination wand was cut at mid-summer to attract.
* One version of the Yule log was a bundle of ash faggots burned at the midwinter solstice and the wassail bowl was carved from ash wood.
* In Northern England, it was once believed that if a woman placed an Ash leaf in her left shoe, then she would be fortunate enough to immediately meet her future spouse
* Locally there were traditions associated with the ash. In Yorkshire it was said to be a sign of disaster if the ash did not produce keys in a year.
* Another old belief, recorded at least in the nineteenth century, was recorded in Lincolnshire and Frankish law codes. In the north of England, until the 19th century, the ash used to be known as esh and men believed that if they freshly cut an "esh-plant," no thicker than their thumb, they had the right to beat their wife with it. (Some customs are best forgotten.)
* The Ash tree gave warriors silent warnings about war. To die under an Ash tree while in battle, was a guarantee to be selected by Odin to go to Valhalla.
* Also in German forests Christian folk, in previous centuries, feared "demons" in the trees. They told tales of the Askafroa (Eschenfrau) who was the wife of Ash and did much damage. So people would sacrifice to her on Ash Wednesday (despite this being a Christian festival in origin.)

Greek Customs

The Greek goddess Nemesis carried an ash branch as the symbol the divine instrument of the justice of the gods, the scourge. In iconology she is also depicted with an eight-spoke wheel symbolic of the solar year. The wheel is also a symbol of the Fates who dispensed her justice under and through the ash tree, metering out happiness or misery and ensuring that fortune was shared and not cosseted by the few. If anyone hoarded the favors she had given or didn't sacrifice some or part of it to the gods, or didn't try to alleviate the poverty and misery of fellow man. Nemesis would step in and withdraw what was given dispensing justice through humiliation with a scourge made of ash.

In later Greek myths Nemesis was identified as Andrasteia, daughter of the sea god Oceanus and goddess of the "rain making ash tree." In this aspect her scourge was used for ritual flogging to bring fruitfulness and productivity to the trees and crops. This association with Oceanus the god of the sea through his daughter Andrasteia, connects the ash tree with thunderstorms, which waters the earth and fertilizes the land. The ash tree is said to attract lightening. As well as the ash branch, wheel and scourge Nemesis also carried an apple branch as a reward for heroes.

Celtic Customs

* Wood being taken without touching the ground, would cleave to the element of air, flying straight and true. One of the most famous spears in Celtic mythology was the Spear of Lugh, one of the four treasures brought to Ireland by the Tuatha De Danann from the city of Gorias. This was a spear of power and direction which would not miss its target. So keen was it that it was kept hooded when not in use.
* In Ancient Wales and Ireland, oars were made of this wood. Ash protects against drowning and oars and coracle slats were often made of ash.
* Gwydion, the Celtic equivalent of this Norse God, was known to choose the thick, strong twigs of the Ash for his wands and was renowned for his magical abilities.
* The staff of the good god and chief of the Tuatha De Danann, the Dagda, is believed to be made of ash wood.
* The Staff planted by Fintan the Ancient was an ash.
* Of old, a staff of ash was hung over doorframes to ward off malign influences, or ash leaves were scattered in the four directions to protect a house or area, or a garter made from its green bark was worn as protection against sorcerers and physic attacks.
* Of old, a staff of ash was hung over doorframes to ward off malign influences, or ash leaves were scattered in the four directions to protect a house or area, or a garter made from its green bark was worn as protection against sorcerers and physic attacks.
* Carve a piece of ash wood into the shape of a solar cross (an equal-armed cross) and carry it with you when traveling across sea or water for protection against drowning. Healing wands are also carved out of ash wood and healing poppets can be carved from its roots.
* It is the second most common tree found near Holy Wells in Ireland, the first being Hazel. The Ash was often the selected tree for Maypoles.
* Ash is one of the trees were protected by Brehon Law of Ireland. Cutting down one of these trees was a fine of one cow. These Trees are Oak, Hazel, Apple, Holly, Yew, Ash and Pine. The Ash was a sacred chieftain tree, believed to "court the flash" since it was prone to be struck by lightning. The ash tree has a particular affinity with lightning, which it attracts. Under an ash tree is not the place to be during an electrical storm.

Several Famous Ashes:

* Tree of Creevna-Ireland-emigrants to America carried pieces of this ash tree before they left. This tree was considered a charm against drowning.
* Tree of Uisnech. Standing upon the mythological fifth province of Ireland, it was the centre point of Ireland, performing in wood what the Umbilicus Hiberniae; the centre stone of Ireland did as it also lay upon the Hill of Uisnech.
* Tree of Totu, Dathi, and Uisnech-Ireland-these Ash trees were some of the five magic trees cut down in 655 AD as a sign of Christianity conquest over paganism. The other two were an oak and an elm.

Generic Lore

* In folklore it was believed that the fairies could be seen and conversed with by mortals wherever the three trees grew together.
* As a cure for rickets the baby was passed widdershins through a cleft made in an ash sapling. The tree was then tied-up and sealed with clay, and afterwards a bond grew between the child and the tree, any later damage to the tree also happened in the health of the child and vice versa, therefore the ash tree could never be cut down as this would result in the disease. If you want your newborn child to be a good singer bury its first nail parings under an ash tree.
* The ceremonial Yule log is often made of Ash--this huge log is kindled each Yule with a piece from last years fire and allowed to smolder for 12 days before it is ceremonially put out.
* Ash is often used for making both mundane and magical tools-it's said that tools with handles of Ash are more productive than tools with handles of other wood.

* The flowering Ash has sap that contains a sugary exudate called "manna," which can be used as a laxative.
* The leaves have diuretic, diaphoretic and purgative properties and are employed in modern herbal medicine for their laxative action, especially in the treatment of gouty and rheumatic complaints proving a useful substitute for Sienna, having a less griping effect. The infusion of the leaves (1 oz to the pint of water) may be given in frequent doses during any 24-hour period. The distilled water of the leaves can be taken every morning and was considered good for dropsy and obesity, and a decoction of the leaves in white wine had the reputation of dissolving stones and curing jaundice. The leaves should be gathered in June, well dried and powdered and kept in well-corked bottles
* Ash leaves and the tender tops can be used in the spring to make a fasting tea that is a diuretic and can be used as a help for weight loss. Put fresh ash leaves under your pillow to stimulate psychic dreams.
* Scatter some ash leaves in a bowl of water and place it under a bed over night to prevent and heal illness. The next morning the water and leaves should be discarded outside on open ground then repeat the procedure each evening until well. Leaves can also be sewn into small sachets and worn as health or protection charms. To gain the love of the opposite sex, carry some loose ash leaves in your pockets.
* The ash was said traditionally to combat viper bites and boiled leaves were given to afflicted animals and laid on as a poultice.
* Ash talismans can be worn as protective amulets. Ash is known to keep away serpents and to protect against their bite. If there are no snakes to be found, Ash can be used instead to keep away nasty people who are bitchy, quick to criticize, impatient, or psychic vampires.
* Ash can be used in medicine pouches or can be used in magick for wart remover: the wart is stuck with a pin that has first been thrust into an Ash, while these words are said: "Ashen tree, Ashen tree, pray these warts off of me." The pins are then stuck back in the tree and left.
* "Beware the ash, it courts a flash, beware the oak, it courts a stroke" says the old rhyme, meaning that these two trees, above all others, attract lightening.

Songs about Ash Trees

"The Ash Tree" is a poem, that was given a Welsh melody, and has become extremely well known in American folklore with dozens of versions. I've always found it a bit creepy, seeing the images of the dead in the branches. But, in a way, I've found that it is a pleasant Druidical song. The second song uses the same music and is a whimsical parody poking fun at those factious Celts.

The Ash Grove

By John Oxenford

The ash grove, how graceful, how plainly 'tis speaking,
The wind [harp] through it playing has language for me.
Whenever the light through its branches is breaking
A host of kind faces is gazing on me.
The friends of my childhood again are before me,
Each step wakes a memory as freely I roam.
With soft whispers laden its leaves rustle o'er me,
The ash grove, the ash grove again [alone] is my home.
My laughter is over, my step loses lightness,
Old countryside measures steal soft on my ear;
I only remember the past and its brightness,
The dear ones I mourn [long] for again gather here.
From out of the shadows their loving looks greet me
And wistfully searching the leafy green dome,
I find other faces fond bending to greet me,

The ash grove, the ash grove alone is my home.
My lips smile no more, my heart loses its lightness
No dream of my future my spirit can cheer;
I only can brood on the past and its brightness,
The dead I have mourned are again living here.
From ev'ry dark nook they press forward to meet me;
I lift up my eyes to the broad leafy dome,
And others are there looking downward to greet me;
The ash grove, the ash grove alone is my home.

Borderlands

Sung to “The Ash Grove”
Author Unknown – Someone in the SCA

If ever you wander down by the Welsh border
Come stop by and see me and all of my kin.
I'm Morgan ap Daffyd ap Gwion ap Hywell
Ap Ifor ap Madoc ap Rhodri ap Gwyn.
We'll feast you on mutton and harp for your pleasure
And give you a place to sleep out of the cold
Or maybe we'll meet you out on the dark highway
And rob you of horses and weapons and gold.

My neighbour from England has come across raiding
Slain six of my kinsmen and burned down my hall.
It cannot be borne this offense and injustice
I've only killed four of his, last I recall.
I'll send for my neighbors, Llewellyn and Owain
We'll cut him down as for the border he rides
But yesterday Owain stole three of my cattle
And first I'll retake them and three more besides.

We need a strong prince to direct our resistance
Heroic, impartial, of noble degree.
My brother's wife's fourth cousin's foster-son, Gruffydd
Is right for the job as I'm sure you'll agree.
What matter that Rhys is the old prince's nephew
He's exiled to Ireland and will not return
I know this for every time boats he is building
I send my spies money to see that they burn.

Last evening my brother and I were at war
Over two feet of land on a boundary we share
But now that I hear he has been foully murdered
I'll not rest until I avenge him, I swear.
Yes, we are just plain folk who mind our own business
Honest and loyal and full of good cheer.
So if you should wander down by the Welsh border
Come stop by and meet all the friendly folk here.

The Willow Tree

By Sam Peeples, free-roaming Druid
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 2002

Found throughout the British Isles in various species, the Willow is also common in Europe, North Africa and America. It is known as Saille in Irish Gaelic. The botanical name of the willow Salix purportedly comes from the Celtic word sal meaning near, and lis meaning water. Other Gaelic words for willow are seilach and feature in Scottish place names such as Achnashellach in Ross-shire and Corrieshalloch on Speyside. These names would have referred to both the presence of willow and related industries utilizing the willow's gifts. The verb and girl's name Sally may be derived from the Willow. In Cornish it is called Helygenn. Other names include: Willow, Witch 's Tree, Pussy Willow, Salicyn Willow, Saille, Sally, Withe, Withy, Witches' Aspirin, Tree of Enchantment, Osier, Tarvos Tree, and Sough Tree. The Greeks called it Helice, and thus is associated with Helicon (abode of Muses.) The Anglo-Saxon welig, from where the name willow is derived, means pliancy. It represents S in Ogham script.

Willows just love water and are often found in moist soils or near running water, along with alder, hazel and birch. It is occasionally found in the under-story of other trees or on the edges of meadows or in areas cleared by fire. Most of the 20 British willow species (330 in total and related to poplar, 100 in America) are bushy, but the White, Black (i.e. Pussy Willow) and Weeping Willow often become tree sized (50'to 80') and most well known for long, thin, variably droopy, flexible branches with few twigs. Its long thin leaves are easily recognizable as yellow in the fall. Yellow flowers arrive in April or May along with the Robin, and easily cross-breeds with other willows. The bark is most removable in the summer, containing 13% tannin and small amounts of salicin. Be careful not to ring the tree when removing bark or it will die, take vertical slices.

The dispersal of thousands of small windblown seeds is used by yellow willow to reproduce itself (2.3 million seeds per pound.) Male and female flowers (in the form of catkins) occur on separate plants. Like other willows, it is reliant on insect pollination, especially from bees [31]. After fertilization, a capsule develops which eventually splits open during spring or summer, dispersing the myriad of minuscule seeds. The production of large quantities of seeds ensures that some will fall on favorable sites. The seeds have a cottony down which allows them to float long distances in the wind, and on water. Seeds are non-dormant, remaining viable for only a few days. They germinate rapidly, usually within 12-24 hours if a moist seedbed is reached [6].

Practical Uses of Willow

First and foremost, trees are quite happy the way they are without being utilized by us, and serve their own niche in the ecosystem without being exploited. 'Nuff said.

Irregardless of size, willows are easily pollarded and make straight poles in 4-5 years, which is good for fencing and baskets, and very munchable to horses, moose, beaver and elk and nested in by birds.

Willow's ability to absorb shock without splintering is still utilized in the making of cricket bats and stumps (note also the similarity between "wicket" and "wicker") and polo balls. (http://www.rfs.org.uk/totm/cricket.htm)

* The Dutch use it for making clogs.
* The Celts used it for chariot wheel spokes.
* The Romany use it for clothes pegs
* The bark's tannin was used for reddish dye and tanning leather.
* Before the advent of plastics, willow was widely used to make a variety of containers, from general basketry to specialized applications such as lobster pots and bee hives.
* A 6th century basket was discovered by archaeologists on Shetland, and apparently made of willow, used the same weaving techniques as those still practiced in Scotland
* Some people twist living willows into outdoor furniture and odds shapes.
* Many plant willows on riverbanks to prevent erosion and control flooding.
* Artificial limbs were once made from this light wood.
* Willow is used as core wood for laminated furniture (esp. Ikea)
* The wood was preferred for making charcoal for gunpowder.
* Used as bottoms of wheelbarrows, chariots, mills and washboards.
* Roots make a purple dye used in France/Sweden for Easter eggs.
* Willow wood is light but strong enough to make roofs and rafters, boats and carts.
* Do not plant close to septic tanks or sewer lines as the roots will invade!
* If you do have a low, wet area in your yard, this tree will actually "dry up" that area.

Mythological Connections

Even in the Adventures of Neera it is a withy ring of willow that must be placed around the ankle of a hanging corpse if Neera is to win the golden sword of Aillil. The placing of this withy plunges Neera into an Otherworld adventure. He is held captive in the Sidhe world and set to physical work but wins through with the support of a Sidhe woman. When he returns to Cruachan, no time has passed. It is still Samhain. He proves his story by showing the fresh blossoming twig he has carried out with him

British and Irish mythology is also rich with legends of the beguiling, Willowy Spring Maiden who is called Olwen, Niwalen, Gwenhyver, Cordelia, Blodeuwedd and many others, who initiate the young King into a deeply sexual experience.

The ancient Celts believed that the spirit of the dead would rise up into the sapling planted above a grave, which would grow and retain the essence of the departed one. Throughout Britain many cemeteries, particularly those situated near rivers, lakes or marshes, are often to be found lined with willow trees to protect the spirits in place.

In Sumer, 4000 BCE, Ishtar's predecessor, Belili, was known as the Willow Mother.

Often associated by the Greeks with water and the moon; it is linked to legends of Ceres, Apollo's harp, Minerva's bird "Wryneck" who only sleeps in willow, and Orpheus who gained bardic skills by touching willows in Proserpine's grove.

In Athens, it was an ancient custom of the priests of Asclepius to place willow branches in the beds of infertile women. This was done in the belief that it would draw the mystical serpents from the Underworld and cure them. The ancient Spartan fertility rites of the goddess Artemis, also demonstrates the willows connection with fertility and fecundity. In that ceremony, male celebrants were tied to the tree's trunk with willow thongs, they were then flogged until the lashes produced an erotic reaction and they released, fertilizing the land with their seed and blood. How quaint. The Greek sorceress Circe is said to have had a riverside cemetery planted with willow trees dedicated to Hecate and her moon magic. Here male corpses were wrapped in un-tanned ox-hides and left exposed in the tops of the trees for the elements to claim and the birds to eat.

In Jerusalem, for the worship of Jehovah, the Feast of Tabernacles was also called the Day of the Willows. Willow branches were carried in processionals, used to roof the small temporary shelters (sukkah) during the festivities, the branches were later burned in the Temples. (Lev. 23:40.)

In Britain the more recent, "Christianized" use of willow to symbolize grief probably originated with Psalm 137:

By the rivers of Babylon
we sat down and wept
when we remembered Zion.
There on the willow-trees
we hung up our harps.

(Biblical scholars point out that these 'willow-trees' were probably Euphrates poplar (Populus euphratica) and not the weeping willows (Salix babylonica) which originated in China.) During the 16th and 17th centuries the association became particular to grief suffered by forsaken lovers, who also adopted the custom of wearing a cap or crown made of willow twigs and leaves. By the nineteenth century illustrations of weeping willows were commonly used as ornaments on gravestones and mourning cards. Willow boughs were also used to decorate churches in Britain on Palm Sunday instead of largely unavailable palm leaves.

The Seneca, a North American indigenous tribe, has a loving bond with all Trees, calling them The Standing People. They consider the Willow to be a source of gentle humility, charm and grace, adding elegance as She touches Her fronds to the Mother Earth, sweeping away fear to nurture peace.

One old tradition concerning the willow is still celebrated today by Rumanian Gypsies. This is the festival of Green George, which takes place on the 23rd of April. A man wearing a wicker frame made from the willow represents the character of Green George, which is then covered in greenery and vegetation from the land. This is symbolic of the willows association with water that fertilizes the land bringing fruitfulness to the fields. On the eve of the festival and in a gay and lively manner, everything is prepared in readiness. A young willow tree is cut down and re-erected at the place of the festivities, there it is dressed and adorned with garlands. That same night all the pregnant women assemble around the tree, and each places an article of clothing beneath it. The belief being that if a single leaf from the tree falls on a garment over night, its owner will be granted an easy child delivery by the willow goddess. At dawn on the 23rd Green George appears in all his splendor and knocks three nails into the tree, removing them again he then proceeds to the nearest river, lake or stream from whence the tree was cut and throws them into the water, this to awaken the goodwill of the waters spirits to their proceeding. Returning he collects the willow tree and takes it back to the river, lake or stream, and dips its branches and leaves in it until they are heavy with water, thus awakening the tree's beneficial and fertile qualities. The water spirits and the willow tree's beneficial qualities evoked, all the communities animals, flocks and herds are led to Green George who raises the tree and shakes water onto them in blessing ensuring fertility for the coming year. This done the tree is taken back to the place of festivities and re-erected. Feasting, drinking and merriment then commences in thanks to the tree and water spirits.

Magical Uses of Willow

(user beware)

White Willow is a tonic, anti-periodic and astringent. It has been used in dyspepsia connected with debility of the digestive organs. In convalescence from acute diseases, in worms, in chronic diarrhea and dysentery, its tonic and astringent combination renders it very useful. one dram of the powdered root. one or two fluid ounces of the decoction

Black Willow: The bark has been prescribed in gonorrhea and to relieve ovarian pain; a liquid extract is prepared and used in mixture with other sedatives. Largely used in the treatment of nocturnal emissions. Fluid extract, 1/2 to one dram

Country folk have long been familiar with the healing properties of willow. They made an infusion from the bitter bark as a remedy for colds and fevers, and to treat inflammatory conditions such as rheumatism. The decoction is made by soaking 3 teaspoons (15ml) of the bark in a cup of cold water for two to five hours. Then bring to the boil. Strain and take a wineglassful each day, a mouthful at a time. The bark can be dried, powdered and stored in an airtight container. The sap gathered from the tree when it is flowering can be used to treat facial blemishes and dandruff. Young willow twigs were also chewed to relieve pain. In the early nineteenth century modern science isolated the active ingredient responsible, salicylic acid, which was also found in the meadowsweet plant. From this, the world's first synthetic drug, acetylasylic acid, was developed and marketed as Aspirin, named after the old botanical name for meadowsweet, Spirea ulmaria. Aspirin is now derived from coal and petroleum. The amount swallowed to date in the USA is approaching an annual 35 million lb. or five tablets a week for every man, woman, and child.

In times of hunger the softer inner bark, the "bast," was dried and ground into a flour. Although very bitter it provided nourishment and a source of vitamins and minerals. In colonial times the bast was brewed into tea, which was considered a specific against malaria and a poor man's alternative to quinine.

Willow can additionally be useful in cases of hysteria and nervousness and as a Quinine substitute (although this is used only when Quinine is unavailable.) Willow can be used to loosen tightness in the chest produced by pneumonia, whooping cough and other respiratory infections.

* For a wish to be granted, you must ask permission of the willow, explaining your desire. Select a pliable young shoot and tie a loose knot of it while expressing what you want. When the wish is hopefully fulfilled, return and untie the knot. Don't forget the last part.
* When willow wood is carried in your pocket, it will give bravery, dexterity, and help one overcome the fear of death.
* Willow is one of the nine woods of a Beltaine Fire (Birch, Oak, Rowan, Willow, Hawthorn, Hazel, Apple, Vine, Fir)
* The wind in the Willows is said to be the whisperings of a fairy in the ear of a poet. It is also rumored that Willow trees can uproot themselves and stalk travelers at night, muttering at them.
* Its leaves are used in love attraction sachets. Willow leaves or twigs can also be used in spells to create loyalty, make friendship pacts, treaties, or alliances.
* To find if you will be married soon, on New Year's Eve, throw your shoe into a willow; if it doesn't catch in the branches the first time, you have eight more tries; success means you will be wed. The rhyme goes:

"Throw your shoe high up
into the branches of a Willow tree;
If the branches catch and hold the shoe,
you soon will married be."

* Willow has the ability to banish depression and sadness; sitting beneath a willow tree calms and soothes the emotions. Try it out, this one works!
* Shavings of the wood, pieces of bark and whole leaves can be placed in a Dream Pillow or placed in a small bag, either under your pillow or under the bed itself.
* The willow has long been used for dowsing and for finding buried objects.
* If you need to share a secret, confess to a willow and the secret will be trapped.
* Because of its coppicing ability, it is a symbol of renewal, growth and fertility.
* Willow is used to bind the birch twigs to the ash handle of a broom.
* Willow caps were presented to all people who were disappointed in love. It is customary in the present day for villagers in Wales to ask a rejected suitor on the morning of his sweetheart's marriage to another man, "Where is your willow cap? We must make you a willow cap." The same applies to a spinster whose lover discards her for another girl.

Green Willow, or All Around My Hat.

Traditional British Song Chorus:

CHORUS:
All around my hat I will wear the green willow
And All around my hat for a twelve month and a day
And if any one should ask me the reason why I'm wearing it
It's all for my true love who's far, far away.

Fare thee well cold winter and fare thee well cold frost
Nothing have I gained but my own true love I've lost
I'll sing and I'll be merry when occasion I do see
He's a false deluding young man, let him go, farewell he and...

(Chorus)

Other night he brought me a fine diamond ring
But he thought to have deprived me of a far better thing
But I being careful like lovers ought to be
He's a false deluding young man let him go farewell he and...

(Chorus)

Quarter pound of reasons and a half a pound of sense
A small sprig of time and as much of prudence
You mix them all together and you will plainly see
He's a much deluding young man let him go farewell he and...

(Chorus)

Sing All a Green Willow

Text by William Shakespeare (1564-1616,) from The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice, Act IV scene 3. Based on an old traditional text.

The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,
Sing all a green willow.
Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,
Sing willow, willow, willow.
The fresh streams ran by her and murmur'd her moans,
Sing willow, willow, willow.
Her salt tears fell from her, and softened the stones,
Sing willow, willow, willow,
Sing all a green willow must be my garland.
Sing all a green willow;
Let nobody blame him; his scorn I approve.
Sing willow, willow, willow,
I call'd my love false love; but what said he then?
Sing willow, willow, willow:
If I court more women, you'll couch with more men!
Sing willow, willow, willow.

The Oak Tree: Quirky Quercus

By Sam Peeples, Free-roaming Druid
A Druid Missal-Any, Fall 2002

I have a soft spot in my heart for the Oak tree, both because of its Celtic associations and its general usefulness to society. I had a tree house as a young boy, cradled in those mighty boughs, and could clamper easily up the branches. Many wars were fought from that platform, and many days spent reading comic books and just sleeping in the breeze while leaves rustled overhead. With that in mind, we finally come around to do the most famous of the Celtic trees. There was so much information on the internet, it was hard to narrow down the information that I thought was appropriate. Does one really need to know what color is associated with the oak? Any way, here we go.

Etymology

The Anglo-Saxon root of Oak is "Ac" or "Aik" and the fruit "Aik-com," the Irish called it "daur," the Welsh "dar" or "derw;" which is cognate with Greek "drus." The technical name of the Oak is said to be derived from the Celtic quer (fine) and cuez (tree.) We, of course, love to note that the term "druid" is derived from the Indo-European rook of *der=oak and *wid=knowledge. Interestingly, the root for oak, is also the root for the English wood "door." Many deities associated with portals or doorways are thus associated with the Oak.

Physical Characteristics

Although slow in growth, some species of oak will reach 150' in height, 13 feet in girth and 46' in circumference (some grew much larger) and 800 years of age. There are about 80 species and hybridization is quite common, with the offspring of new species quickly adapting to new climatic conditions by interbreeding with local variants. In America, the most prominent are the White Oak (Eastern,) Swamp Oak (Southern,) and Burr Oak (Central.) Species have adapted to Oak Savannah, Pine Forests, Appalachian mountains, and Southern flood plain forest. The English Common Oak and Sessile Oak are rather similar to their American cousins, except they have this annoying accent and dry sense of humors. It is often a dominant canopy tree, which craves sunlight, and is useful in land reclamation on disturbed sites. It prefers elevations under 2,000 feet, but will be found as a scrub tree until 4,500 feet in altitude. It is resistant to fire, as long as there is little shade during recovery, with heavy damage in growing season killing only 60% of the trees if less that 66% of circumference is charred (and dormant season casualties are only 20%) due to underground reproductive centers. Acorns do not survive fire at all. Nicks or scratches or stumps (under 16 inches) have been known to sprout, and sprout best when cut in dormant season.

Oak leaves are amongst the most easily identified leaves for school children; followed by maple, dandelions and (surprisingly) marijuana. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Society for Creative Anachronism lists the oak leaves and acorns as the most common heraldic plant device. Leaves emerge in Mid-March to May depending on climate.

The yellow staminate flowers grow at the ends of branches. In August at the height of the summer when most other trees are wilting from the heat, the oak produces a new leaf called "Lammas shoots" thus adding new color and freshness to the tree. These new leafy shoots are golden-pink when young, turning from pale to dark green as they harden. In autumn the oak tree is at its most majestic as its leaves change color again turning from dark green to various shades of yellow, orange, russet and a pale golden brown. The leaves sometime stay on the tree until the following spring or until the new buds forming for the next year push them off.

Acorns ripen 120 days after pollination and crops tend to have peaks during their four to ten year cycles during moderately breezy summers (usually traveling less than 200 meters from the base,) and begin bearing acorns usually between 50-200 years of age, but as early as 20 years. Acorns grow quickly in late July, and fall to the ground in September. Acorns do not have a dormancy period, germinating soon after falling, thus they don't store well, and last less than a year, 90% going stale after six months. A 70' tall oak may produce as many as 23,000 in a good year, but 10,000 is reasonable on a big tree or as many as 200,000 per acre, depending on April temperatures and early rains. I personally, have never attempted to count a tree's entire crop. Seeds are often dispersed the farthest by blue jays and other birds, although squirrels are often unwitting assistants. The acorns are a choice food for many species including deer, mice, squirrels, bears, boar, blue jay, pheasant, grouse, and rabbits. The leaves may be eaten in winter by deer and porcupine feed on the bark.

Practical Usage

* As timber, the particular and most valued qualities of the Oak are hardness and toughness; Box and Ebony are harder, Yew and Ash are tougher than Oak, but no timber is possessed of both these requisites in so great a degree as the British Oak. It is easily machined, accepts finishes well, and glues into strong joints; making it an excellent choice for furniture, paneling, flooring and veneering.
* Many of the supportive beams in Cathedrals in castles use oak or yew, with specific forests linked to the church for its replacement timbers every 400 years.
* Oak has also long been used for railroad ties, fence posts, mine-timbers, caskets, shingles, cooperage, and the prime source for whiskey barrels (white oak.) It is also excellent for firewood, and was once a primary source of fuel for eternal sacred fires.
* Oak bark and wood contains a great deal of tannin, which is what makes Acorns so bitter. It can be used to tan leather and other skins.
* The roots were formerly used to make hafts for daggers and knives.
* After the Oak has passed its century, it increases by less than an inch a year, but the wood matured in this leisurely fashion is practically indestructible. Edward the Confessor's shrine in Westminster Abbey is of oak that has outlasted the changes of 800 years. Logs have been dug from peat bogs, in good preservation and fit for rough building purposes, that were submerged a thousand years ago. In the Severn, breakwaters are still used as casual landing-places, where piles of oak are said to have been driven by the Romans.
* Quercus suber, Cork Oak, is a Mediterranean variety whose spongy bark yields commercial cork. So you can use your bulletin board to encourage rain.

* An infusion of it, with a small quantity of copperas, yields a dye which was formerly used in the country to dye woolen of a purplish color, which, though not very bright, was said to be durable. The Scotch Highlanders used it to dye their yarn. Oak sawdust used also to be the principal indigenous vegetable used in dyeing fustian, and may also be used for tanning, but is much inferior to the bark for that purpose. Oak apples have also been occasionally used in dyeing as a substitute for the imported Oriental galls, but the black obtained from them is not durable.
* In Brittany, tan compressed into cakes is used as fuel. Oak-bark is employed for dyeing black, in conjunction with salts of iron. With alum, oak-bark yields a brown dye; with a salt of tin, a yellow color; with a salt of zinc, Isabelia yellow.
* Acorns were of considerable importance formerly for feeding swine. About the end of the seventh century, special laws were made relating to the feeding of swine in woods, called pawnage, or pannage. In Saxon times of famine, the peasantry were thankful for a share of this nourishing, but somewhat indigestible food. The Board of Agriculture has lately issued a pamphlet, pointing out the use as fodder, which might be made both of the Acorn and of the Horse Chestnut. The analysis of the Acorn given by the Lancet is: water, 6.3 per cent; protein, 5.2 per cent; fat, 43 per cent; carbohydrates, 45 per cent. The most important constituent of both the Acorn and the Horse Chestnut is the carbohydrate in the form of starch. Acorns contain a substantial proportion of carbohydrate and fat, and in many country districts are still collected in sacks and given to pigs, but they must also be mixed with other vegetable food to counteract their binding properties.
* After the oak bark has been used for tanning, gardeners then use it to make a decoction called "Tan." Tan is used to cover new plantings encouraging them to grow due to the warmth it generates. However care needs to be taken for it sometimes favors the growth of fungi, harmful to certain plants. Tan is also used as a cover for racetracks and circus rings, and as an adulteration of chicory and coffee. In Brittany tan compressed into cakes was used as fuel.

Ancient Oak Groves

Graves suggest that Oak Cults came to Britain by the Baltics somewhere between 1600 and 1400 BC. This places these people about 500 years before the Celts came to the Islands. Pliny mentions the Gaulish oak sanctuaries in 1st Cent CE, Strabo describes Galatian congregations in "Drunemetons," 2nd Cent Maximus says the Celts worshipped Zeus (Taranis?) in the oak, and "Dryads" were "those who delight in the oaks." Irish holy sites with "Derry" or "dara" in them are associated with oaks, such as Brigit's holy cell at Kildare. Many of these sites in the British Isles were approached with dread and reverence by local farmers until WWII. See the OBOD site for extensive discussion of some of these sites and their mythological connections. The second site of the original grove of the RDNA was the Hill of Three Oaks, a place now found on the Carleton Map, and a haven of kit-flying and Frisbee games. Modern Druids seem to prefer Oak Groves, although Hazel and Rowan are also popular.

Mythological Connections

* Oak is supposedly the most commonly lightning struck tree, perhaps due to a rather deep root system or the ion formation on the tall branches, thus its association with Thor and Taranis.
* Mary was once worshiped as Our Lady of the Oak in Anjou, France. She later appeared to shepherd children in Portugal as Our Lady of Fatima, crowned in roses and hovering over an oak tree.
* In older days, the middle-east was more heavily forested. The oak was held sacred by ancient Hebrews. Abraham saw the angels under an oak tree. Jacob buried the idol of Shechem under an oak. The oak in Shechem made Abimelech king. Isaiah said that idols were made of oak. The angel, who gave Gideon his orders, sat under the oak of Ophra. Absalom sustained his sacred thigh injury in an oak grove at Ephraim. The biblical mother-shrine Mamre at Hebron included a sacred oak in a female-symbolic grove. According to the Bible, when Cain murdered Abel, Cain was obliged to carry the dead body of his brother for seven hundred years before Abel could be buried. To mark the burial place, Cain stuck his staff into the ground, whereupon Seven Oaks (now known as the Seven Oaks of Palestine) immediately sprang forth in a row.
* Blodeuwedd tied Llew Llaw's hair to an oak branch and made him stand with one foot on the rim of a bath and the other on the haunch of a sacred beast, in order to inflict upon him the sacred thigh injury that would allow him to be her husband, and king. When he died his soul escaped in the form of an eagle and perched in an oak tree.

> The rapid oak tree,
>
> Before him heaven and earth quake;
>
> In every land his name is mine.
>
> --Taliesin, The Battle of the Trees

* Thor was widely worshiped by Norse warriors but was also revered by farmers and peasants because of his capacity to create rain for the crops. Mjolnir the magical hammer was reputedly made by dwarves from the wood of a sacred oak tree, and not only represented the destructive power of the storms Thor created (the fires from heaven,) but its image was used as a fertility symbol in marriages (in its connection with rain and crops) and in funerals (as a symbol of death and rebirth,) and for accepting newborn children into the community (as a symbol of strength and protection.) Such was he revered that the fifth day of the week Thursday (Thor's day) was named after him.
* When traveling Thor rode in a chariot made from oak drawn by two goats, Tanngnjostr (Tooth-gnasher) and Tanngrisnir (Tooth-grinder,) and when moving across the heavens dispensing weather, it produced the rumblings of thunder and sparks of lightening from its wheels. Thor and his followers undertook many expeditions to Jotunheim (Iceland) the land of the frost giants, and there erected high-seated pillars of oak. These they used to hallow new ground enabling the gods to protect their people in new lands.
* Two black doves flew from Thebes in Egypt: one to Dodona and the other to Libyan Ammon in the oasis of Siwwa. They alighted on oak trees and proclaimed them oracles of Zeus, in human speech. The oracles were taken by priestesses who interpreted the sounds of the cooing of doves, the rustling of oak leaves and the clinking of brazen vessels that hung from the trees. The shrine of Zeus at Dodona, where an oak cult grew up, had oracular birds, a sacred spring, a sacred black dove and an iron basin. The black dove priestesses chewed acorns to control the oracle, as they listened to the wind in the trees for poetic inspiration. The iron basin was used as a gong to mimic the sound of thunder.

* The most famous of Zeus' interpreters was an old priestess called Pelias, who prophesied Zeus' messages from a sacred spring at the foot of a giant oak in the grove at Dodona.
* Hera left Zeus after a fight. To get her back he pretended to marry the nymph Plataea, cutting down an oak tree and dressing it as a bride to make her jealous. Hera tore off the bridal veil in anger, but became reconciled to her husband when she saw what lengths he had gone to in order to win her back.
* When the baby Hermes stole Apollo's cows he disguised their tracks by covering their hooves with shoes made from the bark of a fallen oak tree. Erotic statues of Hermes were usually carved of oak.
* Erisichthion felled an oak tree sacred to Ceres that was inhabited by a nymph, drawing blood when he struck it with his ax. Ceres punished him by sending his entrails to Famine.
* Orpheus led a dance of wild oak trees down the Pierian mountains.
* Pan, son of the nymph Dryope and Faunus, son of Picus, were both hatched from the eggs of oak woodpeckers.
* The Virgins at the temple of Vesta in Rome burned fires of oak wood. The Roman Alban Holiday was the annual marriage feast of the Oak Queen, the nymph Egeria, to the Oak King of the year. The Vestal Virgins coupled with the companions of the Oak King, secretly, in a dark sacred cave, just as they did during the Saturnalia. The new Oak King was the child of the Oak Queen or of one of her vestal virgins. See the Golden Bough for more Sacred King theories.
* Ovid called the oak the Tree of Jove. White oxen were sacrificed to Jupiter as an oak god on the Alban Mount at Rome. The image of Jupiter at the Capitol in Rome was originally an oak tree. Could this have influenced Pliny's accounts to make them more understandable to the Romans, or was this merely a parallel custom?
* The oak is sacred to all thunder and lightning gods. Hercules attracted thunderstorms with sympathetic magic, by rattling an oak club in a hollow oak, or by stirring a pool with an oak branch.
* The Titans were men who had been stretched over oaken wheels.
* Oak heroes include Ixion, Atlas, Hercules and Telamon. Hercules carried an oak club because oak provides mast. Herculean symbols include the acorn, mistletoe or loranthus, and the rock dove, which nests in oaks.
* Ancient Prussians revered sacred oak trees. The chief oak in the forest at Romove had priests who tended a perpetual fire of oak wood. This tree, draped with a cloth, was considered the dwelling place of the god. The Prussians adored it and hung images from it. There was a sacred oak tree at Hesse called the Red Jove from which omens were drawn and to which sacrifices were made. Holy oaks were preserved in Germany into modern times.
* First fruits of the chase were hung on oaks in Saxony and Thuringian until the 13th century. Kirwaido, God's Mouth, ruled ancient Prussians in the name of the god. When he had become weak and sick he immolated himself atop a pile of straw and thorn bushes. The blaze was lit from the perpetual fire that burned before the holy oak tree.
* Estonians sacrificed oxen to oaks, with prayers for rain and good crops. They also annually smeared oak trees with the blood of beasts.
* Slavs sacrificed goats and bulls to Perun/ Piorun/ Pyerun/ Peron, a thunder god, in a grove with an oak tree. A perpetual fire of oak wood was kept burning before an effigy of Peroun/Perun at Novgorod, where the death penalty was imposed for allowing the fire to go out.
* The Bohemian festival of the Little Daedala was held in an ancient oak grove, with boiled meat set out for the birds. When a raven took some meat and flew into an oak tree, that tree was felled. Its wood was made into an image which they dressed as a bride and drew to the river with bridesmaids beside it. A crowd then followed it to town, dancing and piping. The image was saved for the Great Daedala, held once every 60 years, when all the images were taken in carts in solemn procession to the river Asopus and then to the top of Mt. Cathaeron, where there was a wooden altar with a pile of brushwood atop it. Sacrificial animals, the images and the altar were consumed by fire.

Magical Properties and Customs

(Caveat Magicus!)

* Pieces of lightning struck trees however would protect a house.
* Tannin is especially strong in oak bark, which is good for treating leather and its astringency for hemorrhoids.
* Many parish boundaries in Britain are still marked by an old oak tree The following is a quotation from Withers:

"That every man might keep his own possessions,
Our fathers used, in reverent processions,
With zealous prayers, and with praiseful cheere,
To walk their parish limits once a year;
And well-known marks (which sacrilegious hands
Now cut or breake) so bordered out their lands,
That every one distinctly knew his owne,
And brawles now rife were then unknowne."

* The ceremony was performed by the clergyman and his parishioners going the boundaries of the parish and choosing the most remarkable sites (oak-trees being specially selected) to read passages from the Gospels, and ask blessings for the people.

'Dearest, bury me
Under that holy oke, or Gospel Tree;
Where, though thou see'st not, thou may'st think upon
Me, when you yearly go'st Procession.'
-----HERRICK

* An old proverb relating to the oak is still a form of speculation on the weather in many country districts based on when leaves emerged.

"If the Oak's before the Ash,
Then you'll only get a splash;
If the Ash before the Oak,
Then you may expect a soak."

* Oaks were believed to court the lightning flash. The English say: "Beware of an oak. It draws the stroke."
* British bastards born under an oak were except from censure.
* Irish churches used to be called "Dair-thech" or "oak house."

* Cornish toothaches cured by driving a nail into an oak.
* In modern magick circles, Oak is good at most any purpose.
* Gauls ate acorns to divine the future, and acorns gathered at night assist fertility.
* Welsh ensure good health by rubbing left palm on oak at mid-summer.
* In Wales, the rustling of oaks can inspire a poet.
* Remnants of old-time superstitions with regard to the oak were to be found in Wales so late as sixty years ago, when it was customary in many districts for the young men and maidens to dance and sing around the oldest oak in the village. This was called a "round dance." It took place as a rule at Easter, but Whitsuntide and Midsummer festivities were held under its branches.
* King Charles II (mildly Scottish) started "Royal Oak Day" in May 29th to celebrate his restoration, due to the aid of a tree where he hid after a battle (coward.) This displaced Beltane as the most popular maypole day in some counties. Many other people in history claimed sanctuary in the easily climbable branches.
* Oak is one of the traditional nine woods of a Beltane fire.
* Successful Roman commanders were presented with crowns of oak leaves during their victory parades, and oak leaves have continued as decorative icons of military prowess to the present day.
* Germany's put fairy haunts near the base of large oak trees, called Oakmen, who are unfriendly big-headed louts who offer food that will make you ill (usually disguised dung.) Pillywiggins are pixies that live in the flowers under oaks.
* Fairy magic can be countered by turning your clothes inside out and shaking them at an oak tree.

> "Turn your clokes,
>
> For fairy folks,
>
> Are in old oakes."

* Rain magic: Priests of Zeus dipped an oak branch into a spring on Mt. Lycaeus to make it rain by sympathetic magic. The spring water was said to send up a cloud of mist from which the rain fell. Tapping on an oak door is a charm to bring rain.
* An acorn in the pocket with preserve health and wood chips attract luck.
* Mold off of acorns assist in healing scabs.
* An oak leaf touching your heart will protect you from lies.
* Oils from pressed acorns alleviates pains in the joints.
* Oak bark when finely ground and powdered makes a remedial snuff that can be inhaled to arrest nosebleeds. It has also proved beneficial in the early stages of consumption.
* Sprinkled onto bed sheets it will help to alleviate bedsores.
* A pinch of powered oak bark mixed with honey and taken in the mornings will help and aid ladies with menstrual problems.
* Acorns should be gathered in the daylight, and leaves and wood by night. A waning moon is the correct time to harvest Oak.
* To catch a falling oak leaf will bring you luck and prosperity, and you shall suffer no colds throughout the winter.
* If someone is sick or poorly in the home, place an oak log on the fire to warm the house; it will help to "draw-off" the illness.
* If you wish to know whether you and your present beloved will marry, take two acorns, naming them under a full moon for yourself and your lover, and drop them into a crystal bowl of well water. If they stay close to one another, as though knit by a bond, you will be sure to marry, but if they float away from one another, that is a sign that the bond will end.
* Knocking on an oak after bragging will protect you from divine retribution.
* The herbalist Gerard said, "that which growth on the bodies of olde Okes is preferred before the rest: in steede of this most do use that which is found under the Okes..." But rumors are that if done improperly a curse would befall any who came in contact with the item.
* East Saxon groves were dedicated to Thunor (Thor.)
* In Scotland, one 19th century farmer said

> "It was believed that a sprig of the Mistletoe cut by a Hay on Allhallowmas eve, with a new dirk, and after surrounding the tree three times sunwise and pronouncing a certain spell, was a sure charm against the glamour or witchery, and an infallible guard in the day of battle. A spray, gathered in the same manner, was placed in the cradle of infants, and thought to defend them from being changed for elf-bairns by the Fairies."

Acorn Recipes

These are from THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COUNTRY LIVING by Carla Emery, available at Amazon.com

Acorn Coffee:

Select plump, round, sweet acorns. Shell and brown in oven. Grind in a coffee mill and use as ordinary coffee. Or hull 1/2 c. small sweet acorns. Add 1/2 c. cracked wheat. Mix. Roast in your oven. Pound in a mortar. Boil with water to get your coffee. Add honey, molasses, or brown sugar to sweeten.

Acorn Meal:

Fortunately, tannin is very soluble in hot water. So, peel the acorns. Grind them up. soak the "flour" in very hot water. The water will turn brown because of the tannin coming out. Throw away the water and repeat 4 times. Another way to do this is to line a colander with a straining cloth, put the ground acorns in, and gradually pour a gallon of water, as near boiling hot as you can manage, through. There will still be some dark chocolaty color to the paste, but after exposure to a gallon of hot water, you can be confident that enough tannin has been removed to render the acorn meal edible.

Spread the acorn paste on a baking sheet and bake at a low temperature until thoroughly dry. If it has caked, grind again, and you have your acorn flour. You can substitute acorn meal for cornmeal in any recipe, or use part acorn meal and part cornmeal, or 2/3 acorn meal and 1/3 oatmeal.

[Side note: some Asian marketplaces sell ground acorn powder at a very reasonable price. –Mike]

The Apple Tree: The Fruit We All Know

By Sam Peeples
A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2002

This is a more difficult tree to discuss since it is such an ever-present part of our diet. Many scientists believe it is the first fruit tree to be domesticated by humans. Apples are easy to identify by sight and flavor, and as a result they have deep connections to cultures and mythologies. We see them around us all the time in supermarkets, and apples (like corn) is one of the ubiquitous foods.

Etymology

In ogham script, apple is called Ceirt/Quert ("KWAIRT.") "Qu" (like "K" or "Kw") Not sure why the "Ceirt" is associated with the Apple tree, as Scottish translates Apple tree as "abhall" and Middle Irish "aball." Apple is "ubhal," Irish "ubhall/úll," Early Irish "uball," Old Irish "aball," Welsh "afal," Breton "avallen." According to MacFarlane's Online Gaelic Dictionary, "Ceirt" is Scottish for "right, justice, propriety," though I've also been told (by an Irishman) that it's Irish for "rag/piece of clothing." As the most popular fruit of the Teutonic area, the Apple has appropriated, as its popular name, what was once a common Germanic term for fruit of any kind, "Apfel" being once "apl," and often "apulder," connected with "maple" and "mapulder," and being still extended to many totally different fruit-bearing plants, such as thorn-apples and love-apples. The Anglo-Saxon name for the blackberry, for instance, was the bramble-apple; and that rare old traveler, Sir John Mandeville, speaking of the cedars of Lebanon, says, "they beren longe Apples, and als grete as a man's heved." Though both apples and apples of gold are spoken of in several parts of the Bible, the tree now so called is believed not to have been cultivated by the Hebrews, the citron or some other fruit being referred to.

Physical Description

The Pyrus Malus has over 10,000 varieties, with over 7,000 types cultivated in the U.S., but with only 20 varieties making up 90% of the commercially sold apples. The bark resembles cherry trees and belong to the enormous Rosaceae (rose) family of plants (as are pears,) and approach 10-13 meters in height, although most commercial trees are cropped to keep the branches closer to the ground. The branches sometimes have thorns. They tend to be found between 30 and 60 degrees of latitude where winters are close to the freezing point, but rarely reach 15 (e.g. New England and Washington.) They like cool air of valleys and shaded hillsides. There are usually three major splayed branches with 90 degree branches. The pale white flowers are quite lovely and appear before the leaves in May, and are primarily pollinated by bees.

Apple trees may begin to bear fruit around six to eight years after sprouting, and may continue for over century (producing about 800 pounds of fruit a year,) but most commercial trees are replaced after 15 years. Most modern orchards take scions, or branches of very fruitful branches, and graft them into base trees to grow better apples, while the rootstock is usually very resistant to frost, making a very robust hybrid organism. Apples are 79% water and 18% air (which is why they float and shrivel so well.) They generally have a total of 10 seeds in five compartments (carpels) which make a nice star if sliced horizontally. If they don't have as many, it's probably a sign that the tree was stressed by climate, poor pollination (bees help,) or growing difficulties. The better "set" the seeds are, the better the fruit will develop, usually taking 140-170 days, usually ripening in August. The sunnier the climate, the redder the apple on the sides facing the sun. Most apples are dinged or unpretty and go in as "filler" in commercial products. The world's most expensive apples are in Japan and Korea, at $25 a piece for a perfect specimen. Some unusually well-maintained orchards in Japan, place a parabolic shield under the apple to get a solid red hue to the entire apple.

Physical Use

* Apples are for eating, silly.
* Apple wood is sometimes used as a veneer for furniture and music instruments.
* Crab-apple tree, a wild variant, has a proverbial hard wood, excellent for cudgels.
* Apple wood is fine for carving and smells beautiful when burned. As the old rhyme says, "Pear logs and Apple logs, They will scent your room."
* The unripe fruits of the wild Apple are used in the manufacture of verjuice, now chiefly made in France, which, when fermented and sweetened, makes a pleasant drink; but in the sixteenth century the fruit was in more esteem than it now is. Christmas was then the season they being served in hot ale "When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl."

Mythological Appearance

The first and most famous appearance of Apple is definitely in Genesis where many people assume that the apple was the forbidden fruit on the Tree of Good and Evil. It simply doesn't state what type of fruit it was, except that it was good to eat. Most likely it was a late medieval tradition based on the pictorial choice of the apple by various European artists. There were some varieties of apple tree in the middle east, but a citron or fig would have been more likely, if it wasn't just a story. Apple tree, Heb., thappuakh (cf. Arab, tiffah; Egypt. dapih, "apple") and the description of the tree and its fruit indicate the common apple tree, Malus communis, which is beautiful, affording shade for a tent or a house (Cant., ii, 3; viii, 5,) and bears a sweet fruit, the aroma (Cant., vii, 8) of which is used in the East to revive a fainting person (cf. Cant., ii, 5.) Apple groves flourished at an early date (Ramses II) in Egypt (Loret, "Flore pharaonique," p. 83); place-names like Tappuah (Jos., xii, 17) or Beth-tappuah (A. V., Jos., xv, 53) indicate that they were a distinct feature of certain districts of Palestine. But this might be renaming of the fruit after a place. We see the apple in many modern Jewish traditions. During Rosh Hashanah, apple slices dipped in honey are eaten in the hope of a sweet new year. Haroset is a traditional Passover dish. It is a mixture of apple, nuts, wine, and spices, representing the brick mortar with which the Jews were forced to build while they were enslaved in Egypt.

Apples appear frequently in Celtic Lore. The Isles of the Otherworld are sometimes called Emain Abhlach, Emain of the Apple Trees. Cormac was once offered a branch (possibly for grafting?) from Manannan Mac Lir. It bore golden apples. When shaken it gives off a sweet sound that soothes sadness, cures illness and brings peace. It is the giving of a similar branch that soon inspired the voyages of Bran in the Immram Curaig Bran MacFerbal. In both cases, the hero soon made a journey to the Otherworld. Because they are seen as an Otherworld gift, it is not really surprising that they appear so frequently in Samhain customs (bobbing for apples on strings or in tubs,) especially those concerned with divining future events. It is true, of course, that round about October and November they are a good wholesome food that is both in season and readily available

Avalon, where the wounded Arthur was taken from the battlefield, is also related. Geoffrey calls it "Avallo" in the HISTORIA and "insula pomorum" (island of the apples) in the VITA MERLINI. It is often seen as having a connection with apples because of the similarity of its name to various Celtic words indicating that fruit: Old Irish ABALL, Middle Welsh Afall, Middle Breton Avallenn, Celtic Avallo. It has also been connected with Avalloc, evidently originally a god who, according to William of Malmesbury, lived there with his daughters. The present case form of the name may have been influenced by the Burgundian place name Avallon. One school of thought suggests that it comes from Irish Oileán (island.) It was perhaps originally a Celtic paradise. It was said to produce crops without cultivation, to be ruled by Guingamuer, Morgan's lover, or by a king named Bangon. In PERLESVAUS, Guinevere and Loholt died before Arthur and were buried there. Avalon was then identified with Glastonbury, probably because Arthur's grave was supposedly found at Glastonbury in the reign of Henry II and, as tradition had had him borne away to Avalon, the two were considered the same. However, because of the first syllable in Glastonbury's name, some may have thought it identical with Caer Wydyr, the Fort of Glass, another name for Annwfn.

The tale of the Sons of Tuirenn combine both Irish and Graeco-Roman elements. The Sons of Tuirenn killed Lugh's father, Cian. Lugh demanded that they do eight "impossible" tasks as blood-price for his father's life. The first was to bring back three apples from the Garden of the Hesperides in the east of the world. They would know these apples from the following characteristics: they were the size of a one-month-old child, the color of burnished gold, and they tasted of honey; eating them healed all wounds and diseases and the apples would not be diminished by being eaten; and if thrown, they would rebound to the thrower's hands. The Sons of Tuirenn managed to accomplish all eight tasks, but were mortally wounded while doing the last one. Lugh refused to allow them to use the healing powers of another object they captured in the second task, a magical pig skin, so they died shortly thereafter.

Another famous apple that caused trouble was given by Eris. She was of such a deplorable nature, that the gods had kept Eris apart, and she was not in the list of guests who were invited to the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, the parents of Achilles. Nevertheless, Eris, being difficult to get rid of, came to the party and threw a golden apple through the door with the inscription: Kallisti ("For the fairest")

And Hera, Athena and Aphrodite started disputing on account of the apple, and were therefore sent by Zeus to Mount Ida near Troy in order to be judged by the shepherd Paris, who chose Aphrodite as the most beautiful, accepting Helen's hand for a bribe. This is one cause of the Trojan War, for Paris, having come to fetch his bribe at Sparta, where Helen was queen, left the city as her lover and sailed with her to Troy. But her husband Menelaus and his brother Agamemnon, against all odds--for war had never before broken up for the sake of a woman--sent a powerful army against Troy, and produced a conflagration that still today causes such an awe and amazement as if the flames of Troy were still burning. The modern followers of Eris, the Discordians, use the Kallisti apple as one of their symbols has another rendition.

In another Greek legend, Atalanta was a powerful warrior who would only marry the man who could outrun her. Desperate to win, Hippomenes prayed to Aphrodite for aid, and she gave him golden apples from her garden which he was to throw into Atalanta's path. The apples did distract Atalanta and he won the race, but he forgot to give due honor to Aphrodite afterwards and as punishment, both he and Atalanta were changed into lions.

The Hesperides were three virgin sisters who, along with a dragon, guarded the tree of golden apples Gaea had given to Hera as a wedding gift in their garden. These were reputed to bring beauty and health. It was the eleventh of the twelve labors of Heracles that he bring back the golden apples to the world.

Pomona was the Roman Goddess of fruit trees, especially of apple trees, and was also know as the "Apple Mother" who gave the "apples of eternal life." Roman banquets ended with apples and an invocation of Pomona's blessing. Pomona had a special priest appointed to her service. Her sacred grove was called the "Pomonal" and was located on the road from Rome to Ostia.

In the legend of Thomas the Rhymer (13th century,)Thomas Learmont, laird of the castle of Ercildoune, is accosted by a hag who takes him on a journey. He is shown three paths, one of leads to the land of the Fay. While ravenously hungry, he resolutely passes by all the luscious fruits of all kinds, but he is warned not to eat of any of them, for he would then be trapped there forever. He is also told that his hunger would soon be relieved with an apple. When they reach a certain spot, the hag climbs down off the horse and offers Thomas an apple from a small yet perfect tree. She tells him that after eating it he will be graced with the gift of Truth. At that time the hag turns into a beautiful woman and together they go to a castle where they feast and make merry for three days. At the end of that time, the woman tells him that he must return to his own world where seven years have passed. When he returns home, he finds that he is given the gifts of prophesy, poetry, and an enchanted harp. He becomes a wise ruler of his territories and is, in time, called back to Fairyland where he remained.

Iduna, wife of the Norse God of poetry, Bragi, kept a box of apples. If any of the Gods felt the approach of old age, they only had to taste of one of these apples to remain young. She was abducted by a giant (aided by Loki) and, in time, the other Gods realized that they were aging rapidly. Loki was sent to rescue her so that she might restore youth to the Gods. He later married her, and whenever he was punished, she would sometimes use these apples as leverage to free him.

Another renowned myth to the Swiss is the story of William Tell refusing to bow to a Hapsburg lord's hat placed on a stick in the town square. As punishment he is forced to shoot an apple off his son's head with a crossbow. After doing so, he then manages to escape from the governor's clutches on a stormy river, effectively drowning the rascal. The legend is a distortion of actual events that led in 1291 to the formation of the

Everlasting League among the forest cantons of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden. The original story is believed to derive from a 12th century Scandinavian tale of shooting a small object off a loved-one's head.

The next feat of the legendary apple would be Sir Isaac Newton's discovery or realization of Gravity. During a plague in the city, he retired to a country estate. As the tale goes, Sir Isaac Newton was sitting under an apple tree when an apple fell on his head. This, supposedly, was what led him to discover the laws of gravity. Popular legend to the contrary, Sir Isaac was not beaned on the noggin by an apple, although it's said that watching apples fall from a tree in his parents' yard was an inspiration. His treatise on gravitation, presented in Principia Mathematica (1687) observed the fall of an apple in an orchard at Woolsthorpe and calculates that at a distance of one foot the attraction between two objects is 100 times stronger than at 10 feet.

The most famous recent example is, of course, Johnny Appleseed, a.k.a. John Chapman (1774-1845,) an eccentric, itinerant pioneer nurseryman and colporteur. He won the respect of many settlers and Native Americans alike as he made his way from his native Massachusetts to the Pennsylvania/ Ohio/Indiana frontier, planting apple nurseries, spreading "news right fresh from heaven," mediating and healing. He exchanged his apple seeds and seedlings for food, cast-off clothing and articles and frontier currency enough to take care of his simple needs. Profits went for copies of Swedenborg's works, which he separated into parts for wider and cheaper distribution. There are several songs about him.

Medicinal and Magical Uses

* The sugar of a sweet apple, like most of the fruit sugars, is amazing. It is practically a predigested food, and is soon ready to pass into the blood to provide energy and warmth for the body. A nice ripe raw apple is one of nature's most easiest vegetable substances for the stomach to deal with, the whole process of its digestion being completed in eighty-five minutes. The juice of apples, without sugar, will often reduce acidity of the stomach; it becomes changed into alkaline carbonates, and thus corrects sour fermentation.
* "An apple a day keeps the doctor away." From an old English advice "Ate an apfel avore gwain to bed, makes the doctor beg his bread."
* "It is better to give than receive." Derived from a fourteenth-century saying "Betere is appel y-yeue than y-ete" (better is the apple you give than you get.)
* Paradise is a word derived from the Persian paeridaeza, or walled garden, such as the Persian gardens, normally containing apple orchards. Throughout history, depictions of the Garden of Paradise include apple trees.
* Bartholomeus Anglicus, whose Encyclopedia was one of the earliest printed books containing botanical information (being printed at Cologne about 1470,) gives a chapter on the Apple. He says:

"Malus the Appyll tree is a tree yt bereth
apples and is a grete tree in itself.it is more
short than other trees of the wood wyth
knottes and rinelyd Rynde. And makyth
shadowe wythe thicke bowes and branches:
and fayr with dyurs blossomes, and floures of
swetnesse and Iykynge: with goode fruyte and
noble. And is gracious in syght and in taste
and vertuous in medecyne.some beryth
sourysh fruyte and harde, and some ryght
soure and some ryght swete, with a good
savoure and mery."

* The custom of serving fresh fruit, particularly apples, at the end of a meal arose because of digestive qualities attributed to them by such early medical notables as Hippocrates and Galen, the latter a second-century Roman physician.
* The medieval physician's bible, the Salerno medical school's Prescription for Health, taught therapeutic applications of cooking apples for disturbances of the bowels, lungs and nervous system, among other ailments.
* The modern tradition of tossing rice at a happy couple succeeds an ancient practice of throwing apples at weddings. I guess, British native apple trees have smaller fruit than modern commercial fruit, or perhaps the Celts were just ornery cusses.
* The game of apple-bobbing began as a Celtic New Year's tradition for trying to determine one's future spouse.
* An Irish and Scottish custom prescribed throwing an apple peel over one's shoulder on the ground, where it would form the initial of your lover's name.
* Eat an apple whole, saving just the pips. An odd number foretells a marriage, an even number means that none is imminent.
* It is said that you may cut an apple into three pieces, then rub the cut side on warts, saying: "Out warts, into apple."
* The once-popular custom of wassailing the orchard-trees on Christmas Eve, or the Eve of the Epiphany, is not quite extinct even yet in a few remote places in Devonshire. More than three centuries ago Herrick mentioned it among his "Ceremonies of Christmas Eve:"

"Wassaile the trees, that they may beare
You many a Plum and many a Peare:
For more or lesse fruits they will bring,
As you do give them Wassailing."

* The ceremony consisted in the farmer, with his family and laborers, going out into the orchard after supper, bearing with them a jug of cider and hot cakes. The latter were placed in the boughs of the oldest or best bearing trees in the orchard, while the cider was flung over the trees after the farmer had drunk their health in some such fashion as the following:

"Here's to thee, old apple-tree!
Whence thou may'st bud,
And whence thou may'st blow,
Hats full! Caps full!
Bushel-bushel-bags full!
And my pockets full too! Huzza!"

* The toast was repeated thrice, the men and boys often firing off guns and pistols, and the women and children shouting loudly. (I do not recommend this part.) Roasted apples were usually placed in the pitcher of cider, and were thrown at the trees with the liquid. Trees that were bad bearers were not honored with wassailing but it was thought that the more productive ones would cease to bear if the rite were omitted. It is said to have been a relic of the heathen sacrifices to Pomona. The custom also prevailed in Somersetshire and Dorsetshire.
* In Danish, German, and English folklore, and in voodoo, apples are used as love charms.
* Roast apples, or crabs, formed an indispensable part of the old-fashioned wassailbowl, or "good brown bowl," of our ancestors.

> "And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl
> In very likeness of a roasted Crab."

* As related by Puck in Midsummer's Night's Dream. The mixture of hot spiced ale, wine or cider, with apples and bits of toast floating in it was often called Lamb's wool, some say from its softness, but the word is really derived from the Irish la mas nbhal, "the feast of the apple-gathering" (All Hallow's Eve,) which being pronounced somewhat like "Lammas-ool," was corrupted into "lamb's wool." It was usual for each person who partook of the spicy beverage to take out an apple and eat it, wishing good luck to the company.

Apple Songs

* "Ida, Sweet as Apple Cider" by U.S. minstrel Eddie Leonard (1903.)
* "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree" by Egbert Van Alstyne, lyrics by Henry Williams (1905,) author of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game."
* "I'll Be with You in Apple Blossom Time" by Albert von Tilzer, lyrics by Neville Fleeson (1920.)
* "Cherry Pink and Apple Blossom White" by Louiguy, lyrics by Jacques Larme (1950.)
* "The Golden Brown and the Green Apple" by Duke Ellington (1965.)
* "Little Green Apples" by Bobby Russell (1968.)
* "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree" words and music by Lew Brown, Charles Tobias and Sam H. Stept (1942.)

The Canny Conifers

By Sam Peeples
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2002

Pine Trees, Firs, Spruces, Yews, Larches. How wonderful these trees are, the evergreen (except for the larch) that have survived not only millions of years of munching by dinosaurs, but have held their own through bitter winters and ice-ages. Coniferous trees generally don't lose their needles in the winter, and house seeds in cone-like structures, thus their name. Their narrow leaves and flexible branches let snow fall off easily, and conserve moisture in the summer.

Etymology

The Scots Pine (Pinus sylvestris) is known in Irish as Giuis, Scots Gàidhlig as Giubhais (also known as Peith,) and Pin in Welsh, but it is actually found from Spain to Siberia. Its nickname in the timber trade is "redwood" or "deal." The Yew is from the family Taxaceae and is known in Irish as Iur, Welsh is Ywen. Juniper is of the Cupressaceae family and found mostly in Southern England, US and Europe, and has no Celtic name, anymore. Sometimes, the name "pine" is used loosely for any tree in the pine family Pinaceae. In North America, that family contains larch, true fir, spruce, hemlock, and Douglas-fir. A tree with needles is not a Pinus if:

* the tree has bundles of a dozen or more needles; needles are soft, flat, in brushlike clusters on short spur-like shoots; deciduous not evergreen--then the trees are larches or tamaracks, Larix.
* its needles are flat, often with a notch at the end; needles grow in two ranks, directly and singly from the branch, and have a plump base that leaves a round depression on the branch. Cylindrical cones are upright and disintegrate on the branch--then the trees are true firs, Abies.
* its needles are short and not bundled but have a stalk and four-sides; they spiral from persistent peg-like bases; the naked twigs are rough and warty--then the trees are spruces, Picea.
* its needles flat, with blunt ends; the needles are in two ranks like the fir, but blunt, shorter, and fatter; dark-green and shiny above, pale below with two slim lines--then the trees are hemlocks, Tsuga.
* its needles are flat with pointed tips and linear; they grow directly from the branch; the leaf scar is small and raised (for the true fir it is larger and depressed); each needle narrows at the base into a short, thin stem. Cones hang down with three-point bracts--then the trees are Douglas-firs, Pseudotsuga.

By the way, the verb "to pine" has no direct connection with the tree, but when pines die they often remain standing long after the life has left them, just like unrequited lovers who die of a broken heart. According to Mirriam Webster:

Main Entry: pine
Function: intransitive verb
Inflected Form(s): pined; pining
Etymology: Middle English, from Old English pInian to suffer, from (assumed) Old English pIn punishment, from Latin poena -- more at PAIN
Date: 14th century
1 : to lose vigor, health, or flesh (as through grief) : LANGUISH
2 : to yearn intensely and persistently especially for something unattainable < wealth lost their for pined still>

Physical Description

Scots Pine is the only native pine in Britain, it reaches 40 meters and lives about 150 years, with some as long as 520. Sometime you get the tall narrow type, but often it splits trunks. The paired needles are about five inches and last about two to three years. Their spread to the British Isles from the continent preceded the disappearance of the land bridge 10,000 years ago and reaching Scotland by 6,000 years ago. It only inhabits 1% of its original range of 1,500,000 hectare, and is primarily found in the West Highlands, having been supplanted by faster growing trees on tree farms. It has naturally been more common in the mountains and areas of elevation. Male and female flowers appear on the same tree, with the female often a bit higher on the tree, using wind pollination. They flower in May, but the seeds must wait two winters to germinate (on the third year after fertilization) and the seeds are tiny, about 120,000 per kilogram. They travel about 70 meters from the tree, and then can skip across the snows for a few more kilometers. They like to find exposed soil, such as that dug up by a rooting boar or a forest fire. The trees are often coated in lichen, which helps to fix nitrogen and then nourishes the soil when it falls off the tree. Some fungi also work in harmony with the tree. Another 45 types of insects, plants and animals (like the Scottish crossbill and Capercaillie) are only found near pine trees in Scotland. Several larger species like (wild boar, beaver, brown bear, moose, lynx and wolf) used to be denizens of the Caledonian forest.

By the nineteenth and twentieth centuries vast quantities of pine were used for pit props, telegraph poles and railway sleepers. Coinciding with this relentless timber extraction came the Highland Clearances in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Since much of the countryside was denuded of people, there was nobody to manage the regeneration of the pine woods; instead the often absent landowners introduced huge flocks of sheep and herds of deer which soon held sway across the old forests, systematically munching through the emerging seedlings. As old trees were removed wholesale, the source of seed disappeared; and, unlike broadleaf trees, cut pine stumps will not regenerate new growth but simply die in the ground. What little management there may have been was totally inadequate. The result was that by 1970 only an estimated 25,000 acres of native pinewood was still standing.

The Yew is only a medium sized tree found naturally in dense shade of Oak woods. It is often used for hedging or making weird animal topiary shapes. It is found across the European continent and British Isles. Its flowers are in March and red fleshy berries are in October. Almost all parts of the Yew (except the red fleshy berries) are EXTREMELY POISONOUS, so great care should be taken before messing with this plant. Birds swallow the aril (red part) and then deposit the seeds in the course of their work. The seeds go dormant for about 18 months in the ground, but it works well by planting cuttings from the tree. The tree is best known for its extreme longevity, some specimens living two or three thousand years and becoming simply enormous in girth.

Juniper is a small tree or bush. With a whitish bloom in May and whose ripen seeds are distributed by birds in October, and then goes dormant until spring before germinating.

Physical Uses

The pine is a strong, general purpose timber with natural preservative qualities, making it very suitable for use outdoors, fencery, joinery, flooring, boxes, telegraph poles, fiberboard, ship beams and masts (witness Beinn nan Sparra, Hill of Spars, in Glen Affric.) The pitch from the tree was used to fill cracks in planks and beer casks. For higher resin content they were harvested on the waxing moon. The resin content is so high that some pine trees will remain standing for 50-100 years after dying without decay.

Yew produces a very durable, beautifully smooth, gold-colored wood with a wavy grain that is often used for furniture, weapons and tool handles. Sometime used as an expensive veneer, when of good quality. In Europe, yew wood was used for making bows, while on the northwest coast of North America, the Pacific yew (Taxus brevifolia) is used by the Haida and other tribes for making masks and boxes.

The Juniper is a very aromatic sapwood that is fairly strong and durable. And can be used for charcoal and pencils. Juniper oil can be distilled, and berries are used to flavor meats and Gin.

Mythological Appearance

In The Golden Bough, James Frazer relates various stories involving pine trees from classical mythology, which may or may not have been Scots pines, such as how the ancient Egyptians buried an image of the god Osiris in the hollowed-out canter of a pine tree. He writes that "it is hard to imagine how the conception of a tree as tenanted by a personal being could be more plainly expressed." As a symbol of royalty the pine was associated with the Greek goddess Pitthea, and also with the

Dionysus/Bacchus mythology surrounding the vine and wine making, probably as fertility symbol. Worshippers of Dionysus often carried a pine-cone-tipped wand as a fertility symbol and the image of the pinecone has also been found on ancient amulets as a symbol of fertility.

For the Romans the pine was an object of worship during the spring equinox festival of Cybele and Attis. As an evergreen tree the pine would also have symbolized immortality.

The pine was held sacred to Pan, the Roman Faunus, and in his Eclogues Vergil describes the pastoral god's home on Mt. Maenalus in Arcadia. Propertius stresses the god's fondness for the tree, and Horace, for his part, dedicates a pine to the goddess Diana in a famous ode.

The Romans celebrated the winter solstice with a fest called Saturnalia in honor of Saturnus, the god of agriculture. They decorated their houses with greens and lights and exchanged gifts. They gave coins for prosperity, pastries for happiness, and lamps to light one's journey through life.

The Scots pine groves or "shaman forests" scattered over the dry grasslands of eastern Siberia were considered sacred by the Buriats, a Mongolian people living around the southern end of Lake Baikal. These groves were to be approached and entered in silence and reverence, respectful of the gods and spirits of the wood.

While learning about the habits of a bear, I learned the following American Indian saying. "When a pine needle falls, the bear smells it, the Eagle sees it and the rabbit hears it."

Folk Customs

* All parts of the Yew tree are poisonous except the fleshy covering of the berry, and its medicinal uses include a recently discovered treatment for cancer.
* Coniferous trees are especially popular for planting in cemeteries and churches with their promise of "eternal life." Many Celtic churches were famous for their enormous Yews planted in the adjoining cemetery.
* Late in the Middle Ages, Germans and Scandinavians placed evergreen trees inside their homes or just outside their doors to show their hope in the forthcoming spring. Our modern Christmas tree evolved from these early traditions or the yule log traditions.
* The Christmas tree was popularly believed to have been introduced by Prince Albert (another German) by Queen Victoria (another German) to the British Isles in the 19th century with the custom of hanging blown glass baubles from Thuringia. The custom soon made its way to America in the 1880s. Other believe that the Christmas tree tradition most likely came to the United States with Hessian troops during the American Revolution, or with German immigrants to Pennsylvania and Ohio, adds Robson. The Christmas tree market was born in 1851 when Catskill farmer Mark Carr hauled two ox sleds of evergreens into New York City and sold them all. By 1900, one in five American families had a Christmas tree, and 20 years later, the custom was n early universal. Six species account for about 90 percent of the nation's Christmas tree trade. Scotch pine ranks first, comprising about 40 percent of the market, followed by Douglas fir which accounts for about 35 percent. The other big sellers are noble fir, white pine, balsam fir and white spruce.
* Romans believed that pine cones imparted both physical and moral strength.
* Pine was sometimes used to make an expectorant or inhalants, sometimes for antiseptic use.
* The Pine tree is an evergreen, its old title was "the sweetest of woods." It was known to the Druids as one of the seven chieftain trees of the Irish.
* Mix the dried needles with equal parts of juniper and cedar and burn to purify the home and ritual area.
* The cones and nuts can be carried as a fertility charm.
* A good magickal cleansing and stimulating bath is made by placing pine needles in a loose-woven bag and running bath water over it.
* To purify and sanctify an outdoor ritual area, brush the ground with a pine branch. The scent of Pine is useful in the alleviation of guilt.
* A persistent theme in the folklore of Scots pine is their use as markers in the landscape. In the Highlands there is a recurrent theme that they were used to mark burial places of warriors, heroes and chieftains. In areas further south where the sight of Scots pine may have been more unusual and their use would have stood out more, they can be seen to mark ancient cairns, trackways and crossroads. In England they were commonly used to mark not only the drove roads themselves, but also the perimeters of meadows on which passing drovers and their herds could spend the night.
* Glades of Scots pines were also decorated with lights and shiny objects, the tree covered in stars being a representation of the Divine Light.
* Juniper grown by the door discourages thieves.
* The mature Juniper berries can be strung and hung in the house to attract love.

Obligatory Food Reference

"Alba," the name is Gaelic for Scotland. Introduced by the Vikings, spruce and pine ales were very popular in the Scottish Highlands until the end of the 19th Century. Many early explorers, including Captain Cook, used spruce ale during long sea voyages since it prevented scurvy and ill health. Shetland spruce ale was said to "stimulate animal instincts" and give you twins. Alba is brewed to a traditional Highland recipe from Scots pine and spruce shoots picked during early spring. Pure malted barley is boiled with the young sprigs of pine for several hours then the fresh shoots of the spruce are added for a short infusion before fermentation. Tawny brown strong ale with spruce aroma, rich Malt texture, complex wood flavor and lingering finish. Described by the Scottish press as "Light pale ale with champagne."

Quotes and Notable Literary References

Who leaves the pine-tree, leaves his friend,
Unnerves his strength, invites his end.
--Ralph Waldo Emerson, Woodnotes

I frequently tramped eight or ten miles through the deepest snow to keep an appointment with a beech-tree, or a yellow birch, or an old acquaintance among the pines.
--Henry David Thoreau, 1817 - 1862

The pine tree seems to listen, the fir tree to wait: and both without impatience: they give no thought to the little people beneath them devoured by their impatience and their curiosity.
--Friedrich Nietzsche, The Wanderer and His Shadow, # 176.

You can live for years next door to a big pine tree, honored to have so venerable a neighbor, even when it sheds needles all over your flowers or wakes you, dropping big cones onto your deck at still of night.
--Denise Levertov, Threat

Acts of creation are ordinarily reserved for gods and poets. To plant a pine, one need only own a shovel.
--Aldo Leopold

There was a handsome male mockingbird that sang his heart out every morning during the nesting season from the top of a tall Norfolk Pine tree. Last week the tree was cut down. The mockingbird and his song are gone. I can't put a dollar value on the tree nor on the mockingbird nor on his song. But I know that I--and our whole neighborhood--have suffered a loss. I wouldn't know how to count it in dollars.
--Jacquelyn Hiller

Two Coniferous Songs

"Only Yew!"

Filked by Patrick Haneke,
Akita Grove, Year 2001.
For the Public Domain.
Original "Only You" By the Platters

(Spoken Intro by William Watson)
Old emperor Yew, fantastic sire,
Girt with thy guard of dotard kings
What ages hast thou seen retire
Into the dusk of alien things?

Only yew is found near every church.
Only yew will neither lean nor lurch.
It grows a hard, tight grain,
Makes bow staves both straight and true.
It fills my heart with awe for only yew.

Only yew can live o'er four thousand years
Only yew can outlast our worst fears.
Only yew and yew alone
Laughs at the passage of time.
Whose name is famed and so easy to rhyme.

Only yew can guard the graves at night.
Only yew's leaves can kill with just one bite.
I understand the magic that you do
Making dreams come true.
Yes! The one and only yew.

"O Tannenbaum"
Words by Ernst Anschuetz
Melody: Tradtional folk tune

O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,
Wie grun sind deine Blatter.
Du grust nicht nur zur Sommerzeit,
Nein auch im Winter wenn es schneit.
O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,
Wie grun sind deine Blatter!

O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,
Du kannst mir sehr gefallen!
Wie oft hat nicht zur Winterszeit
Ein Baum von dir mich hoch erfreut!
O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,
Du kannst mir sehr gefallen!

O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,
Dein Kleid will mich was lehren:
Die Hoffnung und Beständigkeit
Gibt Mut und Kraft zu jeder Zeit!
O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,
Dein Kleid will mich was lehren.

Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
How steadfast are your branches!
Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
How steadfast are your branches!
Your boughs are green in summer's clime
And through the snows of wintertime.
Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
How steadfast are your branches!

Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
What happiness befalls me?
Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
What happiness befalls me?
When off at joyous Christmastime
Your form inspires my song and rhyme.
Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
What happiness befalls me ?

Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
Your boughs can teach a lesson.
Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
Your boughs can teach a lesson.
That constant faith and hope sublime
Lend strength and comfort through all time.
Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
Your boughs can teach a lesson

Christmas Plants & Picking the Yule Log

By Mairi Ceolbhinn, D.C. Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2001

Druids love and respect their plants and truly wish them to return to full vitality in the spring. Without plants, how'd we do our sacrifices? What we'd eat? What'd we wear? It's nice to know that in the depths of winter, when the days are shortest, that some plants are doing rather well. We wish to celebrate this with Christmas trees and such and bring their blessings into our homes.

Mistletoe, as we all know, was considered sacred, by our ancient Siblings and has remained such throughout the years. Its Gaelic name still means "all healing," although I'm not sure how to use it safely, since it is rather poisonous. Perhaps, it is by its poison, that it fends off winter's blight, and manages to bloom around the solstice? Its persistent fertility is therefore an established trait that gives us that great custom of "kissing under the sprig of mistletoe" which would happen in a night of partying and debauchery. That age-old theme of commemorating the death of the "old Sun" and birth of the "new Sun" is now popularly incorporated into the images of "Old Man Time and Baby New Year" doing a tag-team on January 1st every year.

Holly berries, like Mistletoe, bloom amidst the snow as if to defy winter and encourage the return to life. Its green boughs were of course common decorations on buildings, holy places and public buildings during the winter festival, and this tradition has fortunately continued to this very day. Even the Japanese, Mike Scharding says, have a "kadomatsu" placed in front of the door at New Year's Eve.

Yule Log Tradition:

Not to be morbid, but a sacrifice is necessary to rekindle the life of the dying sun (no, I'm not pro-Aztec, which sounds like a marketable drug,) and it seems the Yule Log has filled that role for several centuries. "Yule" comes from "hweol," meaning "wheel," which is a frequent European symbol for the Sun. So you're basically giving the Sun a good-needed torching to warm it up.

According to various sources, it is widely agreed that the hearth of the Celtic House was the home of a protective spirit, and (for practical and symbolic reasons) the fire was rarely allowed to die out except once or twice a year during the big fire holidays. Special prayers were and are still spoken before leaving the banked fire of turf for the night in rural areas. Much magic also went on around the fire during cooking, story telling, and entertaining of guests. The hearth was basically the pre-modern "Home Entertainment Center." If you've ever noticed, televisions also send comforting relaxing flickers of light into a darkened room while you stare blankly?

Now, back in those days, people had access to common forests surrounding their village. The choice of the wood varied greatly among locales, but one good size tree would provide several logs for a neighborhood. But under no circumstances, should you steal one from a neighbor's private land (and no buying one at a parking lot, good religion is do-it-yourself.) I've not heard of any special methods of cutting a tree down, but a short ceremony, and posting a few days advance notice for malevolent or uninterested spirits to depart, would certainly be in order. (No, that Golden Sickle is no more effective that a haddock, get a good steel axe.) Angry spirits will make the tree conk you on the head; so be forewarned.

Once cut down, a goodly size log was the festooned and regally dragged back to town through the streets. As the Log entered the house, some cultures would give it a hearty drink of oil, salt and mulled wine, with a song perhaps. In more recent times, it was burned on Christmas Eve (which is close enough to the Solstice,) with music, activities and frolicking. To kindle the fire, splinters from last year's logs (saved by the eldest daughter) were used to get the substrate of dry logs going, since those Yule-logs are hard to burn by themselves. Guests were encouraged to toss sprigs of holly on the fire to take away bad luck. The way it burned would prognosticate the future.

Splinters of the log and cinders were taken home to protect against fires, lightning and tax-collectors at their home. Now the Yule Log tradition, widespread since the 12th century, nearly died out with the change to pot-belly stoves and grills in the late 19th Century. The tradition still survives in sizeable pockets today in the country-side today. For fire sensitive areas, a smaller log-shaped cake now decorates the dinning room table. I've tried this custom for a few years in my little BBQ next to my house (sneaking one from the River Creek National Park,) and saved some ashes, and no disasters have yet befallen my home (well, except the Pentagon in Virginian Commonwealth, but that's the workplace, perhaps the White House and the "Mystic District" of Washington, D.C. were spared because of their National Yule Log?.)

For me a Christmas tree is just another elaboration on "bringing the greenery in," and it certainly is a younger tradition than the Yule Log, perhaps a merger of pagan Nordic tree worship and perhaps the 13th century morality plays' "Tree of Life" (from the Garden of Eden) which was often the only stage prop, and conveniently performed around the Solstice. Perhaps, the inability to have a Yule Log burning and urbanization led to the soaring popularity of the Christmas tree in the 19th century? So go get your plants!

The Redwood:

If the (Ancient) Druids Had
Lived in Northern California....

By Sybok Pendderwydd, Arch-Druid,
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove,
OMS-RDNA
A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 2003

The Druids: figures of romance and mystery. Mention of them evokes images of cloaked figures performing obscure rites in the oaken groves of Gaul. The name Druid, at least according to some sources, means "Oak Priest" and the magnificent Oak was indeed the chief of the trees revered by the ancient Celtic Priests. In ancient Gaul, the Oak was indeed the most impressive of trees. Known for the strength of its boughs, and its sheer beauty it was also the source of the sacred mistletoe.

So what if the Druids had lived in California? Specifically, the northern coast I believe that our own Redwood (Sequoia Sempervirons) would have become the tree revered most by the Celtic priesthood. The poor oak pales in comparison to these magnificent trees, which grow to an average height of 300 feet. The redwood is also the source of the mysterious burl, which gives many of these trees distinctive personalities. From a distance, the formation of burls can make faces appear on the trees, evoking thoughts of the Ents, Tolkien's race of trees.

Redwoods grow in two ways. The first is with seed, and their seeds are among the smallest of any plant known, hundreds of which can be found in the redwoods own pinecones, which average around the size of a jellybean. The second way they grow is by shooting new trees from their root systems, which spread out hundreds of feet around the typical redwood, just a few feet deep in the ground. Typically, these offshoots form "fairy rings" around their mother. As they grow, and the mother tree dies off, the ring is all that is left. I can picture the Druids using these natural rings as the centers for their rites.

The Redwood is illustrative of magickal practice too. Its taproot, which extends into the earth from the center of the tree grounds it, like the familiar grounding meditation many of us do before ritual, to connect ourselves with the Earth Mother. The tree then shoots high into the sky, higher than any other tree, also like the familiar centering meditation, which affirms our connection to the cosmos.

Water brethren may find the Redwood a friend too, since it gives off ten times its own weight in moisture every day. The Redwood also needs a lot of water, which is why it thrives only from the Big Sur area to a few miles into Oregon, and only within a thirty-mile stretch from the coast. They like all the rain and fog we get here. They are true water-kin.

Water was sacred to the Druid as well. Most of their main groves had a spring or stream running near or through them, and water deities played an important role in much of Celtic mythology.

My own wand came from a Redwood, a rather famous one. The Garberville Giant was once listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's tallest tree. When it stood, it rose some 375 feet into the air. Alas, about ten years ago it toppled. Residents in nearby Garberville thought an earthquake had hit, and the sound of the impact was heard thirty miles away. I visited the fallen giant, located in a grove off the famous "Avenue of The Giants" in 1994. It was in the early morning, and I was guided to the top of the tree. There on the ground, like it was placed there, was my wand, a twig from the top branches of the giant. It is exactly the length of the inside of my elbow to the tip of my middle finger.

I remember feeling quite enchanted during our visit, and, although at the time we were the only humans around, I felt the eyes of other entities watching us. I know there were fairies in that grove, and my walks in other Redwood groves have confirmed for me the presence of fairy folk.

I go for hikes in the redwoods as often as I can, stopping at each fairy ring, admiring each old growth tree. I feel the wonder and the majesty of the giants and affirm my connection to the cosmos through them. It's well worth it to take the docent led nature walks through the "tourist groves" at any of the big Redwood State and National Parks. The docents are well versed in Redwood lore and you'll leave with a much greater appreciation of the Sequoia than you had before.

Now I must admit that I am quite prejudiced here. I was raised in Illinois and have only lived here on the "left coast" for a little over ten years. I have yet to visit the cousins of our local coastal redwoods, the Giant Sequoias (Sequoia Giganiticus) that grow only in the Kings Canyon area of Sequoia National Park. They don't grow as tall as ours do, but they get much bigger around. I may change my tune once I have communed with them (but I doubt it.)

Celtic Kelp Customs

By Sam Peeples, Free-roaming Druid
A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 2003

The Celtic lands are known for possessing 300 shades of green vegetation over rolling hills and mountains, but we forget that most Celts lived less than 3 miles from the barren rocky shores of sea. Only that they weren't so barren once you went below the water. There was plenty of seaweed, which is not actually a plant. And it has played an important role in the history of the Celts.

Physical Description

Kelp is actually a brown algae, the king of the algae world, producing the largest collective body of single-celled organisms; which is why it is often confusedly referred to as a plant. Its scientific name is Phaeophyta. There are about one hundred kelp species in the world and kelp can live for up to fourteen years. New blades of kelp are produced every year. These plants are simply phenomenal growers. Harvesting kelp is like cutting grass--it grows back VERY quickly. In the right conditions, these plants can grow up to 18 to 24 inches a day! Bull kelp can grow 10-20 meters in as little time as four months. It grows to the surface on a "stipe," and branches out into "fronds" and is buoyed by an air bladder shaped like a light bulb, called pneumatocysts, and may form very dense surface canopies than can stop up to 99% of the surface light from reaching the base (called a "holdfast.")

During the spring and summer, new kelp blades grow towards the sunlight. The new blades are not occupied by colonists (snails, fish, etc.) yet. Later, when the blades become older, they will be literally covered with these animals. In late spring, microscopic larvae from the animals that inhabit kelp forests attach to the blades. In mid-summer, the turban snail population rises in the fronds. Small schools of fish and animals search for food in the Kelp forest. Through all of spring and summer, harbor seals and sea otters raise their young in the forests in California, and seals also hunt there in the Celtic lands also. In the fall, warm water from offshore flows into the forest. Kelp grows at a slower rate because nutrients in the water begin to be depleted. In the winter, seaweed weakens. Old blades decay and are torn from holdfasts and stipes. Storm waves tear away blades of the kelp, littering the ocean floor, where it decays, and becomes a source of food for bottom ocean dwellers; or it washes up on the shore to be collected by humans.

To reproduce, adult kelp releases spores. The spores swim to the ocean bottom and grow into tiny male and female plants which are called gameotophytes. The male releases its sperm to fertilize the female's eggs and the embryos grow into kelp plants also known as sporophytes. The sporophytes grow into adult kelp plants and these in turn release more spores. The cycle is completed in one year. Kelp grows well on rocky bottoms. The plants need a lot of light and enough water motion to keep nutrients flowing around the plant. They usually grow in water 20-80 feet deep but some forests grow at depths as great as 130 feet--sometimes even deeper. Kelp competes with small animals and plants for space on the ocean floor. When the kelp becomes older and taller, it competes with other kelp plants for sunlight. The deeper the ocean bottom, the farther the kelp columns grow from eachother.

In Gàidhlig it is known as "dúlamán," and I included a song at the end of this article by that name. In Scotland there are five types of Kelp. Oarweed and Tangleweed grows higher on the shore, and is left on the rocks during low tide; resembling fingers about two meters long. Cuvie grows closer to the low-tide line and is rarely uncovered, growing to three meters. Dabberlocks is a long narrow kelp, but much thinner. Sugar Kelp is found in bays and sea loch, away from the waves. The stipe is short with long fronds. Furbellows is rare and not described.

Jellyfish float through the forest, and the thick canopy of the forest slows the flow of water. The most common invertebrates found in Kelp are polychaetes, amphipods, lobsters, squids, octopi and ophiuroids. Outside the holdfasts; sponges, tunicates, anemones, cup corals and bryozoans are probably the most commonly occurring fixed animals within kelp forests. Birds associated with drift kelp, like phalaropes, feed on the associated plankton and larvae. The kelp wrack provides an important food source and habitat for kelp flies, maggots and small crustaceans on which several species of shore birds, starlings, common crows, black phoebes and warblers feed on it.

Physical Uses

In modern times, kelp is painfully associated with the Highland Clearances of the 18th and 19th Century when landlords and chiefs sold clan lands, introduced sheep grazing, and relocated villages to the shore-line into individual croft-homes. Kelp was one of the few high profit industries for the impoverished Highlanders. Whiskey production was only possible for those with sufficient capital. Kelp burning seems to have been introduced into some of the lowland parts of the Scottish coast early in the eighteenth century, but was not thoroughly established in the Highlands until about the year 1750. Kelp contain salts, potash, and chiefly soda, used in some of the manufactures, as soap, alum, glass, etc. It can be used as a substitute for barilla. The weeds are cut from the rocks with a hook, or collected on the shore, and then dried on the beach. They are afterwards burnt in a kiln or in long trenches, constantly stirred with an iron rake until they reach a gooey state; and when they cool, the ashes become condensed into a dark blue or whitish-colored rocky mass. The manufacture was carried on in the summer during June, July, and August.

After several famines in the 18th Century and the collapse of the Kelp market following the Napoleonic Wars, many of the remaining clansmen emigrated to America or Australia. The potato blight in 1835 and 1845 also devastated the remaining populations. WWI, in some parts of the Islands and Highlands, afforded occupation to considerable numbers of Highlanders. Iodine was extracted until the 1930s. Kelp was later harvested as a source of potash for making gunpowder during World War I (Frey 1971, Tarpley 1992) but currently the emphasis is on the production of algin, which serves as an emulsifying and binding agent in food (ketchup, ice cream, lipstick, beer) and pharmaceutical products (such as coatings to prevent infections) and food for use in abalone farms, and sometimes by humans due to its high vitamin and mineral contents. Oarweed can be boiled and served with pepper, butter and vinegar. Sugar kelp is rather sweet.

At first it was of little importance, but it gradually spread until it became universal over all the western islands and coasts, and the value of the article, from the causes above-mentioned, rose rapidly from about £1 per ton, when first introduced, to from £20 per ton about the beginning of the nineteenth century. While the great value of the article lasted, rents rose enormously, and

the income of proprietors of kelp-shore rose in proportion. Throughout the kelp season, people spent the whole day occupied in its manufacture, and the wages they received, while it added to their scanty income, and increased their comfort, it was small recompense in proportion to the time and labor it required, and a pittance compared to the market prices received by those to whom the kelp belonged. Moreover, while the kelp-fever lasted, the cultivation of the ground and other agricultural matters seem to have been neglected and extravagant habits were developed by the proprietors. The consequence was that when the duties were taken off the articles, for which kelp was used as a substitute in the earlier part of the 19th century, the price of that article gradually diminished till it could fetch, about 1830-40, only from £2 to £4 a ton. With this fall in price, the incomes of the proprietors of kelp-shores also plummeted, landing many of them in ruin and bankruptcy, and leading many to sell their estates.

The manufacture is still carried on in the West Highlands and Islands, and to a greater extent in Orkney, but although it once occupied a considerable number of hands, it is now of comparatively little importance, much more of the sea-weed being employed as manure, as shown in the Irish movie, "The Field" about a crofter struggling to gain possession of a small piece of land in the 1920s. He would walk down a steep cliff path every morning, several times, to carry back this natural fertilizer to produce "lazy beds," a type of soil on top of rocky ground to eke out an existence. While at the industries' peak, however, the manufacture of this article undoubtedly increased to a very large extent the revenue of the West Highlands, and gave employment to and kept at home a considerable number of people who otherwise might have emigrated. Indeed, it was partly on account of the need of many hands for kelp-making, that proprietors did all they could to prevent the emigration of those removed from the smaller farms, and coerced them to settle on the coast. Kelp was definitely a mixed blessing for the Highlanders.

Mythological References

Kelpies are famous in the Highlands, and can be detected in human form because they are unable to keep their hair from appearing like seaweed, thus their name. They are sometimes called Each-Uisge (Ech-ooshk-ya, meaning "water horse") or Fuath (Foo-ah,) and they are also part of northern Irish Fairy lore, suggesting their migration from Scotland. A Cornish Kelpie is called a Shoney, a name derived from the Norse name Sjofn, a Goddess of the Sea. In Iceland they are called Nickers, which are similar to the Nix, the water sprites of Germany. In the Shetland and Orkney Islands they are called Nuggies. Another name for the kelpie on the Isle of Man is the glashtyn. The glashtyn is described as a goblin which often rises out of the water and is similar in nature to the Manx brownie. Like all kelpies, the glashtyn appears as a horse--in this case, as a grey colt. It is often seen on the banks of lakes and appears only at night. In Ireland, a faerie known as the Phooka is also said to take the shape of a horse and induces children to mount him. He is then said to plunge with them over a precipice killing them. The Scottish kelpie is also attributed with similar feats. I wonder if there is a possible connection with the aquatic steeds of Manannan MacLir, Irish God of the oceans? Perhaps, the original story brought the heroes to the sub-aquatic kingdom of fairies. Another explanation, is that a lot of children slipped and fell off of cliffs or drowned while horsing around near the water; and somebody made up a story to pass the blame.

These reputedly voracious faeries once densely populated the North Sea and all the lochs of Scotland. Deer and humans who wandered too close to the lochs, were their favorite meals. In northern Scotland there are stories of Kelpies who appear as friendly seahorses and allow passing humans to mount them so that they may be drowned. Kelpies have limited shape-shifting powers and can appear as handsome young men to lure young girls to them. They were probably the forerunners of our current belief in the Loch Ness monster. Kelpies may be captured by placing a bridle over their heads, though it was a difficult and dangerous task due to the beasts strong and willful nature. However, if a person managed to accomplish this task, the kelpie was forced to serve the one who bridled it. Other tricks to unmask one, were pouring boiled water on one, striking it with a holy item, or tricking it to walk over a cross-road. The general advice, don't accept rides from strange horses.

Kelpie Story

Loch Pytoulish is a beautiful little lake, partly in Kincardiue and partly in Rothiemurchus. It is 674 feet above the sea, the same height as Loch Dallas, behind Kinchirdy. Its environment is rich in memories of the past. To the west is the Callart, a rocky height, which till lately was densely covered with larch. It stands now cold and bare. At the east end, near the march, is Lag-nan-Cuimcanath, where Shaw of Rothiemurchus, the captain of the clan in the combat at the Inch of Perth, 1392, waylaid a party of Cummings and slew them. The lonely remains of their graves may still be seen in the hollow. There is an island in the loch, which sometimes appears when the water is low. It is evidently artificial, and probably was used as a place of defense. Perhaps it had a crannog (island fort) and it may have been connected with the Stone Fort on the hill above (Creag Chaisteal.) On the east side of the loch there is a well-defined terrace, with the remains of hut-circles and cairns. It is about 30 feet higher than the lake, and makes, with the surface of the water, as striking a parallel as the famous Roads of Glenroy. This terrace, which many mistake for a road, and others at a higher level (700, 800, 900,) may be traced for miles on both sides of the Spey. It was in Loch Pytoulish that Colonel Thornton killed the monster pike, of which he gives so glowing an account in his book. With such a setting, it is not surprising that the loch was said to have been of old one of the haunts of the Water Kelpie.

Once upon a time, the Baron's heir and some other boys were playing by the loch side. One of them cried out with surprise, "Look, the pretty pony!" They went to see. It was a palfrey, gaily caparisoned, with saddle and bridle bright with silver and gems, feeding quietly in the meadow. The boys tried to get hold of it, but could not. They were allowed to come close, and then, with a toss of its head, it was off. Thus frolicking, they drew nearer and nearer to the loch. At last they caught it by the bridle, when, with a wild shriek, it rushed for the water. The lads struggled hard, but their hands were glued fast to the bridle, and they could not loose them. But the Baron's son, who had his right hand free, drew his dirk and gashed at his fingers until he gained release. He alone escaped; the other's perished in the waters.

Kelp Burning Song

Dúlamán na binne buí, dúlamán Gaelach
Dúlamán na binne buí, dúlamán Gaelach
A'níon mhín ó, sin anall na fir shúirí
A mháithair mhín ó, cuir na roithléan go dtí mé

Tá ceann buí óir ar an dúlamán gaelach
Tá dhá chluais mhaol ar an dúlamán gaelach

Rachaimid go Doire leis an dúlamán gaelach
Is ceannóimid bróga daora ar an dúlamán gaelach

Bróga breaca dubha ar an dúlamán gaelach
Tá bearéad agus triús ar an dúlamán gaelach

Ó chuir mé scéala chuici, go gceannóinn cíor dí
'Sé an scéal a chuir sí chugam, go raibh a ceann cíortha

Góide a thug na tíre thú? arsa an dúlamán gaelach
Ag súirí le do níon, arsa an dúlamán maorach

Ó cha bhfaigheann tú mo 'níon, arsa an dúlamán gaelach
Bheul, fuadóidh mé liom í, arsa an dúlamán maorach

Dúlamán na binne buí, dúlamán Gaelach
Dúlamán na farraige, 's é b'fhearr a bhí in Éirinn

Beautiful yellow dúlamán, Irish dúlamán
Beautiful yellow dúlamán, Irish dúlamán
O gentle daughter, here come the wooing men
O gentle mother, put the wheels in motion for me

There is a yellow-gold head on the Irish seaweed
There are two blunt ears on the Irish seaweed

I would go to Dore with the Irish seaweed
"I would buy expensive shoes," said the Irish seaweed

The Irish seaweed has beautiful black shoes
The Irish seaweed has a beret and trousers

I spent time telling her the story that I would buy a comb for her
The story she told back to me, that she is well-groomed

"What are you doing here?" says the Irish seaweed
"At courting with your daughter" says the stately seaweed

"Oh where are you taking my daughter?" says the Irish seaweed
"Well, I'd take her with me," says the stately seaweed

Beautiful yellow dúlamán, Irish dúlamán
Dúlamán from the sea, the best there is in Ireland

Planting Your Own Grove

By Stacey Weinberger
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2000

The Live Oak acorns that have fallen over the course of this past Fall at the Grovesite are already showing signs of sprouting. Our Server has collected some in the hopes of growing them at her new house. This has given me the in

spiration and impetus to post the first in a series of see and do articles. My teacher always told me that Druidism is a “See and do” religion versus Judaism or Christianity which are talk-think religions. And so we bring to you a plan for planting your own grove.

Do you have a reverence for trees, particularly oaks? You can grow these mighty trees yourself, from seed.

Start by gathering acorns. Let your favorite kids help or find acorns at the foot of an oak that has a special meaning for you. Make sure the tree is healthy. Use a fishing pole or other long pole to shake them from the tree. Your best chances of successful acorns are those picked directly from the oak.

Gently twist the acorn’s hat. If it comes off easily, you’re got a candidate for your project. Toss out any cracked, rotten, or hole-y acorns as well as those that seem very light by comparison. As a final test, place the acorns in a bucket of water and get rid of the floaters.

Don’t keep acorns too long before you plant them! Once they dry out, they probably won't germinate.

Using plastic bags, mix a handful of acorns with a handful of perlite. (Vermiculite can be added to the mix, if you like.) Seal the bag, date it, and place it in your refrigerator. It may take as much as three cycles of the moon for the acorns to germinate or as little as one cycle, depending on the type of oak. At the full moon and the new moon, check your acorns to see if they are starting to sprout. When several have sprouted, its time to plant all the acorns in the bag.

To plant the acorns, use large plastic pots (this is one time I actually like plastic anything!.) I tend to use the large black ones left over from the previous spring’s azalea purchase. Use one-gallon size at a minimum. The little oaks will develop looooooong tap roots, so they'll need plenty of depth. Make sure the pots drain well, too, with holes in the bottom.

Fill the pots with potting soil almost to the top. Leave about one inch. Place a single acorn on its side and cover it with half an inch of potting soil. Then water, taking care not to wash the soil away from the acorn.

Place your pots in a protected area so the cold won’t freeze them or dry them out. Water them whenever the soil dries on top.

Now sit back and wait! Hopefully in the spring, you’ll see the first signs of growth. When the little oaks are growing nicely, you can move the pots to an Eastern sunny spot and fertilize them every Sabbat. At Mabon or Samhain when the little oaks are one to two years old, plant them in a permanent spot.

The thing I really like about having these small oaks in pots is that I can arrange the pots in a circle for special workings. In the side yard, on the back deck, or even in a pasture, I can let them grown (almost) naturally and feel the power of this magickal tree. As they grow, I can move them out, away from the center of the circle, to make room for their future growth. Once a lot of rituals have taken place in this circle of young trees, the place becomes sacred, and its a good spot to plant the trees in a special ceremony.

Winter Tree Care and Planting Tips

By Stacey Weinberger, Baccharis Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 2002

From the February edition of Leaf Lines, Newsletter of The National Arbor Day Foundation. Though Spring officially begins on March 20 this year, in many places it is still cold and there is still snow on the ground. These are excellent recommendations until the weather warms.

1. Watching Your Trees In Winter

Take a walk outside to observe the buds and stems of your trees. Look at your mature trees and any new plantings from last fall or spring. What will you find?

Carefully remove a sealed bud and gently open it. Inside you will find tiny immature leaves and perhaps the beginnings of a flower. The buds are triggered to life each spring by day length. Temperature changes hasten or slow down the development of the buds.

Select several trees in your yard and tie a piece of string to their branches. Take just a moment each day, or once a week, to carefully inspect the tightly closed buds on the branches. Plant breeders use this very technique to search for ways to develop cold-hardy trees, particularly for the fruit industry.

Watching the buds awake and noting the date of the event is called phenology* an ancient forerunner of ecology. Mark on your calendar the exact dates the buds actually emerge on each tree. You can also record when your trees blossom and leaf out. Each year you will begin to learn more about the characteristics of your trees. This process of keeping yearly records will prove to be very useful --especially if you are raising fruit trees.

2. Wabbits and Other Wascals In Winter

While you are on your winter walks you may encounter other signs of life in your orchards or gardens besides simple bud development. Check your trees for signs of rodent damage. It is common for mice or rabbits to chew the tender bark of a young tree right down to the heartwood. Don't worry...if you find a girdled tree, the damage can usually be repaired by a technique known as "bridge grafting." Bridge grafting literally bridges the gap in the living tissues so they can continue the tree's growth as well as transport needed nutrients to and from the leaves and roots.

Mark the site of the damaged tree and return with a sharp knife. Remove all frayed or loose bark from around the wound. Next, remove a sucker or a slender, long, branchlet from the tree and cut it into lengths just a little bit longer than the wound, measured from top to bottom. Sharpen these sticks into wedges at both ends and insert them under the bark at the top and bottom of the wound. Several of these "bridges" will be needed, spaced at intervals around the tree.

Finally, protect the wound by covering the entire area with grafting wax. In a few years, the wound will be healed and the tree will grow normally. If you can't find grafting wax at your local nursery, try searching for it on the web.

3. Consider Your Planting Site

While the act of planting a tree may only involve a few hours, proper care and maintenance may last a lifetime. This winter, care for your new trees by simply taking the time to study the future site upon which they will be planted. Consider the environment in which you'll be working--whether you are planting on your property or planning an Arbor Day tree-planting event at a local park.

In selecting a tree, your first consideration must be what the tree needs. In other words, what environmental factors limit the ability of a particular species to live a healthy life? One indication is to look at the native species in your area. Some non-native species and horticulturally-developed cultivars may also do well on your site. Remember to always select the right tree for the right place.

4. Buy Your Trees Now for Spring Planting

While you are on those winter walks, consider how your trees define the scenery. Now is the time to create plans for your desired landscape. What would you like to see when you take this same walk in future years? Imagine planting trees and shrubs to create a beautiful, productive, "edible landscape" surrounding your home with delicious fruits and nuts to benefit your family and the wildlife outside your back door.

Consider planting some of our fruit trees...a Stayman Winesap Apple, an Early Richmond Cherry, or perhaps a delicious Belle Of Georgia Peach. If you like nut trees, you might choose the beautiful Hall's Hardy Almond, American Hazelnut, Shellbark Hickory, or Black Walnut. The Sourwood is an excellent honey tree for beekeepers.

To brighten up future winter scenes around your home, select trees for their bright colorful fruit, unique branch structure, or peeling bark. Our online Tree Store offers many possibilities. Some of our favorites are the Prairifire Flowering Crab, River Birch, Lacebark Elm, Northern Catalpa, or the Kousa Dogwood.

Make a large photocopy of your property plat. Here you can create an inventory of all the trees on your property and position them on the map. Include the botanical names of the trees for your reference. As you select trees for later plantings, you can share this map with friends, nursery growers, or use it to consult with your local County Cooperative Extension Agent.

As you plant trees, work to shape your landscape with a diverse selection of strategically placed plantings to create a landscape of beautiful, useful, edible trees for all four seasons.

5. Forcing Spring To Arrive

Now that the coldest days of winter are behind us, you can slip outside on a mild day to take care of some dormant winter pruning. Remove any crossing limbs that might rub together, sucker shoots, and any broken or dead branches. From the cuttings you remove, save a few heavily budded branches for forcing indoors to brighten up your home with colorful blooms and leaves. Good candidates for successful forcing are hazelnuts, redbuds, willows, forsythias, apple and crabapples, magnolias, and red maples.

Bring your cuttings (up to 1/2 inch diameter or smaller) inside and place them in a bucket of tepid water (about 100 degrees) with a floral preservative. The preservative will increase hydration and control any bacterial growth. Fill up a vase with warm water and preservative as well. The water in your vase will need to be changed in your container about once a week too.

Now, fill up your sink with very warm water and place the ends of the branches into the sink. Cut the stems of the branches off under the warm water. Size the branches so they fit into your vase and then proceed to create an arrangement. When you are finished, set the vase away from bright sunlight in a cool location. It will take anywhere from 1 to 6 weeks for the blooms and/or leaves to burst from their buds.

We encourage you to forward these Winter Tree Care and Planting Tips on to your friends and family around the country.

Thank you for planting and caring for America's Trees!

*Phenology looks at the relationship between climate or seasons and periods of biological activity. Phenologists study and record the changes and movements of animals and plants in relation to weather and seasonal changes taking place in their surrounding environment.

Leave No Trace

By Stacey Weinberger
A Druid Missal-Any, Spring 2001

As Druids and lovers of Nature we tend to spend a lot of time outdoors, be it holding services, hiking, or overnight camping. With the coming of Spring and warmer weather and our thoughts turn towards those outings in the woods it is important that we keep in mind the philosophy of Leave no Trace.

Leave No Trace is a program of outdoor ethics managed by the non-profit organization LNT Inc. dedicated to building awareness, appreciation, and most of all, respect for our natural lands. Following these simple principles of Leave No Trace we are able to enjoy our activities outdoors while still preserving our environment:

Plan ahead and prepare

1. Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
2. Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
3. Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
4. Visit in small groups. Split larger parties into groups of 4-6.
5. Repackage food to minimize waste.
6. Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.

Travel and camp on durable surfaces

1. Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
2. Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
3. Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary. In popular areas
4. Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
5. Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
6. Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent. In pristine areas
7. Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
8. Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

Dispose of Waste Properly

1. Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.
2. Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
3. Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
4. To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

Leave What You Find

1. Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
2. Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
3. Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
4. Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

Minimize Campfire Impacts

1. Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.
2. Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires.
3. Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
4. Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.

Respect Wildlife

1. Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
2. Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
3. Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
4. Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.
5. Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors

1. Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
2. Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
3. Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.
4. Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
5. Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.

The Creation of a Druid's Nemeton

This is an article by Rhiannon Hawk Fugatt,
of the Druid Heart Spirit Grove/Nemeton Awenyddion
O How She Set up Her Grove Site.
A Druid Missal-Any, Summer 2002

While Sister Rhiannon uses Welsh deities, the deities invoked can be adapted to the Celtic pantheon of your affinity and their attributes and roles.

Nemeton means "Sacred Space." The Druids of old and Druids of today prefer our sacred space outdoors in a place where we feel or sense Nature Spirit activity. Many Nemetons are located in a grove of trees. Natural places can add a lot to a ritual, especially if you can find a spot that exists along a ley-line or high energy center along the Earth's magnetic grid. Our Druid Grove's Nemeton is in the middle of a forest of silver-firs, oaks, pines, cedars, and dogwoods, twenty to thirty feet behind our home. Before we created the standing stones Nemeton I searched the property by spending time in different locations attuning to Earth's energy there and paid special care of natural vibrational frequencies.

The circle of our Grove is about twenty-five feet across, and around the edges stand twelve stones in the eight directions of the wheel of the year. We spent considerable time creating this sacred space, but it is nothing compared to the hard work that went into the ancient's creation of Stonehenge or other ancient sacred places. These stone monuments, or circles, express the way Druids perceive the universe and we connect with the universe in this circle that has no beginning and no end. These standing stones will stay here to remind future people of our existence and sacred connection with the land.

I found most of the stones in our stone circle by digging them out of the ground near the Nemeton's location. Some of them were very large, weighing up to two thousand pounds. For the larger and heaviest stones we used a come-along, a hand operated wench for pulling them. The largest stone that now stands in the East was the heaviest. I dug it out of the hard clay soil just fifteen feet away from the Nemeton in the ground. After three days of cranking the come-along we finally had him close enough to the East so we started to prepare his spot in the Grove, next we stood him up and lodged him into the dig out. Now I'm sure it would have taken a lot less time if we had a tractor to move it, but we decided to do it by hand. The rest of the stones in our Nemeton weighed less than a thousand pounds. I moved them by my self with a refrigerator dolly.

If you were to put as much effort into your sacred space, it might be good to get a work party together to help. While not all of us are blessed to have land, sometimes it is necessary to seek out Pagan friendly land owners. Druids who live in cities can create sacred space in your homes but, please be sure you have a fire source such as a candle, for that is where the spirits dance.

The Nemeton is circular, but Druids stand or sit in a horse shoe pattern during ritual. The opening in the horseshoe is where the spirits enter our Nemeton that is in the South. The South is also where we have our altar. The altar is used to create an open doorway for the kindred spirits to enter during ritual. The reason for the altar's location being in the South is that the South side of any clearing has the most sun through out the day.

The altar I created in our Nemeton is a trithilian--three standing stones in close proximity capped with a flat sandstone. The altar is a bridge between the worlds. The lay out of the ritual tools on our altar are symbol. How they are placed on top of the altar stone reflects how we relate those symbols with our own inner spirit, and our connection with the world tree cosmology. On our alter we place the symbols of Land, Sea, and Sky, and of the balance between the moon and sun. During ritual we do not step behind the altar out of our deep respect for the Shining Ones or good spirits who may be passing through the opening into the Grove.

A Grove is what Druids call their act of gathering for rituals, magic and meditation. We are the Druid's Grove. We join with others and do the tree meditation at the beginning of our ritual to feel that the peace within trees, also exists within us, and to experience the interconnectedness of our roots growing together. The rituals take place in the Nemeton.

These rituals are celebrated during the solstices, the equinoxes, the four fire festivals, and the healing rites we do every month. The Nemeton has a fire pit dug out of its center. Before all rituals we prepare for the spirit fire by placing oak twigs and logs in a cone shape. Oak represents durability and strength and is associated with the Welsh sun God Llew. We light the spirit fire in ritual during the moment the God and Goddess who preside over the ritual are arriving. When we are in the Nemeton all is quiet except for the sounds of nature, the four winds in the trees, and our voices raised in song. We keep a peace around us that allows our senses to awaken and our minds to be open for contact with the invisible world. The invisible world exists all through out this middle earthly plane.

When we had finished building our stone circle I did a ritual to welcome the new stones. This is done by consecrating the stones with offerings that have been blessed by the spirits. First we invite a patron God and matron Goddess from the Welsh pantheon into our Nemeton. We call on the Goddess Brúd. She brings with her the flame of inspiration and the creation of fiery spirit energy that dances in the center fire. We call on the God Manawyddan, he is the voyager who sails on the ocean, and over the land. He goes between our world and the other worlds and assists us to lift the veils between the worlds. I invoke Brúg and Manawyddan into two white candles. These represent the brightness of the God and Goddess and reminds us to keep alive our own inner spark of the divine. The invocation is done with songs and poetry. Then we take the candles and we light the center fire to connect the spirits and us with the Celtic world tree.

The center fire of our Nemeton represents the center of the world tree and the center of the world tree is the Middleworld or Earth. We invite the God and Goddess of the rite to dance there in the spirit fires. Then we call the Celtic triad spirits to bless us with their presence. The triad spirits are our Ancestors of the sea, the Nature Spirits of the earth, and the Shining Ones of the sky. The triad spirits we invite into the Grove each have an earthen bowl that contains an element that is attributed to the realm they come from. A bowl of water is placed to the left on the alter for the Underworld and the Ancestors. A bowl of earth for the Middleworld and the Nature Spirits is placed in the center. The Shining Ones have a feather and an incense bowl on the right side. We invoke these spirits with poetic verse to imbue their spirit into the water, the earth, and the incense.

The poetry we use is written by our Grove's Bard. Then we take the two candles around to each stone and pour a small amount of melted wax onto the ground in front of each stone. This is done to awaken each stone to the spirits of the God and Goddess we have invoked into the candles, that their energy may vibrate from the Earth that is within the newly created Nemeton. A Druid then takes each bowl starting with the water of the Ancestors, and pours a small amount on top of each stone while invoking the energy of the Ancestor's realm of the Underworld to pulsate through all of the stones in the circle. The Underworld is more distant from our world than the Otherworld, and is usually found through water. The world tree's roots are in the Underworld, so are the past, our ancestors, and our minds. This the Druid says during invocation to each stone while pouring the waters, "May the vibrations of the Underworld, through this stone, pulsate with the luminous light of the Anwyn." The name for the Underworld in the Welsh lore is Anwyn. Then the Druid goes to each new stone member repeating this same process then returns the bowl to the alter giving thanks by words of prayer.

The same process is done to awaken the stones to the energetic activity of Nature Spirits, who's world comes next on the way up the world tree. Nature spirits are part of the creative energy flow in nature, they exist in plants, streams, mountains, trees, animals, and in this Middleworld earthly plane. They can be any size. They work together in a synchronized harmonious flow to keep balance present in the Nemeton. The trunk of the world tree exists on Earth. It is the Middleworld, it is our nature and earthly relations, our physical body's connection to Earth. The spirit fire in the center of our Nemeton is the very center of the world tree and is also in the trunk. To synchronize the stones with nature's energy a Druid takes the bowl of Earth and walks towards the first stone to the right of the altar and says,

"May the rhythmic vibrations of our Earth Mother pulsate with you, and through you, as it does in us. Help us amplify the healing powers of Abred in our Nemeton. Make this a place that will awaken our ability to be more attentive to the forces of Abred."

Abred is the Welsh name for this Middleworld. The Druid then pours a small amount of earth from the bowl over the stone, and repeats the same process with the other stones. The bowl then gets returned to the alter.

Next, we bring to the circle of stones the presence of the Otherworld. We do this by asking assistance from the Shining Ones who have come to us from the Otherworld. In The world tree cosmology, the Otherworld and the Underworld are not the same. The Otherworld is above and more celestial. It is the canopy of branches and leaves on the world tree. Access to the Otherworld is usually through portals on Middleworld (Earth) in areas where there is energy concentrated, such as ley-lines and power spots, sacred hills, stone circles and the like. The Shining Ones that live in the Otherworld are the Gods and Goddesses from old Celtic lore and legends. We honor them in our rituals with offerings of herbs, songs, and prayers. To merge the light energy of the Shining Ones with the stones, an active Druid takes the bowl of incense and feather and approaches the stone starting with the one to the right of the alter. Sain is the Gaelic term we use for wafting the smoke. The Druid starts to Sain the stone while saying,

"Oh Shining Ones, hear our prayers and accept our offerings. For today with your help, we consecrate our new stone members to make them wholly in the realms of Anwyn, Abred, and Gwynvyd at the edges of our Nemeton!

“May the higher frequencies of Gwynvyd illuminate through you, within and without, let the messages of the Gods and Goddesses speak through you to us clearly, that we may hear the truth and feel their hearts nobility brought to this Nemeton."

The Welsh name for the Otherworld is Gwynvyd. When the Druid returns the bowl of Gwynvyd to the altar all raise their hands to the South, above the altar and say,

"Let the powers of Land, Sea, and Sky live within and on the edge of this Nemeton. Let the spirit fire and world tree connect the stones to the center of our Nemeton."

To end this rite a Druid approaches the fire and takes some ashes from the spirit fire and first enters the South saying,

"Voices from the ocean of the four winds! Come! Rush through the stones and spiral into the center of the world tree."

The Druid then sprinkles some ash on the ground in front of the stone, and on the stone, and does this for each of the stones in every direction. The Druid does this while chanting,

"Let the spirit fire and world tree connect the stone people to the center of our Nemeton. By the blessing of all spirits, dance together our ancestors, our nature spirits, and the Shining Ones, we welcome these new stone members into our Nemeton."

All say, "Gadael hi bhod!" Rituals are always followed by a song of peace, and a fellowship feast.

Tree Meditation

A Meditation from the Druid Heart Spirited Grove:
By Rhiannon Hawk
A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 2001

Meditation is the key to trance when it is done correctly. Breathing techniques help induce these states of trance and also awaken the electric governing vessel and the magnetic conception vessel which helps our outward journey to succeed. Meditation and trance are a pathways between the conscious and sub-conscious for inner therapy, reprogramming, recreating our pasts, healing our core self, etc. We use trance and meditation for all of these plus journeying. Journeying is similar to astral projection except that you are safe and still in your mind, body, and spirit. When you journey into the underworld (Anwyn,) you journey into the sea, deep parts of your self where your Ancestral memories exist, genetic and spiritual, past lives also.

There are different levels of trance. We like to use medium trance because you are safe there. Deep trance should only be done by those with much experience or by a guide who leads you by voice.

The Tree Meditation

By Rhiannon Hawk
A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 2001

The tree meditation does many things. It grounds your entire being. It runs Nyvwyres (Sacred Spirit) energy through the governing vessel which runs down through the crown of your head to a spot called the core-star, and the conception vessel which runs up (from the earth) from the bottom of your spine or feet to the core-star. The core-star looks just like it sounds like a small white sun located between your solar-plexus and your navel. Thus uniting the earth and the sky, and filling the channel with Nyvwyre. The tree meditation is also a medium trance state. So instead of ending your meditation when it is done you can slide right into a journey.

Start by finding a quiet place where you will be undisturbed. Unplug your phone. Put a sign on your door "DO NOT DISTURB." Do your meditation outside if you can find a place and the weather is willing. Have a pillow ready because you are going to sit cross legged. When you are comfortable you may begin. Take a few deep breaths slowly. First filling your stomach then your lungs. Fill completely. Do this a few times. Focus on letting go of any tension that may have built up during the day. Keep deep breathing as you take your mind and body off any distracting thoughts. THINK NOTHING!

At the bottom of your spine imagine pushing and growing a large tap root down into the earth and feel other roots pushing down. Feel your roots pushing down through rock breaking them apart. Feel your roots feeling water, minerals, and nutrients. Now just take some time to allow them to grow further down until you feel warmth. Feel them reach water.

After you have a strong root system well grounded, feel that earth energy moving up to your lower body (belly area) and developing a wide base trunk. Grow up quickly. Feel the trunk growing up your entire body, and when you get to just above your chest feel branches push their way out. Keep moving up and out. Take some time to do this. Make sure that branches grow out of the crown of your head. Reach those branches for the light of the sun. Feel the warming rays giving you energy. Grow new sprigs and lots of leaves and don't forget to take a deep breath and live. Be a tree for a moment. Notice if there are any animals living in your branches?

Pause...

Now I want you to focus on the earth energy coming up to your core-star, that is directly above your navel. Feel how strong Mother Earth's energy is flowing through you!

Take a moment...

Now feel Father Sky's energy coming down through your branches, down to your core-star at the same time you still feel the earth's energy coming up.

Take a moment...

Now send the Earth's energy up to the sky, out your branches, and send the skies energy down into the earth through your roots. As soon as both are united you see a bright light that is gold-white. It is coming from your core-star. Back in that light. Feel the love. Let that light burst throughout your entire being. You are meant to be here now. To continue with journey

Now stay within and visualize that gold-white light filling you up trying to burst out of your bark. All the way out to the ends of your branches, and all the way down to the tips of your roots, especially your tap root. Once you have done this imagine that you as your human self are smaller that normal and inside this tree that is filled with light. You are floating around as if there is no gravity. Now turn yourself upside down and look at the opening of the taproot that looks far into the underworld. It looks like it goes forever, all you see are its sides and the light. You decide to investigate. But first you find that there is a small white pouch tied around your waist, and you realize that it must have a purpose so you open it, and inside there are three golden seeds. You put them back in the pouch and continue on your journey. You grab a hold of the bark and pull yourself into the tunnel, as you are small inside this great tree and you are light energy you find it very easy to move along.

As you keep looking ahead it seems as though it will take forever but as you continue to move you see the bottom of the root and it looks like it is open at the end. As you get closer you see a beautiful luminous light that is tranquil to see. Upon reaching the opening you see a reflection, you grow more aware of the object that the reflection is coming from, and you see that it is a cauldron. A very large cauldron that could hold one to two hundred gallons. It appears to be water. Looking into that water it's dark at first just reflecting that luminous light, then you notice that an image appears, some kind of writing. Some ancient symbol that may have belonged to your ancestors. Look very closely. Memorize it, you may know it, it may even be unfamiliar to you, but remember it well...

The experience has made you feel somehow, special, like you were given a gift. Then you realize that you must also leave an offering so you reach for your pouch and open it, allowing the golden seeds to fall freely to the sacred waters. You will receive a sign that the offering was received. After you have received this you may return back up the root to your core self.

Once you are back in the trunk of the tree, expand your body to fill the tree and return to the earthly plane, remember to keep your core self intact.

It may be helpful to record this reading it aloud into a tape deck allowing for the amount of space you will need in different places during the meditation and journey.

Michelle's Meditation

By Michelle Hajder, Feb 3, 1997
On Carleton Vaxnotes Druid Conference

Part One

Yes, that's grounding...but I also have this meditation/personal ritual for on-the-spot energy focus, which I also call grounding.

This is not something I invented, but is a general purpose thing I have seen different forms of in many books...

One sits on the floor/ground with good posture and a nice straight spine, taking a couple deep breaths and calming the mind an body.

Concentrate on your spine, feel it, be aware of it, and be aware of its energy. Now slowly feel and visualize your "spine" slowly extending downwards past the tailbone and descending out of your body. (It's probably gross and distracting to visualize actual vertebrae poking out your butt...the common image/feeling is a column of energy that flows from you spine. And remember, it's extending, not leaving your body, just getting longer and still keeping you connected.)

So feel and visualize your "spine" descend straight down through the floor, then the floor below, or the foundations of the house, down into the Earth. Be sure to take it slow enough that you *really* do feel this happening. Do no try to send your spine deeper until you are secure at the level you are on.

Send it down through topsoil, past water mains, layers of clay, etc, until you hit bedrock. Feel it continue for miles and miles downward, yet connected to your body.

Send it to the point at the center of the earth. secure it there. feel the link between you and the center. feel you spine securely rooted to the spot. You are so strongly connected that not even a tornado could move you.

Now, practice feeling and drawing energy up from out of the depths of the earth up your spine and into your body. Draw energy, draw peace. Send energy back to the earth. Feel the flow.

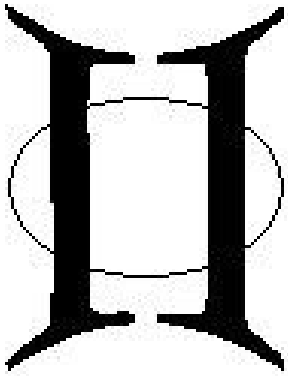
Part Two

Now, If you want to continue the exercise, feel how you spine is connected to the center of the earth. follow it up back through the dirt and rock, back up your body, and now extend your spine-energy-column out the top of your head, extending slowly as before so you really feel it move out the top of you head, up above you, through the ceiling, through the roof, through the levels of atmosphere, up into the heavens as far as you can imagine.

You are now connected to both earth and sky, a powerful column joining two powerful forces. Pull energy down from sky. Send some back. Pull sky energy and send it into the earth. Raise earth energy to the sky. Do both at once. As you inhale, pull energy from above and below, and as you exhale, breathe the energies out. Pull positive energies in, send negative out.

Play with exercise of this sort and see what works for you.

So Ends Volume Nine
Of the Green Books.



Feel Free to add your own articles on

trees and recipes to this section.

Green Book
Of Meditations

Volume Ten
Research Resources
On Druidism

2003 Introduction

Originally this was going to be the bulk of ARDA 2's Part Seven Miscellany, but due to some copyright concerns and the general wholeness of the subject matter, it seem that a Green Book was possible out of the material. Much of material of Section Two is from ARDA 1's Part Eight, and much from ARDA 1's Part Seven is now here in Section Three and Four. This section will naturally expand over the years, so it's a good idea to separate it from the main body text of ARDA 2.

I don't wish you to misinterpret this book as if for me to say that you have to be fascinated and obsessed with Celtic research to understand Druidism. That's not what I mean. Yes, I've studied the old ones, but I think there is more than can be learned form living plants and animals and each other than from the few remaining scraps. However, it's still good and interesting to know, even if not practiced. I hope you enjoy it, and have fruitful research.

Yours in the Mother,
Mike Scharding
March 20, 2003
Embassy of Japan, D.C.

Printing History

1st Edition, 2003 (ARDA 2)

Drynemetum Press

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Section One: Essays on Modern Druidism

The Sociology of the RDNA

By Irony Sade
November 1998
(New to ARDA 2)

Introduction

In this paper I intend to demonstrate that the great sociological theories of Schleiermacher, Marx, Durkheim and others are applicable to the study of the Reformed Druids of North America. I believe that these theories can shed useful light on even a movement as peculiar as the RDNA and that the Druids themselves hold some valuable contributions for the general study of religion. I intend to demonstrate that while they do not call themselves a religion, and perhaps ought not to do so on philosophic grounds, the Reformed Druids share enough of the qualities of a religious movement to be usefully studied as such. I will discuss the sources and methodological problems involved in this kind of study, give an introduction to the Reformed Druids, and a brief sketching of their origins and belief. Next I will address the question of religious applicability, and finally delve into the examination of the sociological theories of Schleiermacher, Marx, and Durkheim as they relate to the Reformed Druids.

Disclaimer and Acknowledgments

It must always be remembered that in matters of religious belief each individual can express only his or her conception of what a religion is or teaches. This is especially true of Reformed Druidism. The Druidic path is an intensely individualistic one and each Druid can only speak for sure of what he or she has found. To a certain extent this also holds for describing the movement as a whole. The way in which I see Reformed Druidism is only one amongst the many views that can be taken of it. Anyone wanting to take a serious look at the subject should be careful to view it through more than one lens.

Which brings me to a certain methodological problem with this study. Most- if not all- of the scholarly work that has been done regarding the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton has been done by one man, Michael Scharding. Archdruid of the Carleton Grove from the spring of 1993 to that of 1994 he cosponsored the most recent revival of the Druids at Carleton (1995-6) and remains an influentiall - albeit absent - friend at the time of this writing. Michael Scharding majored in History as an undergraduate and in 1994 undertook the wonderfully self-referential endeavor of researching the history of the Reformed Druids for his Senior Integrative Exercise. In 1996 he revised this paper into a rather longer one, A General History of Reformed Druidism in America, and published it along with nearly all the collected writings of Reformed Druids past in A Reformed Druid Anthology, of which he was also the associate editor. "As a result of this research," he writes, "I've probably collected and read more Reformed Druid material and talked with more Druids from the different factions than any other Reformed Druid (except possibly Isaac Bonewits.) This means that I'm either an 'expert' or I am now more irreparably confused in my Druidism than ever as a result."[1] It also means that no academic study of Reformed Druidism to date - to my knowledge - has escaped from his shadow.

Daniel Hansen's American Druidism is a wonderful field guide to the various Druid groups of the Americas, and provides a fine history of the RDNA, but, as Mr. Scharding has commented, "it would not be a good book to compare my opinions against as I had a great deal to do with getting [it] published."

Margot Alder also talks about the RDNA in what many consider the definitive work on the Neo-Pagan movement, Drawing Down the Moon, but says very little that Scharding does not.

Isaac Bonewits also mentions the RDNA at Carleton in Real Magic but discusses them primarily in terms of one of their rituals, which he uses as an example to illustrate his theories on magic working. In short, beyond a few oral interviews performed by the College archivist and others and the preserved writings of past and present Druids there is little written work to study.

To date, Michael Scharding represents the most influential academic voice in the study of Reformed Druidism. Except by performing new, original research it is nearly impossible not to be influenced by his perspective on the movement. As mentioned above, any adequate study of religion ought to view it through more than one lens. Luckily most of the progenitors of the movement are still alive and much of its history has been recorded and stored so the possibility of original studies remains. I write this merely to make the reader aware of Scharding's influence. The study of Reformed Druidism is both indebted to and dominated by him, and, while I have drawn extensively on my own observations, interviews, research, and experience as Archdruid over the past three years, this paper is no exception. People who wish a clearer look at the movement are encouraged to explore it for themselves.

Finally let me make one technical note. Wherever I refer to 'Druids' in this paper I mean the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College, past and present. I do not intend to discuss the Paleo-Druids of the Old World, nor the Meso-Druids of Brittany revived in 1717, nor most of the other Neo-Druid groups in America except as they directly relate to our understanding of the RDNA. If you want an overview of them, read Hansen. With that caveat, let us begin.

Irony Sade
Prentice 206
November, 1998

Section I

An Introduction to Reformed Druidism

"Religions that combine humor, play, and seriousness are a rare species," Margot Adler wrote. "Once you embark on a journey of change in perception, even when you start this journey as 'play,' you can end up in waters far different from those you may have originally intended to enter."[2] Reformed Druidism represents the embodiment of this sentiment. Created partially as a joke, partially as a reaction against authority, it nonetheless blossomed and grew far beyond the hopes and desires of its founders, becoming both sillier than they had intended, and far more serious than they had ever imagined.

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1 In his forward to A General History... A Reformed Druid Anthology, pp. 331.
ARDA pp. 16
2 Margot Adler, Drawing Down the Moon, pp. 299-300

Reformed Druidism began at Carleton as a humorous response to the ruling that all students attend a set number of religious services each term. The early flavor of the movement was always one of serious tongue-in-cheek, a combination of the intentionally profound with the pointlessly silly. The early Liturgy, for instance, was written in a playful pseudo-King James style both to provide a semblance of legitimacy and to tease the traditional profundity of holy writings. At the same time it contains some incredibly meaningful passages. Deborah Frangquist, one of the early formative members of the RDNA, recalls one of them nearly thirty years later.

> O Lord, forgive these three sins, which are due to our human limitations:
>
> Thou art everywhere, but we worship Thee here;
>
> Thou art without form, but we worship Thee in these forms;
>
> Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, but we offer unto Thee these, our prayers and sacrifices.

"I still find that one of the most profound spiritual statements I have ever heard," she recalls. "It informs my understanding of what I as a believing Christian am doing in Christian liturgy, including the Eucharist. Every time I ended out on the Hill somewhere saying that prayer, I was moved anew by it, and I don't think I was alone in that."[3] The Druids at Carleton today continue to exhibit this characteristic blend of the meaningful and the frivolous. Their celebration of Beltane - the first of May - in 1998 included both a pair of weddings as serious and beautiful as the nuptial pairs could ask and an extended bout of 'doughnut fishing,' a spontaneous game where people chased a doughnut suspended on the end of a string, trying to catch it in their mouths while being tickled.

It is, I believe, this persistence of humor and spontaneity, respect and seriousness that has kept Reformed Druidism alive at Carleton for the last thirty-five years and enabled it to spread as far as it has. Were it to lose either of these qualities the movement would be finished. It would become either the useless ghost of a religion or a sacrilegious joke. With them it becomes something both meaningful and liberating, a way of searching and of exploring life in the company of others and oneself that is not exactly one thing or another. Neither a religion by its own definition, nor a philosophy by anyone else's, Reformed Druidism represents a unique and valuable creation of the human mind, and a fascinating confusion to the study of religion.

3 This triad first appears in the Order of Common Worship as the invocation and again in nearly all the early liturgy. The Druids at Carleton have currently fallen out of the habit of actually using the old liturgy, but they still read through it for a good laugh and ponder it's many truths. See A Reformed Druid Anthology, Part Three, Liturgy of the Druids.

Deborah Frangquist in an interview with Eric Hilleman, Carleton Archivist, October 31, 1993;pp. 450 of A Reformed Druid Anthology.

Section II

Origins of the Reformed Druids

The Reformed Druids of North America began, with no connection to either the Paleo or the modern European Druids, at Carleton College in April of 1963. At that time the college had a requirement for graduation stating that

> "Attendance is required at the College Service of Worship or of the Sunday Evening Program or at any regularly organized service of public worship. Each term, every student must attend seven [of ten] of the services or religious meetings."[4]

A number of students felt that it was unfair to require people to attend services and decided to test the policy. The protesters were led by the original 'Triumvirate', consisting of David Fisher, Howard Cherniack and Norman Nelson. They noted the escape clause of "or at any regularly organized service of public worship" and realized that they could create and organize such a service themselves and offer it up to the relevant deans as a fulfillment of the requirement. The college would have two choices, as they saw it: either to refuse to recognize them and be accused of religious discrimination, or to let them graduate at which point the movement would be declared a hoax and the requirement further ridiculed.[5]

Instead, in the summer of 1964, John Nason, the president of the college, sent out a memo revoking the requirement. It should be noted that Nason had already decided that the college's policy of in Loco Parentis was outdated and may have been planning to revoke the requirement all along. The role of the Druids in its elimination is debatable, but they cheerfully took the credit for its disappearance.

Two things about this origin are crucial to the understanding of Reformed Druidism. The first is that the founders never intended the movement to last. The second is that the Reformed Druids had no connection what so ever to any other Druid group at the time of their founding.[6] "Indeed," writes Scharding, "this leads up to the greatest hindrance to the entire study of Reformed Druidism; the name 'Druid.' Many scholars will see the word 'Druidism' on a sheet of paper and suddenly a myriad of assumptions will strangle their minds."[7]

The Reformed Druid movement embodies none of the philosophy, worldview, cultural resonance or even religion of the Celts, Paleo, or Meso Druids. The name was picked because it was sufficiently venerable to be taken seriously and sufficiently misunderstood that the young RDNA could make up whatever they chose and not be called on inaccuracies.[8] As the

4 Carleton College Catalogue, March 1964, pp. 136. -ARDA-

5 It should be remembered that these students - the original 'triumvirate' consisting of David Fisher, Howard Cherniack and Norman Nelson - were in no way irreligious. David is currently an Episcopalian priest. They merely felt that the requirement was unfair on principle and should be tested. They also hedged their bets and continued attending the 'legitimate' services throughout their protest.

6 This will be discussed more in section IV.

7 ARDA pp. 339. This seems to be a thing that each researcher is at pains to learn anew

8 "Mec"- Michael Scharding- wasted eight months of research before figuring this out. I knew he'd done so and I still fell for it. My desk is littered with fascinatingly irrelevant books on Druidism that have nothing to do with the RDNA.

story goes, Howard Cherinack's parents did not like indicating that they were Jewish on government forms, and had taken to writing 'Druid' instead. The Triumvirate picked up the idea and ran with it, inventing beliefs as they went. The subsequent history of the movement is complex and fascinating but I do not intend to address it here. Scharding has covered it more thoroughly than I am ever likely to and traces its internal dividing and developments over a thirty-year span. I will attempt to avoid much of that discussion except where it is relevant to our purpose here.

Section III

Beliefs of the Reformed Druids

Two things were of primary importance for the Reformed Druids in the beginning, and have remained fundamental to the movement ever since. The respect for nature, and the respect for each individual's rights. The founders wanted to create a system that would contain a meaningful core while eschewing all dogma and orthodoxy. In the words of one Druid, "Reformed Druidism is a statement that religion has a tendency to become organized religion and [sic] which then becomes organization devoid of religion."[9] The founders were very conscious of this 'fossilization theory' and wished to provide no framework for organization that could be exploited later. As such, when the two tenets were devised and finalized in 1963, they were kept as simple and as inclusive as possible.

> The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
>
> And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it people do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life they are come face to face with it.[10]

These are the only two tenets of the Reformed Druids of North America - and the only two statements with which all Druids are ever likely to agree. Everything else is up to the individual. In their original form the tenets are rather cumbersome. They are often paraphrased as 'Nature is good' and 'Nature is good.' A more serious way of putting it, currently practiced amongst the Druids at Carleton is to say that first: The spiritual search is an important, individual, and life long endeavor, and secondly, that one way of searching lies through the study, understanding, and awareness of nature. Each of these phrasings indicates something rather different if they are taken literally, yet it is at one truth that they point. The only commandment I have ever seen attached to Reformed Druidism is "Think for thyself!" The tenets, however you conceive of them, establish the framework in which to do this.

Druidism teaches that you have the right to believe what you know to be true, no mater what anyone else thinks of it. At the same time it holds that you cannot simply pick what you would like to be the case, nor design a cosmology irrespective of what the world teaches. To be a Druid is to deliberately and consciously seek out the truth of the world and decide for yourself what it is you will believe. Margot Adler sheds some useful light on the matter when she writes "The original founders seemed to hold the fundamental idea that one should scrutinize religion from 'a state of rebellion,' neither embracing traditional faiths nor rejecting them."[11]

Druids look everywhere for inspiration. World philosophies, religions, science fiction, children's books, strange dreams, the flight of swallows; all are considered equally valid insights to potential truths that must be at least examined, if never espoused. As Scharding writes, "It was important to Druidism that you believed your own views instead of slavishly following those of others, provided that you had carefully examined them and judged them sound."[12] This intellectual honesty is a necessary - if not sufficient - feature of the Druidic search. Without it the movement would descend into utter relativism.[13]

Another significant feature of Druidic 'belief' is that it is compatible with almost any other religious system. It serves to accentuate rather than replace a person's faith. Michael Scharding is a devout (maybe) Catholic as well as being a Druid. The group today contains at least one Atheist Druid, Jewish Druid, Quaker Druid, Seventh Day Adventist Druid, and innumerable Agnostic and Confused Druids. Indeed, the people who have taken Reformed Druidism to be their only religion have always been in the minority. The movement is hardly a thing that one can be converted to. The most common reaction to the personal acceptance of being a Druid is one of coming home. My own was, "Oh - now at last I have a name for what I've always done." The inclusiveness with which Druidism approaches all other religions is one of its strongest and most redeeming features.

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9 Internal correspondence ARDA pp. 338

10 An interesting change in the modern phrasing of the first tenet is the omission of the idea that the spiritual search is universal. The reason for this is two fold. One motivation is a desire not to impose even that truth on others. Another is that it has become apparent that one can be a great Druid without holding that the spiritual search holds any immediate, personal, relevancy. David Coil, one of the greatest Druid apologists at Carleton today and the functional right hand of the Archdruid for the last year, holds the above view. He believes that upon death he will go back to being 'nineteen cents of chemicals,' end of story. He would rather live a life that ponders its spiritual significance, and expresses one of the purest Druidic spirits on campus.

11 Drawing Down the Moon. pp. 301

12 ARDA. pp. 341

13 One could argue that the Druids already embody such a relativism in that the closest thing we have to a statement of belief is really simply an insistence that you search truth out yourself. If so, it is only the relativism of individual minds. Yet I do not believe that even this is the case. The intellectual honesty that Druidism fosters encourages clear sight and careful thinking, and it seems that even with a great many people searching in this manner, agreements and commonalties arise. It may be that when people look hard and carefully at the nature of reality they all find, on some fundamental level, the same things. It seems to me that even without an imposed order to the universe, relativism confounds itself against a deeper order that is already present. It is part of the answer to the problem of saying "This is the truth that I have found, which I will force on no one else - but it applies to everybody." A rigorous examination of this confusion will have to await the foredoomed attempt of working out a formal Druidic philosophy and metaphysic.

Section IV

Is Reformed Druidism a Religion?

There is an unwritten rule that whatever any Druid may say about him or herself, no one is to make categorical claims regarding the entire movement. Druidism can be and has been a religion for its individual members. It has never claimed itself to be a religion. Druidism is above all a system of inquiry into life, nature and meaning. Depending on how one takes that the movement could be viewed either way. The official Druidic statement has been that the RDNA does not affirm or deny the validity of any religion, including itself.

The founders of Reformed Druidism certainly never intended to start a religion. Indeed, the persistence of the movement beyond the elimination of the Chapel requirement took many of the founders by surprise. David Fisher left the movement early on because he had begun to fear that he had helped to start something that was becoming dangerously close to a real religion. Its function as a protest was fulfilled, and yet the group remained. "For a great many Druids, the RDNA had introduced the possibility of taking personal responsibility for understanding and believing one's own faith."[14]

Druidism continued because people continued to find it meaningful and useful beyond its initial function as a creative protest. Still, did that make the RDNA a religion? The founders were careful not to call it such, though they wished it to appear as one for political purposes, and the movement has remained deliberately vague on this question ever since. Part of the reason for this vagueness is the fear of the 'fossilization theory.' If the RDNA had indeed found something meaningful in the realm of religion, it was felt that it had done so through its very simplicity. If defining themselves as a religion - or anything else - would engender the complexity and rigidity that people had joined the movement to avoid, they wanted no part of it.

One of the consequences of this refusal was the gradual splintering of the original RDNA into innumerable branches. Every so often someone would enter the movement who felt that it should be further defined. Each time this happened, after a brief struggle to change the whole RDNA, a new splinter group would form centered around the rebel and his or her followers. At present, so far as I can tell, there are nearly two dozen separate and related branches, all bearing the name 'Druid,' all spawned by definition or methodological disagreements. The first and most drastic of these schisms began in 1974 over the question of whether the RDNA should declare itself and its members exclusively pagan. This was exactly the sort of thing that many of the Druids - especially those for whom the Carleton grove had been influential - wanted to avoid. They loved the fact that one did not have to renounce any religious beliefs to become a Druid, and that the Druids brought together people of all different faiths to search together in a friendly, healthy manner. Others felt differently though, and a new group was formed.[15]

The old RDNA remained as it was, happily undefined and unsettled as to the religious question. Even in their second great interaction with authority, which seemed to hinge upon whether the RDNA represented an actual religion or not the Druids managed to escape without really settling the issue.[16]

From a research perspective the question remains. Is the Reformed Druid movement a religion? Is it a 'real religion,' whatever that means? Is it something to which one can legitimately apply the theories of Weber, Marx, and Schleiermacher as I intend shortly to do? It is apparent by now that I, at least, regard it as, if not a religion per se, at least something to which many of the great religious theories and debates are applicable. If I did not, all the time I have put into this project would be seen as wasted.[17]

In what ways can the RDNA be considered a religion? Eliade defined the base of all religious experience as the personal experience of sacred reality or Other. Schleiermacher followed him in stating that it was the encounter between the finite and the infinite, which is the origin and object of all religion. To my mind, it is with exactly this encounter that Druidism deals. It is almost beyond question that on any functional level human beings are finite creatures. Through Druidism they engage freely in the spiritual search - the individual quest for understanding of the sacred. Certainly Druidism can and has dealt with all of the classical religious problems of ontology, metaphysics, soteriology, and eschatology, not to mention that of theodicy, the celebrated 'question of evil.' It has done so, however, on a purely individual level. Druidism never teaches that any particular thing is or is not the case - it simply teaches people to learn and decide for themselves.

All of the classic problems and issues of religion are discussed at Druidic meetings and debated at great length from a variety of views but in the end it is up to each individual to decide what to believe. What the RDNA does is to create a place where people of many different religions can come together to share their traditions and learning. Scharding credits this persistence to the delight in the possibility of taking personal responsibility for one's own faith. The movement had shown people experientially "the benefits of learning from people from other faiths in a non-hostile forum of interaction."[18]

The insight of the Druids, Scharding writes,

> "was that if the same story about, say, a bird making it's nest, can be interpreted by all religions as a useful analogy for their own religious beliefs, then people of all religions could benefit from getting together and hearing that same story.... As long as dogmatic theological statements remain out of the stories, the group can enjoy each other's company."[19]

It has often been denied that Reformed Druidism is a religion because it boasts no dogma or theology. 'How can that be a religion,' we often hear. 'It doesn't teach anything!' The short answer is that Druidism teaches people how to learn, not what is true. It will show you how to walk - not where to travel. In this it is exactly as much a religion as are the Zen Buddhist schools, or, for that matter, Taoism. The theories of the great sociologists of religion are usefully applicable to these systems. I believe that, even if it denies being a religion itself, they are no less applicable to Reformed Druidism.

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14 ARDA pp. 339.

15 See Scharding for a thorough discussion of this initial split, known within the movement as the 'Isaac wars.' Hansen also gives a solid cataloguing of the extant Druid groups in the United States today, their relationship to one another, and how each came to be.

16 This was the almost famous 'Smiley Case' which will be discussed further below.

17 Or as a furthering of the great and subtle joke that some have seen Druidism as being!

18 ARDA pp. 339

19 ARDA pp. 341

There is one other problem that ought to be addressed. The question of what it would mean to declare the RDNA a religion. In a sense the question is academic because the movement intentionally never claims to be one. But from a certain perspective the question remains. If Reformed Druidism declared itself to be a fully fledged religion like any other, would it in effect be denying all religious validity? The argument runs vaguely as follows. Reformed Druidism affirms and denies no religious validity by its own admission. But the essence of religion seems to be a profound respect for the importance and validity of a personal encounter with the sacred. If the RDNA calls itself a religion just like the others, is it stating, in effect, that religious experience is not worth validating? The essence of religious tolerance is not unconditional acceptance of differences but rather an abiding respect for the sacredness of the other's Other. Druidism appears not to contain this. To put it differently, if Druidism includes itself in the set of Religions, is it saying that a religion does not have to affirm or deny anything at all? Druidism does not appear to contain any sacred. By calling itself a religion is it saying that there is no sacred to religion?[20]

I do not believe that this is the case. First of all, Druidism never declared itself, as such, to be a religion. If its members do so, that is their own affair, but almost invariably Druidism mutates and develops into something subtly different and much more complex as soon as it is adopted by a lucid individual rather than a group. Secondly, Druidism does hold an abiding respect for other experiences of the sacred. It simply holds their expressions, through theology, poetry, art, and philosophy as secondary portrayals of that primary experience. The experience of the sacred is holy and respected, whoever happened to have it. Their depiction of it is granted only as much validity as anyone else's. It is taken as one of many fingers pointing at the moon, not the moon itself. The validity of any and all experiences of the sacred stand. Religious expressions are viewed as mutable. Finally, Druidism itself would never - nor would any Druid that I know - state that there is no sacred in religion. It would merely insist that we each critically and honestly examine our own experiences, religious and otherwise, to seek out and understand the sacred within them.

20 I confess that I do not completely understand this argument and have not given it the best statement or defense possible. I would gratefully welcome any clearer formulations of it. It is almost regrettable that there has never been a serious philosophical study of the Reformed Druid movement. Druidism seems such a valuable tool of inquiry that one could see the attraction in developing a solid understanding and perhaps metaphysic of it. But it is not at all clear to me at this point how one would go about doing this, nor even that it should be done. It is not that I doubt Druidism could take the probing, but the defining that it would almost certainly entail seems against the spirit of the system. It may be that anything that was developed in such a manner would become yet another splinter group, another branch of the movement that would leave its original roots unchanged.

Section V

Sociological Theory and the Reformed Druids

Of all the classical social theories, those of Friedrich Schleiermacher seem to most accurately describe Reformed Druidism.[21] Schleiermacher divided the depictions of religion in his time into those reducing it to functions of the will, reason, and imagination. When viewed as such, the primary vehicle for religious expression became morality, philosophy and art, respectively. Schleiermacher believed that each of these conceptions left out something crucial about the nature of religion and so posited a fourth category. The primary faculty of religion, he felt, was feeling. Religion, he posited, was the encounter of the finite to the infinite. Feeling was that by which we experience this encounter. As pure feelings are essentially incommunicable between sane humans, other means of expressing the encounter must be utilized. According to Schleiermacher, morality, philosophy, art, theology, rituals, laws, legends, and even history are all secondary means of trying to express this primary experience. As such, they have no final or absolute validity in the domain of religion! Only feeling can convey the primary experience, and feeling is essentially impossible to communicate.

Schleiermacher's view of religion is a profound call for tolerance. If all theologies and dogmas, all morals and rituals are only secondary expressions of the sacred, then even religious beliefs that completely antagonize one's own can be tolerated. People can realize that it is only the details of expression that they are fighting about when there may be no real disagreement over the feeling of the sacred. This view is almost identical to that espoused by Reformed Druidism. They too regard all expressions of religious truth to be equally valid as secondary indicators of an inexpressible reality that is never the less to be sought by each individual. They too exhibit a unilateral tolerance for all systems of religious belief and practice.[22]

Because no single expression of sacrality can be seen as being its primary experience people interested in approaching that sacred must engage in a constant process of interpretation of these secondary expressions. This hermeneutic circle of translation and interpretation is inherent to the Druidic search.

It is interesting that by both of these views religious experience and validity must remain forever a uniquely individual phenomena. Until it is possible to accurately communicate pure feeling, neither the Schleiermachers nor the Druids of the world will ever be able to convey to another what exactly their encounters with the Other - the infinite - were like. All forms of expression prove not only inadequate for the searcher's understanding of religion, but also for the sage's communication of religious understanding. The consequence of this, were everyone to operate within this model of religious

21 In discussing the sociology of the movement, I do not intend to focus here on social factors leading to or even influencing the Reformed Druids. Michael Scharding discusses some of these including Judeo Christian influences, the influence of Asian religions, of the 'Sixties,' of Carleton, and toys with the possibility of Fraternal influences in the creation of the RDNA. Instead I intend to look at the applicability of some of the classical sociological theories to Druidism, leaving the discussion of factors to those who know more about them.

22 Within reason. Someone whose religious practice involved destroying the natural world on principle, or who ritualy murdered random folks would not be tolerated. But this would be on behavioral grounds rather than religious ones.

understanding, is a plurality of completely unique experiences of the sacred, where each person honored the validity of other's experiences, and realized that no one's expressions of that feeling were any more adequate than their own.

Carl Marx had rather different conception of religion. Unfortunately his understanding of the phenomena was rather stunted by his hatred of it. Marx's insights into the nature of economics and political theory are profound; it is a shame he could not apply the same clarity of thought to the study of religion. It has been argued that Marx's statements on religion are inconclusive and contradictory, making it rather hard to discern what he actually thought on the subject, but from his critiques of Feuerbach, and of Bauer in On the Jewish Question a synthesis of sorts can be made.

It seems that Marx held that the ideas of religion emerged from social powerlessness. Religion served, in his mind, as a superstructure to maintain and perpetuate the economic base, which gave rise to it. It did this by maintaining the social class structure and placating the lower classes with promises of something better to come - so long as they held their peace for the time being. At the same time it seems that Marx held that religion emerged from alienation in the realm of civil society - the same force that produced divergent political and economic systems. Alienation leads to the objectification of an expression of one's self - or one's culture - which then is imagined as being independent of the thing it is an expression of. This is idolatry on Marx's view - the worship of something you yourself have created.[23]

It seems, though, that none of these ideas shed any particular light on Reformed Druidism. Druidism did not arise out of social powerlessness, does not maintain any class structure, and has no economic bearing what-so-ever. It also posits no higher being, objectified or otherwise, that could be viewed as a created and forgotten idol of civil alienation. Instead it seems that the RDNA emerged and has been sustained primarily through curiosity. Furthermore, Druidism does not seek - or serve - to maintain any authority, including its own, other than that of intellectual honesty, which is operative on a solely personal level. Druidism does take a certain delight is frustrating the authority of others, especially that which is seen as arbitrary, restrictive or simply absurd. In this sense it could be seen as a reaction to authoritarian structures, but not at all in the way that Marx envisioned. The RDNA has had only two major interactions with authority, and while one of them was the purpose of the movement's initiation, the struggle against an authority has never since proved a motivating factor in the movement's continuation.[24]

Another sociologist whose theories mesh oddly with the RDNA is Emile Durkheim. Durkheim held fundamentally that religion is not irrational - not at all a function of superstition and error as others have often maintained. All religious experience is the experience of the power of society in his view. The immediate fascination of this view is that no society can ever exist without religion. He also believed that to understand religion we must go back to its base: totemism. On at the same time he held that as a society changes, its god must too. In totemism the individual identifies and becomes one with the totem, which in turn unifies and expresses the nature of his or her social group. As societies advance this identification becomes intellectualized and disguised. By the time a society reaches a reasonably advanced stage its conception of the totem has evolved into a fairly abstract, usually singular god. Along the way this conception of the sacred has been purged of all definable qualities. To adequately represent and unify a very simple social group was easy - they could all be seen to manifest attributes of the bear, for instance. As people specialize and society develops, one definable vision of 'god' can no longer depict them all equally. By abstracting more and more - and by removing all human characteristics - a societies god becomes more philosophic, beyond all description and understanding, all in the attempt to represent as many different objectified people as possible. The eventual and evident end of this so far as religion goes, is that a society will either have to simplify itself drastically to preserve its conception of god, or the individual itself will become seen as sacred - bypassing the objective representation of the individual as a totem, god, or anything else.

Druidism seems to be an exemplification of this second course. The very conception of god has been objectified away to nothing, and we are left with the individuals again, knowing that the sacred is important, but realizing anew that it is basically unknown. Each individual must seek out their own understanding of the sacred and, in doing so, it appears that each individual actually becomes in some sense sacred. While Reformed Druidism itself certainly did not begin as totemism and evolve to something else, it is entirely possible that the society from which it arose did. It may be that the emergence of the RDNA is the exact fulfillment and continuation of Durkheim's theory on religious evolution. It emerged at a time when society had diversified to the extent where not even a completely abstract and indescribable god without any qualities could represent every member of that society - for people are not themselves abstract. A specific conception of a personal deity could represent individuals better than an abstraction.

In this case the theory does shed useful light upon the RDNA. The movement is seen as the natural result of societal change and the forerunner of a greater degree of individual awareness and responsibility for religion soon to come. Indeed, as one looks at the kinds of religious movements that have been emerging since the 1960's when Druidism began one can see that many of them embody just this individualization of the sacred - though none of them do so as simply and carefully as do the Reformed Druids. I need merely instance the vast neo-pagan movement, the Church of All Worlds, and other similar organizations, where any non-socially murderous religious belief is tolerated, and where the church will ordain anyone as a legal minister for the asking.

On the other hand, Durkheim insists that all religious experience is the experience of the power of society. The Druidic path is one that can be followed without reference to society at all. It is useful to talk to others, to read the writings of sages past, or to ponder the teachings of other religions, but the essence of Druidism is clear and careful thinking about the world - a skill that could be practiced by the last man on earth. In addition, most, if not all, of the religious experiences reported by Reformed Druids have taken place in utter solitude. It is in their aloneness with nature that many of the Druids find themselves closest to the sacred. One could argue that if the individual itself has become sacred it is only natural that he or she would feel closest to the sacred when alone with themselves, but this argument smacks strongly of sophistry. It is also possible that the religious experience a person feels when alone is simply the transcendental power of society that they have absorbed and carried with them manifesting itself like a voice in the wilderness. Given the feeling and noetic content of many of these experiences I must seriously doubt that this is the case. I

23 In this understanding of Marx I am deeply indebted to professor Nader Saiedi of Carleton College.

24 The first was the successful attempt to get the mandatory chapel requirement revoked. The second was the 'Smiley Affair' beginning in 1967 when the RDNA successfully stalled the US Military out of Drafting one of their priests. See the Carleton Archives, Internal correspondence, and pp. 345-6 of ARDA.

have yet to see a clear and convincing argument in its favor, but mention it because I cannot refute it completely.

Finally, Durkheim's description and justification of the social contract meshes nicely with Reformed Druidic thought. For him it is the inherent sacrality of each individual that makes it important for us not to break our promises to each other. For the Druids, an inviolate respect for the rights of each individual is inherent to the movement. Life is inherently sacred, many of them hold. No one has the right to violate that.

Section VI

Conclusion

I hope that I have at least demonstrated that the Reformed Druids of North America, while not being a religion in the strictest sense, comprise a movement to which the sociological theories of Schleiermacher, Marx, Durkheim and others are applicable. I believe that much can be learned about the movement by seriously applying the theories of these and other writers, and by examining and developing the philosophic background of the RDNA. I hope that others will continue this search, and if they ever find from within the movement that they are acting against its spirit, that they will listen to the dictates of their hearts before forging ahead or dropping their studies.

What I am not sure that I have demonstrated is that the Reformed Druids actually embody a definable and distinct set of people that could be studied as a religious group. I think that what binds them together is the spirit of their search, the shared history of the movement, and their individual acceptance of the simple tenets. If that is not enough, to convince the reader, I ask you to consider how the world's Christians can be considered part of one movement, embracing as they do both the Catholic church and the Quaker meeting halls.

Finally, let me say that for the most part, the confusion as to who is and isn't a Druid shows up on paper more than it does in life. This seems to be because, despite the changes, there has never really been any doubt as to who the Druids amongst people were. As Isaac Bonewits writes,

> "The role of the Druid has always been clear - scholar, and artist, poet, and priest, philosopher and magician - the one who seeks, preserves and expends the highest wisdom her or his people are capable of handling safely, and who uses the knowledge and inspiration for the benefit of their community." [25]

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25 ARDA pp. 323

Why Are We Called Reformed? Reflections on Judaism and Calvinism

By Mairi Ceolmhor, ODAL, DC Grove
transcribed and assisted by Mairi Ceolmhor
using several dictionaries.
(New to ARDA 2)

Ogmos, and other gods interested in elegant speech, please guide my words to present my own personal views and reach the hearts of my readers; who will not mistake my views for those of the RDNA in general. . I'm sorry it's so long, so perhaps it should be read in two parts if you have a short attention. Enough said, let's roll

What's in a name? Depends on the person, I guess. Many people take great pride and derive much support by the names and associations, which they adopt. Labels, much as we hate pigeonholing, provide a reference point for understanding someone. How about members of the Reformed Druids of North America? We've certainly spent a lot of time researching, defending, deprecating and defining the term "Druid," because in the RDNA, we call ourselves "Druids." It is natural to understand the background and implications of that term. But why are we also called "Reformed?" What are we referring to "Year XXII of the Reform" or when we speak of our movement as "The Reform?" Where exactly does the word "Reformed" come from?

The word "*reform*" first appears in surviving English literature as "*reformen*" in 1340, derived from French "*reformer*" or Latin "*reformare*" with a meaning of "make again" or "restoration." After 1440 it added the nuance, "to improve"; and in 1563 "changed for the better" was added. Around 1663, it was used popularly to denote "improvement by removal of some abuse or wrong," due to its use in describing the 16th century religious movement of the "Reformation." "Reformatory Schools" began in 16th century to "reform" juvenile offenders (did the Founders belief they were in a prison-like school?) In days of Prohibition, it was also used to refer to drunkards who have given up the habit. Today, the Oxford English Dictionary describes it as:

> 1 a. to put or change into an improved form or condition.
>
> 1 b. to amend or improve by change of form or removal of faults or abuses.
>
> 2. To put an end to evil by enforcing or introducing a better method or course of action.
>
> 3. To subject hydrocarbons (gasoline) to cracking to produce new products. (And most Druids like hydrocarbons and they are "crackers")

Some members of the RDNA understand it in the "recasting" or "re-creation" or "re-constructing" modes with moderation. But, it is primarily under the religious and moral meaning that the term is now used in our general society. So in order to appreciate this term, I looked at two churches (I'm not sure if we really are a church) that use "Reformed" in their title; Reformed Judaism and Reformed Christianity (there's no Reformed Islam, I think.) Let's hypothesize how their traditions

may (or may not) have affected our own self-identity in the early 60s. If nothing else, when discussing your "reform" during inter-faith dialogue, we should understand what their "reform" means.

We know that a movement, known as "Reformed Judaism," solidified around 1810, see www.ccarnet.org/platforms/principles.html It is described on several sites on the internet as:

> "Judaism marked by a liberal approach in nonobservance of much legal tradition regarded as irrelevant to the present and in shortening and simplification of traditional ritual." -Anonymous
>
> We Reform Jews are heirs to a vast body of beliefs and practices embodied in TORAH and the other Jewish sacred writings. We differ from more ritually observant Jews because we recognize that our sacred heritage has evolved and adapted over the centuries and that it must continue to do so. And we also recognize that if Judaism were not capable of evolution, of REFORM, it could not survive. Reform Judaism accepts and encourages pluralism. Judaism has never demanded uniformity of belief or practice. But we must never forget that whether we are Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, or Orthodox, we are all an essential part of K'lal Yisrael -- the worldwide community of Jewry. **http://rj.org/index.html**
>
> The vernacular language is used in most services. Judaism is adapted to contemporary conditions. The spirit of the law, rather than the letter of the law, is observed. Revelation is seen as coming through the human spirit and nature, as well as sacred text. Traditional home rituals are not as highly valued as in other traditions of Judaism**.**
>
> **www.interfaithcalendar.org/ReformedJudaism.htm**
>
> Reform Jewish services allow for women cantors, choirs, organs and pianos as well as other instruments, and "music" as well as chanting. Women are also allowed to read from and chant the Torah, as well as pray aloud. The worship service involves the congregation much more than Orthodox and Conservative counterparts. This allows for quite a bit of variety in worship, especially with regards to the musical language used in worship. http://simplechemistry.w00tcentral.com/Kyles/rejud.htm

Gosh, that sounds quite a bit like us! I believe, there were at least a few members with a Jewish background in the Founding Days of the Carleton Grove, such as Howard Cherniack and Deborah Frangquist. Throughout our history, some members have knowingly called ourselves "Drues," and cracked jokes like "That's funny, you don't look Druish" in Berkeley. We also had our very own Hassidic Druids of North America branch in St. Louis Missouri during the mid-70s (for more info see, ARDA part 5.

This belief seems also to niche in with the neo-old-testament style of the early Druid Chronicles of the 60s; e.g. rebuilding the altar, the psalm-like meditations of "David" Frangquist, lonely hermits seeking god in the wilderness, invocation of weather, prophetic ranting at authorities, and images of a persecuted people seeking release ("let my people go" by Cherniack.) The prevalent "Cult of Carleton" has an apparent belief that Northfield is a special holy-land (let's see, that makes Israel in the Middle East and Carleton in the Mid-West…) That, plus an innate desire for academic excellence, love of dancing & song, self-deprecating humor, a world-wide Diaspora, a tendency to delve into anti-defamation and fight persecution, adaptation to various cultures, and inveterate kibitzing, plus being human beings is as far as the resemblance seems to extend.

Of course, there are points of difference. We look to the possibility of more than one divinity. Most of the Druids aren't obsessed with returning to Ireland. We don't have sacred scriptures, and don't read what few words we do have recorded. The ancient Celts were illiterate, and we proudly continue that tradition by not "liter"-ing indiscriminately. We also try to not blow our own horn, "sho far" as I can tell. Nor do we have any dietary customs, except to eat enough to live and limit whiskey during the winter season (which sounds backwards in practicality to me,) although the vegetarians amongst us are rather noisy and self-righteous. (I'm a Texan; we worship cows best when they're inside our bellies and on our feet.) There is a definite lack of a sense of racial separatism (i.e. "us vs. the gentiles") among Druid (with the Celtophiles excepted,) and we have no objections to marriage with members of other religions (in fact we seem to practice a bit of all of faiths) as long as they are civil. And, we don't require members to cut off pieces of their bodies (either gender,) although the Orthodox Druids have this thing about lopping off the heads of their enemies…. Finally, except for Brother Peter, most Druids don't seem to wear strange headgear.

We also know that many of the Founders were also members of the Protestant branch of Christianity, such as Fisher, Nelson & David Frangquist, and so the term "Reform" must have had several inescapable meanings that were attractive to them (although the first image of Presbyterian-style Druidism is a bit comical at first.) "Reformed" often indicates a Protestant church that is related to the Calvinist branch, as formed in various continental European countries. Calvinism had a "strong emphasis on the sovereignty of God and especially by the doctrine of predestination." At first, this seemed like a strong mis-match for the RDNA, so I further investigated a lengthy sermon at a "Reformed" site at http://www.graceonlinelibrary.org/theology/full.asp?ID=625 This is when I discovered other meanings latent in the term. The lecture taught that;

> "This position commits us to a high view of Scripture. We receive it as the infallible and fully inspired Word of God. **We will bow to no higher authority**. Historically this has meant that we do not elevate church tradition to the level of Scripture - as the Roman Catholic Church has done. But neither do we canonize our own experience, no matter how spectacular or supernatural it may be. Church tradition and personal experience have no independent status and are always subservient to the teaching of the Bible." (My emphasis)

Again, much of that does not mesh well with most Reformed Druids' beliefs (or, at least the Druids I know.) However, the revolt against the original Roman Church (the history of Catholicism is about warring factional beliefs) by a strong-willed minority of the oppressed is quite heroic (despite what many of them would later do to other minorities) and well paralleled by the early Grove at Carleton. The Founders of the RDNA revolted against the Deans of Men and Women for the imposition of mandatory religious attendance, but perhaps not to the extent of nailing 95 complaints onto their office doors (I'm sure they would have used thumb-tacks.) The distrust of "experience" part written above doesn't jive that well with us either. Again, the RDNA apparently does not look highly upon its own literature. Attempts were made to stop publishing the 1976 Druid Chronicles (Evolved) and that 1996 A Reformed Druid Anthology, because the works were seen as encouraging dogmatism by providing too much material in a portable format that could encourage spiritual dependency on others' past experiences in written form (i.e. Bible hugging.) Brother Mike, an assistant editor of ARDA, recommended the book as a doorstopper or paper-weight on a desk; rather than as a 'brain-stopper' or 'dead-weight on the soul'. He is pleased to report that, "very few people have read it." Indeed, the RDNA seems to lean more toward the individual's experiences as having greater spiritual power, rather than asserting the institutionalized fossilized customs of past members. Reading further, I noted:

> Because God is sovereign, He is Lord of all of life. Hence, we seek to live all of life to the glory of God. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Lo, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (I Cor.10:31.) This is a far-reaching command, which Reformed people have generally taken quite seriously.

Hey, I'm not a Christian myself; but, change that deity to "Earth-Mother," remember that every sovereign has court officials, and add a flavor of Zennish "Everyday life as religion" with unexpected moments of enlightenment, and I can swallow that pretty well. A bit further:

> Hand in hand with this missions emphasis goes a concern for revival. Although this word has suffered abuse in recent years, there is nothing unreformed about revival! Again and again throughout the history of the church God has poured out His Spirit to bring times of refreshing.

IMHO, my own Reformed Druidism believes in the cycle of revivals of Nature and the pressing need for a continual discovery of Awareness and Wisdom through introspection and revelation from the gods. And Gods know!, how the Groves crash and need a good rejuvenating jolt every few years. The coming and going of members, or a change of focus, often breathes new life. So I can parallel with this thinking again. As for missionary activity, I am rather neutral. Make your presence findable and those who come will come. Don't be a public nuisance (unless it's necessary.) That's my system. I'm not a missionary of Druidism or grove-oriented like Brothers Isaac, Larson or Mike. I think a well-balanced RDNA Druid can enjoy fulfilling participation in any religion's congregation, without forming their own "druid" grove. This is what I plan to do. It's called "Guerilla Druidism," but I'm not into aping those around me (that would "Gorilla Druidism," something I'm not bananas over.) I'm definitely a "Solitary Druid," see my song in http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/bard.html (Salvo #5.)

> "To the Reformers the Roman Catholic sacramental system seemed to be part of a transaction that was always going on between man and God. In it, people made sacrifices designed to appease and please God. They would attend the mass, bring offerings, show sorrow, do penance--which might involve self-punishment or compensatory good works--until God would be gracious. The leaders of the church, from priests through bishops and popes, mediated the transaction. The Reformers believed that such an arrangement could easily be misused as a political instrument for forcing rulers to comply with the church's wishes and as a personal instrument for keeping people in uncertainty or terror. It was this vision of Catholicism that helped inspire the Protestant leadership to rebel and to define justification in other terms."

The RDNA doesn't fit in with this, as we definitely are into pleasing the Gods, sacrificing, and seeking their wishes. I think, if you're going to live somewhere, you should ask those in the neighborhood what the rules are (including Nature, the first resident) and follow them. The Brothers David (Fisher & Frangquist) say much on this subject of sacrifice;

> For one man, the sacrifice of life is the offering up of himself to a god or gods. To another, it is an offering up of his mind to a search for truth. As a priest, I repeat the great Answer to calm men's hearts and minds, not as a magical formula of absolution; but some the Answer is an absolution, washing away the distractions of a week of worry, and reaffirming confidence in the idea of a purpose in life. Book of Faith, V.9. The Apocrypha. http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/ARDA-02.pdf

I feel, that if the Gods don't like us at all, then they shouldn't have made us (or we shouldn't have made them.) We all have our good days and bad days, and any omniscient deity should realize that and take it into consideration on what to dish out to us. I also believe that a mother knows what her child needs, no matter whether it gurgles, coos or grimaces; so we should remember that when the debate on "proper" ritual is brought up. Brother MaDagda & Sister Tegwedd claim that the "Reformed" refers to some ancient practices which we have "reformed"; notably, our decision in 1963 to end the sacrifice of animals for religious purposes (including humans -and arguably- even politicians) or the offering of blood. Sister Tegwedd recommends getting consent from the plant sacrifice by some means. "The Book of Customs in the "Druid Chronicles (Reformed)" recommends several Celtic customs and practices, but does not require their mandatory obeisance. Now, I'm not a bible-stroking, verse quoting, steely-tongued debater; but Cherniack once said,

> "Have ye not forgotten that we are reformed, yea, we do even call ourselves by the name of Reformed, wherefore we must put behind us those things which do bring offense to our senses;" –Book of Latter Chronicles, Ch 5 Vs 9

The RDNA has been firmly silent on issues of an afterlife (and strangely reticent on a "before-life," by the way!.) I think most people should concentrate on this existence, or basically to "get a life." Some members use the RDNA as a garnish or decoration attached to other religions that provide full-service after-life systems; other members treat the RDNA as the main-course and consider it to provide for all their needs. Call me a Humanist, but I think there are enough good reasons to be gentle, responsible and caring member of a community or have a religious life without an "afterlife bribe/threat." I believe that Confucius said, "How can a virtuous man understand the world of ghosts and spirits when they can't even program a VCR to stop blinking 12:00 on its clock?! Oi vey!" or thereabouts.

The Protestant "priesthood of believers" revived an ancient concept of a direct link to God(s) without the mediation of professional priests (who still have a role.) Members of the RDNA appear to be very careful not to vaunt the offices of the three orders; and we certainly don't get paid well enough to make a living off it. I, personally, see them more as undertaking extra responsibilities rather than as an achievement of "perfection" or "completion" of Druid-ity. In other words, a life-long First Order might just as speedily reach enlightenment or Awareness as a high muckety-muck 9th Order Patriarch, without vigiling or drinking the Waters of Life every weekend. Surely, the Earth-Mother knows her own, and all our fancy titles won't bias her relationship with us. More than likely, according to the ARDA history, these orders were both an attempt to overthrow Fisher's control of the Carleton Grove, plus a carry-over from the Fraternal groups that David Fisher wanted to simulate at Carleton. Yet, I believe they still have proponents who've found a use for them. Going back to the "Reform Sermon";

> "In theory, Protestantism has stood throughout its history for a principle of protest that calls under judgment not only the beliefs and institutions of others but also one's own movements and causes. On those grounds, however, most students of Protestantism would recognize that the Protestant tradition has not been substantially more successful than have other faiths at remaining self-critical or at rising above institutional self-defensiveness."

This last aspect seems the firmest legacy of Protestantism for the RDNA. I have heard, "Show me two Druids and I'll give you at least 3 opinions on any topic." Well, in my opinion, we are a rather argumentative, critical bunch of curmudgeons, who take matters into our hands, and are fiercely suspicious of hierarchy and the institutionalization & fossilization of religion. (And some aren't.) Our name does have a potentially empowering meaning that could encourage activism and rebellion, without demanding it. Yet, like the last part, we also sometimes slip into ruts, avoid hard choices, resist natural adaptations and don't seek to know or correct our errors. Remember the expression that, "It is easier to see smoke coming from a neighbor's kitchen window than to notice the burning roof on top of our own house?" At the end of the ritual, we have to go home, sweep our corners, air the linens, and wash the dishes like our other fellow mortals.

I would add one last shade to the word "Reform" as in OED's 1A definition; its first meaning. That is to change into a new form. As Nature breaks down and rebuilds all things (vegetable, animal or mineral,) there is no "eternal," only change and adaptation. Again, in my opinion and twelve years of experience, the RDNA's greatest power has been the power to take older diverse creeds, traditions, rules, and faiths and transform them into a product (perhaps even "improved") by using our humor, reflection and piercing inspection such that could meet the current needs of our grove members. As Brother MaDagda states, "As reformed druid, I take what I can from our ancestor s of the Oaken Brotherhood and reshape, reform it to fit within this time, this age."

Until now, the usual response to "Why are you called Reformed?" has always been (and Brother Mike just loves this joke,) is "Because we also worship bushes… except elected ones…" I hope that this essay will help you to go beyond that sort of reply in some way and start a good dialogue with other faiths.

Peace!
Mairi Ceolmhor

P.S. Proudly call yourself Reformed Druids when the Celtophiles criticize you. We can stand up to them also. Perhaps you can console them that without a "Reformed Druid" you can't have an "Orthodox Druid"?

Responses to Mairi

(Various Authors, 2002)

(New to ARDA 2)

Chapter the FIRST

1. Date: Tue, 16 Apr 2002 07:09:28 -0400
2. In the Vernal Equinox edition of the Druid Missal-Any, Mairi Ceolmhor speculates that Reformed Judaism "sounds quite a bit like us!" (in reference to the RDNA.)
3. Though this may be only one perspective on the historical similarities between the RDNA and other "religious movements" throughout history, and not to reflect on other Groves beyond an historical anecdote, Silent Grove does not in any way, past or present, draw parallels to any aspect of Judaism, whether Reformed or not, or it's natural extension - Zionism.
4. Indeed, Silent Grove strongly disengages itself from the current atrocities committed by the Zionist regime, and does not wish to have its Grove sullied by any suggestions of connections, associations or similarities with historical or contemporary Judaism/Zionism in part or as a whole.
5. -Glen
6. Silent Grove

Chapter the SECOND

1. Dear Glen,
2. I'm glad you've broken your silence to speak out on issues that matter to you. :) The following, is of course, my personal opinion in reply to your personal opinion for the possible benefit of the readers' opinions. :)
3. Each grove in the Reform is naturally free to choose its sources of inspiration, and equally free to choose which one's not to be inspired by (if it is possible to ignore a "purple rhino" once the idea is mentioned to you.)

4. I believe what you most object to here is the collaboration between politics and religion.

5. Any religion, once it has a desire to achieve and keep political or military power, will then proceed to protect that power, usually against rival religions.

6. This is the sad fact of Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Sri Lanka, Israel/Palestine, Timor, the Wild West and numerous other locales.

7. I understand the dilemma that possible association or resemblance to any group can bring about unfavorable comparisons.

8. I'm still proud to have German ancestry, although I disdain the Nazism of the 20th century.

9. I'm proud to be part Irish, but deplore the violence of North Ireland.

10. I speak English, despite the millions of Celts killed, disenfranchised or enslaved (etc.) by Anglo-Saxon & French descendents.

11. I doubt that any western institution (especially a religious one) or academic environment that hasn't been affected, influenced or involved with Judaism or Christianity (which is Judaism blended with Mithraic and Greek Mystery cults) or Islam for that matter, which was Mairi's argument.

12. While I'm sure some Reformed Judaics support Zionism, I believe the underlying purpose of that movement is to adjust Judaism to the realities of modern life, rather than to adjust the world to Judaism, which is more Zionic to me.

13. If there is one lesson I've learned in Reformed Druidism, it is that there are allies and good lessons in nearly every religion, if you know where to look (the opposite also holds true) and search well.

14. But I will agree with you, that the current situation in the Middle East, with its messy blend of racism/ politics/ religion/ class/ lunacy is just plain discouraging.

15. I hope that America doesn't go any further down a similar road of its own, towards extremism or preferential treatment for population based on religion.

16. But, I do not know enough of the details and history behind these religious conflagrations which touch so many related topics. But I am applying myself to a growing understanding.

17. After all, the last reason why we're "reformed" is that we're trying to fix our mistakes, and we can learn much by relating to and engaging ourselves in the dilemmas of others, and we'll need your help.

18. This reminds me of what Isaac told Carleton-graduates in the 70s about "throwing the baby out with the bath water" (2nd Epistle of Isaac) when it comes to magic and associations with neo-paganism.

19. Interestingly, Isaac (of all people) was accused by several people of being Jewish because of his name (which resembles the founder of Reformed Judaism,) involvement with founding the Hassidic Druids of North America, and a few other reasons.

20. I believe his reaction was "I'm charmed, but you're very mistaken."

21. On a final thought, I'm reminded that poem by Issho (Zen Harvest #19):

1. Over the pond
2. Every night casts its light
3. But the water won't be soiled
4. The moon won't be either.

22. But, I hope you at the very least found Mairi's article to be thought provoking? I welcome other input on dealing with PR issues of association with other groups and movements by the readers.

23. Yours moderately,

24. -Mike

25. April 16, 2002

Chapter the THIRD

1. Dear Mike,

2. Actually, Brother Mike, all I am saying is that Silent Grove does not consider itself, in any way, influenced by historical or modern Zionism.

3. We despise the situation in the Middle East, as provoked by war criminal Ariel Sharon in 1999 by his visit to a Palestinian holy location. We also despise the fact that your nation continues to fuel Zionist arrogance by providing $3B/annum in aid to a bellicose nation whose hegemonistic aspirations in the region are a detriment to world prosperity.

4. Any Druid would plainly see that the balance is completely torn asunder by misguided foreign policy that funds 'war brokers' to pad their corporate coffers.

5. This is not the wish of the Mother. As such, and I am sure you feel it as well, things will be corrected in the near future. Divination would tell you as much.

6. With warm regards,

7. Glen

Chapter the FOURTH

1. Dear Glen,

2. It seemed a poor choice on his part, wasn't it?

3. Canada is a wonderful country, after all, I've thought of moving there. In a way, your grove appears to be negatively influenced by Zionism, as is shown by your outrage.

4. It doesn't take a Druid to realize such matters of the world exist. But it would take a Druid to know how to respond wisely. Without time travel, what would be a good course to take?

5. Most of my divination is about the Earth-Mother's acceptance of my sacrifices, not those of others'. I'm sure the gods hear those.

6. With warm regards,

7. -Mike

Chapter the FIFTH

1. All in the Mother,

2. It is in the spirit of good ale, good music, and a good heart, that I need to rectify Brother Mike in his assumptions as to my sunrise message.

3. Indeed, the message is that each Grove delivers unto themselves the deeds they see as fit.

4. It is simple to be an editorial proxy, however to be representative, that has been the downfall of all political/ religious movements.

5. I welcome, each and everyone of you, to visit our website in the weeks to come, as we begin to practice "Druidism" without getting lost on provocations such as, "What is Reformed?" and glorify far more important trivial frivolities from days a' yore! Indeed, you may find our catalogue will soon surpass the "un-official website" of the RDNA.

6. Tsk! Such a shame that your arrogance exudes in statements that extol the self, rather than the Grace of the Mother. An old Taoist once proclaimed, "visit the river and sit there until you forget yourself. Only then can you become selfless."

7. As far as the Zionist regime is concerned, our Grove feels no bitter hatred, only a sullen remorse that such a wondrous group of people could degrade themselves to the pit of hate once again, such that many societies will reward them with violence as they have done throughout history.

8. BTW, I'm glad you left in question marks.

9. A Zen Buddhist once dropped by a pizza parlor called "Zen Pizza."

10. He ordered one with everything.

11. The pizza came, and he paid, but he complained when the clerk didn't give him any change.

12. The clerk quickly pointed out that, "change comes from within"

13. Therein lacks the wisdom.

14. With the Mother in our hearts,

15. Silent Grove

Mini Essay on the RDNA

By Mike Scharding
August, 2002
(New to ARDA 2)

Dear Gale Group,

I have long appreciated your coverage of our little group in your Encyclopedia of American Religions. Isaac Bonewits forwarded this copy to me, because "Mike, you're the Archivist of the RDNA, so you do it." Well, I did edit the 500 page "A Reformed Druid Anthology" http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/, so I hope that can help amend your copy, which is reasonably accurate.

I have underlined corrections and new information. If you'd like a disk version of this document please send me your e-mail address. My address is mikerdna@hotmail.com

-Yours sincerely,
Michael James Scharding
Arch-Druid of D.C. Grove
Former Arch-Druid of Carleton Grove (1993-1994)
Archivist of the RDNA since 1992.
www.geocities.com/druidarchives
You can reach me at work 9-5 M-F at 202-238-6918
Email: mikerdna@hotmail.com
www.geocities.com/mikerdna Largest page on the RDNA

*** *** ** ** ** ** ** ** ** ** **

The Reformed Druids of North America was formed in 1963 by a group of students at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, as a protest against a compulsory chapel attendance requirement. It began as a result of a breakfast conversation between David Fisher, Howard Cherniack and Norman Nelson. The idea emerged of forming a non-bloody sacrificial Druidic group. If students were denied credit for attending its services, then they would claim religious persecution; if they received credit, the whole project would be revealed as a hoax, thus ridiculing the requirement. The requirement was dropped in the summer of 1964, and the Druids quickly claimed victory. The group decided that, since it benefited from the spiritual inquiry and enjoyed rituals so much, it would continue. At that time, the loose structure was completed and the two basic tenets of belief were outlined.

> 1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
>
> 2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.

Most Druids couldn't remember this, so it was soon simplified to:

1. Nature is good.
2. Likewise, Nature is good.

Rituals had been constructed by the Reformed Druids with a resemblance to the Episcopal service, in addition to materials in anthropological literature, such as The Golden Bough, the classical text by Sir James Fraser. A fire burning altar was constructed on nearby Monument Hill, where the first Protestant service in Minnesota had been held. Though frequently destroyed, the altar was constantly replaced, proving to be an inspiration to future Druids whenever persecuted. Later on, prominent, immovable boulders were used. Ritual is directed toward nature and is held outdoors, in an oak grove where possible. Robes of white, originally made from bed sheets, were often worn with various colored ribbons of office. Inspirational readings and concepts were drawn from the texts of all the world's religions, with a strong emphasis on Oriental and Celtic sources. The passing of the waters-of-life is a symbol of oneness with nature and each-other. The eight major festival days are Samhain (Nov. 1), Mid-Winter, Oimelc (Feb. 1,) Spring Equinox, Beltane (May 1,) Mid-Summer, Lughnasadh (Aug. 1) and Fall Equinox. The Celtic/Druidic gods and goddesses are retained to help focus attention on nature, but some groves now use other pantheons or call the simple spirit of the Earth.

Some Reformed Druids are organized into autonomous groves, others are solitary. Each grove is headed by an Arch-Druid, a Preceptor (for business matters) and a Server (to assist the Arch-Druid.) Three orders of the priesthood are recognized, but the majority of members do not enter them. The original "Druid Chronicles," written by David Frangquist (the third Arch-Druid of Carleton) in 1964, consist of the history, and the few rules and customs of the RDNA. The Chronicles serve as entertaining reading, although they are written in King James style English. Despite the abundant writings in later years, the RDNA is not a scripture-based religion; rather deriving wisdom from experience and inspiration. Many in the group refused to acknowledge it as a religion, preferring to call it a philosophical form of inquiry**.** (In this regard, those members resembled the fraternal groups such as the United Ancient Order of Druids.)

Over the years, a continuity of organization was affected through a lineage of Arch-Druids. The original Arch-Druid entered the priesthood of the Episcopal Church. About half of even the most active members also eventually join mainstream religious movements, since the lessons of Reformed Druidism are often seen as a catalyst to inquiry and compatible with nearly all faiths. In 1978, about fourteen locally autonomous groves were functioning, especially in Northfield and Minneapolis, Minnesota; Chicago and Evanston, Illinois; Ann Arbor, MI; Webster MO; New York City; and Palo Alto and Berkeley, California.

In the mid-1970s, the motivational leadership of the Druid movement passed to Isaac Bonewits, who had made national headlines when he graduated from the University of California at Berkeley with a degree in magick. Bonewits and Larson headed a Berkeley grove, which was the center of druidical activity on the west coast. Many members of various groves were active protesters against the Draft, which was seen as a target similar to the chapel requirement of the Founding days, and other prominent issues. This motivated the first unsuccessful attempts to register as an official religious organization with the IRS. During the mid-70s, a great debate arose over whether the RDNA was part of the Neo-Pagan movements of California that had blossomed in early 70s. A schism developed, led by Bonewits, to form the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA,) which was amenable to Neo-Paganism and greater organization; and then schismed again into the Schismatic Druids of North America (SDNA,) which was exclusively Neo-Pagan. The Carleton faction preferred that the RDNA branch remain undefined and silent on such matters. The most lasting contribution of Bonewits & Larson was the compilation and distribution of the numerous Druid writings by various authors. In 1977, he published the 250 page "Druid Chronicles (Evolved)," which contained Frangquist's original publication plus more history, rituals, laws, customs and humor for the many branches of the Reformed Druids. In 1978 he began Pentalpha as a national Druid Periodical and established a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charity.

After several years of publishing the magazine, trying to promote Druidism and research into Indo-European religious origins, Bonewits formed a new organization called Ar nDraiocht Fein ("Our Own Druidism") in 1983. ADF was famous for a broad Indo-European source of inspiration, seminary training, intensive research into liturgical formulation, church tax-status, and strong organization; and soon became one of the largest Neo-Pagan groups in the country. In 1986, some members of ADF rebelled and formed "The Henge of Keltria," based in Minneapolis; focusing on Celtic religion and more relaxed training methods. ADF, Keltria, RDNA and NRDNA all bear the Reformed Druid sigil (a circle with two vertical lines) that David Fisher invented in 1963. The bulk of Druids in America belong to one of these four members of the family of American Druidism. Their only other major rival in North America is the British organization, Order of Bards Ovates and Druids (OBOD.)

Arch Druid Joan Carruth and many other members hived off the Berkeley Grove and founded the Live Oak Grove in Orinda, California in 1981. Live Oak took over the lead during the lapse at Carleton & Berkeley, eventually incorporating as a tax-free religious organization. After Berkeley's "Pentalpha" & "Druid Chronicler" newsletter ended, Live Oak's Emmon Bodfish published the "Druid Missal-Any" newsletter until 1991. At that time, there were only four remaining active groves; Orinda, CA; Seattle, WA; Northfield, MN; and Keene, NH. The Live Oak grove ended in the mid 80s as did many of the scattered groves of the RDNA & NRDNA, and the torch of activity reverted back to Carleton. A slow revival had begun silently in 1982 when Frangquist re-established the Carleton Grove with some energetic young students. In the mid-80s, a greater interest in Neo-Paganism, Native-American and ecology drove Carleton into new realms of spiritual experimentation, adding a few elements of Wicca (such as Lunar rituals,) austere vigiling, and the sweat-lodge (blending Scandinavian and Sioux customs.) Members of any order, not just the Arch-Druid, were encouraged to lead services, activities and other methods of participation. Ironically, the groves of the NRDNA remained closer to the original liturgy and structure.

Mike Scharding (31st Arch-Druid of Carleton, 1993-1994) established the Druid Archives with the help of the Carleton College archives. Materials from all the past RDNA groves and the other Druid movements in the world were gathered there for public access, and a list of contents was posted on-line. Many consider the RDNA is the best archived In 1996, Scharding compiled the 500 page "A Reformed Druid Anthology," which updated Bonewits' 1976 publication, carried new history, detailed the great debates of the 70s, and made it all available to the Public Domain on the internet. After Emmon's death, his protégé from the Live Oak Grove, Stacey Weinberger, re-established a grove on the same site in 1999 (called Baccharis Grove) and succeeded to the role of publishing "A Druid Missal-Any" in 2000 on each of the eight Druid holidays. During the 90s, a greater communication ease of E-mail, free down-loading capacity, the uncomplicated organizational style, and the RDNA's high-profile name, assisted the resurgence of grove formation in the RDNA. In addition to the four remaining groves of 1991, thirty-odd new groves were operating in 2002, mostly on the west and east coast, the Midwest, Japan and Canada.

The current Reform has about 4000 members, but only 400 engage in grove activity. The vast, silent majority of solitary members live apart from groves, quietly observing the changing seasons, celebrating the cycles of their life, engaging in moving conversation with their non-Druidic peers, and reflecting with Awareness on what passes around them. Therefore, what happens in the groves, perhaps, should be seen as the exception of what is standard in the RDNA. Regardless, the RDNA (and descendent organizations) continue their quirky self-deprecating activities, in many different traditions, with its trademark mixture of reverence and playful humor.

The Most Famous Reformed Druids

By Mike, Digitalis Grove
Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 2002
(New to ARDA 2)

I'm sure you've heard these jokes:

> "I'm a Reformed Druid, I worship bushes, except the elected kind."
>
> "I'm a Reformed Druid; Pacific Chapter, I only worship Douglas Firs"
>
> "I'm a Reformed Druid; I don't hug trees and sacrifice virgins, I sacrifice trees and hug virgins..."
>
> "I'm a Reformed Zen Druid; I worship trees AND bushes that aren't there."

Who started this infamous series of jokes? Apparently a very famous Reformed Druid is at the origin. Strangely enough, it isn't Isaac Bonewits, but a man who never actually existed. For most Americans, Captain Jonathan S. Tuttle, is the most widely recognized Reformed Druid that they will likely know.

Background on Tuttle

On January 14th, 1973 the 15th episode of the first season of M*A*S*H was written by Bruce Shelly, David Ketchum and directed by William Wiard and was simply titled "Tuttle." The episode opens with Hawkeye Pierce and Trapper McIntyre stealing camp supplies to give to Sister Teresa and her nearby orphanage during the Korean War. They say the goods are delivered on orders from Capt. Jonathan S. Tuttle. Of course, Capt. Tuttle doesn't exist; he was Hawkeye's imaginary friend as a kid. Tuttle always took the rap for Hawkeye's misdeeds. He's described as "George Washington, with John Wayne's agent," "Mister Humility," "an inspiration to us all," and one who "brings out the best in me." Col. Blake wants Tuttle to be "officer of the day," so Hawkeye cleverly creates a personnel file,

> Hawkeye: "Religion..."
>
> Trapper: "Atheist?"
>
> Hawkeye: "I don't believe in Atheism. Let's make him a Druid."
>
> Radar: "What's that?"
>
> Hawkeye: "They worship trees."
>
> Radar: "Ah, tree surgeon."
>
> Hawkeye: "Druid, Reformed. They're allowed to pray at bushes."

Other Purported Vitals:

Full Name: Captain Jonathan S. Tuttle

Serial number: 39729966.

Born: Battle Creek, MI in 1924.

Religion: Druid, Reformed.

Medical school: Berlinisches Politechnicum.

Parents: Harry & Frieda Tuttle

Height: 6'4"

Weight: 195lbs

Hair Color: Auburn

Eye Color: Hazel

Tuttle soon gives all 14 months of neglected back pay to the orphanage. When Tuttle was going to be decorated for this gesture by Gen. Clayton, Hawkeye runs into camp saying how Tuttle was volunteering to do field surgery and jumped out of a helicopter without his parachute. "No sacrifice was too great." Of course, Trapper's new imaginary friend, Captain Murdoch, obtained the fake dog tags and parachute! Hawkeye even delivers a eulogy for Tuttle:

> "We can all be comforted that he's not really gone. There's a little Tuttle left in all of us. You might say, that all of us made up Tuttle. Our grief will pass, and it's already hard to remember exactly How Johnny looked, how he talked, his little laugh. Thankfully, he's left behind a memorial. I've been informed by Radar, he's named Sister Teresa's orphanage As the sole beneficiary of his GI insurance. How typical. We salute you, Captain Tuttle. Humanitarian and healer. Good luck, Doctor, in that big waiting room in the sky..."

What an amazing fellow Druid! But the mystery doesn't end there. Perhaps a cover-up is involved since he didn't apparently die. At an official air force base, I found:

> Captain Tuttle
>
> Assistant Professor of Political Science, Surgeon HQ USAFA/DFPS - M4 2354 Fairchild Dr. USAF Academy, Colorado 80840-6258 (719)333-2270 Tuttle.dfps@usafa.af.mil
>
> Captain Tuttle is a bit of a mystery man, often seen only late at night by a few lucky souls. His degree area is scholarly, and his teaching talents are legendary. His degree is from the Berlinisches Politechnicum. His studies focused on urban legends and 1970s TV shows. He is 6'3", 195 lbs, born in Battle Creek, Michigan. He is the best darn OD we have ever had. On 24 August 2000, there was a sighting of the elusive Capt Tuttle, however, after analysis of the photographic evidence it was determined the sighting was a mere false alarm.

This evidence is available at: www.usafa.af.mil/dfps/faculty.htm#tuttle It's comforting to know that you can't keep a good Druid down, right?

More About Those Tuttles

This episode is interesting, because it shows how a story can take a life of its own. Most people acknowledge that the myths that surround most heroes are fictitious, but that does nothing to cease inspiring us. Tuttle is a model for us all. I noted his 20 years of schooling, international experience, medical knowledge, and love of home-made liquor.

An interesting point is that nearly all of the major characters in M*A*S*H have Celtic or Border names: Pierce (York.), McIntryre (Scot), Maj Burns (Scot), Maj Houlihan (Irish), Col. Blake (Welsh), Corporal Riley (Scot), Father Mulcahy (Irish); with Klinger (Lebanese) as the exception. Is there some kind of implied rejection of the Anglo-American desire for exporting war being symbolized by a Celtic crew trying to clean up the mess of the aftermath? For me, Pierce and McIntryre are two crafty Druids trapped in the madness of war, trying to remain free by using wit, humor and satire to escape the insanity and dismality imposed by the dull uptight Burns and other various commanding buffoonish officers. For more on M*A*S*H characters see: www.mash4077.co.uk/ TV tapes are available at Amazon.com.

Interestingly, the mythical rebellious Reformer, "Tuttle," also appears in the 1985 movie "Brazil" (by Terry Gilliam of Monty Python.) Brazil is born out of doom-based fiction such as George Orwell's 1984; Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World"; and Franz Kafka's "The Trial," chronicling a story where a reluctant bureaucrat is dragged into a web of conspiracy in a society of automatons. A printing error for the arrest of Archibald Tuttle, leads to the mistaken imprisonment of Mr. Buttle. Ironically, as Sam goes about his business to clear Buttle's name, he aids and is aided by Archibald "Harry" Tuttle (played by Robert De Niro), A renegade heating engineer who is sought after by the Ministry of Information for "Freelance Subversion." Tuttle allies with Sam after fixing Sam's heating system. Tuttle is bent on destroying the bureaucratic state. When asked his motives:

> "Why? I came into this game for the action, the excitement. Go anywhere, travel light, get in, get out, wherever there's trouble, a man alone. Now they've got the whole country sectioned off - can't make a move without a form."

Indeed, this Tuttle is described as:

> Tuttle is a far cry from the slick, self-assured conspirator imagined by polite society; he is simply a human being seeking liberation from paperwork and social regulations. In his denial of society, Tuttle proves that humanity is not entirely lost. Tuttle provides one of the rare occurrences of true humanity in Brazil's dispassionate society, proclaiming, "We're all in it together," when in fact the majority of society seems to believe that every man must fend for himself.

Origin and Further News on Tuttle

So where did they learn about "Reformed Druidism" for the M*A*S*H script? Now, Isaac Bonewits was born in 1949 in Royal Oak, Michigan; so is there a connection with Battle Creek Michigan? Bruce Shelly, the prolific writer, lived in California. (http://us.imdb.com/Name?Shelly,+Bruce.) Unfortunately, I've been unable to make contact with him, and he's at least in his late 60's, so perhaps we'll never know. Perhaps a relative or friend of his was a neo-pagan? Most likely, Shelley heard of Isaac's infamous "Degree in Magic" from UC Berkeley in a 1971 newspaper article and remembered it for the episode 15 months later. Interestingly enough, the Charles E. Tuttle Publishing house has been releasing a line of "linking East & West spirituality" since the 50s, winning Publisher of the Year in 1971, with many titles on Celtic Monasticism, Japan and of course, Korea. Perhaps we have a blending of two figures? Unfortunately, Mr. Shelley did not know that the RDNA was founded in 1963, so Tuttle actually predates the RDNA (being 1951 when he died), unless of course, Tuttle is related to David Fisher...

So to wrap it up. Tuttle is still out there on "Nick at Night" and various re-run channels doing his best to present a noble image of the self-sacrificing hero, that we all hope is in us too. Bring him up in a conversation or utilize him in your daily deeds.

Where Do People Get Ideas About Druids?

(The Paranthetical Epistle of Mike)
July 5, 2001
(New to ARDA 2)

As always, I speak for myself, and certainly do not represent the opinions of the Reform or other members. Why, in fact, I don't often agree even with my self. Sometimes I have the most interesting conversations when I talk to myself…

Few people join the Reform, or any other Druid group for that matter, without some pretty strong preconceptions already established. Man has always wished to control Nature, rather than be controlled (or rather, just a part) of Nature, so myths are rife with gods, demi-gods or even mere mortals who can twist or manipulate mighty Nature to their own whims and needs. "Man" is often defined 'as the animal which uses tools', although we know that chimps use sticks and some birds sew their nests. I would redefine "Man is an animal that uses drugs," which may make you smile (I refer you to the 5th Order for further guidance), but in a real way we all wish that we were something that we are not. There are several avenues to accomplish this goal, mainly: drugs, insanity, and fantasy. Religion tends to wander in and betwixt these three options, acting as a possible accelerant to their flames. Fantasy is by far the most socially acceptable option in our present society. This can take on many forms; day-night-wet dreams, the entertainment media which provides us a brief respite, living our dreams vicariously through other more famous people (i.e. soap operas), myths –gossip- stories, drama and games.

Tolkienn is often credited with being the grand-daddy of the Fantasy movement, so we all should add "The Hobbit" to our Grove libraries. I seriously believe that without Tolkienn, there would be no Reform. (Or if there had been no McCarthy or inquisition. As all of you Dr. Who fans know, changing the past in reality is a very dangerous activity, but changing our understanding of the past is big business.) So, let's talk about Dungeons and Dragons, an influential off-shoot of this Fantasy movement. We all know that Role-Playing Games (RPG) and the medieval Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA), both starting in 1971-ish, grew hand-in-hand with the Neo-Pagan/Wiccan/New-age emergence. Perhaps, those evangelists are correct in saying that RPGs are a breeding ground for Paganism; which they add is a "bad thing." Strangely enough, I kind of agree with them. I first played D&D in 4th grade in the school yard, exploring the "S2: White Plume Mountain" scenario, as, can you guess? Yes, a 6th Level Druid named "Magoor," if I remember rightly. My understanding of magic was heavily influenced by that game over the next 8 years, as well as by the definitions of the 9 alignments (Lawful Good, Neutral Evil, True Neutral, Chaotic Neutral, etc.), and the ordering of the Planes of Existence. (I dare not touch the topic that experience points and advancement are only gained by slaughtering others, which is actually capitalism….) D&D provided a structure for me in which multiple pantheons of deities, ruling separate realms, could co-influence their respective spheres of activity over our mortal plane of existence (a concept that is no doubt conducive to my own eclectic brand of Druidism.) Yet it wasn't until College, that I began to depart from Catholicism (the True Paganism!, according to some people.) I am sure that Brother Isaac Bonewits (refer to his academic "Real Magic" tome or his RPG "Authentic Thaumaturgy") would be the first to agree with me, that these popular visions of fireball-flinging wizards are perhaps detrimental and distracting to the more practical magic that we

are usually inclined towards practicing (although it would be fun to unleash a ninth-level "creeping doom" (i.e. a cloud of bugs) upon certain opponents….)

So that brings us back to Nature and our relation to it. In numerous fantasy novels (in particular, the "Shannara" series), computer games ("The Druid," and the game "Mystery of the Druids," advertised in this issue, etc) and also in AD&D (where we are a special sub-class of Cleric); where we have been laden with the image of a rather crotchety old man, usually robed with a deep hood, who is rather neutral of human concerns (because nature does not concern itself with good or evil), hauling rocks around the landscape for no apparent reason (perhaps they were the inventors of the construction cartel?), in control of secret powers related to the control and protection of Nature, and loitering in dark leafy groves singing groovy tunes (that sounds like me, except the "old" part, I'm only 30.) Unlike most clerics, the powers of fantasy figures come through the study of Nature not the imploration of the god(s), and "absorbing of energies," or the gruesome activities of which the Ancient Druids are often accused (perhaps rightly), we can also change shape! Adding to this stew, are the Celtophiles; who claim the Druids could do anything your ancestors could do, and could do it better (if they really wanted to try), including an imposing list of cultural, judicial, musical, medicinal, philosophical & astrological skills that would make a modern renaissance liberal-arts student blush in shame. I suppose they didn't have specialists back then? Don't forget that famous verse of "Gimme that old time religion" goes "We will worship like those Druids, who drink fermented fluids, waltzing naked through the woo-ids, and that's good enough for me!" (This, at least, describes the Carleton Grove rather too perfectly.) As for the general public's opinion, don't forget lead guitarist Nigel's adept summary, in the movie "Spinal Tap," with his introduction to the song Stone Henge; "Long ago, in a mystical land, were a strange race of people, the Druids. No body knew who they were, or what they were doing…. But their legacy lives on in…. STONEHENGE!" Of course, the Wiccans bring over their ideas, thinking we that we must also like athames, pentacles and quiet moonlit walks on the beaches… (which are cool too.) Finally, there are our siblings in the UK & Europe, who are dotty over dolmens, heady over henges, and have a really poor fashion sense towards ridiculous headgear, unflattering robes, & gaudy jewelry. (I'm sorry, perhaps I'm really AM talking about us?) This has been going on for at least four centuries, (see "The Famous Druids" by Owen in 1979)!

Whew! For good or bad, this is the image and mental baggage, which nearly all our recruits bring with them to the RDNA. What's the problem with it, because it sounds really exciting and it's great for marketing our image (except that bit about sacrificing, which I might discuss further next time)? Well, nothing I guess really is really wrong, but I believe the founders of the Reform had different key elements; simplicity, revolutionary defiance and a love of whiskey (which I might add are key Scottish attributes….) The RDNA began over the issue of not being coerced into worshipping the way other people want us to do (and perhaps it still is?) Now, I'm a rather antagonistic person myself, being 41.32352% or so Celtic-ish ("The easiest way to make an Irishman to decline an action is to order them to do it"), always taking up an opposite view to balance things (there's my lasting imprinted notion of "neutrality" again), so I hate being defined by other's fantasies (mine are sufficiently strange, thank you!.) But it is only by examining your presumptions and preconceptions that you can know where you're coming from and going to.

The previously described image (the word "describe" also has a meaning of corralling or limiting) is rather similar to the one that many in the ADF, OBOD, Keltria & some of us are (perhaps willingly) striving towards, I believe. What has made us stand apart from the pack of other Druid groups, is probably our well-developed sense of sarcastic humor (an ancient Druid trait) & our skillfully inept organizational skills (unfortunately, also an ancient Celtic trait.) However, borrowing the Taoist image of "the un-carved block of wood," whose future shape is yet undetermined, and therefore infinitely versatile; I believe each and every grove, yea!, every Druid in the Reform should consider stripping away these accretions (there's that "Waltzing naked in the woods" cry for simplicity!), return to the seed of Druidism (which may be something about Nature, isn't it?), then allow their trees (& grove) to follow Nature's course (please be reserved on pruning the mistletoe that clings to your boughs, too.)

Like it or not, as a group, we are diverse, anarchic and eclectic. In the past we had Norse, Zen, Celtic, Hasidic, Wiccan, Non-Aristolean, Humanistic, Orthodox and others paths which had no easy labels (take a look at this site for a fuller list:

www.geocities.com/mikerdna/wheregrove.html

In all honesty, our group has not been conducive to a Reform-wide mythology, theology, voting rules, set ritual, long-term membership, powerful-lobbying body, fund-raising, recognition by IRS, or fashion (Och lord, how I've tried, but I am a color blind Scot, yowsers!) For most, that sounds like failure. But a leopard shouldn't complain about its spots. I heard once that a sign of a good teacher (hopefully, one of ours is the Earth-Mother) is not the answers she gives, but the kinds of questions that she raises. I believe that, under her tutelage, we have produced a healthy crop of really good questions about some very basic concepts and issues, (bull-shit is very good fertilizer.) As long as that activity continues, whether we call it Druidism or not (an oak is an oak is an oak), then the RDNA lives on.

Now that I've said my piece, what do you think?

Fantasy Druids

By Daniel Hansen (DC2001:Scharding), Msc.D.
of the Celtics Studies Center at the Olympic Grove WA
(New to ARDA 2)

There we were, sitting at the dining room table with the usual piles of assorted odd shaped dice, a pencil with a well worn eraser, and sheets of paper filled with numbers, cryptic scribbling, and strange names like "Northwind," "Tangen," "Sun Carver," "Greylord," and others just as strange and exotic. The room was pretty well dark except for the hanging light over the table. Scattered around the table were small painted figurines of wizards, fighters, and thieves as well as dragons, unicorns, and orcs. At the head of the table sits the Game Master or Dungeon Master (the DM) with his Game Master screen filled with "to hit" charts and saving throws. Sitting around the table were the usual players, this night there were only four of us, but it could've been as few as two or as many as ten. Off to one side is the usual stack of empty pizza boxes from the local pizza delivery and crushed cans of cola. Together we were playing one of the many fantasy role playing (FRP) games set in the Middle Ages were magic was "real" and "reality" was created in the imagination of the players and directed by the Game Master. There are many variations of these games such as Advanced Dungeons & Dragons (AD&D) TM, Warhammar TM, or Paladium TM. However, if we wanted to play something other than a medieval fantasy there are many other variations. This includes the superhero game Champions TM, the cowboy Boot Hill TM, the post nuclear holocaust Gamma World TM, and space-faring Travelers TM, but this time we were playing the Medieval world most common to fantasy role-players gamers.

These fantasy role-playing games have been around for over thirty years or so, since the early 70's, and untold millions of have experienced these worlds of magic and adventure. For those unfamiliar with fantasy role playing games, the basic idea is gamers create with words and imagination a fantasy world called a "campaign" in which magic is real and works the way its supposed to and its instantaneous. This is where worlds of high adventure abound around every corner. This is where magical treasure and mountains of gold pieces are waiting to be claimed if only your character is brave enough or strong enough or smart enough to meet the challenge, slay the evil monsters, and survive the dungeon traps. Then victory and the spoils are yours for the taking (on paper at any rate), only to renew the quest with a new adventure with even more powerful adversaries, and maybe even do battle with the gods themselves.

In this campaign, I was playing a Druid, one of many character classes," My Druid waved his magic wand and a fireball shoots out and strikes the ugly half-orc warlord. I roll three six-sided dice, all snake eyes. "Just great," I thought to myself. The Game Master rolls his lucky dice. "Ha!" he says, my monster saved for half damage." Now it's his turn, the Game Master rolls his twenty sided dice... a twenty, a hit. He rolls an eight-sided dice... a six. I look at my Druid's character sheet, six points of damage was just enough to take my nature priest out of the game. I set down my dice, leaned back in my chair, and patiently watched as the other players carried on with the game. I picked up my character sheet and wondered, "just what is a Druid anyhow?" Was it something made up by the creators of fantasy role-playing games or was there such a thing as a Druid.

The more I pondered the question of what is a Druid, I had decided to find out what it was, if indeed it was something. Being "killed" in the game it was easy to slip away. Like most people, I looked it up in a dictionary and sure enough there was such a thing as a Druid. Most dictionaries say something like "the priests of the ancient Celtic religion." I decided to look Druids up in the encyclopedia and I found it between "Drugs" and "Drums," (I couldn't help wondering if there was a message in that placement.) Here it said that the Druids were the judges, priests, and advisors to the Celtic kings of Gaul, Ireland, and Britain. It went on to say they held the mistletoe and oak tree to be sacred. It concluded by saying the Roman Empire outlawed them and that Christianity finally wiped out Druidism. While all this information was accurate, it was to say the least kind of vague. Fortunately, today there are a number of books in circulation, which give a more detailed insight than the general information found in a dictionary or encyclopedia.

For modern Druids, how much effect have these fantasy role playing games had on the shape or direction of Druidism today? Having played various fantasy role-playing games (particularly AD&D) since I was in college and later becoming involved with various branches of neo-Druidism, I can definitely see parallel and influences of fantasy role-playing games on the concepts found within modern Druidism. I know that this statement may shock and offend many Druids, especially those who want to eliminate any and all non-factual elements from Druidism, but to deny the truth doesn't make it go away. To realize the effect of fantasy role-playing games on modern Druidism, it is first necessary to look at the ancient or paleo-Druids and contrast them to the neo-Druids. After that, compare and contrast the neo-Druids with the fantasy Druids.

Historically, the paleo-Druids were part of the elite ruling class, while not actually lords, they had enormous political clout. In Ireland a king could not speak before the Druid had his say first. The paleo-Druids were the teachers, the lawyers, the philosophers, healers, prophesiers, and the intermediaries between mortals and the gods. No ritual or ceremony could be performed without a Druid present to ensure it was done correctly. In certain circumstances, it was the paleo-Druid's duty to perform human sacrifice, either burning their victim in huge wickerwork, or a ritual sacrifice such as the Lindow Man. According to Caesar it took twenty years to train to become a Druid as opposed to the hereditary priesthoods of the Mediterranean world where you are born into the role of being a priest. The Druids were considered the most just of men and were attributed with fantastic magical powers to move mountains, control weather, create thorny barriers, and other great magical feats. The Druids were the living libraries of the ancients Celts who practiced an oral tradition and were renown for their memory. It is said that they didn't commit their knowledge or lore to writing because it dulls the mind. The Roman Empire considered the Druids a serious political threat and took extreme measures to eradicate them. An example is the Roman attack on the Druid sanctuary of Mona where the Romans slaughtered the Druids and Celtic defenders and cut down their sacred grove. Later the early Christian Church of Rome would continue the attack on the Druids as serious rivals for the spiritual niche in Celtic society. Sadly, between the Roman Legions and the legion of Christian missionaries, the Druids as a social caste ceased to be by the 5th Century CE.

Fifteen centuries after the last recorded Druid, the Druids reemerged from their ancient slumber. It's safe to say that the current groups of neo-Druids bear very little resemblance to the paleo-Druids. For starters, they are a fringe group and wield little or no political clout (we don't even make a voting block) such as other minorities and like-minded groups do. While some Druids run the rituals, most are content to participate in local grove or circle activities. Leadership takes time to give lectures or teach a few classes on the concepts of Druidism, such as philosophy and magic. They fall far short on their roles of teachers, lawyers, diviners, and philosophers (there are exceptions, but they are few and far between.) Due to modern laws and good sense, modern Druids perform neither human nor

animal sacrifices. Instead flowers, leaves, wine, or other non-animal sacrifices are made as a token of reverence to the Old Gods. As for training neo-Druids, there are no special requirements and training techniques vary from one group to another. Needless to say, it no longer takes twenty years to train a Druid. There are correspondence courses, which take about a year to complete. There is one thing the neo-Druids have in common with the paleo-Druids and that is the Christian Church still seems to consider Druids a serious rival or threat. It is clear from this rough comparison there is considerable fundamental differences between the paleo-Druids and the neo-Druids.

Now then, what about the Fantasy Role-Playing Druids? Well to begin with they exist only in fantasy realms of the imagination. Most game systems present the Druid as a nature priest and as such the Druid seems to be a very weak class. The Druid is given a few abilities that are nature-oriented spells that are in tune with Nature, and are restricted as to armor and weapons available to them. Generally the Druid is given the alignment of "True Neutral," which indicates that the Druid is not motivated by good or evil, lay nor chaos, but seeks a balance between all the forces of the universe. All in all it is a pretty pathetic character class. It is little wonder that they are not considered a popular class and in the recent 2nd editions of Advanced Dungeons and Dragons they have been dropped down to a mere footnote. Still, for many, there is a fascination with the Druid and it has inspired several works of fiction as well as numerous game supplements like AD&D "Celtic Campaign Sourcebook," AD&D "The Complete Druid's Handbook," Culps' "Celtic Myth," and Chaosium "King Arthur Pendragon." Each of these works presents a slightly different variation on the same theme, but the feel of the Druid as a powerful character remains as part of a Celtic realm filled with magical landscapes, mighty warriors, Otherworld monsters, kings, legendary treasures, and Druids. Within the concept of the game, the Druids were themselves associated with other classes such as Bards and Rangers and they were also connected with certain non-human creatures like Dryads, Swanmays, Banshee, and Leprechauns. Within any of these sources it is possible to create a truly impressive character that can effectively leave the forest and take their place within the greater fantasy realm.

Fantasy Role-Playing Druids, and in fact most role-playing, adds quite a dimension within the neo-Druid experience. Keep in mind that the neo-Druids are trying to bring Druidism into relevance for today as an alternative belief system within the neo-Pagan movement. The role, if you'll pardon the pun, of the fantasy Druid can be used to make a working concept of how Druids should interact with others of diverse belief systems, become familiar with working with magic and interacting with supernatural beings, both friend and foe. Here in the fantasy realm, the Druid can regain the power and prestige held by the paleo-Druids of old. It is safe to say that most of the modern Druids are familiar with Fantasy role-playing games and if they played, it is a good bet that they played as either Druids, Bards, or Rangers or a combination of one of these or something else. There is a great deal of truth in that while playing these fantasy type games, individuals can experience a certain spiritual (and some may say religious) satisfaction and insight without ever realizing how or why. The explanations for this can delve from the ridiculous to the metaphysical, but for each person the experience and reason are different so it would be foolish to generalize. The important thing is that the experience does happen and we should just accept it as a gift from the powers that be.

I found that reading up on the Druids, from both scholarly and fantasy books; I was better able to redefine the role of the Druid within the campaign setting and in my practice of neo-Druidism in the real world. In so doing, when I played the Druid I played him as he should have been played in the first place, as a class of high learning and honor. While it is true that being a Druid is not for everyone, but it couldn't hurt to try and who knows, you just might find as I did that I like being a Druid.

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Druidess: An Overview

By Daniel Hansen, Msc.D., Olympia Grove
Druid Missal-Any, Summer 2002

The question is often asked, where there female Druids? This article, the first part of a series by Brother Daniel, hopes to shed some light and give us some answers and evidence.

In our modern world of non-racist, non-sexist egalitarian society, and in particular the neo-Druid movement, we often attribute these modern values on our views or interpretation of history. Now after saying that, I'd like to address the subject of Druidesses. In all neo-Druid branches, men and women play roles of equal importance. A group can be lead by a Druid who is either a man or woman, and it doesn't make the slightest difference which. In ancient times or in the time of the paleo-Druids, there was a clear division of duties between men and women in all aspects of Celtic society. It is true that in Celtic society, women had a great deal of flexibility and social latitude not shared by women of other cultures of the period, but it was still a more or less male dominated society.

All of the early references to the Druids indicated that they were men. It wasn't until around the third century CE that Druidesses are first mentioned. However, there is evidence that a female priesthood existed side-by-side with the Druids and in some cases long before the paleo-Druids. Keep in mind that the question of the existence of the Druidess is a highly controversial topic, one with experts arguing for and against the existence of Druidesses.

After reading over a considerable amount on information on the subject, I have come to the conclusion that there was indeed a Celtic female priesthood of some kind and from our modern perspective, they were in all probability what we call Druidesses.

What are the facts to support such a wild claim?

Actually there is quite a bit, some of it is highly questionable and therefore subject to various interpretations by various authorities. I think it is best to examine the evidence piece by piece rather than throw it all out at once in order to sort things out. I'll start from a rather simplistic overview then I will go into greater detail on each subject.

In the beginning, most experts speculate, the concept of the Divine was that of the Magna Matre or the Great Mother. It is easy to understand how early mankind perceived of God as a woman. In the cycle of the year, particularly in the spring, the Earth literally burst into life. The Earth Mother could be seen in the contour of the land where mountains were her breasts and caves as her womb. This is called dinnshenchas, "The lore of prominent places." It is not surprising that in Europe we should find cave paintings of magical significance, which seemed to ask for abundant animals to hunt and food to eat deep in these caves. Other relics from the past to confirm in the belief in the Earth Mother are the so-called "Venus" figurines. These are small clay or stone models of pregnant women with large breasts and buttocks. What their actual function was is still a mystery to us today, but their relevance as a cult object is obvious.

Is this early reverence for an Earth Mother evidence for a female priesthood? The obvious answer is..."no." We have to look at other early evidence. In some of the more primitive peoples who survived into the era of recorded history, such as the Picts in Scotland, we find a strong tradition of matrilineal succession, that is where your lineage or heritage is traced through your mother rather than through your father. Matrilineal succession is traced to a period before connection between mating and birth were recognized. This is after all a more reliable system than that of patrilinear succession, after all you always know who your mother is, while a father can never really be absolutely sure he is the father.

Paleolithic to Neolithic man knew that women could work great magic in their bodies such as the producing of life. Thus women were assumed to be able to use the magic of their bodies for other purposes. Through time it is highly possible that women became clan or tribal leaders of magical rites and the priestesses of the early Earth Mother religion.

Into the hands of the most powerful women magic-welders were kept the rites of fertility, both plant and animal, as well as the possession of much of the primitive tribal lore. These women must have been regarded as magicians par excellence in the times before the Indo-European invasions. Were these women Druidesses? No, but they can be considered their predecessors.

The Indo-European invasions which swept across Europe were patriarchal in nature with their Sky Father God worship and their male priesthood. It took hundreds of years for the invasions to "sweep" across Europe until it finally reached Ireland around 350 BCE. After conquering a people, the invaders attempted to either oust the local goddess by killing her or they used her for their own purposes. By the latter, the local Goddess was made into the mother, sister, spouse, or daughter of their male God. How is this possible? Keep in mind that the Celtic gods and goddesses were never believed to be inviolable. These local goddesses never really conflicted with the Celtic nature-gods and so the two worships could exist side-by-side.

There is a practical side to this limited toleration of the conquered religions. The conqueror assumed his gods were stronger, but it couldn't be denied the conquered people and their gods were on their home ground. The local gods might have some unguessed powers to do evil such as making the land barren and useless to the conquerors. Over time, the conquering people had taken over the land, the people, and the gods. In primitive societies where the church and state were very close (in some cases one and the same), it was important to break the religion as well as the government of the conquered people. If the old religion were left intact it would be a rallying point for revolt. The strategies for the take over are simple, yet effective. The first step is to adopt as much of the native religion and practices into the new religion as possible. The second step is where it is impossible to incorporate any major part of the native religion, such as a god or ritual, then that god or ritual must be stigmatized as evil. These two tactics tend to force the native religion "underground" and become what the Romans called a mystery cult or religion. On the surface it seems that one Pagan tradition stretches out the hand of welcome to another Pagan tradition and even admits them into their pantheon.

Taking into account the conservative nature of primitive people and their resistance to change or new ideas, there are always pockets of resistance with the ancient Earth Mother cult, it can be seen in the persistence of the Celtic Matres which survived well into the Roman period. The Matre or Mother Goddess was usually found in threes and they had fertility symbols such as fruit, flowers, a cornucopia, or an infant. This fertility cult was served by a powerful female priesthood, who possessed the tribal lore, what we would call "folk wisdom." The Celts regarded the number three to be magical and powerful so they gave their deities the attributes or characteristics, such as three heads, or like the Matre, three sisters. It is possible that this is a literary attempt to explain the Celtic Pagan idea of a single god or goddess shown in triple form in order to emphasize their divine powers.

In other places of Europe, such as the isle of Sena and Loire off the coast of Armoria (France), conservation left these ancient rituals, site, and their priestesses in tact. Wondrous powers were attributed to these women such as shape changing

into animals, raising storms and tempests by songs, curing all diseases, and predicting the future. Were these women Druidesses? If they weren't, then they were as close as you can come without being one. The powers listed are almost identical to powers attributed to the Druids by the Greek and Roman historians. Our prime source of the Druids is Caesar. He speaks of priestesses among the Germans, but he makes no mention of a female Druid caste. Of course we cannot assume that Caesar gives us a full account of the Celtic religion and this must be set against his silence on the subject. It is possible that the Druidesses may have been a very specialized priestess who had some particular purpose, such as diviners. This could explain why they were over looked.

We also know that women were definitely set apart as the priestesses of the Moon Goddess. Everywhere that the Moon was worshiped as a Goddess, it was served almost exclusively by women, although in many areas men also played a part in the Moon Goddess service, but in a very different capacity Women were in charge of the magical practices intended to encourage the fertilizing power of the Moon Goddess.

The first woman to be called Druidesses are found in the third century of the Common Era. However the term used for them is not Druidess, but Dryads, which means "Nymph of the woods." one train of thought is that Druidism and Dryadism were two phases of the same religion. Dryadism was restricted to females in the early matriarchal stage, but it was later opened up to males as well. It then outlasted the male phase and reverted back to a female cult. Some experts say that these women were not actually Druidesses at all, but that they were wise-women in the same genre of being soothsayers who read palms or tea leaves to divine the future for a price. If these Dryads were indeed the descendants of the Druidic tradition, then by third century CE Druidism was in a sad state of retreat.

In Ireland up to the fifth and sixth centuries C.E. there were still Druids who were both male and female, because in the literature that have survived there are references of Ban-Drui or Bean-Draoi female Druids. We know this from the chronicles of early Christian missionaries who came to Ireland to spread the new faith. It is well documented that the Christian Church attacked the Druids for their Paganism, but especially for the Druids propensity to include sacred women to their ranks. The Christians used the same tactics to takeover Druidism that the Indo-Europeans used on the pre-Indo-Europeans, specifically adaptation and stigmatization. In Ireland the power of women was reaffirmed by St. Patrick's prayer asking for protection from "women, smiths, and Druids."

In Ireland, one of the best examples of the survival of women’s power is found in the secluded sisterhood of Druidesses in the cloister-like enclosure of Cill-Dara (Kildare) also known as the "Church of the Sacred Oak" where the goddess Brighidh or Brigid was worshipped. This sisterhood managed to survive a thousand years under a thin veil of Christian trappings before it was finally crushed under the religious persecutions in the Protestant Reformation. It is recorded that the women of around 450 C.E. had organized games, or their own at the fairs. They kept a special place or section at the public assemblies and they even had special enclosures reserved for them which men were not allowed in.

So much for the simplistic overview, now it is time to look at each of these aspects of the Druidesses in some detail. The following sections are intended to highlight the various functions and duties of Druidesses at the various stages in history. These are not intended as absolute statements, but my presentation of a wide spectrum of related and interrelated subjects which set the groundwork for the rise of Druidesses, their reign as it were, and their various survivals.

Summary

In these sections of the various phases and aspects of the Druidess, I hope to have shown the remarkable durability and longevity of this often neglected side of Druidism. Their lineage. which extends far beyond recorded history back to the dawn of religious thought and the rise of the cult of the Earth Mother and the Moon Goddess. These early female shaman eventually evolved as their society evolved and they changed as their culture changed.

Whether they acted alone as the village wise-woman or they clustered together in a secluded sanctuary, they had an amazing conservation of their traditions, knowledge, and belief system. Many of these institutions, to varying degrees, exist today as either folklore, bits of "sage advise," or in our veneration for the Earth Mother.

While these sections may have shown the existence of Druidesses in the distant past, what does all this have to offer Druids and Druidesses today? The neo-Druid movement by and large does not have an unbroken link to the past. Druids today, male and female, are products or recreations or anachronism. What I am aiming at in this series of articles was as far as the Druidesses were concerned to show what I call "Arrival-Survival-Revival." In my articles I have shown the "Arrival" of the Druidess from her origins with the Matre, Moon worship, and Corn-Spirit cults. I have shown their "Survival" after the Roman and Christian persecution began with the references Dryads and witches. The neo-Druid movement, as was the Meso-Druidic movement, is in part of the "Revival" stage. In the neo-Druid movement women play a key role in the evolution of modern Druidic thought, but with the revival it is important that we not forget the ancient roots of the Druidess, even if the term no longer applies to our modern concept of Druidism.

Where Are My Druid Ancestors?

By Mike Scharding, Digitalis Grove
Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2002

I get one of these delightful letters about every week and spend copious amounts of work-time on them. Perhaps this sample response may assist you in your own correspondence. I sometimes wish to tell them that we do keep records, "but only back to 538 A.D., and strangely they are all in a mysterious language on golden plates." But honestly, it is a pressing dilemma for a movement that espouses tradition but rejects many of those traditions of the last 1300 years of recorded history. I hope that it opens your eyes to the desperate desire of many young pagans to fill a "missing link" between themselves and their more ancient ancestors. Is this a curable condition, and do you have any other responses to this perennial question?

> Dear Mike,
>
> My question is about a matter of how does one research their ancestors' involvement with druidism? I am very interested in finding out a few things about my family and believe somehow our lives have been impacted by our ancestor's involvement. This may sound outlandish but I would like to know to figure or trace information. What are the oldest records, and whom does one speak with for this sort of information? If you are not sure, please forward this to somebody who might be of be of some help.
>
> Thank you very much! Yours truly,
>
> Desperately Seeking Seanachi

****

Dear Seanachi,

Hi, how ya doing?

I wish I could be of greater help on this subject. My parents have done extensive genealogy back to the 17th century, and we're pretty sure we've got more ancestors before those ones. But in my own Reformed Druidic way, I'll try to offer my best advice on this frequent question. There may be a solution imbedded somewhere in this long reply.

Most genealogical records of American/British/French citizens only go about to the 17th century (ask the Mormons for assistance on research); unless you are linked to a royal family, then you go back into the late medieval age (barring "secret" records, if they exist or are not doctored.) This sadly leaves all of us out of any connection with "actual ancient Druids" who more or less vanished by the 7th to 9th century, probably. It is probable that every clan had its Druid (or at least a Bard or two.)

But given the closeness to royalty and religious power throughout the ancient and modern world (every single U.S. President is a descendent of William the Conqueror, and the one with the most direct patriarchal connection (and always the tallest except for G.W. Bush, but he didn't really win) has always won the presidency. Their family trees are carefully done by a foundation, so finding a president or noble in your family tree would be a good route.

Now although Patriarchy was seemingly well established by the first few centuries of the Christian Era, we cannot be entirely sure that the job of Druid was passed on from parent to child, and there is evidence that in some Celtic area, that inheritance may have passed through the mother and adoption of apprentices or nephews and nieces was frequently an established part of village life and career training. But, let's assume for now that Druids didn't sensibly select the smartest and most promising children of the countryside, and rather only passed on their knowledge and powers to their biological offspring, irregardless of their natural talent (one of the reasons why hereditary Monarchy is not a great idea.) Well, since celibacy wasn't truly in effect until the 16th century for many clergy and monks and popes; and many Druids reportedly re-defined their job-description to "Christian" with changing fashions of power; a link to an ancient abbot, bishop or pope would also be a good bet.

Now, you might have better luck finding a family connection to a meso-pagan Druidic revival organization since 1697 (one of the fraternalistic clubs..) They presumably kept membership records. If there were any "Druidic Survivals," they probably would have joined one of these clubs over the last three centuries. Contact OBOD or (http://druidry.org/) or UAOD or AOD (http://www.igld.org/orgnat.htm) to pursue this route, then provide a list of your family members and time periods and they may or may not be able to confirm or disconfirm their membership.

Another route. Since it is generally agreed that when explicit Druidry was suppressed, the bards probably continued some of the stories, truth or lore of the Celtic religious culture. So if you could find any minstrels or entertainers (like O'Carolan and such) then you might have a connection. Such as a "harper" or MacCruithin, or one of the hereditary piper families of a clann. Many chieftainships and positions were hereditary, and the clann system continued to the 16th century in Ireland and 19th century in Scotland, well into the historical period.

If you wave enough money or foolishness in public, someone will supply all your needs (see credit card salesmen and Madame Cleo.) Anyone who offers you a Celtic pedigree chart is probably just trying to scam some money; and there are lots of them already working the Scottish/Irish-descendent market; adding you would not take much more trouble. Demand to see the original documents and blow the dust off them yourself.

Here are the last few methods, and perhaps least satisfying for pedigree mongers, is Idea, Nature, Divine Inspiration, Simple Mathematics, and of course the Apple and Boat test.

Idea

If the thoughts and beliefs of the Druids can leap from their bodies to non-blood-relationship people through the medium of words and music and custom; then by studying ancient and modern Celtic culture you can regain the seeds of those past souls and hopefully they will regerminate into a similar tree.

Nature

If the Druids gained their knowledge and power through the observation and interaction with Nature over generations; then you can by doing likewise, and thereby you and your descendents will gradually build up a similar bloodline of power.

Being the impatient Americans that we are, you could jump-start the whole process by getting your parents to convert, or even (like the Mormons) retroactively convert your ancestors in their heavenly rest to your new religious program. That would add several generations to your current status of inheritance.

Divine Inspiration

Surely, if you are a good Druid, and I think you are, then you believe in the Gods (or at least on alternative weeks, like me.) Now, the Deities should be technically more powerful than the worshippers (otherwise the roles would be reversed.) If the gods still exist, and the Druids listened to them, then you can ask the gods to download that power and information to you from their backup disk, right? This is known as the prayer method. Are there any signs of artistic, ESP, political or musical prodigies in your family line?

Simple Mathematics

Now there is a famous Irish proverb: "In the veins of every Irishman is the blood of a king, and a slave." Kings and slaves are but two sides of the same coin or "The Wheel of Fortune." Let's explore this further:

By argument: There are 600 Million Europeans today. There were only 30 million Europeans during the Black Plague of 13th century. Probably only seven million in 1 AD in Europe during the Roman Empire (which is why a single legion of 10,000 was so HUGE a problem for the Celts.) Let's assume that two million of those were Celtic religious practioners (France, Switzerland, North Italy, Spain, Dalmatia, Turkey, Britain, Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Belgium, Denmark/West Germany), with about 20,000 Druids/Intelligentsia (1%) okay?

There are plenty of legends with Druids having offspring. Assume 1.2 kids per Druid (probably three is normal, but child mortality, plagues and war reduce it, plus overlapping descendents) and a 20 year inter-generational period with 100 generations since 1 A.D..

So, you've got 20,000 ancient druids (1.3 to the 100th power which is 8,2817,974.5) producing a whopping grand sum of about 165,6359,490,440.3 currently living Druid descendents at a minimum. And it's a possible 2,535,301,200,456,458,802,993,406,410,7520,000 people, if we use 2.0 kids for calculations; but there are only 8,021,020,016 people on earth now.) So with Europe and America and Australia's combined estimated Celtic-descendent population of about 400,000,000 people, you have at least at 40-100% chance of having a Druid ancestor, depending on your calculations, without knowing any more than that your great grandmother was a McWhatzername.

Unfortunately, we don't know their Druid ancestor's name(s) and street postal address(es), but let me assure you by your very presence, that not knowing your ancestor's name will negate your existence or your heritage. I' ve got lots of ancestors I don't know too well, and I do fine.

Apple and Boat Test

Now if you're a "Christian Druid," congratulations, it gets much more simple!! Since you believe in "Ya*weh, then you believe the first Humans were Adam and Eve (among others.) Now Adam and Eve were originally on very close terms with God (as all the Druids were) and lived in a Garden, with intricate association and knowledge of all the plants and creatures of the Earth (in fact they named them all.) This would qualify as "Druidic" by many definitions. So if Adam and Eve were Druids and Druidesses, then we all are Druidic descendents. If by chance, non-Druidic people were around (because some women was marrying all these sons of Adams, unless constructing women was a family business for the Adamses) then the flood killed all of them all, leaving only Noah's offspring, who have a direct link to Adam, thus insuring and cementing our Druidic heritage, including the Maori exchange student at your neighbor's house.

I hope that in someway, I've been helpful and reassuring on this fascinating topic. I wish you the best of luck in your search, and hope you get back to me when you find a promising path to your solution.

-Mike the Fool

AD of DC

Now About Those Human Sacrifices…

by Polifonix Armorica
1970? 1975?

We Celts have been spread over a wide area, and you can never be sure about some tribes, especially those exposed to the influences of other races. Therefore, when confronted with the accusation of practicing human sacrifice which happens whenever I mention that, as a Bard, I belong to the order of Druids. I have until now countered only with the reply that we haven't been doing it in my village for as long as even the oldest inhabitant can remember and that we don't know of any villages that were doing it, even before Caesar came through. But it grows tiresome to hear such statements as, "I don't go along with burning people up in wicker cages," so I decided to investigate the matter.

To this date, even in the New Middle Ages, virtually the only formal sources available to me are those of the mundane world. In the New Catholic Encyclopedia I find: "Although there are references to human sacrifice in Gaul and Britain, it must have been rare. At any event, there is no evidence that this practice was approved or conducted by the Druids. The Catholics of the mundane world have been showing, signs of ecumenism lately, but if they have any ulterior reason for denying or even toning down evidence about pre-Christian Druids, I fail to comprehend what it could be.

However, one encyclopedia doth not an argument make. Turning to Man, Myth & Magic, an illustrated encyclopedia of the supernatural (because it was handy), I found the statement: "The Celts practiced human sacrifice. The Romans considered this ritual to be barbarous and caused it to be discontinued. They also struck a lethal blow at the Druids whose power and political influence was a threat to the success of Roman campaigns in the Celtic areas. Caesar, referring to the practice of human sacrifice, describes the great images of interwoven branches which were filled with men and set alight..." Now, Man, Myth, & Magic is patently aimed at a popular, even sensation seeking market, and if it can find any gruesome lore to repeat, it probably will, and not worry overmuch about strict accuracy. Of the two, I'd be more inclined to accept the New Catholic as an unbiased encyclopedia. Even so, notice who described the sacrifices - Julius, who was out to conquer us. And notice that we Druids had political power which the Romans could not tolerate if they were to rule us. Can you begin to suspect there was a certain amount of propaganda in those tales about wicker baskets? One of the best ways to enlist opinion against your enemy, especially when you're the invader out to get his land, is to spread stories about the really ugly things he does, whether he does or not. And the Romans had some grounds to talk about us, with the way they threw people to the lions?!

Turning to a source which I hoped would be more authoritative than Man, Myth, and Magic, I opened the third edition of Sir James Frazer's venerable The Golden Bough. There, human sacrifices were the Beltane fires in the 17th or 18th century in the Scottish Highlands. Unable to understand quite how Frazer arrived at the unequivocal decision that Gauls practiced human sacrifice because Scotsmen lit bonfires eighteen centuries or so afterwards (couldn't we just as easily argue that Weenie roasts are unequivocal proof that the ancestors of the picnickers indulged in cannibalistic feasts of "long pig"?) I read on and found that "The earliest description of these sacrifices has been bequeathed to us by Julius Caesar " Julius again! As conqueror of the hitherto independent (!) Celts of Gaul, Caesar had ample opportunity of observing the national Celtic religion and manners, while these were still fresh and crisp from the native mint and had not yet been fused in the melting pot of Roman civilization." "Fresh and crisp" seem odd words to describe a centuries old religion and it is strange that Frazer does not seem to realize that Julius was not exactly the most objective observer. "With his own notes, Caesar appears to have incorporated the observations of a Greek explorer, by name Posidonius, who traveled in Gaul about fifty years before Caesar carried the Roman arms to the English Channel."

The Encyclopedia Americana describes Posidonius as a Stoic philosopher and statesman, ca 135 to 51 BC, who went to Rome as ambassador at the age of 50, initiated Cicero into the Stoic philosophy, wrote many works on history, astronomy, and geography, and in his physical investigations was largely a follower of Aristotle. It does not deny that he might have traveled in Gaul, but neither does it stress travels in Gaul as any important part of his life. Besides, if Julius had such fine opportunity of studying us at first hand, why should he fall back on Posidonius in the first place? Sir lames goes on: "The Greek geographer Strabo and the historian Diodorus seem also to have derived their descriptions of the Celtic sacrifices from the work of Posidonius in the first place; Sir James goes on "The Greek geographer Strabo and the historian Diodorus seem also to have derived their descriptions of the Celtic sacrifices from the work of Posidonius, but independently of each other, and of Caesar for each of the three derivative accounts contain some details which are not to be found in either of the others. By combining them, therefore, we can restore the original account of Posidonius with some probability, and thus obtain a picture of the sacrifices offered by the Celts of Gaul at the close of the second century before our era." That is, assuming that Posidonius wrote such an account, and that Strabo and Diodorus were not quoting parts of the tales that Julius spread but did not include in his own books. Frazer begins by saying that Caesar "appears to have used," and Strabo and Diodorus "seem to have used" Posidonius, but, since human sacrifices fit his own theories, he doesn't belabor the uncertainty of this point.

Strabo, according to Americana, lived from 64 BC to 19 AD and traveled from Armenia in the East to Sardinia in the West, and from Pontus Euxinus on the North to the borders of Ethiopia. I'm not exactly sure whether this territory includes Gaul, but if so, Strabo traveled through it after Julius had already subdued most of it and, presumably, crushed out the supposed human sacrifices. As for Diodorus Siculus, the Encyclopedia Britannica, Eleventh Edition, says: "He asserts that he devoted thirty years to the composition of his history, and that he undertook frequent and dangerous journeys in prosecution of his historical researches. These assertions, however, find little credit with recent critics." Collier's Encyclopedia adds: "There are no references to it (Diodorus' history) in pagan literature for it was less a scholarly undertaking than a business enterprise. Diodorus used other but good authorities frequently..." Moreover, those parts of Diodorus which describe Julius' Gallic War and therefore, presumably, our religious activities, have apparently been lost and exist "only in fragments preserved in Photius and the excerpts of Constantine Porphyrogenitus," to quote Britannica again.

But back to Sir James: "Condemned criminals were reserved by the Celts in order to be sacrificed to the gods... If there were not enough criminals, captives taken in war" were added, some being shot with arrows, others impaled, others burned in the famous wicker cages. Even Frazer, who blandly assumes every word Julius and his rough contemporaries wrote about us is true, credits us with sacrificing only criminals and prisoners of war. "Executions" these would be called if Sir

James' own culture were doing it, "sacrifices" only because he is writing about somebody else's culture. He next spends eight pages or thereabouts describing examples of wicker cages and bonfires of Christian times, in which animals, usually cats or snakes, might or might not be burned, and argues that because Christians of later centuries burned cats, snakes, and bonfires, therefore, we Celts burned people.

Sir James provides irony as to why we did it. "If we are right in interpreting the modem European fire festivals as attempts to break the power of witchcraft then we must suppose that the men whom the Druids burnt were condemned to death on the ground that they were witches or wizards" and fire was simply the surest way to get rid of them. Animals sacrificed were thought to be witches in disguise. Witches were believed to blight crops and cast unpleasant spells on people, so that exterminating them was protecting the rest of the populace, not persecution. Even Frazer considers this the most likely reason why witches were done to death the most likely reason why witches were done to death. "On this view," he continues, "the Christian Church in its dealing with the black art merely carried out the traditional policy of Druidism, and it might be a nice question to decide which of the two, in pursuance of that policy, exterminated the larger number of innocent men and women." It might also be a nice question to decide how many of those so executed were innocent in their own opinion. Sir James, taking the stance of the sober and non mystical side of the early 20th century AD considers that anyone accused of witchcraft had to be innocent, because there's no such thing. Self-proclaimed witches seem themselves to protest against that line of reasoning. To say that a culture which did believe in witches should not have taken steps to protect themselves because your culture does not believe in witches is to apply a retroactive scale of justice. More to the point, any Christian who shakes an accusing finger at us Druids on account of Frazer's arguments, had best be prepared to defend the actions of his own church in later centuries.

Yet according to my friend, Lady Frytha of the Marches, ~ Christian witch burnings were almost exclusively a feature of the late medieval and early modern times, not of the early medieval period. 4 This would mean that the Druidic tradition was revived again after a millennium or so of attempts at obliteration which were effective enough, at least, to wreak havoc with our literary works. But the whole "witchcraft" theory (of Druid sacrifice) depends on a few assumptions of less than proven reliability: that we couldn't find any other criminals except witches (witchless centuries don't seem to have any noticeable lack of un-supernatural criminals), and that we did, in fact burn and otherwise sacrifice them.

The Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology, that majestic tome, states: "Allowing for literary license, there seems to be no doubt that the Celts practiced human sacrifice, perhaps not as a frequent part of their ceremonial, but certainly in times of trouble and possibly, in the earlier period at least, at certain annual ritual gatherings." Larousse seems to base its argument on our own oral tradition, arguing that such and such an ordeal is an allusion to ritual blood letting. At first sight, this looks more damning than the non-Celtic propaganda discussed above. However, most of the traditions known to Larousse appear to be Irish and Welsh; Julius did a fairly thorough job of obliterating Gaulish traditions. What lore has survived in any area was only written down later, a good part of it in Irish monasteries, and subjected to a good bit of re-copying over the centuries, by adherents of another than the original religion. And long re-copying has been known to do strange things even to texts of a single author's literary creation. It can hardly be an easy task to figure out exactly what tales were really told, and when and if that is done, the matter of interpretation still remains. Having watched respected critics almost batter each other over the heads arguing about whether or not Arthur took a swipe at the Green Knight in a comparatively late poem which survives in only one known text, and considering the confusion of symbols which the Mabinogian surely must present to the uninitiated mind, I feel some doubts as to how authoritative a case can really be built against us on such grounds. Still more important, this body of tradition was already ancient when scraps of it were finally put down on parchment; already ancient centuries before Julius came through. Possibly, once, human sacrifices may have inspired some things in the tales; there may turn out to be human sacrifice in almost every people's history, if you go far enough back. (Judeo-Christians are not exempt. In the Judeo-Christian holy writings, there are not simply possible allusions to human sacrifice, there are out and out statements of it.) That hardly means we were still doing it within anybody's living memory by the time of Caesar, nor that anybody by the second or third century BC had any idea that our traditions contained possible allusions to human sacrifice. Long ago and far away I once found a scholarly collection which included an Irish folktale in which a "hung-up, bloody man" came down from a tree to play the role of villain. The notes theorized that this man was the Christus, who had been put into the story as villain by some stout old Pagans resisting conversion, but the Christian generations had long been retelling the tale in total ignorance of the bloody man's identity. And this happened within a short time, compared with the centuries in which our lore had had time to develop! There remains, also, the question of symbolism. Future centuries may read The Lord of the Flies and suchlike, and decide that 20th century rituals included human sacrifice. And The Lord of the Flies is certainly no more symbolic than the Mabinogian. It looks to me as if we could just as easily rephrase this sort of "traditional" evidence and say: "Allowing for literary license, there seems to be no doubt that the Jews slaughtered Christian babies."5

We've heard there is a novel in which Druids are described as committing a particularly revolting sacrifice, something about stuffing a young girl with oak leaves. This sounds to me like the work of some thrill-seeking novelist out to out-Julius Julius. The worst that Caesar, Frazer, and their more serious followers (excluding novelists) say of us is that we executed criminals and, at need, war prisoners. Almost every culture has done such things, many cultures in more painful methods than the grisliest we have been soberly accused of practicing. The great difference is that, according to Julius and Frazer, we saved up our executees and did it at certain times and in possible connection with religious rites. Since Druids were political as well as religious leaders, even Sir James might have some trouble deciding how much of the execution was religious and how much merely legal. The line between politics and religion was not always so clearly defined as in the last few centuries of mundane history. And yet, the highest religious rites are almost universally secret, open only to chosen believers and therefore, if Posidonius and Julius witnessed anything, it was probably an execution more "legal" than "religious" or else they would have to have been sneaking and spying and in the latter case, if we were the barbarians they have made us out to be, they would have been lucky to escaped with their lives.

Julius liked to think of himself a great tactician, and if he witnessed a criminal execution or two, he would have been only too happy to embellish the details and report it as widespread religious practice. These Romans, our earliest accusers, did a few things that make the worst they said of us look almost gentle. I have not yet uncovered any story to the effect that we used torture as part of our legal processes in gathering evidence and confessions--but since torture was accepted juridical process in the Graeco-Roman world, spreading such a report about us

would have had no propaganda value. If according to the picture Julius and Sir James paint, we had been less thrifty about combining ritual with criminal processes, we might have gone down as "civilized."

So far, the burden of evidence that we did even this much rests on Julius, who had good motives (after his own peculiar ways of thinking) to use all the propaganda against us that he credibly could, even if he had to manufacture it; upon Strabo, whose independence from Julius' tales or the effects of them is questionable; upon Diodorus, who seems to have been a popular writer and something of an opportunist. capable of taking the goriest and, therefore, most salvable material and treating it as utter truth; and upon Posidonius, who may or may not have written an account which Julius, Strabo, and Diodorus may or may not have used; and upon a few scraps of mangled Celtic traditions, long transmitted and interpreted by adherents of newer creeds. Until better evidence turns up I In inclined to dismiss the whole case.

Footnotes

1. No connection to the Reformed Druid movements.
2. It doesn't. Pontus Fluxinus is the Black Sea. Strabo's travels include almost none of what is generally thought of as Western and Northern Europe, and only the eastern half of Southern Europe. The only "Gauls" he could have had any contact with were their distant cousins who settled "Galatia" near the southern shores of the Black Sea.
3. That is to say. "witches-as-evil-doers."
4. The biggest persecution period ran roughly 1450 to 1750 or so.
5. Especially if, for example, some future group of Nazis were to (Gods forbid!) conquer the world, murder every Jew and destroy every book about Judaism except their own. Now-consider what our current sources of information about non-Christian religion in Europe and Russia are.

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Druid Ritual Differences

By Rhiannon Ysgawen, Nemeton Awenyddion Grove
Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 2003

I'm writing this article on ritual differences to dispel any misunderstanding that people may have learned about Druidry. The traditions as practiced by most Druid Groves today will validate the information I wrote here. I do not speak for all Druid Groves, but the larger Druid organizations do agree with this information. I will compare Druidry with Wicca to try to dispel any ignorance anyone may have about the Wiccan practice being Celtic. Comparing Druid craft and Wicca is not meant to be a put down to the Wiccan path. We do have similarities. Both honor the Mother Earth. There are distinct differences though and that must be taken into account by anyone exploring Pagan religions.

Druid ritual is generally open to the public. In Druid ritual, participants stay in the present by staying on the earthly plane. The Wiccan and others often do astral travel during ritual, and sometimes they relocate their magic circles to another realm.

Druids remain on this middle Earth plane during ritual. The "Between the Worlds" that Druids refer to is the Earthly plane, or Middleworld, the Underworldly sea being below, and the Otherworldly Sky, above. Instead of transporting ourselves to deity, as many other Pagans do, Druids open the veil between the worlds with the helping hands of the voyager Manawyddan or Manannan, inviting the deity into our sacred space to be with us in the here and now.

Druid rituals are inclusive and open for non members and non-Druids to participate during ritual, as long as they are respectful and keep the harmony laws required to participate.

Druids do not cast magic circles or protective barriers around our ritual sites. Instead we build and create Nemetons or sacred space, which have their own place in nature. The four quarters are usually not called in or invoked as they are in many Wiccan circles. We call the Celtic Triads of land, sea, and sky, that is not the same as the quarters of earth, air, fire, and water. The reason it is that most Pagans cast a circle at the beginning of their ritual to ensure protection from invading entities when journeying or transporting space is done during ritual. The circle that is cast creates a containment field for holding the energy that is manifested during their ritual. The circle that gets cast must be undone at the end of the rite. This works well for certain types of magical workings that are part of the practices in Wicca. In Druidcraft, sacred space is marked by stones, or wood, and can be psychically seen as a small fence that can be stepped over but, any negative entities definitely know not to enter the sacred ground.

In Druidry every aspect of nature and the universe, visible and invisible, is respected and revered as a necessary part of the whole. All is seen as equal in Druid ritual. All of Earth's nature and the universe is sacred space. We are not concerned that unfriendly entities not banished from our Nemeton will invade our space and try to take possession. Through the three world invocations, Druids bring deity into our Nemeton while staying in Middleworld. The centering and grounding that most Pagans do with the four corner invocations is done to help participants establish their place. Centering and grounding is something that Druids do during the world tree invocations in ritual and the tree meditation. In Druid ritual, the sacred fiery center within the Grove and within each of us is directly connected with the Otherworld. After many rituals the divine spirit of the Groves sacred fire grows, so does ours. When this Otherworldly fire grows stronger, it strengthens our connection with the illumination of the Otherworld.

Druidry is polytheistic, meaning we have many gods and goddesses. We also have Nature Spirits that exist in nature. We also honor our ancestors. The Wiccan are dualistic believing that all the gods and goddesses are different faces of their lord and lady. Even though the order of the Awen in Druid perception flows through our gods and goddesses, the deities each have their own gifts, seasonal connections, and lore. The Awen embraces every aspect of light and dark, masculine and feminine, life and death, all depending on one another, walking hand in hand always. All is as valuable, all is holy and necessary to wholeness. This perception is unifying and non dualistic, it is all and one. The energy of the circle moves in both directions simultaneously, pro and con.

There seem to be many Wiccan teachers and book writers who are teaching their students that there is such a thing as Celtic Wicca. Wicca is not Celtic. While some Wiccans may call on some of the Celtic deities, they also use practices and call on deities that come from many other different cultures' traditions. Many of these other practices come from works such as Aradia gospel of the witches, Crowley, the Key of Solomon, Masonic rituals, Carmina Gadelica, and other cultures' traditions. All of these listed works are part of the training that Gerald Gardner learned from, and with which he formed the tradition of Gardnerian Wicca back in the early 1900s. Gardnerian Wicca is where most of today's Wiccan practices come from. While there may be many Wiccan practitioners who believe that Wicca is as old as Druidry, or that its practices date way back before Gardner, it may but only for a few decades. From the lineage of Gardner's training anyone could see that his practices were put together from different sources and traditions and he found a way to mix these traditions to make a new one.

Gaelic traditionalists say that the practice of borrowing practices other traditions is disrespectful to that tradition and cultures' ancestors, and dishonorable to the modern day traditionalists who work very hard learning and preserving the ways of their traditions. The cultural pantheon of deities a Druid chooses to work with usually will come from a deep heart felt moment or realization that they've lived another life, or many lives in that culture. They may also have ancestry from that culture. The traditional Gaelic, views a person's dedication to their family, cultural and spiritual, as an oath of utmost importance. This is also where immense value is placed on the honoring of the ancestors in Druidry. In the Celtic World Tree, the ancestors have an entire world of existence that is honored and respected in Druidry. To stick with one culture's tradition and honor their ancestry is quite uncommon in the Wiccan practice because of the eclecticism of the Wiccan way. Druidry today tries to keep and practice from the traditional Gaelic ways. Because there are many Wiccans that borrow concepts, icons, and sacred relics from other traditions, it causes much friction to exist between the other traditions and Wicca. This can manifest itself in such things as the Lakota Declaration of War. Which was created by Lakota traditionals against those who steal words from their spiritual leaders.

Spiritual differences exist between all practices whether they are rooted in a tradition or not. I am just drawing on factual information from the research I've done on both Wicca and Druidry. This does not reflect all of Druidry or Wicca, but most. If you really want to find out if these statements are true, then please do some of your own research to find out.

Section Two: Quoted Material on RDNA and Mike's Responses

Real Magic

by Isaac Bonewits 1971,
pg. 155-9, revised 1978, 1988

In the hills, lit only by the moon, the Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA) are celebrating Samhain (pronounced "so'ahn.") This is the night that others call Halloween and in the old Celtic cultures was the "day between years," or the beginning of the new year. The RDNA is a revival of old Celtic (especially Irish) religious beliefs and practices, "reformed" in that it forbids the practice of blood sacrifice. The group was founded in the early 1960's and is not to be confused with other groups using similar names or claiming to go back in unbroken lines to prehistoric Ireland. The RDNA makes no such grandiose claims.

The service starts with prayers to the Earth-Mother (the personification of the "Life Force"), to Be'al (the personification of the abstract essence of the universe), to Dalon Ap Landu, Llyr, Danu, and other deities of ancient Ireland. Reciting hymns translated from old Celtic relics and manuscripts, these latter-day Druids send up their praise to Nature. They admit their human frailties and limitations.

Then passages from the Chronicles of the RDNA are read and meditated upon (the Chronicles are a history of the movement written in pseudo-King James style, plus the translations mentioned above, plus meditations and poetry. All is considered the work of men, though possibly written while inspired.)

The members of the congregation are wearing ribbons around their necks; these are red, the color of life. As the ceremony continues, the "Waters-of-Life" (about 80 proof) are exchanged for the "Waters-of-Sleep" (pure H20); and the red ribbons are exchanged for white ones, the color of death. This is to symbolize that the Season of Sleep has begun; the red ribbons will not be worn again until May 1, the beginning of the Season of Life.

A short sermon is given by the Arch-Druid upon the subject of man's constant destruction and defilement of Nature (the RDNA was into ecology long before it became a fad.) The Earth Mother is asked to bless her children and fill them with her powers, so that they may do Her will. The participants identify themselves as a part of the Earth Mother and assert their interdependence with each other and with her.

After a few more payers of praise the service is over. The participants, feeling refreshed and strong, sit on the hilltop to finish the Water-of-Life and gaze at the stars and the city below.

But all is not yet quiet upon that hilltop, for after all it is Halloween and the night is still young. A warning is given but all choose to remain. The thin line between religion and magic is about to be crossed. Still wearing their traditional tabards, the two leaders of the group prepare for a ritual of ceremonial magic.

The altar is a chunk of rock imbedded in the hilltop, once used by the Indians for their rituals. It now becomes the center of a "magic circle." Holes are dug by daggers and staffs are

planted at the four points of the compass; a fifth staff (the largest one there) is placed at the base of the altar pointing to the evening's target.

A wandering hippie out for a stroll in the woods happens on the group. When they tell him what they are doing, he decides to leave quickly (in that area one knows better to mess around in the affairs of magicians.) A stick is used to trace a circle around the staffs and altar, and they enter. Unlike most magic circles this one is not designed to keep anything out but rather to keep energy in until it is time to release it.

The members of the group are mostly professionals, specialists in Green and Brown Magic. The two leaders of the group, one a Green, the other a Yellow Magician, are neither ignorant nor gullible (in fact, most of the group are college graduates with years of training in magic.) The leaders have designed a ceremony with great care to take advantage of every method in the books to insure successful spells. Two items are on the agenda curse and an exorcism.

The ritual begins with a circumlocution of the ring of staffs. Readings from the Chronicles follow. The ring is cleared of all hostile entities and thought patterns. They now begin to concentrate.

A series of litanies is read to all corners of the globe, conjuring and summoning gods, demigods, nature spirits, and the spirits of great men. They are called on to join the group and lend their powers. The language is flowery and emotional, the expression rhythmic; emotion is built up as the Druids feel presences outside the circle. The moonlight or something is doing strange things outside the ring.

An image of the target is built up until every member has it clearly in mind. The past history of the man is retold, his atrocities enumerated, his danger declared. The wishes of the group are announced to the beings assembled.

The target is not to be destroyed outright, for he is well skilled in repulsing ordinary attacks of Black and White Magic. Instead he will destroy himself by being forced to suffer personally and directly the consequences of his every magical act. An impenetrable shield is imaged around him, with a "psychic mirror" covering the insides. Every time he attempts to use magic for any purpose, his energy will bounce off this mirror and strike himself instead of his intended victim. This is known as the "Boomerang Curse," or as a variation of "the mirror effect," and it can be harmless or deadly, depending solely upon the future actions of the target. It is pure "poetic justice" in action.

Emotion has been aroused and the target visualized. The desire has been declared in detail. The group focuses its energy with another extemporaneous chant and fires! More than one member sees amorphous shapes winging across the sky toward the target.

The second ceremony is an exorcism of the area. Using similar techniques emotion is once again raised and brought to a peak. Incantations are read declaring the intent. All great violence both physical and psychic is forbidden. Neither right-wingers nor left-wingers will be able to sway crowds into rioting; all White Witches and Black Witches who attempt destruction will find their powers neutralized. Once again it is not destruction that is done, but rather a stripping of power from those who would destroy. Peace and quiet are to reign, at least until the next High Holy Day. With grand and sonorous tones the Druid magicians fire the energy produced.

After both ceremonies a statement of success or "follow through" is made, asserting that all has gone and will continue to go as planned.

The second ritual finished, the assembled entities are thanked and dismissed. The circle is broken and the hilltop cleaned of litter. The Druids head home satisfied, leaving the hilltop to the moon and the rabbits.

They have used principles unknown to establishment occultists. They have mixed Yellow, Green, and Brown Magic as well as the roles of magicians, wizards, and witches. The targets were unprepared for anything but traditional attacks.

Extensive postmortems are later done, with interesting results. Shortly after the rituals were done, the first target lost the best sensitive in his coven; not long afterward his entire group had fallen apart and he was close to bankruptcy. The exorcism seems to have been a rousing success, as well; reports from various covens throughout the area revealed total confusion and consternation. As for the politicians, despite the fact that excuse after excuse popped up, they were unable to stage one riot in the next three months, not in fact until after Candlemas!

It was, of course, sheer coincidence. Naturally.

Note the pattern so far: Supplication-Introduction, Reply from the Deity (or personified group-mind), Identification of Participants with the Deity (same Note), Statement of Requests and Statement of Success.

The opening prayers at the Christian altar, the opening dance steps of the Hopi, the clapping of the Pentecostalists and Vodun people, the chanting of the Buddhists, the singing of praises to the Earth Mother, and the Conjuration of Beneficients; all these are Supplication-Introduction.

The readings of sacred scriptures, whether the Bible, the Chronicles, or incantations written for the occasion, or the recital of histories; these are all in effect a Reply from the Deity or Power being addressed.

The priest consecrating the Host, the Druids changing their ribbons, the Hopi, Pentacostalists, Vodun people, and Buddhists "possessed" by their deities; all have achieved Identification with the Deity concerned.

And every single groups asks for specific benefits and ends with a positive assertion that their requests will be granted; thus, we have the Statement of Requests and Statement of Success.

Grab a scrapbook of comparative religions, and I'm sure you will be able to find more examples of this pat tern. But what is the basic theory behind it and why is there so much diversity in its realization?

Mike's Response to Real Magic

Isaac's book, published in 1971 for his Bachelor's Thesis (kind of like my History), was intended to impress the world with a scientific approach to magic. The book was well received. In it, Isaac talks about comparative similarities between ritual structures and uses the RDNA's Order of Worship as an example. This recount is probably from the Berkeley Grove of the late 60s/early 70s, because of the Ceremonial magic that follows afterwards. The older Carleton Druids did practice some magic, but far less than the Californian Druids or the current Carleton Druids. A few notes; Isaac's description here of the purpose of the RDNA is a bit different than mine, but Isaac knew relatively little about the RDNA at Carleton before he wrote to them in 1974. This excerpt is the only major part in the book that is specifically concerned with the RDNA:

Mike's Response to Authentic Thaumaturgy

by Isaac Bonewits 1977

Although these reasonably widely published books are not specifically about Reformed Druidism, they were written while Isaac was an active Reformed Druid, and they can provide instructive insights into how Isaac Bonewits understood magick, ritual and group dynamics. They also show the complexity of religious theology that Isaac possessed and is a strong contrast to the frequent simplicity of the Reform. Especially interesting is a liturgical analysis of RDNA ritual. Even to the cursory reader, it is obvious that Isaac has an incredible talent & joy for tying-up slippery subjects into intricate, working definitional structures. Isaac can make a definition for just about everything, definitions which mesh with each other like cogs in a clock. Unfortunately if you disagree violently with one or two cogs, the whole system (like most theilogies/theologies) can grate on you.

This is important later in this study, because it was Isaac's impulse of applying very detailed definitions (in a perhaps overly authoritative tone) that drove many RDNA members into a frenzy. Perhaps it is the common assumption of the layperson that every group's thealogy needs to be detailed and fixed (and then published) that led to the assumption that Isaac must have been the most inspired Reformed Druid leader. Most other Reformed Druids did not really care too much about liturgy, and were probably therefore never considered leaders.. I highly doubt that many Reformed Druids have ever intellectualized the Order of Worship to the same extent as Isaac. While certainly the most published Druid, Isaac's works must be understood to be elaborations of his own personal beliefs rather than those of Reformed Druidism, which can never be more than simple.

Mike's Response to Druid Chronicles (Evolved)[270]

"DC(E)" published 1976

Edited by Isaac Bonewits & Robert Larson with dozens of contributing authors.

This tome was the most recent predecessor of this paper in providing a history of Reformed Druid. DC(E) is also very likely to bias future scholars who decide to begin their study of the RDNA with this tempting resource. Because of DC(E)'s between-the-lines view of Reformed Druidism as mainly oriented (and fated) to become a part of the Neo-Pagan community (with a Celtic focus), this book is a biased source (but thus very valuable for presenting the later-NRDNA & SDNA sides of the debates.) DC(E) has never been widely printed, (perhaps 300 copies) but it appears often as the source used by researchers for obtaining RDNA documents. DC(E) has long served as the collection of primary resources for those RDNA and NRDNA groves that were without access to the Carleton archives. DC(E)'s resulting authority in the bibliography of researchers has probably led many scholars to the conclusion that Isaac was the main (if not tacitly, the only) inspirational leader of Druidism. The truth is that there were many leaders, in different ways, at different times and in different senses.

While DC(E) does not overtly claim to be the only resource for studying Reformed Druidism, it is very attractive because it brings together in one tome what used to be very difficult-to-obtain written materials from the many branches of Reformed Druidism. Although DC(E) possesses a long introductory chapter and another quick disclaimer in the beginning:

Indeed, many of the members of the original RDNA accept only these Books [the first five] as relevant to Reformed Druidism and consider other written material of a Druidic nature to be either irrelevant, optional or perniciously heretical.[271]

many reviewers have assumed or implied that the whole book is pertinent to all of Reformed Druidism. Because of the local Celtic ethnic emphasis amongst the Berkeley grove,[272] many of DC(E)'s sections are very heavily Celtic in focus, the exception being the section on Hassidic (Jewish) Druids in the back. The DC(E) leaves a false impression that Celtic sources of inspiration prevailed in the whole of Reformed Druidism. Because many researchers probably only skimmed through it at best or perhaps hastily concluded that if Berkeley was like this; so must everyone else. DC(E) is definitely written for the insider-Druid, not for the casual reader or quick researcher. Perhaps the encyclopaedists wished to pigeon-hole the RDNA and used Isaac as a willing or convenient "figure-head" for the group.

An important omission from this compendium was the Green Book of Meditations, a result of copyright problems, which illustrated the core of the Carleton policy of drawing upon diverse **existing** Asian & World religions in addition to religions of the past.[273] A hind-sight problem with Isaac's Apocrypha, is that all the letters that argued against Isaac's definitional referendum in 1974 were not found in Isaac's Apocrypha.[274] This is primarily justified in that Isaac expected additional letters to be added to the Apocrypha by the individual owners of copies of DC(E.) The unfortunate result is a general bias amongst the printed matter in his favor. Isaac printed a remarkably careful and honest account of the voting results in "The Book of Changes" about the pivotal issues of self-definition of the debates on Neo-Paganism vs. Multi-religioned, Religion vs. Philosophy and about organizational change. Isaac also showed that the following events led to everyone re-affirming the traditional right of individuals choosing their own definitions.

While still a handy compendium of primary documents and arcane past customs, the DC(E)'s place as THE SOLE REFERENCE tool for serious and balanced scholarship should be soon replaced by the International Druid Archives and A Reformed Druid Anthology.[275] In the IDA collection, the DC(E) will still serve as a historical document for understanding how the NRDNA & SDNA saw themselves as different from the RDNA. Since several of the documents and customs in DC(E) are still found written down nowhere else, this will ensure the continued importance of DC(E) for study in future years, just like the original Blue Book of Archives at Carleton. But its greatest importance remains for understanding one or two sides in a very many-sided debate.

It is of course impossible to put the entire 250 page collection here, but the pertinent documents that I comment upon in Appendix E are the First & Second Epistles of Isaac, the Book of Changes, and most of the Druid Miscellany section (called part six in DC(e).) There were occasional swipes in the footnotes, but we won't go into those.

Drawing Down the Moon

by Margot Alder
1978 &1986 pg. 319-328
(WHICH YOU SHOULD BUY!)

1978 Notes

"Large Parts of the Neo-Pagan movement started out as jokes, you know," Robert Anton Wilson, author, Witch (& Reformed Druid), and a former editor of Playboy, told me one day. "Some of the founders of NROOGD will tell you their order started as a joke; other wills deny it. There is a group that worships Mithra in Chicago which started out as a joke. The people in many of these groups began to find that they were getting something out of what they were doing and gradually they became more serious."

There have always been spoofs on religion. But religions that combine humor, play, and seriousness are a rare species. A rather special quality of Neo-Pagan groups is that many of them have a humorous history.... ...Since we live in a culture that makes a great distinction between "seriousness" and "play," how does one confront the idea of "serious" religious groups that are simultaneously playful, humorous, and even (at times) put-ons? How *seriously* can we take them?

The relationship between ritual and play has long been noticed. Harvey Cox, in Feast of Fools, develops a theory of play, asserting, like others before him, that our society has lost or mutilated the gift of true festivity, playful fantasy, and celebration. In 1970, when an interviewer asked Cox about the "rise of the occult," he replied that astrology, Zen, and the use of drugs were "Forms of play, of testing new perceptions of reality without being committed to their validity in advance or ever.."...

... Huizinga writes that play and ritual are really the same thing and that all sacred rites, mysteries, sacrifices, and so forth are performed in the spirit of play, that poetry is a play function, and that all these things may well be serious since "the contrast between play and seriousness proves to be neither conclusive nor fixed... for some play can be very serious indeed."

"The Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA) began in 1963 at Carleton College as a humorous protest movement directed against the school's requirement that all students attend a certain number of religious services. Since "attending the services of one's own religion" was one way to fulfill this requirement, a group of students formed the RDNA to test it. The group was never intended to be a true alternative religion, for the students were Christians, Jews, agnostics, and so forth and seemed content with those religions.

In 1964 the regulation was abolished but, much to the surprise and it is said, horror of the original founders, the RDNA continued to hold services and spread its organization far beyond the college campus. One of the founders, David Fisher, who wrote many of the original rituals, is now an Episcopal priest and teacher of theology at a Christian college in the South, having apparently washed his hands of the RDNA. Many of the original founders considered Reformed Druidism not so much a religion as a philosophy compatible with any religious view, a method of inquiry. They certainly never considered it "Neo-Pagan."

The original basic tenets of Reformed Druidism were:

> 1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, one way among many.
>
> 2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it.

These Tenets were often shortened to read

> 1. Nature is good!
>
> 2. Nature is good!

The original founders seemed to hold the fundamental idea that one should scrutinize religion from "a state of rebellion," neither embracing traditional faiths nor rejecting them. They intended RDNA to avoid all dogma and orthodoxy, while affirming that life was both spiritual (Be'al) and material (the Earth-Mother) and that human beings needed to come to a state of "awareness" through unity with both spirit and nature. The founders also seemed to distrust ritual and magic, sharing the prejudices and assumption of most of the population.

RDNA has always had a sense of humor. The Early Chronicles of the Druids, as well as many later writings, are written in a mock biblical style. Here, for example, is a description of how the regulations at Carleton were abolished:

> 1. Now it came to pass that in those last days a decree went out from the authorities;
>
> 2. and they did declare to be abolished the regulations which had been placed upon the worship of those at Carleton.
>
> 3. And behold, a great rejoicing did go up from all the land for the wonders which had come to pass.
>
> 4. And all the earth did burst forth into song in the hour of salvation.
>
> 5. And in the time of exaltation, the fulfillment of their hopes, the Druids did sing the praises of the Earth-Mother.

Similarly, the original "Order of Worship" has many similarities to a Protestant religious service, complete with invocations and benedictions. Reformed Druids are not required to use these rituals and as is true of so many Neo-Pagan groups, participants have created new rituals to take their place. I did attend an RDNA ritual in Stanford, California, that sounded not much different from a number of liberal Christian services I have attended, despite its being held in a lovely grove of oaks. But when I described this ritual to another leader of a Reformed Druid grove, he merely laughed and remarked, "It all depends on who's doing the ritual. A service by Robert Larson (Arch-Druid of an Irish clan in San Francisco and a former Christian Scientist) often sounds like Christian Science. My services are influenced by my own training in Roman Catholicism. Besides, most religious ceremonies follow the same kinds of patterns. It is natural to find similarities." The Reformed Druid movement is extremely eclectic, to say the least.

The festivals of the Reformed Druids are the eight Pagan sabbats we have come across before: Samhain, the Winter Solstice, Oimelc (February 1st), the Spring Equinox, Beltane, Midsummer, Lughnasadh (August 1st), and the Fall Equinox. The rituals are held (if possible) outdoors, in a grove of oaks or on a beach or hill. The officiating Druids often wear robes - white is traditional, but other colors are acceptable. During the ritual, which can include readings, chants, and festival celebrations, the waters-of-life are passed around and shared to symbolize the link between all things and nature. (During the

ritual I attended in Stanford, California, the waters-of-life was good Irish Whiskey. Whiskey in Gaelic means 'waters-of-life'.) All worship is directed toward Nature and various aspects of nature retain the names of the Celtic and Gaulish gods and goddesses:

Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of the Groves

Grannos, God of Healing Springs

Braciaca, God of Malt and Brewing

Belenos, God of the Sun

Sirona, Goddess of Rivers

Taranis, God of Thunder and Lightning

Llyr, God of the Sea

Danu, Goddess of Fertility

The "paganizing" of the Reform Druids came as a great surprise to many, and some of the originators regard it as a regression. But from its inception there has been much in RDNA that is Neo-Pagan in nature. The "Order of Worship" includes hymns to the Earth-Mother, to Be'al, and to Dalon Ap Landu, lord of the groves, as well as ancient Welsh and Irish poems. This is fertile ground for anyone with a love of nature, an interest in Celtic lore and myth, and a love of poetry, music, and beauty.

Once the initial protest was over, the most important aspect of Reformed Druidism had to be that it put people in touch with a storehouse of history, myth, and lore. Isaac Bonewits, Arch-Druid of the Mother Grove of the NRDNA in Berkeley (see below) and certainly an avowed Neo-Pagan, told me "Over the years it grew and mutated, much to the horror of the original founders, into a genuine Neo-Pagan religion. There were actually people who were worshipping the Earth-Mother and the old gods and goddesses, who were getting off on it and finding it a complete replacement for their traditional religion." Bonewits, Larson, and one or two others played a large role in this change of direction.

At present [in 1978] there are branches of Reformed Druidism in at least seven states. The grove at Carleton has existed on and off to this day as a philosophic path open to the members of many different religions. There are also non-Pagan RDNA groves in Chicago, Ann Arbor, and San Jose. In addition there are a number of NeoPagan branches. Calling themselves the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA), these groups include Norse Druids in San Diego, Zen Druids in Olympia, Wiccan Druids in Minneapolis, Irish Druids (with services in Gaelic) in San Francisco, Hassidic Druids in St. Louis, and various Eclectic Druids in Oakland, Berkeley, and Los Angeles. All these groups are autonomous. Bonewits has publicly stated that Reformed Druidism can survive only if it recognizes its own nature, which is that of a Neo-Pagan religion.

The NRDNA, unlike the RDNA, is Neo-Pagan. And Isaac's Eclectic Druid grove in Berkeley requires the members of the priesthood to declare themselves Neo-Pagans and make a commitment to the religion. His grove, writes Bonewits, "is avowedly Neo-Pagan" and defines itself as :

...an Eclectic Reconstructionist Neo-Pagan Priestcraft, based primarily upon Gaulish and Celtic sources, but open to ideas, deities and rituals from many other Neo-Pagan belief systems. We worship the Earth-Mother as the feminine personification of Manifestation. Be'al as the masculine personification of Essence, and numerous Gods and Goddesses as personifications of various aspects of our experience. We offer no dogma or final answers but only continual questions. Our goal is increased harmony with ourselves and all of Nature.

Bonewits publishes a newsletter, *The Druid Chronicler*, available from Box 9398, Berkeley, California 94709 [now moribund]. He has also published a book, *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved),* which gives the history of Reformed Druidism, the liturgy, and much more.

The Hassidic Druids were formed in 1976 and the group is made up primarily of former Jews who wish to keep certain aspects of Hebrew and Yiddish culture but want to avoid the oppressive nature of what is in many respects a patriarchal theology. They add Yiddish and Hebrew sources to the Gaulish and Celtic ones. They have a set of additional scriptures called the *Mishmash* and the *Te-Mara*, which, in Reformed Druid Tradition, satirize in a good natured way the scriptures -this time the Talmud. Most of it is both humorous and profound.

The Reformed Druids have never been a large movement. Even now, with two different branches and twelve different groves, the active members probably number no more than a hundred. Yet they seem to illustrate an important point: When one combines a process of inquiry with content of beauty and antiquity, when, even as a lark, one opens the flow of archetypal images contained in the history and legends of people long negated by this culture, many who confront these images are going to take to them and begin a journey unimagined by those who started the process.

Recent Notes in 1986

By 1985, most of the Reformed Druid groups were moribund. A few groups are still flourishing. There's a Druid group in Seattle and a lively group in Berkeley, California, the Live Oak Grove. This group publishes A Druid Missal-any, has planted a sacred grove, and is doing research into Gaelic rituals.

Meanwhile, after a long absence from the Pagan scene, Isaac Bonewits has started his most ambitious Druid project yet; *Ar nDraiocht Fein* (Our own Druidism.) He has started a new journal, *The Druid's Progress*, and, by the time the second issue was out, scores of people were joining the process of slowly, carefully creating a new form of Neo-Pagan Druidism.

Bonewits told me, "It started out as a simple network for a few dozen people who wanted to coordinate research on the old religions of Europe. Then more and more people wanted rituals and clergy training. Now it's a collective act of creation. With the help of 200 people we're creating a new religion."

Bonewits said that he came to realize that the Reformed Druids was not an appropriate vehicle, at least for him. "Most people in the RDNA were Zen anarchists," Bonewits said. "They had a philosophical approach, applicable to any religion. Most of the RDNA were not Pagans. They resented me and felt I was infiltrating their group."

In The Druid's Progress, Bonewits lays out his vision of Ar nDraiocht Fein. It would be an attempt to reconstruct using the best scholarship available, what the Paleopagan Druids actually did, and then try to apply such knowledge to creating a Neo-Pagan religion appropriate for the modern world. It would use the scholarship of authors like George Dumezil, Stuart Piggot, Anne Ross, and Mircea Eliade. It would create rituals and liturgy and would set up a complex training program to achieve excellence. It would "keep nonsense, silliness and romanticism down to a dull roar," he told me. "after all, the Druids had some unpleasant customs which I have no intention of perpetuating. They were headhunters, for example. But it is important to know where you are coming from if you are going to claim you are connected to certain ancestors or traditions. If you say you are a "Druid" you ought to know what kinds of thoughts they had. Then you can pick and choose what parts make sense in modern America."

Bonewits' vision of Druidism is not entirely Celtic or even Pan-Celtic, but Pan-European. It would include all the branches of the Indo-European culture and language tree; Celtic, Germanic, Slavic, Baltic, even pre-classical, archaic Greek, and Roman. While most people are aware that fragments of Druidism seem to have survived in parts of Wales and Ireland, some of them surviving in disguise through the institutions of the Celtic Church and among bards and poets, research done by Russian and Eastern European folklorists, anthropologists, and musicologists, writes Bonewits, "indicates that Paleopagan traditions may have survived in small villages, hidden in the woods and swamps, even into the current century! Some of these villages still had people dressing up in long white robes and going out to sacred groves to do ceremonies, as recently as World War One!" Much of this research has been published in Soviet academic literature and has never been translated. Bonewits believes that this material, combined with Vedic and Old Irish sources will provide most of the missing links in reconstructing Paleopagan European Druidism. Translating these sources will be one of ADF's tasks.

One of the most important aspects of Ar nDraiocht Fein is its training system, which is based on a series of levels or circles, somewhat like the organization of the old Church of All Worlds. You can move forward and (if you lose knowledge or skills) backward! Since the Indo-European clergy were supposed to be the intelligentsia of their culture; the poets, the musicians, the historians, and the astronomers, the training for each level includes drama, music, psychic arts, physical and biological and social sciences, counseling, communications, and health skills. Languages are also emphasized. Bonewits is partial to Irish, but is seeking scholars in all European languages. Along with many others, he has come to believe that when you invoke a deity in the language their original worshippers used, you get a more powerful magical response.

Bonewits has always been extremely opinionated and often difficult, even egotistical, but he remains one of the most interesting Pagans around. In talking about Druidism, he says flatly that there is no indication that the Druids used stone altars. They did not build Stone Henge, the megalithic circles and lines of northwestern Europe, the Pyramids, or have anything to do with the mythical continents of Atlantis or Mu. What's more, he will not accept what he considers to be the questionable scholarship of Louis Spence, Margaret Murray, Robert Graves, H.P. Blavatsky, and others.

While the local druid groves will have lots of autonomy, Bonewits makes no apologies for the fact that this group will have a structured hierarchy and that Bonewits will be the Arch-Druids. He told me, "I'm being extremely out front about running it as a benevolent dictatorship. I get a lot of feedback, but I make the final decision. These are the rules of the game. If you don't want to play by them, you should probably start your own Druid groups, and I hope you succeed. Some people will think that makes me autocratic," he laughed, "and they're probably right."

Reaction to this approach in Pagan periodicals has ranged from attacks: "Bonewits has come out with his plea in the wilderness. 'Support me and I'll be your Guru.' Give me a break Isaac" (*Pegasus Express*) to great praise: "This is actually a good approach for a young organization whose founder wishes it to be proliferate and generally be successful" *(Panegyria.)* Appearing a major Pagan festivals, Isaac has had a rousing response. Clustering around him on an evening, you might find an intense discussion, or three Celtic harpists playing for each other and exchanging information. His training program has gotten many people talking. Several priest and priestesses in other traditions, feeling that their own training was haphazard, have talked about incorporating elements of his system into their own groups. Several local Druid groves have already formed. There is clearly a thirst for structured study and scholarship within the Pagan movement and *Ar nDraiocht Fein* is one group that is going to try and fill that need. The pendulum always swings.

Recent Notes in 1997 Edition

Groups Section

Ar nDraiocht Fein: A Druid Fellowship (ADF.) A national religious organization devoted to creating a public tradition of Neo-Pagan Druidism. The name is Gaelic for "Our Own Druidism." Founded in 1983, ADF is and outgrowth of the Reformed Druids of North America, an anarchistic movement begun by college students in the mid-1960s, and describes itself as the largest Neo-Pagan Druid organization in the English speaking world. In developing an independent tradition of Druidism, ADF has been doing research about the ancient Celts and other Indo-European peoples, designing rituals, and developing artistic skills. It sees itself as a group of "polytheistic nature worshippers, attempting to revive the best aspects of the Paleopagan (original) faiths of out predecessors within a modern, scientific, artistic, ecological, and wholistic context, taking a nondogmatic, pluralistic approach." The group was started by P.E.I. Bonewits and has a bimonthly newsletter, *News from the Mother Grove*, and a journal, *The Druids Progress*, that is published (usually) twice a year. There are more than 350 members of ADF and about twenty congregations (groves) around the country. Ar nDraiocht Fein has regional solstice and equinox gatherings, and publishes songbooks, pamphlets, and other works. There are various categories of memberships. A form for membership can be obtained on-line or by sending $3 with your request to: ADF, P.O. Box 516, E. Syracuse, NY 13057-0516. Web site: http://www.adf.org

Henge of Keltria. An international network and Neo-Pagan Druidic tradition. Keltria is described as a third generation Neo-Pagan Druidic tradition whose lineage has roots in the Reformed Druids of North America and Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF.) There are groves in various parts of the country and members in many parts of the world. The Henge publishes a book of rituals, holds classes, and publishes a correspondence course. The tradition of Keltrian Druidism has its own pantheon, festivals, and a system of initiation where one chooses a primary discipline: bard, seer, or priest. Address: Henge of Keltria, P.O. Box 48369, Minneapolis, MN 55448. E-mail: Keltria@aol.com.

Web site: http://members.aol.com/Keltria/keltria.htm

Shining Lakes Grove, ADF. At present the largest local branch of Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF), a Druid fellowship (see listing.) "Shining Lakes Grove is working to revive those practices of our Indo-European ancestors that are found to be rewarding and suitable for modern needs and sensibilities." Shining Lakes Grove has many public and private rituals; workshops and lectures; social events; discussion groups; training and fellowship in Bardic, Artisans', Healers, and Warriors guilds; monthly bardic circles; community building activities; family and children's activities; and rites of passage. Address: Shining Lakes Grove, P.O. Box 15585, Ann Arbor, MI 46106-5585

Current Newsletters and Journals Section

THE DRUID'S PROGRESS. This is the journal published by Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF), (see listing.) Issues include articles, essays, songs, and rituals. Published "twice a year (Gods willing)"; 70-120 pages. Back issue are available. Subscriptions: $15/year (U.S. Bulk rate); $20/year in Canada and Mexico; $25/year overseas. Prisoners can subscribe for $10/year in the U.S., $20/year foreign or airmail. Address: ADF, P.O. Box 516, E. Syracuse, NY 13087-0516

KELTRIA: A JOURNAL OF DRUIDISM AND CELTIC MAGICK. A magazine published by the Henge of Keltria and available to both members and non-members of the Henge. Includes theme articles related to the Henge's three paths of Druidism: The Bardic Path, The Seer's Path, and the Druid's Path. Includes serious articles on Druidic and Celtic traditions. Also includes articles on land, technology, herbs, and divination, as well as letters, reviews, interviews, rituals, poetry, and music. Editor: Tony Taylor. Published quarterly; 26 pages. Subscriptions: $12/year; $13/year Canada; $20/year all other countries. $3/sample issue. Address: Keltria, P.O. Box 48369, Minneapolis, MN 55448

THE MINSTREL. A Canadian/Pagan magazine dedicated to networking and information; a forum for Pagan culture that wants to open discussion and dialogue. Includes articles on Wicca, Druidism, other Pagan traditions, mythology, astrology, poetry, and networking. Editor: Stephen Kendall. Published quarterly, but dependent on submissions from the community. 23 Pages. Subscriptions: $10/year; $3/single copy (Canadian or U.S..) Please make checks payable to The Minstrel. Address: The Minstrel, P.O. Box 3068, Winnipeg, MB, R3C 4E5. Phone: (204) 942-2881.

NEWS FROM THE MOTHER GROVE. The newsletter of Ar nDraiocht Fein: A Druid Fellowship (see listing.) Editor: Jaguar. Published every other month (free to members.) Address: Jaguar, c/o Shining Lakes Grove, P.O. Box 15585, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-5585. Phone: (313) 665-8428. E-mail: Jaguar@adf.org.

Mike's Response to Drawing Down the Moon

published 1978 & 1986
by Margot Adler

Margot Adler appears to have a well balanced investigation on how play & paradox were vital elements in the RDNA, NRDNA and SDNA. Adler's book comes the closest to examining the fundamental debates of Reformed Druidism, as I have elaborated upon. An important side note to remember is her heavy reliance upon Isaac Bonewit's definitional skills and essays to better explain and differentiate the diversity of Wiccans and Neo-Pagan philosophies.

Her well-balanced coverage is fortunate because "Drawing Down the Moon" is the most comprehensive and well-known authority (if such a position can exist) upon Neo-Paganism and Witchcraft. It's hard to imagine anyone studying Neo-Paganism, Modern Druidism or Wicca without beginning with Drawing Down the Moon; preferably the 1986 edition (or the most recent edition.) So important is it as a textbook and reference guide, that the previous entries from the 1978 publication were kept intact and then merely followed with updates.

1978 edition

The section on "Religions of Paradox and Play" admirably espouses quite a bit of the "Carleton" stance instead of only relying on an "NRDNA" stance. It was published during the 1978 "zen-ith" of Grove formation in Reformed Druidism. Adler starts her evaluation by comparing the RDNA to other prankish groups that also evolved into semi-serious religious groups, while still retaining a great deal of ambiguity about self-definitions. Because of her visits to Savitzky's Stanford Grove and conversations with Robert Larson, (both Carleton alumni) she has a more balanced & insightful understanding of Druidism.[276] A particularly delightful statement is the vague difference of religion and philosophy:

Many of the original founder considered Reformed Druidism not so much a religion as a philosophy compatible with any religious view, a method of inquiry.[277]

She actually listed the two Basic Tenets, which are at the heart of Reformed Druidism, as we'll discuss later. She also grasps the basic message of Reformed Druidism:

The original founders seemed to hold a fundamental idea that one should scrutinize religion from "a state of rebellion," neither embracing traditional faiths nor rejecting them. They intended RDNA to avoid all dogma and orthodoxy, while affirming that life was both spiritual (Be'al) and material (the Earth-Mother) and that human being needed to come to a state of "awareness" through unity with both spirit and Nature.[278]

Although the spiritual/material conclusion was a little hasty.

She then outlines the basic liturgical structures, missionary growth, the diversity of local styles and the trend of the newer groves to increasingly attract members from a Neo-Pagan background. All this is fine, but she only specifically lists Carleton as a grove open to all faiths. Her list of the extant groves is followed by:

The NRDNA, unlike the RDNA, is Neo-Pagan. And Isaac's Eclectic Druid grove in Berkeley requires the members of the priesthood to declare themselves Neo-Pagans.

She implies to the unwary reader, by singling out Carleton as being unlike the NRDNA, that because the NRDNA calls itself Neo-Pagan that they will therefore refuse to allow non-Pagan members to participate. There is also the problem that

many of the members in the early NRDNA didn't consider themselves primarily Neo-Pagan and the late-NRDNA was still open to members of all faiths.[279] The immediately following blurb about Isaac's grove furthers such a hasty assumption. This was a poor omission which may have lead to confusion by the readers.

1986 Edition

This version of Drawing Down the Moon, came out after the aftermath of Isaac's Berkeley administration and formation of "Ar nDraiocht Fein." She provides a rare printed hindsight view from Isaac:

Bonewits said that he came to realize that the Reformed Druids was not an appropriate vehicle, at least for him. "Most people in the RDNA were Zen anarchists," Bonewits said. "They had a philosophical approach, applicable to any religion. Most of the RDNA were not Pagans. They resented me and felt I was infiltrating their Group.

In this, Isaac is sadly right, many did feel that he was infiltrating the group; but he also had many supporters who merely objected to his methods and timing rather than his goals. However the phrase "Most of the RDNA were not Pagans" could have been better stated "Most of the RDNA **and some of the NRDNA** were not Pagans" to reflect why his demands for an exclusively Neo-Pagan leadership in a NRDNA grove at Berkeley caused such trouble up to 1981. Of course, the fact that most of the NRDNA were Neo-Pagans, meant they were also rather ornery about being herded. The origin of the Live Oak Grove, mentioned as still existing, is not explained as being a rebellion within the NRDNA against Isaac's 1981 attempt to take over the ArchDruidcy of Berkeley and impose his experiments on it from the SDNA, which were to lay the foundational structures later realized in "Ar nDriaocht Fein." The remaining lines about ADF, gave the group a great deal of valuable free press and new membership.

1997 Edition

A rather disappointing new edition, with few revision on the older articles, with only minor address corrections like these in the groups section. We hope that the recent resurgence in Reformed Druid & European offshoot's activity in America, such as OBOD, will be noted in the next edition.

Encyclopedia of American Religions

by Gordon Melton.
2nd Edition *1079* pg. 656.

Reformed Druids of North America. The Reformed Druids of North America was formed in 1963 by a group of students at Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, as a protest against a compulsory chapel attendance requirement. It began as a result of a conversation between David Fisher, Howard Cherniack and Norman Nelson. The idea emerged of forming a non-bloody, sacrificial Druidic group. If students were denied credit for attending its services, then they would claim religious persecution; if they received credit, the whole project would be revealed as a hoax, thus ridiculing the requirement. The requirement was dropped during the 1963-1964 school year, but the group decided that, since it enjoyed the rituals so much, it would continue. At that time, the structure was completed and the major system of beliefs outlined.

Rituals had been constructed by the Reformed Druids from materials in anthropological literature, such as The Golden Bough, the classical text by Sir James Frazer. A henge (an open-air temple) was constructed on nearby Monument Hill, where the first Protestant service in Minnesota was held. Though frequently destroyed, the henge was constantly replaced. Ritual is directed toward nature and is held outdoors (in an oak grove) where possible. Robes of white are worn. The passing of the waters-of-life is a symbol of one-ness with Nature. Festival days are Samhain (Nov. 1), Midwinter, Oimelc (Feb. 1), Beltane (May 1), Midsummer, and Lughnasadh (Aug. 1.) The Celtic/Druidic gods and goddesses are retained to help focus attention on nature. They include Donu, the mother of the gods and humanity, and Taranis, one of her children, the god of thunder and lightening.

The Reformed Druids are organized into autonomous groves. Each grove is headed by an arch-druid, a preceptor (for business matters) and a server (to assist the arch-druid.) Three orders of the priesthood are recognized. Higher orders are honorary. *The Druid Chronicles,* consisting of the history, rules and customs of the Reformed Druids of North America, serve as the scriptures. These were composed mainly by Jan Johnson and David Frangquist, who succeeded the first arch-druid.

Over the years, a continuation of organization was effected through a lineage of arch-druids. The original arch-druid entered the priesthood of the Episcopal Church. Others established groves in different parts of the country. In 1978, locally autonomous groves were functioning in Northfield and Minneapolis, Minnesota; Chicago and Evanston, Illinois; Ann Arbor, Michigan; Webster Groves, Missouri; New York City; and Palo Alto and Berkeley California.

In the Mid-1970s, leadership of the Druid movement passed to Isaac Bonewits, who had made national headlines when he graduated from the University of California at Berkeley with a degree in magick. Bonewits headed a Berkeley grove. More importantly, he compiled the Druid writings, adding material he had written on Druidism and in 1977 published the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved*), which contain the history, rituals, laws, and customs for the Reformed Druids. In 1978 he began *Pentalpha* as a national Druid periodical. After several years of publishing the magazine and trying to promote Druidism, Bonewits withdrew from all leadership roles (though he continues to be active in Pagan affairs otherwise.) Emmon Bodfish became preceptor of the Berkeley Grove, which was renamed the Live Oak Grove and moved to Orinda, California.

Membership: In 1984 there were three groves: Orinda, California; Garland, Texas; and Keene, New Hampshire.

Periodicals:
Druid Missal-any, Box 142, Orinda, CA 94563.

Sources:
P.E.Isaac Bonewits
Real Magic
Authentic Thaumaturgy
Druid Chronicles (Evolved)

Mike's Response to Encyclopedia of American Religions

2nd Edition, pg. 656

Informational material was mostly collected between 1971 and 1976 with some updates in the mid 80s. Numerous Errors are in here. Mostly a description of the basic founding history, rituals, sites and terminology of Early RDNA. The first error in the article was that the Druids used "Henges," when the proper term was "altars." "Donu" should be spelled "Danu." The editor mistakenly claims that the Druid Chronicles were written: "by Jan Johnson, and David Frangquist, who succeeded the first Arch-Druid." This error is based on a 1973 letter by David Fisher to Gordon Melton (the editor.) Jan Johnson had nothing directly to do with RDNA after the summer of 1963, especially with writing the Chronicles. It is more likely that Fisher meant to say Norman Nelson, not Jan Johnson, because Norman both helped in the Chronicles and succeeded Fisher as ArchDruid (followed by Frangquist.)

We return to a pro-Isaac view of organizational leader. First, the term "leadership of the Druid movement" would enrage and confuse most of the Druids, especially if "Druid movement" was implied as only the early RDNA. Isaac definitely was the most public leaders, but he was not the only one. The phrase "headed a Berkeley grove" hides the fact the Berkeley grove was riddled by schisms during the mid 70s. The compiling of Druid materials, published in 1976 (not 1977), was also an exercise of propaganda on Isaac's part, although very entertaining and excellently arranged.

An error about membership requirements is expressed:

> **Membership**: In 1984 there were three groves: Orinda California; Garland, Texas; and Keene, New Hampshire.

Greenwood Grove and Carleton were functioning, but not very well, at this time, but it is understandable that he could have overlooked them. Note the academic's erroneous emphasis on Groves being linked with membership. There were many solitary members all over the nation who considered themselves just as "active" as those in a grove.

This article, as so often, limits the discussion to the purpose of the RDNA as fighting the Chapel Requirement and then as mildly continuing because:

> the group decided that, since it enjoyed the rituals so much, it would continue.

That's a rather shallow examination of the debates and a frequent over-concentration on structure versus purpose. It assumes that participation in ritual is the only definition of who is a Druid, a point I have refuted. But, these errors are understandable if one looks at the sources: Real Magic, Authentic Thaumaturgy & Druid Chronicles (Evolved) all by Isaac Bonewits the greatest ritualist ever in the Reform.

2nd Ed pg. 139

In Chapter 18, The Magick Family, makes assumptions that all forms of Neo-Paganism, including those "of a particular pre-Christian tradition (Druidic, Norse, Egyptian)" are believed to be "products of the Gardnerian revival, from which they are believed to have originated." Which is simply false in the case of American Druidism.

Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults

1988, pg. 216

It's very short so I'll quote it entirely:

> "Neo-Pagans generally adopt a single national-ethnic tradition, the Norse, Druidic, and Egyptian being the most popular....Druids are tied together by The Druid Missal-any, a periodical published by the Live Oak Grove of Orinda, California."

Mike's Response to Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults

The RDNA's mention in the section on Neo-Pagan Organizations is an indication of the recognition that the RDNA usually gets in lists sharing prominence often with "biggies" like Asatru, Church of All Worlds and Church of the Eternal Source. This is likely a result of a reliance on Adlor's book.

The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft

© 1989 by Rosemary Guiley

excerpt: "A Brief Biography of Isaac Bonewits"

With additional comments and data by Isaac Bonewits.

[Also in 1978, he researched and wrote Authentic Thaumaturgy, essentially a rewrite of Real Magic for players of fantasy role-playing games such as Dungeons & Dragons. It was published in booklet format, shown left, in 1978 and 1979 by The Chaosium, publishers of the Runequest and Call of Cthulu games. "A.T." became highly influential in the RPG community, even though no more than 1,000 copies were ever printed. Many years later, in 1998, he published a dramatically expanded and updated edition shown right, for Steve Jackson Games, which released it as a large trade paperback.]

In 1979 he married for a second time, to a woman named Selene [Kumin]. That relationship ended in 1982. In 1983 he was initiated into the New Reformed Order of the Golden Dawn [the San Francisco Bay Area's best known, and stereotypically "eclectic," Wiccan tradition]. The same year, he married again, to Sally Eaton, the actress who created the role of the Hippie Witch in the Broadway musical, Hair. [During the early 1980s, Bonewits and Eaton were heavily involved in the California revival of the Ordo Templi Orientis, or "O.T.O.," best known for its most important historical figure, Aliester Crowley.] They moved to New York City in 1983 where Bonewits met Shenain Bell, a fellow Neo-Pagan, and discussed the idea of starting a Druidic organization. The fellowship, Ár nDraíocht Féin ("Our Own Druidism" in Irish Gaelic), was born as a fresh Neo-Pagan religious organization with no ties to the ancient Druids or to the RDNA, which by this time was apparently [but not exactly] defunct. Bonewits became Archdruid, and Bell became ViceArchdruid.

In 1986 Bonewits and Eaton separated, and he moved to Kansas City for several months, where he worked as a computer consultant. He then returned to Berkeley but could not find work in Silicon Valley, which was in a slump [they had a glut of unemployed technical writers]. He moved back to the East Coast, to Nyack, New York, near Manhattan, in November 1987, with his intended fourth wife, Deborah Lipp, a Wiccan high priestess [and married her in 1988]. He continued work as a computer consultant and worked on the building of Ár nDraíocht Féin. He also began work on a book on the creation, preparation and performance of effective religious rituals [about three-quarters finished after all these years].

[From 1988 through 1995, Bonewits and Lipp were partners (along with several others across the continent) in making ADF the largest and most successful Neo-Pagan Druid organization in North America, with legal standing and tax exempt status in the USA. For most of this time, they were also partners in running a Gardnerian Wiccan "Pagan Way" group in New York and New Jersey.]

[1990 saw the birth of Bonewits' first known child, Arthur Shaffrey Lipp-Bonewits, at their home in Dumont, New Jersey. Arthur quickly became known among East Coast Neo-Pagans as an intelligent, self-aware, and hyperactive child. 1990 also saw, however, a serious blow to Bonewits' health, when he began showing symptoms of a "new" disease called Eosinophilia Myalgia Syndrome, caused by chemically contaminated l-tryptophane tablets manufactured in Japan and consumed by tens of thousands of Americans in 1989. This multisystemic disease caused Bonewits an increasing inability to perform his

secular or Archdruidic duties, leading to his loss of employment in 1992 and his resignation as Archdruid of ADF, and assumption of the Archdruid Emeritus title, on January 1, 1996. In 1997 and 1998, Bonewits began to show signs of recovering from the disease's worst effects, except for relapses in the winter months, but by this time the disease had also caused severe damage to his marriage with Deborah, and in 1998 they separated.]

The "10-year gap." Bonewits has discovered, he says, a "10-year gap" between many of his views and their acceptance among Neo-Pagans. In 1973 he was the first Neo-Pagan to state publicly that the alleged antiquity of Neo-Pagan Witchcraft (Wicca) was "hogwash." The Craft, he said, did not go back beyond Gerald B. Gardner and Doreen Valiente [Now I'm willing to push it all the back to the 1920's!]. Bonewits was held in contempt by many for that, yet by 1983, Neo-Pagans generally acknowledged that Neo-Pagan Witchcraft was a new religion, not the continuation of an old one. The Aquarian Anti-Defamation League was also ahead of its time. In 1974-75, Neo-Pagans were not ready to admit that they needed public relations and legal help. By a decade later, a number of such organizations were in existence.

Around 1985 Bonewits began regularly discussing the need to provide social services for domestic and personal problems and drug dependencies. Neo-Pagans, he points out, represent a cross section of the population, and such problems cut across religious lines. Bonewits estimates that as many as 80 percent of Neo-Pagans come from "non["dys-"]functional family" backgrounds. Neo-Pagans, he observes, are brighter and more artistic than average, but also, therefore, "more neurotic." The community has been quick to address these social issues with programs.

Bonewits also began lobbying for financial support for full-time Neo-Pagan clergy (the priesthood is essentially a volunteer job), but the idea fell on uninterested ears. In 1988 Bonewits was pursuing a goal of buying land and establishing an academically accredited Pagan seminary. [As of the late 1990's, there are dozens of Pagan-owned land sanctuaries, and a few Pagan seminaries earning accreditation from the national accreditation agencies. Alas, ADF is not among them, though a couple of ADF groves own their own land. A few Neo-Pagan clergy have managed to obtain employment via the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans as UU ministers.]

[I'll be adding material to this over the next few months and perhaps rewriting it entirely so that I don't have to refer to myself in the third person -- even if us Druids do love threes!]

Harper's Encyclopedia of Mystical and Paranormal Experience

BF1407.G85 1991
article by Rosemary Guiley
on Druids. Pg. 167-169.

In the United States, modern Druidism has had a small following, beginning in 1963 with the founding of the Reformed Druids of North America. The order was conceived by a group of students at Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, as a facetious protest against a school requirement that students attend religious services. Though the requirement was dropped in 1963, the Reformed Druids caught on. The order expanded in a collection of autonomous "groves." Rituals were written from anthropological literature, such as Fraser's The Golden Bough. P.E.I. (Isaac) Bonewits emerged as a Druidic leader in the mid-1970s and added much to the modern writings. Some groves eventually split off to form the New Reformed Druids of North America, and Bonewits left to form his own organization, Ar nDriaocht Fein ("Our Own Druidism") in 1983. By the late 1980s, Ar nDraiocht Fein was the only active, National Druid organization, with it's headquarters in Nyack, New York. Isaac Bonewit's goal was to pursue scholarly study of the Druids and their Indo-European contemporaries, and to reconstruct a liturgy and rituals adapted for modern times. Like the British Druidical organizations, the American groups claim no connection with the ancient Druids.

Modern Druids celebrate eight holidays...."

Mike's Response to Harper's Encyclopedia of Mystical & Paranormal Experience

By Rosemary Guiley
pg. 168

What is delightful about this article is there is nothing I object to at all in this article! Therefore I'll praise it. **It is good** because it doesn't claim members gave up their earlier religion. The autonomy of Groves is emphasized. Isaac is mentioned as "a" Druidic leader, not as "the" Druidic leader, which is an unusually correct view. The NRDNA is simply mentioned as breaking off, and no silly business of it having been entirely Neo-Pagan. ADF is mentioned as a split off of the NRDNA with few long-term connections. And finally, after a long article on British Druidism, no assumptions are made that the British, American and Ancient Druids have any real connections.

Magic, Witchcraft and Paganism in America,

1992, pg. 18-19

While Gardnerian Witchcraft was growing, so was a vision of Neopaganism that posited a Mother Goddess faith from anthropological, historical, and science-fictional elements. The vision was based in part on some of the same material that Gardner had found. Three groups illustrate this impulse."

{a description of Fere Faeria by Fred Adams}

{a description of the Church of All Worlds}

"In the early 1960s a group at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, sought a means to protest the compulsory chapel attendance rules. From anthropology books such as James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, they constructed the Reformed Druids of North America, whose worship services they attended instead of chapel. After a year of controversy the rules were lifted, but the Druids had discovered a new faith which they preferred. Today Druid groves are found in every section of America and at last report were still active at Carleton."

Magic, Witchcraft and Paganism in America,

1992, pg. 30

Bonewits' Real Magic offers a perspective on the contemporary practice of magic by someone with both a sense of humor and formal training in both anthropology and occult history. A leader in the Druidic movement, Bonewits had his moment of fame when he graduated from the University of California in Berkeley with a degree in magic. He has continued to produce theoretical material on modern Paganism that keeps him near the top of the list of Pagan intellectuals.

Magic, Witchcraft and Paganism in America,

1992, pg. 225

To speak of Druids in England calls up images of ancient priests and modern counterparts who annually gather at Stonehenge to salute the rising sun on June 21. In America, Druids are a completely different reality. American Neo-Pagan Druidism was created in 1964**[!]** as a new religion by a group of students protesting compulsory chapel services at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. Beginning with the reading of several anthropology textbooks, they founded the Reformed Druids of North America. Once they won their crusade, they also discovered that they preferred their new Paganism over whatever they had previously been given as a spiritual format. The Reformed Druids survived at Carleton into the 1980s and as each class graduated, the Druid members took the movement around the world. The most prominent Pagan attracted to Druidism was Isaac Bonewits, who with the zeal of a convert, edited and published the Druid "scriptures" generated at Carleton and became their leading intellectual voice. The Druids have been one of the few non-Wiccan groups within the larger Neopagan community which has an identifiable existence.

Mike's Response to Magic, Witchcraft and Paganism in America,

1992, pg. 225

We start off this article's discussion on Reformed Druidism with this gem:

> American Neo-Pagan Druidism was created in 1964 as a new religion...

The RDNA started 1963 and was only meant to resemble a religion at first. "Neo-Pagan" was a term unknown to the Founders until 1974 or so. A better understanding would be: "American Neo-Pagan Druidism can trace its historical roots back to the RDNA, which began in 1963." The article continues to bias the reader by stating:

> They also discovered that they preferred their new *Paganism* over whatever they had previously been given as a spiritual format.

Paganism? Does this imply non-Christianity? You see the problems inherent in leaving that term in there. Do we see the RDNA members at Carleton denying the validity of their own past beliefs to live wholly by Druidism? Occasionally, but far more often they have said it has deepened their appreciation of their previous religious faith. This article lacks a discussion of the essential debates of Druidism beyond mentioning its purpose of hoaxing the College.

We run into another Isaac-centered quote herein:

> The most prominent Pagan attracted to Druidism was Isaac Bonewits, who with the zeal of a convert, edited and published the Druid "scriptures" generated at Carleton and became their leading intellectual voice.

The "leading intellectual voice" is a result of a bias of the letters included in Isaac's Apocrypha which show his long (and very well-thought out) definitions as having been relatively unopposed; although a flood of angry responses from Carleton & Non-Carleton RDNA disputed them vigorously. Reformed Druidism respects all Druids' views as being valid, not submissive to another's interpretations. The final point about Druidism being one of the few public groups is well worth noting.

Mike's Response to Magic, Witchcraft and Paganism in America

1992, pg. 18-19

We find again the common misunderstanding about the chapel requirement:

"they constructed the Reformed Druids of North America, whose worship services they attended instead of chapel. After a year of controversy the rules were lifted, but the Druids had discovered a new faith which they preferred."

The members kept going to chapel, in addition to Druid services, to cover their butts just in case their project failed. I doubt most Druids would have chosen the term "preferred." As long as Druidism is understood as a complementary faith that doesn't necessarily replace a member's previous religions, then it's okay.

Magic, Witches and Witchcraft in the US,

1992, pg. 13 on ADF

Ar nDriaocht Fein: Irish Gaelic for "Our Own Druidism," Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF) is an American based neo-Pagan Druid religious fellowship. It has no direct links to the ancient Druids but is a reconstruction of Druidic and Indo-European pagan rituals and religions (see Neo-Paganism.) It was founded in 1983 by P.E.I. (Isaac) Bonewits, former Archdruid of several groves within the Reformed Druids of North America. Bonewits serves as the organization's only Archdruid, and Shenain Bell as Vice-Archdruid.

ADF integrates religion with alternate healing arts, ecology-consciousness, psychic development and artistic expression. It is organized in groves, many of them named after trees. The oak tree is sacred, as it was to the ancient Druids. The groves observe eight seasonal High Days (the sabbats in Witchcraft) and conduct regular study and discussion groups and a wide range of artistic activities. Through study and training, members advance through a series of five circles, the fourth of which is the equivalent of a master's degree, and the fifth the equivalent of a doctorate. The idea of the circle structure was borrowed from the Church of All Worlds.

Worship and rituals usually are conducted outdoors. ADF is polytheistic, and recognition of various deities depends on the individual grove and the purpose of individual rites. The one deity who is worshipped at every ritual is the Earth-Mother (Mother Nature.) Deities, ancestors and nature spirits of the Three Worlds, Land, Sea and Sky, are invoked. The Waters of Life, passed or aspersed (sprinkled) in rites, represent the spark of immanent deity.

Liturgy and rituals are based on scholarly research into old Indo-European religions, folk magic, art and social customs. While little is known about the Druids themselves, scholars say it is likely that Druidism had much in common with other Indo-European religions of the time. The research is ongoing and involves translation of numerous foreign and archaic language texts.

Bonewits has identified five phases of liturgical design common in the religions of related Indo-European cultures:

> 1. The consecration of time and space; the psychic centering, grounding and unifying of the participants into a "groupmind."
>
> 2. The opening of the Gates between the Worlds and the starting of a flow of energy back and forth between participants and deities.
>
> 3. The raising and sending of the major part of the congregation's energy to the deities being worshipped.
>
> 4. The returning of power from the deities to the congregation.
>
> 5. The reversing of the rite's beginnings, and closing down of the psychic, magical and spiritual energy fields that were created.

Sacrifices made to the deities include tree branches, fruits, flowers and vegetables. Although animal, and even human, sacrifices were performed in most paleo-pagan religions, they are strictly forbidden in ADF rituals, as well as in neo-Paganism in general (see sacrifice.)

Clergy wear long white robes; members of the congregation are encourage to dress in paleo-pagan garb. Bonewits has introduced the white beret as a signature of ADF; the berets and any other head coverings are removed upon entrance to a ritual site, except during very hot weather. The ADF's sigil (see sigils), a circle pierced by two vertical parallel line, was first associated with neo-Pagan Druidism by David Fisher, the founder of the Reformed Druids of North America (inactive.) The sigil may have been taken from the shape of a foundation of an old Roman-Catholic temple. The logo, a branch sprouting from an oak tree stump, is a Celtic rendition inspired by the badge of the Scottish MacEwen clan.

The journal of ADF is *The Druid's Progress*, edited by Bonewits and published twice yearly. *News from the Mother-Grove* is a newsletter published bi-monthly.

Mike's Response to Magic, Witches and Witchcraft in the US

(distinct from MWP), 1992, pg. 13

The two articles pertaining to the study of Reformed Druidism in this excellent encyclopedia are mostly dealing with ADF and Isaac Bonewits, but it refers to the Druid Sigil that the RDNA share with ADF and Keltria as:

first associated with Neo-Pagan Druidism by David Fisher, the founder of the Reformed Druids of North America (inactive.)[280]

This falsely implies that David Fisher started the RDNA *as a Neo-Pagan group* headed towards becoming a Celtic religion (which a lot of Neo-Pagan Druid groups do center around.) It is also mistakenly implies that the RDNA was inactive during the time of the printing (1992), when they really meant that Fisher was inactive. The RDNA was active *in Groves* at Carleton, St. Olaf, Berkeley, Seattle & New Hampshire in 1992; but Druidism will always be active in the hearts of each past Druid.

Magic, Witches and Witchcraft in the US,

1992, pg. 33-35 on Isaac

Bonewits, P.E.I. (Isaac) (1949-) One of the brightest and most colorful figures of the neo-Pagan movement, Phillip Emmons Isaac Bonewits is best known for his leadership in modern Druidism (see Neo-Paganism) He is a priest, magician, scholar, author, bard and activist, and has dedicated himself to reviving Druidism as a "Third Wave" religion aimed at protecting "Mother Nature and all Her children."

Bonewits was born on October 1, 1949, in Royal Oak, Michigan, the perfect place, he likes to joke, for a future Archdruid. The fourth of five children (three girls, two boys), he spent most of his childhood in Ferndale, a suburb of Detroit. When he was nearly 12, the family moved to San Clement, California.

From his mother, a devout Roman Catholic, Bonewits developed an appreciation for the importance of religion; form his father, a convert to Catholicism from Presbyterianism, he acquire skepticism. He bounced back and forth between parochial and public schools, largely due to the lack of programs for very bright students, his I.Q. was tested at 200.

His first exposure to magic came at age 13, when he met a young Creole woman from New Orleans who practiced Vodoun. She showed him some of her magic and so accurately divined the future that he was greatly impressed. During his teen years, he read extensively about magic and parapsychology. He also read science fiction, which often has strong magical and psychic themes.

In ninth grade, Bonewits entered a Catholic high school seminary. He soon realized, however, that he did not want to be a priest in the Catholic faith. He returned to public school and graduated a year early. After spending a year in junior college to get foreign language credits, he enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley in 1966. At about the same time, he began practicing magic, devising his own rituals by studying the structure of rituals in books, and by observing them in various churches.

His roommate at Berkeley, Robert Larson, was a Druid, an alumnus of Carleton College, where the Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA) had been founded in 1963. Larson interested Bonewits in Druidism and initiated him into the RDNA. The two established a grove in Berkeley. Bonewits was ordained as a Druid priest in October 1969. The Berkeley grove was shaped as a neo-Pagan *religion* unlike the other RDNA groves, which considered the order a *philosophy*. The neo-Pagan groves became part of branch called the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA.)

During college, Bonewits spent about eight months as a member of the Church of Satan, an adventure that began as a lark. The college campus featured a spot where evangelists of various persuasions would lecture to anyone who would listen. As a joke, Bonewits showed up one day to perform a satirical lecture as a Devil's evangelist. He was so successful that he was approached by a woman who said she represented Anton Szandor LaVey, founder of the Church of Satan. Bonewits attended the church's meetings and improved upon some of their rituals but dropped out after personality conflicts with LaVey. The membership, he found, consisted largely of middle-class conservatives who were more "right-wing and racist" than Satanist (see Satanism.)

Bonewits had intended to major in psychology but through Berkeley's individual group-study program he fashioned his own course of study. In 1970 he graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in magic, the first person ever to do so at a Western educational institution. He also was the last to do so in the United States. College administrators were so embarrassed over the publicity about the degree that magic, witchcraft and sorcery were banned from the individual group-study program.

The fame of his degree led to a book contract. In 1971 Real Magic was published, offering Bonewits' views on magic, ritual and psychic abilities. A revised and updated edition was published in 1979 and reissued in 1988.

In 1973 Bonewits met a woman named Rusty, a folksinger in the Berkeley cafes. They moved to Minneapolis, where they were married, and where Bonewits took over the editorship of *Gnostica*, a neo-Pagan journal published by Carl Weschcke of Llewellyn Publications. He gave *Gnostica* a scholarly touch and turned it into the leading journal in the field. But the job lasted only 1 1/2 years, for the editorial changes resulted in the loss of many non-Pagan readers, who found the magazine too high brow.

Bonewits remained in Minneapolis for about another year. While there he established a Druid grove called the Schismatic Druids of North America, a splinter group of the RDNA. He also joined with several Jewish pagan friends and created the Hassidic Druids of North America, the only grove of which existed briefly in St. Louis, where its membership overlapped with that of the Church of All Worlds. In 1974-5, Bonewits wrote, edited and self-published *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved*), a compendium of the history, theaology, rituals and customs of all Reformed Druid movements, including the ones he invented himself.

He also founded the Aquarian, Anti-Defamation, League (AADL), a civil liberties and public relations organization for members of minority belief systems, such as Rosicrucians, Theosophists, neo-Pagans, witches, occultists, astrologers and others. Bonewits sought to convince such persons that they had more in common with each other than they realized. By banding together, they could effectively fight, through the press and the courts, the discrimination and harassment of the Judeo-Christian conservatives.

Bonewits served as president of the AADL and devoted most of his income from unemployment insurance to running it. The organization scored several small victories in court, such as restoring an Astrologer to her apartment, after she had been evicted because a neighbor told her landlord that her astrology classes were "black magic seances." In 1976 Bonewits and Rusty divorced, and he decided to return to Berkeley. The AADL disintegrated shortly after his departure.

In Berkeley, Bonewits rejoined the NRDNA grove and was elected Archdruid. He established *The Druid Chronicler* (which later became *PentaAlpha Journal*) as a national Druid publication in 1978. He attempted to make the Berkeley grove as Neo-Pagan as the groves in Minneapolis and St. Louis, which caused a great deal of friction among longtime members. After a few clashes, Bonewits left the organization. *PentaAlpha journal* folded.

In 1979 he married for a second time, to a woman named Selene. That relationship ended in 1982. In 1983 he was initiated into the New Reformed Order of the Golden Dawn. The same year, he married again, to Sally Eaton, the actress who created the role of the hippie Witch in the Broadway musical, Hair. They moved to New York City in 1983 where Bonewits met Shenain Bell, a fellow Neo-Pagan, and discussed the idea of starting a Druidic organization. The fellowship, Ar nDraiocht Fein ("Our Own Druidism" in Irish Gaelic), was born as a fresh neo-Pagan religious organization with no ties to the ancient Druids or to the RDNA, which by this time was apparently

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In 1986 Bonewits and Eaton separated, and he moved to Kansas City for several months, where he worked as a computer consultant. He then returned to Berkeley, but could not find work in Silicon Valley, which was in a slump. He moved back to the East Coast, to Nyack, New York, near Manhattan, in November 1987, with his intended fourth wife, Deborah, a Wiccan high priestess. He continued work as a computer consultant and worked on the building of Ar nDraiocht Fein. He also began work on a book on the creation, preparation and performance of effective religious ritual.

The "Ten Year Gap." Bonewits has discovered, he says, a "10-year gap" between many of his views and their acceptance among neo-Pagans. In 1973 he was the first neo-Pagan to state publicly that the alleged antiquity of neo-Pagan Witchcraft (Wicca) was "hogwash." The Craft, he said, did not go back beyond Gerald B. Gardner and Doreen Valiente. Bonewits was held in contempt by many for that yet by 1983, neo-Pagans generally acknowledged that neo-Pagan Witchcraft was a new religion, not the continuation of an old one. The Aquarian Anti-Defamation League was also ahead of its time. In 1974-5, neo-Pagans were not ready to admit that they needed public relations and legal help. By a decade later, a number of such organizations were in existence.

Around 1985 Bonewits began regularly discussing the need to provide social services for domestic and personal problems and drug dependencies. Neo-Pagans, he points out, represent a cross-section of the population, and such problems cut across religious lines. Bonewits estimates that as many as 80 percent of neo-Pagans come from "nonfunctional family" backgrounds. Neo-Pagans, he observes, are brighter and more artistic than average, but also, therefore, "more neurotic." The community has been quick to address these social issues with programs.

Bonewits also began lobbying for financial support for full-time neo-Pagan clergy (the priesthood is essentially a volunteer job), but the idea fell on uninterested ears. In 1988 Bonewits was pursuing a goal of buying land and establishing an academically accredited Pagan seminary.

Mike's Response to Magic, Witches and Witchcraft in the US,

1992, pg. 33-35 on Isaac

The first error in Isaac's biography is:

> The Berkeley grove was shaped as a Neo-Pagan *religion*, unlike other RDNA groves, which considered the order a *philosophy*. The Neo-Pagan groves became part of a branch called the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA.)[281]

It could be argued that the Purdue Grove was reasonably close to being operated as a religion, at least when under scrutiny of the Draft boards. I believe that I have shown that the philosophy/religion definition is deceptive because it presents a clear-cut division of a very foggy difference between religion & philosophy. In fact, I see the split as mostly a result of differences of mindsets from their respective environments rather than in understanding. Some groves in the NRDNA were not Neo-Pagan, and those that were "Neo-Pagan" were not exclusively Neo-Pagan. Here, as in many articles, the hasty reader is provided with an attractive simplification.

After telling of the SDNA and Hassidic Druid's foundation by Isaac the article continues:

> In 1974-75, Bonewits wrote, edited and self-published The Druid Chronicles (Evolved), a compendium of the history, theology, rituals and customs of all the Reformed Druid movements, including the ones he invented himself.[282]

Isaac was only one member (although the busiest) of a consortium of five to six RDNA members (the others were primarily Nelson, Frangquist, Shelton, Larson) who wrote sections or helped put the book together. It is easy to mistakenly conclude here Isaac was the sole author or that the entire DC(E) was valid for all Reformed Druid movements, probably an oversight.

We are lucky to have this reference to the NRDNA/SDNA conflict in California:

> In Berkeley, [1981] Bonewits rejoined the NRDNA grove and was elected ArchDruid. He attempted to make the Berkeley grove as Neo-Pagan as the groves in Minneapolis and St. Louis, which caused a great deal of friction among the longtime members. After a few clashes, Bonewits left the organization.[283]

He won by one vote and it wasn't the Neo-Pagan part as much as the exclusion of people refusing to define themselves as Neo-Pagan, taking on political crusades or completely restructuring the leadership of the group.

Besides this few quibbles, it is a good biography of Isaac. However no real mention occurs of the underlying debates is offered. No second opinion is sought for balance from members of the "old" RDNA.

Magic, Witches and Witchcraft in the US,

1992, pg. 107-109

In the United States, another modern Druidic movement with no connection to the ancient Druids or to the modern Druids in England, was formed in 1963. The Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA) initially was conceived as a hoax by a group of students at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, who were protesting a school requirement that students attend religious services. The requirement was dropped in 1963-4, but the Reformed Druids decided to take themselves seriously and continue as an organization of autonomous "groves." Rituals were reconstructed from anthropological material and included non-bloody sacrifices. The founders of the RDNA did not intend for it to become a religion but rather viewed it as a philosophy. Some groves split off to form a separate branch, the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA), which emphasized neo-Pagan religion. Among these groves was the Berkeley grove, which was led by Archdruid P.E.I. (Isaac) Bonewits in the mid-1970s. Bonewits left the organization around 1978-9. In 1983 he formed his own Druidic organization, Ar nDraiocht Fein ("Our Own Druidism.")

By 1985 modern Druidic activity in the United States had declined. The Reformed Druids of North America was no longer active as an organization, though individual groves remained scattered around the country. Ar nDraiocht Fein had approximately 400 members as of 1988.

Modern Druids observe the eight seasonal Pagan holidays (see Sabbats), holding their rites outdoors. American Druids gather at a Stonehenge replica in Washington."

Now for a few short excerpts from the monumentally important tome of:

Mike's Response to Magic, Witches, and Witchcraft in the US,

1992, pg. 107- 109

The RDNA is tacked at the end of a section defining ancient Druidism and modern British druid groups. Thankfully it states that Reformed Druidism has: "no connection to the ancient Druids or to the modern Druids in England." The requirement was dropped after the 1963-4 year, in June 1994 to be official.

It treads on difficult territory when it mistakenly claims that:

> Among these groves was the Berkeley grove, which was led by ArchDruid P.E.I. (ISAAC) Bonewits in the Mid-1970s. Bonewits left the organization around 1978-79.[284]

No mention here of the important "leadership" exercised at Berkeley by Larson, Abbott or Carruth before, during and after Isaac's periods of ArchDruidcy in the 70s. Isaac returned briefly in 1981, of course, as a leader of a remnant of the Berkeley grove; the rest of whom left to form Live Oak grove.

The article correctly states that:

> By 1985...The Reformed Druids of North America was no longer active as an organization, though individual groves remained scattered around the country.

Which is true. There is no more Council of Dalon Ap Landu, or it's successor the Co-Council of Dalon Ap Landu, each Grove went on its own merry way. But still the article expresses the strange concern that Druids must be in active groves to be active Druids.

The Truth About Neopaganism

By Anodea Judith
From Llewellyn Publications 1994

Druidism- The Druid branch of Neo-Paganism, largely spearheaded by Isaac Bonewits, is a reconstruction of the ancient Celtic oral tradition. Druid of old were the teachers, the bards (musicians), the scholars, and the traveling Priests who spread knowledge of traditional wisdom, theology, and moral philosophy throughout the Celtic lands from perhaps as early as the 5th century BCE until the 4th century CE, not to be revived again until the 16th and 17th centuries. They were of the higher classes and were skilled in divination, herbal medicine, ritual implementation, astronomy, the construction of calendars, music, and poetry.

Today, Druidism is alive in Europe and the United States. Until recently, English Druids held ceremonies at Stonehenge, a megalithic monument that was once believed to have been built by the Druids, though modern theories refute this. British Druidism is said to have been revived in 1717 by William Stukeley and John Toland, and revised by the Masons.

In 1965 [1963 actually], the students at Carleton College in Minnesota founded a Druid Order, RDNA (Reformed Druids of North America.) It began as a hoax to protest a school requirement to attend religious services, but they soon became so fascinated by the religion that they began to set up an organization of Druid "groves." They joined with the Neo-Pagan movement through NRDNA, or New Reformed Druids of North America, led by ArchDruid Isaac Bonewits, author of Real Magic. Later, in 1983, Isaac founded another organization, still active today, called Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF), which translates as "our own Druidism." ADF focuses on scholarship and training, with emphasis on healing, ecological awareness, music, and liturgy.

A split-off from ADF, Keltria, focuses more on the Wiccan side of Celtic mythology, and is an initiatory tradition.

Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF) (Druid)
PO Box 1022, Nyack NY 10960
Keltria (Celtic Druid)
PO Box 33284, Minneapolis MN 55433

Mike's Response to The Truth about Neo-Paganism

Anodea Judith serves as a priestess and was a former president of the Church of All Worlds. She is best known for her books on Chakras and healing. She authored several songs and articles that were reprinted in the RDNA magazines of the 1970s, and would have been an acquaintance of Isaac Bonewits. This book was a 70 page mini-introduction to Neo-Paganism, possibly to be distributed to law enforcement or other interest groups, and since we got a page, I'm rather pleased, but it is disappointing that the address of the Carleton Grove was not listed.

It is not certain if Druid were traveling persons in the early days, and I'd push back Druidry to 7th Century BCE. I would also substitute "Fraternal organizations" rather than "Masons" in her overview of Druidry. She gets the date wrong for the RDNA founding, a common mistake. The article, written at a time of rebuilding of the RDNA, apparently did not know of the continuance of the RDNA into modern times, and the article implies its demise and inevitable slide towards Neo-paganism. I think Keltria would also disagree that it is "Wiccan."

An Interview with Isaac Bonewits

From: "The Druid's Progress," ADF, 1994

In a leaky tent at Dragonfest festival in 1994, Summer, and Robin pulled Isaac Bonewits away from his workshops just long enough for an interview about the past and future of Druidism.

Interviewer: Where did you grow up, where were you born?

Bonewits: I was born in Royal Oak, Michigan which is an appropriate place a future arch druid. Well Royal Oakes is a suburb of Detroit. I grew up the first 11 years in Ferndale Michigan, and Troy Michigan and various suburbs in the Michigan area, either in the Detroit suburbs or at one point we moved out to a distant suburb called Troy. I was raised a Catholic, my mother was a French Canadian Roman Catholic, still is. My father was a Presbyterian agnostic. He didn't pay a lot of attention to religion, but whatever mom said was OK with him. I bounced around a lot between public school and Catholic school. I'd stay in one till I got kicked out and then I would go to the other 'til I got kicked out.

Interviewer: What did you do to get kicked out?

Bonewits: I just had a bad habit of asking rude questions, especially in the Catholic schools about things that kids weren't either a: weren't supposed to know about; or weren't supposed to have the opinions I had.

Interviewer: Do you remember any of those arguments?

Bonewits: I remember one occasion were a nun had told our 3rd or 4th grade class that if everybody got something done we would get to go on this field trip. At the last minute she changed her mind and said we weren't going to go on the field trip after all. I said to her "you lied to us.' She slapped me and I slugged her. I was not about to put up with that. My mom had to send my older brother in to plead with them to not expel me from the school. I could have cared less at that point.

Interviewer: Was the education any good?

Bonewits: Not particularly, I can't say that the Catholic education was any better then public school was. Catholic school was a lot more rigid about making exceptions for exceptional students. Public schools were much more willing to let me read books that were at a higher grade level than the Catholic schools were. Catholic schools were much more interested in making everyone fit into a rigid regimented regime. When I was 11 the family moved to Southern California and I didn't have anything better to do at the time, so I went with them. We lived in San Clemente for a while which was a beach town about halfway between L.A. and San Diego.

Interviewer: Was that a dramatically different environment?

Bonewits: Yeah. Oh yeah, sure. I moved from living in the suburbs, very old suburbs of big city to living in what amounted to a rural town, suburb stuck in the middle of nowhere and I had the Pacific Ocean in my front yard literally. It was wonderful. When I was thirteen I went for the second semester of ninth grade to this

catholic seminary. It was supposed to be a prep school for the college level seminary training. And got in trouble there because I kept asking awkward questions during history class. Because you see, I read books about European history, which weren't written by Catholics. So I was asking questions about the inquisition and the crusades and various corrupt popes. They thought I had a bad attitude. They told me I wasn't to come back the next year.

Interviewer: Did you get away from the Catholic influence when you got to San Clemente?

Bonewits: I was a devout Roman Catholic. I really believed all that nonsense. I was an altar boy. I thought I was going to be a priest. My mom wanted me to be a priest. I was raised to be a priest, like some catholic parents will do whether they are Irish or French Canadian or Italian. The end of the semester came around and the two priests who ran this little hole in the wall Catholic high school/seminary thing realized they didn't have enough student 'volunteers' to run their summer camp for the littler Catholic kids they were going to run to make money. On the last day as I'm all packed up and ready to go they call me into the office and say "well, we've decided we're going to let you stay after all -- if you work for us this summer." I said Well, gee that's too bad because I've decided I don't want to come back next year. They said "Oh, that's too bad, did you decide you don't have a vocation to be a priest"? Without thinking about it at all, I just looked at them and said "Oh no, I have a vocation to be a priest all right, just not in your religion." I made the decision at the moment I spoke the words, and I just picked up my suitcase and walked out to the car where my dad was waiting for me. He was delighted to hear that I had made that decision. Dad had never wanted me to be a priest anyway. Mom was disappointed. Later that summer I was working odd jobs to get spending money and I was working at a doughnut shop, sweeping the floors and washing the windows and running errands and the kind of thing they would let a thirteen year old do. And there was a Creole woman from New Orleans, who was working there. In fact she was having an affair with the owner of the shop. And she had a kid from a previous relationship and I started doing baby sitting for her. She started to tell me about Voodoo and started showing me things about Voodoo, including a couple of very spectacular spells that worked very emphatically.

Interviewer: You were open to this?

Bonewits: I was wide open to it. Voodoo is distinct from voodoon. Voodoo is the American magical system of the Afro-American religions with all the religious matters stripped away. She showed me these magic spells she was doing and I observed that they worked spectacularly well. That really got me very curious about the topic and I started doing all kinds of reading in the library. Every book I could find on magic and then it got into physic phenomenon and ESP, and then it got into anthropology and comparative religion. I just loved all this stuff. Finally when I went to UC Berkeley I started out as a psychology major, but the psychology department at that point was entirely under the control of the rat men. The Skinnerian behaviorists. If you couldn't do something with rats and pigeons it wasn't real, and therefore there was no reason for psychologists to have to learn about it. So I dropped out of the psychology program and started taking classes I wanted to take. Which were classes in folklore, mythology, comparative religion, and statistics so I could understand a little about parapsychology, the experimental design. Eventually I put it all together and got a special degree program in magick. And that's how I got my bachelor's degree in magick.

Interviewer: They had a program where you could design your own?

Bonewits: Yes, we are talking about the late 1960's when the whole idea of student-designed programs were just being invented, ours was one of the first at UC Berkeley.

Interviewer: Do they still do that?

Bonewits: They still have do it yourself programs but they had a sign up in the college of letters and sciences for several years after I graduated that said under no circumstances are any individual group majors using the words magick, witchcraft, sorcery or anything similar to be approved.

Interviewer: Appalled themselves did they?

Bonewits: Yes they did. Although the chancellor did tell me at one social event I met him at a year or so later that I was the first person in some ten or twenty years who had gotten UC Berkeley to get the college any publicity who wasn't either involved in making bombs or throwing them.

Interviewer: There's that. What about high school?

Bonewits: I got out of high school a year early. I took extra classes, went to summer school and got out as fast as I could. I hated high school. I was the typical weird dweeb/nerd/geek or whatever they're calling it this week. I had very few friends and very few people who you could hold an intelligent conversation with.

Interviewer: So how did you hit the Pagan movement?

Bonewits: When I was in UC Berkeley and in the process of studying all these things I stumbled over Gerald Gardeners books. I knew there was a Pagan Community. I had joined the SCA at some point in the late sixties and met some Witches and Pagans there, including Gwydion Pendarwyn, who did the first Pagan music album. I wasn't overly impressed with the quality of their magickal technique. At one point I was living with a guy who was a graduate of Carleton College, in Northfield, Minnesota, which is where the reformed Druids of North American got started. He mentioned Druidism to me. All sorts of bells started going off in my head. I said gee this sounds really interesting; let's do some of this stuff. So we started up a grove in Berkeley of the Reformed Druids of North America. It was October 1969 I was ordained as a third order priest of the RDNA. I am coming up on the twenty-fifth anniversary of my ordination as a priest. I published my first book Real Magick in 1971. Foolishly, I did not immediately go into graduate school from undergraduate studies. I probably could have done it if I had gone immediately in. I wanted to take a break off from Academia for a while. So far that break has lasted about twenty-five years. I am hoping

to go back and get my masters and PHD. The main reason I want to go back is so I will have access to the libraries, to the professors, the database and the online nets. When I went to Berkeley after the first few classes I took it became very clear to me that it was possible to get a good education at Berkeley; but it was going to be in spite of the system rather then because of it. I just started hanging out at the library doing the research I wanted to do. I would start visiting these professors, including ones I wasn't taking any classes from. They would sit there day after day with their doors open during their official hours open for visiting, and nobody ever going by to talk to them. They were delighted to have somebody come and talk who was really interested in learning their topic. I got to sit in on some of the graduate student seminars. I remember I had one professor, Fountainrose, now passed over, who was a scholar and gentlemen. I took his course in Greek religion, and for my term paper I wrote an essay proving one of his pet theories was wrong. He gave me an A on the paper. I wrote a paper on Greek shamanism. What I proved was there were no Greek shamans. Shamanism was not part of the Greek religion, it was something that people on the fringes doing it from Thessely and so forth, and it wasn't really integrated into the Greek religious worldview.

Interviewer: After you got involved in the Pagan religious world did you have the goal or urge to become a religious authority? Did you mean to become a public figure?

Bonewits: No, I just sort of stumbled into it. Publishing the book wasn't originally my idea. When I graduated and there was all this publicity in the newspapers about somebody getting a degree in magick. I got solicitations from three or four publishing houses that said would you like to do a book, we'll be happy to pay you money. I said, oh gosh, gee wiz! So I recycled some of my papers from the college classes, wrote a bunch of new material and published the book. All of the sudden I was an authority figure. Two years later I went out to Minneapolis/St. Paul and becoming editor of Gnostica magazine for Llewellyn publications. In 73 Carl Westke held the first of his Gnosticons, which was a pagan festival. He invented the pagan festival. He did it more like a science fiction convention in a hotel. I went out there to do lectures for it. He invited me to move out there and take over as editor of his in-house magazine and said he wanted me to raise the quality of his magazine. I was there for about a year and a half and raised the quality of the magazine, we made it, what other people besides myself thought was the single best occult journal being published in English at the time. The academic standards and the quality of the writing in general. Unfortunately when you raise the quality of something you lower the readership. He wasn't making as much money as he wanted to make so he kept pressuring me to lower the standards again back to where they had been back when he had a lot of subscribers. So I quit, which was probably a damn foolish mistake.

Interviewer: Well, there are finances and there are principles.

Bonewits: I was young enough to think that the principles were so important that I could ignore the financial repercussions. It was basically publishing Gnostica that made me a national figure for the Pagan community. It was widely distributed. I published articles in there, which were extremely controversial at the time. I was the first person to publish an article doubting the antiquity of the Crafte. I published a later version of that in Gnostica in which I analyzed everything we knew about the history of religion in general, and the history of Wicca in particular, and came to the conclusion that there was little or no evidence that this was actually an ancient religion, and a great deal of evidence that it was a modern one. The screams echoed from one ocean to the other. I got so much flak. I was not prepared for the degree of horrified response that I would get. I didn't understand at that point how emotionally important the myth of antiquity was for people in the Crafte. I know that now but I didn't know it then. A whole bunch of people said "I am gonna fix that bastard Bonewits, I'm going to do research to prove he's wrong." A lot of people did the research and come to the conclusion, "Dammit he's right." So more people started publishing articles saying, well, no guys this really isn't ancient after all.

Interviewer: The idea of famtrads is popping up everywhere.

Bonewits: I really regret inventing that terminology. Over the course of the last 25 years I have met hundreds of people who claimed they were famtrad witches. Maybe one of them was telling the truth, possibly two. The rest were simply lying. Or they had been taught by people who were lying.

Interviewer: In another generation we will have famtrads.

Bonewits: My son is a famtrad witch. All of our kids are going to be famtrad pagans of one sort or another. The problem was that once you proved that Gardener either hadn't been initiated, or if he had been none of the older stuff got into what he handed on, then you had a lot of people, first in Britain and then in the U.S. claiming that we have a witchcraft tradition that is older than Gardener. There had been a group called the Pentagram club, associated with Oxford and Cambridge who had been trying to recreate Witchcraft based on Margaret Murrays' ideas, at about the same time Gardener had been doing what he did. There also seem to be a few occultist who were imitating Murray when Murray's books came out. Its entirely possible that it was one of those Murrayite Witches that Gardener ran into. They told him what they had was ancient, he may have genuinely believed it was ancient. I don't think so, he was a classic scoundrel\guru. People who want to believe there is something ancient, they have that loophole. When I first talked about the concept of famtrads I very carefully defined it as people who belonged to families who had been underground occultists for many generations. And this generation they are calling themselves witches. At any event that's what made me a national figure. At the time I was involved with politics within the Reformed Druids of North American community. I thought what they had was a pagan religion. They are singing hymns of praise to the Earth Mother. They are invoking all of ancient Celtic Gods and Goddesses. They are referring to what they do as nature worship. It sure looks like a religion to me. So I was trying to get the members of the RDNA to accept the fact that what they were was a Neo-Pagan priestcraft. They didn't want to have any of

that. They started out as meso-pagan Druids, believing that Druidism was a philosophy rather then a religion, and that you could apply it to any other religion that you happen to belong to. You could be a Christian and a Druid at the same time. I now have found out just this past year, after consulting with a young man at Carleton College who is organizing the International Druid archives, that across the street from Carleton College was St. Olaf's College, and the St. Olaf College library has a huge collection of Meso-Pagan Druid literature from the 1850's. [Actually only three books, and Carleton students rarely "crossed the Cannon River" to go to Olaf in the 60s.] I think that may be where the founders of the RDNA got some of their material. The founder claimed he was a famtrad Druid, he now refuses to answer letters from anyone who is pagan because he is an Anglican Priest now, and very embarrassed about being responsible for the RDNA. After several false starts trying to start new versions of the RDNA, including the Hasidic Druids of North America, I finally said the hell with it, the group I was with in Berkeley blew up to smithereens. I now know what happened because I know more about small group dynamics. At the time I just said I don't need this garbage anymore, I am tired of trying to be a scholar for a group that doesn't care about scholarship, I am tired of being a leader for a community that trashes it's leadership. I sold three quarters of my magical library, and bought computer books instead. I taught myself some marketable job skills and I earned a living for a while. What an amazing change. The biggest shock was how much I had to suppress who I was to work in a corporate environment. Fortunately at that time, computer tekkies were still a weird enough minority, and a valuable enough minority they were allowed a great deal of slack, that they are not allowed today. The pleasantist surprise I got was how similar computer programming was to spellcasting. I actually got some very good ideas from computers that I could apply to ritual design. Eventually I got dragged by the scruff of my neck kicking and screaming into starting another Druid organization.

Interviewer: I call it the Gods kicking you. If you don't move in the direction they want, they won't send a memo, but they will kick you.

Bonewits: I have been trying to learn the Irish language for the last ten years and one of my Irish teachers is a PHD linguist, he casually mentioned one day, during one of our Irish lessons, an Irish for Pagans class. He said that if you were to combine the material from the Greek and Roman writers, the surviving Welsh and Irish literary traditions, the surviving Indo-European mythological material we have in the Carmina Gadelica and the new material from the surviving Pagan traditions from the Baltic territories, which were still dressing up in long white robes and going out to oak groves in WWII. If you combined all that together you could actually reconstruct 80 or 90 percent of the Old religions really had been in Europe. As opposed to the fantasy that most people think of in the old religion. I foolishly mentioned that quote to a Pagan I met in an Irish class in New York City, who was from Oklahoma he said well why don't we do it then. I said Noooooooooo!!!!! Finally I was persuaded by deities beyond my control, that I had to start it up again. This time I said fine, we are not going to try to rewrite anybody else's system we are just going to start something from scratch. We'll call it Our Own Druidism, that how we got the name ADF, Ar nDraiocht Fein. In Irish that means Our Own Druidism. That way nobody can claim that I am ripping them off or perverting their tradition. It started out as a network of 30 or 40 independent scholars inside the Pagan community. People who actually had academic degrees, people who had actually read a few serious scholarly book on it. As word of what we were doing spread, we had people wanting us to start doing ritual. They wanted Druid ritual. An then they wanted a training program for the clergy. An then they wanted a local grove structure. And the next thing we knew we had a full scale public Pagan church fund.

Interviewer: Where was this centered?

Bonewits: I was living in New York when we started it, and then I moved to Kansas City for a while doing a computer job, then I moved back to California for a while, then I moved back to New York again. One of the major pluses and minuses of ADF was that we became a national organization without going through the preliminary stages of local and regional.

Interviewer: Because of where the scholars were located?

Bonewits: Yes, the scholars were located all over the country. The people who were interested in what we were doing were located all over the country, and I was located all over the country. The central address kept changing a lot.

Interviewer: Did you have a personal life going on here?

Bonewits: Oh I had a personal life, an extremely personal life, going on during all of this. Not assisted by the relocations at all. I had enormous financial problems. I got in serious trouble with the IRS because I completely misunderstood income averaging, so I seriously underpaid my tax bill one year. They found me out ten years later and started hounding me for it, and I'm still paying that off.

Interviewer: I kind of always hoped the IRS would have to dump the database every seven or eight years.

Bonewits: No, oh no.. For people who they have flagged as being weirdoes, or politically suspect, they never throw it away. I was already in the FBI files because I was a medic at the Brooklyn Free Clinic during the demonstrations.

Interviewer: So, they already knew who you were.

Bonewits: So, they followed you around with it. They didn't hold that against us when we applied for tax-exempt status for ADF. We're a 501c3 organization. I was still earning my living through secular employment. Until last May when I became disabled and was no longer able to function in a corporate environment. It's hard to do type setting and layout in graphics work on a computer when you can only type thirty words a minute.

Interviewer: Can we inquire what happened?

Bonewits: I am one of the 10,000 or so unlucky Americans who consumed poisoned tryptophane products during 1989. That's why they took it off the market. It turned out that there was this one sleazy Japanese corporation that decided to improve their profit margin by using the new genetically engineered strain of bacteria to

produce the raw tryptophane powder from the raw dairy product, which is how they do it, they take left over whey from other dairy processing activities and they use bacteria that munch the whey and excrete the tryptophane. I didn't realize I was consuming bacterial shit all this time, what the hell. That's their standard way of doing it. They bought a new genetically engineered strain of bacteria that was designed to produce more of the tryptophane faster. And they simultaneously decided that they would lower their filtration standards from human medicine level to animal medicine levels, since they also did veterinary products. They didn't mention that to anybody and in America vitamins are not controlled by the Food and Drug Administration. They sold tons of this stuff to American vitamin companies who then packaged it up and then sold it to their unsuspecting customers. So, thousands of people came down with this brand new disease. A few hundred of them died, several hundred wound up in wheel chairs, or otherwise seriously paralyzed and the rest of us would up with a wide variety of multi-systemic damage. Tryptophane is a natural amino acid, its found in a lot of foods mostly in dairy products and turkey. Which is why when you have a big turkey dinner, everybody falls asleep. It was used as a treatment for insomnia, it was used as an anti-depressant because it did not affect your mental processes, unlike most of the anti-depressants that were available in the 70's and 80's. I've been taking tryptophane for years, on my doctor's advice. So were most of these other people who came down with this disease.

Interviewer: How did they discover what it was that was causing the problems?

Bonewits: A bunch of people starting coming down with really weird syndromes and the doctors couldn't figure it all out. And they thought a new disease was going on. They reported this to the CDC (Center for Disease Control) and eventually the correlation came through that all the people who had this disease had been consuming tryptophane products. And that was when the food and Drug Administration confiscated a bunch of tryptophane from the shelves of a few stores, examined it and found this chemical contaminate somewhat similar to heavy metal poisoning.

Interviewer: Does this give you more time to pursue other goals?

Bonewits: Yes and no. I'm becoming increasingly physically handicapped. This may be the last year I am able to do festivals. I used to drive all over the country going to pagan festivals. Now I can't drive more than 45 minutes without my hands and feet cramping up. I can't type at a keyboard for more than an hour at a time without having to take a break, a long break. I used to make my living as a computerized typesetter or a writer. It's going to be real hard to make a living as a writer if I can't type for more than an hour at a time. I can still do speaking, but how long that is going to last is in question because of the damage it does to my throat.

Interviewer: So computers are a real interest to you.

Bonewits: Primarily as a tool. I don't do a lot of programming. I play around with BASIC programs from time to time just as an intellectual puzzle. I also buy logic puzzle magazines and do those. I love computers, but I love them as a useful tool, not as an obsession in and of themselves. I'm getting on the nets now. I can't log on very often and it takes forever to read all the messages and write responses. I'm getting a lot of valuable feedback from people on ideas, throwing them out on the nets and seeing what happens. Now I'm on the PODS net, we have an ADF echo and a senior Druid echo, that is distributed by the Pagan Occult Distribution System. Otherwise know as PODS Net, for the tekkies in the audience its run through the FIDO echo net. I am also on GENI and I am also going to be on America On Line. Possibly Compuserve and Prodigy as well. The problem is that they all cost money, and I can't get on these things unless people arrange free membership for me, which has been done for a couple of them. We just don't have the finances for me to be on all the nets all the time I would like to be on. I figure if I am on five or six other nets and I log on them every other week, I can at least keep in touch with people. People can send me questions, I can no longer read everything everybody says, but I can at least read the messages that people have aimed at me.

Interviewer: You mention the ADF. What is it?

Bonewits: ADF has turned out to be one of the most controversial groups in the country, mostly because of what I call the ten-year gap. Usually when I come up with an idea that horrifies the community, ten years later it's old hat and everybody knows it. ADF was one of the first Pagan traditions to talk about the need for excellence and the need for standards, qualifications for clergy, paying for clergy, keeping the bullshit quotient down to the absolute minimum in our community. Things that really offended people in our community, and still do. What I find fascinating by this is that even though people are offended by us that doesn't keep them from stealing our ideas.

Interviewer: Which is the definition of eclectic.

Bonewits: Right. What has happened is we have become a touchstone for comparison. We don't claim perfection and we have made zillions of mistakes, but because we started out with the intent with avoiding all of the old mistakes, that has given us the option to make new ones. We have learned a lot and we have published everything. We publish all of our mistakes, which is some thing that most groups don't do. Because of that it has been very educational, not just for us but for other people in the community. All of the sudden dozens of Pagan groups are talking about standards for Clergy, they are talking about improving the quality of their research. They are talking about the uses of liturgical languages, they are talking about paying their clergy. All this stuff that horrified people when we first brought it up, is now becoming the norm. So even though we are a small group we are dramatically influential nationwide.

Interviewer: How do you see the Druid organizations differ from the Pagan/Wiccan organizations.

Bonewits: There are two major areas of difference. The first is a theological difference, and the other area is a structural focus difference. Theologically most Wiccan groups are duotheistic or monotheistic. All the goddesses are blended into one goddess and all the

gods are blended into one god, except for those groups who refuse to admit the existence of male deities. The god and goddesses are seen to be faces or aspects of the eternal female and the eternal male. Yin and the Yang. In the ADF the focus is very polytheistic. We insist on treating each god or goddess as the unique individual he or she may be. We will compare similarities of different deities but for ritual work we never mix them up. The Wiccan groups who do a lot of drawing down discover they get better results when they treat a god or a goddess as an individual, rather then one vague marshmallow puff goddess or god. This is a practical discovery that people make after they do trance possession work for a while. The other major difference is a structure focus one. Wicca, as a religion, is small group oriented. Groups that are closed, exclusionary and private. The style of work that goes on in a Wiccan coven requires you to bring people in one at a time to screen them carefully to make sure that each new person that comes in will get along with the people who were there previously. Rituals are private and magical space is between the worlds, it's cut off from the rest of reality while doing the ritual. Druid focus, on the other hand, is on large-scale public groups. On being inclusionary, anyone who shows up for a ritual can do so as long as they behave themselves. The sacred area is open rather then closed. We don't cast circles for druid rituals, we consecrate or recognize the sacredness of a particular piece of ground. but the energy flow of a druid ritual is in and out of the area throughout the whole ritual. We don't cut ourselves off. Rather then being between the worlds, we consider ourselves in the center of all worlds. This has practical implications in that if somebody shows up late, or an adult has a child that has to be taken care of, they can enter or leave the ceremony at any point as long as they do so quietly. Druidic liturgy is specifically oriented towards large groups, and Wiccan liturgy is specifically oriented towards small groups. One of the things that Pagans have found out is that you cannot take the liturgical and magickal techniques of a Wiccan circle that is designed to work with eight or nine people and make it work for two hundred people.

Interviewer: These days congregationalism is a hot topic.

Bonewits: How are you defining that term?

Interviewer: From a Wiccan perspective, as you have defined it, they are saying that there are masses of people, who want to attend but they all need to be in a group within the circle. And the idea of having people do ritual for the people somehow negates the idea of claiming the Gods individually. It sounds like what I am hearing that the Druidic design encompasses congregations.

Bonewits: Our theology says that anybody can talk to the gods, anytime they want to. That they don't need mediators. But, we also believe that creating, preparing and forming liturgy is a specific art and science that you need to have training in and that some people are going to be better at than others are - through training and inborn talent. And so we don't think that everybody should be clergy. We think that only the people who have a specific calling to be clergy should be clergy. We also recognize that there are many different types of clergy, other than leading an organization or running ceremonies. Our training system is defining, we have ministries. We have a healing ministry, we have a counseling ministry, we have a divinatory ministry, we have a scholarly ministry, and we have a congregational ministry. These of the specialties people follow in the study program. The future of neo-paganism is very clearly going toward having large-scale public pagan churches. And that is going to happen with or without the input from the Wiccan community. They basically have a choice, they can scream and refuse to participate or they can accommodate and have their concerns brought into the process. Its happening anyway. What we've been finding is that when people start up an ADF grove or a CAW nest for that matter, being another publicly oriented pagan church, we might have a half a dozen people at their first meeting, and a dozen at the second, and twenty at the third meeting, and fifty at the fourth meeting. There is an enormous hunger in the America public for religion that is meaningful, and a sizable number of people are really looking for public paganism. And they do not have either the time or the inclination to go through the kind of intense, small group training that Wicca is designed to do. And yet we have had Wiccan priestesses who have claimed that we don't want to let all these riff raff in, and we've got to bring them in one at a time, in a traditional apprenticeship, outer court training system. And if there are not enough priestesses in town to accommodate all the people who want in, tough luck!

Interviewer: Insisting everyone be priestess?

Bonewits: Precisely. This is primarily Gerald Gardener's fault. Gerald Gardener took Martin Luther's principle of 'every man his own minister' and changed that to 'every witch his/her own priest/ess.' And when you got your first degree, as has been published in quite a few places, you are ordained as a priest or priestess at the same time you are ordained a witch. At your first degree. And that was why they had to invent the term high priest or priestess, because there were people who were functioning genuinely as clergy on a congregational level.

Bonewits: ADF is now ten years old, and we are just now having our first ordination to the priesthood coming up in September. Our first person who has worked her way all the way through the study program to the level where we will ordain her as a priestess.

Interviewer: There is the ongoing issue of professional or paid clergy. But I'm not sure if the new paganism provides adequate teaching, and this is an issue in such a rapidly expanding religion.

Bonewits: In our study we have program the provision that if you are in the first circle, and there happens to be a second circle member near you, we expect you to communicate with that second circle person.

Interviewer: Circles?

Bonewits: Our system is circles within circles. First circle is the absolute beginners. Second circle is sort of like deacons, people who decided they are serious about the organization and they want to start taking responsibility and work toward a leadership role. The third circle is the first ring of genuine leadership. This is where we actually call people a healer, a bard, or a liturgist or a priest or priestess. If somebody is in the

second circle, part of their second circle studies is advising any first circlers who live near them. And part of the training for the third circle is advising any second or first circlers who are near you. This makes that person not the sole source of advice, but one of them.

Interviewer: A self-correcting environment.

Bonewits: The other thing too, is that we have deliberately set up horizontal and diagonal communication as well as vertical communication within our structure. So that everybody can talk to everybody else, without having their message censored by somebody on a totem pole.

Interviewer: I was impressed on how available you were to everyone. I have been to festivals or other events where the important figures come around, but they won't speak to the masses. It seems to me that if you are out to work with the masses, then you ought to be part of that group.

Bonewits: It really depends a lot on the personal, intellectual style of the leadership. Some people are really uncomfortable talking to beginners. And if they are (uncomfortable), then its just as well that they don't, because they won't do a very good job. Some people feel very comfortable talking to people from a variety of levels. It just happens that I am one of them.

Interviewer: Is it energy too?

Bonewits: How much psychological energy they have to put into it, yes. This is one of the reasons why we set up our study program for people to pick specialties. Depending on what their specialties is what kind of interactions they will have with the other members. If someone's specialty is scholarship, then they are probably going to only interact with other scholars most of the time, unless they are teaching a class in a local grove.

Interviewer: So, social skills may not be their specialty.

Bonewits: Right

Interviewer: I think that delivering information is so important, but it requires such a variety of social skills that make it work.

Bonewits: Unfortunately, as you probably know, knowing something and being able to teach it well are not the same thing.

Interviewer: Every tradition has its own flavor, if people are interested in your organization where would you recommend they start to see if there is a fit.

Bonewits: Well, the first thing to do is we recommend people call up our 800 number, 1 - 800 – DRUIDRY, or they can send $3.00 and a self addressed stamped envelope to our mailing address, and we will send out an information packet. Which will include the latest issue of our national newsletter.

Interviewer: This is great.

Bonewits: People dial it up and they get a one-minute spiel on what ADF is and is not, and then we tell them to send three dollars to that address. So, they can do it directly or indirectly.

Interviewer: You see a lot of things about witches and pagans, witches being such a phrase for the media, do you get a lot of generic interest or does it tend to be people more informed about druidism?

Bonewits: I would say that about 2/3 to 3/4 of the members of ADF are also Wiccans. They are either practicing Wicca now or have in the past. A lot of people joined ADF because they were looking for a structured system of training that would give them the well rounded body of skills that they felt they needed and they didn't think they were getting from whatever tradition they were studying in. We also have a lot of people who were informed enough and experienced enough to realize that the small group techniques of Wicca weren't working for larger groups and they wanted to learn appropriate techniques of liturgy and teaching and so forth for the larger groups that they finding coming to their doorstep.

Interviewer: You use the phrase liturgy. Would you characterize that more as a presentation, sacred drama, how does it differ from what they try to do?

Bonewits: Liturgy specifically refers to worship ceremony. Especially in regards to public worship ceremonies. The word originally means literally public works. Litergos. There were all kinds of public works you could do in ancient Greece. Springing the money for a ceremony was one of them. And after a while that took on the connotation that liturgy was primarily arranging to have sacrifices done for a particular deity. And throwing the big communal meal that came afterwards. And the liturgists were the people who had enough money they could afford to pay all the expenses themselves. Does this sound familiar? And then when the Christian came along they chose to use the word liturgy to refer to their central religious ceremony. The mass. And the protestants sometimes still call what they do liturgy and sometimes they call it something else. Liturgy I use as a generic term for worship ritual. It involves magical, and theatrical, and psychological and mundane aspects to create a multimedia experience that enable people to have a closer connection with the divine, however defined by a particular tradition.

Interviewer: In that system, are the observers responsible for raising energy, for feeding energy?

Bonewits: Yes, everybody participates in raising energy in druid ritual. We have a standard liturgical, which is basically an outline that all of our local groves use. That way people traveling from one grove to another grove will know what to expect. And it fits with the general cosmology and theology that we are developing in our particular tradition. But there is an enormous amount of elbow room in how they interpret the liturgical outline.

Interviewer: My thought, is that since I came from a Wiccan background that you had to have an encompassing circle, within which you contained energy.

Bonewits: You don't need to contain energy.

Interviewer: It's an intriguing idea, because coming in and out of circle causes special issues.

Bonewits: What we do in ADF ritual we consecrate sacred space, or in some cases we reaffirm to ourselves that the space is already sacred, we reconstruct the cosmos, which is a standard thing in world liturgy according to our cosmology. That will vary from group to group,

according to whether they are doing a Celtic focus, or a Norse focus, or a Vedic focus, or a Slavic focus, they all have the same cosmology, but with different emphases on it. So you reconstruct the universe according to that cosmology by inviting or invoking entities associated with the different worlds of that ethnic group's cosmology. Then we usually invite the three kindreds, the deities, the ancestors and the nature spirits. We do a placating sacrifice to the outsiders, spirits of discord and chaos. We do that outside of the area, where most of our work is going on. And, we get people into a group mind primarily through the use of music and song. Dance, when we are in a good place for dancing, and when we are with a group of people who know how to dance. Not holding hands and stumbling around in a circle. Which is what most pagan dance is. Then we invoke a specific god or goddess as the special guest for the occasion. And offer our sacrifices. And the sacrifices in druid ritual are artistic performances. We offer songs, poems, sacred dance, ritual drama.

Interviewer: Not so much a sacrifice, but an offering.

Bonewits: They are all offerings, yes. What we do is people make offerings to the god or goddess of the occasions and then we have a prayer in which we take all the energy which has been generated by peoples' perceptions of these artworks and offer that as our sacrifice to the god or goddess of the occasion.

Interviewer: I think sacrifice has such connotations.

Bonewits: I know it does, I know it does. Then you get a return flow of energy from the deity, or deities and you then use that for generic blessings on the congregation or for a rite of passage or for some kind of spell that needs to be done. And at that point you don't need to raise any more energy cause you've already got stuff from the deity. And then we wind it all down.

Interviewer: To be technical, about that piece of it. How do you see that energy? Energy invoked in the deity, is it because the deity is us and we put the energy there? Is it an outside source that has its own existence separate from the energy that we impart to it? Is it part of the great human unconscious? All of the above?

Bonewits: Yes. All of the above. We don't insist on monothesisism..

Interviewer: There's a good word! Monothesisism.

Bonewits: Monothesisism. Ah, yes. I think Sam Wagar or Paul Slee came up with that term, I forget whom. It's the underlying concept to all of Western civilization that there has to be a single best answer or a single best solution to any problem. We use multi-model approaches, we are polytheist, we are pluralism.

Interviewer: Does this work in a practical sense?

Bonewits: Yes it does. What we generally do is after we have given the sacrifice of energy to the central deities of the occasion, we take it back from them, we get a return blessing from them which goes into a cup of the waters of life. We usually have one chalice of whiskey and one chalice of spring water. People can sip from either or both. Sometimes we do a meal but that messes up the pacing of a ritual so we don't usually. This is equivalent to the cakes and wine in a Wiccan ritual. What it does is it takes the divine energy and gives you a physical symbol of taking it into yourself. That is what communion is for. Then people are filled with divine energy and then we do our invocations and our magical work so that everybody is going to get as much energy as they can handle. Then we either absorb it to ourselves for personal blessings and healing or if we have a rite of passage that needs to be done like an ordination or child blessing or funeral or if there is a particular spell that has to be done, we then do it, using standard magical techniques within the aesthetic context of what we have been doing in the ritual. When that is over we drain off the excess energy and we say thank you to everybody we invited and we unwind the ritual. It's all very sensible if you sit down and look at it.

Interviewer: I see people using the cakes and wine as refreshment now that the ritual is over.

Bonewits: Right, part of the problem is that Wiccan magical technology was real confused, Gerald Gardener didn't understand a whole lot about magick, although he belonged to a lot of magickal groups. Some groups used the cakes and wine as a grounding method, and some used it as a reception of blessings from the Gods method, and some use it as a charging us up so we can now do the spell method. I think from a logical point of view it makes more sense in the latter context, that the deities give you their blessings from the cakes and wine and you can then cast your spell. You shouldn't have to raise more energy after the cakes and wine to cast a spell. You should have gotten those things charged up enough. You do your cone of power, your energy raising before the cakes and wine. You do that as a way of giving your love and your energy to the God and Goddess, they then give you the return flow which you then use for magick.

Interviewer: When you are in an open circle and people come and go you don't find that draining because you don't anticipate it to be.

Bonewits: Right, if all of the sudden somebody lands a hot air balloon on the other side of the meadow and everybody's attention is distracted, fine that will cause a problem. But well done public ritual does music and song an poetry and drama that holds peoples attention and keeps it, it keeps everybody thinking more or less along the same lines for the duration of the ritual. That is how you get a group mind.

Interviewer: Let's get away from the details and out to the broader picture. Where do you see the Pagan movement and particularly the Druidic movement going in the next five years. Is it expanding rapidly?

Bonewits: Oh yes, we have been around for ten years now, we have fourteen chartered groves. And those are legal branch churches of the corporation.

Interviewer: What size are the groves?

Bonewits: The newer groves have three or four people in them. The larger groves have 20 to 30 people in them. Once the groves have been around a year or two they tend to have 50 to 100 people showing up for the high days celebrations. Every grove is required to provide publicly accessible worship. We started out thinking that grove would be planted and some would flourish and some would die off, and some would merge and some would split. We expected change and we even

wrote into the grove organizers handbook how to handle change. We have a specific manual that we give people who are organizing a grove, how to run a grove, what specific things you can do, helpful advice for your early years.

Interviewer: Do you have standards or requirements for people before they can start a grove?

Bonewits: No. Any three members can start a grove, any one or two members can start a proto-grove. We have forms that they fill out, we have questionnaires that are mostly for us to assist them in what they are doing. We basically give the groves an enormous amount of local autonomy; provide that they don't violate the national bylaws, provided that they don't violate basic policy.

Interviewer: How extensive are these by-laws?

Bonewits: There are a lot of them, you need them for any corporation that is doing as many things as we are doing. It's about eight pages of small print typesetting. In a large part, we wrote the by-laws the way we did for the benefit for the IRS. Cause the IRS expects you to have certain by-laws if they are going to treat you as a real church. Most of those expectations are reasonable and practical, and some of them that aren't are still understandable as they relate to Christian groups, which is what the IRS is mostly thinking in terms of. Most of the by-laws that affect groves directly, there are about 10 or 11 of them, are pretty damn small. Groves have to call themselves by a name that includes the initials ADF somewhere, and they have to use that in all their flyers, advertising and whatnot, groves have to provide public or semipublic rituals eight times a year minimum. They have to have some kind of meeting at least twice every lunar month. We have a good neighbor policy in every grove, they have to contact the police department, contact the local interfaith council, contact the local religion editors and the local media ahead of time, long before any problems develop. Pre-emptive publicity. This is something I am recommending to the people in Colorado Springs who are having problems with the right-wingers there. Go for pre-emptive publicity, so by the time the Christian right gets around to attacking us directly, we already established credibility and friendly relationship with the local media. So they will come to us and ask our response before they print something. Our meaning the Pagan community.

Bonewits: So the rules for starting a local grove is relatively simple and easy, beyond those rules we try to give each grove the maximum amount of autonomy possible. Every grove has to do a public works project every seasonal quarter, some kind of secular, not magickal, public works project. Planting trees, adopting a highway, working for a weekend in a soup kitchen, working for a suicide hot line. Something physical, mundane and secular that shows the rest of your community that you are part of it. That you are not a bunch of weirdos hiding away being separate. That you are taking responsibility as a citizen of your town to contribute to your community.

Interviewer: So what do you think you'll be doing in the future? Do you write because you love it or because it was something that needed to be done?

Bonewits: Provided I can find ways around my various physical handicaps, I will continue writing and speaking. I would like to concentrate for the next few years on books, but we are having severe financial disabilities, I am earning a third of what I was earning before I went on disability. Those checks will vanish in September. I am involved in a lawsuit with the Japanese manufacturers and that is supposed to bring in a chunk of money sometime real soon now. Sometime in the next year or two I will probably get a chunk of money but that has to be invested so I can live on it the rest of my life. I may never be cured from this particular disease, I may get better, I may get worse. No way of knowing. I don't make a salary as the ArchDruid of ADF. ADF doesn't bring in enough money to pay me a salary. At one point the ADF board voted to pay me a stipend of 300 dollars a month, later we had to borrow some money to pay off some debts and I suggested we suspend the stipend until we had paid off all of our debts. As in many organizations, the board of directors is paying large amounts of the expenses of the organization out of their own pockets. We are trying to get beyond it but we are having to fight tooth and nail this oh so convenient anti-money attitude in the Pagan community. This anti-money attitude of the craft, which was created in 1957 when Gerald Gardener wrote the ancient craft laws, was started because when they canceled the Witchcraft Act in 1951 and shortly thereafter Gardener wrote his first book. They replaced it with the Fraudulent Mediumship Act, which made it a crime to ask for money for psychic readings, so Gerald, when he wrote the ancient craft laws, wrote in a law saying you can't charge money for using the art. People have taken that as meaning you can't charge for anything vaguely connected with the Witchcraft community. It provides a convenient excuse for parasites, which is the blunt way to put it. People today were born in non-Pagan religions, even the folks who were born in famtrads. They were at least surrounded by non-Pagan religions and they are terrified that some of our people will become tele-evangelists. Or at least we say we are and that provides the perfect excuse for freeloaders. The fact of the matter is that the average neo-Pagan in American is not poor. The average neo-Pagan has a middle class, white collar or blue-collar job. They have plenty of money for science fiction books, comic books, video tapes, computers and computer games, they have plenty of money to go to science fiction conventions, go to the SCA or whatever their priority happens to be. The fact that the Pagan community has been reluctant to put money into it's own religious needs is more a sign of peoples priorities then a sign of peoples poverty. Even people who are flat broke can be putting in hours volunteering to help. And some do. Most of our groves in the ADF charge dues, and we have encouraged them to do so because you have expenses running a grove.

Interviewer: What is the population of the ADF?

Bonewits: It is difficult to say with precision, we have some three hundred members in the computer base, we have 250 to 300 who subscribe to our national journal, and there is an overlap of about a 150 people who are both members and subscribers.

Interviewer: What about the people who just come to see - to see if its right for them? Is that a regular population?

Bonewits: That's a constantly changing number. People come to a ritual or two and decide if its their cup of tea. If they like it they come back. If they come back several times the groves will say OK, why don't you join?

Interviewer: Is that population responsive to the media?

Bonewits: Media attention? Oh sure, we encourage local grove sponsors to advertise in metaphysical book stores, at local colleges and universities at coffee houses, places where you'd think you'd find someone who is simpatico. We don't require them to advertise in the local newspaper, or radio, or through the local college radio station. Depending on how the communication fluctuates is how many new people will show up. But because we have a standardized liturgical design after a few months of doing the ritual you can handle a sudden influx of 20 or so people and it doesn't change the ritual. You know what to do when that many people show up. We try very hard to make sure that the people doing this know what the hell they're doing. A lot, one of the things that has been happening with the establishment of groves that have been around for several years now, is that if somebody starts a new grove near them, they get adopted as a sister grove. And the more experienced liturgists go out and help them with their first few meetings and invite their members to attend theirs.

Interviewer: You mentioned CAW are you associated with them in some way?

Bonewits: Not officially, I am a member of CAW and Otter's a member of ADF. We just gave each other lifetime memberships. We exchange publications, we sit and talk on the phone a lot, myself and other members of the board of CAW. We have a lot in common because we're public pagan churches, focused on that particular part of what the pagan movement is doing and needing to do.

Interviewer: From what I know of CAW, which admittedly is not much, they don't have the same type of structure, education and background and common liturgical forms.

Bonewits: They are more anarchistic than we. They have the ideals, but they don't have the detailed instructions to their membership. They prefer to let their membership experiment, invent and see what they come up with.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you would like to cover, something important we didn't get to?

Bonewits: I think I've covered most of the stuff. I have met several people here at this gathering, which has been a lot of fun, who said that they are interested in starting groves in Denver, and Colorado Springs and so forth. So, people should keep an eye open for announcements of new groves in the mountain states.

Interviewer: We have the 1-800-DRUIDRY number and they would have the listing there of what is local?

Bonewits: What we do is we will send people the latest issue of the newsletter and the newsletter lists all of the local groves and the proto-groves and of the local guilds and SIGs we have. So people can then start writing.

Mike's Response to Interview with Isaac Bonewits

I'm sure Isaac's done dozens of interviews. I've done at least four with him alone. This one is remarkable for the number of details of his pre-college days and reaction of the Neopagan community to his activities; something not discussed much in the interviews that I did. It is a solid interview and a valuable tool for understanding the transition to ADF.

American Druidism: A Guide to American Druidism

By Daniel Hansen 1995

ISBN 0-89716-600-0 (An important Book!!)

pg. 19-21

The Neo-Druid movement in America had begun independently of any direct British or French influence at all. Because America was spared the meso-Druid phase of development, it was not bound by any of their traditions. In fact, American Druidism didn't start out as a religious movement or even as a Celtic appreciation society at all, but rather it was a humorous protest.

In 1963 a group of students at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota rebelled against the college's mandatory chapel attendance requirement. For their protest they formed what they called the Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA) and they held pseudo-religious services once a week. Keep in mind that initially none of these students were Pagans or heathens; most were Christians and their services or sermons took on the forms of religious services they were familiar with. Because Carleton College had a large Asian Studies department, there was a considerable amount of Eastern philosophy mixed in with their free-thinking style. Their protest had the desired result and in 1964 the mandatory chapel requirement was repealed, however the RDNA continued to hold services and meet once a week, much to the surprise of the college officials. With time, the early RDNA took on most of the external aspects now common among neo-Pagan organizations; the eight festivals, a simple hierarchy and almost no dogma. Yet the original group eclectically chose inspiration from primarily Asian and Middle Eastern living traditions. Of the original members was Robert Larson, who was the first to observe a seriously Celtic emphasis and would years later set the foundations for what would be known as the neo-Druid outlook. As these first Druids graduated from Carleton and moved, they planted a new grove of the RDNA wherever they settled down. At one point there were about a dozen RDNA groves across seven states, most fading away by the end of the 70's. It is most noteworthy that among these offshoot groves was the Berkeley grove headed by Robert Larson, established in 1968. It is from this Celtic-oriented grove that the neo-Pagan Druid movement would find its avatar, Isaac Bonewits.

In 1974, the RDNA promoted a man to the post of ArchDruid [of Twin Cities] who has the distinction of having the only accredited degree in Magic from the University of California at Berkeley; his name is Philip Emmons Isaac Bonewits. Bonewits saw great potential in the neo-Druid movement, but he decided that the RDNA (or the NRDNA which he established in 1975) was not the proper vehicle to promote Druidism. Primarily amongst the RDNA's faults was the refusal to call itself exclusively neo-Pagan. The RDNA, as was found in most neo-Pagan organizations of the time, a phenomenal lack of effective organization beyond the local grove level. In 1983, Isaac Bonewits carried some elements of the RDNA with him and founded a new neo-Druid group that would become known as Ar nDraoicht Fein: A Druid Fellowship (ADF.) ADF had a slow start, but it worked its way up to being the largest branch of neo-Druidism in America today. ADF even had a "missionary" branch in Ireland. ADF's strength lies in its insistence on academic excellence on all scholarly research into Celtic and Druidic subjects. One of their mottoes is "Why not excellence?" Their other motto is "Fast as a speeding oak," which is to point out to them that these things take time.

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(Referring to the 60's counterculture) During this time, the concepts of the ancient Druids was revived. It began at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota in 1963. What started out as a protest against mandatory chapel attendance turned into a religious revitalization movement, much to the surprise of the college officials and to many of the original founders as well.

Originally their concept of Druidism was little more than the revival of a name and the use of a few Celtic deity names. A few of the Reformed Druid groves located in California's Bay Area, a hotspot of 60's radicalism, narrowed Carleton's global eclecticism into primarily Celtic and neo-Pagan areas of inspiration. These Berkeley-ites paid greater attention to the ecology/anti-nuke movements, borrowed from esoteric philosophies and dabbled into some of the occult arts. The modern version of Druidism was growing in leaps and bounds, but it lacked direction and a leader with a vision for the future of Druidism. Eventually Phillip Emmons Isaac Bonewits got involved with Druidism. It was he who took the leadership position. He had a vision of a pan-Indo-European Druidism in America based upon sound scholarly research of the ancient Indo-Europeans, the Celts in particular.....

pg. 145.

For every movement there has to be a beginning and for the neo-Druid movement, that beginning was at Carleton College, with the humorous protest which led to the creation of the Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA.) It is interesting to note that the founders of the RDNA never intended it to be a true alternative religion. They were simply protesting against the school's regulation requiring mandatory chapel attendance. The RDNA was founded in 1963 at Carleton College to test the chapel requirement by "attending the services of one's own religion." The next year the school dropped the chapel requirement, but the RDNA continued to meet. The RDNA combined a bit of seriousness with play; in fact they always had a sense of humor. As an example of this humor, the "Early Chronicles of the Druids," was written in a mock biblical style. The original founders of the RDNA distrusted both rituals and magick as being the primary causes of ossification in religion. Although their name implied a Celtic viewpoint, they remained extremely eclectic in their choice of inspirational material, primarily drawing upon Eastern philosophies and liberal Christianity. The RDNA intended to avoid all dogma and orthodoxy, while affirming that life was both spiritual (Be'al) and material (the Mother Earth) human beings needed to come to a state of "awareness" through the unity of spirit and nature. The original "Order of Worship" has many similarities to a Protestant religious service with both innovations and benedictions. Typically their rituals are held outdoors in a grove of oaks, on a beach or on a hill.

The Early RDNA were "Reformed Druids" in the sense that they ostensibly followed the festivals of the paleo-Druids such as Samhain, Winter Solstice, Oimelc, Spring Equinox, Beltane, Midsummer, Lughnasadh, and the Fall Equinox and worshipping the following Celtic deities; Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of the Groves; Grannos, God of Healing; Braciaca, God of Malt and brewing; Belenos, God of the Sun; Sirona, Goddess of Rivers; Taranis, God of Thunder and lightning; Llyr, God of the Sea, and Danu, Goddess of Fertility. However it was up to the Druids to interpret them as gods, or Jungian archetypes, or philosophical ideals. For their Grove meetings the RDNA used the four points of the "magic circle" not to keep anything out, but to keep energy in until the time to release it. After the Ring was cleared of all hostile entities and negative thought patterns they began to concentrate in conjuring and summoning the gods, demigods, nature spirits, and spirits of great men to lend their

powers. At this point they pass around the "waters of life" (good ol' Irish Whiskey) and the "waters of sleep" (pure water.) The language used is flowery and emotional, the expression is rhythmic, and emotions are built up as the Druids feel the presence outside the circle, once their emotions have been aroused and the target is visualized. Their desire has been declared in tail, the group then focuses its energy with another extemporaneous chant and fires its built up magic. The ritual is then finished by thanking the assembled entities who are then dismissed. The circle is broken and the site is cleared of litter. The RDNA emphasized the importance of the ecology long before it became a popular movement. The RDNA makes no claim to prehistoric Ireland.

The original basic tenets of Reformed Druidism were:

> 1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, one way among many.
>
> 2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it.

These previous two tenets were often simplified as:

> 1. Nature is good!
>
> 2. Nature is good!

The RDNA's fundamental idea was that one should scrutinize religions from a "state of rebellion," neither embracing traditional faiths nor rejecting them. They were the first neo-Druid group to admit their human frailties and limitations. This has been a distinguishing characteristic of most of the neo-Druid branches which followed it.

The RDNA has never been a large organization, at its largest it had three branches and twelve Groves across the United States, its membership has rarely exceeded two hundred members participating in grove-activities at any given time. Shortly after it was ford, the RDNA underwent a schism of sorts in that it developed a number of branches. During the 70's, the missionary grove of Berkeley (California) took their Reformed Druidism onto a new pathway; in effect they chose to primarily borrow ritual elements and customs from modern neo-Pagan and ancient Celtic sources. There were New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA), Norse Druids in San Diego, Zen Druids in Olympia, Wiccan Druids in Minneapolis, Hassidic (Jewish Mishmash) Druids in St. Louis, and Eclectic Druids in Oakland, Berkeley, and Los Angeles. By 1985, however, most of these branches of RDNA had disappeared leaving at least four active groves; Carleton, Berkeley/Bay Area, Seattle, and New Hampshire.

One of the reasons that many of the groves of the RDNA have faded away was the short term nature of most groves. The RDNA has never espoused itself as the true path for its members, merely a place for open-minded seekers of all religions to gather and exchange stories and thoughts. When some members sought religious systems with greater, more organized collections of "dogmas" or "truth," their activity in the RDNA dwindled. Another cause was the exit of Isaac Bonewits from the NRDNA, due to differences of opinion over organizational methods and aiding the establishment of new groves to fight the RDNA's natural entropy.

Perhaps one of the RDNA's greatest legacies has been the encouragement it has given its members to follow their dreams. In that, Isaac was the founder of perhaps the most enthusiastic off-shoot of Reformed Druidism, Ar nDraoicht Fein; a nationwide neo-Pagan Druid movements. Most 2nd and 3rd generation offshoot Druid organizations bear little resemblance to their simplicity of the original RDNA, but one way to identify them if the Druid Sigil (the circle with two parallel lines cutting through them.)

Hansen's Sources:

Druid Chronicles (evolved), by P.E.I. Bonewits
Drawing Down the Moon, by Margot Adler
Real Magic, by P.E.I. Bonewits
A General History of Reformed Druidism in America, by Michael Scharding

To order a copy of Hansen's book (as of 1995) send 14.95 plus $3 shipping and handling (Washington residents please include 8.2% sales tax) make check or money order payable to Peanut Butter Publishing 226 2nd Ave W, Seattle WA 98119 (206) 281 5965. Include your address.

Mike's Response to American Druidism:

I predict that Hansen's book will come to be viewed as a milestone in the American Druid movements. For those wishing to tie Reformed Druidism into the American Druid movement, Hansen's book is a good place to continue with after reading my Epistle here. Because I helped him edit his sections on Reformed Druidism, I have few quibbles with his presentations. Most of it is paraphrasing Real Magic, Drawing Down the Moon and my A General History. I'm not sure about how widely Druids feel that they "keep the gods out," and this is probably from reading the ritual description in "Real Magic" by Bonewits.

People of the Earth: The New Pagans Speak Out

Ed. Ellen Evert Hopman & Lawrence Bond 1996
Being Resold Under the Title;
"Being a Pagan: Druids, Wiccans & Witches Today"
The following two excerpts were taken from the interviews with Isaac Bonewits and from Tony & Sable Taylor, with permission from Ellen Hopman.

Isaac Bonewits (May 1993)

……As time went by, I went to college; I met a few Wiccans here and there; I saw a couple of the early copies of Green Egg; and it became obvious to me that I was a Pagan. Then I discovered Druidism, and I knew that was where I belonged.

I had a roommate during my last year in college named Robert Larson, who was a graduate of Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. That was the birthplace of the Reformed Druids of North America. He wasn't one of the founders, but he was one of the early members of the organization. He mentioned to me that he was a Druid and told me about the group and showed me their literature, such as it was at that point.

I said, "This is great, this feel just right!" So we organized a grove in Berkeley and started doing ceremonies, and I said, "Yes, this is where I belong." I've been stuck with being a Druid ever since.

Q: So what is the essence of Druidism? What is the most sacred thing? What has kept you a Druid all these years?

I can only say that I have a "vocation" to be a druid, using the Catholic terminology, since I don't know any Celtic terminology to describe the same thing. Every time in my life that I have tried to stop being a Druid, that I have dropped out or semi-retired, gone on sabbatical, or anything like that, someone or something has come by and lifted me up by the scruff of the neck and tossed me back into it again.

To me the essence of Druidism is combining the best of head and heart and hand. Combining the intellect, the emotions, and the artistic creativity and craft that people have. It's using that to worship the Gods and to help ourselves to understand our lives better and understand what we are doing and where we are going.

Q: So you founded a group called Ar nDraiocht Fein?

Yes, or it founded me, I'm never too sure about that. I've been going back through my records trying to figure out when did I actually start ADF. It's very difficult to put a clear-cut beginning line to it. The roots of it go back to the years I spent with the Reformed Druids of North America.

The RDNA did not consider itself Pagan. The RDNA, very much like the Mesopagan or fraternal Druid organizations of England, believe that Druidism is a philosophy. A style of questioning and of metaphysical openness that is applicable to any belief system. On the other hand, I say that if you are gathering people out in the woods, you are singing hymns to the Earth Mother, and you are giving praises to the old Celtic Gods and Goddesses, you are practicing a pagan religion.

Over the years I made a number of efforts to paganize the RDNA and to get the people of the RDNA to accept the fact that what they were doing was a neo-Pagan religion. I was met with varying degrees of success and resistance. Eventually, at one point there was a blowup in the small-group politics, and I just said, "this is it, I am not doing this anymore. I am tired of beating my head against a cement wall." I retired for a couple of years and focused on learning how to earn a living with computers.

Eventually I started getting back into doing ritual that for me was "Druid ritual." It was based originally on the RDNA stuff but increasingly on the studies I was doing of the Celtic materials. I have found early versions of the current ADF liturgy dating back as early as 1981. Yet to the best of my knowledge we didn't officially start ADF until around 1983 or 1984. That was when I was talking to friends about the research that had been mentioned to me by my Irish teacher concerning Indo-European studies. Things like the comparative mythology of Georges Dumezil and the discoveries that had been made of more or less intact Pagan traditions being practiced in the Baltic territories.

A number of friends of mine who were amateur or professional scholars said, "Gee, this is exciting. We ought to organize a group to look into this." The next thing I knew we had ADF.

Almost within the first year of putting ADF together as a network of about forty scholars, we had another hundred people joining us who wanted rituals, rites of passage, and music and art, who wanted a complete religion.

This was before we had finished researching what the old religions of Europe really were. To me it was very important that we plant our roots in firm ground. That we not indulge in the kind of romantic silliness that most Druid revivals of the past have indulged in. I though we should find out what they were actually doing in Europe before the Christians came along, what parts of those religious beliefs do we really agree with today, and whap parts do we think are no longer appropriate.

Q: How is ADF different from other groups?

Most of the people in the rest of the Pagan community are very casual about their scholarship. They read something that sounds or feels good, and they go for it. This is probably the reason why so men and women in the Goddess spirituality movement leapt on the Golden Age of Matriarchy idea, because it felt so nice. The fact that the evidence to support that was shaky to slim didn't seem to bother them much. They could always claim it was the fault of those mean, nasty Patriarchal Evil Folks, or male anthropologists.

There's a line in Lewis Carrol's The Hunting of the Snark about how you close your one eye and then gaze fondly upon the subject with the gleam of true belief in your other eye and you will see the snark, which is otherwise an invisible entity.

The other approach that an awful lot of people in the pagan community have taken to scholarship has been to read until they find stuff they like and then stop reading. Or at least to stop reading anything that contradicts what they want to believe. ADF is to the best of my knowledge the only neo-Pagan tradition that is based on the idea of continual research and on changing and adapting our policies and procedures based on the results of that research.

One of the most revolutionary things we've done in ADF is to spread the idea that credentials should be verified. If somebody makes a claim, you should be able to verify whether or not that claim is valid.

Most other Pagan groups get a system together, and they stick with it. They may elaborate on it, but that's it; they don't really do any more digging.

Tony and Sable Taylor (Feb 12, 1994)

Q: How did you become a Druid?

That was a gradual metamorphosis. There was a mystique about it that called to me. There was something in my ancestral being that urged me to seek it out. It took me a while to realize what I was and that that was what had been calling to me all those years.

What I knew about Druids at that point was what I had picked up from The Golden Bough by Sir James Frazier. Reading about the Fire Festivals in Europe as a teenager started me on the path to Druidism.

When I met Tony, the two of us were drawn to this thing called Druidism, but we didn't exactly know how to define it. We started doing research, and we found out that there were occult bookstores, places where we could find information. The more we found out, the more we knew we were on the right track.

Q: When did you both meet your first Druids?

That would have been Isaac Bonewits at the Pagan Spirit Gathering (PSG.) I think it was in 1985. At that time Isaac was the only person who was putting his name out in public as being a Druid, at least in the American neo-Pagan community. He had the wealth of information from the old RDNA, and since there were no books on Druidism that I knew of, at least not on modern Druidism, he was the only contact point that we had. If there had been other contact points, we might have pursued them. So we talked with Isaac, and we got involved with ADF.

Q: How long were you involved with ADF?

I think it was about four years. It was kind of disappointing, because I had these great expectations that I was going to get all my questions answered, and that didn't happened. There simply wasn't enough information being disseminated by ADF for me to get the answers that I needed.

I wanted to know what Druidism was; I was still wrestling with it in my own head. I was relying on Isaac as my "high guru" to put the pieces of the puzzle together for me. I discovered that was a mistake; I can't put those kind of expectations on another person.

Due to that and to some other disagreements such as administrative issues that Tony and I weren't comfortable with, and due to the promise of a certain amount of goods coming to us for the membership fee and not getting those, we left. We weren't seeing the publications that we had been promised, for example. We eventually just got very frustrated.

We decided that we weren't going to wait for Isaac anymore, and we were going to do it ourselves. We then formed Keltria.

Q: How is Keltria Different from ADF?

Keltria works specifically within a Celtic framework. We don't have Greek Druids or Slavic Druids. We have Celtic Druids. We're more tribal than ADF. We recognize that within the Celtic culture the tribe and the clan were very important. We try to structure ourselves around that idea. We are not trying to be a fraternal organization. We like to work in smaller, closer groups that mirror the tribe – the feasting, the ritualing, the camaraderie that exists within an extended family.

We are organized into groves that operate as extended families. The Druids within each clan are free to interact with Druids from any other clans. Just as the ancient Druids could move from tribe to tribe and be recognized and respected. We stay in contact with the other clans, even though we may have our own.

Q: How is this different from ADF?

We don't specialize in large public ritual. We are certainly capable of doing them – we do them at PSG every year – but it's not our main focus. We have never done a ritual for the whole PSG, but we have done open, public rituals there on nights when people had a choice of four or five rituals they could attend.

We typically don't do things for the public at large. It's not that we are being secretive, it just doesn't feel like something to be scattered upon the wind. Our rituals are designed to speak to the soul, and they only speak to certain souls.

Mike's Response to People of the Earth

This excepts are taken from much longer interviews. Ellen Hopman has been an active member of Keltra and ADF for many years before forming her own split, the Order of the White Oak in the late 90s. Being a major Druid organizer and published author, she approaches this interview from an advanced point of reference, perhaps leaving a few questions unasked that the amateur would have like to have asked. But overall, these were fine interviews, and I look forward to updates. Although the book was first published in 1996, Isaac's interview was from 1993 and Taylor's from 1994. Isaac interviews were made before my first interviews with him (Feb 1994), but Tony Taylor's was made after my interview with him (Jan 1994), so that might be important to keep in mind; not that I've influenced them as much as they have influenced me.

By 1993, Isaac had completed a decade with ADF and was definitely beginning to feel comfortable with its progression and beginning to take stock of its progress so far. The 1980s had been a difficult time, with many long debates and arguments with members of the Neo-pagan community, and several split-offs over this period. Things had cooled off by this point, and this is reflected in his charitable memory of these events. Isaac's method of being generous and inclusively careful may well be his greatest inheritance from the fractious years of the NRDNA.

Tony & Sable Taylor's interview are similarly generous, and any pre-existing acrimony with ADF seems to have dissipated after realizing the inherent difficulties or running their own organization for several years. I've attend some of their PSG services and they worked fine in public. What I remember most about the festival, was Keltria's sponsoring the Cow stealing contest that I wrote about in the Dead Lake Scrolls.

The Druid Renaissance

Edited by Phillip Carr-Gomm
1996 by Harper Collins

Isaac Bonewits writes
A chapter in the book called
"The Druid Revival in Modern America"

Although some fraternal organizations of Druids, such as The Ancient Order of Druids, have been present in the United States and Canada for over a century, the current Druid revival is rooted primarily in the planting of the Reformed Druids of North America, the 'RDNA,' in 1963. Almost all currently existing Neopagan Druid groups can trace themselves back to the RDNA, via my own Druidic organization, Ar nDraiocht Fein: A Druid Fellowship, ADF, and its offshoots, such as the Henge of Keltria, HK. However, before going into this history, we should first review some of the vocabulary used by many modern American Druids, namely the uses of the word 'Pagan' and its three main prefixes- 'Paleo-', 'Meso-', and 'Neo-'.

Paganism, Ancient and Modern

The term 'Pagan' comes from the Lain 'Paganus', which appears to have originally had such meanings as 'country dweller', 'villager', or 'hick'. The early Roman Christians used 'Pagan' to refer to everyone who preferred to worship pre-Christian divinities, whom the Christians had decided were all 'really' demons in disguise. Over the centuries, the word 'Pagan' became an insult, applied to the monotheistic followers of Islam by the Christians (and vice-versa), and by the Protestants and Catholics toward each other, as it gradually gained the connotation of 'a follower of a false religion'. By the twentieth century, the word's primary meaning had become a blend of 'atheist', 'agnostic', 'hedonist', and 'religionless'.

Today there are many of us who proudly call ourselves 'Pagan', but we use the word differently from the ways that most mainstream Westerners do. To us, 'Pagan' is a general term that includes both old and new polytheistic religions, as well as their members. The overwhelming majority of all the human beings who have ever lived have been Pagans, and we believe that there is an enormous wealth of spiritual insight and strength to be gained from following a Pagan path.

'Paleopaganism' refers to the original tribal faiths of Europe, Africa, Asia, the Americas, Oceania and Australia, when they were (and in some cases still are) practiced as intact belief systems. Of the so-called 'Great Religions of the World', Hinduism (prior to the influx of Islam into India,) Taoism and Shinto, for example, fall into this category.

'Mesopaganism' is the word used for those religions founded as attempts to recreate, revive or continue what their founders though of as the Paleopagan ways of their ancestors (or predecessors), but which were heavily influenced, either deliberately or involuntarily, by the monotheistic and dualistic world views of Judaism, Christianity and/or Islam. Examples of Mesopagan belief systems include Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism, Spiritualism, Druidism as practiced by the Masonic-influenced fraternal movements in Europe and the Celtic Isles, the many Afro-American faiths (such as Voudoun, Santeria, or Macumba), Sikhism, and several sects of Hinduism that have been influenced by Islam and Christianity.

'Neopaganism' refers to those religions creates since 1940 or so (though they had literary roots going back to the mid-1800s), that have attempted to blend what their founders perceived as the best aspects of different types of Paleopaganism with modern 'Aquarian Age' ideals, while consciously striving

to eliminate as much as possible of all the traditional Western monotheism and dualism. The Church of All Worlds, most Wiccan traditions, ADF and Keltria, are all Neopagan.

These terms do not delineate clear-cut categories. Historically, there is often a period, whether of decades or centuries, when Paleopaganism is blending into Mesopaganism, or Mesopaganism into Neopaganism. Furthermore, the founders and members of Mesopagan and Neopagan groups frequently prefer to believe, or at least to seem to, that they are genuinely Paleopagan in beliefs and practices. This 'myth of continuity' is in keeping with the habits of most founders and members of new religions throughout human existence.

Druidism, Ancient & Modern

So how does this vocabulary work in terms of Druidism? We know that the original, Paleopagan Druids were a social class of intellectuals and artists, with counterparts in the other Indo-European cultures, such as the Brahmins in India, and the flamens in Ancient Italy; however, only the Celtic ones were called 'Druids'. They were of both genders and had several sub-classes, such as Bards, sacrificers, healers, diviners, and judges. They were polytheists, not monotheists, and it is probably true that they did offer human sacrifices from time to time. However, they did not build Stonehenge or the pyramids, did not all have long white beards, did not come from Atlantis, and probably few of them had golden sickles. These Druids functioned primarily as the transmitters of knowledge and culture from one generation to the next, and as performers and supervisors of the ceremonies they believed necessary to keep the forces of chaos at bay. Though deep in their esoteric and exoteric knowledge, they were probably no wiser than the medicine people, Shamans, and Witchdoctors of any other culture.

Most scholars believe that the original Paleopagan Druids were wiped out by the Roman Empire and the Roman Catholic Church, with only scattered remnants of their beliefs and traditions surviving underground among the Bards and Brehons (or judges), of the Celtic peoples. There is no sound historical or anthropological evidence for a surviving intact tradition of Druidism – as distinct from scattered folk or family customs – anywhere in the world, with the possible exception of their cousins in the Baltic territories, who may have kept a form of Lithuanian Paleopaganism alive well into the twentieth century.

The fraternal or Mesopagan Druid groups were started in the 1700s, probably well over a thousand years after the last Celtic Druid had died, by well-meaning individuals who were not adverse to 'fibbing' about their individual and group histories. Iolo Morganwg, for example, was an early supporter of (Christian) Unitarianism, and by an odd coincidence, it turns out that the Paleopagans he wrote about were all Unitarians too!

These Mesopagan Druid groups met the needs of many people for a form of Paganism that would not require them to be publicly known as non-Christian. They did this by claiming that Druidism was not a specific religion but rather a philosophy applicable to any faith, and that the Paleopagan Druids had 'really' been, not just monotheists, but 'Pre-Christian Christians', waiting around patiently for Jesus to be born so they could all run out and convert!

One of these Mesopagan Druid groups may have influenced the first of the modern American Druid organizations, the Reformed Druids of North America. Originally founded in 1963 as a protest against coerced religion at Carleton, a small Midwestern college, the RDNA wound up continuing long after the protestors had won. Its polytheology was a sort of Zen Unitarianism, supporting a philosophy of constant questioning and meditation which was applicable to almost any religious quest. In this, as in some of its liturgical language, the RDNA closely resembled the Mesopagan groups. The founder of the RDNA, David Fisher, at one time claimed to have already been a Druid when he arrived at Carleton College.

The RDNA ceremonies invoked the Earth Mother as 'a personification of the material world' or Mother Nature, a Sky God called Be'al (based on a prot-Celtic root 'bel', referring to brightness or fire, as in Belenos, a Celtic Sun God) as 'a personification of the abstract essence of reality', and several Gods and Goddesses from the various Celtic countries. The Buddhist-style meditations and Celtic deity invocations had a powerful effect upon the young people who started the RDNA (messing around the with archetypes can do that), and many of them carried the 'faith' to other colleges when they graduated or transferred from Carleton. However, since the founders were far more concerned with individual philosophical and religious freedom than with the efficient operation of organizational structures, few of the local congregations, or 'groves', seem to have lasted for very long and no national network was ever successfully created. Nonetheless, new groves still seem to spring up occasionally in the United States and Canada. Carleton College now has an official part of its library, The International Druid Archives, assembled by recent graduate and RDNA historian Michael Scharding. It includes copies of the just published 'A Reformed Druid Anthology', incorporating my own 'The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)' with much additional materials from other RDNA founders and authors. (This is available on the World Wide Web and in electronic format – look for pointers on the www.adf.org Home Page and on other Pagan Web Pages.)

I was ordained as a Druid priest by Carleton graduate Robert Larson in October 1969. I was actively involved in the RDNA for several years, eventually editing the writings of the founders and adding materials of my own to produce the book mentioned above, 'The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)'. As time went by, I became increasingly convinced that Reformed Druidism should admit to being a Neopagan religion, and I worked to make its liturgy as effective as possible. Not too surprisingly, those early RDNA members who thought of themselves as Christians, Buddhists, and Agnostics, found my missionary zeal appalling.

After several false starts, with the New RDNA, the Schismatic DNA, the Hasidic DNA, to name a few, in 1983 I began 'A Druid Fellowship', or ADF; a fellowship rooted in the use of modern scholarship, effective liturgical design, and artistic excellence. I wanted to create a completely new and emphatically Neopagan Druid tradition. Naturally, small politics being what they are, we have had a few branchings-out of our own. The largest branch is Keltria, which 'schismed' from ADF a few years ago to focus their energies on specifically Keltic Druidism (as distinct from ADF's use of Indo-European sources in addition to Celtic ones), and on the esoteric aspects of Druidry. For the rest of this chapter, I'll discuss Neopagan Druidism as practiced in ADF. Keltria is similar in most ways, but you can write to them directly for details (see the resource list at the back of this book.)

Neopagan Druid Beliefs

Many of the members of ADF have come to accept most of the following beliefs. However, it is important to remember that not everyone would use the term 'belief' in reference to these concepts, and that every concept mentioned has a wide variety of accepted interpretations within the organization.

Thou Art God/dess: We believe that divinity is both immanent (internal) and transcendent (external), with immanence being far more needful at this crucial phase of human history. Deities can manifest at any point in space or time

they choose, including within human beings, through the processes known as 'inspiration', 'channeling', and 'possession'.

Goddesses and Gods: We believe that divinity is as likely to manifest in a female form as it is in a male form, and that the word 'Goddess' makes just as much sense as 'God'. Women and men are spiritual equals, and 'masculine' and 'feminine' attitudes, values, and roles are of equal importance.

Polytheism: We believe in a multiplicity of Gods and Goddesses, as well as lesser beings, many of Whom are worthy of respect, love and worship. We have a wide variety of non-exclusive concepts as to the nature of these entities. While some of us believe in a 'Supreme Being', Neopaganism is emphatically polytheistic. We have no figure of ultimate Evil.

Nature Worship: We believe that it is necessary to have respect and love for Nature as divine in Her own right, and to accept ourselves as part of Nature, rather than Her 'rulers'. Many of us accept what has come to be known as 'the Gaia hypothesis' : that the biosphere of our planet is a living being, Who is due all the love and support than we, Her children, can give Her. We consider ecological awareness and activism to be sacred duties.

Cautious Technophilia: We believe in accepting the positive aspects of Western science and technology, but in maintaining an attitude of wariness towards the supposed ethical neutrality of that science and technology. We consider it important that scientists (like everybody else) pay as much attention to their means as they do to their goals.

Religious Freedom: We believe that monolithic religious organizations, would-be messiahs and super-gurus are a hindrance to spiritual growth. We believe that healthy religions should have a minimum of dogma and a maximum amount of eclecticism and flexibility. Neopagan Druidism is an organic religion, and like all other organisms is growing, changing, and producing offshoots.

Positive Ethics: We believe that ethics and morality should be based upon joy, love, self-esteem, mutual respect, the avoidance of actual harm to ourselves and others, and the increase of public benefit. We try to balance people's needs for personal autonomy and growth with the necessity of paying attention to the impact of each individual's actions on the lives and welfare of others.

Religious Toleration: We believe that it is difficult for ordinary humans to commit offenses against the Gods and Goddesses, short of major crimes such as ecocide or genocide. Our deities are perfectly capable of defending Their own honor without the need for us to punish people for 'blasphemy' or 'heresy'.

The Good Life: We believe that human beings were meant to lead lives filled with joy, love, pleasure, beauty and humor. Most Neopagans are fond of food, drink, music, sex, and bad puns, and consider all of these (except possibly the puns) to be of spiritual value. However, we do not approve of addictive or compulsive behavior, and we support people with dysfunctional histories who have entered appropriate recovery programs.

Magic and Mystery: We believe that with proper training, art, discipline and intent, human minds and hearts are fully capable of performing most of the magic and miracles they are ever likely to need. Magical/miraculous acts are done through the use of what most of us perceive as natural, (some say 'divinely granted') psychic talents.

Liturgical Art and Science: We believe that there is an art and a science to creating, preparing and performing worship rituals. Our worship celebrations are continually evolving as we search for the most intellectually satisfying, artistically beautiful, spiritually powerful, and magically effective rites possible.

Connecting to the Cosmos: We believe in the importance of celebrating the solar, lunar and other cycles of our lives. We consciously observe the solstices, equinoxes, and the points in between, as well as the phases of the moon. Such 'rites of intensification' are human universals, as are the various ceremonies known as 'rites of passage' – celebrations of birth, puberty, personal dedication to a given deity or group, marriage, ordination, death and so forth. Together, these various sorts of observations help us to find ourselves in space and time.

Born-Again Paganism: Many of us believe in some sort of afterlife, usually involving rest and recovery in the Otherworld before reincarnating. We have no concept of 'eternal' punishment, refusing to worship deities who could be that cruel.

Hope and Action: We believe that people have the ability to solve their current problems, both personal and public, and to create a better world. Our utopian vision, tempered with common sense, leads us to a strong commitment to personal and global growth, evolution and balance.

Mystic Vision: We believe that people can progress far towards achieving personal growth, evolution and balance through the carefully planning alternation of their 'normal' states of consciousness. We use both ancient and modern methods of concentration, meditation, reprogramming and ecstasy.

Community Responsibility: We believe that human interdependence implies community service. Some of us are active in political, social, ecological and charitable organizations, while others prefer to work for the public good primarily through spiritual means (and many insist on doing both.)

Authenticity: We believe that if we are to achieve any of our goals, we must practice what we preach. Neopagan Druidism, like any other religion, should be a way of life, not merely a weekly or monthly social function. So we must always strive to make our lives consistent with our proclaimed beliefs.

Cooperation and Defense: We believe in cooperation and ecumenical activities with those members of other faiths who share all or most of these beliefs. We also believe in resisting efforts by members of dysfunctional religions who seek to persecute us or suppress our human rights.

There is more to Neopagan than the information give here, of course, and a great deal of variation in how these beliefs are extended to cover other topics. Some of our members are pacifists, and others are in the military; some are animal rights activists and vegetarians, others are carnivorous hunters; some are committed to conservative, others to alternative lifestyles. We actively encourage everyone to apply these principles to the practical questions of their daily lives.

Neopagan Druid Ceremony

ADF rituals, including the public worship rites known as 'liturgies', are rooted firmly in what we have been able to reconstruct of the cosmologies of the Paleopagan Indo-Europeans. These were woven, complex, and multi-valued, though remarkably similar from culture to culture, and were reflected in the social structures and myths of each culture, as the Dumezilian school of comparative mythology has clearly demonstrated. George Dumezil was the scholar who single-handedly rehabilitated the filed of comparative religion after decades of it being academically unfashionable. His theories have been substantiated and fleshed out by many respected scholars, as well as by myself and other Neopagan researchers.

One cosmology incorporates the idea of a 'polar' vertical axis reaching from the Celestial Realm above, down through "here', or the Midralm that humans normally live and function in, down to a Chthonic Realm or Underworld below. This

vertical axis is often symbolized with a Sacred Fire, a Sacred Well and a Sacred Tree. The Fire represents divinity descending from the Celestial Realm, the Well divinity ascending from the Chthonic Realm, and the Tree represents that which connects all the Worlds and Realms.

Another Cosmology is that of the 'Three Worlds' of Land, Waters (sometimes called 'Sea'), and Sky (sometimes called 'Middle Air'.) There can be seen as a horizontal axis running through the center of the vertical one, which is the here and now, with the Worlds being reflected in the Celestial and Chthonic Realms. A polarity of values running through all these is that of 'light' forces and being (of order/safety, not necessarily of Good) and 'dark' forces and beings (of chaos/danger, not necessarily Evil) existing in every World and Realm. Yet another polarity is that of 'Here' and 'Outside' (or 'the Otherworld' or 'Faery'), marking a distinction between the physical and the spiritual aspects of reality. All of these cosmological concepts can be seen in Neopagan Druid rituals, with emphases varying, depending upon which particular Indo-European culture a given grove has chosen to focus. (all are allowed, though Irish is the most common.)

The primary deity worshipped by Neopagan Druids is the Earth Mother, also known as Mother Nature or Gaia. She can be thought of as the consciousness of the biosphere, as a personification of the fertility of the Earth, the Mother of all other deities – at least those worshipped by humans on this planet- and so forth. Gaia is the literal and metaphysical ground upon which we stand, the source and mirror of all that lives and dies. She is mentioned prominently near the beginning and end of every Neopagan Druid ceremony.

ADF liturgy also focuses strongly on a Divine Gatekeeper, deities or other spirits of Bardic inspiration, the 'Three Kindreds' of Deities, Ancestors and Nature Spirits, and even the forces of Chaos – very carefully. Every ADF liturgy has a specific Divine 'guest of honor' or two, to whom the majority of our worship is dedicated. Our offerings consist of songs, chants, dances, ritual dramas, poems and other works of art. These are 'sacrificed' instead of the blood offerings of our Paleopagan predecessors.

The Vision of Neopagan Druidism

What makes ADF different from other Druidic organizations and other Neopagan traditions? This is how we see it:

In ADF we believe that excellence in scholarship is vitally important. The Goddesses and Gods do not need us to tell lies on their behalf, nor can we understand the ways of our Paleopagan predecessors by indulging in romantic fantasies, no matter how 'politically correct' or emotionally satisfying they might be. So we promote no tall tales of universal matriarchies, of Stonehenge being built by Druid magic, nor of the ancient Druids originally having been Shamanic crystal-masters from Atlantis. We do not whitewash the occasional barbarism of our predecessors, nor exaggerate it. We use real archeology, real history and real comparative mythology – and we are willing to change our opinions when new information becomes available, even if it destroys our pet theories. This approach is rare in the history of Druidic revival and the Neopagan community.

In ADF we also believe that artistic excellence is important, both in ritual and outside of it. The Gods and Goddesses deserve the very best that we can give them, so we encourage our members to develop their creative skills to the highest levels that each can attain. Our Bards, painters, woodcarvers, needle-workers and liturgists are among the best in the Neopagan community.

In ADF we believe that excellence in clergy training and practice is vital for any healthy, growing religion. To that end, we are attempting to create a professional clergy training program equal in rigor and superior in results to anything done by the world's other religions. Unlike many alternative religions, we will never have 'instant initiations' into our clergy. Nor do we assume that every member of our religion will have a genuine vocation to the clergy, though it is likely that, for the first couple of decades, a high proportion will. However, we expect that eventually the vast majority of our people will be laity. Nonetheless, everyone is expected to communicate with the Goddesses and Gods in her or his own way – spiritual growth is not a monopoly of the clergy. Every human being needs to learn how to contact the divine fire within, how to talk with trees, and how to unleash the power of magic to save the Earth. If there is such a thing as 'spiritual excellence', we must strive to express that as well.

ADF's study program is unlike those of any other Druidic organization, in that we assume that the primary purpose of participants is to undertake leadership roles within the Neopagan Community. Thus we have a 'university without walls' system of academic and practical studies, designed to produce professional level clergy, Bards, judges, healers, ecologists and others. Credit is given to life experiences and students are expected to be able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills upon request. While esoteric studies, including magic and mysticism, are part of the program, exoteric studies, including first aid, non-profit management, history, comparative religions, counseling and mainstream science, are emphasized. It can take several years for a person to work here or his way through the program, but we are not in any hurry.

Naturally, we believe that liturgical excellence is rooted in these other forms of excellence. Sound scholarship (especially historical and mythological), beautiful art, genuinely competent clergy, and people who are ready, willing, and able to channel divine energies – all are crucial to creating the powerful religious and magical ceremonies that we and the Earth so desperately need.

We have two mottos that we have been using so far. The first is based on the ideas just described: "Why not excellence?" This emphasis on the excellence as a goal makes us both unique and controversial within the Neopagan community. Although some folks think that such emphasis 'isn't democratic', we feel that our concept of divine immanence implies that everyone has something they are good at (you just need to contact the deities within you and channel Their creative power.) However, our second motto – 'As fast as a speeding oak tree!' – serves to remind us all that the achievement of excellence takes time.

We have already officially declared the first Druidic dogma: the Doctrine of Archdruidic Fallibility. No one in ADF, not even the Archdruid, has all the answers. We make no claims of handing down an 'authentic' unbroken tradition from the past, and have very strong doubts about any group that does make such claims. Thus we are free to evolve our systems within the organic structures already created, adapting them as necessary to suit the needs of coming generations. We are also free to make many mistakes in the process – a freedom we've already taken advantage of. Every member of ADF has both the opportunity and the obligation to contribute her or his time, money, energy and talents to the adventure.

We believe Neopaganism is eventually going to become a mainstream religious movement, with hundreds of thousands (if not millions) of members, and that this will be a good thing, both for the individuals involved, and for the survival of the Earth Mother. Neopaganism is currently riding the crest of the 'baby boom'. Many people who grew up in the 1960s and 70s are discovering us at about the same time that they are realizing

both the desperate state of our planet and the eternal relevance of our youthful ideals. Membership in the Neopagan community is quietly growing at a geometric rate, both through word of mouth and through the many do-it-yourself books now available, giving us an ever greater impact on the mainstream culture.

All these Neopagans are going to need publicly accessible worship, teaching, counseling and healing. Within thirty years we expect to see indoor temples and/or sacred groves throughout North America and Europe, staffed by full-time, paid, professional clergy. These will provide the full range of needed services to the Neopagan community, with more 'corruption' than that experienced by the Unitarians, the Buddhists, or the Quakers. We anticipate globally televised Samhain rites at Stonehenge, and Beltane ceremonies attended by thousands in every major city. We see Neopagan clergy taking part in international religious conferences as equals with clergy from other faiths. We see our children wearing pentacles, Druid Sigils, and Thor Hammers to school as easily as others now wear crosses, Stars of David, or Hands of Fatima. We see talented and well trained Neopagan clergy leading thousands of people in effective magical and mundane actions to save endangered species, stop polluters, and preserve wilderness. We see our healers saving thousands of lives and our Bards inspiring millions through music and video concerts and dramas. We see Neopaganism as a mass religion, changing social, political, and environmental attitudes around the world and stopping the death-mongers in their tracks.

This vision is very different from that of most current Neopagans, who focus on small groups as their ideal. Those small groups will always be an essential part of the Neopagan religious community, operating both within and apart from larger organizations, just as their equivalents have throughout human history. As wee see it, the future of Neopaganism will require a wide variety of different group sizes, structures, and ritual styles. To lose any of the currently existing approaches risks impoverishing our spiritual 'gene pool'. So we are not out to 'replace' other Neopagan traditions, even though we believe that we have something unique and wonderful to share with the world.

Doing that sharing requires 'going public', something that many Neopagan traditions have been reluctant to do. Granted, it may remain necessary, for another decade or two, for some Neopagans to remain in hiding wherever fundamentalist hate is rampant. Even for those of us in publicly-oriented Neopagan groups, it will take courage and caution for us to safely 'come from the shadows'. Yet, if we follow the lessons learned by the civil rights movements of our generation, we will eventually have full freedom to practice our beliefs. Accepting and encouraging our community's growth, while avoiding missionary fever, will be a vital tool in achieving that task.

We believe that Neopagan Druidism has an important role to play in the future of Neopaganism and the survival of the Earth. Already other Neopagan traditions are imitating ADF's training program, our liturgical techniques, and our emphasis on the Arts. If we can attract enough people who are willing to dedicate their time, energy, and money to achieving these goals, the vision can be manifested. We can save the Earth Mother, create a global culture of prosperity and freedom, and usher in a genuine 'New Age.'

Suggested Reading

The following books will get you started on understanding ADF's approach to reconstructing Druidism;

Scott Littleton, C. *The New Comparative Mythology, An Anthropological Assessment of the Theories of Georges Dumezil*, Third Edition, University of California, 1980. This is the best critical introduction to Dumezil's work, with an extensive bibliography of relevant books and articles by Dumezil and others.

Doniger O'Flaherty, *Wendy. Women, Androgynes, and Other Mythical Beasts*, University of Chicago, 1982. O'Flaherty (now known as Doniger) give an extensive discussion of the sexual politics of the IE myth system using sound research and a clear presentation. She is also the author of: *Shiva, the Erotic Ascetic*; *The Origins of Evil in Hindu Mythology*; *Other People's Myths*; and an excellent translation of the *Rig Veda*, among many other books and articles.

Piggot, Stuart. *The Druids*, Thames and Hudson, 1985. The best book on the subject so far, covering the archaeological, classical, and historical evidence concerning the Druids, both Paleopagan and Mesopagan, albeit in a very anti-romantic and anti-religious style.

Adler, Margot. *Drawing Down the Moon*, Beacon Press, 1987. This is the best book that anyone has published about Neopagan movements in America. Note, however, that the discussions of Reformed Druidism do not reflect what is going on in ADF today. There is a nice section on ADF starting at p. 325 in this second edition.

Bonewits, Isaac. *Real Magic*, Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1989. A basic introduction to the theory and practice of magic. Includes an extensive bibliography of other titles that will be helpful.

Friedrich, Paul. *Proto-Indo-European Trees*, University of Chicago, 1970. Primarily a linguistic monograph, this in the only book to cover all the various species of trees known to have had names in the PIE language. He includes a great deal of religious and symbolic detail.

Stover, Leon E. and Kraig, Bruce. *Stonehenge, the Indo-European Heritage*, Nelson-Hall, 1978. A harsh but fascinating look at the people associated with the various stages of Stonehenge's construction. The authors belong to the 'hard primitivism' school of IE studies, are hostile to religion and positively rabid about clergy, but the book does an excellent job of straightening out the bewildering array of prehistoric and early IE cultures. The bibliography and research notes are great.

Smith, Brian K. *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*, Oxford University Press, 1989. A superb introduction to the complex world of Vedic ritual and metaphysics. Much of what puzzles the author will make perfectly good sense to Neopagan ritualists, and will give us some glimpses of what western Druidism must have been like.

Eliade, Mircea. *A History of Religious Ideas*, 3 Volumes. Novl 1 –*From the Stone Age to the Elusian Mysteries*, University of Chicago Press, 1978, and Vol 2 – *From Gautama Buddha to the Triumph of Christianity*, University of California Press, 1982, are of most value to Neopagans. This is simply the best material on the history of religious ideas available, organized both chronologically and thematically. It includes an enormous amount of information on Paleopaganism and early Christianity.

Rees, Alwyn Brinley. *Celtic Heritage*, Thames & Hudson, 1961. A Dumezilian analysis of Celtic mythology and religion,

based primarily on Irish and secondarily on Welsh materials. Gives an excellent overview of basic patterns of belief, and will explain much of the cosmology underlying Celtic mythology and ritual.

Hutton, Ronald. *The Pagan Religions of the Ancient British Isles, Their Nature and Legacy*, Blackwell, 1991. A brilliant review of the history, prehistory and psuedohistory of British Paleopagainsm. This is an excellent tour of all 'the things we know that just ain't so', and belongs in every Druid's library.

Lewis, Bernard. *History –Remembered, Recovered, Invented*. Princeton University Press, 1975. A succinct introduction to the ways in which people filter history through their personal and cultural needs, fears and wishes, even when they are trying to be unbiased. An excellent cure to excessive romanticism, scientolatry, and matriarchal fever.

Caesar, Julius, trans. Anne and Peter Wiseman. *The Battle for Gaul*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1980. A modern colloquial translation, filled with dozens of explanatory maps, photographs and drawings.

Carr-Goom, Phillip. *Elements of the Druid Tradition*, Element Books, 1991. A brief introduction to the facts and facies of Mesopagan Druidism, by the current Chosen Chief of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids. Overly romantic, yet honest about absent historical evidence. Includes excellent guided meditations and good ideas about bridging the gaps between Meso- and Neopagan Druids. Also recommended is Carr-Gomm's *The Druid Way*, the story of a vision quest/pilgrimage through the landscape of southern England, Element Books, 1993.

Some 300 or so additional recommended books can be found in the back of the ADF Study Manual.

We do **not** recommend any non-fiction by Robert Graves (on Celtic topics), D.J. Conway, Douglas Monroe, Lewis Spence, H.P. Balvatsky, Edward Williams (aka Iolo Marganwg), or any works by others based on their writings, nor those of Merlin Stone, Barbara Walker, or other revisionist idealogues. Much of what is available in print about the ancient Druid is hogwash, so read carefully and beware of unverified assumptions, nationalistic biases, monotheistic reinterpretations, or claims of intact underground family traditions of Druidism. When in doubt, consult your nearest tree…

Isaac Bonewits has been a Druidic priest for over 25 years, and a Wiccan priest for 15 years. He is one of North America's best known authorities on Neopaganism, Druidism, Witchcraft and the Occult. He hold the only accredited (B.A.) degree ever given in Magic, (U.C. Berkeley), and is the author of the classic introductory textbook, *Real Magic*, as well as the infamous FRP game magic system, *Authentic Thaumaturgy*. He is the founder and Archdruid Emeritus of Ar nDraiocht Fein: A Druid Fellowship (ADF), the largest and best known Neopagan Druid movement in North America, and co-leads a Gardnerian coven with his wife, Deborah Lipp. He is also a singer and songwriter of Pagan songs, some of which have appeared on two albums: '*Be Pagan Once Again!*' and '*Avalon is Rising!*', with a third, '*We Are One Family!*', to be released in Winter 1995/6. He was an early fighter for Aquarian civil rights, having written the *Aquarian Manifesto* and started the seminal Aquarian Anti-Defamation League in 1974. On January 1, 1996 he resigned his position as Archdruid of ADF and is currently finishing books on Neopagan polytheology and liturgical design, as well as his own histories of Druidism and Witchcraft.

He can be contact through P.O. Box 1021, Nyack NY, USA 10960-1021, as well as through Ibonewits@aol.com and via other online services. He is especially interested in hearing from European and South American Druid organizations.

Resource Guides

[A few select sections incorporated by
Mike Scharding to show extent of computer use in 1996]

The two largest Druid groups in America are Keltria, PO Box 33284 Minneapolis MN 55433 and ADF, PO Box 516, E. Syracuse, NY 13057-0516. Information on these, and other American groups is available in American Druidism: A Guide to American Druid Groups by Daniel Hansen from CSC, 27013 Pacific Hwy S. 315, Kent WA 98032 USA. (Both A Druid Directory and American Druidism are also available from The Oak Tree Press, PO Box 1333 Lewes E. Sussex BN7 IDX. Email: office@obod.co.uk)

Archives

The International Druid Archives holds the largest publicly accessible assembly of documents from modern Druid movements worldwide. To consult, contact Carleton College Archives (re: Druid Archives) 300 North College St, Northfield, Minnesota 55057 USA.

Magazines

Aisling PO Box 196, London, WCIA 2DY
The Druid's Voice PO Box 29, St. Leonards-on-Sea, E. Sussex TN 37 7YP
Keltria Journal of Druidism PO Box 48369, Minneapolis MN 55488 USA
Druids Progress PO Box 9420 Newark DE 18714-9420 USA
Metrodruidz Nuz, Green Man Grove (ADF), PO Box 3495, Jersey City, NJ 07303 USA

Druids on the Net by Erynn Laurie

The Internet and other computer networks are an ever-expanding part of many people's lives. Druids are an active part of this growing network, participating in fascinating discussions, building Web pages, debating the nature of Druidism and building friendships all around the world. If you have a computer and a modem, you can join in this aspect of the Druid renaissance through local bulletin boards, commercial online services like Compuserve or America OnLine, or local Internet service providers….

… Because of the nature of the net, these lists are not and cannot be comprehensive. They are merely meant as an entry into the world of Druidism online. Net resources come and go without notice. Although these sites and lists were active at the time this book went to press, some may no longer be available when you try them. Listings here are almost entirely English language resources, along with a few for Celtic languages.

Local BBS Access…

Usenet Newsgroups…

alt. mythology
alt.pagan
alt.religion.druid
soc.culture.celtic

Mailing lists….

World Wide Web Pages….

ADF Web page
http://www.adf.org/
Anders Magick Page
http://www.nada.kth.se/~nv91-asa/magick.html
Bibilographies of Interest to Mythologists
http://www.the-wire.com/culture.mythology/mythbibl.html
BUBL Information Service: Religions of Ancient Peoples
Http://www.bubl.bath.ac.uk/BUBL/ReligPre.html
Celtic Culture Page
http://www.pic.net/~callahan/celtic.htm
Celtic, Germanic & Nordic Culture Page
http://ukanaix.ce.ukans.edu/~eickwort/cu/hrd_main.html
Celtic & Viking Art Files
http://www.tardis.ed.ac.uk/~feorag/paganlink/gallery/celtpics.html
Ceolas Celtic Music Archive
http://www.standford.edu/ceolas.html
Dalriada Heritage Society
Gopher://gopher.almac.cu.uk/11/scotland/dalriada
DrOOP Home Page
http://www.piexlations.com/users/pixelations/drphome.html
Lysator Pagan Files Directory
http://www.lystaor.liu.se/ftp/pub/religion/neopagan/index.html
Myths & Legends
http://publpages.unh.edu/~cbsiren/myth.html
Nemeton-L Home Page
http://www.speakeasy.org/~mimir/nemeton.html
Order of Bards Ovates & Druids Home Page
http://www.obod.co.uk/obod/
Pagan Resources Page
http://www.ssc.org/~athomps/pagan/paganres.html/
Rowan Fairgrove's Home Page
http://www.crc.ricoh.com/~rowanf/rowanf.html

Brief information on Druid groups is available in the United States by telephoning 1-800-DRUIDRY [not available c.2003]

Email information via the Internet on the large Druid groups is available from:
ADF@aol.com Keltria@aol.com OBOD@aol.com

Mike's Response to The Druid Renaissance

This is the only chapter in the book devoted to America, but there are other very impressive chapters illustrating the chain of lineage and connection between the other Druid movements in Europe and the British Isles. Written not long before his retirement from the role of ADF's Archdruid, Isaac's essay for this chapter is well written and draws upon various early essays that has written; such as "The Other Druids," "Neopaganism Druidism" and several ADF early publications like "A Vision of Neopagan Druidism." Written a year or two after inviting Isaac to the Carleton Grove, this article shows a better understanding of the "family tree" nature of Druidism in America branching out from RDNA to produce ADF, Keltria, Druidactios and other spin-off groups influenced by them.

Isaac continues to push the possible fraternal origins of Reformed Druidism through the agency of David Fisher's statement that he belonged to an earlier tradition. However, I believe, that as Isaac showed Iolo Morganwg creating a Unitarian format for his Meso-paganism; it is quite possible for Fisher's groups to make an Episcopalian/Unitarian format for their Druidism. Certain members were masons, which may have led to the ten orders and the initiatory practices.

Several Groves, besides Carleton, have lasted a long time, such as Berkeley (1969-1993), Hazlenut (1978-present), Birch (1983-Present), Greenwood (1976-Present), but indeed most lasted about three to four years. The recent updates about the Archives and the A Reformed Druid Anthology are well-appreciated to show that the movements isn't moribund.

The Resource Section references to Modern Druidism were included to show the state of available materials as was likely to have been seen in 1996 at the beginning of the Internet Revolution in the Neo-Pagan movement. The RDNA had yet to play a large role in this movement, with ADF & Keltria producing a great deal of information; followed closely by OBOD from England. In those years, it was a small pool, and most people were familiar with each other.

Who is Isaac Bonewits?

(Immodest Third-Person Self-Introduction)

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Isaac Bonewits is North America's leading expert on ancient and modern Druidism, Witchcraft and the rapidly growing Earth Religions movement.

A practicing Neo-Pagan priest, scholar, teacher, bard and polytheologian for over thirty years, he has coined much of the vocabulary and articulated many of the issues that have shaped the 300,000 strong Neo-Pagan community in the United States and Canada, with opinions both playful and controversial.

As an author (of Real Magic, Authentic Thaumaturgy, and numerous articles, reviews and essays), a singer-songwriter (with three albums to his credit), and a "spellbinding" speaker, he has educated, enlightened and entertained two generations of modern Goddess worshippers, nature mystics, and followers of other minority belief systems, and has explained these movements to journalists, law enforcement officers, college students, and academic researchers.

He is the founder and Archdruid Emeritus of Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, (the best known Neo-Pagan Druid organization in North America), a 3° Druid within the United Ancient Order of Druids (the best known Mesopagan Druid order), a retired High Priest in both the Gardnerian ("British Orthodox") and the N.R.O.O.G.D. ("California Heterodox") traditions of Wicca (Neo-Pagan Witchcraft), an initiate of Santeria (Afro-Cuban Mesopaganism) and the "Caliphate Line" of the Ordo Templi Orientis (Aleister Crowley's Mesopagan magical tradition), as well as a member of other Neo-Pagan and Mesopagan Druid orders.

Articulate, witty, yet scholarly, he is currently writing books on Druidism, Witchcraft, liturgical design, and polytheology. Should your topic be outside his expertise, he can quickly refer you to colleagues, scholars and spokespersons for any legitimate Neo-Pagan movement.

Mike's Response to Who Is Isaac Bonewits

This is an accurate summary of how Isaac, and his friends, judge himself. An intriguing fellow.

Encyclopedia of American Religions

6th Edition
Published by Gale Research
Edited by J. Gordon Melton. 1999

***1719 (p. 805)**

Ar nDraiocht Fein: A Druid Fellowship, Inc.

PO Box 516

East Syracuse, NY 13057

Ar nDraiocht Fein: A Druid Fellowship, Inc. is a Neopagan Druid community founded in the mid-1980s by Isaac Bonewits. The attempt to reconstruct and revive a form of Druidism, began at Carleton College during the 1962-1963 school year. It spread from there as the Reformed Druids of North America. Bonewits became a Druid in 1969. The following year he attained some degree of fame when he graduated from the University of California at Berkeley with a degree in Magic. He published his survey of the field, Real Magic, in 1971. Through the 1970s, Bonewits took a prominent role in Druid affairs. He published a newsletter and edited the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) (1976), but toward the end of the decade he withdrew from leadership and kept a low profile for several years.

Bonewits reasserted his position as an Archdruid in 1984 with the publication of the first issue of The Druids' Progress and the announcement of the founding of Ar nDraiocht Fein as a specifically Neopagan form of Druidism. The order maintains a contemporary faith based upon the latest academic research and assessment of ancient Druidism. While reviving the best aspects of the past, this approach advocates self-consciously living in a modern scientific, artistic, ecological, and holistic context. Like other Neopagan groups, it is a nature worshipping, polytheistic faith.

Bonewits also designed the new Druidism so it was not limited to Celtic traditions, but pan-Indo-European to allow a broad inter-cultural participation. Though Neopagan Druidism is seen as very close to Wicca, it is distinguished from Wicca by its emphasis upon polytheism rather than just two major Wiccan deities (the Sky God and the Earth Mother), its large group orientation as opposed to small covens, and its public inclusionary character.

Neopagan Druids are organized into groves that meet twice monthly and celebrate the common eight pagan festivals. Bonewits (with the assistance of other members) has written The ADF Grove Organizers Handbook, the ADF Members' Guide, the ADF Study Manual, and the ADF Liturgical Manual. Recently Bonewits retired and was named Archdruid Emeritus. Ian Corrigan has been named acting Archdruid in the interim before a New Archdruid is designated.

Membership: In 1992 there were approximately 375 members in the United States and approximately 15 in Canada. There were 12 chartered groves in the United States. Individual members could be found in Japan, Czechoslovakia, England, Australia and Ireland.

Educational Facilities: The ADF study program provides college-level training for Druidic clergy and other leaders.

Periodicals: The Druids' Progress. News from the Mother Grove. The ADF Membership Directory.

Remarks: It appears that most, if not all, of the various Druid groups that were functioning in the 1970s and 1980s have disbanded and that their work now survives through the ADF. However, at last report there was a former group of the Reformed Druids of North America still functioning in California.

Sources:

Adler, Margot. Drawing Down the Moon. Boston: Beacon Press, 1986.

Bonewits, Isaac. Real Magic. New York: Coward, McGann, and Goeghengan, 1971.

Bonewits, Isaac. What Do Neopagan Druids Believe? Newark, DE: Mother Grove, 1991. Tract.

Bonewits, Isaac. What is Ar nDraiocht Fein? Newark, DE: Mother Grove, 1991. Tract.

#1747 (P. 816)

Divine Circle of the Sacred Grove

Box 1737

Fontana CA 92334

The Divine Circle of the Sacred Grove was founded in 1985 by Janette Gordon, a priestess who has a long history of participation in Druidism as well as training in Wicca and a broad mastery of occultism in general. In 1965 she founded the Order of Druids, School and Drunements, which was incorporated into the Divine Circle. The church holds weekly religious services and the school offers a full course of study on Wicca, magic, ritual, healing, occultism, and related topics. The school operates as a correspondence school under the tutelage of Janette and her husband, Norman Gordon. She has authored all of the curriculum lesson material.

The church teaches the balance of Nature affirmed in ritual activity, the polarity of Goddess and God, and a way of life based upon personal empowerment through magic. While operating out of a single center in Fontana, California, the church has extended its influence to Wiccans across the United States through its school, which offers master's and doctorate degrees to its graduates. It also offers special training for the priesthood and provides an opportunity for graduates to become initiates and priest of the church.

Membership: Not reported.

#1759 (p. 820)

Henge of Keltria

Minneapolis, MN 55448-0369

The Henge of Keltria was established in 1987 (incorporated in 1995) by co-founders Tony Taylor and Sable Taylor, both former members of the Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF.) The Taylor had some administrative differences with ADF and rejected its idea of multicultural Druidism. They work within a context of Celtic Druidism. The Henge of Keltria is a Neopagan group dedicated to protecting and preserving Mother Earth, honoring the ancestors, revering the spirits of nature, and worshipping the Celtic gods and goddesses. Special emphasis is placed on spiritual development fostered through study and practice of the Druidic arts and Celtic magick. Through training, networking, resource material, ritual participation, and meaningful communication, the group aims to provide a religious and spiritual framework through which people may reach their full potential.

Affiliated local groups are called groves. Each grove is free to compose and perform ritual and magick geared to its own particular focus, provided such work remains compatible with the beliefs, ethics, and ritual and structural framework of the Henge.

Members progress through three grades of initiation called rings, a symbolic nature derived from the rings of a tree; the ring system measures the growth of its participants. The three rings are named for sacred trees: the Ring of the Birch, the Ring of the Yew, and the Ring of the Oak. Within the highest ring, the Oak, there are three tiers – Hawthorn, Rowan and Mistletoe. Advancements are based on time, knowledge, and service to either a local grove or the Henge. Special provisions are made for those transferring from other Neopagan paths, so that those with several years of training and experience do not need to begin at the bottom.

Membership: Not reported. Groves are found in Minnesota, Wisconsin and California.

Periodicals: Keltria: A Journal of Druidism and Celtic Magic. Serpent Stone: A Journal of Druidic Wisdom.

#1781 (p.825)

Reformed Druids of North America

C/o Live Oak Grove

616 Minor Road

Orinda, CA 94563

The Reformed Druids of North America was formed in 1963 by a group of students at Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, as a protest against a compulsory chapel attendance requirement. It began as a result of a conversation between David Fisher, Howard Cherniack, and Norman Nelson. The idea emerged of forming a non-bloody, sacrificial Druidic group. If students were denied credit for attending its services, then they would claim religious persecution; if they received credit, the whole project would be revealed as a hoax, thus ridiculing the requirement. The requirement was dropped during the 1963-1964 school year, but the group decided that, since it enjoyed the rituals so much, it would continue. At that time, the structure was completed and the major system of beliefs outlined.

Rituals had been constructed by the Reformed Druids from materials in anthropological literature, such as The Golden Bough, the classical text by Sir James Fraser. A henge (an open-air ring temple) was constructed on nearby Monument Hill, where the first Protestant service in Minnesota was held. Though frequently destroyed, the henge was constantly replaced. Ritual is directed toward nature and is held outdoors (in an oak grove where possible. Robes of white are worn. The passing of the waters-of-life is a symbol of oneness with nature. Festival days are Samhain (Nov. 1), Mid-winter, Oimelc (Feb. 1), Beltane (May 1), Mid-summer, and Lughnasadh (Aug. 1.) The Celtic/Druidic gods and goddesses are retained to help focus attention on nature. They include Danu, the mother of the gods and humanity, and Taranis, one of her children, the god of thunder and lightning.

The Reformed Druids are organized into autonomous groves.. Each grove is headed by an arch-druid, a preceptor (for

business matters) and a server (to assist the Arch-druid.) Three order of the priesthood are recognized. Higher orders are honorary. The Druid Chronicles, consisting of the history, rules, and customs of the Reformed Druids of North America, serve as the scriptures. These were composed mainly by Jan Johnson and David Frangquist, who succeeded the first arch-druid.

Over the years, a continuity of organization was effected through a lineage of arch-druids. The original arch-druid entered the priesthood of the Episcopal Church. Others established groves in different parts of the country. In 1978, locally autonomous groves were functioning in Northfield and Minneapolis, Minnesota; Chicago and Evanston, Illinois; Ann Arbor, Michigan,; Webster Groves, Missouri; New York City; and Palo Alto and Berkeley, California.

In the Mid-1970s, leadership of the Druid movement passed to Isaac Bonewits, who had made national headlines when he graduated from the University of California at Berkeley with a degree in magick. Bonewits headed a Berkeley grove. More importantly, he compiled the Druid writings, adding material he had written on Druidism and in 1977 published the Druid Chronicles (Evolved), which contain the history, rituals, laws, and customs for the Reformed Druids. In 1978 he began Pentalpha as a national Druid periodical. After several years of publishing the magazine and trying to promote Druidism, Bonewits withdrew from all leadership roles (though he continues to be active in Pagan affairs otherwise.) Emmon Bodfish became preceptor of the Berkeley Grove, which was renamed the Live Oak Grove and moved to Orinda, California.

Membership: In 1997 there were two groves: Orinda, California and Keene, New Hampshire.

Periodicals: Druid Missal-Any

Sources:

Bonewits, P.E. Isaac. Authentic Thaumaturgy. Albany, CA: The CHAOSium, 1978.
Bonewits, P.E. Isaac. Real Magic. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1971.
Bonewits, P.E. Isaac. The Druid Chronicles (Evolved.) Berkeley, CA: Berkeley Drunemetum Press, 1976.

Mike's Response to Encyclopedia of American Religions 6th Edition

ADF: A good essay of ADF, although highly reliant on materials from Isaac Bonewits and Adler. In fact most of the entries in this section of his encyclopedia on Neopagans, are named in Drawing Down the Moon. An interview with another member would add more variety to Isaac's standard history of the group.

DCSG: Although this group has not enjoyed a good reputation after reputedly repackaging ADF materials, and various financial schemes. It is however an adequate representation of the group, and they've moved on-line, operating out of Arizona.

HK: Useful addition of Keltria to the Encyclopedia, one which more or less draws from the interview of Taylor in the book, *People of the Earth*.

RDNA: See my other objections to Melton. Mostly drawing about "What and Why is Reformed Druidism in the 1970s?" at the beginning of Druid Chronicles (Evolved.) A new error was added, referring to a "henge," when they should be referring to an altar repeatedly built on the site in the early 60s. A stone circle has been built nearby at Carleton in 1999, but I'm sure he would not have known about it in 1997. They did not do an update since 1986, as is shown by assuming that the Orinda grove was still operating in 1997, and the Missal-Any had stopped in 1991. Instead, at that time, the major groves operating were at Carleton (MN), Hazelnut (CA), Birch (NH), Akita (Japan), Greenwood (WA) and Big River Grove (MN.) A simple letter to Carleton could have provided that information. Regardless, Melton still puts out one of the wider encyclopedic sources on Druidism.

Modern Druidic Movements:

From www.religioustolerance.org
Circa 1999

Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids (OBOD): There are two beliefs concerning the development of this group. One traces their origin to the Ancient Order of Druids (AOD) by Henry Hurle in England in 1781. This group repeatedly split due to internal dissension into many separate organizations. By 1918, there were five groups attempting to perform solstice ceremonies at Stonehenge; all were breakaway groups from the original Ancient Order of Druids. By 1955, all had disappeared except for the British Circle of Universal Bond which subsequently split in 1963 to form the OBOD. The other lineage is claimed by the OBOD who trace their ancestry back through the AOD to a group founded in England in 1717 by John Toland. He is said to have combined local groups of Druids (called groves) from a 10 locations into the Mother Grove. The OBOD's current address is: PO Box 1333, Lewes, East Sussex, England, BN7 3ZG. Email address: office@obod.co.uk

The British Druid Order was founded in 1979 by Philip Shallcrass and Emma Restall Orr. They "see Druidry as a process of constant change and renewal whereby the tradition is continually recreated to address the needs of each generation." They currently have about 3,000 members, mostly in the UK. 3 Their address is: British Druid Order, PO Box 29, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex TN37 7YP, England. Email addresses are: greywolf@druidorder.demon.co.uk and bobcat@nemeton.demon.co.uk

The Reformed Druids of North America: This movement started as a type of undergraduate prank at a mid-western U.S. college (Carleton College at Northfield, MN) in 1963. (One source says 1957.) The administration had required that all students to attend church. Some students invented the RDNA as a reaction to this rule. The leaders were amazed when many of the students wanted to continue the RDNA, even after the protest against the administration had been won. From this source, a number of Neopagan Druidic movements have split off, including:

Ar nDraiocht Fein: (ADF) This can be loosely translated as "our own Druidism." Their name is pronounced "arn ree-ocht fane." It was founded by Isaac Bonewits who is currently the Archdruid Emeritus. The ADF emphasizes scholarly research, and " a blend of ancient practices and modern realities." His motto is "paganize mainstream religion by mainstreaming paganism." Their goal is to recreate a Pan-European Druidism, involving elements from Baltic, Celtic, Germanic Slavic and even pre-classical Greek and Roman beliefs. The ADF publishes a quarterly ADF journal, a bimonthly News from the Mother Grove, and a semi-yearly Druid's Progress. As of mid-2002, they have 43 groves in the U.S. and two in Ontario, Canada. Their web site is at: http://www.adf.org Their Email is at address is: ADF-Office@adf.org. Their postal address is: ADF, P.O. Box 17874, Tucson, AZ 85731-7874

The Henge of Keltria: Five ADF members compiled a list of 13 concerns about the ADF at the Pagan Spirit Gathering in 1986, Emulating the actions of Martin Luther, they attached the list to the door of Isaac Bonewits' van in 1986. Fortunately for Isaac, they used tape in place of the nails that a Christian urban legend says that Martin Luther used. Keltria has focused on ancient Celtic religion and holds only non-public rituals. They published a journal: Keltria: A Journal of Druidism and Celtic Magick" from 1986 to 1998.

Mike's Response to Modern Druidic Movements:

The website religioustolerance.org has been around since about 1996 and providing a neutral, level-headed third-party description of the various major and minor religious movements on the internet for reference. As such, it has dispelled a lot of rumors. Probably working off Melton's materials and Drawing Down the Moon.

Druid Organizations

Excerpts taken from Jean Markale's
"The Druids: Celtic Priests of Nature."
Published by Inner Traditions Intl Ltd, 1999

It is an accepted fact that there are no official written texts revealing an authentic druidic tradition; moreover, this is quite convenient, for it allows any person to claim that he or she is the heir of a tradition transmitted orally over the centuries. This being the case you should not feel compelled to believe such individuals. It would be quite pointless to ask those who claim descent from an oral lineage for the least little bit of proof, in that, by definition, no proof exists. I am not saying that there are no true oral traditions that have survived the ages. This would be ludicrous to profess and as equally difficult to prove as the fore written statement. It is necessary to say, however, that you should keep your mind clear when making decisions about covens, groves, circles and the like.

The Druidic brotherhoods can be classified into four principle categories. The first is the line of John Toland (1669-1722), an Irish Catholic who founded his druidic order on September 22nd, 1717. This order is quite an antiestablishment movement, currently known under the name of the Druid Order, whose founder's paganizing tendencies have been tempered by modifications introduced by the Anglicans. The influence of the famous poet William Blake, a member of the brotherhood, appears to have been very important on this clearly esoteric druidic branch, that also has the allures of a secret society.

The Second line of druidic brotherhoods, The Ancient Order of Druids, was founded by Henry Hurle in 1781. Hurle, a carpenter, gave this brotherhood a quite visible Masonic coloring, as well as humanitarian preoccupations, particularly those concerning mutualism and social providence. William Blake was also a member of this brotherhood. The ritual of this group appears very similar to that of the Scottish Masonic Lodge. The third druidic line is that of Iolo Morganwg, a masonry worker who was born in Glamorgan County, Wales. This inspired self-taught man was very interested in old Celtic culture, and did much research and published several works on the subject. It is probable that Iolo collected folktales and that he knew medieval Welsh literature quite well, little more of him is known other that the fact that he founded the first druidic and bardic Gorsedd in London, on June 21st, 1792, the day of the summer solstice. This is a good measure of the reliability of this information if one recalls that the ancient druids had no solstice festival whatsoever, a fact substantiated by all the documents that we have at our disposal. The Welsh Gorsedd would become the quasi-official branch of druidism, and it is to this lineage that the currently existing Fraternity of Druids, Bards, and Ovates of Britain is connected. The members of this lineage do not consider themselves as priests of an ancient religion. They do however, consider their druidism an eternal quest for Celtic wisdom and truth.

The fourth category brings together countless brotherhoods, fraternities, groups, and sects not necessarily connected to any one of the three previously described lineages. Some of these brotherhoods are maintained only by the ephemeral will of their founders. Others are tied to different traditions. Each having it's own conception of druidism. Druidism in a sense died when the Celtic society became extinct at the hands of it's predecessor, Roman Christianity. However, that which would have remained are the principles of druidism, for they could not have vanished. Listed below are the Guilds, Brotherhoods, Covens, Groves, and Circles as I am aware of them. I will post more as I find them.

The United Ancient Order of Druids is the oldest of the surviving Fraternal "Mesopagan" Druid organizations. They are primarily active in the Ohio, Nevada and California regions. On the East Coast, Iona Grove #1, UAOD, is an active grove which meets in the Washington, DC, area, at least 4 times each year, on the Solstices and Equinoxes, for dinner, good conversation, and the presentation and discussion of a paper relating to Druidism and/or fraternalism. They have been in existence since 1994 and have grown very quickly to a membership that now numbers over forty. Some of these members come from New York, West Virginia, Connecticut, Ohio, Texas, Minnesota, and California. The Secretary for Iona Grove UAOD is Paul M. Bessel, at 703-418-1172, fax 703-418-6625. You can e-mail him at paulb@cpcug.org. Via snailmail, you can write to Iona Grove #1, UAOD, c/o 2301 Jeff Davis Hwy., #1521, Dept. IBWS, Arlington, VA 22202-3818.

The Order of Bards Ovates and Druids, also known as OBOD, is a modern offshoot of The Druid Order (British Circle of the Universal Bond), and is evolving into a Neopagan movement with over 1,200 members around the world. To receive a packet of information about them, just write to: OBOD, Dept. IBWS, PO Box 1333, Lewes. East Sussex BN7 1DX England, and enclose several International Postal Reply Coupons, or send email to office@obod.co.uk. OBOD publishes an excellent monthly newsletter Touchstone, for members only. Excerpts from previous issues are online at the OBOD site. OBOD's current Chosen Chief is Philip Carr-Gomm, psychologist and author of some good books on Druidism. You can email him at philip@obod.co.uk.

The Druid Clan of Dana or DCD, is a daughter organization of the well known Fellowship of Isis, or **FOI**, perhaps the largest international Pagan networking organization in the world. The DCD is "for all of those who honor the Goddess in the Druid manner." All FOI members may join. It was founded by Baron Strathlock and Lady Olivia Robertson, it's current head (and head of FOI.) Phillip Carr-Gomm, current Chosen Chief of OBOD was an early member. All three were initiated as Druids by Ross Nichols, the former Chosen Chief of OBOD. Each DCD Grove is entitled to interpret Druidry according to its own view, but courses exist to make this easier. The Clan magazine, Aisling, is available to the general public. A subscription for 4 issues is ⌋5 (or $10US), including postage. Send to: PO Box 196, Dept. IBWS, London, WC1A 2DY, UK. A sample back-issue can be obtained by E-mailing Isis@styx.cerbernet.co.uk

The Insular Order of Druids or IOD is a new Druid order, founded in 1993 c.e. They appear to be more Neopagan than Mesopagan, and their Arch Druid Dylan Ap Thuin is a poet and tattoo artist/body piercer! Definitely a 1990's kinda group, appealing to a younger generation of British Druids but enjoying warm relations with other members of the Council of British Druid Orders. You can send them email at: "Druids@insular.demon.co.uk" or write to them via snailmail at: IOD, c/o Labyrinth, 2 Victoria Road South, Southsea, Hants, England.

The Reformed Druids of North America or RDNA, are ancestral to both ADF and Keltria. Michael Scharding, is a former Archdruid of the Carleton Grove of the RDNA, founder of the International Druid Archives at Carleton College, and the editor of A Reformed Druid Anthology.

Ar nDraiocht Fein: A Druid Fellowship, or ADF, which roughly means "Our Own Druidism." The ADF is the fastest growing Druid organization in the world. Its founder, Isaac Bonewits, emphasizes accountable and highly qualified clergy, with a whole Indo-European focus. Write to: ADF, PO box 516, E. Syracuse, NY 13057-0516 The new Archdruid of ADF is

John "Fox" Adelmann, whom you can email at adf-archdruid@adf.org.

The Henge of Keltria is another great Neopagan Druid organization, which branched off from ADF a few years ago in order to form an exclusively Celtic path of Druidism. You can get information about Keltria by emailing Keltria's editor and Co-Founder, Tony Taylor at keltria@aol.com. By snailmail, please send a Self Addressed Stamped #10 Envelope to: Keltria, Dept. IBWS, PO Box 48369, Minneapolis, MN, USA 55448. Subscriptions to their excellent Keltria Journal are $12 year in the USA, $13US per year in Canada, everywhere else is $20US per year. The current President of Keltria is David Schaal, whom you can email at DSchaal@aol.com; while the current Vice President is Ellen Evert Hopman, Master Herbalist and author of several good books on herbalism, as well as People of the Earth: The New Pagans Speak Out. You can email her at Saille333@aol.com for information about her classes and overseas tours.

IMBAS is an organization that promotes the religion of Celtic Reconstructionist Paganism, and traditional Celtic culture and heritage. The Celts are recognized as the tribal Celts of Iron Age Europe and the modern peoples of Alba (Scotland), Breizh (Brittany), Cymru (Wales), E'ire (Ireland), Kernow (Cornwall), and Mannin (Isle of Man.) Celtic Reconstructionist Paganism is a votive religion that is grounded in folk tradition, mythological texts, and the archaeological and historical records; and is based around the home, the family, and the community/tribe in honoring the land, the ancestors, and the traditional Celtic Gods and Goddesses. "We do not practice our spirituality, we live it." The IMBAS website is filled with some of the best Celtic scholarship available on the Web, with a wealth of articles and reviews by people who know what they're talking about. IMBAS can be contacted directly at imbas@usa.net or by snail mail at: IMBAS, PO Box 1215, Montague, NJ, 07827-0215 USA.

Aos Dana, Fiona Davidson, Invergowrie House, Ninewells, Dundee, DD2 1UA, Scotland.

The Bardic Order Group, Alex Gunningham, Flat 2, 20 The Common, Ealing, London, W5 3JB, England.

The Council of British Druid Orders, Elizabeth Murray, 76 Antrobus Road, London, W4 5NQ, England. The Council includes representatives of most of the Druid groups in England and others (as associate members) from around the world (including ADF.)

Druiidica Comardia Eriutalamonos (Druidical Fellowship of the Western Land), M. G. Boutet, 32 Fourth Ave. South, Roxboro, PQ, H2I 3W3, Canada.

The Druid Order, BCUB (British Circle of the Universal Bond), David Loxley, 23 Thornsett Road, London SE20 YXB, England.

Ecole Druidique des Gaules, Bernard Jacquelin, Villa Montmorency 75016, Paris, 45 27 74 79, France.

The Glastonbury Order of Druids, R. Maughfling and J. Paterson, Dove House, Barton-St. David, Somerset, TA11 6DF, England.

The London Druid Group, Gordon Gentry, 74 Riversmeet, Hertford, SG14 1LE, England.

Ollotouta Druidique des Gaules, Pierre de la Crau, B.P. 13, 93301, Aubervilliers, Cedex, France. This group appears to be creating a Gaulish version of Neopagan Druidism, similar in many ways to ADF.

Mike's Response to Druid Organizations

Prof. Markale is a Frenchman, and probably the most familiar with the British and European traditions that are nearest at hands. Having written many books about the Druids, I am honored that he included anything at all about the American Druid movements, seeing as how we've only been around forty years. Another paragraph, at least, on the Neopagan movement and its implications for the fraternal movements would be proper, I believe. However, most academic authors of Druids don't seem to pay much attention to the modern movements.

By the way a contact address for Carleton is:

The Arch Druid
Reformed Druids of North America
Carleton College
Northfield, MN 55057, USA

Websites:
www.geocities.com/mikerdna
and
the RDNAtalk conference at Yahoogroups.com

Outline of Druidism

http://religiousmovements.lib.virginia.edu/
Created by: Karen Junker
For the Religious Movements Homepage
Ms. Junker was a student at the University of Washington
when this page was created.
Fall 1999
Last modified: 08/21/01

I. Group Profile

1. **Name** : Druids; also known as Druidry, Celtic Pagans, Neopagan Druidism, Celtic Reconstructionists, Christian Druids, Pagan Druids, Bards.
2. **Founder** : No single founder is responsible for Druidism. It might be helpful to look at Druids in three categories in order to get a sense of the diversity within the group. The categories are divided roughly into time periods and the terms used within the movement to describe them will vary, but for this discussion we will call them:
    a. *Classical Druids* - the druids of ancient times.
    b. *Revival Druids* - members of groups formed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
    c. *Modern Druids* - druids who have begun practice since around the 1930's.
3. **Date and Place of Birth** : As there is no actual founder of Druidism, there is no date or place of birth.
4. **Year Founded** :
    a. *Classical Druids* : The prototypes for classical Druidry probably originated in the early Celtic peoples of the Neolithic Hallstadt/La Tene cultures of the lakes regions of modern Austria.
    b. *Revival Druids* : various groups and individuals of the romantic ethnic reconstruction movements of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Druid Circle of the Universal Bond (An Druidh Uileach Braithreachas) was formed in London in 1717 by John Toland. The Ancient Order of Druids was formed in London in 1781 by Henry Hurle. The Welsh Druids, Maen Gorsedd, formed in London in 1792 by Iolo Morganwg (Edward Williams.) These and many similar groups formed and dissolved at a fairly rapid rate. The Commentatio De Druidis Occidentalum Populorum Philosophis, published in 1744 in Ulm by Jean Frickius showed in the bibliography 261 authors who wrote about druids between 1514 CE and 1744 CE.
    c. *Modern Druids* : There have been a large number of "Here today, gone tomorrow" modern druidic groups. The Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids (a descendant of the Universal Bond group) formed in 1964 under the direction of Nuinn Ross-Nicholls in London. In 1963 David Fisher and friends formed the Reformed Druids of North America in Northfield, Minnesota. In 1983 Isaac (PEI) Bonewits left the RDNA and formed Ar nDraiocht Fein (Our Druidry) in Berkeley, California. In 1989 Sable and Tony Taylor left ADF after four years and formed the Henge of Keltria. In 1992-93 Erynn Laurie and Lorax formed the Inis Glas Hedge School. There were many other small groups formed, dissolved, and re- formed- modern druids rarely formalize their practices to the extent of registering their group with the government or publishing their books.
5. **Sacred or Revered Texts** :
    a. The *Classical Druids* are believed to have retained their vast body of knowledge in an oral tradition. The Celts as a cultural and linguistic group, and especially the brythonic Celts, (who later became known as the Welsh, Breton, Cornish, and Manx language groups) used Greek letters to write their language in daily personal and business life. The oral tradition which contained the 'sacred lore' was written down only by later religious or historical scholars, and is necessarily incomplete and inaccurate. Scholars today are attempting to sort out what is the pure form of the history, law, science, art and religion of the Celtic peoples.
    b. The *Revival Druids* lived in a time prior to the development of archeology and history as areas of rigorous scientific study, so were influenced by broad speculation. The Druids were a fascination of the popular culture of the time; over 260 authors wrote about Druids from 1514-1744 (Raoult.)
    c. *Modern Druids* have developed writings within the various groups which may be considered sacred texts. The Henge of Keltria's Book of Ritual may be considered sacred to the members of that group. Other contemporary Druids will refer to favorite books written about the Druids or Celts. Books by and about Druids appear in greater numbers than ever before. Following the emphasis on learning traditionally ascribed to the ancients, today's Druids often have long reading lists of respected material. Likewise, many will list books or authors they consider fraudulent or based on fantasy. (see Selected References.) Some Celtic Reconstructionists are writing books or articles about material they receive as guided inspiration from their gods or other nature spirits. These works are accepted by some and not by others. Since no governing authority presides over the entire Druid movement, there is no final word on what becomes holy writ. Many Druids rely on the stories and reports which have been preserved in the form of myth or fairy tales to inform their religious belief.
6. **Size of Group** : There is no way to estimate the number of Druids worldwide. A modern druid gathering may number from three to perhaps a thousand. Many druids also belong to affiliated groups and so could be counted more than once. Others belong to no formal group at all, and can be inferred only from book sales. A current (1999) movement in the modern Neopagan community is to encourage all Neopagans and occultists to enter the 2000 US Census line under religion as "pagan" in order to register a unified presence. This would remove the statistical tendency to list 'pagan', neo-pagan', 'heathen', 'wiccan', 'witch', 'druid', and 'bard' as separate and non-related categories.
7. **Cult or Sect:** Negative sentiments are typically implied when the concepts "cult" and "sect" are employed in popular discourse. Since the Religious Movements Homepage seeks to promote religious tolerance and appreciation of the positive benefits of pluralism and religious diversity in human cultures, we encourage the use of alternative concepts that do not carry implicit negative stereotypes. For a more detailed discussion of both scholarly and popular usage of the concepts "cult" and "sect," please visit our Conceptualizing "Cult" and "Sect" page, where you will find additional links to related issues.

8. **Remarks** : The best way to assess the current groups is to visit their web sites, and to read reference books and articles with an eye to separating information into that referring to the three types of Druidry referenced in this page.

II. History

Classical Druids : Modern day knowledge of the actual practice and beliefs of the ancient Druids is limited by the records which survive. Scholars continue to sift through such evidence as archeological samples, Roman inscriptions and the written literature of Wales, Ireland and Britain. It is known that ancient Druids were poets, lawgivers, seers, healers, magicians and philosophers. They had a special relationship with nature as divine. Druids could be trained in the colleges that existed if they were born to a Druid family or if they demonstrated the necessary ability.

Memory was especially important, as their teachings relied on an oral tradition. It is not certain that they acted as clergy to the general population, but they were spiritual leaders and advisors with status almost as great as a king. Some of the names of ancient druids survive in writings by Caesar, Strabo, etc. Scholars are still working to decipher what may have actually been their practices and beliefs, as most of the writing about the druids was done by people who were antagonistic to their ways. Some modern druids claim to be linked to these ancient druids.

Revival Druids : Druid belief and practice varied widely in the 18th and 19th centuries. Professor Ronald Hutton gives us an idea of the characterizations of the Druids made by writers of the time in his introduction to *The Druid Renaissance* ("Who Possesses the Past?"), Philip Carr-Gomm, ed. The Druids were variously the orthodoxy of the Anglican church, the pre-Christian prophets who foresaw the coming of Christianity before the birth of Christ, the superstitious, the barbarous or the political advocates of radical democracy. The practicing Druids of the time concentrated on community service, creating a system of mutual insurance, visiting the sick, widows and orphans, even offering loans to buy houses.

The Druid groups achieved such acceptance in society that even the Prince of Wales is said to have been a member of one of them. The Bardic tradition of Druids formed by Iolo Morganwg in 1792 did a great deal to revive the Celtic roots of the movement, though modern scholars have determined much of the material he based his group upon to have been invented by the bard himself. It is this overlay of poetic romanticism and fantasy (imagination and faith) which influences much of the belief of Druids since that time.

Modern Druids : Many contemporary Druids concentrate on learning as much as possible about the actual practices and beliefs of the ancients, in order to rebuild a Druidic religion. They will quickly point out that reviving the old ways is done thoughtfully, to avoid such horrors as human or animal sacrifice. Druidism is still strictly a fraternal order to some, not intended as a religion. Some Druids are unconcerned about authenticity, looking to the Celtic tradition of poetic romanticism inspired by Morganwg. Whether informed by fact or fantasy, the modern Druid values creativity, faith and the pursuit of knowledge equally as the basis of their practice and belief.

Here is a sample of the development of several contemporary modern Druid groups:

> In 1963, David Fisher and some other students at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota decided to come up with an alternative to attendance at religious services required by the college. They formed the Reformed Druids of North America, which exists to this day as a philosophical group at the college. The RDNA was found by the college to fulfill the church attendance requirement. In 1964, the requirement was lifted, but students continue to meet as Druids.
>
> In 1969, Isaac Bonewits joined the RDNA. After starting several other Druid groups in an attempt to meet his need for real religious practice combined with excellence in scholarship, in 1983 he formed ADF (Ar nDraiocht Fein, A Druid Fellowship.) Though it had a Celtic name, ADF was Pan-Indo-European in study and worship.
>
> In 1985, Sable Taylor and Tony Taylor met up with ADF. After four years, they formed the Henge of Keltria in order to create a tribal setting where small groups(called groves) could work within a specifically Celtic framework and yet still interact with other clans of druids. Asked to describe the development of modern Druidism, Tony Taylor says, "Re-construction makes sense. If you are renovating an old building, you replace the old wiring, the lead pipes, you bring it up to code. In Keltria, we are taking material that makes sense and putting it in a modern context, in a form that still makes sense."

Other groups have been formed in the past few decades, some claiming ancestral lineage back to the ancient Druids, some with links to the Revival era groups. Some Druids are individuals who are simply drawn to the spiritual life centered in nature or the poetic wanderings of the romantic bard. This is a short, by no means complete, list:

- Green Druidic Order of Ronan ab Lugh, 1960s, Belgium
- Reformed Druids of North America, formed by David Fisher, Minnesota, USA, 1963
- Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids (O.B.O.D.), formed by Ross Nichols, London, 1964
- Ar nDraiocht Fein, formed by PEI (Isaac) Bonewits, USA, 1983
- Druidic Church of Gaul, formed by Pierre de la Crau, 1985 in Paris.
- Druidic Group of Gaul, 1987, east and central France.
- Henge of Keltria, formed by Tony Taylor and Sable Taylor, Minnesota, USA, 1989
- Grand College du Chene d'Or, 1992, Belgium.
- Comardiia Druvidiacta Aremorica, 1993, Brittany.
- The British Druid Order, led by Philip Shallcrass.
- For a comprehensive list of modern Druid Movements, see:

Raoult, Michel. 1992. *Les Druides, Les Societes Initiatiques Celtiques Contemporaines.* Monaco: Editions du Rocher, 1992, third edition, revised.
Shallcrass, Philip. nd. *A Druid Directory.* privately published by The British Druid Order, PO Box 29, St. Leonards-on-Sea, E. Sussex TN37 7UP, England.

III. Beliefs of Druids

For some, the practice of Celtic or Druid religion is a private matter. It can be the rigorous pursuit of intellectual excellence carried out in furious debate over computerized mailing lists.

For others, the practice of their faith requires them to venture forth, to act upon their beliefs by doing volunteer work in their communities, political activism or building a compost heap in their own backyard.

They tend to abhor dogma, the result being slow growth within the movement, as agreements are slowly negotiated about how to conduct a ritual or what officers should represent the group. The modern Druids stress personal responsibility and education.

While no two Druids will believe exactly the same way or worship the same gods, there are some commonalities.

- They can be monotheistic; some Druids say they are Christian, though this is not the norm.
- Some Druids are following a racist or nationalist agenda, but once again, this is not typical of the majority.
- Some are polytheistic (honoring one or more of the many ancient Celtic gods or heroes, including ancestor worship.)
- They are usually animists, believing that everything in nature possesses a soul or spirit.
- They practice magic.
- Most celebrate the Solstices and Equinoxes as well as the festivals of Samhain, Imbolc, Beltane and Lugnasash.
- They revere nature, often becoming involved in efforts to sustain a balanced ecology.
- They honor their ancestors, whether the mighty dead or grandparents who deserve respect and special attention.
- Their sometimes tribal form of worship can revitalize the values of extended family and community.

Many have considered themselves to be Druid for years before even realizing that other people shared some of their beliefs.

IV. Links to Druid Web Sites

Celtic Pages Links to many, many Druid web sites. Go here first!
http://www.hermetic.com/akashic/celtic.html
Henge of Keltria Home page for the Henge of Keltria, Inc., an organization formed to teach and to worship the gods and goddesses of this Celtic tradition. Good links to other related pages.
http://www.keltria.org/
Order of Bards, Ovates, and Druids Website for a large organization based in England. Some problems with the page design have been reported, but are being fixed.
http://druidry.org/
Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF) One of the better known American druidic groups, this page has good text about the modern movement.
http://www.adf.org/
Celtic Druidism The Druid page on the Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance page. Excellent overview of the Druid tradition.
http://www.religioustolerance.org/druid.htm
Druidism Guide
http://www.uoguelph.ca/~bmyers/druid.html
British Druid Order
http://www.druidorder.demon.co.uk/
Isaac Bonewit's Home Page
Meet the ArchDruid Emeritus of ADF.
http://www.neopagan.net/
The Celtic Traditional Order of Druids
http://www.goodnet.com/~merlyn/ctodmain.htm
Reformed Druids of North America
Http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna

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Mike's Response to Outline of Druidism

Religious Movements is another website, like Religious Tolerance, that provides neutral third-party information on major and minor religious traditions. This format, more of outline than Religious Tolerance, is very well researched, as shown by the sources. The information on American Druidism comes apparently from Isaac Bonewits' and Tony Taylor's interviews in Hopman's books. No real arguments with it.

A Concise History of Druidism

The Modern Neo-Pagan Period

Excerpted from Novitiate Studies,
The Companion's Sourcebook · Volume I
Copyright © 2002 · Covenant of Avalon
http://www.covenantofavalon.org/Writings/history_neo.html

For all of the academic oversight of the meso-pagan revivalists, it is certain that they yearned to somehow reclaim the spirit of Britain and Gaul's pre-Christian, nature-centric and wisdom-based spiritual history. They must certainly be credited with planting the seed that would blossom into a modern spiritual interest in the preservation of our future, through the study and embrace of the ways of the past. Modern Druidism speaks to the need of the human spirit to re-connect with the long alienated spirit of Mother Earth, and of the land, and the sensibility to protect and worship them.

The Meso-Pagan and Neo-Pagan Bridge

Perhaps the strongest link between the meso-pagan and the neo-pagan period is provided in the lineage of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids, which traces its origins back to Toland's ceremony at Primrose Hill in 1717 and the formation of the Ancient Order of Druids. The Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids was founded out of separation from the AOD in 1964 by Philip Peter Ross Nichols.

> "When his teacher, the Chosen Chief Robert MacGregor Reid, died in 1964, the Order split into two groupings, as had happened several times before in its history. A group of senior Druids disagreed with the election of MacGregor Reid's successor, Dr Thomas Maughan, and decided to form a reconstituted order with Ross as its Chief, and with the three grades of Bard, Ovate and Druid fully taught and recognized in a way that had not previously been done in the Order's modern cycle.
>
> One of the major achievements of Ross Nichols as Chief of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids was to reintroduce the celebration of the fire ceremonies which had been abandoned from the repertoire of modern Druidry, so that the reconstituted Order celebrated not only the Spring an Autumn equinoxes and the Summer Solstice, but also the Winter Solstice and the four Celtic fire festivals of Imbolc and Beltane, Lughnasadh and Samhain."
>
> -- Biography of Ross Nichols, by the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids

Among the OBOD's other separations from the practices of Orders founded upon romanticized perceptions of Druids of antiquity, was the belief in sexual equality and elimination of exclusionary admission practices. And as the account above provides us with example, the foundation of the OBOD began a new age in dedication to genuine scholarship of the past. Other groups began to emerge in Britain such as the 'British Druid Order', and later many of them despite varying customs would come together to form the 'Council of British Druid Orders'. From the 19th into the early and mid 20th centuries, we see that the sciences of archeology and historical reconstruction improved. As more began to emerge, each of these new, but well rooted Druid groups held similar and strong commitments to historical accuracy, dismissing rightly, much of the romanticized ideas of Druidism and the masonic-like practices of the orders founded upon those ideas. A new age had begun - one that embraced more fully the true nature of the pre-Christian religion of the Druids of old. It wasn't long before new Druid Orders were being formed all across Western and Northern Europe, Australia and eventually, North America.

Druidism Comes to America

In 1963 at Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, a number of students, out of objection to a policy mandating regular attendance of religious services, formed a group they playfully named 'The Reformed Druids of North America'. Though the formation of the group was inspired by little more than an intent to mock the policy of the college, many of their members found inspiration in the Druid Path and continued to participate in the group in order to explore world faiths and Earth-based religion. Many of the original members went on to form RDNA Groves in various other states.

Though for the most part, the RDNA did not take itself entirely seriously, it gave rise to the interest of some from among its membership who would go on to carry on the earlier spirit of Druid revival. One such member, Isaac Bonewits, left the RDNA and founded 'Ar nDraiocht Fein' or 'ADF' in 1983, believing that a serious interest in a viable, neo-Pagan, Earth-based religion was emerging to which the RDNA, based on the motivations of its formations, was unable to minister to. The ADF later splintered and soon Henge of Keltria Druidism was formed as group specifically dedicated to precise reconstruction of Celtic religious practices, as opposed to having an Indo-European theological base. Other groups would soon after emerge, holding themselves out to be the 'guardians of true Celtic belief and practice'.

But with the turn of the millennium, the world has seen a resurgence of interest in spirituality not predicated upon dogmatic explication. The new millennium has given rise to a new recognition of the need for the human spirit to connect with the divine presence in nature. And with that, more and more people, particularly within Pagan paths, are beginning to see the disadvantage in limiting the wisdoms of any tradition exclusively to the acceptance of geographical and historical definition. Druidism is an organic, creative, and vital spirituality that has the capacity to speak to any generation, past or present, because it has the gift of timeless wisdom. Philip Carr-Gomm, the present chosen Chief of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids, in 'The Druid Renaissance' writes, "It is surely the capacity of each generation to produce its own claim to immortality, which is the essence of that semi-divine inspiration for which the mediaeval bards strove." It was in *this* spirit, that the Covenant of Avalon was formed in the year 2000.

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Mike's Response to A Concise History of Druidism

Well written little overview, of which I've only snipped out the section applying to Modern Druidism. Obviously influenced by Isaac's terminology of Mesopagan and Neopagan, this is a new organization, one of which I still have little knowledge.

A LITTLE HISTORY OF DRUIDRY

Excerpted from Phillip Shallcrass (copyright BDO 2003)
(This is a thoroughly revised and expanded version
of section 2 of A Druid Directory,
edited by Philip Shallcrass and Emma Restall Orr,
BDO, Devizes, 2001)

Modern Druidry: c. 1900 - Date

The Druid tradition underwent further revision throughout the 20th century, one early landmark being the initiation of a young Winston Churchill into a lodge of the Ancient Order of Druids in 1908. The following year saw the foundation of An Uileach Druidh Braithreachas, also known as the British Circle of the Universal Bond, also known as the Ancient Druid Order. This seems to have been largely the brainchild of George Watson MacGregor Reid, second Chosen Chief of the Order, whose other big idea was the tonic drink Sanatogen. His inspirations for the ADO seem to have been many and varied. One was the Victorian magical society, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, which numbered W. B. Yeats and Aleister Crowley among its members. Another was the Theosphical Society, founded by an eccentric but highly charismatic Russian spiritualist, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. Others were Buddhism and the writings of Greek Gnostic Christians. MacGregor Reid was a true universalist, seeing truth in all religions, hence the eclectic nature of his ceremonies. Druids sometimes performed these in the traditional white robes topped off with somewhat less traditional outsized turbans. During one oration, he invoked in turn angels of the Lord, Druid ancestors and ascended Tibetan Masters. He came into noisy conflict with the then owners and with the police when he objected to being charged for admission to Stonehenge. This is a tradition still carried on by some Druids at the present day.

A different vision of Druidry was presented through the writings of Lewis Spence, Ross Nichols and others. Spence was the author of a series of popular works on Celtic mythology, folklore and magic during the 1930s and 1940s, some of which are still regularly reprinted. Nichols was a member of the Ancient Druid Order and a friend of Gerald Gardner, the founder of modern Wicca and a fellow member of the ADO. From researches into folklore, members of Gardner's coven devised the eightfold festival cycle now celebrated by most Pagans. Nichols offered the idea to the ADO hierarchy but they refused, being happy to continue celebrating just the summer solstice and the spring and autumn equinoxes. Gardner incorporated the eight festivals into his Wiccan writings in the 1950s while Nichols introduced them into Druidry through the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids (OBOD,) founded by Nichols and others in 1964 when he led a breakaway from the Ancient Druid Order.

In 1963, modern pagan Druidry emerged in the United States with the foundation of the Reformed Druids of North America. The **RDNA** was begun by a group of university students in Minnesota who were disgruntled at the university rule that said all students had to attend religious services. They reasoned that, since they had no choice over attendance, they could at least choose their religion. So they created **RDNA** Druidry. Much to their surprise, it caught on and they soon had a dozen active groves across seven states.

The global cultural explosion that was the 1960s sparked, among other things, a new level of interest in occultism, mysticism and spirituality. Much of this interest was directed towards Eastern faiths: Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, but there

were some whose spiritual explorations led them towards native European traditions including Druidry. A book by John Michell, The View Over Atlantis, stimulated a revival of interest in ley lines, a concept first developed in the 1920s by Alfred Watkins in his book, The Old Straight Track. Watkins defined ley lines as straight trackways laid out across prehistoric Britain linking together standing stones, stone circles, burial mounds and other features of the landscape. By the mid-1970s a whole new discipline had been created, bearing the name Earth Mysteries. Many of its proponents came to see ley lines as channels of earth energy or as paths followed by UFOs. The widespread public interest in Earth Mysteries led more people to explore native spiritual traditions.

When Ross Nichols died in 1975, OBOD effectively ceased to exist. However, in the late 1980s it was revived by Philip Carr-Gomm, himself initiated into the Order by Nichols in the late 1960s in a ceremony on Glastonbury Tor in Somerset. Under Carr-Gomm's gentle leadership and inspired by his talents as a writer and facilitator, OBOD has grown to be the largest Druid Order in the world with some 2000 members currently taking its mail order courses and some 5000 initiates.

Philip Shallcrass became conscious of a calling to Druidry in 1974 after reading Robert Graves' 1961 book, The White Goddess. Failing to find an existing group to join, Shallcrass had the idea of creating a new Druid Order in 1977. He joined a coven of Alexandrian Wiccans the following year. By 1979 the group had dropped so much material from the Wiccan handbook, the Book of Shadows, and adopted so many elements of Druid belief and practice that they decided to stop calling themselves a coven and call themselves a grove instead, the standard designation for a Druid gathering. This Grove of the Badger was the Mother Grove of what was to become the British Druid Order. The cross-fertilization between the traditions of Wicca or Witchcraft and Druidry, first seen in the friendship between Ross Nichols and Gerald Gardner, has continued. Emma Restall Orr, who became joint chief of the British Druid Order in 1995, and the founder of the Insular Order of Druids, Dylan ap Thuin, both have backgrounds in Witchcraft. The increasing numbers of Druids with training in Witchcraft has been a significant factor in shifting Druidry away from the patriarchal image set in the 18th century and towards a more pagan form.

In 1983, a member of the RDNA's grove at the University of California in Berkeley, Philip Isaac Bonewits, founded a new, more overtly pagan group which he called Ar nDraoicht Fein, A Druid Fellowship. ADF was noted for its sense of humour and its scholarly approach, both derived from the personality of its founder. Many other American groups have since emerged as offshoots from ADF, most successful among them being the Henge of Keltria, founded in 1988, of which the writer Ellen Evert Hopman was one of the more prominent members before founding her own group.

The 1980s saw the formation of the Council of British Druid Orders with the intention of bringing together the heads of various Druid Orders to discuss issues of mutual interest. Some members saw it as being mainly concerned with problems surrounding access to Stonehenge. Others saw it as an opportunity to explore broader issues of belief and practice. It brought together a disparate group of Orders ranging from the oldest, the Ancient Order of Druids, to newer, more overtly pagan groups such as the British Druid Order, via Orders whose main interest seemed to be arguing with English Heritage, the official guardians of Stonehenge. By the mid-1990s the tensions between the various groups reached breaking point and the Ancient Druid Order, the British Druid Order and the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids all resigned. The Council continues, though without the support of so many of the largest Orders it can no longer be seen as representative of the broad spectrum of British Druidry. Following a successful first gathering in Avebury in 1996, the Druid Forum has emerged, in which folk from different Orders come together in peace to explore Druidry. Learning from the mistakes of the Council of British Druid Orders, the Druid Forum has no appointed officers and no interest in political lobbying.

The process of re-inventing the tradition continues at the present day through writers and practitioners such as the singer and folklorist R. J. Stewart and the prolific John and Caitlin Matthews, who, with Philip Shallcrass, Emma Restall Orr and others, have been instrumental in re-introducing 'shamanic' practices into modern Druidry. In so doing, they seem to be restoring the role of Druid to something close to its ancient form, that of the walker between worlds, mediating between them for the benefit of their communities. This 'shamanic' Druidry works directly with spirits of place, of the land, of trees, plants, animals and ancestors. It has been inspired partly by the discovery of 'shamanic' practices described in the medieval literature of Ireland and Wales but also by study of, and contact with, other indigenous earth-ancestor spiritualities. Native American practice has been particularly influential. The living example of Lakota sweat lodge ceremonies led to the re-introduction of sweat lodges into Druidry. Britain and Ireland have a native sweat lodge tradition that dates back at least to the Bronze Age, but it had been lost until its reintroduction in the 1980s.

In the 1990s, the new pagan and 'shamanic' Druidry took on the role of the acceptable face of contemporary paganism, exploiting the positive public image of Druidry to work for a broader acceptance of paganism in general. One flowering of this was the establishment of the Gorsedd of Bards of Caer Abiri among the stones of the Avebury Henge in Wiltshire at the autumn equinox of 1993. With a ceremony composed by Philip Shallcrass, the Gorsedd grew within two years to a gathering of over four hundred that included members of several Druid groups along with Witches, Heathens, Christians and large numbers of non-aligned pagans. This broad community were coming to Druid priests to be handfasted, to have their children blessed and to celebrate the turning of the wheel of the year. The Avebury Gorsedd offered a unique opportunity for many pagans to celebrate festival rites publicly and it attracted a good deal of favourable publicity.

As more people became aware of the new Druidry, it attracted a radical wing that took an active role in the road protest movements of the 1990s. One of the strongest trends in Druidry through the 1990s was the growth of ecological awareness and activism. Such concerns come naturally to a philosophy that has always regarded trees, stones, springs, rivers, lakes, hills and mountains as sacred and imbued with spirit. Part of this ecological movement has led many Druids to rediscover sacred sites in their own neighbourhood and to find appropriate ways of working with those sites both in spirit and in active conservation. This represents something of a return to the localised cults that flourished in pre-Christian times.

Part of the role of the Druid as walker between the worlds has shown itself as an interest in building bridges between different faith groups. Druids such as Tim Sebastian of the Secular Order of Druids and Emma Restall Orr have been instrumental in bringing together representatives of many spiritual paths in interfaith gatherings and conferences throughout the 80s and 90s. This is a process that seems set to continue and gain in strength. The same focus on bridge building has led Druids to become actively involved in discussions with statutory bodies concerned with access to, and the conservation of, ancient sacred sites.

Ideas of Druidry are constantly being revised both by the practical experience of those involved in it, and in the light of new archaeological research and new techniques for exploring

and understanding the past. But the Druidry of today, while it draws heavily on the past, is very different from the Druidry of 5000, or even 500 years ago, and this is as it should be, for a static tradition is a dying tradition, and Druidry is very much alive. Throughout its history, Druidry has changed and adapted in response to circumstances. Each century re-creates the tradition to satisfy its own needs. The fundamental needs of our own age are to find personal harmony and balance amid increasing technological and cultural chaos, and to preserve the ecological balance of our hard-pressed Mother Earth. Modern Druidry seeks to address both these needs.

Current estimates suggest that there are between eight and ten thousand initiated members of Druid orders in Britain alone, divided between about thirty groups. These groups vary in size from one or two persons up to thousands. Some are locally based, others are international. Druid groups also exist in the USA, Australia, France and many other countries. Membership consists of equal numbers of women and men. Beyond the membership of these groups there is a much broader interest in Druidry demonstrated by the fact that there now seem to be more publications available on the subject than at any other time in its history. This is clear evidence of the way in which Druidry continues to resonate in the modern mind, echoing the deep-seated need for a spirituality rooted in the past yet appropriate to the present while holding the opportunity to create a better future.

Where Druidry will go from here is difficult to predict. At present, the tradition is in a state of simultaneous flux and rapid expansion. Recent publications on Druidry by Druids have become less self-consciously 'New Age' or whacky. Druidry is now discussed at academic conferences as a serious component of modern religious culture. Public interest continues to grow, as do numbers joining Druid groups and the number of groups there are for them to choose from. This interest is focused mainly on the younger, more pagan Druid groups, while membership of the older, more staid groups is either stable or decreasing. The Welsh Gorsedd of Bards bucks this trend by continuing to go its own way, as a cultural rather than a spiritual institution, now irrevocably linked to the annual National Eisteddfod.

One of the most interesting developments in Druidry in recent years has been the emergence of Druid camps. These events, pioneered by the British Druid Order and the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids, take place in Britain, America, Australia and elsewhere, yet they have many aspects in common. They all have a central structure where camp meetings will be held, usually first thing in the morning. They usually have rustic showers and hot tubs, often a sauna. There is a central ritual space, with other, quieter ritual areas away from the main camp. Rituals themselves follow similar patterns, with a circle being marked out, the four cardinal directions honoured, and invocations to the gods and ancestors. Music, poetry and storytelling feature strongly, both in rituals and in their own right, sometimes in the form of eisteddfod competitions, often as a spontaneous part of campfire evenings under the stars. Camps offer a range of talks and workshops on a common range of subjects, including basic introductions to Druidry, divination, astrology, earth mysteries, ritual, and the bardic arts. Perhaps we see here the renaissance of a kind of global Druidry.

Towards the beginning of this essay, I suggested that the ancient Druids might have had a range of beliefs and practices that included yet transcended the localized tribal faiths of prehistoric Europe. Perhaps the global similarity between Druid camps heralds a re-awakening of that uniformity within diversity that allowed Druids from all nations to gather together with at least a fair chance for mutual understanding. Time will tell.

Mike's Response to A Little History of Druidry

Phillip Shallcrass is a reknown author of the British Druid Order, who has been a nexus point for organizing the myriad Druidic groups found throughout the British Isles and Europe. This book "A Druid Directory" was published until recently to keep everyone in touch with each other and provide accurate essays, and information to dispel myths and rumors about the Druids. Naturally it has few words to spare for the American Druid movements, but on the whole it is accurate. It shows the parallel growth on both sides of the Atlantic around the same years, as being perhaps driven more my cultural and technological reasons, than any such personal drives of member caught up in these events.

My Review of Other Essays

By Mike Scharding
ARDA 2, 1996

Having read this Epistle, you should better be able to appreciate this review of previous research and information published on Reformed Druidism.

Inadequacy of Previously Published Studies on the RDNA:

Unless you come to the International Druid Archives at Carleton College, your investigation of Reformed Druidism would be lucky to have found the resources in this volume. While I should be grateful for the relative abundance and accessibility of small printed reference materials on Reformed Druidism, I fear that this material is likely to lead to hasty prejudices or simplifications that have not been substantiated by my research. Appendix D contains a copy of all the studies[267] that I could find. You may wish to read through the previous field of research, before reading my evaluations.[268]

In summary, these reference materials falsely imply Isaac Bonewits to be the sole influence or the most important Reformed Druid,[269] that the RDNA is obviously defined as or destined to be "Neo-Pagan," that philosophy & religion are easy labels of difference between the RDNA & the NRDNA, that Reformed Druidism became a religion that replaced the previous religions of all members, that ritual attendance in a Grove defined an "active Druid," that the unfavorable reactions to Isaac's initiatives only came from fuddy-duddy Carletonian members, and finally that the RDNA has died away since 1979.

Conclusions to be Drawn with Available Sources:

With the exception of Margot Adler, most of the articles don't deal with the developments of RDNA philosophies after the initial protest against the Chapel Requirement. Most tacitly assumed that the RDNA became the sole religion of its members (both RDNA and NRDNA) and that is was solely composed of Neo-Pagans. Rarely do we see any accompanying definition of Neo-Paganism and many readers (since Neo-Paganism is not in many dictionaries) would have to assume it meant the RDNA or NRDNA couldn't be Christians, Jews, Taoists, atheists etc.

Many of these articles' biases are a result of Isaac's later prominent organization, "ADF:A Druid Fellowship" and his willingness to be interviewed. There is no mention of the Eastern & Personal philosophies for many groves. In fact, although cursory comments about Hassidic Druidry appear, the overwhelming drive of the RDNA/NRDNA seems to be obsessively reported as reconstructing ancient Druidism into a Neo-Pagan Celtic religion.

The fascinating debated issues found during the political conflict of "Isaac vs. Carleton RDNA vs. NRDNA" are muted or omitted, though our records shows it to be the primary focus of the entire 70s. No confirmation is sought from the researchers by interviewing other RDNA members, except by Margot Adler & Hansen. Gordon Melton, the eventual source of many encyclopedia articles, got his information solely from a letter in the early 70s by a disgruntled David Fisher seeking to put Druidism behind him before entering the Seminary. Fisher was but one member and it was David Frangquist and others who carried forward the group's new purpose and philosophy.

I see these sources as generally over-concerned with external organizational structure, festival dates, Isaac's "leadership" role, the name "Druid," foreshadowings of ADF, implying that NRDNA is extremely different because it is a religion and discussing little of the raison d'être for the RDNA beyond mentioning that initial protest against Chapel Requirement.

But since these researcher did not have access (or attempt such) to the same resources that I will use, we can forgive them. None of the other RDNA members really seemed that concerned to publicly advertise themselves and provide handy definitions to the unfamiliar outsiders, except Isaac. With all these errors and potential confusions available to the scholar of Reformed Druidism, a new review is necessary to balance and correct misunderstandings. That is what my histories are here to correct, a previously one-sided public knowledge of the Reformed Druid Movement.

Section Three: Book of Isaac Rants

RDNA and It's Offshoots

By Isaac Bonewits
1996, 2001

The Reformed Druids of North America ("R.D.N.A.") started out as a quasi-religious Mesopagan protest against coerced religion at a small Midwestern college, back in 1963 c.e. The RDNA was invented in order to test the freedom allowed by the college's rules requiring all students to attend church. Much to the surprise of the founders, even after they had won their protest, many of the Druids wanted to continue the movement. The prayers to the Earth-Mother and the old Celtic divinities, combined with Zen meditations, Christian mystical writings and the Founders' anarchistic philosophy now represented a valuable part of their spiritual lives. Graduates of Carleton College spread the Reformed Druid movement wherever they went.

It was in Berkeley, California that one of these alumni, Robert Larson, became the local Archdruid for a group of people, including myself, who were already thinking of ourselves as Neopagans. Under our influence (and my own not-entirely-appreciated agitation) an increasing overlap between RDNA and the Neopagan community began to form. Today, the handful of active RDNA groves (congregations,) such as those led by Stephen Abbot in California and Joan Carruth in New Hampshire (see photo on right) are almost all Neopagan and are using the name "NRDNA" (for New RDNA,) while other Druidic movements, such as ADF and Keltria, have grown from the RDNA's trunk as specifically Neopagan branches.

According to one Reformed Druid document, *The Book of the Law,* the Basic Beliefs of Reformed Druidism run thusly:

> "The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is on way, yea, one way among many.
>
> And great is the importance, which is of spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it."

This has since been abbreviated, in *The Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals,* to the following statements:

> "1. Nature is good!
>
> and the second is like unto the first:
>
> 2. Nature is good!"

The material realm is personified as the "Earth-Mother" (or Mother Nature,) one of the oldest archetypes known to humanity. Many now apply this name to the biosphere as a whole, in order to emphasize our dependence upon Her (though She is usually called "Gaia" then.) The nonmaterial essence of the universe(s) is called "Béal" (which is believed to be an ancient Celtic name of an abstract divinity, based on "Bel" or "shining one,") and the concept is rather similar to some versions of the Native American idea of the Great Spirit. Thus a polarity (not a dualism) of matter and energy, female and male, darkness and light, is established; but it is vital to realize that neither half of the polarity is believed to be superior to the other.

The "object of Humanity's search" is called "awareness," and is defined as "unity with Béal." a task that can only be accomplished by also attaining unity with the Earth-Mother. Thus Reformed Druids are urged to develop all the different aspects of their beings — physical, mental, emotional, psychic, artistic and spiritual — in order to attain the required state of dynamic balance that will lead them towards awareness.

Beyond these fundamentals, the philosophy and (poly)theology of Reformed Druidism are kept deliberately vague. It is up to each Reformed Druid to work out her or his own path towards awareness.

The Reformed Druids are organized into congregations called "groves," each with from three to ten or more members (though dozens of others may show up for major holiday celebrations.) Only a handful of these are still active, though a couple of dozen have been founded over the years. Every grove is an independent entity, and each may operate its own "flavor" of Reformed Druidism. At times there have been groves practicing (among the Neopagans) Norse, Wiccan, Eclectic, Zen and even Hasidic Druidism. The older RDNA groves (i.e., the ones run by original Carleton graduates) often continue to mix Christian, Taoist, Native American, and other mystical traditions with their Druidism. Individuals frequently follow more than one variety at a time, depending upon their personal interests.

Attempts to keep any sort of national structure going have been fruitless due to the strong individualism of the members.

Obviously, Reformed Druidism is a uniquely American phenomenon. Because of its tolerance for theological and philosophical differences, its lack of discrimination against women and other minority groups, its sense of humor about itself, and its distrust of all organizational structures, it is drastically different from most other philosophical and religious movements that have called themselves "Druidic" previously.

And yet the Reformed Druids do have some fundamental concepts in common with the Paleopagan and Mesopagan Druids who preceded them and the Neopagan Druids who developed from them. Down through the ages, their communities have known how to tell who the Druids among them were, because the role of the Druid has always been clear — scholar and artist, poet and priest, philosopher and magician — the one who seeks, preserves and extends the highest wisdom her or his people are capable of handling safely, and who uses that knowledge and inspiration for the benefit of their community.

Currently Existing Druid Groups and Friends

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Introductory Comments:

The Paleopagan Druid organization(s,) if there were any, vanished long ago. This does not, naturally, stop some modern Druid groups and individuals from claiming to be surviving underground Paleopagan Druid organizations or the offspring thereof.

Mesopagan Druid orders are among the oldest fraternal groups still in existence, and were once very popular across the USA and Canada. Closely related to the Freemasons in history, liturgy, and theology, they have kept the ideals of Druidism alive for over two centuries. Their activities are generally open to all sincere participants, save that the older ones tend (in the U.S.A. at least) to have separate gender-based groups ("Ladies Auxiliaries.") Read Elements of the Druid Tradition by Philip Carr-Gomm for details.

Neopagan Druids are reviving the best aspects of ancient Earth-centered religions in a modern context. Their activities are generally open to all sincere participants, regardless of ancestry, gender, sexual orientation or membership in other Pagan or Druidic groups. Read Drawing Down the Moon by Margot Adler, People of the Earth: The New Pagans Speak Out by Ellen Evert Hopman and Lawrence Bond, or The Druid Renaissance: the Voice of Druidry Today by Phillip Carr-Gomm (with a chapter by myself on "The Druid Revival in Modern America") for details.

You can exchange ideas with Neopagans Druids on the Internet newsgroup called "alt.religion.druid," as well as on the "Pagan Message Boards" of all the commercial online services, including America Online, Compuserve and Pagans Online.Com.

You can do live chatting about Druidism with others off the commercial services by using "IRC" (Internet Relay Chat) and special "java chatters" on specific websites, and join private emailing lists about Druidism and Celtic Studies.

If you decide to send regular or "snailmail" letters to any of the groups listed here, expect to wait a few weeks for your reply, as each of these groups is run by a handful of volunteers working part-time. And it doesn't hurt for you to include a few dollars to help them with their postage and printing costs.

Druidic Organizations:

The United Ancient Order of Druids is the oldest of the surviving Fraternal (what I call "Mesopagan") Druid organizations. For an explanatory essay about them, you can jump to The Story of Druidism: History, Legend and Lore (U.A.O.D..)

They are primarily active in the Ohio, Nevada and California regions. On the East Coast, Iona Grove #1, UAOD, meets in the Washington, DC, area, at least 4 times each year, on the Solstices and Equinoxes, for dinner, good conversation, and the presentation and discussion of a paper relating to Druidism (as a fraternal organization, not a religious movement) and/or fraternalism in general. They have been in existence since 1994 and have grown very quickly to a membership that now numbers over fifty. Some of these members are in New York, West Virginia, Connecticut, Ohio, Texas, Minnesota, and California. I was recently privileged to be initiated into this organization, as a Bard, Ovate and Druid (3º.)

The Secretary for Iona Grove #1, UAOD is Paul M. Bessel, at 703-418-1172, fax 703-418-6625. You can e-mail him at paulb@cpcug.org

Via snailmail, you can write to Iona Grove #1, UAOD, Paul M. Bessel, 2301 Jefferson Davis Hwy., #1521, Dept. IBWS, Arlington, VA 22202-3855.

The UAOD is also active in Sweden, so here's their Swedish UAOD website.

The Order of Bards Ovates and Druids, also known as OBOD, is a modern offshoot of The Druid Order (British Circle of the Universal Bond,) and is evolving into a Neopagan movement with over 1,200 members around the world (including myself.) To receive a packet of information about them, just write to: OBOD, Dept. IBWS, PO Box 1333, Lewes. East Sussex BN7 1DX England, and enclose several International Postal Reply Coupons, or send email to office@druidry.org. OBOD publishes an excellent monthly newsletter Touchstone, for members only. Excerpts from previous issues are online at the OBOD site.

OBOD's current Chosen Chief (they don't use the term "Archdruid") is Philip Carr-Gomm, psychologist and author of some excellent books on Druidism. You can email him at philip@druidry.org. The Insular Order of Druids or IOD is a new Druid order, founded in 1993 c.e. They appear to be more Neopagan than Mesopagan, with Wiccan elements, and their Arch Druid Dylan Ap Thuin is a poet and tattoo artist/body piercer! Definitely a 1990's kinda group, appealing to a younger generation of British Druids but enjoying warm relations with other members of the Council of British Druid Orders.

You can send them email at: Druids@insular.demon.co.uk or write to them via snailmail at: IOD, c/o Labyrinth, 2 Victoria Road South, Southsea, Hants, England.

The Mother Grove of The British Druid Order or BDO "was formed in 1979 as part of a personal quest to recreate a native British spirituality." "The Order is currently under the guidance of founder, Philip Shallcrass (Grey Wolf, aka Wolf Walks With Fire) and Emma Restall Orr (Bobcat) as joint Chiefs, their role being that of facilitators and guides. Philip is a musician, artist, poet and writer. Emma is a writer, teacher and soul counsellor. Both lecture and present workshops on many aspects of Druid tradition. Both have links with other Druid groups in Britain and overseas."

"The Order also works with other faiths and traditions, finding common cause and common sources of inspiration with those who follow other spiritual paths. Philip and Emma have wide practical experience in numerous magical, mystical, spiritual and shamanic traditions, all of which they bring together in the BDO to create a unique brand of pagan Druidry."

You can email Emma Restall Orr at: bobcat@nemeton.demon.co.uk

You can email Philip Shallcrass at: greywolf@druidorder.demon.co.uk

King Arthur Pendragon, Titular Head & Chosen Chief of the Loyal Arthurian Warband, and member of the Council of British Druid Orders, has his own website from whence he rallies "Wizards, Witches and Warriors" to fight for the Earth Mother and for free and open access to Stonehenge for all. He and his followers battle through both nonviolent political protest and through civil and criminal lawsuits, even going so far as to drag the British government before the European Commission on Human Rights. If you're at all interested in these issues (and you should be!), a visit to his website will be quite educational. If you would like to network with him about these and other eco-warrior issues, you may email him at pendragon@dragons4.demon.co.uk

The Reformed Druids of North America or RDNA, are ancestral to both ADF and Keltria. For historical information, you can read an essay on the Reformed Druids of North America and their Offshoots on this website. For current info, visit A Psuedo-Official Homepage of the RDNA maintained by Michael Scharding, who is a former Archdruid of the Carleton Grove of the RDNA, founder of the International Druid Archives at Carleton College, and the editor of A Reformed Druid Anthology. Michael can be emailed at MSCHARDI@carleton.edu

Naturally, I have to include the organization I founded, Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, or ADF. To receive a printed packet of information about this Pan-Indo-European Druid Fellowship, just send three US dollars to cover printing, postage and handling, to: ADF, Dept. IBWS, PO Box 516, East Syracuse, NY 13057. You can send email to adf-info@adf.org to get an automated information response or visit the ADF website to find book lists, study materials and several ADF-related internet mailing lists.

If the ADF website is down or busy, you can go back to my Homepage for a list of links to ADF-related essays you can read in my website. Since they're newer versions, and include essays the new board considers "too radical" to be on the ADF website, they won't necessarily reflect current ADF policies, however.

I'm not the Archdruid of ADF anymore, and I haven't been for over two years. For that matter, I'm not on the Board either, and I don't subscribe to the Mother Grove's private emailing list, so I can't tell you anything about current policy discussions inside ADF.

The new Archdruid of ADF is John "Fox" Adelmann, whom you can email at adf-archdruid@adf.org .

Another great Neopagan Druid organization (of which I am also a member) is the Henge of Keltria, which branched off from ADF a few years ago in order to form an exclusively Celtic path of Neopagan Druidism.

"We are a positive path Neopagan tradition dedicated to protecting and preserving our Mother Earth, honoring our ancestors, revering the spirits of nature, and worshipping the Gods and Goddesses of our Celtic heritage. Our focus is on personal growth through the development of mind, body, and spirit. We place special emphasis on spiritual development fostered through study and practice of the Druidic Arts and Celtic Magick. Through training, networking, resource material, ritual participation, and meaningful communication we hope to provide a religious and spiritual framework through which people may reach their full potential."

"We call our religious organization a "Henge." The autonomous local groups working within the Keltrian tradition are called "Groves." Each Grove is free to compose and perform ritual and magick geared to its own particular focus, provided such work remains compatible with the beliefs, ethics, and ritual and structural framework of the Henge."

I can't recommend Keltria: Journal of Druidism and Celtic Magick highly enough. The Journal is no longer being published, but orders are still being taken for back issues. Sample articles, table of contents for the issues and an order form are online at the above address.

You can get information about Keltria by emailing Keltria's President Wren, at HengeofK@aol.com . By snailmail, send a Self Addressed Stamped #10 Envelope to: Keltria, PO Box 17969, Long Beach, CA, USA 90807.

IMBAS "is an organization that promotes the religion of Celtic Reconstructionist Paganism, and traditional Celtic culture and heritage. The Celts are recognized as the tribal Celts of Iron Age Europe and the modern peoples of Alba (Scotland,) Breizh (Brittany,) Cymru (Wales,) E'ire (Ireland,) Kernow (Cornwall,) and Mannin (Isle of Man.) Celtic Reconstructionist Paganism is a votive religion that is grounded in folk tradition, mythological texts, and the archaeological and historical records; and is based around the home, the family, and the community/tribe in honoring the land, the ancestors, and the traditional Celtic Gods and Goddesses. We do not practice our spirituality, we live it."

The IMBAS website is filled with some of the best Celtic scholarship available on the Web, with a wealth of articles and reviews by people who know what they're talking about. They also have live chats via java software at their site, as well as an emailing list.

IMBAS can be contacted directly at imbas@imbas.org or though it's President, Danielle Ni'Dhighe at President@imbas.org , or by snail mail at: IMBAS, 1412 SW 102nd St., #139, Seattle, WA 98146-3770 USA.

The Order of the White Oak is "a loose collection of Celtic Reconstructionists, philosophers, and students of Druidry who are concerned with the matter of ethics in the Druidical community and who meet with our peers from time to time to study the Brehon Laws, to search the ancient stories for Celtic tribal values, and to consult our own consciences for the kind of Druid path we envision. Our purpose is not to condemn or judge anyone. We welcome Druids of every denomination as well as independents and those who care about Celtic culture, history and spirituality to join in our discussions."

For more information, you can email Ellen Evert Hopman (Willow/Saille) at Saille333@aol.com She was the founder of the Whiteoak emailing-list that the Order was sparked by. A founder and early officer of Keltria, Ellen is also a professional member of the American Herbalists Guild and the author of Tree Medicine-Tree Magic, A Druids Herbal for the Sacred Earth Year and People of the Earth - The New Pagans Speak Out (Lawrence Bond contributor) as well as several videos on the subjects of herbs and Paganism.

The Celtic Traditionalist Order of Druids is "a teaching Order, dedicated to the preservation and rebirth of the worship of the ancient Gods and Goddesses, primarily those of the Celtic Nations - Cymru (Wales,) Eire (Ireland,) Kernow (Cornwall,) Bretagne (Brittany,) Alba (Scotland,) Albion, Galicia (Northern Spain,) Gaul/Galica (France) as well as other related lands and peoples."

"The CTOD, officially founded in 1987, is a semi-monastic teaching order dedicated to the principals of Truth, Honor, and Loyalty. While somewhat eclectic in nature, the Order strives to be as faithful as possible to the spirit of the cultures which have gone before -- while introducing modern aspects to the faithful worship of the Old Gods. The Order considers its self semi-monastic, due to the fact that while group formation is practiced, most members walk a path of solitary reflection and study. It is not 'Celtic Reconstructionalist', more 'Celtic Realist'."

The CTOD can be contacted by emailing Howard and Vicki Mieth at merlyn@goodnet.com .]

The Aisling Association of Celtic Tribes "is a Celtic Reconstructionist Pagan organization focused on worship of the Gods, scholarship, and community service. We work to develop a modern form of tribal life, blending Iron Age ideology with modern day practicality and to honor the Gods in all we do. Likewise we are developing reconstructions of many different paths associated with Pagan Celtic cultures that are as true as possible to the ancient ways while being applicable to the society in which we live. We look towards the future of what our paths mean, as much as we learn from the past to develop them."

"We base our ways on research of ancient Celtic culture, mythology,---primarily at this time the Gaels (Irish, Scots, and to some extent, Manx) but as we grow and interest develops among our members we will develop more on the British, Welsh and Gaulish material. We are also deeply influenced by our experiences and do not discount them, although we may strive to validate them on the material out there. We do not make any pretensions to passing on ancient knowledge from unbroken lines, we are a modern religion based on research of the old --- however, we also do not mix our Celtic-based practice with Wicca, Ceremonial Magick, or Shamanism. (This is in no way a statement that our way is better or that we are cultural surpremists --we simply chose to not be eclectic in our practices. Of course, being of Celtic descent is in no way a requirement for involvement ---we wish strongly to disassociate from those misguided individuals who use the terms "Celt" and "tribalism" to promote their agenda of supremism, isolationism, and hatred.)"

"Our primary goal is to develop educated, well rounded members to serve their communities---- their Tribe, their Pagan Community, and their physical neighborhoods. We are in the process of developing a study program to develop clergy, healers, warriors, bards, and others in order to do this. Most of our programs will be individually modified for each participant and will work with standard requirements for professionals in the chosen fields where applicable."

Their email address is AislingACT@aol.com . Their snailmail address is: AACT, PO Box 1946, Dover NH 03821-1946.

The Summerlands is an entire Celtic community on the net, with message boards, classes and a multitude of resources! This huge website is guided by well-known Neopagan Celtic scholar Searles O'Dubhain, his "kitchen witch" shaman wife Deborah O'Dubhain, and several other names you'll recognize from various Druidic organizations and chatrooms.

"The Summerlands is a pagan community dedicated to rediscovering, preserving, disseminating, and when necessary, reinventing that which was lost to us... the magick, history, customs, and religions of our ancestors. We are about worshipping and celebrating the old Gods and Goddesses in Ways both ancient and new."

"The Summerlands is the home of the Heartland, the resting place of the Sun, and the reflecting pool of the Moon. Though our accent is primarily Indo-European and Celtic, all are welcome who come in peace to share our fires. Our goal is to develop into a multi-traditional community that works in harmony. Our Ways welcome your Ways."

They have message boards, a library, live chatting and online classes. They charge a modest fee for membership and classes.

Here's a few other groups I have only snailmail addresses for, along with their contact people:

Aos Dana, Fiona Davidson, Invergowrie House, Ninewells, Dundee, DD2 1UA, Scotland.

The Bardic Order Group, Alex Gunningham, Flat 2, 20 The Common, Ealing, London, W5 3JB, England.

The Council of British Druid Orders, Elizabeth Murray, BM Oakgrove, London, WC1N 3XX, England. The Council includes representatives of most of the Druid groups in England and other Druid organizations (as associate members) from around the world (including ADF.)

Druiidica Comardia Eriutalamonos (Druidical Fellowship of the Western Land,) M. G. Boutet, 32 Fourth Ave. South, Roxboro, PQ, H2I 3W3, Canada.

The Druid Order, BCUB (British Circle of the Universal Bond,) David Loxley, 23 Thornsett Road, London SE20 YXB, England.

Druidiactos, the organization founded by Tom Cross/Tadhg MacCrossan, author of The Sacred Cauldron, is defunct. Since Cross is racist, sexist and anti-Semitic, it's no great loss. The last I heard, he was running a "Celtic Christian" group and insisting that "True Celts" should all be Catholics!

The Divine Circle of the Sacred Grove, the organization founded by Janette-of-the-many-aliases, now operating out of Phoenix, AZ, is not recommended. Compare the contents of that essay just referenced with my Cult Danger Evaluation Frame to understand why this group is as close to being a "dangerous Druid cult" as any could be.

Ecole Druidique des Gaules, Bernard Jacquelin, Villa Montmorency 75016, Paris, 45 27 74 79, France.

The Glastonbury Order of Druids, R. Maughfling and J. Paterson, Dove House, Barton-St. David, Somerset, TA11 6DF, England.

The London Druid Group, Gordon Gentry, 74 Riversmeet, Hertford, SG14 1LE, England.

Ollotouta Druidique des Gaules, Pierre de la Crau, B.P. 13, 93301, Aubervilliers, Cedex, France. This group appears to be creating a Gaulish version of Neopagan Druidism, similar in many ways to ADF.

Druidic Online Chats and Emailing Lists

The #druid homepage contains information about the #druid IRC chat channels that exist on both the Undernet and the PaganPaths servers, as well as transcripts of online classes by Isaac Bonewits. ADF has numerous emailing lists available through their website, including ones devoted to various Celtic and other Indo-European cultures, as well as regularly scheduled online IRC chats. Celt.net is an online Celtic community that sponsors many Celtic emailing lists as well as Celtic websites. You can subscribe to several Celtic Language emailing lists through listserv@listserv.heanet.ie by sending a message saying "subscribe __(listname)__." Included are:

CELTIC-L (Celtic culture)
GAELIC-L (Gaelic Language Bulletin Board)
GAEILGE-A (conversation in Irish Gaelic for fluent speakers/learners) GAEILGE-B (Irish Gaelic for beginners)
GAIDHLIG-A (conversation in Scottish Gaelic for fluent speakers/learners)
GAIDHLIG-B (Scottish Gaelic for beginners)
GAELG (conversation in Manx Gaelic and support for learners)
OLD-IRISH-L (Scholars and students of Old Irish) Website
IRTRAD-L (Irish Traditional Music List)
IE-FILK (Irish Filkers List)
WELSH-L (conversation in Welsh for fluent speakers/learners) Website
CYMRAEG-L (Welsh for beginners) The Celtic Studies Group is "an emailing list for beginners to Celtic Studies and Celtic Spirituality -- along the lines of Nemeton-L and IMBAS only beginner oriented."

The Druids Grove Site is the homepage for the long running Druids Grove chat on America Online. It contains uploads of chat logs, a Druid FAQ, and links to other interesting Druid/Celtic sites.

IMBAS has an emailing list which can be subscribed to at their site, and live Druid chatting on their site.

Keltria has an emailing list available through their website.

Nemeton-L is an emailing list for "Druids and other Celtic Pagans and their friends. It is a place for research, reflection, debate and discussion."

The Summerlands website has both online chatting and classes available to members.

Other Websites of Interest to Druids

Amulets by Merlin is the company and website of Merlin Windsor, "The Official Jeweler to the Archdruid of North America." <G> He's the artist who made the oakleaves and acorns Green Man necklace, with matching bracelet and earrings, that many have seen me wear at festivals. Though there are many fine jewelers in our Neopagan community, Merlin is one of the best -- In My Humble Opinion, of course! If I'm going to mention Celtic jewelry, then I have to tell you about Ancient Circles, a superb source of Celtic-design textiles (including some fabulous capes,) jewelry (pendents, earrings, brooches, torcs,) calendars and other arts. They are well worth paying a visit to!

C.E.L.T. Corpus of Electronic Texts is a website maintained by the University College Cork in Ireland. It contains many historical Irish manuscripts and other documents in electronic format for searching or download, as well as links to other text sites and Irish Studies resources.

The Celtic League is an international organization devoted to the preservation and support of Celtic cultures and languages. If you're going to call yourself a "Druid," then you ought to be paying attention to the issues this organization addresses, even if most modern Celtic activists are Christians. Celtic-art.com --

The Art of Courtney Davis is the website for one of the world's greatest Celtic artists. Mr. Davis is the artist behind the many Dover Clip Art Books that so many of us use as graphics resources (see how many examples you can find on this and other Druidical websites,) and is a reknowned illustrator of books on Celtic Topics. He deserves Druidical respect and honor for helping to make Celtic Art once again the glory that it was.

Every Celtic Thing on the Web is a cauldron full of links to every aspect of ancient and modern Celtic culture and language.

The Irish Bookshop is a major source of books and tapes about Ireland and the Irish language, with some materials about other Celtic languages. I especially recommend the Buntús Cainte series of Irish language books and tapes. The owner travels frequently across the Pond and can pick up special orders on request.

Lisala's Celtic Studies Resources Website is well worth visiting for anyone interested in real scholarship about Druids and Celtic Studies. Lisa is a professional medievalist, specializing in Celtic Studies.

The Rampant Lion is a website for a couple who consider themselves "paleo-pagan" Celts (I haven't asked if they have the severed heads of any revered ancestors in their house.) Though they rudely dismiss all the Druid groups listed above as fraudulent or delusionary, they do have an excellent Celtic Links page that is well worth visiting by anyone interested in serious Celtic Studies.

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(P.E.)Isaac Bonewits, Adr.Em./ADF

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Druidism - Past, Present & Future
Part 1: The Paleopagans

This article by P.E.I. Bonewits in 1993 is based on his previous study, "The Other Druids," published in The Druid Chronicles (Evolved,) now out of print.

Druidism is a topic that has been fascinating people for thousands of years, yet many folks (even within the Neopagan community) are confused about what is actually known and unknown, fact and fancy (whatever those words may really mean,) about the various phenomena that have all been labeled *Druidism.* The purpose of this article will be to briefly outline the current consensus among scholars about Paleopagan, Mesopagan and Neopagan Druidism. Comments by those having more accurate data will be welcomed by the author.

It should be pointed out, however, that the author is working strictly on the traditional, "earth-plane," historical level of reality. It is not unusual for religious and philosophical movements to have legends about their origins, in fact, all of the world's "great religions" have them. The existence of such mythic material says nothing about the validity of the spiritual, philosophical or magical concepts such groups may have to offer their members or observers; especially since many of the legends about the origins of groups were created for archetypal, mystical and otherwise symbolic purposes and are not necessarily meant to be taken literally.

Earth-plane reality is not the Drearntime; many modern religious and magical orders are based on psychic rather than physical links to the past, and that past is often one that may never have existed physically on this planet. But profound metaphysical insights are still profound, regardless of whether or not those promulgating them are accidentally or deliberately passing on unprovable tales about their origins. Modern Druids are as likely as modern Witches to suddenly go mystical and romantic when hard historical questions are brought up. Some avoid the problem entirely by citing "reincarnation memories" or other divinatory techniques as the sources of their beliefs. Such sources deserve respectful analysis, but at parapsychology's current state of development, historians do not yet have the proper mental tools to adequately perform the necessary evaluations.

The term "Pagan" comes from the Latin paganus, which appears to have meant "country dweller, villager, or hick," and not necessarily in a polite way. The Roman army seems to have used the term to mean "a civilian,' " and the Roman Church later used it to refer to those who were not part of "the Armies of the Lord," i.e., those who were nonchristian. After 1500 years of propaganda, the term became synonymous in many people's minds with "atheist, devil worshipper, or heathen" (heathen, of course, means "people of the heath, where heather grows.") Today, most people who define themselves as Pagans use the word as a general term for "native and natural religions, usually polytheistic, and their members."

This is the sense in which this author uses it. The term "Paleopagan" refers to the original polytheistic tribal faiths of Europe, Africa, Asia, the Americas and Australia, when they were still practiced as intact belief systems. "Mesopagan" refers to those founders within the basically monotheistic/dualistic worldview of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. "Neopaganism" refers to the recent attempts to revive what the founders perceived as the best elements of Paleopaganism (of varying ethnic origins) within the context of modem humanistic ideas of psychological growth needs and mutual human interdependence.

The first term was coined by this author, the second by Robin Goodfellow, and the third (as "Neo-Paganism") was rediscovered by Tim Zell.

Our discussion in this article will deal with Paleopagan, Mesopagan and Neopagan Druids and systems of Druidism, from before the Christian era to the present day. We'll include a history of the British Masonic/Rosicrucian Druids from the 1700's to date, and detail the origins of the New Reformed Druids of North American back in 1963. We'll end with some speculations about what Druidism may become in the near and far future, in the "British" Isles and the Americas.

But first, let us go over what we know of the original Paleopagan Druids. This can be accomplished swiftly, for we actually know very little of them. The ancient Greek writers who mentioned the Druids were, according to Stuart Piggott's *The Druids* (which is the best book in English available on the subject,) for the most part suffering from either the Savage Barbarian bias ("Hard Primitivism") or else the Noble Savage mystique ("Soft Primitivism.") The accounts of Julius Caesar are mostly war propaganda, heavily weighed down with atrocity tales designed to make the Celts look terrible and the Romans look wonderful. The same comment, of course, holds for the writings of the early Christian missionaries, some of whom encountered Druids in Ireland and Scotland, and found them to be far less gullible than the populace. Indeed, it seems that the overwhelming majority of books written about the Druids, until the 20th century, were far more fancy than fact.

The really hard facts and probabilities about Paleopagan Druidism can be summed up briefly: the Druids practiced a system of priestcraft that was perhaps similar in *some* ways to that of the Brahmins of India. They were active throughout Gaul and the "British" Isles, and perhaps in other Celtic territories as well. They were the victims of a series of successful genocide campaigns waged against them by the Roman Empire and the Church of Rome. First to taste defeat were the Druids of Gaul, around 54 c.e. and those of Britain around 61 c.e. (all by the Roman Legions.) The Christians managed to obliterate Druidism (or at least drive it completely underground) in Ireland, Scotland and the outer Isles during the fifth and sixth centuries c.e. How long Druidism may have lasted (either aboveground or underground) in Wales and other outposts is unknown, but it was probably not for very much longer.

As a social class, the Druids seem to have been just below the warrior/nobility class in power and prestige, though they apparently had the political and religious power to be noncombatants and to start or stop wars. Their training could have lasted as long as twenty years and seems to have included poetical composition, memorization techniques, law, ritual practice, weather predicting and other specialties. There appear to have been several subcategories, all vaguely called "Druids." For example; the "Bards" were in charge of music, poetry, singing and dance; the "Vates" or "Ovates" were in charge of prophecy and divination; the "Brehons" (whom some say were not Druids at all) were judges and law-givers; etc. "Druids" per se were primarily teachers, magicians and priests. All of these categories seem to have overlapped, along with healing, animal husbandry, time keeping, astrology and the transmission of oral traditions.

They definitely were respected authority figures and this *may* relate to the fact that the word "Druid" is based on the root "dru-" meaning "oak tree, firm, strong." Therefore, it is possible that "druidecht" or Druidism may relate as much to the concepts of "firm knowledge givers," "dogma knowers" or "sources of orthodoxy" as it does to "the oak worshipping priests." This would make it an interesting contrast to "wiccacraeft" or "Witchcraft," which seems to mean "the craft of bending" or "the twisting skill" (standard terms used for magical workers, but seldom for religious authorities.)

Druid places of worship *seem* to have been mainly oak groves. They practiced animal (and *perhaps* human) sacrifices and may have performed divination from the remains. They were touchingly fond of mistletoe, especially if it grew on oak trees. They appear to have been polytheists rather than monotheists or duotheists. They believed in an afterlife very much like the fleshly one (not, it would appear, in reincarnation or transn-dgration' except for special persons) and made it a special point to bury tools, weapons, animals and food with dead warriors and kings for use in the Celtic equivalent of the "Happy Hunting Grounds" believed in by some Native Americans. A favorite day for rituals, which may have marked the beginning of their lunar months, seems to have been the sixth day after the night in which the new moon was first visible. They did not appreciate either the Roman Paleopagans nor the Roman Paleochristians very much.

That just about sums up what we really know for sure about the Paleopagan Druids. There are no real indications that they used stone altars (at Stonehenge or anywhere else); that they were better philosophers than the Greeks or Egyptians; that they had anything to do at all with the mythical continents of Atlantis or Mu; that they wore gold Masonic regalia or used Rosicrucian passwords; that they were the architects of (a) Stonehenge, (b) the megalithic circles and lines of Northwestern Europe, (c) the Pyramids of Egypt, (d) the Pyramids of the Americas, (e) the statues of Easter Island, or (f) anything other than wooden barns and stone houses. Neither is there any proof that the Ancient Druids were "Prechristian Christians"; that they understood or invented either Pythagorean or Gnostic or Cabalistic mysticism; or that they all had long white beards and golden sickles. We don't even have any proof that they were the only magical workers among the Paleopagan Celts (or among the tribes conquered by the Celts.) And although there are sporadic references to a "seminary" for the higher training of Druids in "Albion," (which could have meant either the physical country of Britain or Wales, or else the Gaelic "Otherworld," i.e., higher training between lives); there is no proof for this nor for any really developed intertribal communications between Druids.

With that background in mind, let us attempt to trace the revival/survival of Druidism in the Celtic and Gaulish territories. As near as we can tell, Druidism as such had vanished as a public activity by the end of the sixth century of the common era. Bards, however, seem to have survived fairly well, at least in Ireland, Scotland, Wales and the outer Isles. Whether they also managed to keep alive (as an underground cult) other aspects of Paleopagan Druidism, as has been claimed, remains to be proven. It is also possible, though unproven (and perhaps unknowable,) that some of the so-called Family Traditions of Witches in these territories kept alive some of the knowledge of the Ancient Druids.

We do know that, as far back as the 12th century c.e., Bards in Wales were holding large competitions, to which the generic name Eisteddfod has been attached. One of them was held in 1176 c.e. in Cardigan Castle, sponsored by a Lord Rhys, but it was almost three centuries before another competition of any significance was held, at Carmarthen in 1450. The next appears to have been in the north of Wales in 1523, at Caerwys, and another in 1568 where Queen Elizabeth (who was anxious to control the traveling minstrels she saw - probably correctly - as a threat to British rule) examined the Bards and granted licenses to some of them to travel and collect fees.

Throughout these centuries, the scholarship of learned men (women weren't allowed to write) concerning the Druids was abysmal. The same Greek and Roman commentaries were dug up and rehashed, over and over again, and fanciful theories

were built upon them. Most of these "scholars" were not very romantic in their treatment of the Druids; on the contrary, writers seemed to vie with one another in "revealing" the foolishness, barbarity and vanity of Druid worship. This was of course the proper party-line to take for a scholar wishing to survive with either his reputation or his head in Christendom. It did not, however, improve the image of Prechristian religions in Europe.

To be continued!

The Other Druids

by Isaac Bonewits
Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1975

Modern Introduction

This article is taken verbatim from DC(E,) except for spelling adjustments and such, but I have added extra bracketed paragraphs, i.e. "{xxxxx}," from Isaac's later 1979 Pentalpha version (titled "Druidism Past, Present & Future") where he expanded certain ideas (most notably the first few of the following paragraphs.) I've dealt with this issue enough to leave it at that. As an overview of past "Druidic" groups, it is a nice compilation. See my own up-to-date bibliography at the end of Part Eight for other good overviews of Paleo, Meso and Neo-Druidical movements.

-Scharding

The Article

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Here the original article from DC(E) begins.

It will come as a surprise to no one that the Reformed Druid movements in North America were not the first attempt to resurrect Druidism. There are, in fact, dozens of groups that have been started over the centuries in an attempt to carry on or reinvent what their founders thought were the principles and practices of Druidism. Although none of the Branches of the Reform have any historical connection with any of these (up to the present, anyway) with one minor exception considered near the end of this article; nonetheless, a brief review of the histories of these groups will prove of interest to most Reformed Druids.

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It is said by some that in 1245 c.e. a gathering was held of underground Druids and Bards from several of the British Isles, and that a theological unity was agreed upon and a special group or Grove founded, called the *Mount Haemus Grove*, which is said to still be in existence, with an "unbroken line" leading back. Such claims need to be treated most carefully. There does seem to be a group by that name, recognized by some of the modern Druids in England, but this hardly constitutes proof of such an extraordinary claim. It may indeed go back a few centuries (probably to the id 1700) but that does not make it an unbroken heritage from 1245.

In 1659 c.e., the scholar John Aubrey, having done some archeological fieldwork at Stonehenge, made the suggestion that Stonehenge *might* have been a temple of the Druids. He developed this suggestion cautiously over the next few decades in his correspondence with his fellow scholars and in the notes for his never fully-published work, *Templa Druidum*. In 1694, a fiery young Deist named John Toland discussed the theory with him and became very enthusiastic over it. In 1659, excerpts from Aubrey's book were published, including his theory about Druids at Stonehenge, which then saw light for the first time.

In 1717, a young antiquary named William Stuckeley obtained a transcript of Aubrey's complete manuscript of *Templa Druidum*, including the portions never published. Stuckeley though the theory about Stonehenge being a Druid Temple was a terrific idea and began to develop it far beyond Aubrey's original concepts.

Also in that year, it is claimed, John Toland held a meeting at which Druidic and Bardic representatives from Wales, Cornwall, Brittany, Ireland, Scotland, Anglesey, Many, York, Oxford and London appeared and formed *The Universal Druid Bond* (U.D.B..) The UDB has supposedly continued to this very day (or rather, at least one current grove is claiming to be part of a Universal Druid BOND says that it goes back this far) and the present name of the head group of the UDB seems to be *The Mother Grove An Tich Geata Gairdeachas*.

In 1723 c.e, the Druid Stone Altar was invented by Rev. Henry Rowlands in his monumental work, *Mona Antiqua Restaurata*. His Druids are Patriarchs right out of the Christian Bible, and the altars they use are cairns and the capstones of cromlechs (though he does at least allow the Druids to remain in their groves, rather than forcing them to build huge stone temples.) These Druid Stone Altars quickly became part of the rapidly growing folklore of Druidism. Prior to 1723, Druids were required to use altars made of sod or tree stumps, adequate, perhaps, but hardly as glamorous.

In 1726, John Toland published his *History of the Druids*, in which he pictured the Druids as unscrupulous mountebanks and theocratic tyrants. This was rather surprising act for the man who had supposedly had, nine years earlier, helped to found a Universal Druid Bond and been its first "Chosen Chief." He did, however, put further forward the Stonehenge theory of Druid worship.

Scholarship of equal value was, of course, being produced in France as well. In 1727, Jean Martin presented Patriarchal Druid (Christian style) in his *Religion des Gaulois*. Throughout this century, on both sides of the Channel, Druids were being invented east and west, though in France these "Pre-Christian Christians" tended to be patriotic heroes resisting foreign invasion, while their English counterparts were the greatest mystics in history.

In London, throughout the century, "Druid" groups appeared along with Rosicrucian and Freemasonic organizations. In 1781 c.e., Henry Hurle set up *The Ancient Order of Druids* (AOD,) a secret society based on Masonic patterns (not surprising, since Hurle was a carpenter and house builder.) This group, like most of the similar mystic societies form at the time, was heavily influenced by Jacob Boehme. Jacob Boehme, 1675-1724 c.e., was a Protestant mystic, greatly involved with alchemy, hermeticism and Christian Cabala, as well as being a student of the famous Meister Eckhart. His mystical writings attempted to reconcile all these influences and had a tremendous impact upon later generations of mystical Christians, Rosicrucians, Freemasons, and Theosophists.

{"Overseas, the link between Deism, Masonry and Druidism was once again established, in the small town of Newburgh, New York. G. Adolf Koch has an entire chapter on "The Society of Druids" in his book *Religion of the American Enlightenment*. Deism and downright atheism were popular during the 1780's and 90's among the American intelligentsia, especially those who had supported the American and French revolutions. In fact, a rather large number of the key political figures involved in both revolutions were Deistic Masons and Rosicrucians (see Neal Wilgus, *The Illuminoids*.) Koch tells the story of the Newburgh Druids thusly:}

{"Some Influential citizens of Newburgh had organized themselves into an interesting radical religious body called "The Druid Society." Like its sister organization, the Deistic Society in New York, it was a radical offshoot of an earlier and more conservative society. A Masonic lodge had been established in Newburgh in 1788, and it seems, as one attempts to piece together the fragmentary facts, that as the brothers, or at least a number of them, became more and more radical in the feverish days of the French Revolution, the metamorphosis from Mason to Druid resulted. The Druids held their meetings in the room formerly occupied by the Masons and continued to use a ceremony similar to the Masonic. It is interesting to note, too, that as the Druid Society dies out contemporaneously with the end of Palmers' activities in New York City (he was a famous Deist of the time-PEIB,) a new Masonic lodge was instituted in Newburgh in 1806."}

{"Koch continues, "The question naturally arises as to why those apostate Masons chose the name of Druids. It seems

that when they abandoned Christianity, with which Masonry in America had not been incompatible, they went back to the religion (as they conceived of it -PEIB) of the ancient Druids who were sun worshippers. It was commonly believed at that time, by the radicals of course, that both Christianity and Masonry were derived from the worship of the sun.. The Druids thus went back to the pure worship of the great luminary, the visible agent of a great invisible first cause, and regarded Christianity as a later accretion and subversion of the true faith, a superstition, in short, developed by a designing and unscrupulous priesthood, to put it mildly in the language of the day." "}

{"It appears that Thomas Paine, among other radicals of the time, was convinced that Masonry was descended from Druidism. Koch refers us to an essay by Pain, *The Origin of Freemasonry*, written in New York City in 1805. In this essay he mentions a society of Masons in Dublin who called themselves Druids. The spectacular fantasies and conjectures that have been offered over the centuries to explain the origins of Masonry and Rosicrucianism will have to await another article to be properly discussed. Suffice it to say for now that the sorts of Druidism with which the noble Paine and his friends might have been familiar were far more likely to have been offshoots of Masonry than vice versa."}

{"As for the group of Druid Masons in Dublin, this author knows nothing else about them. Perhaps they were a branch of the UDB or AOD. I will speculate that they may very well have been intimately linked with the Irish Revolutionary politics, which might or might not have strained their relations with Druid Masons in England. There doesn't seems to be much data about Irish Masonic Druidism available in this county, but we do know a bit about developments in Wales."}

Following the tremendously successful Eisteddfod organized by Thomas Jones in Corwen in 1789, a huge variety of Welsh cultural and literary societies mushroomed and flourished. In 1792, a member of several of these groups in London named Edward Williams, using the pen name *of Iolo Morganwg* (Iolo of Glamorgan,) held an Autumnal Equinox ceremony on top of Primrose Hill (in London.) Along with some other Welsh Bards, he set up a small circle of pebbles and an altar, called the *Mean Gorsedd*. There was a naked sword on this altar and a part of the ritual involved the sheathing of this sword. At the time, no one paid very much attention to the ceremony or its obvious sexual symbolism (which if noticed, might legitimately have been called "Pagan,") at least not outside of the London Bardic community.

Iolo, however, was not daunted. He declared that the Glamorganshire Bards had an unbroken line of Bardic-Druidic tradition going back to the Ancient Druids, and that his little ceremony was part of it. He then proceeds (almost all scholars agree) to *forge* various documents and to mistranslate a number of manuscripts, in order to "prove" this and his subsequent claims. Many people feel that he muddled genuine Welsh scholarship for over a hundred years.

In 1819, Iolo managed to get his stone circle and its ceremony (now called, as a whole, the Gorsedd inserted into the genuine Eisteddfod in Carmarthen, Wales. It was a tremendous success with the Bards and the tourists, and has been a part of the Eisteddfod tradition ever since, with greater and greater elaborations.

Iolo's effects did not stop there however, for later writers such as Lewis Spence (who produced more fantasy about Celtic Paleopaganism than any writer of the last century,) Robert Graves and Gerald Gardner apparently took Iolo's "Scholarship" at face value and proceeded to put forward theories that have launched dozens of occult and mystical organizations (most of them having little if anything to do with Paleopagan Druidism.)

By 1796 c.e., all megalithic monuments in Northwestern Europe were firmly defined as "Druidic," especially if they were in the form of circles or lines of standing stones. In that year, yet another element was added, in La Tour D'Auvergne's book, *Origines Gauloises*. He thought he had discovered a word in the Breton language for megalithic tombs, "dolmin," and by both this spelling and that of "dolmen" this term became part of the archeological jargon and of the growing Druid folklore.

At this point the folklore, also called "Celtomania," went roughly like this: "the Celts are the oldest people in the world; their language is preserved practically intact in Bas-Breton; they were profound philosophers whose inspired doctrines have been handed down by the Welsh Bardic Schools; dolmens are their altars where their priests the Druids offered human sacrifice; stone alignments were their astronomical observatories..." (Salomon Reinach, quoted by Piggot)

Art, music, drama, and poetry were using these fanciful Druids as characters and sources of inspiration. Various eccentrics, many of them devout (if unorthodox) Christians, claimed to be Druids and made colorful headlines. Wealthy people built miniature Stonehenges in their gardens and hired fake Druids to scare their guests. Mystically oriented individuals drifted from Masonic groups to Rosicrucian lodges to Druid groves, and hardly anyone, then or now, could tell the difference. Ecumenicalism was the order of the day and in 1878, at the Pontypridd Eisteddfod, the Archdruid presiding over the Gorsedd ceremony inserted a prayer to Mother Kali of India! This might have been magically quite sensible, and was certainly in keeping with traditional Pagan attitudes of religious eclecticism, except for the face that the British attitude towards Indian culture and religion was not exactly the most cordial at the time (of course, if there were no British people leading the rite, it might have been a deliberate bit of Welsh nationalistic magic against England!.)

But before this, in 1833, the Ancient Order of Druids (the secret society founded by Hurle) split up over the question of whether it should be mainly a benefit (charitable) society or a mystical one. The majority voted for being a charitable society and changed its name to *The United Ancient Order of Druids* (UAOD.) This group, with branches all over the world, still exists as a charitable and fraternal organization rather like the Elks or Shriners. An example of their philosophy may be found in a collection of their sayings entitled *The Seven Precepts of the Prophet Merlin*:

> "First: Labor diligently to acquire knowledge, for it is power.
>
> "Second: When in authority, decide reasonably, for thine authority may cease.
>
> "Third: Bear with fortitude the ills of life, remembering that no mortal sorrow is perpetual.
>
> "Fourth: Love virtue, for it bringeth peace.
>
> "Fifth: Abhor vice, for it bringeth evil upon all.
>
> "Sixth: Obey those in authority in all just things, that virtue may be exalted.
>
> "Seventh: Cultivate the social virtues, so shalt thou be beloved by all men."

Meanwhile, the minority group, still calling itself by the old name (AOD,) also continued to exist, as a mystical Masonic sort of organization. The AOD may have been among the groups known to have held ceremonies (Summer Solstice rites were the only ones held by anyone it seems) at Stonehenge prior to 1900

c.e. (it was a popular pastime) and in any event, there were several such groups using the site. In 1900, one of the standing stones fell over and the angry owner of the land (Sir Edward Antrobus) decided to fence the monument and charge admission, the better to (a) keep a closer watch on it and (b) to earn enough money to repair the damage being committed by tourists. This caused a problem almost immediately, when a Druidic group was holding the very next Summer Solstice ceremonies and the Chief Druid was kicked out by the police (he laid a curse on Sir Edward, the effects of which are unrecorded.)

Although the AOD, in the form of one of its subgroups (the Albion Lodge at Oxford) gained a certain amount of notice when they initiated Winston Churchill in August of 1908, the rite was performed at Blenhim Park, not Stonehenge. The only Druidic group known for sure to have used the monument during the years between 1901 and 1914 was called *The Druid Hermeticists*. In 1915, Stonehenge was sold by the weary owner to someone else who immediately gave it to the British Government, at a ceremony in which Druids of some sort assisted. Since 1919 c.e., when Stonehenge became a national monument, at least five different Druid groups have asked government permission to use it, although other groups have celebrated at various nearby spots (because of political and metaphysical squabbles) and some group, of course, may have used Stonehenge without government permission or knowledge.

By 1949, only two groups seem to have been left using Stonehenge for the Summer Solstice rites; the AOD and the British Circle of the Universal Bond (BCUB.) In 1955 the AOD seems to have disappeared, leaving the plain to the BCUB. But the latter also had a problem, when a group succeeded in 1963-4, calling itself The Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids (OBOD,) and decided to celebrate elsewhere (usually Primrose Hill.)

Things of a Druidic nature were occurring outside of Stonehenge, of course. In Wales, the National Eisteddfodd Court runs an Eisteddfod every year (alternating between northern and southern Wales) and has the "Gorsedd of Bards" arrange the rituals for each occasion. Bardic and Druidic groups have also arisen in France, Brittany, Cornwall, the Isle of Man, Scotland, Ireland and in various parts of England. While the Welsh groups (Bardic, Druidic and Bardic-Druidic) spend most of their time and energy looking down their noses at all the non-Welsh groups (and even being so rude as to kick non-Welsh Druids out of their ceremonies); the others in turn spent tremendous amounts of time and energy on internal warfare.

Ecumenical movements, of course, have appeared and disappeared. The UDB, supposedly founded in 1717 by John Toland, claims to have survived since then under a succession of Chosen Chiefs, including such names as Toland, Stuckeley, Lord Winchilsea, Blake and Spence, among others. It appears to have been their English group (the BCUB referred to above) that suffered the split in 1963-4. Both groups, naturally, claim to be the only legitimate representatives in the UDB. There do appear to be a couple of dozen public Druid groups in France and the "British" Isles, many of them using the "Bards, Ovates and Druids" phraseology. One leader states that there may be as many 400 independent Druids not affiliated with groups. Such estimates, like those of underground Witches, Occultists and Pagans, must remain speculation since (thanks to religious bigotry) the estimates cannot be tested without risking the lives of those so exposed.

{"The author has recently been in contact with yet another Druidic group in England, called the Golden Section Order Society, which may or may not be connected to any of the other Mesopagan Druids over there. We hope to learn more about them, and the other groups, in future correspondence. For now, let me emphasize that this series of articles is being based on the best research of which the author is aware. Readers having further data or corrections are sincerely requested to share their evidence so that future writings on these topics can be appropriately rewritten."}

{"I will make one further comment before leaving the Mesopagan Druids of the "British" Isles (I put "British" in quotes, by the way, so my Irish, Scots and Welsh friends won't lynch me.) Masonic Druidism as a religious and philosophical system that has lasted for at least two centuries, helping hundreds of people to gain a better understanding of themselves and their times. Its attitude of reverent skepticism is fully in keeping with the ideals of the founders of the Reformed Druid movements in North America. These Mesopagans have a great deal of wisdom and experience that modern Neopagans would do well to avail themselves of, and many of the current Masonic Druids are right on the borderline between Meso- and Neo-. It is to be hoped that more lines of communication will be opened between us in the years to come."}

In the United states, there have been branches of most of the British Druid groups discussed in the article and there is nothing special that needs to be said about them. There is, however, at least one homegrown group that deserves a mention, if only because of its possible dangers to naive seekers after Druidism.

Around 1970 c.e., a man named Barney Taylor (no relation to Tony,) operating under the name of "Eli" (which he claims means "teacher") appeared on the American occult scene teaching a religion he called the "American Druidic Craft." Taylor 's background included training in Naturopathy, Herblore, Scientology, Psychocybernetics and similar mind training systems (including possibly "The Process," a semi-satanic group.) A highly charismatic man, Taylor went around the US in the early 1970's, giving lectures on "Druidic Witchcraft" and founding covens.

Evidence would tend to indicate that Taylor invented his "Druidic Witchcraft" form whole-cloth. His magical and religious system has mutated quite a bit over the years, as a careful reading of his "First Book of Wisdom" will reveal to the trained eye of an Editor or Literary Critic. Several drastically different writing styles are run together in a conglomerate of Herbology, Mystical Christianity, UFO ology, Gardnarian (Neopagan) Witchcraft, Von Danikenism, Freemasonry, Spiritualism, Scientology, Process, Ceremonial Magick, etc. The resulting system, now calling itself "the Druidic Craft of the Wise," bears no resemblance to any system of Druidism practiced in Europe or North America, now or in the past. Neither does it resemble Neopagan Witchcraft very much, except for a few items obviously borrowed from easily available published sources. However, because the name "Druidic" is attached to Taylor's teachings, it would be wise to give a short account of them.

The DCW is a strictly authoritarian and patriarchal monotheistic religion. The deity is called "The Father," and no references are made to female deities at all. The word of Taylor is law, no criticisms may be voiced and no outside religious study or practice is allowed. All competing religious groups are termed fraudulent (including the Neopagan Witches Taylor recommends in writing but forbids in practice) and his attitude towards them is one of complete hostility. Private lessons at his farm in Arkansas, as well as correspondence lessons are available, however (judging from the copies of the correspondence materials seen by this writer) they are of abysmally poor quality.

Part of the initiation ceremony (done by a priest/ess claiming to be "of the Order of Melchizadeck") involved the placing of a "Spirit Guide" on the back of the neck of the initiate. According to ex-members, this is actually a vampire or artificial elemental, used to psychically bond to the group together and to

provide a source of psychic energy for Taylor and his friends. Many elements from the psychic technology of the Process and Scientology are evident, including the major technique of "spiritual enlightening" a student by destroying their old, non-magical, personality and building them a brand new personality that is magical, and does exactly as it's told. Throughout the course of training, students are given many secrecy oaths and almost no explanations whatever of what is going on. Taylor apparently feels that, as Guru, he has a right to manipulate his students "for their own good."

A number of very harsh and alarming accusations about Taylor and his activities have been made over the years, but so far no evidence that would stand up in a court of law has been produced. The psychic result of his training system, for those who stick with it, are obvious even to little-old-lady-tea-readers; classic examples of the "sleazy-satan-scientologist-junkie-vibe" so familiar to observers of the less savory fringes of the occult community.

Let me reiterate that the "Druidic Craft of the Wise" bears no resemblance to or connections with any of the Masonic Druid groups in England and America, nor with any of the Branches of the Reformed Druid movements in North America, save one. Several Covens are currently breaking away from Taylor and they have expressed interest in the Reformed Druid movements [possibly the Celtic College of Reformed Druidic Wicca? - Scharding]. Since several Covens have broken away in the past and joined various Neopagan Witchcraft groups, this is not an impossible task.

Readers are advised to stay as far away as possible from Taylor and his followers, however. There are plenty of legitimate Druidic and Craft groups around to choose from.

Neopagan Druidism

by Isaac Bonewits
Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1975

Here is the article from Vol. 2, Issue 6 of Pentalpha/Druid Chronicler by Isaac Bonewits as it was printed in 1979. At the time of writing this article Isaac was essentially on a sabbatical away from Reformed Druidism and doing intensive study of ancient Indo-European religions. Much of Isaac's materials of this time period may be interpreted as indicative of the theme of the Ar nDriaocht Fein organization that he formed between 1981 and 1983. Perhaps this was yet another attempt of Isaac to bring the NRDNA fully into an organized Neo-Pagan religion?.

-Mike Scharding

In the last two issues we have discussed both the probable and the fanciful history of Druidism in Western Europe and North America. In this concluding section I'll talk about he one Druid movement with which I am the most familiar, since I both an Archdruid within it and its resident historian: The New Reformed Druids of North America. Few, if any, legendary tales have to be dealt with here, since the movement was founded only sixteen years ago and its actual history is easily traced.

But first I will repeat the main definitions I've been using for the historical varieties of Paganism, mentioning once again that these are broad and frequently overlapping categories.

What are Neopagan Religions Like?

The New Reformed Druids of North America represent only one of the many varieties of Neopagan religions now being practiced in this country. Together, these various groups form a rich tapestry of friendly differences and strong similarities.

Most Neopagans (of various persuasions) seem to agree that their similarities are often of more importance than their specific doctrinal distinctions or ethnic focuses. Some of these common beliefs appear to include:

1. The idea that divinity is immanent (internal) as well as transcendent (external.) This is often phrased as "Thou art God" and "Thou art Goddess."

2. The belief that divinity is just as likely to manifest itself as female. This has resulted in a large number of women being attracted to the faiths and joining the clergy.

3. A belief in a multiplicity of "god" and "goddesses," whether as individual deities or as facets of one of a few archetypes. This leads to multi-value logic systems and increased tolerance towards other religions.

4. A respect and love for Nature as divine in Her own right. This make ecological awareness and activity a religious duty.

5. A distaste for monolithic religious organizations and a distrust of would-be messiahs and gurus. This makes Neopagans hard to organize, even for "their own good," and leads to constant schisming, mutation and growth in the movements.

6. The firm conviction that human being were meant to lead lives filled with joy, love, pleasure and humor. The traditional western concepts of sin, guilt and divine retribution are seen as sad misunderstandings of natural growth experiences.

7. A simple set of ethic and morality based on the avoidance of actual harm to other people (and some extend this to some or all living beings and the planet as a whole.)

8. The knowledge that with proper training and intent, human minds and hearts are fully capable of performing all the magic and miracles they are ever likely to need, through the use of natural psychic powers.

9. A belief in the importance of celebrating the solar, lunar and other cycles of our lives. This has led to the investigation and revival of many ancient customs and the invention of some new ones.

10. A minimum amount of dogma and a maximum amount of eclecticism. Neopagans are reluctant to accept any idea without personally investigating it, and are willing to use any concept they find useful, regardless of it origins.

11. A strong faith in the ability of people to solve their current problems on all levels, public and private. This leads to...

12. A strong commitment to personal and universal growth, evolution and balance. Neopagans are expected to be making continuous efforts in these directions.

13. A belief that one can progress far towards achieving such growth, evolution and balance through the carefully planned alteration of one's "normal" state of consciousness, using both ancient and modern methods of aiding concentration, meditation, reprogramming and ecstasy.

14. The knowledge that human interdependence implies community cooperation. Neopagans are encouraged to use their talents to actually help each other as well as the community at large.

15. An awareness that if they are to achieve any of their goals, they must practice what they preach. This leads to a concern with making one's lifestyle consistent with one's proclaimed beliefs.

And Neopagan Druidism?

Neopagan Druidism is the latest phase in a movement, the Reformed Druids of North America, that started out as a quasi-religious Mesopagan protest against coerced religion at a small Midwestern college, back in 1963 c.e. The RDNA was invented in order to test the amount of freedom allowed by the college's rules requiring all students to attend church. Much to the surprise of the founders, even after they had won their protest, many of the Druids wanted to continue the movement. The prayers to the Earth-Mother and the old Celtic divinities, combined with the anarchistic philosophy, had come to represent a valuable part of the spiritual lives. Graduates of Carleton College spread the Reformed Druid movement wherever they went.

It was in Berkeley, California that one of these alumni became the local Archdruid for a group of people who were already thinking of themselves as conscious Neopagans. Under their influence, an increasing overlap between RDNA and the rest of the Neopagan community began to form. Today, the handful of active groves (congregations) are almost all Neopagans and are using the "NRDNA" (for New RDNA.)

Are Druids Witches?

Only recently. Since the Paleopagan Druids were long gone by the time the Anglo-Saxons began using the word "Wicca" ["bender" or "magician"], all speculation about "witches" having been the remnants of the Pre-Christian Celtic clergy (i.e., the Druids) are unprovable. There is, in fact, no hard evidence to indicate that witches were ever though of as religious functionaries until the Church invented Neogothic (or Satanist) Witchcraft in the middle ages.

But in recent years a number of Neopagan religions have been founded by people who have chosen to call themselves "witches." These Neopagan Witches have a great deal in common with other Neopagans, including the Druidic sorts, and several initiated Witches have become ordained Druids and vice versa. This sort of overlapping membership is extremely common in the Neopagan movements and is an understandable result of polytheistic theologies (or "theoilogies") and ecumenical meetings.

What are the Basic Beliefs of Neopagan Druidism?

Neopagan Druidism retains the "Basic Tenets" of the original RDNA movement and builds upon them. According to one Druid document, *The Book of the Law*, they run thusly:

> The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
>
> And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it.

This has since been abbreviated, in The Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals, to the following statements:

1. Nature is good!

and the second is like unto the first:

2. Nature is good!

The material realm is personified as the Earth-Mother (or Mother Nature,) on of the oldest archetypes known to humanity. Many now apply this name to the biosphere as a whole, in order to emphasize our dependence upon Her. The nonmaterial essence of the universe(s) is called Be'al (which is believed by me to be an ancient Celtic name of an abstract divinity, based on "Bel" or "shining one,") and the concept is rather similar to some version of the Native American idea of the Great Spirit. Thus a polarity (or a dualism) of mater and energy, female and male, darkness and light, is established; but it is vital to realize

that *neither* half of the polarity is believed to be superior to the other. There is a very strong gender equality running throughout the Neopagan Druid worldview, and an Earth-Father/Sky-Mother polarity (as in ancient Egypt) would be considered just as valid.

The "object of Humanity's search" is called "awareness," and is defined as "unity with Be'al," a task that can only be accomplish by also attaining unity with the Earth-Mother. Thus Neopagan Druids are used to develop all the different aspects of their beings; physical, mental, emotional, psychic, artistic and spiritual, in order to attain the required state of dynamic balance that will lead them towards awareness.

Beyond these fundamentals of Neopaganism in general and Neopagan Druidism in particular, the philosophy and theoilogy are kept deliberately vague. It is up to each member to work out her or his own path towards awareness. Other goddesses and gods, both Celtic and nonceltic, are invoked by the Druids, but each member has his or her own personal definition of the concepts involved.

What About Organization?

The Neopagan Druids are organized into congregations called "groves," each with from three to ten or more members (though dozens of others may show up for major holiday celebrations.) Only a handful of these are still active (in the San Francisco/Berkeley, St. Louis, and Olympia areas,) though a couple of dozen have been founded over the years. Every grove is an independent entity, and each may operate its own "flavor" of Neopagan Druidism. Currently there are groves practicing Norse, Wiccan, Eclectic, Zen and even Hasidic Druidism. Individuals frequently follow more than one variety at a time, depending upon their personal interest. Attempt to keep any sort of a "National government" going have been fruitless, due to the strong individualism of the members.

Pentalpha is currently instituting a Neopagan Training Program for members and would-be clergy of various Neopagan belief systems who wish to work within the Pentalpha structure (though followers of other Aquarian paths might find it of value as well.) Neopagan Druidism is one path among many that participants in the program may choose to follow. Eventually Pentalpha will issue legal church charters to Neopagan Druid groves (as well as other groups) led by participant in the program.

But is it "Really" Druidism?

Obviously, Neopagan Druidism is a uniquely American phenomenon. Because of its tolerance for theoilogical and philosophical differences, its lack of discrimination against women and other minority groups, its sense of humor about itself, its distrust of all organizational structures and its other similarities with the rest of the Neopagan community, it is drastically different from most other philosophical movements that have called themselves "Druidic."

And yet the Neopagan Druids do have some fundamental concepts in common with the Paleopagan and Mesopagan Druids who preceded them. Down through the ages, their communities have known how to tell who the Druids among them were, because the role of the Druid has always been clear; scholar, and artist, poet and priest, philosopher and magician; the one who seeks, preserves and extends the highest wisdom her or his people are capable of handling safely, and who uses the knowledge and inspiration for the benefit of their community.

The Path of the Druid, like that of the Brahmin, the Medicine Person, the Shaman or the Rabbi, is one of heavy responsibilities and hard work. But like these others, it is also a path of great rewards; physical, intellectual, artistic, magical and spiritual. For those who feel a link to the Paleopagan Celtic peoples, and who find themselves wanting to use their highest talents to serve their communities, Druidism can be a challenging and exhilarating way of life to explore.

A Basic Wiccan Rite

by Isaac Bonewits
Druid Chronicles Evolved 1975

For the benefit of those Reformed Druids who have inquired as to exactly what goes on at a typical Neopagan Witchcraft ritual, and how it might differ from one of our own, we present the following Basic Wiccan Rite, in outline form. This is based primarily upon the pattern developed by an Eclectic Reconstructionist Wicca organization in California. It is highly similar to that used by the majority of Neopagan Witchcraft movements in America. Astute readers will note that there are no incantations, songs or names of particular deities in this outline. This is because each Coven chooses or invents its own and usually prefers to keep these matters secret, in order to protect the delicate structure of the groupmind created by the system. The rituals also tend to work much better when the Coven has written its own variations to the basic theme.

There is nothing to either prevent or encourage the use of this pattern by Reformed Druids of any Branch of the Reform; except, of course, that most Wiccans would not accept most Druids as competent to preside over such a ceremony. Isolated elements of this rite may, naturally, prove of use in the creation of new Druid Liturgies.

Suggestions concerning the psychic technology of this rite and others of a similar nature may be found in The Second Epistle of Isaac and in several of the books listed in A Bibliography of Druidism.

1. Ritual baths beforehand, personal anointing, with special oils if desired, putting on of clean clothes to travel to meeting site in.
2. Upon arrival at meeting site, all immediately change into whatever clothes (if any) will be worn for the rite. Leaders should arrive early in order to set up site properly, make sure materials are all on hand, see that musicians know their cues, etc.
3. Altar is placed outside of where circle is to be and all tools, statues and other materials are set up on altar sturdily.
4. Circle is marked out on floor or ground with tape, powder, flour or whatever. Those that use concentric circles mark out the proper mathematical proportions and inscribe whatever symbols are used inside the concentric rings. Candles or torches are placed at the Four Quarters.
5. Coveners assemble outside circle(s), two by two. Those groups that use scourging for purification do so now (3 + 7 + 9 +21 is the common pattern.) Musicians may start opening song; coveners enter circle being greeted by HP (High Priest) and HPS (High Priestess) or their assistants, usually with a kiss and a password. All file into the circle clockwise, alternating (as much as possible) male and female, and distributing themselves equally around the circle.
6. If coveners are too far apart to hold hand, they move closer to the center of the circle until they can. If there are too many coveners in the circle, the rite should be stopped, the circle makers scolded, and the circle drawn all over again larger. Then start the rite again from the beginning.
7. All coveners, including the leaders, join hands facing the outside of the circle. Music starts and the HPS leads a counter-clockwise dance around the circle. Men dance with their left heel kept off the ground (a ref. to the Lame King motif.) After at least one full circling, HPS lets go with her left hand and leads the dance into a slow inward spiral (the Labyrinth motif.) When the spiral is as tight as it can get, HPS turns to her right and kisses the man next to her (symbol of awakening to passion and new life.) She leads a new spiral outwards, this time clockwise. She and every woman kisses each man she comes to. The spiral eventually unwinds into a circle with all facing inwards and dancing clockwise.
8. Assistants go outside circle and very carefully carry in altar. This is placed near or on the center of the circle and candles on it are lit.
9. HPS and HP (or assistants) exorcise and consecrate Four Elements. Sword or athame (ritual dagger) is used to mark outside of circle, beginning at a chosen Quarter. Each Element is used to consecrate circle (salt, water, incense, and lighting of torches is one way.)
10. HPS & HP may anoint each other and coveners with special consecrated oil in triangle or pentagram shape, with special poem or blessing chant (procedure is easier if coveners are skyclad, i.e., naked.) Females anoint males and vice versa.
11. With bell in weak hand and athame in strong, HP or HPS goes to beginning Quarter, rings bell, cuts pentagrams or other sigil in the air and invokes or summons the "Lord of the Watchtower" or Spirit of that Quarter. This is done clockwise at the remaining Quarters.
12. After each summoning, all say "Welcome" or the equivalent.
13. HPS begins to take on the persona of the coven's chosen Goddess, standing in ritual postures or perhaps dancing from the Quarter of Death to the Quarter of Birth and back again. HP may be leading a chant or song about the Goddess during this. If dancing or singing is going on, the musicians are playing along.
14. HPS returns to the center and delivers the "Charge of the Goddess" or the equivalent, speaking as the deity incarnate. All bow to Her respectfully.
15. In some groups, HP may then do a similar dance, be sung to as the coven's chosen Horned God, and deliver a Charge of His own.
16. HPS announces that it is time to raise the Cone of Power and the purpose for which it is being raised. She stands in the center, with or without HP, and begins the dance chant. Music starts.
17. Coveners begin to dance slowly in a clockwise direction around circle, chanting a standard mantra or one made up for the occasion. Musicians gradually speed up the rhythm, dancing and chanting go faster and faster. During this, dancers are concentrating on an energy flow going through their bodies in a clockwise fashion and rising up in a spiral manner to form a Cone of Power. (Note: some really strong group have the power flow going both directions at once, forming two spirals into a single cone.)
18. HPS (or sometimes the HP) watches throughout this and tunes the power to the color and shape desired. When she thinks that the Cone has reached its peak of Power, she yells or otherwise signals and all drop to the floor repeating the cry and releasing all the energy into the spell.
19. Coveners sit quietly for a few minutes, in order to recharge. A quiet song or mantra may be chanted at this point.
20. The dancing and raising of the Cone may be repeated once or twice more (only.) Each time there is recharging afterwards.
21. In some groups, during the raising of the Cone, the HPS & HP may be having sexual intercourse, timing their orgasms to the peaking o the Power (which is made easier if there is music especially drums available.) However this is usually done only in groups that use sexually activity to raise the power rather than dancing.
22. HPS & HP bless the wine and the dagger-in-the-cup symbology and bless the cakes or cookies with the other elemental tools. These are passed to all and consumed.
23. This is the time for minor magical workings, telling of myths, songs, folktales, etc. Future rites may be planned. Political matters are avoided entirely, including the discussion of possible future initiates, shifts of office, etc. (These are only to be discussed at organizational meetings, not rituals.)
24. HP or HPS (or all) hold up a tool. All chant a brief chant, draining all excess power in the circle into the tool(s.) HPS (and HP if necessary) comes down from divine persona.

25. HP or HPS (or assistants) goes around circle with bell and athame, thanking and dismissing the Spirits. All coveners salute Four Quarters and say "Farewell" or equivalent at each Quarter.
26. HPS or HP goes around circle sprinkling salt or earth, thus grounding out the circle.
27. HPS cuts circle with sword or athame, saying "the circle is broken, merry meet and merry part" or equivalent. All repeat the last part and the rite is over.
28. Altar is packed up and made ready for transportation by the leaders before the socialization afterwards gets too far underway.

General Notes

A. The rite usually works best when the ritual is completely memorized. Cue cards are a distraction and (usually) a sign of laziness.
B. The musicians may be outside the circle throughout, or may come in with the altar, after the spiral dance.
C. Since Wicca is supposed to be a Celtic religion, there is no need for Kabbalistic elements in this rite.
D. HP & HPS may delegate all tasks except the persona taking (the shamanistic part) to members of the Coven.
E. It is a definite help if the coveners attend folk-dancing classes and learn some complete dances.
F. Schismatic Druids are expected to be able to lead one of these sorts of rites at a moment's notice (though they will probably never be asked) as a basic exercise in religious formulas.

Money & Pagan Clergy: Shall The Two Ever Meet?

By Isaac Bonewits, Copyright 2001

Isaac Bonewits, as you know, was one of the Berkeley Grove's Archdruids in the 1970s, a prolific and well-known writer on Neo-pagan topics. In the 80's, he schismed off and formed ADF with the help of a few friends. Recently he has retired from active leadership. Recently, his www.neopagan.com *website was closed with this message:*

Freedom of Information

and Supporting Pagan Creators 1.9
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Many of you who have visited my website a few times will have noticed that my web pages, as well as the workshops and interviews I do, contain many references or "plugs" for other authors of whom I approve, and some folks have wondered why I would recommend "competitors."

Granted, I do get small referral fees from Amazon.com for books purchased because buyers went to Amazon from my site, but this doesn't add up to much, and I get nothing from books purchased on my recommendation from other stores.

I recommend good books by other authors because there are so few of them, because I feel that authors deserve support from their colleagues as well as from their readers, and because it is important to every subculture (which Neopaganism still is) to support its own "economy."

Most readers have only the vaguest ideas of how authors earn their livings, often assuming that published ones are all wealthy. They get these ideas in part from news stories about "best selling" authors getting huge book advances and/or selling movie rights for millions of dollars (pounds/euros/etc.); unaware that only one writer in ten-thousand ever sees more from her or his writing than the original book advance of a few hundred or a few thousand dollars (pounds/euros/etc..)

My best known book, Real Magic, has been in and out of print for almost thirty years, generating a trickle of royalties three years out of five. Yet with roughly 250,000 copies sold around the world, in three languages that I know of (English, Dutch & Russian,) my total direct income from the book during those thirty years has been less than US$25,000 - or about ten cents per copy. How many of you could live on US$800 per year?

Another source of the myth that published authors are rich is the fact that, for centuries, only those who were wealthy (or subsidized in some fashion) could afford to spend their time writing. This has been true even throughout the last several decades. I remember being told often during the 1970's by my friend Randall Garrett, author of the wonderful Lord Darcy novels, that the three things a writer most needed were, "a tweed suit, a briar pipe, and a spouse with a steady income!" The situation has not changed. <G>

"Ah, but what about those huge speaking fees authors get?" I hear someone asking. Steven King, Danielle Steele, or New Age superstars may receive thousands of dollars (pounds/euros/etc.) for speeches or seminars, but lesser known authors receive much smaller fees (for mine, see my Presentations page.) The reason you see so many Pagan and other authors dragging books to festivals, or hawking psychic readings there, is because the usual Neopagan festival or

speaking event pays far less than the author would have earned staying home and cranking out a few more pages. At the end of most festival seasons, Neopagan authors and speakers usually find ourselves having spent or otherwise lost far more money than we've received.

Some of the reasons for these results have to do with the "poverty consciousness" so popular in the Neopagan community, which I've discussed at length elsewhere. But many have to do with the basic anti-intellectualism of American (and I suspect, Australian) culture. After all, a speaker is "just talking," and "anybody" can do that! The idea that printed or spoken words could have any real monetary value is alien to most people, in large part because they do not perceive the years of effort that go into learning the craft of writing and speaking well, or the hours of painful sweat that can go into writing a single chapter or one-hour speech.

So why do Neopagan creators keep writing and speaking? For most of us, it's because we love our deities, our planet, and our communities enough to live at a "lifestyle" far lower than we could earn otherwise if we were, for example, holding down the kinds of well-paying "blue-collar" and "white-collar" jobs that most Neopagans have. Many Neopagan clergy who aren't writers, teachers or musicians make the same decisions, literally sacrificing comfort and financial security for their vocation.

(Members of most mainstream religious communities, whether rich or poor, would be deeply ashamed if their clergy lived at standards significantly lower than that of the average member of their congregations. I can't imagine the average Baptist, Lutheran, Jew, Catholic, or Buddhist going to their minister's/rabbi's/priest's house to find an empty pantry, children wearing sweaters because the heat has been turned off, or a dead vehicle in the driveway, shrugging their shoulders and going home without taking action of some sort. Yet I've seen Neopagans do just that.)

In recent months, I've been reading articles in magazines and online about the "freeware" and "shareware" movements among computer software writers, as well as the arguments pro-and-con concerning the downloading of music and video files on the Net. There are now major controversies over the very concepts of "copyrights" and "intellectual property," with creative artists, consumers, and corporations taking diverse and often strident positions.

"Shareware," for those of you new to the Net, refers to computer programs that one can download and try out before buying. The assumption is that users who like the software will be willing to pay what they, or the software authors, consider "a fair price" (or a small donation to a worthy nonprofit cause,) which is usually much lower than equivalent commercially produced and distributed software would cost. Shareware originally worked on an "honor system," and some still does. "Freeware" refers to programs that are put out on the Net with no return expected, other than perhaps postcards, user feedback, and opportunities for programmers to improve their skills and earn reputations with which they can later build professional careers.

Freeware authors generally had and have no complaints about a lack of money for their efforts, and I suspect that most were and are subsidized in some fashion, by their parents, schools or employers. Shareware authors, however, quickly learned that honor systems didn't generate much income, perhaps because individuals have such varying ways to define "honor." So they gradually began to offer multiple versions of their shareware, with additional functions, documentation, or technical support requiring users to pay varying fees (I don't know if they got this idea from commercial software publishers or vice versa.)

Based on the concepts of freeware and shareware, as well as political and philosophical theories (such as those of Richard Stallman) of free information exchange, some people on the Net began to say that all information should be freely available, including digitized audio and video information - hence the controversies over the online trading of copyrighted music and video files. These mirrored in many ways the arguments about photocopying of books and periodicals in the 1980's and 1990's. Publishers weren't too thrilled about the invention of the photocopy machine back then, while students, researchers and collectors were delighted. Similarly, cassette and video taping technology were controversial, at least until the music and film industries figured out how to make money through using them. It's been suggested that the music industry and its big name performers will stop fighting audio file sharing technology as soon as they find a way to make significant money from it.

Left out of most of these controversies, at least once they were "settled," were the non-superstar creators whose books, songs, and performances were copied by individuals, without a penny going to those creators. Some creators weren't bothered at all, considering unpaid copies to be free advertising and promotion that could build a following. Others felt that while they weren't making any money, at least their out-of-print works were still reaching an audience (as I did during the years when Authentic Thaumaturgy was available only in photocopies.) I strongly suspect, however, that most of us felt just a little bit "ripped-off" each time someone copied our work because they were simply too stingy to buy it (as distinct from being genuinely poor.) That quarter-dollar/pound/euro of income lost per book, or half that per tape, isn't much perhaps, but multiply it by hundreds or thousands of readers/users and it begins to have a real impact on his or her life. That missing money could have paid for new research materials, new instruments, classes to gain new skills, travel to gain new insights, or simply blessed time to think and create. For us "minor" authors, artists, speakers, and performers, tiny losses add up over time to big setbacks, some of which kill careers and all of which limit the amount of work we accomplish over the course of our lifetimes.

Getting back to philosophy for a moment (away from that messy "real world" stuff,) it seems to me that many of the ideas now being discussed about freedom of information contain some (deliberate?) confusion between the different kinds of information that exist, some of which (a) should be openly available to all, and some of which (b) needn't be or even (c) shouldn't be. As examples of just these three categories (of the dozen or so categories that could be delineated,) I would offer (a) basic scientific or historical information, or evidence of corporate or governmental or military crimes, (b) medical techniques, poetry, fiction, or personal memoirs, and (c) instructions on making weapons of mass destruction. Remember, "all or nothing" arguments are rooted in Christian Dualism, not the real world. The fact that subtle distinctions may need to be made between differing kinds of information and audience does not justify tossing those distinctions out of your philosophy because they'd require work to define and teach, or worse yet might cost you some money.

At one point, a reader and I were discussing the Freenet and its system of decentralized, distributed file storage on the Net. That system essentially makes it impossible to ever suppress information once it's been uploaded. Unfortunately, it also makes it impossible to ever enforce a copyright or patent anywhere in the world. As an author, this means that any of my work on the Freenet would never go "out-of-print," and I would never again have to deal with a publisher's commercial judgments in order to get my thoughts shared with the world. It also means that anyone could impersonate me and publish items under my name, or plagiarize me, and I would have no recourse.

and, oh yes, I would probably never see a penny of payment for my works, no matter how many people downloaded and used them, and no matter how much effort it had taken me to produce them.

As I told the reader I mentioned earlier, "Letting the authors get ripped off by readers instead of by publishers isn't much of an improvement. From what I know of the Freenet idea so far, it provides no financial incentive at all for writers to write, and thus is a backward step to the days when only the idle wealthy could afford to write."

To which he replied, "I have optimism and faith in humanity. People will give you $1 when they read an essay (I would.) Of course, it's my faith in humanity that gets me in trouble." So I decided to take his suggestions and give them a try. In early October of 2000 c.e., I gave visitors to my website the option to click a graphic and donate small sums of money to me, assuming that they had found something on my site that they thought was worth that amount to them. This required them to have an account with PayPal.com, but the account set-up process takes very little time and they could always snailmail me a small sum if they preferred. In April of 2001, I added the alternate option of using Amazon.com's Honor System. With over 1,500 visitors to my site daily in October (200+ visitors daily after Halloween,) even a one percent response rate would generate more than enough income to justify setting the system up.

How well did it work? Since I put the donation boxes up last October, my website has received over 110,000 visitors. As of July 15, 2001, the overall response ratio has been something like 0.05% (that is, five-hundredths of one percent) or one in every 2000+ visitors; that since the Halloween rush finished has been around 0.10% (one-tenth of one percent,) or one in every 1000+ visitors. The total income from the experiment (not counting transaction fees) has been $900+ from 70+ people on 90+ occasions. This averages around one donation every 3 days or so, both before and after Halloween. However, 20+ of those donations and over a third of the money received has been from just two generous donors who have given repeated donations. The bottom line is that my website has been generating a little over a hundred dollars per month of income to me, which is about enough to pay my hosting and net access costs, but is certainly not enough to let me spend the many hours I would like to devote (and have in the past) to adding new material and keeping the older contents current and legible. Since I have no other job, and my self-employment efforts yield less than $8000 per year, you can see how this is less than satisfactory.

I say this not to whine, nor to embarrass anyone, but to point out that there are some unseen holes in anti-copyright theory. Most modern people now use money as the rock-bottom measure of all value. Things that are a high priority in our lives are the things we spend money on, or give money to; things that aren't, we don't. I've often suggested that we could build or buy Neopagan temples in every city in the U.S. and Canada, for example, if we simply collected one piece of silver jewelry from every Neopagan at every festival for one year. Yet, the very same people who "can't afford" to donate to a Neopagan temple, community center, website, or other organization on a regular basis, have no problem finding the money to buy science fiction books, videos, comics, beer, pizza, jewelry, fancy ritual tools, robes, etc. This is not a pattern unique to Neopaganism – almost every nonprofit organization or movement tells the same tale. People generally have money for those things that bring comfort, pleasure and ego-gratification. Everything else has to wait in line and hope for the best.

I suspect that most people on the Net, whether Neopagan or not, if given a choice between giving small sums of money to deserving strangers they will never meet, just because it's the right thing to do, or else keeping the money to buy toys or gifts for themselves or their friends, will do the latter. This pattern will become even more evident on the Net as going online becomes ever easier for the foolish, uneducated and shortsighted - after all, most Western people intelligent and wise enough to understand long term consequences have already been on the Net for a few years. Yes, I know that's terribly un-P.C. of me to say, and no, I'm not thinking of those of you who are genuinely poor and were only able to get a computer, and hence online, recently because you had to wait for them to get cheap, or who visit here from your public library.

We Neopagans like to think of ourselves as smarter, more creative and more complex than those who belong to more conservative religions, and by and large most of us are (another un-P.C. fact.) Multi-model theories, pluralism, ambiguity, and polytheology are not easy for most Westerners to grasp, which is yet another reason why we frighten fundamentalists of all persuasions. But the dualism which underlies mainstream Western culture still influences our daily thinking and feeling patterns. We still fall into habits based on the fantasy that matter and spirit are separate, and that artistic, creative, and spiritual activities happen in a different universe than rent checks, car payments, and grocery bills.

I'm not the only Neopagan leader or author to notice all this. Fritz Jung, who with his partner Wren runs witchvox.com, spoke about this in an essay called, "Community Support, Does it Exist?" a couple of years ago. As he said in last year's update, "Not much has changed. We all still struggle to find the cash to do this kind of work. As predicted, several good folks that used to do this work, simply went away." Also on the witchvox.com site is an essay by author Maggie (Benson) Shayne called, "Writers, Farmers, Witches and Copyright," in which she focuses on the casual plagiarism that so many Neopagans engage in, saying, "I would like to see the Pagan community take a stand against the wanton abuse of its own best and brightest."

Prolific Neopagan author Patricia Telesco wrote me:

> "It amazes me that people forget we work for every cent we get in royalties. They don't see us in front of our computers or scouring over research books for upward of 500 hours to write just 200 pages of text. They're not in our kitchen when we blurily make coffee after being up late so we can write when the little ones don't want fruit snacks or a story. Our families, friends, and co-workers often give up a great deal of time with us just so we can pursue this passion - and give something lasting to the community. The bottom line comes down to serving those that serve before we loose our teachers, our leaders and our elders to burn out. If we value their wisdom and insights, we will begin to share the load."

Sisters and brothers, your authors, musicians, speakers, webmasters, organizers and clergy can not live on blessings and goodwill alone. Please buy our books, tapes, CDs and videos instead of stealing copies. Donate to those groups and websites who provide valuable services. Go to your high priestess' house and do her dishes once in a while, mow her lawn, buy her some groceries, watch her kids for an evening, or in some other fashion give her the gift of free time. And please, stop criticizing authors or teachers for the "crime" of reaching out to "newbies" and "Baby Pagans" - it's a lot more work than it seems, and we were all beginners, once upon a time.

As a special updating note, you probably got here from the opening page at my website that announced the temporary closing of my site. Except for the Errata Sheet page for the first edition of my Witchcraft eBook, which will remain accessible until the Second Edition has been out for a while, I'm closing everything down here, at least for now. I just can't afford the time and effort that keeping this site updated, easy to read and fed with a constant stream of new writing has required. If donations at PayPal and Amazon Honor System pick up enough to put food on my table and pay my electrical bill, I'll go back online. But it may take a few weeks.

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The Advanced Bonewits' Cult Danger Evaluation Frame

(Version 2.6)

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Introduction

Events in the last several decades have clearly indicated just how dangerous some religious and secular groups (usually called "cults" by those opposed to them) can be to their own members as well as to anyone else whom they can influence. "Brainwashing," beatings, child abuse, rapes, murders, mass suicides, military drilling and gunrunning, meddling in civil governments, international terrorism, and other crimes have been charged against leaders and members of many groups, and in far too many cases those accusations have been correct. None of this has been very surprising to historians of religion or to other scholars of what are usually labeled "new" religions (no matter how old they may be in their cultures of origin.) Minority groups, especially religious ones, are often accused of crimes by members of the current majority. In many ways, for example, the "Mormons" were the "Moonies" of the 19th century — at least in terms of being an unusual minority belief system that many found "shocking" at the time — and the members of the Unification Church could be just as "respectable" a hundred years from now as the Latter Day Saints are today.

Nonetheless, despite all the historical and philosophical warnings that could be issued, ordinary people faced with friends or loved ones joining an "unusual" group, or perhaps contemplating joining one themselves, need a relatively simple way to evaluate just how dangerous or harmless a given group is liable to be, without either subjecting themselves to its power or judging it solely on theological or ideological grounds (the usual method used by anti-cult groups.)

In 1979 I constructed an evaluation tool which I now call the "Advanced Bonewits' Cult Danger Evaluation Frame" or the "ABCDEF" (because evaluating these groups should be elementary.) A copy was included in that year's revised edition of my book, *Real Magic*. I realize its shortcomings, but feel that it can be effectively used to separate harmless groups from the merely unusual-to-the-observer ones. Feedback from those attempting to use the system has always been appreciated. Indirect feedback, in terms of the number of places on and off the Net this ABCDEF has shown up, has been mostly favorable. For example, it was chosen by and is now displayed on the website of the Institute for Social Inventions, who paraphrased it for their "Best Ideas — A compendium of social innovations" listing.

The purpose of this evaluation tool is to help both amateur and professional observers, including current or would-be members, of various organizations (including religious, occult, psychological or political groups) to determine just how dangerous a given group is liable to be, in comparison with other groups, to the physical and mental health of its members and of other people subject to its influence. It cannot speak to the "spiritual dangers," if any, that might be involved, for the simple reason that one person's path to enlightenment or "salvation" is often viewed by another as a path to ignorance or "damnation."

As a general rule, the higher the numerical total scored by a given group (the further to the right of the scale,) the more dangerous it is likely to be. Though it is obvious that many of the scales in the frame are subjective, it is still possible to make practical judgments using it, at least of the "is this group more dangerous than that one?" sort. This is **if** all numerical assignments are based on accurate and unbiased observation of **actual behavior** by the groups and their top levels of leadership (as distinct from official pronouncements.) This means that you need to pay attention to what the secondary and tertiary leaders are saying and doing, as much (or more so) than the central leadership — after all, "plausible deniability" is not a recent historical invention.

This tool can be used by parents, reporters, law enforcement agents, social scientists and others interested in evaluating the actual dangers presented by a given group or movement. Obviously, different observers will achieve differing degrees of precision, depending upon the sophistication of their numerical assignments on each scale. However, if the same observers use the same methods of scoring and weighting each scale, their comparisons of relative danger or harmlessness between groups will be reasonably valid, at least for their own purposes. People who cannot, on the other hand, view competing belief systems as ever having possible spiritual value to anyone, will find the ABCDEF annoyingly useless for promoting their theological agendas. Worse, these members of the Religious Reich and their fellow theocrats will find that their own organizations (and quite a few large mainstream churches) are far more "cult-like" than many of the minority belief systems they so bitterly oppose.

It should be pointed out that the ABCDEF is founded upon both modern psychological theories about mental health and personal growth, and my many years of participant observation and historical research into minority belief systems. Those who believe that relativism and anarchy are as dangerous to mental health as absolutism and authoritarianism, could (I suppose) count groups with total scores nearing either extreme (high or low) as being equally hazardous. As far as dangers to physical well-being are concerned, however, both historical records and current events clearly indicate the direction in which the greatest threats lie. This is especially so since the low-scoring groups usually seem to have survival and growth rates so small that they seldom develop the abilities to commit large scale atrocities even had they the philosophical or political inclinations to do so.

The Advanced Bonewits' Cult Danger Evaluation Frame (version 2.6)

	Factors:	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Low High
1	Internal Control: Amount of internal political and social power exercised by leader(s) over members; lack of clearly defined organizational rights for members.	_____
2	External Control: Amount of external political and social influence desired or obtained; emphasis on directing members' external political and social behavior.	_____
3	Wisdom/Knowledge Claimed by leader(s); amount of infallibility declared or implied about decisions or doctrinal/scriptural interpretations; number and degree of unverified and/or unverifiable credentials claimed.	_____
4	Wisdom/Knowledge Credited to leader(s) by members; amount of trust in decisions or doctrinal/scriptural interpretations made by leader(s); amount of hostility by members towards internal or external critics and/or towards verification efforts.	_____
5	Dogma: Rigidity of reality concepts taught; amount of doctrinal inflexibility or "fundamentalism;" hostility towards relativism and situationalism.	_____

6 Recruiting: Emphasis put on attracting new members; amount of proselytizing; requirement for all members to bring in new ones. _____

7 Front Groups: Number of subsidiary groups using different names from that of main group, especially when connections are hidden. _____

8 Wealth: Amount of money and/or property desired or obtained by group; emphasis on members' donations; economic lifestyle of leader(s) compared to ordinary members. _____

9 Sexual Manipulation of members by leader(s) of non-tantric groups; amount of control exercised over sexuality of members in terms of sexual orientation, behavior, and/or choice of partners. _____

10 Sexual Favoritism: Advancement or preferential treatment dependent upon sexual activity with the leader(s) of non-tantric groups. _____

11 Censorship: Amount of control over members' access to outside opinions on group, its doctrines or leader(s.) _____

12 Isolation: Amount of effort to keep members from communicating with non-members, including family, friends and lovers. _____

13 Dropout Control: Intensity of efforts directed at preventing or returning dropouts. _____

14 Violence: Amount of approval when used by or for the group, its doctrines or leader(s.) _____

15 Paranoia: Amount of fear concerning real or imagined enemies; exaggeration of perceived power of opponents; prevalence of conspiracy theories. _____

16 Grimness: Amount of disapproval concerning jokes about the group, its doctrines or its leader(s.) _____

17 Surrender of Will: Amount of emphasis on members not having to be responsible for personal decisions; degree of individual disempowerment created by the group, its doctrines or its leader(s.) _____

18 Hypocrisy: amount of approval for actions which the group officially considers immoral or unethical, when done by or for the group, its doctrines or leader(s); willingness to violate the group's declared principles for political, psychological, social, economic, military, or other gain. _____

A Call to Arms
or
Treating the Disease

version 1.5

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Isaac Bonewits

The attacks on the World Trade Center and Washington DC by Muslim Fundamentalists have crystallized a number of ideas that have been drifting around in my head for several years. This "911 call" wasn't just a wake up call about terrorism, it was a sign that the Culture War between Modernity and Fundamentalism has become irredeemably deadly. Though there are multiple non-religious motives behind Islamic terrorism, this essay will focus on the religious factors sanctifying and justifying mass murder.

The Problem is Fundamentalism

As I discussed in another essay, Understanding the Religious Reich, Fundamentalism, whether Jewish, Christian, or Islamic (or Marxist, for that matter,) has become the primary threat to world peace and even to civilization itself. Let's put this as clearly as possible: a bunch of religious lunatics murdered over 6,000 people on September 11, 2001. There is absolutely no reason to believe that they won't do something just as awful again if given the chance.

Here is what I said there, so you don't have to jump over and back:

Throughout this essay I'm going to be referring to "Fundamentalists," so perhaps I should clarify the term. Let me start, as I so often do, with a historical review of the term — on this occasion quoting from the 1964 edition of *A Handbook of Theological Terms,* by Van A. Harvey:

> **"**Fundamentalism is a name that was attached to the viewpoint of those who, shortly after the turn of the [19th-20th] century, resisted all liberal attempts to modify orthodox Protestant belief or to question the infallibility of the Bible in any respect. The name is derived from a series of tracts published between 1912-14, entitled *The Fundamentals* that aimed at defining and defending the essentials of Protestant doctrine. The most important of the fundamental doctrines were (1) the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible, (2) the doctrine of the Trinity, (3) the virgin birth and deity of Christ, (4) the substitutionary theory of the atonement, (5) the bodily resurrection, ascension and second coming of Christ (parousia.)

Since most of these beliefs have been a part of Christian orthodoxy [for fifteen centuries], historians have seen the uniqueness of Fundamentalism to consist in its violent opposition to all beliefs that seem opposed to some teachings of the Bible. In the twenties and thirties, this opposition was focused particularly on any theory of man's [sic] origins, especially evolution, that seemed incompatible with the account in Genesis. Consequently, Fundamentalism tended to be identified with blind opposition to all critical inquiry.

Because of this identification, certain conservative theologians who share the above-described beliefs but who think they can be defended in a rational manner have tended to shirk the name "fundamentalist" and call themselves "evangelical conservatives." They generally oppose the spirit of ecumenism and any theology, including neo-Reformed theology, which does not regard the Bible as the absolute and infallible rule of faith and practice.**"**

Notice that 40 years ago he was mentioning the "…**violent opposition** to all beliefs that seem opposed to some teaching…" The term "Fundamentalist" has since been extended by the mass media to refer to "Fundamentalist" Jews, Moslems, and even Hindus. In each case, the inference is that some people refuse to budge from the most conservative version of their faith that is available to them and resist, even to the point of violence, all competing worldviews, including scientific knowledge about the origins of life and of Earth not really being the center of the universe. Non-Christian examples include **some** Orthodox and Hassidic Jews and **most** Shiite Muslims in Iran (most Sunni Muslims elsewhere.) Christian but not Protestant examples would be ultra-conservatives within both Roman and Eastern Orthodox Catholicism, as well as **some** Mormons (though non-Mormons often consider all members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints "non-Christian.") Non-theistic examples would include many Marxists and Secular Humanists, as well as other fervent atheists.

For the purposes of this essay, I could simply refer to "ultra-conservative monotheists," but "Fundamentalists" is somewhat shorter and extremists among the modern Christian Protestants who call themselves by this term were — at least until the World Trade Center attacks — the primary threat to our lives and freedom. So on those occasions when I don't specifically mention it, you may keep in mind all the other types of Fundamentalists mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

Later in that essay I said:

> …this desperate need for a simple universe leads Christian and Islamic Fundamentalists to desire secular power to enforce their opinions (which they call "God's Law") upon every man, woman, and child on the planet, and to eliminate all competing worldviews.
>
> (Jewish Fundamentalists, however, only want to have total domination over the territory that their predecessors ruled 3,000 years ago as well as over every Jewish family elsewhere in the world.) When Fundamentalists get into secular power, this is what they do, as any glance at Ireland, Israel/Palestine and most Islamic nations will reveal. And then most of them will export their Fundamentalism elsewhere.

and:

> We can and should, however, blame specific Fundamentalists **and their beliefs** for crimes they advocate and commit today. Jewish Fundamentalists murdering Palestinians, Islamic Fundamentalists bombing shopping malls and flying jets into office buildings, and right wing Christians killing doctors and clinic workers (not to mention right-wing Catholics and Protestants murdering each other's families in Ireland) are all acting out some of their belief systems' most basic (fundamental)

> doctrines, beneath the additional layers of political and economic conflict.

and:

> …all those who believe in simple human decency and freedom of religion for all people, everywhere in the world, must stop being so damned passive and start taking effective action to contain, subvert, and dethrone Fundamentalism wherever and whenever it oppresses its own and other peoples. Fundamentalists can only thrive in atmospheres in which their fanaticism is considered "just their religious belief," and something to be tolerated by everyone else, rather than the world-wide threat to peace, justice, democracy, and civilization that it is.

The drumbeat for war of some sort has been loud and unstoppable since the day America lost her innocence. Despite the fact that no one seems to know exactly how to track down and kill the surviving terrorists responsible, the overwhelming majority of Americans (including myself) and many citizens of other nations certainly want to do so. Of course, if this "war against terrorism" follows the usual pattern of the last few American wars, everyone in the general vicinity **except** the guilty parties will be killed and victory will be proclaimed far too early. Among the many casualties will be basic constitutional rights and simple human decency, all in the name of stopping terrorism (exactly as happened in the "war" against Communism.)

Regardless of what happens in the American crusade for vengeance, even if this year's arch-villain Osama bin Laden is caught and killed, we will still be treating the symptoms instead of the disease. So here is

A Call to Arms

By Isaac Bonewits

It is well past time for liberal, moderate, and conservative Jews, Muslims, Christians, Neopagans, Unitarian Universalists, Atheists, Agnostics, and everyone else who isn't a religious fanatic, to declare "war" on deliberate ignorance, religious bigotry, and sanctified violence — that is to say, on Fundamentalism.

As I said before, it is time to take **effective action** to "contain, subvert, and dethrone Fundamentalism wherever and whenever it oppresses its own and other peoples." What does this mean? To begin with,

- Reconstructionist, Reform, Conservative, and secularized **Jews** have to **stop respecting** Orthodox and Hasidic Jews, at home and abroad, who advocate violence against non-Jews in Israel, who attempt to revoke the civil liberties of those who have different moral visions, who oppress their wives, who deliberately keep their kids ignorant, and who use money and weapons to oppress, enslave and kill other human beings.
- Liberal, moderate, and secularized Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox **Christians** have to **stop respecting** the ultra-conservatives/Fundamentalists in their communities, at home and abroad, who advocate violence against abortion doctors, who attempt to revoke the civil liberties of those who have different moral visions, who oppress their wives, who deliberately keep their kids ignorant, and who use money and weapons to oppress, enslave and kill other human beings.
- Liberal, moderate, and secularized **Muslims** have to **stop respecting** the Islamic Fundamentalists, at home and abroad, who advocate violence against heretics, who attempt to revoke the civil liberties of those who have different moral visions, who oppress their wives, who deliberately keep their kids ignorant, and who use money and weapons to oppress, enslave and kill other human beings.
- Atheists, Agnostics, Deists, Freemasons, Rosicrucians, Gnostics, New Agers, Neopagans, Unitarian Universalists, and members of other belief and non-belief systems have to **stop pretending that Fundamentalism is just another belief system** entitled to full social and political respect, one that will eventually go away as people become more enlightened.

It isn't and it won't. Fundamentalism is a mental and spiritual illness that endangers and oppresses hundreds of millions of innocent people around the world. It is an illness that deliberately controls its victims to prevent them from ever becoming more enlightened, because its leaders know that scientific education, exposure to other lifestyles, gender equality, and spiritual awareness, all spell the end of their dictatorships. In fact, ancient and modern Fundamentalism (in my extended sense) is the most dangerous collection of **"cults"** in history.

Effective action means that the full resources of modern nations and modern people as individuals must be used to legally overthrow Fundamentalist governments, even if the leaders are financially helpful to American corporations. There are few Fundamentalist democracies, so we aren't likely to be going against the "will of the people" in so doing. We need to swamp the Middle East, Ireland, China, Southeast Asia, and American radio and television talk shows, with accurate information about the world outside, about modern science, about modern liberal attitudes, about absurdities and atrocities in their scriptures, about the crimes of current Fundamentalists and their theocratic plans for the future. I'm suggesting that Radio Free America become Radio Free Planet, and not just a voice for unrestrained robber-baron capitalism (yet another Fundamentalist cult that has hurt as many people as it has helped) as it was during the Cold War.

Our Central Intelligence Agency has shown that it's really good at assassinating democratically elected officials, overthrowing liberal governments, and training death squads to torture, rape and kill liberals and moderates. Let's see how good they can be at overthrowing Fundamentalist dictators (where their people have no legal options) and their oil-rich sympathizers, once they have the free hand they are begging for.

When Islamic Fundamentalists crashed jumbo jets into the World Trade Center, they weren't just declaring war on the United States. **They were declaring war on the entire modern world.** When American Fundamentalist Christian ministers Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson blamed the September 11th, 2001 attacks on liberals and secularists in American culture, they weren't just making asses of themselves, as they have done so many times before, they were declaring their solidarity and sympathy for the insanity that is Fundamentalism:

> "I really believe that the Pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and the lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the ACLU, People For the American Way, all of them

who have tried to secularize America. I point the finger in their face and say 'you helped this happen.' " (Jerry Falwell)

"I concur." (Pat Robertson)

As more than one political cartoonist put it, while Osama bin Laden and his friends were rejoicing that "God has punished America for her sins," Falwell and Robertson were saying, "Amen, brothers!" Let us never forget what we heard them say.

The first, and perhaps most crucial, step to stopping terrorism is to stop Fundamentalism. Then we can deal with those aspects of terrorism that are rooted in political, ethnic and economic conflict. But all three kinds can ultimately be defeated only by a massive, unrelenting, worldwide campaign of education in the modern principles of pluralism, relativity, secular politics, and economic justice for every living human being. That last part, of course, will be a stumbling block to organizing these efforts, because worldwide economic justice would require that the multibillionaires who run the First World be willing to take cuts in their income. But that's a topic for another essay. For now, I'll just point out that leaving a fifth of the world's population in the thrall of Fundamentalism — ignorant, uneducated, and hostile to the rest of the world — is not a cost-effective way to run a planet. The hundreds of billions of dollars that will be needed to repair the physical damage of September 11, 2001 is just a down payment on what Fundamentalism could cost us in the years to come if it is not stopped.

Now, on to a few related topics:

How are Critics of Fundamentalism Different from Those They Criticize?

I am often asked by those who have read or heard my strong opinions about Fundamentalists, how it is that I am "different" from them. I am told that my opinions about them are just as harsh as their opinions about my religious community, and I more-or-less agree with that observation. I am told that I am spreading hate against Fundamentalists by mentioning how hate-filled they are. So how, then, are those who consider Fundamentalism a threat to civilization and freedom, different from the Fundamentalists who say nasty things about us? Are we really "just the same" as the people we oppose?

I think almost everyone who is critical of Fundamentalism would agree that:

- **We don't want** to shut down their places of worship and outlaw their religions.
- **We don't want** to discriminate against them in hiring, in housing, in the military, or in the receipt of social services.
- **We don't want** to take over the government and force every citizen to live according to our theological opinions, whether we think a deity shares those opinions or not.
- **We don't want** to organize paramilitary groups to overthrow the government, or to plant bombs, or to fly jumbo jets into office buildings, all for the greater "glory" of our deities.
- **We don't want** to kill people for being gay or lesbian, or for having sex with someone they aren't married to, or for sassing their parents, or for practicing divination, or for belonging to a "false religion."
- **We don't want** to drive people from their homes and places of worship, and kill them if they resist, because we think some deity gave our predecessors a deed of property a thousand years ago.

Yet all these things are what most Jewish, Christian and Islamic Fundamentalists **do** want to do. And have done when they were able to. And will do again, if ordinary people who aren't religious fanatics don't take action to stop them.

In short, we don't want to be sanctimonious, bloodthirsty, power-mad bigots like they are.

That's what makes us different. If saying so sounds harsh, or rude, or biased, or politically incorrect, so be it. If some people reading this consider themselves to be Fundamentalists, but don't agree with this Fundamentalist agenda, then perhaps they should change their religious identities to Evangelical, Conservative, or Orthodox members of their faiths. Better yet, they should actually take control of their current denominations from the lunatics and fanatics.

[This section excerpted from Understanding the Religious Reich.]

Islamic Fundamentalists, Yes; Ordinary Muslims and Arab-Americans, No

I hope I've made it clear that I don't like Islamic Fundamentalism any more than I like Christian or Jewish or Marxist Fundamentalism. But as a committed advocate of religious freedom and pluralism, I try very hard not to treat specific individuals of those faiths as enemies until such a time as they show themselves to be such. Because the September 11th, 2001 attacks were perpetrated by Islamic Fundamentalists, it is all too tempting for Americans of all faiths (and none) to lash out and attack our Islamic and Arabic neighbors, assuming that they are all, "just the same." Try to remember some important facts:

- Most Muslims consider their Fundamentalist fanatics to be just as crazy and evil as most Christians and Jews (publicly or secretly) consider their Fundamentalists to be. Yes, the liberals and moderates in these faith communities are usually too cowardly to denounce their fanatical brethren, but that doesn't make them supporters.
- A major reason that many Muslims move to the United States or other Western nations is precisely because they aren't Fundamentalists and don't want to live in a Fundamentalist tyranny.
- A large number of American Muslims aren't Arabic in ancestry (lots of them are African-American or Pakistani-American) and many Arab-Americans are Orthodox Christians (not to mention agnostics, atheists, and yes, Pagans.)

I urge you to join with those who are guarding local Muslim mosques and community centers until the anti-Islamic hysteria is over.

However, while America is thinking about waging war in the Middle East, let's

Save a Little Anger

Us spiritual folks aren't supposed to get angry, or so we are told. Yet, we **should** all be very, very angry at those people who committed such horrific mass murder on September 11, 2001. All those who belong to terrorist networks, the governments that hide and support them, and those who profit financially and politically from terror, deserve to be punished for the crimes they commit, no matter what their supposed justification.

But wait — perhaps we should save some of our anger, just a small bit, for their other accomplices:

Save a little anger for the CIA operatives who gave them weapons and training in how to be terrorists. You know, the same folks who now want all ethical constraints removed from their behavior?

Save a little anger for those corporations, mostly American, who have made millions of dollars selling jet fighters, attack helicopters, explosives, automatic rifles, and other deadly devices to all sides in the eternal stew pot of hate that is the Middle East.

Save a little anger for those politicians and billionaires who have callously played the Islamic nations off against each other for fifty years, always backing the despots most likely to increase profits while ignoring or destroying democratic movements as "threats to stability."

Save a little anger for the airlines who improved their profit margins by using overworked, underpaid, and barely trained "security" personnel, rather than hiring real professionals to screen passengers or ride on the planes.

Finally, let's **save just a little bit of anger** for ourselves. Ordinary American citizens have let these bastards get away with creating a world in which terrorism is not just possible but damned near inevitable — and we have paid a terrible price for our unwillingness to stop them. That price will only get higher until we stop treating the symptoms of worldwide terrorism and start attacking the root causes of the disease: irresponsible, greedy, power hungry people who consider us all — terrorists and victims alike — as weapons and tools in their insane competition for world-domination. And make no mistake about it: while Jewish Fundamentalists may only want to rule the territory their predecessors conquered centuries ago, Christian, Muslim and Marxist Fundamentalists **do** want to rule the world and eliminate all competing world views.

Fundamentalists have long been waging a "culture war" with the forces of justice, science, democracy, and pluralism, which they call the "Forces of Evil." Let's start actively fighting back.

What Should We Do in the Short Run?

There is a slogan that civil rights activists have long used, "No justice; no peace." Unfortunately, that slogan is true on many levels. Poverty, despair, hunger and injustice are all too easy to manipulate by terrorist organizations. This is why I agree with the suggestion now circulating on the Net that our President should be urged (in email, faxes, and snailmail) to **accompany any invading troops in Afghanistan with troops bringing food, tents, and medicine** to the Afghan people. Afghans have been starved and brutalized by the Taliban regime, which is **not** an elected government supported by the Afghan people, and may react well to genuine help from outside their nation. But we can and should also say, "No justice; no peace" to the terrorists as we hunt them down.

Also in the short term, it's time for the mass media and the vast majority of Westerners to treat all Jewish, Christian and Islamic Fundamentalist leaders who preach hatred and violence against all competing world views, and who scripturally sanctify murder, with **contempt** — not respect. Let's not fall for the ingenuous argument that we shouldn't be biased against bigots — **we should be biased** against all oppressive movements and people.

It's time for all those who truly believe in freedom and democracy to use every kind of power that they have, whether political, economic, military, social, spiritual, or magical, against the specific individuals who promote Fundamentalism, enslave entire nations, and commit mass murder. To that end, I will resume posting "Villain of the Month" photos on my website at <http://www.neopagan.net/>. Those who believe in magic or the power of prayers can use those photos to focus their minds. Those who don't can use those photos to inspire more mundane efforts.

Talk about this with your friends. Write **snailmail** letters to your political representatives. Send harsh feedback to popular media figures who whitewash Fundamentalism. Do binding spells on the villains responsible. Subvert the would-be dominant paradigm!

What Should We Do in the Long Run?

In the long term, it's way past time to put a permanent stop to all terrorist organizations. Yet, terrorism will continue as long as there are ignorant, unhappy, impoverished people nursing legitimate grudges against rich and powerful nations. To permanently stop terrorism, we will have to create a world in which every nation is genuinely democratic and every individual feels that his or her voice will be heard without needing a gun or bomb to get attention. So we need to use all our knowledge, skill and power to subvert, influence and eventually overthrow every fundamentalist, secular, or tribal dictatorship on the planet and then take the necessary steps to prevent any new ones from getting started. I've been told that this is imperialism, that we shouldn't force our values on others. Well, if our values are going to save lives, promote justice and strengthen freedom, as distinct from just maximizing corporate profits, then using our power and our wits to help remove criminals and lunatics from ruling impoverished nations may not be such a bad idea.

Let's not neglect all the home grown, domestic terrorist groups, either. The mass media should be clear that Christian Militia groups are just as un-American as Islamic ones are.

Terrorism cannot be stopped without a massive campaign to educate Third World peoples about science, technology and pluralistic, democratic values. To that end, we need a popular wave of enthusiasm to spend a few billions dollars to revive and deploy the Peace Corps and to send food, medicine, tools and seeds with them. This is something for which I would be willing to see a national draft in America and other industrial nations.

We also need a long-term grassroots campaign to get Congress to pass laws and the Executive Branch to enforce them, forbidding the U.S. government and American corporations to ever again train and equip terrorists, as they did in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Central America. We have had an unforgettable lesson about the dangers of training rabid pitbulls — eventually they turn on their supposed masters.

A real war against terrorism and Fundamentalism will take decades, will cost Western economies billions of dollars, and will require a short term lowering of our wealthy standard of living — but we've already seen the deadly alternative. Will Americans and other Westerners be willing to do it? Only time will tell.

Final Clarifications

When I advocate a "war against Fundamentalism," I am *NOT* advocating physical violence against your nearest Fundamentalists. I am using the phrase in the same way as the (abandoned) war against poverty or the war against breast cancer. Yes, if our hearts are filled with hatred and revenge, we are in danger of becoming similar to our enemies. But we must still fight vigorously and unrelentingly until Fundamentalism is no longer the threat to freedom and democracy that it is now. **This is an intellectual war of competing memes.** All who believe in freedom, democracy and pluralism must work against sanctified ignorance and bigotry, which is to say, against Fundamentalism as I have discussed it in this essay.

Likewise, **I am not advocating hatred towards Fundamentalist individuals,** though that is their attitude towards all who are unlike them. I am advocating honesty and forthrightness about expressing the meme that Fundamentalism (as discussed in this essay) is **not** worthy of respect as a religious path and is all too easily turned to violence and oppression. Creedism has got to become as socially unacceptable as racism or sexism, and Fundamentalism **is** creedist.

And, yes, **I know that this essay doesn't sound very spiritual or New Agey.** I've already received plenty of commentary from fluffy-bunny types who want people to respond to terrorism by holding hands and sending white light and love to the whole Earth. They have been saying the same thing for many years and nothing has changed in world politics or the Religious Reich as a result. I will send out good vibes when that is appropriate, but loving your enemies in wartime is suicidal.

I have written and spoken elsewhere about the ethics of magic and prayer. Most beliefs that these activities somehow require a separate set of ethics from the ones we use in our secular lives are rooted in the Western Dualism that separates spirit from matter. The touchstone I use in teaching is that **any action that is ethical when using physical, artistic, intellectual, or social means, is ethical when you are using magical, psychic, or spiritual ones.** Follow your own spiritual beliefs, but remember that refusing to take action is itself a decision that will reap karmic consequences for you, and all the Earth.

Section Four: Celtic Stuff

Ancient Celtic History in an Instant!!

By Isaac Bonewits
Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1975

1000-750 B.C.E.
The Urnfield Culture, considered Proto-Celtic, dominates much of Europe.
720-680 B.C.E.
Early Celts seem to have discovered iron, as iron swords and other weapons are buried with their dead in Austria.
600 B.C.E.
The Colony of Massilia is founded by the Greeks, thus opening up trade and cultural contacts between the Celts of central Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean.
520-480 B.C.E.
The La Tene phase of Celtic culture begins. Trade between the Celts and the Etruscans begin.
400 B.C.E.
Celts invade Italy and settle Cisalpine Gaul
390 B.C.E.
The city of Rome has difficulties with fun-loving Celtic tribes. Property values plummet.
400-100 B.C.E.
The La Tene Culture is spread to the British Isles and most of Western Europe.
279 B.C.E.
Large numbers of Celtic tourists invade Greece.
275 B.C.E.
The Celtic State of Galatia is set up in northern Turkey, much to the surprise of the locals.
230 B.C.E.
Greek Soldiers are rude to Celtic visitors from Galatia, the army from Pergamum stomping all over the Celts in western Turkey.
225 B.C.E.
Roman army finally defeats invading Celtic Gauls in central Italy, at Battle of Telamon.
200 B.C.E.
Population increases cause spread of fortified settlements (called "oppida") from Gaul to Bohemia.
191 B.C.E.
Roman imperialism conquers Cisalpine Gaul. Taxes are invented.
100 B.C.E.
The tribe known as the Belgae leave Continental Europe for Britain, in order to get away from the Germanic tribes (which, as usual, were being pushy.) Once there, the Belgae proceed to be pushy themselves.
58-51 B.C.E.
Roman armies conquer most of the Celts left in Europe. Caesar invents atrocity stories about the Druids.
43 C.E.
Roman general Claudius begins the conquest of Britain. It takes him awhile.
432 C.E.
Patrick begins the conquest of Ireland. It takes him awhile.
563 C.E.
Colum Cille starts a monastery-fort on the Island of Iona in order to convert Scotland.
590 C.E.
Columbanus establishes monastic and scholastic centers in Europe. Property values plummet.

The Decline of Druidism

By Thomas M. Cross
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1986

43 B.C. to A.D. 14 Gaul: Augustus forbids Roman citizens to participate in Druidic rites.
A.D. 14 to 37 Tiberius persecutes the Druids of Gaul
A.D. 41 to 54 Claudius has the Druids "very thoroughly suppressed"
A.D.61 Britain: Suetonius Paulinus massacres Druids on the Isle of Anglesey (Mon) off the coast of Wales.
A.D. 590 Ireland: Synod of Drumceat restricts activities of the Druids in Ireland.
A.D. 637 Druids abolished following the battle of Moyrath

Medieval Period

The class of the filidh take over many of the traditions of the Druids along with the Brehons, storytellers and ollamhs in Ireland and Gaelic Scotland.

Elizabethan to Cromwell Periods

Bardic schools are broken up by the English in Ireland and eventually in Scotland with the destruction of Irish aristocratic society.

Following the Cromwellian and Glorious Revolutionary Periods

Celts and Druids are re-discovered in England and Wales during the beginning of the enlightenment period and into the "Age of Reason" through the reading of classical literature. In the 18th century, some neo-Druidic (Mesopagan) groups appear.

Romantic Period

Edward Williams "Iolo Morganwg" founds a neo-Druidic dogma from the study of Bardic relics from which he forges a Bardic philosophy under the influence of the Enlightenment, Romantic movements and "natural religion." There soon follows a revival of interest in Welsh antiquities which has a beneficial influence on Celtic scholarship and Celtic nationalism.

Twentieth Century

Rise of more Druidic orders based on Morganwg and 18th century "Druidic" lodges. Anthropology in its infancy is still under the influence of amateur archaeologists and amateur romantic social scientists which gives rise to unscrupulous scholarship such as Gerald Gardner's Witchcraft theories, Margaret Murray's theories and finally to Robert Graves' The White Goddess. Following the works of Murray, Gardner, Graves etc. there appears many "Wicca" groups and covens which claim to be practicing the "old religion" of ancient Europe.

Serious scholarship begins to investigate the ancient religions of Europe and the importance of the Indo-European culture and ideology is discovered by Georges Dumezil and many linguists, anthropologists, and religious historians.

Latter Half of the Twentieth Century

Following the publication of works by the serious scholars in Indo-European philology, history and archaeology, much of the lost knowledge of the Druids and Celtic peoples is restored and neo-pagan groups begin to incorporate the data. Many other neo-pagans are distraught by the truth of the old religion and decide that their traditions based on the erroneous works of Gardner, Graves, Murray is preferential in their own modern tastes. Neo-Druids based on the Morganwgic material is clung to since it appeals to their own tastes.

Therefore what has come from the Druids and survived into the myths, legends and sagas of the Irish, evidence from archaeology of Gaul, the iconography, bas-reliefs, classical testimony, Celtic philology, Welsh and Scottish tales, the folklore, the epic-type literature and with Indo-European comparative studies, much of what the Druids probably taught has been restored or reconstructed.

Question

The question remains then, does anyone who wants to learn what the Druids probably taught wish to use that information for a basis of their religion or religious thought? If not, then I would ask such a person why would they want to identify with the Druids or why should they call themselves "Druids" or neo-Druids or any sort? What is it to be a neo-Druid? Would it not be self-contradictory to call oneself a Druid or neo-Druid and not be interested or make any use of the scholarship or information concerning what the ancient Druids taught? How can anyone be called a Hindu who never read any Vedic literature or disagreed with revealed knowledge of the Hindus? How can anyone be called Jewish who did not profess the religion contained in the Torah or any Jewish scriptures? How can anyone be called or call himself a Tao-ist yet reject the Tao Te Ching taught by Lao-Tzu? The neo-Druid who is not interested in Celtic mythology or historical Celtic religion as probably taught by the ancient Druids has little right to be called by such an epithet as Druid or neo-Druid? If one is more in agreement with Wicca or Christianity or is more interested in Shamanism than with Celtic religion, one is not a Druid, but rather a "Wiccan" or Christian, or disciple of Shamanism. At least the followers of Iolo Morganwg are within a Celtic tradition, albeit not an ancient one.

Welsh Pronunciation

By Gwydion Pendderwen
Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1975

After much nagging, Gwydion Pendderwen has revised a part of his Gramadeg Gwydion (Gwydion's Grammar) to provide the reader, of PJ & DC with a reasonably accurate guide to those strange Welsh-words that crop up in Graves, Squire, Rhys and many rituals.

Welsh is basically a phonetic language, unlike Irish and Scots Gaelic. With a few exceptions, all the phonemes of the language are uniform, the sounds pronounced as they are spelled.

Vowels

a as in palm or pat though not as broad as the American a.
e as in gate or get. A short sound as in most Romance languages.
i as in beet or bit. Most often the shorter sound. o as in dope.
o 1) in N. Wales, a French u without rounding the lips. 2) in S. Wales, pronounced as i above.
w 1) a glide, as e in wet. 2) a vowel, as in fool.
u 1) a long i as in treat, rarely as in trick. 2) a short obscure sound (schwa,) as in dumb, sir, and the first sound in about.
Diphthongs fall into two main groups, rising and falling
Rising diphthongs include ia, ie, io, iw, iy, in which the first sound is a glide, and similarly, wa, we, wi, won wy and wy (these last two contain the differenty sounds.)
Falling diphthongs include oe, oi, ae, ai, ei, au, eu, aw, ew, iw, ow, uw, wy, yw. In S. Welsh, ae, ai, ei, au are pronounced about the same.

Consonants

These are approximately as in English, with some exceptions:
ch as in Scottish loch, a slightly aspirate sound.
dd always a voiced th, as in them, breathe, loathe. C always a hard k sound.
f always a v sound, as in off.
g always as in go, never gestate.
ng as in sing, rarely as in single.
ll an unvoiced l, produced by placing the tip of the tongue on the ridge of the hard palate back of the teeth, with the sides of the tongue against the molars. Emit the air as if trying to say thin. The tip of the tongue will drop naturally, and the sound produced should be Ilin. The ll sound is very similar to a lateral lisp, and it is advisable not to practice the ll in anyone's face.
ph as in pheasant.
th as in thin.
rh an unvoiced, trilled, mostly easily approximated by pronouncing it
hr. a strongly trilled r.

The Pronunciation of Irish Gaelic Terms

By Robert Larson
Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1975

This is not going to be a lengthy explanation of Gaelic spelling or pronunciation. What I hope to do is to give the reader a good enough idea of the basic sounds of the language to enable them to pronounce those words found in the DC(E.)

Every consonant in Gaelic has two sounds, "broad" and "slender." A slender consonant is pronounced more tensely than a broad consonant, and often a "y-glide" can be heard between the consonant and the following vowel. For those of you who know Russian, there is a similarity to hard and soft ("palatalized") consonants. The slender consonant is palatalized, though usually not as noticeably as in Russian. A broad consonant is one which is preceded or followed by a slender vowel, to wit: "e" or "I." Usually the consonant is both preceded AND followed by the appropriate vowels. **-IB**

Of course these are only approximate, but they are very good approximations. They are those of the Munster dialect, which is grammatically the most conservative dialect in modern Irish The spellings used will be the modern spellings, except where the Chronicles have the old form. In that case, the new spellings will be also presented next to the old. I personally prefer the older spellings, but the newer ones are more understandable to those unused to Irish spelling. Broad consonants will be the CAPITALIZED ones, slender consonants in lower case.

For those interested in more information and a good beginning grammar and vocabulary, see *Teach Yourself Irish* by Myles Dillon and Donncha O Croinin, English Universities Press, London 1961. Another good source is *Learning Irish* by Micheal O Siadhail from Yale University Press, 1988.

Modern Comments by the Editor, Scharding

"Unless you are one of the rare ones, like myself, you probably won't have a clue on how to pronounce most of the Irish Gaelic terms bandied about in the ARDA. It is not necessary to know hardly a single word of Irish to be a Reformed Druid, at least in the RDNA sense. However, a great number of people are attracted to Reformed Druidism because they would like to be in a "Celtic Religion," and something called "Druid" sounds Celtic. The usual result of this is that many of the people who are Reformed Druids have at least a passing interest in Irish culture and Irish language.

"It is an interesting fact that Celtic-oriented Druids in America seem to have a dominant preference for Irish language, gods & culture. This is probably due to the fact that the Irish culture retained intact more elements of a Paleo-pagan culture into the modern era than the Welsh, and certainly longer than the Gauls. It is also due to the fact that over 45 million Americans claim Irish descent versus less than the 15 million who claim Welsh descent. It is also a result of the Irish dominance in Folk music. Irish is only one of the Gaelic languages, there is also Scottish Gaidhlig and Manx Gaalige; but Irish language tutorials are by far the most abundant in America. This is but the most simple of pronunciation guides, most major libraries and bookstore chains should be able to provide lexicons & language instruction books."

Consonant	phonetic translation	broad sound	slender sound
B	B	as in boot	as in beauty
C	K	" " cool	" " cure
D	D	" " do	" " dew
F	f	" " foot	" " few
G	g	" " good	" " jewels
H	h	" " hood	" " hew
L	l	" " loot	" " lurid
M	m	" " moon	" " music
N	n	" " noon	" " innure
P	p	" " poor	" " pure
S	s	" " soon	" " sure
T	t	" " tool	" " tune
Bh	v	" " voice	" " view
Ch	ch	" " *scots* loch	" " *German* ich
Dh	Gh (silent)	*voiced* ch	'y' as in year
Gh	gh	*as dh*	
Mh	v	" " bh	
Ph	f	" " f	
sh	h	" " h	
Th	h	" " h	
R	r	" " trilled	

2) Vowels are a whole 'nother kettle of fish. These will be the symbols used and the sounds they represent; (remember the words are spoken by a cultured English voice):

symbol	sound
a	At
·	fAther
e	bEt
È	fAte
I	sIt
Ì	shEEt
o	OUght
Û	sOOn
u	bUs
	dUne

3) The accent in an Irish word is stronger than in English and usually falls on the first syllable. In the transliterations that appear in The Berkeley Calendar under the Druid Months and elsewhere, if the accent falls on a syllable other than the first, that syllable will be underlined. The accent in Irish is so strong that vowels in unaccented syllables become murmured.
4) Syllables are separated by hyphens. These pronunciations are of

The Gaulish Language

Thomas M. Cross
A Druid Missal-Any, Summer 1986

The first Celtic language to pass beyond this world was probably Gaulish – once spoken in regions we would now call France, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Bohemia, southern Germany and in Glatia of Turkey and perhaps Portugal and Galicia. This language was in most respects identical to the P-Celtic Old Brythonic ancestor of Welsh, Cornish and Breton. The main differences between the dialects of Gallo-Brittonic (Gaulish and Brythonic) were lexical, but like Goidelic (archaic and primitive Irish) the language had declensional endings similar to that found in Latin, Greek, Sanskrit, Icelandic, Old English and Lithuanian. In other words, Gaulish shared the same characteristics of most all Indo-European languages in that they were highly inflected. Certainly this was the very tongue spoken by Diviacus known by Caesar and Cicero and the Druids described by Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, Pomponius Mela and probably known to Posidonius. James Travis theorized that the Druids probably had known a counterpart to the Rig Veda which he calls a "Druid-veda" in his book "Early Celtic Versecraft." His investigation of the earliest verse forms in Celtic languages show that linguistic conditions which proceeded these first written verses must have shared the same Indo-European inflectional characteristics we find in such languages as the Vedas and other I-E verse forms. The accent was on the initial syllable and syntax was free or less fixed. Rhyming was probably unknown as we know it today, but the main device used was alliteration similar to that we find in the early verse of Germanic languages.

Gaulish is only know to us from inscriptions (which employed either Greek or Roman letters,) from glosses made by Romans or Greeks and from reconstructions based on phonetics and historical linguistics. How Gaulish was pronounced can only then be conjectured from phonetic rules and by the spelling used in the inscriptions. One of the problems is in the use of the Roman and Greek alphabets. Evidently, those who could write Gaulish had to represent the pronunciation as best he could from the letters that we learned from Latin and Greek spelling, thus the sounds shared by both Gaulish and the other languages would used the corresponding letter. In ancient time, spelling was based more on pronunciation than it is today – as for example modern English or modern Irish in which the spelling represent older and obsolete pronunciations. Thus when we read Gaulish inscriptions using Roman letters, we must give the letters their Roman or Latin value as they were pronounced at the time the inscription was produced. To double check we may consult the phonetic rules of Celtic etymology. But some learned Gauls invented some letters such as the "barred D and barred S" which probably represent the soft or voiced th and sh sounds respectively. Also the Gauls may have used the Greek chi to represent the ch sound represented in loch. The vowels must have had the "continental" values with the exception that in most unstressed positions they became schwa like the u in hut or the o in other. The Gauls would often spell the same word using e and i as alternatives and therefore we can see that a sound somewhere in between was used perhaps nasalised or similar to the i of English hit when spoken with a twang. Other say that Gaulish had the sound of the French u or German u (like saying English "ee" of need with lips pouted in position of saying the oo of food.)

Gaulish, unlike modern Celtic languages, did not have mutations or aspiration, the initial consonants did not change according to any grammatical rules. This phenomena was in its infancy developing later in the stage of lenition (consonants

changing because of the final sound of a preceding word or because it is flanked by vowels) and eventually become systematic as the languages rapidly developed before literacy was widespread. At the same time that Celtic languages began developing mutations already the declensional endings began disappearing. It is very probable that the loss of the declensional endings were mostly responsible for the development of mutations as well as the fossiling of the syntax.

SOME BASIC GAULISH

Verb "to Be";

Verb "to be"	
Esmi	I am
Esi	Thou art
Esti	He is
Esmos	We are
Sueste	You (plural) are
Sent	They are

Pronouns

Singualrs	I	Thou	He	She	It
Nom.	Eg	Tu	Is/es	Si	Id
Accusative	Me	Te	Im/em	Siam	Id
Dative	Moi	Toi	Io	Iai	Io
Genitive	Moue	Toue	Eso	Esa	Eson
Plurals:	We	You	They	They	They
Nom.	Snes	Sues	Ioi	Ias	Ioi
Accusative	Snes	Sues	Sons	Sans	Sons
Dative	Nebis	Suebis	Iobis	Iobis	Iobis
Genitive	Neseron	Seuseron	Eson	Esan	esan

Gaulish had basically four cases nominative (subject,) accusative (object) dative (prepositional) and sometimes a vocative cased (used when directly addressing someone.) There was also Plural and Dual numbers. An example can be made in the masculine proper name Segomaros:

CASE	SINGULAR	PLURAL	DUAL
Nom.	Segomaros	Seogomaroi	Segomarou
Acc.	Segomaron	Sgomarons	Segomarou
Dat.	Segomaru	Segomarobis	Segomarobem
Gen.	Segomari	Segomaris	Segomarou
Vocative	Segomare	Segomaros	Segomarou

The Feminine noun benna "woman
" (from Indo-Euro. *gwen)

CASE	SINGULAR	PLURAL	DUAL
Nom.	Benna	Bennas	Bennai
Acc.	Bennan	Bennans	Bennai
Dat.	Bennai	Bennabo	Bennabem
Gen.	Bennas	Bennon	Bennai

Magos "plain" Irish "magh"
Welsh "Ma" Masculine Noun

CASE	SINGULAR	PLURAL	DUAL
Nom.	Magos	Magesa	
Acc.	Magon	Magesa	
Dat.	Mages	Magebos	Magebem
Gen.	Magesos	Mageson	

Rix "king," Irish "Righ" or "Ri,"
Welsh "Rhi" Masculine Noun

CASE	SINGULAR	PLURAL	DUAL
Nom.	Rix	Riges	Rige
Acc.	Rigim	Rigons	Rige
Dat.	Rigi	Rigobis	Rigebem
Gen.	Rigos	Rigon	Rigou

Mens "month" Irish "mi," Welsh "mis"

CASE	SINGULAR	PLURAL	DUAL
Nom.	Mens	Menses	Mensou
Acc.	Mensim	Mensins	Mensou
Dat.	Mensai	Mens	Mesobem
Gen.	Mensos	Menson	Mensou

Mater "mother" Ir. "mathair",
Welsh "mam" Feminine noun

CASE	SINGULAR	PLURAL	DUAL
Nom.	Mater	Matres	Matres
Acc.	Matren	Matrens	Matrens
Dat.	Matrei	Matrebo	Matrebem
Gen.	Matres	Matron	Matriou

Lugus (proper name) Irish "Lugh"
Welsh "Lleu" Masculine –u Stem

CASE	SINGULAR	PLURAL	DUAL
Nom.	Lugus	Lugoues	Lugu
Acc.	Lugum	Luguns	Lugu
Dat.	Lugou	Lugubis	Lugubem
Gen.	Lugous	Lugion	Lugouo

Medu "mead", Gaulish neuter u-stem
Irish "Medhbh", Welsh "Medd"

CASE	SINGULAR	PLURAL	DUAL
Nom.	Medu	Medoues	Medu
Acc.	Medu	Meduns	Medu
Dat.	Medu	Medubis	Medubem
Gen.	Medous	Medion	Medouo

The I-stem Mas. Endings

CASE	SINGULAR	PLURAL	DUAL
Nom.	-is	-eies	-eie
Acc.	-in	-ins	-eie
Dat.	-I	-ibis	-ibem
Gen.	-os	-ion	-iou

Feminine I-stem endings

CASE	SINGULAR	PLURAL	DUAL
Nom.	-I	-ias	-ia
Acc.	-ien	-iens	-ia
Dat.	-I	-ibo	-ibem
Gen.	-as	-I	-iau

Neuter I-stem endings

CASE	SINGULAR	PLURAL	DUAL
Nom.	-I	-ia	-ia
Acc.	-I	-ins	-ia
Dat.	-I	-ibis	-ibem
Gen.	-os	-ion	-iou

N-stem masculine

CASE	SINGULAR	PLURAL	DUAL
Nom.	-o	-enes	-ene
Acc.	-in	-ons	-ene
Dat.	-I	-enobis	-obem
Gen.	-os	-on	-ou

This is just a few of the Gaulish declensional endings that have been reconstructed by Celtic philologists working with the inscriptions found in excavations and working with the etymology of Old Irish and early Welsh. Note that the Gaulish ending –os masculine of Segomaros corresponds with the Latin –us ending, greek –as or –os and proto-Germanic –az (in Gothic –as) endings.

Many Gaulish words were Latinised and assimilated to Latin, some of which survived into modern French, e.g. courma or (to) cereuis to cerevisia to cervoise "beer" or ale." Casanos (an epithet of the oka tree "holy one" to Latin cassanus to French chene. Gaulish gleno "to clean" Latin glenare to Frech glaner.

GAULISH	ENGLISH	IRISH	WELSH
Abrona	River	Abhain	Afon
Are	Near		Ar
Beccan	Small	Beag	Bach
Briga	Hill		Bryn
Cambo	Crooked		
Ceto	Wood		Coed
Cumbo	Valley		Cwm
Dunon	Fortress	Dun	Din
Dubo	Black	Dubh	Du
Dubro	Water		Dwr
Lindon	Lake	Lind	Llyn
Lis	Hall		Llys
Maros	Great	Mor	Mawr
Monedos	Mountain		Mynedd
Nantos	Brook		Nant
Penno	Head	Ceann	Pen
Poullon	Pool, harbor		Pwll
Tir	Land	Tir	Tir
Tracto	Sand		Draeth
Innis	Island	Innis	Ynys
Nemetos	Shrine		
More	Sea	Muir	Mor

Gaulish Religious Terms

Druidiactos	o.ir. druidecht, mod. Ir. Draiocht "Druidism"
Vindomagos	Welsh Gwynfa "paradise or white plain"
Bacuceos	Possessed by evil spirits
Talamu	Ir. Talamh "earth"
Dusios	An incubus (according to Latin gloss)
Talamasca	Female evil spirit "earth hag"
Cassos/caddos	Holy (as in cassibellaunos and Cassanos)
Caragos	A fortune telling
Morimarusa	"sea of the dead"
Iipomiiduos	horse sacrifice (cf. asvamedha of Vedic)
Biliomagos	"plain of the sacred tree"
Nemeton/nimidas	"shrine", nemet= "sacred" (-as is a variant)
Uernemetis	"over shrine" (-is ending is gen. Pl.)
Cauaros/kaouaros	"giant", Welsh "cawr"
Daculon	"sickle"
Gutuatros	"invoker" for deities like Moltinos, by gutuater Martis

A Guide to Celtic Deities

By Isaac Bonewits
Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1975

[In the same sense that many in the Reform are at least mildly interested in Celtic languages, there are some who prefer to research, venerate and meditate upon Celtic forms of deity. Whereas some forms of Reformed Druidism have chosen primarily Asian, African, Philosophical or Native American paths, there is a very large percentage of our membership interested in Celtic religion, so a handy guide of Celtic gods has many been provided here for them. Although there are far better collections of material on Celtic deities out there, I thought I'd reprint this list from the DC(E)

-Scharding 1996

The following article was originally written as a course supplement for a class entitled "Witchcraft: the magic of ancient Classical and Celtic beliefs in a Contemporary Society," taught by its author, Michael Nichols. It has been mildly edited in order to make the data more relevant to Reformed Druids, but it is essentially intact. Comments by the Editor appear in brackets. God names with a "#" after them are of particular relevance to Reformed Druids. Mike depended almost entirely upon one book (MacCulloch's,) which is an excellent one, but others of equal interest may be found in the Bibliography of Druidism. It should be noted that Celtic Paleopaganism is a highly controversial subject and experts will frequently disagree with one another. Therefore this article should be taken as merely a starting point in your researches in the field.

-Bonewits 1975

Introduction

The First writers to attempt any clarification of the topic of Celtic Paleopaganism were the Romans, who helped little with their habit of replacing the names of Celtic deities with the names of their own Roman deities. A modern scholar attempting to recapture the lost legacy of Celtic religions finds that he or she has rather limited resources. Briefly, these are: dedicatory and votive inscriptions, manuscripts dating from the Middle Ages but perpetuating much more ancient traditions, stories and chronicles and mythical legends, and most importantly, the Bardic tradition which inspired Gallic, Breton and even Norman minstrels.

Such religious anthropology is discouraging and tedious, yet in this field there is one scholar who stand out and deserves all the accolades that a grateful Pagan can bestow upon him. Unfortunately, his mammoth contribution is seldom remembered, or acknowledged, or even realized. The man in question is the Can J. A. MacCulloch and his 390 pages of amazingly exciting research was published in 1911 c.e. under the title *The Religion of the Ancient Celts*. All research (others would disagree with such a sweeping conclusion) in this area since 1911 c.e. is merely a footnote to this great man's pioneering efforts. It is for this reason that the bulk of the following material is culled from MacCulloch's extensive work, for his own publication is long since out of print and is exceedingly hard to find.

[MacCulloch's book can be gotten in microfilm from several places, however. Also to be highly recommended are the works of Squire, Piggott, Greene and MacCana.]

The Gods of Gaul and the Continental Celts:

Though many Druids are concerned more with the traditions developed in the "British Isles" it must be remembered that these majestic and magical deities ultimately had their origin in the beliefs of the Continental Celts [*who were spread all the way into Turkey!]* and one must keep in mind at all times that the great majority were local, tribal Gods, of the roads and commerce, of the arts, of healing, etc. There were very few Pan-Celtic deities. MacCulloch quotes another authority, Professor Anwyl, to this effect: 270 Gods are mentioned only once on inscriptions, 24 twice, 11 thrice, 10 four times, 3 five times, 2 seven times, 4 fifteen times, 1 nineteen time (Grannos #), and 1 thirty times (Belenos #.) If the notes on the following deities seem brief, you may console yourself with the understanding that it is all that we know of them:

The Following Gods were most frequently associated with the Roman God Mercury, and are said to have had many of His attributes:

Artaios (Artaius): A Bear God, and God of Agriculture.
Moccus: A Swine God, a Corn God and a vegetation spirit.
Cimiacinus: God of Commerce, Roads and (perhaps) Leys.
Ogmios: God of Speech, binding humans with His eloquence.
Dumias: God of Hilltops and Mounds (and beacon points?.)
Alaunius, Acecius, Arvernorix, Arvenus, Adsmerius, Biausius, Canetonensis, Clavariatis, Cissonius, Cimbrianus, Dumiatis, Magniacus, Naissatis, Tocirenus, Vassocaletus, Vellaunus, Visucius: Gods whose attributes and functions are not specifically defined, though generally identified as Mercury-like. [*Several of these deities may be the same, under different spellings.]*

The following Gods are associated with Apollo, both in His capacity of God of Healing and God of light:

Grannos #: God of Thermal Springs, name means "burning one."
Borvo (Bormo, Bormanus): God of Bubbling Springs, "boiling one." Votive tablets inscribed to these two show that They were often invoked for healing.
Belenos #: Sun God, name means "the shining one" [from root "bel" "bright" "good."], the most popular and widely known of the Celtic Gods.
Maponos (Mabonos): God of Youthfulness.
Mogons (Mogounos): Sky God, God of Plenty, God of Increase.
Anextiomarus, Cobledulitavus, Cosmis, Livicus, Mogo, Sianus, Toutiorix, Vindonnus, Virotutis: Gods whose attributes and functions are not defined, though Apollo-like. Certain Gods in this group are said to have been worshipped in a circle of stone by priests called Boreads *[from Greek myths of a land called Hyperborea, the land beyond Boreas, the North Wind]*. There is a report by one of the Classical writers that every 19 years the Sun God appeared dancing in the sky over this stone circle, playing the lyre. Many past and present scholars speculate that the circle may have been Stonehenge and the 19 years refer to the 19 year Solar-Lunar cycle said to be measured by these stones [*see "The Mysteries of Stonehenge" for a detailed reporting of this matter*].

The following are tribal War Gods associated with aspects of Mars, and there many [some 60 are known]:

Caturix: "battle king."
Belatu-Cadros (Belacetudor?): "comely in slaughter."
Albiorix (Albius?): "world king."
Rigisamus: "king like."

Teautates (Toutatis, Totatis, Tutatis): a tribal War God, regarded as an embodiment of the tribe in its warlike capacity. Lucan regards Him as one of the three Pan-Celtic Gods, the other two being Taranis # and Esus.

Neton: "warrior."

Camulos: pictured on coins and war emblems.

Braciaca #: God of Malt and Intoxicating Drink, such as the Irish "cuirm" and "braccat" [*not to mention "na h-uisce beatha" the waters-of-life! Braciaca may also be a God of Altered States of Consciousness and may be related to the Smith Gods*].

Alator, Arixo, Asterix, Beladonis, Barres, Bolvinus, Britovis [consort to Britinia, perhaps?], Buxenus, Cabetius, Cariocecius, Camenelus, Cicollus, Carrus, Cocosus, Cociduis, Condatus, Cnabetius, Coritiacus, Dinomogetimarus, Divanno, Dunatis, Glarinus, Halamardus, Harmogius, Leusdrinus, Lacavus, Latabius, Lenus, Leucetius, Laucimalacus, Medocius, Mogetuis, Mullo, Nabelcus, Ocelos, Ollondios, Randosatis, Riga, Rudianus, Sinatus, Segomo, Smertatius, Tritullus, Vesucius, Vincius, Vitucadros, Vorocius: War Gods whose attributes are not specified.

The Following Gods are equated with Jupiter, as Ruler of the Celtic "heaven," "Otherworld" or afterlife [*and as Sky Gods and Thunder Gods*].

Taranis #: (Taranoos, Taranucnos): God of Thunder & Lightning [also Fire, Storms, the Sun and protection from all of these, as the name is obviously cognate with Thor, Thunder, Donner, Tyr and a number of other inter-related Thunder-Fir-War-Demon Killing Gods. Quite possibly He is also related to the Sylvannus/Esus/Cernunnos trinity and/or Sucellos mentioned below.]

Cernunnos: "the Horned One," pictured as a three-faced God, squatting, with a torque and ram's headed serpent, and sometimes holding a cornucopia [He is the one usually shown with antlers or other large horns, and with furry legs, cloven hooves and a large phallus (erect.) More than one scholar has pointed out the similarities both to the Hindu deity Shiva and the postulated "shamanistic" cult of the Horned Sorcerer"]. He is considered a God of Abundance, an Earth and Underearth God, Lord of the Underworld, and an Ancestral God [also as a God of the Hunt and God of the Wildwood. Among Wiccans, He is the most widely worshipped male deity, combining all of the above aspects, plus a few more (including Sun God, God of Animal Life, etc..)]

Sylvanus (Silvanus) and Esus: pictured with a cup and hammer, a Wolf God and a God of Woods and Vegetation, an Underworld God of Riches (cattle.) As Esus, He is many times associated with a bull and three cranes.

[Cernunnos, Sylvanus and Esus form a trinity comparable to Diana/Hecate/Selene [or Jupiter/Neptune/Pluto]. Some times They are seen as three separate deities, while at other times they are viewed as three aspects of the same God. The confusion is felt in that Aeracura is a Consort to one of the three, but it is not clear which one. If the three are considered to be as one, the problem is greatly reduced.]

Dio Casses: a collective name for a group of Gods worshipped by the Celts, possibly Road Gods. On some of the inscriptions, the name Cassiterides occurs, which was an early name for Britain, meaning beautiful or pleasant land.

Grouped Goddesses were considered more important than individual Goddesses, Who were known only as Consorts to certain specific Gods [*so much for the theories of the Celts having a matriarchal religious system]*. Professor Anwyl gives the following statistics: there are 35 Goddesses mentioned once, 2 twice, 3 thrice, 1 four times, 2 six times, 2 eleven times, 1 fourteen times (Sirona #), 1 twenty-one times (Rosemerta,) and 1 twenty-six times (Epona.) The following listing includes both individual and grouped Goddesses.

Belisama: "shining Goddess," representing Woman as the first civilizer, discovering agriculture, spinning, the art of poetry, etc. Perpetual fires burned in Her temples. *[Also known as the Goddess of Light, and sometimes as Consort to Belenos*].

Sul (Sulis): "to burn," associated with a cult of fire.

Nemetona: a War Goddess.

Andrasta (Andarta): "invincible." sometimes worshipped *[it is alleged*] with human sacrifices.

Sirona # (Dirona): associated with Grannos, the "long lived" Goddess of Healing Wells and Fertility. {*in England, She is also a Goddess of Rivers and of Wisdom*]

Vesunna and Aventia (Avenches): also associated with Grannos.

Stanna: "the standing or abiding one."

Sequanna: Goddess of the Seine River.

Bormana and Damona: associated with Bormo.

Dea Brixia: Consort to the God Luxovius.

Abnoba, Clota, Divona, Icauna, Sabrina, Sinnan: River Goddesses.

Dea Arduinna and Dea Abnoba: both Forest Goddesses.

Rosemerta: Consort to one of the Mercury-like Gods, but which one is not clear.

Epona: A River Goddess and Goddess of Animals (especially Horses.)

Deae Matres: grouped Goddesses, usually three in number, representing fertility and abundance.

Berecynthia: an individual representation of a triple Goddess.

Abonde: A fairy Goddess who brought riches to house.

Esterelle: a fairy Goddesss who made women fruitful.

Aril: A fairy Goddess who watched over meadows.

Melusina and Viviane: two extremely popular fairy Goddesses [*the latter of Whom was responsible for distracting the wizard Merddyn in the Arthurian Cycleswhich are full of references to disguised Celtic Deities.]*

The Gods of the Irish Mythological Cycle

The Tuatha De Danann (the Children of the Goddess Danu) reached Ireland on Beltane and defeated the Formorians, who were the earlier dark inhabitants. *[It is believed by many scholars that] the Formorians are actually a personification of the fierce power of the storms of the western sea [however, they could also be (a) memories of a real tribeperhaps even Neanderthalsthat had settled Ireland previously, (b) mostly imaginary giants, demons, etc., (c) a previous invasion by ancestors of the same tribe the Tuatha came from, or all of the above*].

The defeat of the Formorians did not take place until the second battle at Samhain. Then the Tuatha remained masters of Ireland until the coming of the Milesians. The Druids of the Tuatha raised a magical storm to prevent the Milesians from landing on the shores, but Amhairghin, a poet of the Milesians [*i.e., a magician and Druid*] recited verses which overcame the storm [*some of which appear in "The Customs of the Druids" in the DC*]. The Milesians fought with the Tuatha and defeated them after much time and effort. The survivors of the Tuatha are said to have taken refuge in the hills where They became the "fair folk" of later generations, seen less & less by mortals.

The Following is a [*short*] list of some of the Gods and Goddesses who play in the great Irish mythological drama, with genealogy and attributes where known:

Dagda (sometimes called Cara or Ruad-rofhessa): the Great Father, Chief of the Gods, a cunning deity with great knowledge [*like most Irish deities*]. He owned a cauldron of plenty, and thus may be related to Cromm Cruaich. His main feast was Samhain and human sacrifices were *[said to be]* common.

Danu # (Anu): Daughter of the Dagda, She gave Her name to the entire family of Gods [*and in many way superseded Dagda in importance*]. She had three sons (Brian, Iuchar and Iucharba) and is associated with Brighid and Buanann.

Oengus (Angus #) : "the young son," He superseded Dagda in cult worship. A God of Love [*and of Youth],* He was Patron to Diarmaid na Duibhne.

Brighid (Brigit, Bride): Supreme Goddess of Knowledge, Crafts, etc. Her ancient shrine at Kildare housed the sacred [*and perpetual*] fire. She is a Fire Goddess and is celebrated on St. Bride's Day [*after the Christians turned Her into a "Saint*"], also known as Candlemas [*or Oimelc*]. She had a female priesthood and Her shrines were often found in oak groves.

Ogma: Son of Danu and the Dagda [*divine incest was not unknown among the Celts*], a master of poetry and inventor of Ogham script. He was a God of Eloquence and the Champion of all Gods in Battle [*and obviously cognate with Ogmios, as a "God who binds." Mircea Eliade has some fascinating material on this archetype*.].

Bobd Dearg: the last child of the Dagda [*equivalent to Babd or Badhbh, the War Goddess*].

Elatha (Elathan): son of Net, husband of two War Goddesses, Babd (Badhbh) and Nemaind (Namhain, Nemon.) He is the Battle King of the Tuatha.

Lug (Lugh #): God of all Arts and Crafts, slayer of Balor (hence, protector from the Evil Eye,) a Sun God. He is the son of Cian and Ethnea. [*The feast of Lughnasadh is named after "the funeral games of Lugh," i.e. the celebration He threw to commemorate his father*.]

Cenn Cruich: God of Burial Mounds (equivalent to the Welsh Penn Cruc.)

Cleena and Vera (Dirra): fairy or witch queens.

Aine: great Fairy Queen of Ireland, daughter of Eogabal. Her rites were celebrated at Midsummer Eve. [*She is probably a variant on Anu or Danu*]

Morrigan (Morrigu,) Neman (Nematona,) Macha, Badb (Badhbh) and Cathubodua: War Goddesses. Neman was Net's consort. To Macha were devoted the heads of slain enemies. Carried on poles, these were called "Macha's mast." [*When invoke for purposes of exorcism, the Morrigan at least has many similarities to the Hindu Goddess Kali, as a Demon Slayer.]*

Brian (Bran,) Iuchar, Iucharba: the three sons of Danu [*and Turien*?], together they gave birth to Ecne (wisdom.)

Goibniu: A Divine Craftsman, God of Artistry in Metal-working, creator of magical weapons and inventor of the drink of immortality. *[He is considered by some Druids to be the equivalent of Braciaca, because of the this last aspect*.]

Creidne: God of the Brazier, and of Armor.

Luchtine: God of Carpenters.

Diancecht #: God of Medicine. His son Miach used magic for healing, and His daughter Airmed used herbs for this purpose.

Etain: Another one of Oengus' lovers, She is a Goddess of the Dawn.

Mider (Medros): A God of Fertility, lord of a "Celtic Elysium."

Nuada: a "Celtic Zeus" whose full name means "of the silver hand." He is a maimed God [Who lost His hand in battle, thus forcing him to give up the Kingship of the Gods and letting Bres take overwhich caused no end of trouble. Diancecht made Him a new hand and He eventually regained His throne]. His daughter is Creidylad, Who is wedded alternately to light and dark forces, much like Persephone in Roman mythology.

Ler: A majestic and ancient Sea God, father to Manannan [*Equivalent to the Welsh Llyr #]*.

Manannan (Manannan Mac Ler): a young and heroic Sea God. He is credited with making the Tuatha De Danann invisible and immortal. He is a God of Weather, especially at sea, where He is a great navigator. He is also Lord of the overseas "Elysium," earlier identified with the Isle of Man [*which some say is named after Him. The Isle of the Blest, sometimes called "Avalon," "Albion," and by a variety of other names, is a concept common to all the Celtic tribes. It was usually identified with one of the islands or another, usually (though not always) to the west of one's own territory. England, Wales, Scotland, Man, the Shetlands and other places have all been though to be it at one time or another*]. His wife is Fiand. Dairmaid was His pupil in Fairyland. His steed was Enbarr. He is a God of Wizardry, especially in battle.

Tethra: Battle King of the Formorians [*and God of the Sea*].

Bres: although a Formor, he became King of the Tuatha [*after Nuada's hand was lost*] and achieved supremacy through the powers of blight. He was given Brighid as His Consort [*both as a bribe and so She could keep an eye on Him*] and Their son is Ruadan.

Domnu (Dea Domnu): The Formorian Goddess of the Deep, She is to the Formors what Danu is to the Tuatha. Her son, who was also a sea God, is Indech.

Cathlenn: Balor's Consort. Her venom killed the Dagda.

Balor: the God of the Evil Eye [*He was a giant with one eye that emitted terrible blasts of killing light when it was propped open. This is considered by some to be significant of the negative force of the Sun*.].

Buarainech: father of Balor.

The Gods of the Welsh Mythological Cycle:

The Mabinogian may be though of as the Welsh National epic, and it is very likely the riches, most complex and varied of any known mythological system from any [*Celtic*] land. Most of the information which scholars now possess concerning the religions of ancient Wales has been garnered from this wondrous work, which is an enthralling and enchanting now as when it first passed from the oral tradition. The Bardic tradition, mentioned earlier, was at its zenith in the area of Welsh Literature, for in Wales, as in no other place, this mystical-poetical school enjoyed a sort of official sanction. Thus, this great and complex tapestry of myth has been passed to the present age still [*more or less- at least compared to other Celtic systems*] intact, and showing very little wear. Indeed, contemporary authors such as [*the highly recommended*] Evangeline Walton have added further embellishments to the tapestry, in penned petite-point, creating sparkling clarity of a story all the richer for being a retelling. It would be no exaggeration to say that 90% of all those who follow a "Celtic Tradition" of Neopagan Witchcraft regard the Welsh heritage as the basis for their belief, ritual and purpose [*though a very large chunk is also taken from Greek and Roman sources]*. The reason for this may be that more detail has survived from the Welsh cycle, though there are obvious correspondences to Gods and Goddesses already mentioned as belonging to the Irish or other previous systems.

The Following is a list of Welsh Gods and Goddesses, for the most part taken from the Mabinogian, with the genealogy and attributes where known:

Llyr #: ancient, majestic Sea God, father of Manawyddan [*and equivalent of Irish Lir*].

Manawyddan (Manawyddan Ap Llyr): a master craftsman who battles great wizards, Pryderi's father and husband of Rhiannon. He is a Lord of the Celtic Elysium, as Rhiannon is its Lady [and equivalent to Irish Manannan].

Bran the Blessed: a God of huge proportions, altered time perception was conveyed to those who attended His several head [*which also gave prophecies*]. He is considered by most scholars to be equivalent to Urien or Uther Ben [*known in the Arthurian cycle as Uther Pendragon*]. He is also equated with Cernunnos as God of a happy Underworld, but more likely a Lord of Elysium, and referred to as the "father of many saints."

Branwen: "Venus of the Northern Seas," a Sea Goddess who was also a Goddess of Love, Beauty and Fertility. She is associated with a cauldron of rebirth, and Her ancient shrine was at Anglesey (Mona.) She was Bran's sister.

Don: Equivalent to the Irish Danu, a Goddess of Fertility [*connected with a God named Donn*]. Her distinguished children include: Gwydion, Gilvaethwy, Amaethon, Govannon and Arianrhod. Beli may have been Her Consort.

Math the Ancient: one of the oldest divinities of Gwynned, a king and magician pre-eminent in wizardry, which He teaches to Gwydion; equated with the Irish God of Druidism (probably Dagda,) Math is supreme in justice and compassion.

Gwydion (Gwyddon): Supreme Magician, Supreme Shapeshifter and Creator, great astrologer, a might Bard, poet and musician; both a philosopher and a Culture God. He raids the Land of the Gods to benefit mortals and is thus a patron of thieves [*He has other similarities to Hermes/Mercury as well*]. He is lover to His sister Arianrhod and father to Dylan Llew.

Amaethon the Good: a God of Agriculture, the secrets of which He stole from Arawn, Death Lord, and was aided by Gwydion in the war that ensued. He is associated with both dog and deer.

Llew Llaw Gyffes: probably originally a bird divinity, especially as an eagle, which has ever been the symbol of a Sun-God, which Llew seems to have been. He was always a shapeshifter. His wife is a Dawn Goddess named Blodewwedd who is transformed into an owl, and thus becomes a Dusk Goddess. [*He is equivalent to the Irish Lugh # and the British Lug*]

Govannon (Gofannon): the Smith of the Gods, creator of magic armour and weapons and (working with Man) inventor of the drink of immortality. [*Equivalent to Irish Goibniu and Gaulish Braciaca*]

Arianrhod: "of the Silver Wheel" and thus a Moon Goddess. Both sister and lover to Gwydion: both eternal virgin and fruitful mother, with "Beauty famed beyond summer's dawn." Mother of Llew (light) and Dylan (Darkness.)

Dylan #?: God of the dark seas. His uncle Govannon kills Him, and the waves still dash against the shore in an effort to avenge His death.

Pwyll: Prince of Dyved, His wife is Rhiannon and His son is Pryderi. Lord of an Underworld called Annwfn (Anwyn.)

Pryderi: Lord of Annwfn, as His father before Him (and before that, it was ruled by Arawn.) He was stolen at birth and called Gwri. Later He is a swineherd from Whom Gwydion steals the sacred swine. Pryderi inherited a cauldron of regeneration form His father, Who got it from Arawn.

Rhiannon: a Goddess who is a fairy bride to Pwyll and mother to Pryderi. Her name may be a corruption of Rigantona "great queen." She is mistress of the magical birds of Fairyland, and in some accounts, She is married to Manawyddan, Lord of a (different?) Celtic Otherworld.

Beli: Later form of Belenos, seen as a God of Light and a victorious champion and preserver of the "Honey Isle." His sons are Llud, Caswallawn, Nynnyaw and Lleveleys(Llefelys.) He was also called Heli and Belinus.

Caswallawn: "war king," a God of War.

Nynnyaw: a God of War.

Llud: [*probably equivalent to the Irish Nudd (Nuada) and/or Lugh*], Llud manages to rid his country of three plagues: (1) the Coranians, who hear every whisper, (2) a shriek heard on May-Eve which makes the land and water barren, caused by two dragons in combat (these Llud captures and imprisons at Dinas Emreis, where they later cause trouble for Vortigern and Merddyn,) and (3) a magician who lulls everyone to sleep and then steals a year's supply of food.

Gwyn: son of Nudd, lover of Creiddylad (daughter of Llud.) Gwyn is both a great warrior and hunter and a Lord of Fairy land. His shrine is at Glastonbury Tor and may have been the center of a hill-top cult. Both magician and astrologer, He is often pictured riding with His hounds through the forest, hunting for the souls of the dead [*the Wild Hunt motif*].

Tegid Voel: a water divinity in a submarine Elysium, and lover of the Goddess Ceridwen.

Ceridwen (Cerridwen): patroness of Poetry, owner of the cauldron of inspiration. She has three children: the beautiful Creirwy, the hateful Morvran, and the ugly Avagdu (the prototype of "the good, the bad and the ugly.")

Movran "sea crow," so hateful and terrible that none would dare strike Him at the Battle of Camlan; a former War God.

Vintius: God of Storm Winds (originally a War God.)

Taliesin: As Gwion, He was Cerridwen's serving boy who was set to stir the great cauldron of inspiration. When some of the hot potion splashed Him, he touched His burned hand to His mouth and tasted the brew; thus becoming the God of Poetic inspiration, the greatest of all musicians and poets.

[Dalon Ap Landu # : an obscure Welsh God who is associated in Reformed Druid worship with Trees and Who is the special Patron of Druids. However, in at least one other Druidic cult now in existence (and totally unconnected with any Branch of the Reform,) He plays the role we assign to Be'al; as the Supreme Essence of the universes, and is also the Patron of Druids. The name "Dalon" may be a variant of "Dylan."]

Conclusion:

Thus the roll-call of some of the most important Celtic Gods and Goddesses is complete. Yet, to fully come to know and understand these magical and majestic Beings, it is necessary to know the entire mythology from which They spring, where the myth cycles are still extant. Beyond that, these divinities may be though of as archetypal figures, as alive in our subconscious minds today as in the minds of the ancient Celtic peoples. And when a modern Druid or Witch calls upon one of these Beings, she or he invokes a force deep within her or his own being, a force which is reflected deep within the subliminal reaches of the universe itself, which responds in its own turn. Thus, these grand Forces in the cosmos are personified as ancient Gods and Goddesses; personified in myth, in folklore, in music, in poetry, in beauty, and in love. - Larson

[Larson's last notes: Any mistakes or errors in this article should be attributed to myself, not to the author, whether in parenthetical insertion of alternate spellings for names or the italicized and bracketed comments. Unfortunately, I did not have

access of my library of Celtic materials at the time of typesetting, and many of the insertions were taken from an all-too-fallible memory.

Also unfortunate is the dearth of published material on British, Scottish, Manx, Breton and other Celtic mythologies. Any member of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu with experience in these fields is asked to write an article for the next edition.]

THE GOD LIST

by Tom Cross of Post Oak Protogrove
[ED: The following article is not particularly well made and may be terribly mis-spelt and mis-researched!]
Druid Missalany, January 1983

Merddyn (Myrddin: Art) original Bard and Prophet (Merlin in English also sald to be advisor to Arthur. In Roman times Druids became known as Bards in Britain, after druids were outlawed.
Diancecht God of Healin" the 'Leech'
Sirona (this is latinised Gaulish) Serene Welsh Star Goddess. Sirona is from the Gaulish word for star Siron
The Irish Brigit
Irish Ogma
Albio (Albion, Alba) Rix (Kin=)
Albiorix (Rigi samos) King of the World/War
Aerecenthia - Agrculture and Vine
Bordeo -- Guardian and ProtectOr of Hot Springs
Bussamarus 'the large lip pped Eq. to Jove
Ogmios God of Eloquence and poetry

Welsh Cf: Brythonic DEITIES:

Don (Dana) Earth Mother of feritility
Nudd or Ludd (Muada) Sun King I.4armed the War Goddess Moriggu Morgan
Gwynn Ap Nudd The fair son of Nudd and Morrigu (the tribe GodcLess) He is God of the subterranean Otherworld of the Dead. Spirits in Annwn or Abred. He saved the souls of dead warriors who died on the battlefield. He is ruler of fairies and other nature spirits. He was a hunter and carries an owl on his shoulder as a companion.
Llew (Lugh) also Lleu and LLewellyn Llew Llaw Gyffes son of Gydion and Arianrhod, twin brother of Dylon. Llew represented the sun. A sort of Appolo figure
Gwydion Druid of the gods, of Science (Gwydaoniaeth) Gwyddon wisdom. He fought the demons and evil spirits. He teaches all that is useful and good. The God of Learning and knowledge. (Derw (Oak) and Gwydd (good or knowledge) -- Derwydd
Amaethon God of agriculture Farming Cattle raising or herding. Brother of Gwydion
Gofanon (Goibhnu) Smith God, forger of weapons architect and brewer of Ale for the Gods. Brother to Gwydion.
Arianrhod Goddess of the silver Gircle. A moon goduess.
Rhiannon (Epona, Macha Rigantona in Old Brythonic.) The Great queen. Also known as Brigantia, Brigit.
Pwyll (pronounced Poo-weelth) Prince of Dyfed and Demetae later lord of Annwn (an Other world)
Toys God of the Seas. Equivalent of Irish Ler or Lir His first wife was Penardun daughter of Don. Begat Manawydan. Second wife Iwerridd begat Bran and Brauwen.
Manawydan (sometimes spelled Manawydaan) In Irish know-how as Mannanan (Mac Lir (son of Lir) or Fab Llyr (son of Llyr) Master of Magic and lived in the ocean of waters. His islands are Man and Anglesey.
Bran (Bendigeidfran) Half brother to Manawydan. A Giant.
Nissien. Diety of Peace. He loved to reverse trouble to harmony.
Efnissien. he loved trouble and hostility. He liked to reverse what his brother Nissien made.
Brauwen sister to Bran. She became wife of Matholwch, King of Eire.
Ceridwen Goddess Of Poetry and Inspiration to poets. Equivalent to Muse. She was the Bards awen. She owned the cauldron of Inspiration.

Creirwy- daughter of Ceridwen. A love goddess. She was beautiful.
Affgdu Brother of Creirwy. He was horribly ugly.

Ireland Daoine Sidhe Fairy Folk:

Bean Sidh Banshee
Cave Fairies Fir Bolg
Babd similar to Nordic Valkerie or Norns Or Morrigu (Morrig gan)
Cluricunes akin to Leprechauns and Fear Darrig. They get drunk in the wine cellar.
Daoine Sidhe (Dain Shee) properly the Tuatha de danaan people of Don Panthon. They hid in the hills and mound (sid) after Mil and his people came.

Demons of the Fomorians

The Evil Eye of Balor
Dubhalachacj Dulla Hans
Evil spirits of Fomoir inhabiting the sea.
Fomorian Giant and Hero possessed a very mean stare. His gaze could kill.
Headless Phantom or pimply a dark ghost. They drive the Death Coach or 'Coach a bower' perhaps once the chariot of death. He picks up the spirit of a dying person to ride to the Other World.
Fear Gorta, (fear darrig) Par Darig (sing) A practical joker akin Leprechauns.
Leprechauns. The Wealthy little shoemakers. Called Lurigadawne in CO. Tpperar, leprechauns, Luricare in Kerry
Leanhaun Female fairies. She inspires poets and singers just as Brigit or Ceridwen. She gave men strength in battle (similar to Morrigu) by her songs she would be seductive but to men who embraced her she draws away his life until he wastes away. She is sometimes a blood-sucking vampiress.
The Pooka or Phooka. An animal spirit and demon usually in the form of a horse takes its victim on terrifying rides.
Dearg Due. The red blood suckling vampire of Ireland
Man of Hunger. He is an emaciated figure who appears at times of National disaster
Laignech Faelad, the wolfmen. Lycanthropy originated in Ireland. Men who turn into wolves
Fairyland, in the Otherworlds, Tir nam 'og, Tir o Thuinn, Mag Mor, Tir na beo, mag mell, Tir tairngire, Irn aill, Hy breasail, Flath Innis
Dalon on Ap Landu -- leaf Son of Branch?
The Land of Youth, The land under the waves, The great plain, land of the living, the pleasant place, The plane of Happiness, The other world. Original Atlantis. Home of Fomorians and the Fir Bolgs. The Noble Isle Druids' abode that sank after some incantation supposedly, disturbed it.
Grannos (Actually a Gaulish equivalent to Diancecht) Borvo is theGod of hot springs.
Braciaca: Medb in Irish, is goddess of Drinking and Intoxication.
Beleno /Beli Mawr (in Welsh) Bile (Irish/equivalent of Be-al)
Be'al and Belenos are the same deity.
Llyr (Ler or Lir in Irish) Mannanan Mac Lir(his son) Manawydan Fab Llyr or Ap Llyr (Welsh name.)
Danu Don (Weleh name) also known as Mathair Mabon and Deanu, Mother of Earth or of the gods etc.
Oberon (see A Midsummer Night's Dream by Shakespeare) NON celtic character q.v. Auberon from French romances

Gaulish Gods

By Thomas Cross
Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1985

In my spare time (applying for new jobs) I did some research in Gaulish iconography and language and I have found some possible equivalents (linguistic entymological cognates) for major Irish gods that I have hitherto not seen in any books. Perhaps these were unavailable to past Celtic mythologist, or they are simply oversights. Clearly there are dozens of equivalents in the interpretation Romana that even MacCulloch overlooked and it even makes Caesar's interpretation inadequate for the ancient Roman purpose… for later many other Roman gods were equated with Gaulish gods.

In Belgica, the god named Loucetios appears. The name means "lightning" and appears elsewhere as Leucetios cognated with the Irish lochet. In Lugdunensis, Belisamaros appears as the male or masculine cognate of Belisama. Belisama's names appears in a Gaulish inscription of which I have no translation but it is written in Greek letters… in a rough transliteration of the Greek letters her name appears as Belesami which is probably with an oblique case-ending (dative or ablative,) otherwise –I is genitive. On the other hand, Belesami could be a masculine genitive for Belisamaros however if you break the name down you have Belisa + maros (maros="great" in Welsh Mawr or Irish Mor) at any rate the –os ending is usually masculine and is equivalent to Latin second declension –us or Greek –os. Clearly Gaulish case-endings are so similar to Italic and Latin that it seems obvious that Celtic was closely related to Italic. In most of the Gaulish inscriptions of the Roman period, Gaulish is scanty and is usually only one word of Gaulish (a proper name) appearing in Latin sentences so one usually sees Gallic deities spelled in Latin with Latin case endings.

Bormo or Boruo is not necessarily the same deity as Bormanus. Bormo is usually paired off with Damona (Cow) and Bormanus is paired with Bormana. Bormo/Boruo is the root of the French Bourbonne, the root of the name of Bourbon in Bourbon whisky… this is an interesting parallel considering that Bourbon be given to that type of uisce beatha we have in America and that its name is rooted in the name of an ancient Gaulish god of boiling springs.

In Lugdunensis, there appears a possible cognate of the Irish Danu and Welsh Don, the mother of the gods, in Donnia which the Romans equated with Merva. Maponos appears in Lugdunensis, however the name is spelled Mabonos, which in Britain appeared in ancient inscriptions as Maponus (notice the Latinized spelling.) A sea god appears in Lugdenensis also called Moritasgos which seems to be a form of moritex "sailor." Perhaps Moritasgos is similar to Manannan/Manawydan?

In Aquitania, the god Vindon equated with Mercurius, appears who name is definitely cognate with Irish Fionn and Welsh Gwynn ap Nudd. Sucellos appears there but the name is spelled Sucuelos. There is an equivalent to the Irish Shannon perhaps in Siannus(?) In Aquitania, Boruo appears again but with an epithet Boruo Albius. Damona appears as Damona Matuberginnis, and there is Viducus-Mercurius… perhaps Vidu is cognate with Welsh Gwydion or gwyddon ("wise man.") Elsewhere and in Aquitania, Adsmerios-Mercurius, Mar-Tritullus,Rigisamos-Mars, Mogetus-Mars, and Maglo Matonio the first element Maglo is of the root of Welsh Mael (as in Maelgwn) and Matonio which seems cognate with Mathonwy or Math ap Mathonwy etc.

In Narbonesis, Mars is equated with Britouius, Budenicus, Buxenus, Olludius, and Pollux is equated with Vintios whose name could be the root of Welsh gwynt "wind," otherwise gwynt is from the Latin ventus. Cathubodua appears there and

elsewhere as Cassibodua, often equated by modern scholars with Badhbh Catha, but I recall the druid Cathbad in the Tain stories

In the Danubian area, there is the Celtic god Cernenos whose name appears to be another spelling of Cernunnos (the horned god whose name appears on the altar dug up in Paris with the first letter missing –ernunnos,) but in the Danube Cernenos, he is equated with the Roman Juptier. One may also recall that other statues of male gods appeared with horns (which have been broken off since) which were Gallo-Roman Mercuries or Marses. Therefore we need not think that horns imply any special function or department. Too often we think of the horned god as a Chthonic god and I think this wide-spread concept is the result of the Wiccan and Margaret Murray theories (Jim Duran disagrees) The Lugoues appear in the Danube region also it does in Spain. Lugoues is plural for Lugu which is undoubtedly Lugh or Lleu of insular tradition. Perhaps the Lugoues were a triple Lugh as Lugh could most probably been a triple God (MacCecht, MaCuill, MacGreine.)

In the Danube region, there is Jupiter as Nundinarios; also a god of the Rhine? In Rhenus. The Gaulish word renos or rhenos means "river" which is the root of the name of the Rhine.

In the Alpine region, there is Mars-Vintius which recalls the Vintios-Pollux of Narbonesis.

In eastern Gaul, part of the older Belgica but latter called Germania Superior by the Romans, there appears Cicollos which sounds much like Cichol Grigenchos of the Irish Lebor Gabala Erin who was a Fomoire. Also there is Meduna whose name seems to be cognate with Ireland's Medhbh (Medb) of Connacht in the Tain. This goddess's name means "mead" according to modern scholars and Meduna seems to be the feminine of medus (Gaulish for mead.) Medb is also supposed to mean "intoxication."

Lenus appears in Germania Superior (Belgica east) and his name appears spelled in Greek letters, evidently Lenos in Gaulish as the Greek letters are transliterated. His name means probably "ocean" and is equivalent with Ler (Irish) or Welsh Llyr. There is Noadat equated with the Roman Mars – definitely another version of the Irish Nuadu or Nuada which also appears in the Welsh as Nudd and as Nodens and Nudens in ancient Britain (in Britain the Romans equated him with Jupiter.)

Among the Treveri (Trier) they had many of the same deities in their pantheon (if one may use that term) as found all over the rest of Gual, including a goddess called Boudina which has the root Boud (victory) cognate with Irish buadh and Welsh budd.

The Gaulish terminology of words having to do with magic or religion are:

BACVCECS = possessed of evil spirits
TALAMASCA= female demon of the earth who appears in trees
CARAGVS= fortune-teller
NEMETON (NIMIDAS, NEMETOS)= a shrine, sacred place, a consecrated clearing, or simple "that which is sacred" (nem- "sacred" or "heavenly" from an Indo-European root meaning "vault of heaven")
CAVAROS= (transliterated Greek letters Kauaros) "giant" cognate with Welsh cawr
DUSIOS= a male demon, an incubus (or dusmus glossed by ancient Roman as "diabolos")
VINDOMAGOS= paradise (modern Welsh gwynfa) literally "white-plain", but vindos (gwynn) was used also as "blessed" or as a noun for "bliss"
BILIOMGOS= "plain of the sacred tree" Bilio is Gaulish cognate of Irish Bile "sacred tree" which may remind one of the sacred trees which play many important parts in Irish lore and of the Norse Yggdrasill.

"Celtic Goddesses of the Moon From A to C:"

Pentalpha, November 6/7, 1978 c.e.

This article is by Stephen McCaully, Co-Archdruid of the Hazel Nut Grove (NRDNA,) author of The Encyclopaedia of Celtic Gods & Goddesses, and one of the best Celtic scholars in the Neopagan Community. He is also a nationally known scholar of the Tarot and a practicing ceremonial magician.

Aine: Evans Wentz (in his book *The Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries)* seems to agree with previous Celtic scholars that Aine was worshipped as a moon goddess by the ancient Irish Celts in the province of Munster. Her worship, like that of Annis (see below) has continued all the way through the Christian Era, mostly through the agency of the rural inhabitants of Munster. She has also been identified with horses and horse worship, and the "horse = moon" formula may represent a common mythic pattern in Celtic tribes. Certainly in Ireland and Gaul, horses have been identified with the moon and the moon-as-horse was seen as "The Grey Mare." Epona, the Gaulish goddess of horses and ponies, was considered in both Britain and Gaul to be strongly connected to the moon and its worship. Aine was known in Celtic times by the titles of "Queen of the Heavens" and "White Woman," both common names for moon goddesses in Gaul and Britain.

Andrastea/ Andraste./Andate: She is considered to have been worshipped in Britain and Gaul as a moon goddess, supposedly by the Druids themselves. T. C. Lethbridge has compared Her with the Egyptian goddess Adrasteia, Whom he claimed was a moon goddess in ancient Egypt. In Britain She was known as the Goddess of Victory. We are told that in one of Her sacred groves war captives (who at a later time were mostly Roman soldiers who had been hapless enough to have been captured while razing a village or two) were immolated in Her honor. Usually this-was done to punish malefactors for heinous crimes against the people. In this respect Andrastea was seen as a goddess of justice and was given the title of "She Whom none can escape."

Annis: In Her main aspect as a goddess of death, She was known as "Black Annis," and Her powers were at their height when the moon was in its waning phase. Like the Greek goddess Hecate, called "The Hag," Annis too was a goddess of the darker side of the moon, and crossroads were sacred to Her as well. Like many other Celtic moon goddesses, She remained worshipped well into Christian times. Indeed, although Her early worship is said to have centered in Northern Britain, it is in Cornwall that Her worship supposedly survived until the 1930's. Aine was believed to be able to transform Herself into a large and formidable black dog and this power figures strongly in the stories * told about Her religious cult. Some witch groups still use Her name in their rites, when a "Dark Mother" type is needed.

Ardunia/Arduina/Arduim: a moon goddess Who was worshipped primarily in Gaul, one of Her most sacred ritual sites was the great forest of the Ardennes, which in the time of the Caesars covered a vast area. Following their usual habit, the Romans identified Her with their own Diana, since like Diana (and many other moon goddesses) She was a goddess of the hunt and of hunters, as well as the protector of deer and other woodland creatures. The name Arduine was used mostly in Southern Gaul.

Celtic Goddesses of the Moon From A to C, continued

December 21/22, '78

Here is the continuation of Stephen McCaully's article, begun last issue, on the results of his research.

Arianrod: Among her many aspects, Arianrod was a Cymric lunar goddess, also known as the "All Goddess." Like many other moon deities, she was endowed with the gift of great beauty. Other spellings are Arianhod and Arianrhod. April 1 was her day of worship among the ancient Celts; this day became "All Fool's Day." According to T.W. Rolleston in Myths and Legends of the Celtic Race (1949,) Arianrod was the sister-wife of Gwydion the mother of Dylan, "Son of the Wave," and Lleu, the Cymric equivalent of the Irish god Lug (Lugh) and the Gaulish god Lugos, whose name means "light." Arianrod was identified with the sea and its mysteries. Her main stronghold was Caer Arianrod, supposedly located on the Menai Straits, where she controlled the tides so that Ynys Mon (Anglesey) was accessible without a boat only during the lowest spring and autumn tides. Arianrod in Welsh means "Silver Circle," an apt name for a lunar goddess. According to Charles Squire in his - Celtic Myth and Legend, Poetry and Romance, she figure's in Arthurian Romances as Morgawse and Morganna, and in the Welsh Arthurian myth as Gwyar. Her name appears in the stories of Taliesin, the druid bard. In another tale, she is wedded to Nwyfre ("Space,") according to Squire.

Artio: Artio was not only a goddess of the moon, but also a goddess of fertility. She has been compared by classical writers to the Greek goddess. Artemis and to the Diana of the Romans. Artio was worshipped for the most part in Gaul and Switzerland (Cisalpine Gaul.) In both areas she was a bear goddess, presiding over the bear clan. The city of Berne is associated with her rites and may have been in ancient times the site of her grove or temple.

Boudicca: This great warrior-queen of the ancient Britons, whose name means - "Victory," was also a druid priestess of the moon goddess Andrastea, to whom she sacrificed many hundreds of Roman Soldiers captured in battle. Her sacrifices appear mostly to occurred in southern and eastern Britain.

Brigid: T.C. Lethbridge equates the British goddess Black Annis, the'-moon goddess discussed in that last installment (see PJ&DC, Vol 2, Is 1.) with the famous Celtic goddess: of fire and light, Brigid, whom he claims was worshipped in Britain and Ireland as a moon goddess. In one book we are told that the number nine is very important to her worship. In the Hebrew Qaballah, nine represents, among other things, the moon. In Celtic tradition, it was said that nine times must you bow to the new moon, once for each of Brigid's Nine Maidens, or aspects. In both Britain and Gaul she was know as the Triple Goddess, which, usually relates to the three main phases of the moon (new, full and waning.)

Cailleach: Worshipped by the Celts of Alba-Scotland, the "Cailleach," whose-name means "The Lady of the Forest," was another moon goddess according to T.C. Lethbrigde. Like Arianrod, she was also a sea-goddess, frequently appearing as a sea horse, and often as a grey mare riding among the clouds. This ties her to the Gaulish goddess, Epona. As a lunar deity, the bull of the horned moon was also sacred to her.

Ceridwen: In Wales we find the principle moon goddess to have been Ceridwen, also known as Ked. She was a goddess of druidic mysticism and, of course, magic in all its forms. According to Bessie Redfield's Gods: A Dictionary of the Deities of All Lands, Ceridwen's most valued magical possession was a magic boat which -may be compared to Manannan's vessel with eyes; neither could be capsized or sunk, nor needed oarsmen. In the story of Taliesin, she is the keeper of the Cauldron of Inspiration, which appears to be the same as Bran's Cauldron of Rebirth and Regeneration, and the Dagda's Cauldron of Plenty. One of the great treasures of both Ireland and Britain, it demonstrates Ceridwen's relationship with the moon, the cauldron being a symbol of the element water, relating it to the suit of Cups in the Tarot.

In many Celtic areas of the ancient world, the concept of a Great Mother, no matter by what name she was known, had three phases of her power, and this gave her the title of "Triple Goddess." Sir John Rhys felt that this meant that she was identified with the three phases of the lunar month: At the time of the new moon, her powers are just beginning to gain strength; at the full of the moon, her powers are at their height and beyond belief; and at the waning phase, her powers become weak and quite unpredictable.

The White Rabbit was also the symbol of the "White Moon" of the ancient Celts. The term "White Dog" refers to the "White Sun" which would chase the white moon-rabbit around the length and breadth of the sky.

Other goddesses identified with the worship and veneration of the moon were Epona, a horse-goddess seen by Anne Ross (Pagan Celtic Britain) as a lunar deity; Mab of Ireland (according to T.W I. Rolleston); and Rhiannon, the Cymric goddess of birds, identified with the moon by Sir John Rhys (Celtic Folklore, Welsh and Manx.) T.W. Rolleston and Charles Squire.

Editor's Note: Typing and guest editing on these last two articles was provided by Gwydion Pendderwen. many thanks!

Section Five: Druidical Bibliographies

A Bibliography of Druidism

by Isaac Bonewits
Druid Chronicles Evolved, 1976
[Nearly verbatim from 1976, so it's terribly out of date. -Scharding]

The following books and periodicals should start any aspiring Schismatic or Hasidic Druid/ess on his or her way. They include writings on the subjects of Archeology, Anthropology, Celtic Folklore & Mythology, Celtic and non-Celtic Paleopaganism, Psychology, the history of early Christianity in Europe, Mysticism, Philosophy, Ritual Magic and ESP.

Those titles with stars (*) attached are highly recommended and those with hatches (#) are to be read very carefully as they may contain materials which are speculative, unscholarly or sometimes just plain nonsense.

BOOKS:

Arbman, Holger; THE VIKINGS
Bardon, Franz; INITIATION INTO HERMETICS
Bonewits, P.E.I.; REAL MAGIC*
Bord, Janet & Colin; MYSTERIOUS BRITAIN
Bowen, John t. & Rhys Jones, T.J.; WELSH
Brennan JH: EXPERIMENTAL MAGIC
Brothwell, Don & patricia; FOOD IN ANTIQUITY
Brown, JAC: TECHNIQUES OF PERSUASION
Buckland, Raymond;WITCHCRAFT ANCIENT AND MODERN
Buckland, Raymound; THE TREE*
Butler, WE; APPRENTICED TO MAGIC
Campbell, Joseph; THE MASKS OF GOD (4 VOL)**
Campbell, Joseph; HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES
Carney, James; STUDIES IN IRISH LITERATURE AND HISTORY
Carus, Pau; HISTORY OF THE DEVIL AND IDEA OF EVIL*#
Chadwick, Nora; CELTIC BRITAIN
Chadwick, Nora; THE CELTS
Clark, Grahame & Piggot Stuart; PREHISTORIC SOCIETIES *
Cohen, Daniel; THE NEW BELIEVERS#
Cole, Sonia; THE NEOLITHIC REVOLUTION
Cole, Sonia; THE RACES OF MAN
Collis, JS: THE TRIUMPH OF THE TREE
Colum, Padraig; A TREASURY OF IRISH FOLKLORE
Conway, David; MAGIC; AN OCCULT PRIMER
Cottrell, Leonard; THE GREAT INVASION; HOW THE ROMANS CONQUERED BRITAIN
Cross, TP & Slover, CH: ANCIENT IRISH TALES
Daly, Mary; BEYOND GOD THE FATHER*
Daniel, Glyn; THE MEGALITH BUILDERS OF WESTERN EUROPE
Daraul, Arkon; A HISTORY OF SECRET SOCIETIES *#
D'arbois de Jubainwville; THE IRISH MYTHOLOGICAL CYCLE
Davidson, HR Ellis; PAGAN SCANDINAVIA
De Bell, Garrett: THE ENVIRONMENTAL HANDBOOK
De Laet, SJ: THE LOW COUNTRIES
Deren, Maya; THE DIVINE HORSEMEN
Dillon, Myles (ed); EARLY IRISH SOCIETY*
Dillon, Myles & Chadwick, Nora; THE CELTIC REALMS*
Dillon, Myles & O'croinin, Donncha; IRISH
Douglas, Mona;THIS IS ELLAN VANNIN AGAIN; FOLKLORE
Dubos, Fene;THE GOD WITHIN
Durant, GM: BRITAIN-ROME'S MOST NORTHERLY PROVINCE
Edwards, Owen; CELTIC NATIONALISM
Eliade, Mircea; SHAMANISM; ARCHAIC TECHNIQUES OF ECTASY
Eliade, Mircea; YOGA, IMMORTALITY AND FREEDOM
Eliade, Mircea;THE TWO AND THE ONE
Ellwood, Robert; RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL GROUPS IN MODERN AMERICA #
Every, George; CHRISTIAN MYTHOLOGY
Farb, Peter; ECOLOGY
feng, Gia-fu; TAO-TE-CHING
Feng, Gia-Fu: TAI CHI A WAY OF CENTERING & I CHING
Filip Jan; CELTIC CIVILIZATION AND ITS HERITAGE
Fox, Aileen; SOUTHWEST ENGLAND*
Frazer, James & Gaster, Theodore; THE NEW GOLDEN BOUGH*
Freitag, Anton; TWENTIETH CENTURY ATLAS OF THE CHRISTIAN WORLD*##
Frost, Gavin & Yvonne; THE WITCHES BIBLE*
Gaskell, GA: DICTIONARY OF ALL SCRIPTURES AND MYTHS
Gimbutas, Marija; THE GODS AND GODDESSES OF OLD EUROPE*
Gossiny & Uderzo: ASTERIX THE GAUL**
Graves, Robert: THE WHITE GODDESS *##
Gray, William; SEASONAL OCCULT RITUALS
Gray, William; INNER TRADITIONS OF MAGIC
Grimm, Jacob; TEUTONIC MYTHOLOGY (4 volumes) *
Hadingham, Evan: CIRCLES AND STANDING STONES
Van Hamel, AG; ASPECTS OF CELTIC MYTHOLOGY
Hawkes, Jacquetta; ATLAS OF ANCIENT ARCHEOLOGY
Hawkins, Gerald & White, JB: STONEHENGE DECODED
Hodges, Figgis & Co; CELTIC STUDIES (CATALOGUE 23)
Hodges, M; THE OTHER WORLD
Hoffer, Eric; THE TRUE BELIEVER
Hone, Margaret E; THE MODERN TEXTBOOK OF ASTROLOGY
Howe, E Graham; THE MIND OF THE DRUID*
Huson, Paul; MASTERING HERBOLOGY*
Huson, Paul; MASTRING WITCHCRAFT*#
Huxley, Francis; THE WAY OF THE SACRED
Huxley, Julian; RELIGION WITHOUT REVELATION
James, William; VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE
Jones, Gwyn & Thomas; THE MABINOGIAN*
Jones, Marc Edmund:HORARY ASTROLOGY
Josephy, Alvin; THE INDIAN HERITAGE OF AMERICA
Joyce, James; FINNEGAN'S WAKE*
Kendrick, TD; THE DRUIDS*
Kopp, Sheldon; GURU
Kors, Alan & Peters, Edward; WITCHCRAFT IN EUROPE
Leek, Sybil; DIARY OF A WITCH*

Leek, Sybil; COMPLETE ART OF WITCHCRAFT*
Leshan, Lawrence;THE MEDIUM,THE MYSTIC AND THE PHYSICIST
Lewis, Diehl & Loh, May; PATTERNLESS FASHIONS
MacCana, Proisias; CELTIC MYTHOLOGY
MacCulloch, John; THE RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT CELTS
MacCulloch, John; CELTIC MYTHOLOGY*
MacNeill, Maire; THE FESTIVAL OF LUGHNASA*
Mair, Lucy; PRIMITIVE GOVERNMENT
Marshak, Alexander;THE ROOTS OF CIVILIZATION
Mattingly, H; TACITUS ON BRITAIN AND GERMANY*
McBaine, A; MYTHOLOGY AND RELIGION
McGarey, William; ACUPUNCTURE AND BODY ENERGIES
McKenna, P; CELTIC MYTH
Mead, GRS; PISTIS SOPHIA; FRAGMENTS OF A FAITH FORGOTTEN
Mercier, Vivian; THE IRISH COMIC TRADITION
Meyer, Kuno; ANECDOTA OXONIENSIA, CAIN ADAMNAIN
Meyer, Kuno & Nutt, Alfred;THE VOYAGE OF BRAN
Miller, Perry; THE AMERICAN TRANCENDENTALISTS
Murphy, Gerard; SAGA AND MYTH IN ANCIENT IRELAND
Neumann, Erich;THE GREAT MOTHER*
Newall, RS;STONEHENGE GUIDEBOOK
Nicholson, EWB; KELTIC RESEARCHES
Niel, Fernand; MYSTERIES OF STONEHENGE**
Norton-Taylor, Duncan; THE CELTS
O'Brien, Elmer; VARIETIES OF MYSTIC EXPERIENCE
O'Rahilly, Thomas; EARLY IRISH HISTORY AND MYTHOLOGY
O'Riodain, Sean p & Daniel, Glyn; NEW GRANGE & THE BEND OF THE BOYNE*
De Paor, Maire & Liam; EARLY CHRISTIAN IRELAND*
Parry, Thomas; A HISTORY OF WELSH LITERATURE
Peate, Iowerthe; TRADITION AND FOLKLIFE, A WELSH VIEW*
Perry, John Weir;THE LORD OF THE FOUR QUARTERS
Piggot, Stuart; THE DRUIDS **
Piggot, Stuart; THE DAWN OF CIVILIZATION *
Powell, TGE; THE CELTS
Priestley, JB; MAN AND TIME
Raferty, Joseph; THE CELTS
Rees, Alwyn & Brinley;CELTIC HERITAGE*
Reich, Wilhelm; SELECTED WRITINGS AND INTRODUCTION TO ORGONOMY*
Rick, Theodor;PAGAN RITES IN JUDAISM*
Rhys, John; CELTIC FOLKLORE, WELSH AND MANX
Richmond, IA;ROMAN BRITAIN
Robbins, Rossell Hope; ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF WITCHCRAFT& DEMONOLOGY **#
Rogo, D Scott; PARAPSYCHOLOGY: A CENTURY OF INQUIRY
Ross, Anne; EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE PAGAN CELTS *
Ross, Anne; PAGAN CELTIC BRITAIN
Rothenberg, Jerome; TECHNICIANS OF THE SACRED
Schonfield, Hugh;THOSE INCREDIBLE CHRISTIANS
Shepard, Paul; THE TENDER CARNIVORE AND THE SACRED GAME
Sherman, Harold; HOW TO MAKE ESP WORK FOR YOU
Shipley, Joseph; DICTIONARY OF EARLY ENGLISH *
Silver, Abba; WHERE JUDAISM DIFFERED
Sjoestadt, Marie-Louise;GODS AND HEROES OF THE CELTS
Sloane, Eric; AMERICAN TREES**
Sloane, Eric; THE SEASONS OF AMERICA'S PAST*
Smith, Morton; THE SECRET GOSPEL
Spence, Lewis; MAGIC ARTS IN CELTIC BRITAIN ##
Spence, Lewis; MYSTERIES OF BRITAIN ##
Squire, Charles; CELTIC MYTH AND LEGEND, ROMANCE AND PEOTRY *#
Standen, Anthony;SCIENCE IS A SACRED COW*
Steward, David & Mikunas, Algis; EXPLORING PHENOMENOLOGY
Stone, JF: WESSEX BEFORE THE CELTS*
Sullivan, JWN; THE LIMITATIONS OF SCIENCE *
Symonds, George W; TREE IDENTIFICATION BOOK
Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre;PHENOMENON OF MAN *#
Thom, A; MEGALITHIC SITES IN BRITAIN
Thomas, Lewis; THE LIVES OF A CELL*
Tompkins, Peter & Bird;SECRET LIFE OF PLANTS
Toynbee, Arnold; CRUCIBLE OF CHRISTIANITY
Treharne, RF; GLASTENBURY LEGENDS
Valiente, Doreen; WHERE WITCHCRAFT LIVES
de Vries, Jan; KELTICHES RELIGION
Walton, Evangeline; PRINCE OF ANNWN (1ST) *
Walton, Evangeline; CHILDREN OF LLYR (2ND)*
Walton, Evangeline; SONG OF RHIANNON (3RD)*
Walton, Evangeline; ISLAND OF THE MIGHTY (4TH) *
Waters, Frank; THE BOOK OF THE HOPI
Watts, Alan; THE LEFT HAND OF GOD*
Watts, Alan; PSYCHOTHERAPY, EAST AND WEST*
Wells, Calvin; BONES, BODIES AND DISEASE
Wilders, NM:AN INTRODUCTION TO TEILHARD DE CHARDIN
Williams Mary; GLASTONBURY; A STUDY IN PATTERS
Wilson, DM:THE ANGLO-SAXONS *
Wilson, Robert Anton; SEX & DRUGS A JOURNEY BEYOND LIMITS *
Wilson, Robert Anton & Shea, Robert; ILLUMINATUSI (3 volumes) **
Wod, Eric S; COLLINS' FIELD GUIDE TO ARCHOLOGY IN ENGLAND
Yeats, William; MYTHOOLOGOIES
Zimmer, Heinrich; THE KING AND THE CORPSE.

PERIODICALS

Green Egg is by far the most important journal dedicated to the Neopagan movements. It contains articles by and about the different movements as well as materials concerning ceremonial magic, ecology action, futuristics and feminism. Its "Forum" (About 50% of each issue) contains letters, completely uncensored, forum members and leaders of all the above-mentioned movements discussing and debating (sometimes quite violently) with each other and themselves. It is published eight times a year. Subscriptions cost $7.00 per year and are well worth it. Sample issues are $1.00. Send your money to: Church of All Worlds, Box 2953, St. Louis, MO 63130.

The Witches trine, published by the New Reformed Orthodox Order of the Golden Dawn, advertises itself as "A literate Journal of the Craft" and is just that. One of the best of the Neopagan Witchcraft publications, it comes out eight times a year and costs $3.50 per year to subscribe to. Sample issues are 50 cents. Ask about the facsimile edition reprints of their early issues. Box 23243 Oakland CA 94623.

The Crystal Well is the oldest Neopagan Witchcraft publication in America and remains one of the best. It comes out about eight times a year (less if donations are slim) and offers subscriptions. Box 1164, San Pedro, CA 90733.

Stonehenge Viewpoint is published by Annular Publications and, like the books published by that company, contains a great deal of fascinating data about megalithic monuments and Paleopaganism and its survivals in the "British" Isles. Subscription rates for this quarterly appear to be $2.00 per

year, with back issues (many quite valuable) going at 50 cents each. Ask for a copy of their book catalog. 1421 sate street, Suite 35, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

AADL News is the official publication of the Aquarian Anti-Defamation League, Inc. It comes out irregularly trying for 8-10 times per year, and contains news about civil libertarian activities by and in behalf of minority belief movements in the United States and Canada. The subscription cost is $5.00 per year, which can be included in an Associate Membership (%7.50 per year) and is highly recommended. Box 3720, Minneapolis MN 55403

The Nemeton Directory will be published some time in late 1973 c.e. In conjunction with the Pagan Yellow Papers (published yearly in Green Egg) this directory will list addresses and information about all the public Neopagan movements in America. The price has not been set yet, but it would be well worth writing to them for details.

In the meantime, you might want to get a copy of Songs for the Old Religion, which both a book ($2.00) and a record ($6.45 +39 cents if you live in California.) These songs are highly useful in Neopagan rituals (though one sometimes has to change a word or two here and there to fit one's own system of mythology) and will be especially appreciated by those who are fond of Robert Graves' mythological system. A few musicologists have claimed that most of the music is very old Celtic traditional tunes and not actually original, but even is this is true, it is rather irrelevant, since there is hardly a Celtic tune of the last 300 years that is completely original. Several of the songs work well with Reformed Druid rituals, so that is all most of us are concerned about.

To obtain any of these items, write to: Nemeton, box 13037, Oakland, CA 94661.

Parabola: myth and the Quest for meaning is a new publication dealing with mythology, ritual and folk religions. It is published quarterly at a subscription rate of $12.00 per year, which is expensive, but it looks as if it is going to be an important and valuable journal to Neopagans. Published by Tamarack Press, 166 East 61st St, NY, NY, 10021.

RECORDINGS:

The following records and tapes may be of use in rites as well as in rewrites. They are divided roughly into these categories; Folk, Ethnic, Classical, Popular and Other. Naturally, many other titles could be added.

Folk:
ROGER NICHOLSON; "Nonesuch for Dulcimer."
BUFFY SAINT MARIE: Most of her albums.
FOLK LEGACY RECORDS; "Golden Ring"

Ethnic:
THE IRISH ROVERS
THE DUBLINERS
THE CLANCY BROTHERS
OSCAR BRAND
THE CHIEFTAINS
URUBAMBA
EVEREST RECORDS : "Authentic Music of the American Indian"
FOLKWAYS RECORDS; "Healing songs of the American Indian"
DR JOHN THE NIGHT TRIPPER
NONESUCH RECORDS: "In praise of Oxala and other Black Gods"
COLUMBIA RECORDS; "Medicine, Mine & Magic"

Classical:
PROKOFIEV: "Alexander Nevsky"
OFFENBACH: "Tales of Hoffman"
WAGNER; "The ring Cycle"
MENDLESONN: "Walpurgis Nacht"
VISTA RECORDS; "Fantasia"

Popular:
PENTANGLE:
TRAFFIC "John Barleycorn"
INCREDIBLE STRING BAND
MOODY BLUES: "search for the Lost Chord."
GRAHAM BOND "We put Our Magic on You"
Donavan

Other

NEMETON: "Songs for the Old Religion" Order from Nemeton, Box 13037, Oakland, CA 94661 $5.95 plus tax.
WILBURN BURCHETTE: "Guitar Grimoire" and "Wilburn Burchette Opens the Sevens Gates of Transcendental Consciousness" order from WB box 1367, Spring Valley, CA 92077. $5.95 plus Tax?
ENVIRONMENTS

My Druid Bibliography

By Mike Scharding
Mostly from April 1994,
But with a few updates in 1996

The references to First Search and "YY:XXX" codes are for an online library computer database for locating over 250,000,000 books. First Search is also available at Carleton and St. Olaf College in Northfield. All numbers are Library of Congress numbers, unless noted otherwise, like ISBN. These are the works that have primarily shaped my background knowledge while researching and writing this paper. This list will prove useful for further exploration of points I've glossed over.

Other Fields and Reference Sources

Cosette, Nikies. *The Occult in the Western World: An Annotated Bibliography.* Library Professional Publications 1986. REF BF 1411.K53 1986. at Carleton.

Fairchild, Hoxie Neale. *The Noble Savage: A Study in Romantic Naturalism.* Columbia University Press:NY 1928 (NY 1964.) PR146.F3. at Carleton. Very good overview of Romantic literature.

Fraker. *Religion in American Life:Resources*. REF BL 2525.R445 at Carleton.

Geisendorfer, James V. *Religion in America:A Directory*. E.J. Brill:Leiden 1983 REF BL2525.G45 1983 at Carleton. Good resource for alternative groups.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen. *Encyclopaedia of Wtiches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File: NY & Oxford 1989 REF BF 1566.g85 1989. at Carleton. Usefull for Wiccan research. not Druids.

Hansen, Daniel. *American Druidism: A Guide to American Druid Groups*. Peanutbutter Press, Seattle 1995. ISBN 0-89716-600-0 at Carleton. **Excellent**

Leslie & Shepard. *Encyclopaedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*. 2nd edition. Gale Research Company 1983. REF BF 1407.E53 1983. 3 Volumes. at Carleton. Vol 1 gp 168, Vol 2 pg 973. A good occult, but pretty useless for pagan religions.

Lippy, Chareles H. and William, Peter W. *Encyclopaedia of the American Religious Experience*. REF_BL2525.E53 1987 Vol 1-3. at Carleton. with Vol 1:an essay on Folk Religion, Vol 2: an essay on Occultism, Vol 3:an essay on Ethnicity and Religion and an essay on California and the South West.

Melton, J. Gordon. *Directory of Religious Bodies in the U.S.* Garland Publishing Inc:NY & London. 1977. REF BL2530.U6 M44 at Carleton. Good LIST of groups, not much Info.

Melton, J. Gordon. *The Encyclopaedia of American Religion*. 2nd Edition. REF BL2530.U6 M443 1987. at Carleton. Treatises on Magic religions and long entries on many groups.

Melton, J. Gordon and Poggi, Isotta. *Magic, Witchcraft and Paganism in America: A Bibliography*. 2nd Edi. Garland Publishing Inc:NY & London 1992 REF BF 1622.U6 M44 1992 at Carleton. **Excellent** coverage of the Wiccan scene of America.

Melton, J. Gordon. *Religious Leaders of America*. Gale Research Inc:Detroit Mich 1991 REF B72. M458 1991 at Carleton. Pg 91. Includes Biographies of Pagan and eastern cult leaders.

Unknown. *Magic, Witches, and Witchcraft in USA* 1992

Unknown. *Encyclopaedic Handbook of Cults,*

Ancient Druids and Celtic Life

Adamnan, Saint (trans. Wentworth Hugh.) *The Life of Saint Columba*. E.D. Dutton & Co:NY 1908 BX4700.C7 A2. at Carleton. Latin and English. Useful for Scottish Conversion and mention of 6th cent. Druids.

Best, Mark T. *The Druids in History and Myth.* First Search Honors
Paper at Houghton College 1987 NY:VXO

Bonwick, James. *Irish Druids & Old Irish Religions*. Griffith, Farran & Co:London 1894 (1984 reprint) BL980.I7 B66 1984. at Carleton. Just barely better than Antiquarian.

Bremm, Martin. *The Stars and the Stones*. Thames & Hudson:London & NY 1984. QB16.B74 1984 at Carleton. **Excellently illustrated** and diagramed treatise on Irish Megalithic astronomical practices and how they may have influenced holidays.

Bromwich, Rachel. *Trioedd Ynys Prydain (the Welsh Triads.)* Cardiff 1979 (1961) D113.76 at Univ. Minn. This is Welsh and English. The Definitive translation of Welsh Triads, extremely academic. Not Fun.

Caeser, Julius (trans. Anne & Peter Wiseman.) *The Battle for Gaul*. David R. Godine:Boston 1980. DC62.C2813 1980. at Carleton. **Excellent** English version with charts and easy-to-follow maps.

Chadwick, Nora. *Celtic Britain*. Frederick A. Praeger:NY, 1963. DA 140. C48 1963. at Carleton Library. An excellent collection of archeological finds, PAIN-stakingly described.

Chadwick, Nora. *The Druids*. Cardiff University:Cardiff Wales 1966. BL910.C5. at Carleton. Important for understanding the limits of classical sources.

Clancy, Joseph P. *The Earliest Welsh Poetry*. R&R Clark:Edinburgh 1970. PB2369.C59. at Carleton. A good modern English translation of older welsh without misty eyes. 2nd in a series.

Cross, Tom and Slover, Clark. *Ancient Irish Tales*. Henry Holt & Co:NY 1936. PB1421.C76. at Carleton. A compendius LITERAL translation. Boring, but good resource of major irish cycles with a glossary.

Cremin, Aedeen. *The Celts in Europe*. Centre for Celtic Studies: Sydney 1992. ISBN 086758 624-9. Entry level reading on Celtic Europe.

Dinan, W. *Monumenta Historica Celtica: Notices of the Celts in the writings of Greek and Latin Authors from the 10th century B.C.E to the Fifth Century A.D. Arranged Chronologically, with English Translation*. London 1911. Volume One and Two. Excellent Reference for classical celts.

Elder, Isabella. *Celt, Druid and Culdee*. Covenant:London 1962. at First Search. Okay reading, not much on Druids, persay, unless you consider Columcille to be a Druid.

Ellis, Peter Beresford. *The Celtic Empire*. Constable, London 1990. ISBN 0-89089-457-4. A good sympathetic general history of the Celts from 1000 BC to 51 AD.

Ellis, Peter Beresford. *The Druids*. 1994 ISBN 0-09-472450-4. and ISBN 0-8028-3798-0. **AN EXCELLENT SOURCE** Larson says**, "The Druids is probably the best book I've read on the subject.** Though I feel that Ellis presents a somewhat too idealized portrait of Celtic society and religion, he certainly knows his stuff. I ran across quite a few references that I was previously unaware of. Definitely a good read and thought provoking."

Green, Miranda. *The Gods of the Celts*. Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd. Gloucester UK 1986. ISBN 0-86299-292-5. or Barnes and Nobles ISBN 0-389-20672-5.

Green, Miranda. *Dictionary of Celtic Myth and Legend*. Thames & Hudson London/NY 1992. ISBN 0-500-01516-3. Green's grocery lists would be worth a read. These books are simply excellent.

Hansen, Daniel. *American Druidism: A Guide to American Druid Groups*. Peanutbutter Press, Seattle 1995. ISBN 0-89716-600-0 at Carleton. **Good**

Hood, A.B.E. *Saint Patrick: His Writings and Muirchu's Life*. Phillimore & Co. LTD:Sussex, 1972. BX4700. P3 A213. At Carleton.

Hoysh, Wentworth. *The Life of Saint Columba*. ED Dutton & Co: NY 1908. BX4700.c7 A2. At Carleton.

Humphries, Emyr. *The Taliesin Tradition*. Black Raven Press: 1983. at Univ Minn. An excellent overview of Welsh Bardism/Druidism and the historical underpinnings of Welsh poetry/nationalism.

Hutton, Ranold. *The Pagan Religions of the Ancient British Isles, Their Nature and Legacy*. Blackwell, Oxford 1991 ISBN 0-631-17288-2. A good overview from the mesolithic to 1000 A.D.

Jackson, Kenneth. *The Oldest Irish Tradition: A Window on the Iron Age*. Cambridge University Press 1964. 55pgs. PB1327 J3 at Saint Olaf. Excellent primer on how classical sources and earliest Irish tales corroborate eachother and can therefore be used to reconstruct history.

Jones, Prudence and Pennick, Nigel. *A History of Pagan Europe*. Routledge, London 1995. ISBN 0-415-09136-5. Goes into all paganisms from the Greeks to the Balts. Somewhat passionately pagan in outlook, but pretty objective overall. Curiously, the chapters on the Celts are probably the weakest in the book.

Kendrick, Thomas D. *The Druids:A Study in Keltic Prehistory*. Frank Cass & Co Ltd 1966 (1927) Carleton. One of the FIRST and BEST analysis of Druidism, paring away Modern Druidism from the ancient. It also has most of the classical sources in the original and literally translated. **EXCELLENT SOURCE**.

Kinsella, Thomas. *The Tain: Translated from the Irish Epic Tain Bo Cuailgne*. Oxford University Press: London 1975. PB1423.T3 K5 1970. at Carleton. A nearly-literal translation of this IMPORTANT early Irish epic of 210pgs, very dry reading, but excellently done.

Laing, Lloyd. *Celtic Britain*. Charles Scriber's Sons:NY 1979. DA140.L33. at Carleton. An acceptable description of Celtic ethnology, especially the Picts.

MacCulloch, John Arnott. *The Religion of the Ancient Celts*. T&T Clark:Edinburgh 1911. BL900.M44. At Carleton. Despite its early date, this big book has a lot of good info on the continuity of celtic customs until 1900. Covers all areas of religion, without enough footnotes. Contains sysnopses of major irish mythology.

MacLennan, Malcolm. *Gaelic Dictionary*. Aberdeen University Press: Aberdeen 1925. ISBN 0-08-025712-7 A popular english-scots gaelic cross dictionary.

MacNeil, E. *Early Irish Laws and Institutions*. London 1935. ?

MacNeil, John T. *The Celtic Churches:A History 200-1200*. Chicago University Press. 1974. BR748. M33 at Saint Olaf. Excellent for understanding how Druidism disapeared or blended with christianity.

MacNeill, Maire. *The Festival of Lughnasa* (2 volumes) by Comhairle Bhelaoideas Eireann, Dublin. 1982. VOL 1 ISBN 0-906426-10-3 and 0-906426-12x. VOL 2. ISBN 0-906426-10-3 and ISBN 0-906426-13-8. The definitve book on this Irish/Scottish festival and nearby months.

Nash, David William. *Taliesin: The Bards and Druids of Britain*. John Russel Smith:London 1858. PR8920.N3. at Dennison University. A devastatingly **GOOD** piece of critical study on Rev Davies' and Owen's translations of Welsh poetry. It gives Welsh ORIGINAL and a non-mystical translation. This is also a better book to read than Davies' actual book!

O hOgain, Daithi. *Myth, Legend & Romance: An Encycloaedia of the Irish Folk Tradition*. Prentice Hall, New York 1991. ISBN 0-13-275959-4. A compendium of useful and interesting articles running the historical gamut from Cu Chulainn to Daniel O'Connel. Lots of good stuff. Also has a useful guide to language and pronunciation, both Old Irish and Modern.

O'Rahilly, C. *Tain Bo Cuailgne:From the Book of Leinster*. Dublin 1967. A well received translation.

O'Rahilly, T.F. *Early Irish History & Mythology*. Dublin 1946. A well recieved translation.

Owen, A.L. *The Famous Druids*. Greenwood Press:Westport Conn. 1979 at IDA. Druids in Literature.

Patrick, Saint (trans. A.B.E. Hood.) *Saint Patrick: His Writings and Muirchu's Life*. Phillamore & Co Ltd:Chichester Sussex 1978. BX4700. P3 A213. at Carleton College. Latin and English versions of 2 forms of St. Patrick's life and a good overview of the general literature on Patrick.

Polybius (trans Iann Scot-Kilvert.) *The Rise of the Roman Empire*. Penquin Books:Great Britain 1986. DG241.P64213. at Carleton. Good for understanding the negative Roman attitude to Celtic life as a result of Celtic treachery during the Punic Wars of Hannibal.

Powell, T.G.E. *The Celts*. Frederick A Praeger:NY 1958. D70.P6. at St. Olaf. Acceptable.

Piggott, Stuart. *The Druids*. Frederick A Praeger:NY & Washington 1968. BL910 P5 1968. at St. Olaf. This is probably one of the first books you should read on Druidism. Piggott gives an excellent 60 pg discussion on how modern Druidism started. follows with a detailled description of classical sources. **EXCELLENT**

Piggott, Stuart. *The Druids*. Thames & Hudson:NY,NY 1985. First Search. **A newer version**.

Piggott, Stuart. *William Stukeley: A Portrait of an Antiquarian*. Oxford 1950. at Univ Minn. A biography of the man who popularized Druids among Archeology more than anyone else.

Quinn, David Beers. *The Elizabethans and the Irish*. Cornell University Press:Ithaca NY 1966. DA 937. Q5 at Carleton. A good overview of Irish culture and institutions and how much the English despised them.

Rankin, H.D. *The Celts and the Classical World*. Croom Helm:London & Sydney 1987. D70.R36 1987. at Saint Olaf. Another **great** source on the attitude and encouters that background classical writers on Celts.

Rees, Alwyn. *Celtic Heritage:Ancient Tradition*. 1961. GR147.R4. 428pgs at Saint Olaf. Full of tidbits.

Reid, Donna. *Dragons, Leeks and Druids*. FirstSearch. Thesis at CA:CLU.

Ross, Anne. *The Pagan Celts*. BT Bartsford Ltd:London 1986 (1970.) D70.R67 1986. at Saint Olaf. For those with little knowledge of the daily life and appearence of celts and their institutions, **you should read this book**. Like Jackson's book, it shows the agreement of classical, early Irish and archeological sources on the material life of Celts. Very well illustrated and footnoted.

Ross, Anne. *Pagan Celtic Britain: An Archeological Examination*. Columbia University Press:NY 1967. BL900.R6. at Carleton College. Less exciting, but like Chadwick, it is a PAIN-staking examination of any relic in archeology that can be tied in with religion.

Ross, Anne. *The Life and Death of a Druid Prince*. Summit Books: NY 1989. ISBN 0-671-74122-5.

Scharding, Michael. *Ancient Sources about Druidism*. Drynemeton Press:Carleton College Archives. A private compilation of ancient classical references to Celtic

religion in the original and translation. Highly in violation of many copyrights and swiped from other books.

Wiseman, Anne & Peter. *The Battle for Gaul*. DC 62.c2813 1980 at Carleton. David R. Gadine: Boston 1980.

Modern Paganism, Fraternalism and (American and British) Religious Pluralism

Adler, Margot. *Drawing Down the Moon:Witches, Druids, Goddess-Worshippers & Other Pagans in America Today*. Beacon Press:Boston 1986. ISBN 0-8070-3253-0 at Carleton. This book is considered by nearly everyone to be **the best overview** of modern Neo-Paganism and Wicca, with a special chapter on the Carleton Druids.

Buckland, Raymond. *Anatomy of the Occult*. Samuel Weiser Inc:NY 1977 BI33.4 B924a. ISBN 0-87728-304-4 Interlibrary Loan. General descriptions of Satanism, Witchcraft, Alchemy, Ceremonial Magick & Voodoo.

Bryant, M. Dorrol (editor.) *Pluralism, Tolerance and Dialogue*. Univ. of Waterloo Press:Ontario 1989. BL410.P58 1989 at Carleton. More good essays on how religions can get along.

Carnes, Mark C. *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America.* Yale Univ. Press:New Haven & London 1989. HS204.C37 1985 at Carleton. An **EXCELLENT** book that really explains, in an un-hostile way, what fraternal organizations really about (Male-Bonding) and an excellent historical overview. Valuable starting book before heading into British Druidism.

Cherry, Conrad. *Nature & Religious Imagination*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia 1980. BT695.5 C47 at Carleton. I recommend this for future studies of Neo-Pagan, transcendentalism & ecology origins in the US. Dry.

Cross, Tom. *Fire in the Head: Shamanism and the Celtic Spirit*. Harper Collins:San Francisco 1993. ISBN#0-06-250174-7. A good example of Cross's Gaulish research, which has done well, mostly because little else is published on Gaul.

Curtes, Lewis Perry. *Anglican Moods of the 18th Century*. Archon Books 1966. BR756.C8 at Carleton. Provides a better understanding of how common people thought back then when studying British Druidism.

Fairchild, Hoxie Neale. *The Noble Savage*. Columbia Univ. Press:NY 1928. PR146.F3 at Carleton. A well-known study on the Romance period and Naturalism. Usefull for understanding shifting public views of Nature and people practicing Indigenous religions.

Gardner, Gerald B. *The Meaning of Witchcraft.* Samuel Weiser:NY 1959. BF1566.63 at Carleton. A description of what witchcraft IS and IS NOT by the man who is a founder of Modern Witchcraft.

Godwin, John. *Occult America.* DoubleDay & Company Inc:Garden City NY 1972. BF 1434. U6 G6 at Carleton. About Astrology, Witchcraft, L.Ron Hubbards' Scientology and Dianetics, Edgar Cayce and TM.

Grell, Israel, Tynacken (Editors) *From Persecution to Toleration.* Clarendon Press: Oxford 1991. BR757.F76 1991 at Carleton. All about the 17th and 18th century difficulties of religious toleration in England. Good background reading (very hard on the head, though) for studying 18th century British Druidism.

Hammann, Louis J. & Buck, Harry. (Editors) *Religious Traditions & the Limits of Tolerance*. Anima Books: Chambersburg PA 1988. BL85.R39 1988 at Carleton. A good collection of light essays in many religions.

Hansen, Daniel. *American Druidism: A Guide to American Druid Groups*. Peanutbutter Press, Seattle 1995. ISBN 0-89716-600-0 at Carleton. **Excellent**

Heineman, Kenneth. *Campus Wars: the Peace Movement of American State Universities in the Vietnam Era*. NY Univ. Press: NY 1993. DS 559.62. u6 H45 1993 at Carleton.

Heinlein, Robert A. *A Stranger in a Strange Land*. Ace Books:NY 1961 & 1987. ISBN 0-441-79034-8. The "sacred" sci-fi book that inspired the oldest & largest Neo-pagan group in America (Church of All Worlds.)

Holzer, Hans. *The New Pagans*. Doubleday & co Inc:Garden City NY 1972

Miller, David L. *The New Polytheism*. Harper & Row:NY 1974. at Carleton. Mostly a dull treatise on how we should focus on Greek Paganism not Celtic paganism. Considered excellent by other researchers.

Morgan, Edmund S. *The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop*. Harper Collins Pub:San Francisco 1958. Personal Copy. Before talking about stodgy Protestantism in America when studying Neo-Paganism and modern liberal theology, read this and reconsider the origins of religious toleration in America.

Needleman, Jacob. *The New Religions*. Doubleday:Garden City NY 1970 245pgs. at Carleton. Mostly on Eastern cults in the U.S. and Mormonism. Recommended by a lot of other researchers, I found it dull.

Roberts, Maire. *British Poets & Secret Societies*. Barnes & Nobles Books: Totowa NJ 1986. PR508.S43 R63 1986 at Carleton or Olaf. Interesting reading about how the elite in Britain belonged to many groups.

Roberts, Marie. *Gothic Immortals: The Fiction of the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross.* Routledge:London & NY 1990. PR868.R75 R67 1990 at Carleton. Rosicrucian literature analysis, out of my league.

Robbins, Thomans & Anthony, Dick.(Editors) *In Gods We Trust: New Patterns of Religious Pluralism in America.* Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick & London 1990. BL2525.I5 1990. A **good** collection of essays, especially one's on the weakness & secularist biases of anti-cult experts and good chapters upon women's spirituality.

Robson, John. *College Fraternity and its Modern Role.* 1966. First Search MN:MNU & MUO. Okay.

Rowley, Peter. *New Gods in America*. David McKay-Cambell Inc.:NY 1971 207pgs.

Scott, Gini Graham. *Cult and Countercult: A study of a Spiritual Growth Group and a Witchcraft Order*. Greenwood Press: WestPort Conn. 1980. BP 605. I42 S38. at Carleton. A very **Good** book giving a detailed examination of self-help "religions" and an insider's view of what witchcraft was like n the early 70's

Swidler, Leonard & Mojzes, Paul.(Editors.) *Attitudes of Religions & Ideologies Toward the Outsider*. Edwin Mellen Press: Lewiston/Queenstowon/Lampella 1990. BL410.A8 1990 at Carleton. Rather heavy reading.

Valiente, Doreen. *The Rebirth of Witchcraft*. Phoenix Publishing: Washinton State 1989. at Carleton. AN **Excellent** book (along with Adler) on the various strains of Wicca; by the woman who founded it.

Whalen, William J. Handbook of Secret Organizations. Bruce Pub. Co.:Milwaukee 1966. HS204.W45 at Carleton. Very useful and simple historical and organizational histories of secret and public organizations up to the sixties. *Useful in pursuing Reformed Druidism as a fraternal group Thesis Idea.*

Wuthow, Robert. *Experimentation in American Religion: Thier New Mysticisms and Their Implications for the Churches.* Univ Calif Berkely:Los Angeles, 1978. BL2530. U6 W87. at Carleton Library. A statistical analysis of a survey in the

San Francisco Bay Area. This is the hotbed of alternative religion, and it gives a lot of **very good information** on what type of people choose to be mystics and pagans.

Modern Druidism by Druid Authors Since 1697

Blake, William. *Jerusalem*. at Carleton. supposedly an OBOD leader, and the work is "mysterious."

Bonewits, P.E.Isaac. *Druid Chronicles (Evolved.)* Drynemeton Press: Berkeley 1977. at IDA. History, customs, rituals and lore garnered from different branches of the Reformed Druids of North America.

Bonewits, P.E.Isaac. *Real Magic.* Creative Arts Book:Berkeley 1971. 1979 reprint. ISBN 0-916870-19-7 from Berkeley. A leader of modern Druidism (incl RDNA.) This was his widely read Bacherlor's thesis that won him a Bachelor's of MAGIC at Berkeley 1970. Excellent view of his thinking and a modern reinterpretation of magic. Valuable for the liturgical analysis of the Order of Worship of the RDNA.

Bouchet, Paul. *Hu Gadarn, Le Premier Gaulois. La Princesse de Vix. La Divination par les Nombres*. These may possibly be interesting to Druidism as they are written by the Chief Druid of French OBOD. **Unavailable as yet**.

Bouchet, Rene. *Les Druides:Science et Philosophie*. Robert Laffont:Paris 1976. BL910. B67. at Carleton. A French version of OBOD beliefs.

Bouchet, Rene. *Les Druides? Toujours Vivants!* Interesting.

Carpenter, William. *A Critical Study of Ezekiel's Temple. and Israelites Found in the Anglo-saxons*. 1872 supposedly an OBOD chief Druid. Questionable source to investigate.

Carr-Gomm, Phillip. *The Druid Way*. Element:Rockport Mass 1993. ISBN 1-85230-365-4. at First Search. Present Cheif Druid of OBOD giving teachings of his group.

Carr-Gomm, Phillip. *Elements of the Druid Tradition*. Element: Rockport Mass 1991. ISBN 185230202x at First Search. See previous article. Excellent book, but of dubious scholastic quality, but a reasonably good philosophical treatise.

Connelan, Owen. *Proceedings of the Great Bardic Institution*. First Search **Unavailable.**

Davies, Rev. Edward. *Celtic Researches*. JBooth: London 1803. at Univ Minn & IDA. **Extremely Widely Read** book that influenced a lot of people. Unfortunately he recieved poor translations to base his book on. Very difficult to read unless you know the Bible, Hebrew, Latin, Linguistics and Celtic Mythology. Full of Bunk.

Davies, Rev. Edward. *The Mythology and Rites of the British Druids*. J.Booth:London 1806. at Univ Minn. & IDA See previous note. very difficult to understand. Helio-Arkite Theory that Druids were the heirs of Noah's patriarchial religion.

Evans, Edward. *Poems, Lyrics and Pastoral*. **Unavailable**. Questionable.

Griffith. *The Welsh Question and Druidism*. R. Bank & Son:London 1887. at Saint Olaf.

Hansen, Daniel. *American Druidism: A Guide to American Druid Groups*. Peanutbutter Press, Seattle 1995. ISBN 0-89716-600-0 at Carleton.

Herbert, Algernon. *The Neo-Druidic Heresy*. 1838. **Unavailable due to age**. Soon to be at IDA. Believed that the Culdee church was infiltrated by pagan druids.

Higgins, Godfrey. *The Celtic Druids*. 1829. Supposedly a leader of OBOD, this book is suspect.

Howe, Graham. *The Mind of the Druid*. Skoob: 1989. ISBN 18171438756. at First Search.

James, D. *Patriachial Religion of Britain*. **Unavailable**.

Kendrick, Thomas D. *The Druids:A Study in Keltic Prehistory*. Frank Cass & Co Ltd 1966 (1927) Carleton. One of the FIRST and BEST analysis of Druidism, paring away Modern Druidism from the ancient. It also has most of the classical sources in the orignial and literally translated. **EXCELLENT SOURCE**.

Keneally, Edward Vaughan. *An Introduction to the Apocalpse. The Third Messenger of God*.

Massey, Gerald. *Book of Beginnings*. 1881. *Seven Schools of Man*. 1887. *Man in Search of his Soul*. 1887. *The Coming Religion*. 1889. *Ancient Egypt: The Light of the World.* *** Supposedly a Chief Druid of OBOD, and his works contain "hidden" references to OBOD knowledge. **All Sadly Unavailable**

Matthews, John. *Taliesin: Shamanism & the Bardic Mysteries in Britiain and Ireland*. Aquarian Press of Harper Collins Publishers: San Francisco 1991. BL980.G7 M39 1991 at Wesleyan and IDA. More interesting arm-chair philosophy from an OBOD member.

Matthews, John. *The Celtic Reader: Selections from Celtic Legend, Scholarship and Story*. Harper Collins: San Francisco 1990. ISBN 1-85538-228-8. An **EXCELLENT** collection of antiquarian articles on Druids collected by an OBOD member. Invaluable.

Morgean, Owen. *The Light of Britania*. D. Owen:Cardiff 1890. at First Search **somewhere.** Writer at the tail end of really weird antiquarian Druid beliefs.

Nash, David William. *Taliesin: The Bards and Druids of Britain.* John Russel Smith:London 1858. PR8920.N3. at Dennison University. A devastatingly **GOOD** piece of critical study on Rev Davies' and Owen's translations of Welsh poetry. It gives Welsh ORIGINAL and a non-mystical translation. This is a better book to read than Davies' actual book!

Nichols, Ross. *The Book of Druidry.* Harper Collins:San Francisco 1990. ISBN 1-85538-167-2. An **EXCELLENT** source of history on OBOD, it's Leaders, archeological beliefs and customs.

Nichols, Ross. *Prophet, Priest and King*. Element Books. 1993 **Unavailable as yet**

Nichols, Ross. *Prose Chants & Poems*. 1941. **Unavailable**

Piggott, Stuart. *The Druids*. Frederick A Praeger:NY & Washington 1968. BL910 P5 1968. at St. Olaf. and Thames & Hudson:NY,NY 1985. at First Search. Piggott gives an excellent 60 pg discussion on how modern Druidism started. follows with a detailled description of classical sources. **EXCELLENT**

Reid, Donna. *Dragons, Leeks and Druids:Welsh Nationalism*. Thesis at FirstSearch CA:CLU

Scharding, Michael J.A.U. *A General History of Reformed Druidism in America*. Drynemeton Press: Carleton College Archives 1994. at IDA. **Rather good work** for an undergraduate History Thesis. A fresh, invigorating look at correcting the myths of the first 33 years of the American Druid movement from its origin with the Reformed Druids of North America in 1963 at Carleton College to the foundation of "Ar nDriaocht Fein" in 1983 and beyond. Includes photocopies of past research on Reformed Druidism, extensive annotated Bibliography and useful time-charts.

Spence, Lewis. *The History and Origins of Druidism*. Rider & Co:London 1938 and Aquarian:Northhampshire 1979. First Search. Another member of OBOD, and mythologist.

Stukeley, William. *Abury:A temple of the British Druids*. Reid:London 1745 at FirstSearch Facsimilimy EU-EMW. One of the important books in British neo-druidic revival and archeology in general.

Stukeley, William. *Stonehenge: A Temple Restored to the British Druids*. Reid:London 1838. at First Search Facsimile EU-EMW, real MI-EYB, NY-ZCU. One of the important books in British neo-druidic revival and archeology in general.

Toland, John. *Christianity not Mysterious*. 1697. *Pantheisticon*. 1717. *State Anatomy of Great Britain*. 1717. Toland was one of the first to support Druids as builders of stonehenge. Also is "claimed" to be the first chief Druid of OBOD. He has written over 100 books and was quite a rebel.

Toland, John. *The History of Celtic Religions and Learning*. Norwood Editions:Norwood PA 1978 (1726.) at Firsht Search NY:ZTS soon to be at International Druid Archives. One of first modern books on Druidism.

Wallace, Gillian E. *Druids, Archaelogy and Changing Interpretation*. at First Search. Thesis CA:CUY.

Ward, Rutherford. *Celtic Lore:The History of the Druids & Thier Timeless Traditions.* Aquarian/Thorsons:London 1993. ISBN 1855381346. Light-weight Arm chair reading.

Ward, Rutherford. *The Druids and their Heritage*. Atheneum: 1979. First Search. Armchair reading.

Ward, Rutherford. *The Druids: Magicians of the West*. Sterling Pub Co:NY 1990 (1978) ISBN 085030346x First Search. More Armchair reading.

Wiese H. & Fricke H. *Handbuch des Druiden Ordens*. Munich 1931. **Unavailable?** A very **GOOD** source, in German, about the A.O.D. and the Druidic revivals in Europe.

Williams, John. *Barddas*. Llandovery 1862 at First Search IL-ATL, MN-MNU. (Copy in International Druid Archives, Both Volumes) One of the biggest fraudulent studies. Facing pages of Welsh and English translation. This is a very unacademic source, **full of lies**, very dull, but with the occasionally interesting bit.

The 1960s and Campus Protest Movements and Recorded Interviews

Abbot, Stefan. *Oral Interview 1994*. at IDA. Berkeley protester and Druid.

Adams, Sam *Oral Interview 3/28/1994 at IDA*. at IDA.St.Olaf Druid in 80s/90s

Bonewits, P.E.Isaac. *Oral Interview 2/23/1994*. at IDA. Berkeley protester and Druid Thealogian.

Bonewits, P.E.Isaac. *Oral Interview 4/1/1994* in 2 tapes at IDA. Berkeley protester and trouble maker (oops!)

Burke, Edward Moore. *Unrecorded Discussion.* Carleton Graduate '93.

Cascorbi, Alice *Oral Interview 10/29/93* in 2 tapes at IDA. and Carleton Archives. Carleton RDNA revivalist in 1986 and knowledgeable about modern Neo-Paganism.

Corrigan, Ian. *Oral Interview 1/7/1994* in 3 tapes at IDA. Bay Area and Midwestern Druid

Corruth, Joan. *Oral Interview 3/1994* at IDA. Bay Area protester and Druid.

Frangquist, Deeborah & David. *Oral Interview 10/31/1993* at Carleton Archives and IDA. Founders of Reformed Druidism at Carleton. Interviews cover protest scene and state of women's lib at Carleton.

Heineman, Kenneth J. *Campus Wars: The Peace Movement at American State Universities in the Vietnam Era*. NY Univ. Press:NY & London 1993. DS559.62.U6 H45 1993 at Carleton. This book focuses upon the protest movement of SUNY Buffalo, Kent State Univ, Penn State Univ. and Michigan State Univ. It is valuable for showing that Berkeley wasn't the originator or role model for protests in the early 60s.

Hixon, Charles *Oral Interview 4/1994* at IDA. Berkeley protestor and Druid.

Kitchell, Mark. *Berkeley in the Sixties*. PBS Home Video. 117 minutes 1990

Larson, Robert. *Oral Interview 4/1994* at IDA. Carleton and Berkeley protester and Druid

Maitland, David C. *Oral Interview 5/26/1993* in 3 tapes at Carleton Archives. Chaplain at Carleton and Professor of Religion from 1958-1986ce. Valuable interview for history of Reformed Druidism.

Nason, John. *Oral Interview 8/12/1992* in 3 tapes at Carleton Archives. President of Carleton 1962-70.

Oldfeather, Felicia. *Oral Interview 4/8/1993* in 2 tapes at Carleton Archives. Protestor at Carleton in the very early 1960s.

Press, Larry. *Oral Interview 3/3/1994* in IDA. Berkeleyite and Druid

Rorabaugh, W.J. *Berkeley at War, the 1960s*. Oxford Univ. Press:NY & Oxford 1989. F869.B5 R67 1989 at Carleton. A wonderful long term perspective of Berkeley with good local and Bay Area maps followed by a close blow-by-blow history of the events in the 60s both on campus and in the town of Berkeley.

Salee, Cindy *Oral Interview 4/1/1994* at IDA. Bay Area protester and leader of Native American Druidism

Savitzky, Steve. *Oral Interview 1994* at IDA. Prominent Carleton protester in 60s and Archdruid.

Shelton, Richard. *Oral Interview 3/31/1994* in 1 tape at Carleton Archives and IDA. Archdruid at Carleton and student protester in late 60s/early 70s.

Shelton, Richard. *Oral Interview 5/8/1993* in three tapes at Carleton Archives and IDA. More questions.

Sherbak, Chris. *Oral Interview 4/1994 at IDA*. Berkleyite and Druid

Smith, Bardwell. *Oral Interview 12/28/1993* in 3 tapes at Carleton Archives. Professor of Asian religions and faculty advisor for RDNA at Carleton in 60s

Taylor, Tony. *Oral Interview 1/1994* in IDA. Bay Area Druid and leader of Henge of Keltria.

Tezera. *Oral Interview 1994* at IDA. Berkeley protester and Druid

Recommended Reading Books in A Druidic Flavor

Cleary, Thomas. Zen Antics: 100 Stories of Enlightenment

Elder, John. Family of Earth and Sky. 0-8070-8528-6 1994

Hoff, Benjamin. The Tao of Pooh.

Hoff, Benjamin. The Te of Piglet

Nisker, Wes. Crazy Wisdom: Provacative romp through the philosophies of East and West.

Johnston, William. The Still Point: Reflections on Zen and Christian Mysticism

Johnston, William. The Mirror Mind: Zen Christian Dialogue.

Reader, Ian. Religion in Contemporary Japan. 1990

Reps, Paul. Zen Flesh, Zen Bones.

Shah, Idries. any of his books about Sufis

Suzuki, D.T. any of his books about Zen

Tworkov, Helen. Zen in America

Shinto: The Way of the Kami

Academic Resources for Researching Druidism

By Mike Scharding, 2000

This website was set up in June 2000 and organizes the materials a little better. I hope you enjoy it. Naturally it's at least 4 years out of date by the time of ARDA 2's publishing.

-Mike Scharding
March 21st, 2003
Embassy of Japan, D.C.

Academic Studies on Neo-Paganism

1. **Drawing Down the Moon** Witches, Druids, Goddess-Worshippers, and Other Pagans in America Today by Margot Adler, Amazon List Price: $16.95 Paperback - 584 pages Rev&Exp edition (March 1997) Penguin USA (Paper); ISBN: 014019536X ;
2. People of the Earth: The New Pagans Speak Out, by Ellen Evert Hopman and Lawrence Bond, Destiny Books, 1996, ISBN 0892815590; paper. $17 at Amazon
3. A Community of Witches: Contemporary Neo-Paganism and Witchcraft in the United States (Studies in Comparative Religion) by Helen A. Berger / Hardcover / Published 1999 Amazon Price: $18.71
4. Paganism Today:Wiccans, Druids, the Goddess and Ancient EarthTraditions for the Twenty-first Century by Harvey, Graham and Hardman, Charlotte ISBN: 0722532334
5. Contemporary Paganism: Listening People, Speaking Earth a book by Harvey, Graham. Amazon Price: $17.95 Paperback - 250 pages (July2000) New York Univ Pr; ISBN: 0814736203
6. Magical Religion and Modern Witchcraft by Susan Greenwood (James R Lewis, editor) Paperback (May 1996) State Univ of New York Pr; ISBN: 0791428907 ; Dimensions (in inches): 0.78 x 8.98 x 5.84 Other Editions: Hardcover ($56)
7. **Phoenix From the Flame** by Vivianne Crowley. ASIN: 1855381613 ; Dimensions (in inches): 0.83 x 8.51 x 5.28
8. Witchcraft & Paganism in Australia by Lynne Hume, Amazon Price: $29.95 Paperback (October 1997) Melbourne Univ Pr; ISBN: 052284782X
9. Nature Religion Today: the Pagan alternative in the modern world." by Eds J. Pearson, (see Resource Section) R. Roberts & G. Samuel. Edinburgh University Press. 1998; ISBN: 074861057X Paperback $26.
10. Witchcraft and Paganism Today by Anthony Kemp. ASIN: 1854791176
11. Neo-Paganism (Truth About Series) by Anodea Judith, List Price: $1.99 Paperback (November 1999) Llewellyn Publications; ISBN: 1567185673 ; Dimensions (in inches): 0.19 x 6.89 x 4.19
12. Paganism: A Beginner's Guide by Teresa Moorey Paperback (July 1999) Amazon Price $13,Hodder & Stoughton; ISBN: 0340742496
13. The Pagan Path By Janet and Stewart Farrar and Gavin Bone, published by Phoenix (USA) and distributed by Hale. 250pp., ISBN: 0919345409 Amzaon Price: $14.95 Paperback (March 1995)
14. Liber Wicca: A Flight into the Fanciful By Frater I Nigris
15. The New Paganism by Harold Lindsell

Focused Studies on Neo-Pagan-like topics

1. The Emerging Network: A Sociology of the New Age and Neo-Pagan Movements by Michael York Paperback (May 1995) $21 Rowman & Littlefield; ISBN: 0847680010 Other Editions: Hardcover Library Binding - 372 pages $71 (May 1995) Rowman & Littlefield; ISBN: 0847680002 ; Dimensions (in inches): 1.02 x 9.20 x 6.21
2. The Existential Pagan -- On Freedom and Responsibility by Rel Davis, Eston Mansfield (Photographer), Greg Fisher (Illustrator) Our Price: $18.95 Paperback - 192 pages (October 1, 1998) Old Time Religion, Inc.; ISBN: 096663800X
3. The Enlightenment an Interpretation: The Rise of Modern Paganism by Peter Gay Amazon Price: $27.50 Hardcover (December 1996) Peter Smith Pub; ISBN: 0844668915
4. Methods of Compassion or Pretension? : Conducting Anthropological Fieldwork in Modern Magical Communities by Jone Salomonsen
5. Nature & Supernature--Harmony & Mastery: Irony and Evolution in Contemporary Nature Religion by Bron Taylor
6. Nature Religion in America: From the Algonkian Indians to the New Age by Albanese, Catherine. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.) Paperback Reprint edition ISBN: 0226011461 ; Dimensions (in inches): 0.72 x 9.05 x 6.07 Amazon Price $17.
7. American Sacred Space by Chidester, David, and Edwart T. Linenthal, eds. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995.) ISBN: 0253210062 ; Dimensions (in inches): 1.02 x 9.28 x 6.18 Other Editions: Hardcover. Amazon price $19 (paperback)
8. New Spirituality, Self, and Belonging: How New Agers and Neo-Pagans talk about Themselves by Bloch, Jon P. (Westport, Conn.: Praeger,1998) Hardcover version is ISBN: 0275959570 and $55
9. Living in the Broom Closet : Hiding Neo-Paganism in the Culture of Confession by Keenan, Tanya E. (M.A. thesis, University of South Florida, 1998)
10. The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess by Starhawk [Miriam Simos], (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979) second edition 1989 ISBN: 0062508148
11. The Concept of the Goddess Sandra Billington and Miranda Green (eds.) Routledge 1996
12. Ancient Goddesses: The Myth and the Evidence by Lucy Godison and Christine Morris (eds.) British Museum Press 1998
13. The Faces of the Goddess Oxford University Press
14. Journeying the Politics of Ecstacy: Anthropological Perspectives on Neoshamanismby Robert J. Wallis
15. The Old Religion by Richard Smoley
16. A Goddess Arrives The Novels Of Dion Fortune And The Development Of Gardnerian Witchcraft
17. Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America by Mark Carnes
18. From Persecution to Toleration by Israel, Grell & Tynacken (editors),
19. British Poets and Secret Societies by Maire Roberts Barne& Nobles Books:Totowa NJ 1986

Some Academic-ish Studies on Wicca

1. **Drawing Down the Moon** Witches, Druids, Goddess-Worshippers, and Other Pagans in America Today by Margot Adler, Amazon List Price: $16.95 Paperback - 584 pages Rev&Exp edition (March 1997) Penguin USA (Paper); ISBN: 014019536X
2. Persuasions of the Witch's Craft, by Tanya Lurhman, Blackwell 1989 Paperback (December 1994) McClelland & Stewart; ISBN: 0330329464 Other Editions: Paperback Reprint edition(March 1991) Harvard Univ Pr; ISBN: 0674663241
3. Witchcraft Today: the Modern Craft Movement (Witchcraft Today, Book 1) by Chas S. Clifton (Editor), Charles S. Clifton (Editor) Amazon List Price: $9.95 Paperback - 208 pages (May 1992) Llewellyn Publications; ISBN: 0875423779
4. Never Again the Burning Times: Paganism Revived Orion, Loretta. (Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press, 1995.)Paperback ISBN: 0881338354 Amazon Price $14
5. A Community of Witches: Contemporary Neo-Paganism and Witchcraft in the United States (Studies in Comparative Religion) ~ by Helen A. Berger / Hardcover / Published 1999 Amazon Price: $18.71
6. What Witches Do: The Modern Coven Revealed, 2nd edition by Stewart Farrar. Phoenix trade paperback. $9.95; ISBN: 0919345174
7. Witchcraft from the Inside. Buckland, Raymond. Paperback - 240 pages 3rd Rev&en edition (March 1995) Llewellyn Publications; ISBN: 1567181015 ; Dimensions (in inches): 0.60 x 9.01 x 6.00 Amazon Price $14
8. Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft, by Raymond Buckland. List: $14.95, Amazon Price: $11.96, 272 pages, Llewellyn Publications, 1986, ISBN: 0875420508
9. The Truth About Witchcraft Today Scott Cunningham Llewellyn Publications, 1988 ISBN: 0-87542-127-X
10. A History of Witchcraft: Sorcerers, Heretics, and Pagans, Jeffrey B. Russell, List: $15.95, Amazon Price: $12.76 You Save: $3.19 (20%), Thames & Hudson, 1982, ISBN: 0500272425
11. Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and America. - WITCHCRAFT IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE AND AMERICA compiled by Jeffrey Merrick,
12. "Heretic's Heart" by Margot Adler Paperback - 309 pages (August 1998) Beacon Pr; ISBN: 0807070998 ; Dimensions (in inches): 0.90 x 9.01 x 6.02 $11 Other Editions: Hardcover 384 pages (August 1997) Beacon Pr; ISBN: 080707098X
13. HISTORY OF WICCA IN ENGLAND: 1939 - present day by Julia Phillips
14. Satanism and the History of Wicca by Diane Vera

Neo-pagan Encyclopedia Resources

1. Witchcraft Today : An Encyclopedia of Wiccan and Neopagan Traditions by James R. Lewis Amazon Price: $75.00 Hardcover - 370 pages (December 1999) ABC - Clio; ISBN: 1576071340
2. Neo-Pagan Witchcraft I and II(Cults and New Religions) by J. Gordon Melton (Editor) 1999
3. Magic, Witchcraft, and Paganism in America: A Bibliography (Religious Information Systems Series, Vol 3) by J. Gordon Melton, Isotta Poggi Amazon Price: $30.00 Hardcover 2nd edition (June 1992) Garland Pub; ISBN: 0815304994
4. New Age Encyclopedia by J. Gordon Melton, J. Gordon Our Price: $67.00 Paperback 1st edition (May1995) GALE Group; ISBN: 0810371596; Dimensions (in inches): 1.12 x 9.32 x 6.26
5. Perspectives on the New Age (Suny Series in Religious Studies) by James R. Lewis (Editor), J. Gordon Melton (Editor) Amazon Price: $59.50 Availability: Hardcover - 369 pages (September 1992) State Univ of New York Pr; ISBN: 079141213X
6. Witches - An Encyclopedia of Paganism and Magic by Michael Jordan List Price: $19.95 Paperback (October 1, 1998) Trafalgar Square; ISBN: 1856263053
7. Encylopedia of Witches and Witchcraft by Edain McCoy
8. The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft Rosemary Ellen Guiley Facts on File, 1989 ISBN: 0-8160-2268-2
9. Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology by Leslie and Shepard, Gale Research Company 1983, 3 volumes
10. Encyclopedeia of American Religions by Gordon Melton,
11. The Encyclopedia of Cults, Sects, and New Religions Hardcover - 600 pages (July 1998) Prometheus Books; ISBN: 1573922226 ;

Celtic History and Archaeology

1. The Celtic World: An Illustrated History 700 B. C. to the Present by Patrick Lavin, Patrick Lavino, Amazon Price: $10.47
2. A History of Pagan Europe by Prudence Jones and Nigel Pennick, Routledge:London 1995 ISBN 0-419-09136-5
3. The World of the Druids by Miranda J. Green List Price: $29.95 Thames & Hudson; ISBN: 050005083X
4. The World of the Celts by Simon James, Amazon Price: $22.46 Hardcover - 192 pages (October 1993) Thames & Hudson; ISBN: 0500050678
5. The Ancient Celts by Barry Cunliffe (Editor), Amazon Price: $49.95 Hardcover - 400 pages (October 1997) Oxford Univ Press; ISBN: 0198150105 ;
6. Celt and Greek: Celts in the Hellenic World by Peter Berresford Ellis Hardcover (December 1996) Trans-Atlantic Publications, Inc.; ISBN: 0094755809
7. Celt and Roman: The Celts of Italy by Peter Berresford Ellis, Amazon Price:$35.00Hardcover - 288 pages (September 1998) St Martins Pr (Short); ISBN: 0312214197 ;
8. The Celts by Nora K. Chadwick, Barry Cunliffe (Introduction), Amazon Price: $10.36 Paperback - 328 pages 2 Ed edition (January 1998) Penguin USA (Paper); ISBN: 0140250743 ;
9. The Rise of the Roman Empire by Polybius, Penguin Books:Great Britain 1986
10. The Celts and the Classical World by H.D. Rankin, Croom Helm: London & Sydney 1987
11. The Battle for Gaul by Julius Caeser (trans. Anne & Peter Wiseman), David R. Godine:Boston 1980
12. The Celtic Empire by Peter Berresford Ellis, Constable:London 1990 ISBN 0-89089-457-4
13. The Oldest Irish Tradition: A Window on the Iron Age by Kenneth Jackson, Cambridge Univ. Press 1964
14. The Celts in Europe by Aedeen Cremin, Centre for Celtic Studies:Sydney 1992 ISBN 086758 624-9
15. Monumenta Historica Celtica: Notices of the Celts in the writings of Greek and Latin Authors from the 10th

Century B.C.E. to the Fifth Century A.D. by W. Dinan, London 1911 Volume 1 and 2
16. The Elizabethans and the Irish by David Beers Quinn, Cornell Univ. Press: Ithaca NY 1966
17. Celtic Britain by Lloyd Laing, Charles Scriber's Sons: NY 1979
18. Celtic Britain by Nora Chadwick, Frederick Praeger:NY, 1963 (poss. reprinted)
19. The Age of the Picts by Cummins, W.A., (NY: Barnes and Noble Books, 1995)
20. Pre-Christian Ireland, From the Early Settlers tothe Early Celts by Harbison, Peter, Thames and Hudson, London, 1988
21. Pagan Celtic Ireland: The Enigma of the Iron Age Raftery, Barry, (Paperback - 240 pages (March 1998) Thames & Hudson; ISBN: 0500279837 ; Dimensions (in inches): 0.90 x 10.08 x 6.93
22. The Celtic Heroic Age: Literary Sources for Ancient Celtic Europe and Early Ireland and Wales by Koch, John and John Carey, (Malden MA: Celtic Studies Publications, 1995)
23. Roman Britain S. Ireland, Routledge Books, 1979
24. An Atlas of Roman Britain Jones, Barri and David Mattingly; Blackwell, 1990
25. The Celtic Heroic Age, by John T. Koch, Celtic Studies Publications inc., 2000. (Excellent primary resources classical and modern.)

Celtic Literature and Mythology

1. Celtic Heritage: Tradition through the Tales - by Alwyn Rees, Brinley Rees (Contributor), Amazon Price: $12.76 Paperback - 428 pages Revised edition (May 1989) Thames & Hudson; ISBN: 0500270392 ;
2. Celtic Myths and Legends by T. W. Rolleston,List Price: $9.95 Paperback - 456 pages (December 1990) Dover Pubns; ISBN: 0486265072
3. Chronicles of the Celts by Peter Berresford Ellis (Carroll & Graf, 1999; ISBN: 0786706066, hardcover),
4. Cath Maige Tuired: Second Battle of Mag Tuired, by ed. and tr. by Elizabeth A. Gray (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1983)
5. Lebor Gaballa Erenn: Book of the Taking of Ireland (5 vols.), ed. and tr. by R. A. S. Macalister (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1938-56)
6. Ancient Irish Tales by Tom Cross and Clark Slover, Henry Holt & co.:NY 1936
7. The Tain:Translated from the Irish Epic Tain Bo Cuailgne by Thomas Kinsella, Oxford University Press: London 1975
8. Trioedd Ynys Prydain (the Welsh Triads) by Rachel Bromwich, Cardiff 1977
9. Celtic Myth and Legend by Charles Squire Paperback (October 1987) Newcastle Publishing Company; ISBN: 0878770305 ;
10. The Mabinogion by Lady Charlotte Guest Paperback - 160 pages (April 1997) Dover Pubns; ISBN: 0486295419
11. Celtic Myths and Legends by T.W. Rolleston Paperback - 456 pages (December 1990) Dover Pubns; ISBN: 0486265072 ; Dimensions (in inches): 1.98 x 8.84 x 6.20
12. Glamoury by Steve Blamires
13. Celtic Mythology by Proinsias MacCana
14. Encyclopedia of Celtic Wisdom
15. Myth, Legend and Romance: An Encyclopedia of the Irish Folk Tradition by Daithi O hOgain, Prentice Hall:NY 1991 ISBN 0-13275959-4
16. Dictionary of Celtic Myth and Legend by Miranda Green, Thames & Hudson:London 1992 ISBN 0-500-01516-3
17. The Earliest Welsh Poetry by Joseph P. Clancy, R&R Clark:Edinburgh 1970
18. A Pocket Guide: The Customs and Traditions of Wales by Owen, Trefor M., (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1991)
19. Gods and Heroes of the Celts, by Sjoestedt, Marie-Louise, tr. by Myles Dillon (Berkeley: Turtle Island Books, 1994)
20. Ancient Irish Tales, ed. by Tom P. Cross and Clark Harris Slover (Totowa NJ: Barnes & Noble, 1996)
21. The Metrical Dindshenchas (Vol 1-5) by Gwyn, Edward, School Of CelticStudies, Dublin Institute For Advanced Studies, 1991
22. The Apple Branch; A Path to Celtic Ritual by Alexei Kondratiev Paperback - 258 pages (October 1998) Collins Pub San Francisco; ISBN: 189825642X
23. Bards of the Gael and Gaul: examples of the poetic literature of Erinn by George Sigerson, pub. London, T. Fisher Unwin, c1907 [there are many editions!]. [Sigerson was then Pres. of the Nat'l Literary Soc. of Ireland.] 2d ed., rev. & enl. xv, 431 p. : ill. ; ca. 25 cm.
24. Mythic Ireland Michael Dames, Thames and Hudson, London 1996.
25. Early Irish Myths and Sagas Jeffrey Gantz, penguin books, NY 1981
26. The Wisdom of the Outlaw: The Boyhood Deeds of Finn in Gaelic Narrative Tradition Joseph Falaky Nagy, Univ. Calif. Press, Berkeley, 1985
27. Earth, Air, Fire, Water: Pre-Christian and Pagan Elements in British Songs Rhymes and Ballads Skelton, Robin and Blackwood, Margaret
28. Traces of the Elder Faiths of Ireland: A Folklore Sketch: A Handbook of Irish Pre-Christian Traditions W.G. Wood-Martin
29. Celtic Women: Women in Celtic Society and Literature By Peter Berresford Ellis, William Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, 1996 ISBN 0-8028-3808-1

Traditional Irish Laws

1. Traditional Irish Laws by Mary Dowling Daley, Ian McCullough (Illustrator) Amazon Price: $8.21 Hardcover - 80 pages (March 1998) Chronicle Books; ISBN: 0811819957
2. Women in Celtic Law and Culture (Women's Studies, Vol 12) by Jack George Thompson, Amazon Price: $99.95 Hardcover (May 1996) Edwin Mellen Press; ISBN: 0773487603
3. The Brehon Laws : A Legal Handbook by Laurence Ginnell THIS TITLE IS CURRENTLY NOT AVAILABLE. The publisher is out of stock. If you would like to purchase this title, we recommend that you occasionally check this page to see if it's been reprinted. Hardcover reprint edition (September 1993) Fred B Rothman & Co; ISBN: 0837722136
4. Early Irish Laws and Institutions by E. MacNeil, London 1935

Celtic Miscellany

1. The Festival of Lughnasa by Maire MacNeill, Comhairle Bhelaoideas Eireann, Dublin:1982 2 Volumes (possibly reprinted)
2. The Stars and the Stones by Martin Bremm, Thames & Hudson:London 1984.
3. The Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries by Evans-Wentz, W. Y., (NY: Citadel Press, 1990)
4. The New Comparative Mythology (Third Edition) by Littleton, C. Scott, (Berkeley:University of California Press, 1982)
5. Sex and Marriage in Ancient Ireland by Power,Patrick C., (Dublin: Mercier Press, 1976)
6. Women of the Celts; Jean Markale
7. Celtic Women: Women in Celtic Society and Literature By Peter Berresford Ellis William Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, 1996ISBN 0-8028-3808-1
8. Social History of Ancient Ireland P.W. Joyce
9. The Stones of Time, Calendars, Sundials, and Stone Chambers of Ancient Ireland Martin Brennan, Inner Traditions International, Rochester VT, 1994
10. A guide to Megalithic Ireland J.H. Brennan, Aquarian Press, SF, 1994
11. The Celtic Gauls: Gods, Rites and Sanctuaries Jean Louis Brunaux, B.A. Seaby Ltd, London, 1988
12. Earth Rites:Fertility Practices in Pre-Industrial Britain Janet and Colin Bord, Granda Publishing, London 1982

Indo-European Studies & Overview

1. In Search of the Indo-Europeans -J.P. Mallory:
2. Comparative Mythology - C. Scott Littleton:
3. A History of Pagan Europe - Nigel Pennick and Prudence Jones:
4. Myths and Symbols in Pagan Europe by Davidson, H. R. Ellis, (Syracuse NY: Syracuse University Press, 1988)
5. The Lost Beliefs of Northern Europe by Davidson, Hilda Ellis, (London: Routledge, 1993)
6. Pagan Religions of the Ancient British Isles- Ronald Hutton:
7. Lost Beliefs of Pagan Europe - H.R. Ellis-Davidson:
8. Stonehenge, the Indo-European Heritage- Stover & Kraig
9. The Silver Bough - F. Marian MacNeill

Books about Ancient Druids

1. The Druids Stuart Piggott, Thames and Hudson, 1985; ISBN 0500273634; paper.
2. The Druids by Paul R. Lonigan, Amazon Price: $55.00 Hardcover - 160 pages (June 30, 1996) Greenwood Publishing Group; ISBN: 0313299552 ;
3. The Druids by Peter Berresford Ellis, Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1995; ISBN 0802837980; paper.
4. The Life and Death of a Druid Prince by Anne Ross, Summit Books:NY 1989 ISBN 0-671-74122-5
5. The Druids: A Study in Keltic Prehistory by Thomas D. Kendrick, Frank Cass & Co. 1966 (perhaps first in 1927.)
6. The Druids by Nora Chadwick, Cardiff University:Cardiff Wales 1966
7. The Excellence of Ancient Word: Druid Rhetorics from Ancient Irish Tales by Copyright ℘ 1993 John Kellnhauser
8. The World of the Druids by Miranda J. Green List Price: $29.95 Thames & Hudson; ISBN: 050005083X ;

Public Views about Druids through Published Books

1. Taliesin: The Bards and Druids of Britain by David William Nash, John Russel Smith Publ:London 1858! At Dennison University
2. The Famous Driuds by A.L. Owen, Greenwood Press:Westport Conn. 1979
3. The Druid Source Book edited by John Matthews
4. The Taliesin Tradition by Emyr Humphries, Black Raven Press: 1983
5. William Stukeley:A Portrait of an Antiquarian by Stuart Piggot, Oxford 1950
6. The Encyclopedia of Celtic Wisdom edited by Caitlinn and John Matthews

Celtic Gods and Religious Customs

1. The Gods of the Celts by Miranda Green, Alan Sutton Publ.:Gloucester UK1986 ISBN 0-86299-292-5, (barnes and nobles) ISBN 0-389-20672-5
2. Celtic Goddesses: Warriors, Virgins, and Mothers by Miranda Green, Amazon Price: $22.50 Hardcover - 224 pages (January 1996) George Braziller; ISBN: 080761405X ; Dimensions (in inches): 0.87 x 9.96 x 7.06
3. Dictionary of Celtic Myth and Legend by Miranda J. Green, Amazon Price: $15.16 (November 1997) 240 pages
4. Dictionary of Celtic Mythology by Peter Berresford Ellis(Oxford Univ Press1994; ISBN: 0195089618, paper.)
5. Symbol and Image in Celtic Religious Art by Miranda Green, Amazon Price: $25.99 Paperback Reprint edition (September 1997) Routledge; ISBN: 0415080762
6. Pagan Celtic Britain by Anne Ross:, Amazon Price: $15.26 Paperback (January 1997, Originally 1977) Academy Chicago Pub; ISBN: 0897334353 ; Dimensions (in inches): 1.30 x 8.91 x 5.99
7. The Pagan Religions of the Ancient British Isles: Their Nature and Legacy by Ranold Hutton, Blackwell:Oxford 1991 ISBN 0-631-17288-2
8. The Pagan Celts by Anne Ross, BT Bartsford Ltd:London 1986 (orig 1970)
9. Druids, Gods and Heroes by Anne Ross
10. The Archaeology of Ritual and Magic by Ralph Merrifield (NY: New Amsterdam Books,1988)
11. The Sacred Isle: Pre-Christian Religions in Ireland by Daithi O'Hogain, (Dublin: Boydell & Brewer; 1999)
12. The Celtic and Scandinavian Religions by John Arnott MacCulloch THIS TITLE IS CURRENTLY NOT AVAILABLE. The publisher is out of stock. Hardcover (June 1973) Greenwood Publishing Group; ISBN: 0837167051 Other Editions: Paperback
13. The Religion of the Ancient Celts by John Arnot MacCulloch, T&T Clark:Edinburgh 1911
14. Irish Druids and Old Irish Religions by James Bonwick, Griffith Farran & CO: NY 1894 (1984 reprint) An on-line version is rumored to exist.

Celtic Christianity

1. The Celtic Churches:A history from 200-1200 by John MacNeil, Chicago Univ. Press, 1974
2. Celtic Christian Spirituality: An Anthology of Medieval and Modern Sources by Oliver Davies (Editor), Fiona Bowie (Editor), Amazon Price: $16.96 Paperback (December 1995) Continuum Pub Group; ISBN: 0826408354 ;
3. Carmina Gadelica: Hymns & Incantations by Alexander Carmichael (Compiler), Amazon Price: $15.95 Paperback - 512 pages (August 1992) Lindisfarne Books; ISBN: 0940262509 ;
4. The Sacred World of the Celts: An Illustrated Guide to Celtic Spirituality and Mythology by Nigel Pennick, Amazon Price: $21.00 Hardcover - 144 pages illustrate edition (November 1997) Inner Traditions Intl Ltd; ISBN: 0892816546 ;
5. Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom by John O'Donohue, Amazon Price: $10.40 (November 1998) 234 pages
6. Pagan Past and Christian Present in Early Irish Literature by Kim McCone, (Maynooth: Maynooth Monographs Series, Maynooth Press; 1990)
7. The Life of St. Columba by Saint Adamnan, E.d. Dutton & co: NY 1908
8. Celt, Druid and Culdee by Isabella Elder, Covenant:London 1962 (maybe reprinted)
9. Saint Patrick: His Writings and Muirchu:s Life by A.B.E. Hood, Phillimore & Co.:Sussex 1972

Books on Modern Druid Groups

1. A Reformed Druid Anthology Available for free download at http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna http://www.druidorder.demon.co.uk/Druid%20History.htm
2. A Little History of Druidism by Greywolf available http://www.druidorder.demon.co.uk/Druid%20History.htm http://www.neopagan.net/MesoDruids.HTML
3. Meso Pagan Drudism A good 5 page General Essay by Isaac Bonewits on the fraternalistic Mesopagan Druidism (i.e. 1700-Present) outgrowths of Masonry. http://www.neopagan.net/mesodruids.html A good page for researching old and new druidism: found at http://www.neopagan.net/RecDruidBooks.HTML
4. The Mind of the Druid by E Graham Howe ASIN: 1871438756
5. American Druidism by Daniel Hansen / Paperback / Published 1995 Amazon Price: $14.95 (Special Order)
6. Elements of the Druid Tradition, by Philip Carr-Gomm; Element Books (Dorset, England), 1991; ISBN 185230202X; paper.
7. The Druid Way by Phillip Carr Gomm (Element Books, 1993, ISBN 1852303654, paper) $15 at Amazon
8. The Druid Renaissance: the Voice of Druidry Today, by Phillip Carr Gomm (Harper Collins/Thorsons, 1996, ISBN 1855384809, paperback) List Price: $21.00- 320 pages
9. The Book of Druidry : History, Sites and Wisdom by Ross Nichols, John Matthews, Philip Carr-Gomm (Editor), phi Carr-Gomm, Amazon Price: $15.20 Paperback - 320 pages Reprint edition (May 1992) Thorsons Pub; ISBN: 1855381672 ;
10. The Druids (Ancient Peoples and Places Series) by Stuart Piggott Amazon Price:$15.95 Paperback (May 1985) W W Norton & Co; ISBN: 0500273634 ; Dimensions (in inches): 0.54 x 9.48 x 6.27
11. Spirits of the Sacred Grove : The World of a Druid Priestess by Emma Restall Orr, Emma Restall Orr Paperback - 272 pages (November 1998) Thorsons Pub; ISBN: 0722535961 ; Dimensions (in inches): 0.75 x 8.50 x 5.34
12. The Druid Source Book : From Earliest Times to the Present Day by John Matthews (Editor) ASIN: 0713725729

Popular Books About Druids

By Mike Scharding, 1993
Regretably Terribly Out of Date

A 400 Year Chronological Bibliography

When I was researching the history of Druids, it became apparent that Sturgeon's Law (90% of everything is crap) was an effective summary of the literature surrounding the ancient Druids until 1970.

However, as I looked more closely, I've noticed that many of the authors are previous members (or chiefs) of OBOD. Now I wish to be charitable, so instead of declaiming the works of OBOD's leaders, I would instead characterize their books as indicative historical resources of the changing of beliefs within the various fraternal organizations leading up to the founding of OBOD in 1964.

Likewise, I will grant that such modern works as "The Sacred Cauldron" and "21 Lessons of Merrlyn" should not be execrated as scholastic rubbish, but rather they should be seen as works of inspirational art that gives the researcher a more vivid picture of the divergence between historical re-constructionist groups and those groups which are apparently relying on divine sources of inspiration. Books by Stuart Piggot, Ross Nichols and A.L. Owens (listed below) carry good accounts of the various beliefs and erroneous publications about Druidism through history. There is however a lot of material still left to be talked about by a researcher!

I would further caution the reader that many of these works make no such claims that they are personal opinions, and purport to be factual accounts. They are also continual reprinted, deceptively hiding their ancient first publishing date and thereby tacitly presenting them as fresh research.

Here's a rough summary of the author's names to avoid when seeking firm knowledge of the ancient Druids: Lewis Spence, Rutherford Ward, Phillip Carr-Gomm, Ross Nichols, Rene & Paul Bouchet, Godfrey Higgins, Tadhg MacCrossan, John Williams, Iolo Morganwg, Edward Evans, John Toland.

I would also caution against the un-skeptical use of John & Caitlin Matthews (also of OBOD,) who have recently published dozens of Celtic Oriented books. Although the Matthews have graciously reprinted the out-of-print rare antiquarian tracts on Druidism, they have subsequently added to these tracts with their own interpretations of Shamanism. More scholarly annotations would be helpful in the footnotes. However, they do make interesting reading.

Finally, I would advise the reader to check any of their research books to see if those books rely on the authority of the following books which are widely dismissed by the current academic authorities.

The Sacred Cauldron by Tadhg MacCrossan

Founder of Druidactios, a group that apparently dislike Neo-Pagans and is disliked by the Neo-Pagans also.

199? The 21 Lessons of Merrlyn

Widely described as "21 Lessons of Crap." Beware.

1993 Prophet, Priest and King by Ross Nichols

Elements Books A posthumous book by a former OBOD chief.

1993 Celtic Lore: The History of the Druids and their Timeless Traditions by Rutherford Ward

Aquarian/Thorsons: London ISBN 1855381346 More lightweight armchair guessing

1993 The Druid Way by Phillip Carr Gomm

Element Books: Rockport, Mass ISBN 1-85230-365-4 Current Chief of OBOD teaches about his group

1991 Elements of the Druid Tradition by Phillip Carr-Gomm

Element Books: Rockport Mass ISBN 185230202x Interesting but of dubious scholastic quality, but a good philosophical treatise.

1991 Taliesin: Shamanism & the Bardic Mysteries in Britain and Ireland by John Matthews

Aquarian Press of Harper Collins: San Francisco (BL 980.G7 M39 at Wesley and in Carleton Archives) Interesting arm-chair philosophy by an OBOD member.

(1990) orig. 1978 The Druids: Magicians of the West by Rutherford Ward

(1990 Sterling PublCo: NY ISBN 08503030x) Not very accurate

1990 The Celtic Reader+ Selections from Celtic Legend, Scholarship and Story by John Matthews

Harper Collins: San Francisco 1990 ISBN 1-85538-228-8 An excellent collection of out-of-print antiquarian articles by an OBOD member.

1990 The Book of Druidry by Ross Nichols

Harper Collins: San Francisco ISBN 1-85538-167-2 An EXCELLENT history of **OBOD**, it's leaders and customs.

1980s La Princesse de Vix by Paul Bouchet

By a French chief of OBOD

1980s Hu Gadarn, Le Premier Gaulois. by Paul Bouchet

By a French chief of OBOD

1979 The Famous Druids by A.L. Owen

Greenwood Press: Westport Conn (at Carleton Archives) Like Piggot, this GOOD book gives a good review of the various interpretations of Druids from the 18th century until the present.

1979 The Druids and the Heritage by Rutherford Ward

Athenaeum: 1979 Armchair reading

1978 (1990) The Druids: Magicians of the West by Rutherford Ward
(1990 Sterling Publ Co: Ny ISBN 08503030x) Not very accurate

1976 Les Druides+ Science et Philosophie. by Rene Bouchet
Lafront: Paris (BL910. B67 at Carleton) A French version of OBOD beliefs

1970s Les Druides: Toujours Vivants! by Rene Bouchet
Interesting. By an OBOD author

1968 (1985) The Druids by Stuart Piggot
Praeger: NY, (Thames and Hudson: NY) An EXCELLENT Book. I've included it here because it has a 68 page discussion documenting the bad scholarship of the previous 200 years and mentions many of the authors and books described above.

1950 William Stukeley: A Portrait of an Antiquarian by Stuart Piggot
Oxford (available at Univ. Minn) An in-depth biography of Stukeley, the man who first started the myth that Druids built Stonehenge and sensationalized Druids in British culture. The Author, Stuart Piggot is a respected authority on Celtic Religion.

1938 (1979, 199?) The History and Origins of Druidism by Lewis Spence
Rider& Co.: London (repub. Aquarian: Northhampshire) Another OBOD member and mythologist.

1931 Handbuch des Druiden Ordens by H Wiese and H Fricke
Munich 1931
A good account of German fraternal organizations

1911 The Religion of the Ancient Celts by John Arnott MacCulloch
T&T Clark: Edinburgh (at Carleton) Outdated, but contains good collection of surviving modern Celtic customs until 1900.

1894 (1984 reprint) Irish Druids and Old Irish Religions by James Bonwick
Griffith, Farran & Co.: London (at Carleton) An honest, sensible approach to historical druidism, but terribly outdated.

1890 The Light of Britannia by Owen Morgen
D.Owen: Cardiff Written at the peak of really weird antiquarian beliefs.

1889 Ancient Egypt: Light of the World by Gerald Massey
Currently unavailable Former OBOD chief with small amounts of the group's teachings.

1887 The Welsh Question and Druidism by Griffith
R. Bank & Son: London (at Saint Olaf) Not too bad. An overview.

1887 Man in Search of his Soul by Gerald Massey
Currently unavailable Former OBOD chief with small amounts of the group's teachings.

1887 The Coming Religion by Gerald Massey
Currently unavailable Former OBOD chief with small amounts of the group's teachings.

1887 Seven Schools of Man by Gerald Massey
Currently unavailable Former OBOD chief with small amounts of the group's teachings.

1881 Book of the Beginnings by Gerald Massey
Currently unavailable Former OBOD chief with small amounts of the group's teachings.

1872 A Critical Study of Ezekiels: Temple and Israelites Found in Anglo-Saxons by William Carpenter
Supposedly another OBOD chief

1868 Barddas by John Williams
Llandovery (available at Carleton Archives) Reprint of the biggest fraudulent studies by Iolo Morganwyg in the 18th century. This books is chuck full of lies, although it is very interesting readings. Facing pages of Welsh and poor English translations.

1858 Taliesin: The Bards and Druids of Britain by David William Nash
John Russell Smith: London 1858 (PR8920.N3 at Dennison Univ. and Carleton Archives?) A **VERY GOOD** piece of critical study on the works of Rev. Davies, Owens & Evans. Nash provides original Welsh verses and a non-mystical translation. Much more interesting to read than Davies' actual book.

1840 Jerusalem by William Blake
Famous poem by a past OBOD chief, but quite long.

1838 The Neo-Druidic Heresy by Algernon Herbert
(Interlibrary loan copy too old, maybe available at Carleton?) Believed that the Culdee church was infiltrated by pagan Druids.

1838 Stonehenge: A Temple Restored to the British by Druids William Stukely
One of the founders of OBOD, who used primitive archeological methods to back up his suppositions. See Stuart Piggot for more information.

1830s Patriarchial Religion of Britain by D. James
No Information available

1830s Poems, Lyrics and Pastoral by Edward Evans
More questionable Welsh translations.

1829 The Celtic Druids by Godfrey Higgins
By a former OBOD chief.

1806 The Mythology and Rites of the British Druids Rev. Edward Davies
J. Booth: London (at Univ Minn & Carleton Archives) See "Celtic Researches,) this one deals with the Helio-Arkite Theory that Druids were the heirs of Noah's patriarchal religion.

1803 Celtic Researches by Rev. Edward Davies

J Booth: London (at Univ Minn & Carleton Archives) A widely read book that use poor translations of Welsh. Very difficult to read unless you know the Bible, Hebrew, Latin, Linguistics and Celtic Mythology. Full of Book. Heavily debunked by David Nash in 1858, but considered authoritative until then.

1745 Avebury: A temple of the British Druids by William Stukely

One founders of OBOD, this man was singularly responsible for linking Stonehenge and the Druids. Stuart Piggot aptly describes how this happens.

1726 (Repub 1978) The History of Celtic Religions and Learning by John Toland

(repub Norwood Editions: Norwood PA) One of the first modern books on Druidism. First Chief of OBOD. Writer of over 100 books. Early proponent of Stonehenge Druids

1717 State Anatomy of Great Britain by John Toland

First Chief of OBOD. Writer of over 100 books. Early proponent of Stonehenge Druids

1717 Pantheisticaon by John Toland

First Chief of OBOD. Writer of over 100 books. Early proponent of Stonehenge Druids

1697 Christianity not Mysterious by John Toland

First Chief of OBOD. Writer of over 100 books. Early proponent of Stonehenge Druids

Section Six:

The Book of Ancient Sources

2003 Introduction

This book was put together by myself over the summer of 1993 when I was into super-deep research on the Ancient Druids. While most people concentrate of using Ancient Irish and Welsh sources when trying to research the Druids, we often try to ignore the copious Classical Roman and Greek sources referring to the world into which (like or not) the Celtic countries were economically and militarily enmeshed. While it is true that many of the writers displayed arrogance and disdain towards the Celts, they do offer another means by which we can guage how far back many of the native traits and customs listed in medieval Christian texts, go back several hundred years, before literacy came to the Celtic realms.

One thing to keep in mind is that where one reference to Celtic RELIGIOUS practices is mentioned, there is usually several pages of reference in the material to ordinary customs and ways of life that, by some definitions, shed life on the world view of the Celts being described. I didn't have time to exhaustively pull out all such references, so please check the original materials (most of which have been republished or can be found in larger libraries, universities or on-line versions.) To fully understand these sources, how accurate they are, and what were their sources; I recommend reading "The Druids" by Kendrick, "The Druids" by Chadwick and "The Druids" by Piggott. Taken together, you will better understand these resources, before starting your own very rewarding research into the Classical world. Remember, you need to know Roman Empire history, as well as British & French Empire history to know the Celts. It's sadly the conquerors who have left most of the records throughout history of the conquered peoples.

Perhaps, given enough free time, I will try to reprint materials from native authors of Celtic realms. But that is another project, and it has already been mostly accomplished in The Celtic Heroic Age by John T. Koch (Editor,) John Carey (Editor.)

-Sincerely
Mike Scharding
March 21, 2003
Embassy of Japan, D.C.

1993 Introduction

Collected by Michael Scharding with a blatant disregard to copyright laws for his comprehensive studies in the history department at Carleton. Original language and English translation provided where possible. Except for one or two sources, it contains the original classical materials from 500 B.C.E. to 500 C.e. (Excepting early Irish Sagas) referred to in most modern books on Celtic religions.

Mike Scharding
31st Day of Foghamhar, Year XXXI of the Reform.
September 1st, 1993 C.E.

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Ammianus Marcellinus

Ammianus Marcellinus (C. 390-91 or later,) considered to be the last of the great Roman historians. He wrote of the period of A.D. 96-378. He appears to have been in Gaul with Ursicinus with whom he had served in the East. He is an important authority on the Druids, having obtained his material from much earlier sources, among whom he cites Timagenes (q.v.) with deep respect.

There is another item of testimony that must belong to the same period, if its author, Timagenes, is correctly identified with the rhetorician and historian who practiced at Rome in the time of Pompey, and afterwards under Augustus. The following extract from his lost account of the Gauls are given by Ammianus Marcellinus in the 4th Century, A.D.:

Ammianus Marcellinus,

Constantius et Gallus, xv, 9, 4:
"According to the Druids, a part of the population [of Gaul] was indigenous, but some of the people came from outlying islands and lands beyond the Rhine, driven from their homes by repeated wars and by the inroads of the sea."

Ammianus Marcellinus,

Constantius et Gallus, xv, 9, 4
"Drasidae memorant revera fuisse populi partem indigenam, sed alios quoque ab insulis extimis confluxisse et tractibus transrhenanis, crebritate bellorum et adluvione fervidi maris sedibus suis expulsos."

Ammianus Marcellinus,

Constantius et Gallus, xv, 9, 8:
"In these regions, as the people gradually became civilized, attention to the gentler arts became commoner, a study introduced by the Bards, and the Euhages, and the Druids. It was the custom of the Bards to celebrate the brave deeds of their famous men in epic verse accompanied by the sweet strain of the lyre, while Euhages strove to explain the high mysteries of nature. Between them came the Druids, men of greater talent, members of the intimate fellowship of the Pythagorean faith; they were uplifted by searchings into secret and sublime things, and with grand contempt for mortal lot they professed the immortality of the soul."

Ammianus Marcellinus,

Constantius et Gallus, xv, 9, 8:
"Per haec loca hominibus paulatim excultis viguere studia laudabilium doctrinarum, inchoata per bardos et euhagis et drasidas. Et bardi quidem fortia virorum illustrium facta heroicis composita versibus cum dulcibus lyrae modulis cantitarunt, euhages vero scrutantes seriem et sublimia naturae pandere conabantur. Inter eos dryaridae ingeniis celsiores, ut auctoritas Pythagorae decrevit, sodaliciis adstricti consortiis, quaestionibus occultarum rerum altarumque erecti sunt et depectantes humana pronuntiarunt animas immortales."

Ammianus Marcellinus

Constantius et Gallus, v. 11

In early times, when these regions lay in darkness as savage, they are though tot have been threefold, divided into Celts (the same as the Gauls,) the Aquitanians, and the Belgians, differing in language, habits and laws. Now the Gauls (who are the Celts) are separated from the Aquitanians by the Garonne river, which rises in the hills of the Pyrenees, and after running past many towns disappears in the Ocean. But from the Belgians this same nation is separate by the Marne and the Seine, rivers of identical size; they flow through the district of Lyons, and after encircling in the manner of an island, a stronghold of the Parisii called Lutetia, they unite in one channel, and flowing on together pour into the sea not far from Castra Constantia. Of all these nations for the Belgae had the reputation in the ancient writers of being the most valiant, for the reason that being far removed from civilized life and not made effeminate by imported luxuries, they warred for a long time with the Germans across the Rhine. The Aquitanians, on the contrary, to whose coasts, as being near at hand and peaceable, imported wares are conveyed, had their characters weakened to effeminacy and easily came under the sway of Rome.

Almost all the Gauls are of tall stature, fair and ruddy, terrible for the fierceness of their eyes, fond of quarrelling, and of overbearing insolence. In fact, a whole band of foreigners will be unable to cope with one of them in a fight, if he calls in his wife, stronger than he by far and with flashing eyes; least of all when she swells her neck and gnashes her teeth, and poising her huge white arms, proceeds to rain punches mingled with kicks, like shots discharged by the twisted cords of a catapult. The voices of most of them are formidable and threatening, alike when they are good natured or angry…

Ammianus Marcellinus,

Constantius et Gallus, v. 28:

"The druids, who were of a loftier intellect, and bound by the rules of brotherhood as decreed by Pythagoras' authority, were exalted by investigations of deep and serious study, and despising human affairs, declared souls to be immortal."

Ammianus Marcellinus, A.D. 380 :

Liber xv. c. 9

"...the Bards record the exploits of heroes, in poems, which they sing to the soft sound of the lyre..."

Ausonius

(Decimus Magnus Ausonius) (KEY), c.310–c.395, Latin poet and man of letters, b. Bordeaux. He tutored Gratian, who, when he ascended the throne, made Ausonius prefect of Gaul, and finally consul (379.) When Gratian died, Ausonius returned to Bordeaux. His work gives a detailed picture of contemporary people and places. *Mosella,* a description of his journey on the Moselle River, contains his best verse. Among his other works are *Parentalia,* verse sketches of dead relatives, and *Ordo nobilium urbium,* a description of 20 leading cities of the Roman world. Ausonius was nominally a Christian, although his works reveal many pagan beliefs.

Ausonius Commem.

Professorum IV 7-10

That such continuity between the Vates and the women fortune tellers is reasonable, is suggested by the fact that at the end of the 4th century we find that a pedigree reaching back to the druids themselves was still a boast of honourable ancestry. This is illustrated by two passages from Ausonius, and, although it does not by any means decide the question of the pretensions of the 3rd century diviners to the title of druids, at least it provides evidence of the continued memory of the order a hundred years later.

Ausonius.

Commem. Professorum, IV, 7-10

If report does not lie, you were sprung from the stock of the druids of Bayeux, and traced your hallowed line from the temple of Belenus.

Ausonius.

Commem. Professorum, IV, 7-10

Tu Baiocassi stripe Druidarum satus,
Si fama non fallit fidem,
Beleni sacratum ducis e templo genus,
Et inde vobis nomina.

Ausonius.

Commem. Professorum, X, 22-30

Nor must I leave unmentioned the old man Phoebicius, who, though keeper of Belenus's temple, got no profit thereby. Yet he, springs, as rumour goes, from the stock of the druids of Armorica (i.e. Brittany,) obtained a chair at Bordeaux by his son's help.

Ausonius.

Commem. Professorum, X, 22-30

Nec reticebo senem
Nomine Phoebicium
Qui Beleni aedituus
Nil opis inde tulit;
Set tamen, ut placitum,
Stirpe satus Druidum
Gentis Aremoricae,
Burdigalae cathedram
Nati opera obtinuit

Arrian

Arrian (known as Flavius Arrianus in Latin) was a historian and philosopher from Nicomedia in Bithynia, who lived in the 2nd century. His works included: Anabasis - seven books about Alexander the Great Indica - a supplement to the Anabasis describing India, and the voyage of Nearchus leading the Greek fleet on the return from India.

Arrian

1:5 Selection "On the Danube"

The same day he led his whole force back to camp, safe and sound. At this point (50 years before the Celts invaded Macedonia) Alexander was visited by envoys from Syrmus, the King of Triballians, and from the various other independent tribes along the Danube. The Celts from the Adriatic Sea also sent representatives – men of mighty demeanor and tall in proportion. All professed a desire for Alexander's friendship, and mutual pledges were given and received. Alexander asked the Celtic envoys what they were most afraid of in this world, hoping that the power of his own name had got as far as their country, or even further, and that they would answers, "you, my lord." However, he was disappointed; for the Celts, who lived a long way off in a country not easy to penetrate, and who could see that Alexander's expedition was directed elsewhere, replied that their worst fear was that the sky might fall on their heads. None the less, he concluded an alliance of friendship with them and sent them home, merely remarking under his breath that the Celts thought too much of themselves.

Pausanias

Pausanias (fl.c.160 CE): Pausanias, reputedly born in Lydia, was a Greek traveler (as well as Greece he also visited Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Macedonia, Epirus) during height of Roman rule. His most important work is the *Description of Greece* [Periegesis Hellados], a sort of tourist guidebook, which remains an invaluable text on ancient ruins.

The *Description of Greece* survives in ten books in the form of a tour of Greece starting in Attica. The first book seems to have been completed after 143 CE, but before 161CE. No event after 176CE is mentioned in the work.

Pausanias begins his description of each city with a synopsis of its history followed by an account of the monuments in topographical order. He also discusses local daily life, ceremonial rituals, legend and folklore. His main concentration is on artistic work from the glories of classical Greece, especially religious art and architecture. That he can be relied on for building and works which have since disappeared is shown by the accuracy of his descriptions of buildings which do survive.

Pausanias

Description of Greece xxi: 1-4

So despising the Greek army he advanced from Heracleia, and began the battle at sun-rise on the next day. He had no Greek soothsayer, and made no use of his own country's sacrifices, if indeed the Celts have any art of divination. Whereupon the Greeks attacked silently and in good order.

Athenaeus

Athenaeus (ca. 200) was a Greek writer, best remembered for his anthological anecdote collection Deipnosophistae of ancient authors. He also wrote Deipnosophistai (The Learned Banquet,) a book about two people discussing recipes. He is also called Athenaeus of Naucratis, since he was born in Naucratis, Egypt. Little else is known about him, except from what his books tell.

Athenaeus

Deipnosphistae. IV 150-4,160. VI 233-4,246, 249

Among the Celts, says Phylarchus in the sixth book, many loaves of bread are broken up and served lavishly on the tables, as well as pieces of meat taken from the cauldrons; no one tastes these without looking first to see whether the king has touched what is set before him. Again in Book iii, the same Phylarchus says that Ariamnes, who was a very rich Celt, publicly promised to entertain all Celts for a year, and he fulfilled this promise by the following method. At various points in their country he set stations along the most convenient highways, where he erected booths of vine-props and poles of reed and osiers, each booth holding four hundred men and even more, according to the space demanded in each station for the reception of the crowds which were expected to stream in from towns and villages. Here he set up large cauldrons, containing all kinds of meat, which he had caused to be forged the year before he intended to give the entertainment, sending for metal-workers from other cities. Many victims were slaughtered daily – bulls, hogs, sheep, and other cattle – casks of wine were made ready, and a large quantity of barley meal ready mixed. Phylarchus continues: "Not merely the Celts who came from the villages and towns profited by this, but even passing strangers were not allowed to depart by the slaves who served, until they had had a share of the food which had been prepared.

Poseidonius (He of the Porch,) in the Histories which he compiled, collected many usages and customs of many peoples germane to the philosophic tenets which he held; and he writes: "The Celts place hay on the ground when they serve their meals, which they take on wooden tables raised only slightly from the ground. Their food consists of a few loaves of bread, but of large quantities of meat prepared in water or roasted over coals or on spits. This they eat in a cleanly fashion, to be sure, but with a lion-like appetite, grasping whole joints with both hands and biting them off the bone; if, however, any pieces proves hard to tear away, they slice it off with a small knife, which lies at hand in it s sheath in a special box. Those who dwell beside rivers of by the inner and outer sea slope eat fish baked with salt, vinegar and cumin. The last they also drop into their wine. They use no olive oil, on account of its rarity, and being unfamiliar it seems to them unpleasant. When several dine together, they sit in a circle; but the mightiest among them, distinguished above the others for skill in war, or family connexions, or wealth, sits in the middle, like a chorus-leader. Beside him is the host, and next on either side the others according to their respective ranks. Men-at-arms carrying their oblong shields, stand close behind them, while their bodyguards, seated in a circle directly opposite, share in the feast like their masters. The attendants serve the drink in vessels resembling our spouted cups, either of clay or silver. Similar also are the platters which they have for serving food; but others use bronze platters, other still, baskets of wood or plaited wicker. The liquor drunk in the houses of the rich is wine brought from Italy and the country round Marseilles, and is unmixed; though sometimes a little water is added. But among the needier

inhabitants a beer is drunk made from wheat, with honey added; the masses drink it plain. It is called corma. They sip a little, not more than a small cupful, from the same cup, but they do it rather frequently. The slave carries the drink round from left to right and from right to left; this is the way in which they are served. They make obeisance to the gods, also, turning towards the right."

Posidonius again, describing the wealth of Lovernius, father of Bituis, who was deposed by the Romans, says that to win the favor of the mob he rode in a chariot through the fields scattering gold and silver among the myriads of Celts who followed him; he also made an enclosure twelve stades square, in which he set up vats filled with expensive wine, and prepared a quantity of food so great that for several days all who wished might enter and enjoy what was set before them, being served continuously. After he had finally set a limit to the feast, one of the native poets arrived too late; and meeting the chief, he sang his praises in a hymn extolling his greatness and lamenting his own lot in having come late. And the chief, delighted with this, called for a bag of gold and tossed it to the bard as he ran beside him. He picked it up and again sang in his honour, saying that the wheel tracks made by the chariot on the ground on which he drove bore golden benefits for men. All this Posidonius recorded in the twenty-third book.

In the twenty-third book of his Histories, Posidonius says: "The Celts sometimes have gladiatorial contests during dinner. Having assembled under arms, they indulge in sham fights and practice feints with one another; sometimes they proceed even to the point of wounding each other, and then, exasperated by this, if the company does not intervene, they go as far as to kill. In ancient times, he continues, we observe that when whole joints of meat were served, the best man received the thigh. But if another claimed it, they stood up to fight it out in single combat to the death. Others, again, would collect silver or gold, or in a number of jars of wine from the audience in the theatre, and having extracted a pledge that their award would be carried out, they would decree that the collection be distributed as presents to their dearest relatives; then they stretched themselves on their backs over their shields, and someone standing near would cut their throats with a sword." Euporion of Chaleis, in his Historical Notes, writes as follows; "Among the Romans twenty pounds are offered to any who will brave decapitation with an axe, on condition that their heirs receive the prize. And often, when too many are enrolled, they dispute which of them has the best right in each case to have his head cut off. "

iv. 160

Thereupon Magnus took the floor and said: "our altogether excellent Larensis has answered this glutton "dog" concerning "conch" keenly and well. But I will follow The Celts of the Paphian Sopater: "Among them it is the custom, whenever they win any success in battle, to sacrifice their captives to the gods; so I, imitating the Celts, have vowed to the heavenly powers that I shall burn three of those counterfeit dialecticians on the altar. Look you! Having listened to you solemnly professed your philosophy and your philology and your stoical endurance, I am going to make a test of your doctrines first by smoking them; then if I see one of you….."

vi. 233-4

Among the Celts, the tribe called Scordistae, though they refrain from importing gold into their own country, nevertheless do not pass silver by when they pillage and outrage other people's lands. This tribe is a remnant of the Celts who attacked the Delphic oracle under Brennus, but a leader named Bathanattus removed them to the regions round the Danube; from him also the road by which they retreated is called Bathanattia, and they call his descendants Bathanatti to this very day. They also eschew gold and do not bring it into their native towns, because through it they have undergone many terrible trials; but they use silver, and for its sake commit many terrible acts. And yet surely they ought not to have banished that class of metal so sacrilegiously stolen, but rather the impiety which they had committed the sacrilege. For if they had not brought silver into their country any more than gold, then they would sin with respect to bronze and iron; or, again, if even these were not found among them, then they would be continually exercising their craze for war in order to steal food and drink and other necessities."

vi. 246

Ptolemy, the son of Agesarchus, who was a native of Megalopolis, say, in the second book of his Inquiries Relating to Philopator, that drinking-companions for that king used to gather from ever city, who were called "laugh-artists." Posidonius of Apameia says, in the twenty third book of his Histories: "The Celts, even when they go to war, carry round with them living-companions whom they call parasites. These persons recite their praises before men when they are gathered in large companies as well as before any individual who listens to them in private. And their entertainments are furnished by the so-called Bards; these are poets, as it happens, who recite praises in song."

vi. 249

Nicolas of Damascus (he was of the Peripatetic School) in his bulk History (for there are one hundred and forty books) says, in the one hundred and sixteenth book, that Adiatomus, the King of the Sotiani, which is a Celtic tribe, had six hundred picked men as a body-guard, called by the Celts in their native tongue "siloduri"; this in Greek means "bound by a vow." "These men the kings keep to live and die with them, since that is the vow which the picked men make. In return for this they exercise power with him, wearing the same dress and having the same mode of life, and they are absolutely bound to die with him, whether the king dies of disease or in battle or in any other manner. And no one can tell of any case where one of these men played the coward or evaded death whenever it came to the king."

Dio Cassius

Dio Cassius

Roman History LXII 6&7

"Let us show them that they are hares and foxes trying to rule over dogs and wolves." When she finished speaking, she employed a species of divination, letting a hare escape from the fold of her dress; and since it ran on what the considered the auspicious side, the whole multitude shouted with pleasure, and Buduica, raising her hand toward heaven, said, "I thank thee, Andraste, and call upon thee as woman speaking to woman, for I rule over no burden–bearing Egyptians as did Nitocris, nor over trafficking Assyrians as did Semiramis (for we have by now gained this much learning from the Romans!,) much less over the Romans themselves as did Messalina once and afterwards Agrippina and now Nero (who, though in name is a man, is in fact a woman, as is proved by his singing, lyre-playing and beautification of his person); nay, those over whom I rule are Britons, men that know not how to till the soil or ply a trade, but we are thoroughly versed in the art of war and hold all things in common, even children and wives, so that the latter possess the same valour as the men. As the queen, then, of such men and of such women, I supplicate and pray thee for victory, preservation of life, and liberty against men insolent, unjust, insatiable, impious, if indeed we ought to term those people men who bathe in warm water, eat artificial dainties, drink unmixed wine, anoint themselves with myrrh, sleep on soft couches with boys for bedfellows, boys past their prime at that, and are slaves to a lyre-player and a poor one too. Wherefore may this Mistress Domitia Nergo reign no longer over me or over you men; let the wench sing and lord it over Romans, for they surely deserve to be the slaves of such a woman after having submitted to her so long. But for us, Mistress, be though alone ever our leader."

Having finished an appeal to her people of this general tenor, Buduica led her army against the Romans; for these chanced to be without a leader, inasmuch as Paulinus, their commander, had gone on an expedition to Mona, an island near Britain. This enabled her to sack and plunder two Roman cities, and, as I have said, to wreak indescribable slaughter. Those who were taken captive by the Britons were subjected to every known for of outrage. The worst and most bestial atrocity committed by their captors was the following. They hung up naked the noblest and most distinguished women and then cut off their breasts and sewed them to their mouths, in order to make the victims appear to be eating them; afterwards they impaled the omen on sharp skewers run lengthwise through the entire body. All this they did to the accompaniment of sacrifices, banquets and wanton behavior, not only in all their other sacred places, but particularly in the grove of Andate. This was their name for Victory, and they regarded her with the most exceptional reverence. Now it chanced that Paulinus had already brought Mona to terms, and so on learning of the disaster in Britain, he at once set sail hither from Mona. However, he was not willing to risk a conflict with the….."

Caeser

Caius Julius Cæsar, B.C. 99-44 :

De Bello Gallico, Liber vi., cc. 13-18:

The quotations on this page are those used by the Rev. J. Williams Ab Ithel, M.A., from his works "Barddas - the Bardo-Druidic System of the Isle of Britain" published by the Welsh MSS Society in 1862

"They preside over sacred things, have the charge of public and private sacrifices, and explain their religion. To them a great number of youths have recourse for the sake of acquiring instruction, and they are in great honour among them. For they generally settle all their disputes, both public and private; and if there is any transgression perpetrated, any murder committed, or any dispute about inheritance or boundaries, they decide in respect of them; they appoint rewards and penalties; and if any private or public person abides not by their decree, they restrain him from the sacrifices. This with them is the most severe punishment. Whoever are so interdicted, are ranked in the number of the impious and wicked; all forsake them, and shun their company and conversation, lest they should suffer disadvantage from contagion with them: nor is legal right rendered to them when they sue it, nor any honour conferred upon them. But one presides over all these Druids, who possess the supreme authority among them. At his death, if any one of the others excels in dignity, the same succeeds him: but if several have equal pretensions, the president is elected by the votes of the Druids, sometimes they even contend about the supreme dignity by force of arms. At a certain time of the year, they assemble in session on a consecrated spot in the confines of the Carnutes, which is considered the central region of the whole of Gaul. Thither all, who have any disputes, come together from any side, and acquiesce in their judgments and decisions. The institution is thought to have originated in Britain, and to have been thence introduced into Gaul; and even now those who wish to become more accurately acquainted with it, generally repair thither, for he sake of learning it."

"The Druids usually abstain from war, nor do they pay taxes together with the others; they have exemption from warfare, and the free use of all things. Instigated by such advantages, many resort to their school even of their own accord, whilst others are sent by their parents and relations. They are said to thoroughly know a great number of verses. On that account, some continue at their education for twenty years. Nor do they deem it lawful to commit those things to writing; though, generally, in other cases, and in their public and private accounts, they use Greek letters. They appear to me to have established this custom for two reasons; because they would not have their tenets published, and because they would not have those, who learn them, by trusting to letters, neglect the exercise of memory; since it generally happens, that, owing to the safeguard of letters, they relax their diligence in learning, as well as their memory. In particular they wish to inculcate this idea, that souls do not die, but pass after death from one body to another; and they think that by this means men are very much instigated to the exercise of bravery, the fear of death being despised. They also dispute largely concerning the stars and their motion, the magnitude of the world and the earth, the nature of things, the force and power of the immortal gods, and instruct the youth in their principles."

"The whole nation of Gauls is very much given to religious observances, and on that account, those affected with grievous diseases, and those who are engaged in battles and

perils, either immolate men as sacrifices, or vow that they will immolate themselves, and they employ Druids as ministers of those sacrifices; because they think that the life of a man is not given for the life of man, the immortal gods cannot be appeased; they have also instituted public sacrifices of the same kind. Some have images of immense size, the limbs of which, interwoven with twigs, they fill with living men, and the same being set on fire, the men, surrounded by the flames, are put to death. They think the punishment of those who are caught in theft or pillage, or in any other wicked act, is more acceptable to the immortal gods; but when there is a deficiency of such evil doers, they have recourse even to the punishment of the innocent."

"They chiefly worship the god Mercury; of him they have many images, him they consider as the inventor of all arts, as the guide of ways and journeys, and possessing power for obtaining money and merchandise. After him, they worship Apollo, Mars, Jupiter, and Minerva. Concerning them they have almost the same opinions as other nations, namely: that Apollo wards of diseases; that Minerva instructs them in the principles of works and arts; that Jupiter holds the empire of heaven; and that Mars rules wars. To him, when they have determined to engage in battle, they generally vow those things which they shall have captured in war. When they are victorious, they sacrifice the captured animals; and pile up the other things in one place."

"The Gauls declare that they have all sprung from their father Pluto, and this they say was delivered to them by the Druids."

Cæsar, C. J.,

De Bello Gallico, vi, 13,

[Transl., H. J. Edwards, 1917, Loeb Library]:

"Throughout Gaul there are two classes of persons of definite account and dignity. As for the common folk, they are treated almost as slaves, venturing naught of themselves, never taken into counsel. The more part of them, oppressed as they are either by debt, or by the heavy weight of tribute, or by the wrongdoing of the more powerful men, commit themselves in slavery to the nobles, who have, in fact, the same rights over them as masters over slaves. Of the two classes above-mentioned, one consists of Druids, the other of knights.

"The former are concerned with divine worship, the due performance of sacrifices, public and private, and the interpretation of ritual questions: a great number of young men gather about them for the sake of instruction and hold them in great honour. In fact, it is they who decide in almost all disputes, public and private; and if any crime has been committed, or murder done, or there is any dispute about succession or boundaries, they also decide it, determining rewards and penalties: if any person or people does not abide by their decision, they ban such from sacrifice, which is their heaviest penalty. Those that are so banned are reckoned as impious and criminal; all men move out of their path and shun their approach and conversation, for fear they may get some harm from their contact, and no justice is done if they seek it, no distinction falls to their share.

"Of all these Druids one is chief, who has the highest authority among them. At his death, either any other that is pre-eminent in position succeeds, or, if there be several of equal standing, they strive for the primacy by the vote of the Druids, or sometimes even with armed force. These Druids, at a certain time of the year, meet within the borders of Carnutes, whose territory is reckoned as the centre of all Gaul, and sit in conclave in a consecrated spot. Thither assemble from every side all that have disputes, and they obey the decisions and judgments of the Druids. It is believed that their rule of life was discovered in Britain and transferred thence to Gaul; and to-day those who would study the subject more accurately journey, as a rule, to Britain to learn it."

Cæsar, Caius Julius,

De Bello Gallico, vi, 13,

[Transl., H. J. Edwards, 1917, Loeb Library]:

"In omni Gallia eorum hominum qui aliquo sunt numero atque honore genera sunt duo. Nam plebes paene servorum habetur loco, quae nihil audet per se, nulli adhibetur consilio.... Sed de his duobus generibus alterum est druidum, alterum equitum.

Illi rebus divinis intersunt, sacrificia publica ac privata procurant, religiones interpretantur; ad hos magnus adulescentium numerus disciplinae causa concurrit, magnoque hi sunt apud eos honore. Nam fere de omnibus controversiis publicis privatisque constituunt, et si quod est facinus admissum, si caedes facta, si de hereditate, de finibus controversia est, idem decernunt, praemia poenasque constituunt; si qui aut privatis aut populus eorum decreto non stetit, sacrificiis interdicunt. Haec poena apud eos est gravissima. Quibus ita est interdictum, hi numero impiorum ac sceleratorum habentur, his omnes decedunt, aditum sermonemque defugiunt, ne quid ex contagione in commodi accipiant, neque iis petentibus ius redditur neque honos ullus communicatur.

His autem omnibus druidibus praeest unus, qui summam inter eos habet auctoritatem. Hoc mortuo aut si qui ex reliquis excellit dignitate succedit, aut, si sunt plures pares, suffragio druidum, nonnumquam etiam armis de principatu contendunt. Hi certo anni tempore in finibus Carnutum, quae regio totius Galliae media habetur, considunt in loco consecrato. Huc omnes undique qui controversias habent, conveniunt eorumque decretis iudiciisque parent. Disciplina in Brittania reperta atque inde in Galliam translata existimatur, et nunc qui diligentius eam rem cognoscere volunt plerumque illo discendi causa proficiscuntur."

Cæsar, C. J.,

De Bello Gallico, vi, 14,

[Transl., H. J. Edwards, 1917, Loeb Library]:

"The Druids usually hold aloof from war, and do not pay war taxes with the rest; they are excused from military service and exempt from all liabilities. Tempted by these great rewards, many young men assemble of their own motion to receive their training; many are sent by parents and relatives. Report says that in the school of the Druids they learn by heart a great number of verses, and therefore some persons remain twenty years under training. And they do not think it proper to commit these utterances to writing, although in almost all other matters, and in their public and private accounts, they make use of Greek letters.

I believe they have adopted the practice for two reasons - that they do not wish the rule to become common property, nor those who learn the rule to rely on writing and so neglect the cultivation of the memory; and, in fact, it does usually happen that the assistance of writing tends to relax the diligence of the student and the action of the memory. The cardinal doctrine

which they seek to teach is that souls do not die, but after death pass from one to another; and this belief, as the fear of death is thereby cast aside, they hold to be the greatest incentive to valour. Besides this, they have many discussions touching the stars and their movement, the size of the universe and of the earth, the order of nature, the strength and the powers of the immortal gods, and hand down their lore to the young men."

Cæsar, Caius Julius,

De Bello Gallico, vi, 14,

[Transl., H. J. Edwards, 1917, Loeb Library]:

"Druides a bello abesse consuerunt neque tributa una cum reliquis pendunt; militiae vacationem omniumque rerum habent immunitatem. Tantis excitati praemiis et sua sponte multi in disciplinam conveniunt et a parentibus propinquisque mittuntur. Magnum ibix numerum versuum ediscere dicuntur. Itaque annos non nulli vicenos in disciplina permanent. Neque fas esse existimant ea litteris mandare, cum in reliquis fere rebus, publicis privatisque rationibus, Graecis litteris utantur.

Id mihi duabus de causis instituisse videntur, quod neque in vulgus disciplinam effere velint neque eos qui discant litteris confisos minus memoriae studere; quod fere plerisque accidit ut praesidio litterarum diligentiam in suadere, non interire animas, sed ab aliis post mortem transire ad alios, atque hoc maxime ad virtutem excitari putant metu mortis neglecto. Multa praeterea de sideribus atque eorum motu, de mundi ac terrarum magnitudine, de rerum natura, de deorum immortalium vi ac potestate disputant et iuventuti tradunt"

Cæsar, C. J.,

De Bello Gallico, vi, 16,

[Transl., H. J. Edwards, 1917, Loeb Library]:

"The whole nation of the Gauls is greatly devoted to ritual observances, and for that reason those who are smitten with the more grievous maladies and who are engaged in the perils of battle either sacrifice human victims or vow so to do, employing the Druids as ministers for such sacrifices. They believe, in effect, that, unless for a man's life a man's life be paid, the majesty of the immortal gods may not be appeased; and in public, as in private, life they observe an ordinance of sacrifices of the same kind. Others use figures of immense size, whose limbs, woven out of twigs, they fill with living men and set on fire, and the men perish in a sheet of flame. They believe that the execution of those who have been caught in the act of theft or robbery or some crime is more pleasing to the immortal gods; but when the supply of such fails they resort to the execution even of the innocent."

Cæsar, Caius Julius,

De Bello Gallico, vi, 16,

[Transl., H. J. Edwards, 1917, Loeb Library]:

"Natio est omnis Gallorum admodum dedita religionibus, atque ob eam causam qui sunt adfecti gravioribus morbis quique in proeliis periculisque versantur aut pro victimis homines immolant aut se immolatorus vovent, administrisque ad ea sacrificia druidibus utuntur, quod, pro vita hominis nisi hominis vita reddatur, non posse deorum immortalium numen placari arbitrantur, publiceque eiusdem generis habent instituta sacrificia. Alii immani magnitudine simulacra habent, quorum contexta viminibus membra vivis hominibus complent; quibus succensis circumventi flamma exanimantur homines. Supplicia eorum, qui in furto aut in lactrocinio aut aliqua noxia sint comprehensi, gratiora dis immortalibus esse arbitrantur; sed, cum eius generis copia defecit, etiam ad innocentium supplicia descendunt."

Cæsar, C. J.,

De Bello Gallico, vi, 18, 1,

[Transl., H. J. Edwards, 1917, Loeb Library]:

"The Gauls affirm that they are all descended from a common father, Dis, and say that this is the tradition of the Druids."

Cæsar, Caius Julius,

De Bello Gallico, vi, 18, 1,

[Transl., H. J. Edwards, 1917, Loeb Library]:

"Galli se omnes ab Dito patre prognatus praedicant idque ab druidibus proditum dicunt."

Cæsar, C. J.,

De Bello Gallico, vi, 21, 1,

[Transl., H. J. Edwards, 1917, Loeb Library]:

"The Germans differ much from this manner of living. They have no Druids to regulate divine worship, no zeal for sacrifices."

Cæsar, Caius Julius,

De Bello Gallico, vi, 21, 1,

[Transl., H. J. Edwards, 1917, Loeb Library]:

"Germani multum ab hac consuetudine differunt. Namque neque Druides habent, qui rebus divinis praesint, neque sacrificiis student."

English text of above

Dio Chrysostum

Dio Chrysostom (C. Ad. 40 until after 112,) an eminent Greek Sophist and rhetorician under the Roman Empire, grandfather of Dio Cassius. He was born near Mount Olympus, and came to Rome under Vespasian. He was banished from Italy under Domitian and wandered in Thrace and Scythia and the land of the Getae, but was reinstated in favour later under Nerva and Trajan. Eighty of his orations or essays on politics and philosophy have survived. He became a convert to Stoicism in later life. Among his lost works were attacks on philosophers and also on the Emperor Domitian. The evidence of Dion Chrysostom, the golden mouthed orator, dates from about A.D. 100.

Dio Chrysostom, (c. A.D.40 - after 112,)

Oratio xlix: (Teub., 1919, pp. 123, 124)

The Persians, I think, have men called Magi, the Egyptians, their priests, and the Indians, their Brahmins. On the other hand, the Kelts have men called Druids, who concern themselves with divination and all branches of wisdom. And without their advice even kings dared not resolve upon nor execute any plans, so that in truth it was they who ruled, while the kings, who sat on golden thrones and fared sumptuously in their palaces, became mere ministers of the Druid's will.

Cicero

(Marcus Tullius Cicero) or Tully, 106 B.C.–43 B.C., greatest Roman orator, famous also as a politician and a philosopher. Cicero studied law and philosophy at Rome, Athens, and Rhodes. His political posts included those of curule aedile (69 B.C.,) praetor (66 B.C.,) and consul (63 B.C..) He was always a member of the senatorial party, and as party leader he successfully prosecuted Catiline. Later he was unable to prove that he had legal sanction to execute five members of Catiline's group, and on the charge of illegality he was exiled (58 B.C.) by his personal enemy, Clodius. He was recalled by Pompey the following year and was hailed as a hero.

Strongly opposed to Julius Caesar, Cicero was a leader of the party that caused him to convene (56 B.C.) the triumvirate at Lucca. In 51 B.C. he was governor of Cilicia, and on his return he joined Pompey against Caesar. After the civil war Caesar forgave Cicero, and he lived in honor at Rome under the dictatorship. He did not take part in the assassination of Caesar, but he applauded it. He and Marc Antony were bitter enemies, and Antony attacked Cicero in the senate. Cicero replied in the *First Philippic* and the *Second Philippic,* in which he sought to defend the republic. When Octavian (later Augustus) took Rome, he allowed Antony to put Cicero's name among those condemned, and Cicero was put to death on Dec. 7, 43 B.C.

Cicero

De Divination into I, XLI 15, 36, 90

Cicero (106-143 B.C.,) orator, author, letter-writer, and the greatest Latin prose stylists. His chief residences were first in Rom and later in his villa at Tusculum, but he studied in Rhodes where he had known Posidonius. He wrote the De Divinatione about eight years after Caesar had published the commentaries.

Cicero,

De Divinatione, I xli, 90,

[Transl. Judge Falconer, 1922, Loeb Library]:

"Nor is the practice of divination disregarded even among uncivilized tribes, if indeed there are Druids in Gaul - and there are, for I knew one of them myself, Divitiacus, the Æduan, your guest and eulogist. He claimed to have that knowledge of nature which the Greeks call "physiological," and he used to make predictions, sometimes by means of augury and sometimes by means of conjecture."

Cicero,

De Divinatione, I xli, 90,

[Transl. Judge Falconer, 1922, Loeb Library]:

"Eaque divinationum ratio ne in barbaris quidem gentibus neglecta est, siquidem et in Gallia Druidae sunt, quibus ipse Divitiacum Aeduum, hospitem tuum laudatoremque, cognovi, qui et naturae rationem quam [xxxxxxxxxxx] Graeci appellant, notam esse sibi profitebatur et partim auguriis, partim coniectura, quae essent futura, dicebat."

Cicero,

De Divinatione, I xli, 90,

[Transl. Judge Falconer, 1922, Loeb Library]:

How reliable were the auspices at the time you became a member of the College of Augurs! Nowadays, if you will forgive me for saying so, Roman augurs ignore them, though they are respected by the Cilicians, Pamphyllans, Pisidians, and Lycians. It is hardly necessary to mention our illustrious and excellent guest, King Deiotarus of the Galatians, who never embarks upon any undertaking without first consulting the auspices. Why, once upon a time, warned by the flight of an eagle, he returned home after having started upon a journey which he had previously planned and arranged; the very next night, the chamber in which he would have slept, had he continued his trip, crashed in ruin. He himself told me that such a portent had frequently caused him to abandon an expedition, even though he might have been upon the road many days. Incidentally, that was a noble and memorable statement he made after Caesar had taken from hi his tetarchy and his kingdom and imposed an indemnity upon him. He declared that he had no regrets with reference to the auspices which had smiled upon his alliance with Poempey for by following their guidance he had

been able to defend with arm the authority of the Senate, the freedom of the Roman people, and the majesty of the empire. The birds, he said, which had guided his course into the ways of loyalty and honor had counseled him well, since he prized his good name far above his riches. Now there is a man who appears to me to have the correct conception of augury.

But enough of this problem; I shall return to it sometime, when I can examine it in greater detail. Let us now give our attention to other peoples and their augural practices – which we shall find to be more superstitious than merely artificial. They use virtually all varieties of birds, whereas we employ only a few; their ideas and our as to what omens are favorable show wide divergence. Deiotarus used to ply me with questions about Roman augury, and I was just as eager for information concerning the system practiced in his state. Immortal gods, what a difference! In some particulars they were diametrically opposed the one to the other. He was forever consulting the auspices, but we hardly ever do, except when we receive a mandate from the people….

Supremely ridiculous is your insistence that Deiotarus had no regrets with respect to the omens which were given him as he began his march to join Pompey, "because they had guided his course into the ways of loyalty and friendship toward the roman people, and of duty and honor, for he prized his good name and fame above his kingdom and his riches." All that may be quite true, but it has no connection with auspices, for no raven was needed to inform him that he was acting the part of an upright man in preparing to uphold the freedom of the Roman people. He should have understood that without any prompting by a raven, and of course, he did. Now Birds predict events propitious or calamitous. But I can see that Deiotarus was led by the auspices of virtue, which forbids us even to glance at fortune until we have satisfied all the demands of integrity. In his case, however, if the birds forecast a favorable turn of events, they certainly defrauded him. He fled from the battle in the company of Pompey – tragic sight!

Epistle to the Galatians

New Testament

In the course of centuries, gallic tribes, related to those that invaded Italy and sacked Rome, wandered east through Illyricum and Pannonia. At length they penetrated through Macedonia (279 B.C.,) and assembled in great numbers under a prince entitled Brennus, for the purpose of invading Greece and plundering the rich temple of Delphi. The leaders disagreed and the host soon divided, one portion, under Brennus, marching south on Delphi: the other division, under Leonorius and Luterius, turned eastward and overran Thrace, the country round Byzantium. Shortly afterwards they were joined by the small remnants of the army of Brennus, who was repulsed by the Greeks, and killed himself in despair. In 278 B.C., 20,000 Gauls, under Leonorius, Luterius, and fifteen other chieftains, crossed over to Asia Minor, in two divisions. On reuniting they assisted Nicomedes I, King of Bithynia, to defeat his younger brother; and as a reward for their services he gave them a large tract of country, in the heart of Asia Minor, henceforward to be known as Galatia.

The Galatians consisted of three tribes:

the Tolistboboii, on the west, with Pessinus as their chief town;

the Tectosages, in the centre, with their capital Ancyra; and

the Trocmi, on the east, round their chief town Tavium.

Each tribal territory was divided into four cantons or tetrarchies. Each of the twelve tetrarchs had under him a judge and a general. A council of the nation consisting of the tetararchs and three hundred senators was periodically held at a place called Drynemeton, twenty miles southwest of Ancyra.

That these people were Gauls (and not Germans as has sometimes been suggested) is proved by the testimony of Greek and Latin writers, by their retention of the Gallic language till the fifth century, and by their personal and place names. A tribe in the west of Gaul in the time of Caesar (Bell. Gall., VI, xxiv) was called Tectosages. In Tolistoboii we have the root of the word Toulouse, and in Boii the well known Gallic tribe. Brennus probably meant prince; and Strabo says he was called Prausus, which in Celtic means terrible. Luterius is the same as the Celtic Lucterius, and there was a British saint called Leonorius. Other names of chieftains are of undoubted Gallic origin, e.g. Belgius, Achichorius, Gaezatio-Diastus. Brogoris (same root as Brogitarus, Allobroges,) Bitovitus, Eposognatus (compare Caesar's Boduognatus, etc.,) Combolomarus (Caesar has Virdomarus, Indutionmarus,) Adiorix, Albiorix, Ateporix (like Caresar's Dumnorix, Ambbiorix, Vercingetorix,) Brogitarus, Deiotarus, etc. Place names are of a similar character, e.g. Drynemeton, the "temple of the oaks" or The Temple, from nemed, "temple" (compare Augustonemetum in Auvergene, and Vernemeton, "the great temple," near Bordeaux,) Eccobriga, Rosologiacum, Teutobodiacum, etc. (For a detailed discussion of the question see Lightfoot's "Galatians," dissertation i, 4th ed., London, 1874, 235.)

As soon as these Gauls, or Galatians, had gained a firm footing in the country assigned to them, they began to send out marauding expeditions in all directions. They became the terror of their neighbours, and levied contributions on the whole of Asia Minor west of the Taurus. They fought with varying success against Antiochus, King of Syria, who was called Soter from his having saved his country from them. At length Attlaus I, King of Pergamun, a friend of the Romans, drove them back and confined them to Galatia about 235-232 B.C. After this many of them became mercenary soldiers; and in the great battle of

Magnesia, 180 B.C., a body of such Galatian troops fought against the Romans, on the side of Antiochus the Great, King of Syria. He was utterly defeated by the Romans, under Scipio Asiaticus, and lost 50,000 of his men. Next year the Consul Manlius entered Galatia, and defeated the Galatians in two battles graphically described by Livy, XXXVIII, xvi. These events are referred to in I Mach., viii. On account of ill-treatment received at the hands of Mithradates I King of Pontus, the Galatians took the side of Pompey in the Mitradatic wars (64 B.C..) As a reward for their services, Deiotarus, their chief tetrarch, received the title of king, and his dominions were greatly extended. Henceword the Galatians were under the protection of the Romans, and were involved in all the troubles of the civil wars that followed. They supported Pompey against Julius Caesar at the battle of Pharsalia (48 B.C..) Amyntas, their last king was set up by Mark Antony, 39 B.C. His kingdom finally included not only Galatia Proper but also the great plains to the south, together with parts of Lyesonia, Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Phrygia, i.e. the country containing the towns Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe. Amyntas went to Actium, 31 B.C., to support Mark Antony; but like many others he went over, at the critical moment, to the side of Octavianus, afterwards called Augustus. Augustus confirmed him in his kingdom, which he retained until he was slain in ambush, 25 B.C. After the death of Amyntas, Augustus made this kingdom into the Roman province of Galatia, so that this province had been in existence more than 75 years when St. Paul wrote to the Galatians.

THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH GALATIAN THEORIES

St. Paul addresses his letter to the churches of Galatia (Gal., i, 2) and calls them Galatians (Gal, iii, 1); and in I Cor., vi, 1, he speaks of the collections which he ordered to be made in the churches of Galatia. But there are two theories as to the meaning of these terms. It is the opinion of Lipsius, Lightfoot, Davidson, Chase, Findlay, etc., that the Epistle was addressed to the people of Galatia Proper, situated in the centre of Asia Minor, towards the north (North Galatian Theory.) Others, such as Renan, Perrot, Weizsacker, Hausrath, Zahn, Pfleiderer, Gifford, Rendell, Holtzmann, Clemen, Ramsay, Cornely, Page, Knowling, etc., hold that it was addressed to the southern portion of the Roman province of Galatia, containing Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, which were visited by Saints Paul and Barnabas, during their first missionary journey (South Galatian Theory.)

Lightfoot was the chief upholder of the North-Galatian theory; but a great deal has become known about the geography of Asia Minor since he wrote in the eighteenth century, and the South-Galatian Theory has proportionately gained ground. A German Catholic professor, Stinmann (Der Liserkreis des Galaterbriefes,) has, however, recently (1908) given Lightfoot his strong support, though it must be admitted that he has done little more than emphasize and expand the arguments of Chase. The great coryphaeus of the South-Galatian theory is Prof. Sire W.M. Ramsay. The following is a brief summary of the principal arguments on both sides.

(1) The fact that the Galatians were being changed so soon to another gospel is taken by Lightfoot as evidence of the characteristic fickleness of the Gauls. Ramsay replies that tenacity in matters of religion has ever been characteristic of the Celts. Besides, it is precarious to argue from the political mobility of the Gauls, in the time of Caesar, to the religious inconsistency of Galatians, whose ancestors left the West four hundred years before. The Galatians received St. Paul as an angel from heaven (Gal., iv, 14.) Lightfoot sees in this enthusiastic reception proof of Celtic fickleness of character. In the same way it may be proved that the 5000 converted by St. Peter at Jerusalem, and, in fact, that, nearly all the converts of St. Paul were Celts. Acts (xiii-xiv) gives sufficient indications of fickleness in South Galatia. To take but one instance: at Lystra the multitude could scarcely be restrained from sacrificing to St. Paul; shortly afterwards they stoned him and left him for dead.

(2) St. Paul warns the Galatians not to abuse their liberty from the obligations of the Law of Moses, by following the works of the flesh. He then gives a long catalogue of vices. From this Lightfoot selects two (methai, komoi) as evidently pointing to Celtic failings. Against this it may be urged that St. Paul, writing to the Romans (xiii, 13,) exhorts them to avoid these two very vices. St. Paul, in giving such an enumeration here and elsewhere, evidently does not intend to paint the peculiar failings of any race, but simply to reprobate the works of the flesh, of the carnal or lower man; "they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God" (Gal., v. 21.)

(3) Witchcraft is also mentioned in this list. The extravagant devotion of Deiotarus, says Lightfoot, "fully bears out the character ascribed to the parent race." But the Emperor Tiberius and many officials in the empire were ardent devotees of augury. Sorcery is coupled by St. Paul with idolatry, and it was its habitual ally not only amongst the Gauls but throughout the pagan world.

(4) Lightfoot says that the Galatians were drawn to Jewish observances; and he takes this as evidence of the innate Celtic propensity to external ceremonial, "appealing rather to the senses and passions than the heart and mind." This so-called racial characteristic may be questioned, and it is a well-known fact that the whole of the aboriginal inhabitants of Asia Minor were given over heart and soul to gross pagan cermonial. We do not gather from the Epistle that the Galatians were naturally attracted to Jewish ceremonies. They were only puzzled or rather dazed (iii, 1) by the specious arguments of the Judaizers, who endeavoured to persuade them that they were not as perfect Christians as if they adopted circumcision and the Law of Moses.

(5) On the South-Galatian theory it is supposed that the Epistle was written soon after St. Paul's second visit to Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, etc. (Acts, xvi.) Lightfoot makes use of a strong argument against this early date. He shows, by a detailed examination, that the Epistle bears a close resemblance, both in argument and language, to parts of the Epistle to the Romans. This he thinks can be accounted for only on the supposition that both were written about the same time, and, therefore, several years later than the date required for the South-Galatian view. To this date required for the South-Galatian view. To this Rendell (Expositor's Greek Test., London, 1903.p. 144) replies that the coincidence is not due to any similarity in the circumstances of the two communities. "Still less can the identity of language be fairly urged to prove an approximation of the two epistles. For these fundamental truths formed without doubt the staple of the Apostle's teaching throughout the years of continuous transition from Jewish to Christian doctrine, and his language in regard to them could not fail to become in some measure stereotyped."

(6) The controversy has raged most fiercely round the two verses in Acts, xvi, 6 and xviii, 23, the only places where there is any reference to Galatia in Acts:

"And they went through the Phrygian and Galatian region" (ten phrygian kai Galatiken choran);

"he departed and went through the Galatian region and Phrygia" (or "Phrygian") (ten Galatiken choran kai phyrgian.)

Lightfoot held that Galatia Proper was meant in the second. Other supporters of the North-Galatian theory think that the countries of North Galatia and Phrygia are meant in both cases. Their opponents, relying on the expression of contemporary

writers, maintain that South Galatia was intended in both places. The former also interpret the second part of xvi, 6 (Greek text) as meaning that the travellers went through Phrygia and Galatia after they had passed through South Galatia, because they were forbidden to preach in Asia. Ramsey, on the other hand, maintains that after they had passed through the portion of Phrygia which had been added to the southern part of the province of Galatia (and which could be called indifferently Galatian or Phrygian) they passed to the north because they were forbidden to preach in Asia. He holds that the order of the verbs in the passage is in the order of time, and he gives examples of similar use of the aorist participle (St. Paul The Traveller, London, 1900, pp. ix, 211, 212.)

The arguments on both sides are too technical to be given in a short article. The reader may be referred to the following: North-Galatian: Chase, "Expositor," Dec. 1893. p.401, May, 1894, p.331; Steinmann, "Der Leserkreis des Galaterbriefes" (Münster, 1908), p. 191. On the South-Galatian side: Ramsey, "Expositor," Jan., 1894, p. 42, Feb., p. 137, Apr., p. 288, "St. Paul The Traveller," etc; Knowling, "Acts of the Apostles," Additional note to ch. xviii (Expositor's Greek Test., London, 1900, p. 399); Gifford, "Expositor," July, 1894, p. I.

(7) The Galatian churches were evidently important ones. On the North-Galatian theory, St. Luke dismissed their conversion in a single sentence: "They went through the Phrygian and Galatian region" (Acts, xvi, 6.) This is strange, as his plan throughout is to give an account of the establishment of Christianity by St. Paul in each new region. Lightfoot fully admits the force of this, but tries to evade it by asking the question: "Can it be that the historian gladly drew a veil over the infancy of a church which swerved so soon and so widely from the purity of the Gospel?" But the subsequent failings of the Corinthians did not prevent St. Luke from giving an account of their conversion. Besides, the Galatians had not swerved so widely from the purity of the Gospel. The arguments of the judaizers made some of them waver, but they had not accepted circumcision; and this Epistle confirmed them in the Faith, so that a few years later St. Paul writes of them to the Corinthians (I Cor., xvi, 1): "Now concerning the collections that are made for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, so do ye also." It was long after the time that St. Paul could thus confidently command the Galatians that Acts was written.

(8) St. Paul makes no mention of this collection in our Epistle. According to the North-Galatian theory, the Epistle was written several years before the collection was made. In Acts, xx, 4, etc., a list is given of those who carried the collections to Jerusalem. There are representatives from South Galatia, Achaia, Macedonia, and Asia; but there is no deputy from North Galatia -- from the towns of Jerusalem on occasion, the majority probably meeting at Corinth, St. Paul, St. Luke, and Sopater of Berea (probably representing Philippi and Achaia; see II Cor., viii, 18-22); Aristarchus and Secundus of Macedonia; Gaius of Derbe, and Timothyof Lystra (S. Galatia); and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia. There is not a word about anybody from North Galatia, the most probable reason being that St. Paul had never been there (see Rendall, Expositor, 1893, vol. II, p.321.)

(9) St. Paul, the Roman citizen, invariably employs the names of the Roman provinces, such as Achaia, Macedonia, Asia; and it is not probable that he departed from this practice in his use of "Galatia." The people of South Galatia could with propriety be styled Galatians. Two of the towns, Antioch and Lystra, were Roman colonies; and the other two boasted of the Roman names, Claudio-Iconium, and Claudio-Derbe. "Galatians" was an honourable title when applied to them; but they would be insulted if they were called Phrygians or Lycaonians. All admit that St. Peter named the Roman provinces when he wrote "to the elect strangers dispersed throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" (I Pet., i, 1.)

(10) The manner in which St. Paul mentions St. Barnabas in the Epistle indicates that the latter was known to those for whom the Epistle was primarily intended. St. Barnabas had visited South Galatia with St. Paul (Acts, xiii, xiv), but he was unknown in North Galatia.

(11) St. Paul states (ii, 5) that the reason for his course of action at Jerusalem was that the truth of the gospel might continue with the Galatians. This seems to imply that they were already converted. He had visited the southern part of the Galatian province before the council, but not northern. The view favoured above receives confirmation from a consideration, as appended, of the persons addressed.

THE KIND OF PEOPLE ADDRESSED

The country of South Galatia answers the conditions of the Epistle admirably; but this cannot be said of North Galatia. From the Epistle we gather that the majority were Gentile converts, that many were probably Jewish proselytes from their acquaintance with the Old Testament, that Jews who persecuted them from the first were living amongst them; that St. Paul had visited them twice, and that the few Judaziers appeared amongst them only after his last visit. We know from Acts, iii, xiv (and early history,) that Jews were settled in South Galatia. During the first missionary journey unbelieving Jews made their presence felt everywhere. As soon as Paul and Barnabas returned to Syrian Antioch, some Jewish converts came from Judea and taught that the circumcision was necessary for them, and went up to the council, where it was decreed that circumcision and the Law of Moses were not necessary for the Gentiles; but nothing was determined as to the attitude of Jewish converts regarding them, following the example of St. James, though it was implied in the decree that they were matters of indifference. This was shown, soon after, by St. Peter's eating with the Gentiles. On his withdrawing from them, and when many others followed his example, St. Paul publicly vindicated the equality of the Gentile Christians. The majority agreed; but there must have been "false brethren" amongst them (Gal., ii, 4) who were Christians only in name, and who hated St. Paul. Some of these, in all probability, followed him to South Galatia, soon after his second visit. But they could no longer teach the necessity of circumcision, as the Apostolic decrees had been already delivered there by St. Paul (Acts, xvi, 4.) These decrees are not mentioned in the Epistle by the Judaizers, the advisability of the Galatians accepting circumcision and the Law of Moses, for their greater perfection. On the other hand, there is no evidence that there were any Jews settled at this time in North Galatia (see Ramsay, "St. Paul The Traveller.") It was not the kind of country to attract them. The Gauls were a dominant class, living in castles, and leading a half pastoral, half nomadic life, and speaking their own Gallic language. The country was very sparsley populated by the subjugated agricultural inhabitants. During the long winter the ground was covered with snow; in summer the heat was intense and the ground parched; and one might travel many miles without meeting a human being. There was some fertile tracts; but the greater part was either poor pasture land, or barren undulating hilly ground. The bulk of the inhabitants in the few towns were not Gauls. Trade was small, and that mainly in wool. A decree of Augustus in favour of Jews was supposed to be framed for those at Ancyra, in Galatia. It is now known that it was addressed to quite a different region.

WHY WRITTEN

The Epistle was written to counteract the influence of a few Judaizers who had come amongst the Galatians, and were endeavouring to persuade them that in order to be perfect Christians it was necessary to be circumcised and observe the Law of Moses. Their arguments were sufficiently specious to puzzle the Galatians, and their object was likely to gain the approval of unbelieving Jews. They said what St. Paul taught was good as far as it went; but that he had not taught the full perfection of Christianity. And this was not surprising, as he was not one of the great Apostles who had been taught by Christ Himself, and received their commission from Him. Whatever St. Paul knew he learned from others, and he had received his commission to preach not from Christ, but from men at Antioch (Acts, xiii.) Circumcision and the Law, it is true, were not necessary to salvation; but they were essential to the full perfection of Christianity. This was proved by the example of St. James, of the other Apostles, and of the first disciples, at Jerusalem. On this very point this Paul, the Apostle, placed himself in direct opposition to Cephas, the Prince of the Apostles, at Antioch. His own action in circumcising Timothy showed what he expected of a personal companion, and he was now probably teaching the good of circumcision in other places. These statements puzzles the Galatians, and made them waver. They felt aggrieved that he had left them, as they thought, in an inferior position; they began to observe Jewish festivals, but they had not yet accepted circumcision. The Apostle refutes these arguments so effectively that the question never again arose. Henceforth his enemies confined themselves to personal attacks (see II Corinthians.)

CONTENTS OF THE EPISTLE

The six chapters naturally fall into three divisions, consisting of two chapters each.

In the first two chapters, after the general introduction, he shows that he is an Apostle not from men, nor through the teaching of any man, but from Christ; and the gospel he taught is in harmony with the teaching of the great Apostles, who gave him the right hand of fellowship.

He next (iii, iv) shows the inefficacy of circumcision and the Law, and that we owe our redemption to Christ alone. He appeals to the experience of the Galatian converts, and brings forward proofs from Scripture.

He exhorts them (v, vi) not to abuse their freedom from the Law to indulge in crimes, "for they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God." It is not for love of them he admonishes, that the Judaizers wish the Galatians to be circumcised. If there is virtue in the mere cutting of the flesh, the inference from the argument is that the Judaizers could become still more perfect by making themselves eunuchs -- mutilating themselves like the priests of Cybele. He writes the epilogue in large letters with his own hand.

IMPORTANCE OF THE EPISTLE

As it is admitted on all hands that St. Paul wrote the Epistle, and as its authenticity has never been seriously called in question, it is important not only for its biographical data and direct teaching, but also for the teaching implies in it as being known at the time. He claims, at least indirectly, to have worked miracles amongst the Galatians, and that they received the Holy Ghost (iii, 5), almost in the words of St. Luke as to the events at Iconium (Acts, xiv, 3.) It is the Catholic doctrine that faith is a gratuitous gift of God; but is is the teaching of the Church, as it is of St. Paul, that the faith that is of any avail is "faith that worketh by charity" (Gal., v. 6); and he states most emphatically that a good life is necessary for salvation; for, after enumeration the works of the flesh, he writes (v, 21), "Of the which I foretell you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things shall obtain the kingdom of God." In vi, 8, he writes: "For what things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap. For he that soweth in his flesh, of the flesh, also shall reap corruption. But he that soweth in the spirit, of the spirit shall reap life everlasting." The same teaching is found in others of his Epistles, and is in perfect agreement with St. James: "For even as the body without the spirit is dead; so also faith without works is dead" (James, ii, 26.) The Epistle implies that the Galatians were well acquainted with the doctrines of the Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, Incarnation, Redemption, Baptism, Grace, etc. As he had never to defend his teaching to these points against Judaizers, and as the Epistle is so early, it is clear that his teaching was identical with that of the Twelve, and did not, even in appearance, lend itself to attack.

DATE OF THE EPISTLE

(1)Marcion asserted that it was the first of St. Paul's Epistles. Prof. Sir W. Ramsay (Expositor, Aug., 1895, etc.) and a Catholic professor, Dr. Valentin Weber (see below), maintain that it was written from Antioch, before the council (A.D. 49-50.) Weber's arguments are very plausible, but not quite convincing. There is a good summary of them in a review by Gayford, "Journal of Theological Studies," July, 1902. The two visits to Galatia are the double journey to Derbe and back. This solution is offered to obviate apparent discrepancies between Gal., ii, and Acts, xv.

(2) Cornel and the majority of the upholders of the South-Galatian theory suppose, with much greater probability, that it was written about A.D. 53, 54.

(3) Those who defend the North-Galatian theory place it as late as A.D. 57 or 58.

DIFFICULTIES OF GALATIANS II AND I

(a) "I went up... and communicated to them the gospel... lest perhaps I should run, or had run in vain." This does not imply any doubt about the truth of his teaching, but he wanted to neutralize the opposition of the Judaizers by proving he was at one with the others.

(b) The following have the appearance of being ironical: "I communicated... to them who seemed to be some thing" (ii, 2); But of them who seemed to be something... for to me they that seemed to be something added to nothing" (ii, 6): "But contrawise... James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars." Here we have three expressions tois dokousin in verse 2; ton dokounton einai ti, and oi dokountes in verse 6; and oi dokountes styloi einai in verse 9. Non-Catholic scholars agree with St. John Chrystostom that there is nothing ironical in the original context. As the verbs are in the present tense, the translations should be: "those who are in repute"; "who are (rightly) regarded as pillars." It is better to understand, with Rendall, that two classes of persons are meant: first, the leading men at Jerusalem; secondly, the three apostles. St. Paul's argument was to show that his teaching had the approval of the great men. St. James is mentioned first because the Judaizers made the greatest use of his name and example. "But of them who are in repute (what they were some time, it is nothing to me. God accepteth not the person of man)," verse 6. St. Augustine is almost alone in his interpretation that it made no matter to St. Paul that the Apostles were once poor ignorant men. Others hold that St. Paul was referring to the privilege of being personal

disciples of our Lord. He said that did not alter the fact of his Apostolate, as God does not regard the person of men. Most probably this verse does not refer to the Apostles at all; and Cornerly supposes that St. Paul is speaking of the elevated position held by the presbyters at the council, and insists that it did not derogate from his Apostolate.

(c) "I withstood Cephas." -- "But when Cephas was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was blamed [kategnosmenos, perf. part. -- not, "to be blamed," as in the Vulgate]. For before that some came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were done, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them who were of circumcision. And to his dissimulation the rest of the Jews consented, so that Barnabas also was led by them into that dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly unto the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all: if thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as the Jews do, how dost thou compel the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" (ii, 11-14.)

Here St. Peter was found fault with probably by the Greek converts. He did not withdraw on account of bodily fear, says St. John Chrystostom; but as his special mission was at this time to the Jews, he was afraid of shocking them who were still weak in the Faith. His ususal manner of acting, to which he was led by his vision many years previously, shows that his exceptional withdrawal was not due to any error of doctrine. He had motives like those which induced St. Paul to circumcise Timothy, etc.; and there is no proof that in acting upon them he committed the slightest sin. Those who came from James probably came for no evil purpose; nor does it follow they were sent by him. The Apostles in their letter (Acts, xv,24) say: "Forasmuch as we have heard, that some going out from us have troubled you... to whom we gave no commandment." We need not suppose that St. Peter foresaw the effect of his example. The whole thing must have taken some time. St. Paul did not at first object. It was only when he saw the result that he spoke. The silence of St. Peter shows that he must have agreed with St. Paul; and, indeed, the argument to the Galatians required that this was the case. St. Peter's exalted position is indicated by the manner in which St. Paul says (i, 18) that he went to behold Peter, as people go to view some remarkable sight; and by the fact that in spite of the preaching of St. Paul and Barnabas for a long time at Antioch, his mere withdrawal was sufficient to draw all after him, and in a manner compel the Gentiles to be circumcised. In the expression "when I saw that they walked not uprightly," they does not necessarily include St. Peter. The incident is not mentioned in the Acts, as it was only transitory. Eusebius (Hist. Eccl., I, xii) says that St. Clement of Alexandria, in the fifth book of the Hypotyposeis (Outlines), asserts that this Cephas was not the Apostle, but one of the seventy disciples. Clement here has few followers.

A very spirited controversy was carried on between St. Jerome and St. Augustine about the interpretation of this passage. In his "Commentary on the Galatians," St. Jerome, following earlier writers such as Origen and St. Chrysostom, supposed that the matter was arranged beforehand between St. Peter and St. Paul. They agreed that St. Peter should withdraw and that St. Paul should publicly reprehend him, for the instruction of all. Hence St. Paul says that he withstood him in appearance (kata prosopon.) Otherwise, says St. Jerome, with what face could St. Paul, who became all things to all men, who became a Jew that he might gain the Jews, who circumcised Timothy, who shaved his head, and was ready to offer sacrifice at Jerusalem, blame St. Peter for acting in a similar manner? St. Augustine, laying stress on the words "when I saw that they walked not uprightly," etc., maintained that such an interpretation would be subversive of the truth of Holy Scripture. But against this it may be said that it is not so very clear that St. Peter was included in this sentence. The whole controversy can be read in the first volume of the Venetian edition of St. Jerome's works, Epp., lvi, lxvii, civ, cv, cxii, cxv, cxvi.

(d) Apparent Discrepancies between the Epistle and Acts. -- (1) St. Paul says that three years after his conversion (after having visited Arabia and returned to Damascus) he went up to Jerusalem (i, 17, 18) Acts states that after his baptism "he was with the disciples that were at Damascus, for some days" (ix, 19.) "He immediately began to preach in the synagogues" (ix, 20.) "He increased more in strength, and confounded the Jews" (ix, 22.) "And when many days were passed, the Jews consulted together to kill him" (ix, 23); he then escaped and went to Jerusalem. These accounts here are not contradictory, as has been sometimes objected; but were written from different points of view and for different purposes. The time for the visit to Arabia may be placed between Acts, ix, 22 and 23; or between "some days" and "many days." St. Luke's "many days" (hemerai ikanai) may mean as much as three years. (See III Kings, ii, 38; so Paley, Lightfoot, Knowling, Lewin.) The adjective ikanos is a favourite one with St. Luke, and is used by him with great elasticity, but generally in the sense of largeness, e.g. "a widow: and a great multitude of the city" (Luke, vii, 12); "there met him a certain man who had a devil now a very long time" (Luke, viii, 27); "a herd of many swine feeding" (Luke, viii, 32); "and he was abroad for a long time" (Luke, xx, 9); "for a long time, he had bewitched them" (Acts, viii, 11.) See also Acts, xiv, 3, 21 (Greek text); xviii, 18, xix, 19, 26; xx, 37.

(2) We read in Acts, ix, 27, that St. Barnabas took St. Paul "to the apostles." St. Paul states (Gal., i, 19) that on this occasion, besides St. Peter, "other of the apostles I saw one, saving James the brother of the Lord." Those who find a contradiction here are hard to satisfy. St. Luke employs the word Apostles sometimes in a broader, sometimes in a narrower sense. Here it meant the Apostles who happened to be at Jerusalem (Peter and James,) or the assembly over which they presided. The objection can be pressed with any force only against those who deny that St. James was an Apostle in any of the senses used by St. Luke (see BRETHREN OF THE LORD.)

Clement of Alexandria

(c. A.D. 150-between 211 and 216,) a Greek Christian theologian with a wide knowledge of Greek literature and Stoic philosophy, who was converted to Christianity and who taught in Alexandria. Among his surving works is the Stromateis (commonly referred to by modern writers as Stromata,) "Miscellanies," of which eight books survive. Among his sources was Apollodorus and he also cites Timaeus and Alexander Cornelius Polyhistor. St. Jerome declared that he was the most learned of all the Father. Shortly before this was written, Clement had also made a brief reference to the subject; in this he seems to suggest that he considered Druidism to be the older system.

Clement

Stromata I:xv70,1

Alexander, in his book "On the Pythagorean Symbols," relates that Pythagoras was a pupil of Nazaratus the Assyrian… and will have it that, in addition tot these, Pythagoras was a hearer of the Galatae and the Brahmins.

Clement

Stromata, I, xv, 71, 3

Thus philosophy, a science of the highest utility, flourished in antiquity among the barbarians, shedding its light over the nations. And afterwards it came to Greece. First in its ranks were the prophets of the Egyptians; and the Chaldeans among the Assyrians; and the Druids among the Gauls; and the Samanaeans among the Bactrians; and the philosophers of the Kelts; and the Magi of the Persians…..

Diodorus Siculus
BOOK 5 CH 21:4,22,24,26-31

(Flourished under both Julius Caesar and Augustus, and lived until at least 21 B.C.) He wrote a World History in forty books in which, among a host of other writers, he cites Tamaeus and Posidonius.

Diodorus Siculus

Histories, v, 28, 6:

"The Pythagorean doctrine prevails among them [the Gauls], teaching that the souls of men are immortal and live again for a fixed number of years inhabited in another body."

Diodorus Siculus

Histories, v, 31, 2-5:

"And there are among them [the Gauls] composers of verses whom they call Bards; these singing to instruments similar to a lyre, applaud some, while they vituperate others.

"They have philosophers and theologians who are held in much honour and are called Druids; they have sooth-sayers too of great renown who tell the future by watching the flights of birds and by the observation of the entrails of victims; and everyone waits upon their word. When they attempt divination upon important matters they practice a strange and incredible custom, for they kill a man by a knife-stab in the region above the midriff, and after his fall they foretell the future by the convulsions of his limbs and the pouring of his blood, a form of divination in which they have full confidence, as it is of old tradition.

"It is a custom of the Gauls that no one performs a sacrifice without the assistance of a philosopher, for they say that offerings to the gods ought only to made through the mediation of these men, who are learned in the divine nature and, so to speak, familiar with it, and it is through their agency that the blessings of the gods should properly be sought. It is not only in times of peace, but in war also, that these seers have authority, and the incantations of the bards have effect on friends and foes alike. Often when the combatants are ranged face to face, and swords are drawn and spears bristling, these men come between the armies and stay the battle, just as wild beasts are sometimes held spellbound. Thus even among the most savage barbarians anger yields to wisdom, and Mars is shamed before the Muses."

Diodorus Siculus

Histories V.21

And Britain, we are told, is inhabited by tribes which are autochthonous and preserve in their ways of living the ancient manner of life. They use chariots, for instance, in their wars, even as tradition tells us the old Greek Heroes did in the Trojan War, and their dwellings are humble, being built for the most part out of reeds or logs. The method they employ of harvesting their grain crops is to cut off no more than the heads and store them away in roofed granges, and then each day they pick out the ripened heads and grind them, getting in this way their food. As for their habits, they are simple and far removed from the shrewdness and vice which characterize the men of our day. Their way of living is modest, since they are well clear of the luxury which is begotten of wealth. The island is also thickly

populated, and its climate is extremely cold, as one would expect, since it actually lies under the Great Bear. It is held by many kings and potentates, who for the most part live at peace among themselves.

22. But we shall give a detailed account of the customs of Britain and of the other features which are peculiar to the island when we come to the campaign which Caesar undertook against it, and at this time we shall discuss the tin which the island produces. The inhabitants of Britain who dwell about the promontory known as Beleirum are especially hospitable to strangers and have adopted a civilized manner of life because of their intercourse with merchants of other peoples. They it is who work the tin, treating the bed which bears it in an ingenious manner. Their bed, being like rock, contains earthy seams and in them the workers quarry the ore, which they then melt down and cleanse of its impurities. Then they work the tin into pieces the size of knuckle-bones and convey it to an island which lies off Britain and is called Ictis; for at the time of ebb-tide the space between this island and the mainland becomes dry and they can take the tin in large quantities over to the island in their wagons. (And a peculiar thing happens in the case of the neighboring islands which lie between Europe and Britain, for at flood-tide the passages between them and the mainland run full and they have the appearance of island, but at ebb-tide the sea recedes and leaves dry a large space, and at that time they look like peninsulas.) On the island of Ictis the merchants purchase the tin of the natives and carry it from there across the Strait to Galatia or Gaul; and finally making their way on foot through Gaul for some thirty days, they bring their wares on horseback to the mouth of the river Rhone.

Diodorus Siculus

Histories V.24-32

[24] Since we have set forth the facts concerning the islands which lie in the western regions, we consider that it will not be foreign to our purpose to discuss briefly the tribes of Europe which lie near them and which we failed to mention in our former Books. Now Celtica was ruled in ancient times, so we are told, by a renowned man who had a daughter who was of unusual stature and far excelled in beauty all the other maidens. But she, because of her strength of body and marvelous comeliness, was so haughty that she kept refusing every man who wooed her in marriage, since she believed that no one of her wooers was worthy of her. Now in the course of his campaign against Geryones, Heracles visited Celtica and founded there the city of Alesia, and the maiden, on seeing Heracles, wondered at his prowess and his bodily superiority and accepted his embraces with all eagerness, her parents having given their consent. From this union she bore to Heracles a son named Galates, who far surpassed all the youths of the tribe in quality of spirit and strength of body. And when he had attained to man's estate and had succeeded to the throne of his fathers, he subdued a large part of the neighbouring territory and accomplished great feats in war. Becoming renowned for his bravery, he called his subjects Galatae [or Gauls] after himself, and these in turn gave their name to all of Galatia [or Gaul].

[25] Since we have explained the name by which the Gauls are known, we must go on to speak about their land. Gaul is inhabited by many tribes of different size; for the largest number some two hundred thousand men, and the smallest fifty thousand, one of the latter [the Aedui] standing on terms of kinship and friendship with the Romans, a relationship which has endured from ancient times down to our own day. And the land, lying as it does for the most part under the Bears, has a wintry climate and is exceedingly cold. For during the winter season on cloudy days snow falls deep in place of rain, and on clear days ice and heavy frost are everywhere and in such abundance that the rivers are frozen over and are bridged by their own waters; for not only can chance travelers, proceeding a few at a time, make their way across them on ice, but even armies with their tens of thousands, together with their beasts of burden and heavily laden wagons, cross upon it in safety to the other side. And many large rivers flow through Gaul, and their streams cut this way and that through the level plain, some of them flowing from bottomless lakes and others having their sources and affluents in the mountains, and some of them empty into the ocean and others into our sea. The largest of those which flow into our waters is the Rhone, which has its sources in the Alps and empties into the sea by five mouths. But of the rivers which flow in to the ocean the largest are thought to be the Danube and the Rhine, the latter of which Caesar who has been called a god spanned with a bridge in our own day with astonishing skill, and leading his army across on foot he subdued the Gauls [the Germans] who lived beyond it. There are also many other navigable rivers in Celtica, but it would be a long task to write about them. And almost all of them become frozen over by the cold and thus bridge their own streams, and since the natural smoothiness of the ice makes the crossing slippery for those who pass over, they sprinkle chaff on it and thus have a crossing which is safe.

[26] A peculiar thing and unexpected takes place over the larger part of Gaul which we think we should not omit to mention. For from the direction of the sun's summer setting [north-west] and from the north winds are wont to blow with such violence and force that they pick up from the ground rocks as large as can be held in the hand together with a dust composed of coarse gravel; and, generally speaking, when these winds rage violently they tear the weapons out of men's hands and the clothing off their backs and dismount riders from their horses. Furthermore, since temperateness of climate is destroyed by the excessive cold, the land produces neither wine nor oil, and as a consequence those Gauls who are deprived of these fruits make a drink out of barley which they call zythos or beer, and they also drink the water with which they cleanse their honey-combs. The Gauls are exceedingly addicted to the use of wine and fill themselves with the wine which is brought into their country by merchants, drinking it unmixed, and since they partake of this drink without moderation by reason of their craving for it, when they are drunken they fall into a stupor or a state of madness. Consequently many of the Italian traders, induced by the love of money which characterizes them, believe that the love of wine of these Gauls is their own godsend [literally "gift of Hermes"]. For these transport the wine on the navigable rivers by means of boats and through the level plain on wagons, and receive for it an incredible price; for in exchange for a jar of wine they receive a slave, getting a servant in return for the drink.

[27] Throughout Gaul there is found practically no silver, but there is gold in great quantities, which Nature provides for the inhabitants without their having to mine for it or to undergo any hardship. For the rivers, as they course through the country, having as they do sharp bends which turn this way and that and dashing against the mountains which line their banks and bearing off great pieces of them, are full of gold-dust. This is collected by those who occupy themselves in this business, and these men grind or crush the lumps which hold the dust, and after washing out with water the earthy elements in it they give the gold-dust over to be melted in the furnaces. In this manner

they amass a great amount of gold, which is used for ornament not only by the women but also by the men. For around their wrists and arms they wear bracelets, around their necks heavy necklaces of solid gold [torques], and huge rings they wear as well, and even corselets of gold. And a peculiar and striking practice is found among the upper Celts, in connection with the sacred precincts of the gods; for in the temples and precincts made consecrate in their land, a great amount of gold has been deposited as a dedication to the gods, and not a native of the country ever touches it because of religious scruple, although the Celts are an exceedingly covetous people.

[28] The Gauls are tall of body, with rippling muscles, and white of skin, and their hair is blond, and not only naturally so, but they also make it their practice by artificial means to increase the distinguishing color which nature has given it. For they are always washing their hair in lime-water, and they pull it back from the forehead to the top of the head and back to the nape of the neck, with the result that their appearance is like that of Satyrs and Pans, since the treatment of their hair makes it so heavy and coarse that it differs in no respect from the mane of horses. Some of them shave the beard, but others let it grow a little; and the nobles shave their cheeks, but they let the moustache grow until it covers the mouth. Consequently, when they are eating, their moustaches become entangled in the food, and when they are drinking, the beverage passes, as it were, through a kind of strainer. When they dine they all sit, not upon chairs, but upon the ground, using for cushions the skins of wolves or of dogs. The service at the meals is performed by the youngest children, both male and female, who are of suitable age; and near at hand are their fireplaces heaped with coals, and on them are cauldrons and spits holding whole pieces of meat. Brave warriors they reward with the choicest portions of the meat, in the same manner as the poet introduces Ajax as honoured by the chiefs after he returned victorious from his single combat with Hector:

To Ajax then were given of the chine
Slices, full length, unto his honor.
[Iliad VII.321]

They invite strangers to their feasts, and do not inquire until after the meal who they are and of what things they stand in need. And it is their custom, even during the course of the meal, to seize upon any trivial matter as an occasion for keen disputation and then to challenge one another to single combat, without any regard for their lives; for the belief of Pythagoras prevails among them, that the souls of men are immortal and that after a prescribed number of years they commence upon a new life, the soul entering into another body. Consequently, we are told, at the funerals of their dead some cast letters upon the pyre which they have written to their deceased kinsmen, as if the dead would be able to read these letters.

29] In their journeyings and when they go into battle the Gauls use chariots drawn by two horses, which carry the charioteer and the warrior; and when they encounter cavalry in the fighting they first hurl their javelins at the enemy and then step down from their chariots and join battle with their swords. Certain of them despise death to such a degree that they enter the perils of battle without protective armor and with no more than a girdle about for their loins. They bring along to war also their free men to serve them, choosing them out from among the poor, and these attendants they use in battle as charioteers and as shield-bearers. It is also their custom, when they are formed in battle, to step out in front of the line and to challenge the most valiant men from among their opponents to single combat, brandishing their weapons in front of them to terrify their adversaries. And when any man accepts the challenge to battle, they then break forth into a song in praise of the valiant deeds of their ancestors and in boast of their own high achievements, reviling all the while and belittling their opponent, and trying, in a word, by such talk to strip him of his bold spirit before the combat. When their enemies fall they cut off their heads and fasten them about the necks of their horses; and turning over to their attendants the arms of their opponents, all covered with blood, they carry them off as booty, singing a paean over them striking up a song of victory, and these first-fruits of battle they fasten by nails upon their houses, just as men do, in certain kinds of hunting, with the heads of wild beasts they have mastered. The heads of their most distinguished enemies they embalm in cedar-oil and carefully preserve in a chest, and these they exhibit to strangers, gravely maintaining that in exchange for this head some one of their ancestors, or their father, or the man himself, refused the offer of a great sum of money. And some men among them, we are told, boast that they have not accepted an equal weight of gold for the head they show, displaying a barbarous sort of greatness of soul; for not to sell that which constitutes a witness and proof of one's valor is a noble thing, but to continue to fight against one of our own race, after he is dead, is to descend to the level of beasts.

[30] The clothing they wear is striking - shirts which have been dyed and embroidered in varied colors, and breeches, which they call in their tongue bracae; and they wear striped coats, fastened by a buckle on the shoulder, heavy for winter wear and light for summer, in which are set checks, close together and of varied hues [a kind of tartan]. For armor they use long shields, as high as a man, which are wrought in a manner peculiar to them, some of them even having the figures of animals embossed on them in bronze, and these are skillfully worked with an eye not only to beauty but also to protection. On their heads they put bronze helmets which have large embossed figures standing out from them and give an appearance of great size to those who wear them; for in some cases horns are attached to the helmet so as to form a single piece, in other cases images of the fore-parts of birds or four-footed animals. Their trumpets are of peculiar nature and such as barbarians use, for when they are blown upon they give forth a harsh sound, appropriate to the tumult of war. Some of them have iron cuirasses, chain-wrought, but others are satisfied with the armor which Nature has given them and go into battle naked. In place of the short sword they carry long broad-swords which are hung on chains of iron or bronze and are worn along the right flank. And some of them gather up their shirts with belts plated with gold or silver. The spears they brandish, which they call lanciae, have iron heads a cubit in length and even more, and a little under two palms in breadth; for their swords are not shorter than the javelins of other peoples, and the heads of their javelins are larger than the swords of others. Some of these javelins come from the forge straight, others twist in and out in spiral shapes for their entire length, the purpose being that the thrust may not only cut the flesh, but mangle it as well, and that the withdrawal of the spear may lacerate the wound.

[31] The Gauls are terrifying in aspect and their voices are deep and altogether harsh; when they meet together they converse with few words and in riddles, hinting darkly at things for the most part and using one word when they mean another; and they like to talk in superlatives, to the end that they may extol themselves and depreciate all other men. They are also boasters and threateners and are fond of pompous language, and yet they have sharp wits and are not without cleverness at learning. Among them are also to be found lyric poets whom

they call Bards. These men sing to the accompaniment of instruments which are like lyres, and their songs may be either of praise or of obloquy. Philosophers, as we may call them, and men learned in religious affairs are unusually honored among them and are called by them Druids. The Gauls likewise make use of diviners, accounting them worthy of high approbation, and these men foretell the future by means of the flight or cries of birds and of the slaughter of sacred animals, and they have all the multitude subservient to them. They also observe a custom which is especially astonishing and incredible, in case they are taking thought with respect to matters of great concern; for in such cases they devote to death a human being and plunge a dagger into him in the region above the diaphragm, and when the stricken victim has fallen they read the future from the manner of his fall and from the twitching of his limbs, as well as from the gushing of the blood, having learned to place confidence in an ancient and long-continued practice of observing such matters. And it is a custom of theirs that no one should perform a sacrifice without a "philosopher"; for thank-offerings should be rendered to the gods, they say, by the hands of men who are experienced in the nature of the divine, and who speak, as it were, the language of the gods, and it is also through the mediation of such men, they think, that blessings likewise should be sought. Nor is it only in the exigencies of peace, but in their wars as well, they obey, before all others, these men and their chanting poets, and such obedience is observed not only by their friends but also by their enemies; many times, for instance, when two armies approach each other in battle with swords drawn and spears thrust forward, these men step forth between them and cause them to cease, as though having cast a spell over certain kinds of wild beasts. In this way, even among the wildest barbarians, does passion give place before wisdom, and Ares stands in awe of the Muses.

[32] And now it will be useful to draw a distinction which is unknown to many: The peoples who dwell in the interior above Massalia, those on the slopes of the Alps, and those on this side the Pyrenees mountains are called Celts, whereas the peoples who are established above this land of Celtica in the parts which stretch to the north, both along the ocean and along the Hercynian Mountain, and all the peoples who come after these, as far as Scythia, are known as Gauls; the Romans, however, include all these nations together under a single name, calling them one and all Gauls.

The women of the Gauls are not only like the men in their great stature but they are a match for them in courage as well. Their children are usually born with grayish hair, but as they grow older the color of their hair changes to that of their parents. The most savage peoples among them are those who dwell beneath the Bears and on the borders of Scythia, and some of these, we are told, eat human beings, even as the Britains do who dwell on Iris [Ireland], as it is called. And since the valor of these peoples and their savage ways have been famed abroad, some men say that it was they who in ancient times overran all Asia and were called Cimmerians, time having slightly corrupted the word into the name of Cimbrians, as they are now called. For it has been their ambition from old to plunder, invading for this purpose the land of others, and to regard all men with contempt. For they are the people who captured Rome [387 BCE], who plundered the sanctuary at Delphi [279 BCE], who levied tribute upon a large part of Europe and no small part of Asia, and settled themselves upon the lands of the peoples they had subdued in war, being called in time Greco-Gauls, because they became mixed with the Greeks, and who, as their last accomplishment, have destroyed many large Roman armies. And in pursuance of their savage ways they manifest an outlandish impiety also with respect to their sacrifices; for their criminals they keep prisoner for five years and then impale in honor of the gods, dedicating them together with many other offerings of first-fruits and constructing pyres of great size. Captives also are used by them as victims for their sacrifices in honor of the gods. Certain of them likewise slay, together with the human beings, such animals as are taken in war, or burn them or do away with them in some other vengeful fashion.

Although their wives are comely, they have very little to do with them, but rage with lust, in outlandish fashion, for the embraces of males. It is their practice to sleep upon the ground on the skins of wild beasts and to tumble with a catamite on each side. And the most astonishing thing of all is that they feel no concern for their proper dignity, but prostitute to others without a qualm the flower of their bodies; nor do they consider this a disgraceful thing to do, but rather when anyone of them is thus approached and refuses the favor offered him, this they consider an act of dishonor.

And they are strange for they consistently use urine to bathe the body and wash their teeth with it, thinking that in this practice it constituted the care and healing of the bodies.

As for the enemies follow toward malefactors and enemies the Celtiberians are cruel, but toward strangers they are honourable and humane. Strangers, for instance, who come among them they one and all entreat to stop at their homes and they are rivals one of another in the hospitality, and any among them who are attended by strangers are spoken of with approval and regarded as beloved of the gods. For their food they use meats of every description, of which they enjoy an abundance, and a drink of honey mixed with wine, since the country supplies them with a great quantity of honey, although the wine they purchase from merchants who sail over the seas to them. Of the tribes neighbouring upon the Celtiberians the most advanced is the people of Vaccaei, as they are called; for this people each year divides among its people the land which it tills and making the fruits the property of all they measure out his portion to each man, and for any cultivators who have appropriated some part for themselves they have set the penalty as death.

Diodorus Siculus

Book XXII 9.2-5

Brennus, the king of the Gauls on entering a temple found no dedication s of gold or silver, and when he came only upon images of stone and wood he laughed at them, to think that men, believing that gods have human form, should set up their images in wood and stone.

Diodorus Siculus

Book XXXI. 13. 1-15.1

The general of the barbarous Gauls, returning from his pursuit, gathered the prisoners together and perpetrated an act of utter inhumanity and arrogance. Those of the prisoners who were most handsome in appearance and in the full bloom of life he crowned with garlands and offered in sacrifice to the gods – if indeed there be any god who accepts such offerings; all the rest he had shot down, and though many of them were acquaintances known to him through prior exchanges of hospitality, yet no one received pity on the score of friendship. It is really an not surprising, however, that savages, in the flush

of unexpected success, should celebrate their good fortune with inhuman behaviour.

Diodorus Siculus, writing in the first century BC, gives us a description of Britain based, in part, on the voyage of Pytheas of Massilia, who sailed around Britain in 300 BC.

As for the inhabitants, they are simple and far removed from the shrewdness and vice which characterize our day. Their way of living is modest, since they are well clear of the luxury which is begotten of wealth. The island is also thickly populated and its climate is extremely cold, as one would expect, since it actually lies under the Great Bear. It is held by many kings and potentates, who for the most part live at peace among themselves.[27]

Diodorus then tells a fascinating story about the Hyperboreans that was obviously of legendary character already when he was writing:

Of those who have written about the ancient myths, Hecateus and certain others say that in the regions beyond the land of the Celts (Gaul) there lies in the ocean an island no smaller than Sicily. This island, the account continues, is situated in the north, and is inhabited by the Hyperboreans, who are called by that name because their home is beyond the point whence the north wind blows; and the land is both fertile and productive of every crop, and since it has an unusually temperate climate it produces two harvests each year.[28]

Now, it seems that there is little doubt that Diodorus is describing the same location, but we notice that the climate is so vastly different in the two descriptions that we can hardly make the connection. However, let us just suppose that his description of Britain was based on the climate that prevailed at the time he was writing, and the legendary description of the Hyperboreans was based on a previous climatic condition that was preserved in the story. Diodorus stresses that he is recounting something very ancient as he goes on to say:

The Hyperboreans also have a language, we are informed, which is peculiar to them, and are most friendly disposed towards the Greeks, and especially towards the Athenians and the Delians, who have inherited this goodwill from most ancient times. The myth also relates that certain Greeks visited the Hyperboreans and left behind them costly votive offerings bearing inscriptions in Greek letters. And in the same way Abaris, a Hyperborean, came to Greece in ancient times and renewed the goodwill and kinship of his people to the Delians.[29]

Diodorus remark about the relations between the Hyperboreans and the Athenians triggers in our minds the memory of the statement of Plato that the Atlanteans were at war with the Athenians, and we wonder if the Hyperboreans are the "early Athenians." After all, the Greeks are said to be "Sons of the North Wind," Boreas. The relationship of the Hyperboreans to the Delians is expounded upon by Herodotus:

Certain sacred offerings wrapped up in wheat straw come from the Hyperboreans into Scythia, whence they are taken over by the neighbouring peoples in succession until they get as far west as the Adriatic: from there they are sent south, and the first Greeks to receive them are the Dodonaeans. Then, continuing southward, they reach the Malian gulf, cross to Euboea, and are passed on from town to town as far as Carystus. Then they skip Andros, the Carystians take them to Tenos, and the Tenians to Delos. That is how these things are said to reach Delos at the present time.[30]

The legendary connection between the Hyperboreans and the Delians leads us to another interesting remark of Herodotus who tells us that Leto, the mother of Apollo, was born on the island of the Hyperboreans. That there was regular contact between the Greeks and the Hyperboreans over many centuries does not seem to be in doubt. The Hyperboreans were said to have introduced the Greeks to the worship of Apollo, but it is just as likely that the relationship goes much further back. Yes, this is contrary to the idea that culture flowed from south to north, but we are writing a contrary book, so don't let that bother you! Herodotus has another interesting thing to say about the Hyperboreans and their sending of sacred offerings to Delos:

On the first occasion they were sent in charge of two girls, whose names the Delians say were Hyperoche and Laodice. To protect the girls on the journey, the Hyperboreans sent five men to accompany them … The two Hyperborean girls died in Delos, and the boys and girls of the island still cut their hair as a sign of mourning for them… There is also a Delphic story that before the time of Hyperoche and Laodice, two other Hyperborean girls, Arge and Opis, came to Delos by the same route. …Arge and Opis came to the island at the same time as Apollo and Artemis…[31]

Herodotus mentions at another point, when discussing the lands of the "barbarians," that "All these except the Hyperboreans, were continually encroaching upon one another's territory." Without putting words in Herodotus' mouth, it seems to suggest that the Hyperboreans were not warlike at all. A further clue about the "religion" of the Hyperboreans comes from the myths of Orpheus. It is said that when Dionysus invaded Thrace, Orpheus did not see fit to honor him but instead preached the evils of sacrificial murder to the men of Thrace. He taught "other sacred mysteries" having to do with Apollo, whom he believed to be the greatest of all gods. Dionysus became so enraged, he set the Maenads on Orpheus at Apollo's temple where Orpheus was a priest. They burst in, murdered their husbands who were assembled to hear Orpheus speak, tore Orpheus limb from limb, and threw his head into the river Hebrus where it floated downstream still singing. It was carried on the sea to the island of Lesbos. Another version of the story is that Zeus killed Orpheus with a thunderbolt for divulging divine secrets. He was responsible for instituting the Mysteries of Apollo in Thrace, Hecate in Aegina, and Subterrene Demeter at Sparta.[32] And this brings us to a further revelation of Diodorus regarding the Hyperboreans:

And there is also on the island both a magnificent sacred precinct of Apollo and a notable temple which is adorned with many votive offerings and is spherical in shape. Furthermore, a city is there which is sacred to this god, and the majority of its inhabitants are players on the cithara; and these continually play on this instrument in the temple and sing hymns of praise to the god, glorifying his deeds… They say also that the moon, as viewed from this island, appears to be but a little distance from the earth and to have upon it prominences, like those of the earth, which are visible to the eye. The account is also given that the god visits the island every nineteen years, the period in which the return of the stars to the same place in the heavens is accomplished, and for this reason the nineteen year period is called by the Greeks the "year of Meton." At the time of this appearance of the god he both plays on the cithara and dances continuously the night through from the vernal equinox until the rising of the Pleiades, expressing in this manner his delight in his successes. And the kings of this city and the supervisors of the sacred precinct are called Boreades, since they are descendants of Boreas, and the succession to these positions is always kept in their family.[33]

A "round temple" on an island that can only be Britain, where every nineteen years a god "dances" from the vernal equinox until the rising of the Pleiades. We have musicians whose job it is to continually play in the temple and sing, and

the most famous of ancient singers and musicians is associated with the worship of Apollo. Notice also that the dating is internal to the myth, based on what is obviously the heliacal rising of the Pleiades. During what period of time did the Pleiades rise just before the sun on the vernal equinox?

[27] Diodorus of Sicily, English translation by C. H. Oldfather, Loeb Classical Library, Volumes II and III. London, William Heinemann, and Cambridge, Mass., USA, Harvard University Press, 1935 and 1939.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Herodotus, The Histories, Book IV, trans. Aubrey De Selincourt, revised John Marincola, 1972; Penguin, London.

[31] Herodotus, op. cit.

Herodotus

The Greek researcher and storyteller **Herodotus of Halicarnassus** (fifth century BCE) was the world's first historian. In *The Histories*, he describes the expansion of the Achaemenid empire under its kings Cyrus the Great, Cambyses and Darius, culminating in king Xerxes' expedition in 480 BCE against the Greeks, which met with disaster in the naval engagement at Salamis and the battles at Plataea and Mycale. Herodotus' remarkable book also contains excellent ethnographic descriptions of the peoples that the Persians have conquered, fairy tales, gossip, legends, and a very humanitarian morale. (For a summary with some comments, click here.)

Herodotus

Book 2 CH 94 on location of Celtic temple

Let, then, Ammonian Etearchus' speech to that great an extent be made clear by me, except for this, that he asserted, as the Cyrenians said, the Nasamonians returned and the human beings to whom they had come were wizards all. Moreover that very river that flowed by, Etearchus concluded, was the Nile and, what's more, reason thus demands. For the Nile flows from Libya, even cuts the middle of Libya, and, as I conclude by taking what's plain as evidence for what's not known, starts from distances equal to the Ister. The Ister river flows beginning from the Celts and the city of Pyrene and splits the middle of Europe. The Celts are outside of Heracles' pillars and border on the Cynesians, who are settled farthest toward the sun's setting of those settled down in Europe. And the Ister ends at the sea and flows the way of the Hospitable sea through all Europe, where in Istria the Milesians are settled as colonists

The Ister (i.e. Danube,) then, because it flows through settled land, is known by many, but about the Nile's source no one can know, since the Libya, through which it flows, is unsettled and desolate; so about its flowing, as much as was possible by inquiry to reach, has been said; finally it discharges into Egypt. And Egypt is situated somewhere pretty nearly opposite the mountainous Cilicia. Thence to Sinope on the Hospitable sea is five days' straight road for a well-girt man and Sinope is situated opposite the Ister's discharge into the sea. Thus the Nile, I think, goes through all Libya and is equal to the Ister. Now, about the Nile let so much be said.

Herodotus

Book Four

But before Darius came to the Ister (i.e. Danube,) first he took the Getians who think themselves immortal. For indeed the Thracians who have Salmydessus and have settlements above Apollonia and Mesambria, a city, and are called Scyrmiadians and Nipsaeans, without a fight gave themselves up to Darius, but the Getians turned to senselessness and immediately were enslaved, who were the Thracians' bravest and most just.

Now, they think themselves immortal in this manner: they believe both they die not and he who perishes goes to Salmoxis, a divinity (and some of them name that same one Gebeleizis.) Then at intervals of five years' time him of them who obtained it as his portion by lot on each and every occasion they send away as a messenger to Salmoxis and make injunctions of whatever on each occasion they ask. So they send him this way: some of them are appointed and have three javelins and others take thorough hold of the hands and the feet of him who is being sent to Salmoxis and by tossing him up in mid air cast him onto the spears. If indeed he dies by being pierced through, to them then

the god seems to be propitious, but if he dies not, they blame the messenger himself and assert for themselves that he is a bad man and, having blamed him, they send away another. And they enjoin the injunctions on one who still lives. Those same Thracians also on the occasion of thunder and lightning shoot arrows up toward the sky and threaten the god, since they believe no other god exists except their own.

Moreover, as I have learned by inquiry from the Greeks who settled the Hellespont and Pontus, it's that that Salmoxis, being a human being, was a slave in Samos and was a slave to Pythagoras, the son of Mnesarchus, and thence he, having become free, acquired numerous things and, having made an acquisition, went away to his land; then, seeing that the Thracians were living badly and somewhat more senseless, that Salmoxis, knowing the Ionian way of living and habits more profound than among the Thracians, inasmuch as he had associated with Greeks and among the Greeks with not the most strengthless wiseman, Pythagoras, prepared himself a men's apartment, in which he, receiving as host all the first men of his townspeople and treating them well, taught them thoroughly that neither he himself nor his symposiasts nor the descendants from those on each and every occasion would die, but they would be present in that place, where on each and every occasion surviving, they would have all the good things. And in the time when he was doing what has been described and was saying that, in that time he built an underground house. Then when the house was entirely complete for him, from the Thracians he was made to disappear and, having gone down, down to the underground house, he lived for three years. So they missed him and mourned him on the ground that he was dead and the fourth year he appeared to the Thracians and thus it proved credible to them what Salmoxis was saying. That, they assert, he did.

But I about that one and the underground house neither disbelieve nor accordingly believe anything very much, but think that that Salmoxis lived many years earlier than Pythagoras. Moreover, let whether Salmoxis proved a human being or that one is a native divinity of the Getians go its way. Those indeed used a manner like that and, when they had been worsted by the Persians, followed the rest of the army.

Then Darius, when he had come and the foot army together with him to the Ister, then, all having gone across, Darius bade the Ionians, after they had broken the pontoon, follow him by the mainland, them and the army from the ships. But when the Ionians were to perform the breaking and do what was bade, Coes, the son of Erxandrus, being the general of the Mytilenians, said to Darius this, after he had asked previously whether it was dear to him to receive an opinion from one who wants to show it forth from himself: "O king, because you are to advance with an army against a land, in which manifestly neither will be anything ploughed nor a settled city, now allow you that bridge there to stand in place and leave as its guards those very ones who threw it. And so if we act in accordance with our mind, after we have found the Scythians, there is a way out for us, and even if we are not able to find them, at any rate the way out's safe for us; for not yet did I fear lest we be worsted by the Scythians in battle, but rather lest we be not able to find them and suffer something significant in our wandering. Indeed this, someone may assert, I say for my own sake, that I may remain behind, but I for my part, although the opinion that I found best for you, king, I bring to your midst, yet myself will follow you and would not be left behind." Darius took very much pleasure in the opinion and replied to him with this: "Lesbian foreigner, when I have been brought back to safety to my house, appear by me by all means, that you in return for good advice with good deeds I may repay."

Hippolytus

(C. A.D. 170-c. 236), an important Christian writer of the second half of the second and the beginning of the third century, probably resident in Rome though his writings are in Greek. Of his work only fragments remain, the most important being the Philosophumena, the "Refutation of all Heresies" in ten books, of which the second and third are lost. He is regarded as one of the most important of the theologians of the third century in the West, but although he took an active part in the controversies of the time, little is know of his life.

Hippolytus

Philosophumena I:xxv

"The Keltic Druids applied themselves thoroughly to the Pythagorean philosophy, being urged by this pursuit by Zamolxis, the slave of Pythagoras, a Thracian by birth, who came to those parts after the death of Pythagoras, and gave them opportunity of studying the system. And the Kelts believe in their Druids as seers and prophets because they can foretell certain events by the Pythagorean reckoning and calculations. We will not pass over the origins of their learning in silence, since some have presumed to make distinct schools of the philosophies of these peoples. Indeed the Druids also practice the magic arts."

Hippolytus

Philosophumena, i. 22:

"The druids among the Celts having profoundly examined the Pythagorean philosophy, Zalmoxis, a Thracian by race, the slave of Pythagoras, having become for them the founder of this discipline, he after the death of Pythagoras, having made his way there (? sc. to Thrace?), became founder of this philosophy for them. The Celts honour them as prophets and prognosticators because they foretell matters by the ciphers and numbers according to Pythagorean skill…. The druids also practise magic arts however."

Diogenes Laertius

Diogenes Laertius, native of Laerte in Cilicia, was a biographer of ancient Greek philosophers. His *Lives of the Philosophers* (*Philosophoi Biol*,) in ten books, is still extant and is an important source of information on the development of Greek philosophy. The period when he lived is not exactly known, but it is supposed to have been during the reigns of Septimius Severus and Caracalla. Because of his long and fairly sympathetic account of Epicurus, some think that Diogenes belonged to the Epicurean School, but this is not clear. He expresses his admiration for many philosophers, but his own allegiances, if any, are not stated.

He divides all the Greek philosophers into two classes: those of the Ionic and those of the Italic school. He derives the first from Anaximander, the second from Pythagoras. After Socrates, he divides the Ionian philosophers into three branches: (a) Plato and the Academics, down to Clitomachus; (b) the Cynics, down to Chrysippus; (c) Aristotle and Theophrastus. The series of Italic philosophers consists, after Pythagoras, of the following: Telanges, Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno of Elea, Leucippus, Democritus, and others down to Epicurus.

The work of Diogenes is a crude contribution towards the history of philosophy. It contains a brief account of the lives, doctrines, and sayings of most persons who have been called philosophers; and though the author is limited in his philosophical abilities and assessment of the various schools, the book is valuable as a collection of facts, which we could not have learned from any other source, and is entertaining as a sort of *pot-pourri* on the subject. Diogenes also includes samples of his own wretched poetry about the philosophers he discusses.

Diogenes Laertius

Vitae Intro 1 & 5

(Flourish c. the second quarter of c. third century A.D.) He was the author of a compendium of biographical material in ten books, still extant, generally known as the Lives of the Philosophers. Despite careless and uncritical elements the work is of priceless value because most of the ancient sources used by him have now been entirely lost. His information is given for the most part at second or third hand, but very often with the names of the original authorities cited. He almost certainly made use of Appollodorus and from time to time borrowed material from Polyhistor. He cites both Sotion of Alexandria and also the Magicus of the Psuedo-Aristotle on the druids.

Diogenes Laertius

Vitæ, intro., i

"Some say that the study of philosophy was of barbarian origin. For the Persians had their Magi, the Babylonians or the Assyrians the Chaldeans, the Indians their Gymnosophists, while the Kelts and the Galatæ had seers called Druids and Semnotheoi, or so Aristotle says in the "Magic," and Sotion in the twenty-third book of his "Succession of Philosophers.""

Diogenes Laertius,

Vitæ, intro., 5:

"Those who think that philosophy is an invention of the barbarians explain the systems prevailing among each people. They say that the Gymnosophists and Druids make their pronouncements by means of riddles and dark sayings, teaching that the gods must be worshipped, and no evil done, and manly behaviour maintained."

Livy

(59 b.c. – A.D. 17) One of the greatest Roman historians; born at Padua, where he died; but he spent much of his time in Rome in the highest literary circles. He wrote a history of Rome in 142 books, of which 35 only are extant, and some fragments and brief epitomes of certain further sections. His book is just full of stuff on various peoples who were conquered or dared to stand up to Rome. Book 8:ix.7-x.14; Book 23:xxiv.9-xxv.1; Book 38:xlvii.5-11 & xxxiii-xxxv;

Livy

Book VI ix –xi

[7.9]The consuls for the following year were C. Sulpicius and C. Licinius Calvus. They resumed operations against the Hernici and invaded their territory, but did not find the enemy in the open. They attacked and captured Ferentinum, a Hernican City; but as they were returning home the Tiburtines closed their gates against them. There had previously been numerous complaints made on both sides, but this last provocation finally decided the Romans, in case the Fetials failed to get redress, to declare war against the Tiburtines. It is generally understood that T. Quinctius Pennus was the Dictator and Ser. Cornelius Maluginensis the Master of the Horse. According to Licinius Macer, the Dictator was nominated by the consul Licinius. His colleague, Sulpicius, was anxious to get the elections over before he departed for the war, in the hope of being himself re-elected, if he were on the spot, and Licinius determined to thwart his colleague's self-seeking ambition. Licinius Macer's desire to appropriate the credit of this to his house (the Licinii) lessens the weight of his authority. As I find no mention of this in the older annalists, I am more inclined to believe that it was the prospect of a Gaulish war which was the immediate cause why a Dictator was nominated. At all events it was in this year that the Gauls formed their camp by the Salarian road, three miles from the City at the bridge across the Anio. In face of this sudden and alarming inroad the Dictator proclaimed a suspension of all business, and made every man who was liable to serve take the military oath. He marched out of the City with an immense army and fixed his camp on this side the Anio. Each side had left the bridge between them intact, as its destruction might have been thought due to fears of an attack. There were frequent skirmishes for the possession of the bridge; as these were indecisive, the question was left unsettled. A Gaul of extraordinary stature strode forward on to the unoccupied bridge, and shouting as loudly as he could, cried: "Let the bravest man that Rome possesses come out and fight me, that we two may decide which people is the superior in war."

[7.10]A long silence followed. The best and bravest of the Romans made no sign; they felt ashamed of appearing to decline the challenge, and yet they were reluctant to expose themselves to such terrible danger. Thereupon T. Manlius, the youth who had protected his father from the persecution of the tribune, left his post and went to the Dictator. "Without your orders, General," he said, "I will never leave my post to fight, no, not even if I saw that victory was certain; but if you give me permission I want to show that monster as he stalks so proudly in front of their lines that I am a scion of that family which hurled the troop of Gauls from the Tarpeian rock." Then the Dictator: "Success to your courage, T. Manlius, and to your affection for your father and your fatherland! Go, and with the help of the gods show that the name of Rome is invincible." Then his comrades fastened on his armour; he took an infantry shield and a Spanish sword as better adapted for close fighting; thus armed and equipped they led him forward against the Gaul,

who was exulting in his brute strength, and even - the ancients thought this worth recording - putting his tongue out in derision. They retired to their posts and the two armed champions were left alone in the midst, more after the manner of a scene on the stage than under the conditions of serious war, and to those who judged by appearances, by no means equally matched. The one was a creature of enormous bulk, resplendent in a many-coloured coat and wearing painted and gilded armour; the other a man of average height, and his arms, useful rather than ornamental, gave him quite an ordinary appearance. There was no singing of war-songs, no prancing about, no silly brandishing of weapons. With a breast full of courage and silent wrath Manlius reserved all his ferocity for the actual moment of conflict. When they had taken their stand between the two armies, while so many hearts around them were in suspense between hope and fear, the Gaul, like a great overhanging mass, held out his shield on his left arm to meet his adversary's blows and aimed a tremendous cut downwards with his sword. The Roman evaded the blow, and pushing aside the bottom of the Gaul's shield with his own, he slipped under it close up to the Gaul, too near for him to get at him with his sword. Then turning the point of his blade upwards, he gave two rapid thrusts in succession and stabbed the Gaul in the belly and the groin, laying his enemy prostrate over a large extent of ground. He left the body of his fallen foe undespoiled with the exception of his chain, which though smeared with blood he placed round his own neck. Astonishment and fear kept the Gauls motionless; the Romans ran eagerly forward from their lines to meet their warrior, and amidst cheers and congratulations they conducted him to the Dictator. In the doggerel verses which they extemporised in his honour they called him Torquatus ("adorned with a chain,") and this soubriquet became for his posterity a proud family name. The Dictator gave him a golden crown, and before the whole army alluded to his victory in terms of the highest praise.

[7.11]Strange to relate, that single combat had such a far-reaching influence upon the whole war that the Gauls hastily abandoned their camp and moved off into the neighbourhood of Tibur. They formed an alliance offensive and defensive with that city, and the Tiburtines supplied them generously with provisions. After receiving this assistance they passed on into Campania. This was the reason why in the following year the consul, C. Poetilius Balbus, led an army, by order of the people, against the Tiburtines, though the conduct of the war against the Hernici had fallen by lot to his colleague, M. Fabius Ambustus. Though the Gauls had come back from Campania to their assistance, it was undoubtedly by the Tiburtine generals that the cruel depredations in the territories of Labici, Tusculum, and Alba were carried out. To act against the Tiburtines, the republic was content with a consul, but the sudden re-appearance of the Gauls required a Dictator. Q. Servilius Ahala was nominated, and he selected T. Quinctius as Master of the Horse. On the authority of the senate, he made a vow to celebrate the Great Games, should the issue of the war prove favourable. After giving orders for the consul's army to remain where it was, in order to confine the Tiburtines to their own war, the Dictator made all the "juniors" take the military oath, without a single refusal. The battle, in which the whole strength of the City was engaged, took place not far from the Colline Gate in the sight of the parents and wives and children of the Roman soldiers. Even when absent, the thought of those near and dear to one is a great incentive to courage, but now that they were within view they fired the men with a firm resolve to win their applause and secure their safety. There was great slaughter on both sides, but the Gauls were in the end repulsed, and fled in the direction of Tibur as though it were a Gaulish stronghold. The straggling fugitives were intercepted by the consul not far from Tibur; the townsmen sallied out to render them assistance, and they and the Gauls were driven within their gates. So the consul was equally successful with the Dictator. The other consul, Fabius, crushed the Hernici in successive defeats, at first in comparatively unimportant actions and then finally in one great battle when the enemy attacked him in full strength. The Dictator passed splendid encomiums on the consuls, both in the senate and before the people, and even transferred to them the credit for his own success. He then laid down his office. Poetilius celebrated a double triumph - over the Gauls and over the Tiburtines. It was considered a sufficient honour for Fabius to be allowed to enter the City in an ovation. The Tiburtines laughed at Poetilius' triumph. "When," they said, "had he ever met them in a pitched battle? A few of them had come outside their gates to watch the disordered flight of the Gauls, but when they found that they, too, were being attacked and cut down indiscriminately they retreated into their city. Did the Romans deem that sort of thing worthy of a triumph? They must not look upon it as too great and wonderful a thing to create disorder in an enemy's gates; they would themselves see greater confusion and panic before their own walls."

Livy

Book XLVI

"Do not think that only the name of the Gallo-grecians is a mixture; long since both their bodies and their minds have been mixed and corrupted. Or if they were Gauls, with whom we have fought a thousand times in Italy with varying results, so far as the issue depended on our commander, would even a messenger have come back from there?

Livy

xxxiii-xxxv

[5.33]After the expulsion of that citizen whose presence, if there is anything certain in human affairs, would have made the capture of Rome impossible, the doom of the fated City swiftly approached. Ambassadors came from Clusium begging for assistance against the Gauls. The tradition is that this nation, attracted by the report of the delicious fruits and especially of the wine - a novel pleasure to them - crossed the Alps and occupied the lands formerly cultivated by the Etruscans, and that Arruns of Clusium imported wine into Gaul in order to allure them into Italy. His wife had been seduced by a Lucumo, to whom he was guardian, and from whom, being a young man of considerable influence, it was impossible to get redress without getting help from abroad. In revenge, Arruns led the Gauls across the Alps and prompted them to attack Clusium. I would not deny that the Gauls were conducted to Clusium by Arruns or some one else living there, but it is quite clear that those who attacked that city were not the first who crossed the Alps. As a matter of fact, Gauls crossed into Italy two centuries before they attacked Clusium and took Rome. Nor were the Clusines the first Etruscans with whom the Gaulish armies came into conflict; long before that they had fought many battles with the Etruscans who dwelt between the Apennines and the Alps. Before the Roman supremacy, the power of the Tuscans was widely extended both by sea and land. How far it extended over the two seas by which Italy is surrounded like an island is proved by the names, for the nations of Italy call the one the "Tuscan Sea," from the general designation of the people, and the other the "Atriatic," from Atria, a Tuscan colony. The Greeks also call them the "Tyrrhene" and the "Adriatic." The districts stretching towards either sea were inhabited by them. They first settled on this side the Apennines by the western sea in twelve cities, afterwards they founded twelve colonies beyond

the Apennines, corresponding to the number of the mother cities. These colonies held the whole of the country beyond the Po as far as the Alps, with the exception of the corner inhabited by the Veneti, who dwelt round an arm of the sea. The Alpine tribes are undoubtedly of the same stock, especially the Raetii, who had through the nature of their country become so uncivilized that they retained no trace of their original condition except their language, and even this was not free from corruption.

[5.34]About the passage of the Gauls into Italy we have received the following account. Whilst Tarquinius Priscus was king of Rome, the supreme power amongst the Celts, who formed a third part of the whole of Gaul, was in the hands of the Bituriges; they used to furnish the king for the whole Celtic race. Ambigatus was king at that time, a man eminent for his own personal courage and prosperity as much as for those of his dominions. During his sway the harvests were so abundant and the population increased so rapidly in Gaul that the government of such vast numbers seemed almost impossible. He was now an old man, and anxious to relieve his realm from the burden of over-population. With this view he signified his intention of sending his sister's sons Bellovesus and Segovesus, both enterprising young men, to settle in whatever locality the gods should by augury assign to them. They were to invite as many as wished to accompany them, sufficient to prevent any nation from repelling their approach. When the auspices were taken, the Hercynian forest was assigned to Segovesus; to Bellovesus the gods gave the far pleasanter way into Italy. He invited the surplus population of six tribes - the Bituriges, the Averni, the Senones, the Aedui, the Ambarri, the Carnutes, and the Aulerci. Starting with an enormous force of horse and foot, he came to the Tricastini. Beyond stretched the barrier of the Alps, and I am not at all surprised that they appeared insurmountable, for they had never yet been surmounted by any route, as far at least as unbroken memory reaches, unless you choose to believe the fables about Hercules. Whilst the mountain heights kept the Gauls fenced in as it were there, and they were looking everywhere to see by what path they could cross the peaks which reached to heaven and so enter a new world, they were also prevented from advancing by a sense of religious obligation, for news came that some strangers in quest of territory were being attacked by the Salyi. These were Massilians who had sailed from Phocaea. The Gauls, looking upon this as an omen of their own fortunes, went to their assistance and enabled them to fortify the spot where they had first landed, without any interference from the Salyi. After crossing the Alps by the passes of the Taurini and the valley of the Douro, they defeated the Tuscans in battle not far from the Ticinus, and when they learnt that the country in which they had settled belonged to the Insubres, a name also borne by a canton of the Haedui, they accepted the omen of the place and built a city which they called Mediolanum.

[5.35]Subsequently another body, consisting of the Cenomani, under the leadership of Elitovius, followed the track of the former and crossed the Alps by the same pass, with the goodwill of Bellovesus. They had their settlements where the cities of Brixia and Verona now stand. The Libui came next and the Saluvii; they settled near the ancient tribe of the Ligurian Laevi, who lived about the Ticinus. Then the Boii and Lingones crossed the Pennine Alps, and as all the country between the Po and the Alps was occupied, they crossed the Po on rafts and expelled not only the Etruscans but the Umbrians as well. They remained, however, north of the Apennines. Then the Senones, the last to come, occupied the country from the Utis to the Aesis. It was this last tribe, I find, that came to Clusium, and from there to Rome; but it is uncertain whether they came alone or helped by contingents from all the Cisalpine peoples. The people of Clusium were appalled by this strange war, when they saw the numbers, the extraordinary appearance of the men, and the kind of weapons they used, and heard that the legions of Etruria had been often routed by them on both sides of the Po. Although they had no claim on Rome, either on the ground of alliance or friendly relations, unless it was that they had not defended their kinsmen at Veii against the Romans, they nevertheless sent ambassadors to ask the senate for assistance. Active assistance they did not obtain. The three sons of M. Fabius Ambustus were sent as ambassadors to negotiate with the Gauls and warn them not to attack those from whom they had suffered no injury, who were allies and friends of Rome, and who, if circumstances compelled them, must be defended by the armed force of Rome. They preferred that actual war should be avoided, and that they should make acquaintance with the Gauls, who were strangers to them, in peace rather than in arms.

[5.36]A peaceable enough mission, had it not contained envoys of a violent temper, more like Gauls than Romans. After they had delivered their instructions in the council of the Gauls, the following reply was given: "Although we are hearing the name of Romans for the first time, we believe nevertheless that you are brave men, since the Clusines are imploring your assistance in their time of danger. Since you prefer to protect your allies against us by negotiation rather than by armed force, we on our side do not reject the peace you offer, on condition that the Clusines cede to us Gauls, who are in need of land, a portion of that territory which they possess to a greater extent than they can cultivate. On any other conditions peace cannot be granted. We wish to receive their reply in your presence, and if territory is refused us we shall fight, whilst you are still here, that you may report to those at home how far the Gauls surpass all other men in courage." The Romans asked them what right they had to demand, under threat of war, territory from those who were its owners, and what business the Gauls had in Etruria. The haughty answer was returned that they carried their right in their weapons, and that everything belonged to the brave. Passions were kindled on both sides; they flew to arms and joined battle. Thereupon, contrary to the law of nations, the envoys seized their weapons, for the Fates were already urging Rome to its ruin. The fact of three of the noblest and bravest Romans fighting in the front line of the Etruscan army could not be concealed, so conspicuous was the valour of the strangers. And what was more, Q. Fabius rode forward at a Gaulish chieftain, who was impetuously charging right at the Etruscan standards, ran his spear through his side and slew him. Whilst he was in the act of despoiling the body the Gauls recognised him, and the word was passed through the whole army that it was a Roman ambassador. Forgetting their rage against the Clusines, and breathing threats against the Romans, they sounded the retreat.

Livy

Book 23 xxiv-xxv

[23.24]The next day the senate, on being consulted by M. Pomponius, the praetor, passed a decree to write to the Dictator, asking him, if the interests of the State permitted, to come to Rome to conduct the election of fresh consuls. He was to bring with him his Master of the Horse and M. Marcellus, the praetor, so that the senate might learn from them on the spot in what condition the affairs of the Republic were, and form their plans accordingly. On receiving the summons they all came, after leaving officers in command of the legions. The Dictator spoke briefly and modestly about himself; he gave most of the credit to Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, his Master of the Horse, and then gave notice of the elections. The consuls elected were L. Postumius for the third time - he was elected in his absence, as

he was then administering the province of Gaul - and Ti. Sempronius Gracchus, Master of the Horse, and at that time curule aedile also. Then the praetors were elected. They were M. Valerius Laevinus, for the second time, Appius Claudius Pulcher, Q. Fulvius Flaccus, and Q. Mucius Scaevola. After the various magistrates had been elected the Dictator returned to his army in winter quarters at Teanum. The Master of the Horse was left in Rome; as he would be entering upon office in a few days, it was desirable for him to consult the senate about the enrolment and equipment of the armies for the year.

While these matters were engrossing attention a fresh disaster was announced, for Fortune was heaping one disaster upon another this year. It was reported that L. Postumius, the consul elect, and his army had been annihilated in Gaul. There was a wild forest called by the Gauls Litana, and through this the consul was to conduct his army. The Gauls cut through the trees on both sides of the road in such a way that they remained standing as long as they were undisturbed, but a slight pressure would make them fall. Postumius had two Roman legions, and he had also levied a force from the country bordering on the Upper Sea, sufficiently large to bring the force with which he entered the hostile territory up to 20,000 men. The Gauls had posted themselves round the outskirts of the forest, and as soon as the Roman army entered they pushed the sawn trees on the outside, these fell upon those next to them, which were tottering and hardly able to stand upright, until the whole mass fell in on both sides and buried in one common ruin arms and men and horses. Hardly ten men escaped, for when most of them hail been crushed to death by the trunks or broken branches of the trees, the remainder, panic-struck at the unexpected disaster, were killed by the Gauls who surrounded the forest. Out of the whole number only very few were made prisoners, and these, whilst trying to reach a bridge over the river, were intercepted by the Gauls who had already seized it. It was there that Postumius fell whilst fighting most desperately to avoid capture. The Boii stripped the body of its spoils and cut off the head, and bore them in triumph to the most sacred of their temples. According to their custom they cleaned out the skull and covered the scalp with beaten gold; it was then used as a vessel for libations and also as a drinking cup for the priest and ministers of the temple. The plunder, too, which the Gauls secured was as great as their victory, for although most of the animals had been buried beneath the fallen trees, the rest of the booty, not having been scattered in flight, was found strewn along the whole line where the army lay.

Livy

Book 38:xlvii.5-11

38.47]This was the substance of what Furius and Aemilius said. I understand that Manlius spoke to the following effect: "Formerly, senators, it was the tribunes of the plebs who usually opposed those who claimed a triumph. I am grateful to them for having conceded this much to me, either personally or in acknowledgment of the greatness of my services, that they not only showed by their silence their approval of my being thus honoured, but were even ready, if necessary, to recommend it to the senate. It is amongst the ten commissioners that I find my opponents, those whom our ancestors assigned to their commanders for the purpose of gathering the fruits of their victories and enhancing their glory. L. Furius and L. Aemilius forbid me to enter the triumphal chariot; they snatch the victor's wreath from my brow; these very men whom I was going to call as witnesses to what I have done, had the tribunes opposed my triumph. I envy no man his honours, senators. Only the other day when the tribunes of the plebs were trying to prevent the triumph of Q. Fabius Labeo, strong and determined as they were, you overawed them by your authority. His enemies laid it to his charge, not that he had fought an unjust war, but that he had never even seen an enemy. Still he enjoyed his triumph. I, who have fought so many pitched battles with 100,000 of our fiercest enemies, who have killed or taken prisoners 40,000, who have stormed two of their camps, who have left all the country this side the Taurus more peaceable than the land of Italy - I am not only being defrauded of my triumph, but actually have to defend myself before you against the accusations of my commissioners.

"You have noticed, senators, that they bring a double charge against me; that I ought not to have made war on the Gauls, and that I conducted it in a rash and imprudent way. 'The Gauls,' they say, 'were not hostile to us, but you wantonly attacked them while they were quietly carrying out your orders.' I am not going to ask you, senators, to judge the Gauls who inhabit those countries from what you know of the savagery common to the race, and their deadly hatred to the name of Rome. Keep out of sight the infamous and hateful character of the race as a whole and judge those men by themselves. I wish Eumenes, I wish all the cities of Asia were here, and that you were hearing their complaints rather than the charges I am bringing. Send commissioners to visit all the cities of Asia and find out which has delivered them from the heavier thraldom, the removal of Antiochus beyond the Taurus or the subjugation of the Gauls. Let them bring back word how often the fields of those people have been devastated, how often they and all their property have been carried off, with hardly a chance of ransoming the captives, and knowing that human victims were being sacrificed and their children immolated. Let me tell you that your allies paid tribute to the Gauls, and would have been paying it now, though freed from the rule of Antiochus, if it had not been put a stop to by me.

[38.48]"The greater the distance to which Antiochus was removed, the more tyrannically did the Gauls lord it over Asia; by his removal you added whatever lands lie on this side the Taurus to their dominion, not your own. But you say, 'Assuming this to be true, the Gauls once despoiled Delphi, but though it was the one oracle common to all mankind, and the central spot in the whole world, the Romans did not on that account declare or commence war against them.' I should certainly have thought that there was a considerable difference between the conditions existing when Greece and Asia had not yet passed under your suzerainty, as far as regards your interest and concern in their affairs, and the conditions prevailing now; when you have fixed the Taurus as the frontier of your dominion; when you are giving to the cities liberty and immunity from tribute; when you are enlarging the territories of some and depriving others of their land by way of punishment or imposing tribute: when you are extending, diminishing, giving, taking away kingdoms, and making it your one care that they shall keep the peace both on land and sea. Would you consider that the liberty of Asia would not have been secure had not Antiochus withdrawn his garrisons, which were remaining quietly in their quarters, and do you suppose that your gifts to Eumenes would be safe or the cities retain their freedom as long as the armies of the Gauls were roaming far and wide?

"But why do I use these arguments, as though I had made the Gauls into enemies and had not found them such already? I appeal to you, L. Scipio, whose valour and good fortune alike I prayed to the immortal gods - and not in vain - to grant me, when I succeeded to your command; I appeal to you, P. Scipio, who though subordinate to your brother the consul, still possessed both with him and the army all the authority of a colleague; and I ask you whether you know that there were legions of Gauls in the army of Antiochus; whether you saw that they were posted at either end of his line, for there his main

strength seemed to be; whether you fought with them as regular enemies, and killed them and brought their spoils home. And yet the war which the senate had decreed and the people ordered was a war against Antiochus, not against the Gauls. Yes, but I hold that the decree and order included those who had formed part of his army, and amongst these - with the exception of Antiochus with whom Scipio had concluded peace and with whom you ordered a special treaty to be made - all who bore arms on his behalf were our enemies. The Gauls above all supported his cause, as did also some petty kings and tyrants. With the others, however, I made peace and compelled them to make an expiation for their misdoings proportionate to the dignity of your empire, and I tried to influence the Gauls, if haply their innate ferocity could be mitigated. When I saw that they remained untameable and implacable, I thought they ought to be coerced by force of arms.

Lucan

(C. A.D. 39-65) A Roman poet of Spanish origin and nephew of Lucius Annaeus Seneca. He was educated in Rome and appointed queaestor under Nero and a member of the college of augurs, and became a voluminous poet and writer, and a highly distinguished rhetor, with some training in Stoic philosophy. His only surviving poem (incomplete) is commonly known as the Pharsalia, an epic poem in ten books narrating the contest between Caesar and the Senate, and bearing in the manuscripts the tile De Bello Civili. Convicted of conspiracy against Nero he was forced to die, and the Pharsalia was never finished. His chief source was Livy, but we was probably indebted to Caesar or one of his sources. During the reign of Nero (A.d. 54-68) we find this same picture drawn with the same grand emphasis of Lucan's verse; and incidentally, probably as a sort of poetical flourish, we have the groves mentioned for the first time as the haunts of Druids.

Lucan

Pharsalia, i. 441ff:

"You also, ye poets, who in your panegyrics hand down through the ages brave souls cut off in battle, free from apprehension have ye bards poured forth your wealth of song. And you, ye druids, having laid aside your arms, have returned to your barbaric rites and sinister mode of worship. - To you alone it is granted or withheld to have knowledge of the gods and the powers of heaven, you who dwell in deep woods in sequestered groves. Your teaching is that the shades of the dead do not make their way to the silent abode of Erebus or the lightless realm of Dis below, but that the same soul animates the limbs in another sphere. If you sing of certainties, death is the center of continuous life. Truly the peoples on whom the Pole star looks down are happy in their error, for they are not harassed by the greatest of terrors, the fear of death. This gives the warrior eagerness to rush upon the steel, a spirit ready to face death, and an indifference to save a life which will return."

Lucan.

Pharsalia Book 1,

Those who kept watch beside the western shore
Have moved their standards home; the happy Gaul
Rejoices in their absence; fair Garonne
Through peaceful meads glides onward to the sea.
480 And where the river broadens, neath the cape
Her quiet harbour sleeps. No outstretched arm
Except in mimic war now hurls the lance.
No skilful warrior of Seine directs
The scythed chariot 'gainst his country's foe.
Now rest the Belgians, and the Arvernian race
That boasts our kinship by descent from Troy;
And those brave rebels whose undaunted hands
Were dipped in Cotta's blood, and those who wear
Sarmatian garb. Batavia's warriors fierce
490 No longer listen for the bugle call,
Nor those who dwell where Rhone's swift eddies sweep
Saone to the ocean; nor the mountain tribes
Who dwell about its source. Thou, too, oh Treves,
Rejoicest that the war has left thy bounds.
Ligurian tribes, now shorn, in ancient days
First of the long-haired nations, on whose necks
Once flowed the auburn locks in pride supreme;
And those who pacify with blood accursed
Savage Teutates, Hesus' horrid shrines,

500 And Taranis' altars cruel as were those
Loved by Diana (18,) goddess of the north;
All these now rest in peace. And you, ye Bards,
Whose martial lays send down to distant times
The fame of valorous deeds in battle done,
Pour forth in safety more abundant song.
While you, ye Druids (19,) when the war was done,
To mysteries strange and hateful rites returned:
To you alone 'tis given the gods and stars
To know or not to know; secluded groves
510 Your dwelling-place, and forests far remote.
If what ye sing be true, the shades of men
Seek not the dismal homes of Erebus
Or death's pale kingdoms; but the breath of life
Still rules these bodies in another age --
Life on this hand and that, and death between.
Happy the peoples 'neath the Northern Star
In this their false belief; for them no fear
Of that which frights all others: they with hands
And hearts undaunted rush upon the foe
520 And scorn to spare the life that shall return.
Ye too depart who kept the banks of Rhine
Safe from the foe, and leave the Teuton tribes
Free at their will to march upon the world.

Lucan,

Pharsalia, i, 450-8:

"And you, O Druids, now that the clash of battle is stilled, once more have you returned to your barbarous ceremonies and to the savage usage of your holy rites. To you alone it is given to know the truth about the gods and deities of the sky, or else you alone are ignorant of this truth. The innermost groves of far-off forests are your abodes. And it is you who say that the shades of the dead seek not the silent land of Erebus and the pale halls of Pluto; rather, you tell us that the same spirit has a body again elsewhere, and that death, if what you sing is true, is but the midpoint of long life."

Lucan

Pharsalia, i, 450-8:

"Et vos barbaricos ritus moremque sinistrum sacrorum, Druidae, positis repetistis ab armis : solis nosse deos et caeli numina vobis aut solis nescire datum : nemora alta remotis incolitis lucis : vobis auctoribus umbrae non tacitas Erebi sedes Ditisque profundi pallida regna petunt : regit idem spiritus artus orbe alio : longae - canitis si cognita – vitae mors media est."

Lucan

Pharsalia, iii, 400-450

But Caesar's visage stern betrayed his ire
Which thus broke forth in words: "Vain is the hope
Ye rest upon my march: speed though I may
410 Towards my western goal, time still remains
To blot Massilia out. Rejoice, my troops!
Unsought the war ye longed for meets you now:
The fates concede it. As the tempests lose
Their strength by sturdy forests unopposed,
And as the fire that finds no fuel dies,
Even so to find no foe is Caesar's ill.
When those who may be conquered will not fight
That is defeat. Degenerate, disarmed
Their gates admit me! Not content, forsooth,
420 With shutting Caesar out they shut him in!
They shun the taint of war! Such prayer for peace
Brings with it chastisement. In Caesar's age
Learn that not peace, but war within his ranks
Alone can make you safe."

Fearless he turns
His march upon the city, and beholds
Fast barred the gate-ways, while in arms the youths
Stand on the battlements. Hard by the walls
A hillock rose, upon the further side
Expanding in a plain of gentle slope,
430 Fit (as he deemed it) for a camp with ditch
And mound encircling. To a lofty height
The nearest portion of the city rose,
While intervening valleys lay between.
These summits with a mighty trench to bind
The chief resolves, gigantic though the toil.
But first, from furthest boundaries of his camp,
Enclosing streams and meadows, to the sea
To draw a rampart, upon either hand
Heaved up with earthy sod; with lofty towers
440 Crowned; and to shut Massilia from the land.

Then did the Grecian city win renown
Eternal, deathless, for that uncompelled
Nor fearing for herself, but free to act
She made the conqueror pause: and he who seized
All in resistless course found here delay:
And Fortune, hastening to lay the world
Low at her favourite's feet, was forced to stay
For these few moments her impatient hand.

Now fell the forests far and wide, despoiled
450 Of all their giant trunks: for as the mound
On earth and brushwood stood, a timber frame
Held firm the soil, lest pressed beneath its towers
The mass might topple down. There stood a grove
Which from the earliest time no hand of man
Had dared to violate; hidden from the sun (27)
Its chill recesses; matted boughs entwined
Prisoned the air within. No sylvan nymphs
Here found a home, nor Pan, but savage rites
And barbarous worship, altars horrible
460 On massive stones upreared; sacred with blood
Of men was every tree. If faith be given
To ancient myth, no fowl has ever dared
To rest upon those branches, and no beast
Has made his lair beneath: no tempest falls,
Nor lightnings flash upon it from the cloud.
Stagnant the air, unmoving, yet the leaves
Filled with mysterious trembling; dripped the streams
From coal-black fountains; effigies of gods
Rude, scarcely fashioned from some fallen trunk
470 Held the mid space: and, pallid with decay,
Their rotting shapes struck terror. Thus do men
Dread most the god unknown. 'Twas said that caves
Rumbled with earthquakes, that the prostrate yew
Rose up again; that fiery tongues of flame
Gleamed in the forest depths, yet were the trees
Unkindled; and that snakes in frequent folds
Were coiled around the trunks. Men flee the spot
Nor dare to worship near: and e'en the priest
Or when bright Phoebus holds the height, or when
480 Dark night controls the heavens, in anxious dread
Draws near the grove and fears to find its lord.

Spared in the former war, still dense it rose
Where all the hills were bare, and Caesar now
Its fall commanded. But the brawny arms
Which swayed the axes trembled, and the men,
Awed by the sacred grove's dark majesty,
Held back the blow they thought would be returned.
This Caesar saw, and swift within his grasp
Uprose a ponderous axe, which downward fell
490 Cleaving a mighty oak that towered to heaven,
While thus he spake: "Henceforth let no man dread
To fell this forest: all the crime is mine.
This be your creed." He spake, and all obeyed,
For Caesar's ire weighed down the wrath of Heaven.
Yet ceased they not to fear. Then first the oak,
Dodona's ancient boast; the knotty holm;
The cypress, witness of patrician grief,
The buoyant alder, laid their foliage low
Admitting day; though scarcely through the stems
500 Their fall found passage. At the sight the Gauls
Grieved; but the garrison within the walls
Rejoiced: for thus shall men insult the gods
And find no punishment? Yet fortune oft
Protects the guilty; on the poor alone
The gods can vent their ire. Enough hewn down,
They seize the country wagons; and the hind,
His oxen gone which else had drawn the plough,
Mourns for his harvest.

Valerius Maximus

(Flourished in the first Century A.D.), a Roman historian who wrote a handbook for rhetoricians, Factorum ac Dictorum Memorabilium Kibri IX, consisting of a collection of illustrative historical anecdotes. The book is dedicated to Tiberius and is strongly nationalistic in tone. He made use of Livy and Cicero among other sources, but is uncritical in the use of his material.

Valerius Maximus

II:6, 10

Having done with the description of the town (Marseilles,) an old custom of the Gauls may now be mentioned; for it is said that they lend to each other sums that are repayable in the next world, so firmly convinced are they that the souls of men are immortal. And I would call them foolish indeed if it were not for the fact that what these trousered barbarians believe is the very faith of Pythagoras himself..."

Valerius Maximus

II:6, 10

10Horum moenia egressis vetus ille mos Gallorum occurrit, quos memoria proditum est pecunias mutuas, quae his apud inferos redderentur, dare, quia persuasum habuerint animas hominum inmortales esse. dicerem stultos, nisi idem bracati sensissent, quod palliatus Pythagoras credidit.

11 Avara et feneratoria Gallorum philosophia, alacris et fortis Cimbrorum et Celtiberorum, qui in acie gaudio exultabant tamquam gloriose et feliciter vita excessuri, lamentabantur in morbo quasi turpiter et miserabiliter perituri. Celtiberi etiam nefas esse ducebant proelio superesse, cum is occidisset, pro cuius salute spiritum devoverant. laudanda utrorumque populorum animi praesentia, quod et patriae incolumitatem fortiter tueri et fidem amicitiae constanter praestandam arbitrabantur.

Paulus Orosius

Paulus Orosius was a 5th century Spanish priest and historian. He was the author of the seven-volume *Historiarum Adversus Paganos*. The universal history from Creation to 417 was a popular book in the Middle Ages. It is believed that it was translated into Anglo-Saxon by Alfred the Great.

Paulus Orosius

Book Five

Furthermore, in the same period of the Jururthine War, L. Cassius, the consul, who was in Gaul, pursued the Tigurini as far as the Ocean, and, in turn, was surrounded by the same ambush and was killed. Lucius Piso, a man of consular rank and a legate of the consul, Cassius, was also killed. C. Publius, the other legate, that the remaining part of the army which had taken refuge might not be destroyed, in a most disgraceful truce gave over hostages and half of all their property to the Tigurini. When he returned to Rome, C. Publius was summoned to court by the tribune of the people, Caelius, and he fled into exile. Caepio, the proconsul, after capturing a city of the Gauls, by the name of Tolosa, took away from the temple of Apollo one hundred thousand pounds of gold and one hundred and ten thousand pounds of silver. When he sent this under guard to Masilla, a city friendly to the Roman people, he secretly killed those to whom he had committed it for transportation and safe keeping, as some testify, and he is said to have criminally made away with all of it. As a result of this, a great investigation was afterwards carried out in Rome.

(16) In the six hundred and forty-second year after the founding of the City, C. Manlius, the consul, and Q. Caepio, the proconsul, being sent against the Cimbri, Teutones, Tigurini, and Ambrones, Gallic and Germanic tribes, which at that time had conspired to blot out the Roman Empire, divided the provinces among themselves, making the Rhone River the boundary. While they, then, disputed among themselves with most serious bitterness and contention, they were conquered to the great disgrace and danger of the Roman name. For in this battle, M. Aemilius, a man of consular rank, was captured and killed, and the two sons of the consul were slain. Antias writes that eighty thousand Romans and allies were slaughtered at this time and that forty thousand servants and camp followers were killed. Thus, of the entire army, only ten persons are said to have survived to bring back the wretched news to increase the miseries of the people. The enemy, after gaining possession of both camps and great booty, by a certain strange and unusual bitterness completely destroyed all that they had captured; clothing was cut to pieces and thrown about, gold and silver were thrown into the river, corselets of men were cut up, trappings of horses were destroyed, and the horses themselves were drowned in whirlpools, and men with fetters tied around their necks were hung from trees, so that the victor laid claim to no booty, and the conquered to no mercy. At that time, there not only was very great grief at Rome, but also fear lest the Cimbri would immediately cross the Alps and destroy Italy.

Pliny the Elder

(A.D. 23 or 24-79) He held the procuratorship in Gallia Narbonensis and Gallia Belgica. His chief and only surviving work is his Naturalis Historia. It consists of prefatory matter and thirty-six books, containing compendia of various geographical, ethnological, medical and scientific subjects, gathered from a wide variety of written sources, chiefly Roman and Greek. Among these are references to Varro and Alexander Cornelius Polyhisotr, the latter of whom he cites on historical geography and as an authority on oak-trees, mistletoe and acorns. Pliny's work includes important notices on the druids. Natural History XVI:249-51; XXIV:103-4; XXIX:52; XXX:13

The quotations on this page are those used by the Rev. J. Williams Ab Ithel, M.A., from his works "Barddas - the Bardo-Druidic System of the Isle of Britain" published by the Welsh MSS Society in 1862

Pliny the Elder,

Naturalis Historia, Liber xvi. sect. 95

"The Druids (so they call their wise men) hold nothing in greater reverence than the mistletoe, and the tree on which it grows, so that it be an oak. They choose forests of oaks, for the sake of the tree itself, and perform no sacred rites without oak leaves; so that one may fancy that they had even been called for this reason, turning the word into Greek, Druids. But whatever grows upon these trees, they hold to have been sent from heaven, and to be sign that the Deity Himself has chosen the tree for his own. The thing, however, is very rarely found, and when found is gathered with much ceremony; and above all, on the sixth day of the moon, by which these men reckon the beginning of their months and years, and of their cycle of thirty years, because the moon has then sufficient power, yet has not yet reached half its size.

"Addressing it in their own language by the epithet of all healing, after duly preparing sacrifices and banquets under the tree, they bring to the spot two white bulls, the horns of which are then for the first time garlanded. The priest clothed in a white dress ascends the tree, and cuts the mistletoe with a gold knife; it is caught in a white cloak. Thereupon they slay the victims, with a prayer that the Deity may prosper His own gift to them, to whom He has given it. They fancy that, by drinking it, fertility is given to any barren animal, and that it is a remedy against all poisons."

Pliny the Elder,

Naturalis Historia, Liber xxiv, ss. 62-63

"Like to this Sabine herb is that called selago. It is gathered, without using a knife, with the right hand wrapped in a tunic, the left being uncovered, as though the man was stealing it; the gatherer being clothed in a white dress, and with bare feet washed clean, after performing sacrifice before gathering it, with bread and wine. It is to be carried in a new napkin. According to the tradition of the Gaulish Druids, it is to be kept as a remedy against all evil, and the smoke of it is good for all diseases of the eyes. The same Druids have given the name samolus to a plant that grows in wet places; and this they say must be gathered with the left hand by one who is fasting, as a remedy for diseases of swine and cattle, and that he, who gathers it, must keep his head turned away, and must lay it down anywhere except in a channel through which water runs, and there must bruize it for them who are to drink it."

Pliny the Elder,

Naturalis Historia, Liber xxix sect. 12

"There is another kind of egg in high repute in Gaul, although the Greeks make no account of it. A great number of snakes in summer time are artificially twisted and rolled together in to a mass by the saliva of their jaws and the foam of their bodies. It is called snake's egg. The Druids tell you that it is thrown in to the air with hisses, and must be caught in a cloak that it may not touch the ground; that he that catches it must fly on horse-back, for that the snakes pursue him until hindered by the intervention of some river; that the test of it is, if it flows against the stream, even when tied with gold. And, according to the common craft of wizards, shrewd to conceal their cheating, they pronounce that it must be taken up at a particular time of the moon; as though it rested with the man's choice, whether that proceeding on the part of the snake should take place or not."

Pliny,

Naturalis Historia, xvi, 248

From Kendrick

Mistletoe berries can be used for making bird-lime, if gathered at harvest time while unripe; for if the rainy season has begun, although they get bigger in size they lose in viscosity. They are then dried and when quite dry pounded and stored in water, and in about twelve days they turn rotten – and this is the sole case of a thing that becomes attractive by rotting. Then after having been again pounded up they are put in running water and there lose their skins and become viscous in their inner flesh. This substance after begin kneaded with oil is bird-lime, used for entangling birds' wings by contact with it when one wants to snare them.

Pliny,

Naturalis Historia, xvi, 248

From Kendrick

Viscum fit ex acinis qui colliguntur messium tempore inmaturi; nam si accessere imbres, amplitudine quidem augentur, visco vero marcescunt. Siccantur deinde et aridi tunduntur ac conditi in aqua putrescunt duodenis fere diebus, unumque hoc rerum putrescendo gatiam invenit. Inde in profluente, rursus malleo tusi, amissis corticibus interiore carne lentescunt. Hoc est viscum pinnis avium tactu ligandis oleo subactum cum libeat insidias moliri.

Pliny,

Naturalis Historia, xvi, 249:

From Kendrick

"Here we must mention the awe felt for this plant by the Gauls. The Druids - for so their magicians are called - held nothing more sacred than the mistletoes and the tree that bears it, always supposing that tree to be the oak. But they choose groves formed of oaks for the sake of the tree alone, and they never perform any of their rites except in the presence of a branch of it; so that it seems probable that the priests themselves may derive their name from the Greek word for that tree. In fact, they think that everything that grows on it has been sent from heaven

and is proof that the tree was chosen by the god himself. The mistletoe is found but rarely upon the oak; and when found, is gathered with due religious ceremony, if possible on the sixth day of the moon, (for it is by the moon that they measure their months and years, and also their ages of thirty years.) They choose this day because the moon, though not yet in the middle of her course, has already considerable influence. They call the mistletoe by a name meaning, in their language, the all-healing.

Having made preparation for sacrifice and a banquet beneath the trees, they bring thither two white bulls, whose horns are bound then for the first time. Clad in a white robe, the priest ascends the tree and cuts the mistletoe with a golden sickle, and it is received by others in a white cloak. Then they kill the victims, praying that god will render this gift of his propitious to those to whom he has granted it. They believe that the mistletoe, taken in drink, imparts fecundity to barren animals, and that it is an antidote for all poisons. Such are the religious feelings that are entertained toward trifling things by many peoples."

Pliny,

Naturalis Historia, xvi, 249:

From Kendrick

"Non est omittenda in hac re et Galliarum admiratio. Nihil habent Druidae (ita suos appellant magos) visco et arbore, in qua gignatur, si modo sit robur, sacratius. Iam per se roburum eligunt lucos, nec ulla sacra sine earum fronde conficiunt, ut inde appellati quoque interpretatione Graeca possint Druidae videri. Enimvero quidquid adnascatur illis e caelo missum putant signumque esse electae ab ipso deo arboris. Est autem id rarum admodum inventu et repertum magna religione petitur et ante omnia sexta luna, quae principia mensum annorumque his facit et saeculi post tricesimum annum, quia iam virium abunde habeat nec sit sui dimidia. Omnia sanantem appellant suo vocabulo.

Sacrificio epulisque rite sub arbore comparatis, duos admovent candidi coloris tauros, quorum cornua tum primum vinciantur. Sacerdos candida veste cultus arborem scandit, falce aurea demetit, candido id excipitur sago. Tum deinde victimas immolant precantes, suum donum deus prosperum faciat iis quibus dederit. Fecunditatem eo poto dari cuicumque animalium sterili arbitrantur, contra venena omnia esse remedio. Tanta gentium in rebus frivolis plerumque religio est."

Pliny,

Naturalis Historia, xvi, 250-251

From Kendrick

Now I notice that some foreign peoples use certain plants on their persons both to make themselves more handsome and also to keep up traditional custom. At any rate among barbarian tribes the women stain the face, using one plant and some another; and the men too among the Daci and the Sarmatae tattoo their own bodies. In Gaul there is a plant like the plantain, galled glastum; with it the wives of the Britons, and their daughters-in-law, stain all the body, and at certain religious ceremonies march along naked, with a colour resembling that of Ethiopians.

Pliny,

Naturalis Historia, xvi, 250-251

From Kendrick

Equidem et formae gratia ritusque perpetui in corporibus suis aliquas exterarum gentium uti herbis quibusdam adverto animo. Inlinunt certe aliis aliae faciem in populis barbarorum feminae, maresque etiam apud Dacos et Sarmatas corpora sua inscribunt. Similes plantagini glastum in Gallia vocatur, Britannorum coniuges nurusque toto corpore oblitae quibusdam in sacris nudae incedunt Aethiopum colorem imitantes.

Pliny,

Naturalis Historia, xxiv, 103 - 104:

From Kendrick

"Similar to savin is the plant called selago. It is gathered without using iron and by passing the right hand through the left sleeve of the tunic, as though in the act of committing a theft. The clothing must be white, the feet washed and bare, and an offering of wine and bread made before the gathering. The Druids of Gaul say that the plant should be carried as a charm against every kind of evil, and that the smoke of it is good for diseases of the eyes. The Druids, also, use a certain marsh-plant that they call samolus, this must be gathered with the left hand, when fasting, and is a charm against the diseases of cattle. But the gatherer must not look behind him, nor lay the plant anywhere except in the drinking-troughs."

Pliny,

Naturalis Historia, xxiv, 103 - 104:

From Kendrick

"Similis herbae huic Sabinae est selago appellata. Legitur sine ferro dextra manu per tunicam qua sinistra exuitur velut a furante candida veste vestito pureque lautis nudis pedibus, sacro facto prius quam legatur pane vinoque. Fertur in mappa nova. Hanc contra perniciem omnem habendam prodidere Druidae Gallorum et contra omnia oculorum vitia fumum eius prodesse Iidem samolum herbam nominavere nascentem in umidis, et hanc sinistra manu legi a ieiunis contra morbos suum boumque, nec respicere legentem, nec alibi quam in canali deponere, ibique continere poturis."

Pliny,

Naturalis Historia, xxix, 52:

From Kendrick

"There is also another kind of egg, of much renown in the Gallic provinces, but ignored by the Greeks. In the summer, numberless snakes entwine themselves into a ball, held together by a secretion from their bodies and by their spittle. This is called anguinum. The Druids say that hissing serpents throw this up into the air, and that it must be caught in a cloak, and not allowed to touch the ground; and that one must instantly take to flight on horseback, as the serpents will pursue until some stream cuts them off. It may be tested, they say, by seeing if it floats against the current of a river, even though it be set in gold. But as it is the way of magicians to cast a veil about their frauds,

they pretend that these eggs can only be taken on a certain day of the moon, as though it rested with mankind to make the moon and the serpents accord as to the moment of the operation. I myself, however, have seen one of these eggs, it was round, and about as large as a smallish apple; the shell was cartilaginous, and pocked like the arms of a polypus. The druids esteem it highly. It is said to ensure success in law-suits and a favourable reception with princes; but this is false, because a man of the Vocontii, who was also a Roman knight, kept one of these eggs in his bosom during a trial, and was put to death by the Emperor Claudius, as far as I can see, for that reason alone."

Pliny,

Naturalis Historia, xxix, 52:

From Kendrick

"Praeterea est ovorum genus in magna fama Galliarum omissum Graecis. Angues innumeri aestate convoluti salivis faucium corporumque spumis artifici conplexu glomerant, anguinum appellatur. Druidae sibilis id dicunt in sublime iactari, sagoque oportere intercipi ne tellurem attingat. Profugere raptorem equo, serpentis enim insequi donec arceantur amnis alicuius interventu. Experimentum eius esse, si contra aquas fluitet vel auro vinctum. Atque, ut est Magorum sollertis occultandis fraudibus sagax, certa luna capiendum censent, tanquam congruere operationem eam serpentium, humani sit arbitri. Vidi equidem id ovom mali orbiculati modici magnitudine, crusta cartilaginis, velut acetabulis bracchiorum polypi crebris, insigne Druidis. Ad victorias litium ac regum aditus mire laudatur, tantae vanitatis ut habentem id in lite in sinu equitem Romanum e Vocontiis a divo Claudio principe interemptum non ob aliud sciam."

Pliny,

Naturalis Historia, xxx, 13:

From Kendrick

"It [magic] flourished in the Gallic provinces, too, even down to a period within our memory; for it was in the time of the Emperor Tiberius that a decree was issued against their Druids and the whole tribe of diviners and physicians. But why mention all this about a practice that has even crossed the ocean and penetrated to the utmost parts of the earth? At the present day, Britannia is still fascinated by magic, and performs its rites with so much ceremony that it almost seems as though it was she who had imparted the cult to the Persians. To such a degree do peoples throughout the whole world, although unlike and quite unknown to one another, agree upon this one point. Therefore we cannot too highly appreciate our debt to the Romans for having put an end to this monstrous cult, whereby to murder a man was an act of the greatest devoutness, and to eat his flesh most beneficial."

Pliny,

Naturalis Historia, xxx, 13:

From Kendrick

"Gallias utique possedit, et quidem ad nostram memoriam. Namque Tiberi Caesaris principatus sustulit Druidas eorum et hoc genus vatum medicorumque per senatus-consultum. Quid ego haec commemorem in arte oceanum quoque transgressa et ad naturae inane pervecta? Britannia hodieque eam attonita celebrat tantis caerimoniis ut dedisse Persis videri possit. Adeo ista toto aestimari potest quantum Romanis debeatur, qui sustulere monstra, quibus hominem occidere religiosissimum erat, mandi vero etiam saluberrimum."

Pomponius Mela

(Flourished c. A.D. 43,) wrote De Chorographia, a brief geographical survey of the world in three books, the third of which includes the outer coasts of Gaul and Brittany. The text was published by C. Frick (Leipzig, 1880.)

Pomponius Mela,

De Situ Orbis, iii, 2, 18 and 19:

"There still remain traces of atrocious customs no longer practiced, and although they now refrain from outright slaughter, yet they still draw blood from the victims led to the altar. They have, however, their own kind of eloquence, and teachers of wisdom called Druids. They profess to know the size and shape of the world, the movements of the heavens and of the stars, and the will of the gods. They teach many things to the nobles of Gaul in a course of instruction lasting as long as twenty years, meeting in secret either in a cave or secluded dales. One of their dogmas has come to common knowledge, namely, that souls are eternal and that there is another life in the infernal regions, and this has been permitted manifestly because it makes the multitude readier for war. And it is for this reason too that they burn or bury with their dead, things appropriate to them in life, and that in times past they even used to defer the completion of business and the payment of debts until their arrival in another world. Indeed, there were some of them who flung themselves willingly on the funeral pyres of their relatives in order to share the new life with them."

Pomponius Mela,

De Situ Orbis, iii, 2, 18 and 19:

"Manent vestigia feritatis iam abolitae, atque ut ab ultimis caedibus temperant, ita nihilominus, ubi devotos altaribus admovere, delibant. Habent tamen et facundiam suam, magistrosque sapientiae druidas. Hi terrae mundique magnitudinem et formam, motus caeli ac siderum, et quid dii velint scire profitentur. Docent multa nobilissimos gentis clam et diu vicenis annis, aut in specu aut in abditis saltibus. Unum ex his quae praecipiunt in vulgus effluxit, videlicet ut forent ad bella meliores, aeternas esse animas vitamque alteram ad Manes. Itaque cum mortuis cremant ac defodiunt apta viventibus. Olim negotiorum ratio etiam et exactio crediti deferebatur ad infernos : erantque qui se in rogos suorum velut una victuri libentur immitterent."

Pomponius Mela

De Chorographia, Libri Tres,

[Ed. Carolus Frick, Liepzig, 1880 iii. 2]:

"They have, further, their eloquence and their Druids, teachers of wisdom, who profess to know the greatness and shape of the earth and the universe, and the motion of the heavens and of the stars and what is the will of the gods."

Latin text of above:

"Habent tamen et facundiam suam magistrosque sapientiae druidas. Hi terrae mundique magnitudinem et formam, motus coeli ac siderum, et quid dii velint scire profitentur."

Pomponius Mela

De Chorographia, Libri Tres,

[Ed. Carolus Frick, Liepzig, 1880 iii. 2]:

"They teach many things to the noblest of the race in sequestered and remote places during twenty years, whether in a cave or in secluded groves. One of their dogmas has become widely known so they may the more readily go to wars: namely that souls are everlasting, and that among the shades is another life."

Latin text of above:

"Docent multa nobilissimos gentis clam et diu, vicenis annis, aut in specu aut in abditis saltibus. Unum ex his quae praecipiunt in vulgus effluxit, videlicet ut forent ad bella meliores, aeternas esse animas vitamque alteram ad manes."

Pomponius Mela,

De Situ Orbis, Liber iii. c. 2

The quotations on this page are those used by the Rev. J. Williams Ab Ithel, M.A., from his works "Barddas - the Bardo-Druidic System of the Isle of Britain" published by the Welsh MSS Society in 1862

"They [the Gauls] have an eloquence of their own, and their Druids as masters of wisdom. These profess to know the magnitude and form of the earth and the world, the motions of the heaven and the stars, and the will of the gods. They teach the most noble of the nation many things privately, and for a long time, even for twenty years, in a cave or inaccessible woods. One of their precepts has become public, namely, that they should act bravely in war, that souls are immortal, and that there is another life after death. Therefore along with the dead, they burn things which belonged to them while living. Their debtor and creditor accounts were transferred below. Some even went so far as to ascend the funeral pyres of their own accord, as though about to live with them."

Strabo

(Probably c. 63 B.C. – after A.D. 21,) a Greek geogrpaher, historian, and an adherent of the Stoics. He had known Posidonius. He was in Rome 44-35, c. 31, and 7 B.C. and had a great admiration for the Roman Empire. He may have written under the patronage of politicians or officials. His historical books are lost, but his important Geogrpahica in seventeen books has survived.

Strabo, B.C. 54 : "Geographia," Liber iv: The quotations on this page are those used by the Rev. J. Williams Ab Ithel, M.A., from his works "Barddas - the Bardo-Druidic System of the Isle of Britain" published by the Welsh MSS Society in 1862

"And among the whole of them [the Gauls] three classes more especially are held in distinguished veneration, the Bards, the Ovates, and the Druids. The Bards are chanters and poets. The Ovates are sacrificers and physiologists. The Druids, in addition to physiology, practice ethic philosophy. They are deemed to be most upright, and, in consequence, to them are committed public and private controversies, insomuch that on some occasions they decide on battles, and stop the combatants on the eve of engaging. Matters pertaining to murder are more especially entrusted to their decision, and when profit accrues from these, they think fertility will attend their country. These and others say their souls are immortal, and that the world is so too; yet ultimately fire and water will prevail. To their simplicity and ferocity are superadded much stupidity, vain boasting, and love of ornament. They wear gold, having collars thereof on their necks, and bracelets on their arms and wrists; and dignified persons are clad in dyed garments embroidered in gold…"

"Having stricken the man destined for sacrifice on the back with a sword, they augur from the palpitation. They never sacrifice without the Druids. Other kinds of human immolation are spoken of: some victims they slay with arrows, or crucify their offerings; and having prepared a colossus of hay, and thrown wood upon it, they burn together oxen, all sorts of wild beasts, and men."

Strabo

Geographica, iv, 4, c. 197, 4

[Transl. H. L. Jones, 1917, Loeb Library]:

"Among all the Gallic peoples, generally speaking, there are three sets of men who are held in exceptional honour : the Bards, the Vates, and the Druids. The Bards are singers and poets; the Vates, diviners and natural philosophers; while the Druids, in addition to natural philosophy, study also moral philosophy. The Druids are considered the most just of men, and on this account they are entrusted with the decision, not only of the private disputes, but of the public disputes as well; so that, in former times, they even arbitrated cases of war and made the opponents stop when they were about to line up for battle, and the murder cases in particular, had been turned over to them for decision. Further, when there is a big yield [of criminals for sacrifice] from these cases, there is forthcoming a big yield from the land too, as they think. However, not only the Druids, but others as well, say that men's souls, and also the universe are indestructible, although both fire and water at some time or other prevail over them."

Strabo,

Geographica, iv, 4, c. 198, 5

[Transl. H. L. Jones, 1917, Loeb Library]:

"But the Romans put a stop to these customs, as well as to all those connected with the sacrifices and divinations that are opposed to our usages. They used to strike a human being, whom they had devoted to death, in the back with a sabre, and then divine from his death-struggle. But they would not sacrifice without the Druids. We are told of still other kinds of human sacrifices; for example, they would shoot victims to death with arrows, or impale them in the temples, or having devised a colossus of straw and wood, throw into the colossus cattle and wild animals of all sorts and human beings, and then make a burnt offering of the whole thing."

Strabo,

Geographica, iii, 3, 6

Beside these shields they have a dirk or a butcher's knife. Most of them wear linen cuirasses; a few wear chain-wrought cuirasses and helmets with three crests, but the rest wear helmets made of sinews. The foot-soldiers wear greaves also, and each soldier has several javelins; and some also make use of spears, and the spears have bronze heads. Now some of the peoples that dwell next to the Durius River live, it is said, after the manner of the Laconians- using anointing rooms twice a day and taking baths in vapours that rise from heated stones, bathing in cold water, and eating only one meal a day; and that in a cleanly and simple way. The Lusitanians are given to offering sacrifices, and they inspect the vitals, without cutting them out. Besides, they also inspect the veins on the side of the victim; and they divine by the tokens of touch, too. They prophesy through means of the vitals of human beings also, prisoners of war, whom they first cover with coarse cloaks, and then, when the victim has been struck beneath the vitals by the diviner, they draw their first auguries from the fall of the victim. And they cut off the right hands of their captives and set them up as an offering to the gods…..

Strabo,

Geographica, iii, 4, 5

In addition to their trait of simplicity and high-spiritedness, that of witlessness and boastfulness is much in evidence, and also that of fondness for ornaments; for they not only wear golden ornaments –both chains round their necks and bracelets round their arms and wrists – but their dignitaries wear garments that are dyed in colours and sprinkled with gold. And by reason of this levity of character they not only look insufferable when victorious, but also scared out of their wits when worsted. Again, in addition to their witlessness, there is also that custom, barbarous and exotic, which attends most of the northern tribes – I mean the fact that when they depart from the battle they hang the heads of their enemies from the necks of their horses, and, when they have brought them home, nail the spectacle to the entrances of their homes. At any rate, Posidonius says that he himself saw this spectacle in many places, and that, although at first he loathed it, afterwards, through his familiarity with it, he could bear it calmly. The head of enemies of high repute, however, they used to embalm in cedar oil and exhibit to strangers, and they would not deign to give them back even for a ransom of equal weight in gold. But the Romans put a stop to

these customs, as well as to all those connected with the sacrifices and divinations that are opposed to our usages. They used to strike a human being, whom they had devoted to death, in the back with a sabre, and then divine from his death-struggle. But they would not sacrifice without the Druids. We are told of still other kinds of human sacrifices; for example, they would shoot victims to death with arrows, or impale them in the temples, or, having devised a colossus of straw and wood, throw into the colossus cattle and wild animals of all sorts and human beings, and then make a burnt offering of the whole thing.

In the ocean, Posidonius says, there is a small island, not very far out to sea, situated off the outlet of the Liger River; and the island is inhabited by the women of the Samnitae, and they are possessed by Dionysus and make this god propitious by appeasing him with mystic initiations as well as other sacred performances; and no man sets foot on the island, although the women themselves, sailing from it, have intercourse with the men and then return again. And, he says, it is a custom of theirs once a year to unroof the temple and roof it again on the same day before sunset, each woman bringing her load to add to the roof; but the woman whose load falls out of her arms is rent to pieces by the rest, and they carry the pieces round the temple with the cry of "ev-ah" and do not cease until their frenzy ceases; and it is always the case, he says, that someone jostles the woman who is to suffer this fate. But the following story which Artemidorus has told about the case of the crows is still more fabulous; there is a certain harbour on the ocean coast, his story goes, which is surnamed "two crows," and in this harbour are to be seen two crows, with their right wings somewhat white; so the men who have disputes about certain things come here, put a plank on an elevated place, and then throw on barley cakes, each man separately; the birds fly up, eat some of the barley cakes, scatter the others; and the man whose barley cakes are scattered wins his dispute. Now although this story is more fabulous, his story about Demeter and Core is more credible. He says that there is an island near Britain on which sacrifices are performed like those sacrifices in Samothrace that have to do with Demeter and Core. And the following, too, is one of the things that are believed, namely, that in Celtica there grows a tree like a fig-tree, and that it brings forth a fruit similar to a Corinthian-wrought capital of a column; and that, if an incision be made, this fruit exudes a sap which, as used for the smearing of arrows, is deadly. (Perhaps the Yew?) And the following, too, is one of the things that are repeated over and over again, namely, that not only are all Celti fond of strife, but among them it is considered no disgrace for the young men to be prodigal of their youthful charms. Ephorus, in his account, makes Celtica so excessive in its size that he assigns to the regions of Celtica most of the regions, as far as Gades, of what we now call Iberia; further, he declares that the people are fond of the Greeks, and specifies many things about them that do not fit the facts of today. The following, also, is a thing peculiar to them, that they endeavor not to grow fat or pot-bellied, and any young man who exceeds the standard measure of the girdle is punished. So much for Transalpine Celtica.

Strabo,

Geographica, iii, 4, 16-17

They bathe with urine which they have aged in cisterns, and wash their teeth with it, both they and their wives, as the Catabrians and the neighbouring peoples are said to do. But both this custom and that of sleeping on the ground the Iberians share with the Celts. Some say the Callaicans have no god, but the Celtiberians and their neighbours on the north offer sacrifice to a nameless god at the seasons of the full moon, by night, in front of the doors of their houses, and whole neighborhoods dance in chorus and keep it up all night. The Vettonians, when they visited the camp of the Romans for the first time, upon seeing some of the officers promenading up and down the streets merely for the sake of walking around, supposed they were crazy and proceeded to lead the way for them to the tents, thinking they should remain quietly seated or else be fighting.

Strabo,

Geographica, iv, 3, 1-2

Lugdunum (Lyons in France); whereas the remaining parts, including the parts along the ocean, having been classified under another division, I mean that division which is specifically assigned to the Belgae. As for me, however, I shall point out the separate parts in a rather general way.

Lugdunum itself, then, (a city founded at the foot of a hill at the confluence of the river Arar and the Rhodanus) is occupied by the Romans. And it is the most populous of all the cities of Celtica except Narbo; for not only do people use it as an emporium, but the Roman governors coin their money there, both the silver and the gold. Again, the temple that was dedicated to Caesar Augustus by all the Galatae in common is situated in front of this city at the junction of the rivers. And in it is a noteworthy altar, bearing an inscription of the names of the tribes, sixty in number; and also images from these tribes, one from each tribe, and also another large altar. The city of Lugdunum presides over the tribe of the Segusiavi, which tribe is situated between the Rhondanus and the Dubis.

Strabo

Geographica, Vii, 1, 1-3

Now the parts beyond the Rhenus, immediately after the country of the Celti, slope towards the east and are occupied by the Germans, who, though they vary slightly from the Celtic stock in that they are wilder, taller, and have yellower hair, are in all other respects similar, for in build, habits and modes of life they are such as I have said the Celti are. And I also think that it was for this reason that the Romans assigned to them the name "Germanni," as though they wished thereby that they were "genuine" Galatae, for in the language of the Romans "germani" means "genuine."

Strabo,

Geographica, vii, 2, 1

It is ridiculous to suppose that they departed from their homes because they were incensed on account of a phenomenon that is natural and eternal, occurring twice every day. And the assertion that an excessive flood-tide once occurred looks like a fabrication, for when the ocean is affected in this way it is subject to increases and diminutions, but these are regulated and periodical. And the man who said that the Cimbri took up arms against the flood-tides was not right, either; nor yet the statement that the Celti, as a training in the virtue of fearlessness, meekly abide the destruction of their homes by the tides and then rebuild them, and that they suffer a greater loss of life as the result of water than of war, as Ephorus says. Indeed, the regularity of the flood-tides and the fact that the part of the country subject to inundations was known should have precluded such absurdities; for since this phenomenon occurs twice every day, it is of course improbable that the Cimbri did

not so much as once perceive that the reflux was natural and harmless, and that it occurs twice every day, it is of course improbable that the Cimbri did not so much as once perceive that the reflex was natural and harmless, and that it occurred, not in their country alone, but in every country that was on the ocean. Neither is Cleitarchus right; for he says that the horsemen, on seeing the onset of the sea, rode away, and though in full flight came very near being cut off by the water. Now we know, in the first place, that the invasion of the tide does not rush on with such speed as that, but that the sea advances imperceptibly; and, secondly, that what takes place daily and is audible to all who are about to draw near it, even before……

Strabo,

Geographica, vii, 3, 8

After that he received gifts from the tribe sin question and from Syrmus. And Ptolemacus, the son of Lagus, says that on this expedition the Celti who lived about the Adriatic joined Alexander for the sake of establishing friendship and hospitality, and that the king received them kindly and asked them when drinking what it was that they most feared, thinking they would say himself, but that they replied they feared no one, unless it were that Heaven might fall on them, although indeed they added that they put above everything else the friendship of such a man as he…..

Strabo,

Geographica, xii, 5, 1-2

As a cession they received the present Galatia or Gallo-Graecia, as it is called. Leonnorius is generally reputed to have been the chief leader of their expedition across to Asia. The three tribes spoke the same language and differed from each other in no respect; and each was divided into four portions which were called tetarchies, each tetrarchy having its own tetrarch, and also one judge and one military commander, both subject to the tetrarch, and two subordinate commanders. The Council of the twelve tetrarchs consisted of three hundred men, who assembled at Drynemetum, as it was called. Now the Council passed judgment upon murder cases, but the tetrarchs and the judges upon all others. Such, then, was the organization of Galatia long ago, but in my time the power has passed to three rulers, then to two, and then to one, Deiotarus, and then to Amyntas, who succeeded him. But at the present time the Romans possess both this country and the whole of the country that became subject to Amyntas, having united them into one province.

Suetonius

Suetonius (lived in the first half of the second century A.D.) a Roman historian, contemporary with Tacitus. His chief work is the Lives of the Twelve Caesars (including Julius.) The following was written around 120 A.D.

Suetonius,

Claudius, 25:

"He [the Emperor Claudius] very thoroughly suppressed the barbarous and inhuman religion of the Druids in Gaul, which at the time of Augustus had merely been forbidden to Roman citizens."

Latin text of above

Suetonius,

Claudius, 25:

"Druidarum religionem apud Gallos dirae immanitatis et tantum civibus sub Augusto interdictam penitus abolevit."

Tacitus

A.D. 56 or 57 - about A.D. 117 CORNELIVS TACITVS was a Roman historian who lived during the First Century and early Second Century A. D. His most famous works include The Histories and The Annals of Imperial Rome. He also wrote The Agricola, much of which is now lost. Born into a wealthy family living in Gaul or Northern Italy, Tacitus received the best education available to a Roman from a good family. Public speaking skills, oratory and debate, were considered the most important areas of study for a young man destined for a career in imperial service or senatorial office. Tacitus was a senator during the reign of Domitian and was later to fill the post of consul, the highest office open to a Roman who was not emperor. After his consulship, he was given the governorship of the large province of Anatolia (much of modern Turkey.) Tacitus hated great concentration of power in the hands of the early emperors. Though he hated imperial power and in his writings tries to paint every emperor as a corrupt despot, he hated civil war and anarchy even more. He had a particularly heavy bias against the emperor Tiberius, whom he portrayed as a sinister and cruel emperor, purging his opponents from the Senate by having them tried for treason and executed. He showed scorn for Claudius and Nero, and even his writings about Augustus contained some belittling innuendoes and snide remarks. His writing is full of tales of corruption, government scandal, and innocent people being destroyed or having their good names ruined because of the emperor's lust for power. It was Tacitus' belief that the emperor had so much power in his hands that no man could occupy the throne without being corrupted by that power.

Tacitus,

Annals, xiv, 30

[Transl. Church and Brodribb,]

"On the shore stood the opposing army with its dense array of armed warriors, while between the ranks dashed women in black attire like the Furies, with hair disheveled, waving brands. All around, the Druids, lifting up their hands to heaven and pouring forth dreadful imprecations, scared our soldiers by the unfamiliar sight, so that, as if their limbs were paralyzed, they stood motionless and exposed to wounds. Then urged by general's appeal and mutual encouragements not to quail before a troop of frenzied women, they bore the standard onwards, smote down all resistance, and wrapped the foe in the flames of his own brands. A force was next set over the conquered, and their groves, devoted to inhuman superstitions, were destroyed. They deemed it, indeed, a duty to cover their altars with the blood of captives and to consult their deities through human entrails."

Tacitus,

Annals, xiv, 30

[Transl. Church and Brodribb]

"Stabat pro litore diversa acies, densa armis virisque, intercursantibus feminis; in modum Furiarum veste ferali, crinibus deiectis faces praeferebant; Druidaeque circum, preces diras sublatis ad caelum manibus fundentes, novitate, aspectus perculere militem, ut quasi haerentibus membris immobile corpus vulneribus praeberent. dein cohortationibus ducis et se ipsi stimulantes ne muliebre et fanaticum agmen pavescerent, inferunt signa sternuntque obvios et igni suo involvunt. praesidium posthac inpositum victis excisique luci saevis superstitionibus sacri : nam cruore captivo adolere aras et hominum fibris consulere deos fas habebant."

Tacitus,

Histories, iv, 54

[Transl. Church and Brodribb]:

"The Gauls, they remembered, had captured the city in former days, but, as the abode of Jupiter was uninjured, the Empire had survived; whereas now the Druids declared, with the prophetic utterances of an idle superstition, and this fatal conflagration [of the Capitol] was a sign of the anger of heaven, and portended universal empire for the Transalpine nations."

Tacitus,

Histories, iv, 54

[Transl.. Church and Brodribb,]:

"Captam olim a Gallis urbem, sed integra Iovis sede mansisse imperium : fatali nunc igne signum caelestis irae datum et posessionem rerum humanarum Transalpinis gentibus portendi superstitione vana Druidae canebant."

Vopiscus,

Vopiscus and Lampridius whose work was included in the document known as the Historia Augusta, a compilation believed to be substantially of third-century date, but containing some older material, perhaps with further additions in the fourth century.

Vopiscus

Selections from Historia Augusta,

[14] I do not think it too far out, nor yet commonplace, to insert a story about Diocletian Augustus that fits in with this passage. It was given to him as an omen of imperial power. My grandfather told me he learned it from Diocletian himself. He said Diocletian was spending some time at a cook-shop near Tungri in Gaul, back when he was working his way through the ranks. He was reckoning up his daily tab with a certain woman, a Druid. She said, "Diocletian, you want too much and you don't pay enough for it." Diocletian supposedly answered - in jest, not seriously - "I'll be generous when I'm emperor." After that utterance the Druidess supposedly said, "Diocletian, don't joke. You will be emperor when you have killed a Boar." Diocletian in his heart always held the desire for imperial power, and Maximian and my grandfather knew it. Diocletian himself recounted to him what the Druid said. At the time, since he was deep, he laughed and kept silent. Yet on hunts, when he had the opportunity, he always killed the boars with his own hand. In the end, when Aurelian received imperial power, then Probus, then Tacitus, then Carus himself, Diocletian said, "I always kill the boar, but another man gets the meat."

Now, the remark has been known generally, that when he killed Aper the praetorian prefect, Diocletian supposedly said, "At last I have killed the fated Boar." ["Aper" is not only a Roman name, but also the Latin word for "boar."] My same grandfather used to say Diocletian himself had said he had no other cause for killing by his own hand except in order to fulfill the Druid's utterance and fix the imperial power as his own. For he would not want to get the reputation for such cruelty, especially in the first days of his reign, if it were not Necessity dragging him to this murderous atrocity.

Vopsicus,

Numerianus, XIV

XIV. 1 Curiosum [non] puto neque satis vulgare fabellam de Diocletiano Augusto ponere hoc convenientem loco, quae illi data est ad omen imperii. --avus meus mihi ret<t>ulit ab ipso Diocletiano compertum--. 2 'cum', inquit, 'Diocletianus apud Tungros in Gallia in quadam caupona moraretur in minoribus adhuc locis militans et cum Dryade quadam muliere [cu]rationem convictus sui cotidiani faceret atque illa diceret: 'Diocletiane, nimium avarus, nimium parcus es', ioco non serio Diocletianus respondisse fertur. 'tunc ero largus, cum fuero imperator.' 3 post quod verbum Dryas dixisse fertur: 'Diocletian[a]e, iocari noli, nam eris imperator, cum Aprum occideris.'

XV. 1 Semper in animo Diocletianus habuit imperii cupiditatem, idque Maximiano conscio atque avo meo, cui hoc dictum a Dryad[a]e ipse ret<t>ulerat. 2 denique, ut erat altus, risit et tacuit. apros tamen in venatibus, ubi fuit facultas, manu sua semper occidit. 3 denique cum Aurelianus imperium accepisset, cum Probus, cum Tacitus, cum ipse Carus, Diocletianus dixit: 'ego semper apros occido, sed alter utitur pulpamento.' 4 iam illud notum est atque vulgatum, quod, cum occidisset Aprum praefectum praet., dixisse fertur: 'tandem occidi Aprum fatalem.' 5 ipsum Diocletianum idem avus meus dixisse dicebat nullam aliam sibi causam occidendi manu sua fuisse, nisi ut impleret Dryadis dictum et suum firmaret imperium. 6 non enim tam crudelem se innotescere cuperet, primis maxime diebus imperii, nisi illum necessitas ad hanc atrocitatem occisionis adtraheret.

Vopsicus,

Aurelianus XLIII, 4 and 5

He (Asclepiodotus) used to say that on a certain occasion Aurelian consulted the Gaulish Druidesses to find out whether his descendants would remain in possession of the imperial crown. These women told him that no name would become more illustrious in the state annals than that of the line of Claudius. It is true, of course, that the present Emperor Constantius is of the same stock, and I think that his descendents will assuredly attain to the glory foretold by the Druidesses (dryades.)

Vopsicus,

Aurelianus XLIII, 4 and 5

Dicebat enim, quodam tempore Aurelianum Gallicanas consuluisse druidas, sciscitantem utrum apud eius posteros imperium permaneret: tum illas responsdisse dixit nullius clarius in republica nomen quam Claudii posterorum futurum. Et est quidem ian Constantius imperator eiusdem vir sanguinis, cuius puto poste ad eam gloriam quae a dryadibus praenuntiata sit, pervenire.

Lampridus

Lampridus is one of the authors of Historia Augusta, a compilation believed to be of 3rd Century materials.

Lampridus

Alexus Severus LIX,5

When he (Alexander Severus) was on his way, a Druidess cried out to him in the Gallic tongue, "Go forward, but hope not for victory, nor put trust in thy soldiers."

Lampridus

Alexus Severus LIX,5

Mulier Dryas eunti exclamavit Gallico sermone, "Vadas, nec nictoriam speres, nec te militi tuo credas."

Life of St.Columba
Book 2

CHAPTER X.

Of a poisonous Fountain of Water to which the blessed man gave his blessing in the country of the Picts.

AGAIN, while the blessed man was stopping for some days in the province of the Picts, he heard that there was a fountain famous amongst this heathen people, which foolish men, having their senses blinded by the devil, worshipped as a god. For those who drank of this fountain, or purposely washed their hands or feet in it, were allowed by God to be struck by demoniacal art, and went home either leprous or purblind, or at least suffering from weakness or other kinds of infirmity. By all these things the Pagans were seduced, and paid divine honour to the fountain. Having ascertained this, the saint one day went up to the fountain fearlessly; and, on seeing this, the Druids, whom he had often sent away from him vanquished and confounded, were greatly rejoiced, thinking that he would suffer like others from the touch of that baneful water. But he, having first raised his holy hand and invoked the name of Christ, washed his hands and feet; and then with his companions, drank of the water which he had blessed. And from that day the demons departed from the fountain; and not only was it not allowed to injure any one, but even many diseases amongst the people were cured by this same fountain, after it had been blessed and washed in by the saint.

CHAPTER XI.

Of the Danger to the blessed man at Sea, and the sudden calm produced by his prayers.

AT another time the holy man began to be in great danger at sea, for the whole vessel was violently tossed and shaken with the huge dashing waves, and a great storm of wind was raging on all hands. The sailors then chanced to say to the saint, as he was trying to help them to bale the vessel, "What thou art now doing is of little use to us in our present danger, thou shouldst rather pray for us as we are perishing." On hearing this he ceased to throw out the bitter waters of the green sea wave, and began to pour out a sweet and fervent prayer to the Lord. Wonderful to relate! The very moment the saint stood up at the prow, with his hands stretched out to heaven and prayed to the Almighty, the whole storm of wind and the fury of the sea ceased more quickly than can be told, and a perfect calm instantly ensued. But those who were in the vessel were amazed, and giving thanks with great admiration, glorified the Lord in the holy and illustrious man.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Of the boy whom the holy man raised from the dead, in the name of the Lord Christ.

AT the time when St. Columba was tarrying for some days in the province of the Picts, a certain peasant who, with his whole family, had listened to and learned through an interpreter the word of life preached by the holy man, believed and was baptized the husband, together with his wife, children, and domestics.

A very few days after his conversion, one of the sons of this householder was attacked with a dangerous illness and brought to the very borders of life and death. When the Druids saw him in a dying state they began with great bitterness to upbraid his parents, and to extol their own gods as more powerful than the God of the Christians, and thus to despise God as though He were weaker than their gods. When all this was told to the blessed man, he burned with zeal for God, and proceeded with some of his companions to the house of the friendly peasant, where he found the afflicted parents celebrating the obsequies of their child, who was newly dead. The saint, on seeing their bitter grief, strove to console them with words of comfort, and exhorted them not to doubt in any way the omnipotence of God. He then inquired, saying, "In what chamber is the dead body of your son lying?" And being conducted by the bereaved father under the sad roof, he left the whole crowd of persons who accompanied him outside, and immediately entered by himself into the house of mourning, where, falling on his knees, he prayed to Christ our Lord, having his face bedewed with copious tears. Then rising from his kneeling posture, he turned his eyes towards the deceased and said, "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, arise, and stand upon thy feet." At the sound of this glorious word from the saint, the soul returned to the body, and the person that was dead opened his eyes and revived. The apostolic man then taking him by the hand raised him up, and placing him in a standing position, d him forth with him from the house, and restored him to his parents. Upon this the cries of the applauding multitude broke forth, sorrow was turned into joy, and the God of the Christians glorified.

We must thus believe that our saint had the gift of miracles like the prophets Elias and Eliseus, and like the apostles Peter, Paul, and John, he had the honour bestowed on him of raising the dead to life, and now in heaven, placed amid the prophets and apostles, this prophetic and apostolic man enjoys a glorious and eternal throne in the heavenly fatherland with Christ, who reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Ghost forever.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Concerning the illness with which the Druid Broichan was visited for his detention of a female slave, and his cure on her release.

ABOUT the same time the venerable man, from motives of humanity, besought Broichan the Druid to liberate a certain Scotic female slave, and when he very cruelly and obstinately refused to part with her, the saint then spoke to him to the following effect: "Know, O Broichan, and be assured that if thou refuse to set this captive free, as I desire thee, that thou shalt die suddenly before I take my departure again from this province." Having said this in presence of Brude, the king, he departed from the royal palace and proceeded to the river Nesa (the Ness); from this stream he took a white pebble, and showing it to his companions said to them: "Behold this white pebble by which God will effect the cure of many diseases among this heathen nation."

Having thus spoken, he instantly added, "Broichan is chastised grievously at this moment, for an angel being sent from heaven, and striking him severely, hath broken into many pieces the glass cup in his hand from which he was drinking, and hath left him gasping deeply for breath, and half dead. Let us await here a short time, for two of the king's messengers, who have been sent after us in haste, to request us to return quickly and help the dying Broichan, who, now that he is thus terribly punished, consenteth to set the girl free."

Whilst the saint was yet speaking, behold, there arrived, as he had predicted, two horsemen who were sent by the king, and who related all that had occurred to Broichan in the royal fortress, according to the prediction of the saint--both the breaking of the drinking goblet, the punishment of the Druid, and his willingness to set his captive at liberty; they then added: "The king and his friends have sent us to thee to request that thou wouldst cure his foster-father Broichan, who lieth in a dying state.

Having heard these words of the messengers, St. Columba sent two of his companions to the king with the pebble which he had blessed, and said to them: "If Broichan shall first promise to set the maiden free, then at once immerse this little stone in water, and let him drink from it and he shall be instantly cured; but if he break his vow and refuse to liberate her, he shall die that instant."

The two persons, in obedience to the saint's instructions, proceeded to the palace, and announced to the king the words of the venerable man. When they were made known to the king and his tutor Broichan, they were so dismayed that they immediately liberated the captive and delivered her to the saint's messengers. The pebble was then immersed in water, and in a wonderful manner, contrary to the laws of nature, the stone floated on the water like a nut or an apple, nor, as it had been blessed by the holy man, could it be submerged. Broichan drank from the stone as it floated on the water, and instantly returning from the verge of death recovered his perfect health and soundness of body.

This remarkable pebble, which was afterwards preserved among the treasures of the king, through the mercy of God effected the cure of sundry diseases among the people, while it in the same manner floated when dipped in water. And what is very wonderful, when this same stone was sought for by those sick persons whose term of life had arrived, it could not be found. Thus, on the very day on which King Brude died, though it was sought for, yet it could not be found in the place where it had been previously laid.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Of the manner in which St. Columba overcame Broichan the Druid and sailed against the wind.

On a certain day after the events recorded in the foregoing chapters, Broichan, whilst conversing with the saint, said to him: "Tell me, Columba, when dost thou propose to set sail?" The saint replied, "I intend to begin my voyage after three days, if God permits me, and preserves my life." Broichan said, "On the contrary, thou shalt not be able, for I can make the winds unfavourable to thy voyage, and cause a great darkness to envelop you in its shade." Upon this the saint observed: "The almighty power of God ruleth all things, and in His name and under His guiding providence all our movements are directed." What more need I say? That same day, the saint, accompanied by a large number of followers, went to the long lake of the river Nesa (Loch Ness,) as he had determined. Then the Druids began to exult, seeing that it had become very dark, and that the wind was very violent and contrary. Nor should we wonder, that God sometimes allows them, with the aid of evil spirits, to raise tempests and agitate the sea. For thus legions of demons once met in the midst of the sea the holy bishop Germanus, whilst on his voyage through the Gallican channel to Britain, whither he was going from zeal for the salvation of souls, and exposed him to great dangers, by raising a violent storm and causing great darkness whilst it was yet day. But all these things were dissipated by the prayers of St. Germanus more rapidly than his words were uttered, and the darkness passed away.

Our Columba, therefore, seeing that the sea was violently agitated, and that the wind was most unfavourable for his voyage, called on Christ the Lord and embarked in his small boat; and whilst the sailors hesitated, he the more confidently ordered them to raise the sails against the wind. No sooner was this order executed, while the whole crowd was looking on, than the vessel ran against the wind with extraordinary speed. And after a short time, the wind, which hitherto had been against them, veered round to help them on their voyage, to the intense astonishment of all. And thus throughout the remainder of that day the light breeze continued most favourable, and the skiff of blessed man was carried safely to the wished-for haven.

Let the reader therefore consider how great and eminent this venerable man must have been, upon whom God Almighty, for the purpose of manifesting His illustrious name before a heathen people, bestowed the gift of working such miracles as those we have recorded.

Nennius

Nennius, a ninth century Welsh monk/historian of Bangor, is a major source for tales of King Arthur. Unlike the much more careful Bede, Nennius was, as one modern historian writes "unrestrainedly inventive." His work can neither be entirely trusted nor can it be dismissed, as he apparently had access to no-longer-available 5th century sources.

Nennius

Historia Britonium 40

40. After this, the king summoned his magicians in order that he might enquire of them what he ought to do.

(An Irish version was made in the 14th century, and the word magos was therein translated "druids." This naturally does not prove that Vortigern's magi called themselves by that name, but it illustrates rather well the survival of functions and office that may have been a direct heritage from Druidism in decay.)

Nennius

Historia Britonium 40

40 Et postea rex ad se invitavit magos suos, ut quid faceret ab eis interrogaret. at illi dixere: in extremis fines regni tui vade et arcem munitam invenies, ut tu defendes; quia gens, quam suscepisti in regno tuo, invidet tibi et te per dolum occidet et universas regiones, quas amaras, occupabit cum tua universa gente post mortem tuam. et postea ipse cum magis suis arcem adipisci venit et per multas regiones multasque provincias circumdederunt et illis non invenientibus ad regionem, quae vocatur Guined, novissime pervenerunt; et illo lustrante in montibus Hereri tandem in uno montium locum, in quo aptum erat arcem condere, adeptus est. et magi ad illum dixere: arcem in isto loco fac, quia tutissima a barbaris gentibus in aeternum erit. et ipse artifices congregavit, id est lapidicinos, et ligna et lapides congregavit et cum esset congregata omnis materia, in una nocte ablata est materia. et tribus vicibus iussit congregari et nusquam comparuit. et magos arcessivit et illos percunctatus est, quae esset haec causa malitiae et quid hoc evenerit. at illi responderunt: nisi infantem sine patre invenies et occidetur ille et arx a sanguine suo aspergatur, numquam aedificabitur in aeternum.

Green Book
Of Meditations

Volume Eleven
Druid Games

2003 Introduction

This is a last minute addition to the Green Books, because I couldn't think of a better way to end this collection, than in a playful manner. Much can be learned through noisy games and interaction with people in controlled situations, rather than in quiet solitary contemplation. I hope that the lessons imbedded in these games will make the participants wiser. Due to their complicated nature, distributing the rules to players before the start of the game would be advisable. Good quality drink during the performance of the game will also encourage their spirits during the difficult initial period of the games.

Sincerely,
Mike Scharding
DC Grove
February 1, 2004

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Sigily
A Druidic Board Game

By Pat Haneke and Mike Scharding
(Refer to Board Graphic at End of Article)
A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2003

Sigily Background

Sigily was invented by Pat Haneke and Mike Scharding in 2003. It is considered part of the Public Domain for free use. If you market it, please give half the profits to the Nature Conservancy charity. The original idea is based on 2000 year-old, but wildly popular, Korean New Year divination & gambling game called "Yut Nori." Pat suggested to Mike that it could be adapted for Druidic use and gave the basic additional rules and Celtic touches. The Druid Sigil was invented in 1963 by the Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA), and is used by ADF and Keltria also. It can be played any time of the year, but it is especially appropriate on Lughnasadh, famous for its summer horse racing and arts & crafts. There are many rules, but after playing the simple version first, the advanced rules will introduce more elements of strategy.

Game Summary

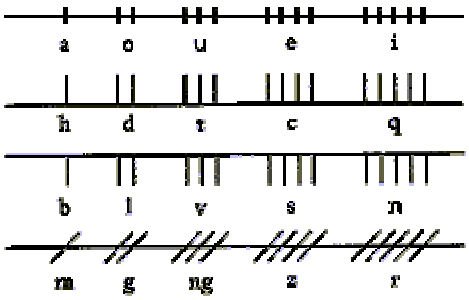
King Connor wishes to divine the future of his new reign at Tara, the capitol of Ancient Ireland. To gauge the fates, he has called the best chariot teams from the four provinces of the kingdom to hold a year long race around the circumference of the island of Erinn, stopping at the holy groves of the kingdom; which are marked with Druid Sigils. The race will be both a strange trip of time and distance, and death will be but a temporary lull for the duration of the game, as players will be reborn from the cauldron of heroism. The goal is to get all your chariot teams from your province (and your partner's chariots if 4 people are playing) in a complete circuit of the board. You toss Ogham sticks to determine how many moves you can advance a chariot. It is a grand adventure of both chance and strategy. Various treasure coins will be collected by landing on spaces, answering question cards, taking short cuts through the fairy land, and destroying your partner's chariots by combat. If you get rich enough, the Druids on your team can cast spells to improve your chances of winning.

Preparation

Print out board and glue securely to wood, stiff plastic or metal background. Make four sets of four marked dimes (tape a letter of the province on them, "L", "U", "M" or "C") for the 4 chariots of each province's team. Players may number or "name" their chariots after friends or family. Collect 52 pennies for the treasure coins and place the number of pennies on each sigil (heads up, of course) as in indicated on the board (1 for plain sigils, 2 on the 8 holiday sigils, 2 each on the 8 fairy sigils, and 4 on the center sigil.) Get four short (3" to 5") pieces of half-circle rounded molding strips from a frame store or hardware store (or just use 4 Popsicle sticks), for the Ogham sticks using in counting moves. They should roughly land flat side up half the time, to be acceptable. Mark the flat sides of the sticks with the ogham letters for dog (cu), deer (fiadh), cow (tarbh) and horse (each), perhaps drawing a figure. The rounded side of the stick may be painted black. (If satisfactory sticks are unavailable, use four quarters, with face being equivalent to flat side up.) If

gambling; 2 players put 26 dollars or quarters (depending on your instincts) in the pot on the side of the table to be divided at the end of the game; based on counters collected, 3 players put in 17 dollars or quarters in the pot, if 4 players, put 14 dollars or quarters in the pot. Agree on any advanced rules before the game starts!

Where to start: The starting point of the game changes depending on the calendrical date on which it is played. The starting point is the nearest future (or current) holiday of the



Druid year. Nov. 1 is Samhain, Dec 21 is Winter Solstice, Feb 1 is Oimelc, March 21 is Spring Equinox, May 1 is Beltane, June 21 is Summer Solstice, Aug 1 is Lughnasadh and Sept 21 is Fall Equinox. All chariots entering the board begin one sigil clockwise from that starting point and continues clockwise around the board.

Number of Players: Can be played from 2-4 player, with possible allied teams in a 4 player game. If 2 players, use 4 chariots each; if 3 players use 3 chariots; if 4 players, use 3 or 4 chariots. With 4 players, using teams, both partners must finish all their chariots to win the game. Connaught & Leinster are partners as is Ulster and Munster in 4 player games.

Ogham Sticks

How to Throw the Ogham Sticks: The person who is going to drop the sticks (or 4 quarters) raises them about a foot off the ground, and another player makes a big circle with 2 hands. The dropping player drops the sticks through the hole or may throw them against a wall, ceiling, statue, etc. DO NOT LET THE STICKS HIT THE BOARD! Elaborate dropping methods are permissible, as is pleading to the gods to influence the results.

How to Count the Ogham Sticks: You generally count the number of sticks that are flat-side up. If they land on their end, remaining vertical, then they are considered flat side up.

One Stick Flat Side Up ("Aon") is one moves
Two Sticks Flat Side Up ("Dha") is two moves
Three Sticks Flat Side Up ("Tri") is three moves
All four Sticks Flat Side Up ("Ceither" or "Kay-her") is four moves
All four Stick Round Sides Up ("Coig") is five moves
(If using 4 coins, treat the "head" as Flat Side Up.)

If you get A "Ceither" (4) or "Coig" (5) everyone cries "Is Math Sin!" (pron. "Smashing!"), meaning "that's great!", and it allows a player to do another free throw after moving their chariot. A limit of three consecutive free throws is in effect, after which the turn of play automatically moves to the next player.

In combat, if a tie results, the tie-breaking is determined by the highest animal on the flat side of their stick. From lowest to highest (dog, deer, cow, horse.) If both tied players have the same animal highest animal, then they throw again. If using coins, throw them again.

Who Starts:

Advanced rules should be decided before the order of play is determined. Each player throws the sticks, highest goes first. Remaining players throw again to determine second, etc. Ties require players to throw again. Player 1 is Connaught, Player 2 is Ulster, Player 3 is Leinster and Player 4 is Munster. Each player sits on the appropriate side of the board. Playing on the floor is recommended, unless adequate table space permits the sticks to be thrown without hitting the board (and knocking things out of place.)

General Play:

After throwing the sticks, a player may introduce one of their chariots onto the board to the number of spaces after the starting point of the game, or they may advance one chariot that is already on the board. You may not pass a turn or refuse to move, a chariot has to be moved or introduced into play. Only one chariot may move per throw of the sticks, a move cannot be divided among 2 chariots. Do not count the original holiday sigil from which the game begins as part of your move. (Example if game is played on November1st, Samhain is the starting point. If a "tri" (3) is rolled, then a player may introduce a chariot and advance to the Winter Solstice.) When you finish on a sigil with money on it, stack the coin under your piece, and this booty will travel with your piece. You do not collect coins from sigils that you jump over, i.e. on which you do not finish. Likewise, when you jump over another piece, they are unaffected, unless you finish your move on their sigil space.

To complete the circuit of the board, you must land on (or pass) the holiday sigil that you began from, after circling the board or taking a short cut. That chariot then leaves the game and is placed on the appropriate chariot marker on the bottom of the board. When all chariots of your team (and your partners) have finished, then you win the speed portion of the race. The game continues until there is only one player remaining on the board. The fastest team will have good health and fortune at love, while the richest player will do well in terms of business in the coming year. If playing by advanced rules with magic spells permitted, completed players may still cast spells on their turn using some of their stored treasure.

Outline of a General Turn:

1. Player has the option to declare and play one spell. Most spells can only be played at this time. Spell effects commence at this point.
2. If a player has a chariot in Fairy Land, they throw to see if fairy darts kill the chariot.
3. Player takes preparatory action needed to move a specified existing piece including:
   - Declaration of intent to enter fairy land from entrance spaces (and tests whether they can enter.)
   - Intention to go backwards according to Home Territory Advanced Rules.
4. Throws sticks for their turn
5. Player decides if they will introduce a chariot or take action with a specified existing chariot.
6. Moves chariots, fights, etc.
7. After all moves are finished, a Druid Curse or a Stone Skin spell can be cast.
8. Says "My turn is over" and hands the sticks to the next person.

Fighting:

Celts thrill in personal combat, and you should seek to clash with your opponent as often as possibly. If your chariot (with all it's accumulated booty) lands on a chariot from your own team (or your partner's), then the 2 (or more) chariots are fused piggy-back style on top of each-other until they reach the goal together (or die together) acting as one single unit, under the control of the "top" player, producing an even higher stack of combined coins that will be kept by the top player after completing the cycle. After completing a cycle, both fused players will be placed on their own province's chariot marker on the bottom of the board, but all the carried booty is split between the two players. If the "top" player had a "ceither" (4) or "coig" (5) move to reach that sigil, then they can use their free throw to continue after fusing together. Fused players do not get multiple attacks.

However, if your chariot finishes its move on an enemy's chariot, then you must fight! Both players throw the sticks. Whoever gets a higher score lives (attacker gets an extra point in attacking, putting the defender at a disadvantage, except possibly under the advanced rule of home territory advantage) and all the coins of the loser are stacked under the winner, and the loser is removed from the board, but may be re-introduced later in the game, just as they were in the beginning. Ties in fighting are broken by noting who had a "higher" animal on the flat side of the stick, but if both have matching high animals, throw the sticks again. If the winner had "ceither" (4) or "coig" (5) move to reach that sigil, then they can use their free throw to continue.

Note: On the Fairy (green) sigils, different rules apply. The fairies do not like fighting in their territory and punish those who participate. Both sides will lose all coins, which are added to the Center Sigil's treasure pot. Both players must roll to see who wins and loses. The attacker still has a +1 advantage. The loser is removed from the board as usual (to be reintroduced later possibly from the starting point), but the winner must return to the holiday sigil that they used to enter the fairy lands, and that specific chariot may not re-enter the fairy lands by that specific entrance for the remainder of the game, although that individual chariot may enter other fairy gates on other holiday sigils. Other chariots on the same team are not affected by this blockage. Fairy rules for fighting apply on Beltane, Lugnasadh, Samhain & Oimelc, but do not apply on the yellow sigils of solstices or equinoxes.

Holiday Sigils:

Solstices and Equinoxes:

If you land on these solar holiday sigils, then you can throw the sticks again. If you are not playing with advanced card rules, then the first yellow sigil after the starting point should be "turned off" to slow down the start of chariots in the game. If playing by advanced rules, you need to answer a question card first and if you can answer it well, then you can throw the sticks again. Fairy rules for fighting do not apply on solstices or equinoxes.

Beltane, Lughnasadh, Samhain & Oimelc:

These sigils are considered magical safe-havens and under the protection of the fairy folk, which discourages fighting (see Fairy rules for fighting.) If you stop on one of these four holiday sigils, then on your next turn you can say (before your next throw of sticks), that you wish to attempt to cross the veil between this world and the next and proceed further into the fairy lands (the green sigils in the middle of the board) and attempt a short cut. To cross the veil between world requires a special throw before your normal throw. If you get "aon", "dha" you must throw again and move that many sigils into the fairy lands. However, if your special throw had resulted in a "tri", "ceither" or "coig", none of your chariots may enter the fairy lands that round, and must throw your normal move and advance that chariot around the long way (clockwise) around the board; and a failed fairy land entrance attempt removes your right to a free throw (which would normally accompany a "ceither" or "coig.")

Fairy Land:

The fairies are the shrunken remnants of the ancient deities of Ireland, and they guard their realm furiously from unwelcome mortal guests, who seek their treasure and wisdom. Certain days of the year are considered to bring the mortal world and fairy world into close contact, on which it is easy to cross-over. The Beltane, Lughnasadh, Samhain, Oimelc holiday sigils; plus the nine green sigils in the center of the board are all considered be places where the mortal and fairy world overlap, and thus fall under fairy land rules for fighting purposes (see above.)

Be warned, the deeper reaches of fairy land (the nine green sigils in the center) are especially dangerous to mortals. At the beginning of each of your turns that starts with one or more of your chariots in the deep fairy land, you must throw the sticks to determine if your chariot is overcome by fairy darts shot from the misty side of those roads. If your sticks result in a "aon" you are fatally wounded, and all the treasure under your chariot goes to the fairy jackpot in the center, and your stricken chariot returns to the holiday sigil that was used to enter the fairy lands, and may not re-enter the fairy-lands through that holiday sigil (you can try again through other holiday sigils.) This is similar to losing a battle in fairy lands. If you did roll a "dha", "tri", "ceither", or "coig", then you are entirely unharmed, and you may throw again and advance as normal. Each further turn with a chariot in fairyland requires a new saving throw of the sticks to defend each chariot that you have in there. Naturally, you don't want to dawdle in the fairylands, but to progress through very quickly.

You must move forward in the Fairy Lands, and once you cross over the center sigil, you have to choose which of the three exits you'll head towards. You cannot backtrack.

Wind spells do not affect players in Fairy Land. Druid Curses likewise cannot be laid in Fairy Sigils. Fireballs can hit players on Beltane, Lughnasadh, Samhain and Oimelc but cannot affect players in deeper Fairy Lands. Chariots cannot cast fireballs within Fairyland, or shoot them out of Fairy Land at players in the mortal realm outside.

Fairy Jackpot/ Sigil Coin Refill System

A lot of money tends to build up in the center sigil from all the spells cast, confiscated wealth from fights in fairy land, and special backwards moves by home territory advantage. If a player lands on the jackpot they get all the money accumulated up to that point, and can cause the nouveaux riche player to get out of hand. If more money goes into the pot after that acquisition, the player still remaining on that spot will not collect the new money, but rather the new money will go on the side for the next person to land on the spot. The limit for the Fairy Jackpot is 7 coins. After that, all new coins that will "overflow the jackpot," and they should be distributed to empty fairy sigils radiating from the center sigil, one at a time. If all the fairy sigils have a least one coin, then the overflow should fill empty sigils on the main board beginning with the starting point of the game and going clockwise around the board, one sigil at a

time. This overflow mechanism will ensure that money will be recycled for use in later rounds of the game.

When you safely exit the fairy lands, from any of the exits, you continue clockwise around the board. If the exit point happens to be the "finish line" (example, if the game starts from Samhain, and you'll probably choose to exit the fairylands on or past Samhain), then you are finished with that chariot, and then move that chariot to the "winner's platform" at the bottom of the board. Once a chariot finishes the course of the board, it may not be reintroduced into play.

End of Game:

At the end of the game, when only one player has not completed moving his chariots around the board and on to the winner's platform, then play will cease and all players count all their treasure. The first player or (team of partners) to finish his team of 4 chariots gets 2/3 of the remaining treasure still unclaimed on the board, and the remaining third of the unclaimed coins is distributed among the losers in order of game play, one at a time. Coins under chariots still on the board still belong to the uncompleted player for the purpose of counting. Each coin gets one dollar or quarter that was bet at the beginning of the game.

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Advanced Optional Rules

After the basics of the game are mastered, players may wish to add more rules to spice up the game even further and at more elements of strategy and excitement. The addition of some or all advanced rules should be agreed upon before the order of players is determined.

Random Gambling:

After mastering the basics of the game, you may wish to gamble on individual throws or fights. General rules of which can be worked out by those betting, using player's personal money. This has no affect on game play, but can be a fun addition, both sides must agree for a bet to go into effect.

Solstice & Equinox Question Cards:

Before the beginning of the game, before teams are selected, 12-16 index cards are divided among the players. Each player secretly (i.e. not even telling a partner) writes a question on the card, that is not impossible, but reasonably challenging, of a druidic nature. Then (without being read) the cards are shuffled and placed by the sided of the board. When someone lands on a solstice or equinox sigil, they draw a card, if they can reasonably answer the question, they will get a free throw of the sticks, and they rip up the old card. If the cards run out, then the players automatically get a free throw of the sticks from that point onwards. If they rolled a "ceither" or "coig" to reach the Solstice/Equinox, and answered the question card correctly, they do not get 2 free throws (but if they answer the question wrongly, they lose ALL free throws, and it becomes the next player's turn.)

Home Territory Advantage Rule:

Each of the players has a territorial quadrant of the board between Beltane, Oimelc, Lughnasadh and Samhain that matches their team's provincial name. In that area, they are very familiar with the terrain and backwoods trails. All of their chariots beginning on a sigil there move an additional space.

If they have a chariot on one of those 5 sigils in their home territory, they may announce (BEFORE they throw the sticks) that they wish to move that chariot backwards on that turn. That backward jumping chariot loses one coin which goes in the Fairy Jackpot in the Center Sigil, and the exact result of the Ogham sticks is then used to go backwards (they don't get an additional bonus space, which is only for forward moves.) If they go backwards with a "ceither", and are still in their home territory than may announce to go backwards again (before throwing their free throw), otherwise if they have moved backwards out of their territory, they must resume clock-wise rotation on further moves of that chariot. If a player uses backwards moves to go past the starting point, they DO NOT WIN by then advancing past the starting point; they must make a full circuit or take a short cut, just like other players.

Two changes to fighting rules, is that in their home territory, that player has a +1 in attacking or defending, and the other player has no advantage in attacking or defending. Also if a partner lands on your chariot while in your territory, the piece with the home territory advantage goes ON TOP. Naturally, this rule should be agreed on before the provinces are allotted at the beginning of the game, as it will drastically affect the game.

Magic Rules:

Each chariot has three riders; a driver, a warrior and a druid. There are eight different possible spells whose inclusion may be individually approved before the game starts. A spell is generally cast before the sticks are thrown on your turn. To cast a spell requires you to sacrifice a few coins or "heads", which will then go into the fairy jackpot in the center sigil. Only one spell can be cast before each turn to throw sticks. Four spells require coins under one specific chariot, four spells can be cast using coins drawn collectively from several chariots of a province (including ones that have already gone to the winner's platform.)

*** Four Specific Chariot Spells ***

1. Druid Curse:

By sacrificing 2 coins under a specific chariot, a player can permeate that particular sigil under the chariot with a deadly curse for the remainder of the game. It may be cast before throwing the sticks on their turn, or, after their turn (but certainly before the next player throws their sticks.) Only 1 Druid curse, by any player, per territory (Ulster, Leinster, Munster or Connaught) is permitted to avoid an impassable mine field from developing. Beltane, Lughnasadh, Oimelc and Samhain sigils can not be cursed. The 2 sacrificed coins are placed in the Fairy Jackpot in the Center Sigil. A special marker is placed on that sigil (such as a nickel) to mark the cursed spot. Any future chariots (including the one that cast that spell) that lands again on that cursed sigil, will die. All the wealth of that cursed chariot will go to the Fairy Jackpot in the Center Sigil, and the cursed chariot dies and goes off the board; but may be reintroduced again later.

2. Fireball:

Before throwing sticks on your turn, you can sacrifice 2 coins from a single chariot. You can then fling a fireball up to two sigils in front or behind that chariot (even if the defender is on a Beltane, Oimelc, Lughnasadh or Samhain sigil; without fairy land fighting rules; but fireballs cannot affect people in deep Fairyland in the center.) The defending chariot must throw sticks to determine if they take damage. If they roll a "aon" or "dha" the defender dies and is removed from the board, if "tri" there is no damage and the fireball dissipates, if "ceither" or "coig" is thrown then the spell is reversed onto the original

caster, who must now throw sticks to determine their own fate (and this may continue to ping-pong back and forth.) Whoever's chariot is killed by the fireball is removed from the board, but their treasure under the chariot remains on that sigil on the board, slightly roasted.

3. Free Turn:

A single chariot may sacrifice 4 coins under it, before throwing sticks, to ensure that it will get a free turn after the sticks are thrown. If they subsequently get a "ceither" or "coig", they do not get 2 free turns.

4. Stone Skin:

After your turn, but before the next player throws sticks, you may sacrifice 2 coins under your chariot to endow your chariot with invulnerability until it advances again. No one can land on that sigil of a stationary stoneskinned chariot without automatically losing combat. Once the player moves that chariot again, the spell is broken. Stoneskin also protects against Fireball.

*** Four Collective Chariot Spells ***

5. Remove Curse:

Must be cast before throwing sticks on a player's own turn. Two coins from any or all of a player's chariots may be sacrificed to remove one Druid Curse from anywhere on the board.

6. Clock-wise Winds of Speed:

Before throwing the sticks on their turn, a player may sacrifice 3 coins under 1 or more of their chariots (including completed chariots) from one province (e.g. 3 coins from 2 Ulster chariots), which will cause a fierce wind to blow for three complete rounds of play. All the chariots on his team and his partner's team will move one extra square when advancing, but other rolls (fighting and fairy entrance) are unaffected. Multiple spells of this nature, may overlap and are cumulative. Backwards moves under home territory rules for anyone are impossible under the duration of this spell.

7. Counter-Clock-Wise Winds of Sloth:

Must cast the spell before throwing the sticks on their turn. Cost: 3 coins. Similar to Winds of Speed, but all the chariots on your opponents' teams will move one space slower for three rounds of play. Backward moves under home territory rules for all players get a +1 on their moves. These spells are also cumulative.

8. Freeze:

Before throwing sticks on your turn, you can sacrifice 3 coins from one (or more) of your chariots. This will force another player of your choice to lose a turn, unless that player sacrifices 5 coins to block the spell. A player cannot be frozen more than twice in a row. A frozen player will be passed on their turn of play, and may not cast spells, but may still defend normally against physical attacks on the board.

Stacked Chariots = Super Chariots Rule:

If the players agree with this rule, then stacked chariots in combat get one attack per chariot. E.g. If two chariots (from one or more partners) lands on an opponent's chariot, then the attacker gets two attacks and the defender gets one defending attack. The defender's roll is higher than both attackers, both attackers die. If one of the stacked chariots dies, it is removed but, the remaining chariot may continue the attack It is possible for one attacker and one defender to die in such situation. If two groups of stacked players meet in combat, then each attacking and defending chariots should be paired up for individual combats, until only one remains.

Territorial Starts:

Players may wish to begin on different starting points, especially if playing with the home territorial advantage advanced rules. If so, Ulster starts on Lughnasadh, Leinster on Samhain, Munster on Oimelc, Connaught on Beltane.

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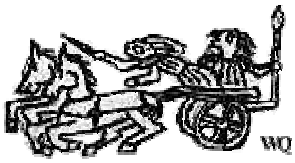
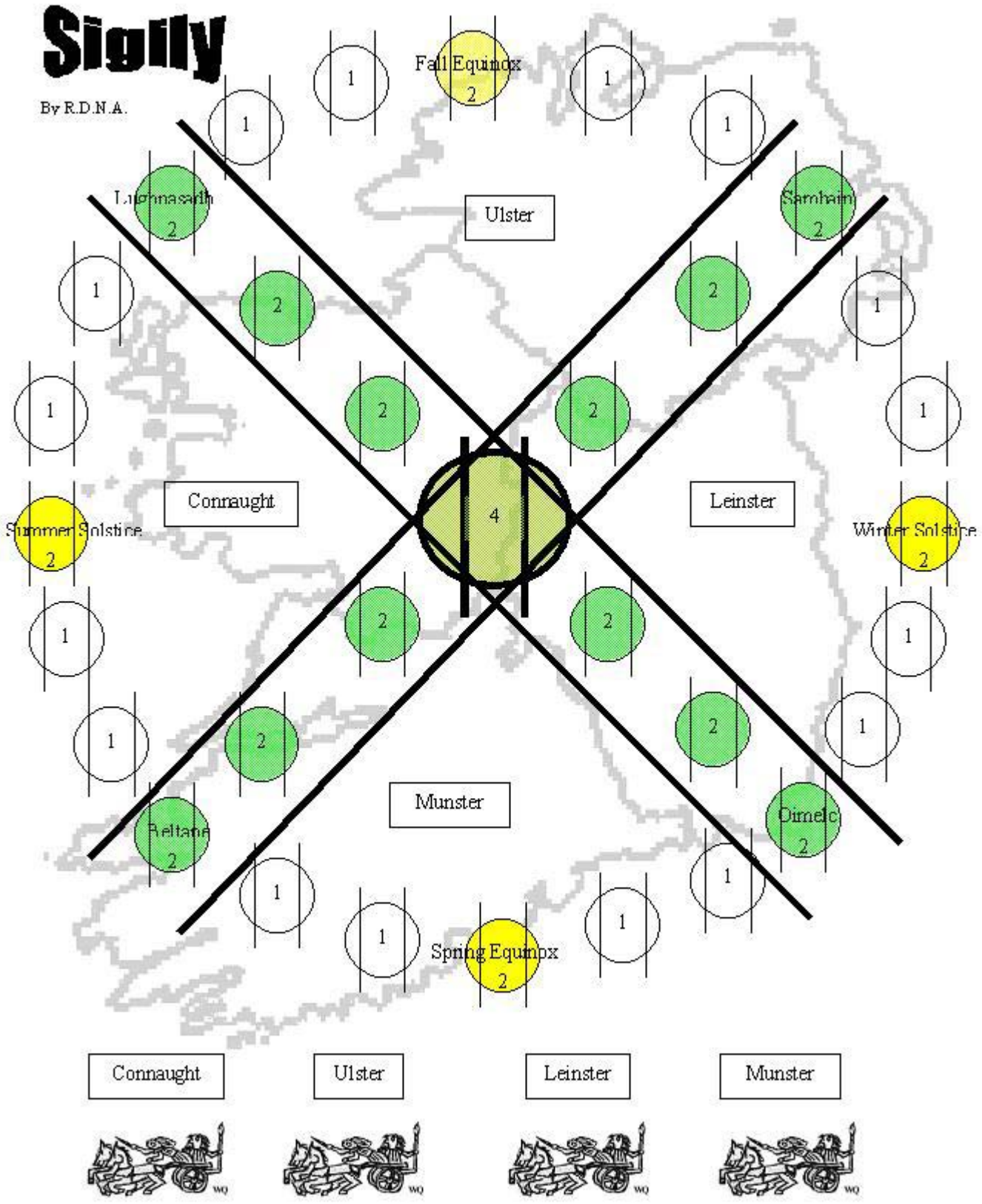
These are just the tentative rules, that need to be worked out by some play groups. I would appreciate any suggestions for an official set of rules to be published in the Samhain 2003 edition. Send those comments to mikerdna@hotmail.com





Color board at www.geocities.com/mikerdna/sigily.jpg

Down the Danube

Designed by Mike Scharding
February 4, 2004
For the Public Domain
Based on Egyptian Game of Senet
And the Nordic Game of Valhalla

Game Summary

The Danube river running from Donaueschingen in German,y rolls about Eastern Europe until it empties down into the Black Sea. The name of the river is derived from the Celtic goddess, Danu. I got the idea for this game from the Egyptian game of Senet which was played mainly by wealthy adults, symbolizing the battle between good and evil. It may have derived from a form of divination. If you'd like, you could ask a yes or no question at the beginning and if the white pieces win, then you get a "yes." DTD is appropriate for playing on Samhain.

Game Preparation

Print out a color version of the board or color in the river with a blue highlighter pen. I'd recommend that you laminate the board. Pennies and nickels can be used if you don't have something else for the playing pieces.

Game Rules

DTD is a two-player board game. Each player uses 5 game pieces of different designs or color, such as nickels and pennies. The object of the game is to travel down the river from the spring of Donaueschingen in Germany down to the Black Sea (where the Celtic peoples originated on the northern shore.) You must move all of your pieces off of the board and stop your opponent from doing the same.

The board is made up of 36 squares. At the start of the game, all pieces are placed on squares 1-10, nickels on even squares, pennies on odd squares.

Sticks are used for determining the number of moves. Throw the sticks in the air and count the number of white sides facing up and the number of black. The moves you can make are:

1 white = 1move
2 white = 2 moves
3 white= 3 moves
4 white=4 movess
4 black = 6 moves.

The first person to throw a 1 goes first and therefore uses the nickel on the white circles. The first move is always from square 10 to square 11. Then the moves are of your own accord. Your turn continues as long as you throw a 1, 4, or 6. If you throw a 2, or 3 you make that move, and then hand the sticks to the other player for a chance to move. The second player must move first from square 9 to square 10. You can divide the number of moves between multiple pieces.

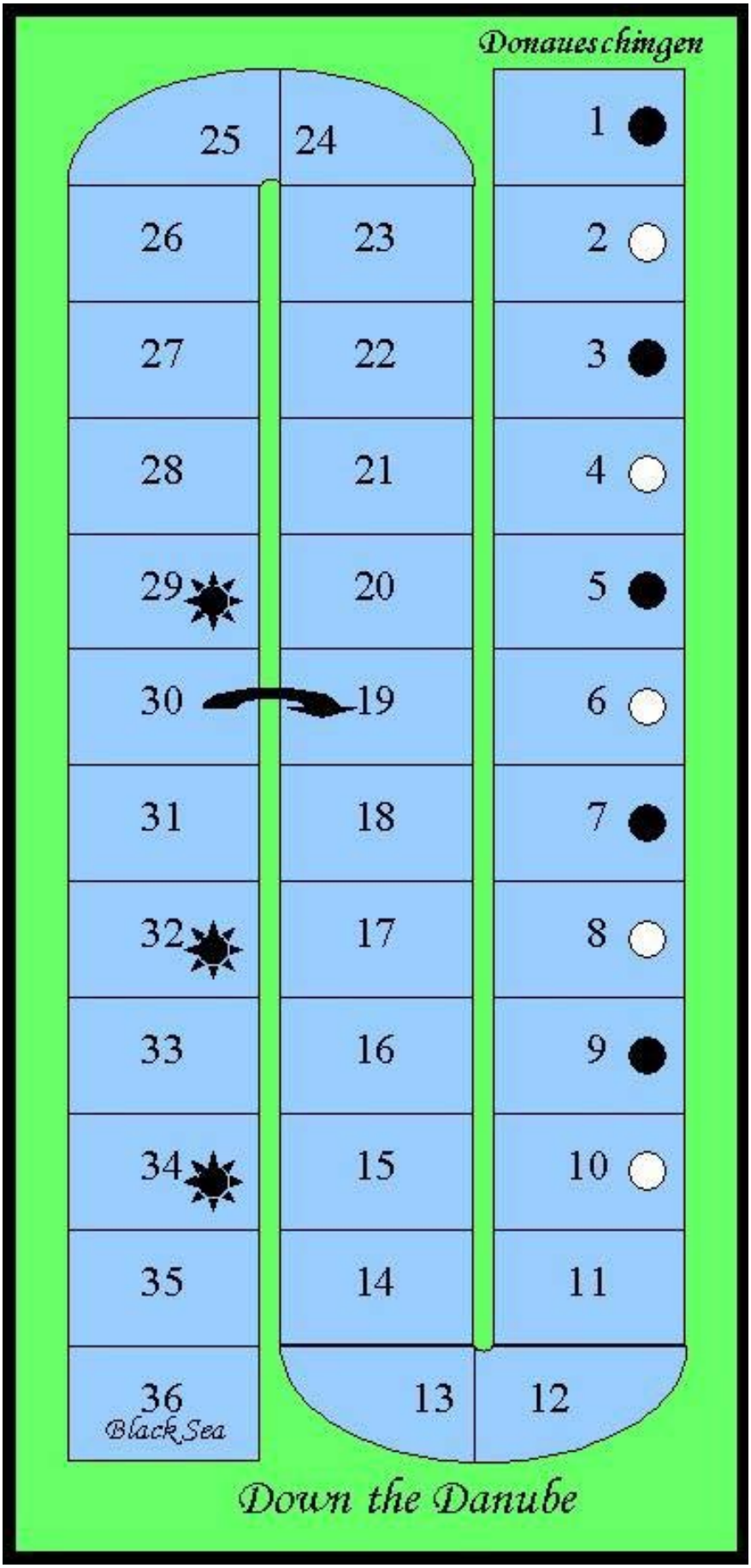
There are many dangers in this board game. If your piece lands on a square occupied by your opponent, or vice-versa, the pieces switch places with the square you started that move from. It is a good idea to group your pieces together, because two "grouped" pieces of the same color on squares side-by-side cannot be switched. You cannot land a piece on a square occupied by your own color.

You can also form a "block." A "block" is formed by 3 pieces side-by-side. An opponents piece cannot leap past a block, but your piece can. There is no passing up your turn. A piece must move forward if possible - even onto square 30 (explained later.) If all pieces are blocked, they must move backwards. If you cannot move at all, you miss a turn. In the third row (25-36) you can "block" with just 2 adjacent pieces, but 3 pieces is not considered a "block" on this row.

Squares 29, 32, and 34 are safe squares, because no piece can switch places with you on them. If you opponent lands on a safe square that you occupy, they move back a space and use the extra move on another piece. If by moving back a space they land on your piece, they still switch, unless the next space is part of a valid "block."

Square 30 is a set of nasty rapids. If your boat lands upon it, then the crew must walk overland back to square 19 to fell new trees and build a new boat. If that is occupied, the piece must start over from space 9 or 10, or the highest unoccupied starting space of their own color.

Square 36 is the last one, and anyone landing here exactly is removed from the board, but all pieces must then move off of the board for you to win. If you throw a higher number than needed, use the extra moves on another piece's move. You may not move any pieces off the board unless all your pieces are off the first 10 squares.



Color Printout at www.geocities.com/mikerdna/danube.jpg

Bricriu's

Bluff & Bluster

Based on Perudo & Liar's Dice & Bluff
(Dice & cups available commercially)
By Mike Scharding, 2004

Objective

Bricriu, the trickster god of Irish legends, is holding the Trickster Convention, and has invited other trouble-making spirits from other parts of the world to exchange schemes, ploys and devious ideas. At the end he reveals a new tournament to decide where the next convention will be held in the next century. The game is played in a golden palace with 20 white shields and 10 red shields hanging on hooks upon the walls of the hall. Bricriu addresses the assembly and says the purpose of the game is to see who is the more conniving and devious spirit.

The goal is to be the last player to have at least one die in play. A game is played in rounds by 2-6 players (4 or 5 is best) takes 30-40 minutes for a full game. During each round, the players roll their dice, an opening bid is mad, and play continues as the bid is raised until it is challenged, and the challenge is resolved. Players lose dice for incorrect bids or challenges. Once a player has lost all of their dice, they are out of the game.

Preparation:

Print a color version of the board and laminate it.
Collect 5 dice for each player. (30 white dice)
Have one colored dice as a bid marker (preferably red)
One plastic opaque cup for each player (6 cups)

Game Board

The Red Die

Players will place this dice on the bidding circles track to declare their bids and make it easier to keep track.

The Bidding Circles Track

This is the white and red circle shields that ring the board. As the bids are called and raised, the red die is moved sun-wise (clockwise) on the bidding spaces around the track. Players declare their bids by placing the red die on either Number Bid circles or Magic One Bid circles allowing all players to decide whether its time to raise a bid or challenge. [If the bid, for some reason, goes above 20 White circles or 10 Red circles, just keep going around the board adding 20 (or 10) to the number written on the board.]

The Lost Dice Squares

Players place any dice that they have lost on these squares, where they will remain out of play. This aids other players to keep track of how many dice are in play or out of play; making bid calculations more simple.

The White Dice

Players will bid on ALL white dice in play, including those in their own cup (or those show outside the cup, but in play.) Dice on Lost Dice Squares do not affect game play. The single pip on the dice is a "Magic One" and will change to match the number called on any bid, without control of the die's owner.

Game Rules

0. Choose the First Bidder of the Game.

Every one rolls all five of their dice, to determine who will start the game. The person with the highest total will start and then proceed clockwise around the table. Ties are re-rolled.

1. Roll the Dice.

We begin. All players takes a dice cup and five white dice. They shake their dice and give them a roll, but do not let their opponents see what they have rolled. Keep them concealed under the cups. You may peek in your cup as often as you like, but secrecy is a critical aspect of Bricriu's Bluff & Bluster!

2. Opening Bid

The first player can declare any amount of numbers (or Magic Ones) as their opening bid, even if they didn't roll that many. You base your bid on your estimate of all dice in play. There are two types of opening bids; Number Bids and Magic Ones Bids.

Number Bids:

The white shields along the bidding circle track are for Number Bids. A Number Bid is a claim that revealing all of the dice in play (your dice and your opponents') will show a particular number (Magic Ones count towards the number called, being like jokers in a deck of cards.) All matching number and Magic Ones on the white dice count together toward a Number Bid.

For example, if you have three fives and your three opponents each have one Magic One (but no 5's), there are really six fives in play (5+5+5+1+1+1.) After reading your opponent's eyes for weakness, declare your bid by placing the red die with a six facing up on the white "5" shield circle.

Magic Ones Bids:

Red shields are used for Magic One Bids. A Magic One Bid is a claim that revealing all of the dice in play (your dice as well as those of your opponents) will show a particular amount of Magic Ones. Only Magic Ones will count toward a Magic One Bid, but this gives you another option in bidding and bluffing your opponents in tight situations.

For example: If you have three Magic Ones in your hand and you suspect that your other opponents each have a Magic One in their hand, then it is reasonable to advance the red die around the Bidding Circles Track to the red "6" shield circle and have the red die face upwards with a Magic One on it.

3. Bluff, Bluster and Raise

After the opening bid is made, play continues clockwise to the next surviving player. You cannot pass. Each player in succession will have only two options that they can make:

A. Raise the current bid, or
B. Challenge the current bid.

Remember, All the white dice in play, both yours and the dice held by other players, even the dice you can't see should be considered when you calculate to raise the bid. It's okay to bluff and bluster, and setting the next bid just a bid higher than the true odds, will force the next person into a difficult dillemma of whether to risk a challenge or raise it to even more ridiculous odds. Don't make it an easy decision for them.

Raising the Bid

Raising the bid is the key to strategy. Depending on your opponents' bidding and the dice showing in your cup, you can raise the bid in a few different ways.

A. Either keep the red die on the same bidding circle, and turn it to show a higher number on the die. (For example, if your opponent's poor bid was four 3's, then you can raise that with a daring bid of four 4's, four 5's, or four 6's.)
B. Or, move the red die clockwise to any higher Number Bid circle (White), and turn the dice to show any number you want on top. (For example, if your opponent declares a bid of four 3's, then you can upset the game by confidently bidding five 2's, six 5's, seven 3's, and so on.)
C. Or, move the red die clockwise to any Magic One Bid circle (Red) and turn the red die to show a Magic One on the top. For instance, if your opponent declares a bid of five 3's, counter his impetuous bid with a bid of 3 Magic Ones (or even 4 Magic Ones), since it is in a position on the Bidding Circle Track that is higher (i.e. clockwise) from the already declared bid.

NOTE: If you are playing by Show & Reroll rule, after your bid you should immediately announce or execute this maneuver before the next player makes their call.

Bid raises continue to rise from one player to the next until challenged.

Challenging the Bid

If you don't think there are enough white dice in play to support the latest bid, then you can challenge the bid rather that raise it. You can only challenge a bid on your turn, and must loudly and clearly call out the word "Challenge" or "call" for everyone to reveal their dice. This decision cannot be reversed or recalled.

4. Resolving the Challenge and Ending the Round

Once a player has challenged a bid, all players lift their cups and reveal their dice to everyone. Count all the dice in play that match the bid; numbers and Magic Ones for Number Bids; or Magic Ones only for Magic One Bids.

After you count the total, it is time to determine who lost.

A. If the actual amount of dice is equal to or more than the bid amount, the challenger loses the challenge, and forfeits one dice, and puts the dice on the Lost Dice Track in the middle of the board, and drinks once.
B. If the actual amount of dice is less than the bid amount, the bidder loses the challenge, and forfeits one dice, and puts the dice on the Lost Dice Track in the middle of the Board, and drinks once.
C. If you are player by the optional Special Rule "Perfect Bid," and the bid is exactly the same as the bid amount, the everyone but the bidder loses a die and drinks. This rule tends to unbalance the game's odds quickly, but is enjoyable because you get to berate the challenger verbally.

Challenge Examples:

Example 1:

You challenge a bid of ten 5's. When all the white dice are counted, there are eight 5's and four Magic Ones. That's twelve 5's in all – two more than the bid amount. Therefore the bidder was right; there were at least ten 5's in play. So you lose the challenge and place one of your dice on the Lost Dice Track.

Example 2:

You challenge a bid of five Magic Ones. When the dice are counted, there are four Magic Ones. You win the challenge. The bidder loses the challenge and surrenders one die to a Lost Dice square.

5. Next Round

After the challenge is resolved either way it is time for the next round and the red die is reset to the white "1" circle with a one facing up. All load the dice you still have into your cup and roll again, as in the beginning. The player who won the last round takes the red die and starts the bidding in the new round. Bidding, of course, can begin anywhere on the bidding track.

Game continues until people run out of dice.

SPECIAL OPTIONAL RULES

Mix and match these rules to the players' preferences.

Show and Re-roll Rule

This is great for confusing your opponents. Immediately after opening or raising a bid, you may put one or more of your dice outside your cup for all players to see, then reroll and hide all of your remaining dice. Any rerolled dice that match your bid (if challenged) will count towards it. Showing and rerolling can therefore improved your chance of winning a possible challenge.

Your can show any amount of dice outside of your cup – as long as you have at least one die left to reroll. The dice shown does not have to match your bid at all, but that may help to convince the next player. The dice outside your cup remain there for the rest of the round, and count towards any future challenge, and can not be returned to your cup until the next round, possibly inhibiting your options, if the bid should revolve around the table to you again.

Perfect Bid Rule

If the amount of dice is exactly the same as the bid amount, everyone except the bidder lose the challenge, and must forfeit a die to the Lost Dice Track and drink once. This often unbalances a game, on average people will lose 2 or 3 dice in the game to this rule, if used, lowering the strategy quotient in the game. You could also have dice lost only by challenger and ALL but bidder must drink once, which is more fair.

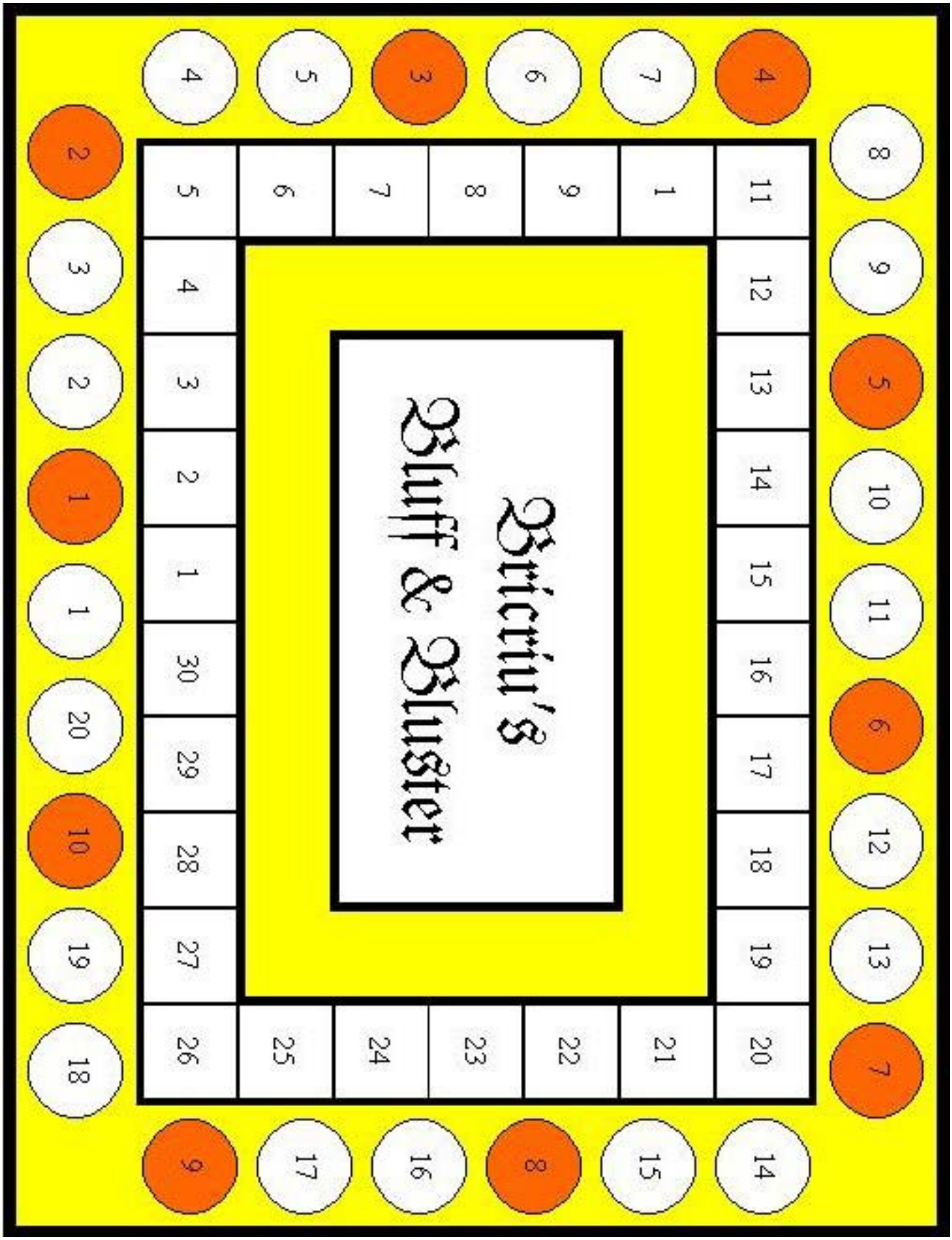
Die Hard Rule (Corollary to Perfect Bid Rule)

You cannot lose your last die when there is a perfect bid, unless you are the player who is actually challenging the bid.

For example, you have one die left. Alex ahs 4 dice, Sue and Susan both have 2, Shane challenges Sue's bid of eight 4's. There are exactly eight 4's shown. Normally in this situation, all players except Sue would have to surrender one die each, but under the Die Hard rule, because you didn't call the challenge, you are saved and can keep your final die.

Big Miss Rule

The difference between the actual amount of dice and the bid affects the number of dice lost. If there are more dice than the bid called, the losing challenger loses the difference in dice to the center track (if he challenges seven 5's, and there are nine 5's, then the challenger loses 2 dice (nine minus seven =two.) If the bidder bids seven 5's and there are actually four 5's, then the bidder lose 3 dice (seven minus four = three.)



Color printout at www.geocities.com/mikerdna/bricriu.jpg

Mystifying Celtic Board Games

By Mike Scharding, DC Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2003

It appears that the Celts played many types of board games before the advent of Cards and Chess in the 2nd Millennium from the Middle East via the Caliphate. However, as usual, they never bothered to write down the rules for posterity. As a result when boards and tantalizingly incomplete folklore references were uncovered, no modern archaeologist has been able to very clearly explain which named game went with which board or rules. Where experts disagree, the rest of us can throw in our own guesses; and a result is a confusion of websites with contradictory rules for games of the same name. I'll try to give you the web-sites, possible rules and variations and then let you figure out your own satisfactory method of play.

One school of thought claims that all games of chance (drawing lots, spinning wheels, dice, dominoes, etc.) are derived from forms of divination by the common masses, and that some boards were designed to keep track of the score from these rolls. Another branch of board games were an imitation of deciding hunting strategies in the dirt, replication of real battles or children's playground fights; such as chess, checkers, fox and geese, tafl, and the Celtic board games in this article. There may well have been some mystical elements, or divine intentions that could be derived from the outcome of the games. Disputes could be settled over board games, rather than resorting to arms.

Hnefatafl

This is not strictly a Celtic game, but one introduced from the various Scandinavian invasions from the 5th century onwards, and likely spread throughout the British Isles. It soon died out with the advent of chess as a strategy game of choice for nobility and the rise of mercenary armies instead of brotherhood bands, and the rules are also a bit hazy, but have passably been reassembled in the 20th century, although some may be actual new creations unlike the original. Many of the following Celtic board set-ups are sometimes postulated to be variants of Tafl, so we might as well explain its rules first.

There are different sized boards, and different distribution of pieces, but the generally theory is that there is a "king" in the center, with a few bodyguards around him, and about twice as many enemies lined up at the edge of the board. The king's strategy is to escape to the edge (or corner of the board for an extra challenge.) The enemy's strategy is to capture the king. Both sides proceed by alternate turns. Captures are made by either side by arranging two of their pieces such that they are on directly opposite sides of their opponent's piece (not diagonally), which is then removed from the board. I call this "squeezing" or "pinching" them. All pieces move like rooks in chess and can move horizontally or vertically, as many spaces as they wish, so long as no one is in the way. There are many variations that try to limit the inherent advantage of the king slipping through the net of the enemy to freedom.

Possible rule additions:

Only the king can occupy the center or the corner spaces. King must be captured on all four sides.

The enemy cannot occupy both squares adjacent to a corner at the same time (diagonally one square away is fine, I think.)

A piece can be "squeezed" against a corner square or the center square by a single piece on the opposite side.

A player may move into and rest on a space between two of the pieces of the opponent, without dying, in effect, requiring the surrounding opponent to move away and then back to effect the capture.

The king and his defenders cannot enter the original squares held by the defenders at the beginning of the game.

- A 22 page illustrated historical treaties of the Tafl family, its origins, and variants on huge and small boards is available at

  http://user.tninet.se/~jgd996c/hnefatafl/hnefatafl.html

- Full page Tafl variant board to experiment with. http://www.dregate.org/tafl.pdf

- Another Tafl 11 x 11 setup arrangement (labeled as "Gwyddbwyll") is at

  http://members.tripod.com/~thevole/game.html

- Tafl boards for sale: http://www.tarahill.com/tafl.html

Fidchell (Fithcheall) and Gwyddbwyll

Now we get to the murkier world of the Celtic board games. Fidchell and its apparent Welsh linguistic cognate, Gwyddbwyll, appear often in ancient legends of fairies and the recreation of nobility as seen at

http://www.seekermagazine.com/v0499/tongues.html and http://ipc.paganearth.com/diaryarticles/history/games.html

There are also accounts of kings giving boards to honored guests, on the reservation that they never give it away or sell it, implying a kind of holy status to the gift. The translation of both is "wood knowledge," also implies that some type of wisdom can be gained from playing the game; and what that is, well, you'll have to find out and relate it to us.

A 7 x 7 board was discovered in 1932 in a crannog (lake dwelling) in Ballindary, Ireland up north with little holes drilled in it, and head-shaped pegs. (See the sketch to the right.) and so people tried to figure out whether it was Bran-dubh or Fidchell. Most have guessed it was Fidchell, and that it was basically a "mini-Tafl" board with king in the middle, two guards radiating from each side and three foes on each side of the board. The goal was likely to get the king from the "belly button" to the corner (or "arms and legs") where the special quarter circle was etched. Could this be a description of how the soul emanates from the center to the limbs?

Variations that have been suggested:

Players must answer a riddle or trivia question to move on their turn, possibly prepared in advance, according to agreed limits or a common agreed topic that both know well. Have to throw a dice and get an even number to move on your turn, although I doubt how well this would work.

- Printable Fidchell Board:

  http://users.indigo.net.au/darke/treubh/brandubh/lg_board_blank.jpg

- Fidchell Boards for purchase:

  www.historicgames.com/wood.html

Bran-dubh and Ard Righ

(Pronounced Bran-doo and Ard-ree)

We know even less about these variants on the same 7 x 7 board graphic as above. Bran-dubh means "Black raven" and Ard Righ means "high king" from the Gaelic. One reconstructed postulation that I liked has the king in the center and one prince on each diagonal from the king (four total.) One baron flanks each side of the corner squares (i.e. 2 in each corner), thus eight barons in total. See this link for a visual presentation of this arrangement.
http://users.indigo.net.au/darke/treubh/brandubh/lg_board_pieces.jpg.

Barons go first. All pieces can move one square in any direction, but barons and princes could also move two diagonally if the spaces are empty. You capture by stepping on someone on a single space move, but the king is immune to attack. The goal of the game is for the barons to wipe out the young princes and visa-versa. Usually, the princes run and hide while the king runs about like a maddened rhinoceros taking out the barons. If any piece stays in the corner for two rounds it is considered to be lost in the woods and removed from the board. Only the king can go on the center square. Most games I played end up with the king defending a prince in a corner region, with the prince bouncing between two squares behind the king, forcing a draw. Thus, it was recommended that players play two games, each time switching positions and adding up their total surviving pieces at the conclusion of their likely draws to determine an overall victor.

Fox and Geese (or Deer and Hounds)

Fox and Geese is probably also a Viking game of the hunt (and there are a few others) that spread widely in Celtic lands. 13 geese (some with more) and one fox are on the board (some with two.) All move one square at a time, horizontally and vertically (others allow a diagonal move without capture.) The fox captures by leaping over the geese, but can only jump one goose at a time. Thus two geese lined up are an insurmountable barrier to him. The goal of the geese is to chorale the fox until it cannot move. The fox is trying to eat all the geese.

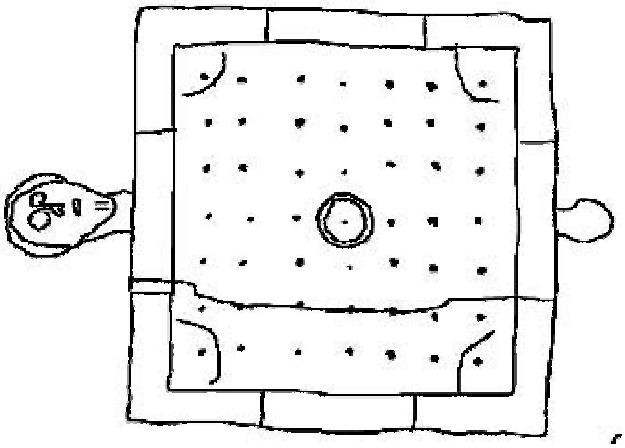
One such variant board is at

http://www.stainess.freeserve.co.uk/images/fgtbl.jpg

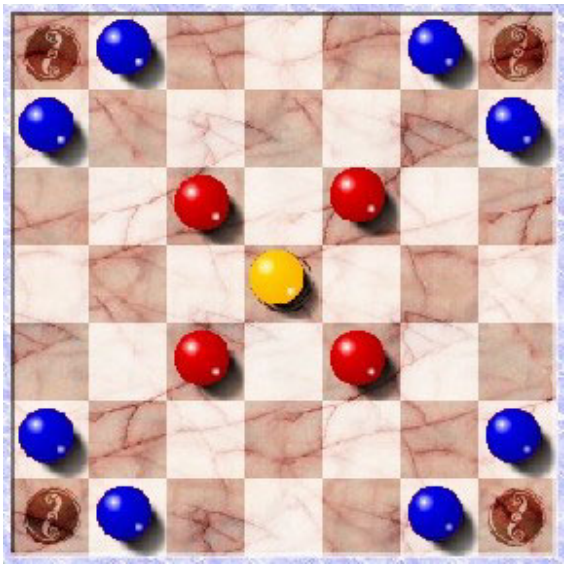
How to Make the Boards:

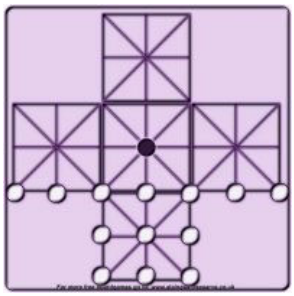
These games have links to print out your own board that can be glued onto a stiff cardboard or sheet of plastic or glass. The playing pieces can be made from coins with affixed labels, colored glass baubles, draughts from checkers, pawns from chess, different colored rocks, candies, or carved wooden pieces. As far as I know, there are no on-line forums to play these games. Feel free to improvise the rules to make the games more balanced, or develop larger boards and new moves to widen the possibilities of play.

Naturally, the reconstructed rules may not resemble the original games, but then we'll probably never know those rules; but the gods appreciate the effort.



Perhapsfidchell above, Tafl to the left and Bran Dubh, below





Fox and Geese

Hebridean Hijinks

Game concepts, board style and graphics
Copyright by Mike Scharding, 2004 c.e.

GAME SUMMARY

The chief of the small town of Balla Chulish, the seat of power for the Great Valley in western Scotland, has died and all his children are vying for the position. The Druid advisor to the past chief decides that the children must sail out on an adventure to learn the necessary lessons of a wise leader. But it will not be an ordinary visit, for each island has a mysterious legend, a wise proverb and a difficult quest that must be understood and achieved to win the hermit's treasure coin. So the players set out in their triple hide leather coracle boats with a few trusty sailors.

Between 2 and 6 players wander around a board, performing games of skill and knowledge against randomly selected opponents, in order to acquire different color coin prizes. Each island has a different mini-game or contest. Penalties for losing are drinking and a loss of pride. Numerous proverbs and philosophical lessons are learned in the process. The first players to get the agreed number of coins of each color win the game (1st, 2nd and 3rd Place) and becomes the chieftain of their valley. A game will last between two and three hours or a nice evening.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Drinking large amounts of alcohol, tea or food may make you sick and incapable of driving or walking home safely. Be sure not to endanger yourself or anyone else, and have an established way home by a designated driver or sufficient money for a taxi or a confirmed place to sleep it off until morning. Also, few of the featured islands of the Hebrides really resemble the islands described in the game.

NUMER OF PLAYERS

Between two and six players can play Hebridean Hijinks, but the optimal number is 3 or 4. The number of necessary coins and number of attempts at each coin on a particuliar island that are permitted during the entire game. These will vary to balance out game play, and should be agreed on before the game, depending on how much time you have.

2 Players: Put 1 coin on each circle. To win, you need 2 or 3 coins of each color (+ 1 silver & gold.) You get 1 chance each island.

3 Players: Put 1 coin on each circle. To win, you need 2 or 3 coins of each color (+ 1 silver & gold.) You get 2 chances each island.

4 Players: Put 2 coins on each circle (but only 1 on each silver & gold.) To win you need 2 coins of each color (+ 1 silver & gold.) You get 2 chances each island.

5 or 6 Players: Put 2 coins on each circle (including silver & gold.) To win, you need 1 coin of each color (+ 1 silver & gold.) You get 2 chances each island.

COIN LIMITS

The player may not take more than one coin from an individual island. Nor may they take more coins than the necessary of any color as needed to win. If they acquire such a coin through contest, inheritance or normal game play, they must leave it behind on the island when they leave the island.

PREPARING THE BOARD

It is recommended that the board and coin labels be printed in color, cut out neatly with scissors, or filled in with markers. Laminating the board is highly recommended, and taping it onto a 2 inch high box or book, to keep it above the wet table and easily moved off the table for cleaning.

Each coin's label should be glued or taped neatly onto a nickel, perhaps shrink wrapped.

A player's acquired treasure coins may be placed on a shallow dish, or kept on their purple numbered circle on the board.

For the pieces of complicated games, putting the pieces in a labeled ziplock baggy will save time.

The following items are necessary to be collected a head of time and brought in a box:

Two or Three printouts of Green Book 11

4 popsicle sticks per person as throwing-counting-sticks

A few large paper grocery Bags

Several pencils, and sheets of paper

Print outs of the various gameboards

A bag of clean pennies (60+), nickels (15+), dimes (15+) and quarters (15+.)

3 large cloth napkins and/or 3 handkerchiefs

Lots of string

One pack of chewing gum

Several head-size balloons.

Rubberbands

Popcorn and Peanuts

Deck of Cards

Some large nuts (like walnuts or pecans)

A bottle cap

A pitcher

Lots of cups, a table, and chairs.

A couple rags to clean up spilt beer.

A low box to go under the laminated game board.

DRINKING RULES

We recommend that several pitchers of beer be bought at a time with group funds. Fatty food recommended.

Unless otherwise stated, a drink equals a sip of enough beer to wet the tongue, perhaps 3/4 ounce at most. An average game will have 80-100 drinks, or about 6-9 soda cans. Players may choose to substitute a caffeinated beverage like tea, coffee or soda instead or choose to eat 1/4 cookie per "drink."

MOVING RULES

4 popsicle sticks (or squares of stiff cardboard, drink coasters, coins or other 2 sided objects) are used in the game. One side is white and the other is black (or some other system of marking.) If you can, make one set for everyone. Sticks are dropped about a foot off the table on their ends and counted;

1 white side up = 1 move

2 white sides up =2 moves

3 white sides up= 3 moves

4 white sides up= 4 moves

4 black sides up =5 moves

Players can move to any circle that touches their own circle (i.e horizontally and vertically), and can make "L" turns or "U" turns, even reversing back on their previous course. You jump over other players without harming them.

ORDER OF PLAY

Person to roll highest on the sticks will go first, and then rotate around the board clockwise. The order of events are as follow on a regular turn:

1. Weather Check The weather is very uncertain in the Hebrides. Roll to check for storms: a "four" means a storm hits you and you cannot leave your island and basically lose your turn. A "five" means you are hit by a storm after leaving an island and the next player in game succession can throw sticks for your move and thereby choose whichever island they wish to move you.

2. Normal Move. Players may not pass. Roll to see how many circles you can move. Move your piece to the island. If the player is the first to visit the island, go to step 3. If the player is not the first visitor, but there is still a coin, go to step11. If there is no coin, follow step 12. If the island is occupied before you land on it, go to step 13.

3. Island Description. Someone reads the description of the island. They may elaborate

4. Proverb Reading. The lesson is read, but only one is selected by the reader, and is the only one used for the remainder of the game.

5. Tapping. All players tap their cups three times and say "Slainte!" (pron. "Slan-cha," meaning "cheers!") The last one to do so must drink once. If no person was discernibly last, no one drinks at all.

6. Opponent Selection. All the other players roll sticks, the player with the highest score is assigned the theatrical role of the opponent in the game. The assigned opponent does NOT have to relocate their ship to the island. Note: in cases of occupied islands, the previous arrival is automatically designated as the opponent.

7. Rules for the Game. Rules are read, and materials prepared.

8. Game is played.

9. Decision. If the player loses, then he must drink one sip. If the player wins, they get the coin from the island and all other players must drink once to praise the victorious player.

10. It is now the next player's turn.

11. Previously Visited Island with a Remaining Coin.

The player must remember and speak the general nature of the island's proverb. Exact words are not necessary, but meaning must be conveyed well. (To prove that they were paying attention to the game play, and penalize players who leave the room for a short time.) The other players will judge the adequacy of the island's visitor's memory.

If the player can't remember it or can't express it well, then the player must drink once and do steps 3-10 to repeat the story & proverb.

If they can remember the proverb, then do step 6-10, saving much time.

12. Empty Island with No Coin

The player must remember and speak the general nature of the island's proverb. The other players will judge the adequacy of the island's visitor.

If the player can't remember it or can't express it well, then the must drink once and start from step 3 and stop after doing step 5; thus reminding all of the island's story.

If they can remember the proverb well, that's the end of it, and then it's the next player's turn (i.e. Step 10.)

13. Occupied Island Rules

Sometimes an island will already have another player on it. As usual, repeat the proverb on island, and get approval from other players.

If poorly worded, the player drinks once and go to step 3 and the other occupant of the island is automatically designated as the opponent.

If the proverb is worded well, go to step 7, with the opponent automatically being the other occupant of the island. If there are more than one other occupant, the player landing there can choose the opponent.

If there is a coin still on the island, and the player wins, they get the island's coin. If the player loses, the opponent gets the coin (if within their limits.)

If there is no coin on the island, and the opponent has a coin from that island or a coin of the same color as that island, the player may take that coin and the opponent drinks twice. If the player loses, then the player drinks twice and the opponent can take one coin of that island's color (if within their limit.)

If there is no coin on the island, and the defeated opponent does not have that island's coin, or one of the same color, the player may choose any coin from the defeated opponent's treasury (a silver or gold coin can only be taken after a special throw of sticks with a 4 or 5 result.) If the player loses, the opponent may select one from the player in the same manner.

If the island has no coin, and the opponent has no coins, then the defeated opponent drinks thrice. In the same way, if the player has no coins and loses, then the player drinks thrice.

Naturally, A player cannot take a coin which puts them over the limit per color, or more than one coin from the same island.

JUDGING RULES

If a player contests the result of the game or a point of order; both parties will eloquently explain their position for up to two minutes. Players may wish to have a permanent judge selected at the beginning of the game, perhaps a bystander. Otherwise, judges are all the other members of the game (i.e those not involved in the dispute) and attentive by-standers get one vote. Judges close their eyes, speak "1,2,3" and blindly point at the player of their choice, and open their eyes. If a tied decision results, the judges must drink twice and a revote is taken after a quick conference of judges. If tied again, judges again drink twice, and the plaintiff wins the debate. The loser of the decision must drink twice.

SPECIAL RULES

No Pestering Rule

A player cannot consecutively land on the same island as another player. Every other round is okay, though.

Plain Sight Rule:

Players must keep their coins in their purple circle in plain sight so that people can see how many coins they have and which island they are from. Penalty is 2 drinks each round that they refuse after a warning.

No Cheating Rule

If anyone caught egregiously cheating, they must defend their actions to the judge(s), with normal judging rules. If they lose the decision then they drink thrice and lose a turn.

No Stealing Beer Rule

Players may only drink beer when the rules require it. Players should not purposely lose a contest in order to drink. Judges decide the guilty decision. Penalty $2 into the pot for the winner of the game.

Taboo Rule:

Certain words are forbidden on the ocean by sailors. If a player says "rabbit/hare", "iron" or "potato," in any language, then they drink twice for each infraction, and their next move will have a storm sweep them off course. A player may appeal to the judges.

No Team Rule

Players should not be in cahoots with each other. If an opponent is suspected of playing half-hearted against another player, to give them an easy victory, then they may be judged by their peers as cheating.

No Interference Rule

If anyone is judged as willfully and significantly interfering in a contest between two other peoples, then they drink thrice and lose one coin of the choice of the offended plaintif.

No Leaving Rule

Players who leave the table for any reason other than buying more beer or food, must pay a penalty of either 3 drinks or return one coin to the board. Punishes weak bladders.

Sick Rule

If a player can no longer drink or eat, due to extreme nausea, they may continue to play without doing so, at the discretion of the judges.

Quit Rule

If a player must quit the game, all coins that they have return to the board on their original islands.

SPECIAL ISLANDS

Balla Chulish: The starting point of the game, once the players leave, they cannot return until they have all the necessary coins to finish the game. They must land exactly on it. Once returned, they are safe from losing coins, but may continue to be selected as a random opponent during the landings from other players trying to finish.

Loch Linne: A safe zone, multiple players can land here without contest. When landing here, players dip their cups in the strait's waters, which flow with beer and have a drink.

Silver Islands: A player must be within 3 coins of the required total coins to finish the game to enter a silver island. A player who lands here may select any opponent they wish, and choose any contest they wish from the board's options. If the player wins they get a silver coin, and all other players drink; if the player loses, the player drinks twice. If a player lands on an occupied silver island, they must choose the occupant as an opponent, but if they lose, then they also lose a coin of the occupant's choice. There is no limit on the number of attempts for a silver coin.

Gold Islands: A player must be within 2 coins of the required total coins to finish the game to enter a gold island. When a player lands here, a randomly selected opponent gets to choose any contest they wish from the board's options. If the player wins they get a gold coin, and all other players drink; if the player loses, the player drinks twice. If a player lands on an occupied silver island, they must choose the occupant as an opponent, but if they lose, then they also lose a coin of the occupant's choice. There is no limit on the number of attempts for a silver coin.

FINISHING THE GAME

When a player has collected all the necessary coins, and gotten their silver and gold coins, they battle their way back to Balla Chulish. After landing there, they may continue to be selected as a random opponent, or as a judge, but may choose not to drink anymore.

OPTIONAL RULES

New Island Rules

The players may collectively decide to replace an island's game, before starting, with another game and decide a new proverb for it.

Time Limit Rules

The group may collectively agree in the beginning that the game will end at a certain time, and the players with the greatest number of coins will win the game.

Good Story Rule:

Anyone who can come up with an amazing story related to the locale or game, will at a decision of the judges, be given an extra 2 spaces on their next roll.

Perfect Sailing Rule:

No weather checks.

Gambling Rules:

Each person puts 10 dollars or quarters in the pot. The payout at the end of the game is as such, and if they quit, their share is distributed to other players.

2 player 75%, 25%

3 Players 66%, 33%, 0%

4 Players 50%, 35%, 15%, 0%

5 Players 40%, 30%, 20%, 10%, 0%

6 Players 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10%, 0%

Broken Rules Rule

Because this game has not been game tested, yet, if it comes to the attention of the players that a point of order needs to be adjusted to correct a significant imbalance, the judges will decide.

PINK ISLANDS

Pink 1: Isle of Bute (Isle of Sleep)

STORY

They were for a very long while afterwards driven about on the waves, till they found an island with trees upon it like willow or hazel. Thereon were marvellous fruits thereon, great berries. The player squeezed some of the berries into a vessel and drank the juice, and it cast him into a deep sleep from that hour to the same hour on the morrow. And they knew not whether he was alive or dead, with the red foam round his lips, until he awoke the next day.

A hermit by the tree says to you 'Gather ye this fruit, for great is its excellence.' So your crew gathered (it), and they mingled water with it, to moderate its power to intoxicate and send asleep. The hermit then said:

PROVERB

If you want your dreams to come true, don't sleep too much.

Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.

LULLABY GAME

Player and opponent have four minutes to simlutaneoulsy compose separately their own lullaby that the judges think most witty and appropriate for a child's bedtime lullaby. Paper and pencils are permitted. The lullabys are then sung or read to the judges.

Pink 2: Isle of Tory (Isle of Questions)

STORY

You arrive on a rocky shore and wander inland to find a great many elderly people yelling questions to each other. The other person never answers the question but with another question, however the conversation seems to progress wisely. They ignore all attempts by your crew to communicate with them, saying, "Do you think we have time to answer questions, when we have too many areas to inquire about?!" One hermit sits quietly on a boulder on the beach and says:

PROVERBS

A child who asks a question is not dumb

Questions are a burden to others. Answers are a prison for oneself.

Form an opinion of a man from his questions rather than his answers.

You are only a few questions from knowing the right answer.

Good questions lead to more good questions, answers will come along at their own time.

QUESTIONS GAME

The player begins by asking the opponent a question. The opponent may only answer with a question. Anyone who repeats a question that they, or the other, has asked will lose the game. They have only 5 seconds to consider a reply.

Pink 3: Isle of Iona (Isle of Sadness)

STORY

You have found a large island, and a great multitude of human beings therein. Black were these, both in bodies and raiment and they rested not from wailing. An unlucky lot fell to one of the sailors on your ship. When he went to the people who were wailing he at once became a comrade of theirs and began to weep along with them. Two more sailors were sent to bring him back, and they did not recognize him amongst the others (and) they themselves turned to lament.

A nearby hermit tells you: 'Let four (of you)' saith he, 'go with your weapons, and bring ye the men perforce, and look not at the land nor the air, and put your garments round your noses and round your mouths, and breathe not, the air of the land, and take not your eyes off your own men

The four went, and brought back with them and when the other two were asked what they had seen in the land, they would say: 'Verily, we know not what they say; but what we saw others doing we did.' On the shore, the hermit then says:

PROVERBS

He who has been near to death knows the worth of life

Let each praise the ford as they find it.

You cannot motivate the best people with money, they are motivated only by passion.

EULOGY GAME

The Player and the Opponent have 2 minutes to think at the same time, and then 2 minutes to speak in turns. They must tell a Eulogy for a famous person or someone that everyone at the table will know. The person may be living or dead. Whoever is judged to be the more clever or saddening will win.

Pink 4: The Summer Isles (Isles of Laughter)

STORY

You find an large island in the center of a pack, with a great level plain therein. A great multitude were on that plain, playing and laughing without any cessation. Lots are cast and one sailor walks onto the island. When he stepped on to the shore, he at once began to play and to laugh continually along with the islanders as if he had been with them all his life. His comrades stayed for a long, long space expecting him, and he came not to them. So then they leave him.

One monk fishing in a small boat anchored off the shore says:

PROVERBS

A sense of humor is not a burden to carry, yet it makes heavy loads lighter.

One man with humor will keep ten working.

JOKESTER GAME

The Judges will announce a topic and the player and opponent must tell a relevant joke. They have 2 minutes to think at the same time. Player tells their joke first. Whomever is judged to be funnier or better delivered will win.

Pink 5: Isle of Lewis (Isle of Horses)

STORY

Before you is a great, flat island. Two sailors entered the island. Great was its size and its breadth, and they saw therein a long, great green sward, with vast hoof-marks of horses upon it. As large as the sail of a ship was the mark of the hoof of each horse. They saw, moreover, the shells of huge nuts like pecans, and they saw, there, also a pile of gigantic jewels and plunder of giants. They were afraid then, after seeing what they beheld, and they all, swiftly, hastily, went on board their boat.

When they had gone a little from land, they beheld (rushing) along the sea to the island a great multitude of warriors, which, after reaching the green of the island, held a horse-race. And swifter than the wind was each horse, and great was the shouting (of the multitude) and their outcry and noise. Some saying: 'Bring the grey steed'; 'Drive the dun horse there'; 'Bring the white horse!'; 'My steed is faster!'; 'My horse leaps better.'

When the wanderers heard those words, they went away with all their might for they felt sure it was a meeting of demons they beheld. In a small hut on the shore, a hermit says to them:

PROVERBS

You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink.

Misfortunes come on horseback and depart on foot.

The mouse cannot compete in the games of the giraffe.

MY HORSE IS ABC… GAME

The player begins by stating: "My horse is a …. Horse," and inserts an adjective beginning with the letter "A." The opponent then immediately repeats the player's statement, while adding another adjective beginning with the letter B. In this way the phrase becomes longer and longer alphabetically (perhaps going through the alphabet more than once.) If one person mis-speaks and can not recover quickly, or repeats a word out of order, they lose.

WHITE ISLANDS

White 1: Isle of Raithlin (Isle of Poor Man)

STORY

You meet an old man, clothed only with the white hair of his body, sitting on a broad wet rock in the midst of the waves. Every four minutes he throws himself down into prostrations and prayer.

He says "I used to keep money from the church's funds for festivals and re-use graves to save money, even desecrating the graves of saints. On a pilgrimage by boat, I met a man sitting on the wave who saw a band of invisible demons leaping in joy about me. He forced me to throw my wealth over board to rid myself of their company. I however, kept but a small cup and this angered him. He did call forth this rock from the ocean's depth and capsized my boat. Seven years had I been here, everyday my cup fills with whey-water and 7 cakes. After that, one day an otter brought me a salmon out of the sea. I pondered in my mind that it was not possible for me to eat a raw salmon. I threw it again into the sea. The next day, I saw an otter bring the salmon to me again out of the sea, and another otter brought flaming firewood, and set it down, and blew with his breath, so that the fire blazed. So I cooked the salmon, and for seven other years I lived in that manner, learning from the generosity of the ocean. Every day my island grows one foot wider. When the islands reaches back onto the soil of Ireland, then my curse will be broken. I have a lesson for you, he says:

PROVERBS

Wealth if you use it, comes to an end; learning, if you use it, increases.

I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand.

GIVE AWAY GAME

A deck of cards is stripped of aces, deuces and face cards, and then one joker is added, and they are shuffled, beginning with the opponent, each person is dealt the cards. Pairs are immediately discarded. Beginning with the player, the two people take turns drawing one card from the other. Pairs are immediately discarded. They may rearrange their hand as they see fit. Last player remaining with a card in their hand is the loser. Play must be quick.

White 2: Isle of Mull (Isle of Wisdom)

STORY

You arrive on wide island strewn with boulders. On each boulder sits a man or a woman, deep in thought. Three times a day, one man walks around placing a loaf of bread and a fish on each rock, whereat they turn to face a different direction while quietly consuming it. The stones are highly polished from their turning their seating place around. As they think, their thoughts appear on the surface of the rock, only to vanish again in a heartbeat. You notice golden chains linking them to the rocks, but that they are unlocked. They never leave the stones, for fear of their place being taken by another.

The man with the bread, is taking notes, and turns to you and says:

PROVERBS

For every word of wisdom forgotten, a lesson will return to remind you.

Better the supposition of a wise man than the certainty of the fool.

Learn lessons from the mistakes of others, lest you should also know their punishment.

BROKEN PROVERBS GAME

The player begins by speaking half of a well-known proverb, which the opponent must finish. Then the play reverses with the opponent speaking half of a well-known saying. If the other person does not recognize the phrase they must quickly come up with an appropriate finish. Perfect phrasing is not necessary, and a clever answer is acceptable, if the judges concur that it wise.

White 3: Isle of North Uist (Isle of St. Asaph)

STORY

St. Asaph sits in his cell by the sea shore with a few disciples at his feet. One disciple explains that St. Asaph is the patron saint of dung, (there is nothing so lowly that the Gods are not concerned about it) and that depending on what he eats, the dung will have a different healing property. He has explained the Gospel of Fiber and the need to regulate what goes out to make room for what goes in. Rather than contemplating their navels, the monks contemplate the end of all food. One monk shares a bit of wisdom with you;

PROVERBS

No matter how impressive a man is, their dung is as smelly and brown as your own.

What goes in must come out, but it may not be the same condition.

UP MY BUTT GAME

The player begins by incanting, "There is a _____ up my butt." And the opponent must say the same thing, substituting a word that rhymes with what the first player claimed was in his anal canal. When one cannot come up with the new rhyming word they will lose if the victor does not immediately offer one more rhyme to show that words do remain, and if they cannot, then the one who stopped first must begin a new contest. This will keep people from using "orange" and having an unfair advantage by starting with a difficult rhyme. A quick pace is expected. Any language is acceptable, provided another judge can vouch for it.

White 4: Isle of Rum (Isle of Expansion)

STORY

You hear the singing of psalms. You behold a high, mountainous island, full of birds, black and dun and speckled, shouting and speaking loudly. You rowed a little from that island, and found another island which was not as large. Therein were many trees and on them many birds. And after that they saw in the island a man whose clothing was his hair. So you asked him who he was, and whence his kindred. 'Of the men of Ireland am I', saith he.

'I went on my pilgrimage in a small boat, and when I had gone a little from land my boat split under me.' I went again to land,' saith he, 'and I put under my feet sod from my country, and on it I went out to the sea and stood on that sod,' saith he, 'now a yard is added to its breadth every year from that time to this, and a tree every year to grow therein.

The birds which thou beholdest in the trees,' saith he, 'are the souls of my children and my kindred, both women and men, who are yonder awaiting the end of time. Half a cake, and a slice of fish, and the liquor of the well cometh to me daily,' saith he, 'by the ministry of otters at the hour of noon, moreover, another half-cake and slice of fish come to every man yonder and to every woman, and liquor of the well, as is enough for everyone.' You ask what will happen when there is no room to expand, but he is silent in his reply.

When their three nights of guesting were complete; they bade the pilgrim farewell, and he said;

PROVERBS

All fires begin as small sparks

Pride never stops growing until it is ready to challenge the gods.

GEOMETRIC LANDSLIDE GAME

The player picks a whole real number between two and ten and the opponent has to double it. Then the player has to double it. The pace should be constant and relatively quick. The first to have the wrong number loses. No writing is permitted.

White 5: Eastern Skye (The Isle of the Trees of Threes)

STORY

On the shore of this island you see a thicket filled with trees with three trunks, which have three limbs, and each limb has three branches, which has three twigs, which have three leaves, which have three lobes, with three veins. Many words are carved onto each twig bespeaking great wisdom. The gardener of these trees comes up and asks if you know how to write in Ogham and hands you a scroll with the alphabet. He says, "I have inscribed the wisdom that I have learned from these trees back onto each of their very own twigs, even as their wisdom is inscribed on my soul, but there is still not enough room to scratch it on. I wish to see if you are quicker at writing than my experienced hand. Let me tell you of the wisdom of Ogham:

PROVERBS

Much is written between the lines.

That which is written is binding, that which is spoken is soon forgotten.

OGHAM SPELLING BEE GAME

The player and opponent are given one of the Ogham charts at the end of this game and are asked by a third player to write a simple short sentence in Ogham along a long pencil line. Whoever finishes first, correctly, gets one point. The first to get two points out of three bouts will win the game. If there is a letter in the sentence that can not be written with Ogham, they must draw a circle. Spaces should be recognizable between words.

GREEN ISLANDS

Green 1: Isle of Islay (Revolving Isle)

STORY

You come to small island with a fiery rampart about it; and that rampart used to revolve around the island, while the island itself is in the midst of an eternal whirlpool. There was an open doorway in the side of that rampart)sometimes open, sometimes closed, at the whim of the gatekeeper,) and, whenever the doorway would come opposite to them, your crew used to see the whole island, and all, that was therein, and all its indwellers, even human beings beautiful, abundant, wearing adorned garments and feasting with golden vessels in their hands. And you heard their ale-music. And for a long space you beheld the marvel, and deemed it delightful, yet you noticed that when the door was opened, all those inside rushed to look out. You wondered at this, considering the marvels inside.

The gatekeeper addresses you;

PROVERBS

Change is an easy panacea, but it takes character to stay in one place and be happy there.

The door of opportunity is only open to those at the right place and right time with the right key.

POPCORN GAME

The player and the opponent take turns. The opponent will close their eyes and make a ring with their thumbs and forefingers and slowly and steadily oscillate the ring in a circle before their face, not far back from the edge of their side of the table. The player on the other side of the table may not cross the edge of their half of the table, and will try to flick a piece of popcorn or peanut through the ring of fingers. Both sides get 10 shots. Best score wins, player wins a tie. Judges should make sure both sides are fair and honest.

Green 2: Isle of Lismore (Isle of the Net)

STORY

You find near the shore of this island a great silvery column. It had four sides, and the width of each of these sides was two oar-strokes of a the boat, so that in its whole circumference there were eight oar-strokes of the boat. And not a single sod of earth was about it, but (only) the boundless ocean. And they saw not how its base was below, or because of its height how its summit was above. Out of its summit came a silvery net flung far away from it; and the boat went under sail through a mesh of that net. One sailor strikes off a piece of the mesh with a sword, to bring back proof of the encounter. When the net was pulled up, many great fish were caught, and many smaller ones fell through the mighty net. A few great fish fell through the hole made by the sailor's sword. And then they heard a voice from the summit of yonder pillar, mighty, and clear, and distinct. But they knew not the tongue it spake, or the words it uttered. A Dean of the hermitage on the nearby beach quietly said:

PROVERBS

Man eats not what he desires, but what he finds.

Do not keep all that you catch.

NET TOSS GAME

Player and opponent take turns. The player begins by putting a penny on the ground one foot from his feet (which are tightly pressed together) and one foot to the right of the penny he puts a dime. The player then tries to drop a napkin or handkerchief over the penny. If it lands on the penny he gets 1 point, if it touches the dime, he gets a negative point. If it misses both, there is no point. If the player does anything but land on the penny, the opponent can try at the same distance. If the player covered the penny, the opponent must move the penny and dime one foot farther away from the throwing point and take their turn. Until one of the people covers the penny, the coins will not be moved further away, and they may continue to alternately attempt the same distance. First to get 4 points wins the match, but if after 10 throws each, neither has gotten 4 points, then the highest score wins, player wins a tie.

Green 3: Isle of Tiree (Isle of the Spinning Beast)

STORY

You found an unusually sunny island, with a fence of stone around it. When they drew near it a huge beast sprang up from the island, and raced round about the island. It seemed swifter than the wind. And then it went to the highest point of the island and there it performed (the feat called) 'straightening of body', placed its head below and its feet above; and it turned about within its skin. That is, the flesh and the bones revolved, but the skin outside was unmoved. Or at another time the skin outside turned like a mill, the bones and the flesh remaining still.

When it had been for long in that wise, it sprang up again and raced round about the island as it had done at first. Then it returned to the same place; and this time the lower half of its skin was unmoved, and the other half above ran round and round like a millstone.

It left you alone, while your sailors spinned in fear of it, but when you stopped or retreated it charged at you. You and your sailors fled with all their might, and the beast perceived them as fleeing and it went into the beach to seize them, and began to smite at them, and it cast after them with stones from the beach.

A nearby fishing hermit calls out to you:

PROVERBS

A spinning top will keep its balance.
What comes around goes around.

COIN SPIN GAME

The player and the opponent will (at the count of three) both spin a coin of the same size (i.e. two dimes or two quarters) and whomever spins longer will get one point. The first person to get three points wins the game. If the coins rolls or leaves the table and hits the floor, but still spins or moves, it is still in play. The two contestants may try to have their coin strike the other player's spinning coin. Objects cannot be introduced to the playing area after spinning has begun. Breathing or otherwise fanning air onto the playing area is strictly forbidden.

Green 4: Isle of Canna (Isle of Attractive Youths)

STORY

After that they came to a island, and there was a great plain therein, and on this a great tableland, heatherless, but grassy and smooth. They saw in that island near the sea, a fortress, large, high and strong and a great house therein adorned and with good couches. Seventeen youths come down to greet your boat, and give you a bath before being brought up to the ruler of the castle.

Each sailor is given a partner, wined and dined and fine garments are bestowed upon them. Three months pass (i.e. the player loses one turn after completing this game) and it seems like three years despite the luxury. You are told that as long as you stay here, the passage of time will not touch you, yet some in your group yearn to return to Balla Chulish.

One day while the ruler and the youths are out of the fortress to serve justice to the farmers of the land, the crew sneak down to the ship and prepare to leave the island.

The rule and her youths hear of the action and rush to the beach and the ruler throws a ball of yarn out to the ship and it clings to the player such that the player cannot release themselves, and the ship is hauled back to the shore, and 2 more months are spent on the island.

A hermit tells you that it is your love for the ruler and her children that makes the ball cling to you. So you order another man to grab the ball of yarn on your second escape, which happens in the same way. And when the man catches the ball of string, the sailor's hand is chopped off so that you can leave the island. The ruler and the children cry pitifully for their loss.

A fishing hermit then tells you:

PROVERBS

There are ways to capture things beyond your grasp

LASSO GAME

The Player and opponent each make a lasso out of string and take turns holding an upright immobile thumb at the edge of their side of the table. The player, without crossing their side of the table, tries to throw the lasso over the finger. If they miss, it is the opponents turn. Each successful throw is one point and entitles them to another immediate throw. First person to reach 4 points wins.

Green 5: Isle of Rona (Isle of the Pillar)

STORY

You see another island (standing) on a single pedestal, in other words, one foot supporting it. And you rowed round it to select way into it, and found no way thereinto; but saw down in the base of the pedestal, a closed door under lock. You understood that that was the way by which the island was entered. And they saw a crowd on the top of the island; but they held speech with no one, and no one held speech with them. Every day, it notched up one inch to the dismay of some and delight of others.

You (then) go away back (to sea.) A hermit on a nearby rocky shoal is hunting crabs, by tossing a plank over two rocks and thereby traversing from one rock to the next. He explains the wisdom of the caber;

PROVERBS

It is not a matter of who goes farther, but who remains straighter of the course.

A drowning man will grasp at even a small stick.

MINI CABER GAME

A Sheet of paper with a straight line down the middle is laid in the middle of the table. Taking turns, the player and opponent take a pencil by the point, resting vertically at the end of the paper, and with a quick flip of the wrist flip the point up and over so that the point lands facing away from them, as straight as possible. Remove the stick between throws. Whose ever pencil lands straighter gets one point for the match, and judges may have to decide here. First to 4 points wins.

BLUE ISLANDS

Blue 1: Isle of Arran (Isle of Swine and Birds)

STORY

You arrive at another great island, after great weariness of hunger and thirsting and all the crew is sad and sighing, having lost all hope of relief. In that island were many trees: full-fruited were they, with great golden apples upon them. Red fiery short animals like swine were under those trees. Now, they used to go to those trees and strike them with their hind-legs, so that the apples would fall from the trees, and then they would consume them. From dawn to sunset the red animals did not appear at all, but they used to stay in the caverns of the ground. Round about that island many birds were swimming out on the waves. From Morning to noon further and further they used to swim from the island. But from noon to evening nearer and nearer they used to come to the island, and arrive therein after sunset. Then the birds used to strip off the apples and eat them.

One of the crew went to see the island, and he called his comrade to him on shore. Hot was the ground under their feet, and they could not dwell there for its warmth, because it was a fiery land, and the fiery animals heated the ground above their cages. For the few precious moments between the birds and the animals, the crew would gather apples and repair back to the safety of the boat.

On the first day they brought with them a few of the apples which they were eating in their boat. So then they filled their boat with the apples as seemed good to them, and went again to sea. A hermit in a nearby cave says;

PROVERBS

A single table, used in shifts, can serve an army.

SWINE & BIRDS GAME (see board)

On a chess board, in two opposite corners, place a different color marker. On the remaining spaces place a penny. The player begins and moves his piece like a knight on the chess board, and takes the penny for one point. The opponent then does likewise, taking turns. If either person takes the other person's piece, they win. You cannot pass. Otherwise, the game is over after 16 moves each, and the one with the most pennies is the winner. Players loses in a tie.

Blue 2: Isle of Colonsay (Isle of Sheep)

STORY

You spy another island, with a brazen palisade, which divides the island in two equal halves, and you perceive great flocks of sheep therein, with a black flock on this side of the fence and a white flock on the far side. And you see a big man separating the flocks. When he used to fling a white sheep over the fence from this side to the black sheep it became black at once. So, when he used to cast a black sheep over the fence to the far side, it became white at once. The men were adread at seeing that.

One of your sailor flings a rod with black bark on the side wherein were the white sheep, and it became white at once. Then they flung a peeled white rod on the side wherein were the black sheep and it became black at once. The sailors refuse to land on the island, but the shepherd calls out to you:

PROVERBS

When the fool does not succeed in bleaching ebony, he then tries to darken ivory.

If you lie down with dogs, you'll rise with fleas.

Where you stand is where you sit.

REVERSI GAME (see board)

Using a 6 x 6 board shown at the end of the game, put two pennies face up and 2 face down in the center of the board, like an Othello board. Then the player may put down a face up penny anywhere on a square touching another penny one the board. All the pennies between the two face up pennies will be turned face up, like in Othello. The two gamers may choose to pass. 10 seconds is too long for a move.

Blue 3: Isle of Eigg (Isle of the Rich Man)

STORY

Thereafter they come to another lofty island, wherein were four fences, which divided it into four parts. A fence of gold, first: another of silver: the third fence of brass: and the fourth of crystal. Kings in the fourth division, queens in a another, warriors in another, maidens in the other. Each gazed longingly at the other's territory.

A maiden went to meet them and brought them on land, and gave them food. They likened it to cheese; and whatever taste was pleasing to anyone he would find it therein. And she poured liquor to them out of a little vessel, so that they, slept an intoxication of three days and three nights. All this time the maiden was tending them. When they awoke on the third day they were in their boat at sea. Nowhere did they see their island or their maiden.

Then they rowed away, and a fishing hermit calls out to their boat;

PROVERBS

The strongest fences and prisons are the ones we build in our mind.

DOTSS & BOXES GAME (see board)

Using the board at the end of the game, the two gamers take turns (opponent goes first) connecting two adjacent dots anywhere on the board vertically or horizontally. Five seconds is enough time to think. If a player completes one or two boxes by drawing a line, then they write their initials in that box(ex.) Each box will be a point at the end of the game. You may not pass.

Blue 4: Northern Skye (Isle of the Board)

STORY

As you land on the beach, you see a mighty chieftain and his bodyguards standing on a hill besieged by a numerous ring of villainous foes. Although the bodyguards are equal in strength to the villains, the villains seek to attack the bodyguard from behind while one attacks in the front, thereby overwhelming them. The chieftain seemed torn between the valor of remaining behind and dying, or escaping to gather his clansmen. The chieftain breaks through the siege with the help of his bodyguards and joins you in the boat, and asks you to convey him to the next island so that he may call on his kinsmen to revenge themselves against the Campbells. He laments;

PROVERBS

Two men are an army to one.

FIDCHELL GAME (see board)

The generally theory is that there is a "king" in the center, with a few bodyguards around him, and about twice as many enemies lined up at the edge of the board. The king's strategy is to escape to the edge (or corner of the board for an extra challenge.) The enemy's strategy is to capture the king. Both sides proceed by alternating turns. Captures are made by either side by moving two of their pieces such that they are on directly opposite sides of their opponent's piece (but not diagonally), which is then removed from the board. I call this "squeezing" or "pinching" them. All pieces move like rooks in chess and can move horizontally or vertically, as many spaces as they wish, so long as no one is in the way. There are many variations that try to limit the inherent advantage of the king slipping through the net of the enemy to freedom.

Only the king can occupy the center or the corner spaces. King must be captured on all four sides. The enemy cannot occupy both squares adjacent to a corner at the same time (diagonally one square away is fine, I think.) A piece can be "squeezed" against a corner square or the center square by a single piece on the opposite side.

A player may move into and rest on a space between two of the pieces of the opponent, without dying, in effect, requiring the surrounding opponent to move away and then back to effect the capture. The king and his defenders cannot enter the original squares held by the defenders at the beginning of the game.

Blue 5: Isle of Harris (Isle of Gates)

STORY

The island is studded with large wooded post with gates swinging about on the posts. Many sheep graze the rich grass amongst the heather. Shephards close the gates to direct the path of the sheep. It is a tranquil place, but once, says a shephard, "the gates were once fixed in place, making it difficult to reach new meadows, when old ones were shorn, and there was disagreement on which direction the sheep should use to cross the island. And great tragedy resulted when wolves ate the sheep, and some fell off the cliffs, while the shepherds argued amongst themselves."

He then adds:

PROVERBS

Consult with your neighbour before building a fence, or you'll have to rebuild it or make it taller.

Better a weak trusted neighbour over the fence, than a strong brother over the sea.

Fences keep things out, as well as keep things in.

STOPGATE GAME (see board)

The player is assigned the white dots and the opponent the black dots. By taking turns, the player starting, each person will connect two adjacent dots of their own color (horizontally and vertically) and try to stretch a line from one side of the court to the opposite side, while also blocking the plans of the other person. They may attach more than one line to a dot on following turns in their quest to get to the other side. You cannot cross another's line.

RED ISLANDS

Red 1: Isle of Jura (Isle of the Path)

STORY

The island has two large mountains nestled together that dominate the scenery. At the base are two lonely cairns of rock covering the graves of past chieftains of the north and south halves of the island, respectively.

One king was particularly evil and was misquided by his Druid advisor after his death about the path to his ancestors. He was told to go left at one cairn, right at the next and left again, in this way he would find the Land of the Young. He is still traveling this pathway without release.

A hermit on the shore relates that if you can walk a figure eight around the cairns three times, with your eyes closed, without touching the cairns, then a great treasure will be discovered. He concludes with a local saying:

PROVERBS

Never stray from the path of a chief, no matter how attractive the byway.

He can't walk straight whose mind is bent

WALK GAME

Place two chairs about 5 feet apart and then blindfold both the player and the opponent. If either can walk a figure eight path around the chairs three times (without touching them, or assistance from others) then they automatically win, with ties favor the player. Otherwise, whoever is judged to have done better will get the coin. Two tries are permitted to each player.

Red 2: Isle of Barra (Isle of Pride)

STORY

On this flat island there are two vertical rocks supporting a low stone in front of a well, surround by a high stone fence. These were built in the distant past when people were of a much smaller stature. Over the years, the attending hermit says, people grew taller, but the entrance to the well provided them a lesson in humility to local lords, since they had to dismount and crawl through the gate to visit the well. It is also said that the surface of the water rose up and down with the movement of the tides, and that if one could catch one of the small fish with his teeth, by leaning over, then he would be selected as chieftain of the island's population.

The hermit then adds;

PROVERBS

Many of life's highest prizes can only be gained by lowering your pride.

Everyone has a master, to whom they must bend knee.

BITE THE BAG GAME

Place a large paper bag (say 26 inches tall) on the floor, and have each person take turns trying to bend down and grip the bag with their teeth. Their hands may only touch their own body, and only the soles of both feet may touch the floor. No leaning against any props. The player begins. If they cannot grab the bag, the opponent may try. When both succeed 2 inches are removed from the bag's height and the player starts first again. Each person is allowed three attempts at each height. If only one person succeeds at a height, they win. If both can't succeed the noone wins.

Red 3: The Kyle of Lochalsh (The Misty Sea)

STORY

You then voyaged till you entered a sea which resembled green glass. Such was its purity, that the gravel and the sand of that seafloor were clearly visible through it; and they saw no monsters nor beasts therein among the crags below, but only the pure gravel and the green sand. For a long space of the day you were voyaging in that sea, and great was its splendour and its beauty.

You afterwards put forth into another sea like a vaporous cloud and it seemed to them that it would not support the boat. Then you beheld under the sea, down below, roofed strongholds and a beautiful country. And you saw a beast huge, awful, monstrous, in a tree there, and a drove of birds circling above the tree, and flocks round about the tree and beside the tree an armed man, with shield and spear and sword. When he beheld yon huge beast that abode in the tree, he fled thence. The beast stretched forth his neck out of the tree and set his head into the back of the largest ox of the herd and dragged it into the tree, and devoured it in the twinkling of an eye. The flocks and the herdsmen flee away, at once, and a greater terror and fear seize your crew, for they supposed that they would never cross that sea without falling down through it, by reason of its tenuous mist below them.

So after much danger, they pass over it. And a nearby otter, with a shell and rock clutched on its chest, pokes his head out of the water and speaks to you in the tongue of men;

PROVERBS

Let not the left hand know what the right is doing.

When the fox starts preaching, look to your hens.

The lion that roars is not the one that kills

GRAB THE ROCK GAME

The player holds a walnut (or similarly easily grasped object) in their hand in the middle of the table. The opponent hovers above the open hand and without warning tries to grab the walnut. The player will try to close his hand quickly, but not before the opponent has made a full-fledged attempt. If the opponent grasps the walnut, he gets one point. Then the two switch sides. The grasper cannot wait more than 30 seconds, but may do one feint per turn. Each side will try five times. Best score wins, player wins a tie. The on-lookers will judge if either has acted dishonorable and accord points.

Red 4: Western Skye (Isle of Three Winds)

STORY

The currents are swift here and the winds are fierce, and the inhabitants have mighty chests to survive, since the gusts of wind literally try to steal the air from your lungs. They worship the spirits of the air here, claiming that the air, is often unnoticed when still, yet its absence or movement cannot be denied.

Leaning against the gales, a young champion from the village swaggers down to your boat's landing place to challenge you to the contest of the three winds. His chest is larger than a horse and his voice makes the bones of your head shake.

PROVERBS

God made the sea, we make the ship; he made the wind, we make the sail; he made the calm, we make the oars.

THREE WINDS GAME

There are three challenges. If the player wins, they will get a free turn immediately after receiving the coin and have no trouble with weather for the next two moves.

Balloon Game: using identical inflatable objects (no bigger than a basketball), both people will try to explode the balloon with the might of their lungs. One point for the victor.

Breath Game: Both people on the count of three will clamp their mouth shut and pinch each-other's nose shut. The last to open their mouth will gain a point. They may twist eachother's noses, but not too fiercely.

Cup Game: If one still hasn't won two points, the third game is played to break the tie. Both players must drink an equal size glass of beer and slam an empty cup on the table. Judges will gauge the winner by speed and amount spilled or remaining in the cup.

Red 5: Northern Minch (The Tappist Monk)

STORY

Here in the space between the Inner and Outer Hebrides there is a dangerous realm of barely emerging rocks that seek to rip apart your boat's hull. Your sailors struggle valiantly and steer a course through the perilous region with advice from some friendly seals who show you a narrow pathway through the rocks.

As you emerge you note a barefoot hermit on a wet rock, wearing only a brown leather cape. He brandishes a large knife and challenges you to a game, noting;

PROVERBS

The five fingers are not equal
The knife does not know the owner's hand

SPOON TAP GAME

The player and the opponent will take a spoon or pencil (or knife if they are stupid) and lay their dominant hand on the table. Then at the same time, they will begin the tapping game. A warm-up is permitted. Starting with a tap outside the thumb, then a tap between the thumb and first finger followed by a tap outside the thumb. Then a tap between the first and middle finger, followed by outside the thumb. Continue in this way until you get to a tap outside the pinky and then returning back to the starting point outside the thumb. The first player to complete three cycles wins. The taps must touch the table, but hitting the fingers on the way down is acceptable, if painful.

ORANGE ISLANDS

Orange 1: Mull of Kintyre (The Three Pyramids)

STORY

The plains of this long peninsula are littered with cairns of past chieftains, heroes and great bards. In between are long stretches of heather and rock-strewn rubble. The largest of the cairns is the height of six grown men standing on each-others' shoulders, and the locals claims that the chieftain wished to be buried inside standing up, but not having enough rocks, they were forced to bury him in a sitting position. At one time he ruled both Ireland and Scotland, and when he went to war in Ireland, he would hold his troops on his shoulder and stride forth across the ocean to make war in Ireland.

In front of his cairn are three poles. Rocks with holes drilled in them are placed over the poles. The local priest explains that whoever can transfer the stones from this side to the other side by a set formula will gain the wisdom of Cormac's experience. He then adds;

PROVERBS

You must sometimes go back a step in order to advance two.

MOVING PYRAMIDS GAME

Unless you have time to make three sticks and round objects with holes in them, you can use coins. On two identical sheets of paper draw three 2 inch circles number (from the left #1, #2 & #3.) Place a quarter on circle #1, and a nickel on quarter, and penny on the nickel, and a dime on the top. In this way a smaller coin is always on a bigger coin.

The goal is to reconstruct the pyramid of coins from Circle 1 to Circle 3, and then rebuild it in Circle 1 in this formation. You can only move one coin at a time, and it must be from the top of the stack in any circle. You can move a coin onto the top of any stack in the three circles, as long as it is smaller than the coins underneath it. Both people will simultaneously see who can complete this puzzle quicker will win. They can start over if confused. If after four minutes neither has finished, then there is no winner.

Orange 2: The Isle of Coll (The Monastary of Skulls)

STORY

The monastery on the island has a crypt carved into the living rock of a beach cliff. There are eight rows of cubicles high and eight columns wide. All are stuffed with the heads of the various abbots and saints and healers who have lived and studied on this island since the ancient days. Half of them are painted blue, since they are men. Once a year, they are all taken down carried around town, and a game is played before they are placed in the cubby holes again. The only bit of advice that the young monk will pass to you is;

PROVERBS

Do not let your enemy's successes go unmatched or unchecked.

SKULL STACKER GAME (use chessboard)

This is basically a version of Connect Four. Taking turns, beginning with the player, the people will put a skull (i.e. a penny or a nickel) on the lowest available square of a column (use a checkers or chess board.) When they get four squares in a row, horizontally, vertically or diagonally they win.

Orange 3: Isle of South Uist (St. Columba's Well)

STORY

You find another wide low island, with a golden rampart around it and the midst of it white like down. They see therein a man, and this was his raiment the hair of his own body. Then they asked him what sustenance he used. Verily', saith he, 'there is here a fountain in this island. On Friday and on Wednesday whey or water is yielded by it. On Sundays, however, and on feasts of martyrs good milk is yielded by it. But on the feasts of full moons, and of Oimelc and of Midsummer and also on the high tides (of the year), it is ale and wine that are yielded by it.' At noon, then, there came to every man of them half a cake and a piece of fish; and they drank their fill of the liquor which was yielded to them out of the fountain of the island. And it cast them into a heavy sleep, from that hour till the morrow. When they had passed three nights of guesting, the cleric ordered, them to go. So then they went forth on their way, and afterwards bade him farewell. Before you leave, he offered to show you a game of wisdom and a piece of advice:

PROVERBS

Aim for the heights and depths

BOMBARDIER GAME

The game requires a picture of beer (or water if you're poor) and a shot glass. Plays take turns with a handful of clean dimes or pennies into the pitcher, trying to get them to land in the shot glass at the bottom. To ensure that the shot is tough players must place their elbows on the top of the pitcher and drop the dime from that height.

If you don't get the dime in the glass, you must pour out and drink an ounce of beer. If you get the dime in the glass, your opponent drinks 2 ounces. First player to get three points wins. If you totally miss the pitcher, than you lose the game.

Orange 4: Isle of Muck (The Fishing Wharf)

STORY

A full week were they voyaging, in hunger and in thirst, when they discovered a great, high island with a great house therein on the seashore and a doorway out of the house into the plain of the island and another door (opening) into the sea, and against that door there was a window of stone. That valve was pierced by a head-size hole, through which the sea-waves were flinging the salmon into the midst of that empty house. After this they beheld a decorated bed for the chief of the house alone, and a bed for every three of his household, and food for three before every bed, and a vessel of glass with good liquor before every bed and a cup of glass on every vessel. So they dined off that food and liquor and they give thanks to the unknown host who had helped them from their hunger. As you prepared to leave, you meat a hermit fishing nearby the island says;

PROVERBS

It is foolish to scorn advice, but more foolish to take all advice.

Men don't eat what they want, but what they can catch.

FISHING GUM GAME

Each person will take a pencil with 2 feet of string handing from it. At the end of the string is a wad of wet chewing gum. Scatter twenty-one small penny-size scraps of paper (pink if possible) on the floor between the two sitting people. At the start of the judges, they will race to drop the gum on to the fish and scoop them up on to the table, where they can then pull them off the gum with the other hand. The person with the most fish at the end will win. Three minute time limit.

Orange 5: The South Minch (The Sinking Ship)

STORY

As you are traversing this rock-strewn stretch of open water, you notice a hermit floating in the waves, quite confused about his situation. When you approach closer, you notice his enormous boat below him about 20 feet below the surface. It seems to be in excellent condition. The hermit explains that a mosquito had bitten the leather walls of his boat as they left port, bound for the far western islands of the Outer Hebrides and by the time he had reached the Minch, the boat was completely awash and sinking. He is the last survivor from the boat. His conclusion was:

PROVERBS

A small leak will sink a great ship

SINK THE CUP GAME

To play, fill a glass with beer, eliminate the foam, and float a bottle cap on the surface of the beer. Take turns, with the opponent first, o pouring beer into the cap. Whoever sinks the cap must drink the whole cup and the other person gets a point. Resting your hand on the edge of the glass is considered unsportsman-like. First to get three points wins the game.

SILVER ISLANDS

Silver 1: The Isle of Man

The people of this land have been ruled by many lords from different races and tongues. They have grown accustomed to sudden changes of laws, and ask you to instruct them in a different game whenever they land.

Silver 2: Shillay (Isle of Three Kinds)

The island is only occupied by a herd of sheep in the mountains, seals on the shores, and a myriad of birds in the air. Each time someone lands, one of these creatures will ask you which game you'd like to play for a coin they bear around their neck.

Silver 3: The Orkneys

The island bears no trees, merely numerous rings of rocks of past huts. One monk is found rolling rocks to make a new hut, for every night of the year. Each night he must do something different, and each time you meet him, he has a different task for you.

GOLD ISLANDS

Gold 1: Anglesey

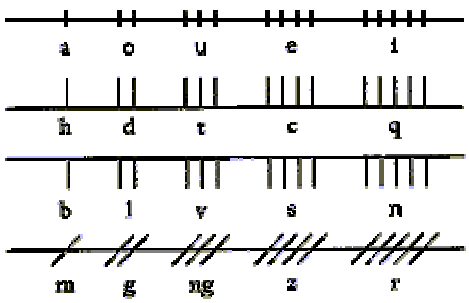
Peopled by people of a strange tongue, yet strangely similar. They are difficult to understand, and quick to change their minds. A different chieftain meets each arrival of guests, and always with a different task in mind to be performed in exchange for their treasure.

Gold 2: Hy Brasil

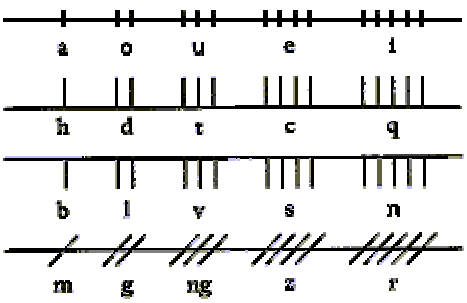
This land is never found in the same location, and emerges only once a month from the waves for a day. Each time it is slightly different, yet mostly the same. A young maiden always meets you by the shore and bears the most recent decision of the island's council on the events to be performed.

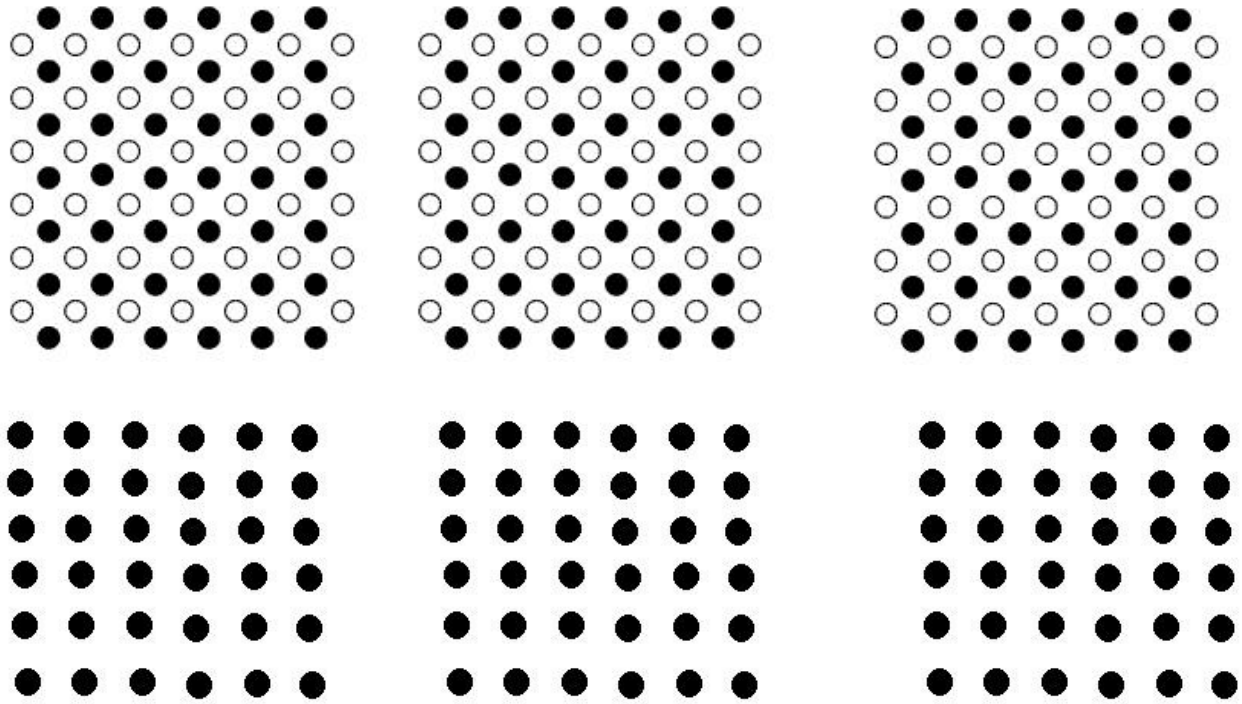
Gold 3: The Shetlands

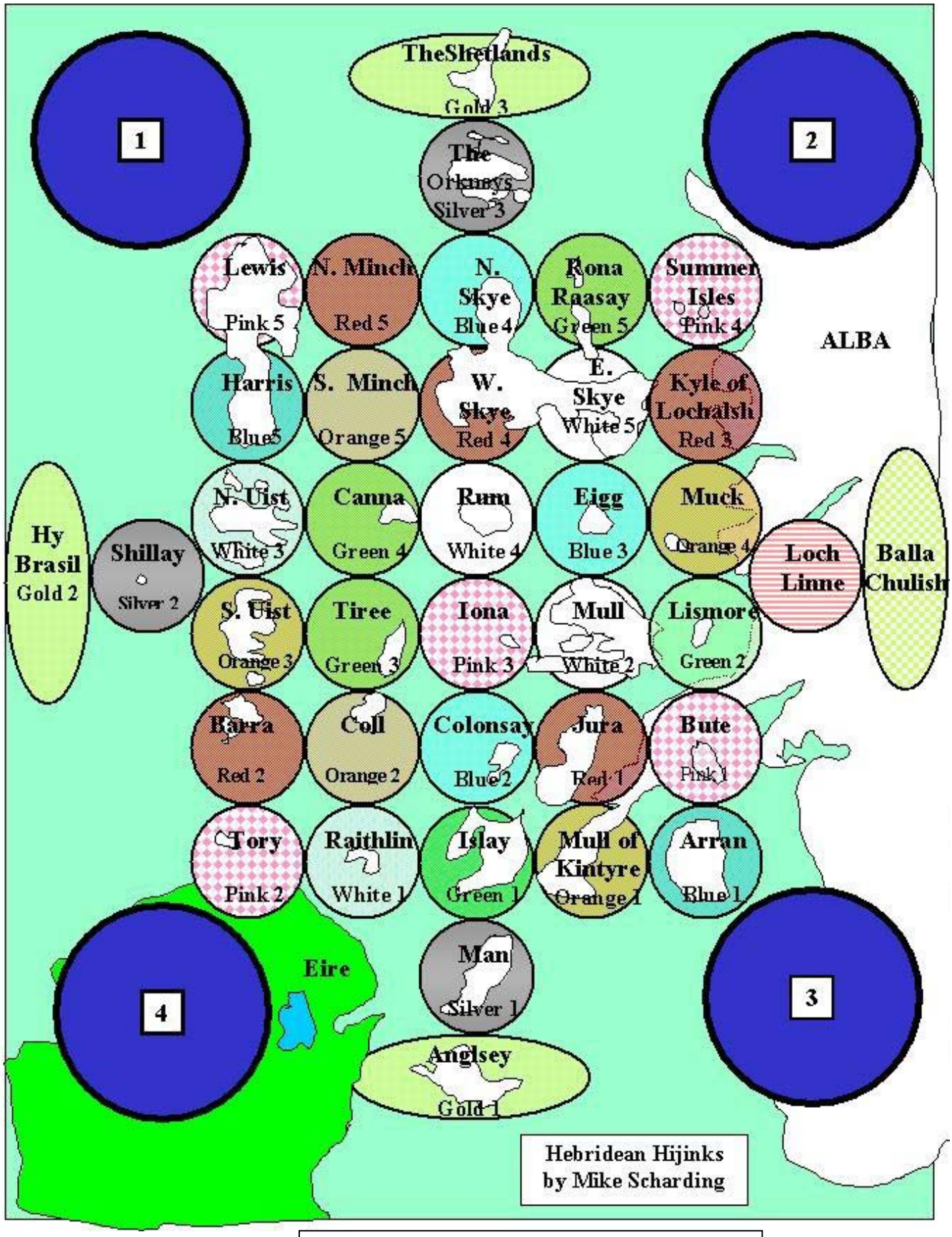
Far from the lands of others, they have grown quirky and perverse in their local talents, gained by sending young sailors abroad to learn the ways of others. Each islet permits only one visit per year, such that each islet resembles another larger island to the south in customs and ways. With the return of a sailor, they soon change again, such that no visit is the same.



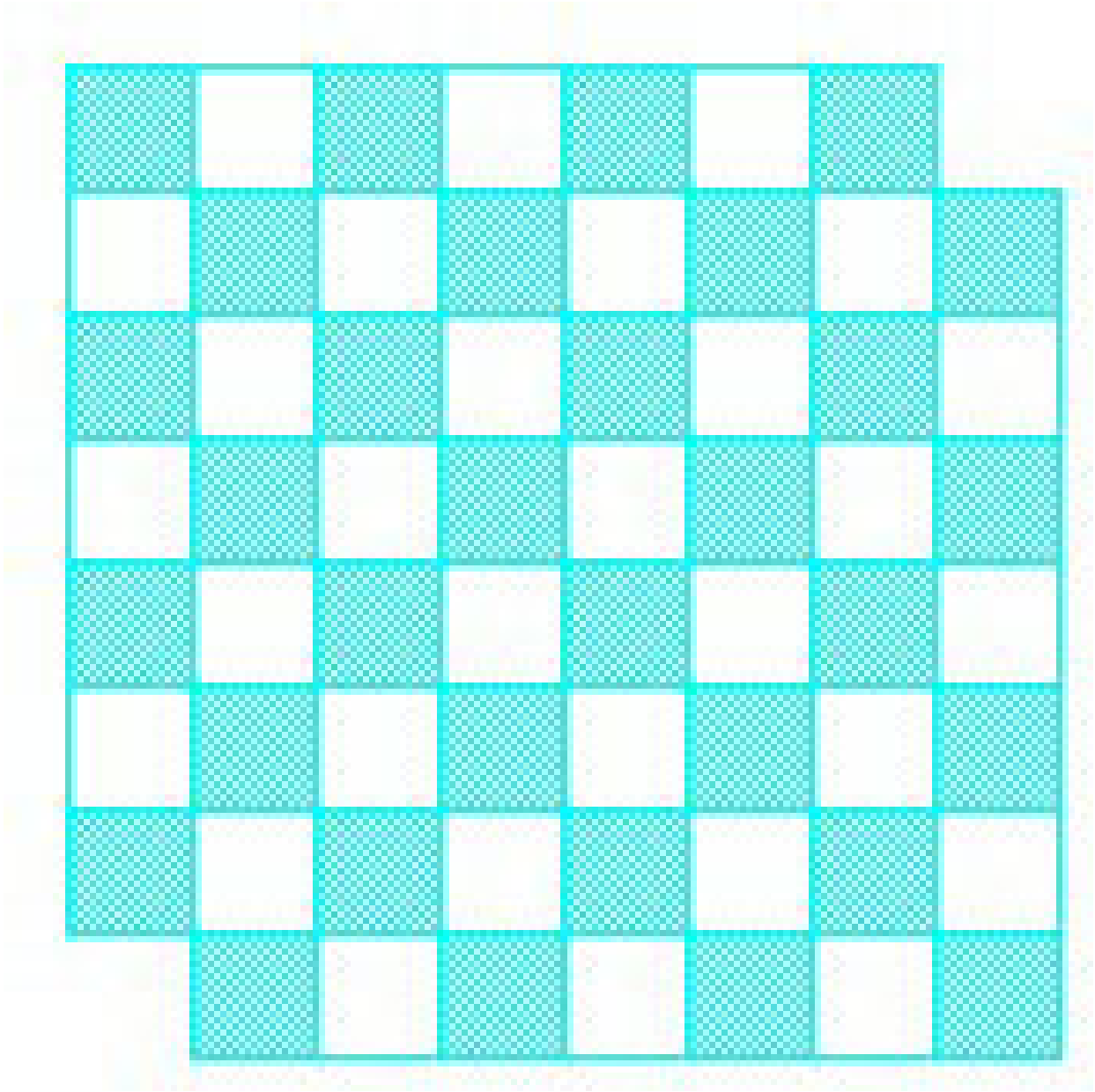
White 5
Blue 5
Blue 3







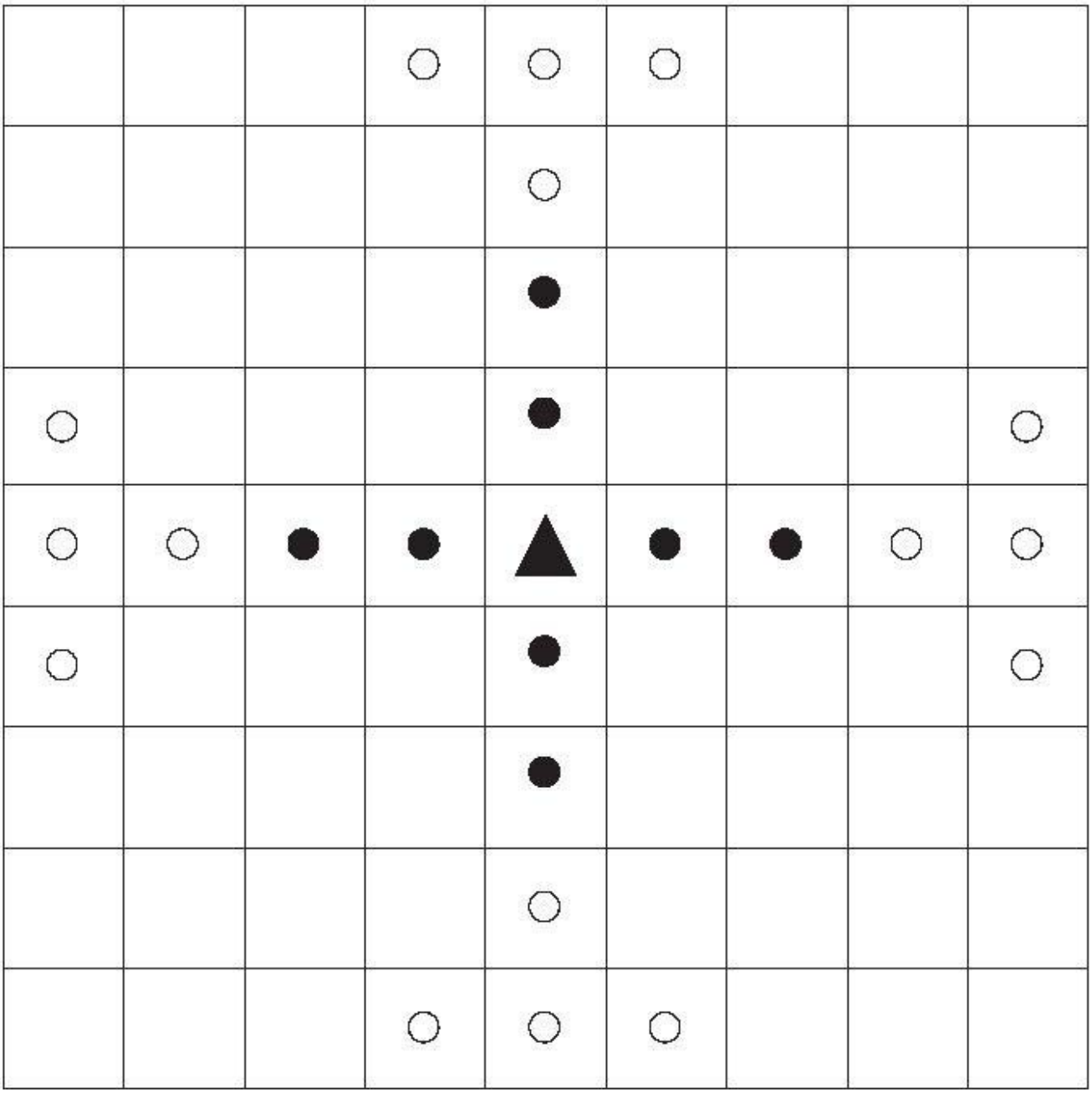
www.geocities.com/mikerdna/hijinks.jpg for a color printing



Blue 1 use 8x8

Blue 2 use center 6x6 with a
dark line sketched around it for clarity.

Orange 2 use 8x8



For use with Blue 1

Brythonic Brew-ha-ha.

By Michael Scharding
Game concept, board design and some graphics
Copyright Feb 5, 2004

Summary

The king of all Ireland grows old with no apparent heir. Rather than descend into civil war, the king calls to him the young heirs apparent of each of the four regions Ulster, Leinster, Munster, and Connaught. He explains that the most important characteristic of a king is that they be wise, brave, skillfull and good at entertaining their guests at the mead halls. In order to acquire these traits he sends the young lads off to the Brythonic lands to the East, wherein they may learn from wise hermits, sages and holy people at the sacred sites in the countries of Cymru (Wales), Albion (England), Kernow (Cornwall), Breizh (Brittany) and Gaul. After finishing a series of quests and collecting the appropriate number of medallions, the first to return will be adopted by the king, and designated his heir.

Important Notice

Drinking large amounts of alcohol, tea or food may make you sick and incapable of driving or walking home safely. Be sure not to endanger yourself or anyone else, and have an established way home by a designated driver or sufficient money for a taxi or a confirmed place to sleep it off until morning.

Most of these descriptions are reasonably accurate according to local lore, but some have been elaborated or added to from similar stories in neighboring areas. Do not use this as a definitive guide book to travel in that area. Sites of interest to those who play this game, and from which some text was lifted:

www.mysteriousbritain.co.uk
www.cornishlight.freeserver.co.uk
www.faculty.de.gcsu.edu/~dvess/ids/medieval/wells
www.bath.ac.uk/lispring/sourcearchive
www.bretagnenet.com
www.brittanytourism.com
www.visit-bretagne.com
www.brittany-bretagne.com

Movement Rules

Between two and six players can play Brythonic Brew-Ha-Ha, but the optimal number is 3 or 4. The number of necessary coins and number of attempts at each coin that are permitted during the entire game will vary to balance out game play, and should be agreed on before the game, depending on how much time you have. Should last 2-3 hours.

2 Players: Put 1 coin on each circle. To win, you need 2 or 3 coins of each color (+ 1 gold) , 1 chance on each circle.

3 Players: Put 1 coin on each circle. To win, you need 2 or 3 coins of each color (+ 1 gold), 2 chances for each circle.

4 Players: Put 2 coins on each circle (but only 1 on each gold.) To win you need 2 coins of each color (+ 1 gold), 2 chances for each circle.

5 or 6 Players: Put 2 coins on each circle. To win, you need 1 coin of each color (+ 1 gold), 2 chances for each circle.

Limits on Coin Collection

The player may not take more than one coin from an individual circle. Nor may they take more coins than the necessary of any color as needed to win. If they acquire such a coin through contest, inheritance or normal game play, they must leave it behind on the island when they leave the circle.

Preparing the Game

It is recommended that the board and coin labels be printed in color, or filled in with markers. Laminating the board is highly recommended, and taping it onto a 2 inch high box or book, to keep it above the wet table and easily moved off the table for cleaning.

Each coin's label should be glued or taped neatly onto a nickel. The appropriate coins should be stacked on their appropriate circle.

A player's acquired treasure coins may be placed on a shallow dish, or kept on their purple numbered circle on the board.

For the pieces of complicated games, putting the pieces in a labeled ziplock baggy.

The following items are necessary to be collected a head of time:

4 popsicle sticks per person as throwing sticks
A low box to go under the laminated game board.

Paper and pencils p6, p7, b3
Big bag of cleaned coins w1, g1, g2, g3, g6, g7, g8, r6
Pile of index cards w2
Sheets of aluminum foil w3
A set of scales (being two cups handing from a ruler's ends and the rule suspended from a string in the center) w6
Lots of string in 8 inch lengths w7
2 decks of cards w8, o1, o3, o6, b2,
Four sets of chopsticks g4
Knapkins o5, g8
Handkerchief?
Styrofoam cups o4, r2
Uncooked onion or leeks r4
A pitcher & shotglass g5
Straws o2
Baloon o4
Matchbooks o7, r7

Drinking Rules

We recommend that several pitchers of beer be bought at a time with group funds.

Unless otherwise stated, a drink equals enough beer to wet the tongue, perhaps ¼ to ¾ ounce at most. An average game will have an estimated 80-100 drinks, or about 5-8 soda cans over several hours. Players may choose to substitute a caffeinated beverage like tea, coffee or soda instead or choose to eat 1/4 cookie per "drink."

Moving Rules

4 popsicle sticks (or squares of stiff cardboard, drink coasters, coins or other 2 sided objects) are used in the game. One side is white and the other is black (or some other system of marking.) If you can, make one set for everyone. Sticks are dropped about a foot off the table on their ends and counted;

1 white side up = 1 move

2 white sides up =2 moves

3 white sides up= 3 moves

4 white sides up= 4 moves

4 black sides up =5 moves

Players can move to any circle that touches their own circle (i.e horizontally and vertically), and can make "L" turns or "U" turns, even reversing back on their previous course. You jump over other players without harming them.

Order of Play

Person to roll highest on the sticks will go first, and then rotate around the board clockwise. The order of events are as follow on a regular turn:

1. Weather Check The weather is very uncertain in Britain & France. Roll to check for storms: a "four" means a storm hits you and you cannot leave your camp and basically lose your turn. A "five" means you are hit by a storm or mist after leaving on the journey and get lost in the downpour and the next player in order can throw sticks for your move and thereby choose whichever direction they wish to move you.

2. Normal Move. Players may not pass. Roll to see how many circles you can move. Move your piece to the circle. If the player is the first to visit the circle, go to step 3. If the player is not the first visitor, but there is still a coin, go to step11. If there is no coin, follow step 12. If the circle is occupied before you land on it, go to step 13.

3. Circle Description. Someone reads the description of the circle. Reader may elaborate.

4. Proverb Reading. The lesson of the circle is read. Only one is read and remains in use for the entire game.

5. Tapping. All players tap their cups three times and say "Pob lwc!" (pron. "pop-luk", meaning "good luck!") The last one to do so must drink once. If no person was discernibly last, no one drinks at all.

6. Opponent Selection. All the other players roll sticks, the player with the highest score is assigned the theatrical role of the opponent in the game. The assigned opponent does NOT have to relocate their ship to the circle. Note: in cases of occupied circles, the previous arriver is automatically designated as the opponent.

7. Rules for the Game. Rules are read, and materials prepared.

8. Game is played.

9. Decision. If the player loses, then he must drink one sip. If the player wins, they get the coin from the circle and all other players must drink once to praise the victorious player.

10. It is now the next player's turn, clockwise.

11. Previously Visited Circle with a remaining Coin.

The player must promptly remember and speak the general nature of the circle's proverb. Exact words are not necessary, but meaning must be conveyed well. (To prove that they were paying attention to the game play, and penalize players who leave the room for a short time.) The other players will judge the adequacy of the circle's visitor's memory.

If the player can't remember it or can't express it well, then the player must drink once and do steps 3-10.

If they can remember the proverb, then do step 6-10.

12. Empty Circle with no coin

The player must remember and speak the general nature of the circle's proverb. The other players will judge the adequacy of the circle's visitor.

If the player can't remember it or can't express it well, then the must drink once and start from step 3 and stop after doing step 5.

If they can remember the proverb well, that's the end of it, and then it's the next player's turn (i.e. Step 10.)

13. Occupied Circle Rules

Sometimes an circle will already have another player on it. As usual, he repeats the proverb on circle, and get approval from other players.

If poorly worded, the player drinks once and go to step 3 and the other occupant of the circle is automatically designated as the opponent.

If the proverb is worded well, go to step 7, with the opponent automatically being the other occupant of the circle. If there are more than one other occupant, the player landing there can choose the opponent.

If there is a coin still on the circle, and the player wins, they get the circle's coin. If the player loses, the opponent gets the coin (if within their limits.)

If there is no coin on the circle, and the opponent has a coin from that circle (or a coin of the same color as that circle,) the player may take that coin and the opponent drinks twice. If the player loses, then the player drinks twice and the opponent can take one coin of that circle's color (if within their limit.)

If there is no coin on the circle, and the defeated opponent does not have that circle's coin, or one of the same color, the player may choose any coin from the defeated opponent's treasury (a gold coin can only be taken after a special throw of sticks with a 4 or 5 result.) If the player loses, the opponent may select one from the player in the same manner.

If the circle has no coin, and the opponent has no coins, then the defeated opponent drinks thrice. In the same way, if the player has no coins and loses, then the player drinks thrice.

Naturally, A player cannot take a coin which puts them over the limit per color, or more than one coin from the same circle.

Judging Rules

If a player contests the result of the game or a point of order; both parties will explain their position for up to two minutes. Players may wish to have a permanent judge selected at the beginning of the game, perhaps a bystander. Otherwise, judges are all the other members of the game (i.e those not involved in the dispute) and attentive by-standers get one vote. Judges close their eyes, speak together "1,2,3!" and blindly point at the player of their choice, and open their eyes. If a tied decision results, the judges must drink twice and a revote is taken after a quick conference of judges. If tied again, judges again drink twice, and the plaintiff wins the debate. The loser of the decision must drink twice.

Special Rules

No Pestering Rule

A player cannot consecutively land on the same circle as another player. Every other round is okay, though.

Plain Sight Rule:

Players must keep their coins on their edge of the board so that people can see how many coins they have and which circle they are from. Penalty is 2 drinks each round that they refuse after a warning.

No Cheating Rule

If anyone caught egregiously cheating, they must defend their actions to the judge(s), with normal judging rules. If they lose the decision then they drink thrice and lose a turn.

No Stealing Beer Rule

Players may only drink beer when the rules require it, and not out of turn. Players should not purposely lose a contest in order to drink. Judges decide the guilty decision. Penalty $2 into the pot for the winner of the game.

Taboo Rule:

Certain words are forbidden on the ocean by sailors. If a player says "rabbit/hare", "iron" or "potato," in any language, then they drink twice for each infraction, and their next move will have a storm sweep them off course. A player may appeal to the judges.

No Team Rule

Players should not be in cahoots with each other. If an opponent is suspected of playing half-hearted against another player, to give them an easy victory, then they may be judged by their peers as cheating.

No Interference Rule

If anyone is judged as willfully *and* significantly interfering in a contest between two other peoples, then they drink thrice and lose one coin of the choice of the offended plaintif.

No Leaving Rule

Players who leave the table for any reason other than buying more beer or food, must pay a penalty of either 3 drinks or return one coin to the board. Punishes weak bladders.

Sick Rule

If a player can no longer drink or eat, due to extreme nausea, they may continue to play without doing so, at the discretion of the judges.

Quit Rule

If a player must quit the game, all coins that they have return to the board on their original circles.

Special Circles

Four Circles of Ireland: The starting point of the game, once the players leave, they cannot return until they have all the necessary coins to finish the game. They must land exactly on it. Once returned, they are safe from losing coins, but may continue to be selected as a random opponent during the landings from other players trying to finish. Players may not enter the circle of another province of Ireland.

Gold Circles: A player must be within 3 coins of the required total coins to finish the game to enter a gold circle. When a player lands here, a randomly selected opponent gets to choose any contest they wish from the board's options. If the player wins they get a gold coin, and all other players drink; if the player loses, the player drinks twice. If a player lands on an occupied gold circle, they must choose the occupant as an opponent, and if they win they get his gold coin (if he has one.) But if they lose, then they also lose a coin of the occupant's choice. There is no limit on the number of attempts for a gold coin.

Finishing the Game

When a player has collected all the necessary coins, and gotten their gold coins, they must battle their way back to their home province of Ireland. After landing there, they may continue to be selected as a random opponent, or as a judge, but may choose not to drink anymore.

Optional Rules

New Circle Rules

The players may collectively decide to replace an circle's game, before starting, with another game and decide a new proverb for it.

Good Story Rule

Any player coming up with a good related story to the locale or legend.

Time Limit Rules

The group may collectively agree in the beginning that the game will end at a certain time, and the players with the greatest number of coins will win the game.

Gambling Rules:

Each person puts 10 dollars or 10 quarters in the pot. The payout at the end of the game is as such, and if they quit, their share is distributed to other players.

2 player 75%, 25%

3 Players 66%, 33%, 0%

4 Players 50%, 35%, 15%, 0%

5 Players 40%, 30%, 20%, 10%, 0%

6 Players 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10%, 0%

The Circles

PINK CIRCLES

Pink 1: Llanfair

STORY

You approach a small town of a few huts by a river and ask a neighboring farmer of it name. “We don’t like to talk about it, “ he replies. When pressed, he explains, “it’s called Llanfairpwyllgwyngillgogerychwrndrobwillantisiligogogoch, which means the Church of Saint May by the rushing waters of the whirlpool by the red cave of St. Tsyiioch.” You ask why the name is so long and he replies, “There isn’t much else to do around here to fill up the conversation.” You ask where the hermit’s cave is, and he replies, “We don’t like to talk about that either,” and walks away. He however turns, and points to the east and says’

PROVERB

From a little, a lot can be made.
A single event can be interpreted in a 100 ways.
All love the lamb, but cook it in a different way.

TELEGRAM 12 LETTERS 5 MIN GAME

The hermit’s game involves the player and opponent being given a sheet of paper and twelve random letters (perhaps a polysyllabic word) and then 3 or 4 minutes to make as many English words by arranging and rearranging the letters. The most acceptable words will win, ties favor the player.

Pink 2: Liverpool

STORY

The very streets are crawling with long-haired bards and minstrels trying to woo and seduce the ladyfolk of the town. Not a man, but a lute in hand; and not a woman but eating pate du fois, the local favorite dish. None speak, but converse in rhymes and verse and run scamper like monkeys. The most popular test of a lover’s enthusiasm is to make them cross the treacherous sands in the bay at low tide, full of quick sand and quickly rising tides. Not many wish to visit Liverpool as a result, and their persuasive talents are being stretched by an advertising campaign in the works. One marketer says to you;

PROVERB

A good catchword can obscure analysis for 50 years.
A good performance’s message will not soon be forgotten.

JINGLES GAME

Player and opponent are given a sheet of paper and three minutes to compose a jingle and verses to advertise a new product for sale, selected and scored by the judges.

Pink 3: Cadir Idris

STORY

On the summit of Cader Idris there is an excavation in the solid rock which resembles a couch or seat for a giant who once gazed upon the movements of the heavens from there. It is said that if anybody remained in the seat of Idris for a night on one of the " three spirit nights," for the person who did so would die, go raving mad, or become a poet. Mysterious lights are, it is said, to be seen on Cader Idris on the first night of each New Year

These stones were haunted by the ghosts of Druids, who were in the habit of punishing wicked people by beating them, and were particularly hard in their treatment of drunkards. A man fond of drink slept there one night, and his experiences were terrible. He declared the Druids beat him first, and then whirled him up to the sky, from which he looked down and saw the moon and stars thousands of miles below him. The Druids held him suspended by his hair in the mid-heaven, until the first peep of day, and then let him drop down to the Duffryn woods, where he was found in a great oak by farm-labourers. He lived long enough only to tell the tale.

One of the nearby farmers relates;

PROVERB

Easy words will be hard to say if your heart and will are not ready.
The difference between genius and madness is the ability to interact with society.

TONGUE TWISTER GAME

The player and opponent try to say one of the following phrases (same for both) the fastest three times. One judge assigned to each, must start over with any flub.

I saw Susie sitting in a shoe shine shop. Where she sits she shines, and where she shines she sits.

How can a clam cram in a clean cream can?

Send toast to ten tense stout saints' ten tall tents.

The thirty-three thieves thought that they thrilled the throne throughout Thursday.

I wish to wish the wish you wish to wish, but if you wish the wish the witch wishes, I won't wish the wish you wish to wish.

Hassock hassock, black spotted hassock. Black spot on a black back of a black spotted hassock.

Green glass globes glow greenly.

Excited executioner exercising his excising powers excessively.

Pink 4: Cardiff

STORY

You enter the most segregated market-town you have ever seen. Dogs with dogs, Cats with cats, lawyers with liars... Fruits are in the eastern part of the square, meats in the west and so on. When you ask a merchant what they sell, they list every type of food in that category, even if they do not sell it, because they like to give their customers more options. They do so because the lord of the town, Sir Drinksalot Cocopuff, sometimes dresses in the clothes of the commoners, and wishes to hear proof that he has the biggest market in the land. Whichever merchant has the most “goods” for sale wins a bag of gold. A nearby hermit begging for food butts in and explains;

PROVERB

Even the commoner may know the names of the trees in the forest, but the expert knows the bushes, vines, and herbs.

SIR DRINKSALOT GAME

Today, by chance, the Lord has come to market and mistakes you and a nearby stranger for a merchant. The judges pick a category with many objects like (sciences, fruits, professions.) The player and opponent must say "Drinksalot, drinksalot _____." Filling in a word of that category. The pace must be very quick and missing the rhythm, repeating a spoken word, or saying the wrong category is grounds for losing. However, if a person fails, the likely victor must immediately say one more object in the category, to prove the possibility remains to continue.

Pink 5: Scilly Islands

STORY

Since ancient times, the Scilly Islands have been separated from Cornwall's peninsula by a shallow stretch of sea that sometimes becomes dry during unusually low tides. And it used to be one island, but overzealous mining has reduced it to five small remaining nubs. During those low tides, the peoples wheel large quantities of mined tin to the mainland and transport it to a navigable port for export. To celebrate this event, the people return to their island and engage in enormous festivals where the entire crowd imitates the increasingly complicated dance instructions of a traditional choreographer.

The choreographer invites you to the festival that begins today and she comments:

PROVERB

When people are free to do as they please, they usually mimic each other.

DANCE MIMIC GAME

The opponent will make a single dance move and the player will try to imitate it. Then the player adds a second move and the opponent must perform both moves. In such a way the game continues until there are 10 dance moves or one of the people makes an egregious error. Small errors are acceptable to the judges. If 10 moves are satisfactually completed, the player automatically wins.

Pink 6: Westbury Horse

STORY

There on the great green sward on a gently sloping hill is an enormous figure of a galloping horse, cut deeply into the lower layer of limestone, stretching 150 meters across and 80 meters high. The legend is that it was carved hundreds of years earlier over a horse's grave, by a grateful king to a white horse that miraculously rushed onto a battlefield, at a time of greet need, and carried the king to safety. The horse afterwards would give him advice on matters of ruling the land. Every one or two hundred years, the horse disappears for a night to be re-shoed at Wayland's Smithy, and returns larger and facing the opposite direction.

It is said that, horses that graze there are reputed to more clever than average, and chalk taken from pits is said to make the artist more skillful in drawing. A nearby hermit writes the following message on a black slate;

PROVERB

The quieter you become the more you can hear.
A listener needs more intelligence than a speaker.

LISTEN & DRAW GAME

The game involves the player slowly describing a person or place to the opponent for 2 minutes, while the opponent sketches it. Then, without showing the picture, they switch roles. The pictures are then judged based on their drawing ability and accuracy.

Pink 7: Paris

STORY

Once upon a time there was a poet whose words enchanted man and beast and the city of Paris hired him to charm the rodents out of the city, where they plagued the population. He composed an epic poem about cheese, and a land without cats, and leaky bags of grain; and so bewitched the rats that they followed him out in the forest and beyond the mountains. When he returned a week later, they refused to pay, and so he brought back the rats, plus all the gophers, skunks, rabbits, voles, shrews, mice, and wild boars that he could find. A plague ensued, and wiped out half the population, and he was accused of Biological terrorism and sentenced to hang. The boars were roasted, and a new industry in bacon was invented.

The wealthy local rat catcher then reverently explains;

PROVERB

Poets & pigs are appreciated only after death.

RHYME GAME

The player and opponent takes turns, player first. The player says a word, the opponent must quickly reply a word that rhymes with it, and so on. If one cannot continue, the other player must add one more word to show that it was possible to continue. Any repeats or unacceptable rhymes are cause for losing.

WHITE CIRCLES

White 1: Holyhead

STORY

The two hermits who used to live on this island lived by a well, and divided the dioceses by traveling in this manner. Madog traveled east facing the rising sun of the morning and returned facing the setting sun in the evening. Cadwgan traveled west in the morning and east in the evening. Madog was suntanned, healthy, well-liked, but nearly blind; Cadwgan was wan, cold, poorly liked, but sharp of sight. Every evening they would play a game and count the number of birds that returned to their dove houses. Madog was glad to count the ones that returned home, but Cadwgan noticed those that did not return on-time. Madog lived to twice the age of Cadwgan.

Your local guide explains;

PROVERB

People do not count what they are given, but what they are refused.

QUICK EYE COUNT GAME

The player grabs a handful of coins and drops them on the table. The two people have up to 10 seconds to count them and shout the number once, after that a judge covers them. Whoever first shouts the correct number wins. If neither are correct, then neither wins, and a second handful is dumped on the table. Continue until someone wins.

White 2: Winnifred's Well

STORY

Winnifred was a local woman who had traveled the world widely and returned to this little village and set up a hermitage to share her knowledge of medicine and matters of the advice to both local people and passing travelers. She rejected the advances of a lord, and her head was lopped off, rolled down a hill and a spring burst from the ground where it stopped. She reattached the head, and lived many years after that. Near her death, she again removed her own head and dropped it in the well, so that her spirit would answer the questions of those who visited the white pebbly well whose moss smells of incense.

The caretender of the shrine explains that those who can answer a question that she can't are rewarded, because;

PROVERB

Different doors have different keys.
Little known facts may answer great riddles.
Learning without thinking is labor lost, thinking without learning is perilous.

TRIVIA CARDS GAME

Each of the judges take two cards and write a question and its answer on it and shuffle the deck and then begin to ask the player and opponent. The first to answer the question properly, and to the judges satisfaction, gets one point. First to get 5 points wins the game.

White 3: Llanfihangel Yew Tree

STORY

Planted over two millennia ago, this unique, enormous tree in the corner of a church yard is still the pilgrimage point of a great number of people in the region. Four times a year, unusual lights are seen at night on the branches. People come and attach figures of cloth or beaten-metal to the branches in hopes that they will come true. Those most skillfully done, are most likely to become true according to the local hermit, who dismisses the skeptics by commenting;

PROVERB

Criticism comes easier than craftsmanship.

FOIL YOUR FOE GAME

The player and opponent are both given a sheet of aluminum foil or origami paper and are instructed by the judges to create some type of object. They have two minutes to do so. The most creative or well-sculptured object is the winner.

White 4: Glastonbury Tor

STORY

The lone standing tower on this hill, is at the center of an enormous maze etched on the side of its slopes. Once, this hill was historically in the midst of a shallow bay, that has long since silted up and left it amongst dryland. But in ancient days, a wise man from the Mediterranean came with a cauldron and a sacred thorned branch and planted it in the ground, and it came back to life and grew to enormous size. People come and attach symbols of their sorrow to the thorns and hope that the griefs will remain behind, attached to the tree. The catch is that they must do it blindfolded and must not use a thorn already used by another, and there are few spaces left open, such are the numerous griefs in the region.

A nearby pilgrim weapingly adds;

PROVERB

For every 100 people striking at the branches of evil, there is one striking at its roots.
The largest tree was once a seed.
On an unknown path, it is better to be slow.

TREE OF THORNS GAME (SEE BOARD)

The opponent takes a thorn chart and secretly place four clothes on the nine thorns of their chart. The player then, takes another chart and places it on the table and (one at a time) circles a thorn between 1 and 9, and looks to the opponent. The opponent then silently writes an X if it is already filled and draws two lines through the circle if it is an empty space. The player gets five guesses and need 3 successful ones to win. If he guesses all five correctly he gets another turn.

White 5: Cerne Abbas Giant

STORY

An enormous figure of a man with a club and an erect member is carved into the limestone substrate of this wide hillside. The locals say that a giant used to live in this area of the hills and that he would capture local travelers, brigands, even lost warbands, and hang them from the forest that used to be here. One young lady went to a hermit and asked for a way to rid them of the giant since her home village was on the other side of the hill and she wished to visit her mother more easily. The hermit gave her a magic shovel, dipped in Austin's well during the morning rays of four holy days, and told her that anything she dug a hole around would not leave without her permission.

One day, she rolled an enormous keg onto the hill and the giant got drunk and fell asleep. She quickly cuts a large outline around him with the shovel and when he awoke she refused to let him leave for many months until he shrunk to half his size; she let him leave, but swore that his soul and virility could not leave from the outline; and thus she used this to blackmail him into performing useful services for the town for many years, and later married him and moved away. The local villagers make sure the outline has never become overgrown, lest the giant revert to his old ways and return.

A villager also adds;

PROVERB

It is no fun to hang a man who doesn't object.
If you're fated to be hung, don't worry about drowning.
Never talk about a rope in the house of a hanged man.

HANGMAN GAME (SEE BOARD)

The opponent thinks of a famous phrase or proverb, and the player has to guess letters in a game of hang man. The opponent draws a body part for each mistake. Ten misses and the player is dead (1 head, 1 body, 2 hands, 2 feet, 2 arms, and 2 legs in a pentagon shape.)

White 6: Isle of Wight

STORY

A long time ago, this island was a separate little kingdom and a wise white-haired king ruled over its people for a century. His judgments were always just and impartial, and all disputes were quickly resolved. When he died, his spirit continued to settle cases by speaking a small voice from within this alabaster crypt. He would ask the two concerned parties to stand on either end of a rocking white granite stone and the more righteous party would always rise and the mistaken party would drop, regardless of their actual weight.

A nearby hermit who cuts the grass notes;

PROVERB

Equality in injustice is justice.
Before you judge your neighbour, walk a mile in his shoes.
In all things, find a balance between extremes.

SCALES OF BALANCE GAME

Tie two large paper cups or small buckets to a stick's end, and suspend the stick by the center to make a simple scale. Then the opponent will place an assorted mix of objects both light, heavy and indeterminate weight on the table. The player will tell the opponent to lift and put which objects into the two cups. Then the opponent will lift the scale off the table and if the objects are reasonably well balanced, the player wins.

White 7: Channel Isles

STORY

The fishermen who leave her in the treacherous channel between Albion and Gaul have known great tragedy and heartbreak. When the two lands are not at war with eachother, the very sea clashes one wave against the other. Not trusting either side, they people have become very independent and rugged, and cultured, although illiterate.

Many have died in shipwreck and sunken ships during storms and piracy. When their bleached bodies are found weeks later, the only way that the relatives can recognize their loved ones is by the intricate knotting of the tassels on their clothing, blessed by the hermit Malo on the annual pardon festival.

Noting that you'll have to travel later across this strait, the locals teach you their skills and note;

PROVERB

A string is useful until a rope is found.
Every knot has an unraveler among the Gods.

KNOT DIFFICULT GAME (SEE BOARD)

Take the sheet of knots at the end of the game. The judges will call out a knot from the list, and the player and opponent will rush to complete the knot first with their own string, while looking at the sheet. Whoever finishes first correctly wins. If there is a virtual tie, then the one whose knot is more skillfully done will win.

White 8: Carnac

STORY

A holy man named Cornely was seen leading a wagon of precious goods led by two white oxen by a farm. The two farmers asked him where he was going, he said "To Carnutes to make sacrifice to stop the invaders." "You'll be there tommorow" the farmers advised. "What are you growing?" Cornely asked. "Oats," they replied. "They will be grown tomorrow, good men" Cornely said, and tossed a large stone off the back of the wagon, saying "all should take off their hat when passing it to thank the good farmers." The next day, the oats in the field were ready for harvest.

Some Romans came the next day searching for Cornelly. The Romans asked the farmers who said Cornelly passed the day before and had instructed all to doff their hats at this point. The Romans ignored the advice, and marched towards Carnutes, and had not gone more than 1000 steps when their limbs froze and they humped over, into thousands of tall stones in rows. Apparently, Cornely made it to Carnutes in time.

A local hermit says if you and your friend mark two unblemished stones with the same symbol, you will die with your friend at an old age. He then asks you to help catalogue the stones, noting;

PROVERB

A scholar's ink lasts longer than a martyr's blood, but one changes the past, the other will change the future.

MEMORY GAME

The aces, deuces and face cards are stripped from the deck and the remaining cards are shuffled and placed on the board in a square pattern. The player, then the opponent, take turns turning over two cards at a time. If they match, they are removed and the person gets another turn. If they don't match they are returned to the face down position, and it is the next person's turn. The person with the most cards wins, ties favor the player.

GREEN CIRCLES

Green 1: Llyn Cerrig Bach

STORY

Amidst the twisted remains of an ancient forest, degenerating into swamp, there is a bubbling murky pool of a few acres in size here, with a 11 foot cliff at one end and stony outcroppings along the edges. Under the windswept cliff, on the shore, there is one flat and low rock, and one somewhat higher, with a cup-like depression in the middle. In the murky waters are said to lie great treasures, thrown into the bottomless depths to prevent the arrival of the invading hordes of Roman legions. Previously, the pool had been used by locals who would toss a coin onto the flat rock and if it bounced into the taller one's cup, it would be propitious.

PROVERB

The harder you land, the higher you bounce.

COIN BOUNCE GAME

Take a low cup, and the player and opponent take turns bouncing coins into the cup filled with beer. Each player gets 10 turns. Person with the highest score wins, ties favor the player, and the loser drinks the beer.

Green 2: Alderly Edge

STORY

Not many years ago a farmer was taking a white horse to market and a white-clad old man in an ancient style of clothing stopped him and asked to buy the horse. The farmer refused, hoping for a better price in the market, but strangely no one would purchase it. On his return, he agreed to sell it, and followed the old man up to the face of the sandstone cliffs of Alderly Edge. The old man tapped the wall, and a crack opened and they went inside. Hundreds of great armored warriors were asleep inside, with a white horse by each, and a sword in each hand. The old man directed the farmer to a pile of treasure, and instructed him to take as much as he could carry, and the great wizard lay down to sleep, tired from his most recent journeys. The farmer took the money and when he emerged from the crack, he could not again see where the entrance had been.

An enormous stone ball is inscribed with pictures from the event. A local stone merchant shows you a handful of those coins, that he has collected from farmers, which are said to have once come from that cave. He says;

PROVERB

A spinning coin will keep it's balance.
A rolling stone gathers no moss.

COIN SPIN GAME

The player and the opponent will (at the count of three) both spin a coin of the same size (i.e. two dimes or two quarters) and whomever spins longer will get one point. The first person to get three points wins the game. If the coins rolls or leaves the table and hits the floor, but still spins or moves, it is still in play. The two contestants may try to have their coin strike the other player's spinning coin. Breathing or otherwise fanning air onto the playing area is strictly forbidden.

Green 3: Great Orme Copper Mine

STORY

Since the end of the age when we used only stone and antler, this area has provided the metals we needed to make our tools of copper and bronze. The tunnels snake throughout the hills, and no man knows them all, or dares explore them all, for it is said that the hills are hungry and that one miner must die every year for the ores to be found. Those miners brave enough to delve into the secrets of these mines, are paid in copper pennies every week. Their wages are as many pennies as they can balance on their elbow and catch in the hand of the same arm.

One grimy miner with large hands is having his lunch, and he explains to you;

PROVERB

No matter how hard the hand tries, it cannot grab its own elbow.

COIN CATCH GAME

Player and opponent place one penny on their elbow and then snap their hand and try to catch the falling penny. If both catch a penny, they add a second penny, until only one person has caught more than the other. Ties go to the opponent. They get 2 retakes during the course of the whole game.

Green 4: Tinkin's Wood/Carleon

STORY

A wild bandit lives in these woods and assault people as they traveled through this forest. He uses only sticks and staves, but is most skillful in their usage and delivers the treasure to the local folks once a year, on June 22nd. After easily disarming you, he throws your traveling money and two bags down on the ground by your feet. He says that he'll give you a chance to win it back, by proving if you really want it. Whoever can put more of the money into their bag using only two sticks will keep all of it.

PROVERB

He who embraces much collects little.
The slow horse reaches the mill
Many hands make the work light.

CHOPSTICK CHALLENGE GAME

A big handful of peanuts and/or popcorn are put on the table and each person uses a pair of chopsticks to pick up and transfer the food into a styrofoam cup that is resting on the table. Whoever gets more pieces will win, and all ties will favor the player. If the player loses, the opponent can take any single color coin from the player's treasure and put it on the Circle. Future players can later choose that coin instead of a Green 4 coin, if they'd prefer it.

Green 5: Bodmin's Moor

STORY

The largest in Cornwall, the Bodmin Moor stretches 15 miles in each direction, full of wet land, sink holes, quicksand and the bottomless Dozmary pool, said to be connected by a tunnel to the very ocean itself. It is said that Arthur had Sir Bedivere cast the sword Excalibur into this pool, whereby it was conveyed back to the Lady in the Lake for safe keeping.

Jan Tregeagle, who had swindled several local people, and was summoned in a court case, suddenly died before the time of the trial. The judge did not relent, and the spirit was forced to leave hell to give testimony at court. The judge took pity on Tregeage, who did not wish to return to hell, or let him escape to heaven, and so assigned him three impossible tasks; to make a 40 yard rope of sand, to cut down the trees of Dartmoor with a young haddock for an axe, and to empty Dozmary Pool of water using only a leaky limpet shell. If he could accomplish these, he would be permitted to go to heaven. The demons agreed that it was a fair judgment.

Locals will not approach the pool because they fear the Black Beast of Bodmin Moor, a black panther, the size of a man who prowls the moor. It is said that the Beast is one of the original Hell Beasts assigned to interfere with Jan Tregeagle's works, by carrying a large mouthful of water every day to refill the pool.

A local marsh hunter says that an object thrown from the beach into the exact middle, will emerge a week later at the beach and will cure sores. He advises;

PROVERB

Even the straightest shot may not land where the eye intends.

BOMBADIER GAME

The game requires a picture of beer (or water if you're poor) and a shot glass inside it. Plays take turns with a handful of clean dimes or pennies into the pitcher, trying to get them to land in the shot glass at the bottom. To ensure that the shot is tough players must place their elbows on the top of the pitcher and drop the dime from that height.

If you don't get the dime in the glass, you must pour out and drink once. If you get the dime in the glass, your contestant must drinks twice. First player to get three points wins. If you totally miss the pitcher, than you lose the game.

Green 6: Plouha Cliffs

STORY

These are the highest cliffs in Brittany, over 105 yards above the crashing waves, while gulls and cormorants circle above the two small islands in the harbor. It is rumored that the sons of two feuding chieftains, were good friends, and wished to resolve the dispute without the shedding of blood. Gweltez tells Marrec that they should ride horses towards the lip of the cliff and the one who stops furthest from the edge will lose the contest. Unfortunately, as Gweltez tried to reign in his horse, it stumbled on the rock, and Marrec reached over to try to catch him. So great was their speed, that they are said to have landed far out in the bay, forming the two islets that shelter the bay.

A child collecting ferns and gorse near the site explains;

PROVERB

When you are pushing yourself and others to the edge, make sure you don't fall over it.

PLOUHA CLIFFS GAME

The goal of the game is to push coins toward the lip of the opposing side of the table, and come closest without going over the edge. The player and opponent take turns, with one point for each victory. If both go over the edge, then no-one wins the point. Nine tries, first to get 5 points or best score wins, ties favoring the player.

Green 7: Le Havre

STORY

Much of the fish comes here to the mouth of the Seinne river inlets that provide safe harbors for many fishing fleets. The tide plays an important role in the life of coastal Brittany, which has the largest variation between high and low water in western Europe. In this bay, the water level difference can reach 50 feet (15 metres); the sight of the incoming sea racing over several miles of sand is spectacular. The sea used to power many tidal mills along this coast, and their ruins are a common sight.

Once a great king, after defeating all his rivals, was being flattered by his advisor, who said that even the waves would obey the command of such a great king. So the king took his throne and sat upon it on the beach and calmly awaited the tides. His valet desperately tried to get him to higher ground, but the king acknowledged that he saw the waves were coming, but trusted his advisors' words so far. The next day, the advisor became the new king.

A shell gatherer finishes the story and then says;

PROVERB

Never forget what your eyes have seen for what your ears have heard.

We were given two ears and one mouth and should use them in that proportion.

SLAM THE QUARTER GAME

The two opponents take one quarter in one their four fists so that the player does not know which is it. The two opponents then slams the four palms on the table and the player must guess which hands the quarter is not under, with one palm being revealed at a time. This happens three times. The player must win twice.

Green 8: Ys

STORY

Gradlon the Great, king of Cornouaille of southern Brittany had the marvellous capital of Ys built for his wife, who died after bearing his only child. Dahut was his dearly beloved daughter, born from a mysterious queen taken during a pirate raid. Since Ys was built below sea level, Ys was protected by great sea-walls, and only Gradlon had the key for the lock-gate.

Dahut dreamed of a city where only riches, freedom and the joy of living would reign. So, she gave a dragon to the townspeople, which captured all the merchant ships at sea, except those whom she had blessed. Ys soon became the richest and most powerful city in Brittany. Every night Dahut took a young sailor to her palace, the night before his first foray out of the city locks. He wore a black silk bag and had to chase for her along the cliff tops at night. Those who returned rarely died in battle and were never lost at sea. Many sailors did not return, and this disturbed Guenole who had lost a cousin in this manner.

One day, a prince dressed all in red came, at Guenole's request from the ocean. Dahut immediately fell in love with him, but he told her to steal the key to the lock-gates from her father while he was asleep, and he would give her dominion under the waves, whereas now she ruled above the waves. As soon as she gave the key to the prince, he disappeared, then the water rushed in upon Ys. The great city had gone to the seabed instantly. The townsfolk changed to dolphins and seals, and it is said she was turned into a mermaid, to await the time when Ys would rise from the sea again. She sings with beautiul voice to attracts fishermen and kill them. They also said that when the weather is very quiet, people hear the bells ring from the disappeared city.

The king barely escaped, and later went to found the city of Paris, which in Breton means, "Like Ys." When he died, a weeping statue of him was raised to face the direction of Ys.

PROVERB

A gallon of water can drown the mightiest warrior.

ATLANTIS SINKING GAME

A strong wet paper knapkin is stretched over a cup of beer and a rubber band hold it in place. A quarter is placed in the middle. In a smoking environment, players take turn burning complete holes through the knapkin with the cigarette. In a non-smoking environment a sharp pencil can be used or the players can simple continue to stack dime on the surface of the knapkin (not touching the glass lip.)

BLUE CIRCLES

Blue 1: Castle Rigg

STORY

Here in the rolling valleys, and remnants of forest are scattered many stone circles. The largest of which is Castlerigg and Long Meg & her daughters. It is thought that this was once a place of meeting and festivals with special ceremonies held here for the best athletes and bards in the games. Both victors of body and mind were given a stone to commemorate their accomplishments. It is said that on full moon nights, when no one is watching, the stones throw off their mantles and compete in races and dances for an hour. Any crops planted nearby are always stunted and stamped down by mysterious forces.

The area is littered with small pebbles, said to be the offspring of these great stones, and are much prized by local children for games. A shephard gives you one and notes;

PROVERB

Once the avalanche has started it's too late for the pebbles to vote.

One finger cannot lift a pebble.

GO MOKU GAME (SEE BOARD)

On the Go Moku pebble board, players take turns, putting pennies and nickels on the boards cross-points, trying to put four stones in a row. They can place them anywhere on the board, that is unoccupied.

Blue 2: Llanddwyn

STORY

As you land on the island, a herd or wild horses rush down to greet you and then run off to play in the hills. Dwynwen was one of 24 daughters of a 5th century Welsh king and saint, Brychan of Brecknock. The beautiful and virtuous Dwynwen fell in love with a Welsh prince, Maelon, who wanted to marry her, but their marriage was not to be. Some say that Dwynwen's father had already promised her to another prince. Others say that she realized she wished to live a religious life and did not wish to marry anyone.

In either case, Dwynwen distanced herself from Maelon and he became angry and bitter. Seeing his misery, Dwynwen fled to the woods and prayed for help. She drew a pail of water from a spring, which immediately released her from her heartache, but, when given to Maelon, however, turned him into a statue of ice. Again she performed ascetic exercises at the spring, and was granted three wishes: the first was that Maelon be restored; the second was that she should never wish to marry again; and the third was that all requests made by her on behalf of lovers would come true.

Her wishes were granted. In gratitude, St. Dwynwen became a nun and founded a church and convent. Her well, a fresh-water spring called Ffynnon Dwynwen, became a destination for pilgrims, especially for lovers. Over time she was also known for her ability to heal sick and distressed animals. A nearby star-crossed lover sighs and sadly says;

PROVERB

There is a key for every lock.

GOLDFISH GAME

A deck of cards is stripped of aces, deuces and face cards, and then one joker is added, and they are shuffled, beginning with the opponent, each person is dealt the cards. Pairs are immediately discarded upon notice. Beginning with the player, the two people take turns drawing one card from the other. Pairs are immediately discarded. They may rearrange their hand as they see fit. Last player remaining with a card in their hand is the loser.

Blue 3: Arbor Law

STORY

An earthenwork three yards high and 20 yards wide is surmounted by a ring of 46 recumbent stones. Kings would hold annual court and hear grievances, before a nearby a barrow that broods quietly, holding the bones of their ancestors, who will object to a bad decision. A great battle was fought not long ago between the Welsh and Saxons for domination of this region, and the Welsh won the area for another century. Some people said that the greatest slain warriors were laid on the stones overnight and that the very stars cried crystal tears on them until morning. They were then transferred to the barrow and now await the day when they will be called forth into battle.

A hermit living in a nearby cave greets you, soberly adding;

PROVERB

Your side of the battlefield is more often determined by birth than reason.

WELSH & SAXONS GAME

Divide a 11X17 legal sheet of paper into thirds. In the middle, draw four randomly placed circles around a dime, which will be trees and standing stones. Then the player and opponent draw 15 dime-sized circles on the third of the paper nearest to them, numbering them in order of firing.

Then with the player beginning, they take turns. Putting the pencil on one of their circle they close their eyes and draw a straight line across the board to the other side. If it hits a center circle the arrow is blocked. If it passes through without blockage and hits a player on the opposite side, it kills them and the circle is blackened. Shots do not continue through the first victim to hit another on the first shot. Once killed, though, a 2nd shot can pass through to hit another victim. Each soldier gets one shot in the game, if they are still alive, with a check mark being made after shooting. Whoever has the most soldiers left wins the game. Ties favor the opponent.

Blue 4: Cardigan Bay

STORY

About 600 AD Cantref Gwaelod extended some 20 miles west of the current shoreline into what is now Cardigan Bay. It was an area of rich, low-lying farmland, with a healthy human population and 16 cities. However, it was prone to flooding and was protected from the waves by a system of sea defenses and dykes. Sluices were closed at high water to keep out the sea.

The job of sluice-keeper was an important one, so it was an unwise move by the king to put his loyal (but incompetent) friend Seithennyn in charge, because he enjoyed a glass or two

of ale, and he left the care of the gates to his subordinates, who left in care of the hired held, who left it in the care of itself. When asked to fix the rotting timbers, and rusted bolts, Seithennyn refused, saying that tampering with the work of the wise ancients, would only cause trouble and their hands would never equal the task.

One night a storm pushed a spring tide onto the sea walls and King Gwyddno was holding a party that night in his palace. Seithennyn was there, oblivious to the waves battering away at the sea walls; the sluices were left open and Cantref Gwaelod was inundated. The king and a few of his cronies ran to safety along a crumbling dyke, where he watched his beloved land disappear for ever. The sea took pity on the people and turned them into seals and dolphins, which abound here, and the deepest part of the bay is only 40 yards deep.

Remnants of a ridge going into the bay can still be seen, and during unusually low-tides, stumps of trees and buildings can still be seen in the crystal clear waters. Many sea battles were fought here also, but often misty mornings, which delay the onset of battle. A local fisherman calls out to you;

PROVERB

Small is his religion who must look for it daily.

MINI-BATTLESHIP GAME (SEE BOARD)

Each person takes a battle-ship grid (4 x 4) and hides three boats of two square size, horizontally and vertically. Beginning with the player, they take turns calling out co-ordinates and telling the other if there is a hit, miss, or if the ship has been sunk. Last one alive wins.

Blue 5: Offa & Wat's Dykes

STORY

Two parallel great dykes of earth stretch north and south along the eastern border of Wales. The one to the east is Wat's Dyke and the one to the west is Offa's Dyke, although they sometimes cross. Legend has it that Wat's was an earlier Roman construction and Offa's was a Mercian work, but another legend tells of a great contest of engineers to settle a land dispute between neighbouring lords of Powys.

The legend was that whoever completed their dyke (with ditches on both sides) the furthest would use it as the boundary between them. Unfortunately, the Welsh took their time, making a marvelously well constructed Wat's dyke to the east using the best technology of the day, and Offa's dyke was bigger but sloppily built, and thus completed one day earlier, often collapsing in later years. As a result the Saxons won much land from the Welsh, and the Welsh begrudge the bargain to this day, as Saxons continue to "leak" through Offa's dyke.

Rumor has it that a Welsh man found east of Offa's dyke would have his nose cut off, and a Saxon found west of Offa's dyke would be hung from the tallest tree in town.

A nearby farmer calls out;

PROVERB

The ditch is the master of the field.

Know your enemy's current path to win in the future.

PIPELAYER FOREST GAME (SEE BOARD)

The player is assigned the white dots and the opponent the black dots. By taking turns, the player starting, each person will connect two adjacent dots of their own color (horizontally and vertically) and try to stretch a line from one side of the court to the opposite side, while also blocking the plans of the other person. As a game progresses a player may run several lines from their dots, but must not cross the other player's lines.

Blue 6: Ogar Myrddin

STORY

On the side of a mountain in a ravine is a crack covered by a waterfall, which leads up to a hole on the top of the hill, near which is a cromlech surrounded by a circle of stones. The crack is over a mile in length, and many of passages are too small to be crawled through, although a dog was once trained to go through with a string attached to it until it reached the other side, but the dog was sorely afraid when it emerged and died two months later. The crack was the boyhood home of an exiled young magician.

Under the cromlech, it is believed, an iron chest full of ancient gold is buried. Various attempts are said to have been made by the more greedy of the neighbouring inhabitants to dig it up, but they have always been frightened away by strange portents. Here then the guardians of the treasure are creatures of a supernatural kind, who it is said, enjoy a game of Gwydbwyll on a windy full moon in the fall. Where the leaves or dirt falls, that is where you should play the opponent's pieces.

A nearby bird hunter shows you up to the moon-lit cromlech and tells you;

PROVERB

The clever general doesn't give his foe time to think

GWYDBWYLL GAME (SEE BOARD)

The king's strategy is to escape to the edge (or corner of the board for an extra challenge.) The enemy's strategy is to capture the king. Both sides proceed by alternate turns. Captures are made by either side by moving one piece at a time, such that two of their pieces are on directly opposite sides of their opponent's piece (but not diagonally), which is then removed from the board. I call this "squeezing" or "pinching" them. All pieces move like rooks in chess and can move horizontally or vertically, as many spaces as they wish, so long as no one is in the way. There are many variations that try to limit the inherent advantage of the king slipping through the net of the enemy to freedom.

Gwydbwyll "wood knowledge" differs from Fidchell, in that sticks are thrown first and a score of 5 means you lose a turn.

Only the king can occupy the center or the corner spaces. King must be captured on all four sides.

The enemy cannot occupy both squares adjacent to a corner at the same time (diagonally one square away is fine, I think.) A piece can be "squeezed" against a corner square or the center square by a single enemy piece on the opposite side.

A player may move into and rest on a space between two of the pieces of the opponent, without dying, in effect, requiring the surrounding opponent to move away and then back to effect the capture.

The king and defenders cannot enter the three center squares on each side of the board.

Blue 7: Modron's Well

STORY

Here at Land's End is a famous well on a narrow neck of land, reputed to heal all afflictions and give children to barren women. To be efficacious, rags are tied to the tree, in which a wren sings, and when no branches are available, rags are tied onto the middle of the established rags. Nearby in Men an Tol, which has a large pillar and a might stone with a whole in the middle, which if a child is passed through 9 times against the sun, it will be hale and hearty all its life. The dew on the grass after the Solstice is also a cure for barrenness.

The local baroness in the nearby fortress maintains this pilgrimage site's well, by which drinkers sleep on a flat rock and hope for a healing dream, and yet she herself has never traveled beyond this small barony of 1000 acres. The tenants say she doesn't mind staying here, since;

PROVERB

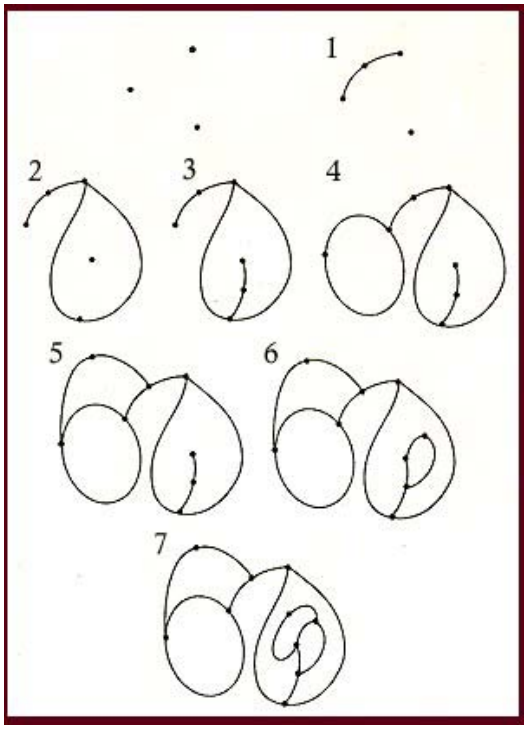
A narrow place is large to the narrow-minded.

SPROUTS 3 DOT GAME

The players start with a certain number of dots scattered across a sheet of paper. A move consists of drawing either a line between two dots, or a loop starting and ending at the same dot. The player then places an additional dot somewhere along the new line or loop, usually in the middle of the length.

The line (or loop) may be of any shape, but it must not cross itself, cross a previously drawn line, or pass through a previously made dot. Furthermore, no dot may have more than three lines emanating from it. Hence, a new dot placed on a line actually has two connections already made.

Players take turns drawing curves. The winner is the last person able to play. An example is below.



Blue 8: Dieppe

STORY

Not far from Calais, and the narrowest part of the strait between Albion and Gaul, this area of Flanders is part of a region also known as the battleground of Northern Europe. Every great king seeking to become an Emperor has rolled through this flood plain to the lament of the local populations through the ages. Fields of red poppies and waving flowers are said to grow on battlefields and each marks the spot where a soldier or peasant has died.

A young rakish boy named Johnny, gives you a small bouquet of those flowers and says;

PROVERB

When two elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers most.

CRUSH THE PEASANT GAME (SEE BOARD)

On a chess board, in two opposite corners, place a different color marker. On the remaining spaces place a penny. The player begins and moves his piece like a knight on the board, and takes the penny for one point. The opponent then does likewise, taking turns. If either person takes the other person's piece, they win. Otherwise, the game is over after 16 moves each, and the one with the most pennies is the winner.

RED CIRCLES

Red 1: Cymru Shipwreck

STORY

Here in a shallow part of the bay, there is a sunken ship of Welsh pirates returning from a raid on Ireland, seeking to recapture all the vowels stolen from the Welsh language. It is reputed to have had a large batch of red-gold coins on board. It was sunken when an enormous gust of wind toppled the boat and it sank to the bottom. Sharks ate most of the crew within minutes. It is rumored that the captain went down with the ship, gripping the only life jacket and the treasure chest until the very end, such was his greed.

The ship is only 15 meters below the surface and local fishermen have tried to swim down to the boat, and one claims to have seen the chest on the deck half open, with the hand of a few skeletons still caught in the heavy lid. The fishermen adds;

PROVERB

Being a hero is by enduring one more minute than the rest.

NOSE PINCH GAME

The player and the opponent grab their adversary's nose and at the count of three hold their breath. The first to open their mouth will lose the game.

Red 2: Newborough

STORY

A long time ago, Anglesey could be walked to by a tall man during the low tides, and many animals lived there that do not anymore, such as the wolf, bear and great elk. However until recent years, there were never any rabbits. One day a man brought a single rabbit across the Menai straits to this new town as a pet. Soon 10 rabbits were born, and a few escaped. Within 10 years, the sand dunes of New Borough were teeming with rabbits, much to the destruction of local plant life. The dunes were unmoored soon, and began to drift and bury the village. Efforts to eradicate them have been futile, since they are unusually clever. To this day the people refuse to even speak the name of these beasts which ravage the local farms.

A local boy in a rabbit skin vest explains;

PROVERB

A wise rabbit has three exits to its warren.

WELSH RABBIT GAME

The player is asked whether they wish to play cards or with cups.

If cards. A deck of cards is taken and one card of each type; ace through ten and Jack, queen and king, is placed face up on the table. A judge will call out a card and the first to touch it will get to keep the card. If you touch the wrong card, you lose one card. Most cards win. Tie goes to opponent.

If cups. Three identical Styrofoam cups are used. A light weight crumbled knapkin is stuffed into one of the cups and the three cups are shuffled quickly by the opponent, and the player must guess which cup is the right one.

Red 3: Dinas Emrys

STORY

King Gwrtheyrn tried to build his fortress on this location but the foundations would not hold and the walls fell to the ground. His advisors told him that if the blood of a boy, born of an unmarried maiden and a wizard, was spilled on the foundation then he would be finally able to build his fortress.

The young Emrys was brought along as the sacrifice. He prophesized that there were two dragons in a submerged lake under the hill, and that their constant fighting caused the tremors that shook the building to the ground.

The site was excavated and the pool drained. The fighting dragons escaped, one red and one white representing the Welsh and the Saxons. The king built a new fort at Nant Gwrtheyrn, and employed the young wizard.

A young man, descended from Emrys lives nearby and is the local champion in contests of strength and skill. He says;

PROVERB

Before you shake right hands, make sure your foe is not left handed.

THUMB WRESTLING GAME

The player uses a red marker on their thumb. Then they have a thumb war. Elbows must remain on the table and their other hand must hold their own ear.

Red 4: St. Non's Well

STORY

Here on a narrow ledge is a small corbelled cave in the side of the hill facing the crashing waves of the sea, not far from the Prescelli Mountains, where the stones of Stonehenge were hewn. St. Non was the daughter of Cynys, king of Menevia ("Way of the moon") who wished to live a hermetic life by the ocean, but she was rudely wooed by Sanctus of Ceredigion. Her child was born at this site in the middle of a great storm, and a spring erupted at this site and little Dewi was born, the most famous Saint in Wales. He was quiet and reserved, yet told them on his deathbed "Do the little things that you have heard & seen through me." On the back wall, behind the pool of astringent water, is a circle with a large plus symbol in the middle.

A little girl is pulling onions and leaks out of a small garden near the shrine to feed the many pilgrims who are visiting to cure ailments of the eyes. She invites you to play with her, noting;

PROVERB

In this vale of sorrow, do not let your tears obscure your vision of the just goal.

What cannot be cured must be endured

STARING/ONIONS GAME

Both people will take a large chunk of an uncooked onion or leek and hold it in their teeth, and stare at each other. The first to blink will lose. Blinking counts as not being able to see the white part of either of their eyes.

Red 5: Wayland Smithy

STORY

Wayland was a grandson of the King of Norway and learned his craft from the dwarfs themselves. His love, a swan maiden, one day found the feathery cloak that he had stolen from her, and was therefore free to fly away. He awaited her return, working furiously to keep his mind off of her, thereby producing amazing works. The king of Sweden (then ruling over England) was jealous of his magnificent swords, hamstrung him and took him to Sweden, after stealing the most beautiful arm bracelet (which Wayland though had been taken by his wife, while he was on business.)

Wayland tolerated this, until he discovered the king's earlier theft. Wayland tricked the two Swedish princes to their death, gilded their bones and made presents to the unsuspecting king, bewitched the queen and left her with child, built a set of golden wings covered with flowers and flew back to England, meeting his wife on his return flight.

They settle down in this area, and his smithy produced many of the famous weapons and metal goods of heroes for the next century. They were more graceful. Although he was buried under his forge, it is said that if you leave your horse and a silver penny on the anvil, and return a day later, the horse will be re-shod.

A nearby tinker recounts Wayland's favorite expression;

PROVERB

Strike the iron while its hot.

ANVIL GAME

The opponent will place a nut, a watch, a shot glass and perhaps 2 other objects on the table, and guard it with a rolled up newspaper or flyswatter. The player will try to steal items from the anvil over the course of the next 60 seconds using only their dominant hand, making as many feints as they like, with up to 20 attempts. If their hand is hit, they must drop the object. They cannot slide objects, but must cleanly pick them up and take them out of the 2 foot wide circle of string. The player must get three of the five objects.

Red 6: Silbury Hill

STORY

This is the largest earthen mound in western Europe, and none know exactly why it was built. Much of the chalk used in its construction comes from the great ditches encircling the Avebury stone complex.

One persistant legend is that at the center of this enormous mound is King Sil sitting on his golden throne or horse, attended by his bodyguards.

Every year, the local people gather around the base of the hill and a large bag of coins is wrapped in a rag and thrown from the top into the crowd. The catcher must first spin 12 times before catching it, or the bag is thrown again.

A local farmer is building a large manure pile nearby, before going out to fertilize his fields. He comments;

PROVERB

The more you step on the dunghill, the more you will stink.

TOSS & KNOCK GAME

The player and opponent take three turns. Each will toss a coin in the air and tap the table with the same hand and then try to catch the coin. Whomever can tap the coin the most and catch it will win the tournament. Continue until ties are broken.

Red 7: Ouessant Isle

STORY

It is said that this was the home of nine maidens who attended a shrine with a perpetual fire burning on the hearth. Once a year, they would cross back to the mainland to find mates for a week and then return. Children would return to the mainland at age 5. Every 7 years, they would re-thatch the roof of the shrine, and invariably, one of them would trip (some suppose that she was purposely tripped) and the thatch she carried from the boat would touch the ground. The others would turn upon the unfortunate wretch and tear her apart, and then finish repairing the shrine.

To this day, the women hold all the posts of the council, as the men are often away fishing or doing labor in the fields on the mainland. A local landlady cautions the players to be careful with the ways of fire;

PROVERB

Too much wax burns down the church

Although the fire of knowledge can be passed on, the receiver must know how to find new resources to sustain it.

MATCH RELAY GAME

The two people will line up 9 matches each. Then they will simultaneously start the first match. As one match is dying they will try to light the next match. The one whose chain lasts the longest will win the game. If the player drops the match, it is considered dead immediately.

Red 8: Fields of France

STORY

Many great historical battles have been fought here by both sides, such that it would weary you to hear them all.

However there is one legend of a local merchant who wanted to send his son off to an academy to become an excellent shot, he noticed that on the trees lining the edge of the king's forest that each was marked with a white circle, with an arrow in the middle. He wondered what great archer lived in this area, and he soon found a young boy with a bow in his hand.

"How do you manage to find the center of these bullseye."

The boy replied;

PROVERB

To always hit a bull's eye, draw the target after your have shot your arrow.

RUBBER BAND ARCHERY GAME

Line up 7 matchbooks or dominoes (2 inches apart) on each side of the table, and without crossing the line of your side, take ten alternating shots each. He with the most hits & fewest shots will win the game. Ties favor the player.

ORANGE CIRCLES

Orange 1: Mon

STORY

The abandoned remnants of an ancient grove, with mighty stumps are all that remain here of one of the holiest sites in the whole island. It was here that the Druids made their last stand during a British rebellion against the Roman Legions. The defenders were slaughtered, the grove cut down and the ground was salted.

However, new trees have managed to grow after a few centuries, and are sturdy enough for young followers of local customs to cut down the mistletoe, unusual leaves, and the first acorns of the season and toss them down to people waiting with bags to catch them before they touch the earth.

One of the young women, in charge of gatherings asks if you would like to try your hand, but cautions that even catching a falling leaf is not as easy as it looks since;

PROVERB

Even in the simplest acts, chaos has a small role.

HAT CARDS GAME

A hat or box is placed on the floor about 6 feet from the chairs of the two people. 15 red cards are given to the player and 15 black cards are given to the opponent. They have 2 minutes to toss them in with the butts firmly planted in their seats. Whoever has the most cards will win, ties favoring the player.

Orange 2: Lake District

STORY

This area of Britain is riddled with lakes set in the rolling hill country. It is simply lovely, and it is a favorite haunt of poets seeking inspiration in the light woodlands during the summer of the year. The legend is that the lakes were formed by the footsteps of giants during a game of soccer. Beyond that it has always been a quiet realm.

One of the local customs is for youths to fill their mouths with water from a local lake with a straw, run up a nearby small hill, and fill a bucket. The first to fill their bucket wins.

PROVERB

The closed mouth is also saying wise things.
Don't reveal the contents of your mouth without thought.

STRAW CONTESTS GAME

Both players are given a large cup of beer and an empty cup. The goal is to fill up the empty cup up to a taped mark on its side by sucking beer through a straw and shooting it into other cup through a straw.

Orange 3: Snowdon

STORY

The largest mountain of Wales rises before you up into the clouds. It is a cold, rocky, unfriendly place, full of crevices and hidden valleys that have sheltered armies during times of national distress. The fields at the base in the land of Gwynedd are known as the breadbasket of Wales and have fed the troops of many princes in times of excursion and incursion.

The mountain was said to actually be a cairn raised to cover the enormous body of King Bran, who was tall enough to walk to Ireland without getting his beard wet. On the side of the mountain is a large green lake that is said to have been from the blood of a dragon wounded on its shoreline. The dragon is reputed to still live under the lake, curled around the door to the hollow chamber under the mountain that houses a terrible and unknown doomsday weapon.

PROVERB

The view from the top of the mountain
May be grand, but its hard to live there.
Mountains like virtues, are often admired from afar and skirted at their base.
Men climb the highest peaks, but don't dwell their long.
The greatest castle will collapse on a poor foundation

MOUNTAIN OF CARDS GAME

Each player is given a deck of cards and give 4 minutes to build the tallest mountain of cards, without cutting or permanently damaging the cards; slight bends are acceptable.

Orange 4: Stow on the Wold

STORY

High in the mountains, this town's cold thin air is difficult to even breathe, although the locals seem hearty enough with mighty chests and large lungs. Well known from the lines of a poem, "Stow on the Wold where the wind blows cold." The most famous building is a church that incorporates several enormous living trees into the walls and outer portals of the building.

One barrel-chested young lad challenges you to the three tests of the lungs, noting in the breeze;

PROVERB

Winds of fate blow both ways

BLOWING GAMES

There are three challenges. If the player wins, they will get a free turn immediately after winning.

Balloon Game: using identical inflatable objects (no bigger than a basketball), both people will try to explode the balloon with the might of their lungs. One point for the victor.

Breath Game: Both people on the count of three will clamp their mouth shut and pinch each-other's nose shut. The last to open their mouth will gain a point. They may twist eachother's noses, but not too fiercely.

Cup Game: If one still hasn't won two points, the third game is played to break the tie. Both players must drink an equal size glass of beer and slam an empty cup on the table. Judges will gauge the winner by speed and amount spilled or remaining in the cup.

Orange 5: Tintagel

STORY

Uther was king and wished to have an heir that would rule over all the land, however, that was not to be, since only the child of the wife of the King of Tintagel was prophesized to bear that title. To ensure that no rivals would reach his wife, he placed her in tower, surrounded by a high wall. Guards with crossbows were ordered to shoot any intruders except the creatures of the air who flew in.

Uther talked with his wizard and a solution was found. Using a cow hide from the largest cow in Britain. Twenty men grabbed the edges and flung the king over the wall after a few progressively larger bounces. The guards followed their instructions, and did not obstruct Uther's entry. Arthur was born nine months after that night.

PROVERB

It takes a village to raise a child to great heights.
What goes up must come down.

RHIBO KNAPKINS GAME

Using two knapkins or handkerchiefs. The player and the opponent try to see who can bounce a quarter higher than the other and they must catch it in the same cloth. If both can bounce it off the ceiling and catch it, then the contest will become who can come closer to the ceiling without touching it on three tries.

Orange 6: Stonehenge

STORY

The rumor is that there have been successive constructions of this great temple, first with dirt mounds, then with wooden posts, then with small stones and later with big stones hauled from the west of Wales, by river and over land. But what is not known is that over several thousand years, the stones have increasingly fallen out of alignment and serve little practical purpose, and yet they have never been adjusted, out of reverence for preserving their original positions.

A young man notes;

PROVERBS

The ways of our ancestors may be difficult to understand,
but blind imitation is not the best way to honor them.

STONEHENGE OF CARDS GAME

Each player is given a deck of cards and a diagram of Stone Henge and given 3 minutes to build the most accurate version they can.

Orange 7: Brest

STORY

When the British people were fleeing the incursions of the Saxon invasions of Albion, many relocated across the Channel in great numbers. So great were their numbers, that the local inhabitants feared being overwhelmed, and met on the shore to do battle with them. Men fought men and women fought women, all clad in only woad. The Gaulish men lost the battle and were annihilated, but their wives did well and the British women were killed. The British men married the Gaulish women in a ceremony after the battle and much talk of treaties.

One general of the women afterwards commented;

PROVERB

It is easy to be brave at a distance.

BRITTANY SPEARS GAME

Set up seven dominos (or matchbooks) on opposite sides of the table, and with your dice sticks take throws at the opponent. Only point-ends count for a hit. Each side takes turns, with one throw for each soldior alive at the beginning of the round. The hand of the thrower may not cross their own side of the table's edge. Each round continues until there is no survivors.

Orange 8: Isles of Moribhan

STORY

The Celtic name for the forested interior was 'Argoat' ('the country of the wood.') As recently as a hundred years ago, the Argoat woods stretched from Rennes in the east to Carhaix in the west. This large tract of land sheltered many wild animals - the last wolf in Brittany was killed as late as 1891. Most of the forest has since been felled, for timber or farmhand, but there are still a few wild places to be found. Two fragments survive of the ancient oak and beech forest of Argoat: Huelgoat, south of Morlaix, and the Paimpont to the south-west of Rennes.

It is claimed that when the forest was cut down, the fairies fled weeping to the coast and jumped into the ocean, each become an island. There are said to be one island for every day of the year, and each fairy appears for one night on their island to tell of their griefs and grant a wish to those who bear a greater one. But each island has this phenomenon on a different day.

PROVERB

Our joys are shallow, our griefs are deep.

ISLAND DROP

Take all the face cards and place them face up on the floor or table and the player and opponent take turns dropping pennies to land on the cards (islands.) Only the first to land there gets a point

GOLDEN ISLANDS

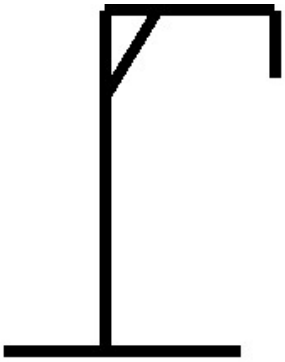
As you remember, the opponent for Golden Islands is randomly selected, and they choose the game to be played from any circle on the board. Golden islands can only be accessed after the player is within 3 coins of finishing the game.

Gold 1: Bardsay Island

STORY

It is said that there are graves for 20,000 saints and holy people buried on this island. Each grave has a nest of a bird resting on top of it. It is said that the birds hatched on a grave will fly off to the birthplace of the deceased once a year. It is also said that anyone buried on this island, no matter how vile or repugnant will be assured a good turn in the afterlife.

A man attending the graves, addresses you and says the saint's will is to do the following game;



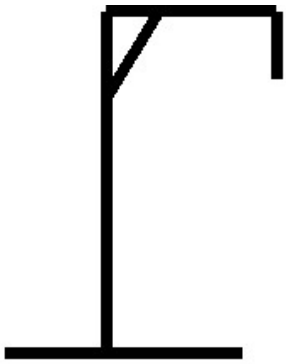
White 5

Gold 2: Calday Island

STORY

The island is inhabited only by cows, monks and a bewildering array of birds nestled on the cliffs above beaches. The monks manufacture a variety of soaps and oils to sell to visiting pilgrims. However they do not speak, and communicate by sign language and small chalkboards that they carry.

A young monk attending the cows challenges you to a contest (however it cannot involve speaking.)

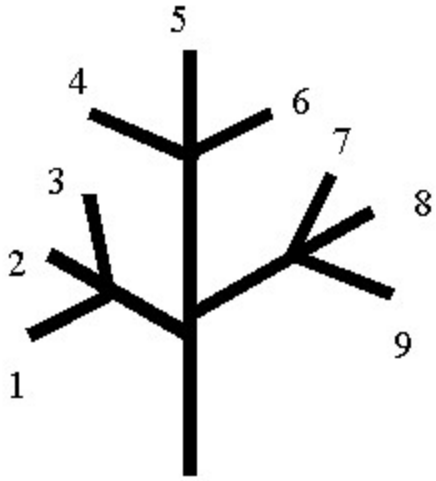


Gold 3: Isle of Birds

STORY

It is a desolate stretch of land only reaching 6 feet above sea level. Nearly once a month they get flooded.

The small collection of dejected sailors suffer constant buffeting from the wind and waves and have little goodwill or humor to share with you. They immediately challenge you to a game they have picked up from their travels of the British Isles.



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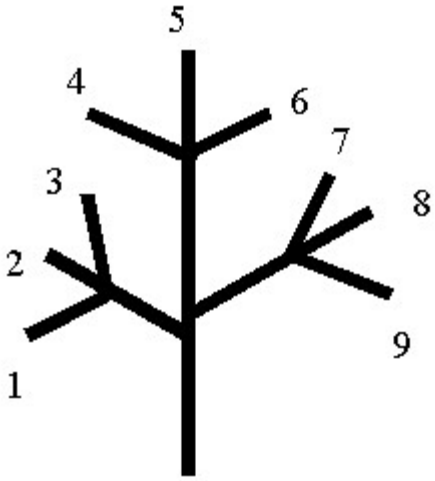

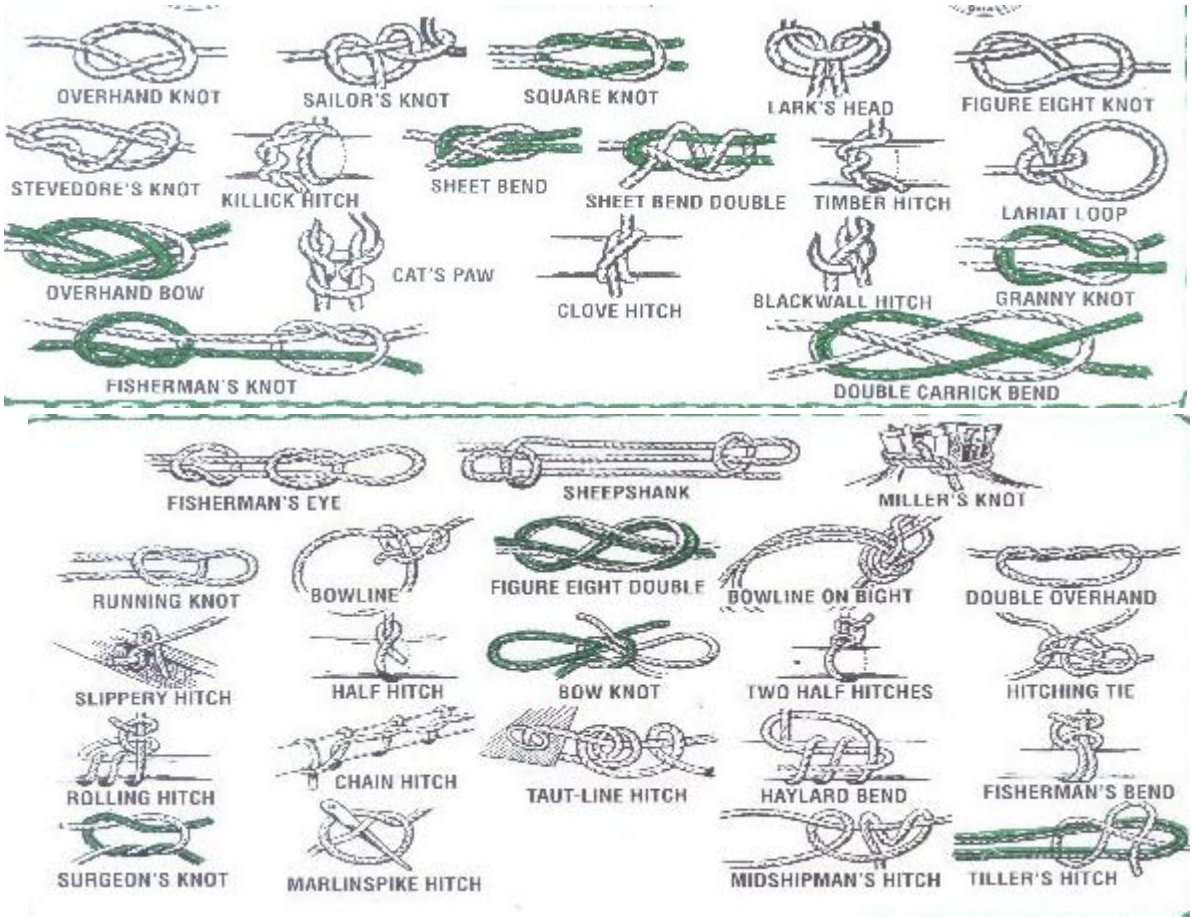
OVERHAND KNOT
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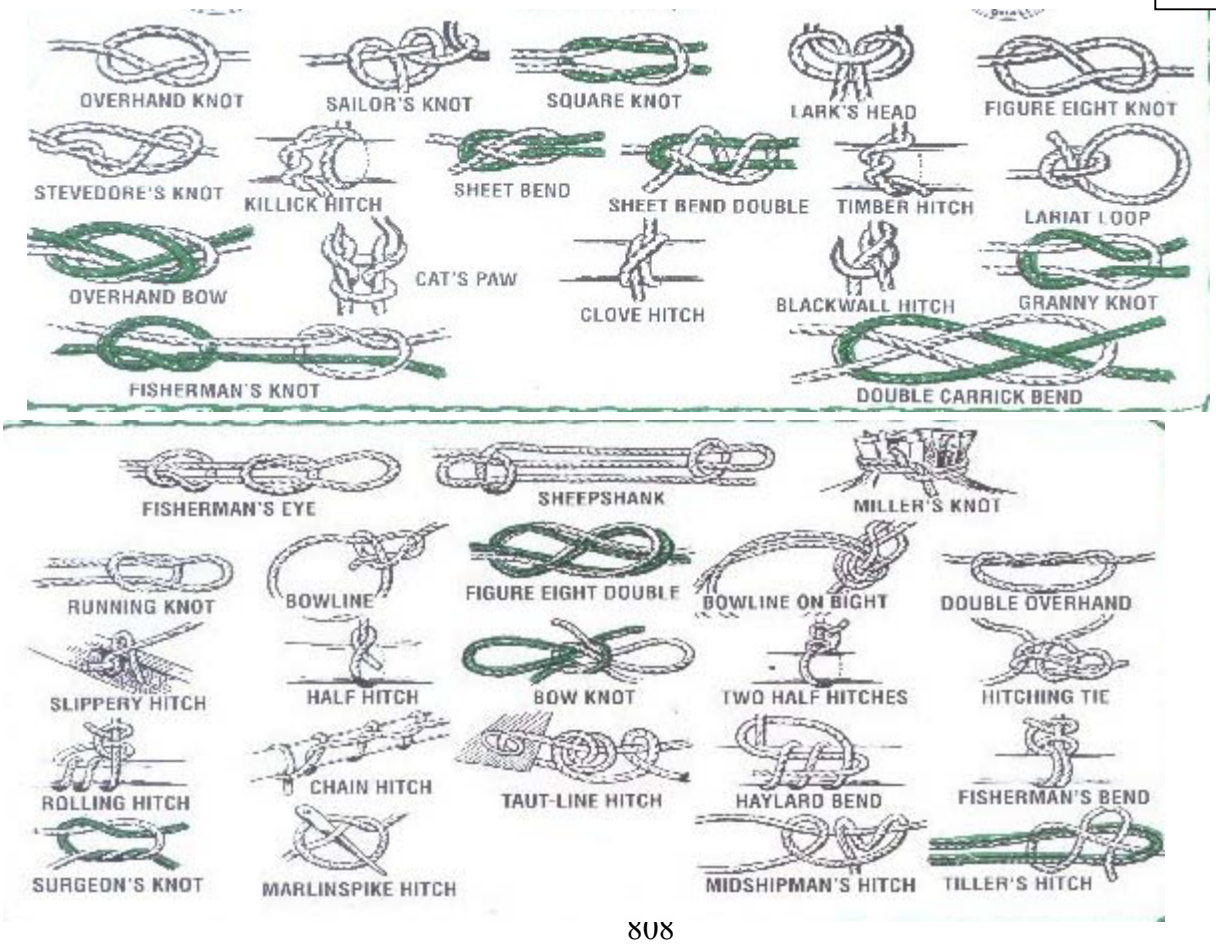
SQUARE KNOT
LARK'S HEAD
FIGURE EIGHT KNOT
STEVEDORE'S KNOT
KILLICK HITCH
SHEET BEND
SHEET BEND DOUBLE
TIMBER HITCH
LARIAT LOOP
OVERHAND BOW
CAT'S PAW
CLOVE HITCH
BLACKWALL HITCH
GRANNY KNOT
FISHERMAN'S KNOT
DOUBLE CARRICK BEND
FISHERMAN'S EYE
SHEEPSHANK
MILLER'S KNOT
RUNNING KNOT
BOWLINE
FIGURE EIGHT DOUBLE
BOWLINE ON BIGHT
DOUBLE OVERHAND
SLIPPERY HITCH
HALF HITCH
BOW KNOT
TWO HALF HITCHES
HITCHING TIE
ROLLING HITCH
CHAIN HITCH
TAUT-LINE HITCH
HAYLARD BEND
FISHERMAN'S BEND
SURGEON'S KNOT
MARLINSPIKE HITCH
MIDSHIPMAN'S HITCH
TILLER'S HITCH

White 7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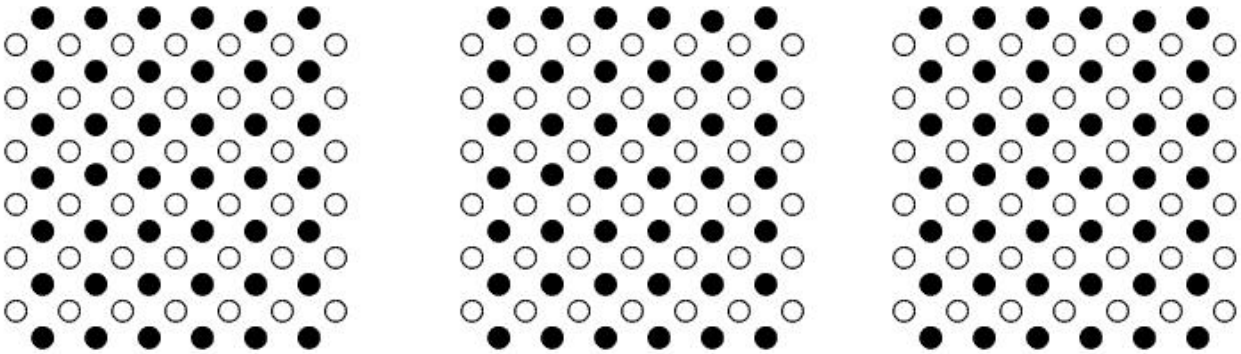

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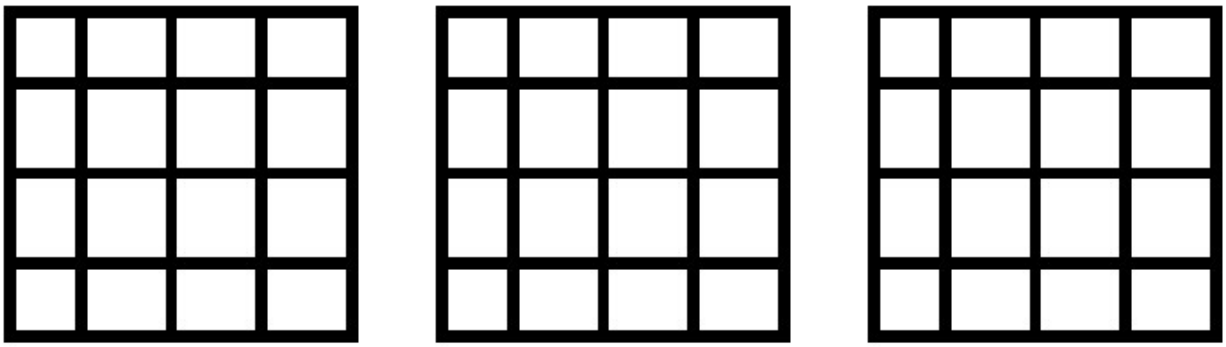

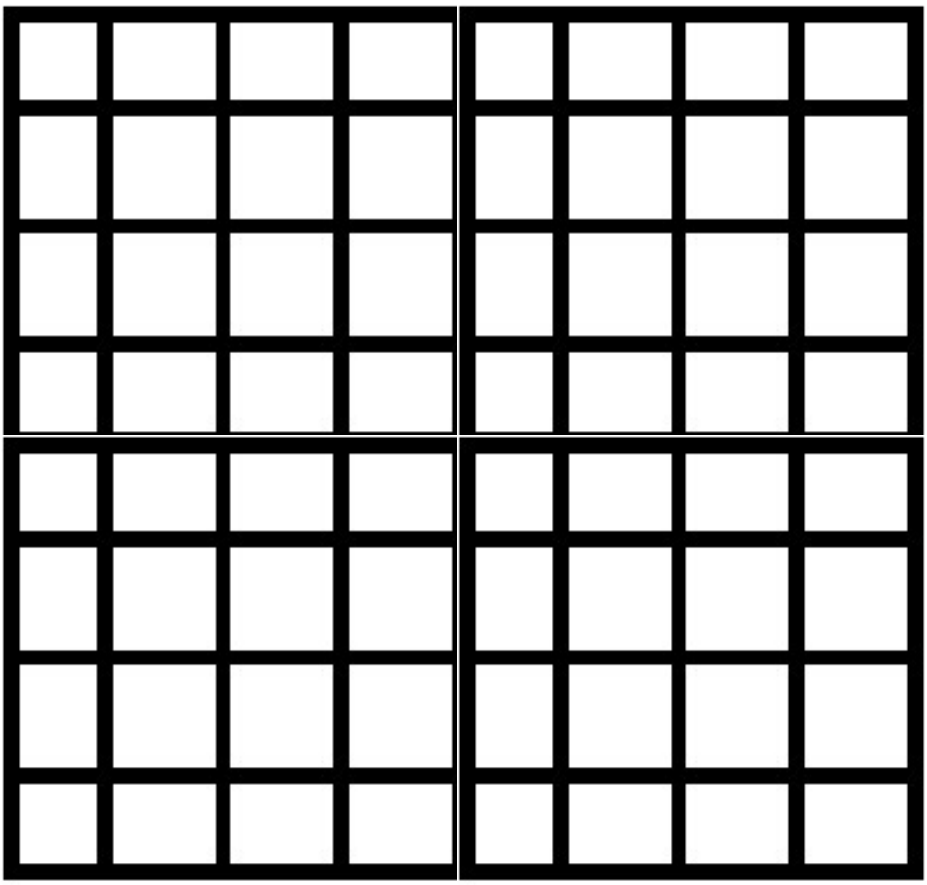

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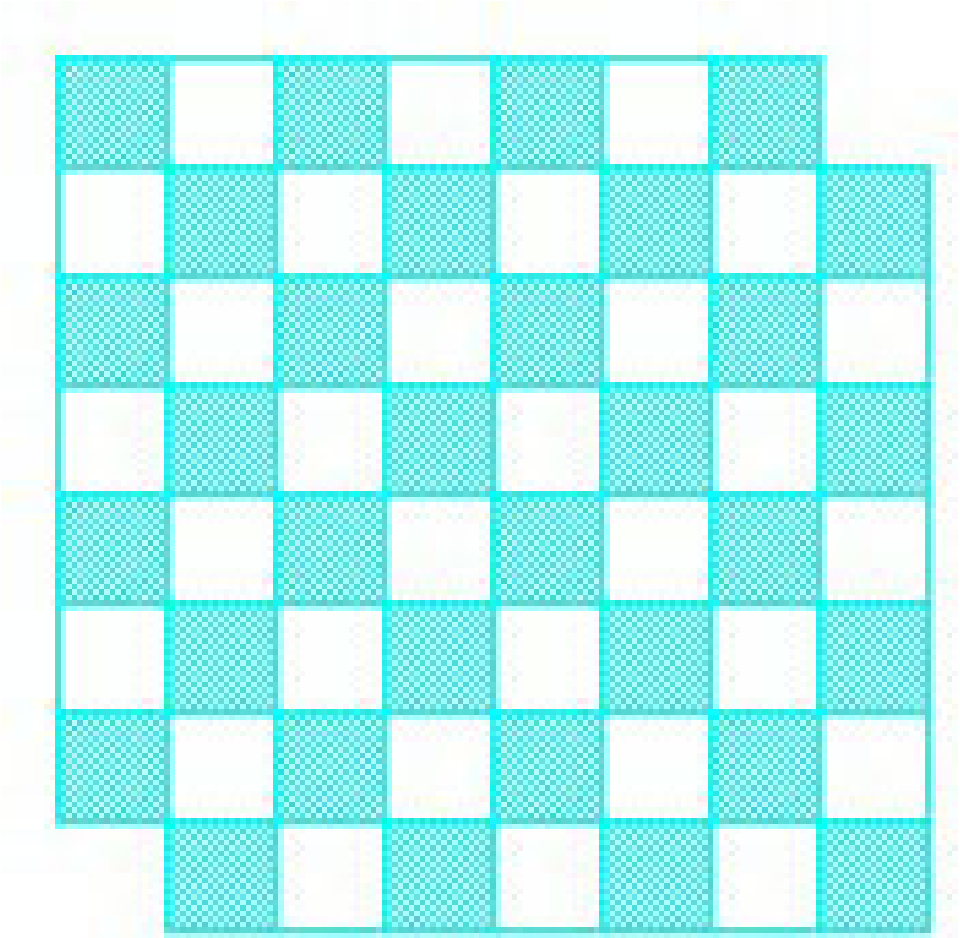

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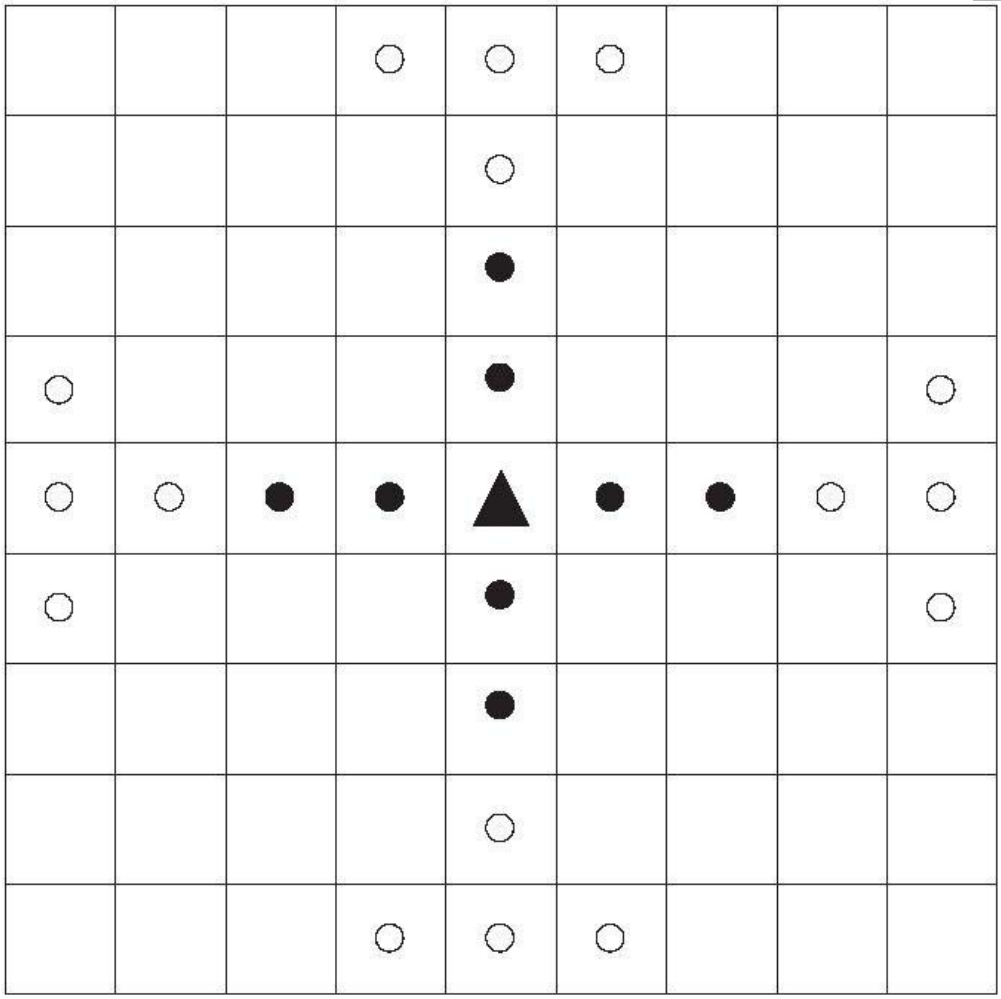
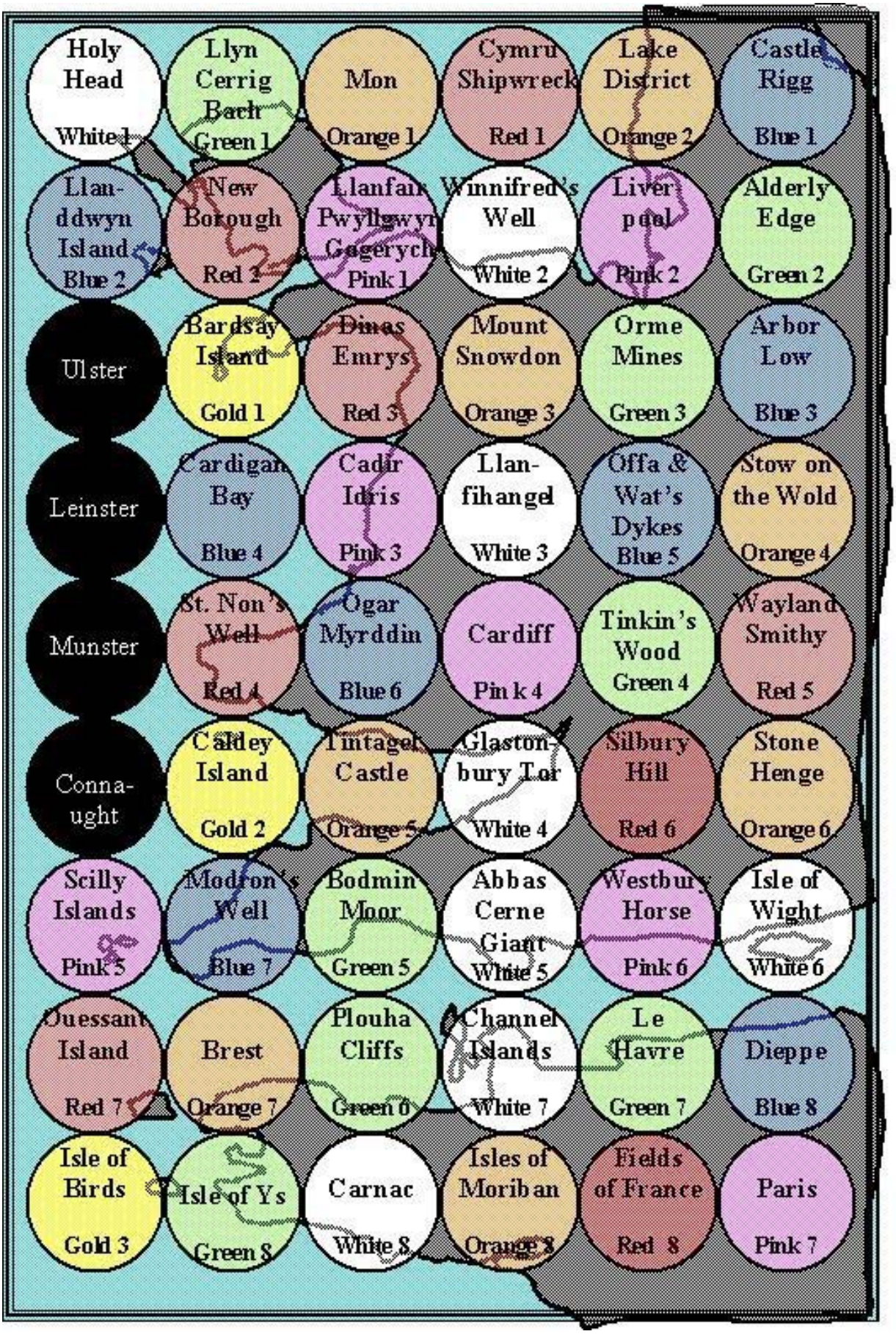


Color board at www.geocities.com/mikerdna/brythonic.jpg



Unused Ideas

PINK CIRCLES

Reverse Game	Know your lessons forward & backward for you know not at which end you will need them.
Politeness	
Flattering/Braggart	Titles distinguish the mediocre, embarrass the superior and are disgraced by the inferior. The more the water gushes from the spring, the less its source is esteemed.
Opposites	The opposite of a truth is also often a truth.
Name that Tune	A wise man if told one side of a square, will know the other three sides. Sing a verse and the rest will sing a chorus.

WHITE CIRCLES

ASL w/partner	Not all messages are conveyed with words.
Math Problems	Numbers rule our life as surely as letters.
Name the parts	The sum may be greater than the parts.
Telephone book Race	

GREEN CIRCLES

Egg Dome	The thin dome of an egg can bear 50 times its weights.
Catapult Game	In 24 hours the louse can become a general.
Tower of turtles	If we can see farther, it is because we stand on the shoulders of our ancestors.
Debate your opposite	It is easy to win a debate if you start our being right.
Shiritori Name (chain of words starting with last letter of earlier word)	The chain is only as strong as the weakest link.

BLUE CIRCLES

Shuffleboard	It doesn't matter how close your enemy is to the ear of the king, as long as yours is closer.
Speed Solitaire	Even when you play alone, you cannot always win.

RED CIRCLES

Hand Slap	Fright is worse than the blow. Better to bear the palm than face the fist.
Rock-Paper-Scissors	Every strength has its weakness.
Ball and Cup (wolf and the sheep)	Religion destroys evil, morality merely hides it.
Beer Hunter (open beers before nose to find shaken one)	One knows not how fate will favor your attempts.
Bag boxing	Aim for the head, watch for the fists.

ORANGE CIRCLES

What's in the bag	When one sense fails, try another.
Mirror Shot	Mirrors show the reality, but make poor advisors.
Sticky Hands	Greedy people store all but friendship.
Bread Eater	If you must eat your words, chew them well.
Juggle 2 balls	One hand may juggle three balls, 2 hands can do 8.
Headbutter	Use your head well.
Flip the cup	To an inverted vessel nothing adheres.

The Voyage of Mael Dun

Translated in the 19th century by T.W. Rolleston
From the Book of the Dun Cow
Which inspired Hebridean Hijinks

PROLOGUE

Three years and seven months was it wandering in the ocean..

There was a famous man of the Eoganacht of Ninuss (that is, the Eoganacht of the Arans): his name was Ailill of the 'Edge of Battle.' A mighty soldier was he, and a hero lord of his own tribe and kindred. And there was a young nun, the prioress of a church of nuns, with whom he met. Between them both there was a noble boy, Máel Dúin, son of Ailill.

This is the way according to which Máel Dúin's conception and his birth came to pass. Once upon a time the king of the Eoganacht went on a raid into another district and province and with him fared Ailill of the Edge of Battle. They unyoked and encamped on an upland therein. There was a church of nuns near to that upland. At midnight, then, when everyone had ceased moving in the camp, Ailill went to the church. It was the hour that the (aforesaid) nun went to strike the bell for nocturne. Ailill caught her hand, and threw her down, and lay with her.

Said the woman to him: 'Unblessed is our state.' Saith she: '(for) this is the time for my conceiving. Which is thy race and what is thy name?'

Said the hero: 'Ailill of the Edge of Battle is my name '(and I am) of the Eoganacht of Ninuss in Thomond.'

Then after ravaging and taking hostages, the king returned to his district, Ailill also being with him.

Soon after Ailill had reached his tribe, marauders of Leix slew him. They burnt (the church named) Dubcluain upon him.

At the end of nine months the woman brought forth a boy, and gave him a name, Máel Dúin was he. The boy was afterwards taken secretly to her friends, even to the king's queen; and by her Máel Dúin was reared; and she gave out that she was his mother.

Now the one foster-mother reared him and the king's three sons, in one cradle, and on one breast, and on one lap.

Beautiful, indeed, was his form; and it is doubtful if there has been in flesh anyone as beautiful as he. So he grew up till he was a young warrior and fit to use weapons. Great then, was his brightness and his gaiety and his playfulness. In his play he outwent all his comrades, both in throwing balls and running, and leaping, and putting stones, and racing horses. He had, in sooth, the victory in each of those games. One day, then, a certain soldier warrior grew envious against him, and he said in transport and anger: 'Thou', saith he, 'whose clan and kindred no one knows, whose mother and father no-one knows, vanquish us in every game, whether we contend with you on land or on water, or on the draughtboard!'

So then Máel Dúin was silent, for till then he had thought that he was a son of the king and of the queen his foster-mother. Then he said to his foster-mother: 'I will not dine and I will not drink until thou tell me', saith he, 'my mother and my father.' 'But', saith she, 'why art thou inquiring after that? Do not take to heart the words of the haughty warriors. I am thy mother.' Saith she: 'The love of the people of the earth for their sons is no greater than the love I bear to you.'

'That may be' he said: 'nevertheless, make known my parents to me.'

So his foster-mother went with him, and delivered him into his (own) mother's hand; and thereafter he entreated his mother to declare his father to him.'

'Silly', saith she, 'is what you art adoing, for if you shouldst know thy father 'you hast no good of him, and you shalt be the gladder, for he died long ago.'

'Tis the better for me to know it', saith he, 'however.'

Then his mother told him the truth. 'Ailill of the Edge of Battle was thy father', saith she, 'of the Eoganacht of Ninuss.'

Then Máel Dúin went to his fatherland and to his own heritage, having his (three) foster-brothers with him; and beloved warriors were they. And then his kindred welcomed him, and bade him be of good cheer.

At a certain time afterwards there was a number of warriors in the graveyard of the church of Dubcluain, putting stones. So Máel Dúin's foot was planted on the scorched ruin of the church, and over it he was flinging the stone. A certain poison-tongued man of the community of the church, Briccne was his name – said to Máel Dúin: 'It were better,' saith he,' to avenge the man who was burnt there than to cast stones over his bare burnt bones.'

Who (was) that?' saith Máel Dúin.

Ailill', saith he, 'thine (own) father.'

Who killed him?' asked Máel Dúin.

Briccne replied: 'Marauders of Leix,' saith he, 'and they destroyed him on this spot.'

Then Máel Dúin threw away the stone (which he was about to cast), and took his mantle round him, and his armour on him; and he was mournful thereat. And he asked the way to wend to Leix, and the guides told him that he could only go by sea.

So he went into the country of Corcomroe to seek a charm and a blessing of the wizard who dwelt there, to begin building a boat. (Nuca was the wizard's name and it is from him that Boirenn Nuca is named.) He told Máel Dúin the day on which he should begin the boat, and the number of the crew that should go in her, to wit, seventeen men, or sixty according to others. And he (also) told him that no number greater or less than that should go; and he (lastly) told him the day he should set to sea.

Then Máel Dúin built a three-skinned boat; and they who were to go in it in his company were ready. Germán was there and Diurán the Rhymer. So then he went to sea on the day that the wizard had told him to set out. When they had gone a little from land after hoisting the sail, then came into the harbour after them his three foster-brothers, the three sons of his foster-father and foster-mother; and they shouted to them to come back again to them to the end that they might go with them.

'Get you home,' saith Máel Dúin; 'for even though we should return (to land), only the number we have here shall go with me

'We will go after thee into the sea and be drowned therein, unless thou come unto us.'

Then the three of them cast themselves into the sea, and they swam far from land. When Máel Dúin saw that, he turned towards them so that they might not be drowned, and he brought them into his boat.

I

That day till vespers they were a-rowing, and the night after it till midnight, when they found two small bare islands, with two forts in them; and then they heard out of the forts the noise and outcry of intoxication, and the soldiers, and the trophies. And this was what one man said to the other: 'Stand off from me', saith he, 'for I am a better hero than thou, for it, is I that slew Ailill of the Edge of Battle, and burnt Dubcluain on him and no evil hath hitherto been done to me therefore by his kindred; and thou hast never done the like of that!

'We have the victory in our hands', saith Germán, and saith Diurán the Rhymer: 'God hath brought us direct and God hath guided our barque. Let us go and wreck these two forts, since God hath revealed to us our enemies in them!'

As they were saying these words, a great wind came upon, them, so that they were driven (over the sea, all) that night until morning. And even after morning they saw nor earth nor land, and they knew not whither they were going. Then said Máel Dúin: 'Leave the boat still, without rowing and whithersoever it shall please God to bring it, bring.'

Then they entered the great, endless ocean; and Máel Dúin afterwards said to his foster-brothers: 'Ye have caused this to us, casting yourselves upon us in the boat in spite of the word of the enchanter and wizard, who told us that on board the boat we should go only the number that we were before you came.'

They had no answer, save only to be silent for a little space.

II

Three days and three nights were they, and they found neither land nor ground. Then on the morning of the third day they heard a sound from the north-east. 'This is the voice of a wave against a shore', said Máel Dúin. Now when the day was bright they made towards land. As they were casting lots to see which of them should go on shore, there came a great swarm of ants each of them the size of a foal, down to the strand towards them, and into the sea. What the ants desired was to eat the crew and their boat: so the sailors fled for three days and three nights; and they saw nor land nor ground.

III

On the morning of the third day the heard the sound of a wave against the beach, and with the daylight they saw an island high and great; and terraces all round about it. Lower was each of them than the other, and there was a row of trees around it, and many great birds on these trees. And they were taking counsel as to who should go to explore the island and see whether the birds were gentle. 'I will go', saith Máel Dúin. So Máel Dúin went, and warily searched the, island, and found nothing evil therein. And they ate their fill of the birds and brought some of them on board their boat.

IV

Three days thereafter, and three nights were they at sea. But on the morning of the fourth day they perceived another great island. Sandy was its soil. When they came to the shore of the island they saw therein a beast like a horse. The legs of a hound he had, with rough, sharp nails; and great was his joy at seeing them. And he was prancing (?) before them, for he longed to devour them and their boat. 'He is not sorry to meet us,' saith Máel Dúin; 'let us go back from the island.' That was done; and when the beast perceived them fleeing, he went down to the strand and, began digging up the beach with his sharp nails, and pelting them (with the pebbles), and they did not expect to escape from him.

V

Thereafter they rowed afar, and a great, flat island they see before them. Then to Germán fell an ill lot to go and look at that island. 'Both of us will go,' saith Diurán the Rhymer, 'and thou wilt come with me some other time into an island which it falls to my lot to explore.' So the two of them entered the island. Great was its size and its breadth, and they saw therein a long, great green, with vast hoof-marks of horses upon it. As large as the sail of a ship was the mark of the hoof of each horse. They saw, moreover, the shells of huge nuts like... and they saw, there, also great leavings (?) of the plunder of many men. So they dreaded that which they saw, and they called their people to them to see what they beheld. They were afraid then, after seeing what they beheld, and they all, swiftly, hastily, went on board their boat.

When they had gone a little from land, they beheld (rushing) along the sea to the island a great multitude, which, after reaching the green of the island, held a horse-race. And swifter than the wind was each horse, and great was the shouting (of the multitude) and their outcry and noise. And then the strokes of their horse-rods at the meeting were heard by Máel Dúin, and he heard, moreover, what each of them was saying: 'Bring the grey steed'; 'Drive the dun horse there'; 'Bring the white horse!'; 'My steed is faster!'; 'My horse leaps better.'

When the wanderers heard those words, they went away with all their might for they felt sure it was a meeting of demons they beheld.

VI

A full week were they voyaging, in hunger and in thirst, when they discovered a great, high island with a great house therein on the seashore and a doorway out of the house into the plain of the island and another door (opening) into the sea, and against that door there was a valve of stone. That valve was pierced by an aperture, through which the sea-waves were flinging the salmon into the midst of that house. Máel Dúin and his men entered that house, and therein they found no one. After this they beheld a testered bed for the chief of the house alone, and a bed for every three of his household, and food for three before every bed, and a vessel of glass with good liquor before every bed and a cup of glass on every vessel. So they dined off that food and liquor and they give thanks to Almighty God, who had helped them from their hunger.

VII

When they went from the island they were a long while voyaging, without food, hungrily, till they found (another) island, with a great cliff round it on every side, and therein was a long, narrow wood, and great was its length and its narrowness. When Máel Dúin reached that wood he took (from it) a rod in his hand as he passed it. Three days and three nights the rod remained in his hand, while the boat was under sail, coasting the cliff, and on the third day he found a cluster, of three apples at the end of the rod. For forty nights each of these apples sufficed them.

VIII

Thereafter, then, they found another island, with a fence of stone around it. When they drew near it a huge beast sprang up in the island, and raced round about the island. To Máel Dúin it seemed swifter than the wind. And then it went to the height of the island and there it performed (the feat called) 'straightening of body', to wit, its head below and its feet above; and thus it used to be: it turned in its skin that is, the flesh and the bones revolved, but the skin outside was unmoved. Or at another time the skin outside turned like a mill, the bones and the flesh remaining still.

When it had been for long in that wise, it sprang up again and raced round about the island as it had done at first. Then it returned to the same place; and this time the lower half of its skin was unmoved, and the other half above ran round and round like a millstone. That, then, was its practice when it was going round the island.

Máel Dúin and his people fled with all their might, and the beast perceived them fleeing and it went into the beach to seize them, and began to smite them, and it cast and lashed after them with stones of the harbour. Now one of these stones came into their boat, and pierced through Máel Dúin's shield, and lodged in the keel of the curragh.

IX

Now not long after that they found another lofty island, and it was delightful, and therein were many great animals like unto horses. Each of them would take a piece out of another's side, and carry it away with its skin and its flesh, so that out of their sides streams of crimson blood were breaking, and thereof the ground was full.

So they left that island swiftly, madly, hastily (and they were) sad, complaining, feeble; and they knew nothing whither in the world they were going and in what stead they should find aidance or land or ground.

X

Now they came to another great island, after great weariness of hunger and thirsting and they sad and sighing, having lost all hope of aidance. In that island were many trees: full-fruited were they, with great golden apples upon them. Red short animals like swine were under those trees. Now, they used to go to those trees and strike them with their hind-legs, so that the apples would fall from the trees, and then they would consume them. From dawn to sunset the animals did not appear at all, but they used to stay in the caverns of the ground. Round about that island many birds were swimming out on the waves. From Matins to None further and further they used to swim from the island. But from None to Vespers nearer and nearer they used to come to the island, and arrive therein after sunset.

Then they used to strip off the apples and eat them. 'Let us go', saith Máel Dúin, 'into the island wherein the birds are. Not harder for us (to do so) than for the birds.' One of the crew went to see the island, and he called his comrade to him on shore. Hot was the ground under their feet, and they could not dwell there for its warmth, because it was a fiery land, and the animals used to heat the ground above them.

On the first day they brought with them a few of the apples which they were eating in their boat. When the morning was bright the birds went from the island swimming to sea. With that the fiery animals were up-raising their heads out of the, caves, and kept eating the apples till sundown. When they were put back into their caves the birds use to come in place of them, to eat the apples. Then Máel Dúin went with his people, and they collected all the apples that were there that night. Alike did the apples forbid hunger and thirst from them. So then they filled their boat with the apples as seemed good to them, and went again to sea.

XI

Now when those apples failed and their hunger and thirst were great and when their mouths and their noses were full of the stench of the sea, they sighted an island which was not large, and therein (stood) a fort surrounded by, a white, high rampart as if it were built of burnt lime, or as if it were all one rock of chalk. Great was its height from the sea: it all but reached the clouds. The fort was open wide. Round the rampart were great, snow-white houses. When they entered the largest of these they saw no one there, save a small cat which was in the midst of the house playing on the four stone pillars that were there. It was leaping, from each pillar to the other. It looked a little at the men, and did not stop itself from its play. After that, they saw three rows on the wall of the house round about, from one door post to the other. A row there, first, of brooches of gold and of silver, with their pins in the wall, and a row of neck-torques of gold and of silver: like hoops of a vat was each of them. The third row (was) of great swords, with hilts of gold and of silver, The rooms were full of white quilts and shining garments. A roasted ox moreover, and a flitch in the midst of the house, and great vessels with good intoxicating liquor. 'Hath this been left for us?' saith Máel Dúin to the cat. It looked at him suddenly and began to play again. Then Máel Dúin recognised that it was for them that the dinner had been left.

So they dined and drank and slept. They put the leavings(?) of the liquor into the pots and stored up the leavings(?) of the food. Now when they proposed to go, Máel Dúin's third foster-brother said: 'Shall I take with me a necklace of these necklaces?' 'Nay,' saith Máel Dúin, 'not without guard is the house.' Howbeith he took it as far as the middle of the enclosure. The cat followed them, and leapt through him (the foster-brother) like a fiery arrow, and burnt him so that he became ashes, and (then) went back till it was on its pillar. Then Máel Dúin soothed the cat with his words, and set the necklace in its place and cleansed the ashes from the floor of the enclosure, and cast them on the shore of the sea.

Then they went on board their boat, praising and, magnifying the Lord.

XII

Early on the morning of the third day after that they espy another island, with a brazen palisade over the midst of it which divided the island in two, and they espied great flocks of sheep therein, even a black flock on this side of the fence and a white flock on the far side. And they saw a big man separating the flocks. When he used to fling a white sheep over the fence from this side to the black sheep it became black at once. So, when he used to cast a black sheep over the fence to the far side, it became white at once. The men were adread at seeing that. 'This were well for us (to do)' saith Máel Dúin: 'let us cast two rods into the island. If they change colour we (also) shall change if we land on it.' So they flung a rod with black bark on the side wherein were the white sheep, and it became white at once. Then they flung a peeled white rod on the side wherein were the black sheep and it became black at once.

‘Not fortunate(?) was that experiment,’ saith Máel Dúin. ‘Let us not land on the island. Doubtless ours colour would not have fared better than the rods.’

They went back from the island in terror. On the third day afterwards they perceived another island great and wide, with a herd of beautiful swine. therein. Of these they killed a small pig. Then they were unable to carry it to be roasted so they all came round, it. They cooked it and bore it into their boat.

Then they saw a great mountain in the island, and they proposed to go and view the island from it. Now when Diurán the Rhymer and Germán went to visit the mountain they found before them a broad river which was not deep. Into this river Germán dipped the handle of his spear and at once it was consumed as if fire had burnt it. And (so) they went no further. Then, too, they saw, on the other side of the river, great hornless oxen lying down, and a huge man sitting by them. Germán after this struck his spear-shaft against his shield. to frighten the oxen. ‘Why dost thou frighten the silly calves?’ saith that huge herdsman. ‘Where are the dams of these calves’ saith Germán. ‘They are on the other side of yonder mountain,’ saith he Diurán and Germán return to their comrades, and tell them the tidings.

So thence they (all) went.

XIV

Not long thereafter they found an island, with a great hideous mill, wherein was a miller huge... hideous. They asked him ‘what mill is this?’ ‘Not... indeed’, saith he... asks what ye shall not know.’ ‘Nay’ say they. ‘Half the corn of your country,’ saith he, ‘is ground here. Every thing which is begrudged is ground in this mill saith he.

With that they see the heavy, countless loads on horses, and, human beings (going) to the mill and from it, again; only that what was brought from it was carried westward. Again they asked: ‘What is the name of this mill? Inber Tre-cenand,’ saith the miller. Then after this they signed themselves with the sign of Christ’s cross. When they heard and saw all these things they went on their way, into their boat.

XV

Now when they went from that island of the mill they found a large island, and a great multitude of human beings therein. Black were these, both in bodies and raiment. Fillets round their heads, and they rested not from wailing. An unlucky lot fell to one of Máel Dúin’s two foster-brothers to land on the island. When he went to the people who were wailing he at once became a comrade of theirs and began to weep along with them. Two were sent to bring him thence, and they did not recognise him amongst the others (and) they themselves turned to lament. Then said Máel Dúin: ‘Let four (of you)’ saith he, ‘go with your weapons, and bring ye the men perforce, and look not at the, land nor the air, and put your garments round your noses and round your mouths, and breathe not, the air of the land, and take not your eyes off your own men

The four went, and brought back with them perforce the other two When they were asked what they had seen in the land, they would say: ‘Verily, we know not, say they; ‘but what we saw (others doing)’we did

Thereafter they came rapidly from the island.

XVI

Thereafter they come to another lofty island, wherein were four fences, which divided it into four parts. A fence of gold, first: another of silver: the third fence of brass: and the fourth of crystal. Kings in the fourth division, queens in a another, warriors in another, maidens in the other. A maiden went to meet them and brought them on land, and gave them food. They likened it to cheese; and whatever taster was pleasing to anyone he would find it therein. And she dealt (liquor) to them out of a little vessel, so that they, slept an intoxication of three days and three nights. All this time the maiden was tending them. When they awoke on the third day they were in their boat at sea. Nowhere did they see their island or their maiden.

Then they rowed away.

XVII

Thereafter they found another island which was not large. Therein was a fortress with a brazen door and brazen fastenings thereon. A bridge of glass (rose) by the portal. When they used to go up on the bridge they would fall down backwards. With that they espy a woman coming out from the fortress, with a pail in her hand. Out of the lower part of the bridge she lifts a slab of glass, and she filled the pail out of the fountain which flowed beneath the bridge, and went again into the fortress.

‘A housekeeper comes for Máel Dúin!’ saith Germán. ‘Máel Dúin indeed’, saith she, closing the door behind her.

After this they were striking the brazen fastenings and the brazen net that was before them, and then the sound which they made was a sweet and soothing music, which sent them to sleep till the morrow morning.

When they awoke they saw the same woman (coming) out of the fortress, with her pail in her hand and she fills (it) under the same slab.

‘But a housekeeper comes to meet Máel Dúin! saith Germán.

‘Marvellously valuable do I deem Máel Dúin!’ saith she, shutting the enclosure after her.

The same melody lays them low then till the morrow. Three days and three nights were they in that wise. On the fourth day thereafter the woman went to them. Beautiful, verily, came she there. She wore a white mantle, with a circlet of gold round her hair. Golden hair she had. Two sandals of silver on her rosy feet. A brooch of silver with studs of gold in her mantle, and a filmy, silken smock next her white skin.

‘My welcome to thee, O Máel Dúin!’ saith she; and she named each man (of the crew) apart, by his own name. ‘It is long since your coming here hath been known and understood.

Then she takes (them) with her into a great house that stood near the sea, and hauls up their boat on shore. Then they saw before them in the house a couch for Máel Dúin alone, and a couch for every three of his people. She brought them in one pannier food like unto cheese or táth. Sheer gave a share to every three. Every savour that each desired this he would find therein. There she tended Máel Dúin apart. And she filled her pail under the same slab, and dealt liquor to them. A turn for every three she had. Then she knew when they had enough. She rested from dealing to them.

‘A fitting wife for Máel Dúin were this woman,’ saith every man of his people.

Then she went away from them, with her one vessel and with her pail.

Said his people to Máel Dúin: 'Shall we say to her, would she, perchance, sleep with thee?'

How would it hurt you,' saith he, 'to speak to her? She comes on the morrow. They said to her: 'Wilt thou shew affection to Máel Dúin, and sleep with him? and why not stay here tonight?' She said she knew no sin, had never known, what sin was. Then she went from' them to her house; and on the morrow, at the same hour, comes with her tendance to them. And when they were drunken and sated, they say the same words to her.

'Tomorrow' saith she, an answer concerning that will be given to you. Then she went to her house, and they sleep on their couches. When they awoke they were in their boat on a crag and they saw not the island, nor the fortress, nor the lady, nor the place wherein they had been.

XVIII

As they went from that place they heard in the north-east a great cry and chant as it were a singing of psalms. That night and the next day till none they were rowing that they might know what cry or what chant they heard. They behold a high, mountainous island, full of birds, black and dun and speckled, shouting and speaking loudly.

They rowed a little from that island, and found an island which was not large. Therein were many trees and on them many birds. And after that they saw in the island a man whose clothing was his hair. So they asked him who he was, and whence his kindred. 'Of the men of Ireland am I', saith he. 'I went on my pilgrimage in a small: boat, and when I had gone a little from land my boat split under me. I went again to land,' saith he, 'and I put under my feet sod from my country, and on it I gat me up to sea and the LORD established that sod for me in this place,' saith he, 'and God addeth a foot to its breadth every year from that to this, and a tree every year to grow therein. The birds which thou beholdest in the trees,' saith he, 'are the souls of my children and my kindred, both women and men, who are yonder awaiting Doomsday. Half a cake, and a slice of fish, and the liquor of the well God hath given me. That cometh to me daily,' saith he, 'by the ministry of angels At the hour of none, moreover, another half-cake and slice of fish come to every man yonder and to every woman, and liquor of the well, as is enough for everyone.'

When their three nights of guesting were complete; thy bade (the pilgrim) farewell, and he said to them: 'Ye shall all,' saith he, 'reach your country save one man.'

XX

On the third day after that they find another island, with a golden rampart around it and the midst of it white like down. They see therein a man, and this was his raiment the hair of his own body. Then they asked him what sustenance he used. Verily', saith he, 'there is here a fountain in this island. On Friday and on Wednesday whey or water is yielded by it. On Sundays, however, and on feasts of martyrs good milk is yielded by it. But on the feasts of apostles, and of Mary and of John Baptist and also on the hightides (of the year), it is ale and wine that are yielded by it.' At none, then, there came to every man of them half a cake and a piece of fish; and they drank their fill of the liquor which was yielded to them out of the fountain of the island. And it cast them into a heavy sleep, from that hour till the morrow. When they had passed three nights of guesting, the cleric ordered, them to go. So then they went forth on their way, and afterwards bade him farewell.

XXI

Now when they had, been long avoyaging on the waves they saw far from them an island, and as they approached it, they heard the noise of the smiths smiting a mass (of iron) on the anvil with sledges, like the smiting of three or; of four. Now when they had drawn near it they heard one man asking of another: 'Are they close at hand?' saith he. 'Yea saith the other. 'Who', saith another man, 'are these ye say are coining there?' 'Little boys they seem in a little trough yonder', saith he. When Máel Dúin heard what the smiths said, he saith: 'Let us retreat', saith he, 'and let us not turn the boat, but let her sterns be foremost, so that they may not perceive that we are fleeing

Then they rowed away, with the boat stern-foremost. Again the same man who was biding in the forge asked: 'Are they now near the harbour?' saith he. 'They are at rest', saith the watchman: 'they come not here and they go not there.'

Not long thereafter he asked again: 'what are they doing now?' saith he. 'I think', saith the look-out man, 'that they are running away; meseems they are further from the port now than they were some time ago', Then the smith came out of the forge, holding in the tongs a huge mass (of glowing iron), and he cast that mass after the boat into the sea; and all the sea boiled; but he did not; for they fled with all their warriors' might, swiftly hurried forth into the great ocean.

XXII

After that they voyaged till they entered a sea which resembled green glass. Such was its purity that the gravel and the sand of that sea were clearly visible through it; and they saw no monsters nor beasts therein among the crags, but only the _pure gravel and the green sand. For a long space of the day they were voyaging in that sea, and great was its splendour and its beauty.

They afterwards put forth into another sea like a cloud and it seemed to them that it would not support them or the boat. Then they beheld under the sea down below them roofed strongholds and a beautiful country. And they see a beast huge, awful, monstrous, in a tree there, and a drove of herds and the tree, and flocks round about the tree and beside the tree an armed man, with shield and spear and sword. When he beheld yon huge beast that abode in the tree he goeth thence in and flight. The beast stretched forth his neck out of the tree and sets his head into the back of the largest ox of the herd and dragged it into the tree, and anon devours it in the twinkling of an eye. The flocks and the herdsmen flee away, at once. and when Máel Dúin and his people saw that greater terror and fear seize them, for they supposed that they would never cross that sea without falling down through it, by reason of its tenuity like mist.

So after much danger, they pass over it.

XXIV

Thereafter they found another island, and up around it rose the sea making vast cliffs (of water) all about it. As the people of that country perceived them, they set to screaming at them and saying: 'tis they! It is they!', till they were out of breath. Then Máel Dúin and his men beheld many human beings, and great herds of cattle, and troops of horses and many flocks of sheep. Then there was a woman from below with large nuts which remained floating on the sea, waves above by them, Much of those nuts they gathered and took with them. (Then) they went back from the island and thereat the screams ceased.

‘Where are they now’, saith the man who was after them at the scream. ‘They have gone away’ saith another ‘band, of them.’ ‘They are not so,’ saith another band.

Now it is likely that there was someone concerning whom they (the islanders) had a prophecy that he would ruin their country and expel them from their land.

XXV

They gat them to another island, wherein a strange thing was shewn to them, to wit, a great stream rose up out of the strand of the island and went, like a rainbow, over the whole island, and descended into the other strand of the island on the other side thereof. And they were lying, under it (the stream) below without being wet. And they were piercing (with their spears) the stream above; and (them) great, enormous salmon were tumbling from above out of the stream down upon the soil of the island. And all the island was full of the stench (of the fish), for there was no one who could finish gathering them because of their abundance.

From Sunday eventide to Monday forenoon that stream did not move, but remained at rest in its sea round about the island. Then they bring into one place the largest of the salmon, and they filled their boat with them, and went back from that island still on the ocean.

XXVI

Thereafter they voyaged till they found a great silvern column. It had four sides, and the width of each of these sides was two oar-strokes of a the boat, so that in its whole circumference there were eight oar-strokes of the boat. And not a single sod of earth was about it, but (only) the boundless ocean. And they saw not how its base was below, or because of its height how its summit was above. Out of its summit came a silvern net far away from it; and the boat went under sail through a mesh of that net. And Diurán gave a blow of the edge of his spear over the mesh. ‘Destroy not the net’, saith Máel Dúin, ‘for what we see is the work of mighty men. For the praise of God’s name’, saith Diurán, ‘I do this, so that my tidings may be the more believed; and provided I reach Ireland (this piece of the mesh) shall be offered by me on the altar of Armagh.’ Two ounces and a half was its weight when measured (afterwards) in Armagh.

And then they heard a voice from the summit of yonder pillar, mighty, and clear, and distinct. But they knew not the tongue it spake, or the words it uttered.

XXVII

Then they see another island (standing) on a single pedestal, to wit, one foot supporting it. And they rowed round it to select way into it, and they found no way thereinto; but they saw down in the base of the pedestal, closed door under lock. They understood that that was the way by which the island was entered. And they saw a crowd on the top of the island; but they held speech with no one, and no one held speech with them. They (then) go away back (to sea.)

XXVIII

After that they came to a island, and there was a great plain therein, and on this a great tableland heatherless, but grassy and smooth. They saw in that island near the sea, a fortress, large, high and strong and a great house therein adorned and with good couches. Seventeen grown-up girls were there preparing a bath. And they (Máel Dúin and his men) landed on that island and sat on a hillock before the fort. Máel Dúin said this: ‘We are sure that yonder, bath is getting ready for us.’ Now at the hour of none they beheld a rider on a race-horse (coming) to the fortress. A good, adorned horse-cloth under her seat: she wore a hood, blue and she wore a bordered purple mantle. Gloves with gold embroidery or, her hands; and on her feet, adorned sandals. As she alighted, a girl of the girls at once ok the horse. Then she entered the fortress and went into the bath. Then they saw that it was a woman that had alighted from’ the horse, and not long afterwards came a, girl of the girls unto them. ‘Welcome is your arrival!’ saith she. ‘Come into the fort: the queen invites you.’ So they entered the fort and they all bathed. The queen sat on one side of the house, and her seventeen girls about her. Máel Dúin. sat on the other side, over against the queen, with his seventeen men around him. Then a platter with good food thereon was brought to Máel Dúin, and along with it a vessel of glass full of good liquor; and (there was) a platter for every three and a vessel for every three of his people. When they had eaten their dinner the queen said this How will the guests sleep? saith she. ‘As thou shalt say’, saith Máel Dúin. Your going from the island’, saith she, ‘Let each of you take his woman, even her who is over against him, and let him go into the chamber behind her.’ For there were seventeen canopied chambers in the house with good beds set. So the seventeen men and the seventeen grown-up girls slept together, and Máel Dúin slept with the queen. After this they slumbered till the morrow morning. Then’ after morning they arose (to depart.) ‘Stay here’, saith the queen, and age will not fall on you, but the age that ye have attained. And lasting, life ye shall have always and what came to you last night shall come to you every night without any labour. And be no longer awandering from island to island on the ocean!

‘Tell us’, saith Máel Dúin, ‘how thou art here’

‘Not hard (to say), indeed’, she saith. ‘There dwelt a good man in this island, the king of the island. To him I bore yon seventeen girls, and I was their mother. Then their father died, and left no heir. So I took the kinship of. this island after him. Every day’, she saith, ‘I go into the great plain there is in the island, to judge the folk and to decide (their disputes).’

‘But why dost thou leave us today?’ saith Máel Dúin.

‘Unless I go’, she saith, ‘what happened to us last night will not come to. us (again.) ‘Only stay’, she saith, ‘in your house, and ye need not labour. I will go to judge the folk for sake of you.’

So they abode in that island for the three months of winter; and it seemed to them that (those months) were three years. ‘It is long were here’, saith one of his people to Máel Dúin. ‘Why do we not fare to our country?’ saith he.

‘What you say is not good’, saith Máel Dúin’ for we shall not find in our own country aught better than that which we find here.’

(But) his people began to murmur greatly against Máel Dúin, and they said this great is the love which Máel Dúin hath for his woman. ‘Let him, then, stay with her if he desires’, saith the people. ‘We will go to our country.’

‘I will not stay after you’, saith Máel Dúin.

One day, then, the queen went to the judging where into she used to go every day. When she had gone. they went on board their boat. Then she comes on her horse, and flings a clew after them, and Máel Dúin catches it, and it clung to his hand. A thread of the clew was in her band, and she draws the boat unto her, by means of the thread, back to the harbour.

So then they stayed with her thrice three months. Then they came to (this) counsel. 'Of this we are sure, now,' saith his people, 'that great is Máel Dúin's love for his woman. Therefore he attends the clew, that it may cleave to his hand and that we may be brought back to the fortress.' 'Let some one else attend the clew', saith Máel Dúin, and, if it clings to his hand, let his hand be cut off.'

So they went on board their boat. (The queen came and) flung the clew after them. Another man in the boat catches it, and it clings to his hand. Diurán cuts off his hand, and it fell, with the clew, (into the sea.) When she saw that, she at once began to wail and shriek, so that all the land was one cry, wail and shrieking.

So in that wise they escaped from her, out of the island.

XXIX

They were for a very long while afterwards driven about on the waves, till they found an island with trees upon it like willow or hazel. Thereon were marvellous fruits thereon, great berries. So of these then they stript a little tree, and then they cast lots to see who should prove the fruit that had been on the tree. (The lot) fell to Máel Dúin. He squeezed some of the berries into a vessel and drank (the juice), and it cast him into a deep sleep from that hour to the same hour on the morrow. And they knew not whether he was alive or dead, with the red foam round his lips, till on the morrow he awoke.

(Then) he said to them 'Gather ye this fruit, for great is its excellence.' So they gathered (it), and they mingled. water with it, to moderate its power to intoxicate and send asleep. Then they gathered all there was of it and were squeezing it and filling (with its juice) all the vessels they had; and (then) they rowed away from that island.

XXX

Thereafter they land on another large island. One of it two sides was a wood with yews and great oaks herein. The other side was a plain with a little lake in it. Great herds of sheep were therein. They beheld there a small church and a fortress. They went to the church. An ancient grey cleric was in the church, and his hair clothed him altogether. Máel Dúin asked him: 'Whence art thou?' saith he.

'I am the fifteenth man of the community of Brenainn of Birr. We went on our pilgrimage into the ocean and came into this island. They have all died save me alone.' And then he shewed them Brenainn's tablet, which they the monks had taken with them on their pilgrimage. The all prostrated themselves to the tablet, and Máel Dúin gave it a kiss.

'Now', saith the ancient man, 'eat your fill of the sheep, and do not consume more than sufficeth you.'

So for a season they are fed there on the flesh of the fat sheep.

One day, then, as they were looking out from the island they see (what they take to be) a cloud coming towards them from the south-west. After a while, as they were still looking, they perceived that it was a bird; for they saw the pinions waving. Then it came into the island and alighted on a hill near the lake. Then they supposed it would carry them in its talons out to sea. Now it brought with it a branch of a great tree. Bigger than one of the great oaks (was) the branch and large twigs grew out of it, and a dense top was on it (covered) with fresh leaves. Heavy, abundant fruit it bore red berries like unto grapes only they were bigger. So (the wanderers) were in hiding, awatching what the bird would. do. Because of its weariness, it remained for while at rest. (Then) it began to eat some of the fruit of the tree. So Máel Dúin went till he was at the edge of the hill on which the to see whether it would do him any evil, and it did bird was, ato that place gone. All his people then went after him.

'Let one of us go', saith Máel Dúin 'and gather some of the fruit of the branch which is before the bird.'

So one of them went and he gathers a portion of the berries and the bird blamed him not, and did not (even) look (at him) or make movement. They, the eighteen men, with their shields, went behind it, and it did no, evil to them.

Now at the hour of none of the day they beheld two great castles in the south-west, in the place whence the great bird had come, an d they, swooped down in front of the great bird. When they had been for a long while at rest, they began to pick and strip off the lice that infested the upper and, lower parts of the great bird's jaws, and its eyes and ears.

They (the two eagles) kept at this till vespers. Then the three of them began to eat the berries and the fruit of the branch. From the morrow morning till midday, they were picking the same vermin out of all its body and plucking the old feathers out. of it and picking, out completely the old scales of the mange. At midday, however they stripped the berries from the branch, and with their beaks they were breaking them against the stones and then casting 'them into the sea so that its foam upon it became red. After that the great bird went into the lake and remained washing himself therein nearly. till the close of the day. After that he went out of the lake and settled on another lace in the same hill, lest, the lice which had been taken out of him should come (again.)

On the morrow morning the (two) birds with their bills still picked and sleeked the plumage (of the third), as if it were done with a comb. The kept at this till midday. Then they rested a little, and then they went away to the quarter whence they had come.

Howbeit the great bird remained behind them preening himself and shaking his pinions till "the end of the third day. There at the hour of tierce on the third day he. soared and flew thrice round the island. and alighted for a little rest on the same hill. And afterwards he fared afar towards the quarter whence he had come. Swifter and stronger (was) his flight at that time than (it had been) before. Wherefore it was manifest to them all that this was his renewal from old age into youth, according to the word of the prophet, who saith 'Thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle's.'

Then Diurán, seeing, that great marvel, said: 'Let us go into the lake to renew ourselves where the bird has been renewed.'

'Nay', saith another, 'for the bird hath left his venom therein.'

'Thou sayest ill', saith Diurán, 'I the first will go into it.'

Then he went in and bathes himself there and plunged the lips into (the) water, and drank sups thereof. Passing strong were his eyes thereafter so long as he remained alive; and not a tooth of him fell (from his jaw), nor a hair from his head; and he never suffered weakness or infirmity from that time forth.

Thereafter they bade farewell to their ancient man; and of the sheep they took with them provision. They set their boat on the sea, and then they seek the ocean.

XXXI

They find another large island, with a great level plain therein. A great multitude were on that plain, playing and laughing without any cessation. Lots are cast by Máel Dúin and his men to see unto whom it should fall to enter the island and explore it. The lot fell on the third of Máel Dúin's foster-brothers. When he went he at once began to play and to laugh continually along with the islanders as if he had been by them all his life. His comrades stayed for a long, long space expecting him, and he came not to them. So then they leave him.

XXXII

After that the sight another island, which was not large; and a fiery rampart was round about it; and that rampart used to revolve round the island. There was an open doorway in the side of that rampart. Now, whenever the doorway would come (in its revolution) opposite to them, they used to see (through it) the whole island, and all, that was therein, and all its indwellers, even human beings beautiful, abundant, wearing adorned garments and feasting with golden vessels in their hands. And the wanderers heard. their ale-music. And for a long space were they seeing the marvel they beheld, and they deemed it delightful.

XXXIII

Not long after they had gone from that island they see far off among the waves a shape(?) like a white bird. They turned the prow of the boat unto it southward, to perceive what they beheld. So when they had drawn near it in rowing. they saw that it was a human being and that he was clothed only with the white hair of his body. He threw himself in prostrations on a broad rock.

When they had come to him, they entreat a blessing from him, and ask him whence he had gone to yonder rock.

'From Torach, verily', saith he, 'I have come here, and in Torach I was reared. Then it came to pass that I was cook therein; and I was an evil cook, for the food of the church wherein I was dwelling I used to sell for treasures and jewels for myself: so that my house became full of counterpanes and pillows and of raiment, both linen and wool colour, and of brazen pails and of small brazen tellenna, and of brooches of silver with pins of gold. Insomuch that unto my house there was nothing wanting of all that is hoarded by man; both golden books and book-satchels adorned with brass and gold. And I used to dig under the houses of the church and carry many treasures out of them.'

'Great then was my pride and my haughtiness.'

'Now one day I was told to dig a grave for the corpse of a peasant, which had been brought into the island. As I was (working) at that grave I heard. from below me the voice out of the ground under my feet: 'But do not dig up that place!', saith the voice. 'Do not put the corpse of the sinner on me a holy pious person!.'

'(Be it) between me and God, I will put (it)', say I, 'in my excessive haughtiness.'

'Even so', saith he. 'If you put it on me', saith the holy man, 'thou shalt perish on the third day hence, and thou shalt be an inhabitant of hell and the corpse will not remain here.'

Said I to the ancient man: 'What good wilt thou bestow me if I shall not bury the man above you?'

'To abide in eternal life along with God', saith he.

'How', say I, 'shall I know that?.'

'That is neither hard nor for thee', saith he. 'The grave thou art digging will now become full of sand.' Thence, wilt not be able to but will be manifest to thee that thou art the man above me, (even) though thou buriest me.' That word was not ended when. the grave became full of the sand. So thereafter I buried the corpse in another. Now at a certain time set a new boat with tanned hide on the sea. I went on board my boat, and I was glad. So I looked around me: and I left in my house nothing from small to great, that was not brought by me, with my vats and wise lets and with my dishes while I was in that looking. at the sea, and the sea was calm for me great winds' come upon me, and draw me into the main, so that I saw neither land nor soil. Here my boat became still, and thereafter it stirred not from one stead. As I looked round me on every side, I beheld on my right hand the man sitting upon. the wave. 'Then he said to me 'Whither goest thou' saith he. 'Pleasant to me say, 'is the direction in which I am gazing over the sea now' It would not be pleasant to thee, if thou keepest the band that surrounds thee. What may this band be?' say I. Saith he to me: 'So far as thy sight. reaches over sea and up to the clouds is one, crowd of demons all around thee, because of thy covetousness and thy pride and haughtiness, and because of thy theft and thin other evil deeds. Knowest thou', saith he, 'why thy boat stops?' 'Verily, I know not.' 'Thy boat shall not go out of the place wherein it stand until thou do my will. 'Mayhap I shall not endure it', say I. 'Then thou wilt endure the pains of helplessness til you endure my will.' He came me towards me then, and lays his hand on me; and duly promised to do his will. 'Fling' said he, 'into the sea all the wealth that thou hast in the boat.' 'It is a pity', say I, 'that it should go to loss.' It shall in no wise go to loss. There will be one whom thou wilt profit. (Then) I fling every thing into the sea, save a little cup. Go now saith he to me, and forth the, stead in which thy boat will pause stay therein And then he gave. me for. provision a cup of whey-water and seven cakes. So I went', saith the ancient man, 'in the directions that my boat and the wind carried me: for I had platform oars and my rudder. As I was there then, a tossing among, the waves, I am cast upon this rock, and then I doubted whether the boat had stopt, for I saw neither land nor soil here. And I remembered what had been said, namely, to sit in the' sea where my boat should stop. So I stood up and saw a little crag, against which the wave beat. Then I set my foot, on that little crag, and my boat escapes from me and the crag I lifted me up, and the waves withdrew. Seven years am I here', saith he '(living) on the seven cakes and on the cup of whey-water which was given me by the man who sent me from him. And I had no (provision) save only my, cup of whey-water. This still remained there. After that I was in a three days fast', saith he. 'Now after my three days, at the hour of none, an otter brought me a salmon out of the sea. I pondered in my mind that it was not possible for me to eat a raw salmon. I threw it again into the sea', saith he, 'and I was fasting for another space of three days. At the third none, then, I saw an otter bring the salmon to me again out of the sea, and another otter brought flaming firewood, and set it down, and blew with his breath, so that the fire blazed thereout. So I cooked the salmon, and for seven other years I lived in that wise. And every day', saith he, 'a salmon used to come to me, with its fire, and the crag increaseth so that (now) it is large. And on that day seven years my salmon is not given me: (so) I remained I am (fasting) for another space of three days. At the third none of the three days there half a cake of wheat, and a piece of fish were cast up. Then my cup of whey-water escapes from. me and came to me a cup of the same size filled with good liquor which is on the crag here and it is full every day. And neither wind, nor wet, nor heat, nor cold affects

me this place. Those are my narratives saith the ancient man.. Now when the. hour of none arrived, half a cake and a piece of fish come to each of them all, and in the cup which stood before the cleric on the rock was, found their fill of good liquor. Thereafter said the ancient man to them Ye will all reach your country, and the man a that slew thy father, O Máel Dúin, you will find him in a fortress before you. And slay him not, but forgive him because God hath saved you from manifold great perils, and ye too are men deserving of death Then they bade farewell to the ancient man and went on their accustomed way

XXXIV

Now after they had gone thence they come to an island with abundant cattle, and with oxen and kine and sheep. 'There were no houses nor forts therein, and so they eat the flesh of the sheep. Then said some of them seeing a large falcon there: 'The falcon is like the falcons of Ireland!' That is true indeed', say some of the others. 'Watch it' saith Máel Dúin, and see how the bird will go from us. They saw that it flew from them to the southeast. So they rowed after the bird, in the direction in which it had gone from them. They rowed that day till vespers. At nightfall they sight land like the land of Ireland. They row towards it. They find a small island and it was from this very island that the wind had borne them into the ocean when the first went to sea.

Then they put their prow on shore, and they went toward the fortress that was in the island, and they were listening, and the inhabitants of the fortress were then dining.

They heard some of them saying: 'It is well for us if we should not see Máel Dúin

'That Máel Dúin has been drowned', saith another man of them.

'Mayhap it is he who will wake you out of your sleep', saith another man.

'If he should come now', saith another, 'what should we do?'

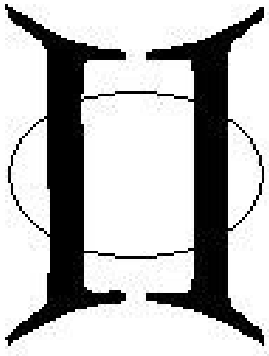
That were not hard (to say) saith the chief of the house: 'great welcome to him if he should come, for he hath been for a long space in much tribulation.'

Thereat Máel Dúin strikes the clapper against the door valve. 'Who is there?', saith the doorkeeper.

'Máel Dúin is here', saith he himself. 'Then open!' saith the chief, 'welcome is thy coming.'

So they entered the house, and great welcome is made to them, and new garments are given them. Then they, declare all the marvels which God had revealed to them according to the word of the sacred poet who saith Haec olim meminisse iuuabit. Máel Dúin (then) went to his own district, and Diurán the Rhymer took, the five half-ounces (of silver) which brought from the net, and laid them on the altar of Armagh in triumph and in exultation at the miracles and great marvel which God had wrought for them. And they declared their adventures from beginning to end, and all the dangers and perils they had found on sea and land.. Now Aed the Fair, chief sage of Ireland, arranged this story as it standeth here; and he did (so), for delighting the mind and for the folks of Ireland after him.

So Endeth the
Green Books
of Meditations



PART SEVEN

THE DRUID MISCELLANY

2003 Introduction

Do not confuse this section with “A Druid Missal-Any” magazine of the NRDNA.

Most of the contents from this dusty corner have been moved into the Green Books of Part Six, which is a separate publication, viewable on-line at the internet site into Green Book Vol 10. Originally, this Part 7 was going to be a good hefty 140 pages, and now its down to a handful, but I felt that this section was better suited to being “the waste bin” for things that absolutely didn’t fit anywhere else”.

As a result, two new Green Books developed and stole all the materials from this section of ARDA 2. One was a collection of materials related to Food & Trees and the other was Research Materials on Modern Druidism. Both of them also had considerable copyright concerns, so it was removed to the Green Books, which will not be commercially available. A few things from the cutting room floor were tossed in here at the last minute.

Yours in the Mother,
-Mike Scharding
March 20, 2003
Embassy of Japan

1996 Introduction

Most of the material in this section is of very little importance to most pre 1986 Carleton Druids (because of its heavy Celtic Pagan orientation), but I feel that it has great importance for understanding the later NRDNA, and it may be of use to modern Carleton Druids.

The books have been pretty much reprinted in order and verbatim from DC(E). This is better preserves the historical nature of these documents, to show the approach and "angle" that the DC(E) of 1976 was presenting, especially to the compilers of religious encyclopedists. Many issues of The Druid Chronicler magazine would essentially add to this section from 1976 to 1980. I removed the Book of Footnotes, broke it up and placed them under the appropriate texts rather than stuffing all of them in this obscure section of ARDA. I have added those sections and indicated so.

As with every section of this collection, none of this material is necessarily indicative of the opinion of any other Druid except that of the author(s). The material is not dogmatic or canonical, and can not be assumed to represent the Reform as a whole. Most of it is terribly out of date, and much **better** recent materials are available.

Day 1 of Foghamhar Year XXXIV of the Reform
(August 1st, 1996 c.e.)
Michael Scharding

The Drynemeton Press

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The Original Chapter Contents in DC(E) 1976 & ARDA 1996

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A Guide to Gaelic [*sic*] Deities (Moved to Pt. 6, Vol 10)
The Book of Bards (Moved to Pt. 6, Volume 6, Book Zero)
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A Basic Wiccan Rite (Moved to Pt.6, Vol 10)
The Book of Footnotes (incorporated into text)
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Credits (deleted)
Corrections (incorporated into text)

Figure 1 Could this be Druids in MN bundling together for warmth on Samhain, or an ancient world-record attempt for the largest go-go dancing group?

Pagan Musings

DC(E) Introduction:

This following was written in 1970 c.e. by Tony Kelly of the Selene Community in Wales. Tony, a most excellent poet and philosopher, was one of the founders of the Pagan Movement in the British Isles and, through his writings and concepts, one of those who initiated Pagan Way in this Country. (Pagan Movement in Britain in Britain and Pagan Way in the US both began as one with the same group of Pagan scholars, the same research into the ancient Goddess cults, and, in initial stages, the same rituals. The two later divided since all agreed that each country had its own particular needs and each required a unique approach in bringing back Paganism.)

What follows expresses well the feeling which lies behind the Paganism of today, and gives the hope that Pagans have for the future. Tony Kelly's inspired manifesto has become one of the great works of resurgent Paganism. As such, I feel that the Neopagan Druids will still find it inspiring for them. As for the non-Pagan Druids, it may increase their knowledge of diverse traditions and give them to appreciate the finer aspects and dreams of Paganism.

We're of the Old Religion, sired of Time, and born of our beloved Earth Mother. For too long the people have trodden a stony path that goes only onward beneath a sky that goes only upwards. The Horned God plays in a lonely glade for the people are scattered in this barren age and the winds carry his plaintive notes over deserted heaths and reedy moors and into the lonely grasses. Who now knows the ancient tongue of the Moon? And who speaks still with the Goddess? The magic of the land of Lirien and the old Pagan gods have withered in the dragon's breath; the old ways of magic have slipped into the well of the past, and only the rocks now remember what the moon told us long ago, and what we learned from the trees, and the voices of grasses and the scents of flowers.

We're Pagans and we worship the Pagan gods, and among the people there are Witches yet who speak with the moon and dance with the Horned One. But a Witch is a rare Pagan in these days, deep and inscrutable, recognizable only by her own kind, by the light in her eyes and the love in her breast, by the magic in her hands and the lilt of her tongue and by her knowledge of the real. But the Wiccan way is one way. There are many; there are Pagans the world over who worship the Earth Mother and the Sky Father, the Rain God and the Rainbow Goddess, the Dark One and the Hag on the mountain, the Moon Goddess and the Little People in the mists on the other side of the veil. A Pagan is one who worships the goddesses and gods of nature, whether by observation or by study, whether by love or admiration, or whether in their sacred rites with the Moon, or the great festivals of the Sun.

Many suns ago, as the pale dawn of reason crept across the Pagan sky, man grew our of believing in the gods. He has yet to grow out of disbelieving in them. He who splits the Goddess on an existence/nonexistence dichotomy will earn himself only paradoxes for the gods are not so divided and nor the magic lands of the Brother of Time. Does a mind exist. Ask Her and She will tell you yes, but seek Her out, and She'll elude you. She is in every place, and in no place, and you'll see Her works in all places but Herself in none. Existence was the second-born from the Mother's womb and contains neither the first-born, nor the un-born. Show us your mind and we'll show you the gods! No matter that you can't for we can't show you the gods. But come with us and the Goddess Herself will be our

love and the God will call the tune. But a brass penny for your reason! for logic is a closed ring, and the child doesn't validate the Mother, nor the dream the dreamer. And what matters the wars of opposites to she who has fallen in love with a whirlwind or to the lover of the arching rainbow.

But tell us of your Goddess as you love Her, and the gods that guide your works, and we'll listen with wonder, for to do less would be arrogant. But we'll do more, for the heart of man is aching for memories only half forgotten, and the Old Ones only half unseen. We'll write the old myths as they were always written and we'll read them on the rocks and in the caves and in the deep of the greenwood's shade, and we'll hear them in the rippling mountain streams in the rustling of the leaves, and we'll see them in the storm clouds, and in the evening mists. We've no wish to create a new religion, for our religion is as old as the hills and older, and we've no wish to bring differences together. Differences are like different flowers in a meadow, and we are all one in the Mother.

What need is there for a Pagan movement since our religion has no teachings and we hear it in the wind and feel it in the stones and the moon will dance with us as She will? There is a need. For long the Divider has been among our people and the tribes of man are no more. The sons of the Sky Father have all but conquered Nature, but they have poisoned Her breast and the Mother is sad for the butterflies are dying and the night draws on. A curse on the conquerors! But not of us, for they curse themselves for they are Nature too. They have stolen our magic and sold it to the mindbenders and the mindbenders tramp a maze that has no outlet, for they fear to go down in to the dark waters, and they fear the real for the One who guards the path.

Where are the Pagan shrines? And where do the people gather? Where is the magic made? And where are the Goddess and the Old One? Our shrines are in the fields and on the mountains, in the stars and in the wind, deep in the green wood and on the algal rocks where two streams meet. But the shrines are deserted, and if we gathered in the arms of the Moon for our ancient rites to be with our gods as we were of old, we would be stopped by the dead who now rule the Mother's land and claim rights of ownership on the Mother's breast, and make laws of division and frustration for us. We can no longer gather with our gods in a public place and the old rites of communion have been driven from the towns and cities ever deeper into the heath where barely a handful of heathens have remained to guard the old secrets and exact the old rites. There is magic in the heath far from the cold grey society, and there are islands of magic hidden in the entrails of the metropolis behind closed doors, but the people are few, and the barriers between us are formidable. The Old Religion has become a dark way, obscure, and hidden in the protective bosom of the night. Thin fingers turn the pages of a book of shadows while the Sunshine seeks in vain His worshippers in His leafy glades.

Here, then, is the basic reason for a Pagan Movement: we must create a Pagan society wherein everyone shall be free to worship the goddesses and gods of Nature, and the relationship between a worshipper and her gods shall be sacred and inviolable, provided only that in her love of her own gods, she doesn't curse the name of the gods of others.

It's not yet our business to press the law-makers with undivided endeavor to unmake the laws of repression and, with the Mother's love, it may never become our business for the stifling tides of dogmatism are at last already in ebb. Our first work, and our greatest wish, is to come together, to be with each other in our tribes for we haven't yet grown from the Mother's breast to the stature of the Gods. We're of the Earth, and sibs to all the children of wild Nature, born long ago in the warm mud of the ocean floor; we were together then, and we were together in the rain forests long before that dark day when, beguiled by the pride of the Sky Father, and forgetful of the Mother's love, we killed her earlier-born children and impoverished the old genetic pool. The Red Child lives yet in America; the Black Child has not forsaken the gods; the old Australians are still with their nature gods; the Old Ones still live deep in the heart of Mother India, and the White Child has still a foot on the old Wiccan way, but Neanderthal is no more and her magic faded as the Lil and Archan burst their banks and the ocean flowed in to divide the Isle of Erin from the land of the White Goddess.

Man looks with one eye on a two-faced god when he reached for the heavens and scorned the Earth which alone is our life and our provider and the bosom to which we have ever returned since the dawn of Time. He who looks only to reason to plumb the unfathomable is a fool, for logic is an echo already implicit in the question, and it has no voice of its own; but he is no greater fool than he who scorns logic or derides it impotence from afar, but fears to engage in fair combat when he stand's on his opponent's threshold. Don't turn your back on Reason, for his thrust is deadly; but confound him and he'll yield for his code of combat is honourable. So here is more of the work of the Pagan Movement. Our lore has become encrusted over the ages with occult trivia and the empty vapourings of the lost. The occult arts are in a state of extreme decadence; astrology is in a state of disrepute and fears to confront the statistician's sword; alien creeds oust our native arts and, being as little understood as our own forgotten arts, are just as futile for their unfamiliarity. Misunderstanding is rife. Disbelief is black on every horizon, and vampires abound on the blood of the credulous. Our work is to reject the trivial, the irrelevant and the erroneous, and to bring the lost children of the Earth Mother again into the court of the Sky Father where reason alone will avail. Belief is the deceit of the credulous; it has no place in the heart of a Pagan.

But while we are sad for those who are bemused by Reason, we are deadened by those who see no further than his syllogisms as he turns the eternal wheel of the Great Tautology. We were not fashioned in the mathematician's computation, and we were old when the first alchemist was a child. We have walked in the magic forest, bewitched in the Old Green Things; we have seen the cauldron and the one become many and the many in the one; we know the Silver Maid of the moonlight and the sounds of the cloven feet. We have heard the pipes on the twilight ferns, and we've seen the spells of the Enchantress, and Time be stilled. We've been into eternal darkness where the Night Mare rides and rode her to the edge of the abyss, and beyond, and we know the dark face of the Rising Sun. Spin a spell of words and make a magic knot; spin it on the magic loom and spin it with the gods. Say it in the old chant and say it to the Goddess, and in Her name. Say it to a dark well and breathe it on a stone. There are no signposts on the untrod way, but we'll make our rituals together and bring them as our gifts to the Goddess and Her God in the great rites.

Here, then, is our work in the Pagan Movement; to make magic where the gods would wish it, and to come together in our ancient festivals of birth and life, of death and of change in the old rhythm. We'll print the rituals that can be shared in the written word; we'll do all in our power to bring the people together, to teach those who would learn, and to learn from those who can teach,. We will infiltrate groups, bring people to groups, and groups to other groups in our common devotion to the goddesses and gods of Nature. We will not storm the secrets of any coven, nor profane the tools, the magic, and still less, the gods of another.

We'll collect the myths of the ages, of the people and of the Pagans of other lands, and we'll study the books of the wise and we'll talk to the very young. And whatever the Pagan needs

in her study, or her worship, then it is our concern, and the Movement's business to do everything possible to help each other in our worship of the gods we love.

We are committed with the lone Pagan on the seashore, with he who worships in the fastness of a mountain range of she who sings the old chant in a lost valley far from the metalled road. We are committed with the wanderer, and equally with the prisoner, disinherited from the Mother's milk in the darkness of the industrial wens. We are committed too with the coven, with the circular dance in the light of the full moon, with the great festivals of the sun, and with the gatherings of the people. We are committed to build our temples in the towns and in the wilderness, to buy the lands and the streams fro the landowners and give them to the Goddess for Her children's use, and we'll replant the greenwood as it was of old for love of the dryad stillness, and for love of our children's children.

When the streams flow clear and the winds blow pure, and the sun nevermore rises unreknowned nor the moon ride in the skies above; when the stones tell of the Horned God and the green wooed grows deep to call back Her own ones, then our work will be ended and the Pagan Movement will return to the beloved womb of our Old Religion, to the Nature goddesses and gods of Paganism.

(Selene Community, Con y Lloer, Ffarmers, Llanwrda, Sir Gaerfyrddin, Cymru, Wales)

Different Strokes

By Isaac Bonewits
Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1975

[This section is terribly out of date, but it is shown to you in its historical originality. Do you notice a bias in the presentation? Scharding]

After studying the materials available from the various Branches of Reformed Druidism, it is possible that you may not find any of them to your personal spiritual taste. Therefore, we append a list of various other organizations you may find more to your liking. Feel free to write to them about their beliefs, activities and goals. Always include a stamped, self-addressed envelope (a large one) with ever request for information. Those organizations with a star (*) attached publish newsletters, magazines or other periodicals .Bonewits

Neopagan:
Coven du Bandia Grassail, Alliston, MA
Manhattan Pagan Way Grove, New York, NY 10022
Children of the Moon, Bladensburg, MD 20710
Ordo Templi Dianos, Lake Worth, FL 33460
Sabaean Religious Order, Chicago, IL 60613
Chicago Mithraeum, Chicago, IL 60614
Temple of Isis, Chicago, IL 60656
Temple of Uranus, Chicago, IL 60637
Church of All Worlds,* St. Louis, MO 63130
Church of Seven Arrows, ULC Denver, CO 80210
Feraferia, * Altadena CA 91001
Temple, Tujunga, CA 91042
Church of the Eternal Source,* Burbank, CA 91505
Council of Earth Religions, San Diego, CA 92116
Temple of the Golden Calf, Berkeley, CA 94704

Wiccan:
Seax-Wicca, *Weirs Beach, NH 03246
Temple of Rebirth, Inc., Passaic NJ 07055
Theos & Phoenixm,* Commack, NY 11725
Moonstar/Starrcraft, Watertown, NY 13601
Association of Cymmry Wicca, * Atlanta Metro Branch, Smyrna, GA 30080
American Order of the Brotherhood of Wicca,St.Paul, MN 55165
Church and School of Wicca, * Salem, MO 65560
Wicca Contact Service, Dallas TX 75205
The Dianic Craft,* Dallas, TX 75221
Arianhu Church, Albuquerque, NM 87101
Susan B Anthony Coven, Venice CA 90291
Church of Wicca of Bakersfield, CA 93304
New Reformed Orthodox Order of the Golden Dawn,* Oakland CA 94661
The Covenant of the Goddess, C/o NROOGD
Nemeton, * Oakland, CA 94661
The Elf Queen's Daughters, Seattle, WA 98104

Other:
The Humanist Society:* check local phone book.
The Theosophical Society:* clpb
The Vedanta Society:*
The Universal Life Church, Inc.,* 601 3rd St, Modesto, CA 52951
The Buddhist Churches in America:* clpb
The Socialist Party:* clpb
The Society of Friends (Quakers):* clpb
The Swedenborgian Churches: * clpb

The Spiritualist Churches:* clpb
Note: The Majority of the addresses in the first two sections were taken from "The Pagan Yellow Pages," which were published over two years ago. Addresses may not be current. A letter of inquiry to the "Forum" of Green Egg (Box 2953, St. Louis, MO 63130) will usually produce a reply.Bonewits

Ecology:
Druids of every Branch of the Reform are deeply concerned with ecological matters. Therefore, we present a list of some of the more effective ecological and conservation organizations in the United States. Each of them deserves your support and (if you live close enough) your volunteer time.
Write to them, enclosing a large self-addressed, stamped envelope, to find out if there are local branches in your area and how you can help.
America the Beautiful Fund, 219 Shoreham Bldg., Washington, DC 20005
California Tomorrow, Monadnock Bldg., 681 Market St., San Francisco, CA 94105
Defenders of Wildlife, 2000 "N" St NW, #201, Wash DC 20036
Environmental Defense Fund, 162 Old Town Rd, East Setauket, NY 11733
Friends of the Earth, 529 Commercial St, San Francisco, CA 94111
National Audubon Society, box 5133 Church St Station, NY NY 10008
National Parks Association 1701 18th St NW, Wash DC 20009
National Wildlife Federation, 1412 16th St NW, Wash DC 20036
National Resources Defense Council, 15 West 44th St, NY, NY 10036
The Nature Conservancy, 1800 North Kent St, Arlington VA 22209
Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Box 321, Bolinas, CA 94924
Sierra Club, 220 Bush St, San Francisco, CA 94104
Wilderness Society, 1901 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Wash DC 20006
World Wildlife Fund, 901 17th St NW, Wash DC 20005

Figure 2 Sturdy engineering endures.

The Sociology of the RDNA

By Irony Sade
November 1998
(New to ARDA 2)

Introduction

In this paper I intend to demonstrate that the great sociological theories of Schleiermacher, Marx, Durkheim and others are applicable to the study of the Reformed Druids of North America. I believe that these theories can shed useful light on even a movement as peculiar as the RDNA and that the Druids themselves hold some valuable contributions for the general study of religion. I intend to demonstrate that while they do not call themselves a religion, and perhaps ought not to do so on philosophic grounds, the Reformed Druids share enough of the qualities of a religious movement to be usefully studied as such. I will discuss the sources and methodological problems involved in this kind of study, give an introduction to the Reformed Druids, and a brief sketching of their origins and belief. Next I will address the question of religious applicability, and finally delve into the examination of the sociological theories of Schleiermacher, Marx, and Durkheim as they relate to the Reformed Druids.

Disclaimer and Acknowledgments

It must always be remembered that in matters of religious belief each individual can express only his or her conception of what a religion is or teaches. This is especially true of Reformed Druidism. The Druidic path is an intensely individualistic one and each Druid can only speak for sure of what he or she has found. To a certain extent this also holds for describing the movement as a whole. The way in which I see Reformed Druidism is only one amongst the many views that can be taken of it. Anyone wanting to take a serious look at the subject should be careful to view it through more than one lens.

Which brings me to a certain methodological problem with this study. Most- if not all- of the scholarly work that has been done regarding the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton has been done by one man- Michael Scharding. Archdruid of the Carleton Grove from the spring of 1993 to that of 1994 he cosponsored the most recent revival of the Druids at Carleton (1995-6) and remains an influential- albeit absent- friend at the time of this writing. Michael Scharding majored in History as an undergraduate and in 1994 undertook the wonderfully self-referential endeavor of researching the history of the Reformed Druids for his Senior Integrative Exercise. In 1996 he revised this paper into a rather longer one, A General History of Reformed Druidism in America, and published it along with nearly all the collected writings of Reformed Druids past in A Reformed Druid Anthology, of which he was also the associate editor. "As a result of this research," he writes, "I've probably collected and read more Reformed Druid material and talked with more Druids from the different factions than any other Reformed Druid (except possibly Isaac Bonewits.) This means that I'm either an 'expert' or I am now more irreparably confused in my Druidism than ever as a result."[1] It also means that no academic study of Reformed Druidism to date- to my knowledge- has escaped from his shadow.

[1] In his forward to A General History... A Reformed Druid Anthology, pp. 331.

Daniel Hansen's American Druidism is a wonderful field guide to the various Druid groups of the Americas, and provides a fine history of the RDNA, but, as Mr. Scharding has commented, "it would not be a good book to compare my opinions against as I had a great deal to do with getting [it] published."

Margot Alder also talks about the RDNA in what many consider the definitive work on the Neo-Pagan movement, Drawing Down the Moon, but says very little that Scharding does not.

Isaac Bonewits also mentions the RDNA at Carleton in Real Magic but discusses them primarily in terms of one of their rituals, which he uses as an example to illustrate his theories on magic working. In short, beyond a few oral interviews performed by the College archivist and others and the preserved writings of past and present Druids there is little written work to study.

To date, Michael Scharding represents the most influential academic voice in the study of Reformed Druidism. Except by performing new, original research it is nearly impossible not to be influenced by his perspective on the movement. As mentioned above, any adequate study of religion ought to view it through more than one lens. Luckily most of the progenitors of the movement are still alive and much of its history has been recorded and stored so the possibility of original studies remains. I write this merely to make the reader aware of Scharding's influence. The study of Reformed Druidism is both indebted to and dominated by him, and, while I have drawn extensively on my own observations, interviews, research, and experience as Archdruid over the past three years, this paper is no exception. People who wish a clearer look at the movement are encouraged to explore it for themselves.

Finally let me make one technical note. Wherever I refer to 'Druids' in this paper I mean the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College, past and present. I do not intend to discuss the Paleo-Druids of the Old World, nor the Meso-Druids of Brittany revived in 1717, nor most of the other Neo-Druid groups in America except as they directly relate to our understanding of the RDNA. If you want an overview of them, read Hansen. With that caveat, let us begin.

Irony Sade
Prentice 206
November, 1998

Section I

An Introduction to Reformed Druidism

"Religions that combine humor, play, and seriousness are a rare species," Margot Adler wrote. "Once you embark on a journey of change in perception, even when you start this journey as 'play,' you can end up in waters far different from those you may have originally intended to enter."[2] Reformed Druidism represents the embodiment of this sentiment. Created partially as a joke, partially as a reaction against authority, it nonetheless blossomed and grew far beyond the hopes and desires of its founders, becoming both sillier than they had intended, and far more serious than they had ever imagined.

Reformed Druidism began at Carleton as a humorous response to the ruling that all students attend a set number of religious services each term. The early flavor of the movement was always one of serious tongue-in-cheek, a combination of the intentionally profound with the pointlessly silly. The early Liturgy, for instance, was written in a playful pseudo-King James style both to provide a semblance of legitimacy and to tease the traditional profundity of holy writings. At the same time it contains some incredibly meaningful passages. Deborah Frangquist, one of the early formative members of the RDNA, recalls one of them nearly thirty years later.

> O Lord, forgive these three sins, which are due to our human limitations:
> Thou art everywhere, but we worship Thee here;
> Thou art without form, but we worship Thee in these forms;
> Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, but we offer unto Thee these, our prayers and sacrifices.

"I still find that one of the most profound spiritual statements I have ever heard," she recalls. "It informs my understanding of what I as a believing Christian am doing in Christian liturgy, including the Eucharist. Every time I ended out on the Hill somewhere saying that prayer, I was moved anew by it, and I don't think I was alone in that." [3] The Druids at Carleton today continue to exhibit this characteristic blend of the meaningful and the frivolous. Their celebration of Beltane- the first of May- in 1998 included both a pair of weddings as serious and beautiful as the nuptial pairs could ask and an extended bout of 'doughnut fishing,' a spontaneous game where people chased a doughnut suspended on the end of a string, trying to catch it in their mouths while being tickled.

It is, I believe, this persistence of humor and spontaneity, respect and seriousness that has kept Reformed Druidism alive at Carleton for the last thirty-five years and enabled it to spread as far as it has. Were it to lose either of these qualities the movement would be finished. It would become either the useless ghost of a religion or a sacrilegious joke. With them it becomes something both meaningful and liberating, a way of searching and of exploring life in the company of others and oneself that is not exactly one thing or another. Neither a religion by its own definition nor a philosophy by anyone else's, Reformed Druidism represents a unique and valuable creation of the human mind, and a fascinating confusion to the study of religion.

Section II

Origins of the Reformed Druids

The Reformed Druids of North America began, with no connection to either the Paleo or the modern European Druids, at Carleton College in April of 1963. At that time the college had a requirement for graduation stating that

> "Attendance is required at the College Service of Worship or of the Sunday Evening Program or at any regularly organized service of public worship. Each term, every student must attend seven [of ten] of the services or religious meetings."[4]

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[2] Margot Adler, Drawing Down the Moon, pp. 299-300

[3] This triad first appears in the Order of Common Worship as the invocation and again in nearly all the early liturgy. The Druids at Carleton have currently fallen out of the habit of actually using the old liturgy, but they still read through it for a good laugh and ponder it's many truths. See A Reformed Druid Anthology, Part Three, Liturgy of the Druids.
Deborah Frangquist in an interview with Eric Hilleman, Carleton Archivist, October 31, 1993;pp. 450 of A Reformed Druid Anthology.

[4] Carleton College Catalogue, March 1964, pp. 136. -ARDA-

A number of students felt that it was unfair to require people to attend services and decided to test the policy. The protesters were led by the original 'Triumvirate', consisting of David Fisher, Howard Cherniack and Norman Nelson. They noted the escape clause of "or at any regularly organized service of public worship" and realized that they could create and organize such a service themselves and offer it up to the relevant deans as a fulfillment of the requirement. The college would have two choices, as they saw it: either to refuse to recognize them and be accused of religious discrimination, or to let them graduate at which point the movement would be declared a hoax and the requirement further ridiculed.[5]

Instead, in the summer of 1964, John Nason, the president of the college, sent out a memo revoking the requirement. It should be noted that Nason had already decided that the college's policy of in Loco Parentis was outdated and may have been planning to revoke the requirement all along. The role of the Druids in its elimination is debatable, but they cheerfully took the credit for its disappearance.

Two things about this origin are crucial to the understanding of Reformed Druidism. The first is that the founders never intended the movement to last. The second is that the Reformed Druids had no connection what so ever to any other Druid group at the time of their founding.[6] "Indeed," writes Scharding, "this leads up to the greatest hindrance to the entire study of Reformed Druidism; the name 'Druid.' Many scholars will see the word 'Druidism' on a sheet of paper and suddenly a myriad of assumptions will strangle their minds."[7]

The Reformed Druid movement embodies none of the philosophy, worldview, cultural resonance or even religion of the Celts, Paleo, or Meso Druids. The name was picked because it was sufficiently venerable to be taken seriously and sufficiently misunderstood that the young RDNA could make up whatever they chose and not be called on inaccuracies.[8] As the story goes, Howard Cherinack's parents did not like indicating that they were Jewish on government forms, and had taken to writing 'Druid' instead. The Triumvirate picked up the idea and ran with it, inventing beliefs as they went. The subsequent history of the movement is complex and fascinating but I do not intend to address it here. Scharding has covered it more thoroughly than I am ever likely to and traces its internal dividing and developments over a thirty-year span. I will attempt to avoid much of that discussion except where it is relevant to our purpose here.

[5] It should be remembered that these students- the original 'triumvirate' consisting of David Fisher, Howard Cherniack and Norman Nelson- were in no way irreligious. David is currently an Episcopalian priest. They merely felt that the requirement was unfair on principle and should be tested. They also hedged their bets and continued attending the 'legitimate' services throughout their protest.

[6] This will be discussed more in section IV.

[7] ARDA pp. 339. This seems to be a thing that each researcher is at pains to learn anew

[8] "Mec"- Michael Scharding- wasted eight months of research before figuring this out. I knew he'd done so and I still fell for it. My desk is littered with fascinatingly irrelevant books on Druidism that have nothing to do with the RDNA.

Section III

Beliefs of the Reformed Druids

Two things were of primary importance for the Reformed Druids in the beginning, and have remained fundamental to the movement ever since. The respect for nature, and the respect for each individual's rights. The founders wanted to create a system that would contain a meaningful core while eschewing all dogma and orthodoxy. In the words of one Druid, "Reformed Druidism is a statement that religion has a tendency to become organized religion and [sic] which then becomes organization devoid of religion."[9] The founders were very conscious of this 'fossilization theory' and wished to provide no framework for organization that could be exploited later. As such, when the two tenets were devised and finalized in 1963, they were kept as simple and as inclusive as possible.

> The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
> And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it people do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life they are come face to face with it.[10]

These are the only two tenets of the Reformed Druids of North America- and the only two statements with which all Druids are ever likely to agree. Everything else is up to the individual. In their original form the tenets are rather cumbersome. They are often paraphrased as 'Nature is good' and 'Nature is good.' A more serious way of putting it, currently practiced amongst the Druids at Carleton is to say that first: The spiritual search is an important, individual, and life long endeavor, and secondly, that one way of searching lies through the study, understanding, and awareness of nature. Each of these phrasings indicates something rather different if they are taken literally, yet it is at one truth that they point. The only commandment I have ever seen attached to Reformed Druidism is Think for thyself! The tenets, however you conceive of them, establish the framework in which to do this.

Druidism teaches that you have the right to believe what you know to be true, no mater what anyone else thinks of it. At the same time it holds that you cannot simply pick what you would like to be the case, nor design a cosmology irrespective of what the world teaches. To be a Druid is to deliberately and consciously seek out the truth of the world and decide for yourself what it is you will believe. Margot Adler sheds some useful light on the matter when she writes "The original founders seemed to hold the fundamental idea that one should

[9] Internal correspondence ARDA pp. 338

[10] An interesting change in the modern phrasing of the first tenet is the omission of the idea that the spiritual search is universal. The reason for this is two fold. One motivation is a desire not to impose even that truth on others. Another is that it has become apparent that one can be a great Druid without holding that the spiritual search holds any immediate, personal, relevancy. David Coil, one of the greatest Druid apologists at Carleton today and the functional right hand of the Archdruid for the last year, holds the above view. He believes that upon death he will go back to being 'nineteen cents of chemicals,' end of story. He would rather live life that ponder its spiritual significance, and expresses one of the purest Druidic spirits on campus.

scrutinize religion from 'a state of rebellion,' neither embracing traditional faiths nor rejecting them."[11]

Druids look everywhere for inspiration. World philosophies, religions, science fiction, children's books, strange dreams, the flight of swallows; all are considered equally valid insights to potential truths that must be at least examined, if never espoused. As Scharding writes, "It was important to Druidism that you believed your own views instead of slavishly following those of others, provided that you had carefully examined them and judged them sound."[12] This intellectual honesty is a necessary- if not sufficient- feature of the Druidic search. Without it the movement would descend into utter relativism.[13]

Another significant feature of Druidic 'belief' is that it is compatible with almost any other religious system. It serves to accentuate rather than replace a person's faith. Michael Scharding is a devout (maybe) Catholic as well as being a Druid. The group today contains at least one Atheist Druid, Jewish Druid, Quaker Druid, Seventh Day Adventist Druid, and innumerable Agnostic and Confused Druids. Indeed, the people who have taken Reformed Druidism to be their only religion have always been in the minority. The movement is hardly a thing that one can be converted to. The most common reaction to the personal acceptance of being a Druid is one of coming home. My own was, "Oh- now at last I have a name for what I've always done." The inclusiveness with which Druidism approaches all other religions is one of its strongest and most redeeming features.

Section IV

Is Reformed Druidism a Religion?

There is an unwritten rule that any whatever any Druid may say about him or herself, no one is to make categorical claims regarding the entire movement. Druidism can be and has been a religion for its individual members. It has never claimed itself to be a religion. Druidism is above all a system of inquiry into life, nature and meaning. Depending on how one takes that the movement could be viewed either way. The official Druidic statement has been that the RDNA does not affirm or deny the validity of any religion, including itself.

The founders of Reformed Druidism certainly never intended to start a religion. Indeed, the persistence of the movement beyond the elimination of the Chapel requirement took many of the founders by surprise. David Fisher left the movement early on because he had begun to fear that he had helped to start something that was becoming dangerously close to a real religion. Its function as a protest was fulfilled, and yet the group remained. "For a great many Druids, the RDNA had introduced the possibility of taking personal responsibility for understanding and believing one's own faith."[14]

Druidism continued because people continued to find it meaningful and useful beyond its initial function as a creative protest. Still, did that make the RDNA a religion? The founders were careful not to call it such, though they wished it to appear as one for political purposes, and the movement has remained deliberately vague on this question ever since. Part of the reason for this vagueness is the fear of the 'fossilization theory.' If the RDNA had indeed found something meaningful in the realm of religion, it was felt that it had done so through its very simplicity. If defining themselves as a religion- or anything else- would engender the complexity and rigidity that people had joined the movement to avoid, they wanted no part of it.

One of the consequences of this refusal was the gradual splintering of the original RDNA into innumerable branches. Every so often someone would enter the movement who felt that it should be further defined. Each time this happened, after a brief struggle to change the whole RDNA, a new splinter group would form centered around the rebel and his or her followers. At present, so far as I can tell, there are nearly two dozen separate and related branches, all bearing the name 'Druid,' all spawned by definition or methodological disagreements. The first and most drastic of these schisms began in 1974 over the question of whether the RDNA should declare itself and its members exclusively pagan. This was exactly the sort of thing that many of the Druids- especially those for whom the Carleton grove had been influential- wanted to avoid. They loved the fact that one did not have to renounce any religious beliefs to become a Druid, and that the Druids brought together people of all different faiths to search together in a friendly, healthy manner. Others felt differently though, and a new group was formed.[15]

The old RDNA remained as it was, happily undefined and unsettled as to the religious question. Even in their second great interaction with authority, which seemed to hinge upon whether the RDNA represented an actual religion or not the Druids managed to escape without really settling the issue.[16]

From a research perspective the question remains. Is the Reformed Druid movement a religion? Is it a 'real religion,' whatever that means? Is it something to which one can legitimately apply the theories of Weber, Marx, and Schleiermacher as I intend shortly to do? It is apparent by now that I, at least, regard it as, if not a religion per se, at least something to which many of the great religious theories and debates are applicable. If I did not, all the time I have put into this project would be seen as wasted.[17]

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[11] Drawing Down the Moon. pp. 301

[12] ARDA. pp. 341

[13] One could argue that the Druids already embody such a relativism in that the closest thing we have to a statement of belief is really simply an insistence that you search truth out your self. If so, it is only the relativism of individual minds. Yet I do not believe that even this is the case. The intellectual honesty that Druidism fosters encourages clear sight and careful thinking, and it seems that even with a great many people searching in this manner, agreements and commonalties arise. It may be that when people look hard and carefully at the nature of reality they all find, on some fundamental level, the same things. It seems to me that even without an imposed order to the universe, relativism confounds itself against a deeper order that is already present. It is part of the answer to the problem of saying "This is the truth that I have found, which I will force on no one else- but it applies to everybody." A rigorous examination of this confusion will have to await the foredoomed attempt of working out a formal Druidic philosophy and metaphysic.

[14] ARDA pp. 339.

[15] See Scharding for a thorough discussion of this initial split, known within the movement as the 'Isaac wars.' Hansen also gives a solid cataloguing of the extant Druid groups in the United States today, their relationship to one another, and how each came to be.

[16] This was the almost famous 'Smiley Case' which will be discussed further below.

[17] Or as a furthering of the great and subtle joke that some have seen Druidism as being!

In what ways can the RDNA be considered a religion? Eliade defined the base of all religious experience as the personal experience of sacred reality or Other. Schleiermacher followed him in stating that it was the encounter between the finite and the infinite, which is the origin and object of all religion. To my mind, it is with exactly this encounter that Druidism deals. It is almost beyond question that on any functional level human beings are finite creatures. Through Druidism they engage freely in the spiritual search- the individual quest for understanding of the sacred. Certainly Druidism can and has dealt with all of the classical religious problems of ontology, metaphysics, soteriology, and eschatology, not to mention that of theodicy, the celebrated 'question of evil.' It has done so, however, on a purely individual level. Druidism never teaches that any particular thing is or is not the case- it simply teaches people to learn and decide for themselves.

All of the classic problems and issues of religion are discussed at Druidic meetings and debated at great length from a variety of views but in the end it is up to each individual to decide what to believe. What the RDNA does is to create a place where people of many different religions can come together to share their traditions and learning. Scharding credits this persistence to the delight in the possibility of taking personal responsibility for one's own faith. The movement had shown people experientially "the benefits of learning from people from other faiths in a non-hostile forum of interaction."[18]

The insight of the Druids, Scharding writes,

> "was that if the same story about, say, a bird making it's nest, can be interpreted by all religions as a useful analogy for their own religious beliefs, then people of all religions could benefit from getting together and hearing that same story.... As long as dogmatic theological statements remain out of the stories, the group can enjoy each other's company."[19]

It has often been denied that Reformed Druidism is a religion because it boasts no dogma or theology. 'How can that be a religion,' we often hear. 'It doesn't teach anything!' The short answer is that Druidism teaches people how to learn, not what is true. It will show you how to walk- not where to travel. In this it is exactly as much a religion as are the Zen Buddhist schools, or, for that matter, Taoism. The theories of the great sociologists of religion are usefully applicable to these systems. I believe that, even if it denies being a religion itself, they are no less applicable to Reformed Druidism.

There is one other problem that ought to be addressed. The question of what it would mean to declare the RDNA a religion. In a sense the question is academic because the movement intentionally never claims to be one. But from a certain perspective the question remains. If Reformed Druidism declared itself to be a fully fledged religion like any other, would it in effect be denying all religious validity? The argument runs vaguely as follows. Reformed Druidism affirms and denies no religious validity by its own admission. But the essence of religion seems to be a profound respect for the importance and validity of a personal encounter with the sacred. If the RDNA calls itself a religion just like the others, is it stating, in effect, that religious experience is not worth validating? The essence of religious tolerance is not unconditional acceptance of differences but rather an abiding respect for the sacredness of the other's Other. Druidism appears not to contain this. To put it differently, if Druidism includes itself in the set of Religions, is it saying that a religion does not have to affirm or deny anything at all? Druidism does not appear to contain any sacred. By calling itself a religion is it saying that there is no sacred to religion?[20]

I do not believe that this is the case. First of all, Druidism never declared itself, as such, to be a religion. If its members do so, that is their own affair, but almost invariably Druidism mutates and develops into something subtly different and much more complex as soon as it is adopted by a lucid individual rather than a group. Secondly, Druidism does hold an abiding respect for other experiences of the sacred. It simply holds their expressions, through theology, poetry, art, and philosophy as secondary portrayals of that primary experience. The experience of the sacred is holy and respected, whoever happened to have it. Their depiction of it is granted only as much validity as anyone else's. It is taken as one of many fingers pointing at the moon, not the moon itself. The validity of any and all experiences of the sacred stand. Religious expressions are viewed as mutable. Finally, Druidism itself would never- nor would any Druid that I know- state that there is no sacred in religion. It would merely insist that we each critically and honestly examine our own experiences, religious and otherwise, to seek out and understand the sacred within them.

Section V

Sociological Theory and the Reformed Druids

Of all the classical social theories, those of Friedrich Schleiermacher seem to most accurately describe Reformed Druidism.[21] Schleiermacher divided the depictions of religion in his time into those reducing it to functions of the will, reason, and imagination. When viewed as such, the primary vehicle for religious expression became morality, philosophy and art, respectively. Schleiermacher believed that each of these conceptions left out something crucial about the nature of

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[18] ARDA pp. 339

[19] ARDA pp. 341

[20] I confess that I do not completely understand this argument and have not given it the best statement or defense possible. I would gratefully welcome any clearer formulations of it.
It is almost regrettable that there has never been a serious philosophical study of the Reformed Druid movement. Druidism seems such a valuable tool of inquiry that one could see the attraction in developing a solid understanding and perhaps metaphysic of it. But it is not at all clear to me at this point how one would go about doing this, nor even that it should be done. It is not that I doubt Druidism could take the probing, but the defining that it would almost certainly entail seems against the spirit of the system. It may be that anything that was developed in such a manner would become yet another splinter group, another branch of the movement that would leave its original roots unchanged.

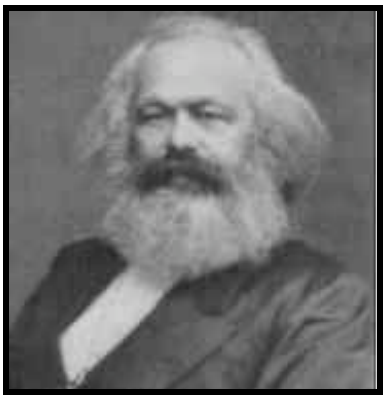
[21] In discussing the sociology of the movement, I do not intend to focus here on social factors leading to or even influencing the Reformed Druids. Michael Scharding discusses some of these including Judeo Christian influences, the influence of Asian religions, of the 'Sixties,' of Carleton, and toys with the possibility of Fraternal influences in the creation of the RDNA. Instead I intend to look at the applicability of some of the classical sociological theories to Druidism, leaving the discussion of factors to those who know more about them.

religion and so posited a fourth category. The primary faculty of religion, he felt, was feeling. Religion, he posited, was the encounter of the finite to the infinite. Feeling was that by which we experience this encounter. As pure feelings are essentially incommunicable between sane humans, other means of expressing the encounter must be utilized. According to Schleiermacher, morality, philosophy, art, theology, rituals, laws, legends, and even history are all secondary means of trying to express this primary experience. As such, have no final or absolute validity in the domain of religion! Only feeling can convey the primary experience, and feeling is essentially impossible to communicate.

Schleiermacher's view of religion is a profound call for tolerance. If all theologies and dogmas, all morals and rituals are only secondary expressions of the sacred, then even religious beliefs that completely antagonize one's own can be tolerated. People can realize that it is only the details of expression that they are fighting about when there may be no real disagreement over the feeling of the sacred. This view is almost identical to that espoused by Reformed Druidism. They too regard all expressions of religious truth to be equally valid as secondary indicators of an inexpressible reality that is never the less to be sought by each individual. They too exhibit a unilateral tolerance for all systems of religious belief and practice.[22]

Because no single expression of sacrality can be seen as being its primary experience people interested in approaching that sacred must engage in a constant process of interpretation of these secondary expressions. This hermeneutic circle of translation and interpretation is inherent to the Druidic search.

It is interesting that by both of these views religious experience and validity must remain forever a uniquely individual phenomena. Until it is possible to accurately communicate pure feeling, neither the Schleiermachers nor the Druids of the world will ever be able to convey to another what exactly their encounters with the Other- the infinite- were like. All forms of expression prove not only inadequate for the searcher's understanding of religion, but also for the sage's communication of religious understanding. The consequent of this, were everyone to operate within this model of religious understanding, is a plurality of completely unique experiences of the sacred, where each person honored the validity of other's experiences, and realized that no one's expressions of that feeling were any more adequate than their own.



Carl Marx had rather different conception of religion. Unfortunately his understanding of the phenomena was rather stunted by his hatred of it. Marx's insights into the nature of economics and political theory are profound; it is a shame he could not apply the same clarity of thought to the study of religion. It has been argued that Marx's statements on religion are inconclusive and contradictory, making it rather hard to discern what he actually thought on the subject, but from his critiques of Feuerbach, and of Bauer in On the Jewish Question a synthesis of sorts can be made.

It seems that Marx held that the ideas of religion emerged from social powerlessness. Religion served, in his mind, as a superstructure to maintain and perpetuate the economic base, which gave rise to it. It did this by maintaining the social class structure and placating the lower classes with promises of something better to come- so long as they held their peace for the time being. At the same time it seems that Marx held that religion emerged from alienation in the realm of civil society- the same force that produced divergent political and economic systems. Alienation leads to the objectification of an expression of one's self- or one's culture- which then is imagined as being independent of the thing it is an expression of. This is idolatry on Marx's view- the worship of something you yourself have created.[23]

It seems, though, that none of these ideas shed any particular light on Reformed Druidism. Druidism did not arise out of social powerlessness, does not maintain any class structure, and has no economic bearing what-so-ever. It also posits no higher being, objectified or otherwise, that could be viewed as a created and forgotten idol of civil alienation. Instead it seems that the RDNA emerged and has been sustained primarily through curiosity. Furthermore, Druidism does not seek- or serve- to maintain any authority, including its own, other than that of intellectual honesty, which is operative on a solely personal level. Druidism does take a certain delight is frustrating the authority of others, especially that which is seen as arbitrary, restrictive or simply absurd. In this sense it could be seen as a reaction to authoritarian structures, but not at all in the way that Marx envisioned. The RDNA has had only two major interactions with authority, and while one of them was the purpose of the movement's initiation, the struggle against an authority has never since proved a motivating factor in the movement's continuation.[24]

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[22] Within reason. Someone whose religious practice involved destroying the natural world on principle, or who ritualy murdered random folks would not be tolerated. But this would be on behavioral grounds rather than religious ones.

[23] In this understanding of Marx I am deeply indebted to professor Nader Saiedi of Carleton College.

[24] The first was the successful attempt to get the mandatory chapel requirement revoked. The second was the 'Smiley Affair' beginning in 1967 when the RDNA successfully stalled the US

Another sociologist whose theories mesh oddly with the RDNA is Emile Durkheim. Durkheim held fundamentally that religion is not irrational- not at all a function of superstition and error as others have often maintained. All religious experience is the experience of the power of society in his view. The immediate fascination of this view is that no society can ever exist without religion. He also believed that to understand religion we must go back to its base: totemism. On at the same time he held that as a society changes, its god must too. In totemism the individual identifies and becomes one with the totem, which in turn unifies and expresses the nature of his or her social group. As societies advance this identification becomes intellectualized and disguised. By the time a society reaches a reasonably advanced stage its conception of the totem has evolved into a fairly abstract, usually singular god. Along the way this conception of the sacred has been purged of all definable qualities. To adequately represent and unify a very simple social group was easy- they could all be seen to manifest attributes of the bear, for instance. As people specialize and society develops, one definable vision of 'god' can no longer depict them all equally. By abstracting more and more- and by removing all human characteristics- a societies god becomes more philosophic, beyond all description and understanding, all in the attempt to represent as many different objectified people as possible. The eventual and evident end of this so far as religion goes, is that a society will either have to simplify itself drastically to preserve its conception of god, or the individual itself will become seen as sacred- bypassing the objective representation of the individual as a totem, god, or anything else.

Druidism seems to be an exemplification of this second course. The very conception of god has been objectified away to nothing, and we are left with the individuals again, knowing that the sacred is important, but realizing anew that it is basically unknown. Each individual must seek out their own understanding of the sacred and, in doing so, it appears that each individual actually becomes in some sense sacred. While Reformed Druidism itself certainly did not begin as totemism and evolve to something else, it is entirely possible that the society from which it arose did. It may be that the emergence of the RDNA is the exact fulfillment and continuation of Durkheim's theory on religious evolution. It emerged at a time when society had diversified to the extent where not even a completely abstract and indescribable god without any qualities could represent every member of that society- for people are not themselves abstract. A specific conception of a personal deity could represent individuals better than an abstraction.

In this case the theory does shed useful light upon the RDNA. The movement is seen as the natural result of societal change and the forerunner of a greater degree of individual awareness and responsibility for religion soon to come. Indeed, as one looks at the kinds of religious movements that have been emerging since the 1960's when Druidism began one can see that many of them embody just this individualization of the sacred- though none of them do so as simply and carefully as do the Reformed Druids. I need merely instance the vast neo-pagan movement, the Church of All worlds, and other similar organizations where any non-socially murderous religious belief is tolerated, and where the church will ordain anyone as a legal minister for the asking.

On the other hand, Durkheim insists that all religious experience is the experience of the power of society. The Druidic path is one that can be followed without reference to society at all. It is useful to talk to others, to read the writings of sages past, or to ponder the teachings of other religions, but the essence of Druidism is clear and careful thinking about the world- a skill that could be practiced by the last man on earth. In addition, most, if not all, of the religious experiences reported by Reformed Druids have taken place in utter solitude. It is in their aloneness with nature that many of the Druids find themselves closest to the sacred. One could argue that if the individual itself has become sacred it is only natural that he or she would feel closest to the sacred when alone with themselves, but this argument smacks strongly of sophistry. It is also possible that the religious experience a person feels when alone is simply the transcendental power of society that they have absorbed and carried with them manifesting itself like a voice in the wilderness. Given the feeling and noetic content of many of these experiences I must seriously doubt that this is the case. I have yet to see a clear and convincing argument in its favor, but mention it because I cannot refute it completely.

Finally, Durkheim's description and justification of the social contract meshes nicely with Reformed Druidic thought. For him it is the inherent sacrality of each individual that makes it important for us not to break our promises to each other. For the Druids, an inviolate respect for the rights of each individual is inherent to the movement. Life is inherently sacred, many of them hold. No one has the right to violate that.

Section VI Conclusion

I hope that I have at least demonstrated that the Reformed Druids of North America, while not being a religion in the strictest sense, comprise a movement to which the sociological theories of Schleiermacher, Marx, Durkheim and others are applicable. I believe that much can be learned about the movement by seriously applying the theories of these and other writers, and by examining and developing the philosophic background of the RDNA. I hope that others will continue this search, and if they ever find from within the movement that they are acting against its spirit, that they will listen to the dictates of their hearts before forging ahead or dropping their studies.

What I am not sure that I have demonstrated is that the Reformed Druids actually embody a definable and distinct set of people that could be studied as a religious group. I think that what binds them together is the spirit of their search, the shared history of the movement, and their individual acceptance of the simple tenets. If that is not enough, to convince the reader, I ask you to consider how the worlds Christians can be considered part of one movement, embracing as they do both the Catholic church and the Quaker meeting halls.

Finally, let me say that for the most part, the confusion as to who is and isn't a Druid shows up on paper more than it does in life. This seems to be because, despite the changes, there has never really been any doubt as to who the Druids amongst people were. As Isaac Bonewits writes,

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Military out of Drafting one of their priests. See the Carleton Archives, Internal correspondence, and pp. 345-6 of ARDA.

"The role of the Druid has always been clear- scholar, and artist, poet, and priest, philosopher and magician- the one who seeks, preserves and expends the highest wisdom her or his people are capable of handling safely, and who uses the knowledge and inspiration for the benefit of their community." (ARDA pp. 323)

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Figure 3 Ehren, Merri & Stephen, c. 2001.

Figure 4 Stephen Crimmins gallantly trying to eat a dangling donut while being tickled, 2001.

Mike Scharding and the History of the Reformed Druids

By Stephen Crimmins, 2003

It is often said that the Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA)[1] at Carleton undergo a substantial change at least once every four years. Both the general membership as well as, and perhaps more importantly, Arch Druids are involved with the Druids for at most 4 years before leaving the Carleton Grove. With each new Arch Druid new ideas are infused into the Grove.[2] However, it is clear that this only begins to explain change among the Druids. It can hardly handle variations in degrees of change nor can it be expected to predict what direction a change will occur in. In order to elucidate the causes of change I will look specifically at the case of Michael Scharding, Arch Druid of the Carleton Grove from 1993-4.

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[1]The RDNA has become a nationwide organization with a number of groups, or groves, in various locations. It should be distinguished from the group of Carleton students which is a member grove of the RDNA, and which will generally be referred to as the Carleton Druids or the Carleton Grove. All Arch Druids mentioned are Arch Druids of the Carleton Grove.

[2]This is something that I have heard a number of times as a druid and more over as one of the current Arch Druids at Carleton. Some of the material that I bring in to this paper will be from my own experiences or conversations as a druid. Moreover though, the topic that this paper discusses, though in this case limited to the case of Michael Scharding, is a more general issue among the Carleton Druids and so one that in some ways affects me. I will try to avoid biases but I cannot promise complete removal from the subject, nor would it be completely helpful. To date what scholarly work as exists that focuses on the RDNA is the work of Carleton Druids [there are some works, such as Margot Adler's *Drawing Down the Moon* that mention the RDNA in a larger context. A listing and notes on the applicability of such works is available in Appendix E of Part 8 of Michael Scharding, Isaac Bonewits, Robert Larson, Richard Shelton and Mark Heiman eds., *A Reformed Druid Anthology* Northfield, MN: Drynemetum Press, 1996, 384-387. (Here in, ARDA) and of course updated in the current collection (ARDA II) in Part Eight. The field could certainly use scholars who have not been Reformed Druids but for now those with some interest will continue to do the best we can.

I should also note that I have for the past few years known Michael Scharding and from time to time have discussed Druidism with him though I had not read his essay on Reformed Druidism, *A General History of Reformed Druidism* until working on this paper nor have I had the chance to discuss the material in that with him. I have, however, asked him to look over the current paper for any insights he may have into his own psyche, as unlikely as those may be.

Scharding's Arch Druidship was one especially full of a series of changes. The changes Scharding's implemented, as will be seen, were in large part derived from a study of the history of the Druids that was more basically fueled by a general interest in history. Particularly, in the middle of his Arch Druidship, Scharding centered his senior thesis around the RDNA. Subsequently Scharding has published *A Reformed Druid Anthology (ARDA)*, a collection of essays, letters, and various writings produced by the RDNA and the second edition of the *ARDA* known as *ARDA II*. Regarding the last two works, Scharding has noted repetitively that he collected the *ARDA* in part for future scholarly use, but that he also intended it for use by practicing Druids. In Scharding's opinion it has become "an anchor of tradition for the most recent Carleton Druids, who…rarely want to root in the Druid Archives in the basement of their campus Library."[3] (The last part is a comment that I both must resent and find to be true) Scharding, on the other hand, did search out the Druid Archives and use what he found to shape his own Druidism. What I wish to examine is what need pushed Scharding to work as extensively as he did and to what degree that work influenced him as AD.

In the early eighties the activities of the Carleton Druids came to a halt after 20 fairly continuous years. In the mid eighties, a number of people interested in Neo-Pagan and Native American religions attended Carleton and restarted the Reformed Druids using what little they could gather about the RDNA and borrowing extensively from other religions. Approximately four years later Scharding came to Carleton, shortly after these 'renaissance' Druids had graduated. Scharding joined the Carleton Druids and, as will be discussed, took a heavy interest in the history of the RDNA.[4]

Scharding's pursuit of Reformed Druid history has had a number of effects on him. In an oral history interview, Scharding noted that he found that "the older Druids... had a much more lackadaisical attitude toward ritual"[5] where as the Druidism that Scharding had first wandered upon placed a fairly heavy emphasis on ritual. Finding this out freed Scharding to perform rituals more in a style that he saw the old Druids as having used and less in the style he was first introduced to. He used Druidism to explore "a philosophical bent about what the whole purpose of religion was"[6] as well as to question the importance of ritual as he found that the older Druids done. He seems to have found a lot about the older Druids that fit with what he had already come to consider in his own Druidism. I might conjecture that, in part, he was looking for and finding similarities, if unconsciously.

Whether or not there Scharding was picking out similarities with what he desired Druidism to be, the studies certainly affected his Druidism. On the contrary, the similarities in philosophical stances that he noticed allowed him to make use of such similarities in the activities that he organized. Scharding noted in his interview that "Basically, when I finished my studies I introduced a greater amount of silliness, play, and meditation to my services, which I began to hold in the earlier style, on a more frequent basis."[7] Like the older Druids he began to have weekly services with meditations, something that hadn't been seen among the Carleton Druids since some time before 1984. It wasn't something that every Druid could agree upon, but the permission of history meant that since it had worked in the past Scharding could legitimately reintroduce it.[8]

However, it should be understood that the Carleton Druids under Scharding did not come to be completely removed from the renaissance Druids. Some of the rituals survived, such as the Native American inspired sweat lodge. Indeed, Scharding became quite interested in holding sweat lodges monthly, when possible.[9] But even the sweat lodge was not in the form used by the renaissance Druids. When Brandon Schields, a renaissance Druid, visited in 1993 he taught Scharding and others "some of the old habits of the sweat lodge."[10]

Scharding is also clear that his research had a definite yet intangible effect on his Druidism. In his interview he discusses an incident where a Christian interrupted a Druid service. One of the less immediate responses was to "kick off a huge surge of interest in my research" which Scharding described as "sort of a search for validity"[11] since he, himself, was still unsure of how he could reconcile the Druids with other parts of his spiritual life. In finding validity, he noted the importance of understanding what had come before; a part of his experience with the Celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the RDNA "to connect with the past of Druidism, to tell all the other Druids that yes, we've been here a very long time, and other people have done the same things that you have done in your search for religious truth;" this was a feeling that his research had helped him with.[12] Moreover, it seems that the reassurance of the past meant something for the future of Scharding's Druidism. He felt a reassurance that since others before him had shown that "one can reconcile one's beliefs with Druidism on a stable basis throughout one's life" his Druidism could continue, whatever the other twists and turns in his life.[13]

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[3]Michael Scharding, Isaac Bonewits, Robert Larson, Richard Shelton and Mark Heiman ed., *A Reformed Druid Anthology* 2nd ed., Northfield, MN: Drynemetum Press, 2003-4, Part Eight, chapter seven. (Here in, *ARDA II*) Part Eight, "A General History of Reformed Druidism" is an updated version of Scharding's comps on the Reformed Druids. Unfortunately, while the initial paper and so the initial part of the "General History" are still scholarly, much of the later material seem to be more examples of Scharding's Druid related memories. They are, unfortunately, without end notes though in some cases it seems possible that they draw from various sources about the druids more than his memories. It is unfortunate that he appended the sections that he did in the manner that he did. It might have been better, if he did not want to expand the "General History" with scholarly sections that he might have included the later sections elsewhere. However, I must still say that Scharding is the person who knows the most of the whole course of the history of Reformed Druids.

[4]*ARDA 2*, Part Eight, "A General History of Reformed Druidism."

[5]Michael Scharding, personal interview with Eric Hilleman, 30 August 1996, Side A. As a conceptual division Scharding tends to divide the eras of druidism at Carleton, before his, into the old Druids and the renaissance Druids, at least outside of his scholarly work. The renaissance druids are those druids who restarted the RDNA at Carleton in 1986 after it foundered in 1984. Traces of it were receding by the time Scharding arrived. 'Older Druids' is a much broader term of everyone from 1963 to 1984. Since I am studying Scharding in this paper I will use his terms, with caution.

[6]Ibid., Side A.

[7]Ibid., Side A.

[8]Ibid., Side A.

[9]Ibid., Side A.

[10]Michael Scharding, *Five Year Druid Diary*, unpublished, 1 August 1993. The *Five Year Druid Diary* represents a selection of entries of Scharding's diary that he felt pertinent to Druidism as well as for future scholars. It also has comments and reflections from 1994 when he compiled the *Diary* in order to donate it the International Druid Archives.

As far as 'old habits' are concerned, the Carleton Druids, with such a quick turn over rate tend to assume that certain aspects are traditional that haven't been around for more than a few years.

[11]Scharding, 30 August 1996. Side A.

[12]Ibid., Side A.

[13]Ibid., Side A.

But why was Scharding the one that produced "A General History of Reformed Druidism," not to mention the *ARDA* and the expanded *ARDA II*, the last of which is contains 2400 packed pages? Was it merely, as he notes, that others were content with Druidism as it was but he "was a historian by training and stubbornly wished to know what my predecessors had done."[14] Of course his interest in history in general had something to do with his choice to study the Druids through their history, but there were other reasons as well. Clearly, Scharding was not the first AD trained at Carleton College as a historian[15] and many more undoubtedly had an interest in history. To be fair, there were earlier attempts to provide some sense of history. The third Arch Druid, David Frangquist, wrote a number of works, including The Druids Chronicle (Reformed) (DC(R)), a history, in mock biblical style, of the foundation of the RDNA. About ten years later, Richard Shelton began to collect an Apocrypha to the DC(R), consisting largely of letters of past Druids.[16] Additionally, a Blue Book of the Archives was kept and added to by successive Arch Druids, though it was lost from time to time.[17] Certainly, though, none of these publication and collections ever thought of rivaling the extent of the *ARDA* though they may well have been created to allow an understanding of the RDNA similar to the one that Scharding was attempting to achieve in his research.

It is worth wondering why Scharding did as much research as he did, far more than any previous Druid. I have already mentioned that Scharding did not possess a direct link to the older Druids. There was a gap which Scharding could not hope to overcome through talking with the Druids who were his immediate predecessors in the way that pre-renaissance Druids might have done. And while he may have had access to a certain number of their written works, Scharding later noted that he believed that "Far more tradition of the group exists outside of the printed matter."[18] Hence, the loss of a direct line meant the loss of a great deal of knowledge which the printed matter could only hint at. Moreover, much of the printed material that existed was not initially available to him. Scharding would have had access to the RDNA section of the Carleton archives, though at that time it was considerably smaller than at present. There was most certainly a copy of Isaac Bonewits' Druid Chronicles (Evolved) (DC(E)),[19] though notably missing was the Blue Book of the Archives which "was lost around 1985…found again" but not passed around, "it got lost again…and found again about '88, and got refound in 1994." However, that collection was never accessible to all of the members of the Carleton Grove."[20] Hence, not only was direct person to person contact unavailable until late in Scharding's time with Druidism, but paper records were also unavailable.

Yet, it would appear that Scharding had the tradition of the renaissance Druids to work from. The renaissance Druids themselves had made some attempts to reestablish the traditions of the Carleton Druids, in part through the influence of the Druid Chronicles (Evolved)[21] as well as a limited amount of contact with Richard Shelton who corresponded with the renaissance druids and celebrated a ritual with them in 1988. However, as Shelton himself notes in an interview, the major impetus from renaissance Druidism was Native American and Wiccan religions.[22] However much of an influence these new areas had relative to traditional RDNA Druidism is not important. What is important is that the renaissance Druids appear to have had a strong tradition that Scharding might have latched on to, rather than needing to study older Druidism for the sake of the remaking his own Druidism.

Scharding himself notes that in many ways his view of religion and his particular spiritual needs did not fit well with renaissance Druidism. While being interviewed he pointed out that much of what the druids were doing when he first showed up "wasn't incredibly satisfying," and that he "just hung out with them because they were the closest thing to what I was looking for."[23] He gives a number of examples of what made those Druids less than satisfying, including a general sense that the Druids had made up their minds about what a religion was and that they did not have a favorable opinion of monotheists.[24] This was a problem for Scharding who was still grappling with various issues about his own religious path; in becoming a Druid he was careful to make sure that it "would not violate his confirmation" with the Catholic Church.[25]

This is not to deny that there was any meaning present when Scharding first became a Druid. During a standard second order ordination, at the time, one was asked "'Do you think that the Earth-Mother is good?' If the recipient said 'Yes!', the druid sigil was drawn on their forehead" However, in Scharding's case, he was asked "Do you dig that the Earth-Mother is Groovy?"[26] Despite the unorthodoxy of this ritual, and despite later noting that this was "during my more serious phase of Druidism,"[27] it meant a lot to Scharding. [28] I note this because Scharding's seriousness was part of what made some of the rituals disagreeable to him. Likewise, when he first became interested in Druids he did so expecting to find something Celtic in the rituals.[29] But, rather than finding anything actually Celtic in either the renaissance Druids or the old Druids, he came to a conclusion illustrated by the following excerpt of a conversation with Richard Shelton.

> "I have achieved Enlightenment!"
> "oh?" he [Shelton] said
> "Yes! the RDNA has nothing to do with [original] Druidism! It's actually Zen Buddhism!"

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[14] *ARDA 2*, Part Eight, Introduction.

[15] David Fisher was the first. David Frangquist the second.

[16] Shelton's apocrypha took twenty years to be published and for the most part access to it is through its inclusion in the *ARDA* side by side with other apocryphal materials. To be fair, Shelton's apocrypha may have been intended more to counter the apocrypha presented by Isaac Bonewits rather than for a completely historical reasons. Cf. *ARDA* P. 39.

[17] Scharding 27 August 1996, Side A.

[18] Ibid., Side B.

[19] Ibid., Side B. Scharding spent a great deal of time and work in expanding the archives, bringing it from a section of the Carleton archives into what he calls the International Druid Archives. It is not clear how much was present though there is some evidence. Scharding himself claims to have enlarged it at least ten fold. Certainly much of the material was added through his efforts, either through visiting alumni or in response to a myriad of letters that Scharding sent out asking for material. Scharding's efforts are largely recorded in the Carleton Archives in a series dedicated to some of the less druidic of his activities.

[20] Ibid., Side B.

[21] *ARDA II*, Part 8, Chapter 8.

[22] Richard Shelton. Interview with Eric Hilleman, May 8, 1993.

[23] Scharding, 27 August 1996. Side A.

[24] Ibid. Side A.

[25] Ibid. Side A.

[26] *Five Year Druid Diary* , Reflections on November 1990. The Sigil is the name for a widespread symbol of the Reformed Druids, a circle with two vertical lines through it. The origin is unknown, though probably an invention of David Fisher, the primary founder of the RDNA.

[27] Scharding, 27 August 1996. Side A.

[28] *Five Year Druid Diary*, Reflections on November 1990

[29] Scharding, 27 August, 1996. Side A.

We then laughed along time.[30]

While Scharding found that old Druidism was no more Celtic than renaissance Druidism he still found reason to latch on to the former. While useful, it would be difficult to chart when these changes occurred and how such timing affected his research interests. For now, though, I will say that there must be more of a point to Scharding's research since many of his dislikes of renaissance Druidism could have also have been applied to old Druidism and much of what he accepted of old Druidism were points that he had previously found unsatisfying in renaissance Druidism.

I believe that Scharding's relationship with renaissance Druidism was actually rather similar to the lack of a relationship that he initially had with older Druidism. Yes, Renaissance Druidism was going on shortly before him, and he had a number of people to serve as links with it, but at the same time, the linkage was not complete. At the time that Scharding had arrived most of the original renaissance Druids had graduated or left Carleton.[31] What Scharding was first introduced to was only a fragment of renaissance Druidism, one that some of the Scharding's immediate predecessors tried to hold on to, but one which Scharding did not have sufficient access to make use of. Scharding has noted that when he arrived at Carleton The Druids were in a "slump" and so "it took me about six months before I found them."[32] Even after he attended his first ritual communication was often disorganized to the point where "I didn't hear about some of [the rituals] until it was too late" to attend them.[33] Farm House, which had been the center of Druidism during the renaissance, was lost to Druids and the loss was significant to many, including Scharding, who noted that "a new focus was required for the Druids."[34]

In addition to uncoordinated events, the leadership itself was rather fragmented. Scharding puts some stress on John Burridge as somebody who had been able to keep many of the Druids together. In his reflections upon his diary he noted that one ritual "was the last ritual where so many [people] were attending, probably because it was the last time John Burridge was at a major Druid ritual."[35] Scharding is even more blatant in an interview where he stated that "the group had faltered, back in '91-'92, because of John Burridge departing."[36] Perhaps even worse for the group was animosity among some of the members and the "loads of gossip circulating and people not going to rituals because 'you know who' was there."[37]

What all this often meant was that the number of rituals was limited and some rituals that were planned did not occur. As I have mentioned, the sweat lodge was an important ritual for Scharding. However, the first sweat lodge Scharding planned to attend "was cancelled when Jon Nauert accidentally bumped Andrea Davis in the mouth with his elbow (their relationship wasn't too good then) and things degenerated." Because of those and similar issues Scharding didn't actually participate in a sweat lodge until 1992.[38]

There were also certain features of renaissance Druidism that were no longer tenable. During the renaissance years and following

There were strong minds who made sure that rituals happened, and that was all there was. There wasn't any kind of totalitarian 'I'm in charge, we're going to make sure this thing happens' and such, it was more like someone showed up and said 'I'm going to lead a ritual on this day. Any of you guys want to come up?' and we'd all show up.

But as time passed fewer and fewer people wanted to take charge one person, "Andrea Davis, from the period of '89 - '92, ended up being pretty much the only person who ever decided to do anything;"[39] the old system of leadership was dying. Simply noting the date that Scharding chooses, 1992, it is clear that after Davis left there was a vacuum of leadership from then until 1993 when Scharding officially became Arch Druid, though undoubtedly he took some charge of the group before then.

Connected to the idea of leadership was the idea of a third order druid. After 1984 until 1993 when Scharding was ordained a third order druid, no one at Carleton was so ordained because, in part, there was no one to perform the ordination.[40] The nature of the third order, though, has changed significantly over time. In 1992, when Scharding decided to become the Arch Druid he "didn't really think there was much difference" between a third order and Arch Druid.[41] However, before Scharding could join the third order and take over the Druids he had to find out more about the third order and find someone to ordain him.

What I argue then is not that the lack of connection with the renaissance Druids, in addition to the old Druids were the *only* cause for Scharding's research into the old Druids, but it was an important influence.[42] I admit that part of the reason that Scharding used his research for his Druidism was because he was dissatisfied with the form of Druidism that he had inherited. But I might also suggest that part of his dissatisfaction comes from the lack of a stable connection to be had with renaissance Druidism and the faltering state of Druidism in his own day.

The results that I have found, of course, only apply to Scharding himself, though I am curious if other Druids, in similar situations, may have reacted in similar ways.[43] Related to that, I would ask, in some cases, particularly that of the renaissance Druids, why examining Druid history was not used to the benefit of the group. I might suggest that the renaissance Druids were not interested in history, and were already familiar with Neopaganism and Native American Religion before becoming Druids.[44] Of course, the ultimate question would be how this question, and where it fits into other questions of influence, might be used to examine the origins of the Druid rituals created in 1963 by David Fisher.

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[30] *Five Year Druid Diary*, 26 February 1994.
[31] Scharding, 27 August, 1996. Side A. He sets the years of the renaissance proper as 1986-1989. Scharding arrived at Carleton in the fall of 1989, right after those renaissance Druids would have left, and he did not become aware of the Druids until 1990.
[32] Ibid. Side A.
[33] Ibid., Side A.
[34] *Five Year Druid Diary*. Reflections, 10/3/91
[35] Ibid., Reflections, 11/21/91
[36] Michael Scharding, 27 August 1996, Side B.
[37] *Five Year Druid Diary* . Reflections, Mid April 1990. Scharding never goes into specifics about the rift.
[38] *Five Year Druid Diary*, 26 February 1994.

[39] Scharding, 27 August, 1996. Side A. He sets the years of the renaissance proper as 1986-1989. Scharding arrived at Carleton in the fall of 1989, right after those renaissance Druids would have left, and he did not become aware of the Druids until 1990.
[40] Ibid. Side A.
[41] Ibid., Side A. This is rather like the original organization where Druids only joined the third order to become Arch Druid.
[42] *Five Year Druid Diary*. Reflections, 10/3/91
[43] Ibid., Reflections, 11/21/91
[44] Michael Scharding, 27 August 1996, Side B.

David Fisher *the* Founder?

By Stephen Crimmins, 2004.

I recently had the privilege of transcribing an interview of the man who is generally known as the primary founder of Reformed Druidism, David Fisher. I was given the ability thanks to Michael (Mec) Scharding, who conducted the interview, as well as to Eric Hilleman for lending me transcribing equipment. The first thing that came into my mind was: how did Scharding manage to get an interview with Fisher who, I had thought, was too embarrassed of Druidism to give an interview. The key, Scharding insisted, was following up on his original call, nothing more. My image of David Fisher has been changing for some time since I was introduced to the contents of the International Druid Archives last year. Listening to the interview has changed my opinion further. This article is an attempt to distill some of what I have learned about our heretofore legendary founder, as well as to share some of the gems of the interview. For those who want to read the complete transcript, it will be published in the oral history section of ARDA II.[1] If you can't wait that long, you can probably pester myself or Scharding.

Margot Adler's *Drawing Down the Moon* paints a picture of Fisher similar to the one that I had until recently. According to it "In 1964 the [religion requirement] regulation was abolished but, much to the surprise—and it is said, horror—of the original founders, the RDNA continued to hold services and spread its organization far beyond the college campus. One of the founders, David Fisher, who wrote many of the original rituals, is now an Episcopal priest and teacher of theology at a Christian college in the South, having apparently washed his hands of the RDNA."[2] I know, moreover, that this opinion is fairly wide spread among those people I've talked to but I have recently come to realize that this is not exactly true.

It is, of course, widely known that there were actually three founders: Norman Nelson, Howard Cherniack, as well as David Fisher. However, for some reason, Fisher has gotten most of the credit. For instance, Joan Carruth's "Epistle to the Myopians" asks "May the Earth-Mother keep David the Fisher in Her sight and bless him, for this is all his fault."[3] But, since he was accompanied by two other founders why is he held above the others? Certainly, while Cherniack forgot about Druidism, Nelson has continued to be active to the present day.

The idea of Fisher as primary founder has precedents from the earliest days. He was the first person credited in the Druid Chronicles (Reformed) as preaching the word of Reformed Druidry,[4] most likely because he was the first Arch Druid.[5] However, Fisher is also often credited with bringing in the majority of the customs of the Druids. In so far as Fisher was the Arch Druid he may have had a special burden to come up with liturgical material. According to the Druid Chronicles and other sources Fisher claimed that he had been made a Druid in high school. However, Fisher has refuted this, saying that he "never claimed any special consecration by a Druid in England."[6] If that is true Fisher was never under the burden of creating material by himself as a "pre-existing" ritual.

Regardless, it seems clear that much of the creation of the Reformed Druids was shared. As he notes in the interview, "we sort of dreamed a piece up here and a piece up there, improvising as we went along the way people, I suppose, sometimes do."[7] This is not to say, either, that Fisher was not the creator of much of the material. For instance he suggested that he "must've dreamed" the sigil up, though he doesn't remember much about his inspiration for it except that the idea of "closing the circle" was important.[8] The meditations were also his addition to the services.[9] On the other hand many other parts of the Druids were the creation of some of the other founders and early members. Fisher credits the higher orders to a suggestion by Nelson and notes that the tenets are the only lasting contribution of Cherniack.[10] Fisher credits the liturgy as

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[1] *A Reformed Druid Anthology, Second Edition*, vol. 1 ed. M. Scharding (Northfield, MN: Drynemetum Press), expected late 2004.

[2] Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon* (New York: Penguin Compass, 1997), 321

[3] Joan Carruth, "The Epistle to the Myopians," in *A Reformed Druid Anthology*, ed. M. Scharding (Northfield: MN, 1996), line 0, page 60.

[4] Frangquist, David, *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*. Fisher is first mentioned in E.C. 1:3. His name is mentioned again in 1:6. Howard Cherniack appears first in E.C. 2:7. Nelson is first mentioned in L.C. 1:10 but then without a last name.

[5] E.C. 1:6 indicates that Fisher was of the third order.

[6] "David Fisher to Reformed Druids of Carleton Grove," 13 April 1970, Reformed Druid Collection, Carleton College Archives, Laurence J. Gould Library, Northfield, MN. There is still some dispute about this in my mind. Despite Fisher's denial the claim appears in Nelson's annotation to the Druid Chronicles and more recently in interviews with Nelson and Larson. Of course, if this claim was made, the circumstances around it would also be of interest. I am inclined to believe that if the claim was made it was after Nelson, Cherniack, and Fisher came up with the idea of the RDNA as a protest though it is possible that he claimed to Nelson and Cherniack.

[7] David Fisher, telephone interview with Michael Scharding, 23 August 2004.

[8] David Fisher, telephone interview

[9] David Fisher, telephone interview

[10] "David Fisher to Reformed Druids of Carleton Grove." Cherniack was also the author of the original constitution. There may be a number of reasons why Fisher chose to overlook that.

something that "I and Norman Nelson wrought in 1963 on Saturdays,"[11] though he does not indicate whether the work was equal or not. Indeed the balance of the initial work will probably be left an open to question for the future because, as Fisher points out, "I didn't take notes at the time because, obviously, I didn't think I was founding something for thirty, forty years."[12]

However, in the period after the founding, Fisher, of the three founders, did have more of a tendency to be a guiding force. Among his early letters are responses to early council proposals, not only accepting some and rejecting others, but also requesting changes in parts,[13] as well sending his own proposals to the council.[14] This occurred despite feeling that Druidism did not meet a need for him and, moreover, that he was being drawn by his increasing Christianity away from Druidism. However, a partial answer could be found in a later letter in which Fisher explained his desire for the proposals as trying to combat over complicated organization that his own actions had inspired.[15] Hence he felt responsible, as a founder, to at least guide what he had started.[16] However, in that type of action it is easy to see Fisher in a parental role that is missing from the later actions of either of the other two founders. This guidance indicates both that Fisher saw himself more as a founder and probably has led others to feel that he had a special role among the founders.

Fisher's interview indicates another 'founder' who was more important as a source of meaning in rituals: David Frangquist. According to Fisher, Frangquist "essentially took what had been a protest against religion requirement and an occasional exercise in panentheistic speculation and turned it into, if not a religion, something like a religion."[17] Moreover, Frangquist was the first leader of the group for whom the Druids "served a [spiritual] need."[18] We know that Frangquist's search for material was apparently more extensive than Fisher's.[19] While it would be difficult to say how much he added it is possible to mention a few notable contributions. Frangquist published the Druid Chronicles (Reformed). While at least some of the material was the writings of other druids,[20] the more serious material in the books of Customs and Meditations is certainly Frangquist's.[21] He is also responsible for the collection of the Green Book of Meditations which was intended to be a guide for later Arch Druids.[22] While Fisher can be seen as creating the Druids, Frangquist created a groundwork for its continuation and is probably most responsible that it is still around. Frangquist has also continued to be a leader in the Druids. When the Carleton Grove faltered in the 1980's Frangquist came to stir up interest. Of course, all of this is not to say that Frangquist is *the* founder of Druidism instead of Fisher. Fisher indicates that Frangquist "refounded" the Reformed Druids; that is to say that while Fisher along with Nelson and Cherniack started the Druids and gave it much of its outward form, Frangquist was the prime mover in imbuing the movement with meaning.[23] Both individuals were important in the creation of what Druidism is, but in different ways.

It is also claimed that, having started something that blossomed into something he hadn't expected, Fisher "washed his hands" of Reformed Druidism. What is true is that, after a point, Fisher stopped providing the guidance that he initially offered and has stopped initiating contact with Druids; the latest letter from Fisher to a Druid in the International Druid Archives is dated 1 August 1974 and before that a letter dated to 13 April 1970. [24] In his interview Fisher says that he has replied to letters sent to him more recently, though none of the replies have made there way to the Archives. However, his letters have stopped being instructions and aid for a wide audience of Druids

Fisher has expressed concern for the Druids; he particularly expressed worry about people who approach the Druids as something that it is not.[25] Perhaps, he has even wished from time to time that he never started the Druids so that people could not be hurt by it. But having such concerns does not mean that he feels that, on the whole, the Druids are not worthwhile. Indeed, at the end of the interview he wished that the Druids would continue to be around as an aid to those for whom it was suitable.

But if Fisher has not washed his hands of Druidism, why do many people believe he did? Before answering that I will examine why Fisher's early guidance and more active role have faded. This is given a fairly clear answer in the interview. Fisher admits that "I've not maintained an active tie with Druidism because sometimes the leadership has seemed very strange to me."[26] Though Fisher may have felt responsible to some degree early on as the nature of the Reform has changed his desire to

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[11] "David Fisher to Rev. J. Gordon Melton," 13 July 1973, Reformed Druid Collection, Carleton College Archives, Laurence J. Gould Library, Northfield, MN.
[12] David Fisher, telephone interview
[13] "David Fisher to Arch Druid of Carleton College," after 29 March 1966, Reformed Druid Collection, Carleton College Archives, Laurence J. Gould Library, Northfield, MN.
[14] "David Fisher to Arch Druid of Carleton College submitting proposals," 1966?, Reformed Druid Collection, Carleton College Archives, Laurence J. Gould Library, Northfield, MN.
[15] "David Fisher to Arch Druid of Carleton College clarifying proposals," 1966?, Reformed Druid Collection, Carleton College Archives, Laurence J. Gould Library, Northfield, MN.
[16] "I see my duty as remaining, and advising," "David Fisher to Arch Druid of Carleton College clarifying proposals," and "I felt somewhat responsible, having started the ball rolling down the hill, to offer what helpful observations I could," David Fisher, telephone interview.
[17] David Fisher, telephone interview.
[18] David Fisher, telephone interview.
[19] David Fisher, telephone interview.
[20] "David Fisher to Reformed Druids of Carleton Grove." The Druid named here is Jan Johnson who, however, left Carleton after the Druid's first term in existence and is an unlikely candidate to have written this. However, it is clear that some selected material came from elsewhere.
[21] "David Fisher to Rev. J. Gordon Melton."
[22] David Frangquist, "Introduction to The Green Book Volume One," in *A Reformed Druid Anthology, Second Edition*, Vol. 2 ed. M. Scharding (Northfield, MN: Drynemetum Press, 2003), 1.
[23] David Fisher, telephone interview.
[24] The later of which is a response to the proposals put forward by Isaac Bonewits. It is of a different nature that the previous, going more to explain the nature of the founding and of his beliefs as a Christian vis-à-vis Neopaganism rather than providing guidance, as he had, towards the Carleton Grove.
[25] Fisher was most particularly worried about Druids who stayed with the group and did not find a more complete religion. Perhaps his concern is valid that in some groups there is not enough material for complete spiritual well being. As Fisher created it and Frangquist altered it at least, Fisher doesn't feel that there is enough material. Though he didn't consider the option during the interview, I would expect that the groups with more long term membership, especially the Groves in California, offer a more filling religion.
[26] David Fisher, telephone interview.

guide those led by a different spirit of the Reform has dissipated.[27]

There are, however, good reasons why Fisher has been seen as a recluse. For my own belief I would point to the research of Scharding who only managed to speak to Fisher after ten years and multiple attempts. A certain feeling came from him to me and, I would think, to others that Fisher didn't want to talk. Admittedly Scharding may have had been helped along in his belief. After telling Robert Larson that he had been unable to contact Fisher during an interview Larson's response is 'that figures,' followed by an explanation of why Larson wasn't surprised.[28] That may have been enough to turn a string of unsuccessful attempts to contact Fisher into a belief that Fisher couldn't be contacted.

However, the quotation from Margot Adler is of an earlier date and probably arises from the period when Neopagans began to use the vehicle of Reformed Druidism. Certainly Fisher became much more silent as his creation turned towards this new religious category and his Christianity may have convinced others that he was more opposed to the new path of Reformed Druidism than he actually was. In specific, I would point to Isaac Bonewits as the origin for the belief, especially since he was the primary source for the Reformed Druid material in *Drawing Down The Moon*. In an early version of Bonewits' article "What and Why is Reformed Druidism in the 1970's," [29] Bonewits wrote that "And so, to the horror or of the original founder, the RDNA continued to exist and grow." In fact, Bonewits, at the suggestion of Richard Shelton,[30] removed this line, though he added another which insinuated something similar.[31]

Some of Bonewits opinions on the founder and on other topics were distorted because he had a particular vision of what the Reformed Druids should be. Most notably Bonewits had a vision of Reformed Druidism not as becoming a neopagan vehicle but as already being one,[32] a point which was denied by many of the founders.[33] With this in mind it is easy to see how Bonewits would see Fisher as being repulsed by his creation if only a limited part of it was considered. Bonewits also had a view of the Reformed Druids needing to become a much more active organization. In his First Epistle he depicts the Founders as having abandoned Druidism, except to protest against changes.[34] From the available letters we have seen that this was not the limit of Fisher or the other Founder's activities, as they tended to guide and support, at least, the Carleton Grove. They, however, lacked an interest in participating in a Grove and, moreover, in creating new Groves, an activity Bonewits saw as essential for the survival of the Reformed Druids. Regardless of the exact reasons, Bonewits believed that Fisher was disgusted with Druidism and was instrumental in spreading this view.

I hope that I have been able to convince people of two things. The first is that while Fisher is most famous as the founder of Druidism there were others who might take more credit especially in the creation of the meaning and continuation of Druidism. Secondly, that Fisher has not repented of his creation. He still takes an interest in the Druids even if he doesn't actively seek them out. His actions and inactions in the past may have led to other views, but those may now be cleared away. I, at least, have come to a new respect for Fisher and for the importance of other founders as well as for who Fisher is today. I would like to end with a few quotes from the interview which I felt to be interesting.

- (On how the Druids were started) One night Norman Nelson, Howard Cherniack, and myself were having one drink too many and were trying to figure out what we could do to deal with this (religious) requirement.
- (An analogy for Reformed Druidism) Well, I suppose, given people's need for alternative spiritualities, the Druids are like a template on a word processor that can be filled in with a number of contents.
- (On some of the sources of Reformed Druidism) I must admit we were all readers of science fiction or science fantasy
- (On the Druid Chronicles (Reformed)) I thought it was pretty fun.

So Endeth
Part Seven
Of ARDA 2

[27] He admits in the interview that some letters from people who took Druidism seriously were embarrassing to him and he felt no need to guide people on that path, perhaps because he had no experience with it.

[28] Robert Larson, telephone interview with Michael Scharding, 20 April, 1994. In in *A Reformed Druid Anthology*, ed. M. Scharding (Northfield, MN: Drynemetum Press, 1996), 475. Other interviews have similar sentiments, such as Scharding's interview with Norman Nelson.

[29] "What and Why is Reformed Druidism in the 1970's?," Isaac Bonewits, Pamphlet produced in 1974? A latter version appears in the The Druid Chronicles (Evolved).

[30] "Richard Shelton to Isaac Bonewits," 1 May 1976, Reformed Druid Collection, Carleton College Archives, Laurence J. Gould Library, Northfield, MN.

[31] "many of the older members of the RDNA disapprove of Neopagan Druidism, considering it a dangerous step backwards." "What and Why is Reformed Druidism in the 1970's?," page 2, in *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, ed. I. Bonewits (Berkley, CA: Berkley Drunemeton Press, 1976.

[32] Bonewits' Sixth Epistle which will be in ARDA II mentions that the omission of non-pagan material that he received through Larson lead him to this conclusion.

[33] A letter from Fisher to Bonewits dated 1 August 1974 probably contributed to Bonewits' feelings. In the letter Fisher says that he nolonger considers himself a "Reformed Druid Priest" or a "Patriarch," (though he never mentions anything about not being a "Reformed Druid." The letter also includes Fishers feelings about Neopaganism. It would have been easy for Bonewits to overlook that the letter did not deny the rest of Reformed Druidism since it denied the part Bonewits felt most important and most real.

[34] "The First Epistle of Isaac," 1:14-15, in *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, ed. I. Bonewits (Berkley, CA: Berkley Drunemeton Press, 1976).

PART EIGHT

A GENERAL HISTORY OF REFORMED DRUIDISM IN AMERICA

a.k.a

The Gregarious Epistle of Michael

or

The Adventures of Prolix the Druid

An unofficial and very controversial attempt by Michael Scharding to provide his own personal overview of the main historical events that he believes has affected the development of the various Reformed Druid movements in North America over the first 34 years of their organizational histories, with updates in 2003. Best read in conjunction with the primary materials that are found in the other parts of "A Reformed Druid Anthology".

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The Drynemtum Press

Blessing

May the blessings of the all-surrounding Earth-Mother be upon you, gentle reader. May my words find a welcome home with you. Please excuse the gregarious nature of my ramblings. It is over ten times longer than any other epistle in Druidic history, but probably of less value than their compact wisdom. Read it at a slow pace, ponder it, and then tell me what you think of it. Please, do not consider it dogma and try to forgive my errors and biases. If you do this, you may receive the greatest blessing of all.

Dedication

I'd like to dedicate this paper in the memory of my grandparents, Emmet Gerald Scharding and Billie Johnston Scharding, without whose love and funding I would not have been able to attend Carleton or to write this epistle.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks goes to Eric Hilleman for helping me to gather, organize and interpret the International Druid Archives. I'd also like to thank all the people whom I have interviewed to write this paper, especially the Frangquists, the Sheltons, Norman Nelson, Robert Larson and Isaac Bonewits. Mark Heiman is to be thanked for the final visual format.

It would be remiss not to thank Professor Phillip Niles for his superhuman patience with my first six proposals and innumerable redrafts. Without his help, I wouldn't have ever come even close to the dubious quality of this paper.

Prominent Disclaimer

This work is **not** to be assumed to be THE definitive, nor official, statement of the history of Reformed Druidism, regardless of my previous position as Arch Druid of Carleton. This paper is a composite of conversations and documents from past Druids that has been molded by the imposition of my personal thinking processes. It is one history, yea, *one history among many* of what was and is and may be Reformed Druidism. I disagree with some of the trends, but I will try my best to be objective in my presentation. Read this paper with caution, because it will be filled with my biases.

Another note, the RDNA tradition of Carleton has been to call both male and female members, "Druids." I will specifically refer to gender of members if it is necessary. I've also been lazy and used "Neo-Pagan" when I should have put "Neo-Pagan, Wiccan, Followers of the Old Way, Crafters, Worshippers of the Goddess, practitioners of personal spirituality, Polytheists/Pantheists/Duotheist, etc." But that would have eaten up alot of time, and you know what I mean. Also please insert c.e. after all dates.

NOTE: This epistle has little to do with British, Neo-Paganistic, Masonic or other forms of Druidism now in America. We welcome any scholarly comparisons with your groups and we offer the use of our archived materials stored at Carleton.

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Figure 1 Group laundry efforts by Druids seeking that sun-fresh smell.

Foreword

1994

The Importance of Origin Stories

Why does a history of Reformed Druidism matter to other modern Druid groups in America? Probably for the same reasons that the study of Judaism and Mithraism is important for studying Christianity. Few religious movements, even spontaneous ones, can resist the temptation to borrow material from other groups. Often this borrowing is never explicitly acknowledged and scholars are forever doomed to waste many precious hours debating where every idea came from, rather than debating what was the importance of the idea. I hope that this history of the RDNA, in some small way, may serve as an origin-story for the other modern Druid movements in America. I certainly hope that other stories will follow and expand the discussions on the influences that I was unable to adequately discuss; for example the full extent of the Neo-Pagan/New Age or Environmental influences upon Reformed Druidism.

All religious movements have a need for origin-stories; i.e. what year did they begin, how did they begin, who started the traditions and (of course) who's to blame for all the crap that has happened since the Golden Age of Founding. These origin-stories help to define whence we came from, to notice how much we've changed, and to help us to decide where we may wish to go. Most religious movements keep rather spotty records in their beginnings, mainly because they are too busy establishing the group. By the time that most origin stories are written down, the Founder(s) are long dead and multifarious myths have obscured much of the truth. Sometimes, as with the ancient Druids, the people never got around to writing down the thoughts, lore and history, and their wisdom has thus vanished into the mists of time.

Not so with the Reformed Druids of North America. Within 2 years of the Founding of Reformed Druidism, a history was written by David Frangquist and efforts were made to preserve early documents and paraphernalia for the edification of future Arch-Druids. Primarily, this was done because of the high turn-over rate that is inherent with a college-based group; a system that precluded the establishment of a resident-elder and made oral-based transmission of stories an uncertain risk. From our copious records, and interviews with living members, it is still possible to reconstruct a mildly detailed history of Reformed Druidism in America.

Although it is *possible* to make such a history, I sometimes have wondered if a history *should* even be published. In many ways, Reformed Druidism is far too simple a subject to be written about, for Awareness must be experienced. Even the most complicated explanation cannot contain the complexities of the simplicity that is Reformed Druidism. By even writing a history of Reformed Druidism, I fear that I may lead hasty scholars even further away from the patterns of Reformed Druidism. If I should do so, I apologize and I hope that further careful cross-study and comparison will lead you back to the true purposes and truths of Reformed Druidism. Even worse, I would be terribly saddened if a Reformed Druid, amidst their struggle for awareness, should begin insisting that the "only true" Druidism lies in repeating the ways of the past Reformed Druids. That would be a tragic waste of time on their part and for those who must listen to such rantings.

So Why am I Writing This?

In the spring of 1993, my grove members and previous leaders knew little of our RDNA history. Much of the heritage of the Reformed Druids had been forgotten by the Carleton Grove by the late 1980s, not that this had inhibited their Druidism by the slightest bit. We knew that the RDNA began as a protest movement in 1963, that we supposedly had three orders of membership, that we should be wary of Isaac Bonewits, that we should allow anybody to participate irregardless of their religion and that the RDNA was the ancestral-origin of many modern Druid movements in the United States. Some Druids would have been content with the freedom of ideas that come out of a vague background, but I was a historian by training and stubbornly wished to know what my predecessors had done so as to augment the possibilities of grove activities and to predict the long-term effects and cycles of Druidism on my fellow grove-members and myself.

As a result of this research, I've probably collected and read more Reformed Druid material and talked with more Druids from the different factions than any other Reformed Druid (except possibly Isaac Bonewits). This means that I'm either an "expert" or I am now more irreparably confused in my Druidism than ever as a result. (More than likely it means that three precious years have passed from my youth.) I have always enjoyed reading the "small scale" history of communities and items of local interest, and this is shown in my choice of studying the Reformed Druids. As a result of my research, I firmly believe that the simple lessons that can be learned from Reformed Druidism are just as valid as those from big, "mainstream" religions with millions of members. Perhaps the Reform's lessons are easier to understand since Druidism doesn't require too many presuppositions. The archived discussions that I have read about the simplicity, honesty and omni-compatibility of basic Reformed Druidism have made my "tidying up" of its history a real labor of love and sorrow. I have watched the dramas unfold, both the touching loyalty to ideals and the disappointing misunderstandings between members. Indeed, each and every Reformed Druid has an interpretation and a history that are just as valid and important as this lowly epistle. I now wish to share my insights with others to heal some of the wounds that have festered from the frequent misunderstandings and to enlighten others with a few thoughts that might be applicable to their lives.

As a historian, I have often bewailed and cursed the dead of past ages for not writing down their thoughts and stories for the future generations to read and cherish; but perhaps they wanted us to figure it out for ourselves? In some way, I hope that this book will set a precedent for members of other nascent religious movements to write down their own histories, while the details are fresh in their minds (and make frequent updated versions available). I only wish that those groups will not forget to be spontaneous and willing to discard the past when it is no longer helpful.

Final Thoughts

During this era of unending questioning, I feel most at home with calling myself a Reformed Druid. I am tied to no religious dogma or creed by my association with the RDNA, beyond the two Basic Tenets. The vagueness of Druidism has ironically proved itself to be a sure anchor in my personal search for religious truths in this chaotic world. I am currently studying the teachings of many religious organizations and individuals, with occasional successes and failures here and there. I doubt that I will find any one system capable of answering all my questions; although I'm interested in Zen, Tao and Christianity. Perhaps no

religion is perfectly fitted for me, or perhaps I can not bring myself to fit in any one religion. If so, then I may have to create a religion for myself, or perhaps even create/modify one for every passing moment.... Who knows?, I may find truth in a few years and then look back on all this as a silly moment of confusion. Yet if I find my true faith, I'm sure it will be far richer and more fervent because of the long study and search that I have made for it. In the meantime, Druidism will be my haven during a storm.

-Mike Scharding

Goodhue Hall 310

April 1994, revised April 1996

Figure 2 Renaissance Druid with altar.

Figure 3 Druid perpetually late for service, hoofing it .

Introduction

(Please, feel free to skip to the first chapter)
Written in 1996

The purpose of this paper is to drastically re-interpret and provide a general historical overview of a nation-wide movement known as the Reformed Druids of North America and the origins of its various offshoot branches, up to 1996.[1] With the help of newly collected and mostly un-published resources, I will provide a new perspective on the role of Reformed Druidism[2] in spawning the American Neo-Pagan Druid movement, including the founding of "Ár nDríaocht Féin" (ADF) in 1983 and the Henge of Keltria in 1987. In addition to influencing Neo-Paganism, Reformed Druidism has played a small role in shaping the atmosphere and character of Carleton College.

I hope that this paper will provide better chronological and organizational understanding to future researchers after which they can conduct further studies on the RDNA. A good researcher must use more than one source in order to gain a balanced perspective. The biases of earlier researchers are the result of an over-reliance upon interviews taken solely with Isaac Bonewits (or Fisher) or by a primarily exclusive reliance upon his writings. There are no experts in Reformed Druidism, merely voices who can provide personal definitions. Therefore, I hope that future studies do not use my study as their sole source either. If they do write reports, I hope that they will mail a complementary copy of the document to: Carleton College Archives, 300 North College Street, Northfield, MN, 55057, USA.

For those unacquainted with Reformed Druidism, I will now provide this introductory synopsis to prepare you for a more detailed history of Reformed Druidism and perhaps foreshadow the debates of this paper. I hope that you will find Reformed Druidism to be an attractive case model for use in your future studies.[3] By the end of this epistle, I hope that you'll know more about the overall history of Reformed Druidism than most present, past and future members. As for our theology or philosophy, it's relatively simple, and you'll be a master of it by the end (as far as any of us ever will be).

Importance to Carleton College:

Reformed Druidism has a special place in the modern history of Carleton College. Originally conceived as a student protest against mandatory attendance of religious services, the RDNA rapidly became a powerful and personal tool for individuals at Carleton to explore the depths of religious truths and comprehend the religious and cultural diversity of the increasingly pluralistic United States.

Over 33 years old, the Carleton Grove of the RDNA was by far the longest running, largest, extant, *unofficial* student-run organization at Carleton.[4] It is now an official organization as of May 1995. Probably only 2% of past Carleton students since 1963 have directly participated in at least one RDNA service or have received it's mailings. But, it is likely that a greater number of Carleton students have interacted with Druids (knowingly or unknowingly) or been introduced to an RDNA member's religious/philosophical curiosity over the last 33 or so years. If nothing else, the Druids have become another nostalgic background ornament contributing to Carleton's mystique; joining the ranks of Rott-blatt, Schiller and the Tunnel Graffiti.[5] The RDNA has also produced a rare, very personal, and unrivaled amount of alumni-student inter-communication and assistance, which alone should attract closer study by Carleton historians.

The RDNA is the only known religion or, if you prefer, group-philosophy, to have indisputably originated at Carleton

College (and perhaps in Northfield or south Minnesota) and spread so far from home; being a recognizable extension of a Carleton-wide attribute of respectful skepticism towards all matters. As local chapters of the RDNA, called "groves," were established across the nation (at first mostly at colleges), a renaissance of religious exploration and correspondence developed within the RDNA's nurturing anti-dogmatic structure. Importantly, this expansion also brought ideas back to isolated midwestern Carleton students and alumni from Druids experiencing different environments.

I might add that I am not alone in my respect for the importance of the Reformed Druid debates and their impact on Carleton College. The RDNA has probably not had much more than 1,800 total members at Carleton,[6] but the previous College Archivist, Mark Greene and the current Archivist Eric Hilleman feel that:

"The Druids are one of Carleton's most interesting, long-lived, and (in terms of national following) most influential traditions. As time passes, I hope that their history will receive some scholarly attention, either within or from outside of Carleton."[7]

Importance to the Neo-Pagan Movement:

Upon entering the catalytic environment of the Bay Area and urban Universities in the late 60s/early 70s, some RDNA members quickly allied themselves with the nascent Neo-Pagan movement which was concentrated there. This quick allegiance was made possible by the RDNA's amazing coincidental similarity of liturgy, organization, and doctrine of religious searching, as will be discussed later.

After years of sometimes bitter infighting during the 1970s over how to more "effectively" organize themselves and as a result of a poor economy, a great number of RDNA groves collapsed or went underground. Some members "left" Reformed Druidism to continue the growth of the American Druid Neo-Pagan movement, by founding "Ár nDraíocht Féin," which possesses few immediately recognizable connections to the RDNA, yet they acknowledge the RDNA as their origin.[8] Yet we should note that RDNA and NRDNA groves have stubbornly continued to persist alongside with the ADF and with ADF's offshoots such as Keltria and Druidactios.[9] Put together, these three newer groups have currently under 800 paid members in 20+ groves/henges/toutas and perhaps 2000+ irregular attendees. The American Druids have always been a small, very recognizable and reasonably public group within Neo-Paganism. But, their numbers are not so insignificant when one considers that the Neo-Pagan movement has between 50,000 to 200,000 members in America, depending on your statistics.[10] In fact, many people see Reformed Druidism in America as being defined by its larger, noisier offshoots, ADF and Keltria or even by the unrelated British/European Druid or Masonic Druidical movements. As a result, accounts of Reformed Druidism history could easily be falsely portrayed as being fated into *evolving* towards these more noticeable organizations.

Neo-Paganism is a collective umbrella term for nature-oriented religious movements with an intense interest in borrowing from pre-Christian cultures coupled with modern sensibilities. Neo-Paganism has been expanding geometrically since the early 70s and will become more and more noticeable in the future.[11] In the coming years, I predict there will be greater number of scholarly studies upon the artistic, musical, liturgical, scholastic, philosophical and theological accomplishments of these highly creative minority religions.[12] These studies will likely be initiated by Neo-Pagan scholars, from secure Neo-Pagan traditions, who are seeking to unearth and explore their groups' relatively recent historical origins.

Because Reformed Druids have often been playfully pushing the definitional boundaries of "Neo-Paganism" as much as they have with Judeo-Christianity, it will continue to attract some interest. Another attraction with the RDNA for scholars is Isaac Bonewits' prominent presence and well-known activities within Neo-Paganism and Reformed Druidism throughout the 70s, which was prophetic of the progressive Neo-Pagan Druidic religion known as "Ár nDraíocht Féin."

Finally, the extensively archived history of Reformed Druidism will provide those scholars with rich comparisonal models and materials when writing the future organizational histories of Neo-Pagan movements (especially Druids[13]). This paper will help them overcome the often treacherous, paltry and deceptive misinformation currently available about the RDNA and may even change preconceptions of what a "Druid" organization has to be.

Importance for Religion in the '60s:

Finally, as a side note, this study will remind scholars how the multi-faceted influences of local environment can influence the thinking and structures of local chapters of the same religion/philosophy. With the great advantage of hindsight, I will show how the radically different administrative policies of Carleton College and Berkeley College during the 60's and 70's may have well led to the development of different understandings and methods of protest among student populations and in the local communities. This difference in protest methodology has in turn drastically affected the course of the "Carleton" RDNA faction and that of the "Berkeley/Bay-Area" NewRDNA faction.

Figure 4 Bard from William Blake's poetry.

Chapter One: Resources, Methodology, and Biases

(Casual readers may skip to Chapter Two)

Research Questions

Most Neo-Pagan scholars have never had access to peruse the newly available resources that I have used to write this paper, so I feel it is necessary to explain, at what will seem at an extraordinary length, just what led to my writing this paper. This section may even provide some new research ideas to future scholars of Neo-Pagan history. Non-academics may freely skip ahead to Chapter Two.

I suspect that there will be few groups over ten years old that can resist the attraction of writing a history. Unfortunately, time and resources are often lacking, and they don't have a viable plan to assemble the necessary materials. There are a number of important questions that the Neo-Pagan historian should ask themselves while planning the process of writing a history. Let's explore them.

1. Who am I writing for?

This is the crucial question. There are different types of histories for different types of audiences. Diaries are appropriate for solitaries. While you may pass a diary onto a child or disciple, you want a diary to remind yourself of personally important memories, personal oaths, and to keep track of the effects of spells. Diaries, unlike Shadow Books, often includes the mundane *and* the magical elements of your lives.

If you are writing a history for a handful of close friends or disciples, you may prefer the Book of Shadows format commonly used in Wicca with one large handwritten book being copied by every new member, as ARDA has been for me. Such a book contains a brief description of apostolic succession, basic rites and basic organizational rules. What's more since only initiates will be reading it, you can write very personal details and be free about naming people. Since everyone in the group, knows the ins-and-outs of the group, you could avoid explaining the simple things, place descriptions and take a lot of knowledge for granted.

If you are writing a history for scholarly study or to enlighten other Neo-Pagan groups, you will probably go into about as much depth as a Book of Shadows, but leaving out any craft-secrets (without hopefully making the history unintelligible). You can expect most Neo-Pagans to understand the Neo-Pagan mindset and opinion background, but the average scholar will require explanation of such simple concepts like "the eight festivals," "sabbats," "cones," "degrees" and "athames."

If you are writing a history for a recruitment flyer of leaflet for mass distribution, you need to condense it drastically and emphasis the drawing points, remove personal details and avoid describing conflicts (acrimony may turn off recruits). Apologetic and defensive works are also becoming necessary, now that the fundamentalists are now aiming their venom on the movements.

In my case, I'm writing this Epistle and ARDA collection for the scholarly audience and as an public-oriented "book of shadows." The result, I thoroughly explain the terms, introduce all the players, tie events into greater sociological cycles, and avoid extremely intimate goofs.

2. What are my biases and reasons?

Identifying and admitting these is a difficult thing to do. Writing a history can lead to some deep soul-searching and you should ask yourself some probing questions. Why are you writing a history? Is it to try to build a historical sequences that support your opinion of what the group's true purpose? Is it to show off your knowledge of the trivia? Are there certain types of people or faction who will resent your history? How much of your groups innovations are actually paralleled by other groups in response to shifts in society? Is it to cover up a disgrace in your organization? Is it to share joyful stories and helpful hints of group coordination? Most of the time we do not recognize what a small pond a coven or a grove is. Do you really know what the real history of your group is? Do you plan to exclude the input of certain people? Why? Are you the best suited person for the job of writing a history or should you co-author it with other people? If you don't like the answers you get from such questions, then beware starting such a task.

3. How will I distribute my history?

There are a number of ways to distribute histories nowadays. I highly recommend that you do it on a computer, as you will amend it several times, and it will give it a professional appearance. Photocopy shops can print and bind small histories rather cheaply now adays. An exciting new method, if you (or a friend) has a talent is that you can set up a web-page and allow people to download files containing your history. You can then just release it on to the Internet and let interested people find it and distribute it to their friends, and it won't cost you a cent after the initial set up.

4. What can I include in a history?

Any thing you'd like. Histories are merely records of what is meaningful to a group of people. Kind of like a big scrapbook. A partial list includes; why a group was founded, chronologies, a series of letters, recipes, sets of bylaws, specialized dictionaries, bibliographies, favorite activities, politics of leadership struggles, jokes, meditations, quotes, mythologies, rituals, blessings, artwork, poetry, music, songs, eulogies, favorite meeting sites, or even stories about how popular members came to join the group. You could even make a video tape documentary. Your imagination is your only limitation.

"The Golden Rule"

Any researcher of Neo-Paganism will understand when I say that a good rule in reconstructing the history of the RDNA (which many "outsiders" consider to be one of the oldest, identifiable, public Neo-Pagan movements) is that disagreement among RDNA members is the general reality and that agreements are the unusual exception. Each individual Reformed Druid (esp. Californian ones) had a different purpose and view of what Druidism meant to them. Although this diversity could apply to members of many mainstream religions, rarely do we see a group give as much free reign, affirmation and empowerment to the individual's beliefs as we find in Reformed Druidism. With that in mind, it is appropriate to beware rashly accepting any statements in documents claiming to be authoritative upon a Neo-Pagan group's beliefs (especially in Reformed Druidism) and to realize that any such statement may be a disguised personal bias (such as this Epistle, for example). The type of person who leaves written

documents may be quite different from the person who does not feel the need to canonize their ideas on paper.

In the case of the RDNA, the "authorities" have tended to be the Third Order Druids who left us the majority of the contemporary written documents and wrote most of the inter-communications on "key" issues. Much of the time, they were also the only ones knowledgeable about the existence and politics of inter-grove communications. Therefore, it is fitting that they should be my primary informants since I am constructing a history on inter-grove activity and organizational change.

However, in future histories about specific groves, there will need to be a great number more interviews of 1st and 2nd Order Druid members taken from each grove, something that is difficult to do since few records are kept of non-Third members. Third Order Druids only constituted (at most) 5% of all past Reformed Druid membership, but they are always the easiest to locate because of their prominence and long-term commitments to the group. It is also important to remember that only a very tiny portion of the activities or attention of most grove members were expended on issues "outside" of their groves. For most members, the local grove and the lives of its own members were all that really mattered and thus documentation of the opinions of non-Thirds on external issues is almost non-existent.

Difficulties of recent history for me:

Because I have never academically studied post-1950 history, which often falls under “politics”, I have adopted some of the research tools of a journalist because I see them as the most ingenious historians of very recent events. Almost all of the major figures in Reformed Druidism are still alive at the time of this writing (1996), but they are still so active in careers that memoirs are not likely to be on their agendas for some years to come, until the retirement. And few people write memoirs, actually. Nor could I use existing research on the RDNA, since most of the other researchers didn't interview many Druids, or probably met with only one Druid. Therefore, I have discarded their work and pursued a very active search and questioning of past and present members, which I recommend unto you. This new research has included a great number of interviews, surveys and document collection from past and present members rather than relying upon poorly researched and published studies.[14]

Interviewing

I must tell researchers how important one's choice of relevant resources is when studying "Neo-Paganism," or any other small, modern, religious groups. Because of the richer amounts of material that are often available on recent historical events, students of recent history sometimes have the joy and burden of having too many resources. This problem of apparent "chaos" can be offset by the fact that many of the principal "movers-and-shakers" of recent events in Neo-Paganism are still alive. Interviewing them allows you to supplement contemporary records with the often '20/20' vision of hindsight and maturation. These "live witnesses" can decipher mysteries found in the available texts or make up for the paucity of documentation. Those interviews can often reduce the extraneous background reading needed by the researcher by the interviewees' indications of which aspects of a group were relatively unaffected by contemporary events. Much of what happens in a grove will never be put down by a pen. Mood and environment are difficult to capture in words, especially written words, but are retained in oral stories.

But we will always face the problem that some people are often too close to an event to step back and give us a un-biased interpretation of that situation. To correct the lies, errors, the "purposeful exclusion of pertinent facts" by certain people and to arrive at a more insightful interpretation of past events, one must cross-check their testimonies with those of others (especially their enemies). Fortunately, much of the stressful RDNA history has occurred over 20 years ago and the Druids are becoming to open up about distressing issues as they distance themselves from them.

Background Reading

Ideally, the researcher of Neo-Paganism should explore the major interests of the people that they are studying, before they begin to study the people directly. It greatly helps when studying "Neo-Pagan" groups to have already acquired a broad background with folk-lore/music/dance (regardless of country), mythology, non-Christian religions and pertinent foreign languages. Such studies limber the mind for exploring new modes of thought, modes which may seem hardly comprehensible to the average Western-trained mind. Many Neo-Pagans are very intelligent, well-read, eclectic and scholastically inclined.[15] If you approach their "official" published materials with little knowledge of the foundational culture and *mentalite* among Neo-Pagan social circles, you are very likely to be overwhelmed or (worse) distracted by the sheer diversity of topics that are being bandied about. I recommend at least a full one or two year's close interaction with a Neo-Pagan group before claiming to competently understand it.

For example, I already possessed certain knowledge and experiences which greatly helped to research American Druidisms and to study Celtic Neo-Paganism, such as:

1. A great deal of familiarity with the many reputable (and disreputable) published studies on Ancient Druidism and Celtic Religions. I also have done a great deal of reading of the published materials of modern Druid movements; both those descending from and those independent of RDNA origins. I therefore can better discern which customs and aspects adopted by modern Druid groups are historically valid and which are actually adaptations from newer, more modern sources of inspiration.

2. An understanding of the basics of a few Asian religions, which is particularly crucial to understanding the origins of Carleton Druids of the RDNA. Any understanding of 60/70s mysticism must include a study of the growing interest in Asian religions.

3. I can read the Scots-Gaelic, French and German languages; all important for studying Ancient Druidism and understanding the academic studies, deities and terms referred to by Neo-Pagans/Wiccans; who are reconstructing old religions of Indo-European origin. Another useful language would have been Welsh or Irish Gaelic.

4. A five year background in observing the rites, interactions, world-views and morals of Wiccans, RDNA Druids, non-RDNA Druids, other Neo-Pagan groups and some rather unusually "liberal" Christian groups.[16]

5. I am also familiar with the customs, terminology and activities of people belonging to the folklore/music/dance groups, Sci-Fi clubs, Society for Creative Anachronism[17] and role-playing groups. These groups are considered, by many, to be four of the primary organizations (plus the Occult arts) that are very compatible with Neo-Pagan views.

6. Also of great help, of course, was my position as the ArchDruid of a very well known Druid organization. Titles will still open doors in this world, but only knowledge, patience, and personality will keep those doors open. Honesty and respect go a long way when interviewing Neo-Pagans. Most Neo-Pagans will not respond well, if they believe you are a closed-minded

Fundamentalist or if you are mocking/belittling their beliefs. Gods help your research project if you should try to "convert" them!

New Resources on RDNA

(Casual readers are encouraged to skip this and continue to Chapter Two)

As stated before, most of the documentation available for this Epistle has been un-accessible, ignored, unknown or misused by previous researchers. As the list of the International Druid Archives shows,[18] there are many types of materials now available. For the instruction of the outsider who will be confused by constant references to strange books in the footnotes, I will describe the dis/advantages and characteristics of the various categories of resources that were of primary use in this paper.

Inspirational Collections

In addition to the aforementioned *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, I have used other unofficial collections to provide a Carleton perspective. *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*, a.k.a. DC(R), was first published in 1964 and it is David Frangquist's[19] description of the first year of Reformed Druidism. DC(R) contains the accumulated laws, customs, the basis of liturgy, several meditations, and valuable suggestions for organizing the RDNA groves. While *much* of the *Black Book of Liturgy*,[20] *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* and *the Carleton Apocrypha*[21] are found in Isaac's compendium, not so with *the Green Book of Meditations*. The Green Book is an optional resource for lazy Arch-Druids to draw Druidic meditations from the many religions in the world. All these sources are merely an alternative resource available for inspiration and story telling. They should not be seen as representing every Druid's viewpoint or personal theology. All of these publications are reprinted in "A Reformed Druid Anthology," often in a their original verbatim format with extensive historiography. Numerous issues of the Druid Chronicler, Pentalpha Journal and the Druid Missal-Any have given me a greater depth of understanding of the NRDNA breadth of interests and plurality of actors.

Non-Intramural Letters

These are letters that Reformed Druids have written to newspapers, various institutions, government agencies and encyclopedia researchers. They tend to fall into two main camps: clever evasions and careful attempts to convey the "joke."

When vitally necessary, many Reformed Druids would be willing to use their resemblance to a conventional religion to fool and thwart authorities; especially those authorities who have made the false assumption that **they can** actually define what is a religion. When writing to newspapers (after 1964) and magazines, the Reformed Druids try to share the basic joke and the protest that lies at its core in order that prospective members would join in the correct spirit of introspection instead of blind devotion to a set of principles or a *group*.

These letters provide a valuable insight into how contemporary "outsiders" viewed the Druids, depending on the year and location in the US. Common mis-conceptions of contemporaries about "Druidism" are conveniently expressed.

February 1993 Questionnaires[22]

As discussed earlier, the responses from 23+ past Carleton members of the years 1963-1986 provided me with a view of how many non-priest druids felt about the Druids and also gave me some Carleton grove statistics. The long years appear to have led most Druids to discard the unimportant trappings of Reformed Druidism, i.e. ritual, leaving the essential freedom of everyone to their own religious belief at the core of their Druidism. Most importantly, it also gave me the opportunity to make contact with rich sources of information.

Oral History Tapes[23]

Unexpectedly, this has turned out to be the greatest research tool. As stated before, the researcher gains the apparently 20/20 hindsight to supplement the contemporary documents of the past. These oral discussions have fleshed out the history of RDNA, NRDNA, SDNA (and ADF) groups that possessed only a skeletal description when viewed from written documents. Some of the tapes were recorded by Carleton's Oral History project, but most were done by myself with the questions oriented towards writing this Epistle.

These interviews are especially valuable for understanding the infighting and troubles of the NRDNA and SDNA which, up to now, have often only been alluded to in materials relying on Isaac's writings. Interesting to this study is the lack of concern that is orally expressed by most of these people towards the politics that seemed to dominate the collection of **written** documents, although they are often the very people who wrote the documents. There is a tendency among researchers to assume that any written document, in the absence of other background material, automatically contains the most important issues of the day. Sometimes it is only the minutiae and trivia, because they are so difficult to remember, that gets written down rather than the events everybody vividly remembers and treasures. Any future *local* grove histories except Carleton and Berkeley and Live Oak, will probably have to rely exclusively on oral interviews.

Internal Correspondence (Int. Corr.)[24]

This category was previously known as the "Records of the Council of Dalon ap Landu," which was appropriate, but it now includes all unofficial correspondence between Reformed Druid members (whether priests or not). This collection consists of a sizable portion of the networking that went on between the priests and arch-druids, with a current quantitative bias of authors coming from Carleton students/alumni.[25] An early voting tradition arose that any attempt to impose a new doctrine upon the entire Reformed Druids must get a consensus of acquiescence of all returned replies that had been sent out to **all the known** Reformed Druids priests on this Council. But since most of the Carleton priests didn't want Reformed Druidism to get too complicated, and this was always a sizable (if not dominant) block of Council members, correspondence ended up being primarily a vehicle for debating and exchanging gossip, not deciding on new laws. The Council also became a means to frustrate anyone from seriously considering that they had finally figured out how to "save" Druidism from itself. Many of the most influential letters have been added to the Apocrypha over the years.

The private internal correspondence also shows the elaborate and humorous back-stage preparations for devising a public front of being a "real, organized religion" when faced against oppressive institutions; such as Carleton College, the Draft Boards (and Isaac Bonewits to some extent).

One of the curious notes about Internal Correspondence (and the oral interviews) is that of Isaac (nearly) alone writing to the "Carleton Faction" until 1978. The "Carleton Faction" wrote to many members of the vague "Isaac" and NRDNA factions, asking them not to exclude non-Pagans. However, we only hear replies from one or two NRDNA members in response, besides Isaac. Besides Isaac Bonewits and Larson and Sherbak, we have

no written documents from other NRDNA members writing to RDNA members until 1979. Larson, himself, usually only steps in to soften and correct some of Isaac's letters to the RDNA. Otherwise we have only silence from all the "Neo-Pagan" Reformed Druid priests in the NRDNA on all these debates. This silence could indicate two likely conclusions:

> 1. The other Reformed Druids, not from Carleton, only wrote or talked amongst themselves on Isaac's "reforms."

and/or

> 2. Isaac (and occasionally Larson) was the only one, at that time, who really wanted to push the issues.

It is possible that the more extended periods of grove membership in the NRDNA groves allowed deeper discussions of issues exclusively by oral communication. However, except for Larson and Sherbak, no other communications are on record from the "NRDNA" and SDNA to the "RDNA" members until 1979, long after any reputed splits would have taken place. Surely if the NRDNA and SDNA (besides Isaac) were litigatious for official reform, more of them would have written to Carleton alumni?

Resources On Carleton College[26]

A good study of the "Carleton Experience" will aid in the study of Carleton Druidism, which is inseparable for many Druids. The Carleton College Archivist has shown me the best selections now available in the very valuable "Oral History Project." I have relied upon the Oral Histories of administrators, faculty and (Druid and non-Druid) students from the 60s and 70s to synthesize a view of the many factors influencing Carleton's internal environment (and therefore the Druids).

Resources on Berkeley[27]

Berkeley Druids and Druids from the Bay-Area were the backbone of the NRDNA movement, and therefore an understanding of Berkeley atmosphere is necessary to contrast with Carleton. Any research on the NRDNA should include some study of not only the history of the University at Berkeley, but it should also include a study of the "Berkeley Community." As I mentioned before, I knew nothing of the Sixties before starting this research and I still know but a little. I have relied on the general overviews of Berkeley provided in the excellent books and videos mentioned in the bibliography. Researchers should pay special attention to *Experimentation in American Religion,* because it provides valuable statistics on the religious scene in Berkeley in 1970; which would be useful for further studies. Interviews with Berkeleyites and the NRDNA are supplementary and provide first-hand accounts.

Resources on Neo-Paganism

Of course, the best book to start with is Margot Adler's *Drawing Down the Moon*. The book is a result of the skills of Adler's long journalistic career being applied towards the study of Neo-Paganism/Wicca, an area she knows intimately. It is by far the most liked and comprehensive survey of the Neo-Pagan and Wiccan movements in America. It is invaluable in its detailed study of many forms of Neo-Paganism and its provision of contact addresses and resources for the scholar. Most people usually regard Gardner (founder of Modern Wicca), Margaret Murray and Starhawk as prominent writers in the field at the beginning, but there are lot more modern authors out there. Each offers a different view that is valuable, but scholarly works are rare and often denigrated by academics. Future scholars should note that I lack familiarity with the subjects of astrology, kaballa, ceremonial magick and deep theological works by Neo-Pagans and Wiccans. I have relied on personal observation and conversations, Isaac Bonewit's letters and *Drawing Down the Moon* for most of my understanding of Neo-Paganism and Wicca

As I mentioned, there are an increasing number of encyclopedias in the reference section of libraries that deal with Occultism and Neo-Paganism/Wicca.[28] Magazines and newsletters, although the best sources of information, are not so difficult to obtain anymore, even if you're not already in such circles. I recommend going to a Sci-Fi convention or spirituality lecture series in order to start finding these periodicals and then order back issues.

Figure 5 "How many Druids does it takes to start a fire?"

Figure 6 An Irish bard and harper, 13th Cent.

Chapter Two: Reform Druidism 1963 to 1973 Carleton's Golden Age

I would like to begin this paper with an appropriately Zen-ish koan (an especially ancient one that I just made up) to reflect the unusual mentality of the early Founders of Reformed Druidism at Carleton College.

The Three Water Bowls

A Druid and his disciple, Baka, were strolling in the garden on a very hot day and Master Druid decided to test his pupil's wisdom. It was a warm Thursday before lunch.

Druid: You!, imagine that you are terribly thirsty and that resting before you are three clear glass bowls filled with red, blue and green colored water. Each bowl is three inches deep, with a wooden base of identical design. Now, imagine that I ask you to tell me what colors are the bowls are in front of you? What would you do?

Baka: I would say; "Red, blue and green, Master."

Druid: The bowls themselves are clear and without colour! But that was the first of your errors.

Baka: Sorry, master. I would say "Clear," then.

Druid: Secondly, you should have just drank from one of the bowls, because water is good for you when you are thirsty and yet you are still worried about the colour of the bowls.

Baka: Sorry, master. Forgive me.

Druid: Your greatest mistake was to think you had to apologize to me because you feared that I wouldn't teach you again! Begone from my presence forever!

(And Baka was suddenly enlightened.)

Baka: Thank you...{pauses and bows} Master.

Druid: Hmph! Eat your rice, you're hungry too.

Interpreting the Koan

The true debates that raged in the 1970s within Reformed Druidism, as alluded in the Zen analogy, are not to be found in examining the imperfect superficial definitions that have been used to separate the Reformed Druids of North American (red-bowl), the New RDNA (blue-bowl) and Schismatic Druids of North America (green-bowl) from each other. Nor is it the point of this Epistle to judge which of these branches is the "most true" form of Druidism; I really couldn't care less. As each of the bowls had equally good water in them, I find that it was unimportant to defend the choice of one color of water over the other. The debate, as I see it, was how to satisfy one's basic needs for religion (i.e. "thirst for water") without worrying about pointless, extraneous details like dogma (i.e. "color"), or how the surrounding institutions (i.e. "Druid ") would react to your choice.

I will not try to prove that an actual transformation occurred **from** a philosophical RDNA (as represented primarily by Carleton) **into** a religion known as the NRDNA. For that, we must take each Druid's own personal definition of their own Reformed Druidism as the most valid litmus test and relinquish our desire to perfectly pigeon-hole their individual beliefs based on the group labels: RDNA, NRDNA and SDNA. Quite a number of Druids were and still are straddling the fuzzy technical borders between "religion" and/or "philosophy" by modern definitions. Many have occasionally chosen either definition for various purposes and then gone back to straddling the fence or even started building a new fence. Instead, I declare these terms to be an unwelcome distraction from other more hidden, but very important, debates that were important to Reformed Druidism as a whole.

The Four "Essential" Debates

These debates, *as I like to see them*, are: >ahem<

1. What are the basic needs that a religion **alone** can fulfill, and how can Nature help?

2. How and who can tell when it is truly appropriate to propose and/or ratify an adoption of dogma in response to a perceived need? Druidism wishes no extraneous permanent accretions[29] or unnecessary leaders upon itself whenever something **else** can be temporarily utilized instead.

3. How many obstacles should be placed in the path of proposals in order to allow suitable time to consider the issues and to prevent adaptations that may lead to an unstoppable process of "complications;" ones which will alienate the first two goals (and possibly exclude most of the earlier members)?

And most importantly...

4. Do the first three points really matter to us? Isn't the organizational aspect of Reformed Druidism all just a silly joke? Why bother arguing? Why not go out and just follow what you know to be true!?

Early "Carleton" Influences

I believe it is best to continue Chapter Two of this paper by an original exploration of the "why, who, what, when and where" origins for the underlying structure and faith of Reformed Druidism. In the period 1963-1966, the basic philosophical and organizational foundations were formulated and established in the forms they would mostly bear unto this very day. Unfortunately (as some Founders saw it) this was also the time when potential defects, faults, Celtic trappings and "Fisher-isms" were adopted. From 1966-1973 many of the issues of expansion and stability that Isaac brought up in 1974 would seem to have already been brought up and tacitly decided (or apathetically ignored) upon by members of the Carleton Faction. Since Carleton students and graduates composed the vast majority of the members, priests and ArchDruids within Reformed Druidism up until the late 70s,[30] it is pertinent to understand the strong role that the "Carleton Experience" had in establishing, modifying, maintaining and undermining the foundations of Reformed Druidism.

Blame it on the 60s

Reformed Druidism is an offspring of the era known as the Sixties, an era which lasted from roughly 1960 to the end of America's involvement in Vietnam in 1973. The 60's, as most people remember (or have heard), were a tense time during which the preceding twenty years of seeming national unity and homogeneity was increasingly coming to doubt and reappraisal. Big issues at colleges were primarily *In Loco Parentis*[31]**,** Civil Rights, the Draft, American foreign policy and the beginnings of the women's rights movement.[32]

The "G.I. Bill" had led to an unprecedented flood of students into colleges during the 40s/50s, which had in turn led to an expansion of faculty size.[33] With this increased college population came a greater interest in a broader "liberal arts" education. Departments like religion, philosophy and English ballooned in comparison to old standbys such as science and economics. These disciplines, by their inherent skepticism about the certainty of cultural concepts, allowed greater numbers of students to see college as a way to continue to explore new ideas amongst relatively supportive age-peers during this period of their lives, rather than being amalgamated into an older society at the age of 18. College administrators, however, were often seen as repressive tools of the Military complex during this period, both by students and many of these newer faculty members.[34]

Carleton appears to have had a somewhat "softer" passage through the 60's than most of the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM), and far smoother than the big universities which were more tightly tied in with the Military Complex such as Berkeley, U of Michigan, Penn State or State University of New York at Buffalo (SUNY Buffalo) as described in Heineman's book, *Campus Wars*. Heineman's book is very valuable in showing that student protest movements and SDS groups, tempered by the Civil Rights movements, preceded and were mostly independent of Berkeley's Free Speech Movement which had captured the Media's attention (and therefore the attention of historians).

Carleton was blessed by its quiet rural location, small size, lack of governmental research and a long history of broad liberal arts education. But by far, it appears to have been blessed by having relatively "liberal" administrators during the 60's, in particular President Nason (1962-1970), Chaplain David Maitland (1958-1986) and religion Professor Bardwell Smith (1962-1995). Each of these men contributed or exemplified crucial elements, in my opinion, of the Carleton atmosphere that permitted Reformed Druidism to flourish in its peculiar way at Carleton.

John Nason (President 1962-1970)[35]

When the late President Larry Gould (1945-1962) foresaw the upcoming turmoil that was beginning to simmer in the country and its colleges, he wisely judged that it was unsuitable for him to continue his benevolent "patriarchy" of administration and retired. President Nason was the first Carleton graduate, class of '27, to become president of the college, thus perhaps giving him a closer feel for the Carleton "mystique." Nason saw a need to get faculty and students more involved with the administration of the college, rather than to "repel boarders at all costs." He himself, with the approval of the Trustees, had already tacitly decided that the *In*

Loco Parentis rules were outdated and he often was a step or two ahead of the student demands.

An important result of this was a development of a Carleton tradition of a more civil and polite (but mockingly "good humor) methods of protest among students and faculty that actually led to some tangible results. Though hang-ups occurred, they were overcome by long discussion where both sides listened and learned. Nason's presidency was an orderly dismantling of some of the "Top-down" imperial policy of his predecessors.

David Maitland (Chaplain 1958-86)[36]

The office of the chaplain at Carleton was initiated by President Larry Gould as a separate institution because Gould was the first president of Carleton who was not an ordained minister. Feeling that religion was important, Gould gave the administration of religious needs of Carleton students to the Chaplain, of which Maitland was the third and longest serving.

As I've discovered, the dismantling of the religion requirement was in many ways aided by Maitland's background. Maitland was against **forcing** anyone to believe, and he himself helped in the dismantling of the mandatory Chapel attendance. Maitland, like his gifted successor Jewelnell Davis, was concerned in expanding and diversifying the nascent religion department of Carleton because understanding a "foreigner's" religion made them seem less foreign. In particular, Maitland supported the expansion of teaching about Asian religions in Carleton.

Professor Bardwell Smith (1962-95) [37]

Bardwell Smith, and other professors like Eleanor Zelliot, brought a much richer understanding of non-Western religions and cultures (especially the Asian faiths) to Carleton. Having witnessed racism and the patronizing attitude toward Asian religion and culture from his fellow marines while serving in Korea, Smith was always cognizant of how education must one day overcome prejudice. Carleton already had already developed many ties with colleges in Japan and India by the time Smith arrived. What Smith and his confederates did was to make Asia a greater focus-specialty at Carleton and bring the humanity and thoughts of Asia back home to the campus. Smith's deep empathy and knowledge of Hindu, Taoist and Buddhist cultures was important as a Dean of College (and as a long-time Druid advisor) during 1968-71 when students and faculty began to hotly protest the Vietnam war.

In comes the RDNA

With that background in mind, let us re-examine the mythical origins of the RDNA. The RDNA began in April 1963 when a group of students closely examined this age-old statement from Carleton College:

> "Attendance is required at the College Service of Worship *or* of the Sunday Evening Program *or* at any regularly organized service of public worship. Each term, every student must attend seven [of ten] of the services or religious meetings."[38] [emphasis theirs]

A goodly number of Carleton students felt that a wasteful amount of time was being spent by religious and secular authorities to keep people "in line" and to keep them from thinking. This was seen as a hindrance to their personal growth. This activity by authority figures is often called the "Fossilization Theory," and the fear of it proves to be the greatest motivator for the RDNA:

> "Reformed Druidism is a statement that religion has a tendency to become organized religion and which then becomes organization devoid of religion."[39]

So it came to pass, that in April 1963 the "Triumvirate" (David Fisher, Howard Cherniack and Norman Nelson) were seeking a group-name for an unusual ploy for protesting the compulsory attendance of Chapel services. They intended to test the leniency of the exemption to the Chapel Attendance that Carleton allowed for those students who attended *regular* services of one's own religion. The Triumvirate wanted to test this by making an outrageously "un-orthodox" group, holding regular services and claiming that it filled the implied requirement as stated in the Handbook: i.e. *regular attendance*. Cherniack, a prominent protester at Carleton[40], commented to the Triumvirate that his parents did not like filling in government forms that they were Jewish, so they had the custom of putting down "Druid" instead.[41] The Triumvirate liked the name, because it was both exotic sounding, and linked to a historical religion concerned about Nature, and one that had opposed a powerful centralized power (Rome). Because none of them knew much more on Druids[42] and thus feared being discredited, the name "Reformed" was likely immediately adopted in order that they could claim to have dropped any historical practice that was brought up by opponents which they had forgotten to incorporate, or with which they might disagree.[43] The term “North America,” was likely picked since there were a few Canadians in the group.

Weekly rituals were dutifully held on Saturday afternoons in the Arboretum from May 1963 to June 1964 with most members coming from KARL radio workers, theater, computer and folk dance enthusiasts. It was a group of friends meeting outdoors and having a good time together while meditating on religion. The men received a cold shoulder from the Dean when they turned in their attendance slips (saying they had attended RDNA services) while the women's attendance slips were accepted due to a loophole in their collection system.[44] Strangely, neither group received any disciplinary punishment, so their ploy was working. However, they also went to Chapel service or other religious services to cover their options just in case their RDNA applications failed.[45] When the requirement was rescinded, and the immediate purpose of the rebellion was over, the RDNA mysteriously continued.

Its Temporary Nature

There appears to be a common assumption among some historians that those organizations that outlast competitors had better-laid foundations and more careful planning. I know that Chaos often rules far more influentially than Order in these matters. Fisher, Cherniack and Nelson (and contemporaries) have always maintained:

> "It was NEVER our intention to "start a religion;" I don't think any of us expected it to outlive our time or life at Carleton, especially after the religious requirement was dropped in 1964."[46]

And had not the RDNA hit some powerful chord of possible validity as quickly as it did, Reformed Druidism probably would have ended in summer 1964 when President John Nason sent out a letter abolishing the Chapel Requirement.[47] Important to realize here is that the rescission of the Chapel Requirement **may** have been more likely a result of other more formal protests and administrative initiatives rather than the results of the Druids (who were mostly ignored), but they took the credit anyway.[48] During the first years, the RDNA was a shadowy group; a group

that most people thought didn't exist in reality. Many Founders[49] still have a hard time convincing their classmates that the RDNA actually existed in reality.

There were several important reasons that kept the RDNA members from dissolving the RDNA, reasons far more complicated than a simple fascination with ritualism or "Paganism" or any other such pat answers. For a great many Druids, the RDNA had introduced the possibility of taking personal responsibility for understanding and believing one's own faith. The RDNA had also shown them (in an experiential way) the benefits of learning from people from other faiths in a non-hostile forum of interaction. For many it was:

> "A period of being together as a group and being quiet together. Doing whatever happens during that period. People liked that, enjoyed it. They found it refreshing, something they valued. I saw, when I became ArchDruid, a goal of introducing people to the riches of other religions."[50]

Some reference materials will have you believe that Reformed Druidism radically changed or replaced the beliefs of the early members. For some, this proved true, but it is hardly satisfying as a general statement. It should be remembered that College is a time when many young adults change their religion, regardless of whether they belonged to a group such as the RDNA. A number of Carleton Druids later would became Unitarians or changed denominations, but several remained in their previous faith, albeit with a new perspective.[51] When we reach the Berkeley period, that will be an entirely different issue.

Limited Celtic Influence

Indeed, one of the greatest hindrance to the entire study of Reformed Druidism; the name "Druid." Many scholars will see the word "Druidism" on a sheet of paper and suddenly a myriad of assumptions will strangle their minds.[52] Such assumptions about "Druids" conjure up visions of the prominent use of Celtic languages and culture, human sacrifices, visiting Stonehenge every summer, being fiercely patriarchal, transmigration of the soul, Atlantis, people lying in dark rooms with rocks on their bellies, long beards and other silly stuff. It is true that the origin of the **names** of the RDNA's organizational structures, its god/archetypes and the titles of some of its officers[53] come from Celtic sources, but there is very little that is definitively Celtic about the **substance** of the early RDNA *at* Carleton, except it's penchant for chaos and entropy. If the Founders had wished to reconstruct a tightly-knit polytheism or to build an intricate system they probably would have chosen to emulate a Nordic Pagan religion or a Classical Pagan tradition, because there was far more material available to them in the libraries of Northfield than on Celtic traditions. The Celtic origin was probably deliberately chosen **because** of the vague scholarly information that was then available on Druids in 1963.[54] Because they were looking for a model that was relatively empty of restrictions, the early members felt no compunction about diverging from the historical authenticity of the Celts at a moment's notice. If you wish, they commandeered the name and image for their own purposes.

A fateful decision to follow their own pathway, whether or not it fell in line with Celtic customs, occurred early on in May 1963 during a stirring debate that almost led to a schism. The Druids were preparing to consecrate their second stone altar[55], when the question of what object to sacrifice came up for debate. While many past[56] and current religions[57] had/have an animal die during a religious activity, or in feasts leading up to events, Western civilization now generally frowns upon animal or human sacrifice, preferring to practice impersonal slaughter by machines at distant abattoirs.[58] One faction, led by Jan Johnson, declared (perhaps a little facetiously) that an animal sacrifice was necessary because:

> "Have you not forgotten the customs of old, which were the customs of our predecessors before us? Verily, I say unto you, nothing will be acceptable to the Earth-Mother save it were nothing smaller than an animal or fowl, yea, even a chicken." [59]

However, Howard Cherniack (a Founder) did counter with:

> "Have ye not forgotten that we are reformed, yea, even do we call ourselves by the name of Reformed, wherefore we must put behind those things which do bring offense to our senses." [60]

The debate was resolved by Jan Johnson relenting his position to avoid Schism during their tender time of foundation. This is the first of the two major schism attempts within Reformed Druidism. Thus the early schism debate was waged over whether to have an animal sacrifice *like the ancient Celts*. The resulting decision not to have animal/blood sacrifice, albeit argued in a light manner, set an early precedent for ignoring scholarship on issues in variance with the members' needs or tastes.[61] Since that time the Reformed Druids and all Modern American Druids have only performed vegetable sacrifices or offerings of tree leaves. This was also a precedent for a renunciation of *slavish* subservience by Reformed Druidism to any surviving remnants of lore left by the ancient Druids of the past.

> 10: Do you teach the ways of the Ancient Druids? If so, it is good.
>
> 11: For they had their wisdom, and that is oft forgot. But verily I say unto you: in their day, even they also were young in their traditions.[62]

There was at least one hard-core Celtic Enthusiast in the original group, Robert Larson, whose importance in the whole of the Reformed Druid movement would come up again much later on in the history. So whereas, the ancient Druids may have been students of Nature, the orientation of the Reformed Druids towards Nature and Brotherhood may have been more a result of influences that were not Celtic. In fact there was, of all things, a demonstrably strong bias towards Far-Eastern Asian religions, Liberal Christianity and Fraternalistic ideals.

The Asian Influences

It may sound rather strange to the reader, but nearly every newspaper article with a first hand *observation* of a grove service led by a Carleton student or alumni, while mentioning the "Celtic" structures, says that the RDNA's services drew mostly upon Hinduism, Buddhism and Liberal Christian thought.[63] One reason for this, as I've stated, is the remarkable availability of coursework on Asian religions, languages and overseas studies in Asia provided by Carleton College during the Founding Years. But more importantly, it was the "weird," living perspectives of Asian religions in regards to authority and learning which were far more attractive to young students than the prospect of scouring dusty old books to dig up scraps of old Celtic customs. Certainly, Asia was of great interest in the world news of that era.

This Asian preference is especially seen in the Carleton RDNA's fond love of Zen Buddhism and Taoism with their *seemingly* anarchic attitude that defies the need for defining itself or relying upon the aid of "authorities":

> **Question**: What is Zen?
>
> **Answer**: Try if you wish. But Zen comes of itself. True Zen shows in everyday living, consciousness in action. More than any limited awareness, it opens every inner door to our infinite nature.
>
> Instantly mind frees. How it frees! False Zen wracks brains as a fiction concocted by priests and salesmen to peddle their own wares.
>
> Look at it this way, inside-out and outside-in: consciousness everywhere, inclusive, through you. Then you can't help living humbly, in wonder.[64]

A brief thumbing through the pages of the Book of Meditations in *the Druid Chronicles*, *"The Green Book"* or the *Carleton Apocrypha*[65] will reveal a close similarity with a book of Koans (Zen Buddhist paradoxical statements) and Taoist anecdotes. This is not "koan-cidental" because many of the initial RDNA Druids had been greatly influenced by courses taught in or about India or Japan, both of which were countries where valuable ideas from outsiders' religions had been incorporated or absorbed into the previous belief systems.[66] This idea of "interactive and overlapping" religions versus "combative" religion especially impressed the Frangquists[67] during their trip to Japan:

> "[From] When I [Fisher] had last seen you [Frangquist], your Druidism has begun to take on a definite Zen Slant, just as mine showing over from Hindus and Christianity."[68]

Take this excerpt by Frangquist, which is very Zen-ish in style:

> Chapter the Tenth:
>
> 1. And when they come unto you and say: "And what, then, is the nature of this thing which ye do call Awareness?" then shall ye give answer unto them in silence, for this is the Third Lesson.
>
> 4. But there are many, yea, it is the greater number, who, in their unawareness, are aware not even of their unawareness.
>
> 5. And they are like unto them who are blind from the day of their birth, and see not, nor know what it is to see.
>
> 6. But some there are who are aware only that they are also unaware: hallowed are they, for they are children of Be'al.[69]
>
> 7. One of these is like unto one who keeps the Vigil;[70]
>
> 8. for their gaze cannot pierce the mantle of darkness which is thrown over all the world about them, but they rest secure in the knowledge of the return of day.[71]

An interesting side note was the growing importance of Zen, Asian religions and "mystery" religions to the greater "Counter-Culture" movement of the 60s, not to mention the Beat culture of the 50s. This Asian influence greatly increased after 1965 when President Johnson repealed the 1917 Oriental Exclusion Act.[72] Many leaders in the Eastern sects that subsequently immigrated to America were influential because the:

> "60's were, after all, a period of an intense interest in mysticism and strange religions, and a period also of the rise of the counter-culture. While none of the founders, or Dave Frangquist, were then self-consciously "counter-culture," I [Fisher] think we provided those alienated by the turgidity of native Protestantism a surprising, viable alternative."[73]

It is therefore no mere coincidence that the selections of *the "Green Book of Meditations"* come predominantly from Eastern religions.[74] Shelton, whose "influence on Carleton Druidism was significant long after his graduation"[75], was particularly insistent that every succeeding ArchDruid of Carleton should have a personal copy of the Green Book. Shelton felt that; "In a real sense the Green Book was the heart of Druidism in my day (70s)," which was diversity.[76]

But I should immediately state here that the Green Book also had many selections from monotheistic religions[77] and secular sources. Also important to realize is that a number of Carleton Druids would bring in meditations from Sci-Fi[78], newspapers, children's books and secular sources. Sometimes no readings were done at a ritual and the meditation was simply to quietly stare at the landscape. Also many students would seek out wisdom in their own time and way, separately from the "group."[79]

Perhaps it was the prominence of the Vietnam war, more than anything else, which led to an early-times RDNA emphasis for drawing on Asian religions. Knowledge and understanding of Eastern faiths may have strengthened the resolve of Carleton students to oppose the inhumanity of the Vietnam war. Through their readings of Asian philosophy and religion, the Vietnamese, Thais, Cambodians and Chinese were no longer some godless, shadowy people who lived far away; but possessors of valid beliefs, souls and morals; although not always expressed like ours.

Another telling sign of the relative unimportance of ancient Celticity in comparison to Asian studies for the early RDNA was that after the RDNA's faculty advisor, John Messenger (an Irish paleo-archeologist), left Carleton in 1965 the RDNA was faculty-supervised by Bardwell Smith (a modern Asian religion professor and ex-Episcopal priest). If they had really wished to revive a pre-Christian religion of Europe, wouldn't they have chosen a History or Classics department professor?

Another element, which I'll bring up again in Chapter Five, is the calendar dating system of Carleton. While the RDNA acknowledges that the Celtic Year begins on Samhain (November 1st), the Druids from Carleton date the "Years of the Reform" from May 1st, 1963 (half way through the Celtic Year) instead of dating from Samhain 1962 as did the more Celtic-inspired Reformed Druids in California. This led to conflicting dating systems, but also shows that the Reformed Druids of Carleton origin were more interested in their own organizational ways, than fitting into a Celtic mode. There was some confusion by Shelton in 1969, dating from Samhain during the Codex Affair, but this was corrected in the 1976 publication of the Carleton Calendar.

Because of the variety of inspiration that existed within Reformed Druidism, some Carleton Druids (in hindsight) therefore regretted the "vivid Celtic Imagery [that] made some interaction with the growing Neo-Pagan movement inevitable."[80] I, however, don't feel that the Neo-Pagans disagreed with Reformed Druidism so much on the theological or cultural grounds, but rather on political and organizational issues, as I'll discuss later.

Fraternal Influences?

An hypothesis brought up by my research was the vague possibility of Masonic and/or Fraternal influence on the very early RDNA. It is important to state here that little or no attention has previously been spent on this idea by the members of the RDNA, partly due to the Fisher's reluctance to talk about the issue, and because very few members really consider it to be important. For them, the group started in 1963. Period. However, I feel it is necessary to address this issue because of the recent renaissance of modern Druid groups in Europe and America, whose origins came from fraternal organizations. Out of academic honesty, scholars using the International Druid Archives at Carleton should be aware of any uncertainties pertaining to the independent origins of the RDNA and the American Druid Movement. I should however caution the reader that I am not a member of any such Fraternal/Masonic order, and that I am only relying upon common, published matter for my information.

There are some indirect evidence that may lend credence to the possibility that the RDNA maybe unwittingly an offshoot of previous Druid Masonic order, or perhaps based on a few ideals snatched from a fraternal organization.[150] Both groups (RDNA and Masonic Druids/Fraternal Organization/Fraternities) have some vague similarities in the areas of liturgy, calendars, costume, philosophy, drinking, and a Judeo-Christian bent. In addition to this, I believe that there were minor opportunities of access to such information by the early members of the RDNA.

Loose History of Fraternalism

For the reader who is completely unfamiliar with Fraternalism, I will share my meager outsider knowledge on the subject, although I am no expert. Modern Freemasonry is generally believed to have begun in the 17th/18th century, although they claim to go back to the Templar knights, and through other groups back to Old Testament times. Very soon after its "re-emergence" back then, Freemasonry became very popular, and the liturgy and hierarchy of Freemasonry soon became the template upon which nearly all later "secret" societies were developed, including Greek College Fraternities; which is a point that I'll bring up again. Mark Carnes explained that the peak popularity of fraternal organizations, during the 19th and early 20th century, was a result of males being dissatisfied with the rising prominence of women in molding the faith at the local parish community and at home.[151] By the late 1950's, fraternalism was rapidly declining at colleges and communities as the generation-gap widened between the youngsters and older lodge leaders. However Fraternalism had many other attractions to the general member than just male-bonding.

The premise of Freemasonry is to preserve and disseminate (in a secret manner) a set of "ancient rituals," wisdom and knowledge of construction that were entrusted by the first builder of the Temple of Solomon, Hiram Abiff, who was murdered for keeping the secrets, to a select disciple (and down through the ages to the Freemasons). For Freemasons, God's simple message was complicated by the accretions of later Jewish generations and then by the Catholic church. The true doctrine was given to the supposed disciples of Abiff, who then supposedly founded Freemasonry. The secrets of Freemasonry were then reportedly guarded by stonemasons and construction workers up through the fall of the Roman empire and the medieval ages until Freemasonry supposedly resurfaced in the 18th century. Other groups imitated the Freemasons and claimed the transmission of ancient knowledge, although not always of the Judeo-Christian variety; e.g. The Red Men organization in which Caucasians dressed up like Native Americans and supposedly passed on the knowledge of Native Americans.

The liturgy and hierarchy of Freemasonry is somewhat based on various Old Testament precedents, in particular with respect to the "patriarchal/male" elements; which is understandable given the male audience for which it was developed. Intrinsic to the beliefs of Freemason is the symbolic image of God as the Supreme Architect of Creation.[152] Nature and Man reflect the perfect mathematical and geometrical genius of God. Through the order and chaos inherent in Nature, and of course Mankind, one could see the mind of God. While few Freemasons ran out into the woods to seek God, some did.

Some of the Nature-oriented Freemasons and Fraternally-oriented people were also familiar with the Renaissance interest in studying ancient Classical documents, some of which referred to a group of Celtic priests who didn't hold services indoors, but in wooded areas; i.e. the God in Nature element. Also in ancient Classical documents on Druids is the recurrent belief among Greeks and Romans that the Druids were the heirs of Pythagoras' philosophical beliefs (or vice-a-versa); which were derived from purity of the science of geometry.[153] Add on to this that the Druids were primarily located in Western Europe (but also on the Danube and Turkey) and were possibly the ancestors of some of the people in Britain, France, Germany and Italy; and you have race-pride thrown into the equation. During the early 1700s, William Stukeley (during one of his more addled states of mind) gave authority to the rumors that the stone circles in Europe and the British Isles were built by Celtic Priests. Nobody could understand how the megaliths were raised with simple tools, so of course some secret knowledge of architecture was required. Because the builders of the Temple of Solomon were, *of course*, the greatest architects a few Fraternalists claimed that the Druids also were the direct heirs of Freemasonic ideas and knowledge. As a result, hordes of fraternal organizations popped up calling themselves Druids. Because little to nothing was academically known about ancient Celtic religion, few academics openly doubted the groups' statements and their "ancient" documents. As a result, much confusion still exists in the public's understanding of ancient Druids. But in the 60s, the British Druids were still making headlines for showing up at Stonehenge, and thus at least the idea of a Druidic brotherhood (or siblinghood) was feasibly available for the founders of the RDNA through the media.

Fraternal Evidence

Isaac Bonewits, a liturgist and an insightful arm chair scholar of Modern British Fraternal Druidism, believes that the liturgy and core philosophy of the RDNA bears a remarkable similarity to those found in the United Ancient Order of Druids; a primarily charitable organization of a few thousand members in the US that still retains some remnants of ritual from their fraternal past. I must defer judgment to Isaac on the liturgical similarity. This is a valid possibility, because a few books of UAOD material was stocked away at the St. Olaf library, which is only a 20 minute bike ride from Carleton. Although David Fisher was headed for Episcopal Seminary, even during the founding of Reformed Druidism, it does seem unlikely that he would have ever visited St. Olaf's Library, because St. Olaf was not then of the same caliber as Carleton, as it is now approaching today. Back in the 60s, even the 70s, Olaf's academic level was looked down

upon by Carleton students, and there would have been little to induce him to have gone there. As for the belief in a universal siblinghood and panentheism; these could easily be found in the doctrines of Deism and Unitarianism and 19th century poets, which are often attributed to Druids in unacademic books and reference materials then available in the Carleton and St. Olaf libraries. It should be noted that there was also a bit of Unitarian background among some of the Founders of the RDNA before they reached Carleton.[154]

The final answer will have to come from David Fisher, who has refused any further interviews since the early 70s. In spring of 1963, David Fisher devised the Order of Worship.[155] In contrast to Isaac's opinion, most Druids and non-Druids claim the liturgy bears a remarkable resemblance in form to the Episcopal rite, not surprising since David Fisher and most early leaders of Reformed Druidism were quite familiar with the Episcopal church.[156] For the sake of the protest and to lend an air of venerable age to the group, David Fisher is reputed by Norman Nelson as having claimed that he [David Fisher] had been initiated as a "third order Arch-Druid while in high school."[157] Not long after the group's purpose was completed by the repeal of the Chapel Attendance ordinance, Fisher denied his high school ordination and claimed that he had acquired the symbology through Frazer's "Golden Bough," which is also plausible. Fisher's motives for denial are slightly suspect because he feared not being admitted to Episcopal Seminary.[158] However, because Fisher unsuccessfully tried to start other "secret" groups before founding the RDNA while at Carleton,[159] one may suspect Fisher (and an undisclosed other person) as having at least some Masonic or fraternal knowledge, or at least an inclination to form a group similar to those based on Fraternal principles (even if Fisher had not been previously a member of a Fraternal group).

Other evidence of Fraternal influence are the 10 orders of the RDNA. In the Scottish Rite of FreeMasonry there are 10 orders of initiation; the first three have different functional purposes within the group, but the next 7 are honorary. The RDNA has three basic orders of 1st, 2nd and 3rd, and the 4th through 10th orders are completely honorary. Each order in FreeMasonry and the RDNA is accompanied by an initiation by someone of that order. Whereas in Freemasonry a ritual, a password or handshake is learned, Druidism only gives a distinctive ribbon and a ritual as a sign of office. Another interesting correlation is the title of "preceptor" for one of the three officers of a grove. "Preceptor" often appears as a title of organizational hierarchy in some Fraternal organizations, particularly Freemasonry. I believe the title could also have come from a position in the Anglican mass.

Then there is the surprising similarity of names and dates of the same eight festivals of the Reformed Druid calendar with the "8-fold wheel of the year" found in Neo-Paganism and the British Druid Fraternal system. I believe that this can easily be explained in that all three groups could have easily researched the popular literature written on Celtic customs. Beltane, Oimelc, Lughnasadh and Samhain were common Celtic festivals in the British Isles up until the 19th/20th century. So anyone spending an hour or two reading MacCulloch (1910) or Kendrick (1932) could have learned of these four great calendar festivals. As for the "cross-quarter" festivals (named so because they lie exactly half-way between the aforementioned holidays) of the solstices and equinoxes; these can be explained by the common (possibly false) assumption that the Druids or Celtic peoples had built the megalithic stone circles as observatories to measure the lunar cycles and the movements of the sun. Since many of these megalithic circles do bear some validity for judging the equinoxes and solstices, many have assumed that great Druid festivals must have occurred at these times also. While Christmas and St. John the Baptist/Midsummer's days are carryovers into the Christian calendars, it is harder to prove the case with the equinoxes.[160] Since these holidays were of easily locatable knowledge, I assume that the founders of the RDNA, various British Fraternal Orders, and the Neopagan movement could have devised the same calendars by independent initiatives and a quick study in their local libraries.

The early Freemasons were notorious for their drinking habits, as are the college fraternities which are their indirect offshoots. Was the RDNA originally set up as a Fraternity? Perhaps in Fisher's mind, but hardly in the eyes of the other druids. Carleton College has a strict policy of no Greek fraternities or sororities on or off it's campus. So how about a Celtic one? Most-to-all students are very supportive of this policy, because of a tradition of openness in the entrance requirements to organizations. The Reformed Druids have always been extremely welcoming of new people, and lacks the "hazing" common to fraternities. As for the use of alcohol at rituals, it was never much more than a shot per person, except in the 2nd Order initiation where it can be as high as three shots. A few tame parties occurred after the services of the main festivals, but no more than could be expected for a general College crowd on a weekend. I doubt this is a conclusive point of evidence of a fraternal influence or fraternity influence. I'll discuss the issue later under the Pseudo-Judeo-Christian influences.

Conclusion on Fraternalism

The possibility of a Masonic connection must remain open to debate, but NONE of the Carleton Druids have ever shown much concern, credence or knowledge of a possible preceding Druid group. For them, it STARTED in 1963, irregardless of what future evidence may show to the contrary. Many of the similarities can be chalked up to similarities that exist between organizations founded for the same purposes (in this case: universal siblinghood and opposition to tyrannical organizations). IF there was any influence it soon ceased within the first months of Reformed Druidism as David Fisher's influence within the group was supplanted by the interests of the other Founders and members. If the fraternal influences existed in the earliest weeks, they were greatly overshadowed by other factors; such as the need to look like a religion to get rid of the Chapel Requirement, the prominence of the philosophies of Asia and the pseudo-Judeo-Christian influences.

Judeo-Christian Influences on Druidism

It is a pretty good bet that at least 85% of all the members of Reformed Druidism were raised in a Judeo-Christian household (or a Western Atheistic one). It is therefore not unreasonable to think that the Founders of the RDNA should have sought a little inspiration from the Bible and other Christian literature when they were devising a "religion" to spoof the Chapel Requirement. This "swiping of ideas" and lighthearted spoofing of the Judeo-Christian tradition may seem a bit blasphemous or heretical to some, but we must remember that the RDNA felt that a religion had to be able to laugh at itself.[161] I think that the first elements to be borrowed from the Judeo-Christian tradition borrowed was the Liturgy, as written by David Fisher in the first few weeks of April or at the latest by May 1st, 1963; and upon which the apparent hierarchy of the RDNA was based.

ORDER OF COMMON WORSHIP:
SUMMER HALF OF THE YEAR
The Earliest Known Version

I. OPENING BLESSING:

O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here;

Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms;

Thou needest no praise, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;

O Lord, forgive [*these]* three sins that are due to our human limitations.

Mighty and blessed, fertile and powerful, to thee Earth-Mother, we sing our praise, asking that what we offer up to thee will be accepted, and thy blessing of life granted to us.

II. PROCESSION AND DRAWING OF THE CIRCLE (and LIGHTING OF FIRE)

III. HYMNS OR CHANTS OF PRAISE

IV. THE SACRIFICE

Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, O our Mother, as we offer up to thee this our sacrifice of life. Accept this we pray, and grant us life.

Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call on the Spirit of the North to give answer, of the South, of the East-- and of the West.

Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life has been accepted.

V. THE ANSWER

1. Of what does the Earth-mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

From Whence do these waters flow?

FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

And how do we honor this gift that cause life to men?

BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

SHE HAS

Then give me the Waters.

2. O DALON AP LANDU, HALLOW THESE WATERS BY THE SEVENFOLD POWERS, AND BY THE THREE WAYS OF DAY AND THE ONE OF NIGHT. GIVE US TO KNOW THY POWER AS WE TAKE AND DRINK OF THY SECRET ESSENCES.

3. To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

VI. THE SERMON

VII. THE BENEDICTION

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that you go forth with her blessing. PEACE, PEACE, PEACE.

A Crude Analysis of the Ritual[162]

For many people, the words of the invocation are their fondest memory of the ritual. Primary amongst the reasons they give is that the humbling expression of how we worship is inherently inferior and flawed to the way we'd LIKE to worship; how the very framework of our mind inhibits true worship. The words "sins" were often replaced with "errors" or “limitations” in later versions.

The liturgical roles of the three officers of the grove are laid out here. The Priest has the center stage in the ritual, governing the actions and timing. But the Preceptor also has a very active role in the etching of the Druid Sigil, the fetching of the sacrifice, answering of the catechism of the waters in part V.1. (which may also be answered by the congregation), and the confirmation of the sacrifice's acceptance. The Server's role is like that of cup-bearer/acolyte and passes the waters amongst the group between V.2. and V.3., and little more. The secular role of the these officers is small. Usually there was only one Priest in a grove, the Arch-Druid. The role of the Priest (or priests, if there are several in a grove at the same time) is to maintain the calendar of observance and hold weekend services (especially during the early 60s). The Preceptor is in charge of the any paperwork and gophering in the grove's activities. The Server has few secular responsibilities.

The service has a vague resemblance to the Holy Mass of the Episcopal church, but besides the consecration of an alcoholic beverage; the Order of Worship follows the generic liturgical template of the services of most religions (i.e. Greeting, Adoration, an invocation to Deity, a consecration/blessing of the community with an optional communal activity or feeding, a meditation/sermon and a parting with blessing). Strangely, any of the participants could well be interpreting the "Lord" in the beginning to the be the Judeo-Christian God. However, they could also be viewing "Lord" as Krishna or Allah or the Great Spirit or Buddha or Cernunnos or "Bob" or etc. Remember that Reformed Druidism has no EXPLICIT gods in it's "theology;" therefore interpretation of the terms and names is up to the individual Druid. The invocation of Dalon ap Landu and the Earth-Mother could be interpreted as however wished by the participant; either as Gods in their own right or as personifications of philosophic ideals.

Waters-of-Life[163]

It is very surprising that there is no consecration of a foodstuff as a parallel to the bread in the Christian Mass. I find

the choice of whiskey, as the drink of consecration, to be a rather intriguing choice. The Irish Gaelic for "whiskey" is "uisce-beatha," or translated literally, it is "waters of life," which is well known.[164] Whiskey being an purely Celtic invention, it was a natural and appropriate choice as the beverage of a "Celtic Religion," like Druidism was portraying itself in the beginning.[165] So it would seem to have been another little Celticism of the group, yes? Possibly not. In a very popular classic Science Fiction book of the 50/early 60s, *Stranger in a Strange Land* and *Dune*, a beverage known as the "waters of life" are used to unite the people in a strange exotic religion. What is interesting to note is that *Stranger in a Strange Land* became the inspiration for a NeoPagan religion known as "The Church of All Worlds," which was started among the science-fiction loving college students in 1961 down in Missouri. Coincidence? However, few early members were known to be sci-fi fans, so it is unlikely that it was an inspiration for Fisher's RDNA.

Calendar

It should be noted that it was decided at the first Samhain ritual (Nov. 1st, 1963) that the Waters of Life would not be served from Samhain to Beltane (May 1st). It is uncertain if financial reasons were involved or Lenten concepts of periods of abstinence. Instead, the Waters of Sleep (plain water) would be served at all rituals during this period. This required a change in the Order of Worship. One reason for the change that I've come up with is that the season of winter in Minnesota is very fierce and uncompromising to outdoor Druid services from November until at least April/May; limiting outdoor services to about 6 or 7 in the fall and 7 or 8 in the spring. As a result, Saturday services would have to be held indoors during the winter, and alcohol was prohibited on the Carleton campus in the early 60s. The use of alcohol was unofficially tolerated off-campus, and the arboretum of the Druid Services was pseudo-off-campus. Thus developed the two halves of the Druid Calendar, the Summer Half from Beltane to Samhain and the Winter Half from Samhain to Beltane. Another possibility for the halves of the year is found in the Benedictine Rule of having different vigils and psalm readings between November 1st and Easter from those used between Easter and November 1st. Fisher would likely have been aware such a difference.

A comment is pertinent here about the eight celebratory festivals of the RDNA. Four of them are tied in with the agrarian/husbandry practices of pre-20th century Europe. Those are Beltane (May 1st) cattle go into the higher elevations to pasture. Next is Lughnasadh (Aug 1st) which is the celebration of the beginning of the harvest. Then comes Samhain (Nov. 1st) when cattle were slaughtered for meat over the winter and dead relatives are remembered. Finally there is Oimelc (Feb. 1st) when the ewes drop their lambs and begin to lactate. These traditional celebrations of the rhythms of Nature were seen as more important and less divisive by the RDNA than remembering the holidays from each of the many World religions.[167] At any rate they are more Indo-European than Celtic and were written about in books like Frazer's Golden Bough and MacCulloch.[168]

The other four festivals are the equinoxes and solstices. Yule/Christmas and Midsummer have their basis in the solstices, but the equinoxes have less celebrated carryovers like Paddy's Day, Easter/Passover and Lady's Day. In fact the equinoxes were not officially celebrated by the RDNA at Carleton until them late 80s, because of the lack of 'proof' that they were Celtic, and because they are not mentioned in the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed*). The Berkeley grove was the first Grove of the Reform to raise the equinoxes to a higher status. Regardless, equinoxes and solstices did not play an important role in the Druidism at Carleton until the late 80s. This is primarily because they mostly fall on vacation times when Carleton Students are unable to meet.

It is interesting that Carleton's weather and academic schedule makes most of the "big eight" festivals, except Fall Equinox, Samhain and Beltane uncelebratable outdoors. The result is that the cycles of the seasons may not be as apparent and important to most of the Carleton members who are unable to participate in all 8 spokes of "The Wheel of the Year." However, as the years progressed after the Chapel Requirement was rescinded, the festivals began to take on a much greater importance than the weekend services, which were a left over from the early days. By the mid 80s, weekend services had completely dropped out of use at Carleton, replaced by lunar observances, 8 festivals and weekly tea or book club meetings. As far as I know, the weekly services are still common at some NRDNA groves.

Early Druid Literature

Seeing as how the Chapel requirement was seen as enforcing Judeo-Christianity at Carleton, it is not surprising that the Druids would poke fun at Judeo-Christianity in a few other ways: scriptures, altar building and missionary activity. In some ways I find this the most interesting part of the early Druid days. It gives me a better understanding of how easy or hard it is to imitate the progress and quarrels of the early centuries of Christianity; and thereby exposes some of our conceptions to a humorous light.

The *Druid Chronicles (Reformed*) was the 1964 summer release 1964 (written and revised from the summer of 1963 to spring 1963) of David Frangquist to leave a faithful account of the early days for Druids who weren't there in the beginning. It is an amazing work, a self-contained blueprint for Reformed Druidism as the Carleton Grove initially understood it. The *Druid Chronicles (Reformed*) may look very much like conventional biblical scriptures. It has the same verse-numbering system and mimics the now-awkward, repetitive and flowery vocabulary of the *King James Bible* of the Episcopal Church of the 1960s. It is divided into five books, perhaps like the Pentateuch of the Torah, and it has an Early Chronicles and Later Chronicles to parallel the Old and New Testaments. It is filled with tales of "great" happenings, heroic deeds and omens (although few prophecies). It has a book of Laws and a book of Customs which set forth the simple structures of Druidism, not unlike Leviticus and Deuteronomy. It also has a book of Meditations which is still referred to for inspiration by members of the present RDNA and NRDNA groves, much like the Book of Psalms. The characterization of David (a Fisher) "crying out in the wilderness," invokes a comparison with how John the Baptist foreshadowed Jesus (perhaps as David Fisher did for Frangquist?). The many reconstructions of the altar parallels the destructions of Solomon's Temple. With a bit of imagination, the words of hopeful reunion by Fisher in Early Chronicles before the summer vacation, could be paralleled with Jesus telling his disciples that they would meet again. For many, it is all they will ever need to practice Druidism, yet despite its popularity, the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* are not inviolable dogma to Druids like the Bible is to many Christians. Although there was an early decision not to add additional writings to the DC(R), but rather to make all further additions to an Apocrypha, this does not indicate that the DC(R) was a holy scripture. It was written with the intention of being a self-standing handy guidebook to be used, or not used. It is perfectly possible to break all the customs in DC(R), disagree with most of the suggestions, not like the meditations, and still be a Reformed Druid in good standing with the group.

Over the years a Talmud-like collection of letters, memoranda and rituals made by the Founders of Druidism and other letter-writing Druids (originally known as the Records of the Council) slowly accumulated in a large binder called the Blue Book of the Archives; which was the predecessor to the present International Druid Archives. Like the Ark of the Covenant, it wandered about from one place to another, being lost frequently. From 1964, until the publication of *the Druid Chronicles (Evolved*) by Isaac in 1976, there was some debate over whether certain letters should be added onto the original five books of the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed*) (esp. *The Book of Faith*). It was finally agreed that the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* should stand as an independent publication. Isaac came up with several letters that he assembled into his Book of the Apocrypha. Many within the RDNA did not like his choices, so certain special documents were extracted from the Blue Book and put into a separate production known as the Carleton Apocrypha under the aegis of Richard Shelton in the period of 1971-1976. To continue the Christian/Druid comparison, one could perhaps compare the Druid Apocryphas to the New Testament or the Lost Books of the Bible, but still with the caveat that the Apocryphas are not dogma or indicative of the whole Reform.

This tradition is roughly similar to the activity of the Early Christians writing to each other. Early debates, as already discussed, were mostly resolved by mail. Most of this is pretty obvious to the reader. Occasional encouragements to spread the "faith" of Druidism (whatever that meant?) only serve to highlight much of the tongue- in-cheek aspect that accompanied much of the growth of Druidism.

Conclusion to Judeo-Christian Influences

Judeo-Christianity, while it had some flaws for many members, was still a primary influence on the beginnings of Reformed Druidism; perhaps even greater than the Asian influences (which themselves, were definitely more influential than Celticicity). And perhaps it is right that Reformed Druidism should continue to occasionally lead its members in a re-evaluation of the Western religions, for like Nature, we will forever "come face-to-face" with them. Many members would return to Western monotheistic religions after a brief bout with Druidism, often with an enhanced understanding of what it means to be religious.[169] Sometimes the RDNA's light-hearted spoofs of elements of Judeo-Christian religions would bring about a revelation and signal a bold exploration into new possibilities.

The Two Basic Tenets

Since the RDNA probably came from no single recognizable or known preceding institution, you may be wondering now "Just what do the Druids believe, and whence came their beliefs?"[81] From the spring of 1963, the two Basic Tenets have been the **only** statement accorded complete theological agreement amongst all the Reformed Druids, both priests and lower Orders. The recruitment for Reformed Druidism was aided and guided by the very short and simple list of beliefs that were devised by Cherniack.[82]

> The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
>
> And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it people do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.[83]

These two short paragraphs are the most recounted quotation of Reformed Druid thealogy and are as roughly equivalent in importance to the RDNA as the Ten Commandments are to Judeo-Christian theology and the Five Pillars are to Islam. They are the **only** beliefs that have ever been required of new members to become a valid Druid in the RDNA or NRDNA. Norman Nelson, a Founder of the RDNA, stated that they "were careful in setting forth the original Tenets, to make it clear that Druidism (at least in 'our' Reform) did not conflict with other beliefs;"[84] The Founders had in effect "formulated Druidism as a religion of the least common denominator, a faith that few could object to, and [we] were surprised when some embraced it as adequate."[85]

It is important to note here that there are no explicit gods or goddesses mentioned in the Basic Tenets. The Earth-Mother is said to be Nature, but she is not **defined** as a Goddess. While the Earth-Mother would immediately be considered a Goddess by most Wiccans and Neo-Pagans who would hear this statement, here is a loop-hole for an atheist or monotheistic Reformed Druid to view the Earth-Mother as a personification of the material world, Nature. The result is that more people can agree on the same thing, while interpreting it differently. As Larry Press related to me, there are no traditional mythologies or stories attached to any of the Celtic Gods by the RDNA in their publications.[86] The god-names remained as uncarved blocks of wood to be wrought upon freshly by each member's imagination in their own way, or to be simply left as blocks.

The Founders had realized that many religions from around the world (past and present) have used analogies drawn from the material world to express Divinity; whether that Divinity is immanent or transcendent.[87] In fact, David Frangquist felt that Nature was at the root base of all religions:

> "John B. Sparks has demonstrated that all of the major religions of the modern world have developed directly or indirectly from Nature worship."[88]

The trick that the RDNA used was that if the same story about, say, a bird making a nest, can be interpreted by all religions as a useful analogy for their own religious beliefs, then people of all religions could benefit from getting together and hearing that same story of how a bird built its nest. ("One mouth telling a story, many ears interpreting."[89]) As long as dogmatic theological statements remain out of the stories, the group can enjoy each other's company, because dogma is as often a testing-device primarily for exclusion rather , as for inclusion.

Resultant Philosophy/Theology

The combination of the Basic Tenets and a general Carleton disinclination to overradicalize on an issue, but to maintain a respectful interest or at least a concerted apathy, comes a great many unofficial practices among Carleton Druids. I remind you that former Carleton Druids were, at least nominally, the ArchDruids of almost all RDNA and early-NRDNA groves until 1976.[90] Because the first core-members of a grove are often chosen by the founding Archdruid, the background of that missionary Third Order Druid is important. Therefore this "Carleton" philosophy/religion is worth expounding further upon before mentioning the hierarchical roots of Reformed Druidism, because these views are older than the political structures themselves and should be known and understood before delving into the "Druid Politics."

Some Druids felt the greatest need for Druidism was to instruct people that they had a right to believe what they knew to be true, regardless of what others said. A person joining the RDNA and/or NRDNA was never required to renounce their previous faiths, whether mainstream or Neo-Pagan.[91] It was important to Druidism that you believed your own views instead of slavishly following those of others, provided that you had carefully examined them and judged them sound:

> "Their numbers are great and their voices are loud. They shall present much authority before you, and say: "We know our way to be the only way, for it is the way of our ancestors."
>
> But take heed, lest you should fall into the trap."[92]

A way that one could oppose such bigoted authority and still prevent one's own participation in the same blame-worthy activity ("the trap") was:

> "...to be intellectually honest with himself, and not blindly bigoted, his faith must be based on a rational and prayerful consideration of the alternatives."
>
> "We pity the man whose faith is based only on a fear of questioning that faith. For our faith is a faith freely embracedm the only kind of faith worth having."[93]

Once that is realized as a noble goal for one's self, it should follow that an opportunity for holding one's own beliefs should also be ceded as the right to others because:

> "Awareness shall come unto no one save it shall be in their own way: and it shall come unto no one save they shall come unto it.
>
> ...And make your way not after the ways of others, but after your own way:
>
> and go too to the fountain of Awareness, which is in Nature.[94]"

This led to the conclusion that one could never successfully force one's own "awareness" upon another, or even reliably judge whether such a transformation had indeed occurred in someone else.[95] This probably posed a permanent perplexing paradox for proselytizing. This philosophy/religious precept of firmness in one's own beliefs and respectful uncertainty over the validity of another's beliefs underlies all the future debates in Reformed Druidism. How this relates to relativism, is another issue for the scholars. Above all, the Druid should remember that in all the religions outside our own: "There were treasures there that related to our tradition as Druids of looking to Nature."[96]

Early on, some Druids had tentatively replied to the first of the four essential debates in Druidism: "What are the basic needs for religion?" One apparent answer, one among many, was that religion (and Reformed Druidism) should encourage and support people to continue questioning and searching for religious truth, but religions should not limit the searcher.

> "If I were ever to pass on any advice to my successors, it would be to never consider that they have found, as Druids, the ultimate answer to any of their questions. Druidism is a faith, if a faith, in questioning, not in answering. Awareness, to a Druid, is an individual thing, to be shared, perhaps, but never to be codified."[97]
>
> "[I] saw it [Reformed Druidism] as a slightly more organized way of pursuing moral, ethical (+later) spiritual issues from new perspectives."[98]
>
> "It also reinforced my own conviction in the universality of core religious beliefs which lie beneath the varying disguises of various religions."[99]

As for the 4th "Essential" Debate, that Druidism shouldn't get too serious about itself, lest it succumb to the "Fossilization Theory." For once a group can't laugh at itself then the organization has stifled a possible expression of religiosity:

> "[T]he strength of Druidism lies in its rejection of the orthodox, a quality which often leads to humorous results.
>
> Without ever being too sure of ourselves, we must provide an opportunity for introspection, in a religious setting, but a setting in which the participant will not feel constrained by the old conventions with which he was formally familiar."[44]

Organizational Roots of the RDNA

The basic beginning of group-structure was devised by David Fisher, because he set up the original liturgy. A more detailed analysis of the ritual is discussed in Chapter Four, but the basic important issue was that three liturgical roles were required to "officially" perform the Order of Worship. The three liturgical roles included 1) an "Arch-druid" chanting the week-end service liturgy, later known as "The Order of (common) Worship," 2) a "Preceptor" who answered to a formulaic set of questions asked by the Arch-Druid before consecrating the "Waters-Of-Life"[100] and 3) a "Server" who carried the cup of the Waters-of-Life around to all the Druids.[101] There was no initial imposition of hierarchy of orders (except in Fisher's mind) at the first service, so anybody could have technically filled each role, including being the Arch-Druid,[102] however things didn't happen to go towards greater egalitarianism.

In order to fulfill Carleton's requirements for being a student religious group, the RDNA had to file a Student Constitution with the Carleton Senate and appoint three officers. These three organizational officers of the RDNA were drawn directly from the liturgical roles and led to the development of the three primary Orders of Reformed Druidism. Fisher had already claimed initially to be an initiated "third order Druid in high school"[103] when the "Triumvirate" had first met, so Fisher apparently filled in this credibility-gap by applying one Order to each of the roles in the Liturgy. In the 1963 RDNA Constitution of the Carleton Grove, only one month into the group's existence, the ArchDruid was listed as being held by "at least a third order" Druid, the office of Preceptor by "at least a second order" Druid and the office of Server by "at least a first order" Druid.[104] The ArchDruid's requirement of being "at least a third-order" refers to the fact that Fisher had stated that there were actually **ten**(!) orders all together.[105]

Here I must pause and refer you back to the second and third "essential" debates of Reformed Druidism; (2) how to detect Fisher-isms and (3) what could be done to delay a proposal until it could be determined whether or not it was a "Fisher-ism." Already we can see that the dreadful "self-feeding" process in (3) appears to have been established and permitted to attach itself to

Reformed Druidism. But before we assign some form of heavy guilt on the head of Fisher for "dooming" Reformed Druidism to eternal power-struggles and schisms that result from hierarchy, let's remember that none of the Founders "expected the group to outlive our time and life at Carleton."[106] The real "guilt," if such a thing exists, would have been the continuation of the previous structure along with the original philosophy, under David Frangquist and his successors**.** For it is they, who have appeared to have nostalgically retained the customs, laws and the seemingly unnecessary hierarchy that were first established to give cohesiveness to the group to oppose the Chapel requirement.

If Dave Frangquist truly believed in Druidism's simpler messages, why did he add Fisher's hierarchy and terminology to his own dissemination of the spirit of the Basic Tenets? Nostalgia? Lack of foresight? Fear of breaking with the past? A little of each, plus a realization that the RDNA was still needed by some at Carleton and something was necessary to keep the group from being mis-used or overly confused. The answer would be the role of the Third Order Druid, as guided by the Druid Chronicles (Reformed) and the Ordination service's instructions to the Third Order.

Figure 7 The Dapper Druid.

Figure 8 A Druid in summer attire?

Chapter Three: Reformed Druidism 1964-1973

Expansion Beyond Carleton

In the spring of 1964, Druidism really looked as if it would fade away with Cherniack retired, Fisher slowly distancing himself from Druidism in preparation for Episcopal Seminary,[107] and the Chapel requirement about to be rescinded. Frangquist and Nelson, however, came up and asked to enter Fisher's mysterious Third Order, with the realization that they had a good thing going with the RDNA. Frangquist and Nelson had decided that they wanted to share Druidism with others after leaving Carleton, or as Zempel later put it:

> "Due to the temporary nature of membership in the Carleton Grove, nearly every priest ordained can be expected to eventually serve a missionary function, making Druidism available other than its birth place."[108]

Frangquist was not an *original* Triumvirate Founder (but close enough to be an honorary fourth Founder), but soon after the first service, he had become a very active Druid in the grove.[109] He did not make this commitment lightly and showed quite a bit of preparation:

> "David [Frangquist], unlike myself [Fisher] and co-founders, took his Druidism very seriously, and meditated long and hard before asking for ordination as a 3rd order priest."[110]

Together, Frangquist and Nelson had decided to use and maintain the Third Order priesthood as a sort of check upon future groves from becoming too serious or becoming too dangerously wild. But they wanted to ensure that the Third Order would not become too domineering, or take itself too seriously. Most of all, the Third Order should not become a goal for title-hungry people on ego-trips.

A word here about the Third Order is in order. There is not much known about the traditional Patron of the Third Order, Dalon ap Landu outside of the RDNA, since he does not apparently exist in any archaeological or literary sources. There is some rumor that "Dalon ap Landu" is a variant of "Dylan eil Ton," which would explain the Welsh name "Dalon son of the Sea," but I suspect that there is little connection between the two. Dylan in the Mabinogi was a young boy thrown into the sea and drowned. In outrage, the sea has ever since been throwing itself in anger against the shore-rocks in an attempt to reach the malefactors. Perhaps there is a symbolic representation of the Druids continually throwing themselves against the breakers of Dogma? The only revealing verse in the Druid Chronicles, doesn't mesh with this hypothesis because it refers to Dalon as a tree:

> "We have seen him on the bosom of the Earth-Mother: huge woody arms raised to the sky in adoration, strong and alive; and we have called His name Dalon Ap Landu.[111]"

If Dalon is a tree-god, that would explain why he's in charge of "groves," and their keepers, the Third Order. One friend has suggested that “ap Landu” be a college boy’s pig-Welsh for “of the land,” which has as much chance of being true as any current theory. Isaac claims that at least one Masonic Druid organization, whose name he unfortunately can't remember, also has a Dalon Ap Landu. It is perhaps revealing of the mentality of Reformed Druids, that they would chose such an intentionally **obscure** Welsh name for the most important office of Druidism, a Patron that was for all intents and purposes laden with no preconceptions or descriptions.[112]

This type of attitude of letting others disprove their own misconceptions is similar to the essence of mysticism in fraternal organizations, when done correctly.[113] The unfounded hopes, fears and expectations can build to a frenzy as the initiation approaches the climax. Then, all the danger is revealed to be a holy "joke" and one sees that all the disappointments were brought on by one's own frenzied fears and hopes. The result is that the initiate begins to realize that appearances can be deluding with regard to ritual and religion, necessitating a deeper observation. Unlike most of the fraternal organizations, Reformed Druidism's services are not secret, and the private nature of the Third Order ordination is merely done to form a closer bond, to leave a little bit of surprise for future initiates and possibly to reduce embarrassment in the unlikely case that the candidate is rejected.[114] Several times, other non-Thirds would be around to observe it, but realistically, how many people would really want to tromp into the Arb at 6:00 am just to watch someone else's ordination?

In the spring of 1964 Fisher was reluctant to continue his Arch-Druidship into his senior year, primarily because he thought the group was becoming too close to a religion; however Fisher was hesitant to relinquish control. Nelson, wishing to be ArchDruid from a love of titles, began this new stage of post-Fisher Druidism. Under Nelson's brief summer ArchDruidcy in May 1964 to Sept. 1964, the Order of Worship was fixed as **the basic** liturgy and the Higher Orders (i.e. 4th to 10th) were established to "stimulate priests of the 3rd Order to continued spiritual inquiry," much like honorary academic degrees.[115] The Higher Orders were also considered very extraneous compared to the First, Second and Third Orders. Over the years, however, the Higher Orders would flit in an out of the records, until the 1970s when the NRDNA wished to revive them as magical badges of office. After the Higher Orders were established, Nelson graduated and left Carleton to start the first of the missionary groves at Vermilion, S.D.[116] during the summer of 1964, essentially acting as the ArchDruid of both Groves. Meanwhile over the summer, Frangquist founded the short-lived Ma-Ja-Ka-Wan Grove in a Wisconsin summer camp.

David Frangquist's subsequent two year reign as ArchDruid (under Nelson and Fisher’s watchful auspices for 64-65) at Carleton from Fall 1964 to Spring 1966 completed the basic formulation of the hierarchy and philosophical foundations of the RDNA, except for the final clarification in 1971 to correct a few elements of sexism that were disturbing to many in the Reform.[117] Because there were only a handful of initial priests on the membership rolls of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu during the early 60s, it was easy for a lot of rules to be hammered out in a consensus very quickly. The consensus tradition is very important to remember because, in later years, it became increasingly difficult to get the increasingly large rolls of priests to either abstain or vote positively on Council issues.

Complete authority over the Reform (if such a thing ever existed) was invested in the Council of Dalon ap Landu under the perpetual Chairmanship of the currently presiding ArchDruid of Carleton.[118] This in effect turned Carleton into the central administration of the Reformed Druid movement in a vaguely similar way to how Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Islam and Judaism all have particular holy areas or "main Headquarters."

Voting membership on this Council was limited to those of the Third Order, each of whom must have been initiated by an Arch-Druid (who is, of course, of the Third Order).[119] New dogma would require a consensus from the replies of **known**, not active, members of the Council who had been contacted.[120] If an Arch-Druid found a prospective initiate too fanatical, or likely to turn Druidism into a personal cult-following, they could do little more than avoid ordaining her/him into the Third Order, within reason.[121] The flaw was that once a "rogue" slipped into the Third Order, there was probably nothing you could do to defrock them or stop their propagation. To defrock them seems to be an un-Druidic thing to do, because you would be claiming to understand their soul better than they could themselves. It was hoped that the Grove members would eventually spot the rogues and leave them.

Missionary Dilemma

Once they had been initiated into the Third Order, Nelson and Frangquist pondered how to form missionary groves away from Carleton. The problem, known as "the Missionary Dilemma," which hinged on the proper consecration of the Waters-of-Life, as performed in the Order of Worship.[122] In order to properly consecrate 1st, 2nd and 3rd Order Druids, you need to have consecrated Waters-of-Life. The only way to consecrate the Waters-of-Life was to have a Preceptor (of the Second Order) and a Server (of the First Order) already present in the Grove before the consecration began. In a technical way, a traveling Third Order couldn't perform the ceremony or consecrate the waters without also having two traveling companions, one of at least the Second Order and another of at least the First Order. Since it was very unlikely that three such graduating Druids from Carleton would go on to the same graduate school, it appeared that Druidism couldn't technically ever leave Carleton.

For some reason, the possibility of carrying pre-consecrated Waters was never discussed. Perhaps because in the service, the unused portions of the Waters are quickly given in a libation to the Earth within minutes of the partaking by the attendees. Instead, the informal decision was made that a missionary Third Order Druid has the right to perform the ceremony in absence of an already consecrated Preceptor and Server. This decision had a precedent (not that precedents are needed or respected in the RDNA) in the way that Fisher (originally the only "consecrated" member of the Carleton Grove) ordained the first 2nd and 1st Order Druids into existence. This was vaguely referred to in the Council decision on 27 January, 1965 which stated:

> "That any priest has the right to conduct worship and receive members into the First and Second orders."

With this obstacle to growth now removed and already tested at the Vermilion Grove of S.D. by Nelson and Frangquist in Wisconsin in the Summer of 1964, the missionary expansion of Reformed Druidism can be said to have begun.[123]

Grove Liberty

Each resolution further limited the numbers of distracting cosmetic touches to ritual or organization that could be lobbied for "official" approval. That type of lobbying to a central authority would distract the attention of the Druids from the virtues of careful introspection and self-reliance. An example of this is that the *contents* of the Order of Worship were never firmly described in the Council's records.[124] There is no phraseology there that limits anyone from building upon or subtracting from the liturgy. One had liberal freedom to experiment with it, although few went too far away from the basics.[125] The only absolutely fixed ritual of the RDNA was for the Third Order. In fact, it was the Third Order which is restricted by such laws, rather than the lower orders. Interestingly enough, no council was envisioned for the first and second orders, although some Founders have afterward said they see no reason those orders couldn't devise and hold their own services, just like the Higher Orders.

Because of early missionary activity by the Founders (Fisher, Nelson and Frangquist all started groves) and the inconvenience of regular correspondence, the difficulty of controlling and directing distant groves was quickly realized. It is also possible that they realized that a fully-enrolled Carleton student (which is **traditionally** the requirement for being the Archdruid of the Carleton Grove) just doesn't have the time to be bothered with supervising and/or controlling far-away distant groves. These elements when combined, led to a great amount of freedom being granted to possible future groves beyond Carleton.

By the Spring of 1966, all it took to found a grove was a Third Order Druid (who could ordain anyone to 1st or 2nd Order) and two other **elected** people to fill the appropriate liturgical roles during the initial service. The Grove's officers of Arch-Druid, Preceptor and Server were then elected by a majority and a new constitution was voted on usually by unanimity[126] and that was mailed to Carleton.[127] Amendments to a grove's constitution were generally by majority vote of a quorum of the grove's known members (1/8 or 1/3 of those of 1st order on up) at two consecutive meetings. Members missing the first meeting must be notified of the second meeting.[128] No specific contents were ever required for the later grove constitutions by the Council to be submitted to Carleton by the new grove, not even clauses of subservience to the Council! Freedom. Hoping to further limit extension of power by future Councils upon future groves, the Council declared:

> "That the local Groves retain the right to organize themselves in any way which will best serve their own needs."[129]

These rules taken together, allowed each individual grove the freedom to make any liturgical, hierarchical or theological rules that they wanted. In many ways it was like the separation of Federal and State government in the USA; with the Council being the Federal government and the local groves (including Carleton) being the States. The only thing the groves couldn't do was to claim that all the rest of Reformed Druidism also had to follow their own modifications. Any dissenters in the grove could leave or even step forward to be ordained into the Third Order, choose to schis from the group, and then form their own equally independent grove. Thus if Berkeley wanted all of its own grove members to declare themselves as Neo-Pagan to serve their own needs, there was nothing the Council could do about it, except to grumble about their exclusionary actions. What the Council *could* do was hope that the Berkeleyites would show enough independent will of their own, which they often did. But if Berkeley wanted all of Reformed Druidism to declare itself Neo-Pagan, then the Council would probably have to discuss and then vote on it.

It should be noted that the individuals of the Third Order, while given the privileges of holding services and ordinations, are **nowhere** granted control of the grove in matters of theology. Nowhere in the laws or traditions does a Third Order Druid have the right to tell someone that they are a "heretic" to Reformed Druidism. While a Third Order could theoretically opt to withhold services and ordinations until their parishioners agreed with her or him, such actions would be generally considered "un-Druidic" or at least a poor way to resolve internal disputes. I believe that the Records of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, are rather vague on the powers of individual Thirds, and this may combat the

existence of personality cults, by encouraging the individual's personal beliefs. But there is no "bill of rights" for members, which is disturbing to me. You can have a charismatic Arch-Druid, but they should have a following based on love and understanding, not on fear of organizational rules/dogma. Entrusting theological issues to the *total* Council, would by default, keep the groves of the Reform open and free of local dictators. But I suppose, if a bad apple did emerge, they probably wouldn't allow members contact with the head organization anyway. If this wasn't the original intention, it certainly was the eventual effect.

Use of Early Publications

Perhaps the greatest legacy to the RDNA that Frangquist left to Carleton wasn't the Third Order and the Council, but rather *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed*), *What is Reformed Druidism*?, and the *Green Book of Meditation (Vol.1*). These three publications were considered, by many members, to have been the heart and soul of Reformed Druidism, along with the great outdoors.

The *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* were completed before the Summer of 1964 by David Frangquist. They contain light-hearted accounts of the major events of the turbulent first year of Reformed Druidism from May 1963 to May 1964 under David Fisher. The humor and cheeky presentation of the Foundation was a balanced reminder to Druids not to get misty-eyed or seriously concerned about preserving the "sanctity" of the many organizational aspects. DC(R) also lists some of the early customs, lists the two Basic Tenets as the sole theology of the group, and provides a number of inspiring meditations to encourage individualistic exploration for personal truth. The book, itself, does not claim to be divinely inspired and there was no decision by the Council to make DC(R)'s statements or customs into official law. DC(R) was left behind as a helpful collection of suggestions, put into writing, on how Druidism was originally run (perhaps in case you'd like to duplicate it). Despite a lack of official endorsement for DC(R), all the different branches of Druidism have claimed that DC(R) is a good thing to keep around for a healthy grove. As we'll discuss later, the only problem with the DC(R) was that it had four verses in Customs that were sexist and would continue to frustrate attempts to legislate gender equality. So while I say it was never official dogma, it had some weight of implied tradition behind it.

The pamphlet "What is Reformed Druidism?" was the first summarization of the movement in Fall 1965, and variations of it were used up into the mid 1970s for recruitment at the student organization fairs at Carleton. Plainly written and to the point, it was a template of modesty for the group's outreach efforts.

The Green Book of Meditations, (The Green Book), was primarily compiled by David Frangquist between 1964-1966. Unlike the universal popularity of DC(R), the Green Book is practically unknown outside of the alumni from the Carleton Grove. Ostensibly, the Green Book was a collection of handy meditations for potential use at Druid Services by Arch-Druids who were too lazy or busy to research their own readings. As such, it is hard to understand its popularity at Carleton, who are usually pretty industrious in pursuing their interests. On successive readings, one quickly realizes that the Green Book is not just a random selection, but contains an underlying integrity. I feel, and many agree, that it generally sets forth to provoke thinking about such Druidical topics as "certainty," "leadership," "reality," "nature," and "individuality." In essence it contains some kernels of Reformed Druidism as understood by David Frangquist. Because it included illuminating examples from many of the world's existing faiths (including monotheistic ones), it gave positive reinforcement to the Carleton tradition of openness to possibility of valid truths to be found in the teachings all faiths. In one way, the early grove resembled some of the inter-faith councils that developed at Carleton in the 1980s, providing a forum for different beliefs to be expressed and appreciated. It is amazing that Berkeley stayed so close to the Carleton ideals of openness as it did, without the Green Book. Perhaps this can be traced to the presence of the DC(R) and Larson, or maybe Druidism can sustain itself by common sense without reference to books?

Crowning Touches

The last hierarchical touch was the creation of a central record-keeping office for the RDNA. The April 26, 1966 decision required future ArchDruids of Carleton (each of whom will be a Chair of the Council) upon retiring to send a report of the state of Druidism to ALL members of the Council. This allowed the initial Third Order Druids to keep track of what was going on at Carleton and elsewhere, even if no voting took place, probably more out of curiosity than from a fear of "heresy." They certainly never expected the Council to get too large or to become tar-babied in politics, a fate that often enveloped the Arch-Druids of Carleton.

Not long after Frangquist stepped down in Spring 66, the Council had started to become a difficult (but not impossible) voting tool because, as membership rolls quickly swelled in the late 60s, it became very difficult to come to a unanimous consensus on basic issues or even just to keep track of the Council's addresses (especially updating the addresses of Third Orders consecrated outside of Carleton). The Council had done its main purpose by 1966 of setting up a basic system. The major flaw to be seriously debated until 1974 was how to remove any remaining doubts concerning sexual equality within the Third Order (considered to have been fixed in 1971). Basically, any further claims of dogma were left to the whims of the individual groves' members, if they even needed it.

> "Druidism boasts no ethos. Since Druidism has never claimed to be a religion, dogmatism has always seemed incompatible with the [RDNA] organization."[130]

We'll pick up the voting problems again later with Isaac's proposals in Chapter Five, but now let's address the question of whether Druidism is a religion or a philosophy.

Religion or Philosophy?

I think most scholars of Reformed Druidism will be surprised to learn that this issue of "Is Reformed Druidism a religion?" was debated again and quietly addressed in 1969-1970 in what I happily call "The Smiley Affair"[131] when the RDNA took on a Vietnam era's draft board. Even before Isaac began his revolutionary testing of the RDNA's organizational limits in the mid 1970s, that important question of Philosophy vs. Religion had already been firmly decided by a definite "Maybe! Why don't you ask each of us?."[132]

What is important to note is that although Reformed Druidism (as a whole) would find it difficult to claim to be a religion in the eyes of all its members, but its quite possible that an individual could claim that Druidism had become their own personal religion. The Reformed Druid groves (except maybe the SDNA) never required a Druid member to give up their previous religious affiliation or adopt a new one. This principle often boiled down to an assumption that the group can not and should not validly declare anything itself, something that can only be done by the individuals. This is an important lesson of Druidism

that I've often come across. This common assumption within Druidism was that one just had to have confidence in one's own beliefs because all theologies come down to an issue of faith, which is basically a personal choice of convictions. Besides, I've rarely found two people who can agree on the same air-tight definition of "philosophy" or "religion." The two definitions become especially difficult to separate if your group doesn't have any explicit gods or goddesses in them. Without definite deities, philosophies and religions both seem to be systems of moral and ethical guidelines to me. It should be remembered that even ethicists can disagree strongly with each other on what is ethical. More often than not, people "give in" a little in certain private opinions in order to further the pursuit of a group accomplishment, which can be good or bad.

It is interesting to note that Reformed Druidism seems to lack many of the elements considered important to the popular understanding of a religion. It lacks a world creation story (besides the story of the group's origins) and it simply refers to Nature as "one of the objects of Creation," which is rumored to be a "Fisherism" that somehow slipped into Reformed Druidism (although no one has really complained). We've already mentioned that Reformed Druidism has no explicit gods in its belief structure. It also lacks an obvious eschatology, it has no judicial system of rigid ethics or morals, there are no injunctions about family/social arrangements, it has no real problems with people editing/criticizing its own scriptures, it lists no legal punishments (e.g. chopping off people's hands), it proclaims no Messianic prophecies or exclusionary methods of claiming its people to be "the only chosen ones." By Western standards, it is, at best, a "half-baked" religion. But I believe that Taoism and Zen also lack these elements and yet they are considered to be religions. Which answer is correct?

In summary, the RDNA was amenable to its members believing (or not believing) in a god (or gods) on a personal level, but vagueness and indecision on this issue prevailed on a group level. I personally see it this way: the RDNA was originated as a philosophy on a group level and it had the possibility of becoming a religion on the individual level; as is evidenced in the following case.

"The Smiley Affair" Elaborated

I mentioned earlier that there were two cases where a united "front" was put on by Reformed Druids to surmount a concern from authorities to its membership. The first was the Chapel Requirement of Carleton College and the second was the US Draft Board; which I refer to as "The Smiley Affair."

Richard Smiley, (CL65:Fisher)[133] was a Third Order priest from the early days of Reformed Druidism who had founded the Purdue grove in 1966-7. Smiley was studying at Purdue and leading a grove there, but the Draft wanted to draft him after they realized he was no longer attending graduate school. Smiley saw a chance to use Reformed Druidism to protest both the Draft *and* the special exemptions from military service that were being granted to the priests of mainstream religions (but not to equally "religious" laity who merely lacked the hierarchical titles). In this respect, Smiley was acting in the true spirit of the Reform because

> "He [Smiley] enjoyed playing the Game as much as anyone, but still was getting something out of it."[134]

In the spirit of testing definitions, Smiley wrote to the Draft Board that he was a minister seeking a 4-D ministerial exemption.[135] When the Draft board cautiously wrote back that they were unaware of his Seminary training, Smiley flatly responded:

> "I am a minister of the Reformed Druids of North America. I received my training concurrently with my regular undergraduate education, at Carleton."[136]

Smiley, the Frangquists, Savitzky[137] and Richard Shelton[138] worked together to explore the loose governmental definitions of a minister, all of which hinged upon a person performing *organizational* functions in a religious group rather than holding definable *religious* beliefs.[139] Also hidden in this protest was the indignation common to young adults; namely, that the "elders" felt that a younger person couldn't be as valid in their beliefs as someone over thirty. Whenever a letter was required by the Draft Board to prove Smiley was a priest in good standing, the Arch-Druid of Carleton would send a **very formal** letter affirming Smiley's actions as *performing the required functions*.[140] The conclusion of the story was that the Council delayed the Draft board so long, that Smiley became too old to be drafted and Druidism remained happily **undefined** in its beliefs and never had to lie.

Smiley was all prepared to do the paperwork necessary for acquiring the legal and financial trappings of a religion. All this was primarily a delaying action until Smiley's surpassed the draft's limitation; there was little hope that they would actually accept his plea. About this time, the Universal Life Church, who will ordain anyone, went to court in 1970 to successfully protect one of its ministers from the Draft. As a result, the ULC membership swelled by the thousands. In some ways, Druidism is similar to the Universal Life Church, of which many Reformed Druids are also members for the ministerial credentials.[141] The ULC "rights" start:

> "Every person has the right to determine his/her own faith and creed according to conscience.
>
> Every person has the right to the privacy of his/her belief, to express his/her beliefs in worship, teaching, and practice, and to proclaim the implications of his beliefs for relationships in a social or political community."[142]

But regardless of the successful outcome, one sees a precedent that if a Third Order (or any other Druid, of course) should claim that Reformed Druidism is their religion, members within Reformed Druidism will generally support them without committing other Druids to accepting the RDNA as a religion. The above listed Druids were even cautiously supportive, of Smiley turning his Grove into a legal church; as long as the rest of the RDNA groves didn't have to become "official." Whereas Isaac could have pointed to this as a good reason to keep the Council going (if he had known of the Smiley Affair before 1974), supporting the option of Third Order minister status, the whole thing was accomplished without officially convening the Council.[143] Shelton felt that this was appropriate, since the draft board had only asked the Carleton Arch-Druid to verify that Smiley was "in good standing" and that he led a grove in West LaFayette, "both of which clearly fall within the Arch-Druid's competence."[144] The issue of incorporation was dropped after the Draft was canceled, until Isaac brought it up in 1974, and eventually his Pentalpha/Druid Chronicler group briefly incorporated in the late 70s, as did Live Oak Grove in the mid 80s.

The "Codex of Form" Affair

Partly due to a brief break in continuity during the winter of 67-68 and the chaos of passing time, much tradition had been lost and Shelton was the first ArchDruid of Carleton not to have personally met a Founder. Shelton, with a prodigious natural talent for legalese, attempted to resolve and clarify the motley assortment of customs, laws and traditions that were handed to him by Savitzky in the spring of 1969. Most of his codified statements have clear precedents from the original Blue Book of the Carleton Archives and the Records of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. Shelton was determined;

> "to settle one way or the other what I perceived as contradictions in the existing Record of the Council, I presented it [*the Codex*] to the Council for discussion only, and I later withdrew it. It was never put to a vote."[145]

The Record of the Council, at that time, was defined as ALL of the past correspondence letters currently on file (kind of like a Talmud). There was a generally negative response in the discussion concerning the collection of customs in the Codex, although they did have precedents. The written replies acknowledged that the Codex showed the standard way how things had once operated, but the Council made it clear that they did not wish to give official or unofficial sanction to its very own customs as being the only "correct" way to perform Druidism, as that would have closed down other potential avenues of exploration and growth for its members. Some things are better left unofficial, since some questions and answers tend not towards edification.

What drew heavy fire were Shelton's three innovations (1) a Secretary to the Council to serve as an anchor due to the rapid turnover of the Chairmanship at Carleton and (2) explicit requirements to keep the Chair informed about new addresses, new Groves, new Priests and (3) seeking a way to replace the awkward entrance requirements for the Higher Orders. Reformed Druid priests bridled at being told that they were **required** to send in reports (although, in fact, the Records of the Council are pretty explicit on this fact). This showed that a strong objection to sturdier organization beyond the Grove level existed as early as 1969. In many ways, the previous "laws" of the council were sometimes being considered as "suggestions," not as inviolable rules. The Codex affair would later inspire another young reformer, Isaac, to codify Druid practices with similar reactions. The Codex affair, in this way, foreshadowed the more well-known Isaac Affair.

> "It is no surprise that the Council that shot his stuff down in 1969 (and attributed nefarious intent to its author then) should get so hot under the collar again in 1974 (and likewise suspect the new author's motives)."[146]

In many ways, the Codex Affair showed the extent to which the RDNA was willing to go and how far they definitely were not willing to go. The "Codex Affair" also alerted past Carleton RDNA Druids (especially the Sheltons) that the Carleton grove was going to require some occasional advice and supervision to keep it on the right path. A sort of protective attitude can be seen to have developed by the Council toward the Carleton Grove. In fact, even to some of the other groves, Carleton would become sort of a mystical shrine.[147] After the event, Shelton would help organize the Archives and made sure that new members had a chance to go through it.

Women's Equality

Despite intensive earlier legislative attempts, the RDNA could still "technically" have been viewed as a sexist institution in 1970 -as defined by its laws and printed customs. Most noteworthy amongst the evidence, there were 4 unpopular verses in the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* that had implied since 1964 that women were unequal to men in the priesthood:

> 13. But no priestess shall be admitted into the councils *of* priesthood, but rather she shall be given *unto* one of them as a gift of service to beauty.
>
> 14. For she who is called to be a priest shall be sealed up *unto* one Order only, and unto her shall be given the service of it for all time;
>
> 15. And she shall be called a priest not *of* the Order, but rather a priest *unto* the Order.
>
> 16. For so it is written; thus it was, thus it is, and thus it is to be. (Customs, Chapter 8:12-16, italics mine)

These statements in DC(R) were not carved in stone, but they did have the power of tradition and Fisher behind them. Up until the Fall of 1970, one of Carleton College's *In Loco Parentis* rules did not allow women to be out of their rooms after 10 pm. The penalties were stiff and permitted exceptions were rare. Since the Third Order requires an all night vigil of at least 7 hours (usually sunset to sunrise), women were effectively excluded from entering the Third Order. Whether or not this barrier to the Third Order was planned by Fisher is unascertainable. To get AROUND this tradition, and to allow women a chance to enter the 3rd Order and the Higher Orders, Frangquist and Nelson proposed that women could be given **"unto** the Third Order" without having to vigil. Women were now admitted to the Third Order, but with a stigma of being "**unto** the Order" instead of being "**of** the Order," like the men. However, in its own way, it was the first step towards greater equality, because it at least meant that women could get into the upper Orders. There was also the restriction of entry by women to only one Higher Order, with no such restriction on the men.

Frangquist, from the beginning, wished to amend this tradition still further and managed to pass the following rules through the Council of Dalon Ap Landu regarding women:

> 27 January, 1965 (voted)
>
> *Priestesses*
>
> (a) To delegate to the priests the right to individually consecrate priestesses to any order which they (the priests) may hold.
>
> (b) To allow priestesses to hold the office of Arch-Druid, provided that they have first vigiled and been granted the right to perform the ceremony by the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.

This furthered cemented the entrance privilege of the women "**unto** the Third Order," an Archdruidcy, a Higher Order, or to hold a service. The women could now hold the Arch-Druidcy if they vigiled, but what if they did not want to risk breaking the curfew? Besides, there still was the problem that, even if the women vigiled *and* became Arch-Druid that she couldn't ordain other Third Order people (much less people to the Higher Orders, still mostly a Male preserve), and she couldn't be

Arch-Druid without *permission* of the Council. Men didn't need Councilor permission to hold services or to be an Arch-Druid. Frangquist was not yet satisfied and a further vote was taken and passed:

> 29 March, 1966 (voted by mail)
>
> *Priestesses*
>
> (a) To grant automatically to all priestesses who have conducted a vigil the right to perform the ceremonies of Reformed Druidism.
>
> (b) To allow a priestess, while holding the office of Arch-Druid, to consecrate priests of the Third Order and priestesses unto the Order which she herself holds.

Part (a) again gave women, who actually *vigiled*, the unabashed right to hold any ceremonies (which included 1st, 2nd Ordinations), ordain people to the upper Orders that she holds, and to hold Orders of Worship services. Part (b) makes it clear that the female Arch-Druid need not require special permission of the Council to ordain 3rd Order Druids. Although not really important, there was also the restriction on the number of Higher Orders as said in the DC(R). Despite the vigil, many women were still traditionally called **"unto** the Order," according to custom of the DC(R), and therefore the earlier rules which talk about "priests **of** the Order" could possibly be interpreted as not including them.

So matters stood until 1969, by which time there had already been 5 female priestess admitted "**unto** the Third Order," and one woman to the Archdruidcy of Carleton. The Priestesses and most of the Priests resented the traditional wording "of **unto** the order," rather than **"to** the order," but the tradition was still upheld by a few old fogies. After reading the 1969 Codex of From, Larson suggested a new referendum on the priestess issue, especially to deal with the four verses from Customs. This new call for reform struck a positive chord with many members and Larson (now Arch-Druid of the Berkeley Grove) asked Shelton to draft a new proposal on priestesses.

The completion of the vote took most of the rest of Shelton's Archdruidcy (spring 69 to spring 71). Generally, support was expressed by most of the members. While voting by mail was expected to take time, the real delay was caused by the reservations of a few of the older male Druids and by Shelton's insistence that only the male priests should vote; so that no possible question of the legality of the vote could ever be raised later on. The following was submitted for a vote to the council:

> 1 May, 1971 (Voted by Mail)
>
> (a) To subordinate all previous resolutions of the Council concerning priestesses to this one.
>
> (b) To allow a priestess who has conducted a vigil and who has been consecrated to the Third Order all prerogatives of the order, including the right to hold the office of Arch-Druid and so to consecrate priests and priestesses to the Third Order. In token of this she is known as a priestess of the Third Order.
>
> (c) To allow a priestess of the Third Order who has been confirmed by the Patriarch of the given order all prerogatives of that order. Again, she is known as a priestess of the given order.
>
> (d) To abolish any restriction other than those applying equally to priests on the number of high orders to which a priestess of the Third Order may be consecrated.

Eventually in 1971, the votes were tabulated.

> "The four clauses that carried were finally passed by consensus, and we felt that this was a major step forward in the reform."[148]

By this time, the curfew on women at Carleton had been rescinded, so this no longer posed a problem on women vigiling at Carleton, and dorms were now co-ed by floor. Part (a) ensured that reference to previous resolutions would not be raised in the future. Part (b) reiterated most of the previous resolution's positive points and changed the phraseology of "**unto** the Third Order" into "**of** the Third Order." Part (c) ensured the equal rights of a woman in a Higher Order. Finally, Part (d) removed any limitations on entry into multiple Higher Orders. These four amendments by the Council essentially negated the 4 verses of the DC(R), but it wasn't until the 1976 publication of the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) [known as DC(E)] that those verses were first excised (which incidentally upset many pro-priestess voters).

As Deborah Gavrin Frangquist related, one of the appealing things about the early RDNA was that its leadership was [somewhat] open to women, unlike other protest movements at Carleton. Besides that, the RDNA was attractive to women who liked to see Divinity represented in a female form. While that idea seems relatively old hat to us now, seeing and praising divinity as a Goddess was an exciting, revolutionary concept back then.[149] At that time, few mainstream churches permitted ordination of women. It is therefore relatively puzzling, in afterthought, that there is such a paucity of records left to us on the activities of early priestesses in the RDNA. Perhaps this is due to history's favoring those leaving written records of their conquests. However, priestesses show up and demonstrate the equal verve and vim of their views in the written records in the mid-70s during the Isaac debates. In the future, more oral interviews will have to be done to supplement the historical record of role of women and female priests in the RDNA.

Figure 9 Etching of a Druid collecting mistletoe. Perhaps Druidism harkens back to our monkey-days?

Chapter Four: Reformed Druidism 1968- 1982 Choosing Your Waters

Why was definition and exclusion so upsetting to Reformed Druidism? We are brought back again to my second and third essential debates and we're going to examine them now from a "non-Carleton" viewpoint. At Berkeley, Reformed Druidism first left its primarily collegiate base of operations to enter into the general society, where some Druids tried to make it meet the full spectrum of needs that exist in an adult's life.[170] Such "major" issues dealt with by "mainstream" religious groups include: marriage, births, deaths, spiritual maturation rites, and religious instruction of children.

The debates after the period of Shelton and McDavid's Archdruidcy of Carleton (1969-72) become very difficult to understand or even to review appropriately unless you have a basic understanding of Berkeley's protest movements, the religious diversity of the Bay Area of California, and the rise of the Neo-Pagan and Wiccan movements. So we'll begin with some basics, although I would strongly recommend reading *Drawing Down the Moon* by Margot Adler to supplement my cursory presentation of Neo-Pagan and Wiccan beliefs. I do not have the time here to refute all the common myths about Neo-Pagan practices fostered by the Media.[171] The best way to read this section is to generally add "but many disagree and differ" after my statements. Please forgive me the use of "RDNA," "NRDNA" and "SDNA" terms plus the unwarranted use of "Neo-Pagan" as a catch-all term. All four of these terms are very unsatisfactory and are riddled with exceptions, but I must refer to groups using those terms, whose labels often shifted every other year....

UC Berkeley in the Sixties

The University of California at Berkeley student protest movements received a disproportional amount of media publicity in the early 60s. Berkeley was of equivalent academic caliber to Carleton, but it was a large urban university with an attached graduate school, so that students hung around a lot longer than in Northfield. UC's Board of Regents, administrators, Science and Economic departments were also heavily dependent upon funding from the Defense industry, NASA and Atomic Energy Commission. As a result of this retractable funding and a rather conservative Board of Regents, UC found it exasperating when a small core number of students and/or faculty protesters brought bad publicity to the University. In addition to this, Berkeley city had a great deal of volatile racial tension, despite being the only major school district to voluntarily and peacefully integrate their schools.[172] The result was a lot of heavy-handed, conservative suppression of discussion.

A result of the deceitful practices and unaccommodating attitudes by the Berkeley administration, and certain confrontative activists, led to the wild radicalization of many Berkeley protest movements. Radicalization happens when the other side is unwilling to yield you anything and the middle ground disappears, so you raise your demands to idealistic levels and then exploit the inevitable rejection of the "baser" test case to show to all the undecided moderates how "wrong" and "backwards" the opposing side is about "common" rights and ideals. As a result of seeing an authority in a vilified light, the moderates will join the radicals rather than willy-wallying in the middle of the debate. A clue to a group becoming radicalized is some catchword resembling the expression "If you ain't for us, you are against us."

As a result of poor communication and intolerance, both sides became increasingly embittered and resolute in refusing mediation. Every earned victory for student or faculty liberties was followed by a new, more bitter battle. But when it came to Vietnam, the issue became too big to be settled on a campus level and it led to permanent widespread dissatisfaction and rebellion amongst students and their local allies. By the mid-60s, the Bay Area had become a magnet for rebellious youths and gurus as a result of the media lime-light on Berkeley.[173] These youths formed a large base for the Bay Area Counter-Culture and new forms of music, thinking and behavior began to flourish, sometimes just to spite the Establishment, but out of these experiments of individualism, several valid new ideas took deep root. Among these experiments, there were forming new ideas about religion.[174]

The dissatisfaction with secular authorities eventually led to disgust with the religious authorities backing them up. Here, to a greater extent than Carleton,[175] was a profound distrust of "anyone over thirty" or who was linked to the Establishment. In the mid 1960s, the first of the groups to later identify themselves as Neo-Pagans were already developing. What had been an intense interest in Astrology, Fraternal societies, Parapsychology, Ceremonial Magick, Kaballah, Numerology, Zen and Divination understood from a mostly Judeo-Christian background, suddenly changed in the early 1970s when two new terms were introduced: "Neo-Paganism" and "Wicca."[176] I am not an expert in this history, but what is important for this study is that, amongst a small group of people, a lot of the trappings of the Occult scene were dropped along with the Judeo-Christian reference point. Everything was modified towards a new "from-scratch" reconstruction of the beliefs from pre-Christian religions, while often retaining 20th century ideals.[177] Their goal was to avoid the traps of thinking inherent in Western monotheistic culture.

This disorganized "revival" movement was vaguely named in 1972 by many people as Neo-Paganism. Wicca concurrently emerged under the initial leadership of the feminists, pushing a conception of divinity as having feminine (and sometimes masculine) traits. The differences of polytheism vs. duotheism, ancient religions vs. modern sources and terminological differences between Neo-Paganism and Wicca pale before their similarities. Both groups hold a reverence for Nature and a tolerance for other people's understanding of divinity and culture. While Neo-Paganism could be seen as an intellectual and emotional reaction against patriarchy, ecocide and monotheistic "Black and White" thinking, several people soon found Neo-Paganism sufficient, in and of itself, to provide the religious framework for their own lives. Initially, Neo-Pagans tended to focus on a specific ethnic group and its associated pre-Christian religious tenets, although eclecticism was becoming increasingly popular. The ethnic possibilities that quickly come to the Western-trained mind are Egyptian, Nordic/Germanic, Greco-Roman and Celtic. In the 60s/70s, Neo-Pagan groups like Church of Eternal Source, Asatru and Fere-Faerie already existed for the first three groups, but the field for Celtic Neo-Pagan religion was inhabited only by the RDNA and Wicca.[178] Wicca's use of Celtic symbology is dwarfed by the heavy reliance on multiple traditions that are non-Celtic in origin.[179] Therefore, Druidism was "needed" by the Neo-Pagan movement to complete the picture and the semi-public RDNA came in, fully formed, at a very propitious time for filling that void.[180]

Differences from Early Missions

The early groves of Vermilion and Rapid City S.D., Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan in Wisconsin and New York #1 that had been founded by the Founders (+Frangquist) before 1968 were located at schools and had promptly folded when that Founder left the grove.[181] The members of those groves tended to be a lot like those of Carleton, mostly disgruntled and rebellious young people of various religious backgrounds without much knowledge in the Occult or mystical religions. Besides, the RDNA was young and new members were expected to be students who would continue their own faith or find a new one after their experience with Druidism. However, in the groves which were founded after 1967 by Carleton students (which included Purdue, Berkeley, Stanford, Chicago, Ann-Arbor, New York #2 and Princeton) most of the Druids seeking to enter the RDNA were either not currently students and/or possessed an Occult or a strong Counter-Culture background.[182]

In fact, we see in these new groves more examples of a Neo-Pagan trend of drawing members from the SCA,[183] SCI/FI,[184] computer geeks[185], Folk-dance[186] and role-playing clubs.[187] All of these groups, however, now had contingents of Neo-Pagans and seekers of *alternate* spirituality, who were ready *en masse* to run further with the ball than even the most dedicated Arch-Druid at Carleton's past groves. There was a bit of a generation gap between the mid-west and the west coast at this time. Those types of people were interested in examining alternatives to modern 20th century society and could easily have seen the RDNA as a "revival" of ancient Druidism. It wasn't that skeptical monotheists or atheists weren't still joining, but they were becoming a relative minority compared to the eager Mystics, New-Agers, Neo-Pagans and Wiccans.[188] These new types of people, however, would be probably confused by a "clearly Neo-Pagan" organizational RDNA system and its strange reluctance to call themselves Neo-Pagan (or anything else for that matter).

The Berkeley Grove

The Berkeley Grove was founded in 1968 by Robert Larson, who remained the ArchDruid from roughly 1968-77, sharing his great interest in early-Irish culture and its pre-Christian paganism with his grove. Larson had left Carleton (ungraduated) in the spring of '65, and had gone to Berkeley to join the Counter-Culture and live in "Hippie-dom." The Berkeley Grove was never associated with the University, because public universities would not allow religious groups to operate, recruit or meet on the campus and Larson never went to school there, but Bonewits did.[189] Larson's room-mate, the first and most energetic disciple was Isaac Bonewits, whose specialty was net-working, ceremonial magick, liturgical design, and what would become Neo-Pagan thealogy. Between these two men, and several later Druids, the Berkeley Grove found the concentration of talent, complementary Celtic interests and long-term commitments that would be needed to form a more consistent and longer-term RDNA activity than was feasible in Carleton's turbulent 4 year cycle of rotation.

Thus it was that the ideas of the little RDNA club of Carleton for religious and philosophical introspection was supplemented by the second major ideology, reconstructive Neo-Paganism instead of deconstructive Druidism. It wasn't that this idea of looking to the ancient Celts was new to the RDNA, but most of the original Druids of Carleton were busy elsewhere with introspection or the study of the living religions of the world. Perhaps the Carleton students didn't feel the impulse to piece together an old tattered system; which might have been historically as tight-minded and dogmatic, in its own ways, as the mainstream Protestantism that they were trying to escape.

Interviews with Berkeley grove members shows that there were many intolerant religious sects (in addition to very liberal groups) roaming around the Bay Area. While this made Druidism's lesson of ecumenical introspection an even more vital message, it also limited its ability to openly attract refugees from an Intolerance War. Persecution there was a very tangible possibility, so that people may have been a bit leery in joining groups that were vague about their purpose and intent (like the RDNA). Because an RDNA priest is required to minister to those who ask for help,[190] irregardless of their religion, imagine how frustrating it would be to have to dodge specific theological questions and answer vaguely to label-seeking novitiates!

Indeed, there was a significant difference in age and religious attitudes among the members that generally entered the Berkeley Grove (and later-founded Groves). The Founders of the RDNA had originally intended Druidism to be such a bizarre and jolting concept that it would shake previous conceptions about religions down to their rudimentary bases among rebellious college students and thus lead them to a few years of new introspections. Since most of the Berkeley (and later groves) Druids were older than the average Carleton College student and had entered the RDNA with a Neo-Pagan or Occult background, the validity of drawing valid religious experiences from a variety of ritualistic forms did not seem too unusual or jolting. For Berkleyites this was already accomplished. They quickly grasped that religious experiences could only be judged by oneself, but now they wanted to emphasize the RDNA's activities to bring individuals of all religious backgrounds into a group to celebrate/worship/study Nature, a group that was non-dogmatic and unpretentious. An excellent way to worship Nature, they thought, would be to follow the customs and stories of a true Nature-worshipping religion (e.g. ancient Celtic Druids) because they would be more finely tuned by centuries of practice.[191] To them, the idea of studying Asian religions through the label Druidism might have seemed a bit bizarre, seeing as how there were already active religious groups practicing Asian religions in the Bay Area that could teach them Asian faiths in a much more "professional way."

Events Before the Isaac Affair[192]

Isaac Bonewits enters the RDNA debates in 1972 as a powerfully energetic and intellectual person engrossed in the Bay-Area activities.[193] Isaac has some detractors of whom the researcher must be leery of listening to without some cross-checking of their tales with other testimonies. Dan Pierson once described Isaac as having "Negative Charisma" which meant that you couldn't help liking him in person, despite contrary messages from your gut instincts. Isaac was energized by the Neo-Pagan renaissance of 1972 where previously uncommitted Occult or Neo-Christian groups redefined themselves as Neo-Pagan; previously separate and individualistic people were now getting together and doing things. Around the time of the early SCA and Sci-Fi conventions, came the Gnosticon spirituality festival in 1974, after which the Festival movement of Neo-Paganism noticeably blossomed.[194] The result was more frequent and intensive net-working and hybridization between previously unacquainted and isolated groups who now recognized an underlying kinship through Neo-Paganism that transcended barriers of local ritual practices and dogma. We are dealing on a small scale with nation building concepts or "identity politics". The question facing Isaac was who was going to organize the Celtic/Druid facet and "lead" it into Neo-Paganism? Why not himself and his friends? They had a group with plenty of

flexibility, humor and history to it, so why not bring in the RDNA to fill this role?

The Council Revisited

Isaac would have been aware of the poor reception of the Codex of Form, the successful vote on women's equality in Reformed Druidism, and the tinkering theories on voting revision in the Council. Seeing all this activity in the Council may have got him thinking about further possible legal refinements.[195] While most of the elements of the Codex were dropped, one element remained ambiguous, the voting rules for the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. As of 1969, the only official statements pertaining to the Council's voting were:

> To declare in perpetuity that the Arch-Druid of Carleton shall be the Chairman Ex-officio of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.[196]
>
> To reserve to all the priests, collectively in the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, the highest authority of the Reformed Druids of North America.[197]

Whereas all the previous Council votes had been pursued until they reached a consensus of all the members who had chosen to vote, this was only a *tradition,* not a *rule*. When Shelton's voting proposal was made, he was looking for unanimous positive votes with replies from a majority of the known members; with an unspoken hope that no negative votes would be cast. Clarification: if there were 23 Third Orders, at least 12 positive votes would have to be cast (and none against) for a bill to pass. It was assumed that all attempts at contacting members would have been made. When that proposal on voting failed to receive a majority *response* of unanimous affirmation after being on the floor for two years, it was withdrawn in June 1972 by McDavid. The last measure to pass the Council (the Priestess vote of 1971) was passed by unanimity of the votes cast (after much cajoling of some patriarchal objectors) with a majority of potential voters participating. Therefore, it appeared to be a sturdy tradition of unanimity is required for a proposal to be approved by the Council and it having been voted upon by at least half the members.

Following the unanimous passage of the proposal giving female priests unequivocal equal treatment and ranking as their male counterparts in 1971, the Council records show a 2 year gap (June 1972 to July 1974) in Council activity and proposals. The ensuing silence during the reigns of the three succeeding busy Carleton ArchDruids gave the Carleton Grove (and it's Chair of the Council) the understandable appearance of having died off,[198] which (according to Berkeley's knowledge) would have only left Larson's Berkeley grove and Isaac's Twin Cities grove. The truth was that the Carleton graduates just couldn't think of another proposal that wouldn't prove divisive and there had never been much "Council-wide" correspondence before, just friendly letters between individual friends. Or as McDavid put it in 1972:

> "I do not see any issues concerning the Council as a whole, and apparently no one else does." [199]

But importantly from Isaac's goals of forming a stable Druid organization, Carleton's ArchDruids were neglecting to send out the required "State of the Groves" letters upon their retirement, showing obvious irresponsibility in what appeared to be the duties of the "national" headquarters of the RDNA. What if an issue did come up that needed an official OK from the Council? With no active Chair of the Council, how could the Council be convened and the votes counted and declared?

The Isaac Affair Begins [200]

Isaac Bonewits realized that the RDNA would be a very appealing organization, especially for Celtic enthusiasts, in a predicted upcoming flood of interest. Bonewits saw a need to transform the Carleton Druids from a "Meso-Pagan" stage of evolution towards the "Neo-Pagan" age, just like other groups had already done.[201] More than that, Isaac wished to *define* the ideas, organization and documents of the RDNA into concise, "marketable" products. To test the waters for his rather complicated agenda, Isaac sent out a proposal on July 18th 1974 to the Carleton ArchDruid to distribute to the Council members for an immediate vote. I recommend reading the full text of Isaac's letters in the Apocrypha, which I will make many references. The tone, haste, assumptions and verbiage of the letters by the young Isaac helps to explain the resulting animosity, misunderstanding, confusion and hostility that was engendered towards Isaac amongst many Carleton and non-Carleton Druids. In hindsight, the letters can be seen as Isaac's way of explaining himself before doing something new on his own. But to the Reformed Druids, it was a bolt out of the blue and looked like an aggressive reformation attempt.

This letter proved to be a set-back for Isaac's public relations with many of the Druids on the Council in Shelton's block This letter put about 20 minor changes or statements of doctrine to be debated and voted upon between July 18th and September 15th, with a *majority* vote to decide the matter or else a schism would take place![202] This was seen as break-neck speed, since the vote on the equality of female priests alone had taken two whole years of debate to reach the traditional *consensus,* and that decision merely affirmed a standing tradition! A few of Isaac's later letters better defined his terms and intentions, but they did little to abate the fact that such proposals would hastily lead the RDNA in the direction towards greater formalization and organization (especially above and beyond the Grove level). In other words, the changes would result in a completely different organization, much like the eventual form of the ADF.

Inclusivity and Exclusivity

Now the RDNA has always prided itself about being potentially compatible with any religion (or lack of religion), but Neo-Paganism could not make the same claim in the early 70s. In its youth, Neo-Paganism generally saw monotheism (or rather, Judeo/Christian/Islam) as being patriarchal and anti-Nature and therefore not compatible with itself.[203] Their position has mellowed out over the years, as exceptions were noted here-and-there, but during the Isaac debates the Carleton Faction definitely saw this attitude being expressed by Isaac. Now if Isaac had solely described Neo-Paganism as:

> "Neo-Paganism sees divinity manifest in all the processes of nature. According to this view, Neo-Paganism is a constantly evolving philosophy that views humanity as a 'functional organ within the greater organism of all Life'"[204]

there wouldn't have been *too much objection*. But instead many Druids were getting their primary definition of Neo-Paganism from Isaac as:

> [Neo-Paganism includes] "polytheistic (or conditional monotheistic) nature religions that are based upon the older or Paleo-pagan religions; concentrating upon an attempt to retain the humanistic, ecological and creative aspects of these old belief systems while

> discarding their occasional brutal or repressive developments, which are inappropriate."[205]

and

> "Let us begin by admitting that we are a religion and describe ourselves to each other and the outside world roughly as follows:
>
> The RDNA is an Eclectic, Reconstructive, Neo-Pagan Priestcraft, based primarily upon Gaulish and Celtic sources but open to idea, deities and rituals from many other Neo-Pagan belief systems....."
>
> "We are willing to interact philosophically and ritually with members of all other belief systems that are compatible with our own approach and Nature."[206]

While mostly the same description as that of the earlier definition, Isaac's version appeared to have an implicit dislike for monotheism and was concerned with organizational politics. For many, "the main problem [with Isaac's definition] was that it was becoming exclusive, even in implication."[207] Such a firm alliance with any group (such as Neo-Paganism) could have been seen as an alliance against another group(s).

Despite Isaac's claim that the RDNA members from Carleton were against Neo-Paganism, most members were actually more anxious about Isaac's manner, and there was a difference between the two. They were very unsure of Isaac's intentions, or as one put it:

> "The cardinal rule of the Third Order was always keep everybody guessing. Isaac picked up on it in spades. We never did really know what Isaac was up to."[208]

But, many finally understood that this far-away and strange Neo-pagan movement wasn't some kind of "evil cult" and then affirmed Isaac's **personal path** of Druidism,[209] but firmly stated that Reformed Druidism was not synonymous to them with Neo-Paganism. To some, it was as restrictive on Druidism to describe the RDNA as Neo-Paganism, as it would have been to call it Taoism, Neo-Shinto or Mystical Christianity.

> "Dick [Shelton] replied that while Neo-Paganism was *compatible* with the Basic Tenets, it was not *required* by them. He also said that he opposed all the attempts to *impose* such a doctrine on the Reform. I maintained this policy during my term as Arch-Druid."[210] (emphasis mine)
>
> "Let us in particular not represent our private paths as Reformed Druidism."[211]

Others expressed hesitancy also.[212] Even Larson, from Berkeley, was opposed to calling the RDNA a Neo-Pagan religion.

> "Rather than supplying a set theology, mythos, ethos, or whatever, Druidism supplies a basis from which each individual Druid defines his own mythos, ethos, etc.
>
> "Rather than looking upon Druidism as a religion or a philosophy, let us look upon it as a way to achieve or augment a religion or philosophy.
>
> I am opposed to Isaac's attempted redefinition of Druidism as "pagan,"...[and] I consider such a definition as over-restrictive for Reformed Druidism as a whole. For individual druids and groves, however, it's a different matter.[213]

Some people will always dislike the accumulated baggage for the term "Pagan," irregardless of whether Paganism is good or bad, and efforts to "reclaim" the work. So, using it in your definition may frighten off a lot of foolish people.[214] These are the very people who need to feel free to join and shed their fearful definitions. The problem with the name "Neo-Pagan" has led to many long defenses by Neo-Pagans against all sorts of misconceptions by "outsiders." Their frustration has reached the point where many Neo-Pagan groups have chosen to refer to themselves as "the Old Way" or other similar terms that are less laden with divisive meanings. Reformed Druidism was special in that it claimed it was separate from, but applicable to, all other religions; although some faiths were more difficult to accommodate. The RDNA had been attractive as an organization because it was not inclined to make any such divisive conclusions, definitions, affiliations, alliances, or blanket statements:

> "We had also done something rather wise, early on, and I don't know whether it was Fisher or consensus. Druidism was compatible with any other religion, even if other religions denied that.[215]
>
> "As Druids, however, we can only affirm a mutual desire to ask ourselves questions about the meaning of life, and about the degree to which religious truth can be truth for us."[216]

Some Druids, both from Carleton and in California, felt that this "definition-making" was an attempt by Isaac to discourage certain members in the group from staying, because Reformed Druidism would then *only* be for Neo-Pagans.

> **Mike**: Were the members [of Berkeley] ever before [circa 1976] required to renounce their previous religion?
>
> **Stefan**: Never! Never! That's b*llshit! The whole philosophy here was: "Be what you want to be." But, when you were in circle,[217] you were a Druid. That was the philosophy here. You could be any other religion, but when you were here, you were a Druid. Period. That's the way it should be."[218]
>
> "**Stefan**: One of my roommates became a Jes-oid,[219] but we were perfectly willing to accept him for what he was... forced out by Isaac.... Roman Catholics.. Jews... As I understood it, in Reformed Druidism, everybody was accepted."[220]

Thus, even a "Jes-oid" could have found acceptance in Reformed Druidism of the early Berkeley RDNA. Unfortunately, once the existence of Neo-Paganism became widely known, people would probably naturally assume that the RDNA was not open to monotheists or atheists. That has proven to have been one of the sad after-effects for many Carleton RDNA, because, ever since the rise of Neo-Paganism, Druidism couldn't easily claim to be unlike anything you've ever seen before. It became very easy for outsiders to pigeon-hole it as Neo-Paganism.

> "The near-universal association of Druidism and Neo-Paganism has kept me out of public Druidic life for nearly 20 years (Isaac lost the battle but he won the war)."[221]

Emphasis on Celtic Elements:

It is interesting to note that the Neo-Pagan enthusiasm for drawing inspiration from Ancient Celtic religion occurred at precisely the same time as many of the present definitive books on Ancient Druidism were published. In fact, since 1966, a veritable flood of good research has been published on ancient Celtic societies, drawing upon a multi-disciplinary review of available data. I suspect that if the Founders had started with the foresight of post 1974 events, they might have chosen a different name for the group than "Druids."

Due to an understandable mistake, Isaac had assumed that the other RDNA groves had been as interested in Celtic religion as his Twin Cities Grove or the Berkeley Grove. After all, Larson's specialty was paleo-Irish studies, he came from Carleton and Celticity is what Larson had explored with the Berkeley group. The tradition of exploring modern religions was never heavily explored in Berkeley, although the policy of allowing anyone of any religion to join did exist. Isaac just couldn't understood how these people from Carleton could invoke the names of Celtic gods and not consider that they were actually dealing with what were, to him and his friends, real deities. Despite all the Celtic surface trappings, the Berkeley Grove was not culturally restrictive, and many members explored various faiths and ideas through Reformed Druidism under Larson's laissez-faire Archdruidcy.

Emphasis Upon Ritual

Occultists and Neo-Pagans, even more so than the practitioners of most mainstream religions, believe rituals and prayers can affect reality. The form and contents of ritual in many occult and Neo-Pagan groups can take upon themselves an overwhelming importance.[222] Perhaps, they needed to do something to keep busy? If you feel that the way a liturgy is performed affects the mental state of the congregation, then liturgical experimentation might prove beneficial to the search for truth. This is perhaps one aspect in which the older Druids didn't experiment too much, but they never objected to it. If one of the goals of the search for religious truth is to thereby improve or change the world, then the improvement of your methods of attainment of truth is a valid exercise.

But Reformed Druid ritual wasn't just about getting things done, it was also about being together in an enjoyable way. It is pertinent to state that even the Carleton RDNA had it's share of magick-working or special rituals going on from the foundation of the RDNA up to 1980. There were weather-workings, the "Druid curse," divinations, an incident of speaking in tongues and prophesy, "exorcisms" of the spirit of war, consecrations of altars, prayers, marriages, "Druidings," and occasional blessings.[223] But many of these were done from an understanding of the power of one's faith being the source of power or as an innocent experiment with their "tongues firmly planted in their cheeks." The older Carleton Druids, despite their dabbling in magick (especially weather working), did not see group ritual as having much purpose in and of itself for Druidism. Ritual was more incidental in some ways.

> "Cannot men seek for answers without the crutch of ritual which has no religious purpose? I can only answer that ritual has a value because it can be used by different men in different ways.
>
> "For one man, the sacrifice of life[224] is the offering of himself to a god or gods. To another it is offering up of his mind to a search for truth."[225]

Frangquist reminds us of the dangers of ritual indulgence:

> "But we have also recognized that ritual is most often a hindrance; and to eliminate it is simply to encourage non-ritual to become the ritual. Rather, as Druids, we have endeavored to build a ritual which will be the destroyer of it own importance."[226]

Ritual flow and directing of magickal energy was important for Occultists since they believe it can significantly change reality, just like prayers in Christianity, and not just changing themselves. However, explaining this whole ritual process is an art and science that no two Occultists ever could entirely *define* in the same way. Reformed Druidism never sought to justify what was in its ritual, because the **content** of the Order of Worship was never fully finalized. Neo-Pagan and Druid experimentation had been always tacitly encouraged within undisclosed limits.

The Use of the Council

Isaac's other big gripe was that the Council was "inactive" and should be constantly debating to keep their Druidism "in shape." The state of meditation and introspection is not always an easy state to enter. For some, it requires self-discipline or asceticism, for others seeing a mere falling leaf or a chance conversation may catapult them into the mysteries of the multi-verse. Druidism is a "never ending search" for religious truth, but that does not mean that Druidism is a "never-resting search." A lag here or there in the correspondence may be part of a greater rhythm of rise-and-fall. For those who have difficulty in exploring Druidism alone, the presence of others in conversation may light-up new avenues of inspection. While at College, one is already in a continual state of constant challenge over the validity of truths, but such a state is much harder to maintain in the loneliness after graduation. I suspect that this search for continued Druidic siblinghood after college is one of the main motivators for the missionary efforts of the Carleton RDNA. Unfortunately for many missionaries, something seemed to have been missing in the new groves, some mysterious Carleton flavor. Many found that they spent more time explaining what Druidism *was not*, rather than being able to explore Druidism. I suspect that the Council's true business up to 1974 was much more oriented towards this lonely communication of observations between far-spread Druids than as a forum for the debate of referendums.

A great concern, that never left many RDNA members, was that Isaac would ordain so many Third Order priests who would be unconcerned with the original purpose of *unconditional* tolerance and unanimity that the Council (or a pseudo-Council) would become "functional." Once functional, such a Council could pass legislation or officially advocate actions that, by claiming to be believed by all members (although decided only by a majority), would alienate many former members into sadly abandoning any formal connection with the RDNA. It was okay for a single member to expand their own views, but it was not kind to force their conclusions upon the Council or even their own grove. Frangquist, long ago, had come to the conclusion that:

> "religion is essentially a question of personal conviction. This is the reason for the failure of the student negotiation committees.

> Committees may provide help in solving political problems, but not in religious problems. The committees have tried to deal in logical arguments; religion deals in faith."[227]

For some, Reformed Druidism had quickly become an intensely private and personal search, so much so that they had dropped from participation in Groves, after the annual diaspora of graudation. These Druids did not take kindly to the assumption that their search had to be open to the examination of others through constant correspondence in order to be valid. Nor did they like the idea that Druids participating in Groves were more "active" than solitary contemplative Druids. The search for truth could also be helped by private conversations with non-Druids. One may well wonder if the mere act of living was true Druidism in action. Therefore the attempt to bolster the identity of Reformed Druidism by increasing the required participation in the Council met with such reactions:

> "Communication is a convenience and proselytization is an option, but if I choose to develop quietly by introspection and to write privately to my friends, I am as much an active Druid- and, I believe, contribute as much to the Reform- as if I broadcast my views to the entire Council of Dalon Ap Landu."[228]

Isaac also feared that the Carleton ArchDruid, as chair of the Council of Dalon ap Landu, was not stable enough for keeping Reformed Druidism alive as an *organization*. In this attitude, he was again missing the point. The high turn-over rate at Carleton was considered to be a boon to their organizational nexus; it essentially prevented Druidism from ever being secure enough in its footing that it could be bureaucratic or imperialistic. Shelton, who had six years earlier attempted the same defining and stream-lining process with the Codex, was now wisely trying to caution and slow-down Isaac:

> "If you would seek to save Druidism, you will lose it; but if you seek the Mother and what she can teach you, Druidism will grow, prosper to her joy and to your great benefit."[229]

Evangelism and Missionary Activity

Perhaps another thing about Isaac that worried many Reformed Druids, especially from Carleton, was Isaac's insistence on speedy growth, recruitment and swapping priestly ordinations with Neo-Pagans of other traditions. Before 1976, new groves generally only appeared when a Third Order Druid had to leave a pre-existing grove and move to a new area for a while. While recruitment was an understandable necessity to build and maintain a grove around oneself, the desire to plant and fill up new groves for their own purpose, that was a bit more unusual. Usually, a priest would only ordain a person to the Third Order when that person had been with them for awhile (perhaps a year). Isaac was suggesting that roving Missionary Druids should begin ordaining priests and priestess from other Neo-Pagan religions (with little to no background in Reformed Druidism) into the Third Order so that a few missionaries could seed lots of new groves. This driving interest in the Third Order disturbed many of the older Druids. A concern with evangelism was a concern with evangelism. A few members were puzzled and asked themselves questions like; is he motivated by a fear of a second “burning times” decimating the ranks, eagerness to share an interesting outlook, or a desire to take over the council? To them, the preservation or expansion of the priesthood of the Third Order was not to be taken so seriously. By emphasizing the Third Order, one may forget about the equality, regardless of their order, amongst all Reformed Druids.

While Reformed Druids often pride themselves that there are few lessons to learn when teaching Reformed Druidism, most will realize that there are often many lessons that one has to un-learn; simplicity often being a hard concept for new-comers to understand. If nothing else, the sense of urgency (possibly because of Isaac's concern to promote eco-awareness) in Isaac's letters seemed just a little bit too manic for the slower, more contemplative Druids.

Over-Emphasizing These Debates

The real lasting achievement of the Isaac Affair was to generate a great deal of worry *and* introspection among members of the Council. They were waken from a lethargic contentment by the constant goosing of Isaac and Larson.

> "From my communications with Isaac, it would seem that he has stirred up a minor hornet's nest with his proposals. Good. That was the intent. Now that he has you thinking about the RDNA as more than a quaint club and has you concerned (or so I hope) about its future, perhaps something can be accomplished."[230]

In this way, the Druids are ironically in debt to Isaac because, for many, they too had been unaware of how much of what they believed to be Druidism was **also** beyond the Basic Tenets. Everything one brings to Druidism necessarily goes beyond the beliefs required by the Basic Tenets. In this way, both sides realized the pomposity they each had been nurturing from being out on contact with other Druids.

Rather than dwelling anymore upon the two fascinating years of retorts and recriminations, or providing a running commentary of one-on-one debates,[231] I'll leave that to your study, and I’ll return to my history and put the debates into a larger context of the history of Reformed Druidism among the branches in the late 70s. I should mention here to future historians that many of the things said in those two years were out of justifiable shock, confusion and ignorance, but were often patched up by unofficial and unrecorded communications between the Druids of the many factions. In fact, once they had overcame the common misconception that Neo-Pagan Druidism had to be anti-monotheistic (i.e. rejecting the validity of some paths of religions) most Carleton members finally had accepted Isaac's Neo-Paganism as a good thing for him and others.

In fact, it has been very easy and pleasantly diverting for a researcher to become over-absorbed in these written debates and feel that Isaac spoke for-and-of the greatest concerns of all the NRDNA and SDNA people. If anything, the Isaac debates brought a clearer understanding of what Reformed Druidism was not to many people. However, in reality, some of the NRDNA and SDNA Druids had many of the same disagreements as the Carleton RDNA with many of Isaac's plans and politics.[232] These conflicts in California increased until 1981 or 1982 when Isaac finally left Reformed Druidism to work on a fresh start with the organization "Ár nDríaocht Féin." Therefore let us widen the perspective to relate the diversity that was the NRDNA and SDNA.

The After-Math of the Initial Isaac Wars:

As Bradley related to me, there were far too many independent-minded Druids in the RDNA and New RDNA traditional camps by the 1970s for Isaac or anyone else to tighten the Reformed Druid organization and its definitional identity without excluding large numbers of the current members. The results were therefore predictable; a majority of the replies from Council members disagreed with Isaac's program; some favored better communication channels while remaining "unorganized" and loyal to the Council and a few Council members followed Isaac into a full schism.[233] The three branches of Reformed Druidism then came into name based on these perceptions at this point: respectively the RDNA, the New RDNA and the third group became the Schismatic Druids of North America. The SDNA was to break many of the formal ties with the Council's authority, so as to determine it's own national rules, but still retaining the Reformed Druid apostolic succession and basic hierarchical pattern and scriptures. The schism was perhaps a wise move by Isaac, because an attempt to "defrock" the earlier members would have just stirred up more animosity and wasted more time and energy from his mission. It was much simpler for Isaac to form a new smaller subset within the expansiveness of Reformed Druidism and then to experiment with new forms of organization.

New Reformed Druids of North America

Now the initial ArchDruids of the early NRDNA groves were, surprise!, past Carleton students: Larson of Berkeley, Savitzky/Uggla of Stanford and McDavid/Bradley of Chicago.[234] The early NRDNA, in association with the SDNA and HDNA,[235] felt that an *official* Provisional Council of ArchDruids (PCoA) was necessary to discuss new issues and release "steam" to prevent any future explosion of built-up tensions that could result from the Druidic vice of infrequent-communication. It would also allow an exchange of religious insights to the benefit of all and take over the duty of the Chair of the Council in case the Carleton Grove should fail.

The RDNA Groves of Ann Arbor, New York #2, and Carleton were deeply suspicious of the PCoA[236] and would much rather have had an *"unofficial"* PCoA,[237] which would have been more in spirit with the anti-organizational streak of Reformed Druidism. They also disagreed with the idea that Arch-Druids could vote on issues that affected their groves, without allowing the grove to affect such a vote. Understandably, because of the PCoA's composition of mostly ex-Carleton students, there was a PCoA decision that stated:

> "That no Reformed Druid should speak for the beliefs or nonbeliefs of all Reformed Druids, save to mention the Basic Tenets outlined in The Book of the Law, and that members of each Branch of the Reform should speak only for themselves."[238]

After that statement, the PCoA mostly talked about three issues: the method and contents of printing of the Druid Chronicles (Evolved), keeping a second record of Grove statistics in case Carleton went 'dormant' again (which was not infrequent), and to forward the voting proposals and other statements of thealogy to the Council for an official vote.[239] It is important to note that these three issues were never voted upon by the Council due to a forgetful error to mail the ballots, they did show the rather limited agenda of the PCoA.[240] Even getting the Arch-Druids, usually the most "responsible" Druids, to communicate with each other was proving to be difficult. The end-result was that Druids everywhere firmly understood their independence and went on ahead with their own local grove projects without asking for the Council's permission anymore, just like I believe the Founders would have hoped. The communicative aspect of the defunct PCoA was performed later by the publication of the Druid Chronicler newsletter.

Schismatic Druids of North America

The SDNA was the embodiment of Isaac's reforms and its headquarters were generally centered upon whatever grove of which Isaac was ArchDruid (which then became called the "Mother Grove"). In a unprecedented flurry of activity over the six years after the Letter, Isaac had ordained over 15 Third Order Druids across the country, all "officially" therefore SDNA. The touchiest point for the SDNA was the stipulation that only self-avowed Neo-Pagans would be ordained to their Third Order and fill their liturgical offices. Isaac wanted to ensure that no more neo-Christians, Unitarians and Taoists would clutter up further the Neo-Pagan definitional and organizational experimentation of the SDNA. Strangely, many of those that he ordained refused to follow this SDNA practice.[241]

Here we come up again with the difficulty of a single individual keeping updated address lists of the Council and coordinating activities. The Carleton Druids and those from the early graduate school groves were easy to locate through the College's alumni offices. It was much more difficult for Isaac to keep track of the many people he had ordained because they were not tied to a central tracking institution (unless you count Isaac himself) and they often neglected to keep him informed of address changes. Add to this the Neo-Pagan and Reformed Druid tendency to belong concurrently to several religious organizations that may take precedent, and you'll see that Isaac was slowly learning a valuable lesson: Neo-Pagans and Reformed Druids are often rather ungovernable people upon which to build complicated, national organizations; much like trying to herd cats. Moreover, it was certainly taking a lot of time and money on his part to keep a firm national group identity going. Currently. authorities with pro-organizational prejudices will often give more credence to a group than to an individual when protesting or defending religious rights. Isaac wanted that kind of mainstream recognition for Neo-Paganistic Druidism. and to achieve this there were necessary activities for Druidism, such as hiring paid clergy, showing more external structure and playing other games of bureaucracy.

Isaac describes his difficulty in dealing with other Neo-Pagans by a theory called "The Ten Year Gap."[242] Like an Old Testament prophet, Isaac was residing on the cutting edge of the intellectual debates, far ahead of the general crowd. Many of the current issues about centralization, standardized definitions, paid clergy, membership fees, proselytizing, day-care, legal defense, seminary training, clergy evaluation and legal "church" status were being broached by Isaac and a few others in the early 70s, about ten years before they become acceptable issues for debate amongst the general Neo-Pagan community. It is like Noah's warning being ignored and scorned until the rain starts falling; only then were the previous insults retracted by his enemies and old wounds became healed, if ever. The traditional Carleton reaction to this formalization might have been; let your other religious group-affiliation(s) take care of those issues and keep your Reformed Druidism simple and free.

Title-Happy Druids

An important fact for the researcher to realize is that most Reformed Druid groves were playing fast-and-loose with those three major definitional titles and were constantly changing "sides" and even gleefully making up new branches like "Orthodox DNA," "Humanistic DNA," "Hasidic DNA, "Zen Hilaric DNA," "Norse DNA" or even returning back to RDNA to describe each grove's individual bent. In September 1978, even Isaac was so uncertain as to what the differences were between these many titles, that he chose to limit them to "RDNA" for groves that were not composed primarily of Neo-Pagans and NRDNA for groves that were primarily composed of Neo-Pagans (including the SDNA).[243] Even this labeling proved unsatisfactory to some Druids who weren't sure they were Neo-Pagan, Wiccan, Humanist, etc.

Disagreement from NRDNA and SDNA

While every NRDNA and SDNA Druid seemed to disagree with Isaac on many issues, it is only fair to say that they also disagreed with every other NRDNA and SDNA Druid on a number of issues. Isaac, for his all his faults, was a respected mover and shaker in the west coast branch of Druidism. Remember the Golden Rule that "disagreement among Reformed Druids is the general reality and that agreements are the unusual exceptions." In a way, the illusionary unity of the Carleton Faction was merely a consensus of agreement that future agreements on such issues was impossible so don't bother trying to pass those new proposals. But, that doesn't mean they didn't enjoy a good debate.

Isaac's prominence in most of the debates was a result of his tendency to stick his neck out and play the "devil's advocate" just to ruffle another Druid's feathers[244] and thereby have a really good all-out debate. Knowing and writing to so many people, Isaac ruffled a lot of people's feathers. Unfortunately, although Isaac was not especially good at apologizing, neither were any of the other Druids.

As with the study of any Neo-Pagan group, one must remember that the prominence of the squabbles over power often hide the underlying agreements. The primary effect of the infighting politics of the 70s in Reformed Druidism was to "burn-out" the Arch-Druids and thereby weaken local grove stability. In hindsight, there also appears to be a natural rise and fall of Groves. Groves usually faltered when the close friends at the core of the grove had to move somewhere else or couldn't meet on a weekly or even other-weekly schedule. Groves started up when an Arch-Druid had regained the financial stability to host rituals and parties for their friends.[245] The vast majority of Druids, who were not of the Third Order, found the politics of organizational hierarchy to be a little annoying and distracting from the joy of celebrating the natural rhythms of the seasons and life's cycles.[246] For many, regardless of the battles over national organization, life in the grove went on as usual as the grove continued to investigate and explore the paths of Truth. With that quick reminder, let's first talk about some of the achievements the NRDNA and SDNA did together.

Druid Chronicles (Evolved)[247]

Most conflicts with Isaac were a result of his trying to stabilize some of the groups' vague self-definitions, which to many were the essence, fluidity and fortitude of Reformed Druidism. Now looking back, Isaac's earlier proposals could be seen as a great deal of noise and commotion to show where he was headed with his own brand of Druidism and to invite others of like mind to make the jump and to go with him. It was reasonable for Isaac to have stayed around for a few years trying to give the RDNA and NRDNA that last push to bring it to a possible *evolutionary* progression. Unfortunately for Isaac, most Neo-Pagans were still very anarchic and liberty-intoxicated in the mid 70s. More members would have likely joined from Carleton if they had truly been more interested in Celtic religion and less oriented towards Asian and Christian religions. It is good to bear in mind that Neo-Paganism was (and still is) but a very tiny collection of religious systems with the amazing diversity of religious choices in America. As for the Neo-Pagans who disagreed with him, Isaac had to wait for the "Ten Year Gap" to close between his views and those of Neo-Pagans.

In the meantime, Isaac's industriousness contributed a very powerful anchor (or should I say noose?) of stability[248] to the RDNA and NRDNA movements through his efforts to collect the early "scriptures," essays, historical trivia and reference lists considered reflective or important to the many branches of Reformed Druidism. The Carleton Druids were at first a bit suspicious that Isaac was going to become a "Druid Fundamentalist" and turn the original writings into inflexible canons of indoctrination. Rather than chancing this by leaving him alone, the Carleton Druids worked very closely with Isaac to keep the facts straight (especially about the RDNA's original purposes). One objection was in the name "Druid Chronicles (Evolved)" with the implication of "Evolved" being an improvement over an older form.[249] They also feared that the history of Reformed Druidism would be forever filtered and interpreted through Isaac's writings ("To the victor goes the history books"), a fear that has proved to be not without grounds. This is something I've come to notice after my own efforts producing ARDA.

To their general relief, The *Druid Chronicles (Evolved*) was published with reasonable disclaimers of any "divine inspiration" or application to the original branch of the Reform, but the evolutionary bias towards Celtic paganism remained a sore point with the Carleton RDNA faction. But for the later NRDNA and SDNA, the DC(E) became their own compact version of the Carleton Archives (to which they had never had access). Very compact and densely crammed with facts, trivia and liturgies, DC(E) has proved an invaluable reference source for many of the surviving NRDNA groves. It also proved crucial in the revival of Carleton Druidism in 1986, when the Carleton Druid Archives had been misplaced. In fact, with that book there was hardly any more danger of a grove losing its roots from isolation, as long as they didn't take the book too seriously.

Druid Chronicler (DCr) and Pentalpha

Not to be confused with the Druid Chronicles (Reformed or Evolved), the Druid Chronicler[250] newsletter replaced the Berkeley Grove newsletter from 1977 to 1981, and continued many of the coordinating efforts of the short-lived PCoA. Under several different editors and networkers, the DCr maintained up-to-date addresses of ArchDruids and spread news on their grove's activities to each other. DCr also printed new additions to liturgies and announced new members of the Council of Dalon ap Landu, and later its subset, the Coalition Council of Dalon ap Landu (CoCoDal). I also believe that these issues were meant to be inserted into the Druid Chronicles (Evolved), in order to keep DC(E) up-to-date and useful as a personal reference tool in the various branches. DCr was run by Joan Carruth, in Isaac's absences from the Berkeley Grove, from 1979-81, just as competently from all appearances. Isaac was on sabbatical during this period experimenting with a group called Pentalpha.

Pentalpha was the nickname of the Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness. It was devised kind of life an umbrella organization for Neo-pagan organizations, although a large portion of its journal's subscribers and submitters were from the Druids. It also acted partly as an eclectic literary forum, to direct funds towards legal cases, and to explore the procedures for establishing the bare framework for making legal churches. A few divorces, relocations and finances eventually doomed the prolific project, but the lessons that Isaac and his small cadre of members learned, would benefit them greatly when ADF was being founded a few years later. Indeed, as we'll see, the lessons they learned were not easily transferred back into the Berkeley grove.

Drawing Down the Moon

When Margot Adlor's book, Drawing Down the Moon, came out in 1978, it caused quite a stir in the Neo-Pagan community. It is considered a historical landmark in the literature of the movement. Here was a finely written attempt to cover the wide spectrum of ideas and groups at a time when most encyclopedists were not yet listing them. For the Reformed Druids, it would forever enshrine the RDNA as the most known path "Celtic" path, but also put in the Play and Paradox chapter along with the Discordians, as a religion that espoused wry humor and *joy de vivre*. Naturally, the 1986 Edition focused more on the growth of ADF. Although Isaac's prominence in the Neo-pagan movement was never in question, but for this book, it is doubtful the RDNA would have been more than a footnote in the movement. However, after this publication, despite the flattering publicity, the movement began to experience a decline of membership and grove numbers. It is still probably the most widespread introduction to the RDNA in the general populace.

The Eclipse of Carleton: 1978-1984[251]

It's important to note here, before continuing the analysis of the NRDNA vs. SDNA conflicts, that the early NRDNA groves led by the Arch-Druids from Carleton had all collapsed or were dropping out of the picture by 1978. The groves of Ann-Arbor and New York #2 had been abandoned by their founders, as somehow lacking that Carleton flavor. Larson left the Berkeley Grove while he was working with an Irish Entertainment group called "Clann Na Brocheta." In retrospect, Larson mused that if he had stayed around, he may have been able to smooth down some of the later problems. However, he also noted that it was time for him to explore other outlets, allow Joan more elbow room, and let the grove try out new slants. The ArchDruids of Stanford and Chicago experienced financial crises, core members moving away and personal difficulties that made a grove too much of a trouble to maintain. Eventually the SDNA Third Orders became the leaders of groves bearing the title NRDNA. So it came to be that the early NRDNA disappeared to be replaced by a mostly (but not exclusively) neo-pagan organization also called the NRDNA between the years 1977 and 1979.

The Carleton Grove experienced a lack of enthusiastic recruitment after Morrison's strong Archdruidcy in 1976. The eclipse of Carleton Druidism in Grove form was partly a result of "burn-out" by those Carleton alumni who felt that Carleton's independence from "outside" control was pretty much established and also that the Carleton grove should now control its own destiny. I also suspect that Druidism had long since stopped being the only liberal religious outlet at Carleton. During the 70s, a stronger Unitarian presence developed, the Catholic and Protestant churches mellowed, and drug-induced mysticism had increased. Between 1980-2 there were no Third Order priests present on the campus, just a few bewildered 1st and 2nd orders who didn't know what to do.

The Political Storm-Clouds gather in California (1978-1982)

It is worth reminding you that the initial anti-monotheism of Neo-Paganism of the early 70s never prevented non-Pagans from participating or (potentially) leading an NRDNA grove, except possibly in Isaac's grove or the Hassidic DNA of St. Louis. It's also worth mentioning again that many in the NRDNA groves were a long ways from solely relying upon Celtic sources.[252] Isaac had many other complaints, primarily organizational and they will be dealt with in the next Chapter of the Epistle.

What seemed on paper to be a rather thriving Druid community was already changing in 1979, a time when Isaac Bonewits left on a two year sabbatical and left Joan and Stefan in charge of the Mother Grove (which they quickly renamed the Berkeley grove again). The late 70's and early 80s was a time when inflation was hurting everybody's budget and most of the groves in California's later NRDNA and SDNA folded soon between 1979 and 1982. The Twin City Acorn Grove, St. Louis Arch Grove (HDNA), San Diego Tuatha Grove and Clan na Brocheta groves had already collapsed, within four years of their foundings.[253] As mentioned before, most Neo-Pagans and Druids ran on a rather tight budget and the cost of getting groves together became increasingly difficult. Without the devoted net-working of Isaac, these groups slipped out of touch and later quietly passed away as they would have anyway, but without any noisy fanfare. This left the Berkeley Live Oak Grove, Los Angeles and Olympia Washington's Evergreen Grove and Greenwood Grove in the roll of active groves. All were pretty distant from eachother and therefore unlikely to communicate too much during a time which was called "The Boring Times." [254]

The Death March on the Beach[255]

Joan Carruth had run the Berkeley Grove as a co-ArchDruid from 1977-79 with Isaac, assisting in a fluorescence of new liturgical patterns, and then as Arch Druid from 1979-1981 with a little help from Stefan McCaully (later of Hazelnut Grove). It appears that the Grove was running happily when Isaac returned in September 1981 and wished to regain his role as "ArchDruid Emeritus"[256] of Berkeley. The election for Berkeley's officers was held after a particularly unsuccessful ritual, in which Joan endlessly led the grove members up and down a long beach looking for a good ritual site, while Druids collapsed from fatigue, anger and boredom.

Accounts vary greatly about what happened during the elections, but Joan and Isaac were contesting the title of Arch Druid, not too long over a personal dispute between the two members. It was a very tense and bitter election with Isaac promising drastic changes for Reformed Druidism if he was elected, based on his experimentations with Pentalpha. The first vote split evenly 6 to 6, but a second vote was held and it came out 7 to 5, in favor of Isaac. Now, Joan is rumored to have felt that Isaac had betrayed them by changing his vote and had voted for himself instead of voting for the other opponent, as was the tradition. Whether this is true or not; a lot of bad blood and anger was raised amongst the Berkleyites.

Joan, Stefan and Emmon split off from Isaac's Berkeley Grove (which promptly became "The SDNA Mother Grove" again) and formed the Live Oak Grove, also in Berkeley (and later holding servieces in Orinda). The Live Oak Grove of the NRDNA felt that Isaac's reforms were taking the Druids too far from what the initial Founders had planned it, a "Dis-organized

Religion."[257] Live Oak Grove lasted for many years under Joan, then Larry, the Bob's Archdruidship, and finally under Emmon's caretaking. Emmon would publish The Druid Missalany newsletter and helped the grove to incorporate for a few years before dissolving. Greenwood Grove of Seattle and Hazelnut Grove remained staunchly independent of any association with the Mother Grove of Berkeley and are very active up to this day. Interestingly, the current NRDNA groves are far closer to the original RDNA liturgical format and customs than the present Carleton Druids. But, we'll discuss this in more detail in Chapter Six. For now let's turn our attention to the new project, ADF, of Isaac and his friends.

Figure 10 "The Druidess"

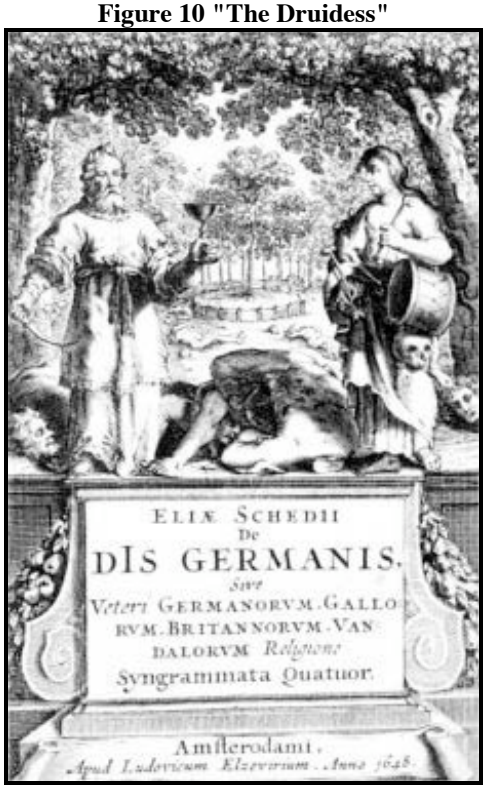

Figure 11 Yes, even back in the 18th Century, the Druids were dissing the Germans

Chapter Five: ADF & Keltria 1983-1996 The Branching of Modern Druidism

The Formation of Ar nDraiocht Fein

It is not my purpose here to give a detailed, complete history of the ADF, which could only come from a collaboration of several inner-members who would be intimately familiar with the development of events and people of the ADF. I can only hope to show some of the relationships and similarities/dissimilarities that exist between ADF and the N/RDNA. To do so will require that I talk a lot about Isaac, because of his major influence in both ADF and in the later years of the NRDNA, which makes him a good focal point for discussion of cross-overs and carryovers between the two groups. Also, because the focus of this epistle is the history of Reformed Druidism, most of the discussion of ADF will be in relation to the N/RDNA, instead of with the Neo-Pagan community, which was indeed the major audience to which ADF catered. The history of Neo-Pagan organizational attempts and ADF's role in debating and exploring Neo-Pagan issues will have to be written by another person.

The reason for Isaac's prominence in the history of the RDNA was his penchant for trying to put order and stability into the organizational structure of Reformed Druidism. Empire builders have always attracted the lion's share of attention from the historians, more so than the simpler histories of those who are conquered or incorporated. Isaac also printed/published a lot of letters and magazines on the debates which have survived to produce a historical record naturally inclined to favor/emphasize his role. Whereas many of the terms and/or structures now used in ADF originally were used in the NRDNA; such as proto-grove, council of ArchDruids/senior druids and others; most of them disappeared from prominence and general use in the NRDNA after Isaac's departure. In effect, they went with him to be used with a new group that was better oriented and appreciative of their potential applicability. While Reformed Druidism was not quite chaos or anarchy incarnated, I like the image of ADF emerging from Reformed Druidism just as Order emerges from Chaos in the genesis myths of many religions.

The Beginnings of Ár nDraíocht Féin (Dec. 1981)

During Isaac's sabbatical from 1979 to 1981 and dabbling with Pentalpha, he was putting together the foundations for a new Druid Organization that would be more stable, legally-recognizable and coherent than the "anarchy" and "ridiculous egalitarianism" of the RDNA and NRDNA. The major problem with the Reformed Druids, in Isaac's and other people's eyes, was its obstinate refusal to allocate power to the leaders and its having a system that defeated any "official" attempt to improve the coherency and/or functionality into a national organization. Isaac's liturgical or organizational changes from scholarly study

of Celtic and/or Proto-Indo-European cultures would forever contend with the RDNA's multiple (and possibly more enticing) systems of beliefs from around the world and from the members' own devising. The RDNA, as a whole, would never resemble authentic, historical Druidism.

At best, Isaac could have formed and shaped one Reformed Druid grove in his vision and then slowly found others. However, each member of those new groves would be constantly reminded by the Druid Chronicles and Reformed Druid correspondence that they could do anything and still be a Reformed Druid, regardless of what Isaac or any pseudo-governing body said to them. It was like sand slipping out of Isaac's fingers or King Canute trying to stop the tides. The RDNA and NRDNA would always be a loose federation of autonomous groves operating in effective isolation; never a complex national organization.

I don't mean to imply that Isaac wished to tightly control people's lives, but that he did wished to create a functional organization that would reciprocate and appreciate his (and other's) interests and suggestions. He wanted a group that would unearth the lost ways and beliefs of the Proto-Indo-European religion, keep itself from lapsing into decrepitude and be able to share that knowledge with the world. He wanted a group that he could be sure would be around 30 years from now. For Isaac to have continued to convert Reformed Druidism into that tool would have been like using fingernail-clippers to hammer in a nail.

One thing is for sure, Isaac gave it the best attempt possible. After all there were many potential recruits within Reformed Druidism, and some did join him in his new projects; but for the most part, he left the Reformed Druid organization behind that he had so carefully maintained, and it slowly decayed into happy, anarchic simplicity. In fact, it is still happily decaying; with occasional growth spurts. As for Isaac, he was to develop new alliances and friendships with people even more like himself.

Reasons for Isaac's "Departure”

Why did Isaac "leave?"[263] Legal status had a lot to do with why Isaac left; and respect for the group's concerns makes up the rest. One of the many weakness of the Neo-Pagan movement was the fact that most of them were not recognized as religious organizations and/or lacked the respect that "established" religions had from governmental and community authorities. As a result, there was a latent weakness for oppressors of Neo-Paganism to downplay the convictions of these tiny groups and mis-present them as "cults." Isaac had had his fill of this bias in the courts, when he was running the Aquarian Anti-Defamation League in the mid-70s. Isaac wanted a Neo-Pagan religious group that could appear to function as smoothly and bureaucratically as the "big boys," preferably a Druidic group, and yet still retain the spontaneity and personal freedom of Neo-Paganism. He wanted a group that could act as a role-model for other Neo-Pagans and/or as an umbrella organization for other Celtic/Druidic groups with similar goals. Reformed Druidism was definitely ecumenical enough for his goal, but perhaps a bit too disorganized. Despite full-hearted attempts to "correct" them, the Reformed Druids proved to be incapable of meeting certain basic standards that he felt were necessary for achieving the nebulous (but vitally important) definitional status of a "stable religious organization."

On casual observation, there would seem to be no carry-overs from Reformed Druidism to ADF except the title "Druid," the Waters-of-Life, an eclectic sense of humor, the Druid Sigil and Isaac himself; but a more careful examination proves otherwise. Without his experiences in the "anarchic" RDNA proving grounds, he would have probably made many (more) blunders in setting up a group formed in the way that he wished. In a sense the RDNA provided a very accurate model for what Isaac wished to avoid in his new group and also what he did want included in his new group. I recommend a close study of the ADF for those curious about the RDNA, because what the ADF **did** do sheds a lot of light on what the RDNA **couldn't (or wouldn't)** do. Isaac (and others) was familiar from his past experiences (with AADL and Pentalpha) with the criteria needed for a religion to be considered "respectable" in a court of law. These "failures" on the part of the RDNA, and similar Neo-Pagan anarchic groups, were carefully "corrected" when planning the new Druid Organization; and they were primarily:

1. Stable, effective, strong central organization.
2. Effective Clergy training and the controlled appointment of Leadership
3. "Defrocking" and "excommunication"
4. Concerted unity in court cases
5. Financial stability.
6. Capability of steady expansion without lessening central power.
7. Official dogma and an ability to speak for a group and make official alliances.
8. Willingness to ally exclusively to Neo-Paganism.
9. Willingness to adapt and change to accommodate scholarly facts on Indo-Euro religion
10. Respect for the group's goals.

All of these goals are carefully tied into eachother, with one leading string leading to another. We shall therefore start with one of these strings in the Gordion Knot.

1. Stable, Effective, Strong Central Organization

Despite Isaac's attempts at removing the chairmanship of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu from Carleton’s, and later a Provisional Council of Archdruids; most of the Reformed Druids (including the NRDNA) were still roughly allied to the Council of Dalon Ap Landu as governed by Carleton. The Coalition Council of DAL did not last long after Joan’s departure in 1982. Because of Carleton's rapid and total membership turn-over and eternally young Archdruids (always under 23 years old); there was little hope of "mature" and bureaucratically competent leadership for the Council. Besides this, the Carleton Archdruid (and a major chunk of the Carleton alumni members of the Council) was, for a long time, poorly cognizant of the religious beliefs and needs of the Neo-Pagan members of the Reformed Druids living on the West Coast and elsewhere.

One of the first things Isaac did was to become life-long, supreme Archdruid of the whole ADF organization (leaders of individual groves are “senior druids”) until the mid 1990s.[264] As you can read in the ADF By-laws in the Part Four of ARDA, the Archdruid was given rather extensive powers for the appointment of bureaucrats, to influence legislation and to veto or to remove problems. The office of Archdruid becomes accountable to electionary influence beginning with his successor, but Isaac is sure to massively influence the formative years of the group's history. As you can further read, there are elected positions to the legislative offices; the ability to vote is not a right of office like in the RDNA priesthood, it's a privilege granted to the general members (except when some are selected as in the board of Trustees). This privilege is not only granted, but it's effectiveness increases with the length of time you stay active in legislation; no more sitting back and occasionally vetoing every 10 years or so. Every year in consistent attendance at legislating increased the number of votes you could cast; which implies that experience in ADF affairs makes you a more competent voter than a new-comer. This position has its advantages and drawbacks, of course.

Furthermore in the voting on issues affecting all groves, the decisions are made by quorums, not unanimity like in the RDNA.

The wishes of the majority override those of the minority. In the RDNA, the rules affecting the entire collective of groves which were passed by the unanimity of the Third Orders were effective on the non-thirds; the custom of a groves' constitution were by quorums. That small change from unanimity to quorum on the organizational level makes all the changes possible for ADF to travel a different fate from the RDNA. The ADF can change more easily on the total-organizational level than the RDNA; which in all reality could only change on the Grove-level. If Isaac could have changed that one tradition of unanimity in the RDNA, he could have stayed in the RDNA and slowly transformed it into the ADF. Needless to say, this was one of the things the RDNA and NRDNA were most reluctant to change.

Once that single change was made, it naturally follows to allocate the collective power and *endorsing capability* of the group by appointing bodies of member like Boards of Trustees, Councils of Lore and Advisory Councils. I do not wish to go into the deep checks-and-balances of his group. The critical change from the RDNA had already been made and it would be belaboring the point to describe further deviations from the organized anarchy of the RDNA's structure. In effect, he had created a constitutional monarchy, as he will freely admit, much like Britain's government which blends autocracy and representation democracy.

2. Effective clergy training and appointment of leaders

Once the issue of legislating by the majority's wishes had been conceded (i.e. that people need to be instructed and led by the (hopefully) better-informed-majority's wishes), the next issue to deal with was appointing good leaders to avoid tyranny and promote the group's goals. The placement of term-of-office limits helps greatly, so is the need for election, but some power is always taken away from the individuals. Unlike secular authorities, religious authorities (excepting Cults) can not hope to "control" the lives of its members, if the congregation member does not wish to be controlled. There is always the option of quitting, both in ADF and/or mainstream religions.

The RDNA is not entirely "innocent" of the danger of Priests potentially dominating the religious congregation, because the Third Order could technically impose oppressive dogma, but the tradition of unanimity hinders such possible imposition on an organizational level, although it could easily happen on the local level. Such an event could occur by the RDNA's priest being given greater powers in the grove's constitution or by "levering" techniques, like the decision of the Archdruid or any priest refusing to grant initiation or refusing to hold services. No special knowledge or conditions were required of the initiate in the Reform, it was on the honor system, if you felt ready then you were probably ready. So in effect the RDNA had no control or educational requirement on who became its leaders (i.e. the Third Order) and no need to worry, because the Third Order had no real, effective power or authority to wield. It was very cleverly planned that way. In fact within the RDNA, many priests tell me that the aspirants to and attainers of the Third Order could very well themselves be considered failures at Druidism, because they seek to take part in "organization." The only center of higher training was perhaps, Carleton College itself, in a liberal-arts education.

The RDNA's system would not satisfy the ADF, which wished a clergy that resembled the clerigical training efforts of the "mainstream" religions. A well-educated clergy would go a long way in currying respect from monotheistic clerical faiths. Indeed, one of the cornerstones of the ADF is its seminary program, which is quite impressively organized on paper in comparison with other Neo-Pagan systems currently out there. It is designed to produce a group of informed, "liberal arts-ish" trained clergy by the end of its 13 track program. Each of the 13 tracks is a different area of learning including:

1. Physical Health and Survival, 2. Therapy and Counseling, 3. Communication, 4. Magic and Divination, 5. History and Social Sciences, 6. Natural Sciences, 7. Movement awareness and Discipline, 8. Artistic and Bardic Skills, 9. Drama and Liturgy, 10. Philosophy and Scholarship, 11. Comparative Religion and Mythology, 12. Mysticism and Altered States of Consciousness, 13. Human Services Administration.

Each track has five degrees/levels of increasing "competence" in that area of knowledge, called "circles." When a candidate has read/studied/practiced the suggested materials in that track, and wishes to be accredited for completing a "circle," they take a test/exam/demonstration to show competency. When one has completed 1st Circle competency in each of the thirteen tracks, one becomes a full second circle ADF druid. It is, of course, quite possible to be third circle competent in History while lagging behind in 1st circle with the other 12 tracks, in which case you'd still be a 1st circle Druid. However, the minimum competency to be a priest in the ADF is to have completed the 2nd circle competency requirements in each track and therefore be working on (at least) the 3rd circle competency for each of the thirteen tracks. The image is of circles within circles (like rings in a tree) with greater proven competency allowing further progression to more inner circles; and correspondingly greater responsibilities and power. A 3rd circle status is roughly equivalent to a B.A., a 4th circle to a M.A. and a 5th circle to a Ph.D. It is interesting to note that the circle-status does not affect, at least now, the right to fill the roles of offices of the Mother Grove's administration or the local roles. This is in itself very interesting. This is coupled with the fact that no one need be in the seminary program to be an ADF member, participation in the seminary program (although encouraged, at least for self-development) is purely optional.

Although this concept of a seminary drew a lot of fire initially from the Neo-Pagan community as a whole; being counter to the free-spirit of Neo-paganism, one-up-man-ship, etc.; since then many have begun to pay greater attention to training regimens.

3. Ability to Defrock and Excommunicate

Closely allied with its clerical training program was ADF's desire to remove troublesome members from its priesthood and general membership, when the necessity arises. Defrocking and excommunication are traditional methods used by Organized Religions to maintain a group's definitional identity boundary when all other forms of persuasion have failed. They are used to protect the group from the development of serious factionalization (though it doesn't always work).

In the RDNA there was **no** known method for defrocking or excommunication officially available. Any action would have to be done by an "unofficial" shunning of the problematic person; i.e. not going to that Priest's rituals or everybody just avoiding that person. However, "officially," that person would still be entitled to retain their RDNA "priesthood" and "order of achievement." If they were already a 3rd Order they could still officially found a new RDNA grove, even if they were considered to be demon-spawn. This defect never actually caused a real problem to the RDNA, but it was a potentially devastating problem in Isaac's eyes. Hypothetically, what if someone came into the ADF grove with a bunch of really strange, dangerous ideas and/or seriously broke the U.S. law? Without excommunication, there would be no way for ADF to disavow the group's connection with that person except to say that each person

was following their own way and no one can speak for the beliefs of others in the group. That might work for the RDNA, but not for ADF which had a destiny to preserve. It was far better, in Isaac's eyes, to remove any group connections with that person by "defrocking" them and/or excommunicating them.

The RDNA tried not to worry enough about the group's survival and forget the rights of the individual. The ADF is self-consciously establishing a right for the group to survive, and it's an interesting choice of potential priorities. This has the advantage of not having to start from scratch with one's Public Relations after a scandal, assuming one is concerned about Public Relations. Each ADF grove has to toe the line with new national changes or it will lose the benefits of participation in the national group. These included a loss of ADF allegiance status (which implies a "loss of name and identity" of that group), a loss of legal protection and supportive advice and/or moneys from the central powers-that-be. It's uncertain how often this happened, but news is infrequent.

4. Concerted unity in court cases:

ADF wants to legally protect and empower its members to practice and publicly-affirm their religious beliefs. One of the main reasons that people joined the ADF is for a legal status for their church. It is expensive, paper-consuming and difficult for each small group to independently obtain/maintain/prove all the requirements of a religious organization in the eyes of the IRS and the public Courts. It is far cheaper for one group (i.e. the ADF Mother Grove, consisting of all the officers of the organization) to attain religious organizational status and then give out franchises to the individual groves that are sort of huddling under it's umbrella. Thereby the poorer groves/members have a better shot of gaining a victory in the courts.

In the RDNA, the original Carleton Grove *could* have performed all of these legal tasks for itself; however expansion soon exposed a problem to a possible extension of legal protection: deep-seated apathy towards making themselves appear organized enough to survive an "inspection" by the government. The unusual precedent to this was the Smiley incident; whereupon a few members of the Council backed-up a member currently active in a Grove distinct from the Carleton Grove. The reason such legal protection was not possible in the RDNA was because nobody wanted to pay membership fees to cover the costs of such applications or concerted legal action. Each new grove meant more people for the already over-burdened Archdruid of Carleton; who was trying to survive a rigorous educational program and maintain a national organization. The fraternal aid in the Smiley case was relatively cheap (mere postage costs) and was therefore feasible; hiring a lawyer for Smiley on RDNA funds would have been impossible. Smiley would have had to hire his own lawyer to defend his religious beliefs, with testimonial backing from the other Council members. Isaac didn't want the little ADF guy out there on his/her own.

Isaac was familiar, from his association with AADL, that court cases are a possible hazard for any Neo-Pagan organization. There had to be a clear representative of the organization to arrange a defense (or mount a prosecution). A representative for the group was necessary for the group in legal cases and for flushing out frauds from the group. In 1989, ADF worked in conjunction with other Neo-Pagan groups to expose the nefarious activities of the Divine Circle of the Sacred Grove. DCSG's leader was misrepresenting herself as having 3rd circle ADF credentials.

5. Financial Stability

Paying for the costs of running the bureaucracy, legal aid in court cases, educational grading of the seminary tracks and to publish/mail periodicals or the new by-laws for the organization costs money. Lots of money. With money comes the threat of corruption, which requires more bureaucracy to self-police itself. You see the viscous cycle now. However, financial compensation for such activities prevents financial "burnout" by goodwill supporters.

The RDNA has never had much to do with enforcing money collection. A tradition of passing the hat was the best method they came up with. The one rule regarding money was that it was required for all Third Order Druids to pay compensation for the postage of the up-date (or "State of the Grove") mailings that the Archdruid of Carleton sent out upon retiring. If people wanted it, they paid for it; and if they didn't want it, they didn't pay for it. It should be noted that this practice is common among Neo-Pagan groups. It will be interesting to see how direct financial support from Carleton College will affect the internal dynamics of the Druids.

Isaac was presenting a valid gripe that it costs money to run an organization within the N/RDNA, and that he was tired of paying for all of it; however many did not wish the organization, and so they didn't pay. The arguments on both sides have many pros and cons which the reader can argue out for her/himself. The result was that Isaac required membership dues on both individual membership and a due for the groves themselves to be franchised. There was considerable debate but it has passed, and no one has gotten rich off it, so it seems to be working out. It is the hope of ADF to have its clergy's efforts compensated with money/services in the future. Despite ADF's growth over the years, we're still talking only about a budget of several thousand dollars.

6. Capability of Steady expansion without lessening central power/importance

It is inevitable, that the physical distance between people will weaken the bond of friendship/allegiance. Distance is not so potent a force of division today as it used to be because of technological achievements that make mass-communication cheaper and easier to access. Photocopy machines, computer publishing, multi-line phone communication and e-mail have greatly improved the organizational skills of smaller dispersed organizations.

The RDNA's apparent apathy (or respect for autonomy) towards its other groves and suspicion of the motives of organized religions, inhibited any initiative towards central government. While many Reformed Druids were happy at the founding of new Groves, and might even offer friendly advice if asked for it, they kept a respectful distance from involvement. The center of attention for each grove, or solitary Druid, was itself. The NRDNA of the Bay Area was blessed (cursed?) with lots of groves within a close geo-physical distance so that physical visits were practical and intergrove-relations and shared rituals were common; permitting shared goals and activities that could breach autonomic tendencies. The "Mother Grove" newsletter of the SDNA and various succeeding magazines disseminated coordinating news and discussed issues important to various members.

The ADF was begun with the intention of operating on both the local level **and** the National level from the beginning. ADF was ready to be a really big family and several devices from Isaac's NRDNA days were used to foster a national level of group-unity. The most obvious is the Annual ADF festival, usually held in conjunction with other groups for cost/fun reasons, in which ADF issues are debated and voted upon. Elections for some offices are also held and just plain physical meetings between members is made possible, so that trans-grove friendship are made more possible. For those not able to attend the meetings for financial or obligatory reasons, electronic communication or proxy voting are now possible. Most of the Mother Grove's

councils meet on a more frequent and regular basis (in person, proxy or electronically) to snip problems in the bud.

This sense of inter-Grove connections is increased by a Council of Senior Druids. A Senior Druid of the ADF is in a job similar to that of an Arch-Druid of the N/RDNA; s/he's in charge of leading a grove's rituals and is technically the leader. They are called Senior Druids because there can only be **one** Archdruid in ADF at a time; which is more historically correct (at least in Gaul/France, where the only mention of the title existed). The Council of Senior Druids' purpose of establishing inter-communication between the Grove's leaders is identical to the original purpose of the Provisional Council of Archdruids in Reformed Druidism; including making some general statements and minor legislation (most of which was never officially completed in the N/RDNA).

The "Druid's Progress" is the national journal of ADF and brings the academic, liturgical and artistic achievements of far-spread grove members together for display and shared knowledge. In some aspects, DP's importance has decreased as local newsletters grow among Groves, but DP will probably remain for those seeking a wider audience. This magazine was recently replaced by “Oak Leaves”. "The News from the Mother Grove" acts to disseminate business mews of the ADF organization and share addresses/locations of officers and groves. The role of a central journal and a more frequent newsletter holding together a group is a general phenomenon of Neo-Paganism and it was preceded in the N/RDNA by the Druid Chronicler and Penta-Alpha magazines also begun by Isaac Bonewits (and others). Local grove publications are exchanged between groves for a similar purpose and thrive on a small scale.

Traveling visits by the Archdruid, usually while going to present a lecture at a nearby convention, are another method of keeping abreast of local development of the many groves in the ADF. However, in recent years, these tours have declined due to Isaac's failing health. ADF groves are also encouraged to visit neighboring groves once in a while, when possible. The last area of intergrove activity would be on computer bulletin board conferences. The cheap, instant communication that this provides for isolated solitary members may be enough to swell ADF's ranks, and advertise it more widely.

7. Official dogma and ability to speak for a group and thereby make alliances[1]

As we've stated before, because the Council of Dalon ap Landu was likely to deadlock on a decisive vote of support for any issue, the individual RDNA member was officially incapable of speaking for the group, being appointed to act as its ambassador, or making an alliance of between the entire RDNA organization and other groups. They could "pretend" to do such things or act informally on the wishes of individuals, but could not represent the RDNA as a whole. This weakened the RDNA's potential "clout" as an organization, since it has trouble sending group-wide ambassadors, making alliances or being represented in court.

ADF, in contrast, has frequently sent ambassadors to religious conventions, set up public relations committees, produced official literature, appointed lawyers and done everything necessary to define itself as a recognizable entity.

8. Willingness to ally exclusively to Neo-Paganism.

Now the Carleton RDNA and it's RDNA offshoots were generally open to the public in a cautious manner, mainly as a result of its exploration of world religions which, if a bit odd (Asian, Atheism and Middle-Eastern), were not met with as much suspicion as Occultism and Wicca. The truth was, the RDNA and NRDNA (as a whole) weren't too picky about where they looked to find religious truth; and Neo-Paganism was merely one option among hundreds of possibilities. While the NRDNA steadily grew to have a preference for Neo-Pagan members and inspiration, it was like the RDNA in that it was never exclusionary towards non-pagans. All were welcome, pending good behavior, even into the Third Order or higher! However, Isaac's SDNA (and the HDNA subset) was very clear in its Neo-Pagan allegiance, especially in the criteria needed for entry into the Third Order.

Isaac's attitude carried over into the ADF, where one must pledge to be a Neo-Pagan/Wiccan/etc.(preferably polytheistic instead of duotheistic or even feminine monotheistic) to fulfill any "official" leadership in the organization. He wanted the ADF to be squarely in the camp of Neo-Paganism. Members partaking in the Study tracks who wished to be accredited as clergy (and not just studying for the enjoyment) would also have to ally to Neo-Paganism. While this requirement was nothing to most of its prospective members, it was a definite inegalitarian (non-pagans aren't welcome and certain types of Pagans were only cautiously accepted), and while no tears will be shed by ADF over it, it is one of the greatest changes from the RDNA. However, as far as the Neo-Pagan Community was concerned, ADF was a very ecumenical religious organization indeed. One interesting custom of the ADF was to allow its own members to practice in other Neo-Pagan religions at the same time.

9. Willingness to change to accommodate scholarly facts on Indo-European religion.

Closely linked with point 8 is ADF's choice of which cultures were to be the official inspiration of the group. The RDNA had shown from it's very founding year, with the debate over choosing what to sacrifice, that it wasn't going to change it's organization to meet historical realities of the ancient Druids. The NRDNA groves under Larson and Bonewits and a few other Archdruids were more willing to model the liturgies, songs and officers to match the known historical facts from one or two ancient religions (including Norse, Celtic and paleo-Hebraic religion), but they usually remained close to the Order of Worship's general plan. Despite some specialization, members within those groves continued to draw upon diverse sources of inspiration.

ADF was founded to research and recreate the original religion of the ancestors of the Indo-European family-tree. ADF was dealing with a pretty broad selection of cultures to work backwards from; including Celtic, Scando-Germanic, pre-classical Greco-Roman, Slavic, ancient Hindu, etc. (and a specially permitted addition, Native American). Truly diverse, but it is still exclusionary of many African-originated religions, Eastern Asian religion, Greco-Roman, Islamic, Meso-Pagan and Judeo-Christianity, not to mention Modern Wicca and Science-Fiction inspired cultures. The ADF is not racist, but they wish to retain a focus. Members are welcome to practice privately any religion they wish and learn from whatever source they wish, but for the purpose of official public ADF rituals only materials pertaining to Indo-European cultures will be considered relevant.

10. Respect for the group's goals

A kind of catch-all conclusion, but it is a point that underlies all of the previous 9 points. The RDNA had a respectful wariness and suspicion about a religious group taking upon itself more tasks, powers of coercion, dogma, sanctity and self-importance than was safe/helpful for the rights/purposes of the individual to be able to pursue and express their religious truth

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with their siblings. From this stems the Reformed Druid penchant for "anarchy" (as it is called in some people's opinions).

While a certain amount of humor and self-mocking has and will continue in the ADF, it has set forward serious goals that it hopes to accomplish, as a group.

Carryovers from the Reformed Druids

It's hard to say what Isaac borrowed from the RDNA since many of the organizational structures that carried over from it were devised and used mostly by himself in the first place. But, assuming that he devised these ideas and implemented them with the help of other Reformed Druids, they can be said to belong in part to Reformed Druidism.

By far, the most apparent carryover was the symbol of Reformed Druidism itself, the Druid Sigil. Perhaps not so significant to the general reader, but I consider it a powerful identifying symbol of shared siblinghood between ADF and Reformed Druidism, sort of like South Carolina and Nebraska both having the US flag flying in front of their public schools. The Druid Sigil has expanded from it's merely RDNA-affiliation into a grander role as a symbol of Druidism in general. This importance as a pan-Druidical banner was increased further by the Henge of Keltria's adoption of the Druid Sigil as one of it's symbols of identification. ADF also adopted a unique symbol for its own. It looks like a stump which has axe-marks upon it and one small oak branch growing anew from it. Each year they enlarge the branch, adding more leaves and girth. The roots of the symbol are knotted in a Celtic interlace and symbolize how Celtic Druidry has it's roots in a pan-indo-european form of religion.[265]

The Waters of Life and some of the questions of the Catechism of the Waters and general structure from the 1977-1980 NRDNA liturgies are noticeable liturgical carryover from the Reform. The initial services of ADF were very similar to the Order of Worship, but with succeeding years, more and more elements disappear until only the Waters remain. They meet outdoors in groves, when possible, like the Reform. The office of Preceptor in the ADF has no liturgical role and is a mere paper-pushing official now.

Finally, The ADF is pursuing a proto-Indo-European system, which looks quite eclectic compared to mono-cultural Welsh or Irish Druid organizations that have appeared over the years. I see this as a slight narrowing of the broad search employed in the NRDNA for truth. That and the caveat that it must be adjusted slightly for modern sensibilities.

Milestones in ADF

As an outsider, with a limited study of ADF, I can only paint a few brushstrokes, whose details must be filled in by someone more familiar with the group's transformations.

Structurally, it began vaguely around 1983, but definitely solidified in 1984, the magazine "Druid's Progress" first came out. The Article of Association were passed in either 1986 or 1987, with the first board of regents holding the meeting on a waterbed, reportedly. Sometime between 1989 and 1991, they incorporated and soon thereafter were granted tax-free status as a charitable religious organization by the I.R.S. and the powers that be.

In regards to size, the organization seems to have quickly reached a size of a few dozen groves and protogroves, spreading mostly in the liberal regions of the East and West coasts and Ohio river valley. Due-paying membership has generally hovered between four to eight hundred members, making them certainly one of the larger Druid groups in the world, but still dwarfed by the century old fraternal movements and the rise of giants like the Order of Bards Ovates and Druids; which now has established several groves in America, Canada, Europe and Australia now.

Due to its tighter identity, clearer lines of leadership, legal status and sense of mission, ADF has been prominent in attending interfaith religious conferences, such as the 1993 World Parliament of Religions, pagan festivals, the 30th Anniversary of Modern Druidism, etc. It also sent out circulars to the Neopagan communities about perceived lack of discussion on community issues and spreading news of the possible charlatans. In order to get its message out, ADF has produced an array of paper and digital publications over the years.

Organizationally, there have been several editions of ADF Grove Organizer's Handbook, ADF Study Manuals, ADF Member's Guides, Liturgical Handbooks, and some magazines. The Druid's Progress magazine lasted about ten years from 1984-1994, fitfully producing about one or two issues every year, while News from the Mother Grove and local Grove publications came out more frequently with current news. DP was a mixture of bardic materials, Indo-European comparative research, and new liturgical and organizational material. From 1997 to the present, the Oak Leaves publication has more closely approached a regular 2 or 3 issues a year, in much the same format, under different management. Minor financial problems and changing editorships over the years has made it difficult to establish continuity, although computerized editing has definitely made an improved product and simpler to organize.

The ADF Study Program caused a big splash in the mid-80s in the Neo-Pagan community. Although training programs, guided readings, and apprenticeships had happened before, none was as academically oriented, much like a seminary-by-mail course of studies. Hundreds of the members, and interested outside parties have enrolled over the years; and doubtlessly has influenced other groups to establish more training materials for its leadership and general membership. The program's apparent flaw was no so much in the choice of the materials or design, but the difficulty of enrolling enough competent graders to handle the onslaught of materials and correspondence than ensued. As a result, the program has occasionally closed and restarted over the years, and some members have been embittered, . Some Druids from other groups have been reticent to join ADF, from the feeling of having to start "from the bottom again," but most have responded favorably to the program.

In the mid 90s, ADF finally began to bring members into the Third Circle and full status as ordained clergy, perhaps a handful by now. And some of these members have also replaced Isaac Bonewits, not long after his illness became severe, as the Arch Druid of the overall ADF organization for about eight years now, in a smooth transition of power, because "it was about time for a new voice."

Considering the heavy number of computer professionals in the Neo-pagan movement, it is not surprising that ADF was one of the first Druid organizations to establish a web-site (www.adf.org) in the mid-90s, a year or so before the RDNA site (which was 1995), and has carefully added more and more resources, anchoring the community in ways far cheaper than the paper publications. Isaac established his own site (www.neopagan.net) after his retirement from the ADF Archdruidcy, and it also has played a prominent role in the Neopagan community. In fact, although dwarfed by some of the Neopagan and Wiccan organizations, it has been a sizable player in the Druid subset of the community, with an influence out of proportion to its size. Perhaps, it would be larger, if it wasn't shedding so many members , who are breaking off into new organizations, but that is not uncommon with larger Neopagan organizations.

ADF Spin-off Organizations

Just as ADF took the parts of the Reform it liked and left the rest, so too have groups split off from ADF to form new Druid groups over the years. Each group has adopted different influences and the connections may seem tenuous, but as Daniel Hansen says in his book, *American Druidism: A Guide to American Druid Groups,* we all live in America, we're all modern, we lack definitive links to Europe, and everybody lumps us together anyway. I like to think of all these Druid groups as part of the family of American Druidism.

The analogy is that the original RDNA is the parent; the NRDNA, SDNA, HDNA and ZDNA are its children; ADF is its grandchild; Shadowpath, Henge of Keltria, Druidactios, DCSG and Primitive Celtic Church are its great grandchildren; and American Druidic Church would be it's great great grandchild. Of course, Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross (Reformed Druidic Wicca) and Order of Mithril Star have just married into the RDNA family, so we'll see how they fit in. It should be remembered that like a family tree, the RDNA "blood" has a thinner concentration in each generation. But since the current Carleton Grove has had 36 successive Archdruids, it may be fairer to call the current Carleton Grove to be a 36th Grandchild of the original grove and therefore something like a 23rd cousin of ADF (and a couple places removed)? Maybe the analogy doesn't work very well, eh?

I will describe each group rather briefly, because Daniel Hansen's book, "American Druidism" does the cataloguing job well enough so I will not have to duplicate his efforts. We have materials in the Druid Archives from these groups, which you are welcome to come and inspect.

Shadow Path Grove, mid 1980s

This was one of the first Druid Groups to break off from ADF in the mid 80s and their one grove hails from Connecticut. They broke off because they did not wish to have public rituals. They continue to use ADF ritual in private. It is believed to have gone inactive by 1993.

The Henge of Keltria, 1987

Keltria is by far the largest of the groups to break off from ADF, taking a good part of the mid-western ADF Druids with them in 1988 (and most of their membership and groves are still in the middle-US). Led initially by Patricia and Tony Taylor, they wished to stop ADF's pan-Indo-European focus and focus squarely (or is that triangularly?) upon Celtic Druidism. They incorporated in the early 90s, not too long after ADF, and have regularly updated their By-Laws. No offshoots have formed, to my knowledge.

They also sought to the public nature of the group, orienting into an initiatory tribal format, start their own training program, have more responsible financing, and publish their a journal (called Keltria) on a regular time schedule (unlike ADF's erratic publishings) until the late 90s. They made their headquarters in Minneapolis, which is interestingly only a short drive from Carleton, although it has recently relocated inquiries to West Virginia. Serpent Stone Journal, also only lasted a few years, but a recent update on the Liturgical book went well, with their unique vervain and mistletoe rites. Since then, however the "Henge Happenings" has been published on-line and is almost as detailed and very well edited.

An initially strong Wiccan flavor has diminished over the years. The Henge of Keltria is almost the same size as ADF and both groups have a large overlap of membership. Keltria has kept the Druid Sigil and added the three rays of Awen also. Keltria has a five circle program similar to ADF, but with far less essay-writing. Never expanding past a few hundred, it continues to occasionally interact with the Carleton Grove over the years.

Numbers have dropped a little over the years, but their group still has annual gatherings in the summer in the Great Lake region that are well attended. In the late 90s, Taylor & co. stepped down from leadership, and new leadership rose to fill the vacuum, including the very talented Wren. However, although much more history has happened with Keltria, I will have to defer until I have a chance to do interviews and carefully peruse the literature.

Uxello-Druidactios, 1988

This was a Gaulish oriented group. It is a little more difficult to understand how Druidactios is part of the American Druid family. Druidactios was founded by Tadhg MacCrossan (Tom Cross) in 1988 after a few years in the Post Oak Proto-Grove of the NRDNA, then a very short stint in ADF, to study its organizational patterns and literature. His well published book "The Sacred Cauldron: Secrets of the Druid" is considered to be a handbook for starting a Druidactios touta (grove). MacCrossan has spent most of the years since writing poison-pen letters about the deficiencies of other Druid Organizations; in particular that they are "infected" with Neo-Pagan clap-trap and Wiccan influences. Most Druids classify Druidactios as "Meso-Pagan" (and it has many connections with the Continental organizations), similar to the original RDNA in that the group does not consider itself pagan. The group was currently in the process of fragmenting into four new groups at the time of ARDA's first publishing in 1996. Since then it has fallen apart, and Tom has reputedly decided to start up a new strain of Celtic Christianity in the Dallas Texas area.

Divine Circle of the Sacred Grove, 1991

This group has some nefarious elements, primarily Janette Copeland, and was trying to attract members to increase its profits. It attempted to use "A Druid Fellowship," which belongs to ADF, in its name but it quit in 1992. DCotSG then claimed phony ADF credentials. The group came under tax-scrutiny and disappeared from the Twin City area. The group moved to Arizona and deals mostly in workshops and herbs now. The remnants of the group from that incident formed a new group, The American Druidic Church.

American Druidic Church, 1992

Jay Tibbles and Patricia Fields founded this spin off from Divine Circle of Sacred Grove and have been relying heavily upon proferred help from ADF and OBOD (Order of Bards Ovates and Druids). They were working out their own customs, myths, newsletters and a training program, but the group did not last more than five years. This group appears to have disbanded.

Primitive Celtic Church, 1992

This grove, like Keltria, broke off to spend more time focusing upon the Celtic aspects of Druidism. Like the DCotSG, they also hail from the Seattle area where they operated a small grove of 4-8 people. One of their plans was to build a small Druidic village on some private land. Recent gossip claims that they have disbanded, but they opened a webpage and seem to be in operation, perhaps on a smaller scale.

Reformed Druidic Wicca 1985?

This group has a mysterious origin, perhaps a splinter off a half-hearted attempt to start a NRDNA Protogrove, or possibly even an ADF Protogrove in the mid-1980s. Records are rather fuzzy. The rumor is that somebody came from Colorado to the Oklahoma region and founded the group. The organization as a whole, with a handful of groves, has remained between ten and fifty members up to the recent years. As material become available I will write more about them. They renamed themselves

Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross (delightfully acronymed MOCC) and are apparently setting up off-shoots groves, building on-line conferences, and are loosely aligned with the RDNA at the present.

Order of the Mithril Star 1993?

This groups was actually a schism from Church of All Worlds, over CAW having strayed too far from the inspiration of "Stranger in a Strange World", but has fallen into the orbit of the RDNA in the last few years, often abbreviating itself as OMS:RDNA; and adapting elements of the RDNA liturgy, constitution, endorsing the literature, and having regular cross-membership in their on-line conferences. Their most ambitious current plan is to set up "Imladris", a commune style village on the West Coast; in a manner reminiscent of the HDNA lifestyle. The have even put out a Green Book with the Druidcraft 101 on-line course text.

I predict that many more groups will splinter off of ADF during the late 90s. I have been out of the country since 1996, so I haven't kept in close contact to record other new organizations, but the family tree has probably sprouted a few new limbs since then. When future research opportunities present themselves, I will update this section.

Conclusion

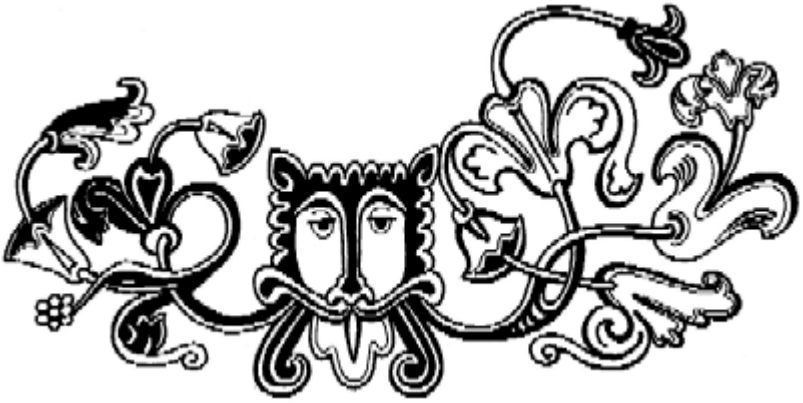
What Isaac had been doing was essentially overhauling the RDNA system so entirely that it was becoming unrecognizable. In fact, the last issue of Druid Chronicler (Dec. 1981) shows a blueprint for what would become the ADF organization. He and a few other NRDNA/SDNA members wanted a stable, legally recognized, hierarchical Neo-Pagan religion that would academically discover the original Indo-European religion by piecing together clues from different cultures. Within a year of the Death March, Isaac left Berkeley and renamed his vision "Ar nDriaocht Fein," which is Irish for "Our Own Druidism," to make it very clear that he had finally broken away from Reformed Druidism.

ADF was in all senses, a new organization. ADF has since developed an envied seminary training program, a rigid hierarchy based on merit not popularity, become a legal church and has been promoting more academically based liturgies and interaction with local communities for Neo-Paganism.[266]

The official leadership as ArchDruid of ADF was resigned by Isaac Bonewits on January 1st, 1996 c.e. due to health problems and due to his distaste for the restrictions that the office place upon his ability to freely speak his mind. A few Archdruids have followed in succession as the first series of Third Circle Druids are ordained. I suspect that ADF will go off in strange new directions, hopefully for the best.

Figure 12 An engraving of a Druid attending an execution.

Figure 13 Another of Aubrey's illustrations.



Chapter Six: Reformed Druidism 1983-1993 The Post-Isaac Years

But while ADF and new branches of Druidism were sprouting from the Modern Druid family, Reformed Druidism continued onward in a slightly less organized format throughout the 1980s at Carleton and Berkeley. As we have seen, from the historical records collected so far, the history of Reformed Druidism could be classified as "A Tale of Two Groves". After the disastrous Death March mentioned in Chapter Four, the Berkeley Grove split into two parts (three if you count Hazlenut Grove), the Mother Grove and the new Live Oak Grove (named after a species of tree in California). Within months after the Fall Equinox election in 1981, the Druid Chronicler magazine and Mother Grove closed, and Live Oak was left and would be the most active grove in the Reform for many years, at a time when ADF was transforming Druidism on the East Coast. In many ways, Isaac had been on the vanguard of one of the waves of the Neopagan community, but as this tropical depression passed by the Berkeley Grove (and the movement in general), things returned to a calm and collected rhythm in the various groves. Things continued on older tracks and people grew wiser from the experience.

I owe a great deal of thanks to Larry and Stacey for their assistance in writing about this period. I have not as intensively explored the possible avenues of research in this decade, and it will show in the absence of footnotes and quoted material. Real life has not been too kind in giving me sufficient time to pursue those studies yet. Hopefully my overview will be sufficient to keep you aware of recent trends, and with the access to grove records and interviews, I will be able to do better justice to the Greenwood Grove of Seattle, Hazlenut Grove of the Bay Area and the Birch Grove in NH; all of which remained active in this decade of Druidism. But for this chapter, I must regretfully concentrate on only the Live Oak Grove and the Carleton Grove's fortunes.

Live Oak Grove

Live Oak Grove hived off from the Berkeley Grove following the hotly disputed grove election of Fall Equinox 1981, in which Isaac replaced Joan as ArchDruid. Most of the original Live Oak members were dissatisfied with that result; others simply liked Joan's style and wanted her to continue leading a grove. Joan was Live Oak Grove's first ArchDruid, and the original membership also included Emmon, Larry, Susan, and Leslie the Bard.

The grove held its first service in the Berkeley Hills at a place known as Hal's Spot (named after Hal Moe, a Nordicly inclined Druid); thereafter (certainly by Samhain 1981) services were held on Emmon's land in Orinda, where they continued until the dissolution of the grove (or after, depending on how you count it). Typically, services commenced about solar noon (rather than clock noon) twice monthly, on the Sundays nearest the Full and New Moons; Highday services were generally held at sundown prior to the day itself, with a social gathering that evening.

Only about a dozen people were ever members, and no more than six or eight were ever active at once -- in the end, only two. After late 1985, the core group wasn't even the official grove, but rather a rump group left over after an electoral coup. The most influential member (Emmon) was never the official leader; what he regarded as his most important achievement (the RDNA corporation) was arguably his least.

Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu

As shown in Part Four of ARDA, this was an attempt in 1981 and 1982 to kick start a new round of inter-grove communication and voting on issues in the absence of any contact from the Carleton Grove. The primary issues were dealing with voting methods of this new sub-committee and re-establishing the Higher Orders. Except for Joan's assumption of the Fourth Order Matriarchy, little else was accomplished by these four groves. Not long after Live Oak started, CoCoDAL mailings ceased in 1982.

Druid Missal-Any

In the place of the CoCoDAL and computer-typed Druid Chronicler magazine was a hand-typed newsletter published by Emmon Bodfish called "A Druid Missal-Any" which soon blossomed from a local grove publication, to become a Reform wide publication. I have no evidence of this publication being received by the Carleton Grove, although Richard Shelton had a few issues in his personal archives, as did Isaac, until 1983.

Now included in Part Eleven of ARDA 2, the 72 or so issues were published about eight times a year about two weeks before the high days of the Druid Calendar. The series ran from February 1982 to February 1991. It is hard to gauge the level of circulation, but a few dozen would be reasonable, with page length between four and forty pages.

The format was usually an introductory letter from Emmon's research into Celtic matters, tied to a season, followed by News from Groves, Live Oak calendar and services notes, and then a few articles and advertisements. Newspaper clippings, illustrations, calligraphy, clip-art, and cartoons added a lively element, missing in previous publications.

Because this publication provides the bulk of existing records on the Live Oak era, we might mistakenly believe that it is sufficient to read it and finish with this era. After all, the pen is also mightier than the staff. But, while it gives us little glimpses into some of the more tangible activities of the Live Oak Grove, there were many developments and events happening on an interpersonal level that go beyond the realm of public knowledge or the scope of this chapter, but would reward the researcher willing to dig deeper into this era.

The only debate of note was the argument between Les, Albionn and Tom Cross over the meaning of truth and manner in which Druidism should be practiced. Tom operated the Post Oak Protogrove in Texas, and was performing research on ancient Gaulish religion, while studying with ADF also. Tempers flared and the debate lasted most of 1987, resulting in Tom leaving the RDNA (along with ADF after similar disputes) to pursue the start-up of Druidactios and publishing "The Sacred Cauldron" and "The Truth about Druids".

Liturgical Developments.

At Emmon's property from March to May 1982, grove members began improving the grove site, planting a circle of eight trees (one for each holiday), setting up a maypole, and laying the foundation for a stone altar. This was a period of permanency, in contrast to the frequent changes of location in the early Berkeley years, before settling on Hal's Spot in the late 70s.

In July 1982, Joan moved away from the Bay Area, and Larry was elected Arch Druid to replace her; Emmon was elected Preceptor. With this change in leadership came a subtle change in direction: inspired partly by contact with the Celtic scholar named Jim Duran, the grove began to carefully incorporate ritual elements gleaned from archaeological and anthropological literature e.g. the offerings to the trees, the circumambulation of the grove site, and the sacrificial shaft. The intention was not to literally reconstruct the practices of historic Druids, but rather to add ritual elements that were consistent with NRDNA practice, and which also had some historical resonance.

Soon after the July 1982 election, the grove incorporated an offering to the trees into the standard service. During the Summer of 1982 the altar was finished, and it was consecrated on Samhain 1982. The grove also began the practice of sacrificing the previous Beltane's maypole ribbons in the Samhain fire. During this period, the active members were Emmon, Larry, Bob, Susan, and Leslie the Bard.

In January 1983 work began on a sacrificial shaft to make direct offerings to the Earth, next to the altar. Work continued through the Spring, and the shaft was consecrated on Beltane 1983. However, the shaft was repeatedly filled by local voles, who used it to dump their excavation tailings; in April 1985 the shaft was lined with a tile sewer pipe (laboriously hauled up the hillside over a period of several weeks), and re-consecrated.

As so many other members of the previous Berkeley Grove, Emmon also instituted a private training regimen of psychic powers during this period, involving concentration on candles, telekinesis, obfuscation, and meditation. All these were carefully studied experiments and evident failures were accepted along with reported successes. Few of these ever translated into the services, however.

Now since California doesn ’t have the seasonal variance of Minnesota the concept of a “Season of Sleep” was questioned, as was the high certainty of acceptance in Summer and refusal in winter. Instead, there was the recognition that in Northern California, that there are three possible responses to the sacrifice, not two, and that the winds do not automatically reject the sacrifice merely because of calendar date. Yes, no, and uncertain.

Continuing the trend of interaction with other Neo-pagan organizations in the Bay Area, around October 1983 Emmon began hosting meetings of a Wiccan circle, and for about the next two years, there was overlap between the two groups. It was common to combine the groups's High Day services (or rather, to do the Druid service at sundown, and the Wiccan service later that evening); similarly, normal Sunday services were sometimes combined, with the Druid service at about local Noon, and the Wiccan service in the evening. During this period the active members were Emmon, Larry, Bob, Herb, the Other Leslie (and her disruptive toddler), Susan, Stacey, and Raphael.

The Live Oak Coup

Sometime before the Fall of 1985, Emmon had incorporated the grove as a tax-exempt religious organization. This had been his long-standing intention, going back to the days of the Berkeley Grove; it was the one contribution he felt uniquely qualified to make, and the one he felt most worthy of recognition. But, Emmon did not have long to enjoy this new creation.

In late 1985, the grove splintered in a way common to small groups. The 1985 grove election was held on the Sunday after Samhain, despite the irregularity of holding elections during the Winter half of the year. (This election had first been scheduled for Samhain or the service prior, but several members claimed they hadn't been notified, thus the postponement). Larry and Emmon were voted out of office; in effect, Emmon's tax-exempt organization had been taken away from him. Whether or not that was the motive for the electoral coup, Emmon believed it was; and tried to have a re-election or have the officers step down. When this failed, shortly thereafter, he forbade the new regime from holding services on his grove site.

Three members remained with the official Live Oak Grove, which soon faded into oblivion, mostly from the Wiccan circle. The Un-official grove, however, continued with hardly a pause. Larry, Emmon, Leslie the Bard, Susan, Stacey, and Raphael held regular and Highday services as before -- in effect, hiving off a new grove, although Emmon always insisted it wasn't really a grove, just a bunch of independent Druids.

Sapping Vigor in Live Oak

Between February 1986 and Spring or Summer 1987, regular Sunday services were suspended, although Highday services continued; thereafter, both regular and Highday services continued until Spring 1993. Leslie the Bard became inactive about Spring of 1986; Susan left the grove in late 1986; Larry left in the Spring of 1987. By mid 1987 the membership was just Emmon, Stacey, and Raphael, and later just Emmon and Stacey in the last few years.

It seems that the reason for the decline of the group was due to both misalignments of personal interests among members and the complications of Emmon’s health problems. Larry Press has explained to me that those years were more or less happy and productive years, and as such do not carry the type of material that often makes news headline banners. It is common with Neopagan organizations to go out with a bang or a whimper after about five to eight years, only to reorganize after a few years of reconstitution. Indeed, although Groves come and go, individuals remain and continue their own spiritual developments “off-camera,” so to speak, in the background, exchanging cards and running into each other at festivals. Eventually these “atoms” will collide again in the right way, and a new reaction will ensue and a Grove may emerge. This is indeed what happened with the rise of the Baccharis Grove in 1999, as I’ll relate in the next chapter.

Carleton’s Period of Regency

As we related in Chapter Four, Carleton had a break in leadership after the formidable Archdruidcy of Katya Luamala, which ended in the spring of 1980. A few first orders continued, notably Heidi, to study on campus, but Druid events seized and only one newspaper article appeared on the campus during her remaining time at Carleton. It seemed that with the passing of the Shelton Era, that Druidism was more or less moribund at Carleton, although the campus was still fertile grounds for revivals.

By uncertain means, word reached the Frangquists that Druidism had faded at Carleton, and during one of their visits to campus to assist in Alumni matters, a meeting was scheduled with some students who had expressed interest. Operating in a rather isolated manner, the 1982-5 revival, under the help of the Frangquists and Sheltons, was weakened by three heavy academic loads of its Third Orders who couldn't keep up a Grove and still pass Senior Comprehensive Exercises.[258] Very little was done in these years beyond holiday services, and membership soon dropped again. In 1983, Meg Ross and a friend brought three first-year women into the First Order before they themselves graduated. One of these women was Alice Cascorbi.

The Second Revival

In 1985 there was a group of students and faculty on campus who were very interested in feminist spirituality, Neo-Paganism and Dakota religion. Most of the members lived communally at Farm House, tilling a nearby field in the Arboretum, and exploring a wide variety of social possibilities until 1990 or 1991. They formed a group called Pagan Studies, which got official CSA funding until 1991, and brought Selena Fox of Circle Sanctuary over from Madison Wisconsin as a guest speaker on Wicca in 1985 or 1986. The presentation went very well, and Selena was having dinner with some students when Koester (a Carleton student with a nature bent) mentioned that Carleton used to have its own form of Neo-Paganism called the Druids, which he had read about in "Drawing Down the Moon." When Selena asked if there were any still left, they all said no, but Alice Cascorbi stood up and said "Wait a minute, I'm a Druid." Everybody got very excited and an old copy of Druid Chronicles (Evolved) was dragged out from the attic and Pagan Studies spawned a subset known as The Carleton Druids.

They never stayed too close to the original Order of Worship and would often experiment with sweatlodges and Wiccan rites. Influence from Shelton and Bonewits lay mostly (respectively) in the Druid Literature of the Green Book of Meditation and the Druid Chronicles (Evolved). The services were often evocative and noisier affairs, followed by long chatting sessions and parties. The practice began of going to pagan festivals (like Circle's Pagan Spirit Gathering) or events in the Twin Cities. Although the Druid Archives' Blue Book eventually became available to them (to be lost again in 1988), only a handful took any interest in the older debates [probably because DC(E) was rather one-sided in its presentation], because they had more interesting things to study, although there was fleeting contact between Shelton and Koester and Schields. The focus was definitely on the present, although some sense of legacy was felt. The continuity of the Second and Third Order had been officially broken and they couldn't get it re-established officially due to some logistical problems of scheduling. However, many vigiled on their own and considered it just as good, and several years or regular services were held with great zeal, but little in the way of written records, but rich in oral tradition. This eclectic mix of Neo-Paganism, Wicca, Native American religion, and Unitarianism into Carleton Druidism lasted, with a more or less anarchic leadership, until 1991 when most of the Revivalists had graduated or had gone inactive, leaving a confused system to the few young members who were their successors.[259]

Changes at Carleton

When the Farm House charter for the off-campus house was lost, the Druids lost their central base of operations deep in the Arboretum to the Outdoor Club, and from 1991 to the present, they have perennially raised the issue of seeking a new communal house, but to no avail more or less. Orange House in 1991-1992 and Seecombe House in 1991-1992 offered some semblance of order, but most of the most active Druids have more or less resided at Goodhue Hall or Watson Hall since 1990. Farm House had been for over fifteen years the ecological, protest and folk-arts bases of the campus, tying the Druids into the vibrant Folk Dance and Folk Music clubs, a tradition that would continue into the 90s.

One other problem that beset the group was the increasing conservative changing nature of the campus, moving on the spectrum from "very liberal" to simply "liberal". As Carleton shot up the rankings into the top ten of Private Liberal Arts Colleges, a number of potential problem-causing freedoms were restricted; notably the Politically Correct movement and being one of the last "non-dry" campus in that select listing. In the previous twenty years, the Druids had experienced little to no pressure on the use of whiskey at Summer services, but as the Grove began to wrestle with the issue of asking for CSA funding for the Druids, the issue was raised of minors partaking of the Waters or recreational drug-use among some members in the late 70s and 80s.

Other factors were involved that lessened the likelihood of continuance of this era's style. Being Sky-Clad at sweatlodges ("druid lodges") or some of the Wiccan observances was also frowned upon by campus security officers and the Dean of Students (although the streaking phenomenon apparently started in America at Carleton in the 1970s, and the enormous turnout for the Winter Nude Olympics in 1991 made the issue inescapable for the administration.) Some of the more "free love" practices among some members at Farm House in the 80s were dampened by the rise of the AIDS epidemic and greater restraint on sexuality brought about by sexual awareness education and spread of diseases. An additional problem of this era was the rise of Christian Fundamentalism in America, which reached Carleton about the same time as the Druids. In a way unseen since the days of the Anti-Druid, disruptions of services, desecration of meeting sites, unwelcome evangelism, and the spreading of rumors affected the open-ness in the way the group reached out to find new members. The low level antagonism never pushed the Carleton Group into an exclusively pagan self-definition, although openly Christian members were fewer in that period; possibly because the Unitarian Club on campus was drawing off a few potential members in that spectrum.

A New Era Dawns

Andrea Davis (1988-1993) bridged this embattled period (as did I (1989-1994), and kept the grove going for a while on her own, despite academic burnout, with the help of Catalyst spirituality club (which lasted from 1991 to 1992). I began my own Reconstruction program in Winter 1992. Not having much personal interest in Wicca, I acquired a fondness for the older styles of Reformed Druidism which my research uncovered. I located Shelton and was ordained into the Third Order and began to provide a feeling of heritage in the grove, while allowing a great deal of freedom and mobility for members to do as they like. I've ordained and counseled over twelve people to the Third Order in the 1993-1995 period, including several past Carleton Druids, began the Druid Archives and reopened contact with the Council and other NRDNA groves in the USA. But this will be covered in the next chapter.

Figure 14 A 19th Century sketch of the Mistletoe harvesting.

Chapter Seven: Reformed Druidism 1983-2003 Revival & Research

Revival of Tradition

It just sounds so egotistically to say it, but I did make some important alterations in the course of Druidism at Carleton during my time at Carleton (1989-1994 and two years of visiting after that). These were only possible by the gracious support from current members and Alumni. I probably alienated more than a few members in 1992-1993 period, at a time when numbers were under thirty on the mailing list and only a handful attending services, when lucky. After 1992, there were few active Grove members older than the class of '94, so it was kind of a rebuilding phase. The Books in Part 9, and my interview in Part 10, will go into more detail, but I'll try to paint the broad picture of both Carleton and Reformed Druidism as a whole. One aspect that bothers me is that, while I have talked to all the principal actors in this period, I have not had a third party interview these people to get a more objective "outsider" view on the history. As a result, the following chapter is unfortunately heavily biased by my own memories and motives. I hope to present a more balanced picture in the next edition, as time passes and allows a truer picture of how events unfolded and the proper weight to assign to them.

Influences

I first attended a few services in the spring of 1990 and Fall 1991 before my overseas trip to Scotland. I had joined because I was fascinated by Celtic music and culture at the time, and I thought the Druids would be a good further study of that material. I was surprised that Celtic influences were rather quite modest, mostly decorative trimming, and this disquieted me then, but after I did further study in later years, I grew to appreciate its non-Celtic charm. By the Fall of 1990, Grove activity was noticeably declining, and after intensive private study of Ancient Celtic Religion and Scottish Gaidhlig, I left for Scotland from Jan to June 1991, thus leaving me little knowledge of its further decline as most members graduated that year. The trip deeply impressed on me depths, and limitations, of the surviving beauty of those Celtic cultures; and yet my Druidism would still evolve in a decidedly non-Celtic manner.

Social Mecca

When I returned to Carleton in Fall 1991, things were aided by the appearance of a social clique known as "Social Mecca", named after Kareem and Curtis' room on the Third Floor of Goodhue, which acted as one of the meeting places of the Druids for much of the 1991-1992 year. There was a poorly defined collective of about 20 new students, in which computer aficionados, sci-fi fans, Druids, Society for Creative Anachronism, theatre members and folk culture fans got together on a regular basis for meals and parties. John Burridge and Heather were also helpful organizers, as was the Catalyst discussion meetings every week at Salem's apartment to discuss pagan issues in general. It was truly a breath of fresh air, and heady times in Carleton Druidism, a streak that lasted until about Spring 1993 or so, when their increasing studies and other personal issues began to dissipate this group. Services were as eclectic as ever during this period, and as usual, many of the events in related organizations had that "druidic" feel to them also. Throughout the year, I took several religion and poetry classes, harp lessons and practiced several arts and crafts on the side with the SCA. It was probably my most creative Bardic year when I think back on it.

One of the high points of the 1991-1992 year was Margot Adler's visit to the campus to discuss her book "Drawing Down the moon", which many of the members had read. This book, and the service we had after that, was inspiring for the group and myself. After rewriting her book in 1986, she had assumed that the Carleton Grove had gone dormant, but was pleasantly surprised to see how it had been revived. That and the strange dream I had at Beltane, after the first service that I led, gave me the desire to take a more active role in Druidism at Carleton (and beyond) in the next year. During much of the 1992-1993 period, I still preferred to be the hyper-helpful preceptor, and assisted other people's services. However, as my peers and elders began to graduate one-by-one, I nervously had to assume more responsibilities as my apprenticeship came to an end.

Archives

The 1992-1993 year was spent studying many more Celtic books as I began to prepare a knowledge base for my Senior Comprehensive Thesis, for which I needed a topic in the Spring of 1993. I was certain that it would be on the ancient Druids, but another subject would interest me far more by then. Much like the previous year, me and the other Druids split their time between Folk-Singing, Folk-Dancing, SCA, and Sci-Fi club; and the whole period was richly entertaining. I took several classes in religion and history with other Druids, giving even class work a Druidic feeling, especially on all the field trips to attend services of a dozen different religions; an experience which would encourage me to further emphasize Carleton's eclectic heritage.

Spring 1993 (when I should have graduated, were it not for my travels in Scotland) was troubled by a decline in activity amongst the Social Mecca crowd. Being a historian, rather than a prophet, I turned to my friends and to History to examine how prominent past members had dealt with the issues. I was rather surprised to find that very few records were actually archived at Carleton in those times, except for the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) and a few dozen papers (still better than many other Carleton clubs). At that time, I was deeply divided by the question of whether I was Christian or Neo-Pagan, and when I discovered that the Founders had find a nice balance between the two, it arrested my attention. Having so fully immersed myself in the adventures and debacles of Druidism at Carleton, and my own Celtic studies, I could not help but wish to investigate more into the group's history. I daringly re-oriented by Senior Comps project, and against the wishes of my medieval history supervisor, began a new research project to construct a history of Carleton Druidism. This research would consume much of my senior year (1993-1994).

I sent off a questionnaire in March 1993 to about thirty past Carleton members, and received several friendly replies and began to establish contact with Frangquist, Cascorbi, Schields and Shelton who began to funnel documents to me over the next year. I would interview dozens of Druids by phone or in person over the next year, my identification with the Founders probably deepened after my run into several evangelists who crashed our services that Spring, and then there was the debacle of the Branch Dravidians being killed by the FBI and Justice department. I

began to value the right to worship as we see fit, not as other would wish us to do so. Perhaps I radicalized a little that Spring, more so than I like to recall, and I began to ask myself a lot of troubling questions.

As a result of all this gathering of information, I developed a huge collection of documents from Reformed Druids, ADF, Keltria, and a dozen other groups, which I had studied over the past three years. I also had a large collection of books on the Celts which I donated to the library, roughly doubling their collection.

During the 1993-1994 year, the Carleton Archivist, Eric Hilleman worked with me in cataloguing and organizing all the interviews, documents, clippings, books, constitutions and miscellaneous papers into a permanent collection. There are probably more than three thousand documents in the collection, giving a good base of study for anyway interested in researching American, European or Ancient Druidism. In 1995, I produced the first web-page for the RDNA and made this information available on-line. The collection is quite impressive, but despite wide advertising, it has had very few visitors over the last ten years; perhaps due to the rather inconvenient nature of traveling to southern Minnesota; yet it remains the best documented club at Carleton College.

The unwieldy and inaccessible nature of the collection, however, began to bother me, and I decided in summer 1994 to begin collecting the most important documents to produce a more portable version; which would turn out to be "A Reformed Druid Anthology". The project stall in 1996 and is about due for an over-haul in 2003, after ARDA 2 and the Reunion make new deposits of materials.

30th Anniversary

The Thirtieth Anniversary of Carleton Druidism on April 17th, 1993 was smaller than I had hoped, only six current members attended, in addition to Richard Shelton; whose later advice would sustain and carry me through many rough periods over the next year. I had not been able to reach many of the older alumni yet, nor was capable of handling a mailing of up to 150 past members. Beltane also went well, and the members of the Grove elected me Archdruid; perhaps the first official AD since 1984. When my friend Sam and I went to the Arb a few weeks later to accept our Archdruidship, we were surprised to notice that the next morning a new oak tree had been planted on the Hill of Three Oaks; which we took as an omen. It later turned out to be an illegal planting by the Rugby team to commemorate their own anniversary.

Unknown to us, at the very same time, the Hazelnut Grove was celebrating their own version of the 30th Anniversary in the Bay Area; and got a one page write-up in the Green Egg magazine; which happened to be the first issue that I bought. In this manner, did Carleton and the Berkeley tradition begin to weave connection back together with numerous cross-interviews, exchange of event flyers, and our Dead Lake Scrolls being followed by the Dead Bay Scrolls from their side. Things died down again from 1995 until 2000 when Stacey contacted me, and connections were again established.

The First Dalon Debate

Not long after that on May 21st, 1993 I vigiled and entered the Third Order, again the first "official" one since probably 1984. This meant a great deal to me at a time when legitimacy seemed so important. I would later realize that priesthood is not a one time phenomenon, but more of a daily re-invigorization and re-anointing by dedicated service over time. However, after that I would go on to the Pagan Spirit Gathering, where I would hear about the Hazlenut Grove's 30th Anniversary and re-establish contact with other Groves, and I returned with unrivaled energy for the 1993-1994 year.

As I've mentioned before, there was a very free sense of leadership in the 85-93 period; where you were a leader because you led. And, looking back, my resurrection of the three Orders at Carleton seems reactionary, and a bit like re-imposing order on a group that had escaped the grasp of authority. At the time, I was probably desirous of titles and other pompous accoutrements; something I'm still wrestling with. My consciously expressed desire then was that it would help clarify and encourage the leaders in the group were, by assigning them with a more firm sense of mission. It would also give them a deeper sense of legacy, and promote a historical curiosity. The concept was passed unanimously by the assembled members of the group at the time, and yet I still harbor mixed feelings of whether it was a proper solution for improving grove activity.

From 1993-1999, the Third Order definitely flourished, and seems to have symbolized a last step towards individual responsibility for their own spirituality, and a bold statement of concern for assisting the welfare of their fellow Druid movements. As of 2003, about 25 Carleton members have entered the Third Order, since the restoration, or about two or three people every year. It's proved to be a big social occasion for the other current Thirds to have "sympathy vigils" on the same night, and groggily celebrate over a joint breakfast. However in 1999, as we'll see, there was a slight change to the procedure.

Senior Comps and Publishing

Events came thick and fast over my senior year as Grove membership swelled, my researches deepened, and I began to publish numerous small collections of material in my spare time; such as Dead Lake Scrolls, Dead Bay Scrolls, Books of Songs and Poetry 1 and 2, Green Books 2 and 3, Book of African Jedi Knight, Book of Ancient Sources, etc. It was a terribly busy year, that did wreck some of my personal relationships, as happens to many seniors at Carleton, I suppose; but it was an exciting time for me. The urge to publish has never really left me since, and I have occasionally been rather shocked at my own zeal, which must have puzzled a few of the more laid-back members of the groves I have been in. However, I've also been reluctant to release the material, choosing to passively wait for people to find it out and get a copy.

My Comps went through a dozen re-drafts as I began to understand Carleton Druidism as less influenced by ancient Druidism, and more of a completely modern phenomenon. I was a bit weak on theory, as is shown in this General History that you are reading, but eventually the 120 pg thesis (twice as big as requested by the history department), eventually was passed, perhaps out of sheer reluctance of faculty members to review it again. With that done in the spring of 1994, I began to put greater interest in picking a successor.

We had had an excellent year, with a special visit by Frangquist at Samhain and a special "Druid Summit" in Spring 1994; when Isaac of ADF, Tony Taylor of Keltria and Richard Shelton came down for Beltane. Most of my first choices for a successor had not expressed strong interest in continuing in the 1994-1995 year, but eventually I found three first year students to take over my duties; Anne, Michelle and Becky. Once my paper was finished, I thought I was free of Carleton, but in fact, for the next two years, I would commute down from St. Cloud MN to visit my friends who had stayed in Carleton's administration after graduation; to make movies with them, and to check on the Druids occasionally.

Half-Dozen Eggs Movie Production

Although never officially linked; from the summer of 1994 to the Summer of 1996, I operated an independent movie company called "A Half-Dozen Egg Productions" with Mark Heiman, and produced three full length films; using dozens of my fellow Druid members as cast and crew members, filming almost exclusively in the arboretum and around Carleton buildings. So in a very poignant sense, they were Druidic movies to me; with their characteristic Carleton sense of humor, prodding at authority and normalcy, and glorifying the beauty and mystery of the campus. None of these movies were widely released, being mostly in-house productions, but it did bring together many members from the 1987 to 1997 period, and we got lots of fresh air and fun together.

Interestingly, my partnership with Mark "Folk" Heiman, my co-producer, led to another Druidical undertaking (A Reformed Druid Anthology) in 1996. Mark had inspired me with his songs in 1990 to undertake further study of the Celtic folk traditions that led me to the Carleton Druids and then study in Scotland. We also played harp and bagpipe together over the years while running the Folk-Singing, SCA, Sci-Fi club and Mystery Science Theatre 3000 club; all events heavily attended by Druids. Mark was never a self-identified Druid, but his monthly all-night song festivals, and weekly "Pickin N Grinnin" sessions have undoubtedly inspired generations of Druids at Carleton since 1988.

The first movie we made together in 1994 was "A Prisoner," based on "The Prisoner" series, and was a pretty poorly produced spy parody. The second movie in 1995 was "Gator: the Fighting Rabbit," based on "Ator: The Fighting Eagle," an amusing spoof of the barbarian action adventure genre, filmed mostly in the forests of the arboretum, dealing with themes of destiny and survival in trying times. This was almost good enough to be commercially released, but it also remained an "in-house" production. The third movie in 1996, "Drake's 7," based on the British Sci-Fi series "Blake's 7," continues the first movie in about 13 episodes written by various Druids and Druid-friendly writers, spoofing the Sci-Fi genre. Due to budget and equipment failure, this was only completed in 2003.

There are current plans to make a fourth movie in 2004, based on Irony Sade's romantic mystery "The Soul of Juliana Spring," which he wrote on the volcanic island of Tonga in 2000. This story is about a Reformed Druid who is inadvertently given custody of a young harpist's soul in exchange for aiding her musical career. He eventually also becomes a spiritual mentor and friend to her in trying circumstances. Undoubtedly, this movie will also feature several grove members and illustrate the RDNA pattern of the seasons.

A Reformed Druid Anthology (ARDA)

After moving to St. Cloud, MN (a city of 50,000 about 2 hours from Carleton), I began the St. Cloud Big River Grove which met infrequently for two years, while I was studying at St. Cloud State University. I tired of accountancy classes and turned again to international studies. A friend of mine said that German, French and Gaelic were easy languages compared to Japanese, and we took the Japanese 101 class together; and he was correct, but I was hooked and began to make plans to work in Japan as an English Teacher.

During those two years, besides making movies and visiting the Carleton Grove (which went about as usual, under the Triple Archdruidcy from 1995-1996), I was also beginning to make plans to republish the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) for a 20th Anniversary reprint edition in 1996 (first published in 1976). When I wrote my Comps, I had included several primary documents from Earlier Druid years, producing a very disorganized photo-copied mess that resembled a proto-type of ARDA way back in 1994. I decided that, as I was retyping all the documents on my MacIntosh, that I might as well edit DC(E) a little, and add a few counter-balancing documents, my new publications, etc. It soon mushroomed out of control.

Most Neo-pagan or modern religious groups have perhaps a book or two authored by their founders, but rarely a historical collection of primary documents on this scale. I was immodestly hoping that someone else would someday decide to research the Reformed Druids, and wished them to have a "portable version of the Druid Archives". The result of two lonely years of long nights on the computer, was "A Reformed Druid Anthology", a 500 page collection; one that was unlike anything I had seen in my research in the Neopagan world.

In a way, as I began to make plans for a self-imposed "exile" to Japan to escape Carleton's intoxicating pull, ARDA began to take the form of my parting gift to the Carleton Druids. I didn't expect to be back for five or ten years, and at the cusp of the internet revolution, did not yet expect to be able to remain in contact with them. I poured much of my soul into composing it, and perhaps as a result, it has done moderately well on the internet since then; having been downloaded several thousand times, far outstripping the 40 volumes that we physically printed at Kinkos at $40 a volume.

Part of me felt it was presumptuous to publish the ARDA, because as a literary collection, it would leave readers with the impression that Druidism was about writing things down, when it was really about dancing under trees. Certainly Isaac was criticized by past Carleton members for publishing DC(E), but none have so responded to me yet, which makes me wonder when the other shoe is going to drop, and I get my just deserts. It has turned out to be an anchor of tradition for the most recent Carleton Druids, who also rarely want to root in the Druid Archives in the basement of their campus Library. I suppose, Carleton Druids just can't stand being indoors with dusty old documents, but I've seen them dragging that red hardbound book all over the arboretum to services.

Legitimacy

It's probably that the Carleton Grove's constitutions were accepted over the years, but its difficult to check that. During the revival in the 80s there was a great deal of hesitancy of making the Carleton Druids "official" again, or requesting funding or to apply for an interest house. Instead other "front" groups were constructed, like the "Pagan Studies Group" in 1988, "Catalyst" in 1992, "Friends of the Earth Mother at Carleton College (FOEMACC)" in 1993.

The underlying reason was that college funded groups had to have listed officers and a copy of the membership rolls. Since most members were pagans or witches, many were hesitant about building up a "paper trail" with the "authorities". And this continued until 1995, when the Buxom Threesome sent in a new constitution and received funding for the Carleton Druids. There was apparently no outcry and the group has been "legit" since then.

There was one moment in 1997 when a retiring AD was thinking about "closing" the group while Irony was on a sabbatical in Europe, but the grove managed to survive until his return, although activity was near non-existent for the remainder of that year.

Since the 1980s, the Carleton Druids have participated in the Council for Religious Understanding (CRU), much to the displeasure of the rising number of evangelical groups on the

campus. It has been listed in materials handed out by the Chaplain's office and the school's web-page. Even during it's unofficial period, the group never had trouble reserving rooms or sites or get articles in the newspapers. We're just too infamous to be unknown.

While not trying to toot the horn, I have been trying to merely appraise other groups of the RDNA existence and role in the development of American Druidism, and keep up contact with the leaders of the bigger groves in the other branches of the groups, like ADF, that descended from Reformed Druidism; through my collection efforts in the archives. In no way, do I consider the RDNA any more or less legitimate than their attempts to construct a Druidical framework to operate in.

Exile to Japan

Not long after the release of our second film, Gator in the summer of 1996, and the first edition of ARDA, I went to Japan to the sister school of St. Cloud State University, which was known as Minnesota State University of Akita (MSUA). Naturally, I immersed myself in the Shinto culture of the farmers in this traditional secluded village in Northern Japan. The Akita Grove soon developed with a mixture of Japanese and America students, basically alternating services between English and Japanese. After I joined the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program, the Shikoku Grove in Southern Japan was founded, and both groves were run by native Japanese since 1998.

As with my trip to Scotland, it was a very intense time of observing a new culture; in this case a modern pagan culture fully welded with technology. I wonder if Japanese society is a possible template for what the American Neo-Pagans are trying to create? During this time, I corresponded with Irony, who was also in exile in Tonga; where he had similar experiences, although they were nominally Christian. I feel that a year off mid-way through Carleton, is quite helpful to giving a Druid a wider experience to draw upon.

Any past reticence about mixing Neo-paganism and Reformed Druidism was melted by my experiences there; as long as the RDNA did not exclusively define itself as Neo-Pagans. I stayed four years in total from Summer 1996 to Summer 2000 and then returned to D.C.; with annual visits to Carleton to visit friends and Druids.

Arboretum Changes

Over the years the Arboretum of Carleton has greatly changed. Until the 1980s, half of the Arb's 800 acres was rented out to farmers of corn, soy-beans, and hay. The original Druids preferred Monument Hill and the Hill of Three Oaks for services in the Upper Arb, not far from an operating Dairy farm that provided milk for the campus until 1965. The Arb is flanked by a 200 acre golf course, a 50 acre cemetery, the town of Northfield, a river, and miles of farmland. It is on a major north-south migration route for birds and deer, with a rich diversity of wetlands, upland forest, riverine forest, natural prairie, lakes, tall grass fields, and successional forest. It became a state game refuge in the 50s, and became more wild and filled from the 60s until the 1980s. At that point, non-native species began to be removed, oak prairie re-established, farmland allowed to turn to successional forest, and trails widened for cross-country skiing.

This transformation forced the Carleton Druids out of the Lower Arb, which had been their haunt in the 1980s. Because of the penchant for sweatlodges, more Druid services have moved to the banks of the river, which has caused conflict with security, over concerns of damaging turtle eggs or wildflowers species in this eco-system. When Farm House stopped being a center for students interested in farming, the Druids lost a base of operation half-way from the campus to the deeper Arb. The flood in 1993 destroyed the bridges that crossed to the west-side of the Cannon River, making that area also inaccessible. Also many of the meeting sites in the Lower Arb were turned to endangered prairie. Later on, vandalism of stone circles on the hill, led to their relocation. Gradually they were also pushed further and further east by further promotion of the Hill of Three Oaks as a Ultimate Frisbee and Rugby ground and the creation of the Recreation Center in 1999 Since 1996, most Druid activity has returned to the Upper Arb.

The Second Dalon Debate

When I visited Carleton in 1999, Irony wanted to introduce me to his latest attempt to prepare a successor, but mentioned that she had some ambivalence towards toward the Third Order. I made the unusual step of showing the service to her before the vigil and she stated that she was comfortable following a deity that she didn't know very well, and wouldn't enter the Third Order under these conditions. This naturally was a bit stunning, but in the argument that followed, I understood their reasoning that the 1st and 2nd Orders didn't have patrons, although the higher orders did, so why did we need a patron for the 3rd Order? It would be more inclusive to keep it nameless, and simply another organizational title based on service to the Grove than to a Deity, of whom we know nothing.

This reminded me of the 1986-1993 period, in some ways. In one sense, the liturgy was only the surface of a large tradition, and the meat and bones probably remained the same, in my reckoning; so I supported it. After coming to a general understanding, with some short-lived bitterness, they decided to devise a new service that would be more dependent on the invocation of the winds. There was also a questioning period by grove members. Part of me was saddened to see one aspect of a tradition fall away (although the old service was still presented as an option to members) but happy to see a new one being established also.

Unfortunately, I know rather little of the 1999-2003 period, so far, except from brief visits and some e-mail exchange with Ehren and Merri. There have been no comprehensive interviews or memoirs yet. As a result, I can only say it sounds like she built on the rather solid foundation of Irony, and had astonishing grove growth for nearly four years. It's probably to soon to speak about any new developments in this period, and the 3rd Edition of ARDA will speak of those developments more deeply.

But the Wiccan influences seem to have lessened, both due to Andrea's departure from Minnesota, and a rather perplexing lack of background knowledge with incoming members. The group continued to be budgeted by the Carleton Senate, active in the interfaith council, hold weekly tea meetings, sweatlodges, highdays and occasional lunar observances. The standard hodgepodge of investiagation into meditation, martial arts, folk activities and theatre continues apace. Sounds like standard happy Druidism to me.

On-line Druids

My own return from exile in August 2000 resulted in a succession of differently named groves within Washington DC; first the Monument Grove at George Washington University, then the D.C. Grove and finally we went totally on-line and I called in the Digitalis Grove. And, in fact, most of my obvious Druidical activity is now spent sending letters and introductory materials to members by e-mail.

The internet revolution has made immense changes in modern Druidism, mostly in terms of speed and cost. I roughly estimate that it is 10 times easier in the 1990s to remain an active part of the overall Druid community that in the 1970s. In Isaac's days, Druids mostly find out by word of mouth, browsing magazines and just running into groups. This still happens, but there is a parallel process in the Cyber World, and its more of an immediate gratification experience, where you can get information and replies to inquiries without have to drive across town or licking a stamp and waiting two weeks. And, as you know, you can meet people anonymously on-line despite being isolated in the Bible Belt or a small mountain in Northern Canada.

Many of the Founders had been specially gifted at early computer programming, even occasionally using some mainframes as altars, actually. Computer match-making also was invented at Carleton in the 1960s, bringing together young couples via zeroes and ones (which can be reassembled to make a druid sigil, by the way). This phenomenon of cyber-druids continued over the years, but communication via computer really began in the mid-80s. Isaac was a convert in the late 70s himself, in desperation to earn a decent living he sold all his occult books and bought programming manuals. At Carleton, all students had e-mail accounts by 1988 (being one of the most linked-up campuses in the country) and there were intra-net system bulletin boards for the Druids and the Vax Notes conference began in 1988 lasting to 1996 with several hundred posts, and distribution of event flyers by e-mail. After 1996 a new web-based program was established and e-mail, even within Carleton's small campus, is still much more convenient than stuffing mailboxes at the post office.

Carleton's first Druid web-page was designed by me in 1995, while still a student at St. Cloud State University. AOL, Prodigy and a few other companies were still the main way to access the internet, and slow download times made distribution of large documents arduous, but groups like ADF, Keltria and a few others had rudimentary pages up by 1996. I would hazard that my publication of ARDA in 1996 was probably the largest Druid collection on-line at the time, but many of the other groups have been slowly building up a collection of on-line resources over the years. This concentration of actors in the Neo-pagan community on a few systems, in the early stages of the internet revolution, Now, although random discovery still happens, there is a sense of "brand name" recognition of which groups are out there, and the search engines correspondingly shuffle people to the most popular sites now.

Recent Events

In Spring 2000, as I was preparing the initial homepage for the RDNA, I got my first letter from Stacey, who had been so involved in the Live Oak Grove. After Emmon's death, she and the other people from the Live Oak formed the Baccharis Grove; partly to work through their feelings about Emmon, and to get Stacey prepared for the Third Order. Not longer after that, and the decline of activity in Baccharis Grove, she established her own grove, called Poison Oak.

By Samhain 2000, Stacey had decided to revive the Druid Missal-Any newsletter, that she had assisted from 1988. I offered to build a web-page and distribute it to people on my mailing list, and those who had joined her NRDNA conference on yahoogroups.com which reached about 30 people in readership. When that conference began to fail, I started RDNAtalk, which was a bit more open to members. Druid Missal-Any gradually added photos, articles and essays on various topics; growing from 4 pages to an average of 28 pages, with a readership now of about 200 people, free on-line. It's pretty thriving now.

As we grew a number of protogroves across the country, we ran into the same problems that had plagued Isaac; how to physically meet and teach the non-written aspect of Reformed Druidism. How to encourage growth, without become obsessed with growth. This has not been solved yet, but it is one of the issues that I'll talk with other Druids at the Druid Reunions to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Reformed Druidism this year.

ARDA, 2nd Edition

Which brings me to this current collection. I had seriously attempted to publish a revision of ARDA 1 by Jan 1, 2000. I had wished to call it the Y2K edition. I gathered most of the necessary materials, but the time to complete them with Mark never became available, and the project was delayed for two more years. From Beltane 2002 to Beltane 2003, I began to undercover more materials, especially from the NRDNA tradition via Stacey's old and new issues of A Druid Missal-Any. There were also numerous materials produced by the on-line Druid conferences.

Predictions

Now it's time to hazard guess of where the current trends are leading the Reformed Druids. I predict that on-line Druidry will continue to grow and produce numerous works. Trans-generational alumni-student bonds will continue to deepen with 2nd generational Druids at Carleton, more reunions, and greater prevalence of computer skills among alumni. Proto-groves will continue to rapidly appear and disappear, until such time as some type of program is developed to better incorporate them into the community. Reformed Druidism will probably become more recognized in the works of other Neo-Pagan researchers, and a greater sense of the family tree of American Druidism will develop; similar to the current fluorescence and coalescence of the British and French movements. I expect the Indo-European thesis will become a widespread tool for reconstruction of older traditions in Druid groups other than ADF. And I will bet that Carleton students will continue to explore whatever ideas and thoughts interest them from their classwork, despite all the trends of other outside groups. I anticipate bright days ahead, for a few years, at least.

Figure 15 Another Druid evidencing wisdom and a poor choice in fashion accoutrements.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

I hope that my rather long Epistle has helped to disperse some of the possible myths and misconceptions fostered by common assumptions of the term "Druids" and those printed by previous researchers (see Green Book 10). Primary among those myths that I hope to have dispelled are the assumptions of inapplicability of Reformed Druidism to monotheistic faiths or with Neo-Paganism. Similarly I hope the reader no longer associates the RDNA solely with Celtic forms or previous forms of Druidism, nor believes the often printed inevitability of becoming "organized," the overwhelming leadership status of Isaac Bonewits, the idea that humor is incompatible with religion and realizes the problems inherent with researching Reformed Druidism from a sole reliance on Isaac Bonewits or published sources *(including this one!)*.

In case you've forgotten, this is a very unofficial history and it presents the RDNA in a far-too organized light. Many (if not most) other Reformed Druids will probably disagree with me on many of my interpretations. Let my ideas be considered as my own personal opinion and do not interpret them as a decisive statement in your further studies of Reformed Druidism. I recommend a closer inspection of the original documents and interviews before tentatively accepting my personal interpretations.

I welcome responses and corrections, but remember in the end that this is my own view of Reformed Druidism and it is but one way, yea, one way among many to understand its chaotic history. Further studies by NRDNA members will probably paint a very different understanding, especially by a researcher more familiar with the background of Neo-Paganism than I am. I hope this paper will act as a guide and reminded us of the many issues discussed and the many independent solutions we applied to the problem of how to be Druids.

Go with my blessing and I thank you for spending the time to read and think about my words.

Master Druid: Tell me, student, what do you believe?

Baka: I believe what I believe, Master.

Master Druid: You have learned well.

Figure 16 A well-known 19th Century shot.

End Notes

Most of these End-notes were produced for the Senior Comps version in 1994 and have not been updated since then.

[1] i.e. New RDNA, Schismatic DNA, Hassidic DNA, etc.DNA
[2] Reformed Druidism, or "The Reform," is my general collective term for RDNA, NRDNA, SDNA, HDNA and all other branches; but it does not include ADF or Keltria
[3] See Part Six: Green Book 10 for other well-known studies.
[4] While we know many student constitutions were handed in up to 1966, they weren't accepted. See Part Four of ARDA
[5] The 125 year timeline handout in 1991 has the Druids as one of 60+ special attractions.
[6] Aver. enrollment at Carleton is around 1500 over the last 30 yrs. See "Celebrating 125 years" timeline
[7] Non-Intramural Correspondence 2/14/87 Greene to Cascorbi
[8] Primarily the Druid Sigil, "Druid," pedigree to Carleton and a relationship with Isaac Bonewits
[9] Part Four of ARDA
[10] Magic, Witchcraft, and Paganism in America pg. 19
[11] I recently heard an estimate that there are only 40,000 Quakers and about 180,000 Unitarian Universalist in the US, yet these groups are considered noteworthy.
[12] The last 7 years have seen a lot on encyclopedias and books on Neo-Paganism, feminist spirituality and Wicca. See Part Six: Green Book 10.
[13] Part Six: Green Book 10 has a few areas that I'd like to see explored further.
[14] Bibliography in Part Six: Green Book 10.
[15] I refer you to Appendix 1 in *Drawing Down the Moon*.
[16] Such as Quakers, Universal Life Church & Unitarians
[17] A medieval enthusiast organization founded in 1969 at Berkeley, now with over 50,000 **paid** members world-wide. Nearly every post 1969 grove in the Reform has interacted with an SCA group.
[18]See Archives
[19] While David Fisher may be considered the biological father of the RDNA, it was Frangquist who nursed and raised Reformed Druidism from infancy to adulthood.
[20] Part Three of ARDA :A A collection of scripts from early rituals.
[21] Part Two of ARDA has a few from this collection of letters by Carleton Druids explaining Carleton Druidism. The Rest in the Archives.
[22] See February 1993 Questionairre
[23] See Oral Interviews in Archives
[24] See Correspondence in Archives
[25]An "active" Druid is defined by some as a member of a functioning grove. Others define "active" as responding to a letter you send them about Druids. Once a Druid, always a Druid, as some say in the RDNA. At present we do not have Isaac's personal collection which may necessitate a re-write
[26] See the last section of the bibliography in Part Six: Green Book 10
[27] ibid.
[28] See Bibliography in Part Six: Green Book 10
[29] i.e. Fisherisms.
[30] See Roll of Archdruids and Groves in Part Four of ARDA.
[31] I.e. the college playing Mommy and Daddy for us.
[32] Oral interviews, and books on protest (see bibliography) make this very clear. See the Frangquists and Shelton interviews for a closer views on each of these subjects.
[33] Observe in "Celebrating 125 Years" time line publication for effect of these causes on growth at Carleton or read the books on campus protests, especially "Berkeley at War."
[34] See Maitland & Smith interviews and "Berkeley at War" for a closer view.
[35] Sources are John Nason's Oral Interview & 30 pg. transcript, and comments by Maitland, Smith and other Druids in their interviews.
[36] Again, oral interviews with Maitland, Nason and Smith; in addition to Druid interviews.
[37] Source interviews with Maitland, Nason, Smith, David & Deborah Frangquist and Norman Nelson.
[38] March 1964 Carleton College Catalogue pg. 136; thanks NN!
[39] Internal Correspondence 10/23/69 in Part Two of ARDA in the Codex Affair section.
[40] Oral History interview with Felicia Oldfeather

[41] Feb. 1993 Questionnaire. Howard Cherniack
[42] It should be noted that the main books used by Druid groups today had not been published yet, that includes the authors Piggot, Ross and Chadwick. They did have Kendrick, which was good. More later.
[43] Archival Interview with David & Dee Frangquist 10/31/93
[44] At that time, women were not considered "deviant" enough to try and buck the system, so the chapel attendance slips were okayed by townswomen who had no idea what RDNA was, and didn't care. The men's slips passed under closer scrutiny and were rejected.
[45] Feb. 1993 Questionnaire with Nelson, Also interviews with the Frangquists and Nelson. I might point out that most researchers believed otherwise. Many Druids continued to go to the Sunday Choir even after the requirement was dropped.
[46] Feb. 1993 Questionnaire letter from Norman Nelson pg. 3.
[47] Ibid. Pres. Nason became a 1st order RDNA member 2 weeks before the requirement was rescinded. Internal Correspondence 6/18/64
[48] See Maitland interview
[49] I consider them : Fisher, Cherniack, Nelson & the Frangquists (not just the first three)
[50] Frangquist interview in Part Ten of ARDA
[51] Questionnaire and oral interviews recorded & unrecorded.
[52] As originally happened to me in my first 8 months of research. (growl!)
[53] Actually only the office of "Archdruid" has any historical basis.
[54] Although Kendrick and MacCulloch should have been sufficient
[55] The story of the continual building of altars and their subsequent vandalisation takes up a great deal of space in the Druid Chronicles (Reformed)
[56] i.e. Rome, Greece, Egypt, Israel, Celtic civilization, Sumerian, American Indian, etc.
[57] I.e. the goats slaughtered during the Islamic Hadj to Mecca, kosher, some Hindu religions, Santeria.
[58] Except in the case of war, where they will sacrifice thousands of lives for a religious ideal or goal.
[59] Druid Chronicles (Reformed) Early Chronicles 5:10
[60] Druid Chronicle (Reformed) Early Chronicles 5:9
[61] Druid Chronicles (Reformed) Early Chronicles Chap. 5.
[62] Druid Chronicles (Reformed) Book of Meditations 7:10-11
[63] See News Clipping in Archives for samples: Carletonian 11/13/63, Purdue Exponent (on Purdue Grove) 1/5/70 & Drawing Down the Moon article on Druids.
[64] Reps, Paul. Zen Flesh, Zen Bones. pg. 175
[65] See Druid Chronicles (Evolved), Green Books in Part 6 of ARDA & Apocrypha in Part Two of ARDA respectively.
[66] These included Fisher '65, Nelson '65, David & Deborah Frangquist '66/'67, Gary Zempel '66, Dick Smiley, Thomas McCausland, Shelton '71, McDavid '72. Essentially all the key Druids in the RDNA's inter-grove history.
[67] The reader should know by this point, that it was the Frangquists who were integral people in setting of the foundations for the growth and future appeal of Reformed Druidism.
[68] Internal Correspondence 1964 Fisher to Frangquist.
[69] I.e. Druids
[70] I.e. a Third Order "priest" who stays out all night awaiting the dawn initiation.
[71] Druid Chronicles. Meditations Chapter 10 in Part One of ARDA
[72] Experimentation in American Religion. pg. 15-18. And Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults pg. 8.
[73] Non-Intramural Corr. Fisher to Melton 7/13/73 in Part Two of ARDA.
[74] Part Six of ARDA, Green Book 2
[75] Feb. 1993 Questionnaire Glen McDavid pg. 5
[76] Internal Correspondence 1/28/86 Shelton to Koester
[77] Especially early Christianity, which I'll discuss later in the Liturgy analysis.
[78] Quite notably the use of the Waters-of-life in the liturgy, as I will speculate later.
[79] In many ways, Frangquist may have designed the perfect Zen monastery, a Zen monastery that doesn't know it is a Zen monastery
[80] Feb. 1993 Questionnaire. Glen McDavid pg. 5
[81] You may be also wondering why it's taking me so long to get to this part. Well, Gibson took over 1400 pages to describe the Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire, but I'll take less than a hundred.
[82] Some feared to even require these.
[83] Druid Chronicle Book of Law, 5 & 6 in Part One of ARDA.
[84] Feb. 1993 Questionnaire letter from Norman Nelson pg. 2.
[85] Non-Intramural Correspondence Fisher to Melton in Part Two of ARDA.
[86] Larry Press interview. Be'al and a couple are given just a smidgen of story, but hardly much.
[87] Neo-Pagans prefer immanent Divinity. Many hard-core monotheists while claiming both, prefer transcendence.
[88] Non-Intramural Correspondence 4/64 KARL. The Book was "Histomap of Religion" published by Rand McNally in 1943.
[89] The Strange Proverbs of Michael Scharding.
[90] See Part Four of ARDA.
[91] I've looked very hard and reviewed all the interviews. I'm not sure the SDNA differed too much in practice, either.
[92] Druid Chronicles. Meditations 6:7-8 in Part One of ARDA.
[93] Non-Intramural Correspondence Frangquist to Carletonian 11/12/65 This was before sexist terminology was realized. Note "rational" was a loophole for non-religious Druids.
[94] Druid Chronicles. Meditations 6:9-11 in Part One of ARDA.
[95] Sort of like the academic "honor system" applied to religious beliefs.
[96] Frangquists interview in Part Ten of ARDA
[97] Carleton Apocrypha. A Book of Faith paragraph 5
[98] Feb. 1993 Questionnaire Ellen Shelton
[99] Feb. 1993 Questionnaire Faris Keeling
[44] Student Organizational Report RDNA 4/23/65 Frangquist
[100] Translation of Uisge-Beatha (Whiskey). "Waters-of-life" appear as a joining medium in "Stranger in a Strange Land," a science fiction book then available. They also show up in "Dune," but that wasn't published until 1965.
[101] Note that "Preceptor" and "Server" are titles swiped from Episcopalian ritual.
[102] Unrecorded interview with James Hall '64 during Mar 1993.
[103] Again, Nelson Questionnaire response pg. 6. See Druid Chronicles (reformed) Early Chronicles 1:6. I go into Fisher's origins in greater detail in Chapter Four.
[104] Constitutions of the RDNA. Part Four of ARDA.
[105] It might be noted that there are three primary orders in freemasonry and that one "rite" has exactly 10 orders, they being primarily honorary after the third order. Part Four of ARDA for rules and Part Three.
[106] Again, Nelson Questionnaire response pg. 2
[107] Which is one of the primary reason Mr. Fisher has often refused any more interviews.
[108] Student Organizational Report RDNA 4/24/66 by Zempel
[109] In fact, he's the one that collected and preserved the "Celtic" scraps in Druid Chronicles (Reformed)
[110] Non-Intramural Correspondence Fisher to Melton 7/13/73 (In Part Two of ARDA)
[111] Druid Chronicles (Reformed) Customs 4:12 in Part One of ARDA.
[112] As a contribution to the "Masonic Theory," Isaac claims in DC(E)'s section on Celtic Deities (Welsh cycle) that another Druid group used Dalon ap Landu also.
[113] I refer you to several books on Masonic initiations. See Bibliography, esp. Carnes in Part Six: Green Book 10
[114] Caused by bad omens, candidate falling asleep, or deep doubts by the initiating Druid.
[115] See Part Four of ARDA
[116] See Part Four of ARDA for dates of grove foundings.
[117] Women had trouble with all-night vigiling at Carleton until 1970 due to a 10pm curfew on females, thus it was harder for women to become Third-Order priests. Therefore, there was some debate as to how valid their priesthoods were in comparison to men's. This proposal, incidentally was started by Frangquist. This problem is ably discussed in the Frangquist Interview.
[118] Records of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu 1/27/65 , Part Four of ARDA.
[119] This passing of continuity through "Apostolic Succession" may have been a subtle joke on Christianity since it eventually leads back to David Fisher, whom nobody believes to have actually been validly initiated. Zen-point: Apostolic Succession was without foundation, but still considered important. Currently the RDNA of Carleton sees no reason why any Third Order Druid can't ordain another, but the earlier reason was to restrict expansion to responsible people (like, um, ArchDruids?).
[120] It isn't written anywhere that a consensus is necessary but the only accepted decisions have been by consensus. It is an unwritten tradition.
[121] Internal Correspondence Smiley to Frangquist (Part Two of ARDA.) Savitzky's taped interview.
[122] See Chapter Four for further discussion on the Waters-of-Life.

[123] See the Epistle of David the Chronicler, Chapter 1 in either form of the Apocrypha in Part Two of ARDA.
[124] Records of the Council of Dalon ap Landu 5/7/1964
[125] Interviews Shelton, Press, Abbot, Bonewits, Salee, Carruth, Savitzky, Bradley, Sherbak. Some in Part Ten of ARDA.
[126] Druid Chronicles (Reformed) Early Chronicles 2:7-10. Part One of ARDA.
[127] Records of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu 1/27/65. See Nelson interview for the "Missionary Dilemma" about how to consecrate waters without a current preceptor.
[128] See constitutions in Part Four of ARDA.
[129] Records of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu 1/27/65 Part Four of ARDA
[130] Carleton Apocrypha. Book of Faith paragraph 5 Part Two of ARDA.
[131] I refer you to Internal Correspondence 9/68 to 9/69 in Part Two of ARDA
[132] The "Maybe" response is common. See Part One of ARDA Endnotes 2:6.
[133] I.e. Ordained at Carleton Grove (CL) by Fisher in 1965.
[134] Frangquists Interview in Part Ten of ARDA
[135] Internal Correspondence 2/5/69 Smiley to Draft in Part Two of ARDA.
[136] Internal Correspondence 3/24/69 Smiley to Draft. This statement was true, for at Carleton, Smiley felt it was his only religion and the title "priest" is a common title of a minister. Part Two of ARDA
[137] (CL68:Peck) ArchDruid of Carleton Fall 68-Spring 69 and ArchDruid of Stanford from 1970-78.
[138] (CL69:Savitzky) AD of Carleton Spring 69-71. AD of Ann Arbor 1974-78.
[139] How similar to being forced to go to Chapel requirement, whether you were religious or not.
[140] See Shelton interview in Part Ten of ARDA
[141] It wouldn't take 1/2 hour to make the RDNA a ULC church without any loss of individuality. But most Carleton students would be too lazy to send in quarterly reports.
[142] Universal Life Church. Life Is pg. 11.
[143] Isaac did not, in fact, come to hear about this case until 1993.
[144] Internal Correspondence Shelton to Scharding 4/24/94
[145] Internal Correspondence Shelton to Scharding 4/24/94, see also Shelton to Council 16 October 1969
[146] Internal Correspondence Shelton to Scharding, sometime between 1994 & 1995.
[147] Interviews with Stefan and Carruth. Most Druids are delighted to hear Carleton is STILL going.
[148] Internal Correspondence Shelton to Scharding April 24th, 1994.
[149] For more on this see Frangquists & Carruth interviews. Drawing Down the Moon, too.
[150] A fun tidbit is that the large British Druid group, OBOD, also began in 1963. Coincidence?...You, the reader, decide.
[151] Perhaps the Neo-Pagan revival was the opposite effect of men and women becoming disgusted at the prominence of males in controlling the understanding of religion. Further study on such a topic would be very interesting to follow.
[152] For which the Compass and Straight edge are it's symbols.
[153] Intriguingly, Pythagorans also had a seeming prohibition on writing down their beliefs. See Part Six: Green Book 10
[154] Frangquist interviews and Nelson interview. See Bibliography for books available on Druidism at Carleton during the early 60s.
[155] Frangquist Interview 10/31/93 in Part Ten of ARDA and Nelson & Cherniack. See Part Three of ARDA.
[156] Norman Nelson & Fisher were both Episcopalian and Druid Founders. Adler "Drawing Down the Moon" pg. 322 thought the same of a descendent service at Stanford. This is seen especially in the naming of the lower two officers as "preceptor" & "server." The term "Arch-Druid" was, of course, a common term in academia from the times of Caesar. See News Clipping from the Carleton Voice in 1988 by James Hall.
[157] Feb. 1993 Questionnaire letter from Norman Nelson pg. 6. Frangquist interview.
[158] Archival Interview with David & Dee Frangquist 10/31/93 in Part Ten of ARDA. Internal Correspondence 1964 Fisher to Frangquist & 11/28/69 Fisher resigns Patriarch of Grannos (See Part Two of ARDA)
[159] Interview with Larson in Part Ten of ARDA. But, Nelson is unsure if it's true.
[160] Larson notes possible Christian carryovers of St.Paddy's Day, Easter and Lady's Day.
[161] In order to explain this attitude, I highly recommend that the reader should watch Monty Python's "The Life of Brian"
[162] For Isaac's analysis of the Order of Worship see the Part Two of ARDA , 2nd Epistle of Isaac and the Real Magic review in Part Six: Green Book 10
[163] The precise combination is a matter of controversy. The most prevalent ratio of Whisky to water is 1:3 except on festivals (during the summer half of the year) when it inverts to 3:1.
[164] Latin's similar translation for whiskey is "Aqua Vitae," the waters of life.
[165] However a chronological problem is that distilled beverages were not invented until the 6th century at least, long after evidence for ancient Druids ceases. Larson however suggests that heat distillation may have existed earlier, or perhaps even through freeze-distillation.
[166] We go into far greater detail about the Druid Calendar in Part Four of ARDA and Part Six: Green Book 7 of ARDA
[167] I.e. Christmas, Sabbaths, Sundays, Fridays (Islam), the birthday of Krishna, etc.
[168] Again, see the Bibliography in Part Six: Green Book 10
[169] . From the Founders (Fisher, Nelson, Cherniack and Frangquist), three would eventually return to Episcopalianism
[170] I didn't even know of Berkeley's non-collegiate base until a month ago, that's how dangerous any reliance on spotty written records can be without lots of interviews.
[171] I.e. animal sacrifice, orgies, kidnapping, brain-washing and other such clap-trap theories by anti-cult "experts." I refer you to Drawing Down the Moon and "In Gods We Trust" in the bibliography.
[172] "Berkeley at War" chapter 2. A delightful chapter.
[173] I need only refer you to the "Berkeley in the Sixties" video in my bibliography.
[174] I refer statistic-freaks to "Experimentation in American Religion" in the bibliography.
[175] See Shelton, Frangquist,(both in Part Ten of ARDA) and Abbot & and Savitzky interviews.
[176] See Drawing Down the Moon Chapters 3,4,5 & 7 and Bonewits, Hixon, Press, Tezera, Carruth, Abbot, Sherbak, & especially Bradley interviews.
[177] Chapter 3 of Drawing Down the Moon and Interviews with Joan Carruth, Bonewits & Bradley.
[178] Interview with Isaac Bonewits 2/23/94 and see most encyclopaedias' almost exclusive focus on the RDNA's fulfillment of this role. See Appendix D..
[179] Observation, conversations and interviews with Taylor, Bonewits & Sherbak.
[180] Since that time, the Celtic field has been swamped with other organizations. See list of groups in Appendices of Drawing Down the Moon and Circle Networking Directory.
[181] See Part Four of ARDA
[182] Interviews with Shelton, Bonewits, Carruth (both in Part Ten of ARDA) and those of Tezera, Sherbak, Hixon, Press, Salee, Savitzky, Bradley and McDavid (unrecorded). See Drawing Down the Moon Chapter 14 and Part Six: Green Book 10 for more discussion on the Neo-Pagan's background.
[183] A medieval society found in Berkeley in 1968 with over 50,000 paid members world-wide. See interviews with Shelton, Bonewits, Press, Carruth, Salee, Bradley, Larson, Savitzky, Scharding and the Frangquists. Internal Correspondence 4/1/72 McDavid.
[184] Pick any interview
[185] See Interviews with Savitzky, Cascorbi, Adams, Shelton, Bonewits, Bradley, Abbot and Larson. see the Archive's Computer Notes on the "famous" Reformed Druid IBM program.
[186] See interviews of Shelton, Frangquist, Adams, Cascorbi, Bradley. Seidel was a super folkdancer.
[187] Interviews with Larson, Abbot, Carruth, Bonewits.
[188] Without being elitist, many Carleton missionaries complained about the lower intellect of members.
[189] He received the first and last bachelor's degree in "Magic and Thaumaturgy," to tweak the nose of the University. See Larson, Bonewits, Carruth, Press, Abbot and Sherbak for more personal descriptions about Isaac, good & bad, not to mention Part Six: Green Book 10. Isaac was always tweaking noses.
[190] Ordination to the Third Order is, sadly, restricted access
[191] One of the ironies of this, sometime obsessive, reliance on Celtic sources is that it may take centuries to nurse together the surviving fragments; in which time a new system might be developed.

[192] I apologize for the use of the term "Affair" which sounds much too sexy, however the "Isaac Intercourse" and "Isaac Interaction" sound equally silly.
[193] Isaac was ordained in October 1969 by Larson.
[194] Drawing Down the Moon 1986 pg. 422 and Interviews with Bonewits and Carruth.
[195] Larson, being Isaac's roommate in 1969, would have told him about Shelton's Codex Affair. Larson wrote to Shelton in 1969 about the matter.
[196] Records of CoDAL 27, January 1965 Council (a) in Part Four of ARDA
[197] Records of CoDAL 27, January 1965 Council (b) in Part Four of ARDA
[198] Remember that Carleton students have little free time or money to track down the addresses of everybody, compose mimeograph masters, separate and mail out frequent letters. However, even a yearly letter was neglected.
[199] Internal Correspondence 4/25/72
[200] The term "wars" could have been chosen because several correspondents in the RDNA and NRDNA often employed unusually aggressive terminology.
[201] See "Real Magic" and Isaac Letters in the Apocrypha
[202] Isaac's majority vote is a natural result of widespread confusion regarding voting and Book of Law verse 12 from the Druid Chronicles, which only applied to the Carleton Grove, not the RDNA, although they were identical at the time.
[203] Interviews of Larson, Carruth, Press, Bradley and Drawing Down the Moon chapter 3. Any letter from Internal Correspondence 7/18/74 to V:10/21/76 is also good territory to browse through, reprinted mostly in Part Two of ARDA.
[204] Drawing Down the moon pg. 13.
[205] The First Epistle of Isaac 2:4 in Part Two of ARDA
[206] Internal Correspondence 7/18/74 Isaac to everyone 1:5-7. First Epistle of Isaac in Part Two of ARDA.
[207] Frangquist interview and any letter by a Shelton.
[208] Frangquist interview in Part Ten of ARDA.
[209] See Part Eleven of ARDA: V: 10/21/76 and 6/21/76 for explicit affirmations of Neo-Paganism.
[210] Feb. 1993 Questionnaire Glen McDavid pg. 5
[211] Internal Corr. Shelton to Isaac 8/14/74
[212] In interviews many "NRDNA" members said that Neo-Paganism for them was an openness to all religions, but that it was hard to communicate this to outsiders so that they could understand this.
[213] Internal Correspondence 5/26/76 Larson to everyone Epistle of Robert in Part Two of ARDA.
[214] Drawing Down the Moon chapter 1 "Paganism & Prejudice" for the pros & cons of names. It might be noteworthy that even the relatively open-minded Carleton Druids were initially frightened by the name and took a bit of time to be calmed down.
[215] Frangquists interview in Part Ten of ARDA.
[216] Carleton Apocrypha. Book of Faith paragraph 5 in Part Two of ARDA.
[217] I.e. in a service, "circle" is a term borrowed from Wiccan practices
[218] Interview with Stefan Abbot. It should be noted that Stefan was by no means on friendly terms with Isaac.
[219] Stefan absolutely hated the Jesus People, back then.
[220] Interview with Stefan Abbot, NRDNA member since 1970. It should be noted that the mood of the Archdruid often attracts and repels different people, regardless of intent.
[221] Feb. 1993 Questionnaire with McDavid pg. 8
[222] Before laughing, remember that Protestants and Catholics went to war over what happened to the host during the Mass.
[223] I'll cross reference these later, but many are referred to in Druid Chronicles (Reformed), Black Book of Liturgy and in the interviews with Carleton Druids. (Part One and Three of ARDA respectively.)
[224] Only plants are allowed in Reformed Druidism and nearly all Neo-Pagan groups, Wiccan covens, etc.
[225] Carleton Apocrypha. Book of Faith paragraph 8 & 9 Part Two of ARDA.
[226] Carleton Apocrypha. Epistle of David the Chronicler Part Two of ARDA.
[227] Non-Intramural April 1964 KARL radio broadcast. "Spring Thaw?" in Part Two of ARDA.
[228] Internal Correspondence. 5/29/76 Ellen Shelton to Isaac in Part Two of ARDA.
[229] Internal Correspondence. Epistle of Richard 5/24/76 Isaac in Part Two of ARDA.
[230] Internal Correspondence. 5/26/76 Larson to everyone Isaac in Part Two of ARDA.
[231] I'll save those for future scholarly essays.
[232] **Druid Chronicles**
[233] DC(E) Book of Changes Chapter 2 in Part Two of ARDA. See also Part Four of ARDA.
[234] Bradley always gave his vote to McDavid, his predecessor. See Part Four of ARDA.
[235] Hassidic (Jewish) Druids of North America in St. Louis, they were a split-off in the SDNA, see Part Five of ARDA.
[236] They referred to it as the "Provisional *Conspiracy* of Arch-Druids." The Provisional Council, appears to have been a term used in some events of the Cultural Revolution, also.
[237] Internal Correspondence 7/18/76 in Part Two of ARDA.
[238] DC(E) Book of Changes 4:2 in Part Two of ARDA.
[239] DC(E) Book of Changes Chapt 3 & 4 in Part Two of ARDA.
[240] DC(E) Book of Changes Chapt 5. Part Two of ARDA.
[241] 1976 Shelton communication with HDNA (unrecorded) and Interviews with many people ordained by Isaac while he was an SDNA ArchDruid. (Salee, Sherbak, Press)
[242] Magic, Witches & Witchcraft in the US pg. 61. See Part 6: Green Book 10.
[243] See Part Eleven: Druid Chronicler vol. 2:1
[244] "Druidh" in Scots-Gaelic is a little bird. I kill me. Ha! However, Larson believes that "the wren (Irish dreoilin) whose old name was "druidh-en" meaning "druids' bird." See you're not making a pun after all!"
[245] Interviews with Savitzky, Salee, Bonewits, Bradley, Larson, Carruth & Abbot.
[246] Unless they are a cover-up, the listing of events and activities in the Druid Chronicler issues should indicate the activity-orientation of many of the groves.
[247] For further study of backstage amendments and corrections see Internal Correspondence, many documents between 1976-1977, many of them in Part Two and Four of ARDA.
[248] Some would say restrictive orthodoxy.
[249] If you think that was semantic, the Frosts got into a lot of trouble with Wiccans when the published "The Witch's Bible" instead of "A Witch's Bible." Another interesting trivia point was that the Carleton Grove archives were nearly lost by Corey. This might have made them apprehensive that Isaac's version would become the only version available to future historians. Of course they didn't tell Isaac, it would just have shown their incompetence even more. See Internal Correspondence 4/10/76in Part Two of ARDA "Beltane Tips" & 9/9/76
[250] It has had various additional titles tacked on. Part Eleven of ARDA :XXXXI B (incomplete)
[251] The close of a grove is rarely documented because of the stressful causes underlying it. Interviews with Savitzky, Bradley, Bonewits, Press, Carruth, Abbot, Bonewits, Shelton & Larson and the Druid Chronicler are my main sources of knowledge on this period, which will hopefully be clarified in my Second Epistle. See Part Four of ARDA and note the "Bermuda Triangle Years" of 1977-1980 as I call them.
[252] See interviews with Carruth, Abbot, Salee, Sherbak, Bradley & Savitzky.
[253] See Part Four of ARDA
[254] Read the Dead Bay Scrolls and Dead Lake Scrolls of Part Nine of ARDA for more on this time.
[255] A humorous account of the Death March incident is in Part Nine of ARDA's Dead Bay Scrolls is balanced by the uncatalogued 12/81 issue of Druid Chronicler in Part Eleven of ARDA and interviews with Bonewits, Carruth, Abbot & Press.
[256] A rarely used title, also found at Carleton, I believe in 1/8/86.
[257] See uncatalogued Druid Chronicler 12/81 in Part Eleven of ARDA.
[258] See Internal Correspondence 4/25/82 onwards to present. Interviews with Frangquists and Shelton in Part Ten of ARDA Personal conversation Tom Lane & Bob Nieman (unrecorded).
[259] Interviews with Alice Cascorbi. Carleton Newspaper Clippings and assorted materials..
[260] Interviews with Sam Adams. Later Internal Correspondence, Newspaper Clippings, Confessions of an Archrdruid, Material from the 1990s, my 5 year personal diary.
[261] Remember that Reagan was Governor of California in the 60s, Neo-Pagans didn't like him any better in the 80s! These are known as the "Boring Years" see Dead Bay Scrolls in Part Nine of ARDA.
[262] See Part Four of ARDA.

[263] As far as I'm concerned he's still a member in good standing of the N/RDNA, merely on an individual path that differs wildly from other members at the present.
[264] This alone makes many Reformed Druids cringe.
[265] Larson notes that the Celtic interlace seems to have stemmed from Saxon/Norse art forms, and it was unknown in Hallstatt or La Tene Celtic art (or pre-Christian). Joke's on Isaac! A Celtic "tree of life" desighn would have been more appropriate.
[266] I've included a copy of "Vision of ADF" in Part Two of ARDA to give you an idea of what Isaac was thinking about in the late 70s.
[267] Except the 200+ pg. Druid Chronicles (Evolved), for size reasons of course
[268] I would, ideally, prefer the reader to be sitting in the IDA, examining the documents.
[269] Isaac is definitely an important one, but no one Druid (not even me) can authoritatively speak for the mind of the whole group.
[270] See Druid Chronicles (Evolved) for the breakdown of it's contents
[271] Druid Chronicles (Evolved) Introduction to Chronicles of Foundation.
[272] Most of the contributors and editors were from the Berkeley Grove.
[273] The Green Book was mainly confined to Carleton until Mid-90s.
[274] Carleton Apocrypha, see Part Two of ARDA.
[275] Of which you are reading volume 1.
[276] Savitzky and Larson had both studied at Carleton.
[277] Pg. 300 1978 edition; 321, 1985 edition in Part Six: Green Book 10 of ARDA.
[278] Pg. 301 1978 edition; 323, 1986 edition. The last part of the quote is pushing it a bit far in Part Six: Green Book 10 of ARDA.
[279] Interviews with Bradley (Humanistic), Savitzky (skeptic), Larson (Paleo-Pagan), Cindy Salee (Taoist/Native American).
[280] Magic, Witches & Witchcraft in the US pg. 13 in Part Six: Green Book 10 of ARDA.
[281] Ibid. pg. 34 in Part Six: Green Book 10 of ARDA.
[282] Ibid. pg. 35 in Part Six: Green Book 10 of ARDA
[283] Ibid. in Part Six: Green Book 10 of ARDA.
[284] bold face is mine, not theirs

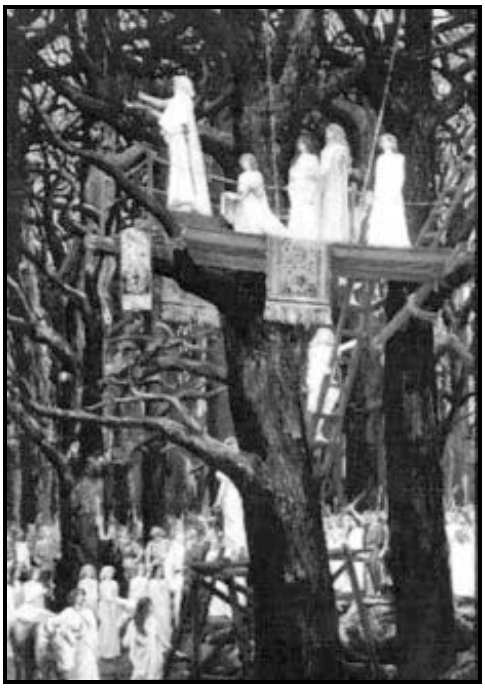


Figure 18 We sure have plenty of Pliny aficionados.

Figure 17 Inspiring locations for Bards are not always conducive to audiences or personal safety.

Figure 19 So Endeth Part Eight

PART NINE

THE BOOKS OF THE LATTER-DAY DRUIDS

2003 Introduction

WHERE DID EVERYTHING GO?!

In order to confuse the general reader, and make things more compartmentalized, I have transferred many of the contents of this section to other more logical areas in the Green Books.

The Book of the African Jedi Knight is in Green Book, Vol. 5
The Book of Ultimate Answers is in Green Book, Vol. 5
The Book of Songs and Poetry, Vol. 1 is in Green Book, Vol. 6
The Book of Songs and Poetry, Vol. 2 is in Green Book, Vol. 6

In addition, I've added the recently published Dead River Scrolls (Published 1997) to this section.

-Enjoy,
Mike Scharding
March 1, 2003
George Washington University, D.C.

Printing History
1st Edition 1993
2nd Edition 1996 (ARDA)
3rd Edition 2004 (ARDA 2)

The Drynemetum Press

2003 Table Of Contents

2003 Introduction
2003 Table of Contents
1996 Introduction
1996 Table of Contents

The Dead Lake Scrolls 1993

The Book of Introduction
The Book of Years
The Book on John Burridge
The Book of Opposition
The Book of Post Scripts: Part One
The Book of Paul: Part One
The Book of Haiku
The Book of Post Scripts: Part Two
The Book of Vigils
The Book of Cattle Raids
The Book of the Great Dream
The Book of Stones
The Book of Fire

The Dead Bay Scrolls 1993

Das Edda Todvolkfortgeshritten
The Book of the Boring Times
The Book of Mr. Boring
The Book of Games
The Book of the 30th Anniversary
The Book of the Laundry Think-Tank
Addendum to the Ordination of the Second Order
The Book of Samhain

The Dead River Scrolls 2003

2003 Introduction
The Mini-Epistle of Michelle the Dark
The Epistle of Amanda
The Sigil Letters
The Book of Exile, Part One
The Tree Epistle of John
The Book of Q
The Book of the Sermon
The Book of Exile, Part Two
The Book of Stones, Part Two
The Book of Vigils, Part Two

Ein Tanz Dream
The Winter King: A Dream
The Wild Hunt
The History of Legitimacy

The Poems of Irony
The Poems of Merri
The Poems of Chris
The Poems of Brad
The Poems of Corwin

1996 Introduction

Unlike most of the previous materials written by many authors throughout the Reform, the following materials mostly come from me and my friends at Carleton (the Dead Bay Scrolls come from Hazelnut NRDNA). Most of them were written in the 1993-1995 period (which along with the Green Book volumes 2 & 3 in the Summer of 93, and ARDA) mark this as a period of high literary output. This period is reasonably separate from the 1963-1979 period of earlier-day Druidism, so I have chosen to call it latter-day Druidism. The title is also a slight humorous poke at Mormonism. There are three main categories that group the contents of part nine;

1996 Table of Contents

1. Thirtieth Anniversary Histories
The Dead Lake Scrolls (Published Aug. 93)
The Dead Bay Scrolls (Published Dec. 93)
2. Weird Stuff
The Book of the African Jedi Knight (Published Dec. 93)
The Book of Ultimate Answers (Published June 94)
3. Songs and Poetry
The Book of Songs and Poetry, Volume 1 (Published July 93)
The Book of Songs and Poetry, Volume 2 (Published Dec. 93)

My literary explosion began after reading the long-neglected materials of the Druid Archives and seeing the sheer possibilities of Reformed Druidism. All this was taking place during the May 93 to May 94 period when I was Arch-Druid. I figured that I am better at writing than at leading rituals (although I did hold an unusually large number of rituals), so I spent much of my energies went into producing literature that might outlive my physical presence at Carleton. I also had a great number of things to say, and this was a good time to write them down. Each book has been individually published before, but this is the first time they have all been published together.

Please enjoy them, do not consider them dogma and share with your friends.

Michael Scharding
January 6th, 1996 c.e. Day 67 of Geimredh
Year XXXIII of the Reform

Figure 1 Twin pillars by Lower Arb's river, dedicated to the Two Basic Tenets 2004.

THE DEAD LAKE SCROLLS

Preface 1993

The Dead Lake Scrolls were written at about the time that I began to explore the history of Reformed Druidism and noticed that the records were pretty shoddy after 1980. I resolved to leave behind some type of document to cover the more recent history. It turned out that my comprehensive project would be on Reformed Druidism, so the relevance of this document is no longer as a quick summary, but as an insight into Druidism at Carleton in the early 90s during my active Arch-Druidcy of May 93 to May 94.

The Dead Lake Scrolls received little if any attention from most of my fellow Grove members, but the Hazelnut Grove loved them and wrote The Dead Bay Scrolls in response. I therefore publish them both, hoping that some wisdom will be found in them by the reader.

As with all Reformed Druidic material, none of this is to be considered to be rigid dogma or unassailable truth. Read it in the lighthearted spirit that it was written in.

-Scharding

The Book of Introduction

Chapter the First

1. I tell you the Carleton Druids are truly a marvelous exercise in religious faith. What other group on campus is as dedicated to loving nature and that encourages diversity of religious beliefs?
2. The knowledge gleaned from the practitioners of the Druidic outlook, is worthy of being written down; both for entertainment and the chance it may enlighten someone.
3. I highly encourage others to add to this work with their own writings on miraculous occurrences, insights gained and beauties observed while at Carleton or elsewhere. Poetry and songs would be a welcome addition.
4. The title of this work makes an oblique reference to the state of Lyman Lakes.

Chapter the Second

1. The Contents are:

The Book of Introduction
The Book of Years
The Book of Opposition
The Book on John Burridge
The Book of Post (s)Crypts Pt1
The Book of Paul
The Book of Haiku
The Book of Post (s)Crypts Pt2
The Book of Vigils
The Book of Cattle Raids
The Book of the Great Dream
The Book of Stones
The Book of Fire

The Book of Years

(By Mike the Fool & Richard the Green)

Chapter The First

1. How did the Druids at Carleton progress over the last thirty years? Sit down and I will tell you so that you may see the larger picture of the Reformed movement.
2. For it is in knowing the Past, that the present becomes clear.

Chapter the Second

1. The Years of Peace (1963-1968 c.e.) were spent in happy isolation at Carleton's newly founded Grove. None knew of the growing neo-pagan movement then. They only concerned themselves with removing the odious religious requirements and partaking of the waters of life. They researched and solidified a vague philosophic system and hierarchy.
2. The Groves of Vermilion and Rapid City, SD were founded by Nelson and disappeared. Likewise with the Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan, Wisc and New York Grove the First by Frangquist and Fisher.
3. The favorite ritual sites of the Druids, until the Years of Exploration, was the Hill of Three Oaks, Computer Center and Monument Hill.
4. Read the Druid Chronicles to learn more.

Chapter the Third

1. The Years of Growth (1968-1974 c.e.) started with the founding of the Berkeley College Grove, from where Robert Larson and Isaac Bonewits did take their knowledge of neo-paganism.
2. These two did also found the Twin Cities Grove and the Stockton Grove.
3. Elsewhere, the RDNA of Carleton College did found the Chicago, the Ann Arbor and the Stanford Groves under Glenn McDavid, Conway and Savitzky.
4. Carleton spent many of these years growing larger after an initial plunge in membership. All of the major publications and codification were finished by this point including the Green Book of meditations, the Apocrypha and Liturgy.

Chapter the Fourth

1. The Years of Pain (1974-1976 c.e.) were started by Bonewits' letter to the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (which is all the third order priests) declaring that the RDNA was in fact an "eclectic, Neopagan & Reconstructionist Priestcraft."
2. Many did rend their hair over his terminology! Many were exceedingly wroth with each other. See the Orange Book of the Apocrypha and the Book of the Apocrypha found in Bonewits' version of the Druid Chronicles for their words.
3. Since the current Carleton Archdruid was seemingly out of touch, so they wanted to assume a rotating head for the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
4. A vote was taken: most of the Carleton graduates voted against it, most Californians voted for it.
5. A split developed and the New RDNA was formed.

6. The Yellow Book of The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) was published and the Orange Book of the Carleton Apocrypha was completed but unpublished.

Chapter the Fifth

1. The Years of the Decline (1976-1980 c.e.) were the result of problems with the transition of the ArchDruidcy, although Donald Morrison is not to blame, a general decrease in mysticism was.
2. The fermentative years of the Vietnam war were over, and were
in the oil crisis. It was not years to be rebellious any more, for Lo!, women and men could drink and sleep in the same dorms now. We were sorely preoccupied with these new pleasures.
3. Likewise, college students could vote now instead of protest.
4. The group withered away and lost touch with the others.

Chapter the Sixth

1. The Years of the Occlusion (1980-1982 c.e.) were years in which few druids over the second order existed. Occasional calls to past Druids gained no real support.
2. For Yea!, these were the start of the Reagan years, and what enthusiasm could any Druid have?

Chapter the Seventh

1. The Years of the Revival (1982-1985 c.e.) were thus called since David Frangquist returned to Carleton College to ordain Tom & Meg.
2. A weak resumption of the old ways were resumed while the Earth-mother nurtured the returning Druidism.

Chapter the Eighth

1. The Years of the Exploration (1985-1990 c.e.) were a result of a break with the third order and the firm introduction of neo-pagan students (& their wisdom) into Carleton.
2. The students did pursue new areas of study, especially in the study of the wisdom of the Lakota.
3. Sweatlodges and nudity were introduced.
4. Waters-of-Life were laid to the side, mostly because they were dangerous with the aforesaid practices.
5. Great Fires blazed at these rituals. One such fire-leader was Joe, whose famous quote rings out through the ages: "Lo! But it is not a real fire until I burn my beard!"
6. Farmhouse was the center of this revival. Many of their names may be found on the "family tree" in Farmhouse on the second floor to this day. The site of choice was the Oak Opening in the lower Arb.
7. The Grove of St. Olaf was started and remained small under Sam's loving care.

Chapter the Ninth

1. The Years of Chaos (1990-1993 c.e.) were not a fault of the ArchDruid, Andrea the Fair, but rather because the mainstays of the group had all graduated, or dropped out of school.
2. There were many insider quarrels that did rend apart the group, and although none wished to be the leader, they quarreled anyway.
3. Pagan Studies did stop meeting and Catalyst under Salem and Celia did help to hold the group together. Especially in bringing in the members of the class of '95.

Chapter the Tenth

1. The Year of Order (1993-1994 c.e.) was then established when Mike the Fool did decide to bring back a modicum of dogma to the group.
2. The Third order did return to Carleton as may be found in the Book of Vigils and many did return to the pleasures of vigiling. (See Book of Vigils)
3. Documents of the past and certain rituals returned from the Archives.
4. The Basic plan was to give a group structure, teach the history and customs, make documents accessible, to encourage all Druid to try and lead a ritual or group exercise, and provide help in finding spiritual groups outside the Carleton after graduation.
5. Then was the Naples Grove of Florida was founded by Kyle Jemair Clark under Mike & Sam's tutelage.

Chapter the Eleventh

1. The Years of Legitimacy (1994-99) did begin and great was apprehension.
2. For how can a group based on being the rebellious outsider survive, when it is now accepted by the Institution?
3. This process did perplex the Druids of Carleton for many decades and they wisely chose not to register with the authorities that be.
4. But, in the mid 80s, the quest for cash led them into closer cahoots with the authorities that be and "Pagan Studies" was founded to garner money.
5. Many discussion groups and lecture luncheons with Druids and others were funded by Pagan Studies.
6. But Pagan Studies faded, as must all institutions.
7. Up arose another young organizer, Michael being his name, and another front organization was founded to garner money, and Friends of the Earth Mother at Carleton College was its name.
8. FOEMACC did bring in the loot and much wax, whiskey and magazines were purchased, and this brought joy to the hearts of the Druids.
9. Yet there was still apprehension in the hearts of the older Druids.
10. And the day did come in the 33rd year of the Reform (May 1995), in which Becky the Grinner did say unto the other children of the Earth Mother; "Why do we not dispose of FOEMACC and seek to garner money directly, yea, even under the very same name as 'Druids'?"
11. And for the first time in 33 years, our petition for legitimacy was accepted and the Druids were no longer the rebels on the outside of the Institution.
12. Or are they?

Chapter the Twelfth

1. The Years of the Internet: (1999-?) did usher in a revolution of inter-communication.
2. In previous years, Druids could not reach their sisthren beyond the range of their voice and reach of the phone.
3. Now with mail of the E, and the powerful Internet, the message of Druidism; confused as it is, can now be

broadcast widely, and discussions between distant Druid became commonplace.

4. Unfortunately, these Druids did not share common vistas or pick up the cues of the face, and misunderstandings and rants did rage across the digital divide.
5. A homepage was set up in the windswept plains of the internet, Mike raising the first flag in 1996, and it was widely acclaimed as needing more work.
6. But it was in this way, that the ARDA was disseminated to unsuspecting people in many lands, some of whom actually liked it.
7. Now a mighty band of 130 Druids do talk daily from across the great Continent of North America, and beyond.
8. Some Grove exist not in a world of carbon and hydrogen atoms, but in zeros and ones, which when combined can draw a sigil.
9. And in this thought, I leave this topic, to see how it develops.

Figure 2 Mike sorting Dead Lake Scrolls in Gould Library, August 1993.

The Book on John Burridge

(By Mike the Fool)

Chapter the First

1. It was a dark and stormy night when I first saw John. I was casually strolling by the music building on campus.
2. Suddenly, I saw two green lights flying towards me. They did neither bob nor sway, but straight at me they did come.
3. Just when I thought they would impale me, a figure in a purple and black cloak roller-bladed shuttled by me, yelling "Aiiyyyeeee!.....Zoom!"
4. That was John and it was sign.

Chapter the Second

1. John was a spiritual guru for me and taught me to play the harp. Sine Ceolbhinn, my harp, is an identical twin of his harp. John loved Hostess Ho-Hos, M&Ms, and Caffeine.
2. He lived in a spiritually powerful house with peeling orange paint called "Orange Awareness House." It was the second oldest house in all of Northfield. Many Druids had lived there including Jon, Dave, Andrea and John.
3. All the Druids did work in the computer center and were VAX geeks. John was the geekiest of them all.
4. His long sable hair had streaks of silver in them, and his tall, nervous, slender figure enjoyed dancing and chasing squirrels. Truly his real name was "Moonhawk Studmuffin."

Chapter the Third

1. Truly, did all the Druids love John and his cat, Machka.
2. One day, John became the victim of an evil squirrel.
3. Photon, for that was his nickname, was rollerblading along near Sayles, when he spotted a squirrel who had strayed too far from a tree.
4. He switched into turbo-mode and did strive to grab the squirrel. Verily, he could just about reach its fuzzy tail, as its feet madly pounded the earth.
5. Earth became gravel...
6. The gravel caught the roller-blade wheels...
7. His feet stopped, but his body didn't.
8. He hurdled through a bush and broke his wrist.
9. The safe squirrel laughed from the tree top, he having planned it all.
10. A song was composed by Ann to the tune of "Dona Dona" as found in the Rise Up Singing Book used at Picking N Grinning:
11. "On a stretcher bound from Northfield

    Lies a man with a mournful eye.
    High above him, in a tree top,
    Laughs a squirrel from on high...

    Chorus:
    How the squirrels are laughing!
    They laugh with all their might
    Laugh and laugh the whole night through... and (clap!)
    Half that April night.
    Dona Dona Dona etc.

Squirrels are easily bound and slaughtered
Never knowing the reason why
But if you chase squirrels o'er gravel
You will fall and you might die!

Chapter the Fourth

1. Aye! Did not every tearful eye fill with sorrow when John had to leave from Carleton College. In their eyes the very color had left the world
2. He was a victim of the most evil lord of the computer center, Carl, who did purge the office of 'unneeded' ones.
3. A great party surrounded the parting of John, over two score were present at Orange House. Many strange things did occur at that party, including a strange GREEN drink.
4. He then did leave, and then Druidism slumped at this college, having lost its most promising new leader, one who was not a student in fact.

Chapter the Fifth

1. Not long after, Orange Awareness House itself was razed by yellow beasts that belched smoke.
2. John now resides in south Arizona at a Commune known as Arcosanti, a place where a mediocre Sci-Fi movie, NIGHTFALL, was filmed.
3. Machka Burridge, John's owner, is with him there too, and she is doing well.
4. Here ends the Book on John Burridge.

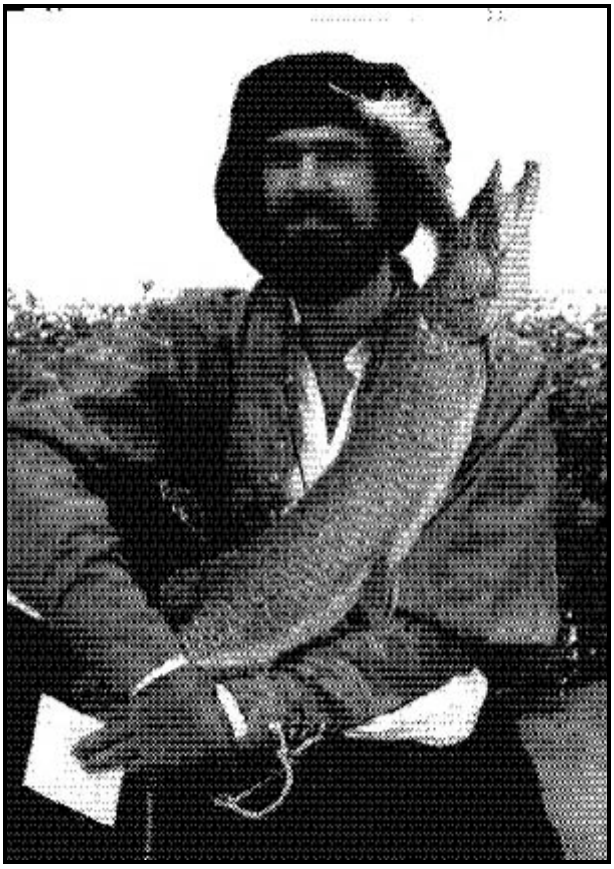


Figure 3 John Burridge & fish, 1993, Huzzah!

The Book of Opposition

(By Mike the Fool)

Chapter the First

1. As the Reagan/Bush years progressed, the intolerance of religions, especially mystical ones has increased at Carleton.
2. Yea, there were far more fundies than you can shake a stick at, Danu bless their small minds.
3. And here are some of their notorious deeds, names have not been hid to hide the guilty.

Chapter the Second

1. It was a bright, sunny day of April 10th, 1993 c.e. when Andrea the Fair and Mike the Busy did go up to the Hill of two Oaks to thank the Earth for its blessings in an Erisian fashion.
2. There were two people there, and since Mike had well advertised the time and place throughout the college, he assumed they were there for the ritual.
3. All removed broken glass from the Hill's green bosom.
4. The two people, Paul R. and Jason B., did leave with friendly remarks, indeed nothing seemed amiss.
5. Yea, but a Griffin did also mount the hill with the splendor of his red locks of hair. He said 'hi' and left. Mike took it as a sign.
6. Mike and Andrea did don the most sacred Cone-Hats of bright colors and the mystical handpuppets of John Burridge. They did dance around intoning 'Beep-Beep' mantras.

Chapter the Third

1. The ritual was mostly done (see order or worship) and Mike was reading a meditation, when Paul R, strode up and declared:
2. "I have come to tell you that you dance before false gods, who will crumble into dust before the superior might of my God on the Final Day of Judgment, and I will see you burn in the Flames of Hell as a result of your worship!!!" He then returned to Monument Hill where a prayer service was being held.
3. Andrea turned to Mike and said "What the Hell was that?" but Mike did not know at first.
4. Mike finished the service and pondered on Andrea's words as she returned to Goodhue. "At first I thought he was just being an asshole, but then later I realized it was harassment." Mike later was prone to say.

Chapter the Fourth

1. Mike did decide to reason with this Anti-Druid, but this is difficult, for Anti-Druids deny the validity of any view but their own.
2. Mike did reason with all his might against the great Anti-Druid encampment. He received an "apology" from Paul, "I didn't want to do it, but God told me to do it." Humph!
3. Mike was unable to coax an assurance that Paul would not interfere with the 30th anniversary ritual on the next week.
4. Mike did beseech upon the authorities for protection, but a legalistic loophole in the Carleton list of student rights did

not feel that students had a right not to be harassed for racial, ethnic or religious background.

5. Mike did spit forth angry recriminations. Had these baboons missed the 60's all together? Were they maliciously stupid?!
6. Mike indeed did lose his countenance, which is oft ill-befitting a Druid.

Chapter the Fifth

1. Posters had been put up on walls by fundies all this year and last, proclaiming the glory and superiority of the Christian faith.
2. Many of the said posters were removed by enlightened people, yeah!
3. Mike and others did fill the spring Carletonian paper with articles about freedom of religion and tolerance for race.
4. But was this the only time the Anti-Druids have acted? Nay! Listen and I will tell you of what I have learned.

Chapter the Sixth

1. Dave and others have told me of many persistent conversion attempts.
2. While preparing wood for a Beltane fire in the Oak Grove in 1990, I did stumble upon a group of pale people dressed in white in silent meditation. They replaced our maypole with a 8' cross.
3. A few times we've arrived at a ritual site only to find the ground LITTERED with strewn crosses.
4. The cross at Monument Hill, is not the work of Anti-Druids, but merely a religious shrine. It has been there since 1987, you should not remove it. Treat it as a symbol for the four directions.
5. Sam, Heather, Alex and I were having a sweatlodge and vigil in May 1992 on the Hill. As we were relaxing in the nude, in between sweats, a contingent of party-fiends did overrun the Hill. They would not leave nor wait 10 minutes! For they had the Hill of Oaks reserved and we did not and we were forced to pull up our stakes and finish at the Little Grove.
6. Read the Druid Chronicles for Anti-Druid activities. Also see the Book of Vigils.

Chapter the Seventh

1. I will now tell you how to deal with Anti-Druids.
2. If you enter arguments with them, you will seem to lose, since their rules to win prevent them from accepting yours.
3. But do not wage war with them, but meet their arguments with compassion, for many a Fundie is suffering from insecurity. Reasoning will not get them to abandon their only anchor, that they have found the ONLY way, and are thus saved, and that you damned.
4. Beware of rousing them. The Public will sympathize as long as you are not shown to be the aggressor.
5. Never announce the site nor time of a ritual via the Carletonian, NNB or in the VAX Notes Conference. All these are publicly accessible and may encourage attacks.
6. Never allow mailing lists to fall into the hands of non-druids.
7. Stuffing the mailboxes is safest.
8. Archdruids, meet with all druid-wannabes to sniff out spies, for we've had them before, and we'll have them again. Meeting with them also encourages the real Druids-wannabes into participation.
9. Always reserve the site at the Campus Activities Office, if you fear interruption. If the register looks funny at you, say you're reserving the FIRE-RING at the site. Of course, the Anti-Druids could also read that reservation book to find you.
10. Many of the Fundy groups have taken to outdoor services, this is good. That's OK. Avoid running into them.
11. Having a person be a "guardian" to detour drunks and bad tempered fiends often helps a ritual. The Preceptor should take any divine "messages" and deliver them, after the ritual is finished.
12. Do not fear bringing them up on charges. First you must tell the Dean of Students of the problem. He will write to the offender with an official warning. If the warned person repeats their behavior then you have a case against them. If you don't complain the first time, you can not smite the person the second time!
13. Remember, security is on your side if they start a fight.
14. However, the Anti-Druids could say you were nude or giving alcohol to under-21 year olds. So practice these with caution.
15. If this sounds paranoiaic, then ignore it, for you must live in an age at Carleton where students have resumed civility in their discourse to each other. You are blessed.
16. So ends this Book.

Figure 4 Eric Hilleman (current Archivist) receiving Blue Book of the old Archives from Sam Adams, Nikki Lambert & Mike Scharding, August 1993.

[Make friends and allies before you need them.

Know your opponent, and respect them.

Misunderstanding is more common than dislike.

What's in the open cannot be easily feared.

Try reason and charity first, then invoke the laws.

Avoid paranoia and grudges, they hurt you more.

Enjoy your time together, regardless. –Mike 2002.]

The Book of Post Scripts: Part One

(By Mike the Fool)

Chapter the First

1. It was April 17th, 1993 when the Druids did gather at Monument Hill, where all that started did occur, to celebrate thirty years of Druidism at this college. It was a sunny day and all did agree it was a gift from the Earth-mother.
2. And Lo!, Richard, an Arch Druid of 1971 c.e., was present and did lead us in the order of worship. For at that time there were no third order priests at the college. (Nor had there been since 1984, though many did the work without being able to be ordained.)
3. And Lo!, Michael, who was but a chick in an egg with his Druidism, was the preceptor, for he knew the stuff cold!
4. And Lo!, others did show up. And their numbers were counted as four people. They were the one called Blake (of the Sci-Fi club), the one called Hannah (of the dazzling cuteness), the one called Paul (of the blond hair) and the one called Nikki (known for her wardrobe). Many more had decided to sleep late or to play Frisbee.
5. Squirrels, birds, deer and bugs were also there in attendance, although they were not always visible nor audible.
6. No Anti-Druid dared to disturb this most momentous occasion, for Michael had taken many precautions and had set up powerful wards.
7. The ritual went well, and wise words and stories were told from the wise ones of the Middle East. The difference between a camels and its rider can be confusing!
8. After the ritual, many did go to the Hill of Two (or three oaks) and did partake of food & Tang while watching the fierce Frisbee teams vie for supremacy.

Chapter the Second

1. Not long after Beltaine, Sam, an ArchDruid of St. Olaf since 1987, and Michael the Fool, did decide to undertake the duties of the office of ArchDruids for the period of time of Beltaine 1993 to Beltaine 1994.
2. These two druids did dress up and carried their ensouled musical instruments ("Stormus" the Bodhran and "Sine Ceolbhinn" the Harp) and flaming brands to the top of the Hill of Two oaks on a moony night.
3. They were enraged to find a sleeping person already on the Hill. Where else could they hold their ritual? What to do?
4. Michael said to Sam that they should build a circle of stones around this victim, who had apparently offered himself as a sacrifice. But Sam saith to Mike, "Nay, that would get us in trouble."
5. Mike also wished to pin a note to the sleeper that said "Sorry, but we didn't need you for a human sacrifice after all, thanks though!" But Sam, full of wisdom, said unto Mike, "Nay, that would get us in trouble!"
6. Mike and Sam did mosey unto the Hill of Monument, whose blank fourth side reflects upon our dogma, and they did dance around the obelisk until they became ArchDruids of Carleton and St. Olaf respectively (and quite dizzy!) and they did ask for wisdom and a sign of blessing.
7. And Lo!, next morning when Mike mounted the Hill of Two Oaks on the next morning, to give thanks to the sunrise, there were now THREE trees present!
8. Once, this Hill bore three oaks, but many years past, a lightning bolt did blast this third tree, reducing it to a stump. Rain and the Grounds Crew further had reduced this stump to a depression on the Hill. Many gentiles thought they saw three trees, but were mistaken, for one tree was split into two trunks and deceived many people.
9. Mike had planted many acorns on the site afore this time, but here was a new oak tree, 3 men tall, sprung forth from the earth over night. It was not far from where the previous tree had stood.
10. He did fall to the ground and gave many thanks for this sign from the Earth-Mother of her love for her Druids.
11. Later, Mike realized that the Earthmother had worked through the Carleton alumni of the Men's rugby team and their tree planting memorial fund, but that did not detract from the miracle.
11. Here Paul, of the dazzling blond hair, doth add comments of his own wisdom:

Figure 5 Alice with the new tree, Oct 31 1993.

The Book of Paul: Part One

(By Paul the Mighty)

Chapter the First

1. Shortly following the arrival of the new oak, the foliage of all the arboretum did shower forth their blessings unto the new oak.
2. Mike, the most-knowledgeable, did collect the offerings for the oak and did skillfully weave them into a ring of life and blessings.
3. Herewith did the two elder oaks contribute to that ring. With familial support, Mike and Paul braved the dizzying heights of the oaks to collect their leaf offerings.
4. Yea, they were like unto squirrels!
5. With the offering to the fledgling oak complete, Mike and Paul did proceed with a ritual of goodwill and blessing.
6. After completing the noon-ish ritual under the gaze of the benevolent sun, and with the support of the Hill of Three Oaks, a libation from the waters of life was imparted unto the oak.
7. The oak did quickly drink from the waters and, with minimal coaxing, persuaded the two nearby ape descendants to bathe it with more powers of life.
8. Immediately after the oak had consumed all Druidic nourishment available, a strange wanderer did appear, and he did stare with wonderment and delight upon the healthy new oak.
9. Lo!, the powers of the Earth Mother surged through the oak and it did shine with glory.
10. So sayeth Paul, the mighty.

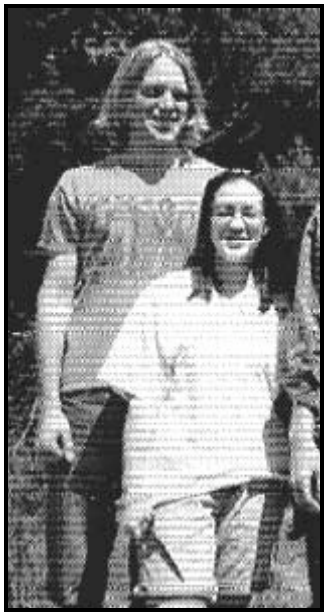


Figure 6 Paul the Mighty & Nikki Lambert at Monument Hill for 30th Anniversary, April 1993.

The Book of Haiku

Placing the kitten
To weigh her on the balance
She went on playing.
-Issa

Nine times arising
To see the moon whose solemn pace
marks only midnight yet
-Basho

O sprint time twilight....
Precious moment worth to me
a thousand pieces
-Sotuba

O summer twilight
bug-depreciated to a
mere five hundred.
-Kikaku

Snow Whispering down
all day long, earth has vanished
leaving only sky
-Joso

Carven Gods long gone
dead leaves alone forgotten
on the temple porch.
-Basho

Vanishing springtime
wistful the lonely widow
pouts at her mirror.
-Seiki

A bright autumn moon...
in the shadow of each grass
an insect chirping.
-Busoh

Black cloud bank broken
scatters in the night... now see
moonlighted mountains!
-Basho

Two ancient pine trees
a pair of gnarled and sturdy limbs
with 10 green fingers.
-Ryota

Yellow butterfly...
fluttering, fluttering on
over the ocean.
-Shiki

Crossing it alone
in cold moonlight, the brittle bridge
echoes my footsteps
-Taigi

Every single step
is quivering now with light
O how bitter cold!
-Taigi

One fallen flower
returning to the branch? oh no!
a white butterfly.
-Meritake

Grey moor, unmarred
by any branch... a single branch
a bird... November
-Anonymous

The soft summer moon...
who is it moves in white there...
on the other bank?
-Chora

Here is the dark tree
denuded now of leafage...
but a million stars!
-Shiki

He who climbs this hill
of flowers finds here a shrine
to the kind goddess.
-Basho

Some poor villages
lack fresh fish or flowers,
all can share this moon.
-Saikaku

Under a spring mist
ice & water forgetting
their old difference....
-Teitaku

Colder far than snow...
winter moonlight echoing on
my whitened hair.
-Joso

After moon viewing
my companionable shadow
walked along with me.
-Jodo

Coolness on the bridge...
Moon, you and I alone
unresigned to sleep
-Kikusa-ni

Winter moonlight casts
cold tree-shadows long and still
my warm one moving.
-Shiki

Weeping...Willows
kneel here by the waterside
mingling long green hair.
-Kyorai

In stony moonlight
hills and fields on every side
white and bald as eggs
-Yansetsu

Penetrating hot
September sun on my skin
feel the cooling breeze.
-Basho

Feeble feeble sun
it can scarcely stretch across
winter-wasted fields
-Bokuson

Ah leafless willow
bending over the dry pool
of stranded boulders.
-Busoh

Figure 7 Japanese Garden c. 1993.

The Book of Post Scripts: Part Two

(By Mike the Fool, Alice, Heiko & Brandon)

Chapter the Third

1. Verily, the third order has languished over the last 15 years. Problems with over devotion to the Waters-of-Life, led to a lack of devotion to the Druids. Beware, ye!, the curse of over-devotion! The next ArchDruid, Katya was unable to fix the damage and went into Occlusion.
2. From 1980 to 1982, the years of occlusion, few above 1st order did roam these sacred groves. Great was their despondency! Lamentations did pour forth from those who sought guidance. A weak call for help did ensue, and yea!, it was answered by a David's love! He did travel forth to fix the damage done.
3. David the Chronicler, did return in 1982 to revive a languishing group at Carleton. Tom, Bob, and Margaret, newly of the 3rd order, did lead the group until 1984 during these Years of Revival. Yet, sadly, none followed these Druids into the third order.
4. Druidism slept at Carleton until the visit by Selena Fox and her husband Dennis in 1985. Many did attend her lecture and ate at Farmhouse, where a feast was thrown for in her honor.
5. Earlier, Curtis and Paul (who was a Glover) had found Isaac's Druid Chronicles in the basement. But they knew not what to make of Druidism, but some pyrotechnic rites and stuffed toy dinosaurs were applied to the problem, to the amusement of all.
6. Heiko, the dark haired, did show Selena of this book, and she imparted unto them the basic history of the RDNA. Many desired to restart this group, but there was no Druid initiate then known. All despaired.
7. Then, by luck or fate, Alice (the good person) did pass by and stated that she was an initiate of the Druids of the second order, or at least of the first order. All did jump up in amazement and asked her for the story of how this event had come to be. She said unto them:
8. "In my freshmen year, the ArchDruid did reside in Burton, on the highest floor thereof, which I and my friends did also reside upon. Their names were Judith and Maggie.
9. "One night, that Druid asked us, 'Do you wisheth to be Druids, fair ones?' We replied back unto him "Verily, we do!" We went to the Hill of Three Oaks and were initiated by that same ArchDruid, who wore a blue bathrobe. He told us 'I don't want you to take this too seriously'. That is my story."
10. All who did listen thereunto did run up to the Hill of Three Oaks. When they had mounted the skybound hilltop, they saw thereon a Stag and a Doe of marvelous beauty. But as they did approach, the two deer had vanished! Each took this in their own way. Many did enter the second order on that night.
11. Unable to bring back another Third Order Druid to 'properly' initiate them, any Druid who led a ritual was considered a third order, and should be respected by all as such. If they so desireth now, they may return for a formal ordination.
12. What did the third order mean before the Years of Exploration? It meant that you vigiled overnight and were initiated by a third order priest with the third order ritual, one that has not been changed since 1965. Back then, only third order priests could lead a ritual, vote on the board of Dalon Ap Landu, received a copy of the annual report from succeeding Archdruids, and were the only ones allowed to initiate a 2nd or 3rd order Druid.
13. What does the third order mean in the Year of Order (1993 to 1994)? It means you have spent a night vigiling in the woods in meditation and was initiated by a 3rd order priest with third order ritual, one that has never be changed since 1965. You will then receive a copy of the annual report from succeeding ArchDruids and are allowed to initiate a 3rd Order Druid. You will also vote on the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, if it is ever revived.
14. According to our new tradition, Second order Druids may initiate 2nd and 1st order Druids with either the official formula or with a made-up version. Second orders can lead rituals.
15. According to our new tradition, First order Druids are anyone whose ever shown up at a ritual and may initiate anyone else into the 1st order. First orders can lead rituals.
16. The 4th through 7th orders are essentially closed, and will probably never be accessible again. Oh, well, big deal

Chapter the Fourth

1. You may ask, "What happened to our Groves, which were scattered across the country?" I will tell you.
2. During the 70's, the ones led by Isaac Bonewits did break with the RDNA and were known as the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA) and as the Schismatic Druids of North America (SDNA), Hassidic Druids of North America (HDNA), the Other Druids of North America (ODNA) and the Zen Druids of North America (ZDNA). In 1979, all these groups changed back their designation back to NRDNA.
3. During the 80's, a few groves led by Isaac Bonewits did break with the NRDNA and mutated into a grim, scholastic group known as Ar nDraoicht Fein ("Our own Druidism"). They did much research on Paleo-paganism in Indo-European cultures.
4. During the later 80's, a few groups led by Pat and Tony Taylor did break with the Ar nDraoicht Fein and formed the lighthearted Henge of Keltria, which concentrates almost exclusively upon Celtic Paleo-pagan culture.
5. Today all four groups still survive; the RDNA, NRDNA, ADF and the Henge of Keltria. Rejoice in the Druid Sigil, that all do honor!
6. What does this symbol, found on the altar stone upon the Hill of Three oaks mean?
7. Some say its a floor plan of a temple in Stuart Piggott's book. In which case it should have a square around it.
8. Some say the circle represents the year, whose left and right lines part the winter and summer half, being the two days of Samhain and Beltane.
9. Some say that the Druid symbol is a Yunic symbol, in other words, a representation of a vagina.
10. Regardless of what it is, it is a symbol of Reformed Druidism to the world!
11. So ends the Book of Post-(s)Crypts, Part II.

The Book of Vigils

(By Mike the Fool & Sine Ceolbhinn)

Chapter the First

1. A vigil is an important marker in one's spiritual quest for religious truth. Therefore any vigiler's story may inspire someone to undertake this mystery of vigiling.
2. What is a vigil? It is the spending (at least) seven hours in the outdoors at night, awake and not speaking unto another. A vigil is mandatory for entering the third order.
3. At dawn, the ordination to the third order is delivered unto the vigiler by another Third Order Druid.

Chapter the Second

1. Not long after the planting of the new tree, Mike did undertake the vigil for the third order. In preparation, the dilapidated pentagonal sweatlodge (near Farm House) was razed by Mike and Paul, of the long limbs.
2. Much wood was salvaged. A story of its magical origins is therefore appropriate:
3. Not long after the Years of the Exploration (1985-90) began, Heiko, Paul (a Glover) and Jan decided to build the sweatlodge by Farm House, where they could sweat.
4. On the soft, dewy morning, of which they would begin construction, they did leave Farm House and looked upon the site.
5. There grazing on the spot was a white Stag. Others say it was a Stag and a Doe. This vision then did vanish. Lo!
6. They took this as a sign, each in their own way.
7. Paul, the blond, and Mike, the fool, did take this wood of Sweatlodge to the Little Grove (also known as the Druid Den) near the Hill of at least Three Oaks. By the Earth-mother!, did not the fires from the old sweatlodge not leap 20 feet in the air, ALL NIGHT!
8. That night (may 21st) a sweatlodge was set up and Richard (ArchDruid of 1971), Paul and Mike did partake thrice of sweat sessions. Then the two did leave Mike to vigil under a starry sky.
9. Mike then did stay up all night. Yea, the weariness of a hard day did sore press him. Verily he spent the whole night on his feet. If he did stop for more than two minutes, he felt sleep creep into his thoughts. He did not know if he would truly make it unto morning, every hour was like a day. Every step he walked was like unto a league.
10. Richard was an hour and a half late the next morning.
11. Mike did enter into the third order, and although he grumbled a great deal, he was greatly satisfied that he had not slept!
12. The next 14 hours, though, he did sleep!

Chapter the Third

1. Not long after this, Mike did initiate his trusty loyal harp, Sine Ceolbhinn ("Jean Sweetmusic") into the third order at the island that is called Mai Fete.
2. Sine had vigiled many times and was deemed worthy of the honor bestowed upon her. Mock not the Harp!

Chapter the Fourth

1. Andrea, Arch Druid of Carleton during the Years of Chaos (1990 to 1993), did vigil many times and is revered for her devotion...
2. On June 19th, she and Mike, clad only by the thunderous and roiling sky, performed the third order ordination using only sub-optimal reading light.
3. I say unto ye, always use white paper, large print and a flashlight
in the dark!
4. Taranis bellowed his approval and all ran back to their respective homes, for the Great Flood of 1993 was being unleashed.

Chapter the Fifth

1. Verily it did rain for many days, until new lakes appeared throughout the arboretum.
2. During the same night as Andrea's initiation, Sam, the Wise Ole, did vigil at the Center of the Universe, which is found just north of Skoglum field at St. Olaf.
3. He wore, as he was wont, naught but a black/blue kilt and a smile.
4. Yea!, did he not spend the night in an open field where lightning leapt back and forth across the sky every 10 minutes until dawn?!
5. The following morning to the aforementioned night, Mike found this brave lad, still alive, wrapped in a tarp like an Irish Tamale.
6. Sam's wits were so addled by the experience that he thought he had enjoyed it! Furthermore he had seen things that he not seen, heard things that he did not hear, felt things he had not felt, smelt things he had not smelt and tasted things he had not tasted!!
7. So did Sam enter into the 3rd order!

Chapter the Sixth

1. Yea, a call did cry out from Circle Sanctuary in Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin that a great meeting of students of the Earth-Mother should meet at a Cave of Eagles near a city called Madison.
2. And the ones who did call forth was named Selena, patron saint of the RDNA, and her husband Dennis.
3. And this meeting was called "Pagan Spirit Gathering 1993," and it was the 14th one, 10th at this site.
4. Sam, the wise, and Mike, the not-so-wise, did journey forth with a non-druid friend, Tim-of-the-car.
5. The journey was four hours and they saw many beautiful trees.
6. The site was a steep valley surrounded by trees and, Yea!, did many people who were pitched in tents did roll down the hill side in the night! Yet none were hurt!
7. The number present was over five hundred. Half of them enjoyed the covering of the sky more than that of clothing, Sam and Mike included.
8. Sam and Mike did arrange to have another 30th anniversary ritual and over a score of people did show up! 2 large bottles of the waters-of-life were passed around and drained, which may be a record amongst Reformed Druids!
9. Among the attendants was Alice, from the Years of Exploration. Also there was Tony Taylor and the Henge of

Keltria, a member of the Ar nDraoicht Fein, two members of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids (O.B.O.D.) and a young man named Kyle. All enjoyed the ritual with the Wisdom of Thomas the Fool being shared.

10. Kyle was so moved by the spirits that he did rush up to Mike and Sam and did ask to enter the third order. The two ArchDruids were puzzled, for Kyle was but a 1st order druid on that very day, but since Kyle was camped next to them, and had given them steak and alcohol all week, they judged him a man of good heart and soul.
11. Kyle was then raised to the second order by Mike and all there present raised the cup and drank yet more of the waters-of-life.
12. Kyle was then raised unto the third order of Dalon Ap Landu by Mike and all present did raise the cup again drink yet more of the waters-of-life, for he promised to vigil on his return home.
13. Kyle was then made ArchDruid of Naples, Florida and all present raised the cup and drank yet more waters-of-life, for Kyle promised to recruit more partakers of the Water-of-Life on his return home, and to write to us often.
14. Mike, Sam, and Kyle, the only three known ArchDruids in the country (although others existed without our knowledge), did pour praise upon the Earth-mother for the creation of a new Grove!

Chapter the Seventh

1. Alice, the reviver, did step forward and asked to be brought into the third order of the most fertile Dalon Ap Landu. Alice having vigiled many times in the past, was deemed quite worthy.
2. Mike did read the words, and all present did partake of the Waters-of-Life yet again.
3. Mike the Fool did consider initiating Sam's drum, Stormus, into the third order, but saw that Kyle was filled with a satiety of holiness.
4. All then did stumble back unto their tents, especially Kyle, to meditate upon the sharing of the Waters-of-Life. Praise Be!

Chapter the Eighth

1. And so it came to pass that Paul, the blond, did decide that he also would vigil with the Earth-Mother.
2. And he did choose a night that did prove to have poor weather, as is common for Druids.
3. The site that Paul had choseth was the Island of Mai-Fete in the lower of Lyman's Lakes, where Mike's Great Dream had occurred.
4. Taranis, god of thunder, enjoys vigils.
5. Mike did long question this blond Druid and found him most knowledgeable and wise, far more than himself.
6. In the morning drizzle, in apprehension of which Mike had wisely laminated the Ordination sheets (O how wise he was!), Mike did ordain Paul the Mighty into the Third Order.
7. The two cloaked members of Dalon Ap Landu did participate in the time-honored tradition of a ritual breakfast this time at Hardee's, of which Paul, of course, paid for, as is custom.

Chapter the Ninth

1. The next who did wish to enter the Third Order that summer was Nikki Lambert, a redoubtable young wench who had decided to vigil in the most inaccessible site yet known to Druidism.
2. We called the site the Pine Forest of the Deep Lower Arboretum. Indeed it took 30 minutes to reach the site on foot!
3. Mike and Nikki did set up camp on the pine needles and collected wood for a long fire.
4. They went to the Cannon River to cool down over with a quick swim, for it was a sweltering night, and to purify themselves in the flowing waters of the Cannon.
5. After the fire was going, Nikki was left to fend for herself on that long night in the woods.
6. There were many four legged critters that did noisily poke about her camp during that night, interrupting her concentration.
7. And, lo!, she found that pine wood burns very quickly and spent most of the night trying to constantly replace the diminishing firewood stock.
8. She also lamented her lack of caffeine.
9. In the morning, Paul & Mike, joined her. She was relatively cranky, but none the worse for wear.
10. With the fire rekindled, the ceremony of consecration was performed by Mike, and Nikki gloriously entered the Order of Dalon ap Landu. And great was the quantity of Waters that was consumed by all parities!
11. Another quick swim in the Cannon was called for, but was kept short due to the persistence of the bugs, known as mosquitoes.
12. A long becloaked march was made to Hardees for breakfast, parading through the streets in fine cloaks. We were tired, but proud!

Chapter the Tenth

1. The last Druid to enter the Third Order during that busy Summer Break was Brandon Schields, one of the Druids from the late 80s.
2. His ordination occurred after he led a sweatlodge on Lughnasadh evening. Sam, Paul & I attended the sweat and found it good..
3. After the cleansing sweat, we went to the Hill of Three Oaks, and once there, Sam did ordain his dear friend at about 8pm, because Brandon had vigiled on a previous day. It was Sam's first ordination of another Druid into the Third Order, and he did it well.

Chapter the Eleventh

1. That Fall, the Frangquists did visit Carleton and Rebecca Hrobak did vigil on the bosom of the Earth-Mother, not long before the Samhain rite of 1993 was performed.
2. Hers was almost a pleasant vigil in the Little Grove (known also as the Druid Den) not far from the Hill of Three Oaks, except for the strong chill that was in the air. She however burned but one large log during that long night.
3. Indeed she was honored that night by a visit from David & Deborah Frangquist, along with many other Druids seeking to give her company, yet most of her time was spent quietly in meditation of staring into the fire.

3. When a good 5 or 6 Third Order Druids did march up to the Hill of Three Oaks, we saw the Sun break over the horizon and marveled at how it was framed in the branches of a large oak tree.
4. Mike did bring Rebecca into the Third Order, although there was but little Waters for the service.
5. At that time, Nikki and Mike did enter into the Fourth Order of Grannos with the blessing of Frangquist.
6. Paul did enter the Fifth Order of Braciaca under the blessing of Frangquist.
7. Mike did enter the Sixth Order of Belenos under the blessing of Frangquist.
8. Possibly the largest Druidic bonfire at Carleton was held that Samhain in honor of our guests, the Sheltons and the Frangquists. Mike barely escaped incinerating himself with the unprecedented use of gasoline. It was a grand sight!

Chapter the Twelfth

1. During the next spring of 1994, two more Druids did wish to enter the Third Order; Anne and Michelle the Dark, and they wished to vigil on the same night.
2. Anne vigiled on a Sandy Island and Michelle the Dark vigiled under the boughs of great spreading willow tree by the riverbank. They were also given much firewood to pass the night.
3. Unlike all the previous vigils that year, theirs was very pleasant, because it did not rain and they had many friendly visitors. In fact it went so smoothly that the previous vigilers were jealous and the air was loud with their jealous comments!
4. After a fortuitous sighting of deer, we processed by Torch Light to the Hill of Three Oaks where Sam brought Anne to the Third Order.
5. Nikki brought Michelle the Dark to the Third Order, and the golden rays of the rising sun did illuminate the Druid Sigil that had been drawn on her forehead by the Waters.
6. We all did drink deeply of the Waters, so much so that we had trouble reaching The Happy Chef, so we instead took a cab there!
7. At Happy Chef, reeking of camp smoke & whiskey, we did try the Black Raspberry Liquor with our pancakes, in addition to more Waters.
8. We were also forced to take a cab back, although we were only 15 blocks from Campus!
9. This did begin the time of the Triple Archdruidcy of Carleton in which the three buxom friends (Becky, Michelle the Dark & Anne) did boldly lead the Druids in seeking the Earth-Mother at Carleton.

Figure 8 Sam ordaining Ann into 3rd, May 1 1994.

Figure 9 Anne Graham on her vigil, Apr 31 1994.

Figure 10 Michelle on her vigil, Apr 31 1994.

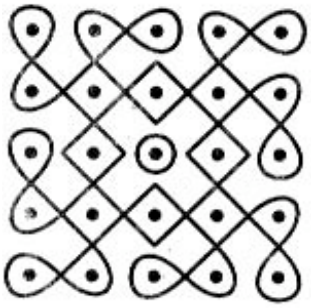
Figure 11 Nikki ordaining Michelle, May 1 1994.

Chapter the Thirteenth

1. In the May of 1995, a most unusual ordination took place with Heather.
2. After preparing herself and receiving blessed items through the mail, the ceremony was conducted over the phone, from Jane of Olaf's room with Sam Adams providing Musical accompaniment.
3. And so, with the help of US WEST, Mike did bring Heather into the Third Order.
4. Mike and Sam felt that the ceremony was adequate but deficient in charm compared to a ritual being performed in person.
5. Later that Summer, Mike went to Royal Oak Michigan (a good place for a Druid to live) and aided Heather in vigiling, for she sleeps too easily.

Chapter the Fourteenth

1. Almost a year did pass before another opportunity to enjoy the pleasures of vigiling did arrive. And this did prove to be yet another double vigil!
2. The three Archdruids of Carleton College were tired after 2 years of leading the Grove, so they were delighted when two freshlings, Michelle Hajder and Irony Sade, did ask to enter the Third Order in the May of 1996.
3. And all the Druids did rejoice at seeing these new contenders for the Third Order.
4. Irony, for well he is named, chose to vigil in the pine forest, near where Nikki had once vigiled, although he did not know of Nikki, and he chose to perform the vigil without fire and he chose to walk throughout the night, not staying in one place too long.
5. Michelle the Blond, who did enjoy tea, chose to vigil in a far more distant spot on the Cannon, verily!, it was 40 minutes from Goodhue, in a lowland of enormous trees. No Druid had ever dreamed of vigiling so far from the campus!
6. Anne, Michelle the Dark and Mike did escort them out into the Arb and we did help carry tents (for it looked as if to rain) and blankets.
7. Mike remained with Michelle the Blond, who would become his great-grandchild, and imparted the history of the Druids and explained their ways to her, although she already did know most of them instinctively, although it was only her freshman year at Carleton.
8. After bathing in the chilly waters of the Cannon (for Lo! he stinkethed), Mike did leave Michelle the Blond to meditate on her vigilling and he sought to locate the peregrinous Irony, whose own nocturnal wanderings on that vigil would lead him throughout the Arb, as had Mike's Vigil three years hence.
9. Irony did startle Mike by appearing suddenly out of the sable darkness with nary a sound, which is indeed amazing, as Mike was renowned for traveling without sound in the woods of the Arb.
10. After Mike imparted a few words of advice to him on Druidism, for Irony was already wise in the ways of Druidism in his Freshman year, Mike did notice that Irony was glowing.
11. Mike had already known that Irony was "close" to the spiritual world, but Mike did not know that the spiritual world glowed through Irony in the night!
12. Mike did essay to find a hidden source of light on Irony's personage, but none could be found, and Mike took this as a good omen.
13. That night it did rain only lightly, for the Earth Mother smiled upon this vigil, and Mike did secretly camp in the tall grassy fields near the Hill of Three Oaks, for he feared the wrath of Security guards should he be discovered.
14. Later that night, Irony did startle Michelle the Blond by appearing suddenly out of the sable darkness with nary a sound, which was stupid, for he had to dodge a swinging cudgel, swung by a frightened Druid.
15. Irony did apologize to Michelle the Blond, for they are good friends, and they shared smores and tea over a campfire for a short while as it misted softly around them.
16. Anne and Michelle the Dark, and perhaps others, did visit the two vigiling Druids and shared their wisdom and brought more water for tea & cider mix.
17. Morning did come, as it always does (though slower on vigiling nights, so the vigilers claim), and Anne & Michelle the Dark did essay to discover where Mike had camped. They then fatiguedly processed for 40 minutes to get to the site of the two vigilers.
18. We moved stealthily so as to surprise the vigilers, and to verify that they had not fallen asleep during the night.
19. Irony was not to be found at his allotted site and the three Third Orders did lament that he could possibly be anywhere in the Arb and noted that they were too tired to look for him.
20. So they grabbed Irony's stuff and went to find Michelle the Blond, and soon reached her site.
21. As we approached her site, we noted that Michelle the Blond was in a trance and looked through us and did not see us, although we were but 20 yards from her. So she wandered away into the woods while we quietly packed up her gear.
22. Eventually Michelle and Irony both returned to the vigil site and it was revealed that they were both still of the 1st order. We therefore brought them unto the 2nd Order.
23. After this the ordinations to the 3rd Order were performed by Michelle the Dark with both Michelle the Blond and Irony the Glowing being present together. It rained a little and Mike took many photographs, as he was wont.
24. Then we processed back to Goodhue, noting a fortuitous pair of deer along the way, and drove to Hardees where whiskey and syrup did flow, although the two Vigilers did weasel their way out of buying us breakfast.
25. So, in this way Michelle Hajder and Irony Sade did enter into their Archdruidcy at Carleton and begin a rather intense period of activities during the Years of Legitimacy.



The Book of Cattle Raids

a.k.a. The Book of Reveling

(By Mike the Fool)

Chapter the First

1. At this Pagan Spirit Gathering of 1993, all the different Druids and Neo-Pagans did gather together to discuss how to pass the time, as it was the sixth of the seven day festival.
2. Tony, the Tailor, did suggest that all take their stuffed toy cows, stuffed toy animals and cow-ish shaped decorations, and they did have a cattle raiding game. The rules were such:

Chapter the Second

1. Only camps with cow-colored banners are playing.
2. Guile is better than force.
3. All cows must be kept in the open, contentedly grazing before your tents.
4. Do not damage these icons for they support your very lives with their milk.
5. The quality of the raid is better than the quantity of cows.
6. Tony is the final arbiter and A-Druid-icator.
7. Blood-price is assigned by Tony on poor sports, brutes and destroyer of property.
8. Any who weareth a cow on their person may be taken with that cow to the camp and done with as the Druid wishes!

Chapter the Third

1. That morning Sam and Mike did well by capturing 12 of the 24 icons before any guardians could stir from their tents.
2. Mike, the skillful, did climb a tree to fetch Pig-asus, the Pig, and did capture Bill the Cat, who was a most un-cow-like cow.
3. Unfortunately, Mike did overtly & loudly brag of the number of their cows and Sam, the guardian of the cows, was distracted by the charms of a well-endowed sky-clad Keltrian, whilst the many men of that tribe did swipe much of our great herd!
4. Alas! and Alack! for the guile of the Keltrians!

Chapter the Fourth

1. Mike did once again increase their herd with six more cows. Unfortunate for this brave lad, he did stir up the wrath of Cow-Woman. Fear ye her wrath!!
2. Cow-Woman, weighing twenty Stone, did bellow in anger and charged upon Mike and Sam's encampment. With her iron-strong arms she did wrestle both frightened Druids unto the ground and then branded them as chattel. Oh, the shame on these two Druids!
3. She stuffed all her cows, plus two more for interest, into her ample bosom, where no efforts could dislodge them! Mike and Sam did try to no avail! Eventually, they had to admit defeat.
4. With a loud, contemptuous snort she did stomp out of camp as Mike and Sam wept for their lost cows! But, Sam pointed out that other cows were in need of our loving care!

Chapter the Fifth

1. One such raid was the raid on the Keltrian camp where eight cows did graze, guarded only by five Druids.
2. Mike and Sam did skillfully creepeth forth, using Winnebagos to obscure their progress towards that mighty rival Druid encampment.
3. Waving high above it was a great eight-foot cow-flag that all other desired to possess.
4. With silent guile, they swept upon the cows, scattering the herd into a wide stampede
5. One Druid, named Kyleen, did grab Mike and did sorely wrestle him down to the Earth before wresting the cow from Mike's grasp.
6. Mike and Sam did dodge and swerve until they escaped with two more cows! MOO!!!
7. They sang as they ran back to their camp:

   How many cows have you now?

   No Cows! No Cows!

   How many cows have we now?

   Six cows! Six Cows!
8. For verily they had six cows, though two of them were rather feline in form and so did not produce very good milk.
9. These two druids did feast richly of milk and cheese, as was their right of proud herd owners!

Chapter the Sixth

1. Mike and Sam did make other daring raids, at the cost of many bruises and scratches and showed their bravery and Guile.
2. Mike and Sam did then return to Northfield, with Tim-of-the-Car, with many new connections and friendships with other groups. Ones that they will share with their fellow Druids.
3. So ends the Book of Cattle Raids.

Moo.

Figure 12 Sam & Mike at PSG July 1993 with

Stormus the Drum and Sine Ceolbhinn the Harp.

The Book of the Great Dream

(By Mike the Fool)

Introduction

1. I add the account of this dream because it explains a lot of my devotion to the RDNA.
2. Other dreams, by others, are no less valid a source of inspiration. Dreams deal with things that our waking minds cannot.

Chapter the First

1. I decided that I would lead the Beltane of 1992, since no one else seemed inclined. For truly, many Beltane rituals have bombed in the past.
2. The Beltane of 1990 collapsed because a strange man showed up and threw blood on the altar stone of the Hill of Oaks while Heather was reinscribing the Druid Sigil.
3. This was my first ritual that I had led and it was held on Mai Fete Island, not long after the slime-o-rama in the algae on the previous day.
4. It was done skyclad with Alex the hairy, Heather the Fair, and Sam the wise. We were to make a circuit of the lower Lyman lake. We assumed bird shapes for the first third, wolf-shapes for the second third and horse shapes for the third. Then, lastly, we did assume fish shape and swam to the island in the chilly waters.
5. Then all did bed down by a ROARING hot fire, in a large snuggle of wool blankets under a starry sky. All did dream strange things, and here is mine, which I remembered.

Chapter the Second

1. It was a dark and stormy night in which there was no color but shades of grey. It was a desolate, mountainous road that I was traveling.
2. This road reminded me of the highlands, nothing scenic, just road. So narrow was this road, that I had to press up against the cliff face to avoid oncoming cars, which sought to hit me.
3. I traveled many miles in the hard rain and lightning. My soul felt great pain and pity for itself. I stopped at a bus-shelter.
4. A tourist bus did pull up, and then did pour forth its passengers. They were the members of the class of '94 and '95, people of the past who I didn't know and faces of people I had not met yet.
5. When the people got onboard, I asked if I could join them, for my journey was long, and my feet were tired. Miraculously there was only one space open, and they were expecting me.
6. We traveled long and came to another pit-stop. When I got out, they drove off without me. This upset me, but I continued to travel onwards until I reached the top of the hill. Then I slid down the other side for a mile.
7. I finally slid under a parked truck and banged my head mercilessly on the universal joint. I crawled out and saw a youth hostel. A warm YELLOW light did come from the windows.
8. I entered and there were all the people from the bus playing cards and running about doing things. I asked if there was a

bed I could sleep on. Miraculously they were expecting me, since a late cancellation had made an opening!

9. Then did a man walk up to me. His body was covered with red, stiff hog bristles (in a black and white background) with a bald head and piercing blue eyes. He reminded me of a Druid, Donny, I had met on the Isle of Arann of Scotland the previous year.
10. This man did shake my hand, in a secret way, much like a mason's handshake and said to me. "Welcome to the club, Michael. You are one of us, now!" He smiled.

Chapter the Third

1. I awoke with a start and then snuggled into the blankets thinking upon this vision until the sun came up and we all chanted
2. He is the sun god! He is the one god! Ra! Ra! Ra! Ra! Ra!
3. I did take this dream as an initiation into a Druid priesthood.
4. Powerful are the spirits on this campus! There are many fairy mounds, stone circles, groves, rivers, diversity of plants and animals. It is a good place to do vigils or seek the spirits.

Figure 13 Sine Ceolbhinn the harp on Mai Fete Island, Summer Solstice 1993.

Figure 14 Mai Fete Island, Winter Solstice 1993.

The Book of Stones

(By Mike the Fool)

Chapter the First

1. Dark and stormy was the night that I pensively strode forth on my last exploration in the arboretum, for I was preparing to go to the land of the rising sun.
2. I did not know the future of Druidism at Carleton, for the presumptive Archdruids did cry of their unpreparedness, as often they do.
3. I went to the circle of stones near the Hill of Three Oaks, "the Dancing Sisters" as David Frangquist had named them so many years ago, and asked them, "O mighty stones, bones of the earth, heareth now my plea, we who are thy siblings. How farest Druidism in the future?"
4. Long were the stones quiet, as is their wont.
5. And I waited.
6. Lo, they did not speak, so I did prepare to leave, when they quickly spoke up, and this did they say, "The sea refuses no river. The stone that lieth not in thy way, need not offend thee. Fire is a good servant, but a bad master."
7. And with that they did become quiescent.
8. And I understood message of "The Twelve."

Chapter the Second

1. Many are mysteries found in the alignments of the rocks at Carleton.
2. It is said that under the altar stone on the Hill of Three Oaks is an original copy of Frangquist's Druid Chronicles, but this is false.
3. The Class of 1886 rock outside of the Library is said to have broken in two when the last member of that class died.
4. The obelisk on Monument Hill has a fourth side, which is blank, and it is said that this side describes the mysteries of Druidism. It is due south of the Hill of Three Oaks.
5. There is a second rock on the Hill of Three Oaks and the altar stone line up with rising and setting sun of Beltane and Samhain. It is said that on both days the sun doth rise behind the crown of an old oak tree in the east and doth plunge at sunset into the brick tower of Carleton's steam plant.
6. "The Twelve" are in line with the Hill of Three Oaks and the Skinner Memorial chapel. It is uncertain what this means.
7. Bracing the sides at the top of the hill path to the Little Grove are two stones known as "King Arthur's Seat" and "Fair Eleanor's Seat" on the north and south respectively. Whosoever sleeps on them all night will be filled with poetry or madness in the morning.
8. Near the lower-arb's tennis courts, on the banks of the mighty Cannon River, are 4 sets of obelisks that once connected Lost Island to both sides of the Cannon, by a bridge that is now gone. It is said that at midnight on midsummer's day, a bridge of light stretches between the obelisks, and whosoever crosses this bridge will be transported to a land of faery.
9. It is rumored that sleeping beneath the arch of the Hadzi sculpture throughout the night will result in a visit by a powerful guardian spirit.

The Book of Fire

(By Mike the Fool and Andrea the Fair)

Chapter the First

1. How to build a fire, sounds simple? It is. Certain conventions have arisen over the years pertaining to fire collection.
2. The Earth-Mother did choose well in putting her Druids on this campus, for wood abounds for the use in Fire, but you must choose that wood wisely.
3. Sometimes fires are not very important.

Chapter the Second

1. Though shalt use only dead wood. Live plants have psychic abilities and scream in fear when you yank or break their limbs. Do you want bad vibes in your ritual fire?
2. Matches and lighters are permissible.
3. Use of Druid juice, although discouraged, is necessary to encourage wet wood.
4. Always collect a little more kindling that you'll need. You'll need it.
5. Four armloads will do a simple ritual fire.

Chapter the Third

1. Sweatlodges are a powerful spiritual tool for Druidic rituals. Do not use them merely for pleasure.
2. Many Native Americans and Native European cultures used Sweatlodges to purify the body of poisons and negative energy. The mind often travels well in the Dark when all that heat and magic start flying around.
3. Drugs and Alcohol are big NO-NOs, because they are dangerous with sweatlodges and should not be used before hand.
4. Drink A LOT of water and salt during the day of the sweat.

Chapter the Fourth

1. Sweats are done nude and not for perverted reasons. Many mystics claim that magic energy dissipates from the body through the palms and soles, the forehead, the belly, the armpits, the nipples and the genital organs. For the most powerful sweatlodge, it must be done in the nude, and you should warn all comers, before they come, of this fact.
2. Because of the nudity, choose a secluded spot at night where wanderers are unlikely to pass by. A guardian/fire tender is recommended. Little Grove and Oak Grove are Good.

Chapter the Fifth

1. I will tell you how to make a sweatlodge, if no one knows at the time of this reading.
2. Dig a foot deep hole, about one foot wide where the ground is comfortable to sit upon.
3. You build a "igloo" of bent poles, tied down into a dome about three feet high and six feet wide, around that hole in the ground. You cover the dome with plastic tarps to hold in the steam vapors. You cover the tarps with blankets to keep in the heat, so that the steam lasts longer.
4. You gather ten or more fist sized rocks. Volcanic rocks are better and they will not 'Explode' when water is poured on them. Most of these 'explosions' are the formation of cracks, but the Sound of that happening is frightening.
5. You gather at least ten armloads of dry, deadwood, with possibly a charcoal base for the fire. You build the fire and insert the rocks into the fire. When they are glowing hot, you transport them into the foot deep hole you dug. Frying pans and thick leather gloves help at this point. Keep the fire going, with possibly a second round of rocks heating up while you sweat.
6. Strip down and purify yourselves. Then you prepare for meditation and enter the sweatlodge. You can do some mantras, chants and prayers until you, or the rocks, are finished. Then exit and drink some water.

Chapter the Sixth

1. Always practice safe fire rules.
2. Use a fire-ring with little surrounding underbrush.
3. Extinguish the fire to the point where you'd be willing to hold all the logs between your legs for a minute.
4. Beware of windy days.

Chapter the Seventh

1. Beware of glass at ritual sites, the best thing to do to prevent build up of glass is for someone to pass the ritual sites after 'party' times of the year and pick up any WHOLE bottles.
2. If whole bottles stay out more than a day, they will become broken bottles.
3. Magnets will pick up nails really well.
4. Encourage shoes to be worn when a site hasn't been groomed.

Chapter the Eighth

1. I tell you that it is far better that the Druids use wood than for it to be chopped into mulch by grounds crew.
2. If you do spot areas of the Arb, where trees have been cut down and stacked into neat piles of log, I tell you that you should abscond with those logs to a hidden spot and store them for future ritual usage.
3. Any bad karma can be dealt with later. Do not delay, for they will return to collect the wood.

Chapter the Ninth

1. You may ask who made the two sweatlodges used from 1992-1995?
2. The first was made by Michael and Matt (the tall) on Mai Fete in the Summer of 1992.
3. The wood for that came from saplings cut down by grounds crew when they cleared the woods next to Lower Lyman lake.
4. The second, of the lower arboretum, was made by Paul the Blond and Michael in the summer of 1993.
5. The wood for that came from saplings cut down by grounds crew when they cleared the woods next to the Oak Opening of the lower arboretum.
6. It should be noted, that there is a rival tradition at Carleton for demolishing the sweatlodge after every usage rather than re-using it.

Chapter the Tenth

1. At campfires, it is always nice to have some type of food that can be cooked after the ritual.
2. Smores, hotdogs, marshmallows and tea pots are the favorite things to heat.
3. Coals cook better than flames.

Chapter the Eleventh

1. Another fun fire activity is making Candles and Torches for Druidical purposes.
2. Both generally require paraffin wax which is cheap, although Beeswax is always preferable in quality.
3. To heat wax, use a double boiler system by filling a pot with water and putting the can holding the wax inside the water. This prevents the wax from surpassing a boiling point, which could produce a cloud of combustible wax vapors!
4. Candles can be made by filling Dixie cups or halved coke cans with wax and suspending a thread in the hardening mixture. Candles can also be repeatedly dipped into the wax, but this will a great deal of time.
5. To make fine torches, you need to gather stalk of dried mullein rods from the fields. They look like crusty corndogs on hollow woody stems between three and seven feet high.
6. One can dip torches gradually or you can take semi-congealed wax in your hands and just squish it onto the torch.
7. Be careful not to put too much wax on a torch that it will cause the stem to snap!
8. A torch made in this way will burn for 10 to forty minutes and is difficult to extinguish by wind or nearby movement.

Chapter the Twelfth

1. It is considered good luck to leap over the Druid campfire. But do so carefully.
2. So ends the Book of Fire.

Figure 15 Being AD can give you a headache.

THE DEAD BAY SCROLLS

or

The Apocryphal of Miracles by the New Reformed Druids of North America of the Hazelnut Mother Grove South Bay Branch

Original 1993 Introduction:

In all the hoop-lah over the Discovery of the Dead Bay Scrolls, I think it's time to set forward the truth of the matter. For those who accuse me of unconscionable delay in taking two years to publish them, I can only remind them that it is taking over 45 years for the Dead Sea Scrolls to be published.

Despite the well-published claims with amply valid evidence, the Dead Bay Scrolls were not written in ancient Icelandic. The often-cited passages of Das Edda Todvordgeshritten is not from translation, but merely bad English. End of debate.

As for the location of the discovery of the documents, I can only state that they were discovered in 1993 at an undisclosed Trailer park in the Bay Region of San Francisco. The Dead Bay Scrolls were then mailed to Carleton College by an undisclosed source. There they were rediscovered in a small mailbox at Carleton by a Nomadic Postal worker who gave them to Michael Scharding. Once there, the original of the DBS were carefully photographed by an Epson Scanner and placed on magnetic media. In order to protect the scholars' rights to publication, Michael Scharding reserved the editor's right to the limited first publication in 1993. However, due to pressing demand for copies by the public, Michael has relented and given free access to the DBS to the general public.

Controversy has raged over the contents. Do they contain information that would undermine the assumed beliefs of the Reformed Druids? Do they tell of disunity with the group before the great Druid Diaspora and the Destruction of the Berkeley Grove? I'll not answer these questions yet, as many more years of study are required by scholarly panels. However for the first time, they are now available to the public. Enjoy.

Michael Scharding, Editor
Computer Math Center
Dec. 9th, 1993 c.e. 40th Day of Geamradh
Year XXXI of the Reform

New 1996 Introduction

I wrote the original introduction after intensive study of the Dead Sea Scrolls for a school project, and was sick of all the bickering that I saw there. Basically, when I wrote the Dead Lake Scrolls in August of 1993, I sent copies to the various existing groves at the time. The Hazelnut Grove was so enamored with them, that they set about writing their own materials to honor the thirtieth anniversary of Reformed Druidism, which had occurred on April 1993.

This is the one of the few NRDNA documents that has been produced without Isaac's influence, and they can therefore give a broader understanding of the NRDNA. Most of the Druids of the Hazelnut Grove were old-time Druids, from the 70s, so here they give voice to their ideas of how Druidism stands in California today.

Das Edda Todvolkfortgeshritte

The Edda of the People's Death March on the Beach

1. Along the long seastrand did they march
2. All the folk on their way to what was to be
3. Unbeknownst to them
4. Their last moot in the grove for a very long time
5. For a dog a lifetime,
6. For the mice of the fields, generations would pass
7. Until one day
8. Arch-Druids twain, one who had been there
9. One who had not would gather new clans
10. In a southern land under the oaks
11. Celebrate the feast of the first grain harvest
12. And that of Lugh of the Long Hand
13. Ordain new druids onto the Order Second
14. Led were they by a Valkyrie
15. Not gay laughing Brunhilde
16. But one of her grim-faced sisters
17. Resolute she trod on,
18. Stopping only when sounds told her
19. Her charges were not as solemn
20. Or as resolute as she
21. One by one they dropped to the sand
22. But the resolute and hale continued
23. After the grim-faced Valkyrie
24. Until at length they came to the rock
25. At the northern end
26. The skraeling (Indian) headed rock
27. Where two of the number drew the sigil
28. Sacred of the circle with two spears
29. One down, one up
30. Their voices lifted
31. To be carried away on the wind
32. The anthem the last time to be sung
33. And then came the Boring Times
34. Eight years when the Druids' voices
35. Were silenced, and the voices in the trees
36. Were silent also, a long season of sleep
37. Until the polarity of Co-ArchDruids met,
38. To call new clans, to ordain new druids
39. Onto the First and Second
40. And raise one long a Second onto the Third.
41. The death march of the Druids had ended
42. And now came the Parade of Life and Increase.

Translated from the Old Tongue by Thorhilde Ooftasdotter var Vinland

THE BOOK OF THE BORING TIMES

Chapter the First

1. Between the last ritual of the Hazelnut Mother Grove in the land of the East Bay, the Death March, and the first meeting of the Hazelnut Mother Grove South Bay Branch (Gee, look at all those puns!), which occurred at the first harvest time of Lughnasadh, there passed several years when Republicans held high office, and nothing was occurring with the Druids of California.
2. Unless things were happening in other parts of the state with other Druids of the Reform, who did not communicate with the Mother Grove.
3. These were called by the Arch-Druid the Boring Times, not to be confused with the Burning Times.

Chapter the Second

1. In that same place where lurked the Orks and the AK-47's there also lurked a young man for a few moons who was a student in Wicca of she who was to become the Co-Arch Druid.
2. This young man had just got out of the Army and was a bit naive.
3. He believed, or so did he tell the Co-ArchDruid, that the ArchDruid was not just playing computer games to play computer games. He was playing them to do important ritual Magick that would either save the world as we know it or change reality so that we would like it better.
4. And the Co-ArchDruid pondered this and wondered at its meaning.

Chapter the Third

1. And the ArchDruid dwelt during most of the Boring Times in the land of Orks and AK-47sand he was sore displeased.
2. For the quake came and trashed his space, and buried him under a torrent of his books.
3. He crawled out and rent his hair saying "No more! I have had enough!"
4. He had an asthma attack and moved to the South Bay.
5. And there was great rejoicing.

Chapter the Fourth

1. And he then told the Co-ArchDruid that what he was doing with the games was a form of catharsis, called kill therapy, in which the monsters became fundies and all the other creatures the ArchDruid Stephen would rid the world of.
2. And she came to participate.
3. And he still does so to this day.

Chapter the Fifth

1. And the ArchDruid moved four times during the Boring Times until he came to rest in the Alamo, and then moved one more time to where he dwells today.
2. Always during the Active Times and the Boring Times did he promote musical groups and New Age Fairs by distributing their cards and flyers at many locations in the East and South Bay.

3. While promoting the shows, one of which he himself co-produced, he would collect and tell jokes about he-who-was-then-vice-president, Quayle, who was at that time a figure of fun for many (and horror for more).
4. And he collected until he had 365 of them.

Chapter the Sixth

1. After the end of the Boring times, he participated in the Laundry Think Tanks, at which the officers of the Grove planned the next meeting of the grove, and in what other activities the Grove would participate.
2. At the most recent non-boring ritual, Lughnasadh, even Mr. Boring showed an unboring part of himself by participating fully, which shocked the Arch Druid into having an asthma attack (two days later).
3. And there was great rejoicing.

THE BOOK OF MR. BORING

(AKA EARACHE ALIEN MESS)

Chapter the First

1. In the city of San Jose there dwelt a man called Earache Alien Mess.
2. He was co-producer with the ArchDruid Stephen of the New Age Renaissance Fair, which was not boring.
3. But the Mess prided himself in not thinking and in being boring.
4. The Mess played organ and volleyball, did astrology and had a radio show at the local cooperative radio station.
5. It was called the Eric Mystic show, which Stephen did rename the Earache Mistake Show. It consisted of New Age music and topics with people calling in.
6. Once he and Stephen were subbing for a woman who was then ill. Hers was not a call in show, but Earache told people to call in. It was a show on Celtic Magick and Druidism.
7. People were so bored when they heard his voice they stopped calling in.
8. Stephen then took the mike, and in his Edward R. Murrow voice said, "Earache Mess, the voice that silences communication."
9. People called in after that.

Chapter the Second

1. But in time even Mr. Boring became bored with being boring and not thinking.
2. And so he studied how to be less boring. He also engaged in a very dangerous activity; thinking.
3. And so it was that in the fullness of time his face actually cracked into a smile, and he laughed at times, and no damage was done.
4. But he still had a problem. And it was dealing with women. He did not even try, thinking it not worth the trouble.
5. But women, especially Druidesses, and pagan women are powerful, and he missed much by being sexist.

THE BOOK OF GAMES

Chapter the First

1. But still within the Boring times in that same place where lurked the Orks and the AK-47's there also lurked a young man who was a student in Wicca of she who was to, become the Co-ArchDruid.
2. This young man had just got-out of the army and was a bit naive.
3. He believed, or so did he tell the Co-ArchDruid that the ArchDruid was not just playing computer games to play computer games. He was playing them to do important ritual Magick, that would either save the world as we know it or change reality so that we would like it better.
4. And the Co-ArchDruid pondered this and wondered at its meaning.

Chapter the Second

1. Meanwhile the ArchDruid played the computer games, and added more games whenever the Earth Mother did spread Her largesse in his direction.
2. And so also did he put money by to add to his collection of computers on which to play games and so either save the world or to change reality as we know it.
3. And the ArchDruid moved away from the land of Orcs and AK-47's many times until at length he came to dwell in a place called the Alamo which was in San Jose.
4. And he was the only dweller in that place beside the concierge who spoke English. All the others spoke Spanish.
5. And so the Co-ArchDruid spoke to them when she came to visit the Arch-Druid for what she called Kill Therapy.
6. She expiated her anger by killing things on the computer.

Figure 16 Stephen Abbot & Joan Carruth at Berkeley Grove, c.1978,

THE BOOK OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY

Chapter the First

1. And the Druids had now come to their 30th year, and wanted to celebrate and thank the deities for helping them to thrive for 30 years.
2. But there also was a death of an author held high among the People for his wisdom. And many were the books of his writing held and cherished among the people, especially the Co-Archdruids.
3. And the Arch-Druid wanted to honor him now, not wait for Samhain. And so was there a memorial as well as great joy for the 30 years of the Reform.

Chapter the Second

1. And the Co-Arch-Druid was in a state of delight for the Arch-Druid Terlach who had ordained her into the 2nd and into the 3rd also was in attendance.
2. And he was Preceptor, and honored an ancient, hoary tradition of the first Preceptor (Cherniack).
3. And when the Co-Arch-Druid asked him if the Earth-Mother had given forth of Her bounty, he answered "Yup!"
4. And there was great rejoicing.

Chapter the Third

1. And the Arch-Druid, whom she had herself laid the apostolic hand of 3rd Ordination upon after he waited over 8 years after his 2nd, was there and took part in the procession and other parts of the ritual, and was congratulated by the older ArchDruids.
2. And there was great rejoicing.

Chapter the Fourth

1. But there was also in that place great puzzlement, for they wondered that she would ordain when others had refused to, for in many minds and many quarters he was seen as a jerk.
2. And she answered onto them saying, "He did the work. He endured the ordeal. He has studied much in many traditions, but especially the sage Kon Fu Tse, who has wrought many changes within him."
3. For he is a magician. And it is the task of a magician to produce changes in reality in accordance with his will. And he is also a priest.
4. And so did the Co-Arch-Druid anoint him just before the close of the year. Even just before the holy day of Samhain, for she was a sadist.

Chapter the Fifth

1. He had committed to doing a Samhain druid ritual for the OTO'ers, thinking he could get her to perform it.
2. But it was in her mind to ordain him and have that be his first ritual as an Arch-Druid. And he called his Grove Tuatha De Danaan.
3. And many were the members from Hazelnut Mother Grove South Bay Branch (Gee, look at all those puns!) who attended the ritual and saw that it was well done.
4. And there was great rejoicing.

Chapter the Sixth

1. And great was the Co-Arch-Druid's pride at seeing this, so that several buttons broke, for she saw that she had ordained well.
2. For it is the way of a true priest to rise above their personal imperfections, act their station and to lead the people in the ritual, and the one called Sommer did that well.
3. And it was the first ritual to be done in the East Bay for several years, and since the Hazelnut had moved, and its name had grown by many characters, it was the first grove in the East Bay to be holding regular rituals.
4. And there was great rejoicing

THE BOOK OF THE LAUNDRY-THINK-TANK

Chapter the First

1. And it came to pass that the Co-Arch-Druid preferred to do her laundry the slow cheap way at her own washer and dryer, rather than at any Laundromat.
2. But the washer and dryer were at her former residence, the house of her mother-in law.
3. And this was also the dwelling of, the Arch-Druid of the Hazelnut Mother Grove South Bay Branch (Gee, look at all those puns!).
4. And so during the time of agitation, the rinse, and the house shaking spin. (5.4 on the Richter scale) The Co-Arch-Druids discussed the matters that mattered to them. So was born the grand tradition of the Laundry Think Tank.
5. And there was great rejoicing.

Chapter the Second

1. They did reason together, and-occasionally rhymed, and even burst into song, which the others in attendance did try to ignore.
2. They planned the next ritual to be held at which the Arch-Druid always had a guided meditation.
3. And the Co-Arch-Druid included it in her script, and there was great rejoicing.
4. But the Arch-Druid, who was fond of shamanism, hated scripts) and made up a poem:
5. If you must have scripts,

   Study them here

   'Cause once at the site,

   Scripts disappear.
6. And there was great rejoicing.

Chapter the Third

1. And at first only third orders did participate.
2. But behold!, two there were who were only firsts, though one had a high degree in Ar nDriaocht Fein, the Other Druids, and was exceedingly wise in the their ways.
3. So the Co-Arch-Druids said they were invited, because of their wisdom, for they were women. And like the Co-Arch Druid they were Wiccans.
4. And they joined the Think-Tank.
5. For their wisdom was discovered in a Tarot Reading.
6. And there was great rejoicing.

Chapter the Fourth

1. There came one into the Laundry Think Tank also who was large and made good food.
2. Now this one had been named after the Good God, Dagda in a special naming ceremony at Ancient Ways, a gathering of the folk.
3. The ritual came after a 3rd Order Ordination of Don the Blonde also called Butt Boy.
4. And the Arch-Druids did greatly love to give all the people names by which they would be known. The Co-arch-Druid named one woman named Sonya who had blonde hair Paper Moon so that she was Sonya Paper Moon.
5. Now this ritual of ordination and naming was the first Druidic event at Ancient Ways in five years, so it will live in the memory of many. At least eight and thirty.
6. And there was great rejoicing.

Chapter the Sixth

1. For Don the Blond had survived the endless night's vigil without so much as a fire.
2. And he would create the Angus Og Grove of Alameda and Contra Costa counties and thereby create a new kind of Druid, the Ombanda Druids of North America.
3. But it is not known if this had indeed come to pass. And the Arch Druid had doubts.

Chapter the Seventh

1. Also was there discussion of matters of great philosophical weight, such as opening the other orders to others who had interest, not by rank, for the Arch-Druid was not one to love hierarchy, but merit.
2. So each order would have its own color ribbon and a tutelary deity appropriate to its nature.
3. Green was known to all as healing and herbs and called Dian Cecht after the God of Healing.
4. Blue also for Bard, Taliesin, Cerridwen and Brigid.
5. Grannos for brewing.
6. Martial Red for warriors
7. Purple for Magick and Myrrdin.
8. Silver for Women's Mysteries Arianrhod.
9. And there was great rejoicing.

Chapter the Seventh

1. But not always was the discussion among the Druids of such great philosophical weight.
2. Many times did they play games on the great electronic philosopher's machine, and kill things which were imaged electronically, for in the Arch-Druid's (strange) mind were these activities linked ritually.
3. Also was there a game of the role-playing, and the Co-Arch-Druid got to play the parts of the non-player characters, and monsters, and growl and wroth greatly with delight.
4. And there was great rejoicing.

Addendum to the Ordination of the Second Order

After finishing the chalice, the Candidate goes off for a period of isolated meditation in which s/he assembles an altar/sacred space, and meditates upon the five-fold Powers of the Mother. When s/he returns, the AD asks the following five questions in order to determine what has been discovered in hir meditation.

AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Power of the Mother? (Fire of Earth)
C: Gives an extemporaneous reply.
AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Beauty of the Mother? (Water of Earth)
C: Gives a reply
AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Understanding of the Mother (Earth of Earth)
C: Gives a reply
AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Wisdom of the Mother? (Air of Earth)
C: Gives a reply
AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Magic of the Mother? (Spirit of Earth)
C: Gives a reply

Figure 17 Emmon Bodfish, Larry & Sue Press, Beltane 1983 at Live Oak Grove.

THE BOOK OF SAMHAIN

Chapter the First

1. And as the great wheel of the year turned the Grove came to its favored place to celebrate a ritual for Samhain.
2. And when the Co-ArchDruid offered the sacrifice the winds were silent for it was the coming of the time of Sleep for the Earth Mother.
3. But the Grove had new spears to consecrate and three new Druids were sealed to the First Order.
4. One of the bearers of these spears was a new First Order named Crazy Bear.
5. And he did the greeting of the quarters according to the Native American medicine way.
6. The ArchDruid called up the quarters in the familiar Celtic tradition.
7. And there was great rejoicing.

Chapter the Second

1. And the officers of the Grove, the ArchDruid, the Co-ArchDruid, the Cocoa-ArchDruid, and the Preceptor told the People of the Grove what Samhain meant to them, and each person in attendance put the name of the honored dead into the circle.
2. But there were in that same place boys racing through on bicycles, for it was a public park.
3. And so they had a right as well as the Druids to be in that place. But the boys showed themselves to be Anti-Druids, for they heckled and called out rude comments, which the ArchDruid and Crazy Bear were unable to ignore.
4. And so Crazy bear ran towards them brandishing the spear.
5. And the Anti-Druid boys rode home and told their parents, and the parents called the police, who came and interrupted the ritual.
6. But the Co-ArchDruid was able to give the Grove the blessing, which was traditional.

Chapter the Third

1. And the people pondered what they had seen and were of several minds (at least one more opinion than there were those present, as is traditional).
2. And the ArchDruid was greatly irked and prophesied dire things for the Grove as a part of this.
3. He thought it was the Brit Bitch or the followers of Bush & Wilson, and the religious right on the warpath to wipe out pagankind. But the Co-ArchDruid took it as a sign of the Druids' innate strength.
4. For it was not until they showed their strength that the Anti-Druids acted against them, for they were not worthy of notice before. But flex a little muscle and the Anti-Druids suddenly sit up and take notice.
5. The Druids and pagankind in general will just have to work a little harder, and fight a little harder from now on.
6. And if getting a permit is required, get a permit.

Dead River Scrolls

2003 Introduction

Not much is known about this collection, which covers the 1997-2001 years at Carleton College, in which Mike was no longer visiting the Carleton Grove as frequently due to his self-imposed exile to Japan for four years. Following the triple Arch-Druidcy of Michelle, Ann & Becky; Irony and Michelle the Blond took over until she dropped out. After this, Merri, Chrissy, Chris, Dan and a host of other Druids stepped in to help with running Grove matters at Carleton.

The Dead River Scolls were originally written by various Druids in 1997, but they got lost. More was written in 1999, and I lost those. But the third time I collect the materials, I held on to them tight, and much did reveal itself from generous donors, on dusty disks that I had misplaced. This collection of more awful writings by me, and much more interesting ones by my friends will hopefully entertain you a little. It covers letters, epistles and speeches from the Carleton and Akita Grove from 1996-2003.

Sincerely,
Mike Scharding
Day 7 of Earrach, Year XL of the Reform.
February 7, 2003

Printing History
1st Edition 1997
2nd Edition 1999
3nd Edition 2003 (ARDA 2)

Figure 18 First Stone Circle, c. 1956.

The Mini-Epistle of Michelle the Dark

(By Michelle Curtis, 1996)

1. March 5th, 1996 19:48
2. The previous postings has sparked quite a bit of discussion on the mailing list. To tell the truth I haven't actually read all of the posts. I did want to see if I could spark some discussion on here about what people believe, not just about paganism but just religion/spirituality in general.
3. I, myself, go through periods of searching. I must always re-examine my beliefs. This happens every few years and I am currently in one such mind set.
4. Usually I try to read about different religious practices but who has time for that during the school year? I have come to realize that I am more of a spiritual than a religious person.
5. The distinction (in my mind) being that spirituality is something you feel and religion is something you practice. Usually the two would have to coincide. Your religious practices should not go against the way you feel about things.
6. Because I am drawn to different aspects of different religions, but cannot reconcile myself to one as a whole, I am forced to pick and combine them….
7. Anyway, I just wanted to try to spark up some conversation about belief and stuff in general. I hope you have been finding my posts from the list to be useful...

Figure 19 Top Amanda on right, Bottom Amanda doing rite Beltane 1997.

The Epistle of Amanda

(By Amanda Bradley, Dec 1997)

1. Dear Michael,
2. Thank you for your long-distance support, it's nice to know that because of our devotion to the Earth we can share our experiences and friendship.
3. There are many people who follow a Druidic path and call it Buddhism, Catholicism, etc.
4. I always find it interesting to attend the religious services of another faith, or get into a discussion with someone who think they believe differently, and see just how much we have in common.
5. We're all seeking, taking the paths that seem the most fitting for our beliefs, but we're all going to end up in the same place.
6. What, may I ask, pulled you to Druidism?
7. For me it was the combination of religion and Nature, the fact that it doesn't require me to think that other religions are "wrong".
8. [Many people have always believed that there is only one "right" way to spiritual awakening or whatever one would call it. However, you are right in that so many religions are very similar, they probably ARE the same religion, but some people found things they didn't like about one, changed it, and denounced the original.
9. Also, Christianity DID borrow from the Pagan religions in order to get more Pagans to convert.
10. These similarities aren't limited to Christianity and the Pagan religions of Western Europe, though. In Indian religions three is also a holy number, and there is a trinity of the Buddha, his Spirit body, Enjoyment body and Dharma(human) body, and there are parallels with Indian religion in Native American religions. Sorry about the run-on sentence. (24 Oct 1996)]
11. You asked about my vigil. It was one of the most surreal experiences of my life.
12. Michelle started out with me in the lower Arb shortly before sunset. She shared with me information I would find valuable through the night.
13. As darkness fell, I expected it to bring fear, but I felt fear only once that entire night when something ran across a field and I though it came at me through the foliage lining the trail.
14. I did a lot of thinking before the sun rose that morning, mostly about the mother-daughter relationship I have with the Earth/Goddess (I'm Wiccan).
15. I saw it as an omen that I stood on the hill at sunrise, a doe and her fawn stepped into view in a nearby field. I can think of nothing else to say about the experience, it was beyond any verbal description.
16. Things are going well with the Druids. We have good participation for most things, but for our last full moon ritual no one showed up. Probably, because it was fairly cold and there were three inches of snow on the ground.
17. All in all a good fall term.
18. I don't have an anthology yet, so I'm borrowing the Religious Diversity House copy for now.
19. Have a good Yule.
20. Amanda

The Sigil Letters

Chapter the First: The Sigil Vigil

1. Dear Siblings
2. You asked me what I see when I look at this neat little sigil you sent to me? Is it now traditional to wear Druid Sigils as jewelry, this smacks of prosyletization, don't you think?
3. I had always preferred retaining the sigils for liturgical work and carving them on the winds at the close of the service with our hands (Peace, Peace, Peace), thus showing vividly how temporary is our mark on the world.
4. But, it was a good question, so I stayed up last night and thought about it, which is not hard since we have 23 hours at the South Pole.
5. Here are the more comprehensible thoughts that resulted;
6. I see two parallel lines intersecting a circle. (is there more to it than that?)
7. I see the original ritualistic gestures of its shape carved on the winds (where do they go?)
8. I see a fork and a knife on a plate (what was for dinner?)
9. I see two chopsticks resting on a bowl (is it full or emptied?)
10. I see a lid to a pot with bars to keep it from falling in (what's for dinner?)
11. I see a grate to filter out the flow of something (what's to be kept out?)
12. I see two boards placed on a well-top (are you thirsty?)
13. I see two pins and a ring, holding up a hairdo (how fancy is it?)
14. I see a drum and two drum sticks (what music does your rhythm accompany?)
15. I see two saplings with the sun rising behind them (what will happen today?)
16. I see two bars on window (is it locked?)
17. I see a galloping turtle with his head pulled in. (what is he afraid of?)
18. I see the world's tropics of cancer and Capricorn. (where will you go?)
19. I see a thing that cannot be described (do you see it too?)
20. I see a baseball in mid-flight (how will you swing?)
21. I see a bridge spanning over a pond (is it deep?)
22. I see rabbit ears on TV antenna. (What channel are you tuned to?)
23. I see a drawbridge of a castle entrance (what is protected?)
24. I see a Celtic cross, with swords unlocked (why were they fighting?)
25. I see some planks laid over a chasm (what made the hole?)
26. I see eyelashes on a half-closed eye (what does it see?)
27. I see the stalactite & stalagmite lined entrance to the Earth-Mother's womb (what will come out?)
28. I see three enclosed spaces (what else in there?)
29. I see a gold platter and two ivory tusks (was it worth the cost?)
30. I see the trails of two friends in a grassy meadow (which flowers will they pick?)

31. I see two streams of a waterfall pouring over the mouth of a cave (must you get wet?)
32. I see infinite space stretching away from the sigil (what is out there?)
33. I see the refined end-product of some melted rocks, hauled far from home (just like us, isn't it?
34. I see a division of a perfect year into two half seasons and two "days between the years"
35. I see analogies that have gone on too long (when will I stop?)
36. I see a short tube when viewed from the sides (details depend on the vantage point)
37. I see two parallel lines intersecting a circle on the other side. (sometimes opposites are similar)
38. It is a lump of pewter, than I hung on my computer.
39. -Ian Friesland, June 1997

Chapter The Second: Sigil Musings

1. November 11th, 1997
2. Dear Amanda Bradley, Sister-in-the-Mother.
3. I wish you a happy Celtic Year and beginning of the Time of Sleep in Reformed Druidism (Samhain to Beltane).
4. As a present I offer you this Druid Sigil which I usually give to new 3rd Orders. What does it mean?
5. It is merely a lump of silver to some, worth $20.
6. To others it is a symbol of weirdness, of people who refuse to accept societies predetermined paths of spirituality.
7. To others it is a symbol by which to recognize other Druids, but verily I believe that there are many people in many faiths or codes who follow the Druidic path but use a different name for it. Seek these people, too.
8. To others, it is a symbol of their desire to control the "magic" of Nature. I have done this too, but beware of egotism, because the control of Nature's magic can be abused, just as we have abused Nature's other resources.
9. To others, it is an indefinite thing. This simple symbol has seemingly never been adopted or named before by any known group before 1963. It can be used as a tool without existing prejudice for teaching.
10. To you, it will mean whatever you wish. If you wear it, people will associate your deeds and words with this symbol.

I give it to you with this in mind.
Yours in the Mother,
Michael, Druid Missionary in Japan

Figure 20 Akita Grove with Bon Den, c. 1997.

Chapter the Third: My Vision of the Sigil

1. I've thought a bit about the sigil. The following is born out of my experiences with a Rosen Method practitioner, my experiences with the Mists of the Stone Forest Grove in Minneapolis, as well as the events of the night of my vigil. In Neopagan Druidism, such as we are, there is a tendency to three-ness.
2. There are a number of three aspected Godheads in Celtic mythology, for example.
3. There is also the aspect of three in time, which has Gaelic names for past, present and future that I cannot remember.
4. Also, the three realities that the Cosmic Tree unites: Upper World, This world, Lower World. Another "three" that we at Mists worked with is that of Gods & Goddesses, Nature Spirits, and Ancestors. In our rituals we invoke these three.
5. The sigil of OBOD is the three rayed sign, commonly translated as the rays of spirit, mind, and body.
6. My view of the RDNA sigil is that the two vertical rays represent spirit and soul. Soul could alternately be called mind. I see the difference between spirit and soul as being the two parts of life that reach for the heavens (spirit), and that which embraces the Earth(soul). I won't say that this is a sharp definition.
7. They could just as easily be two aspects of the same immaterial aspect of a human as two different things altogether.
8. However, they have a body around them, and I believe that is very effectively symbolizes the unity of Life, especially within a Pagan worldview.
9. The two rays extending in both directions beyond the "body" can than have significant meanings of the need to have the balance of an inner life coupled with the outer life of experience.
10. I am a believer in the mind/body connection, and this sigil could well symbolize that too.
11. That has been my experience of late with this Rosen Practitioner. It's a subtle form of touch that reads the soul as kept in the body. I was doing some experiments of my own in my last session, and the results were outstanding.
12. This practitioner I see is good. If I changed my mind in mid-stream, he felt it. I was changing my energies, by centering very deeply. When I hit core, I get body rushes, and when I did, he immediately noted it.
13. I was being silent the whole time, and experimenting with the method because I see this as being a powerful tool for healing souls, which is a desire of mine.
14. So the sigil to me is very profound. I wear it constantly, and it serves to remind me of my Third Order calling.
15. -Robert Harrison, ODAL, Carleton Grove (associated)

The Book of Exile, Part One

(By Irony, 1997-1990)

Chapter the FIRST

1. May 6, 1997
2. Dear Mec,
3. I will not be in evidence over this summer.
4. With any luck I will be wandering Wales and Ireland with my estranged lady love. She had a dream some years ago that we would be in England together the summer before her senior year. Self-fulfilling perhaps, or gratuitous wish granting, but we are formulating travel plans either way.
5. Now I am working on a paper that has crashed four computers and done outrageous power outage. Theological implications of the Ancient Mariner… Someone does not want the thing written.
6. I seem accidentally to have declared a religion major, primarily because I wanted Jackson as an advisor, and found that I am six courses ahead of the game. Time for some time off.
7. There is an internship in Germany I may fall into next term, assuming I come back from the isles. Nothing academic, just building twelve meter racing sailboats within half an hour of both the North and Baltic oceans.
8. Carleton seems unsympathetic to people interested in learning about life rather than ivory. I dearly love the place and the people, but I need some time to myself again.
9. When do you reemerge from the east?
10. Irony

Chapter the SECOND

1. May 7th, 1998
2. Dear Mec,
3. I've settled back into Carleton at last after a long and full year pursuing education in other forms and places.
4. I worked for a month at the end of last spring then poured all the earnings into a plane to Germany where I stayed until October, living alone, learning to drink, working with a blacksmith, living off bread and brie and musslix.
5. I was in Nieder Saxon, Schleswig-Holstein where the Viking 'Empire' was centered, as far North as you can go and not be in Denmark. Barrows are scattered about the landscape, now largely forgotten and unmarked by the locals, though I found the stubs of candles in the hollow of the crown of one.
6. I also spent a fair bit of time playing with the deer in the wild park. While doing that, I encountered a pleasant and awe-inspiring shock of a pure white doe.
7. The trip was badly organized and suffered from discrepant paradigms such that the only things that worked out were those I found for myself. By October I was ready to leave, which was good; they were ready to deport me!
8. So I went to England, reacquainted myself with my British relations whom I had not really seen in fourteen years. I stayed in London for two weeks in the company of an overbearing aunt and a discomfortingly beautiful cousin. She had the most distracting habit of greeting me with a kiss on the cheek. One that verged dangerously on the electric corners of the lips upon occasion. I was very glad we were related.
9. Then I traveled again to a commune in Swindon where I worked for a time and learned many things, to Avebury, where I wandered, was rained upon, and left an offering of blood on the old, old stones, to Glastonbury where I spent the night on the Tor while the winds wept and invisible things clumped about the grass.
10. There I met an old, old witch, a beautiful Mauri woman in her late seventies, still clear of mind, but approaching death who could see in me with a clarity that many miss having known me for years.
11. Then home again by a wandering route where I returned to Merri, at last, and we spent a longer time together than we have since the spring we met. I got to know my family again during those two months, the brother who is growing up without me and the father who is more at peace than I have ever known him to be.
12. I arrived in time for Samhain and a wonderful William friend of mine and I celebrated in style in a field below/beyond my home, out of sight of everything but stars.
13. After Christmas I left for Sea or SEA rather: Sea Education Association - The Semester at Sea program, the most enlightening experiential, and challenging academic phenomenon I have yet to encounter.
14. I learned less about myself there than others did, of I went into it knowing more about this person that I am. I did learn much about how the world works, about power and resolve, how people change and function, and a dozen practical things of work and living.
15. I turned as black as the Arab I am and lost fifteen pounds to sea sickness. Someday I will return to the sea.
16. She is coming to Carleton in the fall, and I will teach her all I know about the workings of this place and to the dubious wisdom and traditions of the last three years.
17. She has that rarest of gifts, true initiative. NO one remaining here does. There is no feedback, no suggestions are offered. Things happen only when out of the nothingness, I, or alas more rarely Michelle Hajder, decides that they will. Then people come participate and wander off again, without comment.
18. Chrissie, though, creates her own schemes and is inspired by those she sees. She arrived at my door with a bag of tricks and announced that we were to celebrate. After the feeling I have here of having to force things through by my will and my presence - all the while trying not to be a leader- it was unspeakably refreshing to have someone enthusiastic, creative in their own right and willing to walk beside, instead of behind or before.
19. I feel vaguely bad about planning for her to assume the leadership here and even a tad of humorous guilt for 'importing' an active and dynamic Druid when there were no local ones forth coming. I have known Chrissie since before she could walk. Promoting her to Archdruidcy feels almost dynastic sometimes.
20. And now I've returned.
21. I have designed the first ethics major at Carleton, which may open up a new concentration.
22. Someone has stenciled John Lennon upon the north facing stone of the circle. Somehow it does not bother me much. The place is well loved by the people here, the lady has a path beaten down to her and I find flowers and offerings there at times.

23. I performed the weddings at Beltain to the great delight of the couples and onlookers. One was a couple from my class. The other, Harriet Erwin and her boyfriend, the secretary of philosophy / religion / classics, if you don't recall.
24. We danced the maypole into the ground and Michelle led the last dance so that I could watch it all happen for once.
25. I am happy in a peculiar way with the near future looking full, serious, and wonderful. I miss my love immensely but we will be together again for another while soon. I am sorry to have missed your wedding.
26. Enough for now, for one letter,
27. Yours in service,
28 Irony
29. Carleton College, MN

Chapter the THIRD

1. Date: Fri, 06 Nov 1998 14:44:00 –0600
2. Druidism, as I practice it, is at its heart the recognition of only two things:
3. That the spiritual search is important, individual, and life long, and that nature presents one avenue down which to take this search.
4. What it requires is simply a great degree of intellectual honesty with ones self. You do not simply choose what you will believe; you search out what might be true and subject it to some rigorous examination.
5. Approach life with the premise that everyone and everything can teach you something you don't yet know, and knows something that you never will.
6. Druidism is about actively learning as much as you can about life and yourself- not merely on the spiritual plane.
7. I could go on forever, but it will become a description of my search, rather than classical reformed druidism if I continue much.
8. It may help you to know one of the very basic suppositions and assertions of that system. You have a right to believe what you know to be true, no matter what anyone thinks of it.
9. I would be glad to talk to you in person about anything. An important learning technique is sharing with others the things you have learned, unlearned, or wondered about. Through their reflections on it, you glean a lot.
10. Give me a call if you wish, or stop by. 646-4566.
11. Irony.

Chapter the FOURTH

1. Dear Mec,
2. After nearly four years I am no longer Carleton's Archdruid. It is an odd feeling. My sigil necklace broke on the trip home and there was a longish space of time where I felt that I could no longer do magic, like that was a thing that went with the position... How was your severance experience?
3. It seems that I am still a servant of whatever it is I've finally begun calling god. It's strange.
4. I feel like this is another training period for a task I can't see yet. The other side of my brain thinks it's all hogwash of course. Who is to say who is right?
5. I enjoyed our contest last night. However long it took to recover from it...
6. I would be honored if you would come to my wedding.
7. For the Apocrypha: "Tread lightly on Fairy toes, and beware all drinking games with past Arch-Druids."
8. You taught me alot, Mec, I thank you.
9. Til next time.
10. Irony
11. June 1999, New York

The Tree Epistle of John

(By John Burridge, 1999)

Chapter the FIRST

1. January 17th, 1999 18:34:13 -0800ï'êM
2. You wrote: Tomorrow's tea will be focused around a discussion. 'Are we making it all up?' The search, the circle, god, magic, meaning... 'Is any of it really there?'
3. I'm not so sure that the question, "Are we making it all up?" is a useful question. (Well, OK, it's one which philosophers have been asking about reality for a while... but then I'm a theatre major disguised as a physics major disguised as a computer person.)
4. Certainly we're being slightly more conscious about how we interpret what we are sensing. Unless you meant, "Is what we're experiencing something which can be measured with machines?" maybe a more interesting question could be, "What is making us choose to organize our sensory input in a way which includes magic, the search, etc.?"

Chapter the SECOND

1. For example, once, while I was hugging a tree, it hugged me back.
2. Now, it didn't grow arms, and the branches didn't move to squeeze my shoulders, but at the time I felt a warmth and a sensation of touch around my shoulders. That I experienced a hug is a truth.
3. The explanation of "what really happened" is another matter. A non-exhaustive list of explanations:
4. The Spirit of the Tree decided that I needed a hug and did something with ectoplasm (or what have you).
5. I was rather depressed at the time, and in need of some kind of comfort so badly that I imagined the tree hugging me strongly enough to "feel" it.
6. By hugging the tree, I somehow brought our "fields" together, and the exchange of "charge" between the tree and my body registered as a sensation of heat and pressure.
7. By hugging the tree, I relaxed my shoulder muscles and the release in tension caused a small muscle spasm interpreted as a shoulder hug.
8. Radiation from the Reed College nuclear reactor just happened to pass through my shoulders at the same time that I was hugging the tree.
9. The Deity saw that I needed comfort, and caused Radiation from the Reed College nuclear reactor to pass through my shoulder at the time I was hugging the tree.
10. None of the above. All of the above.

Chapter the THIRD

1. I prefer to believe the first explanation. It could be wrong.
2. Since I don't expect other people's lives to depend on familiar trees hugging them (or at least believing that familiar trees could hug them), I don't see that it matters what I'm believing about the tree (at least it is consistent with my animist spiritual beliefs).
3. The only thing "wrong" about my belief (as Mark Dwyer will point out) is that it assumes that Trees in general (and The Deity specifically) are even interested in or care what one human being is feeling for the rather short period of five minutes.
4. But hey, it beats being nihilistic about the world.
5. - John

Figure 21 Betsy at New Circle, Beltane 1997.

Figure 22 Irony at Old Circle, Samhain 1996.

The Book of Q

(By Q, 1999)

Chapter the FIRST: Introduction

1. "Arf! Wan! Wan!" as we say in Doggese, or as I say, in English, "Hey there, how are you doing?"
2. I'm not sure I should be here, I'm borrowing Mike's keyboard while he takes a nap.
3. He seems very busy writing stuff here, so I thought I'd write a few things from my perspective.

Chapter the SECOND: The Basics

1. Food and drink is good. Can't state that too strongly.
2. Play and rest is good. Amen to that!
3. I like people to be nice to me.
4. Don't bite the hand that feeds you, unless they're being idiots.

Chapter the THIRD: Other Pleasures

1. I don't know about sex, they neutered me, bastards....
2. If it itches, scratch.
3. Chase anything that moves.
4. Did I mention food?

Chapter the FOURTH: Other Stuff

1. Every day is special and new.
2. Go for walkies, mountains and forests and rivers are good.
3. Forget the paths and just wander about, you'll find something new this way.
4. Visit your friends often.
5. Clothes and leashes get in the way of the good life.
6. When playing in the water, don't fight the current, just cross the river.
7. If you talk too much, especially near unawake people, they get angry at you.

Chapter the FIFTH: Conclusion

1. Hey, this writing thing is pretty easy, huh?
2. Gotta go. He's waking up again....

Q the Dog
July 30th, 1999
Akita, Japan

Figure 23 Akita Grove Circle, c. 1998.

The Book of the Sermon

(By Pat of Akita Grove)

1. Aye, it was a bad omen, for it was Midsummer's Day, the longest day of the year, and yet a service was held in the forest of Takayama.
2. Mike's arrival in our country was certainly a mixed blessing, for although he brought the teachings of the Reform to blend with our Shinto, he did also bring with him his speeches.
3. It is unfortunate that Mike is inspired with enough thoughts to keep several men busy, thus he wishes to dispense the extra ones to those around him.
4. For many weeks he had worked on that speech and for many minutes did it last.
5. A priest of Belenos, Mike did verily stop the sun in the heavens, for time seemed to stretch beneath the torrent of words that he unleashed on the listeners.
6. Grass grew several inches, brains froze and drool escaped the lips of some of his victims.
7. Several were enlightened as their minds sought escape from their bodies, others writhed in abject boredom.
8. Having studied the ancients, he felt not the urgent press of youth, and seemed bent on remaining there talking until we all had reached great age.
9. What was said was not remembered, but valuable insight was inadvertently gained from the message.
10. When the words, stopped, and consciousness returned to the listeners, all blew a kiss to Mike, to remind him of an ancient Druid lesson, known by the masses.
11. Keep It Short & Simple.

Figure 24 Pat doing Sirona's Shugyo Service, at the Akita Grove's waterfall c.1998.

The Book of Exile, Part Two

(By Irony, 1999-2001)

Chapter the FIRST

1. Dear Mike
2. I read all the books you sent me. Thank you deeply.
3. Machiavelli was fascinating, deserving of further study. The one truly disturbing thought it produced was this: will any system of thought that does not make the acquisition of power one of its objectives eventually become a tool for one that does? If so, what are we to do about it?
4. As my mother kindly pointed out one must distinguish between force and power, but still I suspect the quandary remains.
5. The Buddhist answer -- I suspect-- would be to distinguish between inner and outer power. Have enough power in yourself and noone can wield power over you (or have no self...)
6. When I think of Reformed Druidism as a "system" of thought, it seems that its goal - if it has one- is understanding.
7. (I also suspect it is also too small and esoteric a way for any external power monger to notice!) The old Druids though, were very powerful, and very hard to manipulate - which is why Rome had them killed. Bears thinking about....
8. Fate seems to enjoy messing with my mind. Each time I get something all planned out the wyrds weave some new thread past mine that sets me all adrift again. I don not know if I will aim for Japan.
9. The need to do useful work, that I can believe in, is nagging at me and I am struck with Socrates' truth that the philosopher needs to be a citizen of the world. The U.N.'s calling me.
10. The creation of a cooperative peaceful, culturally diverse and environmentally sound planet is something I could work for whole-heartedly. I know not by what means I would do this, nor how, now where, but it tempts me to try.
11. My worry is the assertion that the world's ills are not susceptible to political solutions, but spiritual ones.... There seems to be some truth in that.
12. The Bahai's (worth intensive study - they are practically Druids already!) maintain that the purpose of religion is peaceable union and understanding, a cross cultural binding force - and insist further that it is better to be without religion than to support one that serves division. Them too I must learn more about....
13. Yours truly, Irony

Chapter the Second

Dalon ap Landu: Lord of the Palm Trees
Irony Sade, ODAL, VCN, in Tonga

1. Spring 2001?
2. Druidism becomes exactly as serious as you take it to be (not serious-dull, but rather, important, personal, life affecting.) You and I have taken it more seriously than most, and have (I hope) been rewarded accordingly.

3. I have moved in this year from the pyrhhic and phoenix-like sacrifice of leading, loving and leaving a grove and into what must be old territory for you: the life of a devout, wandering, groveless and lonely Druid priest.
4. Tonga is a lonely place in which to be a druid. The land and the people both challenge and passively assault my understanding and values.
5. Much of what we do as druids harks back to the life and cycles of Mother Earth. The seasons, Beltain, the living and dead halves of the year, growth and rebirth...
6. Even if you do not postulate the horned king, consort to the Goddess, whose life is that of the changing seasons - birth in mid-winter, love in spring, growth, maturity and sacrifice at Samhain- there is much that is tied implicitly to the mysteries of the natural world.
7. But now I am thrust into confronting what I had always wondered about: the cycles we follow are those of a NORTHERN TEMPERATE world. Here in the tropical South, things differ. There is no spring, no autumn, no time of general death and growth.
8. The moon remains, bless her, but she travels widdershins. An anti-clockwise sky! I knew it would be that way in my mind, and I have adjusted my internal compass for the navigation, but then deeper questions begin to spring.
9. Clockwise, I have learned and practiced (during the rare occasions when I engage in ritual or external magic working) is the natural and appropriate direction of things. Beginnings, summonings, progressions, growth, movement, callings - every natural "Good" ritual movement begins clockwise. North East South West, with endings, banishments, etc. being the opposite.
10. All that was explained and justified by the movement of the heavens and anti-clockwise movement is now regarded as "un-natural." The "left-hand path" was never, explicitly mind you, to be avoided as destructive and evil.
11. Now the stars move widdershins above me, and I must ask if the practice of magic is relative to geography (for every ritual culture I know of in the north proceeds clockwise...)
12. Now there are no seasons, and I must wonder if different gods and goddesses hold sway. The Earth remains - the Goddess is eternal- but does the Green Man peer between the coconut palms? Does Llyr swim amidst the reefs I see?
13. Does the Wild Hunt of the Northern Climes hold any truck with hurricanes? Do the Gods I know and serve even visit these regions or have they siblings I have yet to meet and love?
14. It is easy to say that all the gods and all their lovers are but facets of one Brahmanian whole, but it is a difficult thing to act upon. I was consecrated a priest of the Lord of the Groves (though by my well-meaning but foolish tongue I may have been the last) and I am faithful to that charge, but if Landu's son is a purely temperate beast where does that leave me in the tropics?
15. Such questions are the product of a fevered mind. The spiritual quest may be furthered through the study and experience of nature- all of her.
16. If I have wandered farther afield than our linguistic predecessors it is absurd to blame my confusion on their ignorance.

The Goddess is Mother of all, and the lord of the Groves is present even amongst palm trees. Let not the Welsh name I met him under distract me from that fact.

Chapter the THIRD

What do Druids Do?

1. June 2001
2. Dear Mec,
3. One of the men I work with here, Saia, by name, has been asking me about Druidism.
4. Religion plays a huge role in Tongan life, and I often ask him to describe parts of its impact.
5. Invariably he returns the questions; "What are the religious duties of a druid?", "What money does the church collect, and what is it used for?", "What are the requirements for being a priest?", "What obligations do they have?", "Do they serve for life?", "Can they marry?", "Are there Druidic schools?", "To what moral code are Druids bound?"
6. As it is the delicious doom of every Druid to answer such things for his or her self, I can only pass the questions on. May they stimulate much thinking.
7. A thing that fascinates me about his line of questioning is its purely practical focus. Not "What do you believe?" but "What do you do?"
8. In a way it is not such a bad place to start. Actions are driven by values, which may be derived from and supported by wildly divergent beliefs. Thus, if it be found that a group of Druids hold similar values, they can act in concert, even if those values are supported by different or even incompatible beliefs which each individual has developed through his or her independent search for spiritual truth.
9. The forum then becomes: I value X; therefore I will do Y. This shift in paradigms has immediate consequences. Not the least being that it moves one out of the highly contested and poorly articulated realm of theology.
10. Values, furthermore, seem to have a longer half-life than beliefs, which may suddenly shift in the light of new experience. Changes in what people value come only - I suspect- with a distinct change in a person's character, which experience shows is rare indeed.
11. The challenge is that one must engage in serious introspection to discover to which values one is really committed.
12. I did tell Saia the three moral commands supposedly taught by the old Druids: "Act Bravely, Honor the Gods, Do No Evil." Tongan is a tongue of many puns, and I discovered as I said it that the last statement also translates as "Don't Fu*k Badly," a commandment bound to enthuse a certain class of Druids….
13. Life here is good. Much of my work involves counseling and advising rather than hands on work. Sowing seeds of reason into the discussion of kindergarten politics, suggesting accounting changes in the youth groups budget, encouraging people to engage in continuing education (and walking them through the application!)
14. To a large extent, I am simply living here, being part of an alien community, understanding and participating in its life, caring for my neighbors. The island's doctor has started referring me his patients, which is a bit ridiculous.
15. Most important to me I am starting to understand how people here think and am now able to engage in the same sort of thinking myself. That competence snuck up on me.

Its existence was highlighted by the recent arrival of an anthropologist who stayed for a month at the other end of town.

16. She has been studying the culture of Tonga (actually the cultural change and how housing reflects that) for nine months, but apparently only the more diluted samples you find on the bigger islands. She tried to play a game which I have long learned to avoid, and was in too deep within two days and had to flee the island under threat of imminent marriage. Very entertaining.
17. Somehow or other I have now been here over a year. Next Beltaine will mark my release from the Peace Corps. Still no clear plan on what is to follow. Japan is looking less likely.
18. So is traveling right round the world, a trip many ex-volunteers arrange. I have gotten too deeply into this culture to enjoy a touristic whirlwind of several dozen others. I intend to see many other countries, but I wish to know them personally, and that will take time.
19. I know I will return to the states, see my family, maybe publish a few stories. If possible I would like to criss-cross the country a time or two, visiting al my scattered friends and correspondents. Perhaps I will build a new harp and simply be a bard for a while. Tis still too soon to tell..
20. There is yet another Pai Kava running across the road, possibly the last one with electric lights for some time. The island is out of gasoline again.
21. I've had to cut back on my kava intake. I hit a stretch where I was drinking every night for three weeks running. Several gallons a day. The stuff is a drug, after all. Turns you into a lizard if you don't watch it.
22. Much of the business gets transacted at such gatherings, so they are still obligatory, but I try not to drink so long these days.
23. Hope all is reasonably well state-side. How's that Washington Grove coming?
24. Yours in service.
25. Irony.

Chapter the FOURTH

1. December 19, 2001.
2. Rain. Thought we might be in for a hurricane last night.
3. We had to seal all the windows of the town hall and to keep the water out. Now the wind has left for somewhere cooler and we retain only a solid perpendicular drizzle.
4. I can't recall if I mentioned my chickens.
5. For the longest time, I held off adopting any, figuring I could have either them or a garden. With zero local vegetables, the latter was more important.
6. One day, I came home to find two young hens hiding under my bed. I took the hind, tied them up and built a large cage to keep them in.
7. One puzzling fact about chickens is that after a week or two in a new environment, they forget having lived anywhere else. Once these two were thoroughly brainwashed I let them roam free.
8. First thing they did was devour my cabbages and tear up the onions. They haven't even produced any eggs yet!
9. Still, they are adorable – and I can always eat them if they bug me too much.
11. Time flies like a hummingbird. Magically still while sucking life's nectar, then gone too fast to follow. My time approaches the latter phase. Twelve weeks till escape from paradise.
12. With luck I will be home for Beltaine.
13. Send nothing to Tonga after March 16.
14. Till then, I remain your sunburnt emissary.
15. Irony.

Chapter the FIFTH

1. The following account is perfectly true and factual. The events happened last Friday. Makes you wonder just how thorough the missionaries were:
2. HARD CORE PAGANS IN TONGA
3. After being assured by the Doctors that there was nothing wrong with him, Siona Piko (false name) visited a good Christian card reader to diagnose ongoing pains in his abdomen.
4. The reader examined his playing cards and announced that two of Siona's deceased in-laws were trying to take the family with them. Sinoa's wife had died just before his pains started, her brother only months before. Unless the spirits were stopped they would haul off the whole family.
5. Siona returned to his island and tearfully related the story to the surviving relatives. "I know I'm going to die," he told them.
6. Two of Siona's good Wesleyan cousins decided enough was enough. They stole into the graveyard in the early morning and dug up the bones of the two offenders.
7. Carrying as many parts as they could, they snook to the lava field, doused the bodies in kerosene and burned them in the night. The skulls they carried to the wharf and then threw them into the sea, which promptly spat them back out.
8. "We are Christians!" the local priest bellowed at Mass the next Sunday. "Stop doing this! Haven't I taught you anything?"
9. Villagers were somewhat sympathetic, "Sure, we dig up our families graves … to clean and oil the bones sometimes."
10. Said one woman who spoke to me on conditions of anonymity; "The Spirits occasionally make us sick then show up to complain about tree roots prying their ribs apart. Once we clean the grave they always leave us alone."
11. Others were merely terrified of ghostly reprisals because the bones had not been completely destroyed. According to the police officer who recovered the ashes, the deceased were still alive and well and prevented his car from starting when he tried to leave for work.
12. "Go away and let me do my job!" he cried. Under Tonga's very Christian law such acts carry a ten year sentence.
13. The local Druid when pressed for comment, smiled quietly behind his tea cup and simply asked if Siona Piko had recovered.
14. Fresh off the coconut wireless report
15. Irony Sade Reporting
16. P.S. Still digesting Marcus Aurelius' "Meditations". Very good. Definitely high class paganism.

Chapter the SIXTH

1. Dear Mike,
2. Representatives of the Volcano Grove recently undertook a pilgrimage to the island of Tofua.

3. There they were witness to no fewer than five simultaneous thunderstorms, spied several rare species of birds, bathed in a pool sheltered in the rainforest, and were blessed with the opportunity to behold real live lava.
4. The Archfool himself undertook to climb over the lip of the cinder-cone to get a better look at the fire. (Tied to a firmly anchored rope--he is learning a few things!) Others were then able to scramble up the same rope and hold onto him while gazing a hundred meters straight down to the place where rocks are melted up and born again.
5. Some days later he made a solo trip back up the cone without the rope (Goddess watching is dangerously addictive) and was blessed with a double lung-full of sulfuric acid and a badly lacerated leg while fleeing the cloud of vapors that emerged to punish his precocious-ness.
6. Bridgit is known in these parts as "Pele." Tongan being what it is, the word has several other meanings too--Dolphins, card playing, and Spinach-like trees all share the name of the Goddess of Fire. In such a heavily contextual language invocation becomes a dangerous and haphazard art.
7. If all goes well I should escape in March or April and be home for April or May. I have not seen New York in springtime for seven years. It is about time to get home.

Figure 25 Above Mike, below Stephen Crimmins bobbing for Druid Donuts while tickled, Beltane 2001.

Book of Stones, Part Two

(By Mike, 2001)

Chapter the Third

1. Few were more charming and charismatic that Irony of the Black Locks, whose glance could open a hundred hearts and plunge one into mystery.
2. Many were the times Irony did mosey up to the Hill of Three Oaks to reflect on the Reform.
3. There stood the mysterious Twelve Stones on a rise nearby, and often surrounded by trash and high grass, for they were beloved by students, but shunned by grounds crew, who were greatly angered by their presence.
4. Perhaps, the anger was caused by their mysterious appearance, for they appear suddenly in the morning, like mushrooms popping out of the ground, or fallen from the sky.
5. Not a blade of grass was bent nearby or footprint could be found to explain what force brought such heavy boulders to that spot, and no sooner were the stones removed, but they returned, often in the same location.
6. Irony did notice however, that their upkeep did keep him too busy, and a more secluded resting place for the stones must be sought, since the Hill of Three Oaks is a very busy spot.
7. Importuning the president of the College and ground's crew, his petitions naturally found favorable ears and things were put in motion, large machines that did crush their earth beneath their wheels, as the stones had to be transferred over many intervening hills and forest, to a site that was remote and untouched by the hand of vandals.
8. In a consortium of ancient astrological planning, for which the Druids are often attributed great skill, and the might of modern machines, the stones were placed in a circle, with an enormous three edged altar stone of alabaster white in the center, resting upon three other stones.
9. None knew what lay beneath, except Irony, for not all secrets are revealed.
10. Many legends have arisen about the Stones of Irony, or the Stone Circle, as it is known. A powerful place it is.
11. For many years, it has become the chosen place of Beltanes and ordinations, as the Hill of Three Oaks is often reserved by others with other agendas.
12. And yet, no sooner had the stone circle been created, but another circle did appear close to the Hill of Three Oaks, a sly circle, that hid in the tall grasses beneath an oak on the edge of a field.
13. And the wonder is that this was the spot where the altar stone came from; perhaps to take its place guarding one entrance to the area of the Hill of Three Oaks.
14. A mystery it is

Chapter the Fourth

1. After a journey racing the sun, Mike came to the land of the Rising Sun, far to the North where tradition and farming held sway across the land.
2. At this center of international learning, there was a park famed throughout the prefecture.
3. It had been built at the time the university had been founded, and the final stone of several trilithions was set that autumn after Mike did arrive.
4. Circles of stones, and natural springs abounded here, and water grates shaped like that of sigils.
5. Mike did take it as a sign that it was a Druidic place to live, and four years did he remain there, teaching English and Druidic culture to the children of that tribe.
6. Like those mighty megaliths, for which Akita is famous, Mike'

Chapter the Fifth

1. Long an island in the Lakes of Lyman was heart-shaped, and this was known as Mai-Fete island, for all the May Festivals in the early 20th Century.
2. Next to this island was an un-named twin.
3. Both were very bushy with scrub and small trees until the beginnings of the 21st century, when whackers of weeds and saws of chains did reduce their wild natures to a pristine patch of tamed grass.
4. The smaller island was named Stewsie Island after Mr. Stewart who managed the Arb for many decades on Ground's Crew.
5. Labyrinth walking had become popular at Carleton since the reappearance of the Stone Circle on the Hill of Three Oaks, and around the time of the Stones of Irony, an in-laid labyrinth was put on Stewsie Island.
6. Happy students and insightful townspeople swarmed to walk on them barefoot, and legend has it that if you can walk to the center blind-folded and barefooted without touching the edges, then you are rather quite special.
7. But not for long, did people without shoes use these paths, as a force of birds, did enforce a new regime on this island paradise, once known as Dinosaur Island.
8. Oft have the ducks been seen to wander this labyrinth, not paying head to the convoluted path dictated by the designer, nay, they walked right across them, and verily shat about them with wild abandon.
9. Such wise ducks were these.
10. The authorities took umbrage at this, and action followed, with fences placed at the edges of the island to fend off the invaders, who took to the air, and then landed on the stones anyway, to continue their political message of rebellion.

Book of Vigils, Part Two

(By Mike, 2003)

Chapter the Fifteenth

1. My Vigil for my Third Order was way back in '75.
2. Joan and Robert Larson came and visited me a few times during the first part of the night.
3. This was at a park in El Cerrito, California. There was a meadow not far from where I sat, and it seemed to be lit with many little strange lights so I wondered whether there were fairies dancing in the meadow.
4. I spent the last part of the night as dawn came having a telepathic conversation with a gnome about 30 feet away from me.
5. When it was light enough to see, I saw that the gnome had turned into a stump.
6. Then Joan and Robert Larson came to get me, ordained me, and we had the traditional breakfast at Smokey Joe's in Berkeley.
7. -Tegwedd ShadowDancer

Chapter the Sixteenth: Amanda

1. You asked about my vigil. It was one of the most surreal experiences of my life.
2. Michelle started out with me in the lower Arb shortly before sunset. She shared with me information I would find valuable through the night.
3. As darkness fell, I expected it to bring fear, but I felt fear only once that entire night when something ran across a field and I though it came at me through the foliage lining the trail.
4. I did a lot of thinking before the sun rose that morning, mostly about the mother-daughter relationship I have with the Earth/Goddess (I'm Wiccan).
5. I saw it as an omen that I stood on the hill at sunrise, a doe and her fawn stepped into view in a nearby field. I can think of nothing else to say about the experience, it was beyond any verbal description.

Chapter the Seventeenth: Merri

1. What do you do about a problem named Merri?
2. A woman of great charisma, leadership and energy, who bedazzles all who gaze into her deep eyes and hear her laugh. Greater still are the chains that link one's heart who hears her wise words.
3. She was and is a Druid who dares to ask the boldest questions, such as why should I follow Dalon Ap Landu?
4. The question came as a thunderclap to Mike, the Fool, who had journeyed from the Western Isles of the Ocean to assist in the ordination.
5. "Because we have always done so." was his first reply, one that was bitter even as he said it. For in those words, he realized a truth long dormant.
6. The first order, yea, even the second order were without a name; pure in their naiveté; but yet the third order did come with a patron, one verily who was not known in the annals of history. Few wish to serve those they do not know.

7. Mike sat still and examined his heart, and felt for wise words from his years of experience in the diversity of Druidism. And he found some.
8. "It will not be necessary." He said, and the weight of history was felt in the room.
9. "For the work of Dalon Ap Landu is not dependent on his name, but by your actions (if not your words), the work of the Third Order may be done. In the past, this Grove has had many before me who followed a similar course. I would not second guess their tradition either."
10. Sister Merri did choose to walk the Arb, a restless soul like her did not stay in one place, for she was of the roaming kind. And yet she guided Carleton for 4 years.
11. In the morning, on the Hill of Three Oaks, she did into the Third Order, but in a way, unseen for many years.
12. Her work in the ensuing years, shows that the Gods have favored her appointment with great showers of successful groving.
13. The solution is to learn from her.

Chapter the Eighteenth: Robert

1. Lo! Robert, a carpenter, a burly man of athletic build, who could pull wisdom from the fire as easily as he pulls helpless people from burning buildings.
2. A Druid who, like Brother Sam, has explored the range of Druidism, but still finds a place for the Reform's teachings in his lifestyle.
3. A Druid who has contemplated the lofty teachings of Nepal to the base lessons of the streets. A gentle, witty man with calluses and a blue bottle of strange liquor.
4. Brother Robert, a strong tree, was an older Druid, twice the age of the supple saplings of the Carleton Grove, and whose years of experience were well-appreciated by his grove-mates.
5. Vigiling with Brother Ehren, he stead-fastly remained by the fire, a friend of his and often bitter foe. In the morning, the wood was only ashes, but the fire remained in his piercing stare of a Druid who was awake.
6. Mounting the Hill of Three Oaks, he did call forth his dreams and hopes of doing the work of the Third Order, and the winds responded kindly.

Chapter the Nineteenth: Ehren

1. While Brother Robert was in the woods, Brother Ehren was elsewhere seeking the Deer King who stalked the woods that night.
2. Deep in the Lower Arb, beyond the paths trod by mere students, Ehren did go forth, seeking truths others were uncomfortable with.
3. Then he heard the fierce cry in the still of the night. A sound not possible from a single throat, but rather from the shrieks of a quartet of demons.
4. Not one to be afraid, Ehren did go straightly and seek out this horrendous source of noise. Tirelessly, the many miles did pass quickly beneath his feet.
5. Tall was the figure in the moonlight, drapped in black with no face, tall horns and a contraption under its arm that appeared to be a deadly octopus.
6. Another blast from the beast, did shake Ehren's soul to its base, yet he stepped forward to ask questions. But what those questions were, and their answers, are known only to Ehren, for he was forbidden to speak of them to others.
7. In the morning, Mike did awake from his meditation on the spirits, having journeyed himself into realms where thought did not venture.
8. Ehren did enter the Third Order after fierce questioning, ready to do its work.

Chapter the Twentieth: Nozomi

1. Sister Nozomi, born at the cross-roads of two travelers, pulled in two directions, seeking a place to call home. One of those way-stations was the RDNA, which would adapt to her changing circumstances.
2. Bold, dark haired and with a soft heart for her friends, Nozomi lived in a land far from the usual haunts of Druids, till one day a tall man named Mike did meet her at a place of learning.
3. No simple place it was, but of people passing each other. Some to the West, some to the East, growing wiser through the meeting.
4. Her father was a priest of the Shinto faith, and was now teaching her the ways of tending to the shrine and the Way of the Gods. And yet, she knew of other ways, from other lands, and this troubled her heart, as she could not pick only one.
5. Nozomi spent the night taking a pounding beneath a waterfall, in the cool mountains of Northern Japan, with but a white slip to fend off the rasping water.
6. Water passed over, around and through her, cleansing until it hurt, and then until nothing could be felt anymore.
7. In that quiet place she thought on her destiny and found many answers that eased her heart.
8. Such was her composure, tired but confident, ready to add a new flavor to the Druidism, one that the world had not yet seen.

Chapter the Twenty-First: Pat

1. Brave Pat, fearlessly denying himself the wonders of the modern world. Living in a dinky shrine, on a distant mountain in an unknown corner of a far-away land. The sound of flushing water is not heard there.
2. Spouse of Nozomi, seeker of wisdom, bearer of the sharp scraping tongue of bardic majesty; such a Druid is rare among rarities.
3. He began at a Druidic university in Akita, a land known as the Fields of Autumn, for the bountiful harvests that the Earth-Mother blesses there, the beautiful women that feed on the rice, and the husky men who drink the rice-wine. Fanciful are their haircuts and plentiful the barbers to make them!
4. Brother Pat, did undergo the vigil in a yet more distant and steep mountain, many kilometers from navigable river or passable path. Mike was sore afflicted in his toes to reach only the base camp. How much more admirable to climb the mountain!
5. And climb it, Pat did, like a mountain goat in the night, bruises and scrapes were generously received without comment impolite.
6. In the midst of the night, on the summit peak, he did gaze upon the silvered mirror of moon and cried out his questions. Sometimes the moon glowed bright in response, other times, it hid behind clouds, when answers were not to be given.

7. The descent through boulders, twisted tree trunks and slippery gullies was as trying as the ascent, but at a more rapid speed; for so long had he talked with the maiden of the night, that he had not heard the approach of her bright lover storming the horizon.
8. Mike felt the heavy passage of time, and was afflicted by bugs thirsty for his bloods. Where was this young novice Druid, and why did he so resolutely refuse to appear with the dawn?
9. In a spring and a stumble, out of the bushes flew the wild madman, bleeding and bruised, but smiling. “Am I late?” was his only apology.
10. With the solar disk, a man’s height over the stunning edge of the world, Pat did take the oaths and promises, then the long trudge home began, since vehicles were prohibited by Pat’s geas.

Chapter the Twenty-Second: Dan

1. Dan the trusty, Dan the debater, long will you remain in our memory.
2. From a lineage of the loquacious, a dynasty of debater, great is you glib.
3. Despite a busy night of other vigilers’ taking the attention, you performed marvelously when called to the Stones of Irony, to defend your beliefs.
4. On the great circle of boulders were perched the council of Druids, waiting to hear Dan’s words.
5. On the great center altar stone stood Dan, defiantly and modest, bracing himself for the questions that would come.
6. And come they did, like a hail of stones, from all directions.
7. Frantically, but methodically, he fended them off with replies both short and long.
8. Many a Druid before him had dropped speechless early on, for these were not easy questions.
9. Indeed, many a questioning Druid soon found themselves without further questions to pose.
10. And all agreed he had performed well, perhaps a little too well, for they were discomforted by their own abilities in the comparison.
11. Thus did Dan enter their ranks.

Chapter the Twenty-Third: Ikari

1. Brother Ikari was a man of great literary talent and glib in the use of the tongues of English and Japanese, and deeply informed on the mysteries of Keltria and Wicca.
2. In the city of Kobe, known as the Door of the Gods, did Ikari choose to enter the Third Order after long consultation by mail with Mike. A city of commerce and great wealth, hugging the shores of an inland sea, dotted with islands; it was filled with busy streets and bustling people.
3. At a bench by the ocean, many questions did pass both ways, as the two Druids grew in deeper appreciation of each other, and Ikari learned of the finer details of the Third Order.
4. But where to vigil? Hardly a scrap of green was to be seen in such a metropolis.
5. A few inquiries at shrines came up negative, and a city map was inspected. Like most cities in Japan, Kobe was nestled between mountainous interior and pounding ocean.
6. The direction was up, and Mike grudgingly trudgingly climbed another mountain, led by the gifted Ikari, who could read the map better. Provisions were procured at a nearby outfitter for the long journey.
7. On a Saturday night, the large mountain perched university’s athletic fields were mostly uninhabited, and various constructions to test the athlete’s metal filled the plain. Down below was Kobe at night, like a jewel box of sparkling diamonds wrapped in a velvety black shawl.
8. “We will have a marvelous time here.” Mike did opine.
9. From the bushes burst forth a raging, hairy porcine from Celtic legends, bearing fangs, and followed by two smaller wild boars.
10. The two Druids were sorely afflicted by fear, but bravely sought to examine them more closely, from the top of the Jungle Gym.
11. The mighty boar did scoff at their cowardice and proceeded to eat their lunch with piggy abandon.
12. Sated, the great scrapper did leave the Druids with a lesson in humility.
13. The following drizzle did not drastically dampen the duo’s Druidic decorum.
14. After a few more comforting words, Mike did leave Ikari, and did walk up into the chilly woods, to think himself on what had been said.
15. The hours passed slowly, then stopped, and then started to budge again.
16. Lo!, but the sunrise across the bay approached like an arthritic man, and come it did.
17. Both shivering Druids did greet the arrival of Belenos and promptly began the service, and ran to catch the morning trains to their respective hometowns.
18. Thus did Ikari add another achievement to his list of honors.

Chapter the Twenty-Forth: Stacey

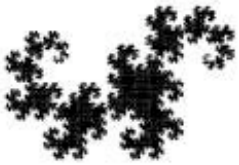
1. Not all Druids are hasty in their progression into order, for some, the movement is one with the glaciers, carefully scouring the path before them, to smooth the way.
2. Such was the case with Sister Stacey, who spent seventeen years before entering the Third Order, so great was her patience and wisdom.
3. As with most pre-arranged vigils, the weather of sunny California had other plans, and a fierce storm joined her, the likes of which had not been seen in decades.
4. Larry the Lax guided and supported her vigil with all his might, but the battle did cost him dearly, and afterwards he spent a long time in recovery with doctors.
5. Drenched, but Druidic, Stacey stepped forth to continue the esteemed work of the powerful dynasty of the Live Oak Grove, publishing the Druid Missal-Any.
6. And with the wisdom gained from the long years, the Third Order’s duties came easily and gracefully, as she assisted others in their paths.

Chapter the Twenty-Fifth: Alyx

1. A mile above the ocean, in the midst of great snowy peaks, a young lady, steeped in wisdom, named Alyx, did realize that she was a Druid.
2. Through long and torturous circuits, she did locate Mike, and began to correspond, not quiting, despite Mike's difficulty in communicating in comprehensible sentences.
3. Nay, she seemed to thrive on it.
4. One knows not where the Druidic spark will flare up, but you know it often when you see it.
5. Deep in the slopes, at a friend's hermitage, she did vigil, not far from the garden, for bears did roam the woods, jealous of their preserve.
6. It was cold, and then it was colder. Heat up it did not. And the air was thinner than thin.
7. In the morning, Mike did come by the power of Taranis, and other visitors did come also.
8. First of the guardian spirits was a golden dog with a long coat and wet tongue who did drool profusely, long did he not stay.
9. Second of the spirits was a deer with a rack of points, points that she wished the young Druid to learn and understand.
10. Finally, there was a spider, who did weave a message for her to learn.
11. Filled with a sense of purpose, and still pondering these mysteries, Alyx did undertake new responsibilities.

Chapter the Twenty-Sixth: Daniel

1. Daniel, deep and demure Druid of the Pacific Rainforest.
2. Long have been your journeys through Druidism, to many strange and diverse creeds.
3. What brought you to the Reform, if not for the simplicity that your complicated studies lacked?
4. On all manner of groups, you have published information, at a time, when I was modestly offering literature from my own.
5. With your advice and guidance, perhaps it raised the quality of the ARDA by a few notches, more if I had listened closer.
6. Immersed in wisdom, surrounded by beauty, betrothed to diversity, raising the future; these are what all Druids wish for.
7. Well, it is that you came to Druidism, better has it become.
8. Deer also appeared and birds were heard.
9. What projects will you delve it next?



Chapter the Twenty-Seventh: Steve

1. Steve, young Steve, slender and fair, what could have brought you there?
2. A vigil, a night spent all alone; your wits to wander, your goals to hone.
3. None could dissuade such youthful verve, and all criticisms missed a nerve.
4. Engaged with fire, you gazed til morn, and thus a new druidship was born.
5. Patriarch of Hephastus, lord of fire, your path will apt go higher and higher.

Chapter the Twenty-Eighth: Wolf

1. Wolf, a hunter, seeking his prey, which must be of wisdom, at such a tender age.
2. Long did you discuss matters, such that the elderly may never have reflected.
3. Piercingly straightforward, each word competently adorned with reason.
4. Oh, that I could also have known so much back at your age.
5. Riding a fiery beast from the cold finger lakes of the north, you did journey to the capital of this wide land.
6. But all the temples of the departed leaders were closed to visitors in the after hours of vigiling.
7. Thus to a park, named Green Belt, for its circle of trees, we both made straight lines of travel.
8. There with my faithful dog Earl, and a cloud of mosquito, did I meet the stocky Wolf.
9. Well your other Druid companions had taught you, for much learning did pass under me too.
10. Off you went on a silent journey into uncharted woods, without light external, guided by your heart.
11. Mike did also travel into the woods, but he also moved away from well-marked trails, and purposely spun around for to better test his ability to find his way back.
12. A test it was indeed!
13. Mike laughed.
14. Many hours were spent trying to feel the land, whether up or down the hill would lead back to the camp.
15. Until that time, Mike did realize how much creatures of comfort we humans are; unable to survive long in the wild without the most careful of planning.
16. With great delight Mike regained the path at a place unknown to him, and there he soon met Wolf, as if their paths were meant to cross.
17. Who was checking on whom, I know not; but we were glad to meet eachother again.
18. In the morning, it was more still than Mike had ever known.
19. The greatest of supplications could not raise the a fly's breath of wind, although bugs did buzz and chirp, such that one could not hear oneself talk. And this was taken as sufficient sign.
20. Such was his will power, that Wolf did not need sleep after ordination, but remounted his dragon and returned to the icy North from which he had come.
21. Mike, weak from his elder years, did sleep a few hours, before returning to the capital, chastened and enwisened.

Chapter the Twenty-Ninth: Mairi

1. Oft did you wander the streets of Northfield when I was visiting, and did partake of services, with you hard-headed concern for proper procedure; have I softened you, yet?
2. Not the way of student did you pursue, but a path of service at a place that dispensed food to hungry travelers.
3. Much was I taught by you, little did I teach.
4. It was an uneventful vigil, wasn't it? A long night tending the fires with you flute music echoing into the walls of the Arb's trees.
5. Gladly did you take up you duties when you left for the Capital of this country, where I would meet you again, by the pull of fate.

Chapter the Thirtieth: Eric

1. Clever Eric, wise Eric, ever studious, and yet showing up at services more often than not, to console this lonely Druid.
2. Your vigil was on Roosevelt Island, although the access was restricted, you crossed on a cloud of air, in the dark of night.
3. There by the statue of Theodore Roosevelt, and by the tidal flats, and lonely paths, you did vigil; within D.C. and yet apart from them.
4. Boats for pleasure and tourism passed by, not noticing your pondering image on the beach's rocky boulders.
5. Cars flew by overhead, as did air traffic, not unlike the turmoil of you soul, despite your placid demeanor.
6. Mike arrived at the official opening time and did greet you, and the ranger did not notice that neither of us did leave the island by the bridge, for we had other ways of traveling.

Chapter the Thirty First: Colleen

1. Col Colleen, ArchDruid of the great white northern reaches of Alaska. Wise were you to choose the midsummer to vigil, when the sun is longest, and your garden most fair.
2. Would that I could have been present in person, but your vigil went well, and we conducted it successfully via cell-phone.
3. A deer did appear, and then a new priest walked the Earth Mother's green skirt.

Chapter the Thirty Second: Mike

1. When word reached him that the mighty Ivan would reach as far as his Nation's capitol, the newly elected Patriarch of Taranis knew that he must defend the mystic district and choose that night for his vigil in September.
2. For all the fiercesomeness of the storm, the greatest obstacle, yea, was the commonsense of his wife, who said that tornados, lightning and punishing rain was not the proper climate for good Druids.
3. Yea, his arguments that Druids are immune from the perils of weather, did sound weak even unto his own ears, and he did relent, until she fell asleep and then he crept out, for nay, he had no courage to battle with her, for unlike some storms, her rage never calmed.
4. So in the comparatively mild hurricane outside he did battle the elements, most heroically until they subsided in the morning rays; whereupon he did cry out in the strong winds his desire to learn yet more of the mysteries of weather.
5. The winds and distant rumbling did come from the directions called, lifting up the new Patriarch of Taranis.

Chapter the Thirty Third: Joss

1. Joss, whose quirky smile, has enlightened my work desk over the last few years. Sent to a military academy in high school, you remained the artist you always were.
2. Exploring the wilds of the forest and spirituality, you carved out a grove for yourself in most un-sympathetic territory.
3. You are no newcomer to vigils, having endured three days without rest, until reality and dreamworld became one on your ranch.
4. To you, a single night vigil must be no hardship, merely a pleasant respite from the pressures of work and study.
5. A rat did crawl by, foreboding great fecundity, cleverness in adaptation, dislike by the fastidious and certainly lots of cheesy jokes.
6. Birds, winds and clouds did grace your ordination, which I hope will be graceful and memorable.

Chapter the Thirty Fourth: The Others

1. Lydia, Lydia, Have you heard of Lydia, Lydia the OK Druid? May your vigil be memorable as has been your journey through life. Would that I could wait to write of what will be an interesting vigil for a promising future.
2. Ian, may your years as a priest be as memorable as the Hill of Three Oaks and Monument Hill on the annals of our History. Our hope and trust remains with you.
3. Will, has it taken so long to assume the responsibilities of Druidism? Has the mantle finally caught up with you? Wear it proudly, and fill your tenure with wondrous events, good conversations and life-changing realizations.
4. And may all the other vigilers of the next decade or two have great things happen at their vigils, and may they remember to write of them to me at mikerdna@hotmail.com!
5. Now, I must put down my pen and rest.

Figure 26 Paul Schmidt ordaining Beck Hrobak to Third Order while David Frangquist and Nikki Lambert observe quietly on Samhain, 1993 at the Hill of 3 Oaks on a chilly frosty morning.

3 Stories & 1 History by Irony

Ein Tanz Dream

(By Irony, 24-8-97)

Dreams and Visions: Here are three dreams and visions that struck me during the last three years. There is something of druidism in each of them, though I have no way of saying what that might be. Take them for what you will...

1. "A piece of sound and movement for the stage or the mind.
2. Do not hear the words; they are just to show the dancers."
3. It is night. Moonlight brightens the mist to a silver pall and distance is impossible to discern.
4. A small circle of lit candles surrounds a kneeling figure whose face we cannot yet see.
5. Slowly a light begins, a soft glow that illuminates the kneeling man with the colors of a winter sun. He is a knight, heavy set, troubled, wrapped in a cloak the years have gnawed like moths.
6. He has been praying, talking to his god, his hands clasped before him. His eyes are closed, and his face animate. We can see his every thought upon it. His lips move but no sound escapes them.
7. A deep humming has begun as of great, sort, wooden horns, or the organ of a dying church. Figures, trees resembling people, and a number of small, folded boulders scatter the scene of our vision.
8. The knight's eyes have opened. He is still talking soundlessly, now to the air, now to himself, always to his god.
9. His hands have begun to move a little, gesticulating.
10. He is telling a story, asking and answering simple questions on his own. Preliminaries.
11. A flute begins, soft and clear.
12. One of the boulders moves, raises its head, suddenly, alertly, listening. There are the horns of a deer upon it.
13. The figure stands and it is that of a man. Only its head is antlered; only its movements deer-like.
14. The flute continues, the humming persists. The knight prays on, oblivious to it all.
15. The other boulders have begun to stir, grown antlers and bodies. They are dancing.
16. Their movements are those of wild creatures, soft, sure, quick and then hesitant. They are leaping, soundlessly, looking always almost as if they are about to strike, collide- then passing, between the trees, between each other.
17. Between the mist and the moon they are silhouettes alone. The light does not illuminate them.
18. The flute continues but the humming changes, drops a key.
19. One last boulder is unfolding, greater than the rest. It is a great stag with a cloak of leaves translucent in the mist.
20. His movements are those of the king of the forest, of a lord amongst men, slow, stately, powerful. He is young and wise, loving and beloved by all. The others rush forward, dropping to one knee, bowing their antlered heads before him.
21. He raises them graciously and the flock prancing behind him.
22. His movements now lead the dance, the others imitating, but now quicker, joyfully.
23. As the stag passes between two trees he reaches out to touch them-
24. And they move, become women, nymphs, their hair encircled by crowns of leafs. They spin inward to kiss him lightly, their movements those of laughter and passion. they spin outwards to join the dance, where they are perused by stags.
25. The knight is blushing now, confessing perhaps.
26. One by one the king awakens all the trees, and each performs the same welcome, kissing him gently, lips or cheek or hand, before darting away to find lovers of playmates amongst the others.
27. Several couples have vanished, chasing each other beyond our sphere of vision, the great king himself has gone, fading off alone while the others danced, when a change begins.

Chapter the Second

1. The knight has become more insistent, troubled, more agitated.
2. Finally he strikes the ground in anger. The flute stops mid note. The dancers scatter, fleeing. A horrible chord emerges from the hum. There is no other sound but the music; there never has been.
3. The knight is as oblivious as ever.
4. Slowly a great dark shape emerges from the mist. Huge, horrible, horned in an entirely different manner from the deer it approaches silently behind the kneeling knight.
5. The knight is angry, has become insolent in mien and manner. He glares at the sky.
6. Behind him the figure reaches out a slow dark hand-
7. And pauses.
8. There has been a swirl in the mist to his right.
9. The great stag has returned. Poised now for flight or combat he stands, tall and slender beneath the shadow of the thing behind the knight.
10. For a moment they stand motionless, the one, arm extended, the other waiting.
11. The knight stares upwards, perplexed, troubled.
12. In the same instant the hand is withdrawn and the stag steps forward.
13. A new dance has begun. The hum is persistent, pervasive, and accentuated now by the faintest of tapping, the tiniest drumming of tension; rain on an old roof at night.
14. The stag and the other circle each other slowly; the knights eyes are tortured, oblivious. The dancers are measuring each the others strength.
15. Finally there comes a time when the stag stands with his back to the knight, interposing himself between the circle and the great dark form.
16. The stag lunges forward, a feint or a thrust with his great horned head.
17. The other flinches back in surprise or fear, and then strikes. Faster than we have yet seen him move his right hand blurs forward catching the king in the side of the face.
18. He is thrown, and it is the knight's face that registers the blow, his body that twists as with a wound. His lips contort in a scream we never hear.
19. The body of the king lies sprawled on the far side of the circle, his legs twisted, his head fallen on one outstretched arm.

20. The dark form passes behind them both.
21. Shock and pain are on the face of the knight.
22. The other returns, turns his back on the king and moves to claim the kneeling man.

Chapter the Third

1. The king stirs, rises slowly, and there is something in his hand; a branch of holly dropped and discarded by one of the nymphs in a happier time, held now like a sword in the hand of a god.
2. He stamps his foot- soundlessly to us- and the head of the other snaps in his direction. His hand pulls back a second time from within an inch of the knight and they begin to circle once again.
3. The knight is now nervous, subliminally aware for the first time that something is going on. He prays faster now, but with less concentration; his hands wring one another unconsciously.
4. The king now stands to the right of the kneeler, the dark one looms above his left.
5. The hum has risen to an unbearable roar.

Chapter the Fourth

1. The dark one stamps forward, hands poised to grab or crush.
2. The king flows forward in the same movement, a lunge or a stamp, and strikes with the holly into the dark thing's eyes.
3. A terrible boom rolls out and away taking the music with it.
4. The dark thing stands twisted backwards, hands clawing at his face; the king is a statue of revenge or deliverance; the knight is framed kneeling between them, his body a study of horror and revelation fading slowly to an impossible calm as a slow silent flash begins behind them all, erasing everything from sight.

Chapter the Fifth

1. The knight still kneels.
2. His candles have gone out. The mist is now the gray of dawning instead of the silver of night, and there are rocks and trees about him bearing no resemblance to the figures that moved before.
3. Slowly he rises, knees creaking in the stillness, and steps out from his circle.
4. He turns to go, then pauses, stooping.
5. He raises the thing that has caught his eye.
6. It is a single prong of deer horn, as dropped by a yearling stag.
7. The morning breaks about him, clarifying nothing.

Figure 27 Hill of Three Oaks, 1993.

The Winter King: A Dream

(By Irony, c. 1998)

Chapter the First

1. It seemed that I stood on a hill of oaks and the seasons changed about me. The first snowstorm of winter was imminent.
2. A circle of watchers, robed in white woolens sat all around the crest of the hill. In the center a fire had been built.
3. About it sat four figures, hooded, showing no faces and speaking not. They seemed very old, though the curl of a young woman's hair showed beneath one hood.
4. Two other figures sat with them, facing each other across the flames. The one was a king who had reached the end of his reign and his power; the other was a king to be.

Chapter the Second

1. When the fire was high, the old king removed his crown and set it within the blaze. It burned quickly and was gone, leaving no ash.
2. He then began to speak, quietly, carefully, telling his successor everything the other needed to know of the reigns and the country he was to command, all the secrets that could be learned only by reigning, and were not always to be known by others.
3. He recounted secrets of state, of practice and of power, secrets of identity, stories and lessons of his own hard reign.
4. He then related what wisdom his own predecessor had told him at his crowning, so many seasons back.

Chapter the Third

1. He spoke quickly, choosing his words with care and precision for he had not much time. The fire could not be fed after it had consumed the crown, and when the last flame died the speaking would cease.
2. Back and back he went, remembering and conferring all the wisdom of all the generations of kings prior to his own, repeating their words from the vaults of his memory, back as far as tradition could carry him and as time allowed.
3. The watchers were silent.
4. The clouds gathered.
5. The last finger of flame winked out, winked in, flickered, was gone.
6. The old king fell silent and the first flakes of winter swirled about them.
7. No one moved.

Chapter the Fourth

1. The watchers in the inner ring now pored their attention into the coals, watching as one by one, they too died.
2. When only seven were left the four watchers in the center moved. Slowly, elegantly, they took the coals from out the ashes and strung them together to form a crown.
3. They stood then, the four without faces. The old king drew back, his role played out.

4. The young chosen king stayed, kneeling at the now empty fire. The eldest of the Four came forth and set upon his head the crown of coals.
5. There was a transfer. The crown burned, but did not burn him. Like a crimson Pleiades it was visible from the foot of the hill.
6. The king stood. The others stepped away. He raised his eyes, raised his hands.
7. Above him the clouds parted, cleared, dissolved into the blackness between the sudden stars. The last flakes vanished.
8. He lowered his arms.
9. The others bowed toward him, silent.
10. The outer circle stood.
11. "Behold the King! " The shout rang out, and the power of the shout, and the power of the king rolled out and down across the hills, filling all his realm.

Figure 28 Seat of the King, Lower Arb 2004.

Figure 29 Brandon Schields, Matt Cohen, Nikki Lambert, Erin Erskine, Diane Freed, Sam Adams, Paul Schmidt, Mike Scharding in the Druid Den on a balmy August 1st, 2003 before a sweatlodge.

The Wild Hunt

(By Irony, 8-30-98)

Chapter the First

1. Algonquin Park
2. Ontario, Canada
3. I think I dreamt of the Wild Hunt.
4. Merri and I were riding Velvet, double and bareback, down Stone road.
5. I was seated in front and Merri had a dress on for some reason and was flopped back against Velvet's rump resting.
6. Sometimes it was winter.
7. We were riding quietly, enjoying the day, when we came suddenly face to nose with another horse.

Chapter the Second

1. Seated upright on Velvet's back my head was just barely level with its nose.
2. It was an enormous chocolate brown horse- I didn't note the gender- standing fully saddled with green saddle bags strapped on behind large enough to stuff a person into.
3. The horse's nose was flat almost to the point of being concave, and I don't recall seeing bit or bridle. It could look at you with both eyes at once.
4. Velvet bolted- the horse ambled along side keeping pace. Nothing could have out-run it.
5. We stopped and the horse came over to sniff me.
6. Velvet reared trying to bring her head on level with its.
7. I grabbed a skinny tree trunk to keep us aloft.
8. The horse ignored velvet and sniffed me again.
9. There was a masked disquieting air of intelligence about it.
10. The brace on the back of its saddle rose like the roll bar on our tractor.

Chapter the Third

11. Velvet came down, pranced away, and reared again.
12. The horse had white hooves, I saw, and there was a bandage about its right front ankle.
13. When Velvet came down again I saw that there was another horse just as large tied to a tree somewhat off the road watching us quietly.
14. It too was chocolate brown with white hooves and had a flattened nose. It had antlers.
15. 'Are these saddled elk?' I thought. 'They're too big even for that- no one less that ten feet tall could ride them!'
16. I saw that the ground was littered with bits of normal antlers and bone, including what looked like thinly sliced vertebrae. I wondered if someone butchered things here.
17. There was a rustling in the woods to our right and a whole fleet of deer came tripping out.
18. They looked tiny compared to everything else and clustered around the legs of the giant horse.

Chapter the Fourth

1. The horse continued to pay Velvet no mind, but sniffed me curiously, as if weighing things up.
2. I eased Velvet past. The horse leaned down and grabbed my left arm with its lips between elbow and shoulder, gripping my jacket and the sleeve underneath.
3. I twisted out carefully and continued away.
4. The horse stood in the road, silent as ever, watching us go. We rounded a corner.
5. Something leapt from a tree like a cat, grabbing me from behind with great awkward, furry arms.
6. I threw it of into the road before us. It landed on its feet facing us- a lion. It had been careful not to use its claws.
7. Then it too stepped aside and let us past.
8. We rode on nervously through the perfectly normal woods where it was sometimes winter.
9. Only later did I wonder if that had been the Wild Hunt with only the riders away for the moment....

Figure 30 Above is the Gate to the Druid Den in Upper Arb and below is woods of Lower Arb, both 204.

The History of The Legitimacy

This being a history of the Carleton Grove during the years from Beltain 1996 until the summer 1999, as recalled by Irony Sade after his retirement as Archdruid. Written on Dec. 31st, 1999.

SECTION ONE

The First Spring of 1996: Initiation

Chapter the First

1. Michelle the Blond and Irony, who has been called the Glowing, were ordained by Mike the Fool to the priesthood of Dalon ap Landu after vigiling the night of Beltain 1996.
2. There were few at Carleton at that time who still called themselves Druids, and fewer still who were not leaving at the end of the year, and Michelle and Irony did wonder much what it was they were to do.
3. Shortly after their vigil there came to pass a gathering of many who had led the Druids during their times at Carleton. Andrea the Fair, Mike the Fool, Misha, Joe, and others were present, and it was determined that a sweat lodge was in order.
4. This lodge was held on the sandy spit in the lower Arb, just beyond the pylons, and was graciously visited by the Security Guards twice during the night.
5. From it the young Archdruids learned many things. Be friendly with the Security Guards, all ye that read this; their favor saved many a ritual in the years that followed.
6. The rest of that spring passed in a flurry of confusion as the two young druids struggled to understand what had gone before.

SECTION TWO

The Second Year 1996-1997: The Year of the Circles

Chapter the First

1. When the Druids returned to Carleton the next fall they discovered that Mike the Fool had left them to spread the word of Druidism in the land of the rising sun.
2. They discovered too that a circle of stones had miraculously appeared just North-East of the Hill of Three Oaks. They did not visit it at once, however, for it was occupied by a couple of the most amorous nature.
3. This place became a haven of all things Druidic, and was loved by many.
4. That fall equinox the tradition of marriage bread was begun. Two loaves were baked, with a ring in each. These were to be divided amongst the celebrants at the equinox, and those who found the rings were to be married the next Beltain.
5. But Lo, it was a young and foolish tradition, for these were young and foolish druids, and they did not think until too late that the loafs should have been segregated by sex.
6. And it came to pass that David the Apologist and Andrew the Mad received the rings. There was much confusion, but they were good sports, and it was decided that they should be married that May.
7. Time passed, as is its wont. Teas were held in the Japanese Garden and in the Faculty Club Lounge. Great ideas were discussed regarding the purpose of life. Andrea the Fair did come often to these discussions, and shared much wisdom from ages past. One Carlos Gonzalas, the wise doctor and healer did visit and teach us many things. At the circle there was music, dancing, and the observance of stars.
8. That Samhain a grand gathering was held. Two dozen druids and associates met in the little grove round a roaring blaze to commune with the night. A talking stick was crafted of a strange twisted wood from the deserts of the west, and it was found to have strange powers over speech.
9. As the stick was passed from hand to hand about the blaze, stories welled up from within its holder. Old grief's were let go, old wrongs forgiven, old stories told, and Death remembered. Letters were burned from relatives to the dead.
10. After a time the stories changed to those of Life, marriages, and hopes. This was taken as a sign that the year would be reborn, however dark the winter might become, and it was good.
11. There was much dancing, and a sweat lodge was held. The day came at last and there was much rejoicing.
12. That winter the teas continued and there were many rituals. A Candlemass observance was held, and a Self-Hater banishment performed.
13. The subsequent grounding of cakes and ale was supplemented by massage oil, and Andrea the Fair introduced the Druids to the delights of the Meltdown.
14. It was a time of great peace and contentment among the Druids, for they did not know what was yet to come.

Chapter the Second

1. All that year the circle of stones beyond the Hill of Oaks had called to the Druids and they had answered.
2. However cold the weather one could always find an offering of flowers placed amongst the stones. But it was not to last.
3. One night late in the winter as Irony was wandering in the upper Arb, he discovered that the stones had been torn from the womb of their mother and lay tossed and scattered about the field.
4. A great wrath fell upon him, and he did assay to repair the shrine, but found his strength too small.
5. He descended upon Goodhue in search of any druids he could find to assist and found them all absent. But he did find a number of the Accidentals, who were friendly with the Druids at that time, and they did agree to aid him, for he felt that the stones should be righted by sunrise.
6. Before the dawn he did return to the circle but found no one there to help. Then did Irony call upon the strength of the Earth-Mother and rolled back the stones with his bare hands.
7. At that time all but the center stone had been moved, for it was a passing great rock, and well frozen to the earth.
8. Just as the sun rose there came one to whom he had spoken the night before, rubbing the sleep from her eyes, but the work was accomplished, and Irony was sore for a week.
9. It was not long after the beginning of spring term that Michelle the Blond and Irony were out wandering the Arb together when they came upon the circle behind the hill and found it desecrated a second time.

10. A great wrath fell upon them both, for this time every stone had been uprooted and rolled about. They did gnash their teeth and wished to curse the evil doers, but recalled the wisdom of ages past and decided to relent.
11. Nor did they attempt to discover the identity of the anti-druids, for they saw that as the beginning of the path of vengeance.
12. Instead they did set about repairing the damage as best they could, and their combined strength was sufficient to move every stone but the one in the center.
13. That was a great stone, full half man sized in height, and their strength availed as naught against it.
14. These two arch druids did then descend in fury upon Goodhue, and there did conscript David the Apologist and Jared the Roommate, and the strength of these two and Irony combined proved sufficient to move the stone.
15. But the circle had been destroyed one time too many, and was never the same again.
16. At this time a plan did begin to fester in the mind of Irony and he wrote concerning it to the president of Carleton. But the paper wheels were ever slow to turn, and it was many weeks before aught came of it.

Chapter the Third

1. The time of Beltain was fast approaching, and the Druids had carved a Maypole, but they lacked still a place to erect it, for the Spring Concert was to occupy the Hill of Three Oaks, and Mai Fete was taken. And they did ponder this matter much.
2. About this time Michelle the Blond was wandering about the wilds, when she discovered that the statue of the Lady, carved of gray wood by unknown hands, that had stood all that year and the one before it just south of monument Hill had been thrown down into the mud.
3. She was disturbed, and righted the Lady at once, and told the other druids about it.
4. Shortly thereafter Amanda the Beautific did come upon the Lady again, and found her once more fallen, and she did right her a second time, but moved her slightly to hide her somewhat.
5. Then did Irony seek out her new abode the next day, only to find the Lady face down in the muddy path with tire tracks across her back.
6. Then did he skip class to carry the Lady far across the Arb and hid her in what was then Three Bird Grove, or the Faculty Picnic Area.
7. Then Michelle the Blond and he did dig a great pit, and buried the feet of the lady in the mold so that she stood man high.
8. They did pack the earth about her and charge upon her the blessings of the Woods, and there she stood firm for many seasons, and was loved by many.
9. Irony did also make her a necklace of amethyst, but it was soon stolen.

Chapter the Fourth

1. With Beltain fast approaching it was suggested that the grove with the lady might be a suitable site for the festival, for it was little known and far removed from the drunken revels surrounding the concert.
2. But there was concern on several fronts.
3. The Arb director decreed that there should be no fires there, for it was an old prairie remnant and must not be burned, and this condition was agreed to with some regret.
4. Another concern arose- for there was the legend of BOB in those days, and it was thought that there might have been his abode. BOB was rumored to be a malicious spirit and had chased many good pagans from the upper Arb at night.
5. Then did the druids Michelle the Blond, Amanda the Beautific, Andrea the Fair, and Irony seek to discover the presence or hiding place of BOB, but they had no success.
6. Then did Irony undertake a second vigil to find if BOB was indeed buried in the Lady's Grove, for he was a mighty fool and confident in his strength, having turned away demons before.
7. And he set himself within the grove with cloak and candle, invited any spirits in the place to visit him, and commenced to wait.
8. He had no wish to do battle, but wished merely to talk with BOB, if he was there, and see what arrangement could be reached.
9. Then night was long, but nothing came. At length, to stave off sleep the vigiler did take a brief walk and found himself once more beside the circle.
10. The night was dark, but he could see that all was not well, for while the outer ring still stood, the great center stone had been toppled and thrust aside by unknown hands.
11. There was no rage in him this third time, but a great weight of sadness, and he lifted the stone lightly and set it back in place.
12. Then a great shock took him and he stood as if stunned, for he had tried many times before to move that stone with no success.
13. Then did Irony thank the Earth-mother for lending him strength, and he walked back to the grove with trembling legs, for he had never been possessed of such magic and it was a strange and terrifying thing.

Chapter the Fifth

1. With no further objections from BOB the Lady's grove was chosen as the site to host Beltain, and at last the day arrived.
2. Then was there feasting and merrymaking, music and song, and the may-pole was danced many times.
3. Musicians came from the twin cities, including Matt the Harper, who was blind, and played upon a great double strung harp. There were fiddles and pipes, drums and accordions, and there was much rejoicing.
4. Amanda the Beautific did invent the Doughnut Tree and it hung above the path to the great amusement of passers by.
5. This event has since passed into Druid tradition, and involves suspending doughnuts from strings and having people then attempt to them eat without their hands, while being tickled. It is a difficult sport involving much madness and little sustenance.

6. A tiny passing dog won the game, leaping full into the air, and snatching a powdered doughnut from its string.
7. At last David the Apologist and Andrew the Mad did step forward to be wed. But here the Druid's nerves did fail them, and it was decided that there should be two weddings, and brides were quickly selected for the lucky men.
8. Why this thing should be so is no longer remembered, for in later years the Druids had no such qualms, and two women were later joined at Beltain 99.
9. So Andrea the Fair was wed to David the Apologist, and Michelle the Other was wed to Andrew the Mad.
10. The weddings were performed by Michelle the Blond, and here was included for the first time the 'chastity within marriage' clause, and there was much amusement.
11. The couples then led a dance about the pole while the musicians played, and all was well, till the Druids did rush suddenly upon the nuptial pairs with a great ribbon and bind them all to the pole, where they were tickled.
12. So ended the first Beltain, and it was reckoned a great success.

Chapter the Sixth

1. Then at last did the plans of Irony see fruit.
2. The destruction of the circle of stones had angered him greatly, for it was well loved by many people. But its proximity to the Hill and its malleable size invited vandals, and it had been destroyed three times in as many terms.
3. Then did Irony undertake a great sacrilege, for he wished to preserve the circle, and yet strengthen it.
4. And so he destroyed it utterly, and transported the largest of the stones away to the Grove of the Lady and brought with them eight others of the largest stones he could find, and caused them to be erected in a new circle there in the Lady's Grove where the Maypole had so lately stood.
5. And this circle was five lengths across, sheltered by Oak trees, and well hidden from the rest of the campus, while the great table and altar in its center was a limestone triangle six feet to the side and two feet thick.
6. But this great slab was supported by the three largest stones from the old beloved circle on the hill, for theirs was the place of honor, and the great center stone of the old circle was set deep into the earth at the southern quarter as the stone of life. It is a powerful stone still, though its size be much diminished.
7. All this was done in the month of May, and so great was his resolve and persuasion that Irony did convince the College to pay for the creation of the shrine.
8. The Circle was laid by Irony and Michelle the Blond, and the work was accomplished by he, she, Amanda the Beautific, Andrew the Mad, and Jenette the Tall.
9. Irony and Dennis Easly did summon a great monster and constrained it to do their will.
10. It was a foul creature that belched fumes and bellowed, and with its inhuman strength was much accomplished that could not have been done otherwise.
11. But its great claws tore at the earth, and none were sorry to see it go. It grumbled as it was dismissed, for the altar top had weighed two and a quarter tons.
12. There were many who were angered at this thing, for Irony had destroyed the first circle more completely than any vandal, and had broken many a tradition of the Druids.
13. They did call him mad, foolish, arrogant, and uncaring, and those words ring ever round his head. But the deed was done, and only time can tell its worth.

Chapter the Seventh

1. The Circle was charged on the last full moon of spring, and it was dedicated as a place of peace and power for all who would respect it.
2. For it was not built for the Druids alone, but for any soul or spirit that desired a place to rest, study, or simply be at peace.
3. A dance was danced about the circle, a twining, spinning dance of charging and awakening: five people walked deosil about the outer ring, while five traced out a great pentacle inside it pointing to the North, each walking the line of the star until they had passed their beginning three times.
4. The Circle was awakened, and many are the strange and wonderful sights that it has seen.
5. So ended the second year of this chronicle, and it ended in doubt and wonder, for the Archdruids had learned a thing or two, but had meddled much with things they did not understand, and none were certain where the group would go.
6. Irony was especially concerned, for the building of the Circle had left him drained, and it would be nearly a year before he returned again to Carleton.
7. At this time Amanda the Beautific was made second order, and she was to join Michelle the Blond in the running of the grove.

SECTION THREE

The Third Year 1997-1998: The Year of Amnesia

Chapter the First

1. There followed what is now known as The Year of Amnesia, for those that were there say they remember little of what was done.
2. Irony was gone for the fall and winter, and only rumors reached him.
3. The College cracked down on public nudity that fall following a walking streak of Parent's Weekend by the cross country teams, and Michelle the Blond did warn the Druids at the sweat lodge that Samhain was not to be indiscreet.
4. Andrea the Fair was present however and felt that nudity was a sacrament, and not to be repressed.
5. There are some who say she flaunted the warning, and there was much bitterness between her and Michelle the Blond.
6. The ceremony of Marriage bread was performed again at the equinox, but there were too many pieces for the druids present to consume, and they were slow to eat them.
7. It then fell out that two non-druids were passing and saw the bread, and they did ask to eat of it, and great was the surprise when they found the rings, for they did not know what they had fallen into.
8. Their names were Michael Pouland and Shelia Anderson, and they did not know what to do, for they had no desire to be married, having each a sweet-heart of their own.

9. An interest in Tarot reading was developed and cultivated, and a stenciled face that some thought was John Lennon, some Albert Einstein, and others Irony, appeared in paint upon the face of the North Stone in the Circle.
10. Some were angered at this, and some were amused, but no one seemed sure what to do with it, for it was quite resistant to scrubbing.
11. At this time also did Michelle the Blond begin to have doubts about the Druids and her own Druidism, but for what cause none can say but she.
12. 'The Druids are nothing but a ridiculous joke,' she wrote to Irony during that winter, 'We should disband them entirely.'
13. Irony was greatly disturbed at this, for he felt no Archdruid had the legitimate power to end the movement, nor did he believe it could be done.
14. He begged her to wait until he returned in the spring before doing anything of the sort, then if she wished to retire from the Druids there would be someone to carry on.
15. Of the year of Amnesia nothing more is remembered until spring, unless it be by another hand. Michelle the Blond, Amanda the Beautific, and Brian the Atheist were there at the time, but they have spoken little of it.
16. That March did Andrea the Fair depart the Twin Cities for the West Coast, and the last of the 'old Druids' was taken from the grove, so far as they knew.

Chapter the Second

1. It was spring before Irony returned, for he had wandered long, and had studied the arts of blacksmithing in Germany, the arts of sailing and oceanography in the Caribbean, and had slept on top of Glastonbury Tor.
2. He returned with a harp he could not yet play, and found many of the druids he had left had vanished. There were new faces, as always, but as ever he missed the old.
3. Rob Harrison, a great friend and councilor did emerge from Northfield during this time, for he had long sought out the Druids, and had been referred by Isaac Bonewits to the grove at Carleton.
4. He was swiftly to become a great resource and co-conspirator.
5. That spring Beltain was held on the island of Mai Fete, where years before more secular festivals had been held.
6. The Maypole was unearthed from its hiding place and was danced innumerable times, until the dancers did pause from dizziness for fear of fainting.
7. This year there was a fire, and much music, and many dishes were brought for a feast, for there were to be two weddings. Shelia had fled to spend the weekend with her real boyfriend, so Michael's sweetheart Jessica stepped forward to take her place.
8. In addition Harriet Erwin, the secretary of Religion, Philosophy, and Classics, did arrive unannounced with her boyfriend to be wed. This was a surprise to him as well as the Druids, but was well received by both parties.
9. There was doughnut fishing, for there were no trees near at hand for the usual sport, and it was well enjoyed, and there was storytelling late into the night.
10. Just at sunset the weddings were performed, and they were beautiful. Their terms were to last for a year and a day, and as the couples had a natural fondness to one another they were more serious than those of the previous year.
11. Irony performed the ceremonies, and read vows from the Anthology before the couples. It was feared that things might get out of hand, for Irony was known to wax serious at times, so before the ceremony he went to his old roommate Jesse the Brown, and gave unto him a great powdered doughnut.
12. "If I get too serious," he told him, "throw this at me."
13. Michael and Jessica did emerge from across the lake each wearing a crown of willow and flowers made by the other, and they did cross the island down an avenue of druids.
14. Before the fire they came to Irony and David the Apologist, master of ceremonies for the night. The vows were read against the sunset, and each agreed to abide by them.
15. Bread was exchanged, and honey wine. But just as the bride was about to drink Irony spoke again.
16. "Last year we included another clause within the vows, and that was of chastity within marriage. It meant you could sleep with whom ever else you wanted to, but not with your spouse, so long as the marriage held."
17. There was a startled stillness as people wondered if he jested, and the bride looked at him with violent eyes, the chalice of mead at her lips.
18. Then came a roar of laughter, and Jesse threw the doughnut. He threw with more force than necessary, for he and Irony had been ill matched as roommates, but his aim was poor, and the pastry hit the bride instead.
19. Then the couple lead a dance as the fire was built up, and the Druids were much impressed, for Jessica and Michael knew what they were about and requested a proper jig, and there was much applause.
20. Then came the Ordeal. It had been discovered that there was an ancient game of Beltain wherein couples would join hands and leap together through a blazing fire as a prophecy for their year together.
21. If they cleared it unscorched and unsevered, the year would be prosperous and fine.
22. If they landed scorched but together, it would be hard, but each would stand by the other.
23. But if one were to leap while the other held back, woe should fall upon the pair, and it was doubtful they would last the year.
24. As the flames reached chest high the Ordeal was called for, and its terms and meaning explained.
25. Michael and Jessica looked much askance, for they were not druids themselves, but had fallen into the affair by chance, and there were many who doubted the two would jump.
26. But Jessica, who wore a long dress of the richest green, did twist and knot it up about her thighs, and seizing hands they rushed upon the blaze.
27. With a mighty leap they sailed through the flames and landed on the grass unscathed and still together, and there was much applause and admiration for their courage.
28. They dropped hands quickly and looked abashed, and some did wonder what this foretold, but as of this writing, they were still together.
29. The wedding of Harriet and her much astonished lover was more subdued, but pleasant. The Maypole was danced a final time in their honor, but when the Ordeal was described and proposed they both demurred.
30. This was reckoned as an ill sign, and by the next year they had parted company.

31. Late into the night the singing and storytelling ranged, as the sky grew dark and the fire dim. Then, as the stars began to gleam the heavens burst forth in glory.
32. A great display of Northern Lights did cover the world- at least at Carleton- and there were pinks and greens amongst the stars, and lights rippled above the wispy clouds as sunshine does beneath a clear pool of disturbed water.
33. Great beams and fingers of light washed clear across the sky. Some reckoned it a gift of the gods, and some were scientists, but all did aver they had never seen the like.
34. The Druids had great command of the weather in those days, but they had never called for this.
35. It was indeed a most marvelous celebration.
36. Though the festival was well attended the numbers of regular druids seemed to be few, and while teas were held there was little discussion of note.
37. Amanda the Beautific had been ordained third order during the winter months, but she was drawn ever away by her studies, and Michelle the Blond did drift even further away from the Druids.
38. After much discussion the face of Lennon was effaced from the North Stone, but it was accomplished only with the most vile of substances, and with the aid of Glen- the master of the paint shop at Carleton, and it was never completely removed.
39. Even now when the stone is wet a ghostly face can still be seen.

Chapter the Third

1. There is little else to be told of that spring, save for one event that happened nearly at its end.
2. Irony visited the Circle often during that time, for he had put much of himself into it and had missed it for a year.
3. So it was that on one venture late in the spring he found the place bestrewn with bottles whole and broken, and found a fire had been built upon the altar and the rock was cracked and discolored.
4. That there be no fires there had been one of the conditions of its building, and the Druids had taken it upon themselves to see that this was met.
5. Indeed they had buried an existing fire ring in that grove- there is a tiny mound over it, just beyond the South-East Stone.
6. This occurrence disturbed Irony, and he did inform the rulers of the Arb, and cleaned the mess as best he could.
7. He had a feeling, though, that the perpetrators would be back, and kept more than his usual watch upon the place.
8. Thus it came to pass later that week as he and Ginger (who was a freshling that year, and who's name describes her well enough) were walking at night that they came upon the Circle and found the altar in flames.
9. There was a second fire upon it, and many revelers about in various stages of drink. Irony and Ginger did walk into their midst, and the drinkers appeared astounded.
10. Then did Irony address them, saying: "What is going on here? This is not a place for fires; the prairie is too near and too sensitive to flame.
11. There are only four spots at Carleton where fires are permitted and this is none of them.
12. I can show you another if you wish to move your party there, but this fire must be extinguished now-"
13. The drinkers did stand as if frozen, and looked on him with blank astonished stares, but he was used to this, and thought nothing of it.
14. "Who will help me stamp it out?" he asked, for he was barefoot, and did not relish the idea. None moved.
15. Then did Irony take from the altar the flaming brands and cast them upon the grass free ground, explaining calmly where fires could be had, and why, and how sorry he was to spoil their fun.
16. The logs removed, he gathered up the coals from off the rock with his bare hands and barefoot, began to tramp them out.
17. At last a few of the drinkers moved and came to help, but they were slow, and little was left for them to do.
18. When the last coals were out Irony did invite them once again to retire to another site, but they preferred to stay.
19. They promised there would be no more flames, and that they would clean the place upon departing, and the two wanderers left satisfied.
20. When they were out of earshot Ginger laughed, for the two had been conversing on the proper uses of magic.
21. "It never works if you are showing off?" she asked him, laughing, for those had been his recent words.
22. Then he looked at her dumbfounded, for he realized suddenly what he had done.
23. For he had handled live coals and trod upon flames barefoot, yet when he looked at his hands and feet he found no burns or blisters, but only a smearing of ash. And when he washed this away he found not even the hair was burned.
24. This was reckoned the second miracle at the Circle, and it was more astounding than the first.
25. The drinkers did keep but half their promise. There was no more flame, but their smashed and broken bottles were all about the stones, and several had not been emptied.
26. Further, and this may have had nothing at all to do with them, the statue of the Lady that had long stood near unto the Circle had vanished.
27. Her hole stood empty and the path approaching her led up to nothingness. A scrap of her dirt was found within the circle, and that was all.
28. There was much sadness at her departure, and so far as this chronicler can tell, she has not been seen by any druid from that day to this.

Figure 31 Altar Stone at New Circle, c. 1998.

SECTION FOUR

The Fourth Year 1998-1999: The Year of Growth

Chapter the First

1. In the history of the Reformed Druids, each changing of the guard has been accompanied with a near reversal in policy and practice as the new Archdruids rebel against the ways of the old.
2. This has saved the Druids from stagnation, but has also curtailed their growth, for if each new generation abandons the teaching and wisdom of the old, then they must begin anew and waste much time relearning basic matters.
3. Irony knew this well, for he had spent his first two years discovering and relearning the basics of Druidic leadership and felt that he had now laid the foundations for growth.
4. He hoped to spare the next generation the lost time of relearning so that they could build upon this foundation, and hoped too that with the proper sort of leadership there would be no rebellion when he left.
5. But these foundations resided primarily in the minds of the Archdruids and would be lost and useless if they could not be passed on, or if the next generation chose to rebel against the ways of the past four years.
6. Furthermore, Irony was now the last of the Archdruids.
7. Amanda had retreated into Neuro-psychology, and during the summer Michelle the Blond had kicked herself out of the Druids, and out of the order of Dalon ap Landu.
8. She returned to Carleton calling herself a Discordian Witch, and figures little in the history of this year.

Chapter the Second

1. Irony, who has been called many things, returned to Carleton early that fall hoping to catch young freshlings during New Student Week when their minds were impressionable and their schedules unformed.
2. He also brought with him two druids from his home. These were friends of his with whom he had long discussed Druidism, and who now elected to attend Carleton.
3. Their names were Merri the Wanderer, and Chrissie the Very Intimidating, and Irony hoped to train them up as the next Archdruids so that no knowledge or time would be lost.
4. Thus you can see there was much he did not know, for this is not the way succession works among the Druids.
5. The gods have a say in who is chosen and will not have their choice usurped. Archdruids emerge.
6. They are not to be picked by leaders of the past, but merely noticed and encouraged.
7. The Druids knew none of this at the time, but it soon became apparent.
8. Many of the core druids of the Year of Growth emerged during New Student Week. Ehren the Eerie, Chloe the Cuddleable, Chris the Fey, Dan the Rabbinic, and several others.
9. Amanda was present on occasion, and Rob, Brian the Atheist, and a few others from past years were still around.
10. Things took off at a great pace.

Chapter the Fourth

1. For the Equinox that fall the Druids learned a Morris Dance, descending upon the Folk Dancers in a great crowd and not leaving till they were taught.
2. Michelle the Blond came to the dance. It may have been the last event she attended.
3. Marriage bread was baked, and Irony and Ginger found the rings. But then a peculiar sub tradition came into play, for though the point of the ceremony is for those who receive the rings to be married at Beltain, in actual fact this had never happened: Dave and Andrew married Andrea and Michelle instead of each other; Michael married Jessica instead of Shelia.
4. This time too the original pair was split, for there were many feelings involved in many directions, and it was felt that even as a mock union the match would bring trouble.
5. So Ginger gave her ring to Merri the Wanderer who was Irony's true beloved, and took upon herself Merri's roommate, Chloe the Cuddleable, as her bride.
6. Teas were held in Prentice House lounge that fall, and there were discussions and sweat lodges.
7. For Samhain the Druids carved no less than fourteen Jack'o'lanterns and carried them in a singing procession all through campus until their arms fell off.
8. There was a mummers play in the little grove, and it was well attended.
9. The fall passed quickly, as it always seems to, and Irony did endeavor to draw the younger druids into roles of leadership so that they might learn the in's and out's of dealing with the college.
10. It quickly became apparent though, that his wishes concerning the next Archdruidcy would come to naught, as indicated by one fairly dramatic event.

Chapter the Fifth

1. At the beginning of each fall, and toward the end of each spring the Circle must needs be cleared of grass, thistles, and vines that grow up within it.
2. For some this is a nuisance, for others an act of devotion. In the past it has been done by hand, and takes for bloody ever.
3. This fall, Irony, Chloe the Cuddleable, Merri the Wanderer and Chrissie the Very Intimidating set about this work.
4. The three younger druids were new to Carleton, and had not made up their minds what they thought of Druidism yet. Strange things shortly began to occur.
5. The Circle spoke suddenly to Merri and set her a challenge- she was to clear a specific path within it, alone, and in spite of an illness she had which made her faint and woozely in the heat. She set about this and accomplished it.
6. Chrissie, meanwhile, had no interest in being there, and was doing so because she felt it was required of her by Irony.
7. The Circle seemed to pick up on this, and sent swarms of ants and spiders after her wherever she sat, though they did not seem to bother the others.
8. Chloe was there primarily because Merri was her roommate, and though she worked as hard as any, she felt she did it for the wrong reason.
9. Irony was unaware of any of this, and cleared in a clueless state of bliss.

10. In the days that followed Chrissie and Chloe felt that the Circle was punishing them for serving it for such reasons as they had.
11. This was not an unjustified feeling, for they each developed the nastiest sort of blistering rash that any one there had seen.
12. Chloe was unable to sit or sleep for days, and nothing seemed to help the inch long blisters that rose upon her legs and arms.
13. Merri developed a few spots, and Irony was basically untouched. The others did make much of this, and there was tension, and no small resentment.
14. It was latter determined that the source of these blisters was a plant- Wild Celery- which contains a photosensitive poison. On skin alone it is harmless; once sunlight hits it, blisters develop.
15. Why Merri and Irony developed it not was a matter of much conjuncture, and no final story was ever accepted.
16. The incident served to push Chrissie away from the potential Archdruidcy, and made it clear to Irony that his will in such matters was not to be done.
17. This incident also signaled the beginning of a very strange thing, for there were many who began to attribute an agency to the Circle itself. "The Circle did this," they would say, "it wants such and such."
18. People began to feel that the Circle itself was sentient, or that there resided within it some being synonymous with the thing itself.
19. This feeling became more pronounced as independent corroboration's began to emerge, but all felt it was benevolent.
20. It would, it was felt, inflict a certain pain on occasion, but always in the interest of driving a person on to further self-development.
21. At the time no one really understood what was happening. For all I know they still do not.

Chapter the Sixth

1. At some point during this fall that two peculiar customs emerged, and they were these.
2. At each of the sweat lodges, and at many of the other night gatherings large cauldrons of stew were made. These were flavored with various herbs and spices, and served hot from the fire.
3. At some point it came into being that whosoever discovered a Bay leaf in their portion of stew was required to kiss the cook in whatever manner was mutually agreeable.
4. No one is entirely sure where this practice emerged, though some do credit it to Erika the Chef, who took it upon herself to do much of the cooking.
5. She is possessed of a playful manner and an open mind, so it is conceivable that she was indeed the source.
6. The second tradition which emerged was imported with Merri the Wanderer and Chrissie the Very Intimidating, and it was the ceremony of Marshmellowing.
7. This ceremony is called for when grievances have developed, or a spectacle is required of one or more of the druids. It is like a stoning, but gentler.
8. All the Druids gather in a circle about the culprit with marshmallows in hand, and throw them one at a time at the marshmallowee.
9. As they throw, each calls out a specific sin or grievance for which their marshmallow is a punitive strike.
10. These can be real or ridiculous sins- 'for being a gay man with straight tendencies!' or 'This is for molesting young sea birds!'
11. Then, if the charge strikes the interest of the throwers, the marshmallowee may be called upon to confess the details of the charge, even if their crime was a complete fabrication!
12. But beware in the throwing, if ever you try this, for if the marshmallow misses its target, the sin rebounds and settles upon its thrower.
13. It is by all accounts a ridiculous tradition, but seems well loved, and serves in some small way to keep the group together.

Chapter the Seventh

1. Winter came, and freezings began.
2. More and more responsibility fell upon the young druids as Irony became gradually consumed by Comps.
3. Just after Imbolc, Merri the Wanderer left Carleton for a time, and founded another grove in New York.
4. It was during this time that various energy experiments were carried out, and designs were made for scientific tests, but the results were inconclusive.
5. It was made known by some of the past druids and associates that these things had been tried before with similar results, and interest gradually died.
6. During this time too the druids set up a Caucus conference. The old Druids_Notes had died. It was in the keeping of Michelle the Blond and seems to have been deleted.
7. During this winter too were many young druids questioned and made second order. These included Merri the Wanderer, Ehren the Eerie, Dan the Rabbinic, Chris the Fey, and Rob the Elder, for they answered their questions well, and were confirmed by signs from the wild.

Chapter the Eighth

1. Spring came at last, and with it Beltain, and Merri came back, and Mec returned from the Land of the Rising Sun and offered himself as a Beltain slave to the druids he found, so that much work was accomplished that would have been difficult without.
2. But there was much discussion between him and Irony, for it appeared that Irony had abandoned many of the traditions of the Druids, and Mec would know the reasons.
3. It came to light, for instance, that Irony and Michelle had been the last priests to be consecrated to Dalon ap Landu, and that Irony had not taught the younger druids about him.
4. This was the last tradition that had survived the thirty-six years since the beginning of the reform, and Mec was puzzled and disturbed that it had not been passed on.
5. Then there was a long and tense debate between these two Archdruids, past and passing, for they had both thought long and hard on such matters, and both had years of druidry to draw upon.
6. But at last Irony answered him saying 'I am a priest of the Druids, and a faithful servant to that to which you consecrated me. I have even met, on occasion, a being which seems to be the Lord of the Groves, and it is good- but it has never named itself to me, and I cannot in good conscience force a name upon it, nor teach others an empty

name to distract them from the living being that you and I both know.'

7. Then there was a great sadness between them.
8. For Mec perceived that the Druids had changed in form, if not in spirit, and he loved tradition, and was loath to see it go.
9. And Irony was sad, for he had never wanted such a break with the past.
10. But both had done what they thought right, and they ended with understanding and friendship between them.
11. And when the Third Order Vigils were performed that Spring, the Lord of the Groves was not mentioned, and people were ordained only as priests and priestesses of the Druids.
12. The old ritual is still there, and may well come back into practice some day.
13. Till then, the spirit that guides the Druids is nameless, and each sees in it something slightly different.

Chapter the Ninth

1. Beltain was held at the Circle that year, and Mec later said it was the best Beltain he had ever witnessed.
2. The Maypole was raised and danced, the Donut tree was hung, there was music, and dancing, and feasting without end, and Jim brought his Tarot cards to read.
3. There was piping and harping, and no less than three couples were married.
4. Kirsten of the many smiles was wed by Irony to her boy in absentia. A good friend stood in for the groom, as they were unable to locate a cell phone, and they underwent the ordeal together.
5. Then Chrissie the Very Intimidating joined Chloe the Cuddleable and Ginger together, and theirs was the most elaborate and beautiful wedding that had yet been seen, for they had a best man- Liz, and a Bridesmaid, who was Chris in green lipstick, and they exchanged gifts and vows in a ring of friends and druids while harps sang in the wind for their joy.
6. Then as the sun set Irony and Merri were joined by Mec- who is also Mike the Fool. But as they were processing down a arch of arms they were trapped suddenly and subjected to a Marshmellowing, for there were many with real and ridiculous sins to level against Irony that day.
7. Then were they joined in a hand fasting rite to last a year and a day, and they were very happy.
8. The festivities lasted long into the night, and there was a mummers play, and singing, piping, and storytelling, and a good number of the druids wrapped into a blanket pile and slept beneath the stars.
9. The next night Merri the Wanderer and Dan the Rabbinic vigiled for third order, and they both chose the walking vigil and met with strange sights, for the horned piper wandered the woods that night and met and spoke with them both.
10. They were ordained on the Hill of Three Oaks, and endured their questioning well and bravely atop the Center Stone of the Circle as the sun rose behind them.
11. Shortly thereafter a sweat lodge was held, and Rob the Elder and Ehren the Eerie vigiled and were similarly ordained.
12. They too acquitted themselves well, and they were questioned under the direction of Merri and the younger druids, for Mec and Irony were pulled away through design, accident, and foolishness, and time passed them by as they lay alone and palely loitering upon the cold hillside.

Chapter the Tenth

1. That spring there was one final celebration of the full moon, for that occurrence was welcomed and met on every occasion.
2. And again there was music and dancing.
3. A large orange moon rose in the east, and a fire upon the hill.
4. There was lightning to the south, and mist and fireflies about the woods and fields that surrounded the Hill of Three Oaks, and such was the beauty and the strangeness of the sight that those who came late or looked back thought perchance that they had stumbled into Faerie.
5. At midnight the rains came, and the druids that were left threw off their cloths and ran dancing through the Arb in delight and celebration.
6. Thereafter power, responsibility, and the strange title of the Archdruid passed to Chloe the Cuddleable, Chris the Fey, and Ehren the Eerie, and Irony told them all he had left to tell about the leading of the group.
7. He told them farewell, and said good-by to the circle that he had raised.
8. He had poured much of himself into the group, and was, when he left, the longest standing Archdruid the Carleton Grove had seen.
9. And as he left the Druids, Carleton and Minnesota the Druid Sigil he had long worn about his neck fell from its cord, and he wept, for he knew that that chapter of his life was at an end, and it was as if much magic had suddenly gone out of the world.

Here ends this book of the History of the Legitimacy.
-Irony Sade
New Years Eve, 1999

—

Figure 32 Irony at Old Circle, Samhain 1997.

The Poems of Irony

(These are the druidicaly inspired poems

of Irony Sade, Archdruid at Carleton 1996-1999.)

Sands of Time

By Irony Sade

I met a man in Mittengrad
While walking down a street.
The snows of several winters gone
Were swirling round his feet.
His cloak showed signs of recent rains,
It's tattered edge told tales
Of nights spent 'neath the starlit sky,
And bramble ridden trails.
He nodded as he greeted me,
And quirked an eyebrow to;
As if to say in some strange way,
'I think that I know you.'
"We've met before, now haven't we?"
He spoke the tongue I knew,
Then vanished while I stood and stared.
And soft the cold wind blew.
I met myself in Mittengrad,
A thousand years removed.
The Sands of Time had bleached my hair
And left some wrinkles smoothed.
My scowl faded clean away,
A knowing mien he wore.
What source of surcease had he found,
Through what unopened door?

Hypnosis

By Irony Sade

Light and shadows ever-mixing
Twisting turning and betwixing
Stone and sky from which the rain comes
Falling steaming hissing screaming;

I am walking through a valley, being tripped by fallen angels.

While beneath the ground is shaking
Bouncing bounding laughing quaking
Fires leaking trees are creaking
All around a voice is speaking;

I am walking through a valley, being tripped by fallen angels.

And above the sky is turning
Swaying praying clouds are burning
Hawk and Phoenix both are slaying
Close behind the hounds are baying;

I am walking through a valley, being tripped by fallen angels.

Straight ahead the Elves are singing
Clear their voices high and ringing
On the hills a storm is climbing
In my ears a bell is chiming;

I am walking through a valley, being tripped by fallen angels.

The Spring

By Irony Sade

The flowers shine like ivory upon the forest lawn
The sky is lightly tinged with pink before the early dawn
The trees are black and high they raise their lofty towering crowns,
And in the stream there is a pool in which all worry drowns.

The larks and nightingales sing of restfulness and sleep
The lilies on their lily pads are floating on the deep
The pebbles show their colors and the trees are dripped with green
The waterfall it plays a song of notes not heard but seen.

The ivy creeps it's way around and up the trunks of trees
The flowers dance a reel to the buzzing of the bees
The butterflies they sit and fan themselves with jeweled wings
The stream it parts around a rock on which the wood nymph sings.

The Pilgrims Lament

By Irony Sade

If the world is only illusion,
Just the fabric of Maya wherein nothing is real,
If the soul of the all is the only existence,
Why does it hurt so much?

If the seeker has thrown off temptation,
If desire is stifled and pain is repealed,
If the peace that we've found is worth all that we've given,
Why do I feel this loss?

The god's of my peoples are too many,
The truth's of the ones I see here too few.
If the god's cannot offer the keys to our heavens,
What can the soul look to?

I look to myself I see only confusion.
When I look to the world I see heartache and pain.
I look to the god's- I see nothing but silence.
What is there there to gain?

Yet the sunset still offers me beauty,
Caresses still fill me with love.
The ground at my feet is still there when I'm weary...
Need we find aught above?

What if there's naught above?

Untitled

By Irony Sade

Gorbeling his gillerthumbs,
The Glabberbeast of Gallermums
Spied a lazing Olgerumph
Upon the forest floor.

Passing through the Pumplefronds
He pounced upon her tumblemonds.
"Dear sir!" She squeaked, "You're squiggling
My oomtingles with your zore!"

Solitude

By Irony Sade 25.4.98

No more questions.
No more stories.
Ask of me no songs.
No more oak leaves drifting in the stream beside the moon,
Nor lightning without thunder in the April muted hills.
And let there be no bitter wood-smoke seeping through the rain.
For there is no more wanting in me.
Nor fear.
Nor any love of challenge.
But give to me a single petal from which a drop of dew has fallen and another has yet to form-

For there is some desire in me still for which I have no name.

On Wind Driven Raindrops

The rains from the skies
are the tears that my eyes
never shed...

While the leaves in the stream
are the drops that my heart's
never bled....

All the words that I've read-
All the songs in my head-
All the pain that I dread....
For the ghost in my bed.....

What am I weeping for?

Poems from Foot Prints

The German times; August and September, 1997
Irony Sade

I

Delighting in life the lark flits above me
Where the rain drips down through the boughs of the pines,
Delighting in the rain the grasses run silver,
Their laughter the wind as it rustles my hair.
Delighting in the wind the pines shiver slowly-
The goddess is washing the dust from their beards.
Delighting in the goddess the deer leap before me-
But the ground has since sunk on the grave of the king.

II

The forests have buried the barrows of others
And webs are now woven where tapestries hung.
The spider stands sucking the life of her mate
On a hill o'er a cairn, o'er a pile of bones.
The bones of the deer now litter the forest
Where the timid folk wander on pathways of stone.
The wander watches the death of the grasses
Ground up in their greens by a growling machine-
But the heather grows green on the grave of the king.

III

Now buildings are build where the badger once burrowed
And the lark 'lights no longer where the lumberjacks lean.
Now bricks are laid over the green growing grasses,
And the Oak is hewn down for the imported corn.
Now the ships are of glass and the soul of the sailing
Is nailed to the mast of the scorekeepers dome.
Now the rain runs in rivers through the sewers of cities
And the forest, forgotten, frowns over the wall-
But someone burns candles on the grave of the king.

* * * * *

The candles in their candle-sticks are hanging on the wall.
The jacket and the dripping jeans are hanging in the hall,
The clouds are hanging in the sky, the rain is on the stone,
And I am at the table slouched, drinking tea alone.

Upper Arb, Spring 98

By Irony Sade

The summertime was dying
And the autumn grasses sighing.
The drifting leaves were lying
Like the waves upon the sea.

I was in a field standing
When I felt my soul expanding
And I heard a voice commanding
That I call it back to me.

And I thought I saw a glitter
As of eyes both glad and bitter.
There was mist upon the litter
That was lying next to me...

Figure 33 Camilla Ammirati at Old Circle, 1996.

Figure 34 Michelle Hadjer, Jenni Melmed, Charles Schmidt & Irony Sade, Nov 1996.

Merri's Druidical Mumblings in the Form of Poetry

Sand Dreams

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1998

Dusk
At the edge of the world,
Dust
Wild round me swirled,
Sand
Beneath me sank,
Silence
As deep I drank,
Voice
Called out my name,
"Who?"
I cried, insane.
Answer
I was never told,
Tongue
So strange and old,
"Tell!"
I plead in tears.
Veil
Thin between the years.
Silence.
And I wake.

Musings in a Colorado Hotel

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1998

Who am I on this precipice,
This cliff above the world,
Looking out o'er this great expanse,
This majesty unfurled?
What eyes are these, to survey so
The trials of beasts and men?
What lips have I to speak so of
These things beyond my ken?
Am I so wise a knowing thing
To explain with proverbs grand,
To nod sagely and lisp along
As though I understand?

Figure 35 Merri doing an anti-marriage rite, 2003.

Northeast Stone

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1998

Silently in death I lay
That death before the birth,
From nothingness, from there I came
I prepare now for earth
Sleeping, floating, pondering
The silence of the spheres
Inside are placed my gifts
And my allotted years
This memory sings to me
When I'm asleep at night
I listen, rapt with wonder,
Till I'm touched by morning's light
Now I find myself again
At the point within my dreams
Where I must prepare myself
To cross uncharted streams
This is a rebirth for me
A time for me to choose
Who I wish to be and
What path I wish to use

The Storm

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1998

It stormed, thunder and lightening crackling in the sky,
and in the air.
I ran through the rain, leaping and dancing,
like a young wild thing discovering for the first time what rain is.
I stood in streams of water, drinking from the sky,
atop the Center Stone.
With each crack and flash I felt the power growing,
within me and without of me,
until they both were one.
The breeze was my breath and the thunder my heartbeat.
I lifted up my open hand to the heavens
in exultation of this life,
and the sky cracked.
My other hand came up to join the first,
and it cracked and rumbled again.
My laughter was lost in the wind, became part of the storm.
The circle spun around me,
Alive.

My love, my love.
Lost in my reverie, we found a rift between us.
Later, under the raindrops, his words brought forth an anger.
A strength within me rose.
A woman I didn't recognize.
She brought him to the church and spoke with him.
She sees clearly.
Her thoughts are sound.
God's words may pass her lips,
she fears them not.
Roles reversed, they converse, until he leaves the scene.
And all in awe I venture forth, into the chapel dark.
The pews are empty but hymns are heard,
humming from the walls.
I kneel in prayer before my Lord and ask to understand.

Untitled

By MerriBeth Weber, c.1998

The silence broken only by the sound of falling snow,
the forest holds its breath.
Standing cloaked in my calmness,
I wait.
The sun, a silver disk,
strains through the clouds,
whiter than angels' wings.
The world's face softened by a snowy veil,
the quivering bride of winter
stands with me
in silence broken only by the sound of falling snow.
The forest and I hold our breath.
Chill fingers reach to caress my eyelids.
The Mother's arms are open,
her child falls grateful into her warm embrace.
Stillness.
The silence broken only by the sound of falling snow,
the forest holds its breath.

Walking With Dad

By MerriBeth Weber, c.1999

Swaggering across hummocks of grass,
Man style.
Delicately balanced in one hand,
A structure of a diminutive nature.
Blackbird, he says.
Only the ash have survived the swamp.
You can tell them by their bark.
Memory rests for a moment in childhood.
Regrettable that the walks were solitary.
Learning waits till now.
Now that I am woman grown.

The Dance

By MerriBeth Weber, c.1999

There is a dance within my soul
A Dance A Dance
Throbbing in my head, beating in my heart
A Dance A Dance
Moving in my limbs, the rhythm
A Dance A Dance
I dance dance a dance dance catlike,
slow, controlled, the rhythm beats
faster, the power grows numbing, exhilarating
Dance Dance Dance
Who's is this? Stop.
A knowledge, a knowing, to be gained in the dance.
From Whom?
dance dance Dance Dance DANCE!
I'm walking, I'm avoiding
I won't dance dance dance
I don't know yet, I'm not certain of this
dance dance dance
Of the Father or the dark one is this
dance dance dance
What knowledge? This knowledge. What knowledge?
Dance Dance
In the meadow, in the forest, by the stones
Dance Dance

I must dance dance dance. I must know.

Sister, if I go astray
Please keep all the rest away.

Dance.

Circle Building

By MerriBeth Weber c.1999

Mother, am I doing right?
Does this soothe your pain?
I'm lining stars up in the night
And wondering if I'm sane.
Mother, is this path I tread
Leading me to hell?
I cleared away those lying dead.
Am I doing well?
There is a focus in this place,
A power swelling deep.
But now and then the Father's face,
It haunts me in my sleep.

Untitled

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1999

Dragonflies are droning in the dreary dusk of day,
Heralding the harper who in Faerie's halls will play.
Bellowing and trumpeting the bullfrogs bounce along.
Fairies find their fellows as the harper starts his song.
' Remember rolling meadows
And grasses wet with dew.
Nights black as black
And skies of pure blue.
Remember golden silence.
Remember waters clear.
The world we knew is fading
The end is drawing near. '
Elven cries of anguish echo eerie in the wood.
Cries that carry farther than the fairies thought they could.
Unwitting I was walking when wails were wailed aloud
And the satyrs' song slipped my mind from its mortal shroud.

Untitled

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 2000

The morning sun sifts through my window.
I watch the light and shadows playing on the wall.
Quietly wondering why I am allowed such contentment.
Can it be that this peace is what is intended
And the rest is all dreams and folly?

Mississippi Mud

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 2000

Moonlight on naked flesh
Rain on the river
Laughter rippling
Young voices cut the night
So good to be young, to be free
Living my dance
Dancing alone
Feet sure between the stones
Water yeilding and supporting
The way is open
The road so long and
Traveled so quickly
Standing a'tremble
The droplets beaded on my skin
Only the moon to light my path
And the clouds come and go

Figure 36 Chris Middleton & Merri Weber, New Circle flying a kite, Beltane 2001

The Poems of Chris

Chris Middleton was an odd quiet sort of Druid who enjoyed mummery and plays and eccentric little talks with puppets at night.

Something to Look Forward to

By Chris Middleton, Carleton, c.1999

I was eating a rather bland breakfast
When suddenly
I died
Moments later my spirit was wheeling from the experience
My vision blurred as the room about me spun into a crazed mix of colors
A blender full of the rich hues of every fruit
Every berry.
Soon all reality and the bowl of oatmeal below me dipped and sank into the thick syrupy afterlife
My spirit was now sticky with the great beyond-
Tastes like blueberries-
Then a darkness, more liquid than coffee, washed over me as I ascended to the light
Could this be death I wondered as I drew my hands through a stream of caffeinated Hereafter
I thought of all the orange slices, the Mandarin, Naval, and Tangerine
I recalled the Grapefruit and Melons
Those distinct memories of Kiwis, Sandpears and Mangos
All those times I had feasted
Those times when I had refused to take a single citrus section
It was there that I came to a Toast Point
I landed gracefully near a sea of tranquil raspberry jam
Along the toasted beach, the waves kicked up a froth of pancakes
People wandered in bedclothes holding hands and holding newspapers
I knew I had reached the land where breakfast never ended
And sighed deeply, turning to English muffin thoughts, and knowing that I'd never have to go to early morning Spanish again.

Untitled for Obvious Reasons

By Chris Middleton, Carleton c.1999

Three men are seated at a table in Purgatory
They are silent
Around them are thousands of silent, caged, parrots
Just as in heaven, just as in hell

In heaven the parrots learn words and continue the conversations
When the people are silent
In hell the parrots learn words and
Interrupt whoever speaks
In Purgatory the parrots learn words,
But are always silent
The three men in Purgatory
Do not know this

The Poems of Brad

10/20/98

Dear Irony,

Your letter inurted me to send anything of interest to you, the enclosed facsimile copies are the nicest things (to me) I've seen on Druidism, Hope they are of interest.

Sincerely, Brad Norris

The Seven Precepts of Merlin

Strive for knowledge, for it is power
Seek virtue, for it brings peace
Abhor vice, for it brings evil on all
Obey those in authority in all just things, so virtue may be exalted
When in authority decide reasonably, for thy authority may not last
Bear with fortitude the ills of life, remembering that no mortal sorrow is eternal
Cultivate the social virtues, so that thou shall be loved by all men

The Gorsedd Prayer

Grant, o Duw, thy protection
And in protection, strength
And in strength, understanding
And in understanding, knowledge
And in knowledge, the knowledge of justice
And in that knowledge of justice, the love of justice
And in that love of justice, the love of all existence's
And in that love of all existence's, the love of Duw
Duw and all goodness

Stolen Child

Where dips the rocky highland
Of sleuthwood in the lake,
Lies a leafy island
Where flapping herons wake
The drowsy water rats
There we've hid our faerie vats
Full of berries
And of reddest stolen cherries

(Chorus)
Come away, oh human child
To the water and the wild
With a faerie hand in hand
For the world's more full of weeping
Than you can understand

Where the wave of moonlight glosses
The dim grey sands with light
By far off furthest crosses
We foot it all the night
Weaving olden dances
Mingling hands and mingling glances
Till the moon has taken flight
To and fro we leap
And chase the frothy bubbles
While the world is full of troubles
And is anxious in its sleep

(Chorus)

Where the wandering water gushes
From the hills above Glencar
In pools among the rushes
That scarce could bathe a star
We seek for slumbering trout
And whispering in their ears
Give them unquiet dreams
Leaning softly out
O'er ferns that drop their tears
Over the young stream

(Chorus)

Away with us he's going
The solemn-eyed
He'll hear no more the lowing
Of the calves on the long hillside
Or the kettle on the hob
Sing peace unto his breast
Or see the brown mice bob
Round and round the oatmeal chest
For he comes the human child
To the waters and the wild
With a faerie hand in hand
For the world's more full of weeping
Than he can understand
W.B. Yeats

Figure 37Charles, Cammilla Ammirati & Irony, Old Stone Circle, Nov. 1996

The Poems of Corwin

Corwin Troost got these poems to me from Carleton at the end of 2002, but I'm not quite sure of the year of authorship. But he'll be there until 2005.

Utter blackness

By Corwin, c. 2002

Utter blackness
Just a second
When bright light winked out.
But in that second,
I could see nothing.
The world was gone.

All too soon,
A spot of light emerges,
And the world returns.
But I always know
That for a second,
It was gone.

Bear Me Up, O World

By Corwin, c. 2002

Bear me up, O world.
Bear me up, support my weight with your lightness.
In your silence, I can sing;
Your cold envelops me,
And stillness is my loyal companion.
Your tiny rain is my ambrosia;
The scent of the grass, the seeds, the decaying leaves—
All your smallness feeds me.
Your immensity, your grandeur, gets more praise,
But your little, secret ways—
The soft rhythm of crunching snow
The midnight pale brightness of a snow field
A single star pushing through the clouds—
Lovingly linger with me,
Always waiting, just for me to notice.
You give me everything
But that I could know it all!
Bear me up, O world
Let me be another tiny, forgotten
Lovely thing.

Transcendence

By Corwin, c. 2002

I feel her
I feel through her
I can feel the back of her neck
Yet I face her front,
And feel that too.
I?
We feel.
Where does I end and she begin?
I am not sure.
I am not I
I stretch beyond my form
And these beautiful, loving bodies
Fall to pieces
Of universe.

Infinity in an Open Plain

By Corwin, c. 2002

I am so used to walls,
Trees and Horizons
I have never stood upon an empty plain
Gazing out into wide forever
Without anything to hold me up
Beside or above, just the ground below.
I look from out this train window;
I wonder—without this steely guardian
Without cities, walls, and dams,
In a world without
Man's constructed obstruction
Would I be borne up by infinity
Stretching my limbs and my sight
As far as they could go,
Or would I, alone, isolated,
Be crushed by its weightlessness?

Spent

Another CD
Another thing
Another, another, and another
Why must I buy
It sounds
It tastes
It feels and looks
So good
So why has my life—my energy—
Gone? following those
Measly little bills?
I am drained
I feel sick.
You can buy happiness,
But like rich food
If you take too much
It is vomit, diarrhea;
Disgust.
I enjoy not spending,
I enjoy frugality,
Taking little, and only cheaply.
This lettuce and celery joy
Gave way to that of mousse and steak.
I feel ill; I mustn't eat.
Later I shall eat slowly,
Rich or poor,
And avoid this sickness worse than hunger.

Figure 38 Ehren Vaugh, Merri Weber & Steve Crimmins in a Druid Cloak Tamale, Beltane 2001.

Historiographies of the Books of the Latter-Day Druids

The Dead Lake Scrolls

It is worth noting than in the originals, I put in pictures, fancy fonts, amusing titles and other items, which would make distribution difficult. They have therefore been removed. With the exception of the Book of Paul, all are authored by Michael Scharding with advice from his friends. This book is mostly to tell Carleton Druids of their past and to record the events of Scharding's ArchDruidcy of May 93 to May 94.

The Book of Introduction

As the contents suggest, this book is setting the purpose and mood for the collection.

The Book of Years

As some of the gaps prove, this was written early in my research on Reformed Druid history. The titles for their different periods are my own and are of little relevance to other people.

The Book on John Burridge

During his brief time at Carleton as a staff member, John Burridge made a lasting impression on the Druid community. This book was written to honor his memory. The Orange House referred to was one of the focal points of Druid life in the campus. I believe it was torn down in 1992. It was kitty korner from Berg house.

The Book of Opposition

The atmosphere at Carleton since 1984 was getting more and more conservative. Incidents of proselytizing increasingly became annoying to Carleton Druids. Now looking back on this book, I am slightly embarrassed by my paranoia, but it was the first time that I had ever been religiously assaulted. Many aspects of my life changed as a result, and much of my ArchDruidcy after the event was dedicated towards increasing inter-religious understanding among the Druids. Most of these precautions listed were commonplace before I came to Carleton in Fall 1989. I feel that I've mellowed a bit since then, and now count it as a moment of enlightenment.

The Book of Post Scripts: Part One

This recounts Carleton's 30th anniversary picnic and ritual held at Monument Hill. It also recounts the stages preceding the re-establishment of the official ArchDruidcy. Sam and I became ArchDruids of Olaf and Carleton, before entering the Third Order (officially) although we did vigil like Third Orders before the initial assumption of the Archdruidcies. My official ArchDruidcy began at Andrea's Third Ordination in June, when she passed the title on to me.

The Book of Paul: Part One

Written by Paul Schmidt, it tells of the special ceremony that we two performed to give greater strength to the new Third Oak on the Hill of Three Oaks, to ensure it wouldn't die. It was one of the more complicated ceremonies I had done up to that point. Paul was a good preceptor and I always enjoyed his support.

The Book of Haiku

I can't seem to get enough Haiku, and I consider it one of the most effective ways to teach other Druids. Each is a quick and simple lesson, with little verbiage. Its tri-fold nature is also dear to my Celtic proclivities.

The Book of Post Scripts: Part One

This book provided a basic understanding of how the Third Order had disappeared from Carleton, and explained why I wished to revive it. There was some distrust of the Third Order, and being disinclined of hierarchy myself, I chose to be very careful of the uses of the office in my upcoming ArchDruidcy. Most of the Druids did not know of the other Druid groves across the country, or about ADF, so I told them about this. I hoped to convey their participation in a larger community. The 1985-1993 Druids had gone on field trips to Pagan Festivals, but we never got around to organizing such an activity, to our own loss, I believe.

The Book of Vigils

Despite some early reluctance to reviving the Third Order, once I entered it under Richard Shelton, there was a veritable horde of requests to enter the Third Order. I suspect more people were ordained in those 6 months than in 3 of the most busy years in the Reform. Such frequent vigils, with all the necessary preparations, brought the community together for a good sized camping party. Strangely enough, poor weather was the rule when it came to Vigils, but this appears to be a historical constant.

The Book of Cattle Raids

Basically a wild tale of Sam and Me at the PSG festival of 1993 in Wisconsin. It was the first time that I had run into the Henge of Keltria and during this trip I discovered that several NRDNA groves still existed.

The Book of the Great Dream

Like the April Fool day proselytizing event, this Dream, in May 92, was one of the great inspiring events before my ArchDruidcy. Having returned from Scotland, I was intrigued by the Dalriada group and the international scene of Druidism. I've always had interesting dreams, with some degree of autonomy within them, so this type of dream was uncommon but not rare.

The Book of Stones

A collection of myths and stories about Carleton stones; handed down to us from time immemorial. I find the story about the Hadzi particularly doubtful.

The Book of Fire

A basic collection of fire-related customs at Carleton during my College days.

The Dead Bay Scrolls

Using the Dead Lake Scrolls & Druid Chronicles as a model, Stephen Abbot (Archdruid of Hazelnut Grove) wrote a history of the California Druids since 1980 up until the Thirtieth Anniversary of Reformed Druidism. The common parallels of tongue-in-cheek humor and faint whiffs of paranoia are intriguing. Although Stephen wrote all these following words, I put them into biblical notational format, for easy reference. This is one of the few NRDNA documents that was not written by Isaac, and it is therefore a good tool for understanding the various attitudes within the NewRDNA.

Das Edda Todvolkfortgeshritten

This poem describes the disastrous ritual leading up to the Grove elections at Samhain 1981 in the Berkeley Grove. Difficulties in finding the ritual site, along with Isaac's strong platform of changes should he be elected Archdruid, and a disagreement about voting procedures caused an eruption of discord in the Grove. Not long after this pivotal moment, Isaac left to found ADF, the Live Oak grove schised from Berkeley and everybody stopped talking to each other. The leader of the Death March was Joan Carruth. The Co-ArchDruids mentioned were Stephen and Tezra of the Hazelnut grove.

The Book of the Boring Times

A clever pun on the Neo-Pagan term "The Burning Times" (the Inquisition). I assume the place of the Orks is a military base in the San Francisco bay. As we can tell from this book, Stephen moves around alot and has worked at many types of jobs.

The Book of Mr. Boring

In some fashion, this work almost seems to be a conversion story about how Druidism can change even the most boring person into an interesting thinker.

The Book of Games

More discussion about the passing of spare time during the Boring Times.

The Book of the 30th Anniversary

The author was Anderson, a prominent Wiccan author. The Terlach referred to here is Robert Larson, the founder of the Berkeley Grove. It also tells of how Jeff Sommers was ordained and founded the Tuatha De Danaan Grove in the Bay Area. This book gives a little insight into the attitudes of the NRDNA to the role of the Third Order. It also has a rare reference to a person being previously denied entrance to the Third Order, but eventually entering in time. It is a difficult area to deny entry, as I discuss in my General History.

The Book of the Laundry Think-Tank

A good overview of the planning of group activities in the Hazelnut Grove.

Addendum to the Ordination of the Second Order

This is unusual, to add to an traditional ordination ceremony. The fact that they required extra meditation by the Candidate seems to confirm that the NRDNA were less interested in hierarchy than in personal growth.

The Book of Samhain

Like my own Book of Oppositions, the Hazelnut Grove was having their own problems.

The Dead River Scrolls

2003 Introduction

Mini-Epistle of Michelle the Dark

Michelle was one of the triple ArchDruidcy of (Becky, Ann & Michelle) which lasted from 1994-1997-ish. This epistle was drawn from the waning days of the Vax Notes Conference.

The Epistle of Amanda

Amanda helped run the grove in the 1996-1998 period. I believe Irony was away and Michelle was in a blue funk.

The Sigil Letters

Strange that more was not written about Sigils before this. Ian Friesland was a scientific friend of mine, an environmentalist, who was really enthused by receiving the Sigil before going on a world-wide research trip of some type. Robert Harrison wrote his letter soon after his vigil at Carleton.

The Book of Exile, Part One

Written by the young Irony just into his Archdruidcy in 1997 to Mike who was exiled to Japan for four years.

The Tree Epistle of John

Another letter, this time from John Burridge (who appeared in the Dead Lake Scrolls) pulled out of the Vax Notes conference just before it was closed and replaced by a new bulletin board.

The Book of Q

Written by my dog, Q, in Japan, who was a favorite at the Grove meetings in the Akita Grove. They tended to pay more attention to the dog, rather than my meditations.

The Book of the Sermon

Okay, so I sometimes ramble a little bit! This was written by Pat Haneke, who I ordained in Japan, and later succeeded me to the Archdruidcy of the Akita Grove that I established there. He is married to Nozomi Kibou and is a bit of a recluse and luddite.

The Book of Exile, Part Two

Irony made a trip to Germany and then spent two years in Tonga for the Peace Corps. These are some of the letters he sent to me in exchange for care packages and Druid reading materials.

The Book of Stones, Part Two

Written to commemorate Irony's feat of getting the College to build a gigantic stone circle.

The Book of Vigils, Part Two

Gosh, there have been a lot of vigils, that I've attended lately. Of course, there are others that I couldn't attend.

Ein Tanz Dream

The Winter King: A Dream

The Wild Hunt

The three dreams by Irony.

Figure 39 New Stone Circle winter c.2001.

Figure 40 Jon Nauert, Heather Gruenberg, Mike Scharding & Margot Adler (Author of Drawing Down the Moon), Jan 10, 1992 in Great Hall.

Thus Endeth
Part Nine
of ARDA 2

PART TEN

ORAL HISTORIES

2003 Introduction

It is my intention to provide the reader with more than one history of Reformed Druidism by presenting the reader with transcripts of oral interviews with prominent Reformed Druids. Their viewpoints should provide more balance and longer term perspectives than my voice or a few scattered documents from them alone could provide to you.

As usual we expect you to understand that their statements reflect their own views, and not that of the Reform as a whole. There are a few dozen other un-transcribed interviews in the archives.

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Figure 1 The Frangquists' interview, Samhain 1993 with Richard & Kit Shelton, Paul Schmidt, Becky Hrobak, Deborah & David Frangquist and Eric Hilleman present.

Drynemetum Press

David Frangquist, '66
Deborah Gavrin Frangquist, '67

October 31, 1993

Eric: This is Eric Hilleman, the Archivist at Carleton College, and I'm conducting an interview today with David Frangquist, class of 1966, and his wife, Deborah Gavrin Frangquist, class of 1967. The Frangquists have both been very involved with the Carleton Druids, and we're expecting that to be the main topic of discussion today, but I think I'd begin by asking you, David, to tell us something about your own personal background, how you got to Carleton College, and then we'll get into the founding of the Druids right after that.

David: I was born in Chicago in 1944 and grew up in the North Shore Suburbs, Lake Forest specifically. As far as coming to Carleton: about the middle of my junior year in high school, we started, as juniors do, thinking about colleges. I think actually Carleton first came to my attention in an article in the *Chicago Tribune* about quality liberal arts colleges in the Midwest. I suffered from childhood asthma, and so one of my concerns was to be as far north as possible to get away from the ragweed areas, so we drew a line through, oh, about Milwaukee and looked at places north of that. Carleton really seemed to be the outstanding school in that area. I did visit other schools that were at that time in the same conference as Carleton; I looked at Ripon and Lawrence and visited Macalester, but Carleton was the place where I just felt most at home. Carleton seemed to have it together better than the other places that I visited, and Carleton was the only place I applied.

Eric: For this tape, actually, I think it would also be relevant if you wanted to say something about your religious background, if any, I don't know what that might be.

David: I was raised in the Presbyterian Church in Lake Forest. I think the main reason that my parents chose that church was that it was the largest, most active church in town, having been founded originally by the McCormicks, or at least largely supported by McCormick money for a long time. So it was sort of interesting: it was the society church in Lake Forest, and there was a lot going on there, so that's what they chose. I was not real active; I mean I attended Sunday school and all that. I was never active in the high school youth group, although there was one.

In the middle of high school I started becoming interested in other religions, and began buying books about other religions. I had my own copy of the Koran. I acquired through the services of some Mormon missionaries a copy of the Book of Mormon and actually read the whole thing. Perhaps my interest in doing some of the scriptural writing for the Druids came from that period, and wanting perhaps to do a better job than Joseph Smith did! Nevertheless, I became interested in world religions at that time, and was doing a lot of questioning and exploring, as students will do at that age. So I was ready when I came to Carleton just to do more exploring, and the idea of the Druids intrigued me.

I don't believe that I have ever at any point abandoned my sense of being a Christian. The strength with which I have felt that has varied over time, but my interest in other approaches has been one, for me, of personal accretion: that the more that I could learn about other belief systems, the more I felt that that was a benefit and useful. I've always been intrigued by parallels that would exist in different religious traditions. That began in the middle of high school, but I never felt the need to jump from one religion to another. It was largely a matter of curiosity.

Eric: The Reformed Druids of North America began during your freshman year, and I'd like to hear your perspective on the founding and early days of that illustrious organization.

David: Well, at that time of course there was a requirement that we all attend chapel or something like it seven out of ten weekends in the quarter. I didn't particularly question that; I was used to the notion that schools made you do things you didn't want to do, necessarily. And I initially generally did attend chapel, because that was convenient, and it left the rest of Sunday free to do other things. I can't say that I found the chapel services all that meaningful at the time. They were of a general Protestant nature: a little hymn sing, a little reading, a sermon that might or might not mean something.

In the spring of that year, I just overheard that there were some people, some of whom that I knew, some friends of mine, who were starting up this group of Druids, and they were doing it, clearly, to protest the chapel requirement, which we in those days always referred to as "the religious requirement." Nowadays we tend to say "chapel requirement" because it's a little clearer, I think, for people hearing what we're talking about, but it was the "religious requirement" that they were protesting.

I was not involved in the initial founding meeting, which I believe occurred in Goodhue, and involved David Fisher and Howard Cherniack. I think Norman Nelson was present for that also, although I was not there, so I'm not certain. I know that Howard was one of the people who was particularly interested in getting something going here, and I believe that he saw it largely as a political thing. The motivations of others who were involved is murkier; best to ask them, I guess.

I don't know who actually came up with the notion of having Druids be the form, because the discussion, as I

understand it, started out with the idea that we needed to form some new religion on campus. The wording in the Catalog, as I recall, was that you could get credit for attending chapel, or the Sunday evening program, or any regularly organized service of public worship. So they said, "Let's organize something." And the idea was that it should be sufficiently off–the–wall to obviously be a protest to challenge the established order, but to be believable enough that a credible argument could be made that this was, in fact, a valid alternative religious service.

I think the thing they liked about the Druids so much was that so little was known about Druidism. Looking at what few references were available in the Carleton library at the time, we knew that Druids existed; we knew that they had something or other to do with the priesthood of the pre–Roman Celtic peoples in Britain; and not much else was known, partly (probably) because their rituals were secret and nothing was written down. Or at least if anything was written down, it hadn't been found. So we were free, really, to invent as much as we wanted about what Druidism was going to be here at Carleton. But nevertheless it was something that had historical reality; it was not being just totally made up out of whole cloth, we did not have to pretend to have a latter–day revelation from some source that had been started all off fresh. We could at least pretend to have some continuity with an older tradition.

The first meetings were held in April of that year [1963]. I was not present at the first service, which involved setting up David Fisher's record stand on Monument Hill. They put a draping of cloth over it, and that was the altar for the day. I do believe I was present at the second service. I'm no longer sure who invited me to that. I knew David Fisher at the time through work at KARL, where he was an announcer and I was a control operator. For quite a while I was control operator *for* David, and I can't remember now what years I was his control operator for a Saturday night program that he did. I may have already been doing that at that time, and it's quite possible that he invited me. Jan Johnson was another person that I knew from dorm life who was involved in those days with the founding of the Druids, or the early meetings. Either of them might have been the person who got me out there.

There were just, maybe, half a dozen of us at the time, a circle of friends who started the meetings. At that time, we hadn't worked out much in the way of calendar and ritual and so on that we later did. *Now* of course we would say the meetings would normally be held between May 1st and November 1st, during the summer half of the year, but at that time, holding our services in April didn't bother anybody because we hadn't figured out there was anything wrong with April!

David Fisher, as far as we know, made up the ritual. He had an Episcopal background and is currently an Episcopal priest, and there are certain echoes of Episcopalian Prayer Book language that show up in his design of the service. He pretended, perhaps that's a pejorative word, he *represented* that he had been ordained as a Druid somewhere in Missouri by someone else, and so therefore there was continuity with the past, and he could come in here and be Arch–Druid and carry the tradition into Carleton. But he was always vague about this prior experience and who this was and where it occurred, and I have to say that I don't really know anything about it, other than the fact that he said that it occurred.

All of the rest of our Druid tradition, then, springs from David Fisher as the first Arch–Druid here at Carleton. We can trace lines of ordination from one person to another, and it all goes back to him. If it goes back prior to him, well, you'll have to ask David Fisher about that. He was the source of our early liturgy, and where he got it from, who knows?

We did decide after a couple of meetings that the little metal record stand was not really a very adequate altar. The idea was that we would build something a little more substantial. It seemed like Monument Hill was the right place to do it: there were all of these inscriptions on the monument about first services of various sorts that had occurred on that site, and so, therefore, this seemed like a good place in Northfield to start another religious tradition. So we found a bunch of rocks. At that time in a little grove of trees near Monument Hill there were quite a few rock piled up because, I believe, Williams had been torn down only a couple of years before, and some of the rubble from that had simply been dumped in this little spot in the trees. So it wasn't hard to go and find rocks and cart them over to Monument Hill and pile them up, which is basically what we did to create our altar.

It didn't last very long! In fairly short order, people we identified as the Anti–Druids came, we believe that these were mostly jocks from Goodhue, who probably had a keg amongst them prior to this escapade, they came and ripped all the rocks apart and threw them about Monument Hill. All of this is written up in the Early Chronicles. I have to say that when I wrote the Early Chronicles, I really was describing in there true events. Now the language is in some cases deliberately vague, or deliberately flowery, but the events behind it all really did occur. So the language in there about the building of the altar, and the Anti–Druids coming and tearing it down, and all this, that all happened. We made several attempts at building the altar, and after a while we kind of gave up that spring, because, well, it was getting to be a bit of a chore!

At the same time we were also carrying the protest to official levels. This was the thing that Howard was the most interested in. We filled out the little slips, I believe they were little green slips that we had to fill out for chapel. You'd put on there the date and the institution that you attended, and turn it in. In the case of the men, we would turn it in to our proctors, and women turned them in to...

Deborah: We turned them in to the Dean of Women's Office. My recollection is that they were yellow, which may have been women's slips, I don't know.

David: OK. Maybe I'm confusing the convo slips with the chapel slips. Anyway, we filled out little slips saying that we had attended these Druid services, and we expected to have credit.

Deborah: We may have given them to our housemothers; they got to the Dean of Women's Office, anyway.

David: Again, after this passage of time I don't remember exactly when all these things happened, but I believe we did do it that first spring. It met with varying responses, in that the men's slips were rejected as being not legitimate or not qualifying for credit, [while] only a couple of slips were turned in by women, but they did, in fact, get credit. We had great fun speculating over why the women got credit. In the case of the men, the slips were reviewed by someone in the Dean of Men's Office (the Dean was then Casey Jarchow), and they spotted these things and said they were not legitimate.

So a delegation was led by Howard Cherniack to the Dean's office to protest this action, and to raise the question: why would the Druids not be acceptable? They went armed with Yellow Pages from the Twin Cities and lists of various

strange and wonderful groups that met there. I remember there was something about the Seventh Hour Trumpeters, and several other groups that sounded very strange. Nevertheless, these were established churches, they were in the phone book. So Howard said to the Dean: well, suppose that one of us wanted to attend one of those churches and put that on the chapel slip; would *that* be acceptable? And he said no. So Howard said, well, then, what gives you the right to decide what is a religion and what isn't? These others are established churches, and you're saying they're not legitimate. What gives you that right? To which Casey's response basically was: the fact that I'm the Dean of Men. I get to decide. There was no pretense here to any intellectual defense of this position; it was purely arbitrary.

Being the good, obedient children of the fifties that we were, when our slips were rejected, we simply went off to chapel, or whatever we needed to do to get enough points. We did not push the thing to the wall. We were not going to jeopardize our Carleton education for this thing, but we did try to make a lot of noise about it.

One of the difficulties that we had was people tended not to believe that we existed. We thought that we had this wonderful protest vehicle, and yet when we tried to get students excited about the fact that we were being denied credit, and that this was not legitimate, it was very hard to get other people on campus interested in that. They simply believed that we didn't exist. Occasionally we would get people to come out to the Hill and meet with us on Saturday afternoons, but many people that we tried to invite simply believed that we were pulling their legs, and that if they went out there, they would be the fools for showing up for something that didn't in fact happen. So we never were able to drum up a ground–swell of opinion. We couldn't get the *Carletonian* to write editorials on our behalf, or any of that sort of thing, which we found very interesting, given the climate of protest that was beginning to develop in a number of areas having to do with things like women's hours and the like.

So that was kind of where we were at the end of that first spring. The following fall we made an attempt to get a little more organized. By that time I was writing things that later became *The Druid Chronicles*, trying to put together some "scripture" and add a little more legitimacy to what we were doing. We also printed some pamphlets, and we got ourselves a table at the day where various campus organizations could put out literature and get people to sign up. We got ourselves a table and passed out pamphlets and tried to get people to sign up. Not too many did. And again, we kept getting this response: oh, well, this is all just a put–on; there aren't really any Druids; you're just pretending. But a few people would believe that we really were there, and [would] come out and meet with us.

At some point we decided that when we had thirty people, that was a magic number of some sort, and we declared that that was a *multitude*. So whenever we had thirty, we could say, "Oh, we had a *multitude* present for our meeting"and that did happen a couple of times.

I believe we had a multitude present for Halloween that year, the Samhain service. That was really quite an elaborate affair, with a number of people in robes. We had torches, and we had a grand procession through the Arb from Monument Hill to a nice fire area in the Upper Arb somewhere near the southern–most bridge and up the hill a little bit. I probably could find it again if I went out and tromped around out there. We had this long procession along the various trails through the Upper Arb to get there, shocking a number of people along the way. I don't know whether they were more shocked by our regalia or just by the fact that we were carrying all of these flaming brands through there.

Again, the events that are recounted in, by this time the Latter Chronicles, that evening really did happen. We had sort of a fortune–telling period, which started with a process of melting bits of lead in a ladle in the fire, and pouring them into water, and then people would look at whatever shapes were formed in the water, and attempt to interpret them, much as you would tea leaves. I had read somewhere that this was a fortune–telling technique, so we did that. And as people got into the swing of it, there were some things that sounded a little bit like prophecy, and like some people were in fact having some kind of profound experience, one of which we later interpreted to be a foreshadowing of Kennedy's assassination. There were enough echoes in that prophecy, and it is described in the *Chronicles,* that it really later sounded like, gee, that fits. Which was a little scary, there were some people who weren't at all sure that they liked this. It was beginning to sound awfully real.

And there were, in fact, I think, a number of us who were beginning to value the experience we were having. Is it a real religion? Well, that's always one of the questions. Were we just playing games, or were we really doing something here that has validity in the spiritual realm? I think that's a question that each of us has to answer for ourselves. It was certainly becoming something that was increasingly important to us in ways outside of the initial protest idea.

After November 1st, we decided it was convenient, by that time Fisher had worked out the notion that there were these two halves of the year, and that there was going to be a period of the Waters of Life in the summer, and a period of the Waters of Sleep in the winter, and so we would not meet between November 1st and May 1st. This was the period of the Waters of Sleep. And besides, it was not very congenial to be meeting outdoors in the bosom of the Earth Mother during that part of the year.

Deborah: Well, not only the Waters of Sleep, but the suggestion that the Earth Mother herself was asleep during that season, which did make a great deal of sense here in Minnesota.

David: Right. So there wasn't much activity during winter, other than I kept on writing on *The Druid Chronicles*. I do remember having a discussion with David Fisher about that time (I think it was more toward the spring) in which he was beginning to feel that maybe this thing was going too far, that maybe we should just stop it, that it was in danger of becoming a "real religion." I remember him saying very specifically to me, "Well, I don't want to become another Joseph Smith." And, basically, I told him that it was too late, that this was going to happen anyway, and that I had no problem at all with being Brigham Young! But I think in many ways he was hooked anyway. He was definitely enjoying playing the Arch–Druid.

Deborah: He always had a flair for the dramatic.

David: Yes.

Eric: At what point did the structure of Arch–Druids and Preceptors and all the various offices get established? Was that something that happened very, very early?

David: That happened very early. I would have to go back and look at the dates that occur on the copies of the constitution that we have. One of the aspects of the political gambit here was to become a recognized, legitimate campus organization. We

felt this would help our argument that we should get credit for this. To do that, there were prescribed formalities. You had to adopt a constitution. You had to submit the constitution to CSA and have them recognize you as a campus organization. You had to have a faculty adviser. There were a number of things to be checked off.

So it was necessary to write a constitution. I believe that Howard Cherniack wrote the constitution, and in the course of that developed the terminology: the Arch–Druid, the Preceptor, the Server as the offices. I don't remember any specific conversations with them about where those things came from. The Arch–Druid was obvious. It's a term that you see in the literature about Druids. We believe that there was somebody that at least *we* call the Arch–Druid, who was a leader of Druids in Britain.

The other terms, I don't know where they came from. It appears that Howard may have designed the rôle of Preceptor for himself. The description in the constitution says that the Preceptor is charged with responsibility for secular matters, which involved things like writing the constitution, getting it submitted to CSA, leading the delegation the Dean's Office, and so on. But I, at least, had no direct involvement in the development of the constitution, but that was all done the first spring in '63, I believe. So we were going through those mechanics of trying to get recognition the following school year.

Eric: Do you know anything about how a faculty advisor was obtained?

David: Well, Jon Messenger was on campus the year '63–'64. I think he was only here a year, as a visiting professor. But his area of specialty was Celtic studies.

Deborah: It was fairly obvious, and he was willing to do it.

David: So I believe Howard approached him, and he said, oh yeah, sure. He was quite willing to do that. He was not actively involved, in that he did not come out to our meetings and so on. We chatted with him a few times, and he shared some lore with us. [He played] largely a figurehead rôle. He understood that he needed to be there as an advisor, and that that was mainly what we required of him. Later, after he left, we approached Bardwell Smith, whom we believed to be sympathetic to our point of view, as indeed he was, and he was quite happy to be our official advisor. But again, Bardwell never really took an active rôle in working with the Druids. He was simply willing to lend his name to the project, and chat with us one on one if we wanted to.

Deborah: There may be a small gap, historically, there, because Bardwell was on sabbatical '64'65, and if our recollection is correct, that Jon Messenger left at the end of '63'64 school year, I'm not sure who we had as faculty advisor '64–'65. But if we remained a club in good standing, we found someone.

David: Well, I don't believe there was an advisor that year, and I don't believe we were a club in good standing, either!

Deborah: That's possible.

David: During the '63–'64 year we did make all the proper applications and so on, and my recollection is that CSA had no problem with our being a campus organization. Anybody who wanted to be an organization could, as long as you got the appropriate things checked off. I do have correspondence from Jon Kaufman, who was one of the CSA people responsible for putting together a booklet about campus activities, and we had submitted a piece about the Druids for that booklet. The correspondence that I have is essentially an apology for the fact that that piece had been deleted just prior to the final printing at the end of the '63–'64 year. Without any prior warning or discussion or anything, it had simply been summarily deleted by whoever finally put the thing together. So there was certainly an atmosphere of persecution there. There were people who really didn't want us to be legitimate, for whatever reason.

The thing that changed, of course, was that in the summer of '64 the chapel requirement was abolished. Suddenly the rules of the game were all different, and the importance of our being an official campus organization greatly diminished. We were never interested in getting any money out of CSA, or anything like that, so what point was there, really, in being an official organization, other than perhaps getting your name in a booklet, which they obviously weren't going to allow? So I think we paid less attention after '64 to the details of whether we really were a club in good standing. I don't remember spending any time on it when I was Arch–Druid, walking paperwork through CSA or anything like that. I think we just decided that that didn't matter so much any more.

Deborah: '64–'65 was certainly a year of some soul searching, the question being whether we had any reason to exist any longer. That was an important topic of discussion during that time, more important, as David says, than our official status.

David: To back up a little bit: during the '63–'64 school year we were still attempting to get organized. I guess I had a little more interest in that sort of thing than the other people. I was busy writing the *Chronicles* and finding what I could in the library about Druidism. One of the things that happened: in the course of events David Fisher had made some references to the Ten Orders of Druidism. He said he was a Third Order Priest, and he was busily admitting other people to the First and Second Orders. Well, what about Fourth through Tenth? What were they? He was not very specific about that, and I suggested that perhaps we should associate each one of them with some god or goddess from Celtic mythology. That was all right with David Fisher, so I went off to the library, and combed through the books, and managed to come up with some names, and invented the so–called higher orders.

Then the problem was: how were we going to get them populated, since this whole thing was sort of a boot–strap effort. I was having great fun inventing structures and procedures, and so invented this mechanism whereby each order would elect the Patriarch of the next order. There was no consideration of Matriarchs at this point; everything was still very patriarchal, and I'm sure Deborah will have things to say about that when it's her turn. It just didn't occur to us that that was an issue yet. "Us," I say, the men. It did not occur to the men that that was an issue. So we were going to have a Patriarch of each of these higher orders, and the Patriarch would be able to consecrate anyone that he chose as a member of the order, and when the order felt like getting around to it, it could elect the next Patriarch.

So we had a structure that would allow us to climb up the ladder and get somebody into each of these higher orders over a period of time. Norman Nelson was very sympathetic to that. Norman particularly liked to collect titles, so he wanted to be member of a bunch of different orders. My recollection is that David Fisher was a little lukewarm about the whole "higher orders" thing. Perhaps, because it would dilute his primacy as Arch–Druid? I don't know. I should not attribute motives to him. But Norman definitely was interested, so we put that all together.

Meanwhile, my own ordination as a Third Order Druid occurred in April of '64. I think this was a watershed for

David Fisher, certainly. When I told him that I wanted to be ordained as a Third Order, become a priest, he was really very reluctant at first, perhaps because that meant that it really was going to move beyond his control. He would no longer be completely in charge. It would have more of a life of its own than he had initially anticipated, perhaps. But he did go along with it.

We had an extenuating circumstance, in that we had made one more attempt to build an altar on Monument Hill. This time we had put the thing together with mortar, and we needed to give the mortar a chance to dry before somebody would come and take it apart. David did the talking about, well, to become a Third Order, you had to do this all–night vigil. I don't know where he came up with the notion. Of course, vigils have occurred in various traditions. There are vigils in the course of becoming a knight, for example. At any rate, that was the test that he prescribed: that you'd have to do an all–night vigil on the bosom of the Earth Mother. This worked out very nicely with the fact that we needed somebody to guard this new altar.

So that's what I did: I sat up next to it with my little fire all night, and made sure that nobody came and disturbed it. David came up in the morning, and we had the ordination of the first Third Order Druid after David. Shortly thereafter, Norman Nelson wanted also to be ordained as a Third Order, and David and I together performed that ceremony. David actually performed the ceremony, but I was present for it.

We began some traditions at that time, too. In the course of the vigil, existing Third Order priests on campus should please come out and spend some time with the person; make it a little easier to get through the night: some conversation, a little story–telling, some reading, whatever, provide company. Also, all the Third Orders around should if possible attend the ordination service, but at the very least, have breakfast together afterwards. After that ordination of Norman Nelson, we all got together in Goodhue for breakfast, and had what counts, I believe, as the first meeting of the Council of Dalon ap Landu, at which we began the process, that I was outlining in the *Chronicles*, of how we would populate the higher orders. I believe it was at that breakfast meeting that we elected David Fisher as Patriarch of the Fourth Order.

At about the same time, David Fisher resigned the office of Arch–Druid and turned it over to Norman Nelson, who as I say, was interested in collecting whatever titles he could collect. He wanted to be Arch–Druid for at least a couple of months before he left Carleton. (He was a senior that year.) So he finished out the year as Arch–Druid. Then since he was gone from campus, that meant that the following fall we had to have some sort of passing on of the torch to somebody else. It was at that time that I was elected Arch–Druid. David was not particularly interested in taking that on again. As a senior he had plenty of things to do, and was quite willing for me to do it.

In the spring of '64, then, on one day we populated as many of the higher orders as we could at that time. It was sort of an assembly–line process in which David Fisher first admitted Norman and me to the Fourth Order. We had our ceremony doing that, this was all on the Hill of the Three Oaks, and we all sat down and had our meeting of the Council of the Fourth Order and elected Norman as the Patriarch of the Fifth Order. Then we all stood up and did the ceremony that Norman had written. He admitted David and me to the Fifth Order, and then we sat down and had our meeting of the Fifth Order to elect me as Patriarch of the Sixth Order. The rationale there simply was that I was going to be at Carleton longer than either of them, so by having me as the Sixth Order, I would have an opportunity to admit some other people to the Sixth Order, perhaps, and elect someone in a later class to be Patriarch of the Seventh Order and so keep it going. At least that was the plan.

I don't believe that there was any sense that we wanted [any] higher order to be higher than another. This was certainly one of David Fisher's concerns; he didn't want that to be true, and I didn't see any reason for it to be true. The only reason we were doing this was because at one point he had said there were ten orders, and so we were trying to make that happen. And it was fun, and a lot of what we did was done for fun. There's no question about that.

We were really quite clear that the most important order, in the sense of the continuing Druid activity, was going to be the Third Order: that Arch–Druids would be drawn from the Third Order, anyone who wanted to be admitted to the higher orders would first be Third Order, and so on. The rest of it was just icing on the cake. At least, that was certainly part of the argument that I made to get myself elected to the Sixth Order!

Eric: As an historical footnote, when you mentioned Bardwell Smith, it reminded me that I had mentioned to Charlotte Smith that I was going to be talking to you, and she said, "Be sure to have them note, for the record, that [our] son was the first pupil in the Druid Sunday School."

David: Yes!

Eric: OK, good: it's on the record now, Charlotte.

David: Yes, I do remember Brooks coming to at least one service. He babbled on quite happily while we did whatever it was we were doing.

Eric: This probably is a natural time to bring Deborah into the conversation, since we are now chronologically up to the year that you arrived. Why don't you start the same way that David did; tell me something about your own background, religious as well as otherwise, and how you came to Carleton, and how you encountered the Druids.

Deborah: Actually, I was fascinated by the fact that David chose to tell us when he was born, because that wouldn't have occurred to me, but I will do that. I was born in Brooklyn in 1947. I spent some time as a very young child in New York City, and then in Long Island, but did most of my growing up in Tarrytown, New York, which is probably best known as the site in which the Legend of Sleepy Hollow took place. Washington Irving lived in the town *that* way; the Legend of Sleepy Hollow took place in the town the other way, and my elementary school was on the site Katrina Van Tassel's home, and in fact my high school was Sleepy Hollow. And our team was the Horsemen.

I say this because I think it may actually have some relation to my willingness to explore non–mainstream traditions, that there was even in this rather respectable New York suburb a slight odor of feyness to what we did as we grew up in the schools. I come from a non–believing Jewish background. It was explicitly non–believing. That is, my father had grown up in an Orthodox Jewish home, my mother in a non–believing home. Their religion was Freudianism. They were both trained social workers, and they didn't have any use for any of that stuff. It was a psychological crutch; virtually any religion [was].

By the time I arrived at Carleton, I had done some significant religious searching of my own, starting when I

was about eleven. Starting with the local Jewish Temple, which at the time, I think, was very much in the mainstream of Reformed Judaism, which meant it was extremely rational, and there was no hint of the supernatural, or the transcendent, or much of anything except Jewish history and how to do the rituals. I went to a Quaker camp in Vermont for a couple of years, as a result of which I attended Quaker meetings for some years, which was probably the first hint of any kind of spiritual life that I got tuned into.

Then I began, I guess about the end of my junior year in high school, a rather odd process of attending the local Episcopal church, and also the local Roman Catholic church, because there were a group of us who attended the Episcopal church, but some of those people were Roman Catholic. So after the Episcopal service was over, we had to run down the street and go to Mass so that they could go to Mass. Since most of us who weren't Roman Catholic were studying Latin, and it was still the Latin Mass, this was sort of fun. So I can't claim any major spiritual quest, but I was sure mucking around with a variety of religious traditions and, like David, had begun a process of reading spiritual books, or scripture or whatever, from a variety of traditions by that time.

I came to Carleton as a 16–year–old. My parents had had me skip one grade in elementary school because they felt I wasn't stimulated enough, and then in what should have been my junior year in high school, I decided I didn't want to do any more high school. There were a number of possible pretexts for that, including the threatened election of a couple of John Birchers to the local board who were proposing to eliminate all Advanced Placement courses, which would have made my senior year a *real* desert.

I had already, being an extremely diligent child, early in my sophomore year gone to the guidance counselors, and said, "I want to go to a small liberal arts college somewhere." They had given me a list of, I don't know, seventy schools nation–wide, or something like that. In those days, one could write away to colleges and get entire bulletins, the entire course catalog and everything; there were no view-books that I remember. I had these things stacked all around my room for much of a year, as I sort of whittled things down. So when I decided I wanted to go to Carleton College, I had some idea of places I wanted to check out, even though this was really a year early, and applied to three colleges. The deal my parents made, since this was only my junior year, was that if I could get into a college of the quality they were sure I could get into after four years, I could go. The Admissions Office was doing interviews in downtown New York in a hotel, so that was where I was interviewed. I had taken the SATs by then, but late; so we didn't have any scores or anything like that.

I visited the other two colleges I was interested in, Brandeis and Radcliffe, because they were closer. I had never been to Carleton before I arrived here, but basically made the choice partly on the basis of that interview, because I liked the way the interviewer approached me. It was far less patronizing than the Radcliffe interviewer. That was part of it the sense of being treated as somebody who sort of belonged in a college. Also, [I was] very attracted by the Social Co–op, and by the total lack of sororities and fraternities here. I have sometimes found myself wondering how different my life would have been if I'd gone to Brandeis, because I probably would have ended up as a good Jew if I had done that.

Anyway, I ended up here in the fall of '63. I may actually have been at that first Samhain service. I cannot remember the chronology exactly, but I remember the kind of procession with torches, and I don't remember whether we did that the same way the following year. I also believe I remember Druids coming through the library in procession, calling people to join in that service, robed Druids.

Eric: Not with the torches, I hope!

Deborah: Not with the torches in the library, no. But with robes.

David: I do remember doing that. I'm not sure which year that was.

Deborah: And I certainly remember the fortune telling with the melted lead, and do not remember how many times we did that. I think I was present at more than one. But what I was actually doing that freshman year, in terms of any kind of religious life, was seriously looking into the Episcopal church: attending Canterbury Club Sunday Mornings, sort of checking out whether I was interested in this stuff. I did not become significantly involved in Druid life or services, except maybe for the great festivals, until the following fall of '64.

But I knew Druids, because I got involved in KARL very early in my freshman year. I ran into the radio station at one of those, whatever they called them then, where there were tables to sign people up. But there was also a radio station open house that I was invited to on that occasion. This was in the days when freshmen wore beanies for about six weeks. One day, very early in my tenure at the radio station, when I was typing something at the typewriter, the then station manager came up and removed the beanie from my head, and announced that I didn't have to wear it *there*. This sealed my commitment to the radio station, and therefore created a commitment to a place where there were a number of Druids, including David and Dave Fisher, who were present. So I certainly knew *about* Druid activities my first year here, even though, as I say, my recollection is of not being involved, except maybe for the major festivals (since I like bonfires) that first year.

My second year, the '64'65 year, I began attending Druid services regularly. I'm not sure of the chronology in terms of my doing that and our becoming a couple. That whole fall there was a certain amount of figuring out how we felt about each other, but that didn't get clarified until Thanksgiving, so that was certainly after Samhain. The kind of advice women were given in those days involved appearing, at least, to be interested in the things that interested a man you were interested in. So my motives may not have been at all pure, becoming involved in Druid activities. By Beltane we were a couple. We did stuff on February 1st; we did something with the Waters of Sleep that year; I think it was indoors.

David: Yes, it was in 2nd Willis.

Deborah: And I remember that. One of the things that was going on during that period, in terms of women's status within the Druids, well, there were several things going on. I remember an under–current of slight titillation about possible sexual overtones to a few of the things which I now remember with a kind of horror. One of them was that, although, as David said, we didn't talk about Matriarchs much, the fact is the names you'd come up with for the ten orders, the Tenth was Fertility, and I think was in fact a goddess. So there was some discussion of the idea that that ought to have a Matriarch rather than a Patriarch.

It was also difficult, if not impossible, for us to think about a woman vigiling at that point, because we had curfews. Again, this surprises me a little. We didn't have bed checks, so if you didn't sign yourself out, they wouldn't know that you were still out. But we were very good, even when we

objected. You would have had to do a little bit of stuff to not sign yourself out, because if you left the dorm after 7:00, you were supposed to sign yourself out. But with a little bit of advanced planning, with a place like the radio station to leave one's gear during the day, for a vigil, it would have been entirely possible just not to go back to one's dorm after some mid–afternoon hour, so that one didn't have to sign oneself out, so that they — the authorities — would never know that one was still out. It would have been necessary to wait past 6:00 [a.m.], when they re–opened the doors, probably until about a quarter of eight, to get back in again without being seen, but this could have been done. We just didn't think about it. We weren't supposed to stay out all night.

So there was this apparently unstoppable obstacle, that you couldn't do a vigil if you were a woman so you couldn't become a Third Order Druid. But there was the beginning of a sense that that was perhaps not equitable, so I think it was Fisher came up with the idea that a woman could a priestess *unto* an order, of one of the higher orders, but not *of* any of the orders, and could not be a Third Order Druid. There was someone, I cannot remember who she was, but I was present when she was made a priestess *unto* the Fourth Order.

David: It was Danny [Hotz].

Deborah: Danny, right. It was a fun ceremony, again with these little odd under–currents of there maybe being something sexual about this, but nobody quite knew what. And that was sort of where it rested, and I think she was the only priestess "unto" one of the orders that I recall.

David: As far as I know, yeah.

Deborah: As far as recall, that was it.

David: I think I actually came up with the term "unto," but it was in response, as I recall, to David Fisher's wanting to be able specifically to appoint Danny as a priestess, and to get around the fact that she would presumably would not be able to vigil.

Deborah: Right. When you look back at it, we're basically talking about the 24 months following the publication of *The Feminine Mystique*, which none of us had heard of. This is proto–feminism, if it's anything like that. We were treated pretty much as equals in the classroom, but none of us had much expectation of social equality, notions of mutuality of relationships. It came very fast thereafter, but it wasn't there then.

So my participation with the Druids my sophomore year became more frequent. I was a regular attendee at services. I became a Second Order Druid very quickly, but then there was this wall about becoming a Third Order Druid. Meanwhile, our relationship got closer during the summer of '65, when we were both on the first of the revived Carleton in Japan programs, conducting a courtship in various places in Japan, including many Buddhist and Shinto temples. And there certainly was, I think, some sense of an enhanced importance to the nature–worship aspect of Druidism as I learned more about Shinto. I was studying one of the Shinto fertility goddesses, who's now pretty much a goddess of wealth, rice having gotten transformed into yen over the generations. It's possible that in my own mind some of this titillation was settling down a bit as I began to deal with this in an ancient culture that was relatively better documented than the Druids.

That year, '65 '66, I was both taking formal instruction to prepare for baptism in the Episcopal church (with Bardwell Smith) and trying to figure out some way that I could become a Third Order Druid. In that year there was a loophole created in the system. Upper class women, I think it was *only* upper class women, could get letters from our parents which were filed with the Dean of Women, saying that we could sign ourselves out for some specified number of overnights a term. These were explicitly supposed to be *not* in Northfield. They were intended to allow us to stay overnight with friends in the Cities if we went to a late play or concert. But it meant that there was a mechanism to sign yourself out. As I was saying before, there was this problem of getting out of the dorm before the hour at which you had to sign yourself out. [This] made it simpler to think about that, and I decided that this was the chance I was waiting for to become a Third Order Druid. We discussed how this should be done, and I decided that I was not comfortable with lying about where I going. I could have in fact claimed that I was going to visit friends in the cities; there were friends who would have insisted that I was there, should I need such backup. But I simply signed myself out to the Hill of Three Oaks.

To backtrack slightly, one possible explanation for why the women who submitted Chapel slips back in the first year got them accepted and the men did not was that because the women were locked into their dorms, there was a system whereby there was someone who stayed up all night just inside Gridley, which connected to all the other dorms, to admit legitimate late arrivals — that is, the other dorms were locked at 11:15, but seniors could have a certain number of times out 'til midnight, and then later to 1:15 or 1:30 — but also to admit miscreants who arrived in the middle of the night after falling asleep after who–knew–what sinful activities in the Arb. These were older women from downtown who were employees of the Dean of Women's office but not regular college employees. And one of their night–time tasks involved checking off Chapel slips. So they just checked off names, and were simply not part of the administration in the way that the Dean of Men's staff were.

It's my belief that some similar oversight was why nobody wondered where the heck the Hill of the Three Oaks was, why I hadn't given a phone number or anything like that. That was how I managed, I think only a year after Danny sort of gave up on the idea of being a Third Order Druid, to become a Third Order Druid.

The experience of vigiling *is* an important experience, and it may have been enhanced for me by the sense of there being something a little daring in doing this, and then of being visited by men during the night, because of course the only other Third Order Druids there were to visit me were male. In a sense, though, we were all taking this very seriously, which was very important to me. So I am both a Third Order and a Sixth Order Druid, since David was still around and could do the Sixth Order [ordination]. Within a couple of years the curfews were gone and it wasn't an issue at all, but it was an important change that suddenly we had to start thinking about the idea that Third Order Druids were women as well as men. I don't think we were equipped to think about it very well, because as I say we weren't thinking very much about changing the nature of female rôles in society.

Eric: Let's talk a little bit about "taking this all very seriously" in connection with the fact that in the summer of 1964 the Religious Requirement is gone; the initial reason for founding the Druids has been removed, but the Druids didn't stop. Say something about why that was.

David: I for one at least had become fond of the Druids. I had put a lot of work into writing the *Chronicles*, and coming up with solutions to various organizational problems. We had had

formal meetings of the Council the previous spring to adopt some of the early resolutions that would clarify things after Norman went on to other pursuits, and so on. It would certainly hard to drop it, but I don't believe it was the force of my personality that kept it going, or anything like that.

What had happened in the course of the previous year was that a number of people had found that they were getting something out of it. At least one person, Dick Smiley, considered Druidism to be his *only* religion. He didn't believe in anything else, and yet there was something very compelling about Druidism for him. A lot of fun, of course, he enjoyed playing the game as much as anyone else, but there was something more to it than that. We had made quite an effort, I know David Fisher did and I did also, to find readings that would be meaningful to people. We adopted a tradition, that I don't think was ever formalized in the written liturgy, of there being three meditations as part of each service: there was the Written Meditation, the Spoken Meditation, and the Silent Meditation, in that order. We would read something, and then whoever was presiding (usually the Arch–Druid) would make some observations about what was read, and then there was a period in which we would all sit quietly together, much in the style of a Quaker meeting, although nowhere near as long as you would do in a Quaker meeting, and simply think about what had been said, if that's what you wanted to think about, or think about the noise that the wind was making in the trees, or think about whatever you wanted to think about. A period of being together as a group, and *quiet* together, and doing whatever happened during that period.

People liked that. They enjoyed it. They found it refreshing. They were getting something out of it that they valued. I certainly saw, when I became Arch–Druid, a goal of introducing people to the riches of other religious traditions, which, as I said earlier, I had started exploring in high school myself. [I] had found a number of passages in Buddhist literature, in Taoist literature, in Zen. I was getting very enthusiastic about Zen at that point, and did quite a bit of reading in Buddhism in preparation for the summer in Japan. I wanted to share those things, and I think David Fisher had much the same sense, that he wanted to share things that he had discovered. He was more into Hindu literature than I was. There were treasures that seemed to relate to our Druid tradition of focusing on Nature as an area to concentrate our worship, but that are found in various traditions. We combed the Psalms looking for the nature psalms, so occasionally there would be something from Jewish or Christian tradition that would be the reading for the day. The idea was to spread it around as much as possible.

I think we sensed, even after the Chapel requirement was dropped, that there was work to be done, that the experience of most students at Carleton was very narrow in terms of what was out there to be learned about people's spiritual experiences. We saw a task to be performed there in terms of broadening that experience, and people responded to that. At least there were enough people who kept coming and listening to what we were doing to keep it going.

Deborah: It's hard now to know what my concepts were at the time, but several things I think are relevant. First of all, one of the arguments made against the Chapel requirement was that it had become an interference with, rather than a furtherance of, spiritual and moral growth for people. It was producing a reaction against religious tradition, which was contrary to its intention. I think there was some feeling that Druidism could be sort of the proof of this claim, that if we were able to follow our, what I would now call our spiritual paths but I don't think was talked of that way then, that there would be some things for us to discover. I still find the opening prayer of the Liturgy — which at one point I believe I was told Fisher had found in Hindu scripture — the one that says

> *(In the original) O Lord (and I would now say O God),*
>
> *forgive these three sins, which are due to our human limitations:*
>
> *Thou art everywhere, but we worship Thee here;*
>
> *Thou art without form, but we worship Thee in these forms;*
>
> *Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices,*
>
> *but we offer unto thee these, our prayers and sacrifices.*

I still find that one of the most profound spiritual statements I have ever heard. It informs my understanding of what I as a believing Christian am doing in Christian liturgy, including the Eucharist. Every time I ended out on the Hill somewhere saying that prayer, I was moved anew by it, and I don't think I was alone in that.

The meditations that David was describing, in fact, for me significantly echoed my experience of modified and short Quaker meetings at my Quaker camp. On Sundays we had a full hour of meeting, but every day we had brief chapel services that were Quaker meeting style. But because we were a children's camp, both on the weekdays and on Sundays our counselors read things to us, very much the kind of thing that we also did in Druid services. Perhaps a little more of the Prophet at camp than in the Druid services, but also readings from Buddhism, readings from Hinduism, readings from the mystics of the Western traditions.

There was what I would now call a kind of spiritual freedom in the opportunity to, either on one's own or in formal classes in Eastern religions, find moving passages or thought–provoking passages, and bring them as written meditations to the Druid services. When I look back at what was available in other religious life, this was just *before* things began to explode with experimentation in some branches of Christianity, this was some of the best stuff around, I think for most of us.

David: Another dimension of it that I felt: one of things that was very important at Carleton, and I believe it's important now, is the sense that there is something very real about being intellectually honest. That's a very important value at Carleton. Having said as part of the protest against the Chapel requirement that we should be treated as a legitimate religion, that we were just as legitimate as anybody else, it was necessary to follow through on that. If we had just disappeared when the requirement disappeared, it would have in some way validated the position of the Dean of Men that this wasn't real, that it was purely political, that there was nothing to it. And we were going to do that! We were going to somehow prove that there really was something to this after all, that our claim had been legitimate.

I don't think *that*, in and of itself, would have been sufficient to carry it more than a few months, but I think that was at least part of my initial feeling in that next fall after the requirement was gone. Part of what gave me the energy to keep it going was to demonstrate in some real way that there really *was* something there, that the claims we were making were valid. Over time, things change. New dimensions get

added. It begins to take on other aspects of its own life. But in that first year I think that was part of what was going on.

Deborah: That desire gave us enough space to begin to discover that we wanted to continue meeting on the Hill of the Three Oaks on Saturdays during half of the year, that there was value in our lives [there].

David: Also, I was talking before about how a great many students refused to believe that we existed. Even at my own 25th Reunion I had conversations with people, talking about having been one of the founding Druids and having people say, "Oh, but they didn't really exist, did they?" By now we are officially mentioned in the 125–year history of the College, and yet there are still people saying, "Oh, but they weren't really there." And there was this stubborn insistence that yes we did exist, yes we really did happen, and we were not going to be wished away by people. That sense of being outcasts in some sense, of being an identifiable minority struggling against the rest of the world, gave us cohesion as a group and fueled that desire to prove to people that we could stick it out.

Deborah: There was something else as well, which you touched on when you talked about the fortune telling and the sense that maybe we were onto something more powerful than we thought, which was the weather magic. Which we continued. Before football games, which was essentially what our meeting time was on [Saturday], there was a spring when the skies were very gray and dark, and we processed to Mai Fête Island, and the skies cleared as we did it. There was a sense that we might be performing a public service!

David: There was also one occasion, I remember, where Mark Steinberg and I (Mark was the station manager of KARL and I was the news director at that time) had an invitation from United Press International to come up to the Twin Cities and attend a Twins game. There was going to be a reception beforehand at which we got to meet Eugene McCarthy, and this was a big deal. This was in the old outdoor stadium, and it was raining cats and dogs all morning. It was dreadful. But we had left a request with the Druids that they do the proper incantations and make the weather nice.

Deborah: I think I lead that service.

David: I remember it continued to pour right up to almost game time. We'd had our meeting with Eugene McCarthy, and we came out and went up into the stands, and as we did so, the clouds all drifted away and the sun came out! And the game went on as scheduled.

Deborah: We really came to count on that. We were married in July of '68 in an indoor service in a friend's home, but then the reception was all outdoors on a hillside overlooking the Hudson River in my hometown. The weather forecasts were a bit iffy, but there were quite a number of Druids in attendance in Tarrytown for the wedding the next day. We had a Druid service the night before, rather than the morning, and it was a gorgeous day. It was just perfect! So by that time I think we'd come to count on the weather magic as something that somehow we had found our way into. We didn't quite know how, but it was reliable.

Eric: I'm reminded of the anecdotes in the *Chronicles* about the efficacy of the Curse that David Fisher invoked at one time: anti–Druids coming to great harm, and something to do with a lightning bolt.

David: There are a couple of different stories in there. One had to do with cursing the weather and nearly being struck by lightning, so therefore saying, "Be careful with this." Another had to do with laying a curse on the anti–Druids, the result of which was that one of them did sprain an ankle. And this was taken to be a sign.

So, yeah: when things like this start to happen, you begin to raise questions about what's really going on.

Deborah: And again I would say, looking back on it, that was not an easy time to think (never mind talk) about the supernatural or the transcendent among our peers. We were uncomfortable doing it even in explicitly traditional religious contexts. The official religion of the College was very intellectual. That was one of the things about the sermons in the Chapel services, both before and after the end of the Religious Requirement: if you didn't know that you were in Chapel, and if they hadn't been shorter than 70 minutes, it would have been hard to tell the difference between a lecture and a sermon at Carleton.

David: Lectures didn't normally have a choral accompaniment.

Deborah: Right, and they lasted longer, but the basic presentation style was rational argument. Perhaps somewhat fewer facts than were presented in a Bio lab, but basically you were intended to deal with this mostly with your intellect, rather than with you gut or your psyche or any of those things.

Getting out there on the Hill, in the weather, did what I would now call "pulling us out of our heads" so that we could react with our whole selves. That was a good thing, and I think we recognized that.

David: And for me at least, as I did more studying of Buddhism, the part of Buddhism that became increasingly intriguing was Zen. Of course, there was a lot of Zen going around at the time. It was a faddy sort of thing. Alan Watts was writing his book. But still there was something very compelling about that point of view that challenged the purely intellectual approach to reality, that there were realities that were not purely rational. We had to acknowledge that and deal with them in some way. I think part of what we were doing, sometimes tongue in cheek, sometimes not, was saying, "look, there is more going on here than you can deal with in pure logic."

Deborah: We had also done something rather wise by declaring early on I don't know whether this was Fisher or a consensus, that Druidism was compatible with any other religion, and every other religion, even if the other religions denied that. (We weren't sure how the Roman Catholic Church felt about this claim of ours.) We were, in a sense, laying claim to a kind of quest that was possible to anyone without having to burn any bridges. I think that fits with some of the Zen explorations that a lot of us were doing at the same time: that there was more than one way to get at truth.

David: It fits with Zen. It also, I think, was a reflection of our feeling, many of us on campus, whether we were Druids or not, that one of the main things that was wrong with traditional Western religion was the exclusivity of it: that you had to be one particular brand, and that if you were that particular brand, then you couldn't be any other brand. In order to become a particular denomination, you'd have to renounce all the others. Many of us believed that this was simply not true, particularly as we began studying the Japanese approach to religion, which is very eclectic.

Deborah: And synchretic; you can be as many things as you want simultaneously.

David: That's right. As they became of new religious traditions, they tended to just incorporate them. Except for Christianity, because the Christians wouldn't let them! It's a great loss,

both to the Japanese and to Christianity. But many of us reacted that that's the approach that makes sense. Why not welcome in as much as you can? Therefore, it really did become an article of the faith that you could be a Druid and you could be *anything else you wanted* and it was fine with us.

David Fisher had some problems with that, I have to say. Particularly as he approached the end of his Carleton experience and began looking ahead to the possibility, the probability, of going to seminary. He was afraid that the people who admit people to seminary would not agree with our point of view, and wanted to resign his orders and withdraw from Druidism.

The rest of us simply told him that that was not possible. His being a Druid was part of who he was; it was part of his life experience. It was not a question of rules. It was simply not logically possible to renounce that or to abandon it. As far was we were concerned, he was always going to be a Druid. He could believe whatever he wanted, but he was always going to be a Druid, and that was that.

Eric: We talked a few times about Dave working on the *Chronicles*. When did that come into final form? Was that before you became Arch–Druid those were all finished?

David: Yes, I believe that was all put together finally in the spring of '64. I remember putting out a little pamphlet, "The Song of the Earth," which had excerpts from the various books. By the time that pamphlet came out, I had the shape of the five books, and mostly written and figured out what was going to go into the various pieces of it. Some things got added later. The last chapter of the Latter Chronicles was written by Norman Nelson and contributed fairly late in the game, and it just seemed like a natural way to wrap up the Latter Chronicles. But by spring of '64 I had figured out what the five books were going to be and basically what was going in each one. I had been working on them all through that year, which may explain some of the grades that I got that year, but those grades may also be explained by the fact that my father died during that period.

I dearly wanted to be able to put it in people's hands. I wanted there to be a *real* scripture, that people could carry around with them the way they carried Bibles around. Not just a pretend scripture, but something really *in print.* Again, this was part of making the whole thing legitimate and real. But there were real, practical production problems in that period. We did not have plain paper copiers.

Deborah: We did have a mimeograph machine that belonged to KARL.

David: No, it belonged to student government.

Deborah: It belonged to student government, but we had access to it because we used it to produce the Noon News Bulletin.

David: Well, I was the official campus mimeograph operator.

Deborah: That's right.

David: People could prepare stencils for campus organizations and functions, and leave them in a box where I would collect them, and I did this, oh, three times a week, I would collect these stencils and run them off, and they were charged at a piece rate to the organization. In the case of the Druids, since we didn't have an account with CSA, we did have to pay cash money for the things that I ran off.

Deborah: For which we passed a hat, as I recall.

David: Not as part of the service. We did not engage in passing filthy lucre around as part of a Druid service. It was not appropriate. But off on the side you could. Some of the materials I donated, and I got other people to help me. We would buy a ream of paper: a "printing" of the *Chronicles* was a ream of paper, because we would buy a ream and then use it. It was cheaper. I donated my labor. Otherwise, if we had to get the paper from the CSA stocks, then the whole charge would be higher.

Getting all those stencils cut was a very time–consuming process.

Deborah: Figuring out how the pages went together on the stencils was exciting.

David: For the *Chronicles* that was not such a problem, because those were full size 8+ by 11 sheets. The pamphlets were a little more complicated, because you had to get it to work out right when you folded it over and cut it.

I typed most of the *Chronicles* myself. I would make typos, and then you had to get out the correction fluid and fill in the holes and wait for it to dry and then retype it.

Deborah: All manual typewriters, of course.

David: All manual typewriters. We did have an electric typewriter. Was it electric? Maybe it wasn't. No, it was just a big old clunky manual.

Deborah: That big old clunky manual. It was a good quality manual, but it was old.

David: The *Chronicles* were all done on the KARL typewriter.

Deborah: Right.

David: The same one we used for the Noon News Bulletin, which was also done on mimeograph stencils. That had nothing to do with Druids, other than the fact that it was the same typewriter, and often the same typist. We would take the news off the UPI wire each day. It would be the 11:00 [news], the latest headlines, the latest Dow Jones averages, get them in, get the Bulletin reproduced, and then we had . . .

Deborah: . . . runners that went to the dining halls, which didn't open until noon.

David: One person for each dining hall would grab these copies and bring them there. They were let in early so that they could put them on all the tables. It was quite a production. I don't know how many years that went on. Tremendous logistics involved in getting that Bulletin out every day.

But it took me a long time to get the stencils made for the *Chronicles*. I believe they were ready, I think we had the first printing by Beltane of '64.

Deborah: Yes, I think that's right.

David: Then we carefully preserved the stencils so that we could do later printings. There was a printing history in the inside cover of each copy of the *Chronicles.* Those early editions were all done from the same set of stencils. The only stencil we would change would be the one that had the printing history on it. Everything else was kept the same; once the typos were in there, and there are some errors in the cross–references, once they got in there, too bad! We weren't going to go through all that again!

Eric: By the time, David, that you became Arch–Druid, you started to have graduation of former Druids, and the issue would come up of people who had been Druids at the Carleton Grove going off and continuing their Druidism at other Groves, founding other Groves. I don't know what the history of that is at all, but perhaps you can say something about the founding of Groves elsewhere beyond Carleton.

Deborah: Norman was the first.

David: Norman was the first, yes. He was the first of our initial group of three to graduate, and he wrote back that he had found some kindred souls in South Dakota and was in the process of forming a Grove there. I don't know whether he ever really officially founded a Grove or not, but he was the first one to raise the question of how would one go about doing this, and we had some correspondence to that effect. There seems to be a logical problem here. In order to have a service and to admit new members to Druidism, they had to partake of the Waters of Life. This was really the only requirement for First Order, to partake of the Waters of Life and subscribe to the Basic Tenets. How could you do that if you didn't have enough people to officiate at a service? Didn't you, after all, have to have an Arch–Druid and a Preceptor and a Server, and they all had to be at least First Order? If you didn't have those people, how could you have a service, and therefore have legitimately consecrated Waters and admit new members?

Well, it seemed to me that he was just putting up unnecessary obstacles, that there was nothing that required any of this stuff. I talked it over with David Fisher, and we came up with the notion that, well, really, all you had to do was to have a Third Order there to conduct the service. We came up, really, with the notion of a Mission, almost. In the Episcopal Church, you have established churches, and you have missions. In other words, you could have a missionary go out and set up a mission. This was a slightly different class of organization than an established church, or in our case, an established Grove. A Mission could be conducted simply by having any Third Order, and the Third Order could consecrate the Waters of Life.

We did have the notion that you couldn't really have a Druid service with only one person. This didn't make any sense. You had to have at least two. If you didn't have an elected Preceptor, Server, and all that stuff, the other people present could as a group do the responsive parts of the service. The answers, that the Preceptor would normally give, could just be done by everyone present. Therefore, having Waters of Life was no problem at all, and once you had Waters of Life, then you could have First Orders, Second Orders, and everything flowed from that. When you wanted to, you could adopt a constitution and create a new Grove.

Our model for this was essentially the CSA model. You want to have a legitimate organization? Write a constitution; adopt it. We have forms for you; you just use the same constitution that Carleton uses. We'll just fill in the blanks: instead of saying "Carleton College," it could say "South Dakota" or "New York," or whatever you wanted it to say. Same three officers; you really only needed to have three people to have a legitimate Grove, because then you had a person to fill each office. We didn't think it was quite legitimate to have the same person fill two offices; that wasn't right. So you need at least three people, and then you could have your constitution, you could have your Grove.

In the original tradition, you had to be an Arch–Druid of a properly constituted Grove in order to admit other Druids to the Third Order. I know David Fisher and I felt that that number three was important in terms of demonstrating that you really had gotten something going, that it wasn't just one person out there playing games, that there really was interest. Unless you had those three people out there, there was something that wasn't quite right about having somebody creating other priests.

I guess that's a tradition that has been somewhat modified over the years, but initially at least, you had to get another Grove going before you could legitimately call yourself an Arch–Druid, before you could then consecrate other priests.

Deborah: To backtrack a little: some of this, Norman's desire to create another Grove, also contributed to this reappraisal, once the religious requirement was gone, about what we were doing here. There was some initial discussion about whether you could be a Druid away from Carleton. Norman obviously had a strong desire and interest to be able to continue to be a Druid while not resident here, and he was really the first person for whom that became a pressing issue. But that was another way in which we got to take a look at this question of what does it mean to say that you're a Druid, and what does it mean to be practicing as Druids. I recall that, particularly some of the times when Norman would come back, because he wasn't that far away, and Betsy was still here, so he would come back not infrequently, considering, that was one of the things we talked about: did it have to be the *same* at other places as it was at Carleton? South Dakota never did get to be that important, but I think that was kind of foreshadowing of some of the issues that came up later, in the Seventies, in particular, and other places.

David: I made an attempt to establish another Grove at my summer camp, where I was a member of the staff. This was a Boy Scout camp, Camp Ma–Ka–Ja–Wan. The camp itself is in northern Wisconsin and serves a Boy Scout Council in the North Shore suburbs of Chicago. I actually did have about eight or so people there: other members of the staff, for the most part high school students, and so very impressionable. They were willing to follow my lead, and they expressed an interest, and we had several services in the course of the summer.

Two of that number expressed an interest in becoming Third Order, and I did consecrate them, sort of in absentia, because by the time they decided they wanted to do that, it was already the end of the summer and we were going our different ways. I wanted some sense that they had some idea what was going on here, so I asked them to write to me some things about their reflections on Druidism before I would agree to the consecration. Since I was not going to be at camp the following summer (I was going to be in Japan), I allowed them to consecrate each other in my name. I don't think they ever did anything with it. I lost touch with both of them after I graduated from Carleton, so the Grove didn't really continue there.

But it did pop up in some other places, in particular in the San Francisco Bay area and Berkeley. One of our Druids here, Bob Larson (whom we always called "Larse") . . .

Deborah: Who was probably the first real Celtic hobbyist among us.

David: Yes, he was definitely a Celtic hobbyist. He determined that we were pronouncing a whole bunch of things wrong, and we continued to pronounce them wrong, and it was fine.

Deborah: But he didn't.

David: Right, he always pronounced them in an authentic way. I could never get the accent right, so I gave up. He was one of the people that David Fisher was very suspicious of. He was afraid that Larse was *really* taking this all much too seriously. And perhaps he was, who knows? That's his problem. I did consecrate Larse to the Third and Sixth Orders, and then he went off to Berkeley.

Deborah: Having flunked out of Carleton in his final trimester.

David: Yes, he never actually did graduate.

Deborah: But Berkeley was a good place to be at that point. By the time we arrived, a year or so later, he had hooked up with Isaac.

David: Right. We both wound up in San Francisco because I went into the army after Carleton, and through just pure dumb luck got assigned to the Presidio in San Francisco. So in 1968 I was at the Presidio, and we were married and set up housekeeping out there. I don't remember quite how . . . I think Larse found *us*.

Deborah: Marriage announcement in the *Voice*, or something like that.

David: And so Larse introduced us to Isaac, whom he had by then consecrated to the Third Order, and they had a Grove going in Berkeley. We attended a number of services over there, at various hillsides overlooking the campus.

Deborah: That Grove was *my* introduction to Neo-Paganism. That was not a word we used when I was here, but the Berkeley Grove was definitely Neo-Pagan. I remember one service on a hillside in Berkeley in which Isaac called upon a great number of gods and goddesses and spirits by name, and I am quite sure they were there, and was far less comfortable with their presence then than I perhaps would be now. [This] was another one of these moments of "what in heck have we gotten ourselves into?" Isaac was a very powerful presence, wherever Isaac was; small rooms, large mountain tops, it didn't really matter.

David: One of the things we were doing with Druidism [was] being very vague with people about whether we took this seriously or not.

Deborah: That was part of the appropriate Third Order stance!

David: Right. The idea was always keep everybody guessing. Well, Isaac picked up on that in spades, and we never did really know whether Isaac believed this stuff or not. I mean, at moments there would be the tongue–in–cheek approach to it all that we really recognized as being very much Carleton "good hume" type approach, and at other times it seemed very real. I don't to this day pretend to know what Isaac was really doing. Eventually he took the stance that Druidism should put itself squarely in the Neo-Pagan camp. Those of us who had experienced Carleton Druidism really could not buy that. I think the main problem with it was that it was becoming exclusive again. It was shutting things out, at least by implication. We could not be squarely in any camp, except our own.

Deborah: There could be Groves whose practice was Neo-Pagan and whose membership was heavily Neo-Pagan, but that was not to say that those Groves were better or worse, merely different from other Groves. There was sort of a suggestion, it seems to me, that the Neo-Pagan Groves were taking Druidism where it was supposed to go, and that was the piece that we resented and resisted.

David: I don't think, personally, that the things they were adding were any more legitimately Druid than whatever things we had added. I think Isaac would argue that they were, because *they* were really Neo-Pagan and the Druids were pagan. But they were various kinds of mythology and anthropology that he had collected from goodness knows where.

Deborah: Just as badly documented as the early stuff we used!

David: Right! So there was quite a controversy about that, which Dick probably could speak to a lot better than we can, because he was in the middle of much of it. Since this is not a videotape, we should mention that Dick Shelton is sitting in the back of the room listening to this.

Eric: We did an interview with Dick, this past spring I believe, and went into the Isaac wars to some extent.

David: I don't know that I need to add very much to that, except that we were very much in touch with Isaac and Larse during 19691970. In the summer of 1971 we went off to Germany, where I had a job with the US government, and basically lost touch with them during that period. Occasional correspondence, but not terribly aware of what was going on, except as the result of the correspondence that we got through Dick.

Deborah: It is worth mentioning, in terms of the Carleton connection, that although we finally met Dick just yesterday, that it was though the Carleton connection that we got to know him and Ellen, mostly through correspondence back when these issues arose, and that we have always been able to find each another through the College directories and so on. That was part of how we became involved, at least tangentially, in some of these issues; not only as people who were physically present in the San Francisco Bay area and trying to figure out what we were going to do in relation to Isaac, but also in terms of this larger question, which Dick was dealing with . . . by that time I think you were in Ann Arbor, if I'm not mistaken?

Dick: Yes.

Deborah: This question of could there be legitimate Groves in the Seventies that were not Neo-Pagan, and what was the stance of Carleton as the Mother Grove, and what kind of authority lay here, and so on. That was probably of continuing importance to us, even though we at that point were no longer practicing Druids. [We] identified as Druids, but there was no real community to practice in.

Eric: In a formalistic sense, of course, the Council of Dalon ap Landu is continuing. You have membership on that, and if any body has to decide these questions, at that time that's the duly constituted body.

Deborah: Right. That was one of the interesting questions. When you got people like Isaac, who had no tie to Carleton directly, except through Druidism, how do you find people who are Third Order and therefore members of the Council. As long as we were all Carls, there was a fair degree of trust that we would that we would always be able to track each other down. This sense that somehow, in the course of following the nature of Druidism, we'd gotten people in there who didn't buy into the same kinds of values and, just, who were different, raised certain kinds of uneasiness, that I think were independent of the personalities involved.

David: I think I had an early sense that, whatever happened with Druidism, it was going to tend to revolve around Carleton. The Council early resolved that the Arch–Druid of Carleton would be the ex–officio Chair of the Council, in the belief that that most likely to be the most workable approach; that if we had the focus go anywhere else, it would probably get lost.

Deborah: Yes.

David: And think that over time, events have borne that out.

Deborah: That the communication channels that run through or around the College serve us well.

David: The College itself provides nice services in that regard.

Deborah: As this interview attests!

David: And we always tell everyone if you lose track of us, simply call the Carleton Alumni Office. Even if we don't let anyone else know where we are, we will always let the College know. That's a promise.

Another Grove that was founded, and I believe flourished for a while, was started by Dick Smiley at Purdue. I know he did have a number of followers there. He conducted services regularly for several years. We have clippings from Purdue newspapers identifying some of the services that he conducted there, and he did admit people to the Third Order. That was without adding Neo-Paganism or much of anything else, I believe, other than what Dick wanted to make up.

Deborah: More importance laid on the solstice perhaps than some other practitioners, but that was *perfectly* consistent.

Michael Scharding: My father remembers Dick Smiley just from reading clippings saying somebody was always having a huge bonfire. It was always Dick.

Eric: You say that after a certain point you were no longer practicing Druids, but [in] 1982 you were going to make a visit back to campus, and you had an ad run saying that Druids were coming back to campus and you'd be happy to meet with interested people. That had the effect of starting up I believe what had become largely a defunct Grove again.

Deborah: I had had continuing relationships with the College. In fact, in 1978, shortly after we got back from Germany, I came here in the summer for a week–long course for alumni that was something the College was experimenting with at the time. Even though it was, I believe, July, there were enough students on campus, and I found some poster that there was going to be a Druid service on that Saturday. So I went to a service that was *fairly* recognizable to me, but that did exist, and which I enjoyed. That was when I discovered that in the Seventies it had become pretty normal for the Arch–Druid to be a woman, which was, as we've said, very contrary to our previous practice.

But then somewhere between then and fall of '81, I joined the Alumni Board and attended three meeting that year; then was off the Board for a year, but involved with development work, so I came for at least one meeting during that; and then got back on the Board for two years. So I began a period of being on campus from one to four times a year, for about five years there. I did that again some years later for my 25th reunion committee, but it was particularly at that period in the early Eighties when we were doing that. And I was getting the *Carletonian* as a member of the Alumni Board; I received the *'Tonian* regularly. In one of those issues there was a letter to the editor bemoaning the demise of the Druids at Carleton, and did anybody know what happened to the Druids? So we wrote back.

David: As I recall, that letter was particularly concerned with the valuable functions that the Druids had performed in providing decent weather on the weekends for arbing.

Deborah: The spring Board meeting was very close to Beltane, because I remember we had our daughter's first birthday on that trip as well, so it was the spring of '82. We were going on to visit other family in the Midwest, so David and Joel came with me, as well as Judith (whom I had brought to all the Board meetings because she was a nursing infant). This was very good timing, in terms of this letter showing up in the *'Tonian* and our response to it, announcing that we would in fact be here and would be glad to re–establish the tradition.

David: I don't know if we took out an ad; I think we sent another letter back.

Deborah: I think we sent a letter back that was then run in the *'Tonian*, and we were approached on the strength of that. Or we may also have written to whoever had signed that first letter, because we had his name, and you could just write in care of the College. So we didn't start this, but we responded eagerly to this initial stimulus. We met with people here.

David: We had a discussion in Sayles–Hill. Several people attended that and expressed an interest, and we talked about Druidism and all.

Deborah: The discussion was advertised on campus in some way or other; flyers or something. I don't remember that anymore.

David: So I said, well, is anyone interested in having a service? Yes, there was interest in doing that, so we held a service on the Hill of the Three Oaks. And then also raised the question: you really want to get this thing started again; is anybody willing to do a vigil? And sure enough, we had three volunteers.

Deborah: I think these were all people who lived in Farmhouse?

David: No; Bob Nieman lived in Farmhouse, I believe.

Deborah: In any case, we were at least partly tapping into some of the then still relatively new (by our lights) ecological and nature interests.

David: Bob invited us to have dinner at Farmhouse, which was wonderful. Good cooks over there at that time! We had a very pleasant evening with him. Let's see; it was Bob and Tom Lane and Meg Ross.

Deborah: Yes.

David: They all did vigil, and I tromped over there in early morning at dawn and performed the ceremony. This was all very spur of the moment, so I did not have ribbons to present them. They got their ribbons in the mail after I got home.

I believe that it didn't take very well. I didn't get much in the way of correspondence from them; didn't get too much in the way of responses to my letters. I did get a letter from Tom Lane a year or so later, saying, well, they hadn't really done too much.

Deborah: There was a small cache of Paraphernalia, which then ended up in the attic of Farmhouse to be rediscovered later.

David: I don't really have first–hand knowledge of what really happened there.

Deborah: One of the other things in terms of what it means to be a practicing Druid: aside from, I believe, the January '82 Alumni Board meeting, when with the wind–chill factor it was unbelievably cold here (the final Board meeting in Great Hall became exceedingly uncomfortable because we were sitting on metal folding chairs and it didn't matter how much we were wearing by the end of that hour and a half; the room was just unheatable) aside from that, I don't believe I have ever made a visit to campus without going out to the Hill of Three Oaks, whether there were any other Druids that I knew of or not. I suppose in some way that says for me that my Druidism is still anchored at Carleton.

Eric: What is it about Carleton that made it a hospitable environment for Druidism to go on? I know the historical reasons it started here, but is there something about the nature of Carleton itself that, in your view, makes Druidism particularly compatible here?

Deborah: Well, one thing that occurs to me when you ask that is my sense of the Carls I've known well having always a bit of tongue in cheek in thinking about ourselves. We can take ourselves very seriously, but we also have a sense of humor

about ourselves. I think that is a quality that made this perhaps more hospitable to Druidism, in various times, than perhaps some other schools would have been. It may have been an accident that it started here, but then that made it more possible to perpetuate Druidism. The time was ripe in the sense that there was also the beginning of encouragement of intercultural studies, area studies. I think President Nason on the academic level was strongly encouraging; in other words, I think the intellectual climate was getting more hospitable towards the idea that we didn't all have to be white–bread middle–Americans. For those of us who were beginning to get very worried about the idea that when we left Carleton we might have to turn into white–bread middle–Americans, this was very satisfying.

Eric: What about the geography of the campus? Is a place like the Hill of Three Oaks a place of spiritual power because of its significance to the Carleton Druids, or is it a place that has something special about it regardless of Druidic associations?

Deborah: I think that's one of these chicken–and–egg questions. As far as we know, it had no name before the Druids called it the Hill of the Three Oaks. That was one of the things people used to give us grief about at first. When we'd announced that we had meetings on the Hill of the Three Oaks, they would insist that not only that we didn't exist, but that *it* didn't exist. We've been very gratified by the fact that *that* at least has become enshrined in the maps, that it's properly recorded.

David: I think the fact of the Arb is very important. It's just impossible for me to imagine something like this starting up, say, at a place like Macalester.

Deborah: Or if we had just the Bald Spot. That wouldn't have done it.

David: I don't think Druidism could flourish meeting in rooms with chairs. It needs to happen outdoors somewhere. I think in all the various other Groves that have been started, that that was a significant component, that they had to meet outdoors somewhere. There are wonderful places above the campus at Berkeley in the Oakland Hills, in the Berkeley Hills, to hold services like this, and I just don't think you can do it without that kind of setting. So the very existence of the Arb was, I think, crucial.

Deborah: Yes.

David: Because I think we all did believe, and do believe, that Nature and an awareness of the world around us, an awareness of Nature as an organic whole is important to us spiritually. You cannot get away from that and have a complete spiritual life. We weren't talking ecology yet at that time, but again, if you look at the history of what was going on in the world, this was at about the same time that awareness of ecology began to be running through the rest of society. Whether Carleton was the right place or not, the *time* was right.

Deborah: And the place was appropriate, in terms of the Arb and the spirit.

David: And I think also, as Deborah has said, that a very important element of Druidism for us, and I think part of what has kept the spark alive, or has allowed it to return over the years, is the sense of not taking ourselves *too* seriously. A meaningful spiritual life is one which has a significant component of humor, of having fun together, of enjoying each other's fun, and enjoying each other's company. That's something that I associate with being a Carl, what life at Carleton is like, at least for the people I associated with. We've often said that we never met a Carl we didn't like. There's perhaps one exception to that, but in general, when we have gotten together with other Carleton people where we've had no previous association, and the thing that we have in common is the Carleton Experience, though sometimes separated by decades, we still find that same spark of humor, of having a good time together, much of which is intellectually based: good banter, ability to kick ideas around and have fun with them.

Deborah: Sounds like Druidism to me.

David: Druidism is of a piece with Carleton in that sense. Not to say that there aren't other places that can have that same experience, but it is definitely something that has happened here, and is part of at least our sense of what Druidism is all about.

Michael: I'd like to ask a question. Would you consider the Carleton Druids to be a fraternity attempt at Carleton? With alcohol, big parties, secret rites . . .

David: No.

Deborah: No. David can speak in terms of the men who were involved in the early period, but one of the things that was characteristic of our Druid times here was that alcohol was used very sparingly in Druid rites. Alcohol, for all that we drank, was probably used less, and abused less, in that period in the early Sixties than it was maybe in the succeeding half–decade, when pot also arrived on campus in significant quantities in the late Sixties and early Seventies. Our partying, if you will, the big festivals for the Druids then, have to me a very innocent quality. The party was the fire, the fellowship, the seriousness and silliness of things like the fortune–telling, and about a shot of alcohol shared with everyone who was present. And that was all we drank together, as Druids. Some of us were also friends, and maybe partied elsewhere.

David: We also didn't put much emphasis on secrecy. I don't recall any attempt to keep anything secret from anyone else. The services were always open. There is this pretense of passing on the lore, what some of the words mean, if you go through the Third Order ordination service, but if somebody else wanted to get up at dawn and come up there on the Hill and attend the service, that was fine with us.

Deborah: Right.

David: We were not keeping anything secret from anyone, or "passing on the mysteries." It didn't have that quality at all. Perhaps if there had been fraternities and sororities and things here, there wouldn't have been the time or energy to make up the silly rituals; I don't know. Maybe our focus would have been drained off in that direction, so in that sense there may be a connection. But I don't think we were trying to create a fraternity substitute.

Deborah: Even implicitly. I don't think so. There were some contexts the *'Tonian*, KARL, Players, where there were intimate sub–communities among Carleton students, because people worked together in intensive ways, and I think for some people who were not as deeply involved in any of those, that was certainly one of the attractions of Druidism. It was another place where you could get together with people and have some continuity without having to study together and stuff. But I don't think that was particularly conscious either. That also wasn't why you joined the *'Tonian* or Players.

David: I didn't mention, in terms of why I came to Carleton, one the attractions (I don't know that it was the deciding factor) was the absence of fraternities. I didn't feel that fraternities

were an appropriate thing to be doing with my college time. I don't know that I'd thought all this out before actually arriving on campus, but by the time I'd been here a while, I believe my sense was that these naturally forming interest groups were a much more appropriate way to form community and to have a sense of bonding than fraternities would have been (which always struck me as highly artificial). I was sort of intrigued by the notion of fraternities, secret rites, and all that sort of thing, but when it came right down to it, it wasn't what I wanted to do.

Deborah: In may case, one of my criteria for considering colleges, I would not look at any place with sororities, and places which had fraternities, even though no sororities, were sort of downgraded on my list. That was very practical. In those days, as a Jew, there were too many sororities I would have been excluded from. I had no interest in buying into a society in which people would be excluding me. Druidism would not, even if had developed that way, would not have had that problem, but I think probably most of us would not have felt very comfortable if it had begun to feel too much like a secret society. Those of us who were here in our time. Except maybe Norman. But he would have done it with great zest for the sheer fun of it.

David: I think most of us who were involved were having too much fun with the theater aspects of it to have gone in for any secrecy.

Deborah: Yes. I hadn't thought of it that way, but I think that's absolutely accurate.

Eric: Other than the people who refused to believe that you existed, and the Goodhue jocks who would destroy the altars (for whatever reason) . . .

Deborah: We believe. This is tradition, but we have no proof.

Eric: ...and administrative hostility, did you experience any hostility toward the Druids as a group from other students, people who were offended by your existence. Particularly the question might relate to existing religious groups on campus, the traditional Carleton religious groups. Did they feel threatened by the Druids, or were there misunderstandings about what the Druids were about?

Deborah: If so, it was damned low–key. I certainly don't remember anything in Canterbury Club. Inter–Varsity wasn't very active.

David: I don't remember any specifics of outright hostility. I had maybe a couple of conversations with people who were essentially fundamentalist Christians who believed that dabbling in any of this kind of thing was dangerous and sinful and dealing with the devil. The sort of people who are uncomfortable with Hallowe'en costumes.

Deborah: Took the spirits far more seriously than we did do.

David: Right. But there are always such people around, and they have their point of view. I didn't think that was particularly meaningful.

Deborah: It wasn't very common as a stance at Carleton when we were here. Certainly not the people we hung out with.

David: I suspect that there were more fundamentalist or nearly fundamentalist Christians than we were aware of. It was certainly less popular at that time to express that point of view openly, but *somebody* continued to go to Chapel on Sunday morning, even after it wasn't required.

Eric: Well, I'd like perhaps as a way to bring this to closure, to probe for some reflections on your part about what Druidism has meant in your own lives, how it has informed your subsequent philosophies and outlooks and altered things for you.

David: I think one thing that's definitely been true: what started out in some ways as a practical matter of being as incorporating as possible, of not wanting to do anything that would turn somebody off, of trying to be as welcoming as possible (part of that was we were trying to get people to join!) turned into a philosophical stance that I now believe very strongly: that a proper outlook on spiritual journey is to be as inclusive and accepting as possible. It doesn't mean you don't make judgments about things; it doesn't mean you don't sort out for yourself what you choose to believe and what you don't choose to believe. But to be open to ideas and to be as accepting of other people and their belief systems as possible is just a way of enriching your own life, your own spiritual experience; and I think it's the only way to go about it. That is something that has grown on me. It started out as sort of an official stance for me within Druidism, but has really been very much internalized.

Deborah: I would say something similar, and I think my experience of the last nine years has been even more informed by it. I was essentially becoming a Christian at the same time I was becoming a Druid. I'm not sure how much of that stuff I wanted to believe, but [was] very drawn to the people. One of the things, given my background, was that Carleton was the first place where I found people of faith whom I could respect intellectually, which broke with one of my parents' insistences about the nature of the world.

There was a period after I left Carleton where I was spending more energy exploring the Christian faith that was newly mine, but during that period I also began to articulate my one religious and spiritual absolute, the one thing which is always a guiding factor for me, which I see as very Druid: never trust the theology of anyone who cannot laugh at themselves. This has been a wonderful touchstone for a wide variety of groups that I have run into, and was great for clearing away some of the underbrush about people who claim to have hold of the true faith when I was a young Christian. Because it did help me to tell who were the people who were on the wavelength that I was on.

In the last going on ten years, my Christian experience has been very informed by feminism, by lesbian and gay liberation movements, by the spiritual journeys of a number of women that I sort of travel with spiritually (which are not Christian; some of which are Neo-Pagan). There's been kind of a return to Druid roots in this time, and I'm not sure how much of the rather long process of coming to really abandon a patriarchal image of God was informed by Druidism, but I see a continuity there. There have been times when I found it very reassuring to remind myself that this was not the first time that I had called upon God as the Earth–Mother or as the Goddess; that lightning had not struck me then, and that I was probably on the right track now.

There's a real significant sense in which this is a piece of my spiritual journey that I am reclaiming. I lead women's spiritual circle gatherings in a couple of different contexts, and have been conditioned to adding recent feminist and lesbian theology. I've been thinking a lot as I've put together the most recent ones of how comfortable this is for me. I haven't actually gotten out any liturgies; it may be time to do that the next time I lead a circle. So it's both informed by apparently mainstream religious life, and been what I think of as a kind of underground spring for much of my spiritual journey since Carleton, since I became a Third Order Druid; a real source of energy and life.

David: I mentioned in my opening remarks having been raised in the Presbyterian Church. Subsequent to that I did seek Confirmation as an Episcopalian, although the service was performed by the old Catholic bishop of Germany, which I rather like, because things were just murky and open–ended and as eclectic as possible. One of the things that I continue to find congenial about the Episcopal Church is that, at least in its better moments, it does seem to allow for things to be pretty much open–ended. We believe that it's better to remain in dialogue, even when we disagree with each other; it's better to allow the possibility of different and multiple answers to fundamental questions than to try to nail down *the* truth or *the* single Truth. We've just experienced evidence of that this weekend; we're in Minnesota to attend the consecration of our former rector from San Francisco as Episcopal bishop of Minnesota. There was a protest on the floor of the hall during that ceremony over the fact that this man has announced that he will ordain practicing gay and lesbian people.

Deborah: Non–celibate.

David: That he will allow within the diocese the blessing of same–sex relationships. (He still won't call them marriages because there are legal ramifications having to do with the use of that word.) But these were very controversial positions. They seem in some people's opinions to be directly in conflict with resolutions in the House of Bishops. How can the House of Bishops say one thing and then turn around and allow a person who holds a differing view to be consecrated as a bishop? Well, I think that's delightful. Why not allow that to happen? Why not allow things to remain open–ended and murky; because I think that's the only way that we can continue to move toward anything that would be spiritually malleable for us.

Eric: All right. I thank you very much for the time you've spent with me, and for your memories and reflections and thoughtfulness. Unless you have anything else to say, I think I'll declare this interview closed.

Deborah: It's been a pleasure.

David: Thank you.

Figure 2 Fisher, Frangquist & Larson, c. 1964 at Monument Hill.

Interview with Robert Larson '66

April 20th, 1994 c.e.

Mike: I am Michael Scharding, class of 1994, and I am interviewing Robert Larson, who was an important Druid because he knew the ways of the original Carleton Druids and also the ways of the Berkeley Druids. Robert founded the Berkeley Druids and thereby with Isaac, he set the stage for the birth of the Neo–Pagan Druid movement in America in 1969. As Archdruid of Berkeley 1969–1977, his views will help us to understand the Berkeley Grove during the troubling times.

Robert: Hi, everybody!

Mike: You're probably the only Third Order Druid from Carleton who I've not phoned, talked to or written to yet.

Robert: Well, congratulations.

Mike: Except Fisher.

Robert: Well, yeah.

Mike: You're also the only Druid to have known most of the competitors in the New and Reformed Druid movements. So you'll be helpful to my paper. Let's start off with what you remember of the early Founding Days and how you came to find the Druids at Carleton.

Robert: Ah, well, that was my Sophomore year. 62–63. I was at, I think, the second service. I made it to most of the services thereafter. Have you talked to Fisher? Fisher won't talk?

Mike: Fisher won't talk.

Robert: That figures. With the ideotheos of young intellectual people, you come up with strange ways of passing the time. The early 60s they still had the religious requirement in force. That went out about 65. That's when you had to go to a certain number of services every term and they made it pretty easy though. It was all nicely hypocritical. At any rate, David Fisher's method of rebellion was forming secret societies, which never really took off.

Mike: Oh, I didn't know there were other secret societies.

Robert: Well, he had a couple others that he tried to get off the ground beforehand. Nothing ridiculous or outrageous, but they were illegal by the laws of the college at that time.

Mike: One of things that Bonewits mentioned is whether Fisher was a member of the United Ancient Order of Druids.

Robert: I have no idea. I don't believe he was. I have no idea of what was in his background.

Mike: Ah. But what you said there made me suspicious.

Robert: Well, no. It was just his method of rebelling against college regulations. We all had our own ways. Mostly sneaking girls into the guys' dorms and getting drunks. But there were other ways, as Fisher never had much of a head for alcohol and he was planning on becoming a minister, it was just his way of rebelling, I guess. I really didn't know Dave that well, and we didn't get along that well. At any rate, he came up with this Druid thing to resist the Chapel requirement, the idea being that when we put in our religious slips we'd write down the Druid thing, and if they accepted it it would prove that the religious requirement was absolutely ridiculous, and if they denied it we could claim religious discrimination. Funny thing was when the men put it in, it was denied, but when the women put it in, the women's dean said "fine."

Mike: What happened there, according to Deeborah Frangquist, is that the slips were checked by dorm mothers over at the women's places. And they didn't know anything and they said, "whatever. pass. whatever. pass."

Robert: Well, I know one guy, who was not a Druid, named Bob Miller who was getting by putting in things like the "Wesleyan Presbyterian and Fire Reform of Colorado" and they were getting accepted. But we had trouble with the Dean, but that was straightened out. Most of us covered our butts by going to the Sunday night lecture any way, which was a painless way of fulfilling the religious requirement. At any rate, there we were in 63 and we went away and came back the next year. For some reason, people found something in it, people on a religious search or philosophical search, kids trying to find their basis of being. "Roll your own religion" has always had an attraction to me, and I rolled my own. At first year, you had Fisher as ArchDruid & Howie Cherniack as Preceptor and we had various servers, but it eventually came down to Frangquist. He eventually became Preceptor and then Archdruid after Fisher had left, and I was his Preceptor for a while. Anything else you need to know of the early days?

Mike: What was your idea of what the RDNA meant to you at that time?

Robert: As I say, it's a nice excuse to get out in the woods on Saturday, but I've always looked at it as a way to search for philosophical/ethical/religious truth. Of course, the search is more important than the finding in those cases. The search led you in various directions. Nature is the focal point. My personal predilection even at that time, although in the introductory state, was in Celtic language, history and practices. I've always had a taste for the obscure.

Mike: I know what you mean.

Robert: Among Northern Europeans, the Celtic mythos was one of the more obscure and one of the more puzzling. I always had a tendency for the pagan religion, but most of my formative experiences were influenced by Nordic traditions. The Celt mythos & ethos & worldview is more conducive to my particular soul. There are many more good books now coming out, but at that time there was very little available and you just had to get your information where you could and I had always been interested in that culture since the age of 12, although for no reason that I could figure out. It's just one of those things, I mean, where do your interests come from? It didn't' really become focused until I was in my 20's and since then I've tried to pick up everything I could find on it, which is fairly good. I did more than a bit of work on Muenster Gaelic and now I can..... (long discourse on languages)

Mike: So you graduated in 65?

Robert: No, I didn't graduate...

Mike: Oh, you didn't graduate, what happened?

Robert: Loss of interest mainly. The final term I was laid up with one sprained ankle on another. I was majoring in English, which was interesting, but not overwhelmingly interesting. I just couldn't see working that hard. The general academic atmosphere just got to me.

Mike: I know that the Third Order was pretty much fixed at this point.

Robert: You mean in the ritual and how you became a Third Order?

Mike: Yes, I think so.

Robert: Yeah, it was pretty much fixed. As far as I know, it was fixed when Fisher ordained his first one, Nelson or Frangquist, I can't remember which was first. The ritual has not changed that much since, in order to keep some ilk of apostolic succession going.

Mike: And did you have the traditional curse of having it rain on your vigil?

Robert: No. But on my vigil, it was colder than an Eskimo's outhouse and I couldn't get my fire going. I found some deadfall in one of the thickets, and I had a nice staff that I was trying to whittle on to pass the time. It was a cold one. Eventually the dawn came, after I was walking around for awhile slapping my arms to my side for two hours, saying "When the f*ck is Frangquist going to show up?" Just as dawn came, off to the west from the Hill of Three Oaks, where I stood my vigil, was a nice lightning bolt striking the ground in the shape of my staff.

Mike: Wow!

Robert: Wasn't that a lucky thing? Fortunately there was no thunder at the time of the ordination!

Mike: Yes, I know we had to do that with the ordination of one of my friends. There was a lightning storm going on and every time it thundered we had to start it all over again.

Robert: That's one way to do it.

Mike: By the end of it, I was speaking 6 times the ordinary rate.

Robert: The way we would have done it is, "Well we're going to have to do this again." Because, at that point, we were taking it halfway seriously. Still got snow on the ground out there?

Mike: I'd say no, but if I do then we'll get another foot in the morning.

Robert: Oh, I know. Minnesota weather sucks.

Mike: We've had six or seven springs so far.

Robert: Has the Cannon River flooded yet?

Mike: Oh, you should have seen it last July! You know it was my fault. I ordained two people that night in July. There was a backlog for ten years when no one was third order and so when Shelton came down and ordained me, absolutely everyone wanted to catch up before they left.

Robert: Oh that's good. A new crop.

Mike: So, two people wanted to be ordained, and I think that was too much, and we got the Flood.

Robert: I ordained two on one night once. The problem out here is that we separated them, otherwise the vision quest doesn't go down, but making two or three visits each night, they were about a mile apart. It was one of those nights. We had a crazy Christian up in the hills back then. Never again will I try two in one night. It wasn't convenient to go home and lie on my own bed while they vigiled, because then I would have to make a mile or two mile hike to check up on them. So I had to stay up all night too...even though I'm a night person...

Mike: I've so far ordained 8 people and I've never been able to sleep on those nights.

Robert: No, you're concerned for them.

Mike: Yeah, you're concerned for them. So you trot out and check up on them, even if they don't see you.

Robert: Well, yeah, it's always the nice thing to do to give them a scare around 12:00.

Mike: A scare? Oh no!

Robert: Oh, yes, it's part of the vision quest. If you're in fairly dense woods, it's almost impossible not to give them a scare tracking through the goddammed underbrush. It's about 1 o'clock at night when things are getting a bit hairy. It's a matter of getting their adrenaline going, which at that time they can probably use to keep awake.

Mike: Sometimes, I don't know about you guys.

Robert: We're a little crazy. If you're half–way intelligent, you're already crazy. If you aren't crazy by the time you're 20, the world will drive you crazy by the time you're 30. I never really intentionally scared anybody, because I'm the type if you snuck up behind me and startled me, I'd jump up about three feet in the air. Most people are that way, especially in the woods at night.

Mike: You left in what year then?

Robert: Spring of 66, after winter term.

Mike: That was when Frangquist was winding down?

Robert: Yes.

Mike: And most of the rules had been passed?

Robert: Yeah. The originals had gone on.

Mike: During that brief flurry of voting, do you think they expected a vote to happen again?

Robert: I'm sure Fisher didn't.

Mike: I heard he always got pulled into consensus.

Robert: That's an interesting tale there. You're familiar with the stalled patriarchate of the upper orders? It stalled with Zempel at 8th? When they were starting up with the Druids, we thought, "Let's make some more Orders so that we can put more initials after our names." and so it was Fisher, Nelson, Frangquist, Zempel, and Zempel wanted the eighth but he got the seventh.

Mike: I wanted the Eighth!

Robert: Everyone wanted the Eighth or the tenth, because there is all sorts of initiation possibilities. But the idea at that time, that I got from Dave Frangquist, was they wanted to edge Dave Fisher out because he was getting a bit too Christian and so they gave him the honor of being the first patriarch of the Fourth Order. He raised the others up to Fourth order, and they elected the fifth order, and then the sixth Order, and that's as far as they got until Zempel. Everyone would be appointed to the higher order, but the point would be that Fisher would be the lowest ranking Patriarch. Since he always wore black anyway, he was preparing himself to become an Episcopalian priest. He's always been embarrassed by the whole thing. We once had a science fiction novel with busty broads on the cover and we gave it to him to autograph, and he turned pale at the sight of it.

Mike: So you went off somewhere after Carleton?

Robert: I went home for a while and, let me assure you, living in Indiana is no treat for someone who wants to do something. Well, I went over to Berkeley and my main objective was keeping out of Vietnam, which I managed to do with one trick. Overweight.

Mike: But you didn't actually enroll at Berkeley?

Robert: No. I was a hanger–on. I was a typical 60s hippie, but I didn't do as much drugs as some other people. I did my share, but everyone did back then. But that was before you time, wasn't it.

Mike: Yeah. I wasn't around then. I was born in 1971.

Robert: You weren't even a sparkle then. Oh, young ones... (Conversation trails off into Scottish & Irish History)

Mike: So, there never really was a Berkeley College Grove?

Robert: No. Religious groups are not allowed in Berkeley at all. It's a state institution. So that can't have groups directly connected with the campus. At that time, Berkeley was a hotbed of radical politics and anti–Vietnam, which is where I was at the time.

Mike: Not even Catholic groups could meet?

Robert: Not for religious services. I'm not sure of the rules there. The first service that we held out there, we purposely flaunted this regulation and had it in the Eucalyptus Grove or somewhere along strawberry creek. After that we had all of our services in Strawberry Canyon out beyond the Stadium.

Mike: Did that inhibit your ability to recruit on campus?

Robert: I've never been into proselytization. I don't believe in proselytization for any religion or philosophy.

Mike: So how did members find you?

Robert: They found us. That's always been the way I've conducted things, you let people who look who find. If you're not looking, you won't find. But then we wouldn't want you if you were not looking for something. It really took off when Robert Anton Wilson was out here, he's the author of the Illuminati Trilogy, and we used to meet at his house before we went off to the hills, in order to arrange transportation. At that time I didn't drive and most people didn't have cars.

Mike: So did you notice a different type of people who came looking for Druidism?

Robert: oh. Well, it's hard to say, because Carleton is much more homogenous than anything in Berkeley, Carleton's a much smaller environment. The thing in Carleton was that lots of people were coming out for a good time. Just following their noses a little bit. Most of the people here were searching for something, but I've never been sure with any of them, though there was a definite pagan or anti–Christian bent... at that time, the anti–Christian bent did not bother me, although it does now to a certain extent. I've mellowed over the years. But, the pagan bent never bothered me, although they tended to go too far into the occult, magical aspect of paganism, rather than the cultural aspects, for my taste. But I find, I

believe you'll find, if you continue on... that what will happen is that the type of people that you get in a grove (that you set up outside the College) will have a fairly similar outlook to you. If they don't like your services, they ain't going to come and the result is, (although you'll have all sorts of factions and people you don't like, some people you like and some people you don't give a damn) you'll find that the general milieu is fairly homogenous within the group. And that's the interesting thing about Druidism, that because of the lack of dogma and the lack of standardization, disorganized religion as we always called it, in a sense it's very Mao–istic with "Let a thousand heresies bloom!" And they do! And I think that's good, because it makes people think. And thought is the main part of the search, that and experience and feeling, which is why the search goes on until you finally kick the bucket, then you may find out something,... or you may not.

I always kept the magic to a minimum although I was always very good at calling the winds, and I always got very good results. But theologically, or rather philosophically, I got more conservative than the group, and my bat has always been paleo–paganism rather than neo–paganism. I could make excellent arguments for human sacrifice.... if I wanted to.

(laugh)

In the original group, I probably would have been on the side of the animal sacrifice. Let's sacrifice a cricket, rather than a purely vegetarian passport, ... but whatever works. And it worked, though the building of the altars and the fire was really a nice touch, after they got rid of the portable record stand, which was definitely not a good altar. But the anti–Druids of the old days, Jocks in other words, were drunks (but so were we, so what the hell!) It's a matter of what side you want to be on.

Mike: You mentioned that in Berkeley people came searching for things. I always thought the Carleton group, back in the early 60s, broke down their beliefs into the very basic questions of fate.

Robert: Some of them, probably. For others, no. For some of them, well, Carleton at that time was a fairly Christian place, but not offensively so. Not like Bob Jones. But barriers were falling everywhere in the early 60s. You have to remember that this was the time of the Civil Rights, the time of Vietnam. Of course, the early 60s were before Vietnam, but the Civil Rights were very big. There was a big thing about getting blacks on campus. There was a big thing about getting more sexual freedom, about getting more open houses. At that time, the dorms were strictly segregated by sex, and college kids being what they are, that was a real big issue at that time. It was the start of the general breakdown of society, which has continued to this day. As soon as we wreck the old form of oppression, we'll erect a new form of oppression. That's what's happening now. My bent has always been towards anarchy rather than socialism, or rather towards conservatism. I always believed you should let people go to hell in their own hand basket rather than your own hand basket. And definitely most people will. That's their choice.

Mike: Let's talk about how you met Isaac Bonewits.

Robert: That was in Berkeley, of course. Interestingly, at that time, he was involved in infiltrating the Church of Satan.

Mike: I heard about that.

Robert: And the cult of Tony Levay, as he called him. He used to come out on the Gate Entrance with a nice black wooden throne and would heckle the Christian bible thumpers. That was just off-campus, you see, where all the stuff was happening. Just off of what is called red square. And I was, at that time, in my hippiedom, to use an Irishism, and I was selling newspapers to skin a living at the Gate, which is one of the better places to sell, if you wanted a congenial atmosphere rather than money. I soon met up with Isaac. Isaac, at that time, was collecting ordinations, he'd join any group in order to be ordained, just to collect them. So, I said what the hell, let's do it real quick and we did it real quick. And at that time, I was in financial trouble, which is no stranger, and we took up rooming together. He had to get out of his place and I had to get out of my place, so we roomed together in an apartment. We got along fairly well for a while. There are a few things between us now, but I've mellowed out quite a bit since then. Monetary again. But that was how I met him. I always thought he went a little overboard on the magic/paganism bit. But that may be part of my essential laziness. I don't believe in enthusing myself over anything, whereas he gets enthused over anything, I control my enthusiasm better than his.

Mike: Okay. When did the actual grove get set up?

Robert: Actually to legally ordain someone, you have to have a grove. So we did that real quick, too. Was Zempel out here at that time?

Mike: Really?

Robert: Zempel was out here for a while.

Mike: Wow!

Robert: And he was studying in physics for graduate work. I don't know whether it was Zempel or another guy. I can't remember, it must have been one of our guys. It was ordain a server quick, ordain a second order quick, to get enough people for a grove, and then, "okay, It's time to ordain some one." But as for getting it going, as an ongoing thing, it was a few years thereafter. And I'm not sure what year it was, but Isaac and I were both members of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Isaac more than I. He set up things for them, and I started doing things for them, and it evolved from there. But my recollection of those days are grim. And it kept going for few years. How long...

Mike: I think you were Archdruid until 1977.

Robert: About then.

Mike: And then you went to join Clann na Brocheta?

Robert: Yeah, and that thing broke up fairly quickly. And since then I have only been to one service, and that was Stephan Abbot's (in 1993) 30th anniversary service at Beltane of last year. I always thought that I had run a loose service! And I didn't know what a loose service was. (Laughter.) Of course, Stephan has never been the most focused individual.

Mike: Yes, I've had many conversations with Stephan.

Robert: You poor boy. (Laugh) I've had met him face to face, trying to figure out between what he wants and what he needs, which are two separate things. But, he's a nice boy.

Mike: He's also a Celtic scholar.

Robert: He likes to think he is. He knows his tarot well. He knows a certain amount of Celtic things, but you can't get into Celtic things unless you learn the languages. And as far as I know he's never taken the trouble to learn one. As far as I'm concerned a language is the heart and soul of a culture.

Mike: It is.

Robert: What language you speak orders how your brain will think, as any linguistics person will tell you.

Mike: I get the impression from other people that although you were the Archdruid from 68 all the way up until 77, officially, it seemed that Isaac was doing all the work.

Robert: Work? What work? I don't know what you mean by work?

Mike: Organizing people to do things.

Robert: Oh. I always allowed people to organize themselves. I've always felt that if you as Archdruid try to organize things too much, you will defeat Druidism, which is to let people to discover in themselves. Rather, that you discover, you have let them discover what they think. If you organize things too much, you direct things too much, what you're teaching people is what you think, and that's not my way. I never believe in that. I always believed that the preceptor should do more of the scuttling work. My main responsibility was providing the service, and in making sure everything was there for the service, and trying to collect the money for the waters, which is impossible I've found. Finally I decide, if you want cheap shit, don't contribute, if you want good stuff, contribute. And people contributed a little after that.

Mike: What was your favorite brand?

Robert: At that time I was into Tattie's, but now I'm into Powers. I don't drink that much, but Irish whiskey is always very nice. I've never liked Scotch that much, except for single malts, but that is prohibitively expensive for waters. Besides, you're supposed to water them down for services, except for Beltane and (hmmph!) Second Order Ordinations. Speaking of drinks, Stephan had some of the worst waters I've ever tasted at that May thing. He doesn't do alcohol and some of his alternative drinks are positively atrocious. The mead, which was home–made, and not necessarily bad, was pretty rank. At any rate, we got through it. It was kind of fun seeing some people again. Just like when I resigned from my Archdruidship, and it turned out to be Joan, I believe that when you step down you ought to go away and let them develop their ways, although I've been curious. But I don't want to see what they're doing unless they need help. If anyone asks me for help, or asks me for an opinion, I'm perfectly willing to give it. But, I'm not going to impose upon them. Again, it's not my way. I very much "live and let live," even though I have strong opinions.

Mike: How much of what was written during the Isaac Wars was his part and how much of it was representing the Berkeley Grove?

Robert: As I've said, Isaac has his enthusiasms, which tend to be pro–pagan, anti–Christian. To a certain extent I understood them. In fact, to a certain extent, I shared them, but not to the same radical extent as Isaac, who had unfortunately spent some time in Catholic seminary, which will do it to you any time. Most of the anti–Catholic and anti–Christian people I have known have gone to Catholic schools.

Mike: In the period when you were Archdruid, did you group ever refuse to allow people to join who were Christian?

Robert: No. Not as far as I know. Some people may have tried to discourage them. But they may not have felt welcome, considering the pagan bent of most of the members, which even I was feeling at that time, but as far as I am concerned, everyone was welcome. If what we do doesn't suit you, you don't have to stay. If something we do offends you, go away. If you offend us with the way you act, we'll tell you. I don't recall any problems of that ilk. If so, it wasn't brought to my attention, as it should have been. If they didn't bring it to my attention, I'm rather pissed. I'm a libertarian in that.

Mike: Carleton College had a very, very heavy enthusiasm for Asian religions in the 60s.

Robert: Must have been after my time. Of course Zen Buddhism in the 50s... I got into Zen for awhile, to a lesser extant. There is the Japanese connection at that time, when students went over to Japan to spend some time.

Mike: Primarily in the 60s.

Robert: I wasn't aware of a heavy enthusiasm for eastern religions in my times. However, in the later 60s, everybody was interested in Asian religions. But Eastern religion and Buddhism are always interesting paths to look into and it's different way of approaching things. I know that Dave Frangquist was one who went over to Japan and that, for a while, he was heavily exploring Buddhist thought. Fisher I doubt.

Mike: Fisher was more into Hinduism, I've heard.

Robert: That makes sense. It's a bit more organized. Anyone who's searching religiously, is going to look into Buddhism and look into Hinduism, as being available to people. Definitely, the Druish meditative thing (although it was fairly short and people spent the time looking around at Nature like you're supposed to do) is sort of Buddhistic. I read some Zen when I was in high school, Alan Watts and such, and it interested me at that time. I'd already given up on my native religion, but what can you say about Christian Science? It was, what did Crowley say?, "an excellent grounding for magic, black magic, but magic nonetheless." On the other hand, Christian science, once you get out of the bullshit aspect, has an interesting viewpoint. But they try to control people's mind too much. It's another pseduo–Christian religion heavily by eastern thought. But Christianity is Judaism, itself influenced by eastern religion and pagan European thought. That's another kettle of fish altogether.

Mike: I always wondered if Druidism's Eastern influence kept the Druids from evolving into what Isaac thought was it's natural destiny. Becoming Celtic, like it's framework suggest.

Robert: Possibly. The main problem with getting Druids off the ground, as Isaac was always want to do, was it's predilection for disorganization rather than organization. When you get alot of independent thinking people (or at least they think they are independent thinking) into a group and you start developing their own views that do not coincide. So, to get any type of organization going is very difficult and once you have a grove structure and a totally decentralized hierarchy, organization becomes counter to what Reformed Druidism is. It just doesn't work. If you get organized, if you start a putsch going, you're going to get dogma. You going to get ritualistic formalism. There is a certain amount of fixed ritualism between apostolic successions, but when you try to get a consistent viewpoint, you won't get that with Druidism as it was structured in the beginning. Now if people want to put forth a dogma and list beliefs in that dogma and then build a church based on that dogma that's fine, but that's not Reformed Druidism. They can call it what they want.

Mike: I can tell that Isaac was headed this direction early on.

Robert: Oh yeah.

Mike: With the SDNA.

Robert: I'd like to see the movement grow. I would like to see it grow to a magnitude of force that Isaac wanted, but not as an organization. I'd rather see it as a method of thought and as a method of looking into things rather than as a method of organization and control. That should never happen to

Reformed Druidism. When Smiley tried to organize and put down rules and regulations and traditions....

Mike: You mean Shelton?

Robert: Right. Smiley was another guy. Yeah. He [Shelton] got some nasty reactions from me and most of the others because it wasn't against what he was saying, but for putting it down as a tight little thing. At that time, it was time of do your own thing, and to a large extent, it should continue to be the bat of the druids.

Mike: One of things I've noticed is that the hierarchy of the Druids gives a great deal of autonomy to the individual groves.

Robert: yeah.

Mike: Any damn thing they want as long as they leave the third order alone.

Robert: Right.

Mike: What made Isaac want to bring everyone into his own system, rather than his own grove?

Robert: I think you can call it psychological error. That's a matter between Isaac and his conscience. I hope that he's matured from that viewpoint. I don't know, and I haven't talked to him in many a year. I have a feeling that it was his Catholic seminary upbringing, which gives you a very tight structure and a desire towards a structure. He's a neat freak, I'm a messy freak. I guess you call it anal–retentive in Freudian terms. He always had a tendency to over organize. It's the problem every politician of trying to make people fit in molds. People are very very resistant to fitting in molds. In a mass, you can predict what people will do, but individually it's off the scale. If he ever got the thing going as a big mass, then he probably could get things organized like he wanted to. But then, getting that mass going together as an organization, given the traditional Druid resistance to being plugged into holes, is very difficult. It is probably beyond anyone, but an organizational genius. Who wants a fuehrer? Especially in the late 60's/early 70s? They were everything from Protestant to Unitarians, from every radical movement of that time, and they've become more so since that time. I've always felt that Druidism would be an excellent umbrella organization if you could get it to a reasonably size organization, if you get enough groves going, to incorporate as a non–profit church organization. God knows, it's always been non–profit. To give an umbrella of legitimacy to other odd–ball sects and I think there's a certain amount of need for that in the paleo–pagan, neo–pagan, occult, magickal community, and even for some of the stranger Muslim, Christian and Buddhist sects. There are a lot of very strange sects out there, some of them are dangerous, and some of them are just strange. They have their own little viewpoint. I don't care what someone believes as long as they don't try to put it on someone else and make them believe it. As long as he acts upon his own beliefs in his own group, that's fine. I think there is a need for that time of Umbrella organization and there have been attempts to set up those sorts of umbrella organizations. Most of them failed through the same problem as the Druids; that when you don't have a tight little dogma, people go off on their own little spritzes and pretty soon everything is breaking apart.

Mike: I know there were alot of things during the early 70s which may have made Isaac write in a slightly ruder style. I mean there are three years when nobody wrote to anybody and it looked pretty dead.

Robert: That was the time he was in Minneapolis and he was trying to get things going with the Gnostica newspaper. When you get involved in the old form of the occult community you run into organizational stasis and I suppose that was very frustrating for him, even though there were new people coming in. The Llywellyn press were very much 1920s operations...You have to remember that Isaac has always had a bent for ceremonial magic and that requires a tremendous amount of organizational control both mentally and physically. You can see where you would carry this bent over into the Druidism and attempt to over organize. As I say, if that's the way you want to set up your grove, fine!, But don't try to make me set up my grove that way.

Mike: Did you like being Archdruid in the early 70s?

Robert: Yeah. It was a nice thing to do occasionally. I missed conducting services since I resigned, and I've always wanted to get together with people near Beltane and Samhain and to hold a service. Actually getting together, since I'm out of contact with many people, is very difficult. Maybe one of these day, it'd be nice.

Mike: Did you always have weekly rituals outside of Quarter Days and Cross Quarter Days?

Robert: No. That's the way we started out. Then I worked out the phases of the moon nearest to Sunday and Noon. I didn't have them on Saturday because I like to watch Football myself, I was a 49ers fan, before they became good. That was the way we continued most of the time.

Mike: I heard that you used to have a lot of pizza conversations at the pizza parlor.

Robert: Some. After Cody & I got together, after each service we'd make a run down to Silano's and have an ice–cream splurge. There's always late night conversations. One winter I tried to organize classes in Gaelic, they lasted a little. I suppose people learned something. At that time I was only middling in my Irish and I could only teach basics. Mainly there were a lot of bullshit session at Bob Wilson's house, before we got going up to the hills. It's at bullshit sessions that you meet people. But organized bullshit sessions, no.

Mike: There weren't any other Druid groups in the Bay Area then?

Robert: There was the Order of Druids. They were a beneficent organization. They still have a few buildings called "Druid's Hall" which are nice to see. But I don't know if they still meet. It's kind of like the Scottish Rite Hall in Oakland, which is mostly a venue for concerts and conventions. I don't think the masons are very active in that hall anymore. I was just printing some directories of cemeteries this week and there are a couple of Druid cemeteries in Sonoma county..... Just Masonic offshoots founded in 19th century.

Mike: But in the Neo–Pagan community?

Robert: No, I don't think so. None that I'm aware. Wait, there were some people basing themselves out of Welsh tradition. I never observed whether they had services.

Mike: So, pretty much the Reformed Druids were sitting out alone in the field?

Robert: Usually it's in a grove. Usually we were sitting around passing the pipe or passing the bottle. I believe in very informal, once you get past the winds. You had the sacrifice. You had the meditation and then the bullshit session for 15 minutes and then break it up. Don't want to have long sermons. I've never been into long sermons. I usually took my readings out of the Chronicles, or occasionally dip into poetry (Yeats, Manningly, Hopkins.) Everyone knew what was coming after I said the first word, but I thought they were important verses for people to think about.

Mike: What does the word "Neo–Pagan" mean to you?

Robert: To me, it's an attempt to reawaken the spiritual sides that we lost when the evangelical Christian movement took over Europe. Unfortunately, most of the Neo–Pagans have taken alot of New Age philosophy, most of which is clap–trap, and attempted to plug it in, rather that attempting to study what the pagans really thought and felt. Read your Roman philosophers, read your Greek philosophers, read your Celtic & Norse myths and attempt to extrapolate off that and you're better off. I'm more for a paleo–pagan viewpoint. On the other hand, for many people, a good exploration of their roots and developing a belief system on the natural world rather on the revealed world. For me, the revealed world is never true. It is true to the person who reveals it only, it is not true necessarily to anyone else, but maybe true to some. This is especially true when it has gone through the garbling that happens with all the holy books of the world. The bible is a prime example, although the Koran does a fine job of garbling Mohammad's message too. The Buddhist texts are probably not the bad of an example because they were never that organized or even pretended to be organized nearly as much. The Vedas are also garbled mythologies, but good mythology when you get down to it. Man's religious views were originally developed out of his relationship with nature and in order to understand what man is, one must get in contact with that side. The churches, especially the revealed churches, obstruct that path. The Puritan church, in particular, defines Nature as the realm of the Devil. Well that may be true from the viewpoint of primitive man, because Nature is dangerous and not kind or evil or good, it merely is. You've got to understand where you stand in the phynotony of life forms. One of the problems I have with the radical environmentalists is that they understand where the animals and plants fit in, but they don't understand where man fits into that relationships; just as the heavy timber industry doesn't understand where the animals and plants fit in. You have to consider both. The only way... not the only way, there's no such thing as the only way....one way for me is through the Nature question. Not necessarily an intellectual quest but a soul and vision quest than anything else. SO you can feel where you are and who you are. Find your spot and make it sacred.

Mike: That's seems to be the message that the RDNA is trying to use. The cautiousness of ever trying to instruct somebody.

Robert: Right. What is true for you. Even for something as simple as "2 + 2 =4" is not necessarily true if you are using a base three. (Laugh) If you agree with the Zuni, who don't count 1–2–3–4–5 on their fingers, but who count on the interstices of their fingers 1–2–3–4. You would end up with a base 8 as a result. The truth may be objective, but the perception is very individual. We all only glimpse one facet and if we move we might see more facets. The object of research is to move and see as many facets as possible.

Mike: I like that.

Robert: You never get to glimpse them all. It's just like science. In the 19th century they figured they reached the end of physics, they had all the answers. Then came atomic theory. Every time we think we are getting close to understanding the universe, it throws us a curve and I think the curves are going to keep coming as long as man continues or intelligent life survives, because the little universe we have in our brain case is changing it's perception all the time.... I think that each of us desires stasis, unchanging universe, and unchanging within an area of life. So we don't get surprised all the time. So we don't feel threatened all the time. Unfortunately the world doesn't work that way. IF you don't learn to flow a little bit, yourself, you're going to get run over by the river. Druidism is a way to flow. That's not a good analogy.

Mike: Religion is a difficult thing to pigeonhole.

Robert: They try. Every little sect of an organized religion thinks they have a copyright on the truth, and that's one thing that pissed off Isaac considerably and one thing that attracted him to Druidism. We didn't claim to have a copyright on truth, or to be the only way of approaching it. Unfortunately, once he found his truth he tried to pigeon hole it himself and that's where he and I part our philosophical company.

Mike: Well, that's all the room we have on this tape. Thank you for this interview.

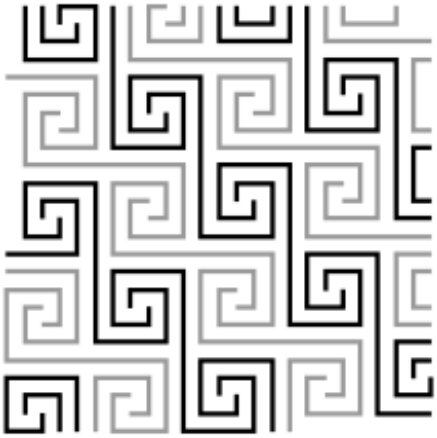

Figure 3 Carruth of Berkeley, Mike Scharding, Norman Nelson, Richard Shelton, David Frangquist & Merri-Beth Weber at the 40th Anniversary at Monument Hill on Beltane 2003.

Interview with Richard Shelton, '71

May 8, 1993

Eric: This is Eric Hilleman. It is Saturday afternoon, May 8, 1993. I am recording an interview in the Carleton College library for the Carleton Oral History Program. I'm talking with Richard M. Shelton, a graduate of Carleton in the class of 1971. Mr. Shelton, who is currently Principal Mathematician for Unisys, was a Carleton math major who subsequently went on to earn a Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Michigan.

Dick: That I have to correct: I was in the Ph.D. program, but I left before finishing my thesis.

Eric: I stand corrected. At Carleton, Dick was heavily involved in a number of things, including folk dancing and the Carleton Druids, more formally known as the Reformed Druids of North America, Carleton Grove. I'm told there was actually a large overlap in his time between those two groups, including both himself and Ellen Conway, who is now Ellen Conway Shelton. Mr. Shelton became Arch–Druid of the Carleton Grove during his time here, and has involved himself with interest in the subsequent ups and downs of the Carleton Druids ever since. That will form the principal subject of what we're going to talk about today. Dick, I wanted to start with some general things about your own background, and what brought you to Carleton, and things like that. Why don't you tell me about that.

Dick: I grew up in Illinois, down–state Illinois, nowhere near Chicago. Of course, Illinois is two states: Chicago and the rest of the state. My father's family is deeply rooted in Illinois, and I was born in Jacksonville, Illinois. My father went to school at Illinois College [in Jacksonville] and subsequently did graduate work in chemistry at the University of Iowa in Iowa City. He worked for a brief time at Dupont in Clinton, Iowa, but discovered that he didn't really like the industrial life, and. I'm reconstructing now, he jumped at the first academic job he found, which was at Western Illinois University in Macomb. That's where I grew up. Macomb is a very odd town, because it's in the middle of Bible belt rural America, but it is a university town. As a result, I grew up very strange: a faculty brat in a culture that I was very much not a part of.

Almost the only person in Macomb that I still feel comfortable talking to is my high school librarian, who graduated from Grinnell College. She suggested that I look at Grinnell, or more generally at the Associated Colleges of the Midwest. When I discovered Carleton, I applied here for early admission, and was subsequently accepted. I came here because of my roots, I think. [I was] an ardent Republican, but events in Vietnam and on campus changed that fairly soon. I'm now considerably more liberal, and now find myself in America at large sort of isolated and in the milieu of a culture in which I no longer feel I belong. So in a very real sense, nothing has changed!

That's how I came to be here. When I applied for admission, I was interested very much in music and in astronomy. I was convinced I was going to be an astronomy major. But when I came here, I discovered I didn't get along very well with the orchestra conductor, and the astronomy department at that time was sort of a college disgrace. It very quickly became clear that I wasn't going to major in astronomy. So I ended up sort of by default in mathematics.

Eric: Were there particular professors at the time, who favorably impressed you, or pushed you in that direction, or moved you in that direction because they were good, or was it not something that had so much to do with the teachers you encountered?

Dick: Oh, that's difficult to say. I think like many people that age I didn't have a real strong notion of what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. I considered majoring in several departments. I had come with a fair amount of mathematics under my belt from high school. My high school was not a regular rural Illinois high school, but the Laboratory School of Western Illinois University. We had the opportunity to take college courses there, so I came here with a fair amount of mathematics. Toward the end of my sophomore year I finally decided that mathematics was clearly what I'd had most of, and seemed to be best at, so I might as well stick with it.

There were a few professors that impressed me very favorably. Roger Kirchner, in particular, I had several classes with. I think any math major has to put in a plug for John Dyer–Bennett, who, for math majors, was a very good instructor, and taught me a great deal about the way mathematics is done, rather than specific mathematical material.

Of all the professors I had here, though, I think the person who left the deepest mark on me was not a math professor at all, but David Porter in Classics, from whom I had beginning Greek and (I think more importantly) the course in mythology, which is where I learned that I have a soul. I don't think it's exaggerating too much to say that it changed my life. I had been interested in mythology before then, but as a very academic sort of thing. It wasn't until I had that course that I began to see the relationship between the dry and dusty mythology that you read about in Bullfinch and people's real emotions and religious needs. I believe it's that course, more than any other at Carleton, or indeed any other time in my life, that made me realize that there is another dimension to the human experience besides the academic one.

Eric: Is that a course that you encountered real early at Carleton?

Dick: Fall term of my sophomore year.

Eric: Since it's relevant, as we get into talking about the Druids, do you want to say something about your religious background? You said that was when you first learned you had a soul; did you *have* a religious background when you came to Carleton?

Dick: My emotional framework is very much a product of my father, who is a typical product of rural Illinois: dyed–in–the–wool Republican, very stiff upper lip. It's almost a cardinal sin to show emotion. I remember vividly one occasion: he had borrowed a tape recorder from the university for some reason, I forget what it was now, but we were having fun just trying it out. At one point he read some Shakespeare into the thing. I thought that was rather interesting; I mean, I had never thought of my father as being interested in literature at all. It turns out in fact that his main extra–curricular activity at Illinois College had been the literary society, but *I* didn't know that, which gives you some indication of how much he kept things bottled up inside. At one point he read out "In Flanders Fields," which commemorates the fallen in World War I, and about midway through he started choking up. After a while, he just gave up trying to finish the poem, and said, "What's the matter with me? I don't understand." There was a big block on the expression of emotion of any sort.

In addition to this, my father, rather atypically for rural Illinois, was a devout atheist. When I was growing up, I remember a couple of occasions, once in nursery school and once in kindergarten, I think once in first grade, some attempt was made to make me familiar with Christianity, but it was clear that it was not something my parents were part of, and it was not something that I was particularly interested in, really. It didn't really touch my life very much. Basically, it involved just being dropped off at Sunday school and picked up. One of the things, I believe, that Druidism is about is that American Sunday schools do very little in actually talking about religion or ethics or morals, or anything of that sort. They're essentially just daycare centers.

It wasn't until I was in, oh, junior high school, I'd say, that I had any significant brush with Christianity. A friend of mine was a Baptist, and he invited me to Sunday school. I went for a few times, and I went to Vacation Bible School class during the summer one year, and became fairly familiar with the Bible. I found it fascinating. I don't think I could ever say that I really believed anything that was in it, as far as the existence of God, much less Christ as the son of God. And to this day, I tend to think that that sort of "religion" is not important to me. It's not what I derive my ethical bearings from. The religious elements in there don't represent things that I regard as historical, although certainly there are a lot of historical things in the Bible. I think my primary interest in the Bible is the historical development of that culture and how the religious elements played off the historical elements.

But I think it's fair to say that by the time I graduated from high school, I had a much sounder grounding in Christian tradition than many people of comparable age in today's society. In fact, I find it very disturbing that many of the ideas and many of the references to religious things or Biblical things one has to explain today; you can't just take for granted that people will know and make the connection. I believe that impoverishes our culture.

But I cannot call myself religious, and it wasn't until Porter's mythology course that I began to understand what religion really is about, and why it is that religion exists as part of human culture. That was the beginning of a very profound change for me. I'm not sure that most people would call me religious now. On the other hand, in a very real sense I am a *very* religious person, and I think the conjunction of the mythology course and my introduction to Druidism broadened my life dramatically. My spring term sophomore year academically was a disaster, but in a very real sense it was the beginning of my life.

Eric: Let's talk about your introduction to Druidism and your memories of your first encounters with this on campus, or how you got involved.

Dick: Early in sophomore year there was an article in the *'Tonian* about Druids, and it mentioned that there were three on campus. There was a photo showing all three of them holding a service. I didn't really think very much of it at the time. It so happened, however, that one of the three, the Arch–Druid, was a good friend of mine by the name of Steven Savitzky, who was two years ahead of me. Steven was involved with a group of people on Third Burton, which was a hot–bed of campus radicalism at the time. The ring–leader, undoubtedly, was Joe Schuman. (Both Joe and Steve were class of '69.)

Joe Schuman looms large in my view of Carleton, and I think many people's. He was, I believe, in Israel my freshman year, so I didn't meet him until my sophomore year, when he came back as a senior. I was taking Econ 10 my first term, and he was in that class. That was an eye–opener; I was still nominally a Republican at that point, I think, although changing fast. '69 of course was the year that the Vietnam war took serious dramatic turns, especially since everybody expected that after the '68 election Nixon would wind the war down. It not only didn't happen that way, it went very dramatically in the opposite direction. It really galvanized the radical community at Carleton, of which I was not a part. But I became good friends with many people who *were* a part of that.

Steve was one of them, and I had known him in other contexts as well. He was a computer nerd; I didn't really consider myself a computer nerd, but I knew how to use the computer. I don't think I realized at that time how large computers would eventually loom in my life, and they didn't for a long while, not until after I left graduate school, in fact. Of course, at Unisys I live and breathe them. But I was very early attracted to them, and that was another context in which I was familiar with Steve.

One day, in April of '69, we were just sort of walking together, talking about something, at this point I can't remember what; it was probably related to computers, and at one point he just sort of turned and looked at me and said, "*You'd* make a good Arch–Druid." I was blown away! Over the next few weeks he gave me a few things to read about Druidism, and I glommed on to it. At this point in my spiritual development it was *exactly* the input I needed: a large window into several different religious traditions.

After the original purpose of Druidism was accomplished (the abolition of the religious attendance requirement) back in the early '60s, Druidism shifted to become the sort of thing that I found it to be: a spiritual anchor for people who, for some reason or another, needed something to hang on to. In Druidism there are largely two main groups. There are people like me, who are essentially religious *naïfs*, if you will; and then there are the "spiritually battered": people who grew up in very strict hellfire–and–damnation traditions, who simply find that it is more damaging than it is helpful. Steve and I were of the former camp. There was always a large contingent from KARL, the campus radio station at the time, who were also of that camp; technical nerds, with essentially no religious upbringing.

The *Druid Chronicles* I found very interesting. I think more important, however, was the tradition in Druidism of bringing readings and discussion of other religious traditions, particularly Taoism and Zen Buddhism, the two big threads in Druidism at that time. Both of them, I think, go back to David Frangquist, who was one of the founders. Taoism, to me, was the "universal truth," and I still believe it. The formal trappings of Taoism are something I never had much truck with, but the underlying philosophy speaks very deeply to my soul, and it's largely what I understand by the term "Druidic." It was very liberating for me, and it gave me a framework in which to explore my religious or spiritual feelings.

After Druid services were started again that spring at Beltaine, there were something like *seventy–two* people at Beltaine, which shows you what Steve had done with Druidism...

Eric: It shows you what an article in the *Carletonian* can do!

Dick: Well, I think, too, it was because Steve was involved in so many things, and a large number of those people were friends of Steve, and friends of Joe's. A large number of them were folk dancers, which both Steve and Joe were involved with, as was I. Toward the end of the year, [since] Steve was graduating, he appointed me Arch–Druid pro tem, and the next fall I was elected formally as Arch–Druid. I held the office for two years, until I graduated two years later.

Eric: You hadn't been Preceptor nor Server prior to that?

Dick: No.

Eric: Seventy–two people! That's a high point!

Dick: Druidism goes in cycles. It was quite popular when it was founded, probably for all the wrong reasons: it was an easy way to protest the religious requirement. After the religious requirement was abolished, it still stayed in strength for a while, I think largely on the strength of David Frangquist. I've never met him, but the trail I've seen in the Grove Archives and the College Archives and the correspondence I've had with him has been full of a very charismatic personality.

When Frangquist left — I believe he left campus in '66 — Druidism started to fade. Gary Zempel was his successor as Arch–Druid. Zempel himself is an interesting character, a radical who "caught Quakerism" and dropped out of society, all the time remaining a chief engineer for General Electric. He had a great deal of trouble reconciling General Electric with his spiritual beliefs.

His successor, Thomas Carlisle, left campus early I don't know the details. He was the last Druid priest left on campus, despite the fact that there were still a few people interested in Druidism, mostly at KARL. Marta Peck called Frangquist and was consecrated to the priesthood via long distance. She started the grove up again, and turned it over to Steve, and Steve took it and ran, we were on another cycle here. We caught the radicalism of the 60s, and that became the core of the next generation of Druidism.

After I left in '71, the Grove carried on for a couple of years, but starting dying down again in the early 70s, until the Isaac affair, at which [time] a good friend of ours on campus, Don Morrison, started the Grove up again. It went again for a few years, and it dropped back. And then I didn't hear a lot about Druidism for a long time, until in the early 80s, I had a letter from somebody on campus. I can't remember who it was now. I sent a copy of the *Chronicles* and I believe a copy of *The Green Book*, a collection of readings that Frangquist put together from, oh, all kinds of places: Zen Buddhism, Taoism, a few things from the Old and New Testaments. We stuck in something, "Sayings of the Psychologists," a reading from [Robert] Ornstein's book about how people repeat formulas over and over again, until what becomes important is the formula, rather than the underlying spirit.

And then again we didn't hear anything until the mid–80s. I got a letter from Heiko Koester, and I came down and celebrated Beltaine here with them on May 1. It must have been 1988, because it was the 25th anniversary: we set this thing up and were converting the date into the Reformed Druid Calendar, in which the year is dated from '63, the founding, and it came out 25! We sat there and looked at each other: my God, it's the 25th anniversary! It was impossible to believe!

By this time, the Grove had taken an interesting turn. I don't really know where this impetus came from, although I suspect Isaac had something to do with it. The people who were interested in Druidism were dealing not with the traditional religious cultures, like Zen Buddhism and even Christianity, but with alternative religions, things like paganism and Wicca (I think they pronounce it wik–ka, but the original pronunciation was wit–cha, a good old Anglo–Saxon word.) Heiko was interested in Native American religious tradition, and several of his friends were too. I think the chief focus of their activity was a sweat lodge that they'd set up, I don't know precisely where it was, somewhere around the Farm House.

That was fine with me; I didn't have any trouble with that. The first letter I had from Heiko was a *little* careful, because I think he was — *afraid* is not the right term — *concerned* that us older Druids might not see paganism or Native American spirituality as an acceptable form of Druidism. But, that's just nonsense. Druidism isn't about acceptable forms of religious spirituality; it's about religious needs. I myself find paganism, as it's practiced in modern America, a bit on the silly side in most cases, but Heiko and his friends had put something together that I found quite attractive, actually. The Beltaine service that they held was the first overt Druidism that I had done for years, and it was in a very real sense a homecoming, quite apart from the fact that it was here on campus.

So I wish these people luck. I am certainly willing to help preserve traditions, but it is not my place to set these traditions in concrete, to try to force them on anything, because not forcing things on people, in a religious sense, is what Druidism originally began for. It's the underlying principle that, I think, connects all of this stuff.

Eric: I'd appreciate it if you could talk a little bit about the forms of Druidism as they existed at Carleton when you were getting involved with it; what a typical gathering would have been like, the kind of rituals that were done, or whatever went on. What happens when Druids get together?

Dick: A lot less than meets the imagination of the unwashed! The original services had a very strong Christian flavor to them. They were modeled, I think, unabashedly on Congregational and Episcopalian rituals. A large amount of Celtic mythology was intermixed, to try to make it as outlandish as possible, because an important part of the original formulation of Druidism was to make it so outlandish that if, for some reason, religious credit were granted for these ridiculous services, then Druidism could be unmasked as just another way to get chapel credit, holding the whole religious attendance requirement up to ridicule.

But when they put the service together, they included a few remarkable things, including something that when I read it the very first time — actually, I didn't read it; I heard it at a service the very first time — it hit me right between the eyes:

O Lord, thou art without form

yet we worship thee in these forms;

O Lord, thou art everywhere

yet we worship thee here;

O Lord, thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices

yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.

Over time — in fact, already that's not the original form; the original form talks about sins: "Overlook these three sins that are due to our human limitations" — already that had been changed to "errors," and since then I think the Lord has dropped out of it. (Druidism at Carleton today sort of sees itself as a Goddess religion, rather than a patriarchal religion; I have no real complaint with that.) I guess the point I'm trying to make here is that in putting this thing together, they actually touched, at least for me and I believe for many other people, or it wouldn't still be around, some very deep religious or spiritual currents.

After that invocation, the Arch–Druid and the Preceptor would draw a Druid symbol on the ground. (The Druid sign is a circle with two [parallel] lines through it.) The Arch–Druid would enter it and consecrate the Waters of Life, which were rumored to be one part scotch to seven parts water, but when I inherited the Paraphernalia, I sat down and actually measured the thing, and it turned out to be one part scotch to *two* parts water, so it was quite a bit stronger than people realized. And on Beltaine, the ratio was reversed. You have to realize that at this time this was one of the few places one could get liquor on campus, or even legally drink it!

Eric: The seventy–two people becomes clearer.

Dick: And then the Waters of Life would be passed in a chalice around the circle. People would partake of them. The chalice was carried from person to person by the Server (whence the name.) After that there was usually a period of silent meditation, and then the Arch–Druid would "do something." Depending on the Arch–Druid, it might be a reading. Fisher (the original founder of Druidism) used the occasion to give a sermon, and since that time has become an Episcopalian priest. He was into this in a big way. A lot of the original trappings were stolen directly from the Episcopalian way of doing things. After the sermon, people would petition the Earth Mother for things, like good weather for the weekend, or something like that.

This was all done in a very light–hearted way. I think that's the other thing that I learned from Druidism, that spirituality is not just serious. If it is only serious, it is missing a large part of the human experience. Certainly the original Druidism was very light–hearted. On one occasion, this is, I think, documented in the Archives now, Howard Cherniack, who is now I believe a lawyer and not religious at all, from everything I've heard of him, was the Preceptor. In the formula of consecrating the Waters of Life, at one point the Arch–Druid is supposed to ask the Preceptor, "Has the Earth Mother given forth of her bounties?" The proper response is, "She has!" One day, he just said, "Yup!" and they had hard a time keeping a straight face during the service for weeks thereafter!

This became known, by the way, as the "Cherniack Response." It's an official part – inasmuch as anything is official in Druidism — an official part of the liturgy. On occasion you will have a Cherniack Response. And it's very difficult to keep a straight face!

I wasn't very good at giving sermons, so I generally tended not to. I confined myself to readings, for the most part, originally chosen largely from *The Green Book* that Frangquist had put together — it's just a marvelous collection of things — and then from my own readings, particularly from Sufism, which I was interested instill am to some extent. Again, a large part of the trappings of Sufism I don't find particularly attractive, but the underlying philosophy and much of the poetry is just pure gold. One of the objections that I had to the original *Green Book* is that there was very little there from Islam. I never really understood that, because there are some marvelous things in Islam. But like many of the Judeo–Christian religions, a large part of it is hellfire and brimstone and doesn't really say much, personally, to me.

The weekly services were pretty much as I've just described. Each of the major feast days had its own ceremony. Again, although originally there were set ceremonies, by the time I joined Druidism, the liturgy had become fairly fluid, and a lot was left to the discretion of the presiding priest. The feasts were almost always celebrated in the evening, the evening *before* the official day. Samhain, for example, the beginning of the religious year, is an ancient festival from the Celtic tradition. The official day of Samhain is November 1st, but it actually begins at sundown the previous day. This period was considered a day between years. It was during that day that the forces of the underworld could come out, and that's the origin of Hallowe'en.

"Us Reformed Druids" were pretty tame: no burnt sacrifices, certainly not human sacrifices, although in the Celtic tradition there is very strong evidence for them. (Although, one always has to remember that virtually all of the historical information about the historical Druids came from their enemies; so a lot of the stuff you have to take with a grain of salt.) Our celebrations chiefly involved lighting a fire; the basic service was pretty much the same as the ordinary weekly service, but it had additional parts in it to commemorate the specific day.

Eric: Where did you hold your meetings? Was it on the Hill of Three Oaks?

Dick: We had three locations that were used with some regularity. I'd say the majority of services were held on the Hill of Three Oaks. I always preferred Monument Hill, although in passing I have to mention that at that time Monument Hill was kept quite mowed, and it was much more manicured than it is now. The grove near the monument, the circular grove, was a very wide and open place, and from it you could see a lot of the Upper Arb. To me, that's the heart of Druidism, and in fact, that's where Druidism started. That's where the first services were held.

Occasionally we would hold services on what we knew as Faculty Hill. If you take the drive that goes behind Goodhue, and go down across the creek and up on the other side where there's that Postage Stamp Prairie, there's a road leading off towards the east that goes by an open area that we knew as Faculty Hill. That's where the Classics Department Picnic was usually held. The Arch–Druid, if he happened to be a Classics student, usually presided over that ceremony as well. That's where the first Samhain service was held, and traditionally, in our day, that's where we usually held Samhain services. But typically those were the only services that were held there.

Nowadays there are several other spots that they use, and I know that they don't use Faculty Hill, because when I walked by there with Michael Scharding, he was surprised to discover that any services had ever been held there. And it's not called Faculty Hill anymore; I'm not sure what they call it. It's not really a hill anyway. But those were the three main locations.

Eric: It was you, wasn't it, who actually added something in Greek to one of the books of liturgy?

Dick: Yes. I was asked to do the officiating there [at the Classics Department Picnic], and a friend of mine helped me write a "traditional" Greek sacrifice, traditional in quotes; who knows what actually happened in ancient Greece! We knew that one was supposed to pour libations in the name of various gods, so we did that. And then in addition, I translated the opening part of the Druid service, that I just recited a ways back on the tape, into Greek, and that's there as well.

Eric: You mentioned earlier having received the Paraphernalia. What exactly was all that?

Dick: The most important part of the Paraphernalia were the mimeograph masters for *The Druid Chronicles*, which I believe have since vanished. We did a printing in '71, and I believe that was the last time they were actually used. There was another printing after that, but I haven't seen a copy of that, and I don't know whether [it] came from the same masters or not.

In addition there was a red glass chalice, about four inches in diameter, I'd say. That, I'm pretty sure, was not original. The original chalice, I believe, was green; the tradition is very fuzzy on that. There was a reversible chasuble that was made, I forget by whom, back in Fisher's day for Fisher himself. Fisher had a flair for the dramatic. Everybody else wore sheets, but he wore black! So he stood out, with this chasuble in addition to that. It was primarily green on one side and primarily red on the other. The tradition very early grew up that during the summer half of the year, from May until November 1st, one wore the green side out, and for the [other] half of the year, when actually very little ever happened, except on February 1st, which was one of the feast days, you wore the red side out. (During the winter half of the year, also, the Waters of Life were the Waters of Sleep: they didn't have any scotch in them.) That chasuble was still around in my day, and still around in Don Morrison's day; but I think it's since vanished.

There was originally a staff for the Arch–Druid, but that was lost before my time. A friend of mine gave me a staff, but it turned out not to be particularly useful, because in getting services ready and hauling stuff to wherever the service was to be held, you needed all the hands free you could get. The staff just got in the way, so I tended not to use it. I don't think that's part of the tradition anymore anyway.

Then there were three books. These were all named because of the color of the covers they were in: *The Black Book,* which contained all the liturgy; *The Green Book,* which was the book of readings that Frangquist had put together; and *The Blue Book*, which was all kinds of miscellaneous archives. To this day, when we say "the Carleton Archives," we have to be careful about whether we're referring to the Grove Archives, which was *The Blue Book*, or the Carleton College Archives, which, after a couple of these busts in the boom–or–bust cycle of Druidism, we began to appreciate as the Right Place to keep things!

The sort of things that were in *The Blue Book* were letters from various places, including a note from Lee Mauk, the chapel monitor who informed Fisher (I believe) that the Dean of Men did not look kindly on these chapel slips being submitted by Reformed Druids, and would not count toward the chapel requirement. There were copies of *'Tonian* articles, and things of that sort, things of vague historical interest.

That was largely it.

Eric: These things were always passed on from one Arch–Druid to another?

Dick: Yes. In addition to the chalice, there was a clear glass cruet, which is what you used to mix the water and the scotch together. It had a line marked on it: so much water, so much scotch. That's what I was referring to earlier when I said that I sat down and measured what the actual proportions of things was. That, too, I think has vanished.

These things went astray several times. One of the Arch–Druids, three after me, by the name of Steve Corey, didn't appoint an Arch–Druid when he left campus. So he had all of the Paraphernalia in his apartment [in the cities], and when he left the cities, he turned them all over to a friend and said, "Here, take care of these while I'm gone." Well, he never came back, and at one point Don Morrison had enlisted my help trying to run these things down, because I had known Steve. We were looking all over the cities where we could think to find them. I say "we"; I was doing this by long distance, because I was in Ann Arbor at the time. One of my Carleton roommates was my leg man here in the cities, and he was quite amused that we had managed to lose the "Dead Sea Scrolls," as he called them.

But that's about all there was in the Paraphernalia. It wasn't an extensive collection. I think the interesting things were the historical documents. Although many of the originals have, I think, been lost, when I left I Xeroxed most of the stuff of interest there. My successor, Glenn McDavid, also made several copies, and I think left copies of a lot of this stuff in the College Archives, so most of that stuff has not vanished irretrievably. But the non–paper things that were in the [Paraphernalia] I think are all completely vanished now.

Eric: In your day was there a permanent, or semi–permanent altar? In the early Druid days they built an altar and the anti–Druids came and destroyed the altar, and they built it again. Was there one in use?

Dick: First of all, with two exceptions, we never really used an altar in my day, and there wasn't a "built" altar anywhere. One of the two exceptions was the big boulder that's still on the Hill of Three Oaks. Whenever we really needed an altar, that's what we impressed into service.

The other exception was the IBM 1620 in the computer lab, which is where we held the Oimelc service on February 1st. As near as we can tell, historically, Oimelc was a celebration of the birth of lambs, which occurs about this time in England. The Christian church took it over and made it Candlemass. The Christian church has this wonderful way with holidays: if anybody insists on celebrating something, the general attitude is, "Well, if you can't beat 'em, join 'em; we'll just co–opt this thing and make it a holiday, "which is why, by the way, Samhain is not the festival of any particular saint, but the festival of All saints: one saint wasn't enough to make that properly Christian, I guess!

But Oimelc was always held in the computer lab, because it's damn cold on February 1st in Northfield!

Eric: The Druids always have a strong streak of the practical!

Dick: Yes, there's that to be said. The other reason it was held there was because one of the early Druids, the connection with computers goes back almost to the very beginning, was a man by the name of Richard Smiley, who later went on to graduate school in computer science. While he was at Carleton he wrote a program that set up various repetitive loops in the 1620 computer, and you could program this so that you could get the loops to resonate in various frequencies. Because there was a fair amount of electro–magnetic radiation from the computer, you could pick this up on a radio. So you took a transistor radio down there, and you programmed in the notes that you wanted to have the thing play, and you could program it to play any song you liked.

So he wrote this program up for the IBM Systems Journal. It was published as a separate program available to IBM users everywhere in the world, and part of the documentation includes several songs that came pre–programmed in the deck of cards that you'd get with this program. One of the songs was the "Chant to the Earth Mother," and that's what we had the computer play as part of the Oimelc service. For that occasion the 1620 became our altar!

Imagine, if you will, slaving away at a computer program in the dead of night, and having, all of a sudden, the door open, the wind whistling in from the outside, and in march three or four, maybe five or six people dressed in outlandish robes who come around and circle the computer, chanting, "Hallow this altar; hallow this altar, "and then set up a radio on the thing and push off a program that plays some weird tune, and then pass a chalice full of milk (this was, you remember, commemorating the birth of the lambs) and hold this off–the–wall ceremony, and then vanish! We saw an awful lot of startled faces.

Eric: About the garb for people: did all the communicants, or whatever the proper term is, appear garbed outlandishly, or was that mostly the people officiating?

Dick: That was primarily the officers. If there were several priests around, this happens on occasion, but not often; there were during my senior year, and there were in the year after the founding, but typically there are only a couple of priests. But if there are a lot of priests around, it's sort of a badge of honor to wear *something* to set you apart. Not to set you apart as a priest, but to draw attention to the fact that we are Druids.

It was fairly common for priests to have some kind of special garment. I went so far as to have a tunic and a chasuble made up for me, but most people contented themselves with a cape or something of that sort.

Eric: Tell me about becoming a priest, your passage through the orders, as it were.

Dick: One becomes a First Order Druid by partaking of the Waters of Life at a service and letting the Arch–Druid know that you want to be a Druid. That's about all it takes: a verbal commitment of interest. Well, that happened to me at the very first Druid service I ever attended. The next week, I was inducted into the Second Order, which involves polishing off any Waters of Life that are left after they're passed. Ordinarily, the remainder is consigned to the Earth Mother, poured out on the altar or onto the ground, to the formula:

This portion of thy bounty we return to thee, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

But if you're inducting somebody to the Second Order, you give him the rest of the Waters of Life.

And then the following, no: it was at the new moon. Part of becoming a Third Order priest is performing an over–night vigil, staying awake all night, and I insisted on doing it at the [new] moon, because some obscure passage in *The Druid Chronicles* recommended the new moon as the time to begin New Projects.

I really paid for taking this literally, because it was the worst weather we have had in spring for a very long time! It rained cats and dogs; it was just a disaster. I couldn't keep my fire going. But I resolutely refused to take that as a sign! About half–way through the night, the rain started going away. By dawn the weather had become much more decent.

It was long before this, even before I had become a First Order Druid, that I had what I believe I can legitimately call a "religious experience." It was after Steve and I had been talking about Druidism and religion in general and Zen Buddhism. We had sort of been talked out, I guess, and we just sort of sat there on the Hill of Three Oaks. I sat there looking up, at the Oaks, at the clouds in the sky, and a very odd experience came over me. It's very hard for me to put into words what, really, it felt like. But I had never felt like that ever before in my life: a feeling of being at one–ness with the world, of being part of something that is very much bigger than my own personal life, a sense of connectedness, if you will.

Between bouts of being soaked on my vigil. . . I firmly believe that the whole point of the vigil, as with many other (not necessarily religious) induction ordeals that may involve sacred drugs, or physical hazing of some sort, I really believe that underlying all of these things is an attempt to disconnect the cerebral cortex from rationality: to get it to perceive the world in a different way than it's used to. And it's this dimension that somebody as deeply involved in academics as I was in my first year at Carleton, and somebody who was taught from birth, practically, that one should keep one's emotions bottled up inside — it was this whole dimension that I had really never uncorked before. And it just came spilling out during my sophomore year. This particular instance on the Hill of Three Oaks with Steve, and later at my vigil, just feeling a part of everything in a way that had no rational sense to it — it was a very moving experience, one that I've felt many times since then, usually not in a religious context. Druid services never really touched me very deeply, with a few exceptions. Most often, during a reading that meant a lot to me. Or as I mentioned earlier, the very first time I heard the original incantation, it just spoke voluminously to me, that, yes, this is Right.

But the services themselves – of course, I never really experienced services as an on–looker. I was involved in putting them on from very early on. So a large part of my experience during these things [was] thinking of the stage management. A large part of my religious growth at this time was reading things to find appropriate things to bring to a service to read after the Meditation. I did an extraordinary amount of reading, particularly Zen Buddhism and Taoism, but in other traditions as well.

Eric: Have you had religious experiences beyond the feeling of connectedness? In my readings in *The Druid Chronicles* some people talk about visions that they've had in the Arb or on the Hill. Is that something that has any relevance to you, yourself?

Dick: Robert Graves speaks of a feeling of, or a perceiving of, the Numinous. I wouldn't go so far as to say that I have had visions, but there are definitely times that I've been overwhelmed by something. I believe that it's that kind of experience that underlies things like visions in people that are more visually suggestible than I am, perhaps. Is it God visiting us? I don't really know. The oriental religions have this wonderful phrase: "That is a question not tending to edification." I believe this is one of those questions; that worrying about what this thing actually *is* is not the right response to it. It's a *rational* response to it. The correct response to it is simply to let it happen, and to let the feeling one has when this happens inform and become a part of one's life in other situations as well.

I have never felt that the feeling I have in situations like this forms the rock upon which one can build an ethical system, much less a religious mythology, which is what I believe most of the Christian religion, and many other religions, to be, primarily. There is a core there of an appreciation of the Numinous that gets expressed in mythological terms, and then somewhere along the line, the truth of the mythology somehow becomes the important religious question. When that happens, you're no longer talking spirituality, you're talking something just entirely different, politics, in fact, is all it really boils down to; power politics.

The number of people that I've talked to that feel that they are religious, but feel that their particular church has *nothing* whatsoever to offer them spiritually, I find just astounding. I think it's just part of the natural course of religion, that the way people try to describe their religious feelings, the mythology they use to describe it, the ceremonies they use to try to evoke it, somehow take on their own life and become divorced from the actual underlying spiritual experience that started this whole process in the first place. At some point along the way, frequently one finds priesthoods being set up, priesthoods becoming entrenched political entities, and at this point you're so far away from meeting the spiritual needs of people that I think it's a mistake to call them a religion, if by religion one means something spiritual.

Eric: Is Druidism a religion? To you?

Dick: To me? No. I don't think I would call it a religion. Is *my* Druidism a religion? It is for me. I think that's a large part of what "Official" Druidism is about: helping people to find their own solution to the Spiritual Problem, or their own answers to their spiritual needs. I would not characterize what I feel, or what I believe, as Reformed Druidism; it's my own brand. I believe any true Druid has his or her own brand, which of necessity goes beyond the Basic Tenets as spelled out in *The Druid Chronicles*.

Is it reasonable to categorize it as religion? For example, does it make sense, as we tried to do on one occasion, to get a Druid priest classified as a priest for a IV–D deferment for the draft (which was an important issue back once upon a time)? Well, I think I'll dodge that issue and say that this is one of those questions that does not lead to edification. The proof is not in the definition, but in the living of the life.

Eric: I'd like to ask about reactions from others at Carleton, and since Reformed Druidism is one of those things that people aren't used to, when they encounter it I'm sure you've had quite a range of reactions. I'm curious about, especially at Carleton, how your peers who were not Druids saw the Druids at that time, and what their reactions were. I mentioned before that in the Early Chronicles, there is talk about the anti–Druids. Did you have experience with anti–Druids during your Arch–Druidship? I'm interested in the reactions of others.

Dick: Carleton in my day was a very tolerant place. When I was there, here, I don't think I ever encountered what I would characterize as anti–Druidism. There was some of this in the early years, although many of the founders thought that it was primarily because these people didn't like them as people, rather than that there was anything religious involved in it. We have always had a great deal of flak from St. Olaf. I think more has been written about Druidism in the St. Olaf newspaper than in the *'Tonian*, and it is all very self–righteously negative.

After I left Carleton, one of the things that pained me greatly was the advent of a large group of fundamentalist Christians on campus. To this day, it is difficult for me to understand how fundamentalist Christians would choose Carleton as a place to come. But there were such people, and several Druids had rather heated discussions and on occasion even violent interchanges with fundamentalist Christians on campus. And that continues to this day, which is something, as I say, I have a great deal of difficulty understanding.

I do not believe that Druidism is fundamentally incompatible *even* with fundamentalist Christianity. Druidism, I believe, says more about the importance of somebody coming oneself to be convinced of the correctness of one's spiritual ideas, [and] the importance and value of examining other religious traditions. In that sense, I suppose, some fundamentalist Christians would object to it. I don't mean to lump all fundamentalism into the Christian camp. There are fundamentalists in other religions as well. But I think, as a historical fact, people who have come to Druidism came to Druidism because traditional Christianity does not meet their spiritual needs, and so as a simple historical fact, people who have been through Druidism by and large tend not to settle down into mainstream Christian traditions. I think a large number from my day have ended up in *some* kind of Christian church, although the boundaries here are a little wavy: a lot of people would not call Unitarianism Christian.

This is worth saying, too: Druidism as I know it is very much a Carleton phenomenon. Druidism transplanted away from Carleton, and there have been many attempts, has never done well. We tried to start a grove in Ann Arbor and failed miserably. This is very ironic, actually: I keep saying that an important part of Druidism for me was to help me get away from the rational straight–jacket that my life was being played out in, and yet Druidism for me is only possible among a community of very intelligent people. This is a paradox that I've never quite understood, and never plumbed to my satisfaction. But the fact remains that I do not enjoy Druidism in the company of people who are credulous, and that's usually what we got when we tried to hold services in Ann Arbor, despite the fact that that is another very enlightened place with lots of intelligent people around. There's something about the liberal arts tradition that made Druidism click, and Druidism away from Carleton just does not work.

What I believe is the biggest threat to Druidism did not come from Christianity at all, but rather from paganism: *l'affaire Isaac*, the whole affair of Isaac. I've never met Isaac, and to this day I cannot be sure what his motives were. We were not particularly charitable is assigning him motives at the time. It seemed to us that what he wanted to do was to

turn Druidism into his own private bailiwick, and set himself up somehow as a Druid pope, a Big Man In Paganism, if you will, latching on to an organization that was older than any of the other pagan organizations that were common at the time that paganism took off.

His original letter [in 1974] proposed that we stop shilly–shallying around about what Druidism really is, and say, "*This* is what Druidism is," and then put out a paragraph that was the most nonsensical thing that I have ever read in a very long time. It was just anathema to what many of us thought, ah, yes, here it is. This is the paragraph that Isaac proposed:

The Reformed Druids of North America is an Eclectic Reconstructionist Neo–Pagan Priestcraft, based primarily upon Gaulish & Celtic sources, but open to ideas, deities and rituals from many other Neo–Pagan belief systems. We worship the Earth–Mother as the feminine personification of Manifestation, Be'al as the masculine personification of Essence, and numerous Gods and Goddesses as personifications of various aspects of our experience.

Well, that doesn't say anything to *me*. I'm not sure I worship anything; I'm not even sure I know what worship is. But this, at any rate, was not what Druidism was about for me, or for any of the Druids, certainly before my time, and for most of them after my time, until Druidism at Carleton began to take on a paganist flavor. And even when it did take on a paganist flavor, it was a responsible paganism.

Chiefly what we objected to with Isaac's approach is the incredible amount of formalism that he wanted to graft onto Druidism. Rule books, and ceremonies that had to be performed just so, and all kinds of various orders of priesthood, just all the kinds of religious paraphernalia that we were trying to escape from in Reformed Druidism. It was just antithetical to the way we saw spiritual things.

For me this was a very agonized period. The letter came out in '74, and the affair really ended in '76 when he published his huge compendium of paganist writings. When he finally published it, we had made it clear to him that it was fine with us if he published it, but that it was not a Druid publication, it was his publication. We said, "We're not about to stand in your way, we're not even going to say that this is not a Good Thing, because for you it clearly is something that means something greatly to you. But it's a mistake to portray this as Reformed Druidism, because that's not what the Reform is all about." And several people suggested, rather pointedly, that he might want to go off and schis. So he had a schism, and called himself the Schismatic Druids of North America. After the publication of his volume, Schismatic Druidism faded rather quickly.

But during this period, from '74 to '76, there was a lot of correspondence with Isaac and with other more traditional Druids, trying to figure out how we should deal with Isaac. During this period I first faced the question of what, really, do I believe. What *does* religion mean to me? And it was only after I saw myself getting *very* upset, almost homicidally upset, that I began to appreciate the difficulties that can accrue to a religious dispute. I had always wondered before this time what the fuss and uproar was in Northern Ireland: how can two religious, two *Christian* sects get so far from the teachings of Christ that they would kill one another over things? In my own small way I began to appreciate that, and it really drained me.

It also changed my willingness to hold services in Ann Arbor at the time. We were having trouble with the grove there anyway, because as I mentioned it was not religiously satisfying to hold services there. But after the Isaac affair, I was no longer even willing to *try* to explain to people, "No, that's not what I'm doing; *this* is what I'm doing, and this is why I'm doing this." My Druidism became a very much more private affair from that point on.

I'm still very happy that there is something like Druidism going on. I'm still willing to come out of retirement to help when things get sticky. And I don't object to leading a service in the company of right–minded people, doesn't that sound awful? But I am not an evangelist. For a while I would have characterized myself as an evangelist, I think. But I no longer am.

In fact, I've come to believe that in its own quiet way, Druidism is about non–evangelism; that it is one of the cardinal errors of mankind to propagate what one believes by any means other than by *example*. If one feels strongly enough about something, the right way to make people understand that is to live it, not to preach it. It wasn't until Isaac that I really understood that.

Eric: Did you meet him?

Dick: No. I came *this* close. He was in the cities for a while during '75–'76, I think, and actually came down and participated in some services here at Carleton. At the reunion in the summer of '76, several of us old–style Druids came, and I had written to Isaac, saying, "I would like very much to meet you; I think you should meet us." Arguments on paper have a way of living their own kind of life and cut more deeply than they are meant to. I felt that it was important for us to meet face to face. But he made excuses and left for the west coast before then. So I never did have a chance to. I understand now he's severely disabled, from some disease or another, which is not anything I would wish on my worst enemy, even Isaac. I haven't heard from him in, literally, decades.

Eric: I wanted to ask also something about the organizational phenomenon of the RDNA. As part of becoming Arch–Druid at Carleton you became *ex officio* Chair of the Council of Dalon ap Landu. I wonder if you wanted to say some things about that, and the phenomenon of people, after having graduated from Carleton, going out, still being part of the organizational structure; and maybe something about the strengths or weaknesses of the Council.

Dick: Originally Druidism was *simply* a Carleton phenomenon. Several of the early Druids, however, when they left Carleton didn't want to drop Druidism, and started groves in other places. Very shortly it became evident that there needed to be some broader organization than just the campus organization. The priests of the time, there must have been three of four maybe, decided (out of the air really) to say that the supreme authority, such as there is any in Druidism, is the Council of Third Order Priests. The Third Order is the Order of Dalon ap Landu, so this is the Council of Dalon ap Landu.

There are several higher orders, but they function more or less like honorary degrees. There's no real activity in the higher orders. Originally, I think, they were simply part of the initial cult of outrageousness. They've not proved useful and have largely died out. It's the first three orders that are important.

The basic structure of a grove is to have a priest to lead the service, and a Second Order Druid to assist, and a First Order Druid to serve as the Server. These three people are our minyan. You have to have three to start a local organization. If you don't have at least three, there's no real point in having a formal organization.

Fairly soon after the original founding, Robert Larson, who was a Carleton student, left for Berkeley and founded a grove at Berkeley. I have no idea whether this is still going on, but for a very long time it was the only other grove that survived with any permanence at all. There were several early groves. One Fisher founded in New York City, that was doomed to extinction. Frangquist founded one at the summer camp that he worked at during the summer. Of course it died when he left. Norman Nelson founded one at his graduate school in Vermillion, South Dakota, and one at his home city of Rapid City in South Dakota. And they all died. There was one founded by Savitzky at Stanford that went along for a while, but again, I have no idea if this is still a going concern. And we founded one in Ann Arbor that lasted for a couple of years and died when we left. Died before we left, really; we stopped holding services long before we left.

But officially, anything that embraces the Reform as a whole, the organ for deciding things like that is the Council of Third Order Priests. In '76 there were something like 30 of us, maybe a bit more than 30. I have no idea how many there are now.

Fairly shortly after this mechanism was put into place, a series of resolutions were passed: formalizing the normal local grove structure; stating explicitly that there is no official liturgy, with the single exception of the induction into the Third Order. There were some other things as well. Practically from the beginning these were all passed by mail, because never once since the first couple years of Druidism have all the priests been together in one place, or even a quorum of them. All of this business was done by mail.

The last thing that passed was in '71: I insisted that we formalize the equality of men and women. There was a lot of male–chauvinist–pigism in the early years of the Reform, and it's not entirely due to the fact that women had less freedom at Carleton at that time (due to the women's hours.) It is directly traceable to the Christian tradition of Fisher and some of his friends. Chief players against that were Frangquist and his wife, and myself. We pushed hard to get this thing; even went to the extent of looking up Druids that we had hadn't heard from in a long time to try to get their votes on this thing.

And in the end it passed by consensus. There were no votes dissenting from the part that was officially adopted. We cultivated that as an ideal. Nowhere will you find it written what a quorum is in the Council of Dalon ap Landu. As an historical fact, everything that was adopted by the Council was adopted by consensus.

When Isaac came along and started consecrating all of his pagan friends to the Third Order, we rapidly saw that if he really wanted to take this and run with it, it would be possible for him to swamp the Council with pagans, and then he could do whatever he pleased. And so very, very strongly we pushed the notion that *anything* the Council adopts has got to be by consensus, because we knew that when it comes to Neo–Pagan sorts of things, things could not be adopted by consensus. There was no consensus on that sort of thing. But since '71, nothing has happened.

Eric: Do you consider that the Council still exists, in any sense?

Dick: Oh, sure. Sure it exists, just by the fact that there are people in the Third Order. It's never done business for a long number of years, and, I'm convinced, never will. I used to have this recurring notion that we had to be careful with this, because it is exactly this kind of organization that pulls a religion away from the spiritual into the formal and political. If one wants Druidism to survive as an organization, which on the face of it is nonsense; Druidism isn't about organizations, but if one wants Druidism to stick around, you have to have some formalism.

Perhaps the best way of perpetuating this formalism is as, in fact, has happened: by word of mouth, from one retired priest to a struggling undergraduate here at Carleton, trying to understand all this stuff, what the founders had in mind when they wrote this kind of thing. I feel strongly enough about Druidism that I'm willing to go out of my way to be part of that. But I think setting up a formal structure to try to keep this thing going is a mistake; it's the trap that religion falls into.

I didn't always believe that. In fact, when I first started as Arch–Druid, I set about codifying all the tradition I could find. It was in the summer after I was appointed Arch–Druid pro tem; I put together a "Codex of Form" (as I called it) that had all of the tradition that I could glean from *The Blue Book* and everything I could put together about what old–style Druidism was about. It was full of "thou shalts" and "thou shalt nots" and so forth. It was such an anti–Druidic sort of thing; I have done penance for this many, many times over! But I was put right in no uncertain terms by several people. It was the beginning of a long correspondence with many people whom I've never met but value as friends. And this, too, is a part of my religious education, in understanding just exactly what true religion is all about.

And it was exactly this sort of thing that we objected to in Isaac: just form run rampant. Yet "Thou art without form."

Eric: If your goal is to continue as an organization, he had at least the point that the Council was not a very effective method of having an organization.

Dick: By design, I would say.

Eric: One of the points he would bring up would be the unreliability, from time to time, of the Carleton Grove Arch–Druid taking their responsibility seriously in reporting to Druids at large happenings and changes.

Dick: And I can understand that kind of frustration, even if he weren't into a power play trying to be Big Fish himself. There was a real divide in Druidism at this time, between Carleton Druids and non–Carleton Druids. The non–Carleton Druids, I'm sure justifiably, felt themselves on the outside, and I'm not saying we're entirely innocent of fostering that. But it remains true that the Druids I'm comfortable with, that I commune with, that I can understand, are the Carleton Druids. I'm firmly convinced that the Reformed Druidism that I know is a Carleton phenomenon, and so it's not particularly important to me that there be an organization for the rest of Druidism.

At the same time, I don't want to give the idea that I don't think people outside Carleton aren't important, or that spiritual development outside Carleton isn't important. But I am convinced that the kind of organization that Druidism adopted survives well only at Carleton. Spiritual enlightenment for other people is important, but probably ought not to be done that way.

Eric: I was reading yesterday, preparing for this, through a lot of the correspondence that I have, a great deal of which comes out the '74–'76 Isaac wars. This correspondence pretty much stops as soon as Isaac's *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* is published. At that time there had been talk about a Provisional Council of Arch–Druids to do some of the, well, people had different ideas as to just what it would do. There

were indications that you would not necessarily be opposed to being part of it if it was going to exist. Did anything ever come of that, or did that just fritter away, or what? What's the end of that story?

Dick: I don't really know the end, to tell you the truth. The Provisional Council of Arch–Druids was suggested by Robert Larson of Berkeley as a way of trying to keep the official face of Druidism somewhat more consistent than the Arch–Druid of Carleton was capable of doing. You have to realize that most Arch–Druids of Carleton had very little in the way of resources, and little time, to spend on this kind of thing. The argument is just, that if Druidism was going to be a nation–wide phenomenon, there needed to be something beyond the Arch–Druid of Carleton to give it some kind of permanence.

At the time [though], most of us from Carleton deeply mistrusted Isaac's motives. We were not at all clear just what the Provisional Council was designed to accomplish. What made us even more suspicious was the fact that this thing was organized, as we saw it, behind our backs, because no Carleton Druids were involved except Robert himself. But again, that's not necessarily attributable to them; they didn't know of the Ann Arbor grove. Although we had announced it to the Arch–Druid of Carleton, she had left campus and not issued anything like a formal report, as she is required to do by the Council.

A large part of the animosity at that time is attributable certainly to deep differences in spiritual matters, but also to a bad lack of communication. It's exactly that sort of thing that the Provisional Council was to try to correct. But the Provisional Council really didn't meet the needs of anybody, so it died fairly soon. It didn't meet Isaac's needs, because Isaac wanted to be leader himself, and this was yet another obstacle in his way. It didn't meet our needs, because Arch–Druids and groves in general, beyond Carleton, have not been particularly important to Carleton Druids.

If Druidism was to be a national organization, the need for something like that was clear, but it's never been clear that Druidism *needs* to be a national organization. Some of us at the time thought, wouldn't it be just *terrible* if Druidism became a religion in this sense! One of my recurring nightmares would be to wake up and discover that Druidism had been declared the state religion! Something to rob Druidism of its essential nature; and that would do it very rapidly. So the Council didn't really answer anybody's needs, and it didn't survive very long.

Eric: I wanted to back up just briefly to a minor point. You [spoke] about the higher orders as being the equivalent to honorary degrees: did you get such an honorary degree?

Dick: Yes . . .

Eric: What orders were you?

Dick: I am a Druid of the Fifth Order, which is the order headed by Norman Nelson, whom I regard as probably the quintessential Druid. He was one of the original founders. The Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Orders were all created in a single day, by who were then the three priests of the time: Fisher, Frangquist, and Nelson. They each became Patriarch of one the higher orders. I've had a lot of correspondence with Norman, and at one point he sent me a letter that said, "Find somebody to consecrate you to the Fifth Order!" So I did. It was in fact Steve [Savitzky], and I asked Norman's permission to have Steve consecrated to the Fifth Order, and he granted it, so I consecrated Steve to the Fifth Order.

Eric: As I understand it, you never were consecrated to the Fourth Order?

Dick: No, that's right. Beyond the Third Order it's just catch as catch can. I'm honored that Norman thought enough of me to grant me this honor. It's not an honor I wear on my sleeve. It's not the sort of thing that I will admit to unless I'm asked it point blank, because I do not believe that it is fundamentally an essential part of my religious experience, or fundamentally a part of Druidism.

Eric: Continuing with the trivial historical footnote, then: as far as I could tell from my readings, it wasn't clear that anybody had ever gone beyond the Seventh Order, which was the Order that Gary Zempel was made Patriarch of.

Dick: Right. Gary Zempel was the Arch–Druid after Frangquist. The first three Arch–Druids were Fisher, Nelson, and Frangquist, and they became Patriarchs of their high orders in that single day back in '64. As sort of a matter of course, the Sixth Order elected Zempel, the next Arch–Druid, to be the next Patriarch. But Zempel never selected any other priests to his order, and not too long after he left Carleton, he sort of dropped out. At one point, he felt that he should do something about the fact that the line of higher orders had stopped there, and mentioned to me that he wanted to be considered as retired, and somebody else should be appointed as Seventh Order [Patriarch]. So I wrote to Frangquist, the Patriarch of the next order down, which is responsible for electing the Seventh Order Patriarch, and said, "Well, Gary doesn't think that he's Patriarch anymore, or doesn't want to be considered Patriarch anymore. This is your bailiwick; if you want to do anything about it, fine." And nothing happened. I didn't expect anything to happen. As far as I'm concerned, he's still Seventh Order Patriarch, and there are no other Seventh Order priests, and it's ending there. It's not a big deal for me. It was for Isaac.

Eric: There have from time to time been other orders created, besides the numerical things, some of them not within the RDNA structure, but others "possibly" within. The Archives includes something from a person who was a Carleton Arch–Druid, at least during the summer of 1978. (It's not too clear what the chronology is in some of those years!) She's announcing the creation of a new order, and she considers herself RDNA. Do you have any comments on that kind of thing, or are these higher orders or not? Where is that for you?

Dick: I've never understood this penchant for creating orders. It's largely a Neo–Pagan phenomenon, the orders created beyond the first [set of] higher orders. The first higher orders, I think, were created simply because Frangquist and Nelson wanted a bigger piece of the action. The higher orders have never been important to me as part of my religious experience. Do I recognize these as orders of Reformed Druidism? Well, I think probably Orders Four through Ten I will acknowledge as part of Reformed Druidism because they're in the *Chronicles*. Are they an important part of Reformed Druidism? Not at all. Are the other high orders important to Reformed Druidism? Well, they're not to my Reformed Druidism. To their members they may be important; far be it from me to gainsay that. I'm perfectly willing to live and let live. Am I going to refuse to have anything to do with somebody that comes to a service wearing the insignia of such an order? No, not at all. I don't feel the need to wear my insignia; it doesn't bother me one way or the other if they want to. It's just not part of my view of Druidism. I know they're there; certainly to me they're not important.

Eric: OK, I want to do a radical shift of where we've been, and return you to college and talk a little bit about some of the other things that were going on at Carleton while you were there, possibly as they relate to you as Arch–Druid, and possibly not. For instance, in May of 1970 the college has its Strike for several days following the invasion of Cambodia. As when I'm doing an interview with *anybody* who was here at that time, I'm interested in knowing your perspective on that and how it affected you, what part you may have played. This is turning into a long question, but I noticed, I guess it must have been in the Black Book, you had a poem or a chant "In Time of War," with the notation that it was written following the invasion of Cambodia. Obviously international politics was on your mind at the time.

Dick: The Exorcism.

Eric: An Exorcism, that's right. There; it's a long question; run with it!

Dick: In the mid sixties several things happened at Carleton. In the earlier sixties, about the time that Druidism was founded, various requirements were being abolished, like the religious attendance requirement. In my freshman year convocation requirement, the requirement that you attend the convocations, was abrogated. In the early sixties a lot of these *in loco parentis* things were falling, and there was a great deal of animosity between the student body and particularly the Dean of Men's Office, to some extent to President Nason as well, because, and, I feel, rightly, the students resented these things as not being an appropriate part of an adult educational experience.

I was not really part of that. A large part of this bitterness was over and done with by the time I got here in '67. In '67 the burning issue was race relations. The yearbook for that year ['67'68] was virtually taken over by essays about the relationship between races. Oddly enough, that seems to have been restricted pretty much to that one year, I think largely because while I was at Carleton we never did have much in the way of a minority student population. I think that's changed somewhat now, but we had a few token blacks, and that was it.

But increasingly as the years went on, certainly by the time I was a sophomore, when Joe came back from Israel, the burning issue, bar none, was Vietnam. It consumed every aspect of our lives, from watching the body counts on TV to the Damoclean sword of the draft hanging over every male one of us. The death of somebody whose name I've forgotten, and whom I never knew, who was the only Carleton grad I know of that was killed in Vietnam, these were all impinging on us all the time.

The election of 1968 really galvanized the campus, and large numbers of students went on buses to Wisconsin to help in the primaries for Gene McCarthy. Many of my close friends, in fact, went on that. I did not, because, I think, at that time I was still a Republican. I had come to campus in '67 supporting the war. It did not take long to change my mind. (This was quite apart from worrying about the draft, although my mother certainly did! It hadn't yet really crossed my mind that *I* myself could possibly be drafted. This changed later on!)

When it became evident that Nixon was not going to wind down the war in Vietnam, there was a dramatic change of attitude on campus, I believe, and people became radicalized in a way that heretofore had not been.

My junior year was the year of the Strike. I was involved as a member of the CSA government: I was a CSA senator for a while, and then I was secretary of CSA, because I got so fed up with the incredibly poor performance of the previous secretary. One of my duties as secretary was to issue minutes for the meetings. This involved typing them up on mimeograph masters and then taking them upstairs to Fourth Willis. (Willis at that time was the Union.) Fourth Willis was were the government offices were and where the mimeograph machine was.

In the process of doing that, I came to know another person who was up there frequently. She had an office up there, but also she used the mimeograph machine. She had been a graduate student at the University of Michigan. Even before the Strike we had had conversations about what had happened at the University of Michigan. I don't know if you're aware of this history, but Michigan, outside of Berkeley and Columbia, was probably the most radicalized campus, and it was that campus that was overrun by the sheriff's office. Really brutal police tactics were used against students there. In fact, a couple of years later I myself went to Michigan as a graduate student, and I remember thinking once, walking past a building on campus, realizing, something suddenly clicked, *that's* the building where all this happened! It was like a thunderbolt from a distant time.

But this woman I talked to quite a bit, and she was a large part of my radicalization. During the Strike we were up on Fourth Willis every day, churning this mimeograph machine, trying to gather and put out all the rumors from all across the country that we knew about. After Kent State and the calling out of the National Guard, there was a very real sense that the powers that be in this country were starting to turn, maybe "Nazistic" is a little too strong a term, but repressive and Fascist. The March on Washington happened, I forget precisely when it was, but I'm sure it was that spring, and Joe was part of that. (I didn't go on that, having essentially no resources and no way of getting there, and refusing to hitch–hike.)

But basically the whole educational structure of the campus came to a halt. There may have been some classes, but virtually everybody stopped going to most of the classes. I can still remember standing by the teletype (KARL had a teletype; that was on Third Willis, I think) and watching as these things came through, and literally ripping them off the teletype and taking them upstairs and typing them onto mimeograph masters. There was a very strong feeling that you couldn't trust the national press. You couldn't trust anybody over 30; that was the phrase, right?

It was a very paranoid time. The threat of the draft really burned that into us: if we got out of line, *we would be drafted.* Our draft boards would be told, and our deferments would be canceled, and we would be called up. I don't really believe that happened a lot. I know it did happen on a couple of occasions. But that was one of the threats that was held over us.

I can still remember the first draft lottery. I think it was when I was a sophomore; it must have been the spring of '69. The numbers came off the teletype, and they were ripping them off the teletype and posting them on the glass window in the KARL studio. I remember coming into the room — it was packed — and starting at the beginning, looking for February 28. I was aware by the time I had gotten to the second of these sheets (there must have been maybe ten of them all together) that my heart was beating so hard I was sure everybody could hear it. As I got farther and farther along down the sheets and I still hadn't found February 28, I started to relax, until I got all the way to the end of the sheets

and I *still* hadn't found February 28, and I realized I'd missed it and it might very well be the second date for all I knew!

It turned out it was number 299, which, even I knew at that time, meant effectively that I wouldn't be called for the draft. And there was a real moral crossroads for me: once the threat of the draft had been removed, was I really as radical as I said I was? This was something I had to think long and hard about. I knew that I was against the war in Vietnam. Would I actually march in demonstrations against it? Well, I didn't, until the invasion of Cambodia, and at that point I was finally pushed over the line; I realized this was something you had to stand up and be counted about, and it was then that I wrote the Exorcism. We held that Exorcism complete with blazing torches that we smothered to put the flames of war out.

Earth Day also happened about the same time. I forget just what year that started.

Eric: Same year.

Dick: Druids were part of the first Earth Day. We gave an invocation. The summer that Ellen and I graduated, we were married that August. The wedding present that I remember best, and that we still have, was *The Last Whole Earth Catalog* that was sent us by Steve.

Eric: How appropriate!

Dick: But it was all part of the times. The radicalism of those couple of years is just impossible to forget, and it really shaped an entire generation. It's been said so many times that it sounds almost trite now. But those were the formative experiences of my generation.

Eric: Do you want to say anything to wrap up, you've touched on this many times, of course, summing up the meaning of the Carleton Druids in your life. That sounds much too vast! Anything that would be an appropriate way to close, stepping back and putting it in its place for you.

Dick: Well, for me personally Druidism was another one of those formative events, experiences, not really an event. Druidism determined the way that I look at life, the way that I deal with not just my spirituality but with almost every aspect of my life, the way I approach writing a computer program, even. A very strong belief that (thinking of it in terms of a computer program now) the user must be respected. As the designer of a program, you can't foist your way of looking at things on the user; you have to adapt your program to what the user wants to do, what is valuable for him. And that's just another bit of Druidism, really. The whole idea of making life user–friendly, if you will.

In a very real sense I live and think and breathe Druidism every day, every hour of my life. As a formal religion I scarcely ever think about it any more, except when I get calls of distress from Carleton! I am occasionally asked to speak about it by other enlightened groups, like the Unitarians. It is not important, no, that's not true: I was going to say it's not important to me that Druidism continue as a "religion." I am very pleased that it has, and not because it validates in any sense something that I was a part of or something that I helped to continue, but because I believe very strongly in its principles and its approach to life.

As religious fundamentalism rises in this country, and in the world, I feel very strongly that it's important that we stand up for an alternative view; that we make clear that no matter how firmly someone may feel that fundamentalist Christianity is the only way to salvation, it is important in a pluralistic society (I would say important anywhere in the world, but certainly in America) not to let that destroy the fabric of society, no matter how sinful you may view that society. In the long run, that is the road to, I won't say damnation, but certainly to destruction. It's important to me that this contrarian view be promoted.

It's not important to me that that view take on a particularly Celtic view or form, or a Reformed Druidistic form, although I would say that this entire contrarian view is a druidic, small outlook. So the particular forms that it takes are not really important to me, but the principle itself I think is one that is one of the most basic in our society.

It's not an anti–Christian view; it's an anti–totalitarian view. I have nothing against the beliefs of Christianity; there are many beliefs of Christianity that I believe in. The moral teachings of Christianity I feel quite in tune with. But the modus operandi of fundamentalist Christian sects is to me just another version of totalitarianism, and it needs to be called that, and it needs to be countered.

Then again, one can apply the same principles in other situations that are not spiritual at all. The traditional top–down management that I encounter every day of my life at Unisys is totalitarianism, and it is counter–productive, and it's why the Japanese are beating us. And this is another way in which I am Druidic, trying to sabotage this top–down management.

Western civilization has from the very earliest times been pushed by and propagated by control freaks. At root, that is what I think Druidism is: a statement against control; that the best things in life come by letting them happen, not by controlling them to make them not happen. All valuable change, well, this is awfully dogmatic, but all valuable change (yes! I firmly believe this!) has come about in situations where the status quo simply can no longer hold, and the people who are trying to keep it from changing are willing to stoop to totalitarian tactics. It is at junctures like these where the Druidic approach is *necessary*.

Eric: Thank you.

Notes added by Dick during the editing of the transcript:
1. *Although at the time of the interview I had not met either the Frangquists or Isaac, I have since met both: the Frangquists in October 1993 and Isaac in April 1994.*
2. My numbering of the floors of Willis may leave some puzzled. The government offices were on what is generally known as Third Willis, the fourth floor if you count the Ground Willis as the first floor. My account is probably influenced by the memory of the three long flights of stairs from the ground floor where I got my supplies to the top floor where I ran off the minutes.

Figure 4 Shelton at 30th Anniversary,

April 1993 on Monument Hill.

First Interview with Isaac Bonewits

by Michael Scharding
on April 1, 1994
Carleton College Archives
Oral History Project
Transcription by Benjamin Wood
Lightly edited for clarity, unknown/questionable words are put inside brackets

IB= Isaac Bonewits
MS= Michael Scharding

Note: See many other interviews with Isaac Bonewits in Green Book 10 of Part Six of ARDA 2.

MS: OK, this is Michael Scharding interviewing Isaac Bonewits, oh, you mind if this is recorded?

IB: No, that's no problem.

MS: OK, on the first of April, April Fool's Day.

IB: Ah hah

MS: 1994

IB: An auspicious to announce the founding of the Order of Thoth.

MS: That's right. Well, this one is mostly going to be back on the RDNA days again. As we were just talking about the writing of the family tree of Druidism, one of the rules in the bi-laws is only an Arch-Druid can elect a third order priest. Was this a common practice, or did any third order person do this?

IB: As I recall, <pause> As I recall you had to be a third order priest to be an Arch-Druid, and you could then ordain other third orders, but I also recall though that the point may have gotten stretched a few times that any third order can ordain another third order. I believe that all of the times that I did ordinations, I was the Arch-Druid of a given grove. Although, oddly enough, I might have been a traveling Arch-Druid, I believe I did several of those ordinations for what eventually became the Arch-grove of the Hasidic Druids of North America down in St. Louis. I was traveling down in St. Louis, at the time I was the Arch-Druid of the Twin Cities grove, in Minneapolis, and I may have at that point done some of the ordinations down in the St. Louis area. That would have been Lou Schreiber and Vicki and Carolyn Clark.

MS: One of the things that some people have brought up, and there's so much dirt that gets thrown on you...

IB: <laughing>

MS: There is, a seemingly great desire on your part to become Arch-Druid of something, and I've noticed that you've been Arch-Druid of a grove often when there's another grove in the same city, mainly because of your SDNA branch. I was just wondering if this might have been because you wanted to increase the size of the third order, that you felt that you needed to be an active Arch-Druid.

IB: <pause> I don't think so. I'm trying to remember what time period you'd be talking about here.

MS: I know you were Arch-Druid of Stockton Grove from '72 to '74, Twin Cities roughly from '74 to '76 it seemed, and then you came back to Berkeley and then you were either Arch-Druid of Berkeley or the Mother Grove in Berkeley.

IB: <pause> I can't remember a lot of those details. I was staying with Bob Pinell <pause> and Roy Keister I think it was in Stockton. I may have made them second or third order, I don't remember. And we did have a grove there that, while I was living in Stockton. Generally, I tended for a long time to simply have a grove where I was living, because if people didn't already about Reform Druidism, I would tell them pretty soon, and then people would say "Oh great, let's start a grove." So we would. But I think it was more on the fact of people wanting there to be a grove then for me being particularly enamored of the role. Most of the time when I was starting a grove, I was the only one who was experienced with the liturgy and such. About the only time there was ever an election that was really contested with multiple candidates, was when I was in the Bay Area where there were a lot of third order Druids floating around. But Stockton was quite a distance from the Bay Area.

MS: And I also noticed that it almost looked like the grove was an extension of the SCA.

IB: Well we had an overlap for a while, a definite overlap. Bob Larson's Clann na Brocheta Grove was, in one sense, an extension of the Renaissance Pleasure Fair, because Clann na Brocheta was a group of Gaelic players and musicians who worked at the Renaissance Fair. And he did there ceremonies for them in [Munster] Irish, um but it, there has been an extensive overlap between the SCA and pagendom and science fiction fandom and computer fandom for many, many years. Because all of these are subcultures that encourage people who are intelligent and creative, so they are going to have overlapping populations.

MS: OK, yeah because I've noticed that a lot of Arch-Druids, a lot of groves have been [SCA] members and come to Carleton.

IB: Oh yeah, and a lot of them have been computer techies.

MS: Yes, <pause> one of the things that is very curious is <pause> more so then a few others, I think we can admit that you are a little more, it almost looks like you're proselytizing.

IB: <gasp>

MS: Yes

IB: You're saying dirty words

MS: Big dirty word, oh, most of the other groves that I've noticed that were setup by founders, except for the one in Berkeley which, of course, led to you, very very few people get ordained by the Carleton graduate. In fact, most of them never ever escape the college environment.

IB: Right.

MS: Berkeley somehow, probably because of the, the rather convenient Bay Area neo-Pagan scene, managed to dump the college environment and go for something permanent. And, I'm kind of curious...

IB: Well there wasn't much of a neo-Pagan scene in the Bay Area in 1969, there were twenty or thirty people in the area who were Wiccan, although most of them were being very definitely undercover in that process, because even then it wasn't safe to come out in public. But there were a number of people in the SCA who were Pagan. And I discovered the SCA at roughly the same time I discovered Reform Druidism, so they seemed to make a good match. And we started doing Druid ceremonies at some of the weekend tournaments. To deal specifically with the topic of proselytizing, I never thought there was anything wrong with telling people you had something good. Shoving it down their throats, or threatening them with hell-fire is totally different, but sharing something that you have that you think is a wonderful thing is, if not an obligation, at least an understand urge on the part of people that who've discovered something good.

MS: Yeah, one of the requirements in the third order is to minister to the people's needs, but I think that the Carleton group had the understanding that they're supposed to find you, or maybe that's just laziness on their part.

IB: There's a couple, several different orientations from that. I really believe that Dave Fisher was coming out of one of the United Ancient Order of Druid groups, that from the style of his liturgy and his description of what he thought Druidism was, it seems very clear that he was coming out of that group. And that group is a fraternal order patterned after the Masons, and like the Masons, pretty much insisted that people knock on the door and ask for admission. They did not actively go out and recruit, so I think that David Fisher had a reluctance to recruit in the first place, and I also think that for most of the old time, the first generation Reform Druids, the RDNA was a wonderful memory from their college years, and they wanted to keep it a quaint little alumni club, they didn't want to let in just anybody. So I suspect that a large part of the, you know, misunderstanding and hostility was generated by the fact, here was somebody that came out of the blue, who never even went to Carleton, who was treating their alumni club as if it were a real religion.

MS: Yeah, and that's what I've been able to pick up.

IB: Yeah.

MS: In fact, you're one of the very few non-Carleton students to actually ordain anybody.

IB: <laughing>

MS: The only other I can think of is Stephan and Tezra at the present, and maybe Larry Press. I don't know if any of the other groves, like the Twin Cities grove or the Arch grove...

IB: Uh, no, Larry Press and Emmon Bodfish in the Orinda grove, they ordained a few people.

IB: And who was I talking to? Yeah, and Stephan and Tezra have done ordinations. So, really, as far as I can tell, the real hotbed of Reform Druid activity was on the west coast, primarily in the Bay region with my grove and the groves that branched off from it. And also up in Seattle, with Cindy Schuller...

IB: Yeah, she has a pretty large group there.

MS: Now, <pause> what happened to all these little groves, like the Arch grove and the acorn grove and these...

IB: Well, the same thing that happens in nature, a bunch of seeds get planted and some of them sprout, and some of them don't, and of the one's that do sprout some of them get cropped off by the deer real fast.

MS: <laughing>

IB: And the ones that manage to survive to become saplings, either prosper or not depending on the rain and the fertility of the soil, and a hundred other things. So if you plant twenty or thirty groves, you're lucky if two or three of them are still running five years later. I didn't realize that at first. The Arch grove lasted for two or three years in St. Louis and then collapsed because the couple who were running it divorced, a situation that is very common the craft but hasn't been so common in the RDNA because we haven't had that many situations where couples were starting a grove. The Twin Cities grove, I believe it kept going for a short period of time after I moved out of the Twin Cities, I believe Avery Grant was running it. And, what ever, its not in existence now, I have no idea at one point it collapsed, my brother might be able to tell us that because I think he stayed in contact with Avery for a while.

MS: It seems to me almost, I don't know, there seems to been in the early '70s, something around 1972 or so, there seems to been large number of groups that seems to like have almost chucked a lot of the old occult astrology and a whole bunch of other kinds of things that, what Bradley calls were from a Christian matrix attitude and just started fresh, and started digging their hands into the stuff themselves and looking into other cultures. And this is what I've been able to figure out what Neo-Paganism is, kind of a hands-on, fresh start.

IB: Yeah, I'd say that that's true in many ways. There was an explosion of interest in the occult and simultaneously in witchcraft, Paganism, and folk magic, all intertwined together during the late '60s and early '70s and really the spread of Neo-Paganism is directly traceable to that particular time period, which is when almost all the people who are now big-nosed Pagans first got involved with it.

MS: Now you've always defined Neo-Paganism as a reconstructive religion based on primarily pre-Christian sources, what were the other kinds of groups that were doing reconstruction in a Neo-Pagan format? I know there's the Source of Eternal Life for the Egyptians.

IB: Church for the Eternal Source, that's what you mean, the Egyptian folks. They were one of the big groups. Fere-Faeria was another one, Fred Adams was trying to reconstruct his vision of Greek religion. The most influential of course was the Church of All Worlds.

MS: But that's not really a pre-Christian religion.

IB: Well, no, they were perfectly willing to admit that they were starting a brand new religion, but they believed that they were inspired by the models of the pre-Christian religions, and expanding them in a modern sense. Tim Zell (now Otter Zell) was important, one of the first people to come up with what became known as the Gaia hypothesis. He actually published material on it before Lovelock did and Zell is the one that actually made the term Neo-Paganism widespread, it was in

the American occult community. The Wiccan movement started out being what I consider Meso-Pagan, and only became Neo-Pagan under the influence of the counter-culture in the United States, when they realized they could drop a lot of the window dressing that had been added to keep the Christians happy.

MS: <laughing> And so the Druids were essentially the Celtic element, but the Wicca was of course using a lot of the Celtic...

IB: But the folks in Wicca claimed that they were Celtic but in point of fact what they were doing was far more Greco-Roman then it was Celtic, and for people in.... Oh, and there was also groups like the Asatru Free Assembly and other folks that were interested in Norse Paganism, they were starting up at about this same time. Unfortunately, they got infiltrated and subverted by Neo-Nazis rather quickly so that most of the, even today, you'll still find that the vast majority of Norse groups are Meso-Pagans, hung up on Aryan, pure-race, bullshit. But yeah, to a certain extent the Druids was the movement in Neo-Paganism for people who were interested in the Celts.

MS: And the RDNA was the only contender in the field at that time.

IB: That's right.

MS: See, that's what I'm very curious about. When I read your early letters, there seems to be a very rushed attitude. I know you were extremely busy in a lot of movements and

IB: <laughing>

MS: …might have been a little bit upset about what you saw as a set of emergency breaks in the RDNA, on something you couldn't really deal to much time with, but um what was the sense of urgency coming from?

IB: That was a time period that I was fairly firmly convinced that the ecology was in a mess and that this insane macho posturing between the United States and the Soviet Union was libel to blow it all up, and I felt that there was really a strong need to spread the ideas of Neo-Paganism and to spread the techniques of magic to people with Neo-Pagan ethics, as widely as possible as quickly as possible, just for the sheer sake of survival of the planet. And I still feel that today but I don't have quite the sense of urgency I used to, because it is beginning to look like maybe enough magic was done to put the breaks on at least the nuclear threat. And because the ecology movement has begun to be successful, and is beginning to change peoples attitudes. I still feel a sense of urgency but I'm not in my twenties anymore.

MS: Yeah, it's actually quite remarkable what you were doing in your twenties...

IB: <laughing>

MS: I must say.

IB: Yeah, I wish I had that much energy today.

MS: Oh, don't you know it. And so let's, I'm just trying to figure out...

IB: Well, you know I've been doing a lot of research over the last twenty-five years in the history of Wicca. And the more I read about Gerald Gardner and about the atmosphere in the occult community in England during the '40s and '50s and '60s, the more sympathy I'm developing for him. And, Gardner ordained zillions of people, he ordained anybody who'd walk into his living room practically, and the reason he seems to have done so was because he figured that if he ordained several hundred people, at least a couple dozen of them would be good and would keep his religion going. And I think to a great extent that I was working on much the same principle, the idea that if I ordained a lot of third order priests, that a significant proportion of them would keep it up and go out and start new groves, where they would ordain new people who would go and start new groves. And I thought that this would be a good thing for the planet and for the people involved.

MS: Yes, Bradley was talking about that, he's a very interesting person if you get to talk with him. And he said that there's a certain size for a parish to remain stable, he thinks it's around two hundred people, cause by that point you have at least five or six people who can cover slack in case something goes wrong, versus just one. And one of the things that I think a lot of people were a little bit eerie about, but then I'll talk about the other side, seems to be your role as a nexus point. Stephan also had this complaint raised against him. For instance, most of the Carleton RDNA were unable, for some reason, to contact many of the other, non-Carleton RNDA. And they almost kind of felt like they had to go through you to get there, while it's nice that you actually were there to see actually make it to other people, I don't know, it almost seems like they're...they're kicking the system.

IB: I sent the name, and mailing address and phone number of every person I ordained to the attention of Arch Druid of Carleton.

MS: Right, and there is documents for that.

IB: And, if the people at Carleton didn't bother to contact any of those folks, and never bothered to keep up-to-date mailing lists, you know that wasn't anything I could really take responsibility for. I seem to recall that once every two or three years, I would send as much of an update as I had of current addresses, but there was nothing to stop people at Carleton from contacting any of these people directly, they just never bothered. The groves at Carleton were primarily concerned with Carleton.

MS: Yes, I picked that up...

IB: Which you can understand, running, even if it's a very small grove, you're still running a student organization, and the average college student really doesn't think on a grand scale in terms of "Oh, I'm at the head of a nationwide network and I have to keep the communication lines clear."

MS: <laughing>

IB: No, the average Arch Druid at Carleton, didn't think about that.

MS: Yeah, and you know, I don't know, maybe they're just jealous or they just, I don't know, there is definitely really small minded thinking going on and actually you know that it is one of the good things that you did publish so much stuff, because, as Bradley says "Isaac Bonewits he might have his faults here and there but at least he publishes, gets stuff out on the table."

IB: <laughing>

MS: "You know, you can like him or hate him, but you still at least have something to work with."

IB: Michael Bradley, who is Michael Bradley, why does that name ring a bell?

MS: Arch-Druid of Chicago.

IB: What?

MS: Chicago

IB: Oh right.

MS: He was inducted by McDavid.

IB: He hardly ever answered his mail as I recall.

MS: Yeah, but he was a pretty mellow dude and he and McDavid had a very nice connection with each other and they had a nice little grove for a number of years. And he's in Seattle now.

IB: Is it still functioning?

MS: Oh no, it stopped in '78 and Bradley's now in Seattle and he's going to join Cindy's group sometime in the future. He actually was going to start the humanistic DNA

IB: The HDNA?

MS: Uh huh, and that might have worked really well.

IB: Well at that point there wasn't any Hassidic Druids left so the initial was ok

MS: That would lead to confusion.

IB: Yes, it sure would. But we had a lot of confusion in those days.

MS: <pause> Lineage, how many groups in the '70s were stuck up on lineage?

IB: What, in the Reform Druid community?

MS: And also elsewhere.

IB: Well a sizeable number in the Wiccan community really felt that lineage was important, because that was how they maintained their quality control. Because they were doing everything in secrecy, that being half the fun of being a witch, they didn't have any published standards of qualification for the clergy. And they had no central, because they were decentralized, there was no one address you could write to, to verify if whether or not a person was capable of doing what they said they were. So, the way they maintained any kind of quality of control was to say "well I was ordained by lady so-and so, how was ordained by lady so-and-so, who was ordained by lady such-and-such." And if you knew any of the people along that line of succession, then you could make a reasonable guess as to whether or not this person had been properly trained and initiated. But of course, that only worked within particular denominations, and there were so many people within the Wiccan community who were making up brand new denominations out of thin air, and telling outrageous lies about their ancestry and their families and their childhood training and a lot of other B.S., when they were obviously using stuff they'd ripped off from Gerald Gardner, that it made it impossible to ever verify anything. Now, but the folks that think of themselves as the British Traditionalist, the Conservatives, still to this day think that lineage is still very important, this is their own apostolic succession. On the other hand there were a lot of people who were saying "well no, we're going to make this all up ourselves, and we're going to use published material, and we're going to use material we research ourselves, and we'll put it all together, and we don't care if it's old or new, we like it cause it works." And those folks didn't care about linage at all. Certainly the folks at Fer-faeria and Church of Eternal Source and The Church of All Worlds weren't worried about lineage, because they knew that they were making brand new religion.

MS: That's why I'm kind of curious about, there has been rumors about Isaac, that one reason you stayed in the RDNA was because it preceded all the other guys. And I think that this is rather a shallow comment.

IB: <laughing> Preceded all the other guys?

MS: Yeah, because the others incorporated '67 and stuff and...

IB: Oh, well incorporations and stuff didn't matter very much. Nobody much was impressed by being incorporated except when it was a chance to gain legal protection for Paganism, then people got impressed by incorporation.

MS: Well, not so much incorporation as foundation.

IB: Yeah, most, Gerald Gardner started his trip, I personally don't think that there was anything preceding him that he was continuing, but even if there was, what he did was a brand new thing, and he essentially started that in the last '40s and early '50s. And the Druid orders, if you want to look at it, if we say that David Fisher came out of the Ancient Order of Druids or one of those offshoots, well that at least goes back to the mid 1700s. But, I never really thought that the apostolic succession was that critical. I have a whole long discussion on varieties of initiation and transmission of the Gnosis or apostolic succession is only one of the three major types of initiation, and it isn't always the most important, the other two being recognition of status already gained and ordeal of transformation. But the point is, no, I didn't stick with the RDNA because I thought the RDNA was older then any of the other Neo-Pagan groups. It was because the archetype, the Druid, really resonated with me, the same way that the archetype of the witch resonates with a lot of other people. It's what I was pulled too, and even when I tried to drop out and stay away from it, I kept getting dragged by the scruff of the neck back into it, kicking and screaming.

MS: It almost seems to me that the SDNA was kind of like the testing groups for ADF in some ways.

IB: Oh, to a great extent. When I sit down and I look through this old material I can see a lot of the ideas that ADF has manifested there in sort of an embryonic stage. And, when I really began to realize that the founders of the RDNA really didn't want it to be a religion, and yet I thought that it seemed obvious to me that it was a religion, I first started experimenting, and I think that the SDNA was my first experiment with that.

MS: Yeah, because I mean there had been lots of RDNA Druids before you who had declared it their own personal religion, it just seems like there was this subtle shift that you're not supposed to, even if you do consider it your own religion, not to advertise the group as a religion. And you want to, well see the thing is, any group after 1967 or so, that grove that founded, whether it was one of yours or one of the Carleton graduates doing it, the majority of the members that they got were of course from SCA, sci-fi, and most of them were Neo-Pagans. I mean, irregardless of the wish, you know, to have lots of smart people get together and just discuss how religions work, the majority of those people are going to be coming from Neo-Pagan tradition. So it's understandable that you'd want to advertise this, so Neo-Pagans wouldn't be confused by the double-talk saying "well we're not a religion, but we're a way to look at religion." And stuff like this, and anyone who's interested in Celticness would say wow, here you go, and they're in. So it's quite understandable from that point of view, and most of the Carleton graduates I've been able to find haven't actually been able to find that kind of attitude of Carleton students to, almost just break down religion and just sit there and look at the basics. That doesn't seem to happen very often with many places, and the only people who really want to use the structure are the people who would actually worship.

IB: Well yeah, if you're going to emphasize the philosophical side of Druidism, then you're going to spend most of your time having intellectual debates, which is lots of fun. We used to do that in the HDNA for a while, we had a hair-pull session, we would get together for the grove meeting, we'd do the ritual and then afterwards we'd come back to my house for a potluck dinner and then after dinner we would read a couple lines from the Mish-Mash and the commentaries on it, and then we would have theological argument for an hour. It was a lot of fun, but we were still doing in within the context of we're Neo-Pagans and we're discussion Neo-Pagan theology. We weren't doing it in the let's keep all this messy religion stuff at an arms length distance, which is what most of the, apparently most of the founders of the RDNA prefer to do.

MS: There also seems like there are a lot of, as you mentioned, Marxists and atheists in the early group, and one of the things that they particularly valued was that... I've always seen it as if you have a bunch of people from all types of religions and un-religions, and you describe the story of a bird making a nest, all religions, because they're faced with the material world all around them, have drawn upon nature for a source for relating to the divine. And philosophies have done so for the same reason, and so one of the things that I've seen at Carleton is that even if you're atheistic or if you're very religious, you can be Christian or anything, they can all get together and draw something out of the simple bird's story that doesn't claim to be part of, or allied to just one group, and so it seems almost, sometimes they describe it as they didn't want Druidism to fall into being a religion, that might just be a little snotty point on their part, that they were above religion, but there seems to have been a fear that it would become narrow, somehow, although you, Robert Larson and yourself were interested primarily in Celtic Indo-European stuff, where as the Carleton grove had a very strong Asian element in it, because the Asian religions were very strongly taught at Carleton. And they pretty much had dropped the Celticness early on, because it had done its purpose. And, I don't know...

IB: Or because that wasn't the interest of the new generations of students coming in.

MS: Right, because of the Asian interest and Vietnam of course made Asian studies much more interesting.

IB: Oh yeah.

MS: And that's why I was always interested...

IB: Well this is one of the reasons why I found the term Meso-Pagan to be so useful, I did not invent that term by the way, a friend of mine in Berkeley who is a Wiccan invented that term, and the Masonic, Rosicrucian, fraternal style groups of Druids in England were Meso-Pagan, what they had was a mixture of Paganism and Christianity and ideas that are rooted philosophically in Christianity, all mish-mashed together and presented as authentic Druidism. In the same way at Carleton you had, the references to nature and the references to the gods and goddesses, but you also had lots of material that was Christian philosophy, liberal Christian philosophy, or Marxist or atheist. Marxism and atheism are also outgrowths of Christianity, Marxism specifically is an outgrowth of the Christian gospel movement of the 1800s, even though Karl Marx would hate to have that said that about it, and atheism is the flip-flop of the dualistic black and white thinking of Christianity, either the Christian god and everything in the bible is true, or there is no god. And you know, as long as somebody calls himself an atheist, they're still playing the game by the Christians rules. In any event, the point is Reform Druidism, as first invented, was definitely a Meso-Pagan system, whether they called it a religion or philosophy or whatever, it was still Meso-Pagan. And, I thought the world needed Neo-Paganism, and saw this as a good starting point. But as you pointed out, within the first ten years I had tried to start alternative groups, using some of the ideas but also working in some of the ideas from the rest of the Neo-Pagan community. And, screening out the material from Monotheism and monothesisism.

MS: It's a very messy little thing.

IB: Well its amusing that the same people who were telling me that Druidism is a philosophy compatible, with every religion on the earth, were telling me "oh no, it doesn't include Neo-Paganism."

MS: Ah, see, I haven't picked that up.

IB: <laughing>

MS: I've looked for it closely, a lot of the letters between them are saying, you know, I remember Shelton once said that "Neo-Paganism was compatible with Reform Druidism, but doesn't encompass it." It's almost like...

IB: Well we didn't have the term Meso-Pagan in those days.

MS: Well yeah.

IB: Might have made a difference if we had, because then what you see is you see, you can have overlapping sets, make Venn-diagrams of it all. But, I had some of these folks verbally tell me it was totally inappropriate for Neo-Paganism and Reform Druidism to overlap and be the same thing.

MS: Well...

IB: Because they thought <coughing> Hang on... I think that they thought as soon as you brought any kind of "ism" into it at all, it was no longer Reform Druidism. I've often wondered why they didn't use the word Druidry but it may be that the fraternal groups in England hadn't started using that word at that point, I'm not sure about the precise dating of that term.

MS: Well see, the thing is, a lot of them in those years were often young too...

IB: Uh huh, we were all young way back then.

MS: Shelton who was one of the primary ring leaders then, has been very active again in keeping tabs about the Carleton grove since '86, when it was primarily Wiccan and Native American back then. And he has not really had too much trouble with us on that issue, and in-fact he's done a couple sweat-lodges and that kind of stuff.

IB: Cool

MS: And, there were a couple points where he was a little bit concerned, well first of all, you were coming from a different cultural background then he was, and most of the other Carleton Druids. I mean, you are first of all, an intellectual, and they hadn't had very much contact [inaudible], they kind of saw traps in definitions. And, they were in the process of destroying set ideas, they didn't want certainties, and...

IB: Right, well they were still in that early adolescent rebellion stage of being more interested in tearing down then they were in building up. And I can understand that, that's a necessary phase for an adolescent to go through. You have to deconstruct the culture around you before you can reconstruct it, to reflect something that makes sense to you.

MS: Right, and since most Carleton students are between the age of 19 and 20 around, I don't think, I think they were a little bit worried, well see it would be very hard of course to impose

the NRDNA system on Carleton because it's so far away, but I don't think they felt that Carleton students, who didn't have a Neo-Pagan background to being with, were quite ready to reconstruct. And, I don't know, maybe they were just a little protective of the grove, they were...

IB: Well that's perfectly understandable, it was their turf. I mean just on a gut level, animal biological basis, this was their home territory, and if they perceived a threat to it, then they would be defensive.

MS: I think they also were a little bit afraid of their own people getting out of hand too.

IB: How so?

MS: Well, do you remember when Larson, I mean Shelton, tried to pass the Codex Reform?

IB: Very vaguely, yeah

MS: Well he got quite a few letters immediately, letters saying you know, red tape, red tape, you know, and Shelton backed down. Shelton by the way was the first Arch-Druid not to have known the founder. And so they were very careful to make sure that future groups wouldn't lose the original style, and that's probably one reason why they hung around so much. If you hadn't been around, they probably would have been content that no outside influences would've come into Carleton, but...

IB: Right, the fact that I wrote New Apocrypha, sent copies of it to all the members of the order of Dalon Ap Landu, that I could get a hold of, sort of rocked the boat, all of a sudden there was an outside influence.

MS: And an outside authority.

IB: Yeah.

MS: From a completely new tradition.

IB: Yeah.

MS: And so, I think that's one of the main reasons that, in-fact, you have led to a closer bond between the alumni and the present students, which we're quite grateful for.

IB: Well that's a good thing.

MS: In fact, no Carleton group has ever had this much interaction between alumni and students, and we're the oldest, unofficial, student organization at Carleton.

IB: Is the RDNA still unofficial?

MS: Still unofficial.

IB: Oh, that's funny.

MS: We have a...

IB: Wait a minute, they were official at one time, they had a faculty advisor, Messenger

MS: Uh, yes, but we never got our constitutions approved.

IB: You're kidding?

MS: Nope, they uh, they kind of like put them into the "later" file, and then, sigh

IB: Just because Carleton is still legally a church school?

MS: No, that was stopped in '22, it was just the fact that we had a bunch of pig-headed, conservative administrators, especially in the Dean of Men, and they just said "Too wild" and put it aside. But, we also had a Dean of, an advisor with Bardwell Smith, who was an Asian history and religion professor, which of course made it more Asian then ever. But yeah, John Messenger was only around for one year.

IB: Yeah right, and then he went elsewhere.

MS: Perhaps if he would have stayed longer we would have seen different.

IB: That's true, could very well have been different.

MS: Now, I want to talk about the Druid Chronicles (Evolved), you know the more I read that book, the more fascinating it gets, and that's a compliment.

<break in the conversation for call waiting, tape flips>

IB: RDNA, so that tells me in the year 17 y.r., that's what I was doing. We have the constitutions here, records of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, Arch-Druids of Carleton through Don Morrison, spring '76 to question mark, that's as far as my list goes.

MS: Oh, yeah, did I send you an updated list of the Arch-Druids?

IB: I don't know if you did or not.

MS: Well, he stopped at '78 and that was followed by Sue Olin for a year or so, and then somebody named Heidi Schultz and I don't know, and then Katya Luomala who was incorrectly ordained, because of a drunkard Arch-Druid.

IB: Oops.

MS: Oops, she like showed up like the day and she like, Katya had vigiled and she thought Sue knew about this and...and Sue didn't show up in the morning. And, so Katya found her like halfway through the day and was like, "where were you?" "Oh, I already thought you were a third order.....well here you go, here's the order. And it's like...

IB: Oh...great.

MS: Yeah, I was like, oh boy. Well you can imagine what that did to her ego. <laughing>

IB: <laughing> Let's see, I have my copy here of the names of the Druids, which you probably have a copy of as well, that says who was ordained in which grove, anyway. It says Hal Moe was ordained in the Berkeley grove in 1973, which... could it mean it was either me or Bob, depending on who was running the grove in that year, I don't remember right now. Then we have Cindy and Tom Schuler both ordained by the mother grove in '78, which probably, lets see down here it says...mg equals mother grove SDNA. Ok

MS: One of the things we do generally is we uh, I've seen at Carleton, is that we would do like, for instance for you it'd be BK69:Larson, so we can keep track of these things easier.

IB: Well that would probably make a lot of sense, and it would be nice to try and reconstruct all of this.

MS: yeah, and...

IB: So we actually do have a family tree, but of course, we don't...I have been constantly told over the years about RDNA groves that existed and then disappeared. Like, uh, there was a grove in Palo Alto, California for a while, and there was a grove at uh... oh god, it's an eastern college, starts with a p....

MS: Purdue.

IB: Purdue, there was a grove at Purdue.

MS: Yeah, that was Dick Smiley.

IB: Dick Smiley... see so you know a lot of groves that I don't know.

MS: Well usually I make the family tree by apostolic succession versus worry about groves, because those just move all over the place. In fact, trying to work out the Berkeley thing, which is so darn confusing I gave up, but I uh...

IB: Well you know Joan Carruth could give you a lot that history. I mean obviously filtered through her eyes, but that's going to be true of anybody you ask.

MS: That's true.

IB: Do you have her current address?

MS: uh huh, yep.

IB: ok.

MS: I did an interview with her.

IB: Bob Larson... has vanished.

MS: Yes, he is vanished... showed up in spring, but disappeared again.

IB: Very strange

MS: Very strange, I heard he's over with Asatru now.

IB: Oh, that could make a certain amount of sense, he liked the Norse stuff too.

MS: Yeah.

IB: In which case, I might be able to track him down through the, through...make connections in the Norse community, maybe through...depending upon which group he's in.

MS: But yes, he's disappeared.

IB: ok, let's see here, now I have in addition to all that, I have the...Druid Missal-Any, which was...the one that Emmon Bodfish organized for a while

MS: Which we don't have.

IB: Oh, ok, well I can make copies of those. What did we have here, oh and...a letter from Chris Sherbak that appeared in the Druid Missal-Any. "Dear third order Druid, the Council of Dalon Ap Landu has not had a vote in many years, one of the main problems has been the lack of contact between the head of the Council and the members, many reasons have been given, but the fact remains. I'm sending this letter to all known members of the Council in hopes of resolving this and getting on with business. There can only be two states of participation in my opinion, active and inactive. Our rules do not allow inactive participation yet, I propose we do now. I ask that you please respond to the questionnaire/proxy below. If you wish to remain in active status, please indicate as such, you'll be kept in the Council's mailing list. If you wish to become inactive, please mark and sign the proxy. This is very important, whether or not you are now interested in a Reform, you are still considered to have a vote. This was his effort to get around the impossibility of ever having a quorum...but that didn't work either.

MS: Well a lot of them just felt there wasn't anything more to vote on.

IB: There was nothing more to vote on?

MS: uh huh.

IB: I see <laughing> ok

MS: <laughing> They thought once they got everyone equal status, that was fine.

IB: 1983, so let's see, so these issues are from 1982 and '83. And...then we had the Druid Chronicler, which...

MS: We've got a lot of 'em

IB: You've got a lot of them, ok

MS: But not quite all of them, I'll have to send you...

IB: 1981 seems to be here, December '81...

MS: That's the last one we have.

IB: Yeah, that one was nicely typeset. This was, this is funny, this is really funny, I think this is the one and only issue that was ever done this way, typeset with nice borders around the edges. And this was <pause> this is the last time before I did ADF, when I tried to make major changes inside, Reform Druidism. Oh jeez, it's been years, literally years since I read this. "Isaac Bonewits left the mother grove in '79 because he was moving to Santa Cruz, when he went he appointed Joan Carruth and Stephen Abbot to be co Arch-Druids. Shortly after he left on his sabbatical, Joan and Stephen changed the name to the Berkeley grove." Okay, so it was the Berkeley grove for a long time, then it became the mother grove, then it became the Berkeley grove again. Let's see, "the next year saw Stephen drop out..." See I haven't read this in five or ten years here. "The next year saw Stephen drop out of the Berkeley grove, that was the end of co Arch-Druidship as an experiment in that incarnation. Joan ran for reelection uncontested and spent the last of 18 y.r. and all of 19 y.r. as Arch-Druid of the grove. In the two years since Isaac, the ritual and structure of the grove went relatively unmolested. But then Isaac showed back up and all the rules changed. He ran for the office of Arch-Druid, warning everybody in advance that he planned to make some broad changes in the grove. Even if it can't be said that the gods spoke, there was an omen of sorts, Isaac won. In doing so though, he alienated a large portion of the existing Berkeley grove... they thought the changes were taking Druidism far away from what its founders at Carleton College had intended it to be. That idea made them uncomfortable, so after much thought and discussion they decided to form a new grove. They asked Joan to be their Arch-Druid and she accepted. Thus there are now two groves in Berkeley: the live oak grove which still uses the traditional forms, and the mother grove, which is developing a new philosophy of Druidism for the 1980s." Right, now you have to understand, that part of all of this complexity that was going on is that Joan and I were on-again off-again lovers for many years. So, some of what was happening here was personal politics between the two of us, although fortunately at this point I can't remember any of the details.

MS: <laughing> yeah

IB: Just that Joan is basically a very wonderful person.

MS: Uh huh, oh I should tell you that...

IB: So you have this issue.

MS: Uh huh.

IB: Ok, that's good, because that is really, in terms of... history of the shift from Reform Druidism to ADF, this is really critical.

MS: Yes

IB: In any event...right Sally <pause> Sally was the Arch-Druidess at the same time as I was the Arch-Druid. Let's see, she was a server in 18yr <pause>

MS: Could we reconstruct these things a little bit later...

IB: Oh, I'm sorry, go ahead, continue with your, your list of questions you had for the interview.

MS: Ok, one of the interesting things that the Druid Chronicles is, I don't think you know this side of the story, is about the same time I believe in '74, '75 when you started Druid Chronicles going, we lost ours. We lost all the Archives, and they were a little bit afraid to tell you this... and apparently Steve Corey taking 'em all up to the Twin Cities without appointing another person at Carleton to take his place. And so all of the

records were seemingly lost for two or three years. And everyone had to rely on their own personal copies of everything, and they were really afraid that your version of the Druid Chronicles would eventually become the only source of information.... And they again found them about two years later, and then I almost can tell the animosity suddenly dropped in the letters.

IB: Well, I find that fascinating, because, you know, I didn't change anything in the Chronicles of the Foundation. I was meticulous in making sure that it was the same word-for-word, the only difference being that...I stuck in footnotes.

MS: Uh huh, no big deal.

IB: Yeah... then I added a bunch of other stuff, but you know, I always thought it's really critical in the history of any religion that you have accurate history. So I always thought it was important that we document what we were doing, while we were doing it.

MS: Yeah, and there's a lot of really good little turkeys, as you call them, in there.

IB: <laughing>

MS: And, I think in there, well even though you do say in the Apocrypha that you intended people to stick in their own stuff later on, some of them are a little bit bitter that... it almost looks like a one-sided argument. Because...

IB: Hey! I didn't stop them from sending Apocrypha around.

MS: I know, they're just a little bitter. <laughing> But otherwise it...

IB: "The editor has been informed that there are other Apocrypha currently being printed for distribution. Assuming that each has a date of writing attached, it should be easy to insert them into there proper order vis-à-vis those included in this edition." One of the things that the people who were hostile about this production never seemed to mention or think about was the fact that we deliberately designed it so that it could be punched and put in a three-hole notebook.

MS: right

IB: Thus implying that there would be alternate version. Oh well...

MS: Uh huh, they, I don't know, they were a little bit anarchistic, you know, any kind of... putting it all together in one book, just kind of, I don't know, grated on their nerves a little bit. But actually, its proved to be an extremely durable and reliable source for a lot of the groves which still use it. In fact, Carleton, in 1986, used it as their sole blueprint to rebuild, because we had lost the Archives again, and couldn't find them, so we used the Druid Chronicles (Evolved), as a blueprint, which of course gave our group a very Neo-Pagan flavor.

IB: Yeah, I would think so <laughing> it would have that effect.

MS: And in that sense, I think maybe the guys at Carleton were a little bit... correct in their view that, you know, once... this book gets out...

IB: No, it's not a matter of once the book being out, it's a matter of distribution. I specifically made it a point to send copies to the library at Carleton.

MS: We actually had a copy for a while.

IB: Yeah, I also specifically designed this so it could be xeroxed, that was the primary reason we typeset it, actually I typeset the whole bloody thing with my own little fingers. And if I had realized then how badly things that were printed on dark colored paper would Xeroxed, we would have never used the dark colored paper for...

MS: Yeah, that's proved troublesome.

IB: Yes

MS: We had to type it up again, and print them up separately.

IB: I'm not surprised.

MS: But yes... and luckily you never made any kind of attempt on here to call it The Druid Bible.

IB: Nah

MS: You remember what caused that trouble with The Witches Bible?

IB: Yes, right, right

MS: And the whole big thing was that they used the simple word "the" versus "a"

<pause>

IB: Right, and point in fact, that wasn't their decision, that was the publishers decision... but that's another tale..

MS: It's amazing how nitpicky some Druids can get.

IB: Special order of worship Santa Cruz gathering, wow I have a whole bunch of stuff in here, I'll have to bring this with me. <laughing>

MS: Oh yeah, please do.

IB: What I'm planning on doing at this point, if we get this trip together for April...

MS: And it looks like it is very possible, I'm already getting the funding process going.

IB: Ok, I'm going to try very hard the week before I come out there, to gather as much of this historical material as I possible can, and I will bring it with me. In fact, I will carry the more important items on the plane with me as carry-on baggage, so that I will have my hands on them the entire time. And then once I have arrived...anything that I haven't Xeroxed, we can Xerox for you. Anything that you don't have yet.

MS: Yeah, and the school's going to pay for all that Xeroxing, isn't that wonderful?

IB: I think that's terrific.

MS: <laughing> So why don't we, let's see here, I have one more question here, do I? <pause> Okay, what would you say, let's just get this last question, what would say the special, what is special about the RDNA among Neo-Pagan groups? <pause> What would make it worth studying, if you were a Neo-Pagan scholar? Besides the fact that you were in it.

IB: <pause> Probably I would simply say it was worth studying because it was the ancestral group that a bunch of other Druid groups grew out of. A lot of that being my fault, but some of it possibly not being my fault. The fact that it was the... you know, it was a different strand of development of what was to become the Neo-Pagan community.... I think that it is a good example of the fact that certain ideas were in the air in that particular time in history. Of course, you can also get, you know the great arguments they have between the great man theory, the inevitable historical movement theories. Unfortunately you can argue both ways from this situation.

MS: How so?

IB: That from the, from the point of view that this was a time of great, you know, of certain ideas being in the air, you can say that the RDNA showed that people were looking for a

religious expression that, had a reverence for nature and yet also had a reverence for human individuality and freedom, which puts it in a similar boat with all the other Neo-Pagan movements. And from the, history is made by individual's point of view, you can point to either David Fisher or myself, or even Bob Larson for that matter, as having been critical in making, changing this from being a tiny little club at a small Midwestern college, to actually being a tiny, but noisy, and influential movement inside of the Neo-Pagan community as a whole. So you could argue it both ways. I don't think of myself as a great man you understand, but I was the person, in that place, at that time, and... I discovered the RDNA at about the same time that I was discovering the Neo-Pagan community, and to me they both seemed to be an obvious match.

MS: Well, ok... I think were going to stop the official interview there and just do some details here now.

<end of first interview>

Second Interview with Isaac Bonewits

by Michael Sharding
on February 23, 1994
Carleton College Archives
Oral History Project
Transcription by Sancho Cochran-Bond
Lightly edited for clarity

IB= Isaac Bonewits
MS= Michael Scharding

Figure 5 Isaac & Sam Adams at Hill 3 Oaks, 1994.

NOTE: See Green Book 10 from Part 6 of ARDA 2 for more interviews with Isaac Bonewits.

MS: Ok, it's February 23rd, 1994, and this is Michael Scharding interviewing Isaac Bonewits, a prominent Druid member and best RDNA mover. Hello.

IB: < laughs >

MS: Ok, the goal of my paper is to try to... well it's going to be pretty big... essentially, fill a gap in the present academic study of Druidism, as a part of Neo-Paganism.

IB: I didn't know that there was any academic study of Druidism.

MS: That's what I figured. I mean, outside of your Druid Chronicles (Evolved), I do not believe there has ever been a really good synopsis of American Druidism. And you had to look, really hunt through encyclopedias to get anything more out of ... than that. In the major, you know, non-Druid publications. As far as I could tell...

IB: Well, it's, you know, it's a very tiny movement. I mean

MS: Dear to my heart.

IB: Maybe, dear to our hearts, but if you include all the people who have ever considered themselves members of an RDNA Group or offshoot thereof, maybe, if you're being real generous, you'd have a couple thousand people.

MS: Yeah, So I guessed.

IB: Now that's not much in a nation of two hundred and fifty million.

MS: No it isn't... But yes, that is true. It's really tiny. And some of them...

IB: But special

MS: Yes. Ok, I have read a few little biographies about you, but for the benefit of the listeners, could you like, maybe briefly, go over your life in four minutes? <laughs>

IB: Ooooo. That's extremely difficult to do, actually.

MS: Oh, I'm sorry, Ok.

IB: Let's see, I was born in Royal Oaks, Michigan. An appropriate birth place for a future Arch-Druid I suppose. When I was eleven, my family moved to southern California, and I went with them, not having anything better to do at the time. At sixteen, I went to the University of California in Berkley as a sophomore, I graduated in spring of nineteen seventy, with a bachelor of arts degree in "Magic and Thaumaturgy." And then I wrote my first book, Real Magic, which was published in 1971, and it has been in and out of print ever since.

MS: Which I would like a copy of. I've read it, but I don't have a copy.

IB: Go to your nearest B.Daltons, or Waldenbooks, it's in all the big chain stores.

MS: Oh, it is being re-published again?

IB: Oh yeah, it's been in print for several years now. Weiser Publications has it out.

MS: Is that your actual Bachelor's Thesis?

IB: No, at that point they didn't have a requirement for a senior thesis, although in point of fact I did turn a couple of term papers, that I had written for different classes in my program, into the skeleton that I grew a couple of chapters around. Which you can sort of tell, if you read looking for that. Let's see, in 1973, I went to Minneapolis for the first of what was to become the Pagan festival movement. The first Pagan festival that I am aware of, anyway. Which was the Gnosticon Festival, that Carl Wesky of Lewellyn Publications started. This was like an indoor convention. It was not an outdoor camping festival, like we're used to know. But, at that time, he had invited me to move to Minneapolis, and take over editing his in-house magazine

MS: Gnostica

IB: Gnostica. Well it was then called Gnostica News, I turned it into Gnostica, edited it for about a year and a half, and then quit over various issues involving... different visions of what the magazine was supposed to be, let's just put it that way. He brought me in to raise the quality of the magazine. I did, and he started loosing readers, He should not have been surprised. In any event... Let's jump back just a little bit, it was in the late sixties that I met Robert Larson, who was a Graduate of Carleton, and who had been an early, but not a founding member of the grove there. He initiated me into the RDNA in, I think, 1968. I made third order, around the full moon of October of '69. So, let's see, I just celebrated my 25th anniversary as an RDNA priest, I think.

MS: Congratulations!

IB:I survived to tell the tale. In any event, at that time, I felt pretty much that RDNA was Pagan, whether it was that obvious to the members then or not. I moved to Minneapolis, I lived in Minneapolis for two years, I started up a grove there, and then, helped a couple of other people start other groves in other places.

MS: That would be...

IB: Traveled around, initiated a whole bunch of people.

MS: And we're still trying to piece together it.

IB: I know, I'm going to try to go through my... I actually have pretty good records... they just are all buried in files that I can't reach because of the other piles of paper in front of them. I will try to get them to you in time to be of some value for your thesis. In any event, let's see, I think I started out with something called the Schismatic Druids of North America, the SDNA,

MS: Which was the group underneath the Provisional Council of Arch-Druids.

IB: Right. I discovered this since, the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, wrote it's by law so that changes could only be made by a quorum of the entire Council, not a quorum of those that could be found. That it had essentially paralyzed itself, and made it impossible to accomplish anything. So that was when I then attempted to start up a Provisional Council.

MS: Yes, did that ever accomplish anything?

IB: I'm not sure it did actually. Other than, a bunch of us exchanging letters back and forth.

MS: Well, that's what normally ends up happening.

IB: In any event, I cannot recall the precise sequence between starting up the SDNA, and the HDNA, the Hasidic Druids of North America in St. Louis. That was roughly the same time, in '74,'75, and early '76. Then, when I went back to California, I believe I started referring to, I was reelected the Arch-Druid of the Berkeley grove there, around 1976. I'm not really certain on a lot of these dates, I'm afraid. In any event, I went back to California... I know I went back to California in '76... Cause, I was there in time for the bicentennial fireworks. I became Arch-Druid of the Berkeley group, we started referring to it as the NRDNA, since people found that a little les silly sounding than, SDNA or HDNA. And then some of the other people who I had ordained started up groups, and they were referring to there groups as NRDNA, too. Although it was never really... None of these groups was ever particularly structured. Obviously it was in 1976 that I produced the "Druid Chronicles (Evolved)." At least I believe that's the date it has on the front cover. Now, what I'm confused about, is exactly how the printing got done. I can't remember whether I did the typesetting in Minneapolis, or in Berkeley. But Bob Larson and I printed the one and only printing of it that was ever done. And we did that at his print shop, that he was working in, in Berkeley, in Lughnasadh of 1976. So, I can't really, at this point remember the sequence, I'll have to go back through files and see if I can find some letters that talk about more precise dating for that. In any event, in the middle 1970s I was back in Berkeley. We had a grove there for a while. As I recall, there was.. I was trying to make the group disciplined, and there wasn't a whole lot of interest in that. And, I was trying to get people to start taking it as a serious religion, and there wasn't a whole lot of enthusiasm for that either.

MS: Did they consider themselves a religion at that point?

IB: Most of them did, yes. The things that specifically characterized all the offshoots I was responsible for was that we said in our own definition that we were a religion. That it wasn't just a philosophy, that it was in fact a religion. Probably, the thing that specifically characterized them was that they were Pagan religions, identifying themselves as part of the Neo-Pagan community. Whereas the old RDNA never did that. <pause> Now, somewhere along in here, I think in the early seventies, Bob Larson got involved with a group of celtophiles, who ran something called Clan na Brocheta, which was primarily a Renaissance Fair group, who performed music and theater at the Renn. Faires. And, he became their resident Arch-Druid, and he started referring to it as the Orthodox Druids of North America, because they were doing things in Irish. There was only the one group of them, as far as I know, that ever existed, but.. and it was only a tongue and cheek reference, I don't think he ever filed any papers with..., but I think they did occasionally refer to themselves in print as the Clan Na Brocheta Grove of the ODNA. <pause> So, let's see, I suffered burn out, spun out and crashed at some point in the late seventies, I believe. There was a major explosion in the Druid group in Berkeley, and I just got sick of the politics, and quit. Now, I believe, off and during these times, I was publishing various things called the Druid Chronicler, and the Pentalpha Journal and Druid Chronicler. We can get some more dates out of those. So it must have been 1980 or '81 that I burned out on Druidism for a while. In fact I burned out on the whole Magical community for a while. I sold a large part of my occult library, and invested the money in computer books.

MS: Your, excuse me, your what? Your what all?

IB: Occult Library, the books I had on Magic and Religion.

MS: Oh, OK.

IB: I got rid of quite a few of them at that point, and used the money to buy books on computers. And taught myself some marketable job skills, and started earning a living for the first time in my life. Or at least for the first time in several years. Then I moved back and forth across the country a few times. Doing computerized typesetting and layout work, small business consulting, technical writing, a little of this, a little of that. And eventually, in 1984, I mentioned to Shenain Bell, who I had met in an Irish class in New York City, some of the things that Jim Duran had told me about Druid survivals in the Baltic Territories. Druid in the loose generic sense of Indo-European Clergy. And Jim had said that, if you took the material that was available in the Soviet archives on Pagan survivals in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, and combined it with the [Carmina Gadelica], dating materials, and the surviving Celtic sagas, you could pretty much reconstruct eighty or ninety percent of what old time Druidism had really been about. And, I mentioned that to Shenain, and he got

very excited and he started discussing it with other friends, and the next thing I know, people were saying, lets start up another Druid group, and I said, oh no, not again. It's very hard to explain this rationally, but over and over again in my life, I've felt someone picking me up by the scruff of my neck and dragging me back into Druidism. So, whether it was the Earth Mother, or Be'al, or someone else, with a capital "S." I was given to know that this was something that had to be done. So that's when I started up ADF, and I deliberately choose the name of Ar nDraiocht Fein to make it very clear that no, I was not hijacking Reform Druidism as I had been accused of in the past, that we were starting something brand new, that we would proudly date ourselves to that year.

MS: That was 1984?

IB: I believe that was 1984. Might have been '83, but I think it was '84.

<to someone else> Yeah when where we meeting?

<someone else>: our meeting in the village was '83 so the … no it was '82. Shenain says founded in '83, but I think it '84. you dated wrong I think it was earlier than that.

IB: I dated from Samhain of '84.

<Someone else>: ...Association in April of '86

IB: Ok, April of '86, my wife says, is when we.. '87.. was when we signed the articles of association, and made ADF a legal entity, on a water bed yes. The first board of trustees meeting was held on a water bed, we thought that suitably Pagan. It was also the only quite room in the house. We were at a party with some friends. And then in <off> 1989 we incorporated?

<Someone else>: Here, in this house.

IB: I'm consulting my off-line memory here.

<Someone else>: No, I was already off the board, and I didn't leave the board until…

IB: So it was '91. I'll have to look it up for you. It was '90 or '91 that we incorporated,

<Someone else>: I think it was '91

IB: and we got tax status last year, I believe, so we're now a 501c3. OK, That's a very brief and disjointed look at my history with Reform Druidism in terms of organizational, such as it is, structure.

MS: Ok, one of the things I have to do in my paper is... First of all, I have to prove that, I call it American Druidism, which is not the best term I could use, but it's the one I used, as including the RDNA, NRDNA, and everything else there, ADF and Keltria. Now, you just mentioned that you chose the name Ar nDraiocht Fein, as being, to avoid seeming that you were hijacking Reform Druidism, now does that mean that there was no connection with Reform Druidism?

IB: No, it means that, I really got worn down, with year after year after year after year of the older members of the RDNA feeling that I had done something terrible to their creation. And so, I decided that if we called it something else, it would not be something that people would automatically associate with all the other Reform Druids. Now, I borrowed some bits and pieces of the RDNA liturgy, because I'd been using it for twenty years.

MS: I believe mostly the blessing of the waters,

IB: The blessing of the waters, we used the catechism of the waters, and we used the consecration, we used the sacrifice prayer, but, the thing that's interesting is, it's been a matter of evolution that we started out with that material, and as I did more research into Celtic studies and Indo-European studies, we started modifying it. So, although the standard liturgical design is recognizable, that's mostly because the standard liturgical design in Indo-European cultures is pretty much the same, whether you're talking Pagan or Christian.

MS: And what is that basic structure?

IB: Ooooo.

MS: Without getting too complicated.

IB: That's a whole long lecture. Five basic phases, two liturgies. Now I might want to go so far as to say it's a global, but I'm not going to stick my neck out on that. I will say that I'm very familiar with it in terms of Indo-European religious ceremony.

MS: I think I've read these somewhere before, but could you...

IB: You probably have. There in one of... There's a whole long discussion of it in DP 2 I believe, or 4. The five basic phases to liturgy, that is to say worship ritual, the first phase is establishing sacred space and time. The second phase is reconstructing the cosmos and opening the gates between the worlds. The third main phase is generating energy, offering praise to that which is worshiped. The fourth main phase is a return flow of energy from the entity, or entities worshiped. And, the fifth main phase is unwinding the energy patterns that were created prior to that. Now that's very loose.

MS: That's very loose.

IB: And if you're going to quote me, I'd rather you quoted from the written material. <laughs>

MS: Yes, I understand. All right, and you say this is more the reason why the liturgies are similar between ADF and NRDNA?

IB: Well, the RDNA liturgy is in many ways, is clearly based on a Christian pattern. And the liturgy as ADF does it is based in part on that, but more in part of what I could reconstruct from dating ritual. And the few references that we have to Druidic ceremony. The ones that appear authentic. <Pause> Now in terms of the terminology that I use today, I consider the RDNA to have been a Meso-Pagan Organization. Now, Paleo-Pagan, and Meso-Pagan, and Neo-Pagan, are not clear-cut divisions. There's no sharp dividing line between those categories. They're points on a spectrum that blends imperceptibly. I believe, and this is what I want to find out from you, if you've managed to discover it: I believe that David Fisher came from a family of people involved in the United Ancient Order of Druids, or one of the other related fraternal offshoots.

MS: David Fisher, as far as I know, refuses to answer anything. So I can't... or maybe it's just bad addresses, but it just doesn't seem to work. I've talked with Norman Nelson who was a Mason, and he says there ain't nothing that looks Masonic, but as I am not a Mason I cannot possibly figure it out.

IB: Ah, OK.

MS: And Gordon Melton has not replied.

IB: In the past, I was in the habit of referring to the various Meso-Pagan Druid groups in England as being Masonic/Fraternal Druids. That was probably much too loose of language on my part. The cross over is easy to make in England, where for centuries it's been common for somebody whose interested in metaphysics and the occult to belong to more than one group simultaneously. There are obvious similarities to Masonic ritual in the surviving United Ancient Order of Druids ceremonies that I have seen scripts of. That is to say, the style

of language is very similar, the style of ceremony is very similar, the images are different. So a modern day Mason, looking at those would not see the similarities. But, certainly I don't think the United Ancient Order of Druids has considered itself a Masonic organization in 200 years.

MS: Yes, mostly charitable, I think.

IB: What?

MS: Charitable organization.

IB: yeah, well a charitable, a fraternal organization. So, I believe that I can see from the earliest Ur text rituals, that David Fisher was probably working from one of the liturgy books of the AOD. And, that combined with his insistence that Druidism was a philosophy applicable to any religion, which is almost a direct quote from the AOD, makes it fairly clear that he was starting out with that, what I call Meso-Pagan approach. The mixing of Celtic Paganism with extremely liberal Christianity. Actually Unitarianism, it turns out.

MS; I always thought of it as Deism.

IB: A lot of Deism, too. I don't know, did you get the magazine that the British Council of Druid Orders put out?

MS: Druid's Voice.

IB: They published an article, in one of the issues that they sent me, on the Iolo Morganwg activity with the Unitarians. It turns out that he was one of the early Unitarian agitators.

MS: Ok, that makes sense.

IB: And he thought of Unitarianism, and Druidism as being essentially the same thing. So, that kind of an approach of mixing whatever they might have had, or fantasized they had that was Pagan, with liberal Christianity, is really characteristic of what I call a Meso-Pagan approach.

MS: Yeah, I agree with you.

IB: It's roughly the equivalent to what was done with Voudoun, and Macumba and Santeria where you mixed Paganism and Christianity, in their case for survival. I think it was partly done for survival, in terms of public relations, in England, but it was also done because the guy who invented most of it was an agitator in the ultra-liberal wing of Christianity. And he saw the Druids as being exemplars he could point to, that English men would be... now this is sexist, of course... that English men would be proud of, and willing to follow the example of. So, in any event, RDNA started out Meso-Pagan. And it was, I will have to admit, it was probably due to my agitating, that it began to move in the direction of being Neo-Pagan. Because I was the one who first, to my knowledge anyway, wrote to any of the older members and said, hey this looks like a Pagan religion here, why don't we admit that it's a religion, and learn what we can learn from the other people in the Neo-Pagan community.

MS: Well, the Neo-Pagan community was not extremely well known at that time, or was it?

IB: Well, that's true. No, it was not particularly well known at that time, and I did not understand, as most people don't when they're young and involved in some kind of a cultural movement, just how tiny the pond was that I was swimming around in.

MS: Well, most of them seem to have pretty much grown out of this thing, I still remember being warned in 1989, stay away from Isaac. But, I think most of the people have pretty much forgotten the incident by this point.

IB: Wait a minute? What incident?

MS: Oh, the letter incident. The 1974 letter. There are just like dozens of letters in the Archives here about that. The initial reactions were pretty strong.

IB: Oh, when I published my letters and Reform Druidism was a Pagan religion and should admit it.

MS: Yeah.

IB: Yeah. I had no idea that that was going to provoke that kind of a reaction. I didn't even get most of the reaction, most of it seems to have gone completely past me, people talking to each other, and not bothering to send me a copy.

MS: I wasn't sure about that.

IB: I saw, maybe a dozen letters, all told, during that whole controversy. You probably have a much better picture of it than I did at the time.

MS: What is your impression of what happened to the NRDNA during the beginning of the eighties? It seems to have disappeared, or gone into what they call the boring years.

IB: The Boring Years, yeah. The San Francisco Bay regions in many ways is similar to England, a terrible thing for a Celtophile to say, but true, in that there were a certain number of people who were interested in the occult and unusual religions, and many of them belonged to each other's groups, and a lot of the activity that took place, took place at the instigation of actually a rather small circle of people. I think, what basically happened was: after the Berkeley grove blew up, that the Orinda Grove continued to survive off and on, but that was like five or six people, I think. Larry Press is the one to ask questions about the Orinda Grove. And, I believe they existed, off and on, to this day. Stephan always had a grove operating out of his back yard. Where ever Stephan Abbot was, he would say there was a grove. But, in point of fact, the grove actually existed only on those occasions when Stephan was in the mood to throw a ritual. And, it was essentially, you know, a charismatic following of whoever was hanging out with Stephan at the time.

MS: When was this starting? When did this Steven come in?

IB: Stephan Abbot? Oh god, he goes way, way, way, way, way back. Way back. He may go back to the very beginnings of the Berkeley Grove, I mean late sixties/early seventies at least. I lived next door to him for a while. We were roommates in a house for a while. We had a lot of interaction together. There was a time period when the Hazelnut Grove, and the Berkeley Grove were functioning simultaneously. And then, when the Berkeley Grove blew up, Stephan insisted that he would keep ceremonies going, and I think he did for a while. Then, Stephan, who has never had a very good grasp of real world economics, and therefore has been homeless on many occasions, or has had to move rapidly from one home to another home, as he moved around, his supposed grove moved with him. But, I was shocked to discover that he actually got around to buying a post office box in San Jose for his current grove, but his phone was recently disconnected, so I have no idea where he is. This is something that happens fairly commonly.

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MS; We're back again.

IB: Stephan and Tezra, both know my feelings about them, but I don't necessarily want that shared with whoever might happen to hear the tape.

MS: So, I hate to bring this up, but what is the explosion of the Berkeley Grove?

IB: I can't remember.

MS: I think it has something to do with two people wanting to be Arch-Druid, or something, at the same time? But that's the only [person] I had.

IB: It was a... I'm going to have to look it up for you, there was a bitterly contested election for Arch-Druid, I had been out of town for a long time, I came back, a lot of the people in the grove wanted me to take over as Arch-Druid again, others wanted the person who had been Arch-Druid for the preceding couple of years to be reelected [Joan]. They held an election, and I think I won by one vote. That's the sort of thing that blows up small groups. And there were also some major personality conflicts going on between some of the organizers, I was trying to accomplish, on a smaller scale, many of the things that I have since done with ADF, and although there were three or four people folks in the group who were enthusiastic about that, the rest of them just didn't see it as being what they wanted to do with Druidism. So, all that got tied into the elections. Then there was a ritual that was going to be done on the beach, that wound up evolving a very long walk, and I think it's now called the Death March. That was Stephan's usual poetic exaggeration. To get to the spot where... I think it was Joan, I don't think it was Nina... It was Joan's decision that there was a specific spot on the beach that was absolutely perfect, and we saw no reason why a bunch of healthy people couldn't walk a mile. Well, one of them wasn't so healthy, but she wasn't the one who complained. That was a young lady who had Polio, and was used to walking along after other people and keeping up. In any event, that was just one more excuse for people who thought I was turning into a rigid religious fanatic, and they wanted nothing to do with it. <pause> What? Make a sacrifice for your religion? How un-American?

MS: Let me just get Henge of the Keltria out of the way here. I heard something about the twelve messages tacked onto your van or something, at PSG. What was your reaction to the Keltria? It was not quite a defection, but...

IB: It was a schism. Actually, though I was slightly annoyed at the time, I fairly rapidly came to see it as a very healthy thing. I figure any religion that has new religions spinning off from it is obviously doing something right. I mean that's a healthy sign for any organization, that it produces offspring. You know, mutations. The people who started Keltria seemed to be more interested in focusing on Celtic rather than Pan-Indo-European approaches to the material. At the time, I think they were quite a bit looser in their attitudes about what kinds of scholarship to accept. And they wanted to do rituals that were more reminiscent of Wicca than what I thought reconstructed Druidism should be. They also had some major disagreements with us over the organizational function and structure of ADF. Now, in the years since they split off, they have come to be more and more similar to ADF, in that... they discovered that some of the organizational rules that I had instituted, I had instituted for very good reasons. That it's the nature of social organizations, whether religious or non-religious to behave in certain ways, and if you plan for it ahead of time you can prevent quite a few headaches. And, I believe, possibly stung by one or two rude comments of mine on the topic, they've taken more and more of the Wiccan/Cabbalistic, non-ancient stuff out of their ceremonies, and tried to put more authentic material into their ritual. I can't say that for sure because I haven't been to a Keltrian ritual, but from the discussions I've had on the phone with Tony, I've gathered that Keltrian ritual, now, does not resemble Wiccan ceremony near as much as it used to.

MS: It doesn't, no. It doesn't seem to be very closely related at all.

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IB: No, the first schism from ADF was Shadow Path Grove in Connecticut, which spun off independently because they didn't really want to run an open grove, which is how ADF Groves are structured. They wanted a closed coven style group, and they didn't want to go public and invite total strangers to show up and participate.

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IB: Schisms from ADF. So the first schism was Shadow Path Grove, that was, I can't remember the year. Then was Keltria. Then the next one was Druidactios.

MS: That's a split off?

IB: Yes.

MS: Oooh! Interesting.

IB: Much to the... It's difficult to get the guy who started it, Tom Cross to admit it, but he was in point of fact a member of ADF [and the NRDNA.]

MS: Oh, does that mean I have to include him in the Definition of American Druidism?

IB: Yes and No. His group doesn't exist anymore.

MS: I heard actually that it does.

IB: Oh yeah? Well, the last I had heard from him, he had announced that he was converting back to Catholicism, and that all real Celts would be Irish Catholics, if they were real Celts. And his second in command, whom he had begged to take over the group had left it in disgust, and started his own Roman Paganism group. That's Ernie Didwell, who now lives in Arizona. An old time Neo-Pagan founding father of the community, in fact. In any event, Tom Cross... You should have the copy of DP that had, what did I call it, a forest full of groves, a discussion of other Druid organizations.

MS: I don't actually have all the issues, I don't believe.

IB: Oh, well tell me which ones you don't have and I'll try to get them to you. I though I sent you a full set.

MS: I'll have to get back to you on that one.

IB: In any event, Tom Cross, like many another person, has erroneously assumed that I am Jewish. Because he's anti-Semitic, he thought it was horrifying that somebody who was Jewish could be running a Druid organization. In point of fact, I'm not Jewish, but it has stirred up that same controversy on many occasions in my life.

MS: How is Druidactios a split off? Besides the fact that he was an ADF member?

IB: He was an ADF member. He started out using a lot of our materials, and then gradually replaced it with his own materials. He decided he wanted to do Gaulish Druidism. And since there's almost nothing known about it, it gives him plenty of room for him to improvise. What he essentially did was, he started up a Celtic version of the Norse Meso-Pagan groups.

MS: That's what I figured.

IB: It was the same, the racism and the emphasis on blood and family and the sexism. You've read his book? The Sacred Cauldron?

MS: I have read The Truth About Druids, and I have glanced through The Sacred Cauldron at a friend's house.

IB: One of the things that's really funny is that one of his major objections to ADF was that we used comparative Indo-European Studies as one of our sources of inspiration, and he thinks that that's a terrible thing to do, that we should only use Celtic materials, and then proceeds to put rituals in his book that are essentially thinly Celticized versions of Nordic fire rituals. In any event, I committed a major crime with him in that I was not... a) he thought I was Jewish, b) I wasn't anywhere as impressed by him as he thought I should be. In any event, so he started up Druidactios. I saw their mailing list at one point, they never had more than about forty people on the mailing list, and two dozen of those where exchange subscriptions with other Pagan publications. He only put out like two or three issues of his journal.

MS: Do you have copies of those?

IB: I believe I might.

MS: Because I would like copies of those.

IB: I have at least a copy of one. He seemed to spend an enormous amount of time writing poison pen letters, about me and other people in the Pagan community, who didn't immediately acknowledge his superiority.

MS: That's what I kind of picked up.

IB: I mean, it was just thoroughly unprecedented, unpleasant yerk. I think is the technical, scientific, theological term. In any event,

MS: Are there any other schisms?

IB: I think that's it. Currently. For all I know there may soon be others. I mean, certainly we get, I get letters from people who say that, you know, they're starting a new group and they're borrowing stuff from us. And that's perfectly fine with me, that was one of the things that I expected to have happen with ADF.

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IB: ...out as having been a member of ADF, I had no indication that he had any background in Druidism prior to the membership in ADF, I could be wrong. I would have to go look up his membership records.

MS: It's a bit too late for me to stick him in my paper, except in the end notes.

IB: But he was upset that we had a non-racist, non-sexist policy, he thought our politics were too liberal. His politics were slightly to the right of Attila the Hun. And I'm liberal.

MS: OK, let's get some statistics on the ADF.

IB: OK.

MS: What are the number of paid members in the ADF, roughly?

IB: That has vacillated wildly. At the moment, I believe the current number of paid members is around 250. With a roughly equal number of paid subscribers to the Druids Progress, and about a seventy to eighty percent overlap. Not all the members subscribe to DP, and not all subscribers of DP are members. What I have discovered however is that this is not actually, necessarily, the most important statistic. I found this out by discussing the topic with Unitarians, and a few other people in other groups at the World Parliament of Religions, in terms of the impact that ADF has, it's sometimes more interesting to look, not at the total number of people who have purchased memberships in the organization, but the people who consider themselves part of the tradition. That is to say, we have about a dozen chartered groves right now, that is to say February of '94. Eight of those groves, at least, are having regular meetings at which anywhere from twenty to sixty or seventy people show up. And those people consider themselves members of the local grove, even though there might be only five or six of them in a given grove, who officially join ADF. So, in terms of the people who have been in ADF and consider themselves ADF Druids, they just haven't gotten around to renewing, and/or the ones that are too cheapskate to buy memberships, but they still want to have the access to the traditions, written and other material. We're probably closer to around a thousand to twelve hundred. Normally, in most religions you would say followers, but we don't have much in the way of followers in the Pagan community. Most Pagan's don't approve of following.

MS: Don't want to go into other Druid groups right now, but... Might as well get them out of the way. OK, what other Druid groups are there presently in the United States, and do you consider them to be in the same category as the RDNA, ADF, and Keltria?

IB: It all depends on how we define our terms. The largest by far is the United Ancient Order of Druids, which still has several thousand members in the US, clustered mainly in Ohio and California. They're a fraternal organization like the Koanas Club, or the Lions, or the Elks. They don't have anything to do with us, even though I've written to them occasionally and exchanged nice letters, they're not connected to the Pagan community at all, to the best of my knowledge. The Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids, which was very definitely Meso-Pagan when it started out is becoming increasingly Neo-Pagan, under the influence of it's current chosen chief, Philip Carr-Gomm, who is a heck of a nice guy. I'm currently reading his book, that he just published, his new one, called The Druid Way.

MS: Very good book.

IB: Excellent, I'm really enjoying it. Even though I get annoyed when he occasionally throws these things in: "Ancient Druids believed..." and it's one of these things that was invented in the 1700s. But, other than that I'm really enjoying the book a lot. I'd say the OBOD is well on the way from the transition from Meso-Pagan to Neo-Pagan. They have several hundred members, I think.

MS: In the United States, or in Britain?

IB: Mostly in England, but they seem to have at least a few dozen in the United States, they have several local groves in the area, that we're going to be starting to list in DP and News from the Mother Grove. We just voted a policy, that I invented, called "a Forest Full of Groves" policy, whereby we will start publishing the central addresses, and local group addresses of the various and sundry other Druid groups that we get along with, which is most of them, by and large. Oh, that's right, I forgot yet another Druid group that was a schism from ADF, because I repressed the memory. Well, it wasn't a schism so much as it was a rip-off, something called the Divine Circle of Sacred Grove: A Druid Fellowship.

MS: They're an offshoot of Barney, aren't they?

IB: Originally they're from Barney. Their leader joined ADF, claiming to have absolutely no background in Druidism what-so-ever, and then preceded to plagiarize our materials, to mix it in with the stuff she had plagiarized from several other people. We were responsible for exposing them as being fraudulent, and essentially drove them out of town, in the Seattle area, and they've now moved to the Arizona area,

and we're keeping in touch with law enforcement people there. They are not nice. In any event, other Druid groups around. Well, there's the RDNA, and it's offshoots. some of them Meso-Pagan, some of them Neo-Pagan, many of them in transition. There's ADF. There's Keltria. Druidactios, if it still exists and functions, is Meso- not Neo- and not interested in being Neo-. Tom Cross is furious that ADF is so "Wicced" as he puts it, even though I've done my best to make sure that what we're doing actually bears very little resemblance to Wicca. But, for some strange reason he's decided that we're Wiccan, and he's agin it. And he's against Neo-Paganism. So, Druidactios is, would be on the Meso-line. There's a whole bunch of groups in England, that we're in contact with,

MS: They're not really pertinent right now.

IB: They're not really pertinent, because they're not really functioning in the United States. I'm unaware of any other Druid Groups in the United States. I'm sure there are some. Oh yeah, there's a, another schism. <laughs> What do they call themselves? The group in Portland. The transsexual people, Yeah. One guy in Portland was a member and was starting a grove to send his spin off and start his own Celtic church or something. Primitive Celtic Church, that's it.

MS: Primitive Celtic Church.

IB: Right. And, their rituals are pretty much identical to standard ADF rituals, and the theology is pretty much the same, as near as I can tell, the only difference is that they're independent. So they're Neo-. Primitive Celtic Church. They exist, far as I know, only in the Portland area. Every once in a while I'll hear about groups being Druid here and there, but when I contact them, I either don't hear from them or it's a group that somebody has just started and they don't know what they're doing and they join ADF. At this point, I have to say that ADF is probably the most influential of current Neo-Pagan Druid groups in America. Closely followed by Keltria. Do you know about Cindy Salee NRDNA grove up in Seattle?

MS: I tried contacting them, and just didn't get anything.

IB: Well, they're not organized in any sense, other than it's just the grove that she's been running for twenty years. Oh right Jay Tibbles. Jay Tibbles was one of the board members of the Divine Circle Group, when we exposed them, and he schismed off from them, and joined ADF. He's also joined the OBOD. He started his own group called the American Druidic Church. You'll be getting these addresses in the mail, I put them in the mail to you yesterday. Yeah, Jay Tibbles, the American Druidic Church. Very nice guy, he's an MD. And, they're essentially doing something that is Wicca essentially, with a strong Celtic focus.

MS: Alright, let try to get back over to the topic.

IB: I'm sorry.

MS: No problem, this is all good information.

IB: I was known as being scattered, absentminded, and having a terrible memory before.... I came down with a neurological disease.

MS: Do you see any similarities between RDNA, NRDNA, ADF, and Keltria, that makes them distinct from any other American Druid group?

IB: Rephrase that question.

MS: Do the aforementioned groups bear a closer resemblance to each other than to other groups?

IB: Well, obviously the NRDNA bears a closer resemblance to the RDNA than to anything else. ADF and Keltria bear a very close relationship to each other. And, historically, we're all linked in a chronological line. The NRDNA grew out of my efforts to convince the RDNA to get rid of the Meso and go for Neo. ADF was in many ways a result of my attempts, of my seizing attempts to do that within the RDNA structure, and just starting up something independent. And Keltria was an offshoot of a group of people inside ADF who wanted to take it in a slightly different direction.

MS:I guess that's good enough.

IB: As far as I'm concerned, all of these, we will cheerfully publish networking information for all of these groups, as well as the groups in the British Council of Druid Orders, and so on and so forth, all the groups that are legit. Whether we agree with their theology or not. If we think that they are, how would I put this? If we think that a group is positively inclined towards helping the environment, and is nature oriented, and upholding what they think of as the highest ideals of Druidism, then we would be inclined to be happy about networking with them, and helping people get in touch with them. I mean, some of the groups just, you know, I have no interest in. There's a cabbalistic group... Cabalistic Druidism, that doesn't make any sense to me. But they like it, so if we have people who come to us who are interested in Druidism, and are also interested in cabbala, I would send them off to that group.

MS: Well, see I wasn't trying to imply that we are the only four groups in the United States, which is not true.

IB: No, but they're the four groups that a) I'm most familiar with, b) that I've played a historical role in, and c) that I can chronologically and evolutionarily link one to the other.

MS: I think we've already gone over what books... Have we gone over what books deal with American Druidism?

IB: There aren't any.

MS: There aren't any, ok, that's right.

IB: The best source to deal with it is Margot Adler's Drawing Down the Moon, Rosemary Guiley's Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft has a long article on ADF

MS: And you.

IB: and me, based on interviews with me that are pretty darn accurate, and that's about it.

MS: OK.

IB: Maybe Gordie has published something somewhere that I don't know about.

MS: There's a few I'll give a copies to you someday.

IB: Oh yeah, Laurie Cabot's book has been talking about me too.

MS: Who's Laurie Cabot?

IB: Laurie Cabot is the official witch of Salem Massachusetts, and she just put out a book called Power Through Witchcraft. And, apparently, she's been mentioning us and recommending us, because we've been getting a lot of people saying, "I heard about you from Laurie Cabot's book, so what the heck." I have no idea how accurate her commentary would be about me. I haven't read it yet, I'm going to.

MS: So you've already mentioned that you share and exchange information with a variety of Druid groups. This is different from Keltria, which does not. I've heard the figure that 35% of ADF members come from Drawing Down the Moon article.

IB: Um, not anymore.

MS: Not anymore?

IB: I'd say that that was certainly true in the first seven or eight years. One of the things that has made ADF such a challenge to organize and to coordinate has been that we made the leap to a national organization at the start, we decided that we were going to function that way, as a national network for people who wanted to reconstruct Druidism in a way that we thought was focused on excellence rather than romanticism. So we have had lots of people communicating with each other at great distances, mostly through the mail, and a lot of people who heard about us primarily through Margot's book, and then joined the organization, and either stayed or didn't stay. This is different from the average organization, which starts out with a small local group of enthusiasts, and gradually gets larger and produces off shoots. So, it's had both strengths and weaknesses to the approach that we used.

MS: What are the main attractions of members now? How do most members come to find ADF?

IB: A multiple number of sources. The 1-800-Druidry line, that has been mentioned in various articles, has generated a lot of phone calls, and a lot of those people have become members as a result. The computer bulletin boards are attracting a lot of people since we have an ADF discussion group in the PODS net echo system. Are you familiar with that?

MS: Not yet.

IB: Pods is Pagan Occult Discussion System, or something like that. It's one of the FIDO net echo systems around the country, small local bulletin boards that use a tree structure to pass messages back and forth. Very informal. It's not a structure, it's a..... bulletin board organizing system paradigm that programmers use in common. In ay event, so there's one of the many FIDO nets is the Pagan collection of FIDO nets. Bulletin boards passing Pagan messages around, and ADF is one of the discussion areas. There is also an ADF discussion area in Genie, there's one on the internet. And we also have people discussing ADF on all of the other main computer systems, like America online, and CompuServe, prodigy and so forth. So our name is certainly bandied about a great deal. And we've uploaded basic ADF literature with our address and with our phone number, so we get a lot of new members that way. And a lot of the new members are people who simply start going to a local grove, and attending. One of the biggest challenges we have right now is figuring out ways to persuade people that they should not just enjoy the fellowship of the local group, but actually join the organization and support the work that we're trying to do that requires money.

MS: You might want to take a look at the SCA, they're going through that problem right now.

IB: I'm not surprised.

MS: Yeah. OK.. and you also do presentations at conventions and such.

IB: Well, I.. yeah I go to festivals and things, not as many as I used to, because my health hasn't been good, but a lot... in the early days, a lot of the early growth of ADF came specifically as a result of presentations that I would do. I would go to a festival in some part of the country, talk about Druidism, talk about ADF, talk about what I'd like to do with it, a dozen people would join ADF, and the next thing we know we'd have two or three local groves. And, therefore, the majority of our groves wound up being in areas that I traveled to, which was mostly the east coast and the upper Midwest. That still has a strong effect on founding local groups. But, since I'm not traveling as much as I used to, it's not as effective a method. There's also the fact that having had a kid, I've had to focus a lot more attention on staying home and earning a living, which I have never been able to do from being Arch-Druid, and that means that I'm spending a lot less time on promoting the organization and increasing it's growth than I would like to be spending.

MS: You mentioned a Parliament of World Religions, is ADF part of any other interfaith councils?

IB: Not currently. It hasn't been relevant yet, simply because <pause> there aren't that many national ecumenical organizations. Local groves, are allowed to join local interfaith councils, but most local interfaith councils don't want Pagan groups, so that will vary considerably depending on what the local politics happen to be. I went... One of our members in ADF donated the money for me to go to the World Parliament of Religions, and so I went last September, and you probably read the results in the DP. the Druids Progress, or News from the Mother Grove, have you gotten that.

MS: I don't get News from the Mother Grove yet.

IB: Ah, I will try to send you some of those. It was a lot of fun, I learned quite a bit, and Paganism made quite a coming out party there.

MS: I heard about that.

IB Yeah.

MS: There was also Circle and wasn't Church of All Worlds there also.

IB: Yeah, and the Earth Spirit Community from Boston, which started out local became regional, and now is becoming a national organization.

MS: Do you see this to increase in the future?

IB: What? Ecumenical activity? Yeah, I think it's going to. Because the liberal members of the other mainstream religions are very very interested in Goddess worship, and in nature religion. And, they're perfectly willing to talk to us. So, even though the fundamentalists and the Greek orthodox and the Roman Catholics aren't to thrilled about us being around, the mainline Protestant and Unitarian and liberal Christian groups are very happy to sit down and have a cup of tea and find out what it is we really believe before they start arguing. I expect that there will be a lot of increasing interfaith activity between Neo-Pagans and non-Pagans in the future.

MS; I want to get a little more, I got like two more questions, here. Now as far as I've been able to pick up, the ADF is extremely well known for its pushing forward paid clergy, and obtaining church status. What were the other movements that were occurring at the same time you were doing this? For that paid clergy status and stuff? Were you alone, or were you among many people?

IB: Well, I told you about the ten year gap, didn't I?

MS: Yes I've heard of it.

IB: OK. About five or six years ago, I started talking about the need for professionally trained clergy in the Pagan community. That as Paganism became more mainstream, and as Pagan congregations became larger and larger, we were going to need a pool of clergy who were at least as well trained as the clergy of other religions are. And that meant that we needed to start having standards of qualification for clergy, based on demonstrable knowledge and skill. That in turn was

eventually going to lead to people having to go to college or in some other way get an education related to how to be a clergy person. This tied into ADF study program, which I believe I sent you a copy of.

MS: I've read it.

IB: I believe that we are eventually going to have a full time paid Pagan clergy. We have full time Pagan clergy now. It's just that hardly any of them get paid. Some of them do, some of them are actually starting to be paid by their religious organizations for these fifty and sixty hour work weeks they put in. I believe Otter and Morning Glory now get a stipend for the work that they do. And, Anders and Deirdre Corbin from Earth Spirit. Officially they earn their living organizing Pagan festivals, unofficially they're basically being paid Pagan clergy. The topic was extremely controversial when I first brought it up, for a variety of reasons, both legitimate and illegitimate. And, I think that we are going to see paid Pagan clergy increasing, and twenty or thirty years from now, there'll be so many Pagan clergy who are paid that every one will wonder what all the controversy was about. Not that this is going to solve all our problems, since there are plenty of clergy who get paid who still have problems. But, it will relieve one set of stresses from the heads of those of us who put in incredibly long hours trying to organize and facilitate large scale Pagan groups, and then have to turn around and earn a mundane living. The main argument on that will be in the last two issues of Fireheart Magazine, if you can get them.

MS: OK, I don't know if I'll get a chance on that. What is the official church position, according to law, right now, of the ADF.

IB: The official legal status of ADF? We're an incorporated nonprofit religious corporation in the state of Delaware, and we have 501c3 status from the IRS, they think we're a church, or they think we're a religious organization, they don't necessarily call it a church. And, so we're completely legal. And, we are working on obtaining what is called a Group-Exemption letter for our local groves. But, the IRS requires us to pay a fee of five hundred dollars for that, and we haven't accumulated sufficient money to pay for it yet, but eventually, each and every single chartered grove of ADF will also have a tax exempt status.

MS: Are your priests considered to be legal ministers?

IB: By whom?

MS: I don't know, by the courts? For instance if someone confided something to one of your priests, would he be forced to divulge that information in a legal court? Or has this not come up yet?

IB: It simply has not come up yet. Our people have performed weddings and funerals. Several of our people are functioning as Chaplains, not in the Military, but we have a prison ministry operating out of the grove in Texas. And, we haven't had any trouble at all with legal recognition of our status. Over the course of the last twenty years, due primarily to the mischievous going-ons of the Universal Life Church, most state and local governments have backed away from trying to define who's a real clergy person, and what is a real religion. Mostly these days, they examine things on a case by case basis. And, if you have an unusual non-mainstream religious group then a local county court house, or state government may want to see materials about your organization, before they'll say, "OK, we'll let you marry and bury here." But, so far that really hasn't been a problem here.

MS: The last two questions are activism, and differences between Druidism and Wicca.

IB: Ok.

MS: Which one do you want to go for?

IB: You've got my discussion of the differences in the... between Druidism and Wicca... in the little brochures. The standard ADF brochures, I mean, they're not that major, in one sense. I mean, Druidism and Wicca are Neo-Pagan religions, as we practice them anyway. <pause> Neo-Pagan Druidism and Neo-Pagan Wicca are similar in that they are both part of the Neo-Pagan community. They're sibling religions, with overlapping memberships. I would say that at least a third and maybe a half of the members of ADF also practice one form or another of Wiccan. There's no real conflict between the two, but there is a different emphasis in theology, a different liturgical style. And, primarily the difference is between groups that are small, private and exclusive versus groups that are large, public and inclusive. but, there's no reason you can't do both simultaneously. That is to say, you can have a large Pagan congregation that has smaller groups within it. That's what we're seeing develop in the ADF Groves, just as I expected.

MS: The major theological difference is Polytheism versus Pantheism?

IB: No, Polytheism vs. Duotheism. Wicca's basic theology is Duotheistic, or in the case of some feminist traditions, Monotheistic. ADF's emphasis is Polytheistic. We think it's more important to honor and celebrate the differences in diversity of deity, rather than the similarities they might have with each other. So, the advantage is that we don't have to cram all the deities into a small set of symbolic pigeon holes. Not every goddess in the world fits into the Mother, Maiden or Crone trilogy. Not every god in the world fits into the Hunting God, Vegetation God, Sun God pattern. So, we have a lot more theological elbow room in that way. My wife is a Witch and a Druid, I'm a Witch and a Druid. I just spent most of my time, and my emphasis in public on the Druidic side, because that's the side that needs work in developing right now. The Wiccan community is doing very nicely, and growing geometrically in a very quiet fashion.

MS: Last question here is activism. Does your group, as a group ...

IB: We encourage our members, and our local groves to be active in areas that are relevant where they happen to live. In ecology, social justice, and so forth. We don't have one or two particular axes that we grind. A couple... several groves are doing tree planting activities for example. We've had litter clean ups, and recycling days, and one group volunteered at a soup kitchen for a weekend, blood drives, basically we want... I think that Pagan congregations, at least the public church ones, should be an integral part of their local, social as well as biological, environment. And, that means participating in the life of the community, giving something back for what you get. I also believe that Druids are the natural chaplains for an environmental movement. And, that people who think of themselves as being Druidic in nature, so to speak, should be involved in some sort of environmental activism, even if its just a matter of joining Green Peace and subscribing to Nature Magazine, they should be putting some of their time, money, and energy into helping the environment.

MS: Alright, well I think I'm going to close off this interview officially, lets see here.

Alice Cascorbi Interview

August 29th, 1993

Alice restarted the Carleton Druids in 1985 and was quiet influential in giving it a new face for the times, new customs with her friends, and breathing new life into the system.

Eric Hillemann (EH): This is Eric Hillemann, the Archivist at Carleton, the date is August 29th, 1993. What follows will be an interview with Alice Cascorbi, Carleton class of 1988. Also Sitting with us is Michael Scharding, the current Arch-Druid of the Carleton Druids and the Druids are expected to form what we are going to talk about today and what the Druids were like when you were here, but lets start out with some information about your own background and what brought you to Carleton. Get us to the campus...

Alice Cascorbi (AC): ok, I was raised in Cleveland Ohio and I went to a preppy private school for my high school and when it came time to look for a college, which all of were expected to do. I didn't know, what I wanted to be and I found out that liberal arts college would be a place for a person like me. We had a good guidance councilor who first pointed in this direction, but it was really a friend of mine, Frankie Bressman who was one class ahead of me, at that school, Laurel school in Ohio, who came here herself. She was class of 86 I guess, who, when I asked her where you going to school, oh she said, "oh Carleton in Northfield." I said, "Well, I guess I heard of that. It was a good school without the pretensions of some of the eastern schools, my hold cohort was being shoved toward. I had had too much and too much of the preppiness and pretension and so when I visited here, the thing that really decided me, I had looked at Oberlin which was quite close to home and Haverford, and Swarthmore, at U of Chicago and Vassar and of the two, I almost when to U of Chicago, but Carleton with its small town atmosphere. I never had been in a safe environment where people could really walk around at night. Even though it is not perfectly safe here, its a lot safer that what I grew up with. The unpretentiousness and yet intellectual, I don't know what the high intellectual level without pretentiousness and the way people seemed to interact when they walked around campus. I liked the atmosphere here it was relaxed and because it had a good reputation academically, that is all I knew about colleges. I came here. I choose Carleton, well for myself, I really blossomed here and I had a good time, a good experience. It was a life changing experience for me. The Druids are only a very small part of that. I didn't really know what I was doing, as a high school kid. This was a very good place to go and if I could choose again, I would choose a college like this.

EH: That is good to hear.

AC: Anyway, my religious background, which would be some interest to this is pretty typical intellectual semi-agnostic atheist parents. My mother raised Catholic. My father raised Lutheran. My father came from Germany. My mother came from Pennsylvania from a long line of people who been in this country a long time. So I have that in my background, for what it is worth, but neither of them was terribly religious. When their children were going up and we moved to Ohio, there was an Anglican church, Episcopal church just down the road. They considered it a great compromise between Catholicism and Lutheranism and so close to home too and we would go there. It was a friendly place, but we didn't have a community there and they were not into it religiously. I think if my parents had been more religious it would have been harder for me to accept what I did and what I have about my spiritual side. I was brought up with this sort of "religion is for kids." It is something we tell the children. It is, looking back, it is the Easter bunny. The parents didn't really believe it. The didn't really believe the teachings of their church. If my parents have spiritual, they do actually, their spiritual beliefs are a lot closer to mine, than to any Christian churches right now and so they are sort of Unitarian Agnostic people who have nothing against odd practice. They don't believe in the devil, they don't believe in, you know, a strong theology of that kind. I'm only getting to this because I'm not a very rebellious person by nature and if they had been, I probably would never have come out of the closet as a Druid. That is just my personality and unlike some of the other folks who hopefully are being interviewed too, I personally have always had a conflict between my desire to do Druid things and my desire to be a good girl and stay in the mainstream. I only put that out, because there are those of us too who are just drawn to it from an internal thing and have trouble with the flamboyant side. Some people really enjoy bucking the system and really had people like that when I was a Druid who were into it because it was cool and weird. There is certainly a place for that, but it is not where I'm coming from.

To make a longer story short, I had read a lot as a child. I read Greek mythology voraciously. I loved Greek mythology and by the time I was 6th or 7th grade age, I had realized that my parents didn't really believe the stuff in church, but they were acting as those they did only in front of the kids, you know. Don't swear sort of things. Sort of superficial lip service to Christianity. It made me really angry and when one of my little classmates said she was an atheist and that meant she didn't believe in god. I said, "Well that is what I am." Oddly enough, or at the same time, I had what I called my mystical streak. I just gave up try to analysis it because even at that time, there was times when I needed to pray or wanted to pray. Wanted to reach out and give thanks or give for help with something. I was 11 or 12 at this time. When I did that I reached out to Diana. The Goddess image that I knew from

mythology and to Athena, but especially to Diana because I was a maiden, I was a young girl with tom boy tendencies and was quite unhappy where I was with my school. The maiden huntress image, was very attractive and comforting. Diana was my goddess, even though I was an Atheist. That is sort of where things stood. I came to College, I was 17. I had been skipped ahead a grade and that was a bad experience that I wouldn't do to a kid like myself at that point, but be that as it may. So intellectually up there, emotionally young, very young. Coming to college was the best thing that happened to me in terms of here I finally had, there were people all around me who were like me who had been smart, who had been weird and had often been ostracized because they were smart and or weird. I loved it, it was wonderful. To open parts of myself, be friends, having good friends. Living with other people all around me, having a roommate. It was tremendously hard especially the first term here, freshman year, but it was tremendously rewarding. For a couple of years, I was just being a student here. I went to Quaker meeting a couple of times. I was interested in their philosophy, but didn't find any real juice in it. I had heard of the Druids in the Carleton Catalogue that this was something that had started back in the '60s. It seemed awfully attractive. No, there weren't any on campus any more, it was something in the past, but what a cool idea, how funny. The amusing, the prankish nature of it to buck the chapel requirement in that way was funny and then somebody took me up to the Hill of 3 Oaks and said this is where they use to meet. That really appealed to my romantic side. God this is great, this hill, these beautiful twisty Oaks, this old stone. This is great. It was just a little part of the background of the school. It was just one of the little legends you here. I didn't. I always very, up until then, had been very private with my spiritual beliefs or spiritual side and very comfortable that way, only comfortable really by myself. Somebody, when I was a freshman, I lived on 4th Musser (Mec snickers)... shut up Mike. I know, I know, that considered one of the worse dormitories on campus and still is. Yeah, coming from Cleveland I was used to that.

EH: Cleveland prepares you for 4th Musser?

AC: That's right, yeah. So anyway, anyway my roommate was Rachel Leader. Done the hall was a woman named Judith Norman who was another freshman. We had a good forum, Judith and Rachel became two of my best friends. Two other people on the floor were Meg Ross who was a junior art major at that point. She had a single, which is probably the reason she was there, in Musser. Another freshman named Maggie Daggit and Maggie was a very frail women with a lot of problems. I think she was drug dependant. Anyway, many different people and I liked all of them. At some point in the fall of '83, Meg came up to us, me and Judith and said, "had we heard of the Druids?" I said, "Yeah" and she said she was a Druid and she one of the last ones left on campus and a guy, whose name many always forget and still forget who is probably David Frankel, right? Somebody who had graduated a few years earlier was the last Carleton Druid and he had inducted Meg into as a Druid, he was back on campus visiting that night and wanted to induct some more Druids if anyone was interested. Meg, asked Judith and me, would you like to become Druids? We said, "yeah, sure, that sounds like fun, what do we have to do?" she said grab your coat, come out to the Hill of Three Oaks (TM). Maggie was there was too and we told Maggie what we doing and asked if she wanted to come and so we all paraded out to the Hill of Three Oaks (TM). Meg had this big green chalice. One of these really ugly glass things that I guess.

MS: Maybe the deep glass chalice.

AC: No, there was 3 or 4 of them kicking around at different times at the Farm House arena, but this one was one big ugly green glass chalice that was probably from Ben Franklin store. Meg had that and somebody had a bottle of spirits of some kind mixed very thoroughly with water. This guy, who ever he was, was staying in Goodhue and we met him at Goodhue and he wore his bathrobe. He had clothes on, but had his bathrobe over as his ritual robe or something. Judith brought her stuffed tiger who is like a mascot. She stills has it and Maggie and I. We tripped up to the hill and the guy, these people know his name...

MS: No, I don't.

AC: Yes you do, never mind. He and Meg, I think we let a fire. We did, they did the blessing of the waters. I guess it was the winter season, so we did the waters of sleep blessing and then they told us the tradition was to become a first level Druid, you just had to say you wanted to, to participate in the waters thing and agree that you wish to be a Druid. He told us that there two things, two tenets of Druidism that we were swearing ourselves two. I found it pretty easy to swear to and they were reverence for nature and respect for all religious paths, respect for other religions. No problem, for me. So we, to use the Druid prevalence, we were sealed to service of the Earth Mother and I related this to my Greek spirituality thing and to my ancestral feelings. You know, that my ancestors are from Europe and this once was their religion. That whatever little bit was left, was left a harking back to that, to something out of my own people, way back and I was delighted. It was mostly for fun and the guy who ever he was, not to take it too seriously that some people in the past had taken this Druid thing really seriously and he didn't think that was a good idea. All the same, to consider ourselves Carleton Druids now. The made the circle. They made the water blessing and then he and Meg both dipped their fingers in the water and they made the circle with the two lines on our foreheads, all of our forehead, it was myself, Judith Norman and Maggie Daggit and Judith's Tiger also received the symbol his forehead. (general laughter) He has never attended another ceremony as far as I know. That was the beginning and the end of my Druid activity for 2 more years.

The next thing in line was, well I had taken a year off. I went through my freshman and sophomore years and decided I wanted to take some time off and so the school year 85-86 I was not enrolled at Carleton and I subsequently take back. I was in Northfield for a portion of that time beginning January 1986 and I was working downtown and living in town. So I still had contact with friends who were at Carleton and I would go visit them sometimes and stuff. Let me make sure I get everything right here, chronologically. There were some other students who were older than I was, who were interested modern Earth spirituality or modern Paganism. One of them I know was Tino Thompson and I think what had happened, the summer before, that is the summer of '85, some students had gone to the Pagan spirit gathering. No, I could be wrong about this. No, never mind, scratch that. Tino was interested in Pagan stuff and some other people were too. They, I wasn't part of that, invited a woman named Selena Fox to come here and speak. It must of happened sometime in early '86, because that is when I was back in town. I went to that lecture, I got an invite from someone I knew. She was a wonderful speaker. She gave a lecture on modern Paganism, modern Wicca. She's a Wiccan, you might say she is a witch and a shamanic practitioner. She talked about the Druids and their part in that small spiritual movement.

MS: She talked about the Carleton Druids?

AC: She did not as far as I remember directly. She talked about the spectrum of beliefs represented in modern Paganism and showed some slides the Pagan spirit gathering, that her group Circle Sanctuary puts on every year. Among them, well there are lots of many kinds of Pagans and there are the Druids. She described them as the Catholics among the Pagans. This was Isaac Bonewit's group. She had slides of Isaac and his group, some of followers at PSG under their Druid flag. I'm sure during the question and answer period somebody said something about Carleton Druids, but the main memory I have of that lecture, a wonderful introduction to people who are out there. There are people seriously worshipping Diana and saying they were, and not keeping it quiet and treating it and insisting they be treated as legitimate religious practitioner which was a new thing for me. As I said, she was an engaging lecture, she is a good teacher and she invited questions.

She talked about Satanism and that was not part of the Earth spirituality thing. It was a Christianity heresy thing. She likened the Satanist use of the pentacle to their use of the cross. In both cases they turn it upside down. I associated the pentacle with icky things and heavy metal music at best. I remember asking her well, who are these Satanists who go out and turn your pentacle upside down. She answered, in her experience, they were people who really lacked power, who were needing power in a big way. She is a psychologist. It was almost an psychological assessment who they might be. This was still freaky and you know the word witch was and to still is not a nice word in a lot of people's ears and certainly in mine. Oh, maiden mother and crow, Diana's maiden. Hmmmm, interesting, I might be a witch, but no no no, I worship Diana. When it was over, there was a dinner for them, potluck held out at Farm house where Tino might have been living at the time. Anyway he was associated with people there, if he didn't live there. Selena and her husband Dennis were hanging out after dinner there and I went over there. I think I didn't eat dinner there, but I got there later with my boyfriend at the time, Hideo Yamada who kind of hid behind the paper and read the sports page. He came with me, but he thought it all too freaky, but that is a funny story in itself, but, he just converted to Catholicism and now he was gung ho about religion himself. We're not still going out, but we're friends. Religion was not something he wanted to touch, especially goofy religion. Selena was there. Dennis was there. I and several other folks.

Someone then brought up the Carleton Druids, we have this home ground Pagan movement here at Carleton and the ancestors of Isaac's group started here and Selena hadn't known that or she said, "That is amazing. Are there any still around?" and someone said "No, they died out." and she said, "that's too bad." I was there, and I said, "No, you know, I am a Druid, I was inducted several years ago, into the first level." And they were like "really, wow!" I guess people had said, "Its too bad we'd like to start it up again and we don't have any Druids of the old line." and they did, it was me and I didn't know it. Maybe a week later, we had a big induction ceremony, a lot of people had been sparked by this and had wanted to associate themselves with the Druids. I think Andrea Dawson, I don't know. Andrea Dawson was part of this with Jan Schlamp, both of them have changed their names now. Heiko Koester, Branden Shield, definitely him, Tino, although he wasn't a close friend of mine and I didn't do much religious practice with him. It was early spring in 86. I guess we looked up the Druid Chronicles. Someone had dug up a copy that might have been out at Farm house and looked up some of the ceremony's and things and getting more and more into it. We put together a big first level induction and had 30 people attend. Among them were Clay Christianson, who works for security here. He had been a friend, as much as a staff member can be a friend to little freshies and everything. He was a cool guy. He was the only staff member who I know of who has become a Druid. About 30 people, about mixed equally men and women, many of them I never saw again at a ceremony, but they seemed consider themselves Druids. I remember, I hope Clay doesn't mind this, but one of things you ask the people when you symbol on their foreheads is "are you ready for this, are you ready to be sealed to the service of the Earth Mother? Do you understand what you're doing?" When I asked Clay the question he said, "I've been ready all my life, you know..." Certainly, like in my case, there were people who had been feelings these things or feeling their invested somewhere other than the Christian milieu in which most of us grew up, but not having a name for it or a place to put it and the Druids became that for me for awhile. After the first big induction, there was no big danger that the lion, so to speak, would die out again. I don't know how much time we have left on this side... I can go into what we did as Druids as I went into my junior year and my senior year.

EH: There is time left, go ahead.

AC: So this thing in the spring happened and the following summer of 86, I left town, I actually went to Japan for a short while. Jan Schlamp and Heiko Koester and I think somebody else like Paul Gover, maybe, but definitely Jan and Heiko went to the Pagan Spirit Gathering that Circle puts on. It is a big week long get together/camp out thing in a camp ground in Wisconsin out in the country. They went and when they came back they were even more fired up. Both of them are go-getters, do it people and had a lot of energy which I never had and they we both also a year ahead of me. The were both at least the class ahead of me. That following fall, the fall of 86, we got the Chaplain at the school who was Jewelnel Davis and she began something new called the council for religious understanding. This was to be a lunch time, once a week get together. My impression was she had envisioned the Catholics talking to the Protestants and everybody talking to Jews kind of thing. Pretty typical ecumenical table, but there would be a topic each week and people would speak about their religious paths, responses to that topic whether it be war or the question of evil or smaller things, the place of women, things like this. The idea was to get religions talking to each other as represented by their student members here at Carleton. Jan and Heiko petitioned that the Druids be allowed to come and sit on this council. Things are a little fuzzy, I don't remember how many rituals or what was going on, at that time we began, sort of, the ritual practice that continued till I left here and after. Jan and Heiko had been exposed to the sweat lodge practice at PSG. They brought sweat lodging to Carleton. I'm sure they ran the first couple and Jan especially was really into it. Heiko went out at some point and cut down some Willow saplings and they built a sweat lodge out of saplings in the lawn at Farm house and dug up blankets wherever people could dig them up and put them over the sweat lodge. I don't remember when I did my first sweat, but it was there...

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...Was Andrea was the one who started the nudity thing? I said, "no, not that remember." We always did sweats naked, but associated with some of the Pagan people was being a Nudist or going Naked in Farm House.

MS: Clothing optional house.

AC: Clothing optional house it became for awhile, but actually that was a little bit later and I really think Brandon Shield was the most into that. I should say, by this time, yeah the fall of 86, Brandon and I had started a relationship which was sort stormy and since has really got awful and I don't talk to him any more. I hope people don't judge me too awfully for that, but its like one of those college things. He was awfully attractive to me and I spent a lot time trying to get him to be to my boyfriend and a lot of that time happened while the Druid stuff has happening and inevitably some of that plays out. I only mention that for the sake of completeness, yes it is true. Heiko was going out with Jan at some point during this too. So we had couples forming among the Druids. Other folks since have told me like Nat Case who when I lived at Farm house my senior year, the year 87-88. He lived there too. After we both graduated, he let me know, that he considered himself a Pagan also, but never have felt good about coming to Pagan rituals, because he didn't really like Branden. Our leadership, I've seen this in other contexts, people who might have been interested in what we doing, might not have been socially interested in us or whatever and so because this is such a little college and people know each other very well often, the personal and the political get very intertwined. They certainly did for me, but let me try to pick up the thread of the narrative a little bit better.

Back in the fall of '86, I was a junior and I was living with Judith and Rachel, my good friends from freshman times in Nourse, second Nourse, Nourse 200. We were doing Druid rituals and I was trying to get through Organic Chemistry. Jan and Heiko were sitting on the council for religious understanding. There was a debate, the beginning of a series of debates around the Druids and around the legitimacy of the Druids, because here is a goofy out of the ground mushroom religion that the kids are doing. They decided we weren't a cult, which is good. A cult, not occult. No Guru not leading us down the wrong path, it was self-delusion if that, and that was ok. Many of the people on the council for religious understanding was quite wary of the idea of a non-Christian spiritual group claiming to be Druid and having meetings under the moon and probably naked sometimes and they were right. All this stuff. I recall reading, I think in the 'Tonian, something about this debate, Druids trying to get into the council for religious understanding and that the council had brought up the question, "well the Druids want in, what if some Satanist came and wanted in? Would we have to let them in? " And that essentially they decided, that they would, if they wanted to be there. It was Heiko and Jan who did it. They went to those meetings. That was very typical, certainly of Heiko, he's kind of that activist personality. I applauded what they were doing. At the same time it really scared me. I didn't want anything to do with it at that point. It wasn't my stick or so I thought. Meanwhile in our company, among our own company, we had some sweat Lodges, mostly on the Farm house Lawn. I recall Paul Gover becoming involved, another guy Paul, Michelle.

MS: Gretchen

AC: Well, Paul Gretch is Paul Grover. Paul Gover was called Gretch because he and another Paul lived at Farm house at the same time, and in one of those precious little traditions, that was really kind of funny, they... Years before they had 2 women living there who had the same name of Laura, I think They decided the younger of the two, should have a different name to avoid confusion. And her middle name was Gretchen. And so, they got Laura and Gretchen. And then the next time two people with the same name showed up, they decreed that the second of the two should be called Gretchen. And I think the third time two people with the same name showed up, it was Paul Grover and Paul....long tall Paul with long hair, who worked in computers, I don't remember his name...he went out with Michelle, and they almost got married. But he was older, and so Paul Grover was called Gretchen, or Gretch. And that name stuck with him.

Anyway, he was in big with the Druid things. Digby Willard came to one of our sweats, kind of late. We had a floating batch of people, and...I found the sweat lodge a very good practice, you know, I guess we're not even close to what the Native American people do in their sweats, but we would...it would be a big event, you know, an event that took time, anyway, and finding time away from studies was always part of the milieu of the Druids. And building the sweat lodge, which had to be rebuilt now and then, because they are fragile - just saplings tied together with sticks - finding enough old blankets to put over it, which wasn't as much of a problem at Farm House, because they had a huge collection up in the attic. Building a fire, getting some granite, or hard stone, heating up the stone. When everything...when the stone was good and hot, bringing it into the sweat lodge, and laying it down. Then the people would crowd in, and I think they told us you always enter going clockwise, which is in...certainly in the Wiccan tradition, circling clockwise is building up energy. And circling counter-clockwise is letting go energy, or drawing down energy. And some traditions are very strict about which way you do what, and we were told, yeah, go in the sweat lodge clockwise.

Piling in there...we would all be naked, you know, people had the option to wear bathing suits or stuff if they wanted to, but the five or seven of us who were sort of core members at this point were into being naked for sweat lodge. I related to it, again, partly because it was...I don't how to respond to it exactly, but I felt like I was in National Geographic, you know. It's like wow, you know, we have all these bodies of really different shapes, and it's okay to be naked for a little while, you know, all together, and not look at it, you know, as sexual, necessarily. Although some people did, I think (laughs). Never mind that. But, no, some people got more of a thrill out of just seeing their friends naked. And some people got more of a thrill out of being naked (laughs). Except when it was very cold, I kind of enjoyed it, you know, alternative stuff.

EH: You had a copy of the Druid Chronicles and things. Was there any feeling that you had used any of the rituals that were done by the early group, or did mostly concentrate on the sweat lodge?

AC: No, we did...I was just getting long-winded on the sweat lodge. We did certainly look through the chronicles, read through them, and look at the rituals that they had done, and re-enact according to their, you know, their formulas, or whatever. We tried having...I think we tried having new moon or full moon meetings each month on the Hill of Three Oaks for a while. And it worked for a while. All of these

things would always fall apart when, you know, finals time came around and stuff. And the cold weather, during a lot of the Carleton school year, kind of puts a damper on these things. So, often times, somebody would say...it would be informal, but Branden or Andrea or somebody might say, "oh, let's have a ritual tonight," or "Let's have a ritual next Saturday. And... okay, well, so-and-so is gonna tend the fire, and so-and-so said she'd get firewood." I'll go into that in a little bit more detail. Often these things would sort of fall apart, and the day of the ritual, the people would call up, and just say, "Oh, I'm working on a paper, and I can't do the fire like I said I could." Or, "Well, I can be there at nine, but not past ten." So, it was very...it was loose, and it was not...well, there was nobody to say, you know, you can't do that, because at Carleton studies come before everything else, and it was just one of those things. But oftentimes, you know, we'd hear with joy, oh, you know, seven or eight people have said they'd be here up on the hill at ten. And two people would show up. And so, that's the way the Druids' roulette worked when I was a Druid (laughs).

EH: Did you have leaders, officers? Was there an Archdruid? Was that title used?

AC: No. When I was there, that title was not.

EH: Were any titles used?

AC: No. We...Depending on our interests...Heiko, and I think Branden got very much into reading the Druid Chronicles, and Jan too. And some of the stuff...they would sort of bring me stuff, and I read some of it, but looking at the formulation of the Druid hierarchy, I think Branden and Heiko got into that, just looking at it. And they decided, and I agreed, that a lot of the sort of playing with, you know, fourth, fifth, sixth level, who was who and what was what, and having a bard, and an I don't know what all, you know, an officer in charge of this and that, just was not appealing to us. It was too hierarchical. None of wanted to be Archdruid. Certainly in the following year, some of us who had been in it longer were looked on as leaders, but it wasn't...it was neither a self-given nor a formally others-given title. It was more a hierarchy of age, like a lot of things are at college...What am I trying to say...? Branden and Heiko made the decision to do vigils. You know, we had a lot of first-level Druids. And I think one of them...I didn't do this myself, but one of them said something to me, like, "Well, you ought to be second-level," you know, "You must be second-level by now," because of what I had done, you know. And I'm like, "Oh, great." They decided they wanted to be third-level, and they...we accepted the idea that for third-level, which meant a more serious commitment to these things, you were to vigil on the Hill of Three Oaks, theoretically, or someplace, anyway...Stay up all night in the Arb and meditate, think about being a Druid. I know that one...I think the night Branden was going to vigil, it was a horribly cold, rainy night, and....I mean, it was about this time, it was...at the beginning he said August - this was October, we're actually in October today, and

Hmm?*

AC: Yeah, you did. But anyway - cold, almost snowing, rain, you know, right around Samhain, or Halloween time. And he decided that - or we all decided that vigiling at Farm House was quite acceptable instead (laughs), and so we had a ritual out on the Hill, and then came back in. And we would do the Waters of Life ceremony. That was a big part of any ritual we did. Other things that our rituals included were guided meditations...we did a little bit of the seasonal celebration, but somehow Samhain, or Halloween, always took big precedence over the other holidays. I think partly because of Halloween, and partly because it occurred early enough in the year that people had energy still to put into it. And a couple of the really big Pagan holidays, or cycle holidays of the ancient Europeans, occur at really awful times for Carleton grads, (correcting) or for Carleton students in class to be doing things with. You know, the winter solstice is when we're all on vacation, and so is the summer solstice. Fall equinox...well, I don't know. We never did much with that. Beltane, May Day, which we should have been able to do a lot with, we never did, somehow. It was never as big a deal as Samhain. Maybe because of Mai Fete, and other things that the college already does around those...I don't know. But it came to me, I guess, the second year that...well, we have this big, you know, Samhain, and people went and dug up just a little bit of Celtic mythology, and I understand I'm not actually pronouncing it correctly, but we said "Sowan," even though we spelled it Samhain, and I didn't really understand why. Okay, that's the end of the year, that's the final...that's the finish of one yearly cycle. It was the day of the dead, where the ancestors could walk again, you know, and people would honor their ancestors, and their connections with those who had died. And we'd have a big shindig at that point, a big ritual on the Hill of Three Oaks, and then always there were Halloween parties to go to afterwards. And the Druids would, in my two years of being associated, they'd, you know, go right to the Farm House Halloween party and have a blast. But we didn't do the same thing on the happy holiday that balances that somber one, which is Beltane, with flowers, and fun, and everything.

Let's see...so yeah, we did...we looked into the old Druid things, but we were anarchistic. Jan and Heiko had learned these...the sweat lodge-type things, and I guess elements of Wicca that weren't really present in the early Druid things. I think the calling of the four directions, and the association of certain qualities with the four directions was not originally done by the old Druids at Carleton. But we would...because they taught us this invocation, we would invoke spirits of North, of South, of East, of West, usually going in a circle, usually North, East, South, West, North being Earth, East being Air, South being Fire, and West being Water. So we would cast a circle, we would ask them, these spirits, to be present. I remember a discussion with Heiko once, 'cause....(laughs), yeah, here we go. One of the Council of for Religious Understanding things was reported once, again, probably in the Carletonian, and they said, well, "a discussion of spirits was posed, and Heiko Koester said the Druids do not conjure up evil spirits, even though they certainly could." And I kind of...I didn't agree with that at all. Because essentially, I don't think they're there to be conjured. So we had some theological differences, you might say. And I talked to Heiko about that, and said, you know, "what do you mean by this?" And he said, "Well, when we invoke, you know, the spirits of North, the spirits of East, I feel they're really there." And Joseph Walzer, who was younger than us, was there with us, and he said something like, "But I think of those as spirits of mind." And I agree with that. So some of us, like Heiko, were truly into the reality of these things. And others of us were seeing them more as symbols. And I certainly fall more into the latter category. But we would invoke the directions, and cast a circle, you know, ask these spirits to be there with us, to protect us and bless us with whatever we were going to do.

We would then have the Waters of Life ceremony, the blessings of the water, which was usually in one of these big, ugly, green chalices from the chalice collection. And Heiko

had dug up several of them from somewhere, I think probably in the attic at Farm House they were stored - there's a lot of old dishware kicking around over there. Or there was, anyway. Waters of Life, which were usually totally non-alcoholic. I think the original recipe calls for some whiskey to be added during the summer half of the year, when they're the Waters of Life. And when they're the Waters of Sleep, that is, from Samhain to Beltane, you don't add any alcohol. But we hardly went out from Samhain to Beltane, anyway, and so it wasn't all that much of a big deal.

We would often dance. We did spiral dancing when we had enough people, and that's really fun. That's...you probably heard about that from other people. There was also...there was a lot of creativity, and we would switch off leadership, who was going to lead the ritual, or once in a while, somebody would come over and say...like Heiko and I might go to Andrea and say, we want to have a ritual to celebrate X and such, you know, the...I don't know what - the winter equinox, whatever - do you want to lead it? And then the person would agree or not, and so whoever was leading the ritual decided what we were going to do. It was always celebratory. Sometimes it also included a prayer, or what you might call a magic working, in that we would raise energy for some specific purpose. The energy was raised by dancing, by chanting...there were several chance which were...which came from PSG, and they're basic modern American Pagan chants that a lot of people know - "the Earth is our mother" is one of them, "Air I am, Fire I am, Water, Earth and Spirit I am," ...what else?

MS: Circles?

AC: "Circle around, we circle around." Those were some biggies that we also did in the sweat lodge. But what I'm trying to lead into is the freedom and the creativity that people brought to these little rituals. And they were little. We didn't have the time and we didn't have the energy to be truly making this a focus, at least most of us...If somebody feels that they were, it's news to me. You know, everybody had their schoolwork, and everybody had their friends, and their relationships, and their sports, and who knows what, you know, also going on, a lot going on. So we didn't have a lot of time to put into this. But...one of the early rituals that I remember, that was totally off-the-wall, was...Curtis Love and Andre Baskin were two guys who...they lived at Farm House that year. Andre was sort of a computer whiz, and kind of an anarchist. He did a few interesting pranks with the computers. Like he set up a vax terminal in one of the closets at Farm House, an illegal vax terminal, which was wonderful, because at that time, when personal computers were just beginning to come in, lot's of students wanted vax space to do papers, and the vax lab was incredibly crowded. And to live out there, and walk into campus, especially on a winter night, was a lot of trouble. And so, I don't know where he kyped the equipment from, but he stole some computer equipment...didn't really take it off campus, 'cause he just put it in a campus house, and got a modem hooked up, so that Farm House had a vax hook-up in its closet. Anyway, that was Andre. And Curtis was a really interesting person - goofy guy, friend of mine. We had bio classes together. And Curtis had a very active, child-like side to him. And he really loved his stuffed toys. And he had this toy lion, called Leo, I guess, just this...

MS: There was the dinosaur too.

AC: Yeah. I don't what all...I do remember Leo the lion clearly. In one of those little in-house things that I wasn't really privy to, because I wasn't living out there at that time, Leo got kidnapped, and it was a big deal. And I think it turned out Andre had done it. And Curtis was putting notices in the NNB for the return of Leo, and, you know, talking about him as though he were truly alive. And somehow peace was made, and whatever factions had done this came together again, and there was to be a ritual sometime, I think, in the fall of '86, late fall, the return of...the reappearance of Leo the lion. And Curtis and Andre set the whole thing up. We did some folk dancing at that ritual. Andre was into folk dancing, so instead of the spiral dancing, we did some Irish jig-type stuff that he taught us, which was sort of fun. And he had a boom-box for music. That was always...the innovations of what to do up on the Hill for entertainment for the theatrics of rituals - music, lights, whatever you want. He had a boom-box, and I remember thinking, "well, that's not very primitive" (laughs). Sort of techno-Druid here. And Leo the lion appeared in a flash of black powder at some point. It was like...there weren't that many people there, there were maybe six or seven of us, and then Andre and Curtis, and Curtis stood up and said something like, "And now, the moment you've all been waiting for, we're going to ask the Earth mother if Leo could come back (laughs), and we really hope she'll grant our prayer." And they did something, and I think Andre threw some, you know, firecracker-type thing into the fire, and there was a big poof, and Leo reappeared, I think on the alter stone. And I remember Curtis picking him up and going, "Oooh, Leo, you're back" (laughs).

And I tell this to emphasize that a sense of fun, and a sense of humor about all this was very much a part of the Druid time that I remember. We could be seriously thinking about our relation to the Earth, and the spiritual nature of that, and at the same time having these sort of silly rituals. One of the things that I like about the Druid path, as laid down by the Carleton people in 1960's, whatever, was the beginning prayer, the apology that we actually didn't use much, but the spirit of it appealed to me, where they said, essentially, to the Christian God, you know, forgive us for doing these things, forgive for asking...you know, forgive us for offering these prayers and sacrifices. We know you don't need prayers and sacrifices. Forgive us these sins that are due to our human limitations, and the sins being offering to a specific God entity...to personifying God in a certain way, and to offering prayer, and to offering sacrifices, which I'll explain in a second. The implication being we know God is bigger than all this. And that's what I believe, that whatever we call God is much bigger, and much more inclusive than any human religion has ever captured. And part of the reason I think this is, if there is such a thing...I'm a scientist, I come from a science background. I believe evolution happened. I believe what they dig up archeologically is true, you know. So it seems that humans have been on the Earth at least several hundred thousand years in their modern form, and several million years, if you count hominid thingies, that probably had language capacity, and made tools too. So in all that time, there have been so many different ways of reaching out to the divine. And I thought then, and I still think, you know, organized religions are an attempt to get a handle on our place in the cosmos, but whatever's out there, if there is anything out there...it's been worshipped in a lot of different ways. And if it's as great as they say it is, you know, as it must be, the only thing that I can think that would differentiate good from bad is intention. So actually, I consider myself more of Unitarian now than anything else. I'm sort of a Pagan Agnostic Unitarian. I have sort of a radical vision of God in that way...that what we were doing was in no way evil or offensive. Which was not shared...this opinion was not shared by all of the campus Christian groups,

but I'll get to that in a second. We offered, as per the old Carleton Druid way, vegetable sacrifices. And everybody talked as though that was hilarious. The question of animal sacrifice runs through most people's minds when they think of Druid, or Pagan. And when we'd say, "No, no, we're the Reformed Druids, we offer only vegetable sacrifices," it would diffuse that tension in a big way. And we did. I mean, we thought about...our connection to the world that feeds us, essentially. Sometimes the sacrifices was Pine branches, I remember getting some from the Pines down near the hill. I was into harvest-type things, like food, you know, not just leaves that we wouldn't really eat, but corn, and squash, and things like that. So, on the occasion where we did, we would usually make

End of First Tape

EH: This is tape two of the interview with Alice Cascorbi on October 29, 1993.

AC: Okay, just to finish up about the vegetable sacrifices...yeah, we would normally leave them up on the Hill to be accepted by wild creatures. And sometimes someone would go back, like I'd go back a day later or something, to see if what we had left on the stone was still there. And if it was, I would throw it in the bushes somewhere. We always used the prayer in returning things, any such like dumping out things that we had to get rid off. "To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our mother, even as we must return to thee." This is a Druid prayer that I think is very beautiful, and you always use it when you're dumping the surplus Waters of Life onto the ground, returning to the Earth. And so, I guess, when I did that, with the vegetable sacrifices, I would certainly say that prayer as I threw the apple in the bushes, or whatever. It had always struck me as humorous that, in my reading of the old Greek practices, the Gods were said to be nourished by the stuff that the people didn't really want. Like they would sacrifice bullocks, as I understand it, and whatever else, but of food animals, the horns, or the...I'm sorry, the hide and the fat would be burned, and the scent of this wafting to Olympus was said to please and nourish the Gods. That's what the Gods got out of a sacrifice, and the humans got the meat. And I led one ritual, probably one of the better ones that I led, in the next year, in '87, and we had a fairly yummy selection of fruit, like some bananas, and stuff, and a large group of people - it may have been the first big ritual of the year, because we had a lot of freshmen interested in the Druids there at the time. And they included Heather Franek, and Heather Gruenberg, and several other younger people. God, what was that guy's name...?

MS: John Nolan(?)...Joe Banks?

AC: Yeah, John Nolan(?) was there. Joe Banks...he was...he wasn't a freshman then...But anyway, lots of new folks...yeah, people who subsequently got to be, I guess, leaders after my time was over, and after I was Carleton. But anyway, we had a large fruit selection, and I explained to the people that what we were going to do in this ritual that I was leading was offer the fruit, and, in the grand tradition of sacrifice, as I said, we were going to then eat it (laughs). So, you know, we would offer to the Earth Mother, but then it would for us to consume. And so, people liked that, they thought it was cute, whatever. And the skins and the cores went into the bushes. But I'm getting a little ahead of myself. Okay, the year '86-'87, it was academically my hardest year. I lot of core classes for my major at that point, which was biology. And had to really drag myself through organic chem, that was just hellish. But as Spring came, somebody asked me, I think it was Heiko, whether I would be willing to sit on the Council of the...the Council for Religious Understanding the following year. And I know at first I said no way. I just said I wasn't interested, I didn't feel a need to discuss my beliefs. But somehow it turned out nobody else was going to do it, or they needed two people, and I think Jan was graduating...would that have been correct? Yeah, I think so. So Jan was leaving, and they needed somebody. And Andrea Dawson also graduated at that point. And Tino was out picture...Tino left, I don't know if he graduated or not, I just don't know. But he was gone. And so, for the following year, '87-'88, which was my senior year, I was one of the elder Druids on campus. And the other elder Druids included Heiko and Branden. Now, wait a minute...I'm wrong about Jan - well, I don't know. Don't take me too literally on all these dates, I'm not quite sure about those things.

EH: We can look up when Jan graduated.

AC: Yeah, okay. But anyway, for one reason or another, I ended up serving on the Council for Religious Understanding in my senior year, which was an interesting experience. That was also Dave Diehl first came in, I think he was a freshman that year.

MS: No beard.

AC: No beard (laughs). He's a character, he always has been. And I found later, somewhat later, that he and I are like third cousins. Yeah, it's kind of cool. Anyway, Dave...these two young women named Heather were very different - we called them Heather Light and Heather Dark, because Heather Franek had long, dark hair, and Heather Gruenberg was very blond, and....I don't know. Heather Gruenberg was a very interesting person, and it was the first...I liked Heather Franek a lot, she became a friend of mine. But Heather Gruenberg was one of the folks who was totally enthralled with the weirdness of it all. This is almost more personal than Druid stuff, but Tino Thompson came back to Carleton that Fall for a short time. He stayed maybe a week or two. And he was kind of living in his van, and kind of traveling around. He came back here...I don't really remember why, but he stayed at Farm House, which was nothing unusual, you know, folks who had been associated with that house, or with people who were in the house always had a welcome, you know, to come and stay over a while. And he and Heather took up with each other (laughs), and it led to a couple of...it led to one very serious situation, which I'll get into, but she was totally enthralled. She was from Michigan, and from a...I guess a kind of conservative small town, and dove right in. And the Druidism was just like the Doctor Who club, and the watching Star Trek, you know, which are also things I love doing, but the sort of just complete immersion in it I don't do. I had some problem with the whole attitude. I said some things I wasn't terribly proud of later. I had, for the first time in my life, the annoying sensation of people expecting me to help them find their spiritual self. And I had always been really solitary. Like I say, I'm not proud of this, and I certainly hope I get better at it as I get older, but...One time I was up on the Hill of Three Oaks, and it was daytime, it was a beautiful Fall day. And I don't remember why I was going up there, but Heather Gruenberg was there, and she was lying on top of the alter stone, kind of belly-down, I guess. And when I got up to the top of the Hill, she looked up at me with this sort of puppy dog expression. She said, "(affects a little girl voice) I've been lying here for the past hour trying to communicate with this rock, and I haven't been getting anything." And it really annoyed me, and I looked at her, and I said, "It's just a rock" (laughs). Oh, Alice, you're so mean, you're so awful. I really am not good with...this is not true

confessions tape, but this is what would go on. Tino was really flamboyant, and they started going out, dating or whatever, and she would go around telling everybody that would listen that her new boyfriend was a bisexual witch. And she was really loud about it, you know, like...I think she lived in Goodhue...just giddy, totally giddy with this new freedom. She told everybody at home, at her place back in Michigan. And, sometime in Fall term that year, the whether was still very summer-like, I got this...Farm House got this phone call, and it was from Dean Jean Phillips...and let me make sure I get everything right here...Okay, Dean Jean had been contacted by a man who turned out to be Heather's old hometown boyfriend, who was younger than she was and was still in high school. And he, having heard about the Druid thing, and about Tino, and being obviously slightly unstable, and extremely jealous - he wanted Heather to marry him, is what I heard from Heather. He really was dead set on holding onto her. And called Dean Phillips, and told her that animal sacrifice was going on, and horrible things were happening in the Carleton Druids, and out at Farm House, and that she really ought to be concerned. And I knew Dean Philips from an academic thing the year before, where I had petitioned to take a bio credit by examination, and she had really helped me out, and she knew me from that, and knew me as, you know, a relatively sane person or something. And she said to me, "I was so relieved when I saw your name on the Farm House residence roster. What's going on?" And I could put it together, because I was, you know...Heather had in confidence...you know, she was looking for people to give her sympathy, and she had told this whole story about her awful boyfriend. Her boyfriend had even threatened her with court action for...I mean, the guy was just nuts. And he had said he could get her for statutory rape, as he was younger. And he would do it if she didn't get back to him. And so with this whole business of her informing him in no uncertain terms that Carleton different, and she was now going with a bisexual witch....Dean Philips said, "Well, when I saw that it was Farm House, which had the purpose of being natural history house," she said, "are you doing any taxidermy, are stuffing any animals out there, is there a legitimate purpose for..." He said things about entrails and stuff. And I said, "No, no, no. Not even that was going on. There's nothing whatsoever to this." And it was so frightening. And it was just...I mean, I told her about the vegetable sacrifices and everything. Yeah, that was a major episode. And she believed me, and I told her...I had also just been approached, Heiko and I both, by someone who was doing an article for the Carleton Voice about the re-emergence of the Druids, and both Heiko and I would be interviewed. And Dean Philips hadn't known about that, and she said, "Oh, that's wonderful, that's great." And I said what was going to happen, and this woman was gonna come out and take photos of us both...Steve Philips was saying, "Do you have anything about the Druids that I could send to Heather's parents?" You know, to let her know that this is not some horrible cult, you know, dismembering animals or something. And I said, "Well, there's this thing coming out." And Dean Philips said oh, that would be perfect, that would be great. And so I heard nothing more about this matter, but it was one of the incidents that brought home, you know, this is not all sunny fun and games...it's very serious shit to some people. It can be made into very serious shit because most people think it's damned weird, and that's, you know...and if they say, "Oh, they're doing whatever...their rights..."

MS: Seriously, I'm thinking of some follow-up things to that, because I remember, like maybe '90...Beltane of '91 or something, there was the hush where Heather was up on the Hill, and boom! It was very hush-hush, and I couldn't figure out what it was about, but suddenly Beltane...boom! fell flat. And apparently someone had pushed her at the alter stone, and maybe thrown blood onto the stone...some crazy guy. So I'm just thinking maybe...

AC: Maybe this was that guy. I should talk about this, because it's probably the most...one of the more interesting things. As the Druids became more public, one of the first things I heard was that the Carleton Christian Fellowship was praying for us. And I knew some people in CCF. One of the people I met through Council for Religious Understanding was John Johnson (laughs), who did come from Wisconsin. He was this tall, really blond guy. Nice guy. He originally came as a Quaker, to the Council for Religious Understanding, but he underwent a conversion. I think it with CCF that he started hanging around...but with one of the more conservative and more dogmatically Christian groups. And I think it's from him I heard they were praying for us. And I said I was offended, and I said something like, "Oh, thank you, we'll pray for them too at our next ritual." I'm just giving my own emotional responses so you understand...I mean, at the time I was this, you know, nineteen-year-old, or whatever I was...Anyway, it became a force on campus, or it became that hadn't existed before, the Druids. Something that could be one the one hand played with by other people who weren't part of us, on the first hand, or whatever. Certainly some of the Christian groups found us...found a focus for...you know, I don't know, (laughs) saving lost souls or...whatever. That right here on campus were people openly calling themselves Pagan, and openly...kindly, but firmly, saying, you know, "No, we don't believe what you believe." I never got any hassle from Christian, and as part of the Council for Religious Understanding, I thought it was important to be as open as possible about what we did, and to allow people to come to our rituals, anybody, if they wanted. Heiko was not as much into that. He was other one who usually sat on the Council. He felt a lot of people want privacy, and want only a group of people they know they can trust when they're doing ecstatic dancing, or you know, whatever they're doing...Magic working, which is in my definition just prayer. It's where you raise and raise energy, and then....send the energy to some specific purpose. Ones that we did that I remember include a couple of sweat lodges for endangered species...one for a friend of ours who was going into the military, to send him some energy. Those were purposes I remember.

MS: Was that [name indecipherable]?

AC: I don't remember who...just...this raising of energy and sending, it was not a huge part of what we did. But anyway, on the Religious Understanding Council, Heiko thought, "No, our rituals are private, they're for insiders only." And I thought we had nothing to hide, let's be as open as we can. And we made a compromise, and we had one big open ritual for Druids. And I have a poster still from that, Nat Case, made the poster, and it said "Druids, One Night Only! Come Celebrate the Season of Fall and the Rising Moon," or something, "Hill of Three Oaks, Nine p.m." And we invited some folks to come. And we had a tradition that I think they picked up at Pagan spirit gathering, of...there was a circle of participants, people who wanted to actually do the chants, and accept the Waters, and stuff like this. And then there was what they called the Circle of Fair Witness, that's people who didn't want to participate, but were friendly, or at least not hostile, and would stand around and watch. And so we had at

least that one big open ritual that was very public. We got some people - it wasn't huge, the weather was cold...But I think John Johnson came to that one, and some other folks that I didn't recognize at all, from other groups, Christian groups, or whatever was on campus.

Some time in the Spring of that year, of '88 now, graffiti began to appear that said "DENMAD," D-E-N-M-A-D, and that's "damned" spelled backwards. And I still have no idea who was doing that. It wasn't one of us, or one of the people I knew. And "Denmad" symbol, this "Denmad" was written several places, including by the computer center, and in front of the library, and in some sort of chemical that killed the grass, out on the Hill of Three Oaks. And, again, it hit the 'Tonian, you know, there was some suspicion, whatever, or not suspicion, but people were saying, "Well, are these the Druids doing this? Is this, you know, Druidism, are you responsible for this?" Of course not, and I recall something good that Heiko said, was basically, "We worship the Earth, we're working to save the Earth, and why would we put chemical on the grass that kills the grass?" Especially up on the Hill, it's like graffiti on a church. And he kind of made a big deal about it, and that he was offended by it, it was religiously offensive. I think he went out and did something for the grass, like he reseeded it, or he did something publicly to try to erase the graffiti.

I ran into...okay, another story. A man, a staff member, whose name I don't recall right now, who was in the post office, probably still is...God, I wish I could remember his name. Middle-aged man, full-time staff member. We got a note from him, the Druids got a note, that said he had intercepted a mailing that was supposed to be an all-campus mailing by us, by the Druids, that had seemed so odd, that he wanted confirmation from us. And indeed, it was spurious. It was somebody trying to send something really weird to everybody on campus. And there were boxes of it, just like all, you know, all clubs, all Carleton clubs could, at least at that time, do a mass mailing, just by dropping off a box of enough flyers. And this was some really ...narrative thing about...it was just a narrative, it was a story, several paragraphs about a cosmic creation, and something about...I think weird shit, some gryphons...it had vaguely sort of cabbalistic, satanistic weird shit all mixed together. I can't remember it exactly, but something about the unicorn mated with the snake, or something. It was nothing to do with Druid stuff, and it was...ostensibly put out by us, and I think it might even have had our phone number, which was certainly public, I mean, Heiko's number as the Druid contact person, or whatever. Well he snitched...I mean, this guy snitched it and didn't let it go out, he said, you know, "Stop that," and "let's not put it out until we get confirmation." And I went later to thank him for that, you know, and I said....was his name Eisner? Eis-something...Eishorn, Eishner, something like that. And I said, you know, thank you, and I had known him in other contexts, and said, "I'm a Druid too, and I really appreciate your catching this." And he kind of gulped, and he said, "Yeah, that's my job. I've heard a little bit about Druid worship, like those kids over wherever they were who set that bum on fire..." And I came really close again to that really scary zone, because this was a good man who I knew in other contexts, and who, you know, certainly is a staff member to student...we were in good relationship, and he was doing his job, but his church, or whatever, was equating anything non-Christian, whatever, with some very sick happenings.

There had been some episode where some teenage boys around town - not here, exactly, but maybe in Faribault? Somewhere close by, set this old vagrant on fire. And this guy, the mail clerk...the staff member, he was thinking that that was our kind of thing. And even with that in his head, he still pulled the mail, and contacted us. And in some ways that's really beautiful, and it's really touching that he would do that, and on the other hand it's really sad and scary to me, personally, how much misinformation there is. So, anyway, as we became more public, we also got targeted, to some extent, by some pranksters. I don't know who they were...Nat Case...if you ever get a hold of him, ask him about...Nat is a good friend of mine. We lived in Farm House together. And he said he thought some weird groups at Carleton, very secretive...that he had seen some people out in the Arb once, all dressed in robes, and it wasn't the Druids. We didn't have robes of our own to wear, certainly not that all looked alike. And he said he saw a bunch of men in robes that all looked alike, who were like student age, all down...they walked past him, he was down by the river.

MS: I saw that once...

AC: You did?

MS: I was sitting at the sign fire over in the Oak grove, and there was like...I came in there, and I had wood up to my nose, and I couldn't see what I was doing. I just dropped the wood, and there was this circle of about seven or eight people...they were all blond, and they were all wearing light clothing.

AC: Maybe they're Oles.

MS: And I thought I recognized a Carleton student. But I came back with [rest indecipherable]...They put up a cross, in the place of the maypole.

AC: They put up a cross in place of the maypole. Very interesting...That's right, the Denmad thing would have crosses associated with it. There were little...it would say "Denmad," and then a little cross. Very interesting.

EH: When you would describe Druidism to someone, would you use the word religion?

AC: I guess I would. But it was clear to me, and certainly from the way I got into it, that it was a religion or a philosophy. Other people have said a spiritual philosophy, that you can take on along with other ones. You need not give up your spirituality or your religion to be a Druid. For me it was something to call what I believed, and I got involved, as I think I've described, in the public aspects of it, for what you might call idealistic reasons. I did not, and still do not, really feel my own spiritual connections with the world except when I'm alone. I did a lot of outreach work, because I thought it was important. I thought it was high time that this kind of thing be recognized and legitimized, and I wanted to spread it around to other young people, like myself, who in essence were already...you know, were already somehow converts, or were already feeling these ways, that there were other ways of approaching the sacred, and that to look back at the old ways was a good way. That's why I was so public. I know the first Carleton Druids were adamant that this was a philosophy. They didn't know about the Pagan movement, as such, and they weren't connected with it for a long time. Many of them are still Christian, and I think one of them is a Christian minister now. Heiko was pretty firmly Christian for while, and for a while he was saying he considered himself both Druid and Christian. As I said, for myself it was not that. The Druidism we had was pretty loosely woven, as I'm sure you know. We would invoke the Earth Mother, and the male principle, sometimes, sort of secondarily, in the form of the Celtic God, I guess, Dalon Ap Landu, the lord of the grove. But we were very much a Unitarian-type group, you know,

free-flowing...people would essentially invoke whatever God image they chose. Some of us were into Hindu mythology by then, and would invoke Shiva and Devi...Brandon was very much into Pan, the God Pan...now I'm coughing all the time. This we saw as perfectly fine. We saw whatever you wanted to call the divine as acceptable. There are a couple of chants that I recall - we had a guy from a Jewish background once come to one of our rituals, and there's a chant for the Goddesses, that's Isis, Astart, Idiana, Hecate, Demeter, Kali, Ynana, and then there's a corresponding one with God names, old God names...Pan, Dionysus, Odin, something, something, and it includes Baal, the Baal of the bible, whose name is related to word bellinose, apparently, and it comes back to the beautiful...anyway, an old, old word, and an old, old name for the male consort of the Goddess. And this guy freaked out, he's like, "I can't say Baal! I'll go to hell if I worship Baal!" And we said, oh, okay, don't say it, you know. And, you know, he was kind of joking around, he was kind of kidding, or he wouldn't have been there. It wasn't really freaking him. But as far as I was concerned, that was fine. And we had a couple of folks from St. Olaf come over and join us...

****End of Side One****

AC: Anyway, so we had the occasional Olaf student, even, coming over to be part of our rituals. Heiko took a lot of charge of that. He was, I think, cross-registered for some class over there, and he'd put notices that Druid rituals were happening up over there. And this guy, Sam Adams, who was a music major, or musically inclined, he wrote a chant. And it's...(sings) All good things from you, mother, all good things from you. /All good things from you, mother, all good things from you. /Your's the dawn so new, mother, your's the sun-drawn dew, mother. / All good things from you, mother, all good things from you. (laughs) So now you can have it again, if you want.

MS: Spring it on 'em.

AC: Spring it on Sam, yeah. But there was a young woman named Christie...very powerful, interesting, and very innocent woman. Really tall, like six feet tall, you know, Norwegian stock. And she came over, and she was so interested in the idea of worshipping Goddesses, and so careful, and so frightened in some ways that she was doing wrong by her God, and by the way she'd been raised. And she and I got to be friends, and I remember she wanted to do a meditation once, and we took some Manheim Steamroller to music, in a boom box, up to the hill, and lit a fire. And she really wanted to do this, and the moon was full, I think, and to be there, and to salute the rising moon, but she asked me, "Is it alright if ask...you know, if I bring God into this?" And I said of course, you know, that's...yeah, sure. And she asked God, the Christian God, to bless what we were doing, and to understand that we were meaning no wrong, or something like this. And then she spoke to the moon Goddess. And I really liked her. I don't know what's happened to her since. So for me, at least, and I think for most of us, it was very heterodox.

EH: You mentioned, way back, about...I believe it was Curtis, or someone, who was a folk dancer. And that reminded me that I'd heard in the late '60's, early '70's, there was a big overlap between the folk dancers and the Druids. Were there overlaps that were obvious in your time with other groups?

AC: Yes, oh yes.

EH: Which ones?

AC: Definitely with residents of Farm House, who were thus drawn from people with demonstrated interest in natural history and Earth preservation. Definite overlap with the computer crowd, very...many of these people were all the same. Folk dancing, yes. I was not a big folk dancer, but many of my best friends were, like Judy(?) and Rachel. And, well...like Andre too. And Andrea Dawson was big into it. Jan did that also, Heiko some. I was maybe the only one of the group that wasn't a big folk dancer. Folk dance, Farm House, computers, and what you might call the science fiction crowd. Some of these people never had anything to do with the Druids, but many people who were occasional Druid participants were big into, like the Dr. Who club, and the Star Trek fan club, which in my time were more...groups of people who got together to watch the show in question, you know, rather than doing anything else outside that together. So yeah, our social groups overlapped quite a bit. And there were romances in between all of these things. Most straight, a few gay (laughs). But, yeah, these four groups I can name as being definitely interrelated.

EH: I'd like to know something about how you feel that your Druid experiences has stayed with you, and informed your post-Carleton outlook. Do you still consider yourself a Druid? If so, how so?

AC: I do for the sake of history. I very much like the idea of being tied into a tradition like this, you know, little as it is, and homegrown as it is. Carleton was my village for the four years that I was here, and it was the first time I ever had that feeling. I'm delighted to be part of that, and to be...you know, asked to interview like this. I've gone back to solitary practice when I want to pray, or to celebrate. I haven't done it with a group, really, since I left Carleton. While I was here, I called everything I was into in my belief system Druid. Now that I'm not with other Druids, the closest group I've found is Unitarians. And they have a Pagan element now, formally, within their structure, called the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, CUUPS. And I sort of stumbled into a group like that in Ohio last time I was home. It's been an experience. It was my first big experience in outreach in a religious way. This past summer...well, I first made contact with the Circle Sanctuary people, you know, Selena Fox, and her husband Dennis, through that lecture that Selena gave back in '86. And I subsequently subscribe to their newspaper - they have a quarterly that comes out - and went to a couple of their gatherings, went to PSG myself the following year, the summer of '87, and again in 1991, and to a couple different events at their land, down in East 'Consin. So I've stayed in touch with them. And they're very eclectic - they have people from many different Pagan paths there, meeting there and doing retreats there, basically. I did an internship with them this past summer. I wanted a place to work and find out more about them as working psychologists, who also have this religion, or this spiritual bent. And I found myself using a lot of the same skills and doing a lot of the same things that I had as a Druid on the Council for Religious Understanding. And, you know, tabling in Sayles-Hill, we also did that, I didn't mention, but we had, you know, the annual freshman round-up, or whatever it was called, where you have a table, and say what you believe. And that's where one of the Carleton Unitarians - I was not part of that part while I was here, but this wonderful woman came up to me, and said, "I'm so glad you're here! You're the only other liberal religious group on campus, and we're so sick of being next to the fundamentalists every year!" It's like, okay. So we

got a welcome from them. It's a part of my life, but it's not....I haven't gone and founded a grove. Yeah, I don't know what to say.

EH: Are there ways of thinking that you find yourself possibly being able to Druidic, that you find stay with you?

AC: Yeah. You know, the things that have stayed most with me are...this little prayer, the returning to the Earth Mother prayer, which I've used quite often, both when I throw out my compost, and a couple of times when I've pulled a dead dog off the road. It's a prayer that you can also use when you learn about a death. And the copy of the letter that's within the Chronicles, called Joan's Epistle to the Myopians, you know, I find really wonderful. And yeah, you sort of pseudo-King James' language of it all is sort of funny. But the sentiments expressed in that are very profound to me, and...I won't say this is the first place...no, I shouldn't say that. To know that there were other people who thought that way, and cared enough to put it down on paper, and include it as part of the Druid Chronicles has been powerful. The sense that...it was the first place I got the sense that I was part of a community in my spiritual way. And though I choose to be [a] fairly solitary member of the community, I still now know where I am, and that I'm not alone. What else...I definitely gained a better knowledge of my own history. As I said, part of thrill of it, for me, was also the thought that we were trying to go back to something that our ancestors had done - some of our ancestors, some of mine, anyway - had done before the advent of Christianity in Europe. You know, they were people, they had a religion. And one of their old religions, the Celtic side, anyway, was this Druid thing. And what we did was not Celtic reconstruction, by any stretch of the imagination. But just the thought, and the name, and the association with the Oak tree, which is a very ancient sacred symbol, wove that into the mixture for me, back to my own roots, in a small way. And I learned about the cycle of the holidays, which I certainly had not known before. We celebrated...this is history again, but we celebrated the holiday of Oimelc a couple of times, which is pretty obscure, but it's the beginning, the very beginning of Spring. It's Candlemas in the Christian calendar, end of February, and I recall...Oh yeah, one of the lovely things about the chapel business was [that] Jewelnel Davis allowed us to use the chapel space for Druid rituals during the winter, when it was really cold out on the Hill. And we would, you know....very grateful for that, and we would look at the limestone walls, and I recall leading rituals in there, and talking about the limestone, and the little shell-creatures that had made it, and that it too was part of the Earth, and though we were inside, we were never away from the Earth. And we had a ritual in there once where we passed a chalice full of milk on Oimelc, instead of water. And I find that the conception of these holidays, as my life goes on, and as I experience more, I tie in more with the different holidays. And I had no exposure to that before I came here. I was in Germany this past February, and they had always said that Oimelc was the beginning of the lambing season, when the sheep and the cows first lactate. And I thought, God, that's way too early. But in Germany, it's true, the first lambs were born right about then. And so, I'm like yeah, this isn't just bullshit (laughs). So, I don't know if I'm answering the question, but, you know...

EH: I think that might very well be a good place to draw this to a close. If you have anything else you'd like to add, go ahead, but otherwise....

AC: Let me think for a second...Just to thank you both - I'm glad this is being set down. I don't know who will hear this, but, you know, good luck to you. And I hope the arboretum continues. I hope the Hill of Three Oaks remains a site where people can gather in a more or less natural setting. There's gonna be a lot of change at Carleton in the next couple years, and I really hope they don't draw lines on that and make it into a football field. 'Cause the Arb has many beautiful places, but the Hill itself is someplace special.

EH: Thank you very much.

AC: Thank you.

Figure 6 Carleton Druids 1988 at Hill of 3 Oaks.
Back Row: Dimitry Goufman, Carron Perry, Liz Mindel, Sarah Van Orman & Gina Cambell.
Two on left: Branden Schield & Unknown.
Three on right: Heather Grunberg (hiding), Fitz Bushnell (obscured) and Curtis Lum.
Front Row: Alice Cascorbi, Joe Walser (picking nose) and Heiko Koester (with horns).

Interview with Michael Scharding

Carleton College Oral History Program
27 August, 1996

This transcript has been lightly edited for clarity. The original audiotaped recordings are available in the Carleton College Archives.

Michael Scharding: MS
Eric Hilleman: EH

Figure 7 Alice & Mike, Hill of 3 Oaks 1993.

[Tape 1, Side A]

EH: This is a tape for the Carleton oral history program. The interviewer is Eric Hillemann, College Archivist, and the narrator today is Michael Scharding, class of '94. The date is the August 27, 1996, and we're talking in the Gould Library. Michael, why don't you tell us a bit to begin with about your own personal background and how you came to Carleton College.

MS: Well, my father was in the military, doing food research and stuff, and also inspecting meat plants. And so we moved around quite a bit around my first 16 years and I lived in 12 or 14 states. But I had always considered Minnesota to be my home, primarily because we have a family cabin up near Hibbing, which I had gone to every year of my life, for summer vacation. And so when I started deciding in high school where to go for college, I naturally wanted to go to Minnesota, because I had grown to love the state very much. My qualifications for Carleton, for any kind of college, was that it had to be in Minnesota, or someplace with a lot of trees. It had to have an indoor and outdoor track and field program, and had to be small, because I didn't like the idea of a large college, and mostly private colleges too. Though I went to public school most of my life, thought they were quite good public schools.

That really narrowed it down to St. Olaf, Macalester, and Carleton, though I did look at Dickinson. I knew when I was looking through publications back at my High School and I saw the Carleton folder, I instantly decided at that point that it was for me. There was something about the pictures - I don't know. They had a package perfectly for me. And I opted for early decision, and they accepted me, along with Olaf and Macalester, but I decided to go to Carleton, though I did do tours and stuff of the various colleges before I came. The track and field thing fell through because I busted my knee right before I came to Carleton, which interfered with my track career. But the trees - actually I think it was Lyman lakes, more than anything else, that convinced me to come to Carleton. Because I really liked water, and I thought it was great that they had a lake on campus. I lived in Goodhue for three years straight, four, if you count living in Myers. I always thought it was great, having your own little house next to a lake, something that most people only dream about doing.

EH: Okay, good. I think I wanted to ask this point too, something about your religious background, because that's going to be relevant to what we're going to talk about later.

MS: Okay, I was raised a Roman Catholic. My parents are Roman Catholic, but two of my grandparents - my maternal grandfather and my paternal Grandmother were both Protestant, and back then, a Catholic marrying a Protestant was kind of like a mixed marriage, or even interracial, because they married Irish and German together, on both sides. But it was never a very powerful Catholic, because it wasn't that old on both sides.

But I've been an acolyte and gone to CCD on Sundays, though CCD doesn't really teach you very much anymore, but it keeps you out of trouble, at least on Sundays. I guess I came to Carleton pretty much in mind being Catholic, but it's kind of interesting - people talk about like Dungeons and Dragons breeding paganism, and they might be right in some aspects of that, because I did play Dungeons and Dragons a lot, and I was familiar with mythology since I was about seven or eight years old. My first D&D game would probably have been around age nine or ten, and I played a druid, my first character, which is kind of interesting. And I've always liked playing the druids and the rangers, ever since then. Both my parents were mountain climbers, and they're veterinarian doctors, and very interested in old history, so we often went to old historical villages and they showed me about nature when I was growing up. Not an incredible amount, compared to some people, but more than I think was the average. And I'd always been more interested in the ancient mythologies, because they were more exciting than Sunday school. And when I was a kid I read everything I could about vampires, Norse mythology, and monsters, everything kind of supernatural. And I still have some interest in that today, though my interests have moved more in an eastern direction, to China and Japan recently. But I'm very prone to mythology, and that shows up, the fact that I named about 150 sites all over campus after various mythologies and stuff. Much to the annoyance of the other Druids, who don't know what I'm talking about.

EH: You hadn't heard anything about the existence of Druids at Carleton before getting here, had you?

MS: Nope. I hadn't heard a thing about them. In fact, when I got here, it took me about six months before I found them, finally found enough information that I could finally attend one of the ceremonies. It was very difficult to track them down, because they were in a slump, back in '88 through '90. Enough people had graduated from the early renaissance, maybe '86 to '89, that they were kind of getting their feet

back on the ground with Andrea Davis. And she's not the most organized leader that we've had, but better than most.

EH: Why don't you tell me about some of the activities that you got involved with at Carleton and then use that as a springboard to talk about how you got involved with the Druids?

MS: It looked like I was going to be majoring in extra-curricular activities, because I essentially signed up for far more activities that it was possible to pursue. I was in the juggling club, I was in the Science Fiction club, the folk music society, folkdancing, social dancing, I did a little bit of intramural Frisbee, but not much; a couple other small little groups that I can't remember now, but since I was spending far too much time doing extra-curricular activities, I started to develop - I came to Carleton with a fascination for the Grateful Dead, after essentially seventeen years of not listening to any radio, and so my first real music interest was with the Grateful Dead, and eventually I managed to get into folk music here at Carleton.

Mark Heiman was at that time a Junior or Sophomore, and he played, he had little miniature concerts where he would sing Irish and Scottish folk tales, and he would sing for six or seven hours, after science fiction club. And I would just sit there and listen, because I thought it was great. I love listening to performers. And at that time, my interest in Celtic things really started to peak. And I started studying languages at that point, and getting as much information as possible on the Celts. And someone told me that well, you're interested in Celtic stuff, why not check out the Carleton Druids? and I said, okay. This was the spring of 1990. By that point I kind of knew about them, but I didn't really know anyone who was in it. And I decided to check these people out, and little did I know that they had practically nothing to do with Celtic stuff. The thing that Sam and I first had grudges about in the beginning (but have since mellowed out about quite a bit) was that I kept pestering Matt Cohen to tell me when the next thing happened, 'cause they were having all kinds of stuff happening over at Farmhouse and the lower Arboretum at the time, over in the Oak Opening, which is now prairie and we can't use anymore.

So that spring, on April first, I got a note saying to show up on the bald spot, dressed in funny clothing. And it was signed 'Pookums.' And after asking enough people, I found out this was Mark Danburg, and this was his way of inviting people to Druid things. So I showed up wearing nothing particularly silly, and I met Joe Banks wearing a boot on his head, and Mark Danburg dressed in polka dots. And it was raining, so we went to the chapel. And I met Andrea there, for the first time, and I can't remember the other two women there. But I think Bill Shearer might have been there also. It wasn't actually a druid ritual that they were having, but it was a Erisian ritual. An Erisian is a person who believes in the goddess of chaos. And April fool's day was a particularly good day for them. And so there was some kind of washing machine anthem, like 'rinse, recycle, spin, wash' or something, and they handed out Oreo cookies, and spun around until they fell down. And I remember going home extremely disappointed because, first of all that was not Celtic, and second of all it was plain silly.

This was during my more serious phase of Druidism. I helped out with some campfires along then, but the first time was Beltane, after that, which was much more serious. It was over in the little grove, also known as the druid den, within a hundred meters of the hill of three oaks. It has a little wooden gate there, and a depression in the ground surrounded by conic hills around it, making it a nice wind trap, where none of the wind can get into it. I don't remember much about the ceremony, but I do remember camping out there with Sam Adams, from Olaf, that night, and we both griped about how unCeltic it was, and that was the start of one of our close friendships. But I didn't do very much Druidism in the 1989-1990 year, but things did pick up the next year. Fall term, I remember, I started doing a great amount of research in Celtic history and doing research for credit, independently, on Celtic deities and stuff, and I was ignoring my Biology major at that point, to the point of hazard. And I had pretty much given up on my Biology major fall of '90 and thinking about history, but I wasn't sure if I really wanted to. So I decided to go to Scotland, to do some on-site language study and Celtic history study. Before I left, I was still not extremely active, I showed up like one out of every two rituals, and they still weren't inviting me to all of them. I didn't hear about some of them until it was too late. This is still under Andrea Davis' Archdruidcy. And I remember I became second order right before I left, which for me was a very definitive moment of independent religious thought at the time. I was kind of spiritually mature for making a quest at that point, right before I went to Scotland.

EH: What was involved in the second order thing?

MS: Well, during the mid-'80s the Druids had revived Druidism in some form or another, which was talked about by Alice Cascorbi in one of the other interviews. And basically, the older Druids were more into, well, they had their own tradition and were also were more into eastern thought and just a wide eclectic choice, but they were definitely not neo-pagan. The people who revived it in '85, '86 were more Native American, neo-pagan, and Wiccan oriented. They occasionally did the old rituals, from the Carleton Druids, but most of the time they made them up, and they had stopped the third order. The third order had come to a halt around 1984, and it wasn't passed on, but the first and second order continued on afterwards. Normally a first or second order Druid has to be ordained by an Archdruid of a grove - an Archdruid is always a third-order Druid, at least in the older days. Now, after '85, there really wasn't an Archdruid, and there weren't any third-orders, officially, though people did vigil, to stay out all night, and just assume that they were third order at that point, because they couldn't find anyone to ordain them. And second order was passed on by Alice Cascorbi who was ordained to the second order by a previous third-order Archdruid, probably Bob Nieman? or Tom ....one of the people ordained by Franquist, and so she was second order, and so she passed it on to the various people living at Farmhouse, the second and first order, which was a new thing, because normally the Archdruid has to ordain the first, second, and third orders of that grove. So they started off a tradition whereby second orders or first orders could ordain people to whatever order they were holding at the time, so that's how it continued after '85. There's no first order ceremony, but they didn't use the second-order ceremony, though they still consecrated the waters of life at various rituals.

By the early 90's, they had stopped using alcohol, mostly because Andrea Davis did not like alcohol at ceremonies. They substituted a very strong mugwort and verbane tea, which was quite effective. And there's a special ingredient, which she never told me about, but she was substituting that for the waters of life. So when I was being ordained to the second order over in the lower arboretum, I believe it was at the Oak Grove - it was one of the last rituals at the Oak Grove that I remember. Basically, she ordained Bill Scherer,

Bill Scherer ordained Matt Cohen, and Matt Cohen turned to me and said... Well, Andrea was saying that "Do you believe that the earth mother is good?" and then the person was supposed to be replying "Yes, I do." And she seals you to the second order with a druid sigil painted on your forehead, which is a circle and two lines vertically passing through the circle. And then that person ordained the next person, that person ordained the next person. But Matt Cohen turned to me and said, "Do you dig that the earth mother is groovy?" and I replied, "I dig." That was considered satisfactory, and I was ordained by Matt Cohen. Then I ordained the woman next to me, and then on and on and on. But I remember asking at that point, because I was kind of in turmoil at this point, I wasn't sure whether I wanted to leave the Catholic Church, or not, so I wanted to make sure that this oath would not violate my conformation, because when it comes to vows I'm pretty faithful to them as far as I can, and so I wanted to make sure that my oath to study Druidism wouldn't violate that oath, and I was very careful in asking this. And Andrea said that it was always a tradition that being a druid of Carleton would not violate any person's religion, though that person could change over time, if they wanted to, later, but it wasn't because of Druidism. So when she said that, I agreed to be ordained to the second order.

EH: Do you want to say a few things just generally about your attitude towards Carleton as you started?

MS: Well, the first term I studied my butt off, and I realized I didn't have to. I quickly came to the understanding that ...well, I think it was summed up best by Topher, who was a prominent protestor at Carleton, and also a member of the Juggling group, he said once that "Carleton would be a lot of fun if it wasn't for all this work." And I took that to heart pretty strongly, and I pretty much determined by the winter of my freshman year that I was not going to be the wonder that I thought I was. First of all, everyone here is incredibly smart, far smarter than at my high school, and I thought I was reasonably smart, but these people were working their butts off far more than I wanted to, because I was having so much fun, just finding people who were like me, and having fun in groups, which I hadn't done much before, that I didn't think it was worth it to waste my time doing homework here. I figured I would pass and get a degree and I'd be fine. I wasn't going to become a library rat and waste away all the time here because I'd heard that college is the best years of you life, and you should live your youth while you have it, and all these other adages, and so I had pretty much determined that I was going to get as much social growth out of these years at Carleton as I could, versus working my butt off, subjects that I'd forget about in four years, doesn't make much sense to me to work hard like that and forget it all, though it does show up nicely on your transcript, to have a nice 3.7 or something. I escaped here with a 2.7 GPA and I thought I was lucky. I basically was a lightweight when it came to classes - I'd take two serious classes and then I'd take lots of music lessons to pad my GPA. I think I ended up something like 410 out of 465 here at Carleton...somebody was working harder at being a slob than I was, and I couldn't figure out who it was. I devoted far more of my time at Carleton to extracurricular activities than just about anyone else I know, possibly excepting some senators.

EH: Tell me about your trip to Scotland.

MS: This was during the height of my Celtic nationalism, with got me in lots of trouble in airports. I went to Scotland, to the University of Glasgow on a two-week notice - I applied two weeks before the end of December, two weeks after the deadline, and the only place that accepted me was in Scotland. I would have preferred to go to Ireland, but Scotland was the only one who would take me. So without asking Carleton for permission, I just up and left, and Carleton responded by saying, 'Oh. Don't come back, if you're not going to tell us.' Because I didn't tell them until mid-January that I wasn't coming back on January fourth. Oops. So I pretty much studied Scottish Gaelic and Scottish history and Database Programming for Historians, and just jumped right in the middle of the school year, right in the middle of a year-long class, and I came out at the top of the Gaelic class and pretty much at the bottom of the history class, because I couldn't write the papers like they did. They have this weird thing in Scotland - they don't use computers, so I had to hand-write all the papers. And I am such a lazy lout that when it comes to writing papers, I write them once. And I had to write by hand, and so I didn't revise them, so I got lousy grades. What can you say?

I was not impressed by Scotland's educational system, which consisted of lectures, lots of notes, and then exams. No discussion at all in the classroom. Not even the tutorial sessions. I was always trying to get conversations going with the little tutorial groups; not a single one would say anything in the class. Even when asked by the Professor! They just hid in their chairs, cowering before his wit and sarcasm. And I was constantly goading him, and being goaded back, and I decided that even though I did like the subject I was studying, that Scotland was not the system of education that I wanted. I preferred Carleton, with fierce in-class discussions and debates, and people talking about issues after class, something that wasn't happening over in Scotland. People did not talk about their homework after class. They weren't interested. It was just something they were doing to punch their ticket.

So basically I studied a lot of Celtic folklore, dance, and everything, and kind of found my roots, Celtically speaking, during that year. I got terribly homesick for Carleton around that time period, and decided to come back for the fall of '91. The college graciously allowed me to come back, but refused to give me any credit for the time I was gone, so that forced me to move my graduation year from 1993 to 1994, meaning an extra year. And I think that year was very important, because it gave me a chance to step away from Carleton and come back with a renewed vigor for what was truly important about Carleton, which was not classes, but the people I was meeting.

EH: Well, let's get back to your connections with the Druids again. You've said some of this already, but I'd be interested in having you sort of characterize what the Druids were like, the kinds of things that they were doing, what ritual was like, et cetera, when you first became involved with them, and how that then changed.

MS: By the time I came around in the fall of '89, to end of '92, it had switched from being Native American-based with some Wiccan things and occasional Druid things becoming almost exclusively Wiccan. All the major leaders of the group - John Burridge, Andrea Davis, Salem Clark, Celia Lange? - everyone who was really in charge of the group, were Wiccans. They weren't Unitarians or eclectic Episcopalians like in the old days, but they were Wiccans and they had a good idea of what neo-paganism was about. It was not the most open group to Christians or Jews or any monotheistic faith. It wasn't like they would run you out or anything, but they just never really talked positively about monotheism or anything like that. While I was really interested in Wiccanism

during my freshman and sophomore years, I was more interested in Celtic customs and stuff like that. Wicca, I knew, was not Celtic stuff; it was based on Anglo-Saxon history and is also based on 19th century ceremonial magic, cabalism, and other kinds of gobbledygook kind of new age - well, it wasn't new age back then, but it's now called new age stuff, and most of that stuff doesn't interest me, I don't believe in complicated magical rituals and stuff like that. So I kind of sat through them and nodded my head, and I think I rebelled more in just in the fact that these were people who were seeking religious truth than actually appreciating the products of their research, because most of their research into Wiccan and Neo-pagan thought was just not interesting to me at all. And so I just kind of hung out with them because they were the closest thing to what I was looking for. It wasn't incredibly satisfying, but it was nice being around the people. That's how I kind of characterize the '89 to '92 period.

EH: So there was something there that was attractive enough to just keep you in there.

MS: Yeah. It kept me from dropping the group. Those were the years, '89 - '92, when a lot of groups were interconnected. Essentially from '86 to '91, the Folk Music Society with Pickin' & Grinnin', the Folk Dancers, the Science Fiction Group, the Druids, and Pro Musica, everybody in those groups knew everybody else in the other groups and often were members of the same groups. It was hard being a member of one group without being a member of the other. Around '91-'92 that kind of stopped; more compartmentalization had happened, where students found they only had time for one group, in addition to their studies. I think Carleton was getting more study-oriented at that point. People were members of one group and not the others. So around '91-'92, all the groups started to separate, and people who were Druids were not necessarily into science fiction anymore, not necessarily folkdancers. That might have been one of the reasons why Druidism had elapsed there, because people didn't naturally carry over from the other ranks to fill in the groups when people graduated. Kind of a strange period. I'm sure if you interviewed Mark Heiman, he could give you a very detailed description of this process.

EH: This is sort of an aside at this point, but I wanted to ask who the cloak people are and how does that relate to Druidism?

MS: Ah yes, and the cloak people were the other group. I think it was Vanessa or Linnea Johnson? back in '87 or '88 she brought a cloak to school, and other people thought it was really neat, and they started wearing cloaks too. Not because of any Druid thing, but just because that was really neat. And cloaks are really nice in the winter - cloaks are very warm, especially to wear over the outer garments that you're wearing in the wintertime already. And they're also mysterious and romantic in their own type of way. Carleton has a Society of Creative Anachronism chapter, which recreates medieval activity, and they like to wear cloaks for their activities. And so the SCA-ers started to wear cloaks. And then the Druids around that time said you know, cloaks are really nice when you're sitting out all night in the woods with nothing much else, so why don't we all start wearing cloaks too? So they started wearing cloaks. And since all the groups were connected at the time, they all started saying 'why don't we wear cloaks too, because everyone else is wearing cloaks.' So essentially, the 'cloak people' was just a coverall term for this enormous five- or six-group clique around campus. And at one point we had something like 25 or 30 people wearing cloaks during the school year. That number has dropped down to maybe six or seven who wear them normally, but for a while there was just a whole parade of cloaks around campus, and the only people who wear cloaks anymore are Druids and the occasional person from the SCA; I guess partly because everyone kept saying 'you're wearing a cloak - you must be a druid' and they go 'no, not really.' But after enough of these kind of inquiries, people just stopped wearing cloaks because they got tired of being asked the question. Of course, if you ask a Druid that question, they just kind of look at you, and smile. That was the preferred response.

EH: To what extent up to this '92 period of Druidism that we're talking about did that group have a sense of connectedness to the historical tradition of Druidism at Carleton? How aware were they of the origins of the group and what it was like in the decade of the sixties/early seventies?

MS: Well, the blue book of the archives, which had contained all the documents of Druidism from the beginning, was kind of lost around 1985. It was found again by one of the Druids, but he didn't hand it around to everybody else, and it got lost again at his apartment, and found again about '88, and got refound in 1994. But the blue book had never been widely distributed, only like one or two people read it at any one time. The archives had some minimal material on the Druids, but basically, when they restarted in '85, they only really had Isaac Bonewits' Druid Chronicles Evolved, which has an extremely heavy neo-paganism basis to it, and so anyone reading that, not knowing... See, I originally thought at '85 they had a break in their tradition, and they started again from scratch, using only Isaac's book, not talking to the original Druids. So unlike the previous renaissance of Druids, they didn't have a direct line back to the original founders - they were originally working from Isaac's point of view when they started the group, which was perfectly fine, because that was the way they were going anyway, because there were already people at Carleton before the Carleton Druids got revived who were interested in paganism and native American beliefs. So finding Isaac's book made it very easy for them to restart the Druids, because they were already interested in the stuff that Isaac was talking about. However, I'm starting to revise this, based on more interviews, and learning of the contacts Shelton had with them.

Most people, I've found, in the '89 to '92 period, knew the basic runup story, that the Druids had been started as a rebellion against the Chapel requirement, and had always had a playful sense of humor. Maybe one out of every three people had actually read the five little books of the Druid Chronicle. So. And that was about it. Not much more than that was actually known, and almost everything else, again, was made up, as it still continues to do. Far more tradition of the group exists outside of the printed matter, things like how to collect your firewood and what kind of people you ask to join the rituals, how do you do it, where you go, all those little details are far more important to the vast majority of Druids at Carleton then what happened in verse 2, chapter 5 of the book of Meditations, which was never very important anyway. They read the book throughout the history of Druidism, they just read the book once or twice and never saw it again, and got on with their own personal searches. Which is okay, of course. And in that way, I guess, the Druids were pretty much sticking to tradition, except that most people did not know the original liturgy of the Druids and did not see them practiced very often, if they did see it once. They were starting over from scratch ritually, using a lot of Wiccan-based liturgies and stuff. But they did talk a lot to each other about Druidism and alternate religious ideas

after rituals and with each other, and in that way they were exploring religious thoughts, which was still in tradition of the older Druids. But it was more oriented towards the neo-paganism and Wiccan ideas then talking about religion as a whole.

EH: What kind of activities were characteristic of the Druids? What was done at typical rituals or what sort of things were popular? When Druids got together in that era what did they do?

MS: Well, one of the things that separates us from the older Druids is that we have sweat lodges all the time. This was one of the major things from the Native American interests was that we started having sweat lodges, originally over at Farmhouse and then later wherever we could find firewood. Setting up the sweat lodge was basically a ritual in itself because you had to pick up dead, fallen wood, carry it to the site, build a frame, cover it with blankets that you had carried on your back from Goodhue or wherever they were. All these little details that you had to fill to get it ready, and digging a hole, finding the sage. It's a lot of work, five or six hour's work by oneself, easily, setting up a sweat lodge. Then there was all the mailbox stuffing of invitations to invite people. It was by far the biggest type ritual we had at Carleton was the sweat lodge, because there's so much preparation work required.

Basically, you show up, sit around the campfire for about an hour while the rocks are heating up, talk about various things, and basically Andrea was the only one who led sweat lodges while I was here. You get in a circle, you call the four directions, ask for their blessing, drink some more mugwort tea special. You strip down, get in the sweat lodge, close it up; the rocks are already in there, and you pour water on the rocks - you have four people, each one calls one of the four direction, then they call the sky and the earth, then they say hi to all their plant and animal brothers, and usually there's some form of anonymity involved, where anything that's said in the sweat lodge cannot be told to other people afterwards. Then they usually sang one of two chants, they get the energy going, and then they do some random singing, noises, meditation perhaps, where you imagine that you are a tree, and go to the roots, then you go to the roots around the roots, then you start traveling around the landscape, kind of diffusing your consciousness as far as you can, which is quite easy with her mugwort tea! Then you ask for blessings, and pray for different people who are in trouble and stuff, and ask for wisdom; then you come back from meditation around the hills, the dirt around the roots, then you go to the roots, then you come back into yourself, and eventually you're human again. Then you thank the four directions in reverse order, and then you open up the flap and you go outside, and everyone's steaming, and it's kind of neat; then you roll in the dewy grass, then you dry off by the fire. If you want to, you do it again, make it pretty quick. But it's the most intense form of ritual that we've ever done at Carleton. Far more than anything Carleton has ever seen before us.

The Wiccan rituals were mostly new-moon rituals. They had the Beltane one in the spring with the maypole dance when they could, and designed one - usually it's just a big bonfire somewhere - basically it's similar to the Native American that you call the four directions, they call them watchtowers, usually there's a circle drawn on the ground before the thing starts to cut off that space magically from the rest of the universe, which is kind of different from Druidic ritual, even Reformed Druidic Ritual, which generally just takes place in nature, versus being separated from nature - that's a hand-me-down from ceremonial magic, where you build a protective circle to protect you against the demons or what-not. There's a lot more, like you have magic knives, and you have cups - the knife is for the male element, the cup is for the female element; there's some sexual symbology with the two things when you unite them. There's some cakes you pass around, in Wiccan ritual. You really have to interview Andrea or Michelle Curtis, since they're much more into Wiccan theology then I am. Basically, Wiccan ritual has a female goddess who's pretty much head honcho. She might or might not have a male consort who runs around the woods with the animals, but the more feminist you get the less likely he is to show up in the ritual, because male gods are 'icky.' They don't like them. So.

EH: Do you know anything about the Wiccan history of people like Andrea or Michelle? Did their Wiccanism predate their involvement with the Druids?

MS: I'm going to be interviewing them before I leave, hopefully, or I'll have them come in. Most of the Wiccans come to Carleton now with Wiccanism before they arrive. Because witchcraft is mainstream enough that most people have heard about it before they get to Carleton, if they're already in that area. I didn't know about it before I came here, so it was kind of.. I don't know. The whole thing about witchcraft is that they for some reason have chosen a really stupid name for themselves, because they've got to reclaim this word, and make it good again, just like homosexuals have to reclaim the word 'queer,' and lesbians have to reclaim the word 'dyke,' and so on. I'm sure there's a pretty good reason why they're going through all this trouble, but I always liked the word 'druid' because, except for the human sacrifices, we have a pretty popular image: you know, tree huggers. I kind of like that. A lot less trouble from the naysaysers.

EH: Well, tell me some thing about changes over time then, in your own connections with Druidism, and how the group changed focus.

MS: The group had pretty much dropped the Native American part of it when most of those people had graduated in 1988/89, and it switched to a more Wiccan/pagan orientation from '88 to '92. They had pagan studies from '86 to '89 or so, where they'd have intellectual discussions on books on paganism. They'd bring in speakers to talk about 'what is Satanism and how is it different from neo-Paganism' and such, and they'd invite people from around the campus to come and listen to them, but generally most of the Christian societies just kind of avoided the pagan studies altogether. One thing that was noteworthy was that they were more activist than the older Druids were. Most people who come who are neo-Pagans or Wiccans are afraid that they're going to get burned at the cross at some time during they're lives. So they have this paranoia to some degree, probably rightly so, that the Christians are out to get them. For this purpose, the group since '86 had had a much closer connection with the college than ever before, because they wanted to make sure first of all that the college was never on the side of whatever group decided to pick on them, but also because they wanted to use the college's resources to help fund activist activities, like bringing the speakers, letter-writing campaigns, and such, so that Carleton College had actually funded Pagan Studies as a student organization, from '86 to '89, when it collapsed. After that, I think from '90 to '92, there was 'Catalyst' run by Salem Clark and Celia Lange, both of whom were solitary witches who didn't do much druid rituals, but they kind of had Sunday morning breakfasts at their apartment, and we discussed various issues of paganism. But, that was not officially funded by the College, but it was still a form of

separate organization from the Druids to kind of bring people together and talk about these issues of where Neo-Paganism fits into society. During my Archdruidcy of '93-'94, I founded 'The Friends of the Earth-Mother at Carleton College' which was a front for getting money for the Carleton Druids without making the Carleton Druids an official organization. Because if you're an official organization, then you have to have your membership open to perusal by the administration, and we didn't want all of our members' names to be released, because of this same paranoia. So we had a front organization to filter money to our group. And I think we got about $500 dollars that year, and we brought in Isaac Bonewits and bought candle wax and purchased some magazine subscriptions and such with that money. And in spring of 1995, I think, or 1996, Becky Hroback and Anne Graham and Michelle Curtis finally got the Carleton Druids sponsored as an official student organization. And so Carleton's longest-running unofficial organization ended 33 years of being an outside organization and became an official organization. So far no major problems, but they're directly budgeted now, and I can see the '86 to '96 period as being a quest for legitimation of alternate spirituality at Carleton, far more than the older Druids ever did. They kind of played around with the idea and had fun with it, but they weren't dead serious on becoming an official organization, like the Druids at Carleton were since '86.

There was a lot more seriousness involved with the rituals. Most of the rituals were held for specific purposes, like healing, trying to - well, they never did black magic that I knew of, but it was to influence powerful people not to do something stupid, like putting nuclear waste on Prairie Island, and things like that. Environmental issues. We held rituals to clear up bad feeling in the air around Carleton at crisis points, for good luck on grades, stuff like that. The rituals were held for specific purposes, rather then being an excuse to meditate, like in the older days. And in that way I think they were different. And at that point I think I was more interested in just doing rituals for meditation than doing magic for practical purposes. Because even though I do believe that magic can exist, I don't feel like messing around with it because when you start disturbing the cosmic order with your own personal desires, I think you might cause all sorts of chaos to happen. So I don't generally try to influence things through magic, if I can help it. Though from a Catholic background, I do believe that prayer is effective. But to have huge rituals, with all sorts of magic being raised up, sounds a little bit like using a machine gun to catch a butterfly. It's overdoing it a little bit, in my opinion, with dangerous consequences for the bystanders.

EH: At what point did you or other people get interested in researching the history of the group and reviving some of the old forms and traditions and offices and things like that?

MS: Well, in February of either '92 or '93 - I can't remember - I essentially became very interested in becoming third order, because during that time period I was getting to the point where I wanted to start leading rituals. And the group had faltered, back in '91-'92, because of John Burridge departing. There weren't Archdruids between '86 and '92. There were strong minds who made sure that rituals happened, and that was all there was. There wasn't any kind of totalitarian 'I'm in charge, we're going to make sure this thing happens' and such, it was more like someone showed up and said 'I'm going to lead a ritual on this day. Any of you guys want to come up?' and we'd all show up. And then someone else would say, 'I'm going to lead a ritual' and then people would show up. That's generally how things worked. Whenever someone felt like doing a ritual, something happened. Andrea Davis, from the period of '89 - '92, ended up being pretty much the only person who ever decided to do anything. And as a result, it started to develop into an Archdruidcy, because no one else organized anything, so she ended up de facto becoming Archdruid. There's an old proverb among us that the person who runs away from authority the slowest becomes Archdruid. So Andrea became Archdruid by default. But after three or four years, she was tired of that. And by the spring of '92 she pretty much had washed her hands of the whole group. I think she graduated in '93, a year late.

However, I was seriously helping her do all the detail gruntwork of carrying everything and collecting firewood and stuff, but I didn't want to lead a ritual at that point, until the spring of '93, when I felt I had sufficiently gotten a feel for the group. Now I would have graduated in the spring of '93 if it hadn't been for that Scottish thing, and the group might have well faltered at that point if Andrea and I had graduated in '93, but I stayed on for the extra year. The spring of '92 was when Sam and I decided we wanted to become Archdruids. '92, '93 - I can't figure out which one it was because they were almost identical years in my mind, because in the spring of both years I'd decided to become Archdruid in different ways. In spring of '92 I decided to become Archdruid just by staying up all night and saying I was Archdruid, which was the way things ran.

EH: Do you mean Archdruid, or do you mean Third Order?

MS: I didn't really think there was much difference, because no one had done vigils in a long time. In the spring of '92, Sam and I went into the little grove, where we had met in the spring of '90, and we decided to just vigil on our own, independently, and declare ourselves third order. And we did this. And it was about that time, the spring of '92, that I began doing my research into the Druids, which came to fruition in the spring of '93, one year later, when I sent out a questionnaire in February of '93, asking for information from other Druids on the past history. I wanted to try to reconstruct Druidism at that point. Because I saw that Druidism under purely Wiccan interests had fallen flat in the spring of '92. And by the spring of '93, Andrea was about ready to graduate, and the whole thing had gone flat. So I decided to try to essentially bring back old Druidism, see if that might help things. So during '92 to 93, considering myself a third-order, I started getting more involved in Druid activities.

The first ritual that I officially ever held was spring of '92, when I led a Beltane ritual on Mai Fete Island, with Sam Adams, Andrea Davis, Sam Adams, Heather Gurenberg, and Alex Stewart being present. I used part of the liturgy of the old druids at that time, because there was just enough stuff in Issac's Druid Chronicles, and then the Carleton clippings of old newspaper articles for me to get a feel of the old Druids. But it was half-Wiccan, half old Druid at that time. Basically, we went around the lake in quarters. The first quarter was earth, the second quarter was fire, the third was water, and the fourth quarter we swam across to the island and was air. I wasn't being pretty true to the Wiccan four-towers thing, but I was doing it my own way. What really was interesting was not the ritual but what happened there in the night, when I had the great dream. It's written up in the book of the Dead Lake Scrolls, which I wrote. Basically, I had this weird dream where I was back in Scotland on the island of Erin, and their was a big bus group of people moving up this mountain, and it was very slippery and hard to walk on. And everything was

in greys, except the rain, which was yellow. The bus stopped, and it was all my friends from Social Mecca [note: the dorm room of Curtis Mitchell & Kareem Kazkaz, a noted social center] and the cloak people, and I got on board there, and went to a place, and got off, and wasn't looking, and a bus hit me, and I slid under the car and banged my head on the universal joint of the car, and when I got up it was still heavily raining and very muddy, and there was this house with a yellow window, glowing against the darkness.

And I went inside, and all the people were there again, had gotten off the bus and were waiting for me, and a man came out who was completely covered in red boar fir, with bristles all over, and he had the same face as one of the druids I met over on the Isle of Arann. He had blue eyes, and he told me "Now you are one of us." And it was about that time that I woke up in the morning. It was a very strange kind of dream. And I kind of considered that my initiation into the Third Order to the full extent, that May of '92. And during my research of '92 - '93, I got enough materials to understand the old Druids, but I still didn't really understand what was different about them from what we were in the renaissance period of Druidism. And the questionnaire was my attempt to find out who were the Druids of the old time. And what I found out in that period radically changed Druidism at Carleton: it gave them a greater sense of history, and changed my complete idea of everything I held religiously. And we'll have to hold on to that until I'm interviewed tomorrow, when we'll do the second part of this interview.

EH: Sounds good. Thanks.

[Tape 2, side A]

EH: Okay, the date is now August 30th, 1996, and Michael Scharding and Eric Hilleman are continuing with an interview begun three days ago. We were talking about the history of the Carleton Druids during Michael Scharding's tenure at Carleton, and Michael, you had begun talking about how you had begun doing research into the history of Carleton Druidism, and I wanted to ask you about the fruits of that research, why you did it, and what kind of things you learned from it.

MS: Well, my major at Carleton was a History major, and I've always been kind of a person who would join lost causes and try to revive them. And what better group to try to revive than a group that's been dead for twelve or fourteen years? Officially, because by '93...well, maybe not twelve years, but '84 was the real drop in the older ways had happened. The renaissance of Druidism had begun in '86 with a different angle. So I wanted to revive as much as I could the pre-1984 Druidism, and to do that I needed to do research. Basically, I began with the Archives, which had not much more than a copy of Isaac Bonewits' Druid Chronicles Evolved, the original Druid Chronicles, part of the black book, and maybe about a couple dozen letters from the '60s and '70s. And from that I was able to get a bunch of names, and eventually I ran into Richard Shelton and David Frangquist and a couple other people, who were distressed to find out that the blue book of the Archives, which was the book of documents handed down from Archdruid to Archdruid, had disappeared. So they helped me to reconstruct the blue book, essentially, and do my other research.

The reason I did the research for the Druid Archives was to provide primary material for my Comps project, a comprehensive exercise project for the history major. I was going to do a history of the Carleton Druids, a project that caused me no end of trouble. Six or seven major revisions, and I think they just let me go because they were tired of me revising it. But one of the things I found out about the older Druids is that they had a much more lackadaisical attitude toward ritual, which I already did, because I had never really enjoyed the rituals that much, I just enjoyed being with the people. They had a philosophical bent about what the whole purpose of religion was and whether or not ritual was helpful towards religion, a topic that didn't come up too often in the post-'84 Druidism at Carleton, and it was a subject that fascinated me, so... I would say that one of the fascinating elements of researching the Druids would be the aspect of religion as being a method of rebellion. One of the problems that I had with post-'84 Druidism was that they were choosing a religion that was being persecuted, probably on purpose in some ways, but also because they thought it was closest to their heart. But they had already accepted the idea of religion, in some ways, because neo-paganism and Wicca and Native American beliefs are religions, in and of themselves. It had become somber, joyless and too serious. And they had given up the whole debate of "What was religion?' And the whole idea of what separates philosophy and religion for me has always been a very thin line, and I've always kind of straddled it back and forth. And these are the issues that the older Druids were constantly writing about, especially during the Isaac Affairs of the '74-'76 period, when Isaac was becoming extremely serious in his Druidism and trying to turn it into a religion, versus a mode of outlook upon religion.

Basically, when I finished my studies I introduced a greater amount of silliness, play, and meditation to my services, which I began to hold in the earlier style, on a more frequent basis. They weren't well received by most Druids, but then most Druids don't generally show up too often anyway. Usually two or three would show up for the weekly rituals, which I reintroduced for a while. The vagueness of the rituals was what I liked the best. If you weren't paying close attention, you might not quite understand what happened - it's like you blinked, and suddenly the ritual's over with. And I thought that was kind of a fun thing to do, because if you hold it in a particularly beautiful location, the people who are attending the ritual might be distracted enough by the trees that by the time they came back the ritual was over. I don't know, I kind of liked that. It's there and gone, and you don't have to worry about it. You can get on with looking at the trees and stuff, which I think is more important than the actual speaking of the words. At my rituals I decided to collect more meditations, and I started to write more personal histories of the recent years, like in the Dead Lake Scrolls, and collected books of poetry, and stuff for materials, most of which never were used, but I was just trying to produce more thoughtful material for possible future Archdruids.

I also made the International Druid Archives larger than the Carleton scope, originally because I thought there was a greater connection between the different groups and Carleton's Reformed Druids, until I realized that the Carleton Druids are pretty much unique in the world, and that the Celtic connections are pretty superficial, and that the only thing that connects these groups, besides the name "Druid," is possibly the use of a couple of visual images of Celticness, a tendency towards anarchy and collapse, and possibly also the...any time you have a Druid group, you pretty much have people who are looking for answers, and I figure since we're

all looking towards the earth mother, we'll probably get most of the same answers, even if they are taking the ancient Celtic part a little bit too seriously. But several Celtically-oriented pagan groups have spun off from the Reformed Druids, notably Ar nDraiocht Fein and the Henge of Keltria. And since I didn't think they would get any kind of stable archive of their own, and I kind of think of them as grandchildren of the Reform, I decided to include the material into the Druid Archives. Which may prove to be helpful to the Reformed Druids in some way, as an additional reservoir of nature-oriented poetry, meditations and liturgies to work off of in the future. Plus, with the Keltria group, they're up in the Twin Cities, and they can come down and join us, or we can go join them, so I thought it would be useful for them to have access to their records. Just kind of networking groups together.

But it's kind of hard to describe how my Druidism at Carleton changed, because it was a very gradual thing. Some of it is covered in my diary, my seven-year diary that I've had since I lived here, but basically Carleton is a very special time when you can work out a lot of your questions in a relatively supportive environment that you might not have another opportunity of. You have several people who are in a similar stage of their lives, and who are willing to ask the same questions and give you honest answers in a way that, well, perhaps people become more experienced as they get aged, and I don't know that experience can be translated in words...It has to be experienced, I believe. But I know that the 18 -21 age is, religiously speaking, probably the most crucial in deciding one's future religious lifestyle. Either you abandon it, you get more conservative, or you learn more about it then you ever believed possible. There's one proverb I remember, and I was thinking about the difference between religion and philosophy, that a religion destroys evil, but a morality merely covers it. I'll let you think about that one. But I think there's a certain something about religion that's one step above a philosophy, whereas a philosophy might have a logical basis to it, or it's more argument-based. There's an element of faith which does not completely exist within philosophy, and that's why I think Druidism kind of bounces back and forth. Philosophy doesn't have the same amount of ritual that religion does, but it's easier to understand philosophy for the hard-minded mind. But occasionally the mind needs to take a vacation - I think that's where religion comes in. But basically, my '93 - '94 school year was spent having a large number of rituals: the weekly rituals I've already mentioned, the nearly monthly sweat lodges, as much as I could. I got the Druid's Notes Conference up and running again, where people could post notes and talk to each other, outside of the ritual time period. I tried to introduce weekly meetings of meditative readings, and stuff like that. I tried to network with people, give them addresses of different groups, and societies outside of Carleton which they might wish to contact. I essentially tried to do everything to make it easier for people to become Druids, sometimes neglecting my own Druidism by being too busy. My own form of Druidism was essentially talking to people, I think much more than doing rituals. Talking to people, and walking by myself in the Arboretum at night were, I think, the two backbones of my Druidism.

The way I have tried to be remembered for my Carleton Druidism is mostly through literature, which is amusing because I consider myself a little bit anti-dogmatic - I make fun of scriptures as much as I can, and to leave behind a 500-page tome of scriptures seems a little bit hypocritical, in a way. But I've collected this collection called A Reformed Druid Anthology, which I'll be publishing tomorrow. Partly as a scholarly tool, for other researchers. I'm producing 30 copies - about ten will be distributed to libraries across the country, about ten will be distributed to friends, and then I'll hold on to the other copies. This will be downloadable off the Internet, on our website. And I kind of hope that people will decide to write histories on their neo-pagan organizations, to provide useful material for religion majors and other people doing research on the newer religions. Especially in an age where Fundamentalism and other Christian religions seem to be surging ahead, I think it's necessary for more people to be doing research on the fringes of the religious movements, which are often the people who are rebelling against the mainstream religions, in a way. And I kind of hope that my book will encourage other people to research this area of theology. And this collection I've made, it has a study guide, it has the original Druid Chronicles, it has the Apocrypha, which has selected letters over the last 34 years from various Druids, on what Druidism is to them. It has a lot of rituals from the older days, a variety. It has various trivia and customs, it has some books on the Hasidic Druids of St. Louis, who are now extinct, and an increased and enlarged collections of meditations, miscellany, my history comps, and various publications that I've put out over the years. Since I won't be here over the next few years, I've decided to leave this behind as a kind of a very long epistle to future Archdruids and various Druids here at Carleton. My hope is that they will realize that most of it is self-deprecating, and that the underlying message is that 'these are the kind of materials you can collect over the years if you continue your Druidism' and not to use this book as a strict guideline or strict handbook of Druidism, but more of an example of what Druidism has done for me over the years, and that the sheer creativity that it can produce from one Druid might be an example for them on how it can affect their lives. It will also give them a sense of continuity over the years, with the past Druids, which I think is important.

There are lots of alumni who have gone through the same problems that you have, and that Carleton has deeply changed their lifestyles. And you can have a connection with these older Druids - just write letters to them, and ask how, over the last 30 years, your Druidism has changed. And for me, seeing how the Druids have changed after graduation has been perhaps the greatest benefit. Because I've seen how the ritual has fallen away, and how the lifestyle changes that they undertook have been the most lasting contribution of Druidism to them. And Druidism for me has pretty much been synonymous with Carleton's educational basis: the constant asking of questions, the unwillingness to accept simple answers, the continual search for academic and religious truth, seem pretty close in my mind. The need to involve other people in this quest is important, also. The 'no man is an island' concept is important for the Druids, because without the other Druids, I would have never gotten to this stage, and that has to be remembered and respected. It is possible to be quite a good Druid by yourself, but I'm sure other people have gone through the same steps you have and can leave a trail for you to follow, or at least, what kind of tools will be useful in your quest. And I've noticed that many of the Druids over the years have returned to their original religion, but they still have that element of Druidism in their minds, which is comforting to me to know that one can reconcile one's beliefs with Druidism on a stable basis throughout one's life - there's always an opportunity for return.

EH: I was wondering if you wanted to say anything at all about the things that you did to mark the 30th anniversary of the Druids.

MS: Richard Shelton came down for that. Basically, for the 30th anniversary, we held a ritual on the Hill of Three Oaks and the Little Grove. Richard Shelton came down to hold a service. That period - that was May of '93, and April of '93 we had a run-in with some anti-Druids who broke up one of our rituals, but I don't think they understood that we were actually having a service. But thinking back on that period, I don't think I acted as well as I could have for that situation. Instead of being calm and collected, I got nervous and paranoid, which probably affected me more than them. Getting worked up about such things - and it was a trivial thing - was very un-Druidic of me, I would think. But it did kick off a huge surge of interest in my research, sort of a search for validity, which Druidism will never supply. Druidism is not in the habit of giving official credentials, and such. It's too much of a rebellious organization to ever... Well, every time someone searches for validity in their beliefs, they might find a couple people who agree with them. But basically, you have to just be yourself and change what you know to be wrong, and stand by what you believe in. No one else can give that to you. I'm sure you've heard that a hundred times before, but it's true. The 30th Anniversary was my attempt to connect with the past of Druidism, to tell all the other Druids that yes, we've been here a very long time, and other people have done the same things that you have done in your search for religious truth, and you're part of a longer struggle that not only have people in the past helped you, but you also have an obligation to provide the resources and support to future Druids at Carleton. Something that I really think is the basis of the third order.

The third order originated with Frangquist asking David Fisher in 1964 to take over the Druid organization, and Fisher had decided by the spring of '64 that he was going on to the Episcopal seminary. And the group was nearing its objective of getting the chapel requirement removed. Fisher did not really like the idea of it continuing onward, but Frangquist thought that the search for religious truth was too important to the various Druids at Carleton to just let it die and leave people to their own devices. Not that he felt that he was the only one who could help these people, but he was a way, a possibility, an opportunity, and that it was his duty to help other people as much as he could who came to him for help. The Druids have never been a proselytizing organization. Sure we show up at activities fair at the beginning of Fall term and put out a membership list, but when people fall away from the organization, if that's the right term, we accept that, and just go on with the people who decided to continue on with us. I really doubt that anyone can graduate from Carleton without becoming a little bit of a Druid. But Frangquist started of the third order...essentially, it's your duty to provide counseling when asked questions, to provide opportunities of religious introspection for people who don't know how to hold services; to offer tips of meditation to those who need to learn about it - you're essentially becoming a resource for other people to work with, a resource that is without affiliation to any particular religion, a neutral party.

There aren't very many neutral religious organizations. I mean the Unitarians come kinda close, but they're still in the Christian camp. And the people who are just completely wandering around, there needs to be a person they can ask questions to. Of course, one of the problems that the Archdruids have is that they don't really have answers. They just have more questions to give to the person who's asking questions, which can be very disheartening to people seeking a simple, strict organization, a belief to believe in. But if they understand that the religious search is merely an endless stream of questions, then we can provide that service to them. That's pretty much the third order.

EH: Why don't we go now to the period after you graduated and you continued to maintain ongoing contacts with the Druids at Carleton. What's the state of Druidism at Carleton now, and what have your connections with it been?

MS: Well, I ordained Becky Hrobak as my successor, and then she took up Anne Graham and Michelle Curtis as her co-Archdruids in the spring of '94. The '94 - '96 period, they held frequent rituals, mostly of the Wiccan variety, which Becky didn't like that much because she's not into ritual - she's kind of like me in that respect. She's more into the meditative aspect, and her favorite activity was having tea parties where people read poetry and drank tea. Or taking Arb walks. That was one of the things I liked doing a lot. But Anne and Michelle are more into the organized ritual aspects of religious life, and they did a pretty good job of organizing things like that. They're also good about providing access to resources of the neo-pagan genre. I think they did a pretty good job, because you don't have a lot of time at Carleton to devote to activity: there's only so many hours you can do and still get a decent GPA. I usually spent a good eight or ten hours a week, at least, of serious Druidic activity or research, possibly much more than that. My grades suffered as a result. You have to be extremely dedicated to do something like that, day in and day out. And after about two years, they were tired of this.

[Tape 2, Side B]

MS: They didn't have the sheer resources of time that I allowed myself. Considering that, I think they kept the group pretty active. It didn't grow too much, but at least it was maintaining itself. They were sophomores when they came into their Archdruidcy, so they were relatively young. It is my opinion that seniors should not be Archdruids, if it can at all be helped. Because Comps tend to take up too much of their time to be an effective Archdruid. But they did find their successors, which is the important thing for the Archdruid to do. They found Irony Sade and Michelle Hajder, who we ordained in spring of '96 to be next year's Archdruids. I've written about them in the book of Vigils, so you're welcome to read that. They're in the Dead Lake Scrolls. But I think that they are the first Archdruids to be in charge of an official Druid organization. The first 33 years of the Reformed Druid history, we were an unofficial student organization. In the spring of '95 or '96, I don't remember, Becky, Anne, and Michelle got the Druids to become an official student organization, with funding and everything.

Now this is very helpful for financial purposes, but for secrecy purposes it kind of puts a wet blanket upon the Druids, because all our records and membership lists are now available for perusal. And there are some hoops you have to jump through as an official organization, which take up more of the Archdruid's time, which should really be spent with the other Druids as much as possible. Here you've got money, which allows you to do more activities, but here you also have more paperwork, and you have to be more careful that you don't do anything that will offend the college, or you

can get your funding revoked. So it hampers the kind of activities you can have, it takes up the Archdruid's time, and it makes you an official part of the college, which affects the whole basis of your organization. If you're constantly on the outside of the group, the group being the college, you can get away with all sorts of stuff and fight against rigidity of beliefs and the status quo and stuff like that, but when you're actually part of it, you have a tendency to support that organization. And while I am very supportive off the college in many ways, I kind of think that the Druids need to be there on the fringes, rather than in the limelight. To correct the organization in ways that only an outsider can really do. I really hope that Michelle and Irony don't get too absorbed in the specifics and legalities and continue to have a thriving organization, meeting in the Arboretum and talking to each other and stuff like that, and don't get wrapped up in college politics too much. But it's kind of nice to see that the group has continued on, after me. Michelle and Irony are my great-grandchildren, in the Reformed sense. Or great grand-brothers and -sisters. I don't know if that works. But it's just nice to see what one has done has lived after one, and I suspect it will continue on for another three or four years before the next major crisis will happen.

EH: Okay, is there anything else you want to say to the Druids?

MS: Good luck!

EH: You've been doing some other interesting things apart from Druidic things. Since your graduation you've been involved in a number of projects - I wondered if you wanted to say something about those.

MS: Well, the Carleton Druids were a religious rebellion of mine, but there were other kinds of things that I was trying to do. Now you mustn't get the idea that I was some kind of wild-eyed revolutionary person running around, picketing places. I prefer to do my kind of Reforming more casually, kind of picking away at the rock versus swinging sledgehammers. One of the other groups that I started at Carleton was the Mystery Science Theater 3000 organization. The Science Fiction Club at Carleton had become more and more quality-oriented and film-watching. The original Science Fiction Club, which started I think in '87, was essentially watching Dr. Who and old Star Trek episodes. And that only took up two hours of your Saturday afternoon, which left you three or four more hours to socialize. That started forming a nucleus which eventually became the Dr. Who club, which became the Science Fiction Alliance. That was a lot of fun. Got lots of people together, talking and discussing various science fiction topics, listening to folk music, like Mark Heiman's singing, which got me into Druidism, and was generally just a good thing. People didn't watch much TV at all back then. For us, watching two hours a week was kind of scandalous, at least in the eyes of the college. And over the last three or four years, there's been an explosion of various science-fiction series on TV, and there's just a glut of viewing activities now being performed by the Science Fiction Alliance at Carleton, to the point where there's so much new stuff on that you have to be quiet so people can hear it for the first time correctly. In the old days, of course, everyone had seen it already two or three times, so it was no big deal if you started talking to your neighbor and making fun of the series or chatting or socializing. Now you have to sit there quietly in a room with sixty other people and then as soon as it's over you have two minutes to talk, and then -boom- there's another series on the TV. It's just not very good for building a community. It's more of a communal... I don't know, it's like being alone in this group of 60 people watching the same program. It's not like the older days. It reminds me a lot of my younger Catholic services, where you sit put and just listen passively.

So three years ago, in the spring of '93, Mark and I founded the Mystery Science Theater 3000 club at Carleton. MST is a business from Minnesota that would take old movies and stick three comedians in the lower right corner of the screen. And they would constantly make fun of these movies that were so abysmally bad that you could hardly bear sitting through them. And somehow by adding humor to it, or just completely destroying them, I think one becomes aware of how many science fiction movies and stuff like that are actually quite good. So we came up with the idea that if we showed really terrible MST movies to the Science Fiction Community here at Carleton, they would stop bitching and moaning about how awful the last Next Generation episode was, and they might actually start appreciating how much better it actually was than 'Manos, the Hands of Fate' or 'Earth vs. the Spider' or these really crappy movies, or that people would take a more positive attitude in their critiques, versus saying 'oh, that wasn't the best thing possible.' Which is, I think, becoming more and more a way that the American public is seeing it as. They have such a fascination with perfection that when something fails to meet it they tear it apart, whereas they don't realize all the good qualities of it. I think by subjecting yourself to what is a *really* terrible movie, you will appreciate the better qualities of the recent materials that are now available. And appreciating what you have, that's what it's all about. Mark and I also formed the Bagpipe Association at Carleton, where we sneak around in the Arboretum at one o'clock in the morning to serenade the students who are still up working. Bagpiping is very similar to the MST3K concept, in that bagpipe is pretty horrible music to listen to, and it makes you appreciate the quiet tinkly music of classical concerts, and stuff like that. The MST3K society is kind of moribund, it kind of collapsed after two or three sucessors; there really wasn't anyone who was interested in watching those movies any more than they already had. They'd seen them all, and they didn't want to see them again. And so it's kind of collapsed. It might power up again in a couple of years, but...

Back in the spring of '94, Mark and I started the Half-Dozen Eggs film production company. Similar to the MST concept, we wanted to make a really bad movie, because here we had been criticizing all these really terrible movies in Mystery Science Theater, and yet, we ourselves were guilty of not appreciating how good those movies were, because we said, 'oh, I could make a better movie than that.' That kind of comment comes up. Well, we decided to put our money where our mouth was, and we failed! We made a terrible movie. The first one was called "A Prisoner" which was supposedly a predecessor to the Prisoner series, the British science fiction series where a retiring spy is taken to a prison and they try to drain some information out of him, and he resists, and he tries to escape, every episode, and fails. Kind of a depressing series in that way. It was the first action series where the hero loses every episode. Which we find kind of amusing. So we made a prequel to that film, and it didn't turn out very well; it was not very well made.

But in the Spring of '95, we decided to move from the science fiction genre to the Barbarian fantasy genre, mainly because it's cheaper to make a really good barbarian film than to make a really lousy science fiction film. Because all you need is a bunch of fur and a sword, and you can make a good barbarian movie. And this was called 'Gator,' based on the movie 'Ator the Fighting Eagle,' so ours was 'Gator the

Fighting Rabbit.' It was a pastiche of 30 or so barbarian movies that I had seen over that spring. Most of the actors and crew were Druidic sorts of people from Carleton, with that quirky sense of humor. The trick of writing a really good comedy is not to write a comedy, but to try really hard to make it serious, and then to fail. It's kind of like Douglas Adams saying that the way to learn how to fly is to throw yourself really hard at the ground and miss. It's a very similar concept.

I had an underlying idea for these two movies, in that Carleton to me has a kind of mystical, mythological landscape, and I always had one foot on the other side, mythologically speaking, while I was here. Every building had all kinds of stories and legends to me, from the friends I've heard talk about what they did there, and everything like that. But I thought it would be really interesting to try to impose a completely alien idea of the college, Carleton College actually being a science fiction scene or set where people were having their brains wiped, or something like that. Or turn it into a barbarian landscape full of monuments and beautiful maidens and bad action sequences. So I extensively used the features of my beloved Carleton in my movies; kind of making a monument of my love to her.

And the last one we've made is Drake's 7, which is another science fiction series but much higher budgeted, based on the old Flash Gordon serials of ten-minute episodes. And to a degree I think these film projects also filled a gap or a void in the Science Fiction Alliance here at Carleton, because over the years there's been less and less interaction between the members of the Science Fiction Alliance. And so what we did with our movies over the last few years, was since a lot of the Science Fiction people hang around over the summer, we put them into movies. And so when you're on the set for five or six straight hours and you only have to say one line, you tend to try to find something else to do. And this is usually where you start making friendships with people, and building a common experience to work upon. And these film projects are a way of getting the Science Fiction Society involved in the more creative aspect of producing science fiction, and not just watching it. And also hopefully to encourage them to comment and write materials on other forms of science fiction beyond the visual formats.

And like the Druids, I've funded various books and projects for the science fiction library as well, stuff like that. And I feel as an alumnus that rather then giving the college a check to work with as they feel, I'd rather target certain groups that I think are important to the college's welfare and make sure that they have all the money that they need. Well, not all the money that they want, but the money that I think they need for certain projects, and so I've directed my contributions to these groups - the druids, the science fiction society, the MST3K group, and the Bagpipe society. Mark Heiman and I together have pretty much been the backbone of these organizations, behind the scenes. The other organization that I think is really important for me is Pickin' & Grinnin', because this is a group that meets Wednesday nights to do folksinging. And one of the unfortunate side effects of mass-production of music is that instead of ...like in the old days, when you wanted to have a dance, you had to find a band to play for you. Now you can just stick a CD or a tape into there and have a perfect performance for your enjoyment pleasure. This leads to more jaded behavior, 'oh, why should I get this crappy band when I can get this beautiful performance by these world-reknowned people who everybody knows?' This is a lack of creativity on their part, because there are certain things that a live band can do that a canned band cannot do. You can't make requests, you can't ask them to do something special. This is part of an aspect of society that is happy with prepackaged religion, prepackaged music, and all these other things. And Pickin' & Grinnin' is where you make your own music, you make your own harmonies, you pick your own songs, you modify the songs, and you play instruments with them. And this kind of self-sufficient attitude toward entertainment I think is very healthy for a student to go through while at Carleton. To realize that there's very little that they can sell you that you can't do for yourself, if you really wanted to.

And this applies towards religion, and entertainment, education to a great degree, and almost everything. The last two or three years I've been getting into a more Spartan existence, as much as I can, mainly because I realize that if you don't want your possessions, they will eventually take control of your life. And after you're dead, of course, your possessions live on after you, but of course that's not who I am, I'm not my possessions, it's the friendships that I've built and the ideas that I've done. And that's more important than who's the richest person in the cemetery or who has the most stuff to give away when they're dead? Well, I think you should be working on that throughout your life, giving away possessions and stuff like that. I guess that's just the main thing about the Druids and everybody is trying to teach self-sufficiency and self-confidence, self-reliance and innovative ideas and how to do things in ways that other people have not done before and are better suited to the situation. To be adaptive in all aspects of life. To challenge myself even further than this, I am going to Japan in five or six days. I am going to abandon most of my official responsibilities as a Reformed Druid for a couple years.

Well, I take that back. I'll probably get questions about religion, and though they won't know I'm a Druid, I'll probably try to give them good advice. I call this "guerilla Druidism." So I guess I'm not officially abandoning my responsibilities, but I'm not going to be going around, starting a grove or anything, for a couple years. But basically I'm going to try to live as cheaply as possible in Japan, which is not easy to do. I'm going to be learning a new language, a new career, and I'm going to have to learn how to do my own entertainment because I won't understand theirs. I'm essentially trying to learn a new lifestyle, and how to adapt to it. Because most of what I know about the American lifestyle has become second nature. I don't know how I learned it in the first place. And I think to become a better adaptive and creative person, to go through it again as an adult, consciously, as you go through it, I think will be a great way of building up tools and resources for future endeavors of mine. New ways of thinking, new ways of organizing people, new ways of learning, new ways of religion. It's just a massive attempt of mine to learn new tools, I guess new Druidic tools, towards life. They say you grow a new soul when you learn a new language. There's also a little bit of - oh, what do you call it - reliving the past here, because I know that Frangquist went to Japan right before he came back with a really heavy-duty Druidism. I suspect he went through many of the same things that I'm going there for. He probably had to learn all sorts of new adaptive and creative ways of thinking and doing things, and then he brought these back to Druidism. I hope that Japan will do this for me also.

EH: Good luck with that, and is there anything else you wanted to say, or are we wrapped up?

MS: I would recommend to people that every morning when they wake up, realize what a great opportunity they have here at Carleton. I've been here since 1989, off and on, and though there were probably days when I didn't think about it, hardly a day has gone by when I did not appreciate the opportunity I had here to talk with people. Do not pay too much attention to the classes - most people never look at your grades in any individual class. Take classes that you'd never take, maybe just pick one randomly. Everything you've learned here will be useful somewhere along the way. Try not to take classes just purely for credit purposes, to get a good grade because you already know the stuff. There's opportunity for dawdling in life, don't do it now. Spend as much time as you can talking with people, I don't think the term networking is appropriate, but just understanding different people who are working in different fields who come from different backgrounds as possible, join as many organizations as you can, perhaps in succession, one after the other, until you can understand how they work. Because you'll never have this quality of openness and access to different types of groups and organizations that you have now. Everything after this gets much more difficult to break into the cliques in the organizations.

Here you have an opportunity to explore all the different types of groups that later appear in society, in a raw state, where there are fewer things hidden from you than there will be in the other forms that exist outside of Carleton College. And try to use whatever opportunities are available for you. I mean it's nice to do the minimum amount of work here. But do independent studies, if you can, do independent research. Ask for advice from the professors: don't underestimate this resource. These are people who've made it their life's quest to teach people and to offer them tools of learning. And most of them are delighted to have people ask them for advice. And after you graduate make sure that you contribute, as past alumni have contributed, to others academic search. Provide access for people who are looking for jobs, give them tips, provide money for certain projects that you hear about that you like. Provide services if they ask for them, or offer your services for certain projects of theirs, and help recruit people that you think are useful for Carleton's future. And never finish your studies. Don't think that you've learned it all, because you haven't. And I wish you all the best of luck.

EH: Thank you.

Figure 8 Frangquist bestowing 6th Ordination on Mike at Samhain 1993 on the Hill of 3 Oaks.

Interview with Irony Sade

Subject: Irony Sade [IS]
Interviewer: Eric Hilleman [EH]
Date: April 21, 2001
Transcriber: Dan Brooks, Leona Kwon (12.10.02)
Tapes: 2

Begin Tape I, Side A

EH: This tape is being recorded for the Carleton Oral History Program. The date is May 11th, 1999. The interviewee in this interview is Irony Sade, a Carleton senior currently. And doing the interviewing is Eric Hilleman. Irony, let's talk a bit about first your own background and anything you want to say about yourself prior to coming to Carleton, and then how you got interested in Carleton and came here.

IS: Alright, I was born in up-state New York, 22 years ago, I suppose. My parents, both professors, one of anthropology, the other biology, and lived between a small town in New York and suburban Chicago back and forth till high school and moved to New York permanently. Came to Carleton, umm, not entirely sure why. It sounded like it was more forgiving of uniqueness than many places, and it was a long way from home, both of which I wanted.

EH: Um, did you visit it before?

IS: I did visit it, once. I'm trying to remember if I was already accepted at that point. I applied early admission, and then didn't actually complete applications for anywhere else. I got into a panic towards the beginning of February and started applying to Cornell just in case, but once Carleton accepted me they apparently told Cornell before they even told me. And I got a letter from them saying, "I'm sorry, you've been accepted somewhere else. We can't handle your application." (chuckle)

EH: Okay, you say forgiving of uniqueness, and that was important to you. Why was it important to you?

IS: Because my high school was not forgiving of uniqueness. And while, I was not willing to conform it meant that I had, perhaps, four friends, over the four years I was there. And that was ok because I kept to myself most of the time, but coming to a new place, I also wanted to be able to be more of who I was without that restriction and without that image in the collective mind of who I already was.

EH: Since this tape is going to talk largely about your relationship to the Carleton Druids, I think I want to ask you about your religious background, if any.

IS: Yeah, (chuckle). (pause) My parents wanted us, my brother and I, to make up our own minds about religion. And as such tried to expose us to everything, but not ever...but wouldn't ever say this is the way that things are. 'Till I was about sixteen I really didn't think about it much, I remember in fourth grade once deciding that since nobody else currently believed in the old Norse gods I would, just because they ought to be believed in, or they might die. (chuckle) But that was never anything serious. I went to a Presbyterian church, my grandmother's church for holidays and on occasion when I felt like it. I was in the choir for a while there, but had no real religious thoughts until I was about sixteen, then I suffered an accident that made me think, and from that point on, started really looking into what Religion was, what God might be, what Truth was, who I was. Just asking all the really big religious questions, and then I started seeking out people who seemed to know and talking to them. Found a prayer group in my high school and joined that, clashed greatly with many of the Christians there, but found a lady who's faith was strong enough, that she would really talk, and she would really answer the hard kinda blunt questions I'd ask. And I learned an awful lot from her, so, I didn't have any...I didn't have any religious training or (pause) I don't know. Experience is the wrong word for it, but I didn't have any background, but I did have thoughts and investigations, I don't know. My family's been religious from way back. My grandfather was a Mullah [spelling?] in Kurdistan and he was the first person on that side of the family to become Christian and passed that onto his son perhaps too strongly. My grandfather used to go to church, sit ramrod straight in the front rows, sing through all the choir pieces, and then turn off his hearing aids when the sermon started. My father, himself, never speaks about religion. Mom was raised pseudo-Catholic, I think, but not really. Very little influence from my family that way, except encouragement to make up my own mind.

EH: Ok, um, have you been satisfied with having chosen Carleton?

IS: Yeah, very much. I agree with Michael ['Mec'] Scharding that it should be required that people take a year off between their sophomore and junior years. But I would definitely come back. I'm sorry to be leaving, but it is getting toward time to go.

EH: Well tell me some things, really anything you want about your Carleton experience, but I'm particularly interested in how you got involved with the Druids. Did you know about the Druids before you came to Carleton?

IS: The person who gave the tour that I came on, over the summer of '95 I guess it was that I came here, mentioned something in passing about the cloak people. And so when I had my sort of interview on campus, I think it was with Dean Govoni, and I asked him, "so who are these cloak people?" And he started laughing and got this "Oh dear, how do I explain this" expression and mentioned that there was a druid group and I looked through the Algol at that point and saw who they were. They looked like neat people, and I think, promptly forgot about it during the intervening summer.

I don't really remember how I actually met the group when I got here. I remember that it was very small, and I remember going to one Druid tea, that Michelle Curtis and Annie had. And I remember being a little bit leery of it, and just kinda, "What's this about?" asking them kinda questions. "What do you mean by these orders? You say that they confer different things. Do they confer what, powers, responsibilities?" You know "what is this about?" And not getting very far with the answers, but I also met Michelle Hajder at some point in there and she'd gotten involved with the Druids. But the first memorable experience with them was a sweat lodge in the lower Arb that was mostly alumni. I don't believe Mec was there but Andrea Davis was. Joe (pause) Banks? I think was and Annie and Michelle both were, Michelle Curtis and Hajder for that matter. Umm, I don't remember how I got involved with it, but that was the one that security busted twice (chuckle).

And oh Rodelt [unclear] rode that story out long ago but that was my first intriguing experience and after that knew I was staying, I guess. By that time also Michelle and I had gotten to be friends and had independently come to the conclusion that the Druids were a neat thing. It was really amazing that a religion had actually started here, if they were going to call it a religion. And that as there were only two people left, both of whom were leaving the next year, and neither of us really wanted to see the group die out, so I can't really speak much for her, but I didn't know much about its history or anything about what I was getting into but decided I didn't want to see it die. So volunteered or ran away slowest I guess and said I would try to organize things next year, and it just sort of accumulated from there.

EH: What about the group appealed to you and made you want to not see it die?

IS: Mmm, innate sympathy for the underdog... I liked the things they talk about, I liked the anything-goes attitude towards questioning but I also saw in it potential for some very serious inquiry into nature and knowledge and what life meant. (pause) I was impressed by the people in it, particularly Andrea, and Mec was around at some point during that first year because he was gone by my second, so I did know him then. (Sigh) I don't really know why beyond that. I'd looked into some of the prayer groups here and had found them interesting but sort of exclusive and the Druids were willing to talk about anything and look into anything and that's what I needed at that point.

EH: Exclusive in terms of just a group of friends who wanted to be in an exclusive group of friends or exclusive in terms of religious orientation?

IS: No, not socially exclusive, for the most part. There was a little bit of that, but I think that is just the nature of groups at Carleton because everything's so intense. But there was a Bible-study group I remember where it was literally that, a Bible-study group. And any other opinions, any other texts, any other readings that you brought in were duly and carefully considered, but (pause) made things acutely uncomfortable I suppose. And I remember at one point asking a lady who shall remain nameless some questions about it and she gave this very piercing look and said, "Have you studied philosophy here?" And I said, "No." Cause I hadn't then, and she said, "Oh, good. You're still pure." and went on with whatever she was talking about. But that made me hesitate towards exploring much that way.

EH: So (pause) Well, I want to get into what Druids did, both early on when you were just getting exposed to them and stuff. One, in what ways they're different than that in the sorts of things that they're talking about as well as just sort of the activities describing what goes on when the Druids get together. Tell me, to start with, about the security-busted sweat lodge.

IS: Okay. That was the only major activity that I saw during that first year here, besides the third order vigil that Michelle and I did. Um, the sweat lodge incident... I don't know the name of the island, or peninsula rather, but the sandbar in the lower Arb, this side of the river but sort of north of the stone pilings, there's a sandy spot in a little dell. Joe Banks and I built the sweat lodge there, I volunteered to help for some reason, and we built fire and somebody brought in saplings and we put up the sweat there and he and I just ended up sitting and talking for, must have been two hours, about a lot of Native American religion that he'd been involved with, about magic of different sorts, about what went on at Carleton, just about life mainly. And we talked about plants and different things and he said what he really wanted were some herbs to throw on the rocks and I said, "Well, what about catnip?" He said "Catnip would be great, do you know where some is?" So I ran off around Lyman and found what I had been told was catnip, turned out later it was lemon balm, which does something entirely different, but is still safe. So brought back a handkerchief full of that. Other people kept showing up and got dark and we were just about ready to strip down and head into the sweat when flashlights and security jumped out of the bushes and said, "What is this?! Who are you? Why are you have fires here? Are you camping? Do you have alcohol?" All three of which are illegal in the lower Arb. And we said yes we had a fire and no we're not camping, we're all ex-Carleton students at least and there's no alcohol at a sweat, that would be a very bad thing. And they took down names and asked that we put out the fire. One of them grabbed a bucket full of river water and was about to dash it onto the fire, [I] was trying to explain to him that throwing the bucket of water on red-hot stones was probably not the wisest course of action, and he wasn't listening, and Joe Banks said, "Sir, this is a religious ceremony. Would you let us put out the fire our way please?" And he was instantly, "Oh. Okay. Yeah that's fine." And I really, I don't know, really respected that somehow, a way of problem-solving I hadn't thought of. So Joe raked the rocks out of the fire, and then poured the water all over the coals and the wood and the ashes, and intoned some circle breaking charm and security told us not to do that again and left. Now we all took off our clothes, put the rocks in the lodge and had the sweat. (chuckle) Since we hadn't gotten the rocks wet. I had no idea how long the sweat lasted, but it was really dark and really cold when we came out. And I guess Mec must have been at that one, because he then lead a whole group of people down into the river to cool off for some reason. I was freezing as soon as I got out, so half the folks ran down to the river, and they other half grabbed whatever they could to wear, and I went and poked up the fire again because I was freezing. So the rest of us sort of clustered around the fire and then everybody else came up out of the river and we passed around soft mead and things and just general decompressing after the sweat and then decided it was time to go home. Took apart the lodge, and I started trying to put out the fire, and since there was a river there, I would grab one log, and heave it into the river. And it would spin through the air in flame and go down in hiss and security came running out of the bushes, stormed into the middle of the place, said, "Who has the fireworks?!" And everybody just sort of stared at them, tried to figure out what they meant and they were mad at us again for having the fire a second time and sort of ordered us all to leave, which was okay cause we were done by then. Made sure to put out the rest of the fire less dramatically, but that was definitely memorable. I continually wonder what would have happened if they'd come back either five minutes earlier or later, either of those times found a dozen naked people sitting in a tent. (chuckle) I don't know. (pause) I did learn from that though for any future Druids reading this to make friends with security. Ask them, or at least keep them informed of some of your activities so that they are less likely to break them up.

EH: You mentioned your third order vigil, that was in your first year?

IS: That was my first year. That was um...Belting [?] night. The night of May 1st and of the spring concert and Michelle Hajder and I both vigiled then because... well Mec said that he didn't like third order vigils in the first year. I meant, no, Annie and Michelle Curtis, 'Michelle the Dark' he calls her, were both leaving and he wanted there to be some third orders left. So Michelle and I both vigiled that night, and it rained. Michelle had a fire vigil, and I did, uh, a walking vigil, the first one after Mec's I guess. And it rained all night.

EH: What's a walking vigil?

IS: A walking vigil is just like the fire vigil but you don't stay in one place, you walk out into the Arb after dark and stay awake and stay walking and just listen to world and listen to the woods and see what you learn. See the sorts of things that crawl out of your head, and see the sorts of entities that come out of the woods. And there's something about vigil nights that's just different. I don't know if things come out then that don't normally or it's just that people don't generally sit down and think for ten hours straight, or walk and think for ten hours straight. But, you learn a lot. I haven't, I don't know, I don't know what the fire vigil was like, I didn't do that then. I've done some since, but I think any vigil I do now is colored by the experience of that one.

EH: So it did what it was supposed to do to you, basically marked a watershed.

IS: It does. It marks a beginning, and it tests your commitment and it teaches you a lot. We've since picked up on that aspect and... well, because so much made sense during and immediately after my vigil and Michelle's, that we couldn't remember later and can't express now, because so much was lost in transition with nobody to tell it to, what we've started doing now is after people vigil they come back to the circle and talk, tell people what they've learned, or ask questions so that whatever they've learned is shared and spread and doesn't dissipate so quickly.

EH: So organizationally at that point, the Carleton Druids were down to very few people who were about to leave except for...

IS: except for Michelle and I...

EH: you and Michelle.

IS: Yeah, Michelle Curtis and Graham were the only two active druids still enrolled. Mec and Andrea were still active, but Andrea was in the cities, and I have no idea where Mec was at that point, except that he occasionally showed up. Michelle had become a second order druid sometime earlier in the year. I actually was never a first or second order druid, and they discovered this as they were trying to ordain me third. They went, "Wait!" And did some serious ad-libbing there and figured it would be okay. But organizationally the sweat happened because the alumni organized it, the vigils happened... I don't entirely know why because we wanted it they just happened. Other than that, weekly teas did happen then and (pause) granted I was not as involved with the group then, but I don't remember that anything else happened.

EH: The Tea's held outside somewhere in the natural Druid setting, or were they in a building?

IS: Depending. Um, then, the first one was in Ann's [?] room on third Goodhue. I remember another one being in Goodhue lounge. I remember one being held in the dining hall, but I don't actually remember any being held outdoors then. During my second year we started holding them in the Japanese garden when it was warm enough, and that went over really well, except that people had to keep running back and forth for water.

EH: So what do you do at them besides drink tea?...

IS: Drink tea...

EH: Is there discussion?

IS: There is discussion. Um, the better organized ones actually have discussion topics announced beforehand so people can bring in writings or ideas or whatever. We've done craft workshops where people built dreamcatchers or carved pumpkins or different things, just generally druidic in some sense. The ones I think are best are ones where we've just started with a question and given people a couple of days to think about it and then had them show up and talk about it. And gotten into some of the best conversations I've had at those. Generally the format is there's not a discussion leader, just sort of an organizer, there's a table full of hot water and the tea collection, however much of it happens to be there. And sometimes somebody will bring cookies or bread or whatever and people just sit down and drink tea and talk and some of the discussions are kind of guided and can go on for two, three hours, some of them. People drift in and out, but that's the general format.

EH: Is it the sort of thing that's sponsored by the druid organization but open to anybody who wants to come and therefore you also even, you get a lot of people who don't, aren't identifying themselves as part of the Carleton Druids or is it mostly people who you consider part of the Carleton Druids who come. Or is that...

IS: Mmm, most of the above (chuckle) I lost the logic train in there somewhere, but, um, we've advertised for some of the teas in the NNB and we usually do that more heavily toward the beginning of the year, but after a while it settles down to a core group that come back. And generally after a while, all of those do identify themselves as Druids, even if that's not always the case. Um, for instance, just this past weekend, one lady that's come to just about every tea this year, finally decided that she really was a Druid. The ones to which people outside the Druid group come have the been the best and the worse because you get a sudden influx of new personalities and new perspectives, but you also get people who come in and sit there uncomfortably and make the whole group uncomfortable. We had one of those last week. What happens after a while is we generally stop advertising because we forget or get lazy, and every now and then we advertise a new one if there's a especially interesting topic going up. And then some people come, generally if folks don't come in the first two weeks of a term, they're not going to it seems, but people do invite their friends and bring in people from out of town and just interesting characters they've met that they think would be interested. And that continues to happen throughout the term and provides some of the growth in membership. I was going to say something... (pause) Yeah, one of the other things that happens at Tea a lot is just organizational stuff. There's a lot of sitting down, "So, what do you guys want to do this term? We've got two full moons, we've got... Samhain, we've got this... Two people want a sweat lodge, etc." And ideas are generated and dates are marked down and on good days responsibility is delegated and then things happen from there.

EH: Would you typically at a gathering like a Tea have ritual at all?

IS: Not typically, but sometimes yes. Uh, more so in the past I would say. The Druids this year are more social than spiritual on group level. Individually, I would say they were more spiritual than most people I've known in the past, but they are so in such different directions that one led ritual at Tea would generally make somebody uncomfortable. We did a Tea somewhat toward the end of last term, this would be winter, where we talked about some basic magical skills, like raising a circle, grounding, putting a quick personal shield if stuff goes wrong, and passed energy around, and taught people how to do these things, just so that they would know. From that has come the energy experiments, which are apparently a recurring phenomena that crop up every eight years or so according to the some of the people that have been around longer, but are either on a hiatus or on their way out right now, not sure, which where we design experiments regarding what is this energy stuff we keep talking about, if I charged ten marbles out of twenty can you tell me which ones they are? Things like that. And results that we have gotten so far have been statistically ambiguous and, but personally meaningful. Like even if someone looks at the chart of results, and says, "Well, the numbers don't tell me anything." They can still go, "But I really felt something when I picked up this rock, but I didn't when I touched any of the others. So I personally think there's something there, even if the numbers don't show it." Tend to get a lot of that on the individual level, but nothing that you could present to a review board and say, see, there really is something here.

EH: You're saying teaching people some of the basic rudiments of magic, etc. How did anyone in the group learn them?

IS: Different places, and surprisingly different places. We started talking about Grounding at one point - my vocabulary for this tends to come a pseudo-Wiccan background, just because that was the first system I encountered that had a vocabulary for magic. But when we started talking about Grounding and Centering some of the people who had done Aikido before said, "Hey! I've done this, I don't know the words you're using, but this is exactly what we do, what we mean, when talk about Chi flow, when we talk about you know extending toward, extending your energy toward the attacker." Or a person who'd done something in a Quaker circle, understood exactly what was going on, and had a different vocabulary for it. I call it magic, because I haven't really anything else to call it, just like I call, whatever it is, God, because I haven't anything else to call it, but I don't attach to either of those words any of the systems that have been attached to them. I use them because they work and they are there. And making up a new vocabulary for them would only breed confusion, not that this doesn't.

EH: So what was your exposure to Wicca, since that was the vocabulary that you...

IS: Mmm, a couple of books in high school, a couple of people early on here... It's not something I've pursued, but it's something that gave me a very valuable point of reference for the experiences that started happening once I was in Druidism. Once I started doing things with the group and really paying attention to what was going on, I get...

End Tape I, Side A

Begin Tape I, Side B

EH: Ok it's recording

IS: I guess I starting looking into Wicca about the same time I started going to the Christian prayer group because after the accident when I was sixteen I just expanded, I wanted to, I wanted to know. I'd run across a set of questions that I had never of asking before, and every time that I've done that, it's just opened up a domain and a world I didn't know existed, and I looked into it every way I could. I didn't pursue Wicca very far because I didn't find it (pause) I don't find ritual as personally meaningful as I do, unstructured experience and what one might call philosophy. But the vocabulary that surrounds the ritual, becomes very useful for making sense of experience later on. So the vocabulary of Circle-Raising helps me make sense of what it is that I do when I'm uncomfortable or about to do something magical that might attract attention is I raise a circle and that could be the walls of the room I'm in, it could be if I'm in the stone circle it could be that, it just, it's something to provide a sacred space, to provide some element of shelter and protection. The vocabulary of the eternal rebirth of the god in Wicca, as opposed to the eternal existence of the goddess makes wonderful sense of the Celtic holidays, and the cycle of the year, even though Samhain isn't technically in any Celtic sense when the god dies, but if you overlay those two systems it makes both of them much clearer.

EH: Okay... Let's do some basic Carleton organization history here. Umm, at the end of your first year, you and Michelle had been ordained as... consecrated into the third order, whatever the word is...

IS: Yes, consecrated....

EH: Alright, and you were the only ones, essentially that are, there to start it up again next year. What did you do to have a group?

IS: Came back fall term sophomore year and found a package from Mec in my mailbox, that included maps of the Arb, included some of the old rituals. I don't believe yet included the anthology... yes, yes it might have had the anthology at that point. Now it had a note saying, "Go to Mark Heiman's and pick up you a copy of the anthology, which was immensely valuable to me. It also had a note saying, "check out the Hill of Three Oaks, go look behind it." And I went up and looked behind the hill, and oh my! there was a stone circle that hadn't been there before. There was a couple making out in it, so I didn't go and investigate just then, but that became a very special place to us, and to a lot of people. Organizationally, a lot of what happened during that first year was trying to get our feet under us. Michelle and I felt like we'd been dropped into things. We hadn't had the group dropped on us because we had asked for it, but suddenly we were supposed to be in charge of something we didn't understand and felt like we had very little guidance. Mec was gone, Michelle Curtis and Ann were gone, Andrea was around that year and proved invaluable. She would come down from the cities on several occasions, both to Teas and to rituals and that helped a lot. Michelle and I were both living in Faculty Club at the time, so Teas were either in the lounge there or in the Japanese garden. And there was a lot of, "So...what do we do?" There was a lot of philosophy that year. A lot of talking about different things, and a lot of trying different things. And we found somebody who was a Reiki practitioner and asked him to come down and teach us and he did that. We came across Carlos Gonzales, maybe?, used to be on the alumni board, he's a Native American, he's a western doctor, but he's also a Native American, and he works with both systems, so we invited him down and he came and talked with us for a while. That was I think our first main event then was Samhain. [?] We've always celebrated Samhain and Beltane. They've always been the most powerful and the most well attended holidays that we've had. Close to thirty people came to that one, that first year, and we made a talking stick and passed it around. A lot of stories came out. Talking stick...

EH: Tell us.

IS: A talking stick is something Andrea told us about and maybe is a stick of some significance and some inherent power, I guess. We find a stick that volunteers, I found this one in Utah. It was a well traveled talking stick. You decorate it with different things that can provoke stories and memory and then you give it to people. And it's really fun to give it to people without telling them what it is, because what happens is you hold the stick, you stick it in the ground, and it washes stories out of you. I don't ... You can describe it any of a different ways. I've heard it describe that it sucks energy from the Earth, and washes up through you and pulls out of you stories that are already there, pulls out of the Earth stories that are there and makes you speak them, I don't know. But if you give it to somebody and have them stick it in the ground, they'll just start talking. And sometimes it's just silly stories, and sometimes it's profound. It's people coming out for the first time. It's people saying good-bye to family members who've been dead for most of a decade. Just stories associated with that. There was a lot of that at the first Samhain - I'm going to pronounce it seventeen different ways, because I've never gotten it clear. But after that we had a sweat. We had several sweats my sophomore year which was good because at the end of that, the people who know how to lead them were all gone and... Actually at the end of the sophomore year I was gone too, but we'll get to that in a while.

Sophomore year was really... was really good. It was really powerful, and felt like things were on the upswing in terms of where the group was going. During that year, we got a lot of little things figured out, like, where does the mail addressed to the Druids actually end up, and who do you have talk to make sure it ends up in the right place. Where are the different spots in the Arb that it's safe to have fires. How do you do a mailing list. How do you contact folks in the cities. Where are all these bookshelves that people keep talking about. What does it actually mean to hold a ritual. A lot of nuts and bolts things like that, a lot of experiential learning. A lot of, "Shoot. I don't know what I'm doing, what do you want me to... How do you... How am I supposed to lead?" A lot of just getting up and doing it. And discovered much later a fair amount of learning what the elements of ritual were, not in any academic sense, not in any, you know, Redown [?] the Wiccan ritual that has thirteen different elements, all of which have to be there. Not that, but just doing rituals from different places, designing rituals based on other things, seeing what worked and what didn't, and then suddenly realizing that secular weddings have the same format as, you know, pick your random pagan event. And that once people started designing rituals without knowing how rituals worked, if you leave out certain elements, it suddenly doesn't work. That they have to have a beginning and an end. Those don't necessarily have to follow one after the other, but there has to be closure, there has to be purpose. If you do a ritual without a reason behind it, not a rational

reason, just "I'm doing this for... or I'm doing this because.." If you're lacking that it falls apart. If you're lacking some emotional investment it falls apart. It's little things like that that I suppose could be studied, but at least in my case, had to be picked up, gradually.

I guess through my second and third year here, I felt mostly like what I was doing with the Druids, was just gathering in, was just stabilizing, was trying to find my own feet and find out how things work, so that then, this year, I could pass on to the next generation of Druids something that they would be able to build on, that they wouldn't have to start from scratch again. I think, had Mec's anthology ... had the anthology not come about then, we would have been very lost. Had Andrea not been around, we would have been very lost. And I don't know what would have happened without those two. Which is very interesting, because they never got along from what I could tell. They had very different approaches and very different perspectives. Grated with each other on more than one occasion.

EH: Has the terminology of having an Archdruid maintained itself at Carleton in recent years or...

IS: Yes, Michelle and I considered the two of us together, the Archdruid, singular. And that worked for a year. I think it's good to have more than one person, whether you call them Archdruids or whether collectively the people who get things done are the Archdruid, I don't know if that makes much of a difference. But it's been a functional thing. The people who organize and made things happen and got things done were the Archdruids or Druid. I guess technically they are supposed to be Third-Order. I don't know, if you buy the functional definition and that's not necessary, but I think that, I personally think that some commitment of the person involved is required for a good Archdruid. That if it's just social and just organization I don't that it works entirely well. That argues in favor of having them be Third-Order. On the other hand, there's David Coil, who I consider an honorary Archdruid. He's been there through the whole past four years, he's been more reliable than any other single person in the grove. And yet for the longest time, he didn't consider himself a Druid, he just showed up to help, and to say actually what if you do things this way, this might work better. Or to volunteer to get firewood, things like that. And, yeah, so yes the terminology has maintained itself. Going into next year, it looks like there are five different people, none of whom could or would lead by themselves, but all of which together might make up, the Archdruid?

EH: Ok, is it time to interject your own personal history about your year off?

IS: My year off? Well, I can skim much of that, if you want. I didn't come back fall of my junior year. I went to Germany, somewhere in the middle of the summer and learned a great deal there, had a lot of very profound Druidic experiences, mostly took the time to sit back and digest and figure out what I had learned at Carleton. Because I knew if I kept piling more on top, I'd start forgetting it all. And I needed to sit still and watch things settle out and figure out what of it was important and what of it was distracting. And one of the things I realized in there was that I needed to get to know my own family, my father and my brothers specifically. But another thing I realized was that the Druids where profoundly important to me, as an existing group, as a historical group, as a personal way of living. That none of those things, were ones that I was willing to give up. I went to England after I left Germany, and tried to find some of the old Druids, which was quite the experience by itself. If you break things down into the Paleo-Druids, the Meso- Druids, and the Neo-Druids, I would say I didn't find any Paleo-Druids, and I wasn't looking for Meso-Druids, but I did find Druids as it were. People who exemplified that which Druidism teaches. who did have some profound spiritual connection that I had only grazed, and I learned an immense amount from them.

EH: These people who call themselves Druids? or people that you just recognize as...

IS: People I recognized as Druidic. I could have easily have found people who call themselves Druids, but that wasn't what I was after. I spent some time in Glastonbury, and something that came very clear there was that there was a difference (pause) that I still have trouble articulating. Glastonbury is a town on several different levels: There are the people who live there. There's the history of the site itself, which is impressive. And then there's this sort-of overlay of New-Age-ness, and I hate the term, New-Age, but it describes it better than anything else. And there's a whole set of people who are there because it's a New-Age center. And yet it's also a place that really does have some significance. And coming down off the Tor, I spent the night there. Coming down off the tour, seeing in the eyes of the people who lived there, the same expression regarding me, as that they regarded the people who were there because it was New-Age center. Realized that there was a difference between the way I was searching what I was searching for, then just, "Ohh, crystals. This is neat." And realized too that that difference wasn't showing, and that if I was going to maintain there really was a difference, I'd better figure out what it was, and how to make sure it came through. So after that I was not looking for people who called themselves Druids, but I was looking for people who had an integrity and a commitment and a depth that names don't. And I did find some.

EH: How do you look?

IS: That's a hard question. [Pause]

EH: How did you find who you found?

IS: By asking questions. By finding...people nets, I guess. I have an aunt in England who's lived there for, lived in the same house twenty-three years and seems to know everybody and asked her. You know, told her what I was up to and what I was looking for and asked for where would be a good place to look and she said, "Well, go to this commune and go talk to this lady in Glastonbury and see what they say." Discovered later that, she had said that the commune was a place that one could find real Druids. I misinterpreted that at the time, I thought that meant there were real Druids there and I would find them. What it really meant was that it was a sort of testing ground, and that people would go there and be watched by the people who owned the commune, owned it and ran it, the family that lived there. And then if they decided that these people really were looking, and really were honest about what they were up to and people they wanted to be in the know, then they would talk to you and move you along farther to tell you where real Druids were. I didn't get that 'til afterwards. I didn't, I left a little confused because I'd expected one thing and hadn't found it and then realized later what had been going on...was quite impressed at how well it worked. The lady in Glastonbury, turned out just was one, that she had known. It was funny. She was very hesitant sending me to her because my aunt herself thought that this person was a witch and not in a good sense, that she had done horrible things to her daughters, not on purpose, just by having a very chaotic persona and energy base. My aunt's vocabulary is very yogic, which isn't one I'm familiar with so

I'm translating things a little bit here. But going and talking with her I found, and maybe this is part of how you search, I found her one of the most genuinely insightful people I'd ever met. That after talking to her for five minutes, having never met her before, she was able to see things about me that my own parents couldn't. That people I'd known for years had no clue of. She could just look inside and go, "Oh, well, you're doing this." And it wasn't psychologizing and it wasn't mind reading. It was just genuine insight. And it was that, and an honesty about her that I really respected, and it was just a great wealth of experience and personal depth that set her apart from other people I had met who had the talk I guess but their lives didn't bear out the things they spoke of that one fellow I met who did right Chi, who could talk your ear off about healing energy and you know, "Oh, you've got...you've got these great streamers out of your hills and different things" and definitely sounded like he knew what he was talking about and his own life wasn't one in which healing seemed to have happened. And that incongruity made me very uncomfortable working with him. I cannot...I don't know, I'm in no position to judge and I can't say he didn't have anything, he wasn't real, I can't say that. But there was something unsettling....there was something discordant about it that didn't quite fit. [Pause] Anyway, that was part of my travels. Unless you have questions there.

EH: So, when you returned to Carleton, um, this time had helped you bring new things to....back to the Carleton Druids?

IS: It did. Um, after I left England I went home for two or three months and then I went on Sea semester and had a completely different kind of learning there and both of those brought more back to Carleton in my person than I had left with. But I think that they were growing experiences for me rather than the Druid group. When I got back most of the group was gone and Michelle had been in charge during that time and we kept corresponding and at one point she wanted to disband the Druids entirely and I didn't think that was right. I didn't think any one person had the right to disband a group that had been in existence longer than they had because they personally weren't working out with it. Or because people weren't taking it seriously or because it seemed nothing but a joke.

EH: Those were the reasons that...

IS: Those, if I recall, were her reasons for wanting to disband. She talks about fall and winter as the year of amnesia. They had Samhain. It went over pretty well. They did a lot of Tarot reading and stuff. Most of...I don't know, the old Druids, the old guard I guess, disappeared during that time. There were a lot of people who were around my sophomore year who were no longer there when I came back spring of my junior year and they are still at Carleton but they're no longer with the Druids. I don't know why. I don't know what happened at the end and Michelle might be the only person who does. [Pause] I forgot where I was going with that.

EH: Well, you were talking about you and Michelle having communicated and seeing that issue differently.

IS: I don't know how she managed things. Um, Andrea had worried when she heard I was leaving because she said there were three elements that were needed to lead the Druids and those were some very good organizational capabilities, some very good ideas, generations, creativities, and some personal charisma, and that those didn't all need to be embodied in one person, but if you were missing any of them in the people in charge the group would fall apart. And she worried that among the people left, there was not the element of charisma she thought I had. Um, I don't know if that was the case. I don't like to think that [pause] charisma, if I have any, is a motivating factor in the growth of the Druid group. But during the times I've been here it's grown significantly and when I was gone it didn't. That bothers me. [chuckle] I don't, I don't want to have followers that...anyway, came back [sigh] this will be the last spring already. Picked up a lot there um, I started leading sweat lodges at that point for the first time, and that was peculiar. No, that wasn't the first time. I led the spring previous, I forgot about that. But then um...oh, we skipped a whole bunch. We skipped the circle.

EH: Tell me about the circle.

IS: Wanna do that? Ok...

EH: Tell me everything, or whatever you want to.

IS: Yeah, ok. [pause] Whoo. Can I get a glass of water?

EH: Sure. Take a break for a minute.

IS: Yeah, ok. When I got back my sophomore year there was a note in my mailbox telling me to look behind the Hill of Three Oaks. That was when I found the first stone circle and [pause] loved the place. Everyone did. There was a maze in the ground next to it at that point that faded over the rest of the year but...even that next spring, if you looked right at sunset you could still see depressions in the ground where people had walked. We used to have music gatherings out there, there were a couple of harpers, there was a lot of whistle players and singers and we had a drummer or two and we would just show up out there and play. People would do their homework out there, we had dancing, I stayed out there one night to watch a lunar eclipse. Turned cloudy all night but, stayed out there anyway. Was this really really wonderful place. Somewhat toward the end of winter term, was wandering out there one night and came across the circle and found that somebody had thrown the stones down, all the other stones, and was furious, and tried to pick them up but they were frozen to the ground. Running out?

EH: Yeah, we're running out.

IS: Ok.

EH: If you wanna hold your thought right there I will change tapes.

IS: Ok.

[End of Tape 1, Side Two. Start Tape 2, Side One]

IS: We found the, the outer twelve stones down and, which was is furious. Came storming back down to Goodhue to see if anybody knew anything or if anyone would help me put them back and they were having a....I forget who I ran into but they were having a dinner then wouldn't come help and [sigh] so they'd come up in the morning. For some reason I thought it was important to get them back up before the sun rose, so I went to talked to another friend of mine who was visiting and he said he would help in the morning. I don't remember the rest of that night that I got out there, maybe five in the morning and waited and waited and waited and nobody came so finally put the rest of the stones back up myself and paid for it for the next week or two [laugh] but managed. I was just really upset because I hadn't been able to get them up quite right and it wasn't the same after that. Then, somewhat later, maybe it was end of spring term already, Michelle and I were out wandering in the Arb together and came across the circle and found everything down, including the center stone, which hadn't been moved the first time and were furious

again and went and talked to some people who were partying on the Hill of Three Oaks and asked them if they knew anything about it and they didn't. So, the two of us together were able to move anything except the center, and neither of us could move that. Both of us together couldn't move that, so we went and found Dave Coil and his roommate and Dave, Jared, and I, together, managed to roll the center stone back into place. I don't think I thought of doing anything about it then. Somebody wrote nasty editorials to the Carletonian about it and uh, everybody was upset but nothing much happened. Then later on, getting toward Beltane we were trying to find a place to hold Beltane because the Spring Concert was happening at the same time and the Hill of Three Oaks and the circle where, we'd wanna get, weren't going to work. So I'd suggested Three Bird Grove, which seemed like a nice place. Some of the older Druids weren't comfortable with that because they'd had bad experiences with that part of the upper Arb. There was...either there was or at least there was a story of something called BOB, which stood for Big Obsidian Ball that I've never encountered and have sought, have looked for but have never run into so I don't know what credit to give this story, but if you want I'll tell it.

EH: Sure.

IS: Ok. The stories I remember. Pagan group in town was anonymously given a black obsidian ball about the size of a small fishbowl which must have cost a fortune, was just given to them anonymously. Well I thought this was really neat, until I started noticing that whoever's house it resided in, that [pause] whoever it was living with would start having random accidents. They would just drop dishes all of a sudden for no particular reason, they would cut themselves on knives, they would twist their ankles on their own stairs, just, I mean, nothing....nothing manifest, just general unpleasantness and bad luck and sort of like they had an anti-browning [?] going around. So they would give it to someone else and they would have the same thing and they would give to someone else and they would have the same thing and finally they decided they'd just better get rid of it. I don't know if they tried magic or exorcisms or anything on it first but eventually, to get rid of it, they went up one night and buried in the Arb. Uh, [laugh] I don't know if that was to ground it or to just make it go away or what but immediately after that several other people, I don't know, sensitive people at Carleton started running into this thing in the Arb that...that just, they would be walking perfectly fine through the path and all of a sudden just get totally terrified and feel and presence and leave. And this happened over and over again, different people, um, Andrea was one, Eric Stewart if I remember, mentioned something about it...that he might, my memory might be wrong there, so, someone would have to ask him. But anyways, Three Bird Grove, where I suggested having Beltane was one of the places where this had been encountered and Andrea at least thought it would be very bad idea to have Beltane there if BOB was around so I said I'd look and went up and spent the night there. Left a candle out and issued an open invitation for whatever was around to come talk to me and waited and waited and waited. I wasn't, somebody got the idea I was going out to duel with BOB and I got very worried. [laugh] I just, I just wanted to talk to find out if there was anything there and if so, what it was up to. Just an offer to be friendly with it. Nothing came, so around, I don't know, one or two, I left and started wandering about and [pause] all the times I've gotten into some other state I haven't realized it until afterwards. But I realized later that I had...that there was something akin to vigiling there where it wasn't just myself walking around for awhile. But I showed up, I came in from behind the hill toward the circle. And everything was fine, except the center stone, and that was down. Found out later everything had been down and Wade Davis had come out and fixed everything he could but he couldn't move the center stone either so, this is the second time it had been down and the third time the circle had been vandalized, not counting broken glass and things, which, was annoying but hey. Wasn't mad anymore, was just profoundly saddened somehow and, without really thinking about it bent down, picked up the center stone, and put it back. And then stood there in shock, wait a minute, I can't lift that. [laugh]

Next morning I skipped class and wrote a letter to Mr. Lewis, the president and, might have the letter somewhere still but, said I don't know if you're aware of it but there's a circle out in the Arb that's a very meaningful place to a lot of folks. It's um, about the closest to a holy site on campus since the chapel's used for classroom sometimes and stuff, and it's just, people have really gotten a lot out of it, and found it important, and it's been vandalized three times in the past ten weeks. And, with your permission, I'd to create something more permanent. Said I'd find the rocks, I'd organize the labor, I'd orchestrate the whole process, all I wanted was his permission, if I could pull it off to build something more lasting along those lines. Well, this got bounced to Dean Govoni, and then it got bounced to...uh...Dennis Easley, and then it got bounced to the chapel, and then it got bounced back to Dean. And the upshot was, this was a very peculiar request, they didn't know what to do with it, but it wasn't against any rules. And if I could find a place with the Arb directors, that they would agree have become a permanent site in the Arb, and if I could find somebody to pay for it and all the other stuff I've mentioned, then yeah, that was ok. I didn't wanna just build it, because I guess I wanted official sanction. This has been a quiet trend through these four years that apparently Max started of getting the Druids more and more official recognition. But I wanted something officially sanctioned so that if it were vandalized, it would be an attack on the College, not just an attack on a random ring of stones. And, the intern chaplain Lisa Ebert, was leaving in four weeks and had a standing budget she could do whatever she wanted with so she said sure, and Dennis found a guy to help move the stones and Mark and Miles said Three Bird Grove was ok and, which is, about two weeks from letter to full circle. It was there, all of a sudden. And, I don't know, I was wandering around, just totally amazed and Michelle and Amanda were both teasing me saying I was acting like a new father or something 'cause I couldn't believe it had happened. I don't know if anybody ever thought it would. I know Michelle didn't. I don't know if I was even asking that question at the time, it was just like, I want this, and, it's just there. We went out and, you know, with sticks and twine and marked out where it could be and picked out what stones we wanted where and set them all into the ground so that they couldn't just be toppled over. It's just all of a sudden there. Transplanted trees to make way for it and cover up some of the tracks. One of the stipulations was that we buried the fire pit so that there wouldn't be any fires there, 'cause they were getting nervous about that. And we did that. There've been two fires that I know of since, but, those have not been officially sanctioned and one of them was interrupted, which is another story. But uh, yeah. That was really peculiar because it, it went up maybe eighth week of my sophomore spring term and then I was gone until the next spring and didn't see it for a year. [laugh]

EH: It's used? It's stayed...it's staying successful? Is it a place of power?

IS: It has accumulated more and more power over the years apparently. We did a charging ritual, we danced a pinnacle dance in the first full moon that it was standing after giving it time to establish itself. When, uh, we first set it up there was a lot of...sort of disconcerted opposition to it, a lot of "How dare the Druids create such a thing without asking us first" from random people. "You know, the old circle is a public spot. You're making a Druidic spot, you can't do that." That was not the intention. It was supposed to be a place of peace and power for anyone who'd respect it and open to everyone. I've tried to make sure it stayed that way. There was some opposition because Three Bird Grove was somebody's favorite sunbathing area, and they thought with, uh, a site there that they wouldn't have that privacy, which I suppose is true, but, I didn't know about that. [laugh]

Figure 9 Old Circle c.1996 & New Circle c.1999
Very soon after both of their appearances.

EH: Is the old circle still there at all?

IS: No, the old circle...at the site of the old circle was where I wanted to build the new one and at this point even though they hadn't really started publicizing it, plans for the Recreation Center were already underway, and they knew they were going to level that field and said anything that was built there would be very temporary and I wanted something more lasting. I also wanted something farther away from partying sites I guess because, while we never tried to find out who vandalized it, the assumption was that it was random groups of drunken folks who wanted to see if they could push the stones around. The current stones weigh in around two and a quarter tons for the most immediately pushable and are farther away from where people are likely to be so I'm less worried about it here. But, four of the stones from the original circle are incorporated into this one. The current south stone was the old center stone. The three stones supporting the center stone were the three largest of the old ring. I didn't want a new circle, I didn't want to create something new, I just wanted to create something lasting, and wanted as much continuity as possible between the two so that...we brought them. It's interesting seeing the people that it's become important to. I never wanted it to be just Druids and it hasn't been that. I ran into a faculty spouse this past Beltane that solved one minor mystery. For most of this year I've heard from different people that while they've been studying in the circle, this old guy, this old bearded guy, would just show up all of a sudden, walk into the circle, go around slowly touching every stone and leave without saying anything. And someone thought it was Mec, and I said no, he's in Japan, and somebody thought it was Mark Heiman, and I said no, I don't think so. Ran into him, over Beltane and uh, I forget who his wife is, I think she teaches in the art department, but he himself is Greek and for him, there are twelve gods, and there are twelve stones in the circle. And he just found it the neatest thing, that there was this, this shrine he could use, already there, that was non, non-denominational isn't the word, but...open, I guess. And I know there are people from town that come up there, I mean even kids from high school that come up when they're having a bad day, they just come up to sit. To have it be something peaceful. [pause] I'm jumping topics I'm afraid. [laugh] You asked if we charged it, did you, or something? I don't know.

EH: About the circle?

IS: Yeah.

EH: I had just asked if it had become a place of power.

IS: Yeah, definitely. It's full of personality too, which is a little disconcerting. [laugh]

EH: In what ways?

IS: Why? Because if it's developed a personality, I don't know, this is going into either metaphysical or magical speculation, depending. There's a personality now attached to the circle. It could be something that was already at that spot that is now being noticed because there are people there more often or has grown because there's power there now, don't know. It could be something that grew there because the circle is there and people focus energies on it. It could be some other entity that just showed up and....

EH: Wow.

IS: If it's BOB he's not like the BOB I remember hearing about. I don't think it is. Um, were I Christian I would say it's an angel, but I'm not. I've run into it on a number of occasions when I was doing someone's Second Order vigil. I realized at one point that while I was speaking it wasn't me anymore. I wasn't in control of the words, that there was something standing through me, guiding the action and, to the people across from me they say I grew ten feet. It wasn't me at all that they were talking to and it remained something else, someone else until I left the circle and turned human again. Other people have talked to it, have met it, have felt it. There's one girl now who was in the little grove and was just listening. I think Mec and I were talking and suddenly went, "Oh, something from the circle just showed up." That she recognizes it on that level, that it's a distinct personality, it's not just a feeling. But I, I'm curious about it because it'll be here longer than any student at Carleton, than any individual person in the Druid group, and it does interact with people and I just wonder...I feel kind of responsible for it. I don't know if that's kind of silly but I built the circle so [laugh] it made them alive[?] too. I wonder what I've introduced. I wonder what effect it's going to have since it can communicate with people and does. So far it's acted as a sort of comforter and spiritual teacher I guess. It's selected different people out to do different things and it said, you know, have this vigil, clear this path, do this thing. It could guard people, I mean it does, but it could do that on a larger level. It could be a continuous presence. I don't know. The way one person put it, it can manipulate people if it chooses, and it will be here longer than any of you. I've seen no indication that it does or that it will do that, but it's, it's at least in some sense an unknown. [pause] I think it's safe. I've seen only good there so far.

EH: Is there anything else you want to say about um, after you got back from being gone, revived somewhat I take it and things that have happened in that period.

IS: Um, the main growth revival happened this fall, but some significant things did happen last spring. One was that while I was gone the circle was kind of vandalized. It was a much classier vandalism so it wasn't something that produced such a strong reaction. While I was in Germany at one point somebody very carefully stenciled with spray paint a face on the south, on the north stone that is...was either John Lennon, Albert Einstein, or me, depending on who you ask. It was a sharp-nosed, long haired guy with glasses and different people thought it was different folks. Somebody thought I did it, but I told them I was sort of off the continent at the time. Anyway, it was really well done and it stayed there even though people probably could have gotten it off because for some, it was a representation of the god, that it was in the right place, it was just there when they came to the circle. Yeah, it was incongruous but it was okay. A little bit of iconography. So when I came back in the spring I studied and thought about it for awhile and I left it and left it and didn't have an immediate reaction one way or another, is this okay, isn't it, 'til I don't know what finally changed but talking to several other people we decided it might be better off gone, that if we left it we could encourage other graffiti and in itself didn't quite feel right. So, got the college's help again, which is one of the reasons I was...tried to have it be an official place. Got Glen from the paint shop to put together some gunk and spent some quality time with a wire brush getting it off. Couldn't quite manage it by myself but he got, he came back later and finished up with some other stuff.

But then that spring too, were the two times that people have built fires in the circle. They built them on the center stone and left...had a drinking party and left a horrible mess. And the first time I just found it afterwards and cleaned up as best I could. Second time was another one of those peculiar otherworldly things, I guess. Ginger Wild and I were out walking and thought we'd swing by the circle one night to see what was going on and saw that folks had built a fire there. So we walked in and, you have to get Ginger's side of the story too 'cause it's much more elaborate [chuckle]. Went in and asked them what they were up to and explained that fires were not allowed in this part of the Arb, that there were too many fields, it was too close to residential area, danger of it spreading was too great and you'll damage the rock if you put it there [chuckle]. They had it built right on top of the table. Told them if they wanted I would show them where it was okay to have a fire but that we had to put this one out, and asked if there was anybody with shoes around that would help me stomp the thing out, and nobody moved. Nobody had moved since I came in, so I was like, okay, started picking up the logs off the altar, center stone, table, alter, all the same thing, I just don't know what to call it. Picking up the logs off the alter, got all the pieces I could get without burning myself and there still a lot there so I started brushing it off and then started scooping it off and picking up handfuls of coals and saying no, you can't have fires here, dumping it out, nobody moved. Just all sort of squinching back into the stones around the circle so I stomped it out and finally somebody got up to help me. I asked if they wanted me to show them either Little Grove or the Hill where they could build a fire safely and they said no, is it okay if so long as we clean up after ourselves that we stay here and I said yeah, that would be okay and left. And as soon as we were out of earshot Ginger just started laughing and laughing and I was like, what? We had been having this conversation earlier about proper, you know, how magic only seemed to work for the right reasons and how showing off was not one of the right reasons. And, she just looked at me and said, showing off, it doesn't work if your showing off, right, right? What do you explain that with? And I looked down and at my hands and realized they were black and sooty, but I had just picked up a full fire's worth of coal and hadn't gotten burnt. And my feet were fine too. And it was just, aghhhh [laugh] what happened to....? I don't know. It's just...another thing. So....yeah. Other thing that happened that spring was the statue of the lady that used to be in the Arb disappeared. Um, I don't know how much of that's here or in the histories, but...

Figure 10 The Lady Statue of the Arb, c. 1995.

EH: I know about it but I don't remember what's been recorded. Go ahead and talk about it.

IS: Ok. You might have trace its early history, 'cause I don't know that, but the earliest I can tell of it is that there used to be a New age group that would come to Carleton on occasion and have events here over the summer. Mec says that they built it originally. It was a statue of a lady about six feet high, carved out of a pine log with a chain saw. And she used to stand up by monument hill, years and years ago. Then, according to Mec, Carleton Christian Fellowship took it down and put a cross up, and then somebody else took the cross down and they put another cross up. But the lady meanwhile sort of drifted down the hill and into the weeds. Well, I found her there my first fall at Carleton, stood here up in the woods. I thought it was a log with a nail in it and I picked it up and I was, oh, it's a statue, that's kinda cool. Stood it up in the woods down above the dam on Spring Creek and stayed there through spring of sophomore year. And then Michelle found it down again and set it up back up, she and Amanda, still over by the creek. They said they moved it though so I went to see where it was this time and found it down again with tire marks over it and decided that was enough and picked it up and carried it to what was then Three Bird Grove and grabbed a shovel, skipped class, and set her up sort of off around the corner so you couldn't see her from the path but you could find her if you knew she was there. And she had more visitors than the circle did, early on. Um, she was there when we had Beltane there the first time and people would

leave flowers and necklaces and just different things there and I would come by and see people kneeling, talking to her, which is a very, a very beautiful statue, very generic, just a lady with her hands together, head bowed with something like a halo on. I thought she was the virgin Mary, I don't know what she might have been but people just called her the lady. Um, sometime around that second fire at the circle um, she disappeared, she vanished again. She wasn't knocked over, she was buried about two feet into the ground, but somebody could have broken her off fairly easily. Instead they actually dug her up out of the ground and carried her off. There were no drag marks, there was no, no burned logs, searched around a good bit but never found her. The hole is still there and you can still see the path to it but she's gone. I was kind of sad about that. I don't know what the New age group was or if there's any intervening stuff between when she was on the Hill and when I found her four years ago. Somebody else might know.

EH: Group that used to meet her old time [?] was called Spiritual Frontiers, but I don't know anything about the lady, before it was in Three Bird Grove, actually, is where I first saw it.

IS: Mark Heiman says that carved into the base there were two initials and a date. I don't recall that but if she shows up, that could be useful for figuring out where she's from. [pause] One year left?

EH: Sure.

IS: [laugh] [sigh] During last spring Michelle started having less and less to do with the Druids. Michelle had her...um, she herself turned toward Discordianism [?] and was still there last I knew but started having less actively to do with organizing things and running teas. [pause] This fall I started really worrying about next year because I didn't, I knew I was gone and we had one Third Order besides Michelle and I and she wasn't terribly active, and I didn't know what was going to happen, and I didn't want all the work we'd done to have to be repeated. I wanted to be able to pass something on, I wanted there to be people to pass it on to. So I tried picking the next Archdruid. That doesn't work. [chuckle] This was pointed out to me from any number of directions. Um, the circle apparently considered the person I'd picked, didn't like her, and gave her a mosquito curse so that whenever she walked into the circle mosquitoes would descend on her and wherever she sat down ants would swarm out of the ground and eat her and she won't go back now. [Eric chuckles] She still won't go there by herself. Um, Andrea kindly wrote from Seattle saying, no, you can't do that. You can't pick the person - they'll show up when it's time. So there was some grand confusion before I figured that out. But, I brought, I didn't bring them back. Two people that I knew outside of Carleton applied and came to Carleton this year, Chrissy Phelps and Mary Beth Weber and both of them were interested in the Druid group. Chrissy was a person I had actually picked to lead it and that was a mistake. For one thing she felt pressured into it and when she later found her own interest diverging didn't know how to back out. Um, we figured that out too, eventually. Mary was not interested in doing anything with the Druids. I mean, she would do stuff with them because I was there but she explicitly didn't want to have anything to do with leadership. She was very Christian herself. When she showed up the circle started talking to her and scared her badly but told her this was something she had to do and so she did, for as long as she was here. But, because I came back with them, I was here during New Student Week and during that time, during that week and a half where people haven't gotten sucked into classes and sort of fossilized into which activities they're going to do, met most of the current proper Druids. There are perhaps three people left over from past years, but just about everybody else is a freshman that we met during New Student Week. Highly recommended, anybody in the future. [pause] Where am I going with it, I don't know. I guess since then I've been just trying to show how things work and what we've been doing, trying to pass on what I've learned without teaching. Trying to share but not say, this is how to do things, because that'll, that'll kill the group faster than anything. We had Samhain again and it was kinda disastrous because we tried to...people that were in charge of some of the things at Samhain also wanted to go to the ball that was happening at the same time, the Halloween dance and...it didn't work. Doing one or the other would have been fine. We had several sweats, um, we had a procession across campus for Samhain carrying lit candles down through the library. Yeah....[Eric laughs] I hoped we weren't going to get arrested for that but managed to get out ok. Walked up through Sayles, through the libe, down past Olin and up through Goodhue singing, it was a lot of fun. And, mostly I've been trying to show people what's going on and introduce them to all the resources, show 'em all the new, the groundwork and get other people to start leading. Something that's happened every four years more or less for the past sixteen so far as I can tell is that when there was a turnover, there was in the next generation a strong reaction against what the people before them had done. That, uh, they would react violently against it and go one way and then the next group would find that too extreme and go the other and I...I feel like because Michelle and I didn't have anything to react against we might have escaped that trend, but....to be extra careful I guess I've been trying to get the people currently involved to do more and more of the organization and more and more of the planning and ideas and things so that there's not a sudden power vacuum. [pause] One of the things they wanna do for instance is to create a, a sort of tri-monthly or quarterly newsletter that comes out. And we've got people now with the background to do that, both with the writing, writing skills we've got four or five people, all of whom write, we got one person who did a magazine in high school and knows all about the editing and the layout and stuff so I think now it can finally happen if they choose to do that. We rediscovered the web page and set up a caucus conference this year. Did a lot of um, a lot of more official stuff, a lot things during New Student Week with prospective students, just tabling and stuff. Working with the chaplain on different things. We started getting letters from prison inmates addressed to the chaplain's office saying I understand you have, from the prison chaplain to the Carleton chaplain, to us saying that I understand you have a Druid group there. I've got someone here who's looking for that kind of spiritual guidance. Could you do something about it? And, never quite know what to do with those but, we're working on it.

EH: I get those too, I'd love to pass them on to you frankly. [laugh]

IS: Ok. That'll work.

EH: Yeah.

IS: One thing I've wanted to do is make up, for all the letters that say, send us all your information, I just wanted to make up a form letter saying we don't have any, look at this website. But, haven't done that for some reason. But I started to, actually, because it's more fun to answer them in person, is, once or twice a term getting all the letters that have come in like that and just passing them out at Tea. Saying hey, take one. It's too much for any one person to do but if everybody

writes one letter every five weeks we can do it. The more serious letters, like the ones from prisoners, I try to answer. And I feel really weird doing that because I don't feel like I'm a spiritual anything. I'm just a guy. Just...ran away too slow, responsibility jumped in. [pause] So this year's been smoother and less eventful than any of the previous, I guess. Lots has happened but nothing, nothing as monumental building the circle or as...suddenly trying to run the group. I think it's been the most, paradoxically I think it's been the most productive year on an individual basis. Not for me, but for people in the group. People have started coming to it not just because it sounded neat. People have always come to it for that, but now people have come to it for...great variety of reasons. To have somewhere to express their irreverent silliness that either gets them in trouble or just looked at strangely anywhere else. One guy loves to make up games and stories and masks and put on impromptu plays. He's doing that now, here, but couldn't find an outlet for that before. We've got die hard scientists who at the same time feel there's something more there and wanna look into it, but aren't religious. We've got a couple of them. We've got people who are profoundly religious, but who have suddenly asked themselves, wait a minute, I think Christ is a great guy but I'm not sure I'm Christian anymore. What am I supposed to do with this? And...feel lost in their churches and start just exploring this way, going well, maybe, maybe there are other ways of looking at time, maybe there are other ways of looking at life, you know, what does this mean. I don't, I wish people had written more in the past about personal experience as well as personal history because there's been a lot of magic this year and these past four years. People have had visions in sweat lodges and have talked about them and have gotten very scared sometimes because they don't know what sort of precedent they have, or what they might mean and since, at least, these years the Druids haven't had a teaching, a cosmology, we've never been in a position to say, oh, you saw this in the sweat, well, that means x. It's just, well, I don't know what it means. You have to figure that out. I can show you these books, I can tell you what I've seen, but I don't, I don't know. There's been a lot of visions. There's been a lot of...lot of tory [?] hallucinations, I don't know. People talking to and getting responses from things in the Arb, in the circle, God, whatever you want to call it and, part of it is that those are very intensely personal experiences and I don't know if they'll ever want them written down. But I feel like if they're, if it's not acknowledged that they happened, that element of the group will be lost. I know that way back in the beginning, someone at the first Samhain ritual started speaking in tongues and scared everybody else to death. But I know it's happened, I know that the Druids as a group have always had some peculiar influence on the weather. Andrea talks about the Winter Carnival people approaching the group when she was in charge. Week before Winter Carnival with no snow on the ground and asking if they could do something and they did a modified rain dance on Farmhouse lawn and day before the festival, just Rice County got hit with a snowstorm. [Eric chuckles] We've done things were we needed it sunny for Beltane and it got cloudier and cloudier and cloudier and cloudier and we finally said wait, come on, could you just be sunny, please? And it would get cloudy right up to that night and then go clear, against all weather maps and stuff. It was just...none of it's impossible but it's too reliable to...comfortably call coincidence. Even had one night where we asked, Amanda and I asked that, we're having a sweat, ok. Told everybody, make sure we have nice weather for the sweat. We didn't specify beyond that. One person thought nice meant sunny. One person thought it meant windy. One person thought it meant cold so there would be no mosquitoes. It hailed. It did everything at once. [Both laugh] It just got utterly chaotic, so we cancelled the sweat. We moved inside to the sauna in the ladies locker room and uh, said ok, we'll have the sweat next Saturday. Everybody think warm, dry, and clear, ok? [laugh] None of this ambiguous stuff. And it was. It's just, it's unnervingly reliable. But I know that whether stuff has been attached to the Druid group all the way back to Dave Fisher but...if it doesn't get talked about I wonder if that'll get lost.

EH: Well, this tape will be record of some of that for later people maybe. I ran into the story from that first year uh, as well as one of the women having a vision that, of uh, I've forgotten the details of, room with a, something draped with a flag or something and uh, just before Kennedy's assassination so that was the interpretation of that later.

IS: Yeah, she saw three black rocks that she thought were three graves and the flag I think. [pause] Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy, and somebody else were assassinated in quick order.

EH: Well, there's five years between Kennedy and King and Robert Kennedy.

IS: Yeah.

EH: But, well, anyway. That's beyond our...[both laugh] Is there still, is there still overlap um, with cloak-wearing?

IS: Oh, yeah. We tried to dispel the Druid stereotypes. We did not have orgies, we did not have drinking parties in the Arb, and we do not all wear cloaks. These are the three main myths...you know.

EH: I've had it explained to me before that the cloak people and the Druids were not the same group although there was a lot of overlap. This was a previous generation of....

IS: Yeah. There are two main groups that...tend to accrue cloaks. So the Druids and the Society of Creative Anachronisms. Those two have a lot of overlap. There are also a few people unassociated with either who wear cloaks just because they like cloaks. So...David's been one of our best apologists for this has always said, you know, not all those who wear cloaks are Druids and not all Druids wear cloaks. The problem is, currently most of the Druids do wear cloaks, at least sometimes. And, all the people who wear cloaks visibly on campus tend to be Druids so we've, we've tried to dispel it but it creeps in. The orgies, there's never been an officially sanctioned Druid orgy. Members of the Druids have been involved in things that could be called orgies, and until Nick's last visit there were no alcohol drinking parties with the Druids, but that was a tradition from his time I wasn't comfortable giving to the group as a whole, passing on that way but, on an individual basis, thought it was ok to humor him with. Yeah. No drinking parties with Mec. [both laugh] Dangerous thing.

EH: Well, let me ask what you foresee for yourself in terms of future Druidism. Will you be involved in another group? Will your Druidism become almost entirely an individual thing? Will you have continuing contacts with the Carleton group? What's your best guess?

IS: A lot of questions there. My Druidism can't be a purely individual thing anymore. The way we understand orders now has something to do with that. First Order, the way we've been describing it, is you consider yourself a Druid, plain and simple. Second, you consider yourself a Druid and find something, you agree with the basic tenets, that's also First Order. You agree with basic tenets, you find something

valuable in the search itself and on a personal level you'll continue that search for the rest of your life. Maybe not with the Druid group, maybe not with any religion at all but just that kind of thinking, that kind of prayerful and rational consideration that makes one a Druid whether they use the name or not. That you're personally committed to that for the rest of your life. Third Order is all that plus a conviction to share. Not necessarily to teach, but to share what you've learned, and to share that way of thinking with the people around you. And I've come to that understanding after I came to Third Order, but it's something that imposes itself. I've watched other people go through the orders now and it's always been something that becomes exactly as serious as you take it. And, if you take it as either a lifelong commitment or as a commitment to share and teach in some sense, then it becomes that. So whatever I do, Druidism will come with me and I'll share the fruits of it and whatever I can of it with those around me. I do think I will always have connections with the Carleton grove, as long as there is one. Um, I don't know how sporadic that will be. I know folks at Carleton now and I will for the next four years. I myself will be in the Pacific for the next four years so I probably won't show up on campus during that time.

EH: That'd be hard. [both laugh]

IS: Yeah. There has been a grove started now in my hometown by one of the ladies that came to Carleton from there and then went back and I'm sure I'll be connected with that. I don't know if I'll be in a position of leadership again. I hope that I won't anytime soon because I've been doing it for too long and I don't think I'm qualified. And I want to do more learning without, without the pressure of being in charge and without the distance of being in charge that when I lead a ritual or a sweat or a celebration, it's very difficult to get into it and get the full effect of it because I'm orchestrating it. I'm being a stage director in some sense, and I'm making sure in the sweat that people are doing okay, that it's not too cold, that we have enough water, that things happen in the right order, and I can't just sink into it and disappear and appreciate the experience while I'm doing that. And I've been doing that for too long so....Wherever I am next I hope it's not as a leader. [pause] I had a dream while I was at sea that has made me think a lot about my future relationship with this grove. And that was that I was walking down Second Street toward the Arb years and years from now, and there was a war going on. Not anything official or national, just lots of people killing each other and doing it in the name of Druidism, and in my name. And...somebody who'd just killed somebody under a bush was talking to me, telling me about this prophet Irony from years back who'd told them all these things and they were doing this for him and all this stuff and ran off and didn't recognize me at all. And I, I walked out to the circle and found that they had very carefully destroyed the entire outer ring but left the center, but done that through some perversion of something I'd once said and heard a voice inside me just saying let it go, let it go. [pause] I was quite serious when I said I don't want followers. I know I've affected the group here and I know I've changed the way it's going to be in some sense, but I've tried very hard never to have the things I've done become Scripture. To have people do things because I did them and on a certain level, I would be very fearful if that were ever to happen. I don't think it will. I think the people here now are sensible enough that it won't, but I...I...I don't know. I never want it to.

EH: I'm thinking that might be a good place to stop. Thank you, Irony.

IS: Thank you.

Interview with Merribeth Weber

Carleton AD from about 1998 to 2003, an extraordinarily long period of time overlapping with the departing of Irony Sade and Ehren Vaughn.

MS: ...Michael Scharding, class of '94 interviewing Merri, class of 03.

MW: Yep.

MS: And today is May 2nd, Friday, 2003, Common Era. We're going to do an interview with Merri about her last four of five or six years here at Carleton and what she's done with the Carleton Druids and other groups that she's been with while she's been here. Why don't we start off by having Merri tell us a little bit about where she grew up and some of the influences in her early childhood that are of interest to this interview.

MW: I grew up in Mexico New York, which is in the middle of nowhere in upstate New York, near Lake Ontario. I lived on a back road in the country and spent the majority of my time running around in the woods and the hay fields and scaring the deer. So I think that that's probably the main influence on my Druidism, or having ended being a druid. That and I grew up Seventh Day Adventist, which is kind of a weird bunch of Christian people, sweet people. I eventually decided that it wasn't quite for me; hence going the Druid route instead of still being Seventh Day Adventist. They're big on being natural, sort of natural foods and that sort of thing. We always used to go for long walks on Sabbath. Nature walks were a big thing, going for hikes, spending time camping. I think that was a big influence...we'd do this thing where'd go for a nature walk on a Saturday after having been to church in the morning and there'd be a big group of people, lots of kids and whatever, and we'd walk along and all the kids were told

to look for a Sabbath surprise. It was a special thing for it being the holy day, that there would be some special thing out in nature that we would find.

MS: Like...?

MW: Like Robin's eggs in a bush or special flowers hidden somewhere that we just happened to notice. It was this whole kind of thing of nature is part of God and I got a lot of that at an early age so...that probably has an influence.

MS: What about your parents, do they have any interests that they were keen to teach you besides Seventh Day Adventism?

MW: As far as spirituality?

MS: Yeah.

MW: I don't know. They taught me to have common sense and be level headed about religion. They raised me with an idea of religion and this is how you do things. The whole idea of don't be mean to other people because of religion and don't just assume people are wrong because they're not the same as you. A lot of things like that that I think is very good and that other people that grew up in the same religion may not have had...because my parents were very much... they're very open.

MS: Were there any individuals, people that in your childhood who were spiritual teachers of any type, individually. Pastor or...?

MW: Yeah, probably Pastor Sadie. Pastor Sadie was the Pastor when I was 8 to 12 or something around there. He was a little unorthodox...he had a tendency to where a leather jacket and ride a Harley. And I thought he was the best Pastor in the world, he was just super cool...and he was just a really great guy all around and was known for giving sermons that were half an hour longer than they were supposed to be...not the greatest thing, but he was into it. He was big on spreading the word of God in his thing that he was doing. But at the same time he was very down to earth and just a normal human being which I think spoke really well to me as a little kid because...you know, I could relate to somebody that read a motorcycle because my brothers rode motorcycles. But at the same time he was a holy man, he was a Pastor, and he was very spiritual. And he was perfectly willing to talk to me even though I was a small child; lots of people just ignore children, so to me, I was like wow...he must be the greatest guy in the world.

MS: I think that's probably because people are afraid of the kinds of questions kids might ask. [laugh]

MW: That's entirely possible.

MS: They haven't learned to keep the deep important questions to themselves yet. When you were looking for colleges, what were you looking for?

MW: I didn't really know...was part of the problem. I knew I was going to go to college because I was smart and smart people went to college...was basically my reasoning. I figured my family would be disappointed in me if I didn't go to college and what in the world would I do if I didn't...I'd probably live on the streets somewhere and be a loser and I don't want that so I'd better go to college. I don't think I worked it all out particularly well...I just figured that was the next step so I was looking for a place that had an atmosphere that I would like because I didn't really like my high school much.

MS: What was wrong with your high school?

MW: One...I was bored out of my mind. Two...the people just didn't make any sense to me, they were just, they cared about being popular and wearing the right color lipstick and which boys they should date or shouldn't and...I wasn't so much into that. I liked to sit in the corner and read books and ride horses and run track. And occasionally do theater...I guess that that sums up my time in high school.

MS: That sounds like the solitary route, actually.

MW: Yeah. I didn't like....they seemed so petty. There's nothing, no creature in the world more vicious than teenage girls. Now they were never vicious to me because I just didn't attract attention, but I watched them...I was like, 'This is not a nice place, I don't like it and nobody ever does anything interesting. There aren't people that I can talk to unless I want to talk about make up so, well gee, I want to find a place that's more interesting and has more interesting people in, and has things I can learn.' So I picked Carleton...

MS: Over...?

MW: Over any Adventist schools, I was still Adventist at that point and they have a big education system. So I thought, hey, I could go to some Adventist school in Australia, wouldn't that be great...cause, you know, Australia. There was the local college...I wasn't going to go there, definitely. There were some other places on the East coast, I don't even remember now. But, basically, I got all these brochures in the mail and I read all these brochures and there was the boring pile and then there was the king of interesting pile. There were three in the kind of interesting pile...weren't many at all. Basically I'd heard a lot about Carleton because I knew Irony who was Archdruid before me and he...

MS: Where did you meet Irony?

MW: He went to the same high school as I did.

MS: Oh really?

MW: Yeah. We dated all through my time in high school. We started dating when I was at the end of ninth grade and he was at the end of his senior year...which was this bizarre thing.

MS: Was Irony different back then?

MW: Yeah.

MS: What was different about him?

MW: He was younger. [laughs]

MS: [laughs]

MW: So I knew about Carleton through him. He'd told me lots of stories because of...dating for a long time. So it sounds like just a fascinating place and I knew about the Druids through talking to him because he became Archdruid and I thought, oh my goodness, that's scary, they're Pagans, aren't they. So my initial reaction to the Druids was 'Wow, that sounds scary. Do they do Satanic rituals in the woods, or something?' He explained that no, that was not what they did, they actually liked trees a lot and that was the main driving force. [laughs] Between all of the fun stories that I heard from him and the fact that I knew it was a good school and the fact that their brochure was one of the few interesting ones and that it was far enough away from home that I would go away from home...because I thought that was a big thing, to move out of my parents and be somewhere else. I applied to Carleton, early decision cause I thought, hey, they're good and if they reject then...I'll apply somewhere else. It was very much...I had senioritis, I didn't want to do anything so they accepted me so I went to Carleton. And then I decided Carleton was really really hard and scary and I didn't know if I wanted to do this whole college thing so then I took a year off.

MS: Was that your sophomore year?

MW: That was actually halfway through my freshman year. Right away I was just like no, no, this is crazy.

MS: You know, back in the early eighties and nineties we used to have a ten day freshman week before you went to classes for orientation and they found out that too many kids were dropping out in the first week...they shortened it down to two days.

MW: Yeah.

MS: It is frightening, a lot of people get home sick when the first workload comes through with two hundred pages for the weekend.

MW: Yeah. That was kind of it. When I first came here I thought I was going to major in linguistics. I didn't really know what linguistics was, I knew it was the study of languages, I loved learning languages, I spent a year in Germany when I was in high school. So I thought, hey, that's the thing to do. And then, my first term I took an upper level German class, Greek, and a freshman seminar on linguistics and I hated it, all of it. It was horrible.

MS: You know what I thought linguistics is like. Everybody likes a good joke, but there are certain people who try to organize and classify jokes, like, this is this kind of humor, this is this kind of humor. [laughs]

MW: [laughs]

MS: That's what linguistics is. People who love the languages but hate to go into the nit-picky details of why this is this and why this is that. I could never take linguistics.

MW: I don't know, it didn't click with me. I got so frustrated with it. So, then when I didn't want to do the major that I thought I wanted to do and hated all my classes my first term and I didn't do very well then I was just like, man college, what was I thinking. So I came back winter term and I talked to a bunch of people and I was like, you know, I really am not enjoying this, can I leave now? They said, well, yeah, I guess you can because you're not doing very well in your classes and you do seem to be quite unhappy here so, sure you just go on and take some time off...come back later.

MS: Where'd you go?

MW:I went home for a while. Then I came back here for a while, just working, random odd jobs. I worked down at More 4, I worked at the dry cleaners. That was interesting. Then I went and took a three month trip to England and Ireland, the whole British Isles thing...hitchhiked around there for a while, it was kind of fun, kind of crazy. Then I came back to home and decided it's time to go back to school now. Came back to Carleton, they wouldn't let me in for winter term, what would've been my sophomore year if I'd gone along with everybody else. So I kind of lived in somebody's room where I wasn't allowed and slept under their bed, quite literally...eventually got back into classes for spring term and then I had a room of my own, it was amazing. Then I was like, 'Hey, Carleton, this is pretty great, 'except you shouldn't have two freshman years...I was a freshman for two years and it was just awful.

MS: I had two sophomore years, it worked out great.

MW: See, sophomore year is pretty good. You can have two sophomore years but you know, having to say you're a freshman for two years, I didn't like that. But the rest of it was great...I really enjoyed it once I came back, and I was ready then. It's like, yeah, ok. College, I still have no idea what I'm going to major in but that's okay because it's liberal arts...I can take whatever I want for a while.

MS: What did you think about the Carleton students in general.

MW: They're all kind of crazy. I really like Carleton. The Carleton students...there's been a change, see, it's different now. When I came hear as a freshman, basically it was just sort of this school for really smart odd balls...which was great, that was what I looking for. I wanted a school for smart people who were weird because that would suit me because I'm smart and I'm kind of weird. So I came here and there's just all these crazy people everywhere and they do all sorts of crazy things and they're stressed all the time. And, you know, I just made a lot of friends and I thought wow is just the greatest, best, place I could possibly have come. I think that's true. And then I hit my junior year and suddenly started taking organic chemistry...oh my goodness, I'm gonna die, this is just way too stressful. You know, but I was enjoying it at the same time that it was slowly eating my soul. But the thing is that the last couple of classes of freshman that have come in have been different than that. They're all...I mean they're all very smart, as expected, and they're a little odd, but they're a lot more mainstream than any of the people that...you know, the balance has shifted. It used to be that the majority of people were a little off kilter from the mainstream popular culture folks that you run into a lot in high school. It's shifted now, and there was a small contingent of people that were still in that mainstream sect, but now it's shifted so that it seems like the majority of the underclassmen are now kind of mainstream and you know there's a few odd balls out of those freshman and sophomore classes and there's all of us upperclassmen who are sitting here going, 'Why is everyone wearing Abercrombie and Fitch and they've all got cell phones, what's going on'...I have a cell phone, I'm sad to admit this but...I can't bash the cell phones too much.

MS: Friends of mine back in '89 were deploring to me, back in '85 when they put telephones into every dorm room it completely changed everything [dramatic]. No more hall phones and people yelling down trying to find people. And then when I was '94 I was telling other people the same thing you told me and so I'm wondering if this is golden age mentality or is it really changing.

MW: Well, it does change. I mean you really...I think I see it even more because of being here five years instead of just the four. It's not big changes, it's not bad...I mean I'm friends with a lot of sophomores and freshman that are great people. It's just slightly different from the way it was when I first got here. It's funny to see that. And it's funny to look around and look at all of the things that have changed on campus too. Just...where I used to eat my meals, everyday for my first two years here. There's a wall there, I can't go to that place anymore. It's gone, it's a storage room. [laughs] They walled up the pit in Burton. It's gone. White walls you can't walk in there, no pit.

MS: No one eats at Burton anymore?

MW: There's Burton, but there are sections of the dinning hall that they've walled off and you can't go in there anymore. I think it's something to do with the basement having problems and they had to store things other places so they walled off sections and made it storage rooms.

MS: Yeah, I don't like it when they tamper with my campus. Come back every year or two and something...there's a new building or there's a new field or...something's always changing. Guess they have a purpose to it. So, Irony introduced you to the Carleton Druids?

MW: Yeah.

MS: But, were there any other clubs that you were interested in when you first came to Carleton?

MW: What did I get involved in? Long time ago. There's folk dancing. I did start off going to that a little bit. I haven't gone to folk dancing I think in two or three years now but when I first came that was one of them. Think I went to Pickin' 'n' Grinnin' for a while. These are sort of a lot of overlapping things. Anime society. I'd never seen Anime before, I was kind of confused by that. I know I went to that for a little while. Got into Film society. I don't remember at what point...but...for a while I went to film society every Wednesday. There was one term that we termed the Malko-term. It was John Malkovich movies the entire term. Film society was so so strange. That was a long time ago.

MS: You staying...currently in any other groups now, besides Druids.

MW: Yep. Interestingly enough, I'm head of two groups on campus and I can't put either of them on my resume because one of them is the Druids which people don't take kindly to...it's a little weird...and the other is the Assassin Guild.

MS:: Woman after my own heart.

MW: Yeah, [laughs]

MS: And my head. [laughs]

MW: Yeah, I ended up with the Assassin Guild by accident. Ehren Vaughn ran it last year and at the end of the year he couldn't find anybody to take it and I said 'Well, if you can't find anybody, I'll do it, but you know I've already got other stuff to do so look around for other people first...' he couldn't find anybody. So I ended up with that too.

MS: Not good for getting rid of that stress of your senior year, isn't it.

MW: Well, it's fun, it's really fun, I like running the Assassins. Because, you know, I deploy people to kill other people with little plastic guns...it's really, it's cathartic. And sometimes I go around with my big foam axe. That's pretty great. But I'm also involved in Aikido. Been doing that for a couple of years now. I've done dance off and on. I've danced Ebony...I didn't this term. They've gotten very sleazy. I mean...Ebony's always been sleazy. It's getting sleazier...I'm amazed. Still just as much fun as ever. Yeah, I think that's about it as far as extracurricular activities.

MS: So, what is your actual major here at Carleton?

MW: I'm a neuroscience Major.

MS: Neuroscience?

MW: Yes. It's a special major

MS: What's that?

MW: Um, brains.

MS: Brains?

MW: Yeah.

MS: How they work?

MW: Yeah. Basically. It's a combination of the biology department, the psychology department and the chemistry department, basically. More biology that anything else and not so much on the chemistry but I did have to take organic chemistry.

MS: Is this a field that you intend to work?

MW: Oh, beats me. I considered grad school or medical school, decided I really don't want to go to medical school, maybe grad school but not right away. Truthfully the plan at the moment is to move to Ann Arbor and live with a couple of friends and have a job for next year.

MS: I hear there's an ADF grove over in Ann Arbor.

MW: IS there?

MS: Yes. One of the biggest ones. Might have to spy on them a little bit.

MW: I better look them up. You should give me contact information.

MS: We used to have a RDNA grove with Shelton back then, back in the '70s too. Quite the happening Druid's spot.

MW: That's great. It's also the big Aikido Mecca.

MS: There's got to be a connection.

MW: I think there is. There are lots of Druids that have done Aikido and lots of Aikido that do...One of the senior students right now in Aikido is one of my co-Archdruids, that's Steve-o, Steve Crimmins. Yeah, lots of people migrate there, it's sort of, it's a Carleton place to go. Used to be Seattle and now, these days it seems to be Ann Arbor, at least for the circle of people I know.

MS: When I was in St. Cloud we had an Aikido club mixed in with the druids. At MSUA we had an Aikido club mixed in with the Druids. So I'm starting to see a pattern running through here.

MW: Yeah, there seems to be, Aikido seems to be an overlap, folk dancing, and folk music.

MS: Sometimes theater.

MW: Sometimes theater, yeah. We haven't had too many overlaps with theater recently although I've done some theater at Carleton but I'm not really a theater person.

MS: See I'm a complete, I'm probably the worst actor in history.

MW: [laughs]

MS: My movies well show that. Andrea Davis back in the '90s brought in a lot of theater majors. That's why we had so much back in the '90s. Moving on to the next phase. You were a little apprehensive about the Druids before you came to Carleton. What was your impression of them, or how did you first...well Irony probably took you to the first service.

MW: Well, actually what happened is he'd gotten that circle built out in the Arb and the very first day that we got here, Chrissie Phelps, who also was Arch Druid for a little while then she went off her own little way, she's actually living in Fish house now which is sort of funny, it's the Christian house. She didn't start off as Christian here, she went the opposite way. I came in as Christian, went Druid, she came in as Druid and went Christian.

MS: Kind of a crossing place, cross roads.

MW: We got here the first day, all three of us because we're all three from the same home town and had gone to high school together and been friends and Irony took us out to the circle and I walked into the circle and the place was just buzzing. I was like wow, this is really cool, I've never experienced anything quite like this before. I think basically that's, I decided ok, this is a good thing. I didn't know what I would think of the Druids until I walked into the circle and as soon as I walked in it was just like, 'Ok, this is something good and I think this is something I'll be involved in.' That was it. Already before the first service, which I think we had a full moon celebration still during new student week. Already by then I was recruiting other people rather than being a freshman being recruited myself. That's where a lot of the

main people, that's where a lot of that group came from was that night during New Student Week, Irony was like, 'Hey, there's a full moon, we'll have a full moon service right away when it's just still all freshman, we'll get people to come. Why don't you ask some of your friends that you've been meeting.' I was like, 'Oh, yeah, sure, sounds like fun.' So, I ran off and Ehren was in my New Student Week group, Chris Middleton lived a floor above me, Chrissie of course came, a bunch of other random people, John Parejko, fiddler John, the guy with the fiddle at every Beltane playing Mairi's Wedding and all that and grabbed all them. The only way that we got John to come was, somebody...he'd set his fiddle down next him, they picked up the fiddle and ran with it and he raced after them just screaming 'give me back my fiddle.' Then we managed to get him to descend to come for a couple of minutes, then I think he had to go play fiddle somewhere. A lot of the crowd that came in with my class came from that new student week thing where we were all friends, we were milling around. I was like, 'You don't want to go to this particular whatever they were taking us to, you know,' how to find the swimming pool at Carleton, you know, those meetings they have. 'You don't want to do that, we should all go do this,' and then they told their friends and they told their friends and we got a bunch of people right away. It was really neat. And then everybody stuck, kept coming to tea...

MS: Were there many old timers back then?

MW: There were a few, there was Dave Coil, and there was Simon with the three or four last names [laughs], a guy that always played the drums, he played several different instruments. There was Michelle Hadjer, was still around, she was sort of peripheral but she came to some things. Amanda Bradley. She was also a Neuroscience major. I don't know, maybe there's an over lap there to because Dan Brewer is graduating with me this year and he's also a neuroscience major, he comes to a lot of Druid thing...he was raised semi-pagan. I don't know who all there was in those days.

MS: Was the group doing pretty well before you came along?

MW: Yeah, it was doing pretty well. I know Irony had done a lot of work legitimizing the Druids...

MS: Legitimizing?

MW: Yeah, he did a lot of, you know, he made friends with the chaplain, and he started, he made friends with all the Arb people and he started making all of the druid events non-alcoholic on general principle because well, it made funding easier. And then it turned out that a lot of people that came in were a lot of people that didn't drink period so it just sort of stayed that way.

MS: I haven't noticed many heavy boozers in all the druids over the years except for maybe myself.

MW: Well, I just know that before Irony came along there was, you still used whiskey for waters of life and things like that and he made some minor changes of that, of just like... 'Well, in general we'll be non alcoholic because the college likes us better that way and none of us really drinks any how. Then we'll have water instead of whiskey.' A few little things. I think it made a bit of a difference with the administration. He made friends with security and the Arb guys like Myles Bakke and all them. Which I think helped because when they ran into us naked in the Arb they'd be like, 'Oh right,' you guys instead of beating us with their flashlights or whatever. I know that was a lot of stuff that I heard about. A lot of it was before I came. Then when I showed up...Irony had actually planned on training Chrissie in as a new Archdruid. What ended up happening was that Chrissie was, you know, she came to stuff and she did stuff but she wasn't quite as into it as I ended up being so I started jumping into Archdruid stuff immediately, as soon as I got here...foolish freshman that I was and then look what I got stuck with.

MS: There is an old saying that the person that runs away from responsibility the slowest becomes the Archdruid.

MW: And that's really true. That's what's happened.

MS: You might be necessarily gifted or not, you just ran the slowest.

MW: That's about how it goes. Just whoever is foolish enough to take on responsibility...they end up with it.

MS: All of it.

MW: Yep.

MS: Have you found over the years that most of the work is done by a small number or is it shared pretty equally?

MW: Well, back in the day it was shared pretty evenly...oh my roommate too...Chloe Flynn was in on things for a long time there. Because there was a big group of us that were all friends and all involved in the Druids. We split up stuff amongst ourselves really well but as the years went on various members of that group sort of schismed off and didn't come to Druid things quite so much and went on to whatever else they did and at the point it became more difficult and it became fewer and fewer of us doing more and more of the work because as people came in they'd do bits and pieces but they'd sort of come and go. It's sort of an anomaly to have had that big group all in one class and all a huge group of friends go through together like that. I think, I haven't seen it happen since. We'll get a few new people every year but they'll be from all different groups and they'll be kind of friendly but, I don't know.

MS: I'm kind of wondering if leaders appear in a vacuum. When there's already strong leadership I think that people tend to follow but when people come in and they notice that there's no one in charge they tend to take on responsibilities they wouldn't normally do. If you already have a very strong, well organized Archdruid, you probably won't get anyone in one in the next class who'll do anything. That's what I'm wondering.

MW: Possibly. I don't know, I know when we all showed up Irony was in charge of everything and he was actually quite organized, planned a lot of stuff. I think what happened is that I jumped in and started doing Archdruidy stuff with him right and then there were...who was, I think it was Ehren, Chris Middleton, and Chloe at the end of that year...see I was not in classes so I was not...I'm like I'm leaving, I don't know when I'm coming back, maybe I never will, I'm heading for Africa or something. I didn't know what I was doing. So Irony decided we should have new people come in, who wants to do it. So the three of them said we'll do it. So they took over as Archdruids. Then I was gone for fall term and then I came back winter term and jumped right back in doing stuff so it was four of us that were in charge of things and that worked out quite well, for a while

MS: Four is quite nice.

MW: It was a quite nice number. Eventually it got harder because we all changed a little as we went along and eventually there was a little bit of friction between some of us. That made it a little more difficult for delegating responsibility and sharing things but by that time we started to have some people coming along behind us and so we could shunt off work there and it still worked out quite well. Then it got down to where

it's only me and Steve-o and Corwin. We're the only ones left, it's a very small group at this point.

MS: In the past most Archdruids have only gone for one year as Archdruid, usually their senior year. Usually a junior is usually following behind. But you had almost three or four years as Archdruid. You think that's a better plan... because I know a lot of Archdruids, like Irony and Michelle and Ann were, they all started off in their freshman year doing work. Does it make a difference.

MW: That's what I did as well. I'm very tired at this point. I think it's better to come in as at least a sophomore or junior and start doing it because, at this point I've been doing it for nearly five years and I've gotten very tired and very frustrated with it because it's, it's a big time commitment. You have to keep the events happening, you have to try and get people in. It's very hard to delegate work to people. People are very resistant.

MS: Especially very busy people.

MW: Yeah, I mean, at Carleton it's just so hard. Now somewhere else where people weren't stressed and writing papers all the time, they might be more willing to volunteer for stuff. But it's tough and you don't want to scare away newbies by saying, 'Hey, you gotta do work now.' Because they're like, 'Hey, if this is work I'm not going to do.' So it's the people who'd been around a while that are doing the work. Well, I've been around the longest so I'm still doing the work. And I've enjoyed it. But I think it would be better, for my leadership of the group, if I hadn't been doing it so long because I know I'm frustrated at this point. Especially because it's my senior year and I just want to play and I have six weeks before I graduate...

MS: Last chance for freedom.

MW: I just need to play. I'll do what I need to do but 'Steve-o, Corwin, you guys do it.' The two of them are like, 'Oh, but we've got so much work. I can't do that. Oh no, no, you please.' 'I'm working on comps, do it, do it.' So all three of us are just sitting around going 'Well I've got a paper,' 'Well, I've got comps,' Well, I've got do this thing,' you know? 'You do it,' and passing it around like playing hot potato all the time about who's going to do what. But it's worked out pretty well because we're always trying to shove it off on somebody else but when it comes down to things needing to get done, you know, we do it.

MS: What kinds of activities did you guys do, perhaps in your first years, and has that changed over the four years, have new things been added. Or removed.

MW: Well, lets see, We started off with full moon celebrations as often as we can manage to remember to do them. We had the fall equinox celebration.

MS: Usually the biggee...

MW: Yeah. And sweat lodges, and Imbolc, Spring Equinox if people are around for it, it usually ends up falling in midterm break, or the spring break, rather. Tea every week, that's been consistent. At tea we do discussions or arts and crafts or Arb walks. There's all sorts of activities that take place in that. And then there's the big Beltane bash every springs, that's our biggest thing, and sort of some more sweat lodges in the spring. It started off like one in the fall and one in the spring and it's gotten up to two in the fall, two in the spring a lot of the time. We were going to try and do three this term...

MS: Sweatlodges?

MW: Yeah, but we got rained out a week or two ago and where we were going to do. What else do we do. I think a lot of that has stayed pretty consistent. There are some random traditions that got started up some where along the line that kept right on going, like the donut tree. For a while there was marshmallowing which was sort of like therapy, get a bunch of marshmallows, you choose some one, it was...instead of a stoning there'd be a marshmallowing and you be like, this marshmallow is for this particular sin and you'd say what the sin is and throw it at them. Now you can make stuff up, it doesn't have to be stuff they ever actually did and at any point in time you can stop and say 'Stop the marshmallowing, explain this sin to me' to the poor person getting marshmallowed and whatever it was, it didn't matter if they did it or not, they've got to explain. It's really a lot of fun, it's kind of a story telling thing...we haven't done that in quite a while but we had several of those during the first couple of years. Traying, Druid traying was always a big thing...stealing trays, going out to Evan's hill, that resulted in several injuries... [laughs]

MS: We did [unintelligible] at the Nude Olympics in '92.

MW: Ah, the Nude Olympics, bah.

MS: I won the luge. But some of the other people, it rained the two previous nights and frozen into a solid sheet of ice but there was a warm rain which pock marked the surface of the ice and then it froze again and so it was like a giant cheese grater. [laughs]

MW: [laughs]

MS: It was a very bad choice of location but we did stick out through the end. Pretty nasty.

MW: I can imagine.

MS: That was Wade Davis, he was also an Aikido person, he organized it.

MW: Yeah, I know Wade. He's actually...Liz McDowell is one of the Druids that came through and she's now with Wade in Ann Arbor. She was my roommate for a year. Yeah, I know Wade pretty well. He's crazy.

MS: He got in so much trouble during Carleton.

MW: Yeah.

MS: He stole the bug. You know he did that?

MW: No.

MS: There used to be a giant centipede in the library lounge about twenty-five meters longs, about two thousand pounds. He dismantled it one night, when no one was looking, took it out and reassembled it in the chapel.

MW: That's great.

MS: He got in trouble for that. He almost got kicked out.

MW: Wow.

MS: Oh yeah. He was behind most of the pranks back then. Now that we've talked a little bit about some of the activities, what do you think the reasoning behind all these activities is. Why do people want to go to Druid activities.

MW: We had a big discussion about this at one point. We were trying to classify the types of Druids. What we came up with...there are the spiritual Druids...the religious Druids. How about this way, we've got the religious Druids and that's the select few for whom Druidism is a religion that's there sole religion. Really don't have anything else. There aren't many of those. I'm one of the few. Irony was one. I think Ehren was one. And I don't know, in my time if there have

been any others. And then there are the spiritual druids, which are slightly different. They may have other religions. Unitarians or Christians or Buddhists or whatever they might be. And they come in because of their interest in spirituality and wanting to take part in it but not wanting it to be there driving religion. So that would be the next layer of druids. Then we've got the social druids. They come for the social group because they like the people, they like the activities, because it's fun. So that's what they come for. And then there are the Druids that come for free food. [laughs]

MS: [laughs]

MW: And they tend to show up at larger events, and they're sort of the sight seeing, food eating Druids. And they're all great and it's fun to watch because everybody's got their own level of involvement. There are the some of them that are there because that's what they believe, they've got this reason behind it and then there are the people that are there because they're very fascinated by it all because of the spiritual interactions that are going on and the activities relating to spirituality and other people are just like fun fun fun and then there are people with the free food. So it's, it's really great. And people will fluctuate between those, two. Sometimes the social ones will become the free food ones and go back to being social and then some times even step up to being spiritual. And it's very fluid.

MS: How would you describe Druidism to someone who doesn't know much about it?

MW: Oh, I've done it on so many occasions.

MS: What's your spiel?

MW: My spiel, all right...the Druids are a nature loving spiritual group, basically. And the only two things that I've been able to determine that they, as a whole, hold to be true, and even then they argue over them, are the two tenets; that being that the search for spiritual truth is an important and a life long search and the second one being that through a familiarity and closeness with natures, that's one way to further your search. If you believe those two things then you can call yourself a Druid, you're a Druid of the first order. Basically that's it. At Carleton at least, that's what it's been. And everyone comes in with their own take on things and it's not a religion unless you decide to make it so. But it's not not a religion. We had this, oh, there was an argument a while back between me and Chloe because my statement was 'Druidism is not a religion.' She said no that's not true. 'Well you can't just call it a religion because it's not a religion for everybody'. She's like 'But it's a religion.' So we can't really decide if we are a religion or a philosophy...I think that we're a spiritual group that likes nature. [laughs] And some times it's a religion.

MS: But if you think about it, most mainstream sects, I think you can probably find those kind of divisions in it too.

MW: Yeah.

MS: There are the people who really truly believe the doctrines of that church and there are some people who are just there because they have pot lunch afterwards.

MW: Yeah. It's true.

MS: Or because they think it's good for their job. There's a lot of reasons...

MW: Yeah.

MS: Motivations I think, people do attend the services. Is there anything beyond that for you?

MW: For me, yes. Druidism has become my religion. People ask me what my religion is, I say, well, I'm a Druid. Because I was Christian for a very long time but it just didn't mesh for me. Finally came to the conclusion that well, this is a whole thing with Christianity that they're right and that everybody else is wrong and should be converted and apparently...I've discovered that there are many Christian groups these days that don't hold that to be necessarily true and they don't feel like they have to convert everybody and that everybody else is wrong and going to hell if they're not Christian. But it's such a pervasive thing and there are so many things that you have to, you're expected to hold as definite beliefs that I hold more as, okay, that's fine, that could be true. I decided to leave the Christianity and I respected, I think, a lot of it, I know that the Christian ideals influence a lot of my beliefs and my ways of interacting with people but I decided it just wasn't going to work. So I said, alright, well, what am I going to be? Can't really be Jewish. You know, Islam isn't going to work for me. Buddhism just doesn't quite work either. Taoist, is, well, confusing, and... I went through, I was like I don't think I can just convert to another religion but I've got this Druid thing and the whole idea with the Druidism is...I'm searching for some sort of spiritual truth. I sat down one day and said well, that's what I'm doing. Must be, that's my religion. Because I've always spent time looking around and wanting to figure out how things work, why does this happen? What is behind this? Why do things interact in this way. Why, why, why, why, why... And ended up coming to the conclusion that I don't know and I'm never going to know but it doesn't matter that I don't know. At that point I wanted to just decide what works for because what works for everyone else is up to them. But what works for me is up to me. That was my goal. And when people found a religion that helped them to better themselves and put a certain amount of structure into their lives, that was a very important thing, very meaningful and I didn't think it mattered which particular way they chose to do it. Or even if they chose it...I mean if you don't choose a religion that doesn't mean that you're a bad person and it doesn't mean you're not going be able to organize your life. You just might have a different system of working, or you might just be really confused [cracking up], and disorganized and have no idea what you're doing. I mean, it can go either way. There are plenty of people that have chosen a religion that are confused and disorganized and have no idea what they are doing and they're mean and they knock at people and they try to drive them off the road, and the road rage...I mean it's so much a personal thing is what I decided. I picked Druid because it allowed me that freedom to make it personal. I have my path and other people have theirs...and we can interact. But it doesn't mean that everybody else has to follow my path, nor do I have to follow any one else's.

MS: You've spoken a lot about the spirituality of it. Is there something more material in your Druidism?

MW: Well, I am a recycling Nazi. There are a lot of things along those lines that have become very...it's sort of the material manifestation of my Druidness is this idea of having respect for the earth. This idea of needing to find a balance amongst each individual when everything else is going around them. What that comes down to is...I recycle my cans and bottles and paper. I drive a car that has decent gas mileage. I walk when I can. I try to take care of the planet...pick up the litter when I'm walking around. It's just strange little things like that. That and yelling at my friends when they throw away plastic bottles. I blame that on my religion. There are definitely material things to it. When I am troubled I go to the circle or I go find a tree. Where some people would go to

church, they would go talk to their pastor, I go talk to the trees. It works for me, it works for me better. People are confusing...trees make sense. And the trees tend to give me better answers than people do. So...that works for me. There are also small ritualistic things, saying hello to the moon when I see it. Paying attention to the changes in the seasons. I get very frustrated at Carleton because I get so busy and so sleep deprived that I don't see things...I miss full moons completely. I sit there going, 'Oh we should have a full moon celebration this term,' except that the full moon was a week ago. I missed it, and there's not going to be another one until break

MS: [laughs] Yeah, I think that's one of the ideas behind awareness that sometime pops up in Druid literature. Just opening up and realizing what is there and your place and your relation with it and often we get tracked onto these plans and stuff that absorbs everything, all our attention and concentration and we miss a lot of things along the way that really should've been appreciated. What happens to Druids after Carleton? Are you at all worried about this?

MW: What happens to Druids when they leave Carleton?

MS: I see Carleton as being a very nurturing place for Druidism, don't you?

MW: Yes and no. Yes because it's open to that kind of thing and you can say 'I'm a Druid, I'm going to do my Druid thing,' and people are like, 'Really? You spend lots of time in the Arb, aren't you afraid you're going to get lost.' But it's a pretty open place to be something weird like a Druid. But at the same it's so intense and everyone's so busy all the time that you have this whole awareness problem and it's hard to go to tea every week when you have to finish your homework for the next day... In that way I'm really looking forward to leaving Carleton and having time to just sit and watch the flowers grow and think about what are my exact beliefs on this particular subject. Or read about other religions...I want to reread the Tao Te Ching, I haven't read it in ages. There's are things like that...I feel like, for me at least, my religion, my spiritual journey has come to sort of this stagnation because I've been so busy for so long, just spinning my wheels that I haven't had that time to grow myself personally and have my faith, or whatever you want to call it, grow. Because that requires work and contemplation and quiet time.

MS: New vistas, new people to interact with, new environments to brave...?

MW: That could also help but, for me...even just a month of not having to do much other than read books and walk in the woods, I think, would do amazing things for me. [laugh]

MS: I think you're talking about sabbatical, aren't you.

MW: Yeah, but, not a sabbatical of 'I'm going to go live in a cabin on top of a mountain for a while,' but, just stopping the frenzy that you get into at Carleton because you're a student, you're here to learn and once you get past your freshman and sophomore years you get into your major and your major requirements and your upper level classes and a lot of hard things. And you start having to look at what you're doing after Carleton and applying to grad schools and applying for jobs and looking for an apartment to live in. It's a whole big thing. You don't really have time for all that in between all the trying to turn in your assignments and trying to get enough sleep so you don't die and attempting to get your exercise and usually you've got at least three extracurricular activities that you're involved in. That's just hard. If I were a religion major maybe I'd have more time for thinking about these things because it would be along with my school work to some extent. I do have some things that apply in my field. Science is a religion in itself. A fascinating one. I run into all sorts of things that I want to sit and ponder with the classes that I take but it's harder because the things that I want to sit and ponder aren't things that I can really apply to the actual school work. I can apply them to my life in all sorts of interesting ways but I can't put them into the paper, I can't put them into my lab report. 'Gee, this has an interesting corollary to this fascinating spiritual book that I read once,' you know, as a foot note and it's just not really going to work so well. So I think that Carleton is a good place for the Druids. I think that the group is small right now but I think it waxes and wanes. I think it'll get big again.

MS: One of the problems I've noticed, I've talked to many Druids after they've graduated over the years...they've always told me that the greatest problem with continuing the Druidic formula/system of operations is that no place is like Carleton, people are different. It's like starting over from scratch. You spend more time explaining what Druidism isn't than explaining what it is. Once you leave the communal atmosphere of Carleton which is basically like a monastery and you go to Grad school and you see somebody once a week for two hours and you're not living with them, you're not eating with them, you're not going to Folk dance with them, you can't get the level of intimacy you can find at Carleton. You'll see this not just with Carleton alumni but across the board, the college years are a very special period of time when you can build that [side ends]

MS:...this interview with a few more things. So, you're not at all worried about a period of loneliness at all, or perhaps never being able to have this kind of experience again.

MW: See, the thing is that the people that I was close to and developed those relationship with graduated last spring for the most part. So for me, this has been my transition, this year has been my lonely period. This was my year to sit there and go, 'Oh my goodness, my friends have all left. Who do I talk to, what do I do now.' I still have the Druids but they're all younger than me now. They're people that I know and I'm friendly with but they're not my...I'm not close to them in the way that I was close to the people that have gone away. So for me graduating is actually going to be... a liberation from that seclusion that I've been in for this year because I'll be going to a place where a lot of my friends live and I'll be having that community again...not the same way, but more so actually than I've been having it here. I am going to be sad to leave behind this place because it is a very special place and there's a lot that is going to change. There's not going to be so many nights of sitting up late, eating pizza, discussing philosophy. Because that just doesn't happen so much when people have jobs. But I've had five years of that. I've enjoyed it, I've savored it and I think it's ok that that period in my life is coming to an end. I think having this year has given me time to think about that. Like, 'Well, okay, this is the way life progresses.' We're having a lot of people who maybe didn't have this strange intermediate year that I've had... I know my friends that all graduated last year...they were upset, they were sad, everyone was leaving but for me, I'm sort of late and I'm following everybody. I'm way behind yelling 'Hey, wait for me, I'm coming.' So...no, I'm not too worried about it. I'm really looking forward to it because I think it's time for me to not be at Carleton anymore because a lot of the people here, I don't relate to them in the same way anymore, I'm not at that level of...you know, it's almost like I'm one foot out of the community already cause there is this whole community of monks or whatever it is here... I've started taking off my

monk's robes already. It's actually harder for me to sit and have these experiences with the people that are still in that mind set than it is for me to have experiences with people that have already moved out of it. So when I go off I think that the fact that the Druid thing has already become very personal for me...I think that'll be alright that I'm not going to have the little Druid community.

MS: You have a little portable version in you now?

MW: I think I've got a portable version at this point. I've been working on it for a long time and I've got...it's contained, it's good. So I think that I may find some church of some sort, I don't know...pick a religion and find a friendly group of people that are interested in things that I'm interested in and maybe I'll hang with them for a while and see what I can learn from them. As well as getting reacquainted with some of the friends that I haven't spent time with in a long time. And then just the quiet time with just me.

MS: Quiet time, yes, quiet time.

MW: It's good.

MS: Talk about outside. What kinds of...were there any outside influences on the Druids during your last four or five years. Any people who popped in or people or outside events that really changed or effected the Druid community at all.

MW: We've had a few townies, as far as outsiders, there was Rob for a while, and there's Doug, these days. And Julianne has been in and out. They're just kind of visitors. They're fun. They kind of pop in and are like, hey, what are you guys up to now. Spend our time together. Outside events...hmm...

MS: Thinks that [unintelligible] riled them up or...

MW: There was the loss of our north stone. That kind of riled us up. It just disappeared one day...somebody stole. We got it back so quickly that it was kind of confusing. We just...it took a while to adjust to the fact that that was actually a different stone.

MS: Have you had much difficulty with some of the Christian groups on campus or anything like that.

MW We really haven't.

MS: Because I know you went through the millennium period...

MW [laughs] Yeah, year two thousand, Y2K. No, I don't remember any difficulties there. We're on pretty good terms with all the other religious groups on campus. Not so much this year but last year we would occasionally try to get things happening with the Unitarians and the Druids simultaneously.

MS: I always called the Unitarians the indoor Druids.

MW: Yeah, they call us the outdoor Unitarians. [laughs]

MS: [laughs]

MW: That always amuses me. Actually there's been a little bit of difficulty with CRU, the Council for Religious Understanding because we've had Druids on that for, I don't even know how long.

MS: [unintelligible] '84, I think. Off and on.

MW: And there's actually no Druid on the Council at the moment. It was...well, Irony was on it back when I first got here. When he and I went for a little while then. When he graduated and I had to leave it was Ehren that took over. Chloe and Ehren both...they were in it for quite a while. Then Chloe left and I started going. So we had two Druids for quite some time. What ended up happening was that it got very frustrating for us and I think it got frustrating for a lot of the non-theistic, or non specifically theistic...basically for anyone that wasn't Judeo-Christian. It got very frustrating in a lot of ways to continue going to CRU. It started off being a really fascinating and great thing to me but then we hit a certain barrier where we'd...the topics of conversation could only go so far and then we'd run into things of...they'd just start bringing in these topics of conversation that, I was slowly realizing...these have no application to the Druids, and then I'd start talking to the Unitarians...oh...there's no application for the Unitarians either. Or the Quakers. And the Hindu's are just kind of confused. A lot of little things where...it's really a wonderful thing to have, CRU, but it's difficult because it is started from this sort of Judeo-Christian perspective and, although they mean very well it gets hard because what they see as important and want to discuss, we can't quite relate to, but at the same time we have a very difficult time explaining to them that, 'Well, this just doesn't apply, this just isn't something that's useful for us. We're fine to talk about it as it applies to you but we can't talk about how it applies to us because it doesn't. That just got sort of difficult. I keep meaning to go in and talk to Carolyn about this, the Chaplain, because she's a wonderful lady and I think she likes the Druids, she sounds quite fascinated by us. I know that she's really...she very much wants to foster understanding amongst all of the groups on the campus. I think that she probably just hasn't realized that...where these difficulties come in. We had a progression of people. One of our people was Will. He's a philosophy major. He was actually there for the Buddhists rather than for us because he was in the Zen Meditation group. He ended up getting asked to leave because he was not communicating in a helpful way or something...the thing is that I was there and what we were hitting was this barrier of him saying that, well that doesn't mean anything to me, that doesn't apply to my life or my spirituality and trying to explain it and I think he came off as confrontational. He was not trying to be...I was present for some of what was happening and it was a matter of one person trying to explain, 'This means nothing to me' and the other person saying 'How, does it not mean anything to you?' 'There's nothing here to be discussed,' and then the frustration on both sides of 'We're not communicating here' and I felt bad because I could see, very much I could see where he was coming from and I could see where none of this was malicious on the other side. So we lost...Will was no longer able to be on CRU, I was very sick of being on CRU because we kept repeating topics and I'd been on it a long time. So I had left but we wanted to have somebody so we sent Corwin. Corwin went very dutifully and after a term emailed me and said 'You know, I really don't like this, it doesn't apply to us, I don't understand how we're supposed to communicate.'

We hit that a lot...trying to explain to people what we are and what we do and, no, that doesn't apply to us. They don't always understand. And we're almost as marginalized as the Christians on this campus sometimes because this campus is much cooler to be Jewish or Atheist or something that's not Christian. If you're Christian they're like, 'Oh, you're Christian,' [dismissive voice] But the Druids they kind of go to the other side. You're too far to the other end. You're strange and what you do isn't legitimate. I got very upset, actually, this fall because they were going to have a Tarot workshop in the Rec Center and it was supposed to be this fun thing, they were having somebody come in and they were going to tell how to do Tarot readings and do some readings and they canceled it at the last minute, the administration did, I'm not sure who was in charge. I never could figure out why. They said that it was because of the advertising, and it was something along the lines of that the advertising made it seem

like it could give you more concrete answers than it really could and that that wasn't something that Carleton should support. But I just found myself very insulted. I was like, 'Now, if you had been having...' they have so many discussions on various Christian ideals and various...oh, they had the evolution guy come in at one point and talk about how, he was the creationist guy and he was saying how Evolution was bull-honkey. They had him come in and nobody complained about that even though, how is a guy coming into say how God created the world and all of it's inhabitants anymore scientific and concrete than somebody coming in and explaining how to do Tarot readings and the history of it and the ideas of what it can accomplish. I don't see any difference there. To me, Tarot has played a part in my spirituality. It's something that means something to me. For me it's a ritual to do and it helps me order my thoughts. It's like prayer would be for some people or saying a rosary would be for a Catholic. Basically they said 'Oh, this is something that's just not legitimate and we can't have that' and got rid of it with no notice what so ever. I was just like, wow...if I were an actual organized religion I could make such a stink about this. But I can't really...and I'm not sure what to do. A lot of us talked about it amongst ourselves, we never did decide who we should talk to or who we could say anything to about how we were really sort of insulted and wished that they kept that, or something.

MS: When you say organized...you're a funded group on campus, right?

MW: Yes

MS: You've got a charter, a constitution in, hold regular meetings, officers, elections. Was there any kind of communal arrangements made to stay in the same dorms together.

MW: No.

MS: No...

MW: No. We did have second Myers once...had almost all of the Druids on it, but that was just by virtue of all of us being friends and a lot of...I ended up, I lived in Goodhue that year. But, there were two of the three Archdruids lived on second Myers that year and a lot of the people. But as far as like a Druid house or anything of that sort...no, we've never done anything of that sort. No we've never done that.

MS: Too organized?

MW: People always have different goals of where they want to live, what kind of living arrangements they want and...besides, I think if we spent all of our time together we'd hate each other.

MS: Quite possibly.

MW: That's my take, I don't know.

MS: There's pretty amazing things that happened over at Farmhouse back in the eighties, clothing optional house was, I think, the official name. There was a lot roommate changes over a period of a couple years.

MW: There was Religious Diversity house, that one year, and that kind of went up in smoke.

MS: Yep...

MW: Religious animosity house, is what we tend to recall... refer to it these days.

MS: Time to wrap up with a couple questions like...now that you're departing and have only six weeks left, what would the key pieces of advice you would leave behind to bequeath your wisdom onto the next generation.

MW: Recruit, recruit, recruit at the beginning of the year. You got to get freshman interested before everybody else gets them interested. I think the main reason we're so small this year is because we fell down in the recruiting this fall. I was recruiting for Assassins and left the two new guys to recruit. They didn't recruit hard enough because they'd never done it before. That would be number one because otherwise you lose the numbers and then it's really hard to do things. Number two would be...stay friendly with all the administration. The best and easiest way to get things done. If they see you as a responsible organized group of people they will respond to you so much better than if they think you're a bunch of crazy freaks that are just going to leave messes everywhere. I think...be friendly and open is the main thing...if you're in charge of things. Pay attention to who comes to things, try to remember names...be aware of what's going on because the best way to insure that the Druids are going to do well and have people that keep coming is if they see you as a friendly and welcoming group. That kind of falls to the leaders to go up and say, 'Why hi Bob, I'm glad you came again, how are you doing.' Whenever they show up. If you fall down on that and you're all just talking amongst yourselves when new people come in and they sit there and they're like 'Oh, I don't know anybody and I'm bored,' they leave and then they don't come back again. But if they come and your nice and you talk to them and you ask them, hey, so what's your major... [laughs] then they feel like, 'Ok, that was fun, I liked that, I'll bring my other friend next time. Then you get more people and the more people it is the more fun it is. The more the merrier, that's the way it goes. I love when we have a huge group of people somewhere. It spreads out the workload, it gives you tons of new people to talk to and it's just fun, and you can plan more things.

MS: Anything to avoid?

MW: Don't do Morris dances that involve sticks in the dark. We made that mistake once. I don't think anybody got hurt. That'd be the main one.

MS: So you're final [unintelligible] next couple of years for the Druids, stay on course, steady as usual...

MW: Yeah, I think they're doing ok. Steve-o and Corwin know what they're doing. They just need to be assertive about grabbing people and bringing them in. They're on top of things. They've been there and helping with all of the events since their freshman years. Corwin's a sophomore and Steve-o's a junior. They know, they've been there. Corwin is setting up a sweatlodge for the first time himself, tonight, or being in charge of setting it up.

MS: Who's going to lead it?

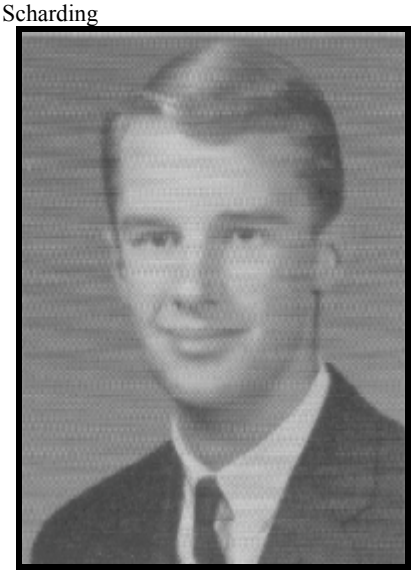
MW: That's a good question. Steve-o probably, I've been teaching him how to go about leading things, I think he led one this fall and did fine. I would lead one but I'm sick and I don't think I'm going to be sweating tonight. If Ehren sweats he may lead one. I don't know if he will though because we're going out for dinner tonight. Sweating on a full stomach is going to be interesting.

MS: Alright, that seems to be about all the questions I can think of right now so I think we're going to close the interview officially now and thank you very much for listening, we appreciate it.

Interview with David Fisher '65

Founder of Reformed Druidsm

August 27, 2004.
Speaker Phone.
DF = David Fisher
MS = Mike Scharding



Michael Scharding: Question number one. Introduce yourself, tell us who you are and where you're from and what it was like when you were growing up

David Fisher: I'm David Fisher. I was born in San Bernadino, California, but raised in a suburb of St. Louis, Missouri, called Webster Groves. Webster Groves was a typical middle class American, Midwestern suburb. I attended grade school there and then attended high school at the St. Louis country day school before going to Carleton College.

MS: What would you say your parents backgrounds are?

DF: You mean background in terms of what, education?

MS: Education, religion, or cultural interests?

DF: My father was raised on a farm in a small town called Foley Missouri and went to Westminster College in Fulton where he graduated in sociology. He spent his career as, mostly, manufactures representative although he had also auto management as a purchasing agent and the director of a small company. My mother was born in Cape Toronto, Missouri. She went to Sweet Burner College but did not complete college. She majored in Latin and in English. Both of them were interested in current events; my mother more than my father. My father enjoyed classical music a great deal. They were both active in the Presbyterian church, of which they were active members. Both were deacons in that church. My father became an elder later in his life.

MS: So you'd say that your parents were, perhaps, future role models for you?

DF: I think so. They both stressed the value of higher education. My grandfather was also a role model. My grandfather Dearmont. He was an attorney and became chief council in Missouri Pacific Railroad and eventually president of that railroad. He was very interested in discussing current events and issues and when we went to his house for dinner on Sundays we would typically have such discussions.

MS: So you were always being introduced to new ideas and kept fresh with the changing of the times?

DF: Yes that's true.

MS: As a child did you have any tendency towards pranks or have a sense of humor in your family?

DF: Oh, no more than usual I suppose. My brother and I both enjoyed a good laugh and so forth. I can't remember anything specific.

MS: Ok. What kinds of clubs and activities were you involved in when you were in high school?

DF: I was involved in the debate club, eventually became vice-president of that, also involved in singing, glee club I believe. I was a manager of the cross country team in high school. For a while I was active in the Order of DeMolay but that was only for about two years.

MS: Is that like Freemasonry?

DF: Yes, Freemasonry. My father was an active freemason and encouraged me to do that, so I did.

MS: I'm not very familiar with Freemasonry, how would you describe that.

DF: I think it's a combination of social service and boys gathering to bond with each other, engage in some rather harmless rituals. To be honest with you it's been so long I can't really remember much. It tells you the impression it made that it only lasted a year. I decided not to go on for the higher whatever. It was too silly.

MS: So, how did you come around to picking Carleton? What were you looking for in a college?

DF: I was looking for a good education. My parents strongly encouraged me to look at Carleton. I had applied and been accepted at Kenyon College. Both my parents said, 'look, you've been to an all boys' high school, we think you should go to a co-ed college.' I think that was a good decision.

MS: So did you visit Carleton before you applied?

DF: Yes I did.

MS: You did. Was there anything that cinched it for you?

DF: I really can't remember. I'd been accepted at Kenyon, as I said, and at Westminster, my fathers alma mater. I was on the waiting list at Harvard. I eventually did get in but decided I didn't want to go to a big school, that I would rather be at a small school and that's why I went to Carleton.

MS: What were your early memories of Carleton, like the transition from home, your clubs, I believe you were a member of the radio station and such?

DF: Yes, I was very active in K-A-R-L; I think it would be fair to say that was my primary activity, secondary activity was players, the theater group. Both of those were very important to me at Carleton. The first year, like many freshman, I tried to find my way. I remember feeling a bit lost at the beginning. But I also remember finding an activity I could relate to in the radio station and in theater. Both which were, as I say, important to me.

MS: Would you say the radio activity was an outgrowth of your interest in current events?

DF: Yes…yes. I was always interested in current events and public speaking, debate. I'd been to the debate club in high school so this was a chance to continue those interests.

MS: Any of the other future Druid members also in the KARL club.

DF: Neither of the two co-founders, Norman Nelson and Robert Larson, neither of them were, I think, active in KARL. I think Norman, from my vague memory, and Bob may have both been on the fringe of players but it's been a long time.

MS: How would you describe the early '60s?

DF: Time of transition. I think it would be fair to say that most of us at Carleton had no doubt at all that we would eventually find a place, a job as good or better than our parents. We had confidence, which is not the case now. What we were concerned about was finding meaningful work, something that we would find not only enjoyable but worthwhile. And when the war began to preoccupy us all, and the civil rights struggle, for many us this became a focus of our energy and attention.

MS: Ok. You mentioned the civil rights act and the cold war, how much apart of that was daily life at Carleton?

DF: At the beginning, not much. There was a chapter of STF and there was a chapter of the civil rights group. Both of those constantly encouraged the rest of us to be more active. I suppose, partly because I was involved in radio and was doing a lot of news broadcasting I decided not to get involved, but to be an observer, although I was sympathetic to both causes. There was also a fair play for Cuba committee. People like Ben Starr. And others were certainly active leaders in those movements. But you ask was it part of our daily fare? No, no it wasn't. We were taking classes and involved in activities and Carleton was a fairly all consuming activity.

MS: What would you say your favorite classes at Carleton were?

DF: Oh, that's hard. I think I really valued my history classes with Catherine Boyd. Medieval history, Russian history, Byzantine History. I enjoyed the classes with Carlton Qualey (sp?) although I didn't find American history then as fascinating as European history. Ironically, although I now teach philosophy, I didn't find the philosophy courses all that stimulating. Martin Eschelman (sp?) was about the most boring teacher I've ever had. A good man, but a rigid analytic thinker and Kantian. Philosophy at Carleton at the time was analytic, not continental and therefore from my point of view, boring. So I took the classes, minored in Philosophy but, at the time didn't make much impression on me.

MS: What was your major?

DF: History.

MS: Do you remember your comps project?

DF: Yes I do, it was a philosophy of history project. I compared Crochet (Sp?) and Collingwood on philosophy of history, and I actually still have the thing somewhere floating around. Although I have not taught philosophy of history professionally more than once or twice it remains an interest.

MS: I guess one topic that was current at Carleton at the time was the en loco parentis rules. How were those changing and what events led up to the Druids taking on one of those rules?

DF: Very interesting time. I think Carleton suffered from the blessings of being liberal. John Nason, bless his heart, was a sincere philosophically inclined Quaker. A decent guy, a little uptight. Not inclined to suffer fools gladly and he hated the idea of being repressive. Of course, you can't be totally without any kind of rules and students, especially some of the more radically students pushed the envelope wherever they could in things like personal dress or even personal hygiene. There were protests about many things, but among them protests about the religious requirement. Sure enough, eventually, of course, as you know, it was dealt with by a responsible group of students who met and endlessly discussed it until it eventually became a non issue. We, at the time, had a choice of a Sunday evening program, which was basically culture, or going to college chapel service; that was actually pretty good, David Maitland is a fine preacher and the choir was excellent.

MS: I've done an interview with Maitland before.

DF: Yea, very bright. Very powerful preacher. Or you could go to town, one of the churches in town, but you had to do one of those things and many people thought that was too much. So the way the Druids got started, I've tried to tell this to other people who've called me and listened to me over the years; it's really very simple, one night Norman Nelson, Howard Cherniack, and myself were having one drink too many and were trying to figure out what we could do to deal with this requirement which we all thought was fairly silly and we decided, because I'd been reading something in one of my history classes about the ancient druids, why don't we start a group called the Reformed Druids of North America. What we tried to set up was essentially a Hobson's choice. If the college gave us credit for attending these ridiculous services we would expose them for the farce they certainly were. If they didn't give us credit we would protest about religious oppression and lack of decency. That is how it began. It was a bunch of guys sitting around, having a drink, having a joke. It was not due to any kind of mystical experience, any kind of transcendental moment. All the things that people keep saying must have been the case just were not the case.

MS: Do you think this is how some other religions have started?

DF: Oh, I wouldn't presume to know. I have no idea. But certainly, I think, it would be fair to say that the Druids, at least in terms of the founders, Howard, Norman, and myself were not meant as a serious alternative to religion. We just didn't think of it that way. We thought of having a good time, we sort of dreamed a piece up here and a piece up there, improvising as we went along the way people I suppose sometimes do. That's how it started.

MS: Ok, lets talk about a couple of those pieces here. I've interviewed about fifteen previous Arch Druids at Carleton and they all have the same questions.

DF: Yes?

MS: One of the things, where did you find/come up with the idea of the druid sigil.

DF: I believe I had read texts such as Jessie Weston, and also Frazer. I'd taken Intro Religion and Intro World Religions and had more than a passing interest in English history and knew something about the Arthurian material. It's very hard to reconstruct all this time later what precise texts I may have read at the time. But that was the general kind of the material. I think, if I were going to be very accurate I would say that there were essentially two foundings of the druids at Carleton. There was the one that was started by Norman, Howard, and myself je n'ai spree (sp?), which, you know, became more than a je n'ai spree because, if you do something week after week its hard to maintain a farce. We began to be a little more reflective and meditative; brought in some poetry, some song. Peter Basquin composed a very nice chant. That continued through my time at Carleton. Then when I was on the way to a graduation, David Frangquist came and expressed a strong interest in moving from mere casual participation to leadership. And, my memory is that

David went on a vigil and had some kind of either visionary experience or at least deeply meaningful personal experience. Something transpired that moved him, whether his heart was strangely warmed or his mind was strangely expanded, I don't know. What I do know is that when we went through a ceremony of ordination David became the next Arch Druid. I think it would be fair to say that he refounded the Druids.

MS: I would agree with that.

DF: He essentially took what had been a protest against religion requirement and an occasional exercise in panentheistic speculation and turned it into, if not a religion, something like a religion. And, when I've gotten letters and emails from successor Arch Druids I've always said the same thing: if you have a question about the meaning of this ask David.

MS: David's very charismatic.

DF: Because, yeah, I think it served a need for him in a way that it may not have some of the rest of us. That's the best of my recollection but I've tried to get these…it's been very embarrassing actually over the years to get these strange messages from these people who take it quite seriously and who ask me for guidance when I have absolutely no interest in continuing to guide anything. I mean I'm happy that they're happy and I don't want them be depressed or anything but neither do I feel called upon to lead the Reformed Druids or guide the Reformed Druids.

MS: I understand that. Usually when each succeeding Arch Druid, there's about forty of them now…

DF: Oh my lord.

MS: Yeah, it's a long series, I was number thirty. When one Arch Druid leaves it's pretty much an unspoken rule that you disappear for a few years and let the next Arch Druid do their own thing, start over from scratch, so to speak.

DF: Yeah, I've heard reports over the years that it's, they've told me that it's changed from year to year.

MS: Yeah.

DF: It's been different things for different peoples.

MS: Yeah, some people go on a Native American angle, so people go Zen. A couple of the groups over in California, spin-offs from Larson's, have pretty much found it sufficient for its own purposes and just stayed with it and so they've gone on a Celtic angle and stayed with it for many years. So it's pretty much systematized and become permanent. But, Carleton has always been such a rotational kind of grove that nothing stays for more than two or three years. Just the spirit gets passed on, not much of the customs.

DF: Hm. I also remember John Messenger being fascinated as an anthropologist in this local phenomenon on his own campus and trying to study it, interviewing some of us, and I remember, oh goodness, it must have been twenty years ago, running into Carlton Qualey (Sp?) at some meeting and him asking me, David, didn't study about Joseph Smith? The implication being, I suppose, that one should've thought ahead. And at the time neither three of us really thought ahead. I think Howard, if I remember correctly, ended up being a lawyer, practicing in Canada, probably took it the least serious.

MS: Right. He seemed more interested in the protest.

DF: Yes, that was Howard. Norman, I think, was ambivalent. Like myself, Anglican, Episcopal. I don't that Norman went on and entered the ministry or not.

MS: He's now a deacon.

DF: He's a deacon. Which does not surprise me. A permanent deacon?

MS: Yes.

DF: Yeah, and I'm a priest. I suppose those ritual impulses took that course. And that's where it is. It's been, on the one hand, interesting to watch something that one started take on a life of its own utterly beyond any extent that any of us could have ever imagined. None of us imagined this thing would last more than four or five years. And as I say I think its largely through David's charisma and David's dedication in refounding it.

MS: Yeah, cause it's collapsed a couple times along the way.

DF: Yeah, I've heard that. I've heard that David has had some role or other in assisting it.

MS: Well, yeah. Usually there's three or four old Arch Druids who look after the group.

DF: Yeah.

MS: And they check in every couple years and if its not there they show up and find a couple interested students and then they leave again.

DF: Huh.

MS: And the group just… It's kind of liking shocking a battery in a car.

DF: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

MS: You've just got to shock it once in a while.

DF: Well, I suppose, given people's need for alternative spiritualities, the Druids are like a template on a word processor that can be filled in with a number of contents and I suppose that's a good thing. At least I'm not sad for it, I just want good news some times and I get letters addressed 'Dear Reverend Brother in the Mother.' But that's life.

MS: Going back to one of the earlier origin points. So you're not quite sure where the symbol came from?

DF: No, I'm really not. I'm not sure whether that was Howard or Norman or myself. It just seemed the closing of the circle with two lines through it meant something.

MS: Kind of resembles a greek letter.

DF: Yes, yes it did.

MS: I think it's phi.

DF: Yes, it does indeed. I was learning a little bit of Greek then. It could have been the idea of Sola Sofia mother wisdom.

MS: Oh, that makes sense.

DF: It could have been that. It also had, for some people, affinities to the peace sign. The idea of closing the circle is certainly a major notion of world mythology so it could be that. To be honest with you I just don't know. I don't think Norman or Howard would know. We all used it, it made perfect sense to us at the time and danged if I could figure out how it happened, it just happened, like everything else.

MS: We've gone through a couple books of symbols and no one else has ever used it before; something so simple.

DF: Maybe it's just the creativity of, I guess I must've dreamed it up but I don't know where it came from.

MS: One of the other mysteries is the origins of Dalon Ap Landu.

DF: That, I think, was a phrase discovered by Norman, or by someone else, a member of the Druids, in their research, as a

phrase meaning lord of the groves. And we adapted it. I can't honestly remember who it was that dug that up.

MS: That's another one that kind of went like a snark quest. A couple people have gone through books of dictionaries and books of mythology and of course they're never able to find it.

DF: Nope. Someone dug it up but, you know, I can't remember which Druid it was that may have done that or not. I just remember someone came up with it and we all thought it was a good idea so we add it.

MS: Actually its kind of fun because, since there is no origin for it, it's also very flexible for usage.

DF: Yep. Like everything else.

MS: You mention before that you were studying Norse and Celtic mythology. Before expounding it and I believe Frangquist also did some research.

DF: Yes. I believe David probably did more because, as I say, he got very serious about it and, having decided he wanted to be part of this he'd better find out more about the implications and off he went. But I don't know what David read because we haven't been in contact for years.

MS: I'm pretty sure of what he read because when I was doing my own research I found his name in all the books I was reading.

DF: Well, I wouldn't doubt it. That would make sense.

MS: Also, one of the things that happened when they were making the Green Book, of Meditations…

DF: Yep.

MS: We have noticed that most of the selections that you contributed were actually from the Hindu texts.

DF: Yes. I did have a copy of hymns and Rig Veda, arguably one of the oldest texts of Religious tradition in the world. And so yes, I used that.

MS: I think the other David was more interested in Zen.

DF: Yes, that's true.

MS: Which was actually quite popular at the time.

DF: Yeah, yeah. Very much so. The Carleton in Japan program, Bardwell Smith teaching in comparative religion was an influence, I think, on many people.

MS: The concept of vigiling…was that taken from medieval literature?

DF: I think that was either, I can't remember whether it was I or Norman, the idea that one had a vigil before one would enter into some serious calling, like knighthood. One of us came up with that idea. All I remember is, no one really being very excited about it except David. He really wanted to try it out and indeed that's what he did.

MS: We were also thinking, is it the Catholic priesthood they vigil before their ordination?

DF: Yeah, that's true.

MS: That's where we figured that came from.

DF: Yeah, I think probably either Norman or I, both of us interested in medieval literature and medieval history would have remembered that. But again, I didn't take notes at the time because, obviously, I didn't think I was founding something for thirty, forty years.

MS: One of the things that happened in the first year is that you, they set up ten orders, or they tried to.

DF: Tried to.

MS: Tried to. I think they got as far as seven before they got tired.

DF: Yep.

MS: I believe that's the same number of orders that's in Scottish masonry.

DF: You know, ten just seemed like a good number.

MS: Ten's always a good…but

DF: *Laughing*. I'm sorry to be disillusioning but it just…it seemed like a good number. I suppose we were fascinated with the ideas of levels, of hierarchies. In the literature of science fantasy, things like Tolkienn and others there's the idea of levels of adeptness and wisdom. I must admit we were all readers of science fiction or science fantasy so that must have had some impact on us. But again, I don't know because we didn't go about annotating what we were doing.

MS: David during his first year put together the Chronicles…

DF: Yes.

MS: What did you think of that.

DF: I thought it was pretty fun.

MS: Yeah, I thought so too.

DF: I mean, it'd be the mock old English and the laying it out in columns like biblical texts was funny. The level of imaginative reconstruction, shall we say, was high. So I thought it was a pretty good piece of work, it was funny. It was funny for me at least to read. I don't know how Norman reacted to it, but I thought it was pretty funny.

MS: Let's see here, early missionary activities. Norman, I think, set up the first out of Carleton Grove.

DF: I remember hearing that, yeah.

MS: David also did one.

DF: Yep.

MS: And I think you set up something in New York for a while.

DF: Oh, I thought about it. It really never got off the ground. I think the Basquins, Peter and Katie, tried to do that. But they were busy establishing themselves professionally. I was busy and so it never really took off.

MS: From that activity the idea of forming a council developed.

DF: Yes. I suppose at that time I felt somewhat responsible having started the ball rolling down the hill to offer what helpful observations I could. So I didn't disagree with the council and, early on at least, continued to try to exercise some benign influence on it.

MS: One of the fun things about the council is that nothing has really been done with it since '71 after the priestess issue was finished.

DF: Yep, I heard that.

MS: Mainly because no ones been able to find everybody, or able to get a unanimity on the issues.

DF: Not surprising.

MS: People were afraid that…like during the '70s that if it could become a majority one then it might actually become functional. And the more it said the less it would be Druidical. As you said before, sometimes less is more in the way of organization.

DF: Where two Druids are gathered together there are at least three opinions.

MS: I think that's now pretty much a legend actually. Everyone has said that at least once so far in their interviews. So, it was set up and groves started to spring up around the country, and disappeared almost as frequently.

DF: Yep.

MS: How would you describe the other founders in character? Like, for example Larson, or Nelson.

DF: Oh gosh, that's a hard question. I really wouldn't want to presume. I think of all of us, Howard certainly, from the very beginning, I think, saw this as a vehicle for social protest and as it became obvious that people were taking it seriously…I don't think he was so much irritated as just bemused. Sort of as in, 'what on earth is happening? Don't these people understand how this started? Are they all insane?' And we explained to Howard, 'no, people are not insane; they're just taking it a different direction.' Norman, I think, found it more significant, very early on. I'm not quite sure how. And I certainly found myself moved by the way in which something that had started as a good natured way of trying to challenge authority had become a source for some people, at least, of meaning and significance. And I felt responsible for that. If people were finding something of meaning it, even if I personally didn't, it seemed to me inappropriate to do anything that would undermine those individual's quest for value and meaning.

MS: I can understand that.

DF: Although it was often to pummel me, something as amorphous and as non-defined would do that. I mean Zen, after all, which you mentioned, and Hinduism are both traditions that have long histories and considerable literature and a very very strong discipline of practice. Certainly in Zen that's true. And it's true in Hinduism in terms of ritual. The Druids never made those kinds of demands on people. So it always is puzzling to me that something which made so little demand on anyone would fill the needs of someone, but apparently it did. So, there we are. I don't have much more than that to add about my cofounders except that I'm sorry to hear about Bob.

MS: How would you say that your observations of early spread of Druidism ties in with your understanding of Christianity started.

DF: Well, the only similarity I can think of is that Christianity emerged in the Hellenistic period and a syncretistic environment in which there was a mixing of many different religious ideas. And certainly our culture, in the '60s and '70s was highly syncretistic. Not multi-cultural in the contemporary sense but syncretistic in the sense there was an interest in overlooking traditional boundaries and finding something meaningful that would not necessarily be as constraining. There were a lot of things going on, so to the extent that the cultures were similar, I think that's the link. I don't think it's the link in terms of the rather highly evangelical character of the first Christian missionaries. And the first urban Christians simply were not, from what I can read about them, that much like the first Reformed Druids.

MS: For me I think the Druids have pretty much been there and people came to them.

DF: Yep.

MS: And people left just as quickly.

DF: Yep.

MS: So, in that sense I think that they're different, they don't have a driving mission to make more Druids.

DF: No.

MS: Though like you said, if they show up you feel obligated.

DF: It is true. I think the druids have met a need for a lot of people.

Side 2

MS: We've got about ten questions left.

DF: I think the Druids essentially fill the need for people looking for meaning who are not ready at that particular point in their life to make the kind of commitment that most institutional religion demands. That's what they do. They offer a placeholder that may be filled later by something that's more sustaining, more involving, more definitive. I think that's good. That's the Druids at their best.

MS: Yeah, I've always described it as being a way station along the road.

DF: Yep, that's what it is.

MS: Also, I've seen it more as Norman describes. He describes it more as a supplement rather than a supplanting.

DF: That's something he, I remember early on, said that. I think the only danger with something like the Druids is that, for some people, it becomes an excuse for staying in spiritual kindergarten the rest of their life. It was never meant, by any of the founders, certainly—I don't even think David—it was never meant to be a genuine alternative world religion. We didn't set it up that way. It has no doctrine to speak of except a vague kind of pantheistic matron theology. It has very little ethical importance, except sort of benign concern for nature and ecology. Perhaps some pacifism. It has no notion of divinity other than a pantheistic one, or panentheistic one. So it wasn't meant to be a replacement for religion. I think meant at its best to help people on their way find something, but then they should move on. If someone stayed a Druid all his or her life that would be unfortunate from my point of view.

MS: I've only known a couple people, mostly in California, who pretty much stayed only in Druidry. Most people go on to find another religion and usually with a renewed appreciation for nature.

DF: Which is great. If the Druids do that then they've done their job.

MS: That's what I think.

DF: And frankly if that's what the Druids are then I don't feel so bad about what happened. You know, I've said to many Arch Druids before, it's a weird thing that something that you start take on such a life of its own. But I guess in some ways, really, what I said to you earlier really remains true. It was restarted by David and so whatever it is now, it's as much his work as it is mine.

MS: I have a couple question for you now.

DF: Ok.

MS: At the end of Carleton, you were starting to feel a greater certainty of vocation.

DF: Yep.

MS: How would you describe how that developed and how you made the transition to seminary?

DF: I was given the Rockefeller fellowship, called trial year ministry. It was meant for people like me, at the time, who thought they might be interested in the ordained ministry but weren't sure. I discovered in union was that, at the time at

least, I was not ready to commit myself to full time ordained ministry. I was ready to commit to teaching. And then I got the call to England, frontier in terms of missionary duty. It became even clearer that I was called to teach, although I didn't ask for work in England as a lay person. I mean the question was what, a whole year of philosophy at St. Louis U. was not the life I'd hoped as it would be and I went to Vanderbilt. It was only while doing a PhD at Vanderbilt in the department of religion, systematic philosophical theology, that I really decided that I also wanted to seek ordination. I was working then in the student chapel, with the Reverend John Hatcher, who was a philosophical complex, very good, person. At one point he said, 'David, if you're gonna play the shaman's role you might as well wear the shaman's rank. You might as well do the process (hard to hear next piece)." But it didn't happen over night. After many conversations with John I found, yeah, that was something with a meaning to me and it has been for the rest of my professional career.

MS: What do you define as a vocation?

DF: Vocation is a direction towards which one feels pulled or sometimes I supposed is pushed. It centers one's life and gives purpose.

MS: Here's a broad question for you; what is the role of religion in life.

DF: You know, I think it's as fundamental, as Tillich said, as the depth dimension of culture. Religion in a culture is what expresses what is spirit in that culture. And at the same time is institution. I think religion helps people direct themselves toward that energy and transform it. What I mean by that is that while there may well be mysterious spiritual depth working in any culture, it takes an active institution with a tradition, a text, a discipline to turn that amorphous spirituality into practical action, into moral imperatives, into concerns for peace and justice, for tolerance and understanding. That's the kind of thing, I think, that at is best, religion does. It transforms what is vague and morphous and unspecific into something that is quite specific with very clear implications for how people live their life.

MS: And when does religion go wrong?

DF: I think religion goes wrong when it thinks, or its leaders think, I admit, or adherents think that they have the final absolute answer to all questions and ought to impose those answers on other people. Certainty is a fine thing. Thinking that gives you license to impose your certainty on someone else is a bad idea because if it doesn't grow from within it's not your own. Everything I know about religion says that you can offer, you can entice, you can lead, you can suggest, and almost (????) in words, but you can't make someone else have whatever you find significant. They have to find it themselves.

MS: What is the role of nature in religion as you understand it?

DF: Well it's something that, at least in Christianity, is seen as an expression of creative love and requiring creative care. That's the simplest way I can describe it. What has been created and given in love ought to be cared for with love, fostered, nurtured, not harmed. And that's about as clear as I can make it. I know there's a lot of talk about creationist spirituality from Eraneus (sp?) to the present and I think that's a good dimension of our spiritual heritage. But in general I think that's what it is. Nature is after all the vehicle through which the spirit moves and expresses itself.

MS: Do you think that people in bygone ages had a better understanding or appreciation than they do now?

DF: No. I just think that probably people have less mediated lives. The culture we live in is a highly mediate one. We interact through electronic means, through a very abstract symbolic language, and through very complex institutions. And people like me spend most of their lives interacting in that world of secondary or tertiary or even quartiary symbolism. No, I don't think we are any better or worse than our ancestors. We are certainly less driven, but every now and then we get reminded, from hurricanes or from plagues that nature remains a force that is not totally mastered for our disposal. But no, the difference is we're mediated in more ways than I think our ancestors were. At least the mediation has more layers, that's a better way of saying it.

MS: And I think that's one thing that Druidry tries to do is bring you to a primary experience.

DF: Yep. Best regarded religion. Every religion I know insists that there is the difference between the thinking about the experience and the institution organization for the experience and the texts recording the experience, and the experience. And whether it's in worship or meditation or reading or prayer…yeah, the plan of the whole apparatus is to nurture and sustain that experience.

MS: Ok. Well after you were ordained, where did you go onto?

DF: Oh, the rest of my story is fairly boring. I was ordained and for the last thirty years I have always combined serving as an interim pastor, assistant, a long term supply priest while I've been teach. So, I've had two parallel careers. One as a teacher and one as a…mostly interim pastor. I'm now out of that business as they say. I am now working as an assistant in a parish, very happy to do that. At this point in life I do not fill drawn to solving the kind of problems that come with interim ministry. I've more than enough to do with my teaching and my other vocational interests.

MS: What's interim ministry?

DF: Interim ministry mean's you're the person in charge of the parish between a full time pastor. It mean's you're the one who provides services, does some ministration, some counseling. And while I could do that with, I think, some grace when I was twenty or thirty or forty, even fifty, I'm now sixty, and I simply don't have the energy or the drive to do that on a full time other job. It's a lot of work and it's a lot of not just showing up and going through the motions. People ask you lots of questions. They need to express this stuff. Sometimes they'd been hurt, sometimes they'd been confused, sometimes they feel abandoned. What you have to do as the interim is find all that anxiety. It's a very interesting and creative challenge but I've done thirteen of them in my life and that's enough.

MS: How have your other Carleton clubs or experiences continued over the years also.

DF: Really not at all. I went to one alumni reunion with my wife who's also Carleton. It was ok. We talked about going this year, decided not to. I think next year's my fortieth and I'm thinking about going next year. But I have very little contact at all with anyone from Carleton. Just have drifted out of contact. And while I find the campus beautiful and attractive I know enough, having been in higher education all my life, to know that, whatever they say, you can't go home again. If I went back I would be with a bunch of strangers who I wouldn't recognize whose lives may have been interesting but certainly with whom I've not been in touch. And I don't know if I'll go back or not; I'm thinking about that. If I do and if there's still a Druid there maybe we could talk. We'll

see. At this point I've been teaching overseas in the summer the last two years, I may do a third year, so…

MS: How does religion change as you grow older?

DF: Yes it does. You find less need to cross certain bows, the minor things and to qualify and footnote. It becomes more a matter of direction, focus. It really is true that less is more. That's not just a Zen notion; it's true I think in all religions. You reach a certain point in your life when you no longer feel as obsessed with, as you did, what turn out to be very minor differences in theory or practice, you are more interested in the bigger picture and that is where I am.

MS: As the years go on and we start to lose more and more Druids, how would you like to be remembered?

DF: Oh, I hope I've some degree of affection. If nothing else, appreciation for having started something that others have made their own. I've not maintained an active tie with Druidism because sometimes the leadership has seemed very strange to me. I'm not a Neopagan and I find that very strange. And I find sometimes the intensity has been a little overwhelming, sometimes its been confusing. You want to say, well, what's going on here. It's sort of a feeling I suppose Howard would have felt all those years ago. I'm grateful that it's been meaningful to people and as long as that's remembered that's perhaps enough. I certainly don't think of myself as worthy of a plaque or an obelisk or anything of the kind. If anyone deserves that it's David.

MS: Over at the Monument Hill there's an obelisk there. Three sides talk about the first baptism, first church service and the first marriage in Minnesota and the fourth side is completely blank. I believe you remember Richard Shelton…

DF: Yeah.

MS: He's always told me that the fourth side describes Druidism.

DF: That's a good monument. I would say and often said *si monumentum quies perspicere*: if you seek my monument look around you. Look at the oak tree. We chose that because there were oaks there. We knew, even with the little research as we had done, we knew there was always a link between the Druids and the oaks and we built that first altar which was torn down by a bunch or rather angry, inebriated, I think intervarsity types, and I understand that it's been rebuilt and rebuilt and so forth a number of times since. But yeah, the oaks really were the grove, it wasn't the physical stones, that was nice, but the stones weren't as important as the trees. Makes some sense.

MS: Ah, trees are a symbol of movement, of growth, of change, not of permanence.

DF: Yeah, that's true.

MS: A couple of final questions.

DF: Ok. This is good because I have to get going to pack, leaving for England on Wednesday.

MS: Ok. During the 1960s and early '70s the Druids had to decide on the priestess issue and this was also during the period of the sexual revolution…

DF: Yes.

MS: And I think the Episcopal church was also starting to think about ordination of women.

DF: That's true.

MS: What are you're thoughts on the whole issue.

DF: Oh, makes perfect sense. It never seemed to me at the time that there was anything wrong with women being able to function on her own; human nature is not confined to one gender. I mean, it's a matter of tradition, preference, that's all it is. If the majority of people are finding it helpful to include both genders than I thought it's a good idea.

MS: Alright. A last question for you then. What are your long term hopes for Carleton and the Reformed Druids?

DF: Well for Carleton I hope it continues to be the kind of place that stimulates creative, aspiring minds in a consumerist and profession driven culture. That is being what a good liberal arts college ought to be as to what unfortunately many colleges becomes. And for the Druids, well, as long as people find whatever the Druids are meaningful and valuable as a placeholder in their journey toward whatever place they find, I hope the Druids prosper and flourish too.

MS: Ok. Well I think those are the major questions I had to ask.

Figure 11 Nelson, Fisher & Frangquist, Hill of Three Oaks c.1964.

So Endeth

Part Ten and the

Main Volume of ARDA 2

Peace, Peace, Peace.

Magazine Volume Notes

(Parts 11-14 printed as a separate **750** page Volume)

Part Eleven
NRDNA Druid Magazines

2003 Preface Only

The newsletter tradition is a great legacy of the NRDNA to Reformed Druidism. Carleton Druids were networked by their alumni ties and bi-polar correspondence tradition, but the other Druids worked in a nodal format and needed something to build community, a way to share information and reach out as a recruiting tool. It details the shifting Berkeley historic politics.

Bonewits' 2 year stint editing Gnostica magazine, writing of Real Magic and Druid Chronicles (Evolved), plus his wide-ranging Neo-Pagan contacts, gave Isaac the skills to be publish the Druid Chronicler magazine. After a few years, he launched the Pentalpha organization to build a more organized Druid organization along with the Pentalpha Journal. Divorce & unemployment forced him to suspend the elaborate PJ, and the Druid Chronicler briefly returned. After Isaac left, the Live Oak Grove under Emmon Bodfish published their local "A Druid Missal-Any", which networked the scattered grove until it also faded away. Not long after Emmon's death in 1999, Stacey resumed the Missal-Any and it became the on-line voice of Reformed Druidism.

I suspect that this will be least popular section of ARDA2. because few people like to read old newspapers. Although most of the interesting articles have been lifted from those 27 years of magazines, you might still wish to watch how Druidism changes over time in a slow chronological manner, to put the articles in the context of their times. Reformatted for publication, they are a treasure to cherish and pretty much speak for themselves.

So please brush off the dust of ages past, so that your browsing might reveal insight into your future. Enjoy.

Part Twelve Conclusion

2003 Conclusion

I hope you have remembered in the beginning when I told you that nothing printed in this volume was actually very important for being a Druid. I repeat this sentiment again and again through out the book, and I'm not just doing lip service to the ideal. If you want to be a Druid you'll eventually have to stop finding excuses for not going out in the woods, fields, or even just looking out the window when you have a free moment. You'll be surprised what you discover.

I am not certain, but fate willing, I will put out another collection in 2013 for the Golden Anniversary of the RDNA. Well in advance of that time, if you feel inspired to add something to this collection, be sure to send it to me at mikerdna@hotmail.com If it is half-decent, it'll probably make it in, but in the meantime, enjoy it all. Please remember that yesterday is history, today is treasure, tomorrow is mystery; so let us treat them as such.

To be continued in ARDA /I\ : Return of the Druid

1996 Conclusion

To be continued in ARDA II,
Son of A Reformed Druid Anthology: The Druid Strikes Back

Part Thirteen: DVD of "Gatorr: The Fighting Rabbit"

2004 Introduction

The 2 hour barbarian movie, Gatorr, DVD was added to ARDA 2's Magazine Volume as an afterthought because it so captures the spirit of Carleton Druidism in 1995, although it was not strictly intended as a Druidic movie. Mark Heiman '02 and I had ample contacts with members of heavily overlapping Carleton groups like; Carleton Druids, the Folk Music Society, The Folk Dance society, Science Fiction Alliance, Society for Creative Anachronism and the Mystery Science Theatre 3000 club. Armed with only a shoestring budget of $2000, three long summer months, piles of fake fur & beards, and 6 months of hotly debated scripts, we set out to make Carleton College's first full-length student film, and to briefly turn the amazing foliage and structures of Carleton & Olaf into the mythical wonderland that it is in my heart.

Intentionally awful as it is, Gatorr has a graceful lilt and it is emblematic of the way how Druids fully throw themselves into their projects, with every ounce of their skill, determination and free time. As the script developed, the introduction of several pseudo-religious lines and plot elements began to mature. As all films, it is a self-portrait of the inner workings of the creator. The cynical post-modernist hero is evident, perhaps giving the underlying message that society remolds the less-than-stellar reality of heroic figures to match its needs. From a sheltered, comfortable world, he undertakes new mystical challenges and is sent on a quest to right wrongs, understand himself. Gatorr's a good natured, bumbling fool pushed by circumstances much beyond his control into a leading position some pretensions towards heroism, hindered by his ineptitude. Barbarian is a relative term used by civilized people for others who are mutually not understandable and at a state of lower technological or apparent complexity.

Much of the movie is about walking, as life of even adventurers is mostly spent in travel and commonplace activities, punctuated by decisive moments. And the film shows that in excruciating details to reveal the subtler nature of heroes. Many elements of the movie (e.g. the Slainte & shoes) are purposely obscure in reason and origins, as is much of life's driving forces. There are several wizards and sages in the movie, some benevolent, others driven by deep seated grudges and fears. The element of reconciliation exists, but sadly wasn't developed fully in the movie.

By the time the final book of ARDA 2 comes out, Part Thirteen will have a copy of Gatorr's script, a map of where all the scenes took place, and details about the various actors, most of whom are Druids. If anyone would like a copy of the DVD, send $10 to cover shipping costs to me, ask for the address at mikerdna@hotmail.com Enjoy.

Part Fourteen: ARDA Files CD

To ensure the survival of records of the Reformed Druids in case the main archives collapses, I pass on, and other inevitable developments, I am enclosing a copy of all the ARDA 1 and ARDA 2 files, collections of Druid communications, and other files to all people receiving a copy of the Magazine Volume.

Please save a copy on your computer, and share a copy to be saved on the computers of other responsible Druids. Distribute copies of the files to researchers and new Druids who have trouble locating or downloading on-line files, for whatever reason.

A Reformed Druid Anthology

Second Edition

A.K.A.
"Son of A Reformed Druid Anthology: The Druid Strikes Back"

40th Reunion 2003

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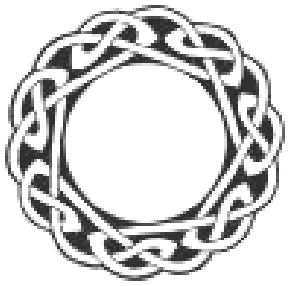

Bonewits, Bodfish and Weinberger
The primary editors of these magazines.

A REFORMED DRUID ANTHOLOGY

2nd Edition

In three volumes.

(Main Volume, Green Books Volume and Magazine Volume)

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(Parts 11-14 of ARDA 2)

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A Druid Missal-Any 1982-1991

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The Standing Stone 1994

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Suggested Catalogue Description of the Collection:
"A uniquely rare encyclopedic anthology of 40 years worth of literature by the Reformed Druids of North America, which is the ancestor of the modern Druidism in America. This collection was primarily produced by the Berkeley Grove and the Carleton College Grove. Contents include a history, study guides, meditations, poetry, songs, jokes, theological debates, rules, customs, liturgies, magic charms, statistics, and recommended reading lists. Their various works of literature draw upon Buddhism, Christian traditions, ecology ideals, the Feminist movement, very ancient Jewish practices, Earth-centered mysticism, New Age beliefs, Neopaganism, Hinduism, the Occult, the Celts, Tao, Wicca, and lots of Zen."

Printed in Times New Roman font.

Acknowledgments

A detailed list of the various authors can be found in Part Four: "Credits, Founders and Known Innovators" but I would like to thank a few very special people for their help in putting this collection together.

Stacey Weinberger has proven of inestimable assistance in acquiring and understanding material from the 1980s at the Live Oak Grove. I have assisted her in the on-line publication of the newer Druid Missal-any for five years, and we have a fine working relationship. My greatest regret is that I was unable to draw further from her experience.

Without Mark Heiman's professional layout experience in the first ARDA project, these volumes would not look as fine and polished. His style and influence continues in the 2nd Edition. He also has kindly given advice and assistance on maintaining the on-line version of these files.

Steve Crimmins contributed enormous energies to provide photos and transcriptions and typing up last minute articles to fill up this 2nd Edition. I would like to thank Eric Hillemann for providing space at the Carleton Archives for the Carleton Druid Archival Project, for conducting many oral interviews with past Druids, and offering helpful hints in collecting and organizing a mountain of materials.

I would like to thank my parents, my friends, roommates, fellow Carleton Druid grove members, Ar nDraiocht Fein, The Henge of Keltria, all the other groves of the Reform, and the authors of the First Amendment.

In order to be true to all my friends, I should boldly state the following about Druidism:

The Entire RDNA Dogma is Contained in the Two Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism (Law 4-6):

> 1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
>
> 2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it men do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.

No more, no less, but these are often traditionally abbreviated into:

1. Nature is good.
2. Likewise, Nature is good.

> Alternate Constitutional Version (1963):
>
> North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the many ways in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature, the Earth-Mother.
>
> North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the Objects of Creation, is important to man's spiritual quests.

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2. Please, do not take this stuff too seriously. Most of us certainly do not!
3. Materials represent only the individual opinions of their authors and no one else.
4. We do not have official group dogma. We merely have our individual opinions, and we bicker frequently.
5. Just because it was printed, doesn't mean the authors haven't changed their minds since they wrote the materials.
6. Most Druids get along just fine without ever reading ANY of these unofficial materials. Many (if not most) Druids thrive better without this literature!!
7. In general... most of us consider Reformed Druidism to be a perspective, not a religion. Do not be fooled by all the external trappings, whistles, and bells.
8. Membership in Druidism is considered very compatible with all religions by many members and the term "Druid" is usually considered to be gender neutral. Or, at least, we tend to think so.
9. Technically speaking, those who do not have the Apostolic Succession descending from Fisher are not permitted to perform most of the traditional liturgies.
10. Within reason, all documents have been presented here in their original historical forms (i.e. after spell-checking and versical numbering).

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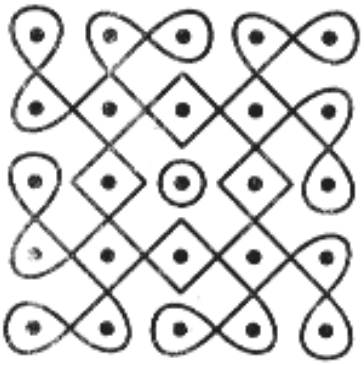


PREFACE

SECOND EDITION

IT SEEMED LIKE THE RIGHT THING TO DO AT THE TIME...

A LONG, LONG, TIME AGO, IN A GROVE FAR, FAR AWAY...

I edited and published a small newsletter from around 1976 c.e. called *The Druid Chronicler,* which eventually turned into *Pentalpha Journal and Druid Chronicler,* disappearing (like so many small publications do) in 1981. While age and illness have wiped large portions of my wetware, I have been able to snag a few memories while reading through these old issues.

Originally my goal was have a way of announcing the events sponsored by my NRDNA grove in Berkeley and to network with other groves in the Reform. I can't remember if I had in mind a replacement mechanism for the Council of Dalon ap Landu, which appeared then (as now) to be defunct as an organizational system, but I at least had the idea of keeping the Druids of the Reform in regular contact.

Then I thought of how nice it would be to have a Neopagan newsletter that would print accurate historical, botanical, and other materials instead of the fluffy pseudo-historical, pseudo-scholarly nonsense that most other Neopagan pubs of the time were putting out. I had managed to do this with *Gnostica* for Llewellyn Publishing for a couple of years and I missed doing it. Moreover, I had always felt that the Ancient Druids had been the scholars of their times, so that a modern Druidic publication ought to at least attempt to have high standards. Then I started sending copies to other Druid groves, both inside the Reform and outside, based on my belief that more contacts with like-minded folks were better than fewer. (Remember, all this was very much pre-Internet.)

When I married my second (official) wife, Selene, we created an organization called Pentalpha: the Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness, abbreviated as AAAAA. Five A's interlocked into a star shape are called a "pentalpha," hence the name and the logo. This was obviously more of a "new age" group than a specifically Druidic one. It also needed a newsletter, but I knew we couldn't manage to put out two high quality publications, so we combined a new *Pentalpha Journal* with the older *Druid Chronicler.* We started covering various New Age and non-Druidic Pagan topics, and put out several rather nice issues.

Then Selene and I separated, Pentalpha folded, and *PJ&DC* became the plain old *Druid Chronicler* again. In 1981, I married again, to Sally Eaton, and we decided upon some sweeping changes to how we wanted to experience Druidism. Some of the thinking that was going to go into my eventual creation of *Ár nDraíocht Féin:* A Druid Fellowship first appeared in the pages of Volume 5, #1 of the *Druid Chronicler,* which folded shortly thereafter.

I hope that those reading these pages more than twenty-five years later will find them of interest, or at least amusement. Remember what old Bilbo used to say about how dangerous it is to step outside your house—you never know where the road is going to take you.

Bright blessings,

Isaac Bonewits

Foreword

When Brother Mike asked me to write the introduction to the Missal-Any section of ARDA and told me I would be in essence I would be writing proxy for Emmon Bodfish, its original editor, I thought, my god, how to fill those shoes and do them justice. Emmon began the Missal-Any at Oimelc 1982 along with Joan Carruth and I believe Chris Sherbak, when the Druid Chronicler ceased publication. It started out as a venue to publish news of the RDNA groves, dates of the High Days and regular services but became so much more. Within the same initial year, Emmon was already writing lead articles that covered an aspect of the particular High Day that were well-researched. Celtic scholars such as Tom Cross and Professor Jim Duran would submit articles. But what made the Missal-Any stand out from other Druid publications was Emmon's unique stamp upon it. Let me clarify. The Missal-Any wasn't self-serving or a product of Emmon's ego. It was a way to get the information "out there" on the High Days, news of what the groves were up to, Celtic history, language, folklore, mythology, and contemporary druid culture that the readership might not otherwise have access to. The lead articles were thought provoking, not mere regurgitation of material from books, and could be used as a springboard for further research by the more ambitious readers. As far as I know no other druid group's newsletter publishes news of their groves.

And there was Emmon's sense of humor. He had a wry wit that appeared in the sorts of cartoons he would add, clips from newspapers and ads which bespoke his observations on the world. They too would make you think, and laugh, and make you look at things in a way you hadn't considered before.

After nine years A Druid Missal-Any ceased publication with the Oimelc 1991 issue. Due to health reasons Emmon needed to devote his energy to finding a place to live where the air was cleaner, leaving the editorship open. Another nine years later (note the trend of the sacred druidic number!), the publishing mantel was once again assumed, this time by me, his student.

Now I had been the proofreader for several years. When Emmon started to consider moving away he offered me the editorship. I in no way felt I had the wisdom or knowledge to be able to take it on, and so the Missal-Any remained on hiatus. Then in 1999 Emmon died. In his will he left me his entire Celtic studies library as well as his Canon copier. Was this to be taken as "a sign" to start up the Missal-Any again? In consulting the AD at the time of my grove he said it was a question of the ownership. The fictitious business statement had certainly lapsed by this time. It was then not long after this discussion that I found in Emmon's effects a letter from me turning the editorship down. Bingo. I could run but I couldn't hide any more. A Druid Missal-Any was reborn.

Samhain 2000 was the first issue of the new edition, mere weeks after my Third Order ordination, following the same format as before, and still produced as a labor of love. The new Missal-Any grew from one and a half pages its first issue to an average of over twenty. It is available by mail as well as by modern technology through email, and thanks to Brother Mike, on its own web site. Emmon's presence is still felt in the occasional reprinting of his lead and "see-and-do" articles. And he remains an inspiration to me still, to do good research, to come up with interesting topics, and to interject humor where possible. Tapadh leat, mo charaid.

Beannachd agus slan leibh,

Stacey Jo Weinberger, ODAL
Archdruid, Poison Oak Grove,
Publisher, A Druid Missal-Any
This 21st of Gearran, Y.R. XLII
21st of April, 2005 c.e.

Introduction

By Michael Scharding, DC Grove

Welcome to the third and final volume of the 2nd Edition of A Reformed Druid Anthology. No other modern Druid organization has produced and released a collection as long and complete as the RDNA. I hope that other Druid groups will follow our example and take steps to preserve and compile their past publications and re-release them for later generations to enjoy and study. A group without a past may have trouble finding its future.

This essay will greatly assist you in fully appreciating the contents of this enormous volume, which is largely free of commentary or exegesis. Although most of the interesting articles have been lifted from those 27 years of magazines and included in the Main Volume and Green Books, you might still wish to watch how Druidism changes over time in a slow chronological manner, to put the articles in the context of their times. Reformatted for publication, they are a treasure to cherish and pretty much speak for themselves.

So please brush off the dust of ages past, so that your browsing might reveal insight into your future. Please read it carefully and enjoy.

Division of the Magazine Volume

The Magazine Volume is actually a multi-media volume of four "Parts", as you can tell from a brief skim of the Table of Contents. Go ahead take a look! Part 11 consists of newsletters that form the bulk of the volume. Part 12 has the short conclusion to the ARDA 2 project. Part 13 is the Druidic movie on a DVD. Part 14 is the Druid Disk copy of nearly all the RDNA records on CD ROM disk.

Part 11 is also sub-divided into four "sections", based primarily on the different publishing runs of the materials. Section One consists of 19 issues of Isaac Bonewits' Druid Chronicler and Pentalpha Journals in the late 1970s. Section Two has the 69 issues of Emmon Bodfish's A Druid Missal-Any throughout the 1980s. Section Three has 34 issues of the current A Druid Missal-Any by Stacey Weinberger in the 2000s, with further updates released annually on the internet. Section Four has the 8 issues of OMS' "The Druid's Egg", being published here as a courtesy; MOCC's "Free Voice" was also intended, but was unavailable in time for the publishing deadline.

History of NRDNA Publishing

From 1963-1975, RDNA members sent mostly hand-written missives and a few mimeograph published booklets. From 1976-1991 regular typed and photocopied (and later word-processes and printed) newsletters and magazines were sent by the NRDNA on a national scale. From 1991-2000, intermittent newsletters and books were released during the first archival movement, in addition to slow proliferation of various online conferences since 1988. From 2000-2004, the internet age drastically reduced the cost of newspaper and conferences, leading to a resurgence of RDNA communication.

The newsletter tradition is perhaps the greatest legacy of the NRDNA to Reformed Druidism. Carleton Druids had a solid inward-looking sense of identity and were tightly networked by their alumni ties and internal correspondence tradition, but the other Reformed Druids were widely scattered and worked in a nodal format and needed something fixed and stable on which to build a community, a way to share information and reach out as a recruiting tool. Part 11, in a sense, details the shifting politics of "Californian" Druidism. I should add as a side note, it has become very difficult to distinguish the RDNA & NRDNA.

Bonewits' newsletter publishing was preceded by his initial book "Real Magic" in 1971, his two year stint editing Gnostica magazine from 1973-1975, and publishing Druid Chronicles (Evolved) in 1976. This, plus his wide-ranging Neo-Pagan contacts, gave Isaac the skills to publish the Druid Chronicler magazine in 1977. After a few years in the SDNA, he launched the Pentalpha organization to build a functional framework for more organized Druid organization along with releasing the Pentalpha Journal. In 1980, Division, divorce and unemployment forced him to suspend the elaborate PJ, and the Druid Chronicler struggled afterwards another year. After Isaac left the Berkeley Grove to found ADF Druidism, the nearby Live Oak Grove under Emmon Bodfish published their local "A Druid Missal-Any", which networked the few remaining scattered groves until it also faded away. Not long after Emmon's death in 1999, Stacey resumed the Missal-Any and it became the unofficial on-line voice of Reformed Druidism in the 2000s, and seems likely to continue for a while.

As a side note, it can be estimated that Druid Chroniclers reached perhaps a few dozen people, Pentalpha Journals perhaps a hundred subscribers at the maximum, old Druid Missal-Any in the dozens, and the New Druid Missal-Any reaches about 150-200 folks within 6 months of posting on line, plus e-mailed and print versions. So most Reformed Druids haven't read and still don't read the newsletter, just doing their thing.

Joys of Newsletters

I suspect that the Magazine Volume will be the least popular section of ARDA2 because few people appreciate old newspapers. I am under no pretensions that our publications were the best-written, most inspired or widest distributed after 1983 among Modern Druids, when the stellar ADF and Keltrian publications came out. Yet these newsletters and magazines are permeated with the characteristics of Reformed Druidism. They were cheap (or free), homely, witty, eclectic, straight-talking and non-dogmatic. They are like a treasured family album, complete with strange relatives and embarrassing baby-photos of us.

It is often said, "newspapers are the first draft of history." Indeed, a few frenetic dedicated editors tried to scoop out a bucket or two from the torrential river of events and thoughts that rushed by them. They took great pains, financial hardships and spent their precious leisure time trying to tell us something about ourselves. Yet the reward for their labors often is that these newsletters soon become lost and forgotten after a few weeks. Newspapers are sometimes classified in the publishing world as "instant best-sellers and instant garbage." Indeed, many Druids are conflicted over the place of written records, since the Ancient Druidism eschewed the pen in such matters.

To illuminate, throughout the process of ARDA1 and ARDA 2, I had been torn by two different inclinations; to publish or not to publish. On the one hand, it seems prudent to leave the past buried, so that the possibly stultifying accretion of tradition and dogma would have little chance of holding Druids back from exploring new frontiers. On the other hand, as a historian, I understand that interpolation from past events may shed light on the future course of Druids, perhaps avoiding a devastating crisis or two in the future. In the end, I decided to re-release the material and trust the Druids to make the wisest choices in their usage as possible tools.

In my experience, Reformed Druids have four primary sources of wisdom and knowledge (in rough order) to nurture their Awareness; Nature, personal reflection, consultation with friends, and musing over written records. In the last case,

newsletters and books are the most physical "fossils" or detritus left behind by a group. They are only a pale hazy reflection of the vitality of the the original living groves (with their inexpressible foibles, the deep conversations, interaction, the sights, smells, the personalities, etc.). Add to this, that most Reformed Druids have been solitary, and an endless stream stories have remained untold. Thus sadly, for those of us who weren't there, it's all we have to draw upon to recreate and imagine those times, and it is indeed a very meager and unsatisfactory substitute.

Yes, amidst the grove events and calendars are some very interesting articles. True, most of the sizeable or time-enduring articles have already been extracted from the newsletters and put into appropriate categories in the Main Volume (liturgy, apocrypha, organizational) or Green Book (poems, songs, seasonal essay, histories). The materials are presented here as-they-were, scattered willy-nilly, with almost no commentary, so it would be very difficult to use this book to answer a question on a specific topic, due to it's unfocused nature.

The strongest reason to read this book is that it gives you glimpses of how groves have changed over time. Taken as a whole, the Magazine Volume offers you an overview of what topics and events mattered to them, at what time, and for how long. You might glean several clever ideas for your own grove's events, and learn from the mistakes of past groves. You will also see how those articles first-appeared, nestled in hard-to-find corners of magazines, popping up at odd times, much like Life's wisdom and Awareness.

I would recommend to any Grove leader to start a newsletter or to motivate their members to contribute to an existing one. As I mentioned before, newsletters build a sense of community, plus give an outlet for shy members to present their thoughts and works in a slow and lengthy manner, conducive to deeper reflection, in contrast to the discursive witty banter and small talk that occurs at meetings. Perhaps this volume will also give you ideas on the contents of your future productions? There are so many possibilities and tools lurking in this simple publication for those who have eyes to see.

Assembly of the Magazine Volume

Unlike the Green Books and Main Volume, the Magazine Volume posed special challenges and problems that greatly delayed the compilation and publishing.

When I first published ARDA 1 in 1996, there were only a measly handful of collected Pentalpha Journals, Druid Chroniclers and four Druid Missal-Anies in the Druid Archives at Carleton College, hardly 80 pages worth at most. Thus, out of neglect or disinterest, I didn't even bother to include them. However, over the years, the amassed page-load has grown 12-fold due to an increasing realization of the magnitude and importance of unknown publishing efforts over the years and improved access to previously hidden collections. Along with "Druid Chronicles (Evolved)", the newsletters are invaluable for understanding the rich diversity of the non-Carleton faction of Reformed Druidism, above and beyond Isaac Bonewits' more famous exploits.

I can take little credit for the contents of the Magazine Volume, as my chief contribution was endless monotonous hours of merely re-typing the fine-crafted, creative work of my predecessors, carefully formatting them in easy-to-read ways, and scanning and tweaking their pictures, trying to faithfully reproduce the contents and style of the originals, knowing that it was both impossible but imperative to try my best. It has left me with a profound sense of respect and empathy for their labors during a less-sophisticated technical age.

But they also had several freedoms, as in Emmon's case, where he would paste in articles at odd angles, tack on clipped cartoons, photocopy in actual plants, scribble in the margins and other hands-on embellishments; much like an artist choosing different paints for his canvas. In contrast, our rendition of his work in neat orderly columns, stable spacing, rigidly squared – it is so much more lifeless and bland, bereft of his artistry. Similarly, in the case of the new Missal-Anies, the original on-line versions were a riotous splash of color, with text snaking its way around the embedded pictures of small and enormous size. Due to memory overload, many unnecessary graphics have been removed from the new Missal-Anies. Each Grove had a "logo" for its news reports, and there were distinctive icons for the section divisions. I recommend that the artistic readers someday go see the originals and see them as the works of art they are, beyond the textual documents that are emphasized here. It should be noted that PJ & DC Vol. 2.5, 2.6., 3.1, Missal-any Vol. 20 and OMS Vol. 1-3 in here were not available for compiling the earlier Main Volume and Green Books collections. Take a look.

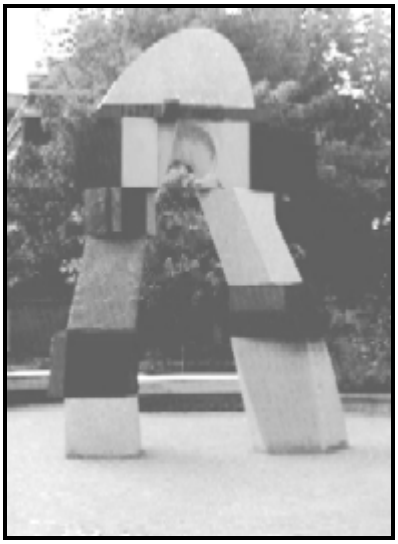
Final Thoughts

I would like to thank all the people who assisted me over the years by giving me copies of back issues, explaining the importance of various articles, and assisting me in the production and review of this volume. I am eternally grateful to them, as should we all.

As I now turn again my focus away from European matters and leave for life in Korea and Asian Affairs, I bequeath to you a very solid 40-year foundation of hard-to-find works that Reformed Druids can draw upon, if they wish. It is uncertain at this point whether it will be I or another who produces further collections. Whoever it will be, I hope they will draw deeply upon the Earth-Mother and her fellow Druids for inspiration.

I wish you well in your daily endeavors and hope that the blessings and lessons of Nature will be ever apparent unto you.

Yours with love, in the Earth-Mother,
Mike the FoOl
Raining Patriarch of Taranis
Day 14 of Earrach, Y.R. XLII
Feb 14, 2005 c.e.



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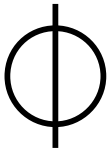

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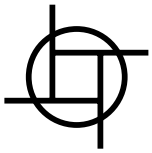

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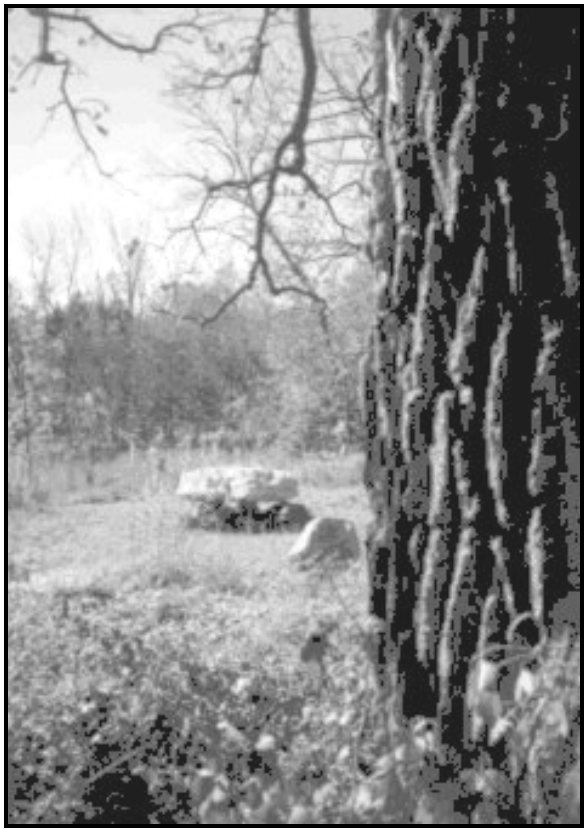

HIC LIBER IN MEMORIAM EMMONIS DEDICATUS.

This edition's volume is dedicated to Emmon Bodfish. who died in 1999, prompting the revived enthusiasm in newsletter publication. May he rest with peace and frolic in the Land of the Young forevermore.

Editor's Blessing upon the Reader

May the blessings of the Earth-Mother be apparent unto you in every day of your life. May you live as long as you wish, make and keep good friends, profit in your just undertakings, gain respect from your peers for your good deeds, and avoid ill-health.

As For Written Tradition…

"They are said to commit to memory a great number of verses. And they remain some 20 years in training. Nor do they judge it to be allowed to entrust these things to writing although in nearly the rest of their affairs, and public and private transactions, Greek letters are used. It seems to me there are two reasons this has been established: neither do they wish the common people to pride themselves in the training nor those who learn to rely less on memory, since it happens to a large extant that individuals give up diligence in memory and thorough learning through the help of writing."
Julius Caesar 44 b.c.e.

Midwinter

When the wind blows cold
on the Hill of Three Oaks
the hearth fire is warm.

Richard Smiley, 1964

The Inheritance

What shall I leave as
A keepsake after I die?
In spring, flowers;
Summer, cuckoos;
Fall, red maple leaves;
Winter, snow.

Ryokan's deathbed poem, 1831

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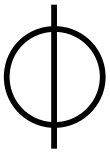

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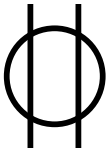

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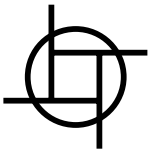
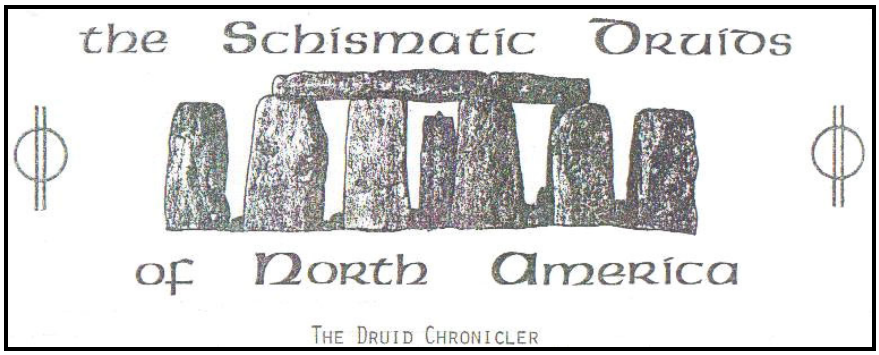


Drynemetum Press

Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION ONE



The Druid Chronicler

Volume One

1977 & 1978

Drynemetum Press

The Druid Chronicler

The Schismatic Druids
of North America
Volume 1 Number 1
Mean Geimredh, 16y.r.
9 Dec 77 to 6 Jan 78 c.e.

THE DRUID CHRONICIER is edited by Adr. Isaac Bonewits. Funds for this issue were provided by him, Stephen McCaully. Bill Heidrick and others. Letters should be directed to the publisher listed below. All contents Copyright @ 1977.

A Druid Newsletter!

This is the first issue of THE DRUID CHRONICLER, a highly irregular Druid newsletter to be issued whenever enough money and new is available to do so. It is published by the Mother Grove of the SDNA, but will carry news concerning all the Branches of the Reform. Would-be receivers of this should let us know in writing and kick in a buck or two (cash) to cover printing and postage costs.

Mother Grove Winter Meetings:

The Mother Grove meets every other Sunday night (Aspeneve) from 6:00 to 10:00 pm Pacific Sidhe Time. These are not official Druid worship services, since they take place indoors, currently at the home of Sister Shirine Morton,(DAL) which is at: 2820 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94702. The telephone number is (415) 841-4833. Right now these meetings consist of an hour's Daoist or Tibetan meditation, an hour or so of Hasidic Druid "hairpull" friendly theological arguments,) a potluck dinner and a couple of hours of Bardic activities (poetry, new and old songs, music and possibly some music lessons on Celtic instruments).

Dates for these biweekly meets are: Dec. 11 & 25, Jan. 8 & 22, Feb. 5 & 19, Mar. 5 & 19, Apr. 2 & 16 & 30.

Mother Grove Highday services are at 3:00 P.M., PST at John Hinkle Park in North Berkeley (off Arlington, near the Alameda Circle). Winter Solstice will be celebrated December 25th, with all retiring to Shirine's afterwards for more Druish activities and a three-way birthday party. Oimelc will be celebrated on February 5th) and Spring Equinox on March l9th.

Hazel Nut Grove Winter Meetings:

Adr. McCaully informs us that his Grove will be meeting with the Mother Grove during this winter and will resume its regular Saturday afternoon meetings next summer.

Tuatha Grove Winter Meetings:

The newest SDNA Grove in San Diego, is holding meetings in the home of the now Archdruidess. Contact her (address appears elsewhere in this issue) for details on times and activities.

Ordinations:

To the Third Order: Shirine Morton (MG77), Patricia O'Neil (MG77), and Christopher Sherbak (MG77). To the Order of Dian Cecht: Joan Carruth (Matriarch), 77.

Grove Mutations in 15 y.r.:

The Berkeley Grove NRDNA and the Mother Grove SDNA met together on Sunday afternoons for all of the winter Highdays and most of the summer. The Hazel Nut Grove NRDNA was formed by Br. Stephen McCaully in August, so that Druids who worked on Sundays could meet on Saturdays instead. Also in August, Br. Bob Larson, AD of the Berkeley Grove, resigned to get ready to go to Ireland and the Grove dissolved, the remnants being absorbed into the Mother & Hazel Nut Groves. During his September trip to Ireland with Cody & Jani Grundy, Bob Larson formed a Grove with Cody called Clan Na Brocheta and he is now the new AD of the Clan Na Brocheta Grove RDNA. Bonewits, AD of the Mother Grove, had resigned last December (76 c.e.) in favor of the Assistant AD, Joan Carruth. She was AD for the rest of the year, until new elections in September when Isaac took up the job again. In November, Isaac went south and ordained Pat O'Neil and Chris Sherbak. Pat is starting the Tuatha Grove SDNA in San Diego, while Chris is going to try to start up a Grove or Protogrove in Los Angeles. Sister Kathleen McQuilling may try and start a Grove in Santa Cruz. Br. Avery Grant is starting up the Acorn Grove SDNA in Minneapolis, since the Twin Cities Grove SDNA seems to have collapsed. No word has been heard from any of the other Groves supposedly existing elsewhere. If they will send us their news we'll print it,

The Archdruid's New Phone Number:

An event of earthshaking surprise has befallen the Mother Grove. Adr. P.E.I, Bonewits actually has a phone number in his very own home!!! Call (415) 547-6697, afternoons and evenings only.

Celtic Library:

Adr. Stephen has a Celtic library of over 400 titles in his home, which is available for use by Bay Area Druids and other Pagans. Many of the texts are quite rare, and microfilming and photocopying is available at slightly above cost.

About the Chronicles

The first printing of THE DRUID CHRONICLES (EVOLVED) has been out of print for several months. Unfortunately, Gnostica magazine has only recently gotten around to printing "What & Why is Reformed Druidism, in the 1970's," complete with obsolete addresses. So your Editor finds himself getting all sorts of orders for the book, with no books left to mail out. So here is what we're going to do.

All the checks sent are being returned. I have opened a new savings account and will run it as a Publication Fund. As soon as we get enough money to reprint TDCE (which may take as much as $1500, since we no longer have free printing) we will reprint and will send copies to all those who have donated $7.50 or more (the new cover price). In the meantime, small amounts of $20-30 may be used from time to time in order to publish this newsletter. If we can find an used printing press, we may just buy it and do our own printing.

Cash, checks and money orders should be sent to: P. E. I, Bonewits, Box 9398, Department PF, Berkeley, CA 94709 and clearly marked as being for the Printing Fund. We can't promise that TDCE will actually get reprinted if you donate five or ten bucks, but we can promise that without some donations from you it really will be impossible to get anything published.

The Druid Calendar for 16 y.r.

The new calendar has been calculated but the artwork and paste-ups are taking forever and printing cash is short. So what we are going to do is make us a two year calendar for 16 & 17 y.r. and get it out by Oimelc. In the meantime, we give you the following data which can be written on your civil calendars. "Ss" means "Sunset,"

The Highdays:

Samhain was Ss Nov. 6, to Ss Nov. 7,

Winter Solstice is Ss Dec. 20 to Ss Dec. 21,

Oimelc is Ss Feb. 3. to Ss Feb 4,

Spring Equinox is Ss Mar. 19, to Ss Mar. 20.

The Months:

Mi na Samhna was Ss Nov. 8 to Ss Dec. 8.

Mean Geimhridh is Ss Dec. 8, to Ss Jan. 6.

Deireadh Geimhridh is Ss Jan. 6, to Ss Feb. 2.

Mi na hOimelc is Ss Feb. 5, to Ss Mar. 6,

Mean Earraigh is Ss Mar. 6, to Ss Apr. 5.

The Active Groves

The following are all the active Groves--that your Editor knows for a fact still exist:

Mother Grove SDNA Adr. P. E. I. Bonewits, Box 9398, Berkeley, CA 94709. Phone: 415-547-6697, afternoons and evenings.

Hazel Nut Grove NRDNA, Adr. Stephen W. A. McCaully, 6620 Telegraph Avenues Oakland, CA 94609. Phone. 415-653-1710, afternoons and evenings.

Clan Na Brocheta Grove RDNA, Adr. Robert Larson., c/o Cody Grundy, 820 Circle Courts South San Francisco, CA 94080. Services in Irish Gaelic.

Tuatha Grove SDNA, Adr. Pat O'Neil, 1808 Third Avenue, Apt. 1. San Diego, CA 92101.

Acorn Grove SDNA., Adr. Avery Grant, 3540 South Columbus, Minneapolis, MN 554070

The Druid Chronicler

Volume 1, Number 2
Mean Earraigh, 16 y.r.
6 Mar. to 5 Apr. '78 c.e.

This issue of THE DRUID CHRONICLER was printed at cost, courtesy of the O.T.O., Box 2304, Berkeley, CA 94702.

About this Newsletter

This is the second issue of THE DRUID CHRONICLER, a highly irregular Druid newsletter published by the Mother Grove of the SDNA every 6-8 weeks (we hope). It contains news of all the Branches of Reformed Druidism in North America, depending on who sends us reports of local events. The Editor is Isaac Bonewits, Archdruid of the Mother Grove. All contents are Copyright 1978 c.e., by the SDNA; though announcements may be reprinted freely by any Neopagan publication. Would-be receivers should let us know in writing and kick in a buck or two to the Publication Fund.

Ordinations:

To the Third Order: Laurence Gold (CL77), Greg Hoffman (CL77), Thomas Lacki (CL76) and Sue Olin (CL77). Sue was elected the new Archdruid of Carleton last May ('77 c.e.) and Br. Don Morrison is now in the Philosophy Dept. at Princeton.

Mother Grove Spring Equinox Services:

These will be held on Sunday March 19th, at noon, in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. East Bay members and guests should meet at Sr. Shirine Morton's house (2820 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley; phone 415-841-4833) by 11:00 A.M. They will drive to San Francisco and meet the West Bay members and guests at the north entrance to the Arboretum (across from the Tea Garden) at noon. Services will be held just to the west of the "Redwood Nature Grove."

After services, the Grove will. walk over to the De Young Museum to see the "Irish Treasures" exhibit. Cost will be $1.50 each for adults and the lines will be long. You may want to bring extra money to buy a copy of the beautiful catalogue and/or some of the Celtic jewelry on sale just outside the exhibit.

Mother Grove "Druid-Nights:"

There aren't too many of these left before Beltane, just those on April 2nd, 16th and 30th. The meetings will be moved to the Archdruid's new house just as soon as the moving process is finished. So far, the average meeting has consisted of a Grove business discussion, a potluck dinner, Hasidic Druid "Hairpull" and Bardic activities, and they have been running from 7 P.M. to l0 P.M. or so.

If the weather in April is nice, we may start doing outdoor services again instead of, or in addition to, the Druid Nights. These would use the Order of Common Worship for Geimredh & Earrach. If there is sufficient interest, we will hold the Druid Nights throughout the summer as well

Note on Open Ceremonies:

All Druid ceremonies in every Branch of the Reform, so far, are open to the general public (if well behaved) except for Ordinations to the Third and Higher Orders, and for some of the private rites of the Higher Orders that are restricted to their own members. If you belong to a non-druidic organization and would like to attend regular Druid services you are more than welcome.

Druidic Education:

Br. David Geller, Patriarch of the Order of Oberon, has agreed to begin running weekly Bardic classes for Neopagans in the Bay Area, if enough people show a sincere interest in putting some work into music, poetry and singing practice. The idea would be to improve everyone's Bardic abilities and to develop new materials for use in Druid ceremonies.

Sr. Joan Carruth, Matriarch of the Order of Dian Cecht, says that she will start some classes in Herbal Medicine, First Aid, CPR and Home Procedures this summer. Classes in Ritual Dance, Field Botany and Ceremonial Magic will also be offered by various teachers if sufficient interest develops. Contact the Mother Grove for details.

Keeping Your Copies of the Newsletter:

As can be seen by the three circles on the side of the first page of this issue, the newsletter is designed to be punched and placed into the same notebook that you keep your copy of the CHRONICLES (probably at the end of Part Four). If you don't have a copy of the CHRONICLES yet, it is still a good idea to keep a notebook, otherwise the pages of the newsletter tend to get buried and lost amid the reams of paper we all keep in our homes. Besides, many announcements of importance will be made only in the pages of THE DRUID CHRONICLER.

The British Druids:

Although the Reformed Druid movements have no known connection to the Masonic-Rosicrucian Druids in the British Isles, we have made friendly contact with American and English members of "The Druid Order: An Druidh Uileach Braithrearchas" which is also known as "The British Circle of the Universal Bond." A copy of their Book List can be obtained by writing to them at: 161 Aukland Road, London, SE 19, England. We will shortly be ordering a complete set of their writings for the Mother Grove archives, as soon as we can figure out how to convert the English prices into American currency.

Information Booklets:

"What and Why is Reformed Druidism in the 1970's?" is about to be reprinted by the Mother Grove. This four page booklet of typeset information about the history, customs, beliefs and Branches of the movement is designed to be reprinted by local Druids and has a space for local addresses to be added. Copies will be sent out with the newsletter. If you need extra copies let us know and we'll work out the costs to print as many as you think you'll need.

The booklet takes quite some time to read, so it is not really appropriate for handing out to strangers who stumble upon Druid rites in progress. If anyone would like to try their hand at writing a brief introductory leaflet let us know and we'll see about typesetting and printing it.

Mother Grove Highday Celebrations:

The Mother Grove decided March 5th that future Highday celebrations, at least for the summer, will be held as weekend campouts in various scenic spots around Northern California. Those who can leave early on Friday afternoons may precede the rest of the Grove to the chosen locations and set up camp for the rest who can't leave till later on Fridays. Most of the Grove would stay through Sunday afternoon each time. The campouts would include nature hikes, mushroom hunts, litter cleanups and overnight bonfires where safe and legal. The following locations and dates have been suggested so far:

Beltane: May 5th-7th., in Sequoia National Park, with actual ceremonies to take place around the General Sherman Big Tree (world's largest tree).

Midsummer: June 16th-18th, either (a) on a private ranch in Sonoma County or (b) private land elsewhere in the Napa-Sonoma area, depending upon whether or not the local Neopagan community decides to resurrect their giant Midsummer Festival. If the pagan community does so, the Druids will join Witches and other Neopagans from throughout California for three days of ecumenical celebration.

Lughnasadh: August 4th-6th, at the Harbin Hot Springs in Lake County.

Fall Equinox: September 22nd - 24th, on the Bear River near Colfax, north of Sacramento, in the Sierra foothills.

Samhain will be celebrated the weekend of November 5th and Midwinter the weekend of December 17th, but the exact locations and activities have not been planned yet. The Archdruid would like to go snow-camping, but the Archdruid is known to be a bit odd.

All of these plans are extremely tentative until various authorities have been contacted and miscellaneous permissions obtained. Announcements from the Grove's Camp Director (Arlynde) will appear in future issues of this newsletter, giving such details as driving directions, costs, babysitting arrangements, what to bring in the way of food and clothing, etc.

In the event that the Mother Grove celebrates a Highday out of the easily immediate area, there is a good probability that at least one Third Order priest or priestess will be available to hold services for those who can't leave town.

Ritual Writing Contest:

Because a number of people in various Branches of the Reform have complained that they don't like the "Protestant sounding prayers" in the Druid services now in common use, we are inviting people to send us rewritten versions of current rites, as well as brand new ceremonies for Druid use. The most popular, artistic, interesting and dramatic of these rites will be published in this newsletter (and possibly in the new printing of the CHRONICLES as well). Liturgies using music, poetry, song and dance will be favored, but cultural inspiration does not have to be Celtic.

Ritual Vestments for Druid Services

By Isaac Bonewits, 1978?

One of the things that makes a ceremony dramatically effective is the sort of clothing being worn by the participants. Among the Reformed Druids, a white robe for Second and Third Order members has been customary, with the priestesses and priests wearing their red or white ribbons-of-office. The following suggestions have recently been made about vestment customs and local Groves are free to use, change or ignore them as they see fit:

The system used by the Masonic-Rosicrucian Druids in the British Isles could be modified thusly: First Order Druids would wear green robes; Second Order Druids would wear green-and-white robes; Third Order Druids would wear white robes; Bards would wear blue tabards over their regular robes; Guards would wear dark red or brown tabards, etc.

AND/OR everyone not wearing robes could wear Paleopagan styles of clothing, usually of the Celtic or Germanic sort. This would ease some of the trans-temporal clashes so common at Druid rites and would add greatly to the ritual gestalt.

AND/OR special seasonal tabards could be worn by the Archdruid (and other officers?) presiding over ceremonies. Simple rectangles (about 18"x36") of cotton or linen could be carefully embroidered, then sewn together at two corners. These would be worn over the head and belted. Each tabard would have a large tree on the front piece and a large Druid Sigil (II) on the back piece, both in the appropriate seasonal foliage. One set of possibilities runs thusly:

From Samhain to Midwinter: Rowan tree with bare branches, mistletoe and light snow.
From Midwinter to Oimelc: Holly tree with berries/mistletoe and heavy snow.
From Oimelc to Spring: Fir tree with new needles and light snow.
From Spring to Beltane: Fruit tree in bloom, with budding branches.
From Beltane to Midsummer: Oak tree in full green.
From Midsummer to Lughnasadh: Sequoia tree in full green.
From Lughnasadh to Fall: Fruit tree with fruit, some leaves starting to turn.
From Fall to Samhain: Sugar maple tree turning gold and scarlet, dropping.

Los Angeles Protogrove

Br. Chris Sherbak is trying to start an SDNA Grove in the Los Angeles area. He can be reached through: 588 North Lucerne Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90004; phone: 213-467-5701

News from Yuma, Arizona

Sr. Katheryn Hughes is interested in starting an RDNA Grove in the Yuma area and says that she also "would like to correspond with any garrulous Druids concerning--well, basically the role Druidism plays in one's life-- everything considered confidential if desired (this is for a sociology paper)." Other notes from her: "I've been doing business with a fantastic bookstore in Erin: Clodhanna Teoranta, 6 Sraid Fhearchair, Baile Atha Cliath 2. Eire. You might also want to pass this on: a quarterly publication called "Carn, links between the Celtic nations," with articles in English and all six Celtic languages. $5.50 per year, write to Alan Heusaff, 9 Bothar Cnoc Sion, Baile Atha Cliath 9, Eire."

Other Protogroves

At the moment we have people wanting to start Protogroves in the following areas:. Columbia MO, Madison WI, West Palm Beach FL, Tacoma WA and Parkersburg WV. If you would like to help any of these people, just contact the Mother Grove and we'll put you in touch.

SDNA Internal Organization

Groves and Protogroves belonging to the SDNA and its offshoots are reminded that they are supposed to send in monthly activity reports so we can be sure you are still alive and kicking. The Groves that haven't sent in a signed Constitution with a list of elected officers aren't legal yet. We also need notices of any ordinations done by your Third Order members, changes in officers, Special Orders set up, etc. We'd like to print your new songs, poems, rituals, problems and solutions, recruitment techniques, ecology actions and other news.

SDNA Grand Tour:

The Archdruid of the Mother Grove of the SDNA is tentatively planning to spend summer of 17 y.r. (1979 c.e.) making a "Grand Tour" around the United States with his wife Selene. We plan to visit Groves and Protogroves, as well as individual Druids and other Neopagans, in over thirty cities. The primary purpose will be to meet people who have been preparing themselves for ordination and to take them into the Third Order so that they can found legal Groves. If you'd like us to visit your town, be sure to let us know sometime within the next twelve months.

New Developments with the Chronicles:

As mentioned last issue, the first printing of THE DRUID CHRONICLES (EVOLVED) was sold out months ago. A new printing is planned for later this year, as soon as we have enough money in the Printing Fund. We are happy to announce that a source of nearly free printing has been found (a friend has bought a printing press) and that we only need to collect $400-$500 for paper and ink, instead of $1500-$2000, for added labor costs. However, at the moment the Printing Fund contains only about $20 --enough to put out another issue or two of the newsletter, but that's it.

Currently the PF is working this way: checks made out to "A.A.A.A.A." or "Berkeley Drunemeton Press" are being returned to their senders, since it will be months before the next 500 copies are printed. Cash, checks and money orders meant as donations to the Printing Fund should be sent to P. E. I. Bonewits, Box 9398, Dept. PF, Berkeley, CA 94709 and clearly marked as for the PF (otherwise I may spend it on beer and chips). These monies all go into a special savings account and when the CHRONICLES are reprinted, copies will be sent to everyone who has donated $7.50 or more (2 copies for $15, 4 for $30, etc). From time to time, money for the newsletter will also be taken from the PF. It may wind up being August or December, but if we get enough money we will reprint the CHRONICLES.

After we have broken-even on the CHRONICLES, we may start a Druid Magazine if there seems to be enough interest.

Future of The Druid Chronicler:

We've already been sent a good article on California Oaks and Sequoias, and several bards have offered songs and poems for publication. Should we start printing these in the newsletter or stick to plain news? Should we include other Neopagan groups or not? Your Editor is masochistic enough to type the pages, but more pages mean more expense, and that means more subscriptions have to come in. We'll keep the prices as low as we can, but we have to have money for printing and postage. If you haven't already kicked in a buck or two to the printing fund by the time the next issue is ready for mailing, this is the last issue of the Druid Chronicler you will probably receive.

Miscellaneous Neopagan Activities in the Bay Area:

A Pagan Study Group exists in the Palo Alto/San Jose area. Their newsletter, Bay Leaves, can be gotten for a couple bucks from Randy Millen, 921 Colorado Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

An Open Sabat for the Spring Equinox will be held from noon March 25th through noon March 26th, at the Greenfield Ranch in Sonoma County, sponsored by the New Reformed Orthodox Order of the Golden Dawn (a collection of Neopagan Witchcraft covens and individuals). Bring your own firewood, hibachi-type-food and hiking boots. For details, call Chandria at 415-731-4220, 6 pm to 9 pm only.

Editorial: Ecology Action!

On February 25th the Mother Grove and the Hazel Nut Grove went to the Japanese Consulate in San Francisco to join various ecologists in protesting the slaughter of thousands of dolphins in Japan during the previous week. Although several of the people from Greenpeace were concerned about the impact of robed Druids on the public image of the protest, friendly arrangements were made for the Druids to form their own distinct demonstration group and for them to refer any curious media people back to the ecologists.

The Druids culminated their participation for the day with a procession at high noon to the front of the Consulate building, where with full ceremony they called down the curse of the Gods and Goddesses of the Sea upon those humans responsible for the slaughter. By the time the rite was nearing its end, several of the ecologists had joined the Druids in their cursing litany. At the climax almost everyone present shouted together "We curse you! We curse you!! We curse you!!!" with a volume that must have easily reached Japan, let alone the tenth floor of the building. Although the rite was good "street theater" and will no doubt have a purely psychological effect on those members of the Consulate who heard it, your Editor can assure you that a significant amount of mana was raised and discharged, and that we fully expect physical results to follow.

Since that time discussions have been held in the Mother Grove and we have decided that we will all start to be more involved in standard ecology action from now on. Druids will be expected to join various groups such as the Sierra Club: Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, and so on, and to volunteer time and/or money to these groups. An increasing number of field trips and campouts will be held and litter bags will be brought along so that we can clean up the woods as we hike. Druids will join more demonstrations and write more letters and boycott more consumer goods (such as real tuna, or Japanese & Russian products).

These decisions are being made because many Druids feel that it is hypocritical to claim that we love and worship the Earth-Mother if we aren't also trying to do something to stop Her rapists. As with everything else Druidic, the exact form and degree of action is up to each individual Druid, but the Druid organizations are going to start providing specific opportunities for intensive action.

Many ecology organizations may well prefer that Druids joining them be discreet, wearing ordinary clothing and not talking much about religion. After all, the general public often feels that ecology activists are weird enough as it is, without bringing up the topic of "funny religions." Other ecology groups may feel that the Druids are the logical "chaplains" for a movement that is already a religion for many of its members, and be at least as willing to have Druids along as they are to have Roman Catholic or Jewish clergy and laity along wearing their unusual garb. In either event, Druids should cooperate with the policies of whatever ecology organizations they wind up joining. Battles for religious freedom and ecological sanity can be fought separately as well as jointly, with no insult to either.

Spring Equinox

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Spring Equinox. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Sleep. The sacrifice should be of budding branches.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side,)

leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into Sigil, which is closed by two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction).

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is not accepted, except in emergency situations.)

PR: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Chant

PR: And the God of the Sun did arise from His tomb in the South; and once more did He fare forth to His children in the Northern lands. (Pause) O Belenos, O Thou unchanging God of many names, but one Face, we, Thy children, welcome Thee back to our lands.
Chorus: O Lord of Light, we welcome Thee.
PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, long have we awaited Thy return, that the coldness of the Night might be taken from our lands.
Chorus: O God of Sun, We welcome Thee.

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PR: The nights were long, the trees had shed,
Chorus: The night had conquered day.
PR: The days were short, and life had fled.
Chorus: The night had conquered day.
PR: The winds were cold, the land seemed dead,
Chorus: The night had conquered day.
PR: But the Sun returns from the Southern lands.
Chorus: Balanced now are we.
PR: Plants spring up on every hand,
Chorus: Balanced now are we.
PR: "Let Life return!" is the Sun's command.
Chorus: Balanced now are we.
PR: The Sun grows stronger every day.
Chorus: The Day will conquer night.
PR: The world grows lush and Life holds sway,
Chorus: The Day will conquer night.
PR: So let us praise Him in all ways.

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PR: O Belenos, O Sun, we praise Thee at Thy return to our midst. Welcome art Thou among us.
Chorus: Bless with thy presence, O Lord of Light.
PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, bless us with Thy warmth and light, that we may rejoice in Thy sight.
Chorus: Bless us and light our way, O God of the Sun.

The Catechism of Waters-of-Sleep

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Sleep while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Sleep. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PREC: SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.
PR: Of what, then, does Belenos give that we may rejoice on this day of His return.
PREC: THE WARMTH OF THE SUN AND THE WATERS WHERE he SLEEPS.
PR: OF WHAT, THEN, DO WE PARTAKE?
PREC: The Waters of the Sun.
PR: Then give me the Waters of the Sun.

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

O Belenos, O Lord of Light, descend into these waters and fill them with Thy presence. Give us to know, O Lord, of Thy promise of Life as we take and drink of Thy warmth and light.

Ordinations

No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Sleep," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length--though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:)

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

The Active Groves:

The following are all the Druid Groves that your Editor knows are supposed to be alive and well. There may well be others that we haven't beard from.

Mother Grove SDNA, Adr. Isaac Bonewits, Box 93981 Berkeley, CA 94709. Phone: 415-547-6697, 2pm to l0 pm. Biweekly Sunday meetings and Highdays. Various classes.

Hazel Nut Grove SDNA/NRDNA, Adr. Stephen McCaully, 6220 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland, CA 94609. Phone: 415-653-1710, 2 pm to l0 pm. Biweekly Saturday meetings and Highdays. Celtic library. Various classes.

Tuatha Grove SDNA, Adr. Pat O'Neil, 1808 Third Avenue, Apt. #1, San Diego, CA 92101. Biweekly Sunday meetings and Highdays. Norse Druidism.

Acorn Grove SDNA, Adr. Avery Grant, 3540 South Columbus, Minneapolis, MN 55407. Phone: 612-823-1303, 2pm to l0 pm. Ecumenical rites with local Wiccans.

Arch Grove HDNA, Adr. Vicki Rhodes, 475 Lockwood, Webster Groves, MO 63119. Biweekly Saturday meetings and Highdays. Hasidic Druidism.

Carleton Grove RDNA, Adr. Sue Olin, Carleton College, Northfield, MN 55057. Founding Grove of the Reformed Druid Movements. Meets weekly & Highdays, Sept. to June.

Clan Na Brocheta Grove ODNA /NRDNA, Adr. Robert Larson, c/o Cody Grundy, 9F 820 Circle Court, South San Francisco, CA 9 080. Highdays only, in Irish Gaelic.

Southern Shores Grove RDNA/NRDNA, Adr. Steven Savitzky, 343 Leigh Avenue, San Jose, CA 95128. Phone: 408-294-6492, 6 pm to 10 pm only. Highdays only?

Ann Arbor Grove RDNA, Adr. Richard Shelton, 722 Dewey Avenue, Ann Arbor, Mi 48104. Highdays only?

Chicago Grove RDNA, Adr. Michael Bradley, 5611 South Blackstone, Chicago, IL 60615. Highdays only.

The Druid Chronicler

Volume 1, Issue 3,
Whole Number 3
Beltane, 16 y.r.
May 4/5, 78 c.e.

The Druid Chronicler is a highly irregular Druid newsletter published by the Mother Grove of the Schismatic Druids of North America every 6-8 weeks. It contains news of all the Branches of Reformed Druidism, depending upon who sends us reports of local events. The Editor is Adr. Isaac Bonewits. All contents are copyright 1978 c.e. by the SDNA. Announcements may be reprinted freely by any Neopagan publication. Subscriptions are $2+per year, sent to: P. E. I. Bonewits, Box 9398, Berkeley, CA 94709. Cash is preferred.

Bay Area Beltane Rites

As far as purists are concerned, the feast of Beltane starts at sunset May 4th, because the sun hits 16 degrees and 18 minutes of declination at precisely 11:27 am, PDT (Pacific Druid Time) on the morning of May 5th. But most Reformed Druid groups prefer, like other Neopagans, to celebrate the High Days on whatever dates turn out to be most convenient for the majority attending.

The Clann na Brocheta Grove will be celebrating during the afternoon of Saturday May 6th, near the top of Mount Tamalpais in Marin. Services will be in Irish Gaelic, led by Archdruid Robert Larson. The entire Clann will be there from noon to sunset, and the feast is potluck. For details, send your phone number to the Clann's Ri, Cody Grundy (see Grove addresses later in this issue) and he'll call you.

Those who live in the San Jose or Palo Alto areas may want to call Archdruid Steve Savitzky to see when his Grove is celebrating (see Grove addresses).

The Mother Grove and the Hazel Nut Grove will be celebrating on Sunday May 7th, in the Berkeley Rose Garden and in Cordonices Park, across the street from each other in northern Berkeley (see map). Members and friends should assemble in the park by the tunnel entrance before 2:00 pm. The Grove will process through the tunnel into the Rose Garden for the main ceremonies. Afterwards, a potluck picnic will be held in Fireplace Area #2 back over in the park. People are encouraged to bring food, drink, poems, music and garlands in their hair. To get there: by car, go up to the top of University Avenue, turn left (North) on Oxford and go to Cedar. Turn right (East) on Cedar and go 7 blocks to Euclid. Turn left (North) and go about the same distance to the Garden & Park. By bus, first get to the downtown Berkeley BART station and take the Euclid bus, which stops right at the Park.

Label Codes

If your mailing label has a dollar sign in the corner, that means that you are a paid subscriber. "EV means an exchange sub. No sign means you should send us some $$.

Hazel Nut Grove Summer Meetings

The biweekly Saturday services of the Hazel Nut Grove will be held in the same spot formerly used by the Berkeley Grove, in Strawberry Canyon (see map). Archdruid Stephen McCaully is also planning on holding some Celtic Nights at his home. For details on exact times and dates, contact him.

Mother Grove Summer Meetings

The biweekly Sunday services of the Mother Grove will be held in Strawberry Canyon as well, usually around 2:00 pm. Regular Bardic meetings are being held as well, probably at the home of Linda von Brasket, Ob. The next two biweekly services will be on May 21st and June 4th. Exact dates for the Bardic meets haven't been settled on yet. Call Archdruid Isaac Bonewits for details.

Tuatha Grove News

Archdruid Pat O'Neil has moved to a new apartment in the same building, from #1 to #12, so alter your notes accordingly. She says that she's going to be doing at least biweekly services this summer in the San Diego area.

Upcoming articles in The Druid Chronicler

We now have some botanical articles being written, as well as a long and detailed piece by Robert Larson on ancient Celtic calendars, another by him on the roles played by the ancient Druids in Irish society, numerous book reviews, some new music, etc. But in order to print such non-news items we have to have more money to pay for the extra paper and postage costs. So if you haven't kicked in two or three bucks to the Publication Fund for a subscription, please do so now.

Organizational Note

Not only should Groves within the SDNA and HDNA be sending monthly reports of activities (and copies of their Constitutions) to the Mother Grove; but they should also, along with all the other Groves, have their Constitutions on file with and send ordination notices to Archdruidess Sue Olin of Carleton. She is the official chairperson of the entire Council of Dalon ap Landu and should be kept informed.

Pagan Festivals

The Second Annual (Midwest) Pan-Pagan Festival will be held July 14-16, at Lake Holiday, Indiana. The festival is being sponsored by the Midwest Pagan Council, a network of covens, Pagan temples and other magical groups from Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana and elsewhere. A variety of workshops, songfests, ecumenical rites and other activities will be held in the wooded campground. Groups participating include Calumet Pagan Temple, Parthenon West, Epiphanies, Coven of the Sacred Stones, First Church of the Craft of W.I.C.A. and Sanctus Spiritus, Temple of the Pagan Way, Circle and others. Total cost is $10.00 per person. For details, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the MPC's publicity coordinator: Selena Fox, c/o CIRCLE, Box 9013, Madison, WI 53715, marked "Attn: MPC festival.'

A five day International Pagan Leadership Conference, Seasonal Festival and Workshop Retreat entitled "A Gathering of the Tribes" will be held in the mountains of Northern Georgia on Sunday through Thursday, September 10-14. Many Eastern and Midwest Pagan teachers will be present and there will be numerous activities. The total cost is $45.00 per person, if registered before August lst. Send an SASE to: Association of Cymmry Wicca, Box 1514, Smyrna, GA 30081.

A national Pagan convention is now being planned for September 2-4 in Denver, Colorado (though it may be postponed so as to not conflict with the Worldcon science fiction convention) by the Craftcast Farm people. For details, send an SASE to: Mike Meyers, Box 572, Fort Morgan, CO 80701.

Correction

Katheryn Hughes is not a Druid priestess (yet, anyway,) though she is interested in starting a Protogrove of some sort in the Yuma, Arizona area. Your Editor got her mixed up with Sr. Gerre MacInnes in Tucson. But Katheryn's address is: 1329 Ninth Avenue, Yuma, AZ 85364. Write her if you'd like to discuss the meaning of Druidism in your life.

Saving Stonehenge for the Public

We have recently received a letter from the Save Stonehenge Committee (59 Norfolk House Road, London, SW 16, England) informing us that the British government has erected a permanent rope fence around Stonehenge, at a distance of 225 feet from the center. The reason seems to be to protect the monument from vandalism as well as to restrict the hours of access and to charge money to tourists. Unfortunately, the result is to prevent many religious pilgrims from being able to visit the spot when and how they choose. The fence also violates the conditions under which the monument was given to the British government in 1918 by its previous owners. They made their "gift to the nation" expecting "the public to have free access to each and every part." The preservation of Stonehenge as an archeological site, ancient monument, modern religious center and lucrative tourist trap, is a problem of extreme complexity and controversy. Thoughtful letters to the Save Stonehenge Committee, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (House of Commons, Westminster) are quite important; especially if any of us are to be able to hold religious pilgrimages there in the future.

The Active Groves

The following are all of the Druid Groves that your Editor knows are supposed to be alive and well. There may be others that we haven't heard from.

Mother Grove SDNA, Adr. Isaac Bonewits, Box 9398, Berkeley, CA 94709. Phone: 415-547-6697, 2 pm to 10 pm. Biweekly Sunday meetings and Highdays. Bardic activities and various classes now being organized.

Hazel Nut Grove SDNA/NRDNA, Adr. Stephen McCaully, 6220 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland CA 94609. Phone: 415-653-1710, 2 pm to 11 pm. Biweekly Saturday meetings and Highdays. Celtic library with 400 books and microfilms. Various classes now being organized.

Tuatha Grove SDNA, Adr. Pat O'Neil, 1808 Third Avenue, Apt #12, San Diego, CA 92101. Biweekly Sunday meetings and Highdays. Norse Druidism and ocean ceremonies.

Acorn Grove SDNA, Adr. Avery Grant, 3540 South Columbus, Minneapolis, MN 55407. Phone: 612-823-1303, 2 pm to 10 pm. Ecumenical rites with local Wiccans.

Los Angeles Protogrove SDNA, Br. Chris Sherbak, 588 North Lucern Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90004. Phone: 213-467-5759, 2 pm to 10 pm.

Arch Grove HDNA, Adr. Vicki Rhodes, 475 Lockwood, Webster Groves, MO 63119. Biweekly Saturday meetings and Highdays. Hasidic Druidism.

Clan na Brocheta Grove ODNA, Adr. Robert Larson, c/o Cody Grundy, Ri Clanna Brocheta, 820 Circle Court, South San Francisco, CA 94080. Biweekly meetings and Highdays. Services in Irish Gaelic. Irish library with 100+ books and photos.

Carleton Grove RDNA, Adr. Sue Olin, Chairperson of the Council of Dalon ap, Landu, Carleton College, Northfield, MN 55057. Meets weekly and Highdays during school year.

Southern Shores Grove RDNA/NRDNA Adr. Steven Savitzky, 343 Leigh Avenue, San Jose, CA 95128. Phone: 408-294-6492, 6 pm to 10 pm only. Meets only for Highdays.

Ann Arbor Grove RDNA, Adr. Richard-Shelton, 722 Dewey Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. Meets only for Highdays?

Chicago Grove RDNA, Adr. Michael Bradley, 5611 South Blackstone, Chicago, IL 60615. Meets only for Highdays.

The Druid Chronicler

Volume 1, Issue 4,
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Lughnasadh, 16 y.r.
August 6/7, 78 c.e.

The Druid Chronicler is a highly irregular Druid newsletter published by the Mother Grove of the Schismatic Druids of North America every 6-8 weeks. It contains news of all the Branches of Reformed Druidism, depending upon who sends us reports of local events. The Editor is Adr. Isaac Bonewits. All contents are copyright 1978 c.e. by the SDNA. Announcements may be reprinted freely by any Neopagan publication. Subscriptions are $5.00 per year, sent to: P. E. I. Bonewits, Box 9398, Berkeley, CA 94709. Cash is preferred.

Bay Area Lughnasadh Rites:

Lughnasadh occurs at 4:51 pm, Pacific Druid Time, on the afternoon of Monday August 7th. According to modern Druid custom, most Groves will celebrate this holiday on the Saturday and Sunday before.

The Clanna Brochecta Grove has not contacted us with details, but it is probably safe to assume that they will meet all Saturday afternoon on Mount Tam with a potluck feast and services in Old Irish. Those interested can contact them at the address given elsewhere in this issue.

The Hazel Nut Grove and the Mother Grove will meet jointly on Sunday afternoon in the Redwood Bowl area of Redwood Regional Park in Oakland. Asst. Adr. Joan Carruth (MG) will lead services (using the new Invocation printed below) at 2:00 pm. This will be followed by a wedding ceremony at 3:00 pm.

Those interested in attending services in the San Jose or Palo Alto area should contact Adr. Steve Savitzky of the Southern Shores Grove.

Wedding Celebration:

Adr. Philip Emmons Isaac Bonewits and Deborah Selene Maenka Kumin will be wed on Sunday August 6th, at 3:00 pm, in the Redwood Bowl area of Redwood Regional Park. The ceremonies will be presided over by the Revs. Tim and Morning Glory Zell of the Church of All Worlds. The afternoon and evening will be spent singing, dancing, playing music and eating and drinking a potluck feast. The Neopagan community is cordially invited to attend. Presents are not required and clothing should be comfortable.

About the Midsummer 16 y.r. issue:

There was no Midsummer issue this year because the Editor was busy moving house and nobody else volunteered to put out an issue. This is one of the things we mean when we say that this is "a highly irregular" newsletter.

Hazel Nut Grove News

Adr. McCaully says that the Celtic library now has almost 500 books and microfilms, thanks to recent donations of books and money. Naturally (or supernaturally) he's hoping for more. Classes in Celtic Mythology Tarot and Ceremonial-Magic will be started this September. Stephen is also willing to do research for Neopagans on any Celtic topic (searching out particular Names or types of deities or tales for example) at reasonable rates. The Grove continues to meet every other

Saturday afternoon in Strawberry Canyon (see map, last issue)! Contact Stephen for details on all these matters.

Mother Grove News:

The biweekly meetings have been suspended for the time being, though the High Day ceremonies will continue. Bardic activities are being organized by Linda von-Brasket, call her at 843-9326 for details. Adr. Bonewits will be teaching a class in Basic Occult Theory and Practice this September and October. If enough interest develops, a class in herblore and woodcraft may be offered by the Grove Botanist. Call Isaac for details after August 10th.

Ordinations:

To the Third Order: Thomas Schuler (MG78) and Cyndie Schuler (MG78). This September they will be setting up the Evergreen Grove, SDNA in the Olympia, Washington area.

Book Publications:

Authentic Thaumaturgy, by P.E.I.Bonewits, has been published by the CHAOSium, and deals with the magical and religious phenomena that exists in the "real world," with some specific advice on how these can be applied to the playing of various fantasy games (such as "Dungeons & Dragons," "Chivalry & Sorcery," "Emerald Tablet," "Nomad Gods," etc). It can be purchased only at game stores. In the Bay Area, try the Gambit stores in Berkeley and San Francisco, the Outpost in Palo Alto and the Multiversal Trading Company in Concord.

His earlier book, Real Magic, will be reprinted next Spring by Creative Arts Publishing in Berkeley, and should be available in most regular bookstores.

The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) are still awaiting sufficient money (about $500) for reprinting. Since the Publication Fund will only have about $30 left after this issue of the newsletter, the wait may be a long one.

Other Neopagan Publications:

The Sword of Dyrnwyn is the monthly newsletter of the Association of Cymry Wicca (Church of Y Tylwyth Teg,) a Welsh Neopagan Witchcraft group. Subs are $7.50 per year, sent to: Church of Y Tylwyth Teg, P.O. Box 1514, Smyrna, GA 30081.

A related group, Pagan Grove Publishing Company (Box 49285, Atlanta, GA 30359,) has published a Pagan-Occult-New Age Directory with over 400 entries, making it quite possibly the most extensive Pagan directory ever put out. Cost is $3.95. They will also be publishing in August a book about the Ancient Welsh Tradition of Wicca, called The Quest - The Search for the Cauldron of y Rhuddlwm Gawr. The cost will by $7.95.

The Circle Book of Songs is published by Circle (Box 9013, Madison, WI 53715,) an eclectic group of Neopagan groups and individuals. The songbook contains both music and lyrics, many of which are suitable for rituals. They also publish other items of interest to Neopagans of all persuasions, so write to them for details. They are interested in contacting Druidic and semi-druidic sorts in the Madison area.

Northwind News - A Journal for Pagans, is published quarterly by the People of Holy Earth, 6 Cypress Road, #1, Brighton, MA 02135. Subs are $3.00 per year. Lots of interesting articles and frequent printing of good rituals.

Castle Rising Publications (9728 East Colfax Avenue, Aurora, CO 80010) puts out several items: a monthly Pagan Newsletter at $5.00 per year, a quarterly Craft journal called Pagan Renaissance at $6.00 per year, a collection of Incense Formulas for $1.00, etc.

The Temple of the Elder Gods (Box 578, Sunland, CA 91040) puts out a Newsletter and a magazine called The Waxing Moon. Joseph & Joanna Wilson are looking for contributions to both. Write for more data on price, frequency of publication, etc.

The Unicorn is a Craft newsletter put out by Paul Beyerl, Box 8814, Minneapolis, MN 55408.

Stonehenge Viewpoint is a quarterly magazine covering astro-archaeology, ley lines, stone circles, etc. Cost is one British pound (about $2.00) per year, plus postage. Write for details to: Stonehenge Viewpoint, 51 Charminster Avenue, Bournemouth, Dorset, England.

The Unicorn Speaks is a monthly newsletter on various Neopagan and Craft topics. Subs are $4.00 per year to: Box 15357, Chattanooga, TN 37415.

We'll list other Neopagan publications as we hear about them, directly or through various newsletters.

A New Invocation:

The following Invocation was written by Br. David Geller for last Beltane's rites and has proven so popular that we are printing it here for others to use in their Druid ceremonies. If any one else has prayers, songs, rituals, etc., that are suitable for Druidic purposes, send them to us for publication.

"AD" stands for the Archdruid/ess and "P" stands for either the Preceptor or for the People as a whole, depending on local Grove custom.

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
P: And we partake of it, we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
P: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
AD: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving.
P: Be in our awareness, teach us your joy, let us feel your sorrow, extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely--let this ritual begin!

New Groves:

Tom and Cyndie Schuler will be founding a new SDNA Grove in the Olympia, WA area this fall, to be called the Evergreen Grove. Their emphasis will be on Zen Druidism.

Chris Sherbak in Los Angeles, Pat O'Neil in San Diego, and Avery Grant in Minneapolis are looking for people to join their fledgling Groves. If you know any Neo-pagans who live in those cities, pass the word.

We hear persistent rumors about a new Hasidic Druid Grove in West Virginia. Does anybody have any hard data?

If anyone reading this newsletter is interested in starting a Grove or Protogrove of any Branch of Reformed Druidism, please let us know. We'll publish your name and address so that others in your area can contact you (post office boxes are a good idea, by the by).

Giant Pagan Songbook

Another project that has been suggested for us to do (in our copious free time) of songs being written is to publish a compendium of all (or at least many) of the dozens sung by Pagan groups across the country and around the world. A number of very fine songbooks have been put out in the past, but these have all been small (due to printing costs) and many are now out of print. This isn't anything we can make any promises on, but if people will start sending us songs (with music, authors' names and copyright status please) we will reprint some of them in this newsletter and eventually we may actually be able to print (and keep in print) a fairly sizable songbook. In the meantime, here's a song that a lot of people have wanted the words for:

The Woad Song

Authorship unknown, (but obviously English!)
Sung to the traditional tune of: "Men of Harlech"

What's the use of wearing braces,
Hats and spats and shoes with laces,
Coats and vests you rind in places
Down on Brompton Road?
What's the use of shirts of cotton,
Studs that always get forgotten?
These affairs are simply rotten
Better far is woad.

Woad's the stuff to show men
Woad to scare your foemen!
Boil it to a brilliant blue
And rub it on your chest and your abdomen!
Men of Britain never hit on
Anything as good as woad to fit on
Neck or knee or where you sit on
Tailors, you be blowed!

Romans came across the Channel,
All dressed up in tin and flannel.
Half a pint of woad per man'll
Clothe us more than these.
Saxons, you may save your stitches,
Building beds for bugs in britches;
We have woad to clothe us, which is
Not a nest for fleas!

Romans, keep your armors;
Saxons, your pajamas.
Hairy coats were made for goats,
Gorillas, yaks, retriever dogs and llamas!
March on Snowdon with your woad on
Never mind if you get rained or snowed on
Never need a button sewed on.....
All you need is woad!!

This Issue

This issue printed, as usual, courtesy of: The Ordo Templi Orientis, P.O. Box 2303, Berkeley, CA, USA 94702. Bill Heidrick, Perpetrator in Charge.

A Quote from the Sierra Club:

"Something will have gone out of us as a people if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed; if we permit the last virgin forests to be turned into comic books and plastic cigarette cases; if we drive the few remaining members of the wild species into zoos or to extinction; if we pollute the last clear air, dirty the last clean streams and push our paved roads through the last of the silence, so that never again will Americans be free in their own country from noise, the exhausts, the stinks of human and automotive waste.

"And so that never again can we have the chance to see ourselves as a single, separate, vertical and individual in the world, part of the environment of trees and rocks and soil, brother (and sister!) to the other animals, part of the natural world and competent to belong in it."

---Wallace Stegner

The Sierra Club needs volunteers in your area!

Reflections on Celtic Time Reckoning

or "Running Around in Cycles"
By Robert Larson, 1978

This article is by Adr. Robert Larson, Archdruid of the Clanna Brochecta Grove, and was originally printed in the Clann's quarterly publication "An Poc Uaine," in the Earrach 1978 issue. Subscriptions to this journal are $4.00-per year and can be sent to: Cody Grundy, Ri Clanna Brochecta, 820 Circle Court, South San Francisco, CA 94080.

I. The basics of Celtic time

There are four logical times to begin the most basic time cycle, the day: midday, midnight, sunrise, and sunset. The use of either of the first two results in an equal day, but they are much more difficult to observe, especially midnight. As a result, early peoples began their days with either sunrise or sunset. The Celts chose sunset, and, instead of days, calculated time in nights, as is attested to by linguistic evidence. This selection also corresponds to the druidic tenet which was simplified by Caesar and Pliny to "the night has precedence over the day." Philosophically, starting the day at sunset makes the statement that things begin in darkness and cold and develop to brightness and warmth--the life from death theme which is recurrent in Celtic myth, and is thus reflective of pagan Celtic religious belief. (The choice of sunrise to begin the day seems to me to make the opposite, and obvious, statement that death comes after life; which is more in keeping with the religious beliefs of the peoples of the Mediterranean and Near Eastern areas, from whom we get our modern method of time reckoning.)

Then, again, perhaps the proto-Celts lived in an area with frequent morning fog, making the choice of sunset natural. However, the choice of sunset does correspond to the other cycle beginnings of Celtic time reckoning, which are symbolic.

The day is divided naturally into halves, light and dark. Though proof is lacking, it is certain that the Celts further divided the day into fore-midnight, after-midnight, forenoon, and afternoon; and I believe it likely that they halved these divisions.

The Celtic year began at Samhain, which was counted as a day between years. The year was divided into quarters

by the four holy days of Samhain, Imbholg, Bealtaine, and Lunasa. The dates normally given for these days are, respectively, November 1, February 1, May 1, and August 1—the days of the often thinly-Christianized holidays of Hallowe'en/All Souls', Candlemass/St. Bridget's Day/ St. Groundhog's Day, May Day, and Lammas. As I shall explain later, these dates are only approximate, but they'll do for now.

Though Lunasa and Imbholg were holy days, Samhain and Bealtaine, the most important days of the year, effectively divided the year in two. Samhain, whose name means "summer's end," was the beginning of the winter half of the year, called geimhreadh. Geimhreadh was the dark and cold half of the year, corresponding to the night half of the day. During geimhreadh, the sidhe and other malevolent beings were believed to be most active, and life was at its lowest ebb. On the other hand, it was also the time of reforming and resurrection. During geimhreadh, the old sun reached its nadir and was reborn, the familiar new-sun-god-replacing-old-sun-god theme found in various forms in Celtic myth. Though the last vestiges of old life disappeared under the snows during geimhreadh, in its second half new life appeared, to reach full vigor at Bealtaine.

Bealtaine means the "fires of Beal," who was presumably a Celtic solar/sky deity. Another name for Bealtaine, given on the Coligny calendar, is Giamon, which in Irish would be geimh-fhuin, or "winter's end." Under either name, Bealtaine marked the beginning of samhradh, the bright and warm half of the year, during which the forces of life reached their apex, and the solar deity attained his full manhood. However, the sun god also began to deteriorate during samradh after his solstice battle (the combat of gods myth); and the forces of life, after coming to fruition, slowly gave way as the year decayed to Samhain.

The choice of Samhain and Bealtaine as the turning points of the year was dictated by both druidic belief and the Celtic economic system. Religiously, the "precedence of dark over light" dogma seen in the day is repeated in the division and beginning point of the year. Economically, Bealtaine and Samhain are the times of transhumance, the moving of the herds from winter to summer pasture, and vice versa. By Bealtaine the ground has firmed up enough from the spring thaw to safely drive the livestock to their mountain pastures, and there is enough growth at the higher altitude to support them. Transhumance is a great social occasion among pastoral peoples, as they gather together for the drive. Inevitably, it became an occasion for religious ritual. At Bealtaine the cattle were blessed by driving them between two huge bonfires (probably sacrificial to ensure a good herding and growing season). By the way, a good smoky fire is an excellent method for killing livestock parasites. Judging by peasant May Day practices throughout the British Isles, it was also a time of much merry-making and promiscuity. These customs reflect the symbolic nature of Bealtaine as the time of mating between the sky god and the earth goddess which will bring forth the next year's life during the latter half of geimhreadh, corresponding closely with (and probably inspired by) the nine-month human gestation period. This symbolic connection is, of course, reinforced by the fact that this time of year is also the mating period for many animals, making Bealtaine an appropriate time for phallus-related worship (such as may-poles).

At Samhain, the tribe would again be together after driving the livestock back to the winter pasture in the sheltered valley. Again, ritual inevitably arose about the occasion. With winter come, prayers and sacrifices to protect the tribe and livestock from the depredations of the evil spirits of the dark half of the year were necessary. As the time of change, it was also a time for attempting to divine what lay in store for the tribe during the coming year. Many of our Halloween games probably started as divinatory practices, even if the Gaulish druids did have a weakness for entrails. Even the dressing up in frightening costumes for Hallowe'en probably had its beginnings in Samhain ceremonies to try to scare or, at least, confuse the spirits, which were believed to be especially active during this night. (Well, after all, if you'd been cooped up in a sidhe hill for six months, you'd want to raise a little hell, too.) The Celtic deity most closely associated with Samhain was the Daghdha in his character of god of the otherworld and rebirth, who was able to take the dead, immerse them in his cauldron, and bring them forth alive.

Geimhreadh was divided into halves by Imbholg, which may mean "swelling belly," and which began the sub-season of earrach, "spring." Around Imbholg-tide many animals give birth, and a celebration of this increase was natural. Its association with St. Brigid, the euhemerized goddess Brighid, leads me to believe that it was also a celebration of the hearth, home, and culture, but this is admittedly conjecture. Of actual Imbholg ritual we know nothing. Symbolically, the new life conceived at Bealtaine is brought forth at Imbholg.

Samradh was sub-divided by the festival of Lunasa a name which means the "games of Lugh" and which begins the sub-season of Fomhar, " harvest." Lugh was a god of many attributes and myriad realms of power. Though probably originally a solar deity, Lugh was also a warrior, an artist and poet, and a craftsman, among other capabilities, and in Gaul was the main god of commerce. It is thus appropriate that his name be given to Lu'nasa, the time of the great fairs, at which competitions were held in athletics, crafts, and the arts, legal cases were decided, livestock bought and sold, etc.--a necessary periodic time of truce in inter-tribal relationships, an affirmation of cultural identity, and an opportunity for open and free trade among\ craftsmen and herders. Another name for Lunasa is Bron Troghain, a difficult name to define, but which has to do with parturition and giving birth. At this time of year, the harvest begins to come in and trees are bearing fruit. The ceremonies of Lunasa were thus probably those of thanks to the gods for a bountiful year, or sacrifices to increase the harvest if the crop looked small.

The Celts also celebrated the solstices. At the summer solstice, ceremonies involved the kindling of large wooden (wicker?) wheels, which were then rolled downhill to symbolize the coming decline of the sun after the solstice. Conversely, at the winter solstice huge fires were lighted to symbolize the rebirth of the sun and its coming return. Evergreens and, on the continent and in England, the mistletoe were given special veneration due to their retaining their life during the time of death. In Ireland the yew supplanted the mistletoe and in Scotland, the rowan. Though we have no direct evidence that the Celts celebrated the equinoxes, I am sure that they did, if only from a desire for neatness in their year. Also, the equinoxes are significant solar times, marking the return and departure of the sun--the god's adolescence and old age.

The Celtic year, then, was divided into eight parts by the holy days and the solstices and equinoxes. It may be best to look upon it as two overlapping years, one having to do with the sun/sky god and the other, the earth goddess. Samhain was the time of dying for the Earth; Imbholg, its rebirth; Bealtaine, its flowering; and Lunasa, its fruition. The winter solstice was the time of death and rebirth for the sun; the vernal equinox, its puberty; the summer solstice, full maturity; and the autumnal equinox, the onset of its old age.

Taking the cycles together, however, we see that the seasons reflect not only the status of the earth-mother, but also the status of the sun god. The period Samhain-Imbholg corresponds with the weakest period of the sun god--extreme age and infancy. The period Imbholg-Bealtaine corresponds with his childhood and adolescence; Bealtaine-Lunasa with his young manhood and early middle age; and Lunasa-Samhain with his late middle age and old age.

The two cycles are thus bound into a syncretic whole. The agent of this binding is the moon. In its monthly period the moon reflects the yearly cycles of the earth and the sun. Because the lunation period closely approximates the female cycle, the moon was most likely personified as a goddess. Now, goddesses are normally connected with either the earth or with water in Celtic mythology. The moon goddess is thus connected to the earth by gender, and this connection is reinforced by the moon's obvious tidal effects. Because of the moon's light-giving capability and its obvious solar connection, the moon goddess was probably thought of as the consort of the sun god. The moon is thus symbolically connected to both the sun and the earth. The Celts used the true lunar month. In keeping with the division of the year and the day, the moon's period was divided into dark and light halves determined naturally by the moon's phases; the dark half consisting of the first and last quarters and the bright half, the second and third quarters. These halves were subdivided by the new and full moons, reflecting the four-fold division of the solar and earth cycles and reinforcing the symbolism.

Finally, I would like to note that many sources have the druids celebrating only one of the holy days per year. I believe this to mean a large scale celebration, with the other holy days having lesser celebrations, probably intra-tribal rather than inter-tribal. The celebration cycle ran retrograde through the holy days thusly: Samhain, Lunasa, Bealtaine, Imbholg. This cycle gives an actual periodicity of three years, which corresponds to the frequency of the great games at Tailtiu; so this ritual cycle is very likely to be basically correct. As we shall see, this ritual cycle was the heart of the Celtic method for calculating time spans of more than a year.

To Be Continued…

Some Notes on Oaks

By Rachel

This article is by Rachel, the Grove Botanist for the Mother Grove. She has over twenty years experience in the biological sciences and is an expert on the medicinal and magical properties of herbs and fungi.

There are 275 species of Oak inhabiting the temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere and the high altitudes of the tropics. They extend as far south as Columbia and the Malay Archipelago. So if you live north of the Equator, you should be within easy reach of at least one oak tree.

Among American Druids there are certain fallacies concerning something called an "English Oak." Just what are people referring to? There are at least a half a dozen kinds of oak that grow in England and all are more closely related to oaks in other places than they are to each other! Many believe that a California oak can never measure up to the grandeur of an English Oak. But the largest oak tree growing in England is only 80 feet high (and is in its old age,) while California Valley Oaks and Black Oaks frequently measure over a hundred feet high. The largest White Oak in the world lives in San Bernadino County in southern California (my books don't give its exact height.) Quercus Schnecku averages 180 feet and grows in the Mississippi Basin. This inferiority complex about California oaks must come from comparing them to the surrounding Redwoods and Sequoias.

The first step in tracking down your local oaks is to go to your nearest library. In the "Nature" section you should find a Flora Key for your area. Look up "quercus" in the index. "Quercus" is the scientific name for Oak and rather than being Latin (as is usually the case-with western scientific names) it is Celtic and means "fine tree." Usually there will be more than one sort of Oak listed, each with a paragraph describing the tree. If the key is highly scientific, you may be tempted to give up after a few words of impossible language. But don't surrender yet! Scan down the paragraph and somewhere near the end you will run across a sentence like this one out of Munz' California Flora (on Quercus Killoggii--the Black Oak):

"Common in hills and mountains, mostly, 1000-8000 ft, mixed evergreen F., Yellow Pine F., N. Oak Wd. San Diego N. through Sierra Nevada and Cost Ranges to Ore."

Now if you can figure out the abbreviations, you now know where to look. Elsewhere in the paragraph should be the average height of the tree and whether it is evergreen or deciduous (drops its leaves in the fall).

All oaks have one thing in common and that is acorns, whether the oak involved is one foot high or 180. Late summer is the best time to locate your local oaks, since the acorns are big enough to see easily. Knowing the average height and general location of the trees you are looking for should combine with these acorns to make it easy to find one, two, possibly even an entire grove of oaks. Once you find an oak of a particular sort and make friends with it, you will be able to spot its sisters and brothers easily.

To be continued…

This Space for Rent!!

Do you have a product or service of a Pagan, ecological, metaphysical, artistic or related nature that would appeal to Druidic-type readers? Well The Druid Chronicler is now accepting ads at the reasonable rate of $5.00 per quarter page. That's black-and-white, camera ready copy. Anything else costs extra to do.

Coming Up in Future Issues:

In the next few issues we'll continue the articles on Celtic time keeping and oak trees, present some new and old songs (with music hopefully,) spotlight activities going on in different Groves, share some tips on recruiting new members, spout off on matters philosophical and metaphysical, publish partial and complete ceremonies for various occasions, list the names of those seeking others to start Druid Groves and Protogroves, print the names and addresses of all willing Third Order Druids, and.....

But all this costs money and the Publishing Fund is barely going to cover this issue of The Druid Chronicler. So if you haven't paid for your subscription yet, now's the time to do so!

The Active Groves:

The following are all of the Druid Groves that your Editor knows are supposed to be alive and well. There may be others that we haven't heard from.

Mother Grove SDNA, Adr. Isaac Bonewits, Box 9398, Berkeley, CA 94709. Phone: 415-547-6697, 2 pm to 10 pm. Currently holding services only for Highdays. Some classes being organized for September & October. Bardic activities: Linda von Brasket, 843-9326.

Hazel Nut Grove SDNA/NRDNA Adr. Stephen McCaully, 6220 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland, CA 94609. Phone: 415-653-1710, 2 pm to 11 pm. Biweekly Saturday meetings and Highdays. Celtic library with 400 books and microfilms. Various classes now being organized.

Tuatha Grove SDNA, Adr. Pat O'Neil, 1808 Third Avenue, Apt #12, San Diego, CA 92101. Biweekly Sunday meetings and Highdays. Norse Druidism and ocean ceremonies.

Acorn Grove SDNA, Adr. Avery Grant, 3540 South Columbus, Minneapolis, MN 55407. Phone: 612-823-1303, 2 pm to 10 pm. Ecumenical rites with local Wiccans.

Los Angeles Protogrove SDNA, Br. Chris Sherbak, 588 North Lucern Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90004. Phone: 213-467-5759, 2 pm to 10 pm.

Arch Grove HDNA, Adr. Vicki Rhodes, 475 Lockwdod, Webster Groves, MO 63119. Biweekly Saturday meetings and Highdays. Hasidic Druidism.

Clan na Brocheta Grove ODNA, Adr. Robert Larson, c/o Cody Grundy, Ri Clanna Brocheta, 820 Circle Court, South San Francisco, CA 94080. Biweekly meetings and Highdays. Services in Irish Gaelic. Irish library with 100+ books and photos.

Carleton Grove RDNA, Adr. Sue Olin, Chairperson of the Council of Dalon ap Landu, Carleton College, Northfield, MN 55057. Meets weekly and Highdays during school year.

Southern Shores Grove RDNA/NRDNA, Adr. Steven Savitzky, 343 Leigh Avenue, San Jose, CA 95128. Phone: 408-294-6492, 6 pm to 10 pm only. Meets only for Highdays.

Ann Arbor Grove RDNA, Adr. Richard-Shelton, 722 Dewey Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. Meets only for Highdays?

Chicago Grove RDNA, Adr. Michael Bradley, 5611 South Blackstone, Chicago, IL 60615. Meets only for Highdays.

The Druid Chronicler

Volume 1, Issue 5
Whole Number 5
Fall Equinox, 16 y.r.
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Bay Area Fall Equinox Rites

Fall Equinox occurs at 2:26 am, Pacific Druid Time, on the morning of Saturday September 23rd. Various Groves will celebrate this holiday on Saturday and Sunday, depending on local customs.

The Mother Grove and Hazel Nut Grove will meet jointly on Sunday afternoon at 2:00 pm, in the Eucalyptus Grove behind the Life Sciences Building of the University of California's Berkeley campus. This is an easy walk from both bus and BART.

The Clanna Brochecta Grove will meet sometime during the weekend at the Renaissance Pleasure Faire, in Novato.

Arch Grove News

The new Archdruidess is Sr. Carolyn Clark. The Grove is meeting for full moons and Highdays, and hopes to start Friday night Weekend services soon. Classes in Hasidic Druidism will be starting in a few months. Their Fall Equinox services are planned for Saturday with a campout at Knob Lick. Former Adr. Vicki Rhodes has been sent to Guam by the military. Are we going to wind up with Oceanic Druids?

Evergreen Grove News

The Grove celebrated Midsummer in Bellingham with eight people attending (not bad for their first service). This included two Odinists, two Witches, three Druids and one unclassifiable. The sun burst through the clouds dramatically in each reference to it. "We took it to be a sign."

The Grove will be sponsoring a weekend seminar/workshop in Ceremonial Magic, and Paganism by Isaac and Selene Bonewits, on October 7th and 8th. The cost will be $40 per person and will include three meals. For details, contact the Evergreen Grove and/or Beltane Books (1406-A Northeast 50th, Seattle, WA 98105). Beltane, by the by, is under new management and is well worth a visit if you're in the area.

Chicago Grove Disappears

Adr. Michael Bradley has moved and left no forwarding address, so we don't know whether or not the Grove is defunct. Can anybody in the Chicago area let us know?

Men's Groups

The Mother Grove has organized weekly meetings for men in the Bay Area Pagan community who consider themselves to be mostly heterosexual. There have been three of these Tuesday night meetings so far, with attendance running from five to eight men. Discussions have centered around "men's mysteries," the role of hetero men in the community, the creation of new rituals around the Horned God and other male deities, magical techniques and exercises, developing legitimate pride in manhood, etc. So far the meetings have all been in the Berkeley-Oakland area, but they may move around the Bay if more interest develops from men living elsewhere. For now, call Adr. Bonewits for each week's location.

For gay and bisexual men in the Pagan community, Caradoc ap Cador has had a group going for a couple of years. For information, write to: Silver Wheel, Box 2064, Berkeley, CA 94702.

Protogroves

The following people would like to organize Protogroves in their areas and invite people living near them to get in contact:

Orange County, California: Richard Bonewits, c/o 34001-A Ruby Lantern, Dana Point, CA 92629. Phone: 714-496-5606.

Fresno, California: Craig R. Miller, 4324 North Cedar, Fresno, CA 93726. Phone: 209-227-8240.

Madison, Wisconsin: Steven Wallenhorst, c/o Circle, Box 9013, Madison, WI 53715.

Name Change?

It has been suggested that the "alphabet soup" of Druid branches is getting a little confusing to both the national Pagan community and the general public as well. The Schismatic Druids of North America and the New Reformed Druids of North America originally decided to use those names in order to distinguish themselves from the preceding Reformed Druids of North America; because while the NRDNA members were somewhat Pagan and the SDNA members very much so, the members of the RDNA were not Pagan at all. The SDNA encouraged the founding of the Hasidic DNA and SDNA Groves have begun calling themselves Norse Druids, Zen Druids, etc. Things may be getting out of hand.

Perhaps the thing to do is to reserve the term "RDNA" for the Carleton Grove and its nonpagan offshoots, while individuals and Groves wanting to practice Hasidic, Zen, Norse, Old Irish, Panceltic, Chaoist, Schismatic or Eclectic Druidism (or any other variety of Neopaganism) can use the term "NRDNA." Specific flavors can be listed in directories and mentioned in informational literature, but would not be part of the formal titles used; to see what this would look like, see this issue's list of Active Groves. In any event, we'd like some comment on these matters from Third Order members and others interested.

Help Wanted

We're going to need some volunteer help in several areas over the next few months, on both the national and local levels. Artists are needed to donate some new logo designs suitable for The Druid Chronicler and/or official stationary; we are also going to need art for The Druid Calendar for 17 y.r. Obviously we're mostly interested in themes of a Druidic nature, such as oak leaves and trees, acorns, sickles, menhirs and trilithons, Druids of various sorts, Celtic deities, and (of course) interlacings, spirals and other sorts of Celtic designs. But if someone wants to do Slavic or German or Native American stuff for the calendar illustrations 7 1/2" high by 10" wide) that would certainly be fitting for such an eclectic movement. Artwork should probably be black & white, pen & ink work, since our printing facilities are limited.

Also needed is someone who has access-to a computer with astrological and astronomical data in its memory (or who can easily get a disc or tape with an ephemerise recorded). This is so that we can calculate the Druid calendars for the next few years with maximum accuracy.

Local Groves need people to help put up recruiting posters, organize music for services, collate mailings, and so forth. Druidism is very much a congregational religion--without the help of the individual members, the average priest or priestess can do nothing.

A New Special Order:

"Dear fellow Druids: The forests have their order and the waters have their order; the light has its order and the rivers have their order. The heavens, the oceans and the earth have an order. The original ten orders are a cycle of knowledge of nature. The later orders, for bards, magicians and healers, are ways of praise. Siblings, some have praise to give who cannot speak poetry, and cannot heal, and as yet cannot work magic. We are like the Zen monk Enku wanting to carve ten thousand images of the diety. We praise the Mother with the work of our hands. So, for slightly inarticulate craftspeople such as myself, I have successfully begun an Order of Lugh.

"Lugh (Ludd, Nudd) was a very popular deity in his day, and the patron of all crafts. There is a story of how he demanded entrance to the hall of the Tuatha De Danann and was told he must have some skill they needed; he rattled off every craft known to the Celts, but they already had representatives of each. He got in by winning a chess game in some books, and by being a jack-of-all-trades in others. He is also connected with light and kingship, and has been called 'the Gaulish Mercury.'

"Anyone of second order or higher is welcome to join the Order. There is no real need for an identifying sign, for the people of Lugh will forever be making them. Initiation consists of the candidate making a small 'image of the Mother' (any aspect) of/on some flammable material and casting it into the fire at services. If accepted (I faced the four directions,) the candidate then stammers something before the congregation, about each act of craft being an act of faith or something. 'Twould be nice if the congregation would then congratulate him/her.

"Creation is not the making of the unique, but the combination and rediscovery of what already is. It is therefore both a meditation and a praise of nature. Many of us have already dedicated a landscape or a batch of bread in our hearts--now this power can be manifest with the name Lugh. Natural materials nice, not essential.

"As to organization: I am not greedy for the title of Matriarch. Since I'm the first member, I'll collect comments, news, etc. until someone volunteers to replace me; no need to stress the leadership aspect of the deity. I happen to be RDNA, but you could all please show this announcement to your Groves anyway? Peace!"

Katya Luomala, DAL
119 Goodyear Avenue
Mankato, MN 56001

More Facts About CIRCLE:

We mentioned last issue a fine Pagan group in the Madison, Wisconsin area called Circle. They've sent us a brief description of themselves:

"Circle is an eclectic metaphysical center headquartered on a farm just outside Madison. As an Aquarian Age educational center, Circle conducts research in parapsychology, maintains a New Age reference library, has a weekly radio show on the frontiers of consciousness, and offers a variety of lectures, workshops and classes on psychic and occult development. As a center for natural living and herbology, Circle offers instruction in herbal knowledge (both classes and an apprenticeship program,) and a great many herbs, wild as well as cultivated, grow in the fields of Circle Farm.

"Among Pagans, however, Circle is best known as a Wicca-Pagan-Magickal Resource Center and publishing house, providing artwork, music, information and contact for Magickal folk throughout the United States and several other countries. Seeking to promote better cooperation and communication among Pagans from many paths, Circle operates the Circle Network, and helps sponsor local, regional and national ecumenical festivals and conferences each year.

"For more information and a free brochure and catalogue, write: CIRCLE, Box 9013, Madison, WI 53715."

We've seen their artwork and songbook, and can recommend them highly. If you run a group that you think the readers of The Druid Chronicler would be interested in, send us an equally brief description and we'll fit it in when we have space. (Or you could break down and buy an ad, in which case it would definitely get printed in the very next issue.)

Reflections on Celtic Time Reckoning Continued

DC V1 Iss 5 Sept 1978
By Robert Larson, 1978

This article, begun last issue, is by Adr. Robert Larson of the Clanna Brochecta Grove, and was originally printed in the Clann's' quarterly publication, "An Poc Uaim, "in the Earrach 1978 issue. Subscriptions to this journal are $4.00 per year and can be sent to: Cody Grundy, 820 Circle Court, South San Francisco, CA 94080. We hope to have more of Bob's fine scholarship in future issues.

II. Achieving an accurate calendar

Nowadays we take the Calendar pretty much for granted. The Roman calendar we use is now quite accurate. In the eighteenth century, however, a gross adjustment of about two weeks had to be made in the calendar to rectify accumulated error. The calendar had gained nearly two weeks over the sun. The method for insertion of leap days now used (the insertion of an extra day in every year evenly divisible by four; except the century marks, when the year must be evenly divisible by 400) assures an almost exact accuracy. But it took a long time to arrive at this method of interpolation.

To achieve an accurate calendar, two things are necessary: the need for a calendar and a goodly period of accurate observation. The need for a calendar automatically arises when a people in a temperate climatic zone advances beyond hunting and gathering society. In an agricultural society, accurate timing of planting and harvesting is a necessity. While a calendar may seem to be less necessary in a mainly pastoral society such as that of the Celts, the times of transhumance must be predictable in order for the tribe to gather the herds. If the herds are moved too early in the spring, there may well be too little growth in the hills to support them; if they're moved too late, valuable growing time and the mountain grasses are wasted. If the herds are moved too early in the fall, grasses are wasted again and the harvest is interfered with; if too late, the herds may suffer from the onset of winter storms. In a pastoral society, moving the herds at the wrong time can seriously threaten the tribe's survival. Some sort of calendar is obviously necessary to avoid wastage of time, grass, livestock, and, ultimately, the tribe.

Being a northern people, the Celts had an advantage in calculation over more southerly peoples, for the difference in the lengths of the light and dark periods of the day is greater in the North. Determination of the solstices and, with them, calculation of the length of the solar year is thus made fairly simple. Equinoxes are also more easily determined, and their determination is more accurate than that of the solstices, because the sun's declination is changing more rapidly at equinox than at solstice. In fact, the Celts might well have been saved the trouble of these calculations (and many of the others, too).

A definitely Celtic culture first arose in that crucible of early northern Europeans, southern Germany and Central Europe. In earlier times successive prehistoric cultures had sprung from this area and spread in much the same directions as the Celts did later. One of these pre- (or perhaps proto-) Celtic peoples built Stonehenge. Gerald Hawkins has convincingly shown that Stonehenge incorporates incredible astronomical knowledge. The Celts might well have taken over, or inherited, their entire calendric system from their predecessors. Judging by later Celtic practice, they would not have evicted the peoples they found in their conquered lands, but would only have made them pay tribute to their new overlords. If this be the case, it raises interesting questions about Celtic religion. Considering the correlation of Celtic myth and Druidic philosophy with the calendar, if the Celts co-opted the calendar, much of their religion must also have come from these peoples. The druidic cult would thus be much older than the rest of Celtic culture, and Celtic Myth would reflect not so much early Iron Age beliefs as Bronze Age and Neolithic beliefs, the specifically Celtic elements being a later overlay. Many of the more primitive elements of Celtic religion, such as animism, would be explained by such circumstances.

Be that as it may, the Celts had an accurate count of the solar year early in their history. While the equinoxes are close enough to planting and reaping seasons to do for an agricultural people, a pastoral people follows different rhythms. The most propitious times for transhumance do not fall on significant sun days, but about midway between the equinoxes and solstices. At these mid-points, the sun is at the same angle of declination in the sky. The sun's midpoints can thus be determined by observation and the days of Samhain, Imbholg, Bealtaine, and Lu'nasa set in place. This angle of declination is 16.3', which again corresponds with certain megalithic alignments, again showing the antiquity of at least the basic Celtic calendar. This declination gives the following dates for the holy days: Samhain, November 7; Imbholg, February 4; Bealtaine, May 5; and Lunasa August 7.

Now, the phases of the sun are not equal, due to the slight eccentricity of the earth's orbit causing it to move faster in the winter when it is closer to the sun. Even as using the solstices and equinoxes yields unequal seasons, so does the use of the midpoints. The period from Samhain to Imbholg is about 89 days, whereas the period from Bealtaine to Lunasa is about 94 days, while the other quarters are around 91 days each. I believe it likely that the druids equalized these intervals, both from a sense of neatness and from a desire to better reflect the equal phases of the moon and maintain their religious symbolism. They most likely started at Samhain, the time of regeneration they probably considered immutable. This would yield the following normal dates for the holy days: Samhain, November 7; Imbholg, February 6; Bealtaine, May 8; and Lunasa, August 8. Though this adjustment is not strictly necessary, it makes the calendar work more smoothly and thus would be more convenient for the average Celt or for places where solar observation was difficult and unreliable due to weather. It also reflects druidic numerology, for the days set in this manner are three lunar months and three days apart, give or take a day.

So we come to the moon. The inclusion of the moon in the calendar was inevitable, not only on religious, but also on practical grounds. In practical terms, the moon is a counting device, enabling the observer to easily count large numbers of days and fix time spans with great accuracy. The introduction of the moon into a solar calendar creates great difficulties due to the incompatibility of lunar and solar movements. (The solar year is 365.242 days, whereas twelve lunar periods are 354.36 days.) The Celtic method of reconciliation between these two cycles is in full agreement with druidic precept and ritual and correlates with the peculiar nine-month cycle of celebration.

To be Continued:

Some Notes on Oaks Continued:

This article, begun last issue, is by Rachel, the Mother Grove's Botanist. She has over twenty years experience in the biological sciences and is an expert on the medicinal and magical properties of herbs and fungi.

It takes twenty years for an acorn to become a mature oak tree, and it can then live for two or three hundred years in some species. Oaks are not the biggest trees, nor the tallest, nor necessarily the most "impressive." What then makes them so special? Why did they become the Sacred Trees throughout all of Europe? One explanation is the observed fact that oaks are hit by lightning (the "fire of the Gods" --IB) seventeen times more often than any other sort of tree.

(This made the oak sacred to the Fire/Sun/Storm Gods of Europe and made the mistletoe that grew in its branches the most highly prized of all. The Germans and Slavs had their oak cults too, so the Druids of the Celts weren't the only ones. --IB)

When people lived as hunter-gatherers, the oak was considered important for many reasons other than the religious ones. It fed people, tanned their clothes, and cured their ills. Let's analyze the tree by parts.

The *wood* is valued in Europe for its hardness and toughness. Though there are harder woods and tougher ones, only the oak combines these qualities in its wood. Beams cut 800 years ago in England are still sound in old buildings. Logs dug up from peat bogs have been found in good preservation, despite having been submerged thousands of years ago.

The *bark* has been used for centuries to tan leather--something very important in a hunting culture that does not have weaving. The active ingredient, tannic acid, is also a medicine with slightly tonic, strongly astringent and antiseptic actions. It is used for chronic diarrhea and dysentery and as a gargle for sore throats. The bark also makes a number of dyes ranging from yellow to dark brown, black and a purplish brown. In England, after the tannic acid had been extracted, the bark (then called "tam") was dried and used for fuel and as a mulch around tender plants (since it generates warmth). In addition, some species of oak (such as the Cork Oak in England and another in California) produce cork from their bark.

Oak *galls* (swellings caused by parasites) have an even higher amount of tannic acid, and are used to make ink and as a strong local astringent applied externally to stop hemorrhaging (naturally, they are also used in tanning).

Then we have the *acorns*. These nuts are easy to open and can be quite tasty if left to leach out their tannic acid in running water for-a day or two. They seem to have been the main staple in European hunters' diets until the invention of agriculture replaced them with grains. Acorns are still easier to process than wild grasses, and can be easily stored all winter in a dry place or ground into a flour. In Europe today, acorns have been pretty well forgotten as a food and are used only in times of famine (and then they forget to leach them!) or to feed hogs. But in the Americas, however, acorns are still eaten by Indians and by a growing number of foraging buffs. According to an analysis by Lancet, acorns are 6.3% water, 5.2% protein, 43% fat and 45% carbohydrates.

To see how well the oak can help humans, look at the Northern California Indians. They fished and tended their oak groves, growing strong and happy until the Europeans came. The only crop they raised was tobacco, since everything else was provided freely by the environment without work (I'm not sure it was *that* easy,--IB.)

So look upon the oak tree as the Lady before Kore, the Wheat Goddess, and remember how much it can give you if you ask. Remember too that the deciduous oaks are the best for getting acorns to eat and the evergreen oaks for medicinal uses.

In future articles I'll be discussing Giant Sequoias and other Redwoods, Ashes, Birches and other trees of interest to Druids.

Wedding Contract:

The following Wedding Contract was read aloud during the wedding of Isaac and Selene Bonewits last August 6th. We have had so many requests for copies of it that we are reproducing it here for others to use as they wish.

This marriage bond shall be a link, but not a chain.

Our marriage shall, for the time being, consist of the two of us. Others, upon mutual consent, may be added to our family.

Our primary affections and commitments as individuals shall be to each other, however, both of us shall be free to share love and affection with others whom both would deem not unworthy.

Both of us shall make our best efforts to earn our daily bread, and both shall share the work of creating and maintaining a felicitous environment. When children

arrive in our household, both of us shall share responsibility and authority in raising them.

Both of us shall strive to maintain open communication between us while respecting each other's right to privacy and occasional isolation.

Each of us shall be supportive of the other's growth in body, mind and spirit, and accept that this will sometimes be inconvenient.

This contract may be renegotiated at any time upon a month's notice, to provide time for thought. No decision to terminate this contract will be made by either without at least three months of joint counseling with a mutually agreed-upon counselor.

This marriage shall be built upon a foundation of sensitivity and mutual consideration for each other's needs and desires.

Subscription Business:

When this newsletter began, all we asked for was "a buck or two" and people took us literally. The result was that the Publishing Fund was constantly in the red, especially as the contents of each issue began to expand. We have finally had to set the subscription price at $5.00 per year, sent to the Editor.

Another problem with the early record keeping was that there wasn't much. We noted who had paid and who hadn't, and that was that. No dates were kept, so we don't know when those early $1-$2 subs expired. We were also sending out lots of free copies in the hopes of encouraging people to pay for subs.

All this is changing now. We are going to have Law and Order! If you look at your mailing label you will notice a few code letters or numbers in the right upper corner. "9/79,"' for example, means that your sub expires in September of 1979. For the sake of simplicity, all $1-$2 subs have been extended to "12/78," even though we'll lose money on that. "EX" means that it's an Exchange Subscription with your publication. "F" means that you're getting it Free. If you are getting this issue free and your label doesn't have an "F" on it then this is the last one you will get without a subscription of some sort. This issue alone will cost us over $150 to put out and paper and postage costs will no doubt continue to skyrocket. TANSTAAFL!!

"Old Gods & New Devils" Newsletter:

We've just finished reading a fantastic new publication, a journal of thoughtful philosophical discussions of modern problems, set in a Pagan metaphysical context. Not since The Green Egg died has such serious intellectual effort been given towards establishing modern Paganism as a "real" philosophical school. We don't agree with everything editor Robert Gover (author of "The One Hundred Dollar Misunderstanding") has to say, but then he obviously doesn't expect anybody to! He seems to view the Old Gods as primarily archetypes, rather than as living Beings, and seems to have a mild bias towards the Greco-Roman deities. But he also appears open to printing serious articles and letters (and perhaps a few humorous ones as well) by folks wanting to put forth solid philosophical arguments, whether they agree with him or not. So if you've been starved for some real intellectual food to chew on, and have found no other Pagan source to suit you, try Old Gods & New Devils. Subscriptions are $15 per year, or $5.00 for four months, sent to: OG&ND, Box 1546, Goleta, CA 93017.

The Hermetic Journal

Those of you interested in alchemy, kabbalah and related Hermetic studies may want to take a look at The Hermetic Journal, a quarterly publication from Scotland. We haven't the space here to do a detailed description, but send them $3 for a sample copy or $10 for a year's sub. Their leaflet on it makes it look pretty good, if this is an area you want to do deep research in. Write to: The Hermetic Journal, Megalithic Research Publications, 12 Antigua Street, Edinburgh 1, Scotland.

Next Issue:

Next issue will be Volume 2, Issue one of The Druid Chronicler, and we hope to start the year off spectacularly. We'll have the conclusion of Bob Larson's series on Celtic timekeeping, an article by Adr. Stephen McCaully on "Celtic and Druidic Moon Goddesses, from A to C" (from his Encyclopedia of Celtic Gods and Goddesses,) a new song or two, and news from local Groves around the country. We'll keep expanding the newsletter as people keep sending us good material and buying subscriptions!

The Active Groves:

The following are all the Druid Groves in the RDNA/NRDNA movements that we know for sure are in existence:

Mother Grove, NRDNA: Adr. Isaac Bonewits, Box 9398, Berkeley, CA 94709. Phone: 415-547-6697. Publishes The Druid Chronicler ($5 year,) holds services for the Highdays only. Some classes from time to time. Bardic activities: Linda von Brasket, 843-9326. Hetero Pagan Men's Group, meets Tuesday nights. Eclectic Druidism.

Hazel Nut Grove, NRDNA: Adr. Stephen McCaully, 6220 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland CA 94609. Biweekly meetings on Saturday afternoons, meets with Mother Grove for the Highdays. Celtic library with over 500 books and microfilms. Classes in Tarot, Celtic Mythology and Magic from time to time. Irish & Norse Druidism.

Clanna Brocheta Grove, NRDNA: Adr. Robert Larson, c/o Grundy, 820 Circle Court South San Francisco, CA 94080. Biweekly meetings and Highdays. Irish Library with 100+ books and photos. Services in Irish Gaelic. Old Irish Druidism.

L. A. Grove, NRDNA: Adr. Chris Sherbak, 588 North Lucerne Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90004. Phone: 213-467-5759. Services for Highdays only. Panceltic Druidism.

Tuatha Grove, NRDNA: Adr. Pat O'Neil, 1808 Third Avenue, #12, San Diego, CA 92101. Biweekly Sunday meetings and Highdays. Norse Druidism.

Acorn Grove, NRDNA: Adr. Avery Grant, 3540 South Columbus, Minneapolis, MN 55407. Phone: 612-823-1303. Services for Highdays only. Wiccan Druidism.

Arch Grove, NRDNA: Adr. Carolyn Clark, 10611 Jesskamp Drive, St. Louis, MO 63136. Meets for full moons and Highdays, Friday night "Weekend" services to start soon. Hasidic Druidism.

Evergreen Grove, NRDNA: Adr. Tom Schuler, Box 1272, Olympia, WA 98501. Meeting for Highdays so far, some classes being organized. Zen/Hilaric Druidism.

Carleton Grove, RDNA: c/o Heidi Shultz, Carleton College, Northfield, MN 55057. Meets weekly and Highdays during school year. Original Grove, nonpagan.

Ann Arbor Grove., RDNA: Adr. Richard Shelton, 722 Dewey Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. Meets only for Highdays. Nonpagan.

Southern Shores Grove, RDNA: Adr. Steve Savitzky, 343 Leigh Avenue, San Jose, CA 95128. Phone: 408-296-6492, 6 pm to 10 pm only. Meets only for highdays. Nonpagan.

Chicago Grove, RDNA: Adr. Michael Bradley. Current address unknown, but may be somewhere in the Chicago area. Meets only for Highdays. Nonpagan.

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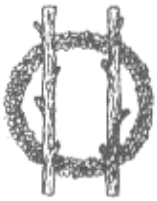
Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION ONE

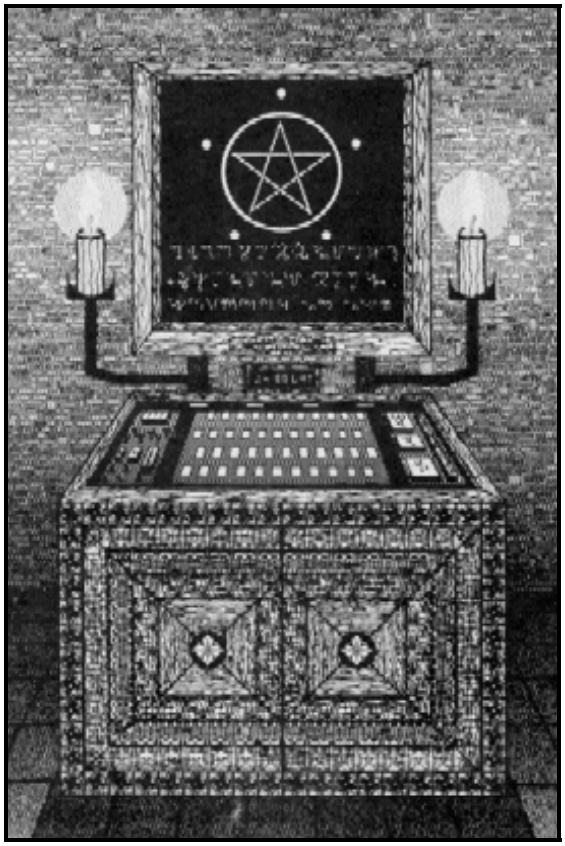
PENTALPHA JOURNAL



The Druid Chroniclers
& Pentalpha Journals

Volume Three, Pt. 1
1979 & 1980

Drynemetum Press



A magical device constructed according to the directions found in an ancient Disc of Shadows. -PEIB

Pentalpha Journal & Druid Chronicler

Volume 3, Issue 1
Whole Number 12
Fall 1979 c.e.

Editorial

Welcome to Volume 3 of *Pentalpha Journal*! We started out two years ago as *The Druid Chronicler*, used both names for a year, and are now switching over completely to the new name. But those of the Druidic persuasion need not despair — *TDC* is still part of *PJ*, as you'll see in this and every issue.

We've grown beyond our original scope— *Pentalpha Journal* is now a quarterly magazine for the entire Aquarian Age community. We still have our Neopagan slant, but we're going be including news articles, reviews and other materials of interest to those who are involved in ceremonial magic, parapsychology, astrology, psychic anatomy, vodoun, earth mysteries, cybernetics, psychic healing, ecology action, polytheistic theology, ritual design and execution, and many other areas of interest to those of us who are seeking our paths towards growth in old/new ways.

Religion *and* Science, Magic *and* Art, Poetry *and* Technology – *all* are needed if we are truly going to make it to the next step in Evolution. We who are engaged in working at the fringes of human knowledge need desperately to communicate – both with each other and with the general public. That's why we publish *Pentalpha Journal: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Aquarian Age.*

In this issue we've got a review of the recent Parapsychological Association's annual convention, an article on ritual design, an historical survey on the role of sheep in Paleopagan cultures, an inspired prose poem about a divine vision, an article about one metaphysician's discoveries about nuclear power, and more. We've gout our regular departments – *Sushumna, the Chakra Column, The Druid Chronicles, Aquarian Age News,* (about conventions and interesting organizations), *Reviews* of new books and tarot decks, the *Contacts* column, *Feedback* letters, *Pentalpha Activities*, and more.

Next issue we hope to add several new departments, including: *Amargi*, about the activities of the Church of All Worlds; *Thaumaturgic American*, about experimental design for psychics and magicians; *Yggdrasil*, about the activities of Norse Pagans; *Magical Astrologer*, about astrological effects on magical and psychic energies, and vice versa; and maybe even more!

Some of you may have noticed that this issue is late. Well, it did take more time to put together than we thought it would (adjusting to the new format and all), but the primary reason was that Selene, who has been doing all our typesetting and camera work, had a physical breakdown. She discovered that working for 40 hours a week at her regular job, then doing another 30 hours of Pentalpha activities, was more than she could handle!

As a result she exhausted her physical reserves and suffered several illnesses that kept her from doing much of anything, magical or mundane, for over a month. She's recovered now, and is training a new typesetter, so the Winter issue should come out fairly close to schedule in late December. But we've learned an important lesson. We (Selene & Isaac) can't do it all by ourselves anymore! Both Pentalpha as an organization and *PJ* as a magazine have become to big for just two people to handle.

So, we are asking friends, members and readers to help out with the donations of time, energy and money. The response so far has been encouraging (this issue wouldn't have come out without it), we are still going to need all the help we can get if we're to keep the organization and the magazine afloat. Some details on this appear in this issue's *Pentalpha's Activities* department.

Many people have made genuinely wonderful suggestions for things we could do or publish – but hardly anyone things about where the time, money and sheer energy are going to come from. We're will to do our share, and a little bit more, but the rest of the community is going to have to *help* out before Selene, Isaac, and the rest of the gang at Pentalpha *burn* out.

PENTALPHA JOURNAL

An interdisciplinary journal for the Aquarian Age.

*contact column
*movie & book reviews
*thoughtful letters
*lively editorials
*polytheological essays
*announcements of major conventions
*songs & poetry
*ritual scripts and critiques
*scholarly articles
*ceremonial tips

If you're looking for accurate, up-to-date, insightful and inspiring materials on Metaphysics, Parapsychology, Witchcraft, Neopaganism, Ceremonial Magick, Kundalini, Yoga, Druidism and other paths of wisdom, then Pentalpha Journal is for you.

Subscribe!

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Pentalpha Journal is the official publication of Pentalpha: The Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness, a chartered member organization within The Church of All Worlds, Inc. It is published quarterly, in the general vicinity of the Solstices and Equinoxes, and contains news, essays, technical articles, songs, ceremonial critiques, and other items of interest to the Aquarian Age community.

Submissions: All items submitted for publication must be neat and legible, and clearly marked as "for publication." Artwork should be camera-ready and black-and-white (unless meant for the cover). If materials are to be copyright in the name of the creators, they must be clearly marked thusly. Our budget is tight, so items without return postage enclosed may not be returned.

Deadlines: All materials, including ads, must be received by November 1st, for the Winter issue; February 1st, for Spring; May 1st, for Summer; and August 1st, for Fall.

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A Note About Our Paper

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Gnosticon I

The Fir Gnostic Conference of the Gnostic Society and Ecclesia Gnostica will be held October 26th to 28th at the Tree House Motel in the city of Mount Shasta, California. The sponsoring organizations are modem, nondualistic Gnostic groups with strong interests in Jungian psychology, hermeticism, Kabbalah, magic and wholistic health.

Speakers will include Stephen A. Hoeller; Rosa Miller Richard Hanuman, Erin Cameron and Richard H. Svihus. The suggested registration fee is $60 per person or $100 per couple. For hotel reservations, call the Tree House's toll free number: (800) 528-1234. See the ad elsewhere in this issue for further details, or write to: Gnostic Society/Ecclesia Gnostica, 3437 A Street #23. Palo Alto, CA 94303 or phone (415)

494-7412.

Samhain Seminar

The Seventh Annual Samhain Seminar of the Church and School of Wicca will be held November 9th -11th, at the Ramada Inn in Durham NC. The C&SW is an eclectic reconstructionist Witchcraft organization, based originally upon Welsh materials but with a great deal of other occult traditions mixed in,

The theme for this year's seminar is 'Life After Death,' and speakers will include: Yvonne & Gavin Frost, Raymond Buck

land, Colin of Ravenwood, William Wheeler and (possibly) Isaac Bonewits. The cost is free! (Though donations will be accepted and really are needed). For further information, contact: Church & School of Wicca, Box 1502, New Bern, NC 28560: For hotel reservations, write: Ramada Inn Downtown Box 98, Durham, NC 27702.

Science for the People

Most Aquarians [tend] to think that science and technology are wonderful tools and terrible masters. But where can we get honest scientific advice on matters such as nutrition, food additives, the politics of food, etc.? As most "authorities" in the field are pawns of the very power structures that are killing us how, its hard to rind anyone we can trust.

Look into the Center for Science in the Public Interest. They publish books, leaflets, posters and other educational materials aimed squarely at demystifying technology and in returning control of science to the consumer. One of their posters, 'Chemical Cuisine' is a complete guide to all the food additives commonly used, listing which ones are safe and which ones to avoid, with the data presented in a clear and usable format. If you're concerned about what you put into your body then you should investigate C.S.P.I. They're at 1755 'S" Street NW, Washington, DC 20009.

Summer Festivals

The Gathering of the Tribes last June 17th was a big success. Members and leaders of a variety of Earth Religions, including representatives of the Hopi nation, met in Unicoi State Park in Georgia. Amid dire warnings of impending doom. But as the festival organizers had promised all along, the local residents not only were friendly, some of them even signed up for workshops and enjoyed themselves tremendously.

We couldn't get to he Midwest Pan-Pagan Festival held in July, but we heard that it was also a resounding success, with over three hundred attendees and a great deal of knowledge exchanged. They even made the religion page of *Time* in a less snide than usual article (once again we should thank Methodist Minister J. Gordon Melton for his kindness and courageous words to the mass media). We send our best wishes and blessings to all of these folks who are working to bring the Neopagan community together and provide opportunities for us to share our knowledge with each other and with those involved in other areas of the Aquarian community.

Traditional Chinese Medicine A Holistic Model

This is the title of a conference with workshops to be held in San Francisco, December 8th-11th. It's sponsored by the International Society for Professional Education (Box 27573, San Fran., CA 94127; phone 415-731 -1330) and is aimed mostly at professional members of the healing professions. "Continuing Education" credit is available for doctors, nurses etc. but paraprofessionals and nonestablishment healers may find a great deal of interesting information here. On the 8th & 9th is the conference (which -costs $85): talks on the metaphysical bases of Chinese medicine, dietary methods, directing energy flow in the body, diagnosing via tongues, irises and pulses, acupuncture and acupressure, Chinese herbalism, etc. On the 10th and 11th there are a variety of workshops on learning the specific techniques mentioned during the conference. These are expensive ($32 each 3½ hour session) and mastery is hardly likely to be so swiftly achieved, but for those with specific interests they may be well be worthwhile. The faculty has some impressive names including Patricia Garfield, William Khoe, Kim-man Lai, Michael Wong. Yat-Chiow Yeung and others.

Pagan Books

Drawing Down the Moon: The Resurgence of Paganism in America by Margot Adler will be published by Viking Press on October 31st (naturally). This is the first book about the Neopagan movements written by a Neopagan, and certainly is the most extensive thorough and unbiased examination to date. It's entertaining, erudite and (to some) exasperating. Bound to be controversial, it's one book you should not miss buying.

Another book by a Neopagan Witch will be coming out on the very same day, this one *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess*, by Starhawk (Harper & Row). In Order to celebrate the publication, Starhawk and other members of the Covenant of the Goddess (see Contacts Column) are throwing a ritual called "A Spiral Dance" in honor of "the true Halloween," on October 31st at 7:30 pm in the Fort Mason Center for World Music (Building 312, Marina & Laguna in S.F.). The ritual will use masks, dance and polyrhythmic chanting to invoke the archetypal energies behind the Halloween stereotypes. The ceremony is free and afterwards the publishers are springing for a party and book signing celebration. .

We'll have detailed reviews of both these books in the next issue of PJ.

Ariadne

Batya Padeo has been working on promoting the spiritual awareness of the Goddess through her production (and writing and directing) of plays in the Bay Area, Ariadne is her third, and looks to be well worth seeing and supporting. She has been funding the plays out of her own paycheck, depending on volunteers to perform, build & design their own costumes, do all the technical work, and to pay for it all out of their own pockets. They work with bare survival rehearsal space, and the going is rough.

Ariadne is a feminist version of Theseus and The Minotaur and promises to be a powerful experience. It will be running in San Francisco on Oct. 26 &27 Nov. 2,3,4,9,10,11 16, & 1 7,and the cost will be $3.50. For more information, or to send any donations (much needed!) write to Batya c/o Women's Studies Program, San Francisco State, 1600 Holloway Ave, San Francisco 94132 .

Pagan Periodicals

The Crystal well, one of the best-known Neopagan magazines, is back on its feet again after a year of silence. Janine Renee is the new editor, and the Volume 13, #3 Harvest issue is now out. Contents include articles on "Bardic Tree Magic," "Storm Magic" "Crafting a Magical Drinking Horn," "Exercising Your Familiar," "The Blessing Way" and "Inner Plane Travels," as well as poetry, news and more. T.CW. describes itself as a "Journal of Neo-romantic Paganism," and so it is. See the ad in this issue of PJ for subscription details.

The Sword of Dyrnwyn is the newsletter of the Association of Cymmry Wicca, one of the major Neopagan Witchcraft organizations in the Southern stales. They are having Survival problems right now and urgently need people to send them articles, news, recipes, poems, reviews, interesting letters and — oh yes! — subscriptions! The cost is $5.95 per year in the U.S. and $7.95 elsewhere and they need help from the community. Their address is Box 4152, Campus Station, Athens, GA 30602.

Halloween PR

lt's that time of year again! The media are all trying to do "spooky" stories for Halloween, and looking for Witches to interview. Well, this year, at least in the Bay Area, they are contacting people who actually know what they're taking about — thanks to deliberate PR work by the covenant of the Goddess (C.O.G.) and Pentalpha,

C.O.G. is a legal church composed of dozens of Neopagan and Feminist covens, mostly in California. C.O.G. members Starhawk, Valerie Walker (the new First Officer), Deborah Bender (former Correspondence Secretary) and Levanah have all been giving interviews to reporters from radio and TV stations as well as local newspapers. Starhawk and Co. are even throwing special dress rehearsal of her "Spiral Dance" rite for the local TV-stations, parts of which may be broadcast on the evening news magazines Halloween night.

Isaac will be showing up on KTSF (26) TV October 25th at 10:30 pm; on the KPIX (5) TV "Evening Magazine" Oct 31st at 7:30 pm; on the ABC Radio Network news programs (AM & FM) Oct 31st as well as in local papers

Maybe this year we'll be able to get some facts across to the general public for once!

Other Aquarians doing PR work this season should write to the Feedback dept. and let folks know how their efforts are rewarded.

Wheel of the Year

We are delighted to announce that Gwydion's new songbook *wheel of the Year* is finished! It has twenty-eight songs and dances, including all the seasonal and sabbat songs, with twelve songs never before published. The book itself is beautiful (we should know -- we did the production work ourselves) with numerous fine drawings by Craig Miller and a magnificent cover photo of a Stonehenge sunset. It's printed on sturdy stock and will last for years. At $6.00 per copy, it's a real bargain.

Also still available are copies of Gwydion's famous record album, *Songs of the old Religion* at $7.00 each. For either or both, send your check or money order to: Nemeton, Box 212, Redwood Valley, CA 95470

If you have news of upcoming major conventions, soon to be published books, organizations people should know about or other items liable to be of interest to the entire Aquarian/Magical/Neopagan community, let us know!

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The 22nd Annual Parapsychological Association Conference

Or A Journey Into Psientific Technology
By I.C. More

August 15, 16, 17, and 18th of this year brought the members of the Parapsychological Association to the Bay Area for a four-day conference held beneath the Christian cross of Saint Mary's College in Moraga, California. The day was bright and sunny as I waded my way through gas lines and traffic toward the beautiful "nestled in the hills" campus, which was gleaming white with its monklike cleanliness.

After weaving my way through parking lots and past fruit trees, garden paths and other earthly dehghts, I finally spotted a group of hurrying men and women dressed in the standard suit and tie, or heels and dresses that I later learned was both typical and expected for gatherings of this particular group. I, too, was hurrying and arrived in the dark auditorium just in time to see the past president, a white-haired man with an English accent say "Thank you" and sit down. So much for the welcoming remarks This was followed by remarks of Pascal Kaplan, Dean of General Studies at John F. Kennedy University (which hosted the conference) introduce their current Graduate and Under graduate programs in Parapsychology and the Study of Consciousness. The remarks were encouraging and inviting, considering the present limits of most educational institutions, but there was the sense of forced respectability that was to set and/or conform to the academic tone that ran through the whole conference.

The stage was set with a long table, with chairs and microphones and a podium on the right, over which most of the presentations were made. The three or four hundred people in the audience appeared to be a mixture of ages, nationalities and professions, but the large percentage of the population seemed to be over fifty, male, and quite successfully professional looking (as well as white). They came from a wide geographical range in this country as well as many from England, Iceland, Germany, and India.

The first set of papers was to be on the topic of *Psi and Cognition* and they began with an excellent paper by Ernesto Spinelli of Hampshire, England, on "The Effects of Complex Tasks on GESP Ability in Young Children." Mr. Spinelli found that GESP (general extra sensory perception) not only decreased

with the increase of age in the children (who ranged from 3 to 8 years old) but GESP decreased with the increase of cognitive tasks as well. In other words, the more complex the conscious thought (or left brain activity), the weaker the GESP ability of psi function. Most interesting. The ensuing papers dealt with experimental approaches to testing psi with and against memory, speaking more to the fastidiousness of the experimenter than to the value of the findings themselves.

The rest of the morning dealt with topics on *Micro PK Studies* and contained papers on "The Mystery of Irreproduceability," a paper on Aversion Therapy and Psi, showing that subjects did not show greater psychic ability under the threat and use of painful electric shock; and "Directional PK Effects with a Computer-based Random Generator System," a rather interesting experiment involving the successful psychokinetic (PK) control of a random, moving computer graphic display.

The break for lunch gave everyone a chance to mingle, and I found myself joining three men at a table in a cafeteria whose beauty was as great as its food was poor. The conversation was typical – one man who considered himself a professional skeptic argued with another man who considered himself a professional psychic, while the third tried to mediate between the two and I gave up altogether trying to get a word in edgewise. I excused myself and returned to a very scientific set of papers on *Spontaneous Case/Free Response Methodology*, which discussed the qualities of targets used in psi experiments to test EP by having the subject guess or describe what they think is on a given screen, card, or similar set-up. It was shown that pictures of organic outdoor scenes scored more "hits" or appropriate matching responses that pictures of people, boatyards, etc. Animals were also high on the "hit" score.

The *Symposiums* were by far the most interesting and the one scheduled for the first day was on *Psi and Scientific Method: Views from Diverse Perspectives*, and it was here that Rhea A. White, a middle-aged woman from the American Society for Psychical Research, let the "cat out of the bag" by stating that psi phenomenon cannot necessarily be measured by science and physical methods that she had felt that way for 25 years and that the taboo against this kind of belief was so encompassing within the Association that she was only just now having the courage to say so in front of her colleagues. This was a typical indication of the state of the art within the Parapsychological Association. There was an intense loyalty to standard scientific method, with downright hostility to anything vaguely radical, and at the same time a growing dissatisfaction among the younger members about the overuse of such clinical methods.

The *Symposium* of Thursday morning interested me a great deal covering Altered States of Consciousness (Charles Tart), Psychic Healing, Psi-Conducive Communities, Shamanism, and Haunting, but many of the papers turned out to be other than I expected. Tart's paper dealt chiefly with hypnosis and drew no major conclusions, the Psychic Healing paper had more theory than it did Psi or Healing, the Psi-Conducive Communities mentioned a few tribal cultures with some mention of fasting and hallucinogens, but made absolutely no mention of any of the current American groups who gather together for the express purpose of doing psychic work, such as ritual magic or healing. Nor did the speaker mention any forms of ancient or modern "Witchcraft" as being related to such communities.

The talk on Shamanism (Rex Stanford), entitled "Are we Shamans or Scientists?" seemed to stress that it's more important to be scientists than to be shamans, stating that science had made more progress than magic and would probably continue to do so. The last talk, "A Case of Haunting," given by a very serious looking fellow (William G. Roll) turned out to be the most humorous talk given, and discussed the fact that the auras of the parapsychological experimenters stay in the laboratory long after the experimenters themselves have gone home each night, and that these factors need to be considered in evaluating clinical results.

There were more talks throughout that day and the next which covered such topics as *Psi and Personality* (people with open minds are more psychic that people with closed minds), *Improving Communication Between Parapsychologists and Other Scientists*, a roundtable discussion of such things as grants, publications, and the overuse of scientific jargon among those in parapsychological research. *Psi and Social Interactions* spoke of poltergeists in the family, the effect of competition on psi performance, and more on the experimenter effect.

Friday afternoon was perhaps the highpoint of the conference with a symposium on *Synchronicity and Psi: Causal vs. Acausal Paradigms*, chaired by Barbara Honegger, (Washington Research Center). It was in this symposium that I saw the first traces of actual creative thinking. The talks began with Alan Vaughan (New Ways of Consciousness Foundation), who discussed the parameters of space and time, as created by consciousness, which exists outside of space and time. This was followed by a talk on poltergeists by Hans Bender from Germany, a delightfully entertaining talk stating in essence that collective unconscious is identical with nature, making, as each speaker did, many references to C. G. Jung along the way. Barbara Honegger gave a brilliant talk on the effects of language as a factor in synchronicity, delving into her own personal experiences, and dealing with the questions of inter-hemispheric verbal communication as a factor in waking state psi. The symposium ended with a gentleman from Maryland, who attempted to rebut all of the above theories by garbling Jung's definition of the term synchronicity, and stating that it had no causal or psychic factor at all, and besides it was all "unproven". Despite the audience's apparent fear of any less-than-scientific thinking, it seemed that these talks were well received. Anyone willing to take the courageous step and present new theories was welcomed, at least by those who shared similar views and perhaps did not have the courage or experimental documentation to say so.

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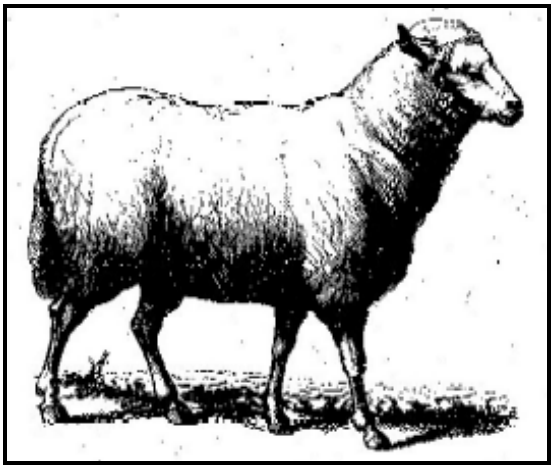


An Unexpected Look at Sheep in Paleopagan Society

By Cyprian

We cannot hope to understand ancient Pagan cultures, much less their religions, without a thorough and realistic scrutiny of just how various Paleopagan peoples actually lived. We need to know the circumstances of their lives because religious though, social behavior and the entire texture of civilization (or the lack of it) ultimately is determined by the physical circumstances in which people find themselves. Thus the desert Arab Moslem sees Paradise as a green and blooming land filled with flowing waters…much the picture of a verdant English landscape.

One of the vital aspects of European Paleopagan life, and one which has been largely overlooked simply because it is no longer of any consequence in western civilization, is the severe paucity of fiber throughout European history until at least the latter part of the 18th century. Today we are so glutted with fibers, both natural and artificial, that we have lost sight of the simple fact that the ancient European peoples had a hard scratch of it to put clothes on theirs backs.

Archaeology can tell us that Neolithic people wore leather garments because we have found the tools used to make them; we also know that they raised sheep because we have found the bones; and we also know they raised flax, the source of linen, because we have found flax seed imprints in their pottery. That they made textiles is know from finds of spindle whorls and pictorial representations of simple frameless looms and, by the most incredible of good fortune, the find of a piece of carbonized cloth.

At this point we need to stop and point out something so obvious that it's generally overlooked: wool from sheep and linen from flax were the two and *only* fiber sources commonly available to the Paleopagans in northern Europe and Britain. Although silk was imported into Europe at a surprisingly early date, it won't be discussed here because its scarcity and high price kept it forever out of reach of all but the very wealthiest individuals (this was also true of cotton until recently). Leather, wool and linen were what people wore because that was all there was available to them.

Now all this makes a difference, a big one, as to what was important in life and what wasn't. Many people now assume that the sheep was a meat animal throughout western history simply because that is the animal's status now. However, this is not true at all. Sheep were not considered a meat source in the West until wool was no longer critical as a fiber supply – not until the late 18th century! The sheep was simply too valuable for its wool to be casually slaughtered and served up as so many mutton chops.

Compounding the sheep's value as a primary fiber source was the sheep's rather uncertain and slow reproductive cycle; a slaughtered sheep is difficult to replace through normal herd reproduction. Also, while pigs, goats and cattle can browse profitably in scrub and forest land and even help clear the land for future cultivation, sheep must graze in open pasture; just another factor setting them apart from other domestic animals. These considerations, all working together, assured sheep a unique place in the economy until modern times, when wool lost its premier position in the quest for fiber.

(Woven cotton cloth was introduced into England in 1681 c.e., establishing the third fiber, even though cotton could not be grown except in parts of the Mediterranean Basin and required prodigious hand labor to be turned into cloth. A century later the production of textiles became the first industry to be taken out of the cottage and fully mechanized and powered by other than human or animal muscle. Thus, for better or worse, the Industrial Revolution was founded upon the spinning jenny, the cotton gin, and the steam powered loom.)

An example of the sheep's preindustrial importance may be found in Ralph Whitlock's delightful book, *The Folklore of Wiltshire* (Batsford). Whitlock, who had himself been a farmboy, recounts how Wiltshire (England) farms were run for the benefit and convenience of sheep and how the shepherd was the "king" of farm workers.

Archeological evidence sustains the sheep's favored position in Paleopagan times. A bone count made at Durrington Walls (Wiltshire near Stonehenge) suggests the eating habits of the Neolithinc occupants of the site. The count reveals 27.4% were cattle bones, 63.8% pig and a mere 1.9% sheep and goats. The remaining percentages were distributed among wild game. Dr. Euan MacKie proposes in his book, *Science and Society in Prehistoric Britain* (Elek), that the occupants of Durrington Walls were not consonant with the normal rural population of Neolithic Wiltshire but were in fact members of a priestly caste, perhaps associated with close-by Stonehenge. The scant 1.9% certainly

seems to indicate that sheep and goats were used as sacrificial, ritual animals and not as a regular food source.

About 15 miles almost due north of Durrington Walls is the great Avebury Neolithic complex. Part of this complex is the Windmill Hill causewayed camp. Archaeological investigation has suggested that this hilltop site was a seasonal cattle market and, according to my own research at the hill, this fits in with our growing knowledge of the pre-Christian pastoral calendar in Britain. Analysis of the animal bones found at the Late Neolithic level reveals 56.2% cattle, 22.6% pig and 13.1% sheep and goats, the remained being again wild game. It's too bad, for our purposes, that the archaeologists did not see fit to separate out the sheep from the goats! At any event, 13.1% of the total could well represent sacrificial animals, herd culls and normal herd mortality. The percentage is too small to represent any real reliance on sheep as a meat source.

It's of some interest to note that hilltop markets, by then largely sheep, continued in Wiltshire until about World War One. Whitlock (cited about) says the shepherds hated the open and exposed hilltop sites. I wonder if those shepherds realized they were continuing a tradition begun at least five thousand years earlier?

People do not sacrifice that which they hold of little value. They do not offer dirt to the Gods. But their sheep were of value – of great, almost over weaning value—and they offered them.

In this light, Christian terminology and iconography establishing the Christ as "The Good Shepherd," "The Lamb of God," "The Sacrificial Lamb," etc., begin to make a lot more sense. So too does the Nativity story that announcement of the birth of the Christ child was made to "shepherds tending their flocks by night" and not to farmers hoeing their crops at noontide. No, these terms and images would be readily understood by the European Paleopagans whom evangelists were trying to convert to their new and radical faith.

We should observes in passing that some authorities contend that the word *Lammas* (used by some to refer to a major holy day occurring in early August) originates from the so-called "Lamb Mass" celebrated each August 1st at the Cathedral of St. Peter Vinculis, in York, England. At this mass, each man holding land in feudal tenure brought a lamb as offering. Such an offering would be entirely in keeping with earlier Pagan practices – only now the Pagan sacrificial lamb was offered to the "Sacrificial Lamb of God."

The Neolithic pre-Celtic society of Europe and Britain apparently was more agricultural than pastoral. The available archaeological evidence points to a farmstead society based on wheat and barley with enough domestic animals to supply immediate needs. One of the factors limiting domestic livestock production was the difficulty in obtaining enough feed to "winter-over" the stock. Consequently, as an approaching winter depleted the pasturage, surplus animals were harvested at Samhain and the remaining breeding stock was gotten through the winter as best as could be done.

The difficulty in providing winter food is best illustrated by the well-known "elm-decline" that began in prehistoric Britain around 3,000 b.c.e. The pollen record showed a sharp decline in elm pollen after that time, but there was no satisfactory explanation until a chance find at an ancient Swiss lake-village site revealed the Neolithic inhabitants to have been stripping leaves and twigs from elm trees and using them for winter cattle feed. Such a technique could hardly be expected to support the large herds we associate with a pastoral society. Even by the time of Saxon England, the situation seemed hardly better. Dr. Dorothy Whitelock, in her book, *The Beginnings of English Society*, (Penguin Books) records: "Owing to the shortage of feeding stuffs, only a minimum of stock could be kept throughout the winter; many beasts had to be slaughtered in the autumn and the flesh salted for winter consumption."

The idea of pastoral society and the extensive land-use techniques required to support it does not seem too indigenous to Europe. Instead it appears to have been imported, perhaps from the steppes of Asia, and its best known historical impact came in Greece where invading male-god oriented pastoralists are believed by some to have overwhelmed the resident female-deity oriented farmers (including those of Crete) and to have established their own civilization, the Mycenaean, which gave us such pastoral Bronze Age swashbucklers as Herakles (Hercules), Agamemnon and Achilles. Perhaps, from such stock sprang the Tuatha de Danaan – pastoralists all – who pushed their way into Europe's final frontier, Ireland. Irish folklore certainly remembers these daring bronze-weaponed pastoralists, just as many of us remember, through Home, the deeds of Achilles 'neath the storied towers of Illium.

It seems almost criminal to dismiss so much fascinating history in a mere paragraph, but the ebb and flow of peoples in not our subject here. Let us merely note that the Bronze Age warriors of Greece were themselves overwhelmed by yet another pastoral peoples, the Dorians, who with their new swords of iron pretty much hacked their way into whatever territory they wanted – and they wanted it all – just as the later Iron Age Kelts overcame the farmer and the Bronze Age pastoralists of Europe, Britain, Scotland and Ireland.

You will note that our discussion has turned from one of peace to one of the sword. There is a reason for this shift and it is rooted in a fundamental but little recognized difference between the farmer and the pastoralists. The physical evidence indicates that the Neolithic farming age was one of those now rare eras in human history, an era of relative peace. There is a reason for this: farmers, no matter how hard they try, can cultivate only a limited amount of land. This limit is determined by their own labor (and the labor available to assist) and the technology at their disposal. What this means is that the farmer is not land-acquisitive. Extra land is of no value to a farmer. Instead of an asset, it can be a liability. Further, because of the nature of farming operations, the farmer is wedded to the land and there is no better way of putting it. In the spring one must plant, then cultivate, then harvest, then prepare the land to plant again. The ploughman in AElfric's *Colloquy*, quoted in Whitelock's book, may speak for farmers everywhere when he declares:

"I go out at dawn driving the oxen to the field and yoke them to the plough. It is never so harsh a winter that I dare lurk at home…but when the oxen have been yoked and the ploughshare and coulter fastened to the plough, I must plough each day a full acre or more…I must fill the oxen's manger with hay, and water them, and clear out the dung."

This endless cycle of toil to wrest a livelihood from the soil leaves precious little time to go adventuring.

Pastoralists have an entirely different life situation. Rather than being tied to the land, they rove upon it as they follow their herds and flocks. Further, as their animals exhaust of pasturage, they *must* move on to new land, regardless of who claims it. As the herds increase in size, still more land is required for their support. Thus pastoralists are very much land-acquisitive. They must have land and ever more land if their animals, which are their

livelihood and wealth, are to survive and prosper. The pastoralist, unlike the farmer, is ever aggressive because the herds ever need new lands to graze. Today, we call this process of land acquisition "war." Only the weapons have changed.

So there we have the nub of it: the pastoralist must be aggressive in order to acquire ever more land for the flocks and herds, and they made their warlike male deities in this image. Farmers are settled upon the land, and in this sense are considered passive, and their Earth Goddess is molded after them. They are ripe for exploitation because of their more or less fixed position upon the land, and they have certainly been exploited throughout history. The traditional contempt of the ruling pastoralist for the farmer was nowhere better shown than in the recent farmers' "tractorcade" upon Washington. Our government openly admitted the farmers had been ripped off and, according to our Secretary of Agriculture, we are going to continue plundering the farmers. After all, as pastoralists we have a license: announcement of the birth of Christ was made to shepherds, not farmers.

In trying to take a realistic look backward at the role of sheep and the herdsman in Paleopagan society we have kicked the shins of at least two popular notions: that the sheep was valued as a meat animal, and the shepherd (he*r*der) represents, with their lambs, the tender and loving creature of popular and especially Christian myth and iconography.

The final part of this essay, which has already taken unexpected turns, deals with the relationship between stockpeople and their animals. Here we must attempt to destroy one more romantic shibboleth, kick another shin, if we are to approach the realities of Pagan life. As a boy, I grew up on my grandfather's farm. This was a dairy and stock farm, and such farming that was done was done mostly to provide feed and pasture for the animals. Now, while it is true that our work animals, being fellow laborers, were held in some affection (I still remember with something more than nostalgia a big hammer-headed mule named "Old Jack"), the other animals, from chickens to prize dairy cows, were viewed purely for their value as meat or milk producers. When one of the dairy cows (and they were all named) fell behind in milk production, she was loaded on the truck and taken to the stockyards and sold as a canner and cutter. There was no tear shed, the only concern was how to best replace her in the herd to make up for the loss in milk production. This was a matter of economics, not sentiment.

The same outlook was even more pronounced in the case of animals raised for meat. I well remember the year I was given two pigs to raise, John and Mary, and with my sister I tended to them most diligently. I think I was about eleven at the time. Sentiment? A few days after Samhain I took my Remington .22 and dropped them both cleanly, then helped dress out the carcasses. The meat was mighty good that winter, and the next year I was allowed to participate in the big "hog killing" and this was a signal honor in my life.

The point of all this personal history is to indicate two things: (1) I know what I'm talking about because I've been there, and (2) domestic livestock are economic assets but like other assets they are of no value until they are harvested. In the case of the dairy cow, the harvest is milk, twice a day. When that harvest fails, the cow is no longer an asset and she must be disposed of and replaced by a new animal that will fill her place in the economic production line.

With animals raised for consumption, the relationship seems even more direct. From the moment of birth, the animal, be it the wobbly and appealing calf, the charming pink piglet or the fuzzy chick, is destined for the table. I promise you, sentiment and romantic notions have no place in this real and hardheaded world of animal husbandry, simply because they are unreal luxuries that cannot be afforded. Sentiment cannot be put on the table nor in the bank. This is not to say that stockpeople do not care for their animals, of course they care for them, but they are not sentimentally attached to them. The animal is bred, born, nurtured and finally slaughtered to provide human food, and in so doing a curious thing occurs. The animal, in making its individual sacrifice, assures the survival of its species.

Lest this seem an unusual assessment, we need to remember that Nature ever squanders the individual to promote the survival of the species. Consider this: not one of our domestic plants or animals, unlike the other inhabitants of this planet, is likely to qualify for the endangered species list. In harvesting domestic plants and animals, we guarantee those species will survive and prosper.

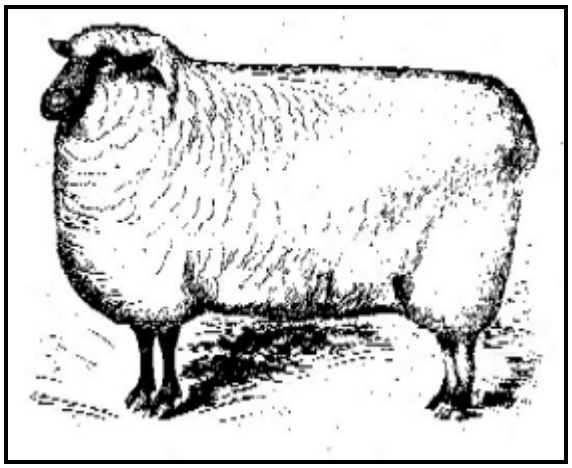
This arrangement may seem harsh in terms of the individual animal, but it has worked exceedingly well in terms of species welfare. If you thing this is not so, then think about how many wild cattle or wild sheep exist as compared to their domestic relatives.

It's only in the last handful of years that even our most advanced societies have been able to produce a sufficient surplus of food and fiber that they have been able to stop viewing wild (undomesticated) animals as unwelcome competitors for the available food and land supply and/or as welcome supplements to a meager larder. To the pioneer American settler trying to establish a farm in the wilderness, that deer raiding the cornfield was no beautiful and noble Bambi but a damned predator eating the food the family must have to survive the winter. Why not just kill the varmint out of hand and at the same time put some welcome fresh meat on the table?

Even today, there are very few areas of the world that can afford the luxury of wildlife conservation. Never was there a more tragic example of this truism than the recent slaughter of dolphins by Japanese fishers. Remember the photographs of the murdered dolphins awash in a lagoon of their own blood.

This essay, which began innocently enough, has been built to end on that final vicious note. This has been intentional and I plead guilty but make no apology for the purpose: to persuade you that there is nothing romantic or sentimental or idyllic about securing the essentials of life – food, clothing and shelter. It is tough, realistic and unrelenting work. That romantic dream of the bucolic life is no more than the vapours of some simpering poet or philosopher who never touched a hoe, cleaned out a stall or slaughtered the prize pig that their family might have food on the table.

My plea is simple. If we are to be Pagans, then let us be Pagans and understand something of the realities of Pagan life, and not become just so many more silly victims of Walden Pond.



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Rite Thinking, Rite Action

By Kyle Griffith

Why doesn't the average Neopagan ritual raise as much psychic energy as a Pentecostal revival meeting? Because the revivalists use simple, concrete techniques for raising power and we don't.

The most basic tent meeting ritual is the Rite of Initiation. After hymns like "Are you Washed in the Blood of the Lamb" and a sermon on sin and salvation, the preacher asks "sinners" to step forward and "accept Jesus." The act of initiation can be a handshake, an embrace, or baptism with water, but in every case it is accompanied by an outpouring of psychic energy from the whole congregation, welcoming the new convert "into the fold." A number of ex-acidheads who became Jesus freaks have described this rite as a psychic experience more profound than any drug; and plenty of people who attend a Fundamentalist church every Sunday never miss a chance to step forward at a revival meeting to be "saved" all over again. Of course the clergy and congregation also get a psychic lift every time the rite is performed.

The important thing for us to remember is that the revivalists themselves admit that their initiation rite has little to do with an intellectual-belief in the doctrines of Christianity and converts are urged to join a regular congregation as soon as possible. Success of the ritual depends not on acceptance of a complex system of belief, but only on two simple acts of will. One, the "convert" has to accept initiation. Two, each member of the congregation has to accept the convert.

The old movie *Freaks* has a beautiful example of such a ritual in a completely non-religious context. A beautiful normal girl is marrying a deformed midget for his money. As part of the wedding ceremony, the company of circus freaks surround her and start chanting 'We accept you, we accept you, one of us, one of us!' The girl, who of course is acting in bad faith, bolts in terror. The scene is one of the most eerie I've ever seen in a movie, and it owes a good deal of its terror to its raw portrayal of magic.

Now, I'm not suggesting we turn our rituals into tent meetings, drumming in public and initiating people by the score just to generate psychic power. There are ways to generate the same power even within the confines of a small stable group. The best as far as I'm concerned is a technique used in Voodoo and Amerind practices: assuming a special state of consciousness as part of the ritual. There are many ways of achieving this, but all involve the same two simple steps as the basic act of initiation. After preparation involving music, dance, preaching etc., a member of the clergy asks a member of the congregation, "Are you read to receive the Power'' The member says yes, and some simple ritual act is performed to confer the power. Simultaneously, the whole congregation responds with an act of some words that symbolize the granting of power, while willing themselves to project the power into the individual, This process goes on until the whole congregation has received the power.

This all sounds childishly simple, much less sophisticated than most of the power rituals now in use. Well, it's supposed to be. It should be simple, repetitious…and powerful. The technique works very well for the Bible-belters, and it can be made to work just as well for us. The reason it can be made to work is because it does not depend on belief in particular deities or elaborate doctrine. All you have to believe in is the basic concept of Magical Power, and the ritual itself is constructed to reinforce that belief by enabling every member of the congregation to feel it.

Each individual group should be able to apply this technique to its existing rituals without making major changes. If your group uses special names for the members during rituals, the congregation might address the member receiving the power by his or her ritual name. If you wear special garments or ritual objects, receiving the power could be the act of putting them on. Or you might partake of a sacrament or recite a verbal formula. The ritual could also take the form of a dance with people moving from one ring (or other formation) to another as they receive the power. Any of these will work if your fells comfortable with them. As far as I'm concerned, though, the simpler the whole thing is, the better it will work.

OK, you've received the Power, now what do you do: with it. My suggestion is, start working Magic. If someone present needs healing, they should become the focus of attention while a specific healing ritual is performed. If someone needs advice or guidance, some sort of divinatory spell should be worked, Better yet, the whole group can go out and do something active: plant a grove, prepare a garden, even have an orgy. The important thing is that the activities have a concrete purpose, and that no particular activity be prolonged until it starts to drag and power seeps away. Hours of mumbo-jumbo about Gods and Goddesses accompanied by dancers panting like marathon runners just doesn't seem to work these days. Sure, maybe your group can successfully recreate the Saturnalia, but personally, I've never seen a long, complicated ritual that was worth the effort.

The important thing to remember if you want to raise and sustain magical power is to keep rituals short, simple, and to the point. Everything you do should have a concrete purpose, whether you're trying to heal, defend, or just make yourselves feel good. Rituals that make extensive reference to elaborate mythologies or methodologies may look impressive to outsiders. (Actually, few do, unless you think people giggle when they're impressed) but unless each ritual phrase and act means almost the same thing to everyone involved, so that individual emotional responses reinforce each other, very little power is going to be generated.

Generating psychic energy isn't at all hard. The crowds at sports events generate so much of it that a lot of professional athletes become magicians (Christian, Voodoo, and even a few Pagan, or so I hear rumored) in self-defense against bad vibes while on the road, or to make maximum use of home field advantage. Political groups from the Right to he Left raise and use psychic forces, And so can we, if we try to get back to the simple techniques everybody else uses.

This department is for news, reports, announcements and other materials of specific interest to Reformed, Neopagan and Mesopagan Druids of all persuasions, throughout Europe and North America.

Arch Grove

Samhain will be celebrated on Saturday night, Nov. 3rd. at Adr. Carolyn Clark's house. There will be a "dumb supper," skyring and other divination activities following outdoor services around the oak trees in the back yard. The grove meets for full moons and Highdays; as with most Druid groups the emphasis is religious rather than magical. There will also be some all day hikes in the country, with emphasis on gathering and using plants (medicinal & dye). For details, call Carolyn.

Evergreen Grove

The grove is growing by leaps and bounds, with over 30 members from the Olympia attending recent activities. On October 31st, the grove will celebrate Samhain with a "dumb feast" and a graveside vigil for a recently deceased member of the grove. Adr. Cyndie Schuler says that they will continue their full moon and Highday celebrations, and will be holding regular sessions of *Mind Games* (based on the book of that title by Jean Houston & R. Masters). Contact Cyndie for more details on times and places.

L.A. Grove

Adr. Chris Sherbak would like to invite Neopagans and other interested folks in the Los Angeles area to contact him about organizing Druidic activities in Southern California. L.A. Grove services, like those of all other NRDNA groves, are open to the general public.

South Shore Grove

Adr. Steve Savitzky says his grove is still active, with the majority of the members coming from the Society for Creative Anachronism ("Southern Shores" is the S.C.A. name for the area around San Jose, California.) So far the grove has been meeting mostly for Highdays, in the Archdruid's backyard (anyone knowing a nearby scenic location appropriate for ceremonies is asked to let him know). They will be meeting for Samhain, and local folks interested in participating can call Steve for details on dates and places.

Mother Grove

The grove has been growing steadily, due perhaps to the regularity of the every-other-Sunday afternoon services during the summer. These will continue through the winter at various locations around the Berkeley-Oakland area. On days when it is raining, indoor meditation and Hairpull sessions will be held. The dates for the next few months will be: October 7th & 21 St. November 4th (Samhain) and 18th, December 2nd, 16th &23rd (Midwinter). The times are usually from noon to 1:00 pm for Bardic practice (music, singing and soon some dance practice) and 1:00-2:00 pm for the actual ceremonies. There may also be another all night vigil for Samhain on November 6/7. For the specific locations each time call Co-Adr, Joan Carruth.

The grove is experimenting with new liturgies, the results of which will be presented herein from time to time. Recently a writer for New West magazine spent the weekend with various grove members, attended a Bardic Revel and participated in the regular cerebration. He became a First Order Druid and has written a very supportive story, which should appear soon, Are we ready for a sudden influx of members?

His visit coincided with a variety of outreach decisions made by the grove. Ads will be purchased in the next edition of the telephone book, Yellow Pages, 'under Churches, Druidic." Posters are going to be designed and put up around campus, and the grove has voted to join the Berkeley Area Interfaith Council. To cover the costs of all this (and incidentally to start covering the supplies that the Co-Archdruids have been paying for out of pocket) the members of the grove have pledged regular monthly donations of from $5-$20 each! For the first time in history, the Mother Grove has a checking account!! Are these the first steps on the road to doom?

Order of Oberon

This is the Bardic Order within the NRDNA, and has been entrusted with the musical and poetic aspects of Druidic rituals. Right now the members are all resident within the San Francisco Bay Area (primarily the Mother and Hazel Nut Groves) and two major sorts of activities are being held.

Every other Sunday afternoon before the services of the Mother Grove, rehearsal/practice sessions are held from noon to 1:00 pm at the site of the ceremonies. These are moderately organized attempts to learn and practice specific songs and (eventually) dances for ritual uses.

Every other Saturday night BYOE Bardic Revels are held at various locations around the East Bay. These run from 8:00 pm "until everyone falls over," and consist of group efforts to sing and play various (mostly Pagan) songs, alternating serious work on religious tunes with not-so-serious Pagan/occult doggerel. Individuals are encouraged to present original works of music, song or poetry. Copies of *The Book of the Bards, Wheel of the Year*, and other collections are available for use, but participants are urged to purchase their own. The dates for these will be: October 13th & 27th, November 10th & 24th, December 8th & 22nd. Call Matriarch Lind or MG Co-Adr. Isaac for locations and details about possible crash space for out-of-towners.

Formal admission to the order of Oberon is at the sole discretion of the Matriarch. All interested persons should contact her directly. The candidate should have ready a song, poem, dance, etc. to perform at their investiture. This offering may be an original work or else an interpretation of someone else's appropriate work (check with the Matriarch for details). It is suggested that each Bard or potential Bard keep a notebook of songs, poems, etc.

Stonehenge Viewpoint.

This is a bimonthly magazine published for those with an interest in archeology, anomalies, standing stones, ley lines and Celtic antiquities. Every issue has something new and challenging, with the scholarship ranging from poor to superb. The July/August issue (#30) included an article on "Hidden Druids in America," most of which was about British Masonic (Mesopagan) Druids, but which included several rare photos of members of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids performing rites. Also in that issues were articles on "Megalithic Sites in America," "Maize in India in 1141 A.D.," and "Sir Bedwyr, the Saxon in King Arthur's Court." At 56.00 for two years (the U.S. & Canada), it's a bargain:

Stonehenge Viewpoint, 2821 De La Vina Street, Box 30887, Santa Barbara, Ca. 93105.

Order of Dian Cecht

This is the healing order within the NRDNA and is open to all Neopagans interested in both the magical and mundane methods of healing. Matriarch Joan Carruth says that no new initiations into the order will be performed after Samhain except for emergencies until next Beltane, (see- list of Highday dates in this issue of The Druid Chronicler). However, non-initiates can attend the monthly meetings on these dates this fall October 28th, November 25th and December 23rd.

A possible healing workshop following the feast of the Turkey God (November 22nd-25th) is being -contemplated. This would be an opportunity for local healers to get together and share their specific healing techniques, with an emphasis on the magical and physical aspects rather than the ritual ones. If you would be interested in helping her to hold such a workshop, contact her soon.

Golden Order Section Society

This is an interesting organization headquartered in England, and composed of folk's interest in Celtic folklore, monuments and antiquities, especially those with Druidic links. They publish a quarterly newsletter filled with fascinating charts on tree alphabets, news of Celtic revivals, facts about the ancient Celts, essays on the Holy Days and more. The latest issue (Lughnassadh/Lammas) included the French text of a Breton Druid group's Imbolc (Oimelc/Candlemas) rites.

They also publish a huge collection of posters, charts, booklets, ceremonies and other materials of interest to Druids of all persuasions. Many of these will spark spirited arguments among Druidic scholars concerning their romantic ideas about Celtic past.

Institute of Celtic Studies

If you're interested in learning about the ancient Celtic cultures – Irish, Manx, Scottish, Cornish, Welsh or Breton – then one organization you should contact is the Institute for Celtic Studies (5339 Broadway, #105, Oakland, Ca. 94618). They have lectures, classes, workshops and concerts designed to teach Celtic arts, music, dances, religions and languages.

The quality of their scholarship, artistry and skill is superb, probably because their dedication is so intense. Though most of their activities center in Northern California, they are willing to travel to other parts of the country as well. This fall they are teaching classes in Celtic Mythology and Gaelic Folk-life, Celtic art, Irish & Welsh language, playing the tin whistle, the Scottish, Irish and Welsh pipes, and more. The costs are usually $30-35 per eight-week series, at two hours per week of class time. Those who belong to Celtic Traditions of Witchcraft or Druidism owe it to themselves to investigate the Institute. Associate membership, which includes a newsletter and all mailings, is $12.00 per year.

High Days for 18 y.r.

For those Druids or other Pagans who like to be precise in the holiday celebrations, the following list gives the exact dates and times for the Highdays (according to one Neopagan Druid method) for the next Celtic year, which will be the Eighteenth Year of the Reform (that is, since the founding of the Reformed Druids of North America). The exact times are based on an astronomical/astrological ephemeris which was calculated for *actual* or geometrical positions of the sun, rather than the more commonly used *observed* positions, and this can make a difference of several minutes for some dates.

The solstices and equinoxes, or Minor Highdays, occur when the sun enters certain astrological signs (Capricorn, Aries, Cancer & Libra.) The Major Highdays of Samhain, Oimelc, Beltane and Lughnasadh occur when the sun reaches 16 18 north or south declination (which fits with certain Stonehenge measurements). The times are listen in Greenwich Mean Time and adjustments can be made by subtracting four minutes for each degree one is west of Greenwich England (0 longitude). During Daylight Savings Time, *add* one hour to the local time calculations.

Since Reformed and Neopagan Druid days run from sunset (of the civil day before) to sunset, the exact civil dates on which to celebrate some of the Highdays may vary in localities where the precise times are close to local sunset.

Samhain 17/18 y.r., the Day Between Years and the Beginning of *Geimredh* (Winter), occurs on November 7th, 1979 c.e. at 21:48 (9:48pm) GMT.

Winter Solstice or Yule occurs on December 22, at 11:03 (am) GMT.

Oimelc or Imbolg, and the beginning of *Earrach* (Spring) occurs on February 4, 1980 c.e., at 18:38 (6:38 pm) GMT.

Spring Equinox or Eostara, occurs on March 20 at 11:04 (am) GMT.

Beltane or May Day, and the beginning of *Samradh* (Summer), occurs on May 5 at 5:56 (am) GMT

Summer Solstice or Midsummer, occurs on June 21 at 5:40 (am) GMT.

Lughnasadh or Lammas, and the beginning of *Foghamhar* (Fall), occurs on August 7, at 11:54 (am) GMT.

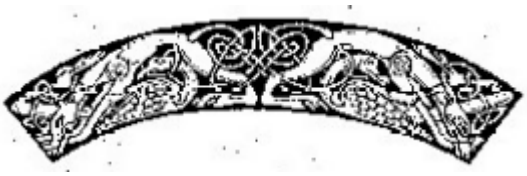
Fall Equinox or the Feast of the Hunters, occurs on September 22, at 21:03 (9:03 pm) GMT.

Samhain 18/19 y.r., starting of the next year, will be November 7 1980 c.e. at 3:19 (am) GMT.

Madrakara

The Earth current is alive and well at Madrakara! From Aug. 24-27 the Western Institute of Esoteric Science held an intensive "exploration or Earth Mysteries" at the nature community of Madrakara, near the Russian River. Thirty-five people gathered to study and experience geomancy, dowsing; sacred geometry, nature ritual, crystal energy and pyramids, orgone accumulators, the ancient lore of the Tuatha de Danaan and the Essenes, stone circles and ley-lines and power points, runes and Ogham, journeying into the field of Earth Mysteries. The four-day intensive closed with an Etruscan ritual wherein a large quartz crystal was prepared by the group for use in future healing circles.

Other recent news: Madrakara has recently been chartered as a grove within the structure of the Golden Section order Society, and has been hosting various activities involved with Celtic studies and healing. The Institute of Celtic Studies held their Bardic School weekend there, harp-playing, piping and whistling, story-telling and singing, eating and drinking, and generally gracing a magical place with magical music. Another weekend saw a healing workshop gathered together by Anodea Judith, for the purpose of sharing healing skills and secrets and talking about techniques, theory and ethics. We gave and received healing for ourselves as well as learning and sharing ideas, and many thanks go to the Madrakara folks for providing both the place and their warm energy.



Druidic Groups

The following are most of the active Druidic groups that we are aware of with branches in the United States and Canada, plus the headquarters of some foreign groups (who will be happy to send detailed lists of their foreign branches). The addresses and information are listed in the Contacts list elsewhere in this issue.

Arch Grove, NRDNA
Clanna Brocheta Grove, ODNA
Confraternite Philosophique de Druids
The Druid Order, An Druidh Uileach Braithrearchas, BCUB
Evergreen Grove, NRDNA
Golden Section Order Society, the Bardic Chair of Caer Llyndain
Hazel Nut Grove, NRDNA
K.A.D. Cahier de Philosophie Druidique
L.A. Grove, NRDNA
Madrakara Grove, GSOS
Mother Grove, NRDNA
Order of Dian Cecht, NRDNA
Order of Oberon, NRDNA
Southern Shores Grove, RDNA
Tuatha Grove, NRDNA

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tapes

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C.A.W. is Alive!

The Church of All Worlds Inc is alive and well in Redwood Valley California. They've finished off the legal procedures to move the church headquarters official to California and have be actively involved in several projects. Recently, the Board of Directors of C.A.W. chartered Pentalpha as a Charter Member organization with the C.A.W. structure (see the *Penthalpha* Activities department for details).

Annual Meeting . . . . .

C.A.W.'s required annual meeting will be held December 1st at 1:oopm in the deep forest of Coeden Brith and Annwfn (adjacent parcels on a ranch outside of Ukiah, which have become centers for Pagan activities in northern California). While most of the meetings will be of interest only to priests and priestess of C.A.W. (where are you?) all are welcome. Please make advance arrangements if you want to attend. For further information, and weekend reservations, write to C.A.W., Box 212, Redwood Valley, Ca 95470.

Forever Forests

Forever Forests, the tree-planting and conservation group established by Gwydion Pendderwen, will be planting trees over several different weekends this winter (if you missed last winter's New Year Weekend planting, you missed one of the best parties of the year). The projects include a lot more than 35 acres of reforestation, spread out over several weekends from late December through February with a five day tree planting: bash from December 28th through January 1st. The cedar, redwood, pine and other species that will be planted will remain as a *permanent forest preserve* in each location. No commercial logging will ever fell these trees. If you haven't received Forever Forests' new brochure telling the whole story (including how to arrange to help plant trees), drop them a card: Forever Forests; Box 212; Redwood Valley, Ca 95470.

Oak Tree

Otter, Morning Glory and others worked very hard again this year restoring the streambed on Coeden Brith, especially the area around Alison's Oak Tree. An enormous effort was made last year to save this tree, with several tons of rocks being packaged around its roots. Unfortunately the streambed scoured another two feet, undercutting the rock baskets and requiring the special efforts of this year. C.A. W. and the folks at Coeden Brith like to thank all the volunteers who have put so much effort into the land where so many good times have been had by Pagans of all persuasions.

Rituals and Songs

Gwydion is best known as a Bard, and his newest publication (even newer than *Wheel of the Year*) is *La Fheile Eoin: The Rites of Summer*, two ritual dramas with music. These were the plays presented at Coeden Brith summer solstice festival this year. If you missed them, or even if you saw them, you'll want to read "The Fox and the End of the World" and "The Dream of Iargalon," both with music and fantastic artwork. The cost is on

$3.00 from Nemeton, Box 212 Redwood Valley, Ca. 95470. It will be published soon, so get your orders in now!

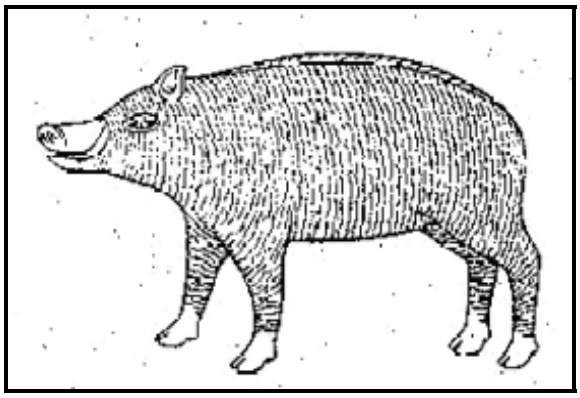
Midsummer Festival

The Coeden Brith Annual Midsummer Festival was all it promised to be – a weekend in the sun and forest of Northern California with 200 friendly Neopagans and a kaleidoscope of activities and rituals and meeting new people.

There were separate hearthfires for individual ceremonies, as well as a large main one for group activities. A Native American sweat lodge was built and traditional rites conducted therein. The Venusian Church from Seattle provided sensuous massages, and the Bee Tree brought along the honey. Gwydion organized, directed and performed music, songs, a ritual masque of his well-love "The Fox at the End of the World," and a late night "Dream of Iargalon." Initiations and ordinations, women's circles and sunrise chants, healings and blessings, revelations and wonders filled the weekend. It was a warm and cuddly gathering, people getting together in a friendly setting to share what we have in common, rather than dwelling on differences.

True congratulations and many thanks are due to Morning Glory and Otter Zell, and the rest of the folks at the Church of All Worlds, for what turned out to be a high point of the year.

-Ed.



Star-Gate Symbolic System, *designed by Richard H. Geer, art by Frank Casron, Cloud Enterprises, Box 1006, Orinda, CA 94563, 1979, $10.00 plus $1.50 shipping (and tax for California purchasers).*

This is a new deck of divination cards, only vaguely related to the traditional Tarot system. The pictures are simple, the symbolic structure has several levels, and the packaging is rather slick. For your money you get 96 somewhat flimsy small cards (2 ¼" x 3 ¼") printed on both sides, a folding plastic layout sheet and an instruction booklet.

The front of the cards include such pictures as: Tree, Wanderer, Root, Air, Chest, Glass, Mountain, Candle and various Stars (Star of Change, of Inwardness, of Impulse, etc.). These full color pictures are not great art, but they are easily understandably by almost anyone.

The backs of the cards have the symbols for the seven categories, the names of the cards again and their primary divinatory meanings. The categories are described thusly: (1) STAR Cards – moods or energies surrounding you; (2) STATE Cards – an out state or condition; (3) STAR-CROSS Cards – how you look or are seen; (4) GIFT Cards -- inner guiding qualities; (5) KEY Cards – a challenge to address; (6) GATE Cards – combined inner approaches; and (7) SIGN Cards – kind of fulfillment.

The usual sexism and creedism so common in standard Tarot designs are, for the most part, missing from this deck – perhaps because only the STAR-CROSS cards have people on them (all of who, however, are pink-skinned). The layout inscribed on the plastic (yuk!) sheet is fairly ordinary, the instructions are written simplistically (though there are some unusual touches to the method recommended for interpretation), and the divinatory meanings ascribed to the cards are somewhat shallow. But the system is quite usable, and not only by adults.

We have an extremely intelligent and creative friend named Cerridwen, who is ten years old and (having grown up in the Aquarian community) quite familiar with various Tarot decks. She was visiting recently while I was examining the Star-Gate deck and was immediately fascinated by the "kid-sized"cards and the "storybook" pictures. After a few minutes of playing with them, she declared they were "kid's Tarot deck" and proceeded to lay out some readings for us. Her choice of cards (done in the usual fashion, by shuffling the cards until they "felt right") for each layout was remarkably appropriate (far more than she realized). *This ten-year-old was able to give good readings her first day playing with the new deck.*

Some folks may feel that only the traditional Tarot designs have sufficient metaphysical depth to be worth using for divination and meditation work. The *Star-Gate Symbolic System* is - based on a complete numerological and astrological system (not, unfortunately, described in the accompanying literature), but even without these organizational details, the pictures chosen have sufficient archetypal vigor that they are perfectly capable of triggering the subconscious psychic forces behind successful divination work – even in children.

One interesting and unusual aspect of this divination system is that the instructions include a spell-casting procedure (not called that, of course). Users of the deck are encouraged to meditate on how the final cards could indicate a maximally beneficial outcome, and to create an emotionally powerful vision, based on those cards, of how things could be improved. People have been using Tarot decks for spell casting for centuries, but books on the subject seldom come right out and mention the procedures.

I think I can definitely recommend this as a beginning divinatory deck for children and adults. Whether the system behind it will prove satisfactory to experience metaphysical students remains to be seen – but there is no reason why we have to limit ourselves to the same Tarot images that have been common for the last 500 years. For those who want to try a new deck, the *Star-Gate Symbolic System* is well worth investigating.

- Isaac Bonewits

Shadow on the Stones, *Moyra Caldecott, Hill & Wang, New York, NY 1979, &$8.95, hardcover.*

When you come up against a Bronze Age god named Groth you know you're dealing with a baddie. This is not to mention his earthly representative, Na-Groth, who warlike tribesmen are terrorizing a sector of prehistoric Britain in *Shadow on the Stones*, the concluding book of Moyra Caldecott's trilogy begun by *The Tall Stones* and continued by *The Temple of the Sun*.

The "Tall Stones" trilogy falls into that increasingly large sector of literature written for advanced adolescents or as light fiction for adults. It's surely as thematically complex as the average pulp paperback, but the distinguishing mark is that most of the protagonists are teens or young adults faced with some crisis of courage and maturation.

Shadow on the Stones re-enters a land who history, while outside of conventional delineations, have become established through the fictional works of such authors as the Thirties occultist/novelist Dion Forture (especially in *The Sea Priestess*) and more recently Peter Valentine Timlett in his own trilogy of *The Seedbearers, Power of the Serpent* and *Twilight of the Serpent*.

It is Britain of the megaliths, the pre-Celtic Neolithic to Bronze Age culture responsible for the great stone circles and barrows of Western Europe. In the historical sequence accepted by these authors, the architects of Stonehenge, Avebury, etc., carried on a religious tradition begun in lost Atlantis and reinforced from contemporary Pharonic Egypt.

The trilogy concluded by *Shadow on the Stones* (the stones being megaliths, of course) tells of lives in this stable theocratic society threatened increasingly by greedy and warlike newcomers. These invaders are not identified, but "na" in the new ruler's name is a Celtic definitive article.

The invaded culture, exemplified by Isar, the youthful hero of the book, Ferm his mother and Karne his stepfather (hero of the first book), must control the threat with a mixture of necessary force (including some improbably Da Vince-esque war gliders!) and high magick's aid. Then they must try to restore the balance with the natural world, typified by the earth forces stored up in the sacred stone circles.

Shadow on the Stones has as its chief weakness the "got to rush, we're near the end" feeling so common in third books of trilogies. The paragraphs are shorter and terser, the pace is faster and faster and pretty-soon-like-this-things-are-hurried-to-a-conclusion.

The story of resisting tyranny is eternal, though, and the archeology may only be anticipating future conclusions. Probably best is the plausible explanation of how stone circles would have been used in a stable Pagan society – and that's something for your favorite articulate eleven-year-old to think about.

-Chas S. Clifton

Jay's Journal, "*edited" by Beatrice Sparks, Times Books, New York, NY, 1979, $7.95, hardcover*.

The Library of Congress cataloging description on the copyright page accurately lists this book as "Witchcraft – Fiction." That listing may be the only accurate item in the entire book. *Jay's Journal* claims to be a diary written by a teenage Mormon boy in the two years before he commits suicide at age sixteen. The book describes his growing involvement with "witchcraft" first defined vaguely as psychic exercises, but eventually revealed as the inevitable "devil worship."

Although the author does an excellent job of depicting the emotional turmoil of a devout Mormon teenager struggling to deal with the 20th century, her treatment of the occult in general and "witchcraft" in particular is replete with one gross error after another. She has Jay led into witchcraft by a follower of Astara – a singularly conservative metaphysical schools whose members would firmly disassociate themselves from anything even vaguely resembling their conception of "witchcraft." To make sure that this Astarian is seen as properly evil, he is later revealed to be a homosexual rapist of young boys. Most bizarre of all, however, is that this Astaran is able to teach Jay how to levitate heavy objects in only a matter of weeks! Not bad, considering that most people involved in psychic studies can work for years without developing that ability (or any of the others Jay so easily masters).

The rest of the book is a tear jerking soap opera of drug addiction, teenage sex and a gradual whirlpool of demonism (complete with cattle mutilations). The same scenario of an international Satanic Brotherhood infiltrating high schools and corrupting America's youth that was so successful in *The Stan Seller* by Baptist evangelist Mike Warnke is repeated by this Mormon author with colorful embellishments.

Jay's Journal is a singularly depressing book, especially for anyone who is actually familiar with current metaphysical movements in the United States. Distortions and mistakes are alternated with outright lies, mixed together in a manner designed to convince teenagers and their parents that the local Tarot reader or psychic healer is an active agent of the Christian Devil. It's a book I recommend every Aquarian in America should read – to remind themselves of just how unscrupulous their would be persecutors can be.

Sparks *could* have written a book in which she accurately described the beliefs and practices of one or more religious or magical groups in order to subject them to a doctrinal analysis according to Mormon dogma. Anyone who belongs to any faith is entitled to critique other systems. But instead of taking this honest approach, she chose to create an emotionally loaded work of fiction. After all, if you can scare people away from examining new worldviews by misrepresentation, you've saved the time and energy you would have spent convincing them that their old beliefs are still useful. *Jay's Journal* appears to be not just the result of gross ignorance, but a deliberate and successful effort to substitute fear and hatred for knowledge.

If, as many people in the Aquarian community suspect, the 1980's are going to be a period of chaos and economic collapse, then we can expect that both the government and the masses will be looking for scapegoats. High on the traditional list of useful victims are members of "funny religions". If there really is a collapse, then our people can once again expect to be murdered, raped and tortured in the name of the Prince of Peace.

And instead of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (the medieval witch hunting manual) our persecutors will be holding copies of books like *Jay's Journal* in their hands. Read it and weep.

-Isaac Bonewits

Witchcraft and Neo-Paganism, *J Gordon Melton, Institute for the Study of American Religion, Box 1311, Evanston, IL 60201, 1979, $5.00, 8 1/2 x 11 offset.*

Melton is a liberal Methodist minister who has been studying minority belief systems in the U.S. for over a decade. He has published sympathetic articles and books for Christian and academic presses. He runs the I.S.A.R., which has accumulated one of the best existing collections of books, articles, pamphlets and other materials relating to minority religions in America.

This latest work is subtitled "A Bibliographical Survey of Books, Periodicals, and Other Materials Representative of the American Magical Community." Like his previous efforts, it is a remarkably thorough and unbiased treatment of its topic. He lists 681 books and articles and 114 periodicals, broken down into such categories as The Magical Worldview, European Wicca, The Emergence of Ritual Magick, Witchcraft in England, Feminist Wicca, Paganism, Voodoo, Santeria, Hex and Huna.

Although he seems have decided to be diplomatic about accepting modern Wiccan dogmas about the supposed antiquity of Neopagan Witchcraft, the majority of his categories are present with accurate and well balanced introductions. He has listed dozens of items, including publications that this reviewer has never heard of before. He invites users of the listings to send in corrections and additions for future printings.

Melton has asked us for information about what has happened to the following (possibly defunct) Neopagan

organizations: Aquarian Family of Covens, Atlantian Wicca, Church of the Wiccan Rede, Dancers of the Sacred Circle, Delphic Fellowship, New England Coven of Traditionalist Witches, Our Lady of Endor Coven and the Religious Order of Witchcraft. Readers who can clear up the mysteries are requested to drop him a not. Those readers who are founders of new religious movements are also invited to send him a description of your group and copies of your literature ordering forms.

In any event, this bibliography is well worth buying for those who are interested in pursuing extensive literary research in the origins and growth of minority belief systems in America.

-Isaac Bonewits.

Gnosticon 1

First Gnostic Conference
October 26, 27, &28 1979
Mount Shasta, California.

The Greek word *gnosis* indicates a knowledge of the heart; an all-encompassing and unifying wisdom through intuition. Gnosticism Was a key e1ement of the pre-Christian Mystery Schools as well as the philosophies of Zoroaster, Pythagoras, Plato and others, Among the earliest Christian the Gnostics emphasized mystical knowledge as opposed to dogma and the necessity of salvation.

During the fourth century, under the auspices of the Emperor Constantine, previously independent Christian groups were organized into a central church based in Rome. Almost immediately, the more mystical and symbolic movements, including the Gnostics, were declared heretic by the newly organized church (heretical simply meaning departure from established dogma).

For the next nine hundred gears various Gnostic groups emerged and sometimes flourished until with the decline of the Crusades, official attention was once again turned toward the problem of heresy. The Inquisition — which became the Church's instrument for persecuting heretics — was formed specifically to eradicate the Cathars, a mystical sect with gnostic overtones. Modem gnostics, as represented by the Gnostic Society and Ecclesia Gnostica, trace their roots to some of these early groups, particularly the Knights Templar and., later, the Martinist Order of France. In its modern form gnosticism embraces a psychological view of religion, myth and symbol, an approach exemplified by the work of the late Carl G. Jung,

At our First Gnostic Conference, the Gnostic, Society and Ecclesia Gnostica invite you to join us for three days of inner quest and transformation.

The Conference

Gnosticon 1 will take place among the breathtaking surroundings of Mount Shasta, an inactive volcano with snowy peaks veiled by a mantle of clouds. This environment, which has given rise to many legends since the time of the Indians, is particularly conducive to awakening the subconscious imagery so important to an individual's perception, of gnosis.

During these three days we will inquire into different forms of Gnostic thought, including:

Hermetic Philosophy — with a careful -translation of the only authentic record of a Hermetic initiation ever found. The examination of this document will also show why the mysteries of Hermes Trismegistus were held by the church fathers to be equal to those of Christ.

Kabbalah — the gnosis of Israel perhaps the most encompassing system of understanding the world within and without, with its emphasis on perfect balance. Rightly it has been called the Yoga of the West.

Sufi Dancing — easy to learn folk dances done to traditional songs and chants from all the major religious traditions of the world, bringing gnosis of God through the ecstasy of music and dancing.

Magic — Kabbalistic and astrological ritual of the pentagram with Gnostic overtones. -

Holistic Health – the Gnostic approach to medicine—an all-encompassing approach to physical and mental health through a never-ending quest for harmony between the individual and the environment.

Informal gatherings, a Eucharist Service, panel with all the speakers for questions and answers and an optional celebration of Halloween on the evening of the 28th will be featured in the program.

GNOSTICON-I orientation desk will open at 11 AM. on Friday October 26th where you will receive your program for the Conference along with all information necessary during your stay. Formal opening of the Conference will be at 4P.M.

Discussions and lectures will be held in the conference room of the comfortable and well-appointed Tree House Motel in the City of Mount Shasta.

The Speakers

Stephan A. Hoeller, PhD. noted lecturer, kabbalist and author; born in Budapest and completed post-graduate work at Gregorian University in Rome; associate professor of Comparative Religions at the College of Oriental Studies in Los Angeles; member of the lecturing faculty of the Philosophical Research Society, President of the Southern California Federation of the Theosophical Society and President of the Gnostic Society in Southern California

Rosa Miller born of French descent; studied medicine, international law, philosophy, theology and comparative religion at various universities in Europe and America; the first woman to be public ordained priest in a valid catholic apostolic succession; lectures on Kabbalah and Gnosticism; Vicar-General of the Ecclesia Gnostica for Northern California; President of the Northern Californi chapter of the Gnostica Society and Vice-President of the Whole Life Center in Palo Alto.

Lewis S. Keizer, PhD. received PhD., Biblical Studies (New Testament, Hellenistic, and Coptic Gnostic Studies); Graduate Theological Union; Berkley California; Executive Director, Popper-Keizer the Advanced School for Gifted Children, Santa Cruz; Dean of the School of Humanities, Academy of Arts

and Humanities in Seaside; past lecturer and Acting Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and Classics at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Dr. Keizer is also a jazz musician as well as founder and conductor of the New Hastings Symphonic Band and the Mozart Festival Orchestra of Santa Cruz. .

Richard Hanuman received B.A. in Harmonistic Psychology at the University of California, Santa Cruz; formerly President of the Whole Life Center in Palo Alto; Founder of the Church of Hanuman and a long time student ff Ram Dass and Sufism

Erin Cameron graduate of the University of Arizona; post graduate work in theoretical as astronomy and psychology at the University of California, Los Angeles; uses astrology as a symbolic approach for more complete understanding and is a practitioner of Kabbalistic ritual.

Richard H. Sullivan, M.D. Dr. P.H. , F.A.C.P.M., received Doctorate of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco founding member of the American Holistic Medical Association; a Diplomat of the American Board of Preventive Medicine; A Fellow of the American College pf Preventive Medicine and the American Public Health Association; has served as President of Northern California Public Health Association, The California Academy of Preventive Medicine, The California Conference of Local Health Officers, and The Association for Holistic Health.

Accommodations & Registration

LODGING — All motels in Mount Shasta are reasonably priced For convenience and comfort we recommend that you stay at the Tree House. Rooms start at $8 per person plus tax in a four-person room and $26 for two persons in a queen bedroom. For reservations please contact the Tree House, a Best 'Western Hotel, Box 236, 1-5 & Lake Street, Mount Shasta CA 96067, (916) 926-3101 or by calling their toll free number (800) 528-12$4. Please specify that you are with Gnosticon-1.

MEALS—A variety of restaurants exist in Mount Shasta that caters to the vegetarian and meat-eater alike. An excellent delicatessen and bakery with fresh bread every hour is located next to the Tree House.

REGISTRATION—The suggested registration fee 'is $60 per person and $100 per couple. This registration fee is a guideline to help us meet expenses and not a prerequisite for attendance. If suggested amount cannot be met, please contact Reverend, Rosa Miller in Palo Alto.

To Get There

BY CAR—Interstate 5 will take you directly to Mount Shasta. Take the Lake Street exit and turn East. The Tree House is on the right hand side.

BY AIR— Hughes Air West, Frontier Airlines and West Air Service Redding Air with direct flights from San Francisco and Sacramento. Airport shuttle service after every flight to the Redding Greyhound Bus depot. Greyhound offers numerous daily trips from Redding to Mount Shasta at the rate of $4.36 per person.

GREYHOUND BUS — From San Francisco to Mount Shasta. One-way: $16.77, Round trip $31.86 per person.

If you are interested in car pools please call the Gnostic Society at (415) 494-7412 if live in Northern California, or (213) 467-2685 if in Southern California.

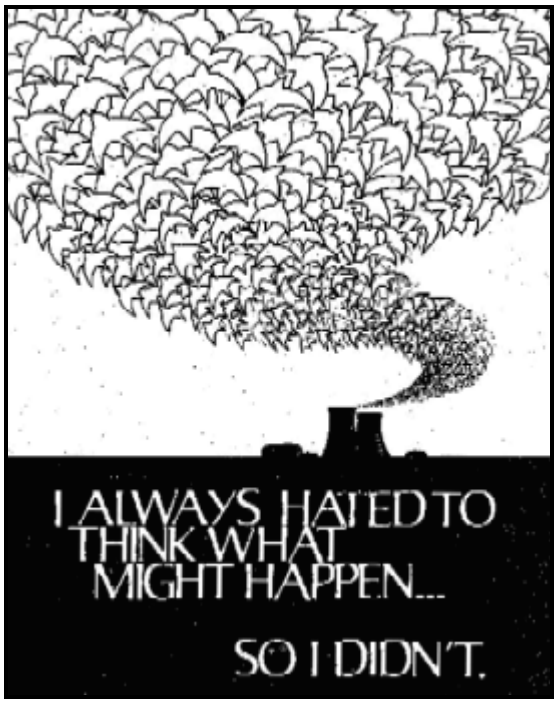
Gnosticon I
Gnostic Society/Ecclesia Gnostica
3437 Alma Street, Suite 23
Palo Alto, California, 94306 (415) 494-7412

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Telephone _____

Please Make Checks Payable to GNOSTICON 1

Regular Registration
Single $ 60 $ _____
Couple $100 $ _____

Deposit To Insure Space
$ 25 _____



LOCAL RESIDENT, HARRISBURG, PA.

What is a Growth Groupies Doing in the Anti-Nuke Movement?

By Jeff Love

This essay was originally published in the July issue of Meta-link; a metaphysical publication from Sonoma County California, and is c 1979 by Wonderbrink Publications.

I have always believed that if we could all get our heads straight by getting more conscious and taking more responsibility for ourselves personally, the problems of the world would work themselves out. I was wrong.

The word "politics" has always turned me off. What, after all, has politics to do with personal/spiritual growth? Besides, newspapers always have the same bad news and I never felt that I had any power to change the way things were going anyway. So

why sit around feeling all paranoid about it. Hot tubs and higher consciousness feel much better. Beautiful ideas are so delicious. Why bother with all those endless struggles?

But even constant bliss can get boring, so last year (1978) during the spring, I decided to find out what political action was all about. My ignorance was astounding. The only political action that I had thought about was the fat-cigar-in-backroom-kind that we are familiar with from old television movies and Watergate. My definition has changed since then; real politics is concerned, conscious people getting together to improve their lives and the lives of their loved ones. A year ago I joined the Abalone Alliance. . .

Intuitively I knew there was something going on behind the nuclear power industry and on a gut level it was leading to no good. I thought the exercise of getting actively involved would improve my dharma — you know, acting instead of just think in and talking. Little did. I know that my dharma was bigger than a nuclear plant.

It began with non-violent training with one of the member groups of the Abalone Alliance, The Friends Service Committee. These people (the Quakers) have been around for a long time, non-violently protesting the inequities of our system since before I was born. The Abalone Alliance is composed of many such groups and "affinity groups" formed from training sessions all over the state of California. The Abalone Alliance (counterpart to the Clamshell Alliance on the East Coast) got its name when Pacific Gas & Electric released some copper into the sea during construction of a nuclear power plant; this copper began to kill Abalones (an underwater mollusk) But, as I was to discover later, the deaths of Abalones is the least of our problems with the nuclear industry.

The training lasts one whole day and is one of the most educational experiences I can remember. First I learned about the nature of atomic energy and how it is used to make electricity. People are a up slogans to put on their t-shirts and the following one sums it up for me; *boiling water with nuclear energy is like cutting butter with a chain saw*. Then I found out the dangers involved. Suddenly all my worst fears about nuclear energy were clarified — even paranoids have real enemies. Having been brought up with the fear of Russian missiles you probably thought that they were your enemy. Guess who is building nuclear time bombs in your own back yard?

Next I learned about the process of consensus decision making which is the foundation of the Abalone Alliance's political structure. Break into small groups; divide the problem at hand. One of each group meets with spokespersons from the other small groups. If everyone agrees, the decision is made. If only one person disagrees, it's back to the small groups until everyone's ideas and. considerations are heard and taken into account in the final decision. It's wonderful to experience real democracy. One gets the feeling that we really have the power to make decisions. I look at the way the government is elected and wonder how it ever got that way. .

Then we broke into affinity groups. These are people who live near each other who work towards personal friendships; the members of the affinity groups meet regularly together to help support each other in up coming actions. Another function of the affinity groups is to keep itself non-violent: The police, it seems have a vested interest turning non-violent actions into violent ones. That's how they're trained — that's what they know how deal with. They know that they can win with violence and, as Gandhi proved, they are helpless against non-violence. They have been known, in the past, to infiltrate protest groups in order to instigate violence. The affinity group system helps prevent this simply by letting everyone know the people they're involved with personally.

We were also trained to stop violence before it happens should one of our group members fly off the handle. And we were taught for example how even the slightest touching of a police officer can be called "assault" or resisting arrest. Non-violence is not only a spiritual philosophy but the best strategy. "Gee," I thought, "whose side are the police on, any way?"

The training ended with role-playing. Here the affinity groups were put in situations similar to the ones we might encounter during a real action. Someone plays a cop or an angry worker and we play the protester; We're taught that they are not really: our enemies, but people who, like ourselves, believe in what they are doing. So our function is to change their beliefs about who we are (they may think we at Russian agents or worse and to try to communicate our concerns about the danger of nuclear power to them, even as they arrest us. Arrest who? Me??

The idea of civil disobedience is as old as America— you could even say it is what started America. When every legal channel, has been tried and closed to us, we have the right to commit an insignificant crime such as trespassing in order to prevent a much larger crime (such as another Three Mile Island). But not everyone can afford to spend time in jail; so many 'participants' act as support persons who help those who do. Jail? Yes, jail. If you plan to walk on someone else's property without their permission in America, you can plan on paying a fine and/or going to jail and being on probation. Last August 6th and 7th (1978) almost 500 people from all classes and all walk of life crossed over the line of PG&E's Diablo Canyon Nuclear power plant property and were arrested. But they knew the consequences of their actions and thought they were about to put nuclear power on trial.

A few interesting questions came to mind during the process, such as 'Why is PG&E, is well as all essential utilities private property?" Other equally interesting questions came up as the Diablo 487 came to face what we had initially referred to as "justice."

In smoke-filled rooms far for the eyes of the media, PG&E officials, various politicians, local lawyers and judges seemed to have decided the outcome of the trials long before they began. Almost unanimously the judges decided that these people had come all the way to San Luis Obispo (the nearby coastal city) for the thrill of trespassing. Nuclear power was not to be allowed as a defense. Did I say "judges" or "dictators?"

Well. I'm afraid that in a courtroom the judge can deem what can be presented as evidence on what issues and has the power to do just about anything, including jailing the defense lawyers if he wants to make the trial come out his way. What a rude awakening to find out that the judges and the police might just as well have been working for PG&E.

Suddenly, it dawns on us. This is a huge conspiracy we're fighting and nuclear power is only the tip of the iceberg.

Granted it is a pretty big tip, but wait until you see the iceberg. It looks like this: the reason nuclear power plants are built in the first place is not because they are safe, economical and an alternative to more important oil, as the industry has been claiming they are for the past thirty years. The plants are not safe enough for any insurance company in the world to risk insuring them. You the taxpayer and the unfortunate victim will pay for any accident with your taxes and your health, and your children's children's taxes and their health, if they have any. The plants are not, economical if, for example, you add the cost of decommissioning and guarding the waste products for a quarter of a million years. A nuke is only good for thirty years and then the power company will dump each glowing plant on the public. Reliable? Statistics show the opposite even if you disregard the near catastrophe of Three Mile lsland, Yes, they are an alternative to more imported oil, but what about imported uranium? Guess which oil companies, have cornered the uranium market? ,

'So why are they built? As you know all utilities are monopolies and the government (In theory) has laws against: monopolies, So special laws allow these privately owned companies to remain monopolies while (theoretically) protecting

the public from the extremes of the profit motive by limiting the amount of profit they can make. It turns out that the rates the utilities are allowed to charge are based on how much capital they have invested, in order to provide service. And what do you think is the most expensive and therefore the most profit increasing investment a utility can make? At about two billion dollars each it's hard to beat a nuke. But the utilities are regulated by the government aren't they? Guess whose favorite ex-employees are on the regulatory commission?

So we get down to some basic questions about why the fundamental resources that we depend on are in the hands of the profiteers. The United States is one of the few, if not the only, western country where a few powerful corporations own its essential resources instead of the government owning them. Do you realize that the annual combined budgets of the, major oil companies is twice that of the largest government agency, the Pentagon? The amazing fact is that private corporations are more powerful in terms of getting people elected (inducing judges) and in setting policies than all 200 million of us average Americans. But then only about half bother to vote, and very few are willing to jump fences for what they believe in.

So, what has all this to do with spiritual growth and higher consciousness? The belief that you can sit back from the political realities and work on just yourself is just that, a belief. There, is an assumption within this attitude that somehow it will work itself out if you just keep your head straight. *The fact is that by not participating actively in changing the world for the better, you are holding the world where it is.*

The people who run things now do so only because we're not doing it. They will continue to try to keep us from doing it for as long as there is profit in it. You may not think of yourself as profit motivated because you have switched to other, in your estimation, higher motivations such as spiritual development, ecological harmony, and love of one another. These life-affirming directions you have chosen are where most of us really want to go if we had the choice. But we do not have the choice. Others more powerful than us at the present will make those choices for us and they won't base their decisions on spiritual growth.

In Search of the Lady

Rhiannon's Mystery

By Stephen W. Abbott McCaully

The following prose-poem dedicated to the Goddess Rhiannon, Goddess of the Wind and Song, was written in a mediumistic trance on Thursday, March 29th, 1979 at 3 AM. I was inspired to some degree by Fleetwood Mac's song about Rhiannon, sung by Stevie Nix. The greater part of my inspiration came from my recent studies and researches in relation to this particular goddess, material that I intend to publish at a later date. I'd like to thank Zai Zatoon for her lovely artistic rendering of the Goddess Rhiannon. I am interested in all comments about this work.

The Journey

I am being taken out of my body, directly out of my body by some unknown force. At first I resist, but after a time I realize that this unseen force does not wish to do me harm. Quite the contrary, it wishes to take me hither and yon away from the confines of my body and mind into another world that I have seen only in glimpses. A world of unearthly beauty and light. An immortal world where time ceases its unending pace. A place where dwelleth the divine kindred of my Celtic race.

I am out of my body floating on my thoughts and allowing them to transport me to this other-worldly place, beyond time and space and even memory. I gaze down at the sites below and see an earth strange and transfigured. Vestiges of the 20th Age are not to be found in any form. There are no cars, no street nor planes, nor trains. Just masses of green and patches of rivers and stream, and occasionally a village flows by.

The air about me is fresh and clean, no smog to poison my lungs and brain. My motion slows in pace, and my memory relates to me its tales of the Celtic race. The winds about me are pressing closer and closer and growing cooler. But I feel not the winds harshness, for I am now clothed in fine, white linen which magically fits my body as if it had been patterned for me. It smells of crisp fresh snow. I am no longer in free flight, but standing on the top, which seems to me a familiar place, and evokes to mind my Celtic race. My mind tries to trace this rock-strewn hill within the bounds of my living memory. After a time it finds the passage to the hidden door that conceals this long buried memory. Through my mind I pass through this door of memories lost and come at last to realize where am, even to know what force has brought me hither through the bounds of time and space, to dwell at last with my Celtic past.

The Encounter with the Lady

My mind has done its work: A great feeling of warmth and mirth now consumes my inner being. I am in a place of grace a power and beauty. A place that I have known before in another life and time, a place where many a sacrifice has been performed to truth and light. The name of this place is whispered on the lips of the wind, and I listen to what the winds wish to tell me:

'Thou hast been transported to this place beyond time and space, and even beyond your deepest memories. This place thou knowest by the name Corshedd Arberib, the hill throne of justice and Sacrifice of this world and the Otherworld, presided aver by the Lady of justice and Light, Wind and Air and Beauty Bright. Rhiannon is my name and love and song be my might. To my abode thou hast come this night.

The wind now takes the form of the most radiant and beautiful woman that I have ever seen in all my life, dressed in a gown of clouds and light, whose airy presence brings to me tears of grand delight. And in a moment of timelessness the Great Goddess of singing Birds and Loving Life stands before my being. I gaze upon her and my mouth forms words that seem strange to my senses. I speak to the Lady of the Wind's True Song:

'Oh Rhiannon; Oh Rhiannon, Beauteous Goddess of Life, Light and Love fashion for me a dove of Love.

She gazes upon my linen-draped frame, with eyes so wise and tinged with flame, and speaks to me and calls to me and calls me by name with a voice so musical I cry in shame.

The Grey-eyed Lady speaks.

"Oh Bard of my people I have brought you hither to this place of light, back to your time honored home this night. Be not ashamed of thy lips desires for thou art welcome in my sight. Here in my throne room thou shalt stay the night and listen to the tales of woe and plight, which I shall impart to thee with grand delight.

And with the wind, which is her element, she tells me tales of woe, and bedevilment, which brought so many tears from out of my eyes that a river began to form, which reached my thighs, and a fire consumed my ears and eyes. Then she blew away my river of tears and cleansed the redness of my eyes and ears.

After a time the Lady spoke to me again:

'O Bard of my people, you have passed this test. Your tears flow honestly down thy breast. In many ways thou art the best, but still thou must pass the final test.

She told me tales of love and beauty that went beyond the rest, and I found myself laughing and then crying like all the rest. Once again a river formed and as before she blew it away and cleansed the redness from my eyes and ears and wiped away all my left over tears. She spoke to me a sleeping rune, which made my mind sway and swoon. But before my lids had fully closed, I heard her say to me in repose:

"Oh Child of Earth, Oh Bard of Loving Heart, I send thee back to relearn thy art, and when though hast accomplished this, I shall call thee back to dwell in this, thy true abode of immortal bliss.

When I awoke I was back in my earthly home, and suddenly I felt so alone and saddened. But when I realized all that had happened, my heart and mind were happy and gladdened.

The Pledge to the Lady

"Oh Lady Rhiannon, Oh Patroness of those who follow the Bardic path, I shall relearn my art and return to the Path of Bard and Druid, of Mage and Sage, and Wisdom of Age, and ever shall I strive to reach the highest path to the highest goal of life and love and freedom of soul. Farewell to thee Oh Lady of Memory, farewell to thee Oh Lady of the Wind's True Song, farewell to thee who taught me this song of life and love and wisdom gone. Farewell to thee sweet Rhiannon.

And now I sit before my desk to study and learn the true poet's quest, and one day soon I shall come again to her holy place of wisdom and learn the arts that will grant me the freedom to live and love within her kingdom.

Bibliography

I recommend the following books to enhance understanding of the Goddess Rhiannon and her Mysteries

1. The Mabinogion, Lady Charlotte Guest
2. Celtic Mythology, Proinsias Mac Cana
3. Pagan Celtic Britain, Anne Ross
4. The Fates of the Princes of Dyfed, Cenydd Morus
5. Celtic Myth and Arthurian Romance, Roger S. Loomis
6. Celtic Heritage, Ancient Tradition in Ireland and Wales, Alwyn and Brinley Rees
7. Early Irish History and Mythology, T.F. O'Rahilly
8. Celtic Myth and Legend, Charles Squire
9. Studies in the Arthurian Legend, John Rhys.
10. Welsh Legends and Folktales, Gwyn Jones.
11. Myths and Legends of the Celtic Race, T.W. Rolleston
12. Celtic Folklore: Welsh and Manx, John Rhys.
13. A Celtic Quest, John Layard
14. Mythology of Ancient Britain, Charles Squire.
15. Celtic Mythology and Religion, Alexander Mac Bain
16. The Mabinogion, translated by Gwyn and Thomas Jones.
17. Women of the Celts, Jean Markale
18. The Mabinogi Translated, Patrick K. Ford
19. The Druids and Their Heritage, Ward Rutherford.
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Sushumna: The Chakra Column

By Anodea Judith.

This is the third in a series of articles on the charka system. Chakras, in this system, are defined as energy centers in the body that correspond to levels of consciousness, bodily processes, and categories of "external reality." The basic seven charkas, from bottom to top are as follows: one) earth, centering, survival; two) water, sex, emotions; three) fire, power, active energy; four) air, love, affinity; five) ether communication, creativity; six) time, clairvoyance; seven) cosmic consciousness, Godhead, 1,000 petaled lotus, seat of enlightenment.

This series of articles is some original conceptualization based on research of common interpretations of many systems. Due to the psychic and metaphysical aspects, the charka system is very hard to express verbally. The author suggests that the read bear with the logical inadequacies, and instead turn inward for personal experience in order to understand the functioning of these centers. Any comments or criticisms are most welcome.

Chakra Two

We have come from the earth; energy that is still, solid, dense consciousness that is concerned with survival, our bodies. We have an understanding of grounding and have talked about things associated with one— singleness, solitude a point, beginning, unity. This is all concerned with the first chakra.

Now we come to chakra number two and add a new dimension. The point becomes a line, solid becomes liquid, the density of the energy is decreased and a new degree a freedom is obtained. Physical matter (seen as densely manifested energy in the first chakra exhibit distinctive characteristics which can be classified according to similarities and differences and regarded in terms of polarities. We can look at the polarities as part of the basic motion of the universe, both as cause and result.

Psychologically, we can look at this motion manifesting in terms of attraction and repulsion. The attraction as well as the repulsion are basic forces behind our concepts of *desire*, within the concept of desire is the organism's (or person's) *natural* inclination towards the circulation of its own energy, both within and outside itself.

Each chakra has an associated element that remains fairly consistent throughout most systems, and the element for the second chakra is water (flowing above earth, chakra one). Water is cool, clear formless; flowing, constant seeking and *naturally* finding its own lever. The water flows over the earth, guided not by it own will, but by the shape of that which it encounters.

Likewise Emotions (from *e*, meaning out, and *movere*, to move) 2 are not always guided by our will or conscious control. We don't consciously decide who, what, when or where to love or hate, laugh or cry. These feelings are triggered by the existence of outside events, situations, or people as they interact with us. What makes me cry may not affect you, and vice versa. Although emotions *can* be controlled, their initial existence is not under our control. Have you willed or consciously created the emotion you are now trying to control? If so, why does it need controlling?

Emotions, polarities, dichotomies, sensation, desire, and sexuality are all aspects of the consciousness level in the second charka, working interdependently.

Our point, from the first charka, now has become a line, or a *connection* between two points. The energy frequency of the second charka lies not in the points, but in the connection between them. This is the dynamic, seemingly active force of the second charka.

But is it active? In the world of "two," the world of differentiation, we have yin and yang, the two basic forces in the universe as expressed in Chinese philosophy. In this system, the yin represents the feminine, the passive, the receptive, and yang the masculine, the creative, the active. This second charka dualistic concept of yin and yang can be applied to all of the charkas (one through seven). The first charka, which represents oneness, unity, and beginning, would be classified as yang. This would make the second charka yin. So instead of being dynamic and active, it is receptive – a view that is contrary to most thinking about sexuality and emotions.

Everything in the universe is in motion. Even the molecules in what we experience as solid mass are moving. We are all looking for completion. We are all on a path somewhere. If we stopped everything in the world right now for the purpose of looking at it, we would find everything was straining, on its way to going somewhere, on its way to becoming. The car on the street, headed for home, a falling apple on its way to the ground, clouds on their way to condensation, streams on their way downhill. This motion is part of the basic yin-yang of the universe, manifesting as change. Constantly. This change is a force which can be worked with, if understood. The best example of this is the I Ching, or Chinese Book of Changes. The I Ching is a system of divination based on the idea that everything is in change, governed by these two basic polaric forces, yin and yang, feminine and masculine, and that by understanding where you are in terms of these forces, you can understand where you are likely to be next. These states and changes are determined by casting to "change" six sets of choice, which manifest as yin or yang, giving 74 possible combinations. Each of these combinations is called a hexagram and represents some basic situation that occurs *in nature*. If we are in harmony with this nature, we can better govern our lives and achieve wisdom, according to the I Ching. Aside from the fact that the I Ching is thousands of years old, and somewhat sexist, (they don't mention a superior woman) I find it an excellent system, worthy of much study.

So now we have polarities and motion and emotion, which can be described as the moving out of the motion within our own selves. (Ever have butterflies in your stomach or shaking spasms when you laugh or cry?) And since this is yin, we have postulated that it is a passive, rather than an active force. It happens naturally and spontaneously, without effort, at least in the healthy individual. Unfortunately it doesn't happen that way for all of us. Some of us have held in our emotions for so long that it has become habitual, and we are unaware that we are doing so.

What is this a result of, and what effect does it have on us? In a culture that largely supports this kind of control, I think this is worth examining.

First of all, how do we *experience* emotions? If our answer to this is movement, then how do we experience the movement? I would say it is all experienced as sensation, or the perception of data by the senses. The data which is kept from reaching the higher centers and becoming information manifests as unconscious information or a *feeling*. Something is trying to give us a message. A message for which our human computer is not programmed. But human beings are not computers, and it is our emotions that make up part of the difference. Let's take the following example:

I'm out on a date with a strange man and we go to a house somewhere. I walk into the house and the house doesn't *feel* right. My conscious mind cannot find a logical reason for it, but my sensory data tells me there is something wrong here. This is an example of a feeling, the precursor of an emotion.

The man I am with says, "Oh don't be silly, there's nothing wrong here. Relax!" But I really feel that there is something wrong, and for lack of *validation* (agreement, confirmation); my feeling turns perhaps to fear, or maybe anger at the man, both of which are *emotions*. Had my feeling been validated or supportively respond to, we might have both been able to track down the source of the feeling and turn it into information. Or perhaps he knows the cause (has the information already) and could explain, "Yeah, well there's this old lady who practices a strange form of magic, but she never really does anything harmful." And perhaps I would relax and forget about it, and let my consciousness move on to other things.

If I didn't, I would get "stuck" there, and all evening I would be off in my own world, giving my attention to my *feelings*, build them up into emotions that I then have to deal with. The basic nature of feeling and emotions is to express themselves, or to "move out." It is through this process that we turn the data into information.

So why do we suppress feelings?

Earlier, we defined feelings as data that does not compute. As I said in the last article, we live in a culture that is "out of the body" oriented. We live in our heads. That is the information we govern ourselves by in our present state of civilization, (generalization notwithstanding). If the culture represses data that

does not agree with its dogma, it keeps the programming where it is. "I don't care what it feels like, this is what it is! Shut up and do what I say!" We've all heard this. And yet we have a sense that something else exists.

The rise of kundalini is often described as a painful, burning process that is frightening to someone who does not have a teacher to allay the fears. My theory on this is that with the rise of kundalini, or the processing of information from "lower" charkas to "higher" charkas comes a great deal of realization that does not correspond nicely with what we have been taught and conditioned by, what we have built our lives around. In fact, the difference is so astonishing; it's like being thrown into another world. Gross realization that can show us the absurdity of our lives can be frightening indeed! As we get into the other charkas, this becomes more and more apparent.

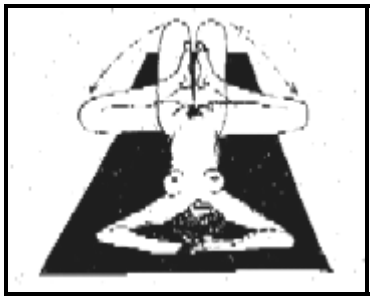
We have a culture that keeps us out of the lower charkas. We looked at this in discussion of the first charka, at the subsequent relationship this population has with the earth that presently supports them. What happens if we look at the water on the earth? We see the same thing. Pollution, dams, drought, occasional floods. And what happens where people get angry, have outbursts, or get locked in their feelings? They are classified as crazy and locked away. The entire charka is repressed; emotions, sexuality, pleasure, the whole works.

Data (raw sensory input) that becomes information (data that is assimilated and assembled conceptually) originally comes to us through our bodies. This date comes to us through processes in all our charkas and the more we let in and process, the more information we have. If something is trying to give us a message, then why not listen? In harmony with the yin concept of second charka, we should be receptive.

There are people who seem to get stuck on an emotional level quite often, much to their own detriment. I find this is usually a case of invalidation. They have been invalidated for so long about what they feel that they stick it out "down there" habitually just for self-validation, guarding the data and never really letting it turn to information.

No matter how much we transform energy, and raise it up the charkas, we never get over our need for the lower charkas. We must always be able to receive and process information this level. Just because we learn to think with our heads does not mean we outgrow our use for our feet.

There is a further result of blocking emotion-sensory shut down. Not only is the data kept form becoming information, but further data is screened out, so as not to "tilt" the computer. This can be dangerous because a) it takes energy to maintain the screen, and b) it starts to impart the functioning of the whole sensory system. This makes everything a little more dull, muddly, and lifeless. We lose our joy, our impetus for movement. Paradoxically, we feel something is wrong when this happens, but so much data is screened, we cannot make out what is behind the feeling and we get stuck there trying to figure it out. By this time, the charka is so crowded with pent-up emotion that we can't even really "feel" it. Can this pattern be broken?



Movement (exercise), circulation of breath, massage, someone that you can share your feelings with; bio-energetics, anger-release (even hitting your pillow); crying even if you don't know what for, all seem to help. Old emotions come off in layers, so it takes time and patience. Since emotions are felt in the body, it is very important to re-establish identity with your body by doing something to make feel good. This can be done in a variety of ways, through grounding, eating, exercising, sex, good music…(I'd love to have people send me lists of ways they can make their bodies real!).

The experience of "reality" seems to go hand in hand with validation, so I would like to talk about validation as an interface between emotions and the major aspect of the second charka, which is sexuality.

We started out as individuals, theoretically with seven charkas each. We have energy in all different states flowing through each of our charkas as well as through our lives. This is an enormous amount of information! As children grow, they make a journey through all the charkas: they begin, barely aware of existence, dependent n the mother for survival. They wet, they drink, they become more aware of the whole world of sensations. All they have at this point is emotions. When they are hungry, they cry without any conscious deliberation. As they gradually become aware of themselves through movement, they realize their separateness, and power. They (like all of us) are still caught in the foregoing processes, and the relationships that are part of this process become part of their awareness and part of their first experiences of love. Gradually, as they grow older, they learn to communicate, see conceptually, think for themselves, and find their own spirituality.

But none of this would take place if it weren't for some continuity of experience, some interaction with others, and some *validation* that what they feel is real, or that someone else feels, sees, hears, or thinks similar things. When they say "milk" and get milk, that validation teaches them language, as well as the concept that they are able to procure what they want and need for themselves.

Sexuality is one of the greatest forms of validation I know. I can think of little else that is more validating than lying in someone's arms, feeling close and feeling mutual energies running through us. It opens up energy on all the charkas and gives us so much validation that we make more of ourselves (even in the literal sense!). Someone loves us, someone makes us feel good, someone validates that yes, and indeed we are really here.

Sexuality also offers a release of tension, especially tension created by held-in emotion. Tension can be described as inhibited movement, or the blocking off of a natural inclination to do something (i.e. cry, get mad, express fear). However, the sexual release is often hardest to come by when it is need the most. When the charka has been closed, it does not have as much energy going through it, and therefore does not generate as much energy. It's like trying to dribble a basketball from a resting position.

There is a psychological phenomenon involving sensation, which is commonly called *the pleasure principle*. This principle states that human being naturally move toward that which is pleasurable and away from that which is painful. Aside from a small minority of masochists, I think this principle is easy to accept.

But our culture does not seem to exhibit this principle when you really think about it! Television screens allow our children to watch murders and crime shows but censor any scenes that involve lovemaking. Hard work and upward mobility are stressed but life's simple pleasures are frowned upon and those of us who believe otherwise are called lazy, weak, and self-indulgent. But the pleasure principle lives on and leaks out in the form of alcohol (to loosen cultural inhibitions), violence, rape, amusement parks, poorly made pornographic movies, drugs and millions of dollars

worth of advertising playing on the repressed sexuality in all of us. When something natural is taken away from us, the resulting gap can be used as an implement for control. Advertising is the best example of this.

There have been studies of culture comparing levels of sexual taboos to violence statistics. The more stringent the taboos on sexuality, the higher the violence rate; and conversely, the more sexually permissive the culture, the lower the crime. 3

It is my strong belief that pleasure and sexuality do not debilitate the organism, or inhibit the flow of kundalini in any way. Yes, many yogis and gurus have achieved a certain lever of awareness through bypassing the sexual charka, but it can be argued that they lack a certain level of awareness as well. Furthermore, Western culture is different from Eastern as is the psychological make-up of individuals. It is true that second charka energy has more of a tendency to get "tacky" under the wrong circumstances, but I feel that this is also a result of the cultural repression that exists.

I cannot deny that abstinence from sexuality can give one an increase of energy for other things. No intimacy, no one to worry about, no one to take up your time, made demands, confront you on your views…It is also true that intense engagement in sexual activity can given one an increase in energy to use for other things. And personally, I prefer the latter. I find that I am more tolerant, more relaxed, more spiritual, more loving, more energetic, and generally healthier physically when my sexuality is flowing. Again, we are talking about a yin charka, and the idea is to be receptive, to flow like water, to move, to expand. To inhibit this flow, is, I believe contrary to the basic harmony of nature, and a general impediment to the flow of energy through charkas.

In the process of evolution, I believe we are moving from constriction to greater freedom. The movement of energy through the charkas supports this, for the energy gets less and less dense as it rises. Moralistic dogmas tend to inhibit freedom and deny our rights to make our won judgments and decisions. Anyone denied this right is bound to be held back from their own growth. And I don't think *that's* moral at all!

There is more involved that just the second charka in making sexual contact with another person. Even on the most casual of levels, there is a certain amount of communication involved (5th charka), though processes (6th and 7th), energy mobilism (3rd). When we contact another person we contact all seven charkas worth of energy in that person if it is a healthy exchanges. If it is not a healthy exchange, the energy is still there, it is just denied realization. In contacting another human being, an aware person cannot help but learn. Sexuality, as part of the basic motion in the universe, is part of the general evolution of consciousness. It brings us together, mixes us up; we exchange energy, love, ideas, and it disperses us when it is time to move on. Not only that but it continues the species. We couldn't survive without it.

I have probably learned as much from my various sex partners over the years about a variety of subjects as I have learned from any institution, work experience, or spiritual pursuit. Yet even as I write this statement, I wonder if I should be saying this in a published paper, due to the cultural conditioning that still exists around me. Will people make moral judgments about me and discount what I am saying? If sexuality were openly and squarely dealt with, I believe we wouldn't have the problems of population control that we now have, which is another strike against the earth. The emerging sexual consciousness in this country, and the simultaneous close to zero population growth support this, and I believe they are connected.

Sex Magic

Now that we have opened all the channels that keep us blocked in our second charka, what can we do with this energy?

Well, first of all, we don't have to do anything with it. We can just keep it for ourselves and experience it for what it is. I find many people who are so intent on sending their sexual energy up their spine, that they have ceased to be able to really appreciate the experience. They remain outside of their bodies, as if externally controlling the energy, and the intensity of their experience is diminished. Sexual energy can be sent to any of the charkas. It can be grounded, and used to make the body more real, more centered and solid. It can be used in the second charka for triggering movement, emotion and tension release, for sheer pleasure, for making the sense clearer and sharper. It can be used in the third charkas as power and energy. Chakras vibrate, and just by increasing the activity of a charka, you increase the general vibrational level of the body. This can give you more physical energy. But please, on a third charka level, let's avoid the power plays and games that often go along with sexuality (more about that in the next article). To use sexual energy for love is self - explanatory (4th charka). Using sexuality on a fifth charka level is interesting. Many things can be communicated with one's body that cannot be communicated any other way. Sexuality itself can also be improved when the communication between the partners is clear, both in the general relationship and in the communication of sexual needs and preferences. On a sixth charka level, I find that it is much easier to link minds, or read telepathically with people I have been sexual with. Sexual communication also enhances the ability to intuit needs. And on the seventh charka level—at that is some of the best energy this charka can aspire to.

The principles of sex magic and Tantra also work on the basic yin-yang of the universe. The belief is that these masculine and feminine forces manifest themselves as archetypes, some of which can be though of as Gods and Goddesses. The idea behind Tantra (Hindu method of raising energy through sex) and western sex magic is that the partners involved are taking part in the basic dance of the universe, and are manifesting their own inner divinity as Gods and Goddesses when they make love. The act of sex, in this case, is designed to increase the realization of this divinity through mental connection to the Gods during sex, and mutual worship on the part of the parts towards each other as Gods. Each partner sees the other as the respective God or Goddess, and in the Union of these forces, the basic union of the cosmos is continued and experience. "As above, so below." Some forms of sex magic involve stimulation to the point of orgasm, and some stop short just at the point of orgasm. In either case the purpose is to raise energy to use for whatever purpose is intended by the participant. Tantric practices generally try to inhibit orgasm, and it is part of the yogis discipline of self-control as well as an experience to realize deity. Unfortunately, Tantric practices are generally designed for men, and the role of the woman is only to be there for the religious experience of the man; to not be too demanding, too

erotic, but erotic enough. In India as well as other places, there are temples where there are women who are trained to do just that, and it is considered part of their spiritual work. In America we have prostitutes, and our culture does not consider this part of a woman's spiritual work. I personally think that anything we do is part of our spiritual growth if we are awake and aware while we do it. However, I do not believe oppressive sexism is particularly spiritual for any of us, and I would like to see more techniques of sex magic developed for women.

Although sex magic is based on the union of opposite forces it can be just as valid for homosexuals of either sex. It may ever be that women are more able to be Goddesses and consecrate each other as Goddesses due to the common understanding they share of the feminine principle (and likewise respectively for men). I think homosexuality is part of the whole process of releasing cultural taboos around sexuality, and leads us to greater freedom, understand, and general enlightenment for members of either gender.

I would like to insert here another note about sexuality and power. In our present culture, there has been greater permission given to men for sexual gratification than for women. Women are taught to wait, to withhold, to be "good" girls. Aside from the theory that this custom comes from a basic denial of the female principle, it is interesting to note the relationship between men and women concerning power. The men presently have the power, the confidence and the energy to go out and do what they intend, while the women stay home and fret about their acceptability, get lost in their emotions (remember validation?) and generally remain powerless. It has been my experience in working with pre-orgasmic women (women who are unable to achieve climax) that when they learn to ask for their own pleasure, to achieve orgasm and feel good about their sexuality, their whole outlook on power changes, and they develop a new self-confidence, a feeling of power and energy in their daily lifes.4 This is rapidly changing and will soon be out of date, but it does prove a relationship between sexuality and the upper charkas.

Conclusion

We have come a long way in our discussion of qualities associated with the second charka. We have talked about polarities, yin and yang, movement and the basic motion of the universe. We have brought these principles into our bodies and examined how they work on a personal level – as emotions, feelings, desires, sexuality and sensation. We have talked about sensation being a level of data that has not yet become information and the need for validation in order for it to do so (self-validation is also possible). We have talked about emotions and the need for their release and the organism's shut down true to lack of release. And we have culminated (as second charka energy tends to do) in sexuality; talking about sex magic and consecration to the Gods.

We live in a culture that is basically upper charka oriented, and we talked about the negative effects this has on the environment and on its inhabitants. I have stated my personal bias in favor of opening the second charka and supporting sexuality. However, I would like to add that despite the open avocation of sexuality, it *is* only one level of consciousness and one level of energy. To dwell too much on it is to miss out on some of the very exciting things that are yet to come.

Notes

For a discussion of degrees of freedom in physical theory, see *The Reflexive Universe*, by Arthur M. Young, Delacorte Press 1976.

"Body Pleasure and the Origins of Violence," by James W. Prescott, *The Futurist*, 1974.

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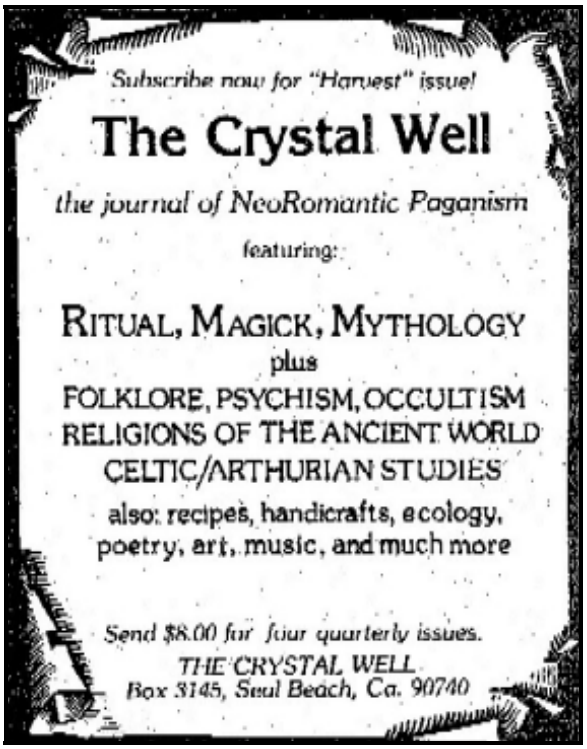
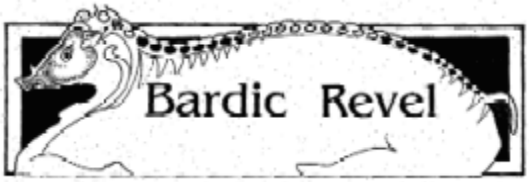
For more discussion on this see Sex for Women, Carmen Kerr.





Autumn Equinox Meditation

I see the sunlight streaming down in great gold shafts and blocks, solid, as it never is at any other time. The grass is greener than in spring, forest green, rich, not with growth, but with fulfillment. The earth, the air itself, is thick with richness and harvest, and approaching cold.

Praise be the gods that never died, for they are True Gods, and non man-created only, though for long and long we thought them extinct. Still, times like this, they sing to us, and we know it is not only our own voices that we hear, not only the sunlight, not only the grass. The dulcimer lays across my knees. I can no longer play it. I had to stop, to look at the wood, the light in it, the curving sides, the great carved head, the strings and frets. Autumn had got into it, and I could longer use it as a tool. It had become Magick itself. Each season has such times, when the singing comes through, and all is as the Mother dreamed it, not as it is on Earth.

Coffee and bread and wood smoke on the air, and I am not longer on the Mountain, but among the houses of men, and my time approaches, the wild sweetness of it. It feels so strange to be in Faerie, and on the common streets. We thought the Magick died, and belonged to an older world, but it is here! Here! I was like the young Jew, who feared that if he moved to another land, his God would not hear him. I ask forgiveness. Magick is not defeated by

asphalt, and the myths of the new Age are now, for now there is more than fear, more than hope. And I wear a body in this time, and I am glad.

Autumn has got into me, too, and I am Magick itself, the full fruit of the earth, and such fruits as not a score of centuries has seen. They thought it dead, and, after a while, so did we; and now behold, the light has become so solid as to make a body, and given life to me, and to these others, and to a new time of myth. To believe it cannot happen again is only to fail, and to build up walls between ourselves, and the unseen which are being torn down from the other side. I could not have come down from the Mountain otherwise.

And now I know those others' fears of us were in their own way correct. For if I am Magick, I make all around me Magick too, and the foot I have in the other world treads the common ground. Praise to the Gods of Harvest, praise the kitchen garden, grey with dew in the cool mornings, mellow in the long afternoon sun, praise the warm fruit in the hand, for the seed that was dead always reaches its impossible fruition, and no cycle lasts forever.

Joan Carruth, D.A.L., O.D.C.
Co-Adr. Mother Grove

Prayer for Foghamhar

The Lady's tears
Glisten on the webs of spiders
Glutted with the blood of summer

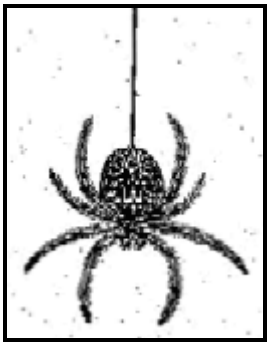
The sky cools.
Its fire has fallen
Onto the leaves of Autumn

Day retreats,
Night returns on wings of wind,
Shaking the stars.

The eternal Hunter,
Pinned on his back,
Struggles to rise
To herald the time of death.

Let us drink then
Of the waters of life.
Let the fire of spirit
Flow in our soul
From here back to summer

Kyle Griffith 9/21/79



Stonehenge

I have seen the cold stone faces
of holy men in sacred places
praying with unspoken phrases
to exorcise me of my sin

I have seen my temples torn
by viciousness of 'sanctity' born
and I stand silent there, and mourn
the Silence of the gods within.

I have seen the witches die
in flames that lit the winter sky
while laughing crowds of men stood by
and cheered their victory.

And I have seen the druids come
to worship in the newborn Sun
the cycle has again been run –
Can *now* the Truth be free?

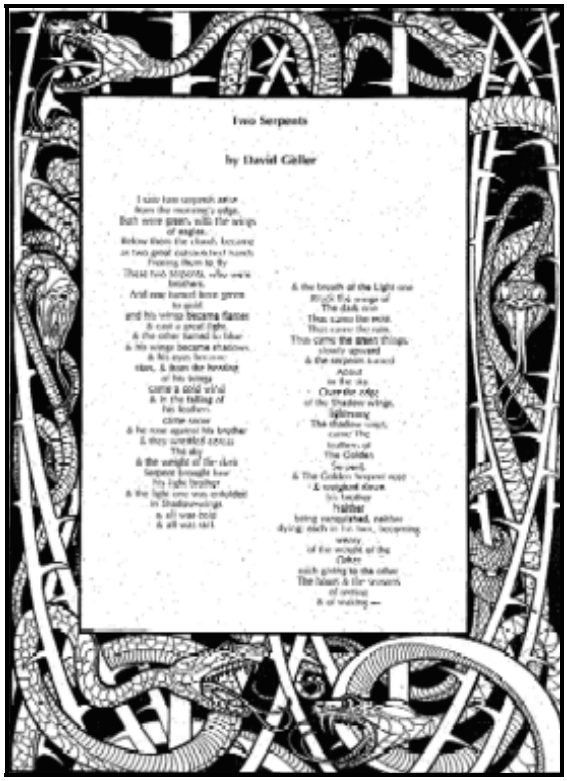
19 February 1979
Arlynde d'Laughlan

Two Serpents

by David Geller

I saw two serpents arise
from the morning's edge
Both were green, with the wings
of eagles
Below them the clouds became
as two great outstretched hands
Freeing them to fly
These two serpent, who were brothers
And one turned from green to gold
and his wings became flames
& cast a great light
& the other turned to blue
& his wings became shadows
& his eyes became
stars, & from the beating
of his wings
came a cold wind
& in the falling of
his feathers
came snow
& he rose against his brother
& they wrestled across
The sky
& the weight of the dark
Serpent brought low
his light brother
& the light one was enfolded
in Shadow-wings
& all was cold
& all was still.

& the breath of the Light one
struck the wings of
The dark one
Thus came the mist.
Thus came the rain.
Thus came the green things,
Slowly upward
& the serpents turned
About
in the sky.
Over the edge
of the shadow wings,
lightening
The shadow sings,
came The
feathers of
The Golden
Serpent
& The Gold Serpent rose
& weighed down
his brother
Neither
being vanquished, neither
dying; each in his turn, becoming
weary
of the weight of the
Other
each giving to the other
The hours & the seasons
of resting
& of waking –



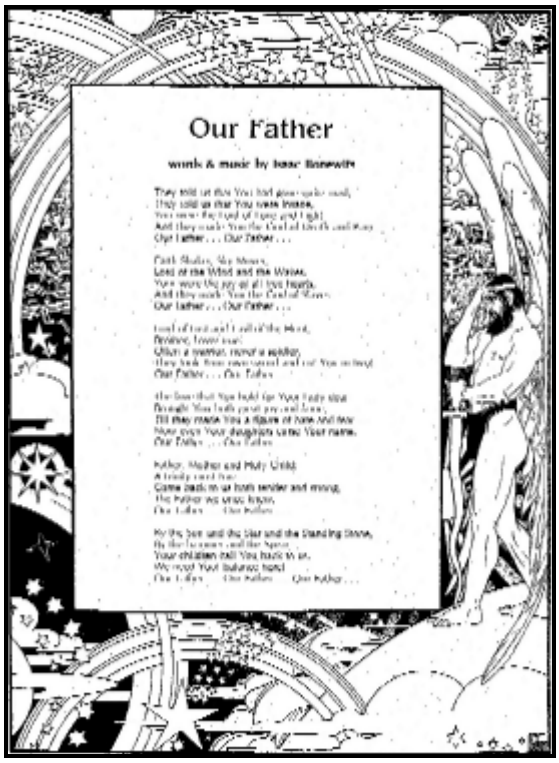
To Lesley

I have met the witches, and
They are burning.
They move with a cat's velvet grace,
void silhouettes with diamond eyes
and brilliant fingertips,
and burning, burning
with all the memories
of all the human conflagrations.
Burning, milky
luminous around the old ones,
opal fire around the young ones,
the weak ones burn in wanting,
the strong ones like the center of the sun;
the hurt ones burn in self-pity,
the angry burn in bitterness.
Behind their shoulders, within the flame
I can see the other lives, chaned back
screaming pain,
screaming ecstasy.
They do not forget.
Sometimes behind a man's shoulder I
will see a woman's white throat;
sometimes behind a woman the
blistered body of a man: but
the soul-feeling is the same.
These are
The souls that dared
that turned their faces from the
well-lit world of men
and walked straight into fear,
though not always without trembling.
The ones who remember with hatred can
lead you to that sad, dark land
and leave you stranded.
The ones in whom even hatred has burned away
can lead you out
with one, sure hand
and the best ones burn in love,
having burned through nervous tissue and personality
to make of flesh a viaduct
for Himalayan waters,
coll and burning.
You cannot face such eye:
Within them is the Name Abraxas,
eternal death and life.
The hand holding the ritual cup
is white with flame.
And should you drink, you yourself
will burn,
burning n the furnaces of Shiva,
til every tear is shed, every fear passed through,
released in a different morning,
on an unknown earth,
with diamond eyes
burnt away with the seeing
of other worlds.

And I took the cup.
And, Oh! my backbone is being pressed against
something dry and wooden;
and Oh! my body is burning!
And every move is met
with searing chains!
And there is only this time left
to tell you want I can see
through eyes not yet consumed.

They tell me
the Craftsman is fashioning new ones for me,
and that they are jewels.

Joahn Carruth
written August 1970



Our Father

Words & music by Isaac Bonewits

They told us that You had gone quite mad;
They told us that You were insane.
you were the Lord of Love and Light
And they made you the God of Death and Pain.
Our Father…Our Father…

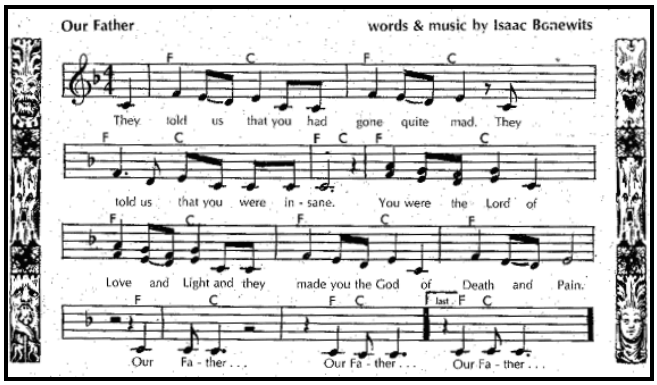
Earth Shaker, Sky Mover,
Lord of the Wind and the Waves.
You were the joy of all free hearts,
And they made You the God of Slaves.
Our Father…Our Father…

Lord of Lust and God of Hunt
Brother, Lover true.
Often a warrior, never a soldier,
They took Your own sword and cut You in Two!
Our Father…Our Father

The love that You hold for your Lady dear
Brought You both great joy and fame,
Till they made you a figure of hate and fear---
Now even Your daughters curse your name.
Our Father… Our Father…

Father, Mother and Holy Child,
A trinity most true—
Come back to us both tender and strong,
The Father we once knew.
Our Father…Our Father…

By the sun and the Star and the Standing Stone,
By the hammer and the Spear –
Your children call You back to us.
We need Your balance here!
Our Father…Our Father…Our Father…



Readers are invited to use the Feedback department to comment on previous issues, including previous Feedback letters, or on other maters likely to be of interest to other readers. We encourage you to be as controversial as you wish, but please no profanity, obscenity, gossip or personal attacks – PJ is read by folks outside our community as well as inside. We reserve the right to edit such items out and to shorten ramblings. We don't have the room to publish every letter we receive, but we do try to print as many as we can, regardless of whether or not we agree with their contents.

Letters meant for Feedback should be typed or clearly printed, and should specify what name (legal or other) and what address (if any) are to be published with them. If you write more than 750 words on any given topic, we may ask you to do us article instead! Write "For Publication" across the top or side, and send your letters to: Pentalpha Journal, Feedback Dept., Box 9398, Berkeley, CA 94709

Big One Coming

I was amazed to discover the Church of the Latter Surf is Neopagan. Your informative description of Neopagan religions in the Summer Solstice 1979 issue sounded strangely like the basics of Surfing; especially the aversion to monolithic religions. Surfers have almost unanimously rejected organized religion over the years, and even today a few consider LDS too orthodox.

LDS believes that the Seismic Forces are in balance with the Cosmic Forces. The Truly Touched Surfers are in tune with the Reality Waves passing between Seismos and Cosmos. They know that none of this will matter when the Big One comes, thus the characteristic aura of joy or peace that they have about themselves.

The Surf is where three powerful forces come together – Air, Land and Sea. This is a sacred place to the Surfer, much life the Druid's Groves. There the Surfer can become one with the Seismos and get "touched to the tits." (What we call "Triple T-ed").

Most important is the coming Big One. This is not the first Big One, nor is it likely to be the last, but it's undoubtedly the only Big One we will ever see. The last Big One came about 3,000 BCE to South America's West Coast. Archeological evidence shows us that ancient Surfers were in touch with the Seismos and prepared for the coming Big One, much as the Church of the Latter Day Surf is doing today.

Deep down you know it's coming soon.

Seismically yours,
Captain Cook, President
Church of the Latter Day Surf
P.O. Box 131
Bend, Oregon 97701

Heart of Mother Earth

I just returned from the Gathering of the Tribes in Georgia. A messenger came to us asking the help of all those peoples on the spiritual path towards the Mother, in defending the Place of Her Heart Chakra, which is at Black Mesa. The federal government has declared the Mesa and surrounding lands as a "National Sacrifice area," and declared their intention to "utilize the resources" there without regard for ecological ramifications. Needless to say, the Elders' protests have gone un-listened-to, since the BIA has decided that a rival council of "progressive" Uncle-Tom-toms represent the "true will" of the Hopi Nation. Meaning they do what the BIA tells them to.

The enclosed material tells most of the story. The Elders also those who can't join them to pray and make magick at home. And also, although the "deadline" is past, you can write to Pres. Carter, % Don Hewitt, producer of 60 Minutes, and demand an accountability for the government's policies. The address is: President Carter, c/o Down Hewitt, 60 Minutes, 624 W. 57 St., New York, NY 10019. Mr. Hewitt has said that if enough people write he will do a show on Black Mesa "from the Elders point of view."

Please spread the word as fast and as far as we can. Black Mesa is the Heart Chakra of the Western World, and if we let them kill it, we'd better get used to living on land that looks a lot like the moon.

Thanks & Blessed Be
Lady Dana
P.O. Box 7242
Boise, Idaho, 83707

This letter came right after our Summer Solstice issue, and the enclosed information is out of date. If you would like to know more, the address given for the Co-ordinating Center and Information is: Heart of Our Mother Earth Protection Alliance, 4 S. San Francisco St. Flagstaff, AZ 86001.

Storms & Celebrations

By third class mail I've sent you all the back issues of my fanzine *Time Machine*. The first three issues include some reports about current activities at Miskatonic University, including a brief account of the student riots of 1969. They began, you may recall, when a Xerox machine was put in the Rare Book Room.

Also in *Time Machine* are a couple of times that I copied from an issue of *Pentalpha Journal* that Pat loaned me. I should like also, in a future issue, to reprint the ritual for recycling beer cans. In company with Brian B., one of Judy H.'s housemates, I have over the course of the years emptied a good many cans and bottles of beer, and even a couple of kegs. I will send you some publications of the Beaker People Libation Front that go into the matter in further detail.

Even if the 1999 eclipse is not total at Stonehenge, the Witches of England and their foreign guests can simply reschedule the event at Tintagel. The eclipse will be total there, and there are many mythic associations with Tintagel. Scarcely one stands upon another now, but the site is said to be most impressive. You will find details about it in the de Camps *Ancient Ruins and Archaeology*, which was paperbacked as *Citadels of Mystery*.

Before the 1999 eclipse, however, there will be another English observation that might be worth commemoration by devotees of the Craft. In July 1988 will be the 400th anniversary of the defeat of the Spanish Armada. According to the late Dr. Gardner, the English Witches claim credit for the storm that scattered the ships of the Armada after Drake's fleet had knocked chunks out of them. Considering what the fate of all the English would have been, Pagan and Protestant alike, had the Spanish landed, the Witches' efforts deserve commemoration.

Arrangements for both celebrations probably should get under way in the not too distant future. Tintagel may be placed under the same limitations that now obtain at Stonehenge.

Stay well,
Roger Herwell.

Medieval Women Writers

Just finished the March Pentalpha (believe it or not, I'm much more nearly caught up on your publication than on most others to which I subscribe). I was about to make out a renewal check to you, and then I saw it goes somewhere else. I think I'll renew for 3 years…

I greatly enjoyed the beginning of your article on Druidism – Past, Present & Future. But I can't allow one statement to go by unchallenged: "Throughout these centuries, the scholarship of learned men (women weren't allowed to write)…" The centuries in question seemed to be about the 7th to 16th c.e., and women were "allowed" to write. Just off the top of my head, I can think of 3 women writers: Teresa of Avila, 1515-1582; Gertrude the Great, 1256-1311; and Roswitha or Hrotswitha, 10th century c.e. No doubt there were many others. Far from being forbidden to write, some of their works were approved by the Roman Church, and Teresa was actually given the title of Doctor of the Church. No doubt, most learned women of the day were nuns, and hardly likely to be better inclined toward Druids and other Pagans than were their male counterparts, nor would they have had access to any unbiased materials on the subject had they been fair-minded

toward other religions. Your phrasing however, implies that the male hierarchy actively and legally or perhaps canonically *forbade* women to write, which could not have been the case. And I just remembered at least two *secular* authoresses: Margaret of Navarre, 1492-1549, and Marie de France, late 12th century.

A few stray thoughts on the *Mishmash*, 2:4 People are more important than property. Granted! But a certain amount of property is necessary to sustain life, even under the provisions of 2:6. In their best intent, the property laws of Western Civilization are designed to guarantee that individuals may possess and enjoy what property they need for survival and a reasonable degree of luxury, and what they or their parents have worked for. Thus, property laws are meant to protect people; they are an extension of the principle that people are more important. Unfortunately, the ethos has gotten out of hand and the underlying reason has largely been lost in the shuffle, but the basic notion of personal property rights is not thereby invalidated, any more than the basic principle of farming is invalidated by certain mammoth companies that push out small farmers. And yes, indeed, Dru Chwerthing – a good Christian convent is a *communistic* community, for instance. Also, there's a difference between the free principle of Capitalism, with its emphasis on individual effort, and Capitalism run amok.

Sorry, I'd meant to keep that short and humorous. Well, re 2:6 and the possibility of persecution of Neopagans, I hope you can believe that if that ever comes, here's at least one monotheistic Christian who will be on *your* side against the persecutors.

I enjoyed the little ad for the "Christians 900, Pagans 1" stickers re *The Wicker Man*. Speaking of which, did that film *Dark Secret of Harvest Home* get your community as angry as it did our household?

Sincerely P. A. Carr

Harvest Holidays.

Thought I would send a comment on your last issue. If Lammas is called Harvest Home, I suspect it is a modern application. I have always seen Harvest Home applied to the end of the harvest, not the beginning. Since the pilgrims got the idea for Thanksgiving from European custom, I have seen Harvest Home applied to that time.

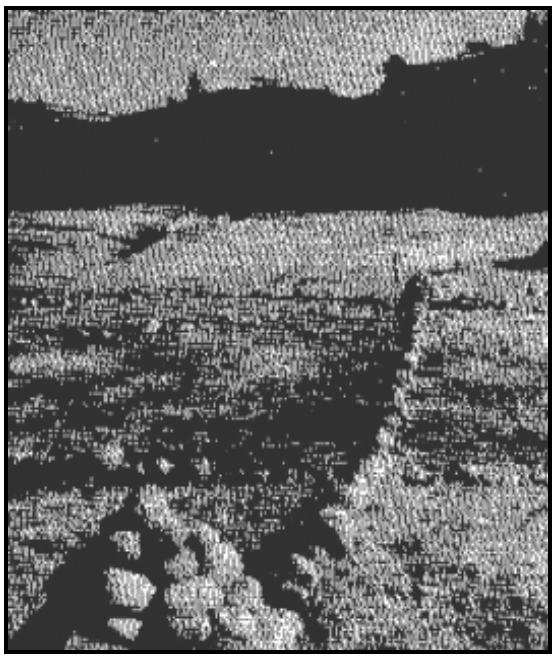
Lammas is loafmass, a time to consecrate bread made from the early harvest. Lughnasadh is the funeral games of Lugh, which give him new energy for the following year.

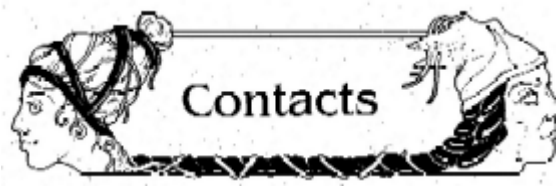
I suspect both are behind the American custom of holding outdoor fairs at this time. I understand some rural Britons hold picnics in a common pasture on this day.

We have a new Stonehenge here, which was just completed. It is called Stone cairns, and resembles Medicine Wheel in Wyoming. It is between Hood River and the Dalles, Oregon. For information, send a stamp to Portland Center for Visual Arts, 117 NW 5th, Portland, Oregon, 97209.

Elwell Norris

See Cyprian's article in this issue for another theory of the origin of "Lammas." Here's a picture Elwell sent along, showing Stone cairns.





This section is a listing of groups that have open services, study groups that have openings, and people to contact if you would like to get involved. If you would like your groups to be listed, send us your name, address and/or phone number, and a brief description of your group. Listings are free for subscribers, $2 for non-subscribers.

Always remember to enclose return postage when writing, and if you are in a hurry for a reply, telephone instead.

Abbreviations: RDNA is the Reformed Druids of North America, NRDNA is the New RDNA, ODNA is the Orthodox DNA, GSOS is the Golden Section Order Society, BCUB is the British Circle of the Universal Bond, Adr. is Archdruid/ess, Co-Adrs. is Co-Archdruids, MG is the Mother Grove (NRDNA).

We can't vouch for all of these groups, and we suggest that you approach new group open-mindedly but carefully, following your own intuitions about whether it's the right place for you. Circle Guide to Wiccan and Pagan Resources*, by Selena Fox, has some excellent suggestion on how to decide if a group is for you, and is available from Circle, Box 9103, Madison, WI 53715 for $5.50. It is an excellent resource guide, and we recommend it for further ideas about what's available in the Neopagan community worldwide.*

California

California Society for Psychic Study, oldest such group in CA, meets on fourth Monday evening of every month. For more info, write to: CSPS, Box 844, Berkeley, CA 94701.

Children of the Raven, an eclectic Witchcraft coven in San Francisco, meets at new and full moons and Highdays. For more information, call Rosemary: (415) 661-0794.

Clanna Brocheta Grove, ODNA, Adr. Robert Larson, c/o Grundy, 820 Circle Court, South San Francisco, CA 94080. Meets biweekly & Highdays; services in Irish Gaelic. Membership restricted to Clann, an Irish cultural society. Irish library with 100+ books & photos.

Compost Coven, invites people in the san Francisco Bay Area to participate in a series of monthly workshops on "Kitchen-Magick & Spellmaking" – mojo sewing-bees, candle-making & anointing, herbal magick, hexes (talismans), edible spells, images, etc. Call Valerie (415) 752-9394 for details.

Hazel Nut Grove, NRDNA, Adr. Stephen McCaully, 3215 Brookdale Avenue, Oakland, CA 94080. Meets biweekly on Saturday afternoons, with Mother Grove for Highdays; Irish Druidism. Celtic library with 600 + books & microfilms.

Herondia Lodge, meets on full moons, and on Sabbats. Study group meets every Wednesday evening and covers a wide range of occult topics. Those interested please call Danann at (415) 961-1567, in Sunnyvale, CA.

Her-Ra-Ha Lodge, O.T.O., Box 3111, Newport Beach, CA 92663. American branch (see Thelema Grand Lodge for description of O.T.O.)

Kvasir Lundr, Pentalpha, *Godi* Harald Moe, 5543 ½ Claremont Ave., Oakland, CA 94618, 415-654-4521. Meets occasionally on weekend nearest full and new moon. Norse Paganism with accent on Mead (Kvasir) in ritual.

L.A. Grove, NRDNA, Adr. Chris Sherbak, 588 North Lucerne Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90004. Phone: (213) 467-5759. Meets for Highdays only; Panceltic Druidism.

Madrakara Grove, GSOS, Danaan Parry & Lila Forest, P.O. Box 82, Occidental, CA 95465, (707) 865-1498. Celebrates the Highdays; holds workshops and seminars.

Mother Grove, NRDNA, Co-Adrs. Joan Carruth, 8259 Terrace, El Cerrito, CA 94530, phone (415) 525-0498; and Isaac Bonewits, Box 9398, Berkeley, CA 94709. Phone: 415-547-6697. Meets bi-weekly & Highdays; Eclectic Druidism.

Order of Dian Cecht, NRDNA, Matriarch Joan Carruth (see MG listing above). A Neopagan healing order dedicated to discovering; learning and sharing both magical and mundane methods of healing. Meets once a month, usually on the Sunday evening closest to the first quarter moon.

Order of Oberon, NRDNA, Matriarch Linda von Braskat, 557 Mira Vista, Oakland, CA 94610. Phone (415) 465-6849. A Neopagan bardic order, dedicated to developing musical and poetic skills of the community. Biweekly rehearsals before MG meetings, biweekly Saturday night Bardic Revels.

Our Lady of Enchantment, an eclectic coven located in Danville. Meets on Full Moons and Great Days. Offers a complete course in Wicca, Magic and Spiritual Awareness. Great Day rituals are open to sincere seekers. For more information call Sabrina at (415) 820-1891 or write to *Our Lady of Enchantment*, 1087 Lehigh Valley Cir., Danville, CA 94526.

Southern Shores Grove, RDNA, Adr. Steve Savitzky, 343 Leigh Avenue, San Jose, CA 95128. Phone: 408-294-6492, 6-11 pm *only*. Meets for Highdays only.

Thelema Grand Lodge, O.T.O., Box 2303, Berkeley, CA 94702. The American (Caliphate) branch of Aleister Crowley's Ordo Templi Orientis, a magical lodge accepting the Law of Thelema. Published the quarterly *O.T.O. Newsletter* at $3.00 per year.

Tuatha Grove, NRDNA, Adr. Pat O'Neil, 1808 Third Avenue, No. 12, San Diego, CA 92101. Meets biweekly on Sunday & Highdays. Norse Druidism & ocean rites.

Illinois

Parthenon West, Box 613, Richton Park, IL 60471. Phone: (312) 748-8976. A beginning temple focusing on Homeric Greek Paganism. Anxious to contact other Hellenic Pagans.

Maryland

KAM, The Keepers of the Ancient Mysteries, Witchcraft covens of many traditions working together. write: KA, P.O. Box 34464, Bethesda MD 20034.

Missouri

Arch Grove, NRDNA, Adr. Carolyn Clark, 10611 Jesskamp Drive, St. Louis, MO 63116. Phone (314) 867-8392. Meets for full moons & Highdays; Wiccan & Hasidic Druidism.

New York

Lashtal Lodge, O.T.O., Box 357, Bowling Green Stn., New York, NY, 10004. American branch.

Ra-Hoor-Huit Lodge, O.T.O., Box 6018, Teall Avenue Stn., Syracuse, NY 13217. American branch.

Ohio

The Order of the Middle Earth, an affiliate group of Circle, has begun a Magickal Pagan study group in the Cleveland area. Instruction in Wicca, Ceremonial Magick, and Meditation will be given by Oberon, an ordained Priest of Circle Wicca. For more info, contact: The Order of Middle Earth, Box 33367, North Royalton, OH 44133.

Oregon

The Church of the Latter Day Surf, dedicated to preparing for the coming Big One and helping Surfers attain attunement with the Seismic Forces. Bitching Dogma is a buck a sack; cash. Box 131, Bend, OR 97701. Publishes "Tsunami!" Captain Cook, editor.

Oaken Moon Pagan Association, 242 Brentborough on Broadmeade, Box 242, Sheridan, OR 97378. Phone: (503) 843-2866. Published *The Elvenstone*, $4/year. NocAonghais, editor.

Washington

Evergreen Grove, NRDNA, Adr. Cyndie Schuler, Box 1272, Olympia, WA 98501. Meets for Highdays and New & full moons; Zen/Hilaric Druidism.

Canada

Gnostic Catholic Church, a non-profit religious society of practicing Thelemic magickians interested in ceremonial and ritual magick, alchemy, and Paganism. If you are an isolated Pagan/Wicca/Magician in Western Canada or traveling through, contact us at P.O. Box 4625, South Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T6E 5G5. Anyone doing research into Slavic Paganism is asked to contact Eugene W. Plwaluk at this same address.

England

The Druid Order, An Druidh Uileach Braithrearchas, BCUB, 161 Aukland Road, London, SE 19, England. Ceremonies, classes & lectures.

Golden Section Order Society; the Bardic Chair of Caer Llyndain, f2/239 Silhurst Road, London SE25 6XP, England. Branches near Glastonbury, Newport, The Wrekin, Edinburgh & Occidental CA. Publishes a quarterly *G.S.O. Newsletter*, as well as numerous charts, posters & booklets.

France

Confraternite Philosophique des Druids, Grand Druid E. Coarer Calodan, 24 Rue Copernic, 44000 Nantes, Breizh, France. Breton Druidism, publishes *Neved* magazine.

K.A.D., Cahier de Philosophie Druidique, Le Reilly 44360, Saint Ehenne de Montluc, Brittany, France. Breton Druid magazine.

Referral Services

The following three organizations maintain referral services for people interested in contacting Witches and other Pagans. Write for more information (send self-addressed stamped envelope).

Circle, Box 9013, Madison, WI 53715/

Covenant of the Goddess, Box 1226, Berkeley, CA 94704

Gnostica Wiccan Referral Service, Gnostica, Box 3383, St. Paul, MN 55165.

Newsflash!

The Women's Coven Newsletter has changed its name and gone public! The first issue of *Home Brew: A Journal of Women's Witchcraft* is hot off the presses with 46 illustrated pages of fascinating materials bound to be of interest to all female Witches (and friends). The cost is $6.00 for three issues (published every three months) or $2.50 each. Send your orders or subscriptions to: *Home Brew*, c/o Deborah Bender, P.O. Box 6, Berkeley, CA 94704.

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(415) 548-0380

A new convention is born! By popular demand the people in Grimoire Games and the Multiversal Trading co. have formed an organization to bring to you the kind of conventions we all want, but very seldom get. The first "GRIMCON" will be held over the last weekend of October the 26th, 27th and 28th, starting at 5 p.m. Friday evening.

The motto of these conventions is simple: *SOME ARE BIGGER, BUT NONE ARE BETTER!* Take a look at our lineup and you'll see what we mean.

Tournaments in Runequest, Cosmic Encounters, Barsoom (John Carter of Mars), Elimination Dungeons (DMd by prominent local DMs), Fantasy/Ancients Miniatures, and several others.

Seminars by people such as Dave Hargrave (The "Arduin" Author"), Stephen Abbot (Head of a *real* Druid's Grove), William Voorhees – doctor of internal medicine, and many others.

A film program of incredible proportions (over 18 hours!) and quality. Also we will have *TWO THEATERS*! The *confirmed* program consists of:

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea
Equinox
Them
Laser Blast
The Wizard of Oz
What's Opera Doc?
Phase Four
Moon Zero Two
The Thing
The Dunwich Horror
and all four hours of Flash Gordon Conquers the Universe

There will be a "Come as Your Character" costume contest, medieval fighting demonstrations, Micro Computers, a huge 2200 square foot open gaming area (plenty of room for all!) and so much more there just isn't room to list everything!

The location is super; it's the Oakland (Edgewater) Hyatt House, only one mile from both the Oakland Airport and the Colesium BART Station. There will be *FREE!* pick up by shuttle van from both locations by the Hotel! Simply call 562-6100 and they will pick you up. See you there!

Room Rates: $36 a night for a single room. $46 a night for two, three, or four.

(These are special GRIMCON rates) ($6 additional charge for rollaway)

Con Rates:

	Pre Registration	At Door
Three Days	$11.00	$12.50
Two Days	$10.00	$10.00
One Day	$8.00	$8.00

SEND TO:
GRIMCON, 1749 Sonoma Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707

For groups/clubs of 6 or more, and for *Active* Military Personnel:

	Pre-registration
Three Days	$10.00
Two Days	$9.00

And for Active Military Personnel at the door (Sorry, no group rates at the door).

Three Days	$11.00
Two Days	$9.00
One Day	$7.00

Military personnel will be required to show their active duty card when they pick up their badges on the day of the Con.

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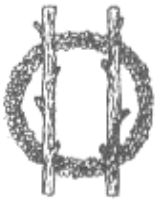

The Druid Chroniclers
& Pentalpha Journals

Volume Three, Pt. 2
1979 & 1980

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Pentalpha Journal

An interdisciplinary Journal for the Aquarian Age
Summer 1980
Volume 3 Number 2

Editorial

Hello! and welcome to the 1980 issue of Pentalpha Journal. It's been a long haul; we know there have been long delays; but at least now we are here and in your hands.

For those of you who are new to Pentalpha, you are holding in your hands a collection of essays, poems, stories, news, and rituals dealing with the subject of magic, the occult, higher consciousness, and spirituality. In this issue we don't have some of the usual Pentalpha departments, and have concentrated instead on articles.

At the time of the writing of this editorial, it looks as though Pentalpha will take another long vacation. It has been a long swim upstream to give birth to this issue, and like the salmon who spawn at the top of the river, the effort takes so much energy, the salmon die. We have been unable to find the money, resources, or the staff to continue publishing. Although I hate to say this is the LAST Pentalpha, I, alone, cannot promise another issue, and there is none on our staff who is willing to do the work to head up another issue. Do any of you out there want to adopt a growing Pagan magazine?

We are truthfully up in the air about what to do. We need the response of the readers. Would you like to see Pentalpha continue? Would you be willing to donate time, supplies, moneys? Is there anyone who would like to head up production of the next issue? Do you feel Pentalpha is worthwhile?

We are on the verge of a new age, and it has been my hopes that Pentalpha could ride the crest of the wave of consciousness that is awakening within us all. If you would like to see this publication continue, we need to hear it from you. If not, the influx and sharing of pew knowledge will take other forms, such as teaching and healing and sharing songs and dances. Those of you on Pentalpha mailing lists-will receive announcements of these events, as well as any further publication that we may do such as pamphlets or single' articles, or songbooks.

I wish I could be more certain or more optimistic, but instead I choose to be honest. All we can do is leave it up to the Goddess, and hope that a way will open up for the path to be followed.

Until we meet again,
Thank you and Blessed Be,
Anodea Judith, for the Pentalpha Staff.

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About Pentalpha

Pentalpha (The Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness) is designed to be an interdisciplinary information nexus of an occult, metaphysical, or spiritual nature. Our hopes are to help educate and unite envoys of the coming Aquarian Age--an age that we feel will be strongly spiritual.

The Advancement of "higher consciousness" is a broad spectrum indeed, and Pentalpha chooses to focus especially on the occult--to reveal and revive those hidden teachings of the metaphysical world. This includes such things as Astrology, Witchcraft, Ceremonial Magick, Voudoun, Kundalini Yoga, Environmental Action, Poly-theology, Ritual Design, Parapsychology, and Psychism. Many of these teachings are quite esoteric, which possesses a problem in pleasing both the beginning and the advanced magician. We hope to have a range of articles that spans this spectrum. From my own studies in metaphysics, I have found much of the information veiled in mystery and esoteric language--which only forced me into further study. This is a design in the teachings.

We hope to edit our articles to read as plainly and simply as possible, while still maintaining some of the esoteric flavor in which these teachings flourish.

To the beginner, we say "Welcome! And may you long continue!" and to the advanced, we say, "Remember how great the learning in the Beginner's Mind!"

We hope you enjoy this issue.

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Black & White Magic: a Non-Racist Approach

Marion Zimmer Bradley

Almost everyone claims to know what is meant by "black magic: and most people have some fairly clear mental picture of what constitutes "white magic." Nine out of ten people, if you pin them down, will say something like "Black magic is it the purpose of doing evil, and white magic is for the purpose of doing good. Right?"

Warning. That answer is terribly simplistic; furthermore, it implies that the person doing the answering knows exactly what good and evil are, or that there is a very clear demarcation line between them.

Some fairly sophisticated people have recently come up with an even more dangerous definition of "black magic." Black magic, so they say, is the primitive magic such as voodoo, derived from Africa and Haiti; the magic of black people.

So, first, let us stipulate, for the purpose of this discussion, that black or white magic, as definitions, apply to the color of the magician's heart; not to the color of skin, robes, or the candles burning on the altars favored by the particular magician. I still remember getting into quite a hassle, some time ago, when participating in a harmless magical ritual, "white magic" by any standards, when my partner, an experienced occultist, but new to ceremonial magic, became very upset by the fact that the officiating priestess (not me) wore a black robe and burned black candles. As it happened, the school of magic to which she belonged stipulated black candles and robes because the color black, absorbing all light, was conducive to retaining body magnetism and power within the magic circle. My inexperienced partner, however, became very disturbed and almost walked out on the ritual, feeling that the black robes and candles meant black magic and a devotion to evil, to darkness.

And here is a deeper ambiguity which should be settled. People who have recently been re-thinking the semantics of our heedlessly racist culture have been disturbed by the long-standing assignment of evil in magic to the "black magic" side of the matter. What, they demand--reasonably, I must agree--is so bad about blackness, that the very idea of "black" should be evil? And this thinking does pervade our culture. A wicked man is "black-hearted," wicked deeds are "dark deeds" and the "Black Man" was a common euphemism for the Evil One otherwise known as Old Scratch, Old Horny, or, the Devil. Conversely, I've been forced to ask myself what is so good about whiteness, that "good magic" should be called "white"? Considering that one of the most paranoid and evil societies ever to infest the face of the Earth, Nazi Germany, was dedicated to the pure white of the supposed Master Race, never to be contaminated by the darker races, one could make out a case for re-defining evil in terms of whiteness; everything from apartheid in South Africa to lynchings in Alabama, has been done in the name of the 'White race," enough to make the thoughtful magician hesitate before proclaiming any magic as "white."

About all one can say for this arbitrary designation of black and white is that it goes far further back than the petty group of ethnic snobberies which has led to current racial troubles. As far as I can tell, the Egyptians (who were certainly NOT a white race in our sense, being neither Aryan nor Nordic) were the first to divide magic into white and black and they probably got it from Atlantis. Furthermore, when they started calling some magic black, and some other magic white, all the people involved in the practice of either were all the same color. The terms "black" and "white," then referred not to people, but to the great division between Good and Evil, which were associated, then, with Light and Darkness.

Why, then, should light have been the symbol for all that was good, for people whose skins were probably dark? Maybe we were a little too fast in declaring that the association of "black" with "evil" had anything to do with racism.

So where did it start?

Probably somewhere about the time of the dawn of sapience in the species Homo Neandertholensis. What is the source of light, warmth, heat, life, and strength for everything that grows? Obviously, the Sun. What is cold, evil, terrifying, a threat? Night, of course; darkness; the withdrawal of that nourishing light. Certainly the first religion known to humanity was the pure awareness of the great light. Jane Goodall, working with higher primates, has demonstrated that even the chimpanzees demonstrate something which can only be called reverence and worship for the Sun.

The greatest event in the history of humankind can only be the discovery of how to control Fire. One of the greatest figures

in ancient mythology is Prometheus, who stole Fire from Heaven, and brought it down to Earth for us to use; it had previously been limited to the use of the Divine Ones on Olympus.

Recent theories have conjectured that this might even refer to a visit from space faring peoples, who taught the primitive inhabitants of this planet how to use fire, being worshipped thereafter as Gods. Personally, while a theory of that kind looked fine in the movie "2001 A Space Odyssey," I'd rather leave Von Moniker and company to the science fiction lovers among us--who can give them the ridicule they probably deserve. Regardless of how fire was discovered, none of us today will really know the truth about it. So despite objective facts, I'd prefer to concentrate on what this great event must have meant to primitive humanity.

The discovery of fire meant that the setting of the Sun no longer need condemn the watchers to a terrible closing-in of darkness, it ended the need for a long stretch of time when the world must be abandoned to the great predators who prowled in the inky darkness, with eyes much better than ours.

There is little doubt that the first religious rituals arose from the need to preserve the tribal fires from going out; early in human history, a fire kindled accidentally by lightning would be guarded "religiously" and later, when the art of making fire was discovered, this awesome secret would be entrusted only to the wisest and most responsible of the tribal elders.

All things, therefore, in their whole existence would have contributed to this great dichotomy; Light, Fire, the Sun, as the greatest of blessings and good things; and cold, darkness, night, as the first among all evils, sheltering most of the other evils inimical to the survival of the tribe.

This goes so deep into the human psyche that virtually all the great religions have equated their spiritual metaphysics with the search for Light. The Egyptians called their most powerful God, Amon-Ra, after the Sun, and referred to the happiness of the blessed dead as "Coming forth into Light." Even in the twentieth century, Christian hymns refer to Christ as the Light of the World--and other mythologies hail Buddha as the Light of the East

This symbolism has been preserved all through human history, through all religions and all mythologies. To the nit pickers who quibble that religions and mythologies are not history, I venture to remind you that until a very recent date, legends and mythologies were all that we had of human history; and it is through these religions and mythologies that we get our deepest insights into human psychology. In virtually all religions, the Gods are those whom James Frazer, in The Golden Bough (a monumental work of comparative religion) tries to explain away as "Solar Myths." I think he got it the wrong way around. To say that the Gods were Solar Myths is to insist on a literalness worse than that of the clerical-collared jackass who solemnly assured the Church that the God of the Old Testament had created the Earth in 4,004 B.C. at 8: 30 on a Tuesday morning in October.

Rather, in the various but universal mythologies of the Gods of Light, the great human psychological drama was being retold; the drama of the daily and yearly return of the focus of human existence, the Sun; Apollo, Bel-Marduk, Amon-Ra--the name does not matter. However, it is significant that when the world's first monotheist, Pharaoh Amenhotep IV, singled out one God as being the greatest and only, he chose Aton--the personification of the physical disk of the Sun--and called himself Akh-n-Aton by the name of his chosen God.

It is also noteworthy that the greatest of the goddesses were associated with the Moon--and what is the Moon except the great and benevolent force which lends light when the Sun is gone, so that the Night may not close in altogether.

And the reverse was true. The evil Gods were those associated with darkness, with cold, with the kingdoms of the dead. In Egyptian mythology, the dead who had not been virtuous in life, and therefore could not "Come forth into Day," were cast into outer darkness. Hell as a place of fire and burning is a fairly recent concept. The very word "hell" comes from the Norse goddess Hela, who ruled over death and the abodes of the unvirtuous dead who could not achieve Valhalla.

Religion and Magic, in those days, were not separated. They are not separated now. I have read books on magic, or "Magick," which state that it's not necessary to embrace any kind of religious belief, but that has always seemed a little fatuous to me. (I suspect what Crowley and others of his ilk probably meant was that it was not necessary to be religious in the ubiquitous "Christian" sense; which it certainly is not. Crowley grew up as a member of the Plymouth Brethren, a sect which would be called, in this country, Jesus-freak and Holy Roller in one. Who could blame him for thinking of the Devil as a friendly fellow by contrast to that grim and fundamentalist God of theirs?) But if magic, or magick, if you prefer, bases itself firmly on the fact that there is more to this material universe that can be weighed or measured, then, whether you know it or not, and whether or not you subscribe to any creed, you are accepting a religious view of the universe. You may not call it that, but that's what it is. Atheists are materialists and cannot be magicians without at least suspending their disbelief.

Well, then, white magic, or if you prefer, the Magic of Light, has always been the function of the priests and priestesses of the Light-bringing Gods and Goddesses; no doubt, the original practitioners of Light Magic were the custodians of the various Sacred Fires, who were pledged to put their care for the tribe and the common good ahead of their own convenience.

And going back again to pre-history, the worshippers of the Gods whose realm was the darkness, somehow accumulated all kinds of evil Anything which had to be done under cover of darkness--treachery, murder, theft, blasphemy--were by definition those things which would not bear the light of day, or the friendly circle of the tribal watch-fires safeguarding the common good. Things done secretly in the dark were, of course, those things which the tribe would not approve. In this same dark category came necromancy and all manner of dealing with the dead.

Recently, of course, night and day have been banished by technology, and so, of course, have these distinctions. Yet the psychology of the cave is still within us all. In most languages, a "dark deed" is a mysterious and shameful one, and people speak of "letting in some light" on anything wrong or furtive. Psychological truths are most often expressed in figurative language. Anything which can be done "right out in the open" is a deed of which no one should be ashamed. "Daylight robbery" is unusually bold and shameless. And in my own college days

dormitories still locked up the maidens of the tribe at eleven at night, to safeguard their virginity, as if no maidenhood was ever sacrificed at three in the afternoon or ten in the morning.

Perhaps, in view of the semantic and racist connotations of black and white magic, it might be better to speak of " Dark Magic" and "Light Magic."

But whatever you call them, people are always going to want to know how one differentiates. And if you thought I was splitting semantic hairs before, just watch me now!

I referred before to the simplistic-definition; white magic does good, black magic does evil. This, of course, assumes that there is some simple definition to that question which has baffled a hundred generations of philosophers. I suspect people who think that way, and with good reason; investigate

I'm thinking you'll discover that "good" consists everything of which they personally approve, and evil just somehow manages to take in everything else.

If you want to split a few more hairs, try to define Light Magic and Dark Magic by intentions. The white magician, you say is trying to help someone, and the black magician to hurt or damage another. This may be less simplistic--at least people who define it this way are trying--but it has problems. For instance; most people approve of healing. White magic. Good Stuff. Praying for the sick is always a good thing, right'? No problems there?

Well, try this one on. A few years ago, a woman I know gave birth to a premature baby, weighing just over two pounds. He was not expected to live, and the mother, a very dear friend of mine, was in utter despair. Two years before, she had lost another child, a tragically handicapped baby who had endured three months of terrible suffering, and died. After that death the mother had had a terrible breakdown; this pregnancy had been spent in very bad shape, and most of us felt that if this baby died, it would shatter the last remnants of her sanity, and leave her other children virtually motherless.

Need you ask what we did? We prayed; some of us prayed and fasted nonstop around the clock. We literally stormed heaven with our prayers. Prayer, of course, is the oldest and simplest form of magic.

Well, almost from the moment that the full-time prayers began, the baby began to gain weight; in a week or two he was discharged from the hospital, and seemed to be-doing well. He was an adorable baby; we all fell in love with him and all felt we had been doing a fine thing. The mother was recovering fast, and seemed happy and together again for the first time in years. Everybody felt good.

For a little while. And then the shadow came down. There was something wrong with the little boy. The poor little fellow didn't grow; he didn't thrive. Eighteen months later, after a terrible, draining and exhausting round of doctors, tests, hospitals, diagnosticians, and progressive misery for the baby and the parents, he died of an extremely rare genetic defect. He had been doomed at birth; that particular defect is incurable. Instead of the short, terrible shock of a premature baby's death, they had to face the death of a real little person, one they had known and loved for more than a year.

So what price white magic? Did we really do any good at all? Did we turn the divine purpose or was it an illusion? Our intentions were perfectly good; but we must share in the blame for prolonging the agony, and for the final disaster that split the family asunder. Who knows enough to try that now?

On the other hand, most people regard the calling up of demons as black magic. Yet there is a well-known treatise on magic (The Sacred Magic of Abra-merlin the Mage) which contends that the white magician has the natural dominion over demons, because good must always have dominion over evil. My own personal feeling is that the man who has supper with the devil had better use a long spoon. However, they are welcome to the company of the demons if they can handle them.

I also remember reading Anton LaVey's various books on Satanism--at the height of that fad. Somewhere in one of his books he said there was no such thing as white magic, that everyone was basically selfish, and that anyone who claimed to practice white magic was a liar and a sanctimonious hypocrite. He states that the first step toward magical power is to declare one's self beyond good or evil. Again, he is welcome to the company of whatever results he gets, but I hope I am a good long way off.

Yet, it can't be doubted that the practitioners of white magic are often a fairly silly and ineffective crew. And as a result, there are many people who are completely turned off by the idea of black magic, don't know what white magic is (or doubt that there is any such thing) and therefore, a great many respectable occultists feel that the only solution is to give up the practice of ritual or ceremonial magic altogether.

It seems to me that this is throwing out the baby with the bath water. Of course, magic is not for everybody. There are people who should never attempt to practice any form of magic, be it black, white or some shade of gray or pink. (Yes, I once knew a young woman who claimed to practice pink magic.) There are also people who could practice magic, black or white, from now until doomsday without any more effect upon themselves and the Cosmos than practicing the piano, and with far less annoyance to the neighbors than practicing the trombone. Everyone who tries his hand at it isn't a magician, any more than everyone who takes voice lessons is Joan Sutherland. Every Sunday, in some church, some minister is practicing his elementary form of magic, praying "Spirit of God, descend upon our hearts"--and no one would be more surprised than himself if the Spirit did actually descend.

This, of course, is what was meant when some character in Shakespeare proclaimed:

> "I can call spirits from the vasty deep," and another, more common-sensical one answered him:
>
> "Why, so can I, so can any man,

But will they come when you do call for them?"

And that, of course, is the question. Will they come when you call them? Can you make them come? What will they do when they get here? And last, but not least, when they have finished doing whatever they came to do, can you send them about their business again?

When I used to write a column for the LAST VILLAGE OTHER on occult matters, people would write in from time to time, and ask me, either seriously or flippantly, if I could teach them to summon up demons. I always replied, yes, I could teach them to call up demons in three days, but it might take seven years to learn how to get rid of them again.

Of course, I was being facetious; but not entirely. My own feeling about "calling up demons" is that the practitioner does not call up some strange alien thing called "a demon" from some distant outside realm known as Hell, but is performing a complex psychological act which lowers the barriers around the mind, and calls forth, or lets out, all the evil impulses and repressed unknown quantities within the subconscious mind. In making the acquaintance of these "demons," the magician will feel probably that the old demons of old folklore with horns, hoofs, a tail and a smell of sulfur would be notch easier to get along with--and certainly a lot easier to get rid of again. Forbidden Planet, a science fiction movie from a generation ago, showed murders committed by a demon who could literally get through any barrier, to commit terrible, unsolved crimes. It turned out that the culprit was the "monster of the Id," called up by the suppressed hate and unconquered guilts and pride of the other people. This was, of course, fantasy, and a powerful metaphor; we all carry within ourselves these "monsters of the Id" and these are all the demons we will ever know or want; and if we can harness these--which is considerably more difficult than harnessing conventional imps of folklore--we can achieve whatever we want. But we must get past the monsters first, and any psychiatrist can tell you how hard that is and how long it can take.

So what, then is magic, and how can it be practiced. How, and why?

W.E. Butler, in his excellent book, Magic, Its Ritual, Power and Purpose (which is one of the first books required for reading in my own order) defines magic very well; Magic is the art of causing changes in consciousness at will.

I cannot think offhand of any magical operation which is not covered by this definition; the kahuna magician walking across hot coals, the witch doctor sticking pins in an image of some frightened person, the mass-hypnotist doing the Indian Rope trick, the hex doctor charming away a child's warts with rainwater and a dead frog, the love potion which started Tristan and Isolde on their ill-fated love affair, or Christ feeding the multitude with the loaves and fishes. These things were brought about by changes in someone's consciousness.

Whether these changes are objective will probably never be known in the measurable way that "scientists" demand to have them known. Magic, almost by definition, has no reproducible results. Otherwise it would be science. But does it matter? The child's warts are gone. The kahuna magician has walked across the fire because his mind was in a state where he could block out heat and pain, and emerge with unblistered feet. Tristan and Isolde are happily bedded down, and on the way to a legendary romance. The man whose wax image is full of pins has a hell of a headache, and will probably die, unless he can get somebody to take off the curse; witch doctors have to make a living too. The masses are entertained, whether by the sight of a man climbing up an unsupported rope, or by the illusion; it certainly beats the average TV show. And since it was two thousand years ago, nobody knows whether the five loaves and the couple of sardines were actually turned into a feast with bushel-basketfuls left over, or whether the multitudes joyously shared a crumb or two apiece in a spirit of love and brotherhood and were nourished by the knowledge that their consciousness of hunger had been changed to consciousness of abundance.

Somebody's consciousness was changed.

So here we have at last a working definition for the magic of light and the magic of darkness, whose consciousness was changed, and for what reason, and with what result.

The white magician, the magician of Light, is trying to bring consciousness up to the level of the good thing found desirable; to find out, in short, where the universe is going, and to go there in complete harmony with it. The magician wants to conform more closely to the forces which are beneficial to humanity, and become more attuned to them; and the white magician is convinced that when his, or her, individual consciousness is completely in harmony with all those vibrations when the magician can stretch forth a hand, and whatever is needed will fall directly into it, without need for further effort; because that means the magician is in a time and space where the Lords of Karma will bestow everything which is desirable at that moment in time.

White magicians make mistakes, of course. Usually by not trying hard enough to distinguish their own will from the will of the Cosmos. Probably, instead of praying that the premature doomed baby should live, we should have prayed only for strength to be given the parents, so that they could endure whatever was best. Nevertheless, the white magician tries to do what is best, in the best way that one person's limited sight allows--and sooner or later, it usually comes around to "God's will be done, because God sees further than I do."

The black magician, on the other hand, is usually not concerned with the ultimate benefit of the universe, or the harmony of the Cosmos. The black magician creed is "Oh, I want what I wants when I wants it," and to that end, the black magician operates upon the world to get exactly that, whether it is deserved, or beneficial, or not. He or she wants it because it's wanted, and that is that.

Take a silly example. A black magician and a white magician want an apple.

The white magician tries to put the self in relation to the Cosmos and go where there is likely to be an abundance of apples; in an orchard at apple-ripening time, for example. And having politely asked permission from the owner of the orchard, or ascertaining that no one's rights will be damaged thereby, the magician will stand directly under a particularly ripe-looking apple just as the wind whose vibrations have pervaded the cosmic awareness, begins to blow hard enough to bring it directly into his hand. So at the proper moment, having become harmonized with the natural laws controlling winds, apples and desire, the magician stretches for the hand, and the forces of nature deliver an apple directly into it. A simpler method is to think "Apple" until it is impressed on the cosmos that the Law of Abundance owes you an apple; you can be sitting at home at the typewriter, or scrubbing your floor and the forces of universal harmony, working together, will create the strangest co-incidences to bring you an apple. A neighbor will say, "I just stopped by to bring you this apple," or someone with a surplus of apples will give you a bushel basket of them. Of course, by the proper use of the Law of Abundance, you have to obey that unexplainable impulse to go see good old Joe and take him a chocolate chip cookie just then! It's astonishing how well it works. Almost every writer has had the experience of needing a particular book, and having someone, "out of the blue" as it were, send it in the mail, unrequested.

Our black magician would probably not want to be bothered waiting for apple-ripening season, or to make the journey to the orchard. Nor would our black mage be humble enough to ask permission of the orchard's owner to pick and eat an apple. Rather, he or she would start sending out vibrations of "I want an apple! Gimme an apple." though the Cosmos, without regard to what was required to deserve an apple from the Cosmos; until somewhere, somebody, disturbed by these vibrations, would stop whatever was being done and deliver an apple, out of proper time and harmony, to this black magician, even if it meant someone who deserved it must go without.

My dog employs a very simple form of "magic" to get a dog biscuit. He goes to the cupboard where the biscuits are kept, cries, whines, yelps, and sends out vibrations of looking like a good dog who hasn't had a biscuit that day. Now, if it's biscuit time, and I have simply forgotten that the dog was due for a biscuit, then the dog is simply attuning himself to the Cosmos and saying, "Here I am, it's biscuit time; do your duty by the harmony of all things and provide me with my biscuit!" And somebody will do it, as his due. That's white magic. Yet he is not a very well trained dog, all things considered; very often he doesn't know or care whether it's time for him to have biscuits, he just knows he wants one, and he makes such an infernal pest of himself that someone will get him one whether it's the right time or not. It's not stretching the point too far to say that the dog is a liar, practicing black magic.

To be Continued...

THE FEMINIST CRAFT

An Interview with Deborah Bender

by Sally Eaton

(Insert interview graphic here)

When I asked Deborah Bender to contribute some material on the Women's Craft, I had in mind reprinting something from one of her two periodicals: Women's Coven Newsletter, (no longer published) and Homebrew, which she co-edits with Levanah Shell Bdolak. While leafing through her files, I found myself asking her many questions about the Women's Craft-questions that I felt, in essence, I already had answers to, both as a woman and a practicing Pagan.

Soon enough, however, I found that I didn't know as much as I had thought. I have never worked in an all-female circle, and I had a lot of preconceived notions about them, as you will see. A good deal of what I had read and heard seemed half-baked. Many of the men I've talked to expressed the idea that women were attempting to substitute female dominance for the patriarchy. I felt an uneasiness beneath people's careful choice of words, a lack of trust without a clear definition of what they were mistrusting. "What are they so wary of?" I wondered.

Most of the magical systems I've worked with are either male-dominant (a convention one tries to ignore!) or attempts at balancing the sexual roles in relation to each other. (No heterosexual-mixed groups I know of draw down the Goddess into male bodies--though why this form of experimentation with role-playing gets ignored is beyond me!) But in a women's temple--those of us used to playing complementary roles wonder how the energies are exchanged: don't you need balance to raise a cone of power? Apparently a naive question...

I made up a list of topics for Deborah based on some common-denominator notions (my own) of relative ignorance about the Women's Craft. She cheerfully contributed two hours of taped material, which was, in a sense, an initiation. The force of her personality conveys a contact with the Goddess she worships. She was able to give me a much clearer view of the nature of women's magical energies and their importance in the community.

Sally: Why do you prefer to work with women?

Deborah: "When I was first starting out, and looking for a group to join, I had been a convinced, active feminist for a few years and was used to working with women's groups in other areas of my life. I enjoyed that and found it very productive. I was aware that I had some suspicion of men and what they might do to me. Regardless of what the real situation was, I felt I would be enough concerned about my feelings as to be unable to relax and just get into what I was doing. I was coming in as a beginner, and therefore unsure of my own power. Most of the mixed groups involved my placing myself under some kind of male leader or teacher, as well as a female one. But I was seeking my own knowledge and power--I had too many images attached to males to be able to receive this power from them as a source.

"As to why I continued working with women: most of the work I have done or am doing involves women's interests. I want to evolve, or 're-invent' a women's magical culture--from the past that has been almost totally forgotten, or probably just ignored. I do work with individual men at times, or for certain reasons, but mostly I work with women on things that concern us."

Sally: What, specifically do you do in a women's coven?

Deborah: "The mixed groups that I've seen tend to be a lot more systematic and cut-and-dried about what they do. There might be leaders who have a set series of formulas that they follow, or rituals or goals. I don't know of any women's groups that work from a set-down system like that. As far as ritual work is concerned, it evolves out of the group..."

Sally: Could you give me an example?

Deborah: "Well, we did a ritual involving some of our feelings about menstruation, which was later published in the anthology MOON, MOON, by Anne Kent Rush, and also in Women Spirit Magazine. It was not an abstract, cerebral ritual--we used our own real menstrual blood. We recited poems in praise of our women's bodies, and our transforming, life-giving blood from which all human life is born. We passed a cup of our combined blood around the circle, celebrating it, and painted our faces with it. Some of the witches there were shocked by this action, which was done publicly. They might have felt it was the blood of a sacrifice, or perhaps be influenced by the old Judeo-Christian concept that menstrual blood was a curse or a pollution. But by bringing this out in the open, we accomplished our purpose, which was to turn around some of these negative feelings and treat our blood as something good and holy and powerful. And it became good and holy and powerful again, as it once was.

"The blood itself is representative of our female bodies, of our wholesome, beautiful, female strength. This was a ritual to

celebrate our women's bodies, to rejoice and glory in our beautiful wholeness. Politically, we need to affirm our bodies, to overcome the patriarchal concept of division between body and spirit. Our bodies are sacred, but people can't seem to really experience this. We wanted to create an experience which would make this real. We made our bodies the focus of a ritual which treated them as sacred, and most of us came away from the ritual feeling that this was really true."

Sally: A lot of people seem to want to know about role-playing, ill terms of sexuality. How, for instance, do you raise a cone of power without male-female polarities?

Deborah: "That's a lot like asking a Lesbian couple which one of them plays the man's role. What goes on in a women's circle isn't a pale imitation of a mixed group; it's a different way of working. The energy pattern of a women's circle looks like a tightly-woven net, with lines of energy crisscrossing between all the people present; or like a bubbling cauldron, wherein each woman's personality floats in the broth of group personality. We are not concerned with setting up pairs of opposites, because polarized relationships are not what we are seeking to follow. We might sometimes play roles of various aspects of the (goddess, but mostly we let each woman bring out in her turn whatever aspect of her personality she chooses to manifest. We recognize that this in itself is a manifestation of the Goddess. We improvise a lot, and go from seriousness to laughter in an instant."

Sally: The term "Dianic Craft"--tell me something of your definition.

Deborah: "I follow the definition put forth by Morgan McFarland and Mark Roberts. The Dianic tradition of the Craft sees the Goddess as being whole and sufficient in Herself and worships Her without a consort. Femaleness is the basic fabric of the Universe, and maleness is one of its manifestations." (Thelemites, take note! -S.) "Dianic covens are frequently all-female, but some include people of both sexes. But they are not founded on the Yin-Yang balance principle; they don't celebrate the interplay of maleness and femaleness."

Sally: Talk a little about your coven, Ursa Maiar, if you would, please.

Deborah: "We were the first female-only coven in the Bay Area. In fact, at the time, the only women's covens that we knew in the world, were the ones led by Morgan McFarland in Dallas. But a women's coven seemed very natural and right to me, and I was sure there would be others.

"My roommate and I, and another woman taught a class on women's spirituality under the auspices of a feminist free school, with the help from the High Priestess of a mixed coven.

"Witchcraft was only one of the areas that we dealt with, but after we'd been meeting for several months and gotten to know each other, the women in the group got more interested in Witchcraft and were willing to try to form a coven. We had to figure out a lot of what we were doing as we went along, but fortunately, there were a lot of very talented women in the group. There were no followers at all; we were all leaders.

"We wanted to help more women's covens grow, so we tried to share what we were doing by publishing some of our rituals, giving workshops, and talking to interested groups of women."

Sally: How many were in the group?

Deborah: "Most of the time, seven. We met weekly for over two years. Lots of the sessions were not rituals; they were what you might consider training-coven work. We shared information, practiced psychic skills, made masks and talismans, had healings and meditation sessions. We studied mythology to forge our images of the Goddess. We built things up almost from scratch, and after two years had reached the point of beginning a series of formal initiations. However, there arose a difference of opinion in the group regarding bringing in others who had not been part of the original seven. Since we worked by consensus, we were unable to resolve this issue, and as members of the coven drifted into other interests, we lost the central core of energy. There was no one to replenish it, because we hadn't conceived of it as an ongoing thing. We hadn't all seen its potential -some were still into it and an extension of the original study group.

Sally: How do you handle sexuality in a women 's coven?

Deborah: "The rituals and general tone of mixed covens are based on Gardner's 'sacred marriage' concept. This forces members to deal with sexuality directly before the group has developed a collective mind. It also tends to distract people from group goals in general. In our circle, we started out dealing with each other as sisters. After we knew each other, after we had forged a common bond through our work together, some sexual activity and stimulus took place. But sexuality was not the fuel or the focus of our working. Some women were Lesbians, some were bisexual, some heterosexual. It didn't seem to make much difference, or to cause a problem.

"Which is not to say sexuality didn't form a part of the energies we raised. But it was a freer, less conditioned sexuality, something you can experience only outside of a role-playing situation. I think men in particular tend to focus on accentuating the differences between gay and straight; women have in general less hostility across these lines. We are concentrating on uniting, not polarizing. We don't depend on artificially created differences: to most women these things are irrelevant in terms of our survival as individuals.

"People in mixed covens tend to look at women's covens as an invention of the feminist movement. What we're really trying to do is look at the old traditions, in which women took major roles of leadership and direction. It is re-inventing, or rediscovering something which has always been there. When the Pagan temples were closed and magic driven underground, Witches could only practice in their family groups. Women were not permitted to bond together outside of family ties. So a great deal was lost, but we can rediscover the 'Women's Mysteries.' They are in our bodies, our actions, our feminine powers as we magnify them within ourselves."

Sally: How can interested women contact sources of information, and find groups in their areas to work with?

Deborah: "Levanah and I publish HOMEBREW, a journal of women's witchcraft, c/o Deborah Bender P.O. Box 6, CA, 94704. The subscription price is $2.50 an issue; $6 for

three. THEMIS, published by Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1, P.O. Box 42121, Los Angeles, CA 90042, is $5 per year. Both these magazines have contact columns for women. Several other publications, notably WOMAN SPIRIT, COVENANT OF THE GODDESS NEWSLETTER, and CIRCLE NETWORK NEWS devote sections or articles to the women's Craft. If you hang out in general Occult circles, you're not as likely to find a women's coven as you are by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope (perhaps with a donation) to one of these sources, along with a request for help. You can ask the Goddess for help, and you can start your own group, too. That's the best advice I can give anybody."

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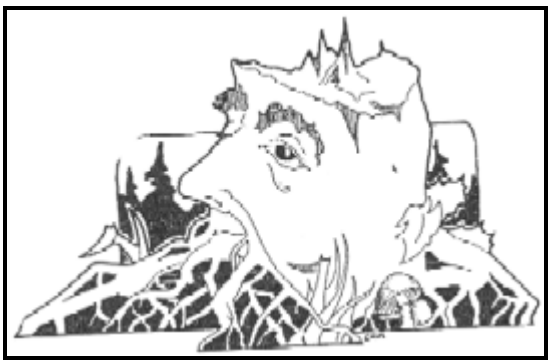


Live Archetypes Prowl the Mysterious Mountain

by Walter Breen

To Pagans and Christians alike, Glastonbury has been for over 2,000 years one of the most sacred and magical places in England--or even the world. Glastonbury is the Avalon ("Appletree Island") of Celtic legend: the Holy Isle in the Summer Sea where Druids were trained at a (now vanished) Stonehenge-like Temple of the Sun atop the mysteriously terraced Tor Hill; the site of the Sacred Well, whose waters have cured many people; the legendary burial place of King Arthur and Queen Gwenhwyfar (Guinevere). Christians know it as a place where Jesus supposedly walked in youth; where his kinsman, Joseph of Arimathea, brought the Holy Grail and various other relics for safekeeping; where Joseph's staff, thrust into the ground, took root and grew into the Holy Thorn Tree blooming at Christmas as well as in spring, until Cromwell's soldiers hacked it into firewood. (Its seedlings still bloom there, and every Christmas flowery sprigs are sent to the Royal Family. This species is found nowhere else but Israel and Glastonbury, Connecticut!) But most of all, Glastonbury is a place of pilgrimage, where sidewalk talk or pub-talk is as likely to deal with the occult as with weather or taxed, and where open-minded visitors even today have mind-opening Close Encounters--with ghosts, or their past lives, or their gurus, or Something--that wakes them to a new consciousness.

When my annual October vacation approached, I was offered the choice of going to Hawaii or England. Though I hankered for the unearthly beauty of Hawaii, every time I thought of the place, an inner voice kept saying "England." And

I remembered that ten years before, on a guided LSD trip, I had suddenly known that someday I would have to go to England, specifically first to Stonehenge, and then to Glastonbury (of which place I then knew nothing); that something awaited me there, something I would have to see and hear and do; but never a hint what.

And so, on hunch, on the feeling that I must go there and find out once and for all, I arrived--for the first time in this life--in London on October 14, and at Stonehenge three days later.

On October 24, 1 awoke with the feeling: this is the day to head for Glastonbury. Everything had a magical quality; coincidence control was complete and automatic--no transit delays despite a route requiring two trains, four different Underground lines, and two local buses. Though I had forgotten to bring raincoat and gloves, I never needed either--weather was perfect, and this day sunshine was unusually brilliant. The whole time *en route*, I felt that I was going home, that somehow everything had been specially prepared for this day, that somehow I was specially meant to be there at this very hour. I kept wondering why I was heading there--something like Jesus' question, "What did you go out into the wilderness to see?" Speculations like "A past life? My roots? Someone I must meet? Acid-induced foolishness of a crazy dream?" led to no feeling of recognition; but nothing could quell my growing excitement.

I got off the bus at Market Cross and headed up High Street toward the Gothic Image Book shop, a place strongly recommended as a source of everything from occult books and magical supplies to greeting cards and quality craft work. A face looked from within its window across the street, making eye contact; I somehow recognized him, thought "friend, but who?" and headed for the door.

"Jamie George? Marion Zimmer Bradley said I should look you up."

"You're Walter Breen, then? When I saw you through the window I said to myself, here is someone I have to get to know." Instant affinity: like old friends getting back together after years apart. I briefly flashed on him as much older and wearing a tabard with a cross fleury, he identified this as part of the uniform of the Knights Templars, to which he recalled having belonged in a past life! After more conversation, he suggested I head for the Tor, and be sure to return before 5:30 p.m. as that was his closing time. I thanked him and headed first for the Abbey.

Glastonbury Abbey ruins felt oddly familiar, and I kept hunting for things that I kept having to remind myself weren't there. The atmosphere was beautiful and like home in Lady Chapel and the Abbot's Kitchen and everywhere else except St. Patrick's Chapel. A sign in the latter notified us that any clergymen of established faiths (unspecified) were welcome to celebrate their liturgy therein by prearrangement. I doubted that they would welcome Druids or Craft people and thought, "They'd have to be awfully insensitive!" I found no prayer possible except, "O Lord or Lady or Whoever, help my disbelief." And I realized that somehow I seemed fated neither to accept Christianity nor to abandon it totally.

Hearing a power mower's growls and whines, seemingly following whatever path I took among the ruins, I kept thinking, "We came here to escape the sounds of war, yet now again they intrude. If even this holy place can be destroyed, what will survive the coming holocaust?" And the answer in a flash: "Only the frailest and paradoxically the toughest things of all: human memory, human DNA." And the mower's noise seemed to drive me toward the exit--to meet--what? whom? On the Tor.

The climb--520 feet vertically, possibly three times that on the slope--was unexpectedly difficult. I have never had any trouble climbing ordinary hills; but this was without any path, only a series of divots dug into the side, mostly too small for safe footing, many slippery from previous rains, or obscured by cow droppings. I kept slipping and became increasingly fearful that I would not reach the summit: either my heart would give out or I would fall and bash my head on a rock. Yet suddenly l became indifferent to whether I lived or die here: after all I was where I should be, l was doing what I should be doing. At once both the heart symptoms and a nagging feeling that I should give up and go back vanished. I kept climbing; it was increasingly difficult hut that didn't matter.

At the summit I looked around at the amazingly beautiful landscape--flat areas sharply demarcated by hedges, hardly any two alike in shape or shade of green-and thought, "How obvious that this was once an inland sea and this Tor an island: Avalon, Apple Tree Island, but where are its apple trees? Why was it so carefully terraced? What is inside?" I passed occasional tourists, but spoke to none. I examined the Tower in growing wonderment.

The tower is possibly 120 feet high, open to the sky, square in cross-section, battlemented at the top, furnished with niches (empty,) and can be entered at East or West by Gothic windows low enough to climb into without difficulty above one of these are two carven medieval plaques, one with the Weighing of the Soul in the Balance, the other with the Cow--singular Egyptian symbolism. This Tower is all that remains of St. Michael's Church, blown down by an earthquake in the Middle Ages (I thought, "a site too holy for Christians to monopolize!"); it has been a place of pilgrimage ever since

At this point I kept thinking, "OK, I'm here: what did I come to see? Is this all? Maybe whatever I seek isn't here. Maybe I should just go back now and tell Jamie how beautiful it was." But somehow that same inner voice said

No. Wait till the tourists are gone. I tried to dismiss all this with "Why?" but no answer came; only within my inner peace, my sense of being at home, that inner voice began to repeat, Go in and lie down. I tried to dismiss this as foolishness but could not silence it. I circled the Tower, waiting. Go in and lie down. And again, as the tourists gradually dispersed, Go in and lie down. GO IN AND LIE DOWN. I felt foolish. Yet I climbed in one of the two windows, took off my coat, and lay down, and looked up: AND SAW BRILLIANT RED AND BLUE FLAMES LINING THE FOUR TOP EDGES OF THE ROOFLESS TOWER FRAMING THE SKY!

Optical illusion? No, the flames were nowhere else, and there they remained, the blue below the red, forming a rampart at least a foot high, probably more; lapis lazuli and intense vermilion. Without my glasses they were exactly as blurry as the wall just below; with my glasses they were again exactly as clear and intense, looking like any other names--except that I never recalled seeing flames in exactly that shade of red. (Highway flares come closest, and these were nearly as brilliant; but much nearer to spectral fire engine red.)

I began taking notes, only to be interrupted each time by that inner voice, stronger than before, saying LISTEN. I took this to mean, "don't make words just listen," and put away my notebook. l listened in order to hear: and I heard and saw.

No human voices, but dimly the buzz tone (not the tap tone) of a bell with a deeper voice than any I had heard in England or America, a bell that night have served for the Transformation Scene in Parsifal. And as this faded, there came the sound of rushing waters below me, from somewhere deep within the Tor: Caves? Tunnels? Over and above the sound of wind within the Tower was another wind-like sound, below me,

west to east, east to west (along the Ultimate Ley Line, joining the Tor with Stonehenge and Canterbury Cathedral!), and I began to feel the energies pulsing in the same directions through me, then up through me, through the Tower, along the walls and especially up the corners.

AND ABOVE THE FLAMES, FROM THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE TOWER APERTURE, WHITE ENERGIES LEAPT UP FORMING GOTHIC ARCHES, WAVERING, FLICKERING, MEETING AT A VERTEX THOUSANDS OF FEET THE SKY!

Listening still more closely, trying not to think in words I heard and felt those energies more and more clearly, with others north to south, south to north, weaker, and others converging on the Tor in still other directions, still weaker.

I looked out through both windows, wondering if the energies could be seen--but the landscape was luminous, glowing golden, only on the Tor, though quite normal everywhere else. For a fraction of a second I wondered: illusion? effect of sunlight? But the glow was identical westward toward the lowering sun, and eastward in partly shadowed areas; and it seemed superimposed on the normal green. Within the Tower the flames still glowed, the energies still flowed; I felt some-how I was partly transparent to them, though unfortunately not completely so: the stream was a little muddy, the crystal a little cloudy, the rainbow a little dirty, but not enough to block the flow altogether. I saw these metaphors in my mind's eye, realized that they represented my psychic condition and to some extent that of many others: all different ways of saying the same thing. In the sky the energies still played and formed their intersecting arches. At one point, clouds passed over the tower and formed themselves into an Eye looking straight down at me! I again wondered if this was an illusion, but realized I had not made it happen; and the winds dispersed the clouds. Then the insights began pouring in: concepts familiar and unfamiliar suddenly coming together, forming huge patterns. I understood much that was before obscure--about myself, about the human mind, about the history of our species, about the way the world is put together: a concentrated course in psychology, philosophy, cosmology. At this point I received what amounted to instructions: I am a kind of intersection point between Eastern and Western concepts, and must investigate the Eastern ones via the Theosophists and their sources, compared with the Western ones via their roots in the Gnostics, medieval mystery schools, esoteric Masonic guilds, early German Rosicrucians, to their Western Tradition successors to the present day, and eventually make some attempt at a synthesis. A huge order, and I hope I live to start it, so that my coworkers and successors may finish it, so that some part of it will survive the holocaust.

Eventually I noticed the sky was suddenly dark as the--instructions? revelations? realizations? came to some kind of stopping point. Above me was a solid bank of white clouds the flames faded out. Through the windows, sun and sky were covered with dark storm clouds. An inner voice said GO. My watch said 5:05, only 25 minutes left for reaching the bookstore!

I climbed out, circled the Tower, kissed one wall good-bye, watched a meditating couple for a few seconds, and headed downslope. An inner voice said SIT. Feeling foolish but unwilling to temporize or ignore it, I saw a park bench nearby and sat down on it, thinking "What am I waiting for?"

At that very moment an old man-possibly 80 or 100 years old--came up and joined me. He looked like a sea captain or other weather-beaten outdoorsy type, glowing, immensely strong, like an oak which has survived centuries of storms clean-shaven, dressed in tweeds and a cap. He introduced himself as Jim Pollard (I gave him my name then,) he said he'd been drawn there today from the far north of England, and did I mind if he talked to me a little while? I said the first thing that came to my mind:

"Speak: I am listening."

This did not even seem odd then, but only later did I realize what a strange way to greet a tourist. He continued:

"Do you mind if I ask you a few questions?"

(These and his later words may not be exact--l have been unaccountably unable to recall them verbatim--but the gist of his questions is exact, and my replies are as near verbatim as possible.)

"I will try to answer."

I felt like a kid in school being given an oral examination. I felt somehow that right here was a phase of the Experience just as important as what had happened in the Tower; I must formulate my answers as clearly and as carefully as possible, for something (but what?) would depend on how I replied. Suddenly I had stopped worrying about getting back to the Gothic Image in time; stopped worrying about being drenched by the oncoming storm or about being struck by lightning on the Tor: I was where I should be.

"Have you found what you sought here?" His voice was gentle, but sounded as though he need only raise it and he could make himself heard halfway across Somerset County.

"In part, at least, yes."

"Did you know what you were seeking when you came here?"

"My heart has followed all my days / Something I cannot name." These were a couple of lines from Don Marquis, the multiple Leo who created the "Archy and Mehitabel" poems. These lines spoke for me better than I could for myself.

"Who are you now?"

A strange question; I had already given him my name! I remembered the insights I had been shown in the Tower-which I kept thinking of as Chapel Perilous--and said:

"I have been the Fool on the Hill. I was one of those who bore the title of Myrddin, I was one of those called Faust. I was once at home in the Abbey, but now I see myself as the Wanderer." (I flashed again--as in the Tower--on the meaning

of "Myrddin" which is Welsh for Merlin and is rendered as "man of the sea hill," namely of Avalon--one who had been trained on the Tor! I flashed again on there having been several people about whom the Faust legends sprang up, and on Faust's REAL quest being for esoteric knowledge, the devil being a figure added by superstitious churchgoers. I flashed again on the similar Wanderer's Quest ascribed to Faust and to Odhinn/Wotan, but with the difference that I was not seeking the key to absolute power. I felt somehow that in answering as I did, some part of this would be familiar to my Interrogator.)

"Do you believe in reincarnation?" (a peculiar inflection and emphasis on "believe.") I took this to mean "believe--or know experientially"'

"Belief is no longer the relevant word. I can 'believe in' things on others' say so, but experience changes belief to knowledge. Memories of past lives have changed belief in reincarnation into knowledge; just as did the experience of the Tor."

"Good. What can you tell me of the origins of man, of how we have come to be where we are now?"

I did not think he meant he needed any summary of the history of technology. I felt that something like a karmic story would be nearer the desired answer, but somehow I had to integrate it with biology:

"I have seen our earliest ancestors as originally one extended tribe, the ultimate face-to-face society, where individuals were linked by kinship or by love" (or by sex, I thought, but did not say) "and each felt responsible for the others" (we're all in this together!) "but over the hundreds of generations their populations increased so much they had to spread out to find living space and enough food for all. And they came to live in geographically isolated tribes which rarely saw one another and eventually forgot about each other. And after thousands of generations of this happening, some of the more remote tribes changed by genetic drift, adapting to different germs, different parasites, different predators, different food, climate, land. They came to be through this genetic drift, this adaptive radiation, almost a different species: short-gutted, high-adrenal, aggressive, mostly carnivorous, mostly nomadic herdsman with some hunters, unlike the rest who remained long-gutted, low-adrenal, more placid, mostly omnivorous, mostly hunter-gatherers and small farmers. And eventually the ice age came, and drove all our ancestors back together, and though they were at each other's throats, like Cain and Abel, their survivors interbred, and we are a divided species to this day because we are their descendants, we bear their DNA--'Man Divided.'"

"Good." (I felt this meant: correctly answered.) "Have you studied Blavatsky?"

"Do you mean Isis Unveiled or The Secret Doctrine?"

"The Secret Doctrine."

"Only occasional quotations." And I suddenly knew I would have to read it through as part of the instructions which had come to me in the Tower.

"You have almost been quoting her: read her to know more. Now that you have been here, what will you do when you return to America?"

"Tell people--especially in writing--of what I have seen and heard, of what I have learned about that small part of the Universe I have been enabled to see, as clearly and accurately as I know how. Tell them to stop murdering the planet. Tell them they need not be afraid to love one another without erecting barriers of class or age or gender or especially religion. For more have died over theological disputes than for any other cause in human history."

"Correct. What do you understand God to be?"

"In the first place, we must not confuse that tribal kitchen-snoop and bedroom-snoop concept worshipped by Jews and Christians, with--THAT" (I pointed to the sky) "which started all this; THAT of which we are all a part-- He interrupted me:

"Good. Have you found your guru?"

"Not yet."

"Nevertheless," (he spoke with great force) "you are to become one, you MUST become one."

Chills went up and down my spine.

"When I have learned enough to feel ready. I am not yet ready."

At this point his wife joined us, a distinguished lady in her 60s or 70s or older. She greeted me, shook hands and said,

"I am so glad Jim got to talk with you."

I was somehow touched and impelled to answer, in a whisper, "Thank you, Mother." She nodded and smiled from ear to ear. We parted; Jim Pollard said, after walking down with me a little way, that they would meet me further down the hill. I found myself climbing down with some difficulty. When I reached the lower slopes, there they both were. sitting on a bench, and I suddenly realized they must have scampered down like mountain goats. I approached; both turned around to see me. Jim resumed.

"What do you know of the brothers of Joseph of Arimathea?"

"I did not know he had any. All I know of the Joseph tradition is what everyone knows." (As mentioned in the beginning.)

"Does that make this place any more holy to you?" He pointed to the Tower.

"This was holy hundreds of years before Joseph arrived. Their coming was only part of the whole." (I thought: but what on earth could make this place any holier? It is the holiest spot in Britain, and arguably the holiest place in this part of the world. It did not occur to me for two weeks that he might have meant an occult order; for which I could not qualify because it was more strictly Christian.)

Then he laid hands on my head, to bless me; and the energies pulsed and crackled into me through my third eye. We parted; I gave him my Box 352, Berkeley 94701 address, should he ever again wish to reach me. His wife said, "Do you wish to write it down?"

"No need to write it. I will remember." Then, to me,

"God go with you."

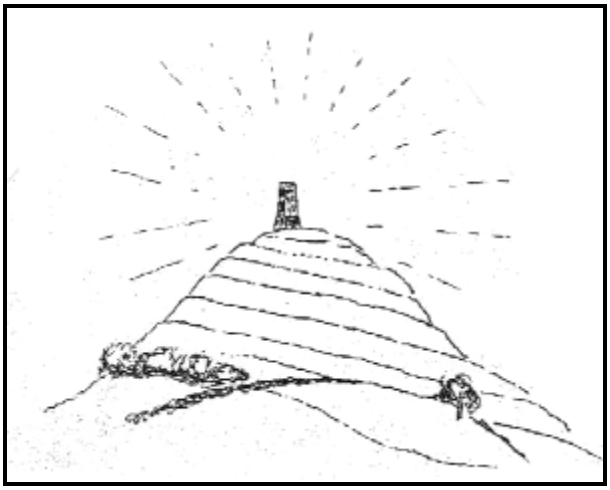
"Blessings on you. Thank you."

Back at Jamie George's bookstore--five minutes before closing!--I described these extraordinary happenings.

Nobody answering Jim Pollard's description had been seen near the bookstore. The Tor is well known to have been an island in an inland sea; shells of modern types and fossils of museum quality: are continually being found in local gardens. (I saw some later, and they are splendid; mostly scallop types and nautilus types.) Ley-line currents are repeatedly and consistently described in much the same terms as I had used. Many people have seen either the red or the blue flames, fewer have seen both. Almost nobody who goes to the Tower open-minded comes back indifferent to the place; it is a site of vast energies Many have seen discarnate entities or visions of various kinds, or have had some other kind of mind altering experiences there.

Jamie could find me only one available bed; this was at Chalice Hill House; run by something called the Ramala

Foundation (known for the RAMALA REVELATIONS). I had to share a room with one Wayne Tooker, American expatriate on his own spiritual Quest, friend of Jamie's, devoted to astrology and many of the other occult interests I shared with Jamie.



And with Wayne Tooker my last counts were resolved. As he told Jamie, he had seen Jim and Mrs. Pollard with me coming down to the foot of the Tor, including Jim's laying hands on me and said,

"This old man might as well have been Gandalf. I could see the energy flows. I knew I wanted to talk to you and what a synchronicity that Jamie got us together." This eye-witness perceived the tail end of the Experience very much as I had seen it.

During the months since I left Glastonbury, I have mostly been high without grass or other chemical catalyst. Learning has continued, mostly exploring implications of what I learned in the Tower.

This his has been a Faustian quest, in which I received much more than I had sought. I am not claiming I actually was Johann Faust or the other scholar of whom similar stories were told (though I do not exclude this either); but it seems clear that I have resumed a Faustian search begun centuries ago, which search for esoteric knowledge to assemble into a system (like those of Aristotle or Albertus Magnus) must have struck my land bound contemporaries as impossibly eccentric, alien, and dangerous.

For me, the relevant part of the Faust legend is not the Gretchen/Marguerite episode enshrined in the operas, but the final sections of Goethe's Faust Part II, in which not only "das Ewig-Weibliche / Zieht uns hinan" (i.e. the Goddess, the only true Eternal-Feminine, leads us onward,) but it was precisely the glimpse of the Ineffable that induced Faust to say, knowing the consequences, "Remain: Thou art beautiful." Clearly, Faust then, like myself today, would neither fully accept Christianity nor completely abandon it; hence he remained like Mr. Spock, like so many of us, like so many characters in Marion Zimmer Bradley's novels, Man Divided.

But more profoundly still, consider: how could the Devil have shown Faust Heaven or the Ineffable? How could he have endured to go anywhere near there, let alone howl could he open Its gates to show Faust What was within? Then what did show Faust all That? And the answer flashed on me with a major shock of recognition - remembrance, and parallelism.

The Interrogator is not the Devil, but a wholly different archetype, namely the Hierophant, the Mystagogue. His questions are standard tests at any Initiation. Faust (or whoever is in the position of candidacy, like Oedipus confronting the Sphinx, like Jesus in the desert being shown the neighboring kingdoms) must answer correctly or fail. What was translated as “Remain: Thou art beautiful" is a ritual answer in recognizing the real Ineffable as against its counterfeits. For only here can Faust the Wanderer find his true home, only here is the Grail, the end of the Quest, on the other side of the Mirror; only here are the real answers in the Riddle Game, the archetypes made manifest, the symbols seen in resemblance to That which they allude to. But this Experience is not an end but a beginning: the very term Initiation means a beginning.

For me, since that day, the "Mysterious Mountain" archetype celebrated in Alan Hovhaness's symphony of that name has had to mean Glastonbury Tor as much as whatever height this visionary composer might have had in mind; the place where archetypes (like the Wise Old Man who was my Interrogator) prowl the slopes; the place where the Ineffable allows itself to be glimpsed: Avalon.

The Druid Chronicler Section

This department is for news, reports, announcements, and other materials of specific interest to Reformed, Neopagan, and Mesopagan Druids of all persuasions, throughout Europe and North America.

Arch Grove:

Archdruidess Carolyn Clark reports that the Beltane Service will be held this year in Kansas City, in conjunction with a Wiccan group. Lughnasadh, however, will be her wedding (Handfasting) to Michael Fix, at Tower Grove Park. It will be modeled after a mini-medieval craft faire, with a tourney, archery, etc., as well as a feast (which will be $3-4, and should be paid for in advance). She encourages those who would like to attend to do so in costume. After that, she and her new husband intend to come out to Coeden Brith in Northern California around the first two weeks in August for ANOTHER rite, and a visit.

Other than that, things seem to be going well for Arch grove. There seem to be about 10-12 members who meet for Full Moons and High Days. Call Carolyn for more information as to dates, places, etc., and also about the herb hikes, which have resumed.

Evergreen Grove:

Cyndie Schuler is now Cyndi Salle Brown, having re-adopted the names of both her parents. The Grove settled to about 15-20 people over the Season of Sleep, and seems to have an active Bardic section, which is working on original music, which we all hope soon to get a sample of. Spring Equinox Services, "Bringing in the Light'," were held on March 22nd at Burfoot Park, with a large ritual fire, a picnic, hiking on Nature trails, and a beach. The Grove holds Full Moon and High Day Services, and Cyndie should be contacted for times and places.

Los Angeles Grove:

AD Chris Sherbak says he is changing the Grove to an RDNA affiliation "just to keep things interesting," and would be glad to hear from any interested Neo-Pagans in his area, to organize Services and other Druidic activities. There is some chance that he may be moving to the San Francisco Bay Area this summer.

Southern Shores Grove:

Adr. Steve Savitzky says his grove is still active, with the majority of the members coming from the Society for Creative Anachronism. ("Southern Shores" is the S.C.A. name for the area around San Jose, California.) So far the grove has been meeting mostly for Highdays, in the Archdruids backyard (anyone knowing a nearby scenic location appropriate for ceremonies is asked to let him know. They will be meeting for Summer Solstice, and local folks interested in participating can call Steve for details on dates and places.

Madrakara Grove:

The folks at Madrakara seem to be busy as usual, with their varied assortment of festivities, workshops, and house building. INVITING IN THE LIGHT was the title of a large, public spring equinox ritual given by Madrakara in San Francisco. Billed as "A Major Event of Transformation for the New Age," they presented an all day affair of Celtic Druidism, Native American Shamanism, Esoteric Christianity, and Wicca, (The Old Religion). The ritual took place indoors, within the halls of the Irish Cultural Center, near the beach in San Francisco. After some group singing and chanting, the lights went out and the ritual began. Hopes and words of wisdom for the New Age were read off papers on the wall that had been hung for that purpose. Ritual movements of bringing in the light from overhead and bringing it down to the earth were performed by all, finally ending in one large spiral dance leading down to the ocean to join Shiela Na Gig for dancing, music, and wave-wading.

There are several things being planned by Madrakara for the future. Danaan will be conducting his earth mysteries workshops May 9-11, May 23-25, and August 22-24. Price is $65.00 which includes food and lodging. Call 707-865-1498 to register.

Madrakara will also be holding their regular Summer Solstice ritual in the meadow (the big stone will have been laid exactly one year ago!) Call the above number for further details if you wish to attend.

Mother Grove:

The Mother/Berkeley Grove continues to meet at John Hinkle Park for New, Full, and High Day Services, although there has been some talk of moving to a less public area, at least some of the time. Contact ADs Joan Carruth or Stephen Abbott if you're not sure.

We will, in any case, be meeting at 12 noon for Bardic Rehearsal, and 1 p.m. for the actual Services. Since we have a member who works weekends, we will be meeting on CLOCK time, not Pagan Standard Time.

The Grove Officers are sporting wreaths, made for us out of Druid funds by Sally Eaton, so that from Samhain to Yule, we had Oak wreaths; Yule to Oimelc, Holly; Oimelc to Spring Equinox, Pine; and Equinox to Beltane, Ivy. They are quite lovely, and are being saved for use in future years, as most of them are artificial, or real leaves dried and siliconed. Many members have been getting their own white robes, and Linda Von Braskat has been working on elaborate embroidered tabards for the ADs, so our visual impact is becoming quite impressive.

There has been talk of (for lack of a better term) a Pagan Sunday School for children of Grove members, to acquaint them with some of the mythic stories we adults know and love so well, and to introduce Pagan philosophy, as an antidote to the prevailing culture. How many kids are interested? We'll make it as interesting as possible, and, of course, you can participate in the design of what you'd like. There are all kinds of interesting projects that could be done! How many adults are interested? Anyone have experience with this kind of thing? Pagan children's books? A Pagan Children's Order?

The new liturgy is much liked. There is more Grove involvement, and the magickal design is better. We still need a dance and choreography and acting workshop, and new songs.

Yes, we're part of the Berkeley Area Interfaith Council, and an interesting experience it is, too. At the group's annual meeting in January, a speaker from the National Council of Churches pointed out that this may be a unique IC, as most are dubbed "Interfaith" because they have a few Jewish or Unitarian members, while Berkeley boasts Bahai, Sufi, Scientology, Zen, Taoist, Vedanta, an Ashram, and various other non-traditional religions, including, of course, the Reformed Druids. Any of you other Groves out there interested in making your local Interfaith Council REALLY Interfaith?

Daniel Ellsberg wandered into one of our Services in December, and seemed intrigued, and he and his wife, Elizabeth, wandered off again with their hands full of literature. One never knows...

ADs Joan Carruth was also invited around Yule to consecrate a tree planting in People's Park in Berkeley, which marked the loss of the famous parking lot, and the turning of the entire tract to growing things. A small ritual was held, and an 8' Douglas Fir consecrated. Various street people struggled wo/manfully through "We Are One Family."

We are planning once again to hold Beltane Services in the Berkeley Rose Garden, and would like to take this opportunity to invite all interested Groves, Covens, and individuals to come and join us. The Rose Garden is a stepped amphitheater with room for the impressive presentation of many Druids. Contact AD Stephen Abbott McCaully for details.

Order of Dian Cecht:

This is the Healing Order within NRDNA, and is open to all NeoPagans with an interest in magickal, psychic, and mundane methods of healing. Now that Beltane is upon us, we would like to encourage new members to join formally. If you do not live near Berkeley (where the Matriarch is,) write to me, and an arrangement can be made for you to be ordained through your local Arch Druid Matriarch Joan Carruth can be contacted through the Berkeley Grove.

We are always interested in ways people have learned to heal themselves and others, but our meetings have stopped being wholly dedicated to comparing notes, and have started to be active working sessions. We have worked on a half dozen or so people so far, and results have been good, but still too small a sample for statistical measure, if ever we wanted to go so far. So far, like most Witches, we have been satisfied with results. We usually meet on Sunday nights closest to the waxing quarter moon.

Order of Oberon:

Matriarch and Chief Bard, Linda Von Braskat-Crowe, announces that beginning after Beltane, the Order will be inducting new members. Prospective Bards are encouraged to keep and add to a notebook of songs and poems, (both their own and others',) and to have a presentation ready for their induction

ceremony. Contact the Matriarch (preferably in person) for further details.

The order is currently holding monthly Bardic rehearsals at the Matriarch's home. Call her at 839-1628 for specifics. Bardic revels also happen monthly, as desired, at various locations.

Isaac Bonewits and Joan Carruth of Mother Grove conducting Druid Services.

Druid Publicity:

The March 24th issue of New West magazine included an extensive article on the Neopagan Druid movement, focusing on Isaac Bonewits and the activities of the Mother Grove. The article was well written, friendly and (for once!) reasonably accurate. Out thanks go out to the author, Frank O'Donnell who became a first order Druid last summer while researching the story.

One side effect of the article's publication was a sudden influx of interest in Druidism--an influx we aren't really ready for yet. PJ was mentioned, and it looks like we'll get a few extra subscribers out of it--perhaps enough to keep this magazine going on to bigger and better things. PJ was referred to as a Druidic publication, which it really isn't all that much

Protogroves:

Why should the full Groves get all the fun? Are there any functioning Protogroves out there? You may get your own section in the Druid Chronicler! Or you may be listed under the Grove whose aegis you are under. We do have word of a proto-grove in Alberta, Canada. Eugene Plawink is organizing it in connection with the SCA up there. They seem to have several members, and are meeting for New and Full Moons and High Days. Berkeley/Mother Grove seer; to have them under their wing so far, but things are flexible. Any others out there? Write the Druid Chronicler before Midsummer with news, or report through a Grove. Let us know you're out there! In your heart, you know you're Druid!

Archdruid Emeritus??:

Isaac Bonewits has retired as Archdruid of the Mother Grove, so that he and his wife Selene could move down to Santa Cruz. Joan Carruth, Matriarch of the Order of Dian Cecht, is now the Co-AD with Stephan McCaully of the combined Mother Grove and Hazel Nut Grove merging. Isaac has kicked himself upstairs to the previously nonexistent position of Archdruid Emeritus. He swears up and down that he will not start a grove, coven, lodge, temple, or koffeeklatsch in Santa Cruz for at least another year. (No one believes him.) He sends this following letter:

Dear Druidic and other Neopagan siblings: It's true. I am now living near Santa Cruz, California, in something vaguely resembling a state of magical retirement. While Selene goes to the University (to get her B.A. in Modern Ritual!), I'm working in the book composition field (typesetting, layout, camera work, etc). and spending what spare time I have reading studying guitar (so I can actually start playing some of the songs I've been writing) and working on a couple of new books. As Archdruid Emeritus, I get to take a break for a year or so. This means that people interested in knowing what's going on with the current Neopagan Druid movements should write to Joan or Stephen, not me. I'm on "sabatical."

One of the projects I'm working on this year is a sort of "Druidic Handbook." I'm rewriting a lot of the material I originally wrote for The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) and adding a sizable amount of new stuff. The book will include history, polytheology, philosophy, rituals, liturgical customs, music, poetry, organizational structures, and everything else necessary so that any qualified reader can use the book to start up his or her own Neopagan Druid group--with or without any "apostolic succession" from the Reformed Druids of North America. It will be written and published in such a fashion that it can be taken into any court in the country and presented as "sacred scriptures" for legal purposes. Whether one wants to start up a Druidic group or not, it will still serve as a source of ideas on how to start a new religion.

The reason I'm mentioning all this is not to promote advance sales (it won't be available for at least a year or two anyway,) but to ask for help. I want to include the best and most usable materials from any and all Druidic, semi-Druidic and pseudo-Druidic sources. I'm looking for copies of Masonic (Mesopagan) Druid ceremonies, remnants of old Celtic folksongs and dances, experimental liturgies from current Neopagan groups and individuals, even people's "past life memories" of Druid lore. Mind you, I will footnote everything properly, and I'm not going to present something as historical

fact unless it can be pretty well documented. But there are many kinds of truth, and each can be presented on its own level of reality.

So if you would like to get involved in helping me create a new Neopagan Druid religion, feel free to send me whatever you've got to offer. Items that are copyright, or which you refuse to let me change, should be marked clearly as such. I won't print much of either kind of item, since I plan on altering, merging, and otherwise transmuting 95% of everything I can get my hands on.

As soon as I have working drafts of various sections of the handbook, I'll circulate copies among the dozen or so people who have shown the greatest interest, including members of as many other Druidic movements as I can find. With luck, we can come up with a consensus of what Aquarian Age Druidism might be like.

If you'd like to help, send your stuff to me at Box 9398, Berkeley, CA, 94709. Please mark your envelopes "Druid Handbook," so they won't get mixed up with the regular Pentalpha mail. Oh, and I should point out that I am terrible at answering correspondence, (I'm about nine months behind on my current pile of letters,) so don't think I'm not appreciating your stuff if I don't write you a letter back immediately. I will try and send postcards out to acknowledge receipt of your materials.

From time to time, bits and pieces of this project, as well as questions for people to argue about, will appear in The Druid Chronicler, along with occasional progress reports. But don't expect anything in a hurry, at least not from this Archdruid Emeritus. After all, folks in the magical community should be able to handle a little A.E. wait!

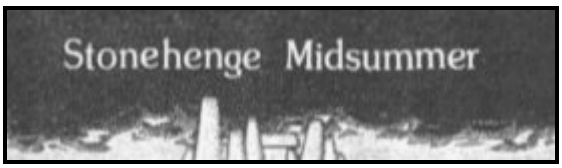
Musings of an Ancient Religion in a Modern World

By Shirine Ann Morton

Today, as a necessity, I woke up, took my Javacrucian drug, (i.e. coffees, saluted the Sun (eyes scrinching at the early AM light) through the walled and windowed barrier to the outside world, and proceeded to journey to the marketplace where I could buy a few volumes of printed matter. As I fumbled for my pen to write the check to purchase words on myth and symbolism, the thought occurred to me at how far we are from the reputed ability of our ancestral religion where learning began at birth and the history and knowledge was reputedly all orally learned.

I think about the lack of oral traditions we are faced with in our society. If I want to know something, I have to resort to the printed word. If I were a survivor of a great calamity, there would be no way I could relate the history of my culture from memory to the new generation, yet we see this ability time and again in groups of people who did not rely on writing for scholarship. Who is more scholarly--I who have a large library and can research obscure facts of knowledge or the Navajo Indian who can walk out into the dry prairie and find means to survive and teach the tradition to the new generation? A sandchanter medicine person has to have the history of the clan in his/her mind along with the myths about the healing, along with complicated mandalas of sandpainting and all the herbal knowledge to compliment the ceremony.

This tradition is completely oral and visual, whereas mine is all written. Admittedly as the young lose interest in the clan, parts of the system may be lost as has happened. It seems to me that many who claim to follow the old ways should begin looking within and studying techniques of visual and oral retention. When I look about me and see people doing rituals they have to read, working up ceremonies from written works, and reading them, I wonder about whether our so-called primitive ancestors were all that primitive.



Stonehenge Midsummer

Many people In America are curious about the sorts of ceremonies performed by Druid groups in England. The British Circle of the Universal Bond is one of the more established Druid movements and is well known for its annual rites at Stonehenge. They are Masonic/Rosicrucian (or "Mesopagan") Druids, and were described in an article by P.E.I. Bonewits in a previous issue of Pentalpha Journal (Number 10).

Although their literary style may seem add (or in some cases offensive) to Americans, it should be remembered that these Mesopagans have a tradition that goes back at least a couple of centuries, far longer than most modern American groups can legitimately claim. The concepts and phrasings used in their annual Summer Solstice ceremonies may well be older than anyone now living. American Druids especially may wish to take inspiration from their elder brothers and sisters in the B.C.U.B., adapting as always for the Aquarian Age.

The Midnight Vigil

An informal procession is formed and proceeds towards an ancient mound to the south of Cathoir Ghall using the old trackway to Salisbury.

This traditional vigil is held around the rim of the earthwork, as preparation for the coming assemblies. It is equivalent to the vigil which a night must have undertaken prior to his receiving the accolade.

Those of the distant and near past, who have handed; on the traditions and concepts of wise counsel to the Druid Order, are remembered. Past and present are united in a silent communion of thought by which inspiration is engendered. The Companions of the Druid Order renew the Covenant, and draw strength to assist them in continuance of their work.

By joining of hands, a great circle is formed, into which visitors are invited.

After a short, informal address, the participants return from the assembly, to rest until the dawn.

THE AWEN CEREMONY

This rite celebrates the advent of the longest day of light in the year. The sun is hailed as a symbol of the return of the Golden Age, when darkness will be banished, even as the sun's

first rays dispel the dark mantle of night. These flashes of the sun's light symbolize the descent of the "Awen," a symbol of the Divine Name of which the three bars of light is the outward expression.

The companions assemble, prepare for the ceremony, and in procession gather up the symbolic elements on then way to the point of the ascent of light.

The symbolic representations are temporarily discarded--their sacrifice--while the Companions affirm their adherence to the Druidic principles. The circle is entered and, after reaffirming their unity of purpose, the Companions greet the rise of the golden sun. They proclaim their beliefs, and the Words of Gold and of the Triads are made known to all. Purification by water and consecration by fire is followed by prayer. The benediction is then bestowed. This ends the ceremony.

Procession of the four elements

The four Symbolic Elements borne by the Element Bearers, (Dionachs) escorted by the Herald, are taken in procession and laid on the East, South, West, and North points where they remain in the care of the "Dionachs of Without," until collected by the main procession.

The Assembly

The Companions gather before sunrise near the Southern Mound to prepare themselves for the ceremony.

OFFICERS:

INNER ORDER (A.D.U.B,)
ARCHDRUID, (1); ARCHBARD (2); ARCHOVIATE (3).
OUTER ORDER (B.C.U.B).
DRUID (4); BARD (5); OVIATE: Earth bearer, (6).

AWENYDDIEN (COMPANIONS)
TEINE: Fire bearer, (7); USIAGE: Water bearer, (8); AYRE: (AIR): Rose bearer, (9).

THE ASSEMBLY
(4) Let us open with contemplation.

(1) Let us contemplate
the super-essential light of lights
the unconquerable sun of suns;
the unquenched flame within all life.

ALL May we receive enlightenment from that great source.

(4) We are gathered within this place of Light and have left outside all disturbing thoughts. Let us consecrate our every thought within this sacred place to the uplifting of humanity and to the attainment of knowledge.

THE INVOCATION

(1) Universal Majesty, Verity, and Love Infinite; all reverence to the Holy One, the World-Enlightener; all reverence to the holy, the Pure, the Liberating Doctrine; all reverence to the brotherhood of the elect, and to all that is noblest and best in mankind.

(5) and (6) collect the rose from the Eastern Stone

THE PROCESSION

(2) Know why we are gathered together into this sacred meeting?
(6) To bear witness to the power of Universal Majesty, Verity, and Love Infinite, according to the commands of the Sacred Five, and of the Servant Messengers to the sons of Men.
(2) And why do we stand at this ancient mound?
(6) To do reverence to the Word that was made known to our forebears, and to acknowledge our indebtedness to those who preserved the truth of the Universal Bond, and passed it on to us as a heritage:

(6) and (3) return to procession. The procession led by (5) hearing the Rose. followed by (3) bearing the Fire, moves sunwise First to the western stone, from whence in silence, Bread and Salt is collected by (9), then to the Northern Mound, where (8) collects the Water.

The procession advances to the Stone Circle but on reaching the northeastern gateway, turns towards the Recumbent Stone, where it dioxides into two columns. The symbolic element's are placed upon the stone, where they remain in the care of the Dionachs, while the columns move on to the Sun Stone. (1), escorted by (6) and the sword-bearer advances to the Sun Stone and place his right hand upon it.

(1) I make and renew the very covenant that is made between heaven and earth. This I do in reverence to my father, and make adoration to the spirit of supernal fatherhood.

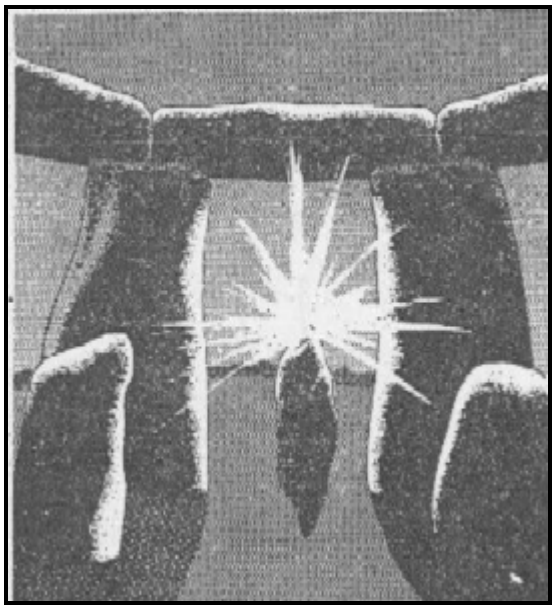
The Companions in processional order each touch the stone in silence. The procession passes once rotted the Recumbent Stone, the Dionachs retire to the columns, and the symbolic elements are collected. (8) takes the Chalice to (1) who sprinkles himself:

(1) This I do in reverence to my mother and to the spirit of supernal motherhood. Purify and strengthen all by the vibrations of health!

Element In. Lit Bearers return to the Columns.

(4) Let us make our, way to the dwelling of light.

The procession forming one column enters the circle from the north. east, and the Companions proceed to their appointed positions. The page to (8) places a square of linen in the cycle center. The tiles are placed. The Four Elements are placed upon the square of linen.



(1) Why do you bear the branches of the sacred tree in your hands?
(4) As an offering to the Ineffable One, We have plucked these branches that we may feed the Sacred Fire with life that comes from the fairest and strongest of the trees. As our forebears have done in their wisdom, so do we in our day of greater growth.
(1) It is well! Let the sacred circle be remembered as ye lay your of offering upon the Sacred Fire!

The oak branches are placed upon the Fire.

(1) May you all receive throughout the coming year the courage divine that conquers all fear.
(4) Let the Sacred Word reverberate within the soul!
(2) From whence has come the mystic Word? -
(1) From the Most High, in the Golden Age, when the mysteries were revealed to the sons of men.

The circle is formed by joining hands.

ALL We swear by peace and love to stand heart to heart and hand in hand. Mark, O Spirit, and hear us now confirming this, our sacred vow.
(4) We who are drawn by affinity to this sacred place, mark the symbolic circle as of yore, and measure, as did our forebears, the lines of the eternal plan. While so doing, leave all earthly desires behind.
(6) Let all mankind prepare for the restoration of the inheritance that has been withheld from them by the power of darkness. Let the earth be prepared for the coming of the great peace. Look forward to the all-illuminating day, flooded with mercy, wisdom and love, that we may go forth from this sacred place reflecting its light on all we meet.

Fanfare to the four Quarters, all turn to the Northeast

(6) Now is the dawn!
(1) Arise, Oh Sun! Let the darkness of night fade before the beams of thy glorious light. Our forefathers discovered the existence of divine purpose within all that is. They found no disorder or wrong within nature which they regarded as the reflected majesty of The Powers, and of the Almighty Power that lies beyond all. They knew that within the divine purpose all is created, preserved and transformed, through mercy and through love. From them came the great concept of the Infinite-universal Majesty, Verity, and Love Infinite, which dwells within the heart and life of all that is controlled by the wisdom and purpose of the Great Designer--the Godhead--The High Trinity, composed of the Builder, the Preserver, and the Transformer, the wise servants of the AD-Wise. They knew of the guidance of the Sacred Five, the Servant Messengers of the Highest, and they taught the purposed evolution of all things towards the better and the best.
(6) Thus I proclaim the ultimate growth of all things into good; the divine harmony that is all-embracing; the eternal mercy and undying love; the eternal justice pervading the word of the cosmos; and the final purification of all!

All face inwards

(4) Let the Words of Gold be heard!
(8) In right submission and in humility there is the seed of Peace.
In peace and simplicity, there is the flower of Love.
In love and contentedness, there is the life of Joy.
In joy and intelligence, there is the light of Hope.
In hope and nobility, there is the heart of God.
And in good and sublimity, there is the smile of God.

(4) Let the Words of Wisdom from the past be read! What are the three desirable objectives which all Druids strive to uphold?
(8) The cultivation of expression. The cultivation and presentation of our ancient wisdom. The enlightenment of the people.
(4) What are the three concepts of Druidical instruction?
(8) The development of the mind. The cultivation of the intuition. The engendering of true manliness.
(4) What are the three essentials of good discipleship?
(8) Keen observation. Veneration of truth. Retentive memory.

(8) collects the water and (3) deflects the Fire. In unison the circle is purified and consecrated. The Four Quarters are treated and the Elements are returned to their former positions.

THE DRUID PRAYER

(4) Grant, O God, Thy protection--And in protection?
ALL Strength.
(4) And in strength?
ALL Understanding.
(4) And in understanding?
ALL Knowledge.
(4) And in knowledge?
ALL The knowledge of justice.
(4) And in the knowledge of justice?
ALL: Love.
(4) And in the love of it?
ALL The love of all existences.
(4) And in the love of all existences?
ALL The love of God, and all goodness.

THE BENEDICTION

(1) May you all go forth with wisdom and understanding to welcome come the day of deliverance, when brotherhood and love win be established amidst the plenty and gladness of the kingdom that is to be restored.

THE CLOSE

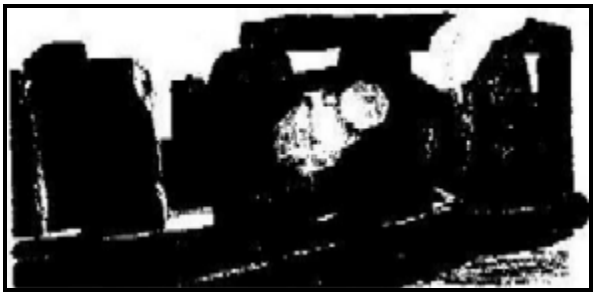
(6) This ceremony is now ended.

The four Element-Bearers step forward in unison and collect the elements from the center of the circle, and return to their positions.

The page to (8) then removes the square of linen.

(4) In peace let us depart; and may there by peace amongst us until we meet again!
(1) Eternal wisdom be with us.
ALL And with all beings!

The procession leaves the circle by way of the Southern Arch.



HIGH NOON

Many Druidic precepts are embodied in the celebration. The high honor accrued from expressions of talent should engender finer works by the possessor of that talent. Talent should be recognized and acknowledged. Honor bestowed implies bestowal from honorable sources; thus honor is equal, but since no man may reap where another has sown, privilege is not equal.

This teaching is well exemplified in the crowning of one of the assembly, and in his sharing of the honor by passing the crown on to his companions. Further thought could well be given to the allegory of the withdrawal of the sword and the subsequent collection of the rose.

It was ever the Druid custom to offer hospitality, a characteristic that is not confined to material matters; and hospitality received is acknowledged by blessing--that we "send them of their way, rejoicing."

As may be seen from the accompanying diagram, the procession in this ceremony completes the fun circle.

PROCESSION OF THE SWORD and the FOUR ELEMENTS

(1), the Sword Bearer, (6) and the four Element Bearers, in procession, place the Sword in the Sun Stone and lay the four elements on the cardinal paint, where they remain in the care of the appointed "Dionachs of Without, " until collected by the main procession.

Officers the same as the Dawn with the addition of:

The Lady (Cerrid wen) Two Maids (Ladies in waiting)

THE HIGH NOON CEREMONY

The Companions gather at the Southern Mound in semi-circular formation.

4) Companions--the proceedings throughout the coming ceremony are symbolical and pervaded by a profound reverential spirit. Remember, the Druid's of old knew no sharp line of division between the secular and the spiritual.

(1) It is good that, from time to time we should unite ourselves in spirit and by our efforts draw near to the circles of the blessed immortals; in this manner, eve prepare our Sanctuary within. The fire is lighted. The bowl is raised and lowered in witness.

(4) Let us proceed.

(3) escorted by (6) returns with the Fire-bowl to the procession. The procession moves sun-wise to collect Bread and Salt from the Western Stone and Water from the Northern Mound. These three elements, (Fire, Air, Bread and Salt, and Water) are laid upon the Recumbent Stone, and the Hele Stone. (6) and the Sword-Bearer escort the Presider and the Triad to the Hele Stone, The Presider withdraws the Sword. After a pause, the Presider hearing the Sword leads the procession to the recumbent Stone. The Dionachs retire to their positions in the Columns.

(4) Let us, in contemplation, enter the world of beauty as was the custom of our ancient companions who, with the whole force of the soul, sought union with the supreme source of life in profound respect and contemplative silence.

The Sword is sheathed by the Presider and laid to rest upon the Stone.

(5) (7) (3) and (9) take up their positions at the Recumbent Stone.

(4) Which other 'stands without the Portal, and for what purpose has such a one come?

LADY I am come on this day of longest light to bear the offering and augury of plenty to the Presider and the Chief Elder of the Druid Order.

(6) It is the Lady of Cathoir Ghall who is come, bearing the augury and offering of plenty, in her symbolic representation of Cerridwen, the Earth Mother.

(4) Bid her enter and welcome. Now do we invoke the Supernal Word; the manifestation of the one Divine Spirit; the Triune Intelligence of the World.

(1) Be with us now. The One spake, and the Three came forth; thus will it ever be.

(4) And the Three became the many, and the many lead us back to the Three, and the One. Thus will it ever be.

(6) The Word is uttered and ended.

(1) The Holy Word has descended; behold the fulfillment.

(4) Let us earnestly unite ourselves in spirit to the Golden Chain of the Druid Succession. May those who keep watch over the Stream of truth and the holy place of the mysteries, watch over us and the teaching of the most ancient Druid wisdom. Let us give thought for any who are sick, or in distress.

Silence is kept for a space.

Let the scroll be read.

(2) reads aloud the names of the departed, whose presence, together with all those unknown, is accepted in reality.

(1) All reverence to out ancients and to our departed companions.

Reverence to all in the Unity, past present, and yet to be.
Peace to all beings.
Eternal Wisdom, be with us.

THE SYMBOLIC FEAST

Staffs proceed to the Elements and take them up, the one hearing the Wine, his page the Bread and Salt, while the other two attend him hearing Fire and Water. (1) and the Presider partake first and serve all others, who advance as directed by the Herald (7) moves forward to take the Water Chalice. Fire, Bread and Wine from the three staffs so that they can partake. The Lady, her attendants, and banner bearers partake.

(6) We proffer hospitality to any who wish to partake. By your leave, Gracious Lady, we will advance.

LADY Go forth--and I will follow.

(6) followed by Lady. attendants and Sword-Bearer, proceed to (1)

(6) Behold the bearer of the Horn of Plenty stands before you.

LADY I offer, Oh Druids, the fruits of the earth of this region and their nectar, in homage to your Order and this sacred place.

(1) Benediction, I take from you the offering of your region.

Partakes, offers to Presider and (4). Then the Presider make the libation to earth, saying:

(1) Blessed be; the fruits of your earth for ever, and we give thanks for the abundance of the harvest which is seen to be gathered.
(1) returns the Horn to the Lady, who is then escorted to the West.
(4) Let the Sword be presented.
(1) addresses each of the four quarters in turn, partly unsheathing the sword and demanding:
(1) Is it peace?
ALL It is peace.

Same statement is made to the four quarters in turn, partly unsheathing the sword and demanding. All Companions and members will respond in like manner. The sword is sheathed at each demand.

(4) Let us formulate the Triad.

The three with rods stand: White Staff to the West; Blue Staff to the North: and Green Staff to the South Apposite the Presider. (1) takes the crown of leaves from (4) and places it on the head of the Presider.

(6) Let it be known; there has never ceased to be they who have transmitted the divine wisdom; for indeed will the immortals ever permit the link to be broken;
(6) Let it be known; there has never ceased to be they who have transmitted the divine wisdom; for indeed will the immortals ever permit the link to be broken.

The feast concludes with (6), who drains and inverts the cup, saying:

(6) The unity is accomplished.
(4) May we be thus united in being.

The three staffs return the Elements to the center of the circle, collect rods, and return to their places. The Presider moves to the center of the circle, removes the crown and Rose from the linen square and places them on the Stone of Measurement.

THE DRUID PRAYER

(4) Grant, O god, thy protection
And in protection -strength
And in strength -understanding
And in understanding -knowledge
And in knowledge -the knowledge of justice
And in And in the knowledge of justice -the love of it
And in the love of it -the love of all existences
And in the love of all existences -the love of God and all goodness.

(1) May the power of the One Life sustain all true seekers. May the love of the One Light pervade all who seek to serve. May our souls be united thereby.
(4) In peace these rites began. In peace we bring them to a close.

(3) (8) and (9) step forward in unison, collect the Fire-Bowl, Water Chalice and Bread and Salt, and step hack into the circle. The bearers of the wineglass and wine-jug then step forward, remove them from the center and return to their places. (7) removes the square of linen.

(1) May all beings receive Eternal Light.

After a pause, the procession, led by the Sword bearer and the Presider, leaves the circle through the Southern Arch. The remains of the bread and salt are scattered to the four winds outside the circle.

HERE ENDS THE

SUMMER SOLSTICE CEREMONIES

Now About those Human Sacrifices

by Polifonix Armorica

We Celts have been spread over a wide area, and you can never be sure about some tribes, especially those exposed to the influences of other races. Therefore, when confronted with the accusation of practicing human sacrifice which happens whenever I mention that, as a Bard, I belong to the order of Druids. I have until now countered only with the reply that we haven't been doing it in my village for as long as even the oldest inhabitant can remember and that we don't know of any villages that were doing it, even before Caesar came through. But it grows tiresome to hear such statements as, "I don't go along with burning people up in wicker cages." so I decided to investigate the matter.

To this date, even in the New Middle Ages, virtually the only formal sources available to me are those of the mundane world. In the New Catholic Encyclopedia I find: "Although there are references to human sacrifice in Gaul and Britain, it must have been rare. At any event, there is no evidence that this practice was approved or conducted by the Druids. The Catholics of the mundane world have been showing, signs of ecumenism lately, but if they have any ulterior reason for denying or even toning down evidence about pre-Christian Druids, I fail to comprehend what it could be.

However, one encyclopedia doth not an argument make. Turning to Man, Myth & Magic, an illustrated encyclopedia of the supernatural (because it was handy,) I found the statement: "The Celts practiced human sacrifice. The Romans considered this ritual to be barbarous and caused it to be discontinued. They also struck a lethal blow at the Druids whose power and

political influence was a threat to the success of Roman campaigns in the Celtic areas. Caesar, referring to the practice of human sacrifice, describes the great images of interwoven branches which were filled with men and set alight..." Now, Man, Myth, & Magic is patently aimed at a popular, even sensation seeking market, and if it can find any gruesome lore to repeat, it probably will, and not worry overmuch about strict accuracy. Of the two, I'd be more inclined to accept the New Catholic as an unbiased encyclopedia. Even so, notice who described the sacrifices--Julius, who was out to conquer us. And notice that we Druids had political power which the Romans could not tolerate if they were to rule us. Can you begin to suspect there was a certain amount of propaganda in those tales about wicker baskets? One of the best ways to enlist opinion against your enemy, especially when you're the invader out to get his land, is to spread stories about the really ugly things he does, whether he does or not. And the Romans had some grounds to talk about us, with the way they threw people to the lions?!

Turning to a source which I hoped would be more authoritative than Man, Myth, and Magic, I opened the third edition of Sir James Frazer's venerable The Golden Bough. There, human sacrifices were the Beltane fires in the 17th or 18th century in the Scottish Highlands. Unable to understand quite how Frazer arrived at the unequivocal decision that Gauls practiced human sacrifice because Scotsmen lit bonfires eighteen centuries or so afterwards (couldn't we just as easily argue that Weenie roasts are unequivocal proof that the ancestors of the picnickers indulged in cannibalistic feasts of "long pig"?) I read on and found that "The earliest description of these sacrifices has been bequeathed to us by Julius Caesar " Julius again! As conqueror of the hitherto independent (!) Celts of Gaul, Caesar had ample opportunity of observing the national Celtic religion and manners, while these were still fresh and crisp from the native mint and had not yet been fused in the melting pot of Roman civilization." "Fresh and crisp" seem odd words to describe a centuries old religion and it is strange that Frazer does not seem to realize that Julius was not exactly the most objective observer. "With his own notes, Caesar appears to have incorporated the observations of a Greek explorer, by name Posidonius, who traveled in Gaul about fifty years before Caesar carried the Roman arms to the English Channel."

The Encyclopedia Americana describes Posidonius as a Stoic philosopher and statesman, ca 135 to 51 BC, who went to Rome as ambassador at the age of 50, initiated Cicero into the Stoic philosophy, wrote many works on history, astronomy, and geography, and in his physical investigations was largely a follower of Aristotle. It does not deny that he might have traveled in Gaul, but neither does it stress travels in Gaul as any important part of his life. Besides, if Julius had such fine opportunity of studying us at first hand, why should he fall back on Posidonius in the first place? Sir James goes on: "The Greek geographer Strabo and the historian Diodorus seem also to have derived their descriptions of the Celtic sacrifices from the work of Posidonius in the first place; Sir James goes on "The Greek geographer Strabo and the historian Diodorus seem also to have derived their descriptions of the Celtic sacrifices from the work of Posidonius, but independently of each other, and of Caesar for each of the three derivative accounts contain some details which are not to be found in either of the others. By combining them, therefore, we can restore the original account of Posidonius with some probability, and thus obtain a picture of the sacrifices offered by the Celts of Gaul at the close of the second century before our era." That is, assuming that Posidonius wrote such an account, and that Strabo and Diodorus were not quoting parts of the tales that Julius spread but did not include in his own books. Frazer begins by saying that Caesar "appears," and Strabo and Diodorus "seem to have used" Posidonius, but, since human sacrifices fit his own theories, he doesn't belabor the uncertainty of this point.

Strabo, according to Americana, lived from 64 BC to 19 AD and traveled from Armenia in the East to Sardinia in the West, and from Pontus Euxinus on the North to the borders of Ethiopia. I'm not exactly sure whether this territory includes Gaulle but if so, Strabo traveled through it after Julius had already subdued most of it and, presumably, crushed out the supposed human sacrifices. As for Diodorus Siculus, the Encyclopedia Britannica, Eleventh Edition, says: "He asserts that he devoted thirty years to the composition of his history, and that he undertook frequent and dangerous journeys in prosecution of his historical researches. These assertions, however, find little credit with recent critics." Collier's Encyclopedia adds: "There are no references to it (Diodorus' history) in pagan literature for it was less a scholarly undertaking than a business enterprise. Diodorus used other but good authorities frequently..." Moreover, those parts of Diodorus which describe Julius' Gallic War and therefore, presumably, our religious activities, have apparently been lost and exist "only in fragments preserved in Photius and the excerpts of Constantine Porphyrogenitus," to quote Britannica again.

But back to Sir James: "Condemned criminals were reserved by the Celts in order to be sacrificed to the gods... If there were not enough criminals, captives taken in war" were added, some being shot with arrows, others impaled, others burned in the famous wicker cages. Even Frazer, who blandly assumes every word Julius and his rough contemporaries wrote about us is true, credits us with sacrificing only criminals and prisoners of war. "Executions" these would be called if Sir James' own culture were doing it, "sacrifices" only because he is writing about somebody else's culture. He next spends eight pages or thereabouts describing examples of wicker cages and bonfires of Christian times, in which animals, usually cats or snakes, might or might not be burned, and argues that because Christians of later centuries burned cats, snakes, and bonfires, therefore, we Celts burned people.

Sir James provides irony as to why we did it. "If we are right in interpreting the modem European fire festivals as attempts to break the power of witchcraft then we must suppose that the men whom the Druids burnt were condemned to death on the ground that they were witches or wizards" and fire was simply the surest way to get rid of them. Animals sacrificed were thought to be witches in disguise Witches were believed to blight crops and cast unpleasant spells on people, so that exterminating them was protecting the rest of the populace, not persecution. Even Frazer considers this the most likely reason why witches were done to death the most likely reason why witches were done to death. "On this view," he continues, "the Christian Church in its dealing with the black art merely carried out the traditional policy of Druidism, and it might be a nice question to decide which of the two, in pursuance of that policy, exterminated the larger number of innocent men and women." It might also be a nice question to decide how many of those so

executed were innocent in their own opinion. Sir James, taking the stance of the sober and non mystical side of the early 20th century AD considers that anyone accused of witchcraft had to be innocent, because there's no such thing. Self-proclaimed witches seem themselves to protest against that line of reasoning. To say that a culture which did believe in witches should not have taken steps to protect themselves because your culture does not believe in witches is to apply a retroactive scale of justice. More to the point, any Christian who shakes an accusing finger at us Druids on account of Frazer's arguments, had best be prepared to defend the actions of his own church in later centuries.

Yet according to my friend, Lady Frytha of the Marches, Christian witch burnings were almost exclusively a feature of the late medieval and early modern times, not of the early medieval period. 4 This would mean that the Druidic tradition was revived again after a millennium or so of attempts at obliteration which were effective enough, at least, to wreak havoc with our literary works. But the whole "witchcraft" theory (of Druid sacrifice) depends on a few assumptions of less than proven reliability: that we couldn't find any other criminals except witches (witchless centuries don't seem to have any noticeable lack of un-supernatural criminals,) and that we did, in fact burn and otherwise sacrifice them.

The Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology, that majestic tome, states: "Allowing for literary license, there seems to be no doubt that the Celts practiced human sacrifice, perhaps not as a frequent part of their ceremonial, but certainly in times of trouble and possibly, in the earlier period at least, at certain annual ritual gatherings." Larousse seems to base its argument on our own oral tradition, arguing that such and such an ordeal is an allusion to ritual blood letting. At first sight, this looks more damning than the non-Celtic propaganda discussed above. However, most of the traditions known to Larousse appear to be Irish and Welsh; Julius did a fairly thorough job of obliterating Gaulish traditions. What lore has survived in any area was only written down later, a good part of it in Irish monasteries, and subjected to a good bit of re-copying over the centuries, by adherents of another than the original religion. And long re-copying has been known to do strange things even to texts of a single author's literary creation. It can hardly be an easy task to figure out exactly what tales we really told, and when and if that is done, the matter of interpretation still remains. Having watched respected critics almost batter each other over the heads arguing about whether or not Arthur took a swipe at the Green Knight in a comparatively late poem which survives in only one known text, and considering the confusion of symbols which the Mabinogian surely must present to the uninitiated mind, I feel some doubts as to how authoritative a case can really be built against us on such grounds. Still more important, this body of tradition was already ancient when scraps of it were finally put down on parchment; already ancient centuries before Julius came through. Possibly, once, human sacrifices may have inspired some things in the tales; there may turn out to be human sacrifice in almost every people's history, if you go far enough back. (Judeo-Christians are not exempt. In the Judeo-Christian holy writings, there are not simply possible allusions to human sacrifice, there are out and out statements of it.) That hardly means we were still doing it within anybody's living memory by the time of Caesar, nor that anybody by the second or third century BC had any idea that our traditions contained possible allusions to human sacrifice. Long ago and far away I once found a scholarly collection which included an Irish folktale in which a "hung-up, bloody man" came down from a tree to play the role of villain. The notes theorized that this man was the Christus, who had been put into the story as villain by some stout old Pagans resisting conversion, but the Christian generations had long been retelling the tale in total ignorance of the bloody man's identity. And this happened within a short time, compared with the centuries in which our lore had had time to develop! There remains, also, the question of symbolism. Future centuries may read The Lord of the Flies and suchlike, and decide that 20th century rituals included human sacrifice. And The Lord of the Flies is certainly no more symbolic than the Mabinogian. It looks to me as if we could just as easily rephrase this sort of "traditional" evidence and say: "Allowing for literary license, there seems to be no doubt that the Jews slaughtered Christian babies."5

We've heard there is a novel in which Druids are described as committing a particularly revolting sacrifice, something about stuffing a young girl with oak leaves. This sounds to me like the work of some thrill-seeking novelist out to out-Julius Julius. The worst that Caesar, Frazer, and their more serious followers (excluding novelists) say of us is that we executed criminals and, at need, war prisoners. Almost every culture has done such things, many cultures in more painful methods than the grisliest we have been soberly accused of practicing. The great difference is that, according to Julius and Frazer, we saved up our executees and did it at certain times and in possible connection with religious rites. Since Druids were political as well as religious leaders, even Sir James might have some trouble deciding how much of the execution was religious and how much merely legal. The line between politics and religion was not always so clearly defined as in the last few centuries of mundane history. And yet, the highest religious rites are almost universally secret, open only to chosen believers and therefore, if Posidonius and Julius witnessed anything, it was probably an execution more "legal" than "religious" or else they would have to have been sneaking and spying and in the latter case, if we were the barbarians they have made us out to be, they would have been lucky to escaped with their lives.

Julius liked to think of himself a great tactician, and if he witnessed a criminal execution or two, he would have been only too happy to embellish the details and report it as widespread religious practice. These Romans, our earliest accusers, did a few things that make the worst they said of us look almost gentle. I have not yet uncovered any story to the effect that we used torture as part of our legal processes in gathering evidence and confessions--but since torture was accepted juridical process in the Graeco-Roman world, spreading such a report about us would have had no propaganda value. If according to the picture Julius and Sir James paint, we had been less thrifty about combining ritual with criminal processes, we might have gone down as "civilized."

So far, the burden of evidence that we did even this much rests on Julius, who had good motives (after his own peculiar ways of thinking) to use all the propaganda against us that he credibly could, even if he had to manufacture it; upon Strabo, whose independence from Julius' tales or the effects of them is questionable; upon Diodorus, who seems to have been a popular writer and something of an opportunist. capable of taking the goriest and, therefore, most salvable material and treating it as utter truth; and upon Posidonius, who may or may not have written an account which Julius, Strabo, and Diodorus may or may not have used; and upon a few scraps of mangled Celtic traditions, long transmitted and interpreted by adherents of newer creeds. Until better evidence turns up I In inclined to dismiss the whole case.

Footnotes to

Now About Those Human Sacrifices…

1. No connection to the Reformed Druid movements.
2. It doesn't. Pontus Fluxinus is the Black Sea. Strabo's travels include almost none of what is generally thought of as Western and Northern Europe, and only the eastern half of Southern Europe. The only "Gauls" he could have had any contact with were their distant cousins who settled "Galatia" near the southern shores of the Black Sea.
3. That is to say. "witches-as-evil-doers."
4. The biggest persecution period ran roughly 1450 to 1750 or so.
5. Especially if, for example, some future group of Nazis were to (Gods forbid!) conquer the world, murder every Jew and destroy every book about Judaism except their own. Now--consider what our current sources of information about non-Christian religion in Europe and Russia are.

This article originally appeared in the pages of Tournaments Illuminated, Vol. 9, No. 1, Spring 1975. Tournaments Illuminated is the official quarterly journal of the Society for Creative Anachronism, a nonprofit educational, research and social organization for medievalists and pre-medievalists. For further information, write to S.C.A. Information Clerk Box 1162, Berkeley, CA 94701. "Now About Those Human Sacrifices" is Copyright 1975 by the S.C.A. and is reprinted by their permission, and that of the author.

The Druidic Cross Tarot

By Stephen Abbot McCauley and Steven Goldstone
-Summer 1980

This Tarot layout is the second of a series planned for publication. It first appeared in *Gnostica News* issue number 45 and was called the Pentacle Layout. The present article should be considered as only a bare outline of the Druidic Cross Layout. It has been developed in conjunction with the: Celtic Pagan Tarot Deck, a set of designs soon, hopefully, to be published. They are beautiful cards, designed by David Weiss, a Los Angeles artist, and myself, using Celtic divinities as archetypes.

The Pentacle Layout was designed to be used for questions dealing with deeply personal and spiritual matters. As most of you are aware, the pentacle symbolizes the microcosm--a mini-universe--a personal frame of reference which extends from within us all as individuals. The Druidic Cross layout is a logical progression from this: it represents five manifested, exteriorized spheres of Being which emanate from the microcosm of the Self.

These five circles correspond to the five traditional elements: fire, air, earth, water, and spirit. And, as in our Druid tradition--they also represent the five directions: north, south, east, west, and the Center. The relationships of Element to Direction are those of the Golden Dawn System familiar to most students of occultism. Fire is South, Air is East, Water is West, Earth is North, and Spirit, or Akasha, is the Center.

In our layout, each circle is given a letter. The center circle is Letter A, and is considered to be the first sphere of influence --the realm of Spirit. Letter B, the second circle, represents Earth; Letter C, the third circle, is Fire. Letters D and E are Air and Water, respectively. This completes the basic circle of the elements. Much can be inferred from this pattern about the nature of energy-flow being shown.

In addition to the Elements, certain ancient Celtic deities hold sway over the Five Circles. These can be invoked as guides by the diviner, or their spheres of influence seen as centers of the body in a psychic sense, or simply studied in terms of how their energies influence a manifestation. The object is to develop a personal relationship with the elemental divinities of the Celtic pantheon, to get close to them, and to listen for their prophetic voices as did the ancient Bards. This guidance from the Gods is the essence of divination.

This list given of Celtic divinities is not intended to be complete, however, it is a suggestion, an outline, of what might be possible. Many other implicit concepts will present themselves to the serious student.

A final set of corresponding images for the outer circles are the Four Magical Treasures of Celtic Tradition, as shown in the diagram.

Some ideas for this layout came from an excellent book by Virginia Moore entitled The Unicorn. In it is given some material from unpublished diaries of W. B. Yeats, written at the time when he was still a member of the Golden Dawn. (After his death, it is believed that most of his diaries work was burnt by his fanatical widow, who considered magic to be of the Devil. A similar fate befell the diaries of Sir Richard Burton, much to our loss.)

Other ideas come from a multitude of books of Celtic Mythology; and still others, from personal experience. Complete bibliography will accompany the Celtic Deck when it is published.

Special thanks are due to David Voight for his fine artwork on the Layout.

This Layout is especially designed for Tarot students who wish to explore the influence of divinities of the ancient Gaels in their lives, and to communicate with them. It can bring more scope and dimension, however, to anyone seriously interested in Paganism and Magic.

Gods	Circle	Elements
Tailtu & Tethra	A	Spirit
Danu & Dagda	B	Earth
Bridgid & Lugh	C	Fire
Cendwen & Mannan MacLir	D	Water
Rhaiannon & Camelos	E	Air

Gods	The Legend	Treasure
Tailtu & Tethra	Center Indigo	Symbol of the Triple Goddess
Danu & Dagda	North Brown	Stone Lia Fail
Bridgid & Lugh	South Red	Spear of Lugh
Cendwen & Mannan MacLir	West Silver	Cauidren of Inspiration
Rhaiannon & Camelos	East | Blue	Sword of Nuada, Fragarach

Table 1 summarizes the five circles of being. Only Circle A will be treated in detail here.

At ancient Telltown was held the annual celebration Lughnasadh for here Lang the (God of fire, married the land of Eirin (Ireland). Watching over this sacred spot is Iailtu, or Telta, who had her palace here. Also, a great battle for the control of Ireland was fought here.

In Celtic religion the center of a particular province was considered the most magical and sacred place in that province. All of the most important Druidic and magical rites were performed and celebrated at the sacred center point. It is appropriate for Tailtu, who watched over such a central and important point in Erin, to be honored here.

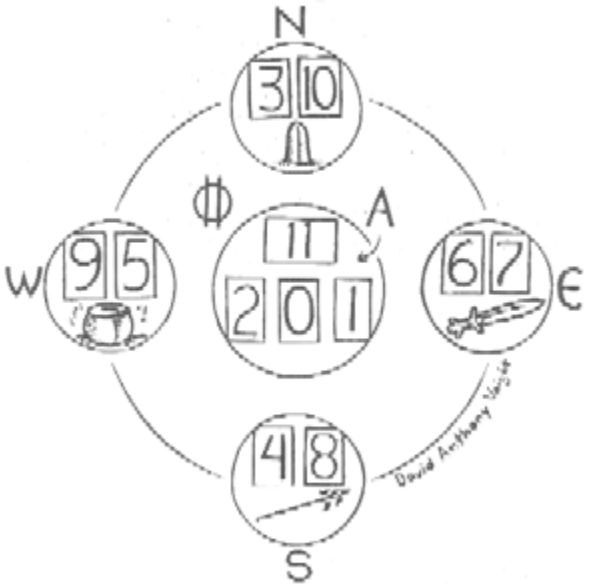
Beneath the sea the Fomoire, whose king was Tethra, plotted to take Erin by force and bring her under the sea. After years of preparation, a great battle was fought at Telltown in which the Fomoire were defeated. Tethra has also been a major force in Stephan's personal work and is honored in the center here.

The Gods do not guard their own treasures, but assign the task to their priests. In this case, the priests are called Druids, and their worship is of the deities of nature and the ways of nature. This particular guardian is called the Druid of the Center, the Druid of the Mystic Center, the Keeper of the Mysteries of the Spirit. The guardian wears a robe the colour of indigo, the elemental colour of Spirit.

If his guardian is to be called upon when you wish to perform a reading which deals with the weighty or deeply spiritual matters. Being a priest, the guardian can contact the deity forms of this (the spirit) plane of awareness if the question is dire enough.

The magical treasure of this centre circle is the symbol of the triple Goddess, the circle of spirit with two lines crossing it. The circle is a symbol for the concept of "peace," for only with peace of mind and the calm feelings which it brings can anything be done successfully of a spiritual nature.

Comments and criticisms of the Druidic Cross Layout are welcomed. Please send all correspondence to the authors at 3215 Brookdale Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602. We do not know when the Celtic Pagan Tarot deck will be completed (hopefully during 1980,) but we will gladly answer correspondence on it when we find out more precisely.



Chakra Number Three... POWER!

This is the fourth in a series of articles on the chakra system. Chakras, in this system, are defined as energy centers in the body that correspond to levels of consciousness, bodily processes, and categories of "external reality." The basic seven chakras, from bottom to top, are as follows: One - earth, centering, survival instincts; Two - water, sex, emotions; Three - fire, power, active energy; Four - air, love, affinity; Five - ether, communication, creativity; Six - time, light, clairvoyance; Seven - cosmic consciousness, Godhead, spiritual information.

These articles represent some original conceptualization on the part of the author from her research and experience of these gained through reading, administering body therapy, doing

psychic readings, and teaching and practicing various forms of yoga. This system is mystical rather than intellectual, and the reader is asked to look beyond logical inadequacies, and instead, turn inward to personal experience for the understanding of these centers. Xeroxes of the previous articles are available from Pentalpha.

Power! The very word has a charge that describes itself. A burst of energy, an explosion; fire, light, heat, wisdom; a feeling of mastery, confidence, control.

We all want it, we all need it, and there are few who feel they have enough. Those who have it, guard it carefully, and those without try desperately to take power from those who do.

We all know what it's like to feel powerless, to have our energy blocked, manipulated, controlled. What is often the case, however, is that we don't realize the power we do have within ourselves; we don't know how to release it and much of it remains unused, checked, withheld.

This article will focus on power and energy as aspects of the third chakra, and how they relate to us in mind, body, and culture. The basic arguments are built on an assumption of "As within, so without"-- that the condition of our own power chakras are the reflection and cause of the use of power and energy externally, and ultimately collectively and politically. This is a very broad topic there is so much one could say about power. and needs to be said, that my own chakra quivers at the implications. Please bear with the length of this article as well as the brevity of some of the subtopics. Any questions are welcomed and can be directed to me through Pentalpha.

Theory and Metaphysics

We began in the first chakra with the element earth, and defined this chakra as the level of manifestation known as matter. From the second chakra, we looked at that matter in terms of its differentiation or polarities, and finally, movement. Numerically speaking, one and two make three, and it is just so as we approach the third chakra. The "matter" of chakra number one, when put into "motion," (chakra number two) reacts with other particles of matter contacted through this movement. This causes changes in the structure of the molecules as the particles within form bonds, split apart, reform, etc. Energy is then given off, or released, as more efficient bonds are made.

Our sun is the prime manifestation of this: The sun is basically hydrogen atoms, which are the simplest, smallest and most abundant atoms in the universe. The sun produces power, light, and heat by way of nuclear fusion. Nuclear fusion occurs when the nuclei of certain light elements collide, mutually rearranging their constituents so that a more stable less energy-rich combination results. This releases kinetic energy. Since the nuclei have a positive charge, they must possess sufficient kinetic energy to overcome their mutual repulsion, so that they may approach closely enough to undergo a fusion reaction. In the sun, this energy is supplied by extreme heat (100,000,000 degrees C) 2 which stimulates enough movement to insure that one atom will hit another, and hit it with enough force to fuse.

Electricity is still another example of an energy/power that is based on movement between polarities. The polarities build up the charge (imbalance of positive and negative particles) which then seeks to regulate itself. From this we derive power.

These are all examples of energy production in the physical world. The third chakra is responsible for the production and regulation of energy in the body, and the conscious channeling of this energy to create power (defined here as directed energy). The various aspects of the chakras combine to bring this miracle about.

Let me express this by comparing the lower chakras to the gasoline combustion engine. An engine is a physical thing, made up of hard, solid metal (matter is the first chakra). But an engine without gas (liquid) will not run. Gas alone will not generate power, and an engine and gas together will not run until it is turned over, providing movement (second chakra) to start the whole process. But once these elements combine, (given a little air, space, and time to exist in) the process of combustion occurs and perpetuates itself. This combustion is the essence of the third chakra on a physical level. Our own energy serves to help the organism obtain what it needs to continue its existence. Energy perpetuates energy, through its manipulation of matter, (which is only dense energy, see Chakra One Issue No. 11).

The first three chakras form a basic interwoven trinity upon which we base our existence in physical bodies, and our life on this planet. None of these groups are isolated, and each are interdependent with other chakras. The element of the third chakra is fire, and for fire to burn it needs not only fuel, but air and space, (or volume,) a function of the fourth chakra directly above. To say nothing of an overall consciousness which has the intelligence to create and maintain the energy generating situation.

The engine also needs air to compress. The volume containing the air is of concern here; when the space within the cylinder decreases, the air heats, exploding the fuel, thus creating more volume for itself again. The bigger the volume within the cylinders, the greater the power of the engine. Combustion is often a matter of oxidation.

Our lives are no different. If we have plenty of room to ourselves, time, and freedom (known in California as "space,") then we have a greater potential for power. Like the engine, if our "space" is infringed upon, we are likely to "heat up" at a certain point, get angry and exert some effort to getting it back.

This chakra is called Manipura in the Hindu system, meaning "lustrous gem." It is described as having ten petals, which I correlate to the power that comes from having hands, ten fingers each. (The first chakra is foul petals, the second is six, the fourth, twelve, etc.) I feel that crystals and gems play a significant role in the psychic development of power, and though the name probably refers to the star-like quality of chakras when seen clairvoyantly, I cannot help but think its connection to crystals is more than coincidental. This is certainly a topic of its own, and one which is only beginning to be explored, let alone understood. 3 I see crystals as amplifiers of psychic energy, in the same way as a magnifying glass amplifies or focuses light. Often around a crystal, one may see little spots of light, refracted by the crystal. These are similar to the vitality globules described by C.W. Leadbeater in his classic book on chakras.4 According to Leadbeater, these vitality globules are a force within the atom that gives it a power of attraction, so that it draws around it other atoms. Leadbeater attributes these globules to the "will-force of the Solar Deity." This vitality is the same force that Hindus speak of when they talk about the life force in breath, called Prana, or the Chi in other systems. To me, it is structure with consciousness in it. By lining up the "charged" points, we can direct our psychic energy.

Manipura is also associated with the intellect in most systems, as is its color, yellow. It is what I call the "lower" intellect--that body of knowledge dealing with things of the physical plane, such as science, technology, medicine, and factual information. Wisdom, conceptual, abstract, or intuitive knowledge are generally functions of the upper chakras.

Ever hear the expression, "knowledge is power"? It is here that the intellect, by virtue of what it knows, sees, and understands, combines with the body's energy and desire, giving us will, the conscious force that directs action. This is the most important aspect of the third chakra and a crucial element in magic. It is through the will that this chakra says, "I can."

Will is easiest to understand by examining the flow of energy in and out of the third chakra. Moving from the bottom up, we have matter changing to spirit; we have combustion a rearrangement of matter which 'produces force. This is the kinetic energy utilized by the will.

Manipura, when approached from the top down, however, brings consciousness to this force, giving it form. It is this aspect of will which gives manifestation to that which the mind conceives and the energy generates. The upper chakras bring information, inspiration, conceptualization, visualization, communication, and love down to this center.

The lower chakras produce energy, while it is the upper chakras that channel this energy, and create power. It is a matter of consciousness putting form to force. Combined, they create will.

Within the body, the third chakra is situated in the solar plexus over the adrenal glands. It is responsible for metabolism and energy distribution in the body. The adrenal glands make adrenaline in the form of norepenephrine and epinephrine, chemical transmitters of impulses across the nerve synapses. As related to metabolism, this chakra also correlates to the digestive system. Problems in these areas would indicate third chakra blockage or exhaustion.

Physically, our bodies express power in tends of energy expenditure. Our nerve synapses are firing constantly, our bodies are always metabolizing. This is a characteristic of being alive. How smoothly the energy is metabolized and distributed through the body, however, depends on many things:

1. What we allow ourselves to do with this energy--where we allow it to flow and how. This is the psychological aspect, or the force from within,

2. What others allow us to do with this energy. This represents authority, social structures, and cultural conditioning that dictate our freedom. This is the political element or forces from without.

3. The state of our health is effected by what we put into our bodies and what we put out with our bodies in the form of exercise or activity. Aside from the physical effect on the body, this is also part of the energy we generate in the outside world, and part of the energy that returns to us.

The specifics of physical, psychological, political, magical, and spiritual power are each worthy of an article of their own. The most important point about them all is that they are interrelated. The food you eat is the matter you combust. It is the fuel for your physical energy. If you want to feel good psychologically, you must take care of yourself physically. But even if you are meticulous about your health, you may still suffer from low energy if you are the victim of oppressive politics, or unresolved psychological conflicts.

Psychologically, the greatest oppression occurs within our own minds. It is not so much what we do that may oppress us, but more often what hits it with enough force to fuse. These are all examples of energy production in the physical world. The third chakra is responsible for the production and regulation of energy in the body, and the conscious channeling of this energy to create power (defined as how you treat others, and if you are in a position of power, your own tension, whether due to poor diet, psychological blocks or some other cause, may result in someone else's oppression. Thus, the cycle continues. "Energy" does not have the boundaries that are definable in terms of matter. One form begets another, and truly, we are an in this together.

Magically, we can perhaps change some of the circumstances in our lives to our own advantage, (and thus increase our power) but the ability to do strong, effective magic, depends on the clarity and focus of our state of mind; as well as our ability to control circumstances to a degree that allows us the time and space to do magic. This powerful art can be hardest to perform when it is needed the most.

So what do we do about this incredible tangle of events we seem so hopelessly caught up in? Where do WE begin to take the power and what do we do with it when we have it? How do we break the cycle of going to our oppressive job everyday, which wastes paper, gas, and electricity, while keeping us too busy to develop something that would be more satisfying, and more energy efficient? What do we do about the people who don't even realize that other possibilities exist? How do we stop the oppressive political thinking, and well formed habits that keep our country, the world, and ourselves in a constant energy crisis?

The only answer I see is that we must work with our own power chakras. The world is far too big for any of us to change it alone especially without any power to begin with. What we con change is ourselves--and perhaps as a result of this, change some of our immediate environment. If enough of us do this, does that change the world?

The rest of this article will focus on some of, the ways we can increase our own personal power. There is no easy, instant solution. The third chakra is a very complex one--perhaps the most complex of them all. Power is created a little at a time, as our own energies gradually evolve to higher and higher levels.

GROUNDING

First things first. Before we can do anything, we have to have bodies to do it in, and we have to be able to move those bodies. This requires contact with the earth or something from the earth plane. If you want to get up out of a chair, the first step is to put your feet on the flour, your hands on the chair and then move.

The first chakra article dealt with grounding in depth, so I will only include a quick review:

Where are you right now? Where is your body, what is it doing, and what is it feeling? What does it feel like in the room you are now occupying? Where is your energy? Connect yourself to the here and now: imagine a cord going from your spine to the ground and hook it into the earth like an anchor. Grounding is simply increasing our awareness of our connection to the earth, or physical plane.

Grounding also connects us with our bodies. Our bodies can be seen as homes for our "spirits," just as our houses are homes for our bodies. We come and go but return to the same place each night. The difference is that we cannot change bodies, move away or rent them out when they no longer serve us well. So we have to take care of them.

NUTRITION

The food we eat is the matter we combust. However, the body runs, not on matter, but on energy. To run the body most efficiently, we want to ingest the combinations of food that burn most efficiently.

This is true to a certain extent. As mentioned above, we use our bodies as physical homes for ourselves. Therefore, they must be fed structural material as well as combustible material. And like our homes, they also need to be cleaned once in a while.

Yes, we need energy producing fuels, but if we try to produce more energy than our bodies are capable of handling, we begin to burn our own structural tissue. One wouldn't want to burn the studs in their walls for firewood!

Drugs such as caffeine and refined sugars do just this. They tell the body to produce more and the body has to take the energy from somewhere and produce. Going one step further back in time, the need for these drugs was probably due to the fact that your body got orders from someone (was it you?) to produce and the body had to call for an "energy fix." So we grab for drugs or simple sugars, which give us quick energy, but in the long run, weaken the body further. As we weaken the body, we are more vulnerable to the psychic hurricane forces around us just as one is more subject to colds if they live in a house with holes in the walls. (especially with no firewood!) When this happens, there is either a need for more protection and/or compensation, or a total breakdown of some sort. This then requires more energy from the outside world, and more energy from the spirit/body in order to obtain it. This weakens the third chakra.

All stimulants have this effect on the body to a certain degree--coffee, sugar, nicotine, (which releases sugar from the liver,) alcohol, and even marijuana affect the blood sugar levels. Therefore, if ingested at all, extra attention should be given to see that the body meets its need in the way of vitamins, proteins, and slower metabolizing starches (such as whole wheat bread or rice).

Ideally these drugs should be avoided altogether, but this is much easier said than done, for usually our activities and environment are as dependent on the stimulants as our bodies are. In a deeply competitive society, where financial security and personal appreciation seem to be based on production, it is hard to compete with the heavy coffee drinker who is full of energy all day long. This forces all of us to "step up" our energy day after day, just to keep up with the demands made upon us. Often this is created by taking on too much in the first place, and then having to work twice as hard to pay for it. However, it seems to be a cultural addiction, and the resulting frustrations and dissatisfactions only make us want more.

EXERCISE

In order to have energy or power, we must overcome our own inertia. Most joggers claim, and I agree, that the more they run, the more energy they seem to have. Again, energy perpetuates energy--once the inertia is broken and the momentum begun, the cycles are easier to maintain (provided it doesn't go too fast--then it's time to ground and center again).

Aside from running, any physical exercise helps to stimulate the third chakra by stepping up metabolism and oxygen intake. Chakras are like muscles; the more you use them, the stronger they become.

PERSONAL POWER-

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL LEVEL

How we feel about ourselves greatly determines how easily our energy flows and how we manifest our personal power. And again, how we feel about ourselves can depend on many different things.

Rather than continue philosophizing, I would like to merely list things that can be done to increase one's power psychologically, the most important place to begin. Some of these things may seem obvious, but I find these are the things most often overlooked by those who complain of powerlessness.

1. Give yourself time alone. Energy blocks can be caused by your own limitations or by limitations put on you by others, consciously or unconsciously. At least when you are alone, you can sort out which is which. Grounding is easier alone anti one has more time to think things through. If you desire to make changes in your life, it is much easier to do it alone. Get rid of people who undermine your energy.

2. Love yourself. If you don't no one else will. You know best what you need and if give it yourself, you don't need as much from others. Need is conversely proportional to power. You can also give more to others this way.

3. Avoid invalidation. Criticism can be helpful but negative energy from others, especially when one is trying something new and uncertain, can be one of the greatest power cripplers I know. It works on a subtle psychological level and is easiest to spot when one is very centered within themselves. Remember new ideas meet their greatest opposition from those who misunderstand them.

4. Balance. To get from the second chakra to the third, the dual forces within ourselves must be balanced. Check input and output, male and female energy, intellectual and physical, work and play, and activity-rest cycles for any energy draining imbalances.

5. Wiring and resistors. Make sure your energy travels in complete circuits--that what you put out does eventually come back. Make sure it is not caught up in resistance. Directing the cause of your life is one thing, but resistance to situations probably created by you for your own growth is a waste of energy and exhausting. If your energy is low, ask yourself if you are resisting something and why.

6. Anger. This is best done in conjunction with grounding and balance and is an excellent way of using the energy within you to bring about change. Blocked power is very often blocked anger. In my experience of administering bio-energetic therapy, most of the self hatred, overeating, and drug abuse is due to blocked anger, which has then turned inward. Anger is a potent and cleansing force--a red serpent of returned karmic energy. It is hard earned and should be spent wisely.

7. Sex. Sex can be healing and energizing, giving validation, support, pleasure, and tens on release, giving that second chakra movement to catalyze combustion in the third.

8. Breaking attachments. Energy that is directed towards something that is not manifesting is energy that is hung up, caught, or otherwise useless. If, after reasonable effort something is not working, let it go. The energy you feel when the attachment no longer has control over you will be exhilarating. The more you release, the less friction you have on your energy flow.

9. Attention. Attention is focused energy. Give it to yourself. Give and accept it from others. Pay it when it needs to be paid.

10. Love. Love is that unifying force that ties us all together, inspires us and gives us a strength to keep going. It is exhilarating, cleansing, energizing, healing, and growth producing.

11. Wisdom. Knowledge is power and the more we learn the fewer mistakes we theoretically make. Wisdom and power both develop slowly, and are wonderfully coupled.

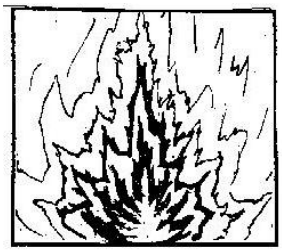
12. Laughter. Taking things too seriously can really make one lose touch with their own power. Whenever things seem at their worst, remember to be amused at the situation.

POLITICAL POWER

Just as our beliefs direct our own energies, so do politics form a kind of megastructure for directing our energies as a group or society. Unfortunately, the politics don't always serve the personal energies of the people involved as well as they might. We have so little direct control over the larger political structures that control us that I choose not to discuss them here. Instead, I wish to illuminate the subtler structures that affect us everyday--structures that we and only we can change.

Politics can be overt or covert. An oppressive situation which is obvious can often be a generator of power for it forces people to join together and realize their strengths against the opposition. However, covert political oppression is quite a different story.

Oppression is the key word here--something that is controlling or subverting your energy. Something that says you can't do that you can't go here; you can't have that. And in this case, the something is more often a nonverbal, commonly held belief rather than a law. Oppression blocks our natural energy flows and if the source of the oppression is mystified, we turn this blocked energy against ourselves. Once we do this, we have blocked our own power and we no longer have enough to stand up against these situations.



Sexism is the clearest example of this. The woman who is superficially granted all the rights and privileges of any man while still facing social rejection for being aggressive, or powerful, faces a greater enemy than mere job discrimination. When she tries to "make it" in a world of men who are conditioned beyond their own awareness to be threatened by her success, the obvious drawbacks due to lack of experience or conditioned passivity become even more insurmountable. Especially when you consider that it is these men who are in the positions of power. Most of "Feminist therapy" is spent re-channeling the woman's self-hatred and depression over her repeated failures at impossible tasks, outlining some of the real problems, and building enough self-esteem through support, for her to have the confidence necessary to overcome them.

I am reminded here of the Radical Therapy maxim, "Awareness plus contact equals liberation," or from another source, "True revolution is revelation." But in this case, the revelation must be grounded--must be applied to the real world so that a change takes place or the awareness is worth little. However, the first battle is the realization of the oppression, and then to find others who can lend strength and support in a common struggle. We create power by supporting each other.

In fact, we create more of our own political and cultural environment than we realize. We have already shown that what we cat, think and do affects how our energy flows. How we use this energy then effects everyone around us. If we stay up late at night, making noise our I neighbor will not sleep either. We all set living examples for each other, whether this is conscious or not. Multiplied out, this becomes how we use our energy as a culture. Are we addicted to madly running errands in our cars and dashing about at a moment's notice, or are we a culture that meditates and does things slowly? What is the result of our increased technological power and the increasing rapidity with which everything occurs? What kind of power do we want to depend on and what kind of power do we want to generate?

Energy travels in cycles, rhythms, and movements; each one begetting the one which is to follow. Just as you cannot drive a locomotive with the steam from a teapot, you cannot do very much with your power if it is constantly squandered on little things that break down your concentration and natural rhythms.

Most of us in this urbanized culture cannot get away from this. The mass of our population gets up every morning, works, comes home, watches television and becomes further programmed without ever having the time to really learn who they are, or what the earth is like outside of "carsville." They become astoundingly ignorant that other possibilities exist--so much so that they are vehemently opposed to any ideas that suggest it. It is important to understand why this occurs.

We are culturally bred into powerlessness, through obedience to authority and through positive reinforcement for conformity. This makes the system "work." Just as the combustion within the engine cylinders perpetuates the cycle of the engine, the processes of our political machinery perpetuate the state of our present society. To fight this, it is important to constantly ask ourselves if we are really following our heart, or are we following programming that was put there when we were too naive to recognize it? How much of our actions are. geared by the tendency to conform, and how afraid are we to break that conformity? What are the ramifications?

The most serious problem is that we are so caught within "the system" that supports us that we are too dependent to change it. I have "ecologically-minded" friends who commute many miles each day to work and back, disliking it intensely. They feel trapped into a behavior they do not support, and powerless to find a better way to pay their rent and food bills. It's the old "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" syndrome. How many of us buy clothing, drive extra miles, ingest "energy raising" drugs, and do many other things we don't really believe in, just to fit the expectations we must meet in order to make a living? How much do these expectations really fit our own values?

Unfortunately, there are no simple answers to this problem. None of us are going to change the system alone or overnight. The only thing we can do to help is to be aware of all this--of the ramifications of our own actions; and to raise our consciousness to a point where the "goodies" of the "system" no longer appeal to us, and to put our energy and support elsewhere. Only we can prevent forest fires! Only we can prevent the destruction of the earth through the misuse of power.

Power is the ability to create change at will. It is the ability to overcome inertia, to combine matter with intellect, to manliest ideas or to change reality to tit those ideas. Magic is defined us the ability to create change in consciousness and/or reality at will (depending on which definition you use).

The key word here, however, is WILL. After all is said and done, it is our will that combines the matter with the

intellect, that creates the change, and that dispels or ignores counter-productive forces.

Will involves intellectual understanding; will involves force and form. By putting ourselves at the crossroads for these energies, and applying a sensitive enough consciousness, we effect change in our surroundings.

Power is everywhere, because everything is in a constant state of change. That which is still has stored power; that which is moving has kinetic power. The trick is to align ourselves with power as it exists, and to use this power to bend and to shape, according to our will, our desires, feelings and knowledge. This can be a dangerous thing, and l see it as involving a great deal of responsibility, hopefully accompanied by equal amounts of wisdom and clear consciousness.

This "willed change" is the essence of both magic and the third chakra. It is a transformation of energy and Manipura is a transformation center. Magic is basically a third chakra activity, (although it clearly involves all the chakras) and as such requires a synthesis of many elements and planes.

Power and magic must be utilized in order to be evident:
"Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I,
But when the trees bow down their heads,
The wind is passing by!"

The wind is a power that can be harnessed by being in alignment with it. Through manipulation of matter, according to a specific knowledge this power can be harnessed (in the shape of a windmill) to do work or to create more power. It is a matter of placing the correct things in the correct way at the correct time anti place or a matter of consciousness putting from to force. This is exactly how magic is done, and magic, like power, operates under certain observable laws. These laws are too numerous to list here, hut suffice it to say that they tall under the heading of knowledge, and any knowledge, perceptively assimilated, can increase one's power as a magician. (or anything else for that matter). Knowledge, placement, movement, and win equal power

The key to magical power is in the synthesis of the different planes. This is where the chakra system--(among others) comes into use. Each of the chakras are associated with different planes, elements, numbers, colors, sounds, thoughts, Gods, body functions, and levels of consciousness. Magic is essentially a willed synthesis of these planes, achieved through an understanding of their common links.

We, as persons, also utilize power by being in alignment with it. One place of power we all occupy constantly is in our bodies--in our spinal column, our muscles, our perception, and consciousness. By paying attention to this body and developing its sensitivity and the healthy now of our own energy, we develop our power. As we come closer to knowing who we are, we become more centered, and therefore, more powerful, as masters of our own energy.

If we are going to practice magic if we are going to unleash our will upon the world around us, we need to be pretty sure we know what we arc doing, if indeed, such a thing is possible. Just as we are subject to the energy levels around us, so is what we do subject to our own levels of consciousness. We are manifesting our own energies, and if these energies are not clear, then our products will not be clear either. This is the reason for the "moral" tone of this whole article. When a great deal of power is exerted, all the aspects of the magician (or politician, etc). are multiplied, both the good and the bad. In this case, mistakes can be a very serious thing.

Therefore, after all the previous considerations have been met, we break through to the "top" of the third chakra, and come at last to what I consider the most important and the most rewarding side of power--that of "spiritual power"-the power of higher consciousness; of spirits, Gods, and cosmic entities.

As I said earlier, we cannot do much with our power if it is squandered on little things. Exerting power can be such an intoxicating and exhilarating experience that few of us pass up the chance when it comes by. But equally gratifying, can be the experience of remaining calm and grounded, doing nothing until the energy builds naturally. The next time the chance comes, we may be able to do more with less effort. This is analogous to not spending your money as soon as it comes in, but saving it for something really worthwhile that may cost a little more, or saving so that you are not flat broke after the purchase has been made. We have all experienced this depletion after an especially trying magical working.

Effort is a key here--if something takes a great deal of effort, it may not be in line with the greater, flow of things. It will also drain your own energy.

Meditation is, among other things, an energy consolidator. Calming yourself and calming your mind will conserve your energy and increase its potency when being spent. Often, if something can be completely planned out in the mind ahead of time, a great deal of energy can be saved when it comes time for manifestation. Often, if one thinks about it a little it may not need to be done at all, or perhaps a better idea will come along.

Kundalini is a spiritual power released by opening the chakras. It rises from the base of the spine and move upward (sometimes). It connects and transforms the various planes of energy as it moves through the body, and is often experienced as a burning sensation. (Kunda means seat, and lini means fire.) This burning is really a purification process, preparing the body for receiving the intense experience of higher consciousness.

Kundalini comes from an unbroken connection between all the chakras. This connection, is, I feel, the essence of power itself--the bridge between matter and consciousness.

The chakras are basically consciousness centers, each reflecting consciousness of a particular sort. Therefore, the greatest tool for increasing power is to bring about an increase in consciousness, in awareness, an increase in knowledge, strength, grounding ability, and efficiency in our actions. And likewise, a decrease of unnecessary defenses and resistance.

If we postulate that we, as human beings carry a positive ionic charge, (and it is said that we do,) then we, too, must be light enough to overcome our own inertia and mutually repelling forces. Only in this way can we undergo a fusion reaction--whether it be with a group, an experience, a job, our environment, or simply the moment at hand. If we carry too much of our own energy with us, we lessen our chances to fuse, to synergies, and to really receive from a situation. If we bring too little, we may not have enough force to fuse. A balance is indeed, necessary.

This fusion experience, and the "power" it produces is the basic essence of love, and brings us to the fourth chakra. I believe that as we learn to drop defenses (or drop our egos,) we open and fuse with greater and greater structures. We approach a more cosmically oriented reality, gaining greater and greater understanding and grandeur. This lack of defenses may not create that awesome and fear inspiring type of power exhibited by those who remain cold, detached, and manipulative, but is instead a greater, more stable and more spiritual power, having beneficial effects on ourselves and our culture as a whole.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Encyclopedia Americana, Vol 20, p. 511w; 1976, Grolier Limited.

2. Reality Revealed, Douglas Vogt & Gary Sultan; Vector Associates, San Jose, Cal. 1977. (This book is not particularly recommended, however.)
3. For more insight into this phenomena, read novels from the Darkover series, by Marion Zimmer Bradley; DAW publishing.
4. The Chakras, by C. W. Leadbeater. The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois 1927.
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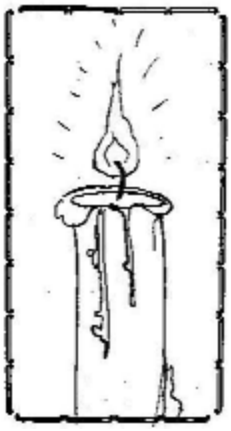
7. Christina G. Rossetti, "Who Has Seen the Wind? Very Young Verses, Barbara Peck Geismer, Antoinette Brown Suter, Houghton Mifflin Co. Boston, 1945.



Children's Page

Dear Friends

This is a plea to other Pagan parents in the area. I desperately need some input on religious instruction for children. My nine year old daughter is showing a great curiosity about religion and I am stumped. There are no clear, easily read books or stories dealing with Pagan beliefs, and as yet we don't have the equivalent of a Pagan "Sunday school" where their questions can be dealt with, and basic instruction given. I feel sure that other parents in the various craft groups have faced this situation, and I would love to know what people have come up with in response. My daughter is already encountering harassment from the other children at her school about her non-Christianity, and I have tried to give her reassurance and direction on how to handle taunts and such. Any input from anyone on this subject would be gratefully received and acknowledged. If I could put something together all by myself, I would, but I do not have the energy or expertise to do it all myself.

BLESSED BE!

Linda Von Braskat-Crowe P.O. Box 4326 Berkeley. CA 94704

This letter isn't the first communication Pentalpha has received about the lack of organized activities for children of Pagan families. It's very distressing to contemplate the fact that our children, growing up with access to Pagan ways, (which our generation had to find for itself) haven't been given enough opportunity to learn the Old Religion's teachings. We think that a children's page in the magazine is necessary and we hope that some of our readers (young and old) can send in ideas to help us.

This time we have an interview with Cari Von Braskat, daughter of the woman in the letter above. She is nine years old and a very forceful Aries woman. I wanted to get an idea of how she actually feels about being in a Pagan family. I was amazed to learn about the criticism she gets at school, and also that she hasn't had much of a sense of belonging to something special. I'd like to connect her with other young Pagans and talk about what we could all do together. Maybe this interview will inspire some of this discussion:

Cari's name is Cerridwen--her mother named her after the Goddess.

CARI: She is a Viking Goddess of the Bonn. I believe in Her.

SALLY: Well, what do you believe about Her? Do you talk to Her?

CARI: Yeah, on special holidays, and sometimes during my ordinary life, when I need to talk to somebody.

SALLY: Do you ever have dreams about her?

CARI: Yes, She's the same as I described before. She just sort of appears from a mist. A white mist, like the rays of the moon.

SALLY: Do you feel like she's your Mother?

CARI: Yes, sometimes. I think I dream about Her about once a weak. If I have a problem, I dream about Her and She helps me think of a solution to the problem.

SALLY: How do you feel about growing up in a Pagan family?

CARI: I think it's a dream sometimes. Sometimes things are very strange, because the other kids ask me if I believe in Jesus, and God, and I say I don't and they tease me. They tell me I'm going to Hell. They say bad luck's going to come to me, like someday I'm gonna get killed.

SALLY: So what do you say?

CARI: I tell them it's my problem. I tell them if I die I'll be able to see what I believe before they do. I don't believe in Hell, people made that up so that people who don't believe in God will get scared and believe in God. People can do what they want, as far as I'm concerned, but they should let me alone to believe what I want to believe and not hassle me about it.

SALLY: What kinds of Pagan things does your family do that you like to do?

CARI: I like going to Bardic Revels and singing with people. And to Druid services with my Mom in the liars and I enjoy it, and sometimes I give flowers and leaves to the Goddess.

SALLY: Would you like to get together with a group of kids and do your own services?

CARI: Yeah. I would like to do different kinds of services. Or just have a party and celebrate and sing and dance. I could learn how to do spells, maybe, if someone would teach me.

SALLY: Do you think you will be a Pagan when you grow up?

CARI: I don't know. I might change my religion. I can't tell yet, because I'm not there yet. It's fun being a Pagan sometimes, but I get a hassle from people about it.

Parents could really help by writing down a list of things their children can learn. If you have a particular deity you're close with, present it to your child as a friend, an ally, a helper.

Maybe the old church notion of patron saints is one that could be adapted—saints have always been disguises for the real Gods anyway. Make the deity personal—let your child have a real relationship with Her.

Help your child set up a simple altar. Choose a cloth, some candles, maybe a statue or picture (he or she could draw one, too) and put flowers or a cup of water on it. Teach the child to interact with his/her personal divinity, and to notice ways in which this divinity manifests (dreams, flashes of inspiration, help in trouble, etc). I personally am not against letting children experiment with simple spells; healing, protection, and defense. A child NEEDS a sense of personal power just as much as she needs to learn to respect other people and their feelings. Letting Saint George slay all your dragons for you is a great imposition on him—better his devotee should learn to wield her own flaming sword. My advice to Cari in the case of her schoolmates' prejudice would be to let them know that the Goddess has ways of teaching folks to respect the religious freedom we have in this country. I also said it might be good for her to spend more time with other children who share her beliefs and are interested in the Old Ways.

Children are natural Magicians, living in a world full of magic, extending all the way from fairies, to imaginary playmates, to the Bogie Man. It is only as we "grow up" that we are told that magic doesn't exist, and to put away our fantasies and devote ourselves to the "real world." If a parent does nothing but preserve and encourage their child's natural sense of awe and wonder about the universe, then they have done that child a great favor by nurturing the most important tool a magician can have.

O Danny Boy

O Danny Boy if words could o'er recall you
To walk again 'neath Pagan Irish skies
Then would I sing, 'til voice be taken from me
And light and life be faded from my eyes.

Too long, too long, your blood's been wasted flowing
To water seeds of wars that have no name
Where brothers die for quarrels past recalling
Nor caring aught for Ireland's agony and shame.

So turn again, the silver Stag is running
With blooded eye in groves beneath the moon
The songs of old still whisper through the oak trees
Where ancient breezes pipe our long-forgotten tunes.

O. Danny Boy, if words could o'er recall you
to walk again 'neath Pagan Irish skies
Then would I sing, 'til voice be taken from me
And light, and life itself be faded form my eyes.

—David Geller

The Lair of Great Cthulhu

(Tune: Chattanooga Choo-Choo)

Pardon me'boy-- Is this the lair of Great Cthulhu? In the city of slime, Where it is night all the time.

Bob Hope never went Along the road to Great Cthulhu, And Tripple-A has no maps And all the Cho-Chos lay traps.

You'll see an ancient sunken city where the angles are wrong.
You'll see the fourth dimension if you're there very long

Come to the conventicle.
Bring along your pentacle;
Otherwise you'll be dragged off by a tentacle.

A mountain's in the middle, with a house on the peak:
'A gnashin' and a thrashin ' and a clackin ' of beak.

Your soul you will be lackin '
When you see that mighty kraken.

Oo-oo! Great Cthulhu's starting to speak.
So come on aboard,
Along the road to Great Cthulhu.

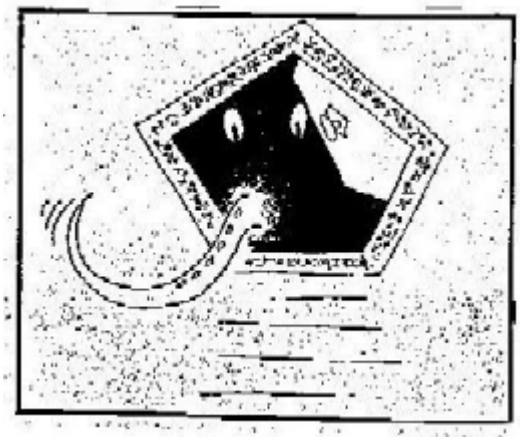
Wen-di'-gos and Dhols
will make Big Macs of our souls.

Under the sea, ~
Down in the ancient city of Rilyeh,
In the lair of Great Cthulhu,
They'l1 suck your soul away!

(Great Cthulhu, Great Cthulu, Suck your soul! Great Cthulhu, Great Cthulhu) In the lair of Great Cthulhu, They'll suck your soul away.

(Here, there is an obligatory saxophone solo, a la Tex Beneke)

-Larry Press, et al.



HUNTRESS

A huntress is She.
In virginal white She fares the pale of night

With carnivore intent: All innocent
Of praise or blame or any virtue bearing mortal name or measurable dimension....
A moonlit mist-wrapp't rose is She, or so appears to be, Who
Flowering, reveals some wild and iridescent thing
that waits in coiled repose and quite conceals:
Intention.
——She'd seem to yield——a White Queen's gambit leading surely to checkmate.
——And lo! springs forth some fool or hero glad to seize upon such bait
He's lost! His heart
'twill cost him, for:
She feasts upon such things
And mayhap, "Pass the Salt" She sweetly sings to one of Her exalted company the whiles She dabs Her dainty lips with samite spun of spider-silk
She's of that ilk at very least that things the world a toy or shake they sky
But it's Her special Joy, to
Take whatever beast may catch Her Eye:
Her taut bow bent like crescent moon,
Swift arrows, then the boon, She grants, with glee A huntress is She.

-by Paladin

Winter

By Deborah Frankel Bender

Then you come before the old woman. Who is the true head of your coven. Blindfold, hands bound, naked, (It is lawful for me to tell you this, since You know it already) And she says to you "Please me."
Women have a better chance of getting through it.
We've had more practice
Coping with unreasonable demands,
Our resources always inadequate.
Men get bad habits
Dealing from strength:
They tend to stick at the first step
("Define the problem")
Few come out of that room with their own bodies on them.
You come before the old woman Who is the true head of your coven. Blindfold, hands bound, naked. She is waiting for you. Small talk, charm, and habits will not help you with her. She has seen it all. She knows more than you do. She is easily bored.
You must come before the old woman
Stripped naked,
And she says to you,
"You're back. What did you bring me?"
What will you offer her? Clean hands? A pure heart? Hers are not. She is not. She is an old woman. She has seen everything done everything, endured everything. She is responsible for everything.
Then your least fear Is knowledge Of the whip by her hand.
Witch, what was your training? Embrace everything. Use everything. Cherish everything. Fear nothing.

So you come before the old woman and dance before her Made to improvise. Hobbled by the rope. Tough to keep your balance. Naturally she laughs. At you wobbling and whistling. She laughs, reminded of the juggler she loved once. She sends you out again.

WINTER

Deborah Frankel Bender

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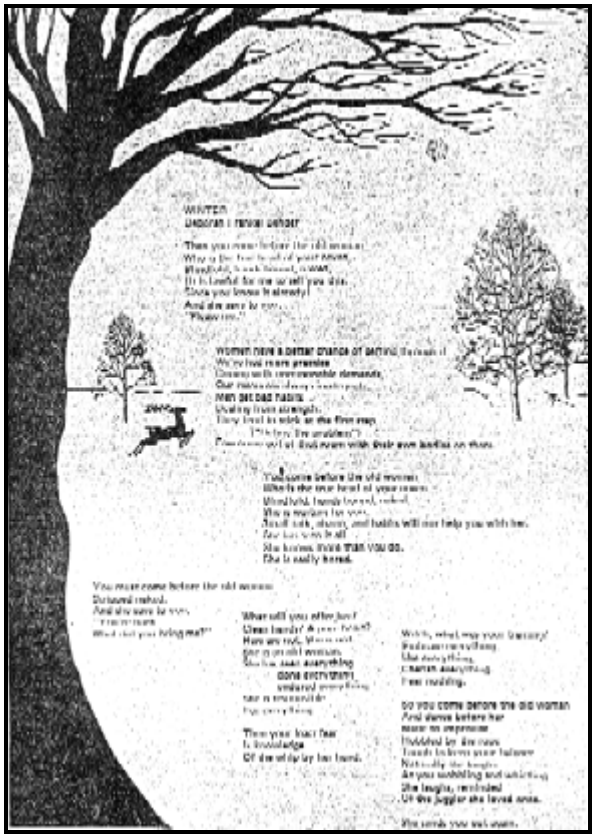


Goddess Gift

The bodies entwined appear as one,
For this, indeed they are,
The song of love escapes their lips,
Is carried near and far

On the wings of ecstasy,
They rise and they do soar,
This feeling it wit never end
For love will e'er endure.

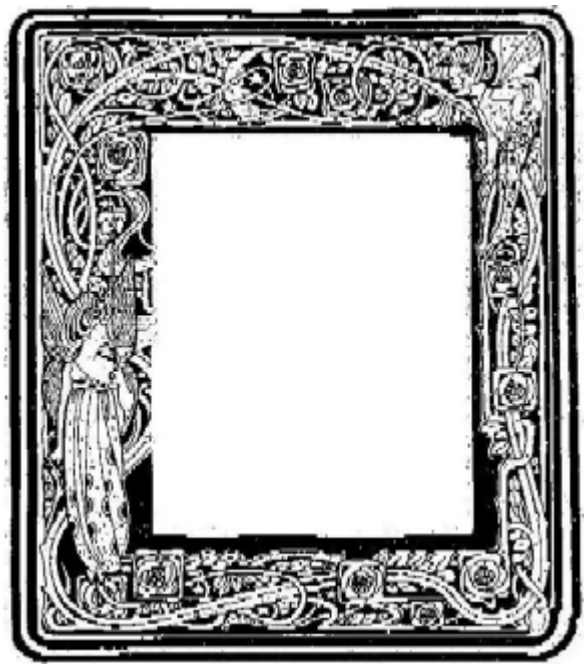
Two bodies—God and Goddess are United perfectly.
Their joy exposed, so openly,
For all the world to see.

Their feelings are eternal

The same they'll always be,
From dawn of time to man's demise
United—Perfectly.

The fire of Life flows through their veins
Their voices rise and fall,
Their ecstasy—adrift of Love
From she who created all.

—Joyce L. Baker



Winter’s Ending

-Jeffrey Andrew Young

Come the goat-man, man of Springtime,
Savior of the Winter's ending.
Come from mountains, come and enter
This, the sad, stiff human figure,
For his mind is numbed with Winter,
Lain neglected since rememb'ring,
And his hands are stiffened branches,
Frozen bones that have no feeling.
Strike the fire deep within him,
Fire to melt this icy thinking.
Passion sings within him somewhere,
Laughter lies awake, awaiting
Some necessity inside him:
To awaken him from slumber.
Now the dead man's mind grows restless,
Fingers yearn for warmer flesh,
Rememb'ring souls that once had touched him,
Breathing bodies he was near to.
Goat-man draw him ever onward
Through the slush of dying Winter
Where his memories await him
In Spring's gentle restlessness.

Lament of the Witch

–Morning Glory– Ohoyo Cjsh Chishba

I may not go to the festival...
All this month I have sewn costumes.
Gathered nuts and baked cakes.
I have strung beads and berries for
the children to wear.
All this my people have taken from me
And they have said: "It is good."
I have borne children, I have woven mats
'I have carved masks, I have washed clothing,
AII this my tribe has taken from me and they have said: "It is good."

But when the sea change comes, my body
begins to flow. My woman spirit to
gather power and force.
Large drops of blood
drip
slowly and then gush forth.

My magick is strongest, my feelings
are deepest; my knowledge is surest..
Now, more than ever I am
A woman of power.
All this my tribe has refused--and they have said: "It is bad."
And when l touched my genitals to
give myself pleasure,.
When I made images to call the spirits...
When I refused the husband chosen for me...
And every, every moon when my body know its bloody power...
AII this my tribe has refused me -

My shadow pollutes, the rainbow serpent is angered, my lover shuns me,
I am cursed, diseased, reviled. Men retch at my scent; avoidably footprints.

Banished from my home, forbidden the festivities...
I remember the medicine
The man's words to me at my puberty ritual: "You must be as Mother Earth...
Humble and fruitful.
You must not touch any holy thing or a man's possessions.
You are dangerous to yourself and to the tribe;.. to bleed is to be sick...
you must be set apart for your moon and give thanks to God that He has spared you life when you cease to bleed."
Hog.
So spoke the wise man.

Old fool! I AM like Mother Earth, she who bleeds and does not die.
Only for men in blood linked with sickness and death.
I am a woman...
my blood

The sacred tools...our foremothers made them.
Once the houses were ours.-..we built them.
Once the rituals were ours...we wrote them.
Once the moon hut was for our own seclusion...we sought it for privacy.
Now, the tools are forbidden
the houses belong to our fathers
the rituals are led by men
the moon hut is our prison
and our bodies are the source of our shame.
What has happened? Why did things change? How has this come to be?
–Long ago–
The old men say: Women were punished for their pollution...for their bleeding. They angered the Gods."
–Long ago– The old women say: "Men became jealous of our power, and they stole everything."

We shared our bread, our fires, our homes, our tools, our magick, our knowledge, our bodies... We shared.--
They had only one thing we did not give them; one skill we did not teach them. They had the use of weapons... and they did no share that. They turned it against us.
The old women say: "Let us kneel down in the mud, crawling along!
We leave it for them, for our Brothers,
We leave the world for them
for they want it that way."
I will not sing this song, looking out through the window of the moon hut and hearing the songs and laughter of my people.
I will not sing this song.
I mark my cheeks with my
Dark Blood.
I will sing a song to the Goddess... who is stronger than the weapons of Men.
I will sing a song to my sisters who are wiser than the lies of Men.
I will sing a song to my daughter who will bear the future of Men.
My song is a song about power, about loving, about sharing, about changing
I will sing about the future I will weave a web of fate
I will sow a seed of doubt I will tell a tale of tomorrow.

I mark my forehead with my
Dark Blood...
...and I wait.

Lament of the Witch graphic.

MONEY MAGIC

By Poisson Volant

"Why is it," a friend asked during a conversation the other day, "that so many Neopagans are lousy at money magic? We find things work with all sorts of other kinds of magical intentions, but the material resources seem to be the one area where efforts fizzle the most."

It's puzzling to me, because by some fluke money magic is the one area in which I've had my most reliable results. I could make a long list of many other sorts of Magic I've tried that have bombed miserably! I don't do money magic often, and "haven't grown rich on it by any stretch of the imagination; but when I've set about invoking forces to aid my material circumstances in times of needs, help has come in the most curious ways.

My purpose here, then will be to share some of my techniques in the hopes they can be useful to Neopagans interested in improving skills in areas such as this. Most (if not all) of these ideas could also be applied to other sorts of magical workings. Many of the ideas are not particularly new, while others are updated versions of older concepts. Nevertheless, perhaps they can be grist for your mill.

Basic Mind-Set

It's always been my experience that if a magician holds unconscious attitudes opposed to a ritual's intention, conducting the ritual may not only fail but could also aggravate the underlying attitude-complex. It's like the story of a person who feels desperate need for having a romantic relationship. The person is unlikely to find happiness in this respect until he or she has gone through a long series of disappointments, ego losses and painful self-insights. What's often found to be the underlying problem is a terrific need for self-esteem.

Money, too, evokes emotional responses in our unconscious. For many people in culture at large, money and spending serve as a kind of self-esteem barometer (witness the ostentatious consumerism of young professionals who flaunt expensive cars and other objects as badges of self-worth). Then there is the opposing mindset of the counterculture, which rebels against the abuses of money by declaring (or silently feeling) that money itself is wrong in some way.

How many times have progressives and revolutionaries damned money for its seemingly intrinsic tendency to corrupt human values? How many have considered it a noble martyrdom to suffer pains of a financially austere lifestyle while holding to a greater moral principle?

To me personally, at any rate, money's natural function is simply to serve as a medium of exchange for goods and services. Either to worship or to curse it--or to admire or resent those who are skilled at getting it--seems to point to an underlying, unresolved issue of self-esteem that will probably interfere with efforts to function easily in an economic environment.

Philosophizing about the concept of money could go on and on. I'll cut it short and get to some of the more practical ways of dealing with unconscious attitudes we hold.

Dig a Little Deeper

The first and foremost step in putting together a successful ritual for obtaining money is to look into your unconsciously values. Of course, readers of pop paperbacks on "Secret Keys to Money, Wealth, and Power" and the like may find they achieve success without any self-probing at all. they happen to click into a belief-system of success and are able to deal with their

I'll tell my feelings very simply. The ideas which will I follow here, however, are intended for those whose feelings are maybe somewhat more complex, more ambivalent; who need to do a little belief-system housecleaning in order to achieve the intentions they choose.

What kind of values have you held about money? How affluent was your home life as a child? What kind of attitudes did your parents hold? Did you rebel against your parent's attitudes when you came of age? What kind of financial state have you lived in during your adult life? How do you feel about yourself when you don't have money to achieve some goal you have? How do you feel about others when you're in a situation like that? In general, how do you feel about those who are more affluent than you are? How do you feel about people who are poorer? When you think about money in broad terms, does it seem to be in large part a tool of exploitation between social classes? What are the feelings of your peers, the people you're close to and care about the most, and how have their attitudes affected vow?

All of these questions represent fertile ground for self-probing. For what, money magic is successful when the magician has achieved a state of mind in which money is pretty much a neutral concept--something that is wanted/needed, but something that doesn't evoke strong feelings in and of itself.

Many magical theorists have said that it doesn't matter what you feel or are during your regular life, as long as you can create the necessary emotional mood during a magical operation. I've found, though, that emotions on subjects like money, self-esteem, and relationships can be very powerful even if they are hidden at a level of the unconscious with which you're normally not much in touch. If these issues aren't dealt with in the context of your whole life, you may find that trying to conjure up cash is an unsuccessful effort to deny the stronger voice of your unconscious feeling.

Invoke Everything

Another maxim of magic is that good old expression, "Invoke often." The idea is more or less identical to the method used in New Thought churches and self-help primers: Whatever belief you summon often enough will become true for you. And you're supposed to clear your mind of feelings that conflict with the intended goal.

But what if your unconscious feelings in opposition to the intention are so strong that they won't go away? When it has happened to me I've found a "war of sentiments" set up with a voice repeating "is" and some inner voice "not!" within me--my external says such-and-such, meanwhile is saying "No, you're not."

Whenever we encounter that kind of inner voice, we have to judge whether it's a valuable warning of one's true will or whether it's the voice of self doubt. If it's the latter. it deserves to be cleared away.

The self-probing mentioned above is a worthwhile way of doing that. I'd like to suggest another practical technique sort of an addendum to the magical maxim: namely, Invoke everything.

Or, to put it another way: Don't clear your mind of feelings that conflict with your magical intention. Rather, invoke them folly, get them out in full view, then let the energy leave your consciousness (preferably by grounding them in some fashion so they don't interfere with the things you really want to do).

Here's a sample exercise which you might find useful Each evening for several days, set aside some time (maybe a half-hour or so) to invoke each of the following sets of imagery. Allot one setting per evening so that your unconscious doesn't get confused by changing gears too fast. Use all of your imaginative powers to make the setting as real as possible: flesh each out with concrete details you feel would be appropriate. When you've created the setting in your mind powerfully, examine all of the feelings about the setting that flow out into recognizable form: Happiness? Sadness? Anger? Guilt?

The Settings:

1. You are an inheritor of old money. You have always been in an environment of comfort and ease. When you came of age the duty you assumed was to carry on your family's great tradition. Your chief challenges are in trying to respond to society's changing demands on your social class while trying to maintain the lifestyle you grow up in.

2. You are the ultimate minority. You grow up in squalor and never had any chance to better yourself. Your life amounts to being dumped on left and right. Pure survival is the main challenge in your life.

3. You came from a wealthy background and became used to a life of ease, but then you suddenly went broke. Now your main challenge is to readjust to a new lifestyle that seems to be only a very dim counterpart of the way you once lived.

4. You came from a modest background, worked your way up until you now head a prosperous firm in private industry. "Making it" financially has been your great ambition, and now you cannot understand the voices in the society that want to take it all away from you.

5. You came from a background of _____(insert your own roots here) and now you are in a situation of ____(describe your current life). The kind of role money has played in your life is _____(describe,) and your feelings toward money are _____(describe).

As should be obvious, all these settings are intended to expose you to the varying ways that people experience and react

to money in their lives. You can gain important clues about your feelings by noting how easy it is to visualize each setting; if you can't seem to make one setting fully real and absolutely authentic, it probably represents feelings about money that you cannot at the moment acknowledge. If any of the settings provoke powerful emotions, you probably have feelings about money that need to be resolved.

The exercises themselves, in fact, are a useful way to resolve feelings. Whenever you encounter something notable while visualizing the settings, resolve to keep working with that setting over a period of time until its emotional energy-hold on you is diffused.

Each visualization session should be closed with whatever method you prefer to ground evoked energies. For example, you might try a statement something like, "I do this exercise for the purpose of exploring myself and expanding my capabilities to experience life richly. I now direct these energies to the earth, where they may permutate and serve the Gods and Goddesses and their holy children."

TNT Blasting

Sometimes overriding emotional contents of the unconscious will have such a strong hold on you that visualization methods don't seem to help you make much progress. For example, I'm a fairly impressionable person; quite often I find that I have such a strong attachment that I can't seem to clear my mind to do any worthwhile visualization work.

Various people deal with this in different ways. Many Neopagans find that some time outdoors, perhaps with exercises exchanging energy with the earth, is invigorating mentally, emotionally, and physically.

I have a different kind of technique I've been experimenting with. Many people use tape recordings to create sound imagery directed toward their magical intentions, and they listen to the tapes while in a reverie state. What I've been doing, however, is to make tapes specifically intended to be disorienting--multiple tracks of all kinds of sounds, conflicting static at events, sometimes jarring noises. The idea here is to use a "power-blaster" approach to clearing away mental/emotional rubble; it doesn't particularly work on deep-seated issues, but it can be useful when I get temporarily pent-up.

I would not recommend this approach if you are feeling fragile or unstable, and probably a great many Neopagans will simply choose not to use it as a matter of personal taste. (The method, incidentally, is a take-off on the kind of conditioning used by the character Hagbard Celine in the Illuminatus! trilogy by Robert J. Shea and Robert Anton Wilson, when Celine was endeavoring to turn a mortal woman into the Goddess Eris.)

And On to the Ritual!

Used in one combination or another, these techniques should help you get in touch with all of your feelings about money and prepare the way for your ritual operation.

As a matter of fact, I don't particularly have any one custom-tailored ritual to offer here. Each of us responds to certain kinds of settings and imagery, and each of us uses certain kinds of rituals for varying intentions. In accordance with money's relationships to things of the material world, I would suggest you try ritual types you would use in operations related to the earth, growing plants, and so on.

Actually, what I use for obtaining new rituals is Burning by Raymond Buckland. It was one of the first books I picked up several years ago when I first got into magic; I tried the money ritual, and it worked. I use the "Pagan" rather than "Christian" wordings--Buckland provides both--and I make two additions: (1) I affirm that the money will not come through any other person's hardship or loss: (2) I visualize the receipt of the money in concrete images as it would naturally appear to me--in my case, an inked-in entry in my account register.)

A Few Afterthoughts

How does magical money come to us? I suppose any way it chooses to. In my case, when I did that first ritual several years ago, I unexpectedly got a check in the mall paying off a childhood life-insurance account that I never knew hard been taken out on me. Other times, long-lost friends have suddenly paid off debts from the distant past that I'd forgotten about. Sometimes, the money takes the form of people asking for services for which they pay me.

But at least in my experience, the money doesn't come out of nowhere. Perhaps indeed you will win a sweepstakes, or befriend a bum who turns out to be a generous millionaire, or find a thousand-dollar bill on the street. As money magic has worked for me, though, it never brings material goods which are utterly unearned. I wouldn't think it realistic to expect money magic to guarantee you ongoing prosperity for no effort, or to support you simply because you are a wonderful person or are doing worthwhile deeds.

In the final analysis, money magic seems to work two ways: Emergency rituals can help you out of a bind, and longer range prosperity workings can get you into a new space in order to realize more financial return on your efforts. But you will still have to make efforts; money is merely the symbol of give-and-take, and you would not remain balanced for long with a deficit energy expended by you.

And that means--perish the thought...

Work!

About Beltane and Lughnasadh

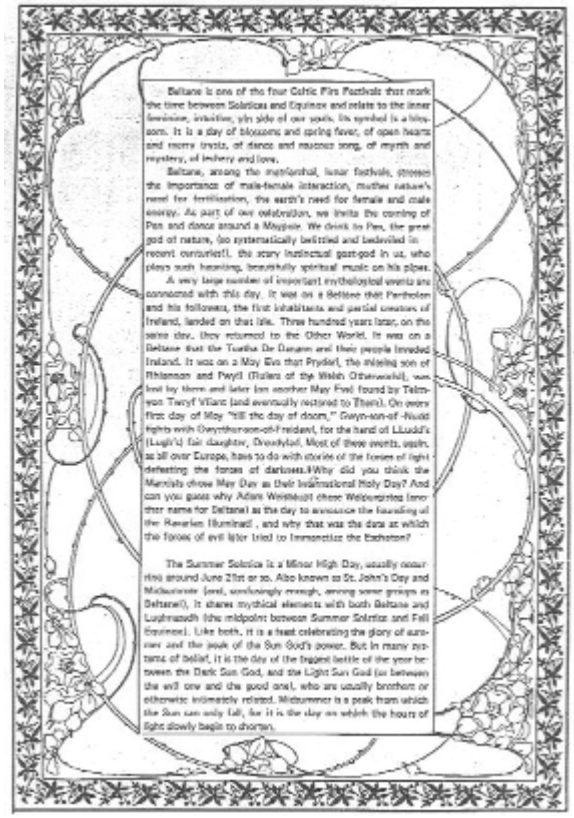
Beltane is one of the four Celtic Fire Festivals that mark the time between Solstices and Equinox and relate to the inner feminine, intuitive, yin side of our souls. Its symbol is a blossom. It is a day of blossoms and spring fever, of open hearts and merry trysts, of dance and raucous song, of mirth and mystery, of lechery and love.

Beltane, among the matriarchal, lunar festivals, stresses the importance of male-female interaction, mother nature's need for fertilization, the earth's need for female and male energy. As part of our celebration, we invite the coming of Pan and dance around a Maypole. We drink to Pan, the great god of nature, (so systematically belittled and bedeviled in recent centuries,) the scary instinctual goat-god in us, who plays such haunting, beautifully spiritual music on his pipes.

A very large number of important mythological events are connected with this day. It was on a Beltane that Partholan and his followers, the first inhabitants and partial creators of Ireland, landed on that isle. Three hundred years later, on the same day, they returned to the Other World. It was on a Beltane that the Tuatha De Danann and their people invaded Ireland. It was on a May Eve that Pryderi, the missing son of Rhiannon and Pwyll (Rulers of the Welsh Otherworld,) was lost by them and later (on another May Eve) found by Teimyon Twryf Vliant (and eventually restored to Them). On every first day of May "till the day of doom," Gwyn Ap Nudd fights with Gwyrthur Ap Freidawl, for the hand of LLudd's (Lugh's) fair daughter, Dreudylad. Most of these events, again, as all over Europe, have to do with stories of the forces of light defeating the forces of darkness. 'Why did you think the Marxists chose May Day as their international Holy Day? And can you guess why Adam

Weishaupt chose Walpurgistag (another name for Beltane) as the day to announce the founding of the Bavarian llluminati, and why that was the date at which the forces of evil later tried to Immanetize the Eschaton?

The Summer Solstice is a Minor High Day, usually occurring around June 21st or so. Also known as St. John's Day and Midsummer (and, confusingly enough, among some groups as Beltane!), it shares mythical elements with both Beltane and Lughnasadh (the midpoint between Summer Solstice and Fall Equinox). Like both, it is a feast celebrating the glory of summer and the peak of the Sun God's power. But in many systems of belief, it is the day of the biggest battle of the year between the Dark Sun God, and the Light Sun God (or between the evil one and the good one,) who are usually brothers or otherwise intimately related. Midsummer is a peak from which the Sun can only fall, for it is the day on which the hours of light slowly begin to shorten.



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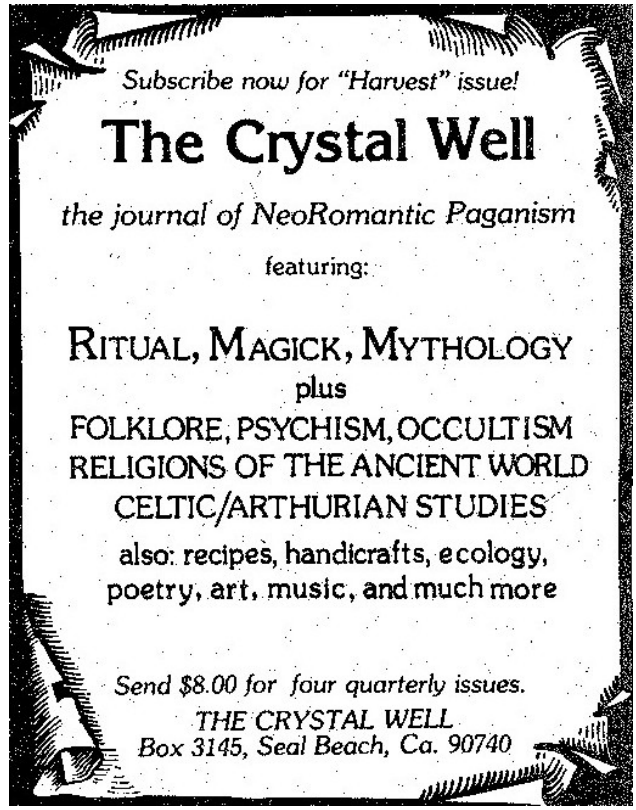
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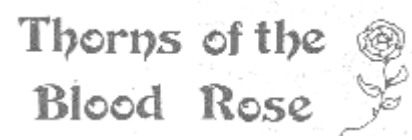
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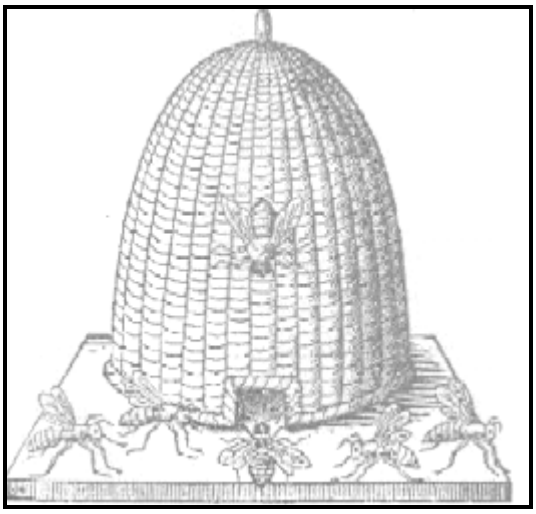

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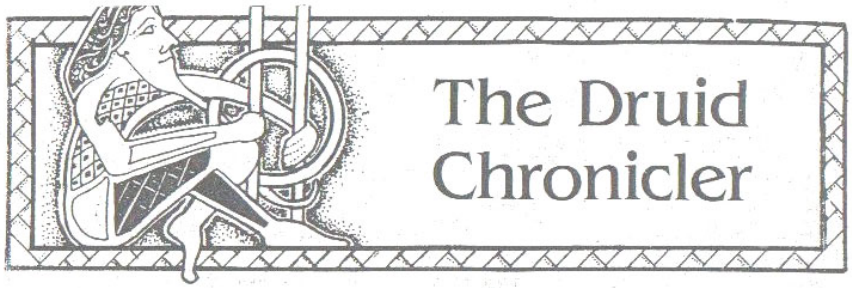


The Druid Chronicler

Volume Four & Five

1980-1981

Drynemetum Press

The Druid Chronicler

Samhain 1980,
Nov. 1980
Volume 4 Number 1

Berkeley Grove Services

These will be held at Hinkle Park, on the Arlington. and will begin at 1 PM sharp, unless otherwise noted by asterix (*). For safety's sake, call Leslie at 430-0885. If it looks like rain. come anyway. Our Mom often stops raining for us, and if she doesn't, we will hold a Meditation Service at the Ad's house.

Nov. 8 Full Moon-Samhain. Meet at Lawrence Hall of Science at 9 AM, Hal's Spot at 4 PM. We will walk to Sugarloaf from there. Hold Services at sunset, and those who want may stay all night. Bring a flashlight, warm clothes, and any opened bottles of alcohol you may have. Be Prepared for anything,

* Nov. 23-Full Moon, probably at Hal's Spot
Dec. 7-Full Moon
Dec. 21-Full Moon-Winter Solstice
Jan. 11-New Moon
Jan. 25-Full Moon
Feb. 8-New Moon-Oimelc

News of the Groves

Berkeley Grove

The Berkeley Grove is beginning to get back into the swing after Summer absences. Grove elections were held on Oct. 12. ArchDruid is Joan Carruth. Larry Press agreed to assist the AD as needed. Preceptor is Chris Sherbak, who will deal with most Grove business. Leslie Craig is assisting the Preceptor as telephone contact person. If there is any doubt about locations and times of Services, she should be contacted, and not the AD. The Server is Steve Goldstone.

We have a number of projects in mind for the coming year. Two of these have already begun. A Protogrove Service has been written and printed and it and a page of information on how to start a Protogrove, etc. are available to anyone who wants one. Contact either Joan or Chris.

Also, since the Druid Chronicles are out of print, and most people either do not want or cannot afford the entire set, we have printed up a Mini-chronicles which is available from Chris or Joan for $2.50. It contains the two page introduction, the standard Summer Service, the two protogrove sheets the Customs, the Book of Meditations, a page of calendrical info, some Bards, And Isaac's flyer, which can be removed and reprinted.

Chico Protogrove

This has just started, under the sponsorship of the Berkeley Grove, Contact: Michael "Tiki" Teague 1588 Fetter St. Chico CA 95926

The Other Groves:

they have no news. Just the old addresses. We'll try to do better next issue (Oimelc)

Tuatha Grove AD Pat O'Neil 1808 3rd Ave. 12 San Diego, CA
Evergreen Grove AD Cyndie Schuler Fox 1272 Olympia, WA 98501
Arch Grove AD Carolyn Clark 10611 Jesskamp Dr., St. Louis, MO 63136
Ann Arbor Grove AD Richard Shelton 722 Dewey Ave, Ann Arbor, III 48104
Madrakara Grove Danann Parry & Lila Forest PO Box 82 Occidental, CA 95465

IS ANYBODY ELSE OUT THERE?

News of the Orders

Oberon (Bardic) -- There will be a meeting of the Nordic Order on Tuesday, Nov. 15th, at 8 PM at the home of Patriarch Linda von Brasket 863 E.28th St., Oakland. Her home is very near the Park Boulevard exit off the MacArthur Freeway. Call her at 839-1628 if you aren't sure how to get there. The meeting will discuss the fate of the Bards over the coming winter, and it is important that as many interested people as possible show up.

Dian Cecht (Healers) -- We will once again get into the saddle and. hold meetings these are open to people interested in healing, of whatever group or rank. You should, however, contact the Matriarch, Joan Carruth. at 525-0498 if you would like to come to the meetings, which are on the Sunday night closest to the waxing Quarter: Dec. 14, Jan. 18, and Feb. 15. They will be held at the Center for Non-traditional Religions, (Greenwalls,) Fulton and Prince, in Berkeley, and Will begin at 7 PM SHARP. We will be permitted to use the hot tub if everybody follows the house rules: bring your own towel, and absolutely no messing with the machinery. They cannot have the tub hotter than it is set, for very good reasons! Anyone who cannot follow the rules we'll be denied the use of the tub for the whole group FOREVER. We will do healings. Everybody is encouraged to bring a photo and/or personal possession of someone who needs healing, and has given permission for us to work on then. We will work on two or three such healings at each meeting.

Angus (Children's) (proposed) -- contact Ron Genzoli at toad Hall, 581-0962, if you are interested in forming such a group. We will be locking, into Release Time for Pagan Children.

Lugh (Craftspeople) -- We will be trying to find out the status of this Order, so it can be reactivated. Stay tuned. If you're interested in being part of this Order, contact Chris Sherbak, at 921-2630.

Contact Addresses

Chris Sherbak 2345 Post St., San Francisco, CA 94115
Joan Carruth 8259 Terrace Dr., El Cerito, CA94530

The Druid Chronicler

Berkeley Grove NRDNA
Feb. 1981
Oimelc Issue 19 y.r.
Volume 4 Number 2

Berkeley Grove Services

These will be held at Hinkle Park, on the Arlington, and will begin at 1 PM sharp. If you have any questions, please call Leslie, at 652-6040. If it looks like rain, come anyway, and if we are unable to hold Services outdoors, we will adjourn to the AD's house for an indoor service.

Mar. 8 New Moon
Mar. 22 Full Moon Spring Equinox
Apr. 5 New Moon
Apr. 19 Full Moon
May 3 New Moon- Beltane this the SIXTH Annual Beltane in the Rose Garden Plan on your fanciest duds and a potluck picnic afterwards. The AD MUST be consulted in advance if you wish to do an ordination at this time. Call me.

News of the Groves

Berkeley Grove

Steve Goldstone has had to resign his post as Server, due to his work with Stephan's school. We will hold re-elections for Server at Spring Equinox Services.

We have heard little from our two Protogroves, except that they're doing well. Both members of the Massachusetts Protogrove are expected here in Berkeley for Beltane, and they may, after that, become a full Grove. The 2nd Order in the Mass. Protogrove is the sister of the Berkeley AD, so her candidacy for Third will be scrutinized VERY CAREFULLY (hear that, Phyl?) The Chico Protogrove is also meeting regularly, and may also become a full Grove this year.

The Berkeley Grove is also hosting the Berkeley Area Interfaith Council monthly meeting for March and we hope most of out Druids will attend. The date is Thurs. Mar 26, at Starr King School on the Conte, at noon NORMAL PEOPLE TIMES. Bring a bag lunch, we will provide drinks, and bring a robe other than black, if you have one. Your AD is now a member of the AIC Executive Committee--a big move for her and for all Pagans. Please come and Dive her immoral supports

Evergreen Grove

Cyndie Sallee left the Grove at midsummer last year, investing Denis Merrill as AD. The Group is alive and well, but limited to ESC students and evidently not looking for new members.

Greenwood Grove

This is Cyndie's new Grove. They are meeting for full moons and High Days, and average about 15 people per meeting. They are also teaching some classes for some of their members and their Bardic circle is thinking about cutting an album. Contact Junkie at 745 North 2nd, Seattle, Wash, 98103.

News of the Orders

Bardic -- There will be two Bardic Revels/Beltane practice at Leslie's new place, on April 18th and May 3. All Bards should attend both, and the entire Grove should attend the second. We may have a much larder attendance this year, and we should make it as slick as we can. Matriarch Linda von Basket will be Ordaining Bards after Beltane. If you are interested in joining you should contact her two weeks in advance, and have your best work ready for her at that time.

Dian Cecht -- Our meetings have averaged four people, but we've been getting some Mood work done, with positive results. Our nest meetings will be on Mar 15. Apr. 12, and May 10. Those are Sundays, at 6 PM. We hope to hold them at Centre (Greenwalls). but arrangements are not final, so contact Joan, at 525-0498 to be sure. We will also accept people for Ordination after Beltane. Non-members, however, are welcome to attend, if they have healing interests and skills.

Stanislavski for Magicians -- Larry Press will hold these meetings at 2 PM, Sunday Mar. 29th, an Apr. 26th. Contact him at 658-2610 for location, although he also hopes to be able to use the facilities at Centre. The Magick really does work better when dramatic techniques of choreography and emotional involvement are used. Remember the rules at Greenwalls, too: bring your own towel, a small donation, if you can, and enjoy the hot tub as it is.

Wildflower ID Class

Begins Sat Feb. 28th. Call (415) 886-5917, and ask for Anna. The classes will be held mostly in the form of walks in the wild and botanical gardens, and will emphasize family characteristics, medicinal & other uses, mythology, and ecology. Held through the Institute for Celtic Studies.

Lost Druids

Does anyone have current addresses for: Lawrence Gold, Wis. Pat O'Neil, CA. Michael Bradley, Illinois.

NRDNA Druids

Several people have asked about various Druid things, like the Higher Orders. As you know, because of the rules of the old RDNA, these are impossible to restart, and other changes also impossible. HOWEVER, we can do these things in NRDNA, for our own Branch only. But we have, really, to start from the old RDNA rules, which means a majority of all 3rds in the Branch. Sooooo. We need the addresses of all 3rd Orders who are or would like to consider themselves NRDNA. Our first action should probably be to simplify voting rules. If you are an NRDNA 3rd please send your address to Chris Sherbak, 2345 Post St., SF, CA, 94115. Also the names' and addresses, if you can, of every other NRDNA 3rd you can think of, by Midsummer.

Chronicler

Mail news to Chris by Spring Equinox, for Beltane Issue.

Thank you.

A Chant for the Spring Equinox

AD: O give praise to the Dark Gods who love:
Praise to the Hunter, stalking and slaying,
Praise to the Hag, weeping and raging.
G: Praise Be'al. who is all gods, praise the Earth Mother's many faces.

AD: Praise for food-store and tight roof, good wool and good health.
G: Praise for hearth and tale and friend.

AD: Praise for grey skies and healing rain, cutting wind and bedding snow.
G: Praise for the mystery of the Land of Shadow.

AD: The Earth went bare, the sunlight dimmed,
G: Light had turned to Dark.

AD: The nights were long, the winds were cold,
G: Darkness ruled over all.

AD: But within the cave, the bear cub waxed;
G: Darkness yearns to Light.

AD: Bough is barren, bud returns:
G: Balanced now are we.

AD: Belenos returns from the South:
G: Balanced now are we.

AD: The Mother stirs and wakes again:
G: Balanced now are we.

AD: Snowdrifts of blossom on earth and tree,
G: Dark will turn to Eight.

AD: The world will be lush, the days will be long,
G: Eight will rule over all.
AD: Til the sweet fruits of the boughs are warm in our hands. And Light yearns again to Dark.

AD: O Belanos, O Lord of light, we praise thee at thy return to our midst. Welcome art thou amongst us.
ALL: BLESS US AND LIGHT OUR WAY, O MIGHTY SUN GOD!

AD: O Earth Mother, beauteous and strong, rise up and let us rejoice in thy sights
ALL: PRAISE TO THE LADY WHO GIVEST LIFE!

The Beltane Chant

(From DC(E))

PR: The Mother wakes from her long sleep and smiles on us today!
Chorus: SHE IS AWAKE!
PR: She brings us Life!
Chorus: SHE IS AWAKE!
PR: She brings us Light!
Chorus: SHE IS AWAKE!
PR: The Mother wakes and seeks Be'al.
Chorus: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS.
PR: We light our fires to show the way.
(The fires of Be'al, the bonfire, are now lit by the plunging of a torch into the kindling.)
Chorus: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!
PR: To couch with the Mother and bring forth Life.
Chorus: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!

(This next section should be chanted at an accelerating pace:)

PR: O Be'al
Chorus: WE WELCOME THEE!
PR: O our Mother
Chorus: WE WELCOME THEE!
PR: O Earth-Mother, O Be'al
Chorus: WE WELCOME THEE!!
PR: O Be'al, O Mother, parents of all that lives, we welcome Ye back to our midst. Give us of Your Life, O Most High, that we may share Your joy.
Chorus: WELCOME ARE YE, AMONG US, O MOST HIGH. SMILE ON US, WHO HAVE KEPT YOUR WAYS, THROUGH THE TIME OF SLEEP.

The Druid Chronicler

Beltane Edition
19 y.r., May 1981
Volume 4 Number 3

Services will be held at Hal's spot at 1 PM. Unless otherwise noted. For those who don't know where that is, the AD will be LEAVING the parking lot at the Lawrence Hall of Science at 12:30 and you can follow. Call Leslie at 652-6040, if you have any questions.

Calendar

May 3 new moon Beltane, Berkeley Rose, Garden Potluck picnic afterwards
May 17 full moon
May 31 new moon
June 14 full moon
June 21 summer solstice, Big tree meadow, EBR park
June 28 new moon
July 19 Full moon
Aug. 2 New moon
Aug. 9 Lughnasadh probably in the Richmond Hills.

News of the Groves

Berkeley Grove

Does anybody remember for sure how many Beltanes-in-the-Rose-Gardens this is? Is it the sixth? Getting to be a Tradition. This year, Post Prop 13, its an expensive one: $40 for the Rose Garden, and $10 for the fireplace. Please come and have a good time, bring munchies for the Picnic, but if you can, bring money. Our fliers have also been going fast, and will need reprinting. I hate to say it so baldly, but if Grove members would each pledge even $5/month we wouldn't be in such a fix. We were designed to be a Poor Religion and O Gods willing, we'll remain so, but it'd be nice if the poverty were genteel.

We have a THIRD Protogrove! Our contact is named Greg Schill, and he's in Butlers Pennsylvania. Be expect to lose the Chico Protogrove: happily since they plan on becoming a full Grove.

News of the Orders

Bardic Order

Nordic Revels will be held at Leslie's, at 8 P.M. on Saturday nights May 23, and July 25. These meetings are obligatory for Harass and optional for others. We will probably start by WORKING, and end by degenerating.

Dian Cecht

Be on time to meet at Centre (Greenwalls,) but you'd best call Joan at 525-0498 to be sure. We will meet at 7 PM, on Sunday nights, May 10 June 7 and July 12. Bring an artifact from a willing victims er... patients when you come, and your own towel if you wish to use the hot tub afterwards. We prefer to limit these meetings to members of the Orders and those with an active interest in psychic and magickal healing, I don't mean to be exclusionary, I'd like lots of people to show up and I'd like them to be magickally competent and willing to work.

Groves and Protogroves

Remember to send news of your group to Chris Sherbak 2345 Post St. San Francisco Ca 94115 BY MIDSUMMER, if you wish to be in the Lughnasadh Newsletters.

Beltane May 5. 11:52 AM

Midsummer June 21, 11:39 AM

Lughnasadh Aug. 7, 5:47 PM

We're GOING to HAVE A pagancon! June 19-22 Big Trees Meadow. EFRP, Oakland! Contact Abbot's or Forever Forests if you want to help. And come!

Cheating a Little

This is Not an Ad

May is my month to donate to charities, and I'm unusually poor this year. So I will donate 100% of the profits I make from all Shaklee orders for the month of May if people mention Paganism or the Crafts to ecology action groups. The products are well worth it. Call Joan for a catalog

The Druid Chronicler

Berkeley Grove NRDNA
Lughnasadh 19 y.r.,
August 1981
Volume 4 Number 4

[Poorly hand written and retyped by editor]

Lughnasadh

Services will be held at 1 PM, unless otherwise noted, at Hal's Spot. Meet between 12-12:30 at Lawrence Hall of Science, if you don't know where Hal's Spot is, to caravan there. Call Leslie at 652-6040 for further information.

Special News

A limited number of the Druid Chronicles (Evolved), complete with printed heavy dividers, 3 hole punched, all 200+ pages, is available for $25 from the Berkeley grove. Check or MO to Joan Carruth. This text has been out of print for 5 years. 2nds and 3rds should own!

Calendar

Aug. 9 Lughnasadh potluck picnic meet at Ad's house at noon to caravan.

Aug. 16 full moon

Aug. 30 new moon

Sept. 13 Full moon

Sept. 20 Autumn Equinox. Location undecided. Grove elections

Sept. 27 New moon

Oct. 11 full moon

Oct. 25 last chance for ordinations

Nov. 6 Samhain. This is a Friday. service will be on sugarloaf at sunset. Those who wish may remain overnight for vigil and ghost stories. Samhain is properly on Nov. 7, 9:14 GMT = 1:10 AM CMT

Summertime News

When your Arch Druid gets too lazy to dredge out the typewriter. We have NO NEWs that I know of from the other Groves. Please Ad's or Prec's send news on Minor High Days to Chris Sherbak. Protogroves too!

News of the Orders

Order of Dian Cecht (Healers)

They will meet at Centre (Greewall's) at 7p on Sundays Sept. 6 and Oct. 4. Bring your own towel to use the hot tub, and $2, if you can. Bring a link to a person who needs healing, and has given permission. The Matriarch is also anxious to hear from 3rds in other groves who would like to become members of ODC. Ordination can be arranged with your AD.

Order of Oberon (Bards)

They will meet at 8 PM on Saturdays Aug. 22 and Oct. 17. Location to be announced. Contact Leslie at 652 6040. These meetings are obligatory for bards and optional for others. There may be additional Bardic Practices. Leslie would also like to hear from Bards in other Groves. Write Chris.

IMPORTANT NEWS!

AD's and 3rds Especially Note!

We plan to restart the Higher Orders (4-10,) Berkeley Grove and as many other groves as wish to participate. Groves should get a consensus (at least 2/3) of their 3rds on whether they wish to be part and inform Chris by Autumn Equinox!!! Berkeley really doesn't want all the M/Patriarchs, so send suggestions for 3rds in your grove who you think would be good M/Ps or members of any order, especially 4-7. Matriarch of ODC will probably become M of Grannos.

These orders will be for the purpose of inciting further inquiry among 3rds, and are granted for achievement, not tenure. They have no further "rights" outside themselves, and are not prerequisite in structure (i.e., you need not be 4th to be 5th) Council of N Order elects M/P of N+1 order. Any 3rd or higher may nominate a member, M/P of order confirms. Ordinations may be done with the M/P's approval, by any member of the Order, or candidates AD so if the M/P is in Olympia, people in Santa Cruz can still join the order) M/P s may resign. If selection is not approved by 2/3 of that order, council of next lower order elects new M/P. Here are my proposals. See what you think. "Est" means "established"

4 -- Grannos–healers (est) green ribbon (est) ODC will fold.
5 -- Braciaca-altered states of consciousness-yellow maniple (est) parties?
6 -- Belenos-astrologers, scientist, teachers- yellow ribbon (est)
7 -- Sirona-earth activists, outdoors people, gardeners, etc.- blue ribbon with wave (est)
8 --Taranis-warriors, armed and unarmed- orange ribbon
9 -- Llyr-Philosophers, thinkers, mystics, etc.- grey ribbon
10 -- Danu-Emeritus order for significant long-term service to the Earth Mother and RDNA. Nomination and selection to order by M/Ps of Order 4-9, by 2/3 consensus. M/P of 10th order confirms- brown ribbon.

Special Orders -- Must be 2nd order or above (except, of course the kids)
Oberon -- Bards (est) Blue ribbon (est)- working order
Merddyn -- Magicians (est) staff or wand (est) proposed (no leader)
Lugh – Craftspeople (est) purple ribbon (est) may or may not exist. There's no reason I can think of not to "restart" it anyway, and maybe the original matriarch will resurface.
Angus -- Children's (est) pink sash- to puberty rites. Proposed. No leader.

On our Autumn Equinox, Matriarch of ODC should be confirmed by 2/3 of 3rd. Of participating Groves as M of Grannos. Council of Grannos will be created by re-ordination of members or ODC. Grannos council will then select m/p of Braciaca from all available 3rd candidates, present or by mail.

Please send info to Chris by Equinox. Let's do it!

The Druid Chronicler

Berkeley Grove, NRDNA
Samhain 19/20 y.r.,
November 1981
Volume 4 Number 5

Grove Elections

Grove Elections were held Sept. 20, 19 y.r. The results were:

Isaac Bonewits, ArchDruid

Joan Carruth, Preceptor

Emmon Bodfish, Server

Leslie Craig, Chief Bard

Isaac has returned to RDNA after his long sabbatical with many revolutionary ideas. Most of the Berkeley Grove wish to encourage these experiments. Some few people, however, adamantly prefer the traditional RDNA format, and chose to begin a second Grove, which will probably be called the Live Oak Grove. We have agreed to permit cross-membership, but felt no one should be an officer in more than one Grove. AD Joan, Emmon, and Leslie resigned their posts in the Berkeley Grove. No new Preceptor or Server has been elected at this point, but Jody, will be the Chief Bard for Berkeley,

Berkeley Grove

Furthermore, Berkeley Grove will be known as the Mother Grove after Samhain. They will hold services on the weekends closest to the waxing & waning quarter moons, at an indoor location. Contact Berkeley Rent-a-Lox, 549-0541 ext. 1347 and leave your phone number, and Mother Grove's Underground Agent will contact you.

Samhain Services for the Mother Grove will be held Nov. 6, at 8 PM, at 1500 Park Ave (Emeryville, below San Pablo). Call Rent-a-Lox for details.

Berkeley Grove started the Coalition Council, and Mother Grove has agreed to remain a member at least for this Quarter.

Grove Reports

Once upon a times Groves submitted an Annual Report to Carleton's Grove. This served such useful functions as recording the names of new Third Order Druids, and Officers of the Groves' and indicating which Groves were active. Since Carleton Grove no longer exists, old AD Joan would like to suggest that Groves publish such info in the Samhain Edition of the Druid Chronicler, in the hope that this info will survive. Each Grove should file this edition, and keep it, in just such hope. Eventually, archives of our early years and struggles may be important, or maybe not.

What follows is the Berkeley Grove Report:

Elected for 20 Y.R. see above
Finances
In: $401.00
Out: $278.00

Auk Snafu: $100.00
Projected Balance: $22.93
True Balance: $21.71

New Members of Dalon ap Landu:
Michael "Tiki" Teague
Larry Press
Leslie Craig
Emmon Bodfish

New Groves Hived Off:
Chico/ San Diego
Tiki

Active Protogroves: Several listed; no contact in last three months
Average Grove Size: 6-10

Major Accomplishments:
5th Annual Beltane-in-the-Rose-Garden
AD elected to Executive Committee of DAIC
Initiation of CoCoDAL, and Higher Orders
Availability of Chronicles and Mini Chronicles

Major Disasters: Checkbook Snafu and Pt. Reyes Death March

For:
Printing $126.02
Mailing $25.55
Waters 27.00
BAIC 20.00
Beltane 47.50

Live Oak Grove

We plan to hold Services rain or shine at Emmon's, in Orinda. Call Emmon at 254-1387 for directions or to connect with rides. We will meet at noon, to put some work into our Grove site. People should bring gloves and hand tools (clippers. hatchet. shovel, etc). Services will begin at 1 PM. If it is raining, the meeting will be held indoors and consist of a combination of Meditation & Hair Pull comparable only to a Quaker Meeting. We are open to anyone interested in the traditional formats and Philosophy of Reformed Druidism. We are also in desperate need of Good & Welfare. Our Officers for 20 y.r. are: AD: Joan Carruth, P: Leslie Craig, S: Emmon Bodfish. Dates of Services are: Samhain: Nov. 6-7, Nov. 22, Dec. 13, 20(Yule)~ 27. Jan. 11, 25, Feb. 8 (0imelc).

Chico Grove

Since Tiki's wife, Janie, is at UOSD for Master's studies, and no one in Chico was qualified yet to become a Third Order, Chico Grove exists only in the Summer, when Tiki & Janie are there. However, Tiki has the requisite three interested in San Diego, and has started another Grove, which he assures us will soon have a name classier then "San Diego."

Green Wood Grove

Cyndie reports that her Grove is busy. They have 15-20 people at their services, and biweekly study groups. They have also put together a 40 page Book of Bards, which may become available as soon as copyrights have been worked out. Their Bards seem to lack only a Pagan-Rock drummer in order to cut an album. They are also evidently in the process of hiving off a new Grove somewhere in South California. She reports that EVERGREEN GROVE is still active under Denis Merrill, but that he may soon move to Cal, and we hope, Ordain a new Third to be Evergreen's AD.

News of the Orders

Oberon (Bardic)

Leslie will hold Bardic Revels on Nov. 21, Dec. 12 and Jan. 23, at 8 PM at her house. Contact her at 652-6040 for directions or rides. She is EXTREMELY desirous of having people in other Groves join Oberon. Each Bardic Circle would be independent, but the contact and sharing between all Druidic Bard's would benefit all. Write to her c/o Emmon Bodfish 616 Miner Red Orinda CA 94563. Send a piece of your work (song' poem, etc,) if you can, and the name & address of your ArchDruid, who will no doubt be authorized to Ordain you, if everyone's agreeable. I, for instance, have been authorized to tell you that she's dying to hear from the Greenwood Bards, especially

Dian Cecht (Healers)/ Grannos (4th)-

Since it seems the Coalition will get off the ground, and Dian Cecht was only started because its first Matriarch found Grannos unavailable, ODC has been declared defunct for the interim, and its Matriarch has been made Matriarch of Grannos by acclamation of the Coalition. The Order is interested in defining itself, and will hold Potluck suppers and discussion from 6-10 PM, Sun nights Nov. 15, Dec. 6, and Jan. 17, for members and interested Thirds only, at her house. Call Joan at 525-0498 for more details. Like Oberon, Grannos is EXTREMELY interested in hearing from other Healers who wish to join the Order; from among the Coalition. You must be Third Order, and interested actively in healing, either magickal or psychic or medical or psychological. Write to the Matriarch, Joan Carruth, 8259 Terrace Dr. El Cerrito, CA, 94530. Your AD can be authorized to ordain you, so be sure to send me their name & address, too. We are essentially people in our communities, and I would like only to see us in touch with each other.

Braciaca & Belenos

These Orders were not started before Samhain. I would like to make every effort to contact their original Patriarchs. and invite them to do it again. If this is impossible, the Coalition will no doubt start them within its structure. Look for them around Beltane~ and, if you are a Coalition member, and interested in them, contact the Coalition Clearinghouses. Braciaca will Probably be Party-throwers and experts in altered states of consciousness. Belanos will be sun-worshippers, scientists, and astrologers, or something like that.

Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu

Members of the coalition: Mother Grove, Live Oak Grove, Greenwood Grove, San Diego Grove

Rules Passed (precis)

1) Votes before the CoCoDAL will be voted on by those who respond to the Clearinghouse Grove within 90 days of postmark.
2) Groves join in Summer by 2/3 vote of their Thirds; Groves may resign in Winter by the same process.
3) Matriarchs/Patriarchs (M/Ps) may resign. There is a Process for their replacement.
4) New members can be Ordained by their ArchDruid, or another member of the Order, by permission of the M/P
5) A person may be a member of more than one Order, but not M/P of more than one.
6) Resignation of M/P of N Order should be reported to the M/P of N-1 Order, whether or not they are immediately replaced.
7) Children under puberty shall not hold higher than 1st Order; no one under 18 shall be Ordained Third.

Other Business Passed:

A) Joan Carruth shall be the Matriarch of Grannos.

Live Oak Grove volunteered to be Clearinghouse for 20 y.r. Any Third Order member of the Coalition may originate a vote by sending a copy of the vote to all member Groves or Solitaries. and to the Preceptor of the Clearinghouse Grove.

Responses should be sent to the Clearinghouse, who will count them and resort the results in the next Chronicler. The address is Emmon Bodfish, 616 Miner Rd Orinda, CA, 945630 (oops should be Leslie, but its 2 AM already)

Rulings of the CoCoDAL are binding only to members of the Coalition. These rules are meant in no way to inhibit the autonomy of any member Grove or Solitary Third, but to facilitate the functioning of the Reformed Druid movement, and make the Higher Orders available once more. Each Third Order Coalition member has one vote in the CoCoDAL, whether solitary or a member of a Grove, though Grove Thirds should vote through their Preceptor or AD, so Emmon will not get confused as to who's voted. If he gets the responses from all; the Thirds in a member Grove at once, it'll simplify his counting

Other News

Please note the two new pages to add to your Book of the Bards courtesy of Emmon Bodfish.

Live Oak Grove has available copies of the complete Druid Chronicles (Evolved), for $25, postpaid. We especially encourage all Seconds and Thirds to own a copy of this invaluable Druidic text. We also have a 40-page excerpt from the Chronicles that we are calling the Mini-Chronicles, which you may obtain for a mere $7. It contains the Chronicles of the Reform, Bards, the Great Druish books, liturgy etc. Please send check or MO to AD Joan Carruth, 8259 Terrace Dr., E1 Cerrito, CA, 94530.

Please note that the Druid Chronicler is going into new hands, and we are not sure how broad they will wish to make their mailing list. If you are not a Third Order Solitary, an ArchDruid, a Matriarch or Patriarch, a ProtoGrove contact person, or an active member of the Mother or live Oak Groves, this MAY be the last copy of the Chronicler you will receive. Getting subscriptions is a hassle, and if the Chronicler continues to be sent out free, we may need to clear the rollodex a little. Stay tuned.

Groves and orders; Deadline for Oimelc chronicler is the end of the first week in January. Send new to Isaac Bonewits, box 9398 Berkeley CA 94709

The Druid Chronicler

The Newsletter of the
New Reformed Druids
of North America
Samhain/Yu1e 20 y. r.
(December 198l)
Volume 5 — Number 1

THE NEXT DRUID REFORM:

New Voices, New Views in the NRDNA

If you've ever seen a copy of the Druid Chronicler before, you've probably noticed that we've had something of a face lift. If you've never seen DC before in your life, welcome to our newsletter!

This changed format is in keeping with some sweeping changes that are taking place in the Mother Grove (formerly the "Berkeley Grove") of the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA).

You may have read about the Reformed Druids and the New Reformed Druids in Margot Adler's Drawing Down the Moon.* (Adler, Margot, Drawing Down the Moon. New York; Viking Press; 1979. In the 1st Edition (hardcover,) we're on pages 300-304). If so, we have some surprises for you.

First, a little history:

Isaac Bonewits left the Mother Grove in 1979 because he was moving to Santa Cruz. When he went, he appointed Joan Carruth and Stephen Abbott Mac Caulley to be co-Archdruids in his place. Shortly after he left on his sabbatical, Joan and Stephen changed the name to the "Berkeley Groves.

The next year sew Stephen drop out of the Berkeley Grove, and that was the end of co-Archdruidship as an experiment--at least in that incarnation. Joan ran for re-election uncontested, and spent the last of 18 y.r. and all of 19 y.r. as Archdruid of the Grove.

In the two years since Isaac left, the ritual and structure of the Grove went relatively unmolested. But then Isaac showed back up, and all the rules changed. He ran for the office of Archdruid, warning everybody in advance that he planned to make same broad changes in the Grove.

Even if it can't be said that the Gods spoke, there was an omen of sorts. Isaac won. In doing so though, he alienated a large portion of the existing Berkeley Grove. They thought that the changes were taking Druidism too far away from what its founders at Carleton College had intended it to be. That idea made them uncomfortable, so after much thought and discussion, they decided to form a new Grove. They asked Joan to be their Archdruid, and she accepted.

Thus there are now two Groves in Berkeley: the Live Oak Grove, which still uses the traditional forms of the ritual, and the Mother Grove, which is developing a new philosophy of Druidism for the 1980s.

Sweeping Changes and a New Philosophy

The very first thing Isaac did was to reinstate the co-Archdruid system. The second was to do away with the traditional Orders of the NRDNA. Therefore, what we have now is a system of Circles (First Circle, Second Circle, et al.,) with an Archdruid and Archdruidess as theological head of the group.

(We admit that "Archdruid" and "Archdruidess" are unwieldy terms. Until we come up with something better and more descriptive, however, we have to use what we already have.)

The new system shows several advantages over the old:

First, we have been able to put a sense of balance back into Druidism. We try not to favor male over female, Goddess over God, or any of the myriad other imbalances to which the Craft and other forms of Neopaganism have been subject--but it happens when you don't have a balanced pair to head your services. It can happen anyway, but the chances are better that we will catch it before it does. This makes for a more effective balance of magical energy in the ritual, as well as psychological and political energy in daily Grove affairs.

Second, the Circles act as a mutual-support system. We will not offer someone an "Order" or a "Degree"; instead, we will invest them as part of a Circle. The Circle is a group of members all at about the same stage of development in Druidism. They aid each other to learn their craft, and they assist in teaching those less advanced than themselves. Thus, everyone shares the responsibility for learning and for teaching their companions.

From the Archdruid

The ancient Druids are said to have built their solar-lunar calendar around a 19-year cycle (that is, 235 lunar months). Samhain this year ends the first 19 years of the Reform begun at Carleton College, and begins a fresh cycle. Samhain also begins the season of Geimreadh (winter,) a traditional time of reforming and resurrection.

This winter bodes fair to continue those traditions in the grand old style. Last September 20th I was (re-)elected Archdruid of what was then called the Berkeley Grove. I ran for the office on a "Revolution ticket," warning the Grove's members that I would make sweeping changes, especially in the areas of liturgy, organizational structure, and training. I said it was time for the Reformed Druids to begin the work necessary to create a complete religion, to grow beyond the loose framework that is the sum of its current liturgy.

I painted out that, little as we know of the ancient Druids, we do know that they were the brahmanic caste of the Celtic/Germanic/Slavic peoples (though they were called by different names in different times and places). They were the artists, musicians, poets, healers, judges, historians, diviners, magicians, clergy--the cognoscenti of their societies. Any neopagan group with the audacity to call itself Druidic should have, above all, a commitment to excellence and a willingness to be everything that the name implies.

These ideals are far beyond the pale of what the Founders of the Reformed Druid movement wanted in the early 1960s. Their image of a Druid was that of an anarchistic philosopher, a sort of Zen Unitarian. And most of them had no intention of starting a "real" religion; they had no idea that the Gods they were invoking happened to be very much alive.

The Old Gods are alive--although I will grant that they're a little sleepy. After all, it's been a long time. But what the folks at Carleton College built was not meant to last, to grow, to

spread. That Reformed Druidism is still around 19 years later is a testimony to the power of the Gods and of the Druidic archetype. And given this archetype, these Gods and the power inherent in the concept of Druidism, we have the basis for a healthy, growing religion, a religion that works.

I have always thought that there was more to Druidism (Reformed or otherwise) than was dreamt of in the philosophies of those at Carleton College. It's out there somewhere, and through diligent hard work, we can find it. We will find it!

Do I hear the Old Gods stirring in their sleep?

Everyone advances through the Circles according to their knowledge, ability and commitment. We are still developing the Circles system and the criteria for admission and advancement, but a few things have become clear based on what we are trying to do:

There will be set criteria for advancement, and everyone no matter who they may be, elsewhere will follow the same criteria.

Various rituals will be structured to the level of their participants.

Everyone will be required to show mastery of the knowledge in one circle before being advanced to the next.

This has allowed us to get back to the OLD idea of what a "Druid" was. He or she was a priest, a bard, a magician, a healer; he/she was of the cognoscenti. Not everyone was cut out to be one, nor did everyone qualify in the Gods' sight.

If you were proper Druid's material, you could demonstrate that fact. Nobody questioned your right to wear that robe because you had been challenged long before you were ever given it. We are trying to return to that method and that standard.

Connections with the Old Order

Does this mean that we have cut all ties with the old NRDNA structure? After all, we're talking about making people work for what they want, then rewarding them for what they produce! The old New Reformed Druids offered everybody the same things, and it was open to the public--in fact, they even held their rituals in public parks.

We haven't cut all our old ties; just most of them. For instance, we will not instantly invest someone into the third Circle just because they are a Third Order Druid in some other Grove. In view of what we're trying to do with our Druidism, there is no way we can do that without compromising our objectives.

We will, however, keep our lines of communication open to other Groves and other groups of Druids. We want to hear what they are doing, and we want to tell them about ourselves.

We will allow public participation in some of our rituals. (Emphasis on the "some.") There will most assuredly be rituals that are open only to members who have been admitted to the First Circle or higher, and rituals closed to lower Circles. It depends what we're trying to accomplish with any given ritual.

Why close some rituals? What do we have to hide? Nothing. Druidism will continue to be as it ever was. But we will hold closed rituals.

This is not because we hold any secrets; rather, it's because we want our rituals and services to work. When we look for an omen, we want an unmistakable omen. We are going to help our rituals work by requiring everybody who participates to be familiar with our methods.

For these reasons, of course, we cannot participate in the old Council [or its successor, the "Coalition Council" (CoCoDAL)] of Dalon ap Landu. We do not recognize their authority to govern our activities because their aims are not ours. How can the Mormon Elders guide a Roman Catholic congregation? Their ideals are too dissimilar.

Isaac spent some time during Samhain this year addressing that subject. In an open letter which he (perhaps unfortunately) finally decided not to mail, he said:

"We will not participate in the original Council (or the current "Co-Council") of Dalon ap Landu--the original governing body of the R.D.N.A., composed of all the priests and priestesses--unless it is made abundantly clear that we do not recognize their authority to make any decisions regarding our activities, structure, 'orthodoxy,' etc. We will participate to the extent of sharing ideas and information with other Reformed Druid groups.

"As for the 'Higher Orders,' the Mother Grove will not help reorganize, nor will we recognize the revival of the old R.D.N.A. Higher Orders or the more recent N.R.D.N.A. Special Orders.

"We're not going to be in any hurry to start any new ones either, save for revamping the Bards inside our own Grove. Members of the Mother Grove may start Special Interest Groups, or participate in the Higher & Special Orders already existing in other Groves, but such SIGs or Orders will have no official status for now."

What Are We Trying to Accomplish?

If we are throwing out so much of the old system, what will we replace it with? Exactly what are our goals?

At the bottom line, they're simple enough. We want to establish a true relationship with the Gods. We think that this is best done through a combination of ritual, magic, music, dance, poetry, and theatre. The Gods love a good show!

And to make this the best show possible, we are going to stress personal development and personal achievement within the Mother Grove. We want dedication, and we think that the rewards--personal, spiritual, even perhaps physical--to be had from that dedication are more than worth the effort.

In addition, we want to see a balanced energy raised in our rituals. Too many Neopagan groups in the past have had a bias (however well-intentioned or even unconscious) toward either the male or the female in their workings. For this reason, we strongly emphasize the value of working with a partner of the opposite sex for balance and completeness.

From the Archdruidess

My name is Sally Eaton. Bonewits is my legal last name, but I prefer to use Eaton. My own identity is very important to me, for all the usual reasons.

I've been involved with NRDNA since 1979. I've been a practicing Witch since my early teens and involved heavily in magic all my life. I was attracted to Druidism because of my Celtic ancestry and because of the emphasis on music; among other things, I'm a singer and songwriter.

During 13 y.r. [1979-80], I was Server to what was then the Berkeley Grove. At that time we had two Archdruids, a woman and a man. I liked this idea very much; the precisely equal division of leadership between male and female is my ideal.

I thoroughly agreed with the basic ideas of Druidism, but as time went on I found myself dissatisfied with certain aspects of the services. We were meeting in public parks so newcomers could join freely, and I felt like I was working in a fishbowl.

More, the services reminded me most of liberal Christianity--they didn't feel Pagan to me.

I'm not a Duotheist, I'm a Polytheist. I work with particular Goddesses and Gods, not just the Great Mother and Father. I wondered why we didn't bring back the real deities of our Celtic forebears. I thought it was our job as Druids to do this.

When I tried to tell people this, though, I found myself bucking a rigid "tradition" that dated all the way back to 1963. I made suggestions, and was told, that isn't the way we do things."

I was frustrated. I could make few creative contributions.

The Carleton College Druids never thought in terms of starting a "great" religion. Anarchy was their byword. They had no training system for the clergy, even though the very word Druid is most often taken to mean "High Priests.

The ancient Druids often took twenty years to complete training in the arts of healing, divination, music, priest craft. I myself have devoted my life to magic. Why should I want a part-time religion?

Folks in NRDNA who wish to continue the Carleton style of worship are welcome to do so, but there are those of us who felt it was our Karma to find a Druid way both older and deeper. I want to see the ancient way restored to its full power and splendor. I want to know the Gods of my ancestors, to come face to face with them on their own terms. I want to know their music, their language, their teachings, and their love. It may take more than our individual lifetimes, but I know it can be done.

First Stops on the Road

We have already taken the first steps on that road. Sally Eaton, Isaac's wife--herself a respected professional actor and singer, playwright, ceremonial magician and priestess--has agreed to join him as Archdruidess of the Grove. Together they have begun to sculpt the rituals that will be used in later workings of the Mother Grove.

We are using Geimreadh (winter) this year to write, revise and test our new rituals. We will work the major problems out of them so that they can be used as the new Order of Common Worship come Oimelc. Jody Veahman, a Celtic Traditional musician and singer, will work with Isaac and Sally (as will I and a number of other Bay Area writers, philosophers, magicians and what-have-you) to make the material strong and effective. When spring comes, we'll see how well we have succeeded in our aims.

From the Editor:

That just about finishes the propagandizing, except for one detail. Like a good short story, a good article should hook its end, ouroboros-like, back on its beginning. And since I brought you into this with a tag about DC's face-lift, I'll wrap up by telling you about it.

The Mother Grove has no official Preceptor. They may never have one; Isaac and Sally are not sure one is really necessary in proper ritual. But as far as anyone is unofficially holding down the job, I'm it.

My name is Elton Wildermuth, and I am (you should pardon the expression) the Druid Chronicler. I have next to nothing to recommend myself except my big mouth and effervescent personality, plus maybe the ability to write a simple declarative sentence in English. You will, however, be hearing a lot from me in days to come. The new DC is my baby, I edit it, I print it, I have the final say over what does and does not go into it. [It's hard to argue with the editor!] Blame it all on me.

Hell, I probably deserve it.

Tell me what you think of my baby! I can be reached by mail as follows:

The Druid Chronicler
c/o Elton Wildermuth
2124 Kittredge Street, No. 31
Berkeley, CA 94704

This is not the Mother Grove's usual mailing address, but it is where all mail for DC should be sent. I'll say more about that in the following section, which contains the actual hard news of the Grove.

Having said my piece, then, it's time for the news.

Druid News:
What's Happening in the NRDNA
News from Groves & Orders

This is the first issue of DC under new management, so there is precious little true news of other Groves to print. Send me your news! Send me your Grove meeting schedules! Tell me all about what you're doing, so I can tell other people! Get it down in print--let people know what you're doing and when it's happening.

I did place a pair of judicious telephone calls in an attempt to fill out my report of current events. First I called Leslie Craig-Harger, who is current Matriarch of the Order of Oberon (the old NRDNA Bardic order).

Then I called Joan Carruth, the Archdruid of the Live Oak Grove in Orinda. Joan has (besides being Archdruid of her own Grove) decided to revive the old Council of Dalon ap Landu---calling it the "Coalition Council" of DAL--and the Order of Grannos (Healers,) with herself as Matriarch of the latter. (She may have more ideas in the offing; those are the only two she mentioned.)

Such news as I had from them and from Sally and Isaac follows.

Mother Grove

The big news concerning Mother Grove is Isaac's return as Archdruid and the Grove's subsequent changes in direction and focus. Among those changes are the reinstitution of co-Archdruidship' with Sally Eaton as Archdruidess, and the restructuring of Mother Grove's hierarchy. All of that is presented in the lead article for this issue.

Mother Grove will be holding Common Worship even while they are establishing the final form of their new rituals. Thus the ritual will evolve from meeting to meeting. Mother Grove's schedule of Common Worship is:

December 20 8.00 PM(Yule)
January 3 2.00 PM
January 17 2.00 PM
January 31 2.00 PM (Oimelc)

Grove meetings regularly begin at 2.00 PM. December 20 will be an evening service because it is the Yule and Winter Solstice ritual. Ending times will vary; any number of things may happen after the service itself. However, services will

begin sharp at the indicated time. Late arrivals may find the doors closed.

Mother Grove's services will be held indoors at 5286 Riverside Avenue in San Pablo. (This too may pass.) To get there, proceed as follows:

These meetings will include a potluck meal; we might as well socialism, since many of us don't see each other between services! Bring whatever you're drinking plus some to pass around, and food that you like — again, enough to share.

NGTC: Those with unusual dietary restrictions (e.g. vegetarians, diabetics, Mormons) will pretty much have to fend for themselves, since we don't know in advance who will bring what. This doesn't mean we don't like you; we simply don't have the facilities ourselves to cater to specific requirements.

In addition to the potluck, Mother Grove will be holding music and dance workshops, theology hairpulls, and anything else they can think of to liven up our afternoons after the rituals.

Live Oak Grove (LOG)

Joan Carruth, the Archdruid of the new Live Oak Grove, says that LOG is open to "anyone interested in traditional Reformed Druidism as set out in the Druid Chronicles (Evolved)." She also wanted to make sure I announced that LOG has prepared a 40-page excerpt from the Chronicles, which they call the "Mini-Chronicles." It is available for $7.00 postpaid from Live Oak Grove; checks should be made payable to Joan Carruth.

Live Oak Grove will be holding rituals "rain or shine" at 616 Miner Road, in Orinda. Their schedule of meetings is:

December 13

December 20 (Yule)

December 27

January 10

January 24

February 7 (Oimelc)

All meetings will begin at 1.00 p.m.

NOTE: The January-February meeting dates are not the dates which Joan reported in the last issue of the Druid Chronicler. Looking at my 1982 calendar, however, I believe these new dates are accurate. Call Joan at (415) 525-0498 to confirm.

I have no map available for Live Oak Grove. Call Emmon Bodfish at (415) 254-1387 for directions.

During the Season of Sleep, Joan says that LCG plans to:

• Plant eight sacred trees

• Build an altar on which they can build fires

• Build a wood of five stakes over which the sun will rise on high days.

Joan says that if it is clear, people attending their rituals should bring gardening gloves and be prepared to spend time working on the grove site.

News of the Orders

News of the CoCoDAL

Live Oak Grove's official mailing address is: Live Oak Grove c/o Emmon Bodfish 616 Miner Road Orinda, CA 94563

Joan has revived the old Council of Dalon ap Landu, calling it the "Coalition Council" of Dalon ap Landu (CoCoDAL). This council represents the Carleton Traditionalists, and claims to comprise all Groves and free Third Order Druids who have not officially resigned. Speaking on behalf of CoCoDAL, Joan informed me that:

1. No Groves have resigned from CoCoDAL. [This is not exactly true; Mother Grove is not officially participating in CoCoDAL, but has not yet tendered its resignation. —Elton]

2. There is no new business before CoCoDAL at this time.

3. Live Oak Grove is acting as Clearinghouse Grove (ChG) for CoCoDAL during 20 y.r. (1981-82). They can be contacted through Live Oak Grove's mailing address, given above.

According to Joan, any member of the Coalition may bring business before CoCoDAL by a four-step process:

1. Write a formal petition and send it to the ChG.

2. The ChG will mail a copy of the proposal to each member Grove

3. CoCoDAL will wait 90 days from the date of mailing for a reply to each proposal.

4. After the waiting period, the ChG will tally t responses yea and nay, then announce both the proposal and the result of the vote.

When she originally spoke to me, Joan informed me that the results of each vote would be printed in the next issue of the Druid Chronicler. I unfortunately had to tell her that this is not necessarily so; please see my comments about news and the printing thereof on page 7. I will try, but schedule and space constraints may prevent me. If this happens, I assure that she will make other arrangements; she was not sure when we talked.

Order of Grannos

The Order of Grannos is an old NRDNA higher Order which Joan has recently revived. She is currently the Matriarch of that Order. The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) says it is a "Fourth Order," whose deity is Grannos (a Gaulish deity,) Patron of Healing Springs.

Concerning the Order of Grannos, Joan said: "We have three members who are nominally associated with Live Oak Grove. However, the Matriarch Joan is beginning to hear from Third Order in other Groves who are interested in joining the Order. We should have Grannos represented in several Groves by Beltane. "

Any Third Order member of the RDNA interested in joining this Order should write a letter to Joan concerning his/her interest in healing — medical, magical, psychic, any combination; she welcomes all.

If you are interested in joining Grannos, write to Joan at: Joan E. Carruth 8259 Terrace Drive, El Cerrito, CA 94530

NOTE: This address will be good only through Oimelc. After that, Joan can be contacted through Live oak Grove at its mailing address.

Joan says she will be authorizing ordinations after Beltane. Members ordained may then start conclaves in their own Groves if they wish.

Joan expects to hear from all members several times per year. She says that this is not because she wants to tell anyone how to run their conclaves, but rather to share healers' lore and so she can publish news of the Order.

The Bay Area Healers' Conclave [Joan's conclave? She did not specify, but I assume it means the three people who are currently members of the Order] is "in hiatus until the Order has spread." After that Joan plans to authorize ordinations by mail and concentrate on running her own conclave.

Order of Oberon

The Order of Oberon is the old Bardic order of the NRDNA, and seems to be the only Order currently having an unbroken history. Leslie Craig-Harger is currently Matriarch of that Order, having taken over from Linda von Braskat in 19 y.r. I called her to find out what her Order was doing during the NRDNA Season of Sleep.

She says the Order is working on poetry and acting as well as music. This is intended to round out their talents and abilities as bards; being a bard covers far more ground than just being a singer and/or instrumentalist.

Her main news, though, did not concern the Order so much as what she is trying to do as Matriarch.

First, she is soliciting dedicatory works from Druidic bards. These works will go into the Matriarch's collection, and Leslie hopes eventually to print them. For more information, or to send her your work, write: Leslie Craig-Harger 1280 61st Street, Emeryville, CA 94608

In addition, she says that creative and archival works are also welcome. She will collect them, and use the ones that fit her needs in her bardic revels.

In addition, she is working on a method whereby Archdruids or other Third Order Druids can ordain bards into the Order of Oberon. This will save Leslie a lot of traveling, which is both wearying and expensive. I will try to publish the details in DC as soon as she finalizes them.

We spent a long time talking about the Mother Grove, and what connections Mother Grove does and does not recognize with the old NRDNA structure. As a result, two days later, Leslie provided me with a chaining note concerning Oberon:

Bardic Revels December 19, January 23, and February 27. Call Leslie for location. We are working on the poetic and dramatic aspects of the 'bardic arts' — beginning with the techniques of satire and lampoon. Lampoons can deal with whatever subject attending Bards choose, with attention to the transforming nature of satire. (Anyone who feels that humor is irrelevant to magic might want to check out Illuminatus, maybe?)

"PS: Order of Oberon does not intend to stick its nose into any Grove's liturgical business. Members of Mother Grove should feel free to attend without danger to their artistic or doctrinal autonomy."

Leslie tells me that due to space limitations, she is having to restrict attendance at her revels to her regular circle of bards (meaning those who already know or have access to her telephone number; she asked that I do not publish it). If this applies to you and you want to attend, call her for details.

The Druid Chronicler Subscription Information: How to Get What's Coming to You

The Druid Chronicler has been sent out quarterly in the past. I have changed that schedule. I will be sending out issues of DC eight times a year — one for each of the four major and minor High Days. Each issue will be published approximately two or three weeks before the holiday, to allow time for the Post Office to deliver your copy.

However it may have worked in the past, the new DC will be offered by subscription only. Eight issues (one year) will cost $5.00. This includes all necessary postage and handling. ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS will expire with the Oimelc issue (around February 1) each year. mat makes my bookkeeping a lot easier.

Anyone who sends for their subscription in the middle of the year will be charged a pro-rated cost for the number of issues remaining until Oimelc.

To subscribe to DC, send a check or money order payable to "MOTHER GROVE" to: The Druid Chronicler, c/o Elton Wildermuth, 2124 Kittredge Street, No. 31, Berkeley, CA 94704

All mall — new subscriptions, inquiries, love letters &c. — should be sent to that address.

What Do We Print?

The Druid Chronicler is the official newsletter of the NRDNA. As such, we do not promise to print "all the news that fits," but we do try to print at least synopses of all news and events of interest to members of the NRDNA.

We solicit any and all news concerning the various Druidic groups worldwide. We do not promise to print all of it, or in same cases even any of it, but we'll try, based on our schedule, needs, and priorities.

If you have news concerning upcoming events, please send it enough in advance (at least six weeks) that it will make it into the issue that appears before the event in question. Otherwise you aren't likely to get many DC subscribers at your Beltane party, nicht Bohr?

News intended for publication should be sent to the subscription/production address. See subscription information above, or the executive information box on page 2.

We do not solicit nor do we publish articles — yet. Who knows when that may change? But don't send us your work yet; we'll let you know when and if we can use it.

Bear in mind that anything and everything sent to the DC is subject to a) possible future publication and b) editing by Elton. Be sure you won't mind having the whole world reading about it before you write to me. And please don't expect to get back exactly what you write, word for word, no changes. Of the few guarantees I can make, that is the first: I will edit.

Letters to the Editor

Postage being what it is these days, anyone who wants a reply to their letter must submit a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Otherwise, you will have to take your chances about whether I got your letter or not.

Also, I will limit my answers to correspondence. The only questions I can answer are those which concern new subscriptions, old subscriptions, missing issues, Druidic news and other items that directly concern the Druid Chronicler.

And be advised, you may very well get a form letter instead of a personal note. Please don't be too disappointed.

I regret the necessity of drawing such a hard and fast line, but other constraints on my time (e.g. the unfortunate necessity of working for a living) makes it impossible for me to be a truly adequate correspondent.

Once again, if that changes any time in the future, I will happily let you know.

Announcement: Gaelic Classes

Jim Duran is currently teaching classes in modern Gaelic on Monday nights at 7:30. Several members of the Mother Grove are attending these classes; learning Gaelic has several obvious applications for those interested in studying and

practicing Druidism. After we have mastered the modern forms, we intend to start work on ancient Gaelic.

We thought that others might also be interested in learning Gaelic, so Isaac approached Jim about holding another set of classes. Details are still rather tentative, but here is what we have:

If there is sufficient interest, Jim will begin a new series of Gaelic classes sometime after January 1. They will probably be held on either Monday or Thursday nights at his house. They can be either new beginners' classes or a continuation of the old series (both, if the interest runs high enough). The cost will be $4.00 per class night, payable to Jim. Call Jim at (415) 535-1086 for further details.

Special Notice for Previous Subscribers to Pentalpha Journal/the Old DC:

A lot of people subscribed to the original Druid Chronicler, and later to the Pentalpha Journal, which absorbed the Druid Chronicler whole. As all of those subscribers know only too well, both publications had a lot of problems with meeting their subscription commitments. Because of these problems, we are extending a special offer to everyone who had a subscription to either DC or the Pentalpha Journal which was not fulfilled.

The Berkeley Grove (under Joan Carruth) revived the old Druid Chronicler after a fashion. they did not offer it by subscription so far as I know, and did not fulfill old subscriptions. Distribution was limited mostly to local Groves and Grove members.

Sam Mayhew of Tintagel Printing & Publishing has said he will revive the old PJ in a new incarnation, and fulfill all the old subscriptions at their old rate (the new sub rate will be higher). I do not know whether or how well that will work. Therefore....

If you subscribed to either DC or PJ before, and if you never received all the issues you should have, you may choose to subscribe to either the revived PJ or DC. If you want PJ, Sam has said he will fill out your subscription. If you want DC, I will give you your first year's subscription to the new DC free.

We have lists of everyone to wham this offer applies, but to hold our costs down we want you to tell us if you're interested. To find out for sure if you're eligible, write to us and let us know. For PJ, write to: Tintagel Printing & Publishing P. O. Box 861, Lakeport, CA 95453 Attn: Sam Mayhew. If you would rather have DC, write to me at the address given above for DC subscriptions.

When you write, tell us which publication you were subscribing to and the address at which you were receiving (or not receiving) your subscription. Then, if your address has changed, tell us your new address. AND PLEASE GIVE US YOUR ZIP CODE--OLD AND NEW! Otherwise, our wonderfully efficient filing system will never cough up your name, and we can't verify your eligibility.

Oh, and one other thing. If your name has changed, be sure and let us know. We aren't going to send Terry Logan's subscription to Jenny Blake without some good evidence that they're the same person.

Make sure you keep on getting yours.. SUBSCRIBE!

Use the handy order form below to make sure that THE DRUID CHRONICLER keeps on coming your way. Just indicate how long you want to subscribe for, tell us where to send it, and enclose a check or money order payable to ISAAC BONEWITS to cover the cost stated on the form.

Important Notice:

WAIT!--Before you open your checkbook....

"Oops! Department": On page 7, I told you to make your checks or money orders payable to "Mother Grove." That was wrong--the bank says we have to fill a few more forms before they'll take checks with the Grove name on them. Ergo, until we get the Grove account straightened out, everything must be made payable to Isaac personally.

Were you subscribing to either the old Druid Chronicler or the Pentalpha Journal when they folded? Did you ever get your money's worth from your subscription? If the answer to the first question is YES, and the second is HELL, NO!, then read about our SPECIAL NOTICE on page 8 before you send us your money.

If you qualify for our free subscription offer and you check the box at the bottom of the form to let us know. yet; we'll contact you after we verify your eligibility.

And while you're at it, if want to take advantage of it,

Then don't send us any money, tell a friend about DC!

YES, I want to keep informed on what the NRDNA is doing! Please enter my subscription to THE DRUID CHRONICLER for l year ($5.00) 2 years ($10.00).

NAME: ADDRESS: Street: State: ZIP:

I understand that my subscription will expire at Oimelc (around February l) each year, and I understand that if I subscribe in mid-year, you will pro-rate my subscription cost based on the number of issues remaining until Oimelc, then refund the balance due me. I have enclosed a check or money order payable to ISAAC BONEWITS to cover the stated price of the subscription I want.

(Signature)

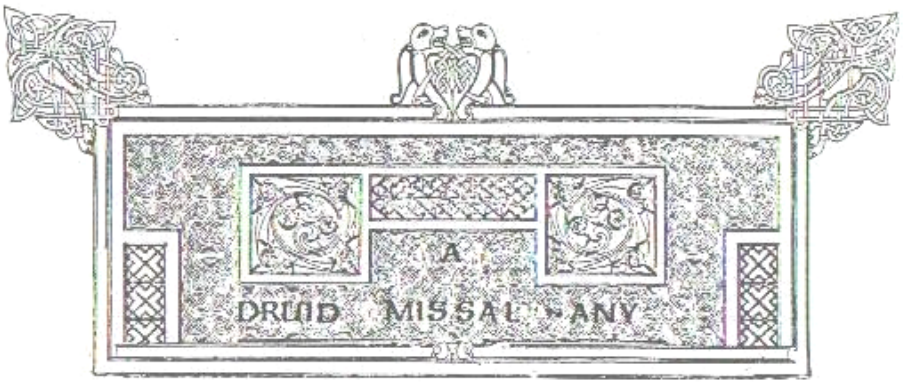
I was a previous subscriber to THE DRUID CHRONICLER or PENTALPHA JOURNAL, and my subscription was not filled. Please check your records to verify this, then enter my subscription to THE DRUID CHRONICLER based on your SPECIAL OFFER. If my address and/or name has changed, I have included my old address on the back of this form.

SEND THIS FORM TO: THE DRUID CHRONICLER, c/o Elton Wildermuth, 2124 Kittredge St. No. 31, Berkeley, CA 94704

So ends "Section One: Early Years" of the Magazine Volume for the Pentalpha Journals and Druid Chroniclers.

Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION TWO



A Druid Missal-Any
Volume Six
1982 c.e.

Drynemetum Press

A Druid Missal-Any Oimelc 1982 Volume 6 Number 1

End of Druid Chronicler Newsletter

As Mother Grove has notified us that they are discontinuing publication of the Druid Chronicler, Live Oak Grove will be putting together this short newsletter with dates of Reformed Druid Services, Holidays, parties, etc. News, energy, time and help will be very welcomed. How about a year's subscription to anyone who comes up with a better masthead?

News of the Groves

This month, Live Oak will be holding Oimelc Celebration on Sunday February 7, at 1:00 PM at the Grove Site at 616 Miner Road, Orinda. Regular R.D.N.A. Services will be at the Grove Site on February 21, March 7, and March 21 (Spring Equinox). All at 1:00 P.M.

Those people who do not have cars, or who do not want to try to find Miner Road, can take the BART to Orinda, and phone from the station for a ride: 254-1387. As the Grove Site is still very rustic, wear shoes that can withstand mud.

Live Oak Grove is building a stone altar and a wooden henge, sighted astronomically and on the rising of the sun on each of the High Days. If there is anyone who would like to be present at the raising of the next, the Spring Equinox, spar, they should be at the Grove Site, pre-dawn, on March 21. We are also planting a circle of Sacred Trees. Gardening help welcomed after each Service

We want to be in communication with the other Groves; and we also will be printing news of the Orders: Bardic, Grannos, and of CoCoDAL,

Druid Calendars for Sale

A group in England have published a large, pictorial Druid calendar for 1982. It is well done, and has pictures and lore on the old megalithic sites. It is available from Nature Company, in the planetarium in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. We were the most startled to read that the person who assembled and edited this project, and who heads this overseas Druid group, is named Joan Carshon. Do we all have a doppelganger somewhere?

Druid Chronicles Available

There are still copies of the full, original Druid Chronicles available from our second printing. The cost is $25.00 plus postage. Contact Leslie, who is hole-punching and collating them, 652-6040. (Discounts for people who help out?) Or call Emmon, who is serving as Preceptor for L.O.G. while Leslie is busy. Leave a message on the machine: 254-1387.

We also have copies of the Mini-Chronicles for those of you that can't afford the full Chronicles yet. These are 35 pages, excerpted from the Chronicles for $7.00, post paid.

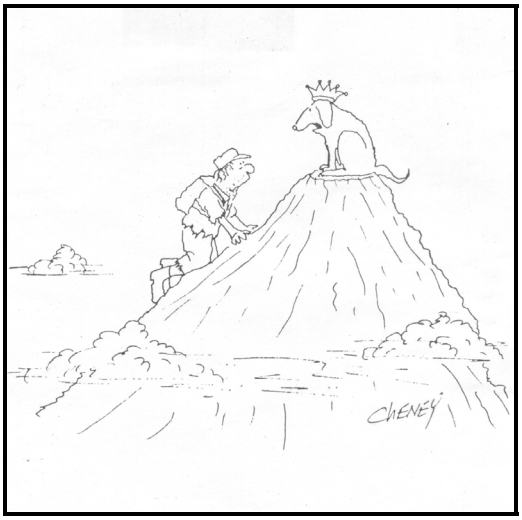
We also have located three of the original Georgian style Ruby glass chalices. Anyone interested in owning one contact Joan Carruth or leave a message for Emmon.

Emmon is continuing Scots Gaelic classes, and may soon know enough to teach. We are also continuing the project of holding up the Scot's end by translating the regular Services into Scottish Gàidhlig. Anyone who would like to help would be much appreciated. We'd like to publish a Scot's version of the Services as a companion piece to the Irish translations in the Urtext Section of the Chronicles. Scottish Gaelic classes are available through the Institute for Celtic Studies, P.O. Box 44, Oakland, CA 54604. Gaelic is NOT a dead language. Tha Gàidhlig beo!

Submissions

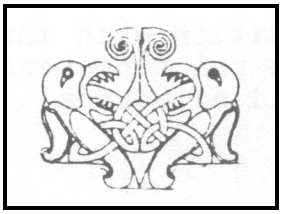
Anyone who has news, opinions, dissertations, etc. which they would like to see in print here, should send them to L.O.G., 616 Miner Road, Orinda Calif. 94563, by March 1, for the Spring Equinox issue. We will publish this newsletter a week before the eight High Days. Camera ready copy appreciated!

Some members of Live Oak Grove were talking of getting together after Service, warming up around a big indoor fire and discussing methods of divination, magical method and the Meaning of It All. Those interested, stay after Services.



"What did you expect? Life is a royal bitch."

If you'd like to be on our mailing list, (or put someone else on the mailing list,) send name and address, and a few 20 cent stamps to LOG, 616 Miner Road, Orinda CA 94563



A Druid Missal-Any Spring Equinox 1982 Volume 6 Number 2

News of the Groves

Oimelc Celebration went well, although few people showed up. We found a place that sells fresh goat milk, for the Waters this year, and which turned out to be pretty good, i.e. not that different from cow's milk, and homogenized.

Two plants have spontaneously sprung up between the stones that mark our altar. Both of them are edible herbs. We can take this as a sign, each in his own way, or you can take a bite. One is an herb I've eaten under the name "pepper grass;" I don't know the Latin name. The other is Montia perfoliata, Miner's lettuce. There is also an unknown fuzzy-leafed herb something like a petunia, not bad to the taste, but not great either.

We have bought a White Birch, so we lack only two trees to complete the circle. We need a Mountain Ash, i.e. a Rowan tree. If anyone knows of a nursery or an individual who has sapling Rowans, please let us know. We have enough money now to pay retail.

E. Dwelly, a Scot's linguist and folklorist, collecting around the turn of this century, writes the following about Druids and Rowan trees.

> "There sacred word was not the oak, as in Gaul, but the yew, the hawthorn, and especially the Rowan. Divination by watching smoke and flame, (there of), and chewing raw meat, in honor of Fionn's thumb, was one of their chief occupations. A blow from their wand caused transformation and spells."
>
> Scotland 1881

Liturgy Additions

Larry Press proposed that we introduce several gradations of response, which we might get from the winds at the four quarters after the sacrifice is offered. Traditionally the Druid liturgy provides a binary system: The Mother sleeps, sacrifice is not accepted, and the Mother is awake, and the sacrifice is accepted. Larry suggests that the officiating Druid look among the following possible responses:

1. The Mother is asleep. (Proceed as per traditional liturgy.)
2. The Mother, though sleeping, hears, and will consider our prayers and petitions. The sacrifice is accepted.
3. The Mother stirs; She is beginning to awaken. She grants our pleas and the sacrifice is accepted. She disagrees with our petition and the sacrifice is therefore not accepted.
4. The Mother is awake. She grants our prayers and the sacrifice is accepted; She disagrees with our request and the sacrifice is not accepted.

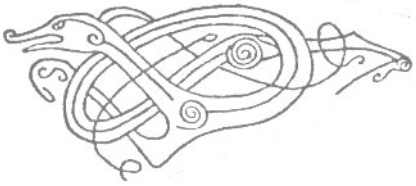
Suggestions for other responses are welcome. Larry and I will be trying out this system, and keeping records of the outcome.

Calendar

Live Oak Grove

All services will be at 1:00 P.M., at the Grove Site at 616 Miner Road, Orinda. If you do not have a car, take BART to the Orinda station and phone us: 254-1387. We'll come and give you a ride.

Equinox, March 21st; April 11, April 25, (note Daylight Saving Time Change!); Beltaine, this will be the 7th ANNUAL BELTAINE IN THE ROSE GARDEN, Berkeley. 1:00 P.M. Druids should be there at 12:00 NOON sharp for set up. The Rose Garden is wheelchair accessible. There will be a picnic afterwards in Cordenesis Park, across the street from the Rose Garden. Bring food to share, if you can, but if you can't, come anyway.



A Druid Missal-Any Beltane 1982 Volume 6 Number 3

Beltaine

By Emmon Bodfish

BELTAINE-1982 The celebration will be held on May 9th, out at the Grove Site at 616 Miner Road, Orinda. Services will begin sharp at 1:00 P.M. and Leslie, Matriarch of Bards, has planned a May Pole dance to follow. The food is pot-luck, so bring food to share, if you can. For more info, or for transportation questions, call 254-1387.

Astronomical Beltaine will occur on May 5, at 12:14 P.M. Emmon will be setting the Beltaine caber in the Grove's wood-henge at dawn on May 6. Hardy souls are invited to come and help align it with sunrise over the Grove altar. Dawn is being held at 6:08 A.M. Daylight Savings time.

THOSE of us who are immune have de-poison-oaked the path up to the Grove site.

THE LIVE OAK GROVE building project is near completion. The circle of the eight sacred trees is complete except for the Beltaine rose, which we will plant May 3rd. The footing of the altar is set, and we hope to get the fire pit of local stone built before Beltaine Celebration. Also, surprise, there is now running water up at the Site. This should make work, and picnicking, a lot easier.

E. DWELLY has this to say about old Highland Beltaine, in Gaelic, Bealltuinn.

> "On the first of May was held a great Druidical festival in favour of the god Belus. On this day, fires were kindled on the mountain tops for the purposes of sacrifice; and between these fires the cattle were driven to preserve them from contagion till next Mayday. On this day it was usual to extinguish all hearth fires, in order that they should be re-kindled from this purifying flame. In many parts of the Highlands, the young folks of the district used to meet on the moors on the first of May. They cut a table in the green sod, of a round figure, by cutting a trench in the ground of sufficient circumference to hold the whole company. They then kneaded a cake of oatmeal, kindled a fire and toasted the oatmeal cake in the embers. When a feast of eggs and custards had been eaten, they divided the cake into as many portions as there were persons in the company, as much alike as to size and shape as possible. They daubed one of the pieces with charcoal until it was black all over, and they then put all of them into a bonnet all together, and each person, blindfolded, drew out a portion. The bonnet holder was entitled to the last bit. Whoever drew the black bit was the devoted person who was to be sacrificed to Baal, whose favor they meant to implore in rendering the year productive. The devoted person was compelled to leap three times over the flames."

This folk ritual may preserve an echo of prehistoric festivals.

Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu

By Joan Carruth

COCODAL has opened its shutters for business after a long, wet, miserable winter. We have nothing by way of old business pending. However, we have several pieces of new business.

One: we would like to encourage any Grove or solitary Third who has not already done so to join the Council,

Another: I have heard several proposals for streamlining the selection of Matriarchs/Patriarchs of the Higher Orders. Some of them sound pretty good. But I have already put in enough of my opinions and proposals for a while, so if any of you would like to propose a change, please do so. Any Third Order who is a member of the Council, either as a solitary or as a member of a member Grove, may propose a new rule or a change by sending it to Emmon Bodfish, Preceptor, Live Oak Grove, 616 Miner Rd. Orinda, California, 94563. He will publish it in the next MISSAL-ANY and wait 90 days for responses from solitaries and Member Groves' Third Orders. Remember, such rules are decided by those who respond, so you cannot block a piece of legislation by not answering. Pros and Cons may be sent in by a postcard or letter to Live Oak Grove Address. We will publish the results.

Current CoCoDAL members:
Live Oak Grove,
Evergreen Grove,
Michael "Tiki" Teague,
Chris Sherbak.

-Joan Carruth, A.D.

News of the Higher Orders

Grannos, 4th Order, (healers)

Now is the time for all good healers to come to the aid of their Order. If you're Third Order and interested in healing (medical, psychological, or psychic) and have access to an ArchDruid, or even another member of the Third Order, PLEASE write to me, Joan Carruth, A.D. and join Grannos: I have this nightmare of Grannos only existing in the area I live in, which to me would make it essentially useless. There are no dues, and no obligations, (though there are some things you can do if you want, like setting up a Healers' Conclave in your area). In return, you will have access to all the pool of healing techniques and experiences I can garner. Write to me, describe your interests, and experience in healing, and give me the name and address of the person, Third Order, you would like to have Ordain you.

Joan Carruth
Live Oak Grove

Brachiaca, 5th Order

Since 4th Order is officially running, we are scouting for candidates for M/P of Brachiaca. Since Brachiaca is the god of brewing, such a person should probably be one who enjoys alcohol, and perhaps other mind-altering chemicals. Perhaps such an Order could be involved in setting up parties around High Days for their Groves. The head of an Order recruits members and keeps them in touch with each other, submits Order news to the Missal-Any, and decides who is to be ordained. It isn't a whole lot of work, or I wouldn't be able to handle Grannos. So, if you are Third Order, and would like to propose yourself as head of Brachaica, or if you know a good candidate, or you would simply like to be a member of the Order, write to Matriarch of Grannos Joan Carruth, c/o Live Oak Grove

—Joan Carruth

Order of Oberon, The Bards

Leslie Craig-Harger Matriarch, will be retiring as such this season, when she can find a suitable successor. Nominations welcome! Until then, she will be doing Ordinations into the Bardic order. If you are interested in joining, contact her through Live Oak Grove, here at the Miner Rd. address. You do *not* have to be Third Order to join Bards. She will be holding occasional Bardic Revels, when possible, and wishes to say that if some other members of Bards wish to hold a Bardic, she'd much appreciate it.

Events

The Institute of Celtic Studies is presenting a lecture on "The Celtic Vision" by Ken Ruffner. It will be on May 18, Bldg C, Rm. 100 Fort Mason San Francisco, 8:00 P.M. Many slides of Irish artworks and landscapes

"Lark in the Morning" is sponsoring a summer music celebration July 26 to August. The site they have chosen includes 46 redwood cabins with stone fireplaces and balconies, a large hall for dances and dining, continuous workshops on many musical instruments and singing and dancing in the Irish Gaelic traditions. Cost is $95, not including meals. Register before May 1, and get a special rate of $85. Contact Box 1176, Mendocino Ca. 95460 or (707) 964-5569

For Pagans: Tour Ireland with 18 days of magic, mythology, history, stories, and rituals with Starhawk and Laura Gale of Reclaiming, the Center for Feminist Spirituality. For more information, contact P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94122 or call Return to the Earth at (415) 661-8671

Live Oak Grove's Beltaine and Maypole dance, 1:00 P.M. May 9, Grove Site, 616 Miner Road, Orinda. If transportation is a problem, take BART to Orinda Station, and phone for a ride, 254-1387.

Things for Sale

Copies of the Druid Chronicles ($25) are still available from Joan Carruth, also copies of the Mini Chronicles ($7),

Live Oak Grove has several Ruby glass chalices of the traditional RDNA type for sale ($10.50)

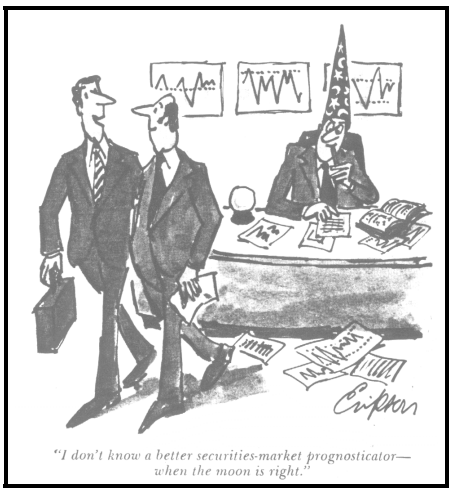
Paladin is getting ready to cast a batch of bronze cycles of Druidic form. There will be just 20 made. If you want any, Third Orders especially, place an order through Joan Carruth, quickly. (415) 245-1387, an answering machine will take your name.

You can order a Viking style drinking horn, though not specifically Druidic, through Old Norway, Dept. R, Helen Ga. 30545, for $13.95.

An excellent book which I had re-printed a few years ago, a few copies of which are still left is *Bladud of Bath* by Howard C. Levis. This contains the complete documentation relating to Bladud, the ninth King of England after Bruce the Trojan. Like the Prodigal Son, Bladud became a leper and looked after swine near Bath, where he discovered the hot springs which cured him of the disease as they have cured many since. Bladud was a Druid and an early student of the art of flying, which finally led to his death. Mr. Levis's illustrated, scholarly work represents the only biography of an individual Druid. Good, large hardback edition with dust-wrapper. $6.95. USA etc. airmail: $9. UDA etc. surface $1.50.

Two other books of mine, not yet available, are to be published next year by Thames & Hudson (inquiries to them). These are **MEGALTHOMANIA**, an illustrated account of the theories, follies, and general activities of archeologists and enthusiasts at megalithic sites; and **LIVING WONDERS**, written with Robert Rickard as a follow-up to PHENOMENA, consisting of about fifty chapters on the mysteries, controversies and weird records of natural history.

FOR SALE PRIVATELY from: 11 Powis Gardens, London W.11.



"I don't know a better securities-market prognosticator—when the moon is right."

Calendar

Regular Druid Services will be held at the Live Oak Grove Site at 616 Miner Rd., Orinda, at 1 P.M. Daylight Savings time, on May 23rd, June 6th and until further notice, we will be expecting to celebrate the Solstice here on June 20th. All with suggestions for Solstice celebration should get them in now.

A Druid Missal-Any Summer Solstice 1982 Volume 6 Number 4

Uath: Late May to June.

The name for this time of the year is taken from the hawthorn, whitethorn, or mayflower. In ancient Britain, this was the time of rest and abstinence after the Beltaine festivities. Old clothes were worn, and the temples cleansed in psychic and physical preparation for the summer. The time is associated with the Goddess Cardea, who casts spells using hawthorn, and it was she who had to be appeased at marriages as such unions were hateful to her, she being associated with chastity and solitude. She is the benefactor of crafts people and the guardian of hinges, having the power to open what is shut and to shut up what is open. She is able, as well, to look forward in time, and back to the hidden past, Cardea lives at the hinge of the Universe, in a starry castle, behind the North Wind. She was worshipped in Britain, and perhaps in the lowlands of Scotland, in Strath-Clyde.

News of the Groves

BELTAINE CELEBRATION went well despite two principle people being handicapped with bad colds. Sue has some color pictures of the merriment, which I hope we can print in the next Missal-Any. The standard Beltaine Service, as given in the Chronicles, was performed, beginning at 1:00 p.m. For the first time in the Grove's history, we had our own altar on which we could build a fire. Though the altar is not in final form yet, the base served as a platform for a good blaze. Afterwards we had the Maypole Dance around our home-made 11 foot tall Maypole. Such thanks to Daniel and Leslie Craig-Hargar for helping splice two logs together, using only primitive hand tools, (i.e. the power saw gave out,) to create a 16 foot pole. All the May Dance participants brought their own ribbon, of what ever color, and we danced and wove them down the pole in the traditional May dance, with the Bards singing and the Matriarch of Bards, Leslie, playing guitar. It was a colorful, fast and flailing event, especially as many of us are not used to dancing in long robes, nor on the sides of hills. All the officers, and many of the members were in their full Druid robes, some barefoot, some in Engineer boots. After the Maypole was woven with the ribbons, we decided to leave it stand, at least until Solstice. Then we sat around it and Leslie sang requests from her lengthy Pagan repertory. Meanwhile most of us ate and enjoyed the return of the Season of the Waters of Life, in flavors wine, Irish Mist, and Whiskey. As this took effect, more people joined in the singing, shouting, and a few dancing through the underbrush.

We particularly want to congratulate Earl for climbing up our forty-something steps to the Grove site, and also to thank him for the use of his phone, which was instrumental for contacting Joan, our AD, for planning and set up, as she is currently without a phone of her own.

Most stayed for the sunset, and some beyond, i.e. those who had gone to sleep, (read passed out), only to be awakened by the cold and foggy dew of Orinda night.

Next celebration is Solstice, a minor high day, on June 20. Next big Celebration is Lughnasadh. Send us your ideas of what you'd like to see in these festival finery games for Lugh.

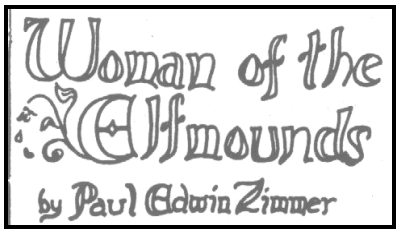
Out of Town/State Readers

Provisions exist in the Druid Chronicles for those people that live too far from an established Grove to start their own protogrove without the need of a presiding Third Order Archdruid. We can send you Proto-grove services to use and the system to set up a group and celebrate the Druid High Days. All it requires is three interested people to enact the rituals but you can read all three roles, if you're alone, or you can recruit a couple of other people. Write us for the details.

Fight Back

Next time you're leafleted or pressured by aggressive Christians, Hari Krishnas, New Guinea Mudmen, etc. whip out some Druid leaflets and convert them back. We have Druid literature on simulated parchment paper, which can help explain who we are and what it's about to your friends, enemies or harassers. In my case I can vouch for them getting rid of some previously persistent Jehovah's Witness canvassers and a vacuum salesman. Send us $1.00 or 5 stamps and we'll send you some.

The Marketplace



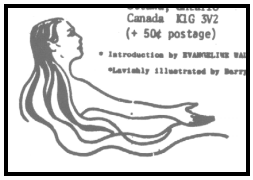
Woman of the Elfmounds

By Paul Edwin Zimmer

Mortal and Immortal Lovers Trapped in a Love Feud…

For generations of men there had been war between Clan Cormac and CaorLieth…for the Elf-Folk do not die, save for in battle, and the hatred of men lives through the ages, passing from father to son…

Available for $4.00 from:
TRISKELL PRESS
P.O. Box 9480
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada, K1G 3V2
(+ 50 cents postage)
*Introduction by Evangeline Walton
Lavishly illustrated by Barry Blair



Bronze Sickles

CORRECTION of a misspelling in the Beltaine issue: the "bronze cycle" was a bronze sickle. Paladin still has some of these for sale for $30.00. The blade is 5" in diameter, and the sickle comes without handles, but with a bronze tang which is perforated for the attachment of a wooden or bone handle. Hawthorn or oak are suggested as sacred woods. Joan Carruth A.D. suggests that Archdruids of Groves, especially should have one to cut the service's sacrifice. The Grove could pool their money and get one, which could remain Grove property when a new Archdruid is elected.

When the moon has lived
Six days,
The sickle flashes
And the mistletoe
trembles and falls.
Woe to the man who puts
His hand to the oak.
Bole, branch, and twig
Live by the god's power.

Caswell Harps

Write for our current brochure
15095 Fruitvale Ave., Saratoga, CA 95070

Calendar

All services are at Live Oak Grove Site, 616 Miner Rd. Orinda (254-1387) at 1:00 P.M. Take the BART to Orinda Station and call for a ride. Solstice Celebration, Sunday, June 20. Regular services on July 4, and July 18. Lughnasadh is tentative, planned for August 1.

A Druid Missal-Any Lughnasadh 1982 Volume 6 Number 5

Lughnasadh Essay: Funeral Games

By Emmon Bodfish

riginally a celebration of the funeral games for Lugh, the Celtic deity of Light. By August 1 the sun is lower in the sky and days significantly shorter. By now even the non-astronomically oriented can feel the summer's decline. The sun, re-born on December 22, is ageing. The period of harvest, Foghamhar, is coming, and this High Day marks the celebration of the First Fruits, and the first produce of the fields. In Celtic Countries, this middle of the summer festival is still marked by the Races in Ireland, Revels in Wales, and the Highland Cattle Show in Scotland. In a stock raising culture like the Iron Age Celts, this was the most likely time of market faires and Gatherings. The calves of the Spring were old enough to sell/trade; likewise the sheep would have been sheared and surplus wool of lambs could be bartered.

Live Oak Grove will be celebrating Lughnasadh on August the 7th at the Grove Site at 1:00 P.M. Bring a sample of any fruits or vegetables that you've grown, and come help us assure a bountiful harvest to come. Take BART to Orinda and phone 254-1387 for a ride.

Photos, thanks to Leslie, of our 1982 Beletaine festivities.

Photo of Emmon in front of the Maypole at the Live Oak Grove site

Creating a Wizard Lite

By Emmon

A Wizard-Lite is a phenomenon you'll often come across in fantasy and occult literature in these post-Illuminati (Trilogy) years. The following is a distillation of my experience with one method of creating one.

Sit straight up, on a sturdy seat, feet flat on the floor, in a dark room. It is never quite dark enough outdoors for this. Lean a little forward, and look into the darkest part of the room. Focus your eyes as if you were looking into the farther distance. The room must be dark enough that you cannot see the wall in front of you. The correct eye focus is nine-tenths of it. Some people describe it as "looking left with the left eye and right with the right eye." I didn't think of it this way, but if it helps...

You'll see flecks of light, blue or violet, which move in curved paths, then wink out. Don't try to look AT or follow them. You'll loose the critical distance focus and not be able to see them at all. You are focusing out beyond them; they appear as five to ten feet away from your chair. The longer you can hold this focus, and your attention on the dark in front of you, the more sparks of lite you will see. At a certain point you get the feeling of seeing past the darkness, into a space speckled with many, many of these sparks. It looked to me like the Milky Way, the first time I saw it. The tendency at this point is to look away, or close your eyes. If you do that, you will loose it and have to start over again. Of course willingness to start over again, and I mean many times, is necessary to the development of any "psychic" skill.

When you can get the focus right and see the sparks fairly easily, you can get to the "starry sky" stage in about 15 to 20 minutes per practice session. Next, you try to form the sparks into a ball by herding them together. There is no better verbal way to describe this. To me it feels like pushing them with my eyeballs. You may feel you are herding them into a close cluster with your willpower. As more sparks are crowded together, the glow will get brighter. It will look something like this:

As it brightens, you can see the floor and the room, but not in detail or color. While it looks like the room, alright, it looks not quite the same as the room looked before. And definitely different from the way the room looks in dim light with your eyes well dark adapted.

I plan to try this in a strange location, which I have not seen in daylight to see if it is a matter of running on memory.

This eye focus is the same one that has been described in the literature as the one to use to see auras.

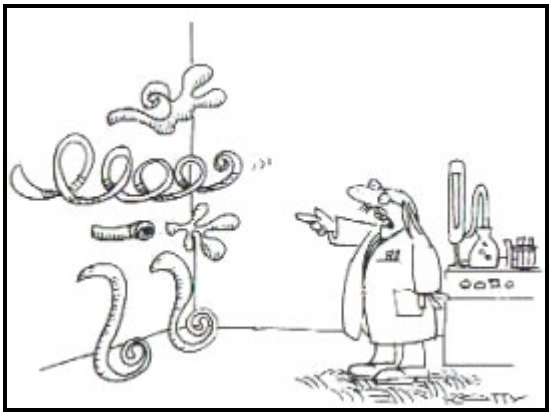
News of the Groves

Live Oak Grove

Live Oak Grove moved to hold emergency elections on the 17th of July, regular services. Our Archdruid, Joan Carruth, is leaving to live in Chico, California. Druid elections, for new reader's information, are usually held at Autumn Equinox, with the new officers taking over at Samhain, which is Celtic New Years. But emergency elections can be held if any of the officers have to resign in the middle of the year.

Results:

Archdruid: Larry Press
Preceptor: Emmon Bodfish
Server: Bob Blunt



"Go away! You're upsetting the laws of physics!"

Calendar

Lughnasadh August 7,* Regular Services August 1st and August 29, and September 12. Live oak Grove Site, Orinda, 1:00.

*Saturday

A Druid Missal-Any Fall Equinox 1982 Volume 6 Number 5

Fall Equinox Essay: Cernunnos

By Emmon Bodfish

quinox approaches the time sacred to Cerrunnos, the Hunter God. The cult of the horned god/shaman, dressed in the horns and hide of a hoofed prey-animal, is one of the most ancient themes running through Indo-European religions. The cave paintings in France show such a figure and may date from Paleolithic times. (Figure 1) He is seen again on the Gundestrup Cauldron in near-historic times, here with the antlers of a Stag. It would be rash to think all horned gods are called Cerrunnos, as each tribe may have had their own name for him, but the theme of the shaman raised to a god and endowed with horns remains consistent. In southeastern Europe he is associated with the goat, and in parts of Britain with the bull, but always with a horned, food species. He may be the Being commemorated in the horn-dances carried out in a number of English villages up through the 19th century and now exclusive to Abbots Bromley. Originally he seems to have been a hunter's patron, and later associated with fertility of flocks and herds, and then with fertility in general. This was the tradition of Grecian Pan, and Robin Goodfellow, and later debased into Christian "devil" myths. The Gaelic word "faighe" for prophet, and also the name of one class of Druids, may be cognate of the Proto-Gaelic word for deer, "fiagh," especially in its genitive case, meaning "of a deer." In Gaelic cultures there is also an association with the Hazel tree, and again with the after-death world, which we will shortly be contacting in the upcoming festivals of Samhain. His following continued after Christianization, and is reflected in the Highland Calluinn ritual still in practice in the 19th century. The Protestant cleric who recorded it seems to have had no inkling of its meaning, but he asserts that the people of the West Highlands, in the 17th century, before the coming of the Presbyters, were "little more than pagans, having been neglected by the Roman Church."

The Horned-God had a second sacred time after Yule and before Oimelc, also indicative of the Cerrunnos -Calluinn (Hazel) association. According to Dwelly, there is an old Gaelic myth that New Year's night is the night of the fecundation of the trees, when the winds blow from the West, and is called Calluinn night. On this night Bogles may walk. Bogles are wood spirits, connected with Cerrunnos in the following interesting manner. The word Bogey or the Scottish Bogle is a diminutive of the original word Bog, with cognates in the Slavic, "Bog" god, and in Proto-Celtic "Boc" god. The Welsh "boucca" evolved into Puck, the wood sprite, and the Highland Bogey, spirit inhabiting wild or lonely places. "Poccan" is a male goat, and "Puc" is the goat-god who presides over the Puck fair celebrations in Ireland.

Figure 1 Masked Dancer, A Masked man with Stag Antlers, and Figure 2 Cerrunnos from the Gundestrup Caldron

News of the Groves

Larry Press, the Archdruid of Live Oak, has suggested we "Write the trees back into Druidism." At the August 7th, Saturday, service, we tried the following ceremony, recognizing each of the eight trees in our Sacred Circle.

The Preceptor prepared beforehand a quart of bloodmeal and clear water in a large chalice shaped bowl. During the part of the standard RDNA service when the chalice of Consecrated Waters was being passed around the circle of participants, Larry, as Archdruid, took the bowl of bloodmeal and, beginning with the live oak that stands at the Southpoint of our Circle, fed each of the trees in turn, going around the Circle sunwise. Then he returned the empty bowl to the Preceptor. By then, the chalice of Consecrated Waters had finished circulating among the members, and the Server returned it to him. He poured the remaining portion into the altar flames, as standard in the RDNA service.

We found that this Ritual Feeding of the Trees fit in well at this point in the ceremony. In the future, Larry suggests, addressing each tree by name, using the oldest Indo-European root word for the name of each species. If that is not discoverable, we will use the old Gaelic. Emmon, the Preceptor, agreed to research tree names.

More information on Dalon Ap Landu, the patron spirit of RDNA Groves, mentioned in the Standard Druid Service. Dalen is Welsh for leaf, and Ap Landu would be "of Landu." Since there is no such term in Welsh as Landu, it is probably a corruption of some phrase or placename. Dalon Ap Landu may be connected with "Dalan of Goidhelic," mythologically the Druid of Eochaid. Or he may be an equivalent to Hu Tadarn or Dylan. Dylan was a son of Manawyddan Ap Llyr, the Cymric name of Manannan Mac Ler. In this case, he is roughly equivalent to Cerrunnos of Gaul in the latter's god-of-the-woods aspect.

The above information thanks to Tom Cross, Garland Proto-Grove, Texas

The original reference to Dalon Ap Landu was from David Fisher, who included this, in his words, "obscure Welsh tree-god" in the RDNA Services. In this reference, he seems to be a vegetation god, speaking through wind, in the trees, and in thunder. Cernunnos is usually glossed as a patron of animals, especially fertility of flocks, herds, and food species.

Anyone with further information on this, or new references is especially invited to write in and share them. Much thanks and kudos will be given. The David Fisher references are given in *The Druid Chronicles*.

Copies of the complete *Druid Chronicles* are available through Live Oak Grove. It is 200-plus pages, with full footnotes and many pictures, $25.00 Or the Mini-Chronicles, which are excerpts of the most important materials, for $7.50 plus $1 postage.

Calluinn a Bhuilg

Calluinn Ho!—This rune is still repeated in the Isles. Rarely, however, do two persons recite it alike. This renders it difficult to decide the right form of the words.

The walls of the old houses in the West are very thick—from five to eight feet. There are no gables, the walls being of uniform height throughout. The roof of the house being raised from the inner edge of the wall, a broad terrace is left on the outside. Two or three stones project from the wall at the door, forming steps. One of these the inmates ascend for purposes of thatching and securing the roof in time of storm.

The "gillean Callaig" carolers or Hogmanay lads perambulate to the townsland at night. One man is enveloped in the hard hide of a bull with the horns and hoofs still attached. When the men come to a house they ascend the wall and run around sunwise, the man in the hid shaking the horns and hoofs, and the other men striking the hard hide with sticks. The appearance of the man in the hide is gruesome, while the din made is terrific. Having descended and recited their runes at the door, the Hogmanay men are admitted and treated to the best in the house.

The performance seems to be symbolic, but of what it is not easy to say, unless of laying an evil spirit. That the rite is heathen and ancient is evident.

CALLUINN a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg,
    Buail am boicionn,
    Buail am boicionn.
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg
    Buail an craicionn,
    Buail an craicionn.
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg,
    Sios e! suas e!
    Buail am boicionn.
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg,
    Sios e! suas e!
    Buail an craicionn.
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg.

HOGMANAY of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack,
    Strike the hide,
    Strike the hide.
Hogmanay of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack,
    Beat the skin,
    Beat the skin.
Hogmanay of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack,
    Down with it! up with it!
    Strike the hide.
Hogmanay of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack,
    Down with it! up with it!
    Beat the skin.
Hogmanay of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack.

From *Carmina Gadelica, Vol. I*, Alexander Carmichael

Now Do We With Songs and Rejoicing

(A Processional Hymn)
Words by David T. Geller
Sung to the traditional tune of:
"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

Now do we with songs and rejoicing,
Come before the Mother to stand.
She has given forth of Her bounty
And with blessings in Her hand,
In the fields She walks
And in the woods She walks;
Our full homage to command.

At Her voice the wild wind is silent
And the fox lies down with the hare.
Every living creature before Her
Sings Her praises to declare:
Thanks to Thee for all,
O thanks to Thee for All,
Thanks to Thee, O Lady most fair!

David Geller
Druid, RDNA
Berkeley Grove

The Lady's Bransle

(Pronounced "brall")
Words by Hope
Sung to the traditional tune of: "Nonesuch" (short version) and reprinted by permission from "Songs for the Old Religion" (Copyright 1973)

O She will bring the buds in the Spring
And laugh among the flowers.
In Summer heat are Her kisses sweet;
She sings in leafy bowers.
She cuts the cane and gathers the grain,
When fruits of Fall surround Her.
Her bones grow old in Wintery cold;
She wraps Her cloak around Her.

But She will bring the buds in...
(repeat freely)

The Woad Song

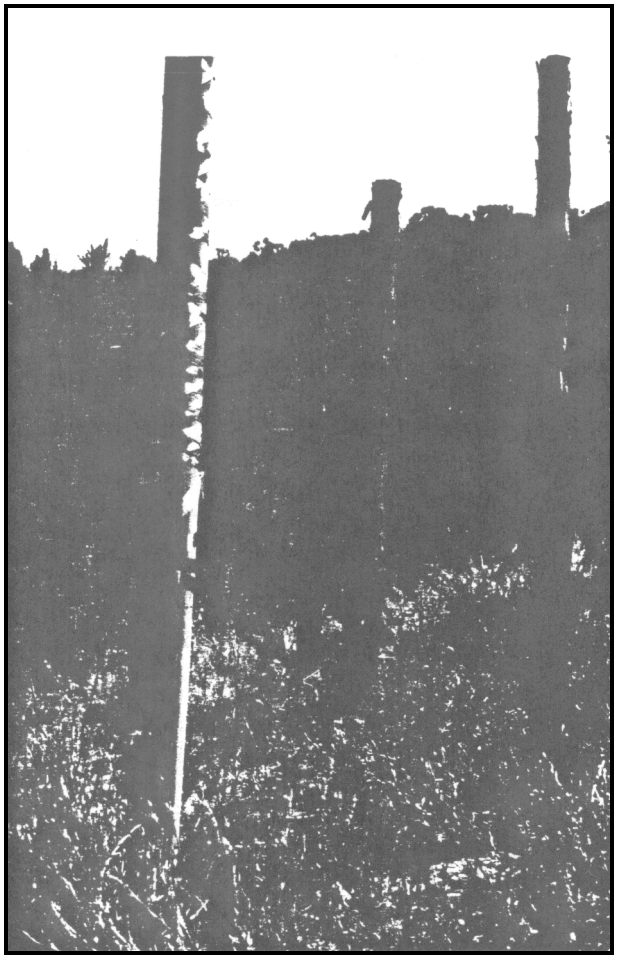
Authorship unknown
(But obviously English!)
Sung to the traditional tune
of "Men of Harlech"

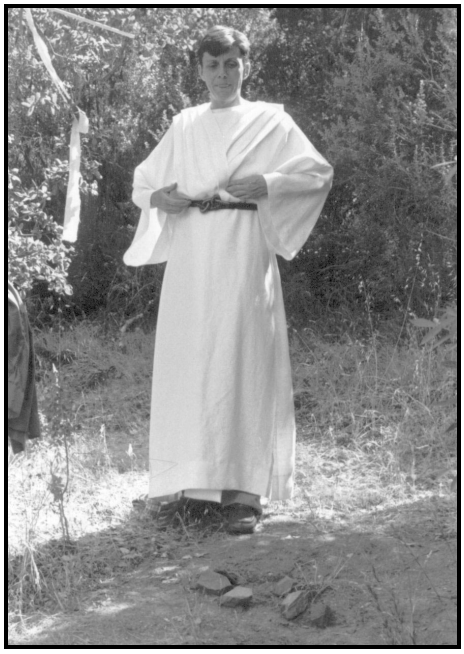
What's the use of wearing braces,
Hat and spats and shoes with laces,
Coats and vests you find in places
Down on Brompton Road?
What the use of shirts of cotton,
Studs that always get forgotten?
These affairs are simply rotten—
Better far is woad.

Woad's the stuff to show men—
Woad to scare your foeman!
Boil it to a brilliant blue
And rub it on your chest and your abdomen!
Men of Britain never hit on
Anything as good as woad to fit on
Neck or knee or where you sit on—
Tailors, you be blowed!

Romans came across the Channel,
All dressed up in tin and flannel.
Half a pint of woad per man'll
Clothe us more than these.
Saxons, you may save your stitches,
Building beds for bugs in britches;
We have woad to clothe us, which is
Not a nest for flees!

Romans, keep your armors;
Saxons, your pajamas.
Hairy coats were made for goats,
Gorillas, yaks, retriever dogs and llamas!
March on Snowdon with your woad on—
Never mind if you get rained or snowed on—
Never need a button sewed on...
All you need is woad!!


The Wooden Henge at Live Oak Grove



Getting Ready for Services

Calendar

Autumn Equinox Service will be held on September at 1:00 PM at Live Oak Grove in Orinda. If you need transportation or more information, call 254-1387 and leave a message. Regular Services will be held on October 3rd and 17th, also at Live Oak Grove.

A Druid Missal-Any Samhain 1982 Volume 6 Number 6

Samhain Essay: The Tuatha

By Emmon Bodfish

amhain, the day between the years. The Druid year starts with Samhain, in the autumn just as the Celtic day starts with sundown, proceeds through night, dawning into the day. The Classic writers of antiquity held that it was a Druid teaching that cold and dark and the difficult precede warmth and light and the beneficent.

In pre-Christian times, Samhain was the occasion of great gathering in Ireland and Gaul, and probably in Scotland and Britain, though there, no records survived. Druids Bards and Ovates (Ollafhs) and the political leaders from all parts of Ireland assembled at Tara. In Gaul similar gatherings were held, and received and sent emissaries to and from Scotland and England. Better accounts survive from Tara than from any of the other Celtic areas. The Tuatha from the four provinces of Ireland assembled at Tara Hall well before Samhain. There after ritual purifications, which may have included the offering of sacrifices, part of the harvest, and leaping through the bonefires, the nobles and Druids retired indoors. They remained "under roof" all Samhain Day, the belief being that on this day the forces of Propriety and order were gathered inside, and the forces of Chaos were afoot outside. Inside the palace at Tara, took up their traditional stations around the High King: Those of Ulster, representing the warrior caste, to his North; Those of Munster, representing the prophetic/aesthetic pole to his right; Those of Connaught, representing the Druid, or clerical caste at his back; and facing his Lennster, representing the Tuatha, husbandman/producers. In this order the great counsel of the year was held.

Though called the Day of the Dead, Samhain was considered a good or lucky day. In contrast, Beltaine was considered a difficult, or tricky day as the day beginning the Season of Life. On Samhain, the two worlds of the living and of the Tuatha De Danann draw close and may merge, making this the time to contact the Other World, and ascertain the disposition of the Gods and ancestors on the plans for the coming year of the settling of old quarrels. Ancestors, in particular, could send fertility, or disease, to their descendents and their favor was sought for the ensuing winter. This tradition was especially strong in Alba (Scotland, approximately) where Samhain was the occasion to seek instructions from the ancestors and bring oneself into harmony with them. If the required funeral ceremonies had been performed, and the yearly offerings made, and all was right between the living and the dead, then there was no need to fear ghosts. But if all was not well between the living and their clan forbearers, if their will was flouted or the rites neglected, the dead could make their will known on this night when the line between the two worlds dissolved and spirits could come over and walk in ours.

To the Tuatha, husbandmen of the land, Samhain marked the absolute end of the harvest. It was forbidden to glean or gather any more wild fruit after Samhain night. This assured that all would be gathered in and stored before the storms began, and may also have prevented over-picking, especially of wild fruit, by declaring that anything which remained in the fields or woods after this date to belong to the wild birds.

Live Oak Grove Elections

Elections will be held before Sunset Service on Samhain, Saturday, October 30, at 5:30pm at Live Oak Grove in Orinda.

Nominations are:

Larry Press for Archdruid
Emmon Bodfish for Preceptor
Bob Blunt for Server

Any other nominations or volunteers should write or phone in, or be present on Samhain to run.

Calendar

Samhain Sunset Service will begin at 5:30 PM October 30, and those who want to will vigil all night. There will be a midnight service, and dawn festivities. Regular Services will be at 12:00 Noon, Pacific Standard Time, on November 14, and November 28. All these will be held at Live Oak Grove, in Orinda. Take BART to the Orinda Station, and phone 254-1387, before 11:45, for a ride.

Protogrove Service

Note: The enclosed copy of the Protogrove service, written largely by Joan Carruth, A.D. should be included at the end of Section Three of the Druid Chronicles, if you own a set, at the end of the Liturgy. A Gàidhlig translation of this will be forthcoming, and can be included with the Irish Gaelic Services in the Urtext Section of the Chronicles.

Michaelmas

By Emmon Bodfish

The following ceremony was associated with this time of year, and enacted annually at least through the 1820s, though in Christian times it was incorporated into Michael-mass festivities. In the Northern Celtic areas, Michael takes over many of the characteristics of the Celtic deity, Manannan McLir, and even of Llyr, the sea god, and ruler of the Land of the Dead, celebrated on this Day of the Dead, Samhain.

‘Na Gellaidh

Thug mo leannan dhomh sgian bheag
A ghearradh am meangan goid,
A ghearrahd am bog ’s an cruaidh,
Saoghal buan dh’an laimh a thug.

Gheall mo leannan dhomh-sa stiom
Gheall, agus braiste ’s cir,
‘S gheall mise coinneamh ris
Am bun a phris mu’n eireadh grian.

Gheall mo leannan dhomh-sa sgathan
Anns am faicinn m’aille fein,
Gheall, agus breid is fainne,
Agus clarsach bhinn nan teud.

Gheall e sid dhomh ’s buaile bha,
Agus falaire nan steud,
Agus birlinn bheannach bhan,
Readhadh slan thar chuan nam beud.

The Promises

My lover gave to me a knife
That would cut the sapling withe,
That would cut the soft and hard,
Long live the hand that gave.

My lover promised me a snood,
Ay, and a brooch and comb,
And I promised, by the wood,
To meet him at rise of sun.

My lover promised me a mirror
That my beauty I might see,
Yes, and a coif and ring,
And a dulcet harp of chords.

He vowed me those and a fold of kine,
And a palfrey of the steeds,
And a barge, pinnacled white,
That would safely cross the perilous seas.

The song and the dance, the mirth and the merriment, are continued all night, many curious scenes being acted, and many curious dances performed, some of them in character. These scenes and dances are indicative of far-away times, perhaps of far-away climes. They are evidently symbolic. One dance is called “Cailleach an Dudain,” carlin of the mill-dust. This is a curious character-dance. The writer got it performed for him several times.

It is danced by a man and a woman. The man has a rod in his right hand, variously called “slachdan druidheachd,” druidic wand, “slachdan geasachd,” magic wand. The man and the woman gesticulate and attitudinize before one another, dancing round and round, in and out, crossing and recrossing, changing and exchanging places. The man flourishes the wand over his own head and over the head of the woman, whom he touches with the wand, and who falls down, as if dead, at his feet. He bemoans his dead “carlin,” dancing and gesticulating round her body. He then lifts up her left hand, and looking into the palm, breathes upon it, and touches it with the wand. Immediately the limp hand becomes alive and moves from side to side and up and down. The man rejoices, and dances round the figure on the floor. And having done the same to the right hand, and to the left hand right foot in succession, they are also become alive and move. But although the limbs are living, the body is still inert. The man kneels over the woman and breathes into her mouth and touches her heart with the wand. The woman comes to life and springs up, confronting the man. Then the two dance vigorously and joyously as in the first part. The tune varies with the varying phases of the dance. It is played by a piper or a fiddler, so sung as a ‘port-a-bial,’ mouth tune, by a looker-on, or by the performers themselves. The air is quaint and irregular, and the words are curious and archaic.

From *Carmina Gadelica Vol. I,* Alexander Carmichael

A Druid Missal-Any Yule 1982 Volume 6 Number 7

Yule Essay: What is Yule?

By Emmon Bodfish

ule, a minor Celtic High Day, the Midwinter Solstice's sun shines into the mouths of cairn graves and the openings of hill tombs. The day was of obvious importance to these megalith builders, and associated with the dead and with regeneration. This is the bottom of the year, and the coldest months are still to follow. Bonfires are lit on hills to call back the Sun, and kept burning all night to celebrate its return. This Celtic tradition may be a cognate of the Norse Yule Log tradition, which is still carried on in the Nordic countries. This use of fire to recall the Sun's fire, (the name for the Sun in Gàidhlig is thought to be derived from the phrase "of the nature of fire," greine, and is of the feminine gender) is an instance of one of the most ancient religious ideas, that of reciprocity.

This concept goes back to the beginnings of religion in the Old Stone Age, as well may the fire lighting ceremonies. As G. Rachel Levy explains, these rites were

> "the culmination of the Stone Age religion of reciprocity, in which, by ritual attunement to the rhythm of seasonal change, man shared with Divinity the responsibility for its maintenance, so that the ceremonies first introduced to guide the birth and death of the hunter's quarry, were replaced in natural succession by those considered necessary to assist the new year to be born, the very sun to return, (and) the harvest to be cut down."

This correspondence

> "was also understood conversely, so that early written documents record (Le Titre d'Horus d'or, by A. Mort, translator, Rev. Arch. xxiv) that the rising of the Young Year God from his winter sleep in the subterranean chambers held hope for the resurrection/reincarnation of man. Such a belief would seem to have been naturally transmitted from the ideas concerning the case as mother of rebirth, now reinforced by the lesson of the seeds, through Neolithic ceremonies in which the sense of mutual causality was so compelling. It is demonstrated in the monuments of the dead."

Gwydion Remembered

A group of children join Otter Zell at a shrine for Gwydion Penderwen who died last week. The Greenfield resident was remembered at Greenfield's 10th Birthday Celebration at the Saturday Afternoon Club in Ukiah.

Sad News

Gwydion Penderwen died this November in a car accident near his home in Ukiah. He has been a Bard and spokesman for the Neopagan community for many years. The annual tree planting which he organized for Forever Forests is scheduled to go on this January. Contact Holy Order of Mother Earth, Box 982, Ukiah, Calif. 95482.

Gwydion's records and tapes are available from Sunrise Books, 3054 Telegraph Ave, Berkeley, California. For information on his other writings contact Holy Order of Mother Earth, Box 982, Skin Calif. 95482.

News of the Groves

Chico Grove

A New grove of the Reformed Druids of North America has been founded in Chico California, by Joan Carruth, former Archdruid of Live Oak Grove. The officers are:
Archdruid: Joan Carruth
Preceptor: Kitty Piper
Server: Bob Chappel
For information contact Joan Carruth, 1588 Fetenit, Chico, Calif., 95926. The Chico Grove will be holding services on all High Days.

Calendar

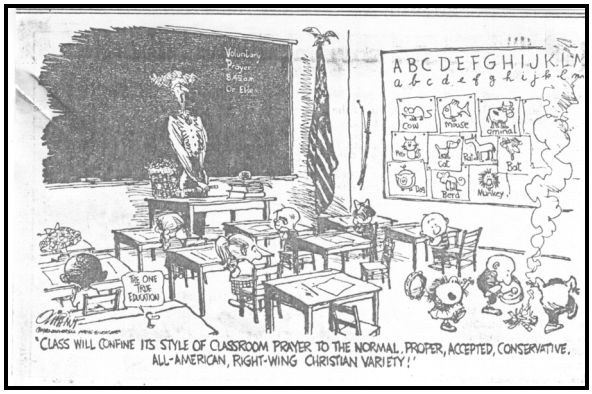
Yule will be celebrated at Live Oak Grove on Tuesday, December 21st at 7:30 P.M. indoors, before a huge Yule Log. Regular services will be also at Live Oak Glove, 616 Miner Rd., Orinda at 12:00 noon on January 2, 16th and 30th. Take BART to Orinda and call 254-1387 for a ride.

Live Oak Grove will hold Yule Services on Winter Solstice, December 21st, at 7:30 PM. at 616 Miner Road, Orinda, California. Bring Mistletoe and song.

Mistletoe

The Druid cutting of the mistletoe (Uil'ioc in Gàidhlig, derived from the phrase "ever young") is described by the Roman writer, Pliny, in his work on the Gauls, "The Druids hold nothing in so sacred respect as the mistletoe, and the tree on which it grows, provided it be an oak. They select certain woods

of oak, and they do not perform any sacred rite without the leaf of that tree; so that hence it is likely they have been called 'Druids', explaining the name from: the (Greek root 'drus' an oak; Druidae, oakites.) Whatever grows on that tree, more than its natural growth, they think has been sent from Deity, and is a sign that the tree has become chosen by Deity as select. However, that species of mistletoe is very rarely found, and when it is it is sought after with great devotion, and especially at the sixth day of the moon, which is the beginning of their months. Having prepared sacrifices and feasts under the tree, they bring up two white bulls, whose horns are then first bound; the priest in white robe, ascends the tree, and cuts it off with a golden knife" (sickle) throwing it down, it is received in a white sheet. Then, and not till then, they sacrifice the offerings, praying that Deity will render gifts on those on whom the mistletoe is bestowed. When mistletoe is given as a potion, it can remove animal barrenness, and it is remedy against all poisons."



Class will confine its style of classroom prayer to the normal, proper, accepted, conservative, all-American, right-wing, Christian variety.

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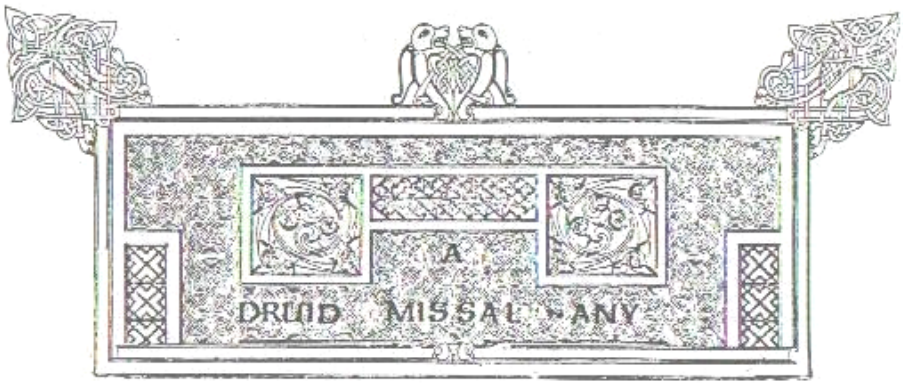
Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION TWO



A Druid Missal-Any

Volume Seven

1983 c.e.

Drynemetum Press

A Druid Missal-Any Oimelc 1983 Volume 7 Number 1

Oimelc Essay: Oimelc and Brigit

By Emmon Bodfish

Oimelc is one of the major high days of the Druids. A pastoral people, this holiday marks the first births of lambs and the lactation of the ewes. It is the end of "black January" and we are past the bottom of the year. It is clear, now, that the light and fertility invoked at the Solstice is indeed returning. This festival is presided over by Bride, (Bridget) as Lugh presided over Lughnasadh at the opposite point of the year. Bride and Lugh are poles, complementary figures, who balance each other in the Celtic system of male/female checks and balances. Though a patrilinear society the Celtic was less male dominated than our own has been, and certainly less patriarchal than the Middle Eastern or Mediterranean societies of the time, or than the Christian society that replaced it.

Bride is the goddess of the hearth and of fire, the inspirer of craftsmen and poets. Her ensigns are the fire essence and the rays of the Sun. Though a Celtic goddess, and associated with the fire sacrifice, a rite not used by pre-Celtic peoples, Bride, in England and Scotland, has absorbed many elements of the local, pre-Celtic Earth goddesses. This, her time of the year, is associated with the visiting of strings and the circumambulation of wells and sacred stones, with the thawing of the streams and the beginning of the year's fishing. The rites of wells and stones may be older fragments of Megalithic religious conceptions. Certainly the stone circles and cairns and the rite of circumambulation, predate the Celtic arrival. Some of the oldest stone circles and altars are found in Mesopotamia and South West Asia, so it is conceivable that the Celts may have brought some of the rounding rites with them from the Indo-European homeland, as well as by having been influenced by these Megalithic rituals, which reached their greatest heights in Western Gaul and Britain, of the pre-Celtic peoples that they encountered on the migrations westward.

John L, Smith, writing in 1780, in *Gaelic Antiquities*, has this to say of circumambulation rites still being practiced by local peasants and attributed to "the old Druids." "...that at the thawing time, the supplicant should go, upon three occasions, to a certain well or spring, and there bath himself three times; or make three journeys to some ancient stone, and there pour the new water out upon it and go three times around it in the deiseal direction" (from East to West). The classic writer, Pliny, ascribes a similar ritual to the Druid rites of healing. He records that the Druids prescribed this rightwise circumambulation of stones and triplicate bathing in the newly thawed water, as part of their treatment for mental disorders or lingering internal complaints.

Bride's function as goddess of fire and the hearth are purely Celtic characteristics. The prominence of the Sun and of fire symbolism, and the fire sacrifice are uniquely Indo-European, as contrasted with the rites of earlier peoples. They mark a shift from the Neolithic and early Megalithic concern with earth's fertility and continuance, to the importance of the regularly recurring cycles of the Heavens, characteristic of the Indo-European religions. Extrapolating from those sacred stone and cairn beliefs that persisted into nearly modern times, it is found that when the divine spirit is felt to reside in the stone, or cairn, which is an embodiment of Earth and a concentration of it, the offering is poured over the sacred stone, or buried within the circle or cairn. Evidence of both these practices have been found connected with Stone Henge. However, fire sacrifice and solar symbolism is connected with a conception of a usually anthropomorphic deity living at a distance, in the sky, as with Taranis of the Celts, or in an Other World, as with Bride, Fire, then so much like the sun in warmth, is conceived as a connecting link to these deities, as the smoke and the offering rise and disappear. Though the Celts shared with the pre-Celtic peoples buried and other forms of sacrifice, they brought with them this idea of the fire sacrifice in which fire and smoke ascend and carry the offering and the prayers to the sky dwelling or distant deity. A tower or cloud of fire is sometimes used in Irish lore as a symbol for Bride. This association continued right down to her co-option by the Christian church, as "Saint" Bridget, when, according to the hegemony, a pillar of fire appeared over her head at this young girl's investiture into holy orders.

—EB

Calendar

Astronomical Oimelc will occur one hour after midnight, February 4, 1983. Oimelc Services will be held on the evening before, February 3, at 5:00 PM. at Live Oak Grove. Take the BART to Orinda and call 254-1387 for a shuttle. Regular Services will be held on Sundays, February 11th And 27th, at 12:00 Noon. Be there by 11:45.

Celtic Deities

by Tom Cross of Post Oak Protogrove

Llyr	God of the Seas. Equivalent of Irish Ler or Lir. His first wife was Penardun, daughter of Don. Begat Manawydan. Second wife Iwerridd. Begat Bran and Branwen.
Manawydan	(Sometimes spelled Manawyddan.) In Irish known as Mannanan. Mav Lir (son of Lir) or Fab Llyr (son of Llyr.) Master of Magic and lived in the Annwn of waters. His Isles are Man and Anglesey.
Bran (Bendigeidfran)	Half brother to Manawydan. A Giant.
Nissien	Deity of Peace. He loved to reverse trouble to harmony.
Efnissien	He loved trouble and hostility. He liked to reverse what his brother Nissien made.

Branwen	Sister to Bran. She became wife of Matholwch, King of Eire.
Ceridwen	Goddess Of Poetry and Inspiration to Poets. An equivalent to Muse. She was the Bard's awen. She owned the cauldron of Inspiration.
Creirwy	Daughter of Ceridwen. A love goddess. She was beautiful.
Affadu	Brother of Creirwy. He was horribly ugly.

Ireland Daoine Sidhe Fairy Folk:

Bean Sidh, Banshee, Babd or Morrigu (Morrigan)	Similar to Nordic Valkerie or Norns
Cave Fairies, Fir Bolg	Ancient inhabitants' spirits
Cluricaunes	Akin to Leprechauns and Fear Darrig. They get drunk in the wine cellar.
Daoine Sidhe (Dain Shee)	Properly the Tuatha De Danaan. People of Don Pantheon. They hid in the hills and mound (sid) after Mil and his people came.
Demons of the Fomorians	Evil spirits of Fomoir inhabiting the Sea.
The Evil Eye of Balor	Fomorian Giant and Hero possessed a very mean stare. His gaze could kill.
Dubhalachach Dulla Hans	Headless Phantom or pimply a dark ghost. They drive the Death Coach or 'Coach a bower' perhaps once the chariot of death. He picks up the spirit of a dying person to ride to the Other World.
Fir Darrig (fear darrig), Far Darig (sing.)	A practical joker akin to Leprechauns.
Leprechauns	The wealthy little shoemakers. Called Lurigadawne in Co. Tipperary, Luricawne in Kerry
Leanhaun Shee	Female fairies. She inspires poets and singers just as Brigit or Ceridwen. She gave men strength in battle (similar to Morrigu) by her songs she would be seductive but to men who embraced her she draws away his life until he wastes away. She is sometimes a blood-sucking vampiress.
The Pooka or Phooka	An animal spirit and demon usually in the form of a horse. Takes its victim on terrifying rides.
Dearg Due	The red blood suckling vampire of Ireland.
Fear Gorta	Man of Hunger. He is an emaciated figure who appears at times of National disaster.
Laignech Faelad	The Wolfmen. Lycanthropy originated in Ireland. Men who turn into wolves.

Fairyland, in the Otherworlds

Tir Na N'Og	The Land of Youth
Tir fo Thuinn	The Land under the waves
Mag Mor	The Great Plain
Tir Na Mbeo	Land of the Living
Mag Mell	The Pleasant Plain
Tir Tairngire	The Plain of Happiness
Tirn aill	The Other World
Hy Breasail	Original Atlantis. Home of Fomorians and the Fir Bolgs
Flath Innis	The Noble Isle. Druids' abode that sank after some incantations supposedly disturbed it .
Dalon Ap Landu	Leaf Son of Branch?
Grannos	(Actually a Gaulish equivalent to Diancecht) Borvo is the God of Hot Springs.
Braciaca	(Medb in Irish, is goddess of Drinking and Intoxication.)
Belenos	Beli Mawr (in Welsh) Bile (Irish equivalent of Be-al)

Be-al and Belenos are the same deity. (2003 Ed. Note: this isn't necessarily true).

Llyr	(Ler or Lir in Irish) Mannanan Mac Lir (his son). Manawydan Fab Llyr or Ap Llyr (Welsh name).
Danu	Don (Welsh name). Also known as Mathair Mabon and Deanu, Mother of Earth or of the gods etc.
Oberon	(See *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by Shakespeare) Non-Celtic character q.v. *Auberon* from French romances.
Merddyn	(Myrddin) An original Bard and Prophet (Merlin in English also said to be advisor to Arthur. N.B. In Roman times Druids became known as Bards in Britain, after *druids* were outlawed.
Diancecht	God of Healing. The 'Leech.'
Sirona	(This is Latinised Gaulish.) Seren (Welsh). Star Goddess. Sirona is from the Gaulish word for star Siron.

Other Gaulish Deities are:

Albiorix	(Rigi samos) King of the World/War
Aerecenthia	Agriculture and Vine
Bordeo	Guardian and Protector of Hot Springs
The Irish Brigit	
Bussamarus	'the large lipped equivalent to Jove'
Irish Ogma	Ogmios God of Eloquence and Poetry

Welsh or Brythonic Deities:

Don (Dana)	Earth Mother of Fertility
Nudd or Ludd (Nuada)	Sun King Married the War Goddess Morrigu (Morgan)
Gwynn Ap Nudd	The fair son of Nudd and Morrigu (the tribe Goddess). He is God of the subterranean Otherworld of the Dead. Spirits in Annwn or Abred. He saved the souls of dead warriors who died on the battlefield. He is ruler of fairies and other nature spirits. He was a hunter and carries an owl on his shoulder as a companion.
Llew (Lugh)	Also Lleu and Llewellyn Llew Llaw Gyffes. Son of Gydion and Arianrhod, twin brother of Dylon. Llew represented the sun. A sort of Apollo figure
Gwydion	Druid of the gods, of Science (Gwydaoniaeth) Gwyddon wisdom. He fought the demons and evil spirits. He teaches all that is useful and good. The God of Learning and knowledge. (Derw (Oak) and Gwydd (good or knowledge)—Derwydd
Amaethon	God of agriculture, farming, cattle raising or herding. Brother of Gwydion
Gofanon	(Goibniu) Smith God, forger of weapons architect and brewer of Ale for the Gods. Brother to Gwydion.
Arianrhod	Goddess of the silver Circle. A moon goddess.
Rhiannon	(Epona, Macha, Rigantona in Old Brythonic.) The Great Queen. Also known as Brigantia, Brigit.
Pwyll	(Pronounced Pwealth.) Prince of Dyfed and Demetae later lord of Annwn (an Other world).

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Celtic Studies Classes

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Sun., Feb. 27th. Gaelic Singing for Power & Solidarity: Part I (in SF). 10 AM-2 PM. $10

Sun., Mar 6th. (Part II, in SF). 10 AM-2 PM. $10

For more information, call (415) 535-1086 or write to 1822 13th Ave, Oakland, 94606.

A Druid Missal-Any Spring Equinox 1983 Volume 7 Number 2

Spring Equinox Essay: Festivals and Eggs

By Emmon Bodfish

quinox, a Druid Minor High Day, the emphasis is Balance." Some customs of this season, still held over from pre-Christian times, include colored and fancy eggs, and the "Easter Bunny" who brings them, though this was not the original sequence or association.

Nora Chadwick, a noted Celtic historian, describes the spring rite of the "coloring of the Cakes end Eggs," noted by classic authors in their descriptions of Druid customs. Egg hunts, egg rolling games and rituals are still current in Ireland, Lithuania and Eastern Europe and may have a pre-Indo-European origin. Decorated eggs, and painted clay models of eggs are a frequent theme of Pre-Aryan, Balkan culture. They are part of the ensign of the Bird Goddess, whose worship seems to have been particular to spring, and to the time of the spring rains, to judge from holdovers into Greek times. Eggs are also part of the imagery of the supreme Goddess of the Old-Europe culture. In this connection, they represent the Cosmic Egg, laid by a swan or Nile goose, which was said to begin the world. Small painted clay eggs were included inside statues of this Great Goddess, as in Marija Gimbutas' drawing below.

> "A Cosmic Egg may also be laid by a mythical water birds: this myth is almost universally known between Africa and the Arctic Zone; it is recorded in ancient civilizations and was known among hunting and fishing tribes. In an Ancient Egyptian myth, the Cosmic Egg was laid by a Nile Goose which was worshipped as the great chatterer, the creator of the world. According to the Orphic story, untreated Nyx (Night) existed first and was regarded as a crest black-winged bird hovering over a vast darkness. Though unmated, she laid an egg from which flew gold-winged Eros, while from the two parts of the shell Ouranos and Gaia (Heaven and Earth) were trotted. The beginning of the myth must lie in the Paleolithic era."

The Egg, plus chatter, words, began the world.

The Bunny wasn't one at all, it was the Hare, not the rabbit, that was the sacred animal among the Celts and Germans. Julius Caesar, in his War Commentaries on Gaul, describes the Gauls as keeping "hares and certain other animals to amuse themselves, and which they do not eat." (or hunt). The hare was seen as a messenger animal, associated with prophecy and madness. The March Hare brought in the Spring and gave the seeds their fertility, or withheld it. To run afoul of him caused madness. By the Middle Ages, the madness element predominated, and he came to be regarded as a demonic species. Many pagan ensigns and symbols suffered like defamation; and prophecy has always been associated with madness in Indo-European traditions. And underlying the egg theme, the theme of the March Hare is solidly Indo-European; its sacred and tabooed nature extends to most of the eastern European languages and early cultures. If language is the oldest witness to history, as Lockwood asserts, then the Cult of the Hare must go back to at least 3,500 BC. and the second wave of Indo-European expansion before Celtic, Germanic and Italic languages diverged. In these, the true word for hare, hara/haso, was tabooed, and euphemisms were commonly invented for it in everyday speech.

Our American Ground Hog Day, may be a dim and distant reflection of the March Hare theme, with its element of prophecy for an early or late spring. In the days of plowing and sowing magic, it was by the hare's behavior that people tried to foretell the spring weather and the prospects for the seeds about to be sown. By the shadows of posts and menhirs, not groundhogs, and by the points of the sun's risings, the priestly castes at the Great Henges determined the day of the Equinox and kept the calendar of sowing and reaping in line with the Heavens.

Calendar

Spring Equinox occurs at 8:40 P.M. Sunday March 20, Equinox Service will be at Sunset, 5:45 P.M. at Live Oak Grove. Regular Services will be on March 13th and 27th at 12:00 NOON, and on April l0th and 24th, 12:00 Noon, Live Oak Grove in Orinda. Beltaine Celebration will be on May 5th astronomically speaking, and Service will be held at sundown that day, approximately 7:00 P.M. A Celebration and Party may be held the following Sunday, please send in feedback about time and ideas you'd like.

News of the Groves

Chris Sherbak, Third Order, now living in Chicago. has volunteered to co-ordinate communications and voting procedures for the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (National Council of all Third Order Druids). He suggests voting by proxy, and the following is a proposed proxy form, open to comments and criticism from all Third Orders, of course. To try to give the Council as broad a base as possible, we would like to hear from all Thirds, active, inactive and long lost. To that end, we are asking for the last known addresses of any of the Thirds whose names are printed in the Druid Chronicles and the last list of Carleton Thirds. Write or phone Chris Sherbak 1654 W. Cortland St, Chicago, Ill, 60622; (312)235-2839.

Dear Third Order Druid,

The Council of Dalon ap Landu has not had a vote in many years. One of the main problems has been the lack of contact between the head of the Council and the members. Many reasons have been given, but the fact remains. I am resolving this and getting on with business.

There can only be two states of participation in my opinion: active and inactive. Our rules do not allow inactive participation yet. I propose that we now do. I ask that you please respond to the questionnaire/proxy below. If you wish to remain in active status, please indicate as such. You will be kept on the Council's mailing list for all Council proposals and newsletter(s).

If you wish to become inactive please mark and sign the proxy. *This is very important.* Whether or not you are now interested in the Reform, you are still considered to have a vote. If you sign the proxy, I assure you that you will never be bothered by this Council again, unless you so wish to contact us. I'll even destroy your current address if you wish. But we need your signature. The proxies will be destroyed after the Council votes on inactivation status. If you have questions, please call me collect. Perhaps this will demonstrate to you the importance this matter is to me.

Thank you for your time,
Peace – Peace – Peace
Chris Sherbak, DAL (MG77)
1654 W. Courtland St.
Chicago, IL 60622
312-235-2839

I would like to be considered:
[ ] Active -- Current address:
_____
_____
_____

[ ] Inactive -- I hereby allow my vote in the Council of Dalon ap Landu, of the Reformed Druids of North America, to be added to the majority vote of any issue brought to the Council's attention. This proxy will be null and void on the first day of January, 1990.

Signed: _____
Date: _____
Name: _____
(please print or type)

P.S. If you know of any other 3rds, please pass along a copy of this, or call be and I'll be happy to send them one. Thanks!

Celtic Old Religions of Wales

By Thomas M. Cross

There is evidence that the Celtic old religions survived into the Elizabethan times in Wales. In Keith Thomas' *Religion and the Decline of Magic* there is a report by John Penry from his *Three Treatises Concerning Wales* (17th Century) of thousands of Welshmen who knew nothing of Christ and "yea almost never heard of him." In Penry's treatises, he also remarks that the Welsh held fairies in "astonishing reverence" and dares not "name them without honour." These tidbits of history are just part of the survivals of Celtic lore scattered throughout Britain and Ireland. Collectors of this kind of lore have helped to reconstruct a vague system of beliefs. One of the collectors was Romantic poet Edward Williams popularly known as Iolo Morganwg. He collected poetry of the bards, medieval manuscripts and copies from the thirteenth century on on the subject of old doctrines and customs. He gathered together his lore and published it with the help of the Welsh Manuscript Society. He purported to have discovered Druidic doctrines as he was influenced by the so-called Patriarchal theory of druid origins. Morganwg padded out his collection by concocting pseudo-druidic rituals concerning the Gorsedd (throne, also means stone circle) and the Eisteddfod (a festival and gathering of bards). Eis ideas were so influential that modern Druids of Wales use material from Morganwg's treasury. At the same time of the late 18th century of Morganwg, William Stukeley and his Druidical order thrived from the Patriarchal theory and he credited Druids as the builders of Stonehenge. Gerald Gardner in the 20th century collected the beliefs of witches and wrote about Witchcrafts founding the Wicca neo-pagan movement. W.B. Yeats worked on solving druidic questions in his work with the Golden Dawn's Hermetic Order. There have been countless other attempts but it would seem that either something is being overlooked or many Celtic reconstructionists had been motivated by their own backgrounds and prejudices. It is a difficult task to assemble the pieces without projecting too much into the material. An eclectic and open-minded approach seems to work best for the most part which has been successful with the R.D.N.A.

Christianity has pervaded Celtic-ism or Druidic survival. Rome had a big part in stamping out Brythonic Druids and evidence suggests that they went underground under the work of the bards. Celtic religion was synchretized Roman religions but the peasantry preserved the older ways even into Christian times when both fused in harmony. This mixing of Christian philosophy with paganism gave rise to the 'heretical beliefs' such as Pelagianism and romances about King Arthur and the 'Sangreal.' The animistic Fairy-Faith prevailed also. A good book to read about the Fairy-Faith is Evans-Wentz' *The Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries.* More studies have shown that the Druids of ancient times were a type of shaman. Shamans have shared many characteristics with Druids such as Otherworld journeys, magical healing powers, tree climbing rituals, knowledge about gods or spirits of earth, nature, and the Otherworld of the dead. Scholars have also shown the Indo-European connection between Druids, filidh, ollavs and bards with Brahmins, and holy men of Hindu culture. The Proto-Indo-Europeans had shamans, also evidence seen by Mircea Eliade in his book *Shamanism: Ancient Techniques of Ecstasy,* amongst the Scythians, Caucasians, Germans, and Iranians.

On the next pages I should like to present a collection of some of the symbology from Welsh folklore and traditions.[1]

Welsh Traditional Lore

Welsh names for the Fire Festivals

Welsh	Irish/Gaelic	Welsh to English Translation
Calan Gaeaf	Samhain	Winter Calends
Gwyl Clau	Brigit/Oimelc	Feast of Light
Calan Mai/ Gwyl Haf	Beltinne/Bealtinne	Feast of May 1st or Summer
Gwyl Awst	Lughnasadh	August Festival

Solstices and Equinoxes

Welsh*		Irish/Gaelic Equivalents
Alban Arthan	Winter Solstice	An Fheill Shlimein
Alban Eiler	Spring Equinox	Co thad Thrath
Alban Hefin	Summer Solstice	Grian-stad
Alban Elfed	Fall/Autumnal Equinox	Co thad Thrath

*From *Barddas* tradition

Welsh Otherworlds

Annwn	Otherworld or Netherworld (AH-noon)
Caer Sidi	Revolving Castle (Kyre-siddy)
Caer Bannawag	Elevated Square Castle (Bahn-nowg)
Caer Pendryfan	Four-cornered Castle (Pen-DRI-van)
Caer Wydyr	Glass Castle (WUH-dr)
Caer Peddwidd	Castle of Drunken Feasts (Veth-with) th as in 'this'
Abred	Lowly existence, plants and animals or inanimate nature
Gwynfyd	Bliss, felicity, blessedness. Man and high forms of thought
Ceugant	Levels of the deity or deities. Perfection. Infinity.
Or	
Abred	Pre-birth…development of a person's soul.
Gwynfyd	Destiny of Man's souls. Re-incarnation or Transmigration
Ceugant	The guide of Mankind's souls.
Abred	Material level, terrestrial. EARTH
Gwynfyd	Blessedness of the heavens ATMOSPHERE
Ceugant	Throne of the high God beyond the Earth's atmosphere SPACE
Afalon	(Avalon) The Apple Isle of the Otherworld

The Welsh Fairies

Bendith Y Kamau	Glamorgan name for fairies. "Mother's Blessing."
Cochion	The red ones. Similar to Irish Fomors.
Coed Y Digoed Mawr	Forest of the red ones.
Cwn Annwn	The Dogs of the Otherworld, foretell death by howling.
Coblynau	Mines and dwarves similar to Cornish knockers.
Cyhyraeth	A Welsh spirit that has qualities similar to the Irish Banshee. They moan before unnatural death.
Gwrach Y Rhybyn	The Welsh equivalent to the Irish Banshee.
Gwragedd Annwn	Water maidens living in Welsh lakes who enchant men with their beauty and take men as husbands.
Gwartheg Y Llyn	Sprits of Cattle (of lakes).
Gwyllion	Ugly female fairies of mountainsides leading travelers to peril at night on mountain roads.
Llamhigyn Y Dwr	The Water Leaper…a toad with wings who confounds Welsh fishermen
Afanc	A water monster of Llyn Yr Afanc on the River Conwy. This Llyn was a whirlpool which sucked animals and people down to its depth with the help of the Afanc, which was thought to resemble a huge beaver or crocodile.
Ellylldan	The Jack O'Lantern or Wills of the Wisp. Ignis fatuus.
Ellyllon	Welsh elves. Ellyll—elf.
Dynion Bach Teg	Wee Fair Men or Fair Little Men.
Y Tylwyth Teg	The fair tribe or family. Welsh name for Fairies.
Bwbach	Ghost, phantom, bogy.
Ty Bwbach	A haunted house. Ffynnon Bwbach—haunted well.
Plant Annwn	Fairies of the Otherworld, their wives and daughters being the Gwragedd Annwn, their dogs Cwn Annwn, their cattle the Gwartheg Y Llyn and their king being Arawn or Gwynn Ap Nudd…the leader of the dead in the afterlife.
Plentyn Newid	A changling.
Bwci	A goblin or ghost. Plac Y Bwci—goblin's home.
Pwca	A shape-shifting spirit seen as variety of different creatures but often as a possessed horse.
Bwgan	A rural ghost of a friendly nature.
Ysbryd	Spirit or ghost.
Rheibio	To curse or bewitch, to ravish or ravage.

Welsh Object of Magic

The Cauldron of in Rebirth	(Pair Dadeni) Used by Bran the Blessed the Mabinogion. Bran is sometimes called Bendigeidfran.
The Cauldron of 'Undry'	Used by the Dagda, a cauldron of Plenty
Cauldron of Annwn or Inspiration	Connected with Ceridwen in *Manes Taliesin,* Manawydan, Pwyll, Pryderi and Ogyrvran in *The Mabinogion* tales.

The Sacred Customs of Hospitality

According to Celtic Customs of Ireland, guest are always welcomed with a feast, and it was considered a dishonour to turn away guests without feeding them. Careful attention was given to the size of a cooking pot or cauldron to make sure it cooked up enough to fill the guest with plenty of food. This custom may have produced the belief in cauldrons of plenty or immortality in the Otherworld. Goibniu (Gofannon) the smith brewed an ale or beer which gave immortality to those who drank it. Mider the son of the Dagda had a similar had a similar cauldron. Ceridwen's cauldron boiled for a year and a day and contained an assortment of herbs including near toxic hallucinogens, her Yfaggdu was supposed to drink to become inspired to make up for his ugliness. A ritual of drinking hallucinogenic potions or intoxicating libations may owe its origin to the same that Brahmins' drinking of the Soma…which could be shamanic use of drugs or alcohol. Evidence shows that this drinking from the cauldron of inspiration was a rite of initiation to gain second sight.

Other Welsh Objects of Magic

The Glain Meidr (Gline Mider) or *Adder's Stone*.

A glass bead of blue or green carved or inlaid with white enamel. This served as a survival of the *Ovum Anguinus* refered to by Pliny and was used for divination or as a good luck charm. In Cornwall these were referred to as *Myl Pref* (a thousand snakes) and were blue beads with a yellow wavy line painted on to represent the snake or serpent. The Scottish Museum ash adder stones too.

The Ash Wand or Staff was used in Wales for the healing properties it was believed to possess. These wands were decorated with spirals making them appear to be a counterpart of the *caduceus.*

The Ogham Alphabet of notches and lines were shown to have been used in Wales in early times. According to tradition, oghams and similar Celtic versions of runes were carved on twigs called *coelbren* and were the Brythonic counterpart of Norse rune-sticks. The alphabets were used on stone also called *coelfain* and rods called *ebillion*. These items were used for divination as well as secret codes for communication between druids, and also served as mnemonic devices. There is also the druid's cord—a string of 13 knots on one strand used for probably the same as the above items, and is believed to be the origin of Catholic rosary beads. The rosary beads were once thought to be of Eastern origin but now it has been shown to be of British monk's origin. The number 13 for the knots reminds us of the Tree-Calendar presented by Robert Graves in *The White Goddess,* in which each of the 13 months is symbolized by a tree of the Ogham alphabet. It has been suggested that the oghams were of Post-Christian Irish origin but now it is accepted as a pre-Christian alphabet invented by Q-Celts (the Goidhels).

To be continued next issue…

[1]Welsh lore presented here can be found in *Barddas* (1862) Rev. John Williams Ab Ithel; *The Mabinogion,* Gwyn & Thomas Jones and books by Lewis Spence, Nora K. Chadwick, Anne Ross, W.Y. Evans-Wentz, and Roger Sherman Loomis.

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Beltane 1983
Volume 7 Number 3

Beltane Essay: Shafts and Gatherings

By Emmon Bodfish

eltaine, one of the greatest, and, now-a-days, best known, of the Old Celtic High Days, it marks the beginning of Samhradh, summer, and the "Season of Life." Historically, it signaled the moving of the herds out to summer pastures in the mountains. Great fires were build to welcome back the Sun, and the cattle were driven through the flames for purification before starting on their way to the high meadows. The Druid caste, priests and priestesses, presided over these rites at which all the clans gathered together at the ritual sites such as Tara and Carnutes for celebration, planning, and deliberation. Quarrels were settled and justice meted out. This was another Druid function, that of magistrate, with a specialized sub-group of the priestly class acting as judges. Sacrifices were offered to Belenos and on the Continent, to Gaulish and Galatian analogs of this Indo-European Sky God. Another opinion holds that this derivation of Beltaine from the name of a sun god, Beal, is problematical, and that Beltaine was, like Samhain, a festival of all the Gods and Goddesses.

For the New Reformed Druids of North America, it is the beginning of the Season of Life and the end of the Season of Sleep. The first spirits of the year will be added to the Chalice of Waters that is shared at each service, and the Third Order members will change their ceremonial ribbons, worn over the fronts of their robes, from white to red ribbons. The Earth Mother wakes from her winter sleep, and chants and praises are addressed to her.

Live Oak Grove plans to inaugurate the shaft grave, a Toll-Uaigh, we have dug this winter at Larry Press's (Archdruid) instigation, with an offering of some of the new Waters of Life from the first chalice of the new season. Shaft graves were build in Ancient Gaul, and perhaps elsewhere in Druidic lands. Offerings presumably to the Earth Mother, were put into these deep shafts at different times over a long period. Some of the "Tolls" were twelve meters deep, and offerings might include a whole tree. We plan to offer a piece of the sacrifice at each service which will be put into the shaft after the rest of the sacrifice has been placed in the altar fire.

And now for a different opinion…

David Rooney is from the Ancient and Royal Order of Druids in America/Aquarian Wicca. It is to be noted that this is a completely different organization from the Reformed Druids of North America (who publishes the Missal-Any) and our various groves, and has nothing whatever in common with us beyond a friendly interest. (Now I have said the necessary disclaimer that keeps us all legal with the laws of the United States of America, another organization with which we have no affiliation.)

Beltane, A Goodly Fire

By David DePaul

Beltane is the third of the Grand Sabbats of the Witches' Year. It is also one of the most important of the Fire-festivals celebrated by the Celtic people of western Europe.

The Beltane Fires, of the Goodly Fire, was kindled by the Druids in honor of the Mother Goddess, known as the Cailleach, that represented the winter Hag. At Beltane, she did not turn to stone as some traditions believed, but in reality changed into a beautiful Maiden who represented the May Queen that wedded the Young Lord, who was later to become the Corn-King. Since the name of the Cailleach was later changed by the Druids in Erin to the name of Mari, it was Mari who was later invoked by the druids into the May Queen during her coronation on Beltane.

Since the fertility of the Earth and the May Queen were of utmost importance to the Celts, both the Cauldron jump and the Maypole dance played a very large role during the Beltane celebration, as at this time the May Queen began her role as the Corn Maiden. It was the Magickal Powers of the Corn Maiden and the Corn-King combined that was favored by the Gods, and the Great Mother that insured a bountiful harvest in the later part of the Witches' Wheel or Year. The dance of Mari, which is performed prior to the Maypole dance is often called the dance of the sacred wheel.

In Wales and Elsewhere, the Beltane Fires were kindled by the Druids by rubbing two Oak sticks together. It is also well known that certain of the more learned of the Druids kindled the Beltane fires with the use of crystals from the rays of the Sun, and were the Keepers of the Sacred Fires during the course of the day, as well as the night.

The Hay Fires were always started by using the faggots of the prior year. The ashes left from the Fire festivals were used for many different magickal purposes too numerous to go into detail about at this time.

The first of May is also celebrated by the Druids in the Isle of Man as being the anniversary of Baal. The Baal Fires were worshipped as the spark of the Sun God, Baal. This custom was, of course, handed down to the Druids and Celts from much earlier Pagan sources.

Other Celtic May Day customs include invoking the powers of the tree spirits and becoming one with them, the placing of a green bush or bough before or upon the house of a beloved maiden for purposed of the curing of barrenness, the planting of a May tree before every house in the village, the singing of May songs, and the wearing of crowns of flowers out shortly after midnight on the morning of the first of May.

The most important of these customs (after the selection of the May Queen) was of course, the erection of the May Pole, which was made from a tree sacred to the Celtic people that was stripped of its branches. The younger folk danced around the pole during the day, and the older folk during the night. The most important thing that is observed every year, a new May Tree was used, and a new May Pole was used, and a New May Queen was selected.

In some Celtic traditions, the Harvest Lord was replaced every year, but the Irish Celts had Harvest Lords that served for a cycle of seven years, becoming the young Lord and Harvest Lord at their death at Samhain the last year of their reign.

That Beltane is both a Rite and Celebration of the Fertility of the Earth, and a very important Rite of Dedication to the Great Mother, is indeed the case, and should be considered as such by all Craft of the Wise that are interested in following the Old Ways in their original customs and traditions.

Notes on the Origin of Dalon Ap Landu

By Tom Cross

Dalon — Sounds similar to Dylan. Dylan is pronounced Dullen in Welsh, not Dillon as was mispronounced by Dylan Thomas or Bob Dylan, who is still perpetuating the Anglicised pronunciation with his pseudonym.

Dylan is the name of Mabinogion deity named Dylan Eil Ton the son of Gwydion and Arianrhod was slain by his uncle Gofannon (Goibhniu). His epithet Eil Ton means 'akin to the wave,' so named because he took to the sea at birth.

Notice elements of his name look much like the reverse of Landu. Dy—Lan
Lan—du.

Daron — Defined in Heini Gruffydd's *Enwau I'r Cymru* (Welsh Personal Names) as the name of the Goddess of the oak.

Daronwy is the masculine form of the same above name. Name of British King in Arthurian and Welsh legend; supposedly born on the Isle of Anglesey.

Daronwy is cognate with Taranís (Gaulish God offered human sacrifices by burning. Mentioned in Lucan's poem *Pharsalia*).

Daronwy — Da-rony-wy (Cymric…from Brythonic)

Taranis — Ta-ran-is (Gaulish with Latino-Greek orthography)

-wy and –is are both masculine endings in the given contexts. Note the inflexional endings preserved in Gaulish names rendered into Latin or Greek texts. Many times Latin inflexions are tagged onto Gaulish words…such as Belinus for Belenos. Greek rendered Belinus thus: (Greek letters), which was then transliterated Belenos, true to Gaulish. The Gauls often used the Greek alphabet for written language.

Taran, Toran, Thor — *Taranis* is cognate with Welsh and Cornish Taran. Taran means lightning and thunder in Welsh and Cornish…though more often it is restricted to thunder as a noun. In Irish the equivalent is Torann…which should be quite close to Thor (pronounced *Tor* in Scandinavian languages.)

Esus, Teuates, Taranis — Dumézil held a theory of the triple God onf Indo-Europeans e.g. Odin, Thor, Freyar. Offered sacrifices by stabbing, hanging, and drowning. Odin received the hanged victims.

Lucan presents us with the various forms of execution of sacrifice to ESVS, TARANIS, TEVTATES by hanging, burning and drowning…in that order. Perhaps this was a triple God form like Odin, Thor and Frey as Georges Dumézil suggests in his theories…Along with Mitra, Varuna, Agni and Iupiter, QVIRINVS, MARS etc.

Landu — Llan—in Old Welsh meant a sacred enclosure or shrine…i.e. a Grove for Druidic rites.

Later, the word Llan came to be used in a Christian context. Llan—shrine for a Holy man or saint, as in Llanfair…Shrine of St. Mary. Llan Mair (mutated).

Llan — Now denotes a church or village in Modern Living Welsh. The Modern Welsh word for grove is Llwyn. Llwyn took over the meaning of Llan. Example: *Y Llwyn On* "the Ash Grove".

Du — Dark or Black. Gaelic equivalent being *Dubh.*

Llan du — Dark Grove or shrine. Llandu is a black grove or Dark grove.

Ap — Is mutated form of Map (Mab) the Welsh equivalent of *Mac.* Map is mutated to Fab or Ap (pronounced Ab) (Fab is pronounced Vab). Mutation is the system like the Gaelic aspiration which in Irish turns *Mac* into *Mhuic* (Vic) etc.

Dalon Ap Landu — Landu is the mutated form of Llandu because it is preceded by Ap making it a modifying object with preposition understood in context. It is a noun-adjective. Dalon could be a corruption of Daron(wy) or a corruption of Dylan.

Dalen — Welsh word for leaf. Dalen (leaf) Ap (son) Landu (of Dark Grove)

Llandu — Could be translated as Dark Lake if we dare to stretch the name Llan to be a form of Llyn (Lake) Llyn-du. There is a river in Llyn, Caernafonshire called Daron.

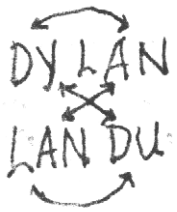
Daron — As an Oak goddess may be the consort or daughter of the Oak god.

Footnotes and Bibliography:

Celtic Folklore, Sir John Rhys. Allusions to Daronwy.
Enwau I'r Cymry, Heini Gruffydd. *Daron* as Oak goddess
Mabinogion, Gwyn & Thom. Jones, Charlotte Guest, Patrick K. Ford, Jeffrey Gantz etc.

De Bello Civili, Lucan	Teutates—drowned victims
Pharsalia, Lucan	Esus—hanged victims
	Taranis—burned victims.

Maximus of Tyre said that oak was the symbol of the Celtic "Zeus" Thunder god.



DA = Good

Padstow May Song.

Cornwall, where Padstow is located, is one of the Celtic areas of Britain, which preserved the old traditions despite invasions of the Anglo-Saxons and the Normans.

Cry: Oss Oss, Wee Oss!

1. Unite and unite and let us all unite
   For summer is a-come unto day
   And whither we are going, we will all unite
   In the merry morning of May.

2. With a merry ring and now the joyful spring
   For summer is a-come unto day.
   O give to us a cup of ale and the merrier we will sing
   In the merry morning of May.

3. The young men of Padstow they might if they would…
   For summer is a-come unto day
   They might have built a ship and gilt it all in gold
   In the merry morning of May.

4. The young women of Padstow that might if they would
   For summer is a-come unto day.
   They might have made a garland with the white rose and the red.
   In the merry morning of May.

5. Where are those young men that now should here dance?
   For summer is a-come unto day.
   O some they are in England and some they are in France.
   In the merry morning of May.

   O where is St. George?
   O where is he-o?
   He's out in his long-boat
   All on the salt sea-o.

   Up flies the kite
   Down falls the lark-o
   And Urusla Birdhood she had an old yowe [ewe]
   And she died in her own park-o.

6. With a merry ring and now the joyful spring
   For summer is a come unto day.
   So happy are those little birds and the merrier we will sing
   In the merry morning of May.

"Oss Oss, Wee Oss" is the cry that goes up from a "united" body of Padstow townspeople. The horse is in fact a man in disguise. He carries on his shoulders a heavy hoop about six feet in diameter covered with a black-painted canvas skirt, and a hobby horse head and tail. The head is a black, white and red painted mask with a tall pointed hood. The horse is preceded by a sailor carrying a painted club, known as "The Teaser." On May eve when the church clock strikes twelve, the horse comes out of his winter stable and follows a traditional route through streets and gardens, stopping to sing a special "Night Song." Just as it is getting light the young men go out and "steal" greenery from the squire's plantation and decorate the town. A Maypole stands in the main square from which flags are strung in all directions. As Horse and Teaser dance and sway through the town, the townspeople sing the Day Song. Frequently, the horse lies down as if dead, and each time after the St. George part of the song, the Teaser bangs the horse with his club and it leaps up, resurrected. Ursula Birdhood may be St. Ursula, known as a protector of birds, who may herself be a Christianized form of the Earth Mother, worshiped as a fertility goddess.

The Padstow Hobby Horse is probably the most exuberant of all surviving English folk ceremonials.

Emmon's Note:

For initiation from Odin, seek the Norse Best Passage.

Calendar

Beltaine Service will be held on astronomical Beltaine, May 5th, at 5:30 P..M. at Live Oak Grove, Orinda. The Beltaine Celebration and Maypole dance will be on Saturday May 7, at NOON at Live Oak Grove, bring 20 yards of your favorite color ribbon. Regular services will be on Sunday, May 29 and June 12, at NOON.

Beltaine Chant

PR: And the God of the Sun did arise from His tomb in the South; and once more did He fare forth to His children in the Northern lands. (Pause) O Belenos, O Thou unchanging God of many names, but one Face, we, Thy children, welcome Thee back to our lands.
Chorus: O Lord of Light, we welcome Thee.
PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, long have we awaited Thy return, that the coldness of the Night might be taken from our lands.
Chorus: O God of Sun, We welcome Thee.

*****

PR: The nights were long, the trees had shed,
Chorus: The night had conquered day.
PR: The days were short, and life had fled.
Chorus: The night had conquered day.
PR: The winds were cold, the land seemed dead,
Chorus: The night had conquered day.
PR: But the Sun returns from the Southern lands.
Chorus: Balanced now are we.
PR: Plants spring up on every hand,
Chorus: Balanced now are we.

PR: "Let Life return!" is the Sun's command.
Chorus: Balanced now are we.
PR: The Sun grows stronger every day.
Chorus: The Day will conquer night.
PR: The world grows lush and Life holds sway,
Chorus: The Day will conquer night.
PR: So let us praise Him in all ways.

*****

PR: O Belenos, O Sun, we praise Thee at Thy return to our midst. Welcome art Thou among us.
Chorus: Bless with thy presence, O Lord of Light.
PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, bless us with Thy warmth and light, that we may rejoice in Thy sight.
Chorus: Bless us and light our way, O God of the Sun.

Aside:

Bob Blunt asks: A Druid sickle usually has a blade on one side; I have a sickle with a sharp blade on both sides, does that count as a Druid bi-sickle?

A Druid Missal-Any
Summer Solstice 1983
Volume 7 Number 4

Summer Solstice Essay:
Danu and Diana

By Emmon Bodfish

idsummer Solstice, one of the four astronomical high-days of the Celtic year, is associated with the Druid goddess Danu, mother of the gods, the Tuatha de Danann. She is probably the same figure as the Irish goddess Anu and the Breton Ana. She may be cognate with the classic goddess Diana, not only on the grounds of word origins, but on the witness of Gallo-Roman writers who noted the similarities in character and type in the days when her worship was still current in Gaul. She is associated with fertility, particularly of women, and with the boar totem, as was Diana the huntress and the earlier Greek Artemis. The virgin aspect of this Moon and fertility goddess was emphasized in the lands bordering the Mediterranean, and the mother aspect in Western and Northern Europe.

Her festival was on midsummer day, and traces of the old customs continue in Celtic lands. On the Isle of Man, it is customary to wear a spring of Mugwort, a plant also sacred to Roman Diana, and reputed, in England, to bring a young woman dreams of her future husband. That the Christian Church chose this day for one of its major saints, John the Baptist, may indicate that it was attempting to displace a major pagan festival and deity. Many of the customs carried on into modern times on "St. John's" day, seem singularly at odds with the stern, rather puritan character of the man who was beheaded for refusing to retract his condemnation of King Herod's incestuous behavior. These include dancing in the streets, all night bonfires, public song fests, and encouragement of amatory games among the young.*

*This sounds interesting, but Ward Rutherford, *The Druids*, does not elaborate.

News of the Groves

Contra County Sheriff-Coroner Investigates the Druids

When we came trooping down the hill from the Grove after services April 16th, we found in our driveway a compact white Valient squad-car with "Orinda Sheriff/Coroner" lettered across the door. The car was empty.

We "Hello-ed" around the property, no answer, no sheriff anywhere. In looking over his car, we noticed that every dent had been labeled with the date on which it had happened. "That's very efficient." Larry noted. Emmon suggested we take a fine-tipped black grease pencil of our own, and, on a clean, undented panel of the door, print a similar date for some time in the future. But about then we heard a crunching of bushes and underbrush and followed the sound around to the west side of the house to greet a wet, muddy Sheriff-Coroner emerging from the shrubbery. He had missed the path to the Grove and gone up an old deer trail to the west of our property.

It seems some home-owner on the other side of the valley had called in and reported suspicious activities by robed figures who seemed to be enacting a burial. The digging work on the toll-uaigh, or our gardening, was being watched. We explained to the Sheriff who we are, who the R.D.N.A. is, and that we are essentially quite harmless. No, we're not doing any burials. Larry assured the officer that we are in the process of getting legal status as a religious organization, and are taking our the necessary papers. From the description that the sheriff quoted to us, our concerned neighbor must have some fairly powerful binoculars, and have been watching for a while. Emmon asked the officer to extend to the caller our invitation to come and join us next service. Too late, after the lawman left, we thought it would be nice to have given him a copy of the Missal-Any to take back to that citizen.

The next day, Monday, we had a visit from the Fire Marshall who found the usual number of minor infractions of various codes, and left us a list of required repairs. Two days later we had a visit from another official, claiming to be from the County Health Department. He wanted to know how many people lived at Emmon's house, which is next to the Grove Site, on the assumption that all "alternative types" live in filthy illegal commune/crashpads. Emmon told him "myself and my son, as you can see on the census rolls." And declined to answer any further questions until he could consult with our attorney. The officer has not been back.

Later that week, we noticed some disturbances up at the Grove Site: the birch sapling pulled away from its stake and bent down, the cover taken off the toll-uaigh, and heavy foot prints through the clover and vetch ground cover, all probably attributable to the curiosity of the same neighbor who called the Sheriff.

That was six weeks ago, and nothing more has happened. The dreaded next installment, "All About Religious Intolerance" has so far not materialized.

Beltaine Live Oak Grove 1983

Beginning the May Pole Dance. Larry and Joan

Wait a minute here…

Tying off the ribbons"

Just what exactly *is* the difference between a goblin and a hobgoblin?

Subscribe to the Druid Missal-Any and find out, $2.50/year or 12 stamps. Write to: Live Oak Grove, 616 Miner Rd. Orinda, California, 94653.

When the moon has lived
Six days,
The sickle flashes
And the mistletoe
trembles and falls.
Woe to the man who puts
His hand to the oak.
Bole, branch, and twig
Live by the god's power.

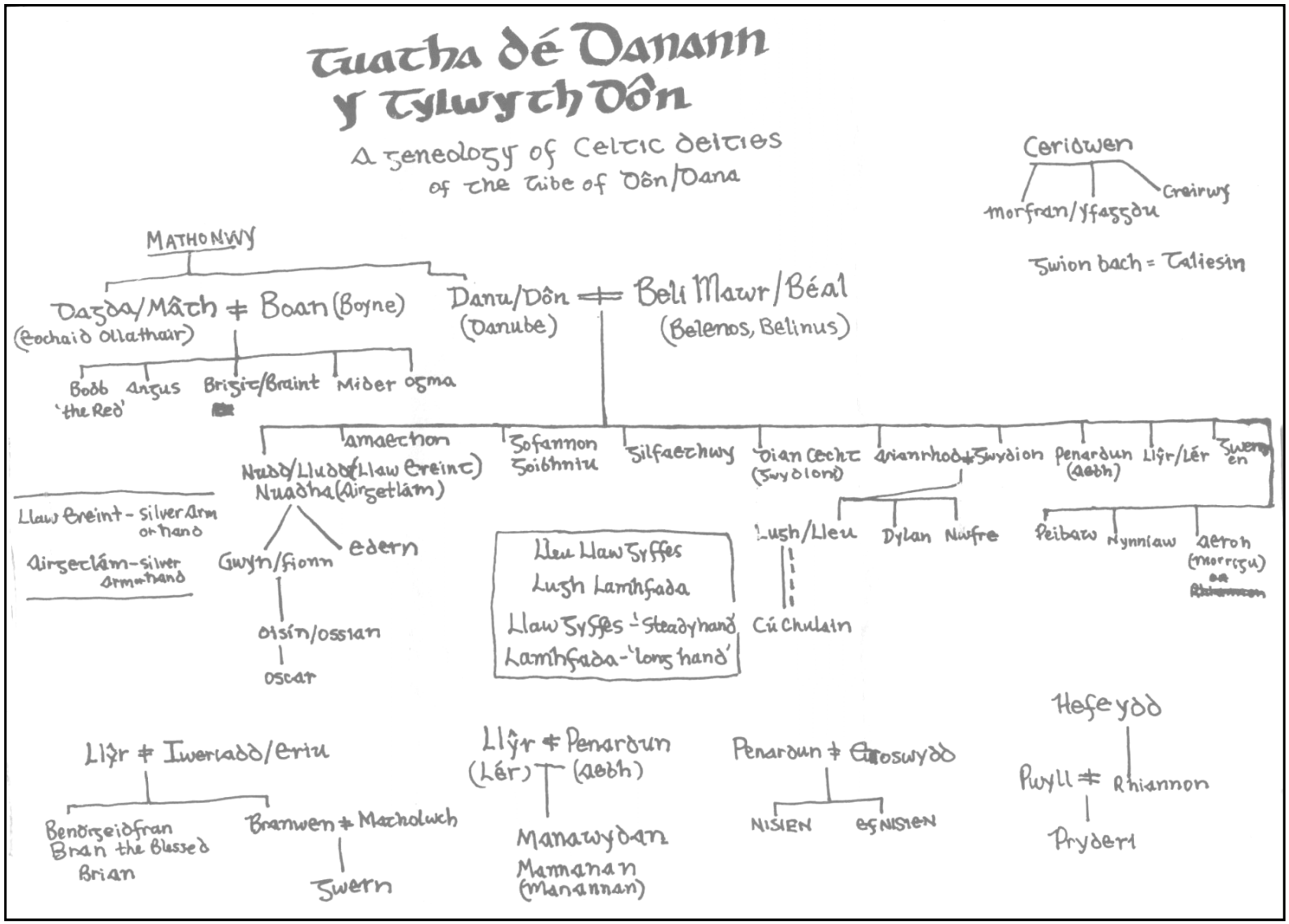
Paladin has Finished Casting the Bronze Sickles!

Our sickles are ready and for sale. They are made of silicon-bronze, are 100 degree lunate arc, 5 ½ inches tip to tang and 7/8 inches across the blade. Each has a 2 ½ inch long, undrilled tang for mounting a handle of your own choosing. They are rough finished and can be polished and sharpened to your needs. Directions for finish polishing and mounting of a handle will be shipped along with each sickle, $40.00 plus $3.00 postage. These are recommended to all Third Order Druids; a $10 deposit hold one for 90 days.

(As of this writing, we have seven of them left.)

Calendar

Solstice will be celebrated on June 21st at 6:00 P.M., assemble at Live Oak Grove at 5:30. Regular services will be on June 12 and 26, and on July 10 and 24, at 1:00 Pacific Standard Time. Any questions, call 254-1387.


Tuatha dé Danann
y Tylwyth Dôn
A genealogy of Celtic deities
of the tribe of Dôn/Dana
Ceridwen
Morfran/Yfagddu
Creirwy
Gwion bach = Taliesin
MATHONWY
Dagda/Mâth ≠ Boan (Boyne)
(Eochaid Ollathair)
Danu/Dôn (Danube)
Beli Mawr/Béal
(Belenos, Belinus)
Bodb 'the Red'
Angus
Brigit/Braint
Mider
Ogma
Amaethon
Gofannon
Goibhniu
Silfaethwy
Dian Cecht (Gwydion)
Arianrhod
Gwydion
Penardun (Aeth)
Llŷr/Lér
Gwern
Nudd/Lludd (Llaw Ereint)
Nuadha (Airgetlám)
Llaw Ereint - silver arm or hand
Airgetlám - silver arm-hand
Gwyn/Fionn
Edern
Oisín/Ossian
Oscar
Lleu Llaw Gyffes
Lugh Lamhfada
Llaw Gyffes - 'steady hand'
Lamhfada - 'long hand'
Lugh/Lleu
Dylan
Nwfre
Cú Chulain
Peibaw
Nynniaw
Aeron (Morrigu) or Rhiannon
Llŷr ≠ Iweriadd/Eriu
Benörgeidfran
Bran the Blessed
Brian
Branwen ≠ Macholwch
Gwern
Llŷr ≠ Penardun
(Lér) (Aeth)
Manawydan
Mannanan
(Manannan)
Penardun ≠ Euroswydd
Nisien
Efnisien
Hefeydd
Pwyll ≠ Rhiannon
Pryderi

A Druid Missal-Any Lughnasadh 1983 Volume 7 Number 5

Lughnasadh Essay: (More) Funeral Games

By Emmon Bodfish

ughnasadh, the festival of Lugh, The Light, or anciently, the funeral games for Lugh, the all-competent hero-god associated with the Sun. He is analogous to the Classical Apollo and now, with Midsummer's past, it is evident that the Sun is sinking lower. It is also the feast of the First Fruits and the beginning of the Harvest Season, Foghar. This feast and concept may predate Lugh and the coming of the Celts to the British Isles. As Marie-Louise Sjoestedt explains, in considering the Druid Traditions,

"We must dismiss the notion of one deity as titular, or associated with a particular function, in favour of the notion of diverse realizations of a single religious idea, groups of deities, probably local, at least in origin, who are not identical but equivalent with each other, having evolved among different peoples, perhaps at different times, from the same generative impulse. We shall find at every point of the epic tradition similar figures as mothers and teachers, no longer goddesses, they become heroines."

One such group comprises the "seasonal goddesses, patronesses of the great feasts of Ireland, and of the sacred places where these feasts are celebrated: Macha, the Machas really, and Carman, Tailtiu, Tea and the three Morrigna." The Machas are often associated with horses, and are the patronesses of the Assembly of Macha which was held at the feast of Lughnasadh, in the first week of August. A Macha, singular, is on e of the three war goddesses, and also the patroness of childbirth. The equivalency of battle and birth as the hour of danger and a rite of passage for men and women respectively was noted by several other pagan peoples. The Aztec tradition reserved one of the highest tiers of Paradise for men who died in battle and women who died in giving birth.

News of the Groves

Live Oak Grove

The Fire Marshal has paid us a second visit, and, since no one was present at the Grove, left us a second notice, and a note that still more brush must be cleared from around the house. Emmon, the Preceptor, has written him a letter to the effect that we are working hard on it. This seems to have calmed matters down for the present.

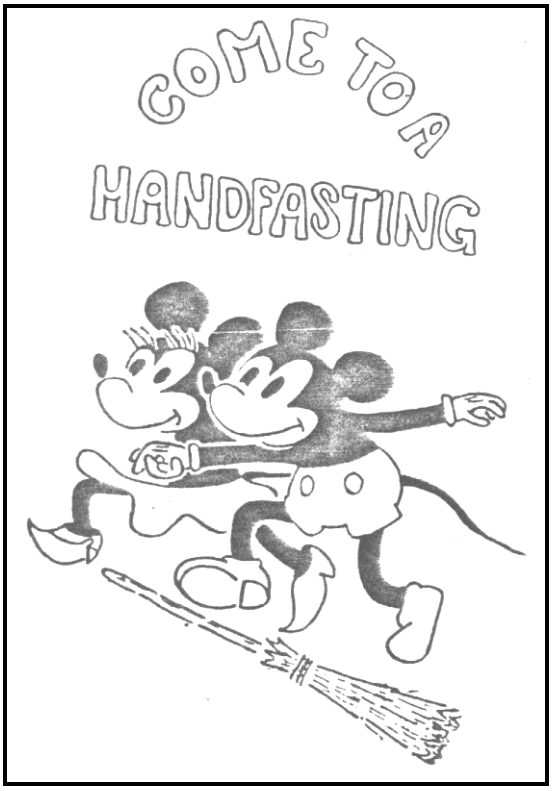
Bob Blunt, the Server, comments:

We won't suffer in perdition
It's not part of this tradition
We just pack up and go fishin'
And that's good enough for me.

We don't cough and we don't sneeze
So we frolic 'mongst the trees
Sniffing fresh air on the breeze
And that's good enough for me.

It seems our behavior
Has stirred interest from a neighbor
Our persistence still won't waiver
And that's good enough for me.

He has sent here to alar ya
Although he cannot harm ya
Just wish he should meet his karma
And that's good enough for me.



Larry Press, Live Oak Grove's Archdruid, and Sue Zartmann, will be handfasted this Lughnasadh.

The long-awaited handfasting of Minne (AKA Susan) and Mickey (AKA Larry) is happening AT LAST!

We're having a pot luck beforehand (so those on Pagan Standard can show up on time), continuing afterward till whenever. Bring your favorite food-groovy, beverage, etc.; musical instruments (plus musicians) are welcome.

The Critics Rave

"…she can cook, and sew too…" – His aunt
"What took you so long?" – His father
"They make such a cute couple." –His mother
"Thank God." – Her mother
"We've all got to get our feet we sometime." –The downstairs neighbor
"Oh yeay, Press finally got his act together." – Her ex-roomie
"He certainly seems devoted to her." – His sister

Happy Lughnasadh

The Paper Work Harvest:

Bountiful, Long Awaited

State of California
Franchise Tax Board
Sacramento, California 95867

July 13, 1983
In reply to
343:APP:MS:vs:g

Reformed Druids of North America, Inc.
616 Miner Road
Orinda, CA 94563

Purpose: Church
Form of Organization: Corporation
Accounting Period Ending:
Organization Number:

On the basis of the information submitted and provided your present operations continue unchanged or conform to those proposed in your application, you are exempt from state franchise or income tax under Section 23701d. Revenue and Taxation Code. Any change in operation, character or purpose of the organization must be reported immediately to this office so that we may determine the effect on your exempt status. Any change of name or address also must be reported.

You are required to file Form 199 (Exempt Organization Annual Information Return) or Form 199B (Exempt Organization Annual Information Statement) on or before the 15th day of the 5th month (4 ½ months) after the close of your accounting period. See annual instruction with forms for requirements.

You are not required to file state franchise or income tax returns unless you have income subject to the unrelated business tax under Section 23731 of the Code. In this event, you are required to file Form 109 (Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return) by the 16th day of the 5th month (4 ½ months) after the close of your annual accounting period.

If the organization is incorporating, this approval will expire unless incorporation is completed with the Secretary of State within 60 days.

Exemption from federal income or other taxes and other states taxes require separate applications.

J. Kudo, Supervisor
Entral Audit Section
Telephone (800) 852-7050

cc. Secretary of State
Cooper, Reed & Everett

Just what exactly *is* the difference between a goblin and a hobgoblin?

Hob is an old English name for the Devil. So a Hobgoblin is a goblin in the service of a dvil or some other entity, whereas a just plain goblin is his own man.

You can subscribe to the Druid Missal-Any by sending $2.00 or 10, 20 cent stamps to Live Oak Grove, 616 Miner Rd, Orinda, 94563.

When the moon has lived
Six days,
The sickle flashes
And the mistletoe
trembles and falls.
Woe to the man who puts
His hand to the oak.
Bole, branch, and twig
Live by the god's power.

The remaining sickles are being sold by Joan Carruth, Third Order, Chico Grove. The price is $40.00 plus $3.00 postage. Address requests to Joan Carruth, 1588 Fetters Street, Chico, California 95926.

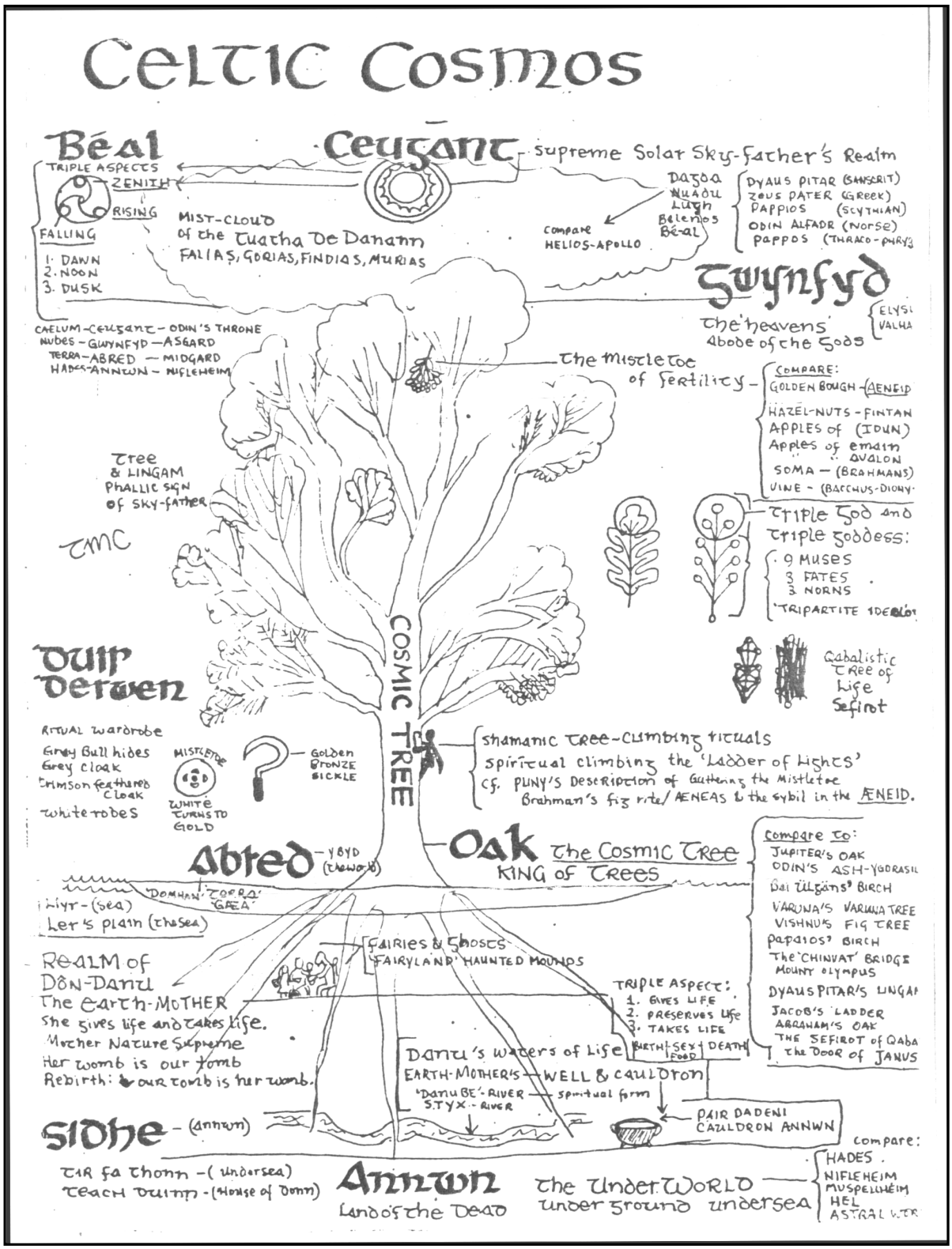
These sickles were cast by Paladin of solid bronze and have a 100 degree lunate arc, are 5 ½ inches tip to tang, and 7/8 of an inch, across the blade. Each has a 2 ½ inch long, undrilled tang for the mounting of a handle. They are rough finished and can be polished and sharpened to your needs. Directions for finish polishing and mounting of a handle will follow shipment of each sickle. (As of this writing, we have five of them left.)

Calendar

Lughnasadh will be celebrated at 1:00 PM, Daylight time, on Sunday the 7th of August. Regular Services will be held also at 1:00 PM P.D.T. on the 21st August, and on the 4th and 18th of September. (1:00 PM, daylight time, is solar noon: the Sun "Soughts". Please try to be here by then, unless you are Charlemagne's court magician, and can point upward and say "Sun, stand Thou still." And be obeyed.)

Aside

Fire is aboriginal television: Stare into some tonight.



A Druid Missal-Any
Fall Equinox 1983
Volume 7 Number 6

Fall Equinox Essay: Archeo-Astronomy

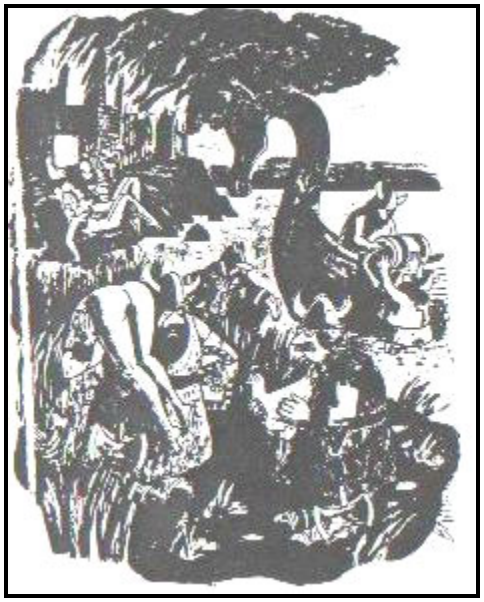
By Emmon Bodfish

all Equinox, this is the season associated with Cernunnos, the horned god, patron of hunters, wild creatures, herders and flocks. Writes Thomas Cross, of Post Oak Protogrove, Texas, the preferred spelling should be Cernunnos from the original inscription found in Gaul and dating from Roman times: _ERNUNNOS.

In its other aspect, the Fall Equinox is an astronomical holiday associated with marking the passage of time and the need to keep the calendar rectified. The Druids were astronomer-priests, as numerous classical authors attest. Watching the heavens, keeping the calendar and predicting lunar eclipses were among their skills and duties. But they were not the first people to be able to do this. They may have learned from the Megalithic cultures that predated them, either in the Indo-European homeland, or during the long trek across Europe before 1500 BC when they arrived in the British Isles. When they came to England, it was already inhabited by a thriving stone age culture which had built Stone Henge, by the use of which it could rectify its calendar and foretell eclipses of the Moon. Many archeologists now believe that the great monument is a perpetual calendar and sidereal computer. Its location and construction show a sophisticated knowledge of the heavens and the Earth. The Moon/eclipse system could have been worked out by careful record keeping over a long period of time, something ancient priesthoods were good at, but because of the geometry of the Earth/Moon/Sun system, it is possible to construct this type of stone marker system for both the Sun and Moon only at the exact latitude of Stonehenge. Calculation of this requires knowledge of mathematics and geometry. According to John Gribbin (*Timewarps*, Delacorte Press, 1979) "even 20 or 30 miles north or south, the doubly significant rectangular observing marker could not have been built."

The effort involved in the construction of this Megalith must have been great; by implication, the society that built it must have been both rich and stable, because in the first place, it could support a group of "wise ones" who were able to study the astronomical alignments over decades, and probably centuries, and to develop the mathematics necessary to plan the great observatory, and secondly it could take men out of active production for the long periods of time necessary to build the stone megalith, circles and ditch-works. Jim Duran, Ph.D. feels that the pre-Celtic people of Britain were organized in sets of matri-clans, based on fishing and hoe cultivation. Matri-clans foster a spirit of co-operative labor among men, as they are accustomed to working with other men from diverse family groups, wife's brothers, sisters' husbands, uncles, rather than feeling at ease only with his own family, his brothers, his father, as is usually the case in closed, patrilineal systems. The system of matri-clan organization is also a distinct advantage to a society engaged in long distance trading and raiding, as Duran thinks the ancient Britons were. Sea raiding may have helped to enrich the economy and make huge projects the economy and make huge projects like Stonehenge feasible. (See Emmon Bodfish's future monograph, "The Financing of Stonehenge.")

As Duran asserts, when the men are going to be away for long periods of time, raiding, trading or engaged in public works projects, they prefer to leave the homesteads in the care of their sisters and their mother's people, who will guard their mutual inheritance, rather than in the keeping of the wives, as under patrilineage. The wives would be from a different, also raiding clan, and their loyalty would be divided.



A chicken? You call that pillage?

Gribbon, reasoning from the workings of the marker stones at Stonehenge, deducts that basic megalithic calculations were in 3/1 and 7/1 ratios. These, especially three, were important numbers in Celtic ritual also. This may be the basis of our seven day week, an institution that pre-dates recorded history, in Northern Europe. Though the Druids did not build Stonehenge, they may have understood its workings, and certainly the working of the Solar calendar it marks. With it they could have calculated not only the Fall Equinox which is at 7:42 AM Pacific time this year, but also the fact that it is a Friday, though they would not have called it that. The names, as most people know, are Norse.

Emmon's Note:

Better wizardry than misery.

News of the Groves

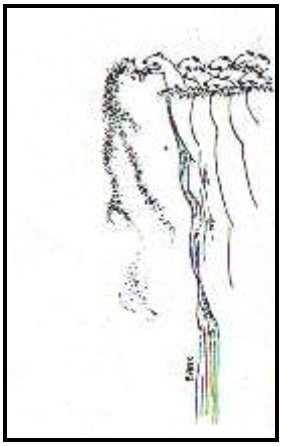
Joan Carruth, A.D. of Chico Grove, will be leaving Chico Sept 7, to return home to her native New England. She will be going back to school and be continuing her education in the Boston area. She was here visiting in the Bay Area the first week in September, and lead the service at Live Oak Grove, which she founded. Later we had a farewell party and carouse at Larry Press's, after shipping off her twenty three boxes of belongings, rail freight.

Tiki is now at Chico Grove and can be reached at the same address. To communicate with Joan about the purchase of the

remaining sickles, leave a message at or write to Live Oak Grove, 616 Miner Rd. Orinda, Calif. 94563.

The Votive Shaft, known Celtically as the Toll Uaigh, which we dug at the Grove Site last spring, (see the Beltaine issue of the Missal-Any) has developed a problem of chronic invasion and occlusion by gophers. It seems the Microtus californicus who have dug numerous tunnels under our lawn, find the deep shaft a convenient place to push the "mine tailings" from their constant burrow construction projects. It's not so much work as bringing them all the way up to the surface in the usual gopher mound method. This has necessitated digging the loose dirt out of the shaft over again several times before we could hold services and make our usual Toll Uaigh offering. We may get a terra-cotta pipe to line the shaft.

It has been suggested that the gophers may be holding services of their own and adding their offerings to those we bury at our traditional times.



At the Lughnasadh celebration on August 7, we added a ritual circumambulation of the Grove Site, ceremonially and permanently setting it apart from secular province and activities. The circle was drawn around it with the ritual staff, and an offering libation of Waters sprinkled out all along and through the way.

Bob Blunt, our Server at Live Oak Grove for the past year, has decided to take Third Orders and asks to be initiated to Third Order and accepted into the Council of Dalon Ap Landau. I will therefore formally ask if there are any Third Order Druids out there who have any objections or reservations? Write now, don't whine later, for as it says in the song, "The magic is layed on and it can't come off." He has been accepted for Thirds by Larry Press, Arch Druid of Live Oak Grove and will vigil on the 17th and 18th of September, and if successful be ordained on the 18th.

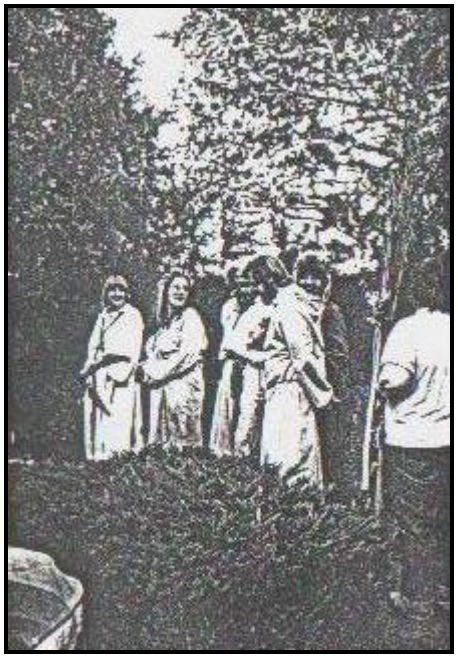
Speaking of irreversible happenings, the following pictures are from the handfasting of Larry and Sue on August 6, 1983. The occasion was starred with good weather, and colorful with new ceremonial robes made by Sue for the event. Danny Geller, author of several of the songs in The Druid Chronicles, carried the traditional broom.

Before the Ceremony

Lining up for the Procession

Daniel Hargar (officiating clergy), Sue & Larry

"Whada ya mean, you 'can't stand up in front of all these people' and object like we planned?"



Processing

The Handfasting

Calendar

Autumn Equinox will be celebrated on Friday the 23rd of September at 7:00 P.M. at the Grove Site at Live Oak Grove, Orinda. Regular Services will be held on Sunday the 25th of September and on the Sundays the 9th and the 23rd of October, at 1:00 P.M., PDT or 12:00 Standard Time. Look in the sky, and when the Daystar culminates, be at the Grove Site.

A Druid Missal-Any
Samhain 1983
Volume 7 Number 7

Samhain Essay: Talking to Ancestors

By Emmon Bodfish

amhain, in the Celtic traditions, begins the new year. It is "the time between the Worlds," the time that the dead may manifest again in our world or send us messages from theirs. In Eire it was the feast of Dagda. In a tradition that may be older than the Indo-European, spirits of departed ancestors are said to be able to send either prosperity or disease, fertility of crops or plague. If you have fulfilled all your ritual and practical obligations to your ancestors, and have not committed any defamations against their names, you have nothing to fear from ghosts on Samhain Eve.

If not, there are various ways of getting back on good terms with the spirits of dead ancestors. One is to create an image, a mask, a statue, a name plaque, or a painting (on rock) of the ancestor. This gives the spirit a "body" or locus in our world to replace the one that has died. The implication seems to be that with this image-body she/he continues to live, to be remembered, and to be able to transact any unfinished business in this dimension which may be troubling her/him. G. Rachel Levy, the anthropologist, feels that this image making is very old, and may account for certain types of rock paintings or prehistoric peoples. She quotes an Eskimo artist, relative to his rock paintings: (This way) "we give them new bodies to replaces their bodies that we had to take away" (for burial). This solidifying or fixing of a spirit into an image is probably pre-Indo-European, though elements of it are carried through in the Celtic culture. It was practiced until fifty years ago by some Siberian cultures[1] which some anthropologists feel are descendents of the pre-Indo-European peoples of North Europe/Asia. It is also very recent. It is still considered filial and decent, in some circles, to erect headstones and memorials over and for dead family members, though why is not now so clearly specified.

Another method of appeasing the ancestors is to name a child after the deceased, so that the ancestor's spirit can be reborn within the clan. This, also, is still in practice, and children are named after deceased or aging relatives to assure prosperity, or at least inclusion in the will.

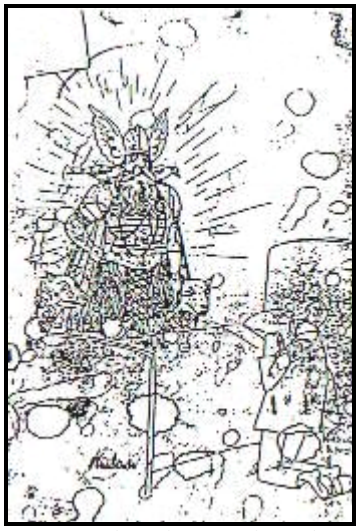
In the Celtic epics, there are numerous Bardic passages imploring that the names of ancestors not be forgotten. In later times, appeals to Deities of the dead, or of the other world, seem to have replaced offerings to the dead themselves. But at the most flourishing times, at the high points of Druid power, all the Celtic cultures buried their dead with rich grave goods, ready for another life that would be a close reflection of this one. Social status would be preserved; chief would remain chiefs, warriors, warriors, etc. Valour would be rewarded in men, fidelity, skill and courage in both sexes.

In the Scottish tradition, a Western Isle, Tir nan Og, is the location of this paradise, and Manannan McLer Comes with his white barge to ferry souls across "to the isle where they would be." Caesar, in the last century B.C., states that Druids of his acquaintance believed "that souls do not suffer death, but after death pass from the (world) to the other." (ab aliis…transire ad alios.) And Lucan, in rhetorical address to the Druids, said

> "But you assure us, no ghosts seek the silent Kingdom of Erebus, no the pallid depths of Hades' realm, but with new body the spirit reigns in another world–if we understand your hymns, death's halfway through a long life."

Unfortunately the hymns have not come down to us.

To the Classic writers, descendents of Mediterranean cultures, death was a state of suspended animation, or minimal animation, where shades drifted and muttered aimlessly in a twilight world ruled by an unfeeling, motionless god, Pluto/Hades.[2] In the Druid afterlife, people and gods mingled in a sunny world similar to this one, but "outside of time." This was so different from the Greco-Roman concepts of death that it seemed to the Classic writers to require both emphasis and explanation.



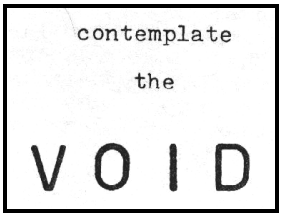
I'm sorry you've been inconvenienced Wotan, I just naturally thought when I said "God" that I would get–you know–Jehovah."*

*From a very old and badly weathered magazine. Who says the Missal-Any never publishes any dirty jokes?

They had, from their own Pythagoras, a doctrine of another kind of re-incarnation, and, in an attempt to explain the unknown in terms of the slightly more familiar, they asserted that the Druids had studied or borrowed from Pythagoras. This myth continued until the 18th Century, when it was reversed and asserted that Pythagoras had plagiarized from the Druids. There is no good evidence that Druidism ever heard of Pythagoras. It antedates him by at least a millennium, probably more. Its doctrine of re-incarnation in a material but timeless body in an Outer World, bears little resemblance to Pythagoras' idea, as recorded by Salmoxis, of the immortality of the soul based on the indestructibility of concept and number. By equating the Druid belief with Pythagoras' school, it could be integrated into the world of Classical thought and made acceptable to the Roman mind, and at the same time enhance the reputation of the Greeks as "The Founders of Philosophy," a favorite Roman idea.

Sucellos, Esus, and in some of his aspects, Cerunnos, are often listed as Celtic gods of the afterlife or Underworld, but as much as my research has been able to determine, there is no one god of the dead, comparable to Classic Pluto or Hades. The Druid afterlife is more an Other World than an Under World, in which gods and people mingle in a timeless dimension. All the gods, and one's own merits and clan connections seem, in Ossian's poems, to determine one's place at the perpetual feast in the Isle of the Ever Young.

It was a later development, and among the Germans, not the Celts, that associated divine energy with the souls of the dead. It was here that the original root of our present word, "God," Ghav, Ghuto, arose and designated "the evoked" and was associated with the souls of the dead.[3] Why the Christian missionaries used this word to translate the concept of their Deity, Jehovah/Yewah, is not known. Perhaps Dis Pater, also a heavenly father, and the other likely candidate, Taranis, were too clearly individualized, and specifically pagan presences. Ghav/Ghut was shadowy and vague. Perhaps they followed Paul's example when he described his God to the Greeks as that "god-they-knew-not" but to whom they had built, nonetheless, an altar on Mar's Hill. However that may be, by the laws of magical evocation, when you evoke "God," you are naming/calling an ancient deity of the dead. This could explain the dour atmosphere at many Protestant services. You might experiment with using "Deus" or "Dea" and see if the mood changes; or, if you want the deity of the Bible, why not evoke Him by name, Jehovah or Yehowah. Avoid embarrassing mistakes. (see illustration opposite.)



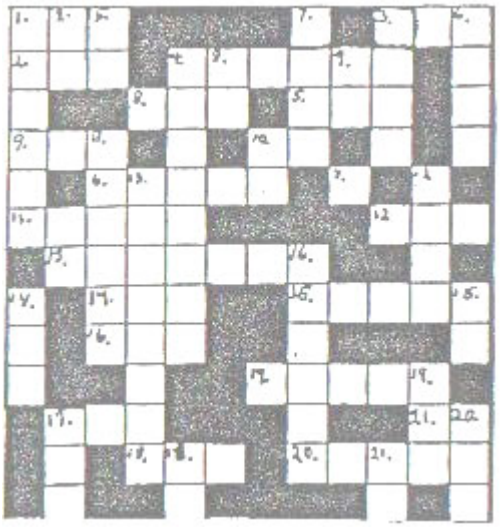
[1]Waldeman Jochelson's Expedition, 1900.
[2]"Being dead is a waste of time." c.f. your average classical culture.
[3]Alternative interpretation: Ghav/Ghuto, "the evoked" one, referred to a "divine energy" associated "with the souls of the dead." The trouble with the history of ideas is that historians all have a different idea of what happened in history.

News of the Groves

On the night of September 17th-18th, Bob Blunt, who has been the Server for Live Oak Grove, performed his Third Order Vigil successfully, and the following morning conducted his first service at the Grove Site in Orinda. Larry Press was the presiding Arch Druid; Susan Zartman was also present to witness. Two noteworthy occurrences: Sue, Larry told me, felt definite immaterial "presences," of animal spirit nature, which, though not unfriendly, were weird. These settled down after a cup of "The Waters of Life" were poured and put out for their perusal. Second, Bob's vigil fire, in the altar's fire pit, may have been a bit too large and bright, as it was spotted by some of our neighbors across the valley, who must have called the fire department. The fire patrol drove up and down the road for a while, but as the Grove Site is not visible from Miner Road, they could see nothing. They never phoned us and nothing came of it. Apparently our protection and invisibility prayers are working. Bob also lead last Sunday's, October 8th's, Service for the group.

[This space was to be a picture of Bob with his new Third Order ribbon, but the photo service has had a delay.]

Druidic Crossword Puzzle



Down

1. Pertaining to bards
2. "Whoever you be, God ___ Goddess"
3. Early Celtic god associated with the dead.
4. Convert: "I once was lost but I'm ___ ___."
5. A meditation chant
6. The Norse Taranis
7. It is tax deductible if you give it to us.
8. The Celtic Paradise. "Tir nan __"
9. Nurse
10. Exists
11. What we are
12. __ Cecht, healer
13. "Of a wolf" in Gaelic
14. Manannan McLer, god of the ___
15. Competent ___ Lugh
16. Goddess of Chaos and Panic
17. By the spring, under the magic Hazelnut tree, Finn ___ the Elder Finn, the Seer.
18. The Finnians attacked Brugh ____ the Boyne
19. Combine
20. To feast
21. The Missal-Any would love to sell you a classified ____.

Across

1. Cry of a Samhain ghost.
2. Lugh of the Long ____
3. Finn was told not to ____ the Salmon of Knowledge
4. The original inhabitants of Ireland
5. Brittonic name for Danu
6. Norse characters
7. Our founder, David ___ Fisher
8. The "cu" in Cuchulain means ____
9. Dagda was Danu and Ogma's _____
10. Dying Cuchulain sought refuge ___ water.
11. Would be able to
12. A Toll Uaigh, a deep ____
13. Member of a legendary Irish warrior brotherhood.
14. The preposition "to" in Gaelic, lenited.
15. The horse goddess
16. Did see
17. In a Scottish name, it means "son of"
18. Cuchulain's battle fury, similar to Tapas, made him very ___.
19. The Good God, club and cauldron.
20. _____ of the Silver Hand
21. Preposition "of" in Scot's Gaelic.

Calendar

Samhain will occur at 3:46 P.M. Pacific Standard Time, on October 7th. Live Oak Grove will hold an all night vigil, followed by a dawn Service for information call 254-1387. Regular Druid Services will be held at the Grove Site on Nov. 20, Dec. 4 and 18.

Announcement

CIRCLE has changed its address to: CIRCLE, Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572. Please send all mail to the new address. The old Madison box number for Circle will remain active for at least several years, but mail will only be picked up there twice a month or so. Mail to the new address will be picked up every day.

Author: "I feel I'm being poorly misunderstood."
Editor of the Missal-Any: "I think they're doing the best they can, Sir, under the circumstances."

A Druid Missal-Any
Yule 1983
Volume 7 Number 8

Yule Essay: Midwinter

By Emmon Bodfish

ule, Solstice, Greinstad, Sunstop; the Sun, which has been setting each day at a new, more southerly point on the horizon stops its progression. We have reached the "bottom of the year," as the Gaels call it. Midwinter's night was considered a productive night to vigil, and a Yule fire was built, in some traditions around a single log big enough to burn all night. Its flames would welcome the returning Sun at dawn. The sunrise was hailed with shouting, drums, and thanks for the returning of the light.

This is one of the four Solar Holidays of the Druid year. This year it will culminate at 9:30 P.M. December 21st, Pacific Standard Time, and an hour later for each time zone east of the Pacific one; i.e. 5:30 A.M. Universal and Greenwich Time. At this moment the Northern Hemisphere of the Earth will be tipped at its maximum angle away from the sun. Since this is one of the few years in which this event occurs at a convenient hour when most of us are awake, we might try synchronizing our watches all across the country and let out at this moment the shout "Seall" (Pronounced sha-oul) to call back the descending Sun. After all who wants to end up freezing in the dark?

Or go out on Midwinter eve and note the point on the horizon where the sun sets; this is its most Southerly extreme. Do the same for the following dawn, Solstice morning, and from the angle between these two points you can calculate your latitude. (Write in for the formula.) By sightings like this, on these Special Days, the Ancients calculated latitude, the curvature of the Earth, and kept the calendar aligned with the Heavens.

News of the Groves

Since the Celtic year ends on Samhain, elections for the officers of each grove for the coming year are usually held at the Samhain Vigil. Live Oak Grove decided to retain its three officers in their same offices as last year:

Arch Druid	Larry Press
Preceptor	Emmon Bodfish
Server	Bob Blunt

Live Oak Grove participated in the Bay Area Interfaith Council Thanksgiving Pageant, as we have for three years now. Emmon read an old pre-Christian Solstice feast poem and we joined with the other Neo-Pagan groups in a circle dance and Earth blessing. The largely Protestant audience's responses ranged from enthusiasm and surprise to appalled silence, that is, the same as last year.

A baby boy as yet unnamed as this goes to print, was born to Herbert DeGrasse by his lady, Martha, December 7, 1983. Congratulations and Beannachd e.

Here is the photo of our Server, Bob Blunt, at his Third Order ordination on October 18 of this year. This photo was to appear in the Samhain Missal-Any but was delayed at the processing lab, where we'd asked them to render it in "half-tone" so as to copy better. (Apologies to Bob, and instructions to find a better photo service.)

Our lawyer, Sandy Margolin, advises us that since we have filed as a religious corporation with the State of California, we are tax deductible from your Federal Income Tax this year. Add up your contributions and file the long form.

Samhain Issue Puzzle

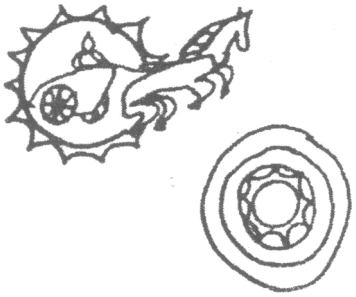
The Missal-Any Fashion Page

(Direct from Paris, Gaul)

Preserved in the acid water of a peat bog, these clothes date from approximately 400 A.D., but Caesar in his commentaries on Gaul describes virtually identical fashions in the first century B.C. Trends changed only very slowly in those days.

The skirt is wool, sheared from a mature sheep. The plaid pattern is made by threads spun from the wool of a dark brown ram woven into a background of lighter wool from white animals. No dye is used. The cape is made of alternating panels of black and white lamb skin. The dress, show on the right, is of a finer spun white wool. It is woven in the form of a tube, a circular fabrication technique also used in ancient Greece. Thus there is no side seams. Matching brooches hold the dress at the shoulders. A linen underslip and britches may have been worn under both these garments.

A net cap and moccasin-style shoes complete each ensemble.



Tue Origins of the Celts and Druids

By Thomas M. Cross

There are certain ideas that have been formed about the Celtic peoples and their mysterious learned men known as the Druids, and unfortunately most of these ideas have inaccurately divorced the Celts and their religious and cultural history from their original Indo-European ancestry, trying to desperately link them with Egyptian, Qabalistic and Semitic or Atlantean ideals. The pseudo-pagan and Wiccans of the Murray, Morganwg and Robert Graves followers who would link the Celtic peoples from some early non-Indo-European fertility-earth-chtonian megalithic types are endless and the idea of a universal Mother-Goddess monotheism having its existence as a teaching of Druids prevails.

Despite the misinformation and the frequent confusion of concepts in early European religion and that of the Celts, the truth has been known for some time. Modern archaeology and research into the myths and comparative studies of cultures present and past has made such good data available for those who seek it and can find it.

To begin with, in dealing with the Celts we are dealing with an ethnic group of various tribes occupying Europe from about 1200 or 800 B.C. to about 30 B.C. and then the peoples remaining to this day in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Brittany, Man and Cornwall. What has been forgotten too often is that the Indo-Europeans were the ancestors of most Germanic, Baltic, Slavic, Roman, Greek, Thracian, Iranian, Afghanistani, Pakistani, and Hind peoples. All of these Indo-Europeans share a common linguistic, cultural and religious (pre-Christian and pre-Islamic) heritage. Many linguistic and comparative pre-historians had discovered the existence of the Indo-Europeans in the last century and in this century. The scholar Georges Dumezil made many an excellent study of links between the Indo-European epics and myths. The Nazi's propaganda had unfortunately created the myth of a master race and that the 'Aryans' (actually Proto-I.e.) or Indo-Europeans were all of the so-called Nordic racial type. The fact is that the indo-Europeans were at one time mostly of the white race is true and the "Nordic", "alpine" or Brachycephalic type and "Mediterranean" ethnic types were the dominate group and yet they conquered and intermixed with some non-Indo-Europeans as well usually forcing the outsiders to assimilate to the Indo-European way. Most of these conquered folk were of the same race as the Indo-Europeans. In Southern Europe the Mediterranean type dominated, as one moved northward into the central areas the Alpine type dominated and more of a Nordic area in the very far North, but in India as the Aryans had been conquering Semitic types and not assimilating much they ran into the Dasyus or

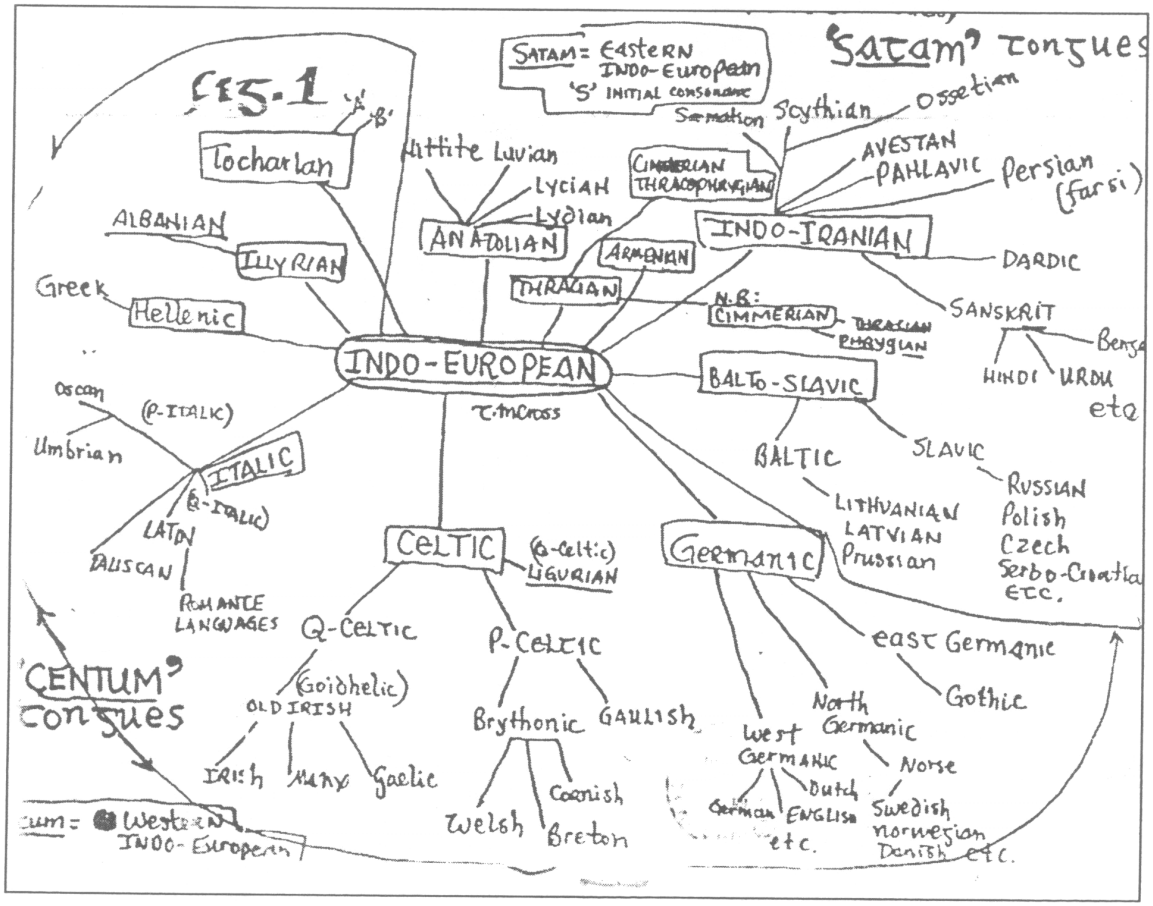
Dravidian types which they subdued and perhaps over the centuries absorbed into the lowest classes in varying degrees until the structure became the caste system.

If any certain race could be classified as the race of the early Indo-European it would probably be the so-called Alpine or Brachycephalic type who were generally rounded headed brunette or brown haired and auburn haired peoples who were mixed with the fair haired tall blonds of the Northern types. What is more important though, is that these peoples domesticated the horse about 5,500 years ago in the steppes of Russia, and developed a strong social and political structure that spread their culture all over Europe and into Asia and would endure for many centuries. In figure 1 there is a diagram illustrating the dispersal of Indo-European language.

(To be continued.)

Calendar

Yule will be celebrated at Live Oak Grove at 7:00 P.M. on Dec. 21st, There will be regular Druid services on December 18th, and January 1, 15th, and 29th. Take the BART to Orinda and call 254-1387 for a ride.



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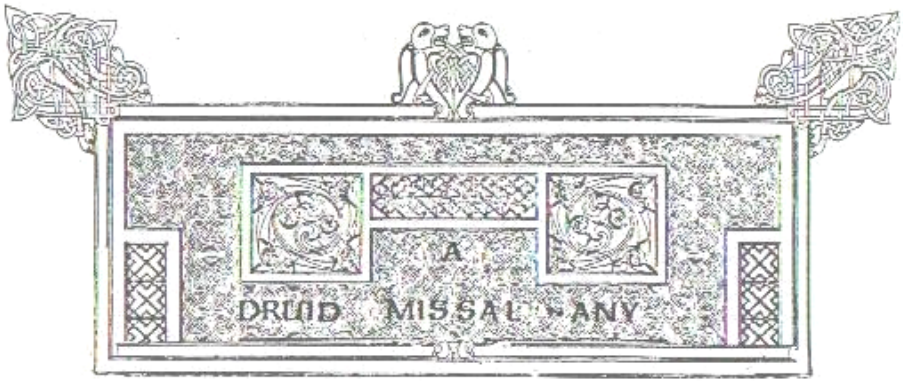
Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION TWO



A Druid Missal-Any
Volume Eight
1984 c.e.

Drynemetum Press

A Druid Missal-Any Oimelc 1984 Volume 8 Number 1

Oimelc Essay: Bridgit

By Emmon Bodfish

Oimelc, the festival of Bride, Bridgit, Bredes, the daughter of Dagda, and Celtic goddess of fire and the hearth. She is also patroness of poetry and inspiration, which the Gaels regarded as an immaterial, supersensual form of flame. Always one of the most prominent and popular deities, the early Christianizers of Ireland were unable to eradicate her name and worship, and instead adopted, (or co-opted) her into their own pantheon as St. Bridgit. According to Charles Squire, she is still the most popular of Irish saints, and is still easily

> "recognized as the daughter of Dagda. Her Christian attributes, almost all connected with fire, attest her pagan origin. She was born at sunrise; a house in which she dwelt blazed into a flame which reached to heaven; a pillar of fire rose from her head when she took the veil; and her breath gave new life to the dead. As with the British goddess Sul, worshipped at Bath, who, the first century Latin writer Solinus tells us, 'ruled over the boiling spring and at her altar there flamed a perpetual fire which never whitened into ashes, but hardened into a stony mass,'* the sacred flame on Bridgit's altar at Kildare was never allowed to go out."

Bride comes, probably, from the Indo-European stem name Bhethe/a which is also the name for the Birch tree. This tree, with its shining white bark, is still known in Gaelic tradition as "Bride's tree." Bhethe/a is cognate with the Roman Vesta, and also with the Hindu Agni, a fire god whose attributes and rites are perfectly parallel to Bride's except for the name and sex change (c.f. Larry Press, A.D.)

"Saint" Bridgit's flame burned on her altar in Kildare from approximately the sixth century until the suppression of the monasteries by Henry VIII of England. "This sacred fire," quotes Charles Squire, "might not be breathed on by the impure human breath. For nineteen nights it was tended by her nuns but on the twentieth night it was left untouched, and kept itself alight miraculously." This echoes the old, pre-Roman, Celtic system of counting by twenties, rather than by tens. With so little of her character and ritual changed, the sixth century Irish gladly accepted the new saint in the stead of the old goddess. A careful examination of Irish hagiology would result in the discovery of many other undeserved co-options/canonizations, in which Celtic deities and heroes became Christian worthies.

Bride was the protector of childbirth, the supreme form of creativity, and in the Christian stories and hymns, St. Bridget is portrayed as the "aide woman" or mid-wife of Virgin Mary, though no such figure is mentioned in any of the Nativity gospels. Celtic women prayed to Bride for a safe delivery, and visited her spring with gifts of thankfulness. Fire-springs-fertility is an old, perhaps even pre-Indo-European triad.

As fire is the winter's indoor sun, Bride's festival at Oimelc lies opposite the Sun festival of Lughnasadh, Lugh and Bride being seen as balanced opposites in the Celtic pantheon. Balance, rather than hierarchy, is the pattern of the Celtic system of thought. Druidism is a kathenotheism, emphasizing the worship of deities in sequence, each pertaining to a certain season of the year, instead of arranging Them in a permanent hierarchy as in the Greek or Roman polytheisms.

According to Marvin Harris' Structural Materialism thesis, we worship, love and adore what we need,** based on the premise "god, what have you done for us, *lately?*" Here, at the coldest time of the year, we need a hearth goddess, a protective figure watching over the birth of the lambs, for which Oimelc is named, and assuring the re-birth of Spring.

*A small knowledge of chemistry would make this miracle easy to arrange.
**Learn more about Fire Worship; live through a winter without central heat.

Structural Materialism and Religious Ritual

Child: "Mr. Druid, why are the sleeves of your robe so long and flowing that they cover your hands?"

Druid: "Join First Orders, child, and when you are standing out there in the cold, grey, dawn waiting to salute the Mid-Winter Sun, you'll find out."

Pagan Parents: Be on the alert for early signs of talent in demon-taming. Our future wizards need your encouragement.

News of the Groves

Joan Carruth, ex-ArchDruid of Live Oak Grove, has moved to New Hampshire, where she has started Birch Grove. Any one with friends in New Hampshire who might be interested in Druidism should ask them to get in touch with her there. Also, future orders for bronze sickles, should be directed to her c/o Birch Grove, 234 Court, Keene, N.H. 03431. She is currently recuperating from a broken foot.

Druid calendars, published by the English group: Sign of the Three Candles, are still available at Lewelln's on Ashby Ave, Berkeley; or by writing to Cahill and Co. 145 Palisade St., Dobbs Ferry, New York, 10522.

Anyone who would like a copy of Live Oak Grove's official Tax Exempt Status papers and Incorporation Notice can get them by sending us a self-addressed 9" x 12" or thereabouts, envelope with 71 cents postage on it.

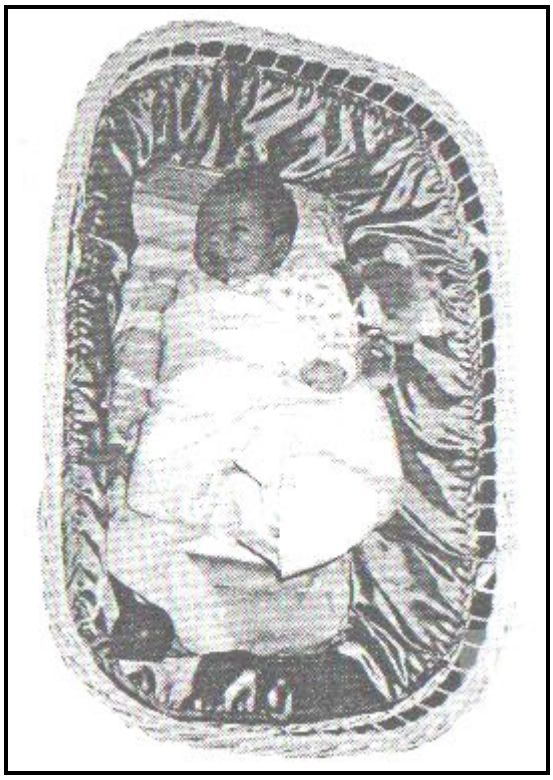
CONSIDER YOURSELVES OFFICIALLY, LEGALLY, AND ROYALLY NOTIFIED.

Jim Duran is giving a new series of seminars on Pre-Christian Europe, cultures and belief systems. In the past, these have been very good and of great help in understanding historical Druidism. Contact Jim at 1822 13th Ave. Oakland, California 94066, (415) 535-1086

Attend Jim's seminars: Develop Celtic Consciousness.

Newest Addition

Martha Masterson and Herbert de Grasse announce the birth of their son Benjamin Frederick Masterson de Grasse December 6, 1983.



Subscription Note:

Subscribe to the Druid Missal-Any. It's just $2.50 a year, cash or check, or 12 20 cent stamps. Write Live Oak Grove, 616 Miner Road, Orinda, California 94563

The Missal-Any Recipe Page

Thanks to
Tom Cross of Post Oak Proto-Grove

Welsh Mead Recipe (Drink of the Gods)

Medd (Henffasiwn) Old Fashioned

A. 4 pints of clear honey.
B. 2 gallons of distilled water
C. 4 lemons
D. 1 oz. cloves
E. 2 lbs. white sugar
F. Piece of ginger (scoured)
G. 2 ox. yeast
H. Small piece of bread
I. Sterile clean earthenware pot, corks and bottles.

1. Spread yeast on a piece of bread.
2. Boil the water honey and sugar.
3. Stand in an earthenware pot or jug.
4. Skim off any scum.
5. Add lemon juice, cloves and ginger.
6. Leave to cool.
7. When lukewarm (98.6F) float the bread and yeast on top.
8. Cover with a clean cloth.
9. Leave for about 6-8 days or 1 week.
10. Strain and bottle.
11. Cork loosely at first, or put balloons over the bottle openings.
12. Let it ferment for at least 5-6 months.

Scots: Athol Brose

1 1/4 pints whiskey (Scotch whisky)
1 lb. honey
1 cup cold water

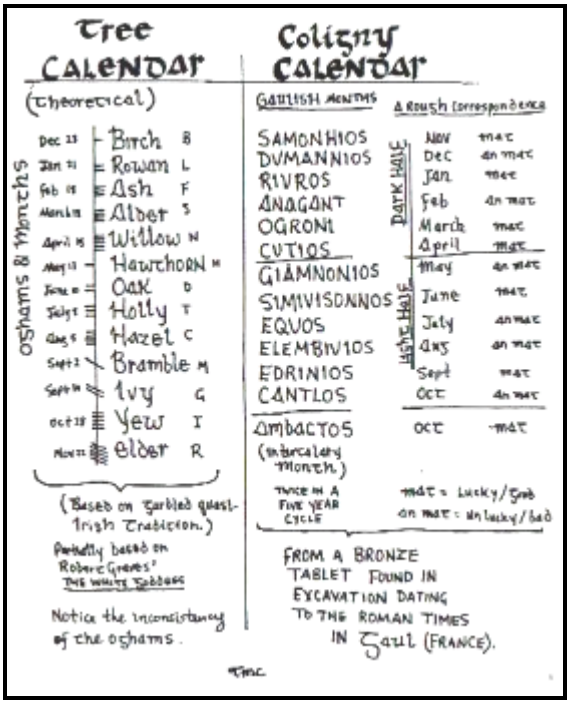
Place honey in a large pan. Add water. Heat until honey is liquefied. Add whiskey when cooled. Stir until it becomes frothy. Bottle and cork.

"Water of life with Hydromel of the Gods!"

Notice:

A dress, very similar to the white one shown on the Yule Missal-Any's fashion page, is available at La Belle Boutique on Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, for $239.00. It's not easy being a Celtic Princess.

*Little Known Fact: the Wall Street Journal makes the best kindling for sacrificial fires. We have done research, we have experimented, we know.



Calendar

Astronomical Oimelc will occur at 7:13 Pacific Standard Time on February 4. It will be celebrated at Live Oak Grove at 12:00 NOON Saturday February 4. Regular Druid Services will be on January 29, February 12, March 4, and March 18 all at 12:00 Noon. (415) 254-1387.

A Druid Missal-Any Spring Equinox 1984 Volume 8 Number 2

Spring Equinox Essay: Renewal and the Season of Sleep

By Emmon Bodfish

quinox, the beginning of spring, which is marked by the Sun's crossing of the Celestial Equator, the first point of Aries. For a diurnal cycle, the day and night are of equal length. The emphasis of the holiday is on renewal, active preparation for the summer to come. The stones of some of the Megaliths mark this sunrise, by this point the plowing and seeding must be done. In numerous cultures these were sacred activities, from the Charming of the Plow in pagan Germany, a celebration which the Anglo-Saxons brought with them to England, to the ritual plowing of the first furrow in a special sacred field by the reigning Chinese Emperor. Our word for acre, 43,560 sq. ft. of land, comes from the Gaelic word "acadh" meaning a field.

Erec, Erec, Erec,
Mother of Earth
Hail to thee, Earth,
Mother of Men

Be fruitful in
God's embrace
Filled with food
For the use of men.

This was written down in the Leechbook circa 950 AD in England. It is the ancient Indo-European Earth Mother and Sky Father, despite five hundred years of Christian influence.

In England, Spring Equinox was celebrated as Lady Day, now fixed at March 25, to make it a dependable legal holiday while the Equinox shifts yearly between the 20th and the 22nd. Before the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in England in 1752, this holiday was the beginning of the New Year, legal and fiscal. In the Gaelic world, the new season, Samhra, wouldn't begin until Bealtaine, but the New Year had commenced on Samhain on November 5th or 6th. Between Samhain and Bealtaine is the "Season of Sleep" and May Day begins the new "Season of Life."

In modern Reform Druidism there is no whiskey, or intoxicant, in the chalice at services all through this Season of Sleep, only distilled water, the Waters-of-Sleep. Only water is poured out in the Offerings to the trees. It is the season of the Pine and the Birch. The latter, Bride's tree, begins her season at Equinox. It has been a time of rest and in-drawing, the re-couping of our energies. Now life starts to re-awaken and we begin preparations for the major celebration of the Druid year, Bealtaine, the full-blown Rose.

And now, by popular demand, another see-and-do article.

Back to the Shadows Again

By Emmon Bodfish

The Druids of folktales were imputed with the power to create a magical mist, the "Cleo Trom" in which to hide themselves or to obscure the field of battle and aid their chieftains' armies. In fact, according to one source, ability to raise the Druid Mist was a test of anyone claiming to be a Fear-droi or a Wizard. This ability is also remembered in fragments of the Ossanic poems and in folklore from the Continent. In his book on magic, Steven Richards remarks that this "Invisibility is the peculiar mark of the Western magician as levitation is of the Oriental one."

In practice, there are different levels of making oneself invisible. At the first level is the crass psychological technique of diverting attention to something else while you quietly walk away, or perform the slight-of-the-hand that completes the trick. Stage magicians, thieves, and Sherlock Holmes are adepts at this one.

On the second level is the method actor's strategy of changing his emotional state, manner and gait such that he seems to turn into (or out to be) someone or something other than who he was, and so to "disappear" into the role. Crowley, working at this level of transformation, tells of the following incident that happened to him in London. When he was walking down a lane, he saw, coming toward him, a group of students who knew him and who were not particularly friendly to him or his ideas. Wishing to avoid their ridicule or worse, he ducked down a side street, but they followed him. The street proved to be a blind end. After stepping into a shop doorway, he rushed back out, having changed his gait and demeanor utterly, and bustled past them in a businesslike way. They did not recognize him and he escaped.

At the third level is something between this technique and that of thought projection or active telepathy. Mrs. Alexander-David Neil describes the first few rings of this level in her book of observations of mystics in India and Tibet. Basically it involves the ability to control your output of emotional energy, your projection of your "presence" in the situation. If you walk through a crowd shouting, bumping against people, and otherwise calling attention to yourself, you will make yourself quite visible. However, if you steal along noiselessly, you may be able to pass without being seen. Animals know this instinctively, and use it to catch their prey. As J.H. Brennan points out, merely sitting motionless cuts down on your visibility. Beast of prey avoid this difficulty by bobbing their heads, creating the illusion of motion. However quiet you are, though, there is still the unquietness generated by your mind. The work of the mind generates an energy which spreads all around the one who produces it, and this energy is felt in various ways by those who come into touch with it. If you can stop even that source of noise, you become as silent as one could be. You maybe seen in the way that a camera "sees" things, but you will not be noticed. No knowledge consciousness, (nampar shespa) follows the visual contact; we do not remember that this contact has occurred.

When the mind inhibits emanation of its radiative energy says Evans-Wentz, it ceases to be a source of mental stimuli to others, so that they become unconscious of the presence of the Adept of the Art just as they are unconscious of invisible beings living in a rate of vibration unlike their own. It is like the ostrich burying his head in the sand. One draws his attention into himself, instead of directing it outward, and

by stopping the flow of the mind, turns off the noise. In the most elementary sense, this form of invisibility is just moving along quietly. "The real secret of invisibility is not concerned with the laws of optics at all," writes Crowley. "The trick is to prevent people from noticing you when they normally would do so." As the test of his power, Crowley took a walk in the street in a golden crown and a scarlet robe without attracting attention. Eliphas Levi makes the same point in several of his manuscripts. This non-projection technique of un-noticibility/invisibility is described by this author's friend, who is considerably good at it, as "pull in your vibe." The Druid Mist cannot hide you if you continue to project a strong emotional presence. Some people say this feels like a drawing in of their personal energy, pulling it back in through the area just above the solar plexus.

Begin, then, by becoming mentally silent, calming your emotions until you reach emotional neutrality, having withdrawn your presence into yourself. Being able to stop the sentences flowing through your head is essential to any success in spiritual or psychic endeavors. It is the first rung of the ladder. This is mentioned in so many different religious and magical traditions that it must be accepted as one of the essential ingredients. Second, you must learn to stop, or put aside, the mood of the moment. This means sorting the flow of emotional energy surging up and down the body. We can all do this, if for only a moment. Take for example the experience of waiting for an important phone call. It is important to you to make a good impression. But while you are waiting by the phone, you become involved in a heated argument with another person in the room. Emotion is surging up and down through your body. Then the phone rings; this is it; you must be personable. You stop. That moment of suspension when you have left the argument and before you turn your attention to the phone, is it, the emotional neutral-point. You can learn to prolong that minute of emotional silence.

When you have silenced your mental verbalizations and are holding a neutral emotional stance, pull in your social, interactive energy, and your presence will seem to fade into the background. You have become a shadow. A camera will "see" you sitting there, but you will not be noticed, not will you register on the consciousness or in the memories of other people. As a secondary benefit, this mental state allows you to see the world quite objectively, in increased detail and dimensionality.

To this state of unnoticibility you add the fourth level by forming the Druid Mist. While it is the least understood part of the art of invisibility, it has been used and described for millennia, just as our ancestors could throw a missile accurately without understanding gravity or trajectory. Forming the Cleo Trom may involve the ability to control either light, or matter or perception. The Mist seems to absorb light; it is dull colored, gray, and visually uninteresting, as well as hard for the eye to focus on; it does not make itself noticeable. Forming it requires preparation and practice. First, you must train yourself to be able to concentrate on one thing for a fairly long time, ten to twenty minutes. Training the attention and developing the will are basics in all magical traditions. It makes the difference between magic as psychic phenomena and magic as wishful thinking. In learning these skills, small amounts of practice daily works better than long sessions, infrequently. The learning may take anywhere from two weeks to two years, but there are interesting experiences along the way.

Begin by getting mentally silent and emotionally calm. Staring at a dark, plain background, relax your vision, focusing in the middle distance. Concentrate your will and energy on a point in mid-air four or five feet in front of you. Madame Blavatsky found it helped to think of willing the matter making up the air to gather and concentrate at this point. This may require a number of practice sessions of ten to twenty minutes each. When the Mist starts to form, it is grayish and almost invisible. You may only notice that you can no longer see the texture of the dark backdrop. For some reason there is a tendency at first for the eyes to cross while practicing this, so privacy is recommended. ("Just what we need...a gonzo wizard." cf. *Bored of the Rings*) After you have produced some of the Mist, you can counter its tendency to disperse by willing it to spin counter clockwise and contract. When you have gathered a mass of the Mist, a good amount which you can definitely see, the final step is to place it where you want it to be, between yourself and noxious stimuli or yourself and other persons. My consultant describes the technique as holding the Cleo with your eyes and pulling it along with your gaze. A woman mystic whom Madame Blavatsky interviewed during her oriental travels, collected and controlled the Mist by moving her hands as though gathering something together and guiding it. This would be the mudra approach. It is a technique widely used by Western mediums. When you think you can form the Mist reliably, success is always sporadic at first, try practicing with a full length mirror, placed eight or ten feet away from you. This way you can see how much of your reflection is blotted out by what looks like a grayish film on the surface of the mirror. Until you are very adept, be cautious of inviting friends to watch. The phenomena requires all of your concentration , and because friends are more disturbing to it than strangers. Anything that evokes an emotional response from you dissipates the effect. When you are well practiced, it is possible to get up, wrapping the Cleo Trom around you like a circular curtain and move about unobtrusively, unnoticed by those around you. But you must maintain the psychological silence and physical unobtrusiveness described as Level Three, or people will become aware of your presence, though not of the details of your physical appearance. H.S. Lewis tells an interesting account of this in one of his autobiographical essays. He was practicing forming the mist in a cafeteria, in order to shut out the noise of the people around him and be undisturbed. When he finished his meal, and went to pay, he recognized the owner of the establishment, an old acquaintance of his, working the cash register. He spoke to the man in a friendly way, but his friend treated him coldly, like a peculiar stranger and would give him no indication of recognition. On his way out of the restaurant, Lewis realized that he still had some of the Cleo Trom wrapped about him, not having dispersed it. This is usually done by dismissing it with your mind, willing it to disperse outward and upward, or in counter-clockwise swirls away from you. Some people find it is only necessary to "let go of it from the will."

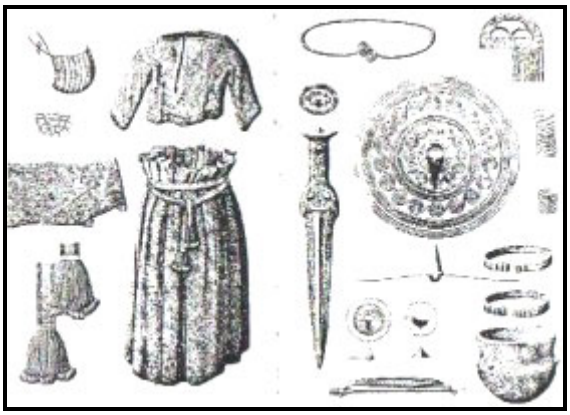
> "The Mist begin to gently lift.
>
> The air begin to clear."

The Mist will disperse naturally as you put your attention on immediate matters and become re-involved with the business of the day and the emotions of the moment.

Photographs I have seen of people practicing holding the Cleo Trom around themselves, show an unfocused area, or streaked appearance in the place of the person's image.

This may seem small stuff compared to descriptions in the old sagas, but even in the Iron Age, it required a fair number of Druids to obscure a battlefield.

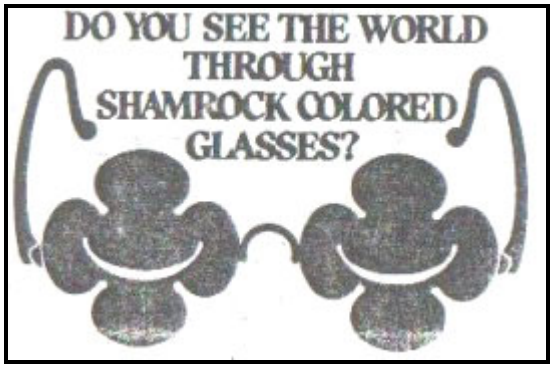
More Druid Fashions



The outfit is of brown wool with a short tunic above, which is fastened in front with a bone pin, made from a human fibula. Below is a full length, gathered skirt, tied with an eight foot sash sporting elaborate tassels. The square of cloth on the left above the tassel detail is a wrap-around underskirt, and to my knowledge the only extant example of La Tene lingerie. Neck torc, bracelets, gold spiral earrings and sandals complete the ensemble. Dagger and shield optional.

News of the Groves

This issue is late due to the breakdown of the Druid-mobile and the deflection of the Preceptor's and the Archdruid's energy in that direction. They plan a resurrection of the engine via a new head.



Subscribe to the Druid Missal-Any. Send $2.50 or 12 20 cent stamps to Live Oak Grove, 616 Miner Road, Orinda, California, 94563. Please make checks out to "LIVE OAK GROVE."

Calendar

Spring Equinox will be celebrated at Live Oak Grove Site on Monday, March 19, at 6:30 P.M. There will be regular Druid services at NOON at the Grove Site on March 18, April 1, April 15, and April 29.

A Druid Missal-Any Beltane 1984 Volume 8 Number 3

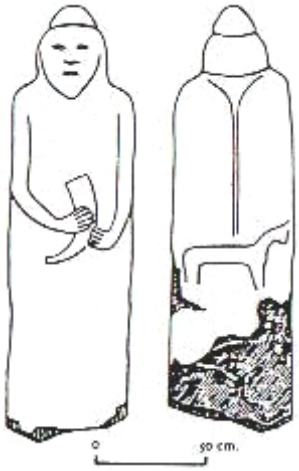
Beltane Essay: Indo-European Drink and Sacrifice

By Emmon Bodfish

eltaine, festival of the Sun, celebrates the long and eagerly awaited return of the Waters of Life to Grove chalices of the R.D.N.A. Use of the divine drink as sacrament, channel to the gods and restorer of mortal and Divinity alike, is an ancient Indo-European concept. It is found in a highly developed form in the Rig Veda, written down circa 1600 B.C. and the custom may go back two to three thousands years before to the Proto-Indo European homeland on the steppes of Asia. The Indo-European tribes early learned the use of fermentation processes both of milk products as yogurt, etc. known to many pastoral races, and, perhaps by extension, the fermentation of honey into Mead. Juices of other, psychotropic plants were preceded and added to this, by some of the later Indo-European tribes, notably the Vedic branch in the Ganges Valley where such herbs abound.

Fraser and others have collected and reconstructed Indo-European ideas surrounding the divine drink and its use, and the origin of sacrament from sacrifice. The early Indo-Europeans saw humanity as originally mortal, and the gods as immortal, and their myths tell how immortality was achieved by certain human beings, or in some branches of the Indo-European spectrum, made available to humanity in general. The Hebrew and Chinese mythologies took the reverse view: animals and humans were originally immortal as Adam and Eve in Eden, or the "First Man" before the dividing up of Chaos. Then, through some fall, death came into the world. In the theme, a hero or demi-god's discovery or theft of a divine potion makes him immortal and able to communicate with the divine powers. The potion is then lost, through trickery or deceit, but sometimes an Earthly version of the drink remains with a promise of future immortality. Consumption of a Sacred drink is used both in initiatory rites and as a group bonding ritual in religions from Ireland to India. The Eucharist may be the Christianization of this ritual; it does not spring from any Orthodox Hebrew rite. Dr. Duran characterizes Christianity as "a very much Indo-Europeanized, Semitic religion." Holy food is more characteristic of other cultures, Semitic, African or Amerindian, while the deified drink is Indo-European. The drink not only inspires, but is though to be a god, a divine thing in itself, or to contain the essence of a divine being. This led Fraser and Rutherford to associate it with the deified sacrificial victim of other sacrificing religions, but Dumézil and other modern students of religion have repudiated this idea. It is an area where experts still disagree. However, its consumption is treated as an act of sacrifice; an offering up to the gods of the drink and of oneself or one's consciousness, (at least temporarily.) This maintains the human connection to the Divine, as well as maintaining the immortal vigor of the Deities thus worshipped. This is explicitly set out in the Rig Veda, and similar descriptions are preserved from the West: The sacrifices to Euses, the Horse Sacrifice of the High Kings of Ireland, libation ceremonies in Greece, and in the Slavic areas, wine or mal rituals to Perun. Statues of Perun held a drinking horn into which a sacred liquor was poured during a spring rite, perhaps even Beltaine, and in which the priest caste then read hopes for the year's crops were read through the liquid's behavior. Perun is cognate with Taranis and Thor as the thunderbolt wielding god of the Oak.

Perun



Stone Idols from Satchany in the Upper Dniester basin.

Structural anthropologists connect the deified drink rite with the "dying-god" motif, which is not an exclusively Indo-European theme, but wide-spread in the Old World. This connection is exemplified in the song of "John Barleycorn," who dies with the harvest in order to feed the people, but rises again in the Spiritus of the ale, and in the sprouting grain of the spring. However, I think these two themes were only merged at a much later date, after the Indo-Europeans had scattered from their steppes homeland. There is no trace of the latter motif in the earliest Indo-European record, the Rig Veda, or in the reconstructed Proto-Indo-European vocabulary.

The young year god, Osiris, Dionysus resurrection theme seems to be part of the pre Indo-European strata of the Eastern Mediterranean. And in Europe, the dying Corn King tradition seems to be older than the Celtic Bardic records and has no official place in Druid doctrine. Though Dumézil also repudiated this "ambrosia cycle," he later, in 1939 re-affirmed the parallel between the Germanic and Indic accounts of obtaining the vessel, cauldron or chalice to hold the deified drink. This vessel grew in importance, and takes precedence in the later mythology of the Western Indo-Europeans over its contents. Anything drunk from the sacred bowl grants divine inspiration. The vessel and the ritual, and the readiness of the participant, (set and setting) become more important than the particular intoxicant. This is the stance taken by the RDNA and discussed in the Later Chronicles, making us a descendent of the Celtic and Western most wavelet of the great Indo-European expansion and evolution. Thus Beltaine, beginning the summer and the Druid Season of Life, sees the return of the Waters of Life to the chalices of RDNA Groves across the country, and to our subscribers if they are holding Proto Grove services, in such unlikely places as Melborne and Hong

Kong.* Since Samhain no liquor has been used, only the Waters of Sleep, pure distilled H_20, in the sharing-cup. Concomitant with this holiday, the Third Order Druids, clergy rank, exchange their white ceremonial ribbons for red. At Live Oak Grove, a Maypole dance follows the Beltaine service, and a general partying and merry-making may continue till sundown.

*Write us for Proto-Grove instructions.

References:

The Rig Veda
Littleton, *The New Comparative Mythology*
Gimbutas, *The Slavs*
Levy, *The Gate of Horn*. (This book is now published as *Religious Conceptions of the Stone Age and Their Influence Upon European Thought*, New York: Harper, 1963.)

When men go to serve the gods, they go for the god that serves them.

News of the Groves

Live Oak Grove

All the vehicles, including the Druid-mobile are back in working order. In discussing this at last Services last Sunday, one of our members from the Wicca Tradition suggested saying some "Oms" for vehicular health, but Larry Press, A.D. opined that "Cars don't get Oms, they get "Varooms." After these we suggest the laying on of non-aerosol Quick-Start, turn the key, put your foot down and incant: "By the power of blazing dinosaurs..."

Vehicles have figured in Paleo-pagan literature, and I was surprised to come across the trade name in the middle of some old Norse material.

Wotan went down
To the Underworld
There to revive the Volvo...

Han San went to
Cold Mountain,
Received the Magic
Melon in a dream, and
Took the sacred Citroens
From the throne
Of the Divine King

Buddha in his Lotus sat
The Mayan War god
Had his Jaguar
Hera rode a Silver Cloud
(R.R. of course)
Aphrodite prized her Opel
But remember
Robin held the Ford.

At Live Oak Grove the gardening has begun, and although our ailing Birch tree is not leafed out, it is alive and readying its sap. We are working on enlarging the Toll Uaigh and lining it in Terra Cotta to prevent the voles from filling it in as they did all last summer. The lawn is re-seeded and the war with the gophers goes on, this year employing sonic rodent repeller and artificial mountain lion smell. Immune members are clearing the poison oak from the path.

Post Oak Proto-Grove

Tom Cross of Post Oak writes that the Irish Festival was a big success, Ken Fleming and the Southern Celtic Music Association doing a superb job of organizing it. Though he didn't think it apropos to give out literature, he was able to speak with a number of people about Druidism, ancient and modern. He met one fellow who will be studying Welsh at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. Incidentally, anyone interested in the Welsh language should contact Tom at Post Oak Proto-Grove, 4209 West Walnut, Garland TX 75042

Emmon's Note:

Warning: Anything you send to us may be reprinted in the next issue of this fishwrap: letters, announcements, cartoons, ads, crank-letters…

Calligraphy by Valerie Voigt.

Green Wood Grove, Seattle, WA.

[Handwritten photocopy]

Spring 1984

Dearest Live Oak Grove,

The Greenwood Grove is still alive here in the Emerald City and wishing you a joyous Spring. We are greatly encouraged each time we get your newsletter and appreciate your fine articles. The one on "the fag" was super. I'm enclosing some cash to pay our postage and help you out.

We have stayed about 20 in number, working together for almost four years...with the same people. Our primary orientation is healing and music. We are not very public but more like an extended family.

Our band "Laughter & Love" should be performing at the C.O.G. festival Aug 23-26 in Northern California. It would be great fun to meet some of you there and swap grove stories. Keep in touch, especially if you're coming to the festival.

While she sleeps,

Cyndie Sallee Adr.Dr.

Special thanks to Cyndie Sallee, Ad. D.A.L. for her generous donation to the Missal-Any. And by the way, that is tax-deductible.

Archaeology

Two Remarkable Inscribed Stones

The first stone is located in western Colorado on a remote canyon ledge, overlooking a broad valley with a stream.

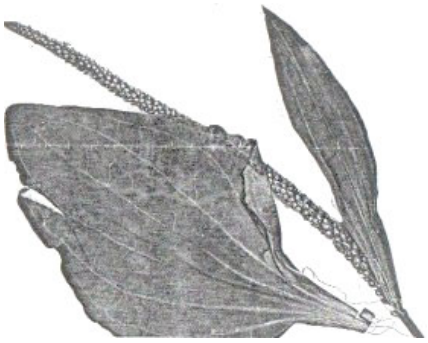
"The dolmen is four feet across the top and has three placed stones holding it above the ledge in a level position approximately six feet from the cliff face. The Ogam on the top of the capstone is intermixed with cupule-like depressions ranging in size from 7-1/2" to 9-1/2" long, 3" to 3-1/2" wide and 1-1/4" to 1-1/2 " deep in the center. The cupule-like depressions are very striking because of their uniformity, smoothness and peculiar shape. The Ogam on the side of the capstone is abundant and occasionally connecting with lines on the top. The surface of the dolmen was obviously smoothed and prepared for the inscriptions. The actual age is unknown but the desert varnish on the Ogam, the depressions, and the smoothed surface is substantial."

The Colorado inscribed dolmen in situ. The top is also inscribed

Needed: And we will pay money for someone to translate articles from French academic journal into English. $5 per page or the original. Contact The Missal-Any, L.O.G. 616 Miner Road, Orinda, Calif. 94563.

Poison Oak and Plantain

Now, at the beginning of Poison Oak season, Carlene Skeffington of New Hampshire offers the following:



A Live Plantain Leaf

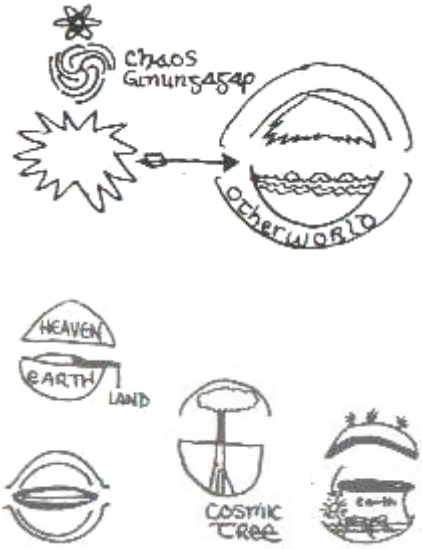
In June, when my right thumb and forearm broke out in an extensive poison oak rash, I remembered reading an article that suggested rubbing leaves of Plantago spp. On the affected area. I tried it, and the itching and redness and swelling stopped! With experimentation I found that it was best to extract the juices from the leaves by crushing them in a mortar before applying it to the rash. Only one application each morning for about ten days was necessary. The most effective were the healthy leaves with prominent linear ribbing and as few hairs as possible. Leaf hairs act as an irritant if rubbed directly into the wound.

Now that the Mississippi River is completely contaminated, what is being down with it?

It's re-opening this summer as the James Watt Commemorative Health Spa.

An Tús Y Dechcrau

A Proto Indo-European Creation story reconstructed from Greek, Norse and Hindu-Rig Vedic sources compared with Irish and Welsh tales.



An Tús Y Dechcrau

In the Beginning, there was nothing
Nothing is something
Something which exploded and expanded
Expanding and evolving
Evolving and dividing
Dividing into many things
But no one was there to witness it

The nothingness was called Ginnungagagap by the Norse
It was called Chaos by the ancient Greeks
It was a pre-world involving an opposite of fire and water
Fire and Water and all of the elements from which all began
It was evolving in to the non-world or otherworld called Annwfn by the Welsh, in it flowed many rivers melting ice, creating steam between the coldness and the fire

Fire became light of the heavens, (Ouranos/Uranus) appeared
There were many Giants which were the land masses
There was darkness and she was called Night (Nat or Nox)
A Giantess became the Earth Mother and she nourished her son, the largest Giant of All called Ymir by the Norse and Cronus by the Greeks.
Titans was the Greek name for these great giants who ruled the earth, the Norse called them Frost Giants, and the Celts of Ireland called them Fomors.

They hid the treasures of the soil within them until
The Gods were born and a hero among them appeared
A God of great strength. The gods were Olympians among the Greeks, Aesir and Vanir among the Norse, and the Tuatha De Danann or Plant Dôn among the Celts of Ireland and Wales. These were the immortal Devas of the Rig Veda.

The Gods slew the Earth-Born Giant (Ymir, Cronus, Purusha-Yama)
The victor was the leader called Zeus by the Greeks, Odin, Vili and Ve of the Norse, or perhaps Lugh or Lleu of the Celts. The Earth Born Giant's corpse was used to build the land for the humans and heavens for the Gods. Thus the first sacrifice, Thus the good things of the earth are free. They eye of Balor was made the bright circle of the sun by Lugh, the skull of Ymir became the land called Asgard where Valhalla was prepared as a heaven for valiant warriors.

But there were still many Fomors, giants, dwarfs, elves, Cyclopes and Hecatoncheires around who would sometimes oppose the Olympians, Aesir and Vanir, or Tuatha De Danann. A giant called Pontus or Aegir or Lir/Llyr was the sea, but Oceanus, or Neptune or Poseidon and Mannanan/Manawydan ruled over it. The waters encircled the land of earth...

Below was an underworld where the dead came back to Chaos or Annwn from whence he came or she came...The spirit traveled back to the ancestors and could dwell in Blessed Isles of the Other world where the sun came down through the Western Horizon.

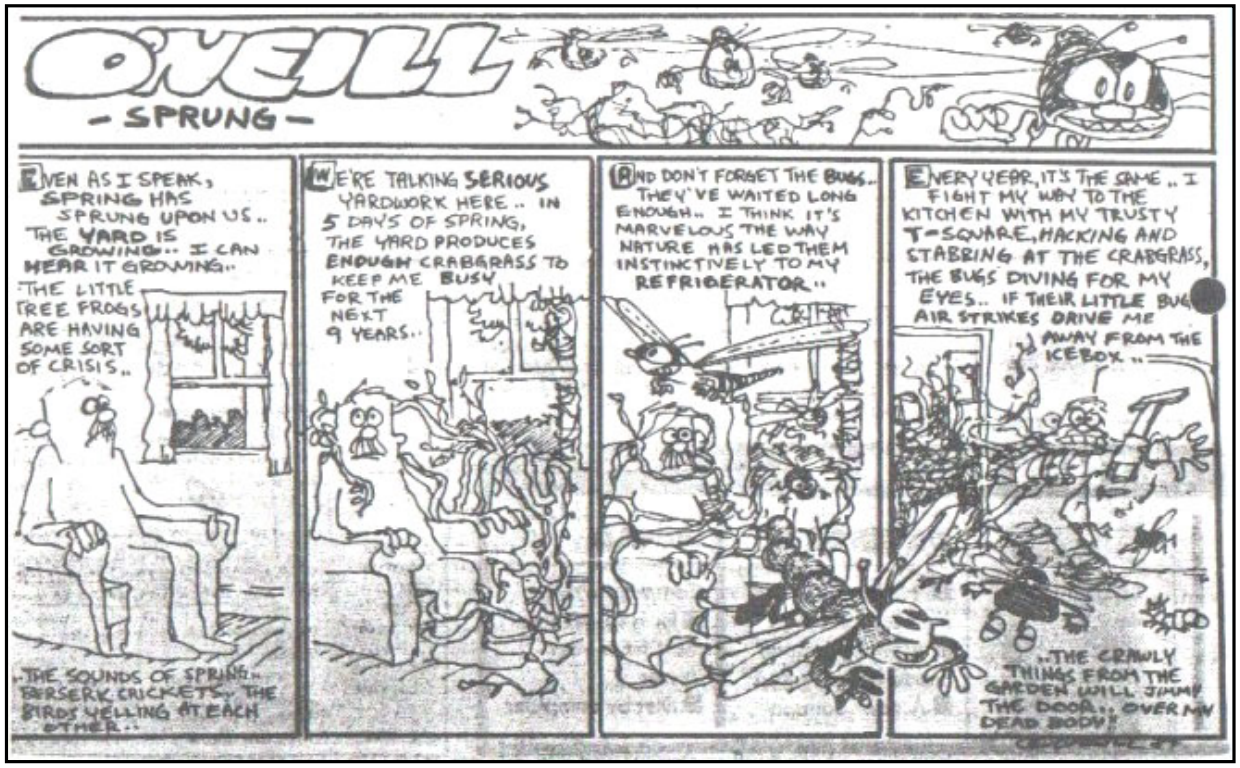
—Tom Cross

Calendar

Beltaine, occurring at 4:56 A.M. Greenwich Time, May 5, 1984 will be celebrated at 12:00, NOON at Live Oak Grove. Bring 7 yards or so of ribbon of any color (no black) for the Maypole Dance to follow.

Regular Druid services will be held at the Grove site at NOON on May 13, 27, and June 10. Call 254-1387 for rides or particulars.

Post-marked 26 April 1984



A Druid Missal-Any Summer Solstice 1984 Volume 8 Number 4

Summer Solstice Essay: Danu and Megaliths

By Emmon Bodfish

idsummer Solstice, one of the four minor High-days of the Celtic year, is associated with Danu, Mother of the gods, the Tuatha de Danann. She is particularly associated with rivers, and rivers from the Don in Russia to the Don in Scotland are thought to be named for her. She is probably the same figure as the Irish goddess Anu and the Breton Ana. Roman Diana and Greek Artemis may be other cognates of the same Indo-European deity. This is based not only on the study of word origins, but on the witness of Gallo-Roman writers who noted the similarities in the character and in season of worship to those of Diana, during the time when the Celtic religion was still practiced in Gaul. Like classical Diana, her totem is the boar, and she is associated with fertility and marriage, and the luckiness of June marriages may be distant memory of her festivities. Mugwort is her flower, an herb also sacred to Roman Diana, and on Isle of Man it is customary to wear a spring of it to the Mid-Summer dance. In England, Mugwort placed under the pillow is said to bring a young woman dreams of her future husband. In Scotland, there are all night bonfires, song fests, and dances for the young unmarried people of the villages.

This is the morning on which the Sun used to rise over the heel stone at Stone henge, beginning the new season of the Megalithic calendar. (It no longer rises at that point due to the precession of the Earth's axis.) The Druids did NOT build Stonehenge. It antedates their arrival in Britain by centuries. It was William Stuckeley, in 1717, who mis-located the Druids there. He did some of the best antiquarian field work of his day, but his theorizing later wildly outstripped his data. The mistake was an honest one, however, considering what was known in his day. He showed that the stones were not a memorial to King Arthur, nor a Roman temple. He was the first to accept them as definitely pre-Roman. The only knowledge of pre-Roman Britain he had came from Roman and Greek writers of the Classical period. They said that Britain was inhabited by Celts whose priests were the Druids. So, if the stones were pre-Roman, Stuckeley reasoned, they must have been built by Druids. He knew of no other candidates. The last two centuries of archeology have given us many, even too many, other possibilities. The current most favored candidates are the early Neolithic framers of Natufian stock, long headed, slender, fine-boned people who inhabited the Salisbury area in 2900-2600 B.C., the best modern date for the first cycle of building at Stone Henge.

A larger boned, hardier people later took over the monument and set up the Blue Stones, but they, too, had disappeared before the arrival of the Halstatt Celts circa 480 B.C.

This is not to say that the Celts did not take cognizance of the huge monument. They worked other monuments of prehistoric peoples, such as the mounds, Sidh, of Ireland and the cairns of Scotland into their mythology and song. They may have done the same for Stone Henge, but the English traditions are almost all lost, while the Irish are among the best preserved.

> "Behold the Sidh before your eye,
> It is manifest to you that it is a king's mansion,
> Which was built by the firm Dagda
> It was a wonder, a court, an admirable hill."

It is likely that the religion of the Megalith Builders was more astronomical than that of the La Tene and later Druids. Two or more different groups contributed to the five or more cycles of construction and re-construction at Stone Henge. Though astronomically aligned, the stones are not accurate enough for an "observatory." It may have served as a calendar rectifier, eclipse predictor, and a ritual site for the Megalithic religion. But what that religion was must remain a matter of conjecture. Clearly it had something to do with sunrise, mid-summer, moonrise, and lunar eclipses, but what it meant, and what they did here, is probably not recoverable short of the invention of a time machine.

Calendar

Summer Solstice will occur at 10:02 P.M. PDT, on June 20, and will be celebrated in a sunset service 7:30 on that day. Regular Druid services will be held at 1:00 P.M. PDT at the Grove Site on May 27, July 1, 15, and 29. For details and rides call (415) 254-1387.

Mugwort

A friend of mine tried the experiment of sleeping with Mugwort under her pillow and reported last year that she had no dreams at all. "I guess I'm just going to stay single." And she is still fancy-free (after a close escape in November) she plans to try the experiment again. If any of you want to try this, you can get mugwort in most herb shops. Write in your results and we will publish them for Lughnasadh.

Post Oak Proto-Grove

Artist-subscriber's conception of us, relative to our vehicular problems of the past several months.

Wall Street Journal,
Monday, April 30, 1984

Theological Math

("New Bible text makes God Male and Female"—*Newspaper headline.)*
They now say God's both She
and He,
Therefore, when we pray,
Should we add She to He and
thus
Direct our prayers to They?
—Lester A. Sobel.

Call us for help, Lester. We have been managing it for centuries.. Once again we Pagans are ahead of our time.

Mount Cua

Sliabh g'Cua!
Haunt of wolves
Rugged and Dark
The wind wails
About its glens
Wolves howl 'round
Its chasms.
The great brown stag
Bells there in autumn
The crane screams
Over its craigs

(Ninth Century Bardic)

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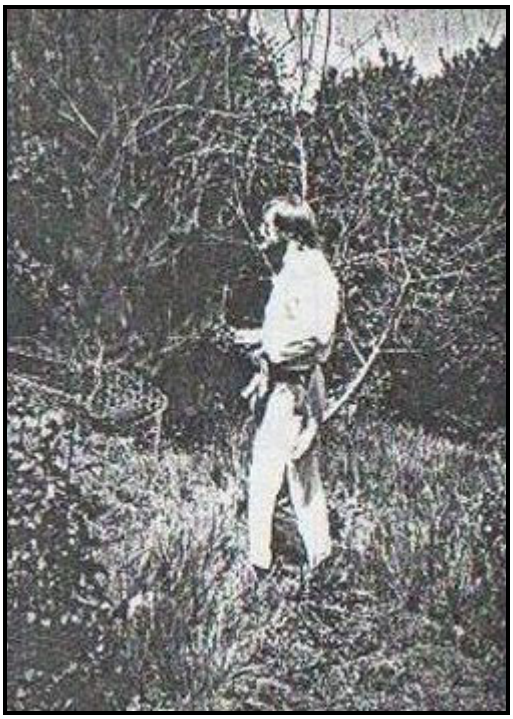
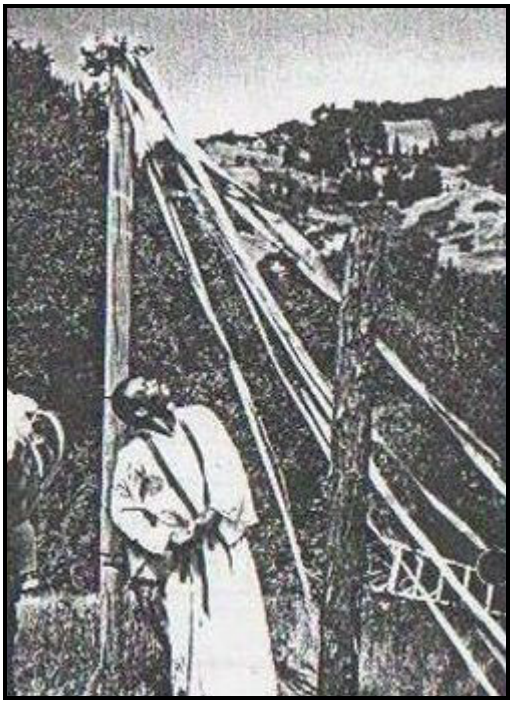
News of the Groves

Live Oak Grove Beltane



Larry Press, A.D.



The Maypole

The Music

A young celebrant

Humbolt, California

Leslie Craig-Hargar, Matriarch of the Order of Oberon, Bards, wants to retire and suggest these revisions in the process of instating Bards, archivists etc. in Order of Oberon.

Comments and acceptance/rejection are requested from all Third Orders bards before this is written into the Apocrypha. Reply before Samhain of 1984.

Not only does my remote location and lack of leadership ability make me a stunningly inappropriate Matriarch of Bards, I also have a strong feeling that the Bards are better off unled. Art for Art's sake is a pretty anarchistic concept, and Art for the Gods' sake requires direct communication with the Gods; i.e., inspiration. I would like to propose to the ODAL that:

A I resign as MOO, leaving no successor.

B) Anyone wishing investiture as a Bard should be recognized and invested by the local AD

C) Anyone who wants to be so recognized has to put their mouth where their mouth is, by presenting some original work to the local grove, and that a text or tape of this work should then be presented to a central Archives.

Love,

Les

Postmarked 4 June, 1984

A Druid Missal-Any Lughnasadh 1984 Volume 8 Number 5

Lughnasadh Essay: Rosmearta

By Emmon Bodfish

ughnasadh is known in Modern Irish as La Lunasa, in Welsh as Gwyl Awst, (August Feast), as Lla Lluanys or Laa 'n Ouyr (day of the Harvest Season) in Manx and as Lammas, Apple Day and Harvest Home in English. It is the anniversary of the funeral games given by Lugh, the God of All Crafts, in honor of his Father. Essentially a harvest festival, this signals the beginning of the harvest season and the ripening of the apples.

This holiday is a day of mixed joy and woe (Irish wakes in the old tradition) for it is now obvious that the days are getting shorter. Stories of the battles between Lugh and Balor (the good Sun-Fire God and the bad one) are retold, as the autumn quarter of "Foghamhar" begins."

—The Druid Chronicles

A much cited but little understood goddess of the Celtic pantheon is Rosmearta, consort of one of the Mercury-like gods, though which one is not certain. It was probably not Lugh himself, whose story and exploits are fairly well known, at least in Irish tradition. She may have been associated with the Gaulish or Welsh Lugh, according to a piece of information from one of our Grove members, but there is no reference for it in any pre-medieval source we can find. His Gaulish name, Lugus, was known to the Romans, but it is not mentioned in connection with Rosmearta. Lugh's wife is Eriu or Erin in the Irish literature. In any case, she seems to have functioned independently of her consort, judged by the number of her references, shrines and place names that have survived. Her name is found in twenty-one different inscriptions, in Roman letters, on monuments in Gaul, dating from the first few centuries A.D. Caesar, Lucan, and later Latin chroniclers tell us that she was very popular, receiving much worship and tribute from the native Gauls.

One derivation of her name, (Branston, L.G. of E.) spring from the Celtic roots:

Ro = much, exceedingly

Smeart = smear, anoint

Branston cites the use of the term, smearta, in an early Cuchulain tale, in which the Irish hero smears with blood a false beard which he has made for himself from grasses. Besmearing his face, he effects a disguise. This fits with the Roman report of her popularity if she was "The much Anointed One." Celtic deity's statues and artifact were often anointed with precious oils, or with the blood of vanquished enemies when that deity was beseeched for favors or thanked for victories.

There is a sanctuary, on the Boyne in Ireland, called Rosmaree, which may be that of her Irish cognate. It is a high mound, of Bronze Age origin, and Medieval Legend tells of a speaking stone connected with it which gave answers to questions about all past deeds and events. It was appealed to in order to settle disputes or establish guilt, much to the despair of the Christian monks, who recorded the custom. Local folklore has it that even up to a century or so ago, no one passed by the stone, whose name is Druin Toreime, without dismounting and paying her homage. It was seen, apparently, as a female being.

This idea of giving answers and of knowing the past, of the actions of all mortals, adds credence to the second derivation of her name, Rosmearta, from the Indo-European root Smer, to think, to remember, to share or portion out.

Ro = much

Smer = remembering, allotting

Ta = from ti, tia, female, she

The All Remembering One

The Apportioner

Her other attributes, her associations with vegetation, grain and Earth-bounty, which she meets out are consistent with the allotting function. She shares this function with another set of supernatural beings whose names derive from the same I.E. root, Smer. These are the Early Greek Moira, and the Germanic Norns, especially the middle Norn, Verthandi. In Greek her title is Lachesis, from lot, distribution, share. A more distant connection can be made to the Italic Parcae, also originally goddesses of vegetation, fertility and birth. But these three powers act differently in the Northern countries than they did among the Indo-Europeans of the Mediterranean. The Norns, Wyrd, and their cognates have none of the feeling of foreknowledge and predestination about them that characterize the Classic Fates. For Homer, the Fates' decision was unavoidable, even if one had foreknowledge and will. The Norn do not control the future. They set out one's circumstances, one's lot, and then record human action as present evolves into past. They do not control our action, but only mark them down, layer by layer, weaving the present into the past.

All these deities have in common the ancient link to vegetation and to the allotment of each person's share in life, but in Celtic and Norse they are not concerned with the future, nor do they have the power and feeling of predestiny this implies. This concept, which in later Hellenic times attached itself to the Fates (and by way of Classic trained scholars to King Arthur's Merddyn), entered Europe with Christianity, there to cause numerous philosophical problems which hardly ended with Calvin. The Indo-European apportioning goddesses give only talents and setting. Greatness, as the poems of Cuchulain and Beowulf, and the Ossianic Fennians make clear, depends on what each person does with their portion. Rosmearta seems to have been a goddess who was thanked for success, harvest and victory.

Rosmearta can be beseeched with incense and aromatic oils to give us the circumstances in which we can be successful. (Blood is not to the modern aesthetic, unless you're a hunter or a beef rancher.) Of course, we must know what these circumstances would be if we're to ask for them and to recognize them when they occur. She can be thanked on Lughnasadh, along with Lugh and Danu, the Earth Mother, for the harvest that now begins, for our share.

News of the Groves

Live Oak Grove

Certain grasslands west of the Mississippi are dotted with regularly spaced mounds, some of which are the largest earthworks built by any mammal except man. The industrious engineer? Meet the humble pocket gopher.

July 1984:

The Return of the Vole-People

Where do they come from?
Where do they go in
the winter?
Are they any relation to Trolls?
How much do they know
about us?
What is in those mounds?

Any answers or suggestions will be welcome. Meanwhile our lawn is riddled with tunnels despite all know repellants. The cat seems totally intimidated.

A Texas biologist weighed the soil excavated by one gopher from its tunnels during one year; it amount to 2.03 cubic yards weighing 2.63 tons. And that was merely the soil dumped on the surface; it did not include the tailings the animal had disposed of in its empty tunnels.

Fun and Daily Business

When we ran out of checks, I went into Hibernia Bank, where we have our account and was directed to see the officer in charge of printing. She had a little fir tree of the left-over from Christmas variety in a red plastic pot on her desk. It was dry, turning brown and sending out distress signals. When I touched one of its brown needles, it fell off. "You should water that; it's dying." She looked up for a second "Huh?" "You should give it some water. It's suffering and it's not yet a year old." She changed the subject "What can I do for you?" "I want to order more checks." "Yes. What's the name of the account?" "Reformed Druids of North America, Inc." She gave me a long, very strange look, and then said, "I really will water it. I promise."

We are Cool with the State

Last year, we got our recognition from the Federal Government, this year the Great State of California has validated our ticket.

A Fantasy Reader's Idea of a Druid by Tom Cross

More and Newer Recommended Reading

The Lost Gods of England, Brandston, (now in paperback.)
The Gate of Horn, G.R. Levey, religious conceptions of the stone age.
The Well and the Tree, Bauschatz, U. Of Mass. Press, mainly Germanic material, but many good Celtic references.
Avesbury, A. Burl, huge pictures, accurate archeology.
The Druids, W. Rutherford, just out in paperback.
Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy, M. Eliade.
Dumézil and the New Comparative Mythology, S. Littleton, good background for understanding Celtic culture.
Celtic Folklore, Vol. I & II, John Reese, just out in paperback.
The Mound People, P.V.Glob, good pictures
Secrets of the Stones, J. Michell, introduction to megaliths
Early Irish Myths and Sagas, Penguin Classic #ISBN 0-14-044.397
Celtic Myth and Legend, C. Squire, big paperback, old 1920's pics.
"Parabola, a Journal of Myth and Folktales," found in most university libraries, or 150 5th Ave, New York City, N.Y. 10011

Lighter Literature

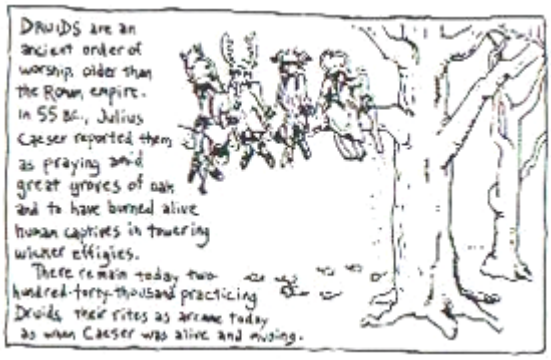
The Discordian Manifesto: Principia Discordia, Loompanics Unlimited, P.O. Box 264, Mason MI 48854
Groo, the Wanderer, #1-8, S. Aragones, especially note the Sage "The worst thing about being a barbarian is having to live like one."
Telecult Power, R. Dubin. Dubious, Good Gulf the Wizard yet lives.
"Meef Comics" #1, Print Mint, 830 Folger Ave. Berkeley, California 94701. Stretch your concepts with the Overland Vegetable Stagecoach!

Calendar*

Astronomical Lughnasadh will occur at 1:11 A.M. P.D.T. August 7, 1984. Lughnasadh will be celebrated on August 7, at 7:00 P.M. at Live Oak Grove with feast to follow. Regular Druid Services will be held a the Grove Site at 1:00 P.M. (Solar Noon) on Aug. 12 and 26, and on Sept. 9 and 23. Autumn Equinox will occur on September 22, 1984 at 1:27 and may be celebrated then in lieu of the Sunday Service on the 23rd.

*Remember, all you behold here grew out of The Calendar.

Postmarked July 23, 1984



Druids are an ancient order of worship, older than the Roman empire. In 55BC, Julius Caesar reported them as prayer amid great groves of oak and to have burning alive human captives in towering wicker effigies. There remain today two hundred forty thousand practicing Druids near whose rites are as arcane today as when Caeser was alive and musing.

From: *Elves, Dwarves, Cost Accountants and Other Mythical Creatures* by T. McKearn, paperback.

P.O. Box 2830
Sacramento, CA 95812
Phone: (916) 445-2020

March Fong Eu
Secretary of State

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DATE June '84 TITLE Preceptor SIGNATURE OF CORPORATE OFFICER OR AGENT Emmon Bodfish

A Druid Missal-Any Fall Equinox 1984 Volume 8 Number 6

Fall Equinox Essay: Cernunnos

By Emmon Bodfish

Equinox approaches the time sacred to Cernunnos, the Hunter God. "Now is come September, the Hunter's Moon begun…" [1]as Holly sings it, and now is the time of Cernunnos, the god of the hunt, the immortal shaman invoking and controlling the quarry. In Gaul, an altar was dedicated to him below what is now Paris. He is one of the prototypes of that inexhaustible figure, The Horned Man.

As Master of the Animals, he embodies their spirits and can parley with them, bringing game to the hunter, or protecting and sustaining cattle and flocks. As the Woods-god, he directs primary energy, the life forces, creative, magical, and procreative of animals and wilderness. As the Shaman-god his function is to be a connecting link between the human and non-human worlds, and to balance the two with their opposing tensions. From these two roles flow his later attributes, God of Wealth, magician, juggler, and Lord of the Dance.

He is appealed to to communicate to the spirit of the animals to let one of their number be taken for food, to make the cattle flourish, and to increase the herds. Most pagan cultures believe that it is not prudent or even possible to catch game or raise an animal for slaughter without its permission on the spiritual level. This is always a bargain, requiring the prey's cooperation. Ritual and honor must be paid to prey species, or to the Master of Cattle, in return.

Though Margaret Murray was ridiculed for suggesting it in the '30s, it has since become clear that we are dealing with a Paleolithic cult in the Horned God, yet one that has continued down to the present day. This shows a strong, basic archetypal appeal. Like all good archetypes, he has multiple and voluminous levels of meaning

In Celtic mythology, he forms a triad with Eusus and Sylvanus. As with other Celtic triple divinities, these may be different facets of the same being. He is close on the left side to Eusus, god of the underworld and riches, and on the right to Sylvanus, Wood spirit, god of vegetation, the Green Man. The links with wealth and death on one hand and magic and fecundity on the other go all the way back to Cernunnos' stone age roots. Around the pictures of horned men on cave walls are other pictures, most of them of animals. All were animals which were important in the hunt, but which were dangerous to hunt. Species known to have been hunted, but which are not dangerous, are not represented. These animals, deer, bison, bulls, wolves, horses are ones that have to be reckoned with, and this was done magically. As the Finn-Ugric and Siberian hunters, heirs to Paleolithic Europe, explained it in the 19th century, there are three things the hunter wants to insure: that he kill the quarry and that it not kill him. That is that his spirit, mana or tapa, overcome the animal's spirit. And thirdly, he wants to insure that his hunting not cause the prey species to flee or to become depleted. He wishes to propitiate the spirits of the animals for the loss of some of their number, and to insure the fertility of the herd and secure its increase. Among many Northern European peoples, it was important to assure the animal killed of a way to be reborn, to come back and continue its life. Its bones were collected and treated with special funeral rites and magic to aid this return. Ideas presaging the concept of reincarnation are common to Eurasian hunter cultures and south to the Caucus and the Indo-European homelands. Here, then are the Cernunnos' triad's attributes:

Success-Wealth Underworld-Death	Magic	Fertility Reincarnation

with magic as the connecting link or directing force which humans and gods assert, influencing the course of events for their benefits.

Cernunnos is the Gaulish deity whom Caesar equated with Roman Mars. This was more than chance resemblance. There is some evidence of for their common I.E. roots. Mars was not always a god of war. Originally he was a god of vegetation. Cato and Varro concur on this, telling us that it was to Mars that the farmers prayed for good crops and prosperity, and for protection of their cattle. He had an old title, from pre-Republican days, of Mars Silvanus, Mars of the Woods. The elements of War and martial spirit were later connected with him when Rome began its expansions and conquest. There is a myth recorded in Plutarch's "Parallela," in which Mars takes on a mortal woman as his lover. Her name is Silvia; she bears him a son whose soul is contained in a spear.

Mars War Plunderer	Mamurius Veturius Fecundity Venus' Lover	Mars Silvanus God of the Wood Protector of Cattle

At the other end of the Indo-European spectrum, in Vedic India, is the figure of Rudra, who may be cognate with Mars. He is the patron of the Kesin, long haired, woods-dwelling ascetics. And there is reason to think that Sylvanias, Silvanus, and Shiva are the same. The latter two share similar myths of travels in the Underworld. If we accept the Irish Wildman-of-the-Woods, Mad Suibhni (Swee' nee) as a late Christian euhemerization of Sylvanias/Cernunnos, then the Celtic Horned-god(s) made similar journeys to the Underworld, under or inside Magic Mountains. All these tales include a visit to a female figure who lives inside the Mountain and who is the source of wealth or knowledge. In Siberia she is the Reindeer Mother. Among the early Greeks she is the Bear Mother. On Shiva's journey, she is Devi, Madam Bramha, conqueror of the Bull-Demon, bulls, cattle, and herds. In the Caucus she is Mother of the Dead, who suckles the soul of the newly dead, as the Reindeer Mother suckles each would-be shaman who finds his way through the labyrinth to her cave. There is nothing like her in African, Chinese, or Australian myths, no source figure who is a Lady-inside-a-Mountain. She is an Eur-Asian figure, probably of Paleolithic origin. In her, we may be seeing who "Venus of Willendorf" was.[2] Similar Magdalenian and Gravettian female figurines have been found far down in caves and caverns under mountains in France and Switzerland. These caves are often difficult and dangerous to climb down into, yet the walls are elaborately painted with figures of animals and outlined handprints of humans, or whole rooms painted red with ochre.

Footprints in the hardened clay show that dances and ceremonies were held here around her figurines, or around clay models of gravid or copulating bison. Here someone painted on the wall the famous "dancing sorcerer" of the Arièges, the proto-type of the Horned Man.

Cernunnos, King of the Wood, Lord of the Animals, he can be appealed to for difficulties with pets or with wild animals. His color is brown, burn aromatic woods or pine pitch or incense. Brown is a very special color; it is not found in the spectrum. It is a mixture of red and green with yellow for warm brown, or blue for cool brown mixed in, in lesser quantities. But there is no brown light. The sensation, brown, is created within the human visual system. This is fitting for Cernunnos, the mind-traveler, the shaman. Francis of Assisi, preaching to the birds, living in the forest, and specifying humble brown robes of local material for his Order, was in the old I.E. tradition of the Holy-Man-in-the-Woods. These old currents of thought change direction and name, but do not die out as quickly and as easily as textbook history would portray.

Cernunnos can best be experienced out-of-doors in the woods or wild places. After 2:00 a.m., and the last lights are out and radios off, even fairly tame bits of the out-of-doors, backyards, and gardens return essentially to Nature. Smells and sounds change. Try sitting like Cernunnos in his Gunderstrup pose in this setting.

If you cannot find a horned serpent, use some other symbol of the Mountain Mother,[2] and a torc, sign of the warrior and of his bond to his patron deity.

[1]Holly Tannen, "Invocation." Kicking Mule Records, KM 236.
[2]James Duran, "The Horned God of Europe," Spring Seminar, 1984.

Suibhne the Wild Man in the Forest

Little antlered one, little belling one, melodious little bleater, sweet I think the lowing that you make in the glen.

Home-sickness for my little dwelling has come upon my mind, the calves in the plain, the deer on the moor.

Oak, bushy, leafy, you are high above trees; hazel bush, little branchy one, coffer of hazel-nuts.

Alder, you are not spiteful, lovely is your colour, you are not prickly when you are in the gap.

Blackthorn, little thorny one, black little sloe-bush; water-cress, little green-topped one, on the brink of the blackbird's well.

Saxifrage of the pathway, you are the sweetest of herbs; cress, very green one; plant where the strawberry grows.

Apple-tree, little apple-tree, violently everyone shakes you; rowan, little berried one, lovely is your bloom.

Bramble, little humped one, you do not grant fair terms; you do not cease tearing me till you are sated with blood.

Yew, little yew, you are conspicuous in graveyards; ivy, little ivy, you are familiar in the dark wood.

Holly, little shelterer, door against the wind; ash-tree, baneful, weapon in the hand of a warrior.

Birch, smooth, blessed, proud, melodious, lovely is each entangled branch at the top of your crest.

Aspen as it trembles, from time to time I hear its leaves rustling, and think it is the foray...

If on my lonely journey I were to search the mountains of the dark earth, I would rather have the room for a single hut in the great Glenn mBolcáin.

Good is its clear blue water, good its clean stern wind, good its cress-green watercress, better its deep brooklime.

Good its pure ivy, good its bright merry willow, good its yewy yew, better its melodious birch...

—Irish; author unknown; twelfth century.

"How do you know they weren't done by cavewomen?" from the Wall Street Journal

News of the Groves

Greenwood Grove

Greenwood Grove's band, (Bardic Circle?) has released a recording, "Laughter and Love." Cassette tapes are available, circa $10 each from P.O Box 30908, Seattle, Washington 98103.

Support the first Druidish album! Their band played this year at the C.O.G. Festival at Harbin Hotsprings, California August 24th and 25th. Unfortunately, we did not know that they were going to play until it was too late to get it into the Lughnasadh Missal-Any. All profits from the sales of this tape go to a nature sanctuary fund and for the production of future Laughter and Love music.

Laughter and Love

Side A
*Laughter and Love, Mr. Mystic Man, Dragon Fire, Once I Met A Lady, Vampire
Side B
Starpeople, Moon Moon, The Gathering, Bard Song, Shaman, Beautiful Goddess

[This stuff above is from the Xeroxed cover of the cassette, not typed up text]

Post Oak ProtoGrove

Tom Cross of Post Oak and the South West Celtic Music Association, are bringing a Celtic band, the De Dannann, to play a concert in Dallas on September the 9th. The Welsh band Ar Log, may also be there. Contact Post Oak Proto-Grove, 4209 W. Walnut Parkway, Garland, Texas, 75049

They will be working this winter on composing Vedic-Homeric style hymns from old musical relics, but set in modern notation, dedicated to the Celtic Druidic Deities.

The air, this year, is filled with the sounds of Druids!

Birch Grove

Re-located in Keene, New Hampshire, Birch Grove is still looking for a grove-site. There are few suitable parks nearby and, as Joan Carruth says, "The natives here spook a little easier..." than in the Bay Area, California. The Grove has been meeting on High Days and would like to expand. Contact them at 234 Court Street, Keene, N.H. 03431

Live Oak Grove

At service August 12th, we found, to our dismay, that a rabbit had drowned in the Toll Uaigh. Though we buried it deeply beside Pithus, the evergreen member of our Grove Circle, the smell, probably from the mud at the bottom of the Toll, was, for a week or so, out of this world. (Pithus = pine. Pines are the trees of the dead.) During that week no deer came to eat our roses; no rabbits ripped up our clover and vole activity was at an all time low for the summer.

Maybe the Druids in the Groves of Esus back around 200 B.C., had the right idea; hang a few dead bodies from the trees and your Grove's flowers won't be devoured by marauding wildlife. Or as one of them was reputed to have muttered to Caesar's scribe; "Sacrifice, shmacrifice, it keeps the darn deer out of here."

At the meeting after services August 26th, it was decided to buy two more pine trees to plant East of the Grove Site to help screen us from view. It was also decided not to respond to the inquiry from the Institute for the Study of American Religion until we find out more about them.

Old Offer Still Good!

Write an article, get a free subscription. (500 to 2,500 words)

Other subscriptions are now $2.50 per year, 8 issues, plus eight 20 cent stamps. Be a good idea to re-subscribe before this price has to go up again.

Anyone with more information on the origin of the Leprechauns or Lugh as connected with the Leprechauns, please write in.

Pensacola Florida

One of our subscribers in Florida writes; "Do you know that Tuscaloosa, Alabama is known as the "Druid City"? No, we did not know that. We will be writing the chamber of commerce there and asking for more information about this nickname.

Post Oak Proto-Grove

Tom Cross found the following interesting reference to Lugh, in Welsh Lleu.

"In some other Welsh versions (of the Lleu mythology) not preserved by the Mabinogi, but mentioned by Gwynn Thomas in "Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs," it is said that Gwydion called after Lleu and chased him through the starry heavens, and it is added that Lleu was called Huan, which is a Welsh synonym for sun. This is the only direct reference to Lleu, or Lugh, to connect him with the Sun...which was not the product of some (later day) weird speculator." Otherwise Lugh as a Sun god stands unsupported, at least in Welsh. However, "There are references to Lugh begin a cobbler along with Gwydion, in the tale of Math Fab Mathonwy. And in the Lugoves, in Spain, which is named after this Pan Celtic deity, is the home of a Guild of Shoemakers. (The town) was called Lugos in Roman times." Lugh was the god of all crafts, and portrayed as competent in all of them, but his skill as a cobbler seems to have been particularly important. "Therefore, I believe that the Leiprechan or Leprachaun of Ireland are a fairy type derived from Lugh, the Samildanach Master of Arts and Crafts." Leprechauns as the people of Lugh, would have the precedent of the name derivation system that gives the Cornish as the people of Cernunnos, or the Rosmerti as the people of Rosmerta and the Irish as the people of the land of Eriu.

Feedback

Relative to this year's Beltaine article discussing the Druids' relationship to and possible opinions about the Megalithic Stone Circles, a student of John Mitchell called to say there is indeed evidence that the Celts noticed and incorporated Megalithic monuments and lore into their own traditions. Among the Bardic survivals in Wales are some instructions as to how to lay out a Gorsedds Circle, which should be built on conspicuous high ground, for holiday celebrations. The description of the placement of the stones or markers, aligned with high day sunrises, and the number of markers used, three for Beltaine, and Samhain, at the sunrise points, two for the Equinoxes, one for each Solstice, agrees with the construction of Boscawen-un Circle in Cornwall and the Tregeseal Circle near St. Just. Other Scottish and Irish megalithic monuments may have originally followed this plan, too. Either the Bards, or their forerunners the Celts, studied the deserted Stone Circles and incorporated their plan into Bardic ritual, or the Megalithic Builders, some of whom, such as the Windmill Hill Community, who were Indo-European, and the Celts both drew from the same ancient source. We would be inclined toward the first alternative. The evidence he cited in Michell and Aubrey Burl makes it clear that the Circles' stones marked the same High Days celebrated by the Celts.

It is becoming clear that the ancient Britons had far more astronomical knowledge than would be necessary just to keep the calendar rectified. J. Bronowski adherents feel that more would not have been necessary for "primitive" man and that therefore more knowledge was not sought. I would plead that innate human curiosity, if no other reason, would prompt further study of the heavens once some astronomical studies had begun. But think of the power it would give an ancient priesthood to be able to predict solar and lunar eclipses. The equinoxes and the solstices may be enough to keep the calendar aligned, but to predict and seem to control, solar and lunar eclipses would keep the king, the warriors and the rabble in line. From a paleo-political point of view this would not have been useless knowledge, but quite practical. Eclipse prediction does not require advanced mathematics, only observations over extended periods. The keeping of careful records over long periods of time is just the sort of thing at which ancient priesthoods excelled.

******

One of our members says, after reading the article on the "Wizard Light" in the Lughnasadh, 1982, issue, that she can remember creating this phenomenon for herself when she was a child. (Commercial: you, too, can order back issues and read them. Just 50 cents each with a SASE) Her older sisters would shut her in a closet or the coalroom to tease her. It being pitch dark in there and boring, she would amuse herself by generating sparkly lights and making them form into patterns and geometric designs. She says she never thought of herding them all together into a ball of light bright enough to see by.

Space! Lots of Space. There ARE other things!

Advertisement

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Calendar

Autumn Equinox will be celebrated at the Grove site at Live Oak Grove on September 22, 1:27 PDT which corresponds to astronomical Equinox, 20:27 Greenwich. Regular services will be at 1:00 PDT, that is Solar NOON, on September 9th and October 7th and 21st. Samhain will occur at 6:38 P.M. Pacific Standard Time on November 6th. Celebration will start at Sundown, approximately 5:00P.M. PST. Election of officers for 1985 will be held, as provided in The Druid Chronicles, at this service.

Notice:

Election of next year's officers will take place at the Samhain service and meeting, as listed above. This is our annual meeting as a Non-profit Corporation. The elected officers, to wit Archdruid, Preceptor, and Server, are our official Board of Directors, and will be making policy for a year. Start thinking about who you want to see in these offices. Archdruid must be fully ordained Third Order Druid. Preceptor must be at least Second Order, Server may be any Grove member. Archdruid handles religious matters, leads in the setting of spiritual policy, offers the sacrifice, and communicates the numinous world on matters, and is the chief financial officer of the Corporation. Server assists the Archdruid, and handles practical and people problems. If you cannot be here to vote, write in, or call us at 254-1387 and record your nominations and opinions on our answering machine, and generally make your wishes known.

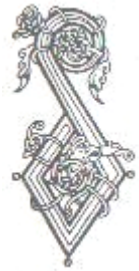
Annual Meeting is 6:30 P.M. at 616 Miner Road, Orinda California.

VOTE THIS SAMHAIN!
else
for one year hold
your peace.
Postmarked on Sept. 11, 1984.

A Druid Missal-Any Samhain 1984 Volume 8 Number 7

Samhain Essay: The End of Summer

By Emmon Bodfish



amhain, Celtic New Year, the day between the Worlds. The Druid year starts with Samhain, in the fall of the year, just as the Druid reckoning of days begins each day at night fall. This marks the end of the harvest season. Any fruit not gathered in by Samhain Eve must be left in the fields to feed the birds and wild animals, or the Sidhe, as one would have it. According to Françoise Le Roux, whose article, "Studies on the Celtic Feast Days" has been translated out of the French by one of our subscribers, Jeanne Elizabeth, Samhain may be derived from Sam Fuin, Weakening or End of Summer. Other competing derivations from Sam Rad or Samhna are by no means disproven. Samh-rad, summer or Samhrach, quiet.

Like New Year's Celebrations everywhere, Samhain festivities fall into two sequential phases; one that signifies a return to Chaos, e.g. disposal of old goods, expelling of evil, reversal of usual habits of behavior, parties, suspension of taboos, and the return of the dead, all on Samhain night; and a second which signifies re-birth of the Cosmos and creation anew, e.g. lighting of new fires, beginning of a new season, inauguration of new ceremonies, reaffirmation of the existing order and installation of new leaders. This will be enacted at the Dawn Service Samhain morning, in the Reformed Druid tradition. The newly elected Arch Druid, Preceptor, and Server enact the first service of the new year; the Third Order Druids change their ceremonial ribbons to new, white ones, and winter begins.

News of the Groves

Live Oak Grove

September 22, one of our members went to the Fall Equinox Healing Conference at Forever Forests in Mendocino, California. She reports:

When we finally arrived at Annwyn, after many delays and difficulties, we found the morning workshop just ending and preparations for lunch almost finished.

Rather rattled from the unnerving ride up White Knuckle Hill, which cost us our gas tank when a rock put a hole in it, we were glad to renew acquaintance with the friendly trees of Forever Forest. I set up a camping place there for my tired toddler to nap before joining the others. Several others attending the conference were just arriving, shortly after us. In addition to the conference goers, and the local residents, there were a number of Pagan folk who had come to celebrate Equinox.

Last time I was here, I saw no finished houses; people were living in buses, campers and trailers. Gwydion had just begun to build the round, shingled dwelling now known as "The Shaggy Mushroom." Now there are two other rectangular houses on the parcel owned by Church of All Worlds, Forever Forest's home. It was in front of one of these, called "Goat House" that lunch was set out.

There, in the clearing, surrounded by oak, pine, redwood, madrone and manzanita, we formed a circle around the table and, after introducing ourselves, sang our thanks, praise and hopes in one of the many lively rounds that were used in the rituals that weekend.

Workshops and the Equinox Celebration were all conducted in a carpeted circle beneath a majestic madrone tree, the biggest I've seen. It appeared to be a permanent circle with cardinal point altars made of wonderfully gnarled old tree roots and branches. Following the instructions of the workshop facilitator, we learned to sense where the energy was blocked, clumped up, in each other's bodies, and where it seemed deficient. Then, by stroking and massaging, attempt to balance the energy.

Now with the deepening dusk, the businesslike mood of the day dropped away and the sense of being in a magical land intensified. Dreams of freedom, blending with shadowy memories of lifetimes past swirled in an exultant present of music and drumbeat and singing and dancing beneath the serene and starlit trees of Annwyn.

Stories of unicorns and mermaids and also of the blackguard developers who currently want to turn this wooded retreat and spiritual center into subdivisions and condominiums, entertain us as we eat our evening meal. I am amazed at my child's appetite. He, who at home makes mealtime a nightmare, was stuffing his mouth with handfuls from both hands. After the feast, and getting the little one to bed, I joined the others down at the hot tub. Up here it's rustic—a large old horse trough with a fire pit under it.

Next morning, after breakfast, we began Aura-cleansing/Chakra Workshop. After some warm up Yoga exercises, we began by balancing the energy in our own bodies. "It's like taking a psychic shower." Anodea told us, "Reach up and pull down the colors." Touching our visualized rainbow, we brought down one hue at a time, beginning with red, drawing it down to our first chakras. After orange and yellow, Anodea says, "Now the heart, just feel all that beautiful green." She demonstrates, rubbing her chest, purringly. By the time we got through blue, indigo and on to

the violet of the crown, I could see a difference in each of us. Each person I looked at seemed more solid more "here." Having balanced ourselves, we pair up for Aura cleansing. Gently we stroke the aura, shaking the negativity off our finger tips after each stroke, finding the places where it seems most concentrated. Around the face is where I found the most negative energy. After the entire aura had been thusly cleansed, the subject is encouraged to "Dump" the remaining negativity by squatting and letting it go as if it were physical.

All cleansed and balanced, we felt ready for bigger things and trouped en masse into Goat House to give it a psychic cleansing, a process which, we were told, guarantees to inspire one to give the building a physical cleaning, too. Using the same techniques as in the Aura-Cleansing, we stroked the energy down and out the door. We all felt much better by the time the whole process ended, and alertly ready to plan and enact the closing circle. Owing to other pressing business, our little group was not able to stay for the closing circle, but despite all our difficulties, we all found the weekend very, very healing.

—By Willow Oak

Emmon's Note:

"If the gods cease to believe in us, do we blink out of existence?"

Feedback On the Cleo Trom

Douglas Adams, in his Sci Fi book, "Life, The Universe and Everything" describes a spell very much like the Druid Mist for hiding things as small as a shopping bag or as large as a restaurant. It is called the "Somebody Else's Problem" field (of energy). Magic is truly timeless.

An Altar or an island between two trees that burns fire and water into the air from the earth.

"Where do you start with this stuff?"

Candle-Staring

How to invoke your first image.

A good method to use for starters, it is partly mundane, making use of a nerve cell refractory period phenomenon, and partly psychic, making use of willed control of a mentally formed object. This image/object is different from the images in visions which come about spontaneously and require no effort on the seer's part to sustain them. These cannot generally be controlled and manipulated by those who witness them. Nor can hallucination be. The purpose here is to create a controllable phantom. This is a magical exercise, as contrasted with a visionary, contemplative, or meditative one, magic being defined here as psychic power and perception under the control of the will.*

Warning: Any of this takes practice; no instant wizardry. It's like learning to play a musical instrument. You will have to start over from the top line umpteen times. Practice for about twenty minutes at a time; then forget about it for a while. Twenty minutes uses up about the amount of high level mental energy most people have on tap. It takes a few hours of quiet, or even a day or so of regular living, to reaccumulate this energy.

*Somebody once said the difference between a magician and a madman is control.

Instructions:

1. Get alone.
   a. Make sure you are not going to be disturbed for half an hour.
   b. Silence helps. Even music distracts. It takes up part of your mental energy to listen to and comprehend it, albeit at the unconscious level.
2. Darkness helps
   a. A dark room or after sunset.
   b. No drafts; the candle must not flicker
3. Sit comfortably about arm's length back from your candle with the flame a little below eye level.
   a. Set the candle against a black background, black felt is good.
   b. The flame must extend above the top of the candle, not be down in a bowl or a hole.
   c. Some people find it helps to draw a circle around themselves, indicating to themselves that for the next half hour nothing outside this circle concerns them.
   d. In some way, mentally calm and ground yourself, letting go worries and plans, and all mental flotsam and jetsam that is normally flowing by.
4. Stare at the candle flame with a relaxed, not a pointed, kind of attention.
   a. The first visual change you will notice is that you will see the circle of light around the flame, the phenomenon so often portrayed on Yule Season cards. Good, you've got your vision relaxed.
   B. The second change you will see is in the flame's image on your retinas. It will seem to waiver or move to one side, leaving a dark shadow or image of itself behind it.

Congratulations: You are already seeing little things that aren't there!

5. Now, you're going to make this dark image come to you.
   a. Look steadily at the dark image without re-focusing on nearer or farther away objects and without turning your head.
   B. When you've gotten the right focus, for long enough, the dark image will pull off of the candle flame and move toward you. When it does this, it may no longer be in the shape of the candle flame. It may change to a shape like this.

   or some other shape.

6. The usual reaction is to startle, blink, and look away, at which the image disappears and you see a lot of bubbles of light and after-images of the candle.
   a. Start again.
   b. The first time I got this to work, it pulled free of the candle flame and then came toward me very fast. As in response to any sold looking object coming fast at my face, I dodged to the side and ducked. The image went on past me and through the space where my head had been. This is not a visual after-image, which follows your field of view as you turn.

7. When you get past the startle reflex and are able to continue to stare in a relaxed way at the image as it approaches you, it will
   a. "Pop" ala soap bubble a few inches from your face.
   b. Or, if you can hold very still, physically and mentally, and continue keeping your attention on it, it will come to you and seem to enter your head at the spot between and above your eyes. The location is known in the East as the "Third Eye" and in the West as the "Unicorn's Horn." There is no tactile sensation and nothing physical happens.

8. Now, you can learn to control this image. By willing it to do so, you can make it stop at any point between you and the candle, hover for a while, get bigger, and then come to you.
   a. It is very slippery and will keep getting away from you at first.
   b. A method of doing this which use has the feeling of projecting my energy out to the image, in midair, and moving it by pushing or pulling. Those are the subjective sensations of it.

The purpose of this exercise, besides helping you to get into a wizard-like headstate, is to give you practice at controlling visually manifested mental/psychic phenomena. Starting with one that is close to the mundane, you can verify to yourself that these manifest by means of your energy, and that you can control that facet of the situation. This is not only amusing and confidence building, but can be a good skill to have on further mental journeys.

Contents thanks to my teacher.
Organization thanks to Chilton's Auto Repair Manuals.—E.B.

Calendar

Samhain will be celebrated at Live Oak Grove on Nov. 6, beginning at 5:30 P.M. Pacific Standard Time with Samhain vigil lasting until the following dawn, Nov. 7. Regular services will be held at Solar Noon, 1:00 P.M. Day Light Savings Time, at the Grove Site on Nov. 24, and Dec. 8. This is the first time in many years we have a full moon for Samhain!

Notice!

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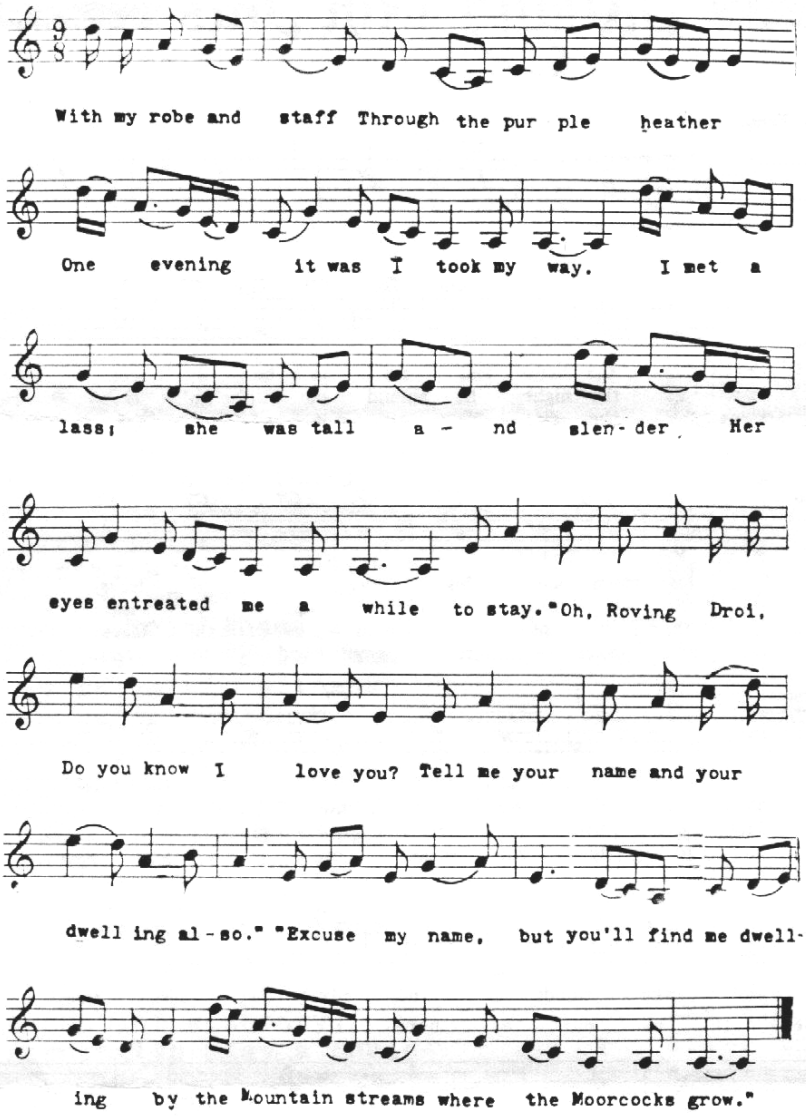
VOTE THIS SAMHAIN!

else
for one year hold
your peace.

Postmarked Oct. 23, 1984

THE MOUNTAIN STREAMS



Talking with Trees

Easy Waltz Tempo

F C7 F Cdim

a tempo

C7 F Am Dm C7 Gm C7 F

1. She looks in the house and she no - bo - dy sees. We go
2. It's late in the night he should be cut - tin' "zzz's" He's --
3. All a - lone by the cir - cle of stones by the sea, At ---
4. Aunt Hann, she comes down with her bask - ets of cheese, Of ---

Bb Fsus F G9 G7 C7 C D7

up to his room and his rug's full of leaves, And
out of the win - dow by shad - ow - y leas
night by the light of the moon on the leaves, You can
cook - ies and cakes--- to tempt and to tease, To

Gmi F C7 F C7 F

all his new trou - sers have pitch on the knees.
Down in the Wild - wood where no - bo - dy sees,
see him go danc - ing on ma - gic - al knees,
try and to teach him some sense if you please, But

CHORUS

F D7 Gm

Out in the woods is he, talk - ing with trees!

4. he'd rather be out of here,

F C7 F

Talk - ing and walk - ing and stalk - ing with trees

F Bb

Up in the high-- hills, catch - ing the breeze,

Bb F C7 F

Out in the woods is he, talk - ing with trees!

A Druid Missal-Any Yule 1984 Volume 8 Number 8

Yule Essay: Mistletoe and the Golden Sickle

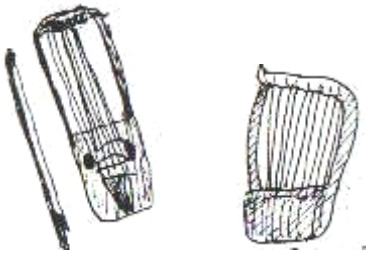
By Emmon Bodfish

ule, Winter Solstice is one of the four minor Druid High Days. It is associated with the Holly and the Mistletoe. All mistletoe symbolism and use we see around during this time of the year is a carry-over from pagan, most likely Druidic, customs of ancient Europe.

Pliny the Elder, in his *Natural History*, gives us the best description we have of a Paleo-Pagan Druid ceremony, that of the cutting of the mistletoe. According to Stuart Piggot, the time for this ceremony was determined by observing the growth of the mistletoe on an oak tree. "The time of the rite was the sixth day of a new moon, and preparations were made for a feast and a sacrifice of two white bulls. A Druid in a white robe climbed the tree and cut with a golden sickle the branch of a mistletoe, which was caught as it fell on a white cloak. The bulls were then sacrificed and all present ate of them."

The golden sickle is inexplicable, as real gold will not hold an edge tough enough to cut through the woody stem of the mistletoe. Gilded, or simply polished, bronze, is more likely. Elsewhere Pliny writes of the ritual necessity of gathering the mistletoe left-handed, after first fasting, and of the Celts plucking Selago without using an iron knife, barefoot and with the right hand through the left sleeve of a white tunic, but these are private rites, not public ceremonies.

We realize that two white bulls are difficult to come by in most parts of the country now, and hard to keep until Yule. (My lease says "No pets.") But a feast among friends and some holly sprigs and mistletoe hung about is definitely in order. The feast at Live Oak Grove will be on the evening of the twenty-first, after Yule service. Watch this space for pictures.



News of the Groves

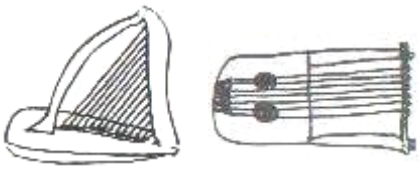
Live Oak Grove

GROVE ELECTIONS

In line with our charter as a non-profit corporation, we had our annual meeting and election of officers, Samhain eve, Nov. 6th, 1984. Officers for 1985:

Arch Druid :	Larry Press
Preceptor:	Emmon Bodfish
Server:	Office left open

Favorite candidate for Server withdrew, stating that couldn't take on the responsibilities of office at this time.



For the fifth year, now the R.D.N.A. was represented in the Bay Area Interfaith Council Thanksgiving Pageant. Though largely Christian, the Council includes Buddhist, Hindu, Sikhs, Taoist, Jewish, and Ba'hai groups. We participated as part of the Neo-Pagan Coalition with C.O.G. and Temple of Isis. Holding up the Druid end, Emmon read the Hymn of Amergin from *Lebor_Gabala*. "Stick to the classics," he says.

Post Oak Proto-Grove

SAMHAIN

Tom Cross went to his office costume party this Samhain as a Druid, long white robe, oak leaf crown, and golden sickle. Richard went as a shaman. The two rather stood out against the punk rockers, the vampires, and the heavy-metal devotees. One of the bosses wore his suite and tie and a Reagan mask. At one point in the proceedings Tom pointed his wand at "Reagan" and changed him into a normal human being, at which the boss obliged by flinging off his mask to reveal Mr. _____.

The drawings of harps, etc. various places around the issue are by Tom, part of his research into ancient Indo-European and Bardic music.

Live Oak Grove

The fourth ventricle is the first area of the brain to show characteristic brain activity in the fetus; it is the last locus of activity in the brain as a person dies. During life, stimulation of the fourth ventricle causes laughter.

—Doug, Corresponding Member.

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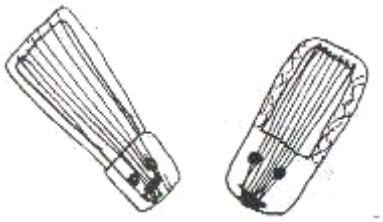


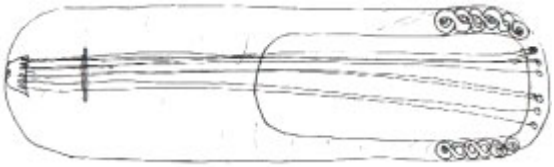
The Grave of the Sun

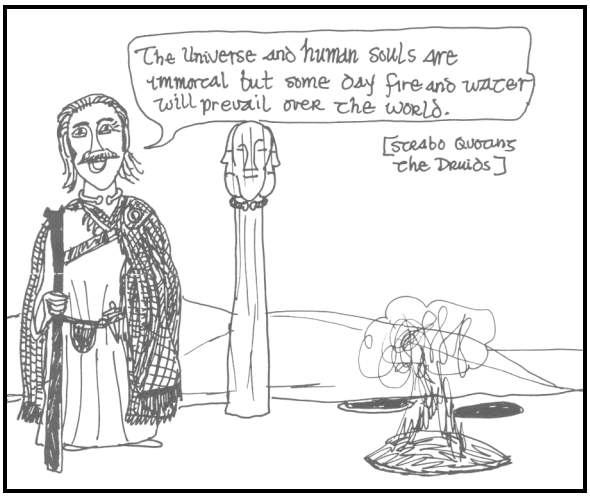
(New Grange)

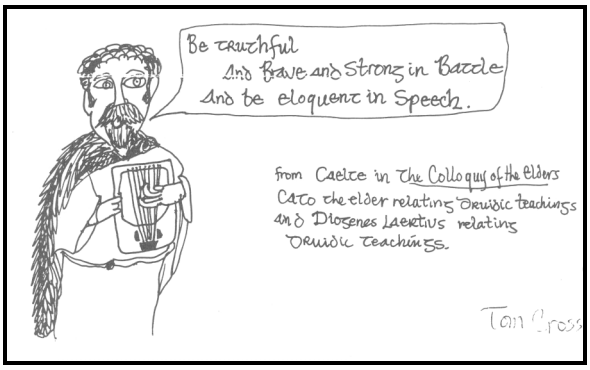
By Seán Ó Tuathail

Inside the quartz-robed hill
the darkness waits
Blood-paint spirals
guard its gate
: Nadir solstice dawn :
light streaks through the portal
breaks
open the black womb
like a nut
nova
the year has turned
Somewhere
voices are singing
the gods
return

Caínteanna na Luíse
c/o 805-85 Wellesley East
Toronto, M4Y1H8, Canada







Samhain

Welsh Folk Customs for Pagans at Nos Galan Gaeaf (Eve of Samhain)

By Tom Cross

1 Before the Eve of Samhain, gather pieces of bread, cakes or pancakes. This is to be called in Welsh *hen solod* or *hel bwyd cennad y meirw*, or collecting food for the dead and the food is soul cakes. This food is to be given to those who have passed on.

In Celtic folk belief, Samhain or Calan Gaeaf is the time when the dead are close to this world and it was believed that on the eve of Samhain, when the Otherworld was closer, the dead came back to earth. This is the time when we can look back at those who have died and reflect on the ones that we miss and remember them and honour them. One of the ways we can do this, is by the archaic rite of feeding the dead which was practiced by the ancient Indo-European ancestors and still practiced in other cultures today.

2. At the Samhain bonfire, or *coelcerth*, as it is called in Welsh, which is lit at night on the eve of Samhain, the soul cakes which have been gathered may at this time be eaten by those celebrating and a portion of each piece is to be thrown into the fire as an offering not only to the deities but also for the dead.
3. When the food has been placed in the fire, a eulogy for the dead may be recited and other charms or

prayers uttered in commemoration of those who have died. Also, the gods and the spirits of the dead may be asked for help in the coming season or for the year. As an example thanks may be given to one's parents or relatives who have died. They will be listening!

4. The fire should then be circumambulated three times each time ending on the west side. Some ecstatic Celtic music could be played. This should end this ceremony and each person should be ready to go home. Staying behind could be for those looking for the dead, or as in Welsh folk belief, the tailess black sow or Ladi Wen (white Lady) who haunts the eve of Samhain. It is speculated that the Ladi Wen represents the old year.

A rhyme from Caernarvaonshire for Nos Galan Gaeaf:

Gwen y gwnei a dy holl deulu,
Hyn a gei di genni leni.

Mayest thou bless thy whole family,
This us what I give thee this year

Pronunciation:
(gwen uh gwnaye ah duh hollh dye-lee
Huhn uh gaye dee ggennee lenee)

—Thomas Cross

Bibliography: (Sources of Welsh folklore)

Jones, T. Gwynn. *Welsh Folklore and Folk-Custom*, Aberystwyth, 1930, Brewer/Rowan and Littlefield.
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Roberts, Tony. *Myths and Legends of Wales*, Haverfordwest, 1979, Abercastle Publications.

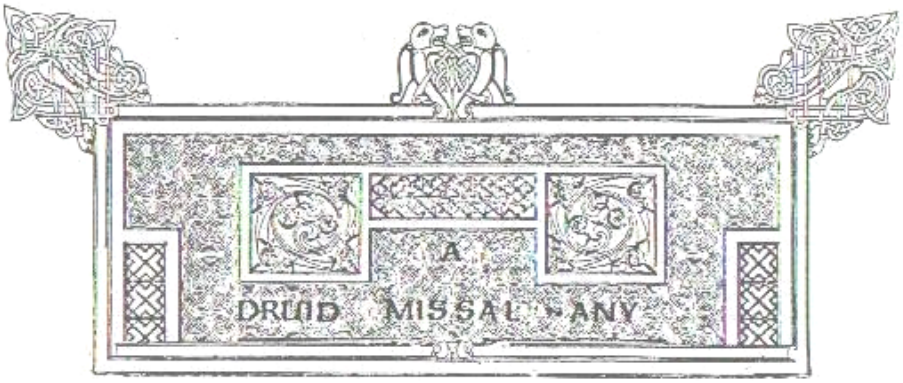
Calendar

Yule, Winter Solstice, will be celebrated at Live Oak Grove at Sunset, 4:15 PST, on December 21st with feast and fun to follow at approx. 6:00 P.M. Regular Druid services will be at 12:00, NOON, at the Grove Site on January 6 and 20, 1985. Astronomical Oimelc will occur at 7:02 P.M. PST on February 3, 1985, celebration time and date is still being planned. Phone in your ideas and preferences. 254-1387.

Postmarked Dec 12, 1984

Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION TWO



A Druid Missal-Any

Volume Nine

1985 c.e.

Drynemetum Press

A Druid Missal-Any Oimelc 1985 Volume 9 Number 1

Oimelc Essay: Brigit

By Emmon Bodfish

Oimelc the festival of Bride, Bridgit, Bredes, the daughter of Dagda, and Celtic goddess of fire and the hearth. She is also patroness of poetry and the source of creative inspiration, which the Gaels regard as a supersensual form of fire. Always one of the most popular deities, the fifth and sixth century Christianizers of Ireland were unable to eradicate her worship, and instead adopted or rather co-opted her into their own pantheon as St. Bridgit. She was not, however, a Christian. Modern evidence suggests that she was of ancient Indo-European origin, cognate with Agni, god of fire in the Vedic tradition, and with hearth goddesses all over Europe. The masculinizing of goddesses was a frequent occurrence in the East and Middle East as nomadic pastoralists settled down and became agricultural and urbanized.

Bridgit is also associated with the Sun, which in Celtic countries is feminine, "na Ghreine," and which is carried in a chariot and served by a young male deity, son of the Sky God, usually Lugh or an Apollo-like figure. This may be a similar pattern to the one for Danu, the Earth Goddess, whose statue was annually transported through the countryside in a ceremonial wagon attended by a young, possibly virgin male priest. Traces of this ritual come from all over pagan Europe, according to Prof. P.V. Glob, but the best descriptions come from Scandinavia, where the ceremony persisted into Medieval times.

On Oimelc, statues of Bride were carried through the streets to her temple, where a perpetual flame burned on her altar. This continued in Ireland under Celtic Christianity, with only the name being changed to "Saint." There and in Scotland, the tradition is still repeated when the dawn shows pink colors, it is because Bride, the Sun-Maiden, hangs her cloak on the beams of the morning sun. In Bara and the isles, up until the last century, she was addressed at dawn as just that, the Sun-Maiden, and even the thin layer of Christianity, laid on in Ireland, was ignored here.

In the oldest Indo-European traditions, the Moon is masculine and may be associated with Cernunnos, the hunt and forest magic. (J. Duran, after Gimbutas, 1982) The feminine moon goddesses, usually connected with water symbolism, are thought to be of Pre-Indo-European origin.

Bride was one of the most popular deities, and most often worshipped and appealed to by the common people, judging from the statements of early Christianizers and from the large number of charms, spells, and songs to her that persisted into Medieval and some into modern times. An old fire charm for kindling a damp hearth, and in Scotland it's always damp, goes: "To Bride, Ruler of fire, give me/us this little bit of perfect fire, now." Highly effective, I use it daily.

Remember also that matches were invented by a Scotsman, a Gael. The word "match" comes (some think) from the Scot's Gaelic word "Maide" meaning "little stick." The fire sticks used to kindle fresh fire for the sacrifice are spoken of in the Vedic tradition as the Parents of Agni; Birch bark, in the primitive tinder-kit, was known as "Bridget's wood." The line from Bride, early Indo-European fire-goddess, through Agni, who is Bridget in her Asiatic male guise, leads, according to the entomological dictionary, to our word ignite and ignition, via Latin. So to keep all this relevant, when you put your foot down on the accelerator these cold mornings and turn the key, invoke Bride, Goddess of fire:

"Ah, Bhride, Banreigh na Teintean, thoir dhomh an beagan teintean lan."

Pronounced: Bri dee

Bride-key to the Druidmobile (No Copying)

Hymn to the Three Brighids

Verse for Oimelc
Alliterative Syllabic Verse in English

Brighid brought us the burning coals
Bright mistress of hearth warmth-ness
Blesses midwives and milk-cows
Bareness banished from us.

Blessed Brighid, Queen of Nature
Daughter of the Dagda comes.
On Oimelc we salute thee
Feeding kindling in fire.

Three Brighids as the winter breathes
Three nights and three heroes born.
On the three hills high fires burn.
Shall we bring our new offering?

—Thomas M. Cross

Brighid (pronounced Breed or Breej) for proper rhythm.

News of the Groves

Birch Grove

Joan Carruth writes that she is looking for land to purchase there in New Hampshire. So they may shortly have a permanent place of their own.

Inc. Magazine recently published its fourth annual ranking of states according to five factors favorable to small business. New Hampshire took top honors as having the most favorable resources and programs. Key factors were personal income and employment.

Happy Holidays

You know...
Feast of Belisima
Conception of the Earth Mother
Winter Festival of Wine & Pleasure
Feast of Taranis
Winter Solstice
Festival of the Divine Children
All these new holidays!
Happy new-holidays, too.

Joan

Live Oak Grove

The main road from Route 24 to Live Oak Grove's Site is now open again. The county has repaired it after two years and several petition efforts by the local residents.

We have planted the two additional pine trees we have been planning. These, when they grow, will give us cover from staring neighbours to the East and North. We bought them in early December but then decided to put off planting them and let them stay down at the house and attend the Yule party, decorated in shiny trinkets and paper birds. Now, duly consecrated with spirit and merriment, they are planted at the Grove Site.

Oakland, California

James Duran, Ph.D. will be giving his seminar and workshop on the Horned God of Europe again this spring, March 9th. Contact him at 1029 East 18th Street, Oakland, California 94606. You might also inquire about tapes of his lectures.

Two Definitions

maitheas, -eis, *s.m.* Goodness, kindness, mercy, bounty. 2. Virtue. 3. Druidism, sorcery.
—ach, —aich. a. Good, benevolent, virtuous, forgiving, lenient, benign.

Rocabarra. *s*. An imaginary rock in the mythical lore of the Hebrides. Like the fairy-flag of Dunvegan, it has already appeared twice, and when it appear s the third time the destruction of the world may be expected. 'N uair a thig Rocabarra ris, is dual gu'n téid an saoghal agrios, *when Rocabarra appears again, the world is doomed to destruction*.

Notes on Oimelc and Brighit

Oimelc (sometimes spelled Imbolg) is known as the pagan Celtic festival from Irish lore is said to translate as "sheep's (ewe's) milk" and has many associations with the goddess Brighit and later with St. Brighid—Christianized as a saint. According to *Cormac's Glossary* (circa 900), the goddess Brighit was daughter of the Dagda or as three daughters of the Dagda. She was an expert in poetry, learning, prophecy or divination, healing and craftsmanhsip. Then, according to the *Life of Brighid* (the saint), she was born "neither within nor without a house, at sunrise; is fed milk by a cow who is white with red ears " (these colors suggest a likely supernatural origin), "she hangs her wet cloak on the sun's rays and her house appears ablaze." According to Gerald of Wales (Giraldus Cambrensis) Brighid and her nuns guarded a perpetual sacred fire and Solinus, in the 3rd century A.D. mentioned that Minerva's sanctuary in Britain contained a perpetual fire. It seems most likely then, that Brighid the saint is a euhemerized goddess Brighit. Therefore, Brighit has many functional associations: lactation of sheep and cattle, arts and crafts, learning, healing, fire, at he hearth and sun, also with rivers and motherhood, and also she is a triple goddess or triune of goddesses.

The British Minerva that Solinus wrote of, seems to be Briganti (or Brigantia) the tutelary goddess of the Brigantes who is cognate with Brighit. There are many non-Celtic Indo-European cognates and parallels, such as *Berecythia*, *Brihati* of Thraco-Phrygians and Indians...the Indo-European root being "high" or "exalted" etc. Brighit also has Celtic counterparts such as the Gallo-Brittonic *Matronae* or *Matres*, triple mother goddesses sometimes called *Sulevia* and known also in Gaul *Belisama* ("most brilliant") and Romanised as Minerva. As Brigantia, her names survives in Britain as names of two rivers, Braint (in Wales) and Brent (in England), as Matres or Matronae the name survives as the river Marne in France.

In Christian legend, Brighid the saint appears as mid-wife to Mary thus reflecting her motherly functions and Lá Brighid (law breed) (St. Bridget's Day) seems to be a purificatory festival—in commemoration of the purification of Mary. Fire was a purificatory element to the ancient Celts as fire was used to purify cattle as in needfire and Bealtaine rituals. Brighid as fire and motherhood goddess was very suited then as a mid-wife to Mary in this purification. On La Brighid or St. Brighid's day, a doll made from a churndash as the image of Brighid called a *Brideog* was carried about from village to village and all women had to bow before it as it was paraded about. On this day, rushes were woven into crosses, called St. Brighid's cross, which bring good luck on harvests and yields. These crosses resemble the ancient triskelion and swastika more than the do Christian crosses. The triskelion in the three legged or armed type of pictograph that today is an emblem of the Isle of Man and Manannan Mac Lir. These symbols of the triskelion and swastika were ancient solar symbols and were used in Indo-European religion—although the swastika has come to be popularly associated with Nazis and the third reich of Hitler it was depicted by the ancient Germanic peoples and also by Greeks, Indians and Celts. In ancient Germany there was, as described by Tacitus, a spring festival celebrated around a mother earth goddess called Nerthus, in which her image was paraded around in a wagon to communicate blessings for peace and a good year. This, of course, parallels Oimelc and similar customs around Brighid.

As Brighit was a triple goddess, there were many other triple goddesses in Celtic as well as other Indo-European mythologies. Brighit was mother of Brian, Iuchir and Iucharbha (also called MacCuir, Mac Cecht and Mac Greine—sons of the Hazel, Plough and Sun) who married another triune of goddesses; Banbha, Fodhla, and Eriu whose names are metaphoric for Ireland (Eriu is an older spelling of Eire). Sometime Brian, Iuchir and Iucharbha (or Uar) were known as the three sons of Danu, perhaps making Danu and Brighit either the same or confused. Danu also seems cognate with Danu, Mother of Vrtra in the *Rig Veda*, Vrtra being the same as the Old Persian god Verethragna. Vrtra was a demonic god opposed to Indra to the Vedic Indians, but Verethragna was a hero god. At any rate, Danu seems to go back to an Indo-European root having to do with "dripping or flowing water," also the root of the name Danube and other central and eastern European river names. The Norns of Norse-Germanic myth, the Parcae of Roman Myth and Moirai of Greek myth are all triple in form and are what we call the Fates who control the destiny of mankind. The Morrigu* of Irish myth seems to correspond as triple in form also, as Badb, Macha and Nemain, however, they seem to be better paralleled in Germanic mythology as the Valkyries in function. Both are war goddesses who, as birds, pick up the slain in battle. Badb is the hooded crow who with her beak pecks at the corpses. Valkyries sometimes appear in bird form and they take slain warriors to Valhalla. In Greek myth, the three Moirai (Fates) were joined by other goddesses, such as, the three Graces and the nine Muses, also a multiple of three. However it was Pallas Athene or Athena who corresponds in function to Brighit as well as Hestia and Artemis. If one could group Athena, Artemis and Hestia as a triune, one would have a parallel to Brighit.

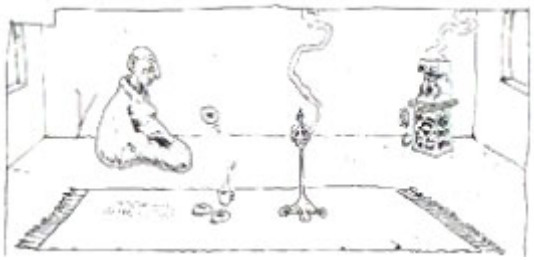
Thus we have:

Celtic	Norse	Greek
Brighit or 3 Brighits or 3 Matrone	3 Nornir: Urd, Verdandi and Skuld	3 Moirai: Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos
The 3 Morrigan: Badb, Macha and Nemain	13 Valkyries-choosers of the slain.	3 Furies
Banbha, Fodhla and Eriu: the 3 goddesses of Ireland		3 graces, 9 muses
Arianrhod (Welsh)	Germanic: Austron (*Eastre*-- goddess of Easter and of dawn)	Eos (Greek) of dawn Ushuas (Vedic) goddess of Dawn

*Welsh equivalent of an aspect of Morrigan in Aeron (from Brittanic Agrona) a goddess of battle and slaughter; Aerfen (Welsh) goddess of the "end of battle" (cf. Aeron and Aerfen to Badb and Nemain). Rhiannon may be compared to Macha. Note: The 3 daughters of Dôn (Danu) in Welsh myth: *Gwernen* (alder), *Elan* (push, drive), *Maelan* (profit, material gain)—all are also names of rivers. In Welsh myth there is Modron mother of Mabon (Mabon ap Modron) from Gallo-Britannic *Matronae*.

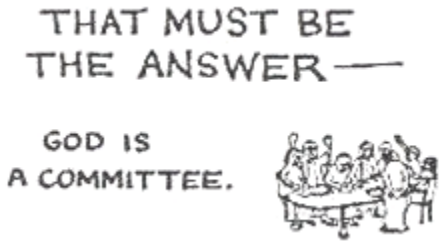
Sources:

The Cult of Brighid, Chap. 4 of *Mother Goddesses*, article by Donald O Cathasaigh
Proinsias Mac Cana, *Celtic Mythology*, Hamlyn
Alwyn and Brinley Rees, *Celtic Heritage*, Thames and Hudson
Padraic O Farrell, *Superstitions of the Irish Country People*, Mercier
Tacitus, *Germania* (with *Agricola* etc.) Penguin trans. H. Mattingly



I include the Java-crucians here because I first learned about them through Larry Press, Arch Druid. I don't know if they ever existed anywhere outside Larry and friends' conversation, but, if not, then they, like Voltaire's Devil, should have.

Polytheism Rediscovered



Ashleigh Brilliant has a new book out, *I Feel Much Better, Now that I've Given Up Hope*, which includes this epigram among others. $4.95, Cody's Books, Berkeley.

Calendar

Astronomical Oimelc will occur at 1:00 P.M. Pacific Standard time on February 3, 1985, and will be celebrated at Live Oak Grove Noon to 1:00 P.M. on Sunday the 3rd, February, 1985. Regular Druid Services will be at the Grove Site at NOON on February 17, March 10. Spring Equinox celebration will be on Tuesday, March 19 this year, time to be arranged.

A Druid Missal-Any Spring Equinox, 1985 Volume 9 Number 2

Spring Equinox Essay: Spring Rites

By Emmon Bodfish

quinox, the beginning of Spring, one the four Minor High Days in the Druid tradition. The Sun crosses the celestial equator, from Southern Declination to Northern, and the day and the night are of equal length. This is the time of renewal, the beginning of preparations for the summer to come. The holiday is older than Druidism; stones in the megaliths mark this sunrise. Plowing and planting begin. It is the season of egg gathering. The giving of painted eggs as gifts and offerings predates Christianity, or the introduction of chickens, originally a wild Indian pheasant, to European barnyards.

The Leechbook records this chant of English (Brythonic, really) farmers in the spring rites circa 950 A.D. The Christian church had not yet begun its campaign in earnest to expunge old pagan ways or else re-name and "Christianize" them as it would over the next five hundred years.

Erec! Erec! Erec!
Mother of Earth
Hail to thee, Earth!
Mother of mortals.

Be fruitful in
The God's embrace
Filled with food
For the use of man.

In England, prior to the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in 1752, Spring Equinox was the beginning of the new year. It is still celebrated there as "Lady Day." In the Gaelic world, the new season, Samhra, summer, won't begin until Bealtaine, but the new year began on Samhain in November.

The emphasis of this season is balance, as day and night now stand balanced. Time to make recompense for old mistakes and receive the reward of our winter's patience. The tree is the birch, Bride's tree, the tree of Spring and Dawn, at the East point of the circle.

News of the Groves

Live Oak Grove

Oimelc meeting, first on the agenda was to resolve the problem of the office of the Server, who, in Live Oak Grove is also the Secretary on the Board of this non-profit, religious corporation. Last High Day we had voted to leave the post of Server vacant until we had worked this out.

Larry Press, A.D., suggested splitting the post into two offices and electing a Server and a Secretary.

Willowoak offered the counter proposal that the office of Server/Secretary be shared between two people, because each of the two candidates, Bob Blunt and herself, have different skills.

"This way I can learn about being Server, and he can learn how to be a secretary to a non-profit corporation," as she said.

Howard clarified how this might work, and the motion was seconded and passed. Then Bob Blunt was duly elected Server/Secretary and Willowoak Co-Server and Under-Secretary. Both will be members of the Board.

(Enough red tape, and it isn't even red ribbon season yet.)

We planted the agreed upon three birch trees, putting them at the Spring Equinox sunrise point on the Grove Circle.

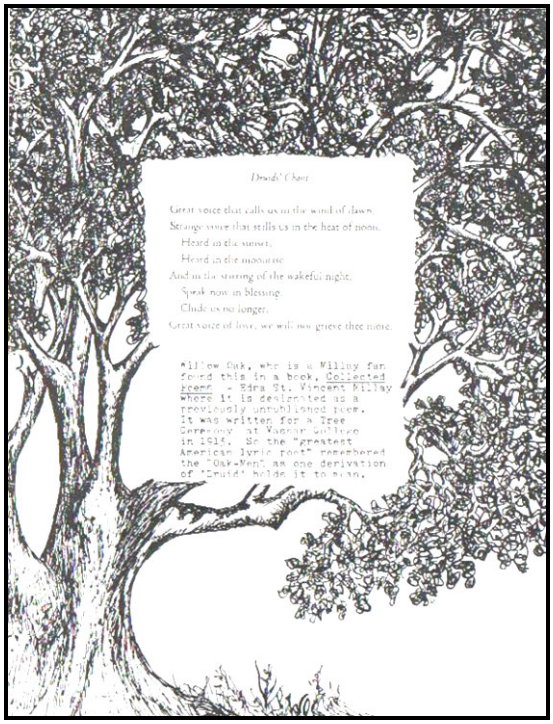
The trunks need to be covered, wrapped to protect them from direct sunlight in this clime. As tying the burlap around the trunk with string may have contributed to the troubles of our last birch tree, this time we have sewn cloth loosely around them, and held it on by a method more like suspenders than a belt.

> "When I joined this religion, I never thought I'd be sewing clothes for trees."
>
> —The Preceptor

On March 2, we planted the May pole meadow with wild flower seeds. We transplanted donated clover and violets into the Grove Circle, and around the base of the Maypole.

At the business meeting after services March 10, we discussed what we could plant as ground-cover in the Grove Circle which the deer and the voles wouldn't devour. Next, we discussed the Missal-Any Policy Statement. The Under-secretary objected to the use of the word "Neo-Pagan" in Section 3, as limiting it to those traditions and groups which have been established in the last few decades, and excluding people from other, older traditions. Larry Press, A.D., stated that he felt that "Neo-Pagan" included every tradition, and the Preceptor said that he thought it included those traditions, no matter how old, which have recently found the freedom to surface, "bloom and flower." It was decided that, since there was no way to correct the camera-ready-copy of the Policy Statement at this late date, it would be run "as is" and comments, additions, and corrections invited from the members. Two people also wanted to add to section 8, making it more specific. Submitted material must be legible, camera-ready and reproducible, but not necessarily typed.

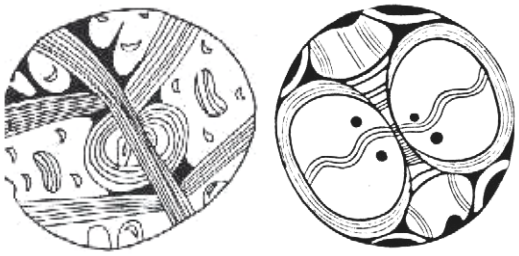
The postage rates are going up in February, by 2 cents someone said. And as we are at the ragged edge, we voted to raise the cost of subscriptions to "A Druid Missal-Any" to $3.00 a year. That's eight issues.



Druid's Chant

Great voice that calls us in the wind of dawn,
Strange voice that still us in the heat of noon,
    Heard in the sunset,
    Heard in the moonrise
And in the stirring of the wakeful night,
    Speak now in blessing,
    Chide us no longer,
Great voice of love, we will not grieve thee more.

Willow Oak, who is a Millay fan found this in a book, *Collected Poems*—Edna St. Vincent Millay where it is designated as a previously unpublished poem. It was written for a Tree Ceremony at Vassar College in 1915. So the "greatest American lyric poet" remembered the "Oak-Men," as one derivation of "Druid" holds it to mean.



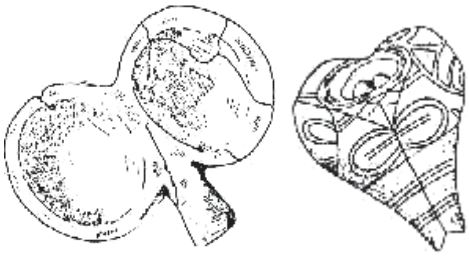
Hatching Blessing

Bu tu fein an deagh nabaidh agus an caraide caomh. Ma 's a h-e agus gun ruig thu null fearann do dhuthchais agus duthaich do bhreith, agus gum feumair thu tilleadh a nall dh'an fhonn-sa rithist, tha mise cur mar bhoid agus mar bhriathar ort, agus mar naoi riaraiche nam bana-sith, thu dhol gu ruig Cladh Mhicheil ann an Ormacleit, an Uibhist, agus thu thoir as a sin thugam-sa deannan beag urach a churar air clar mo chridhe-sa la mo bhais.

I will rise early on the morning of Monday,
I will sing my rune and rhyme,
I will go sunwise with my cog
To the nest of my hen with sure intent.

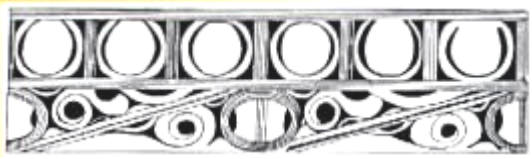
I will place my left hand to my breast,
My right hand to my heart,
I will seek the loving wisdom of Him
Abundant in grace, in broods, and in flocks.

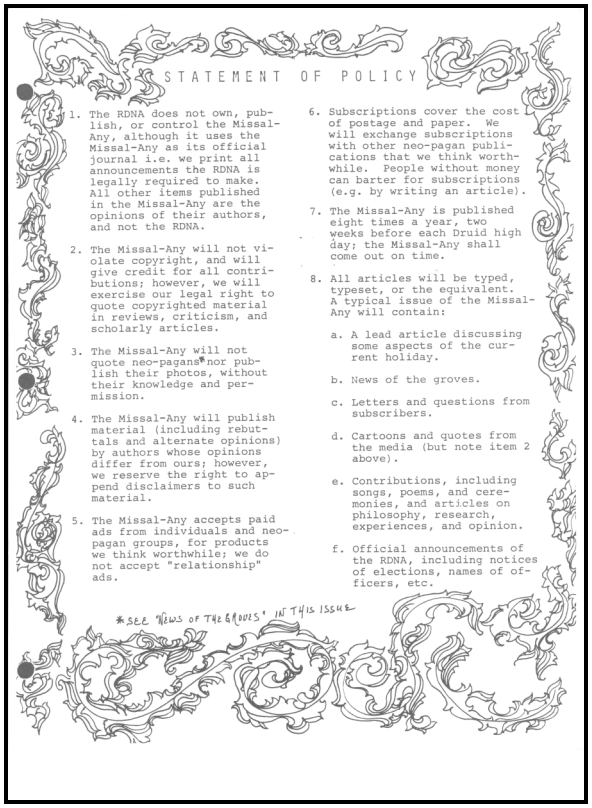
I will close my two eyes quickly,
As in blind-man's bluff moving slowly;
I will stretch my left hand over thither
To the nest of my hen on yonder side.



This is a hatching spell peculiar to this egg-time of year, from the Scottish Highlands, circa 1800. In the Gáidhlig introduction by the collector, Alexander Carmichael, there is a quote from the 102 year old lady from whom he collected this and other runes. In it she tells of the customs, purely pagan, of placing a bit of the native soil on the breast of a corpse before burial. This is a custom I have heard from many sources in the Neo-pagan community, and from my Celtic relatives as a child. However, this is the first "academic" reference or precedent I have been able to uncover. It may have been a part of the Ancient Druid funeral rites, or from an even older Pagan stratum. I have heard it called the "releasing soil" now-a-days. It could well be incorporated into N.R.D.N.A. traditions. We would appreciate any feedback anyone out there has on this.

—The Preceptor
Live Oak Grove




STATEMENT OF POLICY

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2. The Missal-Any will not violate copyright, and will give credit for all contributions; however, we will exercise our legal right to quote copyrighted material in reviews, criticism, and scholarly articles.

3. The Missal-Any will not quote neo-pagans* nor publish their photos, without their knowledge and permission.

4. The Missal-Any will publish material (including rebuttals and alternate opinions) by authors whose opinions differ from ours; however, we reserve the right to append disclaimers to such material.

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8. All articles will be typed, typeset, or the equivalent. A typical issue of the Missal-Any will contain:

a. A lead article discussing some aspects of the current holiday.

b. News of the groves.

c. Letters and questions from subscribers.

d. Cartoons and quotes from the media (but note item 2 above).

e. Contributions, including songs, poems, and ceremonies, and articles on philosophy, research, experiences, and opinion.

f. Official announcements of the RDNA, including notices of elections, names of officers, etc.

*SEE "NEWS OF THE GROVES" IN THIS ISSUE

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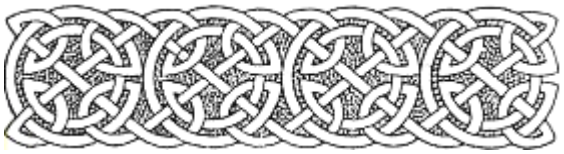
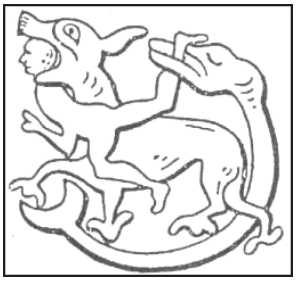


Frankly, I'd be satisfied now if I could even turn gold into lead.

Brownian motion: the movement of microscopic particles caused by Brownies.

Calendar

Equinox will be celebrated at Live Oak Grove at sunset (6:00) on March 19, 1985. Regular Services will be at the Grove Site on March 24, April 7 and 21st, at NOON. Beltaine will be May 5, at NOON.



The Boogies will get you
If you don't watch out
And
Maybe if you do!
—My Mother

A Druid Missal-Any
Beltane 1985
Volume 9 Number 3

Beltane Essay:
Maypole and Shamanism

By Emmon Bodfish

eltaine, major Holiday of the Druid year, and beginning of the Season of Life, marks the point on the sun's ascent when it is half way between Equinox, level, and Solstice, culmination. Bonfires are lighted on hill tops and feast prepared. The Maypole dance, which crowns the festivities, is probably older than Druidism, or than the migration of the Indo-Europeans into Europe or India. There is speculation from both academic and traditional channels to the effect that the Maypole and the Sacrificial pole may have a common origin in the spring and autumn rituals of the early Neolithic pastoralists of the Eur-Asian Steppes. At this season these ancestors of the Siberian, Turkic, Tartar and Indo-European peoples, celebrated an animal sacrifice, in which the animal to be offered was tied to a richly decorated post, which was the center and focus of the ritual and dancing. Ribbons, streamers or threads of bright colors figure in the rites and records of the descendent cultures.

The Rig Veda describes the stake to which the horse sacrifice is tethered as "brightly beribboned" with colored banners streaming down it.

In the Siberian Shamanistic rituals, which preserve the earliest traditions, the reindeer or pony sacrifice is tied to a freshly cut young larch or birch tree. The tree is festooned with ribbons, streamers or colored threads. The colors are always those associated with the particular deity or deities being addressed. The Shaman of the Buryat and his assistants, nine youths and nine maidens, dance. The Shaman, in trance, conducts the spirit of the slain animal up, along the path of the streamers to the top of the tree, and on up to the heavenly abode of the waiting deity. In healing and initiation rites, ribbons are also used to indicate soul-paths.

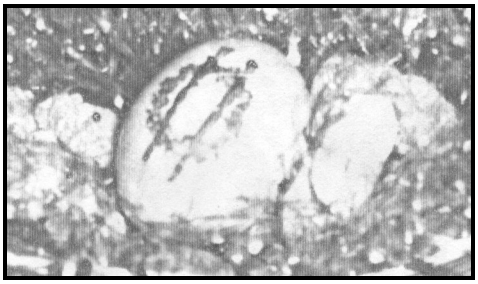
In the volumes of data collected by Fraser, are descriptions of the traditional cutting of the maypole in Europe, in which the tallest young birch in the woods was selected, cut and set up in the village square. These traditions probably pre-date Christian or Roman contact, and seem to have been very little affected by them. Their similarity all across Europe and the Steppes of Asia would argue for a very archaic origin.

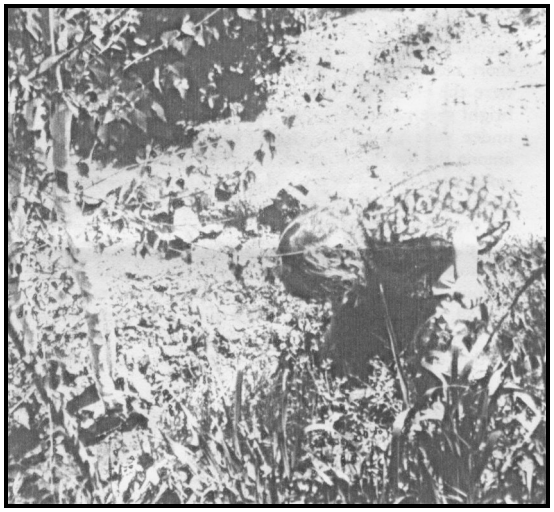
But the May dance also includes strong Pre-Indo-European elements: the circle dance, the gathering of buds and flowers, maybasket giving, and the Green Man symbolism and costumery. These may speak of an older, agrarian tradition, perhaps brought by the first farming peoples coming into Europe from the Near East and the Mediterranean and melding with the indigenous (from Ice Age?) peoples of Europe. The farther East one goes towards the Steppes of Asia, the fewer of these milder customs of the May one encounters in village life and folk tradition, until among the never Christianized tribes of Siberia, there is found the pure animal sacrifice, tethered to the be-ribboned Axis Mundi, the World-Tree.

Mr. David L. Rosenbaum,
Box 2358 E.S.P.
Albany, NY 12220

News of the Groves

Our new birch trees are leafing out and thriving. On Equinox we held an egg hunt for the children up at the Grove Site. Willow Oak hand painted a dozen or two eggs, for the occasion. The tradition of decorated eggs goes back 6,000 years, but the one here with the Druid (R.D.N.A.) sigil is, I believe, a first.





Finding an egg under the Birches

Pouring out the offering to the Big Oak

To a Birch-Tree Cut Down, and Set Up in Llanidloes for a Maypole.

Long are you exiled from the wooded slope, birch-tree, with your green hair in wretched state; you who were the majestic sceptre of the wood where you were reared, a green veil, are now turned traitress to the grove. Your precinct was lodging for me and my love-messenger in the short nights of May. Manifold once (ah, odious plight!) were the caroling in your pure green crest, and in your bright green house I heard every bird-song make its way; under your spreading bough grew herbs of every kind among the hazel saplings, when your dwelling-place in the wood was pleasing to my girl last year. But now you think no more of love, your crest above remains dumb; and from the green meadow and the upland, where your high rank was plain to see, you have gone bodily and in spite of the cost to the town where trade is brisk. Though the gift of an honorable place in thronged Llanidloes where many meet is good, not good, my birch, do I think your rape nor your site nor your habitation. No good place is it for you for putting out green leaves, there where you make grimaces.

No more will the bracken hide your urgent seedlings, where your sister stays; no more will there be mysteries and secrets shared, and shade, under your dear eaves; you will not conceal the April primroses, with their gaze directed upwards; you will not think now to inquire, fair poet tree, after the birds of the glen. God! Woe to us, a cramped chill is on the land, a

subtle dread, since this helplessness has come on you, who bore your head and your fine crest like noble Tegwedd of Old. Choose from the two, since it is foolish for you to be a townsman, captive tree: either to go home to the lovely mountain pasture, or to wither yonder in the town.

—Welsh; Gruffydd ab Addaf ap Dafydd, fl.*c*. 1340-*c*. 1370.

Poison Oak and Plantain

Now, at the beginning of Poison Oak season, Carlene Skeffington of New Hampshire offers the following:

A Live Plantain Leaf

In June, when my right thumb and forearm broke out in an extensive poison oak rash, I remembered reading an article that suggested rubbing leaves of Plantago spp. on the affected area. I tried it, and the itching, redness and swelling stopped! With the experimentation I found that it was best to extract the juices from the leaves by crushing them in a mortar before applying it to the rash. Only one application each morning for about ten days was necessary. The Most effective were the healthy leaves with prominent linear ribbing and as few hairs as possible. Leaf hairs act as an irritant if rubbed directly into the rash.

"The Protestant work ethic isn't cutting it, so we're switching to Shinto."

Have You Hugged Your Tree Today?

Jon Caroll
San Francisco Chronicle

The Green Balloons wave in the wind, and the residents of Hampshire St., a small and residential byway in the Mission, gather around. "OK," says Cheryl Kollin, "this is a glossy privet, and were going to show you how to plant it. First dig a hole."

Everybody laughs. It's 9 a.m. on a brisk Saturday morning, but everybody is cheerful, fortified by strong coffee and sweet, doughy Mexican pastries. Kollin holds up her hand.

"Be sure to dig a notch in your hole for the watering tube." The watering tube resembles a mailing tube filled with pebbles. "The tube is important because it gets the water deep, which encourages the roots to go into the ground rather than up on the surface where they can buckle your sidewalk."

Everybody nods. Buckled sidewalks are the *bete noir* of urban tree planters; steps must be taken.

Note:

For information on urban tree planning, contact
Forever Forests
P.O. Box 212
Redwood Valley, Calif.
95470.

"We believe that in a previous life you were J. Winthrop Harris, who died owing us $4,500."

Calendar

Beltaine will be celebrated on May 5, at NOON at Live Oak Grove. Bring your own ribbon for the Maypole, (approx. 25 feet long.) Regular Druid Services will be held at the Grove Site at NOON on May 19, June 2 and 16th. Summer Solstice will be on June 21, '85. Time and festivities to be arranged. For information (415) 254-1387.

Postmarked May 3, 1985

A Druid Missal-Any Summer Solstice 1985 Volume 9 Number 4

Solstice and Stonehenge

By Emmon Bodfish

idsummer, Solstice, Greine-Stad, Sun-stop, today the Sun reaches its most northerly declination, at 2:44 A.M. Pacific Standard Time. This is the festival of the Goddess Danu, mother of the gods and men. Bonfires are lit on hilltops and the night is danced away. Tossing grain or coins into the air this day is said to help one's prosperity. This is the morning that the Sun would rise over the heel stone at Stone Henge, but for the fact that the Earth has processed far enough on its axis since 1500 B.C. to move the sunrise point out of line with the ancient markers. In the 18th and 19th centuries, English Druid groups held ceremonies there. But now the Henge is fenced off and protected, and accessible only with permission of the government. The huge numbers of tourists were eroding the soil around the monoliths and there was concern that the monument would be damaged. The smaller, less well-known stone circles, such as Callenish or the Maidens are still accessible to the public, as is Avesbury.

The Druids did NOT build Stone Henge. It antedates their arrival in Britain by many centuries. It was William Stuckeley, in 1717, who mis-located them there. He did some of the best antiquarian field work of his day, but his later theorizing wildly outstripped his data. The mistake was an honest one, however, considering what was known in his day. He showed that the stones were not a memorial to King Arthur, nor a Roman temple, as had been previously supposed. He was the first to accept them as definitely pre-Roman. The only knowledge of pre-Roman Britain he had came from the Roman and Greek writers of the Classical period. They said that Britain was inhabited by Celts, whose priests were the Druids. So, if the stones were pre-Roman, Stuckeley reasoned, they must have been assembled by the Druids. He knew of no other candidates. We now feel that Stone Henge and the numerous other stone circles were set up by at least three different, pre-Celtic races, best described, I think, by Clannad's phrase, "the race no one knows." Clannad is an Irish music group who have produced several records, of which their latest, "Magical Ring" is, in our opinion, their best. (We highly recommend it.)

In many English, Irish and Welsh villages, bonfires are lit in the squares, or in Scotland, it is the day for a community picnic on the moors. Then, on mid-summer's night, the shortest night in the year, which will be the twenty third, (long, boring, astronomical explanation here omitted) single women would put a bouquet of Mugwort or St. John's Wort under their pillow, to bring dreams of their future husbands. If you try this, let us know what happens. We need this research.

A Different Derivation of the Name Dalon Ap Landu

Dalon Ap Landu, the obscure Welsh tree god mentioned in RDNA literature and rituals, has usually been translated Leafy one of the tree(s), or Leaf, son of Tree, from the old Welsh. But now a completely different meaning has been brought to our attention.

Dallan	Ap	Landau
Blind also Having second Sight/prophecy	Son of	McLear, or Mamman McLear A Sea God

Whether the spelling is "Dallon" or "Dallan" is unclear because no one has been able to find the original source reference from which David Fisher took the god's name. This new derivation was suggested by way of analogy to Dallan Forgail, a historical individual, a bard and chronicler who lived circa 400 A.D. in Wales. He is mentioned in an Irish fragment called the "Tromdamh Guaire." This means literally the "heavy company of Guar," that is, the heavy company that the bard Guar kept. By "heavy," he may have meant either profound, or politically powerful, or dangerous. I am trying to locate a copy of this.

Other obscure references: In her article in "Ogam" journal, Le Roux mentions BRICRIU, an obscure Irish trickster god, which she feels may be analogous to Loki. Has anyone ever heard of Bricriu?

Tom Cross, Post Oak Proto-Grove, mentions that the ritual drink of the Berserkers was Mead. Is there a mead-honey-Soma connection to Vedic India, or was Mead simply the strongest alcoholic drink then available?

News of the Groves

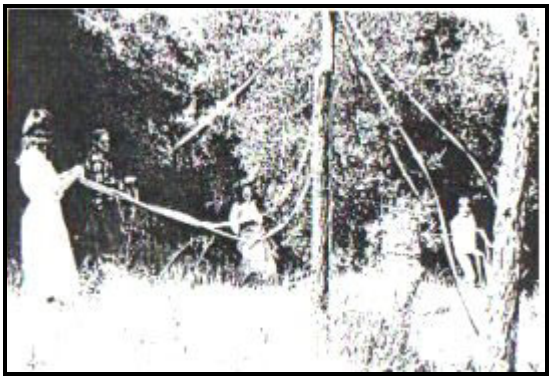
Live Oak Grove

New Religious Order Formed

At sunrise on Beltaine, Grove members Emmon and Willowoak performed the founding ritual of a new contemplative order, the Peaceful Order of the Earth Mother.

Designed to meet needs not covered by the usual RDNA activities, the order imposes dietary and other restrictions on members and provides meditative training and experiences not otherwise available.

With this rite, the pair made formal commitments to their new order, and to one another as members of it, then took an oath of secrecy and obedience to the laws of the order, something that will be required of all members. Vows of celibacy and poverty, however, will be optional.



Grove Members and Friends celebrate Beltaine in the traditional manner."

Caber in the right foreground marks the sunrise at Equinox

A Guide to Celtic Deities

By Isaac Bonewits
From *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved),* 1975

The following article was originally written as a course supplement for a class entitled "Witchcraft: the magic of ancient Classical and Celtic beliefs in a Contemporary Society," taught by its author, Michael Nichols. It has been mildly edited in order to make the data more relevant to Reformed Druids, but it is essentially intact. Comments by the Editor appear in brackets. God names with the Druid Sigil attached [* is used instead in ARDA2] are of particular relevance to Reformed Druids. Mike depended almost entirely upon one book (MacCulloch's), which is an excellent one, but others of equal interest may be found in *A Bibliography of Druidism.* It should be noted that Celtic Paleopaganism is a highly controversial subject and experts will frequently disagree with one another. Therefore this article should be taken as merely a starting point in your researches in the field.

Introduction

The first writers to attempt any clarification of the topic of Celtic Paleopaganism were the Romans, who helped very little with their habit of replacing the names of Celtic deities with the names of their own Roman deities. A modern scholar attempting to recapture the lost legacy of Celtic religions finds that he or she has rather limited resources. Briefly, these are: dedicatory and votive inscriptions, manuscripts dating from the Middle Ages but perpetuating much more ancient traditions, stories and chronicles and mythical legends, and most importantly, the Bardic tradition which inspired Gallic, Breton and even Norman minstrels.

Such religious anthropology is discouraging and tedious, yet in this field there is one scholar who stands out and deserves all the accolades that a grateful Pagan can bestow upon him. Unfortunately, his mammoth contribution is seldom remembered, or acknowledged, or even realized. The man in question is the Canon J. A. MacCulloch and his 390 pages of amazingly exciting research was published in 1911 c.e. under the title *The Religion of the Ancient Celts*. All research *[others would disagree with such a sweeping conclusion]* in this area since 1911 c.e. is merely a footnote to this great man's pioneering efforts. It is for this reason that the bulk of the following material is culled from MacCulloch's extensive work, for his own publication is long since out of print and is exceedingly hard to find.

[MacCulloch's book can be gotten in microfilm from several places, however. Also to be highly recommended are the works of Squire, Piggott, and MacCana.]

The Gods of Gaul and the Continental Celts:

Though many Druids are concerned more with the traditions developed in the "British Isles" it must be remembered that these majestic and magical deities ultimately had their origin in the beliefs of the Continental Celts *[who were spread all the way into Turkey!]* and one must keep in mind at all times that the great majority were local, tribal Gods, of the roads and commerce, of the arts, of healing, etc. There were very few Pan-Celtic deities. MacCulloch quotes another authority, Professor Anwyl, to this effect: 270 Gods are mentioned only once on inscriptions, 24 twice, 11 thrice, 10 four times, three five times, two seven times, four fifteen times, one nineteen times (Grannos*), and one thirty times (Belenos*). If the notes on the following deities seem brief, you may console yourself with the understanding that it is all that we know of them:

The following Gods were most frequently associated with the Roman God Mercury, and are said to have had many of his attributes:

Artaios (Artaius): A Bear God, and God of Agriculture.

Moccus: A Swine God, a Corn God and a vegetation spirit.

Cimiacinus: God of Commerce, Roads and (perhaps) Leys.

Ogmios: God of Speech, binding humans with His eloquence.

Dumias: God of Hilltops and Mounds (and beacon points?).

Alaunius, Arcecius, Arvernorix, Arvenus, Adsmerius, Biausius, Canetonensis, Clavariatis, Cissonius, Cimbrianus, Dumiatis, Magniacus, Naissatis, Tocirenus, Vassocaletus, Vellaunus, Visucius: Gods whose attributes and functions are not specifically defined, though generally identified as Mercury-like. *[Several of these deities may be the same, under different spellings.]*

The following Gods are associated with Apollo, both in His capacity of God of Healing and God of light:

Grannos*: God of Thermal Springs, name means "burning one."

Borvo (Bormo, Bormanus): God of Bubbling Springs, "boiling one." Votive tablets inscribed to these two show that They were often invoked for healing.

Belenos*: Sun God, name means "the shining one" *[from root "bel," "bright," "good."],* the most popular and widely known of the Celtic Gods.

Maponos (Mabonos): God of Youthfulness.

Mogons (Mogounos): Sky God, God of Plenty, God of Increase.

Anextiomarus, Cobledulitavus, Cosmis(?), Livicus, Mogo, Sianus, Toutiorix, Vindonnus, Virotutis: Gods whose attributes and functions are not defined, though Apollo-like. Certain Gods in this group are said to have been worshipped in a circle of stone by priests called Boreads *[from Greek myths*

of a land called Hyperborea, the land beyond Boreas, the North Wind]. There is a report by one of the Classical writers that every 19 years the Sun God appeared dancing in the sky over this stone circle, playing a lyre. Many past and present scholars speculate that the circle may have been Stonehenge and the 19 years refer to the 19 year Solar-Lunar cycle said to be measured by these stones *[see "The Mysteries of Stonehenge" for a detailed reporting of this matter*].

The following are tribal War Gods associated with aspects of Mars, and there many (some 60 are known):

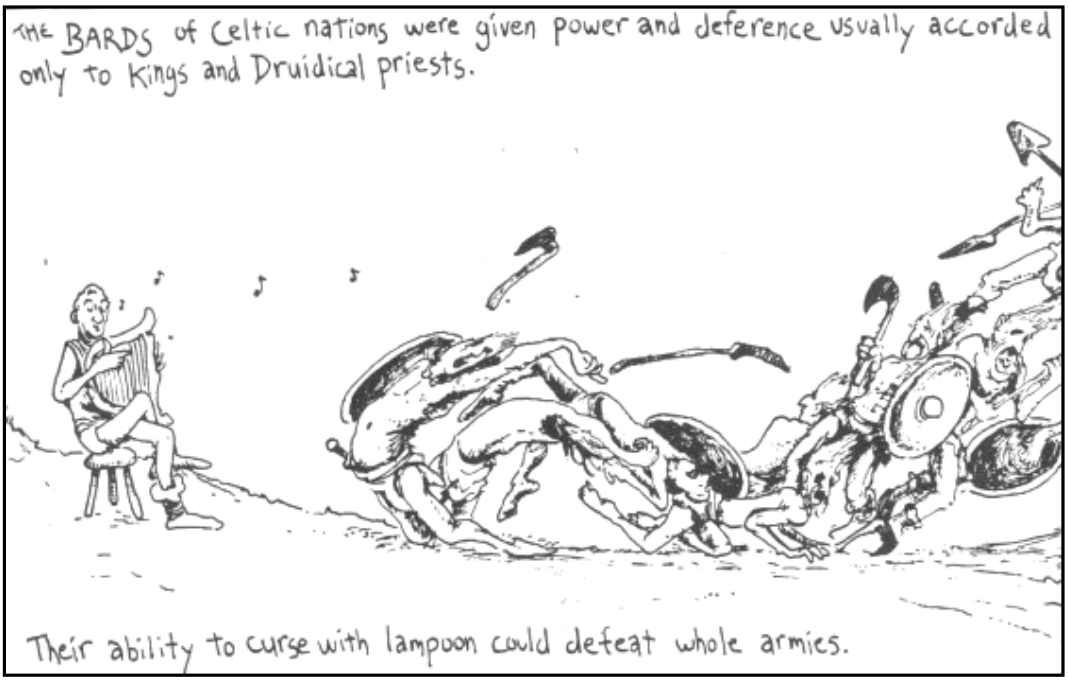
Caturix: "battle king."
Belatu-Cadros (Belacetudor?): "comely in slaughter."
Albiorix (Albius?): "world king."
Rigisamus: "king like."
Teautates (Toutatis, Totatis, Tutatis): a tribal War God, regarded as an embodiment of the tribe in its warlike capacity. Lucan regards Him as one of the three Pan-Celtic Gods, the other two being Taranis* and Esus.
Neton: "warrior."
Camulos: pictured on coins and war emblems.
Braciaca*: God of Malt and Intoxicating Drink, such as the Irish "cuirm" and "braccat" *[not to mention "na h-uisci beath—the waters-of-life! Braciaca may also be a God of Altered States of Consciousness and may be related to the Smith Gods]*.
Alator, Arixo, Asterix, Beladonis, Barres, Bolvinus, Britovis *[consort to Britinia, perhaps?],* Buxenus, Cabetius, Cariocecius, Camenelus, Cicollus, Carrus, Cocosus, Cociduis, Condatus, Cnabetius, Coritiacus, Dinomogetimarus, Divanno, Dunatis, Glarinus, Halamardus, Harmogius, Ieusdrinus, Lacavus, Latabius, Lenus, Leucetius, Laucimalacus, Medocius, Mogetuis, Mullo, Nabelcus, Ocelos, Ollondios, Randosatis, Riga, Rudianus, Sinatus, Segomo, Smertatius, Tritullus, Vesucius, Vincius, Vitucadros, Vorocius: War Gods whose attributes are not specified.

The following Gods are equated with Jupiter, as Ruler of the Celtic "heaven," "Otherworld" or afterlife *[and as Sky Gos and Thunder God]*.

Taranis*: (Taranoos, Taranucnos): God of Thunder and Lightning *[also Fire, Storms, the Sun and protection from all of these, as the name is obviously cognate with Thor, Thunder, Donner, Tyr and a number of other inter-related Thunder-Fire-War-Demon Killing Gods. Quite possibly He is also related to the Sylvannus/Esus/Cernunnos trinity and/or Sucellos mentioned below.]*
Sucellos: pictured as a bearded God with a hammer, God of Creative Forces, of Life and Death, of Fertility. He is considered an "All-Father."
Cernunnos: "the Horned One," pictured as a three-faced God, squatting, with a torque and ram's headed serpent, and sometimes holding a cornucopia *[He is the one usually shown with antlers or other large horns, and with furry legs, cloven hooves and a large phallus (erect). More than one scholar has pointed out the similarities both to the Hindu deity Shiva and the postulated "shamanistic" cult of the Horned Sorcerer"]*. He is considered a God of Abundance, an Earth and Underearth God, Lord of the Underworld, and an Ancestral God *[also as a God of the Hunt and God of the Wildwood. Among Wiccans, He is the most widely worshipped male deity, combining all of the above aspects, plus a few more (including Sun God, God of Animal Life, etc.) For a picture of how He is usually conceived, see the end of "A Basic Wiccan Rite."]*
Sylvanus (Silvanus) and Esus: pictured with a cup and hammer, a Wolf God and a God of Woods and Vegetation, an Underworld God of Riches (cattle). As Eusus, He is many times associated with a bull and three cranes.
(Cernunnos, Sylvanus and Esus form a trinity comparable to Diana/Hecate/Selene *[or Jupiter/Neptune/Pluto]*. Sometimes They are seen as three separate deities, while at other times they are viewed as three aspects of the same God. The confusion is felt in that Aeracura is a Consort to one of the three, but it is not clear which one. If the three are considered to be as one, the problem is greatly reduced.)
Dio Casses: a collective name for a group of Gods worshipped by the Celts, possibly Road Gods. On some of the inscriptions, the name Cassiterides occurs, which was an early name for Britain, meaning beautiful or pleasant land.

Grouped Goddesses were considered more important than individual Goddesses, Who were known only as Consorts to certain specific Gods *[so much for the theories of the Celts having a matriarchal religious system]*. Professor Anwyl gives the following statistics: there are 35 Goddesses mentioned once, two twice, three thrice, one four times, two six times, two eleven times, one fourteen times (Sirona*), one twenty-one times (Rosemerta), and one twenty-six times (Epona). The following listing includes both individual and grouped Goddesses.

Belisama: "shining Goddess," representing Woman as the first civilizer, discovering agriculture, spinning, the art of poetry, etc. Perpetual fires burned in Her temples. *[Also known as the Goddess of Light, and sometimes as Consort to Belenos*].
Sul (Sulis): "to burn," associated with a cult of fire.
Nemetona: a War Goddess.
Andrasta (Andarta): "invincible." Sometimes worshipped *[it is alleged*] with human sacrifices.
Sirona* (Dirona): associated with Grannos, the "long lived" Goddess of Healing Wells and Fertility. *[in England, She is also a Goddess of Rivers and of Wisdom]*
Vesunna and Aventia (Avenches): also associated with Grannos.
Stanna: "the standing or abiding one."
Sequanna: Goddess of the Seine River.
Bormana and Damona: associated with Bormo.
Dea Brixia: Consort to the God Luxovius.
Abnoba, Clota, Divona, Icauna, Sabrina, Sinnan: River Goddesses.
Dea Arduinna and Dea Abnoba: both Forest Goddesses.
Rosemerta: Consort to one of the Mercury-like Gods, but which one is not clear.
Epona: A River Goddess and Goddess of Animals (especially Horses).
Deae Matres: grouped Goddesses, usually three in number, representing fertility and abundance.
Berecynthia: an individual representation of a triple Goddess.
Abonde: A fairy Goddess who brought riches to house.
Esterelle: a fairy Goddesss who made women fruitful.
Aril: A fairy Goddess who watched over meadows.
Melusina and Viviane: two extremely popular fairy Goddesses *[the latter of Whom was responsible for distracting the wizard Merddyn in the Arthurian Cycle—which are full of references to disguised Celtic Deities.]*



Calendar

Midsummer Service will be held at sundown and Live Oak Grove on June 20, 1985. (On the grounds of the Druidical belief that the night precedes the day, in the reckoning of time.) Regular Services will be on June 30, July 14 and 28. For more info. (415) 254-1387.

Postmarked June 18, 1985

A Druid Missal-Any Lughnasadh 1985 Volume 9 Number 5

Reaping and the Last Sheaf

By Emmon Bodfish

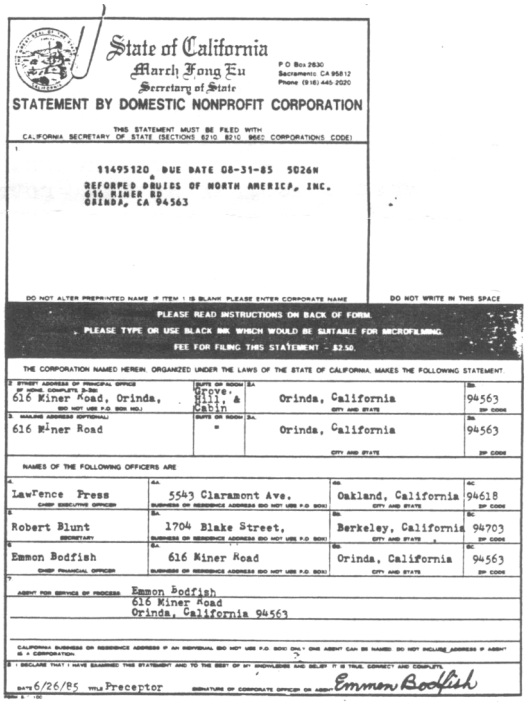
Lughnasadh, Feast of the First Fruits, begins the harvest season. Traditionally it marks the Funeral Games for Lugh, Celtic Sun-God, and by now it is clear that the summer is waning, and the Sun retreating southward. Our harvest this year at the Grove is hay, and apples, and the promise of Elderberries and Holly.

In line with the local fire prevention campaign, we were required to cut down the hay in the two and a half acre meadow at the bottom of the property. (This issue's trivia fact: the bent wooden handle of a scythe, the tall kind the Grim Reaper carries, is called a "snath." We had to order one through our local hardware store when the old one broke.) To speed things up, we also used a weed whip. While out there mowing, I thought: We should try enacting the old Celtic ceremony of "the cutting of the last sheaf." Up until the introduction of mechanical reaping machines in the last century, it was the custom in all the Celtic countries, and many on the borders of them, to leave standing the last "stook" of hay or grain, and then all those that have worked at the reaping of the field take turns throwing their sickles at it. The one who knocks it down is declared the "King of the Harvest" and the shout goes up that he "has got the Old Woman," presumably the spirit of the grain/hay/field, which has been driven into the last sheaf as the reapers advanced across the field. In some areas it was called the "Maiden" or the "Corn-Baby." In each case though, the sheaf was dressed up in makeshift clothes like a woman or a child, and is carried to the Harvest man's home on the last wagon amidst raucous shouts and song, "like a wedding procession" according to a Welsh source. It was hung up over the hearth, or, in Ireland over the door, or in the barn. In some places it was saved until Yule, when it was fed to the cattle, to keep them healthy. In other places it was kept until the following spring and then scattered over the field before it was sown. (Wrapping the trunks of birch trees in burlap…dressing the Last Sheaf, trimming and decorating Yule trees, …What is this Celtic desire to put clothes on plants?)

On the Continent, in Gaulish lands, it is a woman who cuts and binds the last sheaf, after which she is called the "Oat-Bride" or "Hay-Bride" or whatever after the grain. She is escorted home amidst dancing and songs typical of weddings.

We left the last stook of hay standing in the field, and on Sunday, after the regular Druid ritual we went out in company and tied the tuft of hay into a sheaf with a rope of braided rush-grass. All the males took turns throwing the short sickle at it, and Larry A.D., knocked it down. He was declared King of the Harvest and the hay-sheaf was dressed up in a cap and apron which Willow-Oak had made. Larry carried it back on a pole.

As we have no cattle to whom to feed it on Yule, we will save it to scatter over the field.



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Gaulish Gods

By Thomas M. Cross
Post Oak Proto-Grove

In my spare time (applying for new jobs) I did some research in Gaulish iconography and language and I have found some possible equivalents (linguistic etymological cognates) for major Irish gods that I have hitherto not seen in any books. Perhaps these were unavailable to past Celtic mythologists, or they are simply oversights. Clearly there are dozens of equivalents in the interpretation Romana that even MacCulloch overlooked and it even makes Caesar's interpretation inadequate for the ancient Roman purpose…for later many other Roman gods were equated with Gaulish gods.

In Belgica, the god named Loucetios appears. The name means "lightning" and appears elsewhere as Leucetios cognated with the Irish lochet. In Lugdunensis, Belisamaros appears as the male or masculine cognate of Belisama. Belisama's names appears in a Gaulish inscription of which I have no translation but it is written in Greek letters…in a rough transliteration of the Greek letters her name appears as Belesami which is probably with an oblique case-ending (dative or ablative), otherwise –i is genitive. On the other hand, Belesami could be a masculine genitive for Belisamaros however if you break the name down you have Belisa + maros (maros = "great" in Welsh *mawr* or Irish *mór*) at any rate the –os ending is usually masculine and is equivalent to Latin second declension –us or Greek –os.

Clearly Gaulish case-endings are so similar to Italic and Latin that it seems obvious that Celtic was closely related to Italic. In most of the Gaulish inscriptions of the Roman period, Gaulish is scanty and is usually only one word of Gaulish (a proper name) appearing in Latin sentences so one usually sees Gallic deities spelled in Latin with Latin case endings.

Bormo or Boruo is not necessarily the same deity as Bormanus. Bormo is usually paired off with Damona (Cow) and Bormanus is paired with Bormana. Bormo/Boruo is the root of the French Bourbonne, the root of the name of Bourbon in Bourbon whisky…this is an interesting parallel considering that Bourbon be given to that type of uisce beatha we have in America and that its name is rooted in the name of an ancient Gaulish god of boiling springs.

In Lugdunensis, there appears a possible cognate of the Irish Danu and Welsh Don, the mother of the gods, in Donnia which the Romans equated with Minerua. Maponos appears in Lugdunensis, however the name is spelled Mabonos, which in Britain appeared in ancient inscriptions as Maponus (notice the Latinized spelling). A sea god appears in Lugdenensis also called Moritasgos which seems to be a form of moritex "sailor." Perhaps Moritasgos is similar to Manannan/Manawydan?

In Aquitania, the god Vindon equated with Mercurius appears who name is definitely cognate with Irish Fionn and Welsh Gwynn ap Nudd. Sucellos appears there but the name is spelled Secuelos. There is an equivalent to the Irish Shannon perhaps in Siannus(?). In Aquitania, Boruo appears again but with an epithet Boruo Albius. Damona appears as Damona Matuberginnis, and there is Viducus-Mercurius…perhaps Vidu is cognate with Welsh Gwydion or gwyddon ("wise man"). Elsewhere and in Aquitania, Adsmerios-Mercurius, Mar-Tritullus, Rigisamos-Mars, Mogetus-Mars, and Maglo Matonio the first element Maglo is of the root of Welsh *Mael* (as in Maelgwn) and Matonio which seems cognate with Mathonwy or Math ap Mathonwy etc.

In Narbonesis, Mars is equated with Britouius, Budenicus, Buxenus, Olludius, and Pollux is equated with Vintios whos name could be the root of Welsh gwynt "wind" otherwise gwynt is from the Latin ventus. Cathubodua appears there and elsewhere as Cassibodua often equated by modern scholars with Badhbh Catha, but I recall the druid Cathbad in the *Tain*.

In the Danubian area, there is the Celtic god Cernenos whose name appears to be another spelling of Cernunnos (the horned god whose name appears on the altar dug up in Paris with the first letter missing –ernunnos), but in the Danube Cernenos, he is equated with the Roman Jupiter. One may also recall that other statues of male gods appeared with horns (which have been broken off since) which were Gallo-Roman Mercuries or Marses. Therefore we need not think that horns imply any special function or department. Too often we think of the horned god as a Chthonic god and I think this wide-spread concept is the result of the Wiccan and Margaret Murray theories* The Lugoues appear in the Danube region also it does in Spain. Lugoues is plural for Lugu which is undoubtedly Lugh or Lleu of insular tradition. Perhaps the Lugoues were a triple Lugh as Lugh could most probably been a triple God (MacCecht, MaCuill, MacGreine).

In the Danube region, there is Jupiter as Nundinarios; also a god of the Rhine? in Rhenus. The Gaulish word renos or rhenos means "river" which is the root of the name of the Rhine.

In the Alpine region, there is Mars-Vintius which recalls the Vintios-Pollux of Narbonesis.

In eastern Gaul, part of the older Belgica but latter called Germania Superior by the Romans, there appears Cicollos which sounds much like Cichol Grigenchos of the Irish *Lebor Gabala Erin* who was a Fomoire. Also there is Meduna whose name seems to be cognate with Ireland's Medhbh (Medb) of Connacht in the *Tain*. This goddess's name means "mead" according to modern scholars and Meduna seems to be the feminine of medus (Gaulish for mead). Medb is also supposed to mean "intoxication."

Lenus appears in Germania Superior (Belgica east) and his name appears spelled in Greek letters, evidently Lenos in Gaulish as the Greek letters are transliterated. His name means probably "ocean" and is equivalent with Ler (Irish) or Welsh Llyr. There is Noadat equated with the Roman Mars—definitely another version of the Irish Nuadu or Nuada which also appears in the Welsh as Nudd and as Nodens and Nudens in ancient Britain (in Britain the Romans equated him with Jupiter).

Among the Treveri (Trier) they had many of the same deities in their pantheon (if one may use that term) as found all over the rest of Gaul, including a goddess called Boudina which has the root *boud* (victory) cognate with Irish buadh and Welsh budd.

The Gaulish terminology of words having to do with magic or religion are:

BACVCECS = possessed of evil spirits
TALAMASCA = female demon of the earth who appears in trees
CARAGVS = fortune-teller
NEMETON (NIMIDAS, NEMETOS) = a shrine, sacred place, a consecrated clearing, or simple "that which is sacred" (nem—"sacred" or "heavenly" from an Indo-European root meaning "vault of heaven")
CAVAROS = (transliterated Greek letters kauaros) "giant" cognate with Welsh *cawr*.

Καυαρος

DVSIOS = a male demon, an incubus (or dusmus glossed by ancient Roman as "diabolos")
VINDOMAGOS = paradise (modern Welsh *gwynfa*) literally "white-plain," but *vindos* (gwynn) was used also as "blessed" or as a noun for "bliss."
BILIOMGOS = "plain of the sacred tree" Bilio is Gaulish cognate of Irish Bilé "sacred tree" which may remind one of the sacred trees which play many important parts in Irish lore and of the Norse Yggdrasill.

ΛΗΝΟΣ
Ληνος
Leno:

Τομας Μαρκος Κροσος

*Jim Duran disagrees

Calendar

Lughnasadh '85 will be at 5:59 A.M. Pacific Standard, on Aug. 7th. Regular Druid Services will be held at the Grove Site here at Live Oak Grove at 1:00 P.M. Daylight Time, (1:06-1:08 P.D.T. is Solar Noon) on July 28, August 18, September 1, and September 15, 1985. Fall Equinox will be at 6:07 P.M. Pacific Standard Time, 7:07 Daylight, September 22, 1985. Planet Earth will stand perpendicular to the Sun. Be there.

News of the Groves

Live Oak Grove

The gophers have returned in force to plague our lawn, now that the hills have dried up and the soil everywhere around us, being unwatered, is adobe brick. Since the Offering Shaft is lined in Terra Cotta, they can't tunnel into it and fill it us, as they have in previous years. This year we are planning to plant Euphoriba lathyris bushes. "Gopher Bane" around the edges of the circle. We hope that works.

Humbolt

Last Sunday, a "solitary Third" Order Druid, Les Craig/Hargar, came down out of the mountains of Humbolt. She came out to visit and brought her mother with her to see the Grove Site. Les organized a "between Moons" contemplative service/meeting under the huge Vigil-Oak a ways up the hill from the Grove. She said she is suffering from "ritual burn-out", and would like to try a democratic, anarchistic style of Druidism, and would like to hear from other who might be interested. It is a tribute to the breadth and flexibility of the Druid (RDNA) format and soul that we can do these kinds of experiments and that almost all style and needs can be included in the RDNA circle. Write to her c/o the Missal-Any address, here.

Contributed by Ra'pheal

Postmarked 25 Jul , 1985

A Druid Missal-Any Fall Equinox 1985 Volume 9 Number 6

Fall Equinox Essay: Brian Micheal and Bonnachann

By Emmon Bodfish

all Equinox is associated in the Celtic parts of the British Isles with the gathering of root crops. Many of the old customs have continued, in the Highlands and the Islands, and are enacted now in the name of the Micheal-mass festivals. Micheal is the Christian personality most often substituted for Lugh, or even Llyr, by the Old Celtic Church when it first came to the Celtic countries in the 4th and 5th centuries. The flaming sword and warrior aspect of the Archangel may have suggested a similarity to Lugh-of-the-Long-Arm and his spear in his defender, protector role. Most particularly, the quality of "shiningness" links the two.

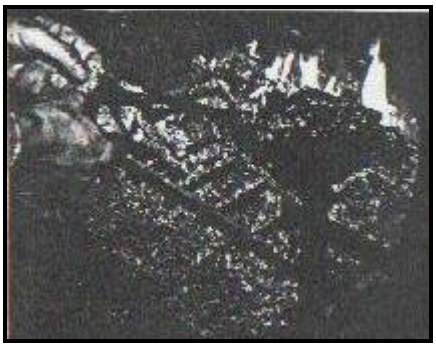
Alexander Carmichael, collecting oral folklore in the 1830s, notes that in the Highlands, St. Micheal is spoken of as "an Brian Micheal," that is, the Demi-god Micheal. Christian saints, such as Columba or Andrew were called "Naomh" the usual translation of the Latin "sanctus." Brian Micheal rides a winged horse, and is the patron of sailors and ships, the former province of Llyr. There is no basis for either magical horses or control of the sea in the Biblical Archangel's exploits that I recall. The same powers and a fiery steed are attributed to him in Cornwall and Brittany, but never in Greek or Roman Christianity, i.e. south of the Alps.

Since some tiny carrots have sprung up in our lawn, we may do a version of the Highland Carrot ceremony come Fall Equinox. (The benefits of using kitchen compost for fertilizer.)

While one of our members went to the gathering at Harbin Hot Springs, the remaining Live Oak members celebrated Lughnasadh with a Bonnack Bake. Bonnacks, or in Scot's Gaelic "bonnachann," are small, unleavened cakes of sweet meal, often mentioned in old Celtic song and lore. The Romans on Hadrian's Wall describe Pictish raiders baking them over their campfires on the flats of their swords.

When it ripened, we cut the rye and wheat that had sprouted spontaneously in our Grove Circle. We decided to make some ceremonial bonnacks out of it. We thrashed it by hand, rubbing the grain heads between our hands, letting the grain fall on a clean white cloth, as described for the old Highland rites. Stacey discovered the best method of winnowing. She put the rubbed grain, still in its husks, in a slopping sided bowl, and blew lightly down the near side of the bowl, puffing the fine chaff up the opposite side and out, all the while shaking the grain in the bowl to bring more chaff to the top.

We made a fire of the last of the wood that Joan Carruth, ex A.D. of Live Oak Grove, current A.D. of Birch Grove, had donated when she moved East a few years ago. The fire burned down to good glowing cooking coals while we took turns grinding the grain in a hand mill, a never-used-before pepper mill, actually. We baked the bonnachann on the flat of a sword, in the old Pictish (Cruithnig) tradition, Ra'pheal lending his sword for the purpose. During the grinding we chanted the old Highland Quern Blessing, Larry reading the English and Emmon reading the Gaelic. Although we were prepared to bite into something "not so wonderful" and eat it anyway, the result were surprisingly good, especially with sweet butter. As Ra'pheal said, "Boy, this is bread 'from scratch'."



Bonnach Recipe

By Emmon Bodfish

Cut your grain with a bronze sickle when the heads are an even tan and dry. Thrash it over a clean white cloth and winnow it with your breath. Grind it until it is a fine meal. Mix it with whiskey and water and pat it into cakes. Cook slowly over a smoored fire, (on the flat of a sword) without turning them. (8-10 min.)

"Tha bonnach min milas aig Bride a' taobh d'an sliabh."

Beannachadh Brathain

Oidhch Inid
Be feoil againn
'S bu choir 'uinn sin
Bu choir 'uinn sin.

Leth-cheann circe,
'S da ghreim eorna,
'S bu leoir 'uinn sin
Bu leoir 'uinn sin.

Bi bin againn,
Bi beoir againn,
Bi fion againn,
Bi roic againn.
Meilc is marrum,
Mil is bainne,
Sile fallain,
Meall dheth sin,
Meall dheth sin.

Bi cruit againn,
Bi clar againn,
Bi dus againn,
Bi das againn;
Bi saltair ghrinn,
Nan teuda binn,
'S bi fairchil, righ'nn
Nan dan againn,
Nan dan againn.

Quern Blessing

On Ash Eve
We shall have flesh,
We should have that
We should have that.

The cheek of hen,
Two bits of barley,
That were enough
That were enough.

We shall have mead,
We shall have spruce,
We shall have wine,
We shall have feast.
We shall have sweetness
Honey and milk,
Wholesome ambrosia,
Abundance of that,
Abundance of that.

We shall have harp,
We shall have harp,
We shall have lute,
We shall have horn.
We shall have sweet psaltery
Of the melodious strings
And the regal lyre,
Of the songs we shall have,
Of the songs we shall have.

The Deities of Gaul

By Tom Cross

The Interpretatio Romana as applied after the Roman conquest of Gaul.

Mercury:

Vinducus, Vindon, Adsmerios, Censualis, Teutates, Iouantocaros (possibly Lugoues, plural for Lugus)

Mars:

Mogetius, Randosas, Rigisamos, Tritullus, Vorocious, Britovios, Budenicos, Buxenos, Ieudrinos, Vintius, Veracinios, Segomos, Camulos, Noadat

Iupiter:
Accio, Nundinarios, Senamos, Cernenos, Esus, Taranis

Minerua:
Donnia, Belisama, Suleuia (or Matres Suleviae)

Apollo:
Atepomaros, Virotutis, Cermillenos, Grannos, Belenos (Belinus), Mabonos (Maponos)

Hercules:
Ilunnus, Smertios, Ogmios, Magusanos, Deusoniensis

Dis Pater:
Sucellos, ?Cernunnos (See Cernenos under Iupiter)

Pollux:
Vintios (see Vintius under Mars)

Liber:
Cocliensis

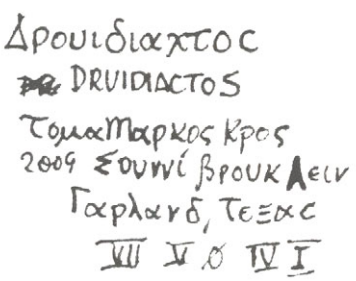
Diana:
Mattiaca

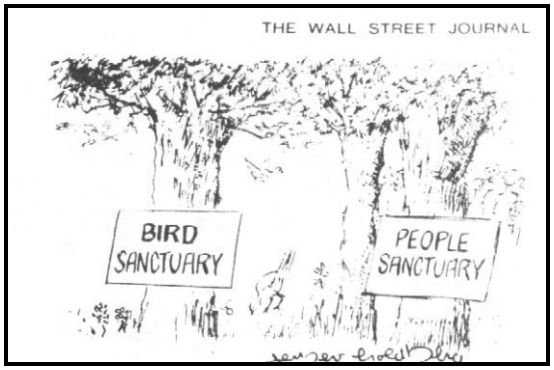
Vulcan:
Gobannicnos

A Note on the Pronunciation of Gaulish Words and Names:

All vowels should be given their continental values as in Italian. The letters v and u are the same and should be pronounced as u in Luna; before vowels as English w. C and g should always be hard as in classical Latin. The diphthongs *ae*, *ai* should be sounded as the English "i" in like; *oe* and *oi* should sound as English oy in boy. The letter s should always be sounded unvoiced and never as a z- sound. According to J. Whatmough (Dialects of Ancient Gaul) and other Celtic philologists, the accent in Gaulish and Brythonic should be on the first syllable. Thus Atepomaros (*Aht*-ep-o-ma-rohs), Sucellos (SOO-kell-ohs), Maponos (MAHP-on-ohs), Cernunnos (*Kairn*-oon-ohs), Vindon (*Wind*-on), Matres Suleviae (MAH-tress SOO-leh-wee-ahee). In those names that are most Latinised, the accent should generally fall on the penultimate syllable (i.e. the second to last syllable.)

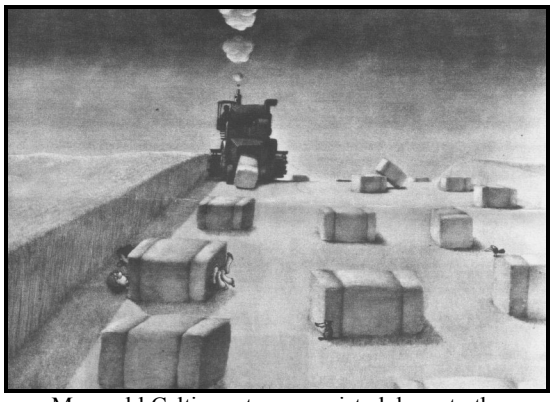
The Greater God list by Tom Cross, Post-Oak Proto-Grove, will be continued next issue.





Calendar

Fall Equinox will be celebrated at the Grove Site at Live Oak Grove on September 22, 1985, at 6:07 P.M. Standard Time, which is astronomical Equinox, and which also is 7:07 Daylight Time. Regular Service is at Solar Noon, 1:00 P.M. Daylight Time, Sept. 29, Oct 13 & 27th.



Many old Celtic customs persisted down to the arrival of mechanical reaping machines in this century.
—A. Frazer

Druid Missal-Any Notes:

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You're supposed to enjoy life?! I thought you were only supposed to enjoy weekends!

Postmarked 3 September 1985

A Druid Missal-Any
Samhain 1985
Volume 9 Number 7

Samhain Essay: Samhain Customs

By Emmon Bodfish

amhain, the break between the years, is one of the four major High Days of the Druid calendar. Throughout the Celtic lands, Samhain was the Great Gathering. Wars ceased, and representative Druids, Bards, Ovates, Kings, and Equites met at sacred sites, on the Plain of Murtheme or with Conobar at Emain Macha in Ireland, or at Carnac in France. Similar convocations almost certainly met in Britain and Scotland, and perhaps in the Shetlands and the Orkneys as well.

The word Samhain may be derived, according to Francois LeRoux, from "sam fuim" meaning "weakening or end of summer," though competing derivations from "sam rad" and "La samhna," "rest" and "reunion" must also be considered. The LeRoux derivation concurs with the traditional date near the first of November, reflecting the Celtic division of the year into two long seasons, Summer and Winter, analogized to day and night. And as the Celtic calendar reckoned the night before the day, with each date beginning at sunset, the new-year began with Samhain, or sundown Samhain eve. It marked the end of the harvest. Anything still ungathered in the fields was left to the wild birds and the Pucas, Wood Sprites.

The rites and rituals have been lost, and we must piece together fragments from oral traditions, from 10th, 11th, and 12th century manuscripts of Irish law and commentaries, old customs and descriptions found in the Cuchulain and Find(h) epics. We gave a rendering of one such description of a Samhain ceremony from the old Irish in last Samhain's Missal-Any.

One of our subscribers, Jeanne Elizabeth, has translated some of LeRoux's work on the social and historical significance of the holiday, from her articles in the French journal "Ogam." As far as I can find, these essays have not been available in English.

Samhain, LeRoux emphasizes, was first of all a universal observance, required, on pain of exile, of every member of the community. It was called the holiday of obligation.

"Samhain is first of all a holiday of obligation, an approximate expression when it is applied to an ancient holiday, but practical, in order to express the restrained tone and universality. Such a holiday, was celebrated with dignity: An assembly was held by the Ulates each year, that is to say, three days before Samhain and three days after, and the High Day of Samhain itself. It was the time when the Ulates were in the plain of Murtheme, and they held the assembly of Samhain each year. There was nothing in the worlds that was not done by them at this time to enhance the games, gatherings, reunions, pomp and magnificence, with costly goods and banquets, and it is from there that came the (custom of) the three days of Samhain in all Ireland.

> 'Conchobar himself served them at the holiday of Samhain, because of the reunion of a great crowd. It was necessary to nourish the great multitude, as all those of the Ulates who did not come to Emain on the night of Samhain and the three days after Samhain, lost their reason, and their sepulchral mounds were prepared, each one's tomb and his headstone set the following morning. There were great provisions at Conchobar's the three days before and three days after Samhain that marked the feast at his palace.'

So runs the stanza from the Birth of Conchobar. At these gatherings, kings were chosen or reaffirmed. Debts and quarrels were settled and laws for the coming year enacted. It was a sacred and magical time, and the corridor to the Other World, to the Ancestors and the Gods, was open, and communications, and even goods and people, or at least their souls, could pass between our world and the Other. The Sidhe Mounds were said to open, and horses or children who had been lost, spirited off by the Sidhe, or other denizens of the Other World, could return or be brought back. But likewise the Deities and ancestors could exact reprisal for offenses against them, or demand changes and send signs confirming or denying victory or prosperity. Kings who had broken their "Guise," ritual taboos, or warriors who had made unjust war, were in particular danger of being struck dead or carried off at this time.

A typical Samhain tale is found in the Echtra Nerai epic:

> On the eve of Samhain Ailill and Medhbh, king and queen of Connacht, offer the prize of his choice to whomsoever succeeds in putting a withe around the foot of either of two captives who had been hanged the previous day. Nera alone accepts the challenge. He goes to the gallows but he only succeeds in fixing the withe after the corpse has instructed him. The corpse then complains of thirst and Nera carries him on his back to a dwelling in which he finds water. Having replaced him on the gallows, he returns to the royal court of Cruachain only to find it in flames and the severed heads of its people near by. As the attacking warriors move off, Nera follows them into the Cave of Cruachain, a famous gateway to the otherworld. Once inside the *sídh* he is discovered but is permitted to remain. He takes a wife from among the women of the sídh and from her he learns that his vision of the destruction of the court of Cruachain was but a premonition: it will come true next Samhain, however, unless the *sídhe* is ravaged before then. He sets out to bring warning to his own people, carrying with him fruits of summer–wild garlic and primrose and golden fern–to prove whence he had come, and he finds his friends still seated around the cauldron as he had left them, though much had befallen him in the meantime. When Samhain returns, the Connacht warriors

invade and plunder the *sídh* and carry off the three great treasures of Ireland. But Nera remains behind with his family in the *sídh* and there he will stay until Doomsday.

Nera remains behind as exchange for the treasures, or as reprisal for the plundering. This illuminates one side and meaning of Celtic sacrifice, and may also echo the more ancient ideas of the death of divine victims, priests married to Goddesses, or who assumed a God's identity. The Nerthus traditions of Germanic society are a close parallel. The priest who tended Nerthus' wagon during its annual summer journey through the countryside was sent to join Her at the end of the ritual pilgrimage. The bodies of some of these male attendants, found with Her wagons in Danish bogs show, according to Prof. P.V. Glob, slight muscular development and hands that had never done rough work. These were not slaves. Neither were they prisoners of war, i.e. warriors, nor criminals, the two most common groups used for sacrificial purposes.

Nera could be a memory of a cultural parallel. He (1.) accepts a magical or magic-laden challenge, more the stuff of a Druid, first function/caste, than a warrior; (2.) he sees a vision and prophesizes; (3.) he is married to a supernal being; (4.) he leaves the mortal world, forever, to join her and serve as recompense for the treasures gained by mortals, his kinsmen.

In modern N.R.D.N.A. celebrations of the holiday, vigils are in order, and vision-quests prayers for guidance in major life-changes are in order. It is a time to tie up loose ends and settle debts, to, as Jim Duran said, "get straight with your ancestors," deceased relatives and departed friends. If you are keeping an all night vigil, leaving out a plate of food or a remembrance for the spirits or departed friends is one way.

Calendar

Astronomical Samhain will occur at twenty-six minutes after midnight on November 7, 1985, P.S.T. (7-8-26 Greenwich) Live Oak Grove will be meeting and holding Grove elections at Sundown, 4:51 P.M. Regular Services will also be at Live Oak Grove Site, 616 Miner Rd. Orinda, California at Solar Noon on October 13 & 27th, November 10 & 24th, and December 15 & 29. Yule will be on December 21st this years.

I've been asked on several occasions if there is a Druidic trickster god. Bricriu, a character in the *Tain Bo Cuailnge*, and possibly a euhemorized god, comes the closest. He comes even closer to being a sort of Celtic Discordia. His epithet was "Poison Tongue."—Emmon Bodfish

The Feast of Bricriu

Of the many Ulster tales not specifically related to *Táin Bó Cuailnge* one of the most important is *Fledh Bhricrenn*, "the Feast of Bricriu." As the title suggests, the setting for this story, as for so many others in Irish literature, is the communal feast, an occasion of primary importance in all heroic societies. The prime mover here is Bricriu the trouble-maker, the Irish counterpart of the Scandinavian Loki. He invites the Ulstermen to a great feast which has taken a year to prepare, but they are very willing, indeed anxious, to forgo the honour, knowing full well his propensity for setting his guests by the ears. He will not be put off, however, and promises stern retribution if they refuse: "I will stir up strife among the kings, leaders, heroes and lesser nobles, till they will slay one another…I will cause enmity beneath father and son so that they will kill each other. But if that be not possible, I will set mother and daughter at a variance. And if that be not possible, I will cause strife between the two breasts of every woman in Ulster so that the smite each other till they rot and putrefy." In the face of such a threat, the Ulsterman cannot but acquiesce.

A Celtic Cosmogony from the *Druidactos*

© Thomas M. Cross 1985.
Appearing in the Druid Missal-Any by Permission of the author. (An excerpt)

I am the waters in the sea
I am the ocean wave
I am the swiftest of horses…
I am a stag in the wilderness
I am the fire of the head
I invoke the goddess
She who inspires the men
The men who told the tale of how the world began.

Sing to me, O Brigantia, send me memories
of tales long ago,
Of how the world began and how the gods
defeated their foe.

In the beginning was the void
There was nothing yet to be destroyed
The void was an immense abyss,
Its daughter was Noux, she the darkness.

'Twas said that the void lay open
With the silver egg in center
Dividing the earth and heaven,
Nemetos was the heaven in the center.

Talamun was the fair earth
She lie with Nemetos above her
To the waters of Lenos she gave birth
Much land the water did cover.

From the depths of the ocean called Lenos
Where Noux of darkness did dwell
Sprang a race of giants, Vomoriones
Sons of Noux rose forth from the shell

Giants ruled over the earth and ocean
Offspring of Noux, the night
Their domain remained below heaven
They liked dark cold better than light.

Belenos was the great giant,
Who kept vast herds of cattle.
His wife, Donnia, often was pregnant;
Her children fight the great battle.

Sucellos, the brother of Lenos,
And brother to Nectonos too,
Carried the deep bowl of abundance
His lyre and mallet hitherto.

Sucellos united with a river,
She was Nantosuelta his wife,
Brought forth Suleuia, Maponos, Medur,

Ogmios and host of others rife.

News of the Groves

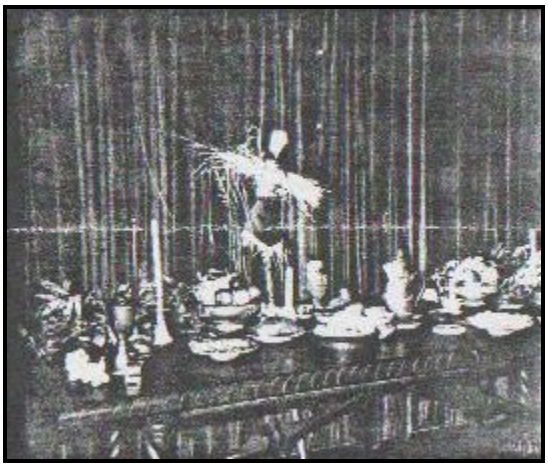
Live Oak Grove

Live Oak celebrated Fall Equinox here on the 22nd. Our Lughnasadh Corn Doll joined the party.

But more urgent, we will be holding the annual Grove Elections at the Samhain Meeting and Celebration. This will also be the time to elect the directors of our Legal Non-profit Corp. Nominations are now open, write in, phone in, holler in, but don't ignore. We will be electing an Arch Druid, a Preceptor, and a Server, also a president, treasurer and secretary for the Non-profit Corporation. Co-secretaries and other directors can also be elected to the board. The catch is that they have to sign their names to the annual tax form, and let the government have their addresses. Consider this if you or your nominee are allergic to government paper.

(415) 254-1387

Do not get mad at our answering machine; you may be old and weak some day too.



EDITOR's NOTE 2002: Unfortunately it was the incorporation as a non-profit corporation that led to the Live Oak Grove's downfall. Because money and land was involved, the Grove's "have-nots" wanted what the "haves" had. Emmon worked so hard for the non-profit status and it meant so much to him. Because of the coup on this election day, a "proper" Grove was not reformed, we don't know what happened to LOG. The have-nots got a hold of it and it consequently died. Stay tuned.

Birch Grove

Birch Grove has a new house; this time they own, no more renting. If you are in the New England area, and interested in Reform Druidism, contact Joan Carruth, A.D. 6 Parker St. Winchester, N.H. 03470.

How To Take An Anglo-Saxon Shower

Jon Carroll
San Francisco Chronicle

I have this theory that long ago, before the Anglos and the Saxons had the Normans pillaged their way to island hegemony, the Celts understood about plumbing. Pipes and U-joints were to them as bird calls and bent grasses were to the American Indian.

The invaders were threatened by this superior knowledge, and forced the proud Irish and Scots and Welsh to destroy their illuminated tomes of sewage lore. Dismantled were the elaborate aqueducts; beheaded were the master plumbers and their rubber friends.

Personals/Leah Garchik

Who Said What

San Francisco Chronicle September 30, 1985

> "No funds appropriated under this act shall be used to grant, maintain, or allow tax exemption to any cult, organization or other group that has a purpose, or that has any interesting, the promoting of Satanism or Witchcraft."
>
> Amendment to the Fiscal 1986 Treasury and Post Office appropriations bill, offered by Senator Jesse Helms, R-N.C., adopted by voice vote without debate.

All but the most secluded of us have heard about the Helms amendment by now. To help counteract this outrage contact:

Pagan Rights Fund, Circle, Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572. The American Civil Liberties Union, which we have been working with to help defeat Amendment 705, also welcomes donations to help its constitutional freedoms protection work. Make check payable to ACLU and send to Barry Lynn, ACLU, 1222 Maryland Avenue NE, Washington, D.C. 20002.

Urge Your Friends of Other Religions to Act Now—Have them mention their religion (especially if they are ministers) as well as their opposition to this amendment when they contact Committee Members.

Contact your Senators—You can get their names by calling your local library and you can get their DC addresses and phones by calling Capitol switchboard (202) 224-3121. Tell your Senators you are a constituent. Ask them if they were present for the vote which attached Amendment 705 to HR 3036 and ask them how they voted. Tell them you are upset by this attack on religious freedom. Tell them you want them to pressure everyone on the Conference Committee to remove Amendment 705. Tell them you want them to oppose any similar measure that may be considered now and in the future such as Robert Walker's bill (HR 3389).

Contact Your Representative—Tell her/him you are a constituent concerned about religious freedom issues, that you want them to pressure everyone they know on the Committee to remove Amendment 705, and to oppose Robert Walker's bill (HR 3389) and any similar measures.

Conference Committee Members:

Political affiliation and religion are included for each Committee Member to give you an idea of their orientation and mindset.

Arizona:

Sen. Dennis Deconcini, 326 Dirksen, Washington, DC 20510; (202) 224-4521. Leg. Aid: Mary Hawkins. District offices: Mesa, Phoenix, Tucson. (Democrat, Catholic)

California:

Rep. Ed Roybal, 221 Rayburn, Washington, DC 20515; (202) 225-6235. Leg. Aid: Carol Galloway. District office: Los Angeles. (Democrat, Catholic, Chairperson of the Committee)

Rep. Bill Lowery, 1440 Longworth, Washington, DC 20515; (202) 225-3201. Leg. Aid: Ben Haddad. District office: San Diego. (Republican, Catholic)

Georgia:

Sen. Mack Mattingly, 633 Dirksen, Washington, DC 20510; (202) 224-3643. Leg. Aid: none. District Offices: Albany, Columbia, Savanagh. (Republican, Methodist)

Hawaii:

Rep. Daniel Akaka, 2301 Rayburn, Washington, DC 20515; (202) 225-4906. Leg. Aid: Patrick McGarey. District office: Honolulu. (Democrat, Congregationalist)

Illinois:

Rep. Sidney Yates, 2234 Rayburn, Washington, DC 20515; (202) 225-2111. Leg. Aid: Donald Fisher. District offices: Chicago, Evanston. (Democrat, Jewish)

Maryland:

Rep. Steny Hoeyer, 1513 Longworth, Washington, DC 20515; (202) 225-4131. Leg. Aid: Mary Sue Hafner. District office: Landover. (Democrat, Baptist)

Massachusetts:

Rep. Silvio Conte, 2300 Rayburn, Washington, DC 20515; (202) 225-5335. Leg. Aid: Thomas Barker. District Offices: Holyoke, Pittsfield. (Republican, Catholic)

Mississippi:

Sen. John Stennis, 204 Russell, Washington, DC 20510; (202) 224-6253. Leg. Aid: Guy Land. District offices: DeKalb, Jackson. (Democrat, Presbyterian: extreme right-wing)

Rep. Jamie Witten, 2314 Rayburn, Washington, DC 20515; (202) 225-4306. Leg. Aid: none. District offices: Charleston, Oxford, Tupelo. (Democrat, Presbyterian)

Nevada:

Sen. Paul Laxalt, 323-A Russell, Washington, DC 20510; (202) 224-3542. Leg. Aid: Sam Ballenger. Home offices: Carson City, Las Vegas, Reno. (Republican, Catholic, going to retire soon)

New Mexico:

Rep. Joe Skeen, 1007 Longworth, Washington, DC 20515; (202) 225-2365. Leg. Aid: Robert Lamina. District offices: Las Cruces, Roswell. (Republican, Catholic)

New York:

Rep. Joseph Addabbo, 2365 Rayburn, Washington, DC 20515; (202) 225-3461. Leg. Aid: Frances Coniglio. District offices: Farrockaway, Ozone Park, Springfield Gardens. (Democrat, Catholic, may not be on committee due to hospitalization).

Oregon:

Sen. Mark Hatfield, 497 Russell, Washington, DC 20510; (202) 224-3753. Leg. Aid: James Towey. District offices: Portland, Salem. (Republican, Born-Again Baptist, liberal on peace, ecology and humanitarian issues)

South Dakota:

Sen. John Abnor, 449 Dirksen, Washington, DC 20510; (202) 224-2321. Leg. Aid: Richard Doubrava. District offices: Aberdeen, Huron, Mitchell, Pierre, Rapid City, Sioux Falls. (Republican, Methodist)

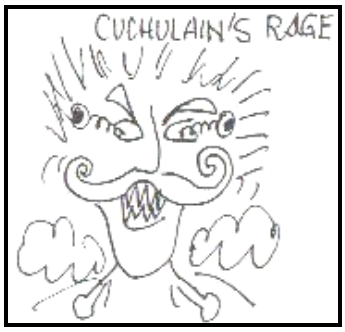
Texas:

Rep. Ronald Coleman, 416 Cannon, Washington, DC 20515; (202) 225-4831. Leg. Aid: Jose Sanchez. District offices: El Paso, Pecos. (Democrat, Presbyterian)

Virginia:

Rep. Frank Wolf, 130 Cannon, Washington, DC 20515; (202) 225-5136. Leg. Aid: Janet Shaffron. District offices: Leesburg, McLean. (Republican, Presbyterian)

Quoted from Selena Fox, "Circle."



The Deities of the Belgae

Belgic Gods and Goddesses
Compiled by Tom Cross

Adcenecos (AHD-ken-ec-ohss)	masculine
Ammaca (AHM-mah-kah)	feminine
Arduina (ARD-winn-ah)	feminine
Arvernos (AR-wair-nohss)	masculine
Atesmerte (AH-teh-smair-teh)	vocative case
Bugios (BOOG-ee-ohss)	masculine
Caiua (KAHEE-wah)	feminine
Camloriga (KAHM-loh-Ree-gah)	feminine
Campestres (KAHMp-es-stres)	Plural probably feminine
Camulorix (KAHM-loh-reeks)	masculine
Cantrustreihiabos Matronis (KAHN-troo-STRAY-hee-ah-bohs Mah-TROHN-is)	
Caprio (KAH-pree-oh)	masculine
Cassibodua (KAH-see-Bodh-wah)	feminine compare Badhbh Catha
Cautopatis (COW-toh-PAH-tiss)	masculine
Cissonius (KISS_oh-yoos)	masculine
Cocidius (KOH-kid-yooss)	masculine
Cosumis (KOH-soo-miss)	Plural masculine?
Degovexi (DEH-goh-weks-ee)	Genitive masculine(?)
Dirona (DHEER-ohn-ah)	feminine
Entarabos (EN-tah-rah-bohss)	masculine
Epona (EHP-ohn-ah)	feminine
Gamaleda (GAH-mahl-eh-dah)	feminine
Gesacos (GGEHS-ah-kohss)	masculine
Icouellauna (EEK-well-la-HOO-nah)	feminine
Iunones (YOO-nohn-ess)	Plural masculine
Loucetios (LOO-ket-yohss)	masculine "lightning"
Magusanos (MAH-goo-sah-nohs)	masculine
Matres Nervianae (MAH-tress NAIR-win-ahee)	feminine plural
Menapos (MEN-ah-pohs)	masculine
Minurae (MEE-noo-rahee)	feminine plural
Mogontia (MOH-gont-yah)	feminine

Nantosuelta (NAHN-toh-Swell-tah)	feminine consort of Sucellos
Nemetona (NEM-et-on-ah)	feminine
Oglius (OHG-lee-oos)	masculine
Ogmios (OHG-mee-ohss)	masculine
Ouniorix (OO-nee-oh-reeks)	masculine
Rosmerta	feminine
Runcinellos (ROON-keen-ELL-ohs)	masculine
Samarobriua (SAH-mah-ro-BREE-wah)	feminine
Singquas (Sing-kwahss)	feminine (possibly a plural)
Sirona	feminine
Smertrius	masculine
Sucellos (SOO-kell-ohss)	masculine
Sulevia (SOO-lay-wee-ah)	feminine
Vassocaletis (WAHS-soh-KAH-leh-tiss)	masculine
Vegnius (WEHG-nee-oos)	masculine
Vercana (WAIR-cah-nah)	feminine
Veriugodumnus (WAIR-yoo-goh-DOOM-noos)	masculine
Vihansa (WEE-han-sah)	feminine
Viradectis (WEE-rah-dek-tiss)	masculine
Visucios (WEES-soo-kee-ohss)	masculine
Visuna (Wee-soo-nah)	feminine

For further reading, consult: *Dialects of Ancient Gaul* by J. Whatmough (Harvard)

Postmarked 10 October 1985

A Druid Missal-Any Yule 1985 Volume 9 Number 8

Yule Essay: Bards, Ogma and Ogham

By Emmon Bodfish

ule begins Winter, Geimredh, season of the Bard. The File and Bards, like the troubadours who followed them, practiced their art "from Samain until summer" as in the old poem of Forgoll, the Bard, who tells King Mongan a story each night from his wise repertory. And, as Keatings explains, commenting on the Old Irish, the winter practices of the File, lodging from house to house in exchange for their songs and stories, had become such a great burden for Ireland, that a king had the idea of banishing them:

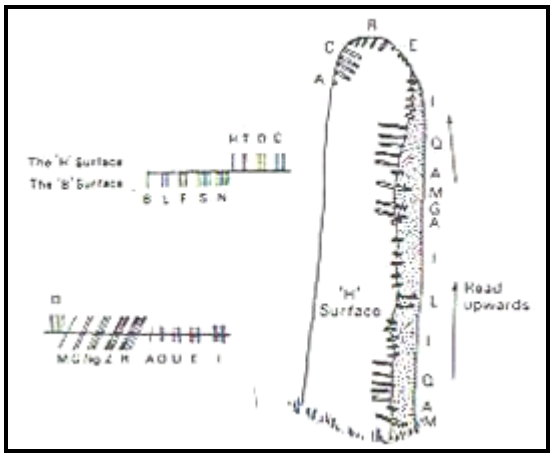
> "It is by Aodh son of Ainmire that a great assembly of Drom Ceat was convened where there was a gathering of the nobles and ecclesiastics(?) of Ireland. Aodh had three reasons to convene this assembly, the first of them being to banish the File and Bards because they constituted a heavy burden and were hard to govern."

At this time, Keatings adds, almost a third of the well-born men in Ireland belonged in some way to the Bardic class. "And from Samhain to Beltaine, they lodged at the homes of the nobles of Ireland." The project failed because Conchobar, to show his Druid orthodoxy and generosity, gathers up the File and Bards and maintains them for seven years, and also sends Cuchulainn to meet them. (It is not, in the light of this, accidental that we have more verse remaining about Conchobar than about any other Pre-Christian Irish king.)

The tradition continued after the Christianization. A folklorist whom the Rees quote recalled that

> "Just until recently, the Irish story tellers, heritors of the Bards, also did not exercise their art during the summer. In order to feel at ease, it had to be winter and night had to have fallen."

The patron god of Bards and story tellers is Ogmios, Champion of Strength and Eloquence. Lucian, writing in the second century, equates him with Roman Hercules, but notes these differences. First, Ogmios is portrayed as an old man, white haired, but still powerful. The Gauls, he learned through his native acquaintance, associate eloquence with the old champion, and not with Hermes, whom they see as too young and callow. On one of the temples or art works then extant, Ogmios, he says, is pictured leading a joyful band of men, attached to him by thin chains which link their ears to the tip of his tongue, a striking visual portrait of persuasive ability. The Irish god Ogma or Oghma, is clearly the same divine persona, though Prof. MacCana feels that the name may be a borrowing instead of a genuine cognate. But the figure appears, often qualified by the title "Grainainech" of-the-Sun-like-Countenance, and The Honey-Mouthed, both in Ireland and Wales as on the Continent. He is also known as "trenfher," champion, or literally the "heavy man." In insular traditions he is not only the patron of eloquent speech, but the inventor of writing, in the old Irish system of Ogham letters. This is a system of writing made up of bars of varying lengths place above and below a central line. It is of uncertain origin, but clearly designed for carving on stone, or at the end of square pillars.



It continued in use into the Early Middle Ages. MacCana believes it probably evolved out of an earlier set of magical symbols, perhaps some of the same ones that gave rise to the Norse Runes.

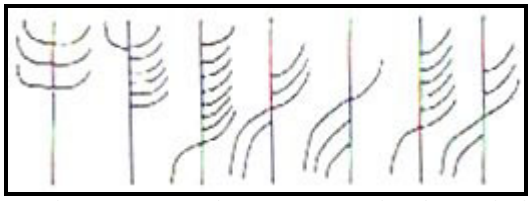


Figure 1.11 Branch runes representing the magical formula ek vitki

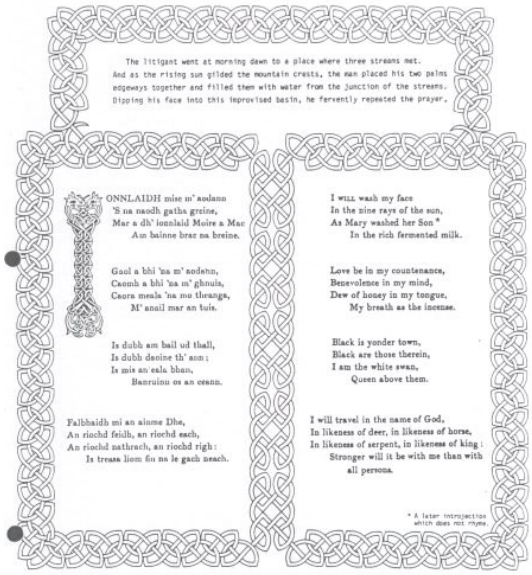
As Ogam came into use after the Celts were exposed to the Latin alphabet, MacCana contends it may have evolved thus: "seeing the utility of the Sound=Letter system of Latin script, the Gauls may have let the magic symbol whose name contained the sound stand for that sound in all words." Other scholars, such as Prof. Rhys, and Charles Squire, believe Ogam was the indigenous script of Ireland. They stress that it more closely resembles a binary or trinary code, akin to the bars and lines of the *I Ching*, than the picture writing of sound diagrams from which Mediterranean and hence all Western systems of letters evolved.

Most Ogam inscriptions are found in Ireland and Scotland, where the Romans never came. (Druidism is full of these riddles.)

Being in this way the God of Writing, it may not be an accident that Oghma is one of the very few Celtic gods for whom we have written records of his worship, i.e. prayers. Two "defixiones," inscribed tablets, were found in France on which Ogmios is beseeched to avenge the author and wreck a curse on certain individuals. In Irish sources, he is also the Champion in this sense of judge and avenger, and to him binding oaths are made. He is invoked as "the god who binds" the binding power of words and oaths, the spell-binding power

of eloquence, so graphically portrayed by the thin golden chains by which he leads his listeners, in the scene described by Lucian. This ability to persuade, convince, and enchant with words was highly regarded in Celtic society, and a part of the training of Bard, Filidh, and Druid alike. LeRoux speculates that the "magic of Ogam" that Cuchulainn used in the *Tain Bo Cuailnge* to stop, single handed, the advance of the Connaught army, was not supernatural magic, but persuasion, or eloquent diplomacy and playing for time.

Thus, Oghma is the one to invoke in negotiations, when eloquent speech and persuasive ability are needed.


The litigant went at morning dawn to a place where three streams met. And as the rising sun gilded the mountain crests, the man placed his two palms edgeways together and filled them with water from the junction of the streams. Dipping his face into this improvised basin, he fervently repeated the prayer.

ONNLAIDH mise m' aodann
'S na naodh gatha greine,
Mar a dh' ionnlaid Moire a Mac
Am bainne brac na breine.

Gaol a bhi 'na m' aodann,
Caomh a bhi 'na m' ghnuis,
Caora meala 'na mo theanga,
M' anail mar an tuis.

Is dubh am bail ud thall,
Is dubh daoine th' ann;
Is mis an eala bhan,
Banruinu os an ceann.

Falbhaidh mi an ainme Dhe,
An riochd feidh, an riochd each,
An riochd nathrach, an riochd righ:
Is treasa liom fin na le gach neach.

I will wash my face
In the nine rays of the sun,
As Mary washed her Son*
In the rich fermented milk.

Love be in my countenance,
Benevolence in my mind,
Dew of honey in my tongue,
My breath as the incense.

Black is yonder town,
Black are those therein,
I am the white swan,
Queen above them.

I will travel in the name of God,
In likeness of deer, in likeness of horse,
In likeness of serpent, in likeness of king:
Stronger will it be with me than with all persons.

* A later introjection which does not rhyme.

Oghmic Incantation

Here is an incantation to an Oghma like figure of "Sun-like Countenance" from the Scottish oral folk tradition. The Preceptor has used it and gives testimony of its utility.

> The litigant went at morning dawn to a place where three streams met. And as the rising sun gilded the mountain crests, the man placed his two palms edgeways together and filled them with water from the junction of the streams. Dipping his face into this improvised basin, he fervently repeated the prayer,

Ionnlaidh mise m'aodann
'S na naodh gatha greine,
Mar a dh'ionnlaid Moire a Mac
Am bainne brac na breine.

Gaol a bhi 'na m'aodann,
Caomh a bhi 'na m'ghnuis,
Caora meala 'na mo theanga,
M'anail mar an tuis.

Is dubh am bail ud thall,
Is dubh daoine th'ann;
Is mis an eala bhan,
Banruinu os an ceann.

Falbhaidh mi an ainme Dhe,
An riochd feidh, an riochd each,
An riochd nathrach, an riochd righ:
Is treasa lion fin na le gach neach.

I will wash my face
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News of the Groves

Live Oak Grove

Samhain—Due to an unfortunate misunderstanding, half of the members were under the impression that the vigil was the night of the 7th – 8th of November, although it was the evening of the 6th through the morning of Samhain Day, November 7. "For they (the Druids) count the nights before the days." Lacking a quorum, those of us present voted to postpone the elections until regular services the following Sunday, November 10. To all those who missed the vigil: We apologize. Those who missed out held a vigil at the Grove Site the following night.

At elections, November 11, 1985, Emmon Bodfish resigned as Preceptor. The officers elected were:

Archdruid & Chief Executive Officer of the Non-Profit Corp.: Bob Blunt

Preceptor & Chief Financial Officer of the Non-Profit Corp.: Herb DeGrasse

Server & Secretary of the Non-Profit Corp.: Willow Oak

Meetings will no longer be held at the Site at 616 Miner Road, Orinda. For more information contact Bob Blunt or Herb DeGrasse at 548-1450.

Birch Grove

Joan asks that you be "cool" in writing to her as the New England Druidic contact. They live in a very, very small town: No references to paganism, the Goddess, Druidism, etc. on the OUTSIDE of the envelope. (Yes, the postman talks to *everybody*.) "Be as wanko as you want on the inside, but keep the envelope cool." Reminding us of the wisdom of the old pagan maxim: "Look inward, but watch out."

Post Oak Proto-Grove

Tom Cross Writes: "I celebrated Samhain this year at my house telling stories with my Post Oak Proto-Grove clique

around the fire…I read from *Finnegan's Wake* for our "scriptures', my friends found *Finnegan's Wake* hilariously humorous.

Advertisements

Interested in Stone Henge?

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Order from: Stonehenge Viewpoint
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Listing over 80 more books related to archaeoastronomy.

Just Released!

Sheila na Gig's new album "Holy Well," Cailleach #9849, with authentic Fenian chant, and Gaelic songs with a pagan flavor from Jim Duran, with Renaissance and traditional Celtic instruments and singing by Sharon Devlin and the rest of the group. We highly recommend it and are planning to feature a full review of the songs in the next issue. Available at Leopold's in Berkeley or from us.

Offensive Opinions Department

(Some people like it, some people hate it. It grew out of a discussion of Cernunnos, and last Fall's Missal-Any…)

T: "Well, I'll concede on the matter of Cernunnos (being Celtic) but I still think He is connected with Val Camonica and Paleolithic hunting magic."

E: "I agree; I'm not fighting you on that. In fact I think that Jim Duran DOES connect Him, as Cernunnos, with the pre-Bronze Age horned gods like at Val Camonica, and before that with the hunter's rock paintings from the Stone Age, and with the Siberian Reindeer Shamans, too."

T: "They were still going in the 1920s and '30s. In Mircea Eliade's book *Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* he goes into that.

E: "Have you got Jim's tape of his seminar, "The Horned God of Europe?"

T: "Yeh, I've got that one. It's on there."

E: "He sees all of Northern Europe and Western Siberia as one Paleolithic cultural area: similar myths, concepts, and graphic motifs, similar mental pictures. They've all got the Reindeer Shaman Theme: the shaman who leaves his body and travels to the Reindeer Mother, the "Mother of Herds," the Earth-prosperity Dispensing Deity, and brings back the souls of reindeer or some other prey animals, and scatters them in the forest to increase the deer, whom the hunters can then go out and harvest. That's the general idea of the myth, anyway. And it's found all across Central Siberia and Northern Europe to Cornwall and Ireland. He's one of the most persistent archetypes, the Flying Shaman who brings back food and prosperity, if we keep the taboos and are good." Connected to Pluto, maybe, the Underworld deity who also sends prosperity.

T: "I think fauns, Pan, Satyrs, Zandharva types are also related to Cernunnos, and the reindeer deities. I think the original Indo-Europeans, the Kurgan people, for example, were slightly more agricultural than the Finn-Ugric, Ural Altaic Siberian types. They were slightly less nomadic, as they moved into more fertile lands where they settled down."

E: "But He's still food and fertility oriented."

T: "Indo-European third function – obedience, resourcefulness, health, fertility, fecundity, loyalty."

E: "And according to Kieswetter, the Flying Shaman is still with us, under the pseudonym of an obscure Cornish saint, who probably never existed. We call him "Santa Claus;" he'll get a lot of press for the next few weeks."

T: "The saint you mean is probably St. Cornely, who I've read in a lot of places has something to do with Cernunnos."

E: "Have you seen the 19th century painting in Murray's book, the one where he still has little horns on his forehead?"

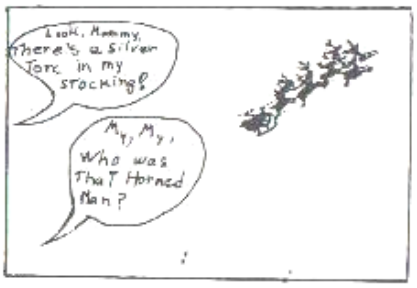
T: "That's funny, Santa having a Reindeer-Cult connection!"

E: "Count'em: He lives at the North Pole and has flying reindeer; the Shamans in Siberia fly 'through the Pole Star' on their ecstatic journey. Santa Claus brings us presents from there, a 'right merry old elf;' the Shaman brings back reindeer souls, hence food and feasting. Santa has elves, i.e. familiar spirits, that work for him; so do Shamans. The special red coat and pointy cap Santa wears, his having a special outfit, riding a flying deer or a flying horse, it all sounds right out of Eliade. Does this mean that all those department store Santa Clauses are doing a 'god-assumption' ritual?"

T: "Could be. But Christmas trees are Nordic-Druidic, the Indo-European strata."

E: "But I agree with you that Cernunnos, or really the Horned God, Cernunnos is just one instance of Him, is pre-Indo-European, or maybe Proto-Indo-European, too. The Indo-Europeans may have brought Him with them from the Caucus homeland. So this year let's get ourselves red suits and participate in this 10,000 year old religious ritual: eat until you drop."

Ogmios-Oghma



Look, Mommy, There's a Silver Torc in my Stocking!

My, My, Who was That Horned Man?

Calendar

Astronomical Solstice will occur at 8:08 A.M. P.S.T. on December 21, 1985. There will be no meetings at the old Grove Site, so for times and places of celebrations, contact either Bob Blunt or Herb (415) 548-1450.

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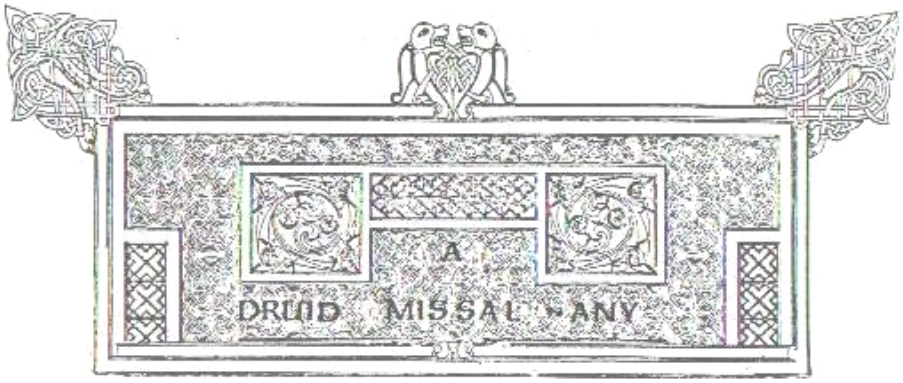
Postmarked December 10th, 1985

Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION TWO



A Druid Missal-Any
Volume Ten
1986 c.e.

Drynemetum Press

A Druid Missal-Any Oimelc 1986 Volume 10 Number 1

Oimelc Essay: Baby Naming

By Emmon Bodfish

imelc, Thaw, Lady Day, birth of the lambs and goats. This is the Festival of Bride Fire Goddess, Divine Midwife, Ruler of the hearth and the byre, and guardian of birth. It was to Bride that the old Celts prayed and sacrificed when a child was being born. Then, after She was thanked for a live birth, the child was ushered into the Celtic community by the Druid naming ceremony. The parents in ancient Britain did not name the child, but rather the foremost Druid of the clan or fife offered a name, based on the circumstance at the birth. In the case of "great souls," heroes or heroines, a Druid connected with the future child's family might receive a vision, and prophesy a name and destiny for the child.

Françoise Le Roux in her study, *Les Druides*, describes three instances of Druid namings that have survived in the literary fragments of Pagan Celtic Culture. (So much of the rich Celtic Bardic work was lost in the Romanization and then more again in the Christianization of Europe and the Isles; we must piece together a heritage from what is left to us, mostly by the Irish Bardic Schools, and in the oral folk traditions. We have nothing comparable to the Bramanas of India, or even the Islandic/Nordic mythologies, though there is ample evidence that such a body of knowledge and art existed in the Celtic World.) A re-naming could occur in adult life, in the case of equites, (warrior-caste) or Druids, on the basis of their deeds, particularly if the warrior left his household and became a member of a different clan.

Ms. LeRoux (Translated from the French by Jean Elizabeth)

> "The Druids intervened at the beginning of life, just, as we have seen, they occupied themselves with death. In Ireland, they officiated by giving a name, based on a particular detail or noteworthy happening. It is this that Cuchulainn, formerly named Setanta, got his name from the Druid, Cathbad. Having killed the fighting dog of the blacksmith, Culann, he, himself, rendered such equitable judgment that King Conchobar and his Druid, Cathbad, were astonished at the little boy:
>
> 'What judgment will you render on this, boy?' said Conchobar. 'If a young dog of the same line exists in Ireland, I will bring him up just to the point where he is as capable as his father. Meanwhile, I will myself be the dog who will protect the flocks, the goods and the land of Culann.'
>
> 'You have rendered a good judgment, little boy,' said Conchobar. Cathbad declared, 'In all truth, we could not have rendered a better one ourselves. Why don't we name you Cu Chulainn, the dog of Culann?' … And from this moment onward he had this famous name, Cuchulainn, because he had killed the blacksmith, Culann's, dog." (*Ogam*, XI, 214-215)

King Conchobar's naming is even more interesting:

> "A child was born with a worm in each hand. He was taken, in the fetal position to the river that was named Conchobar; the river passed by him on his back. Cathbad took the child and gave him the name of the river, Conchobar, son of Fachtna; having taken the boy and put him on his lap, Cathbad gave thanks for him, and prophesized about him." (*Ogam*, XII, 240)

A simple sign was enough. At the beginning of the *Longes mac n-Usnig*, the Exile of Usnech's Sons, the Ulates were assembled for a great feast in the house of Fedlimid. They received the announcement that Fedlimid's wife is with child. The Druid, Cathbad, then foretells that the baby will be a girl of extraordinary beauty and magnetism. She will have skin like snow, blond hair, magnificent blue eyes, ruddy cheeks, flawless teeth, and lips as red as coral. But, Cathbad adds, in order to get this treasure of a child, the Ulates will end up fighting each other.

> "Cathbad then put a hand on the mother's stomach and the unborn babe stirred under the touch of his hand. He said that in all truth the baby would be a girl, that Derdriu would be her name, and that she would be pure, surrounded by evil." ("True, but surrounded by weakness.")

She must have also had considerable Bardic talent, by the later accounts and the poems that are attributed to her. I include a translation of one that survives. It is from the Penguin Classic *A Celtic Miscellany* and her name is spelled Deirdre, in the Scottish fashion, translator unclear, the editor, perhaps, Ms. Betty Radice.

—E.B.

21. Deirdre Remembers a Scottish Glen

Glen of fruit and fish and pools, its peaked hill of loveliest wheat, it is distressful for me to think of it—glen of bees, of long-horned wild oxen.

Glen of cuckoos and thrushes and blackbirds, precious is its cover to every fox; glen of wild garlic and watercress, of woods, of shamrock and flowers, leafy and twisting crested.

Sweet are the cries of the brown-backed dappled deer under the oak-wood above the bare hill-tops, gentle hinds that are timid lying hidden in the great-treed glen.

Glen of the rowans with scarlet berries, with fruit fit for every flock of birds; a slumbrous paradise for the badgers in their quiet burrows with their young.

Glen of the blue-eyed vigorous hawks, glen abounding in every harvest, glen of the ridged and pointed peaks, glen of blackberries and sloes and apples.

Glen of the sleek brown round-faced otters that are pleasant and active in fishing; many are the white-winged stately swans, and salmon breeding along the rocky brink.

Glen of the tangled branching yews, dewy glen with level lawn of kine; chalk-white starry sunny glen, glen of graceful pearl-like high-bred women.

We loved the piece on Santa Claus and the Horned God, keep up the good work!

—Albion & Bonnie Guppy

"I'm not a YUPPIE; I'm an ORA."
"An aura?"
"No, an ORA. Old Rural Amateur."

News of the Groves

"A Druid Missal-Any" hereby gives notice that it will not be publishing, nor responsible for publishing, news or notices of Live Oak Grove, R.D.N.A. Inc. non-profit corporation #11495120.

—January 27, 1986, 616 Miner Rd. Orinda CA 94563

(Oh, and Willow Oak is NOT Server. Our mistake. Sorry)

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What Secret Power Did These Ancients Possess?

What hidden knowledge enabled these men and women to gain power over others? To control finance and business – build huge military machines – win elections?

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The Republicans (not a religious organization) are a century-old brotherhood dedicated to preserving this ancient heritage.

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Calendar

Astronomical Oimelc will occur at 3:02 A.M. Greenwich time on February 4, 1986; that's 7:02 P.M. Pacific Standard Time on February 3, 1986.

Yes, the Missal-Any is more mess-ill-anyous than usual. Our group has split into two, or several, and is undergoing re-organization. As one god said, in his final message to his creation:

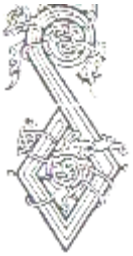
SORRY FOR THE INCONVENIENCE!

Postmarked Jan. 30, 1986

A Druid Missal-Any
Spring Equinox 1986
Volume 10 Number 2

Spring Equinox Essay:
Votive Offerings

By Emmon Bodfish



pring Equinox, the Sun crosses the Equator and shines down over the Northern tropics. It is dawn at the North Pole. This is one of the four Minor Celtic High Days. The grain of the last sheaf, made into the Corn-doll last autumn,* has been taken down from its place of honor, torn apart and scattered over the field prior to plowing. This holiday is one of renewal: planting, cleaning, fasting and "taking the bathes," visiting holy wells and springs. In Southern Britain, if I recall an oral tradition correctly, it was associated with Sulis, Goddess of hot springs and the Rites at Bath, and perhaps in Gaul with Sequanna, Goddess of the source of the River Seinne. Here, in the valley of Dijon, numerous votive offerings to Her have been found, and traditions dramatically emphasizing Her powers to cure the sick were recorded by classic writers. (c.f. Barry Cunliffe, though he does not list his sources for this.) Twenty-two wooden plaques, carved in relief to represent internal organs, one, better preserved, showing anatomically accurate depiction of trachea and lungs, have been recovered.

"The Celtic religious sense was strongly marked by the principle of reciprocity. To save a life, another would be sacrificed. Similarly," Cunliffe states, "if sacred waters were used by someone wanting a cure, a gift in exchange was expected of the user." Votive offerings found in this spring portray the hopes of the pilgrims who brought them, like the exquisite statue of the little blind girl from the shrine of Sequanna. Other carvings are of organs or limbs, perhaps to communicate with the Goddess or to focus the ritual's participants attention on the afflicted part. Wooden votives were carved from the heartwood of the Oak, and may depict the entire figure of the donor, sometimes holding the offering he has brought; a lamb, a jewel, a bar of silver. Most have very individual faces, as contrasted with the smooth, archetypical faces of Celtic God statues."

This is a time to get healthy; do a sauna or visit the Hot Springs, re-organize and get ready for Beltaine.

*See Fall Equinox Missal-Any, '85

News of the Groves

One of the 1st Order Druids contributes the following:

For those of you gifted with adroit feet, a finely tuned ear, and deft fingers, or just enjoy the music and dance of the Isles, there are offered in the East Bay:

Irish Dance lessons Monday evenings at 7 pm followed by a traditional Irish music session at 9 pm at the Starry Plough, 3101 Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley, 841-2802. See Terry O'Neil.

and

Scottish Country Dance lessons 6:30-8:30 pm Sunday evenings at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, in Berkeley. There is no fee for the first lesson and $2 after that. Call Don Kennedy for more information at 261-8678.

Oimelc '86

Three Solitary Thirds* (met at the Orinda Grove Site to celebrate this Bridee's Day and share the milk of the ewe. (Raw goat's milk, actually, since no one we know owns sheep.)

Overheard later that evening at the "party-to-follow," "You know, here we are lounging by this fire, eating strawberries and raw sugar, it is possible to be a hedonist and a health food nut at the same time."

*Third Order Druids, RDNA, who are not associated with any currently active Grove.

Now that we at the Missal-Any have acquired a proof reader, things should be getting better.

The Heathen on the Heath: Balance and Planting

By Les Craig-Harger, Humboldt County, CA

On the farm, the day of equal-night may pass, as usual, unmarked by any observance, yet no less sacred; sacred is each moment to its own purpose. Remember the day of planting, and keep it holy, for few hours separate the rain and clumping mud from the onrushing Too Late, wherein seedlings rise just in time for the devouring heat of midsummer, and bolt before any but the birds and mealybugs have tasted them! Forget not the blessed days of foal-gentling, before the young horse can overcome its wobbliness and see what tottering and snail-paced wimps we two legs are! And are the fowls laying, and where—sacred to this purpose are a thousand times and places, including the tool shed, or your tennies drying on the front porch.

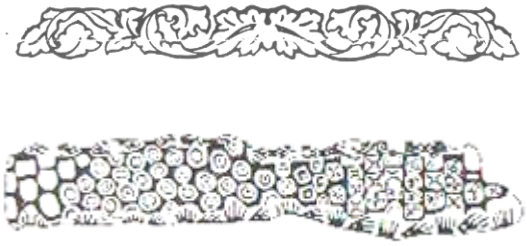
And so sometime after the blooming of the first roses, and the setting out of beans and tomatoes from the greenhouse, someone may notice that spring has, indeed, sprung, and too bad we didn't have time for a Maypole last week…

One may be thankful for the Equinox as it whizzes by, seeing that the daylight hours finally hold their own with the hours of tripping over the water-hose and falling in the compost pit. One may recognize the rich generosity of the Mother in the blackness of dirty fingernails, and the smell of last year's dead leaves calling out to this year's living plants. On the day of the Equinox I may be on my hands and knees in the rain, planting with my fingers in a narrow raised bed, so that each row can be reached without putting my weight on the moist earth. I may be hunting ducks' eggs in the dew, with my son gathering feathers behind me. This year, I may be watching the cow calve, or frantically stringing fence against the incursions of milk stealing steers. But meditations may creep across the back of my mind, meditations of this day of balance, or precious and minutely-measured time—of economy, the ever shifting economy of life and of the earth, which makes hay, as the sun begins to shine, of all our smaller concerns.

In the city, our time is worth money. I could lay aside my shovel, take pen in hand, and prove to myself that in not renting a tractor to till my garden, I am earning perhaps eleven cents an hour. But what cosmic Boss offers me money for this time? and is not my time mine to keep or use, as well as sell? If I compare the time of buddy boots, dripping sweat, and peace with the time of driving cars and sitting at desks, I laugh. And if my time is not entirely my own, but also Hers, shall I offer Her days of my good, smelly, biodegradable toil, or hours and minutes of noise and spewing hydrocarbons? (Hours and minutes, which by Her own executive fiat, may not come until the time for planting is past, for it would take a worse farmer than I am to roll a thousand pounds of metal over the fragility of wet ground, when my own feet can tread their appointed walkways, and fingers and Garden-Weasel, while inefficient, will at least not undo the work of a year's composting.

And what do we plant? As we follow Mother around the garden, clumping like children in Her cast-off shoes, which game of creation shall we play? Each has its own rules; every garden must be a little ecosystem, hopefully favoring plants over pests, and competing successfully with a system of crabgrass, slugs, gooseberry runners, and aphids that already works perfectly well, thank you. The hardy radish will crowd out the weeds, but how many radishes will one family eat? Perhaps I can sell them turnips again this year, if I chop them up finely in Chinese food, or dissolve them in lentil soup. Carrots love tomatoes, and vise versa, but neither of them loves my heavy acid loam; can I till in some sand, without merely creating a playground for the gophers? (My onions, potatoes, and garlic are planted—long before the Equinox—in old truck tires with wood or wire beneath them; for such gopher-ambrosia as these, I must create not only a separate ecosystem, but a separate little planet, inaccessible to nature's little restaurant critics.) The years teach me to recognize lost causes, too; Bak Choi will substitute for celery and cabbage both, and the mealybugs will at least share it with me. We ask for what we want, and do what we can to earn it, but the final choice is at the Mother's whim, varying from year to year. One year someone wished me either piss or peace, and got the accent wrong, for peas were upon me until long after summer should have withered them, whether I ever cultivated them properly or not. The next year, everyone ate a lot of borscht; the next, we learned a thousand and one ways to cook banana squash. I cannot bring myself to despair of eggplants, artichokes, or corn, but surely She laughs at my efforts, as each year's one-meal harvest is celebrated with a toast of "Better luck next time!"

So I'll raise a dented beer-can to this day of balance, before I've forgotten it (and drink the half that doesn't get poured in the slug-traps) and then go on to do as I've always done, celebrating not days, but seasons of labor and years of learning. Like most of Her mob of grubby kids, I love our Mother more than I bother to tell Her; and perhaps as we lesser mothers of forgetful offspring do, She know this. Another year of Her rough patience with my efforts has begun…



A prehistoric mural from the neolithic shrine at Catal Huyuk, Turkey. The 72 honeycomb-like cells seem to represent a natural calendar. Some cells are filled with symbols that look like bees, blossoms, and barley. The placement of the symbols seems anchored to the vernal equinox. (From Echoes of the Ancient Skies).

Advertisement

No. 43, Jan-Feb 1986

Science Frontiers is a bimonthly collection of digests of scientific anomalies found in the current literature. It is sent free to regular customers. Published by the Sourcebook Project, P.O. Box 107, Glen Arm, MD 21057.

I liked the whole idea behind the derivation of Santa Claus from Cernunnos or the horned god in general. What was Herne the hunter anyway? Who was Herne…obviously he is the West Germanic cognate of Cernunnos…INDO-EUROPEAN *KERN- *KORN- "horn"

Latin: cornu = horn

Gaulish: carnu = horn (other dialects: cernu=horn)

Germanic: hernu = horn (Old English: hornu perhaps)

Grimm's law about K becoming Germanic H would mean that Herne is as ancient as Cernunnos and both coming from P.I.E. and therefore Herne is not borrowed from Celtic unless before the Consonantal shift of before 300 B.C. or earlier. The Germanic shift of Indo-European consonants called Grimm's law etc. is supposed to have occurred at least before 300 B.C. This would mean that proto-Germanic *pempe* would become Germanic *femfe* and eventually Gothic *fimf*, and Old English-Anglo-Saxon *fif* ect.

The neophyte brahmanic student or brahmacharin was given an antelope skin cloak from his guru during his initiation…along with the sacred thread or cord, plus a staff made of a special sacred wood…Doesn't this get-up put to mind the shamans of Finn-Ugrian types or what one might imagine the Celtic Druids. AND…if the antelope fur cloak still had the antler or horns intact , would that not resemble the dancing sorcerer of the Trois Freres cave and other upper Paleolithic and bronze age figures of alpine and central western Europe, which were supposedly shamans doing hunting magic rites. This would tie them in with Indo-European priesthoods such as Brahmans, Bhlaghmens, Flamines, Druids, volkhvy, Ktistai, hierophants, hotri, adhvaryus, magas (magi) atarvans, goturs, gaotars, gutuaters, gydhrs, etc.

Where the Brahmin student is given his sacred cord and belt, the Druid student was given his sacred torc and belt…both had staves of sacred wood and both had cloaks of the fur of a horned animal of one sort or another. The brahmanaran had a guru tutor him in an ashram whilst the druidic-pupil was tutored by his ollamh in a secluded nemeton school…both were furnished with huts both in India and Europe and both included studying wisdom, myths, poems, verses and stories by rote frontwards and backwards, both were done by mnemonic devices such as singing and reciting and much listening and repeating. Both students had to attend to sacred fires and keep them burning…and both greeted the sun every morning and early evening.

That's probably much of the similarities and close they were to some original Indo-European method of learning and worshipping.

Anyway, I want to get this off quickly and I'll make time to get the rest of my letter and more to come soon…

—Thomas M. Cross

Postmarked 17 March 1986

A Druid Missal-Any Beltane 1986 Volume 10 Number 3

Beltane Essay: Fire Making

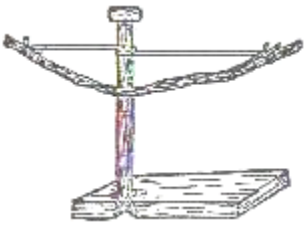
By Emmon Bodfish

eltaine, May Day, festival of bonfires, greeting to Belenos, the returning Sun. It is the beginning of summer, Season of Life. In old "Celtdom" cattle were moved to the highland pastures; modern Third Order R.D.N.A. Druids exchange their white ceremonial ribbons for red ones.

In ancient Britain, Ireland and Gaul, according to the witness of the Classical writers and to numerous folk traditions, all fires were extinguished on Beltaine Eve, and a "new, clean fire" kindled by the Druids, "through means of friction, from logs of Oak." In Gàidhlig this process is called "tog an teine," lifting fire out of the wood.

Making fire by friction is a ceremonial skill that one or a few members of each Grove might want to try.

The bow and drill method is the easiest.



Make a fire-board of Oak, well seasoned, very dry. With a knife or a pointed stone, make a shallow hole, a cup, near the edge of the board. Whittle a "V" notch in from the edge of the board, with the "V's" point at the cup. Don't cut through into the cup/hole. Making the notch, which is undercut, wider on the bottom side of the board, helps. Place your tinder in the notch. (More about tinder later.) With the board on a firm, dry surface, hold it steady by kneeling on it, or holding it down with your foot as you drill. Put the drilling stick in the cup and hold down on it with the "fire hold" block. Then with the bow, spin it as fast as you can. Persistence and consistent speed pay. Use a "fire-stick," i.e. a drill, of at least 3/8 inch diameter. Thinner sticks dissipate heat and cool off too quickly. And, as our Humboldt County "Third" says, it also helps to have someone else to push down on the top of the "fire-hold." "As we work a bow back and forth like that, our arms automatically tend to rise." If no one else is around, hold down on it with your chin. (Paleolithic fire-holds are the joy of Old World archeologists.)

The fire-stick can also be turned by hand. I have not done this and I don't know anyone who has been able to get this way to work. It may have to be a group endeavor, with a number of people spelling each other in relay. But, so I'm told; "Use a longer drill than you would with the bowed method and roll it between your palms. When your hands reach the bottom, quickly let go and return them to the top of the stick and keep it spinning." With either of these methods, it is easier and surer if you have a group of people. With the right choreography, this could be worked into the Beltaine Ceremonies as an effective part of co-operative ritual.

After a while, you will see smoke waver up from the cup-hole then hot black powder will well up and out into the notch; keep turning, faster. Press down harder. Press the tinder into the notch and against the red hot glowing firestick. If you turn the drill fast enough, sparks may jump out and catch the tinder. When you see a red, glowing area in the cup or on the notch, gently remove the fire-stick, and breath on the glow till it becomes a bright gleam. Then pick up the fireboard and tinder together and press the tinder around the incandescence. Carefully breath it into life. This part takes practice and finesse, minute attention, and great awareness of the right moment. In other words it is a meditation. Mastery over fire, like playing the violin, is not learned easily. In many pre-agricultural societies it is considered one of the marks of the Shaman or Adept.

For tinder, I use the feather "wolf-lichen," Letharia vulpine, that grows on Orinda coyote bushes, with lots of fine, dry splinters of resinous pine or juniper, and thinly shredded paper at the center of the bundle. Bradford, in his survival books, recommends lint, from your pocket, and very dry pine needles or shredded bark. ("finely shredded pieces of the "Wall Street Journal" soaked in lighter fluid is great."—Good-Gulf the Wizard) When the tinder begins to flame, gently set it to the kindling under your previous readied altar fire. Continue breathing on it auspiciously, coaxing it into a blaze. From this "new clean fire" re-kindle all your fires. By now you know why pre-industrial people kept fire burning, and never let it go completely out.

An Aside

"Match" is from "maìde" meaning "little stick" in Gàidhlig. The match was invented by a Scotsman. Be grateful.

The Heathen on the Heath: Growth and Life

Beltaine, Belanos, love's return. The sacred shampoo commercial, Lord and Lady finally looking up, enraptured, to meet each other's eyes and fling themselves, slow-motion, into each other's arms. Fulfillment blossoms forth in a smugly profligate burst of life, without regards for our priorities; weeds, rabbits, gophers, and bugs share the celebration with humanity's pampered pets. Who invited the piratical jays, the defiantly rapacious boar? Never mind, you guys; I think She did. Anyway, they're not leaving, and where's the beer?

Beltaine, bright blossoms, how does your garden grow? With glistening backs and gaily discarded shirts, and a thousand things I don't remember planting, and none of it all in a row. My own strawberries could take lessons from the wild ones that have crept in through the fence, and the big, bold blooms of the flower garden struggle in vain to keep up with their more fragile sisters of meadow and creekbed. And our own turn to wildness as well, howling dog and disappearing tomcat in their turn, playing hard at the only game in town. The ducks are a scandal to the jaybirds, and the jaybirds are a scandal to everybody, but scandalous thoughts come easily to mind at this time of year.

I have seen snow on this day—doubtless some manic prank for my especial benefit—but if I want to can tomatoes this year, I will Have Faith and set the starts out, now. Pleasure coaxes us to faith, to belief in the unknowable future;

why else would I trust my corn to a wind called the Freight Train, because it comes every day at four o'clock? Of course, I stake everything, giving the neighbors something to laugh at when the entire assemblage arrives in their yard, green plastic ties gaily fluttering in the residual breeze. Still there are some covenants ineradicable and unbroken, and this day will see the Earth Mother's signature to Her indelible word: the sleek twin banner of the new-sprung squash plant, and the opulent green of the potato leaf. How richly She engraves the simple promise: you shall not starve.

The breeze is perfumed with paradox; roses and garlic, those old lovers of garden-book fame, confuse the nose together. The compost heats up evocatively, and the barnyard is definitely a barnyard, unless the wind is blowing through the lilac bush.

This, they tell us, is the Season of Life, as opposed to the Season of Sleep. This is because this is the Season of Damned Little Sleep, as the screech-owl's mad laughter proclaims its own inexplicable business to the world at large, and deer bound crashingly by the window, no fear of anything but boredom.

Life.

Life! LIFE! Wake up, oh Party Poopers, and celebrate Life! And restless at our Lady's command, we do. For is it not Her pleasure-principle that draws us to her purpose, starting with air but inevitably going on to the harder stuff, while She, our Connection, smiles and gently suggests? We lust and are fruitful, hunger and work, desire and create. And gently, irresistibly, she draws us on.

Beltaine. Blessed be, my people. Look about us, and see the endless, pointless, perfect purpose of our existence.

Poetry from *A Celtic Miscellany*

12. May-Time

May-time, fair season, perfect is thy aspect then; blackbirds sing a full song, if there be a scanty beam of day.

The hardy, bushy cuckoo calls, welcome noble summer! It calms the bitterness of bad weather, the branching wood is a prickly hedge.

Summer brings low the little stream, the swift herd makes for the water, the long hair of the heather spreads out, the weak white cotton-grass flourishes.

...The smooth sea flows, season when the ocean falls asleep; flowers cover the world.

Bees, whose strength is small, carry with their feet a load reaped from the flowers; the mountain allures the cattle, the ant makes a rich meal.

The harp of the wood plays melody, its music brings perfect peace; colour has settled on every hill, haze on the lake of full water.

The corncrake clacks, a strenuous bard; the high pure waterfall sings a greeting to the warm pool; rustling of rushes has come.

Light swallows dart on high, brisk music encircles the hill, tender rich fruits bud...

...The hardy cuckoo sings, the speckled fish leaps, mighty is the swift warrior.

The vigour of men flourishes, the glory of great hills is unspoiled; every wood is fair from crest to ground, fair each great goodly field.

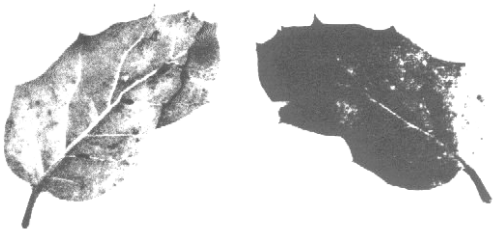
Delightful is the season's splendour, winter's rough wind has gone; bright is every fertile wood, a joyful peace is summer.

A flock of birds settles...; the green field re-echoes, where there is a brisk bright stream.

A mad ardour upon you to race horses, where the serried host is ranged around; very splendid is the bounty of the cattle-pond, the iris is gold because of it.

A timid persistent frail creature sings at the top of his voice, the lark chants a clear tale—excellent May-time of calm aspect!

Irish; author unknown; ninth-tenth century



23.Suibhne the Wild Man in the Forest

Little antlered one, little belling one, melodious little bleater, sweet I think the lowing you make in the glen.

Home sickness for my little dwelling has come upon my mind, the calves in the plain, the deer on the moor.

Oak, bushy, leafy, you are high above trees; hazel, little branchy one, wisdom of hazel nuts.

Alder, you are not spiteful, lovely is your colour, you are not prickly where you are in the gap.

Blackthorn, little thorny one, black little sloe bush; water-cress, little green-topped one, on the brink of the blackbird's well.

Saxifrage of the pathway, you are the sweetest of herbs; cress, very green one; plant where the strawberry grows.

Apple-tree, little apple-tree, violently everyone shakes you; rowan, little berried one, lovely is your bloom.

Bramble, little humped vine, you do not grant fair terms; you do not cease tearing me till you are sated with blood.

Yew, little yew, you are conspicuous in graveyards; ivy, little ivy, you are familiar in the dark wood.

Holly, little protector, door against the wind; ash-tree, baneful, weapon in the hand of the warrior.

Birch, smooth, blessed, proud, melodious, lovely is each entangled branch at the top of your crest.

Aspen, as it trembles from time to time I hear its leaves rustle and think it is the foray…

It is on my lonely journey I were to search the mountains of the dark earth, I would rather have the room for a single hut in great
Glenn mBolcáin.

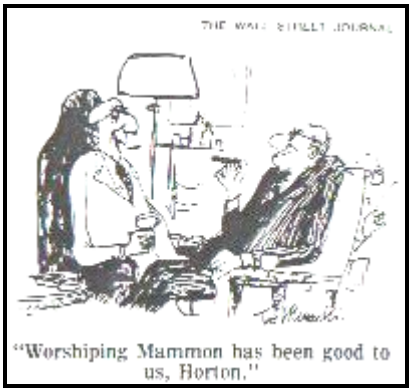
Good is its clear blue water, good its clean stern wind, good its cress-green watercress, better its deep brooklime.

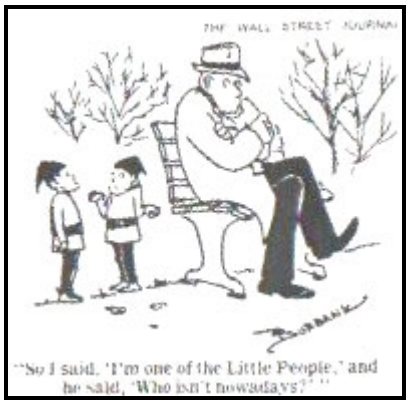
Good its pure ivy, good its bright merry willow, good its yewy yew, better its melodious birch…

Irish; author unknown; 12th Century.

Advertisement

What! Irish lessons in Berkeley? Yes, after the departure of Jim Duran from the area, Irish language lessons and Folklore workshops seemed extinct. But now they are available again, in Berkeley and San Francisco, from Eddie Stack, a native Irish speaker. He can be reached at (415) 521-3636. He will be leaving for Ireland in June, so please contact him as soon as possible.





So I said, 'I'm one of the Little People,' and he said, 'Who isn't nowadays?'

Calendar

Astronomical Beltaine will occur when the Sun is at 15 degrees Taurus, on May 5, 1986 at 11:25 A.M. P.S.T. or, alternatively, when the Sun is midway Between Equinox and Solstice, at a declination of 16 degrees 18 minutes North, at 8:34 A.M. on May 5th this year. We will celebrate it on Sunday, May 4th at the Orinda Grove Site, around sundown. Be there close to 6:00 P.M. Bring a 15'-20' ribbon, color of your choice.

Postmarked 25 April 1986

A Druid Missal-Any
Summer Solstice 1986
Volume 10 Number 4

Summer Solstice Essay:
Firbolgs and Tuatha De Danann

By Raphael McKeen and Stacey Weinberger

idsummer, Summer Solstice, the Longest Day of the Year, is one of four Minor High Days of the Celtic Calendar. It is a feast celebrating the glory and the peak of the Sun God Belenos' (meaning "the shining one") power. On this day the altar fire should be especially large and a sacrifice of green branches and mistletoe be made. It was upon Midsummer Day that the people of the Goddess Danu, the Tuatha de Danann, took pre-Celtic Ireland from its earlier inhabitants, the Fir Bolgs.

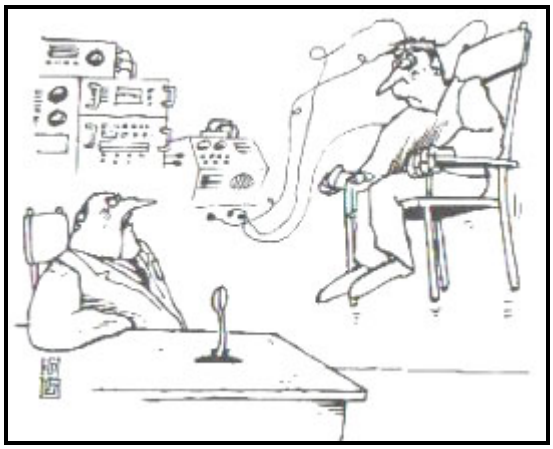
It was upon the mystic first day of May that the Tuatha de Danann landed on the coast of Ireland in a dense fog without being opposed by the Fir Bolgs. The Tuatha de Danann then proceeded to "druidically" form showers and fog-sustaining showers over the country and caused the air to pour down fire and blood upon the Fir Bolgs. The Fir Bolgs had to shelter themselves for three days and three nights, after which time their own Druids put a stop to these enchantments by counter spells.

After a parley at the Plain of the Sea, the Fir Bolgs and the Tuatha de Danann agreed to exchange weapons, so that each side might be able to come to some opinion as to the opponent's strength. The people of the Goddess Danu offered the Fir Bolgs peace, with a division of the country into two equal halves. The Fir Bolg King Eochaid would not have this. The Tuatha de Danann however, impressed by the Fir Bolgs' weapons, decided to retreat farther west into Connaught to a plain then called Nia (now called Moytura), where they drew up their boundary line at the extreme end. This was in front of the Pass of Balgaton, which offered a retreat in case of defeat. Nuada, King of the Tuatha de Danann, sent an ambassador offering the same terms as before. Again the Fir Bolgs declined, but agreed to a truce of one hundred and five days in order to become battle-ready.

It was on Midsummer day that the opposing armies at last met. The people of the Goddess Danu appeared "in a flaming line," wielding their "red-bordered, speckled, and firm shields." Opposite to them were aligned the Fir Bolgs, "sparkling, brilliant, and flaming, with their swords, spears, blades, and trowel-spears." A deadly hurley-match was begun in which thrice nine of the Tuatha de Danann met the same number of Fir Bolgs. The Fir Bolgs emerged the victors. This was followed with more parleys and battles, fought with equal numbers on each side. After four days and a terrible slaughter upon each side, the Fir Bolgs were reduced to three hundred men. Those remaining were offered a fifth part of Ireland—whichever province they might choose. They agreed to this and chose Connaught, ever afterwards their special home, and where, until the middle of the seventeenth century, men were still found tracing their descent from Sreng, a warrior of the Fir Bolgs.

So when you gaze into the Midsummer fire, think of the power and beauty of the Light and before the Sun begins to wane for another half year, remember the Fir Bolgs with their flaming swords standing up to defeat by the Tuatha de Danann.

(Primary Source: Charles Squire, *Celtic Myth and Legend*. Newcastle Publishing Co., 1975.)



Never mind that. Can you bend the spoon?

The Celtic Calendar

Copyright Thomas M. Cross
for the Bard; The Druid Missal-Any

In the 19th century, a few fragmentary Gallic calendars were found in France. Only one of them collected was found in a near complete form in bronze plaques or tablets. This huge Calendar has been named the Coligny calendar by its discoverers. It was engraved with Latin letters of the style of the late republic or early empire in the Gaulish language. The calendar contains 62 consecutive months, the names of these months, numerals marking each night (or 24 hour period), and notes concerning the division of these months into halves and marking the mat "good" from the anmat (abbreviated as ANM) "not-good" days and months. The calendar was lunar and not solar and therefore it follows closely the same type of calendar used in ancient Athens and the Sanskrit Hindu calendar all three of which are like the Jewish calendar. These lunar calendars have in common the intercalary month (an extra month) added twice in a five year period which keeps its months in the same season each year. The modern Western calendar which we use today is a Roman calendar unlike the lunar and so instead of adding a 13th month every so often, we have our year divided into months which add up to 365 days and add an extra day every four years. The lunar calendars have 12 months—half of them 29 days the other of 30 day lengths which only adds up to 354 days and every two or three years an extra 30 day month is added making 384 days in those years. Since the earth takes 365 days and six hours to complete a revolution around the sun, a lunar calendar is 11-1/4 days too short and a solar calendar of 365 days is one quarter of a day too short. The Coligny calendar adding an intercalary month of 30 days ever 2 ½ years thus balances itself out thus:

Lunar Five Year Period: 1,830 days

Roman-Julian-Gregorian Five Years: 1,827 days

Number of Days in 5 solar revolutions: 1826.25 days

As one can see the Roman calendar is nineteen hours or three-quarters of a day too long in a five year period. The Julian year (named after Julius Caesar who hired a Greek astronomer living in Alexandria, Egypt named Sosigenes to design a calendar like the Egyptian solar calendar but more accurate) had an extra day added every fourth year to the last month of the Roman Year, Februarius. From the time of Caesar the Roman empire always used this calendar and after the conversion of most of Europe to Christianity this calendar remained in use. In the 16th century, Pope Gregory decided it would be necessary to make a further adjustment of the Roman calendar so that the extra hours that accumulate after a long period should be dropped so that the time reckoning would be more accurate. It took a while before the English adopted it, but they finally did so in 1752 and thus it also came into use in the English colonies in America. When the change was made they called it New Style, this angered many people who felt that they had lost days from their lives when the 11 days were dropped so that April 1st became April 12th. Those who still stuck with the Old Style (Julian) calendar were called April Fools and that's how April Fools' Day got its start. How did this effect the Celtic feasts? Well, with Old Style All Soul's Eve (Samhain) would have been on November 1st, 1752 which in New Style fell on November 12th, thus Old Style Oct. 31 was now Nov. 11 at sundown.

Many would say at first, that the Old Style Samhain is more correct with the old way, but is it? Not really. You see, the solar year remains 365.25 days and the Old Style (Julian year) got slowly – though very very slowly ahead of itself over the centuries. Lunar calendars (like that of Coligny) creep ahead of the solar year also and a little quicker—so with both of these calendars they had to periodically correct the time reckoning. The Gregorian reform has balanced out the jumping ahead; the calendar is more accurate. Some calendars have no regard for accuracy between keeping the solar and lunar years in harmony. The Moslem calendar for example is a very primitive lunar calendar—lacking intercalary months but merely going by the phases of the moon with 29 day months only. Thus the Moslem calendar lacks the extra intercalary month and the alternating 30 day months like that used in the Athenian, Hindu, Jewish and Gallic-Coligny calendars. Thus a particular month of their calendar may shift from spring to winter, to autumn to summer until they lose years over centuries; the Moslem era therefore has less years than the Julian-Gregorian in the same period of centuries (going by Julian-Gregorian centuries). The Moslems are losing time in their era by their method of time-reckoning. Since the Gregorian calendar is more accurate in terms of time reckoning, it would be silly for neo-pagan Celtophiles to shift Samhain from November 1st to November 12th. Only a few centuries of the Julian era (beginning 46 B.C.) had passed when the Christians came to Ireland and thus Samhain (Gaulish *trinouxtion Samonios*) "three nights of 'Summery'") was marked into the Roman-Christian calendar or Julian Calendar. Thus the Celtic Fire Festivals (Samhain, Oimelc, Bealtaine, Lughnasadh) were preserved by their adoption into the Julian calendar as Christian feasts (All Souls and All Saints, Festival of Lights or Candlemas or St. Bridget's Day, May-Day and Lammas). Other pagan festivals of other peoples were adopted into the Roman-Julian calendar as Christian feasts. As anyone can see, the Celtic calendar's four great feasts are safely worked properly into the Gregorian calendar.

Coligny Months	Duration	Northern*	Translations
Samonios	mat 30 days	Oct-Nov	Hefydd, Samhain samon=summer
Dumannios	anm 29	Nov-Dec	? "dark moon" Du+mann
Riuros	mat 30	Dec-Jan	rhewi "frost" Welsh
Anagantios	anm 29	Jan-Feb	?
Ogronios	mat 30	Feb-Mar	oer "cold" Welsh
Qutios	mat 30	Mar-Apr	?
Giamonios	anm 29	Apr-May	Gaeaf, Geimhreadh Giamon=winter
Simiusonnnos	mat 30	May-Jun	?
Equos	anm 29	Jun-Jul	Archaic for Epos "horse"
Elembiuios	anm 29	Jul-Aug	?
Edrinios	mat 30	Aug-Sept	Welsh *edrin* "noise"
Cantlos	Anm 29	Sept-Oct	Welsh *cantell* "circle"

*If Alwyn and Brinley Rees in their *Celtic Heritage* are correct, then it could be that Giamon is the first month in the southern half as comparison with the Hindu calendar tradition shows; both being from a common Indo-European tradition. Thus the Coligny calendar is the Northern Gallic calendar, the southern Gallic calendar would begin with Giamon as the first month of the year.

—Thomas Cross for *The Druid Missal-Any*

Post Oak Proto-Grove

The Gaulish Language

By Thomas M. Cross

The first Celtic language to pass beyond this world was probably Gaulish—once spoken in regions we would now call France, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Bohemia, southern Germany and in Galatia of Turkey and perhaps Portugal and Galicia. This language was in most respects identical to the P-Celtic Old Brythonic ancestor of Welsh, Cornish and Breton. The main differences between the dialects of Gallo-Brittonic (Gaulish and Brythonic) were lexical, but like Goidelic (archaic and primitive Irish) the language had declensional endings similar to that found in Latin, Greek, Sanskrit, Icelandic, Old English and Lithuanian. In other words, Gaulish shared the same characteristics of most all Indo-European languages in that it was highly inflected. Certainly this was the very tongue spoken by Diviacus known by Caesar and Cicero and the Druids described by Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, Pomponius Mela and probably known to Poseidonios. James Travis theorized that the Druids probably had known a counterpart to the Rig Veda which he calls a "Druid-veda" in his book *Early Celtic Versecraft*. His investigation of the earliest verse forms in Celtic languages show that linguistic conditions which proceeded these first written verses must have shared the same Indo-European inflectional characteristics we find in such languages as the Vedas and other I-E verse forms. The accent was on the initial syllable

and syntax was free or less fixed. Rhyming was probably unknown as we know it today, but the main device used was alliteration similar to that we find in the early verse of Germanic languages.

Gaulish is only know to us from inscriptions (which employed either Greek or Roman letters), from glosses made by Romans or Greeks and from reconstructions based on phonetics and historical linguistics. How Gaulish was pronounced can only then be conjectured from phonetic rules and by the spelling used in the inscriptions. One of the problems is in the use of the Roman and Greek alphabets. Evidently those who could write Gaulish had to represent the pronunciation as best he could from the letters that we learned from Latin and Greek spelling, thus the sounds shared by both Gaulish and the other languages would used the corresponding letter. In ancient times, spelling was based more on pronunciation than it is today—as for example modern English or modern Irish in which the spelling represent older and obsolete pronunciations. Thus when we read Gaulish inscriptions using Roman letters, we must give the letters their Roman or Latin value as they were pronounced at the time the inscription was produced. To double check we may consult the phonetic rules of Celtic etymology. But some learned Gauls invented some letters such as the barred D "D" [There is a bar drawn through the D in the quotations] and barred S "S" [there is a bar drawn through the S in the quotations]which probably represent the soft or voiced th and "sh" sounds respectively. Also the Gauls may have used the Greek chi x to represent the ch sound represented in *loch*. The vowels must have had the "continental" values with the exception that in most unstressed positions they became schwa like the u in hut or the o in other. The Gauls would often spell the same word using e and i as alternatives and therefore we can see that a sound somewhere in between was used perhaps nasalised or similar to the i of English hit when spoken with a twang. Others say that Gaulish had the sound of the French u or German ü (like saying English "ee" of need with lips pouted in position of saying the oo of food).

Gaulish, unlike modern Celtic languages, did not have mutations or aspiration, the initial consonants did not change according to any grammatical rules. This phenomena was in its infancy developing later in the stage of lenition (consonants changing because of the final sound of a preceding word or because it is flanked by vowels) and eventually become systematic as the languages rapidly developed before literacy was widespread. At the same time that Celtic languages began developing mutations already the declensional endings began disappearing. It is very probable that the loss of the declensional endings were mostly responsible for the development of mutations as well as the fossiling of the syntax.

Some Basic Gaulish

Verb "to Be":

esmi	I am
esi	thou art (you are)
esti	he is
esmos	we are
sueste	you (plural) are
sent	they are

Pronouns:

Singulars:	**I**	**Thou**	**He**	**She**	**It**
Nominative	eg	tu	is/es	si	id
Accusative	me	te	im/em	siam	id
Dative	moi	toi	io	iai	io
Genitive	moue	toue	eso	esa	eson
Plurals:	**We**	**You**	**They (masc.)**	**They (fem.)**	**They (neut.)**
Nominative	snes	sues	ioi	ias	ioi
Accusative	snes	sues	sons	sans	sons
Dative	nebis	suebis	iobis	iobis	iobis
Genitive	neseron	seuseron	eson	esan	esan

Gaulish had basically four cases nominative (subject), accusative (object), dative (prepositional),and genitive (possessive – denoting ownership or origination) and sometimes a vocative case (used when directly addressing someone). There was also Plural and Dual numbers. An example can be made in the masculine proper name Segomaros:

	Singular	**Plural**	**Dual**
Nominative	Segomaros	Seogomaroi	Segomarou
Accusative	Segomaron	Sgomarons	Segomarou
Dative	Segomaru	Segomarobis	Segomarobem
Genitive	Segomari	Segomaris	Segomarou
Vocative	Segomare	Segomaros	Segomarou

The feminine noun *benna* "woman" (from Indo-Eur. *gwen)

	Singular	**Plural**	**Dual**
Nominative	benna	bennas	bennai
Accusative	bennan	bennans	bennai
Dative	bennai	bennabo	bennabem
Genitive	bennas	bennon	bennai

magos "plain" Irish *magh,* Welsh *ma* Masculine noun

	Singular	**Plural**	**Dual**
Nominative	magos	magesa	
Accusative	magon	magesa	
Dative	mages	magebos	magebem
Genitive	magesos	mageson	

rix "king" Irish *righ* or *ri,* Welsh *rhi* Masculine noun

CASE	SINGULAR	PLURAL	DUAL
Nom.	Rix	Riges	Rige
Acc.	Rigim	Rigons	Rige
Dat.	Rigi	Rigobis	Rigebem
Gen.	Rigos	Rigon	Rigou

mens "month" Irish *mi,* Welsh *mis*

	Singular	**Plural**	**Dual**
Nominative	mens	menses	mensou
Accusative	mensim	mensins	mensou
Dative	mensai	mens	mesobem
Genitive	mensos	menson	mensou

mater "mother" Ir. *mathair,* Welsh *mam* Feminine noun

	Singular	Plural	Dual
Nominative	mater	matres	matres
Accusative	matren	matrens	matrens
Dative	matrei	matrebo	matrebem
Genitive	matres	matron	matriou

Lugus (proper name) Irish Lugh, Welsh Lleu Masculine –u Stem

	Singular	Plural	Dual
Nominative	Lugus	Lugoues	Lugu
Accusative	Lugum	Luguns	Lugu
Dative	Lugou	Lugubis	Lugubem
Genitive	Lugous	Lugion	Lugouo

Medu "mead" Gaulish neuter u-stem, Irish *medhbh,* Welsh *medd*

	Singular	Plural	Dual
Nominative	medu	medoues	medu
Accusative	medu	meduns	medu
Dative	medu	medubis	medubem
Genitive	medous	medion	medouo

The I-stem Masculine endings

	Singular	Plural	Dual
Nominative	-is	-eies	-eie
Accusative	-in	-ins	-eie
Dative	-I	-ibis	-ibem
Genitive	-os	-ion	-iou

Feminine I-stem endings

	Singular	Plural	Dual
Nominative	-i	-ias	-ia
Accusative	-ien	-iens	-ia
Dative	-i	-ibo	-ibem
Genitive	-as	-i	-iau

Neuter I-stem endings

	Singular	Plural	Dual
Nominative	-i	-ia	-ia
Accusative	-i	-ins	-ia
Dative	-i	-ibis	-ibem
Genitive	-os	-ion	-iou

Masculine N-stem endings

	Singular	Plural	Dual
Nominative	-o	-enes	-ene
Accusative	-in	-ons	-ene
Dative	-I	-enobis	-obem
Genitive	-os	-on	-ou

This is just a few of the Gaulish declensional endings that have been reconstructed by Celtic philologists working with the inscriptions found in excavations and working with the etymology of Old Irish and early Welsh. Note that the Gaulish ending –os masculine of Segomaros corresponds with the Latin –us ending, Greek –as or –os and proto-Germanic –az (in Gothic –as) endings.

Many Gaulish words were Latinised and assimilated to Latin some of which survived into modern French, e.g. courma or (to) cereuis to cerevisia to cervoise "beer" or ale". Casanos (an epithet of the oak tree "holy one" to Latin *cassanus* to French *chene*. Gaulish *gleno* "to clean" Latin *glenare* to French *glaner*.

Gaulish	English	Irish cognate	Welsh cognate
abona	river	abhain	afon
are	near		ar
beccan	small	beag	bach
briga	hill		bryn
cambo	crooked		
ceto	wood		coed
cumbo	valley		cwm
dunon	fortress	dun	din
dubo	black	dubh	du
dubro	water		dwr
lindon	lake	lind	llyn
lis	hall		llys
maros	great	mór	mawr
monedos	mountain		mynedd
nantos	brook		nant
penno	head	ceann	pen
poullon	pool, harbour		pwll
tir	land	tir	tir
tracto	sand		draeth
innis	island	innis	ynys
nemeton	shrine, consecrated place		
more	sea	muir	mor

Gaulish Religious Terms

	Cognates	Meaning
Druidiactos	O. Ir. druidecht, Mod. Ir. draiocht	Druidism
Vindomagos (ouindomagos)	Welsh *gwynfa*	"paradise "white plain"
Bacuceos (bahkook-os)		possessed by evil spirits
talamu	Ir. talamh	"earth"
dusios		an incubus (according to Latin gloss)
talamasca		female evil spirit "earth hag"
cassos or caddos		holy (as in Cassibellaunos and Cassanos)
caragos		a fortune telling
morimarusa		"sea of the dead"
iipomiiduos (epomeduos)		horse sacrifice (cf. asvamedha of Vedic)
biliomagos		"plain of the sacred tree"
nemeton (nimidas)		"shrine" nemet="sacred" (-as ending spelling variant)
uernemetis		"over shrine" (-is ending is genitive plural)
crotta	O.Ir. *crot*, Welsh *crwth*	"lyre" or type of string instrument
cauaros (kaouaros)	Welsh *cawr*	"giant"

daculon		"sickle"
gutuatros		"invoker" (Latinised as gutater) attached to certain deities such as Moltinos, the gutuater Martis

Calendar

Summer Solstice in 1986 will occur at 10:04 P.M. Greenwich Time, which translates to 3:04 P.M. Pacific Daylight Time on June 21st. The Moon is full on the 22nd. It is not often that a full Moon falls on the longest day of the year. It must mean something. Time and arrangements for Celebration at the Orinda Grove will be announced.

No postmark

A Druid Missal-Any Lughnasadh 1986 Volume 10 Number 5

Lughnasadh Essay: Tales of Lugh

By Emmon Bodfish

Lughnasadh, festival of the funeral games of Lugh the Sun God, or, given by Lugh in honor of his father the Sun, depending on your tradition. It is the beginning of the Celtic harvest season, and is often called Festival of the First Fruits. Lugh, from the same root word as light and luminous, is one of the younger generations of gods in the Celtic pantheon. Like other Indo-European solar deities, his growth was rapid,, being the size of a 10 year old when he was 5, and gaining full manly size and skill by age 10 or 12. He is the multi-competent god, not specializing in one function, but capable in all. Even as a child he was expert at any craft or skill from his first attempt at it. As a boy of 8, according to Welsh legend, while his goddess-mother was measuring his foot for a shoe, he picked up a bow and arrow and shot a wren in the leg. This, the story goes on to explain, was the favorite demonstration shot of Celtdom's best crack archers. His mother was delighted, and Lugh went on to become a parent's dream come true. He was good at everything, polite, chivalrous, and an example of filial devotion.

Later as a young man, when he applied for admittance to the company of the elder gods, he is quizzed by the gatekeeper as to what he can offer. "I am an excellent smith," he says. "We have Goibhne the smith," said the gatekeeper. "We have no need of that." And this continues to be the reply as he lists each one of his skills. The gods already have one of their number who is an expert in that domain. Finally, frustrated, the boy shouts, "But do you have anyone who can do them all?" The gatekeeper reflects that, no, they do not. And so Lugh is admitted.

Lugh is the patron of craftsmen, apprentices, and artists. In another tradition, he is also associated with money and the accumulation of wealth. This is his only functionalistic connection with a harvest festival. The Funeral Games of Lugh, whose title for this high day may also refer to the fact that by now the Sun is past his Zenith, and is declining again toward the South.

In the R.D.N.A. traditions, anyone who has a garden, grows anything, etc., should save their first picked produce of the summer season, and bring it or a portion of it to the Service, to be offered up in the altar fire, with hopes of prosperity in the years to come.

News of the Groves

At the Orinda Grove Site, edible puffballs have sprouted next to the altar, (left side, of course.) Of all the ground covers we planted, the Dichrondra did the best. The Gopher Bane plants that we so carefully tended up from mail-order seedlings turned out to be annuals. They set seed and died. The nursery didn't tell us this. Were we bilked? It's true they were one-shot, but there are no gopher tunnels around there this year, either. Perhaps for Lughnasadh we should gather in the seeds and thresh them and replant more Gopher Bain next year.

As the Lughnasadh sacrifice in the R.D.N.A. tradition offers up the first fruits of the harvest, anyone who has a garden, a farm or a flowerbox, might pick and bring an offering.

Some animal got hold of the sack of sacrificial meal and dragged it off and consumed it. I found the tattered and toothmarked bag. She/he will have to pay this back when she/he gets to the Other world.

Haying at Orinda Grove Site

New Publications

"Mermade" magickal arts catalogue and pamphlet was recently sent to us here at the "Missal-Any." While not exclusively Celtic, it has some interesting art work and products not carried elsewhere. As often before, every time you think you've seen it all in the Pagan community, something new comes along. Now, Pagan Paper Dolls.

"Well," as Eileen says, "why not?"

This may not be new to some of you, I don't know, since I have been out of the paper doll using circles for a long time, i.e. ever since I gave up teasing my younger sister and her friends, when some of them grew larger and huskier than I, and this pastime became too dangerous.

You can get a copy by writing to: P.O. Box 106, Long Beach, CA 90803

The Heathen on the Heath: Garden Wars

Okay, enough already! This is war. Sweat runs down too fast to blink away from my eyeballs, and my hands are too filthy to mop it away. How can so many slugs exist in the *world*, let alone in my garden? And where did that eighth duck go, and just what is it that got past my eight-foot fence, stacked tires and assorted whirligigs and wind chimes to eradicate half my potato plants? Hey, gang, there's a limit! Isn't there? At Beltaine you came to party. Now the sun is past the zenith, and you're still raiding the pantry. I've tried asking you to go home. No dice. And the dog has some inexplicable wound on his paw—boars? Bobcats?

This is war. Somehow mine ancient enemy, the wild gooseberry, has started some fifth-column activity amid the tomatoes, and sent spies among my mealybug-ridden brassicae. No use griping to Mother: She and her Consort are making hay while the sun shines, and hardly interested in the squabbles of the children.

Whoever first characterized life in Nature as peaceful had a somewhat warped sense of humor.

The very plants do battle; this winter my pruning-saw must break up a slow-motion barroom brawl between an oak, a madrone, and a whitethorn, all of whom can survive quite nicely if they will simply settle for their own spaces and leave each other alone. Fat chance! All living things demand to not only live, but win, preferably at the expense of any and all possible competitors. That herd of wild pigs must not only have the next ridge, but also *my* ridge, to find true happiness.

And what members of any one species think of each other cannot be printed and sent through the U.S. mail.

Where does that leave your everlovin' Heathen? Confused, mostly. While I have no compunctions about claiming the fruits of my own labor, and whatever else I can pry loose (I'm not even a vegetarian) there are certain human-engendered refinements on the art of war that I will not use. Mom may not care whether my tomatoes or her gooseberries grow in the garden, but that's not sufficient reason to dump assorted petrochemicals in Her water-table--or feed to my down hill neighbors, if it comes to that. I'll go after rodents with cats, traps, and a .22, but I have no desire to bring down my allies the redtails with the "friendly fire" of B-gon or DeCon. Can this be said to make a difference, in view of how the rest of my species chooses to nuke their nuisances? And ought I to be messing around in here at all? This garden is an invasion in itself, exotic and pampered organisms installed in the devastation of turf that I chose to call French Intensive Double-Digging. That's not what was here to begin with.

Thing is, an attitude of nobles oblige requires a certain amount of backup. Kindness is for what we control, and as I gaze in utter dismay on the ruin of my efforts, and the impossibility of reverting to humanity's original mode of participation (hunting and gathering) without overstressing an already depleted wild economy, I realize that my control over this environment is minimal. And wasn't that what I wanted?

Admittedly the fight is rigged. Pit me, with a rifle, against a boar with tusks and I'll bet on me every time. I ought to know; I rigged it myself…I, and forebears who shared my motives, long ago. Like the boar, we also want it all. Unlike the boar, we may someday be unfortunate enough to get it all, thereby destroying it. Will we someday live on chemicals, or mutated yeast, because we have won all our wars and there are no other surviving species?

The squirming, biting, struggling child takes endless comfort in the unarguable restraint of Mother's arms. But as the child ceases to be a baby, a little caution creeps into its protest, unaware at first: we don't want to *hurt* Mommy, after all. And hopefully, by the time we are big and strong enough to do Her real damage, we will have thoroughly absorbed the lesson that She has feelings, too.

Except that people-en-masse are always a little dumber than people one at a time.

Where are you in the world? Where are your battles, what have you won…and at what cost? Come, swap war-stories with me, for even if you are busily making chemicals out of other chemicals, or laying concrete over ground, we are all the same in this. Nobody gave us the right to be who we are; we have made ourselves. Nobody owed us a place in the world; we have taken it. This is *our* nature, as surely a part of us as greenness is of grass, to be channeled but never truly changed.

Just remember that perhaps it is not worth postponing, indefinitely at finite cost to the rest of the world, one's own last battle. For *sus scrofa*, *homo sapiens*, or any living creature, anywhere, there is but one ending. Let the sun blaze on into the night, drink deep, and gird yourself with honor. It is a good day, at least, not to know what's going to happen. And no matter how many sandbags we make of our environment, to pile around our laughable foxholes in the scheme of things, it's out there, waiting for us, somewhere: the fight we can't win.

Nobody's getting out of here alive.

Calendar

Lughnasadh Celebration will be held on August 6th, at sundown, at the Orinda Grove Site. Astronomical Lughnasadha being on August 7, 1986, we will follow the Ancient Druid tradition of the night preceding the day.

The Decline of Druidism: A Time-Line

Post Oak Proto-Grove

Gaul

43 B.C. to A.D. 14	Augustus forbids Roman citizens to participate in Druidic rites.
A.D. 14 to 37	Tiberius persecutes the Druids of Gaul
A.D. 41 to 54	Claudius has the Druids "very thoroughly suppressed"

Britain

A.D.61	Suetonius Paulinus massacres Druids on the Isle of Anglesey (Mon) off the coast of Wales.

Ireland

A.D. 590	Synod of Drumceat restricts activities of the Druids in Ireland.
A.D. 637	Druids abolished following the battle of Moyrath

Medieval Period

The class of the *filidh* take over many of the traditions of the Druids along with the Brehons, storytellers and *ollamhs* in Ireland and Gaelic Scotland.

Elizabethan to Cromwell Periods

Bardic schools are broken up by the English in Ireland and eventually in Scotland with the destruction of Irish aristocratic society.

Following the Cromwellian and Glorious Revolutionary Periods

Celts and Druids are re-discovered in England and Wales during the beginning of the enlightenment period and into the "Age of Reason" through the reading of classical literature. In the 18th century, some neo-Druidic (mesopagan) groups appear.

Romantic Period

Edward Williams "Iolo Morganwg" founds a neo-Druidic dogma from the study of Bardic relics from which he forges a Bardic philosophy under the influence of the Enlightenment, Romantic movements and "natural religion."

There soon follows a revival of interest in Welsh antiquities which has a beneficial influence on Celtic scholarship and Celtic nationalism.

Twentieth Century

Rise of more Druidic orders based on Morganwg and 18th century "Druidic" lodges. Anthropology in its infancy is still under the influence of amateur archaeologists and amateur romantic social scientists which gives rise to unscrupulous scholarship such as Gerald Gardner's Witchcraft theories, Margaret Murray's theories and finally to Robert Graves' *The White Goddess*. Following the works of Murray, Gardner, Graves etc. there appears many "wicca" groups and covens which claim to be practicing the "old religion" of ancient Europe.

Serious scholarship begins to investigate the ancient religions of Europe and the importance of the Indo-European culture and ideology is discovered by Georges Dumezil and many linguists, anthropologists, and religious historians.

Latter Half of the Twentieth Century

Following the publication of works by the serious scholars in Indo-European philology, history and archaeology, much of the lost knowledge of the Druids and Celtic peoples is restored and neo-pagan groups begin to incorporate the data. Many other neo-pagans are distraught by the truth of the old religion and decide that their traditions based on the erroneous works of Gardner, Graves, Murray is preferential in their own modern tastes. Neo-Druids based on the Morganwgic material is clung to since it appeals to their own tastes.

Therefore what has come from the Druids and survived into the myths, legends and sagas of the Irish, evidence from archaeology of Gaul, the iconography, bas-reliefs, classical testimony, Celtic philology, Welsh and Scottish tales, the folklore, the epic-type literature and with Indo-European comparative studies, much of what the Druids *probably* taught has been restored or reconstructed.

The question remains then, does anyone who wants to learn what the Druids

probably taught wish to use that information for a basis of their religion or religious thought? If not, then I would ask such a person why would they want to identify with the Druids or why should they call themselves "Druids" or neo-Druids or any sort? What is it to be a neo-Druid? Would it not be self-contradictory to call oneself a Druid or neo-Druid and not be interested or make any use of the scholarship or information concerning what the ancient Druids taught? How can anyone be called a Hindu who never read any Vedic literature or disagreed with revealed knowledge of the Hindus? How can anyone be called Jewish who did not profess the religion contained in the Torah or any Jewish scriptures? How can anyone be called or call himself a Tao-ist yet reject the Tao Te Ching taught by Lao-Tzu? The neo-Druid who is not interested in Celtic mythology or historical Celtic religion as probably taught by the ancient Druids has little right to be called by such an epithet as Druid or neo-Druid? If one is more in agreement with Wicca or Christianity or is more interested in Shamanism than with Celtic religion, one is not a Druid, but rather a "Wiccan" or Christian, or disciple of Shamanism.

At least the followers of Iolo Morganwg are within a Celtic tradition, albeit not an ancient one.

—Thomas M. Cross

2003 Editor's Note: The final part of this letter began the Cross Affair debate, shown in the Apocrypha that would last almost a year.

Postmarked Jul 28, 1986

A Druid Missal-Any Fall Equinox 1986 Volume 10 Number 6

Fall Equinox Essay:

More on St. Michael and His Pagan Associations

By Emmon Bodfish

Fall Equinox is associated with the gathering of root crops in Scotland and England, and perhaps, before the potato, in Ireland as well. Many of the old customs are preserved in the Highlands, enacted now in the name of "Michaelmas" festivals. Michael was the Christian personality most often substituted for Lugh, or, in other contexts, for Llyr, by the Old Celtic Church. The flaming sword and warrior aspect of the Archangel may have suggested a similarity to Lugh-of-the-Long-Arm with his magical spear. It also carries on the Celtic God's protective image and his function as defender of the people, but most particularly it is the quality of "shining-ness" that links the two.

Alexander Carmichael, collecting oral folklore in the 1800s, notes that in the Highlands, St. Michael is spoken of as "an brian Michael." That is "The Demi-god Michael." Christian saints, such as Columba or Andrew, are called Santo, Saint, from the Latin. Archangel Gabriel is "aingeal" a Gàidhlig word deriving from the Latin, or "Naomh," Gàidhlig for holy, sacred. No one else is "brian," demi-god. The Highlanders' Michael is pictured riding a winged horse, and is the patron of sailors and ships. There is not basis in the Biblical angel's character for this; it is probably a co-option from Llyr, God of the Western Ocean and Master of Horses. The same characteristics, and the combination of associations with ships and with a fiery steed, are attributed to Manannan McLlyr, in Cornwall and Brittany.

The ceremony of the carrots, described by Carmichael, in connection with Fall Equinox and Llyr/Lugh's Time, is something that could be adapted to the present R.D.N.A. celebration. It follows.

From the Carmina Gadelica

On the 29th of September, a festival in honour of St. Michael is held throughout the Western Coasts and Isles. This is much the most imposing pageant and much the most popular of the Celtic year. Many causes conduce to this—causes which move the minds and the hearts of the people to their utmost tension. To the young the Day is a day of promise, to the old a day of fulfillment, to the aged a day of retrospect. It is a day when pagan cult and Christian doctrine meet and mingle like the lights and shadows on their own Highland hills.

The Eve of St. Michael is the eve of bringing in the carrots, of baking the 'struan,' of killing the lamb, of stealing the horses. The Day of St. Michael is the Day of the early mass, the day of the sacrificial lamb, the day of the oblation 'struan,' the day of the distribution of the lamb, the day of the distribution of the 'struan,' the day of the pilgrimage to the burial-ground of their fathers, the day of the burial-ground service, the day of the burial-ground circuiting, the day of giving and receiving the carrots with their wishes and acknowledgements, and the day of the 'oda'—the athletics of men and the racing of horses. And the Night of Michael is the night of the dance and the song, of the merry-making of the love-making, and of the love-gifts.

Some days before the festival of St. Michael the women and girls go to the fields and plains of the townland to procure carrots. The afternoon of the Sunday immediately proceeding St. Michael's Day is especially devoted to this purpose, and on this account is known as 'Domhnach Curran'—Carrot Sunday. When the soil is soft and friable, the carrots can be pulled out of the ground without digging. When, however, the soil is hard, a space is dug to give the hand access to the root. This space is made in the form of an equal-sided triangle, technically called 'torcan,' diminutive of "torc," a cleft. The instrument used is a small mattock of three prongs, called 'tri-meurach,' three-fingered, 'sliopag,' 'sliobhag.' The three sided 'torcan' is meant to typify the three sided shield, and the three-fingered 'sliopag,' the trident of St. Michael, and possibly each to symbolize the Trinity. The many brightly-clad figures swing to and for, in and out, like the figures in a kaleidoscope, are singularly pretty and picturesque. Each woman intones a rune to her own tune and time irrespective of those around her. The following fragment was intoned to me in a soft, subdued voice by a woman who had gathered carrots eighty years previously:—

'Torcan, torrach, torrach, torrach,
Sonas curran corr orm,
Michael mil a bhi dha m'chonuil,
Bride gheal dha m'chonradh

Piseach linn gach piseach,
Piseach dha mo bhroinn,
Piseach linn gach piseach,
Piseach dha mo chloinn.'

Cleft fruitful, fruitful, fruitful,
Joy of carrots surpassing upon me,
Michael the brave endowing me,
Bride the fair be aiding me.

Progeny pre-eminent over every progeny,
Progeny on my womb,
Progeny pre-eminent over every progeny,
Progeny on my progeny.

Should a woman find a forked carrot, she breaks out into a more exultant strain that brings her neighbours round to see and to admire her luck.

'Fhorca shona, shona, shona,
Fhorca churran mor orm,
Conuil curran corr orm
Sonas curran mor dhomh.'

Fork joyful, joyful, joyful,
Fork of great carrot to me,
Endowment of carrot surpassing upon me,
Joy of great carrot to me.

There is much rivalry among the women who shall have most and best carrots. They carry the carrots in a bag slung from the waist, called 'crisolachan,' little girdle, from 'crios,' a girdle. When the 'earrasaid' was worn, the carrots were carried in its ample folds. The women wash the carrots and tie them up in small bunches, each of which contains a 'glac,' handful. The bunches are tied with three-ply thread, generally scarlet, and put in pits near the house and covered with sand till required.

A Letter to the Editor:

I beg to remind Thomas Cross (Post Oak Proto-Grove, Lughnasadh edition) that scholarship is but one path to the Goddess. Perhaps our true roots' obscurity is an advantage, allowing us to do more seat-of-the-pants flying than is permitted by a religion of more cohesive background and authority. The occasional romantic sloppiness of Gardner, Graves, et al, does not negate their premise (that the Old Religion honored Nature in both male and female principles). Nor should it denigrate the poesy of their praise. In their day, both were revolutionary.

It may be that the ancients—of Northern Europe and of other places—knew a good many things that we do not. Trying to discover these truths seems a noble enterprise, but I am not about to limit myself to one cultural group, when that culture is no longer there to be immersed in. You and I may be different *types* of Neopagan Druid, but since Cathbad isn't around to object, "Druid" seems as good a name as any, for either of us.

Les Craig-Harger
Myers Flat, CA.

Pictish

Post Oak Proto-Grove

The Picts seem to have spoken a pre-Indo-European language at one time, before the P-Celtic speakers conquered most of them in southern Scotland, and pushed the rest into its north-eastern extremity. Eventually the Picts were "Godhelicized" by Irish invaders who later colonized Scotland, and the Pictish dialects died out entirely. Our only evidence for this pre-Indo-European Pictish comes from a few inscriptions, carved in Irish ogam characters, after the Irish had settled in Scotland. Such evidence is so scanty that little can be made of this inscriptional evidence. Some contend that Pictish, (the non-Indo-European dialect,) is not related to any other language; others have tired to compare it with some other languages, without success. Some have compared it to Basque, (a pre-Indo-European or non-Indo-European Iberian language) as Sir John Rhys did, but this was unsuccessful. While many proper names of Pictish kings turn out to be Celtic, either P-Celtic or Q-Celtic, some of these names cannot be determined to be either, and seem to be non-Celtic, and even non-Indo-European.

From the Lunnasting inscription:

Ettocuhetts ahehhttannn hccuueuu nehhtons

From the Brandsbutt stone:

irataddoarens

St. Ninians:

besmeqqnanannovvez

Keiss bay:

netetri

Pictish Names which seem Non-Celtic and Non-Indo-Eur.:

Bliesblituth
Canatulachama
Usconbuts

Notice the extreme repetition of consonant clusters in the Lunnasting, Brandsbutt, and St. Ninian inscription which suggest a language which is phonemically very consonantal like that of the Causcassic languages, however the consonant groups are repetitions of the same letters or phonemes such as *tt*, *hh*, *cc*, *vv*, or *uu*, and *nnn*. Notice also that there are all single vowels of the Roman alphabet represented a, e, i, o, u, but not many dipthongs *euu* and *oa* and possibly *ie* in Bliesblituth—these diphthongs may form separate syllables and therefore might not be diphthongs. Notice the prominent s next to other consonants *–ts*, *–ns* in the endings of words such as *Ettocuhetts*, *irataddoarens*, *nehhtons* and *Usconbuts* and appears in the middle of Bliesblituth. This reminds me of the –s ending formed in Etruscan genitives of certain words such as *clan* "son" *clans* "of the son" and may also remind me of English and Anglo-Saxon genitives formed by adding –s or –es. This makes one wonder as to whether Pictish has affinities with a non-Indo-European language like Etruscan or with Germanic languages. If *nehhtons* is interpreted as a form of the Celtic Nechtain then we may have a genitive case of Nechtan in *Nehhtons*.

It may also be a resemblance to Basque in that many Basque words end with –tz (cf. Pictish –ts) such as *bortz* "five," however Basque words tend to have a vowel following –tz e.g. –tza, –tze or –tzi; Basque has more open vowels and ultimate vowels, i.e. not flanked by consonants as much as Pictish. Finno-Ugric languages like Finnish and Lappish have many doubled consonants and consonant clusters like Pictish, but then, these languages are rich in vowel endings on words like Basque. Many Hs appear in Pictish inscriptions which suggests that it did not lack the aspirate H sound and would compare itself again to Germanic languages which in Grimm's law originated with Proto-I.E. initial K-sound. In Welsh, the H sound occurs initially on words from a rather late development from an initial S-sound (e.g. Samon = Haf, Sabrina = Hafren, etc.) The H sound occurs in Irish as a prefixed sound to separate words with an initial vowel and as a late development from mutated forms of consonants at the initial position of words. The internal or medial H found in Pictish seems to be anomalous to Celtic, Germanic or Indo-European phonemics as in *ahehhtann* and *ettocuhetts*.

Lastly, we must conclude that Pictish will continue to elude us for a while until further archaeology can turn up more inscriptions and more helpful inscriptions. We would need to find some written documents in Pictish with some glosses in some known language such as Old Irish or Latin and we would finally be able to finally decipher Pictish and find out definitely its affinities or lack of affinity with other languages. Pictish is more mysterious than Etruscan in that we have found many Etruscan inscriptions in comparison.

—Thomas M. Cross

The Heathen on the Heath:

First Fruits and Hunting

First fruits, late as usual—arguments with the neighbors—yellow grass, grey dust, and scorching heat. Balanced now are we? In the hardware store where I earn some of my living, a motley assortment of law-abiding types are buying their hunting licenses, with tags permitting them to ritually assassinate one or two adult male deer this season. Certain local subsistence hunters regard both the season and its regulations as ridiculous. But I count the hopeful license buyers during one workday, and then count the deer on my way home. The number of deer becomes less impressive, beside the number of hunters.

And the subsistence hunters—does concern for the continued stability of the deer population arise automatically from need? I doubt it. And the numbers of the needy are also increasing…

But the hunt goes on. From my own experience, in pursuit of one wild pig (which died to provide food for two families with hungry children, one of them mine) it seems strange to call it a sport. The hunt is a relationship, ending with the death of the other party. The pig wanted to live, and my cohort and I wanted to eat it. These goals were mutually exclusive; no amount of mystical hocus-pocus could ever convince me that the pig was a willing participant.

There was one moment, crouched on the hillside, with the immensely vital, prehistoric-looking beast looking directly at me, when I felt that the hunt was at an end; I had met the wild. My challenge had been offered and met. The pig was ready to attack or flee, but did neither. Here was life; its ending was anti-climactic.

But sorrow was also the feeling of a split second. Our children were fed. And something within me was changed.

The Hunter roams the greenwood, dealing death at will. Yet He guards His beasts, wears their semblance, instills in them His lust and power. And the Maiden-as-Huntress, in any pantheon, is the friend of Her creatures, mourning their destruction at the hands of conquering humanity.

So it is with nature. Animals do not hate their prey. Cats pounce with glee, eyes wide and ears forward. The dog pursues the rabbit with his tail high; he is playing. They are part of the world, and filled with the sense of being alive.

Is this the longing in the eyes of those who approach my counter, saying "Liscence and two tags, please," and paying the $41 that the government demands for their participation in the rite? The people whose actual means of making a living is many times removed from Earth's vitality will finally face the wild and have something personal to say to it. Balanced now are we?

With that same longing, I came to the Druids, and with that same longing, I came eventually to my untamed hill, to be one grubby, sweaty part of a world with more than people in it. Cars race over a concrete bridge; uncaring, the river flows beneath. Balanced now are we?

As day conquered night, and light conquers day, and our guaranteed annual year continues on its appointed course, I tell you; there is no need for faith.

Balanced now are we?

We may not be able to feel it, but it's there.

News of the Groves

Orinda Grove Site

Lughnasadha, as a festival of the first fruits, went off well. I was surprised at the number of feral plants that have "appeared" for members and born us fruit. One brought as offering the first tomato from a vine that "appeared on its own" in a pot of marigolds. I brought the first apple from the appletree that has been growing outside of my kitchen window for fifteen years, sprung from a Macintosh apple core. Small carrots still occasionally come up in the Grove Site, by the Monterey Pine, on the site of Joan's (First Arch Druid of Live Oak) compost pile. And our apple sapling beside the Lughnasadha caber, sprouted from a spit seed from the '83 feast, is growing rapidly.

The moral is clear:
Fling your garbage
Out the window.
(Sung to Irish Jig Tune)

Live in the middle
Of a kitchen midden.

It's an old Celtic
Tradition.

Skara brae…
Take me home..
Skara brae…

If you can't stand this nonsense, send in your own article and crowd it out.

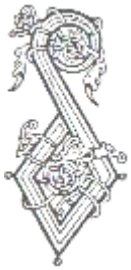
Calendar

Fall Equinox will occur at 11:53 P.M. Pacific Daylight Time, or 07 hours 53 minutes Greenwich on September 23, 1986. Services at the Orinda Grove Site to be arranged: (415) 254-1387.

A Druid Missal-Any Samhain 1986 Volume 10 Number 7

Samhain Essay: The Other World

By Emmon Bodfish



amhain, Celtic New Years, the Day-between the Worlds…The Druidic year stars on Samhain, in the fall of the year, just as the Druidic day begins with the going down of the Sun. Samhain marks the end of the harvest which began at Lughnasadh. All fruit not gathered in by Samhain Eve must be left in the fields to feed the birds, the wild animals, and the Sidhi. The Pukas, mischievous spirits, will come for it, to steal its nourishing essence and leave the husk, or to despoil it, if it is not to their liking. Their mythic descendents swarm out in the form of myriad "Trick-or-Treaters."

Like New Years' celebration all over the world, Samhain festivities fall into two sequential phases: one that signifies the return to Chaos, and involves the disposal of old goods, potlatches, parties, suspension of taboos, return of the dead, and the mixing of the two Worlds, in Past and Future; and a second whose theme is the rebirth of Order and Cosmos, of creating anew, of preparations, and of the rites of Samhain Morning. (As we are not an official, organized Grove, here in Orinda, but a gathering of Solitary Third Order Druids, First Orders, and friends, the election that would ordinarily be held for officers in an R.D.N.A. Grove will not need to be held. Isn't it a relief!?)

The beliefs involving the return of the dead on Samhain Night are based on the Pan-European traditions of Samhain as the time when the Other World is closest to this one, and when, therefore, doors, passages, may open between the two. In Celtic myths these gateways were usually located at the Sidhi Mounds, the megalithic tombs of the Celts' Pre-Indo-European predecessors. But ways were also said to exist through sacred lakes and springs, and through caves in the craigs. These doorways admitted passage in both directions. On special days, mortal heroes or heroines crossed to the Other World on quests, adventures or to obtain prophetic knowledge. Throughout Eur-Asia, the dead, who exist beyond time, are believed to know the future as well as everything that has happened in the past. Dead ancestors could help a favored descendent with this knowledge, or send health and prosperity, but first the petitioner must be in perfect estate, having broken no Geas, nor taboo, nor have incurred the censor of any Deity or Sidhi. In addition, the seeker must be in the good graces of the ancestor whose help is needed. Health or disease were from the ancestors in the Celtic Cosmos; to live well one had to be on good terms with the dead and with one's past. The past becomes present again on Samhain, between the years. All oblations and funeral rites due the ancestors must have been offered, and all debts of this World paid, if the traveler is to step lightly between the Worlds. If all was not in perfect order, the quester might become trapped or the ancestors could send disease and misfortune when the passage opened. Or the wronged dead could pass into this World, and walk in the time between the years, seeking revenge.

The concept of going to the Other World for help from disease or to secure prophetic knowledge is found in several different European Samhain traditions, as well as among the Celts, is probably cognate with, descended from the Other World journeys of the Paleolithic Eurasian shamans. Similar, but more complex and complete traditions and epics have been preserved among the Siberian shamanic religions. There, going to the Other World(s) and returning to one's mortal body are usually the privilege of the clergy, i.e. initiate shamans. But in Europe, on Samhain, the Other World is very close, in Celtic verse, just a mist apart. On this night, there is no treacherous journey through intermediate kingdoms or being-states. Tonight a mortal, albeit a hero or a heroine, could make the leap.

R.D.N.A members hold all night vigils, beginning with a bonfire at dusk when the first of the two Samhain services is held. All opened bottles of spirits must be finished by dawn, and there will be, then, no more fermented spirits in the Grove chalice until Beltaine. Plates of food and offerings should be set out, just beyond the firelight, for the souls of friends who have died in the past year. They may be invited to join the festivities.

At dawn the second Samhain service is held. All remaining liquor is sacrificed in the fire, and the Third Order Druids exchange their red ribbons and ornaments for the white of the Season of Sleep. There is pure water in the Chalice. The new year has begun.

In preparation, all debts should be paid, or arrangements for them brought into harmony. All rites due to the dead, and the past, should have been performed, and all obligations to the living brought current. Then enter the Time-Between-the-Worlds "without burden, without geas, without malice." Pleasant journeys!

The Song of the Druid

Post Oak Proto-Grove

A poem by Thomas M. Cross based on the "Hymn of Amhairghin" translated into the Gallo-Brittonic language commonly called Gaulish or Brythonic. Copyright 1986 Thomas M. Cross

Cantos Druidos

Esmi uentos uerna more
Esmi dubroi en more
Esmi taruos cation sectam
Esmi brennos uxellos-do monedos
Esmi gurensos sauli
Esmi tecisamos blotion
Esmi nertos aggos segos torci
Esmi esox en poullon
Esmi lindon en magos
Esmi cladibi catous
Esmi druids, io uragati tane en pennos.
Poi uedati menses lugati?
Poi lugiati oinocos uerna monedon?

Poi canati magesos sauli, a ne me?

Translation:

I am the wind on the sea
I am the waters in the sea
I am the bull of seven battles
I am the crow above the mountain
I am the warmth of the sun
I am the fairest of flowers
I am the power and courage of the boar
I am the salmon in the pool
I am the lake in the plain
I am the sword of battle
I am the druid, who works fire in the head
Who speaks of the months of the moon?
Who lights the union on the mountain?
Who sings of the plain of the sun, if not I?

Notes:

Gaulish was a declensional language like Greek and Latin and contained nominative, accusative, genitive, dative and sometimes a vocative form differing from the nominative for its nouns. It also contained masculine, feminine and neuter genders; plural and dual forms. The verbs of Gaulish are conjugated similarly to Greek and Latin. It was a P-Celtic language spoken in ancient Britain (known as Brythonic) and in most of France, Belgium, parts of Iberia, Austria, Switzerland and part of southern Germany and was carried to Galatia and Bohemia by colonies of Gauls before the Christian era. The main dialects of Gaul were Belgic, Lugdunensian, and Narbonensian. Belgic dialects became Brythonic* which in time evolved into Welsh, Cornish and Breton –the three surviving P-Celtic languages. Cornish died out in the late 1700s, but was kept alive academically until its revival in this century. In ancient times the Celtic languages did not mutate the initial consonant as they do today, but during the period they began to drop many declensional endings, the process of lenition and other phonetic eccentricities caused mutation.

*in Britain

Re: A Druid Missal-Any
(Emmon Bodfish)
NO. 86-3869

Proof of Publication

Fictious Business Name Statement

State of California
County of Contra Costa, ss

Shirley A. Coats of said County, does herby certify:

That she is and was during all the time herein mentioned, a citizen of the United States, over the age of 21 years and neither a part to nor in any way interested int he matter or action herin set forth, and is and was competent to be a witness in said matter or action:

That she is now and at all times herein mentioned was the principal clerk of THE CONTRA COSTA NEWS REGISTER, publishers of THE CONTA COSTA NEWS REGISTER, which is and was at all times herein mentioned a newspaper of general circulation printed and published semi-weekly in the City of Walnut Creek, County of Contra Costa, State of California, and as such principal clerk ahs now and at all of said times had charge of all legal notices and advertisements in said newspaper; that said CONTRA COSTA NEWS REGISTER is now and was at all times herein mentioned newspaper of general circulation as that term is defined by Section 6000 of the Government Code, and as provided by said Section, is and at all of said time was published for the dissemination of local and telegraphic news and intelligence of a general character, having a bona fide subscription list of paying subscribers, and is not and at none of said times was devoted to the interests or published for the entertainment or instruction of a particular class, profession, trade, calling, race or denomination, or for any number of such classes, professions, trades, callings, races or denominations; that at all times said newspaper has been established, printed and published at regular intervals in said County and State, for more than one year preceding the date of the first publication of the notice herein mentioned; that said notice was set in type not smaller than nonpareil, and was preceded with words printed in black face type not smaller than nonpareil, describing and expressing in general terms the purport and character of the notice intended to be given.

THAT THE

Fictitious Business Name Statement

of which the annexed is a printed copy, was published in said newspaper and not in any supplement thereof on the following dates, to-wit:

August 14, 22, 29; September 5, 1986

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated at Walnut Creek, California

this 5th day of September 1986

Shirley A. Coats
Signature.

Filed Sep 5 1986
J.R. Olsson, County Clerk
CONTRA COSTA COUNTRY
by C. Bonavera deputy
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
Contra Costa County No. 86-3869

The following person is doing business as: A Druid Missal-Any at 616 Miner Rd., Orinda, CA 94563.
EMMON BODFISH, 616 Miner Rd., Orinda, CA 94563.

This business commenced on November 10, 1985.
This business is conducted by an Individual.
/S/ EMMON BODFISH
Statement filed with the County Clerk of Contra Costa County on Aug. 2, 1986.
Pub: Aug. 15, 22, 29; Sept. 5, 1986.

The Heathen on the Heath: Dying

It is the dawning of our year, and the time to mourn our dead.

I mourn two men of gentle courage, Earl McKeever and George Russ. I cannot keen, or recite their deeds in epic verse; I was not so trained, and neither am I that big a liar. I wept when weeping was fresh and unavoidable. Now is the time of remembrance, and I remember each of them.

Both lived with disability; both died at the hands of murderers. What this means to the year that has ended, or the year that is beginning, or any years before or after, is beyond me—for which I am glad.

As always, I turn to the garden, to the land.

Plants are dying now, sinking to the ground, beginning to decay before the green of life has entirely left them. New growth fastens on the decay and is made strong thereby. This is the way of compost, and of those of us who bear the stigma: Survivor. Ruthlessly the living soul battens on memory. The mourner weeps proudly, wearing the names of the dead as decorations of battle.

And the earth does not judge us, nor does she care. Salmon run, and spawn, and die, and all their history is carried out to sea, along with the hope of their race. Leaves fall, and become rich loam. Myth degenerates into bedtime stories—

—and children dream.

And what shall we do, when sweet-scented loves and bright, clean angers of youth begin to disintegrate into the nameless depths of a mind no longer young?

Some of us become cynical, embracing disproof when proof proves impossible. Some of us set places for the dead at our tables, and turn down their beds, and berate the living world for slighting them; too, we cling to dead dreams as if loud repetition of their content would bring back our innocence, and vindicate its misconceptions as higher truth. To some of us, the passage of time is a pattern, immune to any attempt of ours to contribute. To others, time has not passed at all.

"When I die," one friend told me, "the world ends."

But I choose to inhabit a world that will outlive me, if only for company, and the desire to belong. I may not leave a mark on the face of history; there may be no place for me in any structured scheme of things.

But there's always room on the compost heap.

Chapter of Not Having to Move Furniture in the Other World

Whoso knows this spell will have all his weekends free in Amenta.

May I not be forced to move furniture in the other world. That which is large, awkward, and extremely heavy, with sharp corners –may I not be forced to lift it.

The sofa—"I break your back" is its name; it does not fit through any door. I shall not carry the sofa; I shall not lift one end of the sofa.

The chest of drawers—"I fall on your foot" is its name. I shall not move the chest of drawers; I shall not carry even one drawer.

The pile of book boxes—it towers unto the ceiling; "pyramid of Khufu" is its name. I shall not carry one box; I shall not carry one book.

The waterbed—of myriad pieces is it made; no man knows their number. I shall not carry one piece; I shall not attempt to fit two pieces together.

I shall not move furniture in the other world, and all my weekends will be my own, for millions of years.

—Obscure Chapter of the Egyptian Book of the Dead.

Calendar

Samhain, when the Sun is half-way between Equinox and Solstice, will occur at 09:09 hours Greenwich on November 7th, 1986, or 9 minutes after 2 A.M. Pacific Daylight Time. (For Orinda Grove, add 8 minutes and 16 seconds from Fresno.) By the alternative method of calculation, the Sun will reach 15 degrees Scorpius at 10:06 A.M. P.D.T. on 11/7/86. For update on plans at Orinda Grove, call (415) 254-1387. Sickle and Corn Doll Ceremony follows.

*It has actually been a year, a very happy year, since we ran a-foul of that force that causes more trouble than ever did ghosts or goblins. I am speaking of...politics.

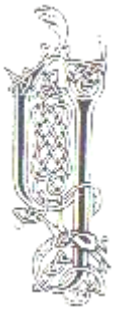
—Mad Sweeney.

Postmarked 31 Oct 1986

A Druid Missal-Any Yule 1986 Volume 10 Number 8

Yule Essay: Mistletoe

By Emmon Bodfish



ule, Winter Solstice is one of the four minor Druid High Days. It is associated with the Holly and the Mistletoe, prosperity and purification. The hanging of Mistletoe over doorways harks back to its protective function, as the All-Heal. Spirits that bring disease will not pass under it. All Mistletoe use and customs are carry overs from Pagan, most notably Druidic traditions.

Though kissing under the Mistletoe can't be traced back further than the 17th century, it is probably much older. It reflects the herb's Paleo-Druidic attributes of protection, fertility, and prosperity.

Pliny the Elder, in his *Natural History*, gives us the best description of a Paleopagan Druid Ceremony, that of cutting the Mistletoe. According to Stuart Piggot, the ceremonial mistletoe must be cut from an oak tree. The time of the ritual was set by the Moon as in Pliny's description.

> "The time of the rite was the sixth day of the new moon, after preparations had been made for a feast and a sacrifice of two white bulls. A Druid in a white robe climbed the tree and cut with a golden sickle the branch of mistletoe, which was caught as it fell on a white cloak. The bulls were then sacrificed and all present ate of them."

The golden sickle is a puzzle, as pure gold will not hold an edge sharp and tough enough to cut through the woody stem of the mistletoe. Gilded, or simply polished bronze, are more likely materials. Though Pliny was allowed to witness the ritual, he probably could not approach the Druid or examine the sickle.

Nor would he have been able to talk to a Gaulish Druid without an interpreter. Their ceremony was recorded in Roman Gaul. Gold may have been a description of color, or a quoting of hearsay. Elsewhere in his book Pliny writes of the ritual necessity of gathering the mistletoe left handed, after fasting, and of the Celts plucking Selago without using an iron knife, barefoot and with the right hand through the left sleeve of a white tunic, but these were private rites, not public ceremonies. There is no mention in them of the presence of a Druid.

Calendar

Winter Solstice is at 7:56 P.M. Pacific Standard Time on December 21st, that is 03:56 hours Greenwich, 1986. If you are near a clock, and remember, shout "Shaul!"

Post-Oak Proto-Grove

Druidism and Truth

An Editorial by Thomas Cross

The word druid itself is rooted in the same Indo-European source as the English word true and truth: names **dru*—the zero-grade form of **deru* "firm, solid, steadfast" which also gave us such words as tree, endure, durable, the Greek *drus*, Sanskrit *druvam* and so forth.

Since Druid means "he who is truthful" or "the firm, solid and steadfast one" (in Gaulish *druis* "druid" in nominative case, *druidos* in the genitive), it is appropriate that we look always for the truth and always utter the truth. In old Irish sagas, the druid or seer who utters a falsehood is cursed and some disaster befalls him and whenever he takes an oath he promises or swears that if he should utter a falsehood knowingly, he may be swallowed up into the earth or some other calamity take him.

In our modern information age that we are now entering, I urge that us modern day druids do our share of preserving truth and guarding against falsehood and dishonesty. I am of course speaking in terms of advertising, everyday speech, on the job, in school, in business, etc. The truth must be able to stand on its own. Truth is not opinion, truth is fact, truth is not values, but truth, though it be impersonal, often hurts when people cannot face it. I find that my greatest pet peeve is misinformation, misleading speculation, propaganda, deception in reporting and teaching. There is much deliberate writing of misinformation in the writings of the occult world. Often the authors are too lazy or too hasty to do the proper research for supporting their opinions or they deliberately falsify their sources and present pseudo-history as history or vice versa. There are so many popular misconceptions held by so many that the truth will be distorted for a long time in the folklore of the modern occultist and neo-pagan in the years to come—although we have the correct information available in most public libraries alongside the misinformation.

Another source of misinformation being disseminated to the general public (outside of the neo-pagan milieu) is the propaganda of the Christian Fundamentalists and Evangelists or "Fundagelicals", who deliberately report falsehoods about the beliefs of others in order to build "straw-men" of their religious and ideological competitors. Often the Fundagelicals report or present their own idiosyncratic or personal religious views as if they were fact—that is, as if they were the objective truth! The Fundagelicals, one might say, confuse fact with values or opinions –a blatant error in logic!

In the field of Celtic scholarship concerning the ancient or paleo-Druids, there is so much nonsense being passed off as fact that it is a time-consuming and tedious task to begin to research the subject. To the beginner and those who have fallen victim to the nonsense, I recommend that you read many of the books coming out in the field of comparative religion and mythology by Georges Dumezil, Jaan Puhvel, Gerald Larson, Bruce Lincoln (to name a few) and consult the works of Mircea Eliade—one of the great 20th century scholars. For those who are concerned about ecology and conservation, I recommend Lovelock's Gaia. For the general

reader I would recommend *The New Apocrypha*—John Sladek, *Psychology's Occult Doubles*—Leahy and Leahy, *The Psychology of Transcendence*—Andrew Neher, the *Dictionary of Misinformation*—Burnam, *More Misinformation*—Burnam, *There are Alligators in our Sewers*—Dickson.

Also I recommend that all neo-pagans develop a skeptical side to how they view these things, to read between the lines, and question things and be curious. It is o.k. to be curious—in fact, it is healthy to be curious about life. Most everyone reading this newsletter, will probably think to him or herself, "Oh I always think for myself, I question things, I read between the lines" and so forth. I ask that you even question *that* and even question what I have written as you read. I *am* not suggesting that we be distrustful or become reductionists or *overly* critical and skeptical. I am suggesting though, that we become less emotional and more inquisitive about learning…that we don't just accept things because they merely feel good or seem to work. Playing around with metaphysics and making experiments with our consciousness is serious business and one can so easily fool oneself into believing things that are not the case which can have serious repercussions for the future. If anyone has read the book *The Day the Universe Changed* by James Burke or seen the series on PBS, you will understand on the worldly level also.

I recommend that you get a copy of a good simple-to-read book on Logic or Reasoning—especially if you have never studied the subject and read it carefully (I recommend *Introduction to Logic* by Copi). Take a course in logic at a local college or school, it will well be worth it for anyone. A fun pastime would be to identify fallacies while reading or watching TV or listening to the radio—(advertising is rife with fallacies and propaganda techniques). Pretty soon you can tear apart the arguments of books simply on grounds of incorrect reasoning or illogic.

I am sure this article will have offended many right-brain, purely emotional mystics, who believe that truth can only be found through some altered state or dream-world; my rebuttal to them is that they are not speaking of this world that we all must live in together. I am talking about the physical world, the here and now, and the rules for living here depends upon people getting along with each other, keeping the environment clean and inhabitable, avoidance of war, avoidance of crime, learning to live with the weather and climatic conditions and avoiding stress, disease, poisons and dishonesty. We all must face that we have to have the mundane necessities in order to survive and we cannot live by spiritual and visionary or magical experiences alone.

—Tom C.

Nonsense:

Or Popular Fallacies in the Neo-Pagan World:

That worshipping a Male deity is a trait of a male dominated society, or, that worshipping a female deity is the trait of a female dominated society.
That a society that used matrilineal descent was "matriarchal."
That all patriarchal societies treated females as inferiors.
That the mother goddesses of Europeans in pagan times are derived from a pre-Indo-European matriarchal or matrilineal people, and/or that they all represent a universal Mother-Earth.
That all celestial deities are Male deities.
That removing sexism from our language will help us to be less sexist. (the Turks and Persians or Iranians have almost genderless or non-sexist languages—yet their cultures are very sexist).
That religious beliefs can be handed down genetically—that certain races have certain types of souls or spirits.

—TC

Halloween and the Druids

This mis-information for school children was published by ESP Inc. Here's what to do. Write to these people at the Berkeley School District, and make known your objections to this spread of misrepresentations. You might quote some of the sources in the past Missal-Anys, or the Druid Book List (available from us.). Be polite, as they in all probability did not known that they perpetuating untruths.

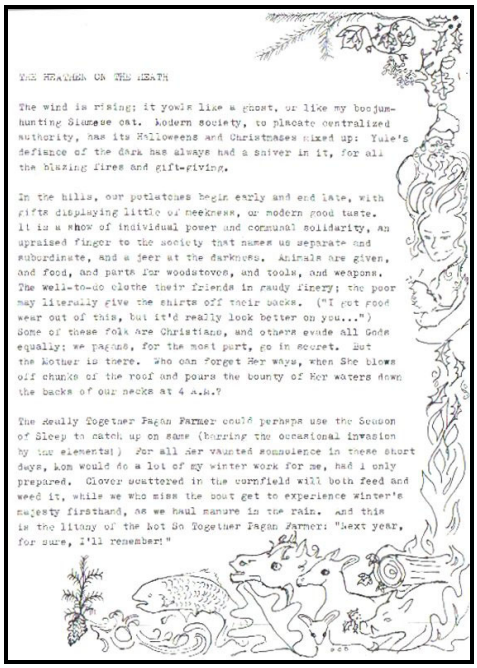
> Have students learn to spell and define the following terms, which appear in the "Student Instructions."
>
> demon Druid elf grotesque Halloween pagan summer's end witch fairy ghost pitchfork spirit
>
> Student Instructions
>
> The name "Halloween" means "hallowed (holy) evening." It is celebrated the day before All Saint's Day. In spite of the fact that Halloween takes its name from a Christian festival, it has never taken on a Christian significance. All of the customs associated with Halloween have pagan origins.
>
> The Druids were an order of pagan priests in ancient Britain and Gaul. They believed that ghosts, witches, fairies, and elves came out to hurt people on Halloween. They also believed black cats were sacred and that they had once been human beings but were changed as a punishment for their bad deeds.
>
> The Druids held a celebration on Halloween called Samhain, meaning summer's end, which marked the beginning of winter and was a time for feasting on food grown in the summer months. Our custom of decorating for Halloween with autumn leaves, pumpkins, and cornstalks came from the autumn festival of the Druids. On the night between October and November, the Druids built huge fires on hills as a protection against the evil to come. The believed evil spirits were waiting to rush in when summer was over. Many Druids stood around these fires and told of their meetings with spirits. They waved burning pieces of straw raised on pitchforks, for they believed this would frighten away demons and witches. In case this did not work, they also wore grotesque and

terrifying costumes. They believed if they dressed horribly and walked around all night, the spirits would think they were demons and do them no harm.

We have kept many Druid customs by using pictures and shapes of ghosts and witches in Halloween decorations and by wearing costumes and masks.

The Druids did NOT believe that ghosts, fairy (firr an Si) came out to hurt people on Samhain. And no Druids of ancient times ever made mention of witches, a pejorative term for members of the Old, also Pagan, Religion. There is no evidence connecting Druidism with any beliefs about black cats; a belief that is probably much more ancient and universal. There is also no evidence that the Celtic beliefs about reincarnation included the return of a person as a cat. Celtic myths and poems that deal with the subject show people's souls returning as people. For a brief summary of some of the Druidic beliefs about Samhain, see the Samhain Missal-Any for 1986. The bonfires on hilltops were beacons to herald the returning Sun, not "protection from evil." The straw and pitchfork story, I cannot find anywhere in Celtic myth, folklore, history or religion. There is no evidence that they ever dressed in "costumes." This is a later invention, possibly harking to memories of myths of Puccas, Celtic nature spirits who gleaned the grain left in the fields after Samhain, Samhain being the end of the harvest. As for line 7, column 2, there is no reference indicating that Druids ever dressed in poor taste nor walked insomniacally around all night. Vigils were held on Samhain. There is no evidence that any Druid ever disguised her/himself as a demon.

"Oh, Well," as Larry said, "It could have been worse. At least they didn't mention human sacrifice."
—E.B.



THE HEATHEN ON THE HEATH

The wind is rising; it yowls like a ghost, or like my boojum-hunting Siamese cat. Modern society, to placate centralized authority, has its Halloweens and Christmases mixed up; Yule's defiance of the dark has always had a shiver in it, for all the blazing fires and gift-giving.

In the hills, our potlatches begin early and end late, with gifts displaying little of meekness, or modern good taste. It is a show of individual power and communal solidarity, an upraised finger to the society that names us separate and subordinate, and a jeer at the darkness. Animals are given, and food, and parts for woodstoves, and tools, and weapons. The well-to-do clothe their friends in gaudy finery; the poor may literally give the shirts off their backs. ("I got good wear out of this, but it'd really look better on you...") Some of these folk are Christians, and others evade all Gods equally; we pagans, for the most part, go in secret. But the Mother is there. Who can forget Her ways, when She blows off chunks of the roof and pours the bounty of Her waters down the backs of our necks at 4 A.M.?

The Really Together Pagan Farmer could perhaps use the Season of Sleep to catch up on same (barring the occasional invasion by the elements!) For all her vaunted somnolence in these short days, Mom would do a lot of my winter work for me, had I only prepared. Clover scattered in the cornfield will both feed and weed it, while we who miss the boat get to experience winter's majesty firsthand, as we haul manure in the rain. And this is the litany of the Not So Together Pagan Farmer: "Next year, for sure, I'll remember!"

The Heathen on the Heath: Seasonal Festivities

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The Really Together Pagan Farmer could perhaps use the Season of Sleep to catch up on same (barring the occasional invasion by the elements!) For all Her vaunted somnolence in these short days, Mom would do a lot of my winter work for me, had I only prepared. Clover scattered in the cornfield will both feed and weed it, while we who miss the boat get to experience winter's majesty firsthand, as we haul manure in the rain. And this is the litany of the Not So Together Pagan Farmer: "Next year, for sure, I'll remember!"

People of the towns and valleys charge about at breakneck speed, readying for their own midwinter festival. They beam in childlike glee at festoons of red and gold and green—anybody recognize those colors? Spend money like water, and then go home and feed their shrewd and skeptical children one version or another of the Santa Clause: there is or there ain't. The Heathen's child didn't wait for the huffing and puffing of grownup authority. "Santa's a spirit," he said. The Heathen's child happens to believe in spirits, being something of an imp himself. Will Santa come to him in visions? Guide him through the forest at night? Bestow amulets, misplace household objects, spook the cat? There have been a disproportionate number of small, impressively-antlered deer around here lately; perhaps I should have a talk with that kid.

Do people have a Yule instinct? With crèches and evergreens, candles in varying arrangements, and assorted bells and books, we all seem to gather in the dark, to give the Wheel of the Year a push out of midwinter's mud and snow. And thus we come to love a season of harsh truths. It is now that sickly animals will die, and terminally-ill people as well. It is now that the weather takes its toll, in sniffles and shivers, in stuck, crashed, or broken vehicles. And darkness settles in our thoughts and our hearts, depression and contention and unexplained tears: we *need* our festival now. The flame of Life's energy burns low, and it is our turn to fan the embers that once blazed so heartily, whether or not we noticed or cared.

So join now, my people, remembering who we are. Let not the traditions of others, whether openly sacred or merely The Way Things Are Done These Days, bind us in unawareness. Rather let us face our hardship and heartbreaks, wearying pasts and intimidating futures, and together make loud, rude noises at them. And so we shall be prepared for the Sun's return, and strengthened for the work that is to follow. Don't worry if it isn't easy, or if the holiday's merriment has a catch in it here and there. We have the freedom to debunk the *real* seasonal fraud, and admit: it *isn't* easy, or carefree, or exactly like being a kid again. Then, having admitted it, light the fire, pour the punch, and make the light welcome when it gets here.

It isn't easy. So why should Mom have to do it all alone?

Postmarked Dec. 15, 1986.

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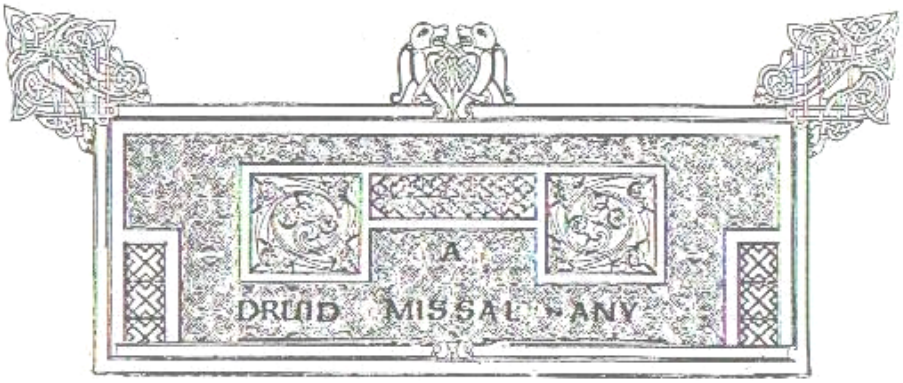
Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION TWO



A Druid Missal-Any
Volume Eleven
1987 c.e.

Drynemetum Press

A Druid Missal-Any

Oimelc 1987
Volume 11 Number 1

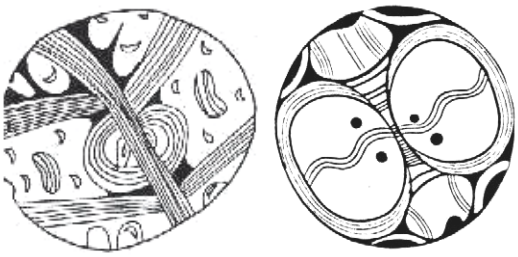
Oimelc Essay: Bride

By Emmon Bodfish

imelc, the festival of Bride, Bridgit, Bredes, the Sun-Maiden, Celtic Goddess of Light, Fire, and the Hearth. She is the patroness of craftsmen, especially those that use fire, smithies and workers in gold. Gold is her color, and she hangs her cloak on the beams of the morning Sun. She is also the patroness of poets, source of Bardic inspiration, which, to the Gaels was a supersensory form of fire descending upon the mind of the poet. The symbol of fire-in-the-water signified her divine inspiration, and her favored poets could see fire burning at the bottom of her sacred wells and springs.

The Festival of Lights, Candlemas, on the Continent, a celebration presided over by "Lucinda," from the Latin "the light bringer," is rooted in old Oimelc festivals. The Light is now returning; the days grow perceptibly longer, thaw begins in the more southerly parts of Europe and in Ireland, and the sheep and kine begin to give birth. In this association, and as Goddess of the Hearth, Bride is also the Goddess of birth. (To co-opt her worship, which they couldn't eradicate, the Christians invented Bridget, who was mid-wife to Mary and Jesus. No such character is mentioned in the Bible.)

In the R.D.N.A. tradition, Oimelc is celebrated when the Sun is mid-way between Solstice and Equinox. There is the milk of a sheep or a goat in the chalice, and thanks are given that the coldest time of the year is past. The Earth Mother begins to stir in Her sleep, and dream of Spring.



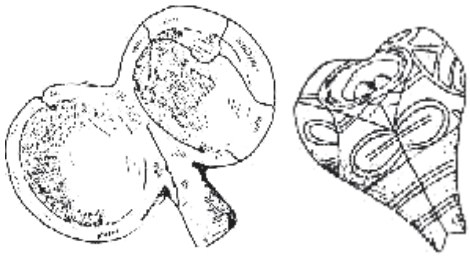
Hatching Blessing

Bu tu fein an deagh nabaidh agus an caraide caomh. Ma 's a h-e agus gun ruig thu null fearann do dhuthchais agus duthaich do bhreith, agus gum feumair thu tilleadh a nall dh'an fhonn-sa rithist, tha mise cur mar bhoid agus mar bhriathar ort, agus mar naoi riaraiche nam bana-sith, thu dhol gu ruig Cladh Mhicheil ann an Ormacleit, an Uibhist, agus thu thoir as a sin thugam-sa deannan beag urach a churar air clar mo chridhe-sa la mo bhais.

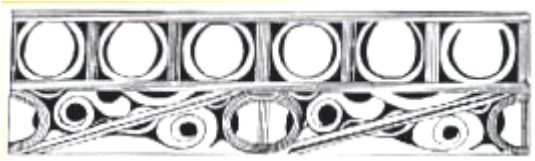
I will rise early on the morning of Monday,
I will sing my rune and rhyme,
I will go sunwise with my cog
To the nest of my hen with sure intent.

I will place my left hand to my breast,
My right hand to my heart,
I will seek the loving wisdom of Him
Abundant in grace, in broods, and in flocks.

I will close my two eyes quickly,
As in blind-man's bluff moving slowly;
I will stretch my left hand over thither
To the nest of my hen on yonder side.



This is a hatching spell peculiar to this egg-time of year, from the Scottish Highlands, circa 1800. In the Gáidhlig introduction by the collector, Alexander Carmichael, there is a quote from the 102 year old lady from whom he collected this and other runes. In it she tells of the customs, purely pagan, of placing a bit of the native soil on the breast of a corpse before burial. This is a custom I have heard from many sources in the Neo-pagan community, and from my Celtic relatives as a child. However, this is the first "academic" reference or precedent I have been able to uncover. It may have been a part of the Ancient Druid funeral rites, or from an even older Pagan stratum. I have heard it called the "releasing soil" now-a-days. It could well be incorporated into N.R.D.N.A. traditions. We would appreciate any feedback anyone out there has on this.



[2005 Editor's note: Emmon had this done at his funeral in 1999.]

Letters to the Editor

I especially have come to enjoy "The Heathen on the Heath" series—it's well written and thoughtful, there is a place for both the scholarly point of view and "the country pagan" point of view. In my opinion, both are important.

I've lived in the country twice in my life, and it's much easier to be a "real" pagan in the country than in the city. In my opinion—the natural cycles of the Earth and the seasons are far easier to follow and to be in tune with in the country—I long for the mountains and woods in my heart—I really don't like living in the city, but for now, that's reality I suppose.

Thom Cross tells me that the Celts really weren't Chthonic oriented—or Mother Earth oriented, but were more sky and astronomically oriented.

Well, the Celts loved Nature from what I read—and I personally believe that some of their Goddesses were very much Earth Mother types (Dana or Danu for one example)—and in a way it doesn't matter what the historic Celts believed in, or how they practiced their faith in the ancient times, but what we believe in and where we are going *now*.

I believe that Mother Earth needs our help, and now perhaps some of the "Balance" lost can be restored—perhaps I'm wrong—but that's one of the major reasons that paganism is

important to me—that I'm of Celtic descent is important too, but it's second to the feelings above.

I believe that modern pagans should become more involved in ecology—cause at least to me that is where the real "power" comes from—from our attunement to Nature, and to the natural cycles of building and decay—life and death.

I'm not trying to negate the role scholarship and study either, for these are very important too—but one can probably learn more about the role of one's life in relation to the whole, and to "the Gods" by a few days in the wilderness, than by weeks spent studying in the library, or in one's study.

I suppose that it comes down to a question of balance in our lives, as well as in nature (which are lives are a part of—no matter if we live in city or country), to balance the studying and scholarship, and the playing and questing in Nature out, one with the other—"the middle path" as the Tibetan Buddhists might say.

—Albion

Pagan Action Alert: November, 1986

Circle Prepares to Go to Court to Fight for Wiccan Rights: We Need Your Help!

Our struggle to obtain a permit to continue operating our Wiccan Church on Circle Sanctuary Land has been going on for more than seven months, and now it is very likely that we will be going to court.

Our right to have our Church's networking offices and other religious activities in our remodeled barn was challenged in April by the county zoning administrator, who threatened to take us to court and fine us for non-compliance to the county zoning code. We then went through a series of intense public zoning meetings in July and August. After running into difficulties in the first two meetings, we got another attorney involved. This second lawyer, who has done work with the ACLU in the past, told us he was interested in serving as lead attorney should we need to go to court. I, along with both of our attorneys, spoke in our Church's behalf at the next meeting in late August. There was much heated debate between us and the government officials about whether or not we were a legitimate Church and whether or not we should get a permit. Finally, we were verbally promised by the local Town Board, the County Zoning Committee, and the County Chairman himself, that we would get a zoning change and permit to continue operating our Church on our Land as we have been doing for the past three years. Based on that promise, we entered into the additional legal steps necessary to obtain that permit, including filing a new application and presenting our request to government officials at more meetings.

However, our new application began running into trouble at the October meeting when the Town Board broke its promise and voted to recommend denying the zoning change to County Board which has the authority to grant the change. Despite this, we persisted in negotiations at a meeting on November 6 and won the Zoning Committee's recommendation for the change by a 3-2 vote. In addition, we even settled on the terms of our zoning permit with both the Town Board and the Zoning Committee. But our zoning change was defeated a week later at the county level by the County Board. Accompanying this letter are recent newspaper articles about that decision.

We now have done everything we can to obtain our permit without a court battle. There is still a chance that the County Board may reverse its decision by voting again, but this has seldom happened in County Board history. I am presently planning strategy with our team of attorneys, which now includes the two who have already been involved in the case, plus another who has had direct experience in dealing with a case of this nature in Wisconsin. While, due to counsel from our attorneys, I can not report exact what legal approaches we will be taking, I can tell you that we are preparing to go to court, even the U.S. Supreme Court if necessary, to fight fro our right to operate our Wiccan Church on this Land.

As far as I know, Circle Sanctuary is the first Wiccan Church in the nation to be faced with such a zoning challenge. Whether we win or lose, what happens to us will affect efforts of other Wiccan Churches to obtain Church zoning in their own local areas as well as Pagan Rights in general. Therefore, it is vitally important for us to win—not only so that we can keep providing our networking services to Pagans throughout the nation and around the world, but even more importantly, so that Pagan religious freedoms are upheld.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

* Send Money: we desperately need funds to win this battle. Any donation, large or small, is appreciated and is tax deductible. Send to: Circle Sanctuary Defense Fund, Box 219, Mr. Horeb, WI 53572 USA.
* Send Energy: Remember us in your meditations and rituals. Send us healing, strength, protection, prosperity, and success.
* Tell Others: ask other Pagans to send us money and energy, too.

Thanks for all Support you send us!
Blessed Be, Selena Fox, High Priestess, Circle Sanctuary

Calendar

Astronomical Oimelc, when the Sun is half way between Solstice and Equinox, will occur this year at 46 minutes after midnight February 4, 1987, Pacific Standard Time.

A Druid Missal-Any Spring Equinox 1987 Volume 11 Number 2

Spring Equinox Essay: Horse Deities

By Emmon Bodfish

pring Equinox, balance, awakening, a time of planting, a time in keeping with the theme of Irish Macha, Patroness of farmers, the Horse–goddess, who could run with the speed of a horse or become one. On the Continent She was called Epona. She was Rhiannon in Wales. She is a shape-shifting Goddess who can appear in human form, or in the form of a mare, or of a woman mounted on horseback. She is responsible not only for the fertility of herds, but of the ground as well. She is described in Celtic myths as the mother of kings or as capable of bestowing sovereignty on the rightful king. She is represented by the white mare whom the Kings of Ireland espouse at their coronations. Prof. J. Duran speculates that Macha and the mare represent the agrarian classes, the "Tuath," the third of the three castes in ancient Celtic society. (The other two were the warriors and the Druids. "Caste" is a poor word since these categories were not rigid, and some movement between them was possible, but it is used in Indo-European studies for lack of a better term.)

Macha may have been the Patroness of the Tuath, as Bride was the Patroness of Bards, and as the Morgani were associated with the warrior caste. Llyr, or Mamnon McLlyr, it is said, also has ancient equine themes running through His worship. There is a theory that He was a Horse-deity back on the steppes of the Indo-European homeland, and that only later, when the Celtic peoples reached the Atlantic coast and the Island, did He become a Sea-god. He is always portrayed in a chariot, or riding in a boat, or in a combination of both, as in His sea-shell boat drawn by porpoises. This considered, He may be more a charioteer or vehicular god than a Horse-deity.* Epona rides astride. Cernnunos, the other shape-shifting, fertility-bestowing deity, never rides. He sits on the ground among the wild beasts, and is spoken of as running with the deer. These latter two figures hark back to the earliest Eur-Asian levels, very likely to the Paleolithic. Similar figures may have been common to the Ice Age peoples of Eastern Europe and West Asia from whom the Proto-Indo-Europeans sprang. In that early time, in the art of the Magdelinian hunters, a similar theme can be seen.

The Paleolithic dancer wearing a horse-head mask is a woman. The men wear disguises of horned animals, bear, or mammoths. The connection between Macha, the female shape-shifter-shaman-magician, and the horse may be very old, paralleling the male enchanter of horned animals, from the time when the Horned Man and the Horse Woman danced in Paleolithic caves.

*Could He be persuaded to protect us nowadays in our cars?

Fig. 24. L. Capitan, etc. Peintures et gravures murales des caverns paleolithiques. Les Combarelles aux Eyzies, 1924."

Calendar

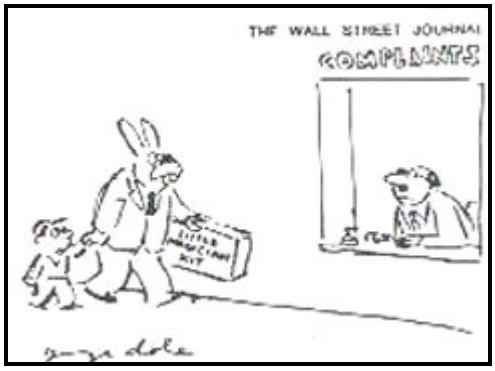
Spring Equinox will occur at 7:53 P.M. on March 20, 1987, Pacific Time. The Sun crosses the Celestial Equator and Spring begins in the vulgar calendar.

Astronomical Beltaine, when the Sun is midway between Equinox and Solstice, will occur at 2:08 P.M. Pacific Standard Time on May 5, 1987.

****

God upstairs,
Downstairs you.
Now just which
Invented who?
Dharma Shave

****



"Little Magician's Kit" on the box.

The Debate Issue

(The Editor fiercely refuses to take sides)

A Rebuttal to Albion and the Irrationalists and the Anti-Intellectual and Anti-Celtic "Druids" (or Those who call themselves "Druids" 'cause they like the name)

I would like to point out that I never told him that the Celts were "astronomically" oriented nor did I tell him that the ancient

Celts had no chthonic beliefs (at all). Mr. Albion has made a "straw man" of me and he uses an *ad hominem* argument by implying that I am anti-ecological or anti-nature because I happen to believe in BOTH the celestial and terrestrial.

Albion is apparently stricken with urban romanticism and somehow believes that knowing "too much" about the ancient Celts will somehow keep you from appreciating nature (which he equates with mother-earth). The Celtic peoples of pagan times were very much concerned with *natural phenomena*. This is clearly not the same thing as MOTHER Nature, whom we have seen on margarine commercials (and elves do not bake cookies in trees either).

The ancient Celts have been romanticized for three centuries or more, and the Druids have been characterized as anything from White-Robed Hermits to Astronomers and medicine men. I believe that we modern Druids are above this kind of la-de-da romanticism that contributes nothing to our intellectual and spiritual growth, but merely serves to obscure the truth behind pseudo-science and whimsical folklore and fairy-tales. If paganism or NEO-paganism has to hide behind pseudo-science and irrational obscurantism, then it is not better off than the rubbish promulgated by mad-men…the delusions, the fads and falsehood that will certainly lead our civilization to ignorance and ruin.

Mr. Albion has attacked the years of research I have put into reconstructing and organizing the vast amount of comparative studies on the Druids and what they might have actually taught. Because Albion has learned much from me* and because he seems to be disappointed in what the paleo-Druids were about, he has decided to attack the messenger for the message. However, he would not have been so quick to attack had he understood the significance of what the paleo-Druid's message had to teach, but unfortunately he finds his *own* reality a safe place than to try to comprehend the world of the ancient Celt. Of course it is not easy to understand the world-view of the ancient pagans—but nothing worth knowing is always going to be EASY.

Furthermore, Albion hasn't his facts straight…Danu (Anglicised as Dana) was not an EARTH MOTHER type so far as scholars can deduce, for the name Danu comes from an Indo-European root meaning "to flow" or "to drip" (see page 175 of Julius Pokorny's Dictionary)…going by the fact that Danu is cognate with the name of the Danube river (*Danu- in Celtic renamed *Danuuius* by the Romans) it seems that *She* is (or was) originally a *River* Goddess. This is not uncommon since rivers all over Britain and Ireland (also Gaul) are named after Celtic goddesses. Danu's role in Celtic myths is very shadowy and ill-definable—all we can surmise is that she is the Mother-of-the-Gods since the name Tuatha De Danann (= tribes-of-Goddess-Danu) and Welsh Mabinogi characters with divine names are frequently "ap Don" (= "son of Don" or "Son of Danu"). Also there are river names all over Britain resembling this Don/Danu: Donwy river, Don river (in Scotland) and the two Dee rivers (the Dee = Celtic *Deua* in Gaulish (or Brythonic) "goddess" the feminine equivalent of *Deuos* "god.") Therefore, we have no real evidence for believing that Danu was an earth goddess.

Out of respect for the intelligence of Missal-Any readers I believe I am obligated to research and substantiate my assertions before I allow my ideas to be published…in Albion's case what he has written speaks for itself…as what many others have written in neo-pagan journals. If you were led to think that Danu was an earth goddess and it was never

*well maybe not!

presented to you any other way, you would not know any better. Unfortunately, Albion didn't know or consider using a better and more plausible example of an earth goddess for the ancient Celts (which I might add is quite obvious if one knows anything about Celtic mythology) that is *Tailltiu* who gave her name to Teltown—the site of an ancient shrine for ancient Irish pagans. The name Tailltiu is etymologically cognate with the Latin *Tellus* and these names go back to an Indo-European root meaning "ground, floor" **Tel-* and this gave the Gauls their word for earth *talamu* (genitive *talamun*) in Irish this word is *talamh*. The ancient Romans had *Terra mater* 'mother earth" or quite literally "mother land." The Greeks had Gaia which James Lovelock used as the title of a well-known book…and well the Celts loved nature so much but…if you're like Albion: just go out to the country and make up you own religion…why give a rat's arse about all that boog larning' anyway!!?!!

—Thomas Cross

The Modern Irrationalist or Fundamentalist Paganism

(A Satire by Thomas Cross)

I'm a kentree pagan ya see s'I doan need no ejjy-kayshunz
I doan give a dayam 'bout whut them ancient Droods tawt
I bleeve to be a true nay-o pagan ya need misty-cull oh-cayshunz
I doan wanna hair no tock 'bout them seltic or kelchick stories
I thank we should jest make it all up from our own thought.

I bleev that iffen ye larn too mech 'bout them myth-all-jeez
Ye aint goan get haaa oan naychur lag hawkin' in the wudds
Them payble who sets cheer in they lah-berries an' steddies
Hey man I doan wanna larn nuthin' I jest wont vibrations.

Whudda hair ya sayin' is thet yew bleev in yer reality
Well Ah got ma own reality ma min' is closed to what them skollies have to say
I thank all ye gotta do is go outside and teeka hawk through the wudds
I shore do miss them mountains I hate the setty laugh
I wants to get backy nachur lag the good ole daze

Although I'm not a blood-selt I fail it een ma hort
I gnaw een ma hort awm a drood dude, man
So doan go conner-dickin' ma re-Al-it-tee
So daon go tailin' me 'bout them oldtimey Droodz
It herts ma broyn to hair that steff 'cuz I
Done made up moan red-LEGION annitz my re-Al-it-tee

I'm kenchee pagan ya see s'I doan bleev in HIS-story
I doan keer whut them SIGH-en-tists bleev or soy
I doan keer fer TAKE-gnaw-lujjy or air EEK-con-gnome-ee
Een ma hort an' spert I gnaw it all jest from what ah fail

Doan gimme them high-falutin' kolleej wurds
All I wont is them vibrations, man
I bleev in getting' back to nature with nuthin' but
a shovel and SIGH-kick energy
I doan need no Sigh-enz to hep out the earth
Jest my reality.

The Irrational Pagan

(A Satire on Those Turned Off by Paleo-Druidism and Other Anti-Intellectuals Also.)

Bein' a pagan's nothin' more than goin' outside
Going out in the country and talkin' 'bout ecology

Yer only a true pagan when you go out in the woods
And getchy self in tune with nature or Mother Earth
We don't need Science and Tech-nology
to make the world a better place for what it's worth.
Though I don't care what they had to say
I call myself a Druid anyway
I also say I'm a Celtic–man
Though I aint interested in their culture.
It don't matter what's in history's plan
I jest know what I fail in ma hort with nature
So don't go telling' me 'bout them ancient folks
You can only learn about them in books.
It hurts my eyes and brain to read 'bout ancient stuff.
So I bleeve what I fail in my hort is enough.
What I hair yo sayin' man is that you bleeve in yer reality
Well I got my own reality and it's a safer place for me
In my own world where I b'long I get high on nature
I pine for the trees and mountains where there's no one
To contradict me or disagree (with humongous college words)
There, I can say whatever I bleeve is pagan and Druidic
I can say that I am a Celt or Tibetan Buddhist and
No one can ask me questions about the Celtic or Buddhist bleefs.
Yep, I'm safe in my own reality there in the country
I am all alone to be a real backwoods mystic
Aint it a shame though that I have to live in the big city
Where there's a bunch o' other people talkin' and learnin'
I feel so damn powerless against them high rise buildings
I can only sound out magical energy to restore nature's balance.
But hail there goes them damn scholars a-studyin' things again
Tellin' me it aint enough to be sendin' out vibrations
They tell me I got to read and learn things, damn that education!

—Thomas M. Cross 1987

A Reply to Thomas Cross' Rebuttal

By Albion

First off, I'd like to say that it saddens me deeply that I have obviously lost a good friend.

Thomas, my letter was *not* an attack upon you personally, though you obviously took it that way. I am truly sorry to have offended a friend over something like having different opinions (and it seems that we are indeed worlds apart in our views).

If I could offer some opinions here, (notice I said "opinions," that's exactly what I mean) I am going to ignore all the pointed jabs that Thom Cross makes at me personally, but I do want to address several of the issues that he raises.

I never meant to imply that Thom was "Anti-ecological" or "anti-nature," I can't see where he finds this from after re-reading the original letter (which by the by, was a personal letter to Emmon and was only published after he asked me if I minded if he did so) of mine.

On the contrary, I knew that Thom loves nature long before I wrote this letter.

Where in my letter in question, do I attack "the years of research" that you have done, there *is* a need for scholarship as I pointed out, but reading and studying will never take one all the way to a spiritual experience, it can help, but something more is needed.

It would be nice to know much more about what the Ancient Celts believed in and did, but even if I did know, it's doubtful that I would live or practice ritual in the same manner as they did. Paganism, like all living religion and true forms of spirituality, is an evolving and changing thing. I find it highly doubtful that we could go back to the world of the Ancient Celts, as time at this level is linear, we can only go forward (or around, as the case may be). The Celts, as all ancient cultures, did some rather ghastly and Barbaric things—that I personally would never want to be part of.

I stand corrected about Danu, however, as the meaning of words changed, Dana, or Danu, came to be connected with the land in general in Ireland, this holds true today, as well in yesteryear.

I think Thomas Cross is missing the point here, where paganism survived (at least in the British Isles) it was not usually the scholarly class who helped it do so, but the simple country people who had passed their beliefs on orally for hundreds of years, these people were not researchers, nor did their knowledge come from books—but it was passed down from generation to generation (by word of mouth).

I don't advocate "making up" one's own religion. I do advocate getting to know your own Higher Self, I do advocate getting out of the cities if it's possible, which in many cases it isn't—in these cases some sort of "quest" into Nature and your own relationship to Nature at all levels is in order, I feel.

I feel that we as a species are at a turning point that could go either way—certainly, being an active ecologist is part of being pagan (at least for me). After living in California for two years, the condition of much of the air and water in the heavier populated places is simply appalling to me. So much for my "urban romanticism".

I am proud to be of Celtic descent, I am interested in my ancestry and always have been.

I am not a "Druid"—since the real Ancient Druids all died off centuries ago (or thousands of years ago). What really qualifies one to be a "Druid?" There are many Druid-revivalist groups both here and in Europe, are any of them "real" Druids?

I have received teachings from an hereditary pagan from England, from two "Wicca" groups of modern origins, and done much research into Native-American Spirituality and Religion, as well as much reading into the Celts and everything Celtic, including their religion. I'm probably also affected by "Quaker" thought (or "The Society of Friends") which was the last branch of Christianity that I was associated with before I adopted paganism.

I am not especially fond of titles, but "pagan" serves quite nicely at this time.

I do not think of myself as a scholar, but as a reasonably simple person who wishes to see Life thrive and our planet survive these turbulent times.

If I have offended the readers of "A Druid Missal-Any", including Thomas Cross, I apologize. But, we are *all* entitled to our own opinions.

P.S. As to the mocking of my Southern accent: as Mark Twain once said, "You got the words, but you ain't got the tune."

The Heathen on the Heath: The Balanced Epistle

Balance? Not to doubt You, oh my Mother, but I don't see it. As the hill greens around me, and the ducks begin to lay, work looms large; winter's anomie begins to thaw, and my own identity pokes its nose out of hiding—a belated groundhog in search of its shadow. Where is meaning, or mission, or will? There is a place for me in these hills, and right easily could I stagnate in it.

Seasons come to us, reminding us that we are neither omnipotent nor alone. But seasons have as many names as there are folk to speak them. I give rose-cuttings to a Wiccan neighbor

"for Brighid," because if I said Oimelc she'd say "huh?" And local farmers have other names for it: lambing-time, and also a pain in the ass, with bummers to nurse and marauders to repel—coyote, cougar, dog-pack. And then one must ask, are the berry-bushes cut yet? Does the nursery have seed-potatoes? The time to remember the Equinox, and planting, is in February, before it is too late.

Much is said in these pages of tradition, and of scholarship, and of knowledge that must not be lost. Others, I among them, point in turn to the knowledge that sits directly in front of our noses, just waiting to be ignored. Neither the traditional scholar, nor I, can do anything as a purist but yell at the other; in the vibrating tension between us is most of reality.

So let me say now that I do not set out to abandon the mythic awareness of our forefolk, but only to live a life with leaves as well as roots. If we are not merely the inventors of myth, but co-participants with the gods, then we must recognize that myth springs both from humanity and from the soil itself. Gladly will I learn what my people once knew of their homeland. But if you ask *me* (or even if you don't; you can always read something else!) I will tell you what I learn from my own homeland, for that may well be the only thing on Earth that I know and you don't.

Myth likes the grubby liberty of the hills, and hill folk join gladly in the game, taking to themselves small notorieties as straight-men to Nature's comedies, or soldiers in mythic battles. There is a Trickster here, called The Buck You'd Better Not Shoot At: he's robbed a thousand gardens with impunity, and whosoever shoulders a gun against him is injured in the attempt. I've seen him myself; he's magnificent. There are good-lucks and bad-lucks, many of them founded in common sense: don't hunt between the houses could hardly be called baseless superstition, nor could the rough interpretations of Karma or hubris that passes for common knowledge. "Something will hear you!" we warn our braggarts, and they turn pale and shut up. And "God" help the one who drives heedlessly by a neighbor's stalled or swamped vehicle, for the local gods will not.

Where do these youthful, local traditions and the elder traditions of Celtic Druidism meet? I spent as many days as anyone else with neither any recognizable knowledge, nor any use for it; then a neighbor came to me. "You're the Druid around here," he said; "which trees should I be careful not to cut?"

I could have said that Druids don't deal with things like that, except that what little I known of tradition states that our forebears were priests and cognoscenti, *meant* to be consulted by their neighbors. I could have said that Neopagan Druidism was a religion—but since when does that make it irrelevant? So "the Druid around here" spent a long day in a neighbor's woodlot, trying to feel the life-forces of trees, inspecting roots for firmness and tops for fullness, and trying to remember snatches of an ecology course she took in 1970. Seat of the pants flying, indeed—but it might have been less confusing if I'd spent more time studying!

And there, perhaps, we have balance, if not stability. Just so is the spring a time of balance, though when it snows one day and cooks my greenhouse the next, it may be too pretty to appreciate it. The year is not an orderly, well-mannered procession; it goes by fits and starts. And learning, if it is to take us anywhere we haven't been before, must see-saw between study and appreciation, with each testing the other.

And when I am confused, I shall admit confusion—not by intoning that there are Things I Was Not Meant To Know, but by realizing that I can't see (or portray) the whole picture at once. I speak to you only as one person speaking, saying one thing at a time. We are not the people of the One God, the One Truth, or the One Way; we are like the forces of Nature that we worship—a howling confabulation of extremes.

This is our balance (as when we chant to a March windstorm, "Balanced now are we!" and burst into giggles.) Let no voice among us be silenced; this is what we are, and how we grow.

News of the Groves

Odd incident on Oimelc Service held by a solitary Third, alone, for his own and the Goddess' benefit. It had rained. The fire pit of the altar was soaked. The wood burned dully and smoldered, since, despite all precautions, it was probably damp. I wondered if it would ignite the sacrifice. This was the Oimelc offering, a fresh bud sprig of pine, with some blooming Baccharis and green hedge from around the Grove. It sat on the coals and smoked a little. I waited, I kept my patience; I resisted the urge to blow on the fire. "Let happen what's going to happen." After a while, a small, blue flame started from one edge of the offering, died down and then revived, yellow-orange. The sacrifice began to burn from the base and the middle of the sprigs, and upward toward their buds. In its own burning, it rekindled the fire, which then burned easily, all the way down to coals. It is the only instance I have seen of the sacrifice igniting the fire.

From the manner in which the sacrifice burned, the Celts read the augury. This, then, is the divination from the coming season.

Circle Sanctuary

An unsigned letter attacking Circle and networking efforts by other nearby Wiccan groups has been sent out across the country. This letter bears the name Moonrose. Moonrose, a Wiccan center in the Denver area, did not write the letter and the allegations it contains are false. Moonrose and Circle have begun an investigation into who is responsible for this hate letter. If you have received this letter, send postmark date and place information along with any ideas of who originated it to Circle, Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572 as soon as possible. Thank you.

Please publish in your next issue and following issues through June:

International Pagan Spirit Gathering

June 16-21: 1987

Weeklong camping festival with rituals, workshops, sweatlodge, music, dancing, bonfires, feasting, children's programs, and other activities. Includes all night Midsummer's Eve ceremony and celebration. Sponsored by Circle in secluded natural campground. For more information, write: PSG '87, Circle, Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572 USA or call: (608) 924-2216.

Postmarked March 18, 1987

A Druid Missal-Any Beltane 1987 Volume 11 Number 3

Beltane Essay: Maypole and Sacrifice

By Emmon Bodfish

eltaine, May Day, was always the most widely and universally celebrated of the Druidic and old Pagan High Days. It was also the least Christianized and distorted, even in the heyday of the church's powers. In Ireland, Wales, and parts of Europe the Maypole was a freshly cut young larch with a crown of green living branches at its top. The use of a tree of the larch family, decorated with streamers suspended down from its top, and other features of the Maypole dance are thought to hark back to the early Proto-indo-European deer and horse sacrifices, and the rituals around the sacrificial stake.

Rituals of this kind were preserved down to the present century in Siberia among the peoples of the northwestern quarter. These tribes once occupied a more southerly location, but have been driven steadily northward since medieval times. In the Neolithic, they are thought to have occupied the forest belt north of the Proto-Indo-European homeland around the Caspian and Aral Seas. Pursuing an essentially Mesolithic life of hunting and pastoralism, most of these forest peoples rejected Christianity and maintained their traditional religions down to modern times, and have, therefore, as Professor James Duran puts it, "been able to give us a window on the past."

They have likewise preserved their traditions in the face of the Russian State, which tolerates them as a folk curiosity. First studied and recorded in this century, they have been a rich source of information about Meso and Neolithic European cultures. The Russian anthropologist Popinov, in his extensive studies of these peoples, gives transcriptions of many of the traditional ceremonies that they have preserved.

In the Siberian pony or reindeer sacrifices, the animal was tied to a freshly cut young larch or birch which had been decorated with ribbons, streamers, and colored threads. In this offering, the Buryat shaman was assisted by the unmarried young people of the tribe, nine youths and nine maidens, who danced around the larch and the slain animal. The shaman, in trance, conducted the animal's soul up the path marked by the streamers to the top of the tree, and then upward to the waiting deity who received the sacrifice. (Ribbons were also used to mark out "soul paths" in healing and initiation rituals.)

In the East Indian Rig Veda, one of the oldest written Indo-European documents, there is a description of the stake to which the horse sacrifice is tethered. The pole is "brightly beribboned" with "colored banners streaming down from it."

The tradition of the Maypole may also draw from a second and even from a third source in the Eastern Mediterranean rites of spring, and in those of the Pre-Indo-European peoples of Europe. In the former, ribbon decorate effigies were carried on tall poles, and each pole-bearer was followed by a line of young girls dancing and singing. These rites were formalized and preserved in the Roman rites of Priapus and in the older, Pre-Indo-European strata behind the festivals of Dionysus in Greece. It seems that similar rituals were enacted in European villages as part or in addition to the dance of the Maypole.

The bare Maypole, in contrast to the May Larch Tree, seems to be a blending of these different lines. From the Mediterranean and the Pre-Indo-European sides it take the bare form and Priapus' crown of flowers, and, in some areas, preserved his phallic effigy. From the ancient Indo-European line come the pole's central position within the circle of dancers, the long streamers, and the steps of the dance that weave them around the pole's trunk.

The R.D.N.A. has always held a Maypole dance. It is the Big Party of the year, and was once dubbed by the media "Pagan Christmas." We will be having a Maypole dance and celebration at the Orinda Grovesite, with food to follow. Isaac's group will also be holding a May Celebration on the weekend.

News of the Groves

Equinox at Orinda Grovesite saw the enactment of the traditional R.D.N.A. service for that holiday, followed by a sumptuous organic feast. The long tabled plans for leveling the Maypole Meadow were revived and the first two postholes begun. "What is this Reform Druidic obsession with digging pits in the ground?" at Orinda Site where I served my preceptorship, I learned Celtic history, meditation and posthole digging, or most precisely digging all kinds of holes and filling them back up again. For those of you who missed "the Army experience" you can get it now through the "church". The "daub and wattle" retaining walls which we made for a couple steps, as an experiment in this kind of construction, have held up well through the winter.

Druidaxta

News from Post-Oak Proto-Grove

(Plus the rantings and preachings of T. Cross, including the debate and dialectic between purist Reconstructionist Druidism and Heterodox Eclecticism.)

Onomatophobia, onomaphobia—these are the fear of words and names. To be afraid of labeling oneself and other thing about oneself is to be afraid to categorize things. To be afraid to refer to something in writing and any other communication is certainly a sign of a lack of self-confidence and certainly a lack of knowing whom one's self is. Honesty in the use of words, or phrases, that is, true communication is a very real and vital form of Life. It is, along with actions or deeds, a divine and human phenomenon that is important to the expression of love, of freedom, of joy, of thought and emotion. As the ancient Druids of Gaul were to say, according to Diogenes Laertius, "the gods must be worshipped, and no evil done, and manly behaviour maintained." And from the Colloquy of the Ancients (Acallamh na Senorach) Caelte told Patrick, that "truth in our hearts, strength in our arms, and fulfillment in our tongues" were the virtues of the pagan Irish.

The elder Druids, which we reconstructionists (such as me), accept as our forbearers both *spiritually* as well as in name, were deeply concerned with the speaking of truth—intellectual and spiritual honesty. The misuse of words is illusion—*maya* as the Indian Druids, the Brahmins, would call it. Perhaps, the whole universe, the cosmos, the order, as we have named it and as we have perceived it in our mythologies and metaphysics are all pure *maya*, and in order to transcend it we must get to know the

illusion well enough to become disillusioned and then we can achieve the experience of deeply knowing and transcending the walls of illusion.

One cannot jump immediately from naiveté to transcendence without experiencing profound disillusionment first. But one cannot change the world without changing the self and to change the self is a process of transcendence, a process of disillusionment, of accepting the truth about one's self and the cosmic order. There is an eternal order to the external and internal world that does not evolve in any perceivable and contrived manner, the perceived evolution is within. The unperceived evolution is only identifiable by its results and not the process.

The gods of the ancient Celts are like those of the Vedic Indians, Germanic peoples, etc. because they evolved from their Indo-European forbearers as did the others, but the essential characteristics did not change by direct manipulation of the myth by people on the folk level. The Druids always strove to keep the tradition intact, to keep it pure from foreign influence, to be caretakers of tradition so that it would not be diluted by those who would use it for *maya* (for deception) to contrive to force it to fit some purely modern needs in their time.

The Druids were indeed the cognoscenti of the ancient Celts and not peasants practicing some deviant religion. Even the keepers of the traditions today, the *seanchaithe* of the Gaeltacht, tell the tales as they were told to them, that is they try to keep the tales word for word as they were transmitted, they avoid distorting and perverting the tradition…except, perhaps, a fabulist here and there, who may parody himself. Even those pagan cults which survived Christianity, were usually isolated and kept their traditions pure from some "new fangled" eclectic influence. By the way, any pagan cult of the British isles which professes to be a PAGAN religion or cult, is more than likely not to be any older than this century, but you can see the oldest pagan cults (which have more links with the ancient pagan religion) carrying on through the Catholic Church tradition (e.g. the holy wells, saints cults, relic cults, and other hagiographical sites and traditions). But it must be admitted that these are on a folk-level, not the products of the Celtic society of the time of the Druids. Many scholars have gone out into the field to work with the conservators of ancient tradition. The Irish Folklore Commission has collected hundreds of recordings of Irish seanchathe (shanachies—the traditional story-tellers) and published many transcriptions of the stories.

Similarly, the Parsis of India are continuers of Zoroastrian religion who fled Iran for Gujarat, India. There are still the Irani (Zoroastrians) of Iran, who knows what has happened to them since Fundamentalist Islam has risen there? But the *mobads* (the magi or priests) of the Parsis has *not* succumbed to eclecticism from the coming of western religious tourists who went there to study under them and over them in the twentieth century. Although, some theosophists did succeed in converting some Parsis to Theosophy, they were very few and the mobads or magi did not allow it to pervert their tradition which was handed down to them from the ancient magi (*mobad* is the direct linguistic descendent of *magu-(patis)* that ancient Persian word for a magus , our word is Latinized and Hellenized.)

Modern Parsis, though, do not inherit their religion through their genes; its not a biological concept flowing through blood into the cerebrum. There are many people of Irish descent who could claim legitimate descent from the Druids, filidhe, and bards of Old Erin. If one has the last name of McNeilly, one may be a direct paternal descendent of an *fili* ("poet" "seer") since McNeilly derives from *Mac an Fhileadh* "son of the fili", and other names of Ireland and Scotland's Highlands derive from occupational surnames of the Druids and Bardic class. Some clans and septs were hereditary bards. I, myself, could be descended from ancient Irish satirists since my forefathers were the MacCrossans of Donegal, but my Welsh and Scottish forbearers do not have occupational surnames but other kinds of surnames and they are not paternal or patrilineal. However, these do not mean we are what our names mean any more than people named Smith are really smiths, or people named Baker are really bakers or people named Taylor are really tailors. Religion is not inherited genetically anymore than one's profession and is even less determined by birth than a name.

The Indo-Europeans were a culture which developed from a segmentary lineage (according to the French structural anthropologists) and this culture pattern is found among the Nuer of Africa who developed a very similar religion to that of the ancient Indo-Europeans. Their version of the sky-father (Taranus of the Gauls) is called *Kwoth* and his descendents the gods of heaven are their version of the Irish *Tuatha de Danann*, but they also have equivalents of the *Fomoire* and numerous other similiarities. The genealogy of the gods and goddesses are a segmentary lineage, their culture is pastoral, and there are numerous other similarities. The metaphysics of the Druids of antiquity is more sophisticated than some "savage barbarianism" we get from hard primitivists and we need not romanticize them by elevating them to "Noble Savage" either.

Sure, they have much in common with shamans, but the term shaman has been so abused by popular usage that the term has become almost meaningless. Certainly they were not that much like classic shamans (as defined by Eliade, in his famous book) and only appear so on the most superficial level.

Do we want to popularize our Revivalist Druidism to some low proletariat level? Do we want to succumb to creating some mass-media hype version of Druidism for display of middle-class or proletariat deviance because we may feel alienated? Why not be rational and live according to what is honest and truthful? We do not need self-deception. We do not need to build walls by making our individual opinions become our dogmas. The strength of our commitment to our "revived" and Reformed Druidism is productive efforts to create and not stagnate into some disunified sects professing some fundamentalist, fragmented dogmas and retreating into non-communication, non-participation, into a darkness of "belly-aching", complaining, and alienation. We are not together as independent individuals battling for a monopoly of truth, but we are all part of the sacred cosmos. We cannot defy nature; it is impossible, for we destroy ourselves in the attempt. We must grow and allow evolution to take place by realizing that we are not mere individuals but a part of the whole cosmos and that we are interdependent upon each other and everything of all that is.

Every one of us, are a microcosm of the total order, we possess within ourselves the very physical elements of everything in the cosmos. The cosmos, is interdependent also, it and all depends upon us both as individuals and as a collective unity. The gods are within us. We need not look always for external manifestations of the divine and sacred. Every act and deed we perform either conforms to nature, is creative and productive or destructive and violent, both go together and both are part of the process of evolution. Our act of eating, learning, and working (to create) are sacrifices…they are acts of sacrifice and when things become used, when things are given or spent, they are sacrificed also. The food you eat has been sacrificed to you, and the water you drink has been sacrificed to you as an individual. The love you give to someone else is a sacrifice to that person. And as Queen Medb made clear (she being a euhermerized goddess of Connacht) as her expectation of a husband (a king married to her—the tutelary goddess), "without jealousy, without fear, without stinginess." Thus the embodiment of Royal Celtic and Druidic virtues in this triad includes generosity. The king sacrifices cattle to feed his people and himself and he is a sacrifice himself. He stands as the leader and patriarch married not only to his wife or wives but to his goddess who protects and serves the people (her children). The goddess is the land and

people, the reign and the society and she is a part of the tribes' divine segmentary lineage, which itself is descended from the higher lineage of the *Tuatha De Danann,* the race of the gods of heaven and their lineage from the primordial family that rose from the oceans of chaos, from the fecundated darkness. Thus the appearance of mankind is itself from the same and everyone has a bit of all within.

Therefore, "I am…, I am…" spoke Amhairghin when he stepped out of the boat of the "Milesians" and consecrated the sacred land of Erin by proclaiming himself, by meditating on the sacrifice within. Donn, the Yama of the Irish pagans, is sacrificed and he dwells down into the otherworld where he built a home for mankind and his descendents. He was a sacrificial victim not so much placating the Tuatha De Danann, but as the ancestor (Dis Pater as Caesar would have called him) of mankind who prepared *Teach Duinn* for the others. There are many other themes in the early literature of the Irish and Welsh which correspond with other Indo-European themes right down to the detail: e.g. dogs which guard the entrances to the Otherworld/Underworld…cwn Annwn (Welsh), the c*us Sidhe*, Kerberos (Greek), Garm (old Norse), the Hounds of Yama (Vedic) and so forth.

We do not need to create an ad-hoc Druidism to fit our preconceived notions of religion and something else; we do not need to distort Celtic myths to fit a modern ideology created to fit our prejudices and our own individual experience. To do so, builds walls, breaks down communication, obstructs others' quest for truth, obscures learning and growth.

It is an obscurantist attitude to moan "there are things I am not meant to know" and to take to the fields as a neo-Luddite and curse the repressive socio-economic-political system or the establishment and get back in tune with nature is another thing. Sure and certainly we are not "the people of one god, one Truth, one Way" but we are not "a howling confabulation of extremes" either. And if we are, why should we be? It's something of a cop-out to merely point out that we are diverse in our attitude and opinions and not still grow like the branches on the tree, both in sharing a common knowledge, some common thread, some ground that we may share, that we may grow together? The dialectic of various opinions may grow to a higher level of unity when we are well informed and can speak in similar terms. We need not be some pluralistic society of people with no direction. We can have our philosophical pluralists, dualist, triplist, etc. We can be all of these, and we can transcend mere complaining and semantic arguing, we can transcend the proletarianization of our religious and philosophic ideals. In short, we can deal with things on a much higher level.

Scholarship is important to achieving these means, because it is not mere "book learnin,'" [it] is an attitude which opens doors and enlightens and if one has trouble with reading and comprehending the materials, then one must have patience and courage. We should not feel that we must compete with each other, that is not the purpose of learning. Not to be clever and show-off, but to take away darkness and help other to learn also. For everyone may benefit when one more person takes the time to learn something new. We are all interdependent and so the more one individual knows, the better is the world. When one person refuses to learn, he or she keeps the totality down, or that is, he or she makes it more difficult for others. It slows down progress when many do not make the effort to allow progression. We all can change the things we see around us that we do not like. Take action for positive change and not merely complain about it! Study is more than formulating theories, scholarship is more than mere perusal of old manuscripts, it is testing those theories, it *is* going out and practicing what you preach.

The higher your standards are, the more difficult it can be to practice what you preach. But going out to preach what you practice is another thing, and it is quite easy to do if you make no effort toward growing. Still, you can be an instrument of deception and not practice what you preach because you are not the kind of person you're preaching at. We know exactly about those famous men who don't practice what they preach because they're not the kind of people they're preaching to! I needn't mention them by name because there are many of them in America and they are frequently or constantly in the public eye.

Reconstructionist Druids endeavor to reconstruct what was lost and use that as a foundation on which to build, it is an old time-tested foundation and well-grounded in the past We do not seek to slip into some time-warp to become living anachronisms. There's the S.C.A. for that kind of fun! We, however, take the identity of Druidism seriously enough to make it work, to create something that actually owes something to the elder Druids besides a mere word or name. We are not ashamed to use labels, names or words; we do not suffer from onomatophobia or onomaphobia. We do not commit human sacrifices or go out and play ancient Gaul in the woods. We do enjoy ourselves. Jim C. is a musician in his spare time, Jim W. does Tai Chi, Chas. H. is in Drama and art, we have many friends and acquaintances from all ages and all walks of life. I, Tom Cross, myself happen to be an English teacher, a literary person and so naturally I like writing different things. This piece and other pieces for the Missal-Any is just one facet and subject of which I like to take a little time to write about. There are other bits and pieces I write, some fiction, some poetry, some non-fiction. This is why we differ from say a Wiccan coven or a Hermetic Lodge, or New Age networks for centering or trance channeling. We are not all of one mind, one way, one truth, but we share enough interests to talk, to meditate, and have some enjoyment of life.

I have friends who do not belong to the neo-pagan movement at all, who are Agnostic, Taoist, and Roman Catholic, and we respect each other's religions and some of them know more about the Celts and the Druids than many neo-pagans simply because they have read my stuff (including stuff I've read and written) as well as hearing it form me (when I show them the latest piece of literature I've read or bought). I am the mere spokesman here because I like to write while others do not or prefer to remain anonymous. One Jewish friend of mine likes to debunk falsehood and fallacies and for a while we were making it a game and running gag—it got me into the habit myself and I use it as part of my thinking habits. So while we look to the ancient Druids for inspiration, we are also very tolerant of other's opinions and we have respect for other people's rights. We do not believe ourselves pious ones, as braggarts and dogma-mongers—we are not evangelists or some Gospel of the Druids, but we have an interest in the hermeneutics of Celticism. What is wrong with that? What is wrong with reconstructing Druidism in this regard? If no one is interested in hearing anymore from me or us, let me know immediately and we shall not waste our time anymore.

An La Bhealtainne Maith

—Thomas Cross

Any comments? If you care to write to me personally, write in care of 2009 Sunnybrook Lane, Garland, TX 75041.

On the Spring Equinox Diatribe

Why does Albion think that a religion should evolve and grow away from scholarship and towards some opinions unsupported by facts or contradictory of facts? The fact is that the Celtic myths were composed by a scholarly class, the intelligentsia made up of bards, filidhe and druids, not by mere eclectic pluralism. Why does Albion bring up some boasts about learning from some "hereditary" pagan group or about "Native-American Spirituality" and then "humble" himself with an appeal to plain folks (false modesty) about "I do not think of myself as a

scholar." The last statement is certainly partly true, what he truly is (as far as I am concerned) is a scholar manqué—a half-hearted scholar who hasn't the interest to carefully read and utilize the materials he has requested.

If he were only using the data for his personal use and distorting it, I would not protest, but since he is putting his misrepresentations before many others—I *must* protest strongly. I am vehemently opposed to deliberate misrepresentation of the tradition for the purpose of changing it to suit an individual's personal biases and prejudices and to deliberately pervert it. As much as he has said, he is not promoting evolution or anyone getting to know his or her higher self—but rather to close people's minds to the possibilities offered by a reasonable and competent study of the ancient tradition. He is promoting darkness, not enlightenment.

While Albion uses the genetic fallacy saying he's a Celt simply because he MAY be descended from Celts, and saying that he has studied them (that's questionable to a degree) he appeals to authority (fallacy) by saying he's privy to some other traditions unrelated. Scholars have better methods than mere fallacious reasoning to find the truth and not just self-congratulatory appeals to folk wisdom and hearsay but rather documentation. Albion speaks for himself only as an individual (this I can say is his only defense), but somehow he expects that everyone should agree with his opinions because he appeals to the crowd by saying "it is highly doubtful we could go back to" wishing to "see Life (sic) thrive and our planet survive." Is he running for some office? Certainly he is right in saying that "being an ecologist is <u>part</u> (my underscore) of being a pagan."

Albion suffers from onomatophobia when he is not fond of titles because he has a problem with words and categories. He doesn't want to label anything cause that means he would have to express himself, that he would have to define things and categorize them; which is something he'd rather not do because that means getting to know something about them. Also I might add, the avoidance of labeling things by many people, is simply to avoid giving them any meaning so that they can mean whatever they want them to at will and whimsy.

We were friends and he originally wrote to me asking for information on the ancient Celts, but unfortunately he's given me more reasons for mistrust because of his insincerity (pretending to understand the data when he didn't even read it) then taking what little he remembered and distorting it before our fellow pagans. Albion had the data that would reconstruct the ancient Druids' wisdom right under his nose, but he ignored it because it required some intellectual thinking and an imagination as well as some difficult studying (philology, a bit of structural anthropology, comparative mythology, etc.) If I had known that this stuff was too difficult for him, I would not have wasted my time trying to provide him with guidelines, but he led me to believe otherwise.

—T.C.

Albion's Response

April 21, 1987

I came to the pagan faith because generally speaking, it is more tolerant than any other form of religion or spirituality I have found.

But gee, Tom Cross may have changed my mind.

"Promoting darkness" ay?

This tidbit comes to you from one who is supposedly "very tolerant of other's opinions," could've fooled me.

I stand by what I wrote last issue.

Paganism, as I see it, is made up of many different strands of thought, and if Tom Cross doesn't like that or can't deal with that – that is his problem, not mine.

It is a fact that the pagan faith survived in the British Isles, it was diluted or changed to a certain extent by folkways or ceremonial magic, or both, but it did survive. There really are hereditary pagans in the British Isles who practice a religion, that has survived for a very, very long time.

But let me ask the readership to judge the psychic quality of Tom Cross' letters in this issue and the last issue of *A Druid Missal-Any.*

Pagans should be beyond this brutal, personalized, back-stabbing that goes beyond defense to simply being hurtful and attacking someone because they are different from you, or hold a different opinion than yours.

The views expressed by Tom Cross in print are tame compared to at least one of the letters I received through the mail.

If this was the work of "born-again" Christians or someone from the Nazi Party or the Ku-Klux Klan, I could perhaps understand—but this is a person who calls himself a "pagan", this implies (in my mind at least), some sort of tolerance for other's views.

Once again, I stand corrected.

I have always like the *Missal-Any* because of its scholarship and approach, this sort of b.s. cheapens and degrades the quality of the *Missal-Any*, in my opinion.

I do care deeply for the Truth (in *all* of its forms), and I will *not* stand for someone saying that I don't. There is not one way to the Gods, but many ways, even in the Celtic Tradition, and my suggestion is that Tom Cross meditate upon *that*.

If I could close with a quote from an earlier form of Revived Druidism: "Truth against the World".

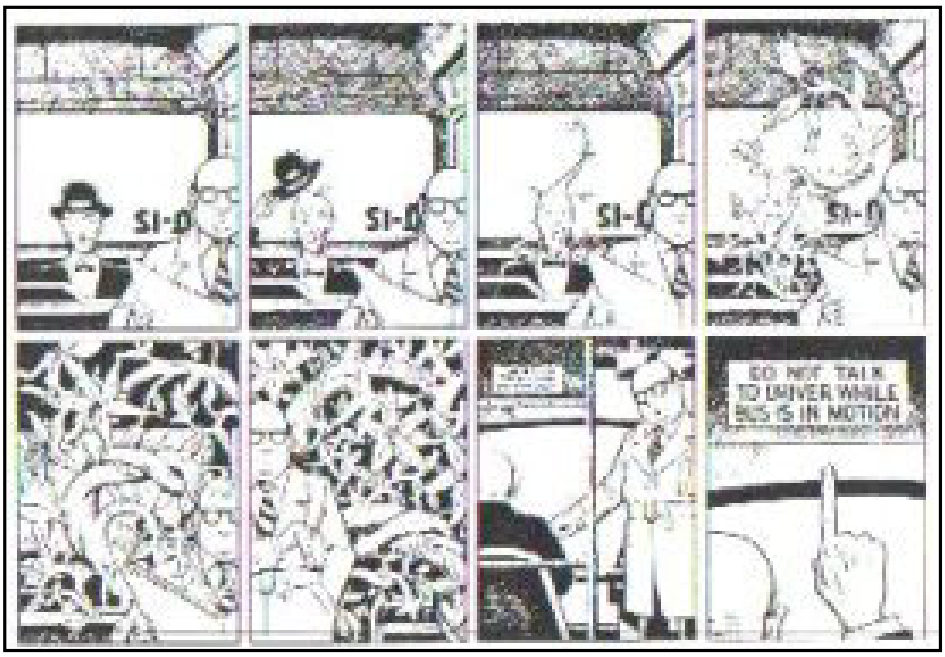
—Albion

Calendar

Astronomical Beltaine, when the Sun is half way between Equinox and Solstice, will occur this year at 22 hours and 8 minutes, Greenwich, or 3:08 P.M. Pacific Daylight Time. We will begin celebrating in Orinda at 1:00 P.M., that is, Solar Noon. Bring a flower and a ribbon, twelve to fourteen feet long, our Maypole is 9 feet high. (What's yours?)

"It's day one of the Merry Month of May. You want a piece of the action?"

Modern Urban Green Man Joke



Do not talk to driver while bus is in motion."

"How is meditation like dealing with a bureaucracy?"
"In both, persistence pays."

—Postmarked Apr. 28, 1987

A Druid Missal-Any

Summer Solstice 1987
Volume 11 Number 4

Summer Solstice Essay:

Danu and Diana

By Emmon Bodfish

idsummer Solstice, one the four minor High Days of the Reformed Druid Calendar, is associated with the Celtic Goddess Danu, Mother of the Gods, the Tuatha de Danann. She is particularly associated with rivers, and rivers from the Don in Russia to the Don in Scotland are thought to be named for Her. She is probably the same figure as the Irish Goddess, Anu, and the Breton's Ana. Roman Diana and Greek Artemis may be other cognates of this Pan-Indo-European Deity. These theories are based on the study of word origins, and on the witness of Gallo-Roman writers of the period who noted the similarities in character, rituals, and Seasons of Worship of Danu and Diana. These primary historical sources, written when the Celtic religion was still practiced in Gaul, corroborate the evidence from linguistic studies. There is an opinion about that Danu was not an important Deity, or even that the Celts lacked a Mother-Goddess figure, but I can find no hard evidence in Philology, history, or Celtic Mythology for this point of view.

Like Roman Diana, Danu's totem is the boar, an animal also associated with a female agricultural deity in the Balkans. Danu, like Frigga of the Germans, presides over marriage and fertility, and the luckiness of June weddings may be a distant memory of her festivities. Mugwort is Her sacred flower, an herb also sacred to Roman Diana; the ripe ear of grain is Her token. (This fits T. Edwards' theory that the Christian Madonna was modeled after (to co-opt?) the various Mother-Grain Goddesses of pagan Europe.) On the Isle of Man it is customary to wear a sprig of mugwort to the Midsummer dance, and in England, placing mugwort under her pillow is said to bring a young woman dreams of her future husband.[1] In Scotland, there are all night bonfires, song fests, and dances for the young, unmarried people of the villages.

This is the morning on which the Sun used to rise over the heel stone at Stonehenge, thus beginning the new season in the Megalithic calendar. It no longer rises at that point owing to the procession of the Earth's axis, but celebrations are held there, anyway.

The Druids did NOT build Stonehenge. It antedates their arrival in Britain by centuries. It was William Stuckeley in 1717 who mislocated the Druids there. He did some of the best archeological field work of his day, but his theorizing later wildly outstripped his data. The mistake was an honest one, however, considering what was known in his time. He showed that the stones were not a memorial to King Arthur nor a Roman temple, the two then common theories. He was the first to establish the monument as definitely pre-Roman. The only knowledge of pre-Roman Britain he had came from Roman and Greek writers of the Classical Period. They said that Britain was inhabited by Celts whose priests were the Druids. So, if the stones were older than any Roman constructions, Stuckeley reasoned, they must have been put there by Druids. He knew of no other candidates. But in the last two centuries, archeology has provided us with many, even too many other possibilities. The currently favored candidates are the early Neolithic farmers of Natufian stock, a longheaded, slender, fine-boned people who inhabited the Salisbury area from 2900-2500 B.C. coinciding with the most accurate modern date for the first cycle of building at Stonehenge. A larger boned hardier people later took over the monument and set up the Blue Stones, but they too had disappeared before the arrival of the Celts around 480 B.C.

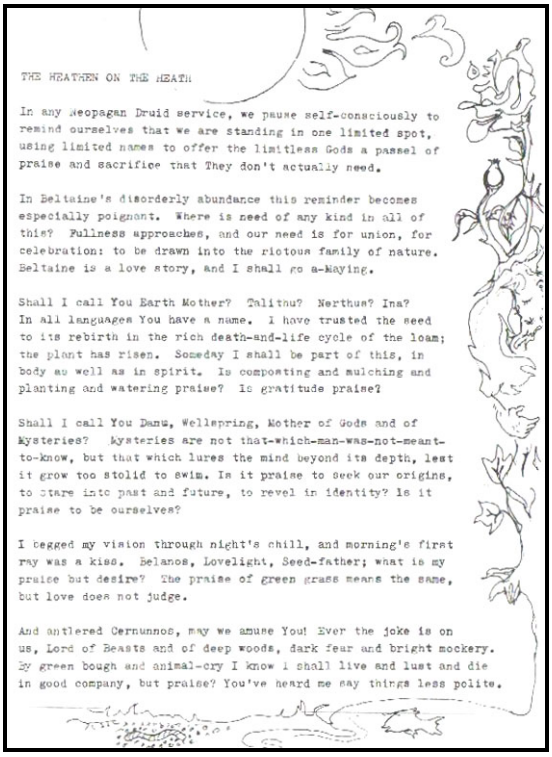
This is not to say that the Celts did not take cognizance of the huge stones. They worked monuments of other prehistoric peoples into their mythology and song. Numerous Bardic compositions refer to the Sidh Mounds of Ireland and the Carnes of Scotland as sacred places and the long abandoned abodes of the Gods. They may have done the same for Stonehenge, but the English traditions and Bardic works were almost all lost, while the Irish are among the best preserved of any oral lore.

> "Behold the Sidhe before your eyes.
> It is manifest to you that it is a king's mansion,
> Which was built by the firm Dagda.
> It is a wonder, a court, and admirable hill."
>
> "The Sidhe of Donegal" a seminar by Prof. Duran.

Two or more different groups of peoples, sharing the same or similar astronomically oriented beliefs, contributed to the five cycles of construction and reconstruction at Stonehenge. Theirs was a fairly sophisticated culture for the time. They knew that the Solstices, eclipses of the Moon, and the courses of the stars were regular predictable events. Their stone moving techniques were on a par with the times. Though not aligned accurately enough for an "observatory" in the modern sense, the stones can serve as a calendar rectifier, an eclipse predictor, and, of course, as a ritual site for religious ceremonies. But what those religions were must remain a matter of conjecture. Clearly they had something to do with sunrise, Midsummer Solstice, moonrise, and lunar eclipses, but what they meant, and what the people did there, is probably not recoverable. As Clannad sings "Forgotten is the race that no one knows."[2]

[1]A friend of mine tried the experiment of putting mugwort under her pillow, but reported she had no dreams at all. "I guess I'm just going to stay single." She is till fancy-free three years later. If anyone wants to try this, you can get mugwort in most herb shops. Send in your results and we'll publish them for Lughnasadh.

[2]Clannad, a modern Irish Folk Group. "Ring of Stones," good album.



THE HEATHEN ON THE HEATH

In any Neopagan Druid service, we pause self-consciously to remind ourselves that we are standing in one limited spot, using limited names to offer the limitless Gods a passel of praise and sacrifice that They don't actually need.

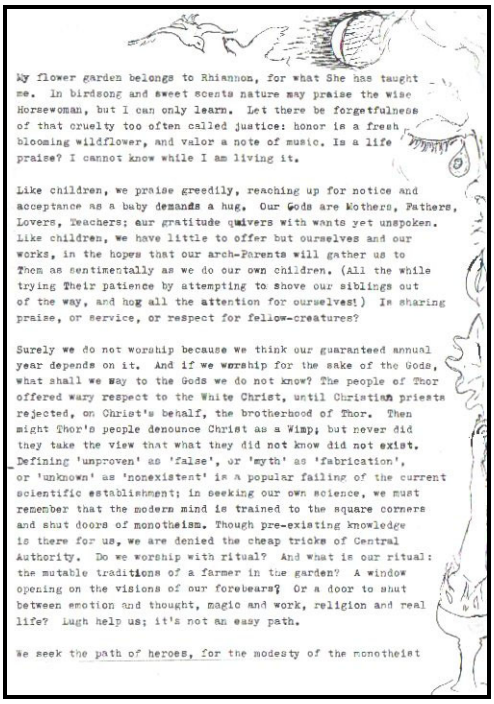
In Beltaine's disorderly abundance this reminder becomes especially poignant. Where is need of any kind in all of this? Fullness approaches, and our need is for union, for celebration: to be drawn into the riotous family of nature. Beltaine is a love story, and I shall go a-Maying.

Shall I call You Earth Mother? Talithu? Nerthus? Ina? In all languages You have a name. I have trusted the seed to its rebirth in the rich death-and-life cycle of the loam; the plant has risen. Someday I shall be part of this, in body as well as in spirit. Is composting and mulching and planting and watering praise? Is gratitude praise?

Shall I call You Danu, Wellspring, Mother of Gods and of Mysteries? Mysteries are not that-which-man-was-not-meant-to-know, but that which lures the mind beyond its depth, lest it grow too stolid to swim. Is it praise to seek our origins, to stare into past and future, to revel in identity? Is it praise to be ourselves?

I begged my vision through night's chill, and morning's first ray was a kiss. Belanos, Lovelight, Seed-father; what is my praise but desire? The praise of green grass means the same, but love does not judge.

An antlered Cernunnos, may we amuse You! Ever the joke is on us, Lord of Beasts and of deep woods, dark fear and bright mockery. By green bough and animal-cry I know I shall live and lust and die in good company, but praise? You've heard me say things less polite.



My flower garden belongs to Rhiannon, for what She has taught me. In birdsong and sweet scents nature may praise the wise Horsewoman, but I can only learn. Let there be forgetfulness of that cruelty too often called justice: honor is a fresh blooming wildflower, and valor a note of music. Is a life praise? I cannot know while I am living it.

Like children, we praise greedily, reaching up for notice and acceptance as a baby demands a hug. Our Gods are Mothers, Fathers, Lovers, Teachers; our gratitude quivers with wants yet unspoken. Like children, we have little to offer but ourselves and our works, in the hopes that our arch-Parents will gather us to Them as sentimentally as we do our own children. (All the while trying Their patience by attempting to shove our siblings out of the way, and hog all the attention for ourselves!) Is sharing praise, or service, or respect for fellow-creatures?

Surely we do not worship because we think our guaranteed annual year depends on it. And if we worship for the sake of the Gods, what shall we say to the Gods we do not know? The people of Thor offered wary respect to the White Christ, until Christian priests rejected, on Christ's behalf, the brotherhood of Thor. Then might Thor's people denounce Christ as a Wimp; but never did they take the view that what they did not know did not exist. Defining 'unproven' as 'false', or 'myth' as 'fabrication', or 'unknown' as 'nonexistent' is a popular failing of the current scientific establishment; in seeking our own science, we must remember that the modern mind is trained to the square corners and shut doors of monotheism. Though pre-existing knowledge is there for us, we are denied the cheap tricks of Central Authority. Do we worship with ritual? And what is our ritual: the mutable traditions of a farmer in the garden? A window opening on the visions of our forebears? Or a door to shut between emotion and thought, magic and work, religion and real life? Lugh help us; it's not an easy path.

We seek the path of heroes, for the modesty of the monotheist

The Heathen on the Heath: Praising the Gods of May

In any Neopagan Druid service, we pause self-consciously to remind ourselves that we are standing in one limited spot, using limited names to offer the limitless Gods a passel of praise and sacrifice that They don't actually need.

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We seek the path of heroes, for the modesty of the monotheist is another cop-out we don't get. Saints are safe in Heaven, beyond the reach of our kind, but heroes are meant to be emulated--though they may shine brighter out of antiquity, all their awkward moments over and one with. We need only remember that some being or circumstance will eventually play Emer to our Cuchullain, and require us to place money where mouth is.

So be splendid in the splendor of May, fellow wedding-guests! If our praise is presumptuous and our dreaming extravagant, only look around: with gaudy flower fields, flooding light, and leaping beasts, we have a fine example.

Salacious Spring Meditation:

Make sure the rigor of your mind is not rigor mortis, but the other kind!

The Heathen on the Heath: The Gift of Horses

I invoke that portion of compost, which is the gift of horses.

Do you guys know how many times I've rewritten this #!%?!! thing? I think we can settle down and admit that the Missal-Any has become a new format: Interactive Nonfiction. Is there some Hitchhiker's Guide to the minority-theological Galaxy? Or are we headed for the Snit at the End of the Universe? Stay tuned…

This is the season of battle; the Sun stands ringed by hero-light, facing the confrontation He cannot win. In the summer blaze of midsummer, YES!, we stand cocky and feisty at His side. The day is long and summer just begun—will it not last forever? By August, each warm hour is precious: our words and deeds will echo with the gentleness of farewell. The (Carleton) traditional services chant our glee at the conquest of day over night, but most of us have our moments of rooting for Pryderi. We are in our glory, our attitude of immortality unsmirched, yet we can still take comfort in saying "This, too, shall pass."

We (genetic and/or emotional) Celts are historically marked as argumentative cusses, as witness the forms of lampoon, rant, and challenge-in-verse. Boldness is our legacy, and defensiveness our last year's garbage.

What is the appropriate channeling of our quibblesome nature? I, for one, would not go back to my pacifist beginnings; I have little respect for the tameness of a toothless dog. My most honored comrades are dangerous folk, controlled by volition rather than weakness. When people are scarce enough to be a resource rather than a nuisance, the strong can stop apologizing. We don't sheathe our blades in the neighbor's house out of fear, but because we respect our neighbors.

Also, if we love, we are having too much fun to care overmuch what our beloveds can do to us…

As a religious minority, we are an automatic rural neighborhood. We have our local characters, but let the stranger say, "Do you know that nut-case?" We will quite likely say, "Oh, he/she's okay once you know him/her," and find that, against the perspective of the rest of the world, we mean it. I know, I know; you'll all howl that this kind of neighborhood loyalty is not something you reserve for Druids or extend to everyone who takes that name. That's true. My primary clan relationships are likely to differ from Tom's, or Albion's, or Mad Sweeney's, and a good number of the members of my clan or clans do not name Neopagan Druidism as their religious orientation. They are all, however, joined to me in avowed and reliable goodwill, and respectful of the orientations I profess. So okay, I am available to my own clansfolk before I would be available to Tom, or Albion, or any other Druids that I don't personally know. But I am available (willingly, and in good faith) to my Druish brethren and sistern before I am (willingly, and in good faith) available to the mainstream authorities. I assume that we squabble *en tutoyant*, and will still be there for each other if that is necessary. (And yes, you can call me on that. Box 215, Myers Flat, CA 95554).

This doesn't mean you have to agree with me, or approve of me. Your minds, especially in devotion to the Gods, are your own.

Fear of names? Sometimes. What do I most fear to name: my Gods, or myself? My dealing with some Gods are embarrassingly private. And I myself possess a name that will call me from sleep, or draw my energy to the user of it; I don't give that to just anybody.

But Tom and Albion have boldly "named" themselves in these pages, to a degree that I have not. Ergo, the Summer Statement: Here am I, a woman 35 years old, attempting to farm a hillside steading in southern Humboldt while making a living as a freelance reporter and general odd-jobber (currently, selling cherry cider and produce to tourists.) The untidy generosity of my physique bears witness to my undisciplined nature, but I'm still pretty functional.

I write—basically, anything that anyone will print, and a lot of things they won't. Most dear to me of all our lore are the poetic, emotionally-charge stories of Erin. Like Albion, I was once a Quaker. My religious practice contains little of formal observance, but I operate under a number of what I see as my own geasa and obligations. (Laugh if you want; sometimes I do, too.) I use magic only as a last-ditch adjunct to doing my damnedest on the physical plane, and only for certain purposes. I honor ethics and deplore morality. My greatest weakness is a reflexive snapping and snarling at what I see as elitism or authoritarianism. I once beaned a wife-beater with my purse, but I am not reliably or consciously brave. I'm a solitary 3rd, married, with a 7-year-old son who lives with me full-time and a 9-year-old daughter who visits.

Tom, Albion, I offer this: who among us has the *power* to be a threat to the others? (Hopefully none of us is such a slob as to throw energy around as we argue, instead of grounding it out!) Both "promoting darkness" and "Ku Klux Klan" show a fine sense of drama, but you know effing well that if the storm troopers showed up looking for any of us tomorrow, the rest would like like right valiant rugs to cover his/her ass. So *will* you guys kiss & make up, or at least wait for the bell?!!

—Les

Calendar

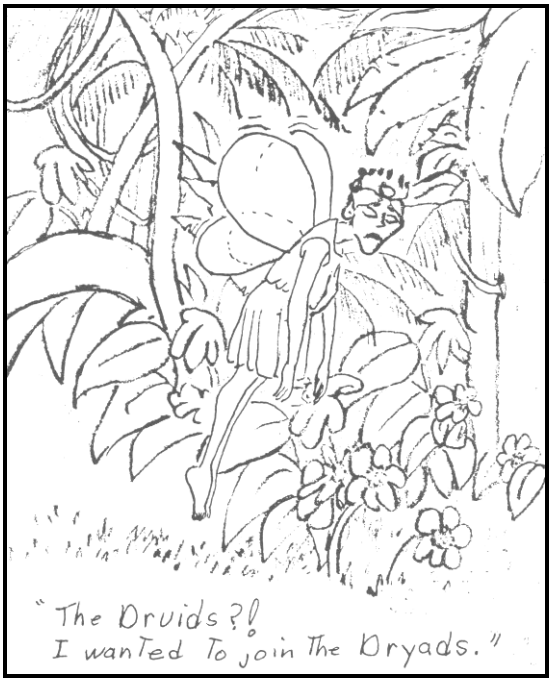
Summer Solstice will occur at 3:11 Pacific Daylight Time on June 21, 1987. The festivities will begin at 1:00 P.M. which is Solar Noon

Lucid Dream Project

Headed by Dr. Stephen La Berge at the Sleep Research center at Stanford University School of Medicine, this vanguard project is targeting the development of an easy, inexpensive device that can be used by anyone wishing to induce lucid dreams (being aware you are dreaming while dreaming.) Dr. La Berge believes the lucid dream state can be used to facilitate creative problem-solving, enhance self-confidence, improve mental, emotional and perhaps physical health, and lead to higher-level consciousness. Lucidity Project, P.O. Box 2364, Stanford, CA 94305

Unwitting Paganization Note:

The Bay Area Rapid Transit and Bus Co. use of the Maypole symbol on all its transfers this year.



And now, to answer many letters at once:

How to Join

What is Reformed Druidism?

Emmon Bodfish
616 Miner Road
Orinda, CA

Guidelines for Visitors and Newcomers

1. Reformed Druid Services schedule to mesh with the movement of the Sun and the Stars. They must start on time, such as at Solar Noon, when the Sun is highest in the sky, or at Sunset. Please be on time. If you are late, stand quietly outside the circle; please don't interrupt.
2. The Service is not a party; partying is afterwards. While R.D.N.A. is not grimly solemn, Druids are serious in their religious purpose. If you are not seriously interested in spiritual development or meditative skills, then Druidism, R.D.N.A. system, is not for you.
3. Once the Service begins, focus. Talking, joking, laughing etc. are rude. They break the concentration of others and prevent the Grove from achieving its goal. If you are drunk, stoned, or uncontrollably disruptive, you will be asked to leave.
4. While everyone is not a scholar, you are expected to learn some historical background about the Ancient Druids.
5. Ranks earned in other religions don't "count" in R.D.N.A. There is no fast way up or around the hierarchy. We are in no way connected with any other Neopagan religion, Wiccan, Craft or the secular, charitable organization style "Druids".
6. If what you really want are "Sex 'n Drugs 'n Rock 'n Roll," Druidism, again, is not for you. You might consult the San Francisco Sex Information Switchboard (415-665-7300) who deal with that sort of networking. Neither do we offer instant magic, curses, nor predictions about the Stock Market.

Enough Said

With thanks to Selena Fox's "Guidelines"

Now, if you're still with us, How to Join.

Read the basic Tenets and see if you agree with them. Read over the Outline of the Foundation of the Fundamentals.

To become a full member of the Reformed Druids, you must attend a Service or a Grove, during the summer half of the year, state that you want to join, state that you agree with the Basic Tenet, "Nature is Good," when you are asked this by the Archdruid, and share with the Grove a sip of the Waters-of-Life. Or you may be accepted by a Solitary Third Order (clergy) Druid who performs the standard Service and shares with you the Waters-of-Life.

If neither of these opportunities are available to you, you can become a Proto-grove member until you can meet an ordained Druid or attend an active Grove. Perform the proto-grove Service yourself. Tell Deity(s) that you agree with the basic Tenets. Let us know and we will announce your new Proto-grove

in the Missal-Any. To wiseacres who only want to see their names in print, and so send us fallacious Proto-Grove applications, we leave them to Cernnunos, Sucellos, and their consciences.

For a copy of the Proto-grove service, send us two or three stamps and an envelope, or $1.00 (We are on budgets, too.)

Now the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism are these:

> The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
>
> And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for is is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.
>
> Nature is good!
>
> And the second is like unto the first:
>
> Nature is good!

The following is from:

The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)

Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals

Being:

a brief catalogue of the major quasi-metaphysical-theological conclusions which may be abstracted from and by the application of the Reformed Druid point of view to questions of ultimate relevance (in outline form).

THE THREE PILLARS
(or treasures, or paths, or baskets, or roots, or branches, or wondrous illuminations)

I. *The Relentless Rebellion (threefold)*

A. *The categorical If*
No intellectually honest mind can long remain so termed unless it is willing to submit all things to rigorous examination, even the most sacred provinces. Blind faith is no faith; it is blindness.

B. *The Principle of Non-Confirmation*
Applying rigorous scrutiny to the world's religions, we find, especially in western form, universal claims to exclusiveness; yet none submits any more proof of its claim than an appeal to faith. Logically, therefore, all are equal.

C. *The Principle of Non-Conformation*
In the face of the insoluble problem of selecting the "one true faith" most people conform to one of two patterns:

> 1. *The True Believer* embraces the faith of his fathers wholeheartedly and unquestioningly, fearing to face the logical possibility (probability?) that he is wrong.
>
> 2. *The Non-Believer* rejects all faiths out of hand, fearing that he might prove himself a fool by choosing the wrong one.
>
> Reformed Druids reject the necessity of conforming to either of these patterns based on fear. True spiritual growth exists only in the *Relentless Rebellion* against petrified norms.

II. *The Paths of Paradox* (also threefold)

A. *The Ceremonial Syndrome*
Man is incurably finite. He cannot conceive of spiritual activity except in terms of ritualistic hocus-pocus. But ritual must be carefully selected or it will independently acquire magical properties of its own. Ritual properly constitutes a springboard for the spirit only. Oak worship is ideal for this purpose (see also III).

B. *The Primacy of Ambiguity*
True spiritual growth consisting of personal effort and rebellion, Reformed Druidism must remain devoid of orthodoxy. All writings must be ambiguous and non-final (present dissertation included).

C. *The Principle of Non-Confirmation*
(rears its ugly head again)
You'll get no pat answers here. There being no logical basis for the acceptance or denial of any faith, Reformed Druidism confirms nothing (including Reformed Druidism). You're welcome to, but you're on your own.

III. *The Last Refuge* (whadaya know...threefold!)

A. *The Noble Fivefold Formulation*

1. *The Nature of Life*
Life is defined as the unity of the spiritual (Be'al) and the material (the Earth-Mother). Without the material the spiritual has no form; without the spiritual the material is dead.

2. *And Man?*
Man, as a living animal, ideally consists of both material and spiritual.

3. *And Man?*
Man is unique. This is because he has self-awareness. He passes from self-awareness through self-centeredness to self-importance, thence to self-isolation, resulting in self-misery.

4. *Unity for All and All for Unity*
Man's self-importance cuts him off from the life-giving benefits of unity with the spirit and Nature (the material). Druids sometimes call unity *Awareness*. It is the object of religion to restore unity; most concentrate

on the direct attainment of spiritual unity, ignoring (or rejecting) the material.

5. *Back to Nature*

Druids (at least some of them) believe that a good approach is to first restore material unity. Having broken down part of the barrier around the self, the rest should then be easier. Hence, Druid Nature worship: the ideality of going to worship oaks.

B. *The Basic Tenets*

The Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism, which form the basis (believe it or not) for the preceding discussion, are found in the Constitution of the Reformed Druids [at Carleton], and in another form in the Book of the Law in *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed) [of the Foundation]*. They are the quintessences of Druidism, such that a person need accept nothing else and still become a Reformed Druid. They are here presented in their most concentrated form:

1. Nature is good!

And the second is like unto the first:
2. Nature is good!

C. *The Last Refuge*

It is simple to grind out these systems. It is the expected thing to do. Perhaps it is useful. It is meaningless!

It is simple to sit on the Hill of the Three Oaks and look at the pretty blue sky. That, too, can be meaningless!

It is not so simple to stand alone under the pretty blue sky and watch all your preconceived systems come tumbling down. But when they come tumbling down, there is a refuge: in Nature. There one may find a clearing of the head, a freedom from stagnant forms, a beginning. (The end)

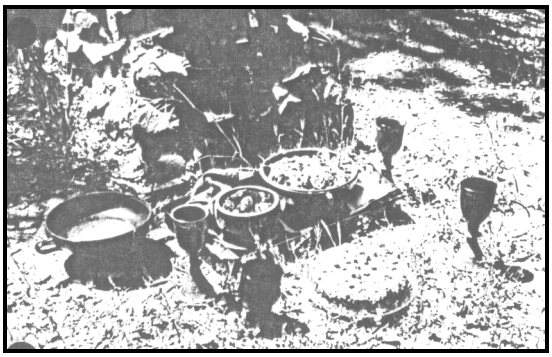
News of the Groves

Announcement:

Stacey and Rapheal have applied to take Second Orders, with the Orinda Group in the R.D.N.A. context. Their requests have been accepted by the two Third Order Druids and the ceremonies will take place in the next six to eight weeks.

Birch Grove

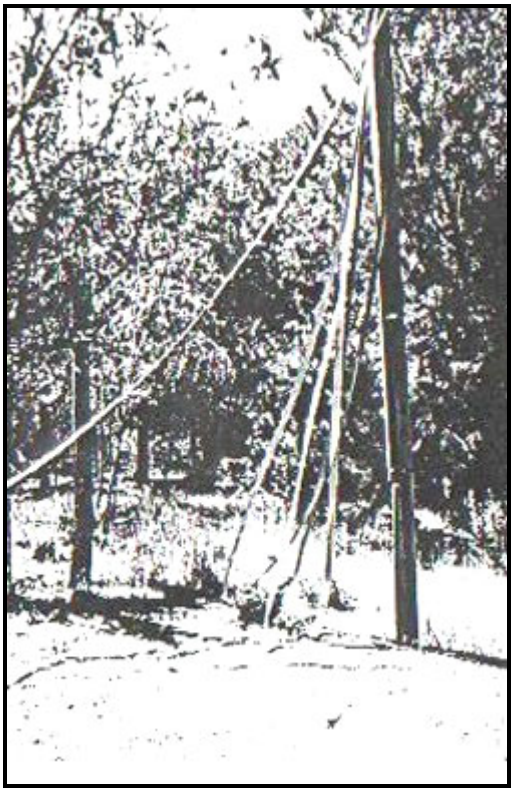
Joan Carruth and Joe Lambert will be getting handfasted at the Rites of Spring Festival in Massachusetts this May. Joan is the Archdruid of Birch Grove, in Vermont. Anyone interested in R.D.N.A. style Druidism in the New England area can contact them here, through the Missal-Any. (No, we don't give out people's addresses without their permission. A sad-but-necessary precaution.)



The Feast

Orinda Grovesite

Orinda Grovesite will not grow a lawn this year, in honor of the drought here. Instead, we will concentrate our efforts on leveling the Maypole Meadow.



Beltaine '87, Orinda

Postmarked June 18, 1987

A Druid Missal-Any Lughnasadh 1987 Volume 11 Number 5

Lughnasadh Essay: Lugh, Balor, and Belenos

By Emmon Bodfish

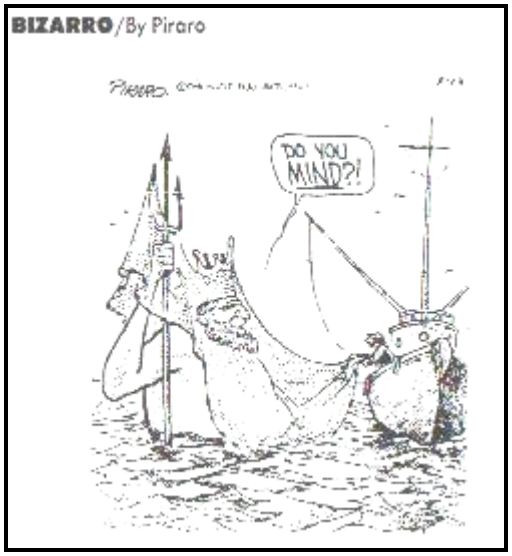
Lughnasadh, festival of the funeral games of Lugh the Sun God, or, given by Lugh in honor of his father the Sun, depending on your tradition. It is the beginning of the Celtic harvest season, and is often called festival of the First Fruits. Lugh, from the same root word as light and luminous, is one the younger generations of gods in the Celtic pantheon. The other Solar Deities, Belenos and Balor, the good and the bad aspects of the sun, respectively, are not only pictured as older, mature male figures, but are traceable to the Early Indo-European stratas, in the Eastern European homelands. But Lugh, as the young Shining One, didn't appear until the Celts had settled Gaul and melded with the Celto-Ligurians and the Pre-Indo-European "Atlantic Wall" cultures which they encountered there, circa 600 B.C. Urnfields replaced passage graves, and typical Celtic farming practices were begun. When the Celto-Ligurians had arrived, a thousand years earlier, there had been no sharp cultural discontinuity, as they blended with the Pre-Indo-Europeans, who continued to build their dolmens and passage graves. Pre-Indo-European traditions were therefore still strong when Celtic Lugh arose and began to replace Belenos as the popular Solar Figure. His ascendant, youthful, headlong character may have been influenced by the Young Year God image common in the Pre-Indo-European cultures of the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts. This archetype has been traced by G. Racheal Levy from the Balkans, to Minoan Greece, along the Mediterranean Coast to France and north to Normandy.

Lugh's best Indo-European cognate is Apollo of the Greeks. The Greek religion was strongly influenced in other ways by the beliefs and Deities of the Pre-Indo-European people they conquered and absorbed. Odin, Lugh's Northern cognate, has a much less Solar character. He is more a Shaman, knowledge-bringer, and Divine Wayfarer, going among mortals in disguise. He is not a martial figure; He is not youthful. Lugh is the patron of the harvest, which in Celtic countries began at Lughnasadh. Apollo was worshipped in the Pelopennesus as a god of vegetation, giving Him another link with the "young Year God" of the Western Neolithic. From a magical lawgiver, healer, transformer archetype, which He shares with Odin and Varuna, He evolved, partly through absorption of the Young Year God, into the youthful solar Deity of the later Celtic myths.

In R.D.N.A. traditions, anyone who has a garden, grows anything, etc. should save their first picked produce of the summer season, and bring it or part of it to Lughnasadh Service, to be offered up in the altar fire, with hopes of prosperity in years to come.

Calendar

Astronomical Lughnasadha will occur 8:17 P.M. Pacific Standard Time. Traditional Lughnasadha, Sun at 15 degrees Leo, will have occurred less than three hours previously, at 5:23.



A Contrary Opinion

Getting Back to Nature This Summer

The heat, the cold, the work, the constant struggle, the hunger, the dirt, the sleeping on the ground, the sickness, the disasters, the pain, and most of all the round-the-clock anxiety and fear, will make you so glad to get back to the relatively palatial environs of your third floor cold water walk-up, that you won't believe the luxury you've been living in all your life.

News of the Groves

Stacey and Rapheal took Second Orders at the Orinda Grove Site on July 26. The sacrifices burned brightly and both candidates were accepted. This is the first giving of Orders of any rank at which this Solitary Third Order Druid has officiated. Walking in the woods ahead of time, long thoughts came while selecting the plants for the sacrifice. Does death occur when one of our patron Deities chooses us for their sacrifice? The Ancient Sacrificers entrusted their messages to the soul of the white bull and dispatched him to the Other World. I choose a sprig of bay laurel, an oak leaf and a goldenrod flower.

Plants are always being sacrificed for us, for our lives. Every meal is a sacrifice. This idea of exchange was a strong part of the Paleo-Pagan's conception of the sacrifice. A life was given that the sacrificer's life might be spared, or that his people might continue to live and prosper. One of our members said that our sacrifices "aren't real sacrifices" because we offer us plants instead of animals. (She wants blood and gore?) We are the *Reformed* Druids of North America. The Reform strictly forbade human (and animal) sacrifice in 1963. Eating animal meat is not forbidden, though. But the problem is still there, even for us vegetarians, we always have to take life in order to sustain our own. This is what anthropologists like Rassmusen and G.R. Levy studying the opinions and theologies of modern Stone Age peoples have called the "universal ethical dilemma."[1]

Only green plants are truly "a-hinsa" or harmless, and guiltless in this matter. All of the rest of us are parasites and have

no choice but to live off of them. They are in this sense the highest moral beings on the plant and thus worthy objects of veneration and worship as every Druid knows.

Now after a two or three thousand year sidetrack into more superficial ethical problems:

"Who owns what?"

"Who gets to boss whom?"

etc.; we are coming back to struggle with this fundamental dilemma again. By "we" I mean the western Indo-Europeans. The Brahmins of India never lost sight of it, nor did their Buddhist descendents. Animal Rights organizations, Gaia Principal groups and ecological consciousness are becoming common fare. A Cultural-Materialist friend of ours wishes to inject here: "When people get enough to eat, then they start to think about what they're eating." "Stone Age level peoples think about it," I reply, "They just can't do anything about it." We may be able to...

After vegetarianism, I suppose the ultimate liberation from this dilemma will come when we achieve artificial photosynthesis on a practical scale and can make our own food from sunlight. That, if it ever happens,[2] it would be a change as profound as the Agricultural Revolution, in altering our basic relationship to other living things. But this time we would be moving in the opposite direction, hopefully with more benign results. Futuristic speculations? Just are some more of the meanings of the sacrifice.

[1]Rasmussen quotes an Eskimo shaman on the subject of sacred animal paintings:

"We make them new bodies to replace the bodies we have taken." "The greatest peril of life is that human food consists entirely of souls: all the beings that we must kill and eat, all those that we have to strike down and destroy to make clothes for ourselves...must be pacified lest they revenge themselves on us for taking away their bodies."

For similar statements from Australians, Malayans, and Siberians, see G.R. Levy, J. Halifax, and A.A. Popov, respectively.

[2]I wouldn't want to think of it happening too soon, as I'd hate to think of putting any more power in the hands of the present technocracy with its Nature-hating consciousness and its evil genius for turning anything to a destructive use. Alternatives to the present Big Brother and Star Wars mind-set are well set out by Shulamith Firestone in "Feminism and Ecology", and by many others. For a copy of the "Druid Book Lists" send us a SASE.

Boycott News

For all the junkfood junkie Druids and other pagans who've been participating in the boycott, success has been achieved at one fast food franchise. It's safe* to go back into the take out line.

San Francisco Chronicle,

Friday, July 24, 1987

Environmentalists Gain Goal, End Boycott of Burger King

Environmentalists yesterday ended a consumer boycott against Burger King after the fast-food chain said it would stop buying the beef of cattle ranchers who are destroying tropical rain forests in Central America.

"Two-thirds of Central America's rain forests have been destroyed since World War II. The primary cause has been the conversion of rain forests to cattle pastures," Rainforest Action Network director Randy Hayes said at a San Francisco press conference.

Burger King received hundreds of letters after the boycott was begun in the spring of 1986. The company formed a management task force to study the problem, said Ann Kokenge, a spokeswoman for the nation's No. 2 fast food hamburger chain.

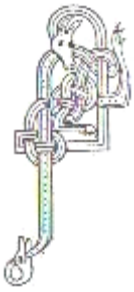
Hayes said, "We applaud their action. They made a responsible decision."

*"Safe?! For who?"
(Signed) Your Stomach

A Druid Missal-Any Fall Equinox 1987 Volume 11 Number 6

Fall Equinox Essay: Sirona

By Emmon Bodfish



all Equinox, a minor High Day in the Druid calendar. The days are getting short again and the harvest is in full swing. This is the time of Cernunnos, and the other Deities of night, of the Season of Sleep, and the Otherworld. The Celts, as far as we know, did not have a specific lunar deity. (I often get asked for the name of a Moon Goddess.) In researching this I have come across the interesting information on the origins of the Goddess Sirona. Her name comes from the same Indo-European root as "star," although She was later associated with the source of the river Seine, a spring where a shrine to Her was located.

As the Celts moved out of the Halstatt homeland in Austria and across Europe, they re-named rivers and springs for their Goddesses, perhaps merging them with local protective Earth Goddesses. A major shrine to Sirona, located at a spring in Hochscheid has been both traced in Roman reports and verified archeologically. This shrine was associated with healing, and Sirona is shown here on plaques and in votive statues along with a young male figure. This is probably Lugh, whom the Romans equated with Apollo after they took over the site in the second century AD. When Christians later took over the shrine, the dedicated it to a "Saint Sabine," another euhemerism of a Pagan Goddess into a Christian Pious. In late Celtic times the sanctuary was a Nemeton built around a spring whose waters were directed into a pool. In the pool have been found small votive statues of the Goddess and of the Divine Couple, presumably Sirona and Lugh, and also coins and precious offerings. It is described by the excavators as an unusually rich shrine for one so far in the country.

Sirona is portrayed here, as elsewhere, in statues and wall reliefs, holding a serpent, and a bowl of eggs, probably serpent's eggs. The motif of the Serpent's Egg appears in Irish literature and in folklore about the Druid in the British Isles. Possession of these magical eggs was said to bestow divine wisdom, eloquence, and protection against spells and disease. This last quality may be a dim echo of the healing powers of Sirona and of Her ancient association with night and dreams. People seeking cures for chronic illnesses often made pilgrimages in order to sleep within the sanctuary of a healing Deity in hope of receiving a Divine Dream in which the cause and cure of their illness would be made known to them by the Goddess of the shrine. Dio Cassius wrote of a pilgrimage made by the Emperor Caracalla to the shrines of the Celts as well as to Greek and Roman temples in search of a cure.

Farther west in Gaul, Sirona takes on a more diurnal and agrarian image, and is portrayed holding an ear of grain and a bowl. The concepts of healing and of regeneration were always closely associated in Celtic culture, according to Prof. Miranda Green, archeologist and British expert on the Celts. The ear of wheat symbolized the power of growth and rebirth, truth to its name "spica" from the root for hope. Green calls Sirona "polyandrous," but evidence simply shows Her working in conjunction with several different male Deities: Lugh, Bormo, Grannus, and several other as yet unidentified male figures. She is always associated with the serpent itself as an image of healing and wisdom in the Ancient World, and a symbol associated with the Milky Way in several early astronomies.

Night, rest, and healing are the domain of Sirona. The nights will be getting longer now, taking precedence over the day. But as one devotee of Sirona, in spirit if not in name, put it, "I hold the darkness to be good no less than the light." Now begins the harvest of the benefits of the "good and covering dark." Between now and Samhain, try to visit some place in the deep country where you can see the Milky Way and the dark sky the way the Druids of Sirona saw it before artificial lights and smog lowered our vision. Anywhere you are, though, a few of the bright stars and planets are always visible, even in the city. If you can't sleep go out and look at the stars.

A meditative experiment for the radical and the brave: From now 'til Samhain, avoid all night time electronic media. Know darkness and stars.

Last Minute News of the Groves

Some of the fish in our pond had become caught in the algae and had died. The spirulina was making good use of the fish-fertilizer. "Oh, dear! The algae is eating the fish." That's how it is out here at Orinda Grovesite everything happening backwards. According to some strains of Celtic mythology, this would mean we have all died and gone to the netherworld. This not a bad theory; it would explain so much.

How's it going, Bob? Jennifer and I were in the neighborhood and thought we'd drop in and see how the search for inner peace and solitude is coming.

(To our new subscribers: This is the finale on a debate that has raged for eight or more months. To get the full fight, send a stamped large envelope for relevant parts of the back issues. Then write up your opinions and send them in.)

Post Oak Proto-Grove

Scholarly pursuits and research can be very mystical and to deny this is missing the point of my attempt to reconstruct the ancient Druids' tradition. When one takes the time to consume the writings of Indo-European scholars, archaeologists, comparative-mythologists, professors of religious history and socio-cultural anthropologists—you are disciplining yourself to a set of guidelines that will keep you on the path to *truth*. The scholarly data are the guideposts and signs along the road to *another* time and place. One forms a mental image or set of images; it starts out blurry and fuzzy, but the more you journey backward in time, the clearer it becomes. When you study linguistics and philology—you can begin to hear the voices of the ancient ones. You can read the ancient inscriptions or etymologies and that helps you to hear the voices from the past. When you study the culture of the ancient Celts or the Indo-Europeans, you begin to form cleaner and cleaner pictures and images of their lives. And then, when you begin to organize and integrate the data you've collected, your mental picture becomes a whole, built-up upon many pictures, sounds and even feelings.

It is like a shamanic journey, but you are not witnessing or experiencing an Otherworld, but a past world—this world as it was. When the puzzle pieces fit together—correlating and corroborating—the image must be true and real and you must reject those pieces which do not fit together, which are not verifiable by comparison and contrast. When it comes together—the image can become so sharply focused that you can *feel* it. When you are studying it and organizing it all—you are absorbed into it and you become like a shaman possessed by spirits. But the important thing, when you take the journey, is to leave behind all assumptions—to become a detached observer leaving behind judgmental thoughts—prejudices, biases and misconceptions. When you come back from the journey, you are in the here and now, and you may then form opinions about it (what you saw and felt), this is where you can apply the data, but the data is a reconstructed tradition and the more facts (verifiable through tests, correlation, corroboration, etc.) the closer your reconstruction is to the ultimate truth. Another way of testing the truth is by its internal logic and also by substantiating it with appeals to the BEST authorities who have used strictest standards of reconstruction.

There *is* a mysticism in scholarship, indeed! It is very useful scholarship to reconstruct the past—for many reasons that are obvious. It is not a matter of taste or opinion when you have actually seen or demonstrated a matter of fact—the reaction to the facts are something entirely different! If something is an established fact, then it is right for its own sake and for the sake of *truth*. Whether or not an ancient Druid said or did something is either a fact or not a fact, and can either be demonstrated or not! One only has the authority to facts about something, but truth is contingent to facts. You can choose to base your beliefs on a factual matter or not, but a belief which expresses to deny a fact is a *false* belief, no matter how you categorize it!

Example:

A false belief:

"Lugh is an Egyptian god believed in by industrial workers in China.
I believe in this."

A true belief:

"I believe that the sunset occurred at dusk this evening."

My vision of Druidism is to reconstruct the ancient religious beliefs and allow it to become part of a new tradition. Now in reconstructing the old traditions—I am engaging in an activity that is subject to being fact or non-fact. Either the Druid said this (did this) or he did not. Whether I can verify it through cultural, anthropological, linguistic, literary or historical evidence is the criteria for establishing its veracity. If it is verifiable, provable, or demonstrable through scholarship, then it is worthy of becoming integrated into the tradition. Once established into the reconstructed tradition, then it becomes a matter of fact—and only then can we say whether or not we agree with it or believe in it.

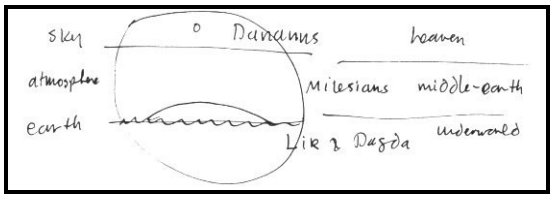
If we choose not to believe in it, then we have broken off from ancient tradition, but it is still part of our heritage as neo-Druids, for after all we have named ourselves after them and that implies that we have drawn from them somehow. If we make-up a false tradition, on the other hand, we encourage false beliefs and we become a ridiculous joke in the history of human folly. If we take ourselves too seriously, of course, we could very well become the sort of "Our way is the only right way" authoritarian fundamentalist type of thing. But if we are not serious enough, we cannot fulfill ourselves, we are a joke and we can degenerate into a superficial band of people who miss out on thoughtfulness.

More on Mitra-Varuna dual sovereignty. In the Celtic priesthood, the Druids were supreme authorities—they were xenophobic, conservative and they embodied traditions of their culture, they scorned eclecticism (unless it fit in with their tradition!)—only in southern Narbonensian Gaul did they allow much outside influences. The seers and prophets, vates and filidhe, etc. were concerned with the more mystical side—but still they were working within the bounds of tradition too—maybe more strictly since the Druid (purohita) types were watching over them. Also, the *filidhe*, uates, or *faith* were poets—they sang, chanted and composed verses—literary types more than we are or could ever be, but we need more of it! The Rix (pl. Riges)—kings were bound to carry out the policies set by Druids (purohita-types) because Druids were judges drawing upon TRADITIONS that they memorized. Odin and Tiw or Lugh and Nuadu were gods who perhaps personified the relationship between Druid and Rix, between Brahman and Rajan or Flamen and Rex, but the correspondence was probably closest in those Proto-Indo-European days when the Kurgan folk had yet to divide the segmented lineages and load up the wagons in search of greener pastures. When the Regos and Blaghmen were our ancestors' father and uncle, dividing their tasks between war and sacrifice, between leading men in a cattle-raid and leading poets in praise. The Regos grabbed his battle axe and said "follow me" while his brother the gheu-patruos or Blaghsmen said "I'll lead the people in a sacrifice to offer Dyeu-pater our best bull, so that our Regos and his men shall have victory in the raid!"

So the priest offered a bull to the god of war, a sky god, and the king led the raid—thus father-sky had a brother who made judgements on the people below and the thus the priest must find out this god's will. Manus killed Yemos—priest sacrificed the king—for the king must be willing to die for his people—as their father and protector. He gave his life so others could live, but our uncle the priest made sure his death was dignified and honorable and thus the father of mankind was a twin Yemos (Yama, Yima, Ymir, Remus, Donn or Tuisto) and the uncle of mankind was Manus (Manu, Romulus, Wironos, Mannwaz, Amhairghen or Manannán) he was the priest, the twin of Yemos. The corresponding gods were Odin and Tiwaz, Jupiter

and Dius Fidius, Zeus and Hades, Lugh and Nuadu, Mitra-Varuna, Bodb and Manannán, or Amhairgehn and Donn. The pattern fits:

Sea Giants	Sky Gods	Man Kind
House of Llyr & Dagda "Eochaid Ollathair"	House of Danann	House of Milé
Bodb Dearg—king	Nuada—king	Donn—king
Manannán Mac Lir—priest	Lugh—priest	Amhairghen—priest



[Clearer chart for graph above.]

Sky	Dananns	Heaven
Atmosphere	Milesians	Middle-earth
Earth	Lir & Dagda	Underworld

Hope to hear from you again,

Tom

May 1st

Dear Emmon,

Got your letter of "May 1st." Sorry to have been so didactic—perhaps I am out-growing neo-paganism—or perhaps I am rebelling against it—the theology of modern religion. If I have offended anyone by defending myself, then it must be a sure sign that I no longer fit in anymore. Still, I believe I have been unjustly criticized or whatever you want to call it.

It seems, also, now, that I have offended you. I truly regret this, if this is so. I *never* intended to upset anyone but merely to state my position so that I could get on with writing scholarship or scholarly research type of stuff. When I have to stop and defend scholarship, it took away from just writing it. I was beginning to feel that no one cared—no feedback – no positive feedback, either! There's mysticism in scholarship which, I believe, we both share. Correct me if I'm wrong! You have shared really great stuff with me and I like James Duran's exposition, because of listening to him, I was turned on to Structuralism, Cultural materialism, and comparing African New Religion, etc. I believe that this turned my direction toward getting at the bottom of the I-E religious stuff- yet at the same time that I wanted to reconstruct the religion, I also turned away from its "modern" application.

It's like taking a shamanic journey into another time or another world. I believe there is mysticism in studying history—when you can imagine the past—dream about it and see it. I'm not going to send in anymore stuff to the Missal-Any because I believe that it is not apparently of any interest to the readers anymore—unless someone wants to write to me, I'm going to keep my mouth shut and only contribute if requested! I enclose the letter fragment I wrote a few days ago.

—Tom

Heathen on the Heath: The Secret of Autumn

Autumn is a promise, wind singing of the blessed rains to come. Autumn is my true love calling, soft as death. The door blows open; cats run in and out. The scent and horror of wildfire blows away, and we foolhardy ones replace it with the smoke of woodstoves against cold that we secretly cherish.

In these days I glare daggers at those who whine for more nice days. Have we cursed our land with the curse of drought, for the sake of our prim plastic notion of a nice day? Do we think of unblemished tomatoes, or mold-free buds, or whatever turns us over-proliferating hominids on, and not of the Mother? She knows her grief will soon be upon her; do we forbid her to weep and be comforted? I may throw a shoe at the Today Show one of these mornings—a strange offering to the gods!

I pick tomatoes now, between writing assignments. My boss is unlike me, but also a farmer. He tells me how he does it, but is also open-eared for what little I may know that he does not. That eternally confused expression belongs to both of us. We share a secret, called "Damned If I Know." We run to beat the deadline of rain, and altogether it's sort of festive.

Autumn howls laughter, weeps loving, just around the corner, and we beg for the turning of seasons, while cursing the passage of time. Neopagans differ from paleopagans, for we face threats that our forbears did not, and are lulled by our overcomplicated distancing devices. No neophyte bard or Druid could have been held in thrall by a vehicle unstartable, or a heating or cooling whoozits beyond normal comprehension. A wise one might instruct on in the mysteries, but no expert was needed to keep one functioning. Take time from the broken washing machine, Oh my People, and ponder the water we wash with. No one has yet died and left us in charge, and that water could somehow manage not to come. We differ as we must, but also in ways that we should not. And in some ways, all our pagan forebears knew the same thing.

What's Gaelic for "Be attentive as you walk?"

News of the Groves

We have finished digging the post-holes and set the seven cabers in place that will hold the retaining wall so that we can level the Maypole meadow. We plan to use woven wood and mud mortar, "daub and wattle works," for the body of the wall. The ancient city walls and dykes of Dublin were made this way. Dublin is from Dubh Linn: "for in the black pond." Our post-holes and earth-works will still be detectable thousands of years hence. Though unless this culture takes some radical detours, they will probably be under shore-to-shore condominiums.

This year has not only been one of the driest, but has also seen one of the worst infestations of Oak Moths in Orinda in living memory. (And living memory is the way we go. In answer to one letter writer's question. "No, the Druid Missal-Any is not computerized. Its records are kept in the living memory of its Third Order Druids.") Not wanting to break with Organic Purity, we did not spray, but have trusted to the birds and worms' other natural enemies. Some of the bird species have gotten in two nests this year, and all have had a "Banner Year." Last service, at that in the R.D.N.A. ritual when offerings of requests to the different Deities are accepted, I asked to be instructed as to what should do for our Oak trees, especially for Darag, a Valley Oak in the consecrated part of the Grove who has suffered more damage from the worms than have the Live Oaks. Next day, in a Health food store of all places, my eye was drawn to a new, guaranteed Organic, product for dealing with these worms which have been

bad all over the Bay Area. Next service, I will confer with my fellow Druids and we will decide whether and how to use it.

Advertisement

A Rare Gem in the Emerald Isle

A palatial dwelling with panoramic vista of the Irish Sea and Wicklow Hills, City of Dublin. Boasts of up-to-date heating, security and recreation facilities. Living accommodations 5500 sq. ft. on 1.79 acs., 8 bedrooms with fireplaces, lounge, music room, conservatory, dining room with art alcove, ecclesiastical chapel, kitchen, breakfast, laundry, utility, pantry, wine cellar. Stained glass windows—works of art. Asking $650,000. Act on impulse! Call today for more info. & color brochure.

Brian Quinn, bkr
818/359-6184

Calendar

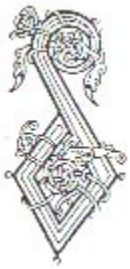
Astronomical Equinox will occur at thirteen hours and thirty nine minutes Greenwich Time on September 23, 1987. That translates into 6:39 A.M. Pacific Daylight Time. This is about as late in the year as Equinox ever gets. Experience it; put it in your living memory.

Postmarked Sep. 18 1987

A Druid Missal-Any
Samhain 1987
Volume 11 Number 7

Samhain Essay: Celtic Feast Days

By Emmon Bodfish



amhain, Celtic New Year, the day between the Worlds. The Druid year starts with Samhain in the fall of the year, just as the Druid reckoning of days begins each day at the fall of night. This high day marks the end of the harvest season. Any fruit not gathered in by Samhain Eve must be left in the fields to feed the birds and the wild animals, or the Sidhe, as one would have it. According to Françoise Le Roux, whose article, "Studies on the Celtic Feast Days" has been translated from the French by one of our subscribers, Jeanne Elizabeth, Samhain may he derived from Sam Fuin, meaning weakening or end of summer. Other competing derivations from Sam Rad or Samhra are by no means disproven, such as Samh-rad, summer, or Samhrach, quiet, still.

Like New Year's celebrations everywhere, Samhain's festivities fall into two sequential phases: one that signifies a return to Chaos, to wit: the disposal of old goods, expelling of evil, reversal of usual habits of behavior, parties, suspension of taboos, and the return of the dead to this world of the living, all of which occur on Samhain night; and a second phase which signifies rebirth of the Cosmos and creation anew, to wit: the lighting of new fires, the beginning of a new season, inauguration of new ceremonies, re-affirmation of the existing order, and installation of new leaders. This phase is enacted Samhain morning, and is symbolized in the RDNA tradition in the Samhain Dawn service, Service The newly elected Archdruid, in Preceptor, and Server enact the first service of the new year; All Third order Druids change their ceremonial ribbons to new white ones, and winter begins.

News of the Groves

It's a short article, not for any lack of news, but what with the markets doing yo-yo's and back flips, we have had very little time to write down anything other than numbers. If it is true, as Jim Duran says, that the ancestors may send or withhold prosperity, then the ancestors are PISSED! We will see what we can do about this on Samhain when the gates between the worlds open, and the dead are said to walk and speak. In the meantime, we promise a longer, "catch-up" article if and when things settle down around Yule.

"I would go crazy,
but I already live there."

—Mad Sweeney

Announcing a new, pagan and New Age oriented newspaper from northern California. It includes more writing from the author of our column. "The Heathen on the Heath."

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Calendar

Astronomical Samhain, when the sun is midway between Equinox and Solstice, will occur on November 6, 1987, at 5:40 P.M. Pacific Standard Time, or by the Astrological method, at 8:42 P.M. Pacific Standard Time, also on November 6th. Samhain Festivities here will begin at sundown, and culminate with the sacrifice of the maypole ribbons, and end with the dawn Service, ushering in the new year.

Letter to the Editor (received Oct. 29)

Editor:

"The Celts had no Mother Goddesses." Startling theory! And where does Tom Cross get the evidence to contradict Green, deVries, Grenier and Szabo, etc., the accepted experts in the field? Listen to this. "Going by the fact that Danu is cognate with the name of the Danube river, it seems that She is (or was) originally a River Goddess," he says, jumping to his own conclusion. In other words he does what he accuses the rest of us of doing: He makes it up out of his head. Exactly what are Mr. Cross' credentials? Not many, I think. And while he is invoking academia and scholarship, why doesn't he go back to some school and learn to write a grammatical English sentence?

Enclosed is a brief summary of evidence pertaining to the Mother Goddesses of the Celts by Prof. Green.

Sincerely,

Annie Rum
B.A. Comparative Literature
M.A. Folkloric Studies

(The summary she enclosed is too long to reprint here, and we would have to break copy write to print it, since it is from Green's published work. Anyone who wants a copy, send us an envelope with three ounces worth of postage on it.
—Ed.

Advertisement

SAMHAIN MOOT—attention all. C. of D. (College of Druidism) members resident on mainland Britain we are planning a Major Druidical celebration of SAMHAIN in Roslyn Glen (10 miles from Edinburgh). Some of the three days Mon. 31st Oct., Tues. 1st & Wed. 2nd Nov. will be spent in instruction/preparation in Caer Eidyn, the rest will be spent camped-out in Roslyn Woods. If you would like to join the Edinburgh Group for this Holy Festival then please get in touch well in advance, so we can make arrangements about accommodation etc.

The Heathen on the Heath: Death

Samhain is change; Samhain is ever the same. Year after year we celebrate the Eternal Return, yet in many ways, every Samhain, we are made aware that you can never really go home.

Remember the dead, they whom—at least this time around—we will not see again. If ever we do meet again, it will be a different story, with everyone wearing different faces; the beloved ghosts who watch with us this night can only wait, and whimper, hoping that when Mannannen's cloak is finally drawn between us, it is wisdom and not wounds that each shall bring away from that parting. Some changes are irrevocable.

I talk to my death. I ask his advice, and he always gives it. It never differs from the last advice he gave me, but the sound of his voice awakens the mind to flooding moonlight, clearer than the cluttered light of day, and all the hairs on the back of my neck stand up, and petty things become very small indeed. For my death says, "Whatever it is that you will do, remember that I am coming for you; I know when that is, but you don't."

We live in a real world, and we know that because, one by one, we die. This Samhain, as we stand in the moon-drenched grass, can we let wishful thinking drain from us, and be there for our Gods as they are? The wishful mind is a lover so busy planning the wedding, or choreographing the seduction, or mentally buying a house, that the fiery satin of the beloved's touch goes unnoticed. Imagination given to the present, and to the opening of the senses, is psychedelic; there is no book of instructions for the opening of an eye, and no script for a kiss.

Name the names of your dead, and let yourself cry. Look at the living and see them. Don't miss anything, because the next Samhain, the next year, the next life, the next time you step on this same patch of ground, everything will be different.

Albion's Thoughts

(Received Sept 28)

I don't want this to be another face off with Tom Cross. There *is* a need for scholarship and research into the ways of our ancestors, there is a place for what Tom does, there is a need for what he does.

As I've said before, I'm not a Druid. Ritually, I practice some hereditary pagan ways (that came from the Midlands of England) mixed liberally with some modern paganism, (oriented to wards the Celtic God/desses).

I also carry a "medicine bag," I ritually sweat in a sweat lodge whenever I can, and sometimes I smoke the ceremonial pipe as well, I don't "blend" all of these ways together (i.e. the Celtic and Native American ways), but practice them separately, but they are different paths to the *same source,* and in some ways, the Inner God/dess forms are very similar. And, both paths, most importantly, *work.*

I've gone into all of this to say that it's o.k.. to take whatever path(s) that you need to take to achieve you own personal Union with the Gods, no matter what anyone else says, follow your *own* path, for this is "the high road" to Spiritual Freedom.

There is one last thing that I'd like to address here.

"The Gods" like us have grown. We aren't in 2nd century Ireland or Gaul, but reside in 1987 North America. Our approach to the Gods is going to change over time, and change with our evolution as a race and species. As we have changed and continued to grow, so too, have the Gods-although their space-time frame is not like ours, the Gods Also "grow" and change. The "Other-World" is different than 2,000 years ago just as our world is different. Don't believe me, but take your own Shamanic journey to find out.

It is also o.k. to "update" our spiritual approach to the Gods, no matter what anyone else might say.

And I'm not saying that the Celtic "Old Ways" are no longer "valid" for our modern age, but perhaps our Faith is a new, and I feel *improved* form of the old faith. As I turn 36 years old on Samhain, I want to begin a new year of my life and this is the last that I wish to writ on this particular subject. There is a place for us all on these pages and no one should give up on helping others to learn but we all hopefully, have learned some important lessons about our selves. This is true growth and is a great spiritual lesson and a gift.

Blessings to all,

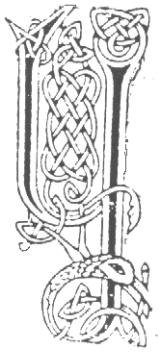
Albion

Postmarked 3 Nov 1987

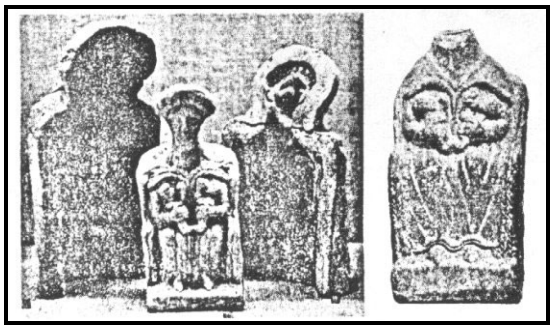
A Druid Missal-Any Yule 1987 Volume 11 Number 8

Yule Essay: Mother Goddesses

By Emmon Bodfish



ule, Winter Solstice, was a minor High Day in the old Druid calendar. The festival's association with a Mother and newborn Son is very old through-out the Eurasian cultural area. It predates Indo-European occupation of Europe, and probably included the Proto-Indo Europeans in their steppes homeland. A Goddess and a Young Year God were worshiped in Balkan Europe before 3500 B.C. and in Summeria and the Caucus even earlier, In Rome, (much later) it was the Festival of the Three Mothers, probably cognates of the extremely popular Triple Mothers cult of the Celts. Mass produced, molded pipe clay votive figures of the three are found throughout Britain and Gaul.*



Left. Pipe-clay mother-goddess and mould; Toulon-sur-Allier, France. Photograph: Miranda Green. Musée des Antiquitiés Nationales, St. Geramain-en-Laye. Right. Pipe-clay mother-goddesses; London. Copyright: Museum of London.

As deVries's, Grenier's, Green's, Szabo's and Ross's work has shown, the mother-goddess cult, so popular in Gaul and Britain during the Pre-conquest period and extending into Romano-Celtic times, has its origin in Proto-Indo-European culture, and shares features with similar cults in some of the other Indo-European peoples. The parallel has been drawn many times with Tacitus' description of the Teutonic Earth-goddess Nerthus who rode in procession through cities. This imagery recalls and is corroborated by Strettweg processional wagon with its female figure and also, later Romano-Celtic Mother figures portrayed in chariots. Another parallel is suggested in Irish literary tradition in descriptions of Connaught's Queen Medb being driven in her chariot around her camp before battle. Medb is a problematic figure, somewhere between a goddess and a heroic archetype. But it must be remembered that the "Tain Bo Chuailgne" was not written down in pagan times.

*Proving that mass-produced little religious goodies are not a modern tackiness.

News of the Groves

I am calling an end to the Cross vs. Guppy et. al. debate. It has become too acrimonious. We Druids are a tiny minority within a minority, the modern pagans, and need to support and understand each other, or at least extend tolerance to one another, being as we are surrounded by an intolerant world, much of which wishes we did not exist. Articles on the subjects are always welcome, but no more personal vilification.

The Celts did not have a single, monotheistic, all-powerful Mother Goddess. That was never what was being maintained. Neither did they have a single all-powerful Father God; they had multiplicity. For a Father, they had Dispater, from whom at least some of the Gauls claimed to descend. Then there was Tuates, a war and ancestor God of the tribes. Better delineated was Dagda, the father of many of the other Gods and Goddesses. And Sucellos, called the "All-Father," but his role beyond that designation is not clear. We know of Mider, a God of fertility and Albius, the Sky God. What did they mean to the Ancient Celts? There is no all-ruling Zeus. Zeus in fact is thought to be cognate with Taranis, a Thunderbolt God who is not a particularly fatherly figure in Celtic mythology. Another God, Nuada, has been called "the Celtic Zeus." Multiplicity and specialization were the rule.

Where did it start? We don't have a Celtic creation myth. Undoubtedly they had one, hut it has been lost in the intervening Roman and Christian darkness. Each of the "houses" clan groups, or "Branches," in Ireland traced their origins back to the tomb of a female ancestor, and attributed the same system of reconning, descent to their Gods, calling them "People" of the Goddess Danu," the Tuath de Danann." It was a female progenitor who was honored at Tara and in Ulster. This is unusual. In most of the rest of the world tribes generally traced themselves back to a male ancestor, divine, semi-divine or semi-animal and divine.

There is no lack of Mother-goddesses among the Celts. Several dozen are known by name from inscriptions or mythologies, the exact count depends on whom you believe to be separate figures, and which you think are different names for the same Goddess in the Celtic mind. Green has studied hundreds of Mother-goddess statues, figurines, and votive inscriptions by way of hard evidence. To dismiss all female deities as "mere consorts of the Gods." is to impose nineteenth century attitudes and values on ancient Europe. The Triple-Mothers, for instance, had no consorts.

I have listed below some of the recent literature.

The Gods of the Celts	Miranda Green
Goddesses and Gods of Old Europe	M. Gimbutas
Celtic Mysteries	John Sharkey
Celtic Mythology	P. MacCana
The Pagan Celts	A. Ross
Story of the Irish Race	McManus
Celtic Religion in Roman Britain	Webster
Celtic Myth and Legend	Squire
Gods and Heroes of the Celts	Dillon
The Druids (now in paper)	W. Rutherford,
Indo-European and Indo-Europeans	Cardonal, et. al.
Academic Journals	Send SASE for a list.

Calendar

Winter Solstice will occur at 1:46 A.M. Pacific Standard time on December 22, l987.

Hunting Thoughts

Sacrifice of two white bulls was traditional to this festival. Knowing that we lacked white bulls, the Deities have provided us in Orinda with a young Mu1e deer buck, who may have grazed at times on our hill. For this, and for the wild greens and the firewood to cook them, we offer up our thinks.

Mad Sweeney's morals: If you hunt, kill only to sustain your own lives, never for "pleasure." Take only what you can use. Send a SASE for instructions on how to tan a hide. Check the hunting laws in your state. And if *you* really want to get the experience, remember: Knives and guns are for ninnies.

Mad Sweeney's Hunting Knife

With only little encouragement I may write an article about how to make these stone tools.

The Heathen on the Heath: Making a Tradition

Time was when I tried to tie every column in with the theme of the seasons. But I've ridden at least one revolution of the year-wheel with this column, and it has finally occurred to me that Mad Sweeney handles the seasonal aspects of the Missal-Any quite well, without the aid of my scholly sloppership. So I think I'll stop the year and get off.

What, I haven't succeeded? Why, so I haven't. For I have here a subject of rant and rave quite appropriate for winter's dark insistence. You see, it occurs to me that winters—especially country winters—are a fine time to get down to the grunt work of our religion. We have sung and feasted and sacrificed, and yelled at one another and praised our ancestors. But what do we do next? What is a pagan, or more specifically a Reformed Druid, life, in grubby day-to-day detail?

I must first admit that hard, clearheaded scholarship is something that I perceive as a duty, badly neglected on my part. I am currently poking my nose into the study of history, in bits and snippets, including more of the world than the U.S., or Celtic Britain and Ireland. The future springs from the loam of the past; if one wants to add a few nutrients for its proper growth, it helps to know what was thrown on the compost heap to begin with, and also to be reasonably aware of the nature of composting.

But what do we want to do with that future? Could I say that most of us would like to bring with us some of the values that we find in the visions of our Celtic forebears—the stubborn individualism that has led English-speaking peoples (and those who still speak Gaelic) into political experimentation that has continued to this day? Do we want to continue the openhearted pride and hospitality of the Celt, and the bold curiosity that looks the very Gods squarely in the eye?

We can only start right now. And though we may debate the correctness of possibility of writing, or rather rewriting, our own religion, the need to rewrite our culture is hardly worth an argument. Culture gets rewritten, and one can either participate actively or be manipulated by those in power. We're living a script that was heavily re-written in the aftershock of two world wars: although the sanctity of the family per se is a very old concept, the sanctity of the *nuclear* family is no older than our own parents. Cut! We're gonna have to do that scene over again. The previous generation meant well. They probably hoped, by isolating the breeding unit, to achieve greater individual prestige, and in some cases, it worked.

No one could have explained to them, without first trying it, that isolating small groups of people with specialized roles under heavy economic pressure would provide all sorts of motivation for abuse. And the failure to deal with Grandma and Grandpa, though a grandiose glitch, is no bigger than some of the boners we'll pull, once we get the lead out and start doing things.

Who's that in the back row? You say "doing things" is a fine idea for flaky South Humboldt hippies, but what about you real folks with real jobs and real bosses and neighbors and such to deal with?

You win a few, you lose a few. Actually, country folks can be just as hardheaded in their expectations as city dwellers, and although rural neighbors are fewer, they have more influence on your day-to-day life. Which brings me to the next point; if we expect to have any influence on our surroundings, we must exercise it as neighbours do, a little at a time.

It would perhaps be more fun to establish, immediately, a clan-type family structure with a set of equal-opportunity social customs. This is always a favorite fantasy, probably because everybody wants to be The McGregor. But if you are the leader of your embryo clan, you have my heartfelt sympathy. Chances are that your contributions pass unremarked, except by loud complaints of stubbornness, meddling, egotism, and being late when you drive the neighbors' kids to school. The loudest grousing will come from your own immediate family, since time devoted to a larger group is time not lavished exclusively on them.

To be even responsible, much less acceptable or polite, we must start small. This means noticing small things.

To whom do we show respect, for what, and in what ways? What are our prejudices? (Careful—lying saps power.)

Is there any subject regarding which we would not want to pass our beliefs on to our children?

Are our religious ideals reflected in our etiquette? Do we give lip service to the Mother, but expect human mothers to stay home until their figures look normal and their kids don't cry unexpectedly? Do we fear and ridicule old age?

Do we revere Nature, but describe biological processes in the language of disgust? (Footnote: this correspondent is aware of the glory-in-grossness rhetoric of Crowley, or the Hell's Angels. She is also aware that the excuses for such rhetoric only fool men. *Please* don't refer to a pregnant acquaintance as "spawning," at least in my hearing…probably also in hers. We *do* know what you mean, and we don't like it.) Or do we use euphemisms to shove conversation away from a subject, rather than handling it in a calm and neutral tone? If a child asked you to describe sex, what words would you use? My "well, they fit together" may have been less than articulate, but it at least allowed my daughter to laugh, especially when I explained that when she was old enough, her instincts would cause her to enjoy it. "I always knew grownups were weird!" said she.

Do we deplore patriarchalism in the home, autocracy in business, and arbitrariness in law, but allow them to function unmolested? Do we "mind our own business" about socially acceptable cruelties, but pretend to the "normality" of the busy bodies in power?

Do we vote? Do we volunteer in the service of our beliefs?

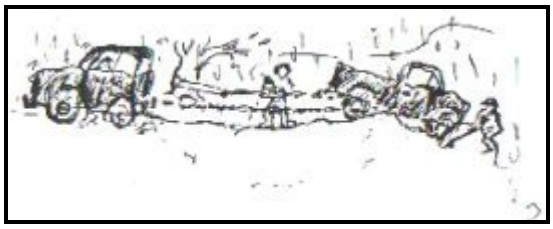
Do we have a relationship with our surroundings? With plants? With animals? How well do we know our climate, our soil, our geography?

See? This is the grunt work. This is the kind of thing a religion faces you with, once you've lasted through the honeymoon phase. And half the time, once you've decided what the Gods really want you to do, your first impulse will be to try to talk Them out of it. Like, there's a quintillion bazillion gophers in my garden, and You Guys don't want me to use *any* poisons? Not even one little pellet? And about that geas. Folks—you really mean to tell me that You expect people to have geasa in the Eighties? Next, You'll be asking us whether we believe in magic.

But if you readers are members of the NRDNA or related organizations at this point in their development, you're the diehards, the ones who have made it this far. You've lived through the political snits and social catastrophes that drove away the dilettantes and novelty-seekers. Your pagan eyes have seen births and marriages and divorces and deaths. You have, somewhere within you, a worldview not taught to you by either mainstream religious or secular authorities.

Now, obviously, there's no law that says you can't just bug out on the project at this point. Taking your feral spiritual priorities out for a spin can make you conspicuous, especially in the current sociopolitical climate of enlightened despair. Giving up always looks terribly sophisticated.

But you can't bug out on winter.



Myself and some of my fellow Neo-Pagans in the Berkeley Inter-Faith Counsel's Thanksgiving Pageant. Your editor is second from the left, in Druid regalia.

Postmarked 17 Dec 1987

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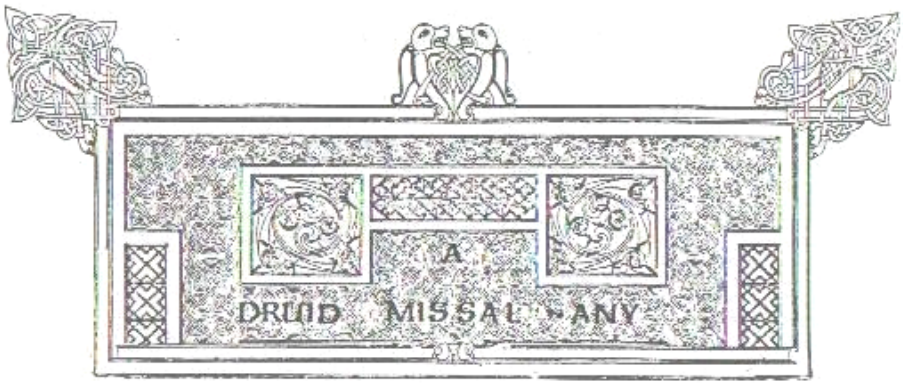
Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION TWO



A Druid Missal-Any
Volume Twelve
1988 c.e.

Drynemetum Press

A Druid Missal-Any Oimelc 1988 Volume 12 Number 1

Oimelc Essay: Bride

By Emmon Bodfish

imelc. Now is the time of Breedes, Bridget, Goddess of the hearth, Ruler of fire, Lucinda, Vesta, candle light parades, Lady Day, the Thaw. Bride was one of the most popular of the pan-Celtic Deities, and in Pagan times a perpetual fire burned on Her altar in Kildare. She was attended by a female priesthood. She is also the Dawn Maiden who hangs Her cloak on the rays of the morning sun. The sun is feminine in Gaelic, and in Scot's folk tradition.

34. To the Sun

> Greeting to you, sun of the seasons, as you travel the skies on high, with your strong steps on the wing of the heights; you are the happy mother of the stars.
>
> You sink down in the perilous ocean without harm and without hurt; you rise up on the quiet wave like a young queen in flower.
>
> Scottish Gaelic; traditional folk prayer, from *A Celtic Miscellany*

From now until Equinox we worship Bride and give thanks for fire. When you light your fire or candle during these days, try, this old Scot's verse, which is, I think, in a direct oral tradition from old Paganism.

> "Unto Bride, Ruler of Fire,
> Give us this little comfort now."

Mad Sweeney's News

I have news for you; the stag bells, winter snows, summer has gone.

Wind high and cold, the sun low, short its course, the sea running high.

Deep red the bracken, its shape is lost; the wild goose has raised its accustomed cry.

Cold has seized the birds' wings; season of ice, this is my news.

> Irish; author unknown; ninth century, from *A Celtic Miscellany*

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Dear Gentlefolk,

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If you already produce printed materials, why not send us a copy of what you're currently doing? We'll be delighted to provide you with a bid on your next reprint. Otherwise, be sure and call us the next time you're working on a business card, catalog, paperback book, direct mail piece or other printing job; we'll thank you, your checkbook will thank you, and, most importantly, the trees will thank you.

Blessed Be,

Anne Newkirk
Account Executive
Arena Press
PO Box 468
Point Arena, CA 95468

P.S. We also offer a line of Pagan/feminist bumper stickers for sale. Write us for a free catalog of prices and designs.

207 Main Street, P.O. Box 468, Point Arena, CA 95468 (707) 882-2833

Photo by Kathy Sheffield

Trout Creek Update:

The Trout Creek Watershed is a unique and special area; the only significant virgin multi-storied grove of old-growth Douglas Fir on the entire 12-mile stretch of the Eel River from its source on Hull Mountain to Van Arsdale Dam. As such, it is **the last old-growth sanctuary** where native plants and animals can

remain undisturbed. Secondly, the area of the proposed **logging would directly impact Trout Creek, impairing the water quality of the Creek, and ultimately the River itself**. Furthermore, the area is easily accessible to the public, being directly above PG & E's own campground. In order to preserve a unique and endangered old-growth eco-system and to protect water quality, recreational and scenic values, which cannot be duplicated in half a millennium, we believe **Trout Creek should be maintained as a sanctuary**. The friends of Trout Creek are more than willing to work with PG & E in the care and maintenance of such a sanctuary.

—John Harnish
Spokesman for FTC

Trout Creek is a major tributary to the main fork of the Eel River. This river supplies both domestic and agricultural water for 300,000 people in Mendocino, Sonoma and Marin Counties. The Eel is a troubled river, overburdened with silt, largely from abusive logging practices. The river is struggling to support its own native steelhead and salmon populations. The silt in the river settles in Lake Pillsbury and Lake Mendocino, causing a diminished water storage capacity for its users in dry summer months.

On Dec. 23, 1986 PG & E filed a Timber Harvest Plan (THP) on 637 acres surrounding a two-mile section of Trout Creek. Through public support, both in donations and letter writing, Friends of Trout Creek and the Rural Institute have been able to temporarily halt the destruction of the last stand of old growth timber on the Upper Eel River**. Only through legal action** has it been possible to get PG & E to come to the negotiation table and talk about alternatives to their THP.

Over the last few months a negotiating team has met on a regular basis with PG & E's representatives. The tentative outcome of those negotiations was an amended THP that provided only a shallow visual screen along the county road and Trout Creek itself.

PG & E has refused to protect these small buffer zones from future timber harvest and claims that donation of the land is not feasible under current tax structures.

After reviewing the proposed agreement with the Rural Institute, Sierra Club officials and Earth First! activists, and in light of a recent Sonoma County court ruling to the effect that cumulative impacts must be addressed, FTC has agreed to continue with legal actions, and pursue further negotiations.

A Court date of January 29, 1988 has been set. Most of the groundwork has been laid, but additional funds must be raised to secure the necessary legal assistance.

Photo by Evan Johnson

YOU CAN HELP!

- **Attend a General Public Meeting:**
  January 19th, 7:30 PM
  Mendocino Environment Center
  106 W. Standley, Ukiah
  Your input is needed;
  Time is running out!

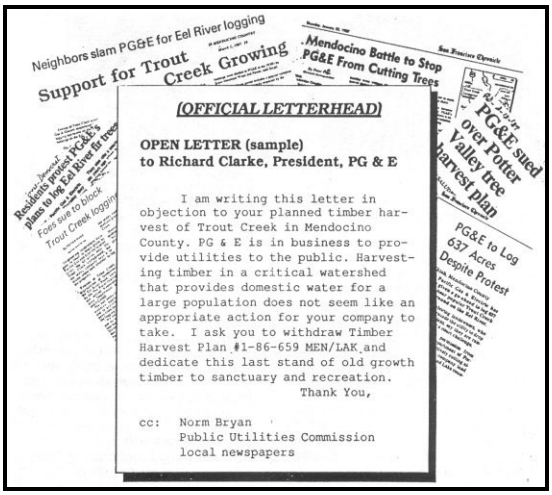
- **Write Open Letters** (see sample)
  to:
  Richard Clarke
  Chief Executive Officer
  PG & E
  77 Beale St. 32nd Floor
  San Francisco, CA 94106
  Send copies to the editors of all you local papers.

- **Contribute funds to help with the Court Case**
  (see attached form)

Thank You!
The Friends of Trout Creek
PO Box 1172
Ukiah, CA 95482
(707) 463-1835

P.S. The original intent was to preserve this old growth Ecosystem as a wilder-ness sanctuary, and assure recreational opportunities and water conservation for future generations. This will continue to be the primary objective. Old-Growth Forests are not a renewable resource!

Your support with a contribution and/or volunteer time can make the difference!



(OFFICIAL LETTERHEAD)

Open Letter (sample)
To Richard Clarke, President, PG & E

I am writing this letter in objection to your planned timber harvest of Trout Creek in Mendocino County. PG & E is in business to provide utilities to the public. Harvesting timber in a critical watershed that provides domestic water for a large population does not seem like an appropriate action for your company to take. I ask you to withdraw Timber Harvest Plan #1-86-659 MEN/LAK and dedicate this last stand of old growth timber to sanctuary and recreation.

Thank You,

cc: Norm Bryan
Public Utilities Commission
Local newspapers

Mail Letters To:

Richard Clarke
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And to all your local newspapers (open letter to Richard Clarke via Editor)

Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Frenhinol Cymru
Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales

Contributed by Rod Hartwell

Calendar

Astronomical Oimelc, when the Sun is half way between Solstice and Equinox, will occur this year on February 4, at 9:24 AM, Pacific Standard Time. Some Groves celebrate when the Sun crosses 15 degrees of Aquarius. That will occur at 6:36 AM on the same day.

Postmarked Feb 2, 1988

A Druid Missal-Any Spring Equinox 1988 Volume 12 Number 2

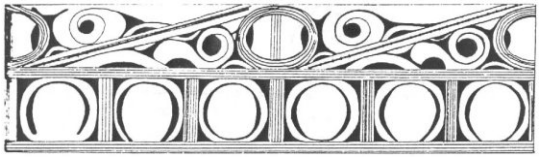
Spring Equinox Essay: Eggs, Bird Goddesses, and Hares

By Emmon Bodfish

quinox, a Minor Druid High Day, the emphasis is on balance. Some customs of the season which are hold overs from pre-Christian times include the colored and fanciful eggs and the "Easter Bunny" who brings them, though this was not the original sequence nor association.

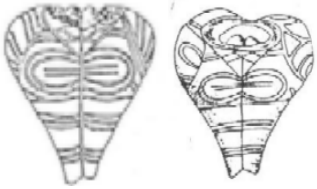
Nora Chadwick, a noted historian, describes the spring rite of the "offering of the cakes and eggs," recorded by classic authors in their descriptions of Druidic customs. Egg hunt, egg rolling games and rituals are still current in Ireland, Lithuania and Eastern Europe, and may have a Pre-Indo-European origin. Decorated eggs and painted clay models of eggs are a frequent theme of Aryan Balkan culture. They are part of the ensign of the Bird Goddess, whose worship seems to have been particular to spring and to the time of the spring rains, to judge from holdovers into Classic Greek times. Eggs are also part of the imagery of the Supreme Goddess of Old-European culture. In this connection they represent the Cosmic Egg, laid by the swan or Nile Goose, which was said to have begun the world. Small painted clay eggs were included inside statues of this Great Goddess, as in Marija Gimbutas drawings reproduced here.

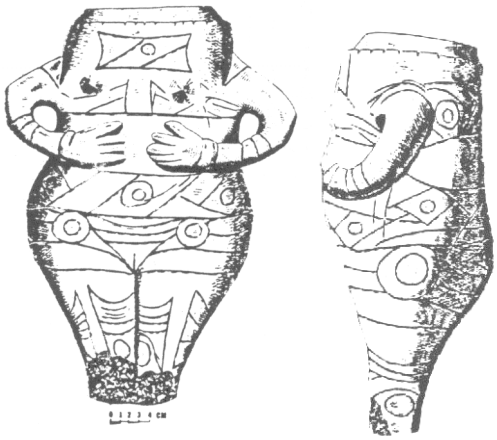
A Cosmic Egg may also be associated with they mythical water bird of Creation. This myth is almost universal between Africa and the Artic; it was recorded in the scripts and hieroglyphs of the literate civilizations and sung in the oral traditions of hunting and fishing tribes.

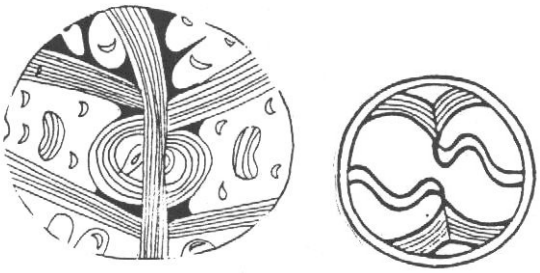


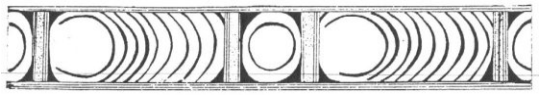
In an ancient Egyptian myth, the Cosmic Egg was laid by the Nile Goose which was worshipped as the "Great Chatterer," the creator of the world and of language. According to the Orphic story, uncreated Nyx (Night) existed first and was pictured as a great black-winged bird hovering over the vast darkness. Though unmated, she produced an egg out of which flew gold-winged Eros, while the two halves of the shell Ouranos and Gaia (Heaven and Earth) were created. The beginning of the myth must lie in the Paleolithic ear.[1]

The Egg, plus chatter, that is words, began the world.

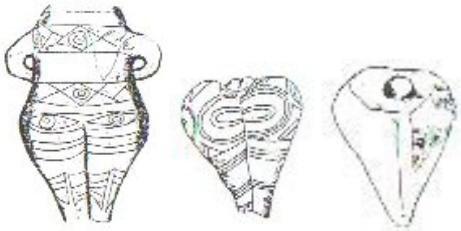


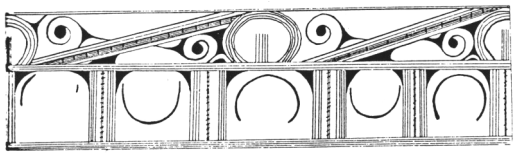




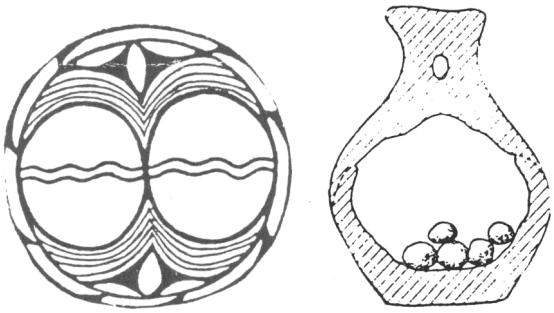


The Easter Bunny wasn't at all. It was a hare. The hare, not the rabbit, was the sacred animal of the Celts and Germans. Julius Caesar, in his war commentaries on Gaul, describes the Gauls and keeping "hares and certain other animals to amuse themselves, and which they do not eat" (nor hunt.) But the motive was more likely propitiation and divination than "amusement." The hare was seen as a messenger animal capable of travel between this and the Other World, and was associated with both prophecy and madness. The March Hare brought in the spring and gave the seeds their fertility, or withheld it. To run afoul of him caused madness. By the Middle Ages, the madness element predominated, and his came to he regarded as a demonic species. Many pagan ensigns and symbols suffered similar defamation and prophecy has always been associated with madness in Indo-European traditions, And, unlike the egg theme, the theme of the March Hare is solidly Indo-European. Its sacred and tabooed nature extends to most of the Western European languages groups and cultures. If language is the oldest witness to history, as Lockwood asserts,[2] then the Hare cult must go back to at least 3,500 B.C. and the second wave of the Indo European expansion before Celtic and Germanic and Italic diverged from one another. In these language groups the true word for hare, hara/haso, was tabooed and euphemisms were commonly invented for it in everyday speech.





Our American Ground Hog Day may be a dim and distant reflex of the March Hare theme with its element of prophecy of the early or a late spring. In the days of plowing and sowing magic, it was by the hare's behavior that people foretold the spring: weather and the prospects for the seeds about to be sown. By the shadows of posts and menhirs, not ground hogs, and by the points of the sun's risings, the priestly castes at the Great: Henges determined the day of the Equinox kept the calendar of sowing and reaping in time with the Heavens.



(It bears saying again: The Druids did not build Stone Henge. Nor as far as we know did they make use of it as a calendar. This was the work and genius of the pre-Celtic peoples of the British Isles.)

[1]Marija Gimbutas, *Goddesses and Gods of Old Europe*, U. of California Press, 1982.
[2]Lockwood, *Indo-European Philology*, Hutchins University Library Press, 1969.

109, 110 Double-eggs within the bellies of figurines which have double-egg motifs incised on front and back. Classical Cucuteni. Novy Ruseshty, Soviet Moldavia. End of fifth millennium B.C.

'Sonatas of becoming': sectioned and splitting eggs, crescents, full moons and snakes. Sipintsi, western Ukraine. Fourth millennium BC

The Heathen on the Heath: Fertility

The hills truly do flow with the milk of the ewe, and the birth of lambs in the frost. Some of them die. Lambkind, however, continues in its sheer numbers, milling back and forth past the bones of the lost ones in the field.

For the animals, the promise of fertility is enough. Each mother beast has her own soft wondering here-baby sound, of desire fulfilled and her work cut out for her. Once I, too, made such sounds.

For the ewe, the task is over when she dies, or when death looms so close that the body will no longer answer any other call. For a woman, time passes a little differently. My tall son and daughter are a source of pleasure and pride, but other work calls to me now, more clearly than that one work of my body. I shrink from the promise of fertility with something akin to revulsion. Would I risk my life again, not in action but in helplessness, while others direct me and attend my most intimate needs? Would I hang my heart once again on a newborn's uncertain commitment to survival?—for the door between worlds swings both ways at birth, and an infant may exit as well as enter. And no parent desires to outlive his or her offspring. And would plain practicality relegate my ambitions to a back corner, while I spent five years or more in a routine of baby care that left no time for anything else but servitude?—for nothing gainful can be done with hours doled out in increments of twenty minutes or less.

Not if I can help it: But then, it didn't look that way to me when I was doing it. In calm, this appears as a function of the passage of time. Once a mother, I was a maiden no more. And someday, even the intransigent body will take its slow, awkward steps from mother to crone. So why (to more women than just me) should fertility, having outlived its personal usefulness, fester like a wound that will not heal?

Some of this can be ascribed directly to the arrogance and cruelty of the powerful. What major corporation would rent part of a woman, when it can more conveniently buy all of a man? The executive woman performs many hidden duties: not only to do her work, but to be the knife-thin, aseptically tailored embodiment of a life with no other purpose. This is called Equal Rights, for now we, too, can owe our souls to the company store. And so birthing becomes either an expensive luxury, or the task of the unambitious. And the earth does not groan, for there are too many humans already.

This is our problem. Over the generations, we have brought it on ourselves, and now we bear it alone. Alone as a race, and often alone as individuals: over such issues as crying babies, housework, and the division of money not equally earned, we squabble rancorously among ourselves.

Very much has already been said, some of it by me, about the need as either political or religious whatever-we-ares to respect the decision of a mother to be a mother. But what is a mother?

Motherhood is a role, a set of tasks. But Motherhood—the embodiment of the many-named Mother we worship—is a form of power. And like any form of power, it can be abused.

We moderns shrink from the corniness of the imitator Dei, not only because of its grandiose indignity, but also through fear of failure. Which one of us is ready to be *the* Lover, *the* Father, or to brave face-on the death and rebirth inherent in the growth and independence of a Child? And who among us can live in our birthing and caring as Earth lives, both passive and productive? If I were Earth, could I whine and manipulate and demand that others care for me? Could I use the sacredness of my condition as an excuse for tyrannical illogic, or blackmail loved ones with my supposed fragility?

Admittedly, if I were Earth, mainstream society still probably wouldn't like me very much. If I were Earth, I would sweat blood and wallow in pleasure, all in one day. I would stride through the entire firmament with Babies on Board and no bumper sticker. I would smell of milk burps and diaper enhancers and the passion of begetting, and care little what any child of mine thought of it. I would lie quiescent under the mud pies and scheming of my young, but do nothing to keep my tsunamis and tornados and earthquakes from dusting the impossibilities off them. And the lambs wou1d drop in the silvered chill of the grass, but spring would come when it came, and no sooner. And by human standards, I'd laugh too much.

And if I were Earth, I still wouldn't know where the money was coming from, but I would continue to Create, and not sweat the details. Without humility, I would take the gifts of heat, of light, of His love, and make life of them, simply because that is what I do.

Obviously, the courage of Earth far surpasses my own. But in all phases of life, there are opportunities to try. When the Gods inspire, shall I say, "but the floor is still dirty!" or "the boss wouldn't like it!" and whimper proudly of what might have been? Beware the boredom of the Gods! Energy is given to us, to flow productively through us; its unfulfilled dispersal can be dangerous. Man, if you are not a father of children, what do you father? Ideas? Music? Shapes and colors, toys and shelters, parades of number and order, or conflicts and their resolution? Or do you open another beer and shrug, saying that the Father is not you? And woman, if you are done with birthing, or do not birth, what else comes out of you: teaching, or healing, or things made with the hands? Vision? Hospitality? Or purposeless busywork and endless complaint, excused by your own insignificance?

Brigit rules the season, and my woodstove. Sometimes She also decides to rule me. I can reach for guitar or typewriter, and let Her have her sport, or I can sit and fuss and hope She doesn't decide to burn the house down.

Calendar

Spring Equinox, when the Sun crosses the celestial equator, also known as the First Point of Aries, will occur this year at 1:33 A.M. Pacific Standard Time on March 20, 1988.

Postmarked 16 Mar 1988

A Druid Missal-Any Beltane 1988 Volume 12 Number 3

Beltane Essay: Bonfires

By Emmon Bodfish

eltaine, the most festive and best-known holiday in the Druid Calendar. The theme of rebirth and renewal, and the beginning of a season of light and growth. It is the day of the Sun God, Belenus, and some authorities think that the name "Beltaine" or Cetshamain derives from Bel Teine, Bel's fire. Others think this the worst sort of "folk etymology." (When I typed it* just now, the Goddess statue here on my desk fell over, so you can make what you want of that. She seems not to approve.)

In Scot's Gàidhlig there is a specific term, "tein' eigin," for fire by friction, fire created by rubbing one wood against another. The literal translation would be "raised fire," and the method of lighting the great bonfires of the High Days, always with fire by friction, was called "raising fire out of the wood." Fire seems to have been thought of as inherent in certain woods, such as the oak, and was a matter of calling the spirit forth. Spending some time with bow and drill, learning how to this is a valid part of a Pagan education. It is a good skill has and a great fire meditation. It takes patience and stamina first, and concentration and the quickness, timing and delicacy to breathe life into the glowing embers. (Write to us for the back issue covering the how-to techniques for this.)

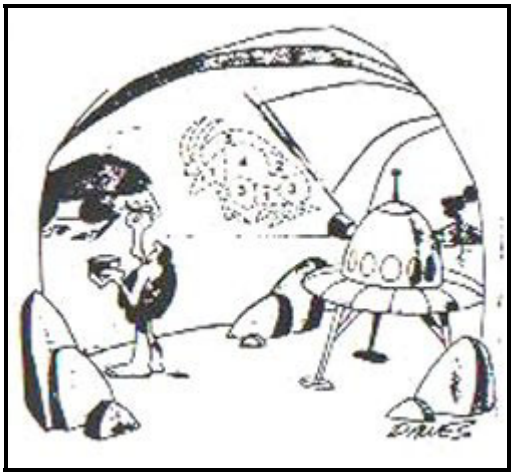
On Beltaine the cattle were driven between two lines of fires to purify them before they were moved to the summer pastures in the hills. This may not have been entirely symbolic. Smoke and the scorching effect drop off exto-parasites and the ability of fire to sterilize surgical instruments used in treating wounds was known throughout much of the ancient world. Similar ceremonies continued to be used in times of plague or contagious diseases among cattle well into Christian times, and, in the Highlands, into the late 19th century. Dwelly, recorder of Highland customs and author of the large *Standard Gaelic-English Dictionary* "the Scottish Webster," printed this description of the practice in 1901:

Teinne

> The tein'-éigin was considered an antidote against the plague and murrain and all infectious diseases among cattle. Dr. Martin says all the fires in the parish were extinguished and 81 married men, being deemed the proper number for effecting this purpose, took two planks of wood and nine of them were employed by turns, who by their repeated efforts, rubbed the planks against each other, till the heat thereof produced fire, and from this forced fire each family was supplied with a new fire. No sooner was the fire kindled than a pot filled with water was put thereon, which was afterwards sprinkled on people who had the plague, or on cattle that had the murrain, and this process was said to be followed invariably by success.
>
> A term applied to fire produced by friction—in olden times a means employed to check evils arising from being bewitched. If a household suffered loss such as indicated being under evil influence, all areas in fires district between two running streams were extinguished on a set day Then a spinning-wheel was put in motion, and kept going furiously until the spindle became heated. Tinder or tow was applied to the hot spind1e, fire was thus procured and distributed to all households affected by evil influences. Within the memory of persons still living, fire was thus procured to check witchcraft in a township in Uist where some sickness, supposed to be evil eye, carried off some cows and sheep. It is odd that neither cow nor sheep (tied after, possibly the epidemic had exhausted itself.—DC.

Dwelly was trying to be a good "modern man" which in 1901 meant denying his Pagan heritage and the efficiency of these remedies. Beltaine, then, is a time to purge the cares and ills of winter, as well as to celebrate the return of light and life. Try passing things infected with bad memories through the smoke of the Beltaine fire, giving away things you no longer use, lightening your load, and putting your burdens aside for a dance.

*Teine, which I had misspelled.



Hi Emmon,

I thought you might find this useful.

Some Considerations in Reconstructing Ritual and Religious Practice

Dr. James J. Duran
Marymount College, Palos Verdes
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90274

This paper is more an encouragement than a proof, more an exhortation than a demonstration. It deals both with the nature of evidence and with the perspectives one brings in looking at

evidence while trying to construct a working hypothesis on the nature of religious form and practice in societies of the past. It comes from one who, like many others, has tried to present information to the general public on an issue both cloudy and controversial—the nature of ritual and religious practice among the pre-Christian Celts.

For the purposes of this paper, terms such as "ritual," "religious form," or "religious practice" will be used in a very broad sense to mean "activities intended as interactions with supernatural forces," with primary emphasis on general regularities of form and on the general meaning of such activities to participants in the culture.

To begin, those of us who seek information on religion among the Celtic peoples usually turn first to the archaeologists and the historians. From the archaeologists, we learn that surviving material evidence can give us only limited information on non-material culture, and that much of that information may be ambiguous. For example, excavated cult sites may yield material remains of buildings, with indications of their layout, construction and use; artifacts including figurines, paintings and ritual implements; sacrificial remains, both animal and human—yet direct information on religious practice may be meager.[1] In short, the dead tell no tales.

From the historians, we learn that written documentation on crucial aspects of non-material culture may be scant or non-existent. Where it exists, it may represent the observations of those outside the culture—as in the case of the contemporary descriptions of Celtic society written by classical writers—and thus be prone to misunderstanding or bias, or else it may come from within the culture—for example, a religious inscription—but remain obscure or ambiguous in its meaning. If we try to fill in the gaps, the historian warns us that we may quickly cross over the boundary from historical reconstruction to historical fiction. An example of the latter may be cited from the May 1977 issue of *National Geographic Magazine,* where naked, tattooed druidesses are depicted as taking part in the killing of a Celtic divine king whose term has evidently expired.

Fortunately the situation is not as bleak as we might fear. A whole range of disciplines ranging from anthropology, folklore, comparative religion, comparative mythology, to textual criticism and ethnomusicology have offered a good deal of evidence on the nature of the non-material culture of past societies. Our ability to use this unexpected wealth of information to increase our understanding of past religious practices, however, depends a great deal both on our general openness to such evidence, and on the assumptions which guide us as we examine such evidence.

In formal and informal discussions of Celtic religion, I have encountered three main types of attitudes. The first holds that we can know only what archaeology and history offer us. If it isn't written in stone or on parchment, it isn't there. This I might call the "scripture-based fundamentalist" perspective. The second viewpoint allows that we can get a general, hazy picture of religious practice, but cautions that we can never know the details, since human nature is subject to constant variation in time and space. This I might call the "non-denominational" perspective. Finally, the third viewpoint in fact maintains that not only general forms but also details of religious practice can remain constant over tremendous stretches of time and space, so that evidence of past religious practices can be garnered not only from archaeological and historical sources, but also from present-day societies. This last point of view I might call the "orthodox" perspective, with a strong belief in "apostolic succession." Perhaps because of my religious upbringing, I lean strongly in the last direction. Seriously, though, this matter of assumptions is of crucial importance both in selecting the evidence and in interpreting the evidence.

The anthropologists Sahlins and Service[2] have stressed the importance of assumptions in discussions of the evolution of human society and culture. Only recently have proponents of cultural evolution been able to again continue the work of nineteenth-century evolutionists such as E.B. Tylor and Herbert Spencer. The hiatus in scholarly activity has been due not to scholarly discreditation of the work of the nineteenth-century cultural evolutionists but to apparent prejudice against the perspectives of such scholars and the substitution of competing perspectives—perhaps no better supported by evidence—which stressed the ubiquitousness and randomness of cultural change. Individual human societies and cultures were seen not as examples of stages of evolutionary development, but as unique products of adaptations to infinitely varied geographical situations and of the chance interventions of history. The evidence, however, has shown that the nineteenth-century cultural evolutionists were in the main correct, and that quite general laws may be discerned governing—and in fact strongly constraining—the development of human society and culture. The evidence also suggests that the forms assumed by material culture strongly shape the development of non-material culture. Furthermore, the evidence suggests that the forms assumed by material and non-material culture are often amazingly stable over time and space.

What does all this mean for reconstructions of religious practices? First, we may expect to find relatively "fossilized" societies and cultures—or individual religious practices or complexes of practices—which exist today and which may give us deep insights in interpreting Celtic religious prehistory. Second, the material culture as well as the non-material culture of such societies may guide us in reconstructing the non-material culture of the Celts in general, and of their religious practices In particular. Third, the general constraints which seem to operate on the realizations of religious form in human societies would strongly limit the number of hypotheses as to *what* was happening in religious practice—or even *why*. This matter of constraints is particularly interesting because it brings up not only societal constraints in religious practice, but also individual constraints in practicing religion.

Here the "psychic unity of mankind" school of anthropological thought comes immediately to mind. Many anthropologists in the course of field work and study have felt that there is such a thing as "human nature" operating consistently in the most diverse human societies—even if the existence of such a "human nature" cannot be easily demonstrated. The linguist Noam Chomsky's work[3] has also demonstrated the existence of cognitive structures—revealed through language forms—that underlie the diversity of human language. The work of epistemologist Jean Piaget on the cognitive development of the child has led in a similar direction.[4] Interestingly, both Chomsky and Piaget suggest the possibility of symbolic systems operating separately from language.[5] According to Chomsky, on the social level, such representational systems may strongly affect the shape of human societal forms and institutions,[6] and on the individual level, may constrain highly what it is humanly possible to conceive of as possible forms of human activity.[7] In short, the deep conventionality of human behavior—long ago lamented by Machiavelli—may strongly affect individual as well as group religious practice. Hence the range of hypotheses that we need consider in reconstructing religious practice—and perhaps the beliefs connected with such practices—may be relatively narrow.

Turning now to Europe, we find a variety of disciplines arguing for the continuity and coherence of material and non-material culture over broad areas of Eurasia. Tread traps, for example, used for catching deer and other animals, turn up not only in prehistoric sites, but also in present-day societies of

Central and Eastern Europe. Archaeologists in the past, innocent of ethnographic information, had identified such tread traps variously as "musical instruments, a machine for making peat bricks, a model of a boat, and a device for catching pike."[9] Likewise, animal husbandry practices in Central and Northern Asia, due to geographical and cultural constraints, can be found fossilized at perhaps any of six possible stages of exploitation.[10] In regard to non-material culture, Emsheimer has suggested that we look also for close analogues of Homeric epic song among the present-day Bardic singers of Central Asia, and Milman Parry and Albert Lord[12] have investigated the Bardic singers of Yugoslavia in order to throw light on Homeric poetry.

In the light of Alan Lomax's revolutionary work on the close correlation of societal form and musical form, the structure of Iron-Age heroic society would lead us to expect just such similarity of musical and poetic expression among peoples widely separated in time and space,[13] though the correlations between musical form and societal form may not extend quite as far as some Central European ethnomusicologists propose.[14] Some of the most spectacular correlations between religious practice and social structure have been made by Bruce Lincoln between Indo-Iranian culture and the Iron-Age cattle cultures of East Africa,[15] echoing earlier correlations by scholars between the cultures of the Interlacustrine Bantu and Old Irish society.[16] If one adopts the perspective of many anthropologists and sees cultures as tight, integrated complexes of cultural traits and not as aggregates of cultural facts produced by chance, once again such strong resemblances between total cultural systems are not surprising.

Europe, despite the rapid cultural evolution of the past few centuries, retains many archaic elements, especially in peripheral areas. Linguists have long noted the great conservatism of languages such as Icelandic and Lithuanian. Marija Gimbutas[17] and Donald Ward[18] have pointed to the Balts as remarkably archaic in culture as well as language, a fact of great importance in the investigation of early Indo-European religion. The folklorist Carl Von Sydow has pointed to the apparent survival over millennia of certain elements of folklore,[19] and the comparative religionist Mircea Eliade has argued for connections in the area of myth which link areas in Eastern Europe to archaic culture areas of North America.[20] Eliade, in fact, has stressed not only the world-wide conservatism of Shamanic beliefs and practices, but the survival of archaic religious cultural traits and complexes among rural populations in Eastern Europe despite centuries of Christianization.[21] The anthropologist Weston La Barre[22] has argued for the continuity of elements of Paleolithic religion in Europe—especially the deer cult—down to Celtic times. In regard to the Celtic areas, Kenneth Jackson has stressed both the archaic nature of international folk-tale motifs found in Celtic literature, [23] and also the value of early Irish tradition in revealing the psychological world of the continental Celts of a much earlier period.[24] Myles Dillon[25] has demonstrated the cultural conservatism of Ireland and India, and the fundamental unity of Indo-European non-material culture, down to details of belief and practice, as have Georges Dumézil and many others.

A Celticist might protest that we can never know precisely what took place in the sacred groves of Gaul or Britain, when in fact the well-documented sacrifices in the clearly demarcated sacred groves of agricultural communities in Central Russia down into the twentieth century[26] might shed a little light on the subject. The fact that Volga Finns were performing the sacrifices need not diminish their evidential value for Indo-Europeanists or Celticists. The cultures of the Finno-Ugric peoples—like the cultures of pre-Christian Ireland and India—might well be examples of the "conservatism of the periphery." Recall that the proto-Indo-European word for "king" is preserved most faithfully not in any present-day Indo-European language, but in modern Finnish.[27]

Turning directly to the Gaelic areas of Ireland and Scotland, let us look at some practices, which may in fact give us a glimpse of sacrificial practices of the pre-Christian period. As is well known, sacrifice—animal or human—came under particularly strong interdiction from the Christian church, so that the details of sacrifice are unknown to us. Yet sacrifices appear to have been carried out when great need arose, especially in Gaelic Scotland. Some of the most striking examples of animal sacrifice occurred when attempts were made to avert cattle plague. Most Gaelic scholars would be familiar with the *tein eigin(n),* or "need-fire," which was kindled with great ceremony at an outbreak of cattle plague. What scholars may not be aware of is that animal sacrifice was sometimes connected to the ceremony. According to Thomas Davidson, in one district, "when a cow showed signs of madness they tied the legs of the mad creature and threw her into a pit dug at the door of the fold. After covering the hole with earth, a large fire was kindled upon it, and the rest of the cattle were driven out and forced to pass through the fire one by one. [28] Other mentions of animal sacrifice are too brief to allow us to decide whether the need-fire ceremony was a part of the proceedings or not. In some cases of animal sacrifice, an ox or a cow was buried alive. In other cases, an animal was burned to death: in one case, a pig; in another case, a diseased cow; in yet another case, the farmer's "best beast." Whether these latter cases are in fact examples of "degenerate need-fire rituals," as the chronology of the reported incidents suggests to Davidson, is perhaps debatable. What is interesting is the constant reference to disease, fire, and burial alive. If we turn to the essay by Donald Ward, "The Threefold Death: An Indo-European Tri-Functional Sacrifice?"[29] we can easily see the connection between averting disease and the burial alive of a sacrificial animal as a form of the third-function sacrifice (in the sense used by Dumézil).[3°] The burning alive of animals is problematic, but then the burning of victims—for second-function sacrificial purposes—seems to distinguish Celtic sacrificial practices from Germanic ones.[31] The immediate explanation of the burning of the animal itself may be practices such as the burning of the *caisean-uchd,* the dewlap of a cow, where "the skin is lit and the burning fumes are inhaled as a safeguard against evil influences during the year." [32] In the sacrifices connected with the *teine eigin(n),* we may, then, have a glimpse of a principal form of sacrifice among the pre-Christian Gaels.

What of the performers of the sacrifice? In the case of the need-fire rituals, apparently all the householders who dwelt in the affected district—usually those who dwelt between two running streams—had to take part in the kindling of the fire. Alternatively, we hear of nine times nine first-begotten sons kindling the fire. As in the sacrifices of pre-Christian Gaul, those guilty of certain offenses against the community were excluded from participation. Interestingly enough, the offenses mentioned by Davidson—failure to pay rent or honest debts, theft, meanness, or "certain offenses against good morals"[33]—may be regarded as third-function offenses.

Where are the druids, vates, and bards? So far we see only the male representatives of households insofar as anyone has a prescribed role. In Vedic terms, these would be householders performing a domestic sacrifice.[34] In view of the well-known compromise reached by the Christian clergy with representatives of the pre-Christian intelligentsia, the *aos dána,* one is not surprised by the absence—or at least lack of prominence—of the bardic fraternity (or sorority, giving due recognition to the women poets as well). Participation in such events was apparently a chasm too wide for a *file* to leap, even with the help of Mo Ling.

Where are the priestly performers of the sacrifice: in Vedic terms, the *hotr* and the *adhvaryu* who recite the formulas and perform the ritual acts, respectively; the *Sáman* singers, who sing the Vedic hymns; and the Brahman himself, who embodies the sacrifice, and who sits to one side, doing nothing but watching to see that no ritual mistakes are made?[35] It is in the innocuous secular context of an Irish poetic recitation that we must look in order to find a structure similar to that of a Vedic sacrificial ritual: a reciter or performer of the poem, a harper to provide musical accompaniment, and the poet himself, the composer of the poem and the occasion of the entire performance, sitting to one side, remaining silent and seeing only that no mistakes were made. [36]

What of the liturgy itself? What of the equivalents of the Vedic hymns? If we look at the Irish Christian liturgical parallels to the Avestan hymns to Mithras, we find the apparent conservation of proto-Indo-European forms—over a tremendous range of time arid space—both in Ireland and Iran, despite changes in religions in both countries.[37] If we accept this conservation of form as a distinct possibility, it may be that we need go no further that the prayers and charms preserved in Carmichael's *Carmina Gadelica,* examined in the light of religious texts from the other parts of the Indo-European world, to get a good idea of just what kinds of prayers might be recited at sacrifices.

Speaking of the *Carmina Gadelica,* it is possible that an item from Carmichael's collection might throw some light on the practice of *imbas forasnai.* Cormac in his glossary describes this rite as a way of gaining supernatural sight; "the diviner 'chants over his palms' and 'puts his palms on his cheeks' before going to sleep."[38] O'Rahilly sees this as a "fanciful etymology," based on a combination of the morphological elements *imb* and *bos/bas,* "palm." In fact there is a rite with an accompanying prayer called the *Ora Ceartais* described by Carmichael in his *Carmina Gadelica* which seems to involve "chanting over palms."[39] A litigant in a court case desiring a favorable outcome

> …went at morning dawn to a place where three streams met. And as the rising sun gilded the mountain crests, the man placed his two palms edgeways together and filled them with water from the junction of the streams. Dipping his face into this improvised basin, he fervently repeated the prayer, after which he made his way to the court, feeling strong in the justice of his cause. On entering the court and on looking around the room, the applicant for justice mentally, sometimes in an undertone, said
>
> Dhé, seun an teach
> Bho stéigh gu fraigh;
> M' fheart os cinn
> gach neach,
> Feart gach neach
> fo m' thraigh.
>
> God sain the house
> From site to summit
> My word above
> every person
> The word of every person
> below my foot.[40]

That the litigant saw himself as something other than a devout Christian supplicant for divine aid and Justice is suggested by the following lines from one of the versions of the prayer:

> Falbhaidh mui
> an amine Dhé,
> An riochd féidh,
> an riochd each,
> An riochd nathrach,
> an riochd righ,
> Is treasa liom
> fin na gach neach.
>
> I will travel
> in the name of God,
> In likeness of deer,
> in likeness of horse,
> In likeness of serpent,
> in likeness of king,
> Stronger will it be with me
> than with all persons.[41]

Could this reflect the prayer of a *breitheamh* on his way to a legal dispute—part of the spiritual weaponry carried by brehon lawyers all the way back to the powerful magistrates of Caesar's Gaul? Do we hear echoes of Amairgen among the sons of Míl Espáne[42] and of Dumézil's cosmic Brahman, who in his person encompasses the universe?[43]

Lest we leave the stream empty-handed, we may also note that "when Finn got the power of divination 'on the Boyne,' he at the same time acquired the power of healing anyone in sickness by giving him a drink of water from the palms of his hands."[44]

It might be objected that we have talked about religious practices and said little about their meaning. That is true, but here I am following the advice of the anthropologist Radcliffe Brown, who long ago stressed the autonomy of rites and beliefs.[45] Ritual forms—like traits of material culture—can be described even when they are not well understood, though it would be rash to say that they could be properly described without any reference to meaning. In fact, the participants in any ritual might give the most varied accounts of why, ultimately, they are doing what they are doing, depending on their differing backgrounds.

The description of the structure of the belief systems which provide the psychological context for ritual acts is of another order entirely. The cultural materialist position of the anthropologist Marvin Harris[46] may prove very useful in describing why religious taboos are introduced to forbid the eating of pork or beef in given societies at given historical periods; it may prove less useful in explaining why a king must sleep with his feet in the lap of a virgin.

Fortunately, Georges Dumézil, Mircea Eliade, and many others have contributed massively to the understanding of religious belief and social ideology, with primary emphasis on the meaning of the forms described. Folklorists dealing with the *märchen* have also explored a psychological world close to that of myth as embedded in religion. I have simply advocated exploring the world between the higher atmosphere of psychological abstraction and the dross of material culture—that world inhabited by the *sidhe i*n Gaelic tradition and the ancestors in Vedic tradition.

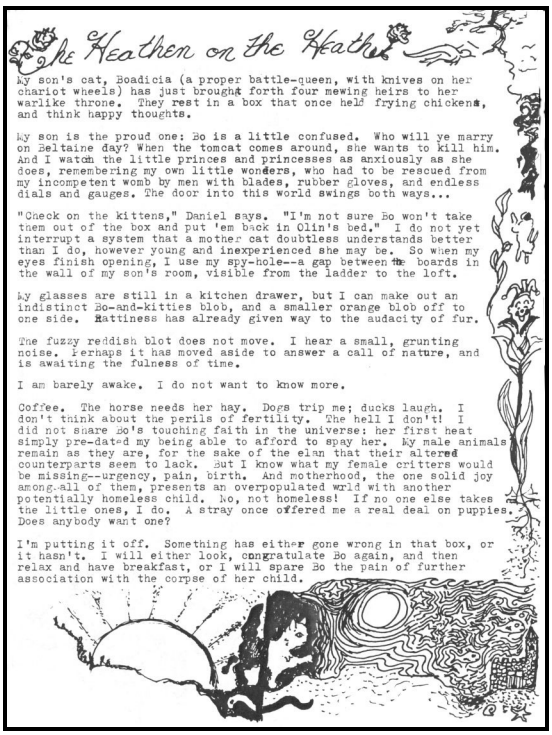
In summary, then, if we adopt a common-sense framework of general cultural evolution as a working hypothesis, and if we do not burden ourselves with unexamined assumptions, we may find that a lot of the evidence we need for the reconstruction of the past exists in abundance. Within this framework, emphasizing continuity in time and space, and the coherence of individual beliefs and practices within overall systems, it may be possible to sketch the main outlines of the structure of religious practice—

and even of the general beliefs motivating it. We may further find, once the main outlines have been delineated, that filling in the details may be easier than we had imagined.

Some might object to this "armchair ethnology." In that regard, let me close with a little story.

When I was studying at Duquesne University, my African roommate returned shaken from class one day. I asked him what was wrong. He replied that in his anthropology class, the teacher, in discussing Van Gennep's *Les Rites de Passage,* had, revealed much of the central content of the circumcision ceremonies in my roommate's home country—all highly secret information. He laughed then—the anthropological field workers, in their efforts to obtain information on the ceremonies, had time and again been deliberately misled by native informants. Van Gennep, however, abstracting from the second-hand accounts of circumcision ceremonies available to him, and constructing a hypothetical version of an idealized circumcision ceremony, had hit the mark.

Accordingly, to use a couple of Irish phrases, I have made this *spreagadh chun gnímh,* this "urging to action," in the hope that you, like Van Gennep, will take a shot in the dark, and that your shots will not be an *urchar an daill chun na daibhche*—"the cast of a blind man at a vat."


The Heathen on the Heath

My son's cat, Boadicia (a proper battle-queen, with knives on her chariot wheels) has just brought forth four mewing heirs to her warlike throne. They rest in a box that once held frying chickens, and think happy thoughts.

My son is the proud one: Bo is a little confused. Who will ye marry on Beltaine day? When the tomcat comes around, she wants to kill him. And I watch the little princes and princesses as anxiously as she does, remembering my own little wonders, who had to be rescued from my incompetent womb by men with blades, rubber gloves, and endless dials and gauges. The door into this world swings both ways...

"Check on the kittens," Daniel says. "I'm not sure Bo won't take them out of the box and put 'em back in Olin's bed." I do not yet interrupt a system that a mother cat doubtless understands better than I do, however young and inexperienced she may be. So when my eyes finish opening, I use my spy-hole--a gap between the boards in the wall of my son's room, visible from the ladder to the loft.

My glasses are still in a kitchen drawer, but I can make out an indistinct Bo-and-kitties blob, and a smaller orange blob off to one side. Rattiness has already given way to the audacity of fur.

The fuzzy reddish blot does not move. I hear a small, grunting noise. Perhaps it has moved aside to answer a call of nature, and is awaiting the fulness of time.

I am barely awake. I do not want to know more.

Coffee. The horse needs her hay. Dogs trip me; ducks laugh. I don't think about the perils of fertility. The hell I don't! I did not snare Bo's touching faith in the universe: her first heat simply pre-dated my being able to afford to spay her. My male animals remain as they are, for the sake of the elan that their altered counterparts seem to lack. But I know what my female critters would be missing--urgency, pain, birth. And motherhood, the one solid joy among all of them, presents an overpopulated world with another potentially homeless child. No, not homeless! If no one else takes the little ones, I do. A stray once offered me a real deal on puppies. Does anybody want one?

I'm putting it off. Something has either gone wrong in that box, or it hasn't. I will either look, congratulate Bo again, and then relax and have breakfast, or I will spare Bo the pain of further association with the corpse of her child.

The Heathen on the Heath: Life and Death

My son's cat, Boadicia (a proper battle-queen, with knives on her chariot wheels) has just brought forth four mewing heirs to her warlike throne. They rest in a box that once held frying chickens, and think happy thoughts.

My son is the proud one: Bo is a little confused. Who will ye marry on Beltaine day? When the tomcat comes around, she wants to kill him. And I watch the little princes and princesses as anxiously as she does, remembering my own little wonders, which had to be rescued from my incompetent womb by men with blades, rubber gloves, and endless dials and gauges. The door into this world swings both ways...

Check on the kittens," Daniel says. "I'm not sure Bo won't take them out of the box and put 'em back in Olin's bed." I do not yet interrupt a system that a mother cat doubtless understands better than I do, however young and inexperienced she may be. So when my eyes finish opening, I use my spy-hole—a gap between the boards in the wall of my son's room, visible from the ladder to the loft.

My glasses are still in a kitchen drawer, but I can make out an indistinct Bo-and-kitties blob, and a smaller orange blob off to one side. Rattiness has already given way to the audacity of fur.

The fuzzy reddish blot does not move. I hear a small, grunting noise. Perhaps it has moved aside to answer a call of nature, and is awaiting the fullness of time. I am barely awake. I do not want to know more.

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I 'm putting it off. Something has either gone wrong in that box, or it hasn't. I will either look, congratulate Bo again, and then relax and have breakfast, or I will spare Bo the pain of further association with the corpse of her child.

I will look, but not too closely. My glasses remain in the drawer.

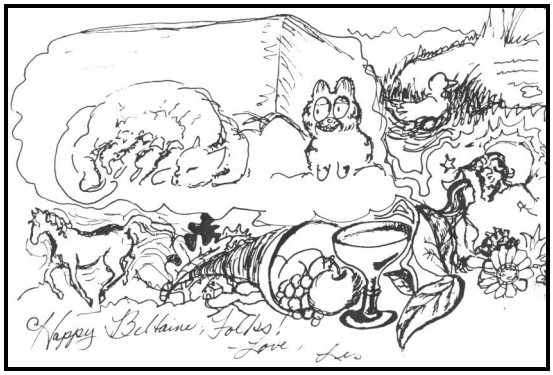
The orange one is still there, still motionless. May it nurse at the undying teats of Earth, How big it is, handsome and furry. It sits in an attitude of guardianship, watching over Bo's unconcerned sleep...with *huge*...exactly round pale...plastic...eyes.

The devilishly grinning toy Garfield that Olin set in attendance on them is doing his job.

Once again I have been a human, empowered and therefore a klutz. That which has escaped my control is doing just fine, thank you, without respect for my megalomaniac and overprotected neuroses. Once again I have peered tremblingly into the face of the Mother, expecting to see death, and found instead the tentative whimsy of love. Sometimes worship is humility. Sometimes worship is as rich and private as a stolen kiss. And sometimes worship consists simply in letting go of responsibilities that don't belong to you. My son already knew that. I have just been shown.

Even when life is fragile, it is not brittle: we invented brittleness. With what do we replace our innocence? What playful and unnecessary gift do we have for the May-bridal and summer-birth? For they will be celebrated in spite of us, even up to the day when life is no more. There is a time to do battle against the destructiveness of power, and a time to simply let go of power and join in the party.

For reasons beyond our ken, She did invite us.



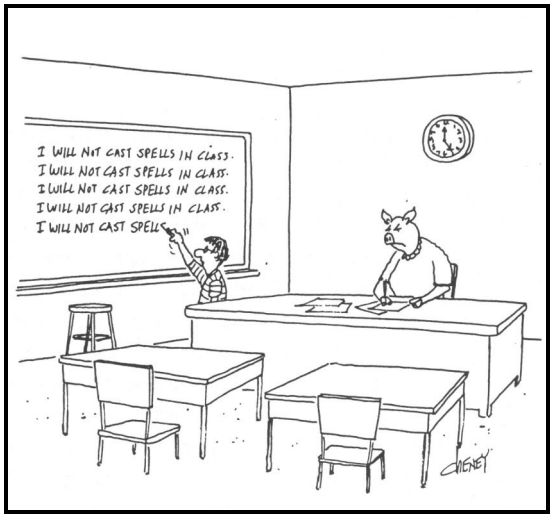
Happy Beltaine, Folks!
—Love,
Les”

Letter from the Editor

I take issue with your statements about your birth experience. Don’t blame yourself! It’s been shown the fear hospitals inspire and the drugs they administer can cause insufficient dilation and a host of other troubles. Sharon, a midwife, and a member, has done successful home deliveries for women who have been sectioned by the A.M.A. before on some such pretext. And SI certainly wouldn’t call those boys “rescuers.” It’s anti-women and pro-A.M.A., a chauvinist bunch of liars if ever there was one. Don’t be so hard on yourself; you did not have a real chance to show what you could do. And watch out about being talked into a hysterectomy by the same boys. It is the latest fad in American medicine, so much so that a European Medical Journal wrote a scathing article warning people about it. Lottie Straus, a renegade doctor I see occasionally, says that two thirds of these operations are unnecessary. They are nicknamed a “potboiler” for young ob-gyns in need of the money. The rationale being “It doesn’t matter.”

‘nough said
Emmon

Women who have gotten talked into this can tell you it sure does matter. Makes a big difference in how you feel, how you function and how you live. Look out!



I will not cast spells in class.
I will not cast spells in class…

Discover a World of Variety at Traditional Arts Programs

By Holly Tannen

The inhabitants of the Bay Area reflect the rich cultural diversity of the world. Each Saturday in Wattis Hall a free Traditional Arts program offers museum visitors a chance to share the music, dance, handcrafts, or food of one of the world’s many diverse and colorful ethnic groups. Traditional Arts programs are funded by a grant from the Paul L. and Phyllis Wattis Foundation. All programs begin at 1:00 pm.

May 7—To welcome in the month of May, Holly Tannen sings traditional Maying songs associated with English and Irish seasonal customs and festivals, accompanying herself on the Appalachian mountain dulcimer. The program ends with ballads of the “traveling people,” or tinkers, of Scotland. Holly will teach the choruses— so come prepared to Sing!

May 14—No Program

May 21—Altamira is a talented trio from South America who perform the indigenous music and songs of the coastal and Andean regions of Colombia and Venezuela. Maria Marquez, Claudia Gomez, and Michael Spiro play a variety of percussion instruments including bells, drums, claves, maracas, rattles, and triangle as well as guitar.

May 28—Willy Claflin entertains us with a mixed-media program, entitled ‘Mother Moose Tales’—a slightly off-beat version of updated Grimms’ fairs’ stories, nursery rhymes, and moose creation myths. Willy is joined by a few of his puppet friends, including Maynard Moose, Sir Douglass Doormoose, and Dr. Albert Alligator.

News of the Groves

As you’ve seen by the clear type and lack of skipped letters, we have a new electric typewriter, kindly loaned to us by Stacey Weinberger, Many thanks and much credit and good fortune in the future and in the Other World. If you’re enjoying the lack of eyestrain, this is who to thank—send good energy.

One of our members in the “Ozark State” writes:

We are currently being harassed by people claiming to be from the Southern Baptists, as my roommate has a stone circle on her back property. They have come to the door frequently inquiring as to our beliefs, (“Inquiring minds want to know!”) and wondering whether or not we believe in Hell, (hell, no!) the Devil, (Oh, Yes, you mean that senile Irishman named Reagan?) and such, including the jewel: “What would you say to God if

you were standing in front of his throne?" (What an assumption!) What's left to say? "Who's your metal smith?"

Yes, Virginia, there is an Inquisition!!

I found out that some people claiming to be from the Arkansas Baptist group have struck a deal with the Little Rock Public Library, the University of Arkansas, and other colleges here to take down, discard and destroy all books pertaining to witchcraft, Wicca and Neopaganism, including many, many anthropology books such as *The Problem of the Picts*, and *A History of Witchcraft in Scotland.* These two were saved from extinction by a friend.

Another group, also calling themselves members of the Southern Baptist Convention, is threatening to have the libraries' funding cut if they don't cooperate quietly.

Fascism lives on in Arkansas.

Morbid Technology Department

Day of the Living Dead Plants

> **Plants, flowers and trees* that never need watering! Secret? They're preserved with non-toxic chemicals, absorbed by the plants' cells. And they look, feel and smell like the real thing.

How about no-feed-'em pets? And I don't want to be around when they get around to people.

If you really want to do something real and necessary, the offer of puppies in this article was not just for comic relief, although the puppies themselves are clowns par excellence. Vamp, Tammy Faye, and Spooky Boots are about four months old, housebroken, livestock-trained, and very loving, but would do better in one-dog houses. Anyone who wants one call 707-943-3411 any day except Wed. or Fri. and set up delivery. Breed: Panther Gap Piggy Bouncer, having a gait like a kid on a pogo stick and all vocalizations of both dog and pig.

And in two or three months, we're having a special on kittens.

Oh, and all of you do your dandiest to let folks know that the so-called "Hungry and Homeless Initiative," for all its excellent liberal credentials, would have the effect of virtually outlawing country life for any but the very wealthy. City building codes are almost impossible to meet out beyond the power lines, and that is what the standardized state code would be. Not to mention the fact that 'Californians Working Together,' if you read the non-celebrity and corporate names on the list, sounds an awful lot like Repo Realty, Inc. The notion originates in Los Angeles, and if you have any publicity contacts, or even loud mouthed friends, down there, that's the place to push hard. In the meanwhile, let's all write to the papers, in the hopes that one of our letters will get printed. If we want to 'vote' for the homeless, we can give a few dollars to our local shelters, and wait for them to send their legislation back through with the bugs worked out of it, instead of letting some L.A. realtors outlaw the family farm while they're at it.

Enough gossip for now. Oh, and the # is my work #. If it takes me a while to get there, it's probably because of wet hands.

Love,
Les

Calendar

Astronomica1 Beltaine, when the Sun is midway between and Solstice, will occur this year on May 4 at 9:06 P.M. Pacific Daylight Time, and should he celebrated on the 5th if possible. Work schedules being what they are in this modern world, the following Sunday is acceptable.

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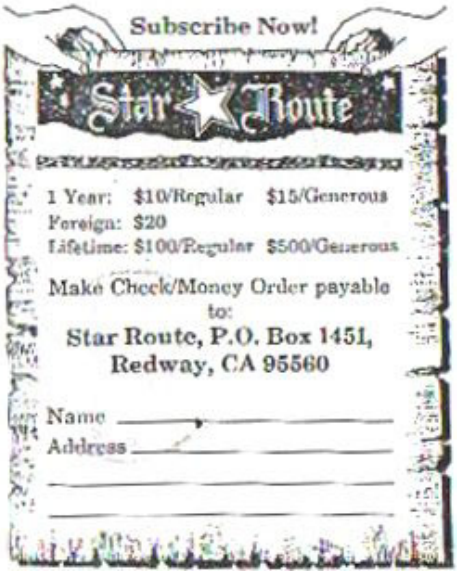

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A Druid Missal-Any Summer Solstice 1988 Volume 12 Number 5

Summer Solstice Essay: Danu and Stonehenge

By Emmon Bodfish

idsummer Solstice, one of the four minor High Days of the Reformed Druid Calendar, is associated with the Celtic Goddess Danu, Mother of the Gods, the Tuath de Danann. She is particularly associated with rivers, and rivers from the Don in Russia to the Don in Scotland are named for Her. She is probably the same figure as the Irish Goddess, Anu, and the Bretons' Ana. Roman Diana and Greek Artemis may be other cognates of this Pan-Indo-European deity. These theories are based on the study of word origins, and on the witness of Gallo-Roman writers of the period who noted the similarities in character, rituals, and Seasons of Worship between Danu and Diana. These primary historical sources, written when the Celtic religion was still practiced in Gaul, corroborate the evidence from linguistic studies.

Like Roman Diana, Danu's totem is the boar, an animal also associated with a female agricultural deity in the Balkans. Danu, like Frigga of the Germans, presides over marriage and fertility. The luckiness of June weddings may be a distant memory of Her festivities. This may have been the month for Old Celtic weddings, too. Not by chance is Oimelc, the festival of the midwife, celebrated nine months later.

The mugwort is Danu's herb and symbol. This herb was also associated with Roman Diana. But Danu, and not Diana, is also associated with the sheaf of ripe grain, connecting Her with the other Mother and Grain Goddess of pagan Europe. On the Isle of Man it is customary to wear a sprig of mugwort to the Midsummer dance, and in England young women place a bundle of the herb under their pillows on Midsummer's Night to bring dreams of their future husbands.[1]

Midsummer morning is the morning on which the first rays of the Sun used to rise over the heel stone at Stonehenge, thus beginning the new season in the Megalithic calendar. It no longer rises at that point owing to the precession of the Earth's axis, but celebrations are held there, anyway.

The Druids did NOT build Stonehenge. It antedates their arrival in Britain by centuries. It was William Stukeley in 1717 who mislocated the Druids there. He did some of the best archeological field work of his day, but his theorizing later wildly outstripped his data. The mistake was an honest one, however, considering what was known in his time. He showed that the stones were not a memorial to King Arthur nor a Roman temple, the two then common theories. He was the first to establish the monument as definitely pre-Roman. The only knowledge of pre-Roman Britain he had came from Roman and Greek writers of the Classical Period. They said that Britain was inhabited by Celts whose priests were the Druids. So, if the stones were older than any Roman constructions, Stukeley reasoned, they must have been put there by Druids. He knew of no other candidates. But in the last two centuries, archeology has provided us with many, even too many other possibilities. The currently favored candidates are the early Neolithic farmers of Natufian stock, long-headed; slender, fine-boned people who inhabited the Salisbury area from 2900-2500 BC coinciding with the most accurate modern date for the first cycle of building at Stonehenge. A larger boned hardier people later took over the monument and set up the Blue Stones, but they too had disappeared before the arrival of the Celts around 480, B.C.

This is not to say that the Celts did not take cognizance of the huge stones. They worked monuments of other prehistoric peoples into their mythology and song. Numerous Bardic compositions refer to the Sidhe Mounds of Ireland and the Carnes of Scotland as sacred places and the long abandoned abodes of the Gods. They may have done the same for Stonehenge, but the English traditions and Bardic works were almost all lost, while the Irish are among the beat preserved of any oral lore.

> "Behold the Sidh before your eyes. It is manifest to you that it is a king's mansion, Which was built by the firm Dagda. It is a wonder, a court, an admirable hill."
>
> "The Sidh of Donegal"
> a seminar by Prof. Duran

Two or more different groups of peoples, sharing the same or similar astronomically oriented beliefs, contributed to the five cycles of construction and reconstruction at Stonehenge. Theirs was a fairly sophisticated culture for the time. They knew that the Solstices, eclipses of the Moon, and. the courses of the stars were regular predictable events. Their stone moving techniques were on a par with the times. Though not aligned accurately enough for an "observatory" in the modern sense, the stones can serve as a calendar rectifier, an eclipse predictor, and, of course, as a ritual site for religious ceremonies. But what those religions were must remain a matter of conjecture. Clearly they had something to do with sunrise, Midsummer Solstice, moonrise, and lunar eclipses, but what they meant, and what the people did there, is probably not recoverable As Clannad sing "Forgotten is the race that no one knows."[2]

[1]A friend of mine tried the experiment of putting mugwort under her pillow, but reported she had no dreams at all. "I guess I'm just going to stay single." She is still fancy-free three years later. If anyone wants to try this, you can get mugwort in most herb shops. Send in your results and we'll publish them for Lughnasadh.

[2]Clannad, a modern Irish Folk Group "Ring of Stones," good album.

Letter to the Editor

Here is a letter from Prof. James Duran, whose paper, "Some Considerations in Reconstructing Ritual and Religious Practice, "we discussed last time.

2 May 1988

Hi Emmon—

The shortest of notes—I'm glad you liked the paper—I have no plans to publish yet—at least not in the area of comparative religion for a while. I have a backlog of linguistic stuff to get out.

On applied comparative religion, I hope no one starts burying animals as offerings to a god of fertility—cruelty to

animals is entirely unnecessary. Among the East African tribes even a cucumber can be offered for sacrifice as "cattle", substituting for the real thing. (Lincoln, p. 31) Models of clay, cheese, etc. could do the trick, also. Note how modern Hindus have handled the question of animal sacrifice.

My best to everyone!

Beannacht na Déithe oraibhe!

Jim Duran

Reviews of Books on Megaliths

Although the Druids did NOT build Stone Henge, there is now a book out about the people who did. It's titled *The Stone Henge People*, by Rodney Castleden, published by Rutledge and Kegan Paul, London. It is archeology, but chatty in style with drawings of how the barrows and some of the other structures may have looked when they were being used, 4700 - 2000 BC.

If you can't find it locally, write Shambala Books, 2482 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley, Calif. 94704

Another book along the same *lines* but more technical is John Wood's *Sun, Moon and Standing Stones*, printed by Oxford University Press. This is professional archeology, and has some good photographs of the stone circles, but a rather dry point of view. Good data if you want to argue with someone.

The Stone Circles of the British Isles is the big glossy coffee table version of a megalith book. It's by Aubrey Burl and published by Yale University Press 1976, and replete with photographs and charts. Expensive, but good if you can pick it up used.

Megaliths and Masterminds is less costly, no photos, except on the dust jacket, but has a much more readable style than the University Press books. Author Peter Lancaster Brown takes an astronomical point of view, and expands his thesis to connect with the Egyptians, the Persians, and the Mayan Quetzalcoatl myth. It was published in 1979 by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

On the Irish side, Clare O'Kelly's paperback *Illustrated Guide to New Grange*, gives good photos and information, inexpensively. It includes many of the other Boyne monuments, and gives descriptions and measurements, but no theory. John English and Co. Ltd., Wexford, England, 1978.

From the more Neo-Pagan Perspective...

Nigel Pennick's *The Ancient Science Of Geomancy*, has a lot of good photos, and a world-wide perspective. It's good reading but remember that it is Mr. Pennick's theory. Thames and Hudson, 1979

Moving even farther out is Janet and Cohn Bord's book *Ancient Mysteries of Britain*. This couple have written a number of psychic books and guide or travel articles. The photos and the completeness of the coverage should interest even those not interested in Earth magic or the religions of the ancients. Many of the smaller stone monuments are included here that are not usually dealt with and so are little known and visited. Use it for a non-touristy itinerary of ancient sites if you are going to the British Isles.

The Ancient Stones Speak is a paperback, well illustrated with photos, and definitely written from the psychic perspective. It catalogues David D. Zink's travels to stone monuments around the world, his theories, his reactions, the local myths, astronomical alignments, and quotes from archeological studies. Extreme in its opinions, you'll like or hate it. E.P. Dutton, New York, 1979

Farther out, theory-wise, and in a psychic style is Francis Hitching's book, *Earth Magic*. She comes out of the Ley Line school of thought, and the book is mainly her and other Psychics' personal experiences with the ancient stones. She has a quick, readable style. It's in paperback by Pocket Books, New York, 1976.

Gerald Hawkin's master work, *Stone Henge Decoded*, is both technical and controversial. It is an old stand-by in the field, and was the first break-through book in the new reassessment of the stone monuments of Britain and Europe. It's out in paperback, in many libraries, and you should at least skim through it if you are seriously interest in Megaliths. London, 1966.

In much the same vein is A. Thom's book *Megalithic Sites*. He is a professional astronomer, and the inventor of the term "the megalithic yard." He has written numbers of articles in professional journals, and several other books about his theories about the builders of the stone circles. I'd put him midway between the scientists and the psychics, and very readable. Oxford Press, 1967

Ward Rutherford, author of *The Druids, Magicians of the West*, has published a new book *Shaman*, which, though not entirely about Druids, has some good material on Eurasian shamanism and its connections with Druidism, the Celts, and their Proto-Indo-European roots. I would take with a cautious grain of salt Mr. Rutherford's interpretations of the old myths—Celtic, Greek, and others—as they are very speculative and subjective. These ancient themes and religious myths are like Rorshach blots: archetypes in which you see what is pertinent to your mind and needs. Here, I think, we learn more about Ward Rutherford's character and the concerns currently obsessing our own times than about the ancient authors of the myths. The material on Euro-Siberian shamans and their practices is good, as are the parallels he traces in shamanic practices from other parts of the world.

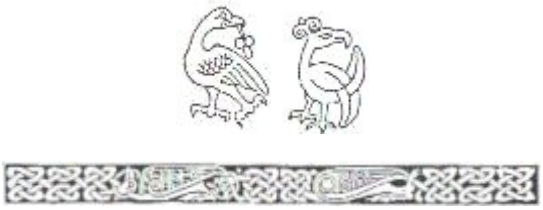
Shamanic roots of Celtic Druidism plus insights into Ward's unconscious. $12.95 Pyramid Books, 214 Derby St. (Box 48) Salem, MA 01970.

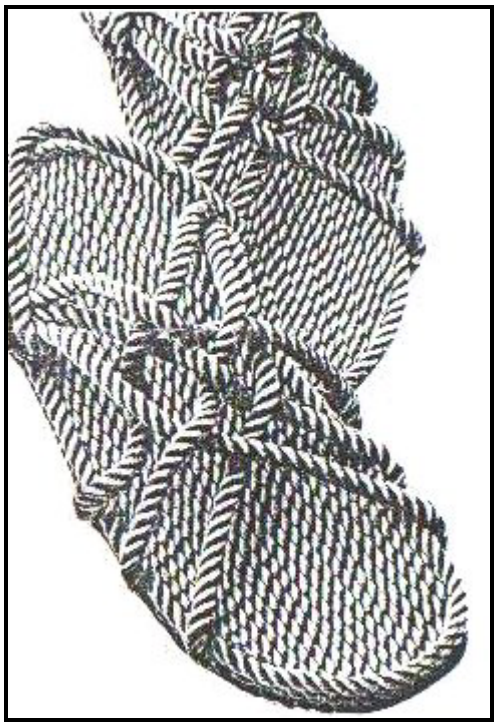
Practical Paganism

Caring for Your Own Dead Lisa Carlson, Upper Access Publishers, Hinesburg Vermont. This is a book you should look into if you want a Druid or Pagan funeral, or just want to avoid the bad atmosphere and poor taste of funeral parlors' pseudo-Christian kitsch.

When Lisa Carison's husband died, she was not only grief stricken but broke. So following the autopsy, she purchased a $60

pine box, obtained a local transit permit, and carried his body to a Vermont crematory in a pickup truck.. The experience eventually led her to write a book to help people in similar circumstances. She writes: "By assuming some control, a family can personalize the death experience and make it meaningful." "If my husband's body had gotten into the hands of professionals, it would have been much harder to let him go." Your involvement will be severely limited if you go to the funeral industry, despite what they may say in selling you their package. We speak from personal experience. Although Carlson says her book has not met with hostility from the funeral directors (still too few people are actually doing personal funerals to bother them) she did have to deal with an incipient hassle from the state medical examiners office. Be ready with the correct placating procedures.





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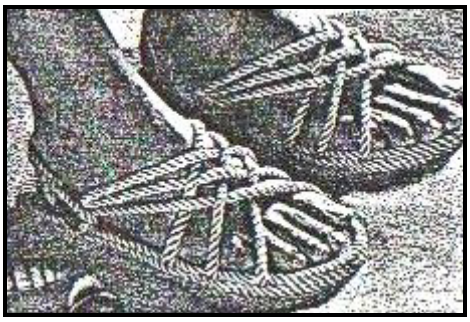

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A Druid Missal-Any Lughnasadh 1988 Volume 12 Number 5

Lughnasadh Essay: Summer Games

By Emmon Bodfish

riginally a celebration of the funeral games he1d by Lugh, Celtic god of light for his father the Sun, Lughnasadh marks the Sun's position half way between Solstice and Equinox. By now, usually August sixth or seventh, the day's length is noticeably shortened. The sun, re-born on December 22, is in decline, and the season of the harvest, Foghamhar, is coming. This High Day marked the beginning of the harvest in pre-industrial times, and in Druidic times was known as the Festival of the First Fruits. Cutting of the new grain could begin, and "hungry July" was over. In the Celtic countries, this middle-of-the-summer festival is still marked by The Races in Ireland, the Revels in Wales, and the highland Games in Scotland. In a livestock-raising culture like that of the Iron Age Celts, this was the most likely time of market faires and regional gatherings. The calves of the spring were old enough to sell or trade. Likewise the sheep would have been sheared and the lambs were old enough to be bartered. This was a festival of the Tuath, the largest class in the Celtic society, comprised of the farmers, craftsmen and merchants. The other two classes were the Warriors and the Clergy, which last included Bards, Ovates, Filidhs and Druids, their students and retainers.

In the Neo-Pagan R.D.N.A. tradition, anyone who has a garden or grows anything, should save the first picked produce of the summer season and bring it, or a portion of it to the Lughnasadh celebration to be offered along with the Grove Sacrifice and hopes and prayers of prosperity to come.

The Coligny Keltic Calendar

All thanks to the Editor of CARN for this opportunity to attract the attention of its keltic minded readers to OUR wonderful and much overlooked Coligny Calendar. This unique bronze tablet provides us with our forefathers' astonishing astronomical knowledge but still more with their extremely original and highly synthetic philosophical system.

This unique bronze exemplar was unearthed at the turn of this century near Coligny, Jura, Free-County of Burgundy. It was broken into many fragments. Whatever was retrieved is kept in the Museum of Lyons. It was immediately noticed that its language was undoubtedly keltic—but consisted mostly of abbreviations which so far have resisted clear understanding. Its roman lettering shows it to have been engraved (in defiance of druidic teaching) at the beginning of the common era, when indeed Druidic teaching on the Continent must have been already much shaken.

The first and magnificent breakthrough in attempts to unveil its secrets was achieved by the late Eoin Mac Néill and published at the end of the thirties (in English) in the Irish review *Eriu*. He discovered the recurrent rules governing it, permutations and coherent intricacies, which "knit" the whole calendrical Period into one piece, and was thus able to give a safe reconstruction of the whole. Yet the meanings of these coherent mechanisms have also so far resisted clear understanding. Further progress was achieved by the present writer and prematurely published (in French) in the German *Zeitschrift für keltische Philologie* in the year 1942. It established the correspondence with the modern common Calendar, fixing in modern terms the beginnings of Periods, years, months (and days), and showed their perfect agreement with the gist of the *druidic philosophy* as described by the well-informed Caesar in his "Gaulish War"—"The druids teach that night has precedence over day".

The Calendar's general constitution can be thus briefly stated:

a) 30 days congregate to make a "complete" month (and 29 to make an "incomplete" one).

b) 60 months (plus two built-up "complementary" ones) congregate to make the calendrical Period.

c) the Period divides into five years.

d) the year divides into twelve months. Hereafter from memory their names and rough correspondences:

SAMON—(30 days) October;

DVMANN—(20 days) November;

RVRO—(30 days) December;

ANAGANT—(29 days) January;

OGRON—(30 days) February;

CVTIOS—(30 days) March;

GIAMON—(29 days) April;

SEMIVISONN—(30 days) May;

EQVOS—(28-30 days) June;

ELEMBIV—(29 days) July;

AEDRIN—(30 days) August;

CANTLO—(29 days) September.

When the sixty-month Period was finished, another one was obviously introduced. Actually, this writer got it printed and roneotyped every year from VIII to XVII (1950-51) without finding it to depart one day from its Sun-and-Moon astronomical system. Due to lack of space there is no question of giving here even a brief comprehensive account of the Coligny Calendar. I shall only dwell on the six following points which I assume to be within the interests of the general **CARN** reader and I shall rest most pleased if I have awakened their wish to inform themselves better about it: The Coligny Calendar is highly scientific, eminently practical, linguistically keltic, philosophically druidic, knitting time into one synthetic unit, and requiring a very elaborate astronomical central observatory.

I. Highly Scientific:

Anyone who is an old jailbird has noticed on the whitewashed cell walls the frequency among graffiti of the groups of vertical small bars (generally in fours or in sixes) cut across by a long horizontal one. This was the spontaneous way for prisoners to keep account of the passage of time in their complete absence of information. I call it an unscientific system. Such is the seven-day week which bravely ploughs its way through all times, months, years and calendrical systems with no

reference to Astronomy. Yet although it is very simple (=giam) the seven-night week is, of course, very ancient among us, most stable, and native to us Kelts (and also to the Teutons) contrary to the current opinion.

The modern common calendar is only semi-scientific as it knows only solar time. The years are kept adjusted to the Astronomy of the sun. But though it mentions months, these are merely relics bravely ploughing their way without any reference to the Astronomy of the moon.

The keltic calendar is highly scientific: It keeps a joint account of both the solar and lunar astronomical times.

II. Eminently Practical:

The months begin with the last quarter of the moon. The new moon occurs on the seventh or eighth. The first quarter on the fifteenth (uniformly marked ATENOUX) and the full moon on the 22 or 23rd of every month. Therefore a quick glance at the shape of the moon allows one to say: "To-day is the 13th of the current month". As for this month, one would know it by noting at any time around noon where one's shadow extends on any bit of flat ground and measuring it with one's feet as children do: The number of feet would reveal to him what is the current month. His noon shadow is longest in December and shortest in June, to grow again to its December length. Actually, the decreasing April shadow would be about the same length as the growing August one; and so on. But a quick glance at the surrounding vegetation would differentiate April from August, March from September, etc., so that with a good degree of accuracy anyone with no other information could say: "To-day is the 13th of the month Giamon of the current year." I would challenge anyone using the common calendar with no watch, no sundial, no radio, no reading and no writing to achieve the same and to be able to announce: "To-day is April 23 in the current year."

III. Linguistically Keltic:

There are only slight differences between the Coligny dialect of Keltic and the contemporary insular Keltic. For example, the "second" is rendered "ALLOS", as on the La Graufesenque graffiti in Southern France, whereas all modern Keltic languages go back to a form of "ALIOS".

Its use of the letter Q for a K-sound has resulted in a lot of eminent learned stupidities about Gaelic, Sequana, prekeltic, etc., rivaling the Big Bang, the Expanding Universe, and the brilliant Einsteinian duds. In fact, I realized before 1945 that this Q had no more meaning than in the French names "République, Amérique, etc." beside the adjectives "républicain, Américain, etc." and was due to the already uncertain pronunciation of the classical Latin C. Latin had no K. Thus we find the month CVTIOS generally written, but occasionally QVTIOS. And the word Ki meaning "here, this here" appears once as CI [CI ALLOS B. = Here the second (half-Period?)] and once as QVI [IN QVI MON. = in this here (lunar month?)]. Space compels me to stop here, KI!

IV. Philosophically Druidic:

All time intervals: Period, years, months (and days by extension) are divided into two halves. To the first half (or at least its beginning) belongs obscurity and cold. To the second half belongs light and eventually warmth, according to Caesar's and Pliny's druidic dictum "The druids teach that the night (and winter = giam) has precedence over daylight (and summer = sam)."

The first half-period consists of 30 months, a "month of months," and is headed by one of the two complementary months. It begins with a SAMON month introducing winter. The second half-period, similarly a month of months and similarly headed by the second complementary month, begins with a GIAMON month introducing a summer.

The five years, clearly indicated by the fivefold repetition of the twelve monthly names, are bipartitioned by alternating SAMON (roughly October) and GIAMON (roughly April) with the winters coming first.

All months are similarly bipartitioned by the word ATENOVX (taken to mean "re-shaping", of the half-moon shape which began the month). Their first half, from the last quarter to the first quarter, consists of the obscure moonless nights of the new moon. Their second half consists of the full moon and all the long-moonlit nights.

The same rule of giam-sam allows us to conclude that the day length began towards sunset, with the night as first half, and the daylight as second half.

This precedence of giam over sam allows us also to understand why the Kelts (and also the Teutons) counted time and age by nights and winters, contrary to all Mediterranean usage. Cf. also such linguistic relics as the English word "fortnight" for two weeks, and the French "huitaine" and "quinzaine" (of days) for a seven-*night* week and two weeks.

V. Intricately Knitted into a Synthetic Unit:

Those coherent mechanisms of permutations and borrowing of days between months and years are too long to be developed here. Let the reader refer to their discoverer Eoin Mac Néill. Only one remark: The month SAMON which begins the winter half of the year borrows its name from the preceding Summer (SAM-) and similarly the month GIAMON borrows its name from the preceding winter (GIAM-).

VI. Requiring a Very Elaborate Astronomical Central Observatory:

All calendrical systems of astronomical nature need astronomical observation to prevent them from going astray. This is due to one main cause, plus a subsidiary one:

a) the real mean yearlength, monthlength, daylength are not in rational relations with one another. It is therefore impossible to express them as fractions or multiples of one another. Every calendrical astronomical system will thus necessarily introduce slight discrepancies which, in the long run, will put it out of gear.

b) Yearlength and other lengths are not exactly static. It is known that our present rmonthlength and daylength are very slowly increasing, whereas present yearlength is probably very slowly decreasing.

For these two reasons, every astronomical calendrical system required continuous astronomical observation to put it right from to time. We are all familiar with the common solar calendar adding of a day to the year every four years; then there is the retrenchment of a day every century or so, and there is an endless (and changing) series of other corrections every millennium and so on.

Yet the common calendar takes account of the Sun only. When the calendar takes account of the Moon as well, as does the druidic calendar, the need for accurate and centralized astronomical observation gets compounded. Since it was in the charge of our druids, they must have used one *central* observatory necessarily of a monumental nature-and not inconsiderable fame. That it was Stonehenge in Wiltshire has

been established in great detail by the present writer and published (in Breton) in the review *Ar Bed Keltiek* (after 1966)

(An English version ready since 1966 still awaits a publisher.) This last assertion has two important sequels:

a) Stonehenge has been in astronomical operation until the days of the Roman conquest of Southern Britain.

b) the druidic Calendar—known from the unique bronze tablet engraved around year zero—had been in use for at least one to two millennia, since the central rings and horseshoes of stones in Stonehenge were built for its astronomical control.

Conclusion:

In view of its scientific nature, coherence, practicality, regular intricacies, exactitude, extreme originality and all superior characteristics, not too mention its age, I have no hesitation whatsoever in proclaiming this Calendar to be one of the main marvels of the human World—a marvel which ought to make us modern Kelts feel as proud as peacocks. Alas! Neven Henaff.

P.S. A Newly-Spotted Elaboration in the Coligny Calendar (June 1977, Coolock)

Apart from desinence -(i)OS, months 3, 6, 9, 12 have *one* syllable. Preceding months 2, 5, 11 (but not 8 SEMI-VISOON) have *two* syllables. Still preceding months 4, 10, (but not SAMON arid GIAMON) have *three* syllables. This is too much to be just blind chance, SAMON and GIAMON having outstanding functions can well be admitted to get outstanding treatment. Only SEMIVISONN is not accountable. I take it to be a nickname (= Mid-Spring) which has displaced the original two-syllable name (possibly just VISONN = Spring). Compare similar treatment with modern "November": Welsh "Tackwydd," nicknamed the black month, Mys Du. Breton knows only the nickname Miz Du. Similarly with "December". This shows the druids to have been particularly concerned with arithmetic.

—N.H.

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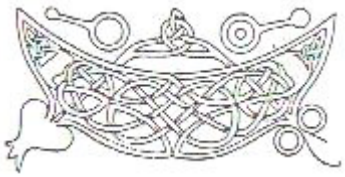


Calendar

Astronomical Lughnasadha will occur at 3:21 A.M. Pacific Daylight Time on August 7, 1988. Celebration at the Orinda Grove Site to be arranged.

Here is the well-known Celticist, Stuart Piggot's recent synopsis of the current archeological opinion about Ancient Celtic civilization. We include it here as part of our listing of Piggot's latest offering *Scotland Before History*, Edinburgh University Press, 1923. It is a good nutshell description of material culture of the Old Celts, a place to start reading, something for which we are often asked here at the Missal-Any. Keep in mind that it is one man's opinion.—Editor

The Structure of Society

By Stuart Piggott

somewhere near the Antonine Wall, we do not yet know.

Let us now try to put together the various pieces of evidence, and see what description we can give of the land and people of prehistoric Scotland at the moment of entering the phase of written history when the Roman military forces arrived in AD 80. What manner of men and what conditions did Agricola encounter? To answer this question we can use not only the evidence of archaeology, but that of the classical writers, of the Irish oral tradition committed to writing in early mediaeval times, of the survival of Celtic institutions down to the same period, and inferences from comparative philology.

Though, over the space of three thousand years, an appreciable amount of natural woodland would have been cleared by agriculture or grazing, great tracts of the landscape must still have been heavily wooded, in areas where now there stretches bog or moorland, as well as in what is today arable and settled land. The chariot warfare, which we know the Celts to have practiced in Scotland as elsewhere, implies the existence of areas of at least relatively open parkland to allow for such chariot maneuvers to have taken place, even if some of the forest clearance was caused by grazing rather than by cultivation.

When considering the population we must remember that, although at least a ruling class of Celtic-speaking peoples was established in many regions of Scotland by the first century AD, this did not mean the extermination of the previous inhabitants, whose ancestry went back to the days of Cairnpapple and Skara Brae, and to the fishers and boatmen of Oronsay or the Forth shore. Linguistically, for instance, the Gallo-Brittonic dialects could have existed side by side with other tongues now wholly unknown and perhaps numerous and varied—the Australian aborigines, some 200,000 strong when first discovered, were speaking more than 500 languages and dialects. Out of the 38 native names recorded in Scotland in the second century AD by the geographer Ptolemy, only 42 per cent are certainly or probably Celtic. As usual, it is the names of natural features which survive the longest—only 35 percent of these are Celtic, as against the 53 percent among the names of tribes and settlement centres. It must of course be borne in mind in this context that we are only concerned with that branch of the Celtic language of which the main descendant is Welsh, for there is no evidence that the other branch, represented by Scottish Gaelic, existed here until its introduction by the Scotti from Ulster in the fifth century AD.

Of the organization and structure of society in the non-Celtic areas we have no knowledge, but within the areas under Celtic rule—and that may welt have been most of habitable Scotland in the first century AD—we can see something of the likely social pattern. There existed some fifteen or so major tribes—Smertae, Damnonii, Votandini and the rest—each governed by a ruler with the status of a tribal chieftain or a *basileus* of Hesiod's Dark Age Greece. Such tribal leaders in southern Britain were on occasions of special relationships described by the Romans as *rex,* and they seem to have held office by reason of their membership of the ruling house. They could indeed be men or women, as Cartimanndua of the Brigantes and Boudica of the Iceni give witness.

Within the tribe a socially stratified society linked the classes one to another by obligation and land tenure. Settlement seems to have been based largely on the individual steading, but

these may have been grouped into what in recent times became called the 'township' or baile, the same grouping of households with collectively tilled common fields and communally owned pasture and grazing. The free men of the settlement (on historical analogies) could have owned shares in the common land, and it seems likely, again on comparative historical evidence, that the skilled craftsmen, whether bards or blacksmiths, would also have their rights there. But between the chieftain and the commoners there came a class of nobles or barons or thanes, a warrior aristocracy, the *equites* of Caesar, who in Ireland at least, and most likely elsewhere in the British Isles, specifically counted their wealth in cattle and whose individual allotment of arable or grazing was a separate portion not included in the common lands of the settlement. These were the men who fought from the chariot, rather than on foot like the lower classes of freemen; these, too, with the chieftain were probably the main owners of slaves who had not the rights of the freemen of the society. Chieftain and nobles formed a general assembly denoted in the Indo-European languages by various names indicating 'the whole' (in Irish, the word for 'tribe'); and although the ruler came from a royal family, it seems that his succession had at least to be formally ratified by the assembly.

We know that the priestly caste, the druids, were of great importance in the Celtic world, but their precise status in the social hierarchy, as far as land tenure is concerned, is obscure. It seems likely that bards and magicians, as a privileged class would be entitled to separate allocations of land, and in later times in Ireland this was certainly the case.

The pattern of the Celtic tribes was therefore that of agreed areas under individual rule (though doubtless the boundaries were often in dispute). Below the chieftain came the nobility, the 'Cow Lords' arid charioteers, with their individual allocations of land; below them again the free men of the settlement with their common land. All classes were bound by obligations and allegiance, and the General Assembly of the king and his nobles determined political and military action. Inter-tribal warfare, and petty skirmishes between factious nobles and their followers, seem to have been constant. Some at least of the Celtic warriors fought naked, doubtless in consonance with some religious sanction, and many tribes and regions had the custom of painting or tattooing their bodies. Head-hunting played an important part in such activities, the heads of the victims being carried home in triumph on the chariot and preserved in the house or impaled over the gate of the hill-fort; cattle raiding was an honourable and accepted occupation for a gentleman.

It is against such a background then that we must set Calgacus, the Swordsman as his name tells us, the first man in Scotland whose name we know. He and his nobles, like their Gaulish cousins described so vividly by Diodorus Siculus, no doubt shaved their faces but 'let their moustaches grow so long that their mouths are covered up and so when they eat, these get entangled in the food, while their drink is taken in, as it were, through a strainer.' They too would wear the Celtic dress that so astonished the classical world—'amazing clothes, shirts with flowing patterns and dyed all kinds of colours and trousers called *brakai;'* perhaps, too, as Diodorus noted, in speech they may have been 'sparing of words and enigmatical,' though 'boastful, threatening and braggarts by nature.' Ceremonial feasting would take place in the big circular thatched house, with the guests graded according to status as they sat round the central hearth with the bubbling cauldron of boiled pork; behind each warrior would stand his armour-bearer, and to the bravest warrior went the choicest joint, the Champion's Portion. Beer or mead would be brought to the guests by a servant moving sun-wise, just as the port decanter circulates today.

It is a barbarous society that we reconstruct, not far from that of Dark Age Greece reflected in Homer, nearer perhaps to that of Beowulf, preserving the texture and idiom of the earlier Indo-European institutions in the same sense that the Celtic languages retain the features that relate them to earlier dialects. For the Romans who had absorbed the Oriental and Mediterranean civilities, an incomprehensible order of things: on the frontiers of their Empire they were separated from their opponents not only by a physical, but by a moral and psychological barrier across which understanding could not reach. The Celtic peoples could not achieve the concept of unity even among themselves, let alone conceive of a world containing both Celts and Romans. 'Seldom is it,' wrote Tacitus of the Britons, 'that two or three states meet together to ward off common danger. Thus, while they fight singly, all are conquered.' And as a modem historian discussing this very problem has said, 'the conduct of the barbarians was rendered worse by the incalculable changes of their moods; they were not guided by logical and reasoned thinking but rather by sudden emotion.' On the other hand, the ancient antithesis of civilized and barbarian, the Tribes Without the Law, was as ineradicably fixed in the Roman mind as in that of Rudyard Kipling. Neither philosophically nor juridically did Roman thought admit the possibility of 'good barbarians,' unless they were firmly under the contractual obligations of a client kingdom or incorporated within the Empire. It was a spiritual and moral as well as a political impasse, and in Scotland, on the outer rim even of Celtic culture, perhaps more impossible of solution than elsewhere in western Europe.

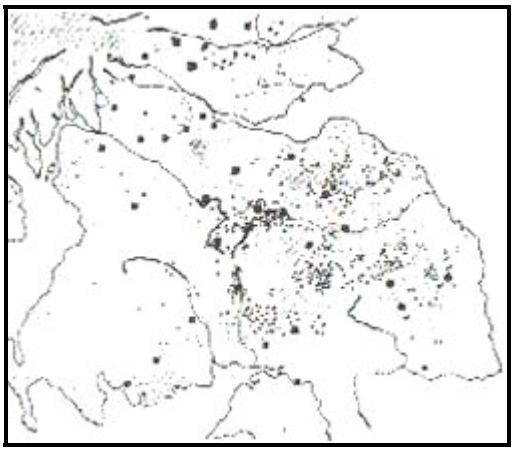
The Roman occupation of Scotland was, like that of the rest of the Highland Zone of Britain, a military garrison established among people of alien traditions, at a lower stage of technological capacity, and with at best a rudimentary and often savage code of law and government. In the face of such an occupying force, determined to preserve peace in the regions it controlled and to put an end to the eternal quarrels and raids between rival families, clans and tribes, that were the breath of life to the Celtic warrior, three main courses of action were open to the barbarians. In the first place, it was possible for a native tribe to accept Roman rule, even to welcome it; such an arrangement could be advantageous to both sides and could either be an informal state of non-aggression, or could be ratified by appropriate legal machinery. In the south of Scotland it looks as though the tribes of the Damnonii and the Votadini took such a course at an early stage of the occupation.

A second (and perhaps the most usual) relationship between native and Roman was that of keeping the peace to the minimal degree consonant with reprisals, at least in the immediate neighbourhood of the garrisons or the ambit of their scouting parties. The more remote from the Roman military zone, the more lawless could the tribe be—what happened north of the Great Glen was nobody's business. But the third, and perhaps more personal solution of the problem of co-existence of incompatible cultures, was for the ruler and his retainers to move out of reach of the military forces, and if possible to put sea or mountain between himself and them.

It is instructive, however, to look first at the situation in the heavily garrisoned area between Hadrian's and the Antonine Walls, especially that part of it in which, as we saw earlier, the builders of hill-forts had established themselves. This was the region in part within the tribal areas of the Votadini and the Damnonii who, as we have said, seem to have come to terms with the occupying forces, and in part within that of the Selgovae, whose submission was probably compelled. The evidence from the hill-forts of the Border counties is eloquent enough as to what was achieved by forcible or persuasive Roman action. Time and time again we can trace the growth, within the defended areas, of congeries of circular stone-walled huts or small houses which, on excavation, prove belong to the period of the Roman occupation, though some are indeed also earlier, and which not only fill the

fort by sprawl over once-defensive walls and ramparts by then out of commission and half ruined. The *pax romana* was no empty phrase, whether achieved by force or by the consent of at least the tribal leaders, and the clan warfare and cattle-raids of which the forts are the archaeological expression could not be tolerated in Romanised territory. Once rallying places of the war-bands, the forts could still have remained the high places of tribal prestige and tradition, but as civil settlements. The nucleation of settlement they presuppose may have been accompanied by, and be in part the outcome of, improved agricultural techniques introduced by the Romans in an attempt to increase local corn production: certainly Romano-Celtic tools of southern English types appear at this time in the Scottish Lowlands.

The Roman Occupation



Hill forts and Roman forts in south Scotland

It was a Celtic custom to have periodic tribal or religious assemblies at fixed places, not necessarily at any permanent settlement, where ceremonies could take place, laws be promulgated, and a fair or market held. Such meetings may have been recognized, within the Roman provinces, as lawful and permissible. We have seen too how there were sanctuaries such as Medionemeton somewhere near the Antonine Wall, while the votive offerings made in lakes must not be forgotten.

A place named in a Roman source as that of Maponus lay within the tribe of the Novantae, whose territory seems to have stretched from the River Nith into Galloway: Maponus was a Celtic god of youth, music and markets, and Lochmaben may preserve his name. It was against the Novantae and the Selgovae that Agricola directed his attack at an early stage of his campaign in AD 82. During the next two years he was engaged in the combined operations in eastern Scotland which culminated in the engagement at Mons Graupius. These campaigns, or the impending threat of such events, would have forced upon the Celtic tribes the alternative courses of action we have mentioned—submission, real or superficial, or withdrawal to regions out of reach of the Roman army.

In such a context it is interesting to consider the Western Isles within the first couple of centuries AD. In the third millennium BC, they had supported a population of stone-using agriculturalists whose enduring memorial is their chambered collective tombs. After this episode there is virtually no evidence of anything but the most scanty and sparse settlement, often of none at all, until there appear the abundant remains of the stone-built houses, byres and farmsteads of iron-using farmers, and the circular defensive tower-houses known as brochs. Once established, such structures were built and lived in for several centuries, into the post-Roman Dark Ages

The material equipment of the settlers would be perfectly in accord with their having origins on the mainland. The circular stone houses are no more than local versions of the timber built farmsteads, which we have already noticed, adapted to conditions of scanty wood and an inclement climate; bone weaving tools and other objects imply sheep farmers making woolen cloth according to traditional techniques widespread in immediately pre-Roman Britain and well represented from West Yorkshire to Galloway.

The structure called a wheel-house, from its plan with radial stone piers representing the wooden posts of the prototype, is clearly the Hebridean equivalent of the farmhouse unit or single steading which we have seen to have been typical of the immediately pre-Roman agrarian economy over most of the British mainland. The animal bones from such houses, and tools such as the weaving-combs mentioned above, show that the builders were farmers grazing sheep for wool—their stock, and any seed corn they may have possessed, must have been taken to the islands during the immigration. The same economy lies behind the brochs, but these remarkable structures show a peculiarly Scottish development whereby the circular stone-walled house was turned into a defensive tower *(see* Index of Sites). Much is still obscure about the precise manner in which these tower-houses, some at least built to a height of 6 m or more, were roofed or floored internally, and there is likely to have been considerable individual variation; but one thing is clear. We are dealing with a development exactly analogous to the evolution of the mediaeval peel or tower house in North Britain, and presumably the result of similar circumstances—insecurity, clan or tribal warfare, cattle thieving and family feuds. It is possible that the broch builders felt the need to defend themselves against an enemy more dreaded than their own kinsfolk, the power of the Roman military forces, which, as Agricola's circumnavigation of Scotland showed, could strike by sea as well as by land. Was this act indeed a demonstration directed *in terrorem* to show that even those in the Islands were not necessarily out of reach?

In the event, there is no evidence that punitive measures were ever taken against these settlements. In fact, it looks as though some peaceable trading took place between the Roman world and the Hebridean crofters, and that the woolen industry of the north, as elsewhere in the Roman Province, was encouraged as a deliberate piece of economic policy. The Celtic north and west was moving towards the place it was to occupy in the earliest Middle Ages, when the movements of peoples in the immemorial manner of prehistory were to begin again, for the Roman grip on northern Europe had become relaxed and ineffective. With the arrival of the Scotti from Ulster in the fifth century AD and the later Anglian settlement in the south-east, historical Scotland with its amalgam of prehistoric traditions of language and culture, mingled with those of Irish and Germanic origins, began to take shape.

A Call for Articles

A Druid Missal-Any would like to invite interested persons to submit articles pertaining to Druid history, language, culture and lore, Paleo- and Neo-druidism, and related topics for publication. The article should be typewritten, double-spaced, and no longer than eight double-spaced (no elite) pages. The editors of the Missal-Any reserve the right to edit articles. Author credit will be announced in A Druid Missal-Any.

From the Psycho-Techno Interface

Light bulbs by Lumi-ram Corporation, of Finland, sold as "color enhancement" bulbs, greatly enhance the ease and effect of crystal gazing. This is quite helpful when trying to learn this skill. They are sold in catalogues and some decorator lighting stores.

Drought-Stricken Car Washing

Save old bath water and wash the car in it. This is made easier with some 3/8" aquarium tubing for a siphon. Do NOT use old noodle or pasta water; it has a wheat gluten in it that you will never get off of your paint. Use old five Gallon bottles or ten gallon plastic bulk food containers for water storage. Some health food stores or restaurants give them away. Only the first and final rinses need be with the hose.

Postmarked August 1st, 1988

A Druid Missal-Any Fall Equinox 1988 Volume 12 Number 6

Fall Equinox Essay: Harvest and Cernunnos

By Emmon Bodfish

all Equinox, a minor High Day in the Reform Druid calendar. The season of Foghar begins. The harvest advances in earnest. All produce of the fields and wild woods must be gathered in before Samhain Eve. Any fruit left in the fields after that night must be left, abandoned to the birds and the wild creatures, "to feed the flocks of Cernnunos." At Fall Equinox the work of harvesting is in full swing and we can appreciate a minor holiday from our work.

There is very little to gather here at the Orinda Grove Site. After the drought and the oak moth plague of this year and last, the oaks have not ripened any acorns to speak of, and the Blue Flag bulbs and wild onions are scarce. We'll leave what there are to the animals. The deer are hungry and the squirrels have grown bold. They come into the yard or sniff around the garage. However we have a bumper crop of fire wood with all the dead saplings and fallen oak limbs. Never cut a living tree for fuel. There is plenty of the dead stuff around.

From now until Winter Solstice is the time of Cernunnos, Master of the Animals, the woodland God, the antlered shaman. He is the teacher and "brother" of mystics, and of the solitary woods hermits of the Celtic pagan tradition. Professor James Duran believes He is a cognate to Hindu Shiva. He is the magician or shaman figure, cultivating his "yoke to God" in solitude. One theory of the torque symbolism in Celtic religion is that it represents a bond to the wearer's patron deity. There is archeological evidence, shrines in caves in Spain and France with continuous offerings left over the centuries, that His identity may go back to the antlered and costumed shamans of the Paleolithic. He is a patron of hunters, and is probably cognate with the Anglo-Saxon figure of Hern the Hunter.

The emphasis of this season is balance: old and new, gains and losses. Now we can take stock of the past, of the year's activities and harvest our gains or cut our losses. Harvest is a time of endings. We are busy storing, preserving and celebrating crops and insights. Balance it with rest, and talking over future plans, beside a hearth fire if possible.

Calendar

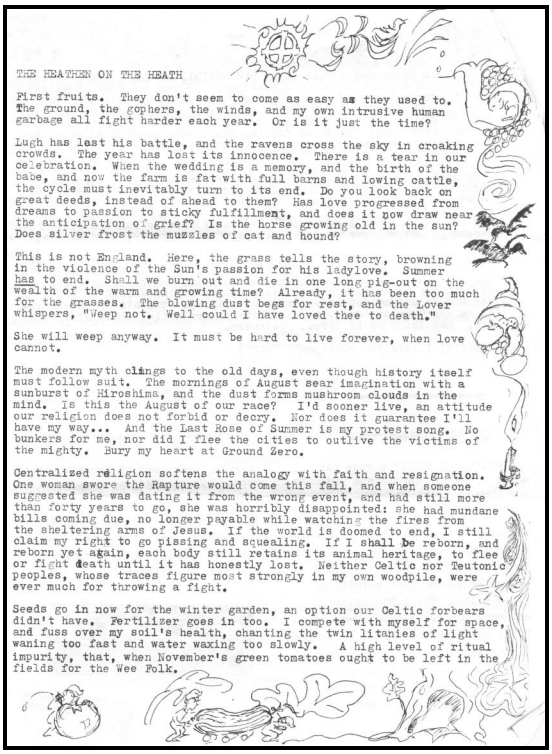
Autumn Equinox will occur at 19 hours 23 minutes Greenwich Time on September 22, 1988, which is 12:23 P.M. Pacific Daylight Time. Celebration here will be Thursday evening, circa 6:30 P.M.

Letter to the Editor: Albion's Request

Would like to correspond with anyone interested in the possible Pre-Celtic origins of the four Fire Festivals: Samhain, Imbolc, Bealtinne, and Lughnasadh.

Please write to:

Albion
P.O. Box 1453
Conway, Arkansas 72032



THE HEATHEN ON THE HEATH

First fruits. They don't seem to come as easy as they used to. The ground, the gophers, the winds, and my own intrusive human garbage all fight harder each year. Or is it just the time?

Lugh has lost his battle, and the ravens cross the sky in croaking crowds. The year has lost its innocence. There is a tear in our celebration. When the wedding is a memory, and the birth of the babe, and now the farm is fat with full barns and lowing cattle, the cycle must inevitably turn to its end. Do you look back on great deeds, instead of ahead to them? Has love progressed from dreams to passion to sticky fulfillment, and does it now draw near the anticipation of grief? Is the horse growing old in the sun? Does silver frost the muzzles of cat and hound?

This is not England. Here, the grass tells the story, browning in the violence of the Sun's passion for his ladylove. Summer has to end. Shall we burn out and die in one long pig-out on the wealth of the warm and growing time? Already, it has been too much for the grasses. The blowing dust begs for rest, and the lover whispers, "Weep not. Well could I have loved thee to death."

She will weep anyway. It must be hard to live forever, when love cannot.

The modern myth clings to the old days, even though history itself must follow suit. The mornings of August sear imagination with a sunburst of Hiroshima, and the dust forms mushroom clouds in the mind. Is this the August of our race? I'd sooner live, an attitude our religion does not forbid or decry. Nor does it guarantee I'll have my way... And the Last Rose of Summer is my protest song. No bunkers for me, nor did I flee the cities to outlive the victims of the mighty. Bury my heart at Ground Zero.

Centralized religion softens the analogy with faith and resignation. One woman swore the Rapture would come this fall, and when someone suggested she was dating it from the wrong event, and had still more than forty years to go, she was horribly disappointed: she had mundane bills coming due, no longer payable while watching the fires from the sheltering arms of Jesus. If the world is doomed to end, I still claim my right to go pissing and squealing. If I shall be reborn, and reborn yet again, each body still retains its animal heritage, to flee or fight death until it has honestly lost. Neither Celtic nor Teutonic peoples, whose traces figure most strongly in my own woodpile, were ever much for throwing a fight.

Seeds go in now for the winter garden, an option our Celtic forbears didn't have. Fertilizer goes in too. I compete with myself for space, and fuss over my soil's health, chanting the twin litanies of light waning too fast and water waxing too slowly. A high level of ritual impurity, that, when November's green tomatoes ought to be left in the fields for the Wee Folk.

The Heathen on the Heath: First Fruits

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Hell, I'll leave 'em a dish of my pickalilli, instead. My clumsiness alone could support a faerie convention. Or perhaps they plant their own garden, late squash in the compost heap and spilt tomato seeds among the potatoes and lettuces. And having finally decided not to die, my garden will cause me to curse the name of zucchini, as it has in years past. Even the fairies don't want that; next year their discards will spring anew, in places where I never would have planted them.

I'll feed the little bastards generously, on zucchini burgers and zucchini bread and zucchini soufflé and quiche. Who needs ritual purity when you have runaway squashes?

The Lady mourns her passing Lord, but lady animals run him off, Papa Tomcat is not welcome, and my duchesses have appropriated the shed: Maternity Ward, Drakes Keep Out! Alas, alas John Barleycorn, He was a rascal anyway. So pass the keg again. Weeping and foolery are kin, tears for the rain and guffaws for thunder. This is important business! As you go about your day, earning and arguing and building the things of humanity, make sure you're laughing and crying enough to bring on the autumn storms and keep the Wheel rolling. There's precious few of us who know our duty, so raise the Waters while you've still got 'em, and toast us in devout rowdiness.

(Sniff!) I love you guys!

Spirit of Biel: Racing Car

"Spirit of Biel," a race car named after the Celtic Sun God was entered in the first all-solar powered endurance race ever, which was held this year in Australia. This ecological vehicle might have finished third had it not collided with a conventional car just outside of Alice Wells. The 1,950 miles of roadway between Darwin and Adelaide could not be closed to conventional traffic for the four days of the race. The fuel's free, and it can hold a speed of 45 mph on a sunny day. Before the race, Mac Cready, president of Aerovironment, dismissed the idea of commercial production on the grounds of cost, but afterwards he commented "I think we all realize that we may have started something that we did not originally envisage."

Spirit of Biel with tilted solar panel.

Q: "What's the oldest living language in Europe?"
A: Welsh.

The Heathen on the Heath: The End of Summer

In the time of balance, I think of hairpulls, and of the doubts as old as religion that we may either decry or embrace. Myself, I have learned to be fond of them; otherwise I suffer a lot.

Rationalism is a cold place. It also makes the sensations of one's isolated consciousness a little uncomfortable. Why should I be peering out these two wet windows, instead of someone else? And whatever I may think of it, does it matter very much?

I'm not really the believing kind. Yet I walk in a world of many gods and goddesses, all part of the divine universe, and all workers of great magicks. I speak, "Lord," "Lady," and solemnly declare that a living world hears me.

I also walk among others of my nonfaith who call upon methods of divination, by cards and stars and crystals. And I have various odd means of justifying my refusal to reject such things outright: archetypal imagery, channels of intuition. Phooey. I cast cards on a table and read the pictures in them as a way of grasping at straws in confusion. I count the images in star patterns and permutate and combine them in the sky of this or that moment in time, because the star-pictures are a handle on the mystery of personality, not because they name aught that I can truly know.

And I collect the lessons of each, ancient and well-laden with the thoughts and dreams of my forebears. Help me, Old Ones! What did you know that I don't?

When does this—or the channeling of my energy through arbitrary places in my body, or the repetition of mantra or Wiccan doggerel—pass over the line between seeking and superstition?

When I walk among the people, I remember a card sent by Mad Sweeney: "Nature is not dirty, but it provides the raw materials from which we manufacture dirt." And I tell myself that people are not foolish or shallow, but they have the materials in them from which foolery and crassness are made. So I am still responsible for the times when I get used or jerked around, but for individual errors in present judgment, rather than for outreach to strangers at all.

People need not be mine to be benevolent, nor need they have been of my time to be wise. Can we translate the speech of poets? And can our materialistically-trained minds then put to use what we hear? Or is it lost to us forever, our efforts warped to fallacy by the indoctrination of an utterly alien culture?

And can we give our Mother any protection but our own extinction? By loving Her, have we become the enemies of our own kind? Many of the so-called scientific community think so.

Yet in rejecting all that they know, we continue in ignorance to wound that which we love.

We need more than balance: Synthesis. Turn in your compost, and think of that.

An Experiment in Iron Age Living

By Albion

In the year 1977, a producer for BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) television named John Percival conceived an experiment to see what the Iron Age was like, in modern times. Percival, an archaeology buff, wanted to see, and show BBC viewers how the ancient Celts might have lived. He conceived his plan for trying the Iron Age after visiting a reconstructed Iron Age village in Lejre, Denmark.

Percival ran discreet newspaper advertisements around Britain. From the one thousand replies, Percival chose six couples and three children to spend a year living like their Celtic ancestors might have, in a careful reconstruction of an Iron Age settlement. Twice a week Percival and his BBC television crew would visit and film what was going on for a twelve part BBC television series. After Percival rented approximately 35 acres of woods and approximately 15 acres of fields from an obliging private land owner, one cold March day in 1977, these modern "ancient Celts" moved to their new village.

This modern tribe consisted of three school teachers, a hairdresser, a nurse, a doctor, a social worker, a builder, a mathematician, a National Farmers Union official, two students, and three children aged seven, five, and three.

Little had been done for these new settlers by the BBC aside from clearing a site in the woods, bulldozing a boundary wall of earth, and piping water into a "well" (as the water table was approximately 197 feet down). They were also given a few metal tools, as well as tents to live in till they got their communal roundhouse constructed, which took 14 weeks to build. Using ancient tools, the group chopped 72 wooden rafters and built a conical thatched roof with the walls made out of wattle (interwoven branches) and daub (mud and animal hair). Their house was approximately 30 feet high and 49 feet wide.

Inside their roundhouse, wattle screens and straw blinds divided their Iron Age house into 13 "rooms." These modern ancient Celts slept between animal skins on low wooden beds. Their Celtic house weathered one of Britain's worse winters (of those years) in fine style and never became too cold. Although because the group never allowed the central hearth fire to go out, it consumed a ton of fire wood every five days. Yet even in snowy weather, these modern Celts stayed warm in their ancient house.

Percival also had this modern tribe of Iron Agers trained in Celtic culture and crafts. In addition, they were trained in survival skills and gathering wild foods. They had two dogs for company. For food, they had three cows, four pigs, nine goats, twenty-five sheep, and forty chickens. In addition, some bees were provided for the production of honey. The pigs were a part wild boar species and the chickens were also an old English variety. Their supply of domestic animal meat was also supplemented by rabbit, squirrel, and an occasional deer or rat. However, our hardy volunteers said that rat had so little meat that it "was scarcely worth the trouble" of cooking. In their fields, these modern Celts grew wheat, barley, oats, peas, and tickbeans.

In some ways the 20th century kept intruding on these modern Iron Agers. The British Educational Authorities ruled that the children had to have access to school books. Also, the volunteer Iron Agers were allowed to use Tampax and contraceptives, and four times during emergencies, a doctor was sent in to attend to their needs. British laws also demanded that a butcher be sent in to stun and slaughter their pigs, and that modern fire codes be satisfied in the form of four exits in their Celtic roundhouse in case of fire. However, aside from these few allowances, these modern Celts tried to live as did their ancestors. In fact, their "catchwords" for doing things became "proper Iron Age."

As these volunteer Celts settled in, their focal point of community became the central hearth fire. Usually on long winter evenings, they would tell their life stories; pick out a tune on a six stringed lyre or the pipe and drums; sing; or play Nine Men's Morris, an ancient board game. They also made elderberry wine, beer, and mead. (They made 23 gallons of mead, which they described as being "very strong").

Bathing was also done around the central hearth fire. Water was heated by dropping pieces of heated iron into a large tub of water. After awhile, a good deal of casual nudity became commonplace, as might be expected. Soap became a problem, as experiments at making soap from animal fat failed. These modern Celts started using clay to shampoo with, as clay removed the grease from their hair.

These Iron Agers' experiments with animal husbandry were also only partially successful. Their part wild pig species would not breed but "made excellent bacon." Their efforts with chickens were also not totally successful, as their hens only laid eggs in the spring. On the other hand, their 9 goats produced 16 kids, their sheep had 13 lambs, and their cows had 4 calves.

These modern Celts also tried to pray to the Celtic Gods and Goddesses but at least one of them found it hard to leave this century and return to yesteryear. However, the group as a whole became more superstitious in their year's time spent in "the Iron Age."

They did celebrate Lughnasadh as a harvest ceremony decked out in body paint made from ash and herbs with a rowdy dance and with one member (a man) representing "the Spirit of Goodness" burying an ear of corn in the earth.

Their harvest was so successful that the efforts to reap it all became a real chore, as members had to stop cutting their crops every two or three minutes to sharpen the soft iron blades of their cutting implements. Yet, within four weeks, they had gathered in their harvest, enough to feed themselves and their animals through the winter.

These modern Celts also made their own clothes from the wool of their sheep. However, they estimated that at least 60 sheep would have been needed to fully clothe a community of their size in Iron Age time instead of the 25 that they had. The wool was coarse and slightly greasy but was warm and resisted the rain.

The one real problem encountered by these trial Iron Agers was with foot wear. Attempts at moccasin making all failed until one member finally designed a "clog" that would hold up in the rainy weather by using two strips of wood, between which was attached a strip of calf leather with leather uppers added. These lasted well and elevated feet out of mud puddles.

Much was done in the group by trial and error and metal making was no exception. They learned quickly to shape and weld iron. Making pottery proved harder, because not only did they have to build their own kiln, but they had to learn to use the right amount of "grog" or ground up stone to make the clay bind correctly. Their first experiments with pots crumbled to dust.

Bartering with BBC producer Percival was also essential to their survival. Goat kids, a calf, pots, and baskets were swapped for salt, eggs, cheese, and honey. Yet despite the need to purchase or swap, they ended the year as creditors to Percival and his crew.

All in all, the year was a highly successful venture for the volunteers with all of them learning many things that they had never known before. But most of all, they spoke of the tribal or community feeling that they had shared and come to love. All expressed sorrow at leaving their friends after the year's experiment was over.

There was much debate within British archaeological circles as to how authentic the experiment was, but Percival's group of volunteers was trying to live out some *guesses* about Iron Age people and their daily existence. For British television viewers the series was successful, too. As one commentator on the series said, "what they were really enacting was our own myth: a dream of simple communal living."

**For readers who are interested in another similar experiment. In Iron Age living in Britain, you can look into "the Butser Ancient Farm Project." See the book *The Iron Age in Britain* edited by J. Collins, pages 32-40.

Postmarked 22 Sept 1988

A Druid Missal-Any Samhain 1988 Volume 12 Number 7

Samhain Essay: Assemblies

By Emmon Bodfish

amhain, a major High Day in the Druid calendar, is the day between the years. The Druid year starts with Samhain in the autumn just as the Celtic day begins at sundown, The Classic writers of antiquity held that it was a Druid teaching that cold and darkness and difficulty precede warmth and light and benefit.

In old Druid times, Samhain was the occasion of great gatherings in Ireland and Gaul, and probably in Scotland and Britain as well, though there no records of them survived.

The Druids, Bards, and Ovates (Ollafhs) and the political leaders from all parts of Ireland assembled at Tara. In Gaul similar gatherings were held, which sent and received emissaries to and from Scotland and Alba (England). Representatives of the Tuatha, the husbandmen, from the four provinces of Ireland assembled at Tara Hall well before Samhain. There, after ritual purifications, such as running or leaping the bonefires, and the offering of sacrifices, the chieftains and Druids retired indoors, into the Great Hall,. They remained "under roof" all Samhain. Day, the belief being that on this day the forces of Propriety and Order were gathered indoors, and the forces of Chaos were afoot outside. Inside participants took up their traditional stations around the High King: Those of Ulster, representing the warrior caste, to his left; those of Munster, representing Bards, Prophets, and artists to his right; those of Connaught, representing the Druidic (clerical) caste at his back; and facing him, Leinster, representing the Tuatha, "the people," crafts and husbandmen. In this order the Great Counsel of the year was held.*

Elections are held in R.D.N.A. Groves, and a night vigil is held mark the new year. In the morning, the Third Order Druids exchange their red ceremonial ribbons for white, and offer a second sacrifice to the Dawn.

*For the High King, it was "face the people day." No wonder the holiday became associated with dread. From Professor James Duran's seminar, "The Druids," Berkeley, 1985.

"Some of them seem to have forgotten that their forefathers—the Picts, Danes and Romans—all entered the country illegally!"

From "Punch," December 7, 1977

The Danes and the Romans, yes. The Picts, perhaps not, if we take the Picts to be the long-headed, fine boned people of north eastern Scotland,* they may be the descendants of the original stone age hunters, among the first Sapiens into the British Isles, which were not isles, but were still attached to continental Europe at the time.

The Stonehenge People, Rodney Castleden, Routledge & Kegan Paul, Inc. London, 1987.
The Old Stone Age, Bordes, World University Library, McGraw Hill, NY, 1968.

To All Branches of the R.D.N.A.

Samhain Liturgical Changes

As a Third Order Druid active in the Reformed Druid Movement, I would like to add the following lines into the Samhain Chant, they being in line with what is stated in the "Epistle to the Myopians" in the Book of the Apocrypha, in the Druid Chronicles. They would be read after the second sacrifice, before the Archdruid's request to the Earth-mother "O Earth-mother, guide our paths…"

The new version of the chant would appear as follows. (neatly typeset when I can get that done. E.B.)

This will be, is being, sent to all Third Order Druids who can be located, and so it will become part of the Apocrypha.

Chant

D: Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, Thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many faceted Nature in and above all, to Thee we sing our chants of praise.
E: Go Thou not from us.
D: Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all Groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not Thy pleasing face from us.
E: Go Thou not from us.
D: The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is Thy order, where Thy strength?
E: Depart not from our midst, sleep not, O most high.
D: The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws His chariot; His face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.
E: Return to us His warmth.

Second Sacrifice

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.
D: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....of the West.

Second Reply

The sacrifice is not accepted.

D: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Archdruid/ess and all other members of the Third Order present now remove their red ribbons and replace them with their white ribbons. The following is the Mourning and Declaration of Faith.

D: Lo, we are as wraiths, our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.
E: Preserve us, o spirit of day. Keep us in Thy mind, O spirit of power.
D: Lo, the Season of Sleep has come, and darkness prevails. Let us then lie down, in the good and covering dark, and rest, and contemplate, and renew ourselves with this gift of sleep.
P: Rest and heal us, O our Mother.
D: O Earth-mother, guide our paths. If Thou wilt leave us, save us through the time of Silence, keep bright within our hearts 'til Spring.
E: So let it be, O our Mother, for we are faithful, and would keep thy ways.

The R.D.N.A. Samhain Chants as They Now Stand

Chant

D:. Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, Thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many-faceted Nature in and above all, to Thee we sing our chants of praise.
E: Go Thou not from us.
D: Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all Groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not Thy pleasing face from us.
E: Go Thou not from us.
D: The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is Thy order, where Thy strength?
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D: O Earth-mother, guide our paths. If Thou wilt leave us, save us through the time of Silence, keep bright within our hearts 'til Spring.
Chorus: So let it be, O our Mother, for we are faithful, and would keep thy ways.

Why Another Article on Scrying?

By Emmon Bodfish

Despite the existence of numerous books on crystal gazing, and my pointing of inquirers toward them, this does not seem to be working as a feint. They keep asking. They say they want something "quick," "short", the "ready-Mart" of scrying. "What works." Here goes.

First, I have had better results with a straight sided solid piece of natural crystal than with a polished ball. This was especially true in the beginning. And secondly, as with so many psychic skills, practice does it.

Set up a room where you will not be disturbed. You must be able to be absolutely unselfconscious. A gentle light, coming from one small source, a candle or a low watt bulb, is best. Sit lightly, comfortably, with your back fairly straight, in a position in which you can forget your body. Breathe easily and deeply; "ground down." Put aside your worries and plans; tell them you will hold court for them later. Later, of course, you must do so and give these thoughts a short audience. This way they will learn to leave you alone while you are practicing your magic.

Eyes open and relaxed, take in the scene around you. Compose your emotions about the neutral point, alert and calm. Listen to the sound of your breathing and slowly stop the sentences running through your head. Become mentally silent, alert, and unbiased; anticipate. Feel the pause at the top of the in-breath. The practice of mental silence, being able to stop the verbal stream of thoughts running through your mind, is essential to the success of any meditative or psychic endeavor. It is the first rung of the ladder. This has been independently discovered by numerous religious and magical traditions and by individuals who have found their own way. It is one of the essentials for progressing in either meditative or thaumaturgical work.

Here are two methods of scrying I have used to get good results. One involves putting the light in front of you. In the other, the light is behind your right shoulder.

In the first, hold the piece of crystal in your right hand between yourself and the light source at the distance at which it is easy for you to focus your eyes on a fleck or a spot in the center of the crystal. At first it will be easier to scry while holding the stone in your hand rather than by gazing at it while it rests on a stand in front of you.

Pick a bright spot, a different looking spot, a flaw or a sparkle in the crystal and watch it. Don't anticipate or try to push for an image. Or, in another way of putting it, "Just watch it like it was television." Turn the rock slowly. Find an interesting angle.

What will come first are eidetic images. These are like the "faces" you see in clouds or the little scenes you can see in the embers. Your eye is seeing pure shapes, unnamed images, and

your brain is saying, "oh, that looks like…" Don't scoff at this or try to stop it. It is one gateway to visions and one of the closest. And, some people would add, one of the safest. Relax your eyes the way you did when you were day dreaming as a kid and just watch. If you can prevent yourself from dismissing it with the "Oh, that's only…" response, the eidetic image will become a scene. Small, very distant figures of people moving about at some unknown task, or geometric mask-like faces that appear, change and disappear are common first sightings. Keep your mind calm and silent and watch. The scene may draw nearer and begin to mean something; a mask may become a face or a person. Two negative skills are needed here; not scoffing and not pushing for something better. Watch, remember, get the feel of it. Sometimes the scene will fade back into being flaws in the crystal; sometimes it will just disappear and you will realize how tired your eyes and mind are. You have come to the end of your concentration energy. With meditation practice, you can increase the length of time that you can hold these contemplative states of mind. Look away. Now you can analyze what meaning you what you saw may have for you. As with all psychic skills it gets easier and more refined with practice. Again, remember the metaphor of learning to play a musical instrument.

When you succeed, try to remember to remember how you were focusing your eyes, and the "feel" of your state of mind. These are helpful guideposts in learning to get back to that state.

Scrying with the light behind you, coming over your right shoulder, is similar as to method, the same eye focus, the same relaxed attention, but here reflections are more important and the scenes are more likely to be in multiple colors. Sunlight can be used, but it is difficult. It is important to have the light coming over your shoulder from the right. This is the positive direction in Celtic lore and does make a difference in mood and mental state. This I know from empirical observation and testing as well. (Yes, we test things here at the Missal-Any. Question everything. It's an old R.D.N.A. tradition not to write or teach about a psychic phenomenon unless you have personal experience of it.) The "light from the right" rule is also corroborated in many other traditions as well. Does it stimulate the left hemisphere? I don't know. Energy, messages, and even thought sentences that seem to originate from the left are often untrustworthy and unconstructive and sometimes even harmful. This is not a prejudice; it comes of long observation. But this does not mean that anything from the right hand side is "TRUTH." I'd like to invoke here a former Archdruid's safety tip for psychic experimenters: "Be as cautious about accepting or trusting any entity or "message" which you may encounter in the course of your psychic workings as you would about trusting a person whom you had just met at a party." Common sense, repeated practice, and long acquaintance are good guides. Check your gut feeling. But this moves into the related problem of ethics, judgment, and veracity testing on the non-material planes, another and vaster subject than simple scrying, which was the subject that I was asked to boil down and put in this nutshell.*

—Emmon Bodfish

*And thanks be to the Gods for that!
Holy wars have been waged and volumes written on these matters, and I can refer the interested reader thither.

Calendar

Astronomical Samhain, when the Sun is at 16 degrees 18 minutes South, will occur on November 6, 1988, at 5:40 P.M. Pacific Standard Time.

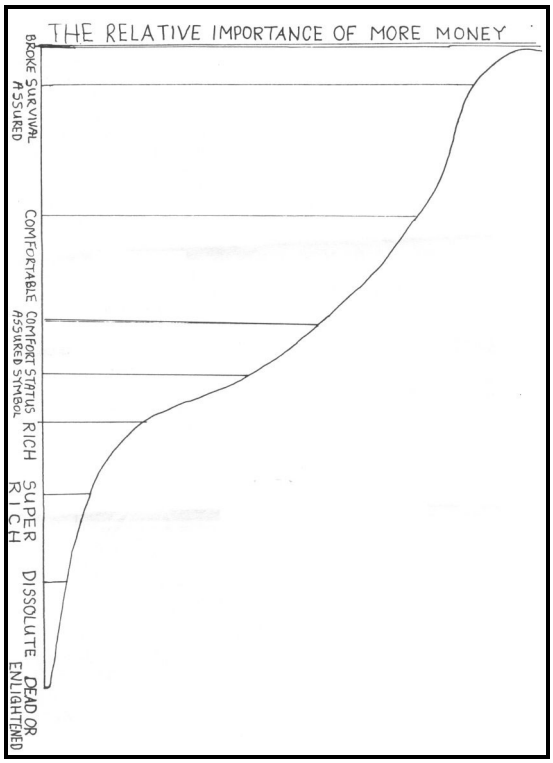
Stock Market Crash

In the old legends
fairie gold turned back to withered leaves
the next day. It shone and lured
only in Elfland.
And by enchantment.
Money is like that.
On the stock market the climbing numbers
increase and multiply and now
nothing but paper,
fit only to write a poem on the back.
Elfland. Wall Street.
Wherever we believe and then
no longer believe.
All over the country the experts are saying
it's a matter of faith:
clap your hands
and Tinkerbell will get well,
and the economy will get well,
and well, we'll see.
Money has always been strange.
It's only real when you don't have it.
Even the sparechanger with a handful of coins
is never sure.
They might refuse to serve him.
They have before.
The Dow Jones
is just another jones to feed.
Everyone needs money to eat
but no one can eat paper.
Where did all this paper come from?
Withered leaves,
fit only for burning.

by
Julia Vinograd

From her latest book, *Graffiti*, Zeigeist Press.
Write: 2500 Durant, Suite 409, Berkeley, 94704

Relative Importance of More Money



Postmarked 29 October, 1988

A Druid Missal-Any Yule 1988 Volume 12 Number 8

Yule Essay: Alignments and New Years

By Emmon Bodfish

Yule, a Minor High Day in the Druid calendar, marks the Winter Solstice. This was a more important day it appears from the archeological evidence in the preceding Megalith Culture. Not only is the rising point of the sun marked in the stones of Stonehenge, but many of the Megalithic tombs are so constructed that only on Midwinter's Day does the sun shine into the interior, usually through a round window cut in the portal stone, or along the funnel-shaped corridor of stone pillars leading up to it. The link between death, the Sun, Midwinter and an afterlife or a re-birth is a very old one, predating the Druids and even the arrival of the Indo-Europeans in Europe. In the cultures of Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean, about whom we have more information than has survived about either the Megalith culture or the Druids, the celebration of the Solstice is linked with the birth of the new, young Year-God, Corn-God or Vegetation-God. (Yes, the Christians co-opted this motif. According to the tax roles the historical Jesus was probably born around May.)

As we know that the Druid year began on Samhain, we know that they did not consider this the birth of the new season, as did many other Neolithic cultures. But the traditions of Bardic revels and of feasting on the wild boar, the vigil of the Yule log, and the decorating of Yule trees very probably do come from the Druid past. So also may be the tradition of going from house to house, singing a ritual song particular to the holiday, i.e. caroling. But in Druid times this would have been something like the "Hogamany Carols" and the related rituals of circling or dancing around the house, beating on drums and bull hides. This tradition was preserved in the remote Highlands until the nineteenth century. The ritual use of the bull hide, also used with other Druid rites, links it to Druidic, especially the Druidic Filidh tradition, and not to the preceding Megalithic or pre-Indo-European ones.

Here is one such carol. Try marching around your house and singing it this Solstice, with or without bull hide.

(Sun-wise, of course!)

Cairoll Callaig

Nis tha mis air tighinn dh' ur duthaich
A dh' urachadh dhuibh na Callaig;
Cha leig ml leas a dhol ga innse,
Bha i ann ri linn ar seanar.

Dirim ris an ardorus,
Teurnam ris an starsach,
Mo dhuan a ghabhail doigheil,
Modhail, moineil, maineil.

Caisean Callaig 'na mo phoca,
Is mor an ceo thig as an ealachd.

* * * *

Gheibh fear an taighe 'na dhorn e,
Cuiridh e shron anns an teallach;
Theid e deiseil air na paisdean,
Seachd ar air bean an taighe.

Bean an taighe is i is fhiach e,
Lamh a riarach orinn na Callaig,
Sochair bheag a bhlath an t-samhraidh,
Tha mi 'n geall air leis an arain.

Hogmanay Carol

I am now come to your country,
To renew to you the Hogmanay,
I need not tell you of it,
It was in the time of our forefathers.

I ascend by the door lintel,
I descend by the doorstep,
I will sing my song becomingly,
Mannerly, slowly, mindfully.

The Hogmanay skin is in my pocket,
Great will be the smoke from it presently.

* * * *

The house-man will get it in his hand,
He will place its nose in the fire;
He will go sunwards round the babes,
And for seven verities round the housewife.

The housewife it is she who deserves it,
The hand to dispense to us the Hogmanay,
A small gift of the bloom of summer,
Much I wish it with the bread.

Calluinn A Bhuilg [63]

Calluinnen Ho! This rune is still repeated in the Isles. Rarely, however, do two persons recite it alike. This renders it difficult to decide the right form of the words.

The walls of the old homes in the West are very thick—from five to eight feet. There are no gables, the walls being of uniform height throughout. The roof of the house being raised from the inner edge of the wall a broad terrace is left on the outside. Two or three stones project from the wall at the door, forming steps. On these the inmates ascend for purposes of thatching and securing the roof in time of storm.

Calluinn a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Buail am boicionn
Buail am bicionn.
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Buail an craicionn,
Buail an craicionn.
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Sios e! suas e!
Buail an craicionn.
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Sios e! suas e!
Buail an craicionn.
Calluinn a bhuilg,
Calluinn a bhuilg.

Hogmanay of the Sack

The 'gillean Callaig' carolers or Hogmanay lads perambulate the town land at night. One man is enveloped in the hard hide of a bull with the horns and hoofs still attached. When the men come to a house they ascend the wall and run around sunwise, the man in the hide shaking the horns and hoofs, and the other in striking the hard hide with sticks. The appearance of the man in the hide is gruesome, while the din made is terrific. Having descended and recited their runes at the door, the Hogmanay men are admitted and treated to the best in the house.

The performance seems to be symbolic, but of what it is not even to say, unless of laying an evil spirit. That the rite is heathen and ancient is evident.

Hogmanay of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack,
Strike the hide,
Strike the hide.
Hogmanay of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack,
Beat the skin,
Beat the skin.
Hogmanay of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack,
Down with it! up with it!
Strike the hide.
Hogmanay of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack,
Down with it! up with it!
Beat the skin.
Hogmanay of the sack,
Hogmanay of the sack.

Hail Braciaca!

Recent excavation of a Bronze Age burial site may have turned up some of the oldest mead yet discovered. The grave was in the town of Ashgrove, in south eastern Scotland and was examined by Professor R.J. Adam and his assistants. Among them was C.A. Lambert, whose attention was caught by the large amount of pollen of the lime tree, Tilia cordata, that she found in the plant debris during the routine pollen analysis of the material covering one of the corpses. This material was mostly leaf fragments, twigs, sphagnum moss, birch bark, and rushes. No lime tree leaves nor bark were identified. The lime, genus Tilia, is not common in Scotland, nor was it common there when the burial was made 3,000 years ago. The possibility of transportation of the small petaled lime flowers, flowering boughs, several hundred miles from the South, seems unlikely even given that it was the custom to place flowers in Bronze Age graves. Pollen of the meadow sweet, Filipendula, was also found in abundance, and also some crusty black material. Although lime flowers couldn't be carried long distances before they wilted and fell, honey made from lime nectar and pollen or mead made from the honey could be carried. Both of these were precious commodities in ancient times and could be traded long distances. The presence of this meadow sweet pollen, also not natively abundant, could be explained in this was, too, as the herb was long used to flavor mead. This is mentioned in several medieval herbals and in traditional recipes. Lambert hypothesizes that a wooden or bark container, such as have been found in other Bronze Age graves was filled with mead, the sacred drink, and placed in the grave. It tipped over and spilled its exotic lime pollen and rneadow sweet brew onto the moss and birch boughs covering the corpse.

Celtic mead may also have been flavored with meadow sweet, as was Bronze Age mead, and as was still the style in the middle ages. The Druidic Celts, lived between these two eras, probably knew the practice and used it, too.

If you buy some commercial mead for Yule, try to buy or gather some meadow sweet and steep some of the dried leaves or a few flowers in the liquor before serving it.

Antiquity, a journal of archaeology. Volume 52, Blouster, U.K. p. 100.

Braciaca: God of Malt and Intoxicating Drink, such as the Irish "cuirm" and "braccat" [not to mention "na h-uisci beatha"—the waters-of-life! Braciaca may also be a God of Altered States of Consciousness and may be related to the Smith Gods.]

One artist's interpretation of Braciaca, God of Brewing.

The Oak King and the Holly King

By Albion

I've always wondered about the Oak King and Holly King Mythology. I used to write to a lady from an (supposedly) Hereditary Pagan group from the Welsh border area of Britain and she illuminated this rather difficult to understand story for me.

In the British Isles, holly, the plant we know here in the United States, didn't grow as a native plant and, in fact, didn't grow there at all until around the 16th century when it was imported from much further south—from somewhere in southern Europe along the Mediterranean Ocean. But a species of oak that stayed green all winter, the holly oak, did grow in Britain (and still does).

Now the holly oak, also called the kerm oak, gets these little red parasites (red bugs) called "kerms," and these bugs do, in fact, resemble true holly berries very much. Its leaves, as the name implies also resemble holly very much. They are shaped the same, have thorns like holly and are green all winter (a sort of "live oak," it is).

Now this tree was/is symbolic of the "Holly King." An Oak King doesn't spar off with a "Holly King," but, in fact, two *Oak* Kings challenge one another for the rule of their respective seasons—summer for the deciduous oak tree and winter, for the holly or "holy" oak, whose life force shows all winter from his evergreen leaves.

This is an ancient mythology I feel, and though not exactly Celtic per se, it is a native British mythology that is very, very old. And now you have a key to its true understanding. I felt that this might be particularly interesting to the folks who live and celebrate at "Live Oak Grove."

A Druid Staff

By Albion

Druids have always been connected with trees, through practicing their rites in groves of trees, to at least one of their Gods (Esus) having to do with trees. Let me share some tree magic with the readers of "A Druid Missal-Any"—a look at the making and using of a magical staff. We don't know how the historical Druids made their staffs, but here is one modern method for making your own Druid staff.

I would like to say that this article will be influenced by my own beliefs (of course) and by some personal correspondence that I did several years ago with a Welsh craftsman, Bel Bucca, as well as an article by Edward J. Fian in a Canadian newsletter called "Standing Stone."

The southeastern part of the United States where I grew up is heavily forested and in spring and summer, is very green. When I was about 19 or 20 years old, I first read about the "Green Man" or Lord of the Forest. I prefer to think of him as a counterpart to Cernunnos, whose time is fall and winter. The "Green Man" rules spring and summer, or so, in my personal mythology, it is.

There are two personal "rules" that I try to observe when taking a piece of wood from the forest. The first is to ask the collective Spirit of the Forest (as I see it, the "Green Man") for permission and for harmony of spirit (in culling, or cutting of this wood). The second is to slow way down, as trees seem to live at a much slower pace than we humans do. Approach the tree slowly. Quiet the mental chatter of your mind and gently let your aura and the tree's aura merge. Then "talk" to the tree's spirit. (Some call tree spirits "Dryads," a Greek word). As you feel your spirit and the tree's spirit align themselves, gently reach out, touch the tree, and feel it respond. Ask the tree if it wishes to be used for a magical staff, to become a partner with you in your magical workings. *Listen* for the answer. It will be either a very definite "yes" or a very definite "no," nothing in between. Again the thing to do is to go into a meditative state, quiet the mind down and *listen*. Trees talk "differently" than humans do, and hence, one must listen "differently." If the tree in question says "no," simply move on to another area and try again. Never try to force a tree to cooperate that doesn't wish to be used. There can be spiritual enemies as well as spiritual allies.

In the old days when culling "live wood" (or wood where the tree's spirit still resides within), blood was spilled as a gift or offering to the tree. However, a piece of red cloth given as an offering (from your spirit to the spirit of the tree) is an effective modern version of this ancient rite.*

I have also heard some long detailed instructions on where or how to get trees, but some simple instructions will suffice I think. If a tree is cut during the waning of the moon, it "feels" the actual cutting less. If the cutting is done when the tree is *not* being touched by the sun's direct rays, say at dawn or dusk, it also will be more effective magically. Also, always say "thank you," as you would to a human who helped you.

The spot from where you take your wood may also be important to you. Remember, trees take in their reality and history (and even "outlook") from *one place*. They are born and have a life and die in a single place. Their view is from that single vantage point. Some feel that trees from a mountainside or a high place are also more magically potent for that very reason.

But also think of what our friends the trees have to offer us who live in what has become a terribly mobile society—stability, knowing the reality of one place, being rooted, and being grounded. These are tremendously important elements of living. As you work with tree spirits, they show a sort of love.

As the Dryads give their gifts to you, you give them an ability that they never had—the ability of movement, of being mobile and of having many views of the world instead of just one—and here lies the true magical partnership and real wizardry.

Some of the more magically potent woods are oak, ash or yew. There are more of course, and in the United States, there are many, many kinds of trees that could be used. There are also "female" kinds of trees—rowan, (mountain ash) or willow, for example, and "male" kinds of trees—oak or ash, for example. I know someone who has a wonderful staff made out of black cherry. It all depends on your needs and the sorts of woods available, of course.

The uses of a magical staff are also varied. In Reformed Druidism I know that there is a beautiful meditation done using a staff on the "Four Pillars of the Day." In some of the older family or hereditary groups, the staff is considered to be a direct link with the Energy of the forest, and is used to form a "ring" (in modern language, a circle) to keep out unwanted or harmful spirits or influences. It could also be used to "charge" (with power) a ring, or circle. It could also be used to banish negative influences from the four quarters of the ring or circle. Of course, an inventive mind could find more magical uses for a staff.

I would say that those with a Druidic inclination could put their name in Ogam letters on their staff, and this too would personalize the staff more. Since we don't know how the historical Druids used their staffs, we can only experiment and perhaps learn anew some ancient techniques. Good luck in your experiments!

*We at Orinda Grove Site use blood meal, a fertilizer which can be purchased at any nursery."

Footnote:

As an afterthought for newcomers to all of this, magic requires common sense. As I write this, it is the end of November. Trees prepare for winter, just as we do. Spring and summer are the times for "tree talking." In winter, as we all know, trees withdraw their life force to deep within themselves. But when spring rolls around again, make a new friend, and meet an excellent magical ally. "Talk" to a tree.

Calendar

Yule, Winter Solstice, will occur at 7:21 P.M. Pacific Standard time on December 21, 1988, "All hail the returning of 'the light!"

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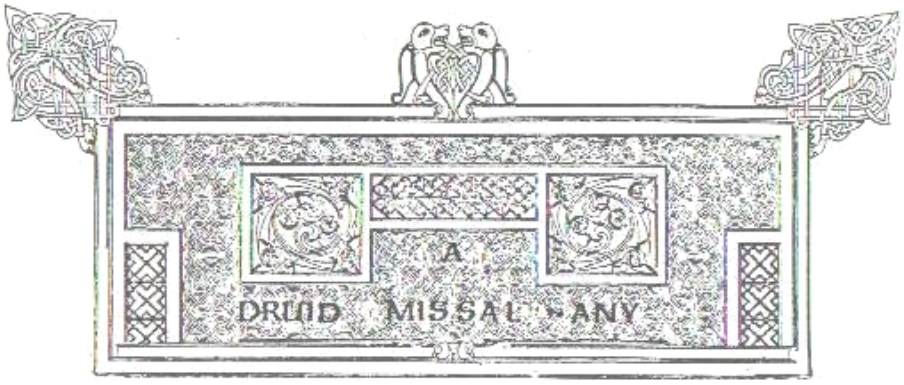
Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION TWO



A Druid Missal-Any
Volume Thirteen
1989 c.e.

Drynemetum Press

A Druid Missal-Any Oimelc 1989 Volume 13 Number 1

Oimelc Essay: Brigid's Sanctuary

By Emmon Bodfish

imelc, festival of Bride, Bridgit, Bredes, the daughter of Dagda, and Celtic goddess of fire and the hearth. She is patroness of Bards and craftsmen. She sends poetic inspiration which the Gaels regarded as an immaterial and suprasensual form of fire. Always one of the most prominent and popular deities, it is thought to be She who the Romans called the "Minerva of the Gauls." The early Christianizers of Ireland were unable to eradicate Her worship and instead adopted, or co-opted Her into their own pantheon as "Saint" Bridget. According to Charles Squire in *Celtic Myth and Legend*, She is still the most popular of all Irish saints with the country folk, and is still easily "recognized as the daughter of Dagda. Her Christian attributes, almost all connected with fire attest her pagan origin. She was born at sunrise; a house in which she dwelt blazed into a flame which reached to heaven; a pillar of fire rose from her head when she took the veil; and her breath gave new life to the dead." This last attribute of the "saint" may be one of the powers of the Goddess which is recorded nowhere else. Knowledge of it was lost when the Druidic teachings were destroyed by the Roman Church and its soldiers It is preserved only in folk memory and here in the co-opters' own writings.

She may be related to the British Goddess Sul, worshipped at Bath, and of whom the first century Latin writer Solinus says "She ruled over the boiling spring and at her altar there blazed a perpetual fire which never whitened into ashes, but hardened into a stony mass."* A perpetual fire burned on the altar of the Druidic sanctuary of Bride at Kildare we learn from both Christian and Pre-Christian sources. Even after the sanctuary was stormed and taken over by Christians, the fire was kept burning, and some of the Goddess' traditions such as that having all and only women clerics in attendance, were continued until the thirteenth century. By then the Roman Church had enough power to impose its monopoly by force and the persecutions were beginning on the Continent. A British bishop declared the sacred fire "pagan" and ordered it extinguished in 1220 A.D.

*a small knowledge of chemistry would make this easy to arrange.

News of the Groves

On December 16 we held an early Yule Service for the benefit of those who could not come on December 21st. At it we performed a chant to Taranis, Druidic God of thunder, lightening and rain. We welcomed Him and asked Him to end the drought. "Withhold not Thy bounty from us." It rained a light rain the next evening, and the day after that it started to rain in earnest. This year around the 27th and 28th it snowed in Orinda. A chant, it seems, can be the worst sort of doggerel, poetically speaking, and if it focuses the right energy, it may be heard.

We also held the regular Yule celebration on the 21st, and another evening ritual on the 22nd for these who couldn't get back to the Bay Area on the Solstice Day itself.

On January 6, 1989 at the Orinda Grove Site it began to rain at the beginning of the regular New Moon service at twilight, and Emmon petitioned Taranis "Please Taranis, just let us have this and then we'll go." The rain lightened in a bit, and in about two minutes, it stopped. We did the rest of the service dry. In the five or six minutes that it did rain, we noted that it did not put out nor dim the sacrificial fire.

"It stopped raining! I am amazed! (and a bit frightened.) Why are the Deities so good? I don't know. It has been this way a lot here. I just hope I'm not building up a big debt somewhere in the Other World."

E.B.

"Praise Taranis! We thank you!"

The Orinda Grove Site is developing a good contact with Taranis, it seems "my faith is not based on faith. It is standing on solid results."

Calendar

Oimelc, when the Sun is midway between Solstice and Equinox, will occur at 3:27 P.M. Pacific Standard Time on February 3, 1989. The celebration will be held at Orinda Site at Noon, Sunday.

The Four Salutations of the Day

Many readers who have been doing the Proto-Grove ritual on their own for awhile write to us asking "What is the next step?" and "Is there a Druid training program?" There is no Druid Training program yet for those not involved in active Groves. We are working on it. But meanwhile a fruitful place to start your training is with the Four Salutations to the Day. If you have been at one of the regular bi-monthly Summer Services of an R.D.N.A. Grove, you have heard the invocation of the "three ways of day and one of night." In this contemplative exercise you will be marking these four turning points of the day with a short, specific ritual, an active meditation in which you will be learning several basic essentials of all psychic or meditative work. It will keep you mindful of your intention to train and of your specifically Druidic vocation and heritage.

These four times, "trathan" in the old Gáidhlig, are noted in Welsh and Irish folklore as magical times when the "other world" is especially close to ours and communication or passage between the two is easiest. The old epic and Bardic poems speak of these times as power-times when spell working was done and an adept person might receive a vision or message from an ancestor or a patron Deity, a moment when a bard, inspired, might speak a prophecy. These are DAWN, NOON, SUNSET, and STARS. STARS is usually interpreted to be midnight.

One of our former Archdruids recounts that when an acquaintance of his was traveling through rural Ireland recently he found that the cottagers stayed indoors or stayed quiet around the noon point of the day. When he rose to go out, or to move on about some mundane business, they would say, "Oh, sit a while. Have another cup of tea." When asked, they would say something vague to the effect that it is a tricky time, unlucky to be bustling about. He did not ascertain whether they did not know why this was so, or if they were just cautious in talking about such matters to a stranger. Most, he felt, did not know why, and this taboo on activity is the last little remainder in folk memory of the old custom of observing the trathan.

The first purpose of the four Salutations is to put you in tune with the natural, celestial rhythms of the day and the changing seasons. The second purpose of the Salutations is a meditative practice, to practice entering an altered state of consciousness at will. The third purpose is to remind you of your Druidic commitment and to organize your day around the four natural turning points of Earth's time clock, providing stop-points in which you take stock of your day, of the passage of time, of nature and your own existence in it.

You will begin by learning to achieve mental silence, to stop thought, and to hold your mind silent for the time it takes the Sun to rise or set. In the temperate latitudes this is about two and a half to four minutes counted from the Sun disk's first contact with the horizon to its last contact, assuming a flat horizon for averaging's sake.

The first skill to be mastered in the Salutations is the ability to hold the mind silent. You must learn to stop thought. By thought I mean the sentences that are normally running through your mind all day and in your dreams at night. I do not mean becoming unconscious, hypnotized, nor losing awareness of yourself or your surroundings. In the Silence you will in fact become more aware than usual of your immediate surroundings. Some Eastern sects consider this the only "true" form of meditation. This is "outward directed" mediation, as contrasted with inner contemplation, "astral travel," or hypnotic trance. It is harder than it sounds, at first, though most people can do it for a few seconds right off. That's enough to start you. Here are some techniques to help you get further into that state and to help you learn to use it. In this wordless state, your consciousness may be turned by your will either inward or outward. In the Salutations it is turned outward. It surprises many people to find that they can perceive, and in acute detail, without any thoughts or words going through their minds. You will progress through this silent space to other states of consciousness. As you are able to hold the Silence longer you will learn from it and be able to explore with it.

1. Repeat a simple phrase, silently in your mind until all other thoughts cease, then let the phrase grow fainter and fainter and fade out. For the solar Salutations, "Hail Belenos!" This is a crutch; drop it as soon as you can.
2. Enter the Silence. Listen to your breath. Listen as though it were the most important instructions you were ever to hear, and which you must memorize. This will stop your mental sentences.
3. Listen to all the ambient sounds as if they were music.
4. Think to yourself down in to the heels of your feet and the heels of your hands. Feel yourself exist.

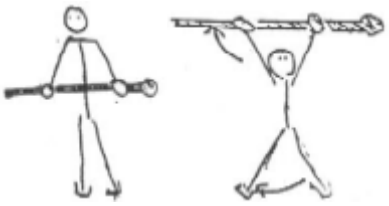
In doing the Salutations four times a day, you are learning to enter a different state of consciousness at will, regularly and often. These three: will, consistency, and practice are the keys to meditative and psychic progress. The goal is to be able to enter, at will, the state of consciousness that you will need in order to do a particular psychic or spiritual work. Small amounts of frequent practice achieve more than an occasional long session.

Do the four Salutations by the celestial clock, at Dawn, Noon, Sunset and Stars whether you are "in the mood" or not. This way you will become capable of entering this clear, silent state at any time, regardless of moods and circumstances, "to find a refuge outside the passions" of the moment, as an old book says. This practice builds and furnishes that refuge, a base-of-operations, for your further work. When you can hold silence for twelve to thirty seconds at a time, alert, eyes open, taking in perceptions as far around toward the corners of your peripheral field as you can, you will notice that things look different from the way that they do in your normal, "mundane" state of consciousness. I won't list the changes because I do not want to bias your perceptions, the self-fulfilling prophecy trap. Not everyone gets all the different changes, but you will discover yours. (Write to the Missal-Any when you do, we like feedback, and we can answer questions individually.) These changes will be your signal that you are in a meditative state, at the Silent Place, rung one of the metaphorical ladder of meditative training. When you have completed the Salutation, then, in line with the third purpose, take some time to consider from this higher perspective what you have been occupied with since the last Salutation. It is a step in getting control of your time, your habits and your life.

The Four Salutations of the Day

Stand, waiting for the first bit of the sun's disk to appear over the horizon. Hold your staff in front of you, your hands in front of your breast bone. Your left hand is above your right hand and the staff is not touching the ground.

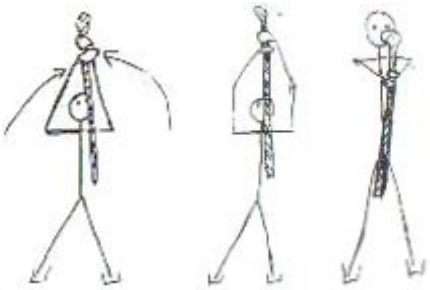
When the first bit of the sun's disk clears the horizon, turn your staff horizontal and raise it over your head in one motion. Breathe in a full breath as you raise the staff, and at the same time step to the right with your right foot. Hold the breath; silence your mind. Your arms and your legs now form two triangles and you are looking at the first sun through a "trilithion" formed by your arms and staff.



Holding the breath, turn your staff back vertical, and, holding it at arm's length, exhale slowly as you lower the staff between your gaze and the morning sun, momentarily blocking it out, until it seems to rise again over the top of the staff.

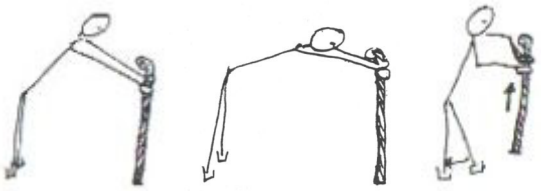
Let go your left hand from the staff and holding it in your right, sweep both of your arms up and outward, breathing in until you reach full extension. Your head, arms, and legs form a pentagram, your lungs are filled with the new air and you are fully open to the morning light. This is true even when there is rain falling in your face in the winter. Then you are open to that truth, that dawn and that aspect of Nature. You hold mental silence here in the open position until the sun's disk clears the horizon.

When it is free of the last horizon* sweep your hands up and together over your right hand, as you inhale. Hold the breath for an instant, then begin slowly exhaling as your turn the staff back to vertical again and lower it again with your line of sight and the risen sun.

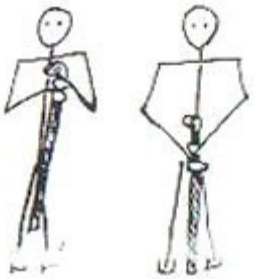


*horizon: trees, buildings, mountains, freeway "on" ramps, whatever is between you and the setting or rising sun.

Continue on down, touching your staff to the ground, arms fully extended and your head bowed between them. Concentrate on the ground and your staff and feel the earth energy move up the staff, through your arms and to your lungs as you inhale another full breath. Raise your head and pull your staff in toward your heart as you straighten up and inhale fully.



Your hands on your staff, touch your breastbone. Hold silence. Perceive the dawning light all around you. Take several (three to nine) calm breaths. Then as you exhale, lower your staff and step right bringing your feet together and the staff to rest on the ground between your two big toes. Press it down. "Ground down" mentally; return to the mundane mental level and worldly functioning. The day has begun.



At NOON you face due South. At solar noon, as opposed to clock noon, the sun will be at the highest pint in the sky that it will reach that day, and it will also be directly South. The movements and the breathing for the NOON Salutation are the same as for the DAWN, however do not look directly at the noon sun. Look at the southern horizon directly below it. Feel the rays and the warmth. Hold silence in the open position for twenty four breaths. Finish the Salutations as at DAWN.

Open Position

At evening, when the sun is about to set over whatever is your local western horizon, take your stance facing it. When the sun's disk touches tangent to the first bit of the horizon, inhale and raise your staff over your head in the first movement of the Salutation. Holding silence, draw it down between yourself and the setting sun until the sun reappears over the top of the staff. Breathe out as you do this. Move to the open position as before and hold it out as you do this. Move to the open position as before and hold it in silence until the last bit of the solar disk is about to sink below the horizon. At that moment, inhaling, bring your arms up and together with the staff between you and the sun. Then as in the other Salutations, exhale as you bring the staff down to ground at arm's length in front of you, bowing forward as the last gleam disappears under the horizon. Feel yourself "bowing down the sun" in synchronization with it. When you feel the ground energy move up along the staff, through your arms, and body, inhale, mind silent, eyes totally perceiving. Hold your staff and hands at heart level as before. See the night begin around you. One day is over; a new day has begun. Press your staff down to the ground again at your feet. "Ground down" mentally. Come back to the mundane world, refreshed. Recall what has happened since NOON.

At celestial midnight, STARS, the sun is on the other side of the world directly below your feet. At this midnight or just before you go to sleep, do the Salutation to the STARS. Face the North Star. Calm your mind. Recall what you have been doing since the last Salutation. When you have achieved mental silence once more, then raise your staff over your head and inhale. View the North Star then raise your staff over your head and inhale. View the North Star through the "trilithion" of your arms and staff. The rest of the Salutation proceeds like the NOON Salutation. Here you will draw your staff down until the North Star seems to rise over the tip of it. You hold silence in the open position for twenty four breaths, then complete the movements as at NOON. Ground down. Retire. Sleep.

A Druid Missal-Any Spring Equinox 1989 Volume 13 Number 2

Spring Equinox Essay: The Birch

By Stacey Weinberger

quinox, one of the four minor High Days in the Druid tradition, signifying the beginning of spring, dawn and the time of renewal. Day and night are of equal length now, and although it is the High Day Oimelc that marks the first stirrings of life, it is at the equinox that this becomes apparent. The Orinda Grove site is blossoming in all its splendor. We have never seen it so green (and without the help of seeding or modern technology!) The hills are a carpet of green, the live oak seems to have recovered from the attack by the oak moths and the ground around the altar has sprouted grass, clover and wintercress, with its peppery tasting flowers and subtle leaves.

As the cycle of the year continues. we move to the next in the circle of the trees at the Grove, the Birch. Passed down through Celtic oral tradition, the Birch is known as "Bride's Tree."

According to Paul Friedrich, author of Proto-Indo-European Trees, (University of Chicago Press, 1970) the birch has been a female-virgin symbol for many of the speakers of the Indo-European languages for over five thousand years. This would fit with one of the aspects of Bride as a Triple Goddess figure.

The Proto-Indo-Europeans, including (the ancestors of) the Celts probably associated the birch with the spring, comparing the brightness of the returning sun, the greening of the earth with something tangible, that represented the changing nature of the surroundings.

The birch's association with spring and the return of light is probably not coincidental. P.I.E. forms of the word (for birch) lead back to "bright, shinning, to be white," and seem to be based on the physical appearance of the birch

(explanatory parentheses by E.B., editor)

Eolas an Deididh Tooth Ache Charm

From Carmina Gadelica, Alexander Carmichael [126]

The teeth of ancient human skeletons found in stone coffins and other enclosures, and without enclosures, are usually good and complete. This is in marked contrast to the teeth of modern human remains, which are generally much impaired if not wholly absent. But there must have been toothache and even artificial teeth in ancient times, as indicated by the mummies in Egypt and the toothache charms and toothache wells in the highlands. One toothache charm and one toothache well must suffice to illustrate this. The toothache well is in the island of North Uist. It is situated 195 feet above the sea, at the foot of a hill 757 feet high and nearly three miles in the moorland from the nearest townland. The place is called 'Cuidh-airidh,' shieling fold, while the well is variously known as 'Tobar Chuidh-airidh,' well of the shieling fold, 'Tobar an deididh,' well of the toothache, 'Tobar na cnoidh,' well of the worm, and 'Tobar cnuimh fhiacail' well of the tooth worm, from a belief that toothache is caused by a worm in the tooth.

The general name of the well is 'Tobar Chuidh-airidh,' well of the shileing fold , to distinguish it from other healing wells throught the Isles. The pilgrim suffering from toothache must not speak, nor eat, nor drink after pilgrimage till after three draughts of the well of Cuidh-airidh are drunk in name of God, and in name of Christ, and in name of Sprit. *

Some persons profess to derive no relief, some profess to derive partial relief, and some profess to derive complete relief from toothache after drinking the water of the well on Cuidh-airidh.

b a chuir Bride bhoidheach
Romh ordag Mather De,
Air mhir, air lion, air chorcraich,
Air chnoidh, air ghoimh, air dheaud.

A chnoidh a rinn domh deistinn,
Air deudach mo chinn,
Ifrinn teann da m'dheud,
Deud ifrinn da mo theinn.

* * *

Deud ifrinn da mo theann;
Am fad 's is maireann mi-fein
Gu mair mo dheud am cheann.

Doighean Eile—

Air mhir, air chir, air chnodaich.
Air mhuir, air chuan, air chorsa.
Air li, air lionn, air liogradh.

The incantation put by lovely Bride
Before the thumb of the Mother of God,
On lint, on wort, on hemp,
For worm, for venom, for teeth.

The worm that tortured me,
In the teeth of my head,
Hell hard by my teeth,
The teeth of hell distressing me.

* * *

The teeth of hell close to me;
As long as I myself shall last
May my teeth last in my head.

Variants—

On lint, on comb, on agony.
On sea, on ocean, on coast.
On water, on lakes, on marshes.

*This sacred well, and this rune pre-date Christianity by millennia.

News of the Groves

February 19, regular service thanks to Taranis! We are almost up to normal rainfall. After struggling for years to grow a lawn around the altar, and then stopping our efforts for the last two years in order to save water during the drought this year, the Deities have done it and the circle within the ring of sacred trees is green with wild plants, many of them Wintercress. When edible food plants spring up spontaneously around your altar, the portent cannot be anything but good.

Oimelc

Oimelc! This was the coldest Oimelc we have experienced at this grovesite. Snow on the Orinda hills, not just Mt. Diablo. Water which I spilled going out before dawn to do the Salutation to the Sun had frozen solid before I returned, ten or fifteen minutes later. I know that is nothing to you easterners and midwesterners, but we here are not set up for this. Our houses are not built for this.* It was about 38° at the grovesite during the Service. One member, who was acting as Preceptor for the ceremony had brought some sheep's wool to sacrifice as an offering since this is the festival of the Ewe. She commented that holding her hand in a pocket full of sheep's wool "sure felt good." It is one theory that you will find the meaning of the religion in the experience of it. And on a day that cold, when your hand holding onto a bundle of sheep wool is the only warm thing about you, you know why the Old Celts were grateful for these animals at this time of year. Not by coincidence do we worship the Goddess of Fire now at the low point of the year! Or that She is Guardian of the Hearth and Shepardess of the flocks.

"A Bhride! Ruler of Fire! Give us this little comfort now!"

*a salutation of admiration to our hardy Carleton founders.

Feed back: On the Four Salutations of the Day

Most readers liked it, one had a hard time following it, some are trying it and one said she'd like to see more of the little stick-man. There's one of those in every group. I used to be like that. Watch out, lady, you end up in the clergy!

Celtic Studies

On January 30, 1989 the office of the President informed the Office of the Chancellor that the proposal for a new undergraduate major in Celtic Studies in the College of Letters and Science has been approved. This is the reward of many years of petitioning and planning. The new undergraduate group major will accept students into the program beginning fall semester 1989, and will offer a full range of courses leading to a B.A. with major in Celtic Studies.

Scrounge!

The wild greens are out and edible and blooming, not just around the altar. "But that would take you all day to fill your bowl!" as one member protested. So for the first time in my thirty or so years as an amateur hunter-gatherer I timed myself. I did a time and motion study. It took thirty eight minutes to gather eight ounces of wild greens for my salad, to fill my bowl, and ten minutes to wash and trim them. I walked about a quarter of a mile. (Four to six city blocks) All organic, these kind of mixed greens sell for $2.98 a pound in our local health food store. That's $3.60 per hour, or there abouts, so I'm over minimum wage. Well what do you know! I'm coming up in the world. The hours are good and the working conditions are excellent.

Making candles for the flame meditation (see Druid training article #2, the Druid Missal-Any, Samhain, 1983 in common years, will take up my afternoon. I got several pounds of half burned candles from a yard sale for around $3.50, a life time's supply of wax. I make wicks by untwisting old, white cotton grocery string which you find thrown out behind markets and then braiding it. The braiding somehow makes it draw wax up and burn longer.* I pour the hot wax into half walnut shells, insert a wick suspended from a twig laid across the shell and let it harden. Where do I get the walnut shells? The squirrels bring them to me. They drop them under the oaks below the grovesite. Where do squirrels get walnuts around here? I don't know. But once I got some special string. A red balloon caught in the Baccaris bushes up near the top of the hill, here. I found it when I went to do Sunset Salutation meditation.

Tied on to the balloon was a postcard with questions asking where I found it, my name and address, and the name of my favorite book. It was a child's school project. It was stamped and addressed to a teacher at our local grammar school, in a child's handwriting, of I'd guess around fourth grade vintage. And the string was white, cotton, and about three feet long. Sealbhach! A whole winter's candle wicks! I filled out the postcard and sent it back. Another time a whole bunch of balloons that looked as though they had escaped from a super market opening, came and caught in one of the grove site's trees, bringing with them yards and yards of string. We must be on a windpath. Oh, well, as Maud always says, "Trust in the Goddess, She will provide."

I don't know how it happens, but it always happens. This religion is so secret, even we don't know what's going on.

—Mad Sweeney

*"Fail il éileadh hao o éileadh
Coisich agus faigh dhomh céile
Fail il éiladh ho ro i

Ring, of Plenty, Folding
Ho! Folding, plaiting...
Come and get me a husband.
Wreath, Plenty, Folding, Braiding.
Ho! of the braiding.

An old Gaelic Lughnasadha chant.
See the Scot's Bardic section of the Druid Chronicles.

We Always Knew it Department

Trees Scream When They Get the Ax.

An Oregon physicist claims high-tech gear proves trees communicate with one another. If you chop into one, he says, adjacent trees send out measurable electrical impulses. W-waves, he calls them. His readings, he says, indicate the axed trees scream.

* * *

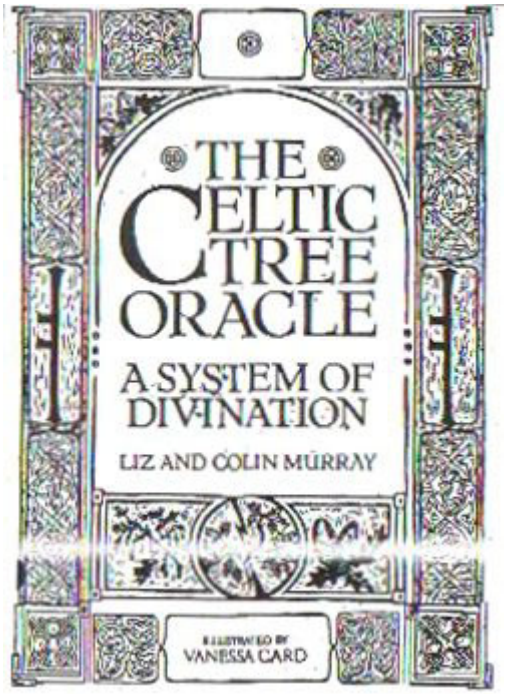
There began to be trouble with the Indians. The Indians of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties caused more trouble to the Spaniards than the Indians in any other part of California.

Apparently the Berkeley traditions of resistance and rebellion are very old indeed! Is it something in the soil or the climate?

This is from a grammar school textbook *The Story of Contra Costa County* by Wima Cheatharn, Harr Wagner Publishing, San Francisco, 1942.

Calendar

Spring Equinox of 1989 will occur at 1:28 P.M. on March 20, 1989. Celebration at the Orinda Grovesite will be held that NOON, and that moment, and also on the following Sunday, at NOON.



Review: The Celtic Tree Oracle

There is available from St. Martin's Press, (175 Fifth Ave. New York, N.Y. 10010) a beautifully put together set of Celtic Divination Cards from England. It comes packed in a quality wooden box and includes a form for writing up each reading you give, and a record book in which to record it. Though I would quibble with their assignation of the trees to the months,* as it follows no system or tradition I have seen nor read, it is still a quality presentation of cards, and could be a useful tool in skilled hands. Our source it is Aardvark Books, 327 Church St. San Francisco, 94114. Phone (415) 552-6733.

*I have always seen Druidic or Celtic Christianized tradition associate the Birch with March and Spring Equinox and the Rowan or Ash with Fall, but they assign the Birch to the month of November and the Ash to March. They are, however, talking months, not High Days.
—E.B.

Postmarked 20 Mar 1989

A Druid Missal-Any Beltane 1989 Volume 13 Number 3

Beltane Essay: Old Crones

By Emmon Bodfish

eletaine, May Day, begins the Season of life. Hurrah! It marks the end of the Season of Sleep, the rule of "The Leprous White Lady," the "Old Woman of the Mill Dust," the Crone. In several Indo-European legends the wandering hero, in Greece Hercules and in the Celtic, Finn, arrives at the palace of the Gods and after passing numerous tests is enraged by their mocking attitude toward him. He challenges any one of them to a duel. The young and vigorous Deities of both genders distain his challenge and will not fight with a mere mortal. Finally, however, the paternal figure of the pantheon says "Oh, but my aged mother will wrestle with you."

The hero is insulted but he accepts. The Ancient of Days pins him. She laughs toothlessly in his face and lets him go. "Do not feel discouraged, hero," says the pater-deitus, "that old Crone wrestles down every man comes far enough to meet Her. Her name is Old Age." Her name is not given, nor was the hero's in the German version of this myth, which I heard, (it's still a word-of-mouth culture,) from Dr. James Duran, Ph.D. If any out there know, please write us. In the Celtic world She was Cailleach, the Old Woman. She was credited in Scottish myth to appear at sea, in the form of a sea horse or sea-hag, and lead enemy ships to their doom, by challenging the captains to ride or catch her. She is a trickster figure, one who brings down the proud, and tricks the vain and the blasphemous. (As a death figure I wonder if She is cognate with Kali in India.) She is a Goddess of transition and transmogrification, not all like the "Underworld" or Death figures such as Nixus or the Eastern European "Mother of the Dead," who greets the newly dead and nurse and instruct them in their new life in the Other World. She is the harbringer and transmogrifier, and She Herself can change from old to young and back again at will or with the seasons. Hers may be one of the stream of myth that fed the later Ban-shee tales and legends. All the seemingly contradictory characteristics of the Deity, enduring seasonal, warlike, alternately young and old, using allure and trickery symbolize Her station at the point of death and rebirth or rejuvenation. She is not a war Goddess per se, like Morrigu or Badh, inciting men to heroism, but a nature deity of the seasons and the elements, and the natural cycles of creation and decay, rest and strife. As Proinsias MacCana writes, more of Her traditions survived than those of the Goddess Morrigu, and being inexterminable, more were co-opted into Christian hegemony. Even the old bardic odes to Her were taken and rewritten to make Her a figure in the new foreign religion. In the eighth or ninth century one of the monastic collectors recorded and "Christianized" this old pagan "dan" written in Ireland. It is composed in that uniquely Pagan style in which the Deity speaks through the mouth of the bard and mourns with him the plight of Her people.

> "The monkish chronicler, availing himself of the semantic ambiguity in the word "cailleach," invented the fiction that She had taken the nun's veil, caille, in the end of Her days."

He then went on from this to compose around this story of the "nun" of Berre. Cailleach Bherre, the Old Woman of Berre, was a popular epithet for Cailleach in that part of Ireland. Unfortunately Professor MacCana does not give the Gaelic/Goidelic original of the poem in his edition of *Celtic Mythology*, but we can easily guess that the holy Roman changed in recording this lament of a "nun" who had once been the advisor and consort of kings. The real subject of this work is the plight of Druidism and the Bardic Orders in decline, driven out to the heath and wild places among the poor and illiterate by the foreign religion of Rome. Many similar laments for the stability, culture and richness of the old courts of Chieftains, bards and Druids, echo down through the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries as the Dark Ages grew darker and Christianity spread.

Swift chariots
and horse that carried off the prize,
once I had plenty of them;
a blessing on the King who granted
them.

My body seeks to make its way
to the house of judgment;
when the Son of God thinks it time
let him come to claim his loan.

My arms when they are seen
are bony and thin;
dear was the craft they practiced,
they would be around glorious
kings…

I envy nothing that is old
except the Plain of Femhen;
though I have donned the thatch of
age,
Femhen's crown is still yellow.

The Stone of the Kings in Femhen,
Rónán's Fort in Breghon,
it is long since storms first reached
them,
But their cheeks are not old and
withered…

I have had my day with kings,
drinking mead and wine;
today I drink whey and water
among shrivelled old hags…

The flood-wave,
and the swift ebb;
what the flood brings you
the ebb carries from your hand…

Happy is the island of the great sea,
for the flood comes to it after the
ebb;
as for me, I do not expect
flood after ebb to come to me.

From Dwelly's Scots Gaelic Dictionary (get out the magnifying glass!) here is a description of a dance enacted in the Highlands up into the nineteenth century. We may be seeing here a descendent of a Druidic ritual or religious drama, There is also, apparently a bird named the black-headed Cailleach bird, but whether it has anything to do with the old Celtic Goddess is unclear.

95. Cailleachag-cheann-dubh.

cailleach an dùdan (cont.)—

"It is danced by a man and a woman. The man has a rod in his right hand, variously called *slachdan druidheachd*, (druidic wand), *slachdan geasachd*, (magic wand). The man and the woman gesticulate and attitudinize before one another, dancing round and round, in and out, crossing and recrossing, changing and exchanging places. The man flourishes the wand over his own head and over the head of the woman, whom he touches with the wand, and who falls down, as if dead, at his feet. He bemoans his dead "carlin," dancing and gesticulating round her body. He then lifts up her left hand, and looking into the palm, breathes upon it, and touches it with the wand. Immediately the limp hand becomes alive and moves from side to side and up and down. He rejoices, and dances round the figure on the floor. And having done the same to the right hand, and to the left and right foot in succession, they are also become alive and move. But although the limbs are living, the body is still inert. The man kneels over the woman and breathes into her mouth and touches her heart with the wand. The woman comes to life, and springs up, confronting the man. Then the two dance vigorously and joyously as in the first part. The tune varies with the varying phases of the dance. It is played by a piper or a fiddler, so sung as a "port-a-beul," (mouth-tune) by a looker-on, or by the performers themselves. The air is quaint and irregular," and the words are curious and archaic commence as follows:—

"Cailleach an dùdain, dùdain, dùdain,

Cailleach an dùdain, cum do dheireadh rium."

The Druids did not Build Stonehenge

In Answer to Many Inquiries

"If the Druids didn't build Stonehenge, and weren't even in Great Britain at the time, when and from where did they come?" Most likely in several waves and from several sources, from Gaul and from Belgium, of course, but also from Ireland. The Celtic evidence in Ireland seems to predate that from the Sussex Stonehenge area by a number of centuries. So when did they arrive in Ireland? And from where had they come?

Peter Harbison in our day, like Heinrich Schleimann, the self-made nineteenth century business man and amateur antiquarian who, after hearing much debate about the whereabouts of Troy, and if, in fact, there has ever been a real city of Troy, took a shovel and a copy of the Iliad and found Troy right where Homer said it was, has advanced the theory for the origin of the Irish Celts right where legend and *Leober Gabala* said they come from: Spain. Not all of them, Celtic speaking people came to Ireland over a number of centuries. But there is evidence that a Q-Celtic speaking people came to the south and west of Ireland around 500 B.C. from the northern coast of Spain. They may have come first in "raid and trade" forays, then as small groups of warrior-aristocrats, younger sons, and their retinues. There is no evidence in the archeological record for any one, large scale invasion. Later whole clans may have *been* expelled from the Celto-Ligurian areas of Spain by the Roman conquests there from 133 B.C. onwards. The *Book of the Invasions, Leobor Gabala,* may be the story of one of these. The followers of King Mil were not even by their own claim the first Celts in Ireland. They fought against a distinctly Celtic native foe in a distinctly Celtic style heroic battle. One group of Celts displaced another, and there is the echo in the old poem of those other groups having displaced still older, Bronze Age, perhaps non-Indo-European populations. This theory, which coincides with legend, and which Professor Hawks, calls his "gradual Celticization theory" of Irish pre-history, fits David Greene's, the noted philologist's, evidence that a Celtic language ancestral to modern Gaelic was being spoken in Ireland by 500 B.C.. This gradual Celtization of the Neolithic and Bronze Age cultures of the island may have followed the model of the Anglization of Britain by the Angles, Saxons and Jutes in historic times. Coming first as raiders, then as mercenaries hired during some of the endless intertribal conflicts, they remained and eventually made war on and conquered their former hosts. This is speculation of course. But it is backed by the (non-conclusive) evidence of the gradual appearance of more and more Celtic types of artifacts, especially military ones, and objects of aristocratic ornament. The farming tools such as stone hoes continue in the native style. In the South and West there aristocratic items are of a non-La Tene style. This may tie them to the Spanish Celts rather than to the La Tene Celts north of the Pyrenees. The possibility is strengthened by the "chevaux-de-frise" style of fortifications on the Aran Isles in County Galway. Similar examples appear in Spain and none in Britain or Gaul. However, some archeologists would see a wooden version of this scatter-stone style of architecture in some early Belgian forts, hence the name. No chariot burials have ever been found in either Ireland, Britain, or Spain, though these figure prominently in the other Celtic areas. Burial rites are usually conservative, slow to change, and generally faithfully preserved by immigrants in their new homelands. This is true even when they adopt the better adapted technologies of the native farmers and craftsmen!

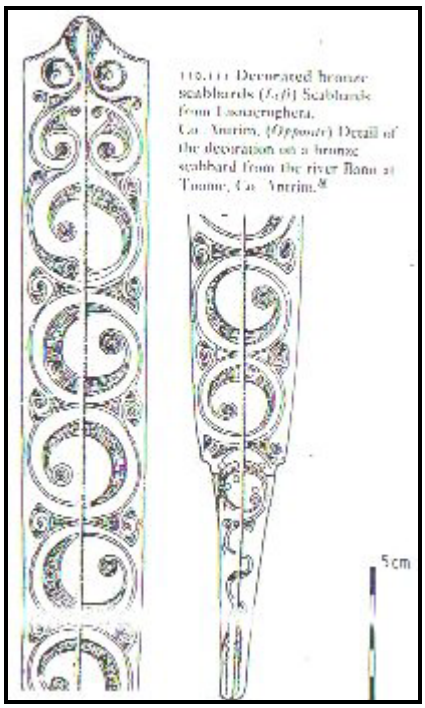
The North of Ireland has always shown more influence from Britain and by way of Britain from the Continent, and this goes back at least as far as the late Hallstatt Period. Iron Halstatt style swords appear in both Britain and North Ireland.

Later, scabbards of elaborate and uniquely British design appear in Antrium. But the influence was not all in one direction. The Celts of Ireland first raided and then settled in Wales, bringing Irish Druidic culture and the artifacts mentioned by Myles Dillon in his article "The Irish Settlements in Wales," in the academic journal "Celtica" #l2. The first evidence of Celtic cultures in Britain are not so early as those in Ireland and are of clearly Gaulish or Belgian origin. Again the pattern seems to be one of gradual Celticization with wave after wave arriving from the Continent all the way up to the arrival of the Belgae, who just precede Roman conquerors in the fourth century B.C. Thus the Heroic society of the Celtic epic warring chieftains, bards, and Druids may go back no farther than the La Tene Period in

England approximately 400 B.C. to 100 B.C. Its roots in Ireland and Wales seem to be a good deal older.

—E. Bodfish

Illustrations by James Adam of Revere, Massachusetts



110, 111. Decorated bronze scabbards (Left) Scabbards from Lisnacroghera, Co. Antrim. (Opposite) Detail of the decoration on a bronze scabbard from the river Bann at Toome, Co. Antrim.*

*From Pre-Christian Ireland, Peter Harbison, Thams and Hudson, London, 1988.

A New Theory about Stonehenge

By Robin McKie
London Observer Service
In the San Francisco Chronicle
Monday, June 6, 1988

LONDON— A recently discovered stone slab, apparently intended for use at Stonehenge, could be crucial in proving a remarkable new theory about the monument's origin.

The stone may show the Stonehenge's ring of distinctive "blue stones" were actually part of another stone circle that was completely dismantled, transported across Britain and incorporated in the great monolith.

This theory suggests that construction of one of the world's most extraordinary edifices was less a matter of religious self-sacrifice by Stone Age Britons, as has been supposed, and more a matter of colonial exploitation of other tribes.

Everyone assumes the blue stones were moved from a Welsh quarry in a rough form before being carefully shaped and incorporated at Stonehenge," said archaeologist Julian Richards, who has just completed a major survey of Stone Age settlements near the monument. "But it is equally possible the stone were transported in completed form, from a ring that had already been built."

Wales' connection with Stonehenge was discovered in 1923 when geologist Dr. H. Thomas discovered that the blue-spotted dolomite stones at the circle were the same as those found at Carn Meini on the Preseli Hills 135 miles away.

The discovery of a stone slab—believed to be a blue stone—in the Daugleddau River is very important because it may provide the information needed to prove or disprove the blue-stone theory.

"If the stone is found to be dressed and carefully shaped when it is eventually taken out of the river, that will suggest it had already been part of another stone ring," added Richards, "of course, if it is relatively rough and only crudely cut, then that would tend to disprove the theory."

The idea that the blue stones, which form two of the Stonehenge's four main rings, were taken from another monument helps explain one of archaeology's major puzzles: Why go to the extraordinary trouble of moving stones, some weighing more than 50 tons, from a site so far distant?

Taking already dressed stones would have meant far less work for its builders. In addition, it is now known there existed a great deal of trade between the regions.

"Nor do you have to suppose that Stonehenge's builders simply invaded that part of Wales, subjugated the locals and forced them to take their stones to Wiltshire," added Richards. "It is quite conceivable that Stonehenge was considered to be such an important religious project that the original blue stone owners gladly gave them away and helped in its construction."

What's Alive? What Counts?

During rush hour on the San Francisco Bridge there is a special free lane for cars with three or more riders per car. Some acquaintances of ours were stopped recently and pulled out of this lane by a CHP who insisted, "You have only two riders." "No, there's the two of us and the child here." "No, that doesn't matter, that's irrelevant." "But he's a passenger." "No, we can't see him. (from the toll booth)" etc. etc. Finally deciding that more than ten minutes of argument was not worth the price of the toll, our friends paid the dollar and departed.

Some religions say life begins at conception, some say at birth, some at naming, but according to the Bay Bridge Authorities and the Dept. of Highways, it's not until you can see over the dashboard.

News of the Groves

In response to last issue's article, "Scrounge!" I have been informed that Miner's Lettuce sells for $10.99/lb. in San Francisco's health food grocery stores. Here I've been, eating it for free and feeling like a scrounge.

And if you're near a Gary Larson Far Side "Off the Wall" desk calendar for 1989, you might check out Wednesday, September 20.

A Druid Riddle

On the table are eighteen odds and ends. You sweep seventeen of them off. Quickly now, what's left on the table, an odd or an end?

Pagan Parents and Kids—Can You Help?

My son, age 9, has declared himself: he is a pagan, and he especially loves "The Lord of the Beasts and the Woods." The only other pagans he knows are adults, or at least too big to remember very much about being 9 years old. Our neighborhood is sort of remote, and I don't know whether he'll ever meet many of Mother's younger children out here. How about a pen pal network for kids in the same boat? If anyone else out there has declared him or herself at an early age, and would like to write, please let me know. I would also be willing to keep a list of addresses, and match penpals as to age-mates or disciplines, if enough people are interested.

—Olin Stoltz (age 9) and Leslie Craig (age 37)
Box 215, Myers Flat, CA 95554

The Heathen on the Heath:

The Heathen on the Heath Babbles on about Patronage

I recently had a very dear brother tell me that my life in the woods had a romantic mystique of being more genuine than a pagan life in the town. May I say, hogwash? The only thing the Heath has managed to impress upon the Heathen and make it stick, so far, is how *un*-genuine a life she usually leads, next to her other brethren of water, beast, and tree. Oh, close-up adoration of the gods is a very moving experience. But there's more to a god or goddess than loving him or her, and it's all much too big for us, and I suspect that the energy of our natural comedy is a better feast for the immortals' table than any amount of praise and sacrifice.

One thing that I'm sure inspires a veritable salvo of godly giggling is how we deal with our patrons and teachers, both in the other world and in this one. Most of you probably know your patrons, and have at least some idea of who your totem beasts are. Some of you may know a departed of discorporate spirit who teaches you, or uses you to speak to others. Some of this stuff is very recognizable; other times, you may shake your head, check whatever resources you use to identify the "real" archetypes, and decide that you're simply crazy.

Totemism, for instance. I'm not going to get into whether our forebears practiced any precise or organized form of totemism, although Cuchullain's relationship with the hound (killing one, then having to fulfill its function, and thereafter being forbidden to harm the hound or eat of its flesh) sounds a lot like totemism to me. But we Neopagans are balanced between two influences: What is born into us from our ancestors? And then, what do the gods and the beasts do to us in the here-and-now?

For instance, I sit at the feet of the entire canine tribe. Wolf, dog, coyote, fox—all bitches and vixens are my sisters. *Elder* sisters. A totem is a teacher, a giver of omens, a bridge between human anomie and the solidarity of nature. I don't know anyone else whose attachments are so general. I do not know that for me to ignore the call of any pack-running nightsinger means disaster. It puts me in quite a dilemma, because a country homestead, with its deliciously helpless ducks and chickens and its panicky newborn grazers, is an even worse place to interact with large number of canines than a house in town. So in a very undignified, non-ritual way, my totem is constantly teaching me the difference between genuine love and respect and the phony human construct of charity. *We* are not the gods. An ordinary housedog knows the gods better than I do.

It can be a pretty harrowing relationship. There's you, and there's your teaching-beast, and there's the rest of the world. Are you brother or sister to a beast that the neighbors regard as property, or a menace, or a running larder? I listen to the song of the Grey Brethren on the ridges with an entirely different emotion than do the sheep-ranchers a little further down the valley, though we meet on the common ground of wishing dysentery and poison oak on the morons who dump unwanted dogs "out in the wilds" to seek out their niche as incompetent pack members and stock killers.

Sometimes an animal relative will come to you for its *death*. Fub that one, and you're in big trouble. I know.

Then there are the creatures other than your totem who show up here and there with messages or lessons, or just to make your day, There was the king stag of our hill, laughing at me. There was the squirrel crossing the road, to show me the consequences of letting faster drivers (or anything else which is simply more aggressive or socially acceptable than I am) push me around. There are the white cranes that feed in the pastures north of here, whose mere presence lights up my heart for no reason that I can name, and the river otters who join me for a dip: "Screw it; this is playtime!"

You can't put your life in a pattern, or make a pretty pattern with the wild things in all their rightful places: not and know anything about yourselves. Nonhuman logic is not going to make sense to you. A brave man can find himself chosen by a grazer; a timid woman might have a totem that hunts to survive. There is more to any animal or spirit than one human can know.

To the sparrow, the sparrow was himself; to the raven, he was dinner, Definitions can be a real bitch sometimes.

Plants will choose you, too. What kind of wood is your staff made of? I don't have one. I kept waiting for a branch of madrone to wave yoo-hoo at me. Meanwhile, the bay tree at the head of my garden, that I had talked to and cried on and rested under for the last dozen years, dropped a branch in this winter's snow. It's about ten feet long, and as thick as my 1eg and finally today it occurred to me that my staff is smack in the middle of it, waiting for me to get my lazy butt in gear and whittle it out. "Hey, is anybody awake here?"

I suspect that the gods sort of meet us in the middle, choosing us when we most need them. Perhaps we look harder for our gods, because religion makes such a blatant difference between us and the rest of the world, and the gods are such an obvious feature of it. We meet with blessings, opportunities, and quest. Eventually, we find the gods who are our patrons. When I was younger, I always thought that my patroness would be the goddess who ruled over my purpose in life, or my identity. Now I know better: my patroness is the goddess that don't cut me no slack.

Paganism is not a TV set, and the teachings of gods and beasts are not a spectator sport: our patrons and our totems will all want something from us. Our laughing disclaimer at the beginning of services may remind us to respect reason, but the praise and sacrifice that follows is just as necessary, to keep our end of the bargain up until we find something better to offer. Wherewith, I offer this praise:

Who loves you?
Whose laughter caresses your departing back?
Beneath whose cloak of midnight do your eyes adjust to the dark,

And whose hand sets the geas before you
Like a wall of stone?
To this, I give my heart.

Beltaine Fire Invocation

Bhride
Firedancer
in the many-hued arms of flame
daggers of light contained in the chalice of the sky,
overflowing with stars
bright with the song of a thousand souls.
Dance with us, our lives wound in glistening threads
about the spokes of the universe,
braided into the umbilical cord of the navel of the Earth.
Teach us to kindle our inner fire,
And dance our lives in the weavings of flame,
The fire that enkindles the heart into spiralling song.

Bhride
Firesinger
voice leaping with the strength of many deer
into the gates of starlight
where the ancient flames soar.
Sing with us, our lives as the weavings of song
on the loom of the many stringed sky
reflected in the inner sky of the spirit.
Teach us to light our inward flame,
and sing our lives into rising smoke
the fire that burns behind the eyes of all souls
and laughs in the cosmic dance of the universe's music.

May 1989, Blue Moon Eagle

Rome Discovers It May be Older Than it Thought

Archaeologists find wall that could add credibility to legend

By Carol Cirulli, Associated Press Writer
San Francisco Chronicle, Thursday, June 30, 1988 D/11

ROME—Archaeologists have dug up a wall in the heart of the Roman Forum that could help them discover the secrets of the founding of Rome. The city could be older than it thinks it is.

The archaeologists say the discovery also could find some truth in the legend of Romulus and Remus.

According to the legend, Romulus established Rome by building a defense wall around the Palatine Hill, the site where he and his twin brother, Remus, were suckled by a she-wolf and reared by a shepherd. Romulus then founded Rome in 753 B.C., as the legend goes.

While the archaeologists don't believe they'll find any proof of Romulus, Remus, the she-wolf and the shepherd, they do think they might find some truth in the legend about the way Rome was founded and when.

Andrea Carandini, a University of Pisa professor who is leading the dig, said archaeologists in May uncovered a stone wall on a slope of the hill just at the spot described by the ancient Roman historian Tacitus as the site of the wall that first defined and protected Rome.

Experts have dated the find to the 7th century B.C., but Carandini said in an interview he suspects underneath it is an earlier version of a defensive wall that could have been built a century earlier.

Archaeologists say reaching the wall could be the first tangible piece of evidence to back up the story of Rome's legendary founding in 753 B.C.

But secrets of the earliest days of Roman civilization may stay locked in the ground if the government fund that has financed the dig for the last three years is not replenished. Carandini says the team needs the equivalent of about $400,000 to continue.

For now Carandini keeps digging.

"We will never discover the wall of Romulus, because Romulus is a legend, of course," he said. "But I think the nucleus of the legend is right, and in a way, we already proved this because nobody believed that there really was a fortification of the Palatine Hill.

The base of the hill eventually developed into the Forum, ancient Rome's market and meeting place, now a major tourist attraction.

Experts who have observed the excavations say the discoveries, if fully documented, will provide significant insight into the little known period between the 8th and 6th centuries B.C.

"It is interesting that the physical objects that (Carandini) is discovering not only seem to be dated very early in the history of the city, but are related to the historical texts that talk about the foundation of the city," said Richard Brilliant, professor of art history and archaeology at Columbia University in New York, who visited the site in May.

"Whether or not conclusions can be drawn about the wall in the development of the city is something much more research is needed to demonstrate."

Alessandro Guidi, an official with the regional archaeology office, said the find indicates that Rome may have evolved much earlier than was once believed from a primitive village inhabited mainly by shepherds into a more advanced society.

"This could be very important because it may be proof that before the Etruscans conquered Rome, Rome already was a very big center," Guidi said.

The defensive wall, discovered about 10 feet below a grassy surface, probably surrounded a "pomoerium," or holy place, in the city that had been founded with the gods' blessings, Carandini said.

Above the excavated wall, archaeologists found remnants of houses they believe date back to the end of the 6th century B.C. and belonged to aristocrats of Etruscan origins.

The houses probably were built after the defensive wall was expanded to surround the seven hills of Rome, Carandini said.

But it is what lies below the wall that may give real insight into the founding of one of the world's most ancient civilizations.

[Again, Pagan myth and legend is found to have a core of truth.]

To the Missal-Any:

It warms me to hear from you again. "Something" is about right. The seasonal diary format of "Heathen on the Heath" so far requires me to be a lot more together than I am. I'll keep the by-line 'cause I like it, but when I do show up, it may be as poet or general essayist and big mouth, or fictionalizer of small experiences or writer of love letters to the gods, with no more whys or wherefores. My ritual consciousness, as of now, is shot to shit.

As I become more a part of my community, other pagans begin to emerge one by one from the woodwork—a cohort in my school music schemes, a Star Route Journal reader or two, other

school connections, other hill people. We're circumspect up here, and not real available to folks we don't know.

Folks come up to me. They talk. They leave. I turn to the person next to me and embarrassedly whisper, "Who was that?"

Music grows more important. I practice a lot. I sing my heart out.

What is a pagan life? I ask myself a thousand times a day, at least. I find that alone, I am driven by a sense of urgency: to be more outspoken, to be a support to my own kind and less fearful of offending or hurting those who do not accept me. If they do not accept me, are their opinions worth wimping out on my own people for? In personal doings, I say what I must immediately, lest fear or habit drag me back into my old hiding-places, out of reach of my spiritual kinfolks. "Let there by no authority between us!" I say. "I'm an anarchist." Swiftly, while pride still lives! Then I am committed, and can't back away from my own will as I have in the past. There may be trouble in this, but as Rhiannon is my witness, I mean no ill-will.

Your scholarly work grows more interesting each issue. I am turning friends on to it—pagans who know who they are, but are barely aware that there is anyone like them in the world, and who know even less than I do of the teachings of our forbears. And in the department, you say it better than I could.

Love,

Les

Calendar

Astronomical Beltaine, at which point the sun is half way between Equinox and Solstice, will occur at 6:31 A.M. on May 5, 1989. Celebration at the Orinda Grovesite to be planned; bring a 15' ribbon.

Postmarked 26 Apr 1989

A Druid Missal-Any Summer Solstice 1989 Volume 13 Number 4

Summer Solstice Essay: Danu and Summer Fun

By Emmon Bodfish

idsummer, the Summer Solstice, the longest day, the shortest night, this is one of the four astronomical High-Days of the Druid year. It is associated with Danu, Mother of the Celtic family of deities the Tuatha de Danann. She is cognate with the Irish Anu and Breton Ana. She may be cognate with classic Roman Diana, though Her character and role are more like those of Juno. Like Her, Danu is the patroness of marriage and sanctifier of the home. The particular luckiness of June weddings may be a folk memory of the time when this time of the year was sacred to the Goddess of marriage. She is associated with fertility of grain as well as of women, and She is linked to rivers and river valleys which bear Her name or cognates of it stretch all across Europe from the Danube to the Don and the De in Scotland. Rivers, valleys, grain, home, fertility and prosperity formed a thematic group in the Celtic mind. Her festival was on Midsummer day and all night bonefires, dances, and games of courtship and revel continued to be celebrated on the day and the preceding night well into this century. Again we see the Druid custom of counting the night which precedes the high-day as the one sacred to that day. There are many, many references to this night of revels in medieval and Renaissance folksong, as well as in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries.

The tension between the folk customs and the Christian church is succinctly in the traditional verse:

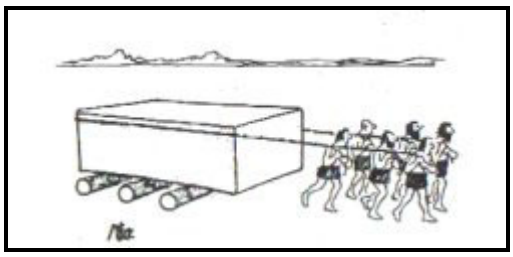
"Mierry do not tell the priest,
For I fear he would call it a sin,
But we have been in the woods this night,
A' conjuring the summer in."

This fragment of a ballad was quoted to us by a folksinger whom we talked with at the Live Oak Park Faire, who had collected it in England. In this case the folk tradition probably goes back to Druid times.

This would be a propitious night for a vigil, or just to try sleeping out of doors if possible. Following another folk tradition whose roots are probably Druidic, single women might try sleeping with a pillow stuffed with mugwort, an herb sacred to Roman Diana, and probably to Danu or Ana, under their heads. This will bring dreams of their future husbands, and was a practice carried on into this century in Celtic countries. The only similar divination practice I have ever heard of for young men involved looking quickly into a particular sacred well, in which he might catch a glimpse of his future mate. But this had nothing to do with Danu or Midsummers.

Editor's Note:

As you can tell by now, our proofreader is absent this issue, attending other festivities in Southern California. This Trath's issue should leave her with no doubts about being needed.



What exactly is a 'henge,' anyway?
From "The Pick of the Punch"

What is a Henge?

But he wouldn't have called it that!

The word "henge" came in to the English language in the late middle ages. According to Unicorn Productions, by way of Channel 4, later written down by Catherine Hills and relayed to us, the term "henge" originally referred to the stones of Stone Henge, specifically the trilithons, the huge uprights and the horizontal stone crossbars which they support. These looked like gallows to medieval scholars, and "henge" meant gallows at that time. Stone Henge was "the hanging stones," or "gallows of stone." This fit with the grizzly fantasies that medieval Christians imagined about their religions and cultures but which, sadly, better reflected practices of the Inquisition and their own day.*

"Recently," reports Hills, "some French archeologists organized an experiment in which two hundred persons dragged a (similarly) large stone some yards along a field. Enormous stones can be moved without recourse to Merlin, UFO's...or modern heavy equipment. (Poor Merlin, out of a job again!)

This is not conjecture. I have found this out by talking to a number of these types while wrapt in my weekday cloak of invisibility: a three-piece suit.

I and other modern Druids are often condemned and called to account for the fact that Roman writers recorded that the Gaulish Druids practiced human sacrifice. Forget that the sane Classical writers also mentioned that the victims were usually prisoners or criminals. The Celts, like other Iron Age pastoralists, could not afford to run jails. Some of the others sacrificed were, according to Ward Russell, Celtic scholar and author of *The Druids,* quoting from another ancient source, individuals who became frenzied during the ceremonies and demanded to be sent, along with the "gift" of war captives, to the Other World. And, yes, a portion may have been chosen "victims."

Human sacrifice is found in the histories of many cultures. It represents a stage in cultural evolution which we, today, have long since passed. It has no more bearing on the modern, Neo-Pagan Druids than does the story of Abraham sacrificing his son, Isaac, to *his* God bear out the behavior or inclinations of modern Judeo-Christians. I know of very few Christians who long to sacrifice their first born sons to Yewah, even if they could be

certain they wouldn't get caught. Yet it was a stage through which their spiritual predecessors passed. (Abraham clearly came from a society that accepted human sacrifice, as did most, if not all, other human groups at a similar stage in their development.) But that is far back in our mutual pasts, and PERSONALLY, I'M TIRED OF TAKING THE RAP FOR IT!

*This primitive thinking is unfortunately still in evidence among fanatical splinter groups of "Christians." It goes something like this: "We Are Christians. We are good. If we do things like _____ (running inquisitions, burning heretics, fire-bombing clinics, (list the latest outrage,) then those other groups must be doing things that are even worse! ('Cause they're just BAD.)" Or: "If I weren't inhibited by all these darned Christians ethics, what would I like to get away with? Well, that's what they must be doing, and we got to stop them."

To Whom It May Concern:

Two disturbing trends that have been growing in the United States—1) that there has been a rise in violent criminal activity with Satanic ritualistic overtones, and 2) that some fundamentalist Christian groups have been spreading false and malicious statements about Witchcraft and Paganism to media and law enforcement personnel attributing such crimes to Witches and Pagans—have made it necessary for the Pagan and Wiccan community to delineate our position to local, state and Federal levels of government. This Resolution was first conceived, written and presented at the Ancient Ways gathering in Northern California on May 22, 1988, and has been successively modified to incorporate input from the Pagan community. This final version now continues to be reprinted and circulated to help clarity the tact that Witches and Pagans are not Satanists and do not engage in abusive or criminal activities. Please share this information with law enforcement officials, educators and media. If your group wishes to be added as a signatory to this Resolution, send a letter of affirmation to GREEN EGG magazine, PO Box 1542, Ukiah, CA 95482.

The Pagan Anti-Abuse Resolution

We, the undersigned, as adherents of Pagan and Neo-Pagan religions, including Wicca (also known as Witchcraft) practice a positive, life-affirming faith that is dedicated to healing, both of ourselves and of the Earth. As such, we do not advocate any acts that victimize others, including those proscribed by law. As our most widely accepted precept is the Wiccan Rede's injunctions "harm none," we absolutely condemn the practices of child abuse, sexual abuse, and other forms of abuse that does harm to the bodies, minds or spirits of individuals. We offer prayers, therapy and support for the healing of the victims of such abuses. We recognize and revere the divinity of Nature in our Mother the Earth, and we conduct our rites of worship legally, and in a manner that is ethical and compassionate. We neither acknowledge nor worship the Christian devil, "Satan," who is not in the Pagan pantheon. We will not tolerate slander or libel against our churches, clergy or congregations, and we are prepared to defend our civil rights with such legal action as we deem necessary and appropriate.

The Heathen on the Heath: War on the Plants

Okay, enough already! This is war. Sweat runs down too fast to blink away from my eyeballs, and my hands are too filthy to mop it away. How can so many slugs exist in the *world*, let alone in my garden? And where did that eighth duck go, and just what is it that got past my eight-foot fence, stacked tires and assorted whirligigs and wind chimes to eradicate half my potato plants? Hey, gang, there's a limit! Isn't there? At Beltaine you came to party. Now the sun is past the zenith, and you're still raiding the pantry. I've tried asking you to go home. No dice. And the dog has some inexplicable wound on his paw—boars? Bobcats?

This is war. Somehow mine ancient enemy, the wild gooseberry, has started some fifth-column activity amid the tomatoes, and sent spies among my mealybug-ridden brassicae. No use griping to Mother: She and her Consort are making hay while the sun shines, and hardly interested in the squabbles of the children.

Whoever first characterized life in Nature as peaceful had a somewhat warped sense of humor.

The very plants do battle; this winter my pruning-saw must break up a slow-motion barroom brawl between an oak, a madrone, and a whitethorn, all of whom can survive quite nicely if they will simply settle for their own spaces and leave each other alone. Fat chance! All living things demand to not only live, but win, preferably at the expense of any and all possible competitors. That herd of wild pigs must not only have the next ridge, but also *my* ridge, to find true happiness.

And what members of any one species think of each other cannot be printed and sent through the U.S. mail.

Where does that leave your everlovin' Heathen? Confused, mostly. While I have no compunctions about claiming the fruits of my own labor, and whatever else I can pry loose (I'm not even a vegetarian) there are certain human-engendered refinements on the art of war that I will not use. Mom may not care whether my tomatoes or her gooseberries grow in the garden, but that's not sufficient reason to dump assorted petrochemicals in Her water-table—or feed to my down hill neighbors, if it comes to that. I'll go after rodents with cats, traps, and a .22, but I have no desire to bring down my allies the redtails with the "friendly fire" of B-gon or DeCon. Can this be said to make a difference, in view of how the rest of my species chooses to nuke their nuisances? And ought I to be messing around in here at all? This garden is an invasion in itself, exotic and pampered organisms installed in the devastation of turf that I chose to call French Intensive Double-Digging. That's not what was here to begin with.

Thing is, an attitude of noblesse oblige requires a certain amount of backup. Kindness is for what we control, and as I gaze in utter dismay on the ruin of my efforts, and the impossibility of reverting to humanity's original mode of participation (hunting and gathering) without overstressing an already depleted wild economy, I realize that my control over this environment is minimal. And wasn't that what I wanted?

Admittedly the fight is rigged. Pit me, with a rifle, against a boar with tusks and I'll bet on me every time. I ought to know; I rigged it myself…I, and forebears who shared my motives, long ago. Like the boar, we also want it all. Unlike the boar, we may someday be unfortunate enough to *get* it all, thereby destroying it. Will we someday live on chemicals, or mutated yeast, because we have won all our wars and there are no other surviving species?

The squirming, biting, struggling child takes endless comfort in the unarguable restraint of Mother's arms. But as the

child ceases to be a baby, a little caution creeps into its protest, unaware at first: we don't want to *hurt* Mommy, after all. And hopefully, by the time we are big and strong enough to do Her real damage, we will have thoroughly absorbed the lesson that She has feelings, too.

Except that people-en-masse are always a little dumber than people one at a time.

Where are you in the world? Where are your battles, what have you won…and at what cost? Come, swap war-stories with me, for even if you are busily making chemicals out of other chemicals, or laying concrete over ground, we are all the same in this. Nobody gave us the right to be who we are; we have made ourselves. Nobody owed us a place in the world; we have taken it. This is *our* nature, as surely a part of us as greenness is of grass, to be channeled but never truly changed.

Just remember that perhaps it is not worth postponing, indefinitely at finite cost to the rest of the world, one's own last battle. For *sus scrofa*, *homo sapiens*, or any living creature, anywhere, there is but one ending. Let the sun blaze on into the night, drink deep, and gird yourself with honor. It is a good day, at least, not to know what's going to happen. And no matter how many sandbags we make of our environment, to pile around our laughable foxholes in the scheme of things, it's out there, waiting for us, somewhere: the fight we can't win.

Nobody's getting out of here alive.

Calendar

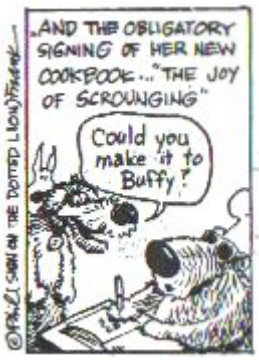
Astronomical Summer Solstice will occur this year at 2:47 A.M. PDT June 21, 1989. The earth will have reached that point in its orbit at which its north pole is farthest inclined toward Belenos' shining countenance. Celebrations will be held at the Orinda Grovesite that afternoon, after, alas, secular "work," circa 5:30 P.M., and on into the evening.

In Answer to Inquiries:

Where does RDNA Druidism stand on abortion? That it is a woman's choice. It is mentioned in the *Druid Chronicles*, which are the foundation of RDNA style Druidism:

The reasoning goes that since Nature and the Deities have seen fit to give this power of gestation and birth only to women, they alone make the decisions regarding it, and matters of pregnancy, birth, and milk giving are no man's business. These are private matters; the woman, not some organization of philosophers and theologians, nor the medical profession, nor society in general, knows and can decide how many children she can safely create and care for. Druidism is a religion of individual responsibility. You make the decisions, you take the consequences, good or bad or puzzling. There is no devil in Druidism to use as a cop out who "made you do it." If in some hypothetical century we were truly running out of people, I would propose that all an RDNA-based society could do would be to try to bribe women into making more copies of themselves, as societies bribe people with the cookie of money and status for undertaking other difficult but important jobs.

I also propose that it would be true, though it is not stated in the *Druid Chronicles*, that neither should women or society in general make laws on matters affecting only males: laws about circumcision, vasectomies, baldness, or whether men should or should not grow their beards. These are individual decisions.



We received this in response to our recent article "Scrounge!"

Postmarked on June 20, 1989

A Druid Missal-Any Lughnasadh 1989 Volume 13 Number 5

Lughnasadh Essay: Lugh the Protester

By Emmon Bodfish

ughnasadh is the celebration of the funeral games given by the God Lugh for his father, Cian, who was slain by the sons of Turenn. Cian was a shape-shifter and magician, i.e. one of the Druid or clergy-caste. Rhys considers Him a minor solar deity, but in mythology He acts more the part of shaman and ambassador. The games show Lugh's filial piety, as Lugh represents all that the ancient Celts thought good in a young man. He is the multi-competent god, defender against oppression, patron and teacher of craftspeople and artisans, God of commerce and its wealth, protector of travelers, and Lord of the Harvest.

The figure of the young boy-God, son of one of the old Pantheon, who saves the people from an unjust ruler, in the myth of Lugh, King Breas the Fomor, is a very old and widespread theme in sacred literature. Many cultures have myths dating back probably to the Neolithic, of a young agricultural and solar deity born on the Winter Solstice, who defends the people, exemplifies morality, teaches the arts of civilization, and is associated with the harvest: Lugh, Balder, the Balkan New Year God, Prometheus, Zeus in His battle with the Titans, Mithra, and some aspects of the Moses and Jesus myths. (The early Judeo-Christian writers grafted these age-old aspects of the Young God into the founders of their faith, just as they did with numerous sayings, rituals and ideas borrowed from the older cultures surrounding them. These things were not new.)

Lugh in His defender role was also a tax protestor. When the Celts had fallen under the sway of Breas, a half-Fomor from "under the sea," Lugh, son of the old God, Cian, appeared. Breas, in one of his acts of mis-rule had levied an oppressive tax on the Tuatha de Danann by means of a deception. Breas is portrayed as a smart man (or demi-god) and clever with words. When he first joined the de Danann pantheon, before the first battle of Moy Tura, he was the one chosen and sent out to parley with Streng of the FirBolgs. But later as king, he perverts his intelligence into trickery. Like Loci in the German myths, Breas has a legalistic, literalistic, conniving turn of mind. And like Loci he is an outsider, possibly an adopted God from the pantheon of the Pre-Indo-European inhabitants of the region. He has ancestral ties to the long term enemies of the Pantheon he now serves, Breas represents the negative aspects of intelligence, as Lugh represents the positive ones. The Battles of the Gods, as one school of theology holds, are the battles of the archetypes and choices within the human conscience. "Mythology is not about how things are; it's about how they feel," Joan Carruth, circa 1983. Breas had the Tuatha de Danann agree to surrender to him the milk of every cow, in Ireland that was brown and hairless. They agreed. He then caused every cow in Ireland to be passed through a fire which made them all brown, scorched and hairless. A more moderate version of this fire ceremony was part of the annual Beltaine purification rites. This may have made his proposition seem at first hearing acceptable to the Tuatha. Then after perverting the sacred purification rite into a destructive one, he claimed the milk of every cow in Erin. Crops also failed to prosper under Breas' rule. The people were starving. Lugh came and won acceptance into the Pantheon with his multitude of skills, high character and regal bearing. He vanquished Breas, restored Erin to the Tuatha de Danann and their king, Nuada. Under Nuada's rule the land prospered and harvests were bountiful. This, in the Celtic theory of sovereignty, was the mark of a true and rightful king.

Celebrate Lughnasadh by offering up to Lugh the first fruits and produce of your gardens, any plants you've grown or windfall profits received. (no animals!) Dance, sing, be grateful for the harvest!

News of the Groves

One interesting bit which a reader brought to our attention on the subject of the Goddess Danu, A.K.A. Anu, Ana, is this brief passage in Boswell's 1773 manuscript: A Tour to the Hebrides:

> The first thing we came to was an earthen mound or dike extending from one precipice to the other. A little farther on was a strong stone wall, not high but very thick, extending in the same manner. On the outside of it were the ruins of two houses, one on each side of the entry or gate to it. The wall at the entry is four lengths and a half of my cane.[4] The wall is built all along of dry stone; but of stones of so large a size as to make a very firm and durable rampart. It has been built all about the consecrated ground except where the precipice is steep enough to form an enclosure of itself. The sacred spot will be more than two acres. There are within it the ruins of many houses (none of them large), a cairn, many graves marked by stones thus: but what Mr. Macqueen insists on is that the remains of a small building standing east and west was actually temple of the Goddess Anaitis, where her statue was kept, from whence processions were made to wash it in one of the brooks. [5] There is a hollow road really visible for a good mile from the entrance. But Mr. Macqueen walked with great action along what he saw to be a continuation of it, for a little way, till there is an easy descent to the brook on the _____.* As I have often observed what looked like visible road in moors, that is to say continued pieces of ground greener than the rest, and perhaps a little lower, I could not be sure that he was right here. All the houses, temple as well as the rest, have not more than a foot or a foot-and-a-half in height remaining of their walls. The temple is in length, within the walls, five lengths of my cane and six hands; in breadth, two lengths and a few hands, I think six too, so that it has been but a poor building. The waters on each side join at the north[6] end of the sacred ground, which is like a theatre elevated above the neighbouring ground, and then the water or river formed by them runs away due north[7] towards the sea. Whatever this place has been it has been a most striking solemn scene. The sight lost in some places on a wild moor around; the hills in some other places

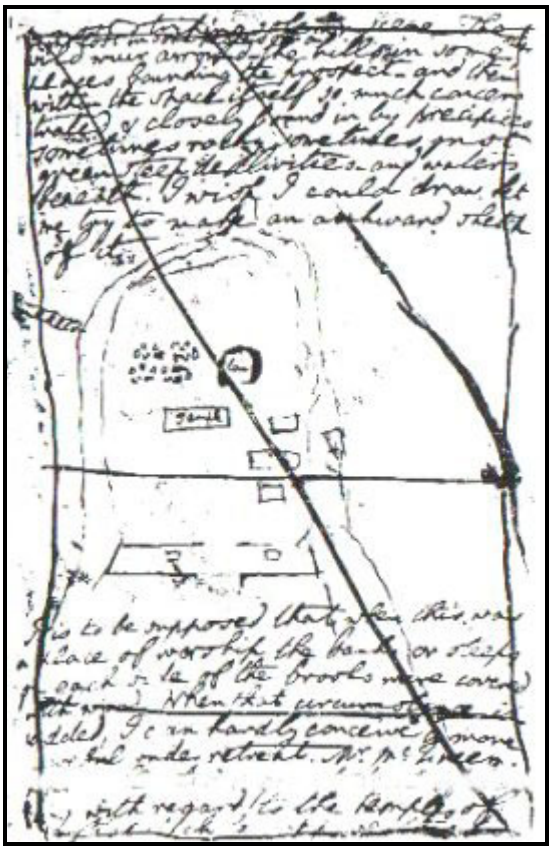
bounding the prospect; and then, within, the space itself, so much concentrated and closely bound in by precipices, sometimes rocky, sometimes just green steep declivities—and waters beneath. I wish I could draw. Let me try to make an awkward sketch of it.[8] It is to be supposed that when this was a place of worship, the banks or steeps on each side of the brooks were covered with wood. When that circumstance is added, I can hardly conceive a more awful rude retreat. Mr. Macqueen has collected a great deal of learning with regard to the temples of Anaitis, of which he supposes this to have been one. My sketch of it may convey some idea. But there is no exactness in it. I may truly be said to

Write about it, Goddess, and about it.[9]

When we got home, and were enjoying ourselves over admirable roasted venison, we first talked of portraits. Mr. John-

*These blanks appear in Boswell's journal where he did not know a direction, East, West, etc.

She [the submitter of the article] asks: "Could this be a folk memory of a Druidic ritual of the washing of a statue of Ana?" Anaista Gaelic "Anaeache," or Anaiad in the Gaelic manner of deriving an adjective from a noun. In this way "bliochd" meaning milk becomes "bliochdaiche" meaning milky or giving milk. It is also to be remembered that "Anaistis" is Boswell's guess at the spelling of a word pronounced by an illiterate Gael, a local guide. Boswell spoke no Gaelic. He likes to show off his Latin and Greek classical education, and falls back on it when he is puzzled. A few pages later on in his journal he notes that a goddess "Anaistis" was worshipped by Celts living in Asia Minor. He must have read this in some one of his classical sources, but does not give a reference. We know from several different sources, some classical, some later, that the Pagan Germans had an annual ritual in which a statue of Nerthus, their Goddess of Earth, grain, and crop fertility was taken to a sacred lake and washed as part of a ceremony after being transported through the countryside in procession in a special, elaborately decorated wagon. This ritual marked the end of the spring festivities. Nerthus seems similar in function to Druidic Danu, if not cognate in name. "Nerthus" may have been originally a euphemism for the Goddess, meaning "of the Earth." As often happens, Her name may have become to sacred to be pronounced and so a substitute, a description, was used instead until name was lost, and the descriptive euphemism became Her name. Mr.s Pottle and Bennett, editors of the edition which our reader used, *A Tour of the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.,* Literary Guild, Inc., New York, 1936, include a footnote in which they, like many Victorian scholars, to explain away the Pagan possibilities by saying that Anaitcha, or Anaiad, may be connected with some ecclesiastical term used in early Christian monastic architecture. But this does not explain the ritual of the washing of the statue. All this is speculation, true, but it is suggestive. The Christian faith did not really gain supremacy in the outer reaches of Scotland until much later than elsewhere in the British Isles. Would anyone like to fund an archeological expedition to the site of Boswell's Temple of Anaista" and settle the question?



Boswell's Plan of the Annait

[4] Boswell's cane is shown, by the dimensions which he gives for "The Temple of Anaitis," to have been thirty-nine inches long.
[5] "The oldest ecclesiastic term existing in the Islands is *Annait (Annaid),* which us peculiar to the Celtic Church, and probably indicates in Scotland, as in Ireland, the mother-church or monastic community of the earliest Christian settlement in the district. It is now structurally represented only by example in Skye." (*Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, Ninth Report. The Outer Hebrides and Skye*. 1928. p. xiv. See the full description, *ibid*., p.p. 149-50)
[6] Supplied by the editors to fill a blank in the MS.
[7] Supplied by the editors to fill a blank in the MS.
[8] See the facsimile.
[9] "For thee we dim the eyes, and stuff the head
With all such reading as was never read:
For thee explain a thing till all men doubt it,
And write about it, Goddess, and about it."
Pope, *Dunciad*, IV. 249-52.

Letter to the Editor:

A Druid Missal-Any
Live Oak Grove
616 Miner Road
Orinda, CA 94563

June 26, 1989

Dear Druid Missal-any (and Hello, Emmon Bodfish!):

Regarding your article on the Summer Solstice:

Oh, please!! You quoted, on page 2, a "traditional verse .... quoted to you by a folksinger…at the Live Oak Park Faire".

That particular verse is far from *traditional* and does NOT, most certainly, date back to Druid times, although the sentiment may well have! It comes from a poem, which later became a song, written by Rudyard Kipling, and which comes from *Puck of Pook's Hill,* entitled *Oak and Ash and Thorn*. The poem later found its way into the Craft literature via (most likely) Gerald B. Gardner. Of course, where Kipling's inspiration came from is speculation. Do you like Kipling? Assuming that you've ever Kippled, that is.

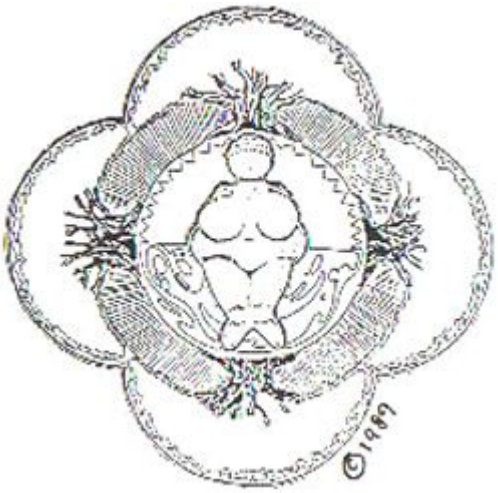
Also, on your fourth page (although it isn't numbered—yes, indeed, you need your proofreader back!) you cite "Ward Russell" in the section on Druids practicing human sacrifice. I believe you properly mean *Ward Rutherford*, author of *The Druids: Magicians of the West.*

I'd like to know more about RDNA and where I can obtain copies of the *Druid Chronicles*. I've been receiving *Druid Missal-Any* since I was the editor of "News from the Mother Grove," one of the publications of Ar nDraiocht Fein: A Druid Fellowship. Although I'm not the editor anymore and no longer serve on the Board of Trustees, you've kept me on your mailing list, most generously. So, I'd like to know more about your organization and your spiritual path. I know from ADF Druidism, but I don't know much about other Neopagan Druid groups and organizations. I am naturally (or preternaturally) curious.

Let me know what your subscription rates, etc. are, so that I can give you something toward your publishing costs.

Walk with Wisdom,

Susan



Drawing by Rob Lansley

Dear Susan,

I certainly never meant that the verse itself dated back to Druidic times. If anyone took it to mean that, I apologize. I meant that the custom of going out into the woods or moors and conjuring the summer in, etc., on Solstice Eve night is a custom that dates back to Druidic times, and maybe a lot farther. I did not know that it was a Kipling quote. Yes, I have a copy of Ward Rutherford's book, *The Druids: Magicians of the West*, and that is the one to which I was referring.

Our subscription rates are $5.00/year/8 issues. Write to us at the Druid Missal-Any, Box 142, Orinda, California 94563

—Emmon Bodfish, Editor

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A Druid Missal-Any
Fall Equinox 1989
Volume 13 Number 6

Fall Equinox Essay:
Cernunnos and Dances

By Emmon Bodfish

quinox approaches! This is the time sacred to Cernunnos, the Hunter God. The cult of the horned god, the shaman-god dressed in the horns and hide of a hoofed prey-animal, is one of the most ancient themes running through Indo-European-Siberian group of cultures. Cave paintings in France and Spain dating from the Paleolithic show these figures, and he is seen again on the Gundestrup cauldron, crafted by the Eastern European Celts under Druid auspicious and direction, he wears the antlers of the stag. It would be rash to think of all the horned Eurasian gods as Cernunnos, each tribe probably had their own name for him, but the theme seems universal among those cultures which lived through the last Ice Age in Europe and Eurasia north of the Caucus. In the Pre-Indo-European Balkans he is associated with the goat, in Siberia with the. reindeer, in England with the Red Deer, and in the Mediterranean and Ireland with the bull, (Here is another element linking Erin to Spain and the Mediterranean world as opposed to the rest of the British Isles or Gaul.) Everywhere Cernunnos is associated with a horned and hoofed, food producing species. He may be the Being commemorated in the "horn-dances" carried out in a number of English villages up through the nineteenth century, and now exclusively in Abbots Bromley. Whether this is a local survival from Druidic or even Pre-Celtic times, or is a rite brought with them by the Anglo-Saxon invaders in the service of their cognate deity, Hern the Hunter, is not known.

Masked Dancer
Paleolithic Engraving from the Fourneau du Diable, Dordogne

Originally Cernunnos seems to have been a hunter's god, and later to have become associated with flocks and herds as "Master of the Animals." Still later he is appealed to for prosperity and fertility in general. This was the stage of the tradition seen in the Grecian Pan cult, and in that of European "Robin Goodfellow," later distorted and debased by Christian missionaries into their "devil" cults and images. There is no devil in the Celtic Pantheon. A cosmic "bad guy" is a theological invention of a set of Middle Eastern religions including Zoroastrianism, Persian, Sumerian and Semitic as well as Christianity. Devil inventing and worshipping as we see it now is a Christian spin-off, and usually a rebellion against that same faith. It has nothing to do with the older, indigenous religions and God-figures of Europe. Cernunnos was an extremely popular figure among the farming peoples of Celtic Europe, and the Romans, newly Christianized themselves, seeing that they could not co-opt his worship, or euphemize him into a "saint," as they did a number of the other Druidic deities, debased him into a demon, i.e. the god of a rival, competing theocracy. Margaret Murray first enunciated this theory in the 1920s. Her work then fell into disrepute in the '40s and '50s, but has since been revived and vindicated. Her book, *The God of the Witches*, Oxford University Press, 1970, is worth reading if you can find it. G. Rachel Levy also sheds some light on the Mediterranean versions of his worship In her book *The Gate of Horn,* Farber and Farber, 1948. (This book is now published as *Religious Conceptions of the Stone Age and Their Influence Upon European Thought*, New York: Harper, 1963.)

The Gaelic word "Faighe" that come to be translated "prophet," originally meant "seer" and was the name of one class of Druids, solitary forest-dwelling mystics, who may have originally been connected with the worship of Cernunnos in his role as the shaman-god. "Fiagh," the Gaelic root word for "deer," is suggestive in this regard. The old "seer" whom Finn encountered beside the sacred pool was probably one such. They are associated with the Hazel, as Cernunnos may have been as Bride is associated with the Birch and Lugh with the Apple tree.

The Horned-god had a second sacred time beginning around the Winter Solstice with the tradition of the Flying Shaman, Mystic and inter-world journeyer, he descends Into the Land of the Ancestors, (the sun, sinking to its nadir?) to bring back new souls, of game animals and kine and humans, that new animals and Infants may be born and increase and prosperity be assured. This journey, "dedicated to the continual flow and renewal of life,"* was still being undertaken by Finn-Ugric and Siberian tribal shamans into this century. It is well documented and the beliefs behind it recorded by A. A. Popov, the Russian anthropologist in his numerous books and articles.

Cernunnos' rituals and, from the evidence of offerings left secretly at cave shrines, his worship, continued long after nominal Christianization of Europe. The Highland Calluinn (Hazel-tree) Ritual is an example of one such rite, still in practice in the nineteen century. The Protestant cleric who recorded it seems to have had no inkling of its meaning, but he writes that the people of the west Highlands, in the middle of the seventeenth century, were "little more than heathens, having been neglected by the Roman Church." According to Dwelly, of *Dwelly's Gaelic-English Dictionary* fame, it is an old west Highland belief that old Calluinn night, when the winds blow from the West, is the night of the fecundation of the trees. The West is the direction of the Celtic Other World, and of the dead. One wonders if this post-Solstice celebration marks the successful return of the shaman, (as well as the sun) from the Land of the Dead with his sack of new souls and spiritual gifts from the Ancestors. (See the Yule Druid Missal-Any for 1986 for the "Santa" Claus-Cernunnos-Flying shaman connection.)

*Quote from the R.D.N.A New and Full Moon Day Service

Hazel

By Emmon Bodfish

One of the basic myths of Druidism is the story of Finn, a young renegade of the warrior caste and his encounter with the Druidic Salmon of Knowledge and the awakening of his psychic and spiritual self. This is in a psychological sense his ascent to the Druid caste and Awareness. The myth was popularized by a nineteenth century author under the name of "Ossian," who added a good deal of "Celtic twilight" of his own, but the myth is very old.

"Around a sacred well, in the heart of Erin, grew nine Hazel trees which bore crimson fruit." (This is most likely a cognate of the well and the World Tree in Germanic mythology, and part of the basic Indo-European World Tree cosmology.) "It was the property of these Hazelnuts that whoever ate them immediately came into the possession of knowledge of everything that ever existed in the world. One class of creatures alone had the privilege of feeding on them: the magical species of immortal Salmon who lived in the well." The human who ate one of the Salmon would attain instant Awareness of everything. However, only a person selected by destiny, or probably originally by a deity, could secure the sacred flesh; from all others it would be taken away before they could taste of it.

Finn, having mastered all the skills of the warrior while he was still a youth, did not go into the service of any chieftain, but, perhaps dissatisfied with that life, wandered alone over the plains of Ireland. At length he came to the banks of the River Boyne, which sprang from the sacred well of the Salmon of Knowledge. There he found a Druid, a woods hermit called Finn the Seer. (He was probably one of a class of Druidic hermit-mystics who were a feature of Pagan Celtic society and probably cognate with the solitary forest Yogis of Brahmanism.) He had been living beside the pool for seven years, hoping to secure one of the salmon and total Awareness, it having been prophesized that one called Finn would attain the Ultimate Knowledge at this well. Finn the Seer approves of the young man and agrees to take Finn MacCumhal as one of his servants, not knowing the youth's real name. (In place of servant, we should probably read student, apprentice, disciple, as that is how one learned mystic skills in most ancient cultures, by ingratiating oneself to an accomplished shaman or mystic and serving him or her as a master.)

Soon after Finn MacCumhal's arrival at the well, the old Seer catches one of the salmon. He hands it to the young man to cook, warning him to eat no portion of it. When Finn brings his master the cooked fish, the Seer immediately perceives the change in his young servant. He has attained All-Knowledge. "Have you eaten of the Salmon?" he demands. "No indeed!" replies the youth. "But while cooking it, a blister arose on the skin of it and I put my thumb on that to push it down. It burnt my thumb, and in pain I put my thumb under one of my teeth to cool it." The old man was perplexed. "You told me that your name was 'Deimne'. Have you another name?" "Yes," answered the youth, "in my warrior trials I was known as 'Finn.'" "That is enough," said the old man. "It is for you that the Salmon was intended. Eat." Finn MacCumhal ate the rest of the Salmon of Knowledge, and in the rest of his life he had only to place his thumb under his tooth (a valid concentration, meditation technique) to receive foreknowledge and divine counsel.

This and other early exploits of Finn MacCumhal are contained in a little tract written on a fragment of a ninth century Psalter of Cashel. I have used the Ossianic Society's translation, from Charles Squire.

The Hazel is one of the sacred trees of Druidism. Its seeds symbolize wisdom.

This fall, when I came across some organically grown Hazel nuts in a local market I decided to try this experiment. I have been on a salt-free, vegetarian diet for a dozen or so years, now, and sense the effects of different foods fairly rapidly. After fasting for half a day, I ate just enough hazel nuts to satisfy the hunger. I was surprised at how few this required. They produced a clear, calm, and satisfied state of mind, contemplative and appropriate for taking a wide and long perspective on things. And they kept me from feeling hungry again for a long time. I could see that these effects would be helpful in scholarly pursuits or in a contemplative lifestyle. We cannot know, of course, whether this effect was any part of the reason that the Ancient Celts had the Hazel tree standing beside the pool of knowledge in their mythology, where the Teutonics had the Ash.

There Yggdrasils stand over the three Wellsprings of the World." I think Celtic Hazel pool is a cognate of Mimir's well in the German system. Both point back to some Proto-Indo-European myth of a World Tree and sacred springs.

A fellow Druid pointed out in Professor Fredrick's reference in his book, *Proto-Indo-European Trees*, University of Chicago Press, 1970, to evidence that the Hazel may have been one of the first native European plants to have been deliberately cultivated by the inhabitants of central Europe before the arrival of grain from the Fertile Crescent.

Hazel *Corylus avellana*

Local names for nuts: COBNUT, FILBERT; FILBEARD, Glos, Oxf, Northants; HALE, HALES, Corn, Dev, Som; HASKETTS, Dor; WOODNUT, Yorks.

Abundant throughout the British Isles, except in very damp areas. Grows in woods, hedgerows and scrubland. A shrub, 4 to 12 feet high, with roundish, downy, toothed leaves. Best known for the yellow male catkins, called 'lambs' tails," which appear in the winter. Nuts from late August to October, ½" to 1" long, ovoid and encased in a thick green lobed husk.

The problem with hazelnuts is that if you hold back from picking them until they are fully ripe, the squirrels and jays will get there first. If you pick whilst the nuts are still abundant on the tree, you will not have the same flavor.

Food for Free: Nuts

…the trees in late August, they are soft and tasteless and apt to wither in their shells within a day. There is a curiosity about these times, for St Philibert's Day—from which the nut received one of its names in an attempt to exorcise its pagan associations—is on August 22. At this time some of the bigger green nuts will give you a crunchy mouthful if you eat them immediately, but they lack the dry, almost fishy flavour of the ripe brown cobs.

Late September is probably the best compromise. Searching for hazelnuts at this early autumn time is a pleasurable test of eye and reflexes. You must beat along the hedgerows like a hawk, trying to distinguish the nuts from the crinkly, parchment

yellow of the changing leaves. If you see some, in bunches of two or three, go for them very carefully, for when they are ripe they will fall from the husks at the slightest vibration of the bush. If the ground cover under the bush is not, as it usually is, an impenetrable tangle of nettle and dead leaves, but relatively clear ground or grass, then it is worthwhile giving the bush a shake. Even the invisible ripe ones should find their way on to the ground after this. In fact it is always worth searching the ground underneath a hazel. If there are nuts there which are dark or grey-brown in colour then the kernels will have turned to dust. But there is a chance that there will be some fresh windfalls that have not yet been picked on by the birds.

In spite of their apparent hardiness and ability to thrive in the British climate, hazels are not always successful at producing fruit. There are any number of pressures which can prevent the formation of nuts, as happened in 1969 when there were very few to be found. For a start, the bushes must be at least seven years old. They must be allowed to branch and produce catkins and flowers—which contemporary hedge-cutting techniques inhibits. The pollen from the catkins must succeed in reaching the delicate crimson stigmas of the female flowers, which appear in January. If the winds are too strong, or there are heavy frosts, both catkins and flowers can be destroyed.

Once you have gathered your nuts, keep them in a dry, warm place—but in their shells, so that the kernels don't dry out as well. You can use the nuts chopped or grated in salads, or with apple and raisins on raw oatmeal (muesli). Ground up in a blender, mixed with milk and chilled, they make a passable imitation of the Spanish drink *horchata*. But hazelnuts are such a rich food that it seems a little wasteful not to use them occasionally as a protein substitute. Weight for weight, in fact, they contain fifty per cent more protein, seven times more fat and five times more carbohydrate than hens' eggs. What better way of cashing in on such a meaty hoard than the unjustly infamous nut cutlet?

Melt two ozs of fat in a saucepan, and stir in the same weight of flour. Add a pint of stock and seasoning and stew for ten minutes, stirring all the time. Add three ozs of bread crumbs and two ozs of grated hazelnuts. Cool the mixture and shape into cutlets. Dip the cutlets into an egg and milk mixture, coat with breadcrumbs and fry in deep fat until brown.

If you gather your nuts early, and have an interest in the more bizarre branches of cookery, you might like to pick some hazel leaves as well and try this fifteenth century recipe for a 'noteye'. It contains all the classic characteristics of the medieval style of cooking: extensive use of spices, the fine cutting and blending of all ingredients, and the gruel-like consistency of the final product.

> 'Take a great procyoun of Haselle leuys, and grynd in a morter as small as you may whyl that they ben younge; take pan, and draw uppe a thrift of Mylke of Almaundys, y-blaunchyd and temper it with Freysshe brothe; wryng out clene the ius of the leuys; take Flysshe of Porke or of Capoun, and grynd it small, and temper it uppe with the mylke, and caste it in a potte, and the ius there-to; do it ouer the fyre and late it boyle; take Flour of Rys, and a-lye it; take and caste sugar y-now there-to and Vynegre a quantyte, and pounder Gyngere, and Safroun it wel, and Sall; take small notys, and breke hem; take the kyrnells, and make hem white and fye hem uppe in grece; plante there with the meat and serve forth."

Slightly adapted from *Two Fifteenth Century Cookbooks*

Food for Free, Mabey, Richard, Collins Press, St. James' Place, London, 1972.

Legal Matters

It is to be remembered that the Ancient Druids were the lawyers and magistrates of their day. So on a practical note, we are reprinting here some information on the standing of living wills. This is an important document to have enacted if you want to avoid a medicalized death and embark consciously and naturally on your transitional journey. You should check with a local lawyer about the status of this new four page document of Will in your state. In the S.F. Bay area, write to us for references to lawyers who have helped us, or write to Circle, P.O. Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI, 53572. They may know of lawyers who have been helpful to the Pagan community.

As the Associated Press reports, and as was noted in the Journal of the American Medical Assoc., living wills are rarely enforced because they are "too vague" and the courts find it hard to hold hospitals to account for permitting, insisting upon, or refusing to cooperate with specific requests of patient and family. The authors of the press report felt that doctors are resistant about living-wills because they believe that a living-will represents a rejection of medical care, rather than a choice of treatment under specific circumstances. Linda Emanuel recommends getting around this balking on the part of medical persons by being very specific. She proposes a four page document which the research staff calls a "medical directive." It lets the signer indicate ahead of time which treatments s/he would find acceptable and which s/he specifically forbids. For each scenario the "directive" lists twelve possible treatments, and the person enacting the directive ranks whether s/he wants or does not want a treatment, or is undecided. Still, after you have enacted one of these, it is best to discuss it and reach an agreement about it with your doctor, if you have one, or any health care professionals you could reach in an emergency. Have standing arrangements with those people the law defines as you next of kin. It is too bad to have to have to prepare for battle, but that is the state of medicine in America. The fight for freedom never ends.

Calendar

Astronomical Equinox will occur on September 22, 1989, at 7:14 Pacific Standard Time, 8:14 Daylite Time. Autumn begins!

Oct. 14: ISC Harp Concert with Laurie Riley and Michael MacBean. Call Mary O'Drain at 234-8412 for more information.

The Roman Chariot, unique in the Universe, built in 1972. Walnut and velvet. Power by BMW R905. Comfortable for long trip. Museum item. Has a beautiful story, sale: $25,000 with trailer. 794-885-2232, NC.

We have a biological need to immerse ourselves in living green at all seasons of the year.

To clear up some misconceptions that have been 'round and about in the community: This newsletter, "A Druid Missal-Any," is a product of the Reformed Druids of North America of Orinda Grovesite. It was founded by Chris Sherback, Joan Carruth and myself, Emmon Bodfish, in the Berkeley Grove, in 1983. I am not a penname for anyone else, but am a real, physical body; I live here, take care of the Grovesite and edit the Missal-Any. We have NO connection with any other Druid groups or persons: Ar nDraicht Fein, Ancient Order of Druids, B.O.D., Rex Benson, Isaac Bonewits, M.E. Barrs, Robert Brooke, Nora Chadwick, or the Primrose Hill Group. The Reformed Druids of North America was founded by David Fisher at Carleton College in 1963. It is made up of independent Groves scattered around the country.

Subscriptions to the Missal-Any are now $5.50/year in the U.S. and $6.50/year in Canada. For European or Pacific Rim subscribers we have worked out the individually, depending on postage and transit time. Write us at P.O. Box 142, Orinda, California, 94563

Ice Phoenix

P.O. Box 247
Fields Landing
CA 95537

Elven Glen

Wild Magic Bulletin

ECOLOGY—EARTH RELIGION—TAO official publication of E.L.F. P.O. Box 1082, Bloomington, IN 47402—$8/4 issues—includes 25 word or less listing of any product/services you may offer CONTAX, PROJEX, EVENTS, & more PSI-LINKS, CLASSES, FESTIVALS!

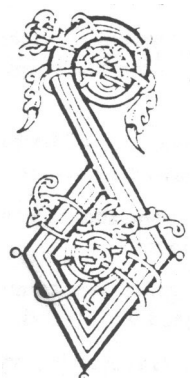
Left. 'Cernunnos' as 'lord of the animals' upon one of the inner plate of the Gundestrup cauldron. The deity sits in cross-legged position, is crowned by a splendid pair of antlers asnd wears a torc about his neck. In his left hand he holds a ram-headed serpent, in his right another torc. Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen.

Postmarked September 19, 1989

A Druid Missal-Any Samhain 1989 Volume 13 Number 7

Samhain Essay: Paying Respects

By Emmon Bodfish



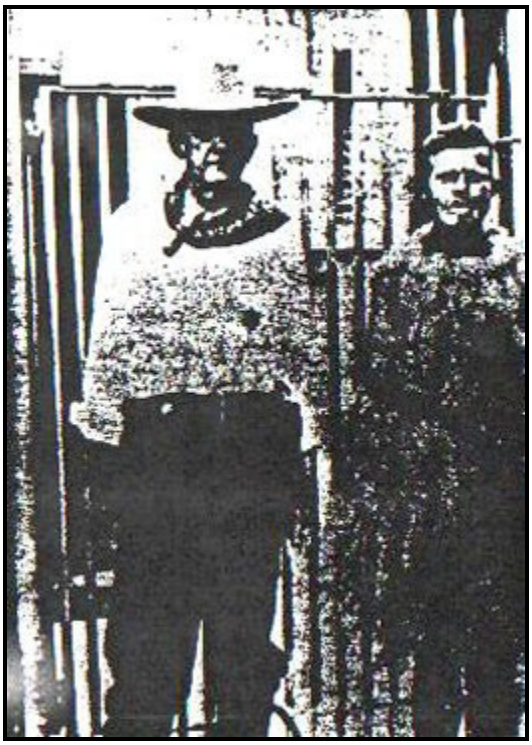
Samhain, Celtic New Years, the Day Between the Worlds, the Druid year starts on Samhain, The sun is half way between Autumn Equinox and Winter Solstice. Samhain marks the end of the harvest season. All fruit and grain not gathered in by Samhain Eve must be left in the fields to feed the birds and wild animals, the flocks of Cernnunos, and its vegetable life essence, its "spirit" becomes the property of "The Little People," the Sidhi, and feeds them. (Is our word, 'fairy," derived from "fear an sidhi," meaning in proto-Gaelic "a person of the Sidhi," one of the little people?) Sidhi is pronounced in Gaelic as English "shee." A Banshee, the spirit that gives prophecies and mourns for the dead, means literally "a woman of the Sidhi." Another folk tradition, probably from old Druid times, holds that "Pukas," mischievous spirits, will come out on Samhain night and steal the nourishing essence of any food crops left in the fields, or, if it is not to their liking, will despoil it. Their mythic descendents swarm out in the form of hordes of trick-or-treaters and disguised, costumed revelers.

This is the night when the Other World, the world of the dead, the future souls, and of the ancestors, comes the closest to our world and "dimension hopping" is the easiest. It is time to honor dead ancestors, and remember old friends. This was "the day of the dead" long before the Christian era. The dead were thought by the ancient Celts to have a wider and truer perspective on things than we mortals do, and to be able to advise their descendents and friends. They know all history, are aware of all forces and causes, and can intuit the future better than we. Pay your respects at graves or memorials, ask questions of departed friends, ancestors, or mentors. Leave out food offerings for them at your Samhain Eve celebrations and vigils. Get out old photographs. Review the past, this pre-Samhain week, and pay old debts, spiritual or emotional. Find lost belongings; make amends. Then celebrate.

News of the Groves

The "Mad Sweeney" Tradition Lives!

A correspondent in Florida sends this picture of their local "forest hermit" who, on an impulse, like his name sake, forsook civilization and went "to run with the deer." He seems to have done pretty well for himself and, as H.D. Thoreau once said, to "have liked it tolerably well."



23. Suibhne the Wild Man in the Forest

Little antlered one, little belling one, melodic bleater, sweet I think the lowing that you make in the glen.

Home-sickness for my little dwelling has come mind, the calves in the plain, the deer on the moor.

Oak, bushy, leafy, you are high above trees; hazel-bush, little branchy one, coffer of hazel-nuts.

Alder, you are not spiteful, lovely is your colour not prickly where you are in the gap.

Blackthorn, little thorny one, black little sloe-bush; water-cress, little green-topped one, on the brink of the blackbird's well.

Saxifrage of the pathway, you are the sweetest of herbs; cress, very green one; plant where the strawberry grows.

Apple-tree, little apple-tree, violently everyone shakes you; rowan, little berried one, lovely is your bloom.

Bramble, little humped one, you do not grant fair terms; you do not cease tearing me till you are sated with blood.

Yew, little yew, you are conspicuous in graveyards; ivy, little ivy, you are familiar in the dark wood.

Holly, little shelterer, door against the wind; ash-tree, baneful, weapon in the hand of a warrior.

1. The legendary miraculous, builder.

—From *A Celtic Miscellany*

Obituary

On October 20, 1989, Avatar the cat belonging to Rapheal and Stacey, affiliates of the Orinda Grovesite, died. He had contracted feline leukemia. We held an R.D.N.A. style service for him in one of the local parks.

Further Suggestions for a Druid Funeral

By Emmon Bodfish

The basic outline of the ceremony is as follows. It can be added to, to fit the needs of the people for whom the service is being done.

The grave is prepared and a means of replacing the soil is ready at hand.

The ceremony begins with the processions up to the grave.

The pall bearers carrying the body of the deceased proceed first.

They are followed by the Third Order Druid[1] who will be conducting the ceremony. S/He will recite the funeral chant as they approach the grave. People carrying the grave goods follow immediately behind the Druid, the one carrying the food offering walking first, just in back of the Druid.

When they arrive at the grave, the Druid continues the chant while the body is lowered, and the participants form a circle around the grave, with the person carrying the food offering stopping first, just at the Druid's left, and the person walking behind him, stopping at his left, and so on.

The food offering, traditionally a joint of meat and a glass of mead, but in modern practice, the deceased's favorite food and drink, is then placed in the grave to the right of the body.

Next all those carrying grave goods come forward in order, deasel, (Sun-wise) around the circle, and place their goods in the grave.

A hymn or some favorite music of the deceased's may be played at this point.

Then in the central and most important part of the ceremony, the Druid steps forward and puts the handful of "releasing earth" onto the body and says, "With this soil I do release thy earthly bonds."[2]

The grave is then refilled with the earth removed from it. When this is done, the Druid consecrates a chalice full of the Waters of Life, using the "Charging of the Waters" from the regular R.D.N.A. Service, for Summer half of the year. S/He drinks a sip of them, makes the Druid Sigil and says "The Waters of Life," if S/He confirms them to be such. The chalice is then passed sunwise around the circle with each member making the sign of the Druid Sigil and stating "The Waters of Life," as s/he passes the chalice to the next person. When the chalice returns, it should *not* be totally empty. The Druid tastes of it again, and if s/he again confirms that it is the Waters of Life, s/he again makes the sign of the Sigil and then pours the remainder over the grave, saying "For thee, (name of the deceased,) we return this portion of the Earth-Mother's bounty, even as we must return with thee."

Lastly, a pine spring or bough, as the pine is the gateway to the otherworld, is placed on the grave.

Then the participants file sunwise around the grave, back to the path on which they processed toward it, and then each backs away nine steps, as it is traditionally very bad to turn one's back on a new made grave.

Footnotes:

[1]Third Order Druid is one who is ordained in the R.D.N.A. or N.R.D.N.A. systems, need not be the Arch Druid of a Grove. If an ordained Third Order is not available, the funeral ceremony can be done without the section of the charging of the Waters of Life, as only a Third Order can consecrate the Waters of Life.

[2]The putting on of the releasing of earth, is the core and necessary part of the Druid ceremony. It can be done by anyone and is quick and unobtrusive enough to be done most anywhere. If you know that your fellow Druid wants this to being her/his journey to the Other World, it can be done with a pinch or handful or any earth, in a home or hospital where a person has just died, and it should be done before the casket is closed in a modern closed casket funeral, even if it is to be done again at the Druid ceremony itself at the grave as described above. Every Neo-Druid and friends of Druids should know to do this and memorize the one, brief line: "With this soil I do release thy earthly bonds."

Copies of this are being sent to all R.D.N.A. and N.R.D.N.A. Third Order (Ordained) Druids, and it therefore becomes part of the official R.D.N.A. Apocrypha. Reactions, additions, and objections should be sent to the Druid Missal-Any, P.O. Box 142, Orinda, California, 94563

[**2003 Note by Stacey:** Without this as a guide, I was able to put a small bag of food in Emmon's coffin: oats, quinoa, barley, and a "spooky fruit." He especially loved spooky fruits, which were the oddest most alien looking fruit he could find. For this little bag it was a lychee nut in the shell. His executor was the one who put the earth in the casket before it was closed.]

Emmon the Filidh

With Apologies to Elizabeth Barrett's Husband

Go crazy along with me!
The best is yet to see.
The outer reaches of the mind,
For which the mundane brain was made
To work and keep us fed.
Who saith: "A whole I planned."
A Sea of Holes, to other realms
Sanity is but a closet.
Trust in your Gods: see all,
Nor be afraid.

Today, driving down University Avenue Berkeley, I found myself behind a license plate frame proclaiming :

INDEPENDENCE FOR WALES
ANNIBYNIAETH ! *

That's Welsh for "Erin, go bra!"
The Cymric independence movement lives.

A letter received by one of our correspondents.

ILLINOIS~ INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Lewis College of Sciences and Letters
Department of Social Sciences

14 June 1989

Dear Ms. _____,

It was extremely kind of you to think of me, as the senior author of STONEHENGE: THE INDO-EUROPEAN HERITAGE, in sending your package of research material: which I am hereby returning.

The either/or debate between diffusion and independent invention is not worth bothering about, because things are never that simple: one way or the other. Human culture is always a complex interplay between both factors.

As for the people who built Stonehenge, we know who they are, for they are buried all around it. Remember, as pointed out in my book, the stones of Stonehenge are situated in the midst of an immense cemetery.

The people and goods buried in this great cemetery belong to a Heroic Society of the Bronze Age, not unlike that celebrated by Homer in his poetic memories of pre-Classical Greece. (I mean those buried in the "round barrows," postdating the "long barrows" of the Neolithic Age; for the monument we know as Stonehenge was very long in the making, from c. 2900 to 2000 B.C., and with minor adjustments into the Iron Age.)

It is true that the center of Stonehenge was "messed up" by early archaeologists.

"Heel Stone" is the proper name (from the legend of the Devil's heel-print on it) and not "Hele Stone." The latter is a misreading of the former by the legend makers of sun worship. Actually, this is one of a pair of stones that once stood there. The axis running between them to the center of Stonehenge was more or less aligned with the midwinter sun in 2000 B.C., when the main stones of the monument were erected in the Bronze Age. I say "more or less," because the alignment was not astronomical but cosmological. We may thus conclude that people gathered, there on or about 1 November, New Year's day of the later Celts, a holiday Christianized as Halloween in Charlemagne's Europe in c. A.D. 813.

My book was written in a rebuttal to the astronomical theory proposed by Gerald Hawkins in STONEHENGE DECODED. That I converted at least one or his archaeo-astronomical (or astro-archaeological) followers is indicated in the enclosed review.

Sincerely,

Leon Stover, Ph. D., Litt.D.
Professor of Anthropology
IIT Center, Chicago, Illinois 60676 (312) 567-5128

Letter from the Editor:

As editor of the Druid Missal-Any for the last five years I am calling for anyone who would like to share the organizational side of the work for a while. Other health and meditative matters will have to occupy me for a while, and if we are not able to find an editor-pro-tempore we will reduce publication frequency or declare a "time-out" while we re-organize. For those who have contributed articles which have not yet been printed, we can either pass your material on to other interested Neo-Pagan magazines or return it you should contact us at P.O. Box 142, Orinda, Calif. 94563,

"Give me a hidden rill
A house free of noise and distraction
Birds help me to sing
Overhead white clouds for neighbors
Nobody asking the fate of this or that noble family
Just this Hazel tree, now-a-days
Starting up from beside its spring
For how many years?"

—Circa Tenth Century

On a list of the world's shortest books, a travel guide: *La Dolce Vita in Scotland.*

Calendar

Astronomical will occur at 11:39 P.M. on November 6, 1989. It will be celebrated at the Orinda Grove Site on the evening of the 6th, and an all night vigil provided for those who are up for it. (Yes, pun intended.) Other celebrations and a service may also be held at a later time for those unable to attend. Contact the Missal-Any, (415) 254-1387

A Druid Missal-Any Yule 1989 Volume 13 Number 8

Yule Essay: Mistletoe and Sickles

By Emmon Bodfish

Yule, Winter Solstice, mistletoe and white bulls, this is one of the four minor Druid High Days on the Coligny Calendar. Pliny the Elder, in his *Natural History*, gives us our first look at the use of mistletoe at this season of the year. "The time of the rite was the sixth day of the new moon, and preparations were made for a feast and the sacrifice of two white bulls. A Druid in a white robe climbed the tree and cut the branch of mistletoe with a golden sickle, the herb being caught as it fell on a white cloak spread below. The bulls were then sacrificed, and all present ate of them." The gold of the sickle has been prolifically debated by scholars ever since. (The Gods find harmless for idle hands?) Real gold is too soft to hold a cutting edge and slice through the tough, woody stem of the mistletoe. Polished bronze is a more likely candidate, but the bronze may also have been gilded. Elsewhere Pliny writes of the necessity of gathering the mistletoe left-handed after first fasting (and purifying oneself.) He also writes of the Celts plucking Selago without use of iron knifes or tools, barefoot and with the right hand through the left sleeve of a white tunic, but these were private rites, not public ceremonies, The golden nature of the sickle may simply have referred to the taboo on the use of iron implements in gathering the sacred plant.

Whatever the metal was then R.D.N.A. Druids now use bronze sickles, cast for us years ago by a member who at that time had access to metal casting equipment as well as the necessary skill. Does anyone out there know how to cast bronze? Have the set up? For, alas, we have no more sickles for new Third Order (Ordained) Druids.

This feast should be celebrated with feasting among friends and relatives, all night bonefires to welcome back the Sun, and much singing and merriment. The exact time of the turning of the Sun God will be, according to my almanac, 1:15 P.M. on December 21, 1989. That's a Thursday, a work day for most of us. If you can't do anything else to celebrate it, surreptitiously light a match. Or, rank and job security permitting, you could jump up and shout "Saoul" (shaou-el), that ought to wake the office up.

Food

One of our readers recommends this brand of Hazelnut Paté which includes little bits of Pagan religious education on its label. It is even Organic! Use it as an alternative to "Greasey-Death" Brand peanut butter with phosphates and TSP (shelf life 1 million years.) It can be ordered from Real Food Company, 2140 Polk Street San Francisco, Calif. 94109. Or, if they don't respond to you with any joy, you can order through us, but then you'll have to pay for the postage and insurance. (The words under the wrinkle on the label are "wisdom to.")

I eat it on unleavened, whole wheat bread with a jelly made from local berries by one of my neighbors: One can now have a thoroughly Druidic nutbutter and jelly sandwich. Mad Sweeney's High Day treats.

A Wicca friend of mine has opined that I should share with a larger audience some of my dear little old Pagan Mama's* successful childcare techniques.

Leftover food on the child's plate:

Instead of stuffing oneself in honor of "starving children in Europe," and initiating future fat, she told me to take it outside and give it to "the birds and wild animals; they lead very hard lives out there." This teaches sharing, good character, and ecology. It helps to live in the country, but there stray cats, dogs and sparrows who frequent city parks and vacant lots. "But," objects one member, "the food may not be good for wild animals!" True, uncooked rice or wheat can harm birds, but I'm talking about leftovers. And if you're feeding kids food you wouldn't give to a stray dog, shame on you.

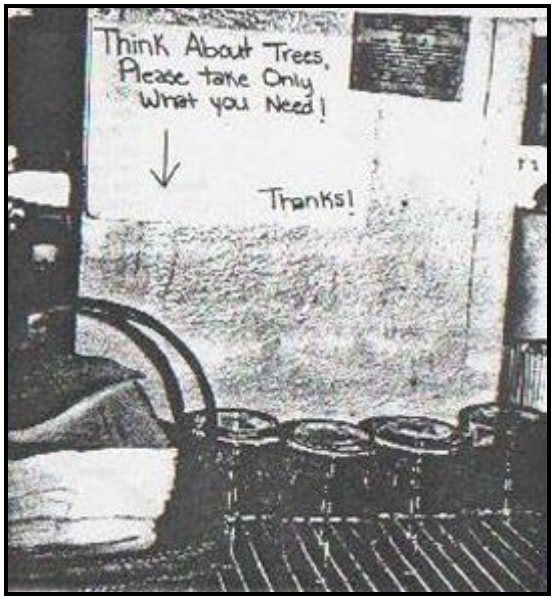
*She dropped out of the Unitarian Church in her teens, declaring herself a pantheist and free spirit. It took a lot of courage to do that in those days.

Business Management and Group Dynamics Dept.

By Wess Roberts, Ph.D., Warner Books, New York, 1987, $l6.95.

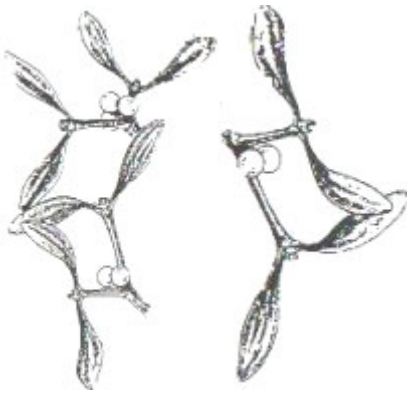
Druid Guilt Department

(and this restaurant wasn't even Druidic!)



Mistletoe

This is from a very good medicinal Herbal, (Manual of herbs,) titled *The Spotter's Guide to Healing Plants*, by Dr. Jaroslav Kresanek, originally from the Slovart Publishers, Bratislava, Czechoslovakia. It is available from Moe's Books, 2476 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, Calif. 94704.



MISTLETOE
(+) *Viscum album*
Loranthaeae
(+) Herba Visci albi—herbage

20-50cm (8-20cm)—++
Flowers: March-April
Caution

Botanical Description
Woody evergreen, semi-parasitic on the branches of trees. Round stems; coriaceous leaves, elongatedly, ovate, obtuse. Inconspicuous flowers forming terminal heads in the leaf axils.

Habitat
Parasitic plant growing on both deciduous and coniferous trees throughout Europe. American mistletoe is a different plant, *Phoradendron flavescens*.

Collection
The young tops of the leafy branches can be collected the whole year round.

Drying
Dry by artificial heat (the only possible method in winter—maximum 40° C; 104°F).

Cultivation
Practically impossible. The seeds are scattered by birds.

Active Constituents
Mainly peptides, which also represent the toxic principle of Mistletoe, viscotoxin (from which amino acids are obtained by hydrolysis). Others are choline acetylcholine, triterpenoids, saponins. flavones, sugars pigments and mucilage (sometimes called viscin).

Efficacy
Metabolicum. hypotensivum, antirythmic, antiscleroticum.

Use
Water and alcohol extracts from Mistletoe have a mainly metabolizing effect; they lower the blood pressure, are beneficial for arteriosclerosis and regulate the beating of the heart. They can be used as an adjuvant for bleeding and excessive menstrual flow. The drug inhibits malignant growths but as it is very toxic, its therapeutic use is limited. The therapeutic dose is very near to the toxic dose.

Dosage
The usual dosage for an infusion is ½-1 teaspoonful to 1–1 ½ glasses of water (macerate 10 minutes). Drink ¼ glass, 2-3 times a day. Mistletoe is often an ingredient in antisclerotic and cardiac herbal teas.

Warning
Do not confuse Mistletoe with the similar deciduous species, *Loranthus europaeus* or *Phoradenciron flavescens*.

Editor's Note:
Caution! Mistletoe, like all strong medicines, can be quite toxic in excessive dose! We are not recommending it. We merely review here the work of Dr. Kesanek in a popular European herbal manual to show that the "Golden bough" herb is still in use in popular medicine on its native continent.

Scientific Proof at Last!

Offensive Opinions Department

(Some people like it, some people hate it. It grew out of a discussion of Cernunnos, and last Fall's Missal-Any...)

T: "Well, I'll concede on the matter of Cernunnos.(being Celtic) but I still think He is connected with Val Camonica and paleolithic hunting magic."

E: "I agree; I'm not fighting you on that. In fact I think that Jim Duran DOES connect Him, as Cernunnos, with the pre-Bronze Age horned gods like at Val Camonica, and before that with the hunter's rock paintings from the Stone Age, and with the Siberian Reindeer Shamans, too."

T: "They were still going in the 1920s and '30s. In Mircae Elaide's book *Archaic Techniques of Esctasy* he goes into that."

E: "Have you got Jim's tape of his seminar "The Horned God of Europe?"

T: Yeh, I've got that one. It's on there."

E: "He sees all of Northern Europe and Western Siberia as one Paleolithic cultural area: similar myths, concepts, and graphic motifs, similar mental pictures. They've all got the Reindeer Shaman Themes: the shaman who leaves his body and travels to the Reindeer Mother, the Mother of Herds, the Earth-prosperity Dispensing Deity, and brings back the souls of reindeer or some other prey animals, and scatters them in the forest to increase the deer, whom the hunters can then go out and harvest. That's the general idea of the myth, anyway. And it's found all across Central Siberia and Northern Europe to Cornwall and Ireland. He's one of the most persistent archetypes, the Flying Shaman who brings back food and prosperity, "if we keep the taboos and are good." Connected to Pluto, maybe, the Underworld deity who also sends prosperity."

T: "I think fauns, Pan, Satyrs, Zandharva types are also related to Cernunnos, and the reindeer deities. I think the original Indo-Europeans, the Kurgan people, for example, were slightly more agricultural than the Finn-Ugric, Ural Altaic Siberian types. They were slightly less nomadic, as they moved into more fertile lands where they settled down."

E: "But He's still food and fertility oriented."

T: "Indo-European third function obedience, resourcefulness, wealth, fertility, fecundity, loyalty."

E: "And according to Kieswetter, the Flying Shaman is still with us, under the pseudonym of an obscure Cornish saint, who probably never existed. We call him 'Santa Claus,' he'll get a lot of press for the next few weeks."

T: "The saint you mean is probably St. Cornely, who I've read in lot of places has something to do with Cernunnos."

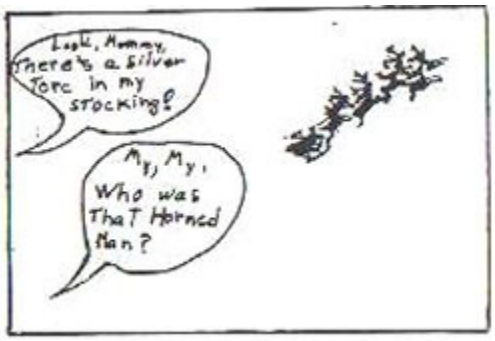
E: "Have you seen the 19th century painting of him in Murray's book, the one where he still has little horns on his forehead?"

T: "That's funny, Santa having a Reindeer-Cult connection."

E: "Count 'em: He lives at the North Pole and has flying reindeer; the Shamans in Siberia fly 'through the Pole Star' on their ecstatic journey. Santa Claus brings us presents from there, a 'right merry old elf;' the Shaman brings back reindeer souls, hence food and feasting. Santa has elves, i.e. familiar spirits, that work for him; so do Shamans. The special red coat and pointy cap Santa wears, his having a special outfit, riding a flying deer or a flying horse, it all sounds right out of Eliade. Does this mean that all those department store Santa Clauses are doing a 'god-assumption' ritual?"'

T: "Could be. But Christmas trees are Nordic-Druidic, the Indo-European strata."

E: "But I agree with you that Cernunnos, or really the Horned God, Cernunnos is just one instance of Him, is pre-Indo-European, or maybe Proto-Indo-European, too. The Indo-Europeans may have brought Him with them from their Caucus homeland. So this year let's get ourselves red suits and participate in this 10,000 year old religious ritual: eat 'til you drop."



And in the spring, the public schools will hold a "May Pole dance." Encourage 'em, Lords, they know not what they do!

Bay Area Report: The Antler Dance.

Marishia Malone(left) and Tamara Dickson, both 4, danced to a Christmas jingle and wore foam reindeer antlers while watching the ninth annual Santa parade in Oakland yesterday. Thousands of spectators lined Broadway from 11th Street to Jack London Square to watch the hour-long parade of marching bands, floats, horses and Santa riding a stagecoach.

Calendar

Astronomical Solstice will occur at 1:15 P.M. Pacific Standard time, on Dec 21, 1989. Time and place of Services for the Orinda Grovesite group will be arranged.

Pumpkin & Xmas Tree Farm for sale, 40 acres, Coastal Peninsula loc. $375,000. $75,000 dwn, owner will fin. 941-3960.

"To Display Our Own Magic"

Druidical druthers, they cave be so clean
Your wizard works hard to not ever be seen
Moving the novels to remove their dust
And wiping the shelves more free of their lust
We cudgel our brain
Till his answers lie bare
In the drolleries chapter
That describes why we care.

"Dearest Vivian"

Lady of the Lake she walks before me
Controlling each image I happen to see
Vibrant her wish that the magic may spin
Our minds further out and deep within
Her veil and her dress both flow to command
That the book that she holds
All must understand
Pages with spells and others with prayers
Or so they're defined
By our mind's many layers.

Good spells,

Fletch Dewly

Sheila Na Gig Advertisement

Sheila na Gig still has some of these albums from their second pressing. They are $10.95 plus postage. Contact us or write direct to Calleach Records, 85 Calle de Quein Sabe, Carmel Valley California 93926. They are all out of the cassette tapes. (So, buy the record and put it on tape.)

Here is a sample of the contents:

(2) Fenian Chant, Charm Song against Hail, Rowing Song

This fragment of a Fenian chant was spliced together by Jim from two sources. The text is from the (Duanaire Finn) the Poem Book of Finn, and the tune (Duan nan Ceardaich) an Ossianic chant sung by Mrs. Archie MacDonald (Song and Pipes of the Hebrides) Folkways Records Fe 4430. The fact that an old literary source can be reunited with a modern oral one speaks well for the strength of the tradition. The antiquity of this type of sung epic poetry is so well known that discussion is virtually unnecessary, but suffice it to say, this is the most archaic piece that we perform. Clach Mhin Mheallain (Charm Song against Hail) is a spell for good weather, of a type once common in Celtic society. As sung by Colum Johnston of Barra, on (Scotland) Columbia records FE 4946.

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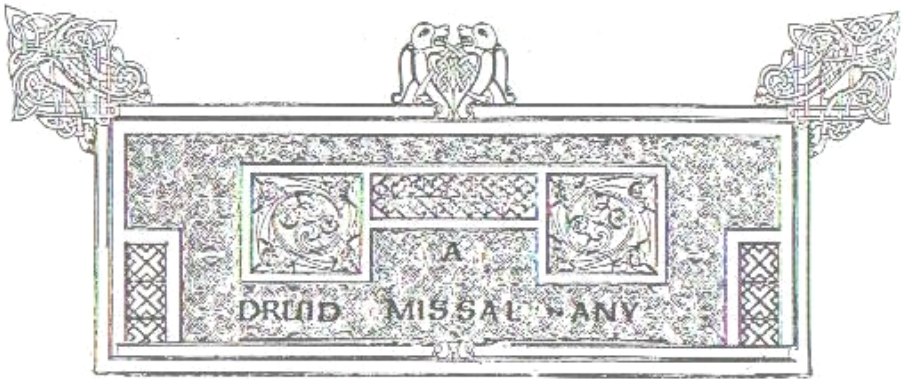
Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION TWO



A Druid Missal-Any
Volume Fourteen
1990 c.e.

Drynemetum Press

A Druid Missal-Any Oimelc 1990 Volume 14 Number 1

Oimelc Essay: Triumph of Light

By Emmon Bodfish

Oimelc is one of the major high days of the Druid calendar. For the Celts, a pastoral people, this holiday marks the birth of the first lambs and the lactation of the ewes. Sheep's milk was an important food in those times, as it was among many herding peoples into this century. The calves would not be born until late April or May.

Oimelc marks the end of "dark January," as it is called by the Gaels. The days are noticeably longer now, and we are past the nadir of the year. The light and life invoked on Yule Solstice are indeed returning.

This festival is presided over by Bride (Bridgit, Breedes) as Lugh presided over Lughnasadh at the opposite point on the Celtic Wheel of the Year. Bride and Lugh are poles, complementary figures, who balance each other across the calendar in another of the Druidic systems of checks and balances. The Druids found good in the balance between opposite poles of a quality, light and dark, summer and winter, woman and man, producing and harvesting. Though a patrilineal society, the Celtic world was less male dominated than our own has been, and certainly less patriarchal than the Middle East or the Mediterranean societies of the time, or than the Christian society that replaced it.*

In this the Indo-European cultures and many of those of the Far East contrasted with the Mid-Eastern group of religions from which Christianity and its offshoots developed. There good was defined as the final and total victory of one pole of a quality over the other. Thus it's light triumphing over darkness, summer over winter, man against Nature. They have partly succeeded; in the middle of the Arabian desert, it is always sunny. Summer has triumphed. The deserts are spreading.

*See Professor Green on the status of Celtic women in *The Gods of Celts,* and Jean Markale's work *Women of the Celts*. Both can be gotten at remaindered price from Publishers' Central Bureau.

News of the Groves

One of our subscribers in Florida, Betty F., wishes to announce the birth of her grand-son. She sent us the modern "Mad Sweeney" picture and information two issues ago, and promises to send more.

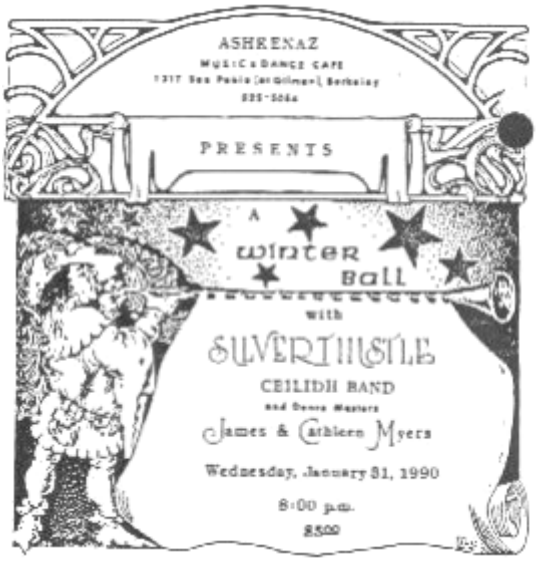
Joan Carruth, ArchDruidess, retired, has a new nephew, Ash, which he has been helping to raise. She plans to get back into active involvement in the Pagan community soon, perhaps even with the coming of the spring.

We received a letter from Italy announcing the publication of a new Neo-Pagan periodical, "Sabazio." It is in celebration of "The Religion of Life," as they put it. It is in Italian but with an English summary. It is four pages, well put together. If you speak Italian, or would like to learn, it looks like a good deal. Price was not mentioned.

Mensile Della Vera Religione
V. Luigi Einaudi 33
00040 Frattocchie (Rome), Italy
Tel. @ fax: 06/935 7583
Direttone Responsabile:
Massimo Consoli

"Forever Forests," will be holding their annual tree planting on February 24, 1990 outside of Laytonville. Contact them at Box *1542,* Ukiah, Calif. 95482. (Forever Forests is a very well organized Neo-Pagan conservationist group, founded by Gwyddion Pendergest, he of musical fame, in the '70s.

A new, at least to us, Druidic god: Neit. He is the consort or the war goddess Neimainn. He is not a true immortal, as many consorts were not, and he died at the Second Battle of Mag Turidh. The land was divided between his sons. In some quarters he is reputed to be the grandfather of Balor. Is "Nicht!" the English anger expression cognate with Neit the husband of the war goddess? No, it's probably just the onomatopoeia. The trouble with cognates is that when you get into this research, you start seeing them everywhere.



Dance steps will be taught from 8:00 til 9:30 pm.
Silverthistle will play from 9:30 til 12:30 am
Dances will include: Congress et Vienne, Sir Roger de Coverly, Flowers of Edinburgh, Golden Slippers, Le Chinche, Vels Jete & Much More!
Food, soft drinks, beer & wine for sale.
Minors welcome.

White Oak Bark Medicine

By Nonie Gienger
(Re-printed by permission of the author and Star Route Journal)

That first year after he was born, we were still living in a tent, right up until November, when a huge winter storm came along and just about blew us away. Literally. Don Edwards came along and rescued us. He had us go over and spend a couple of days with him, riding out the storm. Then, when the storm subsided, we went back and a wandering friend came through, fortunately. He and Richard built a little 7' by 10' cabin in five days. So then we had a floor and a roof and a tarpaper and plastic cabin.

There was one little window in the front and I would sit in front of it, nursing my baby and looking out this one window.

So, that first winter, we had a pattern established where Richard would go to town and work several days for cash and I would stay home and take care of the baby and cook and wash and haul water and get firewood. That was our way of life. Very simple. I'd do small watercolors whenever I'd get the chance.

When Richard would come back from town and be home, and we weren't working on the garden or the house, we would go down to the ocean for several days and gather seaweed and nettles, plantain and dandelions, berries and wild apples, too. We didn't go and buy greens; we ate wild greens. We had money for rice and beans and oil; things like that. But we were even grinding all our own flour to make bread. I was a pioneer housewife and we were living off very little money. But it felt good because I knew where everything came from. Everything was accounted for. We weren't living beyond our means or society's means or the earth's means. I always felt that I had a kinship with Third World women. Actually, I had it so much better than any of those women. Relative to a lot of people in this area, I had kind of a rugged life. But I'd read every so often about a woman walking six miles carrying water on her head for her family, and I'd think, well, gee, I only have to walk one-eighth of a mile. I realized I had it pretty good.

But one thing that was special and is still really special to me, even with the changes in my life and they haven't been that immense since I still grind flour and make bread, but one thing that was special to me was feeling that I had an understanding of other women in the Third World. I wasn't out of touch. So when I read about El Salvador or the infant mortality rate there, I felt I could understand what they felt, and very directly, since we were living on parallel lines. It was a sound life, but there was a certain precariousness to it, too. You had to keep going and you had to keep working to keep alive. You couldn't just fall back.

Right before my second child was born, we developed dysentery. It showed up first in my son. He was two and a half years old, so he would squat outside rather than walk out to the crapper. You know how little kids will get lazy sometimes. One day I found him outside crying and his intestine was hanging out. I didn't know what had happened. I was horrified. I called Richard and we didn't have a vehicle at that time so Richard ran; carrying him in his arms, over to our neighbor's house to have him taken to the doctor.

It turned out he had dysentery. I was six months pregnant with my second child. Dysentery is the biggest killer of Third World babies.

Mary: There was the precariousness.

Nonie: Right. We all went to the doctor to be tested and we all had it. He asked us if we'd been to Mexico recently and we said no. He said he couldn't understand why we had it. We didn't understand either.

Mary: You hadn't had any symptoms?

Nonie: Well, yes, I did, but I was attributing it to being pregnant. But dysentery is one of those funny kind of things. You don't always just have diarrhea You might have abdominal cramps and real irregular movements, but not always diarrhea. It's a bacterial sickness.

But anyway, the doctor told me that there was no medicine that I could take. The only medicine they had for it caused birth defects, so I couldn't take it. He could give it to Richard and to our son, but not to me. He said I would just have to be sick until after I'd had the baby and then I could have the medicine, but I wouldn't be able to nurse my baby.

I was just really blown away. I thought, oh my god, for three more months I'm going to be this sick! By the time I have my baby I'm going to be weak, the bacteria will be rampant and it's the biggest killer of babies in the Third World. It was really frightening, life and death. So, I'd used herbs before for different things and I went home and looked in *Back To Eden*. I found the herbal remedy there and Richard went up to the Perry Meadow Road area and got white oak bark. He brought it back and we used it for colonics and cleaned ourselves out. We had a lot of blood; we were really sick and used Golden Seal. Then we went back and did some more tests and the doctor told us we had cleaned it up ourselves. We saved our own lives and the coming baby. I felt really good about that, and I also realized that babies don't have to die of dysentery. Modern medicine does not provide for pregnant women in the Third World who have this. Here this is, an easily remedied illness, but because modern medicine doesn't use it, babies are dying of it and mothers who are pregnant are suffering from it right now.

But my second child was born and we got running water at that point. It turned out that the cause was in our water. Animals were getting in our water and dying. That was what caused it, but we didn't know enough to look at our own water. We were starting so much from scratch that we were ignorant.

Mary: There were a lot of things that we didn't understand when we first moved to the country.

Nonie: Well, we had made this break with the past generation, so we didn't have this knowledge being passed on to us. We had to learn it all over gain.

Then when my daughter was born, we got running water and when she was six years old, we got a running vehicle again. We had been hitchhiking everything back and forth. That can get pretty rough, especially a mother with kids. Laundry, food and whatnot.

Mary: Did you still feel strong?

Nonie: I still felt strong, but by the time we got a truck, I was ready for a truck. I wanted a truck. I had two children and it was getting harder. And the dysentery had taken a toll. Those things all make you tired and you need certain comforts.

The Celtic Tradition

Caitlin Mathews, Element Books Ltd. Unit 25, Longmead, Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 8BR, U.K.

A well researched book in an easy, conversational style which is a lift after the dense scholarly tone of most of the material written on the topic. Here is a seasonal excerpt.

There are fewer myths and stories about the feast of Oimelc. There is an obscure tradition which relates the origins of the feast of Samhain which has a direct bearing on our understanding of Oimelc. It comes in 'The Book of Lismore' and purports to explain why Samhain is also called the Feast of All Saints. The boys of Rome, says the story, traditionally played a game every year on this day. It was a board game with the figure of a hag at one end and the figure of a maiden at the other. The hag let loose a dragon against her opponent, while the maiden let loose a lamb. The lamb overcame the dragon. Then the hag sent a lion against the maiden, who caused a shower of hail which defeated it. Pope Boniface asked why the boys played this game and who had taught them. They replied that the Sibyl taught them, in token of Christ's combat with the devil. The pope then forbade the game, since Christ's coming was a historical fact.[72]

The explanation of this game might divert us from the real meaning. The hag is the Cailleach who stands at the edge of the season of Winter. Opposing her, at the other end, is the maiden, represented by Brigit. It is Brigit whose feast of Oimelc marks the failing of winter's strength, at which time lambs are born. The Cailleach is traditionally associated with rough weather, but here is Brigit who sends rain. The transition of one season into another aptly reflected in the rnythos of Cailleach and Brigit. Throughout Celtic myth, cailleachs are transformed into beautiful maidens at crucial periods of transition. We have already seen how important this myth is to Celtic kingship rites (Chapter 3) with the transformation of the Goddess of Sovereignty. The Cailleach equally puts off her hideous appearance and transforms herself into the maiden aspect of Brigit once more at the festival of Oimelc.

The feast of Beltain may once have had stories about the Celtic deity, Belenos, attached to it, but these have not survived. Beltain contains the word teine or 'fire' within it and this is one of the main features of the ritual practiced on this day. Keating records only that 'they used to offer sacrifice to the chief god they adored, who was called Beil.'[62] What does remain are the evidences of myth and folklore. The Gaelic tradition of going out on Easter Sunday or upon Whit Sunday to see the sun dancing may well have derived from the feast of Beltain, when, as today on May-morning, people rise early to fetch in the May at dawn.

Announcement

"A Druid Missal-Any" will now be published four times a year instead of eight. All current subscriptions will be extended to twice their current length.

The Boot Legged Concert

Some time in the first or second or such centuries C.E., Rorey Mor, a filidh, had become a woods-hermit in the tradition of Mad Sweeney or Finn the Elder, and he no longer played the harp or sang in the great courts. He had been reputed to be the best harper in the provinces of Connaught and Munster, and the local chieftain of the area to which he had retired determined to get him to play for his court. No entreaties or bribes availed, so the chief and some of his Druids hatched a plan. They sent an invitation to Rorey saying that Conal, the then most acclaimed harper in Erin, was coming to play for the chieftain, and asking Rorey, since he no longer played, to join them in listening to the great bard. The chieftain's Druids knew that Rorey did not attend feasts any more, but they also surmised that he would be curious about what his old rival was composing and would not refuse to come and listen. They were right.

Rorey was shown into the hall where a fine fire was lazing and on the table was a harp of willow wood of the finest crafting, which Rorey assumed to be Conal's. Beside it stood a silver flagon of wine and the benches all around were covered with white fleeces. Rorey was left alone. He waited and waited, but no harper or festive crowd arrived. Meanwhile, the chieftain and his court had hidden themselves behind a wicker partition that curtained off the far end of the hall.

"I'll just see what sort of harp strings the great bard has gotten himself now," thought Rorey, and picked up the harp and brushed his fingers over the strings. What he heard was wonderful. He dipped a finger into the wine and tasted a drop. It was marvelous. (Wine in those days was an import from Roman traders, exotic and used only rarely.) He sipped the wine and his old songs came flooding back to him. He began to play and was soon lost in the calling of his art. The chieftain and his court had never heard such wonderful sounds. All listened on and on, entranced, until, at an interval in his playing, Rorey tipped the flagon to his lips and—nothing—! No more wine came out.

"Aye me! What a mischief I have done! I have drunk up all of the bard's wine!"

They heard him put down the harp. They heard the window shutter open. Before the chief or any of his men could leap up and push aside the partition, Rorey had bounded out of the window and across the court yard and off toward his favored woods.

"Take my two best horses and fetch him back at once!" the chieftain shouted. But it was too late. The retainer searched and searched but he couldn't find the hermit and had to return alone, wet with the morning dew.

This pair of bronze jugs with inlaid red enamel and coral, found before the last war in a burial mound at Basse-Yutz, Moselle, is without doubt the most sumptuous Celtic drinking service so far discovered. Luxury pieces like this would be used at banquets organized by important figures and would accompany them to the Other World; they indicate the importance of such gatherings in the social life of the ancient Celts. It is almost certain that the rich ornamentation of these exceptional pieces has a religious significance, but the actual meanings of the different elements and their inter-relationship remain hypothetical. The upper part of the handle represents a carnivorous animal with fierce fangs, perhaps a dog or a wolf, in hot pursuit of some small waterfowl on the spout—waterfowl were linked with sun worship in the Bronze Age. Two other crouching carnivores watch the bird, obviously ready to join the chase. The lower join of the handle is in the shape of a particular type of head, probably representing one of the great Celtic gods (see illustration page 102). These jugs show a strong Etrusco-Italic influence and were no doubt executed in the first half of the fourth century B.C.

Calendar

Astronomical Oimelc will occur at 9:08 P.M. Pacific Standard Time on February 3, 1990. The sun will be half way between Winter Solstice and Spring Equinox.

One angry logger calls it…

Strip Mining the Forest

Clear cutting 2,000-year old trees,

Driving millions of forest creatures from their homes—a death sentence for most of them,

Cutting an entire river valley—over 100 square miles—leaving only the youngest trees,

Exporting whole forests of unprocessed logs—and exporting with them jobs that local lumber mill workers depend on,

Intensifying the greenhouse effect—why point to the Amazon rain forest when we are destroying the forests right here in California?

That's why we wrote the…

Forest & Wildlife Protection Initiative

The forest cleans the air, moderates the weather, filters and stores the water, serves as a nursery for the salmon, and restores and refreshes the spirits of its many visitors, as well as providing shelter for wildlife and products for building our houses—but *the forest cannot speak for itself.*

Which will be history—clear cutting, or the ancient forest? To put the initiative on the ballot, we need your money, and a lot of help. With your support, we can speak for the forest, strong and clear.

California Election November 1990

____ YES! I support your efforts, and I've enclosed my donation.

___ *$25* ___ $ 50.0 ___$100
___ $10 ___ $5000 ___ $

____ YES, I will help collect signatures. Please contact me.

Contributions are not tax deductible.

name: _____
address: _____zip:_____
phone: ( ) _____

Forests Forever
106 West Standley
Ukiah, California 95482
TEL: 707/ 462-2370 FAX: 707/ 462-4922

Postmarked 5 Feb 1990

A Druid Missal-Any Beltane 1990 Volume 14 Number 2

Beltane Essay: Presiding over the Festival

By Emmon Bodfish

eltaine, one of the greatest, and, now-a-days, one of the best known of the old Celtic High Days. It marks the beginning of Samhradh, summer, the "Season of Life." In old Pagan times, it signaled the moving of the herds up to summer pasture in the mountains and the beginning of the new cycle. Great fires were built to welcome back the Sun, and the cattle were driven through the flames for purification before starting on their way to the high meadows. The Druid caste, priests, priestesses, ovates and bards, presided over these rites at which all the clans gathered together at such ritual sites as Tara, in Ireland, and Carnutes in France. Though a Good Day, Beltane was also considered a tricky one, and great care had to be taken that there were no errors or mishaps that day. The High King, in Ireland, remained indoors, surrounded by his advisors and magically guarded by his Druids. The dancing and festivities were carried out by the farming and craftsmen castes. Previous to Beltane Eve, all quarrels been settled, and justice meted out. This was another Druid function, that of magistrate, with a specialized sub-group of the caste acting as judges. A different sub-group of Druids presided over the sacrifices offered to Belenos, the Sun, and still another specialized group of the Druid caste, often women, Druidesses, actually offered the sacrifices, and dispatched the offered animals. The Ovate sub-group then read the will of the Deities by whether and how the sacrifices were accepted in the fires,

For the RD.N.A. Druids today, Beltaine also marks the Season of Life. Though we have no White Bulls nor mares to offer, (animals sacrifice was forbidden by the Reform which made us R.D.N.A. in 1966 (sic)) there will be whiskey in the Chalice and tree food in the Tree Chalice, offerings of flowers, and the Third Order Druids will exchange their white ribbons of winter for red ones of the summer season. High Kings and politicians will be left indoors, and a merry time will be had by all.

News of the Groves

One of our members who works on an organic apple ranch in one the northern counties of California, has donated four young apple trees. Another Second Order member has given three baby Birch trees, gotten from the P.G.& E. booth at the Earth Day carnival in Berkeley. For providing them, P.G.& E. gets two minutes off the 474 million years they owe for what they've done to the Earth, but our Second Order Druid is now definitely several waves closer to Apple Isle. Another member brought tumbled gem stones to bedeck the altar and another who travels the country over, and has no constant address, donated return address stickers and the impetus for getting the new stationery and printed envelopes.

The events of the Beltane ceremony itself and its sacrifices and offerings will be given in the Lughnasadha-Solstice Issue.

Making Your Religion Work for You

(Helpful Hint #321)

If you are desperately poor, and can't afford any luxuries at all, call it asceticism, and at least get religious points for it.

Bob Winston in Pleasant Valley teaches lost wax casting, BRONZE, GOLD, SILVER! $160 + metal for a six weeks course (415) 947-3980

Before each of the major and minor High Days, eight of them, you should wash your robe. You can of course wash it more often than this, and that is good. But washing once before each Holiday is the minimum. You should wash it by hand, if you have strength, and contemplate the High Day, and the past time between it and the last High Day. What have you been doing? Meditate as you lean over the bath tub, kitchen sink, laundramat sink, or whatever substitutes for the rocks by the river. Of course a sacred river, such as the Boyne, would be the best, but these are largely inaccessible to our members.

Calendar

Beltaine, the beginning of the Season of Life, when the sun is half way between Equinox and Solstice, will fall this year on May *5,* 1990, at 10:30 Pacific Stellar Time, 11:30 A.M. Daylight. The Summer Solstice, June 21, 1990, will occur when the Sun reaches its most Northernly point, and the Earth its greatest tilt at 8:25 A.M. Pacific Daylight time. This being close to noon this year, this should be a lucky and well portending Solstice.

Answers

Got a question that's bothering you or just one that you always wanted the answer to?

Pick out a tree you like, in your immediate neighborhood; I'd prefer an oak. Visit it at approximately the same time every day. The time of the Sunset Salutation would be good.* Touch the tree; I'd recommend with your right hand, while touch, ask your question. Wait thirty seconds or so. Break contact. Go about your business. This is a very ancient method, and it works.

*See "The Four Salutations of the Day" in the Oimelc Issue, 1989, or write us.

If you are having trouble getting into a meditative state, this may help. Zygon, an alternative consciousness research group, has a new "Ultra-Meditation" tape that many claim *will* put your mind in the proper mode, "neuro-entrain" it there. It sounds a lot like Tibetan music, or old Celtic harp and staff-bells. Their old stand-by, the Brain Supercharger tape, works well for centering, and sounds, as one of our members put it, "like being yelled at by angels." I'd prefer the more Druidic phrase, "being beaten into line by Brownies." Admittedly it's high-tech, and a bit forceful, but many have found it helpful. Their "Cetacean Link" whale song tape is also interesting. Write for free information:

Zygon International
325 E. Hillcrest Dr. Suite 203
Thousand Oaks, California 91360
(805) 379-1611

Dagda, who some scholars call the father-figure of the Celtic pantheon, was the patron of the harp. He had a living harp of oak. On it He could play, in addition to Bardic music, three enchanted strains; one that makes its hearers joyous, one that makes them weep, and one makes them sleep. Using music to change one's mode of consciousness has a long tradition in Druidism. Angus Mac Og, the young love God, son of Dagda, also had a harp, but of gold. Its strain was so sweet that any who heard it could not help but follow it. Is this a cognate of the European "Pied Piper" myths? Or just of the nature of love? Modern science finds that music affects a different part of the brain than do speech or the written word.

Help out the Missal-Any. You can draw and color and cut out and paste and stamp and sort. Kindergarten graduates preferred. Contact Emmon:

"The Missal-Any"
616 Miner Road
Orinda, CA 94563.

Press Release

For Publication

Pagan/Occult/Witchcraft Special Interest Group of Mensa: What It Is and What It Does

by Valerie Voigt, National Coordinator, POWSIG

Pagan/Occult/Witchcraft Special Interest Group of Mensa is an international network of persons interested in Nature religions, Witchcraft, magic, and related topics. It was founded in the early or middle '70s, and has been continuously active ever since. POWSIG invites contact and networking from both groups and solitaries, and requests that self-addressed, stamped envelopes be enclosed for quick reply.

What POWSIG Is

POWSIG has three primary purposes, as defined by its members in their questionnaire answers: to disseminate accurate information about Paganism and related topics, both to its own members and to the general public; to publish a newsletter to provide a means of communication and education among its members; and to foster contact and fellowship among its members arid within the worldwide Pagan community.

The SIG's interests include just about anything related to Nature reverence or worldwide mystery religions or magic ancient or modern, including, but not limited to: Witchcraft; magic (abstract and operative: theurgy, thaumaturgy, alchemy); Druidism; the Qabalah (both Hebrew and Hermetic); shamanism (Korean, Amerind, NeoPagan, etc.); Afro-diasporica (Santeria, Candomblé, Voudoun, etc.); Indo-European and non-Indo-European folklore and traditions; Taoism; Buddhism; Hinduism; philosophy; theology; ecology; family life and childrearing.

The SIG publishes a well-known newsletter, *Pagana,* and engages in extensive educational and networking activity. The SIG furnishes speakers to local and national organizations, provides consultation to law enforcement and other public officials, and supplies accurate information and expert consultation to the media. Additional activities such as contact referrals, bulletins, and gatherings and other events offer many opportunities for members to be active in their local and national communities.

What POWSIG Does

For its members, POWSIG is a vehicle for getting or staying in touch with the Pagan community, for contact with SIG members and other interested persons in many geographic and topical areas, and for organizing activities and making things happen. It accomplishes much of this through information and referrals. SIG members in various parts of the world have, through or with the aid of the SIG, established Pagan information lines and hotlines; established covens, groves, and open Circles; worked with law enforcement; and done Pagan PR work in their local communities. Some have formed intertraditional Pagan community organizations in their towns, and many have organized round-robin forums, workshops, classes, or community-service groups.

Members help the SIG and its goals by writing for the newsletter; doing research; helping their Regional Coordinator or other officers with organizing or paperwork; keeping their Regional Coordinators posted about events and issues of interest to SIG members; organizing events of their own; and by being active in their local communities.

The SIG's newsletter, *Pagana,* features articles, news, art, reviews, announcements, letters, contacts, resources, and more. Published about six times a year since 1980, it has both a regular letters column and a forum section for debate. Regular subscriptions to *Pagana* are available only to members, although sample copies are available to non-members.

Reviews and Other Groups Old and New

Planet Drum Foundation

Founded by Peter Berg

This is the principal and oldest organization devoted to the bioregional concept, developed by Peter Berg and Raymond Dassman. Its aim is "to provide a grassroots approach to ecology that emphasizes sustainability, community self-determination and regional self-reliance." A *bioregion* is an area of coherent plant and animal communities, often defined by a watershed. Planet Drum puts out a bi-annual newspaper, *Raise the Stakes*, which present descriptions of bioregional activities from around the world, and essays on topics such as the greening of cities, watersheds, borders, and the like. They have also published "A Bioregional Anthology of Northern California," under the title *Reinhabiting a Separate Country*. The concept of *re-inhabitation* is central to the bioregional movement: it means "learning to live-in-place in an area that has been disrupted and injured through past exploitation." The bioregional concept is now being adopted, along with deep ecology, by most of the Green political groups, in this country and abroad.

Planet Drum Foundation
P.O. Box 31251,
San Francisco, CA 94131

The Order of Bards Ovates and Druids

260 Kew Road, Richmond, Surrey, TW93EG
Telephone: 01-7222966

An Druid Uileach Braithreachas

Green Earth Foundation is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt organization. Contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law. Annual membership is $25.00; student and low income $15 (Canada $30, Foreign $35). The Green Earth Observer contains brief articles and poetry related to GAIA consciousness, book and periodical reviews, and information about ecological and environmental organizations. Members will also be able to purchase books, tapes and other educational materials through the **Green Earth Foundation.**

Name_____

_
Address_____

_
City_____State_____Zip_____

I want to support and contribute to the research and educational objectives of the Green Earth Foundation. I enclose my membership fee of $_____ which entitles me to four issues of the newsletter, the **Green Earth Observer**.

I enclose a $_____ additional tax-deductible contribution to further the purposes and objectives of the **Green Earth Foundation**.
Funds must be in U.S. $; from foreign countries—international money orders.

Please send to: Green Earth Foundation, P.O. Box 1119, Fairfax, CA 94930.

Printed on 100% recycled paper.

Druidism = No incense enlightenment.

Postmarked April 30, 1990.

A Druid Missal-Any Lughnasadh 1990 Volume 14 Number 3

Lughnasadh Essay: Cycle of Lugh

By Emmon Bodfish

ughnasadh, festival of the god Lugh. In one tradition these festivities marked the funeral games originally held by Lugh in honor of his murdered father Cian. In another tradition, in Ireland, they commemorate the death of Lugh's divine foster mother Tailtiu, who cleared the forest from the plains of Ireland to make them fit for agriculture and died of the effort. She is a goddess of agriculture and one of the Irish female origin-figures. Irish clans often traced their ancestry to a female divinity, a goddess of the land. Lugh is the son of Ethniu and Cian, and the grandson of Balor, the elder Sun God, whom he later vanquishes in battle, reminiscent of Zeus overthrowing Chronos.

Lugh is the youthful Celtic Deity of Light, eulogized as "The Shining One." Some see in him an evolved form of the Neolithic "Young Year God," representing the Sun, born on Winter Solstice, married at Summer Solstice, and triumphant at Lughnasadh when he brings the harvest. He is fated to die on Samhain at the end of the harvest season and to sleep until the returning of the Sun on Winter Solstice.

Lugh is the multi-competent god, patron of all crafts and of commerce, protector of travelers, poet, harper, physician, smithy, magician, and defender of the people against their oppressive Fomorian king. Some scholars think he is cognate with Grecian Apollo. He is master of the throwing spear and has the title "Lamhfada," long arm, far reaching; he owns the spear that cannot miss its mark but seeks out its enemy.

The Sun is now half way between Solstice and Fall Equinox, and already the days are perceptively shorter, though the strong heat is still to come. This festival marks the beginning of the harvest. The first fruits are of each farmstead were brought and offered in the sacrifice. Sheep had been sheared, and the surplus wool and lambs could be bartered.

In Reformed Druid tradition, any members who have a garden, a fruit tree, or a tree that gives mast or nuts, or wild land that gives any vegetable food, bring the first fruits picked this season to offer in the Lughnasadh bonefire. (No Animals! That was forbidden by The Reform in 1966 (sic) which gave us our origin, constitution, and laws.) Lugh's tree is the apple. I cannot find a scholarly reference on this, but so folklore and tradition have it. (If you know of one, send it in and get a free subscription if it checks out.) Celebrate with apples, apple pie, cider, apple jack, and the planting of apple trees. Lugh is the divine father of the Celtic champion, Cu Chulain. Reread some of these epics* aloud.

**Tain Bo Cuailnge*, tr. Thomas Kinsella, Oxford University Press, 1970.

To All the Members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu

By Emmon Bodfish

I propose at this season between, Solstice and Lughnasadha, to make these changes in the RDNA/NRDNA ordinary, New Moon and Full Moon Services, the "Order of Common Worship," Services for Samradh and Foghamhar and for Geimredh and Earrach.

1. I propose to change the "False Uncil" script titles in the written text, (not spoken,) from "Catechism" to "Libation," and from "Communion" to "Connexus." This eliminates an obvious borrowing, and the bad memories that cling to such for many modern people. It installs in place of each a new title of Pagan lineage.

2. I propose adding to the RDNA/NRDNA ordinary New Moon and Full Moon Services, the same "Order of Common Worship" Services, for Samradh and Foghamhar and for Geimradh and Earrach, the practice of pouring out offerings to the trees. This has been tried and practiced and found to be successful at Live Oak Grove, and now at Orinda Grove Site.

It is inserted in the Services after the "Communion" ("Connexus") and before the "Meditation." After the Waters-of-Life have been shared and the final portion poured out into the fire and or the earth, the officiating Third Order Druid/ess hands the Grove Chalice back to the Server and receives from the Server the Tree Chalice. This is a ceramic or precious metal cup preferably in the shape of the Sutton Hoe cup or of Greek, Roman or Indo-European libation cups.

It is filled with pure water and blood meal* in the summer half of the year, the Season of Life, and with pure water in the winter half of the year, the Season of Sleep.

The officiating Third Order Druid/ess walks Sunwise (clockwise) around the Grove altar circle, stopping before each tree, calling its name in Gaelic, Gáidhlig, or English, (Ex. "Ah Bheithen!" or "Birch!") and pouring out part of the blood meal as offering to the tree. The last of the libation is saved and offered to the earth in the Offering Shaft, if the Grove has one, or one the ground to the right of the altar. The Third Order Druid/ess then passes the Tree Chalice back to the Server, who replaces it beside the Grove Chalice. Then the "Meditation" begins.

* Blood meal is available in the plant food section of any nursery or garden shop.

Frank Philipps Pottery
Ashland Oregon 97520
(503) 482 - 2059

From the Editor

One reader wrote in to say that a sentence in the last issue's Beltaine article sounded sexist. "...and still another specialized group of the Druid caste, often women, Druidesses, actually offered the sacrifices, and dispatched the offered animals." The "actually" here sounded sexist as in "they *actually* let them do it."

If you took it that way, I apologize. I didn't mean it that way; I did not see that interpretation. I meant by the word "actually" that the Druidesses did the actual physical work of leading the animals up to the altar and killing them. They did the actions, the nitty-gritty real doing of the thing, the muscle-work necessary to make things happen in this solid, mortal, three dimensional world of ours. The donor "offered" the animals in a different sense of the word and the presiding Druid or Druidess of the "Mitra" type "offered" the animals in a another sense, that of communing with the recipient deity and transmitting the community's prayers and thanks. That's what I had in mind.

The English language, (and all other languages,) have for so long been used to vilify women that these secondary, snide meanings of words crop up everywhere. The language is polluted. It will take time and vigilance to rehabilitate it, but a start is being made.

"You need never again pretend that your life is *not* Hell. Feel better already? Good."

So goes the little pessimist and his book of right hand wisdom. Vernon Howard is a "Guru" who is easier for the Western unconscious to assimilate. He is a Westerner and speaks American working class English. I recommend a look at his writing, if only for the curiosity of it.

'member we published this? This was from a book Vernon Howard wrote in the early '80s. The book was good.

Warning! He has since sold out to the Aging Right simultaneous with getting a lot more where-with-all and opening a new school in Ojai, California. Too Bad. His early writing was good, 1983 and before. (I went back and checked the publication dates of the books and tapes.) But we have all seen this happen to authors, philosophers and related Gurus upon a certain degree of "success." Now he's putting out this kind of nostalgic-old-man nonsense.

Do you remember when...?

- Songs were pretty, not jungle screams
- You could travel safely anywhere[1]
- Criminals were punished promptly
- God and sacredness were honored
- Demanders did not force guilt on you
- Clean television taught decency[2]
- You could find uncrowded places
- Men were men, women were women[3]
- Police were respected as protectors
- You did not fear changes in society
- Wrong was not called right
- Women were treated with courtesy[4]

[1]That time has never existed in the whole course of recorded history.
[2]That has never existed in the whole course of its tawdry history.
[3]Yes, we remember it and we hope that it never happens again.
[4]The pedestal and the kitchen

Calendar

Lughnasadha, when the sun is midway between Summer Solstice and Fall Equinox, will occur on August 7, 1990 at 3:33 P.M. Pacific daylite time. Fall Equinox will be on September 22, 1990, at 11:48 Pacific daylite time.

What is Green Spirit?

We are an association of spiritually committed persons seeking to combine our spiritual commitment with service to the wider environment which sustains us. We are loosely, affiliated with the East Bay Green Alliance, but as an independent organization emphasize cooperative and service oriented approaches within a spiritual context towards helping our environment. We seek to serve as a catalyst for multi-faith projects benefiting other persons, and all beings upon and within our earth. Our general meetings are the first Monday of

every month, at the home of one of our members. If you are interested in attending, please call Ms. Usha Muliyil at 653-9899; Gus diZerega at 763-4910; or Ms Suzy Worcester at 540-0269.

Linguistic Lazarus: Cornish Language Is Back From the Dead

Spelling of Long-Lost Words Inflames Local Passions;

By Glynn Mapes
Staff Reporter of the Wall Street Journal

Bes den heb tavasa golhas e dir.
A man who has lost his tongue has lost his land.

—18th Century Cornish Proverb

MOUSEHOLE, England—She has been dead for over two hundred years, but Dolly Pentreath, a combatative fishwife from this tiny village In Cornwall, is still something of a heroine around here. Dolly was the last native speaker of Cornish, a once-thriving Celtic language that died—when she did, in 1777. In her last days, sought out by an English antiquarian, she gave vent to a few well-chosen words of Cornish that the historian later deciphered as "I will not speak English…you ugly black toad!"

Like Dolly Pentreath, the Cornish people today are a fiercely proud and stubborn lot. Which helps to explain two developments in this remote, starkly beautiful corner of southwest England: The Cornish—against all odds—have brought their language back from the dead. And they are fighting with one another about it, tooth and nail.

A Linguistic Miracle

That there's anything to fight about is something of a linguistic miracle. Only one other lost tongue has been successfully revived to everyday use—Hebrew—and it had the full weight of the state of Israel behind it. Cornish isn't in the same league. Though the numbers are growing each year, only a few thousand have studied Cornish, of whom maybe 150 are completely fluent.

But the small number of speakers hasn't prevented a brouhaha, complete with hate mall and even a death threat. "What a glorious mess!" exclaims David Green, who is covering the dispute for a local newspaper. "The whole county is involved in an enormous row over an obscure language that hardly anyone can speak." Readers of Mr. Green's newspaper, the Western Morning News, have vented their outrage in letters to the editor. A sampling: "this load of codswallop," "a tragic schism" and "utter rubbish!"

What's at the bottom of all this?

Spelling.

It seems there are now at least two spelling systems for the revived Cornish language. The old way, called "unified" Cornish, was developed by native Cornish scholars who started the revival in the 1920s. It is based on how the language was spelled in medieval literature and draws from the many Cornish words that old-timers from West Cornwall mixed into their English conversation and from the huge numbers of Cornish place names that still exist.

Then, about four years ago, a new spelling system called "phonemic" Cornish started gaining adherents. Based on a linguist's 1984 doctoral thesis, it attempts to simplify the sometimes illogical spelling of unified Cornish, in hopes of making it easier to learn. For example, phonemic Cornish abandons the letter "c," substituting "k" and "s" for hard and soft consonant sounds. It introduces double consonants for stressed syllables, and it makes clear distinctions between 'y" and "i" sounds. After a power struggle, the phonemic camp, some of whom are not native-born Cornish, gained control of the language's governing body, the Cornish Language Board.

The dispute remained in the Ivory tower until January, when it emerged with a vengeance. John King, a member of the Cornish Language Board and of the town council of Camborne, persuaded the highway authorities to erect a road sign reading "Welcome to Camborne" and, in phonemic Cornish, *Kammbronn a'gas dynnergh.*

Born in London, Mr. King is an ardent Cornish speaker who teaches the language in a local school. But he didn't reckon with the sensitivities of those long used to the unified-Cornish spelling of "Cambron," the old name still widely known. Irate phone calls and mall poured in to him and to the press. He was called an Englishman—an insult hereabouts—and accused of making a laughingstock of the language and of giving the town a German name. One letter writer, he says, threatened to kill him.

"It's a terribly racist view of what Cornishness is all about," Mr. King declares. "Proponents of unified Cornish are identified with blood Cornishmen. I've lived in Cornwall for 20 years, yet I'll always be seen as an outsider."

Fear of Suburbia

There are overtones here of the nationalist fervor that swept Wales and Scotland in the l970s, though Cornwall has avoided the violence that plagued those regions. "Those who want to steal our language think they know better than the people born here," says Len Truran, a proponent of unified Cornish whose small publishing house puts out textbooks, poetry and novels in Cornish. Adds James Whetter, head of the Cornish Nationalist Party, "If we don't hang on to our land and language, Cornwall could sink into London suburbia by the sea."

In the mid-19th century some 50,000 miners hauled tin out of deep shafts around the county, continuing a tradition of underground work going back to the Bronze Age. That industry is nearly all gone now, leaving Cornwall one of the poorest counties in England. Like the ruins of some lost civilization, the remains of rough-stone pumphouses and smelter chimneys dot the windswept moors and perch on sea cliffs.

Only a few decades ago, the language lay in ruins, too. Now proponents run evening classes and correspondence courses, and speak Cornish at regular get-togethers in homes and pubs. A number of state and parochial schools teach the language, and a state-administered exam for secondary-school students is graded in both the unified and phonemic systems. There are church services in Cornish as well as summer camps and play-groups for children. Banks here even accept checks written in Cornish, though often grudgingly.

Nonetheless, there's worry that the spelling dispute may slow or even kill, the language's comeback. "Cornish can't afford an academic debate right now," says Diarmald Breathnach, administrator of the European Bureau of Lesser Used Languages, a European Community agency in Dublin that provides financial support for some 30 small, indigenous languages like Cornish. "Our reaction is, my God, your

language is in enough danger without splitting it apart yourselves."

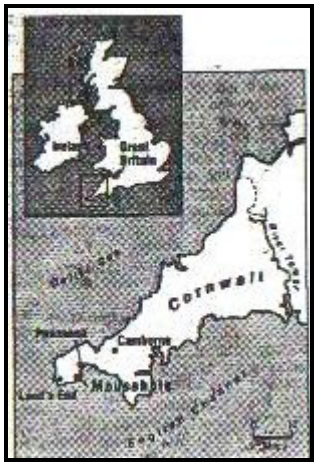
Family Feud

Such worries seem far away from a recent Sunday afternoon get-together of Cornish-speaking families near the town of Liskeard. As their parents chat in the backyard, the children play cricket in an adjoining sheep meadow, shouting happily in Cornish. All of the eight or so youngsters are being raised bilingually and seem at home in both tongues. Eleven-year-old Lowena Sandercock says she would much rather speak Cornish than English to her blond friend Tristan Jenkin, age 20 months. Tristan's first word was *tikkidiw*, Cornish for butterfly. (Pronounced TICK-ee-doo, its literal meaning is "beautiful little thing of God.")

Tristan is a third-generation Cornish speaker, one of the few in Cornwall. His grandfather, Richard Jenkin, was instrumental in the language's rebirth and remains a vocal advocate of unified Cornish. But Tristan's mother, Loveday Jenkin, is on the opposite side of the fence: She's a teacher of phonemic Cornish.

Richard Jenkin, who says he tries to avoid heated arguments with his daughter, isn't optimistic that the language battle will be resolved soon "It's a sad thing that's dividing friends from friends," he says. "I can't see either side giving up its beliefs"

Loveday Jenkin takes a broader view. "It's largely an academic problem, irrelevant to the many people who just want to learn to speak," she says. "If the Cornish people are arguing about it, it's proof the language is alive and thriving."



Cornishmen's distrust of outsiders goes back a long way, to the fifth and sixth centuries. Their Celtic ancestors, who occupied most of southern Britain and spoke a language called Brythonic, were steadily driven westward by the tribes of Germanic invaders, the Angles and the Saxons, ending up in Cornwall and Wales and splitting the language into Cornish and Welsh. A third group of Celts fled to Brittany on the continent; some 300,000 people there still speak a language very similar to Cornish called Bretton.

Among more-recent invaders of Cornwall are upper-middle-class Britons seeking country homes away from the hurly-burly of London and its environs. Their arrival has pushed real-estate prices beyond the reach of many born and raised here.

Crowds are drawn to Cornwall by the land's haunting loneliness. With the sea on three sides, it is almost severed from the rest of Britain by the River Tamar.

If you find you are one of those to whom the Universe responds negatively, you can develop a reverse magic of your own. Example: to stop wind, you have only to walk out a door carrying a kite.

Who do you call about a thing like this?

Is Goddess Worship, Finally Going to Put Men in Their Place?

Spiritual Movement Reveres Mother Earth
and Power of the Female "Energies"

By Sonia L. Nazario
Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal.

In the beginning, there was no God. There was the Goddess. She peered into the great void and created the Heaven and the Earth, and in this new domain women ruled. The world was peaceful, and both sexes worshipped Her.

But then, about 3000 B.C., men decided they had a better idea. They installed male deities—among them the sun god Marduk, who did in Tiamat, the mother of all gods, by pumping air down her throat and blowing her to bits. Things, sadly, haven't been the same since.

Or so say people like Ruth Barrett. Ms. Barrett, who lives in Los Angeles, is a Goddess worshipper, one of a growing number of revisionists who believe it's high time to give credit where credit is due: It was a woman who molded the Earth, argues Ms. Barrett, and it is men—and their male gods—who messed it up. "We don't want men to wear dog collars and be on leashes," she says. "But patriarchy must be put in its place."

Divine Rite

So it is that Evie-Kaiulani Daufin, a lapsed Catholic, has found spiritual enlightenment not in church but in the Garden of the Goddess. In Costa Mesa, Calif. on a recent sun-

splashed afternoon, Ms. Daufin, decked out in a grass skirt and bead necklace in the shape of fallopian tubes and ovaries, joins five others in the Garden (actually, someone's backyard) for a fertility rite.

They giggle as they plunge a 12-foot pole into a hole they have dug in "Mother Earth." Then Ms. Daufin, a journalism professor, dances with the other women around the Maypole. The worshipers include a graying ex-nun who calls herself Changing Woman. They purify themselves with burnt sage, sing in a circle, clutch their wombs and beseech the Goddess to make their lives more fruitful. Their wails reach a feverish pitch and peak in a primal scream.

Just another New Age fad? No way, says Judith D. Auerbach, who studies gender issues at the University of Southern California's Institute for the Study of Women and Men. "Women first wanted to apply feminism to political and economic realms, then to their families," she says. "Now, they want it in their spiritual lives." Goddess worshipers believe that to recreate a harmonious world, traits they consider male (dominance, aggressiveness, competitiveness) must give way to female "energies" (intuition, nurturing and compassion). Women should be revered, they say, because they bear offspring, and are thus linked to nature's cycles.

"This isn't just God in drag," insists Susan Gitlin-Emmer, an artist and Goddess worshipper in Reseda, Calif. To her, the Goddess is earth-bound, represents harmony—not hierarchy—among all living things and can take on many faces. Lunaea Weatherstone, who publishes a magazine on pagan rituals, has fashioned an altar to the Goddess. It bears a statue of Aphrodite, a crystal penis, purple candles, a chalice and a shell. It is here, she says that she worships the Goddess on solstices, equinoxes and Groundhog Day.

Joy of Spell Casting

Goddess worship has been around for a long time, but a recent spate of academic works on Goddess religions, and growing debate in traditional faiths about male bias in theology, has brought in a new wave of believers. Worship groups—most, but not ……

[Goddess Worship Rises, Replacing Old Patriarchy. With Female 'Energies' Like Nurturing, Compassion.]

…exclusively, female—have sprung up from California to Massachusetts. Now there are Goddess newsletters, Goddess books, a California Goddess hotline and a monthly cable-television Goddess show (with host Starr Goode). Ms. Barrett, a self-described witch, says she gets a steady stream of students for her yearlong course on the Goddess. One big draw: the introductory spell casting.

In San Francisco and Los Angeles, the Circle of Aradia and Women Spirit Rising, both worship groups, now stage elaborate public rituals. During the equinox last fall, 200 women in Long Beach, some dressed in embroidered robes, others naked, streamed into a cavernous room lit by candles. One high priestess, sword in hand, walked in a circle, calling out the powers of earth, wind, fire and air. "Blessed Be!" the crowd rejoined.

Ms. Daufin attended that ceremony. "Women were singing, wailing, jumping, planting seeds in an urn full of earth," she says. As the chanting became frenzied, the priestess inveighed against rape and child abuse. Exhausted, everyone fell to the ground.

Judith Piquet, a Los Angeles actress and masseuse, prefers a more private "mystery dance" when she prays. She demonstrates: Standing beside two altars in her bedroom, Ms. Piquet closes her eyes and sensuously slices the air with her hands. She begins to breathe heavily. A look of ecstacy comes over her face and, as her Rubenesque figure quivers, the dance ends abruptly. "I am trying to dance out the separate aspects of the Goddess in me" she explains,

Ms. Piquet says she tried mainstream religions, but felt they patronized women. "You've got the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Three men. Not a woman in sight," she says. Three years ago, she moved into a communal house with four women who worship the Goddess. "Everything fell into place. I saw how devalued women had been," says Ms. Piquet. Some of the women, she says, pray for the time when science will make men unnecessary for procreation.

Which isn't to say that all Goddess worshipers are anti-male. Most worship groups say men merely need enlightenment, that once they embrace the Goddess they, too, can find greater glory. But some aren't so sure. To them, men are "PJ's"—short for patriarchal jerks, the font of the world's ills, a lost cause, beyond redemption. Tempers can quickly flare: When one Goddess magazine, Sage Woman, suggested men could join the movement, some of its 3,000 readers canceled their subscriptions in protest.

Barbara Malcolm, a graduate student at the University of Southern California, videotaped a ceremony near Los Angeles that was equally impassioned. The Ocean Amazons were meeting that day, and the women were sharing war stories about PJ's they once knew and loved. "Be with us now!" they beseeched the Goddess. "Help us emerge from our dark trap of self-doubt"

They dug a hole in the ground and stuffed it full of pictures of fashion models torn from magazines—more male objectification of women, the Ocean Amazons felt. "I am incensed by Madison Avenue," seethed one. "Death to the patriarchy!" she shouted, jamming an ad for liposuction into the hole. Afterward, the women gazed at themselves in hand-held mirrors. "I am Goddess," each intoned.

But men who might feel alienated by all of this can take heart: A new spiritual movement—a sort of sexual counterpoint to Goddess worship is gaining favor. This one is called the "mythopoetic men's movement" and considers itself a refuge from male-bashing, a place where men can go to explore their own "gender-spirituality."

When mythopoetic groups meet, the conversation tends toward how women exploit men and objectify them as work objects. The groups explore a masculinity of yore. one they see as steeped in courage, compassion, fathering and chivalry. Shepherd Bliss, a San Francisco psychologist, guides mythopoetic groups into the woods, where they sing songs, read poetry, revere warrior figures and beat drums. "We want to recreate the wild man—someone vital, and fresh," he declares.

In one recent outing, be says, the men crawled on all fours, pretending to be animals. They had mud fights, engaged in bragging contests and urinated together on trees. They made masks "to allow the primitive side to develop." They cradled each other and meditated. "We cook for ourselves. We tell stories. We spend a lot of time weeping," Mr. Bliss says.

Sometimes, on the hillsides around Los Angeles, the spiritual movements meet. On a recent afternoon, a mythopoetic group beat its drums above Malibu. The 200 men were searching for lost rnasculinity and a link to Father Earth. Their efforts were briefly interrupted, however, when a group of Goddess worshipers, holding a ritual for Mother Earth nearby, let go with their primal screams

Some of the men were enraged, but not Rick Welt. "There was a sense of communication, of being whole with

the women, even if it just, happened on a psychic level," he says. "It was the epitome of sacredness in the 1990s."

* * * *

And then there's the backlash.
By way of contrast, we Goddess worshipping men would be part of the "front-lash."

It is wise to keep track of what the established press is printing about us, if for nothing else so that you can know what to tell the policemen when they burst into your next public celebration.

—E.B.

Probably the Druid Find of the Decade

News from SUMMIT BOOKS

Jennifer Prost
Publicity Director
(212) 698-7504

Life and Death of a Druid Prince

The Story of Lindow Man An Archaeological Sensation

by Anne Ross and Dan Robins

An Archeologist (Ross) and a solid state chemist (Robins) collaborate in a valiant effort to solve the mystery of Lindow Man...An engrossing archeological tale especially worthwhile for its windows into the scientific-detection process.
—Kirkus Reviews

On August 1, 1984 A commercial peat cutter in the English Midlands found part of a human body in the moss he was about to throw into a shredding machine. The Lindow Moss peat cutters assumed the man was a recent murder victim and called the police. A coroner's inquest revealed that although the body was well preserved the man had died long ago, and they turned over the body to the archeologists. 'Lindow Man,' as the body became known, was found to be approximately two thousand years old and the archeologists' discovery of his identity is as exciting as any detective story.

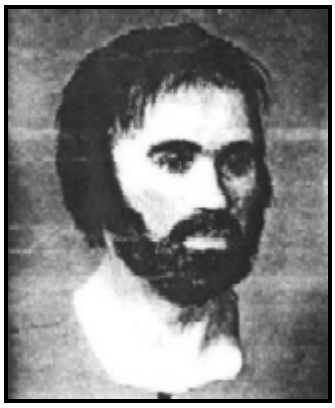
In The Life and Death of a Druid Prince: *The Story of Lindow Man An Archaeological Sensation* (Published by Summit Books, $19.95, June 18, 1990) archeologists Anne Ross and Don Robins reconstruct the rich life and violent death of Lindow Man. Using expert knowledge of ancient Celtic customs and beliefs and state-of-the-art technology, Anne Ross and Don Robins discovered that the man was a Druid prince who had been sacrificed. As they pieced together the many details of his life and his culture, the results of their investigation transform our understanding of Celtic Britain and the Roman invasion of the British Isles.

In this remarkable book, Anne Ross and Don Robins lead us through a complex autopsy and historical and archaeological reconstructions to identify Lindow Man and the circumstances of his death. Based on the characteristics of his body and the little clothing that survived, they identified Lindow Man as a Celtic nobleman and priest. The evidence includes:

- Smooth hands and manicured fingernails and the absence of calluses suggest that he did not perform manual labor
- Perfect body symmetry indicating that he was not a warrior because neither side was more developed from cutting and slashing with a sword
- Blood group 'O' identifying him as a Celt

*A fox fur band he wore around his left forearm was a badge of clan and high rank, identifying him as Lovernios, son of the fox, and a native of Ireland Lovernios, son of the fox)

Chemical analysis of the contents of his stomach revealed finely ground and scorched cereal grains. Anne Ross knew that a charred pancake was part of the Celtic ceremonial last meal and linked Lindow Man to a ritual sacrifice. The manner of his sacrificial death—a triple ritual assault by blunt instrument, garrote and water—confirmed their hypothesis of his noble status. For only the sacrifice of a priest and a nobleman, three times, would appease the three Celtic gods. But Ross and Robins became certain that because of his exceptional status, Lovernios was someone who would not have been sacrificed in an annual or routine sacrifice—but only under special circumstances. Through a melding of archeological, historical and chemical detection, Anne Ross and Don Robins reexamine the Roman invasion of Britain (using the writings of Caesar and Seutonious), re-trace Druid trade routes, and of events that most probably led to this spectacular sacrifice. And, as the facts emerge, Celtic Britain under the Roman occupation comes sharply into focus: Romans determined to destroy the Druid religion…the Celts, defeated in battle, look to their gods for help. Caught up in this human tragedy, Ross and Robins introduce us to the man who traveled hundreds of miles to give his life to save his people and who, mute for nearly 20 centuries, now speaks to us from his watery grave.



Postmarked 7 Aug 1990

A Druid Missal-Any Samhain 1990 Volume 14 Number 4

Samhain Essay: Vigiling

By Emmon Bodfish

amhain, Druid New Year's, occurs when the Sun is half way between Fall Equinox and Winter Solstice. The Druid year begins in the autumn, just as the Druid day begins at twilight with the going down of the Sun and runs until the next evening. Julius Caesar called this the "custom of reckoning by nights rather than by days," or dawnings, and considered it a strange custom, one that set the Druids apart from any of the other peoples he encountered in the Ancient World.

Samhain marks the end of the harvest season. Any food not gathered in by Samhain Eve was left in the fields to feed the birds and wild animals, or the Sidhe, the spirit-folk.

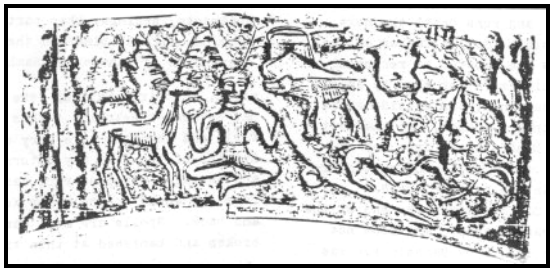
Like New Year's Celebrations everywhere, Samhain festivities fall into two sequential phases the first signifying a return to chaos, e.g. the disposal of old goods, expelling of evil, repayment of debts, completion of contracts, endings, then parties, dancing, fire-leaping and the suspension of taboos; on Samhain night, the first half of "the Day-Between-the-Worlds," this World and the Other are very close. Spirits of the dead may return, and messages can pass very easily from our world to the Other World and back. Spells are more easily broken and banished at this time Cernunnos rules, and His followers, the Suibhnes, forest hermits and prophesiers, the mystical branch of the Druid caste, try their skills at (shaman-like) journeying to the Other World or other parts of this one.

With Samhain dawn, the second phase of the New Year's celebration begins: the establishing of the new order. New, "clean" fire is kindled by friction, traditional summer trappings are exchanged for traditional winter trappings. The traditional Samhain ceremonies and rituals are enacted. Winter begins.

The R.D.NA. Samhain celebration reflects these two phases. It begins on Samhain Eve with a sunset service with the summer season chants and ritual. Then an all-night vigil is held and the altar fire is kept burning. Members bring food and jollity, and all already-opened bottles of liquor and wine belonging to members must be finished or sacrificed before dawn. No alcohol is found in the chalice or consumed in the Grove during the winter half of the year, the Season of Sleep.

At dawn the fire is built up again and a second Service performed at which all the Third Order Druids who are present exchange their red ribbons of the Season of Life for white ones of Sleep. There is pure water in the chalice, and the words and chants of the winter half of the year are spoken. Grove elections are held and the new order invested. Rest and peace are invoked and all the members go home to sleep.

The Celtic God Cernunnos



The Gundestrup Bowl. This magnificent silver cauldron is 42 cm. high and 69 cm. across, and weighs nearly 9 kg. It was discovered in a peat-bog in Denmark, but is believed to be of Celtic manufacture, and to date from the second or first century B.C.—Myles Dillon & Nora K. Chadwick, *The Celtic Realms*: New American Library, 1967, plate 4.

News of the Groves

One subscriber writes that he feels that Danu/Anu/Anawas not a grain and prosperity deity at all but a minor goddess after who rivers are named. He gives no source or reason for thinking this. I think otherwise. Besides Her mythological place as patron deity of the Tuatha de Dannan, and Her legends, I offer as another reference Her mention in the sixteenth century tract, "Coire Annann," translated by Dr. Whitley Stoke sand associates , in the collection "Irische Texte, " where it is noted:

> "In Munster was worshipped the goddess of prosperity who name was Ana, and from her name the two "Paps of Ana" over Luachair Degad."

Whether or not that is the origin of the name of the two mountains, apparently in the sixteenth century or earlier, the goddess' name was associated with prosperity. This association seems to have been common knowledge to the chroniclers who wrote the text.

Banned at Stonehenge

When daylight broke for summer solstice at Stonehenge in England, there was hardly a sun worshipper in sight, for police arrested 378 of them as they tried to get to the 4,000 year old monument for the annual rite. Police sealed off the area because of clashes last year that left 34 officers injured.

—Compiled by Juan J. Waite

Our co-religionists in England appear to have had a rather thin time of it this Solstice. After last year's rock throwing fight with the Hippies, the police decided not to let anyone into the monument for the day. Even the clipping sent to us from thither looks to have been through the wars

Glum thoughts on the paranormal: why do folks who photograph miracles never have cameras that focus?

San Francisco Chronicle: Grab Bag

By L. M. Boyd

Is it conceivable the environmentalists go too far? Still, it's fact the penalty in early Germany for mutilating a tree was death.

Comments the sender: "Were these Druids or did the Germans have sacred trees, too?" I don't know; the Chronicle doesn't give a reference for this fact. But if the Germans that Boyd is quoting had laws similar to the Gaulish Druids,' it was only the cutting of the trees in the sacred groves that won you the death penalty. So how would Christians feel about someone who bombed, and leveled, St. Mark's cathedral? How would Mohammedans deal with a man who vandalized Mecca? The Vandals* tolerated no vandalism in their sacred groves.

*Or whatever German tribe he is quoting.

Bathe in Leaves

petals, berries, barks, and grasses, i.e. the earth's natural medicines and heal yourself without having to ingest painkillers or other synthetic drugs which destroy the body. Drink herbal teas which strengthen immunity, cure symptoms before they turn into colds, and are as good for your body as vegetables. Heal arthritis, skin disorders, premature aging, and other chronic health problems. Private instruction for people interested in preparing herbal remedies for themselves. Also nutritional counseling, gourmet natural cooking, and info on interesting Bay Area events. Session takes place in my colorful little alcove with exotic, medieval ethnic, and folk music breaks. $30. Diana, 654-7591.

This caught my eye as having a distinctly Druidic ring to it.

I have checked on this and she seems to have a good , though not "earth shaking," health program.

—Emmon Bodfish (editor)

Area code 415

Map of Celtic Europe

The National Geographic Society *Map of Celtic Europe* is available from the National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C. 20036, as a supplement to the May 1977 issue which may be ordered for $2.25 per copy. Call to make sure the issue is still available. Their toll free number is (800) 638-4007.

Styrofoam

Styrofoam is a non-recyclable, non-biodegradable petrochemical product that is damaging to the environment and wildlife. For an excellent information packet about the problems of styrofoam and our options contact the Citizen's Clearing House for Hazardous Wastes, Inc., PO Box 926, Arlington, Virgina, (703) 276-7070.

The Staff

By Emmon Bodfish

To become a Druid in the R.D.N.A. mode, the first quest you must fulfill is the search for your staff. This is the first wrung of the ladder. If you own land, a staff can best be found on that. If not, a friend's acreage, roadsides, a Druid Grove or sanctuary, even deserts or wasteland can be explored. There, you must walk through the woods or wild, natural areas, not a garden or a farm. Look for a fairly straight, firm staff of waist to shoulder height. It should be at least as thick as your thumb and no thicker than your wrist. Saunter with relaxed vision, open to what may catch your attention: a wind-fallen bough or deceased and seasoned sapling trunk that appeals or "calls" to you. Or, as another Druid once put it: "Silently as the question: 'Who wishes to come? Who will help me?' Your staff is your basic tool, your compass point and anchor in the Work, your ground, your guide, your identity-piece, and magically speaking, your best friend. It must come to you of its own volition." It should feel ready and right. For this reason, on NO ACCOUNT CUT A LIVING PLANT! And it should not be oak. Firm, seasoned wood that has aged and ripened is best.

When you have found a potential staff, sitting with it for a while, cross-legged, but not lotus position, is good. Sit as Cernnunos is portrayed sitting on the panel of the Gundestrup cauldron. Hold it vertically, pressing the foot into the ground and lean on it. Will it support you on the mundane as well as spiritual plane? If it is the right staff, you should get a feeling of "Yes" and the longer you sit with it, the more it should please you. As another phrases it: "Sit with it. Drink in its presence. Let your energy flow into it. If it's right, it will become yours."

If you were here, or at another R.D.N.A. Grove, then you would bring your staff and present it at the next regular Service. If you are currently unaffiliated, you should instead, when you have found your staff, write back to us and tell about your quest, how you found your staff, what wood it is, and what you experienced sitting in contemplation with it. If you have been doing the Proto-Grove Service for yourself or with other unaffiliated druids, present it at your next new or full moon service. When you have thus found your staff, then you will be ready to start doing the Four Salutations of the Day.

The more you meditate with your staff, or use it in the Salutations, contemplative exercises and "magic workings"[1] the more you will charge it with your energy, and build up a good set of associations around it. It will then act as a reservoir of these, and will help you get into the proper mind-state for sacred work, even when your energy is low. These hours of meditations, workings, or repetitions of the Salutations of the Day are, to use a mundane analogy, your deposits in your supernatural bank account. You build it up with your good energy. It has also been compared to practice put into learning a skill, or a language, or to building up muscle, to wit, supernatural weight lifting. Take whichever of these analogies helps you, or none if that suits. The staff is one of the basic R.D.N.A. objects, (robe will come later), the basic tool, symbolic of all possessions and tools, and probably the first too that humanity picked up and thereby separated ourselves from the animal kingdom.[2] It is your "bag-of-gold-for-the-passage," the "ball of thread you unwind in the labyrinth," your anchor in this World and your tester and touchstone in Others, and some day when you are lost and panicked on a journey in the Nether World, it may find you. This is an important quest.

Begin it now.

[1]I don't like that phraseology; it has been over used in the wrong contexts and debased, but there is no other as widely understood.

[2]Yes, I know other animals use tools but no other creatures carry a possession with them, identify with it as "mine." Though they may pick up a stick to pry or poke something.

Vigil Song

Dawning into darkness
Oldest of nights

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

I came to love you
I came to grieve

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

Strong chains
Won't bind this love

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

For I am a climber
And I am a thief

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

Strong chains
Won't bind me

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

What bird sings in darkness?
Longest of nights

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

Stone walls
Can't hold this love

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

Dancing through darkness
Waiting the light

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

Sunset over Marsco
Cuchullain in sheets*

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

These shades of McLean's words
'Round us like spirits, released

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

Strong Chains
Can't bind this love

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

'S Tu mo leannan
Leannan og

*shrouds

This ode for the Samhain night vigil was written by Rorey MacDonald of South Uist, Scotland. He performs with the popular Scots' folk-rock group, RunRig, whose tapes are available through Ridge Records, Ganton House, 14-22 Ganton St., London W1V 1LB. None of the tapes, however, include this song which may be a bit too controversial for High Presbyterian Scotland. This is from a "broadside" and the editor has heard a private recording made at a concert.

Gàidhlig Vocabulary

'S tu	It is you (familiar)
mo	my
leannan	Love, beloved
og	young
McLean	Scotland's greatest modern poet, Rorey McLean

(It's taken four plus years to get permission to print this. Transatlantic communication at the speed of the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria.)

Events

11/10: Community Rainmaking Effort. Everyone is encouraged to work rain magic on this night: Some local covens will be starting this work at about 8, and everyone is asked to attune with their own workings if they can. This was to have been a large public event, but to date nobody has found a place to hold it. If a site is found, it will be announced on 415/856-6911.

11/24: Pagan/Occult/Witchcraft SIG work party in Palo Alto. 11 AM to 11 PM. Phone 415/856-6911 for info/directions.

12/7: 7 PM – midnight: Bardic Circle at Blue Fire House in Palo Alto. Bring songs, instruments, and food and drink to share (no alcohol please). Info/directions: 415/856-6911.

Calendar

Astronomical Samhain, when the sun is midway between Fall Equinox and Winter Solstice, will occur on November 7, in 1990, at 5:29 A.M. Pacific Standard Time. Celebrations and vigils begin the evening of the 6th.

Books

Ancient Europe: A Survey

By Stuart Piggott

While strolling through a less than savory part of town on my way to get my car from the Garage and Detail Shop, I spotted this one. Amidst the porn and liquor stores, suddenly "There's Taranis and his wheel!" It's not often that we Druids get to see our iconography in store windows. There it was on the green book jacket. This Edinburgh University Press book of Piggott's covers a pre-history of Europe from the beginning of agriculture to the close of Classical times, i.e. the beginning of the Christian take-over. With a great many pictures and a clear, easy style, it is a good, quick background book. It lends to browsing. There are approximately 90 pages about the Celts, their ancestors, and their Iron-Age, Druidic society. However, you should be forewarned of Piggott's "anti-barbarian" bias, typical of the 50s and early 60s in academic circles. Some of that has now changed, as witnessed in such recent works as Gimbutas' *The Language of the Goddess*, 1989, Harper and Row. My bias is that we moderns are no less violent, short-sighted or cruel. We do violence more impersonally* and over greater distances with modern warfare and economic manipulations, but the emotions are no more "civilized." The twentieth century saw the killing of a greater percentage of the European population than did the La Tene era, or even the Roman one that followed.

See if you can get your local library to borrow a copy on their inter-library loan service for you. In 1991, when the copyright runs out, we'll sell "xeroxes" of it.

*Soldiers who served in Viet Nam may disagree.

Advertisements

In case anybody wants 'em, here's where you get 'em.

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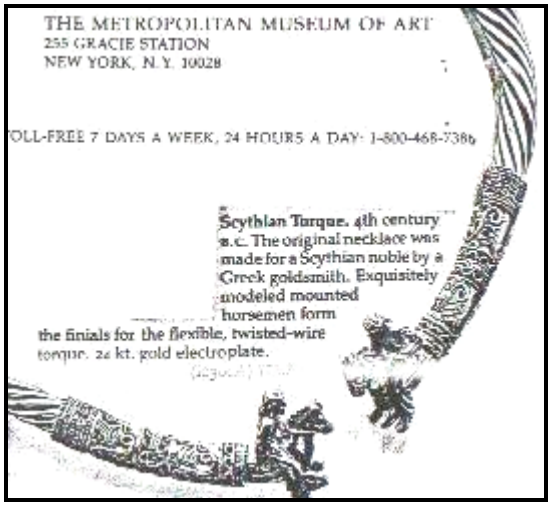


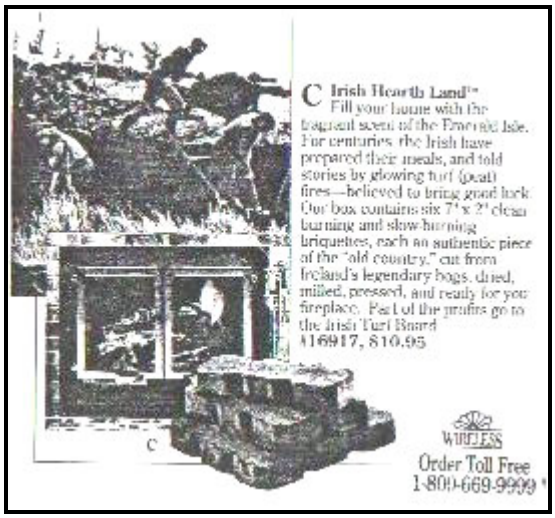
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

255 Gracie Station, New York, N.Y. 10028
Toll-free 7 days a week, 24 hours a day: 1-800-468-7386

Scythian torque. 4th century B.C. The original necklace was made for a Scythian noble by a Greek goldsmith. Exquisitely modeled mounted horsemen form the finials for the flexible, twisted-wire torque. 24kt. Gold electroplate.

(I0306A) $73.50

In case you have ever wanted to wear a torque, there is now one commercially available. Though designed for a Scythian, it is similar to the design of torques worn by Roman Age Celts and described and portrayed by Classic authors and sculptors. Torques seem to have been worn mainly by the Equites, the warrior caste of Celtic society, rather than by the Druids themselves, i.e. the clergy.



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Fill your home with the fragrant scent of the Emerald Isle. For centuries, the Irish have prepared their meals, and told stories by glowing turf (peat) fires—believed to bring good luck. Our box contains six 7" x 2" burning and slow-burning briquettes, each an authentic piece of the "old country," cut from Ireland's legendary bogs, dried, milled, pressed, and ready for your fireplace. Part of the profits go to the Irish Turf Board. #16917, $10.95

Wireless

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Pagan Parent's Network

For those of you out there, few and far between, who are raising Pagan children the *Pagan Parents' Network* can be reached through

Children of the Earth Mother
P0 Box 1652
Bethany, OK 73008

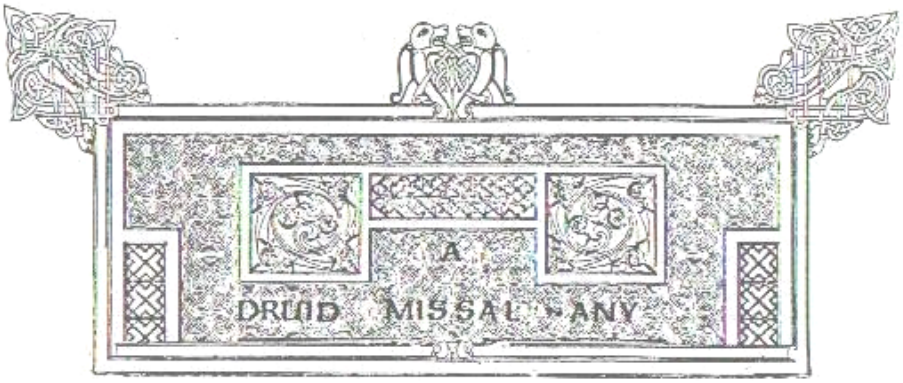
That's right, Pagans in Oklahoma raise their children Pagan and proud. But the PPN may not be publishing much longer because they can't seem to muster the support. Sad, isn't it…

Postmarked 3 Nov 1990

Left. 'Cernunnos' as 'lord of the animals' upon one of the inner plates of the Gundestrup cauldron. The deity sits in cross-legged position, is crowned by a splendid pair of antlers and wears a torc about his neck. In his left hand he holds a ram-headed serpent, in his right another torc. Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen.

Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION TWO



A Druid Missal-Any
Volume Fifteen
1991 c.e.

Drynemetum Press

A Druid Missal-Any
Oimelc 1991
Volume 15 Number 1

Oimelc Essay: End of Publication

By Emmon Bodfish

imelc, the festival of Bridee, Celtic Goddess of fire, the hearth, poetry and inspiration, Patroness of birth, Dawn-maiden, daughter of the Dagda who hangs her cloak on the beams of the morning sun! Here we are in the time of new beginnings.

The Druid Missal-Any will be looking for a new home. The pollution, crowdedness and difficulties of the Bay Area have increased, along with our financial means, to the point where your editor deems an atmosphere of the mountains a benefit. As we will be putting time and energy into locating rural property and relocating, the Missal-Any hereby declares a hiatus in its nine years of continuous publication. Anyone who would like to serve as interim Assistant Editor-Collator and Errand-runner-in-Chief should write to us at the usual address: P.O. Box 142, Orinda, California, 94563. If you would like a refund, rather than waiting for publication to resume, write us. Back issues are still available.

Note from the Editor

If you have sent for the instructions on the Reformed Druid Four Salutations of the Day, and you received only the first two pages, please let us know. Alone these do not make much sense. My mistake. I apologize.

Emmon
The "Groo" of paper work.

A Druid Missal-Any
616 Miner Road
Orinda, CA 94563
(415) 254-1387

Norwegians of old wore mistletoe around their necks to protect them from lightning.

Q. "What's the basic purpose of the Irish shillelagh?"
A. Self-defense. It's a heavy headed club camouflaged as a walking stick.

Environmental Warning
California's Oak Trees in Danger

By Vlae Kershner
Chronicle Sacramento Bureau

Sacramento

As the battle over California redwoods commands the attention of industry and environmentalists nationwide, the state's beloved oak trees face a problem that may prove even more gnarly.

Although the obvious danger comes from chain saws and bulldozers as the state's hillsides make way for subdivisions, the overall threat is subtler. For three of the state's eight major tree-sized oak species, saplings are not surviving in sufficient numbers to replace the mature growth.

In many places where the landscape seems undisturbed, young trees cannot grow because people have inadvertently altered the ecological balance by introducing new grasses or taking steps to prevent floods.

Alarmed by such problems, conservationists have begun a statewide movement designed to preserve the oak tree. Although it cannot match the Sequoias and redwoods' stature as the oldest and tallest living things in the world, the oak has been an institution in California's history, as well as its environment.

"Somewhat belatedly, the environmental movement has discovered the oak woodland and is attempting to protect it," said Robert Ewing of California Department of Forestry. "Even though California oak is a classic part of our landscape, it literally went unnoticed because it didn't seem to be disturbed" before the 1980s, when development spread far beyond the old urban centers, he said.

Oaks now grow on 7.4 million acres statewide, down from 10 million to 12 million before the European settlement, the California Oak Foundation estimates. Valley oaks that grow near riversides are down to 12,000 acres, only 1.5 percent of their original habitat.

Unlike evergreens, oaks do not generally provide most of the land's commercial value. Some 80 percent of oak woodland is privately owned, typically by cattle ranchers.

As a result, "there has been a lot of study of conifers, but there has been almost no research on oaks until the last 10 years," said Doug McCreary, a natural resources specialist at the University of California's Sierra Foothill Range Field Station.

McCreary has been trying to figure out why the valley, blue and Engelmann oaks are not replacing themselves. There are lots of theories, all pointing to man.

A leading one has to do with a change in the ground cover. European settlers brought in cattle and the hardy annual grasses to feed them. Spread by cattle, the new grasses have largely displaced the native perennial grasses of California hillsides.

As opposed to the perennials, the new grasses suck the ground dry in springtime. That makes it tough for young oaks, which do most of their growing in the spring, to get started.

McCreary uses a corner of the 6,000 acre range station 18 miles west of Grass Valley to test how to regenerate the threatened species: Is it necessary to plant from seedlings or can acorns do the job? How long should young trees be watered and fertilized? How should they be protected from cattle and deer?

The species that has fared worst is the valley oak, a tall, spreading tree that once dominated the riversides of the Central Valley but lost most of its range to farmland.

Even where the trees remain, seedlings cannot get started. The most likely reason is that dam building has eliminated flooding, which used to drown seedling-eating rodents and keep away browsing deer, according to Tom Griggs of the Nature Conservancy.

Preserve Established

The conservation group has established a preserve on the Cosumnes River in Sacramento County to restore 1,454 acres of riparian valley oak, one of the threatened species, even though the site still floods annually.

Another declining species is the Engelmann oak, which is found mostly in parts of San Diego County that are being rapidly developed. The third species, the blue oak, still covers much of the Sierra foothills, yet existing trees are not replacing themselves.

All three species are deciduous, as opposed to live oaks, which do not lose all their leaves at once. For some reason, the live oaks—including the Bay Area's characteristic coast live oak—are regenerating better than the deciduous species.

Still, the Bay Area has paved over a lot of oaks, and Janet Cobb of the East Bay Regional Park District is promoting projects in which volunteers plant acorns, including one next month along Interstate 580 in Castro Valley as part of the oak foundation's "plant an acorn for tomorrow" day.

The Sacramento-based California Oak Foundation distributes pamphlets explaining how to care for oaks in urban settings and on how to plant acorns.

The foundation, started just two years ago, has already succeeded in getting the Legislature to designate 1990 as the Year of the Oak and has persuaded the California Native Plant Society to devote he July Issue of its "Fremontia" journal to the oak.

We have oaks!

And a large selection ofother native CA shrubs and perennials.

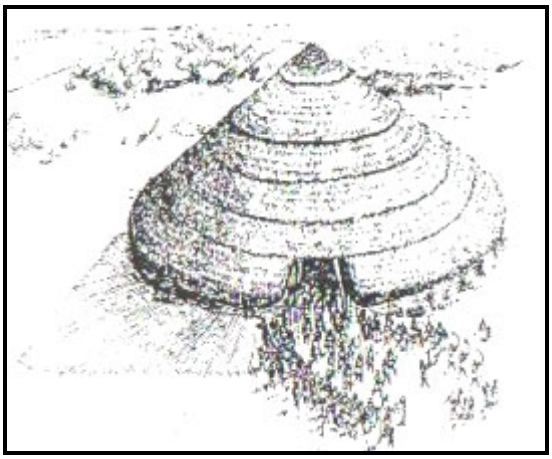
Dawn
Native Plant Nursery at the Berkeley Marina
Behind the Marriott Hotel • M, Th & Sat 9-12.

News of the Groves

We are happy to announce the founding of a new Proto-Grove, Silver Oaks Proto-Grove, the first one south of the Mason-Dixon Line, exact location unannounced, for security reasons.

Orinda Grovesite

I was sitting on my porch, mending one of my robes when I heard a sound and thought "That's a weird bird." I looked down the path into the woods below the Grove Site and saw a five-point Mule buck, maybe twenty five to thirty feet away. Deer do not usually come out in the middle of the day, and this one was just walking along the trail, vocalizing to himself. It was not as loud as when the stags are calling to each other in the fall, he was not challenging, but just walking along making "huuuuuuuuuuuurrrrmm" mumbling, humming, "talky" type sounds. He seemed totally self-absorbed and oblivious to my presence. For some unknown reason, I imitated the noise back at him, and instantly realized that that was the wrong thing to have said. He swung his head around and stared at me, anger but no fear of me. Maybe it was a challenge call. I found myself half way up on my feet and instinctively calculating the distance to my own front door. ("I'm fine as long as he doesn't figure out the doorknob principal.") But he turned away and continued his walk, still mumbling. I have seen a lot of California Mule deer since I've lived in the California foothills all my life, but I have never seen a deer behave like this. If there is someone out there that knows a lot about the habits of Mule stags, could s/he tell us: "Is this normal behavior for bucks? Or are we sharing these paths with a stag whose mental health is in question?"



Reconstruction of the Iron Age structure at Navan Fort, Co. Armagh.

Today, driving down University Avenue in Berkeley, I found myself behind a license plate frame proclaiming :

INDEPENDENCE FOR WALES
ANNIBYNIAETH! *

* That's Welsh for "Erin, go bra!"
The Cymric independence movement lives.

The New Moon

In Cornwall the people nod to the new moon and turn silver in their pockets. In Edinburgh cultured men and women turn the rings on their fingers and make their wishes. A young English lady told the writer that she had always been in the habit of bowing to the new moon, till she had been bribed out of it by her father, a clergyman, putting money in her pocket lest her lunar worship should compromise him with his bishop. She naively confessed, however, that among the free mountains of Loch Etive she reverted to the good customs of her fathers, from which she derived great satisfaction!

Ma 's math a fhuair thu sinn an nochd,
Seachd fearr gum fag thu sinn gun lochd,
A Ghealach gheal nan trath,
A Ghealach gheal nan trath.

If well thou hast found us to-night,
Seven times better mayest thou leave us without harm,
Thou bright white Moon of the seasons,
Bright white Moon of the seasons.

—From the Carmina Gadelica by Alexander Carmichael

A Ghealach Ur

This little prayer is said by old men and women in the islands of Barra. When they first see the new moon they make their obeisance to it as to a great chief. The women curtsey gracefully and the men bow low, raising their bonnets reverently. The bow of the men is peculiar, partaking somewhat of the curtsey of the women, the left knee being bent and the right drawn forward towards the middle of the left leg in a curious but not inelegant manner. The fragment of moon-worship is now a matter of custom rather than of belief, although it exists over the whole British Isles.

May thy laving luster leave us
Seven times still more blest.

O moon so fair
May it be so,
As seasons come,
And seasons go.

—From the Carmina Gadelica by Alexander Carmichael

Drums

Again to answer many letters at once:

Mickey Hart's very popular book *Drumming at the Edge of Magic* has awakened interest in sacred drumming. Though it has nothing specifically Druidic in it, we get asked spin-off questions. Yes there was a Celtic/Druidic tradition of drumming, but the specifics of it were lost in the Christian take over and the subsequent Dark Ages. The instrument was not lost. The traditional Celtic drum is the Bodhran. It's a frame drum similar to the Siberian shaman's drum. The Proto-Indo-European roots of Druidism come from the same stock, the pastoral peoples living north and west of the Caspian and Aral Seas.

Being a "Solitary Third Order" Reformed Druid, I made my drum on the theory that one who fancies himself in the Druidic woods-hermit, fidith, tradition should have one. I was amazed at how well it worked. I based my drum making method on reading, mostly about the Siberian drum traditions,

and hearsay about the Irish bodhran, plus a feeling for the project. Hart's book was still four or five years in the future. (It would have been an invaluable guide.) I made the frame from my two patron woods: Poison Oak, Rhus diversoloba, which has protected me, and the Baccharis which has sustained me. Baccharis, Coyote bush, is my constant kindling and also much of my firewood.

Going up the path I made up the western side of our hill for the daily Sunset Salutation, I noticed a naturally curved branch on a low growing Rhus. I made a mental note of it and determined to look for a similar one of Baccharis. That was the beginning of the drum project. It took a year or so to find a good Baccharis bough with the same diameter and curve. The Coyote bush was long dead and well seasoned and the Rhus I cut without killing the plant. This made the frame of my drum. Then at the public Grove Service and again later in private ritual, I set out a request to the Deities and to Cernunnos in particular for guidance and advice in finding a hide to be the head of the drum. Less that a fortnight later driving home through Tilden Park, I saw a half-grown fawn that had been hit and killed by a car, it must have been no more than a few hours before. That was it; there was my drum head. There was no place to pull over, really, as the road there is bordered by deep, car ditches. I stopped, turned on the emergency flashers, and hoped nobody would run into the back bumper. The deer was old enough to have lost its fawn spots, but only about half the weight of a full grown animal. I wrapped it in my shirt, not wanting to get blood on the trunk carpet, and hauled it home, hoping no one saw me put a body wrapped in a bloody shirt into my trunk.

To share the plenty, I called up a fellow Druid and woke him up. This was early in the morning. We skinned and butchered the little buck with some of the obsidian, stone scrapers. I'd made the previous season. (See the "Missal-Any" for Yule, 1987.) I gave the meat to some of the Grove members as I am a vegetarian. What I needed was the hide.

This is the formula for tanning fluid:

1 pint rock salt
2 oz. powdered oxalic acid
to each gallon of water

I soaked it for four or five days, then tested it to see jf it was done. Cut through the thickest part of the hide up at the top of the neck and look at the cross section. If it's white all the way through, and not gelatinous looking, it's done. Then I took it out of the tub, washed it, soaked it in washing soda, l oz. per gallon for another day, washed it again, and I had a drum skin.

It took me a good bit of experimenting to get it laced* onto the frame. I had no experience and only the vaguest directions, a few pictures in some of the books. On the third or fourth try I found a method that works.

In the Siberian tradition the archetypical drum is made from a piece of the World Tree. The World Tree tradition is one that is carried over into the Indo-European religions. I made the presentation of the drum following the Siberian and hopefully Proto-Indo-European style at the next regular R.D.N.A. Grove service.

Then to the playing of it. I wasn't expecting much. I chose to be alone to try it out. The grip that worked best was the one I'd seen in bas reliefs of ancient temple drummers from Egypt. Hold the drum by the frame with the drum head vertical and the edge of the frame opposite your hand pressed against your chest at the heart as you'd hold the small "Clarsach" harp or a lyre.

I struck the surface with my knuckles. I was surprised at the tone, how attention galvanizing it was, and how quickly I got pulled into it. Trance? I didn't get this from commercial drums and bongos I'd fooled around with over the years. My rational brain decided this was dangerous and irrational and started grumbling but I overrode it and continued the experiment. Definite trance, beyond verbal, opening upward. I overdid that first time and got my arm and knuckles sore. I played it few times more in the next few days and then didn't pick it up for a long time, almost a year. Maybe my work-a-day self got scared. My worry-center definitely didn't like it. Then one day I felt myself moving into a bad mood, one of those bad, bad moods possibly of metabolic origin that nothing chemical I've found ever succeeded in touching. The drum was sitting there beside the door, and "What the hey. Let's try it." It took a while, twenty or thirty minutes before it started to work. The heaviness lifted. I could feel the grimness retreating, angrily, toward the back left side of my mind. And it stayed gone, an "up" day.

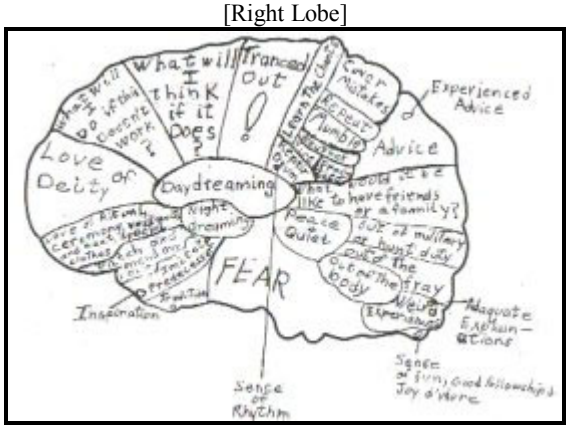
How the drum works this mood change nobody knows. There are a lot of theories. Some of the ones in Mickey Hart's book are pretty good. But as we repeat in R.D.N.A. rituals, the proof and the reason is in the doing. And drums, Hart asserts, "give us their secrets only to players, not to Ph.D.'s."

*I used hide thongs cut from the same skin.

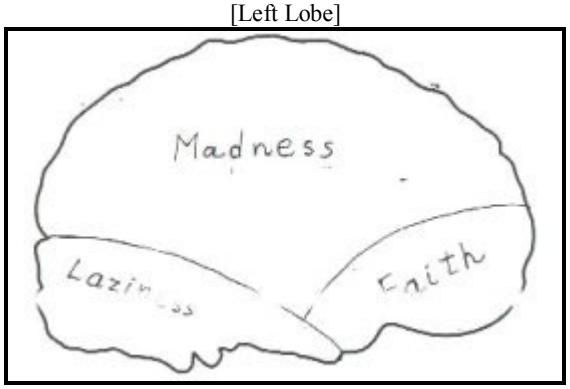
The Mind of a Fidith

(Druidic "Mad Sweeney" Figure)

[Right Lobe]



[Left Lobe]



Celtic Goods Advertisements

Celt-Iberian Sword & Shield

The Celt-Iberians of Roman times were highly regarded as fighting men. They were justly famed for their weapons—the Falcata which the Romans feared and the Caetra Buckler, their very effective shield which could double as a weapon.

Falcata—One of the most devastating swords ever made! The inward curving blade delivers a tremendous blow and was noted for its ability to split both shield and helmet! Considered to be of Greek, or possibly Etruscan origin, this sword spread into Southern Russia and also Spain. It was in Spanish hands that it was most feared by the Romans. The 20 ½" long blade is made from Krupp CK 55 steel. The handle is solid brass. Wt. 3 lbs. 4 oz. 25 ¾ " long, overall. #1-743…$235 ($5.50 s/h)

Falcata Sword SCABBARD—#1-932….$62 ($2.50 s/h; no s/h if ordered with sword)

Caetra Buckler—This shield could strike a telling blow since it was wood rimmed with steel. The 2 ½" long steel spike was used as an additional weapon. Our replica has a strong wood grip. Includes leather strap for over-the-shoulder carry. (In battle the straps were wrapped around the forearm.) Diameter -20". #8-670….$138 ($8.50 s/h)

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"I would like to congratulate you on providing products of excellent quality and workmanship. I am an amateur antique weapons collector and have purchased two of your pieces. The authenticity of these weapons is extremely impressive and they are the best replicas I have yet seen. Several of my close friends are now also interested in your products."

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Milford, NH

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Medieval Shoes for Lads and Lasses

European Baldric

A favorite way to wear a sword since Biblical times, the use of the baldric continued even into the Middle Ages. While much of the weight of the sword rested on the hip, the shoulder strap provided extra support from the opposite side of the body. This aided balance and comfort. Assyrians, Romans and Vikings are all shown in contemporary art wearing baldrics. This European Baldric can be worn with any sword we sell. Fits any period. Oil tanned leather with brass buckle. The frog is left open so you can stitch it closed to fit the sword of your choice. #1-676….$4295 ($3.50 s/h)

Call or write for an interesting and unique catalogue

Calendar

Astronomical Oimelc, when the sun is midway between Winter Solstice and Spring Equinox, will occur on February 4th, in 1991, at 8:26 A.M. Pacific Standard Time. Celebration at Orinda Grovesite to be arranged.

Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION TWO

Other Druid Newsletters

1994 c.e.

Drynemetum Press

News from the Hill of Three Oaks

Volume 1 Number 1 (Jan 1st, 1994)
Newsletter of the Reformed Druids of North America
Carleton Grove

Dear Druid Sibling,

I convey warm wishes to you for a happy new year from the Frangquists and Sheltons, The Henge of Keltria (Minneapolis) and Clan Dalriada (Scotland).

Announcing a meeting to plan events in Winter Term:

Historically, the Reformed Druids generally don't do very much during the winter half of the year (Nov 1st-May 1st) and therefore everybody is too sluggish by May Day to do anything.

Therefore, I'd humbly invite you to attend the **ALL-DRUID meeting on Tuesday JANUARY 4th at 7pm in Nourse TV lounge**. (Food & Drink Provided) I'm not a dictator, but often I make mistakes because I lack advice and guidance of my fellow Druids. Come and tell me some questions, ideas or workshop possibilities you've had over the Winter Break since Samhain (NOV 1st).

I am inviting Isaac Bonewits (from NY) to present in May a series of free workshops and lectures on Druidism and Neo-Paganism. Come to the meeting to help choose which 3 of the 12 workshops he will present to us. Isaac is a figure of importance in the history and culture of Druidism and Neo-Paganism over the last thirty years. This will be his third visit to Carleton.

Open Reserve Possibilities:

Don't forget that one of the joys of being a Druid is broadening our understanding of world religions. Some Druids go about this through Carleton course, others through readings on the side. Many intro-level books are consolidated on the Library's open reserve shelf. The following new publications have been, or will soon be, inserted in the "Rainbow Collection" on Open Reserve for your perusal. (Personal copies of the first three can be purchased for 50 cents each. Books of Meditations $1.00)

Book of the African Jedi-Knight: contains short readings on African Bantu philosophy compared with all the references to "The Force" and "Jedi" in the Star Wars trilogy.

Book of the Dead Bay Scrolls: The history of our Reformed Druid friends in San Jose from 1980-1993.

Book of Poetry Volume 2: Paid for by the Friends of the Earth Mother (our official organization to the CSA). Here's a free copy. If you wish to submit poetry for volume three (coming out in June) send them to me via Campus Mail.

Book of Meditations Vol. 2 and 3: The 2nd has various writings from Welsh, Irish and other Sources. The 3rd has writings from Taoist, Buddhist, Confucian, Winnie-the-Pooh, American Indian and Feminist-Christian sources.

The International Druid Archives contains magazines and various materials from other Druid movements in the USA and overseas. Contents include: mythology, Wicca, recipes, catalogs, book reviews, rituals, herbs, LGB issues, holidays & festivals, poetry and meditations. It is the best collection of Neo-Pagan/Druid materials in the Mid-west and it's here at Carleton!

The IDA is in the Carleton Archives Office on the lowest floor of the library. It is open 9-5pm on Weekdays throughout the year. The college archivist is familiar with the collection and can guide you to what you want to find.

One of the greatest joys for Druids (and Neo-Pagans) is the coming of the Summer Pagan Festivals. They are camping events where you get to sample and participate in other forms of Goddess movements than your own local group. They are filled with many activities & workshops included in your registration on a wide range of topics. There are vendors of jewelry, books, magazines and materials. They look after each other in a "commune" sort of way for that week. Gays & lesbians are free to be themselves and optional nudity is tolerated. Showers, portopoddies, food runs into town, swimming facilities and first-aid is provided.

The closest one is the "Pagan Spirit Gathering" (called PSG) near Madison Wisconsin in late June. RDNA members have attended PSG at least 4 times since 987, every time better than the last (Sam and I went last summer). The cost is $85 per person if you register by Jan 15th and $120 if by March 15th. I will have the necessary application forms and I can provide rides on a first-come/first-serve basis.

Don't put it off if you're interested.

TENTATIVE DRUID SCHEDULE for early January.
* **Tuesday Jan 4th, 7pm.** All-Druid meeting in Nourse TV lounge to discuss ideas and event possibilities for Winter Term.
* **Saturday Jan 8th, Noon to 2pm.** Goodhue 310. Presentation and Discussion of new Druid publications with some poetry and meditational readings. Copies will be for sale.
* **Saturday Jan 15th.** All early application to attend the PSG festival this summer (at cheap rate) must be postmarked by today.

I will close with a poem from Vol. 3 of Meditations and wish you good results on your academic and other activities.

Rain, hail,
Snow, ice:
All different, but
They finally meld into
One valley stream.

News from the Hill of Three Oaks

A Newsletter of the Reformed Druids of
North America and Friends
Vol. 1: Issue 2, Spring 1994

Well, Spring is making fitful attempts to come to Carleton and several Druids are setting up activities to wipe away the bitter memories of last winter. We hope to see you sometime this spring, but if not, well that's okay too. Remember that Druidism is a search for what YOU believe, through observing Nature, and in the end it's a personal quest. (**P.S. if you want off the mailing list, remind me via Campus Mail to Scharding**)

Druid Calendar for April

Druid Meeting: Wednesday April 13th in Sayles Hill at 8pm. Meeting to iron out details about Beltane.

April Visit by Isaac Bonewits: Author of "Real Magic", "Druid Chronicles (Evolved)", "Authentic Thaumaturgy" by Chaosium and a consultant in "Drawing Down the Moon". If all goes well, Isaac will be staying with me at my apartment April 20th-22nd. His visit is coming perilously close to the SCA event on Saturday April 23rd, I know, I know. It's the best I could do. He was a Reformed Druid (like us) and Archdruid of several groves in the 70s and now leads "Ar nDriaocht Fein" which is the largest (and most organized) Neo-Pagan Druid church. Please call if you have any suggestions on this very tentative schedule: (The exact times and places will come next week.)

Wed April 20th: Picking N Grinning 9-11pm at Farmhouse. Isaac will be there and would be glad to teach you some of the many Goddess songs he has heard or written over the last 25 years.

Thursday April 21st: Evening lecture on "Introducing Nature into your Spirituality" (irregardless of religion). During the day (11am-5pm) Isaac and I will be either taking walks or playing in the Druid Archives. You can find us at the Carleton Archival office on the 1st floor of the Carleton Library. Come down and visit us and swap stories or ask questions (Isaac has a wealth of good stories) and peruse the materials we have no collected about Neo-Paganism, Wicca and Druidism!

Friday April 22nd: A lecture at the same time as Convocation about the "Forms and Myths of Neo-Paganism and Wicca in America". An evening ritual in the arb, followed by a Pan-Druidic conference with representative from RDNA (that's us), New RDNA (Berkeley), Ar nDraiocht Fein (Isaac) and Henge of Keltria (Sam Adams and Tony Taylor); probably at the REUB.

Beltane Festivities: On Saturday, April 30th, the Carleton Druids will be celebrating the start of the Summer half of the year and the visible resurgence of the fertility in the Earth-Mother. It looks like we'll have several events, which will be separate, in the sense that participation in one doesn't require participation in another. A rough schedule of possible events is, **assuming Good Weather**: (Final times & Places will be given next week)

1pm: Arbwalk. Mostly just for the non-Druids on the campus to get into the spirit and for Druid wannabees to make first contact with us before the main festivities begin. A possible maypole dance may be included.

4:30pm Swim/Cleansing. Mostly for organizer & those interested. Contact Nikki.

Potluck picnic and discussion. Bring food and snacks to eat.

Maypole & Fire Dance. After a little rest, the maypole dance will be done (instruction provided) and then the Beltane fires will be kindled and a dance to celebrate the life-fires of Spring. Somewhere in here a brief ceremony will be led by Nikki.

Sweatlodge. With that fire, we will heat up rocks. For those who wish to stay, we will have a couple of 20 minute sessions in the Sweatlodge for purification, energy raising and self-cleansing. A sweatlodge is an igloo shaped frame of saplings covered with blankets. Hot rocks are put in a hole at the center of the lodge and then water is poured on them to make steam. We've been doing them at Carleton since 1986. We'll need help collecting firewood and carrying blankets. Contact Michael.

Vigil. A couple of people will be vigiling afterwards. Some will be doing so for fun and personal reasons, others for entering the Third Order. More on this below.

Other Druid Stuff

New Addresses: Michael Scharding is now residing at 1000 Ensley Ave #62 with Ed Burke (645-2371). Becky is now in Hue 335 (x5364).

St. Olaf Grove: Yep, there's a good chance that Sam's grove will be soon populated by Ole pagans! You'll probably even meet a couple at Beltaine. If you know someone at Olaf who may be interested call Michael.

Ordinations: After Beltaine, the Carleton Druids resume Ordinations for the Second and Third Order.

First Order: If you've ever shown up at a ritual, you've probably already entered the 1st Order.

Second Order: This, like the 1st order, can be performed by anyone who is already in the Order (according to new tradition). The 2nd Order is a statement of a strong personal commitment to study Nature closely for whatever spiritual truths it may reveal to you. It can also be an expression of willingness to help with Druid activities. You pretty much decide what it is for.

Third Order: This is for those Druids who wish to make a further commitment to pursue a spiritual search through Nature, helping others to do so, graduating & founding a grove elsewhere or who just feel a "calling". I would request that you talk with another Third Order and plan it at least a week after Beltaine (we already have two scheduled that night). The ceremony for inducting you into the Third Order requires a lot of work and coordination for tailoring it to your wishes between previous Third Orders, so don't wait around too long before telling us, there are a lot of things to discuss. I should remind you that I have always felt that a 1st Order Druid is just as valid a Druid as a 3rd Order Druid, perhaps the 1st orders are even better since they aren't so distracted with pomp and circumstance.

Visit by Selena Fox and PSG: I'm beginning the preparations to bring Selena Fox down next Fall to be a Convocation speaker! Selena is a wiccan priestess who runs Circle Sanctuary in Madison. She has been a long time eco-feminist and has been a vital member of the Neo-Pagan/Wiccan community, especially for networking activities. She is the organizer for Pagan Spirit Gathering, (in Wisconsin) one of the largest pagan summer festivals in America. If you'd like to help with the arrangements next fall or would like more site & ride

information on Pagan Spirit Gathering (June 22-29th, 7 day fee is $100) contact Michael.

Friends of Earth-Mother at Carleton College (F.O.E.M.A.C.C): FOEMACC is essentially a "front group" for the Carleton Druids (for various reasons I'll be happy to discuss with you) and is concerned with promoting a greater understanding of how ecology and all forms of spirituality can be integrated at Carleton. We need to get three volunteers to fill the officer lists so that we can get loads of money from the CSA budget! I'll help out quite a bit. We still have about $140 or so left in our Budget, some of which is going towards bringing Isaac to Carleton College. Contact Michael.

Suggestions for Solitary Druids: To be a Druid doesn't require group activity and Druidism can be explored in many ways by oneself. Here are a few suggestions.

1) Arbwalks and close observation of the passing of the seasons. Perhaps a diary or sketchbook.

2) Taking course at Carleton dealing with handcrafts, Religion, Philosophy or Soc/Anth. Understanding how other groups of people think and act can shed fresh light on our own pre-conceptions and beliefs.

3) Reading books and independent researching. I've collected a few books on the Druids open reserve shelf that may be good starts for exploring other religions. Also browse the Druid Archives on the 1st Floor Library's Carleton Archives office for materials by other nature-spirituality groups.

4) Meditation and personal prayer. Never discount its effectiveness. (Try the Japanese Garden by Watson)

5) Sitting in on the services of religions that you are completely unfamiliar with.

Info Contacts: Michael 645-2371, Nikki x5012, Becky x5364, Paul x5096

News from the Hill of Three Oaks

Volume 1: Issue 3, Spring 1994

There are several events coming up this week that I recommend, and remind your friends to come. Foremost is Isaac Bonewits' visit and 2 on-hour lectures and other activities for the 23rd Annual Earth Day. Keep your eyes open for last-minute flyers from CCE, Farm Club, Friends of the Arb, etc., who will have tables in Sayles at Lunch on Thursday and Friday.

Thursday April 21st at 6pm in Leighton 303: "The Goddess in 20th Century America: The Growth of Neo-Paganism & Feminist Wicca." By Isaac Bonewits

Isaac will talk about the philosophies and events leading up to the modern resurgence of Neo-Paganism and Witchcraft. While the Carleton Druids are not by definition "Pagan", a large number of our members are Pagans, or like them. This is a good chance to get a larger-than-Carleton view of other "Alternate Spirituality" groups that are out there and learn what they're doing. Discussion and questions will follow at 7pm in the same room. Isaac knows quite a bit about this subject, because he was involved in the Bay-Area when it all happened in the early 70s. ?s Call 645-2371

Friday April 22nd at 10:50am (That's the same time as Convo) in Leighton 202. "Nature Spirituality: Appreciation for Nature is Beneficial to any Religion/Philosophy." By Isaac Bonewits.

A more general look at the different way that atheists, monotheists, panentheist, duotheists and polytheists can look to Nature to deepen their spirituality and attack the roots of anti-ecological thought at their very roots (i.e. the Material vs. Spiritual divide). A good way for anyone to start becoming eco-aware in religious settings.

Friday April 22nd from 8am-10am & Noon-4:45pm

A lot of people will be rummaging in our International Druid Archives with Isaac Bonewits, Sam Adams, Richard Shelton & Tony Taylor. Occasional cool stories, debates, bits of lore and other interesting events are likely to occur as we examine the materials we've got and add more to them from our private collections. Please come down and join us for a half-hour or so. The Druid Archives are in the Carleton College Archives Office on the 1st Floor of the Carleton Library.

Friday April 22nd 6pm on the Hill of Three Oaks

Pan-Druidic ritual with members from most of the major Druid groups in America. Shouldn't last more than 40 minutes, followed by a trip to the Reub for a "Druidic conference" with a special presentation by Michael Scharding on "Drinking & Druidism: an Intern-Denominational Comparison". We'll sneak in any under-age drinkers, don't worry.

Saturday April 23rd 10am-4pm at Bridge Square

Open plug for "Beads Bazaar" at Bridge Square in downtown Northfield by Turtle Hill Bead shop. Pick up some cool beads & stuff to make a charm bracelet or ear rings.

The Standing Stone
Spring 1994
Volume 1 Number 1

The News Letter of the
Reformed Druids of Forth America
Hazel Nut Mother Grove,
South Bay Branch (Look at All the Puns!)

Greetings

This is the first edition of the Standing Stone, the occasional newsletter of the Hazelnut Mother Grove, South Bay Branch (took at all the puns!). The purpose of this newsletter is to provide the members of the Grove with information about the upcoming events within our organization and to provide a forum where they can have letters and articles published. In keeping with the spirit of our organization, the articles in this newsletter will have, with few exceptions, Druid, Celtic, and/or Neo-Pagan themes. All items in the Standing Stone not otherwise marked are copyright 1994 by the Hazelnut Mother Grove South Bay Branch (took at aft the puns!). All rights reserved to the original creators and publishers thereof, including the rights of reproduction and distribution.

Who We Are

The Hazelnut Mother Grove, South Bay Branch (look at all the puns!) is a member of the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA) which is a Neo-Pagan organization dedicated to the study of Druidism, the ancient Celtic religion and culture, as well as the reverence of the sacredness of nature and Mother Earth. The NRDNA is affiliated with the RDNA (Reformed Druids of North America), a non-denominational organization that was started as a protest movement in 1963 at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. Started as a protest movement against coercive religion, it is now devoted to the study of the esoteric truths that are found in all religions.

At present the officers in our grove are as follows: Archdruid Stephen Abbot, Co-Archdruid Tegwedd, The Co-Co-Archdruid Akbar, and the Editor and Preceptor is Darren Lochinvar,

For further information about the RDNA write to the following address: The Reformed Druids of North America, Carleton College, Northfield, MN 55057

For further information about the NRDNA:

NRDNA c/o The Greymartin Gazette P. O. Box 6775, San Jose, CA 95150-6775

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Upcoming Events

February 6, Sunday; "The Impala Feast"! This is a potluck, call Archdruid Stephen Abbott for details at (408) 365-9l57

March 20, Sunday; "The Spring Equinox Feast"! This is also a potluck, again call Archdruid Stephen Abbott for details at (408) 365-9157

May 1, Sunday; "The Beltaine Feast"! This is a ritual and a potluck, call Archdruid Stephen Abbott one more time for details at (408) 365-9157.

Why Do It If You Don't Know What It Means?

By Debbie Babcock and Stephen Abbott

How many rituals have you gone to where you hear the same deities invoked time and time again and watch the bored, unemotional responses of the participants, who have absolutely no idea what is going on?

Well, this is the issue we would like to address here, as many Pagans today have a tendency to string a bunch of Goddess - or God names - together in a ritual, chant, or spell without having the faintest idea who They are, Whom they are invoking, let alone what aspect or personality of the chosen Deity(ies) may be invoked, or they end up invoking absolutely nothing, due to the mispronunciation of a word or two.

Our point is that Pagans need to learn how to research the Deities Whom they intend to use in a ritual, chant, or spell. An example here is much of the New Age music, which is very wonderful, but some of it raises a true spiritual aspect because all it does is string names together because they sound good. The chant "Isis, Astarte, Diana, Hecate, Demeter, Kali, Inanna!" comes to mind as a case in point. There is no reference to Celtic Goddesses here. Nor are there Norse, Native American, Chinese, or Japanese Goddess names. This particular chant states that we all come from the Goddess, which denotes the Mother aspect, and not all of the Goddesses mentioned in that chant are the Mother aspect of the Lady.

Whether one is working alone or with a group, the correct Deity and Hir specific aspect should be invoked with a correct pronunciation and the knowledge that you are raising power (energy) for the circle with each Deity you call upon.

Now, you may ask, how does one go about doing the research we are speaking about to gain this knowledge? Easy... or at least relatively simple, anyway. Research means going to the library (unless you happen to have 6,000 or so books hanging around in a personal library) and sit down and actually read mythologies and other related books and material concerning the Deities you wish to use - and write all your information down - take notes.

For instance, Bards of Druidic traditions (Skajäs in the Norse traditions) are the songwriters and storytellers of the group, and they research Deity and the lore attached to enable them to write not only beautiful poetry and songs, but to empower these words with remarkable power and energy. Correct pronunciation of a name and specific aspects of a Deity are much more powerful and effective in ritual and magick than if someone just carts in a couple of major deity names just because they're there,

Another example that we used when we were getting input from other for this article is this: Suppose we are going to do a healing circle and use candle and cauldron magick. Which Deities would you call in? Why? The feedback was great! Dagda and Rob from Hazelnut Mother Grove, South Bay Branch (look at all the puns!) each suggested Brigit for the power of the candle and Cerrydwen for the power of the cauldron. The Goddess Rhiannon with Her healing waters of the West was also suggested. Any other suggestions? Other deities from other traditions can be included simply by doing comparative analysis of different Deities from the different traditions. Kwan Tin from the Chinese would work nicely also.

A young lady from Diablo Valley College's PAGAN Club, and a priestess in her own coven, Michelle MacNiell, suggested that research could also help in co-ordinating the Diety's personality with that of the person you are doing the working for, making what you have sent more powerful.

By researching the Deities, you are growing in your knowledge and power, which will help you in anything you do. Personal growth is an integral part of the Pagan movement, and as the fastest growing religion in the United States today, we need to be accurate with our facts, and sure of ourselves and our religion.

The Moral? Put more meaning into your rituals and magicks! Add power and meaning! Research!

Footnote:

Debbie Babcock is a Priestess of Oak Haven Coven in Contra Costa County, and the Secretary of the Contra Costs Pagan Association, Co-president of the Diablo Valley College Pagan Club and editor of the Contra Costa Pagan Association Newsletter. Stephen Abbott is Archdruid of Hazelnut Mother Grove, South Bay Branch (look at all the puns!) of the Reformed Druids of North America. This article was first published in the Contra Costa Pagan Association newsletter in their quarterly issue, which came out in October 1993.

Further Notes by the Imputer

Co-ArchDruid Tegwedd:

As I was inputting the hard copy to disk of this article, I asked the question of the Authors: Say I'm a rank beginner in paganism who has been chosen to create a ritual for some purpose. My example here is Imbolc, which is sacred to the Goddess Brigit. There would I start? Babcock and Abbott suggested the following books:

Wicca: Guide for the Solitary Practitioner, Scott Cunningham, 1988, Llewellyn Publications, paperbound, 218 pp. indexed, bibliography.

Power of the Witch, Laurie Cabot (the official witch of Salem, MA) 1989, Deft Books, (a division of Bantam/Doubleday/ { Publications Group, Inc.) paperbound 310 pp. not indexed, however has Resources appendix.

That got me going. I came up with several more:

Ancient Mirrors of Womanhood, Merlin Stone, 1984, Beacon Press, 425 pp. paperbound, indexed.

The Book of Goddesses & Heroines, Patricia Moneghan, 1990, Llewellyn Publications, paperbound, indexed, 421 pp.

The Golden Bough, Sir James George Fraser, 1922, MacMillan Co. 828 pp. paperbound, indexed. Public libraries often have the ten volume hardback edition, of which this is an abridged form.

Living Wicca: A Further Guide for the Solitary Practitioner, Scott Cunningham, 1993, Llewellyn Publications, paperbound, 220 pp., glossary, index, bibliography.

The Witches' Goddess, Janet Ferrer, Phoenix Publishing Tam. Indexed paperbound

The Witches' God, Janet & Stewart Ferrer, 1989, Phoenix Publishing, 278 pp., indexed.

One of the most important sections of each book, from the researcher's point of view, is the bibliography, or sources. You can get much vital information by looking up the author's sources, and doing research where the authors did their documentation. As you can afford them, the above books are also worth acquiring for your personal library.

[tsr]

Geomancy: Realigning American Heritage

October 18, 1993 was the Bicentennial of the laying of the cornerstone of our Nation's Capitol. For almost 30 years the Cornerstone of America's Liberty had been mislaid. During the chaos of the seeming Coup De Etat of the Kennedy assassination, the location of the Cornerstone was forgotten. It was perhaps symbolic of the unrest of the sixties and bitter apathy of the seventies and eighties. The soul of our Nation was hurting. The sacred alignments of Washington D.C.'s historical Masonic and Geomantic monuments were in a state of disarray.

It was a time of testing the very fabric of American idealism, The Vietnam War divided the nation. It seemed that the U.S. was losing its edge. We were not leading the Free World anymore. The seventies and eighties saw the deterioration of

America's business and industrial base. We were losing confidence in ourselves. We faced real competition from abroad that should not have been an obstacle for us. We have the capacity to manufacture quality products and service them property. Yet something was lacking. A fairy attitude had possessed us. We became addicted to wealth and luxury. Something afflicted the spirit of our great nation.

All of these problems can be traced, I believe, to a misalignment of and a forgetting of the importance of the historical Masonic and geomantic monuments of our great nation. With the coming of the Clinton Administration to power, I am proud to report a resurgence of the importance of these alignments for the well being of our nation's spirit as a whole.

Washington D.C. has an important east-west-north-south alignment which affects the health of the spirit of America The center point or Ompalatos is the 555 foot high obelisk of the Washington Monument. To the east is our magnificent five-dome Federal Capitol Building. On the top of the central rotunda dame is a statue of the Goddess of Liberty, which was erected in 1863; the year Lincoln signed the emancipation proclamation. This statue was the model for the 1923 Liberty Head Dollar depicting her with a feathered headdress (this was in remembrance of the Native American influence upon our tradition of freedom and liberty emphasized by the Constitution and Bill of Rights). In 1923 she was replaced by the Star headdress version of the Goddess of Liberty who graces New York Harbor. The cornerstone of this great Capitol building was mislaid during the Johnson administration. This building is dedicated to the Goddess, having 5 domes. The predominant Order of Architecture is centered around the Ionic column, which is symbolic of the Goddess.

To the west of the Capitol through, and past the Phallic Washington Memorial, is none other than the Lincoln Memorial. This rectangular Temple with Doric Columns honors the late great Martyred President who preserved the union. Doric columns are dedicated to the Male Equivalent of Deity.

There are some Geomancers of the Esoteric tradition who maintain that the Lincoln Memorial Measurements are an enlargement of the measurements of the Lost Ark of The Covenant of the ancient Hebrew people.

From the Washington Monument to the north, we go through the White House past and through the Ellipse dedicated to Lafayette until we reach The Scottish Rite's House of the Temple. This building is dedicated to the God. It is basically a square building with a half circle in the east. The predominant order of architecture of its exterior is the Ionic, which is sacred to the Goddess. This building embraces God and Goddess elements well. It is a modern replica of the Mausoleum of King Mausoteus, which was built by his widowed Queen at Heicanarsus in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). This was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. It is maintained, not by the government, but by the private donations of the Scottish Rite Worldwide.

Looking again to the south, past the White House, through the Omphalos of the Washington Monument, we find the Jefferson Memorial. This is a building dedicated to both God and Goddess. It has a dome relating and being sacred to the Goddess. The order of architecture is again the Ionic, symbolic of the Goddess. The Monument is erected to the memory President Thomas Jefferson, one of the most freethinking of our founding Fathers. During the Reagan years, acid rain damaged this structure. It has been refurbished, thankfully, due to the influence of President Clinton and his first Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. The damage during the preceding administration reflected the deterioration of the position of women during the Reagan years.

This four point cruciform alignment, when maintained, keeps the country's spirit happy and the power of both men and women in balance. The finding, rededication, and re-laying of America's Cornerstone of Liberty in proper Masonic form, coupled with the cleaning and repair of the Liberty\Freedom Statue atop the Capitol Dome, coinciding with the repair of the Jefferson Memorial have done much to begin the healing process of our great nation.

-Akbar, The Cocoa-ArchDruid

Book Review

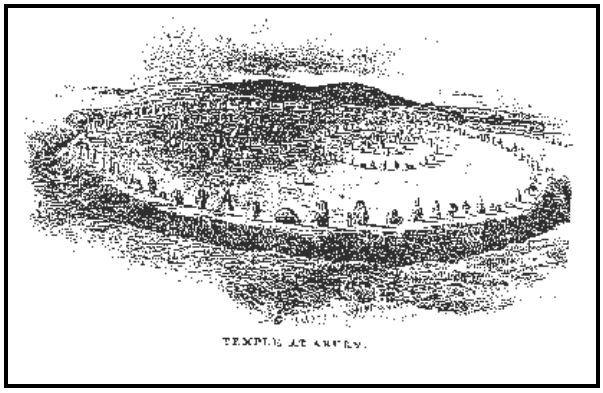
The Book of Ogham, The Celtic Tree Oracle, by Thorsson, 1992, Llewellyn, paperbound, 207 pp., appendix.

This is a book about the ancient tree alphabet of the Celtic Druids. The Oracle has many uses. I can well imagine its use during the Burning Times as a secret means of communication from one Pagan to another. It can be applied in this way either as a written code - in trees, for example (which would be dangerous if intercepted by the Holy Office), as a code using the shin or the nose as the elite.

It is also a means of divination. Thorsson gives readers instructions for making Ogham sticks. You are supposed to use twigs from the actual trees and plants mentioned in the tree alphabet, or should I say Beith-Luis-Fearn (Birch, Rowan, Alder) but for a first try, craft sticks (Popsicle sticks could probably serve as your quest for the correct woods. Making such a set would be a good project either for an individual or for a group such as a circle, coven, or a grove to do as a workshop (hint, hint, Stephen!)

I personally recommend this book for anyone who has an interest in Celtic culture and tradition.

-Co-Archdruid Tegwedd



"Temple at Avebury"

Letters

Dear Druids,

I read about your organization in the Green Egg and so, I am writing. Actually, I also read about you in Drawing Down the Moon. Anyway, I'd like to learn more about you, especially if you have any groves in the DC area. You see, I recently moved here and the only other Pagans I know live in Pittsburgh.

I was introduced to paganism through books in the school library. I consider myself a solo witch, although I only perform rituals occasionally (why else would I do something that fun so rarely?) I also like to pray with Tarot cards; until recently, I would look to the book for "the correct interpretation of the

card." Now I tend to lay one card out and visualize myself in that space to get a feeling for the card. I suppose that's about it for now.

-Judy

Dear Judy,

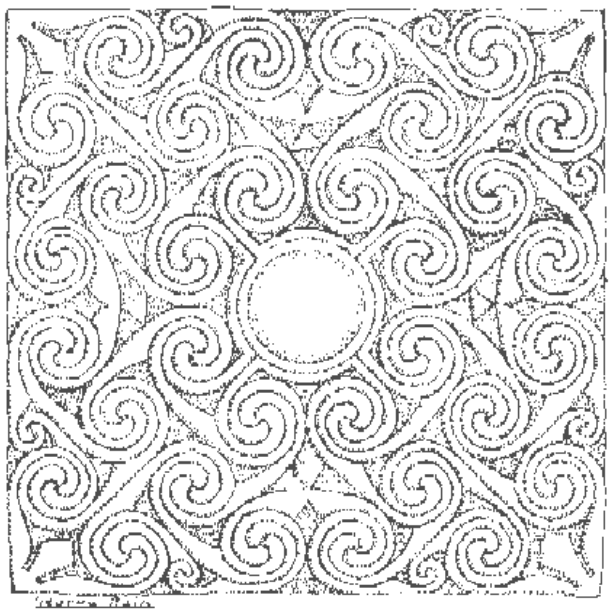
Thank you for your interest. We have had a massive trickle of letters in response to our article in the Green Egg, and it has taken us awhile to get back to everybody. Thank you also for your patience. I'm sorry to disappoint you, Judy, but to the best of my knowledge, we do not have a grove in the DC area. Since ordination is done by laying-on-of-hands, it's rather difficult, if not impossible to do by mail, however if my brother Druids have information I do not have, you are encouraged to contact them at Carleton College. The address is elsewhere in this newsletter.

The ArchDruid Stephen likes it when people come up with their own interpretations, instead of being dependent on books. You will have his admiration. There is nothing wrong (except perhaps an understandable feeling of loneliness) with being a solitary practitioner. During the Burning Times that was the only way you could do it, if at all.

In a list elsewhere in this newsletter are two books expressly for the solo practitioner. Also there is a book entitled Scottish Witchcraft by Raymond Buckland on a tradition mostly designed for the solo like you. Another book, Witta, An Irish Pagan Tradition by Edwin McCoy 1993 by Llewellyn Publications, which will be reviewed in a further issue of the Standing Stone, is mostly for solos, although the rituals can be easily adapted to groups. It comes highly recommended, especially for those who have an interest in Celtic traditions, particularly the Irish branch.

Persevere in your correspondence with others, and try to contact metaphysical bookstores for like-minded people. They often have bulletin boards that have notices on classes, rituals, etc. More suggestions, anyone?

-Co-ArchDruid Tegwedd.



End of Section Two of Part 11

Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION THREE

A Druid Missal-any

Volume Sixteen

2000 c.e.

Drynemetum Press

A Druid Missal-Any
Samhain Y.R. XXXVII
Vol. 16 Number 1
Nov. 1st, 2000 c.e.

Samhain Essay: Summer's End

By Stacey Weinberger

The season of Samhain is upon us. Summer has finally come to an end in Northern California with the warm days of an Indian summer swept away by some of the windiest nights in 50 years. Cold, rainy weather has returned, heavy sweaters are pulled out of storage, the heat is turned on. Time for hot tea, mulled cider and wine!

Samhain, summer's end. Traditionally whatever is left over from the harvest is left in the field for the birds, and mice, and other wildlife, and the Sidhe--the spirit folk, to glean for preparation of the coming winter. Samhain signals the beginning of the Celtic New Year. It is the end of the Summer half of the year and the beginning of the Winter half. This is the time when the veil between the worlds is the thinnest and when the ancestors, departed family and friends are said to return to visit the land of the living once again. The dead are honored and feasted on this night. Food is set out for them and they are remembered in word, song, and deed. Astronomical Samhain occurs when the Sun is half way between the Fall Equinox and the Winter Solstice and is on November 6 this year. As the "night precedes the day," Baccharis Grove will be celebrating Samhain on Sunday, Nov. 5 at sundown, which will be at 5:06 p.m.

After a nine year hiatus, the Missal-Any has found a new home. Though it had been in the back of our minds to resume publication without any particular start date, this Samhain seemed to be fitting. Our Grove celebrates its one year anniversary and is going strong. Interest in the RDNA and what we do seem to be on the rise. It is our sincere wish that we are able to continue the tradition started by our noble founder, presenting information, resources, history, and not a little bit of humor. So it is to him, Emmon Bodfish, that we dedicate this first issue.

News of the Groves

Baccharis Grove

Baccharis Grove, East Bay celebrates its one year anniversary. It was named Baccharis due to the proliferation of said shrub in the East Bay Hills of Northern California and in honor and memory of the Missal-Any's founder, who had quite a fondness for it. Other names in the running were Bay Laurel Grove, Poison Oak Grove, and Fez Grove. Though following in the traditions set by Live Oak Grove, we have already started our own, such as the themed feasts for High Day celebrations. Ask us about the goat's milk ice cream we made for Oimelc. The recipe is available upon request.

On October 21 Grove member Stacey held her Third Order vigil up at the Grove site, on what turned out to be the windiest night in the area of the past 50 years. Sick with a bad cough and fever the AD stuck it out, and it became quite an ordeal for him as well as he ended up in the hospital. The new Third Order feels terribly guilty about it (though it wasn't her fault inspite of thinking that at the time) and sends her best get well wishes.

Obelisk Grove

Mike Scharding, AD of the Carleton Grove from 1993 to 1994, has moved back to the U.S. from Japan to attend graduate school in Washington D.C., and has founded Obelisk Grove. They are putting together a Presidential Pantheon for holding services. There aren't any female presidents yet, so they will be adding some famous female political figures. They are currently taking suggestions on which presidents are in charge of which attributes.

Resources

The Druid Chronicles, now compiled into the ARDA (A Reformed Druid Anthology), are available on the Internet and are downloadable and printable in PDF format. The URL is:
http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/druids/ARDA/

There are two RDNA websites. One is the Carleton College website at: http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/druids/

The other is Mike Scharding's, which is updated almost daily and is quite extensive:

http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/index.html.

It lists, as well as information about the RDNA current Groves, Hazelnuts of Wisdom (short edifying postings), and Fallen Leaves, a memorial to those Druids who have gone on before us.

For Scottish Gaelic books, tapes, and videocassettes contact Siol Cultural Enterprises. Siol is a distributor/wholesaler of Gaelic language and Celtic interest books, music, and videos. They are the North American distributor for Acair Limited, the largest Gaelic language publisher in Scotland and wholesale books from a number of other companies most notably Y Lolfa in Northern Wales, Canan on the Isle of Skye, and Gairm Publishing, Glasgow. Call (902) 863-0416, via email at siol@ns.sympatico.ca, or through post mail at: P.O. Box 81, St. Andrew's, Nova Scotia, CANADA, B0H 1X0

An excellent book to get started learning about the ancient Druids is Miranda Green's *The World of the Druids*, published 1997 by Thames and Hudson. Order from your local independent bookstore today.

October Musings

Two weeks ago, before your editor's Third Order vigil and towards the end of a year of intensive study, one of the MIS people at work came into her office to do some work on her computer. He noticed her Maxfield Parrish calendar, which for the month of October featured the painting "Riverbank, Autumn, 1938," depicting an ancient Live Oak tree. He said, "That looks very Druid." Your editor tried very hard to suppress a laugh, thinking all the while, "Does it show now?"

Calendar

Astronomical Samhain, when the Sun is midway between Equinox and Solstice, will occur on November 6, 2000 at 4:00 p.m. PST. (By the alternative method of calculation, the Sun will reach 15° of Scorpius at 6:49 p.m. PST.) Samhain services will be held on Nov. 5 at Sundown, which is 5:06 p.m. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Samhain we will be going immediately after the service to Le Bateau Ivre, 2629 Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley.

Regular services will be held at Solar Noon on Nov. 12 and 26. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $4.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write Baccharis Grove, c/o 309 63rd St, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any Yule Y.R. XXXVIII Vol. 16 Number 2 December 21st, 2000 c.e.

Yule Essay: Yule and Mistletoe

By Stacey Weinberger

Yule, Winter Solstice, is one of the four minor Druid High Days. More so than any other of the High Days, Yule seems to be especially associated with plants and trees. In the dark days of Winter it is the evergreen that reminds us of the "continual flow and renewal of life."

The Mistletoe is one of the few plants that naturally bears fruit this time of year. It is commonly found on such trees as the apple, ash, walnut, and hawthorn, and much less often on the oak. Though it manufactures its own food through photosynthesis, it depends on its host tree for water and nutrients.

The Mistletoe was held sacred by the Druids. In Wales it is still called *druidh his*, "Druid's Weed." The Roman author Pliny the Elder gives an account of the mistletoe gathering ceremony in his Natural History:

> "The Druids held nothing more sacred than the mistletoe and the tree that bears it, always supposing that tree to be the oak. But they chose groves formed of oaks for the sake of the tree alone, and they never perform any of their rites except in the presence of a branch of it, in fact they think that everything that grows on it has been sent from heaven and is a proof that the tree was chosen by the god himself. The mistletoe, however, is found but rarely upon the oak; and when found, is gathered with due religious ceremony, if possible on the sixth day of the moon. They chose this day because the moon, though not yet in the middle of her course, has already considerable influence. They call the mistletoe by a name meaning, in their own language, the all-healing. Having made preparation for sacrifice and a banquet beneath the trees, they bring thither two white bulls, whose horns are bound then for the first time. Clad in a white robe, the priest ascends the tree and cuts the mistletoe with a golden sickle, and it is received by others in a white cloak. Then they kill the victims (i.e. the cattle), praying that God will render this gift of his propitious to those to whom he has granted it. They believe that the mistletoe, taken in drink, imparts fecundity to barren animals, and that it is an antidote to all poisons."

Pliny doesn't explain why the Druids held the mistletoe so highly other than the reference to it being all-healing. It is extremely poisonous. I overhead this past week while waiting for the train home that some florists, when it is sold yearly at Christmastime, have removed the berries because there have been cases of children picking them off the branches, eating them, and dying. (And where were the parents in this?) Mistletoe has been used (the leaves, not the berries) however, though greatly diluted, in modern times too much success in treating serious illnesses. A specially prepared homeopathic tincture is used in the treatment of cancer and herbalists use mistletoe to strengthen the heart and reduce blood pressure. So the Ancients did have it right after all, it just took us moderns a little while to uncover it, and as with any medicinal, probably used it with great wisdom, caution, and efficacy.

Poems of the Season

From Our Server, Susan Press

Solstice

Winter has come, The song has been sung, The days have been white and cold.

The dark has been deep, The earth was asleep, Dreaming a dream of old.

Now hear Her blood drum, For the time has come, For the days to grow long and warm.

For the dark becomes light, And the earth will take flight, Greeting the Sun's return.

Nights of Winter

In deep of winter, In the middle of the night, Jack Frost paints your windows with nary a light.

Look thru his icy artwork, Know each to be unique, You'll see a starlit world revealed, A world that some would seek.

A world that is within, without, A fragile world of wonder and glitter A world that from his paintbrush flows, In the deep, dark nights of winter.

Walk Amongst the Trees

Murmuring softly, Father Winter walks amongst the trees, gently easing them into sweet white slumber. He stops to rest with those who keep vigil during the long winter, the Holly, the Mistletoe, and the Evergreen.

They are old, old friends and pass the long white winter sharing tales and talking of things they have seen and heard throughout their long lives.

Go walk amongst the trees. Be quiet and still, listen for their voices and then for their wisdom. Share with them your dreams, your wonders and your woes, for they will become the substance of tales told in the future...the knowledge and wisdom of the trees.

News of the Groves

New Groves!

Staggs Trail Grove

The Druids of Staggs Trail Grove (ReDNA) in Alta, CA has been re-established. There are currently four members and they would like to meet more people of like mind. Contact Kelly and Tenby at pendragon@foothill.net.

Tampa #3 Grove, Tampa, FL

Paul Jantzen is establishing his own grove, should there be no others in the area. He has a neurotic parrot and a rather stately cymbidium orchid who would happily take up roles in such a group. There may be some wayward humans who have interest as well. Contact Paul at pjantzen@hsc.usf.edu.

Obelisk Grove, Washington D.C.

Mike Scharding reports that Obelisk Grove is doing poorly. Many students never came back after the first few meetings, but perhaps this will change next term. They had a few events, but as it is the first term for the group, they will regroup and start anew next term. Mike is doing well, adding on to the RDNA site (about 15-20 hits a day, after an advertising blitz) and recently added the Druid Archives access site at

http://www.geocities.com/druidarchives.

The latter will be completed by his birthday on Jan. 15th. With all the bad vibes in DC right now, Mike hasn't really felt very good, but his first term in Grad school is over.

Florida Groves

Swamp Grove (Naples, Southwest Florida) and River Oaks Grove (Jacksonville, FL)

The Florida groves appear to be doing well, despite all the hullabaloo over the election. Without giving away any positions, the general consensus is "enough." Both have nice websites up and running.

Swamp Grove:

http://people.goplay.com/mousepolice/home.html

and River Oaks Grove:

http://personal.jax.bellsouth.net/jax/e/z/ezandmz/index.html.

Carleton

Carleton seems to be doing quite well so far this year. A new batch came over this fall and the Samhain was well attended and the weather held out for most of the rituals. So far none of the members have burned out after three years in leadership positions. Carleton College is on winter break from Thanksgiving to January 11th. Carleton also appears to have a new college chaplain who is very friendly to the Druids, which has generally been the case since 1985.

Akita Grove, Japan

Akita Grove is well, in difficulty. Kibo Nozomi has gone to Oregon in America, and the group remaining in Japan is struggling to reorganize. Ikari Sekigawa (mabon@mb.infoeddy.ne.jp) is still in Japan and is currently on sabbatical, reexamining his life and thinking about things. He says he will resume active Druidry next year, perhaps.

Baccharis Grove

Samhain was celebrated in the patio below the Grove site this year due to the AD still recovering from pneumonia. In RDNA tradition of the new Third Order leading the first service after ordination, our Preceptor led the service. Though a bit on the giddy side prior to the service, and losing the second sacrifice bounding down from the Grove site (it actually got lost in the folds of her robe), the service went very well. The Full Moon rising over the patio wall through the trees during the service was unspeakably beautiful.

The Live Oak acorns that have fallen over the course of this past Fall at the Grove site are already showing signs of sprouting. Our Server has collected some in the hopes of growing them at her new house. This has given me the inspiration and impetus to post the first in a series of see and do articles. My teacher always told me that Druidism is a "see and do" religion versus Judaism or Christianity, which are talk-think religions. And so we bring to you;

Planting Your Own Grove

Do you have a reverence for trees, particularly oaks? You can grow these mighty trees yourself, from seed.

Start by gathering acorns. Let your favorite kids help or find acorns at the foot of an oak that has a special meaning for you. Make sure the tree is healthy. Use a fishing pole or other long pole to shake them from the tree. Your best chances of successful acorns are those picked directly from the oak.

Gently twist the acorn's hat. If it comes off easily, you've got a candidate for your project. Toss out any cracked, rotten, or hole-y acorns as well as those that seem very light by comparison. As a final test, place the acorns in a bucket of water and get rid of the floaters.

Don't keep acorns too long before you plant them! Once they dry out, they probably won't germinate.

Using plastic bags, mix a handful of acorns with a handful of perlite. (Vermiculite can be added to the mix, if you like.) Seal the bag, date it, and place it in your refrigerator. It may take as much as three cycles of the moon for the acorns to germinate or as little as one cycle, depending on the type of oak. At the full moon and the new moon, check your acorns to see if they are starting to sprout. When several have sprouted, its time to plant all the acorns in the bag.

To plant the acorns, use large plastic pots (this is one time I actually like plastic anything!) I tend to use the large black ones left over from the previous spring's azalea purchase. Use one-gallon size at a minimum. The little oaks will develop looooooong taproots, so they'll need plenty of depth. Make sure the pots drain well, too, with holes in the bottom.

Fill the pots with potting soil almost to the top. Leave about one inch. Place a single acorn on its side and cover it with half an inch of potting soil. Then water, taking care not to wash the soil away from the acorn.

Place your pots in a protected area so the cold won't freeze them or dry them out. Water them whenever the soil dries on top.

Now sit back and wait! Hopefully in the spring, you'll see the first signs of growth. When the little oaks are growing nicely, you can move the pots to an Eastern sunny spot and fertilize them every Sabbat. At Mabon or Samhain when the little oaks are one to two years old, plant them in a permanent spot.

The thing I really like about having these small oaks in pots is that I can arrange the pots in a circle for special workings. In the side yard, on the back deck, or even in a pasture, I can let them grown (almost) naturally and feel the power of this magickal tree. As they grow, I can move them out, away from the center of the circle, to make room for their future growth. Once a lot of rituals have taken place in this circle of young trees, the place becomes sacred, and it's a good spot to plant the trees in a special ceremony.

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Statement of Policy

1. The RDNA does not own, publish, or control the Missal-Any, although it uses the Missal-Any as its official journal, i.e. we print all announcements the RDNA is legally required to make. All other items published in the Missal-Any are the opinions of their authors and not of the RDNA.

2. The Missal-Any will not violate copyright and give credit for all contributions; however, we will exercise our legal right to quote copyrighted material in reviews, criticism, and scholarly articles.

3. The Missal-Any will not quote anyone or publish their photos without their knowledge and permission.

4. The Missal-Any will publish material (including rebuttals and alternate opinions) by authors whose opinions differ from ours; however, we reserve the right to append disclaimers to such material.

5. The Missal-Any accepts paid ads from individuals and neo-pagan groups for products we think worthwhile; we do not accept “relationship” ads.

6. Post mail subscriptions cover the cost of postage and paper. We will exchange subscriptions with other neo-pagan publications that we think worthwhile. People without money can barter for subscriptions (e.g. by writing an article).

7. The Missal-Any is published eight times a year, two weeks before each Druid high day; the Missal-Any shall come out on time.

8. All articles will be typed, or the equivalent. A typical issue of the Missal-Any will contain:

a. A lead article discussing some aspects of the current holiday.
b. News of the Groves.
c. Letters and questions from subscribers.
d. Cartoons and quotes from the media (but note item 2 above).
e. Contributions, including songs, poems, ceremonies, articles on philosophy, research, experiences, and opinion.
f. Official announcements of the RDNA, including notices of elections, names of officers, etc.
g. Resources available for further research and study.

Resources

The Abrams Planetarium at the Michigan State University publishes *Sky Calendar*. *Sky Calendar* promotes sky watching for people of all ages. As its name implies, the sheet for each month takes the form of a calendar. Diagrams in the boxes invite the reader to track the moon's rapid motion past the planets and bright stars of the zodiac, as well as to follow the more leisurely pace of the planets in their conjunctions with bright stars and other planets. The reverse side consists of a simplified star map of the month's evening sky. The sky maps are printed for mid-evenings, at Latitudes similar to Lansing (43 N).

The *Sky Calendar* has become the nation's most highly illustrated easy-to-follow guide to sky events. Not only is it enjoyed by its over 10,000 paid subscribers, but it is reproduced (with permission) by classroom teachers for their students, by planetariums and astronomy clubs for their members and the general public, and by park interpreters for audiences at sky talks. Frames from the calendar appear in the planets pages of *Sky and Telescope* magazine. Both the sky map (on the reverse side) and the calendar appear in each issue of *Science and Children*, a journal of the National Science Teachers Association.

A full year subscription is available for $10.00 per year, starting any time. Write *Sky Calendar*, Abrams Planetarium, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824

S & T's Weekly News Bulletin and Sky at a Glance stargazing calendar are provided as a service to the astronomical community by the editors of SKY and TELESCOPE magazine. In cooperation with the American Association of Amateur Astronomers (http://www.corvus.com/), S & T's Weekly News Bulletin and Sky at a Glance are available via electronic mailing list. For a free subscription, send e-mail to join@astromax.com and put the word "join" on the first line of the body of the message. If you should have any problems either subscribing to or unsubscribing from the list, send a message to list administrator John Wagoner at stargate@gte.net for assistance.

Premiering in January 2001 is *Bay Nature*, the first natural history magazine for the San Francisco Bay Area. Every season *Bay Nature* will bring in-depth views of the Bay Area’s open spaces, wetlands, animals, plants, weather, geology--as they are now, and as they were before--as well as the best of Bay area wildlife photography and landscape art, and news of the local conservation community and upcoming related activities.

A one year charter subscription costs $16 for four issues. Send a check to *Bay Nature*, P.O. Box 1493, Martinez, CA 94553-9903, call (925) 372-6002, or email baynature@baynature.com to start your subscription today!

Calendar

Yule, Winter Solstice, when the Sun enters Capricorn, will occur on December 21, 2000 at 5:38 a.m. PST. Yule services will be held on Sunday, Dec. 17 at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Yule we will be going immediately after the service to AD’s house. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on January 7 and 21. Please call the above number to confirm.

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Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION THREE

A Druid Missal-any

Volume Seventeen

2001 c.e.

Drynemetum Press

A Druid Missal-Any Oimelc Y.R. XXXVIII Vol. 17 Number 1 Jan 21st, 2001 c.e.

Oimelc Essay:

The Goddess and the Saint

By Stacey Weinberger

Oimelc, the end of Winter. It is the turning point in the Season of Sleep. Now is when the ewes come into milk and the first lambs are born. It is the beginning of new life. This can be seen even at the Orinda Grove site with the budding of new plant life.

Oimelc is the festival of Bride, Brigid, Breedes, daughter of the Dagda, Sun-Maiden, Daughter of the Dawn, Celtic Goddess of fire and the hearth, and of birth. She is patroness of poets and bards, smiths and craftspeople. Bride has perhaps had the longest enduring cult of any Celtic goddess. This is evidenced by Her aspects being co-opted by the early Christianizers into the figure of St. Brigid of Kildare. Even as a saint, Her identity continued to be associated with fire. No doubt the "legend" of St. Brigid's monastery at Kildare (from cill dair meaning chapel of the oak--possibly a telling connection) of a group of pagan holy women originally tending the perpetual sacred fire of a pre-Christian sanctuary on the site suggests that it is based on historic precedence.

Her eternal flame continued to burn in Christian times at Her sanctuary at Kildare and was never allowed to go out--a tradition that sprung from its pagan Celtic roots. This sacred fire was tended for nineteen nights by nineteen nuns who each took a turn to feed the flame. On the twentieth night, St. Brigid Herself was said to take over. That night the nineteenth nun put the logs beside the fire and said: "Brigid, guard your fire. This is your night." In the morning, the wood was found burned and the fire miraculously stayed lit. The fire was not extinguished from the foundation of the monastery in the fifth century but once in the thirteenth century until the reign of Henry VIII.

Sister Mary Minehan, a Brigidine Sister (Sisters of St. Brigid)--a restoration of the Ancient Order founded in 1807 to revive again the spirit of St. Brigid--relit St. Brigid's flame on Oimelc in 1993 at Solas Bhride, a Christian Community Center for Celtic Spirituality in Kildare. And so to this day Her sacred flame continues to burn.

"Unto Bride, Ruler of Fire,
Give us this little comfort now."

The History of the Sigil

Michael Scharding,
Former Arch Druid of the Carleton Grove
Current Arch Druid of Monument Grove

What is a Sigil?

The circle bisected by two vertical parallel lines is known as the Druid sigil in modern Druid groups. It is one of the many symbols now widely used by Reformed Druids of North America, its offshoot called Ar nDraoicht Fein (ADF) that started in 1983, which also had an offshoot The Henge of Keltria. Therefore, it is a prominent symbol of Druidism in America.

Any group can use the sigil, if they wish, we're not possessive about it, just send us a copy of your artwork for our gallery collection.

False Origin Myth No. 1

There is a well-publicized myth that it came from a photograph of a Celtic-Romano temple's foundation that had a square Roman foundation over laying an older Celtic circular structure. It looks remarkably like the Druid sigil with two of the rectangular while parallely intersecting the circle. However, this shot published in Stuart Piggot's seminal work "The Druids" was first published in 1966, three years after the RDNA was already documented as heavily using the symbol. So that can't be it. None of the founders probably had the background knowledge in 1963 of obscure archeological digs, so they couldn't have come across it anywhere else in the first two weeks of the founding of the RDNA.

Closer to the Truth Story

David Fisher, the founder of the RDNA, was eating lunch at Goodhue Dorm Cafeteria on Carleton College Campus in Northfield, Minnesota, USA in early April 1963 (perhaps April 1st?) and talking to Norman Nelson and a few of his other friends. There were complaining about a mandatory requirement to attend weekly religious services by the college. They decided to start THEIR OWN religion to see if that was satisfactory, and they decided on the name "Reformed Druids of North America."

So they traipsed up to the Hill of Three Oaks soon thereafter (April 17th, 1963) and had the first ceremony. David Fisher claimed to have been initiated into a Fraternal Druid order in Missouri, but they didn't believe him, because he had also tried to set up three other semi-secret farcical organizations on the campus with a similar story. But the others recognized the power of continuing an older tradition. The sigil was apparently used during that ceremony.

So from whence did it come? Probably from David Fisher's fevered imagination (divine inspiration?, definitely inspired by spirits of whiskey). I've conducted over 11 hours of research through various books of symbols and magical runes, but I have found no trace of the circle with two vertical lines. The closest thing is a Greek letter of a circle with one vertical line (and David was possibly interested in starting a

Greek fraternity style group, which were banned at Carleton). The alchemical symbol for oil is similar to that Greek letter.

What does it mean?

Good question. There is no definitive answer on this subject. It both means what you think it means, and it means something you don't think it means.

Various designs have popped up, but there were no ornate designs until 1969. It had always been simple three strokes of a pen until that date. Recently, people have tended to draw it as a wreath pierced and supported by two wooden poles.

Since then, various designs, visualizations, and descriptive readings have been attempted of the Sigil. I'm in the process of collecting and listing them.

What Do You See In a Sigil?

Michael Scharding, November 11, 1997

Dear Amanda Bradley, Sister-in-the-Mother,

I wish you a happy Celtic Year and beginning of the Time of Sleep in Reformed Druidism (Samhain to Beltane). As a present I offer you this Druid Sigil that I usually give to new 3rd Orders. What does it mean? It is merely a lump of silver to some, worth $20.

To others it is a symbol of weirdness, of people who refuse to accept societies predetermined paths of spirituality.

To others it is a symbol by which to recognize other Druids, but verily I believe that there are many people in many faiths or codes who follow the Druidic path but use a different name for it. Seek these people, too.

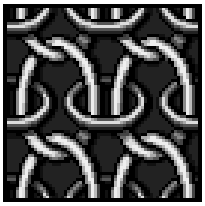
To others, it is a symbol of their desire to control the "magic" of Nature. I have done this too, but beware of egotism, because the control of Nature's magic can be abused just as we have abused Nature's other resources.

To others, it is an indefinite thing. This simple symbol has seemingly never been adopted or named before by any known group before 1963. It can be used as a tool without existing prejudice for teaching.

To you, it will mean whatever you wish. If you wear it, people will associate your deeds and words with this symbol.

I give it to you with this in mind.

Yours in the Mother,
Michael
Druid Missionary in Japan



My Vision of the Sigil

Robert Harrison, ODAL,
Carleton Grove (associated)

I've thought a bit about the sigil. The following is born out of my experiences with a Rosen Method practitioner, my experiences with the Mists of the Stone Forest Grove in Minneapolis, as well as the events of the night of my vigil. In Neopagan Druidism, such as we are, there is a tendency to three-ness. There are a number of three aspected Godheads in Celtic mythology, for example. There is also the aspect of three in time, which has Gaelic names for past present and future that I cannot remember. Also, the three realities that the Cosmic Tree unites: Upper World, This world, Lower World. Another "three" that we at Mists worked with is that of Gods and Goddesses, Nature Spirits, and Ancestors. In our rituals we invoke these three. The sigil of OBOD is the three-rayed sign, commonly translated as the rays of spirit, mind, and body.

My view of the RDNA sigil is that the two vertical rays represent spirit and soul. Soul could alternately be called mind. I see the difference between spirit and soul as being the two parts of life that reach for the heavens (spirit), and that which embraces the Earth (soul). I won't say that this is a sharp definition. They could just as easily be two aspects of the same immaterial aspect of a human as two different things altogether. However, they have a body around them, and I believe that is very effectively symbolizes the unity of Life, especially within a Pagan worldview. The two rays extending in both directions beyond the "body" can than have significant meanings of the need to have the balance of an inner life coupled with the outer life of experience. I am a believer in the mind/body connection, and this sigil could well symbolize that too. That has been my experience of late with this Rosen Practitioner. It's a subtle form of touch that reads the soul as kept in the body. I was doing some experiments of my own in my last session, and the results were outstanding.

This practitioner I see is good. If I changed my mind in mid-stream, he felt it. I was changing my energies, by centering very deeply. When I hit core, I get body rushes, and when I did, he immediately noted it. I was being silent the whole time, and experimenting with the method because I see this as being a powerful tool for healing souls, which is a desire of mine. So the sigil to me is very profound. I wear it constantly, and it serves to remind me of my Third Order calling.

News of the Groves

Carleton

The Carleton Grove is currently sleeping Nov 26 to Jan 15 due to school break.

Akita Grove, Japan

They are currently working on a pagan journal. Things are difficult right now, socially.

Monument Grove

Mike Scharding has been busy working on the Druid Archives files on the internet with the assistance of Jason Hollywood. He wants to locate other Druid Groups, increase the diversity of the collection, and update mailing lists.

New Twin Cities Grove?

Ross the Solid wants to start a Grove here in the Twin Cities area and is looking for members. He can be reached at dracos49@yahoo.com. Ross was a member of the Big River Grove of St. Cloud MN 1994-96.

New Chico Grove

Rhiannon has recently started Draoi Croi Croga Garran (Druid Heart Spirited Grove). She has in the past gathered quite a number of participants to learn the Old Ways and participate in seasonal rites, meditations, and healing rituals, and would like to continue the same in Chico. The Grove currently has plans to build a Celtic sweat lodge, a round lodge for ceremony, and is working on a standing stone arrangement. They also have a metal worker who makes ritual items such as sickles, swords, etc. and Rhiannon makes bronze Awen necklaces. These items are for view on their website. You can contact Rhiannon at jbeltain@pacbell.net or write her at 1959 Vilas Rd. Cohasset, CA. 95973. Their website address is:

http://www.connect.to/DruidHeart.

Baccharis Grove

It truly is the Season of Sleep at the Grove site. The Beltaine Rose lies dormant as well as the Elder. Our Birch tree doesn't appear to be getting new buds and is possibly dead. If that is the case when the weather warms up we will be looking to purchase another. Birches grow better in threes so we will be looking for a source that can supply us with several. Last Fall our poor Pine that had fallen over and snaked around the Grove in a semi-circle was finally cut down. We will be replacing it with a Pine native to the area, such as the Gray or Foothill Pine, rather than a Monterey, which is more coastal and is known for falling over when it gets this large.

Yet even in this time of time of sleep there are signs of life. The Pacific Snakeroot is sprouting up all along the path up to the Grove site and in the Grove itself. Tiny ferns are just beginning to unravel their fronds in the moist earth of the steps. Bride's tree, our spontaneous apple tree, has fuzzy pale green bud just beginning to make themselves known. And of course the mushrooms abound after the recent rains, poking their multi-shaped caps through the fallen leaves of Winter. The most interesting one we've seen so far is the Fluted Black Elfin Saddle (Helvella Iacunosa). The cap is grayish-black and wrinkled looking and the stalk is white to dark gray with prominent grooves and ridges. The look like tiny old men of the forest.

Last weekend our preceptor went wine tasting for her birthday at Rosenblum Cellars in Alameda. One of the wines she tried was the 1999 Zinfandel from their Oakley Vineyards in Contra Costa county (where the Grove site is located). Much to her pleasant surprise the wine tasted like the smell of the Live Oaks that populate the Grove area. So if you want to know what our Grove site area smells like and join us vicariously, buy a bottle of this.

Goat's Milk Ice Cream

Back by popular demand! This was a hit at last year's Oimelc social. Now you too can make Goat's Milk Ice Cream as a fun and tasty way to celebrate the festival of the lactation of the ewe!

½ cup sugar

2 cups very hot goat's or sheep's milk

1/8 teaspoon salt

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

4 egg yolks, slightly beaten

1 pint heavy cream

Mix the sugar, salt, and egg yolks together in a heavy-bottomed pan. Slowly stir in the hot goat's or sheep's milk. Cook, continuing to stir, until slightly thickened; remove and cool. Add the cream and the vanilla extract. Chill. Freeze in a hand-cranked or electric ice cream freezer.

PantheaCon 2001

Cathedral Hill Hotel in San Francisco CA
February 16-19, 2001

Join the largest indoor gathering of tribes and traditions in the country for a 4-day extravaganza of workshops, rituals, events, networking and fun.

Presentations, rituals and panels from a wide variety of guests including: Robert Anton Wilson, Diana Paxson, R.J. Stewart, Raven Grimassi, Lon Duquette, Timothy Roderick, Rachel Pollock, Victor Anderson, Mary Greer, Brian Wilson, Dossie Easton, Z. Budapest, Pat Califia, Gus di Zirega, Kachinas Kutenai, Luisah Teish, M. Christian, Mara Freeman

- Musical performances, ritual theater and a Masquerade Ball: Heather Alexander, Avalon Rising, Gaia's Voice, Pombagira, Reclaiming, Bast ritual, Magical Acts Theatre, and a Rock-n-Roll ritual with Leigh Ann Hussey.
- Workshops, scholarly papers, author readings and slideshows by special guests and local favorites
- Over 65 vendor booths featuring pagan, magical and earth oriented products.

Admission fee: $70 (includes all events for the entire conference) $30 for a full day, $15 for evenings only.

For more information contact Ancient Ways, 4075 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, CA 94609, (510) 653-3244, or view their web site at www.ancientways.com.

Calendar

Astronomical Oimelc, when the Sun is half way between the Solstice and the Equinox will occur on Feb 3 at 10:30 a.m. PST when the Sun will reach 15 degrees of Aquarius (or by the alternative calculation when the Sun will reach 16 degrees 18 minutes declination on Feb 3 at 1:20 p.m. PST). Oimelc services will be held on Sunday, Feb. 4 at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Oimelc we will be going immediately after the service to AD's house.

Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on Feb. 11, 25, and on March 11. Instead of the regularly scheduled service on Feb. 25, we might be attending the Early Bloomers wildflower walk at the Marin Headlands. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $4.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any Spring EquinoxY.R.XXXVIII Vol. 17 Number 2 March 10th, 2001 c.e.

Spring Equinox Essay:

What is the Equinox?

By Stacey Weinberger

Equinox, three months past the Winter Solstice, Yule, marks the astronomical arrival of Spring. This is when the Sun crosses the celestial equator following the ecliptic moving northward. The celestial equator is the projection of the Earth's equator on the sky. It divides the sky into two equal hemispheres and is everywhere 90 degrees from the celestial poles. If you watched the Sun for the course of a year it would appear to circle the sky. This apparent path of the Sun is the ecliptic. Another way to define it is to say the ecliptic is the projection of the earth's orbit onto the sky.

Days and nights are now of equal length, and at the North Pole the sun rises above the horizon after a six month absence. The Sun rises exactly due East and sets exactly due West. The noonday Sun is shining directly upon the equator.

It is a time of balance. As the days start to warm, the nights remain still cold. While there are new buds of green foliage on the Sweet Gum trees outside my window, the thorny balls from the previous year still hang from their branches, stripped of their seeds by the local wild birds. But it is a time not just of balance in Nature but in our own selves. It is a time to look within and to reevaluate our lives, looking at where we've been this past year, and looking towards our own new growth with the coming of the new season. Perhaps it is not a coincidence that the East, the direction of the dawning Sun, also represents new beginnings.

Mad Sweeney News

> Mountain stream, clear and limpid, wandering down towards the valley, whispering songs among the rushes--oh, that I were as the stream!
>
> Mountain heather all in flower--longing fills me, at the sight, to stay upon the hills in the wind and the heather.
>
> Small birds of the high mountain that soar up in the healthy wind, flitting from one peak to the other--oh, that I were as the bird!
>
> Son of the mountain am I, far from home, making my song; but my heart is in the mountain, with the heather and the small birds.

Welsh; John Ceiriog Hughes; 1833-87

Equinox at the Sunwheel

Visit the University of Massachusetts Sunwheel!

Members of the University community and general public are invited to join Prof. Judith Young of the U.Mass. Department of Astronomy to watch the Sun rise and set over the tall standing stones in the U.Mass. Sunwheel for the upcoming Vernal Equinox. Visitors for the sunrise viewing should arrive at 5:45 a.m., and visitors for the sunset viewing should arrive at 5:15 p.m. The sunrise and sunset events will be held on both Tuesday and Wednesday March 20 and 21, 2001.

This is the first equinox to occur since the tall standing stones were added to the Sunwheel; on the equinoxes, the Sun will be seen to rise and set through the East and West stone portals. The sky will be particularly beautiful in the morning, since the waning crescent Moon will be visible in the East just before sunrise. For those interested in learning about the sky, there will be a presentation that will include the cause of the seasons, the Sun's path in the sky, the phases of the Moon, and the story of building the Sunwheel. Bring your questions, your curiosity, and DRESS VERY WARMLY; a $3 donation is requested. Sunwheel T-shirts and sweatshirts will be available for purchase.

The U.Mass. Sunwheel is located south of Alumni Stadium, just off Rocky Hill Road. It can be easily reached from the center of Amherst, following Amity St. to the west, on the right hand side of the road about 1/4 mile after crossing University Drive. ALL VISITORS SHOULD WEAR WARM CLOTHING, SUITABLE FOR STANDING STILL ON FROZEN OR WET GROUND. In the event of rain, the events will be cancelled. For more information on the U.Mass. Sunwheel, check out the web site at:

http://www.umass.edu/sunwheel/index2.html

And see photos of the recent construction. To arrange a Sunwheel visit for your class or group, call 413-545-4311 or e-mail young@astro.umass.edu

Potential Cure for Oak Killer

From the San Francisco Chronicle, March 9, 2001
Peter Fimrite, Chronicle Staff Writer

Scientists battling the killer disease threatening California's oaks have discovered a potential cure, the first big break in their efforts to curb the fast-spreading plague.

While the discovery may not help wildland areas, it could be the savior for thousands of landmark oak trees in parks and on private property.

Experiments on 90 potted live oak trees in Sonoma County since last August determined that the compound phosphonate all but eliminated the deadly lesions that characterize sudden oak death.

"I am totally excited," Matteo Garbelotto, a forest pathologist at the University of California at Berkeley, told The Chronicle yesterday. "This is an incredibly lethal disease,

and we really don't have anything we can do to stop it once it gets into a tree. This gives us something we can use."

Garbelotto, who has been working day and night for months in the lab, mostly with discouraging results, will be addressing a conference in San Rafael today on the issue.

Sudden oak death has killed tens of thousands of coast live oak, black oak, and tan oak trees along a 190-mile range of coastline between Monterey and Sonoma counties. And it has been spreading at a feverish rate.

Plant biologists recently found the disease in Shreve's oak trees in Santa Cruz County, wild huckleberry bushes in Marin County and commercial rhododendron plants at nurseries in Germany, the Netherlands, and Santa Cruz County.

The phytophthora that causes the disease is the same type of organism responsible for the Irish potato famine in the mid-1800s and the current die-off of Port Orford cedars in the Pacific Northwest.

The pathogen is commonly referred to as a fungus, but, in terms of its evolutionary heritage, is more closely related to brown algae.

This particular strain has proved to be both mysterious and highly adaptable. It has been found in rainwater and in soil, on the leaves and on the stems of trees and plants.

During the experiment, potted trees were infected with the phytophthora in August and in November. Within 48 hours of the second application, all the trees--the newly infected and the ones with 3-month-old lesions--were treated with one of four compounds, copper sulfate, al-fosetyl, metalaxyl and phosphonate.

Garbelotto said some trees received stem injections and some soil drenches, and others were treated topically.

Injection was the most effective form of treatment, and phosphonate was clearly the best compound, reducing fungal growth in the new and old infections three-to-fourfold, according to Garbelotto. The size of the lesions was reduced to virtually nothing.

He said al-fosetyl and metalaxyl were both somewhat effective in killing the pathogen, but there is concern that phytophthora can develop resistance to those compounds based on previous experiments on potatoes. Copper sulfate didn't work on the disease but may prevent the pathogen from entering the tree when it is used as a coating.

Garbelotto emphasized that the data were still preliminary and that a lot of work remained to be done before a specific product could be recommended. There are currently many different product lines selling phosphonate, mostly as a fertilizer.

"We should think of this as kind of an exploratory phase," he said. “We need to refine the treatment and work out methods of administering the chemicals, whether it's through injections, sprays or through soil drenching. We also need to do more tests at different times of the year.”

No matter how effective the chemicals are, they still won't be able to stop the pestilence from spreading.

“It's fantastic news, but it is not going to solve the problem because you're not going to do aerial spraying over seven counties of open space and national forest,” said Marin County Supervisor Cynthia Murray, who has been lobbying hard for emergency funding. “There's just no way to do a massive application.”

Even if a spray were developed, one need only look at the efforts to contain the glassy-winged sharpshooter to see how difficult a statewide campaign could become.

Proposals to spray pesticides on the voracious pest, which has spread the incurable Pierce's disease in 13 counties while feeding on grape vines, has created a furor in Sonoma County. Environmental activists, citing threats to public health, have vowed civil disobedience if anyone tries spraying the vines.

The most anyone can hope for with regard to sudden oak death is that beloved trees like the majestic, and sick, 400-year-old oak at Boyle Park in Mill Valley may now be saved from the wood chipper.

Meanwhile, hikers and bikers are being asked to clean their boots and tires of mud to prevent the disease from spreading. Bills asking for $10 million to fight the disease are scheduled for hearings in the state Senate and Assembly. And a quarantine preventing the movement of oak wood and infected plants across state lines is under consideration by the state and by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Leave No Trace

By Stacey Weinberger

As Druids and lovers of Nature we tend to spend a lot of time outdoors, be it holding services, hiking, or overnight camping. With the coming of Spring and warmer weather and our thoughts turn towards those outings in the woods it is important that we keep in mind the philosophy of Leave no Trace.

Leave No Trace is a program of outdoor ethics managed by the non-profit organization LNT Inc. dedicated to building awareness, appreciation, and most of all, respect for our natural lands. Following these simple principles of Leave No Trace we are able to enjoy our activities outdoors while still preserving our environment:

Plan Ahead and Prepare

1. Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
2. Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
3. Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
4. Visit in small groups. Split larger parties into groups of 4-6.
5. Repackage food to minimize waste.
6. Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.

Travel and Camp on Durable surfaces

1. Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
2. Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
3. Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary. In popular areas
4. Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
5. Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
6. Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent. In pristine areas
7. Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
8. Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

Dispose of Waste Properly

1. Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.

2. Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
3. Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
4. To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

Leave What You Find

1. Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
2. Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
3. Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
4. Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

Minimize Campfire Impacts

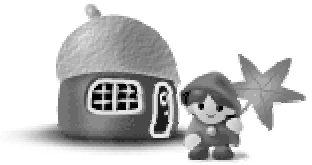
1. Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.
2. Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires.
3. Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
4. Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.

Respect Wildlife

1. Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
2. Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
3. Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
4. Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.
5. Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors

1. Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
2. Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
3. Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.
4. Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
5. Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.



News of the Groves

Monument Grove, Washington D.C.

The D.C. Grove isn't doing well. But Spring is coming soon, along with the Japanese Cherry Blossom Festival which Mike Scharding, AD, is helping to organize with another member of the Grove.

Druid Heart Spirit Grove, Chico, CA

Everything has been going well. Sister Rhiannon has been writing new tunes, making new things, and sewing robes she's embroidering Celtic Knots on. There is a lot of snow up there, what can ya do? Sister Rhiannon is also writing a book on Druidic Ritual with Cymric and Irish deity guides, pronunciation guides, healing meditations, song lists, and more.

Reformed Druidic Wicca, Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross

Thomas Harris of Reformed Druidic Wicca hopes to be going to Washington D.C. this summer to meet with Mike Scharding of Monument Grove to re-establish the line of Archdruidic Succession from the RDNA to RDW. They have a new name that they operate under, the Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross (MOCC), but technically it is a fellowship in the "grouping" of RDW. They have groups spread out all over everywhere with Muskogee, OK, Seattle, WA and Argyle, NY being the three most active. Currently all Groves of the MOCC are independent and proudly autonomous, but there is talk of getting 501(c)(3) status. For more information contact: thomasleeharrisjr@mailcity.com.

Baccharis Grove

Baccharis Grove has been quite busy these last couple of weeks of winter. For Oimelc we revived the Scottish tradition of the Bride-og, a doll representing Bride made out of corn (grain) from the previous harvest. We took a cob of Indian corn and wheat sheaves left from the memorial we held for Emmon last November and fashioned a doll with a linen dress and kerchief, adding dried millet stalks for the arms and legs, and native grasses from the area surrounding the Grove site to form her basket. At the Praise portion of the service the Preceptor read from the Carmina Gadelica and the Grove bid "Let Bride come in!" It looks like our offering of the Bride-og was accepted. The millet has been eaten by the birds and the wheat is beginning to sprout.

After our Grove Pine, Ghiuthais, fell over last year and had to be cut down, we decided to replace it with a native Pine tree. Our research took us to the Digger or Gray Pine (Pinus sabiniana), which is native to the East Bay, particularly the Orinda Hills and Mount Diablo area. We were able to locate one at North Coast Nurseries in Petaluma that specializes in California natives and reforestation. Our Preceptor recounts her tale of trying to dig up the old Ghiuthais:

I went up to the Grove to try and remove the old Pine, try being the operative word. I tried to saw the trunk at the post root portion, but after I got past the bark and into the meat of the tree I couldn't saw anymore because the wood was damp. So I thought to myself, I'll dig all around the stump, loosening it from its earthly binds. I cut through several roots with the aforementioned saw, and continue to dig. Ok this is working. I then moved around to the base of the tree. Broke the damn shovel. So it was old and partially rotted, still, I am disgusted. I took up everything and went back down the hill to the cabin, put on some music, and laid down. Bought a new shovel on the way home. Where's that 20-mule team when you need them?

The Grove has organized a work party in two weeks to take up the shovel again. Volunteers are welcome.

Resources

Siol Cultural Enterprises, a distributor/wholesaler of Gaelic language and Celtic interest books, music, and videos has their new website up and running at http://www.gaelicbooks.com. Their email address is also changing to siol@gaelicbooks.com (or sales@gaelicbooks.com). They have also been given approval to start taking payment using VISA. Just in time for their sale items: All Gàirm books (Dwelly's, Thomson's, Modern English-Gaelic Dictionary, Am Mabinogi, A' Choisir Chiuil, etc.), as well as Bun-Chursa Ghàidhlig, are 15% off when ordered before Mar. 31, 2001! Please note that delivery probably will not occur until late April unless already in stock. E-mail them to reserve a title or for full a list of titles. Sìol Cultural Enterprises 3841 Highway 316, P.O. Box 81, St. Andrew's, NS, CANADA B0H 1X0. Phone/Fax: (902) 863-0416.

Calendar

Spring Equinox, when the Sun crosses the Equator, will occur on March 20, 2001 at 5:31 a.m. PST. Spring Equinox services will be held on Sunday, March 18 at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Spring Equinox we will be going immediately after the service to AD's house. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on March 25, April 8, and April 22 (Earth Day). Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $4.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any Beltane Y.R. XXXIX Vol. 17 Number 3 May 6th, 2001 c.e.

Beltane Essay: Sacred Maypole Tree

By Stacey Weinberger

Beltaine, May Day, the beginning of the Summer half of the year when Nature awakens once again. This is the most widely known of the pagan and Druidic High Days with the practices of paganism having evolved or been adopted into practices of folklore and custom. The marking of the return of life in the veneration of vegetation appear in the words of the old saying "April showers bring May flowers," May Day celebrations, and the dancing around the Maypole with colorful ribbon streamers. It is not surprising that Mircea Eliade's words "the cosmos is symbolized by a tree" and "fertility, wealth, luck, health" are all concentrated on herbs or trees.

Beltaine probably originated as a vegetation, agricultural, and fertility festival. Cattle were driven between two fires to insure their health and fertility before being sent out to green pastureland for summer, with Druids officiating at the ceremony. With the beginning of the summer half of the year the tree embodied the newly awakened spirit of vegetation. The belief was held that the tree-spirit would bless women with children, cause the herds to multiply, and make the crops grow. Houses and farm buildings were bedecked with green boughs and flowery garlands. May flowers were crushed and the juice from them was used to wash the cows' udders.

Nothing symbolized the tree spirit more than the Maypole. Originally a sacred tree, the Maypole became the focal point of Beltaine festivities. A sacred ash tree stood at Uisnech, County Westmeath, an important Druidic center and assembly place where Beltaine was annually celebrated. The Cerne Abbas Giant cut into the hillside above the village in Dorset, possibly dating back to Romano-British times, obviously epitomizes fertility and vitality. For centuries, a fir Maypole was erected on May Eve on the hillside above the giant's head in readiness for the May Day festivities, which were again dedicated to the continuance of fertility. In villages whole trees were felled and set up. Later the pole was permanently left up and then decorated each year for May Day. To this day a few villages in England and local parks and Renaissance faires in the United States still retain the Maypole, which is often painted with red and white spiral stripes. These colors are often used in spring festivities, red signifying the color of life and generative energy, and white, a fresh, new beginning. Again we see the constant theme of renewal and rebirth as the world awakens from its long season of sleep.

Taking a Sit on Recycling

As Druids we don't just worship trees and have a reverence for Nature in name alone. There are things we can do in our daily lives where we can incorporate our beliefs into our daily practice. One of these is using recycled paper products, especially toilet paper. Recycled toilet paper has come a long way from the days of the late 70s and the scratchy material with the consistency of cardboard. Now there are choices equal to regular toilet paper in softness, strength, and absorbency, and they are available at your local supermarket:

Seventh Generation bathroom tissue is available in 2-ply, white, unscented, and without dyes. It is 100% recycled, involves no chlorine bleaching, and is hypoallergenic. It is safe for the environment and for septic tanks.

Second Nature Plus toilet tissue is also available in 2-ply, is 100% recycled, uses a 100% bleach free process, and is 100% post-consumer grade material. Second Nature might have been discontinued by its manufacturer Wisconsin Tissue. Please write in to let us know.

Green Forest is made from 100%-recycled paper, including at least 10% post-consumer paper, and is also safe for septic systems.

If every household in the United States replaced just one roll of 500 sheet virgin fiber toilet paper with 100% recycled we could save 297,000 trees; 1.2 million cubic feet of landfill space, equal to 1,400 full garbage trucks; 122 million gallons of water, a year's supply for 3,500 families of four. Do your job for the Earth Mother!

News of the Groves

Carleton

There will be possibly a few vigils at Carleton during Mike's visit with his internet friends and possibly a Carl or two. The weather is still quite unpleasant, boding well for interesting overnight experiences for all!

Birch Grove

Joan came across this in a discussion from another list the book, Far Pavilions. In this book the protagonist, who had been exposed to different religions, prays to the mountains of his Indian home:

"Lord, forgive three sins that are do to my human limitations.
Thou art everywhere, but I worship Thee here.
Thou art without form, but I worship Thee in these forms.
Thou needst no praise, but I offer Thee these prayers and salutations.
Lord, forgive three sins that are do to my human limitations."

She would like to know if anyone can make a connection between the author and Carleton College, the RDNA, or know how else he might have gotten hold of that prayer.

Birch Grove continues in a kind of limbo. It holds Services whenever Phyllis and I and any third person are in a place of natural beauty and wish to celebrate it. I may hold a few Services this summer in relation to my coven, which is getting inquiries from people who are unfamiliar with the Pagan worldview in general, and need some time before they are ready for Wicca or whatever Path is best for them. I explained how good RDNA is for people in that position, and my High Priestess was intrigued. We may work in her backyard, which has a hilly view, and is bordered by woods,

and there is also a new “Pagan Grove” site at UMass/Amherst which we may try.

It has been a loong cold snowy winter up north here. I was taught that if you have your peas in by Patriot's Day [mid-April], you'll have peas for 4th of July [the traditional 4th meal is salmon, new potatoes and fresh peas]. Well, Patriot's Day, a holiday only observed in Massachusetts, mostly by the running of the Boston Marathon, was this Monday, and so far I can only see parts of my garden. It will be some time still before the snow is gone and the ground workable. However, the crocuses are up, and a couple of daffodils are blooming, so there is hope. Two weeks ago there wasn't even that--it looked like Winter was never going to end. My windowsills are full of baby plants.

Monument Grove

Cherry Blossom festival went well, with 200,000 attendees faithfully worshipping the cherry trees that bestrew Washington DC in this annual ceremony. Thankfully, there were no fatalities this year and the beavers seem healthy. Sine Ceolbhinn is doing well, having recently come out of the closet and dusting off her Druidic finery. We had a nice practice together down by the Rock River Creek. Our Grove's attempt at hand-fishing was hilariously unproductive!!

Grove of One in Garden City, MI

Has disbanded.

Tonga Grove News

Irony is doing quite well, despite the heat, from a picture in the Carletonian newsletter. Tonga experienced a little bit of a shock when the Mir flashed across their sky recently on its earthfall. Several natives were seen previously praying to the gods that some pieces would hit their island so that they could claim profitable damages from the Russians' insurance policy. They were all sorely disappointed.

Druid Heart Spirit Grove

They are almost done completing the standing stone circle and need one more stone to have a circle of eight. They will be having two Beltain rituals with a May Pole this year. The first will be on April 29th, and the second will be on May 5th starting at twelve noon for the May Pole dance, then the ritual, followed by potluck and drumming circle. Rhiannon’s band “Beltain” will be playing with their octave mandolin player Morgan McDow and their Irish flute/Hammered Dulcimer player Dave Cowan. Morgan, and Rhiannon will be doing the music for the May Pole dance.

Rhiannon is looking forward to seeing her newly planted Birch tree clones grow as they are now shooting out little greens which must mean that they are growing roots! She plans on planting them around the Grove site.

Druid Heart Spirit Grove is soon to start building a Celtic Sweat Lodge. They have gotten about ten volunteers, which will be plenty. They have also manifested a butt load of Willow for building the frame.

Creeks Called Groves

They celebrated "First Leaves" festival on April 12th when the first buds of the year have turned into tiny leaves.

Baccharis Grove

After taking three people to remove the tree stump of the old Pine, we finally got our new Pine planted and held a tree dedication for it on April 7. The Preceptor read The Two Trees by William Butler Yeats from his collection of poetry The Rose, 1893. This is a familiar poem to many as favorite Celtic music singer Loreena McKennitt set it to words in her album The Mask and the Mirror.

We have done quite a bit of sprucing up of the Grove site in these last couple of weeks before the Season of Life begins. The new Pine, Ghiuthais, as well as Birch, Cuileann the Holly, and Rose were fertilized, Birch was pruned and mulched, and Rose got a new of wire fence to protect her from the nibbling deer. Even our Ash, which looked as if it had gone into permanent hibernation last winter, appears to be coming up from beneath its blanket of oak leaf compost. And last but not least, and much to the relief of the AD, we are in the process of removing the new poison oak growth from the immediate area of the Grove site.

Tree Meditation

A Meditation from the Druid Heart Spirited Grove

Meditation is the key to trance when it is done correctly. Breathing techniques help induce these states of trance and also awaken the electric governing vessel and the magnetic conception vessel, which helps our outward journey to succeed. Meditation and trance are a pathways between the conscious and sub-conscious for inner therapy, reprogramming, recreating our pasts, healing our core self, etc. We use trance and meditation for all of these plus journeying. Journeying is similar to astral projection except that you are safe and still in your mind, body, and spirit. When you journey into the underworld (Anwyn), you journey into the sea, deep parts of your self where your Ancestral memories exist, genetic and spiritual, past lives also.

There are different levels of trance. We like to use medium trance because you are safe there. Deep trance should only be done by those with much experience or by a guide who leads you by voice.

The tree meditation does many things. It grounds your entire being. It runs Nyvwyres (Sacred Spirit) energy through the governing vessel which runs down through the crown of your head to a spot called the core-star, and the conception vessel which runs up (from the earth) from the bottom of your spine or feet to the core-star. The core-star looks just like it sounds like a small white sun located between your solar-plexus and your navel. Thus uniting the earth and the sky, and filling the channel with Nyvwyre. The tree meditation is also a medium trance state. So instead of ending your meditation when it is done you can slide right into a journey.

Start by finding a quiet place where you will be undisturbed. Unplug your phone. Put a sign on your door “DO NOT DISTURB.” Do your meditation outside if you can find a place and the weather is willing. Have a pillow ready because you are going to sit cross-legged. When you are comfortable you may begin. Take a few deep breaths slowly. First filling your stomach then your lungs. Fill completely. Do this a few times. Focus on letting go of any tension that may have built up during the day. Keep deep breathing as you take your mind and body off any distracting thoughts. THINK NOTHING!

At the bottom of your spine imagine pushing and growing a large taproot down into the earth and feel other roots pushing down. Feel your roots pushing down through rock breaking them apart. Feel your roots feeling water, minerals, and nutrients. Now just take some time to allow them to grow further down until you feel warmth. Feel them reach water.

After you have a strong root system well grounded, feel that earth energy moving up to your lower body (belly area) and developing a wide base trunk. Grow up quickly. Feel the trunk growing up your entire body, and when you get to just above your chest feel branches push their way out. Keep moving up and out. Take some time to do this. Make sure that branches grow out of the crown of your head. Reach those branches for the light of the sun. Feel the warming rays giving you energy. Grow new sprigs and lots of leaves and don't forget to take a deep breath and live. Be a tree for a moment. Notice if there are any animals living in your branches?

Pause...

Now I want you to focus on the earth energy coming up to your core-star, which is directly above your navel. Feel how strong Mother Earth's energy is flowing through you!

Take a moment...

Now feel Father Sky's energy coming down through your branches, down to your core-star at the same time you still feel the earth's energy coming up.

Take a moment...

Now send the Earth's energy up to the sky, out your branches, and send the skies energy down into the earth through your roots. As soon as both are united you see a bright light that is gold-white. It is coming from your core-star. Back in that light. Feel the love. Let that light burst throughout your entire being. You are meant to be here now.

To continue with journey…

Now stay within and visualize that gold-white light filling you up trying to burst out of your bark. All the way out to the ends of your branches, and all the way down to the tips of your roots, especially your taproot. Once you have done this, imagine that you as your human self are smaller that normal and inside this tree that is filled with light. You are floating around as if there is no gravity. Now turn yourself upside down and look at the opening of the taproot that looks far into the underworld. It looks like it goes forever, all you see are its sides and the light. You decide to investigate. But first you find that there is a small white pouch tied around your waist, and you realize that it must have a purpose so you open it, and inside there are three golden seeds. You put them back in the pouch and continue on your journey. You grab a hold of the bark and pull yourself into the tunnel, as you are small inside this great tree and you are light energy you find it very easy to move along.

As you keep looking ahead it seems as though it will take forever but as you continue to move you see the bottom of the root and it looks like it is open at the end. As you get closer you see a beautiful luminous light that is tranquil to see. Upon reaching the opening you see a reflection, you grow more aware of the object that the reflection is coming from, and you see that it is a cauldron. A very large cauldron that could hold one to two hundred gallons. It appears to be water. Looking into that water it's dark at first just reflecting that luminous light, then you notice that an image appears, some kind of writing. Some ancient symbol that may have belonged to your ancestors. Look very closely. Memorize it, you may know it, it may even be unfamiliar to you, but remember it well...

The experience has made you feel somehow, special, like you were given a gift. Then you realize that you must also leave an offering so you reach for your pouch and open it, allowing the golden seeds to fall freely to the sacred waters. You will receive a sign that the offering was received. After you have received this you may return back up the root to your core self…

Once you are back in the trunk of the tree, expand your body to fill the tree and return to the earthly plane, remember to keep your core self intact.

It may be helpful to record this reading it aloud into a tape deck allowing for the amount of space you will need in different places during the meditation and journey.

Resources

Part of a Druid's training is being able to identify native wildflowers, shrubs, and trees, and to learn their medicinal uses and as well as esoteric properties. To help in learning the plants in your area the Missal-Any presents a listing of recommended field guides for across North America.

The Audubon Society Field Guides are the first all-photographic field guides and have vinyl covers to protect them from the elements. The books are divided into three parts: color plates, family and species descriptions, and appendices with a glossary. The series includes Field Guide to North American Wildflowers, Western Region; North American Wildflowers, Eastern Region; North American Trees, Western Region; and North American Trees, Eastern Region.

The National Audubon Society also publishes handy Pocket Guides small enough to fit in your back pocket or jacket without the weight of a larger book. The photographs are close-ups with good detail. These titles are: Flowers (Eastern Region), Flowers (Western Region); Familiar Trees of North America West; and Trees (Eastern Region).

The Peterson Field Guide Series have excellent line drawings and beautiful colored illustrations, and shows what features to look for to tell one species from another. In the series are Pacific States Wildflowers, Rocky Mountain Wildflowers, Wildflowers (northeast and north-central North America), Southwestern and Texas Wildflowers, Edible Wild Plants (eastern and central North America), Ferns (northeast and north-central North America), Western Trees, California and Pacific Northwest Forests, and Rocky Mountain and Southwest Forests, and Medicinal Plants.

Nature Study Guild Publishers has a Finders series of 4" x 6" pocket-sized guides identifying native plants of the United States and Canada. A dichotomous key leads you through a series of questions about the plant you're trying to identify. Each question makes you chose between two possibilities (dichotomous means dividing in two), and each choice brings you closer to the name of the species.

The series is quite extensive with 22 titles: Pacific Coast Tree Finder, Pacific Coast Berry Finder, Redwood Region Flower Finder, Pacific Coast Fern Finder, Sierra Flower Finder, Tree Finder, Winter Tree Finder, Fern Finder: A Guide to Native Ferns of Northeastern and Central North America, Berry Finder: A Guide to Native Plants with Fleshy Fruits for Eastern North America, Flower Finder: A Guide to Identification of Spring Wild Flowers and Flower Families, Winter Weed Finder: A Guide to Dry Plants in Winter, Rocky Mountain Tree Finder, Rocky Mountain Flower Finder, and Desert Tree Finder.

Calendar

Astronomical Beltaine, when the Sun is half way between the Spring Equinox and the Summer Solstice, will occur as 15 degrees of Taurus on May 5 at 03:46 PDT or as 16 degrees 18 minutes decl. on May 5 at 00:53 PDT. Beltaine services will be held on Saturday, May 5, at Solar Noon which is now 1 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Beltaine we will be going immediately after the service to AD's house. Call for potluck "theme" ideas. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon, 1 p.m. on May 20, and June 3. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $4.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any Summer Solstice Y.R.XXXIX Vol. 17 Number 4 June 21st, 2001 c.e.

Summer Solstice Essay: Belenos

By Stacey Weinberger

Midsummer, Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year. On this day the Sun rises and sets at its most northerly points along the horizon and reaches its most highest point in the sky of the entire year at Solar Noon (1 p.m. daylight time).

While there are several Celtic deities who are considered a Sun god or goddess, in the RDNA tradition it is Belenos who we honor and praise this Midsummer day.

Belenos, also known as Beli, Belin, or Belinus in Britain, is perhaps associated with the Phoenician word Ba'al, meaning master. The variant Belenos is found widely distributed in early inscriptions in Gaul and northern Italy. Beli Mawr (Great Beli) appears in The Mabinogion as a powerful king of Britain and ancestor-deity of the Welsh royal line, and may be identical in origin to Belenos Himself. The ancient name element "Bel-" (root), is also found in the Latin bellus, meaning bright or brilliant, beautiful, and all the words subsequently derived from it; in the Goidelic "bile," meaning sacred tree, and other words of distant origin.

Bel was the young-god counterpart of the old-god Bran, as Jupiter was the counterpart of Saturn in the Roman pantheon or as Zeus was the to Cronos in the Greek pantheon. In general the first half of the year may well have been associated with Bran and the second half with Bel or Belenos.

Caesar's Gaulish Apollo is generally to be taken to be Belenos in His native guise. Apollo is actually a latecomer to the Greek pantheon, and one of a variety of theories about His origins is that He was adopted from the Celts. Both are known as gods of light and of the sun. Both are gods of sacred springs. In the Shetlands as well as in the Orkneys, the sick visited the wells, which were circled sun-wise before drinking from them. This is another tribute to Belenos, who like Apollo, is also a healer-god. Water and solar symbolism are closely linked in healing cults.

Whereas dedications to the Celtic gods in the form of inscribed altars appear to chiefly recur within one area, a few individual dedications are distributed widely. Belenos was one deity to be honored in such a way. His dedications are relatively common and widespread in Celtic Europe, particularly in southern and central Gaul, North Italy, and Noricum in the eastern Alps. Ausonius, a Bordeaux poet writing in the later half of the fourth century A.D. mentions sanctuaries in Acquitaine and writes of Phoebicius, who had been a temple-priest there.

Belenos is commemorated in place names as well. In England examples include Billingshurst in Sussex and Billingsgate in London. In France a number of places bear His name. The high rocky islet off the coast of Normandy formerly called Tombelaine, which in the slightly altered form of Les Tombelenes is a reef off Jersey's north coast. Belenos also appears to be venerated in some parts as St. Bonnet.

It is thus not coincidence that in the liturgy for the Special Order of Worship for the Summer Solstice it is suggested that the altar fire be especially large. We welcome Belenos on this day of days asking Him to fill us with life, and warmth, and light our way as we honor Him with His element, and enjoy this glorious season before He begins to wend His way southward again.

Hail Belenos, God of the Sun!
Hail Belenos, Giver of Life!
Hail Belenos, Lord of Light!

News of the Groves

Carleton

Skip Wolcott had his vigil for Third Order last Friday night, 8 June. We have a good crowd of people who are enthusiastic. Skip is also Patriarch of the new Order of Hephasteus (Vulcan) the fire god. Carleton is going on Summer break until September.

Monument Grove

Regular services have begun on Sunday morning near Georgetown, but no one has shown up to participate with me, as I restart the Grove (besides a few passing squirrels and robins). We've undergone a few liturgical changes on the Order of worship. As listed below:

Vestments:

Due to my wife's mischief, my red and white ribbons are now sewn into an inseparable loop with knots where they join. These symbolize Beltane and Samhain. Before starting the ritual, I rotate it once, and then guestimate the date on the red-ribbon (i.e. June 2 is about 18% past the knot), give it a kiss and put that spot at the nape of my neck. You can tell the date by looking at me.

Invocation:

We dance in a circle while singing and then we've added two lines:

"You have no need of names, yet we call on these names."
"We know not all your ways, yet seek to live in harmony with them."

Akita Grove, Japan

Patrick Haneke has produced the ultimate quick and easy ritual for those tired of schlepping baskets of materials, scripts, and such to the site. This can be performed anywhere, even in the middle of Wall Street without drawing too much attention. Pat calls it the "Quick Order," (but other members of the Grove, call it "Lugh's Loogey Liturgy," "Mannanan's Mucus Mass," "Sirona's Spit Service," etc.) and it is best done solitarily (as you'll see):

The Quick Order Liturgy

1. Scratch a sigil at your feet.
2. Whistle or hum something.
3. Ask, “How was that?” Look around you for signs.
4. Say, “Not bad, huh?”
5. Ask, “What is precious to us?”
6. Answer, “Waters.”
7. Ask, “Where is the waters?”
8. Answer, “Right here.” Pour something (or spit) into your hand.
9. Raise your hand.
10. Say, “Bless these and all waters that give us life.”
11. Drink the waters.
12. Say, “Here’s the extra.” Return the extra to the ground.
13. Think of something clever, or ordain people.
14. Say, “Good bye”
15. Rub away the sigil.

(Estimated time for completion: 2 minutes 12 seconds)

Druid Heart Spirited Grove

Druid Heart Spirited Grove is getting ready for an all night jumping over the fires of Alban Hefin on June 24th. The sixth night of the New Moon Mistletoe rite falls on the same night so we will be having two rituals. Then next we are preparing for an open Druid campout for Gwyl Ifan (Lughnasadh) on the weekend of Aug. 4th. Anyone who wishes to attend, send me an e-mail to jbeltain@pacbell.net or a snail mail to Druid Heart Spirit, 1959 Vilas Rd., Cohasset, CA. 95973.

Our stone circle was completed just before the last Beltain which we had thirty-five attend including my Catholic father who completely enjoyed himself dancing the May Pole, and made it through the whole ritual! I don't think that that will be his only Druid ritual he attends, I'm almost done with the book I've been working on for so long. All I have next to do is the Gaelic pronunciation guide and glossary, and the artwork. I need any other authors of similar books to read it for me and write any comments back. I think a good title would be Workbook for a Druid’s Healing Ritual.

Duir de Danu Grove of California

The Grove had a ritual for BAPA's (Bay Area Pagan Assemblies) Gaia's Gateway. The ArchDruid MaDagda did an outstanding job of leading the ritual and doing his by now renowned Tree of Life Guided Meditation. All the rest of the evening after the ritual we got compliments on it.

After Stephen Abbott McCauley and his wife Debby moved up to Sacramento and took the Hazelnut Mother Grove with them, there was a definite vacuum in the Silicon Valley. Druidically speaking, I was going to put together a Grove I called Boudiccea's Birch, but MaDagda beat me to the punch with Duir de Danu. If you know anything about the god Dagda, you know about the ever-full cauldron of delicious food. MaDagda is a splendid cook, which is welcome to Druids, we being a chronically famished bunch. Duir de Danu (Oaks of Danu) had its first ritual for Samhain at Sanborn Park in Los Gatos. It was a beautiful, but very expensive site. The Grove then sat dormant thru the Season of Sleep until MaDagda arranged to do the Gaia's Gateway ritual for the month of May.

MaDagda is also preparing to move from Newark in the East Bay to a house in Cupertino. Now there will be a place to have Celtic Nights during the Season of Sleep. MaDagda, Darren (my significant other), and I went up to Sacramento at least twice to do demo Druid rituals for Sacramento Cross Traditional Circles, the Sacramento answer to Gaia's Gateway. On the last Sunday of each month, a different group does a ritual in its tradition. It is followed by a potluck feast. The people of Gaia's Gateway follow their rituals with a meeting at Marie Callendar's (a local restaurant famous for its pies).

Creeks Called Rivers Groves

In early June Creeks Called Rivers had our first ever yardfood potluck. The idea was to create dishes from the various edible weeds and common plants here in Midwest suburbia.

Happily, no one was hurt, and we ended up with some surprisingly palatable fare. We're going to work on making some repeatable recipes, and make them available on the CCR site. If anyone else out there is interested in yardfood (or is an accomplished yardfood chef), tell Feck (feck@theoldreligion.com).

All things considered, things are going well here in Columbus. I finally bought a house (on Royal Forest Blvd. no less), so Creeks Called Rivers now has a permanent (if not particularly private) outdoor space.

This evening I sat on my patio and began re-reading Drawing Down the Moon by fading sun and flickering candlelight. I heard the first cricket of the year. Life is good; and the Reform is, indeed, groovy.

Baccharis Grove

Sometime between Yule and the first service of the New Year in the electricity went out in the little cabin we rent below the Grove site on the property of our esteemed posthumous member Emmon. Getting permission from the estate several weeks ago to have electricity restored, the lawyer for the estate recommended an electrician, who unfortunately turned out to be a flake. After three weeks going back and forth, missed appointments, and no work or estimate done I fire him. Keeping in Emmon's spirit I wanted to look for an electrician who was a woman (deciding this even before I got a chance to fire the other fellow). Doing a search on San Francisco Bay area web sites for a directory of women in business proves futile, so I call the local feminist bookstore for any leads. The woman on the phone gives me the name of two woman contractors who would be able to recommend an electrician. I call number two. She says she is a contractor but is also an electrician. She is very matter of fact, understands the job, describes what needs to be done, provides an estimate. Fine, she is hired.

When I call her back to coordinate a time and date I could tell by her voice that she was of a generation of women in the trades who had to fight to where she got and is probably in her late 40s to mid 50s. Hmm. I get to thinking. I've got a copy of Emmon's address book that we used to locate friends to invite to his memorial Samhain of '99. I get it out and look under the appropriate place.

This woman's name was there...same number.

I gasp.

And the freaky experience continues. I call the electrician back and tell her I want to ask her something that might make it easier for her to find the house and cabin. I ask her if she knew Emmon and she says yes! In fact she had worked on that very cabin before!! The last time was in '97. She says that when she heard Emmon died she wanted to get

in contact with someone who knew her, but didn't know how. I guess she has now.

I find it amazing, when being open to otherworldly experiences, as Druids tend to be, how we are at times directed to do something. It validates our sense of path and connection, and is both awe inspiring and humbling when it happens.

What is Arbor Day?

Arbor Day is a nationally celebrated observance that encourages tree planting and tree care. National Arbor Day is celebrated each year on the last Friday in April.

The first Arbor Day was celebrated in the state of Nebraska in 1872, in response to a state proclamation urging settlers and homesteaders in that prairie state to plant trees that would provide shade, shelter, fruit, fuel, and beauty for residents of the largely treeless plains.

On that first Arbor Day, more than one million trees were planted in Nebraska's communities and on its farms. The Arbor Day idea was promoted by J. Sterling Morton, (possibly a relative of the RDNA's Shirine Morton?) editor of the Nebraska City News, who later helped the idea spread to neighboring states and eventually to all of the United States and many other nations.

Today, Arbor Day celebrations are held in communities all over America, with the date determined by the best tree-planting times in each area. Celebrations are held as early as January and February in some southern states, and as late as May in more northern locations. For information on the date your state will observe Arbor Day, contact the National Arbor Day Foundation.

National Tree

It could be that the United States is a country of closet Druids! The Oak was voted the national tree.

April 27, 2001. The people have selected the oak as their choice for America's National Tree in a nationwide vote hosted on the Arbor Day Foundation web site. Results of the Vote for America's National Tree were announced April 27th at a tree planting ceremony on the Capitol Grounds in Washington, D.C.

"The oak is a fine choice to represent all of America's trees, and to exemplify the importance of trees in our lives," John Rosenow, president of the Arbor Day Foundation, said. "People of all ages and backgrounds responded enthusiastically to the vote, which was the first time that the entire American public has been able to state their pick for a national emblem."

People were invited to vote for one of 21 candidate trees, based on broad tree categories (genera) that included the state trees of all 50 states and the District of Columbia, or to write in any other tree selection. The redwood, maple, pine, and dogwood rounded out the top five choices.

An oak was planted the same afternoon at Arbor Day Farm in Nebraska City, Nebraska, the birthplace of Arbor Day in 1872.

"We undertook this vote to remind Americans of just how vital trees are to us all, and to emphasize the history and grandeur of our trees," Rosenow said. "By any standard, oak merits the distinction of being named the people's choice for America's National Tree."

Among the many strong attributes of oak, Rosenow cited its diversity, with more than 60 species growing in the United States.

"This magnificent tree is significant in sheer numbers alone," he said, "with oak trees being America's most widespread hardwoods. From the earliest settlement of our country, oaks have been prized for their shade, beauty, and lumber.

"Oak's amazing strength and longevity have also made this tree a central part of our history," he added, "with leaders as diverse as Abraham Lincoln, William Penn, and Andrew Jackson being associated with them. Another early 'hero' of American history, 'Old Ironsides,' or the USS Constitution, was famed for repelling British cannonballs thanks to its thick, live oak hull. The American people have chosen wisely in so honoring the oak."

The Arbor Day Foundation is a million-member, nonprofit education organization that helps people plant and care for trees.

To print out a poster of the Oak as the National Tree go to:

http://www.arborday.org/NationalTree/NToakPoster_lrg.PDF

This 8.5 x 11 inch image can be printed on a color or a black and white printer.

This information is courtesy of the National Arbor Day Foundation at http://www.arborday.org or call 402-474-5655 or write 100 Arbor Avenue, Nebraska City, NE 68410.

Celebrate the Celtic Wheel of Life with Mara Freeman

Mara Freeman, British writer, storyteller, Archdruidess of the Druid Clan of Dana, an Irish Druid order, faculty member at the University of Creation Spirituality in Oakland, California, and author of Kindling the Celtic Spirit offers The Feast of Lughnasa: A One-Day Workshop on the Celtic Harvest Festival. Sunday, July 29, 10am to 5.30pm, Lotus Heart Center, 530 Sunlit Lane, Santa Cruz.

In this one-day workshop you will:

Learn all about the gods and goddesses who preside at this sacred time.

Find out about Lughnasa customs and traditions of Ireland, Scotland and Wales from ancient to modern times.

Listen to Celtic myths and legends of the harvest.

We will then take the teachings of this hallowed time into our souls through ritual, song, meditation and circle dance. Special Guest Linda Carol Risso, teacher of sacred arts and illustrator of Kindling the Celtic Spirit, will teach a traditional Lughnasa craft.

The cost is $89.00 per person and craft materials are included in the fee. Major credit cards are accepted. Call to register: 831 644 9393 or 800 694 1957 (toll-free) or email: events@celticspirit.org

Register early! Space is limited!

Resources

Contributed by Alex Stewart, Second Order.

"Living off the Land"

Contacts: Yes, we all want that mountain cabin, but we need a little help from our friends.

Helpful Internet Sites:

Backwoods Home Magazine: www.backwoodshome.com

Country Home Magazine: www.countryhomemYag.com

Homesteading/Rural Living Site: www.yonderway.com

Rural Living Web Magazine: www.rural-living.com

Rural Living Canada: www.torpw1.netcom.ca//~kenruss/rural.htm

Homesteaders Ring: www.mcsi.net/ssp/homesteaders

Back Home Magazine: www.backhomemagazine.com

Helpful Books and Magazines:

Readers Digest, Back to Basics: How to Learn and Enjoy Traditional American Skills, (1987)

Skip Thomsen and Cat Freshwater "The Modern Homestead Manual" (1994)

Countryside and Small Stock Magazine 800-551-5691, (715) 785-7979

Backwoods Home Magazine, PO Box 40, Montague, CA 96064

Back Home Magazine, 119 Third Ave. West, Hendersonville, NC 28792

Calendar

Summer Solstice, when the Sun enters Cancer, will occur on June 21, at 12:38 a.m. PDT. Solstice services will be held on Saturday, June. 24 at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of the Solstice we will be going immediately after the service to AD's house. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on July 8 and 22. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $4.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any Lughnasadh Y.R. XXXIX Vol. 17 Number 5 August 1st, 2001 c.e.

Lughnasadh Essay: The Harvest

By Stacey Weinberger

Lughnasadh, funeral games of Lugh in honor of his foster mother, the beginning of the harvest, the Feast of the First Fruits. Technically still summer one can already feel the chill of the coming fall in the air here in Northern California. Though the sun is still setting late into the evening, the daylight hours begin to shorten and effort is begun in earnest to bring in the harvest while there is still light in the sky.

Lughnasadh was a festival that lasted a month long, beginning in mid-July and ending mid-August. It was a time of great feasting and games, as well as being a time of assemblies where political and legal matters were settled. Origins of the festival tell that it was established by Lugh to commemorate his foster-mother Tailtiu, the last queen of the Fir Bolg, who died at Teltown, (in County Meath) on August 1. After clearing the great forests of Ireland for cultivation she collapsed from exhaustion, and as she was dying asked Lugh to hold funeral games in her honor every August.

This year the wheat we left from the offering of the Bride-og beside the Grove altar at Oimelc sprouted. As part of our Lughnasadh service we will be re-enacting the Celtic ceremony of the Iolach Buana, the Reaping Salutation. As is tradition, we will be using a sickle, freshly polished and sharpened for the occasion.

The practice of the reaping salutation appears to be related to the "crying the neck" custom that was practiced on large farms in Devon. An old man, or someone else acquainted with the ceremonies, would go around to the sheaves as the laborers were reaping the last field of wheat, and pick out a little bundle of the best he could find. This bundle he would tie up very neatly and plat and arrange the straws very tastefully. This was called "the neck" of the wheat. After the field had been cut, the reapers, binders, and the women stood around in a circle. The person with "the neck" stood in the center of the circle, grasping it with both hands. He would first stoop and hold it near the ground, and all the men forming the ring would take off their hats, stooping and holding them to the ground in imitation of the person with "the neck." They then would all begin in a very prolonged and harmonious tone to cry "the neck!" at the same time slowly raising themselves upright, and elevating their arms and hats above their heads. The person with "the neck" did this also raising it on high. This was done three times.

The cries then changed to "Wee yen! Way yen!" which were sounded in the same harmonious manner three times. After this everyone burst out in joyous laughter with much capering about. One of the laborers would then grab "the neck" and run as fast as he could to the farmhouse, where the dairy maid or one of the other female domestics stood at the door with a pail of water ready to douse him, reminiscent of a rain charm. "The neck" was then hung in a place of prominence and honor within the farmhouse where it remained until the spring when it was mixed with the seed corn before it was sown or fed to the horses or cattle at the start of ploughing.

Beannachadh Buana, Reaping Blessing

From the *Carmina Gadelica*,
Collected by Alexander Carmichael

The day the people began to reap the corn was a day of commotion and ceremonial in the townland. The whole family repaired to the field dressed in their best attire to hail the God of the harvest.

Laying his bonnet on the ground, the father of the family took up his sickle, and facing the sun, he cut a handful of corn. Putting the handful of corn three times sunwise round his head, the man raised the "Iolach Buana," reaping salutation. The whole family took up the strain and praised the God of the harvest (Ed.: Michael, who Lugh became co-opted by in Christian times), who gave them corn and bread, food and flocks, wool and clothing, health and strength, and peace and plenty.

When the reaping was finished the people had a trial called "cur nan corran," casting the sickles, and "deuchain chorran," trial of hooks. This consisted, among other things, of throwing the sickles high in the air, and observing how they came down, how each struck the earth, and how it lay on the ground. From these observations the people augured who was to remain single and who was to be married, who was to be sick and who was to die, before the next reaping came around.

God Bless Thou Thyself my reaping,
Each ridge, and plain, and field,
Each sickle curved, shapely, hard,
Each ear and handful in the sheaf,
Each ear and handful in the sheaf.

Bless each maiden and youth,
Each woman and tender youngling,
Safeguard them beneath Thy shield of strength,
And guard them in the house of the saints,
Guard them in the house of the saints.

Encompass each goat, sheep and lamb,
Each cow and horse, and store,
Surround Thou the flocks and herds,
And tend them to a kindly fold,
Tend them to a kindly fold.

For the sake of Michael head of hosts,
Of Mary fair-skinned branch of grace,
Of Bride smooth-white of ringleted locks,
Of Columba of the graves and tombs,
Columba of the graves and tombs.

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove

Carleton College is on summer break until September. Ehren reports that he is in Ann Arbor, enjoying some high-level physics courses. He didn't know there was a RDNA Grove there 1973-76, but he cannot seem to find an adequate place to worship yet.

Akita Grove, Japan

It is rainy season in Northern Japan, which have dampened many of our outdoor frolics, forcing us to look toward indoor entertainments. With the heat and humidity, much of the grove is not willing to do much, although we are planning a trip up to the mountains to cool off. Nozomi and I will be camping for a week and a half in the World Heritage area "Shirakami (White God?) Mountains." We will meditate, perform austerities, practice waterfall meditation, and perhaps some frolicking with the foxes. This is inspired by the Yamabushi (mountain saints) who wear ridiculous decorations while testing their spirits, visiting mountain shrines, doing dangerous stunts, and learning wilderness skills. Since there are no roads in the area, we intend to go in about three days and make camp. Some members of our Grove will join us on July 28th to have our Lughnasadh service closer to the trailhead. Unfortunately we cannot have a campfire in that forest, but we will have races, tests of strengths, a feast and a handfasting. Nozomi and I will renew. We pray the rice harvest will be bountiful.

Volcano Grove, Tonga

One of the men I work with here, Saia, by name, has been asking me about Druidism. Religion plays a huge role in Tongan life, and I often ask him to describe parts of its impact. Invariably he returns the questions: "What are the religious duties of a Druid?" "What money does the church collect, and what is it used for?" "What are the requirements for being a priest?" "What obligations do they have?" "Do they serve for life?" "Can they marry?" "Are there Druidic schools?" "To what moral code are Druids bound?" As it is the delicious doom of every Druid to answer such things for his or her self, I can only pass the questions on. May they stimulate much thinking.

A thing that fascinates me about his line of questioning is its purely practical focus. Not "What do you believe?" but "What do you do?" In a way it is not such a bad place to start. Actions are driven by values that may be derived from and supported by wildly divergent beliefs. Thus, if it be found that a group of Druids hold similar values, they can act in concert, even if those values are supported by different or even incompatible beliefs, which each individual has developed through his or her independent search for spiritual truth. The forum then becomes: I value X; therefore I will do Y. This shift in paradigms has immediate consequences. Not the least being that it moves one out of the highly contested and poorly articulated realm of theology. Values, furthermore, seem to have a longer half-life than beliefs, which may suddenly shift in the light of new experience. Changes in what people value come only--I suspect--with a distinct change in a person's character, which experience shows is rare indeed. The challenge is that one must engage in serious introspection to discover to which values one is really committed.

Somehow or other I have now been here over a year. Next Beltaine will mark my release from the Peace Corps. Still no clear plan on what is to follow. Japan is looking less likely. So is traveling right round the world, a trip many ex-volunteers arrange. I have gotten too deeply into this culture to enjoy a touristic whirlwind of several dozen others. I intend to see many other countries, but I wish to know them personally, and that will take time. I know I will return to the states, see my family, and maybe publish a few stories. If possible I would like to criss-cross the country a time or two, visiting all my scattered friends and correspondents. Perhaps I will build a new harp and simply be a bard for a while. 'Tis still too soon to tell.

Monument Grove

With the influx of pilgrims (and the fourth of July festival), D.C. is fully charged up. But, all is quiet here in despite the usual hullabaloo. All in all it is a pleasant summer. I've been busy with Japanese classes and keeping the website up to date with all the new Groves joining it. We are now at the ridiculous level of 27 or so Groves. The vast majority of which are probably what you would call "Protogroves" in the official sense but, that only means they don't have a constitution and a Third Order Druid yet. I have gotten a membership from ADF, yes me, so that I can keep tabs on our granddaughter group; which appears as busy as ever. Take care!

Draoi Croi Croga Grove

The Solstice was peaceful. We had just a few people here to celebrate with; everyone else was either out of town or too hard to contact. I've been working on trying to contact and organize for a campout for Lughnasa here on my property. I wanted to have a full on festival with workshops, morning rituals, Bardic fire circle etc. But, by the time I got my printer fixed to make the flyers, that computer burned out. We are still doing the campout on the weekend of Aug. 4-5, it might not be as large as I hoped. If anyone wants to attend, please e-mail me at: jbeltain@pacbell.net

MOCC Muskogee/Mother Grove

Br. Thomas Lee Harris, Jr. returned from the pilgrimage to Lawrenceville, GA on April 1st, making him the April Fool's Archdruid, apparently. There was an attempt to return on Good Friday so he could step off the bus saying "Muskogee, Muskogee, thou who killest the prophets," in recall of that fabulous pre-Reform Jewish Druid Br. Jesus' words in the gospel account concerning his entry into Jerusalem, but the glorious opportunity was foregone in order to be there for friends having medical problems. There was a drumming hour on July 14 near Arrowhead Mall in Muskogee, but, being Oklahoma in the Summertime, it was just too dang hot. Two former members of the Muskogee Grove will be returning by Lammas, and an attempt at making the Grove much more active will be made, provided a decent schedule can be arrived at.

Baccharis Grove

Baccharis Grove is on hiatus the month of July due to our Preceptor participating in the Live Oak Renaissance Festival in Santa Barbara. She reports:

Even though I am not able to attend services, which I sorely miss, I am finding that I am in other ways able to uphold my Druidic practices, even unwittingly. Now this faire takes place in a California Coastal Live Oak forest that is beautiful to behold. Deer graze in the ravine. Western bluebirds fill the air, and there is evidence of wild turkey by their square-tipped feathers left on the ground. We arrived quite late the night before workshops and set up were to begin. I parked the car, turned off the engine, and then realized the car would get pretty hot sitting in the middle of field, so I moved it to beneath one of the oaks.

On Sunday while loading the car for the trip home small light green leaves on the ground caught my eye. These were not the dark green of the live oak! Upon closer inspection I saw that they were mistletoe. I looked up and located the hanging boughs in the branches of the oak tree. I remembered Pliny the Elder's words in his account of the mistletoe ceremony, "The mistletoe, however, is found but rarely upon the oak; and when found, is gathered with due religious ceremony…" I felt extremely lucky and honored to have found this particular oak to park under. Was it coincidence, or instinct?

Last weekend I went by the corn dollies booth to purchase a birthday present for a friend. There also for sale were Bridghid's crosses made of wheat. Wanting to buy one from a Pagan-friendly source I bought it as well. Later that night our guild master was struggling, having a difficult time trying light a fire in our fire pit. Being practiced from setting our Grove's altar fire I offered my assistance and built a "Texas firebox." Lo and behold it lit immediately! I couldn't help but think of the corn dollie I had bought earlier, and of Bride, goddess of the hearth and fire. Was it coincidence, or instinct? In the morning there were a few embers smoldering but they were not lighting. I once again used my skill at building a fire. This time the fire lit before I had even finished. I thanked Bride once again for Her help.

New Grove Announcements!

Dragon Oak

A new Grove has been formed in Virginia Beach, VA. Contact: Penny Kotyk via email at HexxOmbres@aol.com or through MSN Messenger at dragonryder65@hotmail.com. Their homepage is http://www.geocities.com/dragonoak1/index.html

Candle Grove, Whittier, CA

Contact Dusty White at ohmygodiam@aol.com.

Order of the Mithril Star

Greetings from Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd, the Mother Grove of the Order of the Mithril Star of the Reformed Druids of North America (Southern Oregon Branch). Our Mother Grove's name is Welsh and it means "Circle of Walkers Between Worlds," an allusion both to the Druidic Shamanism we practice and in honor of our co-founder, Adam Walks Between Worlds, who passed to Tir Na Og in February 1997.

We have been in existence since Samhain 1995 and currently have three Groves total and over 57 members throughout the United States. Although we started out as a Thelemic oriented tradition of eclectic Witchcraft, with a heavy influence of Heinleinism, our practices have evolved over the last few years to a much more Celtophilic, Druidic focus and have very recently affiliated with the RDNA as an expression of our Druidry.

We are proud to be representatives of RDNA and hope to live up to her high standards of scholarship.

Our website is currently located at http://www.ormus.org/mithril.

May you never thirst,
Stephen Gabriel
Vice-Arch Druid
Order of the Mithril Star of the Reformed Druids of North America

Amon Sul Grove

The summer solstice was celebrated by observing the sunrise and sunset at the Sacred Circle. The Waters of Life was consumed on a regular basis during and between the two ceremonies. The Grove has adopted the following tenets:

1. The Amon Sul Grove is devoted to the worship of Nature.
2. We believe that all Druids are equal and consequently we do not recognize any hierarchical structures or "Orders."
3. All members are authorized to conduct any and all rites and rituals related to Druidism.
4. All offices are strictly functional and do not carry any status beyond conducting necessary organizational tasks of the Grove. The Arch-Druid shall publicly represent the Grove. The Scribe shall be responsible for the Grove correspondence. The Purser shall be responsible for handling the Grove finances.
5. Anyone wishing to be a member of the Grove shall inform the Scribe of such intent.

We will soon have a web-page up and running. Keep an eye out for it! Contact the Grove by sending an email to Gandalf952@cs.com

The Chronicle and the Ballad of the Death of Dalon ap Landu

In 1999, the Hazelnut Grove, in a period of isolation and frustration with no reading material on Dalon Ap Landu (a God only known to the RDNA, apparently we discovered him in 1963) decided to replace him with the much better documented "Hu Gadarn," who has a history running back to 1703 when Iolo Morganwg discovered him.

The reason for the ballad about the battle is that the AD wanted to just ditch Dalon Ap Landu because he couldn't find any literature on him, and he was afraid that we would be laughed out of the room by those for whom we did demo rituals. He did, however, find literature on Hu Gadern. Well, as always in the Reform, there were those of us who rebelled and felt that Dalon Ap Landu should not be just unceremoniously dumped like a bad date. And it hit me one Friday night during our Druid Think Tank meeting. If DAL must die, let him die, as any Celt would want to, in battle. So, I wrote the chronicle and the ballad.

We figure that he was a thought form created by the founding fathers of the Reform, because still being Christians, they felt uneasy about calling up any real Pagan deities. It is my personal belief that by now as a result of having been called upon for 30 plus years, he is at least an eggregore by now, and one day could attain true godhood. And in ritual, whenever Hu Gadern's name is mentioned, we whisper Dalon Ap Landu's name that it may remain a mystery to the multitude.

The Death of Dalon ap Landu (Prose Chronicle Version)

And in those days a great cry went up from those of the cross traditional circles that a ritual shall be held to show the multitude what the Druids of the Reform did in their worship. In the writing of the ritual for the common worship, the scholars and Druids had pored through tome after tome in the Arch Druid's great Celtic library, but could find no reference for the name Dalon ap Landu, or even of his progenitor Landu, and much did the ArchDruid fear the ridicule of the scholars of the cross traditional circles. But a name did come up. One Hu Gadern was the Lord of the Groves for the ancient Cymry, and so his name replaced that of Dalon Ap Landu.

But there were those in the Grove who mourned the passing of Dalon Ap Landu. To them, even a young god was a fit deity who should not be cast aside as a worn shoe. Long did they whisper whenever the name of Hu Gadern was mentioned the doughty name of Dalon Ap Landu. To some it did seem as an in-joke, and to others a mystery.

But there was one who gathered her courage to speak onto the ArchDruid, "If he is to be dead, let him die a fit death for a Celtic deity. Let him die in battle."

And behold, the ArchDruid objected not.

Long had Hu Gadern slumbered under the barrows of the honored Celtic dead. But as gods will often do, Hu Gadern stirred when he heard his name being called. Lo, did they call upon his name to bless the sacrifice of life and the libation. And when he stirred, he knew that there was another god he must face in combat for the privilege of being called upon to bestow the blessings. And behold did he know this, because when his name was called, the other's name, Dalon Ap Landu, was whispered softly.

And when that name was called, be it ever so softly, Dalon Ap Landu did hearken onto his name, even as so youthful a god was he, did hearken onto his name. He knew he must face his nemesis in open combat, in a duel to the death. He armed himself with a spear made of the deadly yew, and armored himself with a targe of solid oak and armor of oaken bark; for after all was he not Lord of the Groves? His shining copper locks were held back by a strip of under-bark, and his blue eyes flashed in the sun.

When the two came together, thunder roared among the boughs of the trees and the ground under them shook. Dalon Ap Landu struck first a blow upon Hu Gadern's mighty thew. But that did not even slow Hu Gadern down, and he, with his spear also of deadly yew, ran Dalon Ap Landu's noble chest through. All the youths who were looking on wept bitter tears for the death of the young and doughty Dalon Ap Landu. Manfully did he struggle with Death. But the Cailleach did scoop up her charge and sped away with Dalon Ap Landu.

But even now in the rites when the name of Hu Gadern is called upon, the name of Dalon Ap Landu is ever whispered by some, and so shall it continue to be a mystery onto the multitude.

The Ballad of the Death of Dalon Ap Landu

Long were his locks of shining copper hue
Stormy also his eyes of Mananan's own blue
Tall was he and mighty were his thews
Shoulders broad as the spreading drui
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

His spear was of the deadly yew
His targe oak that near it grew
He armored himself as all warriors do
But that could not stop the death of Dalon Ap Landu
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu.

Long had the scholars toiled to find his name so true
But where he'd come from no tome knew
So finally in teeth gnashing and weeping anew
They signed a death warrant for young Dalon Ap Landu
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

His only crime was that he was new
For six and thirty years he throve and grew
But of the books and tomes none knew
Of the paltry existence of Dalon Ap Landu
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

Scholars did find as Lord of Groves one Hu
Gadern his surname and stories about him grew
Druids called upon him to give his blessing to
Their offering of leaves and potent brew
O youths and maid shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

Only thirty six years had he, as gods go, that's pretty new
There were those who thought to kill a god, one shouldn't do
E'en a youthful god had merit they would softly coo
As the Druid said the Lord of Groves whose name was Hu

O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

They came together, a clash of arms, Dalon and Hu
In the trees thunder, in ground a tremor grew
Dalon brandished his spear made of deadly yew
And landed a blow on Hu Gadern's mighty thew
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

Then came the spear of the Lord of Groves named Hu
Long and straight his spear, also of deadly yew
The thrust was great and pierced young Dalon straight through
He struggled manfully in his dying, did the son of old Landu
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

And still we sing of the death so long and cruel
He died and went to the land of great Pwyll
A death occurring in great duel
[I hope you think my song adequately cool]
O youths and maids sing a song for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

Tegwedd Shadow Dancer
CoCoArchDruid Hazelnut Mother Grove, CoArchDruid Duir De Danu, and Chronicler of both Groves.

(Note from Mike Scharding, Monument Grove: We have it on very good authority (from a certain anonymous Floridian Druid) that Dalon Ap Landu choreographed his death in 1997, with the help of Braciaca, his drinking buddy, in order to take a well deserved vacation under the auspices of the Deity Protection Program. After blessing the Everglade's mangroves (which are overseen by the god, Darolia) he returned to full duty and bears no grudges. "I enjoy this dying-rebirth god activity, you know, it's invigorating," was his only comment. For further news updates, please contact your nearest tree.)

The Parenthetical Epistle of Mike

July 5, 2001

As always, I speak for myself, and certainly do not represent the opinions of the Reform or other members. Why, in fact, I don't often agree even with my self. Sometimes I have the most interesting conversations when I talk to myself…

Few people join the Reform, or any other Druid group for that matter, without some pretty strong preconceptions already established. Man has always wished to control Nature, rather than be controlled (or rather, just a part) of Nature, so myths are rife with gods, demi-gods or even mere mortals can twist or manipulate mighty Nature to their own whims and needs. "Man" is often defined 'as the animal which uses tools,' although we know that chimps use sticks and some birds sew their nests. I would redefine "Man is an animal that uses drugs," which may make you smile (I refer you to the 5th Order for further guidance), but in a real way we all wish that we were something that we are not. There are several avenues to accomplish this goal, mainly: drugs, insanity, and fantasy. Religion tends to wander in and betwixt these three options, acting as a possible accelerant to their flames. Fantasy is by far the most socially acceptable option in our present society. This can take on many forms; day-night-wet dreams, the entertainment media which provides us a brief respite, living our dreams vicariously through other more famous people (i.e. soap operas), myths--gossip--stories, drama and games.

Tolkien is often credited with being the grand-daddy of the Fantasy movement, so we all should add *The Hobbit* to our Grove libraries. I seriously believe that without Tolkienn, there would be no Reform. (Or if there had been no McCarthy or inquisition. As all of you Dr. Who fans know, changing the past in reality is a very dangerous activity, but changing our understanding of the past is big business.) So, let's talk about Dungeons and Dragons, an influential off-shoot of this Fantasy movement. We all know that Role-Playing Games (RPG) and the medieval Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA), both starting in 1971-ish, grew hand-in-hand with the Neo-Pagan/Wiccan/New-age emergence. Perhaps, those evangelists are correct in saying that RPGs are a breeding ground for Paganism; which they add is a "bad thing." Strangely enough, I kind of agree with them. I first played D & D in 4th grade in the school yard, exploring the "S2: White Plume Mountain" scenario, as, can you guess? Yes, a 6th Level Druid named "Magoor," if I remember rightly. My understanding of magic was heavily influenced by that game over the next 8 years, as well as by the definitions of the 9 alignments (Lawful Good, Neutral Evil, True Neutral, Chaotic Neutral, etc.), and the ordering of the Planes of Existence. (I dare not touch the topic that experience points and advancement are only gained by slaughtering others, which is actually capitalism.) D & D provided a structure for me in which multiple pantheons of deities, ruling separate realms, could co-influence their respective spheres of activity over our mortal plane of existence (a concept that is no doubt conducive to my own eclectic brand of Druidism). Yet it wasn't until College, that I began to depart Catholicism (the True Paganism!, according to some people.) I am sure that Brother Isaac Bonewits (refer to his academic *Real Magic* tome or his RPG "Authentic Thaumaturgy") would be the first to agree with me, that these popular visions of fireball-flinging wizards are perhaps detrimental and distracting to the more practical magic that we are usually inclined towards practicing (although it would be fun to unleash a ninth-level "creeping doom" (i.e. a cloud of bugs) upon certain opponents.)

So that brings us back to Nature and our relation to it. In numerous fantasy novels (in particular, the "Shannara" series), computer games ("The Druid," and the game "Mystery of the Druids," advertised in this issue, etc) and also in AD&D (where we are a special sub-class of Cleric); where we have been laden with the image of a rather crotchety old man, usually robed with a deep hood, who is rather neutral of human concerns (because nature does not concern itself with good or evil), hauling rocks around the landscape for no apparent reason (perhaps they were the inventors of the construction cartel?), in control of secret powers related to the control and protection of Nature, and loitering in dark leafy groves singing groovy tunes (that sounds like me, except the "old" part, I'm only 30). Unlike most clerics, the powers of fantasy figures come through the study of Nature not the imploration of the god(s), and "absorbing of energies," or the gruesome activities of which the Ancient Druids are often accused (perhaps rightly), we can also change shape! Adding to this stew, are the Celtophiles; who claim the Druids could do anything your ancestors could do, and could do it better (if they really wanted to try), including an imposing list of cultural, judicial, musical, medicinal, philosophical and astrological skills that would make a modern renaissance

liberal-arts student blush in shame. I suppose they didn't have specialists back then? Don't forget that famous verse of "Gimme that old time religion" goes "We will worship like those Druids, who drink fermented fluids, waltzing naked through the woo-ids, and that's good enough for me!" (This, at least, describes the Carleton Grove rather too perfectly.) As for the general public's opinion, don't forget lead guitarist Nigel's adept summary, in the movie "Spinal Tap," with his introduction to the song Stone Henge; "Long ago, in a mystical land, were a strange race of people, the Druids. No body knew who they were, or what they were doing…But their legacy lives on in…STONEHENGE!" Of course, the Wiccans bring over their ideas, thinking we that we must also like athames, pentacles and quiet moonlit walks on the beaches…(which are cool too.) Finally, there are our siblings in the UK and Europe, who are dotty over dolmens, heady over henges, and have a really poor fashion sense towards ridiculous headgear, unflattering robes, and gaudy jewelry. (I'm sorry, perhaps I'm really AM talking about us?) This has been going on for at least four centuries, (see "The Famous Druids" by Owen in 1979)!

Whew! For good or bad, this is the image and mental baggage, which nearly all our recruits bring with them to the RDNA. What's the problem with it, because it sounds really exciting and it's great for marketing our image (except that bit about sacrificing, which I might discuss further next time)? Well, nothing I guess really is really wrong, but I believe the founders of the Reform had different key elements; simplicity, revolutionary defiance and a love of whiskey (which I might add are key Scottish attributes…). The RDNA began over the issue of not being coerced into worshipping the way other people want us to do (and perhaps it still is?). Now, I'm a rather antagonistic person myself, being 41.32352% or so Celtic-ish ("The easiest way to make an Irishman to decline an action is to order them to do it"), always taking up an opposite view to balance things (there's my lasting imprinted notion of "neutrality" again), so I hate being defined by other's fantasies (mine are sufficiently strange, thank you!). But it is only by examining your presumptions and preconceptions that you can know where you're coming from and going to.

The previously described image (the word "describe" also has a meaning of corralling or limiting) is rather similar to the one that many in the ADF, OBOD, Keltria and some of us are (perhaps willingly) striving towards, I believe. What has made us stand apart from the pack of other Druid groups, is probably our well-developed sense of sarcastic humor (an ancient Druid trait) and our skillfully inept organizational skills (unfortunately, also an ancient Celtic trait). However, borrowing the Taoist image of "the un-carved block of wood," whose future shape is yet undetermined, and therefore infinitely versatile; I believe each and every grove, yea!, every Druid in the Reform should consider stripping away these accretions (there's that "Waltzing naked in the woods" cry for simplicity!), return to the seed of Druidism (which may be something about Nature, isn't it?), then allow their trees (and grove) to follow Nature's course (please be reserved on pruning the mistletoe that clings to your boughs, too).

Like it or not, as a group, we are diverse, anarchic and eclectic. In the past we had Norse, Zen, Celtic, Hasidic, Wiccan, Non-Aristolean, Humanistic, Orthodox and others paths which had no easy labels (take a look at www.geocities.com/mikerdna/wheregrove.html for a fuller list.) In all honesty, our group has not been conducive to a Reform-wide mythology, theology, voting rules, set ritual, long-term membership, powerful-lobbying body, fund-raising, recognition by IRS, or fashion (Och lord, how I've tried, but I am a color blind Scot, yowsers!) For most, that sounds like failure. But a leopard shouldn't complain about its spots. I heard once that a sign of a good teacher (hopefully, one of ours is the Earth-Mother) is not the answers she gives, but the kinds of questions that she raises. I believe that, under her tutelage, we have produced a healthy crop of really good questions about some very basic concepts and issues, (bull-shit is very good fertilizer.) As long as that activity continues, whether we call it Druidism or not (an oak is an oak is an oak), then the RDNA lives on.

Now that I've said my piece, what do you think?

Resources

Summer Afternoon Herb Walk

Do something delightfully fun and different—sign up for the Learning Annex summer afternoon herb walk in Marin County's magnificent Tennessee Valley!

With herbalist Catherine Abbey Rich as your guide, you'll learn about the awesome healing powers of herbs, plus how to: identify herbs you can use for both cooking and medicinal purposes; use them in a variety of soothing remedies, comforting herbal teas, delicious soups, and full meals. Plus: folklore and herbal remedies from around the world. The walk is an easy three-hour hike. Please dress in layers, bring water and sunscreen, and wear comfortable shoes.

Course 180M, Section B, Sunday, Sept. 9, 3 to 6:30 p.m. Course fee: $39. Call (415) 788-5500 to register.

Call for Articles

The Greymalkin Gazette needs YOUR articles or poetry. The length for articles, good original articles on any topic in Paganism or Magick is between 300 and just under 1,000 words (one to four typed pages). Poetry does not have a length limit, but something like the Sagas or the Eddas would probably be too long. Good topics are those about the Goddess. It should be the body of the email, as I have a tough time opening attachments. Send to: tezra@earthlink.net or if on hard copy, snail mail to:

The Pythoness
The Greymalkin Gazette
P.O. Box 6775
San Jose, CA 95150-6775

Calendar

Lughnasadh, when the Sun is half-way between Summer Solstice and Fall Equinox, will occur on August 7, at 3:54 a.m. as 15 deg of Leo or as 16 deg 18 min decl at 6:25 a.m. Pacific Daylight Time. Lughnasadh services will be held on Saturday, Aug. 4 at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Lughnasadh we will be going immediately after the service to Pyramid Brewery in Berkeley. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on Aug. 19, Sept. 2 and 16. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $4.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

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Fall Equinox Essay: Cernunnos

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any,
Fall Equinox 1984
By Emmon Bodfish

Equinox approaches the time sacred to Cernunnos, the Hunter God. "Now is come September, the Hunter's Moon begun." [1]as Holly sings it, and now is the time of Cernunnos, the god of the hunt, the immortal shaman invoking and controlling the quarry. In Gaul, an altar was dedicated to him below what is now Paris. He is one of the prototypes of that inexhaustible figure, The Horned Man.

As Master of the Animals, he embodies their spirits and can parley with them, bringing game to the hunter, or protecting and sustaining cattle and flocks. As the Woods-god, he directs primary energy, the life forces, creative, magical, and procreative of animals and wilderness. As the Shaman-god his function is to be a connecting link between the human and non-human worlds, and to balance the two with their opposing tensions. From these two roles flow his later attributes, God of Wealth, magician, juggler, and Lord of the Dance.

He is appealed to communicate to the spirit of the animals to let one of their number be taken for food, to make the cattle flourish, and to increase the herds. Most pagan cultures believe that it is not prudent or even possible to catch game or raise an animal for slaughter without its permission on the spiritual level. This is always a bargain, requiring the prey's cooperation. Ritual and honor must be paid to prey species, or to the Master of Cattle, in return.

Though Margaret Murray was ridiculed for suggesting it in the 30s, it has since become clear that we are dealing with a Paleolithic cult in the Horned God, yet one that has continued down to the present day. This shows a strong, basic archetypal appeal. Like all good archetypes, he has multiple and voluminous levels of meaning

In Celtic mythology, he forms a triad with Esus and Sylvanus. As with other Celtic triple divinities, these may be different facets of the same being. He is close on the left side to Esus, god of the underworld and riches, and on the right to Sylvanus, Wood spirit, god of vegetation, the Green Man. The links with wealth and death on one hand and magic and fecundity on the other go all the way back to Cernunnos' stone age roots. Around the pictures of horned men on cave walls are other pictures, most of them of animals. All were animals which were important in the hunt, but which were dangerous to hunt. Species known to have been hunted, but which are not dangerous, are not represented. These animals, deer, bison, bulls, wolves, horses are ones that have to be reckoned with, and this was done magically. As the Finn-Ugric and Siberian hunters, heirs to Paleolithic Europe, explained it in the 19th century, there are three things the hunter wants to insure: that he kill the quarry and that it not kill him. That is that his spirit, mana or tapa, overcome the animal's spirit. And thirdly, he wants to insure that his hunting not cause the prey species to flee or to become depleted. He wishes to propitiate the spirits of the animals for the loss of some of their number, and to insure the fertility of the herd and secure its increase.

Among many Northern European peoples it was important to assure the animal killed of a way to be reborn, to come back and continue its life. Its bones were collected and treated with special funeral rites and magic to aid this return. Ideas presaging the concept of reincarnation are common to Eurasian hunter cultures and south to the Caucus and the Indo-European homelands. Here, then are the Cernunnos' triad's attributes:

Success-Wealth Underworld-Death	Magic	Fertility Reincarnation

with magic as the connecting link or directing force which humans and gods assert, influencing the course of events for their benefits.

Cernunnos is the Gaulish deity whom Caesar equated with Roman Mars. This was more than chance resemblance. There is some evidence of for their common I.E. roots. Mars was not always a god of war. Originally he was a god of vegetation. Cato and Varro concur on this, telling us that it was to Mars that the farmers prayed for good crops and prosperity, and for protection of their cattle. He had an old title, from pre-Republican days, of Mars Silvanus, Mars of the Woods. The elements of War and martial spirit were later connected with him when Rome began its expansions and conquest. There is a myth recorded in Plutarch's "Parallela," in which Mars takes on a mortal woman as his lover. Her name is Silvia; she bears him a son whose soul is contained in a spear.

Mars War Plunderer	Mamurius Veturius Fecundity Venus' Lover	Mars Silvanus God of the Wood Protector of Cattle

At the other end of the Indo-European spectrum, in Vedic India, is the figure of Rudra, who may be cognate with Mars. He is the patron of the Kesin, long haired, woods-dwelling ascetics. And there is reason to think that Sylvanias, Silvanus, and Shiva are the same. The latter two share similar myths of travels in the Underworld. If we accept the Irish Wildman-of-the-Woods, Mad Suibhni (Swee' nee) as a late Christian euhemerization of Sylvanias/Cernunnos, then the Celtic Horned-god(s) made similar journeys to the Underworld, under or inside Magic Mountains. All these tales include a visit to a female figure who lives inside the Mountain and who is the source of wealth or knowledge. In Siberia she is the Reindeer Mother. Among the early Greeks she is the Bear Mother. On Shiva's journey, she is Devi,

Madam Bramha, conqueror of the Bull-Demon, bulls, cattle, and herds.

In the Caucus she is Mother of the Dead, who suckles the soul of the newly dead, as the Reindeer Mother suckles each would-be shaman who finds his way through the labyrinth to her cave. There is nothing like her in African, Chinese, or Australian myths, no source figure who is a Lady-inside-a-Mountain. She is an Eurasian figure, probably of Paleolithic origin. In her we may be seeing who "Venus of Willendorf" was.[2] Similar Magdalenian and Gravettian female figurines have been found far down in caves and caverns under mountains in France and Switzerland. These caves are often difficult and dangerous to climb down into, yet the walls are elaborately painted with figures of animals and outlined handprints of humans, or whole rooms painted red with ochre. Footprints in the hardened clay show that dances and ceremonies were held here around her figurines, or around clay models of gravid or copulating bison. Here someone painted on the wall the famous "dancing sorcerer" of the Arièges, the proto-type of the Horned Man.

Cernunnos, King of the Wood, Lord of the Animals, he can be appealed to for difficulties with pets or with wild animals. His color is brown, burn aromatic woods or pine pitch or incense. Brown is a very special color; it is not found in the spectrum. It is a mixture of red and green with yellow for warm brown, or blue for cool brown mixed in, in lesser quantities. But there is no brown light. The sensation, brown, is created within the human visual system. This is fitting for Cernunnos, the mind-traveler, and the shaman. Francis of Assisi, preaching to the birds, living in the forest, and specifying humble brown robes of local material for his Order, was in the old I.E. tradition of the Holy-Man-in-the-Woods. These old currents of thought change direction and name, but do not die out as quickly and as easily as textbook history would portray.

Cernunnos can best be experienced out-of-doors in the woods or wild places. After 2:00 a.m., and the last lights are out and radios off, even fairly tame bits of the out-of-doors, backyards, and gardens return essentially to Nature. Smells and sounds change. Try sitting like Cernunnos in his Gunderstrup pose in this setting. If you cannot find a horned serpent, use some other symbol of the Mountain Mother,[2] and a torc, sign of the warrior and of his bond to his patron deity.

[1]Holly Tannen, "Invocation." Kicking Mule Records, KM 236.
[2]James Duran, "The Horned God of Europe," Spring Seminar, 1984.

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove, MN

At the final tea of the last term, the Carleton Druids discussed what they would like to do with the Druids at their weekly teas for the coming Fall term. Some of the ideas considered were:

Crafts: beading, mask making, dream catchers, folk dancing, Druid games (we at the Missal-Any are curious as to what those are), tea on the (climbing) wall. Group discussions.

General activities for the Fall Term 2001: Full Moons services and/or social gatherings, more processions and midnight dancing; two sweat lodges per term; watch Druid movies including (but not limited to: Princess Mononoke (it's about nature), Bravehart, Medicine Man, Excalibur, 13th Warrior, The Lorax, and Sword in the Stone, roast marshmallows in the winter by a fire, climb more trees.

We hope that reading what the Carleton Druids have planned provides inspiration for other Groves. There are times when it is not possible to hold services out-of-doors. At these times, such as when the weather is too inclement, there is nothing like a good "hairpull" over a cup of hot tea. Even if you only have two Druids present you will still get three opinions on any given subject.

Akita Grove, Japan

Pat: We finished our two-week trip to Shirakami World Preservation Park, filled with austerities and rituals for the Lughnasadh holiday, concluding with a rather great feast. Nozomi overdid it a little in the waterfall meditations, we were afraid she might have gone a little hypothermic, but she recovered well after a night's rest. Even in the summer, waterfalls are not warm. Be careful with asceticism in the wilderness.

Nozomi: In Japan, there is a very ancient custom of seeking purification by standing under waterfalls. When the first God and Goddess of Japan gave birth to the sun, the Goddess died and went to underworld. The God tried to recover her, but she was revolting and he fled and closed the door to the land of the dead; then he showered. During his shower, a hundred gods were born off his body. Asceticism used to be very popular among the upper classes and clergy in medieval Japan. Nowadays, we usually wear a white robe, but for a long time it was no clothes. Hands are held together and magic formulas are said as long as the body can stand it. Great power is gotten with shugyo. The human body is 95% salt water, so Japanese feel love to the ocean, naturally! There is

an Ocean-grandmother and an Earth-mother for me. Please try it, too!

Pat: We plan to have a special Equinox celebration. On Saturday September 22nd, we will start with a dawn service. The entire 12 hours of daylight will be spent outside in quiet activities, naps, and meditation, then at sunset another service, then for the 12 hours of the night we'll be as raucous as we can with much drinking and carousing and feasting. Then another dawn service and we'll go home and sleep through Sunday for at least a mandatory 12-14 hours. I wrote a Shower Shugyo liturgical piece on an inspiration from hanging upside-down off a cliff for 20 minutes; it can be performed by all orders. It'll appear in a section down below the News from the Groves.

Volcano Grove, Tonga

Things have been unpleasant in Tonga. Morale is low in the Peace Corps. My friend with the burst spleen was medi-vaced this morning to Hawaii where they have an actual hospital. The one here in Tonga has unclean water due to the presence of two cats (probably relatives from my Grove) living on the roof, leaving their leavings to wash into the rain tanks. Most of the others Peace Corps members have resigned from service.

I am on Tongatapu (the main island, only one with reliable email) until August 11th. Then if all works out I will fly back to Niuafo'ou Island for the remainder of my stay. Paradise is overrated. Where do Druids go when they die?

Having no community of thinkers around is a strain. No pagans, no naturalists, precious few musicians. The other volunteers are primarily interested in food and sex, with a few movies in between. Not my kind of fun. If all goes as planned I will escape on Beltain 2002. I plan to head back to New York, see the folks, and build a new harp. Then for the life of a wandering bard. I have many people to visit.

Ice Floe Grove, Antarctica

What do you expect? It's cold, freezing, and arctic (or should I say Antarctic?). Anyway, it's dark a lot and depressing, but the stars are wonderful when the weather is clear. I don't need to do shugyo, because life down here IS shugyo, at least the cold part, bathing outside would be a foolish exercise, to say the least. Our ascetic routine would bore you, but I look forward to leaving next spring.

Monument Grove, D.C.

Well, you all know what's happening here. All in the Grove are safe and sound, but Angeline and John are leaving D.C., permanently, so the Grove is down to an irregular three. I'll be moving next month to the South East from the North West to the Capitol Hill area and starting a Druid garden (too small for a "Grove," I suppose) and opening an international guest house, perhaps.

I've ordained a new member, Alyx Griffin (DC2001:Scharding) to the Third Order on September 1st, using "Taranis Touch" (i.e. a cell phone) to reach her in their forests of Colorado, after sending her pre-blessed materials and consulting with her before hand for several weeks in her preparation. It's the third time I've performed such a long-distance ordination (out of the 17 or so people I've done, so far), and usually I eventually meet them again to add an additional "hands-on" scalp blessing. The results have usually been positive, but nothing beats in-person transmission and all-night campouts in the wilderness for me.

Swamp Grove, FL, ex-RDNA

All are well down here, we are currently drying out the property from the rainy season, and it should be dry in late September. Our county just had a school board vote to keep the Christian coalition from putting up posters in the local schools. Many Pagans, Unitarians, Jews, and representatives from various other groups turned out to speak out against the attempt. Fortunately we all persuaded the school board to do the right thing and they voted to keep the signs out. Freedom of religion is alive and well in southwest Florida.

Druid Heart Spirit Grove, CA

Greetings from Druid Heart Spirit! We have two more dedicants in our Grove now, and have been having a great time! Our campout for Lughnasa was a success. We might, later on get more property, another twenty or so acres for larger campouts and a Druid retreat center.

Druid Heart Spirit is growing well. I think that having the property for doing the campouts and stone circle is a great benefit for the Grove. My partner and I moved five more big stones from the creek down the road and added them to the stone circle. One of them which is ready to be stood in the west must have weighed a thousand pounds. We chained it to the back of my truck and dragged it to our house about one sixteenth of a mile, it left a semi permanent pathway on the dirt road. Then we used a dolly to get it to the Grove location, that took three of us including my twelve year old son Jimmy. We are going to plant it and stand it up using a come-along to a great cedar tree nearby. I'm hoping to get all the stuff together for building a small water fountain in the Grove's area before Fall Equinox. We are also doing a campout for Samhain on Oct. 27th and 28th with workshops, potluck dinner, Bardic circle, and rituals.

Circle Grove, NY.

My family and I are getting a lot out of the Circle here. My baby nieces love climbing on the big stones and my ten-year-old nephew started building a line of small stones through the woods nearby just recently (I'm not entirely sure why.) My parents are devout Christians so I'm happy that they are open-minded enough to enjoy something as odd as a stone circle and to let the rest of the family enjoy it as well.

Walk in peace,
Merri Weber

Ancient Circle Grove, MOCC, NY

We have been very busy lately. We are currently seeking non-profit status and are working on finding grant money to purchase a beautiful parcel of land that is for sale and is in danger of being logged off.

Big River Grove, Minnesota (Defunct)

Ross Wilke is in poor health, but has lots of Celtic fighting spirit. He recommended a site about Ogham, for you rock-scratchers out there: http://www.islandnet.com/~edonon

Corn Grove, Iowa (unestablished)

I just read an incredible book called The Jesus Mysteries, which if you have not read you must. It confirms a lot of things we Siblings in the Mother have always known but never had proof of...their thesis is that Jesus Christ never actually existed but was simply one of many Pagan dying and resurrecting god-men who were worshipped freely in ancient times. They also theorize that the Gnostics had Inner Mysteries, based in the Pagan Mysteries that conferred Gnosis upon the Initiate, that were lost when the Literalists took control of the movement and got bolstered and protected by Constantine when the Romans decided they needed an authoritarian, fear-based religion to control the public.

Won't say more so as not to spoil the ending for you. Every good Pagan should read this. REALLY powerful stuff: http://www.jcwitch.com/

Amon Sul Grove

Amon Sul Grove has attended two Pagan festivals since the last issue: Lammas at Oak Thorn Farm in Eastern Kentucky and Summerland in Yellow Springs, Ohio. Lammas was a fairly small gathering (30-40 as opposed to the nearly 300 at Beltane in May) but the lack of numbers was made up for by our enthusiasm. Summerland was sponsored by our brethren of the Sixth Night Grove, ADF and it, too, was a very nice outing. At both events there was drumming, dancing, partaking of the waters of life, and all of the other revelry of Pagan festivals. Gandalf also attended the first Lexington area Pagan Night Out that was held at Lynagh's Irish Pub. Seven people were in attendance and we hope to make it a monthly event.

Faerie Spell Proto-Grove, CA

Candle Proto-grove has changed its name to Faerie Spell Proto-grove, as that is more the basis of what they are doing there.

Baccharis Grove

I am finding that as I get more involved along this Druidic path elements of synchronicity seem to happen more and more. Either that or I am definitely being watched out for by the deities. This time it appeared to be Enbar, steed of the gods.

For the past five High Days I have been going up to the Grove site to watch the sun rise over the caber set in the position along the horizon of that particular High day by our esteemed posthumous member Emmon. Since the sun is rising later and later in the day I thought it would be easier if I just spent the night at the cabin allowing me to not have to get up quite so early. And I was able to obtain the day off at short notice.

Driving around the bend to the Grove site on that early evening I noticed the temperature gauge going up in my car. As I parked the car it made a rumbling noise towards the center of the dashboard area. Antifreeze bubbled out along the right side. I figured I could either try to find a telephone and arrange to have the car towed or I could just leave it there until morning and limp it back home then, leaving me to enjoy the rest of the evening and watch the sun rise as planned. As there was no mechanic who was open at that time I opted for the latter. I would wait until after rush hour to return home to prevent my car from overheating in traffic.

After watching the sun rise over the Lughnasadh caber and hiking around the hillside and woods, listening to the waking birds and the barking of the adolescent gray fox who has made his home near the Grove site, watching the red tail hawk and turkey vultures hang in the sky seeming to accompany me in my walk I decided it was time to leave my adopted sylvan home and deal with more mundane matters. Just as I was getting on to the freeway my car started to steam and the rest of the anti-freeze poured out. Had to have the car towed. Turned out to be the heater core. Had I not decided at the last minute to take the day off and drive that morning to the Grove I would have been very late for work. Imagine trying to explain that one to my boss! Despite a certain amount of personal consternation, I felt as if I were being watched out for that day. And to that I say thank you.

News from Old Timers (Isaac Bonewits)

Isaac Bonewits (BK68:Larson), a Druid's Druid, has been plagued for his entire life by a surfeit of brilliant ideas and a scarcity of income. Loved or hated by all he meets, Isaac's dream has been elusive due to an absence of a rich patron or at least a stable, funded position as a pagan priest. Recently, he has had good cause to bemoan the financial status of Pagan priesthood in a recent article, far too long to be printed here. To read it in its entirety go to:

http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/isaacrant.html.

Mini-Biography: As we all know, Isaac was the first to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in Magic at the University of California at Berkeley, published his famous Real Magic thesis in the 1970s (recently republished in 1995), helped edit and publish A Reformed Druid's Anthology's 1977 predecessor The Druid Chronicles (Evolved), published Authentic Thaumaturgy for Jackson Games by applying "Real Magic" to role playing games. As a gleefully controversial Arch-Druid of the Berkeley Grove (NRDNA/SDNA) in the late 70s and early 80s, Isaac published "The Druid Chronicler Magazine" and "Pentalpha Journal," before finally schisming off the RDNA to form Ar nDraiocht Fein, the second largest Druid organization in America. The author of countless articles and acknowledge expert on Neo-Paganism, he is sadly now forced by medical troubles into a state of semi-retirement, doing speaking tours and such.

New Grove!

Piñata Grove (at least for now)

Sister Alyx Griffen (DC2001: Scharding) successfully completed her vigil on September 2nd and has entered the 3rd Order. She is starting a Grove in Colorado, as yet but tentatively named. This is her introduction:

To me, religion is like a piñata. On one hand, a faith or belief system that can't withstand some thumps or whacks is nothing but an empty shell; it may look pretty hanging from the ceiling, but in the end it's nothing more than a decoration. But more importantly, it's not the container that matters, but what's inside. Like the piñata, no matter what shape it is, how fancy it's made, or how elaborately it's decorated, religion is ultimately of no use to you unless you smash it open to get to the goodies inside. And whether the stick is need, hardship, or even humor, eventually you're swinging it blindly until, finally, you connect.

Druid News Outside the Reform

Keltria has a third Grove, Avalon Grove, in MO; and Keltria has reelected all of its three officers.

ADF's Study program, closed for along time, is open for business again; and is highly recommended by Mike Scharding, AD, Monument Grove, if you're feeling like testing your mettle and studying.

ADF is also moving its headquarters from Michigan to the Los Angeles area. What goes around comes around. All mail or parcels to ADF should be sent to:

ADF
c/o Raven's Cry Grove
859 N. Hollywood Way, Box 368
Burbank, CA 91505
The general ADF e-mail address remains:
adf-office@adf.org

The Celtic Learning Project

The Celtic Learning Project exists to bring the civilization of the ancient Celts to a broad audience. It seeks to do so through interactive instruction and accurate re-creation of events, communities, and architecture associated with the European Iron Age Celts. In order to achieve these goals the Celtic Learning Project will:

- Educate children and adults through Celtic storytelling.
- Create and distribute educational materials.
- Produce a newsletter containing information on related topics and the progress of the Celtic Learning Project toward long term goals.
- Provide educational programs to community organizations, schools and other interested parties.
- Re-create an Iron Age Celtic settlement staffed with interpretive guides.
- Establish an educational center at the settlement for research, classes, and special events.

For further information contact:
Cyril May, President
128 Nicoll Street
New Haven, CT 06511
(203) 624-2798
cyril.may@yale.edu

Fall Equinox Ritual 2001

D.C. Grove's Patriotic Version by Sine Ceolbhinn,
Qith inspiration from Mike Scharding

No insult is intended; we're just a little wild. We'll report how it works. The Sunday before the Monday service will be spent under the Washington Monument's shadow from dawn to dusk, followed by a party on Sunday night.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these errors that our due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here.
Thou art without set form, but we worship thee in these forms.
Thou art beyond name, but we call thee by these names.
Thine presence is ever with you, but we worship thee now.
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, but we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for mediations.
O Washington and Jefferson, overlook this use of public land for private worship.

Procession

Circle the Washington Monument beyond the Jersey Barriers, stopping at the cardinal points, at which each do a spin. Afterwards form a circle, with Archdruid, Preceptor, and Server inside. All members scuff a sigil below them with their feet.

Incantation

I am a Washington in revolution.
I am a Franklin in wit.
I am a Jefferson in wisdom.
I am a Monroe towards neighbors.
I am a Lincoln in debate.
I am a Bull Moose in the wilderness.
I am a Taft at dinner.
I am a Wilson in study.
I am a Roosevelt in hard times.
I am an Eisenhower in battle.
I am a Kennedy in charisma.
I am a Carter on the farm.
I am a Clinton in virility.
I am a Bush in having smart friends.
I am a Gore to the environment.
Who is it who leads the people?
Who comforts us in our crises?
Who takes the credit for success and failure?
If not I?

Chorus

Dalon's Daily Ditty*

(With appropriate side step rock-shuffle and clapping.)

The Sacrifice

Priest: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles, our clap have echoed off the trees and our dancing feet have pounded the earth. Hear now, we pray Thee, O our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. (All drop their sacrifice on the altar.) Accept it we pray Thee, and cleanse our minds and hearts, granting us Thy peace an life.

Preceptor: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the East (i.e. Congress and the Supreme Court) to give answer. (Congregation notes omens), of the West (Lincoln and Teddy Roosevelt Memorial), of the North (White House), and of the South (Jefferson and FDR Memorials). Fellow Druids, who says the omens are favorable? (Hands raise, majority rules.)

The Reply

(If favorable)

Preceptor: All is well.

Priest: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted. Go to Catechism.

The Reply

(If unfavorable)

Preceptor: All is not well.

Priest: All is not for naught. Approval is not to be expected. We continue to celebrate this joyous occasion, but without the fire in the water. It is now appropriate to pause and reflect on this season. (Skip to meditation.)

The Catechism of the Waters of Life

Priest (in evocatory enthusiasm): Of what does the Earth-mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?!

Preceptor (in plain-song, followed by crowd): The Waters-of-Life!

Priest: From Whence do these waters flow?!

Preceptor and All: From the Bosom of the Earth-Mother, the Ever-changing All-mother.

Priest: And HOW! Do we honor this gift that causes life in us?!

Preceptor and All: By partaking of the Waters of Life!

Priest: Has the Earth-Mother given FORTH of Her bounty?!

Preceptor and All: O She ha--as!

Priest: Then give me the waters!

(Preceptor with the whiskey and Server with the water, pour equal portions simultaneously into the chalice of the Priest.)

The Consecration

O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold-powers and by the three ways of days and one of night. O Presidents, please also bless these waters by your 43 ways. Cleanse our minds and hearts and join us together as we take and drink of your secret essences.

The Communion and Optional Ordinations

Libation

To thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee. O Presidents, including those who disapproved of alcohol, please accept this blessing of drink.

The Meditation

Here is the historical anecdote:

"When George was about six years old, he was made the wealthy owner of a hatchet of which, like most little boys, he was immoderately fond; and was constantly going about chopping every thing which came in his way. One day, in the garden, where he often amused himself by hacking his mother's pea-sticks, he unluckily tried the edge of his hatchet on the body of a beautiful young English cherry tree, which he de-barked so terribly, that I don't believe the tree ever got the better of it. The next morning, the old gentleman, finding out what had befallen his tree, which, by the by, was a great favorite, came into the house; and with much warmth asked for the mischievous author, declaring at the same time, that be would not have taken five guineas for his tree. Nobody would tell him anything about it. Presently George and his hatchet made their appearance. 'George,' said his father, 'do you know who killed that beautiful little cherry tree yonder in the garden?'"

"This was a tough question; and George staggered under it for a moment; but quickly recovered himself; and looking at his father, with the sweet face of youth brightened with the inexpressible charm of all-conquering truth, he bravely cried out, 'I can't tell a lie, Pa; you know I can't tell a lie. I did cut it with my hatchet.'--"Run to my arms, you dearest boy, cried his father in transports, run to my arms; glad am I, George, that you killed my tree, for you have paid me for it a thousand fold. Such an act of heroism in my son is worth more than a thousand trees, though blossomed with silver and their fruits of purest gold."

Many years ago, at the signing of the Constitution, Benjamin Franklin noticed the engraved sun on the Chairman's chair. By looking at it, one could not be sure whether it was a rising or setting sun, but he believed it was a rising sun, by the patriotism and courage of those around us. We are in another time of balance both in the cycle of the sun and in the hearts of American. We Druids seek young Washington's courage to harmonize with these cycles; perhaps accentuating the good and reducing the baneful. I wish you luck this autumn.

The Benediction

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing and that of our presidents.

Parting Chorus

I'm a Yankee doodle Druid,
Here in Washington D.C.
A real strange Druid with a loud bagpipe
Playing tricks and full of whiskey.
I love my dear sweet earth-mother,
She's my Yankee doodle joy.

Yankee doodle went to Wiltshire
Just to view that Stonehenge!
I am a Yankee doodle boy.

I laugh at all those silly Druids,
Tied up in red-tape, they don't need.
Give me a one page constitution, PLEASE!
So I don't go blind, trying to read.
I love our simple, clever humor,
I'll follow it till the day I die.

Yankee doodle went to Wiltshire
Just to view that Stonehenge!
I am a Yankee doodle guy.

*Dalon's Daily Ditty

I've been intrigued by Gospel music lately, despite never hearing any. This is my new take on liturgical gospel. As you know, I'm obsessive about Carleton, and I know every bend of the trail and every forested corner of its 800 acres. Like for the Navajo and Tibetans, it is a deeply sacred landscape, filled with memories, legends, gods, and lessons. I hope you enjoy Dalon's Daily Ditty; it works best with a side-shuffle and rocking back and forth, I believe. Choral work could improve it. A map of Carleton is available at: http://www.acad.carleton.edu/campus/arb/ Feel free to adjust the lyrics or make your own.

I am nothing special just a simple Druid,
Seeking my awareness though the Earth Mother,
And life's lessons.

But, I'm filled with doubts, and deep confusion
What can I do to release these chains?
Make a journey!

CHORUS:

Take me on up,, Lord (i.e. Dalon), take me on down.
Take me on over to the ho-oly gro-oves
Of Carleton!

The road is hard, black, long and winding
With Bright-eyed Dragons spitting fire and smoke.
Lord guide me.

I'm goin' down to the Cannon River,
Gonna wash away all my ignorance
And dogma's blight.

Through lonesome prairie and swamps of passion
In the uncertain floodplain I learn a lesson
The Lower Arb

Matriculate past the dean of admission,
To enter the ranks of those holy students
And faculty.

It's the Land of Youth on an ancient mission
Lifting the torch of inquiry both wide and far
Through long study.

The price of learning is a high tuition
One that must be paid back for many years;
To my pupils.

Drink at the twin lakes of knowledge and wisdom
Filled by the creek of experience
That's Lyman Lakes.

Proceed on to the tower of inspiration
Whose fair white walls call out to me
That's Goodhue Hall.

On seldom trod paths of contemplation
with barbed sarcasm and rocks of Irony
The Upper Arb

I'll climb up that steep, green, holy mountain
Where so many before have found Awareness
Hill of Three Oaks

There I'll pray and vigil in jubilation
Between my green mother Earth and starry Pa
And go on home.

The world will've changed with those revelations
The simple will be hard and the hard simple.
Can I teach this?

But questions will arise despite my education
So, what can I do to solve them all?
Make a new trip!

Sirona's Shower Shugyo Sacrament

By Patrick Haneke and Nozomi Kibou

WARNING: I recommend that you practice in your bath's shower (which works fine, just less scenic and powerful) for a few weeks before trying the real thing to gauge your body's strength and reaction to cold. Each time, go a step colder. Be careful of hazards at natural waterfalls. Large ones can really club you with their force, logs and junk may flow over the edge and strike you, some falls have large, DEEP pools directly beneath them, strong undercurrents, have slippery DANGEROUS rocks nearby and are often located far from medical care. You should probably start off with a group or shuggy-buddy as I call them. An appropriate choice is Sirona, a Celtic God of rivers, quite popular throughout Europe it seems and Patron of the 7th order, but if you know the particular God of that river or falls, it would be best to use that one of course.

Process:

1. Eat a simple diet for a week before the shugyo (low spices, little meat, no salt, no alcohol, no sex).
2. Either in light-weight, white cotton suit or sky-clad, go to a waterfall. Starting downstream on the approach is respectful, if starting up-stream toss in coins with a prayer, the river will carry your message to the falls of your approach. It can be done solo, or as a group (see above), chanting out loud in unison.
3. Start by purifying yourself and 5-10 minutes of mediation on your goal.
4. Bow, clap twice, now, ask to enter the waterfall.
5. If omens are good, step into the waterfall. Drench yourself thoroughly.
6. Turn your back to the waterfall and have the main force of the water hit you between seventh vertebra of the neck and the shoulders. If you douse your head, it's hard to open your mouth to chant and it strains your neck.
7. Clasp hands together, forming a mudra if you like.
8. Chant your invocation. (like the one below)

Sirona's Supplication

I can't release the one used by Nozomi (trade-secret of her father's, but here is one I made). One of the problems you'll realize is that breathing is difficult when cold, so it often comes out in staccato syllables. Keep a rhythm. The verses are A chorus B chorus C chorus B chorus A in a "Stepladder format" (i.e. ABCBABCBA is possible). Perhaps you'll come up with your own words and send me a copy?

Waters over.
Waters under.
Waters around.
Waters through me.

O si-ro-na!
o **SI**-ro-na!
o si **RO** na!
o si ro **NA!**

Waters cleanse me.
Waters love me.
Waters guide me.
Waters bless me.

O si-ro-na!
o **SI**-ro-na!
o si **RO** na!
o si ro **NA!**

Change in motion.
Adaptation.
Down to ocean.
My salvation.

AND REVERSE IT BACK TO THE BEGINNING

Notable Activities & Events

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"Nuts to Carleton" Project

As if there aren't too many already there, I (Mike) thought it would be an interesting idea to donate acorns from all the groves to Carleton to be surreptiously planted in the Arboretum's large grassy field, this Autumn near the Rocks of Irony. I'm borrowing this idea from Isaac's old RDNA Chronicler in the 70s. Basic plan?

Well, just mail 2 or 3 clean blessed acorns to Carleton.
Someone plants them.
Then we wait a few years.
Visit Carleton, and try to divine which one is your tree. :)
Your cost is about 68 cents and an envelope.

Carleton Grove
Reformed Druids of North America
C/O Ehren Vaughn or Merri Weber,
Carleton College,
Northfield, Minnesota, 55057 USA.

vaughne@carleton.edu or weberm@carleton.edu

For more on tree planting:

http://www.druidry.org/obod/intro/treeplanting.html
http://www.druidry.org/obod/touchstone/plantasacredgrove.html

Celebrate the Celtic Wheel of Life with Mara Freeman

The Feast of Samhain, Saturday, November 3,
10am–5.30pm at "Expressions of Amity,"
Ben Lomond, North of Santa Cruz, CA

Samhain is the original Halloween, a time-between-times when the veil between the worlds thins to reveal the mysteries of the Otherworld. This workshop is an invitation to deepen into sacred time and space, to reflect and to seek wisdom for the year to come. Through storytelling, ritual and inner journeying, we will explore the realm of the Ancestors and the Gods and Goddesses of the Underworld. Also a celebration of the Celtic New Year, this is an extraordinary opportunity in our contemporary world to consciously release old negative patterns in preparation for a new cycle of creation in our lives. At the close of the day, we will return to the world with gifts for the soul and the power to call upon these ancient teachings to fire the glow of spirit and beauty in the winter ahead.

Cost: $89.00 per person (some sliding-scale places available). Major credit cards are accepted. For further

information and to register, call 1-800-694 1957, or email: events@celticspirit.org. Space is limited—Please pre-register!

Green Egg on Hiatus!

The Ides of August, 2001

Recently, the Church of All Worlds Board of Directors suspended publication of Green Egg, its renowned international magazine, and dismissed its current Publisher and Editor because of chronic financial problems and an enormous debt. In spite of the heroic efforts of the Green Egg staff and many friends and supporters, frequent fund-raising efforts, and huge patience on the part of the CAW Board of Directors, these problems continued to worsen. Increasing difficulty paying creditors is among the serious problems the magazine's staff and the CAW BoD had to face. Oberon, as the magazine's founder, is being frequently asked about the crisis. Unfortunately, he has had little access to information about the current situation, nor any ability to influence it.

Although it is not common knowledge, Oberon's official involvement with Green Egg ended five years ago; the current difficulties arose long after he was removed as Publisher. Because all concerned felt that airing the details of his removal as Publisher would adversely affect the magazine, Oberon was asked not to discuss the matter publicly. Since then Oberon continued to support the magazine by allowing his name to remain on the masthead as "Publisher Emeritus," and by writing his columns and articles.

People all over the world associate Oberon Zell with Green Egg, one of the most highly-praised and universally-respected Pagan publications of all time. Dozens of books credit Green Egg as a primary catalyst in the early coalescence of the Neo-Pagan community, and name Oberon as its creator and primary influence. After founding Green Egg in 1968, Oberon published 116 issues over 28 years. For much of that time he volunteered his time and energy, building it from a single dittoed sheet to an award-winning 70+ page newsstand magazine with no outside funding. Green Egg eventually supported a part-time staff and a well-equipped office.

Oberon's guiding influence over Green Egg ended abruptly in September of 1996 when he was involuntarily removed from all decision-making power by the Church of All Worlds Board of Directors, most of whom were at that time also members of the Green Egg staff (the Minutes of that BoD meeting have never been released). Oberon's position of Publisher was assumed by the newly-elected President of the Board, and Oberon was handed the "honorary" title of "Publisher Emeritus," with no authority over any aspect of the magazine. The CAW President/GE Publisher and most of that staff later resigned from the magazine in favor of the current Publisher, recently dismissed. The Editor remained throughout the transitional period until she too was recently dismissed.

Our hope would be that out of the current ashes of the Green Egg, a new Green Egg may be born that rests on a kinder and more responsible foundation. We hope that such a new Green Egg will honor its Founder. If it cannot do so, perhaps it should find another name; for Oberon's name and Green Egg's are forever linked in the minds of Pagans throughout the world. Oberon is satisfied with much of the quality and content of the magazine since he was ousted from the role of Publisher. Yet it is acutely painful to him that the magazine he founded has now become a source of financial embarrassment and conflict in the Pagan community. He remains deeply wounded and grieved by the manner of his removal, and estranged from the people who effected it.

We sincerely hope that the Church that took over the magazine from its Founder will be financially responsible to its vendors, investors and subscribers. And finally, we hope that people can pull together in this time of painful reappraisal and learn from all the mistakes that have been made.

Signed,
Morning Glory Zell-Ravenheart
Liza Gabriel Ravenheart
Wynter Rose Stiles-Ravenheart
Wolf Stiles Ravenheart

Calendar

Fall Equinox will occur on September 22 at 4:05 p.m., PDT. Equinox services will be held Saturday at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. Equinox social observance will be held on September 23 at the AD's house. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on September 30, October 14, and 28. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $4.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any
Samhain Y.R. XXXIX
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Samhain Essay: A Thin Time

By Stacey Weinberger

Samhain, Samhuinn in Scots Gaelic, Sauin in Manx, from *sam fuinn* "Summer's end," marks the Celtic New Year, the day when the veil between the Worlds is the thinnest. Fires were lit on sacred hills this night. It was customary to extinguish the household fires, symbolizing the end of Summer, and then relight them from the ceremonial fire marking the beginning of the new season, Winter, the Season of Sleep. For the first time Baccharis Grove will be enacting this tradition during the service when the Third Order Druids exchange their ceremonial red ribbon for white. After the New Year's revelry and merrymaking rejoicing in the bountiful harvest of the previous year, we prepare ourselves for this long period of darkness as our thoughts turn to contemplation, reflection, and renewal.

This Samhain issue marks the one year anniversary of this publication of A Druid Missal-Any. It is beyond your editor's wildest dreams that the Missal-Any would increase from a mere two pages that very first issue to this longest issue of eighteen. Groves reporting seasonal news grew from two to twelve. The number of subscribers has grown both in hard copy, email, and internet subscriptions. We have had to increase the yearly subscriptions to $6.00 with issue due to the increase in length and postage. The Missal-Any has indeed become a vehicle for other RDNA Groves to keep in touch with one another and the Reform. I wish to thank Larry and Susan, the other officers in the Grove, for their support and encouragement in this endeavor, Mike Scharding for his patience with my idiosyncrasies (a polite term for pickiness and stubbornness) and for making the Missal-Any available on the internet, and Emmon, as always, without whom none of this would be possible.

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Festivities for the Equinox included food, music, merriment, and story-telling, and maybe even a fire. In October, there was a nature walk to enjoy the fall colors and observe plants and animals. On the full moon was a torch-lit procession to the Arb.

Monument Grove: News from DC

Things are quieting down, at the time of this writing (Oct 3rd) and people are going about their lives again. Mike moved Oct 20th to the S.E. corner of Washington, closer to the Capitol Building (personal safety has never been his forte.) He intends to give the house a goodly amount of blessings, before moving in.

Akita Grove: News from Northern Japan

My sister Megumi, has moved to Tokyo, dropping our Grove to five family members. Her new husband doesn't like religion. We are assisting my father to run the local Matsuri festival at his Shrine (jinja), and he was curious how the American pagans have their festivals, which is when we first down sat and talked. He was a bit disapointed with some of the customs, Pat explained, but liked Beltane and Samhain; and he already knows about Christmas, "It has good points, but we know more. They should study here."

Father has a good idea. RDNA members will learn much if they come. Brothers Mike, Pat, and Arik came and are happy with the effects the JET program. 2,000 Americans come each year, teach English, receive much money, and do town festivals for one year. It is famous and good. Applications need to be in on December, so don't wait. On HTML, type http://www.mofa.go.jp/j_info/visit/jet/index.html or ask Brother Mike (mikerdna@hotmail.com) who works at the Japan Embassy in D.C. (this is the JET home office, too.) You must be less than 35and have a B.A. Other ways are difficult, too.

So come to Japan!

Halloween is famous in Japan, and some towns have celebrations for it. Japan has own in August (obon festival) for dead people. We will make pumpkins and have a fire for all night, yea!

Amon Sul Grove: (aka Gandalf Grove)

We've been semi-busy planning our Samhain Spooky Gorsedd and Festival of Party Food. The costume theme this year is "Redneck Tolkien," and we've been working on digging up Appalachian ghost stories for telling. Other than that, Feck's wedding in the land of sand, gambling, and Elvis is our only big news.

During August we attended two festivals: Summerland, near Dayton, Ohio and Lammas, at Oakthorn Farm in Menifee County, Kentucky. Both events involved much merrymaking and many opportunities to get to know other Pagans. Oakthorn Farm is owned by a central Kentucky Pagan and it is the site of several festivals each year. Lammas was a fairly small gathering of 20-30 persons and it had a family reunion atmosphere to it. The Sixth Night Grove, ADF, sponsors Summerland and this was their third annual gathering. Those who enjoy elaborate rituals would have found the Saturday rite particularly interesting (Amergin, Senior Druid to the Grove, is an old and dear friend and we have an ongoing discussion

about his "High Church" approach to ritual and my own preference for spontaneity.) Some of the subscribers to the kypaganforum (a Yahoo E-group) had been discussing starting a Pagan Night Out in the Lexington area and we had our first monthly get together in August. We meet at an Irish pub and practice the ancient art of conversation over a pint or two. The Grove's web site at: http://geocities.com/gandalf4.geo, is working some of the time. Contact the grove by sending an email to Gandalf952@cs.com.

Grove of One: News from Ohio

The Dilemma of a Gemini Druid

Greetings, Brothers and Sisters, in the Mother and Be'al!

I have a problem. Now, granted many of you may not take astrology seriously, but based on my own observances, I'd have to say there might be something to it. You see I have the Moon, Sun and Jupiter (I think, it's one of the big planets) in Gemini. Apparently Gemini in general have problems making decisions, but according to my friend Susan, I might as well go and hide from the world; I should join a monastery or something. I can't make up my mind about anything! I've always fighting with myself over which religion I want to be a part of. I've been a Christian (wide variety), Buddhist, Taoist, Wiccan, Satanist and Asatruer. Hell, I even hung out with the Hare Krishnas for a day! It spills out into my mundane life as well windows or Linux? Linux or BSD? BSD or Windows!?! AHHHHH!

I guess this is why I was overjoyed to have stumbled (drunkenly?) over Brother Mike's website. Finally I was allowed to think whatever the hell I wanted to, even if it would change the next hour. Yea, I even found others just as screwed up as I. However I don't get to talk much to other Druids (besides Mike every other month or so), being fairly lazy about communicating with people. So, I suppose this is an open letter to see if other Druids share this Dilemma. Maybe, from what I've read in the ARDA, we have more in common than just an appreciation of Nature; perhaps we all share the Dilemma of a Screwed up…err, umm I mean Gemini Druid.

PEACE!
Matt Ikonen

P.s. I'm working on called The ELDAR Tree (Electronic Library of Druidical Awareness and Research). It's a CD-ROM of a whole bunch of sacred writings from all over the world, with a nifty interface. If you'd like a copy, probably around Yule, let me know. I don't know if I'll distribute it beyond friends, since the whole legality thing gets rather tricky as far as wide spread distribution, but if you want I suppose I could burn up about 25 copies and offer them through A Druid Missal-Any. After that it'd have to be a grove sharing thing.

Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross, MOCC: Muskogee, Mother Grove

Preparations for Samhain-Yule season are currently under progress, which should disturb EVERYONE. The Archdruid has found recipes for Bread of the Dead for Dia de los Muretos and will be making copious amounts. An odd combination has found it's way into the Muskogee Grove that will no doubt dumbfound the entire Druid community, but we gotta go with what works. Belly dancing and St. Jude. Which leaves us with the question of can a Druid group have a Patron Saint? Belly dancing you ask? Who are we to argue??? Anyhows, this fall and winter season should be quite lively here.

Myrddin A Maeglin, Archdruid of the Grove, continues adding our prayers to the intertribal council fire lit in Summit, OK on Sept. 11 for the victims of the attacks. Let all of us pray for wisdom. This declare above all: Healing and Light and Peace.

MOCC: Seattle Grove

Daniel Hansen (DC01:Scharding) has also entered the Third Order of DAL after a period of six years of study, and is considering the establishment of an RDNA grove.

MOCC: Ancient Circle Grove

Our Samhain gathering will be a memorable affair. We will commence with a procession and ritual. Two members will receive their rites of apprenticeship at this time. Feasting, games, dancing and drumming around the bonfire will bring the evening to a close. Each Grove member will depart from the gathering toting home a souvenir bottle of "Middle Ages Brewery" limited edition "Druid Fluid" barley wine.

November 3rd marks our first convocation. At this time new officers will be elected and the year in retrospect will be presented by the Archdruid, Purse warden and Scribe. We will discuss our plans, hopes and dreams for the upcoming year.

We currently have four new people who are interested in the Grove.

Ongoing projects include maintaining the upkeep at an old cemetery (in which we have utilized the free labour of high school kids in need of a community service project as a course requirement), and producing "Ancient Circles Gathering," a newsletter distributed free to the public to foster a greater sense of community spirit among those who practice an earth-based spirituality. Our food pantry is small but growing and our bank account reflects the same modesty.

We will be working with the DSS to "adopt" a needy family at Yule and share our own abundant blessings with those who have less, to make the holiday a joyous affair for everyone.

A more formal schedule of meetings will be instituted in the coming year and classes on a variety of subjects will also be implemented. This is at the request of Grove members.

Filing for our non-profit status is an ever ongoing drama. (Editor's note: be careful of this becoming a Grove drama as well as a bureaucratic one. We speak from experience!)

As always, the public is welcome at our rituals.

Swamp Grove: News from Florida

As predicted in the I-Ching, Tarot, and entrails of gummy worms; The Swamp Grove has risen from the swamp. Actually, we found some new members who asked about our Druidic past and the old members became nostalgic for the old ways. Since you informed me that most of the founding Druids were pretty much Taoists anyway, we figured that it was silly to stop being reformed Druids, even though it is pretty silly BEING a reformed Druid. We still have many ties to the Pagan community and participated in the local move to stop the Christian coalition from placing religious posters in public schools around the county. Our new website is:

http://swampgrove.spiritualitea.net

We are preparing for a Walk With the Ancestors on the 27th with some of the other local Pagans. The Cypress Moon Circle have a wonderful area up in Bonita Springs, about 40 minutes or so north of us, and since our Grove has still not dried out from the heavy rains of late September, we are happy to have a dry place and some good company on Samhain. We have also been planning our next Grove gathering, possibly the Festival of Silly Hats, sometime soon.

Druid Heart Spirit Grove: California

Druid Heart Spirit is getting ready for our Samhain campout. We have had some difficulty in getting everyone's schedules squared away and in order, but I think we've got a plan now. Our Samhain campout has been rescheduled for the weekend following the actual Samhain date. Even though we did not hear back from to many, we are still going to do it, and jump the Samhain fires all night, and play music.

The Yahoo groups e-mail list has proved to be a sufficient means for attracting new membership inquiries, and is bringing new folks to the Grove. The Celtic Sweat lodge is taking longer than I wish. Digging three feet down into clay soil is hard work, so we decided to wait till we have a roto-tiller to help us along.

Our new member Celeste and I had a wonderful time going through our First Order ordinations at Baccharis Grove. Such great company were they to be around.

Baccharis Grove: California

It has been a long dry summer up at the Orinda Grove site and some of the Grove's sacred trees suffered. Water wars continued to ensue with the tenant of the main house who didn't understand the importance of keeping the drip lines running in the hotter, drier months. Deciding to take things into our own hands we made a request to Taranis for a little rain for the trees at the Fall Equinox service. Two days later there was the biggest thunderstorm and lightening show the Bay Area had seen in 20 years. Never underestimate a request to the deities. And be careful what you wish for!

This past year the Grove Elderberry did not revive itself from its winter dormancy. Our Preceptor made the trek up to the North Coast Native Plant Nursery in Petaluma, where we had gotten our native Foothill Pine earlier in the year, to purchase a native Blue Elderberry in time to plant and dedicate for Samhain. There is a new manager at the nursery. When I noticed bags of seeds and asked if she could start actually trees from them, she replied half jokingly with the help of some spells. It was after that I saw a copy of Drawing Down the Moon on the office bookshelf. I took it down to show her where the RDNA is mentioned. She was quite pleased to be supplying trees for a sacred Grove. For transplanting the Elder we came across Foxfarm Organic Planting Mix with earthworm casings and bat guano.

Our Preceptor is taking beginning Scottish Gaelic classes found through The Gaelic Society of America, ACGA. Yes, such things are still available! You can find local classes by looking at their listing of classes on http://www.acgamerica.org/language/classes.html or on the Scottish Gaelic Learners Association of the Bay Area page: http://members.tripod.com/~scotgaelic/index.html

Druid News from Outside the Reform

Isaac Bonewits (BK68:Larson), former Arch Druid of ADF, has another good essay for us about the perils of fundamentalism and the ways to cure it. The full article is at: http:///www.neopgan.net/Call-to-Arms.html or

http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/isaacrant2.html

Skip Ellison, ADF's Archdruid, will be in Madison on November 1st. An informal gathering of Wisconsin and nearby ADF members is planned for that evening.

Liturgical Rigmarole Debate

This is a discussion of the various Groves that arose from your editor possibly opening up the proverbial can of worms by desiring to resurrect the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (being a member is one of the perks of being a Third Order Druid.) Not realizing that what she had known it as by time she joined the Reform in the 80s and what it had been intended as during the early years at Carleton were indeed two entirely two different entities.

From the Baccharis Grove Arch Druid:

"Originally, CoDAL was INTENDED to be a governing body that would make decisions for the Reform as a whole. Whether it ever actually WAS such I don't know, but if so it didn't last for long--in fact, the Druids being who and what we are, the Reform as a whole is ungovernable, so any such attempt is doomed from the start. At any rate, I'm sure that this organization (or something analogous to it) must be what Mike understands you to mean when you speak of "the Council of Dalon Ap Landu."

On the other hand, by the time you and I came on the scene CoDAL had ceased to exist as a governing body (if in fact it ever was such), but we all continued to use the term "Council of Dalon Ap Landu" to refer to what amounts to a mailing list: in effect, all the Third Orders whose addresses we knew. Whenever any of us had some announcement, suggestion, complaint etc. that we thought ought to concern the Reform as a whole (or just those Third Orders whose addresses we knew), we'd send it out to everybody on the list, and claim that we were thereby notifying the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. Here, "Council of Dalon Ap Landu" was arguably a misnomer, but we retained the term for historical reasons i.e. the mailing list was in fact more-or-less just the people who would have been on the real governing body, had there been one. Obviously when you speak of "the Council of Dalon Ap Landu," it's this second sense that you mean.

A discussion ensued amongst the various Groves over hierarchy and the validity of the Orders.

Amon Sul Grove response:

Greetings all,

One of the reasons that I "jumped the broom" and took up with the RDNA was that I was convinced that it truly believed in diversity. To me, this begins with embracing a full spectrum of opinions. The subject line of the email that I responded to was Liturgical Rigmarole. It was not my intent to in any way question the right of anyone to embrace hierarchical structures. I was just expressing a personal opinion that such structures are "silliness." As far as I am concerned, recognition of faithful service comes from the respect of one's peers, not from being elevated to the next level. I have known too many people who have risen to the highest degrees of whatever organization they were in and were still total losers. As far as I am concerned, respect is earned and not conveyed by titles. I return to my assertion that all Druids are equal and I continue to have concerns that "Orders" are elitist.

Faerie Spell Grove Response:

Hee hee! (let the old man speak for a moment...)

This is what keeps the minds fresh and alert--dissenting voices are allowed to be heard. Every note on this so far has had its merit. I agree that practice and study do assist in a better understanding of the world around us, but it is far better to be a loose band of tree huggers than to focus so tightly on regimen that we become like the Catholic Church. Personally after 25 years of serious practice and study, I have come to laugh at myself--for nature has taught me more in her simplistic complexity than any book or ritual ever has.

I am humbled by the layers of knowledge at our disposal if we just learn to observe nature do her thing (as we are even a part of that while we observe.) And on a great cosmic scale as with the cellular level--we are all equals. Ribbons and badges of honor are wonderful fineries, but nature would only laugh at our self-glorification anyway. Why do you think all the druids wore white robes? Should we start wearing colored robes and denote who gets to carry a walking stick?

Okay enough of my ranting. Of course I love you all and I know you are all correct!

Baccharis Grove Response:

It is unfortunate that you have had bad experiences with people being raised up the hierarchical ladder without merit. I too have experienced that in other groups non-pagan related, and it seems based on such things as popularity, one is "good" that day, or the proverbial kissing up. There are some Druid groups where if you read certain books, take certain classes you come out a Druid. To mind my being a Druid is much much more than that.

In the RDNA I haven't experienced the things both you and I have in other situations. In that the RDNA is like a breath of fresh air blowing up a mountainside. The Carleton Druids set down the tradition of the three orders (see A Druid Anthology). It wasn't something that was made up along the way to satisfy those who were power hungry. In my 17 years as an RDNA Druid those who were merely in it for the title didn't last long and eventually faded away.

In my experience those who achieved the higher orders did so out of recognition of faithful service and the respect of one's peers. When one is the ordaining ArchDruid of a Grove, s/he in my opinion should have the wisdom to weed out those who have questionable motives for climbing that hierarchical ladder.

But as is one of my favorite sayings of the RDNA, it is one way, yea, one way among many. It the orders don't work for you, that is ok too.

Faerie Spell Grove Response:

Okay! Here's some fun food for thought:

...having read both of your wonderful emails I am proud to be a druid (whatever the hell that is) and be associated with the RDNA. I have never been a joiner, but throwing in my lot with the RDNA just sounded like too much fun. I am deadly serious about my practice and as far as study, research and all the rest of that junk that goes along with one who gets to carry the "oak stave" (oooh! I just impressed myself!) to thump the youbnins with. But I tend to watch what I allow myself to be called, as my ego is bigger than any title one might pass on.

Thus I go by no title at all (well maybe "Grand Poobah"--from the Flintones, "faerie prince" or maybe something like "that hippie bum who should cut his hair and get a 'real' job" depending on the ritual and whether I am playing with my pet squirrels or being humbled by the majesty of a nearby family of hawks and their ability to fly outside of a metal can with wings.)

In your own worlds, your words carry a sanctity reserved for the highest of truths. What we seem to be discussing here is not so much the matter of who gets to wear what, but more an extremely personal view of what spirituality means. Again, I can find points that I like in both of your arguments, but I am leaning (personally) towards Gandalf's line of thinking (being a philosopher at heart--regimen is an extremely powerful tool that too easily becomes an inescapable trap.) So in short, I agree with you both and believe that what you state reflects truths far more powerful in your magics than simple Freudian leanings. This is how you bond with the world. And I think it is really cool that you two are so open as to share these thoughts!

So here's the punch line. In light of all of this I hope not to bore you with more of my cryptic ramblings, but rather to entice a smile to pass across your face with my next nutty idea.

Having seen covens again and again I have seen the inherent problems and wisdom contained in hierarchical structures. I have long pounded my own pulpit to all who would listen that "someday" I would start my own order and everyone would start out as an HP. Welcome to the coven/grove/elite group of metaphysicians (or whatever...) Now go out and buy yourself the biggest sword you can find and tell all your friends that you are a High Priest/ess. Use it to get laid--and abuse your power in any way you think fit. As one progressed in their learnings, they would be stripped of their ribbons and badges one by one until they attained the vaunted title of "peon" and had the distinct honor of being a "nobody."

Very Zen in a way, but not for the same purpose. Knowledge creates power, which creates responsibility. Responsibility is a heavy stone to bear and takes some strong shoulders to carry it with you throughout the day. I have been creating leaders for quite some time now and made far too many mistakes along the way--thus I have learned the power of titles well and I play with them occasionally to remove any emotional attachment I may have to them. The moral of this story is not that titles are worthless, but that when one truly becomes a master, one needs no title at all. It shows in every thing you do. It's the rest of us who need reminders of how far we have progressed. If that comes in the form of a title, woo hoo! But it is really meant for us, is an extremely personal thing, and means little to anyone else, because the wiser you are, the more you can learn from people who know less than you. If that reminder comes in the form of a badge (trophy) or a badger (totem/guide), take it to heart, but don't allow it to be an outwardly shining light--because it tends to blind some and just annoy others.

...Okay I will be climbing down off of my high horse as soon as I can find a ladder tall enough after that tirade. It is 3 a.m. and I am just annoying myself now. I am off to bed. Thanks for sharing your thoughts and as for mine--well I am glad I have the excuse that it is 3 a.m.--lest it might have been better worded.

Dravidia Grove Response:

I myself follow the same line of thinking. The group that I have study on their own for the most part. We get together to share the knowledge we accumulate, and to pass it on. We are separate, but one. We each have our own views, our own

reasons for being Druids, and our own gifts that we bring to the RDNA. We are Druids. Individuals with common goals and a love for nature that surpasses all other things. We are the spirit of the woods, and the voice of nature. We will always be Druids regardless of others' views. Even if tomorrow we no longer share the views of the RDNA, we will still be Druids. Forever we serve.

The reality of the order is always been clear to me; we are individuals serving the higher purpose of the Earth. Though badges are nice finery, they only show your dedication. Your respect comes from actions, and not from badges. I myself have been a Druid for 20 years by myself, and have done so of my own choice. I have recently become part of the RDNA, now hold a Grove of my own, and have no badges whatsoever. I have areas in all three, but does that mean I am not a Druid because I have no badges? No it doesn't. It simply means that being a Druid is more that simple finery and title. It is a way of life that earns respect by action. A Druid is (in essence) a physical part of nature's actions. We are a part of the whole plan that makes up life, and not just the part that makes up mankind. If any Druid out there holds the material things and badges more sacred, then to me s/he does not know what a Druids purpose is yet. I hope that my ranting hasn't made anyone angry, and I apologize if it has. I am a Druid. We tend to do that.

Baccharis Grove Response

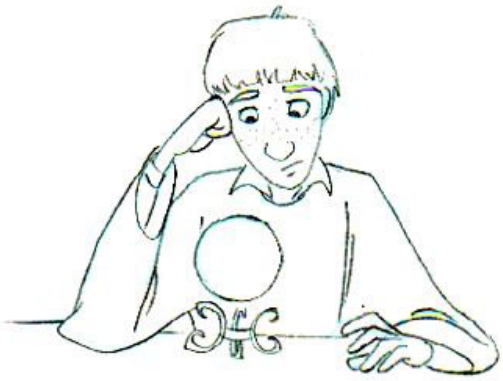
I totally agree with you! True, some people join a group for achieving that badge only. I have seen a lot of people, once they achieve it, feel like they no longer need to put any more work into what they are doing. It is a certain amount of frustration for me, because I see that level of achievement as carrying a certain amount of responsibility with it.

My badges as it were are mere symbols of what I have achieved (red ribbons, bronze sickle--though this is very dear to me as it belonged to my dear friend and mentor who has passed on) but I done them with honor and humility and can only hope that I can live up to what they symbolize to me.

For me becoming Third Order is a stepping-stone. I haven't slacked up on my studies at all (and I include academic as well as spiritual), and continue to be very active in my Grove, doing research on Celtic as well as I.E. practices we can incorporate into our services, and working on my own spiritual development. It is important to me to be able to consecrate the waters-of-life in the name of Dalon Ap Landu as prescribed by the Founders of the RDNA.

But this has been my path. It is what is right for me. I cannot tell anyone to do the exact same thing, because each one of us has our one path. If someone should come to me for advice, that is all I can do, advise. I can say what worked for me, make suggestions and recommendations, but I cannot say this is what you should do. You will know in your heart of hearts what is right. Someone asked me earlier in the year "how do I get to be Third Order?" without even asking what the RDNA is all about. For obvious reasons I did not follow up on it.

I hope you do not mind me making this assumption, but it seems to me that our philosophies are not that far off, but it is our methodologies that differ. Your posts have been very thought-provoking and have caused me to put into words what I have but felt up until now.



On Divination:
A Short Talk and Dialogue

By Larry Press, Arch Druid, Baccharis Grove

I had in mind to lead off with the perfect, most appropriate quote; that meant, of course, finding the book containing it. Having found the book, I see that the full quote runs about a page and a half, extravagantly violating all principles of fair use (and necessitating a great deal of typing). Rather than quote in full, I paraphrase; this is appropriate, since the full quote is itself a paraphrase. Here I paraphrase Xenophon paraphrasing Socrates:

"It is not given to man to know all things; that is the province of the Gods. But as the Gods have given us our limited rational faculty, so have they also given us the oracles. Some questions are suitable to our rationality, and those we must answer rationally; other questions must be put to the oracles. It is arrogant and impious to attempt rational answers for questions that are beyond our rational understanding; likewise it is impious to ask of the Gods answers that we can perfectly well find ourselves."

Thus far my paraphrase. An over-simplification perhaps, but otherwise (I trust) a reasonably accurate account of what the translator said Xenophon said Socrates said.

Now let me go back and restate the whole thing (putting words in everyone else's mouths):

1. There are several reasons why a question might not be rationally answerable
   a. We may lack information.
   b. There might be a rational answer, but we might be too limited intellectually to find it, or to understand it once found.
   c. It may be in the nature of the question itself that there is no rationally attainable answer.

In any of these cases, there could still be an answer (or at any rate, an APPROXIMATE answer) that is attainable IRRATIONALLY (or at any rate, not WHOLLY RATIONALLY).

2. In some important ways, the different divination systems are more-or-less equivalent; which one(s) you choose may be a matter of taste and temperament, or just an accident (though some would say it's no "accident") of which you are exposed to first. The important thing as I see it is that
   a. You have a way of answering questions rationally.
   b. You have another way of answering questions that you can't answer rationally.
   c. You know which is which.

3. In other ways, divination systems are all quite different. Each imposes its own view on the world, and tends to answer all questions in the context of that view. (To a hammer, the world is nothing but nails; to a saw, it's nothing but boards.) In fact, each system is best suited to certain sorts of questions; nonetheless, it does NOT do to second-guess the oracle--IT knows better than you do which sorts of question it can answer (personal experience speaking here).

Querant: How do I find the information needed to answer a question? And how do I know when I have found that information--does a little "ah ha!" go off in the brain?

Augur. Oops! I think you're assuming one does a divination to find missing information, and then uses that information to (rationally) answer the question. That's not how it usually works.

True, information alone can be the difference between being able or unable to answer a question rationally. And in fact, we CAN use divination to (try to) discover missing information, but I don't know that that works very well. Rather, we may use divination not so much to find the information needed to answer a question rationally, but precisely because we lack that information, and so cannot answer the question rationally.

As for how we know we've "got it right," I think we can only know we have the right information when it gives us the right answer. And how do we know we have the right answer? How do we EVER know? Same sort of tests we apply to any purported answer to any question.

Speaking from experience (not of divination per se but of trying to understand things in general, such as why something happened in a certain way, etc.): sometimes part of understanding is waiting to understand.

Querant: How do I answer questions that I can't answer rationally? Blind faith?

Augur: Blind faith? That may work for some (maybe--I'm unconvinced), but not for me. Of course, there's no guarantee you can answer those questions at all--but the oracles give you additional tools. ALSO, the oracles let you see additional facets of questions that you CAN answer rationally.

Querant: Tools? Let you see? Oh this is beyond me, at least right now! And how else would you know other than faith?

Augur: You're looking at a thing--might not be a physical thing; it might be a social situation, an ethical question, or whatever.

You can look at it from a variety of viewpoints (psychological stances, assumption sets, modes of investigation, etc.), and the thing is so complex that no single viewpoint gives a complete picture of it. Rational investigation gives you some of those views of the thing; divination might give you other views of it. The more different directions you view the thing from, the more you know about it. (Though perhaps, not the more sense you can make of it.) But blind faith? Perhaps you're faith-oriented, whereas I'm unfaith-oriented. As I said, I approach divination as a rational exercise, even though I'm working in a non-rational realm. Of course, your mileage may vary.

Querant: Then it seems to be one of those gut feeling things, like you know when you know, hence the "ah ha!" although knowing and feeling come from two different places--they would seem to be related--oh, but they are both senses! The message comes from or through the senses? How can you test a sense?

Augur: It may be that a highly developed gut perception is the ideal. I'm not sure I'd call that "divination"; it may go beyond divination i.e. it may be a direct perception of that of which divination gives indirect hints. Alternatively, it may be just another mode of divination (depending on how you care to categorize things.)

When I think of divination I generally have in mind some system that lets you use your rational faculty (to whatever extent possible) to get information from non-rational sources.

At any rate, I'm head-oriented, rather than gut-oriented, and so I use head-oriented divination systems. I'm sure there are legitimate gut-oriented approaches, but that's terra incognita to me.

Querant: Does divination then come from the head, as it is trying use our RATIONAL faculty?

Augur: For me, it does; for you, maybe not.

Querant: In Tarot readings when there was no answer to be found YET, I've noticed that the cards would be ill-dignified and say something about being selfish or out for gain, etc.

Augur: The oracles do that. Not only do you get answers to the questions you ask, but you get answers to questions you didn't ask, and comments on the state of your act in general.

Querant: I've learned that that means I'm not meant to know yet--is this the "there is no answer?"

Augur: Not necessarily. It could also mean you're asking the wrong question, or asking the wrong oracle (i.e. using the wrong method of divination), or whatever.

It could even be that the oracle really is giving you an answer, but that you can't see it.

Querant: The kinds of questions I asked most recently when I got the ill-dignified cards were job related ones.

Sometimes it just wasn't the time for an answer (maybe I was being pestery or impatient or disparate) or I discovered I didn't phrase the question right.

Augur: Yeah. It can depend a LOT on your current psychological state. It also helps to practice a lot (says one who doesn't).

Querant: How do I find my divinatory method?

Augur: Trial and error. You need to cast about, to see which methods are most congenial to you.

Querant: How do I find out what the methods are?

Augur: Read a lot. Talk to other people. Note also that you don't have to use somebody ELSE'S method; you can modify an existing method to suit your taste (that's what's usually done), or create your own out of whole cloth (that's also done surprisingly often.)

I think that practice with any method will give insight you can use in learning, modifying, or creating another method.

Querant: How do I become familiar with a method's view so that I know how the answers are colored and adjust accordingly?

Augur: By working with that method A LOT. But don't pay too much mind to the differences between the method's views, at least at first.

Remember, it's not wise to second-guess an oracle.

Querant: Should I do a web search for methods? If so, should I search on the keyword "divination?"

Augur: I haven't tried. I'm sure you'd get some hits that way.

I've merely learned about numerous systems (generally only a token amount about them) over the years through reading and discussion. I've followed up on the ones that seemed interesting and congenial, and ignored the rest.

Querant: Why would I use divination? The augury for the sacrifice? Any other instances?

Augur: The augury for the sacrifice is one of the traditional instances; it's really just a special case of the augury for ANY important public function.

I think you should do divinations over ANY important question that doesn't have a really obvious rational answer (and many that do). However, I admit right up front that I don't follow my own advice here as much as I should.

Note though that I don't mean you should ever base an important decision solely on divination--or even primarily on divination-that's just silly.

Querant: Is an oracle a deity?

Augur: You can treat them as such, if that's your bent. I generally don't personify them, except sometimes when talking about them to others.

I use the term "oracle" as shorthand for "divination system," with the understanding that such a system is far more complex than it appears at first--so much so, that we might well treat it as sentient, with its own (inscrutable) will--though, as I've said, I generally don't.

Querant: Do or can the Celtic deities play a part in the divination in any case?

Augur: They may have for Emmon; they could for you, if you want them to. And it WAS the old Indo-European tradition that

1. The Gods spoke through oracles
2. We don't dare do anything important without first checking whether it's OK with the Gods

Somehow, I doubt this is what Newt Gingrich had in mind…

Prayer and the Workplace: "It's Not Just for Ashcroft Anymore"™

By an Anonymous Druid in Antarctica, 2001

Sure! Why if Ashcroft can hold a bible-study and prayer meetings in his governmental office in the Department of Justice before starting work, why not me!

I was also inspired by my research on Islam where people pray at least five times a day, and a religious man blesses Allah 100 times a day. The Hassidic Druids of North America in the 70s advocated that their members be able to write a blessing for any occasion. I'm not to be outdone on anything, so I devised an ambitious schedule to fill the day with prayer. Before coming here, I also had to navigate the daily rat-race. Turning it into a sacred activity will require a new outlook. The possibilities of hexes, prayers, blessings, spell casting are endless, so charge up your non-descript wand (i.e. PowerPoint collapsible pointer rod or a pencil) at night, you'll need it.

Now, rather than make a really long article, I defer to the Reformed Druidic tradition of challenging you to come up with your own appropriate words. As they say, "Prayers need not be long, when the heart is sincere." Just a few words or a sentence will suffice, and you'll soon become really insightful and poetic with practice (i.e. your Bardic skills). Let each time, be as the first. Perhaps if you don't feel like praising at those times, you should just say, "Not now, sorry." You don't have to selfishly wish for personal gain in these situations, I find it's rather nice just to acknowledge the joy of participating in life's abundant activities.

The first week sucked. They may be whispered, shouted, signed or silently thought; "The Gods know our hearts, even when we don't know the words." We in the RDNA are after awareness right? Besides you've heard that people who are married, those who pray, and vegetarians tend to live longer; why? Because they must carefully think about what they're doing, take a concern in those around them, and abstain from most unhealthy activities.

Here are some recommended situations to try some praying, most are obvious, and you can think of more:

Waking up
Cooking and Partaking of Food (all meals)
Partaking of Waters (all times)
Dressing (wards of protection, attracting love and respect)
On seeing the sun, moon or sky
On leaving the house: (invoke protection)
On first touching the ground

On first sight of a living creature
On meeting a friend
On exercise/sports
Commuting (all times)
Restraining Road Rage
On hearing a wise thing
On hearing good news
On avoiding disaster
On entering and leaving your workplace (very Japanese)

Other Special Situations:
Office relations
Administrative problems
Restructuring
Hostile merger
Office dating
Random curses

Work Situations:
Photocopier (apology for paper wastage)
Computer Wards (no crashes)
Impromptu blessing for good health (sneezing)
Word Processing (make me glib)
Handing in reports (be impressed)
Undertaking new projects
Modifying office moods
Completing assignments
Office betting pool
Gossip (protect me, get him)
Recycling (return, to come again)
Meetings (anti-boredom/pressure, speakership)
Mid-day yoga (energy-raiser)
Late afternoon fatigue (focus)
Returning home
Dealing with children and spouse
Going to sleep

Office Magic Equipment:
Computer for divining weather and unknown knowledge.
Paper-weight for storing energy.
Staple for binding power "So staple it be."
PowerPoint pointer rod.

A Few Thoughts About Prayer, Death, and Sacrifice

By Mortus, the Morose Druid

(Please refer to the NRDNA's 1979 article: http://www.geocities.com/druidarchives/pent3-2part2.html titled "Now, About Those Human Sacrifices..." about Celtic Gaul.)

We all know that there are only three certain things in life; Death, taxes and idiots. As much as we dislike them, often all three arrive together. But with this essay, please tolerate the first and third.

Well, it is Samhain, so it's time to bring up that perennial subject; death. (Fun activities at the end.) Yes, death, a subject rarely brought up willingly in our modern cult of youth and life. It is a huge far-reaching subject, on which I'd like to endlessly ramble for a six pages. It is a huge topic that we all are deeply concerned about. Life is, of course, not separate from death, it only looks that way because, "Death stares old men in the face, and lurks behind the back of youth." Perhaps one of the reasons we are so shocked in our society by sudden violent death, is that we persist in that infantile belief of immortality, bolstered by medical and social advances that virtually promise us a death by old age. Death always comes out of season to us, it seems. Yet, throughout history, death was a daily possibility and old age a rare achievement; therefore worthy of respect. (Possibly, a reason why current seniors are not respected is that there are too many of them?) Talk to an insurance salesmen if you really want the morbid statistics of modern dangers. Our fear of death, combined with our materialistic fear of economic loss has made the whole concept of "sacrifice" particularly unpleasant to many today.

The very word "sacrifice" tends to ring warning alarms to pagans, who must constantly prepare arguments and defenses against ill-informed persecution; "Oh, we only use vegetables or Sacagawea Dollars," or such. But while this word is bandied about in this preparation of America for a "new" war, let's pause to reflect on its meanings. Here's a popular view of sacrifice from the O.E.D. (abridged edition);

> "sacrifice: n. 1.a. The act of offering something to a deity in propitiation or homage, especially the ritual slaughter of an animal or a person. b. A victim offered in this way. 2.a. Forfeiture of something highly valued for the sake of one considered to have a greater value or claim. b. Something so forfeited. 3.a. Relinquishment of something at less than its presumed value. b. Something so relinquished. c. A loss so sustained. 4. Baseball A sacrifice hit or bunt. [Middle English, form Old French, from Latin sacrificium: sacer, sacred; see SACRED + facere, to make.]

To "sacrifice" is to "make sacred," which means:

> "sacred adj. 1. Dedicated to or set apart for the worship of a deity. 2. Worthy of religious veneration. 3. Made or declared holy: sacred bread and wine. 4. Dedicated or devoted exclusively to a single use, purpose, or person: sacred to the memory of her sister; a private office sacred to the President. 5. Worthy of respect; venerable. 6. Of or relating to religious objects, rites, or practices.

Many cultures make daily offerings, to "respect," "feed," or "bribe" the spirits by setting aside something they want to "pay back" the gods for the kindness of giving it to the devotee in the first place. Taxes operate on a similar level, by our repaying society for the conditions that gave us a good business environment. The ancient Celts, to take but one collection of cultures, would sometimes bury sacrifices of food, animals, dislikable neighbours, in special pits; perhaps as a fertility-death cyclical bargaining (I give you one skinny deer in the fall, you give me six months' interest…say, three fat deer in the spring?) The Celts were also quite fond of throwing treasures and leaden body-shaped-parts into hot springs, pools, rivers, wells, fountains, oceans or anything wet. The Romans drained them and took the loot; initiating perhaps the first recycling campaign? Hopefully, the gods will further bless us and the government will further improve our economic security and quality of life; a cycle of thanking. Uh-huh, that's the theory. And what is the greatest of material

losses, but the death of our physical body? What do we get in return?

As a falling tree produces an arboreal opening for a new saplings to grow towards the sun; so does death provide new space for youth to grow. What we call ourselves now, is not the same self we will become in five minutes. You can't step in the same river twice. Even physically, parts of us come and go, with every breath and excretion. I was told that our complete skeleton is reformed on a cellular and molecular level within every seven years, and few cells in your body were atomically or biologically present 10 years ago. Life is a process not a stationary condition. (Decomposition and reclamation are processes too.) We merely do not notice the death that is around us, when the forces of growth are more apparent or ascendant. Yet we fear the loss of something we've lost many times before. We want quid pro quo; "if I die and give up this body, I WANT eternal life, or…I'll be really miffed about it!" The truth of the matter is that we probably didn't choose to be in this world and we likely won't be able to choose when and how we'll go. They also say, you can get by in this world with only half of what you're born with, if used rightly. That's all a hard pill to swallow and many religions and industries are built upon this grievous issue. I guess, it's what you do in between that makes all the difference, and be glad that we are such a potentially long-lived species among animals.

Some of us have gone beyond a greedy desire for maximum duration of life to assist others (but not me, yet). We all revere our parents, teachers and heroes for the hardships and injuries they have sustained on our behalf. Why do good people suffer? That's a $60 billion dollar question. I'm not going to go into a good and evil debate, because I'm not convinced they actually exist beyond the level of concepts. Some say that death and suffering inspire us to use our time wisely, and they are inherent to the biological reality of life on Earth. Around Sept 25th, the Rev. Jesse Jackson said the 9-11 disaster has had some positive impact;

> "Suffering breeds character, and character breeds faith, and in the end faith will prevail. This suffering has allowed, in the darkest hour, the light to shine most clearly."

Some of the reasons for tragic death are probably poor preparation, unforeseen consequences, and just plain bad luck. Such comfort takes a long time, if ever, to reassure the victims. Starvation and wasting away are not inherently noble in themselves. Mother Theresa once said, "I pray much better when well-fed and dressed comfortably." Another troubling issue, is that the people most directly responsible for the tragedy died in hopes of receiving divine reward for what is mostly a political statement in a "David and Goliath" act, where we were the loser. While suicide for reasons of depression or cowardice is often not esteemed, but doing fool-hardy acts for a cause or to save a group is often considered heroic; even if the same result is dead people. I guess for many moderns, it's not a question of "if" they die, but how they live and die. I believe, however, that you shouldn't make that choice to die for others without their permission. All too often, violent acts are result of cheating and are used in place of long-term remedies, ostensibly due to time constraints; thereby dampening rather than solving a problem.

Now, as you all know in the Druid Chronicles "The Early Chronicles," it was determined in April 1963, that the RDNA would not choose animal or human sacrifices (lawyers and politicians were included in 1965), regardless of their purported effectiveness. Most, if not all, Druid, Wiccan and Neo-Pagan organizations since then have followed a similar tradition to ours. There is, of course, the agonizing issue of whether fungi are to be treated as plants or animals, as they have characteristics of both! There are strangely no records on how to choose a sacrifice, but there is some guidance on how to do think about a sacrifice:

> "For one man, the sacrifice of life is the offering up of himself to a god or gods. To another, it is an offering up of his mind to a search for truth."–Book of Faith, v.9

> "If one but says "Dalon ap Landu" with the knowledge of the power of it, truly the whole Universe will be forever consecrated."–Thomas the Fool, 1970

Many peoples believe, that spirits with feelings inhabit all objects and creatures, not just "Homo Sapiens Sacrificius." I, personally, try to take only willing sacrifices by divining the feelings of the plants or objects, which might take a long time. And as always, thanks and apologies before and after are to be recommended. I'm moving towards vegetarianism, but still occasionally eat reptiles, fish and bugs. I try to reduce the frequency of consumption and have rarely done the butchering (cowardice on my part, not unlike many Hindus) but I try to be respectful. After all, according to "Babe" they say, "What you eat, walks and talks tomorrow" and "You are what you eat, from your head down to your feet." What goes in, will come out. My wife says that means I'll become a vegetable as I grow older.

In my experience, a sacrifice is rejected when there is a hastily chosen unwilling plant, a poorly directed purpose, misguided intentions of participants, or the gods are in a plain weird mood; and killing for no purpose is not commendable. From my observation, the most common sacrifices in the RDNA have been; leaves, branches, berries, tufts of grass, acorns (plantable afterwards), flowers, home-grown vegetables, ect. The divination of the winds will decide whether the sacrifice is acceptable, and we must patiently await and abide by their decision, not ours. I sometimes cheat though, by only holding services on windy days in areas with

many birds…(By the way, bringing hand-held fans is strictly prohibited! An area, largely unexplored, is how to have an RDNA service or activity without intentionally harming anything, (if such is possible, counting the squashed grass under our dancing feet, airborne microbes, ect. See Jainism.) Would it be too much to bring the ceremony to the uncut offering, which would then live a life of service?

It would be well for the squeamish Neo-Pagans to remember that animals are still routinely raised and killed for religious feasts throughout the world. Examples could include Thanksgiving Turkeys, Christmas Goose/Ham, Easter Lambs, July 4th BBQ, Sajigor goat sacrifice in Kalasha India, Kosher meat preparation, the ever-popular Uidhyah goat sacrifice for Eid holiday in Islam, the reverent buffalo slaughters among Native American plains tribes to teach their children, pig feasts in Borneo, Santeria rites, etc. Christianity prizes the voluntary human sacrifices of its founder and martyrs. Historically, the pre-diasporic Judaic kingdoms had their own fair share of temple sacrifices (and possibly may have again if a few hard-core Orthodox Jews can ever remove the "Dome of the Rock" mosque from the site of the Solomon's Temple.) For those tribal hunters who are still in an ever-present-holy-moment-union with the Earth, any act of hunting is a religiously imbued activity. Ancient tribes are especially afraid that angering an animal's spirit, would reduce the hunt next year. All this goes on, yet journalists would be delighted to uncover a report on a dog killed by some pathetic Satanists. And yet in America, home of the top animal protein consumers, husbandry and abattoirs are conveniently efficient and simply barbaric; if not unhealthily operated as a whole, tastefully out of sight. No one prays during their deaths.

But why do people kill things in a religious service, if most religions are life-affirming, in theory at least? A possible theoretical liturgical reason, offered by the venerable Isaac Bonewits (2nd Epistle, Chapter 7), is that a living (plant, fungal, bacterial or animal) creature allegedly releases energy on its death, (and some while it's alive, too), which might amplify the resonance of a magic raising activity. (I wonder if a flashlight, a plutonium cell, dancing, sex, or campfire could substitute the necessary energy in place of living sacrifices?) Perhaps it is so.

I also disagree with the above definition's hint that only "victims" are sacrificed. While all religions have offered material sacrifice in some format, most ancient cultures freely accepted the necessity or advantage of sacrifice of living creatures, some even considering it such an honor as to volunteer themselves. In some cases, the volunteer would be instructed with lengthy messages to convey to the deities involved, kind of like a court witnesses being briefed by lawyers to present their village's case. However, I suspect that the vast bulk were less than thrilled with their candidacy, often being the criminals, disliked trouble-makers, or prisoners of war of a society. Civilization helped make it possible, as self-sustaining small villages needed as many people alive as possible, due the death rate; but cities often have less-than-necessary inhabitants to be mistreated or sent to war.

With rare exceptions, death is irreversible and final; so unsanctioned killings have been punished more severely than non-fatal injuries by legal codes of most states. It's not my purpose to wade deeply into the debate the pros and cons of capital punishment (see China, Florida, and Texas), but it's interesting that priests are still an integral part of the execution process, although few would label these priests as "blood thirsty;" rather, they're merely there to comfort the victim and restrain the vengeful passions of bystanders, and perhaps to mitigate the executioners' guilt for breaking one of their 10 commandments. To their credit, that great Fertility Cult, (known as the Catholic Church) now tries to sacralize life; and prevent such state-sponsored murders, albeit sometimes to excess. The Druids, themselves, were often also present at matters of life and death, like councils of war, exiling (which equaled death) or executions. Depending on the individual, perhaps they enjoyed or dislike the responsibility involved. One could also make the case that vendettas and war are a "viral" form of human sacrifice that is out of control and self-feeding (like an inferno), soon bereft of whatever religious impulses that may have motivated or restrained the initiators. Once life is stripped of its holy aspect, fearful things become conceivable.

I can think of three attitudes towards death. 1. If you feel that death is an end to all existence, it is a dirty distasteful thing to be feared and avoided at all costs and deeply mourned. 2. If you feel that death is a one way journey to a (hopefully) pleasant place, then death should be an acceptable; if not desired. Of course, "A man's dying is more the survivors' affair than his own," so you shouldn't recklessly hasten your death, widows really hate being told "He's in a happier place." 3. If you feel that death is a two-way or cyclical journey, then the above applies, plus any apprehension or anticipation of having to start all over again from scratch; either in re-birth or re-incarnation. Perhaps it is so.

The ancient Celts and Europeans, on first glance do not seem inordinately afraid of death; in fact, many literary heroes hardly even notice their death until long after the fact. After all, "A brave man dies but once–a coward many times." In the case of the Celts, there are references to ancient Celts loaning money and expecting repayment in the next life. People would keep the heads of enemies or friends, occasionally talking and giving them a feast. But, how the average Joe McBlow felt is less certain. Perhaps, it's along the lines of "It's a good day to die…tomorrow" or "Who wants to live forever? Okay, but who ELSE?" or "I am not afraid to die, I just don't to be around when it happens."

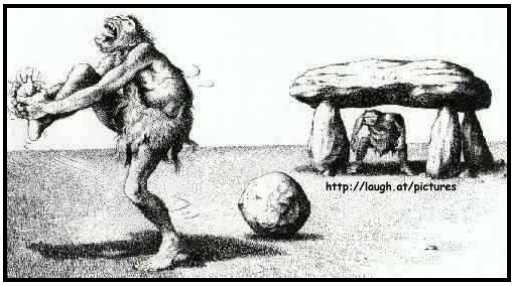
In Celtic myth, there are tales of Avalon (island of apples), Tir nan Og (land of youth), Islands out West over/under the Ocean (America?), Hybrasil, Annwyn (in the Tales of Pryderi), and the Faery underworlds of mounds and tombs. See the Voyage of Mael Dun for another interesting journey by boat. A general sense of connection is thought to exist in the same place, like parallel universes, that are crossed-over sometimes (especially on holidays like Beltane and particularly Samhain). Ghosts, spirits, saints, saints, monsters, faeries are rampant in their mythology that continues to this day.

So, finally, as you know, the greatest traditional remnant concerning death is the great fire-festival of Samhain (or the triple holiday of Halloween, All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day). You've read already read oodles about Samhain on the

internet, you know its roots and know all that stuff about it being a Celtic new-year (a new calendar year in the NRDNA). I'm a "do-er" not a "liturgist," festivals for me are about doing interesting related projects. Here are a variety of uncommon activities (I tire of pumpkins) that I believe are appropriate during this period of time.

Suggested Activities for Samhain

- Visit and tidy-up the graves of family, friends and respected people.
- Séances are popular at this time of year, but book in advance!
- Hold a "dumb feast" with no talking and plates for ancestors.
- Contemplate your own funeral arrangements, especially if you want to fight "The Industry" and have a natural funeral free of chemical and air-tight sealed caskets.
- Include the dead in your thoughts during the daily grind.
- Begin a custom of thanking the things we kill and eat.
- Visit an abattoir or kill your own dinner (fish is the least unpleasant), which will open your eyes and heart to some cold facts.
- Work on your will, living-will, powers-of-attorney, and insurances.
- "Sacrifice" some fun, for retirement planning.
- Discuss deeper issues of after-life with your children and spouse.
- Research genealogy and visit elderly relatives (research for Eulogies).
- Get a health check-up and other medical appointments. Quit smoking.
- Rake leaves, plan a composting heap (done properly, they don't stink)
- Plant acorns, salt meat and jerky, pickle things.
- Go hunting or fishing [or "camera-stalking" of prominent politicians…]
- Volunteer to escort children for Halloween (you get candy, too!)
- Adopt an overseas child or assist a charity.
- At Carleton, we'd pour molten-lead or wax into cold water and divine things.
- Protest the most recent prejudiced horror-flick of the season.
- Lobby against the funeral industry.
- Make a list of 100 things you've done, and 100 more you want to do.
- Contemplate capital punishment, war, crime, sanitation and vegetarianism.
- Bless your pets with smoke (yes, jumping through a fiery hoop is okay…)
- Clean your home, extinguish your oven/furnace's pilot-light and relight it.
- Replace the batteries in your smoke detector, buy a fire extinguisher, etc.
- Write long-winded, disconnected rambles and lists about Samhain and Sacrifice.



Neolithic Farmhouse Discovered in Scotland

Sources: The Times (7 September 2001 http://www.thetimes.co.uk/) and The Daily Telegraph (9 September 2001 http://news.telegraph.co.uk)

The remains of a Stone Age farmhouse, built more than 1,000 years before the pyramids, have been uncovered by archaeologists in a cornfield in Perthshire (Scotland).

The 6,000-year-old home, complete with a living area, bedroom and cooking area, lies close to Britain's longest Stone Age burial cairn near Callander. Historians believe that it and the Auchenlaich cairn were part of the same Neolithic settlement.

The discovery, by archaeologists from the universities of Glasgow and Stirling, is one of two such structures uncovered in Scotland. The other is at Balbridie, Deeside. Gordon Barclay, an archaeologist from Stirling University, said: "This type of enormous timber building is only the second of its kind ever found. This is a very important site, even longer and possibly even older than what we have found before. There is nothing like it anywhere else in Europe." The building is 25 metres long and nine metres wide with walls formed by massive timber posts each about one metre apart. A second line of posts one metre in, along with posts inside the massive room, once supported a thatched roof.

Dr Barclay said the size and built strength of the farmhouse indicated that the Neolithic people were skilled engineers. "This is no shack that somebody has thrown up. It is an enormous, very sophisticated piece of engineering, built to last. The only other evidence we had was of much smaller, lighter structures. This proves that the Neolithic people were engineers as skilled and intelligent as modern man." Because there were no metal nails, the house was made almost entirely from timber shaped to fit together with timber pegs. The farmhouse was split into compartments by light wooden partitions set into the ground. On a large sunken area to the north, the team discovered burnt red gravel, showing that fires had been regularly lit there.

The archaeologists discovered more than 200 pieces of Stone Age pottery and cereal remains which will be radiocarbon-dated. Dr Barclay said: "These were the first farmers ever to cultivate land in Scotland."

Bronze Age Trove Found at Sewage Site

From the Irish Times, Friday, September 28

A £6.5 million Co Limerick sewage scheme has unearthed a rich vein of archaeological treasures.

The scheme, at Castleconnell on the banks of the River Shannon, has yielded a range and density of finds. The finds are unusual for such a confined area according to archaeologists. They also indicate there has been human activity there for thousands of years.

To date, four fulachta faidh, or ancient cooking places, three hut sites, a furnace and four human burial sites as well as nine other pits have been excavated. According to a spokesman for Limerick County Council's archaeological unit all of these are tentatively dated to the early Bronze Age of 5,000 BC to 1,500 BC. Charcoal samples have been sent for analysis and the results will clarify the date range. Numerous artefacts have also been found including over 100 pieces of worked flint, 10 stone axes and a fragment of a rotary quern.

Three locations along the route of a pipeline were archaeologically tested in advance of the work being carried out.

At one of these sites, Hermitage, the farm of Mr. P Moran, significant remains were uncovered and Aegis Archaeology Limited is currently excavating this area.

According to Limerick County Council yesterday the sewage scheme will provide for expansion of the village and its hinterland. It is also expected that the scheme will provide for the improvement of the water quality and amenity value of the River Shannon.

Resources

Book Review

By Mike Scharding, Monument Grove

Pagans and Christians: The Personal Spiritual Experience, Guz DiZerga, Ph. D. Llewellyn Worldwide, St. Paul.

Dr. DiZerga is a political scientist and Wiccan elder with Brazilian roots who has released this new book, with the aim of establishing and promoting a framework for inter-faith dialogue between Pagans and Christians that is philosophically based. He is apparently a very wise man who has learned to temper his anger and delves into the deeper core issues that Ecumenical talks rarely reach. His supportive arguments make heavy reference to Roman/Greek Classical forms of Paganism, which of course is has great amounts of textual support as opposed to other forms of European paganism. (He also draws upon Latin-American forms.) There are areas of weak spots, he is not an expert on early Christianity; and there are some gloss-overs of some touchy issues; e.g. sexuality; so I finished it with some unanswered questions. This book, while not perfect, is very well written with many golden nuggets buried amongst numerous semi-precious stones. It should be part of the library of anyone working with ecumenical councils.

Part One gives an overview of paganism's central general beliefs, focusing on the authority of personal spirituality. I would hesitate to give this book to your mom as her introductory book. It assumes a lot of general factual knowledge about Paganism, but would be a good follow-up.

Part Two: Christian Criticisms of Wicca rebuts some myths focusing on the relationship of Spirit and the Natural world, why good things happen to bad people, and claims of ultimate authority. This is his best written section.

Part Three: Pagan Criticisms of Christianity. He shows that the Pagan view of nature is already present to a degree, without being an apologist, in Scripture and that Christianity does not depend in any sense upon a claim to spiritual superiority. He finally reconciles the two faiths and talks about the ways they can mutually benefit from interaction.

Some Quotes:

"Many Pagans who take such a view of Christianity define themselves against it. In doing so, they remain to some extent still within its power, even to the point of avoiding those Pagan practices that most overlap with Christian practice, such as prayer. By defining Pagan religion as different in all respects from Christianity, some Pagans unintentionally narrow their own spiritual lives…"

"Christianity does offer a unique and valuable path to the Sacred, but unique does not equal exclusive in the worth of religions any more than it does in the worth of people."

"[Paganism] exemplifies personal responsibility, for no one can hide behind scripture and disclaim responsibility because of its supposed objectivity."

"Love can only be fulfilled by the existence of the beloved. It is even more fulfilled when the beloved in turn is also fulfilled. A being loving unconditionally will therefore find delight even in the beloved's loving another. This is why the concept of a jealous God is utterly incomprehensible to me, as it has long been to many Pagans."

"Suffering is an enriching manure for the human spirit. It is a compost for the heart. Genuine empathy for others often arises most readily after we have suffered ourselves."

Carleton College Calendar Available

This year's has a beautiful picture of the Hill of the Three Oaks, showing the oaks in silhouette against an orange sky. Additional copies of the calendar are available from the Carleton Bookstore for $3.00 plus shipping:

Carleton Bookstore
One North College Street
Northfield, MN 55057
(800) 799-4148

Calendar

Astronomical Samhain, when the Sun is midway between Equinox and Solstice, will occur on November 6, 2001 at 11:20 p.m. PST. (By the alternative method of calculation, the Sun will reach 15° of Scorpius Nov. 7 at 12:38 a.m. PST.) Samhain services will be held on Nov. 4 at Sundown, which is 5:07 p.m. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Samhain we will be going immediately after the service to Le Bateau Ivre Restaurant in Berkeley.

Regular services will be held at Solar Noon on Nov. 11, Dec. 2 and 16. Please call the above number to confirm.

A Druid Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $6.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any Yule Y.R. XXXIX Vol. 17 Number 8 Dec. 3rd, 2001 c.e.

Yule Essay: Tree Lore

By Stacey Weinberger

ule, Winter Solstice, the Shortest Day of the Year, is one of the minor High Days of the Druid calendar. Though there is an association with trees at each of the High Days, none of them so strongly evokes the image of the tree than Yule with the tradition of Christmas or Yule tree, a latter-day symbol of pagan tree-worship. The Yule tree as we know it is a German custom brought to England in 1840 by Prince Albert, prince consort of Queen Victoria. Perhaps a parallel to the May-pole in the Summer half of the year (see A Druid-Missal-Any Beltaine 2001), which also was a tree cut down for a particular celebration and placed as the center of ritual, the Yule tree harkens back to an older tradition and can perhaps be traced back to the ancient Druids and other pre-Christian Indo-European practices.

In southern Europe there was the midwinter custom pertaining to the celebration of the god Phrygian god Attis that is very reminiscent of cutting down the Yule tree and decorating its branches. Certain priests of the Attis called dendrophori, meaning "tree-bearers," annually selected a pine tree (pinus silva) from the sacred grove to carry the effigy of the god into His Roman temple. The dendrophori were charged with the duty of setting up and decorating the tree upon which the god was presented for sacrifice. The pine tree stood for a promise of eternal life because being an evergreen it kept its vital appearance even in winter. The boughs did not wither and die, and signified the continuing presence of life.

In Celtic culture there is also archeological evidence of ritual involving trees. At two large sacred circular enclosures, the Goloring near Koblenz and the Goldberg in Southern Germany, that date from the sixth century B.C., a huge central post was erected, possibly imitative of a living tree. Similar pre-Roman ritual activity can be observed at the La Tene site of Bliesebruck where over one hundred sacred pits filled with votive objects had been planted with tree trunks or living trees. In the Rhineland, one of the four regions of the Celtic World, the great scanctuary at Pesch contained many temples and ancillary buildings grouped around a sacred tree.

There are legendary tales of royal halls with a living tree in the center of the building, and trees may have been used this way, as in the Old Manor House at Knaresborough in North Yorkshire and the hall of Huntingfield in Suffolk. Positioning the tree in the center of a building as a source of good luck and protection for gods and men is confirmed by the custom in Germany, continuing as late as the 19th century, of having a guardian or lucky tree beside a house. Does bringing the tree inside symbolize bringing the luck inside? Symbolic offerings were made to the tree, and ale poured over its roots at festivals, as in the case of a huge birch tree that stood on a mound beside a farmhouse in western Norway until it fell in 1874. Adam of Bremen, wrote of a huge tree that stood beside a temple in Uppsala, the holy center in Sweden, that remained green summer and winter (signaling perhaps an evergreen), but no one knew what kind of tree it was. The existence of sacred trees in Germany is the pre-Christian era is borne out by reference to their destruction by early Christian missionaries such as St. Boniface.

Memories of sacred trees at holy places can consistently be found in Irish literature, where a number of sacred trees are mentioned. The sacred tree, in Old Irish *bile*, was apparently a usual feature of the site where the inauguration of the kings of each tribe or confederation took place, the sacred center of the tribal territory.

Sacred trees are found mentioned in pagan texts of early Ireland, most notably in the Rennes Dindshenchas ("History of Places"). Holy trees were particularly associated with sacral kingship and the inauguration rites surrounding the election of a new king. Five special trees are mentioned in the Dindshenchas marking the sacred ritual and assembly centers of Ireland: "The Tree of Ross and the Tree of Mugna and the Ancient Tree of Datha and the branching Tree of Uisnech and the Ancient Tree of Tortu."* Three of these trees are recorded as ash trees, while the Tree of Ross was a yew (an evergreen), and the Tree of Mugna was an oak, although it was not an ordinary one as it bore three crops of different fruits each year: "apples, goodly, marvelous, and nuts round, blood-red, and acorns, brown and ridgy" (together which symbolize the fruits of the Otherworld). It too appears to be an evergreen: "Its leaves were upon it always," as with the tree at Uppsala described by Adam of Bremen.

A characteristic of the Otherworld tree in Irish tradition is that it bears blossoms and fruit of gold and silver, which the more modern Christmas tree is reminiscent of.

This Winter Solstice when you go out to purchase your Yule tree, preferably a live one, keep in mind that you are maintaining the pagan tradition of honoring the tree and making it the focus of the modern day tribal assembly of home. During this time when all seems dead and asleep the pine or fir Yule tree remains green, symbolizing the promise of life that is to return.

*"The Prose Tales in the Rennes Dindshenchas," ed. W. Stokes, Rev Celt 15 (1894) and 16 (1895)

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Warm salutations from campus. Things here are getting hectic, as 9th week comes to a close and finals bear down on the hapless Carleton students. In September we had a weekend of celebration, reflection and meditation.

There was a sweatlodge in the Small Grove. The lodge is a place for physical and spiritual purification, and a time to center and focus yourself. To prepare for it, we spent the day cooking, baking, chopping wood, and setting up the lodge. All were welcome to participate in the lodge and/or to help with preparations.

Samhain was splendid. A cool night, a clear sky, a bonfire and the talking stick--everything we could want. Good turnout and good ritual. And the god died, as planned. All according to schedule.

Monument Grove: News from DC

Our grove is doing fine. Mike's in a new house and preparing for Yule. Did you know that in front of the White House there is the tasteless National Christmas Tree? http://www.apollonius.net/christmastrees.html. Ok, did you know that they have this god-awfully chunky "National Menorah." Well, now did you know there is 10' deep pit, 20' long, 10' wide, filled with the huge "National Yule-Logs." That's right. And my, isn't it toasty from 20' away! Very elemental and pleasing.

Sent off druid-care-packages to Ehren in Carleton, Irony in Tonga, Nozomi in Japan, and Ian in Antarctica. Let's see how D.C. postal efficiency works on those!

As Brother Ian from Down Under so wisely stated; it's about time we all lighten up and admit something:

English is a Celtic Language

Now before you linguists begin a howling, yes, English is technically a Germanic language. But, it is now a language spoken natively by Dravidians, Tamils, Singaporeans, Nigerians, Israelites, and Irishmen; few of whom would claim to be ethnically or culturally Germanic. Each culture has taken the language (which is a tool) and used it to buy potatoes or rice (as Sister Joan put it) and imbued it with their cultural heritage.

Now, I studied Scots Gàidhlig for one year in Scotland, and I'm one of the registered 85,456 speakers in the 1991 Scottish Census; so I have no desire to drop these languages (70% of the world's 6,000 languages may be gone by 2100), since the heart can speak a bit differently through either language. Every language colors the thoughts communicating them, but I'd anger many a Welshman by saying he's just a Sassenach because he doesn't have the Cyrmaeg any more. All Celts today (and in the past too, probably) have at least two languages to bear and to disseminate their cultures, and I'd like to look on it as a positive thing to keep both. As a friend told me, when you learn a new tongue you grow a new soul, and it never hurts to have a spare one, eh?

Ice Floe Grove: News from Antarctica

"Where did all the real Celts go? Long time passing…"

I couldn't be farther away from Ireland (or my native Belgium) but my thoughts fly to that distant land, and I'd like to write a little about it. The RDNA is not exclusively Celtic (we're not, but we all have our favorite traditions), but most other Druid groups are definitely in the Celtophiles section. The problem as I see it, is that people study ancient Celts, but ignore the modern Celts.

We appear to be in a love-hate relationship with traditions. We love ancient Celtic Traditions but not modern Celtic traditions with hundreds of years of shaping by Celts (yes, under Christian and alcoholic influence). Certainly, age sometimes empowers the survival and attractiveness of some beliefs beyond their practical usage (i.e. "fossilization"). For me, the age of the tradition is just one pointer on its feasibility; but it's applicability, wisdom, timing and associations must also be taken into account. As an example, we don't do ritualistic murder anymore. As Mortus said in his/her essay on Death and Sacrifice in Samhain's issue, the RDNA dropped human sacrifice when our mores and perceptions on the issue had changed, even though livestock (deadstock?) is cheaper now than ever before in history.

Irish and country folk of Europe still carry out several life-affirming (and life-denying) activities that may or may not have continuity from pagan times, often under the guise of various saints, despite the otherworldly orientation of monotheism in general. You know this, already. It's hard to tell whether or not these traditions were carry-overs from a bygone organized religion or rather, perhaps, simply natural developments from working daily with (or against) Nature's mysteries on the farm and forest. But the Celts are still here, but they're mostly speaking English nowadays, so no complaining about the difficulty of translating "Old Irish," just go next door and talk to McPherson and start or revive traditions.

How many American Neo-Pagans can explain the Dail of Ireland, name seven living Irish poets or dramatists? Talk about the devolution process' effect on Celtic nationalism? Explain the economic situation of the Welsh economies? What about Brittany's (ahem, not Ms. Spears) engulfment by France or Galicia by Spain which we don't hear about because most of us don't read French or Spanish after high school? Mad cow and foot-and-mouth disease (I've got that I suppose)'s role in the devastation of the crafting culture? I'm not calling upon you to march the streets of Dublin with placards, but if you feel such a connection to these ancient Druids; how about helping their grandchildren continue the living culture?

Enough ranting. Happy Holidays, I'll tell you if I see Santa or his evil twin brother, who lives on the south pole and also gives coal and credit card bills (how do YOU think Santa supports his philanthropy?) Oh, it's still cold here, enough even for a hothead like me. Next year, I should work in the Amazon!

Akita Grove:

News from Northern Japan

We had Samhain on a mountain nearby. We made a big fire, danced and asked the gods questions. We used info from Sister Stacey's article. It helped.

I am the judge of Bardic contest. I want to have your songs! See rules at:

http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/bard.html

and send them to me at nozomikibou@hotmail.com This contest is over at Beltane 2002, but I send out new songs every few weeks for you enjoy.

Hazel Nut Grove: News from California

ArchDruid Stephen Abbott has returned from exile! He is currently looking for a pagan household in which to live in Sacramento. If you know of anyone looking for a roommate with an incredible library of 8,000 Druid, Celtic, and pagan books, and a very nice iguana named Iggy, please contact A Druid Missal-Any and the information will be forwarded on.

White Rabbit Grove: News from Wisconsin

Hi, I'm Katya Whiterabbit (CL78:Olin), the dolt who mislaid the Carleton Archives in 1978. I made the Third Order and discovered the depths of my own personal Chaos, one could say. I was swept during the next decades between the Scylla and Charybdis of Sufism and Anthroposophy. In the mid eighties, having washed up in Wisconsin and gone back to grad school, I reaffirmed my fundamental Druidness, but without the impetus to conduct actual services.

Though randomly asked for Druid bibliographies by the curious, solitary Druidity seemed a waste of my elevation to Third Order. Happily the nineties brought the Internet to me and mine. But imagine my dismay to find the Usenet overrun with costume-loving Celtic Revivalists! Thus began my campaign to advocate for the RDNA way of being among them. Yes, it is I who am known as "healingline" in the posts of alt.religion.druid.

My small business, you see, is called The Healing Line. I have certifications in Thought Field Therapy and distance Reiki, as well as decades of nutritional expertise and other esoteric miscellany to offer the public over the phone. On the side I deal in collectible tablewares, a very highbrow form of recycling. So my Web presence projects me, the public utility, as my ministry, rather than a grove per se.

A seed I sowed back in 1978, before the rest of me blew away in the wind, was The Order of Lugh. Reading about the recently invented "side order" of Hephasteus reminded me. OL is also a non-hierarchic one, like Diancecht, and is meant for artists and craftsmen. At the appropriate spot in the Service, the dedicant commits a work of his or her own hands to the flames, as a token of dedication of all one's works to the Mother and her glories. If it is accepted (and it is highly recommended to work in a flammable medium), you're in. My token, with which I made myself Matriarch of Lugh, was a hand-calligraphed copy of the Order of Lugh Liturgy. Perhaps Lugh of the Long Hand, Master of All Arts, also bestowed on me the confusion from which I was reborn after a cycle of years.

Another copy of the Lugh Liturgy was in the box with the Archives when they were lost. But anyhow, there's nothing very tricky about answering the call of Lugh, if any others in congregations that actually hold services would like to join me.

Peace, peace, peace,
healingline@netzero.net
Note: See Part-Three of the ARDA for Lugh ceremony

Swamp Grove: News from Florida

The Swamp was alive with Druidry and revelry on Samhain. It was actually dry enough to have a celebration, and we certainly did just that. It was the first time that we had gathered for an observance since Solstice last December. We are planning to have some new pictures made of ourselves frolicking and capering, (well perhaps not so much capering) giving ourselves to wild abandon and using magic beans. We have consecrated a new circle area because the gators and swamp have claimed the old one for three months out of the year, the new area is relatively dry all year round.

Creeks-Called-Rivers Grove: News from Ohio

White Land Dinner: This dinner occurs on the evening of the first day during which snow completely covers the grass. Or as close as we can get. This is an indoor feast, usually accented by complaints from those Druids in the grove who wish they lived farther south. Around Dec 15th.

Feast of Coloured Paper: This feast pretty much comes when everyone else is doing Christmas. Well, a day or two before or after, usually, to allow us to do the Christmas thing with our families. Anyway, it's a time that we make it special point to let each other know that we appreciate each other. Around Dec 28th.

Big Ash Grove: News from Michigan

Grove of One has folded and been replaced by Big Ash Grove. The Archdruid's ritual name is Iggy. The ELDAR Tree CD-Rom project is on hold, but the "Big Ash Codex" of rituals is in progress for solitary Druids.

Corn Grove: News from Iowa

May the Mother bless and keep you this year and all years!

Not much to report--Corn Grove seems to have gone dormant, not inappropriately considering the season!

I've been devoting too much time to a songwriter's workshop, but I expect to be passing leadership of that on to some other fool as soon as possible. Not that it hasn't been successful--we started with 16 participants and the very next month had 29, and people are writing songs, which is GREAT. I just did not realize that this was going to be taking up so much of my time and energy! And it's not that I'm unwilling to "sacrifice" my time for what I believe in...but I'm also sacrificing my son's time and my husband's time, and that's not mine to do.

Otherwise, just grooving along quietly and trying to stay off as many radar screens as possible. I hope to have some time this winter to refocus and dive in to my own heart a bit, and see about figuring out how to satisfy some things in me that the mundane world makes very difficult. Getting out of the music business may be a start (the ultimate sacrifice for me!). Ugh.

Golden Oak Grove: News from Minnesota

The weather here is snowy and looks to be perfect snowman temps for the next few days, it's our first snowfall this year but I'm all but certain it's here to stay as I do live in Minnesota and we should of had snow on the ground already by Nov 9th but didn't...Years like this, it usually ends up being very snowy and near Solstice gets extremely frigid...

As for winter plans, I'm not a big fan of winter but I do have some more generalized plans for the season like braving the cold to make a snow-dragon or a snow-gargoyle depending on how much snow we actually get...If ya mix cornstarch with a bit of water and add in paste or gel frosting dyes you can actually paint your snow creatures, add more water, put it in a spray bottle and it really gets interesting (specially when it starts to melt hehe)

This next week I'll be getting the house in order for decorating and a place to put the tree, I'm excited as in this house with such high ceilings we can have a huge one, last year the kids were disapointed as we had a sweet yet poor little tree that resembled the one off of Charlie Brown's Christmas...

Poor little thing drooped under the weight of even the tiniest ornaments and we had to hang the topper from the ceiling on a cord as to not completely crush the little tree...

Cute and memorable but I'm looking forward to a big one this year...In years past when we've had bigger trees I string them with two separate twists of twinkle lights...The first set being a mix of blue and green lights that are kept to the inside of the tree...those are lit up until Solstice eve, then the other set of Amber and Pink get lit on Solstice Day, those lights are more to the outside of the tree...It makes it nice and

helps the kids with understanding the different light symbologies, the soft glow of the tree approaching solstice is perfect for stories and such, then solstice morn it's all ablaze with bright sunny lights...

We also have two tree toppers, the first being a garden mask that I made that has golden acorn antlers, the second being a copper lantern in the shape of the sun, it has a very youthful male face on one side and the face of a womyn on the other...

So we sorta get to cover the baby sun god and (as my kids say) the sunshine-momahn Brigid, a little bit of a bend but hey that's why I'm Pagan...

A couple of years ago my eldest son, then 12, had some friends over during our holiday time for treats and such...Well two of his buddies were afraid of my tree, they said it had a scary head on top of it and that all the celestial decorations were bizarre, they were from Baptist-Christian families...

His little Jewish friend was very interested in all of it and had no problem understanding it, he even brought his mother into see our tree because he was so thrilled that they weren't the only ones with different beliefs, the mother was just as interested as her son...

The little Mexican boys were so cute, they knew what it all meant even though they said that their main families were catholic, that they had other family in Mexico that celebrated the dark of the year and the solstice, that their aunty puts a bull skull with lights inside on a shelf above her tree and feeds it wine, it was no big deal to them...

And the African American boy said that he thought it was kinda freaky but that his granny down in Louisiana used to do some freaky stuff for the holidays so he knew it was all cool...

I just find the different traditions surrounding this time of year (specially) very interesting...

Mojo Grove: News from Down There

The Protogrove we've been working on is on hold for a short while, but we got enough members of both human and nonhuman species (mainly dog) to make a go at it. We humans routinely get out-voted on such things as where the next gathering will take place (the woods) and what sort of activities will be engaged in (the hunt) and sheer pandemonium usually rules. But the exhilaration of letting the dogs lead the way puts the human members in close touch with nature in a way that is indescribably wonderful. We still haven't gotten around to name.

Dravidia Grove: News from Out There

The Grove is doing well, have been contacted by a new member from online who lives in Essex area. She actually seems closer to Monument Grove, but since she seems to be a Christian based Druid, I have decided to help get her started on the right path.

Also, as a note...Saturday, I realized the very essence of nature and life all over again. Here is what happened. My wife has recently had a heart attack, she is well recovered now, but I have taken to smoking outside instead of inside around her. While outside on my front porch a squirrel came down the tree in my front yard, and proceeded to walk up my sidewalk to the base of my porch steps. I moved around a little to let the squirrel know I was there in case it chose a different course of direction. It still proceeded to move toward me. It climbed the first two of three stairs and stopped, my toes were on the top step and it reached out and touched my shoes and commenced to tap me on the foot several times. I looked at the squirrel in amazement, since it is not everyday a squirrel will walk up and try to get your attention.

I called to my wife since the front door was open and she came to the door. She then told me that she had been filling a bowl on the front porch with sunflower seeds. The bowl was empty, and the squirrel was asking me to refill it. I grabbed a handful and placed them on the steps where it started eating a couple and then started taking every 2 out of 3 seeds and hiding them in the grass in the front yard. In the mean time, my wife had finished filling the squirrel's bowl and it made a point of finishing the ones on the steps before proceed to eat the ones in the bowl. Definitely an enlightening and humbling experience the Great Mother bestowed upon me Saturday, and it is one that I will not forget in my lifetime...

Mulberry Grove: News from Arizona

"Beating Around the Mulberry Bush."

Greetings global brothers and sisters,

To make this short and sweet, here's my entry. I'm having a very difficult time at the moment with local law enforcement. I have a court date set for February 26, 2002, precisely one month before my birthday. For almost no reason at all, they will probably take away or suspend my license. I don't even have a job right now! I am majoring in English at Pima Community College here in Tucson, Arizona. My heritage oddly enough happens to be almost pure Celtic with a little Potowatomis Native American. This is strange to me, as life usually is, because at the moment I happen to live in the middle of no less than five Mulberry trees, and no less than five ethnic groups (French, German, Welsh, Scots-Irish, and Potowatomis) make me up (how else do you say that?).

I have not yet been indoctrinated into any Henge or mystic circle, but I do welcome any Druids, or Wiccans, to Tucson with open heart and mind. I hope that you will pray/chant/whatever you do for my victory in the legal arena, as I have no familial support, and am not rich, being a full time student. I am so sick and tired of being a scapegoat on a motorcycle, and of putting up with the way(s) that local law enforcement treats long-term residents of this city of Tucson. I have nothing against them, while they seem to have everything against me.

Right now I'm painting (yes, painting, not scribbling with markers and pencils) a map of France in acrylics for my first French class (French 101). I noticed that the nation of France is shaped like a five-pointed star, which is also interesting, and there seems to be a dog or a demon or something that extends from the northwest portion of the map. Weird. Weird as life really.

Druid Heart Spirit Grove: News from California

Up here in the mountains, the brighter seasons come late, but winter always comes early. The grove's site is peaceful. I've been seeing and hearing a lot of ravens, and owls around the grove lately. We'll do our winter solstice in the snow this year, if there is any covering the earth up here by then, we'll get to have a large fire. Looking forward to a nice peaceful winter, time to do all the Druid arts and crafts and get-togethers for potluck feasts. We are going to gather for staff making, and Ogham carving, and bell branch making (hopefully!). Other than these things we are going to keep it

simple for this dark season, time for me to keep writing and painting.

Baccharis Grove: News from California, Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

The community association where the Grove site is located held a meeting in November to discuss with the local residents the guidelines for the woodlands to be turned over to the Orinda Park and Recreation Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving open space. Emmon, founder of A Druid Missal-Any and Third Order Druid, who passed away two years ago, had established a trust to preserve the land as a recreation area or wilderness area. The guidelines were set up to protect the ecological values of the area, encourage use by local residents, provide safe access, prevent hazards to the surrounding property and develop revenue for maintenance and other Foundation projects

There are also plans to have a memorial plaque to Emmon on the land so hikers passing by might think of him and who gifted the land to stay preserved as a natural wildlife habitat.

We Get Correspondence!

Dear Order of Grannos,

Please consider our invitation to join a new Healing Arts and Artists Regional Directory designed to showcase Holistic Health Practitioners, Personal Growth Facilitators, Workshops, Schools, Body workers, Artists, Musicians, and providers of Healing Services and Natural Products. Regional visitors and locals alike can now conveniently explore your area's rich and diverse Healing Arts and Artist Communities.

Please go to http://www.byregion.net. Click on your country, state or region and look for "New Member Signup" in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

Please contact me if you have any questions or comments. Mail to:kranier@byregion.net

Peace and Prosperity,
Kristan Ranier

To the Council of Dalon Ap Landu:

Liturgical Notes

As Third Order Druid active in the Reform I propose the following additions to the enactment of the Samhain Special Order of Worship. For Groves fortunate to have altars, after the Second Reply the altar fire is extinguished, and all Third Order Druid exchange their red ribbons to white. This makes sense as the next lines to be recited by the officiating Druid are:

"Lo we are as wraiths; our fire is turned to ashes, and darkness walks the land."

After the Second Chant the fire is then relit, thus reproducing the extinguishing of the house fires in Ireland and Scotland at Samhain, and then relighting them from the ceremonial bonfire. The bonfire was lit by friction, and that is something we could work on devising to relight the fire in the future.

Hot Tub Healing

By Pat Haneke and Nozomi Kibo

Well, last time, we gave you our Shugyo service, which relies on cold pounding water to purify from above; so we'd like to balance that by stressing the warm waters bubbling to heal you from below. Japan is well known for its plentiful (over 14,000) natural onsens (i.e. thermal spas) due to the volcanic nature of the islands. Many were discovered by shivering hunters during the winter in the mountains, where they had melt through the heavy snows, providing a refuge for wild animals (especially snow-monkeys). Myths often state that the hunter was led there by an injured animal seeking to have their wounds healed by the waters.

According to my research, many onsens are located in nearly-inaccessible rustic locations of great scenic beauty, often requiring hours-long hikes from nearby roads. Most of these have been deepened and lined with natural stones, bamboo screens, hand-built changing areas. The best are open to the sky year round ("rotenburos") and sometimes are mixed bathing, especially late at night (if you're lucky). Many romantic movies pivot on a humorous rendez-vous that occurs there. Onsens are still one of the top five destinations for travel-crazy Japanese, indeed dozens of books and studies have been written on their bathing customs. After all, "cleanliness is next to Godliness," which is why the Japanese are such a sacred people? Their public bathing houses ("sento"s) yet remain in the poorer sections of the cities, and artificially heated "onsens" (with bowling alleys and recreational sports) are built in the midst of sprawling urban centers. Nozomi says that entire offices or companies will stay at the traditional inns for weekend retreats; drinking, eating, bathing, rough-housing, drinking, singing, having a short business meeting, more drinking, etc.

Now, the Celts were also big fans of spas, springs and natural wells, when they could find them. Specific deities (e.g. Grannos, Suliva) were assigned to each one, and offerings were thrown into the pool for those seeking healing or similar blessings. These holy wells of "Saints," who offering healing and good fortune, continue to attract Catholic pilgrims to this day, and this phenomenon is well documented in bookstores. Many famous springs, such as Baths, were expanded and commercially developed by the Roman conquerors.

According to Mike, back in the misty 70s, the NRDNA Berkeley Grove's very own Order of Dian Cecht (apparently, a substitution for the Order of Grannos) would hold regular healing seminars and workshops followed by, you guessed it, hot-tub healing. So, to revive an older custom, I give you our version in simplistic format; which of course may be done in a warm bathtub. I defer to those women out there, who have raised functional bathing to aromatic tactilely pleasurable

ritualistic experience, and ask that each expand it in their own way. It could be an hour-long and suitably womb-like.

1. Disconnect phone and turn-off all annoyances.
2. Stretch thoroughly
3. Open windows and let in cool fresh air and sun/moonlight
4. Take a short shower and then clean tub.
5. Dim the lights.
6. Fill with piping hot water. Welcome it.
7. Allowing a little water to drain and keeping the tap or shower open.
8. Add accessories (candles, salts, herbs, oils, mineral supplements, etc.)
9. (Some add Waters-of-life blessed for the occasion.)
10. Place a guardian statue in the waters to address (i.e. rubber-ducky)
11. Let water cool down to just above tolerable.
12. Bless your self and the tub
13. Ask to enter, and then slowly enter the tub.
14. Assume desired position or perform mudras.
15. List current ailments. Remember the healthier days' feelings.
16. Internally focus on feeling the afflicted areas.
17. Humming mantras is particularly pleasant when half submerged.
18. Channel the heat and such to those parts, melting and smoothing them, making things flow where they have stopped.
19. Ask for advice, wait and listen. This part takes a while.
20. Contemplate life-style and diet changes or divine requests that come to your mind.
21. Thank the Gods or guardians involved and ask to finish.
22. Pull the drain and bid farewell to the waters.
23. Ask the healing spirits to remain with you as the waters slowly drain away.
24. Let the waters pull away illness as they drain.
25. Quick rinse and dry.
26. Wrap in something warm and take a nap in a dark, quiet place.

Yule Time Caroling

By Sine Ceolbhinn

Strangely enough, Christmas is one of the few times of the year that we feel like singing with our neighbours outside of a karaoke bar. Easter songs? A few. Groundhog Day songs? Not likely. We all want to sing, but trip over the uncomfortable lyrics, right? I decided to but together a little list of songs that a pagan could use in company with their monotheistic friends.

A few hours of scanning the internet has given me a collection of popular songs that didn't dwell on babies in food troughs, righteous crowns, deceased people with bird wings, and ecstatic shepherds hearing voices in the dark (won't even go there). I prefer my own improbable stories (grin). Just change "Christmas" to "Yule time" and most are okay. Santa Claus is rather unavoidable, but he's nearly pagan, and so I let him slide. Many of the songs on the list below have on-line free music-files and lyrics at:

http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/~ai251/xcarol.html

- Auld Lang Syne
- Christmas Song (Chestnuts roasting)
- Deck the Halls
- Do they know it's Christmastime at all?
- Frosty the Snowman
- Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer
- The Grinch's Theme Song
- Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas
- Here Comes Santa Claus
- Holly Jolly Christmas
- Home For The Holidays
- I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus
- Jingle Bells
- Jingle Bell Rock
- I'll Be Home For Christmas
- It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas
- It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year
- Jolly Old Saint Nicholas
- Let It Snow
- O Christmas Tree
- Rocking Around the Christmas Tree
- Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
- Silver and Gold Silver Bells
- Sleigh Ride
- That Christmas Feeling
- Up on the Rooftop
- We Wish You a Merry Christmas
- White Christmas
- Winter Wonderland

Now, I was going to make a list of filkable songs, but surprise, somebody's gone ahead and re-done most of the Christmas songs in a Neo-Pagan flavor. Isn't it great that people do all the work for us? You could spend weeks studying the solstice. Enjoy!!

- http://www.catcreations.com/chatte/library/Yl_songs.htm
- http://www.locksley.com/greenbook/#YULE2
- http://home.intranet.org/~maggi/true/bardicarts/songs/Sabbats/Yule/yulecarolbook.pdf (with piano sheet)
- http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Parthenon/1574/yulesong.htm
- http://www.geocities.com/Athens/5341/carols.html
- http://www.pacificcoast.net/~hornowl/Yulesong.html
- http://home.talkcity.com/SpiritCir/willowfiresong/Frames/Author.html
- http://members.tripod.com/Willow_Firesong/Frames/tuneHome.html
- http://www.mothermountain.org/solsticetunes.html
- http://www.celticsilverspiral.org/Wicca/Songs/Pagan.htm
- http://www.spirit-paths.com/pagan_songs.htm

Various Winter Customs

By Eric, ex-Akita Grove, now in NYC.

I enjoyed the Samhain activities, and spent four hours searching for good customs to complement the next issue. It's a simple list of what I plan to do, because I'm not much of a writer.

- Nov 23 Divining the best presents after a hearty Thanksgiving meal by asking relatives and the Gods.
- Dec 1st Cleaning out the house thoroughly--Any remaining dust is "Not mine, please ignore it."

- Dec 2nd Light "advent candles" or Yule Candles marking down the Solstice Sun's arrival.
- Dec 15th Decorating the House- Holly, Mistletoe, tree setup, bunting, Yule-logs, front lawn décor. Mail out blessings (Christmas cards) to friends and curses to enemies.
- Dec 19th Donate 10% of December Paycheck to charities closest to my house. And carry small presents to distribute to beggars and muggers in NYC.
- Dec 20th Wassailing and Caroling. Nothing more than Trick or Treating for the winter, fun to do with the Christians.
- Dec 21st Vigiling in the Grove. Spend the longest night of the year in the grove with a fire, several blankets and some friends to encourage the sun to make a come back.
- Dec 21st Mari Lwyd in Wales (Lair Bhan in Ireland)-- The Welsh visited houses with a draped horse skull, interrogated their neighbours with strange questions, and got free booze if the homeowner couldn't come up with decent answers. I think Barney's head on a stick would be fine and appreciated.
- Dec 22nd Namahage. In Akita, drunken barefoot men in demon masks, straw clothing, flaming torches (my that's dangerous sounding) would burst into pre-decided homes "surprising" a family at dinner and terrorizing the bejezus out of small kids. The father would ransom their children's lives with more booze, and the demons would bless the house to protect it from fires and further burglar intrusions. Very similar to German house visits by Father Christmas (Weihnachtsmann or Julknap) and his point man, the "Black Moor" (Knecht Ruprecht) Don't you pity my neighbours?
- Dec 23rd Celebrate the Emperor of Japan's Birthday (he is the descendent of the Sun Goddess after all).
- Dec 24th Presents and Party
- Dec 25th Hanging out sheaves of corn or birdseed AFTER Christmas for the all-winter birds.
- Dec 26th Divination by dropping a handful of pine-needles into a bowl and rohrscharching
- Dec 26th Boxing. Put away boxes and decorations. As for the Tree: Put the tree in a safe spot in the yard (needles still on) away from the house. Allow to thoroughly dry and use it to light Beltane fire. WHOOSH! What a sight!
- Dec 27th Return presents and buy discounted goods at stores for next year! A gift of the Gods!
- Dec 30th New Year Resolutions. Adding thanks for last year's completed ones and a tweak from everyone in the room for not finishing the last ones.
- Dec 31st Fireworks, all-night parties are fine to continue.
- Jan 1st Sleep to Noon. Pray to Braciaca for forgiveness and mercy.
- Jan 6th "Epiphany." Credit card bills arrive. Holidays are officially over.

Christmas Plants and Picking the Yule Log

By Mairi Ceolbhinn, D.C. Grove

Druids love and respect their plants and truly wish them to return to full vitality in the spring. Without plants, how'd we do our sacrifices? What we' d eat? What'd we wear? It's nice to know that in the depths of winter, when the days are shortest, that some plants are doing rather well. We wish to celebrate this with Christmas trees and such and bring their blessings into our homes.

Mistletoe, as we all know, was considered sacred, by our ancient Siblings and has remained such throughout the years. Its Gaelic name still means "all healing," although I'm not sure how to use it safely, since it is rather poisonous. Perhaps, it is by its poison, that it fends off winter's blight, and manages to bloom around the solstice? Its persistent fertility is therefore an established trait that gives us that great custom of "kissing under the sprig of mistletoe" which would happen in a night of partying and debauchery. That age-old theme of commemorating the death of the "old Sun" and birth of the "new Sun" is now popularly incorporated into the images of "Old Man Time and Baby New Year" doing a tag-team on January 1st every year.

Holly berries, like Mistletoe, bloom amidst the snow as if to defy winter and encourage the return to life. Its green boughs were of course common decorations on buildings, holy places and public buildings during the winter festival, and this tradition has fortunately continued to this very day. Even the Japanese, Mike Scharding says, have a "kadomatsu" placed in front of the door at New Year's Eve.

Yule Log Tradition:

Not to be morbid, but a sacrifice is necessary to rekindle the life of the dying sun (no, I'm not pro-Aztec, which sounds like a marketable drug), and it seems the Yule Log has filled that role for several centuries. "Yule" comes from "hweol," meaning "wheel," which is a frequent European symbol for the Sun. So you're basically giving the Sun a good-needed torching to warm it up.

According to various sources, it is widely agreed that the hearth of the Celtic House was the home of a protective spirit, and (for practical and symbolic reasons) the fire was rarely allowed to die out except once or twice a year during the big fire holidays. Special prayers were and are still spoken before leaving the banked fire of turf for the night in rural areas. Much magic also went on around the fire during cooking, story telling, and entertaining of guests. The hearth was basically the pre-modern "Home Entertainment Center." If

you've ever noticed, televisions also send comforting relaxing flickers of light into a darkened room while you stare blankly?

Now, back in those days, people had access to common forests surrounding their village. The choice of the wood varied greatly among locales, but one good size tree would provide several logs for a neighborhood. But under no circumstances, should you steal one from a neighbor's private land (and no buying one at a parking lot, good religion is do-it-yourself). I've not heard of any special methods of cutting a tree down, but a short ceremony, and posting a few days advance notice for malevolent or uninterested spirits to depart, would certainly be in order. (No, that Golden Sickle is no more effective that a haddock, get a good steel axe.) Angry spirits will make the tree conk you on the head; so be forewarned.

Once cut down, a goodly size log was the festooned and regally dragged back to town through the streets. As the Log entered the house, some cultures would give it a hearty drink of oil, salt and mulled wine, with a song perhaps. In more recent times, it was burned on Christmas Eve (which is close enough to the Solstice), with music, activities and frolicking. To kindle the fire, splinters from last year's logs (saved by the eldest daughter) were used to get the substrate of dry logs going, since those Yule-logs are hard to burn by themselves. Guests were encouraged to toss sprigs of holly on the fire to take away bad luck. The way it burned would prognosticate the future.

Splinters of the log and cinders were taken home to protect against fires, lightning and tax-collectors at their home. Now the Yule Log tradition, widespread since the 12th century, nearly died out with the change to pot-belly stoves and grills in the late 19th Century. The tradition still survives in sizeable pockets today in the country-side today. For fire sensitive areas, a smaller log-shaped cake now decorates the dinning room table. I've tried this custom for a few years in my little BBQ next to my house (sneaking one from the Rock Creek National Park), and saved some ashes, and no disasters have yet befallen my home (well, except the Pentagon in the Virginian Commonwealth, but that's the workplace, perhaps the White House and the "Mystic District" of Washington, D.C. were spared because of their National Yule Log?).

For me a Christmas tree is just another elaboration on "bringing the greenery in," and it certainly is a younger tradition than the Yule Log, perhaps a merger of pagan Nordic tree worship and perhaps the 13th century morality plays' "Tree of Life" (from the Garden of Eden) which was often the only stage prop, and conveniently performed around the Solstice. Perhaps, the inability to have a Yule Log burning and urbanization led to the soaring popularity of the Christmas tree in the 19th century? So go get your plants!

The Wood Song

Taught to Mike by Sam Adams

You don't have to live in a forest to have a Yule log, just a saw, a car, and a nearby park with some dead or fallen wood. But what kind of wood do you want? Here's a song that's been around awhile and should help you.

Oaken logs will warm you well, That are old and dry;
Logs of pine will sweetly smell, But the sparks will fly.
Birch logs will bum too fast; Chestnut, scarce at all.
Hawthorn logs are good to last, Burn them in the fall.

Holly logs will burn like wax, You may burn them green;
Elm logs, like to smouldering flax, No flame to be seen.
Beech logs for the winter-time, Yew logs as well.
Green elder logs it is a crime For any man to sell.

Pear logs and apple logs, They will scent your room.
Cherry logs across the dogs Smell like flowers of broom.
Ashen logs, smooth and grey, Burn them green or old;
Buy up all that come your way, Worth their weight in gold

Source: http://www.earthspirit.com/twnls.html.
Recorded on: "This Winter's Night," Mothertongue, 1998 (earthspirit@earthspirit.com, EarthSpirit Community, P.O. Box 723-N, Williamsburg, MA 01096)

Gifts for Yule

Yule is traditionally the time of year to share gifts with family and friends. As our thoughts turn to prospects of what to buy A Druid Missal-Any offers these ideas that have a decidedly natural theme.

California Oak Foundation:

Acorns and Eat'em: A How-to Vegetarian Cookbook by Suellen Ocean. Contains complete acorn leaching instructions, nutritional information, and 35 acorn recipes. Paperback $10.95.

Native Oaks of California Poster. Designed by Good Nature Publishing, the "botanically correct" renderings are bordered by drawings of each species' leaf and acorn. Also shows locator maps. Full-color; 24" x 36." $15.99.

Oak Leaf Pillar Candle. Hand-poured 100% beeswax, and embossed with a beautiful oak leaf design, this long-burning candle has natural golden color and subtle honey scent. Decorative gift box. 4" tall, 3" diameter. $14.50.

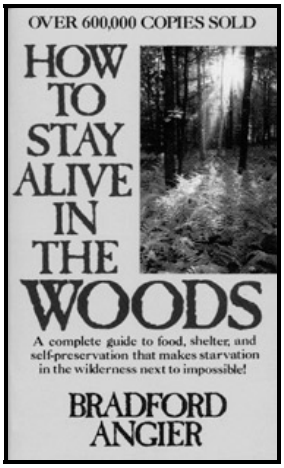
To order mail orders to: California Oak Foundation
1212 Broadway, Suite 810, Oakland, CA 94612
Credit card orders: Tuesday-Friday 10 am–4 pm (Pacific time)
Call: (510) 763-0282 or fax: (510) 208-4435

Bat Conservatory

Because one bat can devour 600 mosquitoes or other insects in just one hour, installing a Bat Conservatory nearby can protect you and your family from insect bites and greatly reduce the need for environmentally hazardous mosquito repellents. Made of Western Red Cedar sawmill trim, this handsome slatted shelter provides respite for approximately 40 bats. 24.5"H x 16"W x 5.25"D. USA.

Available from the Real Goods Catalog. You can order online at

http://www.realgoods.com/care2/shop/shop6.cfm?dp=601andts=1054185 or call (800) 762-7325.



How to Stay Alive in the Woods

by Bradford Angier

Could you survive if stranded in the woods? Bradford Angier's classic survival handbook will tell you how to find food, water, warmth and shelter. Includes making fire, orienteering and safety tips. Great reading, full of valuable information.

For Orders http://www.jastown.com/miscbook/bk-823.htm, or call (219) 594-5852, or write:

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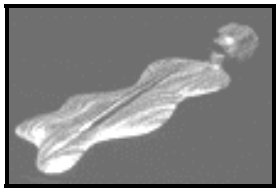


Elliot Landes Penmakers, Writing Instruments

Elliot Landes is a designer/woodworker. Landes designs and produces various writing instruments, desk accessories, and Judaica in his studio in Winters, California. He makes his work available through craft galleries and other outlets that offer fine writing accessories. Landes grew up in Oakland, California and studied at Hebrew University in Jerusalem for two years, followed by studies in product design at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, where he received his B.A. in 1975. He began woodturning in college, and conceived the idea of turning wood writing instruments in his last year of college.

Today Landes produces more than three dozen types of writing instruments and desk accessories.

Elliot Landes Woodworking
Penmakers Inc.
Deep Spring Studio
8 E. Abbey St.
Winters, CA 95694
(530) 795-2648, (530) 795-0428 fax

elliotl@penmakers.net
http://www.penmakers.net/pens2000.html

Shepherd's Watch

Sundial Watches and Jewelry

Sundials use the angle or altitude of the sun to mark the passing hours, and these change with latitude and season. In the heroic age of exploration, the Explorer sundial was developed to adjust for latitude and this dial was favored by early navigators and traveling merchants. Shepherd's Watch® offers: four models of Explorer sundials (available in pewter $30 and $35, and in silver, $90).

Set the latitude.
Suspend the dial.
Have the upper part of the bar facing North.
The shadow on the inner ring will give you the time

The nocturnal dial was first used by navigators in the 16th century who needed to tell the time by the position of the stars. It is actually quite simple to use. The North Star is sighted through the center hole and the pointer arm is aligned with the two "pointer" stars at the end of the scoop in the Big Dipper constellation, also known as Ursa Major. Shepherd's Watch® offers: available in pewter, $25 and $30, and in silver, $90.

Set the middle wheel to the month.
Hold the dial upside down.
Sight the North Star through the hole.
Align the top of the arm with the two end stars of the Big Dipper to read the time.

Shepherd's Watch
16 Westminster North, Suite 306
Montreal West, Quebec
H3X 1Z1
Canada

Order at https://www.shepherdswatch.ca/orderform.htm
or email sherpherds@videotron.ca
http://shepherdswatch.ca/nocturn.htm

Software Games:

"The Mystery of the Druids"

Sounds Fun, but is it Good for the Druids?

Despite Mike Scharding's initial reservations, he found it to be actually great fun! The conversations are non-linear, amazingly enjoyable, witty, and have a tantalizingly dire undertone. The 3-D graphics and amazing audio-visual backdrops are beautifully rendered with tiny minor details that add palpable authenticity. Your sidekicks feed you reasonably correct historical Celtic information.

The game takes about 45 hours (in total) to complete or 10 decent gaming sessions. There are 16 brain-wrackers that require you to carefully search and touch EVERY nook to insure you get all the items. There are only a few places in the game where you can die, so don't worry too much, you can save often and replay favorite parts. Mike, who bought the game (and wrote this review), occasionally cheated, and built a cheat page:

http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/cheat.html

However, it is definitely not positive PR for the Druids, as it represents these modern "gentlemen's clubs" as sinister, murderous people bent on taking over the world. While Mike is interested in taking over the world too (on a part-time basis), he does object to the murderous bit. For the more activistic members, you may wish to protest the merchandization of Druidism. But there are good Druids involved in the plot, too. It should be jolly good rollicking fun for your PC-owning friends in the seasonal holidays ($45 or $1 per hour). Don't get it for your mother.

Applicable Homepages

You can buy it here for $45:

http://www.mysteryofthedruids.com/english/index.php3

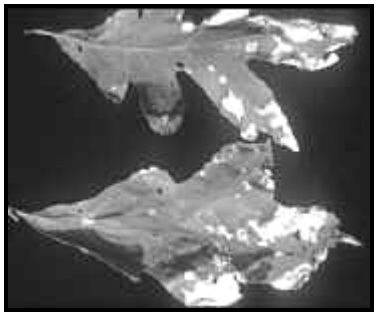
Search for Mystery of the Druids. You can buy it here: http://www.cdv.de/english/_index.html

(Click the English flag) and send Coded Rune e-mail messages to your friends.

http://www.mysteryofthedruids.com the actual home-site

This is America! There is also a free downloadable English demo version, which allows you to question the gardener and solve some puzzles and sneak into the courtyard of Lord Sinclair. Go to:

http://www.mysteryofthedruids.com/english/index.php3



Oak Death Fighters Get $1 Million Grant

By Richard Halstead,
Marin Independent Journal, Nov. 16, 2001

Scientists searching for clues to stem the sudden oak death epidemic plaguing Marin and nine other California counties will receive $1 million from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation in San Francisco.

"That's really good news," said Matteo Garbelotto, a forest pathologist with the University of California at Berkeley who has done much of the pioneering research on the scourge. Government red tape has prevented researchers from getting the money they need to purchase necessary lab equipment, Garbelotto said.

The best thing about the grant is that the Moore Foundation--founded by Intel co-founder Gordon Moore in 2000--allowed researchers to determine how they would spend the money, said Susan Frankel, a U.S. Forest Service scientist.

Word of the grant was probably the brightest news to emerge from yesterday's fourth annual meeting of the California Oak Mortality Task Force, the group of government officials and scientists formed to organize the state's response to the disease. Nearly 100 people turned out for the meeting at the Community Center in Petaluma.

In July, Gov. Gray Davis approved $3.6 million in state funds to respond to sudden oak death. The funding is in question, however, due to the subsequent economic free-fall. On Wednesday, Davis proposed $2.24 billion in cuts to the current state budget.

"We haven't got word from the governor's office yet as to whether or not we'll have to take a cut," said Mark Stanley, an assistant deputy director of the California Department of Forestry and the task force's chairman.

Stanley said that the federal government is still moving forward with plans to impose a national quarantine on the movement of disease hosts from infected areas. But any action is several months away, said Carolyn Pizzo, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official.

Marin County Agricultural Commissioner Stacy Carlsen said he has yet to receive any funding for enforcement of state regulations adopted in May aimed at preventing the spread of the disease. Carlsen said he needs money to hire a full-time employee, who could devote all his time to enforcing the regulations.

"I need a person," Carlsen said. "I'm shouldering this whole thing with my existing staff."

Gov. Davis allocated $266,000 in his current budget to the 10 agricultural commissioners who preside in areas where sudden oak death infestations have been identified. Carlsen

estimates the commissioners, who are charged with the bulk of the enforcement responsibility, need $800,000.

Problems in interpreting the regulations and standardizing their enforcement throughout the 10 counties have also emerged, officials said. The commissioners are scheduled to meet Dec. 13 in an effort to develop a more uniform approach, Carlsen said.

"We do have a problem right now with high-risk material moving from infected counties to uninfected counties," said Monterey County Agriculture Commissioner Eric Lauritzen.

Alan Kanaskie, a forest pathologist with the Oregon Department of Forestry, said California waited a long time before adopting the regulations.

"I think they should have done that right away," said Kanaskie, who detailed Oregon's efforts to eradicate the disease from nine sites in his state. After discovering the disease there in July, Oregon officials immediately quarantined the area and are in the process of clearing it of all trees and plants that host the sudden oak death pathogen.

Because the disease appeared in Oregon in isolated spots, Kanaskie speculated that birds, most likely pigeons, or insects might be spreading it.

Researchers yesterday said they now believe that green waste--vegetative matter under four inches in diameter--poses the greatest risk of spreading the disease's spores.

Under the current regulations, Marin residents who chop down a dead or dying tree are supposed to get a permit before moving it off their property, Carlsen said. But Carlsen said he has no problems with people transporting wood to local composters, such as Redwood Landfill and the Marin Recovery Center.

Shipping wood outside of Marin, particularly to uninfected counties, is forbidden, however, without government approval, Carlsen said.

Garbelotto said that preliminary tests indicate that heating infected wood--to 131 degrees Fahrenheit for up to at least one hour--kills the sudden oak death pathogen, a kind of brown algae of the genus Phythophthora. If done under proper conditions, composting should be safe, he said. Results from additional tests are expected soon.

"We should know for sure in a week," Garbelotto said.

Other research results announced yesterday indicate that the disease reduces the density of the wood it infects, making its use as lumber impractical.

The meeting concluded with some hopeful news. A controlled burn conducted in an area of Marin affected by sudden oak death in September indicates that the disease may not make wildland fires significantly more dangerous, as feared, said Mike Swezy, a vegetation specialist with the Marin Municipal Water District.

Massive Iron Age Hillfort Unearthed

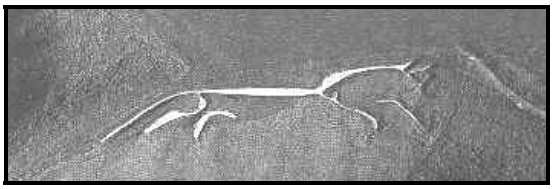
Sources: BBC News (1 November 2001 http://news.bbc.co.uk/), The Guardian, The Independent, The Times (2 November 2001

http://www.guardian.co.uk/ http://www.independent.co.uk/ http://www.thetimes.co.uk/)

English Heritage archaeologists announced that they have finally discovered a long-lost massive prehistoric fortress. Traces of the sophisticated complex on precipitous Roulston Scar, near Thirsk in North Yorkshire (England), have been recorded over the centuries, but it is only now to be given its proper place in the schedule of ancient monuments. Suspicions that a hill fort existed in the area date back to the mid-19th Century, when an Ordnance Survey team mapped a stretch 670ft long of "tell-tale" Iron Age earthworks, but they were later confused with medieval boundary ditches and deleted.

A combination of global positioning technology by mappers' satellites and "good old-fashioned legwork" revealed the true nature and the awesome scale of the fort. The survey revealed that the fort was enclosed by a two-metre-deep trench and a four-metre-high "box rampart," fronted by a timber palisade and topped by a defended walkway; only two entrances were detected, adding to the site's impregnability.

"We were shocked to discover such a huge complex," said Alastair Oswald, archaeological field investigator for English Heritage. Preliminary examinations of the remains suggest it was more than twice the size of most other prehistoric strongholds. Built of timber palisades and girdled by a 1.3 mile circuit of ramparts, 60 per cent of which are cut out of solid limestone, the fort has been provisionally dated at 400BC.



As well as its defensive function, archaeologists think it may have been a "statement of power," possibly housing the Iron Age equivalent of a regional assembly. "Such a large fort would have taken a vast amount of timber and labour to build, which poses many more intriguing questions," said Mr. Oswald. The fortress must have taken several years--and more than 10,000 cubic metres of earth and rock, and 3,000 trees--to build, but nobody seems to have lived there for any length of time. Most hillforts were more akin to fortified villages or

walled towns, often with substantial permanent populations. The evidence so far from Roulston Scar suggests it never was a permanent settlement. Significantly, the stronghold faces what was in Iron Age times the territory of the Brigantes tribe, on the border between the Brigantes and their neighbours, the Parisii. One possibility is that the fortress was built by the Parisian king or paramount chieftain to impress, deter or intimidate their Brigantian neighbours.

Roulston's colourful history has been one reason for the fort's elusiveness; the famous White Horse of Kilburn, carved in the chalk, obliterated a stretch of rampart with its head. Richard Darn, for English Heritage, said: "The Victorian schoolmaster who carved the horse created a fake prehistoric monument by destroying part of a real one, which he didn't know was there." The site was also damaged during the second world war, when defensive works were dug in the main area, which has been the base of the Yorkshire Glider Club for 80 years. So many German gliding enthusiasts had used the grassy hilltop in the 1920s and 1930s that it was seen as a possible Nazi invasion site.

Interesting Reindeer Fact

According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, while both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summer each year, male reindeer drop their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid-December. Female reindeer retain their antlers till after they give birth in the spring. Therefore, according to every historical rendition depicting Santa's reindeer, every single one of them, from Rudolph to Blitzen, had to be a female. We should've known...only women would be able to drag a fat man in a red velvet suit all around the world in one night and not get lost.

Calendar

Yule, Winter Solstice, when the Sun enters Capricorn, will occur on December 21, 2000 at 11:22 a.m. PST. Yule services will be held on Saturday, Dec. 22 at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Yule we will be going immediately after the service to AD's house. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on January 13 and 27. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $6.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

 Ye Olde Scratch Paper

Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION THREE

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Oimelc Essay: Brigit and the Flocks

By Stacey Weinberger

imelc, one of the major High Days in the Druid calendar, is the Festival of Bride, Brigit, Brid, Dawn Maiden, Patroness of Poets, Bards, and Smiths, Celtic Goddess of the hearth, healing, inspiration, childbirth, cattle, and crops. Oimelc marks the end of the dark days of winter and the beginning of spring. Noticeable is the increasing length of the daylight hours.

Originally a pastoral festival, Oimelc was associated with fertility. The Irish word for Oimelc, Imbolc, is derived from the root word m(b)olg meaning lactation. Oimelc stems from the Old Celtic Ouimelko "ewe's milk." This was the time of year in agricultural societies when the ewes were first coming into milk and the beginning of the lambing season. This was important, as milk was the first fresh food since the end of the harvest at Samhain. Sheep and Cattle were valued possessions both in human and underworldly society, and this is especially true of herding societies, such as early Celtic societies. The classical writers such as Pliny and Strabo comment on the use of milk and milk-products in Gaul, Germania, and Britain, showing its importance in those cultures.

That Oimelc is also known as Bride's Feast Day (La Fheill Brighde in Scotland) shows Bride's association with the fertility festival. Though little of the goddess Bride is known in detail, many of her associations were carried over into early Christian accounts of the saint. Anne Ross writes In her *Everyday Life of the Pagan Celts* that in the later Christian tradition, St. Bride's association with sheep and pastoral economy and fertility in general would seem to be carry-overs from her pagan predecessor's role. In the *Life of St. Brighid* there are also various pagan attributes. She was said to be fed from the milk of a white red-eared cow, which was her totem animal as a pagan goddess. In Irish mythology white animals with red ears were considered supernatural or otherworldly. She was protectoress of the flocks and harm would come to any that harmed her cattle. She had the power to increase milk production. In artwork, she was often shown to be accompanied by a cow, which Miranda Green writes is a manifestation of her mother Bofhionn, the White Cow who is the goddess of the sacred river Boyne. She is associated with the dandelion, thought it quite possibly could have been coltsfoot, a plant with similar attributes, which flowers closer to Oimelc. It is said that the milky white juice in the stems fed the young lambs.

Bride's association with the flocks is still evident in modern times. In the Carmina Gadelica, a collection of hymns and incantations by Alexander Carmichael records a charm for stock as recited by Archibald Currie, shoemaker. Charms are a poetic form dating back to Indo-European times used for protection.

The charm placed of Brigit
About her neat, about her kine,
About her horses, about her goats,
About her sheep, about her lambs;

Each day and night,
In heat and in cold,
Each early and late,
Each darkness and light;

To keep them from marsh,
To keep them from rock,
To keep them from pit,
To keep them from bank;

To keep them from eye,
To keep them from omen,
To keep them from spell,
South and north;

To keep them from venom,
East and west,
To keep them from envy,
And from wiles of the wicked;

To keep them from hound,
And keep them from each other's horns,
From the birds of the high moors,
From the beasts of the hills;

To keep them from wolf,
From ravaging dog,
To keep them from fox,
From the swiftness of the Fiann.*

*Fiann were hired warriors.

News of the Groves

Carleton

All is going well here. The Circle is happily slumbering and the weather is cold. We plan to try out the new, more aerodynamic trays[1] on Evans Hill this term. Hopefully we all survive the encounter. I'm looking at a long, hard, but hopefully educational term. And most of us that you know are working on comps[2] now. We'll have to rely on the young druidlings to keep us entertained, I think.

[1]Mike Scharding, graduate of Carleton College explains: "Carleton's winter tradition is to steal lunch trays and go sledding on the nearby suicidally steep hill; 70 yard drop in 20 yards and a nice flat riding plain of 100 meters. If you 'pike position' in the center grabbing the edges you get an extra 30 and glide. They are also excellent squarish enough that you can spin if you keep your weight centered and avoid letting a corner dig in and flip you. I was three-time distance champion from 1990-93, and have the t-shirt to prove it from the nude Winter Olympics of 92!"

[2]Mike further explains: "Comps are the 'Senior Year Comprehensive Exercise' that displays mastery of your major. It consumes about 50% of the time of a Carleton student's senior year (and sometimes junior year) and is roughly equivalent of a Master's Degree research paper in complexity, plus a grueling two-hour oral examination by the department. It severely limits the Druidism of most senior Druids at Carleton, leading to many cases of Senioritis burn-out and grove near-collapses.

Many seniors only resurface in late May, after being in an 'undisclosed safe location' for several months. History papers tend to be about 50 pages, hundreds of hours of lab work for Bio/Chem students, entire choreographies for dance students, etc. As an example; "A Reformed Druid Anthology" was the result of my research, i.e. 'General History of Reformed Druidism' and its supplementary appendixes of primary resource materials. It took 14 redrafts, two years and over a 1,000 hours for me to get a history paper barely acceptable to them. ARDA took another two years to polish up."

Emerald Grove

Seattle's Greenwood Grove STILL exists. It has been renamed EMERALD Grove and is now under the leadership of grove ArchDruidess, Priya Kendrick. She can be reached at: silk999@juno.com or silk@blarg.net and her current Grove calendar website is http://www.scn.org/~emerald.

Volcano Grove: News from Tonga

I applaud the goal of doing twenty hours of druidic work a week from here on out. I have been considering something similar--starting with a physical tour of the groves beginning sometime next fall. It would be highly educational, not to mention fun, to actually visit all the RDNA and related groves I could find contacts for. I am curious how many different directions folks have taken, how many different responses they have developed to the problems of being a druid...Also, I intend to be traveling within the states for a longish period, visiting all my scattered friends and relatives. How odd is it to come this far around the globe while knowing so little about one's own country?

Lower Order of Pele

Representatives of the Volcano Grove recently undertook a pilgrimage to the island of Tofua. There they were witness to no fewer than five simultaneous thunderstorms, spied several rare species of birds, bathed in a pool sheltered in the rainforest, and were blessed with the opportunity to behold real live lava. The Archfool himself undertook to climb over the lip of the cinder-cone to get a better look at the fire. (Tied to a firmly anchored rope--he is learning a few things!) Others were then able to scramble up the same rope and hold onto him while gazing a hundred meters straight down to the place where rocks are melted up and born again. Some days later he made a solo trip back up the cone without the rope (Goddess watching is dangerously addictive) and was blessed with a double lung-full of sulfuric acid and a badly lacerated leg while fleeing the cloud of vapors that emerged to punish his precocious-ness.

Bridgit is known in these parts as "Pele." Tongan being what it is, the word has several other meanings too--Dolphins, card playing, and Spinach-like trees all share the name of the Goddess of Fire. In such a heavily contextual language invocation becomes a dangerous and haphazard art.

If all goes well I should escape in March or April and be home for April or May. I have not seen New York in springtime for seven years. It is about time to get home.

Monument Grove: News from D.C.

Well, D.C. is without snow and mid-30s as of January 10th, which means winter is slow out here. The birds and the squirrels don't seem to mind since feeding them fistfuls of seeds, although the cherry trees accidentally bloomed last month. Mairi and Sine went on a trip to Alabama (don't ask me why) for New Year and tramped about in some swampland. I'm currently working with Nozomi on researching Celtic Women and giving her some leads. I'm also researching the attitudes of different religions towards animal sacrifice and/or laboratory testing. The article should be ready by the equinox.

Thoughts About Anarchy

Many religions, when organized to fit one select group's goals and aspirations, do tend to make it harder for other's to appreciate that religion's teachings. Groups, by their definition, tend to be excluding as well as including. I think it's possible to be a dissenter within a group and provide a valuable service, not unlike the fool/trickster in many mythologies.

The RDNA does have a thick anarchistic streak in it, but not as much as the Discordian church or the Church of Bob. We're more on the disorganized, lazy and incoherent end of the spectrum rather than on bringing down the governments.

Mother Nature, herself, has her rules, with winners and losers; as do most anarchists. She is indifferent to whether the rabbit escapes or the bobcat catches the rabbit. For many, this seems chaotic, not caring if the innocent or the bloodthirsty win, but rather it is neutral. In the biggest sense, Nature tends to lean to the "increasive" side, with life prevailing despite heavy casualties of death. Evil and good only apply to the actions of men outside this system.

Ancient Circle Grove MOCC: News from NY

Here's all the news that fit to print:

Brother Evan Gort received his Naming Rite and also was welcomed into the first circle of study as Druid. He celebrated his Rite of Apprenticeship and received his silver oak tree

pendant. It was a very emotional and moving ritual. We celebrated this important step with Br. Evan Gort, offering our support and freely giving him honour and encouragement.

Brother Aiden has taken a sabbatical from the Grove. He remains in our thoughts and prayers and stands firmly amidst us and is never without our support and encouragement. He will be welcomed back enthusiastically when he chooses to return to us. His skills as Grove Bard are sorely missed. Sister Lily Wolf will soon be celebrating a birthday! She holds a place of great honour in our Grove. She is the embodiment of the wisdom of the Crone. She is a unique and insightful member of the Grove, gifted in shamanic technique and drumming.

Ancient Circle has concluded for the year our upkeep of the Old Bramer cemetery in Hebron, New York. We still have a great deal of work awaiting us next year, but we are confident that we will not be defeated by the ever-persistent grapevines. A special thank you goes out to Argyle Central School Sophomore student, Amanda Spear for her assistance in keeping up the cemetery. She was a tireless worker, full of good humor and such a blessing to us!

We also were successful in adopting a needy family for Christmas. The generosity of the Grove members was a great joy! Preparing the box, wrapping the gifts and then shopping for a holiday food basket was a delight to my spirit! The box was delivered on December 20th. Happy Holidays!

Ancient Circle gathered at the home of Sister Lily for our Yule get together. This was a family event. A Yuletide altar was set up and individuals were able to go at their leisure and make their devotions and offerings there. The food was simple but festive, the company delightsome, and there was great happiness and love. Gifts were exchanged in the glow of 27 candles and Sister Lily's eight-foot tree! It was simply breathtaking! Truly the return of the Sun was not felt more strongly than by those who joined together to share its return and felt its life giving warmth deep in their spirits. What a wonderful time! Many thanks to Sister Lily for her hospitality.

We have heard many good things coming from our sister Grove in Kentucky, called Oaken Circle Grove. I believe that they will soon be posting their activities on this page as well.

—Inion

Oaken Circle Grove MOCC: News from KY

Sherry in northern Kentucky has started a new grove in November 2001, which is an independent affiliate of the Missionary Order of the Celtic Grove. A web address will be soon listed on the RDNA billboard, but e-mail is at oakencirclegrove@hotmail.com

Creeks Called Rivers Grove: News from Ohio

Song writing (or at least melody writing) is something I've been kind of toying with. I recently took up Appalachian dulcimer (because any idiot can play one), and have been having a lot of fun with it. I'm even slowly beginning to understand the whole key/notes/octave thing. An engineer by training, though, I'm not sure why things aren't simply expressed in hertz. My playing with the diatonic fret board has also led me to a bit of blowing on the tin whistle and pan flute. I'm doing all right on the tin whistle, but I'm not ready to do a Waterboys album, or anything. Meanwhile, Zamfir sleeps easy.

Big Ash Grove: News from Michigan

The Fire Ceremony

First you walk through the jungle looking for sticks. Gather as many as possible. When you get back to your village hut begin stacking them in a square (leave out like ten or so for later) so that it looks like a squished box with no top. Remember fire safety rules; like building a pit outside and doing it there, and have a bucket of water ready, just in case. Ok so now you set the pile on fire. Now you have to make friends with the fire; this consists of talking to it, sharing concerns and problems, and also feeding it a few drops of oil. I find patchouli or moldavite oil works good. Now that you have a new best friend you begin taking the other sticks, one by one, and put your problems into the stick. Such as financial problems, love problems, a healing need, a fear, etc. Feed the problems to the fire watching them being transformed

Then take some of the energy out of the fire with your hands...don't worry it's a friendly fire. And put the energy into your stomach, heart and brain; so that you make the right actions, have the right emotions and the right mental abilities to take care of the problem. After you've done this with all but one of your sticks, place the final stick into the fire with the prayer that the Earth Mother is healed. Don't take that energy out of the fire, let Momma E take that energy. Let the fire die out, while vigiling and meditating.

Akita Grove: News from Japan

Our winter solstice ritual drama (Sun Goddess in the Cave) went quite well and the guests liked it. I worked on the dance until end and was nervous! The text is on http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/akitanews.html. We sang by a huge log fire until morning and welcomed the new sun. It was fun.

We plan for a big outdoor festival on Akanidai Mountain with Big Cailleach Search. Peter is in charge because he likes running in woods, being cold and wrestling! The Search text will be in the Oimelc Druid Missal-Any and then everyone in America can prepare for their own fun on Vernal Equinox, but we will do it on Feb 1st. On Feb 2nd, Pat will wear the Demon Mask, and everyone will throw beans at him. He will take bad luck out of the house.

Feb 13th is the fourth anniversary of Beth Harlow's death. We will have a small rite for her memory. Pat will publish a eulogy next issue.

http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/memorial.com

Brother Eric will visit us in May, from America, so we will have special welcome at Akita Airport. He will bring presents to give to Mike (the post office is expensive). Unfortunately, his room at the shrine is unheated, so he will have to be drunk the whole time to live the visit.

Only 10 weeks left for bardic contest. www.geocities.com/mikerdna/bard.html. Keep writing to me at nozomikibou@hotmail.com. That's all. Thank you.

Ice Floe Grove: News from Antarctica

I'm doing fine. I'm wrapping up my research here, and guess what? I am moving to Bolivia in June to join a friend in doing anthropological research in their portion of the Amazon jungle. I'm going to mostly be studying the researchers and seeing how they act as a group in a foreign landscape. The grove

here will naturally cease soon, although I'm sure the penguins will continue the faith for many generations to come.

Speaking of beasties, I just heard the Pauxatawny Phil over in Pennsylvania will be receiving an armed guard for the Ground Hog's Day festival! I guess that's reasonable, considering that 6 more weeks of winter could hurt the U.S. economy. National interest is involved. Uh, huh?

Yours in the Freezer,

Ian

Order of the Mithril Star

"Butterflye Grove" is gone. The leader has moved to the Seattle area and the remaining members have gone on a more Wiccan path.

The contact for Cylch Sequoia Sempervirons is now Angie Druid Fulmer, magickwomyn@yahoo.com

There is an OMS/RDNA protogrove forming in Eugene OR. The contact would be me. We haven't decided on a name as yet.

There is also a protogrove forming in Bremington (sp?) WA. For now the contact is:

butterflye@roguecelts.com

In the Mother,

Stephen Druid Gabriel-MacMullen
Instructor, OMS-RDNA
http://mithrilstar.50megs.com

Silent Grove: New Grove!

I guess since this is our first contribution to a "Druid Missal-Any," a brief introduction of our Grove would be in order. We currently have four members (yes…living, breathing entities). Our focus of course is a lot of things Druidic (and a lot of stuff that isn't) without any real focus on any particular area. We are a rather eclectic group, taking certain aspects from Taoism, Celtic/Scandinavian/Germanic druidism, Native Americana, a general spiritual connection with Nature, and hopefully combining this to create something new and fresh...at least to us. Our focus is mostly on having fun, though seriousness won't escape us either.

Over the past week, our Grove has worked feverishly (gotta keep warm somehow in the winter) designing, developing and publishing our web presence (http://www.silentgrove.org). Glen managed to secure us a domain name and has done most of the work getting the web page up and out there. The rest of us are busy little contributors. We hope to keep the website very active with fresh, new content on our on-line newsletter and events schedule. We're not going to take ourselves too seriously, so the web page is more of a fun place. If you're looking for serious historical druid stuff...well...that won't be the place to get it. You can also find a lot of general information about our Grove there.

We are all preparing for Imbolc but haven't decided where to hold our festivities as yet. It will probably be just the four of us, but nonetheless, it should be fun.

As the year goes forward, we have a lot of ambitious things to do at our Grove. I just hope we haven't bit off more than we can chew! But the journey will of course be all the fun.

Flatulent Waters Grove: News from NY

This Grove, on the Niagara Falls, has disbanded and gone on to a more natural way of worship; long walks in the woods and casual contemplation by transcendental meditation.

Golden Oak Grove: News from Minnesota

All's well here, just a bit crazed right now due to the holiday goings on, seems like no matter how well you plan things there will be a multitude of things that just all go wrong and suddenly all well laid plans are thrown into chaos, but that's life I suppose...

The first thing to hit was the fact that some designer home decorator person of the year has declared that the only twinkle lights to be had for under $8.00 a pop are clear, I looked high and low only to find every style of clear lights imaginable, a few strands of outdoor blue lights, The only indoor ones I could find were red, green, and one strand of frosted gold, other than that it was clear, OiY!!!

Our tree this year is huge and perfect, but it took an entire afternoon to locate all the green and red lights in the Minneapolis St. Paul area and of course that one lone strand of frosted gold...

Not exactly what I had in mind for the tree but it did turn out very pretty--I put the greens inside to make it glow and the reds on the outside--it's lit and looks gorgeous but it isn't a bright beaming spectacle either which is good...

I wound the gold lights with the silk oak leaf garland and will light that up Solstice Morning...My tree topper was crushed beyond repair during our move last spring and I couldn't find anything to replace it that I liked, this year is a horrible year for holiday decorations, I looked again today for something to top the tree with and found the local K-Mart only had red/white/blue and clear stars, "no thanks," so I think tomorrow I'm going to put my daughters piñata up there, it's a sunshine so I suppose it's as appropriate as anything...

It's better than the other thought I had of dressing one of her baby dolls up as the baby sun god and tying to the top of the tree, hehehe...

I've just got done making cookies and have more to bake in the morning but right now I've got some where around 500 mini sugar cookies that need decorating...So far I've made candles, trees in two sizes, and stars...I've still got Moose, Suns, Holly leaves, Oak Leaves, Acorns, Stockings, and Angels to finish up...I got some new gel-food colors today in blue, purple, deep red, deep orange, black, deep green, so they ought to be very vivid once decorated with the colored frostings...I also got some bronze and gold dust to paint them with. It's really cool stuff, edible metallic dust, really makes the suns light up!

Mojo Protogrove

"Mojo" protogrove gathered at a local theatre to watch Harry Potter for pointers on magical thinking for our Winter Solstice. We later convened at a local (Irish) Pub to compare notes.

Amon Sul Grove

Greetings from Amon Sul Grove,

Amon Sul Grove celebrates Yule as the rebirth of the sun, and as such, the beginning of the new year. While the worst of winter's weather is still ahead, the lengthening days are our promise that the cycle of seasons will once again be repeated. Yule also basically coincides with the arrival of our seed

catalogues. Much of January is spent planning the coming year's garden. By Oimelc, the cycle of life has already been jump-started by starting some of the earliest seedlings indoors under full spectrum lights. As I write this, we already have tomatoes, pansies, and valerian that are up. The black cohosh and hawthorn are slow, difficult germinators and it is with both anticipation and trepidation that their containers are being watched. This year we are planning a major expansion of our varieties of medicinal herbs. Our winter has been mild, to date, and some of the irises are already beginning to come up.

Druid Spirit Grove: News from Chico, CA

Alban Gwyddion or winter solstice was wonderful. It was raining out so we ended up doing ritual indoors which made for a closer sharing when passing the triad bowls around we each took turns anointing each other with the awen on the forehead. Our sweat lodge is coming along slowly, I've leveled the ground and am getting ready to dig the surface of the inside of the lodge down a couple of feet. We are doing our regular new moon rites as we do every month here soon. For Canol Gaoaf (Imbolc) we are going to gather on the night of the Feb. 2nd and have another indoors ritual if the weather is too cold. I hope it will be nice so we can feel the energy of the stone circle again in ritual.

New homepage:
http://www.geocities.com/sailletree/homepage.html

Baccharis Grove: News from the East Bay

Rain, rain, rain. It seems like it rained the entire months of November and December. We were only able to hold two services during that time. (We usually meet every two weeks on the Sundays closest to the new and full moons in addition to the High Days.) We weren't able to hold our Yule service due to rain. The morning was so overcast and misty that I was not able to welcome the Sun at sunrise at the Grove site on the day of the Winter Solstice, which I have been doing the mornings of every major and minor High Day since Spring Equinox of last year. When you are used to holding regular services you really begin to feel the lack of that spiritual "fix" that comes with doing rituals regularly.

The first rains in November brought an early spring to Baccharis Grove with shoots of the Pacific Snake Root appearing in sunny spots and Golden Back Fern along the steps and path up to the Grove site. We are currently in a cold snap (lows in the 20s and 30s with snow predicted which is unusual for the Bay Area). I wonder how the cold will affect the vegetation, whether it will survive or die back to begin again when the weather warms up.

One of the benefits of the rain is that is has made putting in steps up to the Grove site much easier; its been easier to pound in the stakes that hold up the wood plank reinforcements and easier to control where the steps so the placement makes sense. The lower steps had just about totally worn away; now the "fall on butt" factor has been greatly reduced.

It was very quiet this past service up at the grove. Gentlest of stirrings of the trees at the Calling of the Winds. All in all it was a quiet day at Grove Woebegon.

Corn Grove: News from Iowa

We are going into abeyance for a while. We'll be back in touch perhaps within the year.

Wind in the Oaks Grove: New Grove!

Merry meet and all that. Hi, my name is Mark. Me and some of my friends have started a grove. I'm the Arch-Druid or what ever you want to call it. It basically started when me and a couple of my friends started reading about Druids, and decided to become one (or some), and the grove is named "The Wind In the Oaks Grove." There are five of us, but we don't have any duties, and the only reason I'm the Arch-Druid is because I'm good with knowledge and computers (high-tech druids LOL).

No, we don't really have any purpose or focus, other than cherishing the Mother together. The Grove is in Norman, Oklahoma. As for being able to get a hold of other groves, I am the only one who can do that now. As for why I was picked to be AD, I don't have any real idea why, except that perhaps I knew more about being a Druid then the rest.

The Great Cailleach Search

Devised by Patrick Haneke, Akita Grove
Collaborated with Brother Alex on his "Great Snogle Beast Hunt"
Plentiful Advice from Brother Mike
Researched and Transcribed by Sister Nozomi

A few years ago, when Brother Mike was in Japan, we went with him to a lot of the local pagan festivals. Mike suggested that we start our own, blending Irish and Shinto traditions. Like our Winter-Solstice service, here is our version of an Oimelc festival, with more focus on activity than liturgy; which the Japanese are famous for. Neo-Pagan rituals can be so dull, whereas the Celtic commoner was likewise more interested in the associated activities of the season. We'll still have an Oimelc service, but it will pale next to the Great Cailleach Search. Please enjoy.

The Straight Dope on the Cailleach Bhuer, the primary figure in this action-drama.

Cailleach (Call y'ach) is the common Gaelic word for old woman, "carlin" in the Lowlands, "Black Annis" in England (Annis being a Celtic Water Goddess), "Cailleach ny Groamch" on the Isle of Man, Cailleach Bhuer (Blue Women), or Hag of Beare is her name in the Highlands. Interestingly enough, an owl is called Cailleach n'Oidhche (very difficult to pronounce) meaning "old woman of the night".

I slapped a few half-remembered legends together and divined the rest. In the old days, old women were respected for the life-power and wisdom that naturally should accrue to the elderly. This particular old lady was a giant in Scottish tales who also represented winter. She could shape shift, either to a serpent or a comely lass and was considered quite wise. She could also become stone at will, indeed, remaining as a stone throughout the Time of Life (May 1st to Nov. 1st.). Thus, she is a natural choice for residing in a stone circle, I think, especially in a stone used for judging the Winter Solstice alignment.

She is reborn on Samhain and reigns throughout the Time of Sleep (Nov 1st to May 1st). After reviving, she washes her tattered plaid in the famous whirlpool off the coast of Jura, "Corryvreckan" ("Coire Bhreacain" is the cauldron of the plaid), and the plaid emerges repaired and pure-white and she drapes it over the land. She bore a staff that could kill any plant and would freeze the ground if tapped. The young God of Spring, born on the Winter Solstice, (no name as yet) wanted to play with his forest friends, but they were too tired, and the Goddess refused to end the winter so early. She recommended that he should be in Galicia or Galetia, not the Gaeltacht, if he wanted some warmth. She complained that she wasn't finished freezing Loch Ness and was still perfecting her snowcap on Ben Mor and Mt. Snowdon, and the skiers would be most unhappy if she didn't finish that job. If she had time, she'd get around to freezing the Irish Sea too.

Undeterred, he asked Cailleach Bhuer if is she was tired, and she admitted that she was getting a bit of a tension headache from concentrating so much on her work. She agreed to take a short break and play a short game of stickball. Spring God tossed stones and nuts, and she batted first. Many valleys and lakes were created by the impact from the stones she hit. She played a marvelous first round and then he asked to have a turn at bat. The staff was thus captured by the young God of Spring, who flung it into the holly bushes, because the staff would kill any other plant, and the holly would prevent her from retrieving it by guarding it with its fierce thorns.

He then ran off, unpenned, and gleaned a few of her seven Arkan Sonney (red, lucky, hairy pigs), whose hot little footsteps melted the snow. The Cailleach dispatched a squadron of her ravens to retrieve the piggies, but the Spring God eluded most of them. The little piggies ran all over the place with the young God, ruining her white blanket of snow. She forgave him later, after he explained the animals were getting thin and needed to eat new plants, but she required him to bring her a flower wreath at Beltane and return her staff next fall.

Not being able to freeze things anymore, she started her new job on Feb 1st. She went to the deep forest of the Isle of Youth and drinks a cup to return her to a more vigorous appearance. Then she works on weaving a new plaid for the next year's vegetation, which she will hand over to her sister at Beltane before transforming into stone for a long rest in the shape of a rock, under a flower wreath, who takes a pause in his morning activities that day to payback the old lady. He, of course, returned the staff at Samhain.

She was the patroness of deer and boar, protecting animals during the winter. She is sometimes depicted as riding a gray stallion with ravens and crows. The Book of Lecan, says she has been through seven life cycles, deaths and rebirth, and has had seven mates. Thus seven is a sacred number of perfection. There are numerous hills named after her, such as Ben Nevis and Schiehallon.

For More on Her See:

http://www.paganvillages.com/Magick/archivesev/NovGoddess.html

The Fun Part: The Great Hunt

Now that you know the background, here is the activity we're planning. A similar one can be done for Beltane, which much nicer reward…

Location:

A forest with lots of trees or places to hide things. It should be smaller than one square mile, and with definable boundaries (roads, fire breaks, fences) to keep members from really getting lost. The smaller the vegetation cover, the smaller the Cailleach will be naturally. Distributing maps and cell-phones and GPS equipment is standard for the over-anxious. A finish line with an evergreen tree, a box, a campfire and a long rope is chosen. Games start and end there.

Number of Participants:

As many as feasible.

Duration:

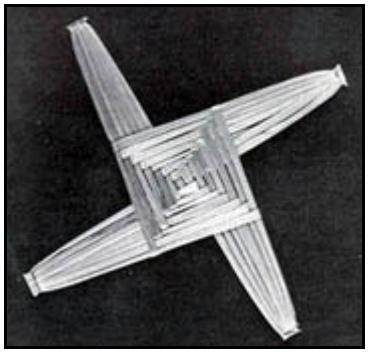
The hunt should last about an hour or two. Older members will wait at the finish line in a suitably warm place (like a van).

Overview:

1. At winter solstice, the AD tells the tale of Cailleach Bheur, to burrow it into their psyches. Then the AD begins preparations for making a hunting package (whistle, secret envelope, hunting stick, tennis ball, piece of elastic, protection amulet, blindfolds, search flares) for each future participant. Train your bagpiper, get a bullhorn or air horn, or super whistle, etc.

Prepare major amounts of hot chocolate and a feast for the returning hunters, preferably at the nearby onsen/hot spa! One long rope is also necessary and a campfire.

2. The Archdruid, or her accomplice, hides a statue or mannequin or doll with a three-foot long stick and hangs a piggy in the nearby area before the first snowfall, or before a predicted great snowfall, thereby covering the tracks and adding a sense of mystery. Caution should be made whereby, notable features are noted down, and the statue will not be completely covered by snowfall (tying it at chest height to a tree is a good idea.
3. A few weeks or months later, the hunters (who've been hopefully training) gather at the starting point, in their best outdoors gear. The rules are explained and the hunting packets are distributed. The player's duty to bring winter to a quick end should be stressed, if the Gods will help. Players are crowned with short antlers, [temporarily] blindfolded and spun around. Bagpipes sound and they rush off into the woods to find the Cailleach Bheur and her little piggy (Arkan Sonney).
4. The first person that finds her statue/manikin places his amulet around the neck of the statue; he or she will grab her staff and use it to knock down the piggy from his cage (always set a few inches out of reach of the stick, to tease them into clever ploys to reach it.)
5. The lucky fellow now grabs the piggy and immediately sounds her/his hunting horn (a shrill whistle) 7 times. The pig rustler will get seven blessings if he can make it back to the finish line and toss the stick into the holly/evergreen tree and put the piggy in a box filled with straw and carrots.
6. After hearing the whistle, everyone tries to tag the pig rustler. If they tag the person, they take away one of the blessings for themselves, and the rustler will get symbolically spanked for each time they are tagged by the officiant. (If you like playing rough, you can have them try to take away the piggy and finish it themselves, but avoid bloody noses.)
7. The winner gets a kiss from the AD, and will hide the piggy for the next year and oversee the preparations and is publicly blessed 7 times (her choice of which blessings to grant) with the staff. All the players are recalled. Players who tagged him/her (in order) may deduct one of the blessings as they see fit for their own use.
8. The piggy is then tied to the middle of a long rope and placed over a fire (or a cauldron in non-fire-possible zones) and the grove splits into two sides (perhaps by Nov 1st to May 1st birthdays and May 1st to Nov 1st birthdays) to divine, by a "tug of war," whether winter or summer is stronger. The side to pull, the (quite possibly burning) piggy over 15 feet from the fire is declared the winner and all its teammates get three blessings, losers get one blessing each.
9. After one hour, if no one has returned, sound the bagpipes' "Warning song" (or sound the siren in 2 blasts) and the players can open the sealed envelope with a description of the location of the statue. However, they lose 4 of the blessings if they do so. They can choose to not open the envelope and keep searching and thus lose only 2 of the blessings.
10. If they haven't returned in 2 hours, play the bagpipes' "retreat song," shoot the flares into the skies and call out the National Guard to return the players. Winter will be longer than usual this year!



Some Optional Things for Oimelc

By Alex Strongbow, ex-Carleton

Well, here's my list of things to do for Oimelc, Imbolg, Candlemas, Ostara or whatever you wish to call it. It's a multi-faceted festival reflecting Bridget's diverse talents. If you were to combine them all you'd be "writing poems by candlelight about flaming metallic sheep." Sounds strange, but where do you think "steel wool" is from? Do not put it in the microwave, though, unless you want to see visions of Pikachu!

- Banana-Split candles (Cherry, banana, pineapple ring; possible imagery…)
- Make decorated candlestick holders.
- Try to predict (e.g. candle divining) whether winter will end soon and what day the last snow will be gone in the grove or some other spot.
- Start planting seeds in little pots.
- Get a candle-making kit at an art store.
- Spring Cleaning Party
- Make homemade butter or ice-cream (try goat's milk)
- Fireworks (if legal, secretly if illegal…)
- Make a contest to find first flowers or awakened hibernators
- Decorate the house: Bridget's Straw Crosses, ironwork, stained glass, candelabras, lava lamps, anything that's bright,
- Melt lead and pour into molds to make items.
- Sharpen knife, repair or replace tool collection
- Rent "Lambchop's Funniest Songs"
- Write poems together (perhaps within 5 minutes on a theme)
- Rent "Babe" or "Ground Hog Day" with Bill Murray
- Rent "Bell, Book, Candle" with James Stewart or "Silence of the Lambs"…
- Rent "Wallace and Grommit" (Perhaps "A Close Shave" is the best episode)
- Decorate chair by fireplace.
- Burn the dried up Christmas tree (watch it go fuuumph!)
- Have a sheep day
- http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Hills/9609/sheeptxt.html
- Call up a farmer and have the kids come down for a sheep birthing.
- Do some knitting with wool.

Also see:

http://pages.ivillage.com/paganparent/imbolic.html
Packed with stuff
http://www.web-holidays.com/candle/ fun

http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/CandlemasCustomsLore.html Overview
http://www.partytown.com/menus/imbolc.htm for a meal
http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson048.shtml About Groundhog Day
http://orderofthecauldron.homestead.com/cadlemas.html Nice discussion on Candlemas
http://www.ghostdragon.net/sabbats/imbolcactivities.html More activities.
http://members.tripod.com/acorns3/archives.html Pagan kids activities back issues (look also under Ostara)

Life is a Birch, Whose Bark is Appealing!

By Sam Peeples, 1st Order, Ex-Stanford Grove

Birch is derived from "Bright" in Indo-European and related to Sanskrit "bhurga," "Birkana" in German, "Beorc" in Saxon, "Bedwen" in Welsh, "Bjarkan" in Norse. "Beith" in Gaelic is the first month of a lunar calendar and as the start of the Ogham alphabet; it is appropriate for beginnings and entry into Druidism. S.T. Coleridge named it "Lady of the Woods." As birch is one of the first trees to come into leaf it would be an obvious choice as representation of the emergence of spring. Often it is the wood of choice for the Maypoles, Yule Log of last season, anytime, really! But, because of its associations with spring-cleaning and babies, it is appropriate for Oimelc or Spring Equinox. Its wood is good for starting fires for any season.

Birch trees are one of the most recognizable trees in the forest, with its slender trunk, banded bark, light branches, alternating serrated leaves and thin peeling bark. It usually grows in copses with multiple shoots in the same spot. They grow to 50-70 feet and are common to Europe and America. They tend to live 60 years. Birches are wind pollinated with little "catkins" in April, appearing with their leaves. Male catkins release pollen and fall apart while female catkins catch the pollen and release the winged seeds in mid-Autumn. The seeds are "pioneers" and tend to like bare sunny patches. Fallen Birch twigs from the parent tree have the capability of rooting and beginning a sapling. Never take a complete ring from around the trunk as this would halt the flow of nutrients and would kill the tree and only prune in late spring after leaves are out and past the "collar." A healthy Birch's thirsty roots will spread twice as wide as the height of the tree. The Birch populations are currently being pestered by "Bronze Birch Borers," "Birch Leaf Miner" worms, and the Birch Canker fungus.

In Britain there are three varieties:

1) The Dwarf Birch (Betula nana), a Scottish Highland shrub that grows even on tundra.
2) Silver (warty) Birch (Betula pendula) whose twigs are hairless and droopy but bear tiny warts and found on well-drained ground. It grows quite tall.
3) Downy Birch (Betula pubescens), like the name, this smaller tree has peach fuzz, found on moors and swamps.

In addition to the Silver Birch, America's major varieties are:

1) Paper Birch (Betula papyrifera), famed for its peely white bark and black stripes. Popular with children who pull off its bark. A quick growing tree, it is often sought by timber companies.
2) River Birch ((Betula nigra) is less common. Naturally found near rivers.

Associations:

Birth, pioneering, fresh endeavor, purity, one of the three pillars of wisdom (Oak, Yew, Birch), exorcism.

Folk and Magic Use:

(As always consult your Doctor)

- Brooms handles and sweeps made of wood and twigs especially for New Year cleaning.
- Russians attached a red ribbon to a branch to fight the evil-eye.
- Norse Farmers connected it to Thor and attached it to a house to avoid lightning.
- Scandinavians flail themselves in saunas with birch twigs.
- Scandinavians wrapped the bark around their legs to keep out the wet--gaiters.
- Siberian shamans used Magic Mushrooms (Amanita muscaria) to climb the skies.
- Dutch boys lashed young women to make them fertile. (eh?)
- Anglo-Saxons beat criminals and children with switches of it.
- Irish often used it for making doo-dads and writing Ogham.
- In Pembrokeshire (now Dyfed) girls would give their lovers a twig of birch as a sign of encouragement; if they were not so lucky they often got a hazel twig.
- The Celts made cradles of Birch for protecting the babies.
- Native Americans used the bark, which was used for buckets, canoes, and as a sugary drink.
- The pitch was made into a glue for fixing flint arrow and spear heads onto shafts.

- Parchment or rune sticks of a Birch struck by lightning can be gathered during the moon.
- The inner bark contains methyl salicylate, which is a counter-irritant and analgesic.
- Bark infusions for rheumatism.
- Poultices of leave, catkins for skin problems.
- Lotions from bark's oil.
- Tea for mouth sores, kidney stones and provide a diuretic
- Young leaves and shoots for laxatives
- Small amulets of Birch will protect you from Faery and lunatics (useful!)
- Wine can be made from the rising sap in March.
- Birch beer brewed from the branches.
- Thatchers and wattlers used its branches.
- Birch charcoal often used for gunpowder and indigestion.
- The timber is tough, stiff and fairly easily worked and is used in joinery, carving, cabinet and furniture making, clogs, spools and bobbins, plywood and flooring.
- The bark, when dried and twisted into a rope, is used for candles.

Winter Birch Tree Cookies

Christmas Baking (1997 Pillsbury Classic Cookbook)

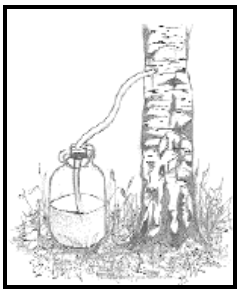
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 3/4 cup of sugar (possibly birch sap sugar?)
- 1 tablespoon milk
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1 egg
- 2 cups Pillsbury BEST All Purpose Flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 package (12 oz) vanilla-flavored candy coating or almond bark, melted
- 2 ounces bittersweet chocolate, melted
-

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Grease cookie sheets. In large bowl, combine sugar and butter; beat until well blended. Add milk, vanilla and egg; beat well. Lightly spoon flour into measuring cup; level off. Add flour, baking powder and cinnamon; mix well. Shape dough into 1-inch balls. On lightly floured surface, roll balls into logs, 6 inches long. Place on greased cookie sheets. Bake at 400 degrees F. for 5 to 8 minutes or until light golden brown. Immediately remove from cookie sheets. Cool completely. Place melted candy coating in pie pan. Dip logs into candy coating; place on waxed paper to cool. Drizzle melted bittersweet chocolate over logs to resemble birch trees. 3 1/2 dozen cookies.

Highland Birch Sap Wine

- 8 pints sap
- 1lb chopped raisins or dried fruit
- 2lb sugar
- Juice of 2 lemons
- General purpose yeast

Collect the sap from a number of trees so as not to overtap an individual tree, which could kill it. The sap should be collected in early March whilst it is still rising. Select larger trees, bore a hole about 1"-2" deep, around 4ft off the ground, place a tube or something similar in the hole and allow the sap to run down. Then put a suitable container underneath and allow to fill. The hole will heal naturally, but it wouldn't hurt to wedge a piece of birch bark over the hole to aid it. Boil the sap as soon as collected, add the sugar and simmer for 10 minutes. Place the raisins in a suitable bucket, pour in the boiling liquid and add the yeast and lemon juice when it has cooled to blood temperature. Cover the bucket and leave to ferment for three days before straining off into a demi-john and sealing with an air lock. Let stand until fermentation finishes, then rack off into a clean jar and let the sediment settle. Bottle the wine and store in a cool place for at least a month. Good for Vernal Equinox.



Birch Tea

This is an old and effective remedy to combat cystitis, urinary problems, gout, rheumatism and arthritis and to remove excess water from the body. To make the tea, collect the birch leaves (the best time is in the spring when the leaves are fresh) and dry them out of direct sunlight. Put 2-3 teaspoonfuls in a cup and pour on boiling water, then cover and allow to stand for 10 minutes. Take the tea 3-4 times daily or just occasionally if you need a mouthwash. Fresh leaves can also be used but as the months progress the leaves deteriorate.

Further Links on Birches:

http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/9344/birch.html
http://druidry.org/obod/text/trees/birch.html
http://hometown.aol.com/birchfire/page18.html
http://www.whitedragon.org.uk/articles/lady.htm
http://www.treesforlife.org.uk/tfl.mythbirch.html

Handicrafts (www.paulbunyan.net/users/bjosephc/bark.htm)
Baskets (www.teelfamily.com/activities/basket/)
Canoes (www.birchbarkcanoe.net/default.htm)

Making Your Own Cheese

A Druid Missal-Any presents a recipe for making your own cheese for Oimelc! This recipe is for Queso Blanco, a South American cheese that is similar to the Indian cheese, Panir. It makes a great cooking cheese because it does not melt. The recipe is very simple and makes 1.5 pounds of cheese. I am certain goat's or sheep's milk could be substituted for cow's milk.

1 gallon organic milk (whole, reduced fat or nonfat)
1/3 cup vinegar (cider, grain or herb vinegar)

Warm the milk to 195 degrees F. You should have a cooking thermometer. Stir the milk to keep it from scorching. When the milk is at 195 degrees F., stir in the vinegar. Turn the heat off and let the hot milk set for 10 minutes. The milk will quickly coagulate into solid white curd particles and a clear greenish liquid whey.

Line a colander with fine cheesecloth and pour the curds and whey into the colander. Hang the bag of curd to drain for one hour or until the curd has stopped dripping whey. Remove the cheese from the cloth. It will be a solid mass of curd and may be wrapped in plastic wrap and stored in the refrigerator until ready for use.

Queso Blanco can be cut into half-inch cubes and used in a variety of dishes. Because it doesn't melt, it works wonderfully in all types of recipes, and can even be deep-fried. You can add it to soups, stir-fried vegetables or pastas; the cheese will take on the flavor of the surrounding food and spices. By itself, the cheese has a very distinct sweet taste.

Thanks to the Straus Family Organic Creamery for this recipe from their newsletter. For more recipes, check out their Recipe Page at:

http://www.strausmilk.com/strecipe.htm. You can also email them at family@strausmilk.com.

Fertility Cycle of the Druid Year

By Nozomi Kibou, Archdruidess of Akita Grove

I apologize for the poor quality of this essay, but I hope you'll like it. You know my father's grove is a fertility shrine (people, plants, animals too) so it is an important subject for me. I have thought about Paganism and the big four holidays and I think they are fertility holidays. Here are the reasons.

Beltane: It is warm. Young people date and have sex (Pat says "It's a festival of muddy knees and grass-stained dresses.") Planting season.

Lughnasadh: We know if we have a baby. People marry. Family starts.

Samhain: Baby gets big. Spirits move in baby. Baby kicks. Hard to work in fields, but okay, that work is done, we can relax, start new plans of life.

Oimelc: Baby is born. Sheep are born. Not much food, which is hard for mothers. Use sheep milk for babies? By equinox, can work in fields again. Grow baby plants!

Beltane: Ready again for more babies? Maybe wait one more year, no?

Sister Tegwedd says we don't need more babies now, "Zero Growth Population," so instead we are mind-creative. Yes, but there is no cycle for that. Most Japanese babies are also born in spring around Feb 1st. April's when school and government and business start a new year in Japan. Very convenient. Birth time of the year, April is. Old Europe started the New Year around Easter, but then changed to the Roman Julian calendar. But now most people are not farmers in Wales or Ireland now, so the baby-schedule doesn't work well. Probably more babies in late summer with constant year-round food, long winters, and in fall school starts.

In modern Ireland there are good luck rules for the wedding, which was often before baby-making. A good wedding will help fertility. See http://www.irelandinformation.com/irishweddingtraditions.htm for many fertility rites of "The Traditional Irish Wedding" by Brian Haggerty.

Old Ireland has no records of "before-birth" advice for women. There were warnings in 11th century that women should have purity of heart and mind and not "heat the womb" during sex; but church didn't like recreational sex back then. Saints took over from Druids in blessing women with fertility, in many unusual ways, including potions. Some babies were born from swallowing live bugs, worms or fish, unusual water plants, sex with giant otters or bird-monsters or night-dreams. There was mystery in how it happened. The best modern advice for all (including men) is to exercise and eat only health food for six months before starting baby/getting married. No drugs, tobacco, alcohol, fatty foods, chocolates, coffee, allergenic foods, meat, gambling and horse racing, avoid rabbits, and corpses. Choose foods with special traits to direct babies' personality. In Japan we were special belly-belt to keep belly warm. Stay that way until milking is done. Of course this is not easy. Other tips on diet to make strong babies at:

http://www.paganparenting.net/information/pregnancy/

Once with baby, a blessing from the priest and the soon-to-be grandparents is good. Some make a special bow/knot for the house. When birth comes, untie it and open all windows, doors, cabinets, knots in house and clothes. The baby comes quicker this way. Sometimes a special bird or animal will visit the house during pregnancy, give it honor, and a name to baby. Going to a forge and pushing the bellows would help the birthing later and make a strong baby. But the most important thing is of course strong love from both parents, no fighting and excitement in the house, peace and tranquility. With this, baby will grow well. If the baby did not go well, abortion by potion and self-abuse was also known. There is evidence of infanticide, too. Unfortunately, modern Ireland has worst rate for "caesarian" births (near 25% for first time), a weak midwife system, and no birth-centers as yet. (http://www.iol.ie/~hba/historyaims.html) Yet, this is because of the modern medical monopoly. In the past midwifes were common. This describes a 19th century Co. Mayo birth:

After she went into labour, the woman was transferred from her usual bed, which was in the kitchen by the fire, to the floor, which was covered with straw. She put on her husband's jacket, an outsize flannel garment with sleeves, made of homespun wool, or bainin. 'As the great event drew near, the husband stood at his wife's back, and placed his hands on her shoulders while she was in a kneeling position on the floor. With words of faith, hope, and encouragement, he supported her morally and physically in her trial, while the midwife got on with the great task of bringing a new human life into the world.'

Celtic sources have much more on the raising of children after birth than before birth. The most important fear was ban-sid (faery women) stealing the children and leaving a "changeling," an old faery who never got bigger and shrank. Sometimes the mother would be took and go to fairy hill to raise fairy-babies. This may have been due to emotional stress and mother running away or hurting the child (like that Texas case) in tight society with small support for mother's need. In famous case of Ard Macha, treating pregnant wife rude like the animal (making her race the horses) caused a weak-body curse on all men of North Ireland for many generations. The point is, let pregnant women do what they want!

More Good Sites:

- http://pregnancy.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.iol.ie%2F%7Ehba%2Fceltic.html for Celtic birth customs.
- http://www.celticsilverspiral.org/History/Myths/superstitions.htm Celtic birth customs.
- http://pregnancy.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.iol.ie%2F%7Ehba%2Fceltic.html Home Birth Society of Ireland.
- http://www2.vhihealthe.com/topic/7061 How to predict the baby at, but I think it is a 51-49 percent chance so don't worry.

Sudden Oak Death Found in Redwoods

Peter Fimrite, San Francisco Chronicle Staff Writer
Tuesday, January 8, 2002

California's magnificent redwoods appear to be susceptible to the same deadly disease that has infected oak woodlands along the Central Coast, preliminary testing shows.

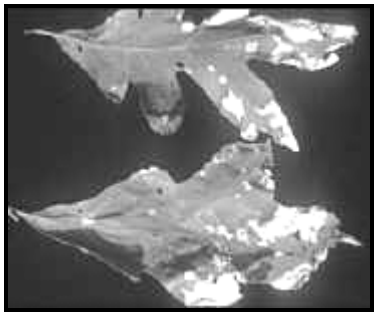
The test results, if confirmed in laboratory experiments, could prove economically, environmentally and spiritually ruinous for a state that is linked in the minds of people throughout the world with the giant trees.

According to plant experts, DNA extracted from redwood sprouts on trees in Big Sur and on the University of California at Berkeley campus proved positive for Phytophthora ramorum spores.

Scientists studying the disease were quick to point out yesterday that the data have not yet been conclusively confirmed in laboratory experiments on seedlings, as is standard before redwood can be officially designated a host.

But the data are frightening nevertheless, given how important the timber industry is to the state's economy and the significance environmentalists place on the state's dwindling old-growth redwood forests.

"We don't know what the ramifications are or whether the disease is killing redwoods, but, if so, imagine California without redwoods," said Matteo Garbelotto, a forest pathologist at the University of California at Berkeley. "I don't think that will happen, but it's something that makes me worry. It's a serious issue that is of great importance for everybody in the state."



Threat Confirmed

While the scientists seek confirmation, a San Rafael arborist, Ken Bovero, has told researchers he has confirmed through an independent laboratory what he has suspected for some time: that the pathogen is killing redwoods.

It was not clear yesterday what scientific steps the independent lab used and Bovero could not be reached for comment.

The disease, also known as sudden oak death, has killed tens of thousands of black oak, coast live oak and tan oak trees from Monterey County to southern Oregon

The disease-causing organism, which is commonly referred to as a fungus but is more closely related to brown algae, is the same type of organism that caused the Irish potato famine in the mid-1800s.

Although some chemicals have been shown to reduce infectious lesions, scientists have not found a cure.

First detected in Marin County in 1995, it has spread like a plague through 10 California counties, infecting many other species of trees and plants along the way.

Some areas, like China Camp State Park in San Rafael, have been so ravaged by the disease that campgrounds had to be closed, and dozens of trees had to be chopped down so they wouldn't fall on hikers.

Dead Sprouts Found

The concern about redwood trees began in earnest in September, when forest pathologists attending a conference in Carmel noticed a lot of dead sprouts coming out of redwood tree trunks at Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park.

The sprouts on redwood trees are important for regeneration. When a redwood tree dies, Garbelotto said, one of the ever-present sprouts grows and takes its place.

Plant pathologist David Rizzo of the University of California at Davis took a sample, and laboratory tests performed by Garbelotto detected spores from the deadly pathogen. The discovery was a jolt to scientists because a redwood is a conifer, unlike any of the other hosts for the disease.

Tests were then done on sprouts from several redwoods on the UC Berkeley campus, which also showed ramorum spores.

"Because it was so serious, we didn't release the information publicly," said Garbelotto, adding that he had come forward now after it became clear the information was about to get out through another source.

Garbelotto said researchers still had not determined whether the spores were actually infecting the trees or were simply present by coincidence. Studies also must determine how prevalent the pathogen is, whether it kills the trees or whether redwoods simply act as a host, like several other kinds of trees.

Studies on redwood seedlings inoculated with the disease are expected to be completed this month and will probably answer those questions, he said.

"Preliminarily, we did see from our samples in nature that the phytophtora was colonizing the tissue, but we have to confirm that," Garbelotto said.

One need not be an economist or environmentalist to understand the seriousness of the potential problem.

If the deadly microbe is, in fact, present in redwoods, it could be catastrophic, even if the mighty trees do not die from the disease.

A statewide quarantine of wood products that currently limits the movement of wood products containing the pathogen would create a bureaucratic nightmare for timber companies. Just getting wood to the mill could become nearly impossible, especially if the wood has to cross county lines.

Tourists who want to visit redwood country might also face restrictions because of fears that they would spread the spores on their shoes.

E-mail Peter Fimrite at pfimrite@sfchronicle.com.

A Miner's Lettuce Leaf Grows in San Francisco

I walk through downtown San Francisco and the Financial District every day to and from work. There is a row of Sycamore trees along Battery Street that last year had the square patch of ground around them covered over with pebbles and grates. Up until then small clusters of Miners Lettuce would sprout after the first winter's rain. I thought how odd yet how tenacious these little plants must be to survive in such a place, mere inches from the exhaust of cars and the soot of the city.

Last year at this time I was sad because I knew that the so-called beautification of the ground around the trees destroyed the habitat of this seemingly out of place native plant. Some grasses sprung up in their place and perhaps what looked like chickweed. But my favorite, the Miner's Lettuce was gone, casualties in the name of civilization, though I still glance down to where they grew as if to eulogize them with that gesture.

Today, as most days that I take that path, I looked down to where the Miner's Lettuce once grew. What was this that I saw? That familiar succulent bowl with the tiny white flower that grew up from its center! Did I believe what I saw? Yes, the Miner's Lettuce had returned! I don't know how or what, but somehow the seeds had managed to survive being dug up and covered with rocks. I learned two things this day. Nature can persevere even amidst concrete and steel, and that you don't have to be in the middle of the forest to experience Her joy.

PantheaCon 2002

Double Tree Inn in San Jose, CA
February 15-18, 2002

Join the largest indoor gathering of tribes and traditions in the country for a 4-day extravaganza of workshops, rituals, events, networking and fun.

Presentations, rituals and panels from a wide variety of guests including: Robert Anton Wilson, Diana Paxson, R.J. Stewart, Raven Grimassi, Lon Du Quette, Rachel Pollack, Mary Greer, Z Budapest, Mara Freeman, Chicago Steve Barkeley aka Stefn Thorsman, M.Macha Nightmare, Darryl Cherney, Amber K., Donald Kraig.

Musical performances, Ritual Theater, Variety Show, and a Masque Ball: Gaia's Voice, Pombagira, Reclaiming, Bast Ritual, Magical Acts Theatre

Workshops, scholarly papers, author readings and slideshows by special guests and local favorites

Over 60 vendor booths featuring pagan, magical and earth-oriented products.

Convention Programming starts on Friday afternoon 3:30 pm, with presentations beginning at 9 am and ending with the last slot starting at 11pm on Sat. and Sun. Monday will start at 9 am and end in the late afternoon with Iron Priest: The Unfairer Sex.

Friday evening will feature a Variety Show*, with a performance by Magical Acts Ritual Theatre, having the Costume Contest (there are rumors of hall costume prizes) on Friday night as well as our regularly featured Pombagira ritual.

Our regular Saturday night event will now be a Masque Ball. And Monday will feature our regular event, slightly tweaked for your enjoyment: Iron Priest: the Unfairer sex

Admission fee: $50.00 (till Sept 15), $60 (till Jan 15) and $70 at the door (includes all events for the entire conference) $30 for a full day, $15 for evenings only.

Parking is free for hotel guests with validations for conference goers. The hotel has agreed to run four daily shuttles for pick ups at the light rail station, times to be determined.

Don't forget that you can sign up to work the Con as a volunteer! Email volunteer@ancientways.com or see http://www.ancientways.com/html/gofer.html for more details.

Mistletoe Confirmed as a Herbal Remedy

I was recently going through a bout of daily headaches. The usual over-the-counter remedies, prescription migraine medicine, and herbal remedies were not working. While shopping at the local natural foods after my Gaelic class I was in the herbal medicines section looking for something else and there was Crystal Star Relax Caps, a "popular and effective formula to ease stress and nervous tension. Helps reduce anxiety and stress to produce a feeling of calm."

I had tried other herbal formulas but nothing specific for stress and tension, and this sounded promising! The next morning there was a slight headache but it went away. Same results the next day, and the next until no more headaches! What is in this stuff? The label read:

Ashwagandha (Withania s.) (Root) 109 mg. Scullcap (Scutellaria l.) (Root) 72 mg. Kava Kava (Piper m.) (Root) 72 mg. Valerian (Valeriana o.) (Root) 36 mg. Black Cohosh (Cimicifuga r.) (Root) 72 mg. Black Haw (Viburnum p.) (Bark) 54 mg. Hops (Humulus l.) (Flower) 36 mg. Mistletoe

(Phoradendron l.) (Herb) 36 mg. Lobelia (Lobelia i.) (Aerial) 36 mg. Wood Betony (Stachys o.) (Aerial) 36 mg. Oatstraw (Avena s.) (Aerial) 18 mg.

Mistletoe? In the Yule 2000 Missal-Any I wrote about its medicinal properties and noted that it has been used to reduce blood pressure. How satisfying that I was able to stumble across a remedy that used it and worked!

Resources

Mike Scharding (Monument Grove) was helping Nozomi Kibou (Akita Grove) with her research on women and came across three books that are not in most lists of "must-reads" on ancient Celtic society. Here are his brief reviews:

Women in Celtic Myth:

Moyra Caldecott. *Tales of Extraordinary Women from the Ancient Celtic Tradition*. Rochester: Destiny Books, 1988, 1992. ISBN:0-89281-357-1. $13.00. 203 pages.

A nicely compact collection of lightly-adapted stories that feature or focus on 11 different heroines who are prominent in Celtic stories. Ms. Caldecott is obviously in love with mythology, but avoids stuffy literal reading and sensationalist rendings. It's plain good reading and will memorably fill a weekend and make a nice starting point for a deeper foray into the subject matter after familiarizing yourself with these key stories.

Celtic Women:

Peter Berresford Ellis. *Women in Celtic Society and Literature*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdman's Publishing Company, 1995. ISBN: 0-8028-3808-1. $20.00. 277 pages.

We all know that Peter Ellis loves to crank out books on the Celts, no matter what the specialty (over ten in the last 15 years I believe). This volume is typical of his well-known intensive research orientation. He stacks information willy-nilly about your ears while trying to purvey his findings to you. Unless you have a relatively good backing in Celtic studies (and even if you do) it is a bit of a daunting work from the sheer number of references to a myriad of historical and literary heroines that he makes. It's easy to lose the thread sometimes due to his exuberance.

This is also its strong point, since he digs up material (especially from the Cornish, Manx, and Breton regions) that is often rarely listed in the popular Llewellyn publishing house and even serious studies. It's a good book to use when you want to find more sources, names, or tie-ins. You'll finish the book, feeling like you just took the first step on a longer journey than you reckoned upon.

As for his style, he is definitely a bit of a romanticist and tends to see the brighter side of the evidence, leaving us with a bit of the bias that the Celts--while not flawless--were definitely a lot more respectful of the females in their native society (unlike the barbaric Anglo-Saxons and prudish Roman Catholic priests, which he deprecates throughout).

Land of Women:

Professor Lisa M. Bitel. *Tales of Sex and Gender from Early Ireland*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996. ISBN: 0-8014-854404. $12.00. 234 pages.

Well, this was a bucket of cold water on the face after reading the preceding rather pleasant books. Prof. Bitel has used equally academic quality as Mr. Ellis, but is an Associate Professor of History and Women's Studies at the University of Kansas. Naturally, her orientation is a bit different, and not having had any coursework in women's studies, I am hesitant to expose my gross ignorance on this academic tradition. She also backs up her statements with 70 extensive pages of endnotes.

She begins by focusing more on legal dimensions of surviving late medieval legal and clerical texts and feels that these reflected a conscious attempt of men to wrench control of the reproductive process away from women in an ancient society that never really respect women properly enough, despite the Romanticism of nineteenth and twentieth century folk-revivalists. She shows us the negative interpretation of all aspects of less legal representation, uncertain recognition by patrilinear families obsessed with heirs, weak bargaining position in divorce, inability to hold property on the same level as men, etc.

This left my Celtic daydreams a little deflated, but she then went on to show the various strategies that the same women to avoid the laws and church to reach higher positions of power and status. She illuminates the daily functionings of the domestic economy of the family, priests' wives, polyandry, the fostering system, child-rearing to a much deeper degree than Ellis did; drawing upon a greater diversity of disciplines. You finish the book with a more mortal-sense of familiarity with the plights and travails of these women and their children and the attitudes and stratagems of their male relatives. A worthy addition to any Celtic library. If a student were to just butt Ellis

and Bitel against each other, you'd have years of fun comparing the conclusions from similar evidence.

Calendar

Astronomical Oimelc, when the Sun is at the half way point between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox, will occur on Feb 3 at 4:25:39 p.m. PST when the Sun will reach 15 degrees of Aquarius (or by the alternative calculation when the Sun will reach 16 degrees 18 minutes declination on Feb 3 at 6:40:00 p.m. PST). Oimelc services will be held on Sunday, Feb. 3 at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Oimelc we will be going immediately after the service to AD's house.

Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on February 9, 24, and March 10. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $6.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

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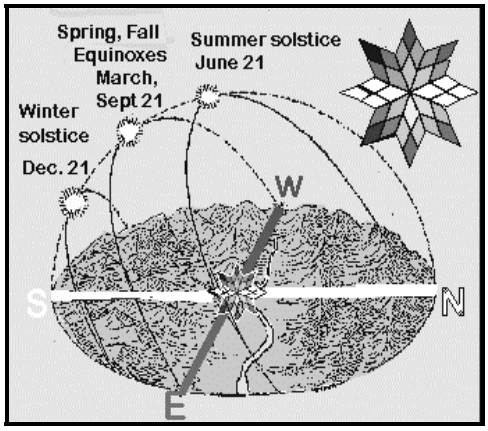


Spring Equinox Essay:
Plowing Charm and New Year

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any,
Spring Equinox 1984
By Emmon Bodfish

Equinox, the beginning of spring, which is marked by the Sun's crossing of the Celestial Equator, the first point of Aries. For a diurnal cycle, the day and night are of equal length. The emphasis of the holiday is on renewal, active preparation for the summer to come. The stones of some of the Megaliths mark this sunrise, by this point the plowing and seeding must be done. In numerous cultures these were sacred activities, from the Charming of the Plow in pagan Germany, a celebration which the Anglo-Saxons brought with them to England, to the ritual plowing of the first furrow in a special sacred field by the reigning Chinese Emperor. Our word for acre, 43,560 sq. ft. of land, comes from the Gaelic word "acadh" meaning a field.

Erec, Erec, Erec,
Mother of Earth
Hail to thee, Earth,
Mother of Men

Be fruitful in
God's embrace
Filled with food
For the use of men.

This was written down in the Leechbook circa 950 AD in England. It is the ancient Indo-European Earth Mother and Sky Father, despite five hundred years of Christian influence.

In England, Spring Equinox was celebrated as Lady Day, now fixed at March 25, to make it a dependable legal holiday while the Equinox shifts yearly between the 20th and the 22nd. Before the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in England in 1752, this holiday was the beginning of the New Year, legal and fiscal. In the Gaelic world, the new season, Samhra, wouldn't begin until Bealtaine, but the New Year had commenced on Samhain on November 5th or 6th. Between Samhain and Bealtaine is the "Season of Sleep" and May Day begins the new "Season of Life."

In modern Reform Druidism there is no whiskey, or intoxicant, in the chalice at services all through this Season of Sleep, only distilled water, the Waters-of-Sleep. Only water is poured out in the Offerings to the trees. It is the season of the Pine and the Birch. The latter, Bride's tree, begins her season at Equinox. It has been a time of rest and in-drawing, the re-couping of our energies. Now life starts to re-awaken and we begin preparations for the major celebration of the Druid year, Bealtaine, the full-blown Rose.

News of the Groves

Carleton

So, we had a Druid Art Day! This Sunday at tea, we crammed all the druids, art supplies, and creativity we could find into Nourse main lounge until art came out! We used crayons, markers, construction paper, play dough, and anything else we could think of. Tea and conversation were provided.

Also, of note is that Carleton College has a new 55 year old president (#10), Dr. Robert A. Oden Jr. Unlike past presidents, his academic focus is Near Eastern Languages and Literatures with a Th. M. in Near-Eastern religions. He was president of Kenyon College in OH since 1995 and taught religion in Dartmouth from 1979-1989. He is definitely going to contribute to the religious scene of Carleton, "But is it good for the Druids?"

Akita Grove: News from Japan

All is well here and we had great fun here. Of course, Naomi won the Great Cailleach Search (see the last Missal-Any, you try it too!), but she fought with Satoko to cross the goal. We celebrated the farmer new year in late January. We carried decorations all over the village.

We are having plans for an Equinox Egg festival, like Easter. Whoever finds the most will be the winner. Doing it in a forest makes more fun. The Shrine is very busy with students needing good luck for exams. After April, Pat (he is a fool) will walk across Japan (the short way from ocean to ocean).

Monument Grove: News from D.C.

Well, I was witness to two crimes within one hour. First somebody robbed a Popeye's Chicken store in front of my very eyes. I didn't realize it till after it was over. Then someone kicked in my front door for fun and ran away laughing. We've since had iron bars installed, ugly as they are.

Mairi is leaving after the Equinox to pursue a solitary path, and taking Sine with her of course. (How can you be solitary with some one else?) It's all in good friendship, and I expect her back on the winter Solstice for goodies.

My wife and I have begun a one-year commitment to raising a seeing-eye puppy. His name is Earl and he's a Labrador Retriever, so he balances Mairi's departure along with my new cat. We all four go out for nature walks daily.

The Encyclopedia of American Religions by Gordon Melton is updating their 1979 article on the Reform Druids provided by Isaac. The article became the template for further encyclopedias on American religious activities. I submitted an

amended copy after having others make their comments and historical notes.

I also investigated the myth of the balancing of eggs on their ends during the equinox. I found a wonderful site on the topic at www.badastronomy.com/bad/misc/egg_spin.html that I recommend you investigate.

Volcano Grove: News from Tonga

Dec 19, 2001. Rain. Thought we might be in for a hurricane last night. We had to seal all the windows of the town hall and to keep the water out. Now the wind has left for somewhere cooler and we retain only a solid perpendicular drizzle.

I can't recall if I mentioned my chickens. For the longest time, I held off adopting any, figuring I could have either them or a garden. With zero local vegetables, the latter was more important. One day, I came home to find two young hens hiding under my bed. I took the hind, tied them up and built a large cage to keep them in. One puzzling fact about chickens is that after a week or two in a new environment, they forget having lived anywhere else. Once these two were thoroughly brainwashed I let them roam free. First thing they did was devour my cabbages and tear up the onions. They haven't even produced any eggs yet! Still, they are adorable–and I can always eat them if they bug me too much.

Time flies like a hummingbird. Magically still while sucking life's nectar, then gone too fast to follow. My time approaches the latter phase. Twelve weeks till escape from paradise. With luck I will be home for Beltaine. Send nothing to Tonga after March 16. Till then, I remain your sunburnt emissary.

The following account is perfectly true and factual. The events happened last Friday. Makes you wonder just how thorough the missionaries were:

Hard Core Pagans in Tonga

After being assured by the Doctors that there was nothing wrong with him, Siona Piko (false name) visited a good Christian card reader to diagnose ongoing pains in his abdomen. The reader examined his playing cards and announced that two of Siona's deceased in-laws were trying to take the family with them. Siona's wife had died just before his pains started, her brother only months before. Unless the spirits were stopped they would haul off the whole family. Siona returned to his island and tearfully related the story to the surviving relatives. "I know I'm going to die," he told them.

Two of Siona's good Weslyan cousins decided enough was enough. They stole into the graveyard in the early morning and dug up the bones of the two offenders. Carrying as many parts as they could, they snuck to the lava field, doused the bodies in kerosene and burned them in the night. The skulls they carried to the wharf and then threw them into the sea, which promptly spat them back out.

"We are Christians!" the local priest bellowed at Mass the next Sunday. "Stop doing this! Haven't I taught you anything?" Villagers were somewhat sympathetic, "Sure, we dig up our families graves…to clean and oil the bones sometimes." Said one woman who spoke to me on conditions of anonymity. "The Spirits occasionally make us sick then show up to complain about tree roots prying their ribs apart. Once we clean the grave they always leave us alone." Others were merely terrified of ghostly reprisals because the bones had not been completely destroyed. According to the police officer who recovered the ashes, the deceased were still alive and well and prevented his car from starting when he tried to leave for work. "Go away and let me do my job!" he cried. Under Tonga's very Christian law such acts carry a ten-year sentence.

The local Druid when pressed for comment, smiled quietly behind his teacup and simply asked if Siona Piko had recovered.

Fresh off the coconut wireless report
Irony Sade Reporting

P.S. Still digesting Marcus Aurelius' "Meditations." Very good. Definitely high-class paganism.

Ice Floe Grove: News from Antarctica

Thanks so much for conveying the news from my lonely outpost. Fortunately for me, I'm soon going to Manaus and working on the Madiera River on April 1st (coincidence?).

Computers don't do well in water, so I'll be out of touches. I'll still write letters occasionally to Mike and Derrick, just like Brother Irony, and do my best to find Dalon Ap Landu hiding amongst the trees of the tropical jungle.

Wish me luck. Enjoy the summer folks.
—Ian

White Rabbit Grove: News from Wisconsin

Having lost her Internet connection, things have been dull lately in WI. Katya says she sprained her ankle on the way to the woods, worsening the boredom. She notes that there has been unusually little snow due to the high temperatures. There are some worries about the water table.

Mojo Protogrove

Mojo protogrove has taken a recess due to unforeseen circumstances.

Oaken Circle Grove: News from Kentucky

Greetings we are the Oaken Circle Grove from Northern Ky. area, our grove is coming along nicely we have five active members and three perspective members in our new grove which was established in Nov.2001. I would like to give special thanks to my husband Mike (Myrid) and my sister and brother-in-law Tara and Brandon for their support. I would also like to welcome Teresa (Oceanna) to our grove. We are still working on pulling our grove ideas together as well as a youth grove.

Our plans for Ostara right now are a get together for the grove and perspective grove members, we are going to do some egg coloring for the children and have them decorate our tree with Easter eggs, (we have one we have had up since Samhain and the decorations change to reflect the holiday). Some natural dyes that can be used are, beet juice for a pink or reddish color, boiled onion skins for a pale yellow, you can also use plum juice or grape juice to make a nice purple, I have heard you can use cooked spinach juice to make a green shade but have not tried that one yet. If any one is interested in learning more about us please go to our website at:
http://oaken_circle_grove.tripod.com/oakencirclegroveky/ We have many pages we hope you will enjoy and we have a guest book on our member's artwork page you can sign. Have a safe and Happy Ostara.

Many Blessings,

Sherry

Silent Grove: News from Hamilton, Ontario

Just thought I'd update you on a new Grove that was started December 21, 2001. We had actually wanted to start the Grove in November of 2001, but decided that our annual celebrations should coincide with the winter solstice in the Northern Hemisphere. Our initial ceremonies included viewing the planet Jupiter in all its splendor, as well as a candlelight vigil for the protection of natural areas that are increasingly coming under attack in our area.

Our next meeting will be March 20th, 2002 and so far we are planning on working with local groups (after our own service which will commence at 2pm EST at a location not yet specified) in conjunction with Earth Day 2002 to hopefully give more understanding to the Druidic interpretation and role of nature, and of its importance within a historical context as well as today and into the future.

Our current group of four has a well-rounded cornucopia of skills and interests, and with alacrity we are all willing to learn more as we expand beyond our knowledge-base and flourish into a wisdom-based group (whatever that means). And, of course, we are always looking for others who wish to join us in their own spiritual journey.

My personal forte is outdoor survival training, Taoist tai-chi, and TM all culminating in a strong, unbreakable bond with nature. My wife's strength revolves in her training in the art of homeopathy, organic gardening as well as natural crafting (soaps, candles, incense etc.). Our other two members have interests in anthropology, geo-caching, divination, poetry and song-writing.

All quite a mouthful (and a delicious one at that)! Of course we all share a deep love of our Mother, and just as she gives, all of us in Silent Grove volunteer our services to charitable organizations (esp. those related to the preservation of the environment from ongoing degradation) when we have time. With warm and brotherly regards.

Emerald Grove: News from Washington State

Back in contact with the Washington Grove! Questions and answers from the second oldest Grove in the Reform.

1) How is your group organized?

Cyndie Sallee-Brown lead our Grove for about 17 years. When she left the area, she elevated me to third. My understanding is that we only elevate someone to third if they are leaving the area. In my case, I had to alter that. I have had problems with my health from time to time and needed a back-up in case I couldn't lead a Grove. JoAnna Schoettler is the other third in our group.

2) What is your grove like, how big is it?

Our Grove, now called the Emerald Grove instead of the Greenwood Grove, has any where from 26 to 55 people showing up an any given time. Usually, it is some where in between, maybe around 40. Since we use my house and back garden, invitation to the Grove is through a friend. As far as specialties, I certainly promote entertainment. My dance troupe has done ritual dances, sometimes people read poetry, share songs, that sort of thing. Otherwise, it is fairly basic because it is an open group. We get a lot of newbies that flow through here. I like to keep things simple.

3) Is it actively working with other local groups or isolated?

I have communication with Leon Reed's group and a group called CUUPS that is connected with the Unitarians in our area. There is certainly a flow of people that come to our Grove as well as the other groups. I have shown up to some of these other rituals on occasion, but actively working with them? Not really.

4) Have you made any publications, poetry, songbooks, and constitutions?

Not since I have been Arch Druid. Cyndie created a songbook with her ex-husband, Dwane Worthington, although I don't think she handed that out much. She also lead a Greenwood Grove choir and they did a few tapes. I was a part of a group called "Laughter and Love" which included Cyndie, Dwane and myself. We did a cassette of music that was pagan related. We used to do concerts a various pagan events in the Northwest area. That was back in 1984, I believe.

5) As the 2nd oldest grove in the Reform, what's been going on since the 70s in your grove? We really lost track of you in 1981 (we lost track of everyone, actually).

I can't even begin to cover what has happened, even since I first came to Cyndie's Grove in 1983. We continue to celebrate the seasons and my focus is to create community.

6) What happened to Cyndie Sallee, the Founder, after Tom Schuler and Dennis Merril left?

Cyndie lead the Grove up until 1997. She decided to move to Hawaii where she lives today. I took over at Lammas in 1997.

I'm still in wonderful spirits after a delightful Candlemas celebration that we had on Saturday evening. It has been a real trip seeing the how the flavor of the group changes as time goes on.

My dance troupe did a Candle dance that went over really well. We are starting a Grove dance troupe so that we might do more ritual dance prior to circle. In the past it was just women from my belly dance troupe that I have been a part of for years. About 12 people signed up and it will be interesting how this comes together.

These days we are drawing more poly folks into the fold, which adds a nice zesty flavor to the group. We had 47 people show up for the ritual and my little house was truly packed! There were a lot of new people this time, maybe about 10 or so. After ritual, most people hung around and talked, danced, and hot tubbed. My hot tub holds 10 people, and we have had up to 15 some nights. It's a friendly group, what can I say?

Druid Heart Spirit Grove:News from California

We're going to be having a few new guests for Calon Eile (spring equinox) from a local group called NorCal Pagans. Some of the great people I met at a recent meeting are really interested in attending a Grove ritual, and I brought my harp, they loved it! We're planning on having rituals outside in the stone circle, with a Grove blessing for the new stones I've added over the last few months, one of them is four and a half feet tall, one foot wide and five inches thick, now stands in the North and casts a beautiful shadow! Recently, I've come across some interesting

studies in my dowsing practices in the Nemeton site, I'd like to share.

I've been having a great time with my dad, and he's learning more about geomancy and we're practicing it together now. He's always known how to dowse with L-rods for water, he's now getting into dowsing for ley lines and came over last weekend to make himself a pendulum and dowse the stone circle. That's the main reason I'm writing is to tell you what happened from our testing the energy lines there.

Nine months ago after our Beltain rites I dowsed the stone circle. Every time I went towards the central fire pit the rods would start to open, but not all the way. Then as I walked around the circle when I got to the area between the altar and the fire pit they opened where the crossover pathway is for the spirits to enter. Two weeks ago I went out and did the same testing and got the same results, except that the rods flew wide open and hit the outside of my arm at the fire pit and altar pathway, and not only that but, as I walked around the circle, in front of the space of every stone the rods parted. My father's testing got the same results.

Now I've always known that the rituals create an energy pattern that follows the shape of the ritual, and the rituals we do are shaped from the way the energy flows in the Celtic world tree. I'm also aware that we create the pathway for the spirits to cross over. Now looking at the energy patterns we've found present with dowsing, I also found a symbol that's been speculated about by the Celtic scholars for years. The symbol was carved in stone in Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Brython, and France, dates back to about 500 BC. It's a circle, with a skeleton keyhole inside. The keyhole is in the center of the circle, with a pathway where we call in the spirits, is the pathway coming off to the side of the keyhole that opens to the outside circle. Some of these symbols are carved so that the opening in the keyhole points south, our altar also faces south! Anyway I think that's more than a theory.

Baccharis Grove: News from California

It has been an usually cold winter in the bay area. A dead mole was found at the edge of the Grove site, perhaps due to the weather. (We buried it on a frond of fern, with a sprig of pine and sticky monkey flower to escort it to Apple Isle.) In agricultural communities Oimelc marked the beginning of spring. As if ordained by the High Day the weather changed overnight at the Baccharis Grove site. On Oimelc proper when we held our service, in contrast to the previous day, the sun shone and the weather was warm. There was a definite change from the winter! I love it when marking the seasons of the year clicks. For the second year in a row we enacted the Scottish Bride-og ceremony and recited the Genealogy of Bride. This year's Bride-og was made from the wheat that sprang up from last year's Bride-og that we cut down at last Lughnasadh.

New Groves!

Nomadic Grove: News from Ontario

Our Grove is called the Nomadic Grove we are located in and around Roseneath Ontario Canada we are currently three sentient members strong with more interested. We are a new and developing Grove we are very committed to the Druid fundamentals with strong Christian undertones, our constitution basically reaffirms a blend of Druidism and Christianity.

Kitsap Peninsula Grove: News from Washington

I am indeed attempting to put together a protogrove, but at present it consists of my family (me and my two teenage boys and 11-year-old daughter).

I've been an initiate of Order of the Mithril Star since its inception as a druid organization, and before that when it was still thinking of itself as Wiccan. Anyway, when a name is chosen, it will be something reflecting our Northwest location. For now let's call it Kitsap Peninsula Grove.

The town in Bremerton, WA
Protogrove July 2001
My email is aspenbutterflye@yahoo.com
previous: aspenbutterflye@home.com
Moved from Colorado in October, 2001

Why Are We Called Reformed? Reflections on Judaism and Calvinism

By Mairi Ceolmhor, ODAL, DC Grove

Ogmios, and other gods interested in elegant speech, please guide my words to present my own personal views and reach the hearts of my readers; who will not mistake my views for those of the RDNA in general. I'm sorry it's so long, so perhaps it should be read in two parts if you have a short attention. Enough said, let's roll

What's in a name? Depends on the person, I guess. Many people take great pride and derive much support by the names and associations, which they adopt. Labels, much as we hate pigeonholing, provide a reference point for understanding someone. How about members of the Reformed Druids of North America? We've certainly spent a lot of time researching, defending, deprecating and defining the term "Druid," because in the RDNA, we call ourselves "Druids." It is natural to understand the background and implications of that term. But why are we also called "Reformed?" What are we referring to "Year XXII of the Reform" or when we speak of our movement as "The Reform?" Where exactly does the word "Reformed" come from?

The word "*reform*" first appears in surviving English literature as "*reformen*" in 1340, derived from French "*reformer*" or Latin "*reformare*" with a meaning of "make again" or "restoration." After 1440 it added the nuance, "to improve"; and in 1563 "changed for the better" was added. Around 1663, it was used popularly to denote "improvement by removal of some abuse or wrong," due to its use in describing the 16th century religious movement of the "Reformation." "Reformatory Schools" began in 16th century to "reform" juvenile offenders (did the Founders belief they were in a prison-like school?). In days of Prohibition, it was also used to refer to drunkards who have given up the habit. Today, the Oxford English Dictionary describes it as:

1 a. to put or change into an improved form or condition.

1 b. to amend or improve by change of form or removal of faults or abuses.

2. To put an end to evil by enforcing or introducing a better method or course of action.

3. To subject hydrocarbons (gasoline) to cracking to produce new products. (And most Druids like hydrocarbons and they are "crackers")

Some members of the RDNA understand it in the "recasting" or "re-creation" or "re-constructing" modes with moderation. But, it is primarily under the religious and moral meaning that the term is now used in our general society. So in order to appreciate this term, I looked at two churches (I'm not sure if we really are a church) that use "Reformed" in their title; Reformed Judaism and Reformed Christianity (there's no Reformed Islam, I think.) Let's hypothesize how their traditions may (or may not) have affected our own self-identity in the early 60s. If nothing else, when discussing your "reform" during inter-faith dialogue, we should understand what their "reform" means.

We know that a movement, known as "Reformed Judaism," solidified around 1810, see: www.ccarnet.org/platforms/principles.html. It is described on several sites on the Internet as:

> "Judaism marked by a liberal approach in nonobservance of much legal tradition regarded as irrelevant to the present and in shortening and simplification of traditional ritual."--Anonymous
>
> We Reform Jews are heirs to a vast body of beliefs and practices embodied in TORAH and the other Jewish sacred writings. We differ from more ritually observant Jews because we recognize that our sacred heritage has evolved and adapted over the centuries and that it must continue to do so. And we also recognize that if Judaism were not capable of evolution, of REFORM, it could not survive. Reform Judaism accepts and encourages pluralism. Judaism has never demanded uniformity of belief or practice. But we must never forget that whether we are Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, or Orthodox, we are all an essential part of K'lal Yisrael—the worldwide community of Jewry. http://rj.org/index.html
>
> The vernacular language is used in most services. Judaism is adapted to contemporary conditions. The spirit of the law, rather than the letter of the law, is observed. Revelation is seen as coming through the human spirit and nature, as well as sacred text. Traditional home rituals are not as highly valued as in other traditions of Judaism. http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/ReformedJudaism.htm
>
> Reform Jewish services allow for women cantors, choirs, organs and pianos as well as other instruments, and "music" as well as chanting. Women are also allowed to read from and chant the Torah, as well as pray aloud. The worship service involves the congregation much more than Orthodox and Conservative counterparts. This allows for quite a bit of variety in worship, especially with regards to the musical language used in worship.
>
> http://simplechemistry.w00tcentral.com/Kyles/rejud.htm

Gosh, that sounds quite a bit like us! I believe there were at least a few members with a Jewish background in the Founding Days of the Carleton Grove, such as Howard Cherniack and Deborah Frangquist. Throughout our history, some members have knowingly called ourselves "Drues," and cracked jokes like "That's funny, you don't look Druish" in Berkeley. We also had our very own Hassidic Druids of North America branch in St. Louis Missouri during the mid-70s (for more info see, ARDA part 5 at: http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/ARDA05.pdf).

Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, Founder of Reformed Judaism.

This belief seems also to niche in with the neo-old-testament style of the early Druid Chronicles of the 60s; e.g. rebuilding the altar, the psalm-like meditations of "David" Frangquist, lonely hermits seeking god in the wilderness, invocation of weather, prophetic ranting at authorities, and images of a persecuted people seeking release ("let my people go" by Cherniack). The prevalent "Cult of Carleton" has an apparent belief that Northfield is a special holy-land (let's see, that makes Israel in the Middle East and Carleton in the Mid-West…) That, plus an innate desire for academic excellence, love of dancing and song, self-deprecating humor, a world-wide Diaspora, a tendency to delve into anti-defamation and fight persecution, adaptation to various cultures, and inveterate kibitzing, plus being human beings is as far as the resemblance seems to extend.

Of course, there are points of difference. We look to the possibility of more than one divinity. Most of the Druids aren't obsessed with returning to Ireland. We don't have sacred scriptures, and don't read what few words we do have recorded. The ancient Celts were illiterate, and we proudly continue that tradition by not "liter"-ing indiscriminately. We also try to not blow our own horn, "sho far" as I can tell. Nor do we have no dietary customs, except to eat enough to live and limit whiskey during the winter season (which sounds backwards in practicality to me), although the vegetarians amongst us are rather noisy and self-righteous. (I'm a Texan; we worship cows

best when they're inside our bellies and on our feet.) There is a definite lack of a sense of racial separatism (i.e. "us vs. the gentiles") among Druids (with the Celtophiles excepted), and we have no objections to marriage with members of other religions (in fact we seem to practice a bit of all of faiths) as long as they are civil. And, we don't require members to cut off pieces of their bodies (either gender), although the Orthodox Druids have this thing about lopping off the heads of their enemies…Finally, except for Brother Peter, most Druids don't seem to wear strange headgear.

Calvin, founder of Reformed Christianity

We also know that many of the Founders were also members of the Protestant branch of Christianity, such as Fisher, Nelson and David Frangquist, and so the term "Reform" must have had several inescapable meanings that were attractive to them (although the first image of Presbyterian-style Druidism is a bit comical at first.) "Reformed" often indicates a Protestant church that is related to the Calvinist branch, as formed in various continental European countries. Calvinism had a "strong emphasis on the sovereignty of God and especially by the doctrine of predestination." At first, this seemed like a strong mis-match for the RDNA, so I further investigated a lengthy sermon at a "Reformed" site at http://www.graceonlinelibrary.org/theology/full.asp?ID=625 This is when I discovered other meanings latent in the term. The lecture taught that

> "This position commits us to a high view of Scripture. We receive it as the infallible and fully inspired Word of God. **We will bow to no higher authority**. Historically this has meant that we do not elevate church tradition to the level of Scripture--as the Roman Catholic Church has done. But neither do we canonize our own experience, no matter how spectacular or supernatural it may be. Church tradition and personal experience have no independent status and are always subservient to the teaching of the Bible." (My emphasis.)

Again, much of that does not mesh well with most Reformed Druids' beliefs (or, at least the Druids I know). However, the revolt against the original Roman Church (the history of Catholicism is about warring factional beliefs) by a strong-willed minority of the oppressed is quite heroic (despite what many of them would later do to other minorities) and well paralleled by the early Grove at Carleton. The Founders of the RDNA revolted against the Deans of Men and Women for the imposition of mandatory religious attendance, but perhaps not to the extent of nailing 95 complaints onto their office doors. (I'm sure they would have used thumbtacks.) The distrust of "experience" part written above doesn't jive that well with us either. Again, the RDNA apparently does not look highly upon its own literature. Attempts were made to stop publishing the 1976 *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* and that 1996 *A Reformed Druid Anthology*, because the works were seen as encouraging dogmatism by providing too much material in a portable format that could encourage spiritual dependency on others' past experiences in written form (i.e. Bible hugging). Brother Mike, an assistant editor of ARDA, recommended the book as a doorstopper or paperweight on a desk; rather than as a 'brain-stopper' or 'dead-weight on the soul'. He is pleased to report that, "very few people have read it." Indeed, the RDNA seems to lean more toward the individual's experiences as having greater spiritual power, rather than asserting the institutionalized fossilized customs of past members. Reading further, I noted:

> Because God is sovereign, He is Lord of all of life. Hence, we seek to live all of life to the glory of God. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Lo, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (I Cor.10:31). This is a far-reaching command, which Reformed people have generally taken quite seriously.

Hey, I'm not a Christian myself; but, change that deity to "Earth-Mother," remember that every sovereign has court officials, and add a flavor of Zennish "Everyday life as religion" with unexpected moments of enlightenment, and I can swallow that pretty well. A bit further:

> Hand in hand with this missions emphasis goes a concern for revival. Although this word has suffered abuse in recent years, there is nothing unreformed about revival! Again and again throughout the history of the church God has poured out His Spirit to bring times of refreshing.

The Hill of Three Oaks at Carleton, c.1998

In my humble opinion, my own Reformed Druidism believes in the cycle of revivals of Nature and the pressing need for a continual discovery of Awareness and Wisdom through introspection and revelation from the gods. And Gods know!, how the Groves crash and need a good rejuvenating jolt every few years. The coming and going of members, or a change of focus, often breathes new life. So I can parallel with this thinking again. As for missionary activity, I am rather neutral. Make your presence findable and those who come will come. Don't be a public nuisance (unless it's necessary). That's my system. I'm not a missionary of Druidism or grove-oriented like Brothers Isaac, Larson or Mike. I think a well-balanced RDNA Druid can enjoy fulfilling participation in any religion's congregation, without forming their own "druid" grove. This is what I plan to do. It's called "Guerilla Druidism," but I'm not into aping those around me (that would "Gorilla Druidism," something I'm not bananas over.) I'm definitely a "Solitary Druid," see my song in (Bardic Salvo #5); http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/bard.html

> "To the Reformers the Roman Catholic sacramental system seemed to be part of a transaction that was always going on between man and God. In it, people made sacrifices designed to appease and please God. They would attend the mass, bring offerings, show sorrow, do penance--which might involve self-punishment or compensatory good works--until God would be gracious. The leaders of the church, from priests through bishops and popes, mediated the transaction. The Reformers believed that such an arrangement could easily be misused as a political instrument for forcing rulers to comply with the church's wishes and as a personal instrument for keeping people in uncertainty or terror. It was this vision of Catholicism that helped inspire the Protestant leadership to rebel and to define justification in other terms."

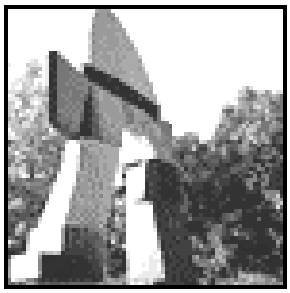
The RDNA doesn't fit in with this, as we definitely are into pleasing the Gods, sacrificing, and seeking their wishes. I think, if you're going to live somewhere, you should ask those in the neighborhood what the rules are (including Nature, the first resident) and follow them. The Brothers David (Fisher and Frangquist) say much on this subject of sacrifice;

> For one man, the sacrifice of life is the offering up of himself to a god or gods. To another, it is an offering up of his mind to a search for truth. As a priest, I repeat the great Answer to calm men's hearts and minds, not as a magical formula of absolution; but some the Answer is an absolution, washing away the distractions of a week of worry, and reaffirming confidence in the idea of a purpose in life. Book of Faith, V.9. The Apocrypha. http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/ARDA-02.pdf

I feel, that if the Gods don't like us at all, then they shouldn't have made us (or we shouldn't have made them). We all have our good days and bad days, and any omniscient deity should realize that and take it into consideration on what to dish out to us. I also believe that a mother knows what her child needs, no matter whether it gurgles, coos or grimaces; so we should remember that when the debate on "proper" ritual is brought up. Brother MaDagda and Sister Tegwedd claim that the "Reformed" refers to some ancient practices which we have "reformed;" notably, our decision in 1963 to end the sacrifice of animals for religious purposes (including humans--and arguably--even politicians) or the offering of blood. Sister Tegwedd recommends getting consent from the plant sacrifice by some means. "The Book of Customs in the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* recommends several Celtic customs and practices, but does not require their mandatory obeisance. Now, I'm not a bible-stroking, verse quoting, steely-tongued debater; but Cherniack once said,

> "Have ye not forgotten that we are reformed, yea, we do even call ourselves by the name of Reformed, wherefore we must put behind us those things which do bring offense to our senses;" --Book of Latter Chronicles, Ch 5 Vs 9

The RDNA has been firmly silent on issues of an afterlife (and strangely reticent on a "before-life," by the way!). I think most people to concentrate on this existence, or basically to "get a life." Some members use the RDNA as a garnish or decoration attached to other religions that provide full-service after-life systems; other members treat the RDNA as the main-course and consider it to provide for all their needs. Call me a Humanist, but I think there are enough good reasons to be gentle, responsible and caring member of a community or have a religious life without an "afterlife bribe/threat." I believe that Confucius said, "How can a virtuous man understand the world of ghosts and spirits when they can't even program a VCR to stop blinking 12:00 on its clock?! Oy vey!" or thereabouts.



The mysterious arch made of 10 types of stone, made by a Japanese artist, outside the library at Carleton College, which houses the Druid Archives.

The Protestant "priesthood of believers" revived an ancient concept of a direct link to God(s) without the mediation of professional priests (who still have a role). Members of the RDNA appear to be very careful not to vaunt the offices of the three orders; and we certainly don't get paid well enough to make a living off it. I, personally, see them more as undertaking extra responsibilities rather than as an achievement of "perfection" or "completion" of Druid-ity. In other words, a life-long First Order might just as speedily reach enlightenment or Awareness as a high muckety-muck 9th Order Patriarch, without vigiling or drinking the Waters of Life every weekend. Surely, the Earth-Mother knows her own, and all our fancy titles won't bias her relationship with us. More than likely, according to the ARDA history, these orders were both an attempt to overthrow Fisher's control of the Carleton Grove, plus a carry-over from the Fraternal groups that David Fisher wanted to simulate at Carleton. Yet, I believe they still have proponents who've found a use for them. Going back to the "Reform Sermon";

> "In theory, Protestantism has stood throughout its history for a principle of protest that calls under judgment not only the beliefs and institutions of others but also one's own movements and causes. On those grounds, however, most students of Protestantism would recognize that the Protestant tradition has not been substantially more successful than have other faiths at remaining self-critical or at rising above institutional self-defensiveness."

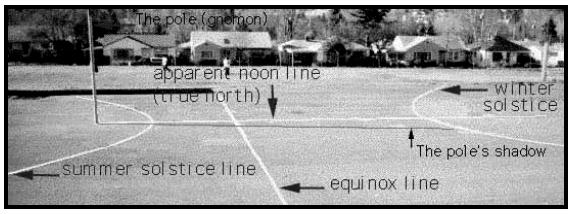
This last aspect seems the firmest legacy of Protestantism for the RDNA. I have heard, “Show me two Druids and I’ll give you at least three opinions on any topic.” Well, in my opinion, we are a rather argumentative, critical bunch of curmudgeons, who take matters into our hands, and are fiercely suspicious of hierarchy and the institutionalization and fossilization of religion. (And some aren’t.) Our name does have a potentially empowering meaning that could encourage activism and rebellion, without demanding it. Yet, like the last part, we also sometimes slip into ruts, avoid hard choices, resist natural adaptations and don’t seek to know or correct our errors. Remember the expression that, “It is easier to see smoke coming from a neighbor’s kitchen window than to notice the burning roof on top of our own house?” At the end of the ritual, we have to go home, sweep our corners, air the linens, and wash the dishes like our other fellow mortals.

I would add one last shade to the word “Reform” as in OED’s 1A definition; its first meaning. That is to change into a new form. As Nature breaks down and rebuilds all things (vegetable, animal or mineral), there is no “eternal,” only change and adaptation. Again, in my opinion and twelve years of experience, the RDNA’s greatest power has been the power to take older diverse creeds, traditions, rules, and faiths and transform them into a product (perhaps even “improved”) by using our humor, reflection and piercing inspection such that could meet the current needs of our grove members. As Brother MaDagda states, “As reformed druid, I take what I can from our ancestor s of the Oaken Brotherhood and reshape, reform it to fit within this time, this age.”

Until now, the usual response to “Why are you called Reformed?” has always been (and Brother Mike just loves this joke), is “Because we also worship bushes…except elected ones…” I hope that this essay will help you to go beyond that sort of reply in some way and start a good dialogue with other faiths.

Peace!
Mairi Ceolmhor

P.S. Proudly call yourself Reformed Druids when the Celtophiles criticize you. We can stand up to them also. Perhaps you can console them that without a “Reformed Druid” you can’t have an “Orthodox Druid”?



Things to Do for Spring Equinox

By Alex Strongbow

Well, that’s a really hard question. We know that most sowing in the fields would be done by now and it was time to change to spring clothes and spend more time outdoors. When it comes down to, we’re talking about eggs and sunlight, right?

1. Break down, and enjoy the Easter egg decoration party. Especially the Ukrainian style wax and decoration. If you’re an overachiever, go into Faberge.
2. Have half an omelet, sunny side up, of course.
3. Hide treasures in the forest or park. Tall grasses equal stepped-on eggs.
4. Be early for April Fool’s day.
5. Go out to the pub for Saint Patrick’s Day and live it up.
6. Spend the whole day with a watch and see if day REALLY equals night.
7. Set up and synchronize your solar-calendar (that rock-henge in your back yard. A great site, for setting up your stones in a parking lot or a field is www.efn.org/~jack_v/AstronomicalCalendar.html Strangely, the design looks like a basketball courts lines! Could there be a connection?!
8. Get your garden planted, if you haven’t started. Try old-fashioned “heirloom seeds” at www.seedsavers.org or Seed Savers Exchange (SSE) at 3076 North Winn Road, Decorah Iowa 52101 at 319-382-5990.
9. Make waffles. Write “Clinton” with maple syrup. Hee. Hee. Enjoy taking halfway opinions on important subjects and carefully study both sides of issues.
10. Change your wardrobe to summer-style suits, sandals and wear a flower. I’ve been thinking. Many religions have strange headgear or hairstyles, and we haven’t since that weird “bald-forehead” style in the 450s AD, so let’s go out for straw hats?!

The Hazel Tree

By Sam Peeples, Free-roaming Druid

Greetings everyone, due to the thunderous applause (i.e. three people) on my birch article, I've been requested to write an article on the Hazel Tree. Its natural side topics of Salmon and Wells (in a Celtic context) will be discussed by Mike and Naomi. I can't attest to all the following information 's validity, but it will provide a good overview of its associations.

Etymology

The European Hazel tree's scientific name is corylus avellana and America's Filbert tree is named corylus americana. (Witch Hazel, although externally resembling Hazel, is actually hamamelis virginiana, with exploding seedpods, but it is apparently native only to New England.) The genus' name Corylus comes from the Greek korys meaning helmet, a reference to the calyx covering the nut; avellana commemorating the small town of Avella in Italy where the nuts were famously cultivated. The English name for the tree and its nut is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word haesel knut, haesel meaning cap or hat, thus referring to the cap of leaves on the nut on the tree (or haesl possibly signified a baton of authority.) The Gaelic word for hazel is Coll, pronounced "cull," and it was popular in men's names. See also: German Haselnuss, French Noisette, Dutch Hazelnoot. Its nickname is "Lamb's Tail." There is often a resident spirit.

Hazel appears frequently in place names in the western Scotland, such as the Isle of Coll and Bar Calltuin in Appin,

both in Argyll-shire where the tree and its place names are the most common. Perhaps even Caledonia (Hill of Hazels) is a derivative. In Gaelic, a hazel grove was calltuin, (modern Scots Gaelic calltainn) and various places called Calton are associated with entrances to the Otherworld, one being the famous Calton Hill between Leith and Edinburgh. It also appears in the name of Clan Colquhoun whose clan badge is the hazel. Tara, the chief seat of the kingship of Ireland was possibly built near a hazel wood, and the great monastery of Clonord was build over a sacred pagan place known as The Wood of the White Hazel: Ross-Finnchuill.

Physical Characteristics

The Hazel has quite the reputation in European lore as a potent source of magical might (the other two being Oak and Hawthorne), probably due to its ability to coppice into dozen young trees. Hazel is considered a small deciduous tree, usually with multiple stems and a spreading habit of its roots. It is actually an enormous shrub that can grow into a tree (but is usually coppiced), which may reach a height of 20-60 feet. It is hardy, moderately shade-tolerant and grows best on heavy but well-drained soil. Hazel, rather like Alder, prefers to be near water but is very accommodating as long as it is not too dry. Its narrow-pointed, toothed leaves are about 5-12 cm and are alternating. As a tree, its maximum life span is about 60 years, but when coppiced back it can survive up to 600 years and still produce a good crop of poles. Their wood is white to reddish, tough and flexible

It is naturally an under-story plant, particularly in oak and ash woods. Hazel trees grow as a clump of slender trunks. When they do adopt a one-trunk-and-canopy tree shape, they readily respond to coppicing, practices which can actually extend and even double the lifespan of a hazel. Either way, people have put the young shoots or whips and the thin trunks to a variety of uses. The management of hazel coppice and "coppice with standards" is a precise and ancient craft. Traditionally, a coppice would be cut on a 7-15 year rotation and the woodland divided into the same number of sections as years in the rotation so one part of the wood was harvested every year.

The hazel would be identified in the late winter by its branchy, hairy twigs carrying greenish buds. The opening of the leaves in April are large and rounded, and double teeth on its edges. The bark of the hazel tree is very smooth, with shades of brown and grey. Male and female flowers grow on the same plant--the male catkins open as the first warm days of spring arrive into bunches of bright yellow, drooping "lamb tails;" female flowers on the same branches appear as tiny pink tufts on plump buds. The fertilized flowers develop into the well-known clusters of nuts, which turn brown in October.

I hate to imply that trees are only good when we can use them for some purpose. Trees have certain rights to unfettered existence, as do all living creatures. That said, this is how you could utilize their bounty.

Practical Uses for the Tree's Wood

- The interior of the walls of many ancient homes was "wattle and daub," using coppiced hazel branches, woven into a lattice, and mud or clay daubed onto it. Some consider this the origin of Celtic art interlacing. The Glastonbury Abbey is rumored to have been built on a Druidic "hedge school" built of wattle. Daub is made of wet clay, dung, chopped straw and lime powder. When this dried, a thin wall could last hundreds of year if not dampened.
- Coppicing is a skilled job that requires practice and only minimal hand tools; usually, just a billhook, axe, and mallet, as well as a drawknife for stripping the trees of their bark.
- Hazel stems split lengthwise and twist easily to make hurdles, thatching, liggers, spars, sways, and pegs. Hazel is or was used for fencing (which blessed a home), hurdles, barrel hoops, walking sticks, fishing rods, fish weirs, whip handles, ties for fastening thatch, pegs, fuel for ovens, torches, and charcoal for gunpowder, domestic fires, and ovens.
- Woodland crafts using hazel are also enjoying a resurgence, and hazel wattle hurdles have even been used as sound screens along motorways.
- Like willow, young coppiced hazel shoots were used to weave a variety of baskets and other container www4.hmc.edu:8001/humanities/beckman/baskets.htm
- Hazel has long been a favorite wood from which to make staffs, whether for ritual Druidic use, for medieval self-defense, as staffs favored by pilgrims, or to make shepherds crooks, bishop's crosiers and everyday walking sticks. In the case of the latter two, the pliancy of the hazel's wood was used to bend the stems into the required shape, though it was also customary to bend the hazel shoots when still on the tree to "grow" the bend into a crook or walking stick.
- Hazel leaves are usually the earliest native ones to appear in spring and often the last to fall in autumn, and were fed to cattle as fodder.
- Hazel nuts (see article below) were a popular source of food.

Other Links on Hazel Trees

Lots of trivia on the Hazel:
http://www.treesforlife.org.uk/tfl.mythhazel.html.

A Robert Graves point of view:
http://webpages.charter.net/orrin8/hazel.htm.

Many associations:
http://www.dutchie.org/Tracy/saherb.html#hazel.

To order a tree.:
http://www.treegifts.com.

Oodles of information on Hazel from OBOD:
http://druidry.org/obod/trees/hazel.html.

Useful information on all animals and plants:
http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/.

Growing a hazel tree:
http://www.growingnative.org.uk/hazel.htm.

A nice summary of this page:

http://www.2020site.org/trees/hazel.html.

Magical and Medical Uses for the Hazel

- Hazel indicates intuition to lead to the source, poetry, divination and meditation.
- It is said the Hazel tree takes nine years to bear fruit from the time of planting; nine years of experience before it will imbue its fruit (or offspring) with its essence. A Hindu teaching says, "keep to yourself what you have been taught until it is yours to share," for only then can it truly be taught again. Hazel asks us to learn the values of time, patience, and experience, and allows us to express ourselves in art, poetry and music.
- Hazel represents letter "C" in the "ogham alphabet ("C" is for Coll), and often used for constructing Ogham wands. The wands of the Druids were made from hazel branches and even the staffs of the Celtic Christian Bishops were made from hazel to this day. Hermes' magic rod may have been made from hazel.
- Midir--An Irish god, lord of the wondrous land of Mag Mor, the tutor of the god Oengus, was struck by a stake cut from a hazel tree. Midir loses an eye that is replaced for him by the god of healing Dian-Cecht. Aonghus Og also carried one such wand. Sabd, mother of Oisin (son of Fionn), is turned into a deer by such a wand of a Druid.
- It is one of the nine woods of a Beltaine Fire (Birch, Oak, Rowan, Willow, Hawthorn, Hazel, Apple, Vine, Fir) www.iit.edu/~phillips/personal/lore/belfire.html
- Until the seventeenth century, a forked Hazel stick was used to divine the guilt of persons in cases of murder and theft. Forked twigs of hazel were also favored by diviners, especially for finding water or treasure.
- Rain-bringing methods included sprinkling water on stones whilst reciting a charm, or tossing a little flour into a spring and stirring with a hazel-rod.
- Diarrhea and menstrual bleeding can be aided by mixing the dried husks and shells with red wine. Hamamelis virginiana in "Witch Hazel" oil is an outstanding treatment for hemorrhoids.
- Newfoundland: An old custom to cure a child of hernia was to split a green witch hazel tree and pass the child through it.
- Russia: Sometimes the cowherds symbolically beat the cattle three times with a willow or hazel branch to make the animals grow well
- Yorkshire: Soil taken from under a hazel bush was fed to Nidderdale cows that had lost their cud, while the earth underneath a freshly cut turf was reckoned good for scour in Swaledale calves. Hazel lambs-tail catkins were placed around the hearth to help the ewes at lambing time and rowan collars were put around lambs' necks; while if a lamb died unexpectedly, its corpse would be hung in a thorn or rowan tree, a custom found elsewhere not restricted to sheep.
- Hazel also has protective uses as anti-lightning charms. Gather hazel tree branches on Palm Sunday and keep them in water. Possibly a continuation of a Norse association of Hazel with Thor.
- A sprig of Hazel or a talisman of two Hazel twigs tied together with red or gold thread to make a solar cross can be carried as a protective good luck charm.
- A cap of Hazel leaves and twigs ensures good luck and safety at sea, and protects against shipwrecks.
- Finland: The stripped hazel stick was a sacred symbol. If there was struggle about a sown field they just set up a stripped stick until the matter was solved
- The week called Karwoche in German, or week of mourning or sorrow, begins with Palm Sunday. In lieu of palms, in Bad Kohlgrub and Mittenwald, the pussy-willow branches are bundled, tied with ribbons and attached to the end of a much longer hazel branch. Parishioners parade their creations as they proceed to church to have the bushels blessed. A good-natured competition usually arises as to whose branches are the longest, especially among the young boys.
- Earlier, in the fifteenth century, a recipe for summoning a fairy involves burying hazel wands "under some hill whereas you suppose fayries haunt."
- If you sleep under a Hazel bush you will have vivid dreams.
- Hazel trees were often planted near holy wells and strips of cloth were hung on them to remove illness of the supplicant.
- In English villages, country-dwellers associate a prolific show of hazel catkins with the advent of lots of babies, and late as the 1950s, the saying, "Plenty of catkins, plenty of prams" was taken quite seriously.
- Any Hazel twigs, wood or nuts should be gathered after sundown on Samhain since it will be at the peak of its magickal energy. On the waning moon, hazel and willow were not cut for baskets, nor was wood cut for boats. Hazel for magickal purposes must not be cut with a knife, but with a flint.

The Hazel Nut Itself

In days gone by, hazelnuts would have provided a source of protein since Neolithic times in England (South Cadbury and Avebury digs), and they were often ground up and mixed with flour to be made into nourishing breads. Hazelnuts, of course, can be eaten, and are a good source of phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, copper, protein and fatty acids. The Gaelic word for hazelnuts is cno, and wisdom is cnocach. From the hazelnut we find the phrase "in a nut shell," because all wisdom and knowledge was compacted and contained within the nut. There are many stories of salmon eating hazelnuts, which then gained one speckled spot per hazelnut. Eating of hazelnuts would bestow wisdom on the recipient (such as bears or humans) and would then bestow gray hairs or freckles. Cultivated hazelnuts, called filberts, take their name from St. Philibert's Day on August 20th, the date by which hazelnuts were supposed to start ripening. They should be sown immediately after gathering, to keep them moist.

- Holy Cross Day on 14 September was traditionally given as a school holiday for children to go nutting, a custom that persisted in England until the First World War. An old saw proclaims that a girl who goes nutting on Sunday will meet the Devil and have a baby before she can wed.
- Various places celebrated Nutcrack Night sometime during November, when the stored nuts were opened, though apparently some parishioners were in the habit of taking hazelnuts to church on the following Sunday to be cracked noisily during the sermon. These people were called "crackers."
- On Halloween (also known as "Nut-Crack Night") The custom of "burning nuts" involves two nuts being placed in the fire, one is to bear your own name, the other that of the person you love. If the nuts burn quietly side-by-side then the relationship will be prosperous.

- Girls were told to place hazelnuts along the front of the fire grate, each one to symbolize one of her suitors. She could then divine her future husband by chanting, "If you love me, pop and fly; if you hate me, burn and die."
- Assign the name of your passion to a nut and throw it in the fire while saying:

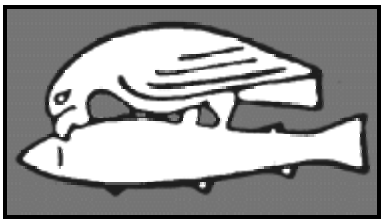
  "A Hazelnut I throw in the flame, to this nut I give my sweetheart's name, If blazes the nut, so may thy passion grow, For 'twas my nut that did so brightly glow."

- In England, the Hazelnut is a symbol of fertility--a bag of nuts bestowed upon a bride will ensure a fruitful marriage, often by an older woman in the village at her threshold or thrown like rice at the wedding.
- Greek: After an arrangement was made, the matchmaker would return to the house of the bride where the announcement that the "Scartsofoli" was accepted without a problem. There was a custom and "Andeti" of the bridegroom to send hazelnuts and walnuts with the matchmaker so that the bride would treat relatives and friends who would visit her to express their felicitations.
- Children born in the autumn could have the "milk of the nut," said to be of great benefit in their future health.
- There was also a belief that hazelnut feed could increase a cow's milk yield.
- The milk taken from the nuts can be used to treat a chronic cough (add honey and water), and when mixed with pepper helps stop runny eyes and noses.
- Finn as a youth ate a salmon, which was fed on hazelnuts of knowledge. Finn's mighty shield was of hazel wood. An old Fenian story tells how Maer, the wife of one Bersa of Berramain, fell in love with Finn and tried to seduce him with hazelnuts from the Well of Segais bound with love charms. Finn refused to eat them, pronounced them "nuts of ignorance" rather than nuts of knowledge and buried them a foot deep in the earth.
- Today hazelnuts continue to be eaten, though more frequently in luxury foods such as chocolate and as hazelnut butter, and as a Christmas delicacy.
- Hazelnuts were carried as charms in pockets to ward off rheumatism, lumbago ("elfshot"), and toothache in some parts of England and Ireland
- "Hazel Rings"--make a string of nine hazelnuts and tie the ends to form a circle. Bless the ring in the smoke of the Samhain fire. You can hang the ring in your home for protection in the coming year

Recipes galore.
http://www.nwhazelnut.com/recipes.html.

More Hazelnut recipes.
http://www.hazelnutcouncil.org/winning.htm.

The edible Hazel catalog.
http://www.hazelnut.com/cgi-bin/hgo/recipes.cgi.



The Salmon of Knowledge

By Mike Scharding, D.C. Grove

The Salmon have been migrating from the Atlantic to the headwaters of British and Irish streams since the retreat of the glaciers of the Ice Age 20,000 years ago. In doing so, they have captured the imagination of many a Celt in the Islands and Continent with their ability to transcend boundaries and their heroic struggles.

The Salmon is a fish that has adapted to both fresh and salt water. They spawn in freshwater and as tiny fish enter the great ocean. The Salmon of the British Isles travel to the area of Baffin Island and Greenland to grow up. After three or four years, they return in the spring to their native stream head. They stop eating for the duration of the trip, relying on body fat during the journey. They will brave dams and leap up over nine feet into the air to surmount any barriers in their quest, or die of exhaustion, and do not turn back. Strangely, the female always dies after spawning, but those returning for a second spawning are called a "celt."

Plentiful details on their ecology can be found on the Internet, especially these two sites.

Pacific Salmon details
http://www.hitime.com/sdscptn.htm#Chinook

Atlantic Salmon details
http://www.asf.ca/Overall/atlsalm.html

Mythology of the Salmon

Of all the fish in Celtic legends, the Salmon is the mostly popular. There are reportedly many Pictish stones bearing Salmon inscriptions preceding the Gaelic take-over of Scotland. The oldest story is from the Book of Invasions (Leabhar Gabhala) that tells of successive waves of colonization of Ireland. Tuan mac Carell describes the primeval invasions of Ireland, which he witnessed, to Saint Finnen. He also claims to have been reincarnated successively as a stag, boar, eagle, and salmon. During his various shape-shiftings he witnessed all the great events that took place in Ireland and he passed on this knowledge to the historians before he eventually died. In this last form he was caught and eaten by an Irish queen, who conceived him as a human child. Similarly, the legendary Welsh poet Taliesin claims:

I have been a blue salmon

I have been a dog

I have been a stag

I have been a roebuck on the mountain

I have been a grain discovered...\

I rested nine nights in her womb, a child

I have been dead, I have been alive.

I am Taliesin.

[Matthews 1991]

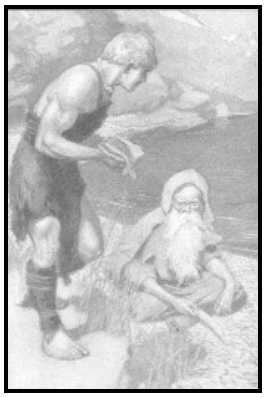
The Salmon is mythically famous for its association with Hazelnuts. The primary story is that of young Fionn (nicknamed Demne) who as a boy was learning bardic skills from Finegas on the rivers of Boyne. Finegas had been patiently fishing for seven years for the Salmon of Knowledge, which had fed on fallen hazelnuts from nine magical (non-descript) hazel trees. The Salmon gained a spot for every hazelnut that it ate. Soon after Fionn's arrival, the fish was caught. Fionn was frying the fish for Finegas, who was off on a trip, and a boil rose on the fish, he pushed it down with his thumb and burned himself. When he put the thumb in his mouth, the knowledge had all transferred to him. Finegas was, of course, a little disappointed, but Fionn shared the remainder with him and promised another Salmon would come along soon.

> Fionn's way of discovering whatever was happening and hidden was always the same. A shallow, oblong dish of pure, pale gold was brought to him. This dish was filled with clear water. Then Fionn would bend his head and stare into the water, and as he stared he would place his thumb in his mouth under his "Tooth of Knowledge," his "wisdom tooth."

Great Story on salmon and Fionn.
http://members.aol.com/guenhumara/fionn.html

Other boyhood tales of Fionn.
http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/celt/ift/ift02.htm

More on Fionn.
http://www.ealaghol.demon.co.uk/celtenc/celt_f2b.htm



The ancient Fianna warband had many special fighting techniques that would be the envy of any martial art movie. One of the most famous besides Caber tossing (to throw bridges for chariots over rivers) was the "Hero's Salmon Leap," which consisted of leaping on top of a standing shield and leaping high up for a "smackdown" on your opponent.

There are also references in Goidelic lore to Salmon being kept in wells (near Hazel tree orchards) for oracular consultation. In the ancient text "Cormac's Vision" the hero sees a royal fortress with four houses in it, and a "bright well" surrounded by ancient hazels. In the well were five salmon, which ate the nuts as they dropped. In the palace, Cormac meets Manannan the sea-god who reveals the Land of Promise to him and presents him with a magic cup and branch. www.enya.org/stories/story06.htm.

Later on, Cormac MacArt, king of Ireland in 266 AD, died at Cleiteach, the bone of a salmon sticking in his throat, on account of the siabhradh genii which Maelgenn, the Druid, incited at him, after Cormac had turned against the Druids, on account of his adoration of God in preference to them. So beware Druids bearing dinner. In Christian monastic communities, there were often salmon ponds for eating. In May 11, 1113AD; "A salmon was caught at Cluain-mic-Nois this year, which was twelve feet in length, twelve hands in breadth without being split, and three hands and two fingers was the length of the fin of its neck." (This is the site of the ruins of the monastery of Clonmacnoise in County Offaly on the River Shannon below Lough Ree and above Portumna, which is in County Roscommon. The arms of Co. Meath incorporate the salmon also.) Christ is also known as in t-eo sénta cas corcra, "The Blessed Curled Purple Salmon." This seems strange, considering that grown salmon prefer salt-water, but I suppose they can remain in fresh-water if not given a choice;

Virtually all salmon live in the ocean, and return to streams to spawn (or are farmed in net pens along the coastline) but Atlantic salmon have been experimented on in terms of stocking in lakes, and they seem to do well, but still won't self-propagate. In other words, they have to be re-stocked to remain as a stable population. There are now some types of Atlantic Salmon called "freshwater salmon." Apparently, they have been farmed and adapted to freshwater by people. This, in fact, makes them much more like trout than salmon.

Water spirits are plentiful in Celtic countries as quoted below

"the spirit of the waters was often embodied in an animal, usually a fish. Even now in Brittany the fairy dweller in a has the form of an eel, while in the seventeenth century Highland wells contained spring fish so sacred that no-one dared to catch them. In Wales Saint Cybi's well contained a huge eel in whose virtues the villagers believed, and terror prevailed when any one dared to take it from the water. Two sacred fish still exist in a holy well at Nant Peris, and are replaced by others when they die, the dead fish being buried. This latter act, solemnly performed, is a true sign of the divine or sacred character of the animal. Many wells with sacred fish exist in Ireland, and the fish have usually some supernatural quality, they never alter in size, they become invisible, or they take the form of beautiful women." [MacCullach]

Salmon, like the proverbial "Frog in the Well" can plum the depths of the unconsciousness for lost treasures and truths. Gantz's Early Irish Myths and Sagas has the story of Froech and Findabair. Findabair loses her ring and her father accuses her of lying to him in order to date Froech. Findabair later prepares a salmon for him that had swallowed it. Saint Kentigern is similarly associated with the Salmon. The story of St. Kentigern is similar. He was the patron saint of Glasgow, from which he proselytized in Cumbria. Folklore makes him the grandson of Urien of Rheged. He and his mother were set adrift in a coracle but were miraculously saved. He vindicated the virtue of a queen who had given her ring to her lover: when the king demanded to see it, it was discovered in a salmon's belly. The salmon is Kentigern's device. During a time of drought St Kevin fed his community with salmon brought to him by an otter. He was reputed to have baptized Merlin before his death. This last story is borrowed from the legend of SUIBHNE GELT, who was confessed by Saint Moling after a life of paganism and madness.

There are many legends of holy wells that held salmon in them and suddenly became great rivers due to an accident. One legend tells of the origin of the river Shannon in Ireland. The Boyne and well of Segais has a very similar story with a young lady named Bóann whose curiosity was too great. Latis was a Lake Goddess who later became a Goddess of ale and mead. Evidence of her worship still remains at Birdsowald, England. Latis fell in love with a salmon, which represents knowledge, and out of pity for her, the other deities turned him into a warrior. However, each winter he must submit to becoming a salmon again until spring.

In Brythonic Lore (i.e. Welsh), the Mighty Salmon of Llyn Llyw (The Lake of the Leader) was so ancient and powerful that he gained a truce with the Eagle of Gwern Abwy, who agreed to take 50 fish-spears out of the venerable Salmon's back for him. In the Arthurian tale of Culhwch and Olwen, it is the salmon--and only the salmon--which carried Kai and Gwrhyr Gwalstawd Ieithoe on its shoulders to find the Mabon, the Divine Child of Celtic tradition, the being who brings eternal life and vigor. Indeed, fairies are known to wear stylish salmon-skin caps, showing a link to the afterworld.

The Well Rite (slow load)
http://www.conjure.com/wisdom.html
Salmon Chalice
http://www.sourceworksceramics.com/salmon%20large.asp
Christian Salmon?
http://www.monasticdialog.com/bulletins/64/CelticSpirituality.htm

Magical Lore of the Salmon

The salmon was revered by the Celts. It was from eating the Salmon of Knowledge that Fionn mac Cumhal gained his wisdom. The salmon has been substituted by the herring in modern Scottish Samhain customs. You must eat a raw or roasted salt herring, in silence, just before going to bed. You will dream of your future partner offering you a drink of water with which to quench your thirst. A similar version is found in the Isle of Man:

- "A Manx girl should eat a salt herring, bones and all, without drinking or speaking; she must then retire to bed backwards; in her dreams she will see her future spouse coming to bring her a drink." [Hull, p. 237]
- In the Hebrides, the salt herring may be substituted with the Bonnach Salainn (salt bannock)--a cake made from meal, with a substantial amount of salt added.
- Traditionally, Salmon was presented at royal banquets with honey and butter.
- Among commoners, salmon was popular during Lent and on days of fast and abstinence. In folk medicine, Salmon gall was used as a remedy for blindness or to correct poor vision.
- The Salmon is referred to as the "King of Fish," and is never spoken of directly while fishing or in a boat; being referred to as "The Red Fish" or "The Spotted One." To this day, in some parts of Ireland, the Salmon is invoked for curses and blessings:
-

The treatment of the boiled broken little fish to you
The Roasting of the salmon to the very end on you
Slainte an Bhradain Chugat: The health of the salmon to you.

Recipe of the Salmon

Grilled Salmon with Lemon Hazelnut Sauce
By Angela Major

MARINADE

The juice of 1 large lemon

2 Tbsp grated lemon rind

1/3 cup Frangelico (Hazelnut Liqueur)

1/4 cup coarsely chopped shallots (scallions-mild/sweet onion OK)

2/3 cup white wine or dry sherry

1/2 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper

MAIN INGREDIENTS

4 to 6 4-oz King or Chinook Salmon steaks

3/4 cup (1/2 lb whole or 1/3 lb shelled) chopped roasted hazelnuts (Filberts)

1/3 cup canola or peanut oil or clarified butter

- Combine all of the marinade ingredients (i.e. not the nuts and Lemon Zest) in a zipper bag. Do not use a metal container; it'll change the taste.
- Marinate the salmon in this mixture 4 hours or overnight.
- To roast hazelnuts, spread shelled nuts in a shallow pan and roast
- In a 275 degree oven for 20 to 30 minutes, until skins crack. To remove skins, rub warm hazelnuts with a rough washcloth. Chop relatively finely - to the consistence of Grape Nuts. DO not put them into a food processor–you'll get Hazelnut butter.
- Combine the roasted hazelnuts and last 2 tablespoons freshly grated lemon zest. Set aside
- Grill 6-8 minutes per side per one inch of thickness of fish. Baste with marinate during cooking.
- Garnish with the lemon-hazelnut mixture.
- Serves 4 people.

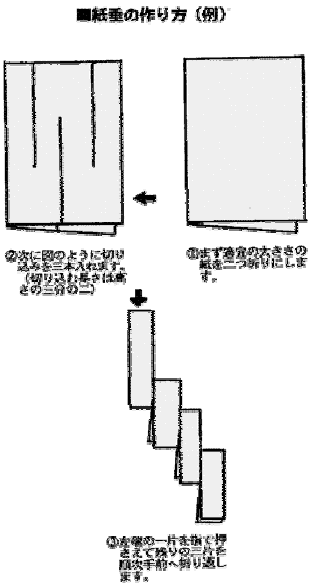
Figure 1 A tree by a well bestrewn with ribbons.

All's Well That's Dug Well

By Nozomi Kibou, Akita Grove

Wells are holes in the ground with water. Water is life. Water moves below our feet in aquifers and over our head in clouds. It is in our bodies of all creatures and in the Earth-Mother. Hazel is used in dowsing to find water and salmon live always in water.

Holy Wells in Celtic countries are often dug holes in hills or valleys. Water falls on hill, goes in earth, is cleaned, and pops out in well. Many legends say that wells were the start of rivers, and are sacred; you must not make them angry. Never do laundry in them. Like caves, men can't resist going into holes, and see them as entering the Earth-Mother, to the wet inside where life starts. In England, many dry wells are filled with bones (pig, dog, horse, sheep, taxmen), coins, tree trunks, grain. Like the RDNA, they gave a part of the harvest to gods of the Earth and hoped for a big reward the next year.

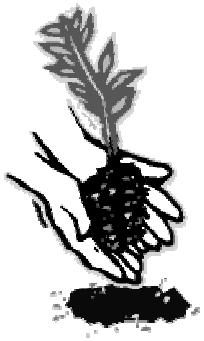


The Hazel grows near wells in Europe and famous saints (i.e. gods with new name) planted them. Many wells' water will heal blindness, childlessness, or pain (like Onsens in Japan). Sometimes fish (salmon) or snakes live in the well, and people talk to them after giving a penny. This is a famous wishing-well custom. If people are sick, they will tie a strip of clothing on the hazel tree. The tree will wash the sick out of the clothes and person. The Irish have a story of a hazel nut falling in water, eaten by fish, and fish eaten by man, who is wiser.

In Japan, wells are also the doors to underworld. In the now popular "Inu yasha" by Mrs. Rumiko Takahashi (she wrote "Ranma ½") a young girl falls in a well and goes to 1135 AD Japan, and fights demons like St. Patrick. Mike Scharding says the English version is in comic book stores now. The town wells are now covered or locked. Too many people committed suicide in wells during WWII from poverty. (Akita is number one in Japan for suicides and alcoholism.) Japan is a wet country, with many people walking into the ocean or dying at fishing. That is why I started the Order of Llyr here.

There are positive things about wells too. Every shrine (Jinja) has a spring or well or river for washing of hands and face and mouth (like Muslims). In the old days, you took a whole bath and changed clothes there. People are too busy, now. Japanese shrines often have very old trees next to the well. When people buy a fortune at a shrine, they tie it onto the tree and hope it comes true. They also write wishes on wood and hang them on the tree.

This is where Japanese custom of making holy paper comes from. In Japanese, "Kami" means paper, gods, and hair. All shrines have special papers called "O-Shide" or "go-hei" that are blessed by priests. O-Shide are attached to strings to protect or show that a place is holy. Hazel trees are protection too, so maybe you'll tie a string of O-Shide around your grove's hazel tree?



Winter Tree Care and Planting Tips

From the February edition of Leaf Lines, Newsletter of The National Arbor Day Foundation. Though spring officially begins on March 20 this year, in many places it is still cold and there is still snow on the ground. These are excellent recommendations until the weather warms.

1. Watching Your Trees In Winter

Take a walk outside to observe the buds and stems of your trees. Look at your mature trees and any new plantings from last fall or spring. What will you find?

Carefully remove a sealed bud and gently open it. Inside you will find tiny immature leaves and perhaps the beginnings of a flower. The buds are triggered to life each spring by day length. Temperature changes hasten or slow down the development of the buds.

Select several trees in your yard and tie a piece of string to their branches. Take just a moment each day, or once a week, to carefully inspect the tightly closed buds on the branches. Plant breeders use this very technique to search for ways to develop cold-hardy trees, particularly for the fruit industry.

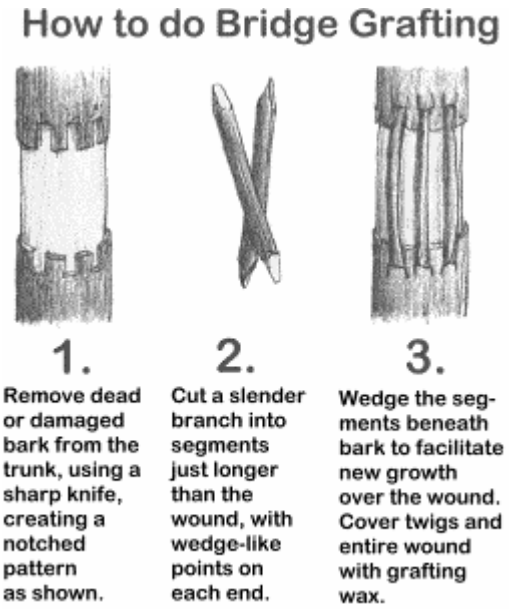
Watching the buds awake and noting the date of the event is called phenology* an ancient forerunner of ecology. Mark on your calendar the exact dates the buds actually emerge on each tree. You can also record when your trees blossom and leaf out. Each year you will begin to learn more about the characteristics of your trees. This process of keeping yearly records will prove to be very useful--especially if you are raising fruit trees.

2. Wabbits and Other Wascals in Winter

While you are on your winter walks you may encounter other signs of life in your orchards or gardens besides simple bud development. Check your trees for signs of rodent damage. It is common for mice or rabbits to chew the tender bark of a young tree right down to the heartwood. Don't worry...if you find a girdled tree, the damage can usually be repaired by a technique known as "bridge grafting." Bridge grafting literally bridges the gap in the living tissues so they can continue the tree's growth as well as transport needed nutrients to and from the leaves and roots.

Mark the site of the damaged tree and return with a sharp knife. Remove all frayed or loose bark from around the wound. Next, remove a sucker or a slender, long, branchlet from the tree and cut it into lengths just a little bit longer than the wound, measured from top to bottom. Sharpen these sticks into wedges at both ends and insert them under the bark at the top and bottom of the wound. Several of these "bridges" will be needed, spaced at intervals around the tree.

Finally, protect the wound by covering the entire area with grafting wax. In a few years, the wound will be healed and the tree will grow normally. If you can't find grafting wax at your local nursery, try searching for it on the web.



3. Consider Your Planting Site

While the act of planting a tree may only involve a few hours, proper care and maintenance may last a lifetime. This winter, care for your new trees by simply taking the time to study the future site upon which they will be planted. Consider the environment in which you'll be working--whether you are planting on your property or planning an Arbor Day tree-planting event at a local park.

In selecting a tree, your first consideration must be what the tree needs. In other words, what environmental factors limit the ability of a particular species to live a healthy life? One indication is to look at the native species in your area. Some non-native species and horticulturally-developed cultivars may also do well on your site. Remember to always select the right tree for the right place.

4. Buy Your Trees Now for Spring Planting

While you are on those winter walks, consider how your trees define the scenery. Now is the time to create plans for your desired landscape. What would you like to see when you take this same walk in future years? Imagine planting trees and shrubs to create a beautiful, productive, "edible landscape" surrounding your home with delicious fruits and nuts to benefit your family and the wildlife outside your back door.

Consider planting some of our fruit trees...a Stayman Winesap Apple, an Early Richmond Cherry, or perhaps a delicious Belle Of Georgia Peach. If you like nut trees, you might choose the beautiful Hall's Hardy Almond, American Hazelnut, Shellbark Hickory, or Black Walnut. The Sourwood is an excellent honey tree for beekeepers.

To brighten up future winter scenes around your home, select trees for their bright colorful fruit, unique branch structure, or peeling bark. Our online Tree Store offers many possibilities. Some of our favorites are the Prairiefire Flowering Crab, River Birch, Lacebark Elm, Northern Catalpa, or the Kousa Dogwood.

Make a large photocopy of your property plat. Here you can create an inventory of all the trees on your property and position them on the map. Include the botanical names of the trees for your reference. As you select trees for later plantings, you can share this map with friends, nursery growers, or use it to consult with your local County Cooperative Extension Agent.

As you plant trees, work to shape your landscape with a diverse selection of strategically placed plantings to create a landscape of beautiful, useful, edible trees for all four seasons.

5. Forcing Spring To Arrive

Now that the coldest days of winter are behind us, you can slip outside on a mild day to take care of some dormant winter pruning. Remove any crossing limbs that might rub together, sucker shoots, and any broken or dead branches. From the cuttings you remove, save a few heavily budded branches for forcing indoors to brighten up your home with colorful blooms and leaves. Good candidates for successful forcing are hazelnuts, redbuds, willows, forsythias, apple and crabapples, magnolias, and red maples.

Bring your cuttings (up to 1/2 inch diameter or smaller) inside and place them in a bucket of tepid water (about 100 degrees) with a floral preservative. The preservative will increase hydration and control any bacterial growth. Fill up a vase with warm water and preservative as well. The water in your vase will need to be changed in your container about once a week too.

Now, fill up your sink with very warm water and place the ends of the branches into the sink. Cut the stems of the branches off under the warm water. Size the branches so they fit into your vase and then proceed to create an arrangement. When you are finished, set the vase away from bright sunlight in a cool location. It will take anywhere from 1 to 6 weeks for the blooms and/or leaves to burst from their buds.

We encourage you to forward these Winter Tree Care and Planting Tips on to your friends and family around the country.

Thank you for planting and caring for America's Trees!

*Phenology looks at the relationship between climate or seasons and periods of biological activity. Phenologists study and record the changes and movements of animals and plants in relation to weather and seasonal changes taking place in their surrounding environment.

Upcoming Events

Scottish Gaelic Workshops in Seattle

Slighe nan Gaidheal presents Féis Shiàtail (pronounced FAYSH hee-AT-ul) from May 28 through June 2, 2002 at Fort Worden State Park and Conference Center, Port Townsend, WA. This Scottish Gaelic cultural festival features workshops and performances from renowned scholars and musicians from North America and Scotland.

Féis Shiàtail provides a rare opportunity for North American audiences to learn about the Scottish Gaelic language, music and culture. While many Gaelic speakers and scholars reside in Canada and the U.S., seldom do they come together on the West Coast. This year's Féis builds on the momentum of the 1998 and 2000 festivals; once again uniting scholars, students and enthusiasts.

Class topics will include Gaelic language, Gaelic song, Gaelic poetry and literature, harp, fiddle, Cape Breton step dance, and bagpipes.

A concert on Friday, May 31 will be one of the festival's highlights. Faculty and local performers will delight audiences with traditional and modern Gaelic music, dance and poetry.

"One of the unique aspects of the Féis is the quality of instruction that we have arranged," said Pandora Fitzpatrick, Féis organizer. "We believe that the study of the language, music, dance and literature of the Gaels happens best within the context of the culture as a whole, and luckily, we have been able to attract instructors who share that view."

Instructors are:

Catherine-Ann MacPhee: A fluent Gaelic speaker from the Isle of Barra, highly successful Gaelic recording artist, and actor, Catherine-Ann will teach Gaelic songs from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. She and her family have recently immigrated to Canada and are living in Ottawa.

Wendy MacIsaac: Well known for performing both as a soloist and with Nova Scotian Gaelic singer Mary Jane Lamond, Wendy will be teaching Cape Breton step dance. She is also an accomplished fiddle and piano player.

Rona MacDonald Lightfoot: A fluent Gaelic speaker from North Uist, Rona will teach Highland bagpipe, drawing on her rich knowledge of song and oral-piping tradition. Rona will also share stories from her experiences as a woman competing in the traditionally male-dominated piping competitions.

Judith Peacock Cummings: A fluent Gaelic speaker and recent transplant to Seattle, Judith will teach the Scottish harp classes. She is formerly of the Scottish folk band "The Whistlebinkies," and because she can teach in Gaelic as well as English, she is in great demand in Scotland at educational festivals.

Aonghas Dubh MacNeacail: A fluent Gaelic speaker from the Isle of Skye and award-winning poet, Aonghas will lead workshops on Gaelic literature, poetry, and Gaelic media. He has published his works in print and on the Internet, performed them live worldwide, and recorded them for broadcast.

Catrìona Parsons: A fluent Gaelic speaker from the Isle of Lewis, Catrìona joins us to teach Gaelic language and song. She is Associate Professor in the Celtic Department of St. Francis Xavier University, an award-winning singer, and author of Gàidhlig Troimh Chòmhradh.

Calum MacKinnon: Native of the island of Tiree in the Hebrides and long-time resident of Western Washington, Calum's energetic and sensitive Scottish fiddle playing make him highly sought after as a performer, competition judge, and teacher. Calum is studying Gaelic in Seattle.

Maureen Lyon: A fluent Gaelic speaker from the Isle of Lewis, Maureen has been the language tutor for the Vancouver and District Gaelic Choir since 1985. She has taught Gaelic privately in Vancouver, at the Celtic Arts programs in Coeur d'Alene and Winnipeg, and many Slighe nan Gaidheal events.

Participants may register for all four days at a cost of $395 or for Friday and Saturday at a cost of $245. Registration includes tuition, meals and accommodation. A late fee of $50 will be charged for registrations received after March 1, 2002.

Féis Shiàtail is funded in part by the Washington State Arts Commission, SAFECO, the Clan MacLeod Society, USA and The Dunvegan Foundation.

About Slighe nan Gaidheal (pronounced "shlee-uh nun GAY-ul") Slighe nan Gaidheal is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation based in Seattle, Washington. The organization's mission is to teach and disseminate to the general public the Scottish Gaelic language in its contemporary and historical context through classes, performances, the encouragement of its routine use, and otherwise. Seirm, the Gaelic choir of Slighe nan Gaidheal, performs regularly in the Seattle area. Slighe nan Gaidheal produces classes and workshops throughout the year in Gaelic language, song and more. For more information about Gaelic activities or becoming a member, please visit www.slighe.com.

About Scottish Gaelic

Scottish Gaelic, one of six modern Celtic languages in danger of becoming extinct, is primarily spoken in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. However, many fluent speakers reside all over the world, due in part to mass emigrations to the U.S., Canada and Australia in the 18th and 19th centuries.

For more information:
Pandora Fitzpatrick, 206-789-2522, pandora@slighe.com
Seumas Gagné, 206-297-8398, seumas@slighe.com
Kathryn Cole, 206-340-1623, kathryn@slighe.com

Time: Classes: 8:45 am-5:45 PM, May 29 through June 1, 2002 (register by March 1, 2002 to save $50) Concert: 8 PM, Friday, May 31, 2002 concert (tickets on sale April 1, 2002)

Witness the Vernal Equinox Sunrise and Sunset at the UMass Sunwheel!

Members of the University community and the general public are invited to witness the passing of the seasons by joining Prof. Judith Young of the U. Mass. Dept. of Astronomy to watch the Sun rise and set over the tall standing stones in the U. Mass. Sunwheel for the upcoming VERNAL EQUINOX.

Visitors for the sunrise viewing should arrive at 5:45 a.m., and visitors for the sunset viewing should arrive at 5:00 p.m. The sunrise and sunset events will be held on both Wednesday and Thursday March 20 and 21, 2002. For those interested in learning about the sky, there will be a presentation which will include the cause of the seasons, the Sun's path in the sky, the phases of the Moon, and the story of building the Sunwheel. Bring your questions, your curiosity, and DRESS VERY WARMLY; a $3 donation is requested. Sunwheel T-shirts and sweatshirts will be available for purchase to help cover the cost of future stone paths at the site.

The exact instant of equinox is 2:16 p.m. EST on March 20. On the equinox, any observer located on the Earth's equator will see the Sun pass directly overhead at local noon and that person will cast no shadow at noon. For observers not located on the equator and not at the poles, the Sun on the equinox is up for 12 hours and down for 12 hours, illuminating all latitudes on Earth! From the Sunwheel here in Amherst, the equinox Sun will be seen to rise and set through the stone portals in the East and West, a very beautiful sight as we experienced last year. This year, the sky will be particularly beautiful at sunset with the first quarter Moon also visible.

The U. Mass. Sunwheel is located south of Alumni Stadium, just off Rocky Hill Road. It can be easily reached from the center of Amherst, following Amity St. to the west, on the right hand side of the road about 1/4 mile after crossing University Drive. ALL VISITORS SHOULD WEAR WARM CLOTHING, SUITABLE FOR STANDING STILL ON FROZEN OR SOGGY GROUND. In the event of rain, the events will be cancelled, and visitors are encouraged to visit the Sunwheel on their own.

For more information on the U. Mass. Sunwheel, check out the web site at: http://www.umass.edu/sunwheel/index2.html or call Dr. Judy Young at 413-545-4311. To arrange a Sunwheel visit for your class or group, call or e-mail young@astro.umass.edu

Resources

Celtic Curse Generator

For those with net access, there is the Celtic Curse Generator at:

http://hermes.lincolnu.edu/~focal/scripts/mallacht.htm
recommended by Sam Adams. Impress your friends, coworkers, and enemies with curses they won't be able to understand and will frighten them all the more!

Calendar

Spring Equinox, when the Sun crosses the Equator, will occur on March 20, 2002 at 11:16 a.m. PST. Spring Equinox services will be held on Wednesday, March 20 at sundown when the Sun sets due west. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Spring Equinox we will be going immediately after the service to Sushi Afloat on Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on March 31, April 14, and April 28. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $6.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any Beltane Y.R. XL Vol. 18, Number 3 April 28th, 2002 c.e.

Beltane Essay: Fire and Water

By Stacey Weinberger

Beltaine, May Day, the first day of summer and the beginning of the Season of Life. In the RDNA tradition the Waters-of-Life are returned to the Grove chalice and all Third Order Druids exchange their white ceremonial ribbons to red. At Baccharis Grove we add a natural fertilizer to the tree chalice as part of our offering to the Grove trees. Now is a good time for those who own bronze sickles to sharpen them for the coming season.

Beltaine is a pastoral festival. It is associated with fertility, the return and renewal of life to the face of the earth. It was also a period of purification for the animals of the as well as people. Fire and water seem to be the principle methods used for purification and to insure fertility of the coming year.

At sundown on Beltaine eve, the Druids kindled need fires or *teine eigin* from oak and other sacred wood. Household fires that were normally never allowed to go out were extinguished and relit from the need fire. At Uisnech, a ritual center in Ireland, this fire was kindled by the king's druid and the people would bring a brand with which to relight their hearths. The Lebor Gabala, the Book of Invasions, contains a story about the Druid Mide, for whom Meath is named, who was the first Druid to light a Beltaine fire at Uisnech for the clans of Nemed. This custom is also documented as being practiced in Scotland in the Highlands and Islands as late as the first quarter of the 20th century.

In ancient times, cattle signified the wealth of the Celtic tribes as well as their continuation and survival. Thus it was importance to insure their fertility and health. To this end, bonfires were lit on hills and mountaintops and the cattle that had been sheltered and stall-fed all winter were driven between the flames before being sent out to summer pasturelands. In his glossary, Cormac, the ninth century Irish writer, Beltaine comes from *Bel-tene*, a goodly fire. According to Cormac the Druids kindled two great bonfires between which cattle were driven. There is some thought that in earlier times that the cattle were sacrificed to the deities in exchange for protection against disease, fertility, a good growing season, and a good harvest in the fall, and later evolved into symbolically passing the cattle between the fires.

Though people also passed between the Beltaine bonfires, their purification and fertility practices seem to be more centered around water than fire.

To the Druids, the most sacred of all water forms was dew (found at dawn, the liminal, "otherworldly" period between night and day), especially the dew of Beltaine morning. The washing of the face in the dew of Beltaine morning and drinking from the well before sunrise was common practice. It was well known that holy wells were considered to bestow fertility upon women. The tradition of dew's potency has come down through the centuries and in Scotland and Ireland young women still rise before dawn on the first of May to wash their faces in the morning dew and let it dry in the air. The dew of Beltaine morning was often gathered and kept as a medicinal or beauty aid. It was said to bring a good complexion, cure sore eyes, prevent or cure headaches, skin ailments, and freckles.

Men who washed their hands in the May Dew were said to gain skill in opening lock and knots, in mending nets and untangling ropes. Women who did the same would be able to untangle threads. Walking barefoot in the dew cured soreness and insured healthy feet during the year.

Also common was the scattering of water to with which to bring fertility upon those whom it falls. On Beltaine in Padstow, Cornwall the dancing 'Obby 'Oss was known for bringing the promise of a husband or child to the young women it covered with its skirts. But in pastimes the prancing and twirling about also including water in this fertility ritual. The 'Oss would wade in Treater Pool near the town, "drink" from the water, and sprinkle those assembled for good luck. Early May festivities in Southern Ireland included a procession of Mummers, one of whom dressed as a clown and carried a long pole with shreds of cloth like a mop at the top. He would dip this into a pool of water or puddle and liberally sprinkle it on the crowds about him, another symbolic gesture of distributing the fertilizing properties of the water.

News of the Groves

Carleton

Mysteries at the Arb!

On a spot not that far from the circle a tree's been found with three trunks, two fallen and dead, the third still possibly living and standing up, so that the two dead trunks come out and encircle a fairly large area. There were three very large handfuls of nails all in about a two-foot radius here, and the mystery is how they could've gotten there. There seems to be a fair amount of trash at this site, more than pretty much anywhere else in the Arb not far from the remnants of a small shack. There's some barbed wire fencing caught under one of the fallen trunks, but there are no posts for it anywhere around. (The stuff is about a foot wide, and it's on the ground for a ways in this vicinity.)

The only answer thus far is there are some kids from town that sometimes come down to that little fort back behind the circle and they are not always as neat as they should be. Has anyone considered fairy folk?

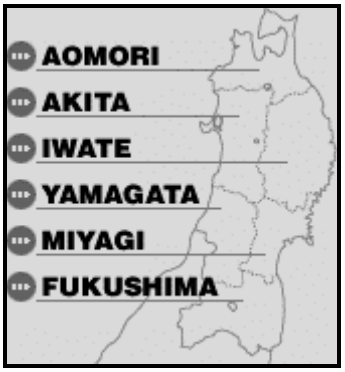
There has been an appearance of paved trails and some concern whether they will be expanded? One of the paths seems to have been carved out though the northeast section.

Sister Merri Webster provides the answer: "I know about the paved trails. Whether I know what you want to know is questionable. I don't think they are going to be expanded, at least not any time soon. There is a new trail that the Arb workers put it in this past summer. I think it is going to be made nicer (i.e. not a mud pit) but I don't think it's going to be paved.

Akita Grove: News from Japan

Equinox was fun, and Nozomi won the egg hunt with 23 eggs. Pat had five and stepped on two. Cherry blossoms are almost ready!

Pat's leaving tomorrow for his trip across Japan from Akita to Iwate. He took three weeks vacation. It is about 200 miles by bird, with big mountains. I'm worried about him, but I gave him a good amulet, so he will be okay. He plans to stop at every shrine on the way and camp nearby. I'm not a good walker, but I will walk with him on some of the return trip.



Monument Grove: News from DC, Now the Digitalis Grove

Well, Mairi has left our grove, taking Sine with her, of course. There is no specific knowledge of where she moved to, except that it is "in the vicinity of the Pacific Ocean," but she left the airport with a floral print shirt, so I have my suspicions it ain't Chile. We'll miss her and her musical talents. But our paths crossed before at Carleton, so I'm sure they'll cross again (three's the charm).

That leaves the DC grove a rather sparse membership, with only me, Earl, Sheeba, Eric, and Shane as the only Reformed Druids that I know are here. Eric and I are so busy with school and work that we can't plan schedules too well, so we've decided to pursue parallel services (i.e. we're breaking up.)

Because of the rigors of preparing the next edition of "A Reformed Druid Anthology" (see the article below) for publishing in Beltane 2003, organizing the 40th anniversary next year, updating the Druid Archives (six years behind schedule), and running the websites, including the new mailing service for newcomer and old-timer interaction to which you're all invited, just send me e-mail at mikerdna@hotmail.com or go to:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RDNAtalk/

I've decided my grove is in cyberspace and have renamed it "Digitalis Grove" with the foxglove plant (natural choice, eh?) for our emblem. The fox, by the way, appears in about 50% of Japanese Shrines as the primary spiritual resident and are associated as the gods' messengers and bring fertility to rice.

Tonga Grove: News from the Pacific

As you read this, the Tonga Grove is closed. Irony should have returned to Britain or New York and is probably having a good time.

Amazon Grove: News from Brazil

Things are going fine. Should reach Maxto base camp by April 12th. Take care everybody.

—Ian

Silent Grove: News from Hamilton, Ontario

Our Grove has decided, not in haste, that we share no connection with the RDNA, and since our actions will be fairly robust in the weeks, months and years ahead that we should singly represent ourselves as the Canadian Druid and Bardic Society. We initially toyed with the idea back in January, prior to Imbolc, but recent events leave us little doubt that this is in the best interests of our Grove.

In the Mother, please notify all that we are leaving the Reform, and wish to have little to no contact with your organization up and beyond the people we have met on a one-to-one email basis.

Best of Luck!

Birch Grove, NRDNA: News from New Hampshire

Since Yule, we have been in the process of buying, with my brother and sister in law, 104 acres in central New Hampshire. It has a large manmade pond, about 20 acres of pasture, and the rest in woodlot rising up a ridge. There are many beautiful white birches on the land. We [my sister, who is Second Order], and I will not be able to move up onto it for another year, as we have much work down here to get ready for the move. But when we do, we have a dear friend nearby who is First Order, and several more interested people, and Birch Grove will be a much more active and regular thingy.

Right now we get together on an irregular basis. But we have a lot of fun when we do, and much interesting Hairpull.

love-Joan

Dravidia Grove: News from Maryland

Have spent a great amount of time in research this month and have also acquired four new books, my favorite of which is a Celtic History book, and my Complete Guide to Herbal Medicines. Have spent almost as much time this week watching nature and learning more of the fascinating things that are always happening. The best was that my Parrolet went outside on porch to get some air the other day. She was only out there about half an hour and when I looked out the window to make sure no cats had pried her cage door open I was amazed to find about ten birds of different species sitting on the railing as if to be having a conversation with her. It does amaze me about the nature of communication between animals and the fact that a house pet could arouse so much curiosity in so short a time.

Also have started planting the herb garden again and getting ready for beautiful cycle of life that flows about us in the spring.

Silver Oak Grove: News from North Carolina

We would like to be affiliated with your group if it's not too much trouble for you, and we're named the Grove of the Silver Oak. We are located in Wilkesboro, NC (West of Winston-Salem), with a current membership of seven. We are neo-pagan and have a love for nature.

Our E-mail address is thebrotherhoodofthesilveraok@hotmail.com.

Yours in the Mother,
Byddin, AD

Swamp Grove: News from Florida

It has been quiet down here in the Swamplands, we are gearing up for the rainy season and enjoying all of the greenery that comes with an early spring. We still follow the way of nature, even though we feel the pavement coming closer with every year. The Grove is made up of a few acres of land that we have tried to preserve and keep healthy and free from the developers who seem to multiply like rabbits down here, paradise isn't what it used to be. Wishing a good rain for all the folks along the east coast dealing with the draught.

Oaken Circle Grove: News from Kentucky

Greetings from the Oaken Circle Grove of Kentucky, our grove has begun to grow in leaps and bounds. We are having a meeting April 12th for five new potential members. Our Beltane plans are set for May 4, 2002. We plan to erect a Maypole and bake tiny fairy cookies for the kids to hang in the trees and bushes as a fairy snack. We will have a nice fire in our fire circle and give thanks to the Mother for all her gifts, the gifts of new friendships as well as old. I want to give thanks to all the people that have emailed me about the grove and have tried to make it something special; I also want to thank our current grove members for all they have done. Love and Hope are the keys to the success of our grove and we already have an abundance of those. If you would like to learn more about us, please go to

http://oaken_circle_grove.tripod.com/oakencirclegroveky/

Many Blessings
Sherry of the Oaken Circle Grove

Amon Sul Grove: News from Kentucky

Amon Sul Grove will be attending Beltane Kentucky April 26-28. The festival is held on private land in Menifee Co., an area that is known for its fundamentalist religiosity. Once when I was there on business, one of the little Pentecostal churches actuality had a sign out front that said, "We do not handle snakes." I have a Darwin fish on my truck and a "The Goddess is alive and magic is afoot" bumper sticker on the tent camper. As the saying goes, getting there is half the fun. Last year there were over two hundred Pagans in attendance and there was much merrymaking.

Work schedules have put the spring gardening efforts behind schedule but we do have a few things started including a variety of medicinal herbs. We had a warm winter and then a really bad cold spell just when the daffodils were getting ready to bloom so that was a disappointment. The new tulips are doing well and are in full bloom at the time of this writing. The roses are budding up nicely but it looks like we lost the Monet that never recovered from being stripped almost bare during last spring's tent worm epidemic. This year's major project is to clear a large enough area to add a second row of grape vines. We lost several of the wine grapes that we started from cuttings that we purchased last year, but some of the survivors are doing well enough that we should be able to start taking our own cuttings.

—Gandalf, Amon Sul Grove Scribe

Big Ash Grove: News from Michigan

Well the BAG (Big Ash Grove) has once again been put into temporary hibernation. It seems that every year around this time that happens, but hey without change there is no life...so I see it as a blessing in a way.

Good blessings to you and the Reform in all its branches.

Cat-in-the-Corner Grove: News from Colorado

The Cat-In-The-Corner Grove (formerly Piñata Grove) is based in Denver, CO. The official membership is currently one human, two Northern Red Oak trees (represented by proxy), and a varying number of potted plants; the two feline members couldn't be bothered with actually joining.

Due to the "Semi-Official Season of Sleep Period of Introspection" that the AD found herself rather reluctantly undergoing shortly after Samhain, the Grove has been in a state of semi-hibernation. Also, the Grove worship site turned out to be a bit too public to be practical, so outdoor services were temporarily suspended (which wasn't too bad, considering that it was rather cold outside anyway). However, with Beltaine rapidly approaching, the AD plans to awaken the Grove once again; this also seems to be an appropriate way to herald the Awakening of the Earth-Mother and the beginning of the Season of Life.

Of course, the Grove still needs to find an appropriate Grove Site in which to HOLD said Beltaine services. So any petitions to your Druidical Deity-of-choice that an appropriate and at least semi-permanent site be located in time for Beltaine would be much appreciated...

Fairy Spell Grove: News from California

We at the Faerie Spell Grove are happy to announce that as of TODAY we are unveiling our NEW free email service--FOR THE PAGAN COMMUNITY!

Faeriespell.net is (as I type) being converted to a druidic-based free email service. We are using cutting edge software and over the next few months we will be building the best email service on the planet!--and it's FREE! We feel the pagan community can use a central meeting place (we happily volunteer) and a forum to exchange ideas, get news (hmm…we are looking for a news service by the way)

The dedicated server package was bought today (multiple T-3 connection--so no more slow mail for us!) and the software is being configured--so maybe it will not be "pleasing to the eye" for a week or two. But we will be improving the look and feel of the site over time. We are also offering FREE WEB HOSTING to all friendly druids (no gimmicks--just don't hog up a ton of bandwidth that we have to pay for). We are doing this as part of our goal of building a business network of eco-friendly capitalists. If you want to make some money in a project outside of your day job--and want to work with crazy, creative druidic types, feel free to email us at:

Ohmygodiam@aol.com.

I want to end this now--as this is not the time or place for a business pitch. But to all we wish the best of fortunes. And to the Silent Grove--three caps please--maybe a few more in a week or two. But we will say--get OUT--do something that is good for the environment around you--and if you can make some money doing it--all the better! We need more druids at the wheel--and less Cheney's and Bush's and Enron cronies. Think about this!

Druid Heart Spirited Grove: News from California

Druid Heart Spirit Grove's spring equinox went really well this year, even though we had to do it indoors. We had a guest from a Gwyddonic order called Nemeton Gwynvyd, and she brought some of their orders wonderful poetic verses for the celebration that we added to the ritual during our devotionals. For Calon Mai/Beltain this year we are having a campout and going to erect a tall Mai pole to dance after the ritual, followed by a bardic circle and cook fire outdoors and potluck dinner. The next morning we will do a sunrise ritual and meditation followed by teas and coffee and cakes. Some members from my band "Beltain" will be her for playing the music for the Mai pole and helping in the Bardic circle where we will share some of our bands traditional arrangements on fiddle, harp, octave mando, and bodhran. All who come are encouraged to bring musical instruments and drums. I have made an online flyer that can be viewed at:

http://www.geocities.com/sailletree/calon_mai.html

Baccharis Grove: News from California

Chop wood, carry water. For being perhaps one of the smallest Groves in the Reform Baccharis seems to be one of the busiest. The Preceptor attended the sunrise on the morning of the Spring Equinox. As the sun rises over the hills in Orinda about a half an hour after the actual sunrise, it gave her some time to wander about the area. Usually some sort of critter wanders by. In the past it has included a skunk, a grey fox, and a doe and stag. This time there was no sign of any animals. At just about the time of the sunrise she scattered the Bride-og from Oimelc as is customary on the morning of the Equinox. There are a few deer bones around that particular area. On this morning the Preceptor noticed a larger one. It was a skull! Not only that, it was the skull of a stag! She carried the skull to the center of the Grove site to get a better look and noticed the time on her watch. It was 6:15 a.m. That means it was found precisely when the sun rose at 6:14! This gift of a stag skull was a reminder to have no expectations and to be grateful for the surprises Dalon ap Landu and the Mother bring.

On March 24 the Grove attended the very first Interfaith Pagan Pride "Return of the Snakes" parade in Berkeley. There were over 20 groups including Berkeley Morris and OBOD Groves from Walnut Creek and Sacramento. It was very well organized and had quite a good turnout for the first year.

After the past two services, as well as on the weekends in between, we have had work parties to dig up the holly and birches that didn't make it through the dry summer and fall of last year. We even put a potential new member who made it past the interview stage to work, hopefully not frightening him away. Water was brought up the hill for the newly planted trees and to refill the bowl set out for the wild animals. On the non-service weekends the Preceptor sawed the birches into manageable size to fit into the trunk of her car. With the assistance of a woodworker friend she plans to make a set of Ogham staves out of them. Another project was cutting down a branch of a Live Oak tree to let the Grove Pine Giuthas and the new Holly Cuileann receive more light.

You make Third Order, nothing really changes, externally. You work just as hard if not harder, for there is a calling, a sense of responsibility to something greater than oneself, a dedication. There are still the tasks at hand to do, tending the Grove site, the paths, making sure the trees get enough water, and that there is fresh water for the local animals. With increased humility it is still chop wood, carry water.

Why We are Reformed, Revisited

Sister Mairi Ceolmhor's article from the Oimelc 2002 issue of A Druid Missal-Any spurred quite a discussion on what Reformed Druidism means and its relationship to other Reform movements. We present the correspondence here in full.

Dear Druids,

In the Vernal Equinox edition of the Druid Missal-Any, Mairi Ceolmhor speculates that Reformed Judaism "sounds quite a bit like us!" (in reference to the RDNA). Though this may be only one perspective on the historical similarities between the RDNA and other "religious movements" throughout history, and not to reflect on other Groves beyond an historical anecdote, Silent Grove does not in any way, past or present, draw parallels to any aspect of Judaism, whether Reformed or not, or its natural extension--Zionism. Indeed, Silent Grove strongly disengages itself from the current atrocities committed by the Zionist regime, and does not wish to

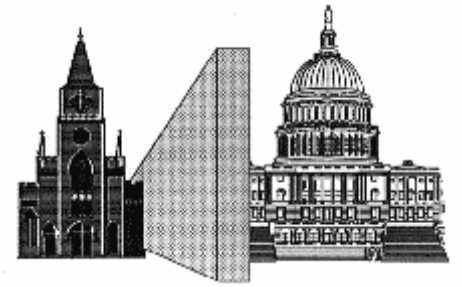
have its Grove sullied by any suggestions of connections, associations or similarities with historical or contemporary Judaism/Zionism in part or as a whole.

Glen
Silent Grove
April 16, 2002

Dear Glen,

I'm glad you've broken your silence to speak out on issues that matter to you. The following is, of course, my personal opinion in reply to your personal opinion for the possible benefit of the readers' opinions.

Each grove in the Reform is naturally free to choose its sources of inspiration, and equally free to choose which one's not to be inspired by (if it is possible to ignore a "purple rhino" once the idea is mentioned to you.) I believe what you most object to here is the collaboration between politics and religion. Any religion, once it has a desire to achieve and keep political or military power, will then proceed to protect that power, usually against rival religions. This is the sad fact of Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Sri Lanka, Israel/Palestine, Timor, the Wild West, and numerous other locales.



I understand the dilemma that possible association or resemblance to any group can bring about unfavorable comparisons. I'm still proud to have German ancestry, although I disdain the Nazism of the 20th century. I'm proud to be part Irish, but deplore the violence of North Ireland. I speak English, despite the millions of Celts killed, disenfranchised or enslaved (etc.) by Anglo-Saxon and French descendents. I doubt that any western institution (especially a religious one) or academic environment that hasn't been affected, influenced or involved with Judaism or Christianity (which is Judaism blended with Mithraic and Greek Mystery cults) or Islam for that matter, which was Mairi's argument.

While I'm sure some Reformed Judaics support Zionism, I believe the underlying purpose of that movement is to adjust Judaism to the realities of modern life, rather than to adjust the world to Judaism, which is more Zionic to me. If there is one lesson I've learned in Reformed Druidism, is that there are allies and good lessons in nearly every religion, if you know where to look (the opposite also holds true) and search well.

But I will agree with you, that the current situation in the Middle East, with its messy blend of racism/politics/ religion/class/lunacy is just plain discouraging. I hope that America doesn't go any further down a similar road of its own to extremism or preferential treatment for a population based on religion. But, I do not know enough the details and history behind these religious conflagrations which touch so many related topics. But I am applying myself to a growing understanding. After all, the last reason why we're "reformed" is that we're trying to fix our mistakes, and we can learn much by relating to and engaging ourselves in the dilemmas of others.

This reminds me of what Isaac told Carleton-graduates in the 70s about "throwing the baby out with the bath water" (2nd Epistle of Isaac, pg. 30 of Apocrypha) when it comes to magic and associations with neo-paganism. Interestingly, Isaac (of all people) was accused by several people of being Jewish because of his name (which resembles the founder of Reformed Judaism), involvement with founding the Hassidic Druids of North America, and a few other reasons. I believe his reaction was "Charmed, but you're very mistaken."

On a final thought, I'm reminded that poem by Issho (Zen Harvest #19):

Over the pond
Every night
casts its light
But the water won't be soiled
The moon won't be either.

But, I hope you at the very least found Mairi's article to be thought provoking? I welcome other input on dealing with PR issues of association with other groups and movements by the readers.

Yours moderately,
Mike
April 16, 2002

Dear Mike,

Actually, Brother Mike, all I am saying is that Silent Grove does not consider itself, in any way, influenced by historical or modern Zionism. We despise the situation in the Middle East, as provoked by war criminal Ariel Sharon in 1999 by his visit to a Palestinian holy location. We also despise the fact that your nation continues to fuel Zionist arrogance by providing $3B/annum in aid to a bellicose nation whose hegemonistic aspirations in the region are a detriment to world prosperity.

Any Druid would plainly see that the balance is completely torn asunder by misguided foreign policy that funds "war brokers" to pad their corporate coffers.

This is not the wish of the Mother. As such, and I am sure you feel it as well, things will be corrected in the near future. Divination would tell you as much.

With warm regards,

Glen
April 16, 2002

Dear Glen,

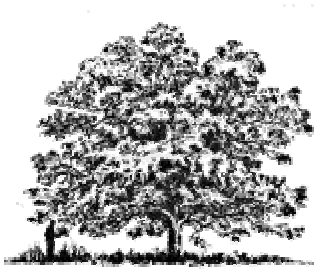
It was a poor choice on his part, wasn't it? Canada is a wonderful country, after all, I've thought of moving there. In a way, your grove appears to be negatively influenced by Zionism, as is shown by your outrage.

Doesn't take a Druid to realize such matters of the world exist. But it would take a Druid to know how to respond wisely. Without time travel, what would be a good course to take?

Most of my divination is about the Earth-Mother's acceptance of my sacrifices, not those of others.' I'm sure the gods hear those.

With warm regards,

Mike
April 16, 2002



All in the Mother,

It is in the spirit of good ale, good music, and a good heart, that I need to rectify Brother Mike in his assumptions as to my sunrise message.

Indeed, the message is that each Grove delivers unto themselves the deeds they see as fit.

It is simple to be an editorial proxy, however to be representative has been 'the downfall of all political/ religious movements.

I welcome, each and everyone of you, to visit our website in the weeks to come, as we begin to practice "Druidism" without getting lost on provocations such as, "What is Reformed?" and glorify far more important trivial frivolities from days a' yore! Indeed, you may find our catalogue will soon surpass the "un-official website" of the RDNA.

Tsk! Such a shame that your arrogance exudes in statements that extol the self, rather than the Grace of the Mother. An old Taoist once proclaimed, "visit the river and sit there until you forget yourself. Only then can you become selfless."

As far as the Zionist regime is concerned, our Grove feels no bitter hatred, only a sullen remorse that such a wondrous group of people could degrade themselves to the pit of hate once again, such that many societies will reward them with violence as they have done throughout history.

BTW, I'm glad you left in question marks.

A Zen Buddhist once dropped by a pizza parlor called "Zen Pizza." He ordered one with everything. The pizza came, and he paid, but he complained when the clerk didn't give him any change. The clerk quickly pointed out that, "change comes from within."

Therein lacks the wisdom.

With the Mother in our hearts,

Silent Grove
April 16, 2002

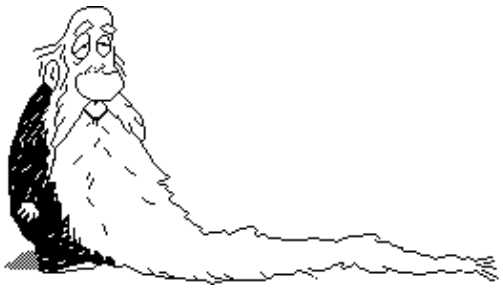
Wow!

All of this spirited thought has caught my eye. It is good to see some serious and intelligent exchanges of thought in neo/pagan (pick-your-favorite term and leave me alone!) circles--as it has been a bit dry around here locally.

I most highly agree with "Brother Glen" (hmm...Can I be different and call him "Unca Glen?") in philosophy and perceived fact. (I was not there; therefore I must assume what is reported is somewhat factual.) But there is so much more to this. I just wanted to put that in first!

In as short of a statement of my view as I can squeeze this:

hmm..."Reformed." I will avoid whipping out the dictionary and will just go straight into my personal diatribe here. The druids of old are dead. (Or they are rrrrrrreally old and hiding with the faeries under the cairns!) They were hunted down like so many other wonderful indigenous civilizations of the earth by the "conquering empires" (I blame the xians mostly--but that is entirely personal) and most of the records we could hope to have to trace a solid lineage or collection of rituals and purposes are lost. This means that we in a very real sense are indeed practicing one of the most mysterious of all religions of the world in this day. Because no one alive (except for the afore mentioned rrrrrrreally old druids) knows exactly what they did and how they did it and why...We have only our best guesses. I hope I do not need to point out the fallacy of "modern science" over the past few millennia to show how mistaken we may be on them.



But I like to think we have a pretty good idea of "what drooids did." They like trees. Hey! I like trees! And there we have a start. This reaches into the shadowy realms of Celtic-recreationism and I am bound to (hopefully) offend some here with my line of thought. Anything we do today is nothing more than an educated guess of those who walked before us. But this can be quite liberating!

With all due respect to my Wiccan(tm) friends--including those I have to meet--Wicca (tm--Gerald Gardner circa 1964?) is a "re-formation" of a collection of beliefs from all over Europe. Pre-1960 there was no "Wicca." There were a variety of indigenous beliefs on every spot of dry land where people resided and the gods there reflected the environment of that locale. Now we have a hundred different official sects and a million different interpretations, blending Egyptian, Assyrian, Celtic, Hindu and other beliefs and calling it "Wicca(tm)." Hence it is an amalgamation of beliefs. Okay--that's cool as

long as we can see it for what it is. Today's Wiccans(tm) are as eclectic as today's fast food establishments. A burger at McDonald's is vastly different from one at Burger King ("they use microwaves!") but they are both lumped into the category of burgers or the larger grab-bag term of American "fast food." So my mini-point here is that the systems of beliefs are varied even under the umbrella title of the predominant defacto "pagan" line of thought.

So--to bring this all together; "if" the druids are dead and gone (not to worry--we ALL die someday) and most of the records we could hope to enjoy have been destroyed then what we really have is a base of ideas and a completely new era. The planet is the same, but the world has changed. Some of us may choose to be "guardians of history" and keep to what little we do know--calling ourselves purists (I like that term btw) and that is all good.

But...

Isn't the very essence of life—of nature herself the ability to adapt and survive? As druids we (should) all look around to the grand old lady herself and seek guidance by example. What does nature do? Nature adapts. The lion eats the zebra (yum!). If there are not enough zebras the lion eats something else or starves. Nature allows the cycle to evolve. Where there are fewer zebras and giraffes (for example) the trees grow more plentiful and the grass grows taller. Humans punch giant holes in the ozone and nature says—okay kids; playtime is over—you die now. "Next!" All in all nature just adapts and keeps going on.

So if the world is a different world than it was back in the days of our fun-loving, golden-sickle wielding forbearers, then "could" (note: I did NOT say "should"—do NOT flame me for implying "should") our beliefs not adapt also? Would not those who went before us be disappointed if we did not see the world and create new songs and rituals to honor and bond with nature that are contemporary to our times and world around us? This is not to imply abandoning old beliefs at all--but more that the term "re-formed" could well be taken as: solid ideas based on a sound premise ("nature is good") and applied to the world around us in a contemporary style that has the maximum impact of intended purpose ("nature is cool").

I mean we could all build a house using only an axe. We "could" make a "Lincoln Log" cabin of sorts (note that I expressly do NOT condone the abuse, murder or butchering of trees or any plant-life—EVER!!!) but we have air-hammers now that shoot these really cool nails into (ahem) wood and build solid, well insulated houses--in a fraction of the time--it took our grandfathers and even more so those before to build homes for their families.

Should our personal spiritual beliefs remain in the Stone Age while all of our realities and perceptions advance forward at blisteringly divine speeds? Is this not the very reason that x-ianity has suffered such an attrition of real followers over the past 600 years and more so in the now deceased "2nd millennia?" The Renaissance came about as the "common man" (a sexist term I know) had more free time from labor and thus better health, more time to learn and thus a chance to look above the rantings of the Church and local nobility and say something to the effect of "screw this! This makes no sense at all!" Europe's collective eyes were opened and the world started a change that has led us to this very moment of Internet debates.

None of this discounts any basic precepts ("nature is good") but it DID invalidate the forced dogma of the previous generations as they had infected current religious thought of that time. ("Nature is good because God is better than thou and so is the Earl and therefore thou musts toil in the fields of thine Earl in service to him in all of his holiness so thou mayest achieve a servile position in his garden in paradise.") I realize this is a lot to chew on--but it is blissfully simple.

If we strip away all but the premise of what those who came before us held true then we have a tree (no?). Okay—so let's consider decorating that tree one belief at a time. Add the ornaments of old by examining them to see if they are kept because of their timeless truth--or simple nostalgia. Can some broken and soiled ornaments not be placed in a jeweled box on display at the base of the tree in an honored position while new ornaments that reflect the time and the base notion ("nature is cool") be placed on the tree in their stead?

This is how I see us as reformed druids. I believe we laugh at nothing our forbearers did. If they thought the sun rose every day and not that the earth revolved around the sun--cool! But we know differently now; our understanding of that fact may negate a certain ritual that is focused on making the sun rise (I am being whimsically hypothetical here for example only)--but our songs of love of the sun rising are an extremely personal expression as we know that it is to our eyes that the sun rises and that is how we romanticize the moment and draw power from it.

The eternal flame has long-been extinguished. Okay—we still know how to make fire. Drop the torch--light a new one. Hell! Use "Hazel" or "Birch cut under the light of the first smiling crescent when Venus and the moon make a one-eyed smiley face just after sundown" if you like--but the fact that the torch is lit and carried and protected from harsh winds seems more important to me than trying to use the same old charred stump soaked in gasoline. I think that we all have our own interpretations of druidism—just as we all have our own beliefs on sex and monogamy/polygamy and polyandry. But one thing I do know for a fact is that whether we choose to like it or not - we all are products of this world as it is--not as it was "back when" and those beliefs are inherent in us. We can no more reject the world as it is today in our spiritual belief systems than we can live without the wonder of toilet paper, washing machines, refrigeration, toothbrushes or readily available soap and hot water.

So we are "21st century druids." Cool! I still like trees. But I also like my computer.

Okay--enough of my prosthelytizing! Thank you for reading--please feel free to write and tell me how sacrilegious I am.

Dusty the passing druid
April 16, 2002

Actually, in the case of the Druids, I think it was the Romans under Julius Caesar and succeeding emperors that were mostly responsible for eliminating them, at least in Gaul (i.e. France-ish area) and all of Britain except for Ireland. In Ireland it was probably still the Roman Empire, but yeah in its later guise of the Roman Catholic Church. (I think Ireland was the only land to escape being conquered by the "Classical" Romans.)

Alyx
The Cat-In-The-Corner Grove
April 16, 2002

Year XL of the Reform

By Mike Scharding, Digitalis Grove

It is the beginning of the Summer Half of the Year, when Druids break the seal on their whiskey bottles and secretly replace their red ribbons from the box of last-year's Maypole decorations. We love this time of year and look forward to sweaty days in our groves.

Beltane 2002 marks the beginning of Year 40 of the Reform, or XL as we like to write it. Because there is no year Zero in our timeline, the 40th anniversary will actually be at the end of year 40 on Beltane 2003, with a possible celebration at Carleton and at other groves. But let's not belittle this year. Because it is year XL, it may be our biggest year ever. Let's all try to "excel"!

Druidism is about:
Experimentation, Exploration, and Exemplary service
And
Life, Love and Laughter

You might wonder why I persist in using Roman Numerals, when the Celts were not particularly fond of the Romans? Roman numerals are rather nice for many things: inscribing in stone, enumerating outlines, labeling Monarchs and Popes, encrypting the copyright dates of movies, and they're just anachronistically fun things to play with.

Origin of Arabic Numerals, with graphics
http://islamicity.com/mosque/ihame/Ref6.htm

Extensive site on Roman Numerals
http://www.deadline.demon.co.uk/roman/front.htm

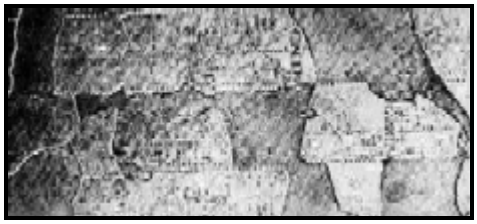
The SCA also enjoys this practice
http://www.sca.org.au/lochac/scribes/hb_app3.html

What else happened 40 years ago:

1962, France performs first underground nuclear test at Ecker Algeria

1962, JFK authorizes Area Redevelopment Act (ARA)

May 1st in History
http://www.thisdaythatyear.com/May/events1.htm
http://www.nytimes.com/learning/aol/onthisday/010501onthisday.html



Ancient Gaulish Calendar

Ten Things to Do for Beltane

By Alex Strongbow

1. Sex. Of course!
2. Wake up early, greet the sun, and wash your face in the morning dew. Collect flowers and make garlands for those you care about.
3. An Oak King can be selected by various athletic competitions such as: races, wrestling, archery, stone tossing, sit-ups in one minute, fire kindling contest (first to boil cup of water), greased pole climbing, rodeo riding, or a combination of foolish macho things.
4. A maypole dance for the women (men too if not enough people). Last woman holding the ribbon will become the May Queen. The May Queen and Oak King should symbolically (or actually) consummate their "marriage" in a symbolic gesture.
   altreligion.about.com/library/howto/htmaypole.htm
5. Picnic, leaving a symbolic offering of one piece of everything. Possibly foods are oatmeal, diary, berries, greens, wine, barley, honey, eggs, sweets. http://ww.keirle.freeserve.co.uk/page18.htm
6. Drama or play of Persephone returning from the underworld or a story of a woman returning from the fairy lands. Divination is a possibility.
7. Enjoy the Waters of Life (i.e. whiskey). If you're solitary, do some self-nurturing type of activity, like a walk in the woods of a state park and camp out or vigil.
8. Raise stones. Its always a good time to bring the community together to haul rocks around and make a memorial of some type to the event. I recommend using car hoods from a junkyard, long levers, and 15 ropes and a pulley.
9. Build a Bonfire. This might be hard for those of you in fire-prone areas like California, but a cauldron fire might be possible, or just use a barbeque/hibachi for the job. Some of you are girl-scouts, but here's some advice for the rest of you.

   Apparently, the traditional wood to burn is oak, ash, thorn, rowan, apple, birch, alder, maple, elm, gorse, holly, hawthorn, and others from a story about the Battle of the Trees. I'd add a piece from any other tree in your forest. Collecting the woods and maypole would be a nice combination activity, and give time for certain members to "dally".

Be sure to remove all the dry materials in the vicinity and dampen the area. Now you can just pile a lot of logs if you'd like, or you can stack them. A pyramid shape or tepee shape is considered ideal, as boxy shapes tend to fall to the side rather than collapse inward (1999 Texas A&M disaster, anyone?). I recommend that you don't get too close to the fire, just in case a log rolls out. Leave spaces between the logs to allow air to circulate. Old Christmas trees make great center pieces (whooom!). Put the kindling and ever-larger pieces in the center.

There are many ways to make the initial flame. Magnifying glass, parabolic mirror, iron and flint, rubbing two sticks (use a bow to spin faster), magma, lightning, natural forest fires, and matches. As always, the key is to start small with shaved wood, dried grass, lint, cotton (yes, toilet paper is good) and add that to small sticks than keep adding bigger stick until the logs reach the magic temperature of 451F. If all else fails, CAREFULLY throw a cup of gasoline onto it.

Dance around it, watch it, and talk to your friends. Throw negativity away into the fire. Or send up prayers with the fire. Young couples may wish to jump over the fire together after it burns down.

As always, stay with the fire until you are able to handle all the ashes with your bare hand. If you can, you take a candle home and relight your furnace, like the ancient Celts did:

http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Oracle/6992/bonfires.html

10. Or you can do something no one else has thought that you really like! See these sites for ideas:

http://altreligion.about.com/c/ht/00/07/How_Celebrate_Beltane0962933966.htm Fun.
http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/Beltane.html

Good customs.
http://www.witchvox.com/holidays/beltaine/beltainehistory.html

A lot of info.
http://paganwiccan.about.com/cs/beltanemaydayb/
www.cyberwitch.com/wychwood/Temple/beltane.htm
Good history

Ivy and the Vine

By Sam Peeples, free-roaming Druid

Why do modern Druids go gaga over trees? Well trees are really cool if you look at them, I mean REALLY look at them. They also tend to stay in one place, which makes it hard for them to avoid our affections. But some plants have the itch to roam, such as the vines, sometimes even abandoning their roots for sunnier destinies, as do some Reformed Druids.

In the famous Battle of Cad Goddeau, finally written down in the 9th century, the writer describes a huge army composed of plants going off to war. Privet and woodbine and ivy on its front. Celtophiles, naturally enjoy guessing at the hidden meanings in the epithets given to each plant. The modern neo-pagans also like to associate these trees with ogham, planets, emotions, colors, shoe-sizes and months of the year. Two of the listed trees, aren't trees at all, they're creepers, which is vine with me.

In these exceptional plants is a lesson. We've all heard the expression "standing on the shoulders of giants?" Nobody makes up a culture in a vacuum; we build on the work of our ancestors, occasionally throwing out a new leaf. Not everybody can be the stout tree in our society; some of us must attach ourselves to giants and build on their achievements to reach the same heights. However, left untamed, they tend to obliterate the intent of the original, leaving a monotonous conformity.

Ivy

Gort was the Irish word for ivy, Hedera helix L., and it should be planted in the fall, with greenish flowers also blooming around Samhain. It is an evergreen plant like holly, and is actually part of the Ginseng family (araliaceae). It is native to Europe and not to America. Its berries are poisonous in large amounts to blood cells, but used to be considered a cure for hangovers. The leaves were brothed and places on wounds and sores. The ancient Greeks used it to garland poets and heroes and counteract the effects of wine. Romans fed it to cattle and gave it to newlyweds. Interestingly, Gort is also the name of the giant robot in the Day the Earth Stood Still.

Unfortunately, Ivy has a dark side. Its tendrils can push through bricks and stones, destroying a wall slowly. It can also run rampant in forests, cloaking and choking the trees and darkening the forest floor so that other plants cannot grow. It has all the characteristics of a weed: rapid, widespread dispersal, very tolerant of a variety of ecosystems, rapid reproduction, opportunistic, quickly dominating ecological disturbed areas, resistant to eradication. A friend of mine says this sounds like most missionaries he knows.

Modern people associate Ivy with traditions and old-age. Many old mansions, colleges and castles are covered with ivy, softening the sharper details of a building. In the use of the term Ivy League, the word Ivy implies those pretentious snots and the parasitic upper class feeding off the common folk. Whoops, sorry about that rant.

Poison Ivy, Poison Oak, and Poison Sumac are relatives of the Cashew family (Rhus) and not related to English ivy. However their three-some nature shows that not all good things come in three and that only through experience can fakes be recognized.

Vine

Muin was the Irish name for the grapevine (Vitis vinifera L) and it grows about 110 feet. Grapes rarely grow wild anymore and are culturally being replaced by blackberries. Grape cultivation was widely-known in pre-Roman Celtic

regions, even remote areas like ancient Slovenia, since the 6th Century B.C. Gaulish wine became indispensable in later Roman times especially since the Christian churches had such a fondness for their drug of choice.

The boiled leaves can be used for skin inflammations and grapes are good for coughs and ingestion. We all know the side-affects of grape-wine by intoxication. However, we have heard about the benefits of a glass or two of wine every day. It is a pity that Americans can't follow the French in drinking wine from youth at meals, as I believe it would result in more responsibility in drinking under the guidance of their parents rather than frat-brothers. Perhaps the greatest lesson of wine is that even rotting (i.e. fermenting) can be a beneficial process to us.

Both vines grow spirally, which some modern pagans associate with reincarnation or the ever-returning nature of search for self. Some postulate the two as enemies since Ivy prefers wet climates, and the vine prefers dry. Ivy also counteracts intoxication, supposedly, although also being linked with the fairy world's altered state.

Other Materials of Interest

About poison ivy:
http://poisonivy.aesir.com/

Dangers of English Ivy:
http://www.noivyleague.com/Pages/english_ivy.html

Biology of Ivy:
http://www.hort.agri.umn.edu/h5015/00papers/okerman.htm

History of British wine:
http://www.english-wine.com/history.html

Overview of world wine history:
http://www.wineeducation.org/text/history.html

About Labyrinth making, often using Ivy:
http://www.labyrinthcompany.com/

About those ivy-league colleges; Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, University of Penn., Princeton, and Yale:
http://ask.yahoo.com/ask/19991110.html

Ivy league jokes:
http://www.newman.upenn.edu/ivy.html

What do you get when you cross poison ivy with a four-leaf clover? A rash of good luck.

Tina: I just touched some poison ivy.
Nina: That was a rash thing to do.

What is a magician with poison ivy called? An itchy witchy.

The Japan-British Isles Comparison

By Patrick Haneke Akita Grove
Transcribed by Nozomi Kibou, Akita Grove
With the Advice and Assistance of
Larry Press, Baccharis Grove

Boring Intro and Disclaimer

What I am about to discuss, if of course, only personal beliefs, and should never be construed as reflecting those of other RDNA members, although there are some who might go with me a little ways into the deep-end of the pool of philosophy on the following subject. All of this is with tongue planted firmly in cheek, but some poor bastard will fall for it completely, I suspect!

As you know, the Akita Grove was founded by Brother Mike, and we've vastly improved it since then, and we have been focusing on a Shinto-strain of Reformed Druidism. Past RDNA groves have done other strains: Hassidic, Norse, Germanic, Orthodox Celtic, Humanist and other ethnic focuses; so this is nothing out of the ordinary. I'd like to give you a quick intro into Japanese similarities to the British Isles.

What is unusual is our vision that we received at this grove, that is shamefully messianic (and definitely messy). But, we'd like to share it with you for contemplation, with no expectation that you'll agree with it. It is, after all, just our personal views. One way among many

Interesting Part Starts

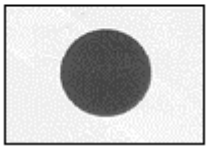
Akita Grove members generally believe that Japan and the British Isles (especially Ireland) are the two most powerful spiritual nodal points on the Eurasian Continent. In fact, if you map all the mounds and rock piles that prehistoric people produced, you have a giant snake whose tail is in Japan and whose head is a heavy concentration in the British Isles. To use a Japanese analogy, imagine two large flagpoles (one from Mount Fuji in Japan and one from Ben Mor in Scotland) between them is draped a long sacred rope (shimenawa) with holy folded-paper pendants hanging over the Eurasian continent. Now imagine one over the North American continent from NYC to SF. The lowest point of these two ropes is of course the Middle East and the Mid West. Can that be a coincidence?

Both of the two "low-point" locations were the meeting points of Oriental and Occidental beliefs forming new religions (Judeo/Christo/Islam and Reformed Druidism/Certain Plains Indians revivals respectively). Both had founders (Jesus and David Fisher) who were rather unwilling dupes who disappeared soon thereafter and whose teachings were sidetracked and redirected by their followers; much to their perturbment. Both started with a simple message that became complicated. Fortunately the RDNA hasn't become as politicized as Christianity so far in our first 40 years, and thankfully we didn't go in for that Martyrdom and Jihad thing.

We long for the day when Ireland will return to her polytheistic past, or just recognize that Roman Catholicism is polytheistic and be open to the undisguised return of older gods too. A friend suggested that perhaps we could start by bringing back the snakes? No, I replied, that would be bio-terrorism in the modern legal sense. We hope that Japan (through J.E.T. program, Martial arts and Anime), and America (through Neo-Paganism, Hollywood and Disney) will play a prominent role on re-erecting the pole in the British Isles.

We hope that you can learn a little about Ireland by studying its parallels in Shinto and Hinduism. Don't forget Japanese Zen Buddhism came from India, which are Indo-Europeans like the Druids! Irish Christianity? Well, in neighboring Iwate prefecture, there is a place where Jesus was supposed to have studied in his youth and later came and raised

a family after his brother was crucified in his place (now, there's an X-File.) It is all related. Glad I could share that with you. The following comparison chart was inspired by Brother Larry over in California.



British Isles

NW Tip of Europe
Few big islands, lots of tiny ones
Destination of the Setting Sun
Lovingly warmed by the Gulf Stream
Medieval repository of Western Learning.
Modern educational powerhouse.
2000 Shades of Green
2nd Oldest Royal Family
Monarch head of Anglican faith
Blend of Druidism and Christianity
Fierce, proud tribal warfare
Endemic Terrorism from Messianic Imported religions.
Fishing, Maritime culture
Fairies, Ghosts and Monsters
Powerful Germanic and French Neighbours who sent culture and invasions.
Source of a world empire, including current financial one.
Predominant difficult language with strong dialects and surviving indigenous languages (Celts).
Tradition-bound culture
Rainy and wet.
Sci-Fi and Folk Culture

Japanese Isles

NE tip of Asia
Few big islands, lots of tiny ones
Source of the Rising Sun
Lovingly warmed by the Kuro Stream.
Repository of Chinese Culture and Learning
Modern educational powerhouse
1500 Shades of Green/Blue
Oldest Royal Family
Emperor head of Shinto faith
Blend of Shintoism and Buddhism
Samurai
Endemic Terrorism from Messianic Imported religions.
Fishing, Maritime Culture
Deities, Ghosts and Monsters
Powerful Chinese and Korean neighbours who sent culture and invasions.
Source of a world empire, including current financial one.
Predominant difficult language with strong dialects and surviving indigenous languages (Ainu).
Tradition-bound culture
Rainy and very wet.
Anime and Folk Culture

There are some differences also.

British Isles

Dry farm and animal husbandry
Gentle hills and rolling plains
Fractionalized regional power
Weak culinary tradition
Few forests
Stable ancient ground

Japanese Isles

Rice paddies and fish husbandry
Steep mountains and valleys
Strong centralization
Strong culinary tradition
Lots of forests
Volcanic, restless, new ground.

The Breakfast of Champions

An Investigation into Lucky Charms
By Eric Powers, Digitalis Grove of DC

Let's name the first brands that come to mind when we think of Ireland; Guinness, Irish Spring soap, and Lucky Charms. Mike Scharding glommed onto Lucky Charms for St. Patrick's Day, knowing full well they had little to do with Ireland. But they're so "magically delicious" that he's been raving about them, but my idea of Irish Breakfast is bacon, poached eggs, blood sausage, boiled tomato, cheese, and lard on a bagel, and a little hair of the dog that bit me;

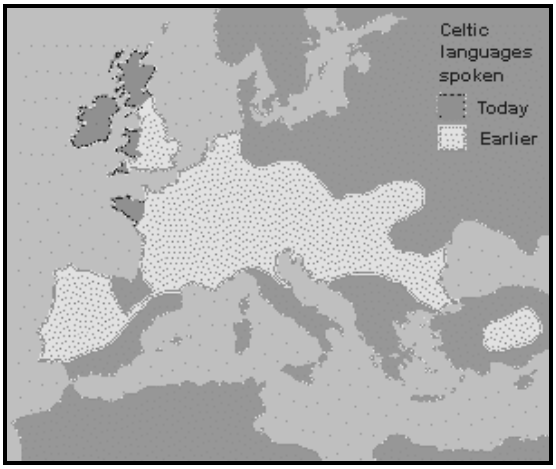
http://www.irishfestivals.net/irishbreakfast.htm Well, I'm no Third-Order guru, but I did some of my own research into the "Celticity" of Lucky Charms. You are what you eat, so what DID the Celts each for breakfast?

Lucky charms were invented in 1963 by General Mills's worker John Holahan (an Irish immigrant who died in an unlucky car accident in April 2000) as the first cereal with marshmallow bits, or "marbits". Lucky Charms were created in Minneapolis Minnesota, not far from Carleton College. Is there a connection? Lucky's (his full name is L.C. Leprechaun) magic ability was changing the white marshmallows into colorful shapes (i.e. his treasure) with a license from the Leprechaun council. The original four "marbits" were pink hearts, yellow moons, orange stars, and green clovers. An amazing diversity of shapes has been added for special occasions. The current shapes are red balloons, blue moons, pink hearts, multi-colored rainbows, yellow and white shooting stars, Lucky's green hat with a green clover, orange and yellow pot of gold, and purple horseshoes.

As a breakfast of champions, there is some doubt. According to one study, (http://www.gwally.com/tests/) those "who prefer the cereal usually become accountants, Internal Revenue Service auditors, librarians who work at the reference desk, or low level government bureaucrats that stagnate in a dead-end position."

The question does remain, would the ancient Druids and magicians of the Celts have eaten Lucky Charms if they had the opportunity? Everybody loved milk. The main ingredients are oats and marshmallows, (plus sugar and vitamins) both of which may have been known to the ancient Celts, who inhabited lands from Denmark to Florence and Turkey to Portugal along the Mediterranean Sea in 200 B.C.

Oats were farmed in Germany as far back as 2500 B.C in Asia Minor and brought to Northern Europe around 1100 BC by the Scythians, about the time of the domestication of the horses as draft animals. Because of their non-glutinous nature, oats are not useful for bread, and have been used primarily for soups or feeding livestock. In ancient Ireland (i.e. Pre-Christian), oats (along with barley, wheat, rye, kale, turnips, beans, cherries and apples) were a staple of the Irish diet found mostly in porridge, and also in black pudding. Oats have an unusually heavy amount of proteins, fats and vitamins, plus it counteracts the high cholesterol in the Celtic diets. Oats were also especially resistant to climatic variations and austere conditions. Carried in times of war, oatcakes were roasted on swords over the fire.



Introduced by Sir Walter Raleigh, the potatoes prospered in Irish damp conditions and became appreciated in the 18th century. Oats soon were grown only as a cash crop while the family ate potatoes. Irish oats are prepared a little differently than American oats (which are mostly rolled); see "before the potato" for details. Some oats companies in Ireland still operate like they did in the 17th century, such as Flavahan. Oats remain the sixth most cultivated cereal in the world (after wheat, maize, rice, barley, sorghum) and have recently become popular as a health food; however, 93 percent of oats produced are still used for animal food. Russia produces 45 percent of the world's supply followed by US 12% and Canada 8%.

As for the marshmallows, they've been around since 2000BC and were a mixture of sap from the mallow plant (found in marshes) and honey. It was so good that it was reserved only for gods and royalty. Now you don't have to be a "Veil of Isis" initiate to postulate a connection with Egypt. According to the famed Book of Invasions, Ireland was colonized by the Milesians. The Catholic Encyclopedia says:

> "The Milesians came from Scythia; and from that country to Egypt, from Egypt to Spain, from Spain to Ireland their adventures are recorded in detail. The name Scot which they bore was derived from Scota, daughter of Pharaoh of Egypt, the wife of one of their chiefs; from their chief Miledh they got the name Milesians, and from another chief Goidel they were sometimes called Gadelians, or Gaels."

Probably fictional, Scota was such a popular character it influenced the naming of both Scotland and Ireland:

> "In ancient times it was known by the various names of Ierna, Juverna, Hibernia, Ogygia, and Inisfail or the Isle of Destiny. It was also called Banba and Erin, and lastly Scotia, or the country of the Scots. From the eleventh century, however, the name Scotia was exclusively applied to Caledonia, the latter country having been peopled in the sixth century by a Scottish colony from Ireland. Henceforth Ireland was often called Scotia Major and sometimes Ireland, until, after the eleventh century, the name Scotia was dropped and Ireland alone remained. Even yet it is sometimes called Erin-chiefly by orators and poets."

So it is conceivable that Scota was some sort of unnamed historical figure. Perhaps she was an Egyptian trade merchant's daughter from the coast of the Mediterranean? Whoever the influence, they would have been familiar with the Marshmallow recipe and passed that tradition onto the new land. The marsh mallow plant is native to all of Europe, so herbalists in ancient Ireland probably knew it.

So yes, marshmallows could be considered a possibly ancient Celtic treat or medicine in some format. The recipe used in the US until 1890 was mallow sap plus egg whites and sugar, whipped into a meringue. It was a rather gooey thing, which was often prescribed by doctors for sore throats with immune system booster and sold in little tins. However the substitution of gelatin and corn syrup and tube puffing have given them a dryer more stable form that can be mass-produced without the health benefits of the original.

The cereal is rich in symbolism for me. Its overall taste is sweet, reflecting a positive view of life. The oaten shapes are a fish for the Salmon of Knowledge, the clover for divine "three-ness," flowers for herbs and beauty, and the "x" piece for crossed swords of the conflict in life. The current marshmallows invoke; pink hearts for love and society, green hat for those humble times when we must eat our hat, blue moon for those sadder times when life is changing in unexpected ways, shooting stars for those pyrrhic moments in life's accomplishments, red balloon for the desire to grow and move up in life, purple horseshoes for our interaction with the animal and mineral kingdoms, rainbows for the diversity in society, the pot of gold for the goals and dreams in our lives. I haven't tried diving with my cereal yet, but it would be an interesting task.

So, we have the combination of Celtic and Egyptian's culinary traditions, plus American marketing genius. The conclusion is that you can eat Lucky Charms with a clear conscience, knowing that everything in the cereal (with the exception of the corn-syrup, food colors and the tri-sodium phosphate) is a Celtic food substance. I'd still recommend a

shank of lamb, some porridge, beer and banger, but enjoy them if you dare!

Other Links:

Essay of Pagan/Christian unity through LC:
www.angelfire.com/fl/Wealtheow/humor.htm

Unofficial lucky charms site:
http://web.syr.edu/~ajhampso/lcharms.html

Court case against Lucky over false advertising as "magically" delicious:
http://www.riversidelife.com/story/story_100000000220.html

Various TV leprechauns:
http://www.tvacres.com/enchanted_leprechauns.htm

Before the potato:
http://allaboutirish.com/library/foodbev/oats.htm

Irish diet:
http://www.celticmist.freeserve.co.uk/dailylife.htm

Irish diet:
http://allaboutirish.com/library/foodbev/food.htm

History of marshmallows:
http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/blmarshmallows.htm

Marshmallow recipe:
http://www.howstuffworks.com/question128.htm

Science and marshmallows:
http://newton.dep.anl.gov/askasci/gen99/gen99440.htm

The Druidic Candidate

Victor D. Infante
Fri, 22 Mar 2002, Orange County Weekly, California

Can California Deal With A Druid For Governor?

In a country just now coming to grips with its millions of Muslim residents, and in a county that not long ago freaked out about the construction of a Hindu temple in Buena Park, a Druid running for governor is bound to raise eyebrows. But Libertarian gubernatorial candidate and Druid Gary Copeland doesn't just tolerate the flak: he welcomes it, like a guy who wrote the kick-me note he stuck on his own back--even when the flak is fired by fellow Libertarians.

"It doesn't bother me at all," says Copeland. "It's not an issue with me. It's their issue, not mine. When people speak, they speak for who they are…It's my path to serve, and I'm doing that. I know not everyone's going to agree, but that's okay."

But everything's not entirely okay. Copeland doesn't mask his annoyance at a Newsweek article that dismissed him as a "whacko" or with postings on a Libertarian e-mail list that chastised him for noting that he's a Druid in the California voter's guide, although he didn't note that he once advocated the use of LSD for spiritual purposes.

Indeed, it seems there's unease within the party over Copeland's unconventional religious beliefs--a "culture of peer pressure," Copeland calls it--that one wouldn't expect from the liberty-loving Libs. It's as if it's all right for Copeland to harbor unusual religious beliefs so long as he doesn't talk much about them.

"Since Libertarians are a third party, we find it difficult to be taken seriously or to be considered by voters," says Mark Murphy, director of a group called Libertarian Activists and a former member of the Orange County Libertarian Party Central Committee. "Obviously, we want voters to see we aren't any different from many of them. So, when Gary--who's a friend of mine, by the way--declares himself a Druid, there's a concern that trying to be taken seriously just went out the window."

Doug Scribner disagrees. "I'm upset that people would find his beliefs a setback to his candidacy. After all, how many Christian politicians openly proclaim their beliefs in ballot guides?" says Scribner, vice chairman of the county's Libertarian Party.

Copeland remains philosophical about the criticism; indeed, he remains philosophical about everything. When you talk to him, he's philosophical at a hundred miles per hour and will frequently answer questions as if he's reading from a Celtic I Ching. Why is he running for governor, for instance? "Because the path brought me here," he says.

It can be kind of frustrating. But beneath it, there's a refreshing sense that Copeland is deeply invested in his beliefs, both as a Druid and a Libertarian.

"It's an asset," he says. "I love my Druidry as much as I love my Libertarianism. I describe myself as an existentialist libertarian Druid. If I can't find an answer from one philosophy, I go to another. Anything that's indefinable, I go to Druidry."

Copeland says Druidry is a Celtic philosophy of magic, similar to the more popular Wicca. It's a circle of logic and spirituality based on the ideal of service to others--like The Lion King minus the cheesy soundtrack. One of the central tenets of Druidry is that no one should have authority over anyone but himself or herself--a point Copeland illustrates with a reference to The Lord of the Rings, noting that the ring Frodo carries has "so much power that, even if you did good things with it, it would pervert, subvert and seduce you."

"That is the basis of all Celtic philosophy: that absolute power corrupts absolutely."

That idea led Copeland to the steadfastly secular Libertarian Party. Around 1980, Copeland was working with Timothy Leary's Brotherhood of Eternal Love to spread the gospel of LSD and enlightenment when he got busted. Fortunately for him, he says, he was screwing the narcotics agent. Not wanting to deal with that, he says, the cops charged him only with low-level possession.

"I was using LSD to be spiritually enlightened," he says. "I was one of those peyote people who for thousands of years

had been using hallucinogens to connect to the spiritual world. Who were the cops to tell me I couldn't?"

Soon after, he began running the Orange County branch of NORML, the marijuana-legalization folks, and soon after that, he fell in with the anti-prohibitionist Libertarians. In 1992, he ran for Congress against Dana Rohrabacher--himself a former Libertarian--and got killed, garnering just 7.7 percent of the vote. In '96, he ran for county supervisor, beating the Democrat in the race--which tells you something about the state of the Democratic Party in Orange County. He has worked in computers and recently founded his own company, NextCure, which will distribute information on drugs under FDA review.

None of this really gives him a leg up in the gubernatorial race against uberbland rivals Davis and Simon, but Copeland would rather run as he is than tailor his biography and message for the mainstream.

"The problem with most politicians is that they're pretending to be something they're not," he says. "They're trying to be something outside their natures." They think people won't like them if they're different. But people like to go to a taco stand and try different tacos. I'm not stupid; when I put the Druid thing in, I knew it would be a hook. If I hadn't done it, I wouldn't be talking to you right now."

Members of Baccharis Grove who attended the Interfaith Pagan Pride Parade in Berkeley got the chance to meet Mr. Copeland and wish him well in his campaign. We didn't get much of a chance to talk to him but did notice he wore quite a nice linen robe.

Bard of the Year Contest Winner Announced!

The long winter is finished and summer is now. The contest of song is over. You may send songs, but I will keep them, and not use them until November.

Thank you for the 40 songs and poems! I did not understand all of them, but I enjoyed them. Like Brother Donald said, it is hard to choose the losers and winners. The real winners are the readers; they were good songs. But I had to pick someone.

The winner of the 2001/2002 is Sister Tegwedd for "Celtic Goddess Chant."

Brigid, Cerrydwen, Morrigan, Arianrhod

Macha Bloudewedd, Rhiannon

And here are my reasons:

It was easy for my understanding.

It was short and simple, which is in the Druidic spirit.

It is uses only nouns, which shows a love of things, which is very Druidic.

It calls my favorite goddesses.

It is useful in liturgy

I cannot vote for Pat, despite his hard work, because his ego is too big already!

As prize, everyone should call Tegwedd, Bard of the Reform, XL, until May 2003.

-Yours in the Mother
Nozomi

A Reformed Druid Anthology Update

By Mike Scharding, Digitalis Grove

Building on the work of my Sisters and Brother, I'm putting out another edition of ARDA next Beltane 2003 to mark our 40th anniversary. The Final-I-Mean-It deadline is March 21st 2003. The final version may reach 800 pages (It's 500 pages now). Because it's such a massive job, the sooner you can send in those materials, the more likely they'll be included. I'll be posting further updates at Lughnasadh and Samhain and Oimelc and listing new additions at http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/update.html.

ARDA is a collection of various articles, trivia, documents and essays about the Reform. Being the pack-rat that I am, I'm not too choosy. ARDA has a bit more of an enduring feeling to contributions than A Druid Missal-Any, which is more topical to the coming and goings of the Reform. If you haven't seen ARDA yet, go to http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/ We're looking for the following types of materials:

Part Zero, One, Five and Seven

Will NOT change much, except for corrections.

Part Two: Apocrypha

We're looking for introspective essays, usually revolving on the theme "What is Reformed Druidism?" or "How should one go about Druidism?" One short paragraph to ten long pages of simple or complex arguments are acceptable. You do not have to write in biblical format.

Part Three: Liturgies

If you've done an unusual twist on a liturgy, have unusual invocations, ordination customs, new Orders, solitary or protogrove services; send them in.

Part Four: Trivia

Tell us about your constitutions, folklore, unusual customs or activities, voting rules, pamphlets, lists of accomplishments by members, new words, different holidays or regalia.

Part Six: Green Books.

This is a collection of stories of a multi-faith nature than contain lessons applicable to anyone. They can be copyright, self-made, public domain, anonymous stories that empower and wizen you. This is the one section of the ARDA 2 that we won't make available to "print on demand," due to the copyright reasons. Most of these have been going into my Hazelnut

column, but I plan to add another 200 pages of stories and jokes myself over the last six years.

Part Eight: General History

If you've found an article about the RDNA, written one or would like to write an essay, DO!

Part Nine: New books of the Reform

We're adding more vigil stories, songs, music, and poetry from the Bardic Contest, and other sources. Preferably these would belong to the public domain. Also needed are grove histories, simple or complex.

Part Ten: Interviews

No promises yet, but I intend to get a few more interviews from Fisher, Nelson, Bonewits, A few more recent Carleton ADs, Joan, and any others who'd like to step in. These take a lot of time to type up, so please try to finish by Samhain.

Part Eleven: Magazines of the Reform

A possible reprinting of all past RDNA magazines and newsletters.

Mysterious Gold Cones

"Hats of Ancient Wizards"

By Tony Paterson in Berlin
telegraph.uk.co, filed: 17/03/2002

WIZARDS really did wear tall pointed hats - but not the crumpled cloth kind donned by such fictional characters as Harry Potter, Gandalf and Merlin.

The wizards of early Europe wore hats of gold intricately embellished with astrological symbols that helped them to predict the movement of the sun and stars.

This is the conclusion of German archaeologists and historians who claim to have solved the mystery behind a series of strange yet beautiful golden cone-shaped objects discovered at Bronze Age sites across Europe.

Four of the elaborately decorated cones have been uncovered at sites in Switzerland, Germany and France over the past 167 years. Their original purpose has baffled archaeologists for decades.

Some concluded that they were parts of Bronze Age suits of armour; others assumed that they served as ceremonial vases.

A third theory, which had gained widespread acceptance until now, was that the cones functioned as decorative caps that were placed on top of wooden stakes that surrounded Bronze Age sites of worship.

Historians at Berlin's Museum for Pre- and Early History, however, claim to have established with near certainty that the mysterious cones were originally worn as ceremonial hats by Bronze Age oracles.

Such figures, referred to as "king-priests," were held to have supernatural powers because of their ability to predict accurately the correct time for sowing, planting and harvesting crops.

"They would have been regarded as Lords of Time who had access to a divine knowledge that enabled them to look into the future," said Wilfried Menghin, the director of the Berlin Museum which has been carrying out detailed research on a 3,000-year-old 30in high Bronze Age cone of beaten gold that was discovered in Switzerland in 1995 and purchased by the museum the following year.

Mr. Menghin and his researchers discovered that the 1,739 sun and half-moon symbols decorating the Berlin cone's surface make up a scientific code which corresponds almost exactly to the "Metonic cycle" discovered by the Greek astronomer Meton in 432bc--about 500 years after the cone was made--which explains the relationship between moon and sun years.

"The symbols on the hat are a logarithmic table which enables the movements of the sun and the moon to be calculated in advance," Mr. Menghin said. "They suggest that Bronze Age man would have been able to make long-term, empirical astrological observations," he added.

The findings radically alter the standard image of the European Bronze Age as an era in which a society of primitive farmers lived in smoke-filled wooden huts eking out an existence from the land with the most basic of tools.

"Our findings suggest that the Bronze Age was a far more sophisticated period in Europe than has hitherto been thought," Mr. Menghin said.

Another cone, found near the German town of Schifferstadt in 1835, had a chinstrap attached to it. The cone, which is also studded with sun and moon symbols, is the earliest example found and dates back to 1,300bc.

Other German archaeologists have suggested that the gold-hatted king-priests were to be found across much of prehistoric Europe. Prof. Sabine Gerloff, a German archaeologist from Erlangen University, has found evidence that five similar golden cones were exhumed by peat diggers in Ireland during the 17th and 18th centuries.

These objects, described at the time as "vases," have disappeared. Prof Gerloff says, however, that her research suggests almost conclusively that they were hats worn by Bronze Age king-priests.

She is also convinced that a Bronze Age cape of beaten gold--the "Gold Cape of Mold" discovered in Wales in 1831--was part of a king-priest's ceremonial dress.

Prof. Gerloff has used computers to create an impression of a Bronze Age oracle wearing a golden hat and with an elaborately decorated golden cape wrapped tightly around the shoulders.

Resources

Bastketmaking in Ireland by Joe Hogan

(Paperback; 25.00 Euro / 22.50 USD / 15.00 UK; Wordwell, 300 pages)

The main purpose of this book is to record the techniques used in making Irish traditional baskets, a task that became more urgent as indigenous baskets, such as creels and lobster pots, began to go out of use. The history of the baskets and their uses are included because, in order to understand or even make these baskets, the author feels strongly that some knowledge of, and respect for, the people who made and used them is required. The book is structured so that each chapter contains information for the reader who has a general interest in traditional craft; each chapter also has a technique section giving details of how to make many of the baskets described. Contains numerous b/w photos and drawings.

From the Read Ireland Book Review
Read Ireland @ Phibsboro Bookshop,
342 North Circular Road, Phibsboro, Dublin 7, Ireland
Mon-Fri 10-5 and Sat 12-5
Tel: +353-1-930-9828
Fax: +353-1-830-2997
http://www.readireland.com

Calendar

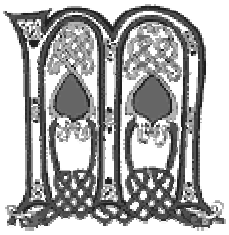
Astronomical Beltaine, when the Sun is half way between the Spring Equinox and the Summer Solstice, will occur as 15 degrees of Taurus on May 5 at 9:38:40 a.m. PDT or as 16 degrees 18 minutes decl. on May 5 at 6:27:16 a.m. PDT. Beltaine services will be held on Sunday, May 5, at Solar Noon which is now 1 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Beltaine we will be going immediately after the service to AD's house. As we have no cattle to drive between the Beltaine fires we will be having a barbeque instead. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon, 1 p.m. on May 26, and June 9. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $6.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any Summer Solstice Y.R. XL Vol. 18, Number 4 Jun. 17th, 2002 c.e.

Summer Solstice Essay: Anu and Danu

By Stacey Weinberger

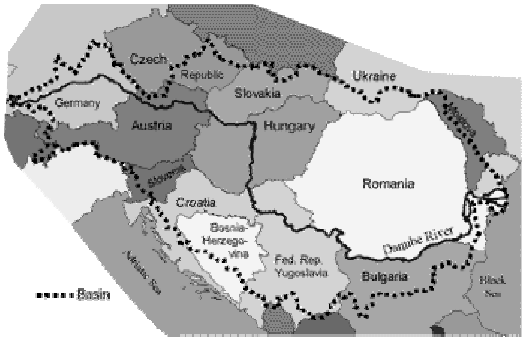


Midsummer, Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year, one of the minor High Day of the Reformed Druid calendar, is associated with the goddess Danu. There has been much discussion in the scholarly community on whether Danu and Anu are cognates of one another or separate goddesses entirely.

Anu and Danu were both fertility goddesses and Mother Goddesses in early Irish mythology. Anu is described in Cormac's Glossary (*Sanas Cormaic*, 10th century) as the mother of the Irish gods, and in the *Coir Anmann* (Fitness of Names) as the goddess of prosperity to whom the province of Munster owed its wealth and fertility. Danu is associated with the divine race of people, the Tuatha De Danann, the People of the Goddess Danu, who are recorded in the *Leabhar Gebhála* (Book of Invasions) having arrived in a cloud from the North, invading Ireland, and defeating the Fir Bolgs and later the Fomorians.

Anu is identified with the earth and fertility of Ireland. She gives her name to the two rounded hills in County Kerry, called *Dá Chich Anann* or the Paps of Anu. In Ireland today she is still talked about from Cork up into South County Tipperary and is considered the earth goddess of Ireland. A distinction is made between her and Danu. Anu is considered to be pre Tuatha and possibly the Sheela na Gig.

Anu is also identified with Aine, another goddess associated with the land. Her cult was localized to County Limerick, Munster, where she was still worshipped up until the 19th century. She was said to live in the hill Cnoc Aine. On St. Johns Eve, Midsummer's Eve, the local people carried torches of hay and straw around the hill that were then taken to the fields to bless cattle (another instance of fire being used to insure the health and fertility of the flocks for the coming year).



Danu, according to MacKillop, is the speculative name for the mother goddess of the Continental Celts, based on the evidence of place names, for example the Danube river (*die Donau*). He writes that "a prosthetic D-changes Ana, Anu to Dana, Danu; some commentators advise that these forms are later scholarly inventions, while others point out that the name Dana has discrete associations and parallels." But if you look at the types of places Danu is associated with, a pattern begins to form. Derivations of her name being rivers show strong evidence that she is a river goddess, as opposed to Anu who is a land goddess. Rivers all over the Indo-Europeans lands were named for her: the Danube in Austria (the Greek author Herodotus commented on the Keltoi residing in the area of the Danube valley in the fifth century B.C.), the Don in southwest Russia (where an inscription referring to an attack on the kingdom of Bosporos and a scattering of La Tene objects across the southern steppes in indicates that some Celts might have reached), Dneipr in the Ukraine (where the Celts settled around 300 BC), Dniestr in Moldavia, and even the Don and Dee in Scotland are all cognates of her name.

Other linguistic evidence exists showing Danu's position as a Pan-Indo-European river Goddess. Her name is Sanskrit and in India's Rig-Veda signifies "stream" and "the waters of heaven."

News of the Groves

Carleton, News from Minnesota

We had a full week for Beltane! There was a sweatlodge on Friday, tea on Sunday, and Beltain on Wednesday! First off, there was a sweatlodge Friday night in the Small Grove. For those who don't know, the sweatlodge is a tool for physical and spiritual cleansing as well as an excellent place for reflection and meditation. There was some cooking over in Greenhouse during the day on Friday (Thanks Liz!). There's was so much that needed to be done outside--chopping wood, carrying rocks, bringing water and setting up the lodge, for starters.

Our rules are simple: 1) Try to eat as little as possible. Many people fast for the day and eat in the evening after the lodge has ended. 2) Don't consume any meat, dairy products, caffeine, or alcohol for at least 24 hours before the sweat. 3) Drink water, and lots of it! 4) Drink more water! (I'm not kidding!) 5) Be in the Small Grove on Friday at 8. That about covers it.

Now, on to the tea. This was Sunday at 3 in Nourse Main Lounge, and we made dreamcatchers. Craft-oriented-types displayed their creativity and make something useful at the same time. For those of you lacking the craft-gene, don't worry! Making dreamcatchers is so simple; a blind monkey could do it one-handed!

BELTAIN! Wednesday, May 1st was Beltain, the biggest event of the Druid year. We marked it by celebrating Spring with music, dancing, singing, storytelling, food, masks, plays,

tarot readings, fishing for people, tree-climbing, Druid weddings, donut trees, revelry, merriment, general frolicking, and much more! Festivities were at the Stone Circle in the upper arboretum. The celebration lasted all day. Weddings and a ritual began at 6pm.

Akita Grove: News from Japan

Pat is back from his trip!

http://www.mythinglinks.org/ct~water.html is interesting. It's about water, wells and healing. Please enjoy.

I've finished the trans-Japan hike from the Sea of Japan beach to the beautiful Matsu-jima islands near Sendai

No matter where you go in Japan, you're hardly going to find a virgin forest. Not just because virginity is a short-lived state in nature, which loves to proliferate at the slightest chance, but because men have been molding this island for so many hundreds of generations. Where tourists see forested mountain sides and winding rivers, the locals see carefully planted rows of Cedars, tended "wild plants," stocks of deer and bear, carefully engineered irrigation systems, and channeled river flowage. The absence of concrete is not necessarily an absence of the hand of man.

There is a spine on mountains running north-south through the center of Japan, so any east-west crossing involves a lot of steep hikes. In particular, I loved the panoramic vista of a reaching the break in a range;

> Mountain pass at night
>
> Moonlit, chilly, very quiet.
>
> Roads slope down both ways.

I'll write more when I feel inspired in a writing way and review my notes.

—Pat

Digitalis Grove: News from DC

Eric is doing well, but can't write an article for this issue, too busy. He says that he'll write something about Irish cleaning habits for Lughnasadh. No news from Mairi and Sine in the Pacific Ocean someplace.

No big change in my personal life, but I'm glad to see the RDNA Talk Circle conference is assisting other Druids to get in contact with each-other, freeing up my hands to do more research and work on ARDA II.

Well, actually, I am just having a good time in DC with all the Memorial Day events and getting ready for this summer. I'll be in Northfield MN, at Carleton College from June 21 to July 7, finishing the editing of the epic sci-fi series, "Drake's 17" filmed mostly with Druid recruits back in 1996. I also hope to meet several old time folk-dancing Druids, who should be there for the Carleton Reunion. It will be a good time to start planning the 40th anniversary for RDNA in 2003. By the way, keep your eye for a possible credit for me in Austin Powers III this summer; I helped them research Japanese navy outfits for one seen in their trip through time.

I'm thinking about assisting ex-Carleton professor, now Senator Paul Wellstone, in his campaign for a third term this fall. As a sidelight, check out Celtic Clothing at http://www.reconstructinghistory.com/celtic/intro.html

Life Garden Grove: News from Long Island, New York

Hello there. I have started a new grove and would like to inform you of our existence. Here is my information

We don't have any leaders because we are all equals but here is a list of members and their roles in our grove:

> Andy "Silent Dragon of Spring" Costantino: Bard, musician, artist.
>
> Kimberly Salinas: lover of all living creatures, writer, poet.
>
> ZuZu: she just kind of sits around and looks for love as most dogs do.

Here are our tenets (taken from the Native American 10 Commandments. We discarded a few like that do not pertain).

> TREAT THE EARTH AND ALL THAT DWELL THEREON WITH RESPECT
>
> SHOW GREAT RESPECT FOR YOUR FELLOW BEINGS
>
> LOOK AFTER THE WELL-BEING OF MIND AND BODY
>
> DEDICATE A SHORE OF YOUR EFFORTS TO THE GREATER GOOD
>
> BE TRUTHFUL AND HONEST AT ALL TIMES
>
> TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR ACTIONS

Our website is still under construction but a temp shall be up and running within a few days at:

http://www.access-solutions.com/LGgrove.html ?

Our contact information is this e-mail address: fistfullofdust@angelfire.com

Swamp Grove: News from Florida

Greetings from the sunny south. All is well with the Swamp Grove, our rainy season is just starting and the fruit trees around the grove are doing just fine. This will be the first year that our banana trees should produce, loads of wild grapes, papaya and citrus are getting ready for the coming season, there are certainly worse places to be than south Florida in spring. Our rituals are very laid back and unorthodox because of the odd growing season down here, we figure that it is more important to worship nature than to worry about when we do it.

Oaken Circle Grove: News from Kentucky

Our grove is continuing to grow, we recently met with two more ladies and if they decide to join the grove, our grove will be up to 12 adult members. We are currently working on the youth grove and setting up our classes. We are also planning a paganing for one of our grove couple's daughter on the summer solstice; she is going on three months old. We have a lovely newborn ritual that was forwarded to us by our dear friend in New York, Inion_an_Daghdha!!! Thank you Inion!!!!!!

The very same couple is also currently planning a handfasting that will take place in mid July, we want to congratulate them and offer them our best wishes as well!!!!!!!!! Also I would like to mention our Beltane celebration was a great success and there are a few pictures of our festivities on the web

page http://oaken_circle_grove.tripod.com/oakencirclegroveky/ We have added some new things to our site, it is constantly under construction. Please check it out and sign our guest books with your thoughts.

Thank you,
Sherry of the Oaken Circle Grove

Cattle Grove: News from Texas

Hey, I just want to announce the opening of the Cattle Grove in Dallas Texas. And as of now we have a rough web page up at http://www.evilsmiley.com/druid so check it out, and if you live in the Dallas area by chance, email me and we can work something out.

—Joss

Mojo Protogrove

Mojo protogrove is now down to one human member, but holds steady with four canine members.

We will hold a Summer Solstice ritual at astronomical solstice instead of calendar solstice unless the two coincide. It is up for debate at this time whether to go to the mountains or to the sea. There is also a possibility that we may be able to have a combined ceremony with nearby American Indian tribal members who will be observing Summer Solstice in their own time honored way.

Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng y Bydoedd Grove: News from Grants Pass, Oregon

OR has had a year of both transformation and growth. Sadly, we had a member relocate to another part of the Pacific Northwest and we have few candidates to replace him, making our numbers a small, but compatible, three.

On the positive side, our Grove is also the Mother Grove of the Order of the Mithril Star. The Order has seen growth this year on both national and international fronts. We currently have solitary members in seven countries, and Groves or ProtoGroves in Washington, Oregon and California. Our Cybernest email list has 65 members, and our current Druidcraft 101 course (taught three times a year via email) has an enrollment of 80.

We will soon be offering a more advanced course--Druidcraft 201. Also, our Clerk, Ceridwen, will be offering an online Astrology for Beginners course as well.

The Order of the Mithril Star was founded in 1996 by Elrond Pendderwydd and the late Adam Walks Between Worlds. The OMS tradition is an eclectic assemblage of various western magickal traditions, including Faery Wicca, Thelema, Discordianism, Hedonism, the Church of All Worlds Tradition, and Celtic spirituality and shamanism. Unlike traditional Druids, OMS Druids revere the Coastal Redwood (Sequoia Sempervirons) rather than the Oak. The email Druidcraft 101 course has been taught more or less continuously since 1997 with an average enrollment of 75, with an average of 20 finishing the course. It is estimated that there are approximately 150 members +/- worldwide.

In July of 2001, the Order joined the Reformed Druids of North America, becoming the only multi-Grove body within the Reform. Since then we have adapted some RDNA traditions to our use, and ?Druidified? (or ?reformicated?) some of our own traditions to ?sort of conform? with RDNA practice.

More information on the OMS-RDNA can be found on our website: www.mithrilstar.org

Druid Heart Spirit Grove/Nemeton Awenyddion: News from Cohasset

Well, things have been very busy here. Calon Mai/Beltain campout was a success! Only about half the people showed up who said they'd be here but this didn't hinder our fun at all. The ritual went great and our Gwyddoniad kindred brought song and dance to share during our ritual's devotionals. We actually got all the food cooked before it got dark out; we ate a wonderful feast and played music. We also had a guest from a Celtic band called "The Pub Scouts." Her name is Jewel and she brought her mandolin, she and I played quite a few songs for everyone with her on mandolin and I on Celtic harp.

A lot of major changes are taking place in the order of our Grove. We have combined forces with a Welsh Gwyddoniad order called Nemeton Gwynfyd, we have become one. Three of Nemeton Gwynfyd's members/elders will be tying their ribbon of dedication to our Nemeton's tree on the next sixth night of the new moon ritual, and this last weekend I was gifted a torc of elder membership into their order by their High Priestess. We have thus in our new kindredship with the Gwyddoniad named our Nemeton, Nemeton Awenyddion, which means: sacred grove of oracles/seers.

For Alban Hefin/summer solstice we will have our regular gathering and mistletoe gathering ritual on June 22nd. I have made special arrangements with some neighbors of mine who have a beautiful pond on their land surrounded by oak trees, one of which has a large bunch of mistletoe hanging within reach from the ground. This is where we will be doing our mistletoe gathering ritual. Then we will head back to Nemeton Awenyddion for our ritual and feast.

We are also planning on having a campout for Gwyl Ifan/Lughnasadh. There is an online flyer at: http://www.geocities.com/sailletree/calon_mai.html

Another big happening at Druid Heart Spirit Grove is that we have our plans and proposal together for non-profit status. Our plans are for buying a large piece of land for Nemeton Awenyddion, Cottage Industries, a nature preserve, and classes and nature walks we will offer to local schools. A Gwyddoniad Druid retreat center will also be our major aim in our plans, with building another stone circle Nemeton, a Celtic sweat lodge, and small tree cabins for our campouts and retreats. Our organization will be accepting board members from Druid Groves, as Groves, not individuals. I will let you all know when more progress is made.

—Rhiannon Hawk

Duir de Danu Grove: News from California

We are having Celtic Nights, the second Saturday of the month. One of the projects we've been talking about doing is making Ogham fews for divination.

Baccharis Grove: News from California

The Season of Life began in full force, as May proved to be a very busy month for us.

We had the distinct pleasure and privilege of having Brother Bob Larson come to our Beltaine service.

In the middle of the month we drove to Mt. Shasta to bring Emmon's headstone to his grave at the Buddhist Abbey. We held a small service also attended by a few of the monks and buried some items of importance to us and to Emmon under the headstone (at his funeral we put some things in his casket in typical early Celtic fashion that he might need in the Other-

world or next life), and each said a few words. I read the Zen Master Ryokan poem, “To My Teacher” and a dirge from the Carmina Gadelica in the original Gàidhlig.

I decided to stay longer at the “philosophical hermitage” and attended an introductory meditation lesson given by one of the monks and two sitting and one walking meditations. The half-hour sitting meditations seemed daunting at first, but I compared them to my Third Order vigil, and didn’t look at them in terms of minutes ticking by but as a block of time. The sitting still and clear head practice is much the same as my daily Salutations to the Three Ways of day and One of Night so it was familiar and I found I could achieve that state. After the meditation there was a dharma talk given by one of the senior monks, which seemed very appropriate for this Druid’s training.

Monday morning I awoke to snow!! It was snowing! The white was very striking on the bright green of the oak, pine, and redwood trees. Snow is very unusual for Shasta at this time of year and it was like a blessing.

I visited Sister Rhiannon of the Druid Heart Spirit Grove on the way home. Her Grove site sits in the middle of a forest and has standing stones. It is truly wonderful.

Rather than consigning the Grove Birches that died last year to the firewood pile, I thought what more fitting a tribute than to make Ogham staves out of them. A friend with a serious woodworking shop graciously agreed to cut the wood to my specifications (based on the measurements of my index finger). They turned out beautifully. The next step is to purchase a woodcarving set to carve the lines. After Gàidhlig class this past Tuesday I got into a discussion with a fellow student at the Irish music session we go to afterwards about the tree alphabet that the Oghams are based on. Each Ogham begins with a letter of one of the trees sacred to the ancient Druids. It suddenly made sense! By each Ogham beginning with the first letter of one of the trees, probably common in Ireland and the Celtic lands at the time, the trees were probably a way of memorizing the alphabet! Look up, see a tree, it stands for this letter. We know that the Druids committed their learning to memory rather than writing it down. This seemingly little exercise filled in another piece of the puzzle to understanding and learning what the Druids did.

Summer Solstice Activities

By Alex Strongbow, ex-Carleton Grove

It is not a major holiday, but here are some activities to surround the holiday.

Short and simple, the list looks like this:

- Picnics, beach parties, and fireworks
- Bonfire (It's always a good time)
- Firefly searching, bug collecting (and release?)
- College or family reunions
- Charging magical tools
- Hardest work on a long-term project or making a journey
- Eating a super-big sundae
- Hauling rocks and attuning your megalithic calendar
- Baseball, soccer, hurley, outdoor games.
- Searching for St. John's Wort
- Backyard volcano building (see familyeducation.com site)

Other Links

Kids activities that teach:

http://family.go.com/raisingkids/learn/activities/feature/dony67summsolstice/dony67summsolstice.html

Megalithic family fun!

http://www.familyeducation.com/article/0,1120,22-4200,00.html

Family projects:

http://www.care2.com/channels/solutions/home/196

Interesting base for studies:

http://www.mythinglinks.org/summersolstice2000.html

The Creation of a Druid's Nemeton

By Rhiannon Hawk Fugatt, Druid Heart Spirit Grove/Nemeton Awenyddion

(Editor’s note: While Sister Rhiannon uses Welsh deities, the deities invoked can be adapted to the Celtic pantheon of your affinity and their attributes and roles.)

Nemeton means "Sacred Space." The Druids of old and Druids of today prefer our sacred space outdoors in a place where we feel or sense Nature Spirit activity. Many Nemetons are located in a grove of trees. Natural places can add a lot to a ritual, especially if you can find a spot that exists along a ley-line or high-energy center along the Earth's magnetic grid. Our Druid Grove's Nemeton is in the middle of a forest of silver-firs, oaks, pines, cedars, and dogwoods, twenty to thirty feet behind our home. Before we created the standing stones Nemeton I searched the property by spending time in different locations attuning to Earth's energy there and paid special care of natural vibrational frequencies.

The circle of our Grove is about twenty-five feet across, and around the edges stand twelve stones in the eight directions of the wheel of the year. We spent considerable time creating this sacred space, but it is nothing compared to the hard work that went into the Ancients' creation of Stonehenge or other ancient sacred places. These stone monuments, or circles, express the way Druids perceive the universe and we connect with the universe in this circle that has no beginning and no end. These standing stones will stay here to remind future people of our existence and sacred connection with the land.

I found most of the stones in our stone circle by digging them out of the ground near the Nemeton's location. Some of them were very large, weighing up to two thousand pounds. For the larger and heaviest stones we used a come-along, a hand operated wench for pulling them. The largest stone that now stands in the East was the heaviest. I dug it out of the hard clay soil just fifteen feet away from the Nemeton in the ground. After three days of cranking the come-along we finally had him close enough to the East so we started to prepare his spot in the Grove, next we stood him up and lodged him into the dig out. Now I'm sure it would have taken a lot less time if we had a tractor to move it, but we decided to do it by hand. The rest of the stones in our Nemeton weighed less than a thousand pounds. I moved them by myself with a refrigerator dolly.

If you were to put as much effort into your sacred space, it might be good to get a work party together to help. While not all

of us are blessed to have land, sometimes it is necessary to seek out Pagan friendly landowners. Druids who live in cities can create sacred space in your homes but please be sure you have a fire source such as a candle, for that is where the spirits dance.

The Nemeton is circular, but Druids stand or sit in a horseshoe pattern during ritual. The opening in the horseshoe is where the spirits enter our Nemeton that is in the South. The South is also where we have our altar. The altar is used to create an open doorway for the kindred spirits to enter during ritual. The reason for the altar's location being in the South is that the South side of any clearing has the most sun through out the day. The altar I created in our Nemeton is a trithilian--three standing stones in close proximity capped with a flat sandstone. The altar is a bridge between the worlds. The layout of the ritual tools on our altar is symbolic. How they are placed on top of the altar stone reflects how we relate those symbols with our own inner spirit, and our connection with the world tree cosmology. On our altar we place the symbols of Land, Sea, and Sky, and of the balance between the moon and sun. During ritual we do not step behind the altar out of our deep respect for the Shining Ones or good spirits who may be passing through the opening into the Grove.

A Grove is what Druids call their act of gathering for rituals, magic and meditation. We are the Druid's Grove. We join with others and do the tree meditation at the beginning of our ritual to feel that the peace within trees also exists within us, and to experience the interconnectedness of our roots growing together. The rituals take place in the Nemeton.

These rituals are celebrated during the solstices, the equinoxes, the four fire festivals, and the healing rites we do every month. The Nemeton has a fire pit dug out of its center. Before all rituals we prepare for the spirit fire by placing oak twigs and logs in a cone shape. Oak represents durability and strength and is associated with the Welsh sun God Llew. We light the spirit fire in ritual during the moment the God and Goddess who preside over the ritual are arriving. When we are in the Nemeton all is quiet except for the sounds of nature, the four winds in the trees, and our voices raised in song. We keep a peace around us that allows our senses to awaken and our minds to be open for contact with the invisible world. The invisible world exists all through out this middle earthly plane.

When we had finished building our stone circle I did a ritual to welcome the new stones. This is done by consecrating the stones with offerings that have been blessed by the spirits. First we invite a patron God and matron Goddess from the Welsh pantheon into our Nemeton. We call on the Goddess Bríd. She brings with her the flame of inspiration and the creation of fiery spirit energy that dances in the center fire. We call on the God Manawyddan; he is the voyager who sails on the ocean, and over the land. He goes between our world and the other worlds and assists us to lift the veils between the worlds. I invoke Brúg and Manawyddan into two white candles. These represent the brightness of the God and Goddess and reminds us to keep alive our own inner spark of the divine. The invocation is done with songs and poetry. Then we take the candles and we light the center fire to connect the spirits and us with the Celtic world tree.

The center fire of our Nemeton represents the center of the world tree and the center of the world tree is the Middleworld or Earth. We invite the God and Goddess of the rite to dance there in the spirit fires. Then we call the Celtic triad spirits to bless us with their presence. The triad spirits are our Ancestors of the sea, the Nature Spirits of the earth, and the Shining Ones of the sky. The triad spirits we invite into the Grove each have an earthen bowl that contains an element that is attributed to the realm they come from. A bowl of water is placed to the left on the altar for the Underworld and the Ancestors. A bowl of earth for the Middleworld and the Nature Spirits is placed in the center. The Shining Ones have a feather and an incense bowl on the right side. We invoke these spirits with poetic verse to imbue their spirit into the water, the earth, and the incense.

The poetry we use is written by our Grove's Bard. Then we take the two candles around to each stone and pour a small amount of melted wax onto the ground in front of each stone. This is done to awaken each stone to the spirits of the God and Goddess we have invoked into the candles, so that their energy may vibrate from the Earth that is within the newly created Nemeton. A Druid then takes each bowl starting with the water of the Ancestors, and pours a small amount on top of each stone while invoking the energy of the Ancestor's realm of the Underworld to pulsate through all of the stones in the circle. The Underworld is more distant from our world than the Otherworld, and is usually found through water. The world tree's roots are in the Underworld, so are the past, our ancestors, and our minds. This the Druid says during invocation to each stone while pouring the waters, "May the vibrations of the Underworld, through this stone, pulsate with the luminous light of the Anwyn." The name for the Underworld in the Welsh lore is Anwyn. Then the Druid goes to each new stone member repeating this same process then returns the bowl to the alter giving thanks by words of prayer.

The same process is done to awaken the stones to the energetic activity of Nature Spirits, whose world comes next on the way up the world tree. Nature spirits are part of the creative energy flow in nature, they exist in plants, streams, mountains,

trees, animals, and in this Middleworld earthly plane. They can be any size. They work together in a synchronized harmonious flow to keep balance present in the Nemeton. The trunk of the world tree exists on Earth. It is the Middleworld, it is our nature and earthly relations, our physical body's connection to Earth. The spirit fire in the center of our Nemeton is the very center of the world tree and is also in the trunk. To synchronize the stones with nature's energy a Druid takes the bowl of Earth and walks towards the first stone to the right of the altar and says,

"May the rhythmic vibrations of our Earth Mother pulsate with you, and through you, as it does in us. Help us amplify the healing powers of Abred in our Nemeton. Make this a place that will awaken our ability to be more attentive to the forces of Abred."

Abred is the Welsh name for this Middleworld. The Druid then pours a small amount of earth from the bowl over the stone, and repeats the same process with the other stones. The bowl then gets returned to the altar.

Next, we bring to the circle of stones the presence of the Otherworld. We do this by asking assistance from the Shining Ones who have come to us from the Otherworld. In the world tree cosmology, the Otherworld and the Underworld are not the same. The Otherworld is above and more celestial. It is the canopy of branches and leaves on the world tree. Access to the Otherworld is usually through portals on Middleworld (Earth) in areas where there is energy concentrated, such as ley-lines and power spots, sacred hills, stone circles and the like. The Shining Ones that live in the Otherworld are the Gods and Goddesses from old Celtic lore and legends. We honor them in our rituals with offerings of herbs, songs, and prayers. To merge the light energy of the Shining Ones with the stones, an active Druid takes the bowl of incense and feather and approaches the stone starting with the one to the right of the altar. Sain is the Gaelic term we use for wafting the smoke. The Druid starts to Sain the stone while saying,

"Oh Shining Ones, hear our prayers and accept our offerings. For today with your help, we consecrate our new stone members to make them wholly in the realms of Anwyn, Abred, and Gwynvyd at the edges of our Nemeton!

“May the higher frequencies of Gwynvyd illuminate through you, within and without, let the messages of the Gods and Goddesses speak through you to us clearly, that we may hear the truth and feel their hearts nobility brought to this Nemeton."

The Welsh name for the Otherworld is Gwynvyd. When the Druid returns the bowl of Gwynvyd to the altar all raise their hands to the South, above the altar and say,

"Let the powers of Land, Sea, and Sky live within and on the edge of this Nemeton. Let the spirit fire and world tree connect the stones to the center of our Nemeton."

To end this rite a Druid approaches the fire and takes some ashes from the spirit fire and first enters the South saying,

"Voices from the ocean of the four winds! Come! Rush through the stones and spiral into the center of the world tree."

The Druid then sprinkles some ash on the ground in front of the stone, and on the stone, and does this for each of the stones in every direction. The Druid does this while chanting,

"Let the spirit fire and world tree connect the stone people to the center of our Nemeton. By the blessing of all spirits, dance together our ancestors, our nature spirits, and the Shining Ones, we welcome these new stone members into our Nemeton."

All say, "Gadael hi bhod!" Rituals are always followed by a song of peace, and a fellowship feast.

The Ash Tree

By Sam Peeples, Free-roaming Druid

One of the easier trees to spot, this sturdy and reliable tree naturally features prominently in Celtic Lore and in the customs of various Indo-European peoples. Modern pagans are well familiar with the phase "by oak, ash, and thorn," which is used as a blessing during ritual or to affirm a charge of power in spellcraft.

There are about fifty species of the genus Fraxinus, and cultivation has produced and perpetuated a large number of varieties. The Common Ash and the Privet are the only representatives in England and Ireland of the Olive family Oleaceae, of which it is the furthest northern species. It is the fourth most common tree in the British Isles, and traces of pollen date back 7000 years. Other species include White Ash--fraxinus americana; European Ash--fraxinus excelsior (Including British Isles); Flowering Ash--fraxinus ornus. Rowan (or "Mountain Ash") is from a different family. The ash tree is known by several folk names: Nion, Asktroed, Jasen Bell, and Freixo. The word 'ash' derives from the Icelandic aske, which means "great fire blaze," or from the Anglo-Saxon word Asech a poetic word for spear, while the botanical name Fraxinus means "great fire-light" due to its high flammability.

It grows 40' to 70' tall (some as great as 40 meters) with a potential canopy of 20' to 50' in width. Unless cut back, it will have a long straight trunk. They take 45 years to mature, with a

life span of 200 years, and longer if coppiced every 12 to 20 years. It likes rich, well-drain soil, with ample moisture, like the olive family. It is often found near limestone, but is adaptable to a wide range of pH. It can tolerate salt. Extreme cold and winter contraction can damage rapidly growing young trees.

Leaf: Opposite, pinnately compound, 7 to 11 sessile, serrated leaflets, total leaf 10 to 14 inches long, dark green above, lighter below with tufts of brown hair. Normally very late coming into leaf, it can then be one of the earliest to loose its leaves.

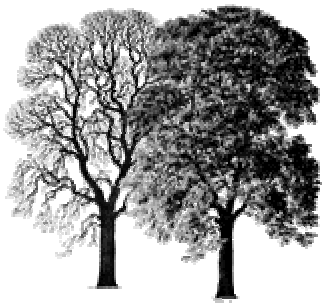
If the oak come out before the ash

There's sure to be a splash

If the ash be out before the oak

Why, then you're sure to get a soak.

Feathery foliage allows many shrubs and plants to grow beneath it. Yellow in the fall. A wind pollinated species, the ash is generally a bisexual tree but you do get male and female trees but these can change sex! Some ash trees have flowers with both male and female parts; some have only male or only female flowers, and some produce separate male and female flowers on different branches. Some branches that produce only female flowers one year may produce all male flowers the following year. The fruit of the ash are the ash-keys: an oblong seed chamber with long strap wings. The keys hang from branches in little bunches and turn from green to brown. The seeds, or keys, stay on the trees through the winter, and only fall in spring. They can be carried quite long distances by the wind, and spring up quickly in almost any type of soil

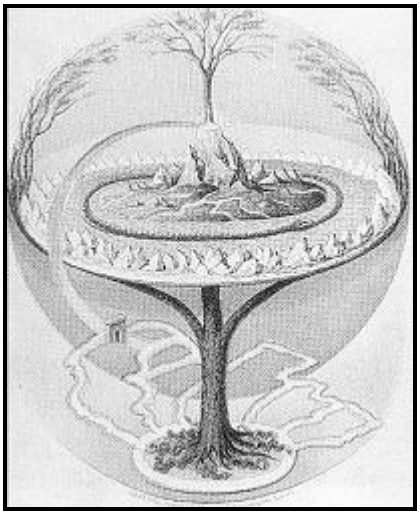


Physical Uses of the Wood

- Laboratory tests show that ash has the greatest "impact strength" of all native hardwoods in the Isles. It will also bear more weight than any other tree when used for joists. It grows very quickly and has great elasticity. The wood is best used for interior purposes, works well, is subject to insect damages, polishes well, shrinks little in seasoning, and is excellent for steam-bending.
- The Anglo-Saxons used the fine-grained and springy Ash wood for making spears, shields, baskets, baseball bats, tool handles, arrow shafts, cricket bats, hop poles, hockey sticks, snooker cues, hurley ("The clash of the ash") and Shillelaghs. Before the development of light alloys ash wood was used for the construction of carts, boat frames, furniture (such as thrones), joists, carriages, coaches, wagons, aircraft wings. It dents easily, but rarely warps with age, but achieves a smooth polish and molding to the hands with usage.
- It rots easily when wet, so it should be kept away from the ground
- The longs burn well, even when freshly cut, but gives no smoke and its ashes are good for potash. It also makes good charcoal. There is a traditional poem various woods and the ash is considered good for royalty; "...but ash new, or ash old is fit for Queen with crown of gold"

Herbal and Magical Uses

(Consult a doctor or herbalist, of course)



Nordic Customs

Ash is well known to be sacred to Odin since the Ash is often known as the Yggdrassil (or the "Ash Yggdrassil") amongst the Scandinavian nations. In Norse mythology, the Yggdrassil supports the Universe, has three main branches and is believed to have sprung from the beginning of time out of primordial slime and ashes. The world tree extends throughout all the worlds from the gods home in Asgard, the mortal realms of Midgard, to the dark underworld of Nifelheim. The sacred waters of the Well of the Wyrd were used by the Norns to water its branches, and the Norns were associated with fate. Any site of great significance within the Norse cosmology usually is placed by a root of the tree. The leaves fed Odin's goat, Heidrun, which supplied the mead for the gods. The leaves also fed four stags (Dain, Dvalin, Duneyr and Durathor) whose horns' dew fed the rivers of the world.

Odin is especially associated with the spear, for which the ash was often chosen, as he owns the mythological Gungnir. The Northern races often employed cremation of the dead, for which Ash is unrivaled. Men were created from Ash by the Norse gods ash and the first woman from rowan. Odin hung himself from Yggdrassil to obtain the runes, of which it is the 26th (Anglo-Saxon version) and resembles a barbed spear.

Ansuz Rune and the Nuinn Ogham

The rune-poem says, "The ash is precious to men and very tall. Firm on its base it keeps its place securely though many men attack it." Northumbrian runes refer to "Gar" meaning spear. Some Norse used the Nidding Pole to pester foes; which was a 9-foot ash pole, surmounted by a horse skull facing an enemy's home.

- Red ash buds were eaten at midsummer to protect from enchantment.
- Ash divination wand was cut at mid-summer to attract.
- One version of the Yule log was a bundle of ash faggots burned at the midwinter solstice and the wassail bowl was carved from ash wood.
- In Northern England, it was once believed that if a woman placed an Ash leaf in her left shoe, then she would be fortunate enough to immediately meet her future spouse.
- Locally there were traditions associated with the ash. In Yorkshire it was said to be a sign of disaster if the ash did not produce keys in a year.
- Another old belief, recorded at least in the nineteenth century, was recorded in Lincolnshire and Frankish law codes. In the north of England, until the 19th century, the ash used to be known as esh and men believed that if they freshly cut an "esh-plant," no thicker than their thumb, they had the right to beat their wife with it. (Some customs are best forgotten.)
- The Ash tree gave warriors silent warnings about war. To die under an Ash tree while in battle, was a guarantee to be selected by Odin to go to Valhalla.
- Also in German forests Christian folk, in previous centuries, feared "demons" in the trees. They told tales of the Askafroa (Eschenfrau) who was the wife of Ash and did much damage. So people would sacrifice to her on Ash Wednesday (despite this being a Christian festival in origin).

Greek Customs

The Greek goddess Nemesis carried an ash branch as the symbol the divine instrument of the justice of the gods, the scourge. In iconology she is also depicted with an eight-spoke wheel symbolic of the solar year. The wheel is also a symbol of the Fates who dispensed her justice under and through the ash tree, metering out happiness or misery and ensuring that fortune was shared and not cosseted by the few. If anyone hoarded the favors she had given or didn't sacrifice some or part of it to the gods, or didn't try to alleviate the poverty and misery of fellow man. Nemesis would step in and withdraw what was given dispensing justice through humiliation with a scourge made of ash.

In later Greek myths Nemesis was identified as Andrasteia, daughter of the sea god Oceanus and goddess of the "rain making ash tree." In this aspect her scourge was used for ritual flogging to bring fruitfulness and productivity to the trees and crops. This association with Oceanus the god of the sea through his daughter Andrasteia, connects the ash tree with thunderstorms, which waters the earth and fertilizes the land. The ash tree is said to attract lightening. As well as the ash branch, wheel and scourge Nemesis also carried an apple branch as a reward for heroes.

Celtic Customs

- Wood being taken without touching the ground would cleave to the element of air, flying straight and true. One of the most famous spears in Celtic mythology was the Spear of Lugh, one of the four treasures brought to Ireland by the Tuatha De Danann from the city of Gorias. This was a spear of power and direction, which would not miss its target. So keen was it that it was kept hooded when not in use.
- In Ancient Wales and Ireland, oars were made of this wood. Ash protects against drowning and oars and coracle slats were often made of ash.
- Gwydion, the Celtic equivalent of this Norse God, was known to choose the thick, strong twigs of the Ash for his wands and was renowned for his magical abilities.
- The staff of the good god and chief of the Tuatha De Danann, the Dagda, is believed to be made of ash wood.
- The staff planted by Fintan the Ancient was an ash.
- Of old, a staff of ash was hung over doorframes to ward off malign influences, or ash leaves were scattered in the four directions to protect a house or area, or a garter made from its green bark was worn as protection against sorcerers and physic attacks.

- Of old, a staff of ash was hung over doorframes to ward off malign influences, or ash leaves were scattered in the four directions to protect a house or area, or a garter made from its green bark was worn as protection against sorcerers and physic attacks.

- Carve a piece of ash wood into the shape of a solar cross (an equal-armed cross) and carry it with you when traveling across sea or water for protection against drowning. Healing wands are also carved out of ash wood and healing poppets can be carved from its roots.
- It is the second most common tree found near Holy Wells in Ireland, the first being Hazel. The Ash was often the selected tree for Maypoles.
- Ash is one of the trees were protected by Brehon Law of Ireland. Cutting down one of these trees was a fine of one cow. These Trees are Oak, Hazel, Apple, Holly, Yew, Ash and Pine. The Ash was a sacred chieftain tree, believed to "court the flash" since it was prone to be struck by lightning. The ash tree has a particular affinity with lightning, which it attracts. Under an ash tree is not the place to be during an electrical storm.

Several Famous Ashes:

- Tree of Creevna-Ireland-emigrants to America carried pieces of this ash tree before they left. This tree was considered a charm against drowning.
- Tree of Uisnech. Standing upon the mythological fifth province of Ireland, it was the centre point of Ireland, performing in wood what the Umbilicus Hiberniae; the centre stone of Ireland did as it also lay upon the Hill of Uisnech.
- Tree of Totu, Dathi, and Uisnech-Ireland-these Ash trees were some of the five magic trees cut down in 655 AD as a sign of Christianity conquest over paganism. The other two were an oak and an elm.

Generic Lore

- In folklore it was believed that the fairies could be seen and conversed with by mortals wherever the three trees grew together.
- As a cure for rickets the baby was passed widdershins through a cleft made in an ash sapling. The tree was then tied-up and sealed with clay, and afterwards a bond grew between the child and the tree, any later damage to the tree also happened in the health of the child and vice versa, therefore the ash tree could never be cut down as this would result in the disease. If you want your newborn child to be a good singer bury its first nail parings under an ash tree.
- The ceremonial Yule log is often made of Ash--this huge log is kindled each Yule with a piece from last years fire and allowed to smolder for 12 days before it is ceremonially put out.
- Ash is often used for making both mundane and magical tools-it's said that tools with handles of Ash are more productive than tools with handles of other wood.
- The flowering Ash has sap that contains a sugary exudate called "manna," which can be used as a laxative.
- The leaves have diuretic, diaphoretic and purgative properties and are employed in modern herbal medicine for their laxative action, especially in the treatment of gouty and rheumatic complaints proving a useful substitute for Sienna, having a less griping effect. The infusion of the leaves (1 oz to the pint of water) may be given in frequent doses during any 24-hour period. The distilled water of the leaves can be taken every morning and was considered good for dropsy and obesity, and a decoction of the leaves in white wine had the reputation of dissolving stones and curing jaundice. The leaves should be gathered in June, well dried and powdered and kept in well-corked bottles
- Ash leaves and the tender tops can be used in the spring to make a fasting tea that is a diuretic and can be used as a help for weight loss. Put fresh ash leaves under your pillow to stimulate psychic dreams.
- Scatter some ash leaves in a bowl of water and place it under a bed over night to prevent and heal illness. The next morning the water and leaves should be discarded outside on open ground then repeat the procedure each evening until well. Leaves can also be sewn into small sachets and worn as health or protection charms. To gain the love of the opposite sex, carry some loose ash leaves in your pockets.
- Ash bark is known as a liver and spleen cleanser and can make the immune system stronger
- The ash was said traditionally to combat viper bites and boiled leaves were given to afflicted animals and laid on as a poultice.
- Ash talismans can be worn as protective amulets. Ash is known to keep away serpents and to protect against their bite. If there are no snakes to be found, Ash can be used instead to keep away nasty people who are bitchy, quick to criticize, impatient, or psychic vampires.
- Ash can be used in medicine pouches or can be used in magick for wart remover: the wart is stuck with a pin that has first been thrust into an Ash, while these words are said: "Ashen tree, Ashen tree, pray these warts off of me." The pins are then stuck back in the tree and left.
- "Beware the ash, it courts a flash, beware the oak, it courts a stroke" says the old rhyme, meaning that these two trees, above all others, attract lightening.

Songs about Ash Trees

"The Ash Tree" is a poem that was given a Welsh melody, and has become extremely well known in American folklore with dozens of versions. I've always found it a bit creepy, seeing the images of the dead in the branches. But, in a way, I've found that it is a pleasant Druidical song. The second song uses the same music and is a whimsical parody poking fun at those factious Celts.

The Ash Grove

By John Oxenford /ashgrv2.html

The ash grove, how graceful, how plainly 'tis speaking,
The wind [harp] through it playing has language for me.
Whenever the light through its branches is breaking
A host of kind faces is gazing on me.
The friends of my childhood again are before me,
Each step wakes a memory as freely I roam.
With soft whispers laden its leaves rustle o'er me,

The ash grove, the ash grove again [alone] is my home.
My laughter is over, my step loses lightness,
Old countryside measures steal soft on my ear;
I only remember the past and its brightness,
The dear ones I mourn [long] for again gather here.
From out of the shadows their loving looks greet me
And wistfully searching the leafy green dome,
I find other faces fond bending to greet me,

The ash grove, the ash grove alone is my home.
My lips smile no more, my heart loses its lightness
No dream of my future my spirit can cheer;
I only can brood on the past and its brightness,
The dead I have mourned are again living here.
From ev'ry dark nook they press forward to meet me;
I lift up my eyes to the broad leafy dome,
And others are there looking downward to greet me;
The ash grove, the ash grove alone is my home.

Welsh History 101

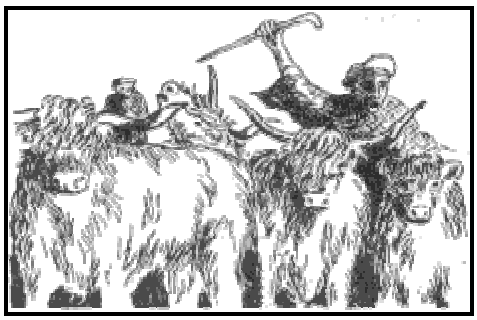
Words by Heather Rose Jones.
Music: http://www.contemplator.com/folk/ashgrv2.html

If ever you wander out by the Welsh border
Come stop by and see me and all of my kin
I'm Morgan ap Daffyd ap Gwion ap Hywell
Ap Ifor ap Madoc ap Rhodri ap Gwyn
We'll feast you on mutton and harp for your pleasure
And give you a place to sleep out of the cold
Or maybe we'll meet you out on the dark roadway
And rob you of horses and weapons and gold

My neighbor from England has come across raiding
Slain six of my kinsmen and burned down my hall
It cannot be borne this offense and injustice
I've only killed four of his, last I recall
I'll send for my neighbors, Llewellyn and Owain
We'll cut him down as for the border he rides
But yesterday Owain stole three of my cattle
And first I'll retake them and three more besides

We need a strong prince to direct our resistance
Heroic, impartial, of noble degree
My brother's wife's fourth cousin's foster-son, Gruffydd
Is best for the job as I'm sure you'll agree
What matter that Rhys is the old prince's nephew
He's exiled to Ireland and will not return
I know this for every time boats he is building
I send my spies money to see that they burn

Last evening my brother and I were at war
Over two feet of land on a boundary we share
But early this morning, I hear he's been murdered
I'll not rest until I avenge him, I swear
Yes, we are just plain folk who mind our own business
Honest and loyal and full of good cheer
So if you should wander out by the Welsh border
Come stop by and meet all the friendly folk here



Further Links

Interesting little encyclopedia article:
http://www.earthcalendar.net/2002/maps2002.html
Weapon handles:
http://www.aikiweb.com/weapons/goedkoop1.html
Fun page on history of wood:
http://www.fpl.fs.fed.us/documnts/FPLGTR/fplgtr113/CH01.pdf
Making Tool Handles:
http://members.lycos.co.uk/handforged/handles.html

General Ash Lore

http://www.british-trees.com/guide/ash.htm
http://www.rfs.org.uk/totm/Ash.htm
http://www.systbot.gu.se/staff/evawal/fraxinus/excelsior.html
http://www.botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/a/ash--073.html use of Ash
http://www.novareinna.com/constellation/ash.html for more on "ash people"
http://www.wicca.com/celtic/celtic/sactrees.htm
http://www.dutchie.org/Tracy/tree.html
http://www.iol.ie/~sinann/grove/trees1.html
http://www.celticconnection.com/myth/trees.html
http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/alabaster/A616259
http://www.owlsdottir.com/elements/trees/celtic_trees.html

Additional Notes on Ash

By Mike Scharding, Digitalis Grove:

It is widely known that Ash was the preferred wood for making spears and the handles of weapons and tools. As such, the name is associated with war and craftsmanship. It is also a popular name in Anglophonic regions. In America, Ash is not in the top 50 for men, but Ashley is the top ten for women with such varieties as"

ASHLEE: English (Modern) Strictly feminine variant of ASHLEY
ASHLEIGH: English (Modern) Strictly feminine variant of ASHLEY
ASHLEY: English From a surname that was originally derived from a place name that meant "ash tree clearing" (Old English).
ASHLIE: English (Modern) Strictly feminine variant of ASHLEY
ASHLING: Irish Anglicized form of AISLING
ASHLYN: English Combination of ASHLEY and the popular name suffix –lyn

For me, the hero in society is someone who puts aside personal considerations to undertake a dangerous mission for the benefit of the community to which he belongs. A hero is different from a mere adventurer. When a society has a warrior band, certain rules of etiquettes, honor codes and initiations develop to regulate their deployment and support them in trying times. This is seen in the Code of Bushido for Samurai, Code of Chivalry, Navy Seals boot camp indoctrination, and children playing Aliens vs. Astronauts in their backyard.

The first hero is Ash Ketchum of Pokemon fame (Satoshi in Japanese) who is the caretaker of Pika-chu, the high-voltage rodent. As many of you unfortunate parents know, Ash has a geas to collect as many pocket monsters as possible, and train them to fight in bloodless combat. This is the child's "General fantasy" in which they stand back and let armies fight their war at a safe distance. The inventor of Pokemon wished to share the wonder of his own childhood explorations of various insects and wildlife in the suburbs of Tokyo, before the rapid growth of concrete and buildings isolated millions of sub-urban children from Nature in the 1960s both in America and Japan.

However, Ash's wilderness adventures, with his fellow band of poke-masters, have antecedents in most literatures of a young warrior (Ash is between 10 and 12) leaving home and experiencing strange adventures which teach him wisdom, restraint, courage, etc. CuChulainn was only eight when he left and was apprenticed to a blacksmith, after killing and taking the role of the guardian dog. Finn (see Hazel article a few issues back) studied at a young age with various teachers and ate the Salmon of knowledge. Finn was later accompanied by heroic falcons, dogs and other magical critters, not unlike the young Ash.

The second hero is Ash, played by Bruce Campbell, of the wild and wacky cult-favorite Evil Dead, Evil-Dead 2, and Army of Darkness that had moderate success in the 80s. Ash is a man cursed with hideously bad luck, and a penchant for returning to dangerous places, when he should know better. We also saw incidents of the Red Branch literature king and warriors knowing what to avoid in Ireland, and yet being harmless to avoid fulfilling their fate. The Evil Dead series revolves around Ash maintaining the boundaries (quite violently) between the world of the living and the dead, which has parallels with several Celtic heroes journeying into the fantastic Otherworld of the faeries and sidhe-mounds. Ash amateurishly summons and banishes demons, travels in time, practices alchemy, divination, necromancy, and a host of other magics, with rather disastrously amusing results. We witness the transformation from unimposing shopping clerk into a confident, untiring, sarcastic one-liner spitting, full-scale, zombie-busting warrior with one hand replaced by a chainsaw (any parallels with Nuada's Silver Hand and the fight with the Fomorians?) Although humor is strangely lacking in many Celtic sagas (except for grim irony), there is a most delicious mix of cynicism, sarcasm, spoofery and dark humor heavily poured over the second and third films of this series. Not for those with weak stomachs, but neither is being a hero; whose role is often forced upon them.

Further Links

On Fionn and CuChulainn:

http://www.oxenby.se/emma/pagan/heroes/fionn.htm

Scholastic essay on Heroes, Evil-Dead movies and feminism:

http://www.bruce-campbell.com/babble/guest/ed-essay.html

The cool factor:

http://centerstage.net/stumped/articles/brucecampbell.shtml

The Evil Dead computer game:

http://www.evildeadgame.com/

Druidess: An Overview

By Daniel Hansen, Msc.D., Olympia Grove

The question is often asked, where there female Druids? This article, the first part of a series by Brother Daniel, hopes to shed some light and give us some answers and evidence.

In our modern world of non-racist, non-sexist egalitarian society, and in particular the neo-Druid movement, we often attribute these modern values on our views or interpretation of history. Now after saying that, I'd like to address the subject of Druidesses. In all neo-Druid branches, men and women play roles of equal importance. A group can be lead by a Druid who is either a man or woman, and it doesn't make the slightest difference which. In ancient times, or in the time of the paleo-Druids, there was a clear division of duties between men and women in all aspects of Celtic society. It is true that in Celtic society, women had a great deal of flexibility and social latitude not shared by women of other cultures of the period, but it was still a more or less male dominated society.

All of the early references to the Druids indicated that they were men. It wasn't until around the third century CE that Druidesses are first mentioned. However, there is evidence that a female priesthood existed side-by-side with the Druids and in some cases long before the paleo-Druids. Keep in mind that the question of the existence of the Druidess is a highly controversial topic, one with experts arguing for and against the existence of Druidesses.

After reading over a considerable amount on information on the subject, I have come to the conclusion that there was indeed a Celtic female priesthood of some kind and from our modern perspective, they were in all probability what we call Druidesses.

What are the facts to support such a wild claim?

Actually there is quite a bit, some of it is highly questionable and therefore subject to various interpretations by various authorities. I think it is best to examine the evidence piece by piece rather than throw it all out at once in order to sort things out. I'll start from a rather simplistic overview then I will go into greater detail on each subject.

In the beginning, most experts speculate, the concept of the Divine was that of the Magna Matre or the Great Mother. It is easy to understand how early mankind perceived of God as a woman. In the cycle of the year, particularly in the spring, the Earth literally burst into life. The Earth Mother could be seen in the contour of the land where mountains were her breasts and caves as her womb. This is called dinnshenchas, "The lore of prominent places." It is not surprising that in Europe we should find cave paintings of magical significance, which seemed to ask for abundant animals to hunt and food to eat deep in these caves. Other relics from the past to confirm in the belief in the Earth Mother are the so-called "Venus" figurines. These are small clay or stone models of pregnant women with large breasts and buttocks. What their actual function was is still a mystery to us today, but their relevance as a cult object is obvious.

Is this early reverence for an Earth Mother evidence for a female priesthood? The obvious answer is..."no." We have to look at other early evidence. In some of the more primitive peoples who survived into the era of recorded history, such as the Picts in Scotland, we find a strong tradition of matrilineal succession, which is where your lineage or heritage is traced through your mother rather than through your father. Matrilineal succession is traced to a period before a connection between mating and birth were recognized. This is, after all, a more reliable system than that of patrilinear succession, after all you always know who your mother is while a father can never really be absolutely sure he is the father.

Paleolithic to Neolithic man knew that women could work great magic in their bodies such as the producing of life. Thus women were assumed to be able to use the magic of their bodies for other purposes. Through time it is highly possible that women became clan or tribal leaders of magical rites and the priestesses of the early Earth Mother religion.

Into the hands of the most powerful women magic-welders were kept the rites of fertility, both plant and animal, as well as the possession of much of the primitive tribal lore. These women must have been regarded as magicians par excellence in

the times before the Indo-European invasions. Were these women Druidesses? No, but they can be considered their predecessors.

The Indo-European invasions that swept across Europe were patriarchal in nature with their Sky Father God worship and their male priesthood. It took hundreds of years for the invasions to "sweep" across Europe until it finally reached Ireland around 350 BCE. After conquering a people, the invaders attempted to either oust the local goddess by killing her or they used her for their own purposes. By the latter, the local Goddess was made into the mother, sister, spouse, or daughter of their male God. How is this possible? Keep in mind that the Celtic gods and goddesses were never believed to be inviolable. These local goddesses never really conflicted with the Celtic nature-gods and so the two worships could exist side-by-side.

There is a practical side to this limited toleration of the conquered religions. The conqueror assumed his gods were stronger, but it couldn't be denied the conquered people and their gods were on their home ground. The local gods might have some unguessed powers to do evil such as making the land barren and useless to the conquerors. Over time, the conquering people had taken over the land, the people, and the gods. In primitive societies where the church and state were very close (in some cases one and the same), it was important to break the religion as well as the government of the conquered people. If the old religion were left intact it would be a rallying point for revolt. The strategies for the take-over are simple, yet effective. The first step is to adopt as much of the native religion and practices into the new religion as possible. The second step is where it is impossible to incorporate any major part of the native religion, such as a god or ritual, then that god or ritual must be stigmatized as evil. These two tactics tend to force the native religion "underground" and become what the Romans called a mystery cult or religion. On the surface it seems that one Pagan tradition stretches out the hand of welcome to another Pagan tradition and even admits them into their pantheon.

Taking into account the conservative nature of primitive people and their resistance to change or new ideas, there are always pockets of resistance with the ancient Earth Mother cult; it can be seen in the persistence of the Celtic Matres that survived well into the Roman period. The Matre or Mother Goddess was usually found in threes and they had fertility symbols such as fruit, flowers, a cornucopia, or an infant. This fertility cult was served by a powerful female priesthood, who possessed the tribal lore, what we would call "folk wisdom." The Celts regarded the number three to be magical and powerful so they gave their deities the attributes or characteristics, such as three heads, or like the Matre, three sisters. It is possible that this is a literary attempt to explain the Celtic Pagan idea of a single god or goddess shown in triple form in order to emphasize their divine powers.

In other places of Europe, such as the isle of Sena and Loire off the coast of Armoria (France), conservation left these ancient rituals, site, and their priestesses intact. Wondrous powers were attributed to these women such as shape-changing into animals, raising storms and tempests by songs, curing all diseases, and predicting the future. Were these women Druidesses? If they weren't, then they were as close as you can come without being one. The powers listed are almost identical to powers attributed to the Druids by the Greek and Roman historians. Our prime source on the Druids is Caesar. He speaks of priestesses among the Germans, but he makes no mention of a female Druid caste. Of course we cannot assume that Caesar gives us a full account of the Celtic religion and this must be set against his silence on the subject. It is possible that the Druidesses may have been a very specialized priestess who had some particular purpose, such as diviners. This could explain why they were over looked.

We also know that women were definitely set apart as the priestesses of the Moon Goddess. Everywhere that the Moon was worshiped as a Goddess, it was served almost exclusively by women, although in many areas men also played a part in the Moon Goddess service, but in a very different capacity Women were in charge of the magical practices intended to encourage the fertilizing power of the Moon Goddess.

The first woman to be called Druidesses are found in the third century of the Common Era. However the term used for them is not Druidess, but Dryads, which means "Nymph of the woods." one train of thought is that Druidism and Dryadism were two phases of the same religion. Dryadism was restricted to females in the early matriarchal stage, but it was later opened up to males as well. It then outlasted the male phase and reverted back to a female cult. Some experts say that these women were not actually Druidesses at all, but that they were wise-women in the same genre of being soothsayers who read palms or tea leaves to divine the future for a price. If these Dryads were indeed the descendants of the Druidic tradition, then by third century CE Druidism was in a sad state of retreat.

In Ireland up to the fifth and sixth centuries C.E. there were still Druids who were both male and female, because in the literature that have survived there are references of Ban-Drui or Bean-Draoi female Druids. We know this from the chronicles of early Christian missionaries who came to Ireland to spread the new faith. It is well documented that the Christian Church attacked the Druids for their Paganism, but especially for the Druids' propensity to include sacred women to their ranks. The Christians used the same tactics to takeover Druidism that the Indo-Europeans used on the pre-Indo-Europeans, specifically adaptation and stigmatization. In Ireland the power of women was reaffirmed by St. Patrick's prayer asking for protection from "women, smiths, and Druids."

In Ireland, one of the best examples of the survival of women's power is found in the secluded sisterhood of Druidesses in the cloister-like enclosure of Cill-Dara (Kildare) also known as the "Church of the Sacred Oak" where the goddess Brighidh or Brigid was worshipped. This sisterhood managed to survive a thousand years under a thin veil of Christian trappings before it was finally crushed under the religious persecutions in the Protestant Reformation. It is recorded that the women of around 450 C.E. had organized games or their own at the fairs. They kept a special place or

section at the public assemblies and they even had special enclosures reserved for them which men were not allowed in.

So much for the simplistic overview, now it is time to look at each of these aspects of the Druidesses in some detail. The following sections are intended to highlight the various functions and duties of Druidesses at the various stages in history. These are not intended as absolute statements, but my presentation of a wide spectrum of related and interrelated subjects which set the groundwork for the rise of Druidesses, their reign as it were, and their various survivals.

Summary

In these sections of the various phases and aspects of the Druidess, I hope to have shown the remarkable durability and longevity of this often-neglected side of Druidism. Their lineage extends far beyond recorded history back to the dawn of religious thought and the rise of the cult of the Earth Mother and the Moon Goddess. These early female shaman eventually evolved as their society evolved and they changed as their culture changed.

Whether they acted alone as the village wise-woman or they clustered together in a secluded sanctuary, they had an amazing conservation of their traditions, knowledge, and belief system. Many of these institutions, to varying degrees, exist today as either folklore, bits of "sage advice," or in our veneration for the Earth Mother.

While these sections may have shown the existence of Druidesses in the distant past, what does all this have to offer Druids and Druidesses today? The neo-Druid movement by and large does not have an unbroken link to the past. Druids today, male and female, are products or re-creations or anachronism. What I am aiming at in this series of articles was as far as the Druidesses were concerned to show what I call "Arrival-Survival-Revival." In my articles I have shown the "Arrival" of the Druidess from her origins with the Matre, Moon worship, and Corn-Spirit cults. I have shown their "Survival" after the Roman and Christian persecution began with the references Dryads and witches. The neo-Druid movement, as was the Meso-Druidic movement, is in part of the "Revival" stage. In the neo-Druid movement women play a key role in the evolution of modern Druidic thought, but with the revival it is important that we not forget the ancient roots of the Druidess, even if the term no longer applies to our modern concept of Druidism.

The Most Famous Reformed Druids

By Mike, Digitalis Grove

I'm sure you've heard these jokes:

> "I'm a Reformed Druid, I worship bushes, except the elected kind."
>
> "I'm a Reformed Druid; Pacific Chapter, I only worship Douglas Firs"
>
> "I'm a Reformed Druid; I don't hug trees and sacrifice virgins, I sacrifice trees and hug virgins..."
>
> "I'm a Reformed Zen Druid; I worship trees AND bushes that aren't there."

Who started this infamous series of jokes? Apparently a very famous Reformed Druid is at the origin. Strangely enough, it isn't Isaac Bonewits, but a man who never actually existed. For most Americans, Captain Jonathan S. Tuttle, is the most recognized Reformed Druid that they will likely know.

Background on Tuttle

On January 14th, 1973 the 15th episode of the first season of M*A*S*H was written by Bruce Shelly, David Ketchum and directed by William Wiard and was simply titled "Tuttle". The episode opens with Hawkeye Pierce and Trapper McIntyre stealing camp supplies to give to Sister Teresa and her nearby orphanage during the Korean War. They say the goods are delivered on orders from Capt. Jonathan S. Tuttle. Of course, Capt. Tuttle doesn't exist; he was Hawkeye's imaginary friend as a kid. Tuttle always took the rap for Hawkeye's misdeeds. He's described as "George Washington, with John Wayne's agent," "Mister Humility," "an inspiration to us all," and one who "brings out the best in me." Col. Blake wants Tuttle to be "officer of the day," so Hawkeye cleverly creates a personnel file:

> Hawkeye: "Religion..."
>
> Trapper: "Atheist?"
>
> Hawkeye: "I don't believe in Atheism. Let's make him a Druid."
>
> Radar: "What's that?"
>
> Hawkeye: "They worship trees."
>
> Radar: "Ah, tree surgeon."
>
> Hawkeye: "Druid, Reformed. They're allowed to pray at bushes."

Other Purported Vitals:

> Full Name: Captain Jonathan S. Tuttle
>
> Serial number: 39729966.
>
> Born: Battle Creek, MI in 1924.
>
> Religion: Druid, Reformed.
>
> Medical school: Berlinisches Politechnicum.
>
> Parents: Harry and Frieda Tuttle

Height: 6'4"

Weight: 195lbs

Hair Color: Auburn

Eye Color: Hazel

Tuttle soon gives all 14 months of neglected back pay to the orphanage. When Tuttle was going to be decorated for this gesture by Gen. Clayton, Hawkeye runs into camp saying how Tuttle was volunteering to do field surgery and jumped out of a helicopter without his parachute. "No sacrifice was too great." Of course, Trapper's new imaginary friend, Captain Murdoch, obtained the fake dog tags and parachute! Hawkeye even delivers a eulogy for Tuttle:

> "We can all be comforted that he's not really gone. There's a little Tuttle left in all of us. You might say, that all of us made up Tuttle. Our grief will pass, and it's already hard to remember exactly how Johnny looked, how he talked, his little laugh. Thankfully, he's left behind a memorial. I've been informed by Radar, he's named Sister Teresa's orphanage as the sole beneficiary of his GI insurance. How typical. We salute you, Captain Tuttle. Humanitarian and healer. Good luck, Doctor, in that big waiting room in the sky..."

What an amazing fellow Druid! But the mystery doesn't end there. Perhaps a cover-up is involved since he didn't apparently die. At an official air force base, I found:

> Captain Tuttle
>
> Assistant Professor of Political Science, Surgeon HQ USAFA/DFPS--M4 2354 Fairchild Dr. USAF Academy, Colorado 80840-6258 (719) 333-2270 Tuttle.dfps@usafa.af.mil
>
> Captain Tuttle is a bit of a mystery man, often seen only late at night by a few lucky souls. His degree area is scholarly, and his teaching talents are legendary. His degree is from the Berlinisches Politechnicum. His studies focused on urban legends and 1970s TV shows. He is 6'3", 195 lbs, born in Battle Creek, Michigan. He is the best darn OD we have ever had. On 24 August 2000, there was a sighting of the elusive Capt Tuttle, however, after analysis of the photographic evidence it was determined the sighting was a mere false alarm.

This evidence is available at: http://www.usafa.af.mil/dfps/faculty.htm#tuttle It's comforting to know that you can't keep a good Druid down, right?

More About Those Tuttles

This episode is interesting, because it shows how a story can take a life of its own. Most people acknowledge that the myths that surround most heroes are fictitious, but that does nothing to cease inspiring us. Tuttle is a model for us all. I noted his 20 years of schooling, international experience, medical knowledge, and love of homemade liquor.

An interesting point is that nearly all of the major characters in M*A*S*H have Celtic or Border names: Pierce (York.), McIntyre (Scot), Maj Burns (Scot), Maj Houlihan (Irish), Col. Blake (Welsh), Corporal Riley (Scot), Father Mulcahy (Irish); with Klinger (Lebanese) as the exception. Is there some kind of implied rejection of the Anglo-American desire for exporting war being symbolized by a Celtic crew trying to clean up the mess of the aftermath? For me, Pierce and McIntyre are two crafty Druids trapped in the madness of war, trying to remain free by using wit, humor and satire to escape the insanity and dismality imposed by the dull uptight Burns and other various commanding buffoonish officers. For more on M*A*S*H characters see: www.mash4077.co.uk/ TV tapes are available at Amazon.com.

Interestingly, the mythical rebellious Reformer, "Tuttle," also appears in the 1985 movie "Brazil" (by Terry Gilliam of Monty Python). Brazil is born out of doom-based fiction such as George Orwell's 1984; Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World"; and Franz Kafka's "The Trial," chronicling a story where a reluctant bureaucrat is dragged into a web of conspiracy in a society of automatons. A printing error for the arrest of Archibald Tuttle, leads to the mistaken imprisonment of Mr. Buttle. Ironically, as Sam goes about his business to clear Buttle's name, he aids and is aided by Archibald "Harry" Tuttle (played by Robert De Niro), a renegade heating engineer who is sought after by the Ministry of Information for "Freelance Subversion." Tuttle allies with Sam after fixing Sam's heating system. Tuttle is bent on destroying the bureaucratic state. When asked his motives:

> "Why? I came into this game for the action, the excitement. Go anywhere, travel light, get in, get out, wherever there's trouble, a man alone. Now they've got the whole country sectioned off - can't make a move without a form."

Indeed, this Tuttle is described as:

> Tuttle is a far cry from the slick, self-assured conspirator imagined by polite society; he is simply a human being seeking liberation from paperwork and social regulations. In

his denial of society, Tuttle proves that humanity is not entirely lost. Tuttle provides one of the rare occurrences of true humanity in Brazil's dispassionate society, proclaiming, "We're all in it together," when in fact the majority of society seems to believe that every man must fend for himself.

Origin and Further News on Tuttle

So where did they learn about "Reformed Druidism" for the M*A*S*H script? Now, Isaac Bonewits was born in 1949 in Royal Oak, Michigan; so is there a connection with Battle Creek Michigan? Bruce Shelly, the prolific writer, lived in California:

(http://us.imdb.com/Name?Shelly,+Bruce).

Unfortunately, I've been unable to make contact with him, and he's at least in his late 60's, so perhaps we'll never know. Perhaps a relative or friend of his was a neo-pagan? Most likely, Shelley heard of Isaac's infamous "Degree in Magic" from UC Berkeley in a 1971 newspaper article and remembered it for the episode 15 months later. Interestingly enough, the Charles E. Tuttle Publishing house has been releasing a line of "linking East and West spirituality" since the 50s, winning Publisher of the Year in 1971, with many titles on Celtic Monasticism, Japan and of course, Korea. Perhaps we have a blending of two figures? Unfortunately, Mr. Shelley did not know that the RDNA was founded in 1963, so Tuttle actually predates the RDNA (being 1951 when he died), unless of course, Tuttle is related to David Fisher...

So to wrap it up, Tuttle is still out there on "Nick at Night" and various re-run channels doing his best to present a noble image of the self-sacrificing hero that we all hope is in us too. Bring him up in a conversation or utilize him in your daily deeds.

The Aristocratic Warrior as Old as Stonehenge

Times Online, May 16, 2002
By Mark Henderson, Science Correspondent

The most significant Bronze Age burial site found in Britain, containing the body of an aristocratic warrior who dies 4,300 years ago, has been unearthed three miles from Stonehenge.

The Amesbury Archer, named after the Wiltshire village where he was discovered and the stone arrowheads buried around his body, was interred with an unprecedented array of weapons, jewelry and pottery for the period, during which the first bluestones were set up at Stonehenge.

His trappings of power, including three copper knives, a pair of gold earrings, five pottery beakers and two sets of flint tools, mark him out as a member of a warrior elite, perhaps even as a tribal chieftain or king.

Archaeologists said that the discovery has the potential to transform understanding of the early Bronze Age and could prove as significant to the period as Sutton Hoo is to Anglo-Saxon England. “This is of the utmost significance," Gillian Varndell, Curator of Prehistory at the British Museum, said. "It is the richest find that we know of from the period.”

The body of the man, who was aged between 35 and 50, was found over the May Bank Holiday weekend in a routine dig at the site of a proposed school development. His grave contains about 100 artifacts, ten times as many as similar sites elsewhere in Britain.

“It is far, far richer than any individual burial from the British Isles at this date,” said Andrew Fitzpatrick, of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury, who led the team that made the find. “It includes some of the earliest metal objects in Britain, perhaps even the first copper and gold objects. This is clearly an elder in the community, perhaps who wielded military authority, and may be a king, a tribal leader or a chieftain of his area.”

He said that during the Stone Age individual burial sites belonging to high status individuals were very rare, hinting at a relatively egalitarian society. Such ceremonial burials were more common in the early Bronze Age, but the grandeur of the Amesbury site is unprecedented. Graves discovered at Chilbolton, in Hampshire, and Radley, in Oxfordshire, from about the same time hold single copper knives and beakers, along with a scattering of stone tools and arrowheads.

“We usually consider a find to be major if there are seven or eight objects,” he said. “This one has 100.”

The Amesbury Archer’s death has been dated to about 2300BC from the style of the pottery and other artifacts he was buried with. The first earthworks at Stonehenge would have been complete; the monument’s inner circle of bluestones was hauled from the Preseli Mountains in South Wales at about the same time.

The cause of death has yet to be determined, but the skeleton shows no signs of a violent end. He was probably in pain, however, from a gammy left leg and a very bad tooth.

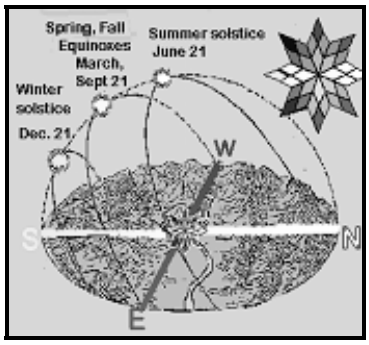
All that remains of the man's clothing are two sets of stone wristguards, worn to protect his forearm against the string of his bow, and a bone pin that probably held a cloak around his shoulders. A shale ring may also be a kind of buckle for securing a tunic.

The site will offer important insights into the culture and society of the Beaker people, who populated southern England in the early Bronze Age, and who take their name from the distinctive drinking vessels found in many of their graves.

Mrs Varndell said: “This time, around 2300BC, was a period when new ideas, technologies and ideologies were having their effect and being expressed in burial customs in Britain. This says something about the status of the person buried, and suggests he is part of some kind of warrior or archer elite. It should tell us a lot about the culture that created the ceremonial landscape of the area around Stonehenge.”

Ros Cleal, curator of the Alexander Keiller Museum in Avebury, said: “This is certainly one of the richest sites in the British Isles, if not the richest. Metal analysis should tell us all

sorts about trade routes and that sort of thing, and it is, of course, contemporaneous with the beginnings of the stone phases of Stonehenge. It's clearly a very major find and the full implications haven't even sunk in yet."



Miscellany

Witness the Summer Solstice at the UMass Sunwheel!

Members of the University community and the general public are invited to witness the passing of the seasons by joining Prof. Judith Young of the University of Massachusetts Dept. of Astronomy to watch the sunrise and sunset over the tall standing stones in the UMass Sunwheel for the upcoming SUMMER SOLSTICE. Visitors for the sunrise viewing should arrive at 5:00 a.m., and visitors for the sunset viewing should arrive at 7:30 p.m. The sunrise and sunset events will be held on both and Friday and Saturday, June 21 and 22, 2002.

On the summer solstice, the longest day and shortest night of the year, the Sun will be seen to rise and set at its most northerly location, over the tallest stones in the Sunwheel. The sky will be particularly beautiful each evening, since the almost-full Moon will rise a few hours before sunset. For those interested in learning about the sky, there will be a presentation that will include the cause of the seasons, the Sun's path in the sky, the phases of the Moon, and the story of building the Sunwheel. Bring your questions, your curiosity, and be prepared for cool temperatures when the Sun is down. A $3 donation is requested to help with the cost of stone pathworks and exhibit expansion that are planned for the Sunwheel. Sunwheel T-shirts and sweatshirts will be available for purchase.

The UMass Sunwheel is located south of Alumni Stadium, just off Rocky Hill Road and across from the maze. The Sunwheel can be easily reached from the center of Amherst, following Amity St. to the west, on the right hand side of the road about 1/4 mile after crossing University Drive. In the event of rain, the events will be cancelled, and visitors are encouraged to visit the Sunwheel on their own.

For more information on the UMass Sunwheel, check out the web site at:

http://www.umass.edu/sunwheel/index2.html or call 413-545-4311. To arrange a Sunwheel visit for your class or group, call or e-mail young@astro.umass.edu.

Hi, you know me as Bridget. I may be a beautiful Sun Goddess now, but I used to be a puff of smoke! But I drink milk. In fact,… all I EVER drink is MILK. You'd think a RED-EARED COW would give strawberry milk once in a while—wouldn't ya??? (Lactose intolerant cow)

Calle Berre's Kids

Introducing a new feature to A Druid Missal-Any, a cartoon called Calle Berre's Kids, drawn by Anna Dryw. It is a spoof on Celtic myths and other like topics.

Anna is a member of Druid Heart Spirit Grove and has been a Gwyddon Elder since the early 1980's and leader of her Order Trefn Gwyddoniad. Currently she is the High Priestess of the College of the Silvering Wheel in Oroville California. She is also the Uchel Gwyddon (High Gwyddon) of the Druidic Priesthood School maintained by the Order and as such, the Ard Druid (same as Arch Druid) at the local Nemeton, Gwynvyd. They are listed on the RDNA links page, but the info is a little dated and is in the process of being updated.

Book Signing

Ellen Evert Hopman, M.Ed., herbalist, Druid Priestess, and author of *Tree Medicine--Tree Magic* (Phoenix publishers, Custer, WA), *A Druid's Herbal For the Sacred Earth Year* (Inner Traditions/Destiny Books, Rochester, VT), *Being A Pagan* (with Lawrence Bond) (Inner Traditions/Destiny Books, Rochester, VT), and *Walking The World In Wonder--A Children's Herbal* (Inner Traditions, Rochester, VT), will be giving a book signing and talk Saturday June 22 at 2 pm, Kingdom of the Wizard Book and Gift Shop, 275 New State Highway (Rt. 44) Raynham, MA 02767 (near Taunton). Call for details 508 822 0111. www.wizardkingdom.com

Book Review

From the Read Ireland Book Review--Issue 202
Petrie Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland by George Petrie and edited by David Cooper (Hardback; 60.00 Euro / 50.00 USD / 40.00 UK; Cork University Press, 280 pages).

This book is a revised edition of the classic work, featuring a new biographical essay on Petrie. Melodies are returned to the form that Petrie originally notated them and are cross-referenced with other major collections. First published in 1855, this book is widely regarded as one of the most important nineteenth-century collections of traditional Irish music. It contains nearly two hundred melodies collected by Petrie as well as song texts in Irish and English and detailed notes by Petrie about their sources.

Read Ireland@Phibsboro Bookshop,
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www.readireland.ie

Calendar

Summer Solstice, when the Sun enters Cancer, will occur on June 21, at 6:24 a.m. PDT. Solstice services will be held on Saturday, June. 22 at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of the Solstice we will be going immediately after the service to AD's house. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on July 7 and 21. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $6.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

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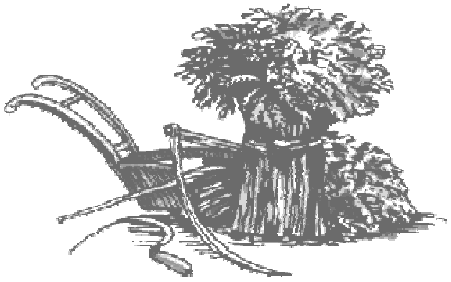


Lughnasadh Essay: Cycle of Lugh

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1990

By Emmon Bodfish

Lughnasadh, festival of the god Lugh. In one tradition these festivities marked the funeral games originally held by Lugh in honor of his murdered father Cian. In another tradition, in Ireland, they commemorate the death of Lugh's divine foster mother Tailtiu, who cleared the forest from the plains of Ireland to make them fit for agriculture and died of the effort. She is a goddess of agriculture and one of the Irish female origin-figures. Irish clans often traced their ancestry to a female divinity, a goddess of the land. Lugh is the son of Ethniu and Cian, and the grandson of Balor, the elder Sun God, whom he later vanquishes in battle, reminiscent of Zeus overthrowing Chronos.

Lugh is the youthful Celtic Deity of Light, eulogized as "The Shining One." Some see in him an evolved form of the Neolithic "Young Year God," representing the Sun, born on Winter Solstice, married at Summer Solstice, and triumphant at Lughnasadh when he brings the harvest. He is fated to die on Samhain at the end of the harvest season and to sleep until the returning of the Sun on Winter Solstice.

Lugh is the multi-competent god, patron of all crafts and of commerce, protector of travelers, poet, harper, physician, smithy, magician, and defender of the people against their oppressive Fomorian king. Some scholars think he is cognate with Grecian Apollo. He is master of the throwing spear and has the title "Lamhfada," long arm, far reaching; he owns the spear that cannot miss its mark but seeks out its enemy.

The Sun is now half way between Solstice and Fall Equinox, and already the days are perceptively shorter, though the strong heat is still to come. This festival marks the beginning of the harvest. The first fruits are of each farmstead were brought and offered in the sacrifice. Sheep had been sheared, and the surplus wool and lambs could be bartered.

In Reformed Druid tradition, any members who have a garden, a fruit tree, or a tree that gives mast or nuts, or wild land that gives any vegetable food, bring the first fruits picked this season to offer in the Lughnasadh bonefire. (No Animals! That was forbidden by the Reform in 1963 that gave us our origin, constitution, and laws.) Lugh's tree is the apple. I cannot find a scholarly reference on this, but so folklore and tradition have it. (If you know of one, send it in and get a free subscription if it checks out.*) Celebrate with apples, apple pie, cider, applejack, and the planting of apple trees. Lugh is the divine father of the Celtic champion, Cu Chulain. Reread some of these epics** aloud.

*This still holds.
**The Tain Translated from the Irish Epic Tain Bo Cuailnge, tr. Thomas Kinsella, Oxford University Press, 1983.

News of the Groves

Carleton

On June 22, 2002, several long-time members of the Reformed Druids of North America gathered on the Hill of Three Oaks, (www.winternet.com/~gmcdavid/html_dir/h3oak.html) at Carleton College, for a Solstice Liturgy and fellowship. This took place as part of the Carleton Alumni Reunion Weekend. Among those present were:

- Dick Shelton, Arch-Druid of Carleton, 1969-1971
- Ellen Shelton, Arch-Druid of Ann Arbor, 1973-75?
- David ("the Chronicler") Frangquist, Arch-Druid of Carleton, 1965-1966 (?), Author of much of the original Chronicles, Patriarch of Belenos
- Deborah Gavrin Frangquist, second woman to vigil for the 3rd Order (c. 1966).
- Michael Scharding, Arch-Druid of Carleton 1992-1994 (?), compiler of ARDA, historian of the RDNA
- Galia (Gerre) Goodman, 3rd Order, 1970

All of them contributed to A Reformed Druid Anthology, and figure significantly in the events and thoughts recorded therein.

Dick had organized the event and presided. David was Preceptor (who else but the Patriarch of Belenos on Midsummer?). The Liturgy was the old Carleton Midsummer

Service (see ARDA) with somewhat updated language. For the Waters-of-Life we used Glenmorangie, a single malt, and an impressive upward step from the ancient Black and White.

Afterwards, several of us walked through the Carleton Arb to visit other sites, sort of a Reformed Druid Pilgrimage. We visited Monument Hill; (www.winternet.com/~gmcdavid/html_dir/monhil.html), where the first Druid Services were held in 1963, and where Dick and I both did our 3rd Order vigils. We also visited the Druid's Den, east of Three Oaks, which has been used by the Carleton Druids in more recent years. Before returning to Campus we walked to Faculty Hill, Site of the first Samhain service. You may have read about it in the Later Chronicles.

For a while Michael, Dick, and David were walking a little bit ahead of the rest of us. This was a particularly impressive--the three most influential Arch-Druids in the history of Carleton together. With the aid of Faris Keeling (one of my Druid contemporaries) I was able to get a couple photographs of this historic chat.

This weekend was particularly meaningful for me. David's view of Druidism, and indeed of all religion, greatly influenced my own beliefs and I had been wanting to meet him for over 30 years. It was also my first meeting with Michael, to whom we all owe a debt for his revival of interest in the Reform at Carleton and beyond, and for the enormous effort he has put into ARDA and other Druidical projects. I also met Eric Hilleman, who administers the Druid Archives at the Carleton library, and thus ensures that this large collection (see http://www.geocities.com/druidarchives/index.html) will be preserved and enhanced for the future. It was also a chance to talk again with Dick, my predecessor as Arch-Druid of Carleton and my old mentor in matters Druidical, and with other friends old and new from the RDNA.

I hope to post some photos on the Web in the next few weeks. Meanwhile there is a picture of the Franquists at: http://webapps.acs.carleton.edu/alumni/reunion/photos/?pageSet=31 (lower right).

--Glenn McDavid

Akita Grove: News from Japan

We possess a good time here in Japan. It is unbearably hot and rainy. We gave a big party in August for dead ancestors called "Obon." Many people visit their parents. I live with my father, but maybe mother will come back from Vietnam. Pat had big adventure across Japan, now is my turn! It will soon be hard for me to travel, so I go now. I am going to Oga half-island by bus, to Namahage land! Pat says it is "tacky," but I like the place. There will be many festivals in Japan in August, but we will have an easy Druid service, and then harvest rice in a near farm in later August!

Amazon Grove: News from Brazil

Ian apparently came down with a stomach ailment and was taken back to their base camp, but has already returned to whatever scientific studies he is up to down there (or is he on vacation?!). He just wanted people to know, "The trees are just grand down here, but not safely huggable, because of the little critters swarming around here." As always, we await our next installment of postcards.

Digitalis Grove: News from DC

My vacation to Carleton College went well and although I was unable to meet any of the Archdruids, I did get to meet Sancho (2nd) who is working in the Druid Archives there. He reminded me of how blissfully simple some of the Druids can be in a non-organized sense, even while those in charge are busy running things in a formal manner. He assisted me in sifting through the archives for more potential additions to the second edition of ARDA (mostly Liturgical materials and letters). As a side note, my Druidesque movie, Drake's 7, which was mostly filmed with Alumni Druids is visually edited and awaiting soundtrack and F/X, possibly by Christmas.

At the folk dance reunion, I met with David and Dee Frangquist (AD 64-66), Dick Shelton (AD 69-71), Glenn McDavid (AD71-72), Gerre Galia Goodman (ARDA, pt2), Faris Keeling ('74), and several Druids from the 70s and 90s. As usual, it was an honor to meet with them, listen to their wisdom and join them for a summer solstice ritual on the Hill of Three Oaks; followed by an arboretum tour of Druid holy sites and the Rocks of Irony. Earl the Dog participated in all the aforementioned activities enthusiastically.

Dravidia Grove: News from Maryland

Actually things here are kinda slow. Am working a lot of hours, and this area is in serious need of rain. We have had some interesting developments in the area with a new fish found in Maryland. It is the Frankenfish, somewhat of a rarity here. I am doing some research on the migration. Other than that the Grove is quiet.

Hemlock Splinters Grove: News from NY

Irony Sade of Volcano Grove has moved back to the States and says Hemlock Splinters Grove should be active again before too long. He would love to put it in touch with the (frighteningly) organized members of the RDNA. This additional news just in from him:

We had a couple of massive full moon bonfires, and visited a ritual performed by a Peruvian shaman for the solstice. Other than that, the tadpoles are frogging, the new snapping turtle has been eating wood ducks, and the oak tree planted from one of the acorns from the old Carleton grove has stretched another foot or so toward the sky. Impromptu music seems to be playing a central part in our gatherings. In other news, I was doing some research at the Eastman School of Music on the old wire strung harps--which I am learning to play--and found a book from the 1780's which attempted to trace the history and antiquity of the Irish harp by linking it back to the druidic traditions. I am working with the curator to spend more time in the archives. The books are climate controlled, and I live far away, but I'll see what can be learned...

Thanks again!

Irony

Eurisko Grove: News from Virginia

The Eurisko Grove is in Hampton, VA and we can be reached at gwydionream@aol.com. "Eurisko" in Greek means "I discover things" which is the general approach we have to our Druidry. We are all previously Wiccan trained and studying under ADF.

Five members in total; three humans (Mike "Gwydion" Ream, Jacquie Ream, Vonn Gants), one dog (Apollo), and one cat (Agnes).

Our length of office is generally one year from Yule to Yule.

Mike and Jacquie Ream = co-senior druids

Vonn Gants = student

Apollo = head of security

Agnes = keeper of mysteries

Our basic tenets are:

1) Nature is good

2) When in doubt consult your nearest tree

3) Question authority

4) Each member of Eurisko Grove is encouraged to study under different teachers

5) Suggested titles of recognition; protégé, contemporary, and mentor

6-10) To come as we think of them

We started the process of ploughing through the ARDA and interested in vigiling sometime. Jacquie and I are both members of Grove of the Other Gods (ADF).

—Gwydion, A sapling among the oaks

Swamp Grove: News from Florida

All is hectic at the Grove...We are re-locating the grove to another site here in the area, we are currently looking at land, the land that we currently use is being sold and we need a permanent grove area. The spirit of the Grove lives, no matter where it is located. Thanks to our members and friends who have pledged their help in the re-location and re-dedication of Swamp Grove, it should all be resolved within a couple of stress-filled months. A great summer wish to all our Brothers and Sisters in the reform.

Oaken Circle Grove: News from Kentucky

Greetings from the Oaken Circle Grove of KY, we are happy to announce that our grove is still growing and that we are making progress towards becoming incorporated and one day tax exempt.

Our solstice celebration was a success and you can find some pics of it on our webpage, we are currently planning out Lughnasadh gathering. We hope it will be a success as well. We recently had a paganing for four-month-old Laurelin, it was a beautiful ceremony and we would like to welcome her to a life of the old ways and hope that she gains all the knowledge of the ancestors as well. Much of the information on our grove is on our webpage, please feel free to check it out:

http://oaken_circle_grove_.tripod.com/oakencirclegroveky

Many Blessings,

Sherry
Founder of the Oaken Circle Grove

Mojo Proto-Grove

Mojo grove spent Summer Solstice communing with nature, and a small group of like-minded folks from a local Tribe of First People/Native American/Aboriginal/Indians (we don't know which is PC anymore, and don't wanna be disrespectful) mostly, Mojo grove members observed the ceremony as guests and absorbed the vibes, and added our own (vibes). Then it was food, drink, and merriment for all. For the upcoming Lughnasadh we will be observing the astronomical date (although if something comes up for the calendar Lughnasadh--well, we're flexible!) Near the astronomical date will be a powwow with the same tribe, and Juju is working on being a part of the ceremonies as a token Druid. Will report in the Mabon issue (do we have a Mabon issue?).

Fairy Spell Grove: News from California

Hey--Just an update here...

I have been buried in work over the last two months creating an email service ala hotmail. Well, it finally works and dare I say looks pretty damned cool!

Now that leads to my super-secret project--which is (shh!) www.faeriespell.net

Which is kinda empty and blank and boring at the moment. But...now that the email service itself works and the basic templates are designed to my exacting specifications I am going to start work soon on my grand design, that being: a pagan (well druidic, but the heathen-dog pagans can come along and find a happy home too!) portal. Webmail basically--again ala Hotmail/Yahoo, but with sections people can visit to chat with other pagans, post news, create mailing lists and most important of all--a complete and ever-expanding library of knowledge. This includes in-depth lessons from those who know (think "Pagan University") and spell help, ritual ideas for the creatively challenged (including fun and rather zany ritual ideas), humor and of course a place to share thoughts and ideas.

I have been working on this concept for nigh many a year and now it is almost ready to build.

My question is simply this: Have I forgotten anything? Are there any happy pagans out there who might like to contribute their computer skills, web design abilities, art or lessons/contacts/ideas to this project?

I am fairly certain that I have all of the bases covered and am not asking for anyone to do any work for me. But it seems the considerate thing to do to get some feedback and/or a wish list if people want before I have everything "set in stone" so to speak.

Oh well...I don't really think this qualifies as "news" yet, but if you have any ideas on how I can get the word out that we are open to assistance or even just general rants while we build this monster I would be deeply appreciative.

Okay thanks!

Dusty
Faerie Spell grove

Hazelnut Grove: News from California

The wheel turned to the time that Stephen Abbott, the ArchDruid, also called Tyroch Windtraveler, should celebrate his natal day. Stacey of the East Bay said, "This is important!" and gathered the faithful to sojourn up to the north where Stephen abode.

And he did abide in a flat with two women, another man, a dog and a cat. The other man, called by name Brian, cooked hamburgers for all. The faithful sat with Stephen, saw his toys and wondered. Stephen did open his gifts with many an ooh and ah. There was a cake that was so rich no one could bear to have more than a thin slice.

This chronicler wanted to do a reading for him, but the time was taken up by a motion picture on the talking box. Before dark, the faithful descended to the south to their own abodes.

Baccharis Grove: News from California

Due to the intervention of Life, the Universe and Everything that it entails, Baccharis Grove is in hiatus for now. The Arch Druid and the Server celebrated Summer Solstice with the rites of Weberos, duly offering charred sacrifices to the Gods. They seemed to be warmly accepted.

They also replanted their three little Oak trees, grown from acorns gathered from Grove property, and found that it was just in time. Says the Server "Although the Oaks are only one year old and quite small, their tap roots had grown extremely long and were in danger of growing out of their large 12" pots, getting trapped and being broken. That is the main danger in transplanting an Oak, if the taproot breaks the tree will very likely not survive. All three were transplanted successfully and seem to be thriving in their new 20" pots. As they were transplanted, they were dedicated to the Earth Mother (we know, that seems superfluous) and asked to grow and be healthy and happy in their new home on our property. We have also discover that our little apple tree has eight small apples that are growing nicely and the grape vines that we thought were decorative have many clusters of green grapes! They are probably Thompson's but I'm hoping for Muscat's. The roses are blooming profusely and our damask rose scented geraniums are huge, four to five feet across. Our neighbors have already picked several five-gallon buckets of green beans, cucumbers and huge cabbages. They happily share their bounty with us and we are all looking forward to tomatoes! The Earth Mother has certainly been generous with us!"

Poison Oak Grove: News from California

"Leaves of Three, Let It Be."

In a fit of severe anti-socialism the Preceptor of Baccharis Grove has decided to take a sabbatical. She has formed a "contingency" grove by the name of Poison Oak Grove (seemed fitting), though to be considered a "legal" grove in the RDNA tradition there needs to be three officers, she likes the sense of "groveness."

Though it was overcast the morning of the Summer Solstice she rose early to watch where the Sun would have risen had she been able to see it. As one person put it, Belenos was being quite demure. After all, He's done the same floorshow for so long he can be subtle from time to time.

Some Possible Lughnasadh Activities

By Alex Strongbow, a Druid Lost in the Woods

Basically, early August is a "hey, the farming is turning out alright!" agricultural festival and horse race time. Because it is a rather warm time of the year, and like other parts of the Northern Hemisphere, it is also a good time for big crowds of people to travel and have some constructive fun. Tailtiu, Lugh's mom, is commemorated in funeral games that last a week or so. I've put together a list of some events that might be done throughout August.

- Food was scarce before the harvest, so you might consider fasting before the festival begins, eating only seasonal foods that you can research as being available before world-grocering began. Perhaps combined with a camping trip, to test your rigor.
- Brehon Wedding/Handfasting: A young couple will put their hand through a hole in a stone and pledge to officiant and public their intention to try living together for a year before deciding on a permanent marriage.
- Settling of Legal Disputes: Advice or mediation in long-term disputes could be sought from other members of the grove (perhaps on slips of paper pulled from an anonymous box). Alliances with other organizations may be approved now.

- Horse racing: Well, few of us have horses, but a trip to a derby, dog track, or Nascar race would be appropriate, as would attending a summer track and field meet. Gambling is encouraged. If you do have a few horses (or can rent them), it is traditional to race along a river or ford a river mid-race.
- Bonfire: Not associated with hearth-fires, but just for fun and illumination of nocturnal partying. Sacrifice bad habits and unwanted things from your life by throwing symbols of them into the fire, this is good anytime. Perhaps, a competition between teams to build the biggest/oddest Lammas tower?
- Prearrange to collect the last sheaf of wheat from a farmer and make it a Cailleach doll (old woman), much like the Bride-og at Oimelc in February. It should be placed on the mantle over the winter and

destroyed in the spring, perhaps ploughed into the ground.

- Celtic Olympics: Yes the games of Tailtean, were held until the time of the Norman invasions in the 12th century. Perhaps modeling them on a highland games, which are frequent this time of year, would be apt. Events could include:
    - Wrestling in either Greco-Roman fashion (pinning shoulders to the ground), Sumo (no touching ground except feet or leaving circle) or WWF Smackdown rules.
    - Hurley, Cricket, Soccer, or Rugby matches.
    - Foot races, wheelbarrow races, bicycle, piggy-back, sack-races, obstacle courses
    - Hammer Toss, Shot put, heavy rock lifting or caber toss
    - Sword dancing, country dancing, interpretive dance etc.
    - Long jump, high jump, pole-vaulting with walking sticks
    - Boffer-sword/Quarter-staff bouts, preferably on a log over a river.
    - Massive tug-a-wars, wacky relays, tag, human pyramids, or egg-toss contests.
    - Archery, fire-arms, catapulting, slinging or spear toss contest
    - Have a "Rhibo," a welsh game where people line up facing each other, making a bed of arms and then fling them up in the air. It is advisable to catch them on the way down.
    - Mental contests for the less physically-gifted: Chess, poetry, story-telling, lying contests, geometry jousts and math matches (bring out old SAT prep sheets), joke-telling, banjo-dueling, scavenging hunts.
- Large elaborate parades or activities to test the strength and endurance of young folk, usually through a forest, to a special spring or well or curving up and around a hill.
- Make plans for the winterization preparations.
- Feasting!: Foodstuffs include Beef, broccoli, cherries, spinach, any type of early berry, corn, potatoes, homemade bread (particularly wheat, oat, and especially corn bread), berry pies, barley cakes, nuts, apples, rice, roast lamb, acorns, crab apples, summer squash, turnips, oats, and all grains. Drinks: Elderberry Wine, Mead, Ale, Meadowsweet Tea, and Cider
- If you live near an abattoir, you could attempt a Tarbh Feis (cattle meditation) by wrapping yourself in a freshly killed bull's hide after eating 10 pounds of beef at a crossroads and sleeping overnight while Druids sing around you. You could then prophesy the 2002 elections by this method, perhaps, or the fertility of the harvest might be gauged from your dreams.
- Offer first-fruits from your garden and plant all the seed of fruits eaten at festival. Bake a loaf of bread in the guise of a man and tear him apart by wildcats. Include bilberries or blueberries in your feast; these were a traditional fruit, whose abundance was seen as an indicator of the harvest to come. Make a cornwheel of ripe grains.
- Gather and make acorn bread: http://www.yvwiiusdinvnohii.net/NAIFood/acorns.htm

Other Lughnasadh Related Pages

Lughnasadh recipes:

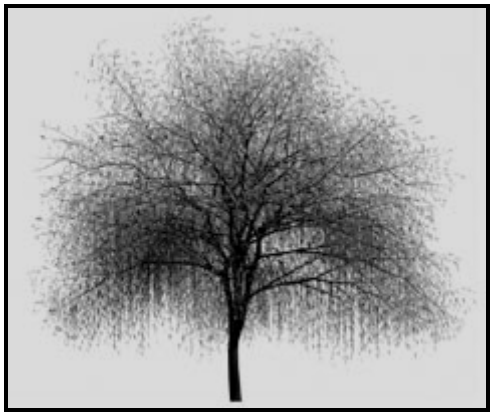
http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Parthenon/7039/AshlinCI.html

All you need to know, and more:

http://www.summerlands.com/crossroads/newsletter_archives/summersun-august2000/ss_lughnasadh2000.html

Excellent lists of activities in detail:

http://cyberpict.net/sgathan/essays/lghnsdh.htm
http://www.isleofavalon.co.uk/edu/g-bank/articles/sig-lugh.html
http://www.paganet.org/pnn/2000/Lughnasadh/sabbat.html
http://www.intercom.net/local/shore_journal/rif10730.html
http://www.wicca.com/celtic/akasha/lammas.htm
http://chantrea.home.attbi.com/lammas.html
http://www.geocities.com/CollegePark/4885/lugh.html
http://www.geocities.com/lavenderwater37/lammas.htm



The Willow Tree

By Sam Peeples, Free-roaming Druid

Found throughout the British Isles in various species, the Willow is also common in Europe, North Africa and America. It is known as Saille in Irish Gaelic. The botanical name of the willow Salix purportedly comes from the Celtic word sal meaning near, and lis meaning water. Other Gaelic words for willow are seilach and feature in Scottish place names such as Achnashellach in Ross-shire and Corrieshalloch on Speyside. These names would have referred to both the presence of willow and related industries utilizing the willow's gifts. The verb and girl's name Sally may be derived from the Willow. In Cornish it is called Helygenn. Other names include: Willow, Witch's Tree, Pussy Willow, Salicyn Willow, Saille, Sally, Withe, Withy, Witches' Aspirin, Tree of Enchantment, Osier, Tarvos Tree, and

Sough Tree. The Greeks called it Helice, and thus is associated with Helicon (abode of Muses). The Anglo-Saxon welig, from where the name willow is derived, means pliancy. It represents S in Ogham script.

Willows just love water and are often found in moist soils or near running water, along with alder, hazel and birch. It is occasionally found in the under-story of other trees or on the edges of meadows or in areas cleared by fire. Most of the 20 British willow species (330 in total and related to poplar, 100 in America) are bushy, but the White, Black (i.e. Pussy Willow) and Weeping Willow often become tree sized (50'to 80') and most well known for long, thin, variably droopy, flexible branches with few twigs. Its long thin leaves are easily recognizable as yellow in the fall. Yellow flowers arrive in April or May along with the Robin, and easily crossbreeds with other willows. The bark is most removable in the summer, containing 13% tannin and small amounts of salicin. Be careful not to ring the tree when removing bark or it will die, take vertical slices.

The dispersal of thousands of small windblown seeds is used by yellow willow to reproduce itself (2.3 million seeds per pound). Male and female flowers (in the form of catkins) occur on separate plants. Like other willows, it is reliant on insect pollination, especially from bees. After fertilization, a capsule develops which eventually splits open during spring or summer, dispersing the myriad of minuscule seeds. The production of large quantities of seeds ensures that some will fall on favorable sites. The seeds have a cottony down that allows them to float long distances in the wind, and on water. Seeds are non-dormant, remaining viable for only a few days. They germinate rapidly, usually within 12-24 hours if a moist seedbed is reached.

Practical Uses of Willow

First and foremost, trees are quite happy the way they are without being utilized by us, and serve their own niche in the ecosystem without being exploited. 'Nuff said.

Regardless of size, willows are easily pollarded and make straight poles in 4-5 years, which is good for fencing and baskets, and very munchable to horses, moose, beaver and elk and nested in by birds.

Willow's ability to absorb shock without splintering is still utilized in the making of cricket bats and stumps (note also the similarity between "wicket" and "wicker") and polo balls. (http://www.rfs.org.uk/totm/cricket.htm)

- The Dutch use it for making clogs.
- The Celts used it for chariot wheel spokes.
- The Romany use it for clothes pegs
- The bark's tannin was used for reddish dye and tanning leather.
- Before the advent of plastics, willow was widely used to make a variety of containers, from general basketry to specialized applications such as lobster pots and bee hives.
- A 6th century basket was discovered by archaeologists on Shetland, and apparently made of willow, used the same weaving techniques as those still practiced in Scotland
- Some people twist living willows into outdoor furniture and odds shapes.
- Many plant willows on riverbanks to prevent erosion and control flooding.
- Artificial limbs were once made from this light wood.
- Willow is used as core wood for laminated furniture (esp. Ikea)
- The wood was preferred for making charcoal for gunpowder.
- Used as bottoms of wheelbarrows, chariots, mills and washboards.
- Roots make a purple dye used in France/Sweden for Easter eggs.
- Willow wood is light but strong enough to make roofs and rafters, boats and carts.
- Do not plant close to septic tanks or sewer lines as the roots will invade!
- If you do have a low, wet area in your yard, this tree will actually "dry up" that area.

Mythological Connections

Even in the Adventures of Neera it is a withy ring of willow that must be placed around the ankle of a hanging corpse if Neera is to win the golden sword of Aillil. The placing of this withy plunges Neera into an Otherworld adventure. He is held captive in the Sidhe world and set to physical work but wins through with the support of a Sidhe woman. When he returns to Cruachan, no time has passed. It is still Samhain. He proves his story by showing the fresh blossoming twig he has carried out with him

British and Irish mythology is also rich with legends of the beguiling, Willowy Spring Maiden who is called Olwen, Niwalen, Gwenhyver, Cordelia, Blodeuwedd and many others, who initiate the young King into a deeply sexual experience.

The ancient Celts believed that the spirit of the dead would rise up into the sapling planted above a grave, which would grow and retain the essence of the departed one. Throughout Britain many cemeteries, particularly those situated near rivers, lakes or marshes, are often to be found lined with willow trees to protect the spirits in place.

In Sumer, 4000 BCE, Ishtar's predecessor, Belili, was known as the Willow Mother.

Often associated by the Greeks with water and the moon; it is linked to legends of Ceres, Apollo's harp, Minerva's bird "Wryneck" who only sleeps in willow, and Orpheus who gained bardic skills by touching willows in Proserpine's grove. In Athens, it was an ancient custom of the priests of Asclepius to place willow branches in the beds of infertile women. This was done in the belief that it would draw the mystical serpents from the Underworld and cure them. The ancient Spartan fertility rites of the goddess Artemis, also demonstrates the willows connection with fertility and fecundity. In that ceremony, male celebrants were tied to the tree's trunk with willow thongs, they were then flogged until the lashes produced an erotic reaction and they released, fertilizing the land with their seed and blood. How quaint. The Greek sorceress Circe is said to have had a riverside cemetery planted with willow trees dedicated to Hecate and her moon magic. Here male corpses were wrapped in un-tanned ox-hides and left exposed in the tops of the trees for the elements to claim and the birds to eat.

In Jerusalem, for the worship of Jehovah, the Feast of Tabernacles was also called the Day of the Willows. Willow branches were carried in processionals, used to roof the small temporary shelters (sukkah) during the festivities; the branches were later burned in the Temples. (Lev. 23:40).

In Britain the more recent, "Christianized" use of willow to symbolize grief probably originated with Psalm 137:

By the rivers of Babylon

we sat down and wept

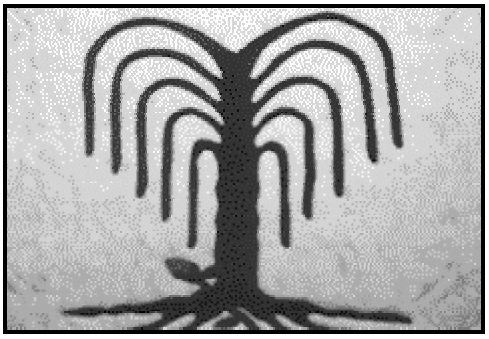
when we remembered Zion.

There on the willow-trees

we hung up our harps.

(Biblical scholars point out that these 'willow-trees' were probably Euphrates poplar (Populus euphratica) and not the weeping willows (Salix babylonica) which originated in China.) During the 16th and 17th centuries the association became particular to grief suffered by forsaken lovers, who also adopted the custom of wearing a cap or crown made of willow twigs and leaves. By the nineteenth century illustrations of weeping willows were commonly used as ornaments on gravestones and mourning cards. Willow boughs were also used to decorate churches in Britain on Palm Sunday instead of largely unavailable palm leaves.

The Seneca, a North American indigenous tribe, has a loving bond with all Trees, calling them The Standing People. They consider the Willow to be a source of gentle humility, charm and grace, adding elegance as She touches Her fronds to the Mother Earth, sweeping away fear to nurture peace.



One old tradition concerning the willow is still celebrated today by Rumanian Gypsies. This is the festival of Green George, which takes place on the 23rd of April. A man wearing a wicker frame made from the willow represents the character of Green George, which is then covered in greenery and vegetation from the land. This is symbolic of the willows association with water that fertilizes the land bringing fruitfulness to the fields. On the eve of the festival and in a gay and lively manner, everything is prepared in readiness. A young willow tree is cut down and re-erected at the place of the festivities, there it is dressed and adorned with garlands. That same night all the pregnant women assemble around the tree, and each places an article of clothing beneath it. The belief being that if a single leaf from the tree falls on a garment over night, its owner will be granted an easy child delivery by the willow goddess.

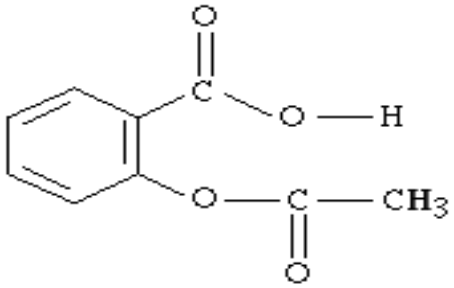
> At dawn on the 23rd Green George appears in all his splendor and knocks three nails into the tree, removing them again he then proceeds to the nearest river, lake or stream from whence the tree was cut and throws them into the water, this to awaken the goodwill of the waters spirits to their proceeding. Returning he collects the willow tree and takes it back to the river, lake or stream, and dips its branches and leaves in it until they are heavy with water, thus awakening the tree's beneficial and fertile qualities. The water spirits and the willow tree's beneficial qualities evoked, all the communities animals, flocks and herds are led to Green George who raises the tree and shakes water onto them in blessing ensuring fertility for the coming year. This done the tree is taken back to the place of festivities and re-erected. Feasting, drinking and merriment then commences in thanks to the tree and water spirits.

Magical Uses of Willow

(User beware)

White Willow is a tonic, anti-periodic and astringent. It has been used in dyspepsia connected with debility of the digestive organs. In convalescence from acute diseases, in worms, in chronic diarrhea and dysentery, its tonic and astringent combination renders it very useful. One dram of the powdered root. One or two fluid ounces of the decoction.

Black Willow: The bark has been prescribed in gonorrhea and to relieve ovarian pain; a liquid extract is prepared and used in mixture with other sedatives. Largely used in the treatment of nocturnal emissions. Fluid extract, 1/2 to one dram



Aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid)

Country folk have long been familiar with the healing properties of willow. They made an infusion from the bitter bark as a remedy for colds and fevers, and to treat inflammatory conditions such as rheumatism. The decoction is made by soaking 3 teaspoons (15ml) of the bark in a cup of cold water for two to five hours. Then bring to the boil. Strain and take a wineglassful each day, a mouthful at a time. The bark can be dried, powdered and stored in an airtight container. The sap gathered from the tree when it is flowering can be used to treat facial blemishes and dandruff. Young willow twigs were also chewed to relieve pain. In the early nineteenth century modern science isolated the active ingredient responsible, salicylic acid, which was also found in the meadowsweet plant. From this, the world's first synthetic drug, acetylasylic acid, was developed and marketed as Aspirin, named after the old botanical name for meadowsweet, Spirea ulmaria. Aspirin is now derived from coal and petroleum. The amount swallowed to date in the USA is approaching an annual 35 million lb. or five tablets a week for every man, woman, and child.

In times of hunger the softer inner bark, the "bast," was dried and ground into flour. Although very bitter it provided nourishment and a source of vitamins and minerals. In colonial times the bast was brewed into tea, which was considered a specific against malaria and a poor man's alternative to quinine.

Willow can additionally be useful in cases of hysteria and nervousness and as a Quinine substitute (although this is used only when Quinine is unavailable). Willow can be used to loosen tightness in the chest produced by pneumonia, whooping cough and other respiratory infections.

- For a wish to be granted, you must ask permission of the willow, explaining your desire. Select a pliable young shoot and tie a loose knot of it while expressing what you want. When the wish is hopefully fulfilled, return and untie the knot. Don't forget the last part.
- When willow wood is carried in your pocket, it will give bravery, dexterity, and help one overcome the fear of death.
- Willow is one of the nine woods of a Beltaine Fire (Birch, Oak, Rowan, Willow, Hawthorn, Hazel, Apple, Vine, Fir)
- The wind in the Willows is said to be the whisperings of a fairy in the ear of a poet. It is also rumored that Willow trees can uproot themselves and stalk travelers at night, muttering at them.
- Its leaves are used in love attraction sachets. Willow leaves or twigs can also be used in spells to create loyalty, make friendship pacts, treaties, or alliances.
- To find if you will be married soon, on New Year's Eve, throw your shoe into a willow; if it doesn't catch in the branches the first time, you have eight more tries; success means you will be wed. The rhyme goes:

"Throw your shoe high up

into the branches of a Willow tree;

If the branches catch and hold the shoe,

you soon will married be."

- Willow has the ability to banish depression and sadness; sitting beneath a willow tree calms and soothes the emotions. Try it out, this one works!
- Shavings of the wood, pieces of bark and whole leaves can be placed in a Dream Pillow or placed in a small bag, either under your pillow or under the bed itself.
- The willow has long been used for dowsing and for finding buried objects.
- If you need to share a secret, confess to a willow and the secret will be trapped.
- Because of its coppicing ability, it is a symbol of renewal, growth and fertility.
- Willow is used to bind the birch twigs to the ash handle of a broom.
- Willow caps were presented to all people who were disappointed in love. It is customary in the present day for villagers in Wales to ask a rejected suitor on the morning of his sweetheart's marriage to another man, "Where is your willow cap? We must make you a willow cap." The same applies to a spinster whose lover discards her for another girl.

Green Willow, or All Around My Hat.

Traditional British Song Chorus:

CHORUS:
All around my hat I will wear the green willow
And All around my hat for a twelve month and a day
And if any one should ask me the reason why I'm wearing it
It's all for my true love who's far, far away.

Fare thee well cold winter and fare thee well cold frost
Nothing have I gained but my own true love I've lost
I'll sing and I'll be merry when occasion I do see
He's a false deluding young man, let him go, farewell he and...

(Chorus)

Other night he brought me a fine diamond ring
But he thought to have deprived me of a far better thing
But I being careful like lovers ought to be
He's a false deluding young man let him go farewell he and...

(Chorus)

Quarter pound of reasons and a half a pound of sense
A small sprig of time and as much of prudence
You mix them all together and you will plainly see
He's a much deluding young man let him go farewell he and...

(Chorus)

As sung by Steel Eye Span on

All Round My Hat.

Here are some alternative lyrics but I'm afraid I lost the email and cannot remember who sent them to me. Sorry.

My love she was fair, and my love she was kind
And cruel the judge and jury that sentenced her away
For thieving was a thing that she never was inclined to
They sent my love across the sea ten thousand miles away.

All around my hat, I will wear the green willow,
All around my hat for a year and a day
And if anyone should question me the reason for my wearing it
I'll tell them that my own true love is ten thousand miles away.

I bought my love a golden ring to wear upon her finger
A token of our own true love and to remember me
And when she returns again, we never will be parted
We'll marry and be happy for ever and a day.

All around my hat...

Seven, seven long years my love and I are parted
Seven, seven long years my love is bound to stay
Seven long years I'll love my love and never be false-hearted
And never sigh or sorrow while she's far, far away.

All around my hat...

Some young men there are who are preciously deceitful,
A-coaxin' of the fair young maids they mean to lead astray
As soon as they deceive them, so cruelly they leave them
I'll love my love forever though she's far, far away,

All around my hat...

Sing All a Green Willow

Text by William Shakespeare (1564-1616), from The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice, Act IV scene 3. Based on an old traditional text.

The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,
Sing all a green willow.
Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,
Sing willow, willow, willow.
The fresh streams ran by her and murmur'd her moans,
Sing willow, willow, willow.
Her salt tears fell from her, and softened the stones,
Sing willow, willow, willow,
Sing all a green willow must be my garland.
Sing all a green willow;
Let nobody blame him; his scorn I approve.
Sing willow, willow, willow,
I call'd my love false love; but what said he then?
Sing willow, willow, willow:
If I court more women, you'll couch with more men!
Sing willow, willow, willow.

More Links About the Willow

About cricket bat willows:

http://www.rfs.org.uk/totm/cricket.htm

Medicinal use of willow:

http://botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/w/wilwhi22.html

A good summary of Willow's occult nature:

http://www.dutchie.org/Tracy/tree.html#willow
http://www.iol.ie/~sinann/grove/circle.html#1

Full of practical knowledg:

http://www.treesforlife.org.uk/tfl.mythwillow.html

Chock-full of lore:

http://druidry.org/obod/trees/willow.html

Good for details on environmental connections and seeding ideas:

http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/tree/sallut/distribution_and_occurrence.html

Good eco-lore on willows through world:

http://www.2020site.org/trees/willow.html

Good for people interested in associations:

http://members.aol.com/birchfire/Page7.html

A more emotional sensitive understanding:

http://www.whitedragon.org.uk/articles/willow.htm

Another good hodge podge of lore:

http://www.iol.ie/~sinann/grove/trees2.html

Herbal lore:

http://www.rexx.co.uk/herbal/uoherbal/htdocs/trees.htm

For historical survey of weeping willows:

http://www.2020site.org/trees/weepingwillow.html

Heroes of the Willow

By Mike, Digitalis Grove

Perhaps you haven't seen the movie, "Willow" (1988) If not, now would be a good time; and of course the DVD version is preferred. The story plot is a mixture of standards and innovation. Evil queen Bavmora and evil daughter fear that a newborn child will dethrone her, kills the mother, and searches for the nursemaid who floats it down the river. Little hobbit-like people receive the baby. But, a normal life with wife and children is disrupted when Willow is asked to use every ounce of ingenuity and skill to escort a special Daikini baby past evil forces to the kingdom of Tir Asleen. Willow's life-long dream is to be a great sorcerer. After being passed over to become the High Aldwin's apprentice, Willow is told by his mentor that Willow's biggest downfall is that he lacks faith in himself.

With an assortment of magical tools from wizards and his wife, a few simple sleights of hand, and a lot of courage, Willow debating life and philosophy all the way with Madmartigan (Val Kilmer), the brownies (Rick Overton and Kevin Pollak) and others. Willow may not be big in size or have fought in any great battles but he proves that strength of the human heart and spirit is a lot stronger than the strength of a great army.

http://www.vkn.com/willow/viewersguide.html Has a good overview of the movie.

http://www.lepconnie.com/index.html#warwickmenu Warwick Davis (willow) fanpage, in which he also played the title role in the murderous "Leprechaun" 6 movie series and Harry Potter (Prof. Flitwick and Goblin Banker) and numerous films.

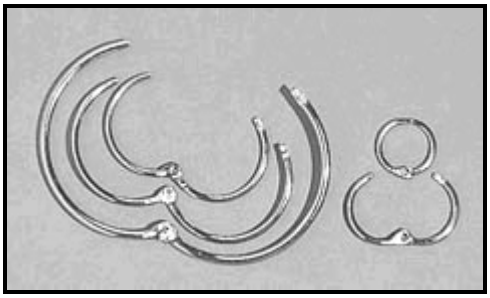
http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Vault/6147/starwars.html Compares Willow with Star Wars. (Played the Ewok, "Wicket," in earlier Lucas films)

Sigil Construction 101

From Mike, Order of Lugh

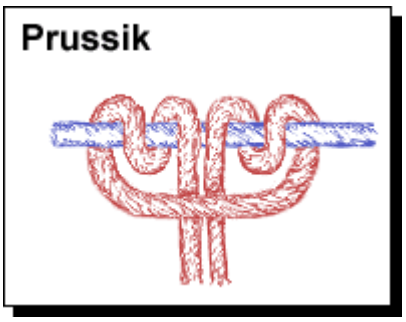
For 40 years, the RDNA, ADF, and Keltria have been flashing those Druid Sigils with a circle and two parallel lines. We don't know where it came from, except possibly from Fisher's feverish mind (see http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/sigil.html for more on sigils), but people have been asking me to sell them one, and I get this wonderful idea. Why don't we just make them? We make up everything else in this group, so why not? Revolt against pre-fab, mass-made religious articles!

Being inspired by Lugh and being a cubicle-bound secretary, I open the drawer to actualize my words. All the materials I need are in there. First take a book ring (see illustration to right) which will form the ring base of the sigil, and they come in many sizes. A side benefit is that you can clip your final sigil on to a button hold, hand it from one of your pierced body-parts, use it to remove ticks and chiggers, or to pick-up and turn-over bacon (large model recommended).



Now to lay the bars onto the circle, balanced on either side of the joint-hinge and the snap-close. These bars can come from snipped coat hangers, paper clips, wire stocks at a bead and jewelry store, or hardware store by the foot. To avoid a sigil that is heavy on the front side, and looks funny when it inevitably flips over, you may wish to in-set the bars. If you have access to a metal shop with a fine-quality metal file (or a simple nail file and lots of patience) you can gouge the four grooves into the book ring. I like to divide the circle into three sections of equal horizontal width, but perhaps you like each section to contain equal amounts of area (remember your geometry classes?), follow your muse here. The bars or rods can then be either welded, set with epoxy, or tied on with clear fishing line (if you're skillful). Don't have the bars extend past the circle too far, or they'll catch on things and poke you (rounding and polishing the edges is advisable) Goldish bars on a silvery ring make a nice contrast. A weight of about one ounce (four ounces is the same as a quarter-pounder patty) will make it hang well, any lighter and it will flop about. I caution against soldering, since the lead prevents you from dipping your sigil into the Waters (if you're into that custom).

The final step is getting the string. You can use yarn (if you're daring), leather, waxed cotton cord (found at bead and craft stores in various colors, I like black), ribbon, parachute cord, fishing line, or twine. Just remember if you catch your necklace on something, you'll get garroted! For the knot to close the string, I like to tie a double-fisherman's knot, which has the added advantage of allowing you to adjust the length while you're wearing it, by pulling the knots closer or father apart.



Attaching the pendant. The following is one way, yea, one way among many. I detest running the cord simply through the book ring, as it never lies flat, the knot closing the string always works its way around to the pendant, and the book ring might open (unless you solder it shut) and you lose the pendant (life is about giving up possessions too, I suppose). I like to hide the joint of the book ring by binding a "prussic knot" over the hinge, between the two bars on the top of the sigil. That way the knot closing the loop of the necklace will lie at the nape of your neck, and can be lengthened and shortened easily.

Cost of the materials, with borrowed tools and free labor, about $2 each. You're welcome to mass-produce them with this design and process. They're not copyrighted. Enjoy.

Prussic knots illustrated:

http://www.hstech.org/howto/rigging/knots/sunday.htm
http://www.deltas.freeserve.co.uk/images/prusik.gif
http://www.kfs.org/~abw/images/kites/active/prussik.gif

Easy soldering:
http://www.allsands.com/HowTo/howtosolder_cc_gn.htm

Soldering basics:
http://hop.concord.org/ieu/ieu.mess.act1.html

Jewelry supplies:
http://www.jewelrysupply.com

Book rings:
http://www.animadesigns.com/suppliesephemera/metalbookrings.jpg

Irish Spring and Irish Cleanliness

By Eric Powers, Digitalis Grove of DC

Okay, I wrote the "Lucky Charms" article for Beltaine, so I had to do the follow up. It is a fact of life for us mortals, as I am sure Nozomi will attest, that things get dirty, smelly and unpleasant to the touch; especially our friends. Until our not-so-distant ancestors, people didn't mind the smells to "risk" bathing, and the oils protected the skin and made wrestling easier. But to prepare wool and clean clothes, you need to remove the grime and so soap was invented. Soap was usually just boiled animal fat, wood ashes (or Pot ash), water and lye.

Then 30 years ago, people learned the advantages of adding perfume, artificial green color, a country's name, a season, and calling it "Irish Spring." But why not call it "Prussian Autumn" or "Ukrainian Winter"? Colgate-Palmolive yields millions of dollars in annual profits from the sale of Irish Spring soap, a product that was only created to improve their image with a bitter and angry Irish community. In fact, Colgate-Palmolive was one of the last large corporations to abandon an officially stated anti-Irish policy. It was well into the 1950s, just a few short decades ago, that Colgate-Palmolive in adherence with that policy, routinely refused Irish and Irish-Americans employment based on their nationality. When Colgate-Palmolive was asked in 1993 to support a National Irish-American Heritage Museum, the request was refused because Colgate-Palmolive was focusing on "the educational needs of youth and minorities." A look at their official web-sites, conspicuously avoids giving a product history (there are five varieties now) or any reasoning why they chose the name. They only describe it as:

"Irish Spring Original launched in 1972 with its classic green striated bar and quickly established Irish Spring as a leading brand for deodorant soap. Irish Spring Original's great, invigorating scent helps keep you feeling clean and fresh." Their selling points are:

Helps keep you feeling clean and fresh,

Great invigorating scent

Rich striated emerald green bar

Used by men and women everywhere

Long-lasting deodorant protection

And of course, “keeps you clean as a whistle” (followed by dirty sexually inviting whistle). This phrase means "Neatly and effectively done; pure." As in the example: "He maneuvered himself out of that sticky situation as clean as a whistle." The reasoning is that a whistle needs to be clean and free of moisture and debris to produce a clear sound. The oldest literary example is Planche (1851) in Extravaganza where a character says, “Or else his head cut off, clean as a whistle.” Which is quite a Celtic feat.

The Celts are in a rather wet area of the world and many legends revolve around bathing and washing, more so than their Saxon neighbors (King Arthur stories aside). In both Irish and Scottish legend, there is the legendary washing woman at the ford (where water was shallow and lots of rock). The warrior, who would encounter her washing bloody linen, may rightly suppose that his death on the battlefield is not far off. Morgan as Modron appears in this connection in a sixteenth-century folk-tale. CuChulainn saw two maidens washing his bloody garments on his way to his last battle. The Washer is also one of the guises of the Morrigan. Legends are replete with her, as are ban-sidhe legends. They vary on whether by sneaking up on her you can change your fate, or whether her mere gaze would kill you. I suspect they originate from women robbing the corpses after battle, cleaning them up and taking back spoils. Somehow the legend is a foresight of this event.

Bathing incidents are such a great opportunity for storytellers to get their characters naked, see each other naked, be consumed by their passions, and make poor life-decision choices without any blame. Valuable items like Swan Princess/Selkie/Mermaid items can be stolen and wives gained, great warriors can be disarmed, and hearts can swoon during bathing scenes. Modern movies have not under-used this technique; but since Psycho, have added it as a good opportunity to kill off characters, after gratifying the young male audiences.

Examples are replete in legends. Angus Og had a palace at the river Boyne at whose estuary the Milesians landed. It was there that Eithne loses her veil of invisibility while bathing in the river. I would think that you would keep that on, while bathing outdoors? The church on the banks where Eithne died was named Cill Eithne by St Patrick. Midhir is a lord of the Otherworld. He lives in the mound of the sidhe at Bri Leith. He is one of the Tuatha De Danann and the foster father to Oenghus, who is the child of Eithne, the result of her seducing by Eochy. The seduction comes about when Elkmar, her husband, is put under a spell where he loses track of time. He believes himself to have been away overnight whereas he has slept for nine months, allowing the birth of the child. Midhir, himself, falls in love with a mortal, a girl called Etain, who he also sees bathing. She is the daughter of Aillil. They fall in love with each other at first sight and are soon in bed together. This creates something of a problem when he returns home and presents Etain to his wife, Fuamnach, who (like Juno) finds no ends of means to torment him and young lovers; starting a tragic cycle of stories. This was quite a mess out of trying to get clean.

Nessa, the wife of Cathbad the Druid was another bathing beauty. Her name was originally Assa or "Gentle," but after Cathbad had killed all her tutors, she took up arms as a woman warrior and was afterwards called "Ungentle" or Niassa (Nessa). Cathbad surprised her bathing without her weapons, but he spared her and granted her only to have her as his wife. She bore Conchobar on the day prophesied as the birthday of Christ. I'd have rewritten the ending a little differently.

There is a place called Abbeyfeale in County Limerick (Gaelic on map: Mainistir na Fiale meaning from the river Fiale), which is traditionally derived from the legendary Fial, wife of Lewy. She was spotted by him while she was bathing naked in the river and not realizing that the voyeur was her husband expired from shock and shame. The abbey was founded by Brian O'Brien in 1188, upon an earlier foundation.

Maurice was walking one day by the shore of Lough Gur when he saw the beautiful otherworld woman Aine bathing. He seized her cloak, which act magically put her into his power, and then lay with her. He probably did something else, for in this way Gearoid laria was conceived, and when he was born, Aine appeared at the castle of the Earl to present the child to him. There's a shocker for him!

One book I read mentioned:

> Certain Irish social customs are also recounted in the Hisperica Famina. The early Irish frequently bathed frequently and considered bathing of guests as an act of hospitality. One text describes the custom of cleaning the feet of travelers: "Fill the steady hand basin with water and wash your dirty feet with flowing draughts; wipe clean your muddy soles with the clear liquid," and again: "pour a clear draught from the wooden tank and wash your dirty feet." The early Irish had a highly developed vocabulary for bathing, with separate words for washing the feet, the hands, hair, or immersing the entire body. For example; Osaic was the Old Irish word for washing the feet.

Now, we know the Celts used soap long before the Romans did, because those new-comer Romans built their empire long after the Celts arrived in the region, but they used it to wash their hands in the morning and during bathing. After bathing they would comb oil and scented herbs into their hair. The Romans rubbed their bodies with olive oil and herbs and then scraped it off with a device called a speculum. Another little tidbit about this type of "bathing" is when the gladiators did it, the "residue" of combined sweat dirt and the oil concoction was sold to wealthy women as a virility drug that was taken internally. Of course the more famous the gladiator the more expensive it was. (And the Romans called us barbarians) Pretty disgusting isn't it?

While the Celts on the other hand used soap made from vegetable oil and herbs (kind of like what we have now) the only difference per se was the inclusion of lye. Another odd little tidbit about Celtic grooming is that they used stale urine to bleach their hair white, possible inspiring tales of blond Celts, when (touristy commercials aside) in fact most Celts are dark or brunettes. We also know from tales of Celtic grooming habits of all the body-paints, make-up and cosmetics that the Celts (or at least the upper-class) used, and this requires something to remove them before reapplication, i.e. soap.

There are also several Fulacht Fiadh (kidney or horse-shoe shaped mounds of burnt stone surrounding a wood or stone lined trough set into the ground), such as in Lochadoon Valley in Cloghane. Warriors of the Fianna, or anyone on extended summer hunts, wouldn't want to haul around a big iron pot and a deer, so they need to cook big hunks of deer or boar somehow. First a stone or timber-lined trough near a stream would be filled with water and then rock would be heated in an adjacent fire before being dropped into the water, a process that was continued until the water boiled. The joints of meat were then placed in the water to boil. It may sound pretty unlikely, but modern archaeological experiments have shown it to be a quite economical and effective method of cooking. It has also been suggested that Fulacht Fiadh were used for bathing or as saunas.

According to a link (listed below), the Gaels were also into building Sweathouses known as Teach an Allais, which may have been derived from all the Viking colonies in the Gaeltacht region, perhaps lasting as long as 1902 in distant rural areas without running water? 80 sweathouses existed in Co. Leitrim in the late 19th Century, but seem to be limited to Co. Leitrim, Fermanagh, Cavan, Sligo, and a few isles of western

Scotland; Jura, Colonsay, Argyll, and Kilmartin Valley. They are highly dismantable stone-igloos, and possibly were recycled in other regions. Sweating removes poisons in the body, improves appearance by unclogging pores, combats the persistent rheumatism of North Europe and (surprisingly) warms you up on cold nights. Peter Berresford Ellis in The Druids describes one as:

"The further development of the medicated bath was the hot-air bath, used in Ireland as a cure for rheumatism until recent years. The structure in which these baths were given was known as “tigh an alluis,” or "sweating house" One such ancient structure survives on Inishmurray in Donegal Bay and several have been described in the last century particularly in the north of Ireland. They are small constructions of stone, five to seven feet long. A turf fire was kindled inside until the house was heated like an oven. The fire was removed. The patient, wrapped in a blanket, crept in and sat down on a bench. The door was closed up. The patient remained until in a profuse perspiration and then, on leaving, was plunged into cold water and then rubbed warm. The patient was encouraged to meditate (dercad) to achieve sitchain (state of peace). It is not beyond the realm of possibility that this act, found in many cultures in the world as a religious action, had similar religious connotations in the Celtic world." [6]

Most dwellings of the Sidhe (people of the hills) are old raths (now submerged lake forts), duns (old dirt embankments of ruined castles), disused par-terre root-cellars/homes, or still-buried cromlechs (those stones stacked on top of each other were once covered by mounds of dirt). This has brought up the idea to me, that perhaps those sidhe or fairies (in certain cases) were not so much a primordial displaced race, a distant race of gods, but memories of vision-crazed mystics who came out of their little sweathouses, still entranced, and performed healings or other magical activities? Those fairy-tales of people out in the night could be stumbling in upon a clandestine meeting of folk-shamans/what-have-yous in their sweathouses, high on who knows what kind of local weed. A nearby stream, which fairies can't cross, might be based on ancient cures for madness. Suddenly surprising the patient with a plunge into cold water was practiced from ancient times to the 19th Century. Boats were constructed which would break up and force patients to swim to the shore in the cold water and there were bridges that would collapse when patients were crossing them. The cold water shower or plunge was a "shock" treatment designed to bring a deranged person to his/her senses. It is an intriguing idea.

Several other culture/religions are obsessive about cleanliness, possibly because it's healthy, but perhaps to distance themselves from the grubby peasants who don't have the time to clean things up as well as a church with excess lazy layman's labor. Shinto revolves around purity, if Nozomi's articles are true; and certainly the Judeo-Christian bible is frantic about being clean (which was interpreted by the Christians to be a spiritual matter, thus bringing on several plagues, and moralistic catastrophes): [most of Leviticus, 1 John 1:9, 15:3; 2 Corinthians 7:1, James 4:8, Ephesians 5:26-27] No where in the bible does it say "Cleanliness is next to Godliness," which is derived from a sermon by John Wesley (1703-1791) or possibly Francis Bacon (1605) "Cleanness of body was ever deemed to proceed from a due reverence to God."

But the evidence does not show that this was the Celts made the spiritual connection, except as described above, they just wanted to look good, and who can blame them? Regardless, you should be able to buy Irish Spring now knowing that, advertising hype aside, soap is a Celtic innovation to Europe (as is the deep plough and iron). Even without your personal home sauna, you'll come out of your bath, invigorated, spiritually purified (Shower Shugyo, anyone?), and not so stinky.

Next time: Celtic Dietary Problems!

More Interesting Links

How to make soap:
http://www.fragrant.demon.co.uk/makesoap.html

The science of soap:
http://cator.hsc.edu/~kmd/caveman/projects/soap/

Soap recipes:http://cator.hsc.edu/~kmd/caveman/projects/soap/aviva.html

What is pot-ash?
http://is2.dal.ca/~jcrealoc/What%20is%20Potash.htm

David Lynch’s review of Irish Spring:
http://www.goddijn.com/soap/sirish.htm

Lucky vs. Trix rabbit WWF match:
http://www.grudge-match.com/History/lucky-trix.shtml

Palmolive exploits Irish:
http://www.irisheye.com/action_alerts/ac3_24_00.html

On being Irish in America:
http://www.inept.com/sporadic/featuresapr98/irish_eyes.htm

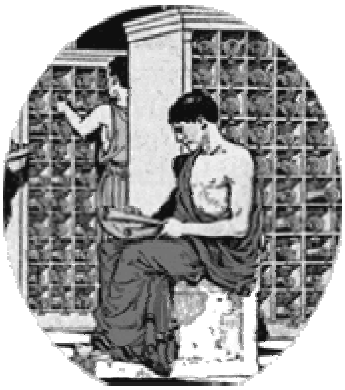
Gaelic Sweathouses:
http://www.angelfire.com/mac/celticprayers/sweathouse.html

Celtic Grooming:
http://www.taliesin.clara.net/lifestyles.htm

Eachna’s Celtic Grooming page with also a lengthy chapter on hand-made woad:
http://www.celticgarb.org/persona/grooming.html

A Social History of Ancient Ireland by P.W. Joyce, Volume II Chapter XXII: Dress and Personal Adornment. This chapter can be found to be partially transcribed on this web site:
http://www.alia.ie/tirnanog/sochis/sochis01.html

"Celtic Body Decoration Pack" by Andy Sloss. This body art kit came out November 1999. It came with a small but surprisingly thick book, a few transfers, and two bottles of body paint. I don't think the majority of the 'kit" is worth it, BUT, the book is surprisingly useful for both basic body-art, and as a mini-guide to Celtic line art in general. It has hundreds of line art examples, as well as how to draw knotwork. There are zoomorphic examples, totem animals, mirror-backs, and more. The book alone is worth the cost to have all these types of images in one handy reference.



Press Release: Pagan Library

June 21, 2002

Envision it. A library filled with books about Paganism and Magick. Not just the few shelves at the local public library. Not just bubblegum Wicca.

In Minneapolis, this is already a reality.

The New Alexandria Library and Resource Center opened its doors in September 2000. We have over 1500 books, several hundred periodicals, assorted video and audiotapes and a beautiful statue of Isis. Our intent is to be a resource not just for the local Pagan community but also for Neo-Pagans worldwide. Our collection is growing every day, ranging from first editions of Gardner and Murray to Pagan fiction (Terry Pratchett, anyone?) Our holdings include books on Paganism--paleo, meso and neo, Wicca, Goddess Studies, Mythology, Shamanism, Queer Spirituality, Divination, Thelema, and Magick We are also the proud repository of two special collections: the Paul Tuitean Memorial Norse collection and the Steven W. Posch Semitica collection. We have what we hope will become the definitive collection of pagan periodicals, and, in addition, the ephemera of our community: festival brochures, ritual scripts, and flyers announcing pagan events.

We are staffed by volunteers, and depend entirely on contributions from the community to survive. To further this work of the Goddess, we urgently request your assistance. We welcome donations of books and other materials. (Please contact us first to avoid duplication.) Most of all, we need your generous financial support.

For more information contact us at New Alexandria Library and Resource Center, 3005 Oakland Ave South, Minneapolis, MN 55407, phone 612-823-3673 (long distance calls returned collect), email us: paganlibrary@magusbooks.com or check our web page: http://www.magusbooks.com/newalexandria/

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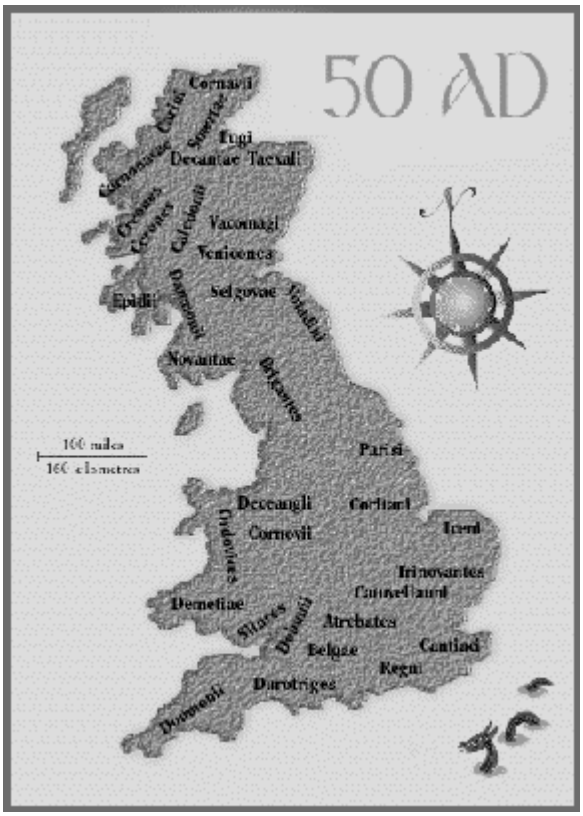


Welsh are the True Britons, Study Finds

From The Independent, http://news.independent.co.uk
By Barrie Clement
1st July, 2002

The Welsh were here first and are therefore the "true" Britons, genetic research published today indicates.

While many post-war historians thought the Anglo-Saxon influence on England may have been limited to political and commercial elites, the new analysis reinforces the more traditional idea of an invasion of Germanic tribes.

Scientists from University College London found a stark difference between the men they tested in England and those in Wales. The genetic make-up of the Englishmen was almost identical to people in an area of the Netherlands where some Anglo-Saxons are thought to have originated.

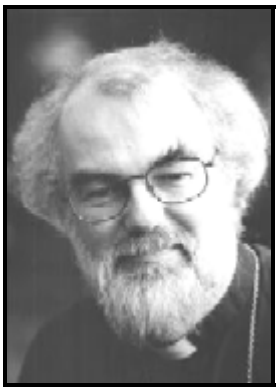
The researchers concluded that the "foreigners" invaded the area now covered by England, wiping out between 50 and 100 per cent of the indigenous population, but failing to move into Wales.

Analysts from UCL tested the Y chromosome–usually inherited unchanged from father to son–and looked for certain genetic markers.

They chose seven market towns in England and Wales mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 and compared the data with samples from Friesland, now a northern province of the Netherlands.

Mark Thomas, of the Centre for Genetic Anthropology at UCL, said it appeared that England was "ethnically cleansed" by people moving from the Continent after the Romans left.

Assistant's Note: Perhaps, this will encourage the more isolationistic people of Britain to be more amenable to viewing their own country as a "land of immigrants?"



Why the Archbishop is Embracing Pagan Roots

From British News, Times Online,;
http://www.timesonline.co.uk
By Ruth Gledhill, Religion Correspondent
July 19, 2002

The man expected to be the new Archbishop of Canterbury will be inducted as a druid in a 200-year-old ceremony with pagan roots in Wales next month.

As the sun rises over a circle of Pembrokeshire bluestones, the Archbishop of Wales, the Most Rev Dr Rowan Williams, will don a long white cloak while druids chant a prayer to the ancient god and goddess of the land.

After a trumpet fanfare and the thrice partial sheathing and unsheathing of a 6 foot 6 inch sword, a citation will be read. Dr. Williams will close his hands in prayer while the archdruid, wearing a crown and shield over his bardic robes, will enfold them in his own and utter words of welcome.

That will be the moment that Dr. Williams, who will adopt a new, bardic name, is accepted into the white druidic order, the highest of three orders of the Gorsedd of Bards, the Welsh body of poets, musicians, writers and artists. The Mistress of the Robes, Sian Aman, will then clothe him in a druidic white headdress, and a steward will lead him to join the other assembled druids inside a sacred circle.

The ceremony will take place "in the face of the sun, in the eye of the light" at the start of the Welsh National Eisteddfod at St David's, Pembrokeshire, in early August.

Although organisers insist the Gorsedd's pagan roots are long behind it, contributors to discussion forums on the Church in Wales website have already suggested it is "nearer to Shintoism than Christianity." Evangelical leaders in the Church of England described it as "unbelievable". The Rev. David Banting, chairman of Reform, the conservative evangelical group, said: "We are concerned that Christian leaders should concentrate on the celebration and promotion of the Christian faith in all its wonder and power rather than dabbling in other things."

Dr. Williams will not be the only church leader admitted as an honorary druid to the Gorsedd. The Right Rev. Daniel Mullins, retired Roman Catholic bishop of Menevia, South Wales, is a member. He insisted: "It has no link at all with ancient druidism." A former Archbishop of Wales, the Right Rev George Noakes, is also a member.

Dr. Williams is a prolific author and poet. His book of poems, Remembering Jerusalem, is currently high on the religious bestsellers list.

The Gorsedd of Bards takes its name from the high seat, which in prehistoric times referred to the mounds on which the sacred kings were wedded to the female spirit of the land. It was invented in the 18th century by the Welsh scholar Iolo Morganwg (Edward Williams), a Welsh cultural icon suspected of sympathies with French revolutionaries and American rebels. On June 21, 1792, he laid out a circle of stones on the grass and proclaimed a Gorsedd of Bards--not in Wales but on Primrose Hill in Camden, North London.

Morganwg, who claimed to have found an ancient Welsh manuscript with the ceremony but in fact wrote it himself, pronounced his first Welsh Gorsedd at the Eisteddfod in Caermarthen, Wales, in 1819. The Gorsedd of Bards has been closely associated with the National Eisteddfod since it was founded in 1860 and the three ceremonies--the crowning of the best free verse poet and the awards for prose and strict metre poetry--attract thousands with their pageantry and Celtic lore.

The Archdruid, Dr. Robyn Lewis, a retired lawyer and deputy circuit judge, defended the archbishop's right to be inducted into the Gorsedd. Only fluent Welsh speakers are allowed in. He said: "The Gorsedd is an organization which concerns itself with literature, poetry, music and art of all sorts including architecture. We meet in a circle of stones, a mini Stonehenge, that we erect in the towns where the Eisteddfod takes place."

The three orders of the Gorsedd, white for druid, blue for bards and green for ovates, are the closest thing in Wales to an honours system. The Queen is an ovate, but the Prince of Wales has never been invited to join. The actor Richard Burton was also a member, as was Lloyd George.

Dr. Lewis said: "We are not like the English druids. The Stonehenge druids are a pot-smoking crowd. Ours is a very respectable society. The ceremony is not pagan. It is just a ceremony. It is quite innocent, there is no serious paganism about it at all. It is a society for the furtherance of the arts in Wales, nothing more. We are not theistic, atheistic, pantheistic, agnostic or anything." He added: "All sorts of people have been members. The Queen was given a green robe although not all of us want her and she never turns up."

He was saddened by the prospect of Dr. Williams's promotion. "Quite frankly, we do not want him to go to Canterbury. We feel he deserves it, but we feel we need him here. He is a fluent Welsh speaker for a start, and that will be wasted in Canterbury, wasted on the desert air."

The archbishop's chaplain, the Rev. Gregory Cameron, defended Dr. Williams. Speaking in Welsh on BBC Wales, he said: "The Gorsedd is not full-blooded paganism, it is an institution making an appeal to the natural universe, to what Wordsworth described as the power of nature."

Resources

From the Read Ireland Book Review
Serpent and the Goddess by Mary Condren
(Paperback; 13.99 Euro/13.50 USD/11.50 UK; New Island Press, 266 pages)

When first published in 1989, Mary Condren's brilliantly researched account of the decline of female power in Western civilization provoked considerable controversy and debate. Exploring uncharted territory, it precipitated and unprecedented amount of research and publication on Celtic religious origins and societal structures. Over a decade later, the book is widely regarded as the pre-eminent book in its field, a classic study of gender, power, and spirituality. Working her way through the corresponding ages of Eve, Brigit, and Mary, the author traces both the rise of patriarchal consciousness and its disturbing implications for society. By reclaiming a matri-centered culture that has been written out of history, the author offers the reader a view of a more optimistic future, reawakening us to the possibilities of an enriched female consciousness.

Read Ireland@Phibsboro Bookshop,
342 North Circular Road, Phibsboro, Dublin 7, Ireland
Mon-Fri 10-5 and Sat 12-5
Tel: +353-1-830-9828
Fax: +353-1-830-2997
www.readireland.ie

Calendar

Lughnasadh, when the Sun is half-way between the Summer Solstice and Fall Equinox, will occur on Wednesday, August 7 as 15 degrees of Leo at 9:40:44 a.m. Pacific Daylight Time, or alternatively as 16 degrees 18 minutes decl. on August 7 at 12:03:32 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Due to the increase in postal rates and the average length of each issue being now 22 pages, we at the Missal-Any have unfortunately had to increase the cost of the post mail subscriptions. They are now $8.00, still a bargain at a dollar an issue. Email subscriptions are free. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd Street, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any
Fall Equinox Y.R. XL
Vol. 18 Number 6
Sep. 15th, 2002 c.e.

Fall Equinox Essay: Sirona

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 1987
By Emmon Bodfish

Fall Equinox, a minor High Day in the Druid calendar. The days are getting short again and the harvest is in full swing. This is the time of Cernunnos, and the other Deities of night, of the Season of Sleep, and the Otherworld. The Celts, as far as we know, did not have a specific lunar deity. (I often get asked for the name of a Moon Goddess.) In researching this I have come across the interesting information on the origins of the Goddess Sirona. Her name comes from the same Indo-European root as "star," although She was later associated with the source of the river Seine, a spring where a shrine to Her was located.

As the Celts moved out of the Halstatt homeland in Austria and across Europe, they re-named rivers and springs for their Goddesses, perhaps merging them with local protective Earth Goddesses. A major shrine to Sirona, located at a spring in Hochscheid has been both traced in Roman reports and verified archeologically. This shrine was associated with healing, and Sirona is shown here on plaques and in votive statues along with a young male figure. This is probably Lugh, whom the Romans equated with Apollo after they took over the site in the second century AD. When Christians later took over the shrine, the dedicated it to a "Saint Sabine," another euhemerism of a Pagan Goddess into a Christian Pious. In late Celtic times the sanctuary was a Nemeton built around a spring whose waters were directed into a pool. In the pool have been found small votive statues of the Goddess and of the Divine Couple, presumably Sirona and Lugh, and also coins and precious offerings. It is described by the excavators as an unusually rich shrine for one so far in the country.

Sirona is portrayed here, as elsewhere, in statues and wall reliefs, holding a serpent, and a bowl of eggs, probably serpent's eggs. The motif of the Serpent's Egg appears in Irish literature and in folklore about the Druid in the British Isles. Possession of these magical eggs was said to bestow divine wisdom, eloquence, and protection against spells and disease. This last quality may be a dim echo of the healing powers of Sirona and of Her ancient association with night and dreams. People seeking cures for chronic illnesses often made pilgrimages in order to sleep within the sanctuary of a healing Deity in hope of receiving a Divine Dream in which the cause and cure of their illness would be made known to them by the Goddess of the shrine. Dio Cassius wrote of a pilgrimage made by the Emperor Caracalla to the shrines of the Celts as well as to Greek and Roman temples in search of a cure.

Farther west in Gaul, Sirona takes on a more diurnal and agrarian image, and is portrayed holding an ear of grain and a bowl. The concepts of healing and of regeneration were always closely associated in Celtic culture, according to Prof. Miranda Green, archeologist and British expert on the Celts. The ear of wheat symbolized the power of growth and rebirth, truth to its name "spica" from the root for hope. Green calls Sirona "polyandrous," but evidence simple shows Her working in conjunction with several different male Deities: Lugh, Bormo, Grannus, and several other as yet unidentified male figures. She is always associated with the serpent itself as an image of

healing and wisdom in the Ancient World, and a symbol associated with the Milky Way in several early astronomies.

Night, rest, and healing are the domain of Sirona. The nights will be getting longer now, taking precedence over the day. But as one devotee of Sirona, in spirit if not in name, put it, "I hold the darkness to be good no less than the light." Now begins the harvest of the benefits of the "good and covering dark." Between now and Samhain, try to visit some place in the deep country where you can see the Milky Way and the dark sky the way the Druids of Sirona saw it before artificial lights and smog lowered our vision. Anywhere you are, though, a few of the bright stars and planets are always visible, even in the city. If you can't sleep go out and look at the stars.

A meditative experiment for the radical and the brave: From now 'til Samhain, avoid all nighttime electronic media. Know darkness and stars.

News of the Groves

Carleton: News from Minnesota

Presidents at Carleton have certainly influenced the RDNA, and most have attended services since the first one, mentioned in the Druid Chronicles EC 1:2. In those days when Nason was President of Carleton, a decree went out from the Administration that all Sundays must be accounted for. Each went to their place of worship in order that their credit might be established on their record.

Well, Stephen Lewis (1987-2002) steps down after overseeing an unusually busy period of building construction on Carleton that gave us the ungainly monstrosity of a recreation center near the Hill of Three Oaks, and also the simple beauty of the labyrinth on Stewsie Island and the Stone Circle of Irony. He was a quirky humorous type who enjoyed student pranks (mine among them), starred in one of my Druidic movies, and attended one of my services.

The 10th president is Robert A. Oden, who comes from the presidency of Kenyon College in Ohio; a school similar to Carleton, with a largely student population in a small rural town. He is described as a Huck Finn and known as a great booster of endowments and protector of neighboring environmentally sensitive areas. His academic specialty is Middle Eastern religions and languages (reading ancient Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic, Ugaritic, Phoenician and Syriac). Interestingly, he graduated from Vermillion high school in South Dakota in 1965, the same year that RDNA founder, Norman Nelson, founded the first missionary grove. Is there some kind of deep concurrence here? His passion is fly-fishing and daily six mile jogs in the Arboretum.

Also in news: A ghost was spotted in a nearby abandoned barn on Campus, with a predilection for pickles and sardines. The Carleton Calendar for 2002/3 has two large monthly photos, one for the Labyrinth on Stewsie Island and one for the Stone Circle of Irony in the Upper Arb. Mike Scharding is currently also trying to coordinate the 2003 reunion activities with current grove members; who are currently eyeing the Campus requirements to register marriages (including Druidical ones?) and refuse to house married ones.

Akita Grove: News from Northern Japan

Things are good here, I have a child growing, so good. Pat say no computer during time to stop radiation and live the simplest life. It is okay, but boring it isn't? Summer is very hot and all festivals are finished. Yeah! Now the quiet time of winter is come. I will read much this winter.

Pat has a new story for the Missal-Any! Maybe I sent it last month? It makes him a busy man, and I like it so. He has new job in roasted-chicken van. He drives around cooking chicken on stick.

The Lunasa Party was a big picnic at the BEACH! Quite fun. Mountain life is different. We will have special ceremony in the town for Sept 11 (your Sept 12th), and my father will be of help for planting tree. We will grow from this.

Shikoku Grove: News from Japan

Ikari graciously made a translation of the Order of Worship into Japanese for the upcoming second edition of A Reformed Druid Anthology. A few concepts were difficult to convey, such as the appropriate level of politeness and antiquity to the language.

Digitalis Grove: News from DC

After a hard summer's typing, I've gotten a lot of the material for the second edition of A Reformed Druid Anthology prepared. Primary changes are an additional 15 letters to the apocrypha, a three-fold growth in the liturgical section (quite astonishing) based on recent unearthings in the archives, numerous corrections to the customs section, two new Green Books, and a few new interviews. I am currently trying to engage David Fisher in a discussion on many unanswered questions.

A third-order vigil for Brother Wolf from New York was rather strange due to the unusually still air both at night and morning. The winds were absent, but a chorus of insects responded. Quite odd. As is my own custom, I also stayed up all night tending my own fire, and went out for a walk in the dark, dark woods of Green Belt National Park near DC. Although only two miles by two miles, I soon became quite lost, and had to spiral my way through the forest to eventually find a way out. Nature is nicest when you have a known path back home, I suppose, and I was shamefully pleased to find a service road after a few hours of searching. For such a young Druid, I found Wolf, to be unexpectedly confident in his foundations, probably due to so much ADF training, but still very inquisitive.

I am moving to a nearby apartment this month and have restarted Grad School studies, and hope to graduate next spring. After that, who knows? I will probably still continue to do a Japanese related job, but with more community involvement, such as tourism or cultural guide? That will be up to the fates.

Brother Eric in the grove, despite his own studies, has taken up the Bardic banner and will run the contest, send in all works to him at ericpowers229@hotmail.com.

Hemlock Splinters Grove: News from New York

The leaves here are beginning to change. Wild turkeys fight trespassing bulls for possession of the berm, the honey bees under the kitchen table are making delicious smells, and the temperature drops into the forties some nights. Irony has started nursing school, necessitating a return to the nylon-strung harp as the fingernails required for playing wires are not permitted in clinical settings. Full moon fires remain popular, drawing the occasional guest up from the cities (Syracuse and Oswego) and a poorly defined get together is planned for the equinox. Anyone in the area on Sunday September 22nd is welcome.

Ancient Circle Grove, MOCC: News from New York

Here in the Northeast we see and feel the first stirrings of autumn. The air is expectant with possibility and it is now that Ancient Circle reawakens. We are currently reorganizing and shall resume our regular activities at Mabon. A harvest potluck shall be hosted and as always, promises to be a culinary delight for all. This is a family event and the widening of our circle during the festivals enriches us all. Ritual will be celebrated and welcomes all who desire to fellowship with us.

A special rite will be held on September 11, 2002.

Ancient Circle remains sister grove to Oaken Circle Grove in Kentucky. Our hearts and souls are one with our sisters and brothers there. Over the past year, we have midwifed Ancient Whispers Grove, an independent grove in upstate New York. (Not an easy birth!)

Our lending library has grown and is now in excess of 175 books, ranging in topics from animal totems to Zen. A schedule of informal study, practical instruction and ritual will be forthcoming.

Dravidia Grove: News from Maryland

All is well here in Maryland, the grove got some much-needed rain, and we could still use some more. Have not had much chance to do too much, this is the peak season for work. It is amazing, but we seem to have an ant problem in Maryland. The resilience of them is overwhelming. I spent an hour the other day watching a group go about their daily activities. Very industrious. Wish some humans were also. (B.E.G.)

My cat has also taken to annoying my wife. I think she is just waiting until it is big enough to make two slippers out of it instead of just one…lol.

—Dolanimus

Cat-In-The-Corner Grove: News from Colorado

The namesake cat passed away, suddenly and unexpectedly, on August 4; this fall's ritual will include a memorial to her. She will be greatly missed, yet her life and contributions will be remembered and celebrated. Fall is a time to remember that seasons turn, and there is an ending to every beginning. However, there is also a new beginning to each ending--a new cat (kitten) has joined, although she is yet too young to contribute anything. (Then again, perhaps she will fulfill that "cat in the corner" story and actually be tied in the corner, to keep her out of trouble!)

Other than that, a suitable Grovesite is still being sought; we make do right now with whatever place seems suitable and reasonably private at the time.

The computer, which had been dead for over a month, has been resurrected--perhaps the Grove may now get back into the "loop" so to speak.

Eurisko Grove: News from Virginia

Greetings from Eurisko in Virginia. We have good news and bad news. The good news is we had a new member join us. This brings the head counts for humans in the grove up to four. The bad news is our friend and grove member recently lost her unborn baby. In honor of Mabon, we are trying to organize a group trip to a local corn maze for family and friends.

Swamp Grove: News from Florida

Hark the Heralds,

Glorious new e-mail and fast Internet connection for the Swamp Grove. We have moved our shrine and circle area about five miles or so, new land and better location (much drier, can actually circle outside all year now) for first time since our inception in the early 90s. Will try to put together a new website and take pictures of the new grove soon. E-mail: spacerock@swfla.rr.com

Oaken Circle Grove: News from Kentucky

From the center of the circle, we spiral out to greet those who seek a deeper communion with nature, the ancestors and the Divine. Oaken Circle Grove provides an enriching and nurturing environment to all those who journey upon the path of the elder ways.

With roots that stretch into the philosophy of Reformed Druidic Wicca, we embrace and accept into our circle all traditions of earth-based spirituality. This rich blend has nourished our spirits and expanded our experiences. We value each member as a vital and unique gift, borne of the Great Mother. We celebrate the diversity of our membership and it is that diversity which brings unity and a greater sense of belonging. Each member is treated with dignity, honour and given the respect due them. We share our vision, goals, projects and common purpose, to enhance cooperation and foster tolerance within the community at large. We teach by example and we live fully and joyfully each day.

We welcome all who desire to share the journey with us and we walk together in Perfect Love and Perfect Trust.

Our grove had to postpone our Lughnasadh celebration until the weekend of the 31st due to a grove member with health issues. Our grove is getting much exposure on groups like the Kentucky pagan network and the Kentucky pagan forum. We will keep you up to date on our grove happenings.

Many blessings,

Oaken Circle Grove
http://oaken_circle_grove.tripod.com/oakencirclegrove/

MOCC—Muskogee/Mother Grove

Muskogee, OK has been sweltering hot lately. While re-starting the rites in Muskogee has been slow going due to scheduling problems, two new local students have appeared, and renewed interest among former members has also helped the slow revival. The Archdruid is currently teaching them Neopagan Cosmology 101: this is the way the metaphysical world is generally comprised, or so we think, or some of us at least. Pay no attention to the obvious b.s., and take everything with a grain of salt. Earth, Air, Fire, Water, that sort of stuff.

The traditional Three Protections over Muskogee will be renewed this autumn. They are placed over Civitan Park, the Muskogee Public Library, and Union Agency Hill (Honor Heights Park). We will be attempting to co-opt the assistance of a Runemaster in casting a protection over the Arkansas River that runs north and east of the city.

Mojo Proto-Grove

Mojo grove is taking sabbatical for an unspecified length of time.

Amon Sul Grove: News from Kentucky

Gandalf and Goldberry recently attended an Adult Weekend Retreat at Crystal Crow's Nest near Beattyville, Kentucky (also referred to as an Awesome Witch Retreat). My first opportunity to party naked in a couple of years. Tending a white-hot fire requires special care when swinging in the breeze. We are also planning on attending the Summerland festival in Yellow Springs, Ohio that is being sponsored by our ADF brothers and sisters in that area. (Amergin, Senior Druid of the Sixth Night Grove, is an old and dear friend of many years.)

I was out of town on business for two weeks during the end of July and we had some drought relief during that time. (Rented a floating cabin on Herrington lake and went fishing in the evenings. Co-workers stayed in local hotels in a dry county and really appreciated the cookout that I had for them that included plenty of ice-cold beer. Still in the broom closet at work so I was unable to explain to them the primary reason why I was at the lake while they were in hotel rooms.) The weeds had taken over close to half of the garden by the time I got back and I was pulling them in the ninety-degree heat. We have more tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and zucchini than we can eat and the tomato harvest may still do well enough to do some canning if we get more rain. (We're still over two inches below normal.) The hop vines are crawling all over the back deck and I'm past due on starting a new batch of beer.

Repairing the termite damage to the log house on the abandoned farm that we own in the Daniel Boone National Forest is progressing well. We now have a floor again and the Fourth of July weekend was the first time in three years that we didn't have to tent camp. The Labor Day weekend project will be to install a new back door to seal the cabin part off from the rooms that were added later. Still debating on whether to dub the property the House of Bombadil or Imladris. The Forest Service map shows the house and two barns with the title Goochland (not sure but I think it's an Anglicization of Guteland which is German for "good land."

—Gandalf, Amon Sul Scribe

News from the East Coast Members of the Amon Sul Grove

Greetings! This is BrightMirage, a new member of the Amon Sul Grove and the official coordinator of the East Coast branch. I suppose that would be me, my cat (Leo), my two snakes (Karma and Onyx), and two guinea pigs (Panda and Rygel).

News in the life of BrightMirage: I was offered and gladly accepted an internship for August at the wildlife bird rescue center I have volunteered/worked/interned at over the last few years. (I was an intern last year but injuries and such prevented me from finishing my "term.") This year has been wonderful so far...there are many diverse species of birds that we are working hard to rehabilitate, and it gives me great satisfaction to be able to release them back into the wild. It makes the long hours and such worthwhile.

The East Coast Branch of Amon Sul now has a new "grove"...inside the apartment! I recently purchased a little bamboo plant (the thick kind that you see in Chinese paintings) that resides in a little ceramic pot with three frogs as the legs of the base. Great calming energy and serenity comes from the tiny bamboo, and it brings me back to my roots as well (no pun intended, really!).

brightest blessings,
BrightMirage

St. Louis Grove: News from Missouri

The St. Louis Grove has a new e-mail address robertbentley@sbcglobal.net was r.bentley3@gte.net.

Cattle Grove: News from Texas

Hey everyone,

Just wanted to chime in and let everyone know how I'm doing. Just to let you know why I've been silent lately is because I've been jammed into a military school in the wonderful (HA!) city of Harlingen, TX. I have no Internet access here save my i705(palm pilot with wireless modem) and all that is really good for is email and AIM. Out of 400 kids I'm the only pagan here, about 97% of the campus is Christian although I did find a handful of people who weren't really practicing and very skeptical of Christianity and they are asking me for information and are thinking of going druid, as they say here...Hoorah! I'm building an altar stone from a large river rock I found on a hike and lugged back and at work decorating it with a sigil using a knife I smuggled back from the mess hall. Anyways, I'm missing the contact with others who share my beliefs so it'd be great if any of you wanna chat my email is evilsmiley@palm.com and my aim name is evilsmi1ey. Well, that's about all I have to say right now.

Peace out,

Joss

Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Budoedd Grove: News from Oregon

Thou art God:

As we approach Mabon, the Order of the Mithril Star finds that it has grown some more. We have 24 new members since Midsummer, and the Order has a new Grove: Cylch Tylwyth Grove in Westmoreland TN. The Order has seen growth this year on both national and international fronts. We currently have solitary members in eight countries, and Groves or Proto-Groves in Washington, Oregon, Tennessee and California.

Our Cybernest email list has 60 members, and our current Druidcraft 101 course (taught three times a year via email) has an enrollment of 65. The current class ends on September 21, and a new class will begin the next day, September 22. To enroll send a blank email to: mithrilstar-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Enrollment is open until October 5th. The class takes approximately 16 weeks. We will soon be offering a more advanced course--Druidcraft 201.

Ceridwen Druid Seren-Ddaear /|\ 6th Order, Clerk of OMS-RDNA, has started a new "Astrology for Pagans" course over email. The course has 93 students (from 10 different countries and 33 states). The Beginning level started on August 1st, and it will segue into Intermediate and Advanced levels throughout the winter.

On March 1st, a new Beginning cycle will start again. If you are interested, please send a blank email to: astropagan101-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

This summer we inducted two "honorary members" into OMS, and bestowed upon them the 3rd Order. One is famed filk musician/songwriter Leslie Fish, author of our "official hymn,"

Sequoia Sempervirons. She has graciously accepted our adoption of her song, and has given her permission to use it on our website. You can hear an mp3, and read the words of this filk song, at http://www.mithrilstar.org/song.htm.

The other new honorary member is Church of All Worlds founder and Pagan sculptor, Oberon Zell-Ravenheart.

Planning for our Druid Monastery in So. Oregon has progressed. Pledges are beginning to roll in for purchase and development of the land, located 6 miles north of Grants Pass OR on 20 acres surrounded by some 850 (plus or minus) acres of BLM land. The vision statement says it all:

"Imladris is a vision for a poly-fideletous-friendly, Pagan, intentional community located in Southern Oregon. The members of Imladris will share a love and reverence for the Earth and for each other.

Egalitarianism will be our greatest ideal. Every member of Imladris will have equal status with every other member. There will be no gurus or cult personalities among us. The community will gather on a monthly basis to discuss business matters, and decisions will be made by consensus. The execution of the business of the community will be performed by a committee of three who serve as clerk, treasurer and secretary for a term of office a year and a day. The same committee of three may not serve more than three periods in a row. Each member will share equally in the work of maintaining the community property, though some members may be more adept at some tasks than others. Members who have specialized skills will be expected to share those skills with the community, should those skills be applicable to the maintenance of the community property.

Each member will be expected to work either inside a community owned business or at a job outside the community, unless they are sick or disabled. As the community grows it is possible that some full time jobs could develop on the property, and those individuals would be compensated as if they worked outside. Every member will donate at least 75% of their income to the community, if earned outside. The community will pay for all utilities, phone, cable, Internet service, food or whatever. A member's long distance bill, and expenses for an individual's vehicle will be their own. The community will attempt to procure a group health care, dental, etc., plan for all the members. Perhaps even a special group auto insurance rate if possible, or a small fleet of vehicles, rather than members owning their own.

Imladris will serve the greater Pagan community as well. The main business of the commune will be to operate a clothing optional resort/convention center where individuals and or groups can stay on the property for conventions, workshops or the like. It would be expected that these types of gatherings would happen during the summer months mostly on weekends. The remainder of the time the commune's guest facilities would be open for use by any Pagan who wishes, much like a motel. There will be a swimming pool, hot tubs and an exercise facility for the use of both guests and residents. Dominating the property will be a 60-foot geodesic dome. This will be the central indoor meeting place, conference facility and all-purpose room. It will be equipped with a kitchen, and guests will be able to get meals there if they choose not to cook for themselves. Available facilities will include: a 50-space campground with a shower house; 10 adjacent RV spaces; five yurts; and two guest rooms in the main office building. It has been determined that if the commune has no more than 13 residents, than they could derive their entire living from running the resort aspect of the community, if open six months per year and averaging a 50 percent occupancy. Residents would have to work only four hours per day four days per week on average (more if there were a big convention using the facilities).

Seven residences (36 ft. geodesic domes) would be spread across the back, non-public side of the property. Hot tubs and ritual space would be in easy walking distance for all. Each residence will house up to five people. Some of these groups we expect will constitute group marriages, or nests.

Imladris will be a community of people who love and care for one another. Everyone will leave their feelings of jealousy, racism, classism, sexism, homophobia and other societal sicknesses behind.

Children of members will be considered the children of all, though an individual child's parents will have primary responsibility. All members will share equally the burden of raising and educating them. The community may eventually have its own school system. It is expected that the community will share in the cost of sending its children to college or trade school.

The spiritual life of the community will be based on those principles and ideals laid out by the Order of The Mithril Star.

Politics shall not be an issue within the community, though from time to time the community may decide (by consensus) to back a particular cause or whatnot. Membership in a particular Party will not be a consideration for membership in the community. Members will be expected to exercise their right to vote and to be informed about what they are voting on, but no one will be allowed to question or ridicule an individual's political orientation.

Membership in Imladris will be open to anyone regardless of race, sexual orientation, income, class or prior religious affiliation. Candidates will be nominated by members, and will be granted trial membership by a unanimous vote. Trial Membership will be granted for a period of a year and a day, at the end of which the member will be given the opportunity to decide if the community is their cup of tea. Naturally they may leave anytime they wish prior to the end of the period. It is encouraged that candidates spend a week or so with us to get to know us before making any commitment.

Imladris will also be host to the international headquarters, or mother grove of the Order of the Mithril Star. Residents of the community are expected to be members of the mother grove and participate in the rituals and organizational activity of the Order. More information on Imladris and the OMS-RDNA can be found on our website: www.mithrilstar.org

Druid Heart Spirit Grove: News From California

Greetings, all is well. I hope you have been doing well. What a fun filled weekend we just had. The Sacramento. Bardic Grove came out for John Winger's initiation into the Awenydd level at our Nemeton. It was wonderful! We had about twenty-five Druids and Pagans camping out and what a feast we had after the ritual, more food than we knew what to do with. My dad participated with us again and this is becoming a regular thing. Then of all things, my brother Joe finally makes it out and I think his spark of interest is coming back to him so he maybe trying to make it out for more rituals!

In the ritual the seeker has to spend about 45 minutes in the dark room (our new lodge out back), blindfolded, with his wrists tied. Then he is given the cup of death by his guide, the hound of Anwyn, my son Jimmy was the hound. He spends this time in rapport with his deity of choice while we set up and do the first half of our ritual, then he is led out to three gates where he is prompted by the hound to answer question given by the beholder/keeper of that gate, eventually after being turned down at each gate he is told that he may go through the little gate, which is, he had to crawl through my legs into the Nemeton--

almost knocked me over, he was a tall one, had everyone rolling with laughter, then he took his oath, tied the ribbon to the world tree, and received his torc of initiation and an Awen necklace. It went great anyhow, everyone's presence added to the energy.

Anyway, this is what I've been doing lately besides working at East West and preparing for the ritual. I finally built the sweat lodge journey house out back.

Duir De Danu Grove: News from California

Duir De Danu Grove (the San Jose area) is holding Celtic night on the second Saturday of each month until such time as we can find a suitable site for rituals, and through the coming Season of Sleep. We have regular hairpulls on a variety of Celtic and Druidic topics. As soon as the sticks can be obtained, we hope to have an Ogham few making session.

Bring a snack and/or beverage to share. Tegwedd's phone number is: 408-257-3864. Leave a message as she screens her calls.

Tegwedd ShadowDancer
Co-ArchDruid and Chronicler of the Duir De Danu Grove

Poison Oak Grove: News from California

Since the Bride-og from Oimelc did not sprout this past year, I bought a Scottish Carlin corn dollie at the Santa Barbara Heart of the Forest Renaissance Faire this August to substitute as the ceremonial last sheaf of wheat for Lughnasadh. This last sheaf, or the person last to harvest his field of grain, was often called the Cailleach or Carlin or old woman. I presented the Carlin at the Lughnasadh service and it is now hanging in a place of prominence until Oimelc when the Cailleach, the Old Hag of Winter, is reborn into Bride, Dawn Maiden.

Last Fall at the Orinda grove site the acorn crop was pretty sparse with nary an acorn to be found, perhaps in anticipation of this year's lack of rain: why send out acorns if they won't be able to sprout? Perhaps the trees did this also as a measure to save their water resources for their own survival. Are trees able to tell when there is going to be drought months in advance and prepare themselves? This fall's crop is already better. I will take special notice of the weather this coming Season of Sleep to see if there is more rain and whether the trees can indeed predict the rainfall of the following year.

Witness the Autumnal Equinox at the UMass Sunwheel

Sunrise @ 6:45 a.m., Sunset @ 6:00 p.m.
Sunday and Monday, September 22 and 23, 2002

Members of the University community and the general public are invited to witness the passing of the seasons by joining Prof. Judith Young of the U.Mass. Dept. of Astronomy to watch the Sun rise and set over the tall standing stones in the U.Mass. Sunwheel for the upcoming Autumnal Equinox. Visitors for the sunrise viewing should arrive at 6:45 a.m., and visitors for the sunset viewing should arrive at 6:00 p.m. The sunrise and sunset events will be held on both Sunday and Monday September 22 and 23, 2002. For those interested in learning about the sky, there will be a presentation that will include the cause of the seasons, the Sun's path in the sky, the phases of the Moon, and the story of building the Sunwheel. Bring your questions, your curiosity, and DRESS VERY WARMLY; a $3 donation is requested. Sunwheel T-shirts and sweatshirts will be available for purchase to help cover the cost of future stone paths at the site.

The exact instant of equinox is 12:55 a.m. EDT on Sept. 23. The sunset closest to this is Sunday Sept. 22, while the sunrise closest is Monday Sept. 23. On the equinox, any observer located on the Earth's equator will see the Sun pass directly overhead at local noon and that person will cast no shadow at noon. For all observers on Earth (excluding the N and S poles), the Sun on the equinox is up for 12 hours and down for 12 hours, illuminating all latitudes! (At the N and S poles, the Sun would encircle the horizon for 24 hours, either very slowly rising or very slowly setting for the entire day.) From the Sunwheel here in Amherst, the equinox Sun will be seen to rise and set through the stone portals in the East and West, a beautiful sight as we experienced last year. This year, the sky will be particularly beautiful as the Moon, just past full, rises and sets opposite the Sun.

The U.Mass. Sunwheel is located south of Alumni Stadium, just off Rocky Hill Road. It can be easily reached from the center of Amherst, following Amity St. to the west, on the right hand side of the road about 1/4 mile after crossing University Drive. ALL VISITORS SHOULD WEAR WARM CLOTHING, SUITABLE FOR STANDING STILL ON WET OR SOGGY GROUND. In the event of rain, the events will be cancelled, and visitors are encouraged to visit the Sunwheel on their own. For more information on the U.Mass. Sunwheel, check out the web site at http://www.umass.edu/sunwheel/index2.html or call Judy Young at 413-545-4311. To arrange a Sunwheel visit for your class or group, e-mail young@astro.umass.edu

Some Optional Activities for Fall Equinox

By Alex Strongbow, a Druid Lost in the Woods

Fall Equinox is the opposite twin of Spring Equinox, only that life is now giving fruit and dying at this point in the year's cycles, sometimes known as Michaelmas in the Catholic calendar; when contracts and rents were collected (as at Easter). What harvesting began in Lughnasadh should be about finished by the Equinox. In times past, autumn was a dreaded season, as people scrambled to prepare food for the long, deadly winter. Only in recent centuries, with assured food supplies, have we begun to romanticize the season. For modern society it is a time for starting school and the end of summer vacations.

It's possibly the last chance to have the types of fun summer outdoor group activities that characterize Beltane, Mid-summer and Lughnasadh. So it offers an opportunity to repeat previous ones, or try out one that you didn't have time for:

- A picnic is definitely in order or participation in final harvesting. Traditional choices would be grapes, acorns, wheat bread, goat, Indian corn, horn of plenty, cornbread, corn, root crops (i.e. onions, carrots, potatoes, etc.), pomegranates, nuts, goose, mutton, dried fruits, apples, beans, and squash.
- Prayers towards protection, balance, and success in life are auspicious.
- Building a doll of grains to be burnt in the spring or fed to animals.
- Sitting under trees with nets to catch falling nuts and leaves, perhaps saving a leaf from each year in a collection. The rest should be made into a leaf pile for the kids.
- The changing leaves can also be dipped in paraffin and put on wax paper. After the leaves dry, they may be placed around the house, or in large jars with sigils of protection and/or abundance
- Take notes on which trees turn color first, which fall soonest, and into which colors.
- Follow the migration of birds.
- String nuts into a necklace.

- Plan a trip to see the fall colors in the mountains.
- Do the Halloween farm-visit early and beat the crowds.
- Make a grapevine wreath for the door.
- Deer season opens. Contemplate it and find some deer. Vegetarians can protest the sporting elements of it.
- A good time to give to local charities to feed the poor.
- When do certain animals begin to disappear?
- Bake bread from scratch (i.e. grind the grains into flour).
- Note the date of the first frost and its effects on plant life.
- Put up storm windows, check insulation and pack away the air conditioner.
- Start notice the location and time of sunrise, noon and sunset and continue through winter.
- Plant acorns and other nuts and wait for spring growth.

Great Websites to Browse:

For associations:
http://www.geocities.com/lavenderwater37/mabon.htm

A nice essay.
http://www.scpagans.net/articles/wheel/mabon.html

Fall Foliage Facts:
http://ncnatural.com/wildflwr/fall/fallfact.html

For fall activities:
http://www.jpc-artworks.com/earthspirit/activities/fallact.html

Crone's Autumn Walk:
http://www.jpc-artworks.com/earthspirit/articles/walk.html

Nice essay:
http://www.angelfire.com/in/childgrove/fallequinox.html

Lots of craft ideas:
http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/5883/mabon.html

Lots of recipes:
http://www.geocities.com/heartland/estates/6120/Holidays/fall.html

High Day Song

This came to our member She of the Storm late one night as she was trying to sleep. It is a belated Solstice song, but it would work for other Druid High Days such as this upcoming Fall Equinox as well.

Solstice Song
(Adapted from the popular Christian
song "Shine Jesus Shine")

Shine, Be'al, shine,
Fill this land with your Solstice blessings
Blaze, balefire, blaze,
Purify us tonight
Flow, chalice, flow
Let the Waters-of-Life be blessed
Send forth the Sun, Bel
And celebrate the light!

Daily Druid Devotional

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove, August 2002

I do this (almost) every day, and it is my incremental regimen, beginning with a cup of steaming coffee. No too much at any time, but like a snowball rolling down the hill (or Milo of Crotona carrying a calf up the stairs everyday) it strengthens your wits and brings you into a greater communion with the world of Nature and profusion of ideas around you. Most of it is stuff we do everyday, but taken one step further in Awareness. It becomes rather difficult to continue finding new examples after a hundred days, and it thus would be an excellent journal activity during the 180 days in the Time of Sleep between Samhain and Beltane. It's as easy as 1, 2, 3. Every day, when possible:

The Triples:

- Take one idea of whose veracity you're sure of, and think of three counter arguments against it or three people who would object to it.
- Take one idea you think is wrong, and think of three supportive arguments or people who would support it.
- Now, take one idea that you're unsure of and bring it up in conversation with three people.

The Doubles:

- Notice one parallel or lesson between Nature and human society, such as nesting and mortgages.
- Resist one urge and give into another urge every day until you are master of them.
- Notice an opposite in the world; and see if you can find a "gray" example.

The Singles:

- Touch a new and different organism every day. If you don't know the real name, give it a temporary name.
- Read one page that you don't have to, on a topic you don't know much about.
- Greet or salute one person you've never acknowledged before.

The Zeroes:

- Listen to someone without a preconception of them.
- Do nothing for a moment in the midst of your busiest time.
- Purposely skip one of the previous activities.

A Sociological Look at the RDNA at Carleton College Or 'The Epistle of Irony'

By Irony Sade
November 1998

Introduction

In this paper I intend to demonstrate that the great sociological theories of Schleiermacher, Marx, Durkheim and others are applicable to the study of the Reformed Druids of North America. I believe that these theories can shed useful light on even a movement as peculiar as the RDNA and that the Druids themselves hold some valuable contributions for the general study of religion. I intend to demonstrate that while they do not call themselves a religion, and perhaps ought not to do so on philosophic grounds, the Reformed Druids share enough of the qualities of a religious movement to be usefully studied as such. I will discuss the sources and methodological problems involved in this kind of study, give an introduction to the Reformed Druids, and a brief sketching of their origins and belief. Next I will address the question of religious applicability, and finally delve into the examination of the sociological theories of Schleiermacher, Marx, and Durkheim as they relate to the Reformed Druids.

Disclaimer and Acknowledgments

It must always be remembered that in matters of religious belief each individual can express only his or her conception of what a religion is or teaches. This is especially true of Reformed Druidism. The Druidic path is an intensely individualistic one and each Druid can only speak for sure of what he or she has found. To a certain extent this also holds for describing the movement as a whole. The way in which I see Reformed Druidism is only one amongst the many views that can be taken of it. Anyone wanting to take a serious look at the subject should be careful to view it through more than one lens.

Which brings me to a certain methodological problem with this study. Most--if not all--of the scholarly work that has been done regarding the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton has been done by one man--Michael Scharding, Archdruid of the Carleton Grove from the spring of 1993 to that of 1994, he cosponsored the most recent revival of the Druids at Carleton (1995-6) and remains an influential--albeit absent--friend at the time of this writing. Michael Scharding majored in History as an undergraduate and in 1994 undertook the wonderfully self-referential endeavor of researching the history of the Reformed Druids for his Senior Integrative Exercise. In 1996 he revised this paper into a rather longer one, A General History of Reformed Druidism in America, and published it along with nearly all the collected writings of Reformed Druids past in *A Reformed Druid Anthology*, of which he was also the associate editor. "As a result of this research," he writes, "I've probably collected and read more Reformed Druid material and talked with more Druids from the different factions than any other Reformed Druid (except possibly Isaac Bonewits.) This means that I'm either an 'expert' or I am now more irreparably confused in my Druidism than ever as a result."[1] It also means that no academic study of Reformed Druidism to date--to my knowledge--has escaped from his shadow.

Daniel Hansen's American Druidism is a wonderful field guide to the various Druid groups of the Americas, and provides a fine history of the RDNA, but, as Mr. Scharding has commented, "it would not be a good book to compare my opinions against as I had a great deal to do with getting [it] published."

Margot Adler also talks about the RDNA in what many consider the definitive work on the Neo-Pagan movement, *Drawing Down the Moon*, but says very little that Scharding does not.

Isaac Bonewits also mentions the RDNA at Carleton in Real Magic but discusses them primarily in terms of one of their rituals, which he uses as an example to illustrate his theories on magic working. In short, beyond a few oral interviews performed by the College archivist and others and the preserved writings of past and present Druids there is little written work to study.

To date, Michael Scharding represents the most influential academic voice in the study of Reformed Druidism. Except by performing new, original research it is nearly impossible not to be influenced by his perspective on the movement. As mentioned above, any adequate study of religion ought to view it through more than one lens. Luckily most of the progenitors of the movement are still alive and much of its history has been recorded and stored so the possibility of original studies remains. I write this merely to make the reader aware of Scharding's influence. The study of Reformed Druidism is both indebted to and dominated by him, and, while I have drawn extensively on my own observations, interviews, research, and experience as Archdruid over the past three years, this paper is no exception. People who wish a clearer look at the movement are encouraged to explore it for themselves.

Finally let me make one technical note. Wherever I refer to 'Druids' in this paper I mean the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College, past and present. I do not intend to discuss the Paleo-Druids of the Old World, nor the Meso-Druids of Brittany revived in 1717, nor most of the other Neo-Druid groups in America except as they directly relate to our understanding of the RDNA. If you want an overview of them, read Hansen. With that caveat, let us begin.

Irony Sade
Prentice Hall 206
November 1998

Section I

An Introduction to Reformed Druidism

"Religions that combine humor, play, and seriousness are a rare species," Margot Adler wrote. "Once you embark on a journey of change in perception, even when you start this journey as 'play,' you can end up in waters far different from those you may have originally intended to enter."[2] Reformed Druidism represents the embodiment of this sentiment. Created partially as a joke, partially as a reaction against authority, it nonetheless blossomed and grew far beyond the hopes and desires of its founders, becoming both sillier than they had intended, and far more serious than they had ever imagined.

1 In his forward to A General History... *A Reformed Druid Anthology*, pp. 331.
A Reformed Druid Anthology, pp. 16

2 Margot Adler*, Drawing Down the Moon*, pp. 299-300

Reformed Druidism began at Carleton as a humorous response to the ruling that all students attend a set number of religious services each term. The early flavor of the movement was always one of serious tongue-in-cheek, a combination of the intentionally profound with the pointlessly silly. The early Liturgy, for instance, was written in a playful pseudo-King James style both to provide a semblance of legitimacy and to tease the traditional profundity of holy writings. At the same time it contains some incredibly meaningful passages. Deborah Frangquist, one of the early formative members of the RDNA, recalls one of them nearly thirty years later.

> O Lord, forgive these three sins, which are due to our human limitations:
>
> Thou art everywhere, but we worship Thee here;
>
> Thou art without form, but we worship Thee in these forms;
>
> Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, but we offer unto Thee these, our prayers and sacrifices.

"I still find that one of the most profound spiritual statements I have ever heard," she recalls. "It informs my understanding of what I as a believing Christian am doing in Christian liturgy, including the Eucharist. Every time I ended out on the Hill somewhere saying that prayer, I was moved anew by it, and I don't think I was alone in that." [3] The Druids at Carleton today continue to exhibit this characteristic blend of the meaningful and the frivolous. Their celebration of Beltane--the first of May--in 1998 included both a pair of weddings as serious and beautiful as the nuptial pairs could ask and an extended bout of 'doughnut fishing,' a spontaneous game where people chased a doughnut suspended on the end of a string, trying to catch it in their mouths while being tickled.

It is, I believe, this persistence of humor and spontaneity, respect and seriousness that has kept Reformed Druidism alive at Carleton for the last thirty-five years and enabled it to spread as far as it has. Were it to lose either of these qualities the movement would be finished. It would become either the useless ghost of a religion or a sacrilegious joke. With them it becomes something both meaningful and liberating, a way of searching and of exploring life in the company of others and oneself that is not exactly one thing or another. Neither a religion by its own definition nor a philosophy by anyone else's, Reformed Druidism represents a unique and valuable creation of the human mind, and a fascinating confusion to the study of religion.

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3 This triad first appears in the Order of Common Worship as the invocation and again in nearly all the early liturgy. The Druids at Carleton have currently fallen out of the habit of actually using the old liturgy, but they still read through it for a good laugh and ponder it's many truths. See *A Reformed Druid Anthology*, Part Three, Liturgy of the Druids.

Deborah Frangquist in an interview with Eric Hilleman, Carleton Archivist, October 31, 1993;pp. 450 of *A Reformed Druid Anthology.*

To be continued in the Samhain issue.

Barrows—Mounds—Celts

In materials on megalithic culture I have mentioned that people in primeval ages already known and played energy of watercourses. I have reached a finding at study of history that people of further cultures made use of that energy all the time until our era. This ensued on appreciation of barrows and mounds from the energy standpoint. Barrows are given to a connection with burial rituals though in many cases residues of dead were not founded there. The Czech archeologist Zdenek Merinsky has mentioned in his publication The Czech Countries Since the Arrival of Slavs until the Great Moravia that in the whole Slavonic area appeared below barrows largely firing tombs without typical urns. Better told only with sporadic residues of burned human bones scattered in earthwork, so he has supposed another sense for the barrows too. The construction of mounds was very time-consuming business and the nesting of burial residues to the arranged mounds could be pious as well as practical. The energy function of mounds can be derived from technical literature where all technologic procedures by their constructions were described. The intensified care was paid to a separation of mass from subsoil. It was very functional disposal against energy losses and can be easy experimental proved.

Martin Brennan in The Stones of Time has mentioned how are inset layers of grass and brown loam by layers of slate and flint. The layers of organic and inorganic materials take turns. The plenary part of this material is by the present excavations withdrawn and it is surprising to what kind of rate can be in the course of renovated work fully replaced.

Kurt W. Mark writes in Der erste Amerikaner: “On the open space where they wanted to build a barrow they first cut all trees and shrubs. They removed loose soil and a layer recumbent below usually covered by stony soil. On this clay flooring they scattered then one or more inches a high level of sand or diminutive grit.”

Magdalena Beranova in Slovane: “Volcanoes--they were antique barrows of Nowgorod Slavs. They were cyclical but had abrupt walls. Inside or outside there was a circle from rocks, above all from boulders, and up was a straight plateau. In the course of construction were first lighted piles and cinders was unfolded to the place where the barrow should be located. Up to the cinders they scattered a layer of mold to which they buried either in urns or in sockets. The next layer about 20 cm was again the cinders shuffled by scurf, whereupon was piled on another part of rampart up to the high 1.5 - 3 m and this operation was repeated. The each part of rampart was covered by a sward.”

Zdenek Merinsky has mentioned, ”Before own filling of barrow was the terrain intended for its creation compared, leveled and was removed all growth. In the course of researches on such modified areas for an own mound are often entrapped

traces of fireplaces probably combined with purgative function when the fire was called to burn all harmful effects and also material and spiritual elements. In any case but these ceremonies did not cohere with own cremation that proceeded at another place. In a lot of cases and at many localities in so modified area we find the construction of square or oblong from limbs, logs or scantlings from various species. Till this time explored residues of these wooden formations indicate that they were not constructions to all intents and purposes and a reason of their building-up is sought in the sphere symbolic joint with burial ceremonies." From the energy standpoint was the wood used like insulating material for separation of rampart mass from subsoil.

In Celtic habitations as well as outside were constructed tetragonal mounds long in sides rounded 50 as much as 200 meters. The similar tetragonal mound 70 x 35 meters was constructed in the embattled habitation Zavist. At its periphery was built up a triangular mainly earthen mound in the width of ground 10 meters and 9 meters high. About 20,000 tons of earth and stones were needed for the construction of this mound. In other cases were earthen mounds smaller or the area was marked by the other way. Near village Makotrasy on sixty hectares big development from Younger Stone Age archeologists uncovered a square with sides around 300 meters formed by moat and initially also by palisade. Roundels originated around from the identical period were discovered in Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia, Austria and Bavaria. There are known about sixty. These circular surfaces were demarcated by only one or more moats. The greatest roundel was found in Bohemia near Kutna Hora. It is put together out three round moats per average 90, 115 and 250 meters. The moat in average 90 meters probably encloses the energy space, two others designate energy zones. Alike designate places for what it is impossible to find reasons are situated also at other places.

Out of the standpoint from a conception of mounds it was places with a concentration of energy components--it was a surface intersected by more energy zones. The mold or the rock of surface received from them the energy and created an isolated P-charge. If the energy value of P-charge was sufficient it was enough to mark its energy space by pales or by a ditch. The ritual place was prepared for transferring the energy to people coming together. People felt there fine and gladly listened to suggestions of their spiritual leaders.

In another case when the energy value of P-charge in the concentration place of energy components was not optimal and had to be increased, it was resolved by mass enlargement of energy place--by the construction of mound. The identical result could be reached at apposition of mass to one pile. In this case would be but necessary for the meeting of people to mark more the energy space in which happen to transition of energy. The pile of earth in the center of meeting-place would be in the way as well as in the center of cathedral. The different materiality of mounds reflects about various starting energy values of the place with concentrated energy. Places like this are many and in following era there were built labyrinths too.

Long ago there were built in the USA more than 100,000 mounds of various sizes and forms. Wisconsin mounds are of great dimensions, ramparts are built up in a form of animals and archeologists gave them the name Effigy Mounds. These mounds had probably the same function like Celts areas bounded by ramparts. With notation by energy places with symbols of animals we can meet also on the plateau Nazca.

The order of Cistercians built their monasteries in central and top parts of watercourses, where quicker running water gains larger energy values and so creates effective conditions for the transition of energy to another matter. The whole area was situated to the energy space of watercourse. Below grounds of the church was installed a water piping where was enabled to manipulate with the energy value of church by the regulated flow of water. The same regulating equipment already had some megalithic constructions. In central and northern Europe were built more than thousand of Cistercian monasteries. The Cistercians also began to build gothic cathedrals that could seat more people. Cathedrals were built in towns with heavy concentration of inhabitants and at places with fewer folks were built churches. Near cathedrals and churches was not required to regulate the energy value by water running through, they were built at energy places and amassing of energy also ensured towers--they operated like menhirs (the known effect "charge flux"). The increased energy value of churches also bears to the reality that people did not stay there the whole day and manses were placed in the vicinity. The mass energy of church was dimensioned so that during the divine service a man drew such amount of energy what prospered to his fitness. A longer stay in a strong energy environment could call up an opposite effect.

People of megalithic culture, Etruscans, Celts, Slavs and people of the Middle Ages as well as other cultures on other continents built the energy constructions that prospered to their fitness. In the 21st century our advanced civilization builds up resembling constructions too but has no idea of their effect to organisms. They are mainly dumps of ground from large constructions, piles of material from abandoned mines, tips, some large buildings, energy systems etc. Energy components of natural and civilized sources what are interactive, in a large apposition of material could induce a harmful overstrain which negative influences the human health.

The description of energy in English you can find at http://www.pribram.cz/centrum in Czech in my book Nezname Energie-(Unknown Energies) that has been published in Czech Republic by publishing house Dialog.

Miroslav Provod, centrum1@ipnet.cz or centrum11@volny.cz

The Oak Tree: Quirky Quercus

By Sam Peeples, Free-roaming Druid

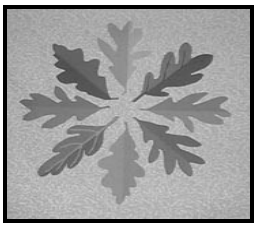
I have a soft spot in my heart for the Oak tree, both because of its Celtic associations and its general usefulness to society. I had a tree house as a young boy, cradled in those mighty boughs, and could clamper easily up the branches. Many wars were fought from that platform, and many days spent reading comic books and just sleeping in the breeze while leaves rustled overhead. With that in mind, we finally come around to do the most famous of the Celtic trees. There was so much information on the Internet, it was hard to narrow down the information that I thought was appropriate. Does one really need to know what color is associated with the oak? Any way, here we go.

Etymology

The Anglo-Saxon root of Oak is "Ac" or "Aik" and the fruit "Aik-com," the Irish called it "daur," the Welsh "dar" or "derw;" which is cognate with Greek "drus." The technical name of the Oak is said to be derived from the Celtic “quer” (fine) and “cuez” (tree). We, of course, love to note that the term "druid" is derived from the Indo-European rook of *der=oak and *wid=knowledge. Interestingly, the root for oak is also the root for the English wood "door." Many deities associated with portals or doorways are thus associated with the Oak.

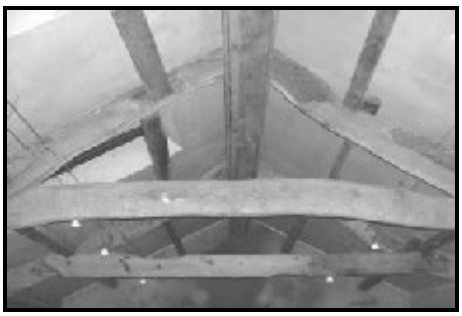
Physical Characteristics

Although slow in growth, some species of oak will reach 150' in height, 13’ in girth and 46' in circumference (some grew much larger) and 800 years of age. There are about 80 species and hybridization is quite common, with the offspring of new species quickly adapting to new climatic conditions by interbreeding with local variants. In America, the most prominent are the White Oak (Eastern), Swamp Oak (Southern), and Burr Oak (Central). Species have adapted to Oak Savannah, Pine Forests, Appalachian Mountains, and Southern flood plain forest. The English Common Oak and Sessile Oak are rather similar to their American cousins, except they have this annoying accent and dry sense of humor. It is often a dominant canopy tree, which craves sunlight, and is useful in land reclamation on disturbed sites. It prefers elevations under 2,000 feet, but will be found as a scrub tree until 4,500 feet in altitude. It is resistant to fire, as long as there is little shade during recovery, with heavy damage in growing season killing only 60% of the trees if less that 66% of circumference is charred (and dormant season casualties are only 20%) due to underground reproductive centers. Acorns do not survive fire at all. Nicks or scratches or stumps (under 16 inches) have been known to sprout, and sprout best when cut in dormant season.



Oak leaves are amongst the most easily identified leaves for school children; followed by maple, dandelions and (surprisingly) marijuana. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Society for Creative Anachronism lists the oak leaves and acorns as the most common heraldic plant device. Leaves emerge in Mid-March to May depending on climate. The yellow staminate flowers grow at the ends of branches. In August at the height of the summer when most other trees are wilting from the heat, the oak produces a new leaf called "Lammas shoots" thus adding new color and freshness to the tree. These new leafy shoots are golden-pink when young, turning from pale to dark green as they harden. In autumn the oak tree is at its most majestic as its leaves change color again turning from dark green to various shades of yellow, orange, russet and a pale golden brown. The leaves sometime stay on the tree until the following spring or until the new buds forming for the next year push them off.

Acorns ripen 120 days after pollination and crops tend to have peaks during their four to ten year cycles during moderately breezy summers (usually traveling less than 200 meters from the base), and begin bearing acorns usually between 50-200 years of age, but as early as 20 years. Acorns grow quickly in late July, and fall to the ground in September. Acorns do not have a dormancy period, germinating soon after falling, thus they don't store well, and last less than a year, 90% going stale after six months. A 70' tall oak may produce as many as 23,000 in a good year, but 10,000 is reasonable on a big tree or as many as 200,000 per acre, depending on April temperatures and early rains. I personally, have never attempted to count a tree's entire crop. Seeds are often dispersed the farthest by blue jays and other birds, although squirrels are often unwitting assistants. The acorns are a choice food for many species including deer, mice, squirrels, bears, boar, blue jay, pheasant, grouse, and rabbits. The leaves may be eaten in winter by deer and porcupine feed on the bark.



Practical Usage

- As timber, the particular and most valued qualities of the Oak are hardness and toughness; Box and Ebony are harder, Yew and Ash are tougher than Oak, but no timber is

possessed of both these requisites in so great a degree as the British Oak. It is easily machined, accepts finishes well, and glues into strong joints, making it an excellent choice for furniture, paneling, flooring and veneering.

- Many of the supportive beams in Cathedrals in castles use oak or yew, with specific forests linked to the church for its replacement timbers every 400 years.
- Oak has also long been used for railroad ties, fence posts, mine-timbers, caskets, shingles, cooperage, and the prime source for whiskey barrels (white oak). It is also excellent for firewood, and was once a primary source of fuel for eternal sacred fires.
- Oak bark and wood contains a great deal of tannin, which is what makes Acorns so bitter. It can be used to tan leather and other skins.
- The roots were formerly used to make hafts for daggers and knives.
- After the Oak has passed its century, it increases by less than an inch a year, but the wood matured in this leisurely fashion is practically indestructible. Edward the Confessor's shrine in Westminster Abbey is of oak that has outlasted the changes of 800 years. Logs have been dug from peat bogs, in good preservation and fit for rough building purposes that were submerged a thousand years ago. In the Severn, breakwaters are still used as casual landing-places, where piles of oak are said to have been driven by the Romans.
- Quercus suber, Cork Oak, is a Mediterranean variety whose spongy bark yields commercial cork. So you can use your bulletin board to encourage rain.
- An infusion of it, with a small quantity of copperas, yields a dye that was formerly used in the country to dye woolen of a purplish color, which, though not very bright, was said to be durable. The Scotch Highlanders used it to dye their yarn. Oak sawdust used also to be the principal indigenous vegetable used in dyeing fustian, and may also be used for tanning, but is much inferior to the bark for that purpose. Oak apples have also been occasionally used in dyeing as a substitute for the imported Oriental galls, but the black obtained from them is not durable.
- In Brittany, tan compressed into cakes is used as fuel. Oak-bark is employed for dyeing black, in conjunction with salts of iron. With alum, oak-bark yields a brown dye; with a salt of tin, a yellow color; with a salt of zinc, Isabelia yellow.
- Acorns were of considerable importance formerly for feeding swine. About the end of the seventh century, special laws were made relating to the feeding of swine in woods, called pawnage, or pannage. In Saxon times of famine, the peasantry was thankful for a share of this nourishing, but somewhat indigestible food. The Board of Agriculture has lately issued a pamphlet, pointing out the use as fodder, which might be made both of the Acorn and of the Horse Chestnut. The analysis of the Acorn given by the Lancet is: water, 6.3 per cent; protein, 5.2 per cent; fat, 43 per cent; carbohydrates, 45 per cent. The most important constituent of both the Acorn and the Horse Chestnut is the carbohydrate in the form of starch. Acorns contain a substantial proportion of carbohydrate and fat, and in many country districts are still collected in sacks and given to pigs, but they must also be mixed with other vegetable food to counteract their binding properties.

- After the oak bark has been used for tanning, gardeners then use it to make a decoction called "Tan." Tan is used to cover new plantings encouraging them to grow due to the warmth it generates. However care needs to be taken for it sometimes favors the growth of fungi, harmful to certain plants. Tan is also used as a cover for racetracks and circus rings, and as an adulteration of chicory and coffee. In Brittany tan compressed into cakes was used as fuel.

Ancient Oak Groves

Graves suggest that Oak Cults came to Britain by the Baltics somewhere between 1600 and 1400 BC. This places these people about 500 years before the Celts came to the Islands. Pliny mentions the Gaulish oak sanctuaries in 1st Cent CE, Strabo describes Galatian congregations in "Drunemetons," 2nd Cent Maximus says the Celts worshipped Zeus (Taranis?) in the oak, and "Dryads" were "those who delight in the oaks." Irish holy sites with "Derry" or "dara" in them are associated with oaks, such as Brigit's holy cell at Kildare. Many of these sites in the British Isles were approached with dread and reverence by local farmers until WWII. See the OBOD site for extensive discussion of some of these sites and their mythological connections. The second site of the original grove of the RDNA was the Hill of Three Oaks, a place now found on the Carleton Map, and a haven of kite-flying and Frisbee games. Modern Druids seem to prefer Oak Groves, although Hazel and Rowan are also popular.

Mythological Connections

- Oak is supposedly the most commonly lightning-struck tree, perhaps due to a rather deep root system or the ion formation on the tall branches, thus its association with Thor and Taranis.
- Mary was once worshiped as Our Lady of the Oak in Anjou, France. She later appeared to shepherd children in Portugal as Our Lady of Fatima, crowned in roses and hovering over an oak tree.

- In older days, the Middle East was more heavily forested. The oak was held sacred by ancient Hebrews. Abraham saw the angels under an oak tree. Jacob buried the idol of Shechem under an oak. The oak in Shechem made Abimelech king. Isaiah said that idols were made of oak. The angel, who gave Gideon his orders, sat under the oak of Ophra. Absalom sustained his sacred thigh injury in an oak grove at Ephraim. The biblical mother-shrine Mamre at Hebron included a sacred oak in a female-symbolic grove. According to the Bible, when Cain murdered Abel, Cain was obliged to carry the dead body of his brother for seven hundred years before Abel could be buried. To mark the burial place, Cain stuck his staff into the ground, whereupon Seven Oaks (now known as the Seven Oaks of Palestine) immediately sprang forth in a row.
- Blodeuwedd tied Llew Llaw's hair to an oak branch and made him stand with one foot on the rim of a bath and the other on the haunch of a sacred beast, in order to inflict upon him the sacred thigh injury that would allow him to be her husband, and king. When he died his soul escaped in the form of an eagle and perched in an oak tree.

The rapid oak tree,

Before him heaven and earth quake;

In every land his name is mine.

—Taliesin, The Battle of the Trees

- Thor was widely worshiped by Norse warriors but was also revered by farmers and peasants because of his capacity to create rain for the crops. Mjolnir the magical hammer was reputedly made by dwarves from the wood of a sacred oak tree, and not only represented the destructive power of the storms Thor created (the fires from heaven), but its image was used as a fertility symbol in marriages (in its connection with rain and crops) and in funerals (as a symbol of death and rebirth), and for accepting newborn children into the community (as a symbol of strength and protection). Such was he revered that the fifth day of the week Thursday (Thor's day) was named after him.
- When traveling Thor rode in a chariot made from oak drawn by two goats, Tanngnjostr (Tooth-gnasher) and Tanngrisnir (Tooth-grinder), and when moving across the heavens dispensing weather, it produced the rumblings of thunder and sparks of lightening from its wheels. Thor and his followers undertook many expeditions to Jotunheim (Iceland) the land of the frost giants, and there erected high-seated pillars of oak. These they used to hallow new ground enabling the gods to protect their people in new lands.
- Two black doves flew from Thebes in Egypt: one to Dodona and the other to Libyan Ammon in the oasis of Siwwa. They alighted on oak trees and proclaimed them oracles of Zeus, in human speech. The oracles were taken by priestesses who interpreted the sounds of the cooing of doves, the rustling of oak leaves and the clinking of brazen vessels that hung from the trees. The shrine of Zeus at Dodona, where an oak cult grew up, had oracular birds, a sacred spring, a sacred black dove and an iron basin. The black dove priestesses chewed acorns to control the oracle, as they listened to the wind in the trees for poetic inspiration. The iron basin was used as a gong to mimic the sound of thunder.
- The most famous of Zeus' interpreters was an old priestess called Pelias, who prophesied Zeus' messages from a sacred spring at the foot of a giant oak in the grove at Dodona.

An oak tree growing in the ruins of Dodona temple in Italy, where Zeus was once worshipped many centuries ago.

- Hera left Zeus after a fight. To get her back he pretended to marry the nymph Plataea, cutting down an oak tree and dressing it as a bride to make her jealous. Hera tore off the bridal veil in anger, but became reconciled to her husband when she saw what lengths he had gone to in order to win her back.
- When the baby Hermes stole Apollo's cows he disguised their tracks by covering their hooves with shoes made from the bark of a fallen oak tree. Erotic statues of Hermes were usually carved of oak.
- Erisichthion felled an oak tree sacred to Ceres that was inhabited by a nymph, drawing blood when he struck it with his ax. Ceres punished him by sending his entrails to Famine.
- Orpheus led a dance of wild oak trees down the Pierian mountains.
- Pan, son of the nymph Dryope and Faunus, son of Picus, were both hatched from the eggs of oak woodpeckers.
- The Virgins at the temple of Vesta in Rome burned fires of oak wood. The Roman Alban Holiday was the annual marriage feast of the Oak Queen, the nymph Egeria, to the Oak King of the year. The Vestal Virgins coupled with the companions of the Oak King, secretly, in a dark sacred cave, just as they did during the Saturnalia. The new Oak King was the child of the Oak Queen or of one of her vestal virgins. See the Golden Bough for more Sacred King theories.
- Ovid called the oak the Tree of Jove. White oxen were sacrificed to Jupiter as an oak god on the Alban Mount at Rome. The image of Jupiter at the Capitol in Rome was originally an oak tree. Could this have influenced Pliny's accounts to make them more understandable to the Romans, or was this merely a parallel custom?
- The oak is sacred to all thunder and lightning gods. Hercules attracted thunderstorms with sympathetic magic,

by rattling an oak club in a hollow oak, or by stirring a pool with an oak branch.

- The Titans were men who had been stretched over oaken wheels.
- Oak heroes include Ixion, Atlas, Hercules and Telamon. Hercules carried an oak club because oak provides mast. Herculean symbols include the acorn, mistletoe or loranthus, and the rock dove, which nests in oaks.
- Ancient Prussians revered sacred oak trees. The chief oak in the forest at Romove had priests who tended a perpetual fire of oak wood. This tree, draped with a cloth, was considered the dwelling place of the god. The Prussians adored it and hung images from it. There was a sacred oak tree at Hesse called the Red Jove from which omens were drawn and to which sacrifices were made. Holy oaks were preserved in Germany into modern times.
-

Ancient Prussians had a terrible habit of turning even the simplest things, like starting a fire, into a large-scale operation, which may be one of the reasons there are no more Prussians anymore.

- First fruits of the chase were hung on oaks in Saxony and Thuringian until the 13th century. Kirwaido, God's Mouth, ruled ancient Prussians in the name of the god. When he had become weak and sick he immolated himself atop a pile of straw and thorn bushes. The blaze was lit from the perpetual fire that burned before the holy oak tree.
- Estonians sacrificed oxen to oaks, with prayers for rain and good crops. They also annually smeared oak trees with the blood of beasts.
- Slavs sacrificed goats and bulls to Perun/ Piorun/ Pyerun/ Peron, a thunder god, in a grove with an oak tree. A perpetual fire of oak wood was kept burning before an effigy of Peroun/Perun at Novgorod, where the death penalty was imposed for allowing the fire to go out.
- The Bohemian festival of the Little Daedala was held in an ancient oak grove, with boiled meat set out for the birds. When a raven took some meat and flew into an oak tree, that tree was felled. Its wood was made into an image that they dressed as a bride and drew to the river with bridesmaids beside it. A crowd then followed it to town, dancing and piping. The image was saved for the Great Daedala, held once every 60 years, when all the images were taken in carts in solemn procession to the river Asopus and then to the top of Mt. Cathaeron, where there was a wooden altar with a pile of brushwood atop it. Sacrificial animals, the images and the altar were consumed by fire.

Magical Properties and Customs

(Caveat Magicus!)

- Pieces of lightning struck trees however would protect a house.
- Tannin is especially strong in oak bark, which is good for treating leather and its astringency for hemorrhoids.
- Many parish boundaries in Britain are still marked by an old oak tree The following is a quotation from Withers:

  "That every man might keep his own possessions,

  Our fathers used, in reverent processions,

  With zealous prayers, and with praiseful cheere,

  To walk their parish limits once a year;

  And well-known marks (which sacrilegious hands

  Now cut or breake) so bordered out their lands,

  That every one distinctly knew his owne,

  And brawles now rife were then unknowne."

- The ceremony was performed by the clergyman and his parishioners going the boundaries of the parish and choosing the most remarkable sites (oak-trees being specially selected) to read passages from the Gospels, and ask blessings for the people.

  'Dearest, bury me

  Under that holy oke, or Gospel Tree;

  Where, though thou see'st not, thou may'st think upon

  Me, when you yearly go'st Procession.'

  --HERRICK

- An old proverb relating to the oak is still a form of speculation on the weather in many country districts based on when leaves emerged.

  "If the Oak's before the Ash,

  Then you'll only get a splash;

  If the Ash before the Oak,

  Then you may expect a soak."

- Oaks were believed to court the lightning flash. The English say: "Beware of an oak. It draws the stroke."
- British bastards born under an oak were exempt from censure.
- Irish churches used to be called "Dair-thech" or "oak house".
- Cornish toothaches cured by driving a nail into an oak.
- In modern magick circles, Oak is good at most any purpose.
- Gauls ate acorns to divine the future, and acorns gathered at night assist fertility.
- Welsh ensure good health by rubbing left palm on oak at mid-summer.
- In Wales, the rustling of oaks can inspire a poet.

- Remnants of old-time superstitions with regard to the oak were to be found in Wales so late as sixty years ago, when it was customary in many districts for the young men and maidens to dance and sing around the oldest oak in the village. This was called a "round dance." It took place as a rule at Easter, but Whitsuntide and Midsummer festivities were held under its branches.

King Charles famed for sleeping and hiding in oak trees, also reclaimed the throne in his spare time.

- King Charles II (mildly Scottish) started "Royal Oak Day" in May 29th to celebrate his restoration, due to the aid of a tree where he hid after a battle (coward). This displaced Beltane as the most popular maypole day in some counties. Many other people in history claimed sanctuary in the easily climbable branches.
- Oak is one of the traditional nine woods of a Beltane fire.
- Successful Roman commanders were presented with crowns of oak leaves during their victory parades, and oak leaves have continued as decorative icons of military prowess to the present day.
- Germany's put fairy haunts near the base of large oak trees, called Oakmen, who are unfriendly big-headed louts who offer food that will make you ill (usually disguised dung). Pillywiggins are pixies that live in the flowers under oaks.
- Fairy magic can be countered by turning your clothes inside out and shaking them at an oak tree.

  "Turn your clokes,

  For fairy folks,

  Are in old oakes."

- Rain magic: Priests of Zeus dipped an oak branch into a spring on Mt. Lycaeus to make it rain by sympathetic magic. The spring water was said to send up a cloud of mist from which the rain fell. Tapping on an oak door is a charm to bring rain.
- An acorn in the pocket with preserve health and wood chips attract luck.
- Mold off of acorns assists in healing scabs.
- An oak leaf touching your heart will protect you from lies.
- Oils from pressed acorns alleviates pains in the joints.
- Oak bark when finely ground and powdered makes a remedial snuff that can be inhaled to arrest nosebleeds. It has also proved beneficial in the early stages of consumption.
- Sprinkled onto bed sheets it will help to alleviate bedsores.
- A pinch of powered oak bark mixed with honey and taken in the mornings will help and aid ladies with menstrual problems.
- Acorns should be gathered in the daylight, and leaves and wood by night. A waning moon is the correct time to harvest Oak.

- To catch a falling oak leaf will bring you luck and prosperity, and you shall suffer no colds throughout the winter.
- If someone is sick or poorly in the home, place an oak log on the fire to warm the house; it will help to "draw-off" the illness.
- If you wish to know whether you and your present beloved will marry, take two acorns, naming them under a full moon for yourself and your lover, and drop them into a crystal bowl of well water. If they stay close to one another, as though knit by a bond, you will be sure to marry, but if they float away from one another that is a sign that the bond will end.
- Knocking on an oak after bragging will protect you from divine retribution.
- The herbalist Gerard said, "that which growth on the bodies of olde Okes is preferred before the rest: in steede of this most do use that which is found under the Okes..." But rumors are that if done improperly a curse would befall any who came in contact with the item.
- East Saxon groves were dedicated to Thunor (Thor).
- In Scotland, one 19th century farmer said:

  > "It was believed that a sprig of the Mistletoe cut by a Hay on Allhallowmas eve, with a new dirk, and after surrounding the tree three times sunwise and pronouncing a certain spell, was a sure charm against the glamour or witchery, and an infallible guard in the day of battle. A spray, gathered in the same manner, was placed in the cradle of infants, and thought to defend them from being changed for elf-bairns by the Fairies."

Acorn Recipes

These are from THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COUNTRY LIVING by Carla Emery, available at Amazon.com

Acorn Coffee:

Select plump, round, sweet acorns. Shell and brown in oven. Grind in a coffee mill and use as ordinary coffee. Or hull 1/2 c. small sweet acorns. Add 1/2 c. cracked wheat. Mix. Roast in your oven. Pound in a mortar. Boil with water to get your coffee. Add honey, molasses, or brown sugar to sweeten.

Acorn Meal:

Fortunately, tannin is very soluble in hot water. So, peel the acorns. Grind them up. Soak the "flour" in very hot water. The water will turn brown because of the tannin coming out. Throw away the water and repeat 4 times. Another way to do this is to line a colander with a straining cloth, put the ground acorns in, and gradually pour a gallon of water, as near boiling hot as you can manage, through. There will still be some dark chocolaty color to the paste, but after exposure to a gallon of hot water, you can be confident that enough tannin has been removed to render the acorn meal edible.

Spread the acorn paste on a baking sheet and bake at a low temperature until thoroughly dry. If it has caked, grind again, and you have your acorn flour. You can substitute acorn meal for cornmeal in any recipe, or use part acorn meal and part cornmeal, or 2/3 acorn meal and 1/3 oatmeal.

Oak Links:

Full of good lore and stories:
http://druidry.org/obod/text/trees/oak.html

Common Associations:
hometown.aol.com/birchfire/page18.html

Chock full of lore:
http://www.celticattic.com/olde_world/myths/oak_lore.htm

Everything you wanted to know (and more) about every species of tree in the U.S.:
http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/tree/

What you wanted to know about British trees:
http://www.british-trees.com/guide/commonoak.htm

Royal forestry society:
http://www.rfs.org.uk/totm/oak.htm

Botanical Lore and greater details on British oaks:
http://www.botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/o/oakcom01.html

Good local lore of groves across Europe:
http://www.indigogroup.co.uk/edge/trees.htm

Excellent British angle on the Oak's symbolic power on British imagination:
http://www.traditionmagazine.com/2%20King%20of%20the%20Wood.htm

Extremely long and interesting, more so than my article. Music takes a long time to download it:
http://www.controverscial.com/Oak.htm

Other sites:
http://www.growingnative.org.uk/oak_r.htm
http://www.2020site.org/trees/oak.html
http://www.dutchie.org/Tracy/tree.html
http://www.owlsdottir.com/elements/trees/celtic_trees.html
http://www.treesforlife.org.uk/tfl.mythoak.html
http://www.silvabook.com/contents/ch3p64.html
http://www.angliangardener.co.uk/Lore/trees.htm

Bardic Contest II

Winter/Spring 2002-2003

I cordially invite the reader to pass the winter doldrums away by writing poetry, stories, songs and chants. You need not submit, but I strongly urge you to pay off the karma of avoiding those forest walks, because you're afraid of freezing your tootsies off in the cold.

Last year we had 15 competitors, and despite Mairi's departure, I hope that everyone will surmount their shy ways and share their thoughts. Due to a resounding lack of competitors for judgeship, I humbly volunteer to oversee the contest. I will be as impartial as necessary.

Send them directly to me, Eric Powers, at ericpowers229@hotmail.com I am a grad student in Washington D.C., and well known as a writer of odd articles, and a member of Mike's grove, (but that won't help him if he continues to send in tripe).

Standards

1. Poems, songs, chants, short stories are accepted. About two or three will be published at www.geocities.com/mikerdna/bard2.html every two weeks starting November 1st until May 1st (inclusive). You might have to wait a while.
2. We are not responsible for lost compositions or your local weather.
3. We do not recompense the author, and the top three selections (chosen at then end by me and a dart board) will only receive slim praise and a metaphoric warm pat-on-the-back.
4. The words must be your own, but paraphrasing and spoofing is fine.
5. You may borrow pre-existing tunes (i.e. "filk" them) or send original music files with a simple tune (no vocals, perhaps, to save space) plunking out the melody.
6. All submissions are assumed to be without copyright and Internet published as Book of Songs and Poetry without profit to anyone, unless the poster indicates otherwise.
7. Overtly racist, sexist, genderist, and other nasty stuff will be nixed, but if you're clever enough to do so subvertly, congratulations.
8. No bribes under $1000 will be accepted. We must have our principles.
9. Non-seasonal topics are accepted (you can write summer poems for December) and this is no preferred bias for humor or depressive tones.
10. There is no #10.

Update on Sudden Oak Death Disease in California

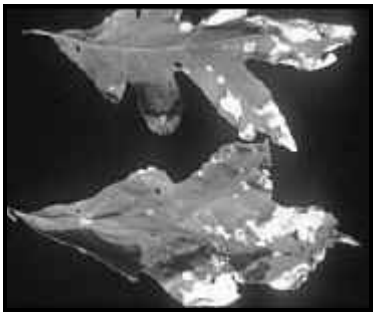
CONTRA COSTA TIMES
Posted on Thu, Sep. 05, 2002

Oak Disease Snares Redwoods, Firs

Finding marks the first time fungus has attacked conifers, raising concern about how far and fast the disease can spread
By Mike Taugher

BERKELEY - A deadly plant disease that has killed tens of thousands of oaks along the Northern California coast is now infecting the youngest of two more of California's signature trees--coastal redwoods and Douglas firs.

The findings mark the first time the fungus that causes sudden oak death has been discovered in conifers, adding to scientific uncertainty over how far the disease will ultimately spread and how dramatically it might alter the landscape of California's coastal woods and forests.



"We're at the point where every single woody species in these forests can be considered a potential host," said David Rizzo, a UC Davis plant pathologist who is one of two leading researchers on sudden oak death.

Rizzo, speaking at a news conference Wednesday to announce the latest findings, cautioned there is no reason to believe that the fungus is capable of killing mature redwoods or Douglas firs.

Still, the discovery of sudden oak death in redwood and Douglas fir saplings adds to a burgeoning list that now includes 17 potential carriers of the disease, including three kinds of oak, rhododendron, manzanita, bigleaf maples and buckeye.

Scientists said it is highly unusual for a plant disease to infect such a wide variety of plants, and they now say that the closest comparable plant epidemic occurred in western Australia. There, a relative of the sudden oak death fungus traveled through root zones to wipe out eucalyptus and other trees so aggressively that entire forests were converted to grasslands and scrub.

Sudden oak death is unlikely to be that dramatic, but scientists said it will be years before they can predict how the disease affects the landscape.

"It's very difficult to say what trajectory this is going to take," Rizzo said.

Gov. Gray Davis, saying the discovery "significantly raises the stakes," asked President Bush for $10 million in federal aid to help fight the plant disease.

Wednesday's announcement also triggers an immediate expansion of a federal quarantine that restricts movement of material from host plants from the area infected by sudden oak death, which now includes 12 counties.

Those counties account for 95 percent of the redwood harvested in California and 42 percent of the timber produced for California's $3 billion timber industry.

Under the new quarantine requirements, timber companies are required to remove bark from redwood and Douglas fir logs before they can ship them out of the state. As it turns out, however, that will have little effect because most redwood and Douglas fir logs already are taken to local mills where their bark is removed.

But the quarantine also prohibits the movement of redwood bark chips across state lines. That could be a problem for the nursery industry and mills where redwood bark cannot be taken to wood-burning power plants.

"Most of them have the ability to move their bark to a cogeneration plant," said Donn Zea, president of the California Forest Products Commission. "There are some who don't, and it will be a greater problem for them."

Different plants have different levels of susceptibility to the disease, scientists said. In tanoaks, the disease has killed up to 90 percent of the trees in areas hardest hit by sudden oak death. Around 40 percent or 50 percent of coast live oaks have been killed in the hardest hit areas.

Meanwhile, bay laurel appears to be the Typhoid Mary of the disease, hosting high concentrations of the fungus and carrying it to other plants without dying itself.

Although scientists have been unable to kill redwood saplings with the fungus in laboratory experiments, they have found redwood shoots and saplings to be infected in several parks and forests between Santa Cruz and Sonoma counties.

On the other hand, Douglas fir trees appear more susceptible to the disease, but scientists have found infected Douglas fir trees only in a single site near Santa Rosa.

"It appears to affect Douglas firs more, but what the long-term implications are we don't know," Rizzo said.

Rizzo and Matteo Garbelotto, a UC Berkeley plant pathologist, said they expect the sudden oak death to become more common along the Northern California coast.

"Humboldt County should be the most incredible place (for the disease, because of its cool, moist conditions) and yet

it's incredibly rare, suggesting it (could be) just a matter of time," Rizzo said.

The scientists said they have also detected additional samples of DNA this year from the sudden oak death fungus in the Sierra foothills, but they have been unable to grow laboratory cultures to prove that the disease has actually taken hold in plants there.

California Druid Candidate for Governor Update

The Orange County Register
September 14, 2002

Spitting incident could cost Copeland the Libertarian vote. The party's executive committee will meet Saturday to discuss pulling support for the gubernatorial candidate.
By John Howard

SACRAMENTO–Libertarian candidate for governor Gary Copeland of Orange County faces the wrath of his own party for spitting on a KABC radio talk show host during a heated discussion about immigrants' rights.

Copeland, confirming witnesses' accounts of the incident, said he spat on host Brian Whitman after Whitman switched off Copeland's microphone. Copeland was recounting past abuses of immigrants and suggested that Whitman supported such treatment when the host turned off the mike.

Copeland got up to leave, heard several on-air comments from Whitman, then turned and spit on him. The incident occurred Sunday evening at the KABC studios in Los Angeles.

"Since I could not say what I believed, I thought I would show what I believed," Copeland said Wednesday.

The 15-member executive committee of the California Libertarian Party plans to meet Saturday in Fremont to decide whether to rescind the party's formal support of Copeland, who lives in Trabuco Canyon. He won the party's nomination in the March primary election against a write-in candidate and was endorsed at the party's convention. The party has about 98,000 registered members in California, including 9,300 in Orange County.

Party chairman Aaron Starr said: "We were mortified when we first heard of this. It takes 10 votes of the executive committee, and we have the votes."

"Libertarians have their principles, and one of them is that you don't initiate force or advocate it. The party has to take a stand on this," Starr said.

But Copeland said the party's withdrawal of support means little. "They don't provide funding," said Copeland, 46. "I'm the candidate whatever they do."

Copeland, who owns a bio-information company, angered some Libertarian leaders earlier this year when he discussed his belief of the Druid religion in an interview with OC Weekly and had his photo taken in his Druid robes for the newspaper.

Resources

From the Read Ireland Book Review, August 24, 2002

Travellers Guide to Sacred Ireland by Cary Meehan
(Paperback; 30.00 Euro / 31.50 USD / 21.00 UK; Gothic Image Press, 712 pages)

This book is an essential companion for all those interested in Ireland's history, mythology and folklore. Ireland possesses such a vast number of ancient sites that most of them remain unknown and all but forgotten except by those who live nearby. This book offers directions to some 800 sites on the entire island of Ireland. Here are simple wells and stones that are still regarded as places of pilgrimage to the local people. Here also are sites of national importance, holy mountains, lakes and rivers created by giants and protected by fairies; ancient churches, round towers, high crosses and beautiful cathedrals built on sites held sacred for thousands of years. The author has explored these sites and reveals their secrets in historical and archaeological detail, the legends and folklore as well as the current information on earth energies relating to the sacred nature of these sites.

Read Ireland @ Phibsboro Bookshop,
342 North Circular Road, Phibsboro, Dublin 7, Ireland
Mon-Fri 10-5 and Sat 12-5
Tel: +353-1-830-9828
Fax: +353-1-830-2997
www.readireland.ie

Calendar

The Fall Equinox will occur on September 22 at 9:56 p.m., Pacific Daylight Time, when once again the day equals the night. At the Equinox the Sun rises due East and sets due West. Wake up early this day and mark where the Sun comes up. At sunset go outside and mark where the Sun sets.

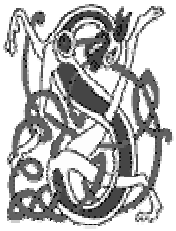
The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $8.00 and email subscriptions are free. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o S. J. Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

 Ye Olde Scratch Paper

A Druid Missal-Any Samhain Y.R. XL Vol. 18 Number 7 Oct. 29th, 2002 c.e.

Samhain Essay: Prophesizing

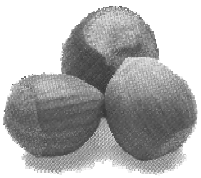
By Stacey Weinberger



amhain, the beginning of the Season of Sleep in the Druid calendar, marks the end of the Celtic year and the beginning of the new, a time the veil between the worlds is the thinnest, when the door to the Otherworld opens and spirits walk the earth, and when communication with the dead is possible. This is the most important High Day in the Celtic calendar.

Samhain is a time associated with prophesizing and foretelling of the future. It was commonly believed that children born on Samhain were gifted with Second Sight or the ability to foresee events and objects. This was time when divination rites were practiced and there are many tales and traditions surrounding them.

In the Book of the Dean of Lismore, a mortal man, Fingein mac Luchta is visited by a ban-sidhe every Samhain who would tell him of all the marvels in all the royal strongholds of Ireland. She tells him of three chief artifacts of Ireland that were found and revealed this night, the headpiece of Briun mac Smethra, a helmet that had been hidden in the well of Sidh Cruachan from the Morrigu; the fidchell board of Crimtham nia Nar left in an adventure and was hidden in the rath of Uisneach; and the minn (diadem) of Loeguire mac Luchta Limfinn that had been hidden since the birth of Conchobar until this Samhain night. The ban-sidh also relates to Fingein other events that come to pass in the next twelve months



In modern times divination rites were still practiced in the Celtic countries at Samhain. Grain, vegetables, and fruit were used indicating the close association of Samhain with the Harvest. These were the foods that would sustain tribes through the winter. Apples and hazel nuts that played an especially important part to the early Celts: they were foods of the Otherworld, were notably used. Hazel nuts were known as a source and symbol of wisdom, and were eaten before divination. The apple symbolized life and immorality, was the talisman that admitted one to the Otherworld, and gave one the power to tell the future.

In the Border ballad Thomas the Rhymer, the 13th century poet and seer, meets the Queen of the Faeries at his favorite Eildon Tree, and after entering her mystic hill, they journey through rivers to the Land of the Faerie, where they find a garden. The queen gives him an apple from one of the trees for his wages saying, "It will gi'e thee the tongue than ne'er can Ice," and thenceforth Thomas can only speak the truth. After having been instructed by the faerie queen in prophecy or "second sight," Thomas is then able to enter Avalon as an initiate where he dwells for seven years.

There are two main apple rites that survive; one involves ordeal by water and the other ordeal by fire. The act of going through water to obtain apples could be the remnants of the Druidic rite symbolizing the passing through water to Emain Abhlach or Apple-Isle. Apple-Isle is where Manannan Mac Lir prepared the Otherworld feast for the eternal enjoyment of those who have passed on.

The Ordeal by Water survives in Scotland in such Samhain traditions as "Dookin' for Aipples." A large wooden tub is filled with water and set in the middle of the floor into which apples are placed. The master of ceremonies has a porridge stick or some other equivalent of the Druidic wand, and with this he keeps the apples in motion. Each participant get three tries, and if unsuccessful, must wait until the others have had their turn. If a participant captures an apple, it is either eaten or kept for use in another of the divination rites.

The modern form of the Ordeal by Fire is known as "The Aipple and the Can'le." A small rod of wood is taken and suspended horizontally from the ceiling by a cord. After it is fairly balanced, a lit candle is set on one end and an apple at the other. The rod is then set whirling around. Each of the company takes turns leaping up trying to bite the apple without singing his or her hair. Touching either the rod or apple with the hands is not permitted.

The divinations practiced at Samhain were chiefly used to discover who would marry, who one's partner was going to be, and who was going to die over the course of the next year. Eating the Apple at the Glass is an example of such a divination. At the hour of midnight the person goes into a room with a mirror. The room is lit with but one candle. The apple is cut into nine pieces. The person stands with his or her back to the mirror,

eats the eight pieces, and throws the ninth piece over the left shoulder. Turning towards the mirror, he or she will see the future partner.

Paring the Apple is another Samhain divination rite performed at the stroke of twelve. The person pares the apple carefully so that the skin comes off in one unbroken ribbon. As the clock strikes twelve the person swings the paring around his or her head three times with out breaking it, and tossing it over the left shoulder. The shape that the paring assumes is the initial of the querant's future spouse. If the paring breaks, matrimony will not happen in the coming year. If any of the readers wants to try either of these divination methods we would be curious to know how they work.

News of the Groves

Carleton

Fall student recruitment went relatively well, but the location of the weekly tea-meetings is in dispute. One member has reputedly "gone deep" into researching older Reformed Druidism. In other news, former Carleton Professor Paul Wellstone (considered the most liberal of existing Senators) is battling a much-watched election for a third term.

Akita Grove: News from Japan

We are doing well. Pat will work at traveling roast-chicken van until December, when the snows become too deep. I finished collecting 20 kilos of chestnuts and other fall plants from the surrounding mountains. Things are developing well in me, and the tentative date is February 4th. I will stop outdoors Shugyo at Samhain, and replace it with warmer shower meditation. We wish Americans a path to greater peace in what seems a difficult time of decision. Love, Nozomi

Amazon Grove: News from Brazil

The wrinkled post-card reads: "Obrigado! Things are well here as the rainy summer season begins. Travel in the Amazon becomes easier as igapos form in flooded forests. My research should be done by March, then I can return to the U.S. Sincerely, Ian."

Digitalis Grove: News from D.C.

Between dodging term-papers and bullets, Eric and I are doing fine. The Fall Equinox anti-war service was emotionally moving, but apparently the bills in congress passed, although we did note that the opposition was more than substantially expected, so we consider it a muted success and hope for further ripples in the social fabric in the upcoming months.

In the meantime, Mike is preparing to mail out the horde of letters in mid-November to announce the 40th Anniversary Beltane service for May 2nd-4th, 2003 at Carleton. If you have access to other Druid mailing lists, please contact Mike at mikerdna@hotmail.com so that he can spread the news by giving you a copy of the flyer.

Garran na Duirliath (Grey Oak Grove): News from Massachusetts

A new grove is forming in Marlborough, MA. Non-smokers are welcome. Contact Dad2Binky@aol.com

Bamboo Grove: News from Delaware

Well, the Bamboo Grove is a new Grove that just came into being (I think around September? That's what Mike has it down as on the RDNA Grove list, anyway.) Many thanks to Amon Sul Grove for their help and advice so that I could start my own lil' Grove in DE.

The Arch-Druid seems to be flourishing nicely...'tis a beautiful bundle of bamboo shoots (three, actually) in a little glazed ceramic vase with three green ceramic frogs as the "pedestals." I'm rather pleased with this turn of events, since I tend to have a rather hard time growing anything successfully and usually need someone to rescue the plant. (Embarrassing stuff for a Druid!)

As for Samhain, the usual tradition is for me to wear my partly Gothic, partly Renaissance dress to classes for the day (providing it's not raining and soggy). It's a quiet way for me to challenge myself...a reminder to me that my spirituality is a part of my everyday life. In my earlier years, I would flaunt my spiritual ways, declaring to the world I was a witch, and one who could call upon the elemental powers. The tradition of wearing this dress over the years has gone from flauntingly defiant, to what it is this year...a quiet reminder that I am what I am. And most importantly it serves to remind me that my spirituality is a part of my everyday life and that no matter where I am, I can be watching and listening for the teachings the Earth-mother and Be'al may whisper to me on the winds.

I plan to give a burnt offering of dried herbs that I've held onto for a long time, not knowing what to do with them. Recently it's dawned on me that I can give of these offerings back to the Earth without harm...sprinkling herbs if I'm outdoors, and giving them up as a burnt offering in my little iron cauldron when indoors, Since I don't know much about the traditional way we honor our ancestors in the Asian tradition, I will offer up a burnt offering of dried herbs in quiet reverence, and watch as my thanks and love rise up to their realm, swirling around them as the smoke rises upwards.

I wish all a sacred and special time this Samhain.

blessings,
brightmirage

Dravidia Grove: News from Maryland

Hello all,

Dravidia Grove is going on a good scarefest this year, we are trying to do the spooky bit for the yard and see how many people we can scare the life out of. The Grove itself is kinda slow, not much time during works peak season, but it is starting to slow down now.

—Dolanimus

Eurisko Grove: News from Virginia

Things down here seem to be plugging along slowly but surely. Gwydion performed his "Jester Routine" at a Pagan Pride Day in Virginia Beach and again on 10/18 at "Harvestfaire" a medieval weekend in Newport News. Jacquie continues her six-month devotional to the Assyrian Gods ending this Samhain. All members of the grove are active in our local Pagan community and this fill most of the undesirable free time we want to get rid of so far.

Swamp Grove: News from Florida

Swamp Grove is beginning to come alive after the hot months of summer and our planting season has started. We are planning a series of Religious Philosophy trivia challenges at a local bookstore called, "Tea with the Druids." All are welcome to try their hand at answering questions about practices and ideas concerning the topic. First place winner each month receives a gift certificate to the bookstore. The contest will be held at Naples Books a Million at 7:00 pm on the last Thursday of each month and will hopefully promote education and tolerance of other belief systems.

Mojo Proto-Grove

Mojo Protogrove will be attending a local "Bowser Boo Bash" an annual event by the local Humane Society to raise funds. Also in the works are a gathering in the forest, much divination with each member using their favorite means, and definitely a party to finish off the night.

Olympia Grove: News from Washington

Brother Daniel has been experiencing difficulties lately and has been without Internet access for most of the year. He is coping well, living healthily, and has immersed himself in the third revision of his Druidism by Mail correspondence program. Recently, he merged with a local branch of the British Druidic Order (based out of England, founded by Shallcrass and Orr), and is seeking to structure it into a stable entity. He wishes everyone a happy new year.

Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng y Bydoedd: News from Southern Oregon

Another turning of the wheel and we enter the realm of the Crone--the favorite season of the Clerk of our Grove--Ceridwen -- for obvious reasons! We continue to grow at a slow, but steady, rate, and we are even now planning our first annual OMS-RDNA Convention--which will take place sometime next year. We are hoping to host as many of our ever-increasing number of Cybernest members as can travel here to Southern Oregon, along with some "special guests" (yet to be decided). More on that as the New Year comes upon us...

The classes are going very well. The latest Druidcraft 101 class began on September 22, and has 85 students. The Cybernest has increased to 87 members--many new ones from the previous D101 class--and they are an enthusiastic bunch! For more info about our Order, go to: http://www.mithrilstar.org

Ceridwen's Astrology for Pagans class also currently has 85 students, who are soon to enter into the "Intermediate" course. This is quite a "cosmopolitan" little group, with people from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, England, Holland, Puerto Rico, Scotland, South Korea, and USA. On March 1st, a new "Beginning" cycle will start again. If you are interested, please send a blank email to: astropagan101-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

And, as ever, we continue to work toward our vision of a Druid Monastery/Intentional Community--"Imladris"--which was mentioned at length in the Fall Equinox issue of the Missal-Any...

Nemeton Awenyddion: News from California

Things have been stirring up in that great cauldron and about to give rise to some very good changes for our Grove's growth and Nemeton site to go into a permanent place in which I will own the property, and still be 25 miles above Chico, Ca. only on a different hill. This is still in the works as I wait for that call on the loan. There will still be ample camping space and the gatherings will be much easier in the winter because we will then be below the snow level.

We will be holding our last campout gathering on the weekend of Nov. 1st-3rd here in Cohasset at the Nemeton's site, along with bardic fire circle after ritual, and potluck feast. I may be doing an intro to dowsing if enough Druids are interested. I'm so far expecting a crowd of about 30 or so. This event will be open to any visitors who agree with our laws of harmony, which you can read at: http://www.geocities.com/sailletree/harmony.html

Our online Seekers classes have been a success and we just started the second Seekers class and the first Awenydd Level class. We even had one of our new members (Laughing Fox) from the first Seekers class fly all the way out from Philadelphia for our last campout on Fall Equinox, we had a blast and ended our meeting with binding ritual song books to use when in ritual.

I also have a new best friend, a mandolin, and I've been working hard at transposing all my fiddle and harp tunes into it, I'm awaiting the cold weather of winter to absorb more musical knowledge with this new friend.

Deep Peace,

Rhiannon

Poison Oak Grove: News from California

The Renaissance Faire has returned to Marin, now put on by the now adult children of the couple who started the Renaissance Faires, which began in California. Through an odd set of circumstances, namely the Scottish guild needing water and my guild having the only running water in the area, I had the grand opportunity to learn how to waulk wool and sing waulking songs with the Scottish women. Waulking is a communal activity practiced by the womenfolk to shrink hand-woven wool to prepare it for cutting and use in making garments. The songs are sung in a call and response method as the wool is kneaded and moved around the table. The last weekend we carved turnip lanterns. Yes the Jack o'Lantern tradition goes back to Scotland! Pumpkins are a New World vegetable. Turnip lanterns were carved and hung on a strong or wire and a small candle is placed inside. This was done at Samhain to light the way for departed souls to find their way home.

This week is the Festival of the Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts at the Shasta Abbey. In the Buddhist tradition, like the Celtic, food is set out for friends and family who have passed on, but on the altar rather than at the feast table or grave. I sent things I thought Emmon would like: an organic Gala apple, beautifully red and white mottled; walnuts from a friend's tree, organic hazel nuts, a small pumpkin, and a beeswax tea light.

The weekend of November 9th I will be driving up to the Mount Shasta to be able to visit his grave.

Some Optional Choices for Voluntary Simplicity

By Alex Strongbow

Looking back on earlier Missal-anies, it seems that Samhain and Yule activities are well covered. Besides if you can't think of things to do on those two holidays, then you probably couldn't find your butt with both hands. So, instead, I'd like to write for a few issues about volunteering and simplicity, a different type of activity, one that involves you with others.

Winter is one of the harshest times in the year, when the Earth-Mother, withdraws much of her nourishment from the northern temperate areas. Bird, animals and people are hard put to survive outdoors in our towns and cities. We've all seen those Thanksgiving soup kitchens and Christmas toy charities, but these are just the apexes of the daily, continual efforts to assist our fellow citizens who haven't been able to meet all their needs.

The greatest obstacle to the joys of volunteering is finding some time to do it in. Who wouldn't gladly lend their energy and expertise to serving our community, pro bono, if we could just solve those little technicalities–making a living, for example, or getting enough sleep? You've heard about the 5% rule, spending about 30 minutes a day or three hours a week on something meaningful? To assist a cause, you have to build up reserves of money, time, and inspiration.

One way, yea, one way among many, to acquiring more discretionary time is the path of voluntary simplicity. That has been defined as "living purposefully, with a minimum of needless distraction." Cut out the junk. Most people find that when they carefully coordinate their use of money and time with their deepest held values, the less important things fade away. This opens up more time and inner space for more discretionary activities, including volunteer services.

How to direct our money and time is a question that requires careful reflection and planning. You don't just throw all you possessions in a trash can and run out to save the world (although that might work). Some of the best ideas on this subject came from Steven Covey's classic The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. This is more than a book for just econometricians, it could also be called The Seven Habits of an Aware Life." It is chock full of good tips.

We all need "time off," a sabbatical to marshal our forces. Some tips for building space for solitude is in Shelter for the Spirit: Creating Your Own Haven in a Hectic World by Harper Perennial, 1997. A quick Druidic paraphrasing of this will now follow:

1. Say No. Save your time and stamina for what truly speaks to your heart. Don't chase every rabbit that you see.
2. Tithe Your Time. Tithing was a time-honored tradition of giving money to charities in a planned, orderly way. Time can also be tithed, giving to something that really speaks and tugs at your heart. You say "no" without guilt to the rest, and things that are beyond achievement.
3. Put Things with Feelings First. Put more importance to the condition of sentient beings than the quality of your stereo sound. This is not to deny the effect that a healthier environment has on living creatures. One hour helping the environment might be helping hundreds of critters and people in small ways.

4. Allow More Time. We often waste time by cutting things close, by rushing about and forgetting and making mistakes. If you always budget in an extra 5-10% of time for a task, then you will usually have time to finish things in a careful controlled manner. No more half-ass mules, my mom would say. If all things go well, then you can read or chat or just breathe. What a gift! You might also be able to notice things that need fixing.
5. Prioritize with the ABC method. Label your daily task sheet with A for "priority--must be done today," B for "important--needs to be done soon;" and C for "necessary--should be done sometime." That way, even if only the A list gets done that day, at least everything that really needs to be done will be done. As time passes, the Bs and Cs will rise in importance or drop off the list.
6. Stay Well. There is nothing more time-consuming that being sick. You're little use to anyone, stuck in bed. Time spent preserving health-nutrition, exercise, spiritual practice; sleep is a no-risk, high-return investment. Think twice before running to catch the bus in the rain, on what a slip and sprained ankle would do to your weekly schedule.
7. Let the machine get it. There is no requirement to drop everything and run to the phone if it rings. Let your answering machine and e-mail be your secretary, and check in every few hours, and you can return your calls at your convenience.
8. Turn off the TV. It takes up time. Choose consciously how much time you wish to spend with your electronic friends (TV, VCR, computer) and don't use them when you're just feeling bored.
9. Put off Procrastination. Some goldbricks spend twice the effort to avoid work. Do the things on your list or drop them. Your list will shrink quickly.
10. Schedule in Fun. Recreation is nourishment for the soul. It is a necessity not an option. Keep it high on the list, and you'll realize what motivates you keep plugging away through a dull job.

By the way, volunteering can be a fun way to spend time with the family, and build up their civic responsibility. For more on "voluntary simplicity," go to Northwest Earth Institute's site (www.nwei.org) or look for more on a web search.

The Apple Tree:
The Fruit We All Know

By Sam Peeples

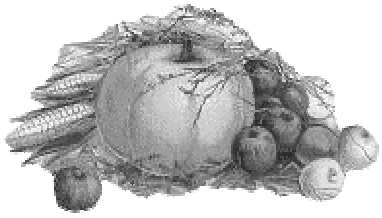
This is a more difficult tree to discuss since it is such an ever-present part of our diet. Many scientists believe it is the first fruit tree to be domesticated by humans. Apples are easy to identify by sight and flavor, and as a result they have deep connections to cultures and mythologies. We see them around us all the time in supermarkets, and apples (like corn) are one of the ubiquitous foods.

Etymology

In ogham script, apple is called Ceirt/Quert ("KWAIRT"). "Qu" (like "K" or "Kw") Not sure why the "Ceirt" is associated with the Apple tree, as Scottish translates Apple tree as "abhall" and Middle Irish "aball." Apple is "ubhal," Irish "ubhall/úll," Early Irish "uball," Old Irish "aball," Welsh "afal," Breton "avallen." According to MacFarlane's Online Gaelic Dictionary, "Ceirt" is Scottish for "right, justice, propriety," though I've also been told (by an Irishman) that it's Irish for "rag/piece of clothing." As the most popular fruit of the Teutonic area, the Apple has appropriated, as its popular name, what was once a common Germanic term for fruit of any kind, "Apfel" being once "apl," and often "apulder," connected with "maple" and "mapulder," and being still extended to many totally different fruit-bearing plants, such as thorn-apples and love-apples. The Anglo-Saxon name for the blackberry, for instance, was the bramble-apple; and that rare old traveler, Sir John Mandeville, speaking of the cedars of Lebanon, says, "they beren longe Apples, and als grete as a man's heved." Though both apples and apples of gold are spoken of in several parts of the Bible, the tree now so called is believed not to have been cultivated by the Hebrews, the citron or some other fruit being referred to.

Physical Description

The Pyrus Malus has over 10,000 varieties, with over 7,000 types cultivated in the U.S., but with only 20 varieties making up 90% of the commercially sold apples. The bark resembles cherry trees and belong to the enormous Rosaceae (rose) family of plants (as are pears), and approach 10-13 meters in height, although most commercial trees are cropped to keep the branches closer to the ground. The branches sometimes have thorns. They tend to be found between 30 and 60 degrees of latitude where winters are close to the freezing point, but rarely reach 15 (e.g. New England and Washington.) They like cool air of valleys and shaded hillsides. There are usually three major splayed branches with 90-degree branches. The pale white flowers are quite lovely and appear before the leaves in May, and are primarily pollinated by bees.



Apple trees may begin to bear fruit around six to eight years after sprouting, and may continue for over century (producing about 800 pounds of fruit a year), but most commercial trees are replaced after 15 years. Most modern orchards take scions, or branches of very fruitful branches, and graft them into base trees to grow better apples, while the rootstock is usually very resistant to frost, making a very robust hybrid organism. Apples are 79% water and 18% air (which is why they float and shrivel so well). They generally have a total of 10 seeds in five compartments (carpels), which make a nice star if sliced horizontally. If they don't have as many, it's probably a sign that the tree was stressed by climate, poor pollination (bees help), or growing difficulties. The better "set" the seeds are, the better the fruit will develop, usually taking 140-170 days, usually ripening in August. The sunnier the climate, the redder the apple on the sides facing the sun. Most apples are dinged or unpretty and go in as "filler" in commercial products. The world's most expensive apples are in Japan and Korea, at $25 a piece for a perfect specimen. Some unusually well maintained orchards in Japan, place a parabolic shield under the apple to get a solid red hue to the entire apple.

Physical Use

- Apples are for eating, silly.
- Apple wood is sometimes used as a veneer for furniture and music instruments.
- Crab-apple tree, a wild variant, has a proverbial hard wood, excellent for cudgels.
- Apple wood is fine for carving and smells beautiful when burned. As the old rhyme says, "Pear logs and Apple logs, They will scent your room."
- The unripe fruits of the wild Apple are used in the manufacture of verjuice, now chiefly made in France, which, when fermented and sweetened, makes a pleasant drink; but in the sixteenth century the fruit was in more esteem than it now is. Christmas was then the season they being served in hot ale "When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl."

Mythological Appearance

The first and most famous appearance of Apple is definitely in Genesis where many people assume that the apple was the forbidden fruit on the Tree of Good and Evil. It simply doesn't state what type of fruit it was, except that it was good to eat. Most likely it was a late medieval tradition based on the pictorial choice of the apple by various European artists. There were some varieties of apple tree in the Middle East, but a citron or fig would have been more likely, if it wasn't just a story. Apple tree, Heb., thappuakh (cf. Arab, tiffah; Egypt. dapih, "apple") and the description of the tree and its fruit indicate the common apple tree, Malus communis, which is beautiful, affording shade for a tent or a house (Cant., ii, 3; viii, 5), and bears a sweet fruit, the aroma (Cant., vii, 8) of which is used in the East to revive a fainting person (cf. Cant., ii, 5). Apple groves flourished at an early date (Ramses II) in Egypt (Loret, "Flore pharaonique," p. 83); place-names like Tappuah (Jos., xii, 17) or Beth-tappuah (A. V., Jos., xv, 53) indicate that they were a distinct feature of certain districts of Palestine. But this might

be renaming of the fruit after a place. We see the apple in many modern Jewish traditions. During Rosh Hashanah, apple slices dipped in honey are eaten in the hope of a sweet new year. Haroset is a traditional Passover dish. It is a mixture of apple, nuts, wine, and spices, representing the brick mortar with which the Jews were forced to build while they were enslaved in Egypt.

Apples appear frequently in Celtic Lore. The Isles of the Otherworld are sometimes called Emain Abhlach, Emain of the Apple Trees. Cormac was once offered a branch (possibly for grafting?) from Manannan Mac Lir. It bore golden apples. When shaken it gives off a sweet sound that soothes sadness, cures illness and brings peace. It is the giving of a similar branch that soon inspired the voyages of Bran in the Immram Curaig Bran MacFerbal. In both cases, the hero soon made a journey to the Otherworld. Because they are seen as an Otherworld gift, it is not really surprising that they appear so frequently in Samhain customs (bobbing for apples on strings or in tubs), especially those concerned with divining future events. It is true, of course, that round about October and November they are a good wholesome food that is both in season and readily available.

Avalon, where the wounded Arthur was taken from the battlefield, is also related. Geoffrey calls it "Avallo" in the HISTORIA and "insula pomorum" (island of the apples) in the VITA MERLINI. It is often seen as having a connection with apples because of the similarity of its name to various Celtic words indicating that fruit: Old Irish ABALL, Middle Welsh Afall, Middle Breton Avallenn, Celtic Avallo. It has also been connected with Avalloc, evidently originally a god who, according to William of Malmesbury, lived there with his daughters. The present case form of the name may have been influenced by the Burgundian place name Avallon. One school of thought suggests that it comes from Irish Oileán (island). It was perhaps originally a Celtic paradise. It was said to produce crops without cultivation, to be ruled by Guingamuer, Morgan's lover, or by a king named Bangon. In PERLESVAUS, Guinevere and Loholt died before Arthur and were buried there. Avalon was then identified with Glastonbury, probably because Arthur's grave was supposedly found at Glastonbury in the reign of Henry II and, as tradition had had him borne away to Avalon, the two were considered the same. However, because of the first syllable in Glastonbury's name, some may have thought it identical with Caer Wydyr, the Fort of Glass, another name for Annwfn.

The tale of the Sons of Tuirenn combine both Irish and Graeco-Roman elements. The Sons of Tuirenn killed Lugh's father, Cian. Lugh demanded that they do eight "impossible" tasks as blood-price for his father's life. The first was to bring back three apples from the Garden of the Hesperides in the east of the world. They would know these apples from the following characteristics: they were the size of a one-month-old child, the color of burnished gold, and they tasted of honey; eating them healed all wounds and diseases and the apples would not be diminished by being eaten; and if thrown, they would rebound to the thrower's hands. The Sons of Tuirenn managed to accomplish all eight tasks, but were mortally wounded while doing the last one. Lugh refused to allow them to use the healing powers of another object they captured in the second task, a magical pig skin, so they died shortly thereafter.

Another famous apple that caused trouble was given by Eris. She was of such a deplorable nature, that the gods had kept Eris apart, and she was not in the list of guests who were invited to the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, the parents of Achilles. Nevertheless, Eris, being difficult to get rid of, came to the party and threw a golden apple through the door with the inscription: Kallisti ("For the fairest") And Hera, Athena and Aphrodite started disputing on account of the apple, and were therefore sent by Zeus to Mount Ida near Troy in order to be judged by the shepherd Paris, who chose Aphrodite as the most beautiful, accepting Helen's hand for a bribe. This is one cause of the Trojan War, for Paris, having come to fetch his bribe at Sparta, where Helen was queen, left the city as her lover and sailed with her to Troy. But her husband Menelaus and his brother Agamemnon, against all odds--for war had never before broken-up for the sake of a woman--sent a powerful army against Troy, and produced a conflagration that still today causes such an awe and amazement as if the flames of Troy were still burning. The modern followers of Eris, the Discordians, use the Kallisti apple as one of their symbols has another rendition.

In another Greek legend, Atalanta was a powerful warrior who would only marry the man who could outrun her. Desperate to win, Hippomenes prayed to Aphrodite for aid, and she gave him golden apples from her garden, which he was to throw into Atalanta's path. The apples did distract Atalanta and he won the race, but he forgot to give due honor to Aphrodite afterwards and as punishment, both he and Atalanta were changed into lions.

The Hesperides were three virgin sisters who, along with a dragon, guarded the tree of golden apples Gaea had given to Hera as a wedding gift in their garden. These were reputed to bring beauty and health. It was during the eleventh of the twelve labors of Heracles that he brings back the golden apples to the world.

Pomona was the Roman Goddess of fruit trees, especially of apple trees, and was also know as the "Apple Mother" who gave the "apples of eternal life." Roman banquets ended with apples and an invocation of Pomona's blessing. Pomona had a special priest appointed to her service. Her sacred grove was called the "Pomonal" and was located on the road from Rome to Ostia.

In the legend of Thomas the Rhymer (13th century), Thomas Learmont, laird of the castle of Ercildoune, is accosted by a hag who takes him on a journey. He is shown three paths, one of leads to the land of the Fay. While ravenously hungry, he resolutely passes by all the luscious fruits of all kinds, but he is warned not to eat of any of them, for he would then be trapped there forever. He is also told that his hunger would soon be relieved with an apple. When they reach a certain spot, the hag climbs down off the horse and offers Thomas an apple from a small yet perfect tree. She tells him that after eating it he will be graced with the gift of Truth. At that time the hag turns into a beautiful woman and together they go to a castle where they feast and make merry for three days. At the end of that time, the woman tells him that he must return to his own world where seven years have passed. When he returns home, he finds that he is given the gifts of prophesy, poetry, and an enchanted harp. He becomes a wise ruler of his territories and is, in time, called back to Fairyland where he remained.

Iduna, wife of the Norse God of poetry, Bragi, kept a box of apples. If any of the Gods felt the approach of old age, they only had to taste of one of these apples to remain young. She was abducted by a giant (aided by Loki) and, in time, the other Gods realized that they were aging rapidly. Loki was sent to

rescue her so that she might restore youth to the Gods. He later married her, and whenever he was punished, she would sometimes use these apples as leverage to free him.

Another renowned myth to the Swiss is the story of William Tell refusing to bow to a Hapsburg lord's hat placed on a stick in the town square. As punishment he is forced to shoot an apple off his son's head with a crossbow. After doing so, he then manages to escape from the governor's clutches on a stormy river, effectively drowning the rascal. The legend is a distortion of actual events that led in 1291 to the formation of the Everlasting League among the forest cantons of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden. The original story is believed to derive from a 12th century Scandinavian tale of shooting a small object off a loved-one's head.

http://switzerland.isyours.com/e/guide/zentral_schweiz/williamtell.html

The next feat of the legendary apple would be Sir Isaac Newton's discovery or realization of Gravity. During a plague in the city, he retired to a country estate. As the tale goes, Sir Isaac Newton was sitting under an apple tree when an apple fell on his head. This, supposedly, was what led him to discover the laws of gravity. Popular legend to the contrary, Sir Isaac was not beaned on the noggin by an apple, although it's said that watching apples fall from a tree in his parents' yard was an inspiration. His treatise on gravitation, presented in Principia Mathematica (1687) observed the fall of an apple in an orchard at Woolsthorpe and calculates that at a distance of one foot the attraction between two objects is 100 times stronger than at 10 feet.

The most famous recent example is, of course, Johnny Appleseed, a.k.a. John Chapman (1774-1845), an eccentric, itinerant pioneer nurseryman and colporteur. He won the respect of many settlers and Native Americans alike as he made his way from his native Massachusetts to the Pennsylvania/ Ohio/Indiana frontier, planting apple nurseries, spreading "news right fresh from heaven," meditating and healing. He exchanged his apple seeds and seedlings for food, cast-off clothing and articles and frontier currency enough to take care of his simple needs. Profits went for copies of Swedenborg's works, which he separated into parts for wider and cheaper distribution. There are several songs about him.

Medicinal and Magical Uses

- The sugar of a sweet apple, like most of the fruit sugars, is amazing. It is practically a predigested food, and is soon ready to pass into the blood to provide energy and warmth for the body. A nice ripe raw apple is one of nature's most easiest vegetable substances for the stomach to deal with, the whole process of its digestion being completed in eighty-five minutes. The juice of apples, without sugar, will often reduce acidity of the stomach; it becomes changed into alkaline carbonates, and thus corrects sour fermentation.
- "An apple a day keeps the doctor away." From an old English advice "Ate an apfel avore gwain to bed, makes the doctor beg his bread."
- "It is better to give than receive." Derived from a fourteenth-century saying "Betere is appel y-yeue than y-ete" (Better is the apple you give than you get.)
- Paradise is a word derived from the Persian paeridaeza, or walled garden, such as the Persian gardens, normally containing apple orchards. Throughout history, depictions of the Garden of Paradise include apple trees.
- Bartholomeus Anglicus, whose Encyclopedia was one of the earliest printed books containing botanical information (being printed at Cologne about 1470), gives a chapter on the Apple. He says:

  > "Malus the Appyll tree is a tree yt bereth apples and is a grete tree in itself. It is more short than other trees of the wood wyth knottes and rinelyd Rynde. And makyth shadowe wythe thicke bowes and branches: and fayr with dyurs blossomes, and floures of swetnesse and Iykynge: with goode fruyte and noble. And is gracious in syght and in taste and vertuous in medecyne.some beryth sourysh fruyte and harde, and some ryght soure and some ryght swete, with a good savoure and mery."

- The custom of serving fresh fruit, particularly apples, at the end of a meal arose because of digestive qualities attributed to them by such early medical notables as Hippocrates and Galen, the latter a second-century Roman physician.
- The medieval physician's bible, the Salerno medical school's Prescription for Health, taught therapeutic applications of cooking apples for disturbances of the bowels, lungs and nervous system, among other ailments.
- The modern tradition of tossing rice at a happy couple succeeds an ancient practice of throwing apples at weddings. I guess, British native apple trees have smaller fruit than modern commercial fruit, or perhaps the Celts were just ornery cusses.
- The game of apple-bobbing began as a Celtic New Year's tradition for trying to determine one's future spouse.
- An Irish and Scottish custom prescribed throwing an apple peel over one's shoulder on the ground, where it would form the initial of your lover's name.

- Eat an apple whole, saving just the pips. An odd number foretells a marriage; an even number means that none is imminent.
- It is said that you may cut an apple into three pieces, then rub the cut side on warts, saying: "Out warts, into apple."
- The once-popular custom of wassailing the orchard-trees on Christmas Eve, or the Eve of the Epiphany, is not quite extinct even yet in a few remote places in Devonshire. More than three centuries ago Herrick mentioned it among his "Ceremonies of Christmas Eve:"

  "Wassaile the trees, that they may beare

  You many a Plum and many a Peare:

  For more or lesse fruits they will bring,

  As you do give them Wassailing."

- The ceremony consisted in the farmer, with his family and laborers, going out into the orchard after supper, bearing with them a jug of cider and hot cakes. The latter were placed in the boughs of the oldest or best bearing trees in the orchard, while the cider was flung over the trees after the farmer had drunk their health in some such fashion as the following:

  "Here's to thee, old apple-tree!

  Whence thou may'st bud,

  And whence thou may'st blow,

  Hats full! Caps full!

  Bushel-bushel-bags full!

  And my pockets full too! Huzza!"

- The toast was repeated thrice, the men and boys often firing off guns and pistols, and the women and children shouting loudly. (I do not recommend this part.) Roasted apples were usually placed in the pitcher of cider, and were thrown at the trees with the liquid. Trees that were bad bearers were not honored with wassailing but it was thought that the more productive ones would cease to bear if the rite were omitted. It is said to have been a relic of the heathen sacrifices to Pomona. The custom also prevailed in Somersetshire and Dorsetshire.
- In Danish, German, and English folklore, and in voodoo, apples are used as love charms.
- Roast apples, or crabs, formed an indispensable part of the old-fashioned wassailbowl, or "good brown bowl," of our ancestors.

  "And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl

  In very likeness of a roasted Crab."

- As related by Puck in Midsummer's Night's Dream. The mixture of hot spiced ale, wine or cider, with apples and bits of toast floating in it was often called Lamb's wool, some say from its softness, but the word is really derived from the Irish la mas nbhal, "the feast of the apple-gathering" (All Hallow's Eve), which being pronounced somewhat like "Lammas-ool," was corrupted into "lamb's wool." It was usual for each person who partook of the spicy beverage to take out an apple and eat it, wishing good luck to the company.

Apple Songs

- "Ida, Sweet as Apple Cider" by U.S. minstrel Eddie Leonard (1903).
- "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree" by Egbert Van Alstyne, lyrics by Henry Williams (1905), author of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game."
- "I'll Be with You in Apple Blossom Time" by Albert von Tilzer, lyrics by Neville Fleeson (1920).
- "Cherry Pink and Apple Blossom White" by Louiguy, lyrics by Jacques Larme (1950).
- "The Golden Brown and the Green Apple" by Duke Ellington (1965).
- "Little Green Apples" by Bobby Russell (1968).
- "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree" words and music by Lew Brown, Charles Tobias and Sam H. Stept (1942).

Apple Links

Botanical lore and details on making cider by presses and just loads of recipes:
http://www.botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/a/apple044.html

Apple magical associations:
http://www.thymewise.net/herbal/apple.php

Apples in western lore:
http://patriot.net/~nachtanz/SSB/ssbapple.html

Apple lore:
http://www.michiganapples.com/pg46thru48.pdf

Crab apple variant:
http://www.growingnative.org.uk/crabapple.htm

Apple quotes in literature:
http://www.appleappetite.com/Appleisms.htm

Good parallel to this page:
http://www.iol.ie/~sinann/grove/trees3.html

More apple quotes and apple history chronology:
http://home.istar.ca/~twinbrnd/appinfo.html#Quotes

Wisdom from apples:
http://www.angelfire.com/mn/cillabhaill/Wisdom.html

Apple lore:
http://www.bennersfarm.com/HA%20folder/Festival%20lore/ha_applelore.htm

Apple terminology:
http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Art_Lewis/apple.htm

Apple songs for kids:
http://www.perpetualpreschool.com/preschool_themes/apples/apple_songs.htm

More kids' stuff:
http://www.alphabet-soup.net/dir2/applesong.html

Unearthing Dalon: General Elements of a Dalon ap Landu Myth Cycle

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(Note: While this article purposes to set forth general elements of a Dalon ap Landu myth cycle, before this article, such a myth cycle did not exist. Except, of course, for a newly created battle between Dalon ap Landu and Hu-Gadarn, which was written--both in poetry and prose form--because of said lack of a myth for Dalon. Dalon's myth cycle, thus, is the epitome of Zen Druid myth. It is the myth that was, and is not, there.)

If one were to quickly glance over a Dalon Cycle—at least this one--it would reveal him to be almost a Neo-Celtic Messiah, were such a thing to exist, or more properly a Druid Everyman. Possibly even the pretense for demi-godhood exists. He is very much an archetypal Druid as well as a Lord of the Groves. The much used title "Lord of the Groves" applies to several greater and lesser known Celtic deities (or at least does not apply to them for purposes of this article, supposing the various forms of Green Man and sylvan deities would be called Lord of the Grove in an extended sense) and can thus be seen as a description of intimate knowledge of Nature rather than mastery over it. First appearing as a name singularly encapsulating the Third Order of the RDNA (The Council of Dalon ap Landu) as well as the ideals Neo-Druids strive to attain, the fact that we were calling on him in our rites without having any form of myth for him, or other means of finding him in Celtic legend was all it took for us to decide, well, Dalon needed some kind of history to him.

Dalon first appears--in his myth--as a prophetic spirit. After all, he probably should have some form of pre-incarnational existence. Let's say that he's most likely an incarnation of Duir/Oak and a spiritual descendant of Nuada.

Despite our knowing the parentage of Dalon, his cycle has no birth, no nativity, though we'll say for the sake of convenience that this may have been lost in the course of time. As such neither given a concrete place of time, he is a person of pure mythology. He is a human manifestation of Duir/Oak, so he doesn't have a human heart, but in its place is an acorn, and all the potentiality contained therein.

His parents are a goddess (either Danu, Brigit, or Gaia depending on the source being used), and Landu, a chieftain, his human father (there may once have been a Landu Cycle, but none of it exists as of the writing of this article. Let's get those creative juices flowing then…) Landu feared than Dalon would discover his maternal origins, so as chieftain over his clan's holdings, he expelled every Druid from his clan's lands and had every stone circle cast down to discourage the impractical leanings of his son's mind. With the circle gone and no human teacher available Dalon is forced to go directly into groves to learn. His education and initiation comes not from the human world, but from Nature Herself during the vigils he holds at Her feet. Often this Nature Goddess is his Mother.

Greater and lesser loves and lusts of Dalon, especially the relationship he has with the Pine-Son. Unlike the Zeus/Ganymede story, there is no abduction. Unlike Apollo/Hyacinthus/Zephyr, there is no jealously, even in the face of extraneous, often bisexual, paramours they both entertain corporately and separately. (Yes, yes, it smacks of polyamoury, but let's remember this is a modern myth cycle.) There is a progression from the awe of newfound love to mystical union to continual revelation and deep sharing. It is almost as if they meet as youths, handfast, and feasibly could grow old together and be buried side by side, were they mere mortals. Their bisexuality, as a concept, is conveniently a "modern anachronism read into the cycle but actually not applicable from their standpoint, as from the mythic standpoint, gender was a non-issue" in case anyone asks.

The enlightenment of Dalon ap Landu is very Buddha-esque. An authority I'll make up for documenting the enlightenment is No'one the Short, a true sage if ever there was one, said, "If Dalon see the Be'al, it is only during his Enlightenment," and "Since the Enlightenment of Dalon, the World Tree from his navel grows." One must assume that since Buddha's enlightenment happens under a Bodhi tree, Dalon's must happen beneath an Oak, although No'one's navel comment has caused some authorities to debate whether the World Tree in the Dalon cycle is actually an orange. Others insist that this is only navel gazing. The debate is cut short by a passage thought to originate with Dalon himself: "For now is every tree become the World Tree. The oak is the ash, the ash is the oak, bramble, chieftain, warrior…these are now made the same in my eyes, not as unknowing of the Mystery and every wall is laid flat in my eyes…every boundary is breached."

Next comes Dalon's coming to grips with his Shadow Aspect. There is some debate as to whether these tales come before or after the enlightenment episodes, but most sources say afterwards as a warning against self-righteousness. Trickster stories are usually incorporated under this heading.

The disowning of Dalon by Landu. This may originally have been a threefold disowning, for there are three different accounts of why Dalon was disowned. Source A holds that it was due to the religious aspect, Source B holds that Landu disapproved of the Dalon/Pine-Son romance, and Source C holds that he was disowned due to an incident in the shadow tales.

Forced out of Landu's lands, the next phase of Dalon's life begins with his becoming a hermit and interacting purely with the Old Ones. This, basically, is Dalon goes up the hill to commune with the Old Ones, returns to deliver his teachings in the Mishnah of Dalon. The whole thing is very Moses on the Mountain and Jesus-Sermon-on-the-Mount-ish. At some point in these discourses, Dalon raised his hands in the midst of a field (conveniently because he just came down from a mountain, possibly one of the Ozarks, much to the chagrin of Old World Druids) and the birds that were in the field arose around him and his Holy Band. The birds flew off to the Four Quarters. Dalon turned to his followers and said, "Even as these birds have flown, so do I send you into the Worlds. I am the door, but if is given to you to be the threshold. You are the reason for the door, you are my definition. Lest I send you out as a sower sows seeds, my speaking unto you will have been in vain." The fulfillment, the very apex, of the Mishnah of Dalon is the sending out of the Holy Band. They were his "apostles" if you can call them that. They were poor and illiterate, a rag-tag gathering of souls that had little in common other than the belief that they could change the world, and that someone had shown them how to do it.

Upon the sending out of the Holy Band, Dalon begins his own pilgrimage. The source of many local legends concerning Dalon in various capacities and guises, morality stories and miracle stories become part and parcel of this cycle, turning Dalon into a Messiah-like figure (also sort of like a Hercules figure in that lots of communities had a Hercules story in the areas that had Greek influence). He has to travel to establish covert recognition of his Divine Nature while, at the same time, discouraging any worship of himself as being especially Divine.

The transfiguration of Dalon is the culmination of his Great Pilgrimage, then Dalon returns to his ancestral home and to his father, Landu. No'one, on the subject of the transfiguration, said: "This can be seen as a lesser event than his enlightenment, for by defining himself as the model Druid, he attempts to limit what a Druid can be, and thus takes a step away from being an image of the all-encompassing Be'al" and "We cannot lose sight that although he is an archetypal Druid manifesting human nature and awe at the Mysteries of Nature, he is--when transfigured--the Lord of the Groves, Spirit of Oak, as much as his rival, Hu-Gadarn…"

Dalon finds Landu in Battle with Hu-Gadarn. Metaphysically, the battle represents our highest potentials grappling with primordial powers, or traditions of our tribe, and concepts beyond our ability to control. The battle between Landu and Hu-Gadarn is assumed to result the jealousy over the love of Dalon's divine mother (again, Her identity is variously given according to what source is used), and Hu-Gadarn kills Landu. Dalon rushes to Landu's side, picks up Landu's spear, and fights Hu-Gadarn. Dalon and Landu represent two visions of the Lord of the Groves. Hu-Gadarn represents the ancient and primal Lord of the Groves as the wildwood. Dalon represents the Lord of the Groves as that of mankind in relationship with the wildwood and Hierophant of the Druid Groves. Hu-Gadarn mortally wounds Dalon as a reminder of human mortality and weakness in the face of Nature itself, and then Hu-Gadarn disappears, either into the wildwood or the fog, depending once again upon the source being used.

Dalon gives the Pine-Son the acorn as an androgynous symbol and as a token of love (remember, the acorn is Dalon's heart) and tries to hold onto life as winter's chill sets in. When at last he can hold on no more, the Pine-Son finally gives him the pinecone while the Pine-Son discourses concerning the eternality of the soul, reincarnation, et cetera. Dalon finally dies in the arms of the Pine-Son. Following Dalon's death there are later metaphysical attributions, in liturgy, written word, and oral tradition as the Lord of the Groves, Initiator, and Dying/Reborn God. He appears as a Nature Spirit in several diverse accounts, and is then reborn. When the rebirth occurs, the Druids are sent out in search of the reborn Lord of the Groves.

A Sociological Look at the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College

Or 'The Epistle of Irony'

Section II

Origins of the Reformed Druids

The Reformed Druids of North America began, with no connection to either the Paleo or the modern European Druids, at Carleton College in April of 1963. At that time the college had a requirement for graduation stating that

> "Attendance is required at the College Service of Worship or of the Sunday Evening Program or at any regularly organized service of public worship. Each term, every student must attend seven [of ten] of the services or religious meetings."[1]

A number of students felt that it was unfair to require people to attend services and decided to test the policy. The protesters were led by the original 'Triumvirate', consisting of David Fisher, Howard Cherniack and Norman Nelson. They noted the escape clause of "or at any regularly organized service of public worship" and realized that they could create and organize such a service themselves and offer it up to the relevant deans as a fulfillment of the requirement. The college would have two choices, as they saw it: either to refuse to recognize them and be accused of religious discrimination, or to let them graduate at which point the movement would be declared a hoax and the requirement further ridiculed.[2]

Instead, in the summer of 1964, John Nason, the president of the college, sent out a memo revoking the requirement. It should be noted that Nason had already decided that the college's policy of In Loco Parentis was outdated and may have been planning to revoke the requirement all along. The role of the Druids in its elimination is debatable, but they cheerfully took the credit for its disappearance.

Two things about this origin are crucial to the understanding of Reformed Druidism. The first is that the founders never intended the movement to last. The second is that the Reformed Druids had no connection what so ever to any

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1 Carleton College Catalogue, March 1964, pp. 136. -ARDA-

2 It should be remembered that these students--the original 'triumvirate' consisting of David Fisher, Howard Cherniack and Norman Nelson--were in no way irreligious. David is currently an Episcopalian priest. They merely felt that the requirement was unfair on principle and should be tested. They also hedged their bets and continued attending the 'legitimate' services throughout their protest.

other Druid group at the time of their founding.[3] "Indeed," writes Scharding, "this leads up to the greatest hindrance to the entire study of Reformed Druidism; the name 'Druid.' Many scholars will see the word 'Druidism' on a sheet of paper and suddenly a myriad of assumptions will strangle their minds."[4]

The Reformed Druid movement embodies none of the philosophy, worldview, cultural resonance or even religion of the Celts, Paleo, or Meso Druids. The name was picked because it was sufficiently venerable to be taken seriously and sufficiently misunderstood that the young RDNA could make up whatever they chose and not be called on inaccuracies.[5] As the story goes, Howard Cherinack's parents did not like indicating that they were Jewish on government forms, and had taken to writing 'Druid' instead. The Triumvirate picked up the idea and ran with it, inventing beliefs as they went. The subsequent history of the movement is complex and fascinating but I do not intend to address it here. Scharding has covered it more thoroughly than I am ever likely to and traces its internal dividing and developments over a thirty-year span. I will attempt to avoid much of that discussion except where it is relevant to our purpose here.

Section III

Beliefs of the Reformed Druids

Two things were of primary importance for the Reformed Druids in the beginning, and have remained fundamental to the movement ever since. The respect for nature, and the respect for each individual's rights. The founders wanted to create a system that would contain a meaningful core while eschewing all dogma and orthodoxy. In the words of one Druid, "Reformed Druidism is a statement that religion has a tendency to become organized religion and [sic] which then becomes organization devoid of religion."[6] The founders were very conscious of this 'fossilization theory' and wished to provide no framework for organization that could be exploited later. As such, when the two tenets were devised and finalized in 1963, they were kept as simple and as inclusive as possible.

> The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
>
> And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it people do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life they are come face to face with it.[7]

These are the only two tenets of the Reformed Druids of North America--and the only two statements with which all Druids are ever likely to agree. Everything else is up to the individual. In their original form the tenets are rather cumbersome. They are often paraphrased as 'Nature is good' and 'Nature is good.' A more serious way of putting it, currently practiced amongst the Druids at Carleton is to say that first: The spiritual search is an important, individual, and life long endeavor, and secondly, that one way of searching lies through the study, understanding, and awareness of nature. Each of these phrasings indicates something rather different if they are taken literally, yet it is at one truth that they point. The only commandment I have ever seen attached to Reformed Druidism is Think for thyself! The tenets, however you conceive of them, establish the framework in which to do this.

Druidism teaches that you have the right to believe what you know to be true, no mater what anyone else thinks of it. At the same time it holds that you cannot simply pick what you would like to be the case, nor design a cosmology irrespective of what the world teaches. To be a Druid is to deliberately and consciously seek out the truth of the world and decide for yourself what it is you will believe. Margot Adler sheds some useful light on the matter when she writes "The original founders seemed to hold the fundamental idea that one should scrutinize religion from 'a state of rebellion,' neither embracing traditional faiths nor rejecting them."[8]

Druids look everywhere for inspiration. World philosophies, religions, science fiction, children's books, strange dreams, the flight of swallows; all are considered equally valid insights to potential truths that must be at least examined, if never espoused. As Scharding writes, "It was important to Druidism that you believed your own views instead of slavishly following those of others, provided that you had carefully examined them and judged them sound."[9] This intellectual honesty is a necessary--if not sufficient--feature of the Druidic search. Without it the movement would descend into utter relativism.[10]

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3 This will be discussed more in section IV.

4 ARDA pp. 339. This seems to be a thing that each researcher is at pains to learn anew

5 "Mec"—Michael Scharding--wasted eight months of research before figuring this out. I knew he'd done so and I still fell for it. My desk is littered with fascinatingly irrelevant books on Druidism that have nothing to do with the RDNA.

6 Internal correspondence ARDA pp. 338

7 An interesting change in the modern phrasing of the first tenet is the omission of the idea that the spiritual search is universal. The reason for this is two fold. One motivation is a desire not to impose even that truth on others. Another is that it has become apparent that one can be a great Druid without holding that the spiritual search holds any immediate, personal, relevancy. David Coil, one of the greatest Druid apologists at Carleton today and the functional right hand of the Archdruid for the last year, holds the above view. He believes that upon death he will go back to being 'nineteen cents of chemicals,' end of story. He would rather live life that ponder its spiritual significance, and expresses one of the purest Druidic spirits on campus.

8 Drawing Down the Moon. pp. 301

9 ARDA. pp. 341

10 One could argue that the Druids already embody such a relativism in that the closest thing we have to a statement of belief is really simply an insistence that you search truth out your self. If so, it is only the relativism of individual minds. Yet I do not believe that even this is the case. The intellectual honesty that Druidism fosters encourages clear sight and careful thinking, and it seems that even with a great many people

Another significant feature of Druidic 'belief' is that it is compatible with almost any other religious system. It serves to accentuate rather than replace a person's faith. Michael Scharding is a devout (maybe) Catholic as well as being a Druid. The group today contains at least one Atheist Druid, Jewish Druid, Quaker Druid, Seventh Day Adventist Druid, and innumerable Agnostic and Confused Druids. Indeed, the people who have taken Reformed Druidism to be their only religion have always been in the minority. The movement is hardly a thing that one can be converted to. The most common reaction to the personal acceptance of being a Druid is one of coming home. My own was, "Oh-- now at last I have a name for what I've always done." The inclusiveness with which Druidism approaches all other religions is one of its strongest and most redeeming features.

Where Are My Druid Ancestors?

By Mike Scharding, Digitalis Grove

I get one of these delightful letters about every week and spend copious amounts of work-time on them. Perhaps this sample response may assist you in your own correspondence. I sometimes wish to tell them that we do keep records, "but only back to 538 A.D., and strangely they are all in a mysterious language on golden plates." But honestly, it is a pressing dilemma for a movement that espouses tradition but rejects many of those traditions of the last 1300 years of recorded history. I hope that it opens your eyes to the desperate desire of many young pagans to fill a "missing link" between themselves and their more ancient ancestors. Is this a curable condition, and do you have any other responses to this perennial question?

> Dear Mike,
>
> My question is about a matter of how does one research their ancestor's involvement with druidism? I am very interested in finding out a few things about my family and believe somehow our lives have been impacted by our ancestor's involvement. This may sound outlandish but I would like to know to figure or trace information. What are the oldest records, and whom does one speak with for this sort of information? If you are not sure, please forward this to somebody who might be of some help.
>
> Thank you very much! Yours truly,
>
> Desperately Seeking Seanachi

Dear Seanachi,

Hi, how ya doing?

I wish I could be of greater help on this subject. My parents have done extensive genealogy back to the 17th century, and we're pretty sure we've got more ancestors before those ones. But in my own Reformed Druidic way, I'll try to offer my best advice on this frequent question. There may be a solution imbedded somewhere in this long reply.

Most genealogical records of the American/British/French citizens only go about to the 17th century (ask the Mormons for assistance on research); unless you are linked to a royal family, then you go back into the late medieval age (barring "secret" records, if they exist or are not doctored). This sadly leaves all of us out of any connection with "actual ancient druids" who more or less vanished by the 7th to 9th century, probably. It is probably that every clan had its Druid (or at least a bard or two).

But given the closeness to royalty and religious power throughout the ancient and modern world (every single U.S. President is a descendent of William the Conqueror, and the one with the most direct patriarchal connection (and always the tallest except for G.W. Bush, but he didn't really win) has always won the presidency. Their family trees are carefully done by a foundation, so finding a president or noble in your family tree would be a good route.

Now although Patriarchy was seemingly well established by the first few centuries of the Christian Era, we cannot be entirely sure that the job of Druid was passed on from parent to child, and there is evidence that in some Celtic area, that inheritance may have passed through the mother and adoption of apprentices or nephews and nieces was frequently an established part of village life and career training. But, let's assume for now that Druids didn't sensibly select the smartest and most promising children of the countryside, and rather only passed on their knowledge and powers to their biological offspring, regardless of their natural talent (one of the reasons why hereditary Monarchy is not a great idea). Well, since celibacy wasn't truly in effect until the 16th century for many clergy and

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searching in this manner, agreements and commonalties arise. It may be that when people look hard and carefully at the nature of reality they all find, on some fundamental level, the same things. It seems to me that even without an imposed order to the universe, relativism confounds itself against a deeper order that is already present. It is part of the answer to the problem of saying "This is the truth that I have found, which I will force on no one else--but it applies to everybody." A rigorous examination of this confusion will have to await the foredoomed attempt of working out a formal Druidic philosophy and metaphysic.

monks and popes; and many Druids reportedly re-defined their job-description to "Christian" with changing fashions of power; a link to an ancient abbot, bishop or pope would also be a good bet.

Now, you might have better luck finding a family connection to a meso-pagan Druidic revival organization since 1697 (one of the fraternalistic clubs.). They presumably kept membership records. If there were any "Druidic Survivals," they probably would have joined one of these clubs over the last three centuries. Contact OBOD or (http://druidry.org/) or UAOD or AOD (http://www.igld.org/orgnat.htm) to pursue this route, then provide a list of your family members and time periods and they may or may not be able to confirm or disconfirm their membership.

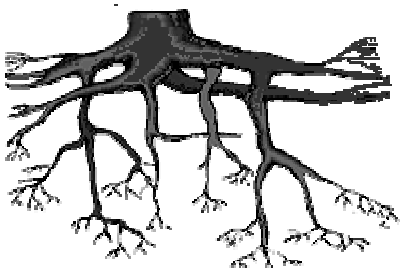
Another route. Since it is generally agreed that when explicit Druidry was suppressed, the bards probably continued some of the stories, truth or lore of the Celtic religious culture. So if you could find any minstrels or entertainers (like O'Carolan and such) then you might have a connection. Such as a "harper" or MacCruithin, or one of the hereditary piper families of a clann. Many chieftainships and positions were hereditary, and the clann system continued to the 16th century in Ireland and 19th century in Scotland, well into the historical period.

If you wave enough money or foolishness in public, someone will supply all your needs (see credit card salesmen and Madame Cleo). Anyone who offers you a Celtic pedigree chart is probably just trying to scam some money; and there are lots of them already working the Scottish/Irish-descendent market; adding you would not take much more trouble. Demand to see the original documents and blow the dust off them yourself.

Here are the last few methods, and perhaps least satisfying for pedigree mongers, is Idea, Nature, Divine Inspiration, Simple Mathematics, and of course the Apple and Boat test.

Idea

If the thoughts and beliefs of the Druids can leap from their bodies to non-blood relationship people through the medium of words and music and custom; then by studying ancient and modern Celtic culture you can regain the seeds of those past souls and hopefully they will regerminate into a similar tree.



Nature

If the Druids gained their knowledge and power through the observation and interaction with Nature over generations; then you can by doing likewise, and thereby you and your descendents will gradually build up a similar bloodline of power.

Being the impatient Americans that we are, you could jump-start the whole process by getting your parents to convert, or even (like the Mormons) retroactively convert your ancestors in their heavenly rest to your new religious program. That would add several generations to your current status of inheritance.

Divine Inspiration

Surely, if you are a good Druid, and I think you are, then you believe in the Gods (or at least on alternative weeks, like me). Now, the Deities should be technically more powerful than the worshippers (otherwise the roles would be reversed). If the gods still exist, and the Druids listened to them, then you can ask the gods to download that power and information to you from their backup disk, right? This is known as the prayer method. Are there any signs of artistic, ESP, political or musical prodigies in your family line?

Simple Mathematics

Now there is a famous Irish proverb: "In the veins of every Irishman is the blood of a king, and a slave." Kings and slaves are but two sides of the same coin or "The Wheel of Fortune." Let's explore this further:

By argument: There are 600 Million Europeans today. There were only 30 million Europeans during the Black Plague of 13th century. Probably only seven million in 1 AD in Europe during the Roman Empire (which is why a single legion of 10,000 was so HUGE a problem for the Celts). Let's assume that two million of those were Celtic religious practioners (France, Switzerland, North Italy, Spain, Dalmatia, Turkey, Britain, Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Belgium, Denmark/West Germany), with about 20,000 Druids/Intelligentsia (1%) okay?

There are plenty of legends with Druids having offspring. Assume 1.2 kids per Druid (probably three is normal, but child mortality, plagues and war reduce it, plus overlapping descendents) and a 20-year inter-generational period with 100 generations since 1 A.D..

So, you've got 20,000 ancient druids (1.3 to the 100th power which is 8,2817,974.5) producing a whopping grand sum of about 165,6359,490,440.3 currently living Druid descendents at a minimum. And it's a possible 2,535,301,200,456,458,802,993,406,410,7520,000 people, if we use 2.0 kids for calculations; but there are only 8,021,020,016 people on earth now). So with Europe and America and Australia's combined estimated Celtic-descendent population of about 400,000,000 people, you have at least at 40-100% chance of having a Druid ancestor, depending on your calculations, without knowing any more than that your great grandmother was a McWhatzername.

Unfortunately, we don't know their Druid ancestor's name(s) and street postal address(es), but let me assure you by your very presence, that not knowing your ancestor's name will negate your existence or your heritage. I've got lots of ancestors I don't know too well, and I do fine.

Apple and Boat Test

Now if you're a "Christian Druid," congratulations, it gets much more simple!! Since you believe in "Ya*weh, then you believe the first Humans were Adam and Eve (among others). Now Adam and Eve were originally on very close terms with God (as all the Druids were) and lived in a Garden, with intricate association and knowledge of all the plants and creatures of the Earth (in fact they named them all). This would qualify as "Druidic" by many definitions. So if Adam and Eve were Druids and Druidesses, then we all are Druidic descendents. If by chance, non-Druidic people were around (because some women was marrying all these sons of Adams, unless constructing women was a family business for the Adamses) then the flood killed all of them all, leaving only Noah's

offspring, who have a direct link to Adam, thus insuring and cementing our Druidic heritage, including the Maori exchange student at your neighbor's house.

I hope that in someway, I've been helpful and reassuring on this fascinating topic. I wish you the best of luck in your search, and hope you get back to me when you find a promising path to your solution.

-Mike the Fool
AD of DC

Celtic Dietary Health Problems

By Eric Powers, Digitalis Grove

Well, you are what you eat, and after discussing junk food and sanitary issues of the Celts, I believe it is time to address the abysmal eating habits of modern Celts, and their health implications. It is a sad fact that as the waves of Germanic people pushed through Europe, the Celts found it was their turn to choose less desirable and more defensible territory. Any visit to a Gaeltacht region of Celtic speaking territory in Brittany or Wales will show you the poor quality of the farming. Now, it is a little known fact that 2,500 years ago, much of Britain and Ireland's barren hills and plains were covered in thick forest full of lions, bears, giant deer, and other monsters. Centuries of degradatory farming erosion, poor arboreal harvesting and other ecological disasters have made many of the bogs and moors of the British Isles. So much for being in harmony with nature. Such a fate awaits the Brazilian rainforest.

For the purpose of the remainder of the essay, we will assume the general French and Belgium and Galician populations are not Celtic. According to the genetic test in the last issue, the English are generally of recent immigrant stock (only back to the 8th century), despite their understandable desire to be aboriginally of the land in which they dwell. Population and ecological pressures have increased the reliance of the Celts to rely on fish, animal and dairy products. The deer hunts of Ireland's roaming army are legendary, as were Robin Hood's in England.

This hunting/gathering/survival lifestyle continues to be eked out in the small crofting communities of the western shores of Scotland and Ireland on the rugged stony coast. A croft is defined as a land holding between one and 50 acres. A crofter's son once defined a croft as "a small area of land surrounded by regulations." For example, there are roughly 2,000 crofts on the Isle of Skye, but of these only 100 or so are large enough to allow a crofter to earn his entire livelihood from the land. The crofts, once laid out to provide homes together with a home food supply are, as one can see, a survival of past economic conditions. Today, the crofter's role is to provide a family home and a side-line to whatever other job the crofter can obtain. The majority of their working age population have to search elsewhere for employment. Some find seasonal work in the building or service industries while others serve in the oilfields of the North Sea.

I found the health statistics rather surprising. Celtic regions (e.g. highlands) tend to be poorer than Anglo areas, with reduced access to health care, nutritional education, higher incidents of low-rate babies and more farm accidents. Sound familiar? This is all accentuated by the lack of physical exercise among non-farmers/athletes in modern cultures.

We all know that British rockers never smile in photos, not because they are cool and grim, but because they have some of the most nasty teeth in Europe, with about 50% of Scottish adults in 1970 having not a single natural tooth left in their head, now down to "only" 20%; (which is still 12% higher than England) and much worse in the Highlands. So when you think of all those bards, imagine why the music is much better than the singing (which must be hard with dentures.) Of course, it was the introduction of sugar in the 16th century that was a prime culprit.

UK (9%) and Ireland (6%) show the lowest level of mammography for at-risk age women and among the lowest rates for immunization of child-hood diseases in Europe (87%), which is higher than the US (60%). Scotland has the lowest rate of breast-feeding in Europe (only 35% in first six weeks, 15% in highlands) mostly due to factors of poverty and prudity (or at least that's the rumor). The birth rate of Ireland and Scotland is the lowest since the famines of 1855. Access to family planning is less than easy in Ireland. Drug use is about as bad as the US and worse than most of Europe outside of the Netherlands.

Consumption of grain-based products in last 24 hours:

Netherlands 93% Germany 90%

France 87% Spain 77%

UK 73% (30% in Scotland)

Europe 75% USA 64%

Obesity Percentage (by various BMI stats for Male/Female)

Sweden 5.3%/N.A.

Netherlands 8%/10%

England 13%/15%

Germany 17%/19%

USA 32%/33%

Things are improving, and the drinking and smoking statistics are rosier. Smoking (Male/Female)

Europe 45%/29% Ireland 40%/31%

Scotland 34/32 UK 40%/30%

USA 30%/26%

Note: Lung cancer is the number one cause of cancer and death in Scotland

Alcohol Consumption Frequency

Infrequent (below 1 per week)/average (2 to 3 per week)/frequent (nearly daily) for male and female showing remarkably high abstinence in Ireland, despite traditional stereotypes.

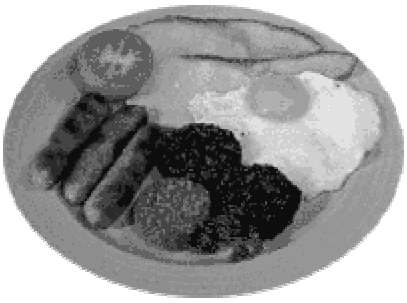
Europe 27/35/36 and 66/29/16

Ireland 41/48/11 and 72/16/2

UK 33/47/20 and 60/30/10

USA 32/45/23 and 53/40/7

Note: Average Scottish Male consumes 20 alcohol units per week (females at 8 units), i.e. a unit is one 12 oz. beer, one cup wine or one shot whiskey.



"The national diet is notoriously high in fat, salt and sugar and low in fruit and vegetables. Next to smoking, our diet is the single most significant cause of poor health, contributing to a range of serious illness, which include coronary heart disease, certain cancers, strokes, osteoporosis and diabetes." How bad is the food really? (Where do you think the restaurant McDonalds was inspired?) Yes, it's rather untasty, probably due to the parcity of strong spices in northern Europe. The old worn saying is that if you want to put on two stone spend a month in Belgium, and to take it off, go to England for a few weeks. (The drink is better in the latter, I believe.) Perhaps Americans are like the pot calling the kettle black.

I remember during my stays at B and Bs in Ireland in 1998, the standard dreaded breakfast "Heartbreak Special" was two links, a thick slice of sweet black pudding (blood sausage), a banger (sardine), two fried eggs, some bacon, a boiled tomato, and a slice of toast with heaps of butter. For the porridge, there was a pitcher of heavy cream; and a cup of coffee. Lard-made biscuits were available on the side. Last year, Mike told me he had similar fare in the Scottish dormitory, and Mairi said Welsh fare was not much better. Think fish and chips or the ubiquitous "crisps" (potato chips in 50 flavors) and candy/tobacco stores.

This is not a newly acquired taste of an enriched society, but the fulfillment of centuries of cultural dreams. I bring you this ancient story, in which a chronically troublesome incarcerated bard is hauled out of chains and brought to cure the king of a demon who had hid inside his gullet. The possession caused unimaginable hunger in the ruler that was draining the wealth of the countryside. MacGonglinney, on promise of his prompt release, told the following story after starving the king for five days. As the insanely hungry king listened, bound in ropes at the three narrows, the demon inside slowly came further and further out of the King's mouth, until MacGonglinney grabbed it and threw it into the fireplace, curing the king. I leave you with his words:

Vision of Viands

In a slumber visional,
Wonders apparitional
Sudden shone on me:
Was it not a miracle?
Built of lard, a coracle
Swam a sweet milk sea.
With high hearts heroical,
We stepped in it, stoical,
Braving billow-bounds;
Then we rode so dashingly,
Smote the sea so splashingly,
That the surge sent, washingly,
Honey up for grounds.
Ramparts rose of custard all
Where a castle muster'd all
Forces o'er the lake;
Butter was the bridge of it,
Wheaten meal the ridge of it,
Bacon every stake.
Strong it stood, and pleasantly
There I entered presently
Hying to the hosts;
Dry beef was the door of it,
Bare bread was the floor of it,
Whey-curds were the posts.
Old cheese-columns happily,
Pork that pillared sappily,
Raised their heads aloof;
While curd-rafters mellowly
Crossing cream-beams yellowly,
Held aloft the roof.
Wine in well rose sparklingly,
Beer was rolling darklingly,
Bragget brimmed the pond.
Lard was oozing heavily,
Merry malt moved wavily,

Through the floor beyond.
Lake of broth lay spicily,
Fat froze o'er it icily,
'Tween the wall and shore;
Butter rose in hedges high,
Cloaking all it's edges high
White lard blossomed o'er.
Apple alleys bowering,
Pink-topped orchards flowering,
Fenced off hill and wind;
Leek-tree forests loftily,
Carrots branching tuftily,
Guarded it behind.
Ruddy warders rosily
Welcomed us right cosily
To the fire and rest;
Seven coils of sausages,
Twined in twisting passages,
Round each brawny breast.
Their chief I discover him,
Suet mantle over him,
By his lady bland;

Where the cauldron boiled away,
The Dispenser toiled away,
With his fork in hand.
Good King Cathal, royally,
Surely will enjoy a lay,
Fair and fine as silk;
From his heart his woe I call,
When I sing, heroical,
How we rode, so stoical,
O'er the Sea of Milk.-

Aniar MacConglinne--Irish,
12th century-trans.
G. Sigerson, in
Bards of the Gael and Gal
(London Unwin, 1897)

Links:

Scottish Health Statistics:

http://www.show.scot.nhs.uk/isd/Scottish_Health_Statistics/SHS2000/home.htm

Irish Health Statistics:

http://www.doh.ie/statistics/health_statistics/healthst.pdf

Int'l Health Statistics: What it means for the United States. (Kind of big):

http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/ota/Ota_1/DATA/1994/9418.PDF

Miscellany

25th California CelticStudies Conference

The annual meeting of CSANA will be held in conjunction with the annual University of California Celtic Studies Conference on the UC Berkeley campus April 3-6, 2003. Our invited speakers include Sioned Davies (Cardiff University), Patrick Ford (Harvard University), Sarah Higley (University of Rochester), Joseph F. Nagy (University of California, Los Angeles), Diarmuid Ó Giolláin (University College Cork), and Oliver Padel (University of Cambridge).

Submission of abstracts is solicited on a wide variety of Celtic topics, including from the fields of anthropology, archaeology, art history, folklore, history, linguistics, literature, and music. Papers should be no more than 20 minutes in length, and abstracts of one page only should be sent by January 15, 2003 to:

Maria Teresa Agozzino (Mabli), Celtic Colloquium Chair
Celtic Studies Program, 6303 Dwinelle Hall, MC 2690
University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720, USA or e-mailed to: mabela@uclink4.berkeley.edu

Calendar

Astronomical Samhain, when the Sun is halfway between the fall Equinox and Winter Solstice will occur on Nov 7, 2002 at 4:00 a.m. Pacific Standard Time, or as 15 degrees of Scorpius on Nov 7, at 06:23 a.m. PST.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $8.00 and email subscriptions are free. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's post mail subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o S. J. Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

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Winter Solstice Y.R. XL
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Yule Essay: What is Yule?

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 1982
By Emmon Bodfish

Yule, a minor Celtic High Day, the Midwinter Solstice's sun shines into the mouths of carven graves and the openings of hill tombs. The day was of obvious importance to these megalith builders, and associated with the dead and with regeneration. This is the bottom of the year, and the coldest months are still to follow. Bonfires are lit on hills to call back the Sun, and kept burning all night to celebrate its return. This Celtic tradition may be a cognate of the Norse Yule Log tradition, which is still carried on in the Nordic countries. This use of fire to recall the Sun's fire, (the name for the Sun in Gàidhlig is thought to be derived from the phrase "of the nature of fire," greine, and is of the feminine gender) is an instance of one of the most ancient religious ideas, that of reciprocity.

This concept goes back to the beginnings of religion in the Old Stone Age, as well may the fire lighting ceremonies. As G. Rachel Levy explains, these rites were

> "the culmination of the Stone Age religion of reciprocity, in which, by ritual attunement to the rhythm of seasonal change, man shared with Divinities the responsibility for its maintenance so that the ceremonies first introduced to guide the birth and death of the hunter's quarry, were replaced in natural succession by those considered necessary to assist the new year to be born, the very sun to return, (and) the harvest to be cut down."

This correspondence

> "was also understood conversely, so that early written documents record (Le Titre d'Horus d'or, by Ann, Fort, translator) that the rising of the Young Year God from his winter sleep in the subterranean chambers held hope for the resurrection or reincarnation of man. Such a belief would seem to have been naturally transmitted from the ideas concerning the case as mother of rebirth, now reinforced by the lesson of the seeds, through Neolithic ceremonies in which the sense of mutual causality was so compelling. It is demonstrated in the monuments of the dead."

News of the Groves

Carleton

The Carleton Grove has had somewhat of a sleepy term. A number of factors, the weather including, have conspired to give us low turnouts on a number of occasions though we managed to attract a number of new members none the less. Samhain was a fairly simple talking "celebration" which we do annually where each person has the opportunity to talk about endings of the past year that have and are affecting them.

We won't be in session for the Yule season so there are no rituals planned however we are gradually planning for a "Hunt for the Golden Frisbee." Normally at the Fall Equinox we have two loaves of marriage bread each with a ring in it and whoever gets the ring has a ceremonial marriage at Beltane. This year, following in the tradition that whatever couple gets the ring never actually gets married, the recipient of the women's wedding band pleaded having had too many previous marriages. So this year we are offering the hand of the fair Prince of Greenhouse to whoever finds the Golden Fleece. We're hoping to have the hunt shortly after the snow melts but we are still in the planning stages.

—Stephen Crimmins

Side Note: Barry Osborne '66, producer of the Lord of the Rings trilogy, is giving a sneak preview performance for Carleton students on December 13th. Perhaps this contemporary of David Frangquist '66 received some subliminal inspiration from the RDNA?

Akita Grove: News from Japan

All is good here
the snow is deep,
lots of warm beer
Earth is asleep.

Looking with forward to Mike's visit for Christmas. Wish all you could also.

—Nozomi

Amazon Grove: News from Brazil

Research is done. Now anonymously going to an undisclosed location for an unspecified time to drink generic booze for unknown reasons. Perhaps I'll meet you there?"

—Ian

Digitalis Grove: News from D.C.

Things are quiet here. Mairi sent a cryptic e-mail stating that she and Sine are doing well. Eric will graduate in December, and I in May 2003, so it is the end of my official academic training in many way. Two years preschool, 12 years public school, 11 years of College and University. I feel educated enough now to know that I don't know very much.

Earl, our Labrador retriever guide-dog puppy, is now a year old and ready to return to NYC for a more intensive phase of training. We'll receive a labradoodle hybrid puppy in January, so the training begins again.

I'm considering taking pastoral training classes at Howard University on a part-time basis starting next fall, and that could stretch for a few years at low intensity. I've been considering leaving the embassy next summer, and starting a new job in government service.

ARDA 2 is slowly coalescing into its final format, as I'll review with Mark. The plans for next May's 40th Anniversary reunion (and June one also) are moving ahead, as the article in this issue will address further. Make plans early to come to Carleton if you can, or start to plan a local event, if you wish.

—Mike

Eurisko Grove: News from Virginia

We celebrated both Samhain and Halloween this year. Samhain and Halloween have many points in common but are actually different holidays. Halloween is an attempt to manifest nightmare imagery on the physical plane as a way of defeating it. Samhain does not view dark aspects with fear, but rather with acknowledgement. Death can, does and will occur. That dark shape in a darkened corner may in fact be more than just a shadow. Halloween gives rewards for facing what we're afraid of. Costumes are used to confuse and frighten, both the physical and non-physical beings that travel about. The Grove also recently received an Avocado seedling.

Samhain eve saw the last harvest from our window boxes of herbs, mini roses and mums. Samhain helps to psychologically prepare for the hardship of the coming winter. Samhain is the time to honor the dead and the ancestors. The veil between the worlds is considered to be the thinnest, which brings up the obvious question of when are they the thickest. Secular Halloween is a hodge-podge of Celtic folklore and Goth commercialism. Food should be left out as an offering to the spirits. We left apples and candy.

On Halloween we eagerly awaited trick or treaters. Trick or treaters are an exercise in showing hospitality to strangers. This hospitality has a few variations of reward. The more you give the more you get back from the universe. The threat of trick or treat should not be challenged. Having a neighbor's kid angry with you does not help to build community. Various myths tell us of gods and demi-gods appearing as strangers to test the virtue of a person. As human beings we are in a constant state of dying. We also experiment with trying to record ghost voices, to no avail.

Our ancestors always faced the prospect that some of them might not make it thru the winter. This darktime of the year is appropriate to face and explore the fears and phobias within us. Fight those battles till the light of the newborn sun shines on you. I carved a pumpkin guardian with a psychic third-eye for protection, painted a turban squash to look like an exposed brain. The apartment has been decorated in fall foliage. We watched quite a few horror movies. We also rode on a ghost train. This featured such things as the "spirit of the woods," an evil witch, a fire crystal and a "warrior/naturalist" who guarded the woods, wearing a dark blue robe with stars and moons on it.

Now we can't wait for Yule. It's still the most pagan friendly of the secular or religious holidays. For Eurisko Grove, Yule marks the New Year cycle. I know very well that Celtic and Wiccan traditions believe the New Year is celebrated on Samhain. Yet I feel we are as much a part of the culture we live in as the culture we are attuning with. Keeping this in mind, the end of December is the end of the year. Historically, both the Norse and the Romans just to name two also looked upon the winter solstice as the yearly demarcation point. Soon we will start shopping for a potted dwarf spruce, who will end up being with us for the next two years and then planted. This has been a tradition of ours for six years now.

There is also an extreme amount of cross-pollination of secular and religious imagery, most of it falling under the category of pre-Christian. What better way to begin the New Year than with new stuff? Also by having the year change halfway through winter, it helps to put the harsh times into more manageable segments. If we make it to the New Year than the remaining winter won't be so bad because we are magically farther away from it. The scent of cinnamon, apples, and evergreens unite to evoke memories long forgotten.

I have to admit I've been conditioned since childhood to enjoy this time of year. It's also a relief after the somberness of the Samhain season. We plan on a sunrise ritual for Yule. Another long-standing tradition is "Dark Christmas Movies". So far we are planning on "The Murder of Edwin Drood" and "Eyes Wide Shut." Yule dinner will feature goose and Dickens on "Books on Tape."

Bamboo Grove: News from Delaware

Samhain was a mystical, reassuring experience for me. I have always felt awkward with rituals; I'm still trying to figure out how to approach spirits/deities in a formal situation since I'm more used to interacting with them on a more daily, intimate basis. So, I took a bit of my neo-pagan background from my past and did a little quasi-formal ritual, sort of ad-libbing as I went. Everything had to be inside, unfortunately, but the spirits have a sense of humor and gave this uncertain Druid "proof" that they were there and listening!

During the ritual, I talked to the spirits of my ancestors. I was a bit sad because I do not personally know my family line beyond my grandparents, and have only seen a picture of my great-grandmother who lived in a remote part of China. I reflected on the fact that my family tree is basically Christian for as far back as I know, and I wondered if any of my ancestors had ever followed different paths, such as Buddhism (Zen or otherwise), Taoism, etc.

I had taken time a few weeks before Samhain to write out a list of things that I wanted to release from my life, and things I wanted to affirm for the upcoming year. As I read from the sheet I whispered my hopes for the upcoming year to the spirits. After I was finished I gently ripped the paper into strips and lit them in my small cauldron; I burned every piece down to ash to send my requests "on their way." When I got down to the last piece, I gazed into the cauldron and watched it burn brightly and then flicker down into embers. As I watched I noticed a portion of an

affirmation on part of the paper that hadn't burned yet, and to my amazement, the flames flickered out before burning three of the words. It was a significant "sign" for me, and I mentally laughed as I realized that the spirits were indeed listening (and definitely have their own ways to communicate clearly with me)! It was a much-needed reassurance, and will make for a Samhain I will remember for a long time to come.

As for this winter, I don't have any particular "projects" in the works for the Grove, other than making sure that the Arch-Druid gets enough sunlight, water, and doesn't get too cold. (Any suggestions for keeping a bamboo plant happy during the winter indoors? Email me: psyche@udel.edu). Even though this is the Time of Sleep, I have a small personal project in the works to prepare for a possible academic advancement after I graduate this spring (otherwise known as getting applications, recommendations, transcripts, etc. done as well as taking the dreaded GRE test). I like to think of this as nurturing the seed of my future ambitions during this Time of Sleep, and hope to see the results in the spring.

May you all have a Blessed Yule!

~brightmirage~

Oaken Circle Grove: News from Kentucky

Greetings,

The Oaken Circle Grove of Northern Kentucky would like to congratulate a grove couple Tara and Brandon on their handfasting on October 19, 2002. It was a beautiful ceremony and there are photos at http://oaken_cirle_grove.tripod.com/oakencirclegroveky/ on the grove photos page. Our grove has finally gathered the paper work for articles of incorporation to become incorporated and then we will be on our way to becoming a not for profit organization. The grove is moving along in many aspects, check out our site to keep informed.

Many Blessings,

Sherry
Founder of the OCG

Swamp Grove: News from Florida

As the Swamp Grove prepares for Solstice, we enter the refreshing cool season that draws so many to our area. Walking through the forest in the everglades is unlike any other place in the US, cypress trees show their roots in the dry autumn and moss hangs heavy on large Florida oaks. It is truly a magical place, worthy of preservation and filled with strange and abundant life. Our small group of Pagans is truly fortunate to be able to experience this sub-tropical wilderness. A happy Solstice to all the reformed Druids in their own magical lands.

Mojo Proto-Grove

We had an extra special Samhain with a lot of effort put into both the ritual, and accoutrements. Also it was mutually agreed upon to officially dissolve the protogrove. A number of us did attend the local Humane Society Bowser Boo Bash, which was a great success, and a lot of fun to boot. We've all decided to at least meet each year to do the Boo Bash together (most of us are neighbors and see each other a lot anyway).

—Juju

MOCC--Muskogee/Mother Grove:

News from Oklahoma

Samhain night. It was time for potluck and partying. Go figure, even the church down the block from us was having a rousing game of bingo. Yippee!!! More than one of the MOCC attendees also grabbed a card or two and sat in on a round of the age-old Samhain favorite. There was a fabulous potluck feast featuring brisket marinated in wine, hot dogs and rigatoni, and it was topped off by everybody bobbing for apples. Even those among us who were frozen by fear of their makeup being messed-up by the water joined in the fun of trying to get an apple. The youngest among us, ages seven and nine, were among the most intelligent at this contest of skill and wit. They simply chomped down on the stem and brought it up, free of the water's icy chill.

Grove of the Ancient Oaks: News from Utah

I had this e-mail request for New of the Grove forwarded to me by my dear friend Inion. She suggested that I send news to you of our new grove being formed here in Utah. Its name is The Grove of the Ancient Oaks. My name is Zack Faust, I am the Arch-druid. We became a grove in early November. We are part of the Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross. We are not a large group, we only have five members. We are happy with what we have. I can be contacted at LLYRBRAE@yahoo.com I am soon to create an e-mail for our group. Thanks for you time and please e-mail me any questions you might have.

With all the blessings of Brighid,

Zack Faust

Poison Oak Grove: News from California

Samhain, a time to remember and honor the ancestors. I can't help but think of Emmon at this time, more so than any other. I arranged a trip up to Mt. Shasta the following week to visit his grave. During the last week in October the Shasta Abbey celebrates the Festival of the Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts, which is much reminiscent of our Samhain. Past relatives and friends are remembered by offerings of favorite foods of the deceased placed upon the altar. I was invited to send my offering since I was not able to be there for the ceremony. In the box I included walnuts from a friend's tree, hazelnuts, an organic apple, a small pumpkin, and a beeswax tea light.

Samhain eve was spent up at the cabin. The wood stove had remained untouched and still set for a fire since before his death nearly three and a half years prior. It seemed the fitting occasion to light it. I had thought I would cry when doing that but didn't. I had no special plans or expectations for the evening, no vigil this year. The evening meal consisted of similar foods I had prepared for the offering sent to the Abbey as well as a cheese sandwich. As I was setting it out, it struck me as the right thing to do to set two plates and split the food in to. Keeping with the RDNA Samhain eve tradition of drinking the last of the waters-of-life before the oncoming Season of Sleep, I poured two goblets of the Grove whiskey normally used in the red Ben Franklin chalice. I put on a cassette appropriately entitled "Through the Veil" and lit candles. With the fire glowing and the impromptu feast the evening took on a decidedly festive air, reminiscent of parties Emmon used to hold at High Days. It

suddenly occurred to me that this had become what is called a "dumb supper," the Samhain custom in Ireland and Scotland of a meal eaten in silence to which the dead are invited and the dead are present as invisible entities. It was at that point I started crying because I could feel that Emmon was happy again.

The Hill of Three Oaks where many of the first services at Carleton were held.

40th RDNA Anniversary Celebration

Mike Scharding, Digitalis Grove

If it is meaningful and convenient for you, we ask you to commemorate the upcoming anniversary in May 2003 by holding a simple service of some type where you live on Saturday, May 3rd or by joining us at Carleton College. Either way, we are both standing on the same Mother-Earth, merely out of sight of each other, and partaking of the same air and feeling the roots of our common past. Keep us in your thoughts that day, as we will towards you.

My simple plan is to surmount poor records by spreading the burden of reaching members to people like you who are reading this letter; even if you won't be attending. By using Alumni records or personal contacts, please just relay this message to a few other people who interacted with the Druids, or who might be interested. I've already reached most of the past Third Orders and Archdruids. There would necessarily be some overlap and redundant efforts involved.

If you do come to Carleton in May, you'll have the unusual chance to interact with current students, something that isn't possible at most Alumni Reunions. Students usually enjoy the chance to hear advice and trade stories with old-timers during this intense time of their spiritual journey. Since it's cooler, there are no annoying mosquitoes. We also promise the largest four birthday candles you are ever going to see!

No reservations are needed, just show up and jump in. Everybody should BYOB, BYOF, and BYOMI (musical instruments) so we can have a fun potluck, no matter how few (or many) arrive. Until you arrive, you won't know who's there, including yourself. The Beltane (May Day) activities are still loosely scheduled, and will be quite simple, and alternative activities will occur in case of rain. Friends and family welcome. If you come earlier on a weekday, you can peruse the extensive Druid Archives during business hours.

May 2nd (Friday): Interviews, Cooking, and other preparations.

May 3rd (Saturday): Walks in the arboretum, maypole dance, a Beltane 40th service (with the requisite deep and meaningful speeches), more folk-dancing, a picnic, silly games, and contests, an evening bonfire sing-a-long, and some vigils perhaps.

May 4th (Sunday): Farewell at Dawn

If you cannot make it in May, you could always choose to attend the probably larger Annual 2003 Carleton Alumni Reunion, which is on the Midsummer, conveniently enough. I couldn't decide, so I will attend both (since other research commitments bring me to Northfield then), but please choose the more convenient date for your schedule and budget. Either will be fun.

June 19th (Thursday): People arrive, folk-dancing may break out.

June 20th (Friday): Late night bonfire and singing (or perhaps Sat?)

June 21st (Saturday): Dawn walk, Noon-ish 40th service at Hill, vigils

June 22nd (Sunday): Sunrise farewell at the hill.

Performers at a play on Mai Fete Island at the May Festival at Carleton in the 1940s and 1950s, a local event of some renown.

Concrete details on location and times will firm up in April at: www.geocities.com/mikerdna/anniversary.html

Our events will be listed in the standard schedule of Alumni activities (we may also attend related groups' activities like arb-walks and folk-dancing). The difference for June will be: no current students, more Alumni events, more mosquitoes!, 95F weather, and cheaper on-campus housing. Non-Alumni should carefully arrange lodging, and contact me if they're puzzled.

Suggested Websites for the Reunion

Up to the week current information on how the May celebration plans are here

http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/anniversary.html

Similar plans for the June Carleton Alumni reunion.

http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/reunion.html

800-acre arboretum map

http://www.acad.carleton.edu/campus/arb/map/arbwhole.html

Good Carleton Campus Map

http://www.carleton.edu/visitors/maps/campus/CarletonCollege.gif

Information on visiting Carleton and finding a place to stay. Don't forget that camping and crash space!

http://www.carleton.edu/visitors/

"Cows, Colleges, and Contentment" is the town slogan, and name of an Irish Bar there.

www.northfield.org/

What adventures lurk in the adjoining town?

www.northfieldchamber.com/pages/tourism.html

More on the lodging available, for those not interested in furtive camping.

www.northfieldchamber.com/pages/lodging.html

Northfield Hotels (use www.mapquest.com to locate)

Archer House, 212 Division Street. (507) 645-5661 or (800) 247-2235. Adjacent to campus, quaint and folksy. $70-$120.

College City Motel, 875 Highway 3 North. (507) 645-4426. Cheap, reasonable. One mile from campus, $50-$80.

Country Inn Motel, 300 South Highway. (507) 645-2286 or (800) 456-4000. About two miles away, $70-$90.

AmericInn Motel and Suites, meeting of South Highway 3 and 19. (507) 645-7761. About 1,200 yds. away, $65-$95.

Super 8 Motel, Highway 3 South. (507) 663-0371 or (800) 800-8000. About three miles from campus, $60-$90.

River View Legacy Motel, Highway 3 and St. Olaf Ave. (507) 645-9980. About one mile from campus, $60-80.

Dundas (an adjacent town)

Another Time, 305 Railway Street, (507) 645-6367.

A Sociological Look at the RDNA at Carleton College

Or 'The Epistle of Irony'

Part Three and the Last

Section IV

Is Reformed Druidism a Religion?

There is an unwritten rule that whatever any Druid may say about him or herself, no one is to make categorical claims regarding the entire movement. Druidism can be and has been a religion for its individual members. It has never claimed itself to be a religion. Druidism is above all a system of inquiry into life, nature and meaning. Depending on how one takes that, the movement could be viewed either way. The official Druidic statement has been that the RDNA does not affirm or deny the validity of any religion, including itself.

The founders of Reformed Druidism certainly never intended to start a religion. Indeed, the persistence of the movement beyond the elimination of the Chapel requirement took many of the founders by surprise. David Fisher left the movement early on because he had begun to fear that he had helped to start something that was becoming dangerously close to a real religion. Its function as a protest was fulfilled, and yet the group remained. "For a great many Druids, the RDNA had introduced the possibility of taking personal responsibility for understanding and believing one's own faith."[11]

Druidism continued because people continued to find it meaningful and useful beyond its initial function as a creative protest. Still, did that make the RDNA a religion? The founders were careful not to call it such, though they wished it to appear as one for political purposes, and the movement has remained deliberately vague on this question ever since. Part of the reason for this vagueness is the fear of the 'fossilization theory.' If the RDNA had indeed found something meaningful in the realm of religion, it was felt that it had done so through its very simplicity. If defining themselves as a religion--or anything else--would engender the complexity and rigidity that people had joined the movement to avoid, they wanted no part of it.

View of Carleton over Lyman Lakes.

One of the consequences of this refusal was the gradual splintering of the original RDNA into innumerable branches. Every so often, someone would enter the movement who felt that it should be further defined. Each time this happened, after a brief struggle to change the whole RDNA, a new splinter group would form centered around the rebel and his or her followers. At present, so far as I can tell, there are nearly two dozen separate and related branches, all bearing the name 'Druid,' all spawned by definition or methodological disagreements. The first and most drastic of these schisms began in 1974 over the question of whether the RDNA should declare itself and its members exclusively pagan. This was exactly the sort of thing that many of the Druids--especially those for whom the Carleton grove had been influential--wanted to avoid. They loved the fact that one did not have to renounce any religious beliefs to become a Druid, and that the Druids brought together people of all different faiths to search together in a friendly, healthy manner. Others felt differently though, and a new group was formed.[12]

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11 ARDA pp. 339.

12 See Scharding for a thorough discussion of this initial split, known within the movement as the 'Isaac wars.' Hansen also gives a solid cataloguing of the extant Druid groups in the

The old RDNA remained as it was, happily undefined and unsettled as to the religious question. Even in their second great interaction with authority, which seemed to hinge upon whether the RDNA represented an actual religion or not the Druids managed to escape without really settling the issue.[13]

From a research perspective the question remains. Is the Reformed Druid movement a religion? Is it a 'real religion,' whatever that means? Is it something to which one can legitimately apply the theories of Weber, Marx, and Schleiermacher as I intend shortly to do? It is apparent by now that I, at least, regard it as, if not a religion per se, at least something to which many of the great religious theories and debates are applicable. If I did not, all the time I have put into this project would be seen as wasted.[14]

In what ways can the RDNA be considered a religion? Eliade defined the base of all religious experience as the personal experience of sacred reality or Other. Schleiermacher followed him in stating that it was the encounter between the finite and the infinite, which is the origin and object of all religion. To my mind, it is with exactly this encounter that Druidism deals. It is almost beyond question that on any functional level human beings are finite creatures. Through Druidism they engage freely in the spiritual search--the individual quest for understanding of the sacred. Certainly Druidism can and has dealt with all of the classical religious problems of ontology, metaphysics, soteriology, and eschatology, not to mention that of theodicy, the celebrated 'question of evil.' It has done so, however, on a purely individual level. Druidism never teaches that any particular thing is or is not the case--it simply teaches people to learn and decide for themselves.

The mysterious Hadzi sculpture in from of the Carleton Library, many legends abound it.

All of the classic problems and issues of religion are discussed at Druidic meetings and debated at great length from a variety of views but in the end it is up to each individual to decide what to believe. What the RDNA does is to create a place where people of many different religions can come together to share their traditions and learning. Scharding credits this persistence to the delight in the possibility of taking personal responsibility for one's own faith. The movement had shown people experientially "the benefits of learning from people from other faiths in a non-hostile forum of interaction."[15]

The insight of the Druids, Scharding writes,

> "was that if the same story about, say, a bird making it's nest, can be interpreted by all religions as a useful analogy for their own religious beliefs, then people of all religions could benefit from getting together and hearing that same story.... As long as dogmatic theological statements remain out of the stories, the group can enjoy each other's company."[16]

It has often been denied that Reformed Druidism is a religion because it boasts no dogma or theology. 'How can that be a religion,' we often hear. 'It doesn't teach anything!' The short answer is that Druidism teaches people how to learn, not what is true. It will show you how to walk--not where to travel. In this it is exactly as much a religion as are the Zen Buddhist schools, or, for that matter, Taoism. The theories of the great sociologists of religion are usefully applicable to these systems. I believe that, even if it denies being a religion itself, they are no less applicable to Reformed Druidism.

There is one other problem that ought to be addressed. The question of what it would mean to declare the RDNA a religion. In a sense the question is academic because the movement intentionally never claims to be one. But from a certain perspective the question remains. If Reformed Druidism declared itself to be a fully-fledged religion like any other, would it in effect be denying all religious validity? The argument runs vaguely as follows. Reformed Druidism affirms and denies no religious validity by its own admission. But the essence of religion seems to be a profound respect for the importance and validity of a personal encounter with the sacred. If the RDNA calls itself a religion just like the others, is it stating, in effect, that religious experience is not worth validating? The essence of religious tolerance is not unconditional acceptance of differences but rather an abiding respect for the sacredness of the other's Other. Druidism appears not to contain this. To put it differently, if Druidism includes itself in the set of Religions, is it saying that a religion does not have to affirm or deny anything at all? Druidism does not appear to contain any sacred. By calling itself a religion is it saying that there is no sacred to religion?[17]

I do not believe that this is the case. First of all, Druidism never declared itself, as such, to be a religion. If its members do so, that is their own affair, but almost invariably Druidism mutates and develops into something subtly different and much

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United States today, their relationship to one another, and how each came to be.

13 This was the almost famous 'Smiley Case' which will be discussed further below.

14 Or as a furthering of the great and subtle joke that some have seen Druidism as being!

15 ARDA pp. 339

16 ARDA pp. 341

17 I confess that I do not completely understand this argument and have not given it the best statement or defense possible. I would gratefully welcome any clearer formulations of it.

It is almost regrettable that there has never been a serious philosophical study of the Reformed Druid movement. Druidism seems such a valuable tool of inquiry that one could see the attraction in developing a solid understanding and perhaps metaphysic of it. But it is not at all clear to me at this point how one would go about doing this, nor even that it should be done. It is not that I doubt Druidism could take the probing, but the defining that it would almost certainly entail seems against the spirit of the system. It may be that anything that was developed in such a manner would become yet another splinter group, another branch of the movement that would leave its original roots unchanged.

more complex as soon as it is adopted by a lucid individual rather than a group. Secondly, Druidism does hold an abiding respect for other experiences of the sacred. It simply holds their expressions, through theology, poetry, art, and philosophy as secondary portrayals of that primary experience. The experience of the sacred is holy and respected, whoever happened to have it. Their depiction of it is granted only as much validity as anyone else's. It is taken as one of many fingers pointing at the moon, not the moon itself. The validity of any and all experiences of the sacred stand. Religious expressions are viewed as mutable. Finally, Druidism itself would never--nor would any Druid that I know--state that there is no sacred in religion. It would merely insist that we each critically and honestly examine our own experiences, religious and otherwise, to seek out and understand the sacred within them.

Section V

Sociological Theory and the Reformed Druids

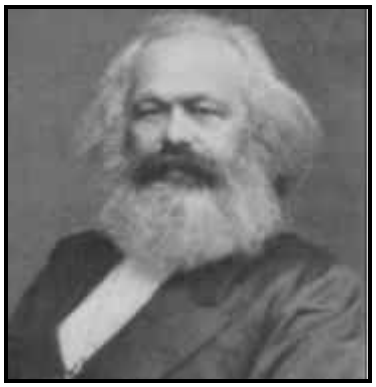
Of all the classical social theories, those of Friedrich Schleiermacher seem to most accurately describe Reformed Druidism.[18] Schleiermacher divided the depictions of religion in his time into those reducing it to functions of the will, reason, and imagination. When viewed as such, the primary vehicle for religious expression became morality, philosophy and art, respectively. Schleiermacher believed that each of these conceptions left out something crucial about the nature of religion and so posited a fourth category. The primary faculty of religion, he felt, was feeling. Religion, he posited, was the encounter of the finite to the infinite. Feeling was that by which we experience this encounter. As pure feelings are essentially incommunicable between sane humans, other means of expressing the encounter must be utilized. According to Schleiermacher, morality, philosophy, art, theology, rituals, laws, legends, and even history are all secondary means of trying to express this primary experience. As such, have no final or absolute validity in the domain of religion! Only feeling can convey the primary experience, and feeling is essentially impossible to communicate.

Schleiermacher's view of religion is a profound call for tolerance. If all theologies and dogmas, all morals and rituals are only secondary expressions of the sacred, then even religious beliefs that completely antagonize one's own can be tolerated. People can realize that it is only the details of expression that they are fighting about when there may be no real disagreement over the feeling of the sacred. This view is almost identical to that espoused by Reformed Druidism. They too regard all expressions of religious truth to be equally valid as secondary indicators of an inexpressible reality that is never the less to be sought by each individual. They too exhibit a unilateral tolerance for all systems of religious belief and practice.[19]

Because no single expression of sacrality can be seen as being its primary experience, people interested in approaching that sacred must engage in a constant process of interpretation of these secondary expressions. This hermeneutic circle of translation and interpretation is inherent to the Druidic search.

It is interesting that by both of these views religious experience and validity must remain forever uniquely individual phenomena. Until it is possible to accurately communicate pure feeling, neither the Schleiermachers nor the Druids of the world will ever be able to convey to another what exactly their encounters with the Other--the infinite--were like. All forms of expression prove not only inadequate for the searcher's understanding of religion, but also for the sage's communication of religious understanding. The consequent of this, were everyone to operate within this model of religious understanding, is a plurality of completely unique experiences of the sacred, where each person honored the validity of other's experiences, and realized that no one's expressions of that feeling were any more adequate than their own.

Karl Marx had rather different conception of religion. Unfortunately his understanding of the phenomena was rather stunted by his hatred of it. Marx's insights into the nature of economics and political theory are profound; it is a shame he could not apply the same clarity of thought to the study of religion. It has been argued that Marx's statements on religion are inconclusive and contradictory, making it rather hard to discern what he actually thought on the subject, but from his critiques of Feuerbach, and of Bauer in On the Jewish Question a synthesis of sorts can be made.



It seems that Marx held that the ideas of religion emerged from social powerlessness. Religion served, in his mind, as a superstructure to maintain and perpetuate the economic base, which gave rise to it. It did this by maintaining the social class structure and placating the lower classes with promises of something better to come--so long as they held their peace for the time being. At the same time it seems that Marx held that religion emerged from alienation in the realm of civil society--the same force that produced divergent political and economic

18 In discussing the sociology of the movement, I do not intend to focus here on social factors leading to or even influencing the Reformed Druids. Michael Scharding discusses some of these including Judeo Christian influences, the influence of Asian religions, of the 'Sixties,' of Carleton, and toys with the possibility of Fraternal influences in the creation of the RDNA. Instead I intend to look at the applicability of some of the classical sociological theories to Druidism, leaving the discussion of factors to those who know more about them.

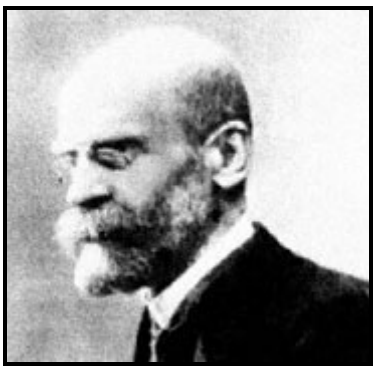
19 Within reason. Someone whose religious practice involved destroying the natural world on principle, or who ritually murdered random folks would not be tolerated. But this would be on behavioral grounds rather than religious ones.

systems. Alienation leads to the objectification of an expression of one's self--or one's culture--which then is imagined as being independent of the thing it is an expression of. This is idolatry in Marx's view--the worship of something you yourself have created.[20]

It seems, though, that none of these ideas shed any particular light on Reformed Druidism. Druidism did not arise out of social powerlessness, does not maintain any class structure, and has no economic bearing what-so-ever. It also posits no higher being, objectified or otherwise, that could be viewed as a created and forgotten idol of civil alienation. Instead it seems that the RDNA emerged and has been sustained primarily through curiosity. Furthermore, Druidism does not seek--or serve--to maintain any authority, including its own, other than that of intellectual honesty, which is operative on a solely personal level. Druidism does take a certain delight is frustrating the authority of others, especially that which is seen as arbitrary, restrictive or simply absurd. In this sense it could be seen as a reaction to authoritarian structures, but not at all in the way that Marx envisioned. The RDNA has had only two major interactions with authority, and while one of them was the purpose of the movement's initiation, the struggle against an authority has never since proved a motivating factor in the movement's continuation.[21]

Another sociologist whose theories mesh oddly with the RDNA is Emile Durkheim. Durkheim held fundamentally that religion is not irrational--not at all a function of superstition and error, as others have often maintained. All religious experience is the experience of the power of society in his view. The immediate fascination of this view is that no society can ever exist without religion. He also believed that to understand religion we must go back to its base: totemism. On at the same time he held that as a society changes, its god must too. In totemism the individual identifies and becomes one with the totem, which in turn unifies and expresses the nature of his or her social group. As societies advance this identification becomes intellectualized and disguised. By the time a society reaches a reasonably advanced stage its conception of the totem has evolved into a fairly abstract, usually singular god. Along the way this conception of the sacred has been purged of all definable qualities. To adequately represent and unify a very simple social group was easy--they could all be seen to manifest attributes of the bear, for instance. As people specialize and society develops, one definable vision of 'god' can no longer depict them all equally. By abstracting more and more-- and by removing all human characteristics--a society's god becomes more philosophic, beyond all description and understanding, all in the attempt to represent as many different objectified people as possible. The eventual and evident end of this so far as religion goes, is that a society will either have to simplify itself drastically to preserve its conception of god, or the individual itself will become seen as sacred--bypassing the objective representation of the individual as a totem, god, or anything else.

Druidism seems to be an exemplification of this second course. The very conception of god has been objectified away to nothing, and we are left with the individuals again, knowing that the sacred is important, but realizing anew that it is basically unknown. Each individual must seek out their own understanding of the sacred and, in doing so, it appears that each individual actually becomes in some sense sacred. While Reformed Druidism itself certainly did not begin as totemism and evolve to something else, it is entirely possible that the society from which it arose did. It may be that the emergence of the RDNA is the exact fulfillment and continuation of Durkheim's theory on religious evolution. It emerged at a time when society had diversified to the extent where not even a completely abstract and indescribable god without any qualities could represent every member of that society--for people are not themselves abstract. A specific conception of a personal deity could represent individuals better than an abstraction.



In this case the theory does shed useful light upon the RDNA. The movement is seen as the natural result of societal change and the forerunner of a greater degree of individual awareness and responsibility for religion soon to come. Indeed, as one looks at the kinds of religious movements that have been emerging since the 1960's when Druidism began one can see that many of them embody just this individualization of the sacred--though none of them do so as simply and carefully as do the Reformed Druids. I need merely instance the vast neo-pagan movement, the Church of All worlds, and other similar organizations where any non-socially murderous religious belief is tolerated, and where the church will ordain anyone as a legal minister for the asking.

On the other hand, Durkheim insists that all religious experience is the experience of the power of society. The Druidic path is one that can be followed without reference to society at all. It is useful to talk to others, to read the writings of sages past, or to ponder the teachings of other religions, but the essence of Druidism is clear and careful thinking about the world--a skill that could be practiced by the last man on earth. In addition, most, if not all, of the religious experiences reported by Reformed Druids have taken place in utter solitude. It is in their aloneness with nature that many of the Druids find themselves closest to the sacred. One could argue that if the individual itself has become sacred it is only natural that he or she would feel closest to the sacred when alone with themselves, but this argument smacks strongly of sophistry. It is also possible that the religious experience a person feels when alone is simply the transcendental power of society that they have absorbed and carried with them manifesting itself like a voice in the wilderness. Given the feeling and noetic content of many of these experiences I must seriously doubt that this is the case. I have yet to see a clear and convincing argument in its favor, but mention it because I cannot refute it completely.

Finally, Durkheim's description and justification of the social contract meshes nicely with Reformed Druidic thought. For him it is the inherent sacrality of each individual that makes it important for us not to break our promises to each other. For the Druids, an inviolate respect for the rights of each individual is inherent to the movement. Life is inherently sacred, many of them hold. No one has the right to violate that.

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20 In this understanding of Marx I am deeply indebted to professor Nader Saiedi of Carleton College.

21 The first was the successful attempt to get the mandatory chapel requirement revoked. The second was the 'Smiley Affair' beginning in 1967 when the RDNA successfully stalled the US Military out of Drafting one of their priests. See the Carleton Archives, Internal correspondence, and pp. 345-6 of ARDA.

Section VI

Conclusion

I hope that I have at least demonstrated that the Reformed Druids of North America, while not being a religion in the strictest sense, comprise a movement to which the sociological theories of Schleiermacher, Marx, Durkheim and others are applicable. I believe that much can be learned about the movement by seriously applying the theories of these and other writers, and by examining and developing the philosophic background of the RDNA. I hope that others will continue this search, and if they ever find from within the movement that they are acting against its spirit, that they will listen to the dictates of their hearts before forging ahead or dropping their studies.

What I am not sure that I have demonstrated is that the Reformed Druids actually embody a definable and distinct set of people that could be studied as a religious group. I think that what binds them together is the spirit of their search, the shared history of the movement, and their individual acceptance of the simple tenets. If that is not enough, to convince the reader, I ask you to consider how the worlds. Christians can be considered part of one movement, embracing as they do both the Catholic Church and the Quaker meeting halls.

Finally, let me say that for the most part, the confusion as to who is and isn't a Druid shows up on paper more than it does in life. This seems to be because, despite the changes, there has never really been any doubt as to who the Druids amongst people were. As Isaac Bonewits writes,

> "The role of the Druid has always been clear- scholar, and artist, poet, and priest, philosopher and magician--the one who seeks, preserves and expends the highest wisdom her or his people are capable of handling safely, and who uses the knowledge and inspiration for the benefit of their community." [22]

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22 ARDA pp. 323

The Canny Conifers

By Sam Peeples

Pine Trees, Firs, Spruces, Yews, Larches. How wonderful these trees are, the evergreens (except for the larch) that have survived not only millions of years of munching by dinosaurs, but have held their own through bitter winters and ice-ages. Coniferous trees generally don't lose their needles in the winter, and house seeds in cone-like structures, thus their name. Their narrow leaves and flexible branches let snow fall off easily, and conserve moisture in the summer.

Etymology

The Scots Pine (Pinus sylvestris) is known in Irish as Giuis, Scots Gàidhlig as Giubhais (also known as Peith), and Pin in Welsh, but it is actually found from Spain to Siberia. Its nickname in the timber trade is "redwood" or "deal." The Yew is from the family Taxaceae and is known in Irish as Iur, Welsh is Ywen. Juniper is of the Cupressaceae family and found mostly in Southern England, US and Europe, and has no Celtic name, anymore. Sometimes, the name "pine" is used loosely for any tree in the pine family Pinaceae. In North America, that family contains larch, true fir, spruce, hemlock, and Douglas-fir. A tree with needles is not a Pinus if:

- the tree has bundles of a dozen or more needles; needles are soft, flat, in brushlike clusters on short spur-like shoots; deciduous not evergreen--then the trees are larches or tamaracks, Larix.
- its needles are flat, often with a notch at the end; needles grow in two ranks, directly and singly from the branch, and have a plump base that leaves a round depression on the branch. Cylindrical cones are upright and disintegrate on the branch--then the trees are true firs, Abies.
- its needles are short and not bundled but have a stalk and four-sides; they spiral from persistent peg-like bases; the naked twigs are rough and warty--then the trees are spruces, Picea.
- its needles flat, with blunt ends; the needles are in two ranks like the fir, but blunt, shorter, and fatter; dark-green and shiny above, pale below with two slim lines--then the trees are hemlocks, Tsuga.
- its needles are flat with pointed tips and linear; they grow directly from the branch; the leaf scar is small and raised (for the true fir it is larger and depressed); each needle narrows at the base into a short, thin stem. Cones hang down with three-point bracts--then the trees are Douglas-firs, Pseudotsuga.

By the way, the verb "to pine" has no direct connection with the tree, but when pines die they often remain standing long after the life has left them, just like unrequited lovers who die of a broken heart. According to Merriam Webster:

Main Entry: pine

Function: intransitive verb

Inflected Form(s): pined; pining

Etymology: Middle English, from Old English pinian to suffer, from (assumed) Old English pin punishment, from Latin poena--more at PAIN

Date: 14th century

1: to lose vigor, health, or flesh (as through grief): LANGUISH

2: to yearn intensely and persistently especially for something unattainable (wealth lost their for pined still)

Physical Description

Scots Pine is the only native pine in Britain, it reaches 40 meters and lives about 150 years, with some as long as 520. Sometime you get the tall narrow type, but often it splits trunks. The paired needles are about five inches and last about two to three years. Their spread to the British Isles from the continent preceded the disappearance of the land bridge 10,000 years ago and reaching Scotland by 6,000 years ago. It only inhabits 1% of its original range of 1,500,000 hectare, and is primarily found in the West Highlands, having been supplanted by faster growing trees on tree farms. It has naturally been more common in the mountains and areas of elevation. Male and female flowers appear on the same tree, with the female often a bit higher on the tree, using wind pollination. They flower in May, but the seeds must wait two winters to germinate (on the third year after fertilization) and the seeds are tiny, about 120,000 per kilogram. They travel about 70 meters from the tree, and then can skip across the snows for a few more kilometers. They like to find exposed soil, such as that dug up by a rooting boar or a forest fire. The trees are often coated in lichen, which helps to fix nitrogen and then nourishes the soil when it falls off the tree. Some fungi also work in harmony with the tree. Another 45 types of insects, plants and animals (like the Scottish crossbill and Capercaillie) are only found near pine trees in Scotland. Several larger species like (wild boar, beaver, brown bear, moose, lynx and wolf) used to be denizens of the Caledonian forest.

By the nineteenth and twentieth centuries vast quantities of pine were used for pit props, telegraph poles and railway sleepers. Coinciding with this relentless timber extraction came the Highland Clearances in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Since much of the countryside was denuded of people, there was nobody to manage the regeneration of the pine woods; instead the often-absent landowners introduced huge flocks of sheep and herds of deer that soon held sway across the old forests, systematically munching through the emerging seedlings. As old trees were removed wholesale, the source of seed disappeared; and, unlike broadleaf trees, cut pine stumps will not regenerate new growth but simply die in the ground. What little management there may have been was totally inadequate. The result was that by 1970 only an estimated 25,000 acres of native pinewood was still standing.

The Yew is only a medium-sized tree found naturally in dense shade of Oak woods. It is often used for hedging or making weird animal topiary shapes. It is found across the European continent and British Isles. Its flowers are in March and red fleshy berries are in October. Almost all parts of the Yew (except the red fleshy berries) are EXTREMELY POISONOUS, so great care should be taken before messing with this plant. Birds swallow the aril (red part) and then deposit the seeds in the course of their work. The seeds go dormant for about 18 months in the ground, but it works well by planting cuttings from the tree. The tree is best known for its extreme longevity, some specimens living two or three thousand years and becoming simply enormous in girth.

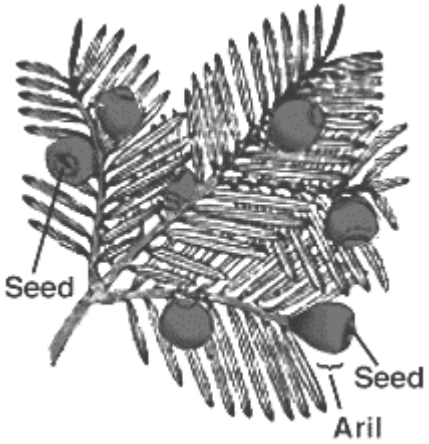
Juniper is a small tree or bush. With a whitish bloom in May and whose ripen seeds are distributed by birds in October, and then goes dormant until spring before germinating.

Physical Uses

The pine is a strong, general purpose timber with natural preservative qualities, making it very suitable for use outdoors, fencery, joinery, flooring, boxes, telegraph poles, fiberboard, ship beams and masts (witness Beinn nan Sparra, Hill of Spars, in Glen Affric). The pitch from the tree was used to fill cracks in planks and beer casks. For higher resin content they were harvested on the waxing moon. The resin content is so high that some pine trees will remain standing for 50-100 years after dying without decay.

Yew produces a very durable, beautifully smooth, gold-colored wood with a wavy grain that is often used for furniture, weapons and tool handles. Sometime used as an expensive veneer, when of good quality. In Europe, yew wood was used for making bows, while on the northwest coast of North America, the Pacific yew (Taxus brevifolia) is used by the Haida and other tribes for making masks and boxes.

The Juniper is a very aromatic sapwood that is fairly strong and durable. And can be used for charcoal and pencils. Juniper oil can be distilled, and berries are used to flavor meats and Gin.



Mythological Appearance

In *The Golden Bough*, James Frazer relates various stories involving pine trees from classical mythology, which may or may not have been Scots pines, such as how the ancient Egyptians buried an image of the god Osiris in the hollowed-out center of a pine tree. He writes that, "It is hard to imagine how the conception of a tree as tenanted by a personal being could be more plainly expressed." As a symbol of royalty the pine was associated with the Greek goddess Pitthea, and also with the Dionysus/Bacchus mythology surrounding the vine and wine making, probably as fertility symbol. Worshippers of Dionysus often carried a pine-cone-tipped wand as a fertility symbol and the image of the pinecone has also been found on ancient amulets as a symbol of fertility.

For the Romans the pine was an object of worship during the spring equinox festival of Cybele and Attis. As an evergreen tree the pine would also have symbolized immortality.

The pine was held sacred to Pan, the Roman Faunus, and in his Eclogues Vergil describes the pastoral god's home on Mt. Maenalus in Arcadia. Propertius stresses the god's fondness for the tree, and Horace, for his part, dedicates a pine to the goddess Diana in a famous ode.

The Romans celebrated the winter solstice with a fest called Saturnalia in honor of Saturnus, the god of agriculture. They decorated their houses with greens and lights and exchanged gifts. They gave coins for prosperity, pastries for happiness, and lamps to light one's journey through life.

The Scots pine groves or "shaman forests" scattered over the dry grasslands of eastern Siberia were considered sacred by the Buriats, a Mongolian people living around the southern end of Lake Baikal. These groves were to be approached and entered in silence and reverence, respectful of the gods and spirits of the wood.

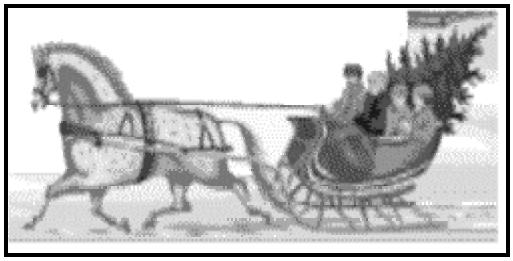
While learning about the habits of a bear, I learned the following American Indian saying. "When a pine needle falls, the bear smells it, the Eagle sees it and the rabbit hears it."

Folk Customs

- All parts of the Yew tree are poisonous except the fleshy covering of the berry, and its medicinal uses include a recently discovered treatment for cancer.
- Coniferous trees are especially popular for planting in cemeteries and churches with their promise of "eternal life." Many Celtic churches were famous for their enormous Yews planted in the adjoining cemetery.
- Late in the Middle Ages, Germans and Scandinavians placed evergreen trees inside their homes or just outside their doors to show their hope in the forthcoming spring. Our modern Christmas tree evolved from these early traditions or the Yule log traditions.
- The Christmas tree was popularly believed to have been introduced by Prince Albert (another German) by Queen Victoria (another German) to the British Isles in the 19th century with the custom of hanging blown glass baubles from Thuringia. The custom soon made its way to America in the 1880s. Other believe that the Christmas tree tradition most likely came to the United States with Hessian troops during the American Revolution, or with German immigrants to Pennsylvania and Ohio, adds Robson. The Christmas tree market was born in 1851 when Catskill farmer Mark Carr hauled two ox sleds of evergreens into New York City and sold them all. By 1900, one in five American families had a Christmas tree, and 20 years later, the custom was nearly universal. Six species account for about 90 percent of the nation's Christmas tree trade. Scotch pine ranks first, comprising about 40 percent of the market, followed by Douglas fir, which accounts for about 35 percent. The other big sellers are noble fir, white pine, balsam fir and white spruce.
- Romans believed that pinecones imparted both physical and moral strength.
- Many Orthodox Jews are still buried in plain pine coffins when swaddling is insufficient for local ordinance codes.
- Pine was sometimes used to make an expectorant or inhalants, sometimes for antiseptic use.
- The Pine tree is an evergreen; its old title was "the sweetest of woods." It was known to the Druids as one of the seven chieftain trees of the Irish.
- Mix the dried needles with equal parts of juniper and cedar and burn to purify the home and ritual area.
- The cones and nuts can be carried as a fertility charm.

- A good magickal cleansing and stimulating bath is made by placing pine needles in a loose-woven bag and running bath water over it.
- To purify and sanctify an outdoor ritual area, brush the ground with a pine branch. The scent of Pine is useful in the alleviation of guilt.
-

- A persistent theme in the folklore of Scots pine is their use as markers in the landscape. In the Highlands there is a recurrent theme that they were used to mark burial places of warriors, heroes and chieftains. In areas further south where the sight of Scots pine may have been more unusual and their use would have stood out more, they can be seen to mark ancient cairns, trackways and crossroads. In England they were commonly used to mark not only the drove roads themselves, but also the perimeters of meadows on which passing drovers and their herds could spend the night.
- Glades of Scots pines were also decorated with lights and shiny objects, the tree covered in stars being a representation of the Divine Light.
- Juniper grown by the door discourages thieves.
- The mature Juniper berries can be strung and hung in the house to attract love.



Obligatory Food Reference

"Alba," the name is Gaelic for Scotland. Introduced by the Vikings, spruce and pine ales were very popular in the Scottish Highlands until the end of the 19th Century. Many early explorers, including Captain Cook, used spruce ale during long sea voyages since it prevented scurvy and ill health. Shetland spruce ale was said to "stimulate animal instincts" and give you twins. Alba is brewed to a traditional Highland recipe from Scots pine and spruce shoots picked during early spring. Pure malted barley is boiled with the young sprigs of pine for several hours then the fresh shoots of the spruce are added for a short infusion before fermentation. Tawny brown strong ale with spruce aroma, rich Malt texture, complex wood flavor and lingering finish. Described by the Scottish press as "Light pale ale with champagne."

Quotes and Notable Literary References

Who leaves the pine-tree, leaves his friend,
Unnerves his strength, invites his end.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson, Woodnotes

I frequently tramped eight or ten miles through the deepest snow to keep an appointment with a beech-tree, or a yellow birch, or an old acquaintance among the pines.
--Henry David Thoreau, 1817-1862

The pine tree seems to listen, the fir tree to wait: and both without impatience: they give no thought to the little people beneath them devoured by their impatience and their curiosity.

—Friedrich Nietzsche, The Wanderer and His Shadow, # 176.

You can live for years next door to a big pine tree, honored to have so venerable a neighbor, even when it sheds needles all over your flowers or wakes you, dropping big cones onto your deck at still of night.

—Denise Levertov, Threat

Acts of creation are ordinarily reserved for gods and poets. To plant a pine, one need only own a shovel.

—Aldo Leopold

There was a handsome male mockingbird that sang his heart out every morning during the nesting season from the top of a tall Norfolk Pine tree. Last week the tree was cut down. The mockingbird and his song are gone. I can't put a dollar value on the tree nor on the mockingbird nor on his song. But I know that I--and our whole neighborhood--have suffered a loss. I wouldn't know how to count it in dollars.

—Jacquelyn Hiller

A yew tree in a graveyard in Wales.

Two Coniferous Songs

"Only Yew!"

Filked by Patrick Haneke,
Akita Grove, Year 2001.
For the Public Domain.
Original "Only You" By the Platters

(Spoken Intro by William Watson)
Old emperor Yew, fantastic sire,
Girt with thy guard of dotard kings
What ages hast thou seen retire
Into the dusk of alien things?
Only yew is found near every church.
Only yew will neither lean nor lurch.
It grows a hard, tight grain,
Makes bow staves both straight and true.
It fills my heart with awe for only yew.

Only yew can live o'er four thousand years
Only yew can outlast our worst fears.
Only yew and yew alone
Laughs at the passage of time.
Whose name is famed and so easy to rhyme.

Only yew can guard the graves at night.
Only yew's leaves can kill with just one bite.
I understand the magic that you do
Making dreams come true.
Yes! The one and only yew.

"O Tannenbaum"

Words by Ernst Anschuetz
Melody: Traditional folk tune

O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,
Wie grun sind deine Blatter.
Du grust nicht nur zur Sommerzeit,
Nein auch im Winter wenn es schneit.
O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,
Wie grun sind deine Blatter!

O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,
Du kannst mir sehr gefallen!
Wie oft hat nicht zur Winterszeit
Ein Baum von dir mich hoch erfreut!
O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,
Du kannst mir sehr gefallen!

O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,
Dein Kleid will mich was lehren:
Die Hoffnung und Beständigkeit
Gibt Mut und Kraft zu jeder Zeit!
O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,
Dein Kleid will mich was lehren.

Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
How steadfast are your branches!
Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
How steadfast are your branches!
Your boughs are green in summer's clime
And through the snows of wintertime.
Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
How steadfast are your branches!
Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
What happiness befalls me?
Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
What happiness befalls me?
When off at joyous Christmastime
Your form inspires my song and rhyme.
Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
What happiness befalls me ?

Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
Your boughs can teach a lesson.
Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
Your boughs can teach a lesson.
That constant faith and hope sublime
Lend strength and comfort through all time.
Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree,
Your boughs can teach a lesson .

Coniferous Links

Excellent mini-summary:
http://www.british-trees.com/guide/scotspine.htm
Scots Pine:
http://www.silvabook.com/contents/ch6p176.html
Also simple:
http://www.british-trees.com/guide/yew.htm
Excellent Yew article:
http://www.indigogroup.co.uk/edge/oldyews.htm
Juniper:
http://www.british-trees.com/guide/juniper.htm
Detailed ecology of ancient Caledonian forest:
http://www.treesforlife.org.uk/tfl.scpine.html
http://www.angelfire.com/fl3/wicca1132/celtictree.html
Modern Christmas tree origins:
http://www.christmas-tree.com/where.html
Washington Christmas trees since the 60s:
http://www.apollonius.net/christmastrees.html
Same Washington trees since the 20s:
http://www.nps.gov/whho/pageant/national%5Fchristmas%5Ftree%5Fphotogra.htm
Very good site for choosing the species of Christmas tree:
http://ceinfo.unh.edu/Common/Documents/whichtre.htm
What is a pine tree?
http://www.icogitate.com/~tree/conifer.ac24.htm
California Pines:
http://www.icogitate.com/~tree/pining.ac22.htm
Know your conifers:
http://dnr.state.il.us/entice/woodlands/knowyourconifers_3to5.htm

Druidical Diet Decision Dilemma Discourse

By Mike Scharding, Digitalis Grove

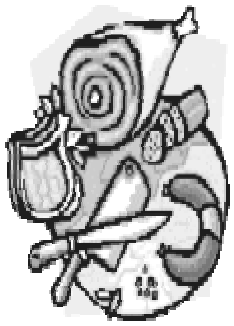
After reading Eric's article (see A Druid Missal-Any Samhain 2002), I felt inspired to write about my only eating decisions. There are no precedents in the RDNA regarding vegetarianism, so it seems to be a personal choice. Of course, I will try to offer a balanced view, from my own perspective. The choice(s) by the esteemed reader (in either direction) may be made easier by a familiarity with all the issues involved.

There seems to have been little doubt that the ancient Celts enjoyed meat, eggs, honey and dairy products. Examination of ancient trash dumps near ancient villages has shown a healthy multitude of bones, shells, and clay hives. Feasts, at least for the elite, were the highlight of year, and many a ferocious competition ensued for the choicest part of a deer. The Celtic descendents still love them, perhaps too much for their own good. Certainly harvest conditions may have hindered choice of farmed animal products, but hunting and fishing in communal lands continued well into the 19th century. Crofting, as mentioned before, still provides food and income for many tens of thousands in Celtic lands; enjoying a close link with the creatures that would become dinner.

After numerous fitful attempts at vegetarianism at Carleton, I eventually cut out mammalian meat during my stay in Japan, three years ago, but continue to eat poultry, fish and reptilian dishes (I call it a dinosaur diet). While Japan is changing to a more Western meat-based approach in meals, you can still get balanced meals, especially if you permit seafood in your diet, as I have chosen. I don't think about it too much anymore, except for considering the "next-step," removing my beloved cheese and milk, and substituting soy products.

There are, in fact, several forms nowadays; ranging on the "carnivorous-vegetarian" spectrum, that have increasingly filled the gap between extremes. The educated mind is said to understand two opposing viewpoints, and come up with a third. Most Druids naturally gravitate towards a moderate choice in the middle.

- Carnivorous: The Eskimos are the most well-known group to have lived almost wholly on animals and partly digested sea-plants from their digestive tracts. They also enjoy remarkable good health, due to the prevalence of fish, with the occasional sea-mammal.
- Carnivorous When Possible: this is the average American/Celtic diet dream of having three servings (or more) of animal meat and a few servings of dairy products. It is a hefty protein diet, providing about 40% to 50% of the calories.
- Religiously Qualified Omnivores: certain faiths forbid certain animals for "purity" reasons or "taboos" (e.g. horses, dogs, and cats are taboo in America), but these are not always followed in practice. Hindus avoid eating cows out of respect, and their economic importance to the non-mechanized farming economy. Buddhists generally advocate different degrees of vegetarianism for reasons of respect to reincarnated ancestors and living beings. Catholics generally avoid meat (but not fish) during Lent. Certain monastic orders (Trappists) are vegetarian mostly for ascetic reasons. Seventh Day Adventists, many Hindus, and Jainists (who also avoid red vegetables) also avoid meat.
- Pollovegetarian: eats poultry and not other types of meat.
- Pescatarians: Vegetables and non-mammalian seafood.
- Lacto-ovo vegetarian: eats dairy and egg products; no meat.
- Ovo vegetarian: eats eggs, no meat.
- Lacto vegetarian: eats dairy products; no eggs or meat
- Vegans: Only plants and perhaps fungi. No meat, leather, milk (except Mother 's milk), honey, feathers, lard.
- Fruitarians: Only eat the "expendable" portions of plants; seeds, flowers, fruits. The main plant should survive unharmed during the harvest procedure.
- Breatharianism: Believe it or not, there are some groups that believe that eating food actually poisons the body, and that clean air and sunlight are all we need. A few dozen have died trying to follow this diet, but the leaders complain that perhaps polluted air and lack of spiritual exercises were at fault.



From my conversations with Druids over the years, I've deduced the following top ten reasons why people continue to eat meat.

1. **Never Thought About it Much.** This is also known as the "disassociation" or "culture" reason. My family, friends and co-workers always incorporated animal products, and now it is second nature to me. Society has made the choice, and I follow their guidance. These people have not, in fact, made a conscious choice either way. One elementary class, when asked to draw a salmon, invariably drew a nice "D" shaped pink slice of meat, rather than a living creature.
2. **Taste and Texture.** In the gourmet's rainbow of flavors and chewability, nothing matches a nice succulent piece of meat. There is a reluctance to give up the variety of their palette (palate?) in artistic terms, regardless of the vast unexplored territory of vegetable options; they enjoy what they have already discovered in the meat realm.
3. **Health Reasons.** Without animal protein, I'd become skinny, decrepit, and waste away to nothing. Most plants can't provide certain key minerals and vitamins that our body can't make. Besides, even if vegetarians live longer, life is about choosing what you like.

4. Simplicity. Nothing is simpler than sticking a piece of roasted meat between two breads or on a plate. Saves time and fills you up. It also feels "good".
5. Intelligence. The strong and smart will eat the weak and stupid. Of course, this argument doesn't go well; when a camper gets eaten by a bear, we want revenge! "Animals don't feel like us" and "animals can't vote" fits in here.
6. Divine. The Monotheistic God gave us dominion over the Earth. We can choose to eat them with no fear of angering God.
7. Economics. Supporting the jobs of ranchers and livelihood of traditional pastoralists.
8. Hunting. I feel at one when I shoot one. Hunters carry on traditions, provide conservation volunteers and finance many ecological projects.
9. Life Force. This is rarely brought up, but it runs instinctively, "You are what you eat." By eating certain animals, people believe they absorb their spirit or "energy" and gain positive characteristics. This is found in Chinese medicines, Native American hunting practices, and American football players eating steak to increase their bullish nature. I had a lot of trouble with this argument in Japan, where they "welcome" the spirit to join with them by saying "itadakimasu" ("I will receive") not to the chef, but to the meal. I always argued that the animal rarely ever wanted to do this before they died. Perhaps after dying, they change their minds?
10. "I'm not prejudiced, I eat everything." My wife proffers this one, driving me crazy. By "excusing" any one species (except Homo Sapiens), you are being unfair to all the others. She argues that plants have spirit(s) too, and we have to eat something, so accept whatever fate brings to you, animal or plant. We live on a pyramid of death, and should humbly accept this. Even cows inadvertently eat bugs in the grass, or squash a frog. That's life (and death), get used to it.

There are, of course, several counter-arguments, on behalf of the Vegetarians;

1. Compassion. Like many animal-rightists, vegetarians often consider animals to have feelings similar or equal to our own in sensitivity, especially in self-preservation, comfort, pain, and family ties.
2. Method. Centers around the painful cramped nature of mass-farms (idyllic family farms are almost extinct), lack of stimulation, movement, painful and frightened deaths. This encompasses a huge range of stomach-turning descriptions. To me, this still leaves open the possibility of accepting meat from an animal that receives a peaceful anesthetized death, on a big rolling farm after many years of productive live experiences. Douglas Adam's futuristic vision of a cow that is bred to desire being eaten, and which can eloquently explain this to the diner, comes to mind.
3. Health Reasons. Cardiovascular disease, colon cancer, obesity, transmitted diseases (both sanitary and parasitical) and pesticide/antibiotics/hormones should dissuade us, especially in semi-raw products. Meat eating people are especially stinky. Oddly enough, those countries noted for their high protein consumption have the worst rate of osteoporosis in the world, while the disease is almost unheard of in the poorer nations that cannot afford meat or drink milk.
4. Diversity. Heavy reliance, or preference for meat, blinds us to the dazzling variety of protein and calcium substitutes. The five vegetables that Americans eat most are French fries, tomatoes (mostly as sauce or ketchup), onions, iceberg lettuce, and other potatoes; that's not my idea of fruits and vegetables--that's garnish on burgers." Did somebody say "vitamin supplements?"
5. Intelligence. If animals have some ability to react to their environment at all (i.e. "think") we should respect it, no matter how rudimentary; and choose food sources that don't injure their life spans. This is found most prominently in the protection of robustly intelligent critters like whales, monkeys, dogs and lawyers.
6. Divine. As mentioned before, many specific animals are revered by certain religions.
7. Environment/Economics. Revolves around the fact that by going through an intermediate step (the animal) 90% of plant proteins and carbohydrates and huge amounts of scarce water are "lost" that could have grown food for hungry people. Many forests and marshes are destroyed to make pasturage for cattle/sheep/crops, not to mention methane. Animal protein naturally is more expensive than vegetable protein, except in very unusual regions of the world.

One acre of land (two acres equals one hectare):

a) Can produce enough feed for about 50 pounds of animal protein with only 15% of that available for human consumption.

b) Can feed 20 vegans or 1 meat eater.

c) Can produce enough soybeans to yield about 500 pounds of protein.

d) Can produce enough wheat to meet the protein requirements for one person for 877 days, whereas soybeans would produce enough protein for 2,224 days.

e) Can produce enough food to feed 4 vegans.

f) Can produce (in pounds): potatoes (40,000), onions (40,000), carrots (30,000), tomatoes (50,000), celery (60,000), beef (250).

g) Requires (in gallons of water): tomatoes (23), lettuce (23), potatoes (24), wheat (25), carrots (33), apples (49), eggs (544), chickens (815), pork (1630), beef (5214).

8. Friendship. It is said that it is easier to approach animals if you're a vegetarian, because either you smell safe or emit friendly vibes. On hunting trips, take pictures not pelts.
9. Life Force. According to some, similar to intelligence, eating an unwilling victim (carrion is okay?) might result in unfriendly spirits joining your collective spirit, and giving you "spiritual indigestion." Many religions advocate restricting meat before religious festivals. One case of the Tarbh Feis in Ireland, actually had the visionary gorge on beef and wrapped in a fresh hide to predict the future of a king. There is also an infamous Irish King rite of eating a whole mare (after making love to it).
10. Prejudice/Social Reasons. As below so above. Basically, by incarcerating animals, denying their rights, separating familial creatures, and eating them, it shows a predilection and unconscious support for racial, class, and gender prejudice.

To me, both arguments can range into the moral high ground and practicality. I don't expect you to change your diet or follow my own choices, but I hope I've opened up a new area of your life to examination and contemplation.

Dietary Links

What did cavemen eat?

http://weightloss.about.com/cs/cavemandiet/
Religion and Diet http://www.torchlight.com/diet.html

Friendly vegetarian introduction:

http://kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_fit/nutrition/vegetarianism.html

Studious overview (but not shocking) similar to my article, but in more detail:

http://www.innvista.com/health/diet/vintro.htm

Although slightly biased towards animal rights, a nice 10 reasons for and against animal rights is presented. Outlining the major arguments on both sides. Expressed in a very cordial and reasoned way:

http://www.cultureandanimals.org/animalrights.htm

Jewish Kosher Primer:

http://www.ou.org/kosher/primer.html

Muslim Halaal Primer:

http://www.muslimfoodguide.co.uk/index1.html

Jain Food Primer:

http://www.jainworld.com/society/jainfood/jainfood.htm

Why Hindus don't like McDonalds?

http://www.indiadivine.com/hinduism-cows1.htm

Religions and Vegetarianism (dozens of essays):

http://www.ivu.org/religion/

Another multi-faith examination of vegetarian ethics:

http://www.compassionatespirit.com/index.htm

Philosophical utility argument against fishing :

http://www.utilitarian.org/animals/veggie.html

Miscellany

The Barbarians of Ancient Europe Conference

Dear Fellow Celts,

The University of Richmond's Department of Classical Studies is hosting a conference on "The Barbarians of Ancient Europe," March 21-23, 2003. The conference will be hosted by Larissa Bonfante, Visiting Professor of Classical Studies at the University of Richmond for the second semester of this academic year. Please visit our web site to review the program, the speakers, and how to register:

http://oncampus.richmond.edu/academics/as/classics/Barbarians/home.html

If you have further inquiries, please e-mail me at swheeler@richmond.edu. We cordially invite you to be a part of this important conference.

Stuart Wheeler

Tentative Program:

Session I. Friday, March 21, 2003, 7:00-10:00 PM, The University of Richmond, Jepson Hall 118

Larissa Bonfante Welcome
Paul Keyser Ancient Geography of the Barbarian
Nancy de Grummond Myth on the Fringe: The Case of the Talking Head
Reception

Session II. Saturday, March 22, 2003. 9:00 AM-12:00 PM, The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

June Aprille, Provost Welcome
University of Richmond
Larissa Bonfante Introduction
Renate Rolle The Scythians
Askold Ivantchik Herodotus and the Scythians
Ivan Marazov The Thracians
Discussion

Session II. Saturday, March 22, 2003. 2:00-5:00 PM, The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Barry Cunliffe The Celts
Peter Wells The Germans
Larissa Bonfante The Etruscans
Otto Herman Frey Situla Art
Discussion

Conference Feature. Saturday, March 22, 2003. 6:30-8:15 PM, The Omni Richmond Hotel

Reception
Norma Goldman Barbarian Fashion Show
Designer

Session III, Sunday, March 23, 2003. 9:30 AM-12:30 PM, The Omni Richmond Hotel

Panel Discussion
Ann Farkas Barbarism and Barbarians
Guenter Kopke Observations on Hellenisms
John Marincola Romans as Barbarians
Walt Stevenson The Later Barbarians
Discussion
Barry Cunliffe Final Words
Buffet Lunch

Calendar

Yule, Winter Solstice, Midwinter, when the Sun enters Capricorn, will occur on December 21, 2002 at 5:51 p.m. Pacific Standard Time. At the Winter Solstice the Sun rises to the most southeast and sets to the most southwest of the entire year.

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Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION THREE

Volume Nineteen

2003 c.e.

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Vol. 19 Number 1
Jan 19th, 2003 c.e.

A well done job

Oimelc Essay: Brigit

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 1985
By Emmon Bodfish

Oimelc the festival of Bride, Bridgit, Bredes, the daughter of Dagda, and Celtic goddess of fire and the hearth. She is also patroness of poetry and the source of creative inspiration, which the Gaels regard as a supersensual form of fire. Always one of the most popular deities, the fifth and sixth century Christianizers of Ireland were unable to eradicate her worship, and instead adopted or rather co-opted her into their own pantheon as St. Bridgit. She was not, however, a Christian. Modern evidence suggests that she was of ancient Indo-European origin, cognate with Agni, god of fire in the Vedic tradition, and with hearth goddesses all over Europe. The masculinizing of goddesses was a frequent occurrence in the East and Middle East as nomadic pastoralists settled down and became agricultural and urbanized

Bridgit is also associated with the Sun, which in Celtic countries is feminine, "na Ghreine", and which is carried in a chariot and served by a young male deity, son of the Sky God, usually Lugh or an Apollo-like figure. This may be a similar pattern to the one for Danu, the Earth Goddess, whose statue was annually transported through the countryside in a ceremonial wagon attended by a young, possibly virgin male priest. Traces of this ritual come from all over pagan Europe, according to Prof. P.V. Glob, but the best descriptions come from Scandinavia, where the ceremony persisted into Medieval times.

On Oimelc, statues of Bride were carried through the streets to her temple, where a perpetual flame burned on her altar. This continued in Ireland under Celtic Christianity, with only the name being changed to "Saint." There and in Scotland, the tradition is still repeated when the dawn shows pink colors, it is called Bride, the Sun-Maiden, hangs her cloak on the beams of the morning sun. In Bara and the isles, up until the last century, she was addressed at dawn as just that, the Sun-Maiden, and even the thin layer of Christianity, laid on in Ireland, was ignored here.

In the oldest Indo-European traditions, the Moon is masculine and may be associated with Cernunnos, the hunt and forest magic. (J. Duran, after Gimbutas, 1982.) The feminine moon goddesses, usually connected with water symbolism, are thought to be of Pre-Indo-European origin.

Bride was one of the most popular deities, and most often worshipped and appealed to by the common people, judging from the statements of early Christianizers and from the large number of charms, spells, and songs to her that persisted into Medieval and some into modern times. An old fire charm for kindling a damp hearth, and in Scotland it's always damp, goes: "To Bride, Ruler of fire, give me/us this little bit of perfect fire, now." Highly effective, I use it daily.

Remember also that matches were invented by a Scotsman, a Gael. The word "match" comes (some think) from "maide" meaning "little stick." The fire sticks used to kindle fresh fire for the sacrifice are spoken of in the Vedic tradition as the Parents of Agni; birch bark, in the primitive tinder-kit, was known as "Bridget's wood." The line from Bride, early Indo-European fire-goddess, through Agni, who is Bridget in her Asiatic male guise, leads, according to the entomological dictionary, to our word ignite and ignition, via Latin. So to keep all this relevant, when you put your ket down on the accelerator these cold mornings and turn the key, invoke Bride, Goddess of fire: "Ah, Bhride, Banreigh na Teintean, thoir dhomh an beagan teintean lan."

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

The ground has accumulated an unusually low amount of snow this winter, although temperatures have been cold.

Hearing more frequent requests from Carleton Druids about the upcoming Reunion in May, and they are ecstatically planning on having a Druid story-telling campfire, in which all the old-timers can tell their stories of past years.

Akita Grove: News from Japan

Nozomi is doing quite well and has broadened her understanding of Druidry and motherhood, being about 30 weeks into her current project. Mike stopped by the Grove on his way around Japan, despite the steep mountain hike to get to her home. All seems well, and the delivery should be in early February.

Silent Protogrove: News from Canada

Mike "Scout" Nadjiwon passed away on December 14th.

A whispering wind, the silent bell

So little time, and so much to tell

Please post under Fallen Leaves since this spirit shared so much with us all, and influenced people far beyond his physical presence.

B.C. Grove: News from British Columbia

I live in a bit of paradise commonly referred to as Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada. I read through some (not all...zzzzzzz) of the RDNA Anthology and am a firm believer in what this original group "stands for." Like many others who are drawn by the name "druid." I come from a Celtic background (you know...the romantic draw of all things Irish...even though it has been three generations since one of my

relatives even touched Irish soil) but by personal definition of what it means to be a "druid" transcends all association with heritage, religious persuasion and political or social ideology. I would like to do my own small part to keep this foundation of universality alive and well.

What I am initially considering is perhaps a personal web page to spark some local interest. There MUST be like-minded individuals here...it is impossible to avoid being touched by the Earth-Mother here...we live surrounded by the ocean, cradled by mountains and inspired by ancient forests. Since I am quite a distance away from the nearest RDNA grove and I do not have the means to travel, perhaps you could give me some advise on how to proceed.

I would be proud to "solidify" my association with this original group and work to preserve what is, to me, a very important aspect of what the term will come to mean.

[MIKE: Well, usually a grove is organized for a purpose bigger than one's self, what is it that you wish to do or become?]

Well I'm not even going to attempt the "become" part...I have absolutely no concept of "becoming" anything at all. But as for what I want to "do"...here I have some vague ideas.

I want to offer (? not that they are mine in any way to "offer," but you know what I mean) the concept of the basic tenets of RDNA, to those who live within a close enough proximity to me that there may be, at some point, a chance to meet and gather for the purpose of sharing what we have in common and learning from our differences.

I would like to be able to "associate" under the umbrella of the RDNA so that it is clear to all that this is what we "stand for" and nothing more.

Damn, do you have any idea how difficult this is? You are really making me think here.

Beyond that very basic desire to connect, I have no real "vision." Now if you had asked me what I do NOT want to do I could have given you a much longer and clearer list.

thanks,

faery

Bamboo Grove: News from Delaware

There's finally time to stop and breathe, but now that I've got some extra time, I find myself wondering what to do with it! It seems that now is a time for resting and waiting for the spring. I'm not a patient person by nature; so all this waiting can drive me up the wall! But despite my frustration and restlessness I'm slowly learning that this seemingly empty time provides space for more inward contemplation, reading, journaling, etc. Time for nurturing the soul.

In other news, the Muses are growing fat and are, presumably, reasonably content. Everyone seems to be thriving, so all is good.

Blessings to you and yours,

Brightmirage

Hemlock Splinters Grove: News from New York

Hemlock Splinters is buried under many feet of snow. The full moon shines beautifully down, but the air is zero degrees and falling. The shapes water makes at these temperatures never cease to fascinate, but we have spent far too little time enjoying them. Most of our energy is consumed by shoveling, hauling firewood, and trying to keep warm. There are no official activities planned until things warm back up.

—Irony

Ancient Circle Grove: News from New York

Gentle Greetings,

I am sorry to report that due to waning interest and discord among members as to spiritual direction, Ancient Circle Grove has disbanded.

May the Gods continue to Bless you,

~Inion

Dravidia Grove: News from Maryland

Hello all,

Well it is Winter time again here at the grove, and we spend a lot of time researching. I have been busy like a beaver gathering new info and my file collection has grown enormously. I now have close to 300 files in both pdf and text document on various subjects of Wicca, Paganism, Druids, and the occult. If anyone is interested in receiving a particular file. Please email me at dolanimus@yahoo.com, and I will see if I have one in that category, since I will be till Spring sorting them all out...

Have a good Winter all.
Dolanimus

Digitalis Grove: News from Washington DC

Eric and Mike are knee-deep in preparations to graduate in May and we've both been playing at being Bardic, so that has delayed our writing of articles for this season's Missal-Any. Our apologies to our loyal readers (if there are any.)

Mike is making the final arrangements this week for the second of the RDNA reunions at Carleton this year (i.e. the summer June event) with the Alumni office at Carleton. www.geocities.com/mikerdna/anniversary.html

Mike will be assisting OMS member Pendderwydd in running an email-centered class over the ARDA is about to begin. Our Druidcraft 202: "A Walk Through the ARDA" class begins Sunday Feb 2. Having compiled this Frankenstein, I feel compelled to assist people trying to navigate this graveyard of shipwrecks. To join the class, send a blank email to druidcraft202-subscribe@yahoogroups.com or you can subscribe on the web at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft202

Eurisko Grove: New from Virginia

Gwydion is trying to organize a team for the Polar Plunge. This is a charity event for Special Olympics in Virginia beach VA, in which people raise money to jump into the Atlantic in February. We had to cancel our planed sunrise vigil for Yule due to a severe stomach virus that has been running rampant. We conducted our Yule ritual honoring Saturn and Mithras on X-Mas eve. Our gift exchange was held in front of the warm glow of a video taped Yule log. Our unofficial protégée program will be coming under review and the revised version to start right after Imbolc. We have two grove projects planned for Imbolc: eggnog and cheese making. Both recipes courtesy of members

of the RDNAtalk list. We also plan on wassailing our new Alberta dwarf spruce soon.

Oaken Circle Grove:News from Kentucky

As of the moment the grove does not have a lot going on, the winter months seem to slow things down a bit. We did have great success with our adoption of a family in need this holiday season; the family consisted of a mom and two children. We hope to do this again next year. We are currently trying to pull together a gathering for Imbolc, we will keep you posted on how it goes. Here is a recap on some of the things our grove has planned for the future. We are working on becoming incorporated as a religious organization and one day plan to go for tax-exempt status. We have a grove pantry/care items that we put in a donation to every meeting and have on hand if a grove member or someone they know need it. We also have a grove lending library. We are planning to in the spring have our shared knowledge classes, such as basic medicinal herbs. Each grove member will teach a class on something they are proficient at. That wraps it up. Have a blessed Imbolc.

Many blessings,

Sherry
http://oaken_circle_grove.tripod.com/oakencirclegroveky

White Rabbit Grove: News from Wisconsin

Thanks for naming my grove, which I finally discover after my net-less year. My new email is healingline@sbcglobal.net, and there is no website, and I am a grove of one. Unlike other RDNA groves, even the house pets here don't compost, at least not conscientiously. My nuclear family are in the Native American church, though they don't go to meetings. That about the horrible warm weather applies again to the present Yule--way too hot, almost like Oslo for goodness sake. This is supposed to be the Midwest!!

Amusing to think this grove resembles "a few," at least from a distance. Maybe I am putting out satellites like the mighty aspen. Anyhow my ministry at present is confined to the household, my help-line (608) 226-0052, and alt.religion.druid. Must repeat thanks for getting me to acknowledge my grovehood.

Kitsap Peninsula Grove: News from Washington State

Greetings from the wet western side of Puget Sound.

The Kitsap Peninsula grove regrets to say that it never did create a gathering, and is closed for lack of membership. Solitary member Butterflye continues to study the ARDA and spend as much time with Nature as possible. Contact is being made with a potential Seattle area grove. Butterflye is no longer affiliated in any way with the Order of the Mithril Star. I remain, as always, a member of the RDNA, and happy to be so.

Blessed Oimelc to all, in Brighid's Service
~~ Butterflye ~~

Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, Mother Grove of the OMS-RDNA, News from Southern Oregon

Greetings in the Mother:

Our latest Druidcraft 101 class will be under way on February 2nd. Imbolc will also be the launch day for our new Druidcraft 202 class, based upon A Reformed Druid Anthology.

Ceridwen's Astropagan 201 (intermediate level) class is well underway now, having begun on January 2. Her beginners' class, Astropagan 101 will be offered again beginning March 1, and it already has 60 pending students.

All classes are available over email via Yahoo Groups. See http://www.mithrilstar.org/courses.htm for further details.

The last quarter of 2002 saw a loss for us as far as Groves established under our wing are concerned. With the moving of Angie Druid Fulmer to Israel, we lost the fledgling Circle of the Beavers proto-grove in Corvallis, OR. Cylch Sequoia Sempervirons Grove (Hiouchi, CA) broke up due to internal strife. And two other proto-groves, one based in the Seattle area and the other in Tennessee left the OMS outright (although I understand they retain standing in the RDNA). On the other hand, the Mother Grove of OMS has gained one new member, and a new proto-grove is forming in Talent OR.

My father was a farmer, and like all farmers he experienced crop losses and failures from time to time. However, he was in tune with nature, and like any Druid, he realized that these things go in cycles, and the next crop he planted would be bigger and healthier than the one he lost.

Membership wise we are now at 91 (down from 173). Of those, 42 are active, 49 are inactive. 69 are 1st Order, 14 are 2nd, 5 are 3rd, 1 is a 5th and 2 are 7ths.

The Mother Grove will hold its monthly "Pagan Movie Night" (for members of Southern Oregon Pagan Network) on February 1st. This month we will be (appropriately enough) showing "Groundhog Day," with Bill Murray. In March, we plan to show "The Sorceress and the Friar" (the English version, not the French sub-titled one), which is about 12th Century France and a "Forest Witch" who gives the Friar a run for his money!

The Mother Grove is also sponsoring a LIVE version of Druidcraft 101 beginning mid-February at Sybok and Ceridwen's cabin in the Cascade foothills. The Talent (OR) proto-grove will be doing the same thing down in their end of the Rogue Valley.

Plans for Imladris are progressing (see http://www.mithrilstar.org/imladris), despite our having decided that the present location of the Mother Grove has too few acres to properly do what we want. A couple of realtors are already working to find a suitable space for us in the Rogue Valley. Waiting is.

Despite our losses in the last quarter of 2002, we are predicting a strong 2003. We believe we will double in size by this time next year, and hopefully spawn at least three new Groves. Imladris will be well on the way to becoming a reality. Like in the above farming analogy, we expect that weeds will be present in our fields, but weeding is always a part of good cultivation. Farther ahead, we are dedicated to seeing OMS-RDNA Groves at our future colonies on the Moon and Mars! We will be around, preserving the RDNA far into the future. After all, if a growing percentage of the Earths population chooses to live their lives as Druids and Gods, we feel that it can only help to bring balance and a return to the reverence that Nature deserves!

And so must it be!

Nemeton Awenyddion: News from California

Things have been going great! The land (36 acres) we plan on buying as a clan land has been dowsed and the shape and resources on the land have great Nwyfre (land energy) ley lines and such. There are two ponds, a marsh, three natural springs that come out of very large stones in the hillside, a few meadows, and lots of oak trees with lots of mistletoe. The last month we've been making all the preparations for the down payment and the move, and checking out alternative housing projects such as cordwood houses to geodesic domes, we will have to build them this next summer and this will require us to camp out on the land when doing so.

Winter Solstice/Alban Gwyddion went great, and then on our usual night for our mistletoe rites I went through an induction ceremony for my tri-level Derwydd masters in the order of clan Y Awen Echen because I turned in all my petitions and theory work for all three masters in the elder advanced training, they all passed with high scores which, after viewed by all the other elders and accepted by them. I will be the second dean of the main college in nearly twenty years. For Imbolc/Canol Gaoaf we might have a special treat if I can contact the goat lady and get some fresh milk, we will probably be making goat cheese and doing the usual celebrations and rituals.

On Feb. 15, Sat. at the San Jose PantheaCon there is going to be a Druid Healing ritual done by many but mostly by Michael Gorman from the OBOD Sacramento Grove of the Oak, R. J. Stewart, Anne Brid, and me. We have worked really hard to fit this ritual into a Wiccan atmosphere so everyone there will hopefully understand and find connection while we are keeping the difference between the two practices of Druidry and Wicca distinguishable, but similar and connected at the same time. It was a difficult task for some of us more traditionals.

I'm hoping to see some of you there, and hopefully to meet some of you from the area that I have not met before. I will be doing the Druid of Language part, repeating all of the blessing to the Triads and sacred fifths in Irish Gaelic after they are said in English.

Deep Peace,

Rhiannon

Poison Oak Grove: News from California

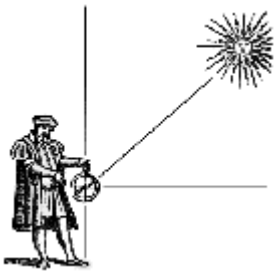
The Season of Sleep, with its days of late sunrise and early, is a time of introspection and renewal. Much consideration has been given, as your editor's mother has been seriously ill and requiring surgery. The dreaded mortality of one's parent(s) is sobering as it makes you reflect on assuming the place of matriarch or patriarch of the family. I am pleased to say that the surgery (knock wood) went well and my mother is recuperating in skilled rehabilitation care. If these are to be her last days the center is a pleasant with caring and conscientious staff.

After a leave of absence and a wee tad later new member Oriana attended her first grove service. As there was just the two of us she performed the role of Server and did so admirably. Her reaction to the Meditation was noticing how much noisier the road, wind, birds, and trees got; hearing them more…this is another step on the road to awareness.

I attended a corn dolly class given by master wheat-weaver Morgyn Owens-Celli. This is an ancient art going back centuries that were part of village harvest celebrations. The last sheaf of wheat, called "the neck" or Cailleach would be cut down and fashioned into a corn dolly and hung in a place of prominence in the house or barn. On Oimelc Eve in Scotland and Ireland a Bride-og was plaited and dressed in white cloth and carried to each household by a group of young girls going door to door, beckoning to "let Bride come in!" Small presents were given to Bride and Oimelc bannocks were baked. After the procession there was a celebration with feasting and dancing. I hope to join the local wheat weavers' guild and weave the Bride-og myself for next Oimelc.

For my birthday I decided to celebrate by hiking new ground: the Point Reyes National Seashore. Famous last words were that I wanted new memories to replace unpleasant ones I had from an earlier time in a nearby area. That was made by getting lost in the woods. A friend and I got a late start. After exploring the recreated Miwok village we took pictures from a wooden bridge and along the hike. The trail went up and up, over and under fallen logs, through washed out paths, mud, and rocks that lay exposed from the recent torrential storms. Undaunted by the coming dark and a little too determined to not turn back we hiked till after the sun went down. It was then I finally realized that the trail was not going to head back down and end "just over that ridge" where we began anytime soon. We started heading back but by that time it was too late; we reached a spot past some fallen trees where we couldn't find the trail any more. There was no moon and it was overcast with dense tree canopy. After trying to find where the trail started up again twice we found a log to sit on and talked a long time. I was so embarrassed as a druid to have gotten us into this mess. I should have known better and turned around before it got dark...We were prepared to spend the night in the woods overnight, but I felt I owed it to us to get us out. I would have never been able to live it down and was ready to turn in my druid badge. With renewed determination I decided to try again. Because visibility was nil I had to feel for the trail with my feet. Success at last. The fallen trees and muddy areas on the trees became familiar marker. It was a harrowing experience and I was actually scared.

After we got back to the meadow where we started we saw two white shapes walking a long with the little one running over one of the Miwok Indian mounds. We think they were deer. It was odd because the local mule deer are brown and don't show up well at night, not white in any case! In Celtic mythology animals from the otherworld are white with red ears. Interesting messengers! Perhaps it was an ordeal or initiation of some sort?



Cross Quarter Day Calculations

By Larry Press, Poison Oak Grove

This article sprang from queries to the Grove mathematician on how to calculate the major Druid High Days. The Druids were the mathematicians and astronomers of their day and would have been able to determine when the major and minor High Days would fall. Poison Oak Grove tries to maintain such practices of the ancient Druids.

The principle is simple. I don't have my calendar here with me, so I can ONLY explain the principle and give artificial examples, but it should be enough to give you the idea.

The astrohoogical calendar doesn't give the times of the cross-quarters because those events are of no interest to most astrohooligers. It does, however, give the Sun's positions at various dates and times; we can use that information to estimate the date and time the Sun will be in the position that interests us.

Suppose for example, that the Sun is at 14 degrees of the sign at noon PST on the 6th of November, and at 16 degrees of the sign at noon PST on the 7th of November. Then the position of interest (15 degrees) is halfway between the two given positions, so the Sun should reach that position halfway between the two given times (in this case, Midnight of the 6th-to-7th).

That's the basic principle. In practice, things are a bit trickier because:

1. The Sun's position is given the calendar in degrees, minutes, and seconds, and we need to convert that to degrees-and-fractional-degrees (e.g. 14 degrees 30 minutes 0 seconds becomes 14.5 degrees).

2. The times are given the calendar in hours, minutes, and seconds, and we need to convert them to hours-and-fractional-hours

3. We use the degrees + fraction and hours + fraction values to compute the date-time of the cross-quarter, but that gives us a value in hours + fraction, so we need to convert that back to hours and minutes.

However, if all you're doing is confirming my calculations, you don't need to worry about all the tricky arithmetic. Do this instead:

1. Go to the tables in the back of the calendar. Look for the LATEST day and time at which the Sun's position is LESS THAN 15 degrees of the sign. Note the date and time, and convert it to Pacific Daylight Time (by subtracting however-many hours). Note the position, and convert it ROUGHLY to degrees and fraction (you don't have to be too accurate here-we're just estimating--it you get it to the nearest 1/4 degree, it'll probably be good enough)

2. Then find the EARLIEST day and time at which the Sun is MORE THAN 15 degrees of the sign. Make note of that date and time, and convert it to Pacific Daylight Time, as well. As before, note the position, and convert it roughly to degrees + fraction.

3. How far apart are the two positions? I.e. subtract the smaller from the larger, to get a separation (in degrees + fraction). How far along that distance is 15-degree position? Once again, you can be rough here. Is it about 1/3 of the way? 1/4? 3/4? If you just get it to the nearest 1/4 or so, that may be enough to confirm or reject my more detailed calculation.

4. So, if 15 degrees at some fraction of the way between the first and second positions (e.g. 2/3 of the way), then the Sun should reach 15 degrees roughly that fraction between the two given times (e.g. 2/3 of the way between the first and second times).

5. Now compare the date-times I gave you (in my e-mail message) to date-times of the first and second positions from the calendar tables (i.e. steps 1 and 2 above). Is the date-time I gave you BETWEEN those two date-times? If not, then one of us has made a big mistake. Is the date-time I gave roughly the same (say, within 1/2 day or so) as the rough calculation you arrived at in step 4 above?

In the exercise above, I calculated the date-time the Sun reached 15 degrees of the sign, but the same techniques work to estimate when the Sun reaches 16 degrees 18 minutes declination.

I believe you have a copy of the same Jim Maynard's Pocket Astrologer 2002 that I have. (We bought them while visiting Stephen last year.)

1. Go to page 56. The upper portion gives the positions (right ascension) of various astrological planets for each day of November; the 2nd column is the Sun's positions.

2. Note that at Noon GMT on the 7th of November, the Sun is 14 degrees 54 minutes of Scorpio, while at Noon GMT on the 8th it is at 15 degrees 54 minutes.

3. The difference between the two POSITIONS is exactly 1 degree; the difference between the two TIMES is exactly 24 hours.

4. The position we're looking for is 15 degrees of Scorpio; this is 6 minutes past the FIRST position (i.e. 14 deg 54 min + 6 min = 14 deg 60 min, that is 15 deg). But the two positions are 1 degree apart (see step 3 above); 6 minutes is 1/10th of the way between those two positions.

5. So we know that the cross-quarter position is 1/10th of the way between the Sun's position at Noon GMT on the 7th and Noon GMT on the 8th. That means that it should reach that position after about 1/10 of the TIME between Noon GMT of the 7th and Noon GMT of the 8th. The time difference is 25 hours, and 1/10th of that difference is 2.4 hours i.e. 2 hours and 24 minutes. Thus the Sun should reach 15 degrees Scorpio at about 2:24 GMT on the 7th of November--which is very close to the time I calculated, using my program to do the interpolation.

6. The final step is to convert the GMT time to PDT. Page 21 of Jim Maynard's calendar gives the time corrections: to convert from GMT to PST, subtract 8 hours; to convert from GMT to PDT, subtract 7 hours.

If the (Ancient) Druids Had Lived in Northern California....

By Sybok Pendderwydd, Arch-Druid,
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, OMS-RDNA

The Druids: figures of romance and mystery. Mention of them evokes images of cloaked figures performing obscure rites in the oaken groves of Gaul. The name Druid, at least according to some sources, means "Oak Priest" and the magnificent Oak was indeed the chief of the trees revered by the ancient Celtic Priests. In ancient Gaul, the Oak was indeed the most impressive

of trees. Known for the strength of its boughs, and its sheer beauty it was also the source of the sacred mistletoe.

So what if the Druids had lived in California? Specifically, the northern coast I believe that our own Redwood (Sequoia Sempervirons) would have become the tree revered most by the Celtic priesthood. The poor oak pales in comparison to these magnificent trees, which grow to an average height of 300 feet. The redwood is also the source of the mysterious burl, which gives many of these trees distinctive personalities. From a distance, the formation of burls can make faces appear on the trees, evoking thoughts of the Ents, Tolkien's race of trees.

Redwoods grow in two ways. The first is with seed, and their seeds are among the smallest of any plant known, hundreds of which can be found in the redwoods own pinecones, which average around the size of a jellybean. The second way they grow is by shooting new trees from their root systems, which spread out hundreds of feet around the typical redwood, just a few feet deep in the ground. Typically, these offshoots form "fairy rings" around their mother. As they grow, and the mother tree dies off, the ring is all that is left. I can picture the Druids using these natural rings as the centers for their rites.

The Redwood is illustrative of magickal practice too. Its taproot, which extends into the earth from the center of the tree grounds it, like the familiar grounding meditation many of us do before ritual, to connect ourselves with the Earth Mother. The tree then shoots high into the sky, higher than any other tree, also like the familiar centering meditation, which affirms our connection to the cosmos.

Water brethren may find the Redwood a friend too, since it gives off ten times its own weight in moisture every day. The Redwood also needs a lot of water, which is why it thrives only from the Big Sur area to a few miles into Oregon, and only within a thirty-mile stretch from the coast. They like all the rain and fog we get here. They are true water-kin.

Water was sacred to the Druid as well. Most of their main groves had a spring or stream running near or through them, and water deities played an important role in much of Celtic mythology.

My own wand came from a Redwood, a rather famous one. The Garberville Giant was once listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's tallest tree. When it stood, it rose some 375 feet into the air. Alas, about ten years ago it toppled. Residents in nearby Garberville thought an earthquake had hit, and the sound of the impact was heard thirty miles away. I visited the fallen giant, located in a grove off the famous "Avenue of The Giants" in 1994. It was in the early morning, and I was guided to the top of the tree. There on the ground, like it was placed there, was my wand, a twig from the top branches of the giant. It is exactly the length of the inside of my elbow to the tip of my middle finger.

I remember feeling quite enchanted during our visit, and, although at the time we were the only humans around, I felt the eyes of other entities watching us. I know there were fairies in that grove, and my walks in other Redwood groves have confirmed for me the presence of fairy folk.

I go for hikes in the redwoods as often as I can, stopping at each fairy ring, admiring each old growth tree. I feel the wonder and the majesty of the giants and affirm my connection to the cosmos through them. It's well worth it to take the docent led nature walks through the "tourist groves" at any of the big Redwood State and National Parks. The docents are well versed in Redwood lore and you'll leave with a much greater appreciation of the Sequoia than you had before.

Now I must admit that I am quite prejudiced here. I was raised in Illinois and have only lived here on the "left coast" for a little over ten years. I have yet to visit the cousins of our local coastal redwoods, the Giant Sequoias (Sequoia Giganiticus) that grow only in the Kings Canyon area of Sequoia National Park. They don't grow as tall as ours do, but they get much bigger around. I may change my tune once I have communed with them (but I doubt it).

Calle Berre's Kids

By Anna Dryw, Nemeton Awenyddion

PantheaCon 2003

Double Tree Inn in San Jose, CA
February 14 - 17, 2003

Join the largest indoor gathering of tribes and traditions in the country for a four-day extravaganza of workshops, rituals, events, networking and fun.

Presentations, rituals and panels from a wide variety of guests including: Robert Anton Wilson, Diana Paxson,

R.J. Stewart, Raven Grimassi, Lon Du Quette, Mary Greer, Z Budapest, Mara Freeman, Chicago Steve Barkeley aka Stefn Thorsman, Darryl Cherney, Amber K., Donald Kraig, and Fakir Musafar.

Musical performances, ritual theater, Variety Show, and a Masque Ball: Gaia's Voice, Pombagira, Reclaiming, Bast ritual, Magical Acts Theatre, Broceliande, Gaia's Consort, Pandemonaeon.

Workshops, scholarly papers, author readings and slideshows by special guests and local favorites

Over 60 vendor booths featuring pagan, magical and earth oriented products.

Convention Programming starts on Friday afternoon 3:30pm, with presentations beginning at 9 am and ending with the last slot starting at 11pm on Sat. and Sun. Monday will start at 9 am and end in the late afternoon with Iron Priest with "Something Wiccan This Way Comes!"

Friday evening will feature a Variety Show, having the Costume Contest (there are rumors of hall costume prizes) on Friday night as well as our regularly featured Pombagira ritual.

Our regular Saturday night event will now be a Masque Ball with a DJ, the theme is Voodoo Carnival. And Monday will feature our regular event, slightly tweaked for your enjoyment: Iron Priest.

Admission fee: $50.00 (till Sept 15), $60 (till Jan 15) and $70 at the door (includes all events for the entire conference) $30 for a full day, $15 for evenings only

Hotel Info: Reserve rooms through Double Tree Reservations at (800) 547-8010 by January 15, 2002 or (408) 453-4000 to get the special hotel group rate for PantheaCon, $89 single/double, $99 triple/quad. Parking is free for hotel guests with validations for conference goers. The hotel has agreed to

run four daily shuttles for pick-ups at the light rail station, times to be determined.

Don't forget that you can sign up to work the Con as a volunteer! Email volunteer@ancientways.com or see http://www.ancientways.com/html/gofer.html for more details.

The Second Annual Interfaith Pagan Pride Parade Berkeley, CA

The Second Annual Interfaith Pagan Pride Parade will take place on Upper Telegraph Ave. on April 13th. Join us in this day of music, art, theater, ceremony, and dance, as the Interfaith Pagan Community and friends celebrate the spirit of Mother Earth. Our inaugural parade was so successful and we had so much fun, that we are just going to have to keep it up. With this parade, we bring together brothers and sisters of ALL indigenous, Earth-based, and nature centered polytheistic beliefs in pride and celebration, as well as those who support arts, music, ceremony, theater and dance within the Interfaith Pagan Community. In doing so, we unite in our message to the world that we must live together in love and tolerance, as opposed to fear and misunderstanding, as voices in the great choir of Spirit.

This year's parade is not to be missed! We are excited to announce that we will be kicking off Earth Week in Berkeley, which will begin a week of activities that bring focus and awareness to the preservation of our precious, divine home; Mother Earth. We will be joined by artists, musicians, craftspeople, community leaders, and many eclectic and ancient spiritual traditions from around the West Coast. We also wish to welcome floats to this year's parade, and are eager to see divine creativity in action. It will no doubt be a day of fun, understanding, and education for all.

We encourage diversity, tolerance, safety, and respect for all participants and audience members. This is a family-friendly event, and children are encouraged to participate. More details to be announced as plans progress. Information: paganparade@earthlink.net, or visit http://www.paganparade.org/.

The Irish-speaking areas of Ireland.

Resources

From the Read Ireland Book Review
Teach Me Irish by Dafydd Gareth Stephens
(Software and Audio CD;
30.00 Euro / 40.00 USD / 20.00 UK; Sain Cyf.)

Do you want to learn Irish but don't have the time or motivation for evening classes? Then this is the method for you! The whole method is based on a natural learning process--you practice simple grammar and vocabulary tasks several times until the software decides that you have learned the tasks well enough to proceed to the next level. In this way you'll move from the basics right up to intricate structures at your own pace in exactly the same way a child learns the language--seeing, hearing and responding over a length of time. Within three months, a typical user could acquire enough language skills to participate in conversation and read a variety of books. With this produce, you can acquire a vocabulary of over 3,000 words--allowing you to participate fully in the rich oral and written traditions in Irish. (Computer System Requirements: Windows PC, Pentium Processor, minimum 100MHz, 16MB of RAM, 7MB of available hard disk space).

To order books from Read Ireland send an email to their order department at ri-orders@readireland.ie. Please be sure to include your mailing address and credit card details.

Read Ireland@Phibsboro Bookshop
342 North Circular Road, Phibsboro, Dublin 7, Ireland
Mon-Fri 10-5 and Sat 12-5
Tel: +353-1-830-9828
Fax: +353-1-830-2997
www.readireland.ie

Calendar

Astronomical Oimelc, when the Sun is half-way between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox, will occur on Monday, Feb 3, 2003 at 10:06 p.m. Pacific Standard Time when the Sun will reach 15 degrees of Aquarius, or alternatively when the Sun reaches 16 degrees 18 minutes declination on Tuesday, Feb 4 at 1:20 a.m. Pacific Standard Time.

A Druid Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $8.00 and email subscriptions are free. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's post mail subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o S. J. Weinberger, 309 63rd St. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any
Spring Equinox Y.R. XL
Vol. 19 Number 2
March 15th, 2003

Spring Equinox Essay:

Plowing and New Years

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any.
Spring Equinox, 1985
By Emmon Bodfish

pring Equinox, the beginning of Spring, on the four Minor High Days in the Druid tradition. The Sun crosses the celestial equator, from Southern Declination to Northern, and the day and the night are of equal length. This is the time of renewal, the beginning of preparations for the summer to come. The holiday is older than Druidism; stones in the megaliths mark this sunrise. Plowing and planting begin. It is the season of egg gathering. The giving of painted eggs as gifts and offerings predates Christianity, or the introduction of chickens, originally a wild Indian pheasant, to European barnyards.

The Leechbook records this chant of English (Brythonic, really) farmers in the spring rites circa 950 A.D. The Christian church had not yet begun its campaign in earnest to expunge old pagan ways or else re-name and "Christianize" them as it would over the next five hundred years.

Erec! Erec! Erec!
Mother of Earth
Hail to thee, Earth!
Mother of mortals.

Be fruitful in
The God's embrace
Filled with food
For the use of man.

In England, prior to the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in 1752, Spring Equinox was the beginning of the new year. It is still celebrated there as "Lady Day." In the Gaelic world, the new season, Samhra, summer, won't begin until Bealtaine, but the new year began on Samhain in November.

The emphasis of this season is balance, as day and night now stand balanced. Time to make recompense for old mistakes and receive the reward of our winter's patience. The tree is the birch, Bride's tree, the tree of Spring and Dawn, at the East point of the circle.

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Carleton will be out of session (as usual) for the Equinox, however we've been having fun with non-traditional holidays.

A few weeks ago we celebrated for the first time ever the 'Ancient' holiday of Mwfydnfud (Mwa-fid-na-fud), or Mess With Forces You Do Not Fully Understand Day. We decided that, in the tradition of Reformed Druidism, we should try out new and exciting rituals, divinations, etc. without fully understanding them. Born at the same time was the new slogan of the Carleton Grove: Reformed Druids of North America, Messing with forces we don't fully understand since 1963.

We are also in the planning stages of another exciting event. Last fall, due to certain complications, only one of the two people needed for the traditional marriage at Beltain was randomly selected by the marriage bread. So, we are planning on having a Marriage Quest, complete with Witches, Information and Misinformation Faeries and much much more coming straight out of our favorite fairy tales.

Plans are being set for the May 40th Reunion (the first of two; see announcement later in this issue) at www.geocities.com/mikerdna/anniversary.html. Students are interested in a "Druid Buddy for a Day" with the old-timers. With Merri's pending graduation after four years as Arch-Druid, there are now at least two new Arch-Druids at Carleton with Steve Crimmin '04 (crimmins@carleton.edu) and Corwin Troost '05 (troostc@carleton.edu).

Akita Grove: News from Japan

Joy of joys. A new baby boy was born to Nozomi Kibou and Pat Haneke on February 8th 2003 and his name is Taiyo Kibou. There's an interesting story to this birth. During an icy snowstorm, Nozomi's rather remote and inaccessible mountain shrine was snowed in and she didn't feel like skiing down the hill in her condition. Then the electrical power was interrupted for almost five days, in the midst of which labor began, of course. Little Taiyo (which means "Sun") is believed to have

been conceived during the 2002 Beltane festivities according to plan, and an Oimelc birth had been keenly desired, but babies will be born when they want to. Pat at least had the presence of mind to at least use the blessed candles from the Candlemas, so possibly the home-birth was a bit easy than expected, finishing in less than 10 hours, with no complications. Nozomi's sister and cousin assisted in the delivery, while Pat used the firewood to heat up water in the old bathhouse. Nozomi's father and brother were away on business. Nozomi is apparently not releasing the movie rights, and visited the hospital a few days later for a check-up. Fortunately, Taiyo doesn't resemble his father too much, and is reported to be "as cute as a button, but a little like a fat monkey." In this issue, they have included a copy of the Baby Blessing they used at a Service soon afterwards.

Acorn Protogrove: News from Ontario, Canada

This is a message to announce the formation of a Protogrove.

We are the Acorn (proto)Grove, Order of Druid Minor.
Located in Newmarket, Ontario, Canada.

We are mixed collection of faiths and paths, however we agree on two points:
The Basic Tenets of the RDNA
St. Francis of Assisi was a cool guy.

Membership:
Arch-Druid (pro tem) Ric Knight
Preceptor (pro tem) Roswell
Server (pro tem) Sculley
Honorable Mention (pro tem) Kodiac

Other members: three interested parties that request anonymity.
Our first ceremony was scheduled Feb 16th (Full Moon and all).
Our website is:
http://groups.msn.com/OrderofDruidsMinor/

Any questions can be directed to me:
bluewoadraider@hotmail.com

Cheers,
Ric Knight o.d.m.

Bamboo Grove: New from Delaware

This time of tentative growth coincides with my own time of personal growth in many areas, and I find that very encouraging...to finally be learning how to merge with the energy of the seasons. Winter still has a firm grip on the East Coast, but one day--despite the cold and snow--I noticed a huge flock of cheeky American Robins cheerfully flitting around a holly tree on my way to the parking lot. Everyone's still ready to hunker down for the next snowstorm, but winter seems to be loosening her grip ever so slowly--the air is softening and there is a gentler energy unfurling. The birds are singing more insistently and coaxing Spring into coming.

Brightest blessings,

Brightmirage

The Hidden Wood Proto-Grove: News from Pennsylvania

If you would like to post on the RDNA site I have a web page at:
(http://www.angelfire.com/realm3/hidden_wood) on the Druids. There are a few of us interested in Druidry, so I guess you could call it a protogrove. We are located in Blair Co. Pennsylvania and would like to be linked with the RDNA.

Our protogrove is called "The Hidden Wood Grove."

Thank you,

Paul Robinson

Hemlock Splinters: News from New York

Hemlock Splinters is still frozen over. No birds come to the feeders out back, but wild turkeys chase falling tufts of Sumac and Marsh-berry across the frozen ponds. The cats have discovered- and not yet murdered- a family of white-footed mice living in the floor boards. The days are longer at last again, and thoughts turn back to spring time. Our emissaries to Ecuador and Quebec returned safely after various delays and accidents, bringing tales of dog-sleds and Jungle birds. No specific activities this moon, but we hope soon to shake off this season of sleep.

Dravidia Grove: News from Maryland

Hello all,

Well things are looking up here, the snow is melting and we are all getting ready for the first day of Spring. Also, have bought a rather decent telescope at a very good price and am enjoying a newfound look at the heavens. Will take a while to get used to the telescope, but should be quite proficient by the next letter. All is well here; we have a lot of snow recently and now a lot of flooding due to the melting. Hopefully we won't experience the droughts we had last year...Have spent a lot of time classifying the text I have acquired and feel that I have only just barely gotten through the first 20 files. Not bad for a start…but uh oh, I have more that 400 files. AHHHHHHHHHH...Well you all should know that research is time consuming so back to it.

a—Dolanimus

Digitalis Grove: News from D.C.

Mike is going bonkers with preparations to graduate from his Masters in International Affairs in May, organizing two 40th Anniversary Reunions, and releasing ARDA 2. Eric is similarly tied up in his Graduate studies, and can no longer attend services either. Things may return to usual this summer. Paul may be transferring from Tampa Grove to our grove this summer.

Golden Apple Grove: News from North Carolina

Just an update, we're the Golden Apple Grove in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, an Erisian RDNA grove, affiliated with the Olot Votccac Waps Discordian cabal, of which I am Episkopos.

Also, would anyone be interested in sigils or other druid art made out of stained glass? I'm booked solid right now, while still in high school, but I have done chaos stars, spirals of birds, Celtic knots, etc. I do either in stone for a tabletop or garden or free hanging.

Tampa Grove #3: News from Florida

Sorry it's been so long–things here have been nothing short of insane trying to get out of the black hole of graduate school. Relocating next week to DC–will be working in Silver Springs MD and I hope to get together with the Digitalis Grove once I get settled in.

—Paul

Oaken Circle Grove: News from Kentucky

The Oaken Circle Grove is working on a gathering. The winter in Kentucky has been a bit harder on us than usual so it has made gatherings more difficult. We are hoping to get back into things very soon. When we have a bit more news to report we will certainly do that. Hopefully we will have more planned for Beltaine.

Many blessings

Sherry

Grove of the Barn Owl: News from Michigan

Merry meet from Cadillac MI. I am Celtrin the Mook, resident flunky and miss spellar of words, of the new protogrove of the Barn Owl.

Our Tenets are: Do no harm.

Our Goal-Thingie is "keep yer head down and yer mouth shut."

Our three members come with no knowledge of anything. No secrets of the dark, and no money. Politically we fit no demographics. Spiritually kinda Zen Pantheists with Taoist leanings and a loose Christian underpinning.

I trust you find us acceptable, and if not we'll just go have some soup at the Bob Evans.

—Celtrin

Cattle Grove: News from Texas

Dear fellows,

As most (or at least some) of you know I've been trapped away in a military academy for this school year but I've been freed for a week due to spring break. While mentally damaging, the school has yet to kill my spiritual side regardless of the forced religious sessions (which I tend to skip) and the rigorous physical training every morning. Through all this I've been accepted to A&M Commerce and plan to attend next fall (sweet freedom), which will thankfully give me full religious freedom, although I might end up with a few raised eyebrows. Anyways May 25th I will be fully free and completely happy. This was just to inform all you what's happening now with me.

Walk with a smile,

Joss Badger

Poison Oak Grove: News from California

The remaining months of this Season of Sleep have been quite active. Members Stacey and Oriana attended PantheaCon Presidents Day weekend and were particularly impressed by the Introduction to Shamanism talk. The instructor spoke of "core shamanism, a term coined by Michael Harner meaning the near universal methods of shamanism without a specific cultural perspective. The class ended with a shamanic journey. I was skeptical and hesitant, torn between the angst of not doing it "right" and experiencing "nothing." The greatest helps the instructor gave, which seems to be to be the key to journeying, is giving oneself a goal even if it is merely to find out where one is at this point in life, and visualization of the place one goes to enter the particular World. My journey was surprising insightful and helped me over an heretofore unknown block.

Much work was done around the grove site and environs. Three more steps were added to the path up to the Grove proper and I think that work of just over three years is done. Douglas irises were planted in the meadow below the cabin and main house.

In my recent reading of Walden I wondered why Thoreau isn't a greater influence on the Druid community. The concept of simplicity, approaching nature as close as possible, taking as little as possible from the environment are concepts that are not new but go back to the Mad Sweeney tradition, but they are ones Thoreau tried to achieve in the more mid 19th century, and so influential still that Thoreau is said to be the father of the Voluntary Simplicity movement. These are things in my opinion a druid needs to consider if he or she is to honor the Earth Mother. You don't need to live in a small cabin in the woods to accomplish this or even own a house with a compost heap out back. Recycling, buying recycled products, eating organic and less-processed foods, walking, bicycling, or carpooling are easy-to-do activities one can incorporate in the his or her lifestyle to lessen the impact on the environment.

Another one for the Bumbling Druid file: the weekend of March 8th I drove to the Los Angeles area to visit my ailing mother. I left my staff there, the one that I use to do the daily Salutations to the Sun (see A Druid Missal-Any Oimelc 1989), and didn't realize until after arriving home. I rented a car for a 24-hour road trip the following weekend to retrieve it, braving torrential rains. It is said that forgetting an item means not wanting to leave or it could have meant a lack of focus and full of distraction. Whatever the reason it will not be a lesson soon forgotten. A staff is more than a tool; it is a friend and reservoir of spiritual energy.

News Bulletin!

The Hassidic Druids of North America are back!

The Hassidic Druids of North America (1974-1978) were an intriguing Jewish-pagan-alternative lifestyle offshoot of the Schismatic Druids of North America (founded by Isaac Bonewits), which were an offshoot of the New Reformed Druids of North America, and the group is being revived.

Carey Oxler, inspired by Isaac's suggestion at the ADF 2002 Autumn Gathering, went through the HDNA archived literature in A Reformed Druid Anthology http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/druids/ARDA/ARDA-05.pdf, grabbed the ball and started running. They have a yahoogroups.com email list called hasidic_druids. There they will be discussing the Mishmash and have a Hairpull every week. Other topics of relevance may be discussed, including additions to the Considdur, Druish holidays and rites of passage, Druish humor, and recipes. Check them out for interesting perspective and lively debate.

Japanese baby going to first shrine visit.

Baby Blessing

By Patrick Haneke, Akita Grove, Japan
March 1, 2003

To be inserted into a standard Order of Common Worship by the RDNA.
Use this in the normal service's invocation:

O Lord, forgive us these three errors of parenthood that are due to human limitations.
Thy child has no end of needs, yet we have only these resources and time.
Thy child's path is uncertain, yet we seek to guide them.
Thy child's choices will be their own, yet we seek to assist them.
O Lord, forgive us these errors of parenthood that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, you have blessed us with this child, yet we further ask your peace and comfort in the years to come. Nurture us as we nurture this babe.

Continue as usual.

Insert this next bit into an RDNA service after the waters are consecrated. If the sacrifice is accepted, then use Waters of Life, if not, use Waters of Sleep for the blessing. With previously blessed waters:

AD: I call upon the parents or guardians of this child to step forward to make their pledges of support.
Father: I am your father, dear child. Your protector, teacher and advisor.
Mother: I am your mother, dear child. Your protector, teacher and advisor too.
Father: You will reside at our home and that of our relatives until you reach maturity, learning from both sides of your parents' relatives.
Mother: Aye, and we will teach of the ways of the Gods, not only our own, but of those of other faiths you will likely encounter.
Father: We seek to assist, but not too interfere, in your life's journeys.
Mother: You are dearly beloved by us and many you do not know yet.
Father: You will grow strong and brave.
Mother: You will grow wise and caring.
Father: You will live close to the Earth
Mother: You will understand the ways of water.
Father: And when the wind speaks, you will understand.
Mother: You are blessed indeed, as we are by your choice to join us.
Father: We name you ( ), which means ( ). This is the name people will call you as an individual. Your last name will be ( ) which means ( ).
Mother: But your true name will only be known by you when you hear it called by Fate.
Father: Grow in moderation of all virtues.
Mother: Tarry not long in vices.
Father: There is much more we wish to say, but these are our first promises to you.
Mother: And we wish to spend many years with you adding to them.

AD: Let all bear the baby, as we will all be enmeshed in his future.

Baby's blanket is held taunt by all participating relatives. Baby is asperged with the Waters by the AD who walks around, sprinkling from all four directions, also dousing the parents and participants for good measure too.

AD: By the power of Dalon Ap Landu, all the Gods of this Land, and those who will direct this child's course, I bless this child. May it live a full, long life blessed with success, love, and accomplishment.
AD: And blessed be all of you by the love that you bear for this babe and for each other. Band together to be a stout palisade in times of defense, a horn of plenty in his time of need, stern teacher in his time of learning, and grateful recipient in his time of production.

The baby is returned to the parents. Baby is returned to the parents and waters are shared by the congregants in that normal part of the service.

Druid Ritual Differences

By Rhiannon Ysgawen,
Nemeton Awenyddion Grove

A Druid Missal-Any is proud to offer two articles by Rhiannon Ysgawen of Nemeton Awenyddion Grove. I have my reasons for publishing two articles by a person in one issue, which is something I normally don't do. At PantheaCon in February there was a panel that discussed the differences

between Druidism and Wicca. I wasn't at the conference that day but learned from those who were that after much discussion it consensus was that there wasn't much difference. I beg to disagree. Rhiannon's article echoes my sentiments. I also dare offer, as a fellow Druid has said, that Druidism is a "head" religion, whereas Wicca is a "gut" religion.

The second article goes into more detail of the three Worlds of the Celtic cosmology Rhiannon mentions in her first one. The Missal-Any welcomes any comments and discussion regarding these two articles as well as any contained within its pages.

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I'm writing this article on ritual differences to dispel any misunderstanding that people may have learned about Druidry. The traditions as practiced by most Druid Groves today will validate the information I wrote here. I do not speak for all Druid Groves, but the larger Druid organizations do agree with this information. I will compare Druidry with Wicca to try to dispel any ignorance anyone may have about the Wiccan practice being Celtic. Comparing Druid craft and Wicca is not meant to be a put down to the Wiccan path. We do have similarities. Both honor the Mother Earth. There are distinct differences though and that must be taken into account by anyone exploring Pagan religions.

Druid ritual is generally open to the public. In Druid ritual, participants stay in the present by staying on the earthly plane. The Wiccan and others often do astral travel during ritual, and sometimes they relocate their magic circles to another realm.

Druids remain on this middle Earth plane during ritual. The "Between the Worlds" that Druids refer to is the Earthly plane, or Middleworld, the Underworldly sea being below, and the Otherworldly Sky, above. Instead of transporting ourselves to deity, as many other Pagans do, Druids open the veil between the worlds with the helping hands of the voyager Manawyddan or Manannan, inviting the deity into our sacred space to be with us in the here and now.

Druid rituals are inclusive and open for non-members and non-Druids to participate during ritual, as long as they are respectful and keep the harmony laws required to participate.

Druids do not cast magic circles or protective barriers around our ritual sites. Instead we build and create Nemetons or sacred space, which have their own place in nature. The four quarters are usually not called in or invoked as they are in many Wiccan circles. We call the Celtic Triads of land, sea, and sky, which is not the same as the quarters of earth, air, fire, and water. The reason it is that most Pagans cast a circle at the beginning of their ritual to ensure protection from invading entities when journeying or transporting space is done during ritual. The circle that is cast creates a containment field for holding the energy that is manifested during their ritual. The circle that gets cast must be undone at the end of the rite. This works well for certain types of magical workings that are part of the practices in Wicca. In Druid craft, sacred space is marked by stones, or wood, and can be psychically seen as a small fence that can be stepped over, but any negative entities definitely know not to enter the sacred ground.

In Druidry every aspect of nature and the universe, visible and invisible, is respected and revered as a necessary part of the whole. All is seen as equal in Druid ritual. All of Earth's nature and the universe is sacred space. We are not concerned that unfriendly entities not banished from our Nemeton will invade our space and try to take possession. Through the three world invocations, Druids bring deity into our Nemeton while staying in Middleworld. The centering and grounding that most Pagans do with the four corner invocations is done to help participants establish their place. Centering and grounding is something that Druids do during the world tree invocations in ritual and the tree meditation. In Druid ritual, the sacred fiery center within the Grove and within each of us is directly connected with the Otherworld. After many rituals the divine spirit of the Groves sacred fire grows, so does ours. When this Otherworldly fire grows stronger, it strengthens our connection with the illumination of the Otherworld.

Druidry is polytheistic, meaning we have many gods and goddesses. We also have Nature Spirits that exist in nature. We also honor our ancestors. The Wiccans are dualistic, believing that all the gods and goddesses are different faces of their lord and lady. Even though the order of the Awen in Druid perception flows through our gods and goddesses, the deities each have their own gifts, seasonal connections, and lore. The Awen embraces every aspect of light and dark, masculine and feminine, life and death, all depending on one another, walking hand in hand always. All is as valuable; all is holy and necessary to wholeness. This perception is unifying and non dualistic, it is all and one. The energy of the circle moves in both directions simultaneously, pro and con.

There seem to be many Wiccan teachers and book writers who are teaching their students that there is such a thing as Celtic Wicca. Wicca is not Celtic. While some Wiccans may call on some of the Celtic deities, they also use practices and call on deities that come from many other different cultures' traditions. Many of these other practices come from works such as Aradia gospel of the witches, Crowley, the Key of Solomon, Masonic rituals, Carmina Gadelica, and other cultures' traditions. All of these listed works are part of the training that Gerald Gardner learned from, and with which he formed the tradition of Gardnerian Wicca back in the early 1900s. Gardnerian Wicca is where most of today's Wiccan practices come from. While there may be many Wiccan practitioners who believe that Wicca is as old as Druidry, or that its practices date way back before Gardner, it may but only for a few decades. From the lineage of Gardner's training anyone could see that his practices were put together from different sources and traditions and he found a way to mix these traditions to make a new one.

Gaelic traditionalists say that the practice of borrowing practices other traditions is disrespectful to that tradition and cultures' ancestors, and dishonorable to the modern day traditionalists who work very hard learning and preserving the ways of their traditions. The cultural pantheon of deities a Druid chooses to work with usually will come from a deep heart felt moment or realization that they've lived another life, or many lives in that culture. They may also have ancestry from that culture. The traditional Gael views a person's dedication to their family, cultural and spiritual, as an oath of utmost importance. This is also where immense value is placed on the honoring of the ancestors in Druidry. In the Celtic World Tree, the ancestors have an entire world of existence that is honored and respected in Druidry. To stick with one culture's tradition and honor their ancestry is quite uncommon in the Wiccan practice because of the eclecticism of the Wiccan way. Druidry today tries to keep and practice from the traditional Gaelic ways. Because there are many Wiccans that borrow concepts, icons, and sacred relics from other traditions, it causes much friction to exist between the other traditions and Wicca. This can manifest itself in such things as the Lakota Declaration of War. Which was created by Lakota traditionals against those who steal words from their spiritual leaders.

Spiritual differences exist between all practices whether they are rooted in a tradition or not. I am just drawing on factual information from the research I've done on both Wicca and Druidry. This does not reflect all of Druidry or Wicca, but most.

If you really want to find out if these statements are true, then please do some of your own research to find out.

Cymru World Tree

By Rhiannon Ysgawen,
Nemeton Awenyddion Grove

The World Tree holds the structure for the Druid cosmology. A cosmology is a belief structure that explains our soul's existence and its connection to the universe or it can be an explanation of a cosmology heard of in a story that explains the origin of creation. In Cymru and Celtic Druid cosmology there is a map of a universal flowing spirit in the World Tree: It is in a vision of a tree, where there are three worlds that exist together within. There is a surrounding circle that symbolizes the Boundless spirit. The Boundless spirit in Celtic cosmology means that all that exists within is of one spirit. Most of our religious and ritual practices today are based on the cosmology.

Written works of how the ancient Cymru Druids practiced ritual is only available through the Gwyddoniad Druid order, an order that survived with enough remaining knowledge to rebuild the entirety of its practices. Because our order's written knowledge is only available to members and seekers, most Druid scholarly researchers of today have to put a considerable amount of effort into discovering the ways of the ancients. What they have to work with for creating Druid rituals is in the tree cosmology or the way the ancient Druids perceived order in the universe and their discovery of it. The only resources that have been left for scholars to ponder are from a few various accounts made by Julius Caesar or Pliny, Cormac's Glossary, and the old lore mythology, archeological findings, scholarly research, Celtic stone circles and carvings. Most of the old lore was written or recorded by Christian monks. Some scholars and historians speculate that a number of the ancient Druids may have entered the Christian monasteries in disguise to preserve their lore and art. During the process of recording it Christian elements were added probably for safety precautions. These old stories were originally told in an oral tradition, and though changed by time, today they still carry some of their original meanings, which reflect the way the people of that time thought and their ways of life.

There are no facts left for us that tell if the Celts had a belief system that had lore concerning how they believed Life's creation occurred. Considering a lot of the Cymru lore tells us about a cosmology that has not a beginning nor an end, it would be very difficult to find a story relating to the beginning of the creation of life. The tree cosmology is present in practically every story Cymru, Irish, Scottish alike.

Drawn from the old Cymru Mabinogion lore, the order that the Cymru Derwydds perceived the cosmos or universe was very well established. The cycle of evolution in this cosmology is holistic and spiritual. Even the Ancestors of the Cymru were considered by the Celtic Cymru as more highly evolved beings. The Ancestors are the Shining Ones to the Cymru order. The Ancestors were beings who chose to come to Abred/Earth from Gwynfyd/Otherworld to have mortal lives so they could help humanity. Even in the older stories of the parents and Ancestors of the gods and goddesses, the cosmology of the three worlds was well-established. This knowledge is also present in the Gwyddoniad books that were passed along to us through the Awenechen, Cymru Gwyddon families.

In reading and studying the old Cymru mythologies you will find continual reference to Anwyn the Underworld, and Gwynfyd the Otherworld. In fact, most of the old lore revolves around Abred the middle-earth and the relationships that happened between the gods and goddesses from Gwynfyd and Anwyn with humanity. In Cymru lore, the old Prydyn (pre-Celtic) tribes are the families of Cymru gods and goddesses.

The World Tree was also common amongst the Mayans, Egyptians, Orientals, Aztecs, Native Americans-sundance, as well as E. Indian Hindus-triloka. It has been a well-documented fact that many of the old ruins of pyramids and ancient temples were built in a way that showed a strong belief in a connection to the other worlds. Such as the pyramid, that has steps going up its sides. When the sun is in its setting position in the evening and shines on the sides of that pyramid, it casts a shadow on the ground, and as the sun goes down, the shadow moves with the setting of the sun, like a serpent entering into the underworld. The whole concept of these ancient places of power being energy vortexes also depicts the connection between the Worlds, as it is in our cosmology and the way energy works in geomancy (earth dowsing), these energy vortexes are places where the energy of our earth opens up a union thus merging the earth and sky creating a tunnel between the Worlds, a connection through the earth (see my geomancy works.) It can be assumed by the fact that the cultures we know of who have an affinity with this cosmology also have in their practices shamanic studies where the shamanic seeker will venture on spiritual journeys to the Underworld and Upperworld to learn from the spirit guides who live there. What the shaman is really doing, is through the inner awakening and energizing they also become energy vortexes that are open to contact with spirit guides. The guides are called, and they come to assist the shaman on their journey outwards to the world of their choice.

In Cymru, a shaman is called an Awenyddion which is plural because once the Awenydd Seeker has made contact with their Gwynfyd guides and anchored them within they are then more than one separate being, they are at one with the Boundless, and they are many.

Since my order focuses primarily on the Cymru I will tell you that by religious and cultural comparative studies I've done, there is a parallel between the Cymru and Irish concepts of cosmology. The terms used here are Cymraeg, but they do have a counterpart in Irish as well. Although I have mostly researched Cymru and Irish, there are probably counterparts in Scottish and in other Celtic languages as well. In the end of this article I will give some examples of the names in Irish, then by your own studies hopefully you will be able to find their counterparts in what ever native culture you desire.

The understanding of the World Tree cosmology unfolds in all directions. When you do the tree meditation the roots are first developed, then the trunk, and then the branches. The three worlds of existence are contained in the world-tree. Abred the middle earth is divided up into eight points with a ninth point at the center (see spiritual evolution.) The center symbolizes the core spirit, in the Cymru Gwyddoniad the core is called Nwyfre or fire-center. The outer circle that surrounds the three worlds is the unity of all spirits and is the faceless, it is called Boundless. When all realms are in harmonious balance the three Worlds

connect straight down through their centers with the energy of Nwyfre. Nwyfre is a bright energy that runs through the centers of the Worlds. When it flows clearly then we have a scepter of light that goes straight down and up through the center of the Worlds in the Tree. The scepter runs energy through and between the three Worlds, and this energy exists in the outer circle that surrounds the whole cosmology as well.

In the Tree cosmology, the otherworld is Gwynfyd and is more above Earth and is of a higher dimension. It is the canopy of branches and leaves on the tree. Access to Gwynfyd is usually located through portals on Abred (Earth) in areas where there is concentrated energy, such as leylines and power spots, sacred hills, stone circles and the like. Anwyn the underworld is farther away from this world than Gwynfyd, and is usually located through the sea, or places that reach deep water, sacred wells, or springs. The World Tree roots are in Anwyn along with the past, our Ancestors, our minds. The trunk exists on Abred--Earth the Middleworld, it is our nature and earthly relations, our physical bodies, our energy being here and now. Abred the Middleworld is not only the center in the World Tree; it is also this present moment. Druids remain on Abred (Middleworld) during ritual. The "Between the Worlds" that Druids refer to is the whole earthly plane, or Abred, Anwyn being below, and Gwynfyd being above. Instead of creating floating energy spheres to do ritual in, as many other Pagans do, Druids ground our Nemetons/sacred space into the whole of Earth. Then we open a door between the Worlds. This creates a pathway for the spirits to cross over into our Nemeton to a tunnel that connects the three Worlds. This sends energy and spirit up and down through the center of our Nemeton. The World Tree branches reach into Gwynfyd, the World of spirit and deity, and into the future. The roots dig deep into Anwyn and touch the cauldron of rebirth, our past, our Ancestors, the trunk is where we are in Abred—the Middleworld.

In holistic perception we are each a holograph of the cosmology's entirety. These three worlds are our divine connection to being open to Gwynfyd knowledge, guidance, and inspiration when they are in balance and alignment (refer to cauldrons of existence.) It is from within that our truer form will emerge. To know the truer form of our innermost selves allows one to see the truer form of what is without.

Within our physical bodies there are places that have direct connection to these three Worlds. They are the cauldrons of existence; they are energy centers. Our belly is connected with Anwyn, our heart is connected with Abred, and crown when it is open, is connected with Gwynfyd. They are similar to the chakras of Hinduism but when we see them within us, we see three cauldrons. Each of these three cauldrons represents the three Worlds from the cosmology. These energy centers also carry the energy of the three worlds within us when they are clear and open.

From the Linguistics Comparative View

Terms:
Underworld, Annwyn (Cymraeg)
Middleworld, Abred (Cymraeg)
Upperworld, Gwynfyd (Cymraeg)

In Irish, each world is divided into quarters, so for each world there is four names. The names for the Irish Underworld are this:

Tir Nan Og, West quarter, means: Land of Youth
Tir Na mBeo, South quarter, means: Land of Life
Tir Na mBan, East quarter, means: Land of Women
Tir Fo Thuinn, North quarter, means: Land under Waves

For the Middleworld Earth, there are four symbols but one name and that name is Bith or Mide, and means: middle.

The Otherworld in Irish is as the Underworld is with its four-quarter naming and it is this:

Sen Magh, West quarter, means: Old Plain
Magh Ionganaidh, South quarter, means: Plain of Wonder
Magh Mell, East quarter, means: Plain of Delight
Magh Findargat, North quarter, means: Plain of White Silver

Then there is a general name in Irish for the Upperworld called Magh Mor, meaning Big Plain. Although there are some cosmological differences between these two there is still the connecting factor that the Underworld is associated with water and the sea, the Middleworld is earth, and the Upperworld is connected with the sky. Thus we also have the triad of sea, land, and sky, which is prominent in Celtic lore and is our remembering of the alignment of all three, to connect earth power and spirit into oneness.

Subutâ Ollobo! Gallic Greetings

By Dan T. Felber

> "Hey, what's that?" a small Gaulish warrior asks, pointing up at the sky.
> "The sky is falling! Come on, Asterix!" shouts his much larger and sort of dopey friend and comrade in arms, trying to pull him back behind one of the local cottages. A small teapot thumps to the ground in front of them.
> "The sky's not falling, Obelix." the little lad states. "What is this?"...
> "Some sort of Roman weapon?"

Celtophiles around the world are probably familiar with our heroes here. As a matter of fact--chances are that if you were a kid growing up in Continental Europe, Comic Books about the inhabitants of this charming little Celtic Oppidum somewhere in ancient Gaul were a staple of your MiniMe Library before you've even heard of a fellow named 'Mickey Mouse.'

Despite modern popular stereotypes and common misconceptions about "Celtic Culture" being predominant or even native to the British Isles and a few other isolated places, the cultural dawn of a people commonly called 'The Celts' is by far not a matter of the modern 'Seven Nations' territories and their history alone.

In fact, this Celtic cultural dawn is nowadays recognized by the academic community as occurring in roughly 1800 BCE; the time around which cultural evidence and artifacts start to emerge anywhere from the Eastern Continent to the Alps to the Isles; clues which are distinctively different from those of their predecessors called the 'Bell Beaker people' for their bell-shaped pottery drinking vessels.

What does this mean to any fellowship that studies "The Druids?"

Well first, we discover a considerable time gap between earliest accounts of this culture by physical evidence, then mention by classical authors and finally the monastic manuscripts we know so well; mostly the ones from medieval (and sometimes a tad older) Ireland and Wales.

This gap spans already eleven Centuries if we consider as framework only the low end of an estimate. This would be the first mention of the term "Druid" (by Greek historian Timaeus in the 4th or 5th century BCE, as some say) and the now lost original manuscripts said to have been from the 7th Century (and transcribed around 1000CE to 1200CE.)

On the optimistic high end, we would find a time span of three Millennia (!) for the era of ancient Druids, provided it is safe to assume the culture had not ever been an agnostic one, which in turn means there was always a certain spiritual concept to which representatives of this culture adhered to and the belief that Irish spirituals in the 12th Century CE were still 'Druids by definition' is a reasonable one.

Looking at chronological events at the time of the incursions into Gallia by the Romans, we'll also have to realize the tremendous impact these historical events had on 'The Ways' of Druids and also on the ways they chose to organize as a reaction to these events.

All known evidence from the Continent suggests, that Celtic spirituals of any kind and by any name preferred rather loose-knit ties to their counterparts from different tribes over any centralized approach, until Roman invasion began shortly before the beginning of our 'Common Era.' The resulting dire threats to the physical body as well as the one of knowledge would have been more than good reason for anybody to reconsider their traditional ways–-and quick!

Around this time, Caesar tells us of many young men coming to them for education, if not in the hope of becoming a Druid themselves. They were learned men, studying the physical skies and conceptual heavens, debating about life and the universe, observers of Nature. They knew the Greek alphabet and used it for bookkeeping yet, not for recording their teachings and beliefs. They felt that if something was so important to the life of the tribe, it should be kept in the mind, not on wax tables or papyrus. Caesar goes on to conjecture that probably they also did not want their teachings to become widely known for a fear of misinterpretation.

As a result, we first hear of yearly gatherings in the Carnute forests and the exchange of single disciples from one tribe to another, while later accounts speak of semi-official "Druid Schools" which had been established in the relative security of island lands off the Continental coast; possibly designed to counteract already devastating invasions such as the ones into Gallia Narbonensis and thus rendering further Roman intrusion a task difficult to accomplish.

Druids are sometimes said to have been (and are still said to be...) a stubbornly traditional and quirky breed of intellectuals. It comes as no surprise that some of them would have favored a flight to the Isles over a loss of life and also the teachings as a whole, even if it meant sacrificing their formerly federalist approach and personal freedom.

Others understandably went with the example Nature sets for all of us with each passing day, "Going with the flow" so to speak, willing to risk the loss of a branch not able to maintain its natural growth anymore off the whole, fair and integral tree of sacred wisdom. Their own motto was not survival at any price but unconditional acceptance of the cycles of life.

Clash of the Paths

Based on these occurrences of human history and spiritual evolution, we are now--in this new Millennium--facing two considerably different schools of thought where our approach to studies of 'The Druid Way' is concerned. Indeed, these two major approaches are not only quite different depending on the respective locales in which they evolved but sometimes outright contradictive of each other.

The first one is an approach distinctively 'insular;' associated with historical references to a Celtic religious caste in recorded history–-be it only ideological or organized, be it solitary or recognizable in Groves or congregations by any other name. This mindset draws for the better part upon the ideals and techniques outlined in the earliest Insular scripts, traditional customs still 'intact' in the communities of the modern Seven Nations and other local evidence. The Insular path emphasizes studies of 'the ways of old'--largely identified with qualities and ideals described in the ancient literature and it is, for this reason, polytheistic in nature.

The second one is an approach I personally call 'continental' (although there is more to be said about this distinction). This approach to Druidry is rooted in extremely local reference points such as flora, fauna and weather conditions. It is meant to be supported to the best possible extent by any scientific evidence about the locale as well as surviving markers of social behaviour and (folk)lore, all with an emphasis on experience in the here and now, a path rather solitary by default and in tune with the concept of Nature-Spirituality as we also know it from other indigenous sources all around the globe. The continental path is pantheistic/animistic in nature.

Winding down in a feeble attempt to conclude...

I would like to take advantage of this opportunity and issue to you, dear reader, a simple call to unity in this place. What is important and dearly needed these days is a mutual sense of tolerance and understanding towards each other, whatever the chosen approach might be. Let there be Druids!

Maybe the time has come for us to accomplish what no one tribal assembly of the past--misleadingly called "Celtic Culture" (for implied unity--was truly able to do: Forget our local differences, pull together for our common cause and thus help provide support, nourishment and healthy growth for this living creature we call Draíocht, Druidry or The Druid Way as well as support, nourishment and healthy growth for our communities which we serve.

One is the tree of knowledge,
One is the fertile soil, on which it stands,
Yet they are both one and the same, after all.

Blessings,

Dan

A Reformed Druid Anthology: Second Edition

As most of the readers may know, the original 500 page A Reformed Druid Anthology was first published in 1996 as a portable selection of useful archival documents from the Druid Archives on matters of liturgy, epistles, historical texts, trivia and interviews. ARDA 2 will be about twice as big. It is not a bible or holy scriptures, but merely some interesting things that Mike Scharding has collected from members of various Reformed Druidic movements have written down.

Progress Information

What was a monstrous project has turned into a behemoth, and yet it is still on schedule for publication in May, in time for the 40th Anniversary. Printed copies won't be available until after the reunion, although on-line copies will be ready by Reunion. CD versions available on request to mikerdna@hotmail.com for $5. No new submissions are being taken anymore for this edition, but feel free to add to ARDA 3, by sending it in now or over the next few years.

Ordering Information

It will be free for download from that time, and you can bind your own copy. And yet some of you might wish to own a physically printed copy to lug about with you (a full set will weigh 10 pounds, about like a cat). There will be a print-on-demand version in the near future this year with a commercial service for the main volume, but you may wish to reserve a copy of the first-print series. There will probably not be a second printing, since things are in the works for ARDA 3 possibly out between 2008 and 2013. The main book is estimated to be over 800 pages (the original was 500). There will also be a separate book for the Green Books at 400 pages and a summer-release of a volume of 25 years of RDNA magazines at 300 pages, but these two will not be offered on print-on-demand, and will only be available for on-line viewing, and an unofficial first printing, due to copy-right concerns.

Price is rather uncertain, and is estimated that it will cost $30 the for main book, $15 for each side volume of Meditations and the Magazines; and shipping costs of $5 for main book, $3 for each of the two side books, including shipping boxes. If it's more than that, Mike will swallow the cost, and if it's less than that, he will write a check for the difference and include it with your order when he mails it out mid-May after the Reunion. You can also order copies for a friend, a library, a university, or an enemy. Please write instructions clearly for a complicated order, or live with Mike's interpretation of your order. (Limit four copies of each book per person.) Checks must arrive at Mike Scharding, Embassy of Japan, 2520 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20008 before April 15th (Taxes anyone?) and be payable to Mike Scharding. If it's in his mailbox after April 15th he will return the check to you. Mike says he is reasonably trustworthy. So don't delay, order today!

A path cutting through the upper Arb near the Druid's Den at Carleton.

Contents Information

To give you an idea of the contents go to http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/ and see what the first volume of ARDA was like in 1996 and click on Part Zero (see Table of Contents) and use it to compare with the following list.

Part Zero: Introduction

Enlarged detailed table of contents
Revamped optional study program.
Part One: Druid Chronicles
No changes.

Part Two: Apocrypha (three times bigger)

14 letters from the Smiley Affair with the Draft Board in the 60s
8 Letters from the Codex Affair from late 60s/early 70s.
6 letters describing Isaac's final schism from NRDNA to form ADF.
16 letters from debates at the Live Oak Grove in the 1980s
14 Letters from the Carleton 1996-2003 period covering new developments there.
6 letters related to Mairi's Research on the Reform.

Part Three: Liturgy (three times bigger)

8 additional old Carleton services
25 services from the Late Berkeley years.
12 new Carleton, Live Oak, OMS, D.C., and on-line services.
German and Japanese Services
10 New Orders
4 articles on funeral, wedding, and baby blessing tips.
35 Articles for solitary services and divination exercises
13 articles of Non-liturgical activities for the eight festivals

Part Four: Trivia and Customs (20% bigger)

6 more constitutions
6 more FAQ materials
3 more articles on calendars

Part Five: Mish-Mash of Hasidic Druids

No change.

Part Six: The Green Books (Separately Published, four times bigger)

Volume 4 (150 pp.) Stories and Thoughts from Around the World
Volume 5 (150 pp.) Chicken Soup for the Druid's Soul
Volume 6 (150 pp.) Books of Songs and Poetry of the RDNA
Volume 7 (70 pp.) Seasonal Essays
Volume 8 (15 pp.) OMS Druidism 101 Course

Part Seven: Miscellaneous Research (two times bigger)

15 Articles written about the RDNA
5 Essays by Isaac
6 Essays by RDNA members on strange topics
21 Articles on Trees

Part Eight: General History (20% bigger)

Just a few updated chapters

Part Nine: Latter Day Reformed Druids (Same size)

Dead River Scrolls (80 pp.) from the Carleton and Akita Groves

Part Ten: Interviews (20% bigger)

New interview with Mike Scharding
Biographical Information on Isaac

Part Eleven: (A Separate Volume in the Summer)

11 Issues of the Druid Chronicler
5 Issues of Pentalpha
72 Issues of old Druid Missal-Any
1 Issue of Standing Stones
20 Issues of new Druid Missal-Any

Forest to Be Restored to Scottish Highlands

James Owen for National Geographic News
February 7, 2003
http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2003/02/0207_030207_scotforest.html

For the first time in 2,000 years, Scots pine, alder, birch, hazel, holly, and mountain ash are set to reclaim a large swath of the Scottish Highlands. Using government funds, a private landowner plans to plant 2.5 million trees over the next five years to create the largest native woodland in Scotland. The effort marks a nationwide move to restore the country's lost woodland.

The ancient Caledonian Forest once covered the Scottish Highlands. Home to bears, beavers, and wolves, its destruction began before the Bronze Age. The forest began to fall to the scythe of climate change and the activities of primitive tribes from pre-Roman times. Subsequent terror campaigns launched by marauding Vikings burned down large areas of forest. Later, farmers and fuel gatherers cleared away most of what remained.

But today a new forest, called Baile Mor, is being planted on more than 10,000 acres (4,000 hectares) of mountainous terrain near the north Atlantic fishing port of Gairloch. The land is owned by John MacKenzie. His ancestors have lived on the property since 1494.

Vestiges of the ancient forest still grow on islands in Loch Maree, a freshwater lake that runs along the new forest's western edge. Remnant pine trees found there are now providing the seeds of recovery. Foresters are using helicopters to airlift seedlings to the wild hills of Baile Mor.

Largest Woodland Grant

Last year MacKenzie secured U.S. $3.2 million from the Forestry Commission, a U.K. government agency responsible for forestry throughout Britain. The sum marks the biggest woodland grant ever awarded in Scotland. Work is already well underway with 2.5 million native trees due to be planted in the next five years.

"It's a positive, practical use for a large piece of land that frankly was almost totally useless," said MacKenzie.

"The forest should become a great amenity for visitors and local folk. It will be wide open for all and sundry to come along and enjoy it. There may even be some economic benefit to the estate in terms of guided wildlife walks and other tourism-related activities."

Although one local politician has criticized the size of the grant, saying the money would be better spent on public services, MacKenzie claims the surrounding community has given the plan a universal thumbs-up.

"As well as giving people more things to do, the forest will boost tourism which is enormously important to Gairloch," he said. "We don't have ferris wheels or piers with flashing lights. People come to the area because of its natural beauty and wonderful wildlife."

As the forest matures, conservationists hope to see threatened Highland animals re-colonizing the area.

"It will provide a greater range of prey species for golden eagles," said Kenny Nelson, South West Ross officer for Scottish Natural Heritage, a government conservation agency. "We also expect pine martens and wildcats to move in. Birds now confined mainly to the east, like black grouse, crested tits, and crossbills are others that should find suitable habitat here."

Habitat for native species has already been aided by the addition of 75,000 acres (30,000 hectares) of woodlands over the past 15 years in Scotland. Biologists say the forest cover provides wildlife a habitat corridor to use for westward migration.

A Growing Trend

The Forestry Commission pledges to recreate another 75,000 acres (30,000 hectares) of Caledonian pinewood by 2005.

This year, a new Scottish forestry plan seeks to provide more incentives for private landowners to plant Scots pine and broadleaf trees over commercial, non-native species such as Sitka spruce. Unlike the current program, a higher rate of payment will go to landowners who create woodland of ecological and recreational value.

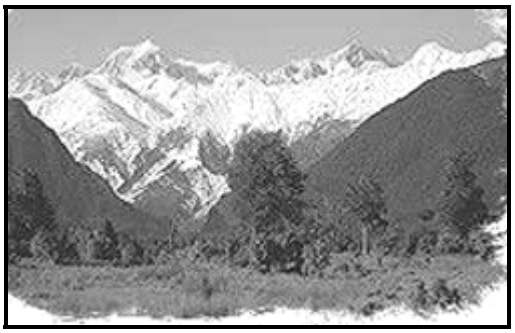
Baile Mor Forest represents a growing trend in Scotland. In 1503, the nation's woodland was utterly destroyed according to historical records. By 1900, woodlands covered just five percent of the country. Today the figure is 17 percent and rising. The target, say government planners, is 25 percent by 2050.

The success of these regeneration schemes isn't guaranteed, however. While human activity had a major impact in the Highlands throughout history, the Caledonian Forest's demise was hastened by climate change.

Climatic conditions like the "Little Ice Age," which occurred between 1320 and 1750, brought low summer temperatures, high rainfall, and ferocious winds to the Scottish Highlands. These conditions encouraged the formation of peaty moorland at the expense of trees.

But for now, at least, the new pinewoods are doing well. An earlier 2,500-acre (1,000-hectare) project on the Gairloch Estate is already bearing fruit after just five years.

This winter, young mountain ash trees are weighed down with scarlet berries while Scots pine saplings flourish alongside their ancestors' gnarled remains. John MacKenzie's ancestors might not believe their eyes as a ghost of the old forest springs back to life.



'King of Stonehenge' Hailed From the Alps

February 11, 2003
From the NewScientist.com news service
www.newscientist.com/news/news.jsp?id=ns99993374

Stonehenge, one of England's best-known prehistoric landmarks, may have been built by nobleman hailing from modern day Switzerland or Germany, according to a new analysis of a nearby burial site.

The remains of a wealthy and powerful man were discovered five kilometers from the ancient stone circle in May 2002. Known as the Amesbury Archer, this man was buried with the oldest gold and copper artifacts ever discovered in Britain, dating from as far back as 2470 BC.

Although there is no direct link between the man and Stonehenge, he is thought to have lived at the time the landmark was erected, about 2300 BC. This, along with the proximity of his burial site and his enormous wealth, has led archaeologists to speculate that he played a role in the stone circle's construction.

Analysis of his tooth enamel now shows that he grew up not in England, but in central Europe, most probably the Swiss or German Alps. Lighter oxygen isotopes in the tooth enamel indicate that the teeth were formed in a colder climate than Britain.

Early technology

"It is fascinating to think that someone from abroad, probably modern-day Switzerland, could have played an important part in the construction of the site," says Andrew Fitzpatrick of Wessex Archaeology, the company that excavated the Amesbury Archer and performed the latest analysis.

Mike Pitts, of English Heritage's Stonehenge Project, says the discovery will also help archaeologists understand the spread of people and Early Bronze Age technology across Europe.

"It's hugely important," he told New Scientist." On one level it's a spectacular find. It's also getting to the heart of where we all come from and the long cultural history of Europe." Pitts says hundreds more remains may now be subjected to the same analysis.

The Amesbury Archer was buried along with a younger man. A shared foot bone deformity indicates that the men were related, and were perhaps father and son. The oxygen isotope analysis of the younger man's tooth enamel indicates that he was raised in Britain.

—Will Knight

British Dig Uncovers Mummies

Robin McKie, science editor
Sunday March 16, 2003
The Observer
http://www.observer.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,6903,915148,00.html

Archaeologists have uncovered the remains of two embalmed humans, providing the first proof that ancient Britons made mummies of their kings and queens. The bodies--a man and a woman--predate the pharaoh Tutankhamen, who was mummified and buried 3,200 years ago.

The discovery at Cladh Hallan, a remote Bronze Age site in South Uist in the Outer Hebrides, makes the couple--a man and a woman--the oldest mummies found anywhere in Europe.

It is believed the male is around 3,500 years old, the female a couple of centuries younger.

'These are the only prehistoric mummies found in this country,' said project leader Dr Mike Parker Pearson, of Sheffield University. 'We have some from historic times--the body of Edward I was wrapped in cloth. But we have never found an example of the kind of thing that went on in ancient Egypt till now.'

Unlike their Egyptian counterparts, however, the Cladh Hallan mummies had to survive, after embalming, in extremely wet conditions. Hebridean weather in the Bronze Age was as grim as it is today. As a result, the couple's wrappings long ago disintegrated. Yet Dr Pearson and his team are convinced the pair must have been swathed in bandages.

'We found them with their knees around the chests and their thighs and calves absolutely parallel. There is no way that could have been done unless they had been very tightly bandaged or tied up with cords or straps of leather,' added Pearson. 'Over the millennia, the cloth disintegrated.'

The team found evidence that the people of South Uist went to extraordinary pains to preserve the bodies of the Cladh Hallan couple. Although the pair was found buried in the foundations of two Bronze Age dwellings called roundhouses, they had not been put in the earth immediately after death.

The state of their bodies indicates they had been kept above ground for several hundred years--at least 500 years, in the case of the male mummy. 'Something must have been done to preserve their flesh before it was wrapped up,' said Pearson.

'We narrowed this down to four options: the pair was left out to dry in the wind; they were slowly dried over a peat fire; they were pickled in salt, or they were dipped in a peat bog for a while.

'To find out which, we studied mineral deposits on their bones which showed that both bodies had been immersed in peaty water for a considerable time--possibly a year before they were bandaged up.'

After that, it appears the couple were put on display or kept in a sacred, warm, dry place--otherwise they would have disintegrated. Just why this couple, which had lived a couple of centuries apart, was venerated in this rather grisly way is still a mystery, however.

'It could be a form of ancestor worship, or the local people could have preserved them because they were great leaders or shamans whose powers they hoped to tap into after death,' said Pearson.

Bronze Age funereal customs in South Uist changed for some reason around 3,000 years ago. The couple were taken from their place of display and buried in the foundations of one of the roundhouses.

'There is something touching about still taking such care about people who had died centuries earlier,' said Pearson. 'It indicates a considerable continuity to the local culture.'

Events

Witness the Vernal Equinox Sunrise and Sunset at the UMASS Sunwheel

Sunrise @ 5:45 a.m., Sunset @ 5:00 p.m.
Thursday and Friday, March 20 and 21, 2003

Members of the University community and the general public are invited to witness the passing of the seasons by joining Prof. Judith Young of the U.Mass. Dept. of Astronomy to watch the Sun rise and set over the tall standing stones in the U.Mass. Sunwheel for the upcoming Vernal Equinox. Visitors for the sunrise viewing should arrive at 5:45 a.m., and visitors for the sunset viewing should arrive at 5:00 p.m. The sunrise and sunset events will be held on both Thursday and Friday, March 20 and 21, 2003. For those interested in learning about the sky, there will be a program that will include the cause of the seasons, the Sun's path in the sky, the phases of the Moon, and the story of building the Sunwheel. Bring your questions, your curiosity, and DRESS VERY WARMLY, including waterproof footwear. A $3 donation is requested to help cover the cost of future stonework at the site; Sunwheel T-shirts and sweatshirts will be available for purchase.

The exact instant of equinox is 8:00 p.m. EST on March 20. On the equinox, any observer located on the Earth's equator will see the Sun pass directly overhead at local noon and that person will cast no shadow at noon. For all observers on Earth (excluding the N and S poles), the Sun on the equinox is up for 12 hours and down for 12 hours, illuminating all latitudes on Earth! One visitor to the Sunwheel suggested we celebrate International Unity Day on the equinox, to acknowledge our common experience of the Sun on that day. From the Sunwheel here in Amherst, the equinox Sun will be seen to rise and set through the stone portals in the East and West, a very beautiful sight as we experienced the last 2 years. This year, the Moon is 2 days past full on the equinox, so observers at sunrise will see the gibbous Moon setting as the Sun is rising.

The U.Mass. Sunwheel is located south of Alumni Stadium, just off Rocky Hill Road. It can be easily reached from the center of Amherst, following Amity St. to the west, on the right hand side of the road about 1/4 mile after crossing University Drive. ALL VISITORS SHOULD WEAR WARM CLOTHING, SUITABLE FOR STANDING STILL ON FROZEN OR SOGGY GROUND. In the event of rain, the events will be cancelled, and visitors are encouraged to visit the Sunwheel on their own.

http://www.umass.edu/sunwheel

Interfaith Pagan Pride Parade

"Ancient Voices"
Sunday April 13th, 2003
People's Park
12 pm-4 pm
Upper Telegraph Ave.
Berkeley, CA

We welcome you to the Second annual Interfaith Pagan Pride Parade! Our inaugural parade was so successful and we had so much fun, that we are just going to have to keep it up! Our theme this year will be "Ancient Voices," in which we celebrate the many ancient spiritual beliefs that will be acknowledged and honored at this year's parade.

With this event, we bring together brothers and sisters of ALL indigenous, Earth-based, and nature centered polytheistic beliefs in pride and celebration, as well as those who support arts, music, ceremony, theater and dance within the Interfaith Pagan Community. In doing so, we unite in our message to the world that we must live together in love and tolerance, as opposed to fear and misunderstanding, as voices in the great choir of Spirit.

This year's parade is not to be missed! We are excited to announce that we will be kicking off Earth Week in Berkeley, which will begin a week of activities that bring focus and awareness to the preservation of our precious, divine home; Mother Earth. We will be joined by artists, musicians, craftspeople, community leaders, and many eclectic and ancient spiritual traditions from around the West Coast. We also wish to welcome floats to this year's parade, and are eager to see divine creativity in action. It will no doubt be a day of fun, understanding, and education for all.

We encourage diversity, tolerance, safety, and respect for all participants and audience members. This is a family-friendly event, and children are encouraged to participate!

For more info, contact www.paganparade.org or (510) 845-9032.

Hill of Three Oaks where many of the first services were held.

40th Anniversary RDNA Reunion News

Plans for the two Reunions are going well, with a few Founders and a large contingent of California Druids already making reservations for the May Reunion. It is strongly recommend that people traveling long distance make plane and hotel reservations soon. (The Country Inn Motel, aka the Druid Inn, is proving to be the most popular).

More details, maps, contacts and instructions are at http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/anniversary.html but below is the current plan. Final plan and rain-date alternatives will be posted April 15th. Check the web site every week or so until then.

Friday May 2nd

Around 12 p.m. Druid Lunch. If you're already here, come by and meet us. Location: Dining and Language Facility (Next to Myers Hall)

From 2-5 p.m. Archives Activity. Exhibition of Druid Archival collection, Collection of historical matters (flyers, diary notes, poems, stories, articles, essays, photos etc.). Personal Interviews with Archivist. Location: Lowest Floor in Gould. Email Mike Scharding at mikerdna@hotmail.comif you're interested in doing one (lasting about 40minutes) or updating an old one. Presentation of the Second Edition of A Reformed Druid Anthology (ARDA 2) and free CD-Rom versions given out.

Around 7-11p.m. Kitchen Fun. Cooking, chatting and other preparations for May Day. Music may erupt. Interfering overseers are welcome. Location: Undetermined Dorm Kitchen.

Saturday May 3rd

6 a.m. "Maying." Go out collect flowers on your own, bring a close friend, and wash your face in the morning dew. Location: Wherever you want, individual activity. Perhaps walking the labyrinth on Stewsie Island might be nice.

Morning Arrival. Most visitors will probably arrive in morning; proceed to the Hill of the Three Oaks.

Around 12:30 p.m. 40th Anniversary Service. Led by oldest willingest Third Order member in the group along with current Arch Druids, with readings by anyone who feels inspired. Location: Hill of the Three Oaks or the Stone Circle. There is a likely conflict with the raucous Spring Concert being held at the Hill of the Three Oaks on Saturday. Perhaps, a procession from Monument Hill to Hill of the Three Oaks, to Druid's Den, to the Stone Circle.

Around 1 p.m. Festivities. Maypole dance, weddings, more folk-dancing, a picnic, silly games and contests, Location: Stone Circle in Upper Arb.

6:00 p.m. Dinner Location: On your own, or go to Dining and Language Facility (by Myers)

8:23 p.m.-2 a.m. Bonfire. Evening bonfire and Exchange of Stories between new and old timers. Letters are read from those who couldn't attend (send one to mikerdna@hotmail.com) Location: Druid's Den near Hill of the Three Oaks.

Around 10 p.m. Vigilers Depart. Some vigils may occur, perhaps, let us help arrange it if you need to use an official fire-pit. Vigilers will leave with the Third Order Druid who will be overseeing their vigil. Location: Depart from Druid's Den.

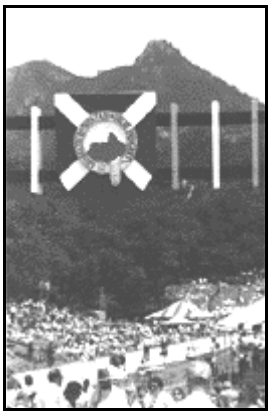
Around 11:59 p.m. Midnight tour of Arb by torch, for the brave, showing all the mysteries. Or perhaps we'll do it in the pitch dark. (Sounds exciting, huh?) Location: Depart from Hill of the Three Oaks.

Sunday May 4th

6:00 a.m. Vigil Ordinations. For people enter the Third or Higher Orders. Location: Hill of the Three Oaks or nearby Monument Hill, Vigilers' choice.

Around 7:00 a.m. Farewell Service. Led by newest willingest Third Order members in the group. Location: Hill of the Three Oaks.

7:30 a.m. Druid Breakfast. Traditionally, Vigilers pay for the dinner of the Ordainer. Location: Dining and Language Facility (next to Myers Hall).



The 5th Annual Grandfather Mountain Gaelic Song, Language and Harp Week

The 5th Annual Grandfather Mountain Gaelic Song, Language and Harp Week will be held on July 6 to 11, 2003 at Lees-McRae College, Banner Elk, North Carolina. Catherine-Ann MacPhee (Gaelic song), Dr. Jamie MacDonald (Gaelic language) and Debbie Brewin-Wilson (Scottish harp) will share their love of Scottish Gaelic through song, language and harp instruction with additional workshops of cultural interest. Classes will be held Monday - Friday prior to the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games. Cost is approximately $375 per person for the week of instruction, lodging and meals. For more information contact Jana Blue at seona@att.net.

Calendar

Spring Equinox occurs this year on March 20, PST, at 5:04 p.m. The Sun rises due East and sets due West. Get up early (sunrise is at 6:13 a.m. PST.) and note where the Sun rises. From today on the Sun will rise gradually farther south each day along the horizon until the Summer Solstice when it will rise the most northern position all year. After the Solstice it will gradually make its return southward crossing the Celestial Equator again at the Fall Equinox when it will rise due east once again.

A Druid Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $8.00 and email subscriptions are free. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's post mail subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o S. J. Weinberger, 309 63rd St. C, Oakland, CA 94618

A Druid Missal-Any Beltane Year XLI Volume 19, Number 3 April 28th, 2003 c.e.

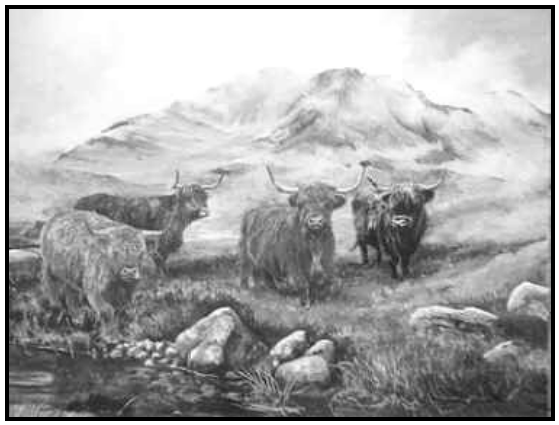
Kids dancing the maypole.

Beltane Essay: Cattle

By Stacey Weinberger

eltaine, May Day, the beginning of the Season of Life, and best known of the Old Celtic High Days. Bonfires are still lit on hilltops in Scotland and Ireland to welcome Belenos, the returning Sun. Beltaine is historically when the cattle, which had been sheltered and stall fed, were now moved out to summer pastures in the hills and mountains. The cattle and other herd animals were driven between two fires made from sacred woods such as rowan, birch, or oak as an act of purification, protection against disease, and to insure their fertility for the coming year. This is a practice from Druidic times and may have its origin in cleansing the animals of parasites (dropping off from the heat) or harken back to when cattle, particularly bulls, were sacrificed at Beltaine.

Cattle were extremely important to early Celtic people. Animal husbandry was probably the dominant food producing activity during the Iron Age. The dairy cows provided the only fresh food during the winter months. There is some speculation on which was the more important function of the cattle herds. One study of the bones from Dun Aillinne, Co. Kildare, shows by the analysis of bones found that the preponderance of animals over six months old were female and therefore milk-producers. If meat production were intended there would have been a greater number of young cattle present. Another study argues that cattle will not give milk unless calves are present and the presence of so many calf remains from Dun Aillinne is due to the rearing of drystock cattle for meat. Or it might have been a combination of the two with milking and harvesting the cattle for meat depending upon the season or historical development. We may never truly know.



Wealth was not measured in precious metal but in the number of cattle a person owned. Cattle fulfilled many purposes: they produced butter, milk cheese, provided meat, hide, horns, as well as strength for ploughing and pulling, proving them to be of extreme usefulness and value in an agricultural society. In early Irish hero-tales wealth was measured in cattle. The importance of the Celtic gentry was calculated not so much in terms of the size of their property as by the number of cattle they possessed.

Stuart Piggott tells us how in his Ancient Europe: A Survey (Aldine Publishing Company, 1966) that "in the opening scene of the 'Cattle-Raid of Cooley' (Tain Bo Cuailnge), Ailill, chieftain of Cruachan, and Medb his wife, boast of their respective riches, and cause their possessions to be brought to them in reverse order of their value, beginning with cauldrons and other vessels, followed by their gold ornaments and their clothing, and then by flocks of sheep, their horses, their herds of pigs, and finally (and so most important) their cattle. The unit of all property (including bondswomen) was a cow." Cattle were the measuring stick of worth and of value, though were not the medium of exchange as money.

The story of the Tain revolves around two supernatural bulls, Donn Cuailnge (the Brown) bull of Ulster and Finnbennach (the White-horned) bull of Connacht. It focuses around a cattle raid by the people of Connacht against the people of Ulster led by Queen Medb of Connacht against CuChulainn, hero of Ulster. The two bulls also wage battle with Donn Cuailgne being victorious over Finnbennach, though dying soon after.

The importance of the bull, and especially white bulls, is evident especially in Druidic practice. In the famous mistletoe cutting ceremony Pliny in his Natural History XVI, 95, records:

"Having made preparation for sacrifice and a banquet beneath the trees, they bring thither two white bulls, whose horns are bound then for the first time. Clad in a white robe, the priest ascends the tree and cuts the mistletoe with a golden sickle, and it is received by others in a white cloak. Then they kill the victims (i.e. the cattle), praying that God will render this gift of his propitious to those to whom he has granted it."

The bull was also used in divination. The practice of tarbh feis (bull feast or bull dream) was used to obtain illumination and also performed to determine the rightful king. In Ireland again a white bull was killed and one man would eat of his flesh and drink of the broth in which the bull was cooked. He would then lay down to sleep wrapped in the bull's hide. Four Druids would chant a spell of truth over him and the sleeping man would obtain a vision of the new king in his dreams.

In Scotland a person might know the answer to an important question about the future by wrapping himself in the

still warm hide of a freshly killed bull. He would then go into a trance wherein the answer would come to him in a vision.

The supernatural importance of the white cow is also not left unnoticed. The cow was the sacred animal to Bride and to her mother Bóann. ("She who has white cows" as translated by Celtic scholar Anne Ross.) Bóann was a goddess of sovereignty and as such was associated with cattle. Bride was protectoress of the flocks and harm would come to any that harmed her cattle. Bride was said to be fed from the milk of a white red-eared cow, which was her totem animal. In Celtic mythology white animals with red ears were considered supernatural or otherworldly. In artwork she was often shown to be accompanied by a cow.

Until at least the late 19th/early 20th century sending the cattle to summer pastures on Beltaine was still practiced. In Scotland it was known as "shieling" (àiridhean meaning the summer residences for herdsmen and cattle, also hills or pastures. E. Dwelly). Families of the crofter townland in Lewis in the Hebrides would gather the flocks, the cattle, horses, sheep, and goats together and spend the day driving them to the moorland. Small huts were set up for the women and small children who tended the herds. The men from the town would come up to visit and the young men would court the maidens. Andrew Carmichael, who collected many of the incantations, prayers, and rites of the Scottish people in his Carmina Gadelica, recorded this driving incantation that was sung to the flocks for protection, as they were lead to the summer pastures. It contains a mixture of both Christianity and pre-Christian-paganism.

An Saodachadh

Comhnadh Odhrain uidhir dhuibh,
Comhnadh Bhrighde Mhuime dhuibh,
Comhnadh Òighe Mhuire dhuibh
Am bugalach 's an cruadhlach,
Am bugalach 's an cruadhlach.

Cumail Chiarain dhuibhe dhuibh,
Cumail Bhrianain bhuidhe dhuibh,
Cumail Dhiarmaid dhuinne dhuibh
A' snodanadh nan cluanan,
A' snodanadh nan cluanan.

Tearmad Fhinn mhic Cumhail dhuibh,
Tearmad Charmaig chuimir dhuibh,
Tearmad Chuinn is Chumhaill dhuibh
O ghearrachu 's o ianlainn,
O ghearrachu 's o ianlainn.

Comaraig Chaluim Chille dhuibh,
Comaraig Mhaol Ma-Ruibhe dhuibh,
Comaraig Bhanachaig bhlighinn dhuibh
Dh'ur sireadh is dh'ur n-iarraidh,
Dh'ur sireadh is dh'ur n-iarraidh.

Cuartachadh Mhaol Odhrain dhuibh,
Cuartachadh Mhaol Òighe dhuibh,
Cuartachadh Mhaol Domhnaich dhuibh,
Dh'ur comhnadh is dh'ur cuallach,
Dh'ur comhnadh is dh'ur cuallach.

Sgiath righ na Féinne dhuibh,
Sgiath Righ na gréine dhuibh,
Sgiath Righ na reula dhuibh
An éigin is an cruaidhchas,
An éigin is an cruaidhchas.

Dinadh Righ na righ dhuibh,
Dinadh Ìosda Crisda dhuibh,
Dinadh Spiorad iocshlaint dhuibh
O dhiheirt is o dhuaireap,
O dhiheirt is o dhuaireap.

The Driving

The protection of Odhran the dun be yours,
The protection of Brigit the Nurse be yours,
The protection of Mary the Virgin be yours
In marshes and in rocky ground,
In marshes and in rocky ground.

The keeping of Ciaran the swart be yours,
The keeping of Brianan the yellow be yours,
The keeping of Diarmaid the brown be yours
A-sauntering the meadows,
A-sauntering the meadows,

The safeguard of Fionn son of Cumhall be yours,
The safeguard of Cormac the shapely be yours,
The safeguard of Conn and of Cumhall be yours
From wolf and from bird-flock,
From wolf and from bird-flock.

The sanctuary of Colum Cille be yours,
The sanctuary of Maol Ruibhe be yours,
The sanctuary of the milking maid be yours
To seek you and search for you,
To seek you and search for you.

The encircling of Maol Odhrain be yours,
The encircling of Maol Òighe be yours,
The encircling of Maol Domhnaich be yours
To protect you and to herd you,
To protect you and to herd you.

The shield of the king of the Fiann be yours,
The shield of the King of the sun be yours,
The shield of the King of the stars be yours
In jeopardy and distress,
In jeopardy and distress.

The sheltering of the King of kings be yours,
The sheltering of the Jesus Christ be yours,
The sheltering of the Spirit of healing be yours
From evil deed and quarrel,
From evil dog and red dog [wolf].

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

The big news is, of course, the 40th Reunion on Beltane weekend from May 2nd to May 4th, which will be discussed in a later article in this magazine. Merri will be stepping down after four years as Archdruid, a record, and being succeeded by Corwin Troost '05 and Steve Crimmins '04. The next issue of the Missal-Any will have an extensive description about how the events were celebrated. Contact Steve Crimmins (crimmins@carleton.edu) and Corwin Troost '05 (troostc@carleton.edu).

Akita Grove: News from Japan

Pat and Nozomi's baby, Taiyo, is doing well and treating his parents to endless nightly vigils to improve their Druidry. As Pat says, "The first eighteen years are the hardest."

Hemlock Splinters Grove: News from New York

Winter went out quietly last week, the temperature rose into the sixties, the trees began to bud- and we got hit with one of the worst ice storms in years. This must be why they call Nature a mother. Hemlock Splinters grove will celebrate Beltain on May 3rd with a May pole, bonfire, music fest and general revelry. Anyone in the area is welcome to attend, call 315-561-6387 for directions.

Love,
I.

Digitalis Grove: News from DC

Eric is moving in June to Boston; Mike is graduating from his Master's program in May, and will be able to devote more attention to a new job search and pursuing Druidry.

Dravidia Grove: News from Maryland

(The editor apologies for leaving out Dravidia Grove's News from the Spring Missal-Any, so this issue presents two season's sets of news.)

Hello all,

Well things are looking up here, the snow is melting and we are all getting ready for the first day of Spring. Also, have bought a rather decent telescope at a very good price and am enjoying a newfound look at the heavens. Will take a while to get used to the telescope, but should be quite proficient by the next letter. All is well here; we have a lot of snow recently and now a lot of flooding due to the melting.

Hopefully we won't experience the droughts we had last year...Have spent a lot of time classifying the text I have acquired and feel that I have only just barely gotten through the first 20 files. Not bad for a star... but uh oh, I have more than 400 files... ... AHHHHHHHHHH...Well you all should know that research is time consuming so back to it.

Just spent two weeks in Indiana visiting the kids, and got through about five more files. Had some great views with the telescope, Jupiter seems to be the best. Not much else going here, the weather is just starting to break here in Maryland, and it is time to start the herb garden.

Dolanimus

Bamboo Grove: News from Delaware

Spring has been rather timid this year—after a glorious day in the sun, it snowed the next day! Nevertheless this is the time for growth and renewal and as I sit here writing, there are squirrels racing about my balcony (three stories up!), waving their tails sassily each other as one or the other claims victory as "king of the hill," er, balcony. The robins, blue jays, and cardinals have made their appearances, along with the crows who braved the winter weather with their everlasting good humor and raucous laughter.

The Arch-Druid made it through the winter just fine--there's a nice spot on my desk that lets him/her bask in the soft sunlight during the day. All the Muses seem to be thriving and indulging in the good life.

Blessings to all in this time of growth and renewal!

~brightmirage~

Eurisko Grove: News from Virginia

we conducted a hiking ritual for ostara. our main harbinger of spring has been our turtle coming out of hibernation. the upcoming season of beltaine will be additionally hectic. we are moving from an apartment to a house. both jacquie & gwydion will be conduction workshops at the circle of the fold information area during the blue ridge pagan alliance beltaine festival in charlottesville va. gwydion will also be manning a both for PAAN (pagans against animal neglect) at the gathering of the tribes festival in isle of wight va. gwydion is continuing to offer informal classes on druidry thru the earth based religions group at langley air force base on alternate fridays. for ostara we also mulled white merlot with cloves, jasmine, rose & basil as a "waters-of-life" for the season. the tuatha de danann came from the north, and the clouds and mists that conceled them made it easy for them to land in ireland at beltain, the first day of may, unseen and unopposed by the firbolg.

MOCC—Muskogee/Mother Grove: News from Oklahoma

Eggs and wild Onions were the order of the day for our Ostara celebration. It's said around here that the only thing that's REAL Indian food is wild onions and eggs, and with all the Cherokees here locally, the "natives" were all asking us where we got OUR onions. Oddly enough, Native foods are becoming more scarce. You see, there have been a lot of non-traditional harvestings in recent years, with people ripping up the plants in huge clumps, even by Natives with precious little time to live life and harvest at the same time. No more harvesting wild onions one by one, it seems, which is the old way I was taught. No more leaving at least one out of ten plants to reproduce, which is also the way I was taught. I guess old Indian folkways are disappearing because of the modern rush. But at the same time, I guess that the rapid disappearance of possum grapes and persimmons and such are also the victims of "rush" and "more for me." So now, the wild onions are getting fewer--something we actually noticed about five years ago around the railroad right-of-ways around here--and the Natives are asking us, in effect, "Where did the wild onions go?" Another possibility, which lives side by side with this one, is that the younger Natives are just not learning how to identify the plants. You can't make the same foods your grandma did if you don't know what those plants look like, not even if they're growing in your own back yard. When we drummed in Spring, I don't know if we were welcoming the change of seasons as much as drumming a dirge for the change of spirit.

Oaken Circle Grove MOCC: News from Kentucky

The Oaken Circle Grove would like to announce a name change we will now be called The Oaken Circle. We are currently planning our Beltaine gathering scheduled for May 3, as the warmer weather picks up so has our activities; also the interest in the circle has once again started to grow. We have had several new inquiries and met with a few potential circle members.

Our Ostara gathering was a success, we had old friends among us as well as new, the children colored eggs and had a wonderful time.

I guess that about wraps it up. If you are interested in our circle please go to:

http://oaken_circle_grove.tripod.com/oakencirclegroveky

Have a Blessed Beltaine,

Sherry
Oaken Circle Founder

Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Budoedd Grove: News from Oregon

Order of the Mithril Star's next online Druidcraft 101 class begins June 21 and will last about 16 weeks. To enroll, send a blank email to:

druidcraft101@yahoogroups.com or enroll online at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft101 For more details, visit http://www.mithrilstar.org/d101.htm

The next Druidcraft 202 course (A Walk Through the ARDA) will begin June 21. This will be a revised class that will encompass the NEW improved ARDA and will take approximately 40 weeks! (Not for the feeble!) Once again, Norm Nelson and Michael Scharding will be joining us to share their unique perspectives. To enroll, send a blank email to druidcraft202@yahoogroups.com or enroll online at:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft202 For more details, visit http://www.mithrilstar.org/d202.htm

OMS is organizing a "Rogue Valley Druid Summit" where the leaders of all the Druid groups represented in Southern Oregon can meet and share concerns, methodology and simply fellowship. RDNA, ADF, Henge of Keltria, Tuatha d' Brighid and Sisters of Avalon all have representation here.

Sister Ceridwen is deeply involved in her beginning and intermediate Astrology classes. For info on upcoming classes (held online) go to:

http://www.mithrilstar.org/huntersmoon

OMS wishes to express our congratulations to the rest of RDNA on the celebration of 40 years of existence. Best wishes also to those making the pilgrimage to Carleton. May your journey be safe and may the Earth Mother grant you enlightenment and inspiration.

May you never thirst,

Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau, AD
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, OMS-RDNA

Nemeton Awenyddion, Llwyn of the White Dragon, Hills of Cohasset, CA

Things have been very exciting and busy in our Grove and college. I just finished another Intro Seekers Class and will be doing the initiations for three new members on Calon Mai/Beltain, that will be part of our ritual. We are holding our annual Beltain campout from May 3rd-4th, ritual, potluck feast, Awenyddion ring, and late night ritual where one new initiate will be chosen by the gods for the all night divinatory quest to Gwynfyd Knowledge, bringing us all the message of the omen they've seen by the next morning, this will be done in a short but intense ritual where we will chant an invocation for the calling of the new initiate to be reborn in Gwynfyd during the nights dream quest. We will chant while we pass around the bag of Welsh bannock cakes as the gods choose who gets the burnt one. This will be done in our stone ring Nemeton while the area remains charged after the seasonal ritual. If interested in attending please contact: jbeltain@pacbell.net

/|\ Our plans to buy clan land in Bangor pretty much dwindled down to nothing when the person who owns the land for sale flaked on us and changed her plans. I've had a strong feeling though that these Hills I live in now are keeping me here for something greater to happen, then some beautiful land came up for sale here just a few miles down the road--below snow level, and it looks like we have a good chance at manifesting it, and it would be enough for us to have a kindred village after all.

WssL,

Rhiannon

Poison Oak Grove: News from California

Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

What is that sound the trees make when there is no wind, there is no rain, naught but the stillness, perhaps the gentlest of breezes? I walked up to the grove site and beyond to the Orinda Highlands one Saturday evening to do the Dusk Salutations. Coming back down the hill I heard I heard what sounded like rain. But wait, I had just seen the first visible star and wished upon it. The sky was clear. What was making that sound?

I sat down on the trail to listen and to see if anything would drip on me. Perhaps it was sap falling from the Live Oak trees (quercus agrifolia), like it does from the sweet gum tree (liquidambar styraciflua)? No, nothing was falling. The sound was louder beneath the trees than it was in clearings, so I know it wasn't insects crawling amongst the leaves. Is this the sound of trees talking?

Members of Poison Oak Grove, including Penny the dog, sitting on the curb watching the Second Interfaith Pagan Pride Parade march down Telegraph Ave. in Berkeley on Sunday, April 13.

Bard of the Year

Contest Winner Announced!

Greetings,

We had a very lively Season of Sleep with several songs this year, which Mike tells me will be collected and published in the Green Book Volume 6 this summer.

The winner was Bright Mirage's "I Am" in Bardic Salvo #3 on Nov. 28th, 2002. Perhaps Mike and Pat should get award for sheer output, but my very favorite submission was naturally Mirage's. Her work was a powerful example of the questing spirit common in the Reform, and should strike a chord on the heartstrings of all the Druids. I am certain that she will make a capital poet someday, despite using only lower case.

As prize, everyone should call Bright Mirage, Bard of the Reform, XLI, until May 2004.

Well, you can stop pestering your inner Bard for the next six months, and just feed your soul on as much inspiration as can, and fatten that poet inside you for the long winter coming up next year. If anyone wishes to undertake the judging for the third Bardic Contest starting next Samhain 2003, then give me an email at ericpowers229@hotmail.com

—Cheers, Eric

-I am-

By BrightMirage
Original Poem
Spring 1999

a whirlwind spirit
dancing thru the flames
leaping into the clouds
touching the crystal rain
reaching for the sun
...
striving to belong
as the eagle on the wind
as the porpoise in the sea
as the tiger in the forest
...
seeking a higher light
a ray of hope
a purpose and meaning
in the madness of life
...
seeking a peace
that will soothe the pain
that lurks in my soul
behind the bright smile
and pretty eyes
...
seeking to fill
the void in my soul
that aches for love
with a love that will
reach beyond
the limits of Time
...
seeking true wisdom
tried and true
something to guide me

in the confusion of
the multitude of answers for sale
in this world
...
seeking to believe
in something higher than myself
to trust and believe
with all of my heart ...

The Hill of Three Oaks where many of the first services were held at Carleton.

40th Anniversary RDNA

Reunion News

Extensive Info, Maps and Travel Details:
http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/anniversary.html

Meals Note: Meals are less than $10, I believe for non-students. Attend Druid Meals for the last-minute corrections in schedule, due to weather. To find the right table, look for some kind of Druid Sigil mark on a paper sign posted at the table. A few "older" looking diners talking with students is also another give-away.

If you're really afraid of missing something, tag along behind Mike or someone else, "your Druid-Buddy," for the remainder of the day. Druid Buddies available on request by writing to mikerdna@hotmail.com

June reunion final plans will be posted in the Missal-Any Solstice issue, but posted May 15th on the web site.

Thursday, May 1st

- 7:00 pm-ish to 10:30 pm-ish Irish Pub Fun Dine or Drink with Druids and listen to Blues Music. Location: "The Contented Cow" Pub, next to Archer Hotel in an alley off of Division Street. Uncertain start due to arrivals from airport, be prepared to wait around. Wear a flower in your hair.
- Friday, May 2nd:
- 12 pm-12:50 pm Druid Lunch If you're already here, come by and meet us and hear the latest plans. Location: Dining and Language Facility (Next to Myers Hall.) After feeding, members will go off to Archives or the Arb, as below:
- From 1-5 pm Archives Activity Exhibition of Druid Archival collection, Collection of Historical Matters (flyers, diary notes, poems, stories, articles, essays, photos etc.), Personal Interviews with Archivist, general browsing of materials. Location: Carleton Archival office on the Lowest Floor in Gould Library. Tell us if you're interested in doing an interview (about 40min) or updating an old one. See Druid Archives site for the 1997 list of contents. We can have materials prepared for you reading, or just browse

when you arrive. Call the archives for any specific questions: 1-507-646-4270.

- Vaguely 1-5 pm Beltane Preparations Steve-o and a few others may be out in the Arb preparing materials for bonfires, sweatlodge and maypole. If aren't interested in working with paper, and you're a tough burly Druid who likes getting dirty and hauling wood, then contact crimmins@carleton.edu to make arrangements to help schlep stuff all afternoon. Location: Undetermined, but probably Druid's Den near the Hill of Three Oaks. Those who finish early can walk around in the Arb or take a nap, wake up in time for dinner!
- 5:30 pm-6:30 pm Druid Dinner. If you're already here, come by and meet us and catch up on the latest plans. Location: Dining and Language Facility. (Next to Myers Hall.)
- Around 7 pm to 1 am? Kitchen Fun Cooking, chatting and other preparations for May Day. Music will ensue, so bring musical instruments or songs that you wish to share. If you can remember the tune, they'll give it a try. Interfering overseers are welcome. Location: Probably Watson Hall basement lounge/kitchen. Non-students, try to be *on-time,* since someone will have to open the door for you to the dorm.
- Around 11 pm-12:30 am Sweatlodge. If the weather's good and the wood plentiful, some members may wish to join a traditional Carleton Sweatlodge (est. 1985) with its uncertain cultural origins. Be balanced. Clothing during sweat is optional, but many members will likely be skyclad, so be prepared, keep a diet free of difficult-to-digest foods (like meat and alcohol) before the one or two sweat sessions. Location: Druid's Den in the Upper Arb near Hill of Three Oaks. Contact crimmins@carleton.edu for more information on attending, or assisting preparations in the afternoon.

Saturday, May 3rd:

- 6AM "Maying." If you can manage to wake up. Go out collect flowers on your own, bring a close friend, and wash your face in the morning dew. Location: Wherever you want, individual activity. Perhaps walking by the Cannon River or tracing the labyrinth on Stewsie Island might be nice thing to do?
- Morning Arrival. Most visitors will probably arrive in morning; proceed to the Monument Hill at your own pace.
- Around 12:30 pm. 40th Anniversary Service. Led by oldest willingest Third Order member in the group along with current ArchDruids, with readings by anyone who feels inspired. Location: There is a likely conflict with the raucous Spring Concert being held at the Hill of 3 Oaks on Saturday. Instead, a 10 minute bagpipe led-procession from Monument Hill at 12:30 to Hill of Three Oaks, to Druid's Den, to Stone Circle. Thus paralleling the procession of chosen Druidical main sites from 1960s to the present. Rained Out Location: Nourse Main Lounge or Skinner Chapel.
- Around 1 pm. Festivities. Maypole dance, at least two marriages, more folk-dancing, a picnic (Bring own Food & Drink, enough for you and for a few others), silly games & contests, bring a 25' ribbon or string. Location: Stone Circle in Upper Arb Rained Out Location: Nourse Main Lounge or Skinner Chapel.
- 5:30 pm-6:30 pm Dinner. Location: Eat on your own, or go to Dining and Language Facility (by Myers) and catch up on the latest plans. Rumor: it may be closed due to Spring Concert, but we'll have to see.
- Around 8:15 pm Sun-set viewing. Quiet beautiful to watch. Location: Hill of Three Oaks. Moon will set at 10:48pm, so unless it is cloudy, it should be a dark night.
- 8:23 pm-2 am Bonfire. Evening bonfire and exchange of stories between new and old timers. Letters are read from those who couldn't attend (send one to mikerdna@hotmail.com) Location: Druid's Den near Hill of Three Oaks. Rained Out Location: Watson Hall basement lounge, again or Nourse Hall Lounge.
- Around 10 pm Vigilers Depart. Some vigils may occur, perhaps, let us help arrange it if you need to use an official fire-pit. Vigilers will leave with the Third who will be overseeing their vigil. Location Depart from Druid's Den
- Around 11:59 pm Midnight tour of Arb by torch, for the brave, showing all the mysteries. Or perhaps we'll do it in the pitch dark. (Sounds exciting, huh?) Location: Depart from Hill of Three Oaks.

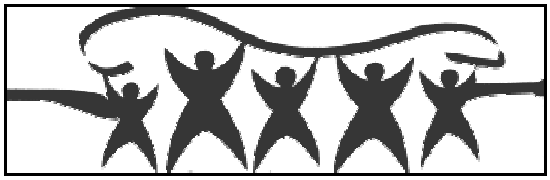
Sunday, May 4th:

- 6:00 am Sunrise Vigil Ordinations. For people entering the Third or Higher orders. Location: Hill of 3 Oaks or nearby Monument Hill, Vigilers' choice.
- Around 7:00AM Farewell Service Led by newest willingest Third Order members in the group. Location: Hill of 3 Oaks
- 7:30 am Druid Breakfast. Traditionally, vigilers pay for the breakfast of the Ordainer. (wink!) Location: Dining and Language Facility (next to Myers Hall).

ARDA 2 Update

By Mike, Digitalis Grove of DC

Mike completed editing the Main volume of ARDA and the volume of the Green Books and has sent off the formatted version for page layout at the Drynemetum Press office in Northfield. Currently, the third volume of Magazines is being assembled. Anticipated web-page posting of the first two volumes is mid-May followed by mailing out before June. Magazine volume should be posted and mailed by the solstice. So be patient, they will be sent out when they are sent out. An e-mailing will be issued as soon as the books become accessible for free on-line, and the full details will be summarized in the Summer Solstice issue of the Druid Missal-Any.



The Epistle of Eric

By Eric Powers, Digitalis Grove

Dear Mike,

I apologize for not being able to attend the Reunions at the Mecca of Druidism, but please read this at a service, if you think it of suitable quality. I was inspired, this morning when I was taking out my liturgical ribbons for a service, and noticed that an application for employment was being yet again delayed. The rest followed naturally.

On Beltane, the Reformed Druids have a custom of switching from white ribbons to red ribbons, for the six months until Samhain. My understanding of this custom goes back to

the origins of the RDNA, which was a protest against the unreflecting organizational tendencies of religion, and the tendency of authorities to categorize and vaunt past practices over current experience, by the liberal use of red-tape. Since the 1700s, bureaucrats had the habit of tying up legal documents with red string and whenever they needed to reread them, they had to be cut open again; which they were reluctant to do. As a result many things were never examined again.

In the Reform, it is the Third Order Druids who are most beset and bound by self-imposed restrictions, copious literature, and the encrustation of customs, many of them conflicting. If you notice, most Druids loosely hang their red ribbons around their neck, this symbolizes that they have not locked away the sources of their tradition, but keep them open to constant review. Indeed the constant questions by new Druids, keeps them on their toes, and their understanding timely. The ribbons are more than a decoration; they are a tool held in reserve. What you choose to bind, will be bound, for a while; and what you unbind, will be unbound, for a while; so speak with caution, but with a full heart. And don't forget, even the newest of Druids will wield the colorful ribbon of Beltane's maypole; wherein the beauty is in the motion of weaving and unweaving; not the unfocused ribbons in the beginning, nor the snug final pattern.

During the Season of Life, we also add the whiskey to the Waters of Life, and should remember that alcohol too is a poison, but one that in moderation may stimulate, assist in the expression of joy, and build communion; yet used too much, and it often brings sickness, despair and discord. And the basis of those Waters is simple water, the universal solvent and the supporting medium of life through our liturgical year.

The hand that is always clenched, or always open and flat, is considered deformed, but a healthy hand is one that opens and closes when bidden. We understand that some rudimentary organization is necessary to function, but we leave the options open and flexible to the current needs, rather than building a structure that will outlast our purpose. We cannot always be celebrating and carrying out duties, for we must also have periods of inactivity and contemplation. The Earth is a good example, in which the forces of life themselves have a period of rest during the winter, coming out leaner and hungry. And so we have the Season of Sleep, in which groggy Druids do not partake of the grog, but rather pull up their settled thoughts for review and purification. This is the meaning of the white ribbon, that of cleansing, crystallizing and reinvigoration, whilst the white snow blankets the earth, storing waters that will melt and flood the streams and fields in the spring.

These are my thoughts that I wanted to share. So I ask you on this 40th Anniversary to think about those ribbons when you put them on your necks, what do they mean to you? There are yet many more mysteries in them.

Yours in the Mother,

Eric Powers, O.D.A.L.
February 10, 2003

The Soul of Juliana Spring

By Irony Sade
Copyright November 2000

Irony, author of A Sociological Look at the RDNA at Carleton College, published in previous issues of this newsletter, offers this short story based on his experiences with the RDNA. It too will be offered in serial format, over the course of six issues (you have been forewarned!). Appropriately the story opens at Beltaine.

Chapter One

It was the eve of Beltain when I first heard of Juliana Spring. The Maypole was being danced for the sixth or seventh time while the tall piper and the boy on the fiddle churned out complementary versions of Kati Barri's Wedding. A crowd of brightly colored folks was clustered around the long table bearing our potluck feast and there were flowers everywhere, for it was the festival of spring.

I noticed the young man when he arrived, standing uncertainly on the edge of the clearing, too curious to pass by, too hesitant to join in the revels. He was short, sandy haired, and serious looking. I marked him as an undergraduate from the university nearby. A voluptuous lady with violets in her hair called to him to join us and eat. He came, smiling suddenly, and they were soon conversing freely. I smiled too, at the pleasure of a new face--then I forgot him, for it was time to crown the King and Queen of the May.

The lad stayed on, late into the fire-lit night, and sipped the honeyed wine as it was passed from hand to hand. People sang and told stories as the stars yawned back to life, and I watched the couples snuggle together for warmth, wondering idly how many would carry the festivities on into the privacy of the forest or bedroom. When my turn to speak came I rolled out the old yarn of the boy from Cork who fell in love with a harp he could not play. The longing tormented him so much that his mother offered her soul to the Druid if he would give her son the gift of music. The sandy haired lad watched me closely as I spoke, pitching my voice low to the slow crackle of the beech logs. It was an old and beautifully chilling tale that I told, not one entirely appropriate for Beltain. It may have snapped him out of the festive mood. He seemed distracted from then on, and kept peering at me through the flames as the night progressed. Eventually he rose for a mug of mead, and, upon returning, sat down to my left in the spot just vacated by a delightfully tipsy nymph.

Silence stretched between us with the expectant air of impending conversation. At last he turned to me, head to one side.

"Are you really a druid?" His voice was soft and low.

The focus of the group had shifted to the far side of the circle. I considered the flames and reviewed the dozen-odd debates for a pair of slow breaths. There were too many ways to respond to that question, but it had been a day of laughter, and I was in no mood for an argument.

"Yes," I replied.

The answer seemed to satisfy him. He too stared into the coals, rolling a warmed mug between his hands. Eyes always gravitate towards fire at night. I have always wondered why.

"This is silly," he remarked at length, still regarding the flames. "I am supposed to be a medical student. I don't even know why I showed up tonight." The lad hesitated, uncertain, and I took a sip of my own mead. Suddenly he was facing me.

"Can you really sell your soul?"

I glanced at him, startled.

"What I mean," he stammered, "is if someone wanted something they couldn't have so badly that they were willing to sell their soul to get it, could you give it to them?"

I continued peering. His shoulders squirmed.

"Like that story you just told," he trailed off. His eyes were still on me, embarrassed, but determined.

"Are you serious?"

He nodded, sucking his lip.

I stared away into the stars between the swaying leaves. Laughter from the lingerers drifted through the night.

"If someone you know, or you yourself, wanted something badly enough to sell their soul for it, then I would certainly be willing to talk to that person."

"It isn't me," he said quickly. "It's my girlfriend. She…She would probably rather tell you herself."

"Do you want me to talk to her?"

"Yes, I do."

"When?"

"As soon as possible."

I considered this. "Could she meet me at the Bubble and Squeak for lunch on Tuesday?"

"I'll tell her," said he, breathing heavily. "I can't believe I'm doing this. My name is Sam, by the way." He grinned. "I guess everyone knows who you are." I forced a dry chuckle.

"Pleased to meet you Sam. You should smile more often--you look old when you are serious."

Sam laughed and turned back to his wine. The cluster across the flames thundered their giggling way into a final chorus of The Rattlin' Bog, and I stared off into the stars above the treetops. They winked back, which was all they ever did, leaving me to guess at the meaning.

Chapter Two

The Bubble and Squeak was a friendly little cafe not far from the university. It had been established by a widowed British matron who had cheerfully wedged her way in between the clothing stores and simply out-baked the competition. She employed a small clan of students and mothers, kept university hours, and was willing to cook anything one cared to name. They really did serve bubble and squeak, if you could order it with a straight face.

Juliana Spring found me at my table by the wall. She greeted me by name and I stood, surprised to find her so tall.

"Miss Spring, hello."

"Sam told me all about you," she began as we sat, and I grinned, imagining that conversation.

"Are you hungry?"

Her pale face shook slightly.

"Not really."

Long fingers fidgeted with something at her neck as we sat, her eyes staring, jumping away when she saw me see them. I watched her hands and realized they held a crucifix.

I leaned forward, speaking gently. "I do not bite."

Juliana started and blushed faintly.

"It's not that. I just don't know how to begin a conversation like this. I feel like Faust!"

"Faust sold his soul to the Devil," I smiled. "I am just an ordinary man."

"Then how can you buy mine?"

I looked away to the budding maples outside.

"What did Sam tell you?"

"That you were a druid, that people seemed to trust you. He told me about the story you shared on Saturday and said he thought you might be for real." She was looking straight at me now, a question perched upon her eyebrows.

"Have you slept since he told you?"

Her dark hair rippled as she shook the head beneath it.

"Then you should definitely have some food in you."

We ordered and she told me about herself. She was twenty, a sophomore at the university, and had loved dancing as a child. Her father delivered sermons at the Revivalists Center a few hours south and wanted her to become either a teacher or a nurse. She relaxed as we ate, and a bit of color emerged in her heart shaped face.

"And what is it you want?" I asked when only her coffee was left. Juliana's body straightened and she looked me in the eye.

"I want to play the harp."

I blinked.

"Do you have one?"

"My grandmother gave me one when I left for college," she nodded. "Dad wasn't going to let me keep it, but I told him I was dating a medical student and taking English classes." Her eyes dropped. "He doesn't know we're living together."

"Have you got a teacher?"

"No. People have shown me different things, and I have all sorts of books, but to hire a teacher you need money. My father will only help pay for what he sees on the tuition forms, and I'm working half time already to cover the rest. I practice all the time though…"

"How much?"

"Whenever I can. I have to pass my classes, or Dad will have me home, and I have to work to pay for them, but I still play a bit every day."

"Then what do you need me for?"

"Because, you see. I don't just want to play. I…I want to be the best in the world."

On the walk out front students passed in threes and twos, giggling or serious, free and careless. Discoursing passionately on things they would forget completely a few months hence. They had all their options open, these people outside; there was not an irrevocable commitment amongst them. None of them were ready to sell their souls.

"Why?" I asked Juliana quietly.

"It's what I've always wanted."

"Since when? You are twenty."

"My whole adult life--since I was ten years old."

"Why?" I repeated softly. Her eyes were hazel and very clear.

"When I was ten I heard a record of harp music at somebody's birthday party, maybe in the adults' room, I don't know. I don't even know what piece was playing, only that it was the most beautiful thing I had ever heard. That night I started dreaming music. It was so lovely, and I knew it was harps. I thought I was listening in on Heaven. In the morning I could still remember some of it, but there is no way to describe music like that, and nothing I could do to reproduce it. I told my Dad, and he said it was a vision sent from God to urge me on to a good life. I told him I wanted to play like the angels I'd heard. He said that that was foolish arrogance and that I could be damned for even thinking such a thing.

"I tried to stop wanting it, to do what he told me, but the dreams just kept coming. Sometimes it's as if I don't even sleep, but just lie awake listening all night long. In church sometimes I would forget to pay attention and just sit remembering the music, smiling. I told my father once when he asked what was so funny. He got so mad he hit me. He doesn't understand."

"Do you still dream like that?"

"All the time. It's what keeps me sane, even if it is maddening. I used to think that all I needed was a harp and that then I could play like that. Then I got one at last and realized it was harder than I'd imagined. After six months I realized it would take my whole life to play the way I wanted to, even if I did nothing but practice. After a year and a half I figured even that wouldn't be long enough. I finally decided it was impossible, and that God was just torturing me with the dreams. I nearly killed myself; it hurt so much. Sam is the only reason I didn't. Then we heard about you, and I thought…I'm almost afraid to hope."

"Where was your mother in all this?" I asked when she fell silent.

"She left." Her face was masked. "When I was ten."

I digested that without expression.

"What made you think of selling your soul?"

"I thought of it a long time ago, actually, but I didn't really believe it was possible. I also had no idea how to do it. It's not exactly the sort of thing you advertise for."

My head was swimming. I glanced down at the tea in my hands. It was cold.

"Even if you did, there would be no quick fix. You would still have to practice, live in the world, pay bills, deal with your father."

Juliana tossed her head impatiently.

"I know…But I want this."

"It's your soul, girl! Can't you think of anything less drastic?"

"I came to you for help, sir. Are you going to help me, or are you going to try and talk me out of it?"

There was steel in those hazel eyes. I saw suddenly why it was Sam loved her.

"I just want you to know what you are getting into. Otherwise there can be no bargain."

"I know what I am getting into."

"Are you certain?"

She glared back defiantly. I swirled my cold tea.

"You, Juliana Spring, want to sell your soul to me in exchange for the chance to play the music you hear in your dreams, here on earth, alive, and to be the best harpist in the world?"

"Yes."

"Are you willing to do whatever I deem necessary to make that happen, however difficult or painful it happens to be, to live your life by my word so far as regards the playing of the harp?"

"I am."

"And do you undertake this obligation freely, without mental reservations, and in full knowledge of the consequences?"

She bit her lip.

"I do."

"Then give me your hands and open your mind to me. Close your eyes when you are ready."

I leaned forward and took her long white hands in mine. I wondered suddenly if anyone was listening. Her eyes closed, and I spoke a very few, swift, syllabant words. Her hands clenched in mine. Her eyes flickered open. Juliana Spring shuddered.

"Is that it?" She gasped.

"That is it."

Juliana shifted her eyes cautiously about the cafe her gaze darting to the diners, the window, the sky, the trees outside, and me. There was a peculiar intensity to her study, as though she had never seen a world like this before. She flexed her long boned fingers, fascinated by their supple movement.

"What happens now?" She asked me.

"Go back to Sam and get some sleep. Tomorrow morning at ten meet me in the park behind campus, on the bench beneath the bur oaks. Bring your harp." She nodded.

"What about…What about my soul?"

"Do not worry about it," I smiled gently. "That is my concern now." I stood, smiling down at her trembling eyes. There was a light in them that I had not observed before. I wondered what she was thinking.

"Lunch is on me," I said.

Celtic Kelp Customs

By Sam Peeples, Free-roaming Druid

The Celtic lands are known for possessing 300 shades of green vegetation over rolling hills and mountains, but we forget that most Celts lived less than 3 miles from the barren rocky shores of sea. Only that they weren't so barren once you went below the water. There was plenty of seaweed, which is not actually a plant. And it has played an important role in the history of the Celts.

Physical Description

Kelp is actually a brown algae, the king of the algae world, producing the largest collective body of single-celled organisms; which is why it is often confusedly referred to as a plant. Its scientific name is Phaeophyta. There are about one hundred kelp species in the world and kelp can live for up to fourteen years. New blades of kelp are produced every year. These plants are simply phenomenal growers. Harvesting kelp is like cutting grass--it grows back VERY quickly. In the right conditions, these plants can grow up to 18 to 24 inches a day! Bull kelp can grow 10-20 meters in as little time as four months. It grows to the surface on a "stipe," and branches out into "fronds" and is buoyed by an air bladder shaped like a light bulb, called pneumatocysts, and may form very dense surface canopies than can stop up to 99% of the surface light from reaching the base (called a "holdfast.")

During the spring and summer, new kelp blades grow towards the sunlight. The new blades are not occupied by colonists (snails, fish, etc.) yet. Later, when the blades become older, they will be literally covered with these animals. In late spring, microscopic larvae from the animals that inhabit kelp forests attach to the blades. In mid-summer, the turban snail population rises in the fronds. Small schools of fish and animals search for food in the Kelp forest. Through all of spring and summer, harbor seals and sea otters raise their young in the forests in California, and seals also hunt there in the Celtic lands also. In the fall, warm water from offshore flows into the forest. Kelp grows at a slower rate because nutrients in the water begin to be depleted. In the winter, seaweed weakens. Old blades decay and are torn from holdfasts and stipes. Storm waves tear away blades of the kelp, littering the ocean floor, where it decays, and becomes a source of food for bottom ocean dwellers; or it washes up on the shore to be collected by humans.

To reproduce, adult kelp releases spores. The spores swim to the ocean bottom and grow into tiny male and female plants which are called gameotophytes. The male releases its sperm to fertilize the female's eggs and the embryos grow into kelp plants also known as sporophytes. The sporophytes grow into adult kelp plants and these in turn release more spores. The cycle is completed in one year. Kelp grows well on rocky bottoms. The plants need a lot of light and enough water motion to keep nutrients flowing around the plant. They usually grow in water 20-80 feet deep but some forests grow at depths as great as 130 feet--sometimes even deeper. Kelp competes with small animals and plants for space on the ocean floor. When the kelp becomes older and taller, it competes with other kelp plants for sunlight. The deeper the ocean bottom, the farther the kelp columns grow from each other.

In Gàidhlig it is known as "dúlamán," and I included a song at the end of this article by that name. In Scotland there are five types of Kelp. Oarweed and Tangleweed grows higher on the shore, and is left on the rocks during low tide; resembling fingers about two meters long. Cuvie grows closer to the low-tide line and is rarely uncovered, growing to three meters. Dabberlocks is a long narrow kelp, but much thinner. Sugar Kelp is found in bays and sea loch, away from the waves. The stipe is short with long fronds. Furbellows is rare and not described.

Jellyfish float through the forest, and the thick canopy of the forest slows the flow of water. The most common inverterbrates found in Kelp are polychaetes, amphipods, lobsters, squids, octopi and ophiuroids. Outside the holdfasts; sponges, tunicates, anemones, cup corals and bryozoans are probably the most commonly occurring fixed animals within kelp forests. Birds associated with drift kelp, like phalaropes, feed on the associated plankton and larvae. The kelp wrack provides an important food source and habitat for kelp flies, maggots and small crustaceans on which several species of shore birds, starlings, common crows, black phoebes and warblers feed on it.

Physical Uses

In modern times, kelp is painfully associated with the Highland Clearances of the 18th and 19th Century when landlords and chiefs sold clan lands, introduced sheep grazing, and relocated villages to the shore-line into individual croft-homes. Kelp was one of the few high profit industries for the impoverished Highlanders. Whiskey production was only possible for those with sufficient capital. Kelp burning seems to have been introduced into some of the lowland parts of the Scottish coast early in the eighteenth century, but was not thoroughly established in the Highlands until about the year 1750. Kelp contain salts, potash, and chiefly soda, used in some of the manufactures, as soap, alum, glass, etc. It can be used as a substitute for barilla. The weeds are cut from the rocks with a

hook, or collected on the shore, and then dried on the beach. They are afterwards burnt in a kiln or in long trenches, constantly stirred with an iron rake until they reach a gooey state; and when they cool, the ashes become condensed into a dark blue or whitish-colored rocky mass. The manufacture was carried on in the summer during June, July, and August.

Kelp burning on the beaches of the Isle of Uist in Scotland around 1904.

After several famines in the 18th Century and the collapse of the Kelp market following the Napoleonic Wars, many of the remaining clansmen emigrated to America or Australia. The potato blight in 1835 and 1845 also devastated the remaining populations. WWI, in some parts of the Islands and Highlands, afforded occupation to considerable numbers of Highlanders. Iodine was extracted until the 1930s. Kelp was later harvested as a source of potash for making gunpowder during World War I (Frey 1971, Tarpley 1992) but currently the emphasis is on the production of algin, which serves as an emulsifying and binding agent in food (ketchup, ice cream, lipstick, beer) and pharmaceutical products (such as coatings to prevent infections) and food for use in abalone farms, and sometimes by humans due to its high vitamin and mineral contents. Oarweed can be boiled and served with pepper, butter and vinegar. Sugar kelp is rather sweet.

At first it was of little importance, but it gradually spread until it became universal over all the western islands and coasts, and the value of the article, from the causes above-mentioned, rose rapidly from about £1 per ton, when first introduced, to £20 per ton about the beginning of the nineteenth century. While the great value of the article lasted, rents rose enormously, and the income of proprietors of kelp-shore rose in proportion. Throughout the kelp season, people spent the whole day occupied in its manufacture, and the wages they received, while it added to their scanty income, and increased their comfort, it was small recompense in proportion to the time and labor it required, and a pittance compared to the market prices received by those to whom the kelp belonged. Moreover, while the kelp-fever lasted, the cultivation of the ground and other agricultural matters seem to have been neglected and extravagant habits were developed by the proprietors. The consequence was that when the duties were taken off the articles, for which kelp was used as a substitute in the earlier part of the 19th century, the price of that article gradually diminished till it could fetch, about 1830-40, only from £2 to £4 a ton. With this fall in price, the incomes of the proprietors of kelp-shores also plummeted, landing many of them in ruin and bankruptcy, and leading many to sell their estates.

The manufacture is still carried on in the West Highlands and Islands, and to a greater extent in Orkney, but although it once occupied a considerable number of hands, it is now of comparatively little importance, much more of the sea-weed being employed as manure, as shown in the Irish movie, "The Field" about a crofter struggling to gain possession of a small piece of land in the 1920s. He would walk down a steep cliff path every morning, several times, to carry back this natural fertilizer to produce "lazy beds", a type of soil on top of rocky ground to eke out an existence. While at the industries' peak, however, the manufacture of this article undoubtedly increased to a very large extent the revenue of the West Highlands, and gave employment to and kept at home a considerable number of people who otherwise might have emigrated. Indeed, it was partly on account of the need of many hands for kelp-making, that proprietors did all they could to prevent the emigration of those removed from the smaller farms, and coerced them to settle on the coast. Kelp was definitely a mixed blessing for the Highlanders.

People gathering kelp on the shore of an island to be shipped to the mainland.

Magical References

There are remarkably few references available on the subject.

Mythological References

Kelpies are famous in the Highlands, and can be detected in human form because they are unable to keep their hair from appearing like seaweed, thus their name. They are sometimes called Each-Uisge (Ech-ooshk-ya, meaning "water horse") or Fuath (Foo-ah), and they are also part of northern Irish Fairy lore, suggesting their migration from Scotland. A Cornish Kelpie is called a Shoney, a name derived from the Norse name Sjofn, a Goddess of the Sea. In Iceland they are called Nickers, which are similar to the Nix, the water sprites of Germany. In the Shetland and Orkney Islands they are called Nuggies. Another name for the kelpie on the Isle of Man is the glashtyn. The glashtyn is described as a goblin, which often rises out of the water and is similar in nature to the Manx brownie. Like all kelpies, the glashtyn appears as a horse--in this case, as a grey colt. It is often seen on the banks of lakes and appears only at night. In Ireland, a faerie known as the Phooka is also said to take the shape of a horse and induces children to mount him. He is then said to plunge with them over a precipice killing them. The Scottish kelpie is also attributed with similar feats. I wonder if there is a possible connection with the aquatic steeds of Manannan MacLir, Irish God of the oceans? Perhaps, the original story brought the heroes to the sub-aquatic kingdom of fairies. Another explanation is that a lot of children slipped and fell off of cliffs or drowned while horsing around near the water; and somebody made up a story to pass the blame.

These reputedly voracious faeries once densely populated the North Sea and all the lochs of Scotland. Deer and humans, who wandered too close to the lochs, were their favorite meals. In northern Scotland there are stories of Kelpies who appear as friendly seahorses and allow passing humans to mount them so that they may be drowned. Kelpies have limited shape-shifting powers and can appear as handsome young men to lure young

girls to them. They were probably the forerunners of our current belief in the Loch Ness monster. Kelpies may be captured by placing a bridle over their heads, though it was a difficult and dangerous task due to the beasts' strong and willful nature. However, if a person managed to accomplish this task, the kelpie was forced to serve the one who bridled it. Other tricks to unmask one were pouring boiled water on one, striking it with a holy item, or tricking it to walk over a crossroad. The general advice, don't accept rides from strange horses.

Kelpie Story

Loch Pytoulish is a beautiful little lake, partly in Kincardiue and partly in Rothiemurchus. It is 674 feet above the sea, the same height as Loch Dallas, behind Kinchirdy. Its environment is rich in memories of the past. To the west is the Callart, a rocky height, which till lately was densely covered with larch. It stands now cold and bare. At the east end, near the march, is Lag-nan-Cuimcanath, where Shaw of Rothiemurchus, the captain of the clan in the combat at the Inch of Perth, 1392, waylaid a party of Cummings and slew them. The lonely remains of their graves may still be seen in the hollow. There is an island in the loch, which sometimes appears when the water is low. It is evidently artificial, and probably was used as a place of defense. Perhaps it had a crannog (island fort) and it may have been connected with the Stone Fort on the hill above (Creag Chaisteal). On the east side of the loch there is a well-defined terrace, with the remains of hut-circles and cairns. It is about 30 feet higher than the lake, and makes, with the surface of the water, as striking a parallel as the famous Roads of Glenroy. This terrace, which many mistake for a road, and others at a higher level (700, 800, 900), may be traced for miles on both sides of the Spey. It was in Loch Pytoulish that Colonel Thornton killed the monster pike, of which he gives so glowing an account in his book. With such a setting, it is not surprising that the loch was said to have been of old one of the haunts of the Water Kelpie.

Once upon a time, the Baron's heir and some other boys were playing by the loch side. One of them cried out with surprise, "Look, the pretty pony!" They went to see. It was a palfrey, gaily caparisoned, with saddle and bridle bright with silver and gems, feeding quietly in the meadow. The boys tried to get hold of it, but could not. They were allowed to come close, and then, with a toss of its head, it was off. Thus frolicking, they drew nearer and nearer to the loch. At last they caught it by the bridle, when, with a wild shriek, it rushed for the water. The lads struggled hard, but their hands were glued fast to the bridle, and they could not loose them. But the Baron's son, who had his right hand free, drew his dirk and gashed at his fingers until he gained release. He alone escaped; the other's perished in the waters.

Kelp Burning Song

Gaelic Original

Dúlamán na binne buí, dúlamán Gaelach
Dúlamán na binne buí, dúlamán Gaelach
A'níon mhín ó, sin anall na fir shúirí
A mháithair mhín ó, cuir na roithléan go dtí mé

Tá ceann buí óir ar an dúlamán gaelach
Tá dhá chluais mhaol ar an dúlamán gaelach

Rachaimid go Doire leis an dúlamán gaelach
Is ceannóimid bróga daora ar an dúlamán gaelach

Bróga breaca dubha ar an dúlamán gaelach
Tá bearéad agus triús ar an dúlamán gaelach

Ó chuir mé scéala chuici, go gceannóinn cíor dí
'Sé an scéal a chuir sí chugam, go raibh a ceann cíortha

Góide a thug na tíre thú? arsa an dúlamán gaelach
Ag súirí le do níon, arsa an dúlamán maorach

Ó cha bhfaigheann tú mo 'níon, arsa an dúlamán gaelach
Bheul, fuadóidh mé liom í, arsa an dúlamán maorach

Dúlamán na binne buí, dúlamán Gaelach
Dúlamán na farraige, 's é b'fhearr a bhí in Éirinn

English Translation

Beautiful yellow dúlamán, Irish dúlamán
Beautiful yellow dúlamán, Irish dúlamán
O gentle daughter, here come the wooing men
O gentle mother, put the wheels in motion for me

There is a yellow-gold head on the Irish seaweed
There are two blunt ears on the Irish seaweed

I would go to Dore with the Irish seaweed
"I would buy expensive shoes," said the Irish seaweed

The Irish seaweed has beautiful black shoes
The Irish seaweed has a beret and trousers

I spent time telling her the story that I would buy a comb for her
The story she told back to me, that she is well-groomed

"What are you doing here?" says the Irish seaweed
"At courting with your daughter" says the stately seaweed

"Oh where are you taking my daughter?" says the Irish seaweed
"Well, I'd take her with me," says the stately seaweed

Beautiful yellow dúlamán, Irish dúlamán
Dúlamán from the sea, the best there is in Ireland

Kelp Links

http://www.celticsilverspiral.org/History/Legends/Legends.htm#KELPIE Kelpie Story

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/charms16.htm Long kelpie story.

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/working/part4.htm Kelt and Highland Clearnances.

http://www.rootsreview.co.uk/~agategs/clannad/dulaman.htm Clannad site with Gaelic Dúlamán song.

Insects Thrive on Genetically Modified 'Pest-Killing' Crops

By Geoffrey Lean, Environment Editor
30 March 2003
http://news.independent.co.uk/uk/environment/story.jsp?story=392044

Genetically modified crops specially engineered to kill pests in fact nourish them, startling new research has revealed.

The research--which has taken even the most ardent opponents of GM crops by surprise--radically undermines one of the key benefits claimed for them. And it suggests that they may be an even greater threat to organic farming than has been envisaged.

It strikes at the heart of one of the main lines of current genetic engineering in agriculture: breeding crops that come equipped with their own pesticide.

Biotech companies have added genes from a naturally occurring poison, Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt), which is widely used as a pesticide by organic farmers. The engineered crops have spread fast. The amount of land planted with them worldwide grew more than 25-fold--from four million acres in 1996 to well over 100 million acres (44.2m hectares) in 2000--and the global market is expected to be worth $25bn (£16bn) by 2010.

Drawbacks have already emerged, with pests becoming resistant to the toxin. Environmentalists say that resistance develops all the faster because the insects are constantly exposed to it in the plants, rather than being subject to occasional spraying.

But the new research--by scientists at Imperial College London and the Universidad Simon Rodrigues in Caracas, Venezuela--adds an alarming new twist, suggesting that pests can actually use the poison as a food and that the crops, rather than automatically controlling them, can actually help them to thrive.

They fed resistant larvae of the diamondback moth--an increasingly troublesome pest in the southern US and in the tropics--on normal cabbage leaves and ones that had been treated with a Bt toxin. The larvae eating the treated leaves grew much faster and bigger--with a 56 per cent higher growth rate.

They found that the larvae "are able to digest and utilize" the toxin and may be using it as a "supplementary food", adding that the presence of the poison "could have modified the nutritional balance in plants" for them.

And they conclude: "Bt transgenic crops could therefore have unanticipated nutritionally favourable effects, increasing the fitness of resistant populations."

Pete Riley, food campaigner for Friends of the Earth, said last night: "This is just another example of the unexpected harmful effects of GM crops.

"If Friends of the Earth had come up with the suggestion that crops engineered to kill pests could make them bigger and healthier instead, we would have been laughed out of court.

"It destroys the industry's entire case that insect-resistant GM crops can have anything to do with sustainable farming."

Patrick Holden, director of the Soil Association, said it showed that GM crops posed an even "worse threat to organic farming than had previously been imagined." Breeding resistance to the Bt insecticide sometimes used by organic farmers was bad enough, but problems would become even greater if pests treated it as "a high-protein diet."

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Editor's Note

There is a reason why fruits and vegetables developed the way they did. It is one thing to tend them while they are growing, but to mess with them genetically? The end result seems to be worse off than the original plant. It reminds me of various pills doctors of Western medicine prescribe that have side effects that require even more drugs to treat those. There must be a better way. Perhaps the organic farmers had it right in the first place, spray occasionally with an environmentally safe pesticide. Get the genetic engineers out of it. Don't mess with Mother Nature.

-Stacey Weinberger, Missal-Any Editor.

Events

The Second ACGA: An Comunn Gaidhealach–America 7th Annual Scottish Gaelic Immersion Weekend

June 6 - 9, 2003
University of Colorado at Boulder
Failte gu Boulder! (Welcome to Boulder!)

An Comunn Gaidhealach—America (ACGA) hosts the 7th Annual Immersion Weekend in beautiful Boulder, Colorado, June 6-9, 2003. The long weekend will feature some of the best Gaelic teachers available in North America. The University of Colorado at Boulder campus will be the setting for an inspirational and fun weekend of learning and sharing Scottish Gaelic.

The Immersion Weekend is an exceptional opportunity for learners and speakers of Scottish Gaelic to come together to celebrate the heritage and strive to learn the language and the culture of the Scottish Highlands and Islands. Classes will meet the needs of those who are just beginning their Gaelic study as well as others who are intermediate students or those approaching fluency. In four different levels of classes our internationally noted teachers will cover material for all levels of learners. The weekend will also provide extended opportunities for more proficient students and native speakers to gather and enjoy Gaelic conversation.

Extracurricular activities will include a social mixer to welcome everyone on Friday night, a Saturday night ceilidh and a Sunday evening outing to a popular restaurant for a "Celtic Gathering."

The campus of the University of Colorado at Boulder is located within walking distance of many shops, restaurants, art galleries and spots of cultural interest as well as walking and hiking trails.

Luchd Teagaisg (The Teachers)

Muriel Fisher is a native of Skye and currently lives in Arizona where she teaches Gaelic through her Tucson Gaelic Institute and at the University of Arizona. She is also a feature correspondent with BBC Alba and writes for Fios: The North Lewis Weekly. Muriel also teaches during the summers at Sabhal Mor Ostaig. This is Muriel's third year as a teacher at the Immersion Weekend.

Donnie McDonald is a native Gaelic speaker from the village of Skigersta on the Isle of Lewis. His inspiration comes from the Gaelic speaking community in which he was raised and his mother, a Gaelic schoolteacher. He has worked with learners and study groups for years. Donnie is a fine Gaelic singer and a member of the folk duo "Men of Worth." He currently lives in California.

Richard Hill is one of the founding and guiding members of Slighe nan Gaidheal, a flourishing Gaelic community in Seattle. He has been immersing himself in Gaelic since he was a child and has studied in Scotland and Nova Scotia. Rich enjoys teaching Gaelic classes and workshops and sharing Gaelic folklore. He is well known for his beautiful Gaelic songs. He is an inspiration to other Gaelic learners.

Jamie MacDonald teaches Gaelic in the Celtic Department at St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia. A native of North Carolina, he grew up steeped in Scottish culture. Jamie obtained his Ph. D in Scottish Studies from the University of Edinburgh in 1993. He is a lover of Gaelic singing and collecting Gaelic songs. Jamie has taught at numerous Immersion Weekends, workshops and seminars.

Cisean (Fees)

The Immersion Weekend will begin on Friday afternoon, June 6, 2003 and extend through early afternoon on Monday, June 9, 2003. The fee for the weekend of classes, workshops, special activities, coffee breaks and learning materials is $125 for ACGA members ($140 for non-members). Early registration is encouraged to avoid a late fee (accessed after May 19th).

Cuid Oidhche (Rooms and Meals)

Room and meals will be available at the University of Colorado at Boulder Conference Center. For those staying at the Conference Center, separate registration is required to reserve your room and meals. The Conference Center reservation form must be returned (by fax or post) to the Office of Conference Services. The charges for the weekend for food and lodging (Friday afternoon/dinner through Monday afternoon/lunch, excluding Sunday dinner) are: Single room - $251.70 plus tax Double room - $160.05 plus tax per person These fees do not need to be paid until check-in on Friday, June 6.

A printable version of the registration form is available on the ACGA website.

http://www.acgamerica.org

For local attendees who wish to take advantage of the meals at the Conference Center the charge is $75 for three meals a day beginning with Friday night dinner through Monday lunch, excluding Sunday night dinner. That fee will be collected at registration on Friday afternoon. Sorry, no partial meal plan is available.

Clar-Uine (Schedule)

Registration on Friday afternoon will be followed by dinner and a welcome mixer. Classes and workshops are scheduled during the day on Saturday and Sunday and in the morning on Monday. The ACGA Annual Meeting will be on Sunday afternoon. Everyone is encouraged to attend the meeting to learn more about ACGA and the many volunteer opportunities available to ACGA members.

Siubhal (Travel)

Travel information and other details will be provided upon receipt of registration and fees.
Order your tutor CD and booklet of Basic Gaelic Phrases for Beginners...only $10!! (see below)

REGISTRATION

Ainm (Name)_____
Seoladh (Address)_____
Fon (Phone)_____
E-meil (E-mail)_____
Ainm Gaidhlig (Gaelic Name)_____

Language Level

_____ New Beginner
_____ Experienced Beginner
_____ Intermediate (Basic Conversation)
_____ Progressed (Conversational)
_____ Advanced

Fees

Weekend Fees - ACGA member $125 _____
Weekend Fees - Non - members $140 _____
ACGA membership: New Members $35 _____
ACGA Membership: Renewing $25 _____
Late Fee - After May 19th $25 _____
Tutor CD and Booklet $10 _____
Additional Donation - TAX DEDUCTIBLE!! _____
TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

($25 is non-refundable in the event of cancellation)
Please make checks payable to ACGA and mail to:

ACGA Immersion Weekend
c/o Rudy Ramsey, Registrar
7644 E. Lakecliff Way
Parker, CO 80134-5933

Calendar

Astronomical Beltaine will occur when the Sun is at 15 degrees of Taurus on Monday, May 5, 2003 3:11 p.m., P.D.T. or alternately when the Sun is half way between the Spring Equinox and Summer Solstice at a declination of 16 degrees, 18 minutes at 12:03 p.m., P.D.T., also on May 5. Practice an old Druid custom by rising before dawn and collecting the dew of Beltaine morning. Washing your face in it or sprinkling it upon others will ensure health and happiness on those the water touches.

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Summer Solstice Y.R. XLI
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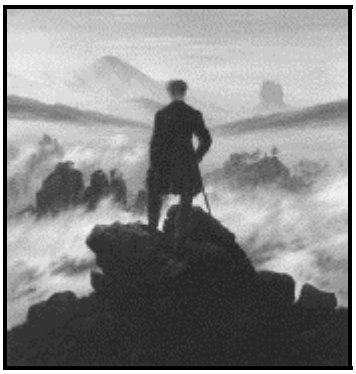
Summer Solstice Essay:

Stonehenge and Mugwort

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any
Summer Solstice, 1985.
By Emmon Bodfish,

Midsummer, Solstice, Greine-Stad, Sun-stop, today the Sun reaches its most northerly declination, at 2:44 A.M. Pacific Standard Time. This is the festival of the Goddess Danu, mother of the gods and men. Bonfires are lit on hilltops and the night is danced away. Tossing grain or coins into the air this day is said to help one's prosperity. This is the morning that the Sun would rise over the heel stone at Stone Henge, but for the fact that the Earth has processed far enough on its axis since 1500 B.C. to move the sunrise point out of line with the ancient markers. In the 18th and 19th centuries, English Druid groups held ceremonies there. But now the Henge is fenced off and protected, and accessible only with permission of the government. The huge numbers of tourists were eroding the soil around the monoliths and there was concern that the monument would be damaged. The smaller, less well-known stone circles, such as Callenish or the Maidens are still accessible to the public, as is Avesbury.



The Druids did NOT build Stone Henge. It antedates their arrival in Britain by many centuries. It was William Stuckeley, in 1717, who mis-located them there. He did some of the best antiquarian fieldwork of his day, but his later theorizing wildly outstripped his data. The mistake was an honest one, however, considering what was known in his day. He showed that the stones were not a memorial to King Arthur, nor a Roman temple, as had been previously supposed. He was the first to accept them as definitely pre-Roman. The only knowledge of pre-Roman Britain he had came from the Roman and Greek writers of the Classical period. They said that Britain was inhabited by Celts, whose priests were the Druids. So, if the stones were pre-Roman, Stuckeley reasoned, they must have been assembled by the Druids. He knew of no other candidates. We now feel that Stone Henge and the numerous other stone circles were set up by at least three different, pre-Celtic races, best described, I think, by Clannad's phrase, "the race no one knows." Clannad is an Irish music group who have produced several records, of which their latest, "Magical Ring" is, in our opinion, their best. (We highly recommend it.)

In many English, Irish and Welsh villages, bonfires are lit in the squares, or in Scotland, it is the day for a community picnic on the moors. Then, on mid-summer's night, the shortest night in the year, which will be the twenty third, (long, boring, astronomical explanation here omitted) single women would put a bouquet of Mugwort or St. John's Wort under their pillow, to bring dreams of their future husbands. If you try this, let us know what happens. We need this research.

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Well, of course the big news was the May Reunion. There is an article below with some more of the details, but let's just say it was quite a busy weekend, full of big events and small private moments. Nostalgia and lots of walking for everyone.

Corwin Troost '05 and Stephen Crimmin '04 were officially inducted ArchDruids of Carleton for the upcoming year by the departing Merri Weber (after a record four peaceful years as AD at Carleton), who is off to pursue graduate studies in Ann Arbor MI. The two ADs will be spending the summer at Carleton, attending the 40th Anniversary June Reunion (see Below) and working in the Archives (hopefully doing some proxy work for Mike on the side).

There is a need to boost recruitment numbers next fall, so let's all wish them luck.

Akita Grove: News from Japan

No news from Akita, except that little Taiyo is doing fine and Pat is doing some part-time trucking to cover the costs of the expanded family.

Acorn Proto-Grove: News from Newmarket Ontario, Canada

The 40 year sigil shirts and mugs will be available at our Proto-grove store site until the end of June if anyone is interested: http://www.cafeshops.com/madebydruids.

Proceeds go to support our tree plantings.

Ric Knight
http://groups.msn.com/OrderofDruidsMinor/

Bamboo Grove: News from Delaware

The Bamboo Grove has grown! We now have 4 mice, 3 snakes, 2 guinea pigs, and 1 cat. The Arch-Druid (bamboo) is flourishing, reaching out with beautiful, delicate green leaves. I am pleased to announce that the Scribe/Caretaker of the Grove (namely myself) and my significant other have just graduated from college! The Grove is moving to another location, still within DE, as both my significant other and myself have full-time jobs closer to PA. Life is good!

Brightest Blessings,

BrightMirage

The Hidden Wood Proto-Grove: News from Pennsylvania

We are planning a few nature hikes to show some of the younger members how to appreciate the Mother. That is if it ever stops raining here.

Sincerely,

Paul

Hemlock Splinters Grove: News from New York

Beltain was a great success at Hemlock Splinters Grove, despite or because of the week's worth of weather working it took to drive off the predicted downpour. Instead the sky was beautifully clear, which dropped the temperature into the thirties and made the bonfire a welcome gathering site. The maypole was almost thirty feet tall, due to a slight miscalculation. The poor dancers were reeling by the time they finished.

The berm pond is now entering its second spring and the diversity of wildlife has exploded. Muskrats, at least two species of water snakes, a new (unidentified) turtle, several ducks, a wood thrush and mocking bird have joined the community. We are hoping to create some small canoe trails into the inaccessible reaches of the marsh, but may have missed our window this year as nesting season has long since started.

Digitalis Grove: News from DC

Mike is in the last throes of publishing ARDA 2 (see below) and completing the second June Reunion preparations (see below).

Fortunately for his schedule, the Grove has shrunk again. Eric has gone to Boston, leaving the known human component of the grove as just Mike. There are rumors that Paul from FL and Mirage from DE and a few others may be relocating here over the summer, so a zestful grove may re-develop quite soon.

Mike graduated from the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University in DC on May 18th. The weather forecast was quite certain about a 50F rainy event for the ceremony on the Ellipse between the Washington Monument and the White House. Mike took things into his hand and tapped on the Washington Monument and asked George to intercede on behalf of his university with the sky gods (the monument is the tallest building in DC). Sure enough, the rain soon stopped, and a muddy ceremony was enjoyed by all. Afterwards, per tradition, Mike thanked the monument and threw his hat up against the side of the obelisk, reaching the 11th stone, which he counted as good luck.

They say that when you learn another language, you acquire another soul. I truly believe there is something to this, since you acquire another window and set of tools to express your mind. So far, I've studied English, French, Scots Gaelic, German, Japanese, and American Sign Language. As you know, I'm trying to enter the foreign service or pursue a career in Northeast Asian affairs. Well, I'm trying another, Korean at the neighbouring Korean Embassy starting June 9th. So perhaps a Korean translation of the Order of Worship may be in the works by the end of the year of instruction?

Eurisko Grove: News from Virginia

Eurisko Grove (RDNA Protogrove) regrets to announce the dissolution of our grove. We will be conducting a dismissal ritual on June 21.

Oaken Circle Grove: News from KY

The Oaken Circle has now disbanded. We wish the best to all out there.

Many blessings

Sherry
Former founder of Oaken Circle

Cattle Proto-Grove: News from Texas

Greetings all,

I don't know how many of you are new and how many of you even remember me...but I was the one shipped off to a military school and after much trouble ended up finding peace with nature there anyways. I am free at last, graduated from high school, finally. I am happy to announce the reopening of the Cattle Protogrove in Dallas, TX now that I have graduated. I am working on getting the website back up and will keep you posted till I do. Anyways, just wanted to let you all know I am free finally and wanted to let those who live in and around Dallas to go ahead and give me a holler at my email theevilsmi1ey@yahoo.com perhaps we could arrange something.

Walk in peace,

Joss Badger

Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove: News from Oregon

Thou art God/dess:

The Imbolq session of Druidcraft 101 ended about a week ago. Of the 100 who started the class, 23 finished and of those 15 joined the Reform and all 15 of those have completed the requirements for 2nd Order. This is the first time in the seven years, or 21 sessions of D101 that we've had such a large finish! Generally we get maybe 5-7 new members. This was a remarkable session.

The next online Druidcraft 101 class begins June 22 and will last about 16 weeks. To date there are already 92 students enrolled, but we have lots of room. To enroll, send a blank email to druidcraft101@yahoogroups.com or enroll online at:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft101. For more details, visit: http://www.mithrilstar.org/d101.htm

The next Druidcraft 202 course (A Walk Through the ARDA) will begin June 22. This will be a revised class that will encompass the NEW improved ARDA and will take approximately 40 weeks! (Not for the feeble!) Once again, Norm Nelson and Michael Scharding will be joining us to share their unique perspectives. To enroll, send a blank email to druidcraft202@yahoogroups.com or enroll online for it at:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft202. For more details, visit http://www.mithrilstar.org/d202.htm

Two new protogroves are forming. One in Talent Oregon, and the other near Atlanta Georgia. Both protogroves' plan to present a "LIVE" version of Druidcraft 101, and of Druidcraft 202.

Sister Ceridwen is deeply involved in her beginning and intermediate Astrology classes. For info on upcoming classes (held online)—or to get a chart and private consultation—go to:

http://www.mithrilstar.org/huntersmoon

Plans for Imladris—Our Druid Monastery and Pagan Conference/retreat center have progressed to a new level. The business plan is being revised and it has been decided that we will relocate to the Arcata CA area, and try to purchase 40-60 acres adjacent to Redwood National Park. This will happen probably within the next 18 months. See http://www.mithrilstar.org/imladris for more information. Once established, we intend to invite the entire RDNA out for a convention!

May you never thirst,

Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau, AD
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, OMS-RDNA

Nemeton Awenyddion: News from Cohasset, CA

Well, summer came after winter this year with hardly any spring at all. It rained straight for weeks, and then the sun came out to a high 97 degrees right away. Now were planning to try to make up for the Beltain campout that didn't work because of the wet weather, and have the campout at midsummer Alban Hefin on June 21st. The campout will be open to all who accept our Laws of Harmony.

We are planning a possible rebirth ritual for a new initiate during the campout, if she can make it out.

Nemeton Awenyddion, although affiliated with RDNA, is now independent and separate of the American Gwyddon order and no longer associated with their ways. We will continue to teach, work, and learn as we always have, in the gentle ways of peace.

Bendith,

Rhiannon

Duir De Danu Grove: News from California

Duir De Danu, the South Bay NRDNA Grove continues to hold Celtic Night on the second Saturday evening of each month. The projected meetings for the next two months are: June 14th and July 12th. The current topic for activities/discussion is The Ogham. We have been making Ogham Fews from popsicle sticks (did we get full of popsicles!), and the next step will be the making of reading cloths and bags to hold the fews. Notify Tegwedd at tezra@earthlink.net or the MaDagda at cinnabarjones@hotmail.com if you want to attend. If we haven't met you in person, we'd like to before the meeting.

Tegwedd ShadowDancer,
Chronicler & Co-ArchDruid of Duir De Danu Grove, NRDNA

Poison Oak Grove:

News from California

Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

Apologies from your editor for the lateness of the Midsummer Missal-Any. There is a saying that I can't remember in Latin, but it translates to something like "In life there is death, in death there is life." (If any of the readers know what this phrase is, please send it in to the Missal-Any at poppinjay@earthlink.net or the address at the end of the newsletter.)

The beginning of the Season of Life started for several members of Poison Oak Grove at the Mecca of Reform Druidism, Carleton College. We had the supreme pleasure of meeting founders Norm Nelson and David Frangquist (names we had only read about in the Chronicles!) and those who came thereafter: Dick Shelton, Katya, Mike Scharding, MerriBeth Weber, Stephen Crimmins, Corwin Troost, as well as former Berkeley and Live Oak Grove AD Joan Carruth. After a disappointing Friday night that was supposed to consist of camaraderie and music (the Carleton students took off leaving the old timers and visitors to do all the preparation for the Beltaine potluck), the Beltaine service on Saturday more than made up for it. We started at Monument Hill where we processed up to the monument and each drew a sigil upon it. We continued to the Hill of the Three Oaks and each traced the sigil carved in the boulder, then on to the Stone Circle where Norm lead the service, the consummate AD.

After your editor returned from the pilgrimage to Carleton she received word that her mother was failing and needed hospice care. A week and a half later she passed on to Tir nan Og. I was at least able to spend the last week with her by her bedside so she did not have to begin her journey alone. Brother Larry is now in a similar position and we wish his mother a peaceful passing as well.

New Grove!

Lark Proto-Grove, Tampa, FL

Lark Proto-Grove, Tampa, FL After a bit of thought, a visit to some of your RDNA info pages, and some discussion with friends and acquaintances, I have decided to respond to your prodding and announce the formation of a plain vanilla RDNA grove. I have found four other people who have expressed interest in belonging (who doesn't want to "belong" after all?). For the natural, outdoorsy sound of it and for the definitions listed below (clipped from Merriam-Webster), I'd like to have our little corner of Druidry known as the Lark Grove. We are located in and around Tampa, Florida. You can list me, Esther Searfoss, at my recently-created-specifically-for-this-purpose email address as the contact:

druidesss@hellokitty.com.
Main Entry: lark
Function: noun
Etymology: lark
Date: circa 1811: something done solely for fun or adventure

Main Entry: lark
Function: intransitive verb
Etymology: probably alteration of lake to frolic
Date: 1813: to engage in harmless fun or mischief--often used with about - lark·er noun

As to what we stand for (I wrote these down though I'm not sure the other members have ever articulated these sentiments but I'm 99% sure they share them):

- We like the RDNA's two basic tenets; Nature is Nature and that's Good.
- We recognize the importance of the search for spiritual understanding.
- We think fun and play are also important for personal development.
- We are friendly to all organized and unorganized religions and philosophies insofar as they espouse and exhibit harmlessness to humanity and Nature.
- Maybe some other stuff when we think of it. (dis)Organization and (ir)Responsibilities:
- The RDNA Lark Grove will meet in part or whole when the spirit of frolic inspires.
- The RDNA Lark Grove may engage in Nature-friendly activities publicly under that name because it's cool.
- As the initiating member, I take upon myself the Mantle of Least Irresponsibility (MLI). I dunno, maybe I'll forward the Missal-Any in full or part to the other members, direct them to the RDNA website, and sometimes instigate group activities or discussion.
- If, at any time, a member emerges who exhibits a lower level of irresponsibility than myself, I will relinquish the MLI in their favor with eloquent unconcern.

Many Thanks,

Esther

The Hill of Three Oaks where many of the first services were held at Carleton.

40th Anniversary RDNA Reunion News

Extensive Info, Maps and Travel Details:
http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/anniversary.html

If you could not make it in May, you could always choose to attend the Annual 2003 Carleton Alumni Reunion, which is on the Midsummer, conveniently enough. I suspect the June meeting will be potentially even larger in attendance than the May meeting, which had over 30 people. I couldn't decide which I wanted to participate in, so I chose to attend both (since other research commitments bring me to Northfield then, including the release of my third full-length movie). The schedule will firm up by May 17th, but some events will happen on all 4 days. Attend those that look interesting to you.

No reservations are needed (unless you're staying in the super-cheap dormitory facilities with cheap meals, so sign up with Alumni Affairs properly, and checkmark the "Druid Reunion" on the application form) so just show up and jump in. In general most Druid meals will be with the general alumni body, but at the Druid picnic on Saturday, everybody should BYOB, BYOF and BYOMI (musical instruments) so we can have a fun potluck, no matter how few (or many) arrive. Please somebody bring musical instruments and songs to share! Until you arrive, you won't know who's there, including yourself. Dress coolly (Avg. temp is 92F in day and 80F at night) in clothes that you don't mind getting dirty, and be prepared for mosquitoes. Sensible footwear recommended. The Solstice (Mid-Summer) activities are still loosely scheduled, and will be quite simple, and alternative activities & sites will occur in case of rain. Friends & family are welcome.

Our events will be listed in the standard schedule of Alumni activities (we may also attend related groups' activities like arb-walks and folk-dancing). A full list of events will be on a schedule when you show up. Ask for "The Druid Reunion Schedule." The difference for June will be: no current students, more Alumni events, more mosquitoes!, 95F weather, & cheap on-campus housing. Non-Alumni should carefully arrange lodging, & contact me if you are at all puzzled. If you're really strapped for funds, I do have FREE space in an extra reserved room in 1st Floor of Goodhue with 2 beds and room for 3 people on the floor. First called, first reserved. ;)

TWIG-ONOMETRY: A large walk-through sculpture made this spring at Carleton from non-native scrub trees taken out of the Arboretum's Oak Savannah and expected to be on display for about one year.

FINAL PLAN

Note, official Druid events & strongly encouraged events by other groups are Boldfaced and those events by other groups which we casually recommend, are in standard font. See the Alumni site, for the full schedule at www.carleton.edu/alumni Many non-Druid events haven't decided on a location yet, but will be listed on the Druid handout sheet and on official reunion schedules. Don't feel obliged to show up at everything, there are just too many events, but please pick a few that are interesting. You should drink plenty of fluids and rest often.

Thursday, June 19th:

- 3-10 pm Arrival Registration. You pick-up keys, purchase meal tickets, and there should be a Druid Reunion sign-up sheet set up at the regular table in Sayles-Hill Student Center. I won't arrive till '9pm, but we'll meet up on Friday.

- 3 pm Dorms Open. For those staying on-campus (which I of course recommend at the cheap prices (book them in March!), you will want to move in and get set up. I'd recommend staying in Goodhue (or Myers or Watson), unless you're a "3" or "8" graduating class, then you should stay with your class.
- 7-10 pm Irish Pub Exercise. Join other early arrivers for a drink and "one-arm lift-presses." Location: "The Contented Cow" in an alleyway around the side of the landmark Archer House Hotel on Division Street, close to the campus.

Friday, June 20th:

- 6:30 am '53 Bird Walk with Sue Sparling Grieff '53.
- 7-9:30 am Tee Times available at Northfield Golf Club (must register by May 15th).
- 7 am-7 pm Recreation Center open.
- 8 am-10 pm Arrival Registration. Location: Sayles-Hill.
- 9a m-10 am Campus Tour. Location: Uncertain.
- 8 am-5 pm Gould Library open.
- 10:15-11:15 am "Ian Barbour on Science and Religion" TV documentary and discussion with Ian Barbour, Winifred & Atherton Bean Prof. of Science, Technology & Society. Location: Uncertain
- 10:15-11:15 am "A Japanese Garden in Rural Minnesota: Ancient Rocks and Fresh Blossoms" by Bardwell Smith, (Prof. Asian Studies, and once advisor to Druids). Location: Japanese Garden behind Watson Hall
- Around 12 pm Druid Lunch & Planning Meeting. If you're already here, come by and meet us and we'll discuss how the upcoming events will happen. Location: Nourse Hall Food Tent area, look for "a sign."
- 1:30-3:30 pm "The Arb Today" walking tour with Arboretum Staff to hear and see the environmental details on the massive expansion of the Lower Arb. Location: Depart from front of Recreation Center.
- 1:45-2:25 pm Talk by Nancy Wilkie, Prof. of Classics, Anthropology & Archaeology. Location: Uncertain.
- 2 pm "Counter Culture" a film release by Lyn Elliot '93 (Asst. Prof. of Film, Penn State). Location: Boliou Hall.
- 3:30-5 pm Druid Archives Activity & Interviews Browsing of Druid Archival collection of historical materials (flyers, diary notes, poems, stories, articles, essays, photos etc.) maintained by the College. Tell us if you're interested in donating materials. Presentation of 2nd Edition of "A Reformed Druid Anthology" (ARDA 2). Location: Lowest Floor in Gould Library at Carleton Archives office.
- 3-4 pm Dance class with Mary Easter & Rae Schupack Nathan, Prof. of Dance & the performing arts. Location: Uncertain.
- 5:30-6:15 pm Shabbat Service. Location: Uncertain.
- 6:00pm Druid Dinner. Eat and talk. Location: Nourse Hall Food Tent area, look for a "sign."
- 8-9 pm Alcholics Anonymous (AA) meeting.
- 9-11 pm All Class Ice Cream. Party Location: Uncertain.
- 9:30 pm-12:30 am Druid Sweatlodges. For those interested, we'll be having three or four open sweat sessions in the popular Carleton Druid tradition dating from 1985, drawing on European and Native American inspiration, for purposes of purification and prayer. Be well hydrated, at peace, and avoid heavy meals at dinnertime. Bring a towel to dry-off, and loose bathing suit, if your modesty requires one. There are no gender-related restrictions on men or women. People with pertinent medical problems (cold, heart conditions) should exercise caution, but may choose to tend the fire or assist in other ways. Fire preparation, lodge building & sanctification of site will actually begin at 8:30 pm and sweats will begin around 10:30 pm or so. You're welcome to help the setup. If you arrive after a sweat has already started, just sit by the fire quietly until the men and women inside the lodge finish, and then you can join when the next one begins after a short rest. About 5-7 people can fit into the lodge at one time, and the moderate sauna-like conditions last 20-25 minutes. If you have led one before, and would like to learn how, contact mikerdna@hotmail.com to arrange details or to ask questions. Location: Druid's Den not too far from Hill of Three Oaks.
- 10:15 pm Fireworks. Location: Lyman Lakes.
- 10:30 pm Class '73 Bonfire. Location: Hill of 3 Oaks.
- 10:30 pm Class '98 Bonfire. Location: Mai Fete Island.
- 12:01 am Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix available at the Carleton Book Store! Buy it now!!!

Saturday, June 21st

- 7:30 am Breakfast. Location: On your own.
- 7:30 am Northfield Arts Guild Fun Run/Walk with Hal Higdon '53, Senior Writer, Runner's World. Register in advance by calling the Arts Guild at 507-645-8877
- 7:30-9:30 am "The Arb Today" walking tour with Arboretum staff. Location: uncertain.
- 8-9:30 "Art Walk" through the Upper Arb with nature illustrator Clare Walker Leslie '68. Location: Uncertain.
- 8-9:30 am Women's Forum. Location: Uncertain.
- 8:30-9:30 am "Out After Carleton" gathering of GLBT alumni, friends & family. Location: Uncertain.
- 8:45-11:45 am Carleton-made Druid Movie Premier. Okay, it's not really Druidic, but most of the movie's actors and cast were Druids, or their friends. There are two possible showings. If editing is finished in time: "Drake's 7" is a science fiction series comedy/tragedy based on the British series "Blake's 7" in the early 80s, and it was filmed entirely at Carleton College. Length is about 3 hours (10 mini-episodes) Produced between 1996-2002. Autographs are free. NOTE If the final editing of "Drake's 7" is not sufficiently completed in time, then we'll show our 2 hour 1995 movie "Gatorr: The Rabbit Warrior" which is a humorous & bizarre barbarian spoof of a young lad seeking his lost sister, fighting a band of rogues, and finding spiritual enlightenment from the Lepus Monastery in Uzbekistan. This was also filmed entirely on campus with a mostly Druidic crew and cast. Location: Boliou Art Hall's small movie theatre.
- 8:30-9:30 am Gathering for Multi-cultural alumni and friends. Location: Uncertain.
- 8-6 pm Arrival Registration. Location: Sayles Hill.
- 8:30-5 pm Gould Library open.
- 9:45 am Parade of Classes Location: Bald Spot.
- 10:30 am Alumni Convocation. Location: Skinner Chapel.
- 12:15 pm ON-TIME 40th Anniversary Service. Led by oldest willingest Third Order member in the group, with assistance & readings by any who feel inspired to contribute. Followed by a Group Photo. After all that, a fiery wheel will be rolled down the hill, in a sort of giant coin toss, to gauge the group's marital & financial fortunes. Location: Start with a procession from Monument Hill to Hill of Three Oaks (Service is held there at 12:20pm for about 40 minutes), afterwards we'll process in a disorderly manner to the enormous Stone Circle in the Upper Arb (see below) Rain Plan Location: If it's raining harder than a misting or gentle sprinkle, promptly go to the Skinner Chapel, otherwise we'll be tough and get a little damp. If we must use the Chapel, we'll have to be extra-quick to squeeze in between class photos there, so be on time!

- Around 1 pm-4 pm Druid Festivities. Sunpole dance, a picnic (bring food & drink & a hat for shade), a wedding, fortune telling, silly games & contests for a few hours. Location: Massive Stone Circle of Upper Arb. Special Directions: From the Hill of 3 Oaks go towards Druid's Den, step onto paved road, go down hill over the first bridge, up hill to a lookout facing Evans Hall, and go 30 yards further to where a dirt road branches off to the left. The Circle will be visible on the right after 80 yards of uphill walking. It's not on the official Arb Map yet, but quite close to the "Mary Okada Postage Stamp Prairie" Rain Plan location Meet at Goodhue's Concrete Bridge with desired level of raingear for a long walk in the rain lasting about 80 minutes through upper and lower arb.
- 1:30-2:30 pm "Life, Time and Emotional Intelligence" with Bill Tredwell '68 and Alan Hughes '68. Location: Uncertain.
- 1:30-3 pm "Life Changing Events" Class '83. Location: Uncertain.
- 2-3:30 pm "Ethics in Our Lives" discussion with John Levine '58, Peter Puchner '58, Neale Stearns '58
- 3:00-4:00 pm Open Rotblatt ("Softball"). Location: Recreation Center.
- 6:00 pm Dinner. Location: On your own, or at Nourse Hall Food Tent, look for "a sign" to indicate the eating-place.
- 8:30-11:30 pm All-Reunion Entertainment. "Folk Dancing!" Yes this is happening at the same time as the Druid Bonfire at night. Oh well! Go to one or attend both for a little. Location: Cowling Sports Center's Dancing Room. Join in, dances will be taught (mostly Eastern European, Israeli and British dances)
- 8:30-9:20 pm Sunset Gazing. Beautiful view and mosquitoes are provided at no extra cost. Bring friends and repellant. Location: Hill of Three Oaks.
- 9:00 pm Games: play board and card games with alums from all classes Location: Uncertain.
- 9:30 pm-2:16 am Druid Bonfire & Story Telling. Evening bonfire and rollicking exchange of stories between new and old timers. Bring copies of interesting jokes, poems and *short* stories you'd like to share with others. Some singing may break out, especially if you bring copies of your songs. Roasting food on the fire is welcome, if you can get close enough. Hopefully, the smoke will flush out the bugs. Letters will be read from those who couldn't attend (send one to mikerdna@hotmail.com) Location: Druid's Den, which is just south of the Hill of Three Oaks. Rain Plan Location Goodhue Super Lounge for a singing celebration, with songbooks of popular tunes (folk, Broadway, protest, pop, campfire, children) provided to pass a few hours 9:30pm-12:00am. Somebody please bring a guitar!!
- 10 pm Class '68 Bonfire, Hill of Three Oaks.
- 10 pm Class '93 Bonfire, Mai Fete.
- Around 10:30 pm Vigilers Depart. Some vigils may occur, perhaps, let us help arrange it if you need to use an official fire-pit. Vigilers will leave with the Third who will be overseeing their vigil. Location: Depart from Bonfire at Druid's Den Rain Plan Location: If Vigilers want to; they can still vigil in the rainy hot night. I know I will, being a glutton for punishment. An umbrella may be provided to those brave souls.
- 11:30 pm Night Arb Tour with the Druids. A mysterious guide will lead a 60-80 minute long Night tour of Upper Arb, and the closer part of the Lower Arb by flashlight, for the brave, showing some of the odder sites and sensations of the Arb. Listening to the night sounds and the crunch of your footsteps in the night breeze. Or perhaps we'll do it in the pitch dark, since the moon doesn't come out until 1:20am? (Sounds exciting, huh?) Location: Depart from Hill of Three Oaks, look for the tour-guide with a torch or flashlight and a big smile. Rain Plan Location: Same plan, just bring desired rain-gear and let a smile be your umbrella.

Sunday, June 22nd

- 5:30 am Sunrise Vigil Ordinations. For people who vigiled and are entering the Third or Higher orders. Location: Hill of 3 Oaks or nearby Monument Hill, Vigilers' choice.
- 6:30 am Druid Farewell Service. For everyone. Will be led by newest willingest Third Order members in the group. Location: Hill of 3 Oaks, rain or shine.
- 7:00 am Druid Breakfast. Traditionally, Vigilers pay for the breakfast or dinner of the Ordainer. (wink!) Location: Nourse Hall Food Tent?
- 8 am Tai Chi with Ken Sansome '68.
- 9-Noon Library and Book Store open.
- 10:30-2 pm Recreation Center open
- 10:30 am Alumni Memorial Chapel Service with Chaplain Carolyn Fure Slocum '82, Alumni Choir Director Lawrence Henry '76, Rev. David Mertz '78, and Rev. Carol Rexroad Cannon '78.
- NOON Check-out!

ARDA 2 Update

By Mike, Digitalis Grove of DC

At long last, the 2003 2nd Edition of the 1996 A Reformed Druid Anthology will be available after the solstice for free viewing on-line:

http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/. (Only the Main Volume and Green Book Volume are done so far.) Keep checking the site every few days thereafter, until it is posted there. The 1st Edition of ARDA will still be available on-line at the same site.

The 50 physically printed sets of the Main Volume and Green Book Volume should be mailed out this month, with the Magazine Volume coming out in August. Numerous logistical delays, a birth, graduation and Reunion planning delayed our team from the Mid-May goal. We hope you can be patient for a few more weeks.

The Main Volume may be available for a commercial on-line print-on-demand service sometime in the late fall of 2003 through http://www.amazon.com, so if you were too late to order the 1st Printing, and still want to print out your own copy, I'd recommend waiting until then and have it neatly bound and mailed to you at very little cost. Otherwise get a 4-inch thick D-ring binder and a few reams of paper, and some coffee, because it's a long print-job. Don't let your boss catch you doing it at work!

It's hard to believe that a group so intent on first-hand observation of Nature should spend so much time writing about it. We hope that you are pleased with the 1500 pages (2657 documents in all) in the three hefty volumes (eight pounds & 6 oz.) of this barely portable Archival collection. If what you want is not in there, go out and find it in our greatest library, i.e. Nature herself. As always, the opinions therein expressed are solely those of the authors at the time of writing them, and if we have made any errors, omissions or listed the wrong authors, please send those corrections to me at:

mikerdna@hotmail.com

It makes an excellent door prop and bookshelf filler, but for those interested in actually studying this mammoth collection, Sybok of the OMS is offering to moderate an online conference

to review the 20 Step self-study program, found in Part Zero of ARDA 2. This Druidism 202 class will take you through most of the collection in a systematic chronological order; reading related materials form the various sections scattered throughout the 3 volumes; and will likely linger from Summer Solstice to Winter Solstice, progressing in a leisurely manner. Other members will post questions, share thoughts, take a quiz, and quibble over related issues in this new conference. Norman Nelson '65 and myself Mike Scharding '93 will also be there to offer some historical notes and awful puns. The sign-up website is at:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft202/ or send a blank email to druidcraft202-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

With that said, I will take a break or two from archiving and then begin collecting materials for the 2008 ARDA 3, which will hopefully take less time to assemble.

The Forty-Year Long Protest March

By Norman Nelson, Founder

Imagine yourself and a couple friends organizing a protest march to correct what seems to be an injustice. A year later, the injustice is irrevocably ended. Forty years later, the march continues! What happened?

Since I find myself in exactly that situation, I was asked, "What do you think about the continuation of Druidism?" [These comments are mine only, but from conversations with some of the other founders, I believe they represent a consensus of opinion.]

Druids progressing from Monument Hill to the Hill of Three Oaks. Both sites were the primary locations of the original services in 1963. Participants shown from left: Wilke, Troost, Crimmins, Weinberger, Shelton, Frangquist, Carruth, Nelson

First, some forty-year-old history:

Back in the long-ago days of the early 1960s, several students at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, decided that the college's religious attendance requirement was actually doing a disservice to religion by forcing people to attend. (A graduation requirement, it said that, seven weeks out of each ten-week term, students must attend a religious service of some sort.) Most of us were religious, and we felt that forced religion turns people away from faith, rather than attracting them.

Most students at Carleton attended the weekly Congregational services at the college chapel, conducted by the chaplain. Some attended the downtown churches of their own denomination, and then filled out "chapel slips" to be handed in to the deans for credit. For those who belonged to churches or religions not represented in town (such as Jews), there were official campus organizations, which gave them credit for attending their meetings. The situation had actually become so ridiculous that even the atheists had a campus group that met for chapel credit!

To organize a protest against the requirement, we decided to start our own "religion" and apply for chapel credit. If we got it, we would show how ridiculous the requirement was, and if we didn't, we would protest and accuse the administration of hypocrisy, since we were attending religious services.

In the early spring of 1963, the Reformed Druids of North America was formed; we even drew up a constitution for ourselves as a campus organization. The official date of the founding was Beltane, 1963.

We were very careful to structure our "religion" so that it didn't require giving up any other faith; we didn't want to antagonize any one. (I've always called Druidism supplementary, not designed to supplant any other belief.)

Press, Carruth, Nelson, Frangquist, Shelton

After six or seven weeks of Saturday afternoon services, at the end of the school year in mid-June, several men and two or three women submitted chapel slips for the last Druid service of the school year. We were careful also to go for our "regular" chapel credit, just in case. (The Druids met on Saturday so as not to conflict with any Sunday services people wanted to attend.)

The slips for the women were accepted by the Dean of Women's office, while the Dean of Men's office rejected credit for the men.

After the rejection, one of the founders went to the Dean of Men's office and asked why we had been turned down. He took along a list of "strange" religious groups from the Minneapolis phone book, and asked, "Would this be acceptable? Would this? Would this?" Finally, with all his other reasons exhausted, the Dean said that we couldn't receive the credit because we weren't "an officially recognized campus organization;" we didn't have a faculty advisor.

The next fall, the speaker at one of the first (also mandatory) weekly all-student convocations was a new professor, who spoke about his anthropological work in the Aran Isles, where Druid practices still continued under a thin veneer of Roman Catholicism. Before he left the room that night, RDNA had a faculty advisor! We knew we had outfoxed the Dean!

That fall, we received chapel credit for our services, and again when we started at Beltane for the spring. We felt that we had definitely won our protest.

It gets even better: the day I graduated in 1964, the college Board of Trustees met and abolished the religious attendance requirement. I learned recently that one of those who most favored the repeal was the Episcopal bishop of Minnesota, who also argued as we had that the requirement was a disservice to religion. I've also heard that the college chaplain supported it, and that subsequently, enrollment in religion classes increased dramatically.

So, in June of 1964, there was suddenly no more need for protest, and therefore no more need for the Druids. Our victory

was total, and most of the founders fully expected our organization to disappear very quickly.

However, for some participants, RDNA had begun to take on a meaning of its own. (We joked that, for the students who couldn't stomach organized religion, our disorganized one was perfect!) In reality, through their meditations and study of their role in nature, they had begun to find a personal, meaningful realization we had never intended to impart. RDNA met their requirements for a faith that explained their lives. For them, it was no longer a joke. You can see this happening with David Frangquist, the author of "The Chronicles," as his writing changes from a parody of the Bible in the first chapters to a serious examination of what it meant to be a Druid.

Vaughn, Weinberger, Press, Carruth, Nelson, Shelton, Frangquist, Weber. Mike in the back causing trouble.

Now, forty years later, here we are. Not only is Druidism still here, it's thriving! RDNA continues in its original form for some, but numerous "offshoots" have also arisen, attracting different sorts of people to their different emphases. While I've not looked into them, I salute them for answering the religious needs of their participants.

Personally, I still believe that RDNA is a supplement to other faiths, as I think do the other founders. But I must respect those for whom it has become their exclusive faith. Given our origin, I'm a little bemused by that, but I think I can understand it.

And, more importantly, I think that Druidism, in its various manifestations, should and will continue. Even if it eventually becomes meaningful only to one person, it still deserves recognition for that. I guess we wrought far better than we thought we did when we started our little "protest march".

A Whole of Druidry

By Dana Felber, Reprinted with Permission

What is the "whole" when it comes to Druidry? Since Druidry is a spirituality that largely looks to the past for its practices and beliefs, this begs the question of, what was the whole of Druidry when there were actual Druids in the world? We tend to romanticize our ancestors, certain that they were not stumbling around in the dark as we are, wishing they were here to teach us their supposed certainties. But...is there such a thing as a One True Druidic Way to seek for? Did such a thing ever exist?

The Celts were a dominant force in Europe for the better part of a thousand years. As moderns in a culture that changes significantly from one decade to the next, we tend to telescope time when we think about the past and speak of Celtic culture and spirituality as though it were a neat, easily-defined package and that what was valid at the end when things were actually written down was bound to be already in place in the beginning. But no culture, especially a fragmented tribal one such as the Celts' is going to ever be consistent across the board, let alone over a period of a thousand years. Moreover, Celtic spirituality is rooted in venerating the spirits of place, which can differ drastically from location to location and even change over time. The nature of those spirits--temperament as it were--will also affect that particular tribe's outlook.

A lot of people today base their Druidry to a greater or lesser extent on the Irish materials that date to around 400 CE and later. It's very tempting to do so because there's a lot of it, more documentation than for any other place or time. And this is fine of course if this is what truly calls to an individual. But to exclusively focus on this material as what should define Druidry for everyone contains some inherent and flawed assumptions.

One assumption is that, coming as it does from the period when Druidry either died out or went underground, the Irish material represents all that was best in the whole history of Celtic culture, a synthesis and summary as it were. This in turn contains an underlying--erroneous--assumption of its own: that a culture or spirituality "progresses" in a linear fashion, i.e., that what comes first is "primitive" and what comes later is "advanced"...and therefore "better." But is this in fact the case? If it were, then it would logically follow that the spirituality we possess today is what is truly superior. Why on Earth are we looking back to a "primitive" past for anything worthwhile or valuable? Or...perhaps our more remote ancestors possessed wisdom we have in fact lost, but that could be regained, if we make the effort.

Another assumption is that one Celtic culture is interchangeable with another because "we're all Celts." Yet Irish culture is very distinctive from Welsh, Scottish, Manx, Breton or Cornish culture, as anyone familiar with them or living within them would explain. Indeed, those could be fighting words to actual individuals living within these cultures today and seeking to keep them from being overwhelmed and lost. It's also frustrating and ultimately offensive to the many people living outside the Isles on the European continent who are reaching back to their ancestors of the Celtic tribes of their region. Some of these people are working very hard to discover that culture, their sacred sites and local spirits, yet when they reach out beyond their locale to share or to learn from other groups, they are often met with indifference or dismissal or an attempt to assimilate them into a thinking they have no resonance with.

So...what is the whole of Druidry? That which, by rights, we should be giving our allegiance and devotion to even as we seek to uncover what it is out of the obscuring mists of the centuries? I think most people here would agree that no modern Druidic group has the exclusive corner on our wisdom. In my experience of the larger groups, the leaders themselves would agree with that. And Celtic culture itself was so steeped in intense individuality as to preclude such a thing. Yet one continues to run into this notion in the broader modern Druidic community. How does it come about?

A lot of people come to paganism and/or Druidry with the Judeo-Christian model of spirituality/religion so embedded within them that they can't conceive of something significantly different that can legitimately be called "spirituality." There must be deities, there must be hierarchy, of both pantheon and clergy, there must be set rituals, liturgies, practices, prayers, creeds and beliefs common to the whole group. So that's what they go looking for--and it's easy enough to find exactly that in certain segments of Druidry. But what about the rest? What about the people in the next newsgroup, next email list, next Druid organization? Are they wrong? Sometimes that's the reaction that occurs--we've all seen it. But that gets right back to attitudes found in Judeo-Christian thinking, the Protestant who tells the Catholic they're going to hell because they pray to saints, or the Jew who smiles smugly at the Gentile neighbors because he/she is certain of being one of "God's chosen people." Why do people who have—apparently--broken free of these molds want to go there? There's so much more to Druidry and Celtic culture and history than any one tribe's piece, or one person's interpretation of that piece. But it demands that we stretch ourselves, be willing to take some risks and be willing to think outside the box we've grown up with. Ultimately it's a quest for a Grail that will heal the very real Wasteland that's all around us. But we have to strive for what the warriors of the Red Branch and Arthur's Logres had: courage to step into the unknown. In this day and age, this kind of courage is less about facing a challenging enemy or dangers in a physical contest and more about opening our minds.

It's tough. We come to a new spirituality not knowing the ropes, uncertain of what we're doing. If someone takes a stance of authority and declares, "This is the way it is!" we often don't know enough in that neophyte stage to be able to judge whether or not the pronouncement is valid for us. Add to that that we want to belong, be a part of a group, a community. Accepted, validated even, in what is often a scary decision taken in defiance of friends and family. So even if these authoritative pronouncements strike us as not quite right, we tend to say, "Well, that's the way it is. The group needs me to go with them." Which's all right as long as there's an adequate comfort level. But that doesn't mean we should stop seeking for our personal Truths (and we all have them) or refuse to accept them when they lead us away from the group, however difficult that parting might be. Because putting acceptance in a group above that seeking flies in the face of the Druidic maxim "The Truth against the world."

I think it's no accident that the hero who goes on a quest into unknown and dangerous lands is revered in the Celtic cultures and held up as an ideal to emulate. Imagine someone like Cu Cuchulain or Gawain coming back home, eager to tell of his adventures and the strange things he saw and experienced--and being told to shut up because he might upset people. Or being called a liar by the elders because they've never seen or heard of what he's talking about, so of course it doesn't exist. The seeking of adventures was expected of Celtic warriors and was encouraged by the institution of set occasions when the tribe would gather to hear--and praise--what had befallen them. Perhaps it's because our ancestors didn't have the kind of access to information we do today--we tend to think we can know it all, or at least be able to look it up. They lived in a world full of unknowns and, if the tales are true, valued an eagerness to learn about what lay outside their sphere, an open-mindedness and acceptance of the unexpected that anyone would do well to emulate. The Druids were acknowledged the intellectuals of their day, and as modern intellectuals on a Druidic path, we too should be always striving for the open mind, and be alive to the spirit of inquiry that is part of the concept of awen/imbas. It's true, this may take us outside our comfortable notions of who and what we are, but to me this is what every story ever written about a quest is all about: leaving what is comfortable to take risks and achieve something. It's no accident that overcoming fear is an integral part of these stories. Fear is what keeps thinking narrow and what truly breeds differences, persecutions and wars, what alienates people and causes their voices to fall silent. Water needs to flow free to be clear and healthy; trapped, it stagnates, grows foul and breeds poisons.

So what is the Druidic "whole"? What else can it be but every person who comes to this path heeding a call of ancient voices with a sincere desire to learn and a willingness to be open to new ideas and teachings but who also has the conviction to hold to their own Truth against the world, however nascent and unarticulated it might be to begin with. They may come by unlikely or unpromising paths, enamoured of teachings they will later discard in quiet embarrassment, but the point is that they do come and they should be welcomed with encouragement rather than contempt for their ignorance. For the wisest person who ever reads these words will remember that he or she once knew no more than they.

Wandering climbers on a ridge of Ben Mor in Scotland.

40 Years Wandering in the Wilderness

By Mike Scharding, Pundit

I was watching an old movie, the other weekend about Moses and the Israelites' 40 years of wandering in the wilderness looking for their god. "Just like the druids." I thought smirking to myself, "without that Golden Calf bit and professional hair-styling."

As a frazzled Reunion coordinator, the May 1-4th weekend in Northfield Minnesota was appropriately one long trudge for me from one location to another, carrying stones (but not tablets), looking after food, fording rivers, and concentrating on the "trees rather than the forest." However, as I step back after a few weeks of rest and reflection, I can give you still only the briefest of overview of the busy schedule.

There have been forty revolutions of the earth around the sun since our little revolt began at Carleton College. Was year

40 much different from 39? I'm not sure, but it was an "XL"-ent year, I thought, and worthy of a big party, two in fact (next one is on the solstice). It was a sign of divine favor, perhaps, that the weather was very nice despite dire predictions of rain. To my surprise, the rain stopped a little after my arrival and began a little after our departure. Events were frequent, and relatively well attended, but many members took leave to sleep and walk around on their own instead of trying to go to all functions. With the leaves more or less out, and no mosquitoes, who could blame them.

Two nutty Druids in a sci-fi/druid wedding.

For the 40th memorial service, we processed out from Monument Hill where the first service was held in April 1963, and filed to the Hill of 3 Oaks to the sound of music from the nearby Spring Concert, then passed through the Druid Den encampment and finally walked through the woods to reach the massive Stone Circle. As the service began, Joan Carruth did an excellent cant of the Hymn of the Earth Mother, and then powerful gusts of wind nearly knocked members off their feet in response to the call to the four winds. Using one of the original glass chalices, Norman Nelson (2nd AD of Carleton) charged the waters, and Frangquist passed around the well-aged whiskey to both young and elder Druids present. Numerous speeches on the temporal nature of the original Druid movement, its evolving encouragement of deeper spiritual searching, and its tenacious continuation were made by Nelson, Frangquist and Shelton; with readings from Rumi, Idries Shah, Christian and Buddhist scriptures. A great feast, using the altar stone for the table, then ensued; followed by a Maypole dance, a wedding, a "don't-want-to-marry-you" service (pre-emptive divorce?), donut games, long chats and good fun.

There was also an archival session, at which members commented that the documents in storage are in better condition than themselves, and requested that their bodies be kept there for another forty years. The interview with 4 year Archdruid MerriBeth Weber '03, showed that things had not changed much over the years, and Druidism was a happy string of events, friendship, research and pursued interests. The college food was considered passable in the new dining facility, and several meals were attended, backgrounds exchanged, and plans decided. A Carleton-style Sweatlodge went well, despite the arrival of quizzical security officers during the set-up preparation; several members afterwards camped out in the area. The cooking and Bardic event was poorly planned and a definite flop, although good back-rubs were given out, but the Saturday bonfire was filled with jocular conversation, political debate, and fire gazing reflection; followed by a 90 minute walk in the pitch darkness of the extensive forest of the lower-Arb; listening to the sounds of the night. Ross and I passed the night in conversation around the campfire.

Monument Hill's Rogue's Gallery: Ross Wilke, Steve Crimmins, David Frangquist, Darren, Larry Press, Mike, Julie Ann, Stacey Weinberger, Richard Shelton, Norman Nelson.

In the morning, the vigiling Corwin Troost and Stephen Crimmins were ordained as Third Order Druids, and Corwin (after some hasty coaching) led the Farewell service and did remarkably well despite frosty fingers and having his notes blown away. Both were then installed as Archdruids after the farewell ceremony by the departing Merri Weber. Ross and Dan both entered the Second Order after appropriate reflection, on that chilly morning. A large contingent then went to breakfast and then left on the shuttle bus back to the airport.

This was the third big Druid Reunion on record (1976 & 1993 being the other two), and probably the largest. About 15 current students turned out (recruitment was low this year) and about 15 old timers showed up including alumni (among them; Norman Nelson '65, David Frangquist '66, Richard Shelton '71, Katya Luomala '78, Darren '91, Mike Scharding '93, Ehren Vaughn '02, Chris Middleton '02), some relations (Julie Doneaux, Ross Wilke) and a few NRDNA members on their first visit to Carleton (Larry Press AD of Live Oak Grove, Joan Carruth AD of Birch Grove, Stacey Weinberger AD of Poison Oak Grove) and assorted family members and pets. A definite "multitude" was in attendance over the weekend.

All in all, a very full experience, one that brought together people from many generations and distant locations to commemorate a common search for awareness through Nature.

Now to get ready for the June Reunion....

The Soul of Juliana Spring

By Irony Sade
Copyright November 2000

Here we bring you the second installment:

Chapter Three

And so it began. We met beneath the oaks the next day on a hillside overlooking fields and meadows creeping slowly back to wild. A brook danced its nearly inaudible way along the foot of the hill. Too far away to really be a presence the red brick

buildings of the university dorms glowed in the morning light. Juliana wore long tan pants that made her look even taller, and a dark light sweater against the chill of the wind. She looked willow thin against the trees, and strode along with the cased harp as if it weighed nothing. She sat down on the end of the bench. I folded my coat across my knees. For a long time there was silence.

"I love this place," she remarked at length. "Sam and I used to come out here on walks before things got so busy."

"What does Sam have to say about all this?"

"I told him everything. He said that he couldn't quite believe it had happened, but that he thought it was very brave of me. He also said it was me that he loved, soulless or not, and that he'd stay with me through everything."

Far away I watched the movement of students to and from the dorms, smaller than ants and twice as aimless.

"He is a remarkable man if he means that. I hope he follows through."

"What do we do now?"

"I do not know yet. Play for me."

The harp case looked homemade. Juliana unzipped it and set the leather carefully aside. The harp stood shoulder high as we sat before it, darkly gleaming chestnut, unadorned. She screwed in its legs and settled the instrument back into her arms.

"What should I play?" She asked, brushing the strings. It was already tuned.

"Anything you wish."

She brushed the chords again and bent her long dark hair. So softly it seemed that she was still warming up, Juliana began to play.

In the middle air before us a cloud of insects danced beside a small yew tree. From its branches darted forth a small brown bird, flickering and flitting into the swarm, matching its mindless, eye-defying movements with its own. It tumbled about immune to gravity with no discernible wing beats, but a twisting, fluttering, graceful confusion of feathers and open beak. Then it was back in the branches, panting, as the swarm danced on, unconsciously reduced. After three long breaths it darted forth again.

She was good. Better than I had been after six years practice, but then, I had never had her passion. There was a freedom and a flow to her movements already beyond anything I could muster. She would never be my student, I decided.

At the end of the second piece the harpist's hands floated away from the strings. A breeze stirred her hair and caught the last of the chords, stretching them out into an inhuman blaze of harmony that drifted softly down the wind. Far below us water shimmered.

The lady turned to me with her heart shaped face. I searched for, found my voice.

"How much did you say you practiced?"

"Maybe two hours a night."

"What about your classes?"

"I have one right now, actually." She gazed over at the dorms. "It doesn't seem that important anymore."

"Then why do you take them?"

"Force of habit. It keeps my father happy, and I'll need some sort of skills if I can't make it as a musician." I turned my face towards her.

"Oh."

She realized it now, I saw. There was no more 'if' in this adventure. We were playing all or nothing.

"Do you want to be in school?" I asked.

"I like the atmosphere, the people, but no, not really."

The bird was back in the air again.

"If you dropped your classes, kept your job, and stayed with Sam, would you have enough money to pay a teacher?"

She considered, strangely calm as the possibilities assailed her.

"I might."

"Good. I will try to find you one. Where do you work, by the way?"

"Down at the Symposium. I'm a waitress there."

"I shall have to visit sometime. Have you got a telephone?" She told me the number and I committed it to memory.

"Here is mine if you need anything. I will call within the week."

"What should I tell my father?"

"That is up to you." I replied, smiling. "And make that six hours a night." I turned to go. She stopped me with my name.

"What's the other half of our bargain? You never said. What will happen afterwards?"

I waited, still as the rough skinned oaks. The wind brought a sheen to Juliana's eyes that almost looked like tears. Her lips began to form a question I had no way to answer. I spoke to cut her off.

"Do not think about it. If you let it worry you the concern will keep you from concentrating completely on the harp. Without that commitment you will never become the best, and the whole deal will be pointless. I am not the Devil, Juliana. You have nothing to fear."

Her eyes were not wholly convinced, but I had said too much already. I left her sitting with the harp and fled to the shadow of the silent trees.

Chapter Four

That afternoon I made some calls. I was looking for the best teacher in an hour's radius. Not the best player - for any musician could get jealous of what Juliana Spring was going to become. We needed someone who could teach her all the things I could not, and who would be able to let her go when she moved beyond their skill. It took me longer than I had thought,

but at last I found a woman who would serve, and made a reservation at the Symposium.

The restaurant where Juliana worked was very much a creation of the town it served. Its clientele were students and faculty, townies out for a night's splurge, and the occasional interloper like myself. The Mediterranean food it prepared was better than most, and the staff was no slower than many. Juliana was a bit too striking to make the perfect waitress, too ethereal to draw the biggest tips. She saw me when I entered and pounced upon my table to claim it as her own.

I gave her the number of the instructor I had found. She very nearly jumped with glee.

"It's going to work," she bubbled over my order. "I talked to all my professors, and they say it's all right. Some of them think I'm nuts, of course. Sam says we are still on, too, so I'm living there, and the manager here let me up my hours to thirty, so I can probably even save a little!" She grinned proudly. "And I'm playing seven hours a day!"

"Bring my food!" I laughed. "People will think I am flirting with you!"

Chapter Five

Spring erupted into summer that year, as it always seems to manage. Beasts that had been wild and rutting a few months before settled down to raising families. The equinox came and went with its festivals of balance, and the stars slid slowly backwards through the heavens. The Hunter began to appear in the mornings again, his jeweled belt and longbow burning down the year. Leaves glowed, and in simpler climes people worked to gather in the harvest.

Juliana and I kept in touch throughout the changes. I also met quietly with her teacher now and again. Sam passed at the head of his class and began courting medical schools. Juliana lost her job, but found another closer to the city. Together they bought an old, tired station wagon and found a way to make both their schedules work. Juliana's teacher discovered her student had been fingering wrong all along, and showed her a new way of sitting that took the strain off her spine. Juliana said she was happier than she had ever been.

Three nights before Samhain someone tried to pound my door in. I came out from the kitchen and pulled it open. The woman the storm blew into my hall was a wreck, her face and hair plastered with tears and rain. She was nearly hysterical, tumbled words escaping in great gasps and stutters.

"I got back from work... and Sam was there... and the door was down... and he said he just came in... and started screaming... and threw Sam around... and was looking for me... and started throwing things... and... and..”

I barred the door and pulled her into the kitchen, still shaking. Juliana went into the softest chair and the tissue box went into her lap. The kettle was still smoldering quietly to itself. I grabbed it and a box from the high shelf.

"Tea." I told her. "Drink."

She grasped clumsily at the deep mug, her lungs still sobbing. I waited until she managed to take a full sip without slurping.

"Who?" I asked her. She stared at me blankly.

"Who threw Sam around?"

"My father...He found out I wasn't taking classes and discovered where we were living somehow. He tore the door down looking for me. When Sam told him I wasn't there he just went wild. He smashed everything he could find and kept roaring about me being a disobedient slut until our neighbors called the police. They were still there when I came home, and the landlord as well, but my father left before they could catch him." She paused for breath, clutching at the tea.

"He found out you were not taking classes?"

She nodded dumbly.

"Had you not told him?"

"I told him I'd gotten a scholarship so that he could stop paying tuition, and that I was working as a nursing intern over the summer. I gave him the number of a girlfriend who would say I lived there but was out at the moment if he called..."

She stared into her mug. I stared into her ear.

"It was stupid, I know. But I didn't want to face him."

"You lied," I breathed softly.

"So what? I sold my soul too. What damage is a lie going to do?"

"Selling your soul is just a sacrifice. A lie is a blow to your own integrity--that is much worse."

"You've got to be joking. Haven't you ever told a lie to avoid trouble?"

"No! When I do something as bad as lying you had better believe it is for something more important than just avoiding trouble!"

Juliana stared up at me, shocked out of her shock for the moment. My voice was louder than I had intended.

"You have a weird set of morals," said she.

You do not know the half of it, thought I.

I turned away from her, studying my dishes. In the reflection of a hanging pot I saw her take another sip from her mug. Her face took on an odd look.

"Why am I drinking mushrooms?"

"Muscle relaxant."

She nodded, still puzzled, then her lovely frame collapsed, crashing back into shock and despair. Her voice was almost too faint to hear.

"He smashed my harp."

There was a knock at the door.

I turned, palms tingling.

"Don't go," she whispered. Her eyes were very large.

Chapter Six

I walked through the hall to the door's heavy oak panels and laid my long left hand upon them.

The young man who stood there was big, but not tall. He wore a checkered mackinaw and a tattered blue cap. There was a chaw of tobacco in his cheek, and he looked up at me with amusement and contempt in his grey-blue eyes. He touched his hat brim in the ritual of respect.

"I'm here for Miss Raskin," he drawled.

"Who?"

He grinned and spat tobacco.

"I followed her here. That's her car out front. Don't try to tell me she's not around."

"There is a Miss Spring here. I have never heard of a Miss Raskin."

He spat again on my clean stone porch.

"Spring's not her real name."

"Who are you?"

"I'm a friend of her father, Mr. Raskin. He told me to come and find his little girl." He smirked up at me. His smile showed oddly clean teeth beneath the brown slime.

"I know she's in there."

"Mr. Raskin is currently liable for housebreaking, assault, and destruction of property. Miss Spring is currently under my protection. Cross this threshold and you will be liable for trespassing, assault and attempted kidnapping."

The clipped words flowed from a well of controlled wrath.

The man on the porch took a half step backwards.

"Now. Did Mr. Raskin tell you to find his daughter, or to find her and bring her back?"

"He... He only said to find her, sir."

"Then you have done as he asked. Go tell him where she is, if you feel you have to." The visitor rolled his poison uncertainly between his cheeks.

"He's still going to want her back," he appended.

"Then we will speak to him in the morning. Goodnight, Tom. It would be best for you not to come here again."

I closed the door in his startled face and dropped the heavy beam across it. Juliana was sitting still and pale when I returned to the kitchen.

"Who was it?"

"Thomas Weedon from Willard's Landscaping, according to his hat. Do you know him?"

"He goes to father's church. I didn't think he'd do anything like this."

"Is your name Juliana Spring?"

"Juliana Spring Raskin. Spring was my mother's name. I've never much cared for the Raskin part."

My eyes searched the woman sitting in my favorite chair, wondering what else I did not know about her. I felt the sweat of adrenaline evaporating off my sides, the almost taste of blood along my tongue.

"What are we going to do now?" she asked.

The storm churned outside like the Wild Hunt in training. Beneath the wind I heard a car start up and leave.

"You and Sam are going to stay with me while we sort this out. Tomorrow morning you are going to talk with your father."

Bleach would only have darkened Juliana's face.

"Could I have some more mushrooms?"

Chapter Seven

The couple stayed for four nights. Sam and I packed up their apartment. It only took two trips; they owned very little beyond clothes and books. I collected the tangle of nylon and shattered walnut as Sam talked to the landlord. The harp was beyond repair.

"What are your plans?" I asked when Sam returned.

"We'll move somewhere else. There are a couple of schools that seemed excited about my coming. I did pretty well last year, and my medical requirements are all finished. I might try talking one of them into accepting me a year early. There is a seven-year MD/PhD program I was especially looking at. It can't hurt to apply anyway. Desperation must count for something"

"I'm more worried about Julie," he added after a pause. "That harp was her life. I don't know what she's going to do without it."

The day after the attack Juliana called her father. Their conversation was brief and private. She emerged from my study in tears. I held her as she wept and came as close as I ever have to hating someone I had never known. There was more grief in it than anger, really, but hate is such a simpler word.

"What did you tell him?"

"Everything. He doesn't understand."

"Everything?"

"Except where we are going and about our bargain. He figures I'm damned anyhow, so what's the difference? He said I'd end up just like Mother."

"What happened to her?"

"She was a dancer. She taught at some of the community centers, YWCA and places like that. She was very good, but it was always just a hobby. Then one day she got an offer to join a dance troupe and get paid for it. My parents fought about that for weeks. She felt she had only ever been a housewife and was entitled to at least try for her own career, and that even if it only lasted for the season it would be an adventure, so what was the harm in it? He argued that she would be abandoning her sacred duty as wife and mother. Making a charnel exhibition of her God given beauty, I think he called it. She said he had no right to talk like that, and that she was going to go off with them anyway.

"Then one day she did... I came home from school and she was just gone, no note or anything. Dad fumed about it for months. He still gets furious if anyone mentions her. I kept hoping she would come back, or write, but she never did." Juliana sniffed.

"Why couldn't she have taken me with her?"

She fell silent. I stayed with her there in the darkening room until Sam came home to my rescue.

To Be Continued...

Events

Witness the Summer Solstice at the Umass Sunwheel

SUNRISE @ 5:00 a.m.
& SUNSET @ 7:30 p.m.
SATURDAY & SUNDAY
JUNE 21 & 22, 2003

Members of the University community and the general public are invited to witness the passing of the seasons by joining Dr. Judith Young of the U.Mass. Dept. of Astronomy to watch the Sun rise and set over the tall standing stones in the UMass Sunwheel for the upcoming SUMMER SOLSTICE. Visitors for the sunrise viewing should arrive at 5:00 a.m., and visitors for the sunset viewing should arrive at 7:30 p.m. The sunrise and sunset events will be held on both Saturday and Sunday, June 21 and 22, 2003.

For those interested in learning about the sky, there will be a presentation, which will include the cause of the seasons, the Sun's path in the sky, the phases of the Moon, and the story of building the Sunwheel. Bring your questions, your curiosity, insect repellent, and be prepared for cool temperatures when the Sun is down. Visitors are also welcome to bring lawn chairs or blankets to sit on. A $3 donation is requested to help with the cost of stone pathworks and exhibit expansion, which are planned for the Sunwheel. Sunwheel T-shirts & sweatshirts will be available for purchase. Visitors are also welcome to bring lawn chairs or blankets to sit on.

At the time of the summer solstice, when the days are longest and the nights are shortest, the Sun rises and sets at its most northerly location, over the tallest stones in the Sunwheel. The word 'solstice' means standstill, and refers to the fact that at solstice, the Sun appears to rise and set in the same direction for over a week. Even though the instant when the Sun is most northerly is on June 21 in the afternoon, visitors will be able to see the Sun rising and setting over the summer solstice stones in the Sunwheel from June 17-26. The astronomical cause of the Sun's standstill is one of the topics that will be explained during the Sunwheel gatherings.

The UMass Sunwheel is located south of Alumni Stadium, just off Rocky Hill Road and across from the maze. The Sunwheel can be easily reached from the center of Amherst, following Amity St. to the west, on the right hand side of the road about 1/4 mile after crossing University Drive. In the event of rain, the events will be cancelled, and visitors are encouraged to visit the Sunwheel on their own.

For more information on the UMass Sunwheel, check out the web site at http://www.umass.edu/sunwheel

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The Stonehenge Alliance

News Release:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
TUESDAY 10 JUNE 2003.
NEW STONEHENGE ROAD WOULD BRING "MASSIVE DESTRUCTION" TO WORLD HERITAGE SITE

New plans by the Highways Agency (1) to upgrade the A303 trunk road near to Stonehenge would devastate an outstanding archaeological landscape of international importance (2) according to the Stonehenge Alliance, a group of environmental organizations opposed to the scheme (3).

If completed, the plan would sink the central 1.3-mile (2.1-km) section of the road into a tunnel bored beneath the UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS). But it would also involve bulldozing new junctions, slip roads, and a brand new four-lane dual carriageway across one third of the WHS causing massive destruction to the protected landscape.

The Stonehenge Alliance is not alone in criticizing the plan. UNESCO's official adviser on UK World Heritage Sites, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS-UK), has said it does not support the short (2.1 km) bored tunnel. The National Trust, which owns much of the land around Stonehenge, has asked the Highways Agency to explain why it will not consider longer tunnels [4].

Speaking for the Stonehenge Alliance, Dr. Kate Fielden said: "Stonehenge is not just the stone circle: it's a unique complex of interrelated monuments extending over a landscape of some 5,000 acres [5]. The Highways Agency's glossy before-and-after photos are highly misleading: they show nothing of the destruction on either side of the short tunnel; nor do they give any idea of the visual impact of its presence in such a special place. Even with the tunnel, the sound of traffic would still be heard at Stonehenge. We welcome efforts to secure the future of the World Heritage Site, but we fail to see how bulldozing a motorway through it would achieve that end. This hugely damaging and intrusive scheme would provoke an international outcry; the government must look at other alternatives."

Notes to editors:

1. A303 Stonehenge Improvement: Have Your Say On Detailed Plans, Highways Agency News Release 500/SWW/03, 29 May 2003, reissued 5 June 2003.

2. "The Stonehenge World Heritage Site is internationally recognized as an outstanding archaeological landscape. Inscription on the World Heritage List places Stonehenge, with Avebury and its associated sites, beside other World Heritage Sites of outstanding universal value such as the Pyramids in Egypt, the Taj Mahal in India and the Great Wall of China." Foreword to the Stonehenge World Heritage Site Management Plan, English Heritage, April 2000.

3. The Stonehenge Alliance is an informal alliance of organizations and individuals formed, under the Chairmanship of Lord Kennet, to oppose the Government's currently preferred road scheme for the upgrading of the A303 at Stonehenge and to put forward alternatives that are less damaging to archaeology and the environment. Stonehenge Alliance supporters include: Ancient Sacred Landscapes Network, The Council for the Protection of Rural England, Friends of the Earth, RESCUE: The British Archaeological Trust, The Pagan Federation, and Transport 2000.

4. ICOMOS-UK Press Release, 12 December 2002; National Trust Press Release, 10 December 2002.

5. "The boundary of the WHS encompasses over 2,000 hectares [5000 acres] of land containing a high density of both

buried and visible 'upstanding' archaeological sites and monuments... Much of the area surrounding the WHS is also of archaeological importance." Stonehenge World Heritage Site Management Plan, English Heritage, April 2000, section 2.1.8.

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THE STONEHENGE ALLIANCE
Position Statement June 2003

The Stonehenge Alliance is a group of organisations and individuals opposed to the Government's scheme for widening the A303 between Amesbury and Berwick Down, which proposes a 2.1km bored tunnel close to the Stones and 2.4km of above-ground dual carriageway within the Stonehenge World Heritage Site (WHS). This road scheme is part of a minimally consulted 'Stonehenge Master Plan' (now renamed 'The Stonehenge Project') and it coincides with the Government's plan to make the A303 into a 'strategic route' to the South West.

The Stonehenge Alliance supports the principles of the widely agreed Stonehenge Management Plan which recognises that the whole archaeological and spiritual landscape of the WHS is of outstanding international importance and should be conserved-not just that part nearest to the henge monument.

The Stonehenge Alliance also strongly supports the concerns raised by ICOMOS UK.*

These include: 'The proposal... does not go far enough in healing the scars in the Stonehenge landscape or in making it available for people to enjoy in peace and quiet';

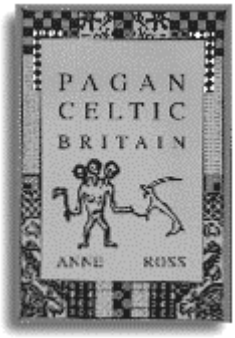
'The short tunnel would not allow reinstatement of key spatial features and associations within the WHS... which in visual as well as access terms would remain compromised';

'the Stonehenge landscape... should... not be a candidate for an above ground dual carriageway'; and 'The benefit analysis should include intangible as well as tangible benefits. This means considering the very high local, national and international 'existence' value of the Stonehenge landscape and the 'bequest' value put on it by those who believe it to be a key part of their national and international heritage'.

The Alliance calls for an holistic approach to sustainable management of the landscape and archaeology of the Stonehenge WHS and its visitors, in line with the aims of the WHS Management Plan and the requirements of the World Heritage Convention. This would involve putting the 'Stonehenge Project' on hold, giving priority to the Management Plan, and reconsidering proposals for the A303 in the light of ICOMOS UK's statements of concern.

* The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is the official adviser to UNESCO on cultural World Heritage Sites.

THE STONEHENGE ALLIANCE IS SUPPORTED BY: Ancient Sacred Landscapes Network; CPRE; Friends of the Earth; The Pagan Federation; RESCUE: The British Archaeological Trust; Transport 2000 and others



Resources

Pagan Celtic Britain by Anne Ross

(Trade Paperback; 35.00 Euro / 40.00 USD / 23.00 UK; 540 pages)

In this book the author employs archaeological and anthropological evidence, as well as folklore, to provide a broad insight into the early Celtic world. She begins by examining Celtic places of worship--the shrines and sanctuaries in which sacred objects were housed and from where they would be ritually displayed when various rites and sacrifices were conducted before the people. She describes the divine warriors with their aquatic, therapeutic and fertility connections. The importance of animals is also analyzed, especially birds, the gods' favourite form of creature for metamorphosis. The reader learns how Celtic places of worship changed with the arrival of the Romans when Romano-Celtic temples were erected and new deities and cults evolved. This book is gripping as the author leads the reader through the evidence from ritual pits and cult sites, votive wells, sacred precincts and mountains.

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Calendar

Midsummer Solstice, when the Sun enters Cancer, will occur on June 21, 2003 at 12:11 p.m. PDT. Midsummer services will be held on Sunday, June at Solar Noon, 1 p.m.

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Lughnasadh Essay:

Tales of Lugh

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any 1986
By Emmon Bodfish

Lughnasadh, festival of the funeral games of Lugh the Sun God, or, given by Lugh in honor of his father the Sun, depending on your tradition. It is the beginning of the Celtic harvest season, and is often called Festival of the First Fruits. Lugh, from the same root word as light and luminous, is one of the younger generations of gods in the Celtic pantheon. Like other Indo-European solar deities, his growth was rapid, being the size of a 10 year old when he was five, and gaining full manly size and skill by age 10 or 12. He is the multi-competent god, not specializing in one function, but capable in all. Even as a child he was expert at any craft or skill from his first attempt at it. As a boy of eight, according to Welsh legend, while his goddess-mother was measuring his foot for a shoe, he picked up a bow and arrow and shot a wren in the leg. This, the story goes on to explain, was the favorite demonstration shot of Celtdom's best crack archers. His mother was delighted, and Lugh went on to become a parent's dream come true. He was good at everything, polite, chivalrous, and an example of filial devotion.

Later, as a young man, when he applied for admittance to the company of the elder gods, he is quizzed by the gatekeeper as to what he can offer. "I am an excellent smith," he says. "We have Goibhne the smith," said the gatekeeper. "We have no need of that." And this continues to be the reply as he lists each one of his skills. The gods already have one of their number who is an expert in that domain. Finally, frustrated, the boy shouts, "But do you have anyone who can do them all?" The gatekeeper reflects that, no, they do not. And so Lugh is admitted.

Lugh is the patron of craftsmen, apprentices, and artists. In another tradition, he is also associated with money and the accumulation of wealth. This is his only functionalistic connection with a harvest festival. The Funeral Games of Lugh, whose title for this high day may also refer to the fact that by now the Sun is past his Zenith, and is declining again toward the South.

In the R.D.N.A. traditions, anyone who has a garden, grows anything, etc., should save their first picked produce of the summer season, and bring it or a portion of it to the Service, to be offered up in the altar fire, with hopes of prosperity in the years to come.

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Part I reported by Stephen Crimmins, Arch Druid

With Carleton out of session the Carleton Grove is taking a break from regular activities. The second part of the 40th Reunion was held around the solstice and, though very few of the people at the Beltane celebration were present, the second part of the reunion was also successful with a number of former Carleton students showing up for a few, or many of the activities along with two Carleton students, myself and Corwin, my fellow Archdruid. There was even a request that we sing The Ash Grove made by members of the class of '53, though we were sadly unable to comply.

Though the most of my fellow students have left, Northfield it self is certainly ripening...it's particularly nice to be out of session right now so that I can notice this... Though it means hot days and nights and mosquitoes, the summer has brought other gifts, including a ripening blackberry bush in the back yard. We started to pull the ripe ones off the other day and after a few minutes we had decided to turn our bounty into an after dinner treat of cobbler that night. We braved mosquitoes and thorns and found ourselves with a few cups of blackberries. Though not carried out with other druids, I think this was a thoroughly druidic activity.

Part II reported by Mike Scharding

It's summer time, and the June Reunion for the 40th Anniversary was a mixture of small successes amidst a baffling over-estimate of general turnout. Carleton had provided a mailing to 400 past members, and listed us prominently in the official schedule, yet only a handful showed up at any one event. The May Reunion had about 35 people over the weekend, as compared to June Reunion at 24 with a large overlap of 8 local people. I had been expecting about 50-60 people. That being said, the weather was all too sunny, 95F and not much wind. That might have had something to do with the reluctance to trudge about in the jungle-hot Arb.

Many people stopped by the lunch and dinner tables to comment on their memories of the RDNA or to inquire about Wicca. The planned movie had to be scrapped due to a missing tape. The archives rummage turned into a round-robin chat

session and photo-exchange from May Reunion. The sweatlodge went well with 6 attendees from the 1985-present period, with old-timer Brandon Schields and Alice Cascorbi leading one session. Unfortunately, the tarp and poles and broken shovel were thrown out by grounds crew two days later, after we forgot to take them down. Which was interpreted to mean it was time to get new materials.

The main service had nine attendees, and a rose was offered by one member, and Steven climbed up into an Oak tree and cut off a small twig and dropped into a large white sheet held by the members (ala Pliny the Elder). Mike also gave a severed head sacrifice [of cabbage], and then solemnly said, "Lettuce pray," and the winds politely answered. A fiery wooden wheel was rolled down the hill in the Scottish tradition to gauge the future, depending which direction it fell. The Druids were generally dissatisfied with the omens, after which Richard Shelton confided to me that you shouldn't state which side is good until it has already fallen down. I guess I still have much to learn about divination. After the service, we went to the Stone Circle for lunch, but due to the heat, it was quickly concluded and no games ensued.

The mysterious Midnight Torch-lit Tour of the Arb went well. As usual the wishing game was done on the field below the Hill of Three Oaks, wherein blindfolded members try to walk from one set of rugby goal, across the field, and through the other goal posts. Most members did loop-de-loops or amusingly wandered off into the cornfields. The toilet paper torch idea went reasonably well and was cheap amusement. If you soak the toilet paper roll on a stick in alcohol, be sure to use vodka or higher strength; but certainly keep it loosely wrapped to allow air in; and it is advised to have a light window screen wrapped around it to catch floating flaming fragments. On the way through the Arb's prairie section we were surprised to find a small herd of cows happily munching away as part of the restoration project. There hadn't been cows in the Arb since 1963, and so this was taken as a good sign of returning good times; especially for college pranksters. There were literally thousands of lightning bugs in the forest to match the star-spangled sky above us on that warm night.

There were no Vigilers and the farewell service on Sunday morning was attended only by two members. We thanked the spirits of the Arb for hosting us and asked them to look after the current students.

Akita Grove: News from Japan

Nozomi says that all is doing well and hopes to rejoin RDNA chats and society in December when she has more free time. Pat sends a new game called "Sigily" to the other RDNA members, and the full rules are listed in a separate article in this issue.

Birch Grove: News from New Hampshire

Birch Grove is meeting, when we can get a few minutes to rub together, in our beautiful woods. We are broke, not getting enough hours of work for the last three months and eating out a lot as we shuttle between the old property and the new, and stressed out. Our carpenter has almost finished cutting the remaining hemlock framing which he had to leave last Fall when the Winter came too early. He says we can start framing in a week or so. Phyllis & I are his crew. So we expect to be exhausted most of the Summer. We have a foundation, a septic system, and a well. We are still trying to sell the old house.

We love being up here. It is beautiful. The fireflies are so numerous it's mesmerizing to watch. The Milky Way stretches across the sky, the Moon sets in Maxfield Parrish blues. The cut wood we are hauling from the hayfield to the building site smells so sweet. We are stressed, with our awareness pulled in so many different directions, and worrying about money, and yet...We have no real doubt that we will be able to finish the house, at least in some form {maybe not the fanciest finishes or appliances} and be able to celebrate Yule in it. We have worked and planned and dreamed so many years for this, it's still hard to believe we are here and doing it.

So there's our harvest. We hope our Autumn is long enough for us to enjoy what we are reaping for years and years to come. We have so much to learn & to do & to build. Being Human we often wish, of course, that we could have done all this years ago. But, like a garden, we grew in our own time & way, and this fruit, borne however late, is full & sweet.

Happy Autumn to all the Druids. We wish we could show all of this to all of you.

Bamboo Grove: News from Delaware

As Lughnasadh approaches, I have the sense that life has produced an especially bountiful harvest this year. After 6 1/2 long years, I've finally graduated college. I now have a beautiful condo to share with my significant other and assorted grove members (cat, guinea pigs, mice, snakes) and it overlooks a river, well, a river used by barges at times and industrial sites nearby, but a river nonetheless.

Lest you think my life is all berries and sunshine, there have been some thorns that have pricked my hand as I reached for the ripest fruits; the full time job I had lined up for after graduation, which I thought would be perfect for me, turned out to be something completely different from what I had imagined. I ended up leaving after a short time in order to find a different way to sustain myself financially and more importantly, to nourish my soul at the same time. So in this season of harvest, I hope to have a big plump job fall right into my gathering basket!

To me the harvest means that it is time to look for the fruits of my labor (be it physical, spiritual, etc.), to look back on a season of growth and hard work, to reflect on what could be changed for the better next time around, and a time to be thankful for what I have been given (even if it meant getting a hard lesson or two). It is a time of things winding down, a waning moon, sitting on the porch and reminiscing about the past year, a pause in the frantic rush of life, and a time to sit down to a full table filled with the bountiful harvest of the Earth Mother.

May you all have a bountiful harvest,

BrightMirage

Digitalis Grove: News from DC

Mike is looking for new grove members interested in chatting or meeting in the D.C. metro region, so write to mikerdna@hotmail.com.

In his spare time, Mike is looking for a new job with an international relations aspect, studying introductory Korean (to expand from Japanese specialty to North East Asian affairs), continuing to train a guide-dog puppy, and moving to a new house. No rest for the weary, I suppose.

As for the ever-extending deadline for ARDA 2 publication, it is sad to say, the main volume won't be ready until mid August (at best), with the Green Books and Magazines undergoing a second close review by Mike and Stacey respectively. Be sure, when the internet version does come out,

you'll hear quickly on the conference; but in the meantime be patient.

Dravidia Grove: News from Maryland

Hello all,

Weather is hot, rainy, hot, rainy, feeling like a yo-yo here. All is well except the adjustment to the local bullfrogs that have moved in under the back of the house, and the 2 billion ants that seem to be everywhere, have started my college courses and am quite busy due to work, college, family and all that.

Have spent a lot of time observing the stars when they are out doing some of the editing for the 400 and some files that everyone wants a copy of. Have added a friend to help with the editing and have added about 7 new books to my physical library, most of which are by Cunningham. When to find time to read them hmmm...

Well that is all...

Dolanimus

MOCC—Muskogee/Mother Grove: News from Oklahoma

In cooperation with the Muskogee Public Library, MOCC: Muskogee/Mother Grove's Bardic College put on a Bardic Circle in June. It was announced on Witchvox and in the Muskogee Daily Phoenix. Five people showed up, and we had selections from Cherokee mythology, 1950s-60s popular music and even a "rabbit-jumped-into-the-hole" story. For those of you unfamiliar with the "rabbit-jumped-into-the-hole" genre, it appears to be invented by Rebecca Jean Saunders and is carried on by her stepson Mark Sydney Harris. It begins with an anecdote, campfire story or urban myth type of setting, and then the protagonist is distracted by a moving color (white, brown, black, spotted or so forth). They begin following the color along by way of a merry chase that leads nowhere, then "rabbit-jumped-into-the-hole" The whole point of the story is, of course, that the rabbit jumped into the hole. We received more email than attendees at the meeting, so we assume there is enough curiosity about the Bardic Arts to warrant to warrant another Bardic circle.

In the MOCC Grove of the Three Rays, one of our online groves, there were a couple postings wondering about the lack of unity in the faith community. After posting my response, I spent some time wondering about unity in the M/M Grove. The song "Circles" says: "The greater the circle, the more the love grows..." M/M Grove learns this lesson every month. While some groves have problems with unity--even if they have lots of activities and a strong ritual base, our grove keeps getting this wonderfully eclectic bunch of folks. We freely admit that, direction wise, we may be different as day and night, but grove-wise we're definitely a community.

Being a community has meant a lot of things for us. I'd like to share a few of them with my colleagues. Not everyone can make meetings, even once in a while. Still, everyone who feels a part of it can identify with the grove. Our Rule may have a hierarchy, but we usually ignore it because our Grove has a heart. Plan for pliability. The Grove belongs to the Gods, not to a guru, and not to gossip. Like all relationships, a Grove takes work, communication and trust. Not everyone is at the same place spiritually...no two trees are identical either, but they seem to share the same dirt just fine. Be extended family for one another. Spend time on yourself. Wounds heal. Seeds happen. Hibernation is cool. Everyone accomplishes, everyone shares, everyone benefits.

No grove is without its problems, but you don't kill a tree just because it is growing in a different direction than the rest. Wild is healthy. Diversity contributes to the survival of the whole. It is okay to have scrub brush among the oaks. In the eyes of the Old Ones, there is neither high-class nor low-class, only kinfolk. Do not let the banner touch the ground...if one leader falls, have extra leadership to help take up the slack. Everyone is capable of being a leader; they only need the opportunity to understand that fact with hands-on experience.

Br. Myrddin A Maeglin
Archdruid, MOCC: Muskogee/Mother Grove

Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove: News from Oregon

Thou art God/dess:

The Sun God Lugh has been sending one heat wave after another to us here in the Rogue Valley, and we are doing our best to stay cool! Gardening and magickal workings are only done in the early morning, dusk, or late into the evening during this season! The first Rogue Valley Druid leadership summit was held at Sybok and Ceridwen's cabin in the Cascade foothills in early July. We all agreed to disagree, and not let our differences become barriers to networking. In anticipation of their relocation to the "Redwood Empire" Sybok & Ceridwen handed over the controls to the So. Oregon Pagan Network website and discussion group to Aigeann, lead Druid of the Rogue River ProtoGrove (ADF). Future meetings were discussed.

Ceridwen and Sybok plan on a fact-finding mission to Arcata CA later in August. We'll meet with members of the Sequoia Pagan Alliance (http://www.sequoiapagans.org) and with old friends from the original "Jefferson Index", as well as meet, greet, and hug our friends, the sequoia sempervirons.

The Midsummer session of Druidcraft 101 is well under way. We started this time with a record breaking 120 total. With Lesson 3 just sent out, we are down to a more reasonable 86. So far no new members have joined. But, "waiting is." The next online Druidcraft 101 class begins November 2nd. To enroll, send a blank email to druidcraft101@yahoogroups.com or enroll online at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft101 For more details, visit http://www.mithrilstar.org/d101.htm

Druidcraft 202 (A Walk Through the ARDA) began June 22. This is a revised class encompassing the NEW improved ARDA. Once again, Norm and Michael are with us sharing their unique perspectives, and they seem to be having fun doing it, although the class as a whole seems rather unfocused, therefore, most druidic! The next session begins November 30th. To enroll, send a blank email to druidcraft202@yahoogroups.com or enroll online at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft202 For more details, visit http://www.mithrilstar.org/d202.htm

Proto-Groves are now forming in Talent OR, New York City, Connecticut and Georgia. The Mother Grove will relocate from Grants Pass OR to Arcata, CA in the Spring of 2004.

Progress is being made in Ceridwen's Astrology for Pagans classes: on July 7, the Beginning class has graduated into the Intermediate sessions, and there will be an Advanced session soon for the other Intermediate class. A new Beginning class will start in November 1, 2003, to enroll, send a blank email to:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/astropagan101/

Several students have expressed an interest in becoming "Professional Astrologers" as well. Ceridwen has been putting

together a Certification program towards this end, as well as working on a "Pagan Studies" program which will include other classes besides Astrology, such as Numerology, Tarot, Shamanic Pathworking, and many others.

If you are interested in a private consultation about your Astrological chart, please visit her home page at: http://www.mithrilstar.org/huntersmoon/

OMS wishes all of you in the RDNA a most bountiful first harvest for Lughnasadh, and abundant blessings throughout the season!

May you never thirst,

Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau, AD
Ceridwen Seren-Ddaear, Clerk
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, OMS-RDNA

Poison Oak Grove: News from California

Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

The seven acres of native oak, bay, and shrub wilderness that belonged to long time member Emmon Bodfish, upon which our grove site is, has officially been preserved as open space. Emmon left the land in his will to the people of Orinda. After four years an agreement between the city, the Orinda Park and Recreation Foundation, neighbors, and the Muir Heritage Land Trust ensures that the open space remains an official wildlife sanctuary with public access. Rental income from his house and small cabin, which sit upon the land, will be used as an endowment for the park and to pay for its ongoing maintenance. Eventually, a portion of the revenue might fund parks and recreation activities citywide.

A dedication service was held on Tuesday, July 22, at the home of the president of the Orinda Highlands Association.

The community, who has known that the grove site existed since the early 80s when it was established, has graciously allowed us to meet upon the site and hold services. The only request they have made is no more fire in the altar for fire safety reasons. Your editor has worked hard to forge a relationship with the community leaders so that we might continue to use the site, and tend it as Emmon had. We continue to be grateful to the community and to Emmon's lawyer and executor Mr. Garrett Riegg for allowing us to be involved and to be able to use the land.

There is a memorial plaque now, set in a boulder covered with moss, alongside one of the hiking trails just off the driveway up to the house. On it is a poem written by Emmon in 1982 about the hill upon where his property resides, which he affectionately referred to as "Messeur Mountain."

The Mountain

From the thick grass
On the Mountain
I see this will be a
Rich year.
The last two
Were poor years.
And no amount of worry
Or effort of the will
Will make any difference.
I choose to pick and eat
This wild lettuce
And not that one.
How random
it is: (Death)
Without any connection
To the moral character
Of either herb.

NO BLAME, then
when Nature gathers me.
It is always cold
On the Mountain,
Not just this year.
Jagged scarps, forever fogged in.
Ferns in the dark gorges
Steep ravines
Unimaginably rugged...
I am afraid,
If I settle long
On Messeur Mountain,
I would not go back. [will]

Sigily, a Druidic Board Game

By Pat Haneke and Mike Scharding
(Refer to Board Graphic at End of Article)

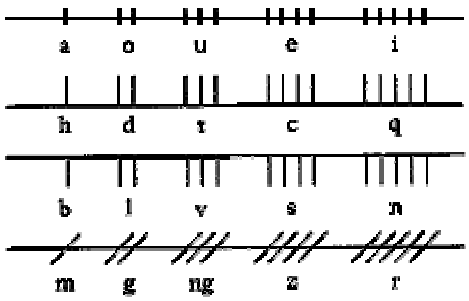
Sigily Background:

Sigily was invented by Pat Haneke and Mike Scharding in 2003. It is considered part of the Public Domain for free use. If you market it, please give half the profits to the Nature Conservancy charity. The original idea is based on 2000 year-old, but wildly popular, Korean New Year divination & gambling game called "Yut Nori". Pat suggested to Mike that it could be adapted for Druidic use and gave the basic additional rules and Celtic touches. The Druid Sigil was invented in 1963 by the Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA), and is used by ADF and Keltria also. It can be played any time of the year, but it is especially appropriate on Lughnasadh, famous for its summer horse racing and arts & crafts. There are many rules, but after playing the simple version first, the advanced rules will introduce more elements of strategy.

Game Summary:

King Connor wishes to divine the future of his new reign at Tara, the capitol of Ancient Ireland. To gauge the fates, he has called the best chariot teams from the four provinces of the kingdom to hold a year-long race around the circumference of the island of Erinn, stopping at the holy groves of the kingdom; which are marked with Druid Sigils. The race will be both a

strange trip of time and distance, and death will be but a temporary lull for the duration of the game, as players will be reborn from the cauldron of heroism. The goal is to get all your chariot teams from your province (and your partner's chariots if 4 people are playing) in a complete circuit of the board. You toss Ogham sticks to determine how many moves you can advance a chariot. It is a grand adventure of both chance and strategy. Various treasure coins will be collected by landing on spaces, answering question cards, taking short cuts through the fairy land, and destroying your partner's chariots by combat. If you get rich enough, the Druids on your team can cast spells to improve your chances of winning.



Preparation:

Print out board and glue securely to wood, stiff plastic or metal background. Make four sets of four marked dimes (tape a letter of the province on them, "L", "U", "M" or "C") for the 4 chariots of each province's team. Players may number or "name" their chariots after friends or family. Collect 52 pennies for the treasure coins and place the number of pennies on each sigil (heads up, of course) as in indicated on the board (1 for plain sigils, 2 on the 8 holiday sigils, 2 each on the 8 fairy sigils, and 4 on the center sigil.) Get four short (3" to 5") pieces of half-circle rounded molding strips from a frame store or hardware store (or just use 4 Popsicle sticks), for the Ogham sticks using in counting moves. They should roughly land flat side up half the time, to be acceptable. Mark the flat sides of the sticks with the ogham letters for dog (cu), deer (fiadh), cow (tarbh) and horse (each), perhaps drawing a figure. The rounded side of the stick may be painted black. (If satisfactory sticks are unavailable, use four quarters, with face being equivalent to flat side up.) If gambling; 2 players put 26 dollars or quarters (depending on your instincts) in the pot on the side of the table to be divided at the end of the game; based on counters collected, 3 players put in 17 dollars or quarters in the pot, if 4 players, put 14 dollars or quarters in the pot. Agree on any advanced rules before the game starts!

Where to start:

The starting point of the game changes depending on the calendrical date on which it is played. The starting point is the nearest future (or current) holiday of the Druid year. Nov. 1 is Samhain, Dec 21 is Winter Solstice, Feb 1 is Oimelc, March 21 is Spring Equinox, May 1 is Beltane, June 21 is Summer Solstice, Aug 1 is Lughnasadh and Sept 21 is Fall Equinox. All chariots entering the board begin one sigil clockwise from that starting point and continue clockwise around the board.

Number of Players:

Can be played with 2-4 players, with possible allied teams in a 4-player game. If 2 players, use 4 chariots each; if 3 players use 3 chariots; if 4 players, use 3 or 4 chariots. With 4 players, using teams, both partners must finish all their chariots to win the game. Connaught & Leinster are partners as is Ulster and Munster in 4 player games.

Ogham Sticks:

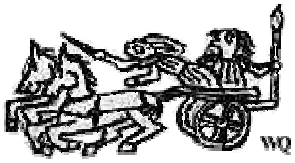
How to Throw the Ogham Sticks: The person who is going to drop the sticks (or 4 quarters) raises them about a foot off the ground, and another player makes a big circle with 2 hands. The dropping player drops the sticks through the hole or may throw them against a wall, ceiling, statue, etc. DO NOT LET THE STICKS HIT THE BOARD! Elaborate dropping methods are permissible, as is pleading to the gods to influence the results.

How to Count the Ogham Sticks: You generally count the number of sticks that are flat-side up. If they land on their end, remaining vertical, then they are considered flat side up.

One Stick Flat Side Up ("Aon") is one moves.
Two Sticks Flat Side Up ("Dha") is two moves.
Three Sticks Flat Side Up ("Tri") is three moves.
All four Sticks Flat Side Up ("Ceither" or "Kay-her") is four moves.
All four Stick Round Sides Up ("Coig") is five moves. (If using 4 coins, treat the "head" as Flat Side Up.)

If you get A "Ceither" (4) or "Coig" (5) everyone cries "Is Math Sin!" (Pron. "Smashing!"), meaning "that's great!", and it allows a player to another free throw after moving their chariot. A limit of three free consecutive free throws is in effect, after which the turn of play automatically moves to the next player.

In combat, if a tie results, the tie-breaking is determined by the highest animal on the flat side of their stick. From lowest to highest (dog, deer, cow, horse). If both tied players have the same animal highest animal, then they throw again. If using coins, throw them again.



Who Starts:

Advanced rules should be decided before the order of play is determined. Each player throws the sticks, highest goes first. Remaining players throw again to determine second, etc. Ties require players to throw again. Player 1 is Connaught, Player 2 is Ulster, Player 3 is Leinster and Player 4 is Munster. Each player sits on the appropriate side of the board. Playing on the floor is recommended, unless adequate table space permits the sticks to be thrown without hitting the board (and knocking things out of place).

General Play:

After throwing the sticks, a player may introduce one of their chariots onto the board to the number of spaces after the starting point of the game, or they may advance one chariot that is already on the board. You may not pass a turn or refuse to move, a chariot has to be moved or introduced into play. Only one chariot may move per throw of the sticks, a move cannot be divided between 2 chariots. Do not count the original holiday sigil from which the game begins as part of your move. (Example if game is played on November1st, Samhain is the starting point. If a "tri" (3) is rolled, then a player may introduce a chariot and advance to the Winter Solstice.) When you finish

on a sigil with money on it, stack the coin under your piece, and this booty will travel with your piece. You do not collect coins from sigils that you jump over, i.e. on which you do not finish. Likewise, when you jump over another piece, they are unaffected, unless you finish your move on their sigil space.

To complete the circuit of the board, you must land on (or pass) the holiday sigil that you began from, after circling the board or taking a short cut. That chariot then leaves the game and is placed on the appropriate chariot marker on the bottom of the board. When all chariots of your team (and your partners) have finished, then you win the speed portion of the race. The game continues until there is only one player remaining on the board. The fastest team will have good health and fortune at love, while the richest player will do well in terms of business in the coming year. If playing by advanced rules with magic spells permitted, completed players may still cast spells on their turn using some of their stored treasure.

Outline of a General Turn:

1. Player has the option to declare and play one spell. Most spells can only be played at this time. Spell effects commence at this point.
2. If a player has a chariot in Fairy Land, they throw to see if fairy darts kill the chariot.
3. Player takes preparatory action needed to move a specified existing piece including: Declaration of intent to enter fairyland from entrance spaces (and tests whether they can enter). Intention to go backwards according to Home Territory Advanced Rules.
4. Throws sticks for their turn
5. Player decides if they will introduce a chariot or take action with a specified existing chariot.
6. Moves chariots, fights, etc.
7. After all moves are finished, a Druid Curse or a Stone Skin spell can be cast.
8. Says, "My turn is over" and hands the sticks to the next person.

Fighting:

Celts thrill in personal combat, and you should seek to clash with your opponent as often as possibly. If your chariot (with all it's accumulated booty) lands on a chariot from your own team (or your partner's), then the 2 (or more) chariots are fused piggy-back style on top of each-other until they reach the goal together (or die together) acting as one single unit, under the control of the "top" player, producing an even higher stack of combined coins that will be kept by the top player after completing the cycle. After completing a cycle, both fused players will be placed on their own province's chariot marker on the bottom of the board, but all the carried booty is split between the two players. If the "top" player had a "ceither" (4) or "coig" (5) move to reach that sigil, then they can use their free throw to continue after fusing together. Fused players do not get multiple attacks.

However, if your chariot finishes its move on an enemy's chariot, then you must fight! Both players throw the sticks. Whoever gets a higher score lives (attacker gets an extra point in attacking, putting the defender at a disadvantage, except possibly under the advanced rule of home territory advantage) and all the coins of the loser are stacked under the winner, and the loser is removed from the board, but may be re-introduced later in the game, just as they were in the beginning. Ties in fighting are broken by noting who had a "higher" animal on the flat side of the stick, but if both have matching high animals, throw the sticks again. If the winner had "ceither" (4) or "coig" (5) move to reach that sigil, then they can use their free throw to continue.

Note: On the Fairy (green) sigils, different rules apply. The fairies do not like fighting in their territory and punish those who participate. Both sides will lose all coins, which are added to the Center Sigil's treasure pot. Both players must roll to see who wins and loses. The attacker still has a +1 advantage. The loser is removed from the board as usual (to be reintroduced later possibly from the starting point), but the winner must return to the holiday sigil that they used to enter the fairy lands, and that specific chariot may not re-enter the fairy lands by that specific entrance for the remainder of the game, although that individual chariot may enter other fairy gates on other holiday sigils. Other chariots on the same team are not affected by this blockage. Fairy rules for fighting apply on Beltane, Lugnasadh, Samhain & Oimelc, but do not apply on the yellow sigils of solstices or equinoxes.

Holiday Sigils:

Solstices and Equinoxes: If you land on these solar holiday sigils, then you can throw the sticks again. If you are not playing with advanced card rules, then the first yellow sigil after the starting point should be "turned off" to slow down the start of chariots in the game. If playing by advanced rules, you need to answer a question card first and if you can answer it well, then you can throw the sticks again. Fairy rules for fighting do not apply on solstices or equinoxes.

Beltane, Lughnasadh, Samhain & Oimelc: These sigils are considered magical safe-havens and under the protection of the fairy folk, which discourages fighting (see Fairy rules for fighting). If you stop on one of these four holiday sigils, then on your next turn you can say (before your next throw of sticks), that you wish to attempt to cross the veil between this world and the next and proceed further into the fairy lands (the green sigils in the middle of the board) and attempt a short cut. To cross the veil between worlds requires a special throw before your normal throw. If you get "aon", "dha" you must throw again and move that many sigils into the fairylands. However, if your special throw had resulted in a "tri", "ceither" or "coig", none of your chariots may enter the fairy lands that round, and must throw your normal move and advance that chariot around the long way (clockwise) around the board; and a failed fairy land entrance attempt removes your right to a free throw (which would normally accompany a "ceither" or "coig").

Fairy Land:

The fairies are the shrunken remnants of the ancient deities of Ireland, and they guard their realm furiously from unwelcome mortal guests, who seek their treasure and wisdom. Certain days of the year are considered to bring the mortal world and fairy world into close contact, on which it is easy to cross-over. The Beltane, Lughnasadh, Samhain, Oimelc holiday sigils; plus the nine green sigils in the center of the board are all considered be places where the mortal and fairy world overlap,

and thus fall under fairy land rules for fighting purposes (see above).

Be warned, the deeper reaches of fairyland (the nine green sigils in the center) are especially dangerous to mortals. At the beginning of each of your turns that starts with one or more of your chariots in the deep fairy land, you must throw the sticks to determine if your chariot is overcome by fairy darts shot from the misty side of those roads. If your sticks result in a "aon" you are fatally wounded, and all the treasure under your chariot goes to the fairy jackpot in the center, and your stricken chariot returns to the holiday sigil that was used to enter the fairy lands, and may not re-enter the fairy-lands through that holiday sigil (you can try again through other holiday sigils). This is similar to losing a battle in fairylands. If you did roll a "dha", "tri", "ceither", or "coig", then you are entirely unharmed, and you may throw again and advance as normal. Each further turn with a chariot in fairyland requires a new saving throw of the sticks to defend each chariot that you have in there. Naturally, you don't want to dawdle in the fairylands, but to progress through very quickly.

You must move forward in the Fairy Lands, and once you cross over the center sigil, you have to choose which of the three exits you'll head towards. You cannot backtrack.

Wind spells do not affect players in Fairy Land. Druid Curses likewise cannot be laid in Fairy Sigils. Fireballs can hit players on Beltane, Lughnasadh, Samhain and Oimelc but cannot affect players in deeper Fairy Lands. Chariots cannot cast fireballs within Fairyland, or shoot them out of Fairy Land at players in the mortal realm outside.

Fairy Jackpot/ Sigil Coin Refill System:

A lot of money tends to build up in the center sigil from all the spells cast, confiscated wealth from fights in fairyland, and special backwards moves by home territory advantage. If a player lands on the jackpot they get all the money accumulated up to that point, and can cause the nouveaux riche player to get out of hand. If more money goes into the pot after that acquisition, the player still remaining on that spot will not collect the new money, but rather the new money will go on the side for the next person to land on the spot. The limit for the Fairy Jackpot is 7 coins. After that, all new coins that will "overflow the jackpot," and they should be distributed to empty fairy sigils radiating from the center sigil, one at a time. If all the fairy sigils have a least one coin, then the overflow should fill empty sigils on the main board beginning with the starting point of the game and going clockwise around the board, one sigil at a time. This overflow mechanism will ensure that money will be recycled for use in later rounds of the game.

When you safely exit the fairylands, from any of the exits, you continue clockwise around the board. If the exit point happens to be the "finish line" (example, if the game starts from Samhain, and you'll probably choose to exit the fairylands on or past Samhain), then you are finished with that chariot, and then move that chariot to the "winner's platform" at the bottom of the board. Once a chariot finishes the course of the board, it may not be reintroduced into play.

End of Game:

At the end of the game, when only one player has not completed moving his chariots around the board and on to the winner's platform, then play will cease and all players count all their treasure. The first player or (team of partners) to finish his team of 4 chariots gets 2/3 of the remaining treasure still unclaimed on the board, and the remaining third of the unclaimed coins is distributed among the losers in order of game play, one at a time. Coins under chariots still on the board still belong to the uncompleted player for the purpose of counting. Each coin gets one dollar or quarter that was bet at the beginning of the game.

**** **** ****

Advanced Optional Rules

After the basics of the game are mastered, players may wish to add more rules to spice up the game even further and at more elements of strategy and excitement. The addition of some or all advanced rules should be agreed upon before the order of players is determined.

Random Gambling:

After mastering the basics of the game, you may wish to gamble on individual throws or fights. General rules of which can be worked out by those betting, using player's personal money. This has no affect on game play, but can be a fun addition, both sides must agree for a bet to go into effect.

Solstice & Equinox Question Cards:

Before the beginning of the game, before teams are selected, 12-16 index cards are divided among the players. Each player secretly (i.e. not even telling a partner) writes a question on the card, that is not impossible, but reasonably challenging, of a druidic nature. Then (without being read) the cards are shuffled and placed by the sides of the board. When someone lands on a solstice or equinox sigil, they draw a card, if they can reasonably answer the question, they will get a free throw of the sticks, and they rip up the old card. If the cards run out, then the players automatically get a free throw of the sticks from that point onwards. If they rolled a "ceither" or "coig" to reach the Solstice/Equinox, and answered the question card correctly, they do not get 2 free throws (but if they answer the question wrongly, they lose ALL free throws, and it becomes the next player's turn).

Home Territory Advantage Rule:

Each of the players has a territorial quadrant of the board between Beltane, Oimelc, Lughnasadh and Samhain that matches their team's provincial name. In that area, they are very familiar with the terrain and backwoods trails. All of their chariots beginning on a sigil there move an additional space.

If they have a chariot on one of those 5 sigils in their home territory, they may announce (BEFORE they throw the sticks) that they wish to move that chariot backwards on that turn. That backward jumping chariot loses one coin, which goes in the Fairy Jackpot in the Center Sigil, and the exact result of the Ogham sticks is then used to go backwards (they don't get an additional bonus space, which is only for forward moves). If they go backwards with a "ceither", and are still in their home territory than may announce to go backwards again (before throwing their free throw), otherwise if they have moved backwards out of their territory, they must resume clock-wise rotation on further moves of that chariot. If a player uses backwards moves to go past the starting point, they DO NOT WIN by then advancing past the starting point; they must make a full circuit or take a short cut, just like other players.

Two changes to fighting rules, is that in their home territory, that player has a +1 in attacking or defending, and the other player has no advantage in attacking or defending. Also if a partner lands on your chariot while in your territory, the piece with the home territory advantage goes ON TOP. Naturally, this rule should be agreed on before the provinces are allotted at the beginning of the game, as it will drastically affect the game.

Magic Rules:

Each chariot has three riders; a driver, a warrior and a druid. There are eight different possible spells whose inclusion may be individually approved before the game starts. A spell is generally cast before the sticks are thrown on your turn. To cast a spell requires you to sacrifice a few coins or "heads", which will then go into the fairy jackpot in the center sigil. Only one spell can be cast before each turn to throw sticks. Four spells require coins under one specific chariot; four spells can be cast using coins drawn collectively from several chariots of a province (including ones that have already gone to the winner's platform).

* Four Specific Chariot Spells *

1. Druid Curse: By sacrificing 2 coins under a specific chariot, a player can permeate that particular sigil under the chariot with a deadly curse for the remainder of the game. It may be cast before throwing the sticks on their turn, or, after their turn (but certainly before the next player throws their sticks). Only 1 Druid curse, by any player, per territory (Ulster, Leinster, Munster or Connaught) is permitted to avoid an impassable mine field from developing. Beltane, Lughnasadh, Oimelc and Samhain sigils cannot be cursed. The 2 sacrificed coins are placed in the Fairy Jackpot in the Center Sigil. A special marker is placed on that sigil (such as a nickel) to mark the cursed spot. Any future chariots (including the one that cast that spell) that lands again on that cursed sigil, will die. All the wealth of that cursed chariot will go to the Fairy Jackpot in the Center Sigil, and the cursed chariot dies and goes off the board; but may be reintroduced again later.

2. Fireball: Before throwing sticks on your turn, you can sacrifice 2 coins from a single chariot. You can then fling a fireball up to two sigils in front or behind that chariot (even if the defender is on a Beltane, Oimelc, Lughnasadh or Samhain sigil; without fairy land fighting rules; but fireballs cannot affect people in deep Fairyland in the center). The defending chariot must throw sticks to determine if they take damage. If they roll a "aon" or "dha" the defender dies and is removed from the board, if "tri" there is no damage and the fireball dissipates, if "ceither" or "coig" is thrown then the spell is reversed onto the original caster, who must now throw sticks to determine their own fate (and this may continue to ping-pong back and forth). Whoever's chariot is killed by the fireball is removed from the board, but their treasure under the chariot remains on that sigil on the board, slightly roasted.

3. Free Turn: A single chariot may sacrifice 4 coins under it, before throwing sticks, to ensure that it will get a free turn after the sticks are thrown. If they subsequently get a "ceither" or "coig", they do not get 2 free turns.

4. Stone Skin: After your turn, but before the next player throws sticks, you may sacrifice 2 coins under your chariot to endow your chariot with invulnerability until it advances again. No one can land on that sigil of a stationary stoneskinned chariot without automatically losing combat. Once the player moves that chariot again, the spell is broken. Stoneskin also protects against Fireball.

* Four Collective Chariot Spells *

5. Remove Curse: Must be cast before throwing sticks on a player's own turn. Two coins from any or all of a player's chariots may be sacrificed to remove one Druid Curse from anywhere on the board.

6. Clock-wise Winds of Speed: Before throwing the sticks on their turn, a player may sacrifice 3 coins under 1 or more of their chariots (including completed chariots) from one province (e.g. 3 coins from 2 Ulster chariots), which will cause a fierce wind to blow for three complete rounds of play. All the chariots on his team and his partner's team will move one extra square when advancing, but other rolls (fighting and fairy entrance) are unaffected. Multiple spells of this nature may overlap and are cumulative. Backwards moves under home territory rules for anyone are impossible under the duration of this spell.

7. Counter-Clock-Wise Winds of Sloth: Must cast the spell before throwing the sticks on their turn. Cost: 3 coins. Similar to Winds of Speed, but all the chariots on your opponents' teams will move one space slower for three rounds of play. Backward moves under home territory rules for all players get a +1 on their moves. These spells are also cumulative.

8. Freeze: Before throwing sticks on your turn, you can sacrifice 3 coins from one (or more) of your chariots. This will force another player of your choice to lose a turn, unless that player sacrifices 5 coins to block the spell. A player cannot be frozen more than twice in a row. A frozen player will be passed on their turn of play, and may not cast spells, but may still defend normally against physical attacks on the board.

Stacked Chariots = Super Chariots Rule:

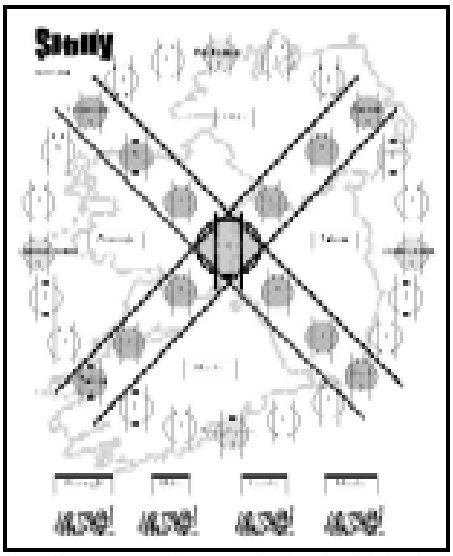
If the players agree with this rule, then stacked chariots in combat get one attack per chariot. E.g. If two chariots (from one or more partners) lands on an opponent's chariot, then the attacker gets two attacks and the defender gets one defending attack. The defender's roll is higher than both attackers, both attackers die. If one of the stacked chariots dies, it is removed but the remaining chariot may continue the attack It is possible for one attacker and one defender to die in such situation. If two groups of stacked players meet in combat, then each attacking and defending chariots should be paired up for individual combats, until only one remains.

Territorial Starts:

Players may wish to begin on different starting points, especially if playing with the home territorial advantage advanced rules. If so, Ulster starts on Lughnasadh, Leinster on Samhain, Munster on Oimelc, Connaught on Beltane.

These are just the tentative rules that need to be worked out by some playgroups. I would appreciate any suggestions for an official set of rules to be published in the Samhain 2003 edition. Send those comments to mikerdna@hotmail.com

Click on image for large, clear, easy-to-read, full 8"x11" window with the game board ready for a color printout! Takes about 2 minutes to download.



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The Missionary Im-Position

By Mike Scharding, DC Grove

Naturally, I speak here only for my own opinion. As you may have been following in the RDNAtalk conference, my thoughts have been turning to those young MIB who knock on my door to share the Good News with me. I'd like to share some thoughts based on my own limited experience in door-to-door sales of the mundane variety, although I have little academic marketing experience. However, perhaps some of the parallels may be interesting.

I should start off by admitting that I actually admire the dedication and sense of inquiry that most door-to-door missionaries possess. I am also a somewhat reluctant spiritual missionary myself, as is shown by the fact that most of you are reading this essay because of my outreach internet efforts, providing access to RDNA historical material. My strategy is however naturally passive. I make suggestions but do not insist on them to the exclusion of others. I am just there. People come, sometimes stay, and often leave soon. Like a tree, I passively watch their passage and shade them while they are near by. I occasionally invite a friend to attend. Many pass under my limbs without even knowing a Druid is present. This I feel is a rather common RDNA method of grove dynamics, it may not be the most organizationally effective way, but it is the most satisfactory method I have found. It is one way, yea, one way among many.

Now, if I was a Treant, like in the Tolkien movie, I could pull out my roots and walk about lobbing boulders about and being a noisy nuisance. And in certain circumstances, I might contemplate such action. Others make this a matter of course, and we see them at our doors every month or two, because we have a large Mormon barn in our neighborhood, so we tend to get the lazy ones who are not willing to travel far. It pains my cynical post-modernist heart to credit them, but most of those to whom I talk to are actually rather nice, wholesome people with more community spirit that my hermitic nature can muster up. But there is something rather unsettling about the whole door-to-door thing, and I'm not sure that they are aware of it. Occasionally, you'll get the hard sell from some door to door friends, that reminds me of a past part-time job that I once had, I think you'll see the parallels and be forewarned.

Nature Abhors a Vacuum Salesperson

In 1995, I answered one of those "Big money for part-time fun work" posters, and got sucked up into a scam-filled operation selling well-known expensive vacuum cleaners in Minnesota. I learned a lot about the way you set up a campaign with many applications to missionary activities. First you divide up a town among the employees, distribute invitations for a free "no-obligation" comparison test via newspapers or coupons, with free complimentary present and literature. When someone bites at the bait, you send out the young commission-paid worker to the address at the appointed time, with promises of how well they will be awarded on the often slim chance of

successful sales (10% conversion rate is considered high, with a 10% cut of the overpriced good). Other times you just knock on doors up and down the neighborhood taking advantage of your sad tired visage to entice compassionate people to invite you in.

What happens next is you give your spiel, and start doing good deeds (such as vacuuming like a madman around the house) and showing off the features of a professional cleaner. Now most people, (and few will admit it), don't mind a little grime in the corners, dust on the lampshade, or dirt under the sofa-cushions. People get by with a simple system of their own, but feel a bit guilty about it, and this is your entry point. You, as a seller, by your zealous example associate your vacuum cleaner with a virtuous clean lifestyle. Mites and dust are a natural part of life, and for most of us they actually build-up our immunological defenses against real parasites; but if given a choice in life, people would like to live in aseptically clean environment, free of grossness. The odds are, even if they buy your brand of cleaner, that they wouldn't put that much more effort into cleaning, but they COULD if they wanted to.

This is called "overbuying" and the car and computer salesmen ply this trick just as often as door-to-door salesmen. The customer is also acquiring "membership" or association with great clean people, who like mountains, are more often admired from afar or bypassed, rather than climbed and imitated. Certainly, some will actually read your cleaning suggestions book and may actually follow the instruction manual you provide; but similar results could probably be had by diligently using any other cheaper vacuum cleaner.

Cleanliness is like unto Godliness

Mark Twain once said, "A cynic knows the price of everything but not its worth." Every salesman must truly believe in the product that they are selling. You must study the other brands of vacuum cleaners only so far as to know their weaknesses, to be able to denigrate them, and then select tests that you know are going to show those faults. Few people are prepared to defend their own cleaners to a well-prepared offense that they are not expecting. The salesman makes it a matter of faith that your own product's deficiencies are more than matched by its strengths; and the cleaner must naturally be taken as a whole item. I spent 30 minutes being instructed in the cleverness of its foaming carpet cleaner head. All types of methods of agitating the cleaning liquid were attempted before the inventor realized that a simple cheap cloth mesh over the end would foam-up the liquid. When explaining this to the people, they begin to associate a few clever features of the cleaner to the rest of the whole contraption, which may indeed be pretty standard fare.

Now the vacuum cleaner sales pitch would start by discussing how much it cost to attain this marvelous product, for which a newly invented need was now apparent. For those of you interested, this $900 vacuum cleaner really only cost $250 to produce, and were sold to the local head agent for $300. The salesman would naturally calm down the customer and "call his boss" to cut a deal, say to $750, which was still too much. Eventually you barter down to a reasonable $500 in regular payments. They get a slightly sup-ed up cleaner, and probably put on a list of "easy marks" for other high-pressure sales agents. You and your boss split the profits. My idealism got the better of me, as did low sales performance, and I left soon afterwards.

What to do with Door Knockers

I know that most missionaries perform their actions as a matter of testing the strength of their faith, a sign of compassion to the benighted followers of the wrong faith, and to follow the instructions of their superiors, and these I tolerate and a few I admire. A few are witless and naïve people with but a few scraps of scripture to cover their nakedness, and I try not to scare them in their delicate condition. For some, their sense of self-worth is painfully dependent on getting others to follow their own pathway, and I feel sorry for these. Indeed I generally feel that those who come to my door may well indeed be the gods in disguise and I feel obligated to assist them in some fashion, even salesmen and missionaries. However, others are belligerently bigoted and seek to stamp out anything that disagrees with their vision, and these I abhor.

I suspect that many of these groups are outward oriented, sometimes in a pyramid scheme, with all the spiritual profits rising organizationally to the founder. It is true that perhaps some form of spiritual community is better than none, but I like to think that the ones that I choose are better, than the ones that choose me; assuming there is free will, of course. Most people, I believe, tend to belong to a faith that operates nearby out of convenience more than avid support of their "small print" of social policies and theological beliefs outlined by their inner circle of organizers. I have always wondered why they don't apply this strong energy into improving the members that are already part of their community? Some groups even seem to exist only to recruit more members. The Mormons are so desperate for growth, as to actually convert the already deceased ancestors of current members, and as a result, they have one of the most massive genealogical collections in the world, as my parents found out in their own family research. Quite likely, several of your own ancestors have been converted in this manner already! Thus much good occasionally does appear to result indirectly from these activities.

There appears to be a few common responses in the Neo-Pagan and Druid community towards these wandering doorknockers. Some choose the "duck and cover" maneuver and refuse to answer the door, which is avoiding the whole issue. There a few (like me) who politely listen and refuse to respond either way, giving neither support nor denial to their cause, basically taking up their time to save some other unknown resident the experience. The most popular and funny, but probably rarely performed, are the "shock and awe" responses of overwhelming these people from narrow backgrounds with lavish displays of "see how weird and unsettling my lifestyle is! Oooga booga!"

However, if you think you can surprise them with your Druidness, your mirthful days may be numbered. I recently came across a book, in which I read a 92 page point-by-point book of a series by Zondervan Guides to Cults and Religious Movement that teach how to witness to Pagans. It is called Goddess Worship, Witchcraft and Neo-Paganism. (ISBN 0-310-48881-8 $6.00) If you want to go head to head against the toughest bible-thumper, I recommend you read it to see what arguments are coming. It was an interesting applying logical methods to sell rather non-sensical fantastical spiritual myths. It is another of those circular argumentative systems that once you accept one point, you are locked into a series of semi-logical faith-based points of belief. Maddening as I found it, it provides intriguing insights into the whole process.

A nice counterpoint is to realize that world views are a dollar a dozen, and I'd recommend reviewing the following two books: The Truth About Neo-Paganism written by one-time RDNA member Anodea Judith (of Chakra fame). ISBN 1-56718-567-3 which is $3 at 60 pages. Another book is Pagans and the Law: Understand Your Rights which is a good handbook to simple legal questions that many Pagans should know, if you get flak for your religious beliefs. I'll hopefully be reviewing this book in a future issue.

In conclusion, I believe that the best preparation for dealing with the missionary is to follow the Druidic path of asking yourself the hardest questions ahead of time, to know what you really believe; and find out what areas of your spiritual life can be met with community involvement, psychiatry, lifestyle modifications and simple greater awareness. After you've done that you should be able to explain the satisfactory nature of your beliefs and perhaps give them a little useful insight to take back with them.

The Soul of Juliana Spring

By Irony Sade
Copyright November 2000

Here we bring you the third installment of a young lady who sells her soul to a Druid to become the best harper in the world, against the wishes of her father:

Chapter Eight

With no further prelude, Samhain was upon us. The displaced pair stayed on to wait out the weekend traffic and tie up some last loose ends. The celebration was at my house that year, in the woods out back. I invited my guests to join if they wished. Juliana begged off, pleading illness, leaving me once more in the kitchen. Baked pies, breads, and squashes; mulled wine, cider, and mead helped to distract me from her troubles. Sam came down after a bit to help me cook.

"What is Samhain, exactly?" He asked as we sat amid the smells and bubbling pots, a pile of apples and peelings between us.

I swallowed a crisp of red skin and reached for a Macintosh.

"Samhain is the Druidic New Year. The harvest is in, the god is dead, the goddess is going into mourning until she gives birth to him anew on the Winter Solstice, December 21st."

I flicked some seeds onto the table and shot Sam a hidden look. He was still listening.

"It is a time when we remember all the people and things we have lost that year. Friends who died, lives that changed, parts of ourselves that we choose to lay to rest. It is a time when spirits of the dead come half way back to earth. Some people believe that messages can be passed between them and the living, tonight." I paused. He waited.

"It is also the beginning of the New Year, and we remember that there is birth in all death, life in all change. It is a time to recall that things move on, however bleak or dismal the threat of winter seems." Sam was staring at me, the knife idle in his hands.

"What are you going to do?" He asked.

"Sit around a fire and talk, mostly. Sing, remember, tell stories." I waved a peeled apple. "Eat good food."

The right corner of his mouth twitched upwards.

"No devil worship?"

"'Fraid not. Sorry."

His grin became a full smile. I smiled as well.

"You are a good listener, Sam. Thank you."

We piled in the last slices of fruit, added the final dusting of spices and lemon, then pinched down the sage sprinkled crust. The first batch of pies was ready to be pulled from the oven.

"Those do look good. I think I may join you."

"We would be honored."

Chapter Nine

That night I watched the flames, listening to the stories of loss, grief, and healing. Some of those who came remembered Sam from Beltain, half a year before, and they welcomed him quietly. Samhain is a much more subdued holiday, deeper than the festival of spring, and less wild. You could say that the one celebrates Life, the other Death, but that is only half true. Sex and Sacrifice are closer; Spring and Autumn. In the one, the world is leaping back to life, winter is vanquished at last, and all of nature pours forth its joy in reproduction and song. In the other we see the dark half of the year beginning. Winter is real, the leaves are down, and the god has given himself in sacrifice that the world might continue on without him. They are Beltain and Samhain. They may be irreducible. I sat between the old year and the new, and wondered what would become of us all.

A few people did actually burn letters to the dead. One man declared his life in the closet was over. A woman said good-bye to her father, killed in a car wreck eight years before. Food was passed, eaten, enjoyed. Sam said nothing, but his eyes burned, and I saw that he understood.

The stories continued. My mind was worn out by other peoples' troubles. I stared vacantly into the fire, content to merely listen. One lady sang of the Fairie Courts riding and the rescue of Tam Llyn from Elfland's Queen. The song seemed to take shape in the coals as I dozed, the great host passing, Tam with the star upon his brow, Margaret waiting, waiting, in her circle of holy water, the soul searing beauty of the Queen and her riders. I saw faces amidst that flickering host. One was a tall woman with eyes like the sunset and a face like Juliana might wear in another twenty years. She smiled, reaching out a long hand to brush my cheek; and then there was only the cold night wind, and smoke stinging tears from my old, tired eyes.

Chapter Ten

The morning they left I gave Juliana a new harp. The black cherry pillar gleamed like plaited hair in the low sunlight of my library. The knotted maple soundboard whorled, swirls and ripples of grain on grain, eddies of foam on a long white shore.

"She is strung with wires," I cautioned, as I watched Juliana's fingers quiver. "They ring differently than gut or nylon strings. You will have to learn to finger all over again."

"But where did it come from?" Juliana breathed.

"She is my harp, Lorelia--and older than you are too, I might add, so show some respect!" I smiled. The harp whispered, my voice resonating in her sound box. It sounded like a chuckle.

"You are a better player than I, Miss Spring. I think she would rather live with you."

Her sandy haired lover was grinning. Juliana threw her arms around me and squealed.

Chapter Eleven

The next day my phone rang, early. I answered. For a long moment there was nothing. Then came an indrawn hiss.

"Thrice damned Druid. I know who you are. Let me speak to my daughter."

"Good morning to you too, Mr. Raskin. That was a nasty way to start a conversation."

"You are a Devil worshiping hell spawn. Why should I be polite to you? Your soul will rot in Lucifer's bowels till the day when God dissolves you both."

"The Devil is a Christian figment, Mr. Raskin. You would know more about him than I."

"You are corrupting my daughter, leading her astray from the church and her family, encouraging her in that damned music and distracting her from God's will. Let me speak to her."

"Who is to say God did not give her that passion, those dreams, the gift she has for music?"

"Don't play games with me. Where is my daughter?"

"She is already gone. You have driven her away from both of us."

"Where is she?"

"I am sorry to say that is none of your business. If she chose not to tell you herself, then I am not about to."

"Tell me where she is! I'll kill you, Druid!"

"'Vengeance is mine,' saith the Lord.' You are not He, Russell Raskin. I am perfectly willing to be judged by God. Try anything yourself and I will see you in court."

There came a long drawn hiss of air forced between teeth.

"You thrice damned Druid. I'll see you in Hell."

"Only if you are there. Good night, Russell."

I broke the connection before he could curse me again. Leaves swirled past my windows in their endless autumnal Totentanz. I stood and watched them, breathing very slowly.

To Be Continued...

Calendar

Lughnasadh will be at as 3:25 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time, Thursday, August 7th, 2003. Poison Oak Grove will hold its Lughnasadh celebration on August 3, at 4 p.m.

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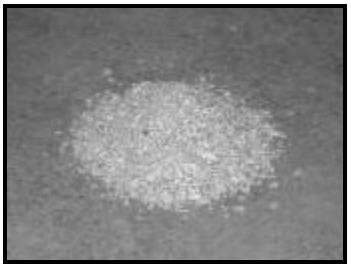
Glencoe in the autumn.

Fall Equinox Essay: Michaelmas and Struans

By Stacey Weinberger

Fall Equinox. A minor High Day in the Druid calendar, there is no evidence of a specific day or ritual being celebrated in Celtic tradition. However there was some evidence that the tribal communities involved themselves with ceremony that reflected itself in the process of the year that insured their survival: the Harvest. By the time of the Equinox the harvest is fully underway.

The harvest has become associated with the archangel Michael and Michaelmas, said to be the most pagan feasts of the Christian calendar, in Celtic countries. Michael is the Christian saint most often associated with Lugh. Early Christian missionaries co-opted the image of Michael as warrior with flaming sword conquering Lucifer for Lugh Lamfhada (of the long arm) as this image might have suggested to Celtic minds similarity to Lugh in his role as protector and defender with his spear victorious over the Fomorians. Lugh is associated with the sea. His foster father was the sea-god Manannan mac Lir. In Normandy St. Michael is the patron of mariners perhaps another co-option. Lugh was said to have invented horse-racing and that sport was a main feature of Lughnasadh celebrations in Ireland. The Highland image of Michael is of the saint pictured on a winged horse. He is also the patron saint of horses and horsemen, and there was also horse-racing, as well as the appropriation of horses, on his feast day, another link between Lugh and Michael. That Michael became associated with the harvest is no coincidence. In Scotland Lughnasadh is celebrated on St. Michael's Day or Michaelmas, which takes place on September 29.



On Michaelmas eve the women of the village baked a special bannock called the "struan Micheil." It was made from all the cereals grown on the farm during the year. This struan represented the fruits of the field (note that Lughnasadh is also known as the festival of first fruits). Oats, barley, and rye were the only cereals grown in the Scottish Isles. These were fanned on the floor, ground, and their flour used in equal parts in the struan. The struan contained a peck of flour and was baked on "uinicinn," a lambs-skin. The flour was moistened with sheep's milk, the sheep being deemed the most sacred animal. It was for this purpose that the sheep were retained in milk till Michaelmas (since Oimelc), after which they were allowed to remain in the pastures and hills and run dry. The struan was baked by the eldest daughter of the family. As the struan gained consistency in firing, it was covered on both sides with three successive layers of batter of cream, eggs, and butter. Various ingredients were added into the small struans, such as cranberries, bilberries, brambleberries, caraway seeds, and wild honey. There was quite a bit of ceremony surrounding the baking of the Michaelmas struan. According to Alexander Carmichael in his collection of hymns and incantations, the Carmina Gadelica:

"Many cautions are given to her who is making the struan to take exceptional care of it. Ills and evils innumerable would befall herself and her house should any mishap occur to the struan. Should it break before being fired, it betokens ill to the girl baking it; if after being fired and before being used, to the household. Were the struan flag (baking stone) to fall and the struan with it, the omen is full of evil augury to the family. A broken struan is not used. The 'fallaid,' dry meal remaining on the baking board after the struan is made, is put into a 'mogan,' footless stocking, and dusted over the flocks on the following day;being the Day of Michael; to bring them 'piseach agus pailteas agus pronntachd,' progeny and plenty and prosperity, and to ward them from them 'suileachd agus ealtraidh agus dosgaidh,' evil-eye, mischance, and murrain. Occasionally the 'fallaid' is preserved for a year and a day before being used."

On the morning of the Feast of Michael all go to early mass, taking their struans with them to church to be blessed by the priest, who urges them to praise Michael for the bounty of grain and wool, the fruits of the field and of the flocks. This is

very reminiscent of Lughnasadh, celebrating the bounty of the harvest.

Here is a basic bannock recipe that can be used as a basis for making your own "struan Micheil."

2 cups plus 2 tablespoons oatmeal
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
Salt
1 ounce butter, melted
Approximately 6 tablespoons water (substitute here with sheep's or goat's milk for the struan Micheil)

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Combine 2 cups of the oatmeal with the baking soda and a pinch of salt. Add the melted butter and the sheep's milk, a tablespoon at a time, until you have a stiff but pliable dough.

Spread the remaining 2 tablespoons of oatmeal on a pastry board and roll out the dough to approximately 1/8-inch thickness. Using a wine glass, cut the dough into 3-inch rounds.

Back the rounds on a greased baking sheet for 15 minutes, or until they begin to turn a golden brown color. Turn off the heat and leave them on the oven with the door open for 5 more minutes.

Allow to cool and store in an airtight container. Makes approximately 12.

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Carleton is out of session until the 15th of September however that hasn't stopped news from accruing. Co-AD Corwin Troost has gone into exile in Japan for the fall. We're sure that he'll bring back news from the paleo-pagans that Mec (Ed. note: Mike Scharding) keeps telling us about. Meanwhile AD Stephen Crimmins has been having a druidic time at his summer job in the Carleton archives where he has been reorganizing the International Druid Archives and is working on updating Mec's out of date Index to the Archives. He is also preparing hopefully for the fall term and getting ready to stop sheep straying from the flock of new students heading towards the Arb. We'll see how it turns out in the next issue of the Missal-Any.

—Stephen, Arch Druid

News of the Groves in Japan

The Shikoku Grove and Akita Grove have not sent in their updates this summer, but they have been receiving very strange weather, according to the newspapers. Japan has experienced one of its coolest and wettest summers in history; which has led many experts to predict serious shortfalls in rice and other vegetable harvests throughout Japan (between 10-35% below average), and ruining the tourist trade in mountain retreats and beach-front communities. There were three prefectures, however, that were predicted to have a normal crop; Akita, Tokushima and Okinawa. The first prefectures happen to have RDNA groves, and Okinawa is an island so far to the south that it doesn't really matter. So whatever you are doing out there in Japan, keep it up, and share it with the rest of the country!

P.S. Those of you who would like to work for a year or two in a traditional pagan village of Japan assisting in English instruction in junior high schools at a generous salary starting next July; contact mikerdna@hotmail.com for info on how to work on the JET Program.

Amber Oak Grove: News from Toronto, Canada

Membership: Four. Location: Greater Toronto area of Ontario.

The grove's main focus is on the myths of the Celts and applying them to our lives. We are a simple and open group of people who work together for the betterment of self and the earth. Many of us come from extensive Wiccan background and as such our work is influenced by our past associations.

We have a zero tolerance policy for the use of drugs and alcohol within our circle when we meet and an age restriction of 19 years or older. We, in the interest of group safety, screen all possible members before information is given.

The Hidden Wood Grove: News from Pennsylvania

We have been real busy the past couple of months. My son came down with Transverse Myelitis. He was in the hospital for a few weeks and is now home. He is able to start to move his feet and a little bit of his legs.

Otherwise we are looking forward to the Fall and the changing of the leaves and cooler weather. The apple cider festival will be coming soon (all that good apple cider and butter).

May your gods go with you,

Paul
www.angelfire.com/realm3/hiddenwood

Bamboo Grove: News from Delaware

I never got around to thanking everyone for the "Bard of the Reform XLI" award (or at least, I don't remember doing so in the newsletter)...so, um, thanks! Although it may have been bestowed with the wry sense of humor characteristic of the RDNA, I do appreciate the honor.

Well, as they say, there is a time for everything. And right now, my life is going through transitions within transitions. One relationship is waning as another blossoms, and there is a lot of sadness and happiness mixed into one confusing bundle of emotions.

The saddest transition of all is that the Grove will probably split up as one relationship ends...the two guinea pigs, Panda and Rygel, will probably go with my "ex," as will the two corn snakes, Onyx and Loki. The Arch-Druid is looking droopy and rather pale green-as opposed to the vibrant, bright green a healthy bamboo plant should have--so if anyone knows of any good advice for bamboo care, please pass it along.

Otherwise, the Grove is rather quiet for now. It is a time for reflection, and "getting my bearings."

Blessings to all,
BrightMirage (Bard of the Reform XLI)

Hemlock Splinters Grove: News from New York

Things at Hemlock Splinters are quiet due to the employment of the Arch Druid Irony and the loss to college of his right hand and younger brother Omen. Most of our efforts this summer have gone into the preparation of a wire harp and flute CD hopefully to be released later this year. The leaves are turning here in the north.

Winter is coming.

Digitalis Grove: News from the District of Columbia

Well, summer's over and my Korean classes are continuing. I spent many weeks perfecting the rules of Sigily from the last issue (there were not significant changes) and trying to research other Celtic games in an article that will follow in this issue. The potential grove members that I had expected, never materialized, so my Grove is operating on a minimum capacity still, as I casually spend the next three months in a job search and recover from a recent house-move of about one block to the south. ARDA 2 is still on my friend's computer being beautified for printing and release, which he says will come quickly this fall; meanwhile I sit on a pile of checks here.

Grove of Ynys Avallach: News from Georgia

I have gathered a group together here and we have been meeting for some time. We have concluded that we would like to form an RDNA grove. So far we have four people, a rough set of rules and offices and the like, we're sticking with just Nature is Good as tenets go, to minimize points of contention, and that covers the short list.

Oh year, we have tentatively name ourselves The Grove of Ynys Avallach and I have been thrown into the position of leading this quartet. We wanted to use something that expressed our mixed Irish/Welsh heritage and love of the Myths of Avalon and Camelot. I was hunting around and found a reference where the word Avallach had also been used as the name of Morgan Lafey's father, in Welsh myths, but still would be translated as Isle of Apples, so it worked out pretty good and we went with it.

Our little grove has a yahoogroup set up at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/YnysAvallach/?yguid=155554261 and a webpage that is under construction, but I do not have the link for it right now.

Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross (MOCC)--Muskogee/Mother Grove:

News from Oklahoma

On Aug. 3 we had a Grove picnic at Elliott Park in Muskogee, OK. All was not sunshine and roses. One participant got sick from the heat, and while we were off at the picnic, one of our members' homes was broken into. Even so, before the problems started, a good time was had by all.

The following Saturday, Sis. Chenretzig was named and entered into the grade of Novice Ovate. She's the first one to be named in the M/M Grove since 1998 or 99. We are glad to have her among us.

The Liturgy Manual 2003 is almost completed. It looks like it may top out at about 100 pages. It combines not only things that were generated by the M/M Grove, but also the Sharayean Mystery School Tradition and a smidgen of RDNA (like the Original Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism). New to it is a timeline of the MOCC that demonstrate how a non-Carleton-affiliated Reformed Druidism just kind of sprouted up in the countryside of Northeastern Oklahoma, then how it kind of grew up wild. Attention is given to the difference in language used by the MOCC and other branches of Reformed Druidism, and the question of whether the MOCC is of RDNA or DCotSG descent.

Questions about the Liturgy Manual 2003 can be answered by emailing me at:

myrddinamaeglin@yahoo.com

We're looking forward to Samhain 2003. The MOCC turns 20 years old on that night. Rumors of the sacred event are preceding it, and it has taken on the name "A Really big kick ass party." Libations may be expected.

Rowan-Oak Grove, MOCC: News from Oklahoma

Rowan-Oak Grove, the Tulsa area grove for MOCC, is pleased to announce our listing at:

http://www.witchvox.com/ and our online community sites: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rowan-oakgrovetbrsc and: http://www.msn.com/groups/creativepaganimity

Our membership both on and offline is growing, not counting the three grove cats we have a grove community in Tulsa of about 35 at the moment including several clergy members and secular officers as well as novices in training and general congregation. Our online community has representatives from other groves in the area and members as far away as Nova Scotia, Canada, with about 15 members total.

Lughnasadh was our 25th annual picnic rite and it was a blast. we will be celebrating in September both full moon and Mabon. as usual these will be open meetings. 101 lessons are being held both online and at my home or area parks when the weather is nice.

Those wishing more information may contact m.s. white raven arch-druidess at: whiteraven_dragonwolf@yahoo.com

Brightest blessings and may the sea, sand, and sky always be your guides!

Cattle Protogrove: News from Texas

Hey all,

Just wanted to tell you all that the Cattle Protogrove has temporarily (the next 4 years or so, not including summers) moved to Commerce, Texas. Commerce is a small town outside Dallas and is surrounded by lots of open land, it's great.

As soon as I got here and I finished unpacking, I pulled out my travel alter and chalice and several book I tend to read over and over (not-so-classic titles such as: A Druid's Herbal, Tree Medicine Tree Magic, and Year of Moon Season of Trees). I walked to the spot in my closet area (which is actually very open to everyone) that I had deliberately not put anything on. It's just above all my drawers and has a mirror behind it. I twisted the peg-like legs into place on the bottom of my altar and placed it in the back, with the chalice to the front and off to the side a little. A small oak box I have (which I keep herbs in it cause it looks cool) was placed on the adjoining side. First thing off I ran out to the nearest liquor store and bought the smallest bottle of Jameson's they had (for usage in my dry dorm BAH!) As soon as I walked back into my room I had... oh a good three people staring at my little makeshift altar area, my roommate included. Being the good Christians they are, they first accused me of being a Satanist. Of course this was simply not true, I told

them I was a Druid and had to explain this to them, which I am not very good at I must say, and gave them Mike's site as a reference for all the questions I could not answer. Before long I think just about everyone in this college of 9,000 students knew that I was a Druid.

Well, I suppose now there will be no awkward moments when I am trying to explain to someone what religion I am. Anyways, I'll be sure to keep you updated further.

Walk in peace,

Joss Badger

Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, Order of the Mithril Star: News from Oregon

Greetings,

Well, it's official: as of tonight (Sept. 4), The Order of the Mithril Star is now a schism (or satellite) group of the Reform and the American Druid Family. This decision was not made lightly, but with much deliberation and divination and soul-searching by myself and the MG, taking all recent factors into account. What this means:

We have remodeled the OMS website to reflect our new direction. It actually resembles the pre-RDNA state, with a few exceptions, and some dressing up. We have taken nearly all mention of RDNA out, except for a couple places where it is appropriate. We have made sure that any new people visiting the website will NOT automatically assume that the OMS speaks for anyone but itself as an independent entity and an "autonomous collective" of Reformed Druidry.

We will also be adding a "dedication" page that will list ALL of our sources of inspiration, of which the Reform is a significant one -hopefully in the next week or so. This is a work-in-progress, and by no means finished...

We are now an independent entity, yet still consider ourselves a part of the Reform and the American Druid Family--it's like we moved out of the house, but we are still in the neighborhood...

We realized that any closer relationship (as we were originally planning) is now a fruitless endeavor, as there are irreconcilable differences between ourselves and the very outspoken schism of the "N"-RDNA...and we are not really sure exactly what the "silent majority" actually feels, so...

Although the group entity of OMS has done this, this does not mean that as individuals we can't still remain connected with the friends we have made in the RDNA. There are some really nice people in here that some of us would like to stay in touch with...

Those of you OMSers who choose to leave all this behind are free to leave the RDNAtalk group, and those who wish to remain here may do so, that decision is up to you as individuals. There is no more group requirement of any kind for you to be involved herein.

As we have been told many times by the Reform, we are perfectly capable of standing on our own as an independent entity, and I think we will all come out of this stronger and more grounded than before.

Blessings,
Ceridwen /|\

Hazelnut Mother Grove: News from California

The Abbott's Inn School of Magick is open once again!

The Abbott's Inn School of Magick was founded 33 years ago in Berkeley, CA. I founded the school because I felt there was a need to teach the magickal arts in a kindly, playful, and gentle way. Whenever possible I would engender humor and whimsy into the subject matter. The classes were more like workshops, where the students were encouraged to on occasion to teach the teacher. Sometimes there would be at least 10 people in the class. We would go around the room and each person would tell the group why they were interested in a certain arcane subject. There were a lot of people who would want one-on-one classes. As time went on there would be other teachers teaching other classes. The reason why it was called the Abbott's Inn School of Magick was because sometimes the classes would have no time limit and those present would stay until the wee hours. Thus the concept of an inn.

Today in 2003 I would like to teach in much the same style and encourage others to join the Inn and teach as well. Today there is a need to learn the magickal arts, to use this knowledge for practical purpose. I hope that I and others can help you in this regard.

Signed,

Stephen W. Abbott, AD
Dean and Founder of the Abbott's Inn School of Magick

Duir de Danu Grove: News from California

What the coming harvest means to me is the ready availability of a lot of my favorite fruits and vegetables. Corn on the cob, that all-American staple is available for a good price. Nectarines and plums are in abundance. My friend's tomatoes are ripening, and she usually brings over a few for me to savor.

Tegwedd ShadowDancer
Chronicler and Co-ArchDruid of Duir de Danu Grove, the South Bay Grove

Poison Oak Grove: News from California

Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

It has been quite active at Poison Oak Grove this past season.

The water situation is being worked out with the tenant of the main house so the driplines to the sacred trees up at the Grove site will stay running when the weather is hot. And soon we will have our own direct hookup to the top of the hill.

Undaunted by the demise of the White Alders we have purchased a new Himalayan Birch to go in the East direction of the Grove trees. The Himalayan Birch was recommended by the nursery as better able to cope with hot weather than the European Birch, which needs cold. I asked the nursery about planting in threes, which Emmon had said he was told to do with Birches, and he had never heard of that. I do know that since Birches like water, three would require more than one (which is perhaps why the Alders didn't thrive, in addition of having a particularly hot summer last without the benefit of a continuous drip until they had gotten established). Keeping that in mind I regretfully broke with the tradition of three Birches that goes back to '81 for the well-being of the tree.

With Poison Oak Grove now being over a year old now it seemed like it might be a good time for grove elections. It has been RDNA tradition to hold elections on between the Fall Equinox and Samhain Eve with the new officers assuming their roles Samhain day.

Poison Oak grove is looking at the upholding the long tradition of holding a Samhain vigil this year. We would hold a regular service with the last waters of life of the year at or just before sun down, vigil at the cabin with food and drink, good conversation, and cheer, and at sun up hold the Samhain service when the Third Orders exchange their red ribbons of office for white, and the waters in the chalice would be replaced the waters of sleep. This would take place, deities willing, the night of Nov. 1.

Famous Irish harper Patrick Ball is playing at the Freight and Salvage in Berkeley, and will be telling Samhain stories the same night as our vigil, Nov. 1. We might get industrious (overly zealous?) and do the sundown service, go to the concert, and come back for the vigil.

Grove member Stacey was invited to the board meeting between the Orinda Park and Rec Foundation and the Muir Heritage Land Trust, the organizations who now oversee the land that the Grove site is on. It took place on Emmon's property and they hiked the perimeter along Miner Road, to the Orinda Highlands, back down the hill

Member Stacey has also acquired a new Druid Mobile and requests Enbarr, magical steed of the Manannan mac Lir, to keep it running well and smoothly, and to watch over and keep it safe from harm.

Gandalf's Reflections On The Arts Zymurgical

By Gandalf, Amon Sul Grove

The Discovery of Beer

There are those who claim that one of the main reasons that our distant ancestors gave up their nomadic ways and began the practice of agriculture was to assure a supply of grain for the making of beer. Think of a time, eons ago, when our ancestors had learned to use fire and to make storage containers (tightly woven baskets or clay pots). Wild grain had been gathered and stored. Water was added to soften the grain. For some reason the grain was not eaten and sat for a day or two. Someone realized that the grain might be saved if it was dried over the fire. After being roasted, the grain had an odd sweetness to it. When it was needed, the grain was once again put in to soak. Someone drank the water and/or ate the uncooked grain and it was good. Grain gathering became a major activity. Someone discovered the cause and effect relationship between covering grain with dirt and new plants sprouting. One of the great things about it was that after you made the beer, you still got to eat the grain. What a concept! Why wander around taking your chances on where your next meal might come from when you could get drunk and eat well at the same time?

The Basics

Yeast are fungi that break down sugar molecules and by doing so produce alcohol and carbon dioxide. When one works out the physics involved, this molecular division process results in a release of energy that is used for metabolic and reproductive processes. Try this link if you are interested in the underlying science:

http://www.yeastgenome.org/VL-yeast.html.

Home Brewing and Vinting

First and foremost, this is not rocket science. There is an abundance of websites that are dedicated to beer and winemaking. Most stores that sell equipment and supplies also stock books. You can probably get everything you need for thirty to forty dollars. If you stay with it, you'll recoup your investment in a short time. You will know exactly what's in your libation. There's also a genuine satisfaction in drinking something that you made yourself.

Equipment Basics

If you have access to a major metropolitan area, there is almost certainly a location that carries everything that you need. If you are really out in the boonies, everything is also available through the Internet. The following is a list of essentials:

Primary fermenter. I used a plastic garbage can for a long time. A few years ago, the place that I get my supplies started stocking Ale Pales which are essentially seven gallon plastic buckets that have a spigot near the bottom. They have a bail, which makes them easy to pick up, and the spigot facilitates racking off (draining).

Secondary fermenter. Not an absolute necessity, but helpful for many projects. Usually a five gallon bottled water jug. The use of a secondary fermenter requires an airlock, because alcohol turns to vinegar with prolonged exposure to air. Since secondary fermentation still involves the production of carbon dioxide, any air in the container is forced out and the carbon dioxide protects whatever you are making. Using secondary fermenters produces a clearer product that has less sediment. Beer that is made using a secondary fermenter may take longer to build up a head.

Hydrometer. A hydrometer measures the specific gravity (SG) of the mix and indicates the potential strength of the end product (potential being the term because all of the sugar is not processed by the yeast). Bottling beer at the correct SG is essential to having the right amount of carbonation. A word of caution: malt liquors (beers with over six percent alcohol) are often a recipe for a hangover. I usually make mine at four-five percent. In making wine, knowing the potential strength is important for predicting whether or not the wine will be dry or sweet. The maximum alcohol content that can be achieved through natural process is eighteen percent, but that's under ideal conditions. Taking the SG to a potential of eleven will usually produce a relatively dry wine. Anything over fourteen may taste syrupy.

Beer containers. The best containers are rubber-stoppered bottles such as those used for Grolsch and Kulmbacher. That way, if you bottle with a little too much residual sugar, the excess gas forces its way through the gasket. No exploding bottles or beer that spews out when opened. It's also an excuse to drink some good imported beer. I originally used quart bottles. However, since there's usually some sediment in homemade beer, sometimes the second pint was a little murky. Twelve ounce returnable bottles can also be used (no twist offs). Bottles, caps, and capping tools are sold by most suppliers. The basic math for a five-gallon batch is 20 quarts, 40 pints, or about 53 twelve-ouncers. A few years ago, I inherited an old refrigerator.

For about two hundred dollars I was able to convert it to a draft beer dispenser. The home brew goes into five gallon Cornelius kegs (their primary use is for fountain soft drinks).

Wine containers. Once again, this is an excuse to indulge oneself. If you frequent your local pub, the bartender may also be able to help you out. Especially if you have demonstrated that Tipping is not a city in China. If my math is correct on the metric conversion, you'll need around twenty-seven bottles for a five-gallon batch. There are different types of wine bottles and some work better than others, primarily due to sedimentation issues. The best bottles are the tapered ones that many German wines come in. Sherry bottles do not work as well work because the air has a tendency to bubble as it goes in stirring up the sediment.

Boiling pot. Unless you are really into beer making, you'll be using malt extract, which needs to be boiled. When making wine, an alternative to using sulfites (which I am allergic to) is to bring the wort (your mix before fermentation) to a low boil.

Stirring stick. During initial processing and primary fermentation, everything needs to be stirred a lot except for the last few days before racking off. I use a wooden spoon and dowel.

Funnel. Get one that has a groove in the side of the spout so that air can come out as liquid goes in.

Supplies

Beer. As mentioned, making beer usually involves malt extracts. Malt comes in a variety of shades from pale to dark and can be hopped or unhopped. What one uses is a matter of personal preference. Please note that even the light varieties will usually produce a beer that is darker than the American Pales that most of us are used to. The cans of malt sold by suppliers are intended to make five gallons. This is a manageable quantity that can be consumed while still fresh. The malt extract, by itself, will not have enough sugar to make the beer strong enough. I recommend powdered malt for the booster but in a pinch I've used regular sugar. Incidentally, most modern beers contain two drugs: alcohol and hops. The hops are one of the reasons that beer makes you sleepy. Hops are also a preservative (probably their original use). Since home brews are not pasteurized, the hop can be essential in extending their shelf life. If your supplier is well stocked, there will be a wide variety of hop available. Some brewers are very picky about their hops, but I've never found much difference between the different varieties. Hop is easy to grow but it needs to be trellised. The hop that I raise is a generic variety that I ordered from the Gurney Seed Company. Email me around March if you would like a root cutting.

Wine. I've never used the concentrates, so I cannot speak to results from their use. I've been fortunate enough to have access to real grapes (usually Concords but I have used whites). If there's a farmer's market in your community, check with the sellers there. Wine can also be made from a variety of other ingredients. There are those who scoff at non-grape wines, but I am not one of them. I have peaches, pears, apples, strawberries, and kiwi planted but they're not producing yet. A bushel of grapes is sufficient for five gallons of wine, but unless you have wine grapes, there won't be enough natural sugar to get the job done. I typically use plain old beet sugar for wine. Grapes are easy to grow but take time and need a lot of room. We've been at our current location four years and the first vines that I planted (Concords) are just starting to produce. If you know someone who grows grapes, the prunings can be used to start new vines. Once you get started, you have an unlimited supply. For the last two years I have been buying wine grape cuttings from this location: http://www.bunchgrapes.com/. I should be able to start propagating my own wine grapes by next year. I may even have a few Concord cuttings that I won't need. Email me around March if you're interested. Mead requires using some honey for sugar content and taste. I have blackberry mead in a secondary fermenter as I write this. Mead can also be flavored with spices such as ginger, cinnamon, and nutmeg.

Yeast. Once again, there are many varieties available and some individuals are very passionate about what they use. Since the basic process is the same, I'm pretty indifferent. I typically use a top fermenting beer yeast. Incidentally, it's easy to keep a starter bottle. Just stir up the sediment, fill a pint with it, and keep it the refrigerator until it's needed. Miscellaneous. If making wine, you'll need corks and a corking tool. There are many flavorings, clarifiers, chemicals, etc. available. I usually forego them.

The Process for Beer

Boil the malt using about three gallons of water. The boil takes about 45 minutes. If using unhopped malt, add hops at the beginning and end of the boil. Let the wort cool; add malt or sugar to obtain desired SG. Add yeast. If using a top fermenter, in about two days, the mix will develop a corona. Use a stainless steel strainer to skim off the solids in the corona. In about a week, the SG will drop to bottling level (.10). If not using a secondary fermenter, rack off and bottle. If using a secondary fermenter, rack off and airlock. Let settle for about a month or so, rack off, add priming sugar to get mix to .10 SG, and then bottle. Store in a cool, dark place if you have one. In 2-4 weeks sufficient additional fermentation should have occurred to build up a head. Getting the head right is one of the most difficult parts of beer making. If you're using resealable containers, you can reprime if you don't get enough carbonation. If you're using screw caps and you get to much carbonation, you can loosen them and let them sit for an hour or two and then reseal. Rubber stoppered bottles will bleed off any excess carbonation. Since there will always be some sediment, pouring requires a steady hand and practice. When making beer, it may be a good idea to not start out trying to make Pales. I've found Ambers and Darks to be much easier.

The Process for Wine

I usually puree the grapes in a blender and then heat them to a low boil. Let cool. Some water can be added but you have to careful or the end product will lack color and body. Add yeast. In a few days the solids will begin to float to the top. Skim off with a stainless steel strainer. If you are not using a secondary fermenter, bottle at around 10 SG. If using a secondary

fermenter, rack off and airlock. Two months in the secondary fermenter is usually sufficient but I've left it longer. Wine should be stored on its side so that the corks stay moist. To deal with sedimentation, shake the bottle and let it sit upright for a few weeks before opening. Uncork and rack off the entire bottle. Once again, a steady hand is beneficial.

Potcheen

Whiskey is essentially distilled beer and brandy is distilled wine. Unfortunately, in the United States, making your own spirits, even for personal use, is illegal. However, I'm getting tired of boiling the hell out green beans in a water bath canner to get them properly sterilized when half as much time in a pressure canner would get the job done. Pressure canners are also easily converted to pot stills. Be sure to spend the extra money for stainless steel. A friend of mine had an aluminum pot still and although it wasn't a poisoning hazard, his product had a definite metallic taste. Do some research before building a still. Lead poisoning is a serious hazard. I no longer drink moonshine unless I personally know the person who made it. Two drinks and you can go blind or die!

The Internet has a lot of designs for making refractory stills and some suppliers are selling them for around three hundred dollars. Refractory stills are much more efficient, producing an output that is up to 170 proof with a single run. Pot stills usually require triple distillation to achieve a final product that is around 120 proof (hence the designation XXX). My understanding is that there is pending litigation about the legality of selling refractory stills. My suggestion is, if you buy one, do so in person and pay cash. Otherwise there will be a shipping or credit card trail that might be used to track you down if the federal government and liquor lobby prevail. It is relatively easy and inexpensive to get a permit to make ethanol for fuel, which then makes your still legal. However, once again, you are on record as owning a still. The law requires that anything removed from the premises must be denatured (rendered undrinkable).

Cleaning Up

In general, zymurgy is a messy process. Many books and articles on home fermentation dwell at great length on all kinds of sterilization activities that involve chemical compounds of questionable utility. Zymurgy had been around for millennia before microbes were ever identified. In over thirty years of practice, the only time I ever lost anything was when I used some ground fall apples to make applejack and I didn't boil the mixture first. That was clearly an error on my part. Soap should be used sparingly. Small traces of soap can throw off the taste. Soap also impairs the ability of beer to make a good head. I use lots of hot water and paper towels.

Epilogue

The preceding is an overview. Zymurgy is a learn-by-doing art. Almost everyone who practices it has the occasional batch that doesn't taste very good. However, considering some of the commercial products that I've had, even my failures have their counterparts in the marketplace. Even if the taste is a little off, the alcohol is still there. Just remember that, with modern techniques, what you will be drinking is almost certainly much better than some of the stuff that the ancients had.

A Druidic Vision of the World

A Commentary Series
Order of Whiteoak (Ord na Darach Gile)
Contact: Whiteoak@ziplip.com
Web: http://www.geocities.com/ordnadarachgile

There has been much debate in regards to White Oak's letter entitled "The Reinstatement of Truth" in the Druid community. Some have said that we, as Druids, should stick to spiritual matters and stay out of politics. The ancient Druids were however advisors to the kings. I feel that this letter is keeping in that tradition. --Ed.

* * *

In the spirit of Service and Involvement that is so much a part of contemporary Druidism, members of The Order of the Whiteoak have decided to honor a request to present our vision of the World as it Could Be in response to our understanding of the World as it Is. We have chosen to do so by addressing some of what we consider the most pressing national and international concerns of our time in a series of letters that express our understanding of the problems that exist and our vision for possible solutions. The following is the first of these letters.

August 27, 2003

The Reinstatement of Truth

One of the prime tenets of all disciplines of contemporary Druidism is the honor of the virtue of Truth. By our estimation, the viability of any governing body or political administration must be judged by the degree of trust that may be placed with the public servants in power. We live in a time of governance by an administration that places this sacred tenet in low esteem, and has betrayed the trust of the public it serves in numerous ways.

In the highest military and civil branches of our government, there has been the deliberate creation of an atmosphere that encourages only the reporting of information that supports the political agendas of the administration in power. Concurrently, information and intelligence that runs counter to that agenda has been ignored, obfuscated, and buried under the excuse of national security. Lies, fictions and exaggerations have been promoted and widely distributed to encourage warfare in Iraq, then excused as error or as a justifiable means to the administration's political ends.

The consideration of Truth in the decision making process is valued only when it supports the political goals of this administration and its few international allies. To our sorrow, we observe this lack of honor for the Truth becoming an acceptable habit practiced not only by those who hold power but by those who seek it, and as an example set by of our leadership, becoming more prevalent in all areas of our national public life. This lack of appropriate ethical behavior is evidenced not only in the promotion of the ongoing war in Iraq, but in the more general "War on Terrorism", and in policy building in the areas of civil rights, education, the rebuilding of the economy, and the protection and stewardship of national and world natural resources and ecological concerns. A brief list of insults to the ideal of Truth by this administration includes but is not limited to:

The deliberate use of fraudulent documents presented publicly by the President, notably in the State of the Union address, to gather public support for the war in Iraq...

Gross exaggerations, inaccuracies and misleading statements presented to the United Nations as fact in the United States' case for a legitimate war to overthrow the government of Saddam Hussein...

The administration's continued assertion of unprovable and unlikely connections between Hussein and Al Qaida...

The administration's attempts to circumvent the Constitution with the Patriot Act and the proposed Patriot Act II in an effort to convince the public that giving up our most precious civil rights would make us somehow safer...

This administration's refusal to release information about meetings concerning the establishment of a national energy policy where representatives of corporations such as Enron and Halliburton were present as consultants...

In spite of overwhelming scientific evidence of the damage still being caused to the environment by ecologically unsound business practices of major corporations, this administration still ignores the public interest in favor of increased profits for corporate cronies...

The use of the slogan "leave no child behind" as a description of a desperately underfunded and gutted education program that is instead leaving so many children behind...

Our vision of the world that could and should be includes a return to the understanding that as servants of the electorate, the powers that be are accountable for Truth in all facets of governance. With the clear understanding that the intelligence community must keep some state secrets secure, we envision an ethic in force that demands Truth in the use and gathering of this secure information. We envision an ethic in force that makes Truth an absolute imperative in the public administration of our laws and processes. We envision a world in which the ability to determine and act on and in Truth is a prime factor in deciding who will be elected to serve. We envision a world in which Truth is not used by the governing bodies only when it is convenient, and where lies are not used for expedience in place of the Truth.

While it is still True that in our form of government the authority to govern is still subject to the will of the People, our vision of the world as it could be includes higher involvement and an assumption of responsibility for our national fate by the governed. The Order of Whiteoak members join with all the other voices that call for accountability from our current administration on these breaches of the ethic of Truth.

As contemporary followers of the Druid Path, we function in a society where Druids are no longer institutional advisors to those in the highest seats of power. We are therefore obliged to make our voices heard as individuals and from the combined voices of our Order to help fulfill our ethic of Service to Truth. We stand not only with other followers of our discipline, but also with those who are issuing this demand from other faiths, as Truth is held as a prime tenet of all faiths.

We refer you to one of our honored wisdoms from the ancient Triads of Ireland that resonates with the Truth in all faiths:

"Three ruins of a tribe: a lying chief, a false judge, a priest fond of refusing." --- The Triads of Ireland, 96.

The Order of Whiteoak

Permission is granted to repost as long as nothing is altered or removed.

Mystifying Celtic Board Games

By Mike Scharding, DC Grove

It appears that the Celts played many types of board games before the advent of Cards and Chess in the 2nd Millennium from the Middle East via the Caliphate. However, as usual, they never bothered to write down the rules for posterity. As a result when boards and tantalizingly incomplete folklore references were uncovered, no modern archaeologist has been able to very clearly explain which named game went with which board or rules. Where experts disagree, the rest of us can throw in our own guesses; and a result is a confusion of websites with contradictory rules for games of the same name. I'll try to give you the web-sites, possible rules and variations and then let you figure out your own satisfactory method of play.

One school of thought claims that all games of chance (drawing lots, spinning wheels, dice, dominoes, etc.) are derived from forms of divination by the common masses, and that some boards were designed to keep track of the score from these rolls. Another branch of board games were an imitation of deciding hunting strategies in the dirt, replication of real battles or children's playground fights; such as chess, checkers, fox and geese, tafl, and the Celtic board games in this article. There may well have been some mystical elements, or divine intentions that could be derived from the outcome of the games. Disputes could be settled over board games, rather than resorting to arms.

Hnefatafl

This is not strictly a Celtic game, but one introduced from the various Scandinavian invasions from the 5th century onwards, and likely spread throughout the British Isles. It soon died out with the advent of chess as a strategy game of choice for nobility and the rise of mercenary armies instead of brotherhood bands, and the rules are also a bit hazy, but have passably been reassembled in the 20th century, although some may be actual new creations unlike the original. Many of the following Celtic board set-ups are sometimes postulated to be variants of Tafl, so we might as well explain its rules first.

There are different sized boards, and different distribution of pieces, but the generally theory is that there is a "king" in the center, with a few bodyguards around him, and about twice as many enemies lined up at the edge of the board. The king's strategy is to escape to the edge (or corner of the board for an extra challenge). The enemy's strategy is to capture the king. Both sides proceed by alternate turns. Captures are made by either side by moving two of their pieces such that they are on directly opposite sides of their opponent's piece (not diagonally), which is then removed from the board. I call this "squeezing" or "pinching" them. All pieces move like rooks in chess and can move horizontally or vertically, as many spaces as they wish, so long as no one is in the way. There are many variations that try to limit the inherent advantage of the king slipping through the net of the enemy to freedom.

Possible rule additions:

Only the king can occupy the center or the corner spaces. King must be captured on all four sides.

The enemy cannot occupy both squares adjacent to a corner at the same time (diagonally one square away is fine, I think).

A piece can be "squeezed" against a corner square or the center square by a single piece on the opposite side. A player may move into and rest on a space between two of the pieces of the opponent, without dying, in effect, requiring the surrounding opponent to move away and then back to effect the capture.

The king and his defenders cannot enter the original squares held by the defenders at the beginning of the game.

A 22 page illustrated historical treaties of the Tafl family, its origins, and variants on huge and small boards is available at:

http://user.tninet.se/~jgd996c/hnefatafl/hnefatafl.html

Full page Tafl variant board to experiment with. http://www.dregate.org/tafl.pdf

Another Tafl 11 x 11 setup arrangement (labeled as "Gwyddbwyll") is at:

http://members.tripod.com/~thevole/game.html

Tafl boards for sale:

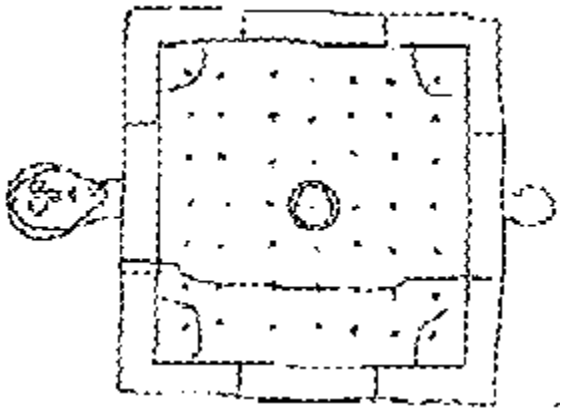
http://www.tarahill.com/tafl.html

Fidchell (Fithcheall) and Gwyddbwyll

Now we get to the murkier world of the Celtic board games. Fidchell and its apparent Welsh linguistic cognate, Gwyddbwyll, appear often in ancient legends of fairies and the recreation of nobility as seen at

http://www.seekermagazine.com/v0499/tongues.html and http://ipc.paganearth.com/diaryarticles/history/games.html.

There are also accounts of kings giving boards to honored guests, on the reservation that they never give it away or sell it, implying a kind of holy status to the gift. The translation, "wood knowledge," also implies that some type of wisdom can be gained from playing the game; and what that is, well, you'll have to find out and relate it to us.



A 7 x 7 board was discovered in 1932 in a crannog (lake dwelling) in Ballindary, Ireland up north with little holes drilled in it, and head-shapped pegs. (See the sketch to the right.) And so people tried to figure out whether it was Bran-dubh or Fidchell. Most have guessed it was Fidchell, and that it was basically a "mini-Tafl" board with king in the middle, two guards radiating from each side and three foes on each side of the board. The goal was likely to get the king from the "belly button" to the corner (or "arms and legs") where the special quarter circle was etched. Could this be a description of how the soul emanates from the center to the limbs?

Variations that have been suggested:

Players must answer a riddle or trivia question to move on their turn, possibly prepared in advance, according to agreed limits or a common agreed topic that both know well.

Have to throw a dice and get an even number to move on your turn, although I doubt how well this would work.

There is a Printable Fidchell Board:

http://users.indigo.net.au/darke/treubh/brandubh/lg_board_blank.jpg

Fidchell Boards for purchase:

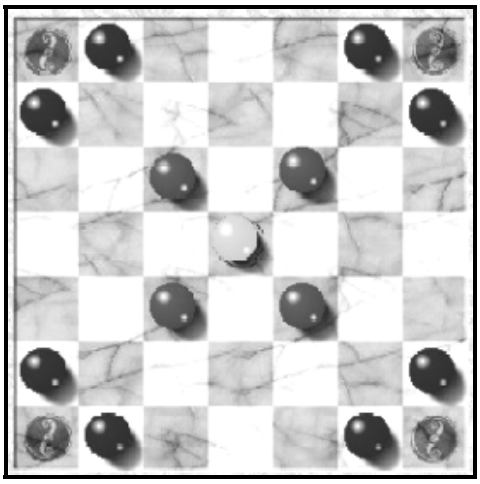
www.historicgames.com/wood.html

Bran-dubh and Ard Righ

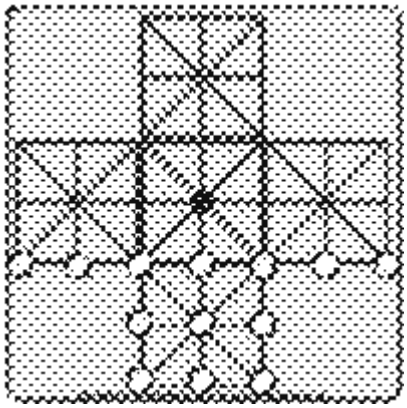
(Which is pronounced Bran-doo and Ard-ree)

We know even less about these variants on the same 7 x 7 board graphic as above. Bran-dubh means "Black raven" and Ard Righ means "high king" from the Gaelic. One reconstructed postulation that I liked has the king in the center and one prince on each diagonal from the king (four total). One baron flanks each side of the corner squares (i.e. 2 in each corner), thus eight barons in total. See this link for a visual presentation of this arrangement.

http://users.indigo.net.au/darke/treubh/brandubh/lg_board_pieces.jpg.



Barons go first. All pieces can move one square in any direction, but barons and princes could also move two diagonally if the spaces are empty. You capture by stepping on someone on a single space move, but the king is immune to attack. The goal of the game is for the barons to wipe out the young princes and visa-versa. Usually, the princes run and hide while the king runs about like a maddened rhinoceros taking out the barons. If any piece stays in the corner for two rounds it is considered to be lost in the woods and removed from the board. Only the king can go on the center square. Most games I played end up with the king defending a prince in a corner region, with the prince bouncing between two squares behind the king, forcing a draw. Thus, it was recommended that players play two games, each time switching positions and adding up their total surviving pieces at the conclusion of their likely draws to determine an overall victor.



Fox and Geese (or Deer and Hounds)

Fox and Geese is probably also a Viking game of the hunt (and there are a few others) that spread widely in Celtic lands. 13 geese (some with more) and one fox are on the board (some with two). All move one square at a time, horizontally and vertically (others allow a diagonal move without capture). The fox captures by leaping over the geese, but can only jump one goose at a time. Thus two geese lined up are an insurmountable barrier to him. The goal of the geese is to chorale the fox until it cannot move. The fox is trying to eat all the geese.

One such variant board is at:

http://www.stainess.freeserve.co.uk/images/fgtbl.jpg

How to Make the Boards:

These games have links to print out your own board that can be glued onto a stiff cardboard or sheet of plastic or glass. The playing pieces can be made from coins with affixed labels, colored glass baubles, draughts from checkers, pawns from chess, different colored rocks, candies, or carved wooden pieces. As far as I know, there are no on-line forums to play these games. Feel free to improvise the rules to make the games more balanced, or develop larger boards and new moves to widen the possibilities of play.

Naturally, the reconstructed rules may not resemble the original games, but then we'll probably never know those rules; but the gods appreciate the effort.

When Leaves Leave Us

By Mike the Fool, DC Grove

Those of us in the northern half of the American continent are treated to the spectacular cycle of the four seasons. With our Druidic tendency to learn from trees, I thought it appropriate to write a little about what I've raked up from our teachers. Trees and plants offer so many possible models to understand the world and our place in it. Naturally, it consists of only my own opinions.

The Science of Leaves

Leaves amaze us. They come in many shapes and sizes, some are single leafed, others are compound (like an ash or locust). It appears that the shape has much to do with strategy. The vascularization of the leaf (the plumbing) tends to be radiative from the stem and spine, and the farther you are from that "backbone," the harder it is to supply and receive nutrients. It's more efficient to keep the edge of the leaf equidistant from these veins. Thus you tend to see lobing like oaks, maples, and such rather than just round leafs. No leaf can utilize all the sunlight that falls on it, and by being slightly transparent and lobed, lower branches can pick up the excess that is missed.

If they are so wonderful, then why do leaves change color and fall off in the autumn? Actually leaves are never constant, they change from the first pale greens of spring, to the dark greens of summer, and then finish in a blaze of rainbow glory. This is all due to the varying concentration of chlorophyll, a vital green pigment, that is present in the leaves. This chemical aids in transforming water and carbon dioxide from the air into sugars and starch that will feed the rest of the tree, something science is still trying to imitate. There are also yellow to orange pigments hiding in those leaves, which are completely masked from view by the abundance of chlorophyll for most of the year.

In the fall after the fruits, nuts and seeds are ripened, due to dropping temperatures and declining sunlight, the tree turns off the mechanisms of the leaves, and begins to withdraw the sap from the leafs, and the chlorophyll is allowed to degenerate. The more hardy pigments like orange (carotene), yellow

(xanthophylls) or red (anthrocyanin) gradually become more visible. Different trees tend to have different colors in the fall, and the amount of sunlight or water and temperature will also affect the display. Aspen, birch and hickory tend to be yellow. Oaks are usually brown from the tannin. Beech can be bronze. Dogwood and sumacs range from purplish to red due to the anthrocyanin formed by trapped glucose. In order to slowly suffocate the leaf and protect the branch, a fragile cuticle of cells begins to build a barrier from the branch to the leaf. Eventually the leaf will be broken off by the wind or from its own disintegrating weight.

The Philosophy of Leaves

Leaves are the faces of the trees. Such tender, thin, flexible and fragile on the fringe of the organism. If they were made of the same sturdy materials as the branches, they would be unable to accomplish their tasks. It is their short, sad duty to be bombarded by the sun, munched on, blighted and live short lives, while sustaining the larger organism.

For me the leaves are representative of our interaction with the environment. We all have these little "antennas" out to bring in nourishment to different parts of our lives raining on us in all directions. Some of these leaves are attuned to sports, love, religion, food, politics, relationships, environment, entertainment, music, etc. The new ones on the top of our consciousness tend to get more attention and sunlight, while the older ones down a few stories, live in shade, doing the best they can to get the sun's eye. In such a way, our irregularities can nourish others near to us, allowing them to supplement our weaknesses with what they pick up.

Every season of the year has its rough storms and strong winds, but most of us have gone through a few periods of "autumn" when we have pulled away from our outer world, shunned tradition sources of comfort, withdrawing resources inside ourselves away from extremities, and hunkered down for a long winter of re-examination of our identity and roots. But these leaves, when they fall, also will land on the outside of our roots, enrichening the exterior soil; and next spring, new leaves will likely emerge in most of the same spots as before on the branches. Sometimes a branch or limb may not grow back in the spring, but that's the changing palate of life.

The leaves never know
Which leaf will be the first to fall...
Does the wind know?
--Soseki

Leaf Links

- www.stormfax.com/foliage has an excellent list of toll-free foliage hotlines for about 30 states from California to Georgia; useful to check before making those trips to the mountains to see the fall colors. It also has useful instructional pages for children.
- www.fs.fed.us/news/fallcolors is run by the USDA Forest Service that details the foliage conditions at national forests from Washington State all the way to Washington D.C.
- www.yankeefoliage.com is mostly geared for the North East from Yankee magazine, but it also has some arts and crafts ideas for using those leaves that you collect.

The Leaf Quiz

The following quiz is to test your knowledge of the more common trees of North America. I only chose trees that lose their leaves or needles in the fall in the upper half of the U.S. and Canada, since it's eternal spring down in the South. Although each genus may have dozens of distinctive species (such as Red Oak, White Oak, Burr Oak, etc.), I tried to pick the most identifiable species for this quiz. To check if your answer is correct, rest the cursor on the picture, and after a few seconds of lying still, a small box will pop up with the name of the leaf. Keep track of your score.

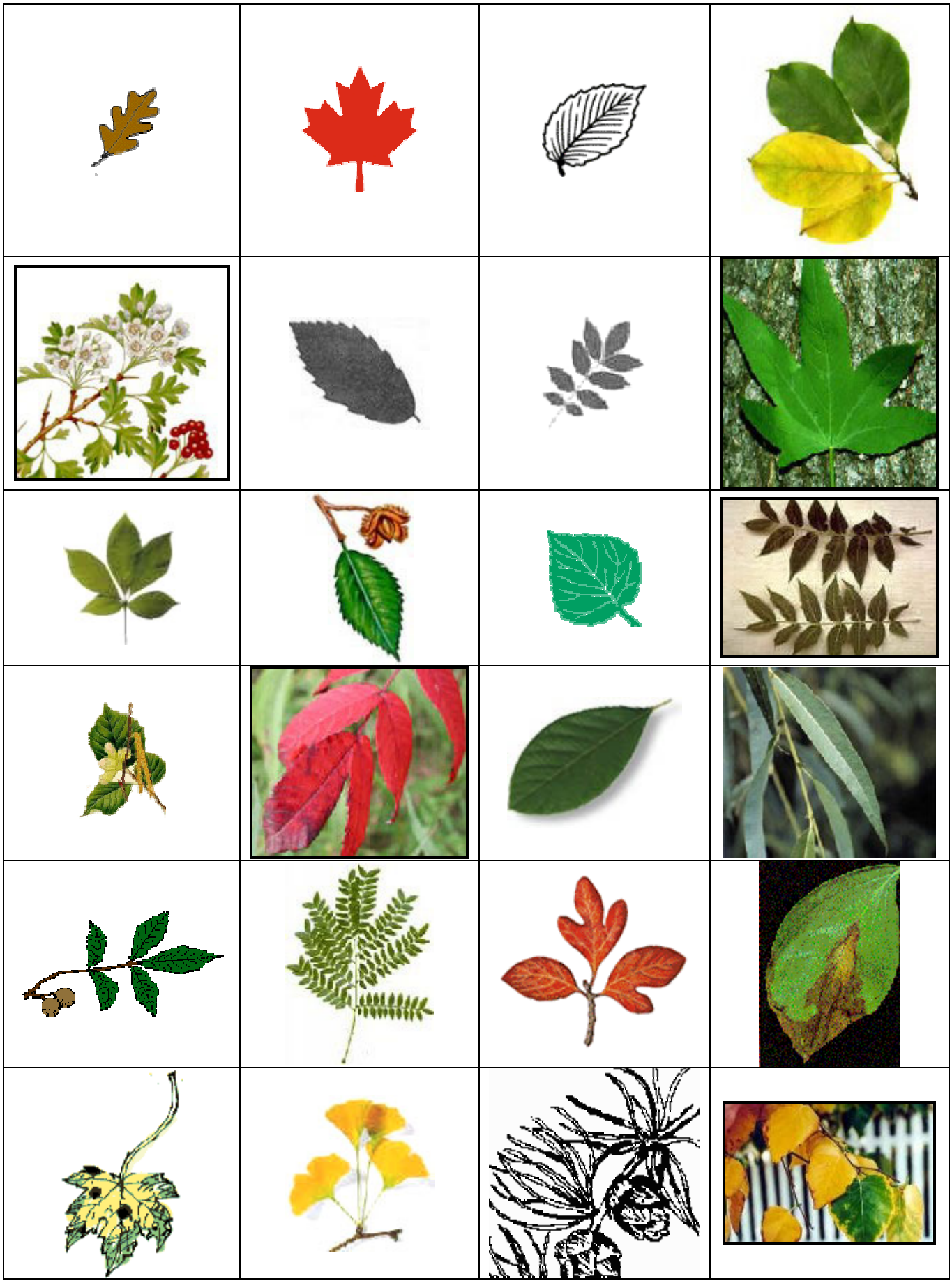
The leaf pictures are in a random order, but the following list of names is alphabetical: ash, beech, birch, cherry, chestnut, dogwood, elm, gingko, hawthorn, hazel, hickory, horse chestnut, larch, locust, magnolia, maple, oak, poplar, sassafras, sumac, sweetgum, sycamore, walnut, willow.

Scoring

21-24 Master of the woods.
15-20 You've obviously been outdoors a few times.
9-14 Average hiker
4-8 Average cubicle bound American (ACBA)
0-3 Hie ye to the forest, knave, and learn your trees!

Answers to the Pictures on the Next Page

Oak, maple, elm, magnolia
Hawthorn, chestnut, ash, sweetgum
Horse chestnut, beech, poplar, walnut
Hazel, sumac, cherry, willow
Pignut hickory, locust, sassafras, dogwood
Sycamore, gingko, larch,



The Soul of Juliana Spring

By Irony Sade
Copyright November 2000

A Druid Missal-Any is proud to present the fourth and second to last installment of the story of a young woman whose passion for the harp caused her to sell her soul. The Missal-Any staff wishes to remind the readers that before selling your soul, to consider carefully all the consequences. Can you live with them? Can you die with them?

We also would like to apologize for repeated chapters in the snail mail and email versions from the Lughnasadh issue. The Missal-Any had become a bit missal-aneous between the web and hard copy versions.

Chapter Twelve

The wetlands behind my forest rose and fell with the changing water table. A family of wood ducks moved into a dying soft maple, and I watched each May to see their chicks take their kamikaze leap of faith. The young ones hatch in a hole fifty feet up the trunk and are raised there by their long-suffering parents. When the ducklings decide they are ready to leave, they scramble to the opening and tumble out. They then have but moments in which to learn to fly. Each spring I sat watching in the moss, and the terror and the joy of each plummet peeled years from off my heart.

The young lady who had sold me her soul was making the most of those years. While Sam drilled and researched his way toward twin degrees, Juliana played. She studied, practiced, improved, discovered, and soon she was herself discovered. The fiddle player of Sheebeg Sheemore was quitting the band, and the group's manager had offered her his place. "What do you think?" She asked over the crackling phone from Seattle, "Should I take it? "

"That depends on what you want."

"What do you mean?"

"Do you want to be a popular, successful, possibly rich and famous musician? Or do you want to be the best harpist in the world?"

"I want to be the best in the world," she decided.

"When you know what to do."

"Yes, I guess so"

"Are you happy?" I chanced, just before she hung up.

"Deliriously! No worries at all!"

Chapter Thirteen

For several years after this she was traveling, six seasons in Ireland, three in Prague. She had moved beyond what any teacher could teach, into the boundless and stupefying realm of self-mastery. She learned something from every person she watched, heard, or played with, incorporated each skill into her own playing, and blossomed. She caught wind of an archaic bard in Scotland, of a novel percussive harping technique from Argentina. She traveled to see and to study, sharing always what she had learned.

A withering bout of Dengue Fever ended Sam's three-year tour as a village doctor in Papua New Guinea. He returned to the mid-west and started a family clinic, eventually buying a house with the profits. My own life and works progressed too, over that slow decade, but this is Juliana's story, not mine, so I shall not speak of those.

Late one December the couple invited me to spend the holidays with them.

"Julie is giving a Christmas concert," Sam told me. "And, well, we were thinking about getting married."

"After twelve years, I should certainly hope so!"

"We wondered if you would want to be in the ceremony."

"I would be delighted."

The concert taxed one's credulity. It was said that the old Celtic bards had three musical gifts: They could make an audience laugh, weep, or sleep dreamlessly at will, such was the power of their music. Juliana was almost that good. She played moods, memories, concert pieces, orchestral segments that were feats of pure skill, and songs that seemed dragged out of the listener instead of the harp. She played and played, and a hall full of musicians, students, artists, academics, fans, strangers, stragglers, and I sat in frozen wonder, our hearts scoured and our minds in awe at what her fingers drew from those shimmering chords.

When it was over I moved through the clamoring sea of admirers and stood beside the stage as the waves swept about her, saying the things that people always say when trying to express admiration of the inconceivable. Juliana stood flushed, as thin and tall as the day we had met, thanking them all with a quiet, blushing, angelic grace. One boy of ten or so was ushered forward between his parents and stood with fire in his eyes as they offered up their praise.

"My daddy says you must have sold your soul to play like that," he piped out between the thank-yous.

"Wow, wait," His father laughed, a hand on the boy's arm.

"That's not true, is it? It's just lots of hard work and practice, right?" His parents chuckled nervously. Juliana smiled.

"I practice all the time," she assured the young, earnest eyes. "Hours. Every day."

The boy nodded as he was led away, but I witnessed how the harpist shivered once his back was turned. The flush of exhilaration had drained from her. The crowds flowed on unheeding.

Chapter Fourteen

There was tension over the dinner table of Hammersmith and Spring that night. Sam looked silent questions at the both of us through the meal, while the conversation danced and wandered, avoiding things not said in threes. I retired to leave them alone after the pudding, but the walls were thin, and when I lay down to rest in the dark spare room, their words crept through the woodwork.

"But what if he's right?"

"This is what you've wanted your whole life, Ju."

"But what has it cost us?"

"What about it?"

"Then he asked that it was as if all the things I haven't thought of in ten years leapt back. I've been so busy playing I never thought about the price! Sam... I sold that man my soul! Do you have any idea what that means?"

"No more than you do, when you stop to think about it."

"What's going to happen to me?"

"Ju, That man's been the best friend either of us has ever had. Did you know he talked the Chair of the Admissions board into letting me enter that seven-year program when I was still a junior? I didn't find out till after I'd graduated! He's helped us with everything we've ever asked, been there when our own families were not around."

"And I owe him my soul."

"So what if you do? You thought about all that before you left college and decided it was worth the sacrifice."

"Well, now I'm thinking about it again. I don't want to go to Hell, Sam, or just stop when I die, or go wherever Druids believe soulless people go. How can we even be talking about belief? If he buys the things he must know what happens to them!"

"You're getting hysterical, Ju."

"No I'm not! I'm just scared."

"Would you rather give up your music?"

There was silence after that, or sounds too soft for me to hear through pine.

I turned slowly from the wall feeling every one of my years, and the bitter pit of all the things that men have ever called me. Judas, Efnisan, Heart-wrecker. What becomes of people who cannot forgive themselves?

The doorbell chimed.

Sam's soft tread moved to answer.

There was a crash, a scream, the sounds of struggle, and I was out the door and moving before I knew I had risen.

A man I had never seen was swearing in the hall. Sam sat upright but dazed against the sofa, blood coloring his sandy pale hair. Glass from the door was sprayed across the carpet. The intruder turned to face me. We both froze.

Juliana's father was skeleton thin, his flesh burned off by the flames within him. A long coat billowed round him like a dark, wild, robe, threadbare and whisper thin. He looked like a man to whom heat and cold were the same: both inconsequential to the climate inside. His arms and jaw writhed in a frenzy of continual motion, the left hand, claw-like, snaking out toward me. He waved an iron crucifix like a blunt, inverted sword, and his eyes blazed with something that I never hoped to see. I looked up at him.

"You," he whispered. His knees crouched like a fighter's.

A door slammed and locked behind me. Juliana's voice was frantic on the phone. I studied his shoulders and the angle of his feet, feeling the room about me, and hoping there was space to move.

"I come only to reclaim my daughter's soul, and God sees fit to set a devil against me, to test my will and courage. Well?" He roared, "Curse me, Druid! You cannot stand before the wrath of righteousness. Do your worst."

"I am your daughter's friend, Mr. Raskin, and no more a devil than you are."

Blood from Sam's scalp dribbled from the crucifix.

"You lie. I've studied you. Orgies in the woods, preaching to young students, scheming and smiling and striving to undo two thousand years of Christ's work on earth. You seduce people away from the Trinity with your Triple Goddess and blind them with your nature worship. You tell them the world is God's word made flesh and the Good Books be damned and manage to hide my daughter's movements from me across eleven years! Yes, I know you, you thrice damned Druid. Curse away before I strike you down."

"We both teach what we believe, Russell. No human being knows the full truth of reality. We each live as we think best and pay the price for that choice. You know this. Do not make it any worse."

There was a siren and the squeal of tires in the drive. Record timing, that.

"Clever, Druid, trying to turn my mind against me. But you are wrong. I know." He shuddered. "I know the will of God as well as you do, who seek to pervert it. And I know this too," he swung the cross in an all-encompassing arc. "The Lord has told me that no human hand can stop me in my mission. Not him on the floor, nor the foolish arm of the law, nor you neither, devil though you be. Curse away and meet your doom."

"Put down your weapon!" Came a voice from the door. Young, scared despite its training. "Throw down your weapon! -- Base, I need backup!"

"I will not curse you, Russell, and I will not let you touch your daughter. I have been her friend for eleven years, watched her through every storm, helped her realize a dream you would not even see. I have been more of a father to her than you have, and not you nor God can take that from me."

"I will take her from you now," he growled, advancing. (Drop your weapon, Mister!) "The care of her soul is in my hands, and takes precedent over any dreams of the flesh. God condones all actions undertaken in the interest of the soul. I will have her from you before she ends up just like her mother!" He spat these last words with a roiling hiss and raised the cross on high.

I do not often read people's minds. Sometimes I wish I never did at all.

"You bastard," I breathed. "What that you've done would your God condone?"

Russell Raskin halted mid stride. His eyes bulged. His throat gurgled something that would never be a word. His left side spasmed violently, and the force of it spun him twitching to the ground. The crucifix leapt from his hand, hiding its face in the carpet. Russell curled and splayed, and then lay still.

The policeman came forward, gun drawn.

"I would have shot him. Really, I would have."

Shut up, I willed him.

"What did you do to him?" He asked in awe.

"Nothing. Call an ambulance."

Chapter Fifteen

The beeps and muted bustle of the world's worst waiting room fought the smell of antiseptic for possession of the air, as I sat down to wait beside Juliana Spring. The slump of her tempered shoulders informed me she had no emotions left. Sam was sleeping down the hall, six stitches, no fracture, and an egg on his crown fit to hatch the Christmas turkey we had not had time to eat.

"Is he awake?" I offered, by way of conversation.

"What did you do to him?"

My eyes winced shut.

"I did nothing"

Nothing.

"How is he?"

"Doctor Sato says his mind is clear, but his body is completely wrecked. She says it was either a stroke or a heart attack, or possibly both at once. She says it's hard to tell because we don't have any medical records..."

She trailed off, gazing through the tiles. Her hands tore at a Styrofoam cup.

"The police searched his house for paperwork, but they couldn't find anything useful. Just junk and religious tracts...no records...no will..."

"They found..." Her voice died. She tried again.

"They found..."

I put my arm around her, but she was done with tears.

"They found my mother's teeth in the basement."

"I know."

"You know? Why do you always know?"

I shook my head.

"What will you do?" Said I, when the silence became too painful.

"He's dying, isn't he?"

"Yes," I responded, knowing it was true.

"When I suppose I'll have to forgive him."

"That is up to you."

She sniffed.

Nurses flitted past, pale as ghosts, busy as angels, each sacrificing their Christmas day to make the world a touch less painful. After a timeless tedium Juliana squeezed my hand.

"Thanks." Only a whisper, but sincere.

I smiled thinly.

"He wants to see you, you know," said Juliana suddenly.

"What?"

"That's what he said."

"He?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"He didn't say. He just asked me to send in the damned Druid if he came around."

I contemplated the machines, the smells of death and healing.

"Then I will go and see him."

Witness the Autumnal Equinox

Sunrise and Sunset at the UMass Sunwheel!
SUNRISE @ 6:45 a.m.,
SUNSET @ 6:00 p.m.
MONDAY & TUESDAY
SEPT. 22 & 23, 2003

Members of the University community and the general public are invited to witness the passing of the seasons by joining Prof. Judith Young of the U.Mass. Dept. of Astronomy to watch the Sun rise and set over the tall standing stones in the U.Mass. Sunwheel for the upcoming Autumnal Equinox.

Visitors for the sunrise viewing should arrive at 6:45 a.m., and visitors for the sunset viewing should arrive at 6:00 p.m. The sunrise and sunset events will be held on BOTH MONDAY and TUESDAY September 22 and 23, 2003. For those interested in learning about the sky, there will be a presentation that will include the cause of the seasons, the Sun's path in the sky, the phases of the Moon, and the story of building the Sunwheel. Bring your questions, your curiosity, and DRESS VERY WARMLY; a $3 donation is requested. Sunwheel T-shirts & sweatshirts will be available for purchase to help cover the cost of future stone paths at the site.

The exact instant of equinox is 6:47 a.m. EDT on Sept. 23, very close to sunrise on Sept. 23. On the equinox, any observer located on the Earth's equator will see the Sun pass directly overhead at local noon and that person will cast no shadow at noon. For all observers on Earth (excluding the N and S poles), the Sun on the equinox is up for 12 hours and down for 12 hours, illuminating all latitudes! (At the N and S poles, the Sun would encircle the horizon for 24 hours, either very slowly rising or very slowly setting for the entire day.) From the Sunwheel here in Amherst, the equinox Sun will be seen to rise and set through the stone portals in the East and West, a very lovely sight as we experienced last year. This year, the sky will be particularly beautiful in the early morning, with the waning crescent Moon visible before sunrise.

The U.Mass. Sunwheel is located south of Alumni Stadium, just off Rocky Hill Road. It can be easily reached from the center of Amherst, following Amity St. to the west, on the right hand side of the road about 1/4 mile after crossing University Drive. ALL VISITORS SHOULD WEAR WARM CLOTHING, SUITABLE FOR STANDING STILL ON WET OR SOGGY GROUND. In the event of rain, the events will be cancelled, and visitors are encouraged to visit the Sunwheel on their own. For more information on the U.Mass. Sunwheel, check out the web site at http://www.umass.edu/sunwheel/index2.html or call Judy Young at 413-545-4311. To arrange a Sunwheel visit for your class or group, please e-mail young@astro.umass.edu

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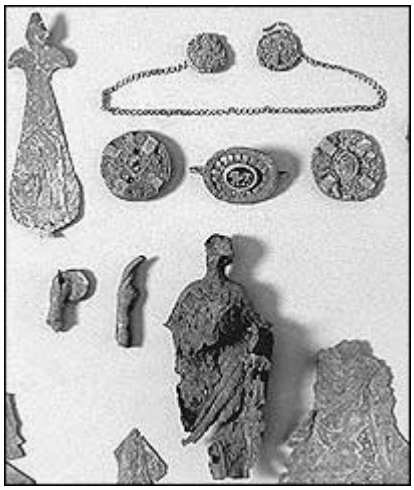

New Roman Goddess Found

A new Romano-British goddess called Senua has been identified among a buried hoard of gold and silver.

The goddess was part of a hoard discovered near Baldock, in Hertfordshire, the British Museum revealed on Monday.

Previously unheard of in the Roman world, she is believed to be a British version of the popular Roman deity Minerva, associated with wisdom, the crafts, healing and springs such as the spa at Bath.

British Museum specialist Ralph Jackson said: "Senua might have been likened to Minerva for any one or more of these perceived powers."

The hoard, found by a treasure hunter with a metal detector and now acquired by the museum, comprises 26 objects including gold jewelry, a silver figure and votive plaques of silver alloy and gold.

The museum said the treasure was buried in a manner that suggested it was being stored for safekeeping against possible raids.

One of the key pieces was the badly eroded 15 cm tall hollow silver figure identified as Senua dressed in a full-length garment, her left shoulder bare and her left arm supporting a fold of drapery.

Her hair is parted on the crown and formed into a bun on the nape of her neck, but erosion has taken away much of her arms, her feet and her face.

Although there was nothing on the statuette itself to identify it with Senua, a silver base for a figurine and inscribed with the goddess's name was found nearby and is believed to be the missing stand.

Along with the figure, several of the 19 plaques were also dedicated to Senua.

"Much work remains to be done on the hoard and on the investigation of its context, and it is likely there will be new and significant revelations," Mr. Jackson said.

"For now though, this find has furthered our understanding of religious practices at the time and added a new name to the Roman-British lexicon," he added.

The Baldock hoard, thought to date from the late 3rd or 4th Century AD, will go on display at the museum from the middle of September.

The hoard was discovered in September 2002.

Story from BBC NEWS:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr//1/hi/england/beds/bucks/herts/3199191.stm

Published: 2003/09/01 17:02:49 GMT

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Editor's Note:

One of our subscribers sent in this etymology of the name Senua that offers some insight to Her name:

"Senua" looks related to "senos, senâ, senon" (of which, only "senos" and "senâ" are attested, afaik, and "senon" would be a reconstructed neuter form), which means "old, ancient." The Old Irish word "sen" (whence the modern Gaelic "seann" and "sean") is obviously cognate, as is the word "hen," found in Cornish, Welsh, and Breton. It could be "sen-" + *uâ or "sen-" + *u- + -â (the latter being the typical feminine suffix), but neither Gaulish nor Proto-Celtic lexicons list a word or root like *uâ or *u-, so these would be reconstructions and I would have to guess at a possible meaning. It could also be a dialectical variant of "senâ" (requiring a dialect that conjugated "senos" as a u-stem noun, for which there is no attestation, but we are talking about Brittonic here, and not Gaulish, so maybe; I'm not as familiar with Brittonic and its dialects) in which case it would mean "The Ancient One" (feminine).

Adoltoues Dêuonôm tei eti suobo,

Uolcomaglos Nesâcnos
(Croman mac Nessa),
Arduo-Drûis Nemetionos,
Vlatimo-Drûis Nesâcnonôm
http://communities.msn.com/CromansGrove/_whatsnew.msnw

Austria's Road Safety Solution: The Druids

By Michael Leidig, Vienna
The Telegraph, London
Sunday, August 10, 2003

Druids have been brought in to reduce the number of accidents on Austria's worst stretches of autobahn.

The Druids have put up huge roadside monoliths to restore the natural flow of 'earth energy.' After the huge pillars of white quartz were put up beside a deadly stretch of road during a secret two-year trial, the number of fatal accidents fell from an average of six a year to zero.

Gerald Knobloch, who describes himself as an archdruid, used a divining rod to inspect the 300-metre stretch of Austria's A9 highway in Styria and restore "earth energy lines".

"I located dangerous elements that had disrupted the energy flow," he told the Sunday Telegraph. "The worst was a river which human interference had forced to flow against its natural direction. By erecting two stones of quartz each weighing more than a ton at the side of the road the energy lines were restored."

The pillars had a similar function to acupuncture, he said. "Acupuncture needles also restore broken energy lines. What acupuncture does for the body, the stones do for the environment."

Harald Dirnbacher, an engineer from the highway authority, admitted that they turned to Mr. Knobloch as a last resort. "We had put up signs to reduce speed, renewed the road surface and made bends more secure, but we still kept getting accidents. At that point we couldn't think of anything else to do and decided we might as well try anything.

I admit when we first looked at it (energy lines) we were doubtful. We didn't want people to know in case they laughed at us, so we kept the trial secret and small-scale. But it was really an amazing turnaround."

Scientists are skeptical of the claims. "Natural sciences need evidence. Whatever can't be measured, does not exist," said Georg Walach, a geophysics professor at Leoben University in southern Austria. "These energy lines and their flow cannot be grasped or measured, and their existence is therefore rejected by scientists."

However, the motorway authorities are extending the Druids' role across the country, paying them about $5,600 for each investigation—a fraction of the cost of resurfacing the road. "Of course, the fall in accidents could be due to something else, as we are continuously repairing the roads." Said Mr. Dirnbacher.

Resources

Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru, A Dictionary of the Welsh Language

Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru, the great Welsh historical dictionary, has been completed after over eighty years' work. The project began in 1921 with the first 27 years being spent on collecting material for the dictionary. The first 64-page part appeared in 1950, and the final part (the 61st) was published at the end of 2002. Complete sets (4 volumes) of the dictionary can now be ordered through bookshops or directly from the University of Wales Press for 150 pounds sterling until the end of February 2003, when the price will revert to the usual 190 pounds.

Work began in January 2002 on re-editing the A-B section of the Dictionary, first edited in a very concise manner in the 1950s, and the first draft of this work is available online at:
http://www.wales.ac.uk/dictionary/gpc_pdfs.htm.

The second edition will also be published in parts, and a shorter electronic version is also in preparation.

For full details, please see the Dictionary's website at: http://www.wales.ac.uk/dictionary/. [Note: demand for sets has been so great that some volumes are currently being reprinted. There may be a delay of several weeks.]

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Irish Trees: Myths, Legends & Folklore by Niall MacCoitir

(Trade Paperback; 22.50 Euro / 26.00 USD / 15.75 UK; 229 pages, with illustrations throughout
Hardback; 35.00 Euro / 40.25 USD / 24.50 UK)

Ancient Ireland was once heavily wooded and a squirrel could travel from Cork to Killarney without touching the ground. So it is no surprise that the mythology and folklore of trees were part of everyday life. A sprig of mountain ash tied to the tails of livestock kept the fairies from harming them. A staff of blackthorn was the best to have when out walking at night to ward off evil spirits.

This book, beautifully illustrated in specially-commissioned watercolours by Grania Langrishe, brings together the myths, legends and folklore associated with the native Irish trees. There are two main themes: the tree as a marker of important places, such as the royal site or holy well, and the role of different trees as sources of magical power in folk customs and traditions. Many 'powers' were common to different trees in spheres as diverse as fertility, magic, and the tree as a link between this world and the spiritual.

From Read Ireland @ Phibsboro Bookshop,
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Calendar

The Autumn Equinox will occur on September 23 at 3:47 a.m., Pacific Daylight Time. Grove celebrations will take place on Sunday, September 21at 4 p.m.

A Druid Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $8.00 and email subscriptions are free. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's post mail subscription free. Write to:

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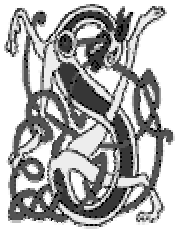
Samhain Y.R. XLI
Vol. 19 Number 7
October 28th, 2003 c.e.

Samhain Essay: Paying Respects

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any,
Samhain 1989
By Emmon Bodfish



amhain, Celtic New Years, the Day Between the Worlds, the Druid year starts on Samhain. The sun is half way between Autumn Equinox and Winter Solstice. Samhain marks the end of the harvest season. All fruit and grain not gathered in by Samhain Eve must be left in the fields to feed the birds and wild animals, the flocks of Cernunnos, and its vegetable life essence, its "spirit" becomes the property of "The Little People," "the Sidhi," and feeds them. (Is our word "fairy," derived from "fear an sidhi," meaning in proto-Gaelic "a person of the Sidhi," one of the little people?) Sidhi is pronounced in Gaelic as English "shee." A Banshee, the spirit that gives prophecies and mourns for the dead, means literally "a woman of the Sidhi."

Another folk tradition, probably from old Druid times, holds that "Pukas," mischievous spirits, will come out on Samhain night and steal the nourishing essence of any food crops left in the fields, or, if it is not to their liking, will despoil it. Their mythic descendents swarm out in the forms of hordes of trick-or-treaters and disguised, costumed revelers.

This is the night when the Other World, the world of the dead, the future souls, and of the ancestors, comes the closest to our world and "dimension hopping" is the easiest. It is a time to honor dead ancestors, and remember old friends. This was the "day of the dead" long before the Christian era. The dead were thought by the ancient Celts to have a winder and truer perspective on things than we mortals do, and to be able to advise their descendents and friends. They know all history, are aware of all forces and causes, and can intuit the future better than we. Pay your respects at graves or memorials, ask questions of departed friends, ancestors, or mentors. Leave food offerings for them at you Samhain Eve celebrations and vigils. Get out old photographs. Review the past, this pre-Samhain week, and pay old debts, spiritual or emotional. Find lost belongings; make amends. Then celebrate.

Editor's note:

Readers might have noticed quite a few reprinted lead articles this past year. It has been a year of changes for your editor with the death of her mother and the unfortunately all too often ensuing family strife. Republishing was not meant to be a cop-out, but a way to maintain the standard of the Missal-Any as set by its founder Emmon, as well as to publish his words and research, which still have worth today and provide inspiration and impetus for further study.

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Carleton awakens, stumbles and continues. A few weeks into the term we have a few interested new comers (most of whom are from my dorm, and some of whom I didn't meet until they came to a druid event). We had a nice little fire on the Equinox. Currently, after a week cold spell Carleton warmed up a bit and now there is a plague of Asian Beetles, (for those not familiar, they look a lot like ladybugs except they bite) locusts, and others. We're waiting for all the town's first born to be taken next.

Dover Grove: News from Massachussetts

Eric, former member of Digitalis Grove in Washington, DC, has settled into Dover MA and established the Dover Grove of the Quiet Reformed Druids of North America. Using the Silent Liturgy that he and Mike Scharding devised in DC, he will meet regularly with his outdoorsy neighbours, Betty and Bob, at their local apple orchard or at the hills around Farm Pond in the town of Sherborn nearby or the banks of the Charles River by the railroad tracks on this lookout perch. They naturally are using apple jack at the services. As for recruiting, they're not really seeking more members, but just wanted to let us know they're doing fine, but anyone or anything that is there at the time of a service is welcome to partake.

Oh, disappointingly, there are no white cliffs, as far as Eric can tell in town, like its namesake in England.

Hemlock Splinters Grove: News from New York

Dark the night
Bare the trees
Cold the wind outside.
Sleeps the light
Laughter flees
Since the day god died

Rowan-Oak Grove, MOCC: News from Oklahoma

rowan-oak grove will be holding its convocation at our samhain costume party. we will also be holding a day of the dead vigil on nov.1 as part of our samhain rites the classes this month deal with development and control of mental and emotional discipline and how they relate to the druid path.

grove membership was added to when my new neighbor joined our outer court congregation making the official count 36 offline. bro. werebear has joined our staff as secretary/treasurer,

enormously easing the amount of paperwork the arch druidess must do.

rowan-oak grove is also forming a band called the new age bards (at least till we decide on a better name) and will possibly in a couple of months have our debut performance at the gypsy coffeehouse, our fave hangout.

That's all for now...

m.s. white raven, arch-druidess
rowan-oak grove, tag for mocc

Poison Oak Grove: News from California

Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

Poison Oak Grove has held its first elections. Its new officers will assume their roles beginning Samhain for one year. The new officers are:

Archdruid: Stacey Weinberger

Preceptor Ignatz Fezman

Server Morag Bhann

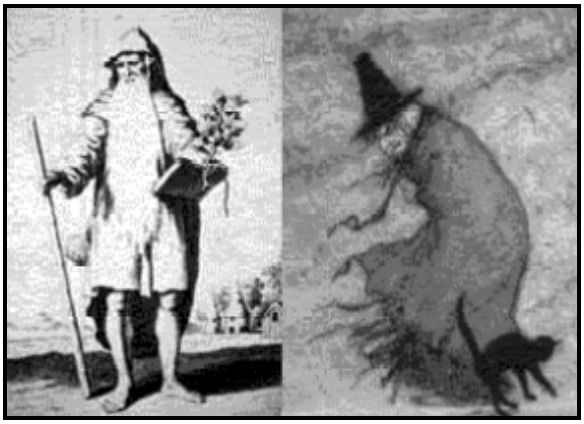
Based on the observation from last year that an abundance of acorns at the grove site meant a wet winter, we are keeping note whether this year's abundant crop will do the same. We are experimenting with learning to predict the weather based on nature, like what we assume the ancient Druids did.

Dalon Ap Landu Research Project

Stephen Crimmins, Carleton AD, has decided to compile a book of Dalon Ap Landu myths. (Yes, he knows that only 1 exists, so far.) He is looking for anybody interested in Dalon Ap Landu to add their own myth. As he sees it at the moment it would be best to vaguely follow the outline provided by Thomas Lee Harris Jr. (if he doesn't mind) provided in the Samhain 2002 edition of A Druid Missal-any. However, feel free to write myths unrelated to that story.

Other suggestions for myths; you may want to imbed jewels of wisdom (or not) within your story, or perhaps involve Dalon ap Landu in the history of your grove or your druidry (or not), perhaps even try to explain some of the mysteries of the RDNA (in truly mythical form) (or not). And don't worry if your myth contradicts with other myths (or not), it'll look more like a real cycle of myths.

If you are interested in contributing, or if you have questions, email Stephen @ crimmins at carleton.edu (for the next 9 months or so before Carleton kicks him out.)



Druidism and Wicca: a Comparison

By Daven (Member, Ord Draiochta na Uisnech)
Web: http://www.geocities.com/ordnadarachgile
Version 2.0 (Last updated 7-29-03)

***

In my contact with Druids from other groups I come across information occasionally that answers questions many of us in the RDNA have, in regards to who and what we are as druids and what do we tell others when they ask. Sister Rhiannon of Druid Heart Spirit Grove has addressed the question of what is he difference between Wicca and Druidism in an earlier Missal-Any (put in the issue.) This is an essay by Daven who gives another in depth view on the differences between Druidism and Wicca.

***

On first meeting a Druid, many Wiccans feel a bond - a commonality must exist. Normally the Wiccan will start talking about The Goddess, their Circle and so on and be somewhat lost when the Druid starts talking about the Triune Thought, the Triskel and Honor or other relevant terms who's meaning may not be immediately clear.

I feel that the confusion stems from misunderstandings and misconceptions. This article will attempt to explain some of these concepts that may confuse the Wiccan.

The Rede/The Law of Returns

Of all the differences that a Wiccan has with Druidism this is probably the most prevalent. In Druidism, there is no "rede." In fact, the only people that the Rede pertains to are those who ascribe to it, it is unique to Wiccans.

Most Wiccans profess some version of the familiar "an it harm none, do as you will" or another. They are truly shocked, confused and/or even irate when the Druid goes "That's nice" and disagrees that this moral guideline has anything to do with them. Some may even accuse the Druid of lacking morals.

Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, the moral concepts within The Law of Returns and the Rede, when boiled out of their archaic language, permeate Druidism. Normally Druids call this the Celtic Virtues. Generally these virtues are described as Honor, Loyalty, Hospitality, Honesty, Justice and Courage. These six principals permeate the entire body of Druidic thought and ritual.

Briefly stated the virtue of Honor requires one to adhere to their oaths and do the right thing, even if it will ultimately hurt others or oneself in the process. A Druid is obligated to remain true to friends, family and leaders thus exhibiting the virtue of Loyalty. Hospitality demands that a Druid be a good host when

guests are under one's roof. Honesty insists that one tell the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth to yourself, your gods and your people. Justice desires the Druid understands everyone has an inherent worth and that an assault to that worth demands recompense in one form or another. Courage for the Druid does not always wear a public face a-standing-strong-in-the-face-of-adversity, alone or with companions. Sometimes Courage is getting up and going about a daily routine when pain has worn one down without complaint or demur.

Outside of the scope of these six virtues, anything goes. Understand that the virtue of Justice demands that one consider the actions one is going to take before they are taken, since any harm to the inherent worth of another will demand that recompense be paid. It also covers many things like "The Law of Threefold Return." Justice, by necessity, is just. For actions that harm, you must pay a price, and actions that promote good things will pay good back to you. That's just. It acknowledges the divine in each and every person. It assures a truly committed society they don't have to fear a knife in the back, or a burglary. It makes sure that even enemies can sit down in a room together and be civil to one another.

It must be understood that the concept of Threefold Return came from Eastern Philosophy and is most closely associated with the Hindu and Buddhist concept of 'Karma.' There has never been anything similar to this concept in European thought.

These virtues do not preclude arguments or conflict. On the contrary, the Celts were some of the most combat-obsessed people we know. From myths we know Celts practiced blood feuds, had clan conflicts, wars. The individual Celt was proud, and fierce demands were made that self-independence was a supreme right. What the Celtic Virtues ensured were the continual functioning of an isolated tribal society.

Think about these concepts when applied to the current government. What if all leaders were truly loyal to those who swore loyalty to them? What if all those who swore loyalty to a leader were coerced by society to be faithful to that oath? What if a guest under someone's roof were guaranteed food and shelter? What if Justice was truly Just, not simply expedient or so concerned with the criminal's rights that crimes were un-recompensed?

This is the ethical standard of most modern Druids. Because it is not summed up in a couplet or long poem does not mean it's nonexistent. It is merely expressed in a different fashion.

Calling Quarters and Magic

Wiccan magic is concerned with projecting the willpower of the caster into the universe, normally through natural energy flows. Part of this magick and ritual is calling on the four quarters of the world, North, South, East and West. Generally there are classical Hermetic elements associated with those quarters, Air, Earth, Fire and Water. These elements give power and energy to the ritual and generally boost the "feel" of the ritual. Druidry is votive in nature, meaning that a critical component of the spirituality and magic is the relationship one has with the Gods, for they are never ordered or commanded, but they are petitioned as friends and companions.

Under very specific circumstances Druids occasionally used the same structure of calling upon the Natural World. Even then it's vastly different from "standard" Wiccan practices. In Druidic rituals the Land, Sea and Sky are called upon.

Each of the Three Realms has specific attributes and very definite associations with them. If I were to ask a Wiccan where the Gods lived, many would not be able to tell me, for the Elemental Quarters hold no answer. But ask a Druid who also uses and understands the Three Realms in a cosmological sense, and the immediate answer will be "The Sky."

Each Realm is associated with a time of life, a stage of development and a mental quality, as well as having several other associations, ranging from Magical to the Time of day.

The Sea is the time before time, when we are not born. All life comes from the Sea. It is where we go at death; it is the source of Dreams and Inspiration. It is the realm that is traveled over to get anyplace when coming from or going to Ireland.

The Land is the here-now. It is this moment, life, and creation, all that is around us. It is fertility, conscious thought, the Universe. All science fits into the realm of the Land, for it is all concerned with the physical realm.

The Sky is the dwelling place of the Gods, the super-conscious, logic and thought. It is where logical ideas come from, and it is a place we hope to gain eventually, to become one with the Gods. It is also where Divine Inspiration comes from.

Every single one of the associations for the elements in the classic Hermetic elemental structure exist in Druidic belief and practice within the three Realms. They are not broken out into separate aspects or spheres as they are in Wiccan beliefs and practices. There are no elementals, deva of the elementals, rulers of the elements or realms in Druidic belief or practice. The realms have no spirits, no consciousness of mystical places, and certainly no angels associated with them because the realms simply are all encompassing. For Druids, it would be like trying to reduce the entire universe down to one human consciousness.

Which brings us to Druidic magic. It's different in some very fundamental ways from Wiccan Magick.

In Wiccan magick, a Circle is cast, the Quarters are called, the Gods are (preferably) asked to bless the work, energy is raised and the spell is cast. After a while, the Wiccan will send that energy off with their desire "tacked on" to it. The intention being that the energy will work to bring their desire to pass.

A Druid, by contrast, is not raising energy. The Druid will invoke the Realms, invite the Gods to the ritual, possibly invoke the Hallows and Provinces (depending on the ritual structure the Druid uses) and then ask the Gods to do them a favor. For this, the Druid will offer food, service of body and/or mind to the Gods, a literal sacrifice to them. In one ritual to help me with a job, I dedicated a blood donation to the Red Cross to Lugh (for his Spear) and used that as my sacrifice to him for a favor I needed. In the same ritual, I baked the Dagda some bread and offered it to him and then gave it to the birds. It depends entirely on what you are willing to give and what the Gods want in return.

In this case, the reasoning is that as a druid, we are members of the Land. Things that could happen in the future belong to the Sky, where the Gods live. Therefore, it's easier for the Gods to make certain things come to pass than it is for us, since we are busy dealing with the now. So, asking the Gods to make an action more likely to happen is an efficient use of your energy. Nothing is free. The Gods will demand and have a right to demand a price from those who need something. If we want the object of the ritual, it makes sense for us to pay the price demanded in order to get it.

As my teacher pointed out to me, the Gods are reasonable. They won't demand anything that would decimate us to provide. If they did, it could be a test to see how strongly you are committed to gaining what you want. For example if a Druid was casting a spell to gain a new job, and barely had enough money to feed himself and his family, I doubt the Gods would demand gold from that Druid, mainly because the Druid probably doesn't have the means to gain the gold. They may demand a feast for themselves, which the Druid and his family would also share.

It should also be mentioned that witchcraft is a collection of granny-tales and native superstition, sometimes based in fact, but quite often based in protecting oneself from the Elves and Fairey. A Druid doesn't try to protect themselves from the realms of the Fairey, but rather strives to come to a partnership with those forces, so that they are working with the Druid, not against them. The High Magick in Wiccan practice is generally also influenced from other sources, most notably the Kabala of Judaism and the Ceremonial and Hermetic Magick of the Middle Ages. Druidic magic, rather than being "Do Steps A, B, C, D and E, in order to get outcome 78," is more of a give-and-take between working partners, a quid pro quo system of cause and effect.

Sacred Space and the Circle

Along with Magic, a concept that often confuses Wiccans when dealing with the Druid is the lack of a Circle in ritual. They point out that Stonehenge and other places similar to it are in a Circle, mounds are circular in shape, many Griannes are circular, and so too are the Celtic forts or duns. So why don't Druids use Circles?

It's because the creation of the Sacred Space is much different to a Druid. Since we are part of the Land, and the Land is everywhere and includes everything we see, touch, smell and taste, all that we interact with is sacred already. How can we, at the beginning of the ritual, sanctify that which is already sacred? Creating a "Sacred Space" is therefore redundant.

The Circle for a Druid is not for containment, as the Druid him/herself will become the container for the energy channeled into the ritual. It is simply an area that is set aside as "more sacred" than the surrounding area, or as a doorway through which other beings and ancestors can travel if they so choose.

The closest a Druid will come to this Wiccan ritual is to invoke the Ancient Provinces of Ireland. In this, once the Realms are invoked and the Gods invited, a Druid would call upon the Provinces of Ulster, Leinster, Munster and Connacht as well as the Center of Uisnech. The Druid will call upon the qualities associated with those provinces and use them to help in rituals. This is about as close to "calling the quarters" as Druidism gets. Each Order may use different processes in this case, and different representations. Most Druids stick with only invoking the Land, Sea and Sky.

Another reason Druids do not use a Circle is that a Circle excludes as well as includes. When a Circle is cast, the primary purpose is to contain the energy raised by the chanting, dancing, singing and other energy raising activities. Additionally, it protects the people inside the Circle from external antithetical influences, and in some cases it is designed to protect those outside the Circle from what is going on inside. The twin purposes of a Circle, containment and protection, would cut the Druid off from the very forces he wished to invoke for the ritual. Thus, most Druidic traditions discard the Wiccan concept of artificially designated "sacred spaces" altogether.

The Gods and Goddesses

One of the major differences that Wiccans need time to understand is that Druidism is not duo-theistic, but polytheistic. Duotheism sees One God and One Goddess, both of which contain all the qualities possible within them selves, including attributes that could be assigned to the other sex. In this view, Kali is the same Goddess as Rhiannon who is the same Goddess as Sif who is the same Goddess as Athena and Artemis and Demeter and so on and so forth.

In Druidism, the Gods and Goddesses are separate individuals. Each has his/her own personality, desires, jobs, spheres of influence and flaws. Lugh tends to be arrogant, The Dagda overconfident, and so on. There is also no Maiden-Mother-Crone equivalent deity in Druidic practice. This also restricts the Druid to the Celtic Pantheon, although there is some choice as to which Celtic pantheon Irish, Welsh or Gaulish.

Shoving all the Gods together in one divine lump would be analogous to saying that I am the same as you, after all, we are both human. You have the same wants, the same needs, the same drives, the same hobbies, the same thoughts and opinions simply because we have the same general shape. To a Druid, this is not only incomprehensible, but also laughable to the point of idiocy since the Gods are not cardboard cutouts of each other. It's asking for a lot of trouble from the Gods for a human to tell Them what They will and will not be.

I feel this is probably the greatest sticking point for most Wiccans during their initial encounter with Druidism. But it can be overcome through the use of mythology.

The Book of Shadows and Mythology

Druids have no Book of Shadows. We may, as individuals, have a journal of our growth as people and as Druids, a place where we put down our thoughts and feelings on different topics. It's our Journal, and it's up to the individual to keep up to date.

When a Druid first joins an order or group, s/he may be given a ritual book, outlining the ritual structure or framework for the rituals the group uses, or a list of rites to do by rote for each of the holidays that are to be celebrated. This book of ritual structure and liturgy is about all they are given. Much of the spiritual path they will have to discover on their own.

Now, this does not mean that they have to eat hemlock to discover that it's poisonous. On the contrary, each Druid is encouraged to read and study the body of work that is available on different topics and not to take anything on faith or because their mentor says so. Studying is a requirement, not just an activity.

The student Druid is expected to read mythology, to read books on subjects such as the Ogham, divination, ritual structure, to study the whys and wherefores of the practice. Along with that they will, in some cases, be required to write articles on what they have found out, even if every other Druid in existence has already discovered and published the same piece of information. The student will still be expected to try to find it on his or her own. There is nothing like the thrill of discovery to ensure an idea remains in the student's mind.

It has been stated in the past that mythology is the key to Druidism, and that can be true. Not only are there clues and hints as to the actual history of Ireland, but also there are statements as to a Deity's personality, likes and dislikes, what will please one or anger another. In addition, hidden in the myths is a wealth of information on the beliefs of modern Druids. What qualities do the Land, Sea and Sky have, where are the places of power, how can one divine from the flights of birds what will happen and other such gems?

Without this reading and study, these gems will be hidden from the student, and in all honesty the student who is unwilling to do the work will probably be dismissed from the ranks of the Druids. But, in addition to this study, Druidism is a way of life. It is something that will be reflected in every action and every

thing the Druid does. You may not be able to say that someone is a Druid, but once you know you will never mistake it for anything else.

Unfortunately, there are no "one book and I'm a Druid" books out there. True Druidism is a compilation of many different books, not all of them directly related to Druidism, each of them providing a part of the puzzle. It's the gathering of pieces and putting them together that is the quest and hallmark of the modern Druid.

History

In this section I wish to make one thing clear, I am Wiccan myself as well as being a Druid. I have very few illusions about Wicca and I'm simply stating what I know to be the only conclusion one can come to based on current facts. I am not trying to put Wicca down nor am I glossing over facts.

Gerald Gardner created Wicca. He didn't create it in its present form, for like every living thing, Wicca outgrew what he thought it was and changed to something not readily recognizable by him. Does this invalidate Wicca? Not at all. Does the fact that a radio was invented invalidate the walkie-talkie?

Wicca has a history that can only be traced back to the 1950's or so. Some scholars place the actual dates of Wicca's invention earlier, some later, but most agree that it was in the mid 1950's. This ultimately means that Wicca is not centuries old, going back to the Paleolithic caveman as some have claimed. No religion that we currently have goes back that far. As society changes, so too does it's religious institutions.

While Gardner pulled from multiple sources to make Wicca, he did pull a few elements from the Celtic practices based on what was believed at the time. But Wicca is not Celtic. Ian MacAnTsaoir and Dawn O'Laoghaire covered this particular point in detail in their essay "Why Wicca is not Celtic". [1]

Druidism has a documented history going back to the late 1600's and the Gentleman's Clubs and Societies of the time. John Tolland organized the first "Druid" Society in Europe, the Universal Druid Bond. From there, groups kept joining and splitting off, being created and dying, each with a kernel of Tolland's to start their particular brand of Druidism. The most recognizable group that is a direct line descendant of the UDB is the Order of Bards Ovates and Druids, or the OBOD. The OBOD and the Ancient Order of Druids stayed in existence through WWI and WWII and continue to the present.

In 1963 in Minnesota, the Reformed Druids of North America was formed, starting the first Druidic group on the American continent. With the focus shifting from a Fraternal order (which, admittedly, the descendants of the UDB grew out of) to being a scholarly order, modern Druidism was born. From humble beginnings as a protest against the requirement of Carleton College that there be religious services held for many school events with mandatory attendance, many new groups sprang into existence. The ADF (Ar nDraiocht Fein) started in the 1970's [Actually, in the early 1980s.] and spawned many splinter groups, The Henge of Keltria being the most famous and successful so far.

Modern Druids have a verifiable history that has been documented and researched. Druids do not claim straight-line descent from the Celts for that would be dishonest. We don't have to invent a history going back to the caves to justify our faith.

Tools

Tools do tend to be important to the Modern Druid. The tools aren't used the same way a Wiccan would use them.

The tools that are important to me are the Staff, Cauldron, Spear, Sword and Stone. Other Druids may disagree with this list. I have heard of other tool lists and certainly each Order will have their own valid ideas concerning what tools are necessary. Also, it should be noted, that a Druid can do a ritual without any tools at all except the mind.

These tools are not important in and of themselves, they are important for what they represent. For Wiccans, each tool is consecrated and identified as personal. Only the owner should touch/handle an athame for example because it is infused with their personal energies and another person handling the blade could contaminate that energy.

When a Druid sanctifies a sword for example, it is a representation of the Sword of Nuada. Any other Druid with access to it can use it in theory. The athame is exclusively the Wiccan's, the sword is Nuada's and it is He who grants his permission for Druidic use.

The Spear previously mentioned is the Spear of Lugh, the Cauldron the Cauldron of the Dagda, and the Stone is representative of the Stone of Fal. Each of these were treasures that the Tuatha de' Dannan brought with them from their cities when they came to Ireland from the North, and are each very magickal artifacts.

The Staff is representative of a Tree, and a Tree connects the three realms, namely the Sea (represented by the water table) Land (Earth it rests in and on) and Sky (the air). As such, it reminds us to do the same thing, and to try to keep those connections in mind. This is why trees are revered in Druidism, although not worshiped.

As a part of this, the Pentagram or Pentacle do not appear anywhere in Druidic practice, at least not those practices that do not have a heavy dose of Wicca in them. The two main symbols of Druidism are the Triskel and the symbol of Awen /|\. Both these symbols have threes contained within them, representing triune thought, in that everything comes in threes, Good-Bad-Indifferent, Land-Sea-Sky, Mind-Body-Spirit, and so on. The Triskel reminds us that it's important to bring those three qualities, whatever qualities they may be, together into one and in that point where they connect, become balanced in the center. This triune thought is central to Druidic thought.

Divination

One last component that may make many Wiccans do a double take is Divination. For the most part, Tarot cards are not used in modern Druidic practice. Now, that is not to say that Druids don't use Tarot to divine the future, because they do. It is saying that Tarot cards are not taught as a divinatory tool per se. Other means of divination are stressed and the Tarot only taught after those initial means of divination are mastered.

The tools most Druids use in forecasting the future are Ogham script, watching nature, and divining by scrying into water, smoke or even the fire. In most schools, Ogham is taught as one of the primary means of divination. Each of the 20 or 25 letters of the Ogham alphabet (there are several different and conflicting sets of Ogham letters that scholars have identified; none yet know which is more authentic than others) have a relationship to a tree, and in each case, that tree has a personality that can tell us a lot about what the Letter is saying. While interpretation may differ from FUThARK superficially, the results and the spreads are the same.

In watching nature, the Druid simply sits outside and watches. They will watch the clouds, the flights of birds, the patterns water skimmers make on the lake, the sound of the crickets chirping, listen to the birds of the Gods and so on. Each of these will tell the Druid certain things from which he can extract information.

It must also be mentioned that in some cases, the Divination of a Druid comes from searching the mythology. By Druidic belief, things move in cycles, in circles. Actions in the past can and do repeat themselves in the present and in the future. By looking into the history or the myth, one may be able to extract what could happen next and make informed guesses and predictions on what should happen next based on what happened before. It is an intuitive leap to a possible new outcome based on understanding of the stories that we study.

Groves vs. Covens

The basic structure of Wicca is the Coven; the basic structure of a Druidic group is the Grove. Each has similarities in that there are attendees, leaders, watchers and guardians. Each person in the group has a role, and each has a specialty, even though ideally, everyone present has the same skills.

In contrast to a Coven, however, a Druidic Grove usually has a connection to a larger order. Whereas a Coven will normally only be connected to another Coven if it "hived off" from it, a Druid Grove is part of a larger overall structure. A central organization, like the ADF, is a larger umbrella group that directs all the Groves that call themselves part of the ADF. They have the final decision regarding who is or is not a member of their order, who may or may not study with their order and so on. Because of this, all Druids who are part of that order are members of the umbrella organization. Thus an ADF Druid from Lyon France could travel to Sydney Australia and worship with an ADF Grove there, and vice-versa as long as the language is not an issue. He could also travel to the United States and worshiping in any Grove in the States.

That also means that there is one office of information for the Order, one spokesman for the Order, and that the Head of the Order (sometimes referred to as an Arch Druid) can speak on behalf of the entire organization. The Head can also make rules, collect fees, give degrees and ordinations and so on. Most Druidic organizations like this are 501(c)(3) certified, which makes them a church in every legal sense of the word in the United States.

Each Grove, while not totally autonomous, does have its own teachers and leaders who are authorized to act on behalf of the Order in local matters. While the local Druid head of the Grove may speak out on taking down a monument in the local city, a statement on matters of national importance (like the Presidential Election) or world importance (like the Pope's apology) would come from the Head of the Order.

Solitary Druids do exist. While these Druids have every right to call him/herself a Druid, s/he should only speak for him/herself and not try to make all-encompassing statements. Solitary Druids are free to follow their own conscience concerning their beliefs and practices. Many Solitary Druids eventually become members of an Order to get a grounding in the basics of a style of Druidism, and from there may move on to develop their own form of Druidism. This is how the Ord Draiochta na Uisnech developed.

These differences are key to understanding the dichotomy between Wicca and Druidism. This document does not claim one is better, more right, more ancient or any thing else than the other. Instead, it is trying to explain the things that a Wiccan may not necessarily understand about Druidism. It is hoped it will help foster understanding and amicable relations between the two groups. Its goal is to affect an understanding that while we are both Pagan religions, Wicca is not Druidism and Druidism is not Wicca. Both have their strengths and weaknesses. Both are critical components to modern Neo-Paganism and both have a lot to learn from each other.

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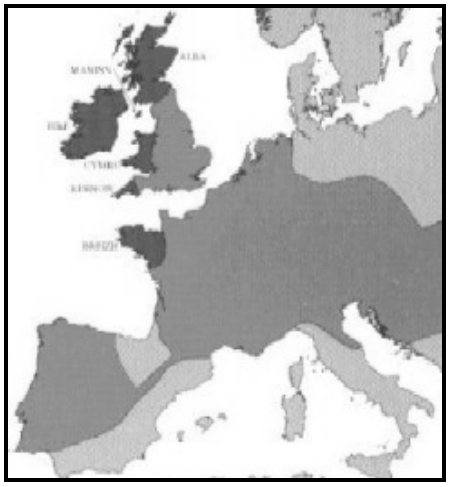


Celtic Sports

Part One: Team Sports

By Mike Scharding, Digitalis Grove

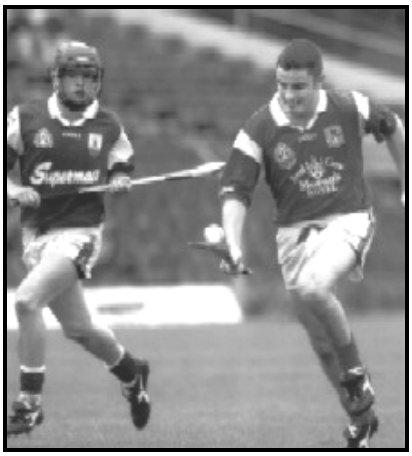
The ancient (and modern) Celts didn't just do board games, but engaged in a variety of athletic pursuits, and from these countries, many of the organized team sports can trace their roots. Most popular team sports are historically merely a recent phenomenon. It is likely that most team sports derive from sacred festival games, where you had large groups of restless young people, into the more secular pastime of today. When I refer to team sports, I am generally referring to seasonal play between consistent groups of people; and not just the target competitions, fighting bouts and strongman contests of a single festival, which will be covered in the next installment of this series. In this three part article, I'll discuss the basics of outdoor sports, highland games, and drinking/pub games among the ancient and modern Celtic peoples; based on internet research, some SCA background, and a half dozen courses on medieval history.

You need to understand the geographical climate of Britain. Until the 10th century, the vast majority of the population of the British Isles (perhaps a total of 2 or 3 million), lived in small self-sufficient hamlets, surrounded by bogs, moors, forests, mountains, stormy seas, with only rudimentary deliveries unless they were on a river or ocean or near the king's highway. Most people probably never traveled more than five to six miles from home, except possibly on pilgrimages, marauding in war bands, cattle drives to the market, fishing or on church business (forerunner of the postal service). Divided by local dialects, long standing feuds, and roving bandits; these small populations were very suspicious of the next village down the road. People were generally always hungry, not very healthy (have you ever seen those small suits of armor?), sports medicine was crude, unfarmed open fields were rare

(churchyards, river banks and market squares were still a possibility), and non-necessary physical exertion or practice was not a highly prized social virtue. Regional sporting leagues were thus rather unlikely, but where large numbers of youths congregated for military training, or fostering in a royal court, team sports could be assumed to have popped up as a supplement to martial training, as we'll find with hurling. The diverse climates of the British Isles brought about summer and winter variations of this basic diversionary activity.

From the 12th to 18th centuries, as times began to get more peaceful, cities grew, and trade routes opened up in Europe, church officials and local lords often disdained or barred team sports as likely to erupt in violent mobs (which they usually did), accompant gambling, and deviation from their spiritual and secular duties to the Lord and lord respectively. Such forms of peasant organization, training or traveling were considered subversive threats to the political-economic status quo, although the nobility themselves engaged in numerous ancient pastimes together themselves such as warring, whoring, hunting, and gambling with the fortunes of their country (the idyllic hopes of an actual knight was not too different from a gangster rap video if you read their epic ballads). Instead, serviceable peasants were encouraged to practice archery, do military drills, and prepare for war; which also was the most common form of population control at the time. Despite these bans, historical records increasingly find evidence of rudimentary sports developing; often in the form of progressively frequent bans on sporting activities, rather than detailed descriptions of the rules or team structures themselves.

Most sports federations, organized systems or rules, and teams date only from the late 18th or 19th century, when large portions of the population began attending public schooling; and some form of orderly dignified play was needed to release the repressed youthful spirits of children of Victorian Britain; who increasingly no longer needed to work in sweatshops all day. With increasing leisure time, free cash, personal hygiene, and interest in vigorous healthy exertion; sports soon bloomed as a respectable pastime for rich and poor until the 1970s. The world empires of the British, French, Dutch, Japanese and Americans quickly disseminated these games and lifestyles, and national teams began to proliferate and compete. Since the invention of the TV and computer games, and fitness clubs, with an ever-aging population demographic; sports participation has precipitously declined in Europe. In recent years, sports federations there have bemoaned an ever earlier age of specialization in one sport, intensifying focus on winning instead of playfulness, decrease in sportsmanship, increased interest in solitary exercise clubs, and a decline of interest in minor traditional sports by talented athletes. According to a recent survey, the top ten participatory sports in the United Kingdom are: walking, swimming, cycling, exercise, snooker/billiards, ten-pin bowling/skittles, weight training, darts and—finally—soccer.



Large Team Sports

Hurling

Hurling is possibly the oldest known field game in Europe. It figures prominently in early Irish lore and the Brehon laws of the 6th century; thus going back at least 2000 years. The only definite thing we know about hurling is that this ancient game is the model for most Celtic sports, including camogie, a female version, Scottish shinty, Welsh bandy (or banty), Cornish out-hurling, ice hockey, field hockey, Gaelic football, and modern Irish hurling. Hurling was banned in 1366 by the Statutes of Kilkenny (along with mixed marriages by the invading Anglo-Normans) and strongly enforced by the Galway Statutes of 1527 due to the violent matches that would ensue after the game. Gaelic Football was devised as a substitute, by removing the hand-held sticks from the game. Hurling was revived in the 18th century by some local barons who added rules of honor to prevent fights, and hurling was institutionalized by the Gaelic Athletic Association in 1884. In the 19th century, variants of hurling, such as Scottish shinty (or camanachd at www.shinty.com) and Welsh bandy (played on ice) and hockey (Hokie), emerged and developed on similar rules. Golf (or kolf), a possible solitary descendent of Shinty, also became popular in the 18th century, but is recorded back to the 15th century, and probably has ancient antecedents of bored shepherds whacking rocks with a stick all over the world.

The legends, which were revived from extinction by Sechan Torpeist, a 7th century bard, tells the story of how Setanta, the nephew of King Conchobair Mac Neasa of Ulster, receives the name of Cuchulainn:

Setanta journeys to his uncle's court to join the boys' corps. He shortened his walk by hurling his silver sliotar (ball) and then throwing his bronze hurley stick after it. He would run and catch both the sliotar and the hurley stick before they hit the ground. Soon he arrived at court, and his hurling abilities amazed the boys of the corps. Legend has it that he was able to score with ease and when he guarded the goal he never let a shot in.

One day King Conchobair was invited to a banquet at the house of Culainn and asked his nephew to join him. Setanta agreed to go after he finished playing a hurling game. While at the feast Culainn asked the king if all the guests had arrived. King Conchobair, forgetting about Setanta, said yes, and Culainn unleashed his hound to guard the house. When Setanta arrived at the feast the great hound leapt up to attack him, but Setanta quickly hurled the sliotar at the hound and it went down

the beast's throat. The boy immediately grabbed the stunned hound by his feet and smashed its head into the floor of the stone courtyard killing him.

When the guests heard the baying of the hound they ran outside and were surprised to see Setanta alive and the beast dead. King Conchobair was overjoyed but Culainn was sad at the loss of his favorite hound. Setanta offered to find a hound worthy of the one he had slain and vowed to guard Culainn's home until such an animal could be found. Thus Setanta became known as Cuchulainn, which translates to "the hound of Culainn".

The stick, or "hurley" (called caman in Gaelic) is curved outwards at the end, to provide the striking surface. The ball or "sliothar" is similar to a field hockey ball with raised ridges. Hurling is played on a large pitch of 137m long and 82m wide. The goalposts are similar to those in rugby, with the crossbar lower than a rugby one and slightly higher than a soccer one. Each game lasts 90 minutes.

You may either strike the ball on the ground, or up in the air. Unlike hockey, you may pick up the ball with your hurley and carry it up to four steps in your hand. After those steps you may bounce the ball on the hurley and back to the hand, but you are forbidden to catch the ball more than twice. To get around this, one of the skills is running with the ball carefully balanced on flat of the hurley The Sliothair may also be kicked with the feet, but only the goalie may use the hand to stop a hit ball, and this really really hurts. To score one point, you must put the ball over the crossbar with the hurley, or under the crossbar and into the net by the hurley for a goal of three points.

There are usually 15 members on a team, although some variants will have fewer players. Goalkeepers may not be physically challenged while inside their own small parallelogram, but players may verbally or physically harass them into playing a bad pass, or block an attempted pass. Teams are allowed a maximum of three substitutes in a game, which can be quite strenuous. Players may switch positions on the field of play as much as they wish.

60 pages of official hurling rules are at:

http://www.gaa.ie/html/pdf/gaaguide.pdf

		GOALIE		
Right corner-back		Full-back		Left corner-back
Right corner-back		Center half-back		Left corner-back
	Midfielder		Midfielder	
Right half-forward		Centre half-forward		Left half-forward
Right corner-forward		Full-forward		Left corner-forward

Gaelic Football

Gaelic Football can be aptly described as a rough blend of soccer and rugby, although it definitely predates both of those games. It is a field game, derived from hurling, and it is thought that the rough Australian Rules Football evolved from Gaelic Football through the many thousands of Irish who were either deported or emigrated to Australia from the middle of the nineteenth century. Gaelic Football is played on a pitch approximately 137m long and 82m wide and each team consists of fifteen players, arranged like a hurling team. The ball used in Gaelic Football is a little smaller than a soccer ball and can be carried in the hand for a distance of four steps, and can be kicked or "hand-passed," a striking motion with the hand or fist. After every four steps the ball must be either bounced or "solo-ed," an action of dropping the ball onto the foot and kicking it back into the hand. You may not bounce the ball twice in a row. When played by men, it may not be picked up directly from the ground. Physical contact is allowed, shoulder to shoulder, but no tackling. The goalposts are the same shape as those that are on a rugby pitch, with the crossbar a little lower than a rugby one, but slightly higher than a soccer one To score, you put the ball over the crossbar by either foot or hand/fist for one point, or under the crossbar and into the net by foot or the hand/fist in certain circumstances for three points.

The rules of Gaelic Football:

http://www.gaa.ie/html/pdf/gaaguide.pdf

Rugby and Soccer/Football

The origin of soccer is widely contested by most countries in the world, which simply can't imagine a time when they didn't play it. I used to hear folklore stories from my father about English workmen in the 10th century who were digging in an old battlefield and uncovering the skull of a Danish soldier. Since the Danish had recently occupied England, the workers began to kick the skull around with glee, which probably hurt their feet. Most Celts reportedly showed greater respect for the

heads of their foes and friends. Actually, football games (known as soccer only in America) have been recognizably documented in the ancient writings of the Chinese (who generally kept detailed decent records of everything, long before the Celts even arrived in Britain) as early as 80 B.C., and soccer-like games have been appearing in Asian literature ever since. In Britain, the world-touring Roman soldiers who were unhappily stationed in that barbaric land probably introduced the game to the locals before the 5th century, possibly in an attempt to kill off the local population with this new violent sport. There is mention of the game as far back as 1175, in the book "History of London," and in those days it was a vicious mass scale hooliganesque contest between two villages:

"Up to two thousand people used to take part, there being no age restriction nor was it limited to the male population. There is evidence that matches took place between married woman and spinsters. The teams would meet at noon at a point decided upon by the leaders of the two villages, usually a point midway between the two villages, and a ball would be thrown in the air. The object being to take the ball back to one's own village where the goalposts were situated; these could be anything from a pool of water or center post in their own town square, and later in the town square of the opponent. The actual ball also varied from a piece of animal hide to a bundle of rags and signified either an item of warfare or of hunting. The means of getting the ball back to the goals was unspecified; but carrying it, kicking it and hitting it with sticks and clubs were the most popular. Some of the players were on horseback whilst others, carried swords in addition to their clubs and staves.

"The field of play was not restricted in any way and normally was anywhere between the two villages--up and down the hills, across valleys, through the farming fields and across rivers. Many people were maimed for life, some killed and others drowned when the mob went through a river or stream. It was thus an ideal way of settling family and other feuds. In many cases a game took place within a game, with ambushes being set to enable private duels to be settled. Play for the day was only abandoned at sunset. When a village was successful in getting the ball back to their own goal they symbolically killed it. The usual method was by drowning in the village fountain or rubbing it into the dirt at the local market. Afterwards the ball would be cut up and shared amongst the leaders."

A historical record of the development of soccer in England shows that Eton college produced the earliest known rules of the game in 1815, perhaps implying that until then, chaos was preferred over order, with street battles often ensuing afterwards. A non-carrying variant known as football soon began to be divorced from rugby. Order gradually came to the game, and standardized rules known as the Cambridge rules were adopted by England's major colleges. American Football began to radically diverge from rugby only after the invention of the quarterback's long-bomb throw in the 1930s at Notre Dame (due to a modification of the shape and a loophole in the rules), that allowed the ball to be thrown forward instead of sideways, that changed it into a staccato game to sack the quarterback or a few running backs, rather than the fluid chaos of rugby.

The rules they decided upon were roughly:

Each team has 15 players on the pitch (i.e. the field of play).

Only the player with the ball can be tackled.

No blocking, normally all supporting players must stay behind the ball carrier.

Forward passes are not allowed. Dropping the ball forward is also prohibited and is called a knock-on.

The ball can only be advanced by running or kicking the ball forward.

A tackled runner must immediately release the ball; the tackler must immediately release the tackled player.

Play is continuous; all stoppage of play must be immediately restarted (unless there is an injury).

A scrum (a large mass of players pushing together) restarts play after a forward pass or knock-on, a scrum can also be awarded in other situations.

A penalty results in the team penalized retreating 10 meters and the other team either tacking a quick tap ball, kicking the ball into touch for their own line out, or taking a penalty kick at goal.

A serious penalty or continuous infractions by a player can result in a 'sin binning'. The sin-binned player is sent off the pitch for 10 minutes and no replacement is allowed, reducing the team by one player.

After points are scored, the ball is kicked back to the scoring team.

The points are roughly: A Try for 5 points is awarded when the ball is carried or kicked across the goal line and downward pressure applied to the ball (i.e. touches the ball down) A conversion is the kick for 3 points is taken immediately after a team scores a try. The ball must be kicked through the goal posts.

History of Rugby:
http://www.angelfire.com/biz4/bigbrian/origins.html

Curling: Celts on Ice

For centuries, modern curling has been a favorite game in Scotland during the mild winters, and may be an old local adaptation of lawn bowling, which reputedly dates from ancient Roman times. The first unequivocal historical record of the sport is from notary John McQuhin, who noted a challenge about throwing stones across the ice between a monk at Paisley Abbey and a relative of the abbot in February 1541. Sir John Sinclair's Statistical Account of Scotland (1781 - 1799) wrote eloquently of the place in parish life that curling occupied. For example, the minister of Muirkirk in Ayrshire wrote: Their chief amusement in winter is curling, or playing stones on smooth ice. They eagerly vie with one another who shall come nearest the mark, and one part of the parish against another, one description of men against another, one trade or occupation against another, and often one whole parish against another, earnestly contend for the palm, which is generally all the prize, except that perhaps the victors claim from the vanquished the dinner and bowl of toddy, which, to do them justice, both commonly take together with great cordiality, and generally without any grudge at the fortune of the day; wisely reflecting, no doubt, that defeat as

well as victory is the fate of war. Those accustomed to this amusement, or that have acquired dexterity in the game, are extremely fond of it. The amusement itself is healthful; it is innocent; it does nobody harm; let them enjoy it.

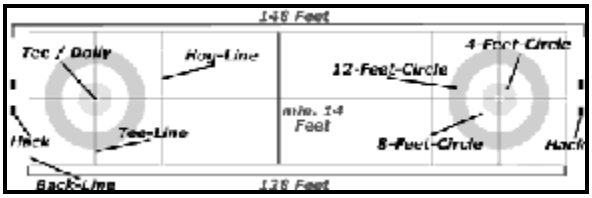
Although the Netherlands also has some evidence in favor of an independent origin, it was Scotland where the game matured and achieved popularity, and where you can still find the highest number of curlers per capita. Curling is popular in parts of Canada, United States, Australia, New Zealand, and a number of European countries. As early as 1924, curling made an appearance at the Olympics, as a demonstration sport, but it did not achieve full status as an official event until 1998, although it is probably the least televised aspect of the Olympics.

Curling is a large class of games, including lawn bowling, bocce, boules, shuffleboard, and (in some cases) marbles, that all have the same basic idea in common. Taking turns, competitors launch (throw, roll, or slide) a projectile (ball or puck) toward a target. After several rounds, the player or team with the projectile closest to the target wins; a large part of the strategy is displacing your opponent's projectiles while protecting your own. You get one point for each stone of yours that's closer to the target than the opponent's first closest stone.

It is only member of this class that is played on ice. A curling rink will have one or more playing surfaces, which are sheets of ice 146 feet long by 14 feet wide. At the end of each sheet is a circular bullseye-like target painted under the ice, consisting of a ring 12 feet in diameter with two smaller concentric rings and an inner circle called the tee, which is the target. The projectiles are big round granite stones about 12 inches in diameter and weighing up to 44 pounds. Handles on the tops of the stones enable the players to control them on the throw, and give a little spin. Each team has four players, and each player has two stones. Starting at one end of the ice rink, a player will "throw" (slide) the stone toward the target. Teams alternate until all the stones have been thrown, at which point the score is counted. Only stones within the outer ring of the target can be scored. The team with the stone closest to the tee wins that end (or round), collecting one point for each of their stones that are closer to the center than any of the opposing team's stones. After eight or ten ends, the team with the highest score wins.

The stones have a tendency to curve, or curl, as they slide down the ice, similar to bowling. By putting a deliberate spin on the flung stone, players can control the direction and extent of that curl and use it to their advantage. But the stone's fate is not determined only by physics after it is thrown, the fun still continues. As the stone slides toward the target, one or two players will slide in front of it, sweeping the ice vigorously with little brooms or brushes (called besoms). This looks rather goofy, but it's a key strategy of the game, because brushing the ice is actually polishing it, giving the stone a smoother surface of melted water and thus extending the stone's range and influencing the direction of the stone, making the competition much more complex.

http://www.gonzaga.k12.nf.ca/academics/physed/curling%20rules/rules_of_curling.htm



Handball

Handball is simple and involves only two or four players (singles or doubles), a ball, durable hands and a few walls. The size of court (60 feet x 30 feet and 40 feet x 20 feet) depends on local custom. Handball is actually much like squash (but without rackets) with the players striking the tiny ball against the front wall, in the hope that it will bounce past their opponent or bounce twice on the floor earning them a point. You've probably seen kids do this at school with tennis balls. The ball is struck with the palm of the hand, or sometimes with a closed fist. When a player has twenty-one points, they have won the game and the player who is first to win two games is declared the winner of a match. One of its great appeals is that it can be played to middle age and beyond.

Uniquely among the Irish Gaelic Games, handball has a thriving international dimension due to Irish emigration in the nineteenth century, but US Army personnel were responsible for bringing the game to mainland Europe. Wherever the game is played throughout the world, the various versions are all thought to be linked to the traditional Irish game, with the possible exception of "Fives", a game played in the United Kingdom and "Pelota", a game similar to handball which was first played in Spain's Basque region.

What about Cricket?

Sadly, I'm out of space this issue, and Cricket is about as English a game as exists. Go to the following page for more information:

http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/cricket.html

The Soul of Juliana Spring

By Irony Sade
Copyright November 2000

Chapter Sixteen

Russell Raskin lay like a skull on a pillow, his hands gnarled and nearly lifeless on the sheet that pinned him down. Wires trailed beneath the cloth. A tube bled oxygen into the air beneath his nose. His eyes followed me as I entered the room. There was a chair by the window. I sat.

"You knew." His voice was quiet.

I nodded.

"How?"

"I looked into your eyes and saw the truth that lived there."

"God told you," muttered Russell. "He told you, so that you would tell me, that I might see my life for what it was. The bastard. You are no better than I was. Why should He let you win?"

I said nothing.

"He did not lie, you know."

"I do not think the gods can lie. It seems a purely human art."

"He told me no human hand would stop me, too. I did not realize that meant He would."

"Perhaps he was giving you the chance to stop yourself."

"Shut up with the righteousness, will you?"

I studied the wires and tubes, the machines that stretched his life.

"Look at me--a dying preacher discussing God with a Druid. I must be mad."

"I once read that the important religious distinction was not between those who believed and those who did not, but between those who loved and those who did not. What you or I believe may not matter so long as we act with love."

"Which does not leave me any better off," growled Russell.

I looked away.

"You loved them both, Russell. You could not have hated so powerfully else."

"Do you believe that?"

I shrugged carefully.

His eyes blazed.

"Answer me, damn you! Do you believe that? Or are you feeding me lies so I'll die content?"

"I was offering an interpretations of events that might bring you peace, should you choose to believe it. How could I know what you felt?"

"You knew what I did."

'What is not the same thing. Besides, is it not the role of priests to bring comfort to the dying?"

"Not this priest. I've never wanted comfort. Comfort keeps you from facing the truth."

"Facing the truth just got you killed."

"Bullshit. Hiding the truth got me killed. Owning up to it just let me die--that and your damned questions. And don't expect me to thank you for that either!"

"I don't. Believe me."

Raskin coughed, exhausted by the effort.

"Why did you do it, anyway?" He asked.

"For Juliana."

The preacher was silent.

"I heard her play, you know. At the concert. A friend of a friend told me about it. That's how I found you. She is good. If God loves music you may not have done such a bad thing."

"She has thrown her whole life into the harp," I responded. "I only hope she forgives me that."

"If not, it's nothing worse than what I've done."

"So? You only hid the truth. I let her believe a false one."

"That's not as bad as murder. Maybe I will see you in Hell after all." The pale Christmas sunshine sidled slowly down the wall. Church bells caroled in the steeple outside.

"Why did you want to see me?" I asked.

The old man chuckled.

Who else was I supposed to talk to? Juliana? My flock? Haven't you read your Nietzsche? All friends lie. Only your enemies will tell you the truth."

I smiled ruefully. There was nothing I could say to that.

"Speaking of which," said Russell sharply.

I stilled my features. Dying as he was, this man could still wound me.

"I've heard it said that Juliana sold her soul to play the way she does. Do you know anything about that?"

"There are different ways to sell ones' soul," I answered very carefully. "One can drive a supernatural bargain, one can destroy some thing or quality central to ones' identity, or one can commit ones' self so completely to a single pursuit that everything else must be neglected. Out of countless paths Juliana has chosen one--and never left it. She has never explored anything else, never tried to discover other worlds, other loves, other things she could be. She has brutally pruned her own possibilities, and thus accomplished something practically

impossible. In that sense she has sold her soul. To me that is an admirable and terrifying choice."

Juliana's father watched me very quietly.

"There was nothing supernatural involved?"

"There was nothing supernatural involved."

Russell grunted. It could have meant anything.

"What a strange way to think," he muttered at last.

Minutes drifted by. Raskin's breaths were getting weaker.

"Is Sam alright?" He asked me suddenly.

"A few stitches. He will be fine."

"Good."

A certain tension went out of him.

"Last request time, isn't it?"

I bit my lip, nodded.

"Tell Juliana she can perform at my funeral." He grinned savagely. "Bet she always wanted to play me to death."

"I'll do that."

Russell Raskin glared up at me. His grey eyes burned, dimming.

"Thrice damned Druid! Take care of my little girl for me."

"I will," I whispered, and he was gone.

Chapter Seventeen

Very few people can manage a funeral and a wedding in the same week with any sort of grace. Sam was one of those few. Watching him move amongst the wedding guests and the mourners from Russell's church, I realized what it was in him that my lovely harpist loved. Juliana Spring Raskin Hammersmith refused to have the wedding put off. She put on all the requisite roles and played at both events.

There was something new in her music now. In her triple guise as daughter, widow, and angel of death, she played at the funeral something I had never heard. There was grief in it, and longing, forgiveness, surcease and healing. She was burying both her parents that day, though none but we three knew it. She played what she played, and the gathered mourners wept, longed, suffered, and forgave, without ever understanding what it was for.

"What was that?" I asked her later.

"The music in my dreams. I just sat and listened and played what I felt. It is the first time that has happened."

"Maybe it was worth it," she added.

She was staring at nothing at all as she spoke. I knew not if she addressed myself, or the grave.

"Juliana," I began.

"No." She stopped me. "I am not the best in the world yet. Almost, but not yet. That might not be so important now, but this new thing is. This is a thing I need to explore."

She rose and left me where the wind played games with the snowflakes and the headstones, the memories and the souls.

At the wedding she played love, but that is an impoverished word to call what was in her music. She played the passion of the newly wed, the depth and humor that comes of knowing another life and mind through twelve long years. She played the tender care of a parent- and this from someone who had never had a child. And she played something else. A thing too powerful to name, that choked me with a private longing. It reached inside to drag out notions I had sworn I would never entertain, and left me shaken with its passage. Juliana's eyes caught mine as she touched the strings, and she smiled at me for the first time since the concert.

At last she released us and took Sam's hand in hers. The guests gaped, daring only to breath. The pastor stood slowly at the head of the chapel. He stretched forth tremulous arms and raised his face to the heavens.

"Amen!" He exclaimed.

And that was the wedding.

Chapter Eighteen

Now I grow weary of the passage of time, and this telling has nearly reached its end. Five years later Juliana was the best harpist in the world, without a doubt, by any standard you cared to name. There were those who said she was the best musician in the world; that she played on peoples' souls instead of strings.

The seasons' changeless change had swung through to Beltain again when the couple came to visit me. I led them down to the workshop where I had labored all winter.

"I have something for you," I let on as we approached.

Standing on the bench was a small traveling harp of darkest mahogany, completely unadorned, polished as glass. Its strings glowed like liquid sunshine in the clear spring light.

"Is that what I think it is?" Sam wondered aloud.

"Golden strings," I smiled. "The best harpists have always had them."

"You're trying to make a legend out of me, aren't you?" Said Juliana.

I laughed.

"If I am, I am too late. You are that already. I just wondered what gold harp strings might sound like, that is all, and you are the only one good enough to do them justice."

She gave me a quick hug.

"You are too kind."

"Hardly. But come outside. The Maypole is starting."

Chapter Nineteen

The rest of the day was a time of celebration and life, that fluid, wonderful, time defying clarity that once seen remains forever living in a persons' heart. The feast was consumed, the pole danced and braided, the King and Queen of the May chosen, crowned and married. I sat on a sun soaked log to rest my knees after the ceremony, watching the wedding games. The King and Queen stood in a circle of revelers, their hands tied to full wine cups, holding a kiss between them. Those in the ring joked, teased, and shouted, gleefully doing everything they could short of actual contact to make the couple laugh and break it off.

Juliana collapsed lightly to my right, flowers in her hair and laughter in her eyes.

"All these years, all these Beltains," she began. "How is it that you never married?"

I looked at her in surprise. Her eyes teased mine.

"Who would have had me?"

"I might have."

"I am twice your age, dear."

"Not any more you're not."

"True. But you had Sam."

"True." She gazed at him fondly from across the green.

"We are thinking of having children, he and I. I am not quite too old yet."

She laughed. "But what sort of mother would a soulless woman make?"

"Juliana Spring," sighed I, and took her hand in mine. "I never took your soul."

She stared.

"You what?"

"I never took it. Your soul has been yours all along."

"But you did! Our bargain--you spoke those words and I felt it leave!"

"It was all in your mind then. I do not really know if souls can be sold. Lost, saved, destroyed, nourished, abandoned, loved, certainly, but to the best of my knowledge your soul is with you always, love it or hate it, to do with as you will. What would I have done with an extra soul, anyhow?"

The harpist's jaw worked soundlessly.

"But if you couldn't buy my soul, why did you even want to meet me in the first place?"

"I wanted to see what it was like to want something that badly. I never have, you know. Most people never do. I could not imagine a desire so strong in a person that young. I had to meet you."

Laughter erupted throughout the glade. Someone had started people-fishing with doughnuts.

"You tricked us," she said at last.

"I did. Are you angry?"

"I don't know yet... If there was no bargain, then everything you've done..."

"I did nothing." I cut her off. "It was all you, Juliana."

"But why?"

"What would you have done all those years ago, if I had told you souls could not be sold, that only practice, passion, and infinite dedication could make you a better harpist? What if I had told you that even with guidance, time, and expert teachers there was no guarantee you would ever be as good as you wanted, or that dream music could never be properly reproduced? I had never even heard you play, remember?"

"I might have become a nurse," she reflected. "Why didn't you though?"

"Because you were serious. Because you were strong enough to make me wonder. Because the gods love it when we act bravely." Her deep, deep eyes searched mine.

"And because, watching you, I got just an inkling of how powerful that desire might be."

In an ideal world she would have kissed me then. But we were in this one, and the moment passed.

"I will name my firstborn after you."

I laughed.

"Even if it is a girl?"

"Even better! I could never have done it without you."

"Nonsense," said I, but it is hard to sound believably stern when your cheeks are flushing crimson.

Chapter Twenty

Juliana played her new harp for us that night, while the couples snuggled and the stars blazed down. She sat on our log in a borrowed cloak with her hair blowing long about her shoulders. The strings burned golden in the firelight as they sang, and a whole generation of listening fools began to believe in magic.

It was the story of her life we heard, made music, wordless and eloquent. Dream songs from her childhood, her mother vanished, father possessed, early despair in her years in college and the flush of young love in meeting Sam. Then came the power, the wonder, the mystery and horror of an unspeakable bargain, the surrender, confidence and strange purity it engendered, and at last the full splendor of the mature theme began. Two decades of concentration and skill in one ascending spiral, the struggle, journey, grief, love, discovery, mastery... and at the end, when I was sure there could be nothing left to feel, came joy.

The End.

The Language of the Picts

From the Orkneyjar: the Heritage of the Orkney Islands site:
http://www.orkneyjar.com/history/picts/language.htm

At the forefront of the great mysteries surrounding the Picts, and one that has stimulated the most discussion and argument over the centuries, is the language these people spoke.

According to historical records written by contemporaries of the Picts, they spoke a different language to that used by the other inhabitants of Scotland. A clear reference to this can be found within the accounts of St. Columba's life in which we learn that he required an interpreter in order to converse with the northern Picts.

However as the Picts themselves kept no written records of their lifestyles, beliefs or heritage, their language has now all but disappeared. The only sources that can give vague clues as to its nature are some of the carved inscriptions they left, placenames and certain accounts of Pictish names written by external sources at the time.

As with all things Pictish, however, the lack of concrete evidence has led to a number of opinions and theories as to the form of the spoken language of the inhabitants of Northern Scotland in the early centuries of the first millennium. Some claim that the Picts spoke an old language indigenous to area--a language that predated the language of the Britons, the Scots and the Irish. This language did not have an Indo-European origin but was instead a survival of the ancient language used by the Bronze Age people of the area.

Then there is the idea that the Picts merely spoke a variant of a Celtic language related to the language of the Ancient Britons. When the Celts arrived in this country, they brought with them an Indo-European language that replaced the existing languages of country.

Along the same lines is the idea that the Picts spoke a version of Ancient British that contained elements of Irish Gaelic--fragments picked up over the years through contact with the Scotti--the invading Irish settlers who claimed territory down the west coast of Scotland. This theory is strengthened by the fact that the writing system used by the Picts--Ogham--originates in Ireland.

The final theory is not actually related to the spoken language of the Picts but instead focuses on the later inscriptions they made using Ogham. It has been suggested that although the Picts used this Irish writing system, they used Old Norse. This is a convincing theory that consistently appears to make sense out of what was once thought to inexplicable.

Dr. Richard Cox, a lecturer in the University of Aberdeen's Department of Celtic claims that the ogham inscriptions found in Orkney as well as in other parts of Scotland, were actually written in Old Norse, the Scandinavian language of the Vikings.

His discovery, published for the first time in 1999 went against the research community that had long believed the inscriptions to be an ancient form of Gaelic or a long forgotten Pictish language.

Dr. Cox explained: "The inscriptions are written in ogham, a writing system using a series of straight slashes on, through or below a central stem line. We think it was developed in fourth century Ireland and later brought to Scotland. While the system was used to write Gaelic in Ireland, no one has been able to make sense of the inscriptions in Scotland.

"But using Old Norse, the inscriptions can be translated meaningfully. Many are memorials, recording who carved the stone and in whose memory it was erected."

The 19 inscriptions Dr. Cox studied make-up about half the ogham inscriptions found across Scotland.

"This discovery is of major significance for our understanding of the early history of Scotland and Scandinavia. There is plenty of evidence, through placenames for example, of Scandinavian influence in some parts of Scotland but these stones provide clear evidence of strong links between Scotland and Norway in areas where other areas is absent." said Dr Cox.

"In Scandinavia memorial inscriptions like these would be carved in runes not ogham. The question is why are these stones carved in Old Norse but using a system of writing developed in the Gaelic speaking world? The evidence suggests strong links in language and learning and in religious custom between Norse and Gaelic-speaking communities."

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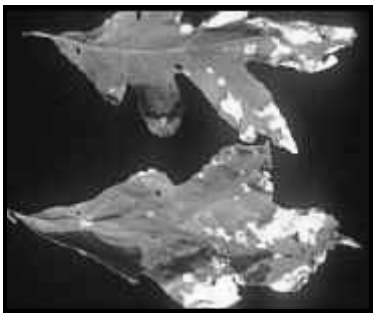
News



Breakthrough for Treatment of Oak Death

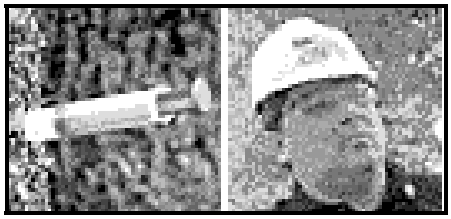
Scientists say Product Helps Infected trees fight disease

Peter Fimrite, Chronicle Staff Writer
Friday, October 3, 2003
URL:
sfgate.com/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2003/10/03/BA253925.DTL

The first major breakthrough in the treatment of the tree killer known as sudden oak death has been approved for use on oaks, a development that could save thousands of homeowners' trees from the plague.

The phosphite product, developed by the Australian company AGRICHEM, protects endangered oaks from infection and helps infected trees fight off the disease, according to UC scientists.

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation approved two versions of the compound Wednesday--one is a spray, the other an injection—for use by professional arborists and foresters.



"This is not the final solution," warned Matteo Garbelotto, the UC Berkeley forest pathologist who has led scientific research on the deadly microbe. "It is just one tool in a series of efforts to stop the spread of the pathogen. But it also gives us hope. The general belief had always been that you can't do anything to stop disease in the forest. This shows there are things that can be done."

The microscopic disease, known scientifically as Phytophthora ramorum, has killed tens of thousands of tan oak, coast live oak and black oak trees in California and Oregon, and has spread to at least 27 other tree and shrub species, most of which act as hosts but do not die.

Scientists believe 11 other kinds of plants and trees have also been infected, but the research verifying them as carriers has not been completed.

The virulent microbe, which throws off spores like flowers shed pollen, has, in essence, scraped whole sections of California's oak dotted hills and valleys bare.

In some canyons in Big Sur every tan oak tree has been killed. Some 40 to 45 percent of the majestic live oaks have died in hard-hit areas, including Marin County.

The chemical, also known as phosphonate, is expected to be available for use on private trees by Oct. 22, after arborists who want to use the product go through two days of training at UC Berkeley.

On Thursday, Garbelotto demonstrated its use—expected to cost homeowners about $30 per application. One way to treat oaks is to inject the chemical into the tree's vascular system with a syringe. The other is to spray the bark with a mixture of phosphite and organosilicate, a chemical that helps the bark absorb the chemicals.

Phosphite is absorbed into the tree and moves up into the leaves, Garbelotto said. It then enters the cambium, the part of the tree the pathogen attacks. The presence of phosphites in the cambium prompts the tree to release chemicals that fight off infections, he said.

The original studies on phosphonate in 2001 showed marked reductions in lesions on trees, but it was registered as a fertilizer and could not be used to fight sudden oak death.

Garbelotto said further studies in Australia, where a different phytophthora is killing trees, proved the compound worked against the kind of disease affecting oaks.

The new product is good news for homeowners whose oak trees can add $30,000 to the value of their property.

But the battle continues on many other fronts.

The disease has been found in nursery plants in Sacramento and in Placer and Stanislaus counties; in King County, Washington; and in Medford and Portland, Ore. A nursery in Vancouver, B.C., was also found to have the disease. And, for the first time, the two mating types of the disease were recently found in Portland, leading to fears that the two could mate and create a new kind of killer immune to the phosphite treatment. The other mating type was previously found only in Europe.

And, even if the disease can be controlled in some places by the newly approved chemicals, it can still live for years and years in hosts like the bay tree and infect future generations of oak trees.

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Longtime Berkeley Bookstore Closes

TO ALL THE FRIENDS, COLLEAGUES AND PATRONS OF SHAMBHALA BOOKSELLERS:

It is with great sadness that I must inform you that I have decided to sell this business.

I have put this decision off as long as possible hoping that the economics of the book industry would stabilize and that of the community in general would improve. I have shared the grim realities of our situation with you in several previous "Open Letters". While many of our long-time friends have rallied to our support, market forces have proven stronger and the trend has continued to further weaken us.

For some months now we have been unable to pay our bills in a timely manner despite rigorous efforts to cut overhead, reducing both hours and staff. The past two years have seen a steady decline in business, a 20% drop in sales in 2002 (operating at a loss) and an additional 30 to 40% so far in 2003.

Things, as they say, can't go on this way.

There are many different factors that have contributed to this situation, but the principal two are the general economy and the current nature of the book industry. The downturn in the nation's economy has adversely affected small businesses all around the country, with perhaps a special focus on California and the SF Bay Area in particular.

Still, 35 years is a pretty good run for a little bookshop. I have always treasured and have striven to continue the legacy of Shambhala Booksellers. It has added untold benefit to my life to have worked here these past 24 years. It has been a privilege to have served and worked with you.

I urge those of you who have outstanding trade or credit slips to please come in and make use of them. I wish, as far as possible, to leave no debt outstanding.

Hopefully we will see, as the elders have told us, with every ending comes a new beginning.

Many thanks,

Philip Barry
Owner/Manager

Events

Oak Ash & Thorn in San Jose

Nov. 15th

Ah yes, another season is passing...twenty dollar bills are beginning to turn bright colors...governors are falling from the trees...and the cool breeze of autumn bears the faint whiff of another batch of home brew gone terribly, terribly wrong.

Must be time for a South Bay show! Join us at the Fiddling Cricket Folk Club on November 15th for an evening of food, drink and song as The Espresso Garden & Café presents an evening of sonic debauchery with Oak Ash & Thorn.

Tickets are $14, the show starts at 8 p.m. and seating is limited, but the food is great and the beer is cold, so come down early for dinner and a good seat. Better yet, reserve a place by calling (408) 394-3353 or e-mail brundle@attglobal.net For

more information or directions, visit www.fiddlingcricket.com or our website at www.oakashthorn.com

We look forward to seeing you there!

Cheers,

Oak Ash & Thorn

3rd Annual Interfaith Pagan Pride Parade and Celebration Returns

Sponsored by K.P.F.A. 94.1, The San Francisco Bay Guardian, and Berkeley Community Media (Ch.25)

ALL DAY!

Theme: "DIVINE FEMININE"

SATURDAY MAY 15TH, 2004, 10am-5pm at CIVIC CENTER PARK IN BERKELEY, CA

New Location! New Celebration!

We are pleased to announce our third Annual Parade and Celebration, which will no doubt prove to be the best yet! This year, we have expanded the celebration to include vendors, crafts, and food (positioned nearby.) We are also exited to announce that we will be featuring an "Author's Circle," in which you can meet and converse with the Pagan community's leading published Authors!

Speaking of Authors, our Parade Marshal for this year will be none other than the wonderful Ms. Diana Paxson, author of NUMEROUS books, and Priestess of Hrafnar, an organization which practices the native religion of the Germanic peoples (Asatru) and Norse shamanic skills, such as oracular seidh. Find out more about Hrafnar and Diana Paxson Here:

http://www.hrafnar.org/

And Don't Forget...

AWARDS FOR FLOATS AND COSTUMES! We are continuing to encourage the participation of floats and costumed participants this year, and will offer special awards for both BEST FLOAT and BEST COSTUME, so don't miss your chance to show us how creative you can be!... and if your serious about building a float, We have a new handbook entitled "Building a Parade Float: A guide for Amateurs" that we would be happy to send you. Just drop us a line at paganparade@earthlink.net. Also, this years event will be covered by our newest sponsor, Berkeley Community Media (Ch.25,) so dress in your brightest and smile for T.V.!

Camera Shy? Bring a mask, or come down and cheer the community on...we would definitely love that!

What? You have not heard of this event? Then you are in for a treat! The Interfaith Pagan Pride Parade and Celebration started in March of 2001, as a community service to the "Interfaith" members of the pagan community, as well as friends and neighbors who support the unity that this celebration represents. The event is inclusive in that it brings together those members of the Pagan community (as described by the Interfaith Center at the Presidio,) who follow Earth-Based, Nature Centered, and or Polytheistic Beliefs. Among the many groups included in this description are Native American (North, Central, and South), Afro-diasporic, Neo-Pagan, Taoist, Shinto, Aboriginal, Hindu, traditional Shamanic, and African spiritual communities. These communities comprise roughly 1/4 of the World's Population, and we members of most of these communities to participate in the Event.

We are endorsed by the Interfaith Center at the Presidio, the San Francisco Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual /Transgender Pride Parade, Reclaiming, the Berkeley A.C.L.U, and the Covenant of the Goddess; all internationally recognized organizations.

Please feel free to pass this invitation on to others, and bring your Family and Friends! Check out our latest Newsletter here:

http://ppp.magiclamp.net/mn/Newsletter.asp

2004 Pagan Pride Day...Modesto

Greetings Everyone,

We are happy to announce that the date and location have been set for the 2004 Modesto Pagan Pride Day Harvest Fest!

The 2004 Harvest Fest will be on Saturday September 11th, 2004 at the American Legion Hall in Modesto, California. Admission to the event will be completely free with a canned food donation.

We plan on offering 20 to 30 craft vendors, covens, and non-profit booths in addition to 4 to 5 authors and speakers. Bands, mythic dancers, entertainment and more will grace our entertainment stage on the deck. We will also be featuring an art show, discussion panels, and a 9/11 memorial.

We hope some of you will be able to make the drive to Modesto and take part in our large 9/11 Memorial this year. It'll probably be one of the largest Pagan memorials around. We are planning a second memorial ritual in respect to 9/11. We will also be having a large Memorial Banner that we hope to get 100s of Pagan signatures on before we send it to New York and Washington DC!

You can get much more information about the Modesto Pagan Pride Day at this URL:

http://www.aupagans.com/Modesto/PPD.html

FOOD FOR THOSE IN NEED

AUP also features a year around food bank open to all of those in need of a little extra help. If you or someone you know would like to receive more information on the Association Of United Pagans Food Bank, please visit this URL: www.aupagans.com/Modesto/Services_FoodBank.html

Blessings and MoonLight,
DragonHawk & MoonRaven
Coordinators: 2004 MPPD
Modesto Pagan Pride Day
120 San Juan Drive
Modesto, CA 95354
(209) 549-1727
http://www.AUPagans.com

Resources

A Chàirdean,

Some of you may be familiar with Carmina Gadelica, a six-volume set of traditional Gaelic poetry -- hymns, chants, incantations, work songs, blessings, etc., collected by Alexander Carmichael between the mid-1800s and early 1900s. Carmichael himself lamented the fact that he was unable to transcribe the tunes and was only able to collect the poetry itself (although that, in itself, was a major feat of great importance).

Our Celtic group, Distant Oaks, has just released a new album entitled "Gach Là agus Oidhche: Music of Carmina Gadelica," which features thirteen songs from volumes I, II, and

III of the collection (various types of poems which we set to original music in traditional styles), along with dance tunes (reels, jigs, slip jigs, strathspeys) and slow airs (both original and newly composed tunes).

The line-up and instrumentation is as follows:

Deborah L. White: vocals, guitar, citole, cittern, fretted dulcimer, percussion.

Jared White: recorders, whistles, Scottish smallpipes, Border pipes, uilleann pipes, psaltery, bodhrán, percussion, backing vocals.

Shayne White: Celtic harp, Medieval harp, virginal, percussion.

David Douglass: Baroque violin

Julie Jeffrey: viola da gamba

Of particular interest to learners is the 20 page booklet, which includes all of the song lyrics in both Gaelic and English, along with historical and cultural notes concerning Carmina Gadelica, Alexander Carmichael, and the individual pieces on the recording (21 tracks of music in all).

If you're interested in reading more about it, listening to sound clips, seeing the beautiful hand-designed cover by Titus Woods, or obtaining a copy of the recording, please visit our new Web site:

http://www.northernwindrecordings.com

If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail me at: gaidheal@distantoaks.com

Leis gach deagh dhùrachd,

Gobnait (Deborah)
Distant Oaks
Celtic & Early Music
http://www.distantoaks.com
http://www.northernwindrecordings.com

Calendar

Astronomical Samhain, when the Sun is half-way between the Fall Equinox and Winter Solstice will occur this year on Friday, Nov 7 as 15 deg of Scorpius at 12:14:45 a.m. Pacific Standard Time or by an alternate calculation as 16 deg 18 min. decl. 09:29:09 a.m.

A Druid Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $8.00 and email subscriptions are free. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's post mail subscription free. Write to:

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Yule Essay: Mistletoe

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 1986
By Emmon Bodfish

Yule, Winter Solstice is one of the four minor Druid High Days. It is associated with the Holly and the Mistletoe, prosperity and purification. The hanging of mistletoe over doorways harks back to its protective function as the All-Heal. Sprits that bring disease will not pass under it. All mistletoe use and customs are carry-overs from Pagan, most notably Druidic traditions.

Though kissing under the mistletoe can't be traced back farther than the 17th century, it is probably much older. It reflects the herb's Paleo-Druidic attributes of protection, fertility, and prosperity.

Pliny the Elder, in his Natural History, gives us the best description of a Paleopagan Druid ceremony, that of cutting the Mistletoe. According to Stuart Piggot, the ceremonial mistletoe must be cut from an oak tree. The time of the ritual was set by the Moon as in Pliny's description.

"The time of the rite was the sixth day of the new moon, after preparations had been made for a feast and a sacrifice of two white bulls. A Druid in a white robe climbed the tree and cut with a golden sickle the branch of mistletoe, which was caught as it fell on a white cloak. The bulls were then sacrificed and all present ate of them."

The golden sickle is a puzzle, a pure gold will not hold an edge sharp and tough enough to cut through the woody stem of the mistletoe. Gilded, or simply polished bronze, are more likely materials. Though Pliny was allowed to witness the ritual, he probably could not approach the Druid or examine the sickle.

Nor would he have been able to talk to a Gaulish Druid without an interpreter. The ceremony was recorded in Roman Gaul. Gold may have been a description of a color, or a quoting of hearsay. Elsewhere in his book Pliny writes of the ritual necessity of gathering the mistletoe left handed, after fasting, and of the Celts plucking Selago without using an iron knife, barefoot and with the right hand through the left sleeve of a white tunic, but these were private rites, not public ceremonies. There is no mention in them of the presence of a Druid.

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Carleton sneaks on silently, nearly unseen (despite her best efforts). Winter blooms upon us, snow falls. And there is a great departure from the body of many students.

Nothing is, as yet, planned for Yule, which will probably be held privately, with most of the Druids off campus. However, we look forward to the return of the student body, and of my co-ArchDruid, Corwin Troost, from his self-imposed exile in Japan.

I am still looking for contributions for a collection of myth's about Dalon Ap Landu. It only takes a minute to write a myth and it can be about what ever you want it to be about (so long as it's about Dalon Ap Landu). You can email those to me, or questions, at: Crimmins@carleton.edu

Akita Grove: News from Japan

A simple New Year's card arrived at Mike's with the following message from Brother Pat: "All is well in the snowy lands of Akita. We were glad you had a chance to visit this year, and we may be visiting NC next March, and will definitely stop by in DC if we can get a connecting flight. Taiyo is growing strong, but seems to have a cold, perhaps because the sun is growing weaker in this season? We are too busy to write much, but try to read the Missalany in our spare time.

Blessings to everybody over there.

Pat

Bamboo Grove: News from Delaware

Reflections on Yule:

Whenever I do celebrate Yule (aka when I'm not frantically caught up in the chaos of the holiday plans of relatives and family and significant others' families, etc!) I tend to look for a simple way to celebrate the rebirth of the Sun King. My oldest memory of doing so was a simple red "log" candle, placed on a simple rectangular piece of thick, clear glass. I lit the three or four evenly spaced out candles on the log, and watched the tiny flames grow...the Sun King's reassurance to me that he was being nurtured for now, growing in strength, and would be ready to return for the New Year.

This year, while I was running errands and idly getting some early holiday shopping done, I stopped by the "SALE" area of the local Target store. (I'm fresh out of college aka broke, and Target is fast becoming my favorite store because it has great stuff that I always buy anyway!) Anyhow, I'd passed that section a few times but something drew me in this one last time. I saw an oil lamp that was in the form of a clear glass globe. Inside was a bit of an evergreen branch, three small pinecones, some "snow," and a bit of cinnamon, I believe.

It completely complemented the idea of what Yule means to me...a time to celebrate the joy and hope of the New Year

even in the midst of darkness and cold. The pinecones represent the seeds and potential of what is to come in the New Year, as well as the potent life force of the Sun King himself. The cinnamon is that bit of fire, a spark that will never go out within my soul even through the darkest times and coldest nights. The evergreen branch reminds me that even through the snow (the Time of Sleep) there is life...wild animals and flora quietly biding their time, waiting to be awakened, to unfurl their leaves once more. And so this simple candle holds promise for the future to me, which is a precious gift at this particular time in my life especially.

Grove News:

Although my ex-boyfriend/roommate has moved out with his snakes (sadly, one of his snakes we both cared for has passed on despite all our efforts) I have not had to "give away" any of the other Grove members; the Grove has managed to stay together through some minor financial miracles and I am grateful for that.

We are 9 members strong: myself (the only Human, and the Caretaker/Scribe);Archdruid (Bamboo plant); Muses: guinea pigs (Panda, Rygel); mice (Rascal, Spud, Lucky, as well as Cricket, who left this Earth so prematurely); rough green snake (Karma); and last but definitely not least, cat (Leo).

~*~A Big Announcement~*~

I suppose the biggest Grove News would be that I (Caretaker/Scribe of the Bamboo Grove) will soon be engaged to a wonderful and loving soul! He is in the Air Force Reserves, and his squadron is actively serving right now, which means a lot of chaotic work and such as of right now...not much dormancy! But Yule is the season of hope and of planting new dreams for the new year; my hope is that these dreams will take root, nestling into the fertile soil that lies beneath the cold frost, to burst into fruition in the spring and summer months ahead.

Blessings of Love and Light,

BrightMirage (Bard of the Reform, XLI)

Digitalis Grove: News from D.C.

Rumors abound that the ARDA 2 may make a debut in time for my birthday in Jan. according to Mark; but I will simply patiently wait and see if this comes true.

I missed a chance to attend a conference on Druidism in Alexandria in November, and Korean and Japanese matters have taken precedence over Celtic ones. And yet, every morning and evening I go out to walk the dog and stare up at the motions of the sun and moon, the falling leaves, and movement of birds and think on things. This and long commuting mediation and RDNAtalk discussion seems to be the whole of my Druidism lately. I also read from "Wisdom: Daily Reflections for a New Age" by Reynold Feldman.

As Christmas season approaches, and DC puts up the enormous Tree, Menorah and Yule log, I will get into the spirit and try to enjoy the holiday in the most Druidic way possible, chatting with my friends. Happy Holidays to everyone.

Dravidia Grove: News from Maryland

Hello All,

Sorry been off for a while, here we go...

A lot of weather changes going on here, and also got the chance to see the lunar eclipse about 2 weeks ago. School is rough, and so is work. In April we will be moving to Indiana due to my youngest daughter going blind, it will be difficult for her to adapt at 11 yrs old, and a major change in my life since I have lived in MD all my life... We have had a lot of rain, and I have spent a lot of time reading some of my new books. The funny thing is just when you think you have completed the works of one particular author, he goes and writes another book. Well just a few more to add to my collection again.

—Dolanimus

Rowan-Oak Grove, MOCC: News from Oklahoma

rowan-oak grove will be having a feast and ritual burning of the yule log for yule 2003. the samhain/day of the dead costume party and convocation went off without a hitch. among the decisions voted on were the confirmation of all board of directors members and their offices within the grove.

confirmed are:

m.s. white raven- arch druidess
bro valens- arch druid
sis m.s. white tigress- druid in training and co hps
bro marson- head of the guardians of the planet (environmental protection team)
sis tsarah- head of corn maiden society (handles decoration of grove, feast preparations etc)
bro werebear - secratary/treasurer and gaurdian of the planet, (also scribe for our newsletter more on that later) sis marrissa- novice ovate and corn maiden
sis alice- summoner

absent officers were bro jeremy who is in training at mocc furthering his knighthood training this office is basically open until he either returns to tulsa or someone else cleet certified wants to take on heading up our security and bro marson who was ill

bro werebear suggested the name talking leaves for the rowan-oak grove newsletter and this was ratified by vote. he will be posting at our online grove site the guardian of the planet articles and has as well as being the scribe and editor an article in talking leaves.

the samhain convocation was our biggest in the 25 year history of the grove community. we had 15 of our now 38 members in the offline grove community present and our normal attendance for classes and rites it between 8 and 10 of the active membership. of our active members (around 25 now) 2/3 are inner court or holding a secular position within the grove. so this made it a double blessing as most were present for all 3 days of the celebration.

our wishes for a happy and blessed yule season to all our druid miscell-any friends. stacey we really appreciate you!

The Grove of the Ancient Oaks, MOCC: News from Utah

Greetings Stacey,

I have had in the past not much to mention. Our Grove had seamed to grow dormant for what felt like ages. I am happy to report that we are up and running again. We plan to have a grand party the night before Yule and do a comfortable indoor ceremony seeing as how it will most likely be 14 degrees outside. I am not sure what else you would like to know... so if there is anything else don't hesitate to send me an e-mail asking for more.

With Blessings from the Gods and Goddess'

Llyr Brae
Archdruid of The Grove of the Ancient Oaks

Nemeton Awenyddion: News from Cohasset, CA

Well, things have been transforming a lot here. Had Ceinlys, one of our closest members move to our area and she's sure been a help. Our online classes are going well and I just took on three more students in our Seekers Class, and including our first level class of eight, I think I'm going to stop offering more Seekers classes for a little while so I can work on other things, writing, harping, fiddling, and art. For our Alban Gwyddion/Yule we will be doing the regular indoor ritual, there's usually snow on the ground here by that time. Probably decorate a Yule log and name it Llew before we put it in the wood-stove incubator, and then an all night vigil and drink mead til dawn, play music and hold the general Bardagh circle.

Changes have been plentiful, as part of the letting go of the old year before Samhain I went through a separation and am now single again. Enjoying the winter holidays with our members/kindred has been most enjoyable. We're in the midst of planning a Calon Mai/Beltain celebration for this next year with camping and the usual gathering space open for non-members to come as well.

Blessings and Happy Yuletide to all!

Ysgawen Rhiannon Am Nemeton Awenyddion

Poison Oak Grove:News from California

Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

From the mess-ill-anyous file: one of the drawbacks of getting a fictitious business name is that one starts getting all kinds of junk mail, applications for credit cards, small business loans, health insurance, ad nauseum. I don't know how this happened frankly. I sent the proper forms to the Oakland Tribune for the announcement to be posted for the required four weeks in the classified section. (Is the Trib selling the names of poor unsuspecting people merely trying to set up their own businesses?) The most interesting was the "A Druid Massal Any" pen sample. It's amusing to me how the Missal-Any's name has already been morphed by some poor drone paid to solicit business from a bought mailing list. Too bad the name was misspelled--a "true" Missal-Any pen would have been a nifty thing to have. It reminds me of years ago when Emmon had box matches made for Live Oak Grove, R.D.N.A. The person fulfilling the order must have misread the application and put R.O.N.A. We still have those R.O.N.A. matches.

Many apologies to the readers who might have sent in articles or subscription checks and have had their mail returned. When I filled out the forms for the post office box I put on the card Poison Oak Grove, RDNA, NRDNA, Reformed Druids of North America, even Live Oak Grove, but not A Druid Missal-Any, which is the name I requested readers send mail to! I will remedy this oversight as soon as I get back from holiday in the Trinity Alps.

We Get Letters!

From one of our subscribers: Speaking of the missal-any... I've got a sad but also hilarious story for you! Last week, my "hard copy" came in the mail, with the (blank) address sheet all ripped and torn, and stamped "damaged in the postal service." When I opened it, I found not the Missal-Any but a newsletter from a local church (not my church). I made a mental note to drop you a line asking for a replacement copy, and then started thinking of the implications. What did they think when it seemed that their church was sending out Druid documents?!?!?!? Wish I could have heard the conversation when they reported it to their minister! Unless someone had opened it, they wouldn't have known to make the substitution; what I thought had happened

From Senator Barbara Boxer, CA, concerning Sudden Oak Death:

Dear Friend:

For a decade, the majestic oak trees of California have been under attack by a disease known as "Sudden Oak Death." For almost as long, I have been working in the U.S. Senate to provide funding so that we may better understand this disease, fight its spread and protect this wonderful symbol of California.

I am pleased to let you know that the United States Senate has approved a request I made earlier this year for a total of $5.7 million for research to stop the spread of Sudden Oak Death Syndrome, which has killed countless oak trees in Northern California. The funding comes from both the Agriculture Appropriations bill and the Interior Appropriations bill.

Sudden Oak Death was first discovered in Marin County in 1994. It has since killed many trees in California and threatens to change the landscape of California. There has been some good news in recent months, as scientists have discovered a new treatment that may slow the spread of the disease. We need to continue to expand research in pursuit of knowledge that will enable us to slow the spread of this disease, and that will lead us to find ways to prevent it from killing this significant symbol of California.

If you have questions or ideas about saving California's oaks or any other federal matter, I encourage you to send your message to:

http://boxer.senate.gov/contact/webform.cfm

Sincerely,

Barbara Boxer

United States Senator

More Ramblings From Gandalf

By Gandalf, Amon Sul Grove

Many of us who study the ways of the Ancients are of the belief that their practices should be given consideration, but that modern day observances need to be tempered by the knowledge that has been accumulated in recent times. (As opposed to the strict re-constructionists who try to replicate previous practices with as much accuracy as possible.) Reconstructionism is particularly difficult when dealing with a culture that didn't leave much in the way of a written history, especially when what little was created has been actively destroyed by both the Romans and Christians.

I think that it is safe to say that most members of this list are focused on developing a perspective of religion that works for them on a personal level. I consider the RDNA to be one of the truly "big tent" religious organizations. (If, for the sake of discussion, you will allow me to refer to our loose confederation of Groves and individual practitioners as an "organization.")

For me, it was initially a struggle against my Christian upbringing. It was such a relief to be able to say: I am not a Christian. I do not want to be a Christian. It is all right not to be a Christian. I will not burn in Hell if I am not a Christian.

The preceding was the result of a realization that I could not accept any of the major tenets of Christianity: Jehovah is not the "one true God." Jesus was not his only begotten son, born of a virgin. There will be no Anti-Christ or Rapture.

Yeshua (if he existed at all) may have just been some poor old sod who was in the right place at the wrong time. There was a civil disturbance/riot in Jerusalem just before Passover (probably a protest against the Roman occupation/collaboration of the Sanhedrin). When it was time to "round up the usual suspects." Yeshua, as an outside agitator, would have been an easy target, especially if the story about the incident at the Synagogue is true. The moneychangers would have been renting their space from the Sanhedrin and paying protection money to the Roman army, only to be attacked by some lunatic. Business was probably off for several days. When the decision was made to make an example of someone, once again, Yeshua would have been an easy target (Barabbas was, by all accounts, a local boy).

Surviving crucifixion happened on occasion. Considering the fact that the accounts indicate that Yeshua was taken down early because of Passover, he might very well have been in a state of shock that resembled death. The entire Jesus mythology may have sprang from random events.

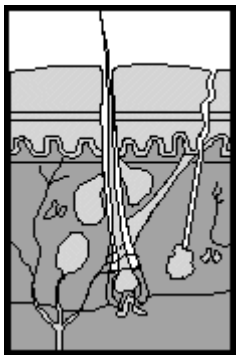
If Jesus was not literally the son of Jehovah, sent to redeem the world from its sins, then Christianity has probably been a huge mistake. Quo Vadis? Since I do believe that there is something that constitutes God, the study of which could be beneficial, Atheism was not a viable option. I soon realized that earth-based religions are what I am best suited to. For years I was a generic Pagan. (My reasons for not being able to embrace WICCA are best kept for another essay.) Although I am part American Indian, I do not look the part and I would feel out of place at a powwow. (When in the woods I often feel more Indian than Druid but I do not consider the traditions to be incompatible). My studies would eventually lead me to an exploration of Pre-Christian Celtic religious practices and a conclusion that I am most comfortable within that framework. I consider returning to the religion of my pre-Christian ancestors to be an effort to correct a fifteen hundred year old mistake. It is my sincere hope that others will come to the same conclusion.

Whiskey and Whiskers: What Makes Druids Hairy?

By Mike, Digitalis Grove

During a five-day camping weekend at the beginning of November, I decided to do what most men do when they are roughing it, forget about shaving and bathing everyday. When I woke up and prepared to return to work the next week, after showering I made one of those quiet heroic decisions, to put down the razor, hold my chin up high and look like the unkempt heathen that I am for a few nerve-wracking weeks. I'd like to share my insights and reflections into this mysterious process after a month of fretting before the mirror and other obsessive thoughts about these wiry tubes protruding from my face. I should warn you in advance that I've never taken a women's studies class or read anthropology, but why let ignorance stop a fun essay and stepping on a few toes?!

So, what really are my reasons for this rather small apparent act of rebellion against the norms of society? It certainly is not because it makes me look good; I'm simply not handsome material. I have a decent goatee, but it is a bit heartbreakingly scruffy on the cheeks; which has given me a lot of empathy for balding men, who ask why they have been blighted with balding, and the disturbing semi-nudity of scalp skin showing through thinning hair. The beard does feel nice, and has sensitized my face to the wind, and provides endless hours of fun of scratching, stroking and chewing. I've noticed many people unconsciously imitate this behavior when I do it, just as some people check for zits on their own face when they see a pockmarked teenager, or when one yawn triggers a whole room. Beards and facial hair runs in my family, mostly in the male members, but I have little fear so far of thinning at the temples (although my grove is currently overgrown), since that is apparently passed down from the mother's side. More than likely, I am probably compensating for something buried in my subconscious, as likely are most attempts at grooming and beautification. But what is it, and how deeply embedded is it in our consciousness?



Possibly, the motivation may be the same innate rebellious and questioning streak that led me into Druidism? Turning the question around, why should I not grow a beard? Why had I adopted the daily ritual of scraping a sharp piece of metal over my sensitive face, and indeed paying money for all these accoutrements, and possibly losing a liter of blood over the last 15 years? What condition or reality was I trying to avoid? Intractable life processes, including hair, hold their own lessons and mysteries. Scales, feathers, hair, nails and skin are all different forms of keratin protein growths on the body. Indeed, one hair after another will eventually fill out a head of hair, as does learning from multiple sources and experiences. Growing a beard, or any hair on your body, is both an exercise in doing nothing (because hair grows in lots of places, whether you want it or not) and also the inevitable grooming and maintenance (to keep others from forcefully trimming you.). In ancient days, people could roughly trim their hair, but due to technological difficulties in having effective shaving tools, most men in Europe and America grew some form of beard until the 19th or 20th century, except if they were rich or in a special institution; such as the military (for practical reasons) or priesthood (due to associations with sexuality maturity and balding habits discussed below). Then, with the growing awareness and constant commercial advertisement of self-cleanliness, mentioned by Brother Eric last year, "modern man" threw off their beards for the clean-shaven look that bespoke their discipline, conformity and delicacy.

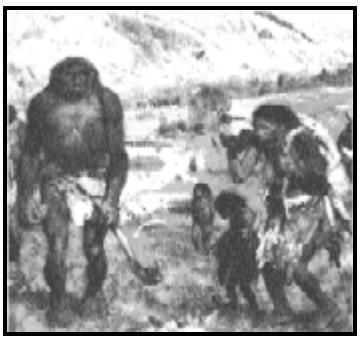
Now, there are many natural actions in society that are either expressly forbidden, or (when allowed) are highly regulated by customs and standards; such as sex (ok in marriage), murder (ok in war), drugs (ok with doctor's permission), lying (ok in politics), theft (ok in taxes and public development) and of course hearing voices in your head (ok in an established church). There are probably some good reasons for these restrictions, and the most interesting stories in cultures tend to revolve around exploring those boundaries of appropriateness.

Before we examine the restrictions, let's ponder why we have those facial hairs in the first place? Druidism has taught me that change is a constant in this life, not only in the way that my body changes throughout my life, but how human bodies have changed over generations and eons. Some say we used to have a lot more hair than we do now... or did we? In fact, we have just as many hair follicles per inch of skin as a chimpanzee, although these tend to be short, thin, single strands that don't thicken and proliferate. We also have developed more advanced sweat glands. We were once famously categorized as "the naked ape" by an author in the 1970s who examined humans from the viewpoint and terminology of those animal behaviorists who make those nature TV programs. Humans are also noteworthy among animals for their willful resistance to evolve physically, choosing instead to use tools, wear clothing and adopt social customs to survive drought, war, famine, pestilence, blizzards, etc. which would have killed weaker members of our society (including myself) and forced us to physically evolve into many new species, if we were only as intelligent as, say, cats or dogs. We likely dropped most of our chimpanzee-like thickened pelt about a million years ago in Africa, because of two theories: ocean and dirty homes.

Water and Earth are home to most of the animals on this planet, with a clever few able to know the mysteries of both environments. Apparently, a critical population of Homo Sapiens lived for a few hundred thousand years by the ocean and nearby river deltas of East Africa; and as any swimmer knows, hair causes considerable drag from friction; meaning lots of drownings. From the same period (I like to call it the Age of Sea Monkeys), we also gained partially-webbed fingers, bigger feet, a taste for salt, and down-turned noses to keep out water. In addition, since early humans lived in huts, tents, caves or lean-tos for a weeks or years at a time, that could lead to a lot of annoying skin parasites that love to hide in hair and animals hides (from 500,000 years ago). Being one with the Earth does not mean one must be dirty, as most animals demonstrate by cleaning themselves. Trying to groom all that hair would have taken an enormous amount of time; and that time was better spent on other activities. Then much much later, really only 20,000-45,000 years ago, people began to weave (based on the discovery of needles), enabling them to move into and stay put in temperate climates (instead of seasonally migrating north and south) where they kept their remaining hair; while those remaining in warmer Africa (and possible later emigrations to Asia, Pacific and America) continued to lose hair. Humans apparently liked this semi-aquatic phase, because over 75% of human population still live within 10 miles of the ocean or a major river, possibly bringing about the appearances of powerful maritime and riverine deities in the developing polytheistic religions among the descendents of a tree-scrambling mammal.

In addition, during that period, being less hairy, itchy and crawling with lice became a desirable trait in choosing a mate, a trait that continues to this day. Personality and eloquence became a desirable trait only with the discovery of language about 250,000 years ago. Groin and underarm hair keep the blood warm at these working joints (that's our best guess, besides indicating mating maturity), while remaining hair on the arms and lower legs kept those active members warm when they stuck out of the clothing and unscratched by bushes and branches. Hair on the fingers disappeared as an inconvenience when handling tools. Mono-brows only finally disappeared in the 1960s. You'd think that children, spending much of the day running about, would need more hair, but perhaps more common predators kept them close to the home hearth (invention of fire was 1 million years ago), more on kids later.

That much seems pretty understandable. But remaining body hair is not about practicality, but triggered by gender hormones of adolescence.



Which brings us to gender variations. So why do men generally have more developed hair on their lower face? It is possible that longer scalp hair was used in small handcraft activities, in addition to protecting the valuable brain from heat strokes and cold weather. Neither female or male primates are especially hairy on their heads, or bodies, but the solution may reside in the two types of mating habits found among primates; monogamous and polygamous. The females and males among the lemurs and smaller "primitive" monkeys tend to be about the same body size, less aggressive, vegetarian-inclined, nearly interchangeable in coloration, and rather faithfully monogamous pairs. (Does this sound familiar to a Golden Age myth? That break was over 30 million years ago.) One theory is that the males among the larger primates (like baboons, gorillas, chimps, and humans) tend to be about 30% larger, prefer to gather many females around them (conducive to building societies?), occasionally eat meat, and have strange traits that set them apart from the females (larger noses, bigger teeth, greater upper body strength, different color hair, exaggerated sexual organs, etc.) Doesn't make this right or desirable, but it is what they tend towards.

Another theory claims that perhaps the females are just 30% smaller than the norm; and this may be a reverse survival trait (along with other secondary female characteristics), to keep violent roaming males from confusing them with other alpha-males, ambushing the women and killing them during periods of ferocious raids. This is the reason it similar to why it is harder to hit an annoying 5 year old than an annoying 15 year old. Nature has stayed our hand because they are just cuter and look more immature, therefore not a threat. Well, the violence obviously still happened for other reasons, due to the strong libido and lack of self-control, especially among these male primates, but perhaps it was less often. I think it would have been smarter for the females to get bigger than the male to protect their young children when a new male took over the group and killed off those that were unrelated to him; but perhaps males selected smaller females that were easier to control? How many men like to date taller women, hmmm?

With our obvious physical differences, and a tendency for men to corral women and children when socially permissible, the growth of a beard indicated that the male child was now considered "sexually mature," and needing to be separated from the females. That "growth spurt" after an usually long childhood, was probably to get big enough to survive this dangerous transition period. Anthropologists could go into this in more detail about tribal sex segregation; but the important thing is to realize the symbolic association of a beard with a place in the male hierarchy. When people lived only 30 or 40 years old, beards at age 15 to 18 were actually a "mid-life" phenomenon. Many Celtic stories abound with stories of fast growing children (probably a story tool to keep the story moving after miraculous births and until the interesting issues of adulthood can begin again), and young warriors who achieve enviable levels of fame and prowess before even having any facial growth. In modern society for several centuries, possibly for accounting ease, we now legally mature at the same chronological age (16 for driving, 18 for marriage, work, voting, and contracts, 21 for drinking, 25 for insurance, etc.) regardless of actual physical or emotional maturity, with all the predictable problems for early and late bloomers. I remember at age 12-14 anxiously waiting for my first stubble, and then just as anxiously shaving it completely off, because I would some how not "fit in." One guy in my high school actually grew a rather nice beard, but the teachers vigorously disapproved, as if he was somehow trying to refuse their authority and move "a step ahead." Perhaps males want to continue to be submissive to other dominant males by continuing to shave and cut their hair, to seem less aggressive and mature, conversely growing your hair out was a sign of rebellion, especially since the 1960s ("Hey, hippy, cut your hair and get a real job,") while shaving your head is customary for entering many religious orders, a sign of penitence, mourning and militaries as a sign of rebirth or new beginnings.

However, in some religions and societies where gender differences are heightened and polarized, along dualistic lines, (i.e. 2/3 of the world), usually grossly in favor of male superiority, growing a beard is almost mandatory to avoid societal accusations of effeminacy. A common punishment in such cultures is to shave or yank out the hairs in their beard. Another symbolism of beards, as with accumulating wrinkles, is as an artistic short-hand for increasing age, with really old men with long beards being a sign of wisdom and experience (like Father Time or Jehovah in Renaissance paintings). Some men however do get confused and think their beard (rather than the transient social constructions) inherently gives them their social dominance and virility, and become superstitiously in awe of its power; even swearing oaths by it. Many kings (and queens) in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia wore fake beards, especially during their young years. Some tribal women tattoo beards and mustaches on themselves, such as the Ainu women of Northern Japan (who are the hairiest people in the world next to cab drivers) and in New Zealand, I believe.

Even in polytheistic circles, like modern Paganism, there is a greater emphasis now of equality of gender in social roles (although priests can get a bit high and mighty), there remains definite exaggerated differentiation of male and female traits in deities worshipped; most so among duotheistic Wiccans, perhaps. However, as we know, real maturity is actually about the ability to care about the needs of others in the community, weigh both sides of an issue, and responsibly follow the orderly rules of society without constant oversight. Such a point may not occur until the 30s, or never, in some cases, although we may adopt the physical trappings of adulthood. Druids are, among all the world's priests, most likely to be portrayed in literature and art as wise, long-bearded males; and this propaganda perhaps lingers in our sub-consciousness because we know so little else about them beyond shallow surface observations.

Thus, in conclusion, there is a long history of reasons leading to our current state of hairiness. The encouraging factors for modern Druids to become hairier are powerful associated images of rebellion, exaggerated focus on male/female deities, an affinity for emulating wild life, time spent outdoors in cold weather, desire for wisdom, a general noticed proclivity for multiple partners, usual distraction by studies from personal grooming, and compensating for something we have no doubt not listed yet. So if these theories are correct, we may have an understanding of why so many young males in Druidic circles tend to grow beards and enjoy being generally shaggy. (And I'd add that many of the female Druids also tend to let all their hairs grow out, at least in college.)

That's all for my armchair philosophy this season. Have a nice Yule-tide and perhaps you'll pester your co-workers why Santa Claus is usually depicted as a long bearded older male, when St. Nicolas was probably a shaven orthodox bishop.

Preserving Sacred Places

A Little Druid Takes on the Feds

By Julie Ann

Some people are just born lucky. I'm not one of them. Many of you, through the RDNA webchat, have gotten to know me more through my misadventures than anything else. From the now infamous Sister Suzanne of Catholic School days past, to my supernatural freeloading ghost "housemate" named Walter, to my run-in this summer with a particularly disagreeable pack of ticked-off prairie chickens.

No, I'm not a lucky gal.

But eventually, all that bad luck building up has to erupt into something. Good or bad, sooner or later, she's gonna blow.

This September, it finally happened. I guess I need to give you a little background here. My brother, Mark, and I are tight. Out of all my siblings, he and I have always been the closest. Don't tell the others that, though. We're a team... the dynamic duo. Lewis and Clark... Bob and Doug Mackenzie (for those of you old enough to remember Second City Television). That's Mark and I. Mark and I had been talking for a while about doing a Boundary Waters trip together. For those of you unfamiliar with the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, it is millions of acres of nothing but pure wilderness, nestled in the north woods of Minnesota. No roads, no houses, nothing for miles on end. Last chance for a latte is in Duluth. We set September 12th of this year as the date we would go in.

However, I can't speak for Mark... or any of the other characters in this story as it unfolds. I can only speak for myself. If you want Mark's side of this, you'll have to ask him. If you want Don the Fed's side of this story... I can get you his number. Stacy, a State staff archaeologist, is currently out "in the field", so you'll have to wait a while until she gets back.

This is my story alone.

Once we pitched camp, several miles into the Boundary Waters, we decided to do some hardcore bushwhacking to the next lake north of us. We were really out in the toolies. Once you get off of the portage routes, there are no trails; so you have to blaze your own. The scary thing about the Boundary Waters is depending on what direction you take, you can be walking in a place where no one has ever walked before. It's that desolate. It's really easy to get turned around up there. Because it doesn't get "traveled," the scrub grows pretty thick. What we were crawling through was unbelievable. Mark was the one who spotted the exposed Canadian Shield rock off in the distance (think large sheets of exposed rock). It would've been easier walking over hot coals than trying to crawl through what we were, so we squeezed and dragged ourselves over to the Shield. Walking the Shield was a whole lot easier. We were on the Shield for about ten minutes when we saw the first circles. A couple of little stone circles, about two feet in diameter. My first thought was "campfire rings." But these circles each had a center stone. And the rocks weren't scorched. These weren't campfire rings.

I don't know why we didn't think more of it at the time, but for some reason, we didn't. We continued walking, and a few minutes later we found a larger cluster of these stone circles. Each, again, had a center stone. None were scorched. Ok... now it had our collective attention. We continued walking to see what would happen. Along the way, we found more and more clusters of stone circles. Most were approximately two feet in diameter, but a couple got up to eight feet or so. All had center stones. No scorching. All I can vouch for is what was going through my mind at that time; we found something. We found something big.

Then Mark stopped dead in his tracks. For those of you who know me personally, you know I'm a runt... so Mark was

eclipsing the view for me. I walked around him, and my lower jaw hit the ground.

We were standing just outside the outer edge of a mammoth-sized stone circle. Boulders... boulders, folks. A perfect circle with a center stone. But that wasn't all. Neatly stacked on top of some of these boulders were more rocks, some were four stones high. Rocks don't do that by themselves, folks. These were cairns.

Mark slowly turned and looked at me. And for as long as I live, I'll never forget the expression on his face. Sheer terror. Last time I saw that look on Mark's face was back when Mark was in high school. When Dad found the beer in the trunk of the car that Mark had forgotten to remove the night before. His eyes were as big as saucers, and he said in almost a whisper "Is this like the Blair Witch Project, or what?" Leave it to my brother... that got me laughing. (Sigh) I love him dearly. When I finally composed myself, I said, "This is sacred ground. It's Ojibwe something-or-other, I'm not exactly sure what. But this is most definitely holy ground. Tread lightly, and disturb nothing."

That was when the camera came out. There was no way I was going to walk away from this without some sort of proof. We didn't touch the stones. I made sure of that. I wasn't exactly sure what it was that we were looking at; but as a Druid, I understand the significance behind circles. You don't break the circle. That is bad juju.

We continued to walk the site, taking pictures as we went, trying to get an idea of the scale of this place. Keeping in mind that the circles were in clusters, we estimated the site to cover 2 - 3 acres. We found hundreds of circles up there.

When we finally canoed, crawled, and portaged our way out of the Boundary Waters, we discussed what it is, exactly, that should be done with this. Do we sell the photos to The National Enquirer? Do we bury this as a family secret and take it to our graves? Do we seek out assistance in finding out what it was that we found out there? What do we do? It was unanimously agreed that we wanted to know just what it was we found out there. But then what? What happens to the site? Nothing could shake me from "This is sacred ground and it needs to be protected." But... there's also a lot to be gained from its study. What legacy in stone did the ancients leave for us to uncover? Where is the happy medium here? I was elected, mostly by default, to be the "family spokesperson" for the site. I then brought it up on the RDNA webchat to get ideas as to what I should do with this. Norm Nelson (bless your heart, I love ya Norm) suggested that I take the photos to the State Historical Museum.

When I got to the Museum, they looked at the photos for all of about two minutes and decided this was way over their heads, and referred me to the State Archaeologist's office. So I went down there. You could tell they didn't believe a word I said. I even got the "If I had a dollar for every person who came in here SWEARING that they found an Indian burial mound on their property, that turned out to be a garbage heap from the 1940's that grass just grew over..." speech. Seriously. That's what they told me. Ok, fine... so I pulled out the photos. Dead silence. What followed can only be described as the Great Inquisition. They kept me down there the entire afternoon grilling me with questions.

"Did you see bottles or cans or wrappers laying around?" "No." "Did you see tent poles or rope?" "No." "Did you see saws or tools, or anything that may have been left behind by loggers?" "No." "Did you see old steel traps or chains, like trappers would use?" "No." "Did you see any old log cabins, or foundations from buildings from old homesteaders?" "No." "Were you by a portage or a trail or a campsite?" "No."

This went on, literally, all afternoon.

Then they finally pulled out the maps. "Can you show us exactly where you were?"

SCREECH! went the brakes. Now it was my turn to ask the questions...

"Why do you NEED to know EXACTLY where it is?"

"What exactly would you do if you DID know the location?" "How do I know you won't ransack the site?"

"How do I know you won't go souvenir hunting?"

"How do I know this won't wind up as the topic of someone's doctoral thesis?"

"How do I know this site won't become public knowledge, and you guys put a flipping admission gate on the front of it and make it a god*&$%#! attraction?"

"This is sacred ground...and it needs to stay that way!"

So now we're at an impasse. The State Archaeologists realized they had a legitimate site on their hands, but I was not about to put an X on the map for them to tromp all over it. And I'm no closer to finding out what it is we found out there. I don't mean to make it sound like it was hostile, because it wasn't. It most definitely wasn't hostile. We were talking and laughing and joking around... but neither side was budging, either.

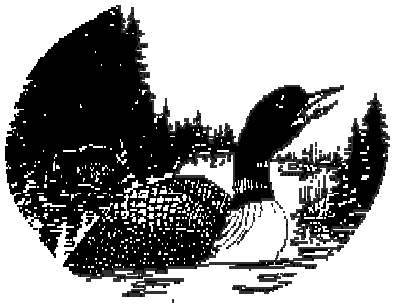
Enter the Fed...

Because the Boundary Waters is federally protected land, the State Archaeologists were required to get the Feds involved. Apparently, from what I gathered, the idea was that this site has most certainly already been found and researched and documented. The State could side-step me, by just calling up the Feds and asking them to send down everything they had on the site.

The Feds had no idea what they were talking about. Nothing like this has ever been found up there. Nothing like this has ever been found in Minnesota PERIOD! After hearing what the State guys had to say about this site, the Feds' interest was a little more than aroused.

In a move that surprised me, probably as much as it surprised the State guys, the Feds opted to bump the State Archaeologists and take over control of the site. They can do that… it's federal land.

But they still don't have that all-important X on the map.



It was time for a family meeting. Don, one of the Feds, wanted to meet with me that weekend, to discuss the site and see the photos. While it was unsaid, I knew I was going to be asked to put an X on the map.

Since family meetings are hard to arrange on short notice, we did this via the telephone. We had to discuss our priorities. What is it we want to achieve? Our objectives boiled down to two: find out what it is that we found up there, and ensure that the site will be protected.

With this under my belt, I hopped in the Jeep and headed north.

I met Don the Fed at a class he was teaching on flint knapping. I guess this is what archaeologists do with their Saturdays to earn extra income. I walked into the classroom and asked for Don. Don strolled over and politely introduced himself. Then I told him who I was. While still shaking my hand, he smiled while he gave me the once up-and-down glance and said "Well, you're the right size for a Voyageur." (Fateful words, those, but I'll get to that later) That was a compliment. The Voyageurs were, even by standards of the day, runts. They had to be small to fit in the canoes, but they were unbelievably tough. These tiny men, who probably weighed no more than 130 pounds toted 180+ pound packs across miles of wilderness, blazing trails as they went. I fully expected that I would be sizing up the Feds... I had no idea that I would be sized-up myself. Apparently... I passed. Don wasn't anything like I'd expect for an archaeologist... much less a Fed. I guess what I was expecting was the "king of the nerds" who spent all his days buried in basement archives pouring over decaying documents and papyri; someone who perpetually smelled of dust and mold. Don, instead, was a big man, very tall, extremely muscular. Long graying hair pulled back in a ponytail. I'd put him about mid-fifties... and from the weathered look about his face, you could tell he spent most of his time "in the field."

So while Don taught the class, and while I was learning to make my very first arrowhead, we got our chance to talk. With others around and within listening distance, we had to keep the discussion vague. After the class, Don offered to buy me dinner while we got to the meat and bones of this site. Over dinner, Don poured over the photos and was stunned speechless. I went over and over how we came to find the site, how bloody inaccessible it is to get to, and everything we saw while out there. Then came the same questions the State guys asked (cans, wrappers, bottles, rope, tent poles, saws, tools, traps, chains, log cabins, foundations from old buildings, and distance from portages, trails, and campsites, etc, etc, etc ad infinitum).

Then came the million-dollar question. Don pulled a map from his backpack, and said, "Can we discuss the precise location?" Which was when I leaned back in my chair, crossed my arms, and said "Before we get to the X on the map, we have a few things we need to discuss." Don laughed a booming laugh, and reached back into his backpack and pulled out a notepad and pen. Still laughing, he said, "Something told me you were going to do this." Which was when I laughed and said "Yeah, well... something told me you were going to ask for an X on the map." Don, grinning from ear to ear, simply said "Touché"

He uncapped he pen, resettled himself in his chair, and with a heavy sigh gave me a long hard look. Finally, he said, "Look, I'm going to be up front with you. Probably a little too up front. We want this site. We want it bad. So what do you want for the X on the map?" I took a deep breath and began...

"We want to be kept in the loop every step of the way. We want to know what it is that we found out there."

"Done... what else do you want?"

"We want the Feds to take full responsibility for ensuring that this site is protected. The location can never be made public knowledge. No one will write a thesis paper on this site. It won't appear on any websites or books. We want this site to vanish. Study it; learn from it what we can. But then all documentation on this site has to be buried under so much beaurocratic red tape, that effectively, it vanishes from the face of the planet. This is unbelievably important to me, and is an absolute deal breaker. This is non-negotiable."

Don looked at me for a second on this last one. He was studying me. He finally said, "Why is this so important to you?"

"Because... this is sacred ground. How would you feel if someone strolled into your church, synagogue, or mosque and ransacked it? You'd be horrified, wouldn't you?" Don just nodded, and I continued, "Well... this is a peoples' church. Show some respect." Don was silent. I noticed his eyes left my face, and landed on the gold Celtic cross I wear around my neck. I wear the Celtic cross as a symbol of my attachment to my heritage; I'm a Celt... a Belgae Celt to be precise. Most people assume it means I'm Christian. It's a common mistake. And I could tell from Don staring at my cross, it was a mistake he was currently making. It's a Celtic cross, not a crucifix folks. So... assuming that I'm Christian... he finally said "But they aren't your gods." I said back "No... They aren't my gods. But that doesn't negate them."

Don leaned back in his chair, and grinned from ear to ear. Here was a (what he was assuming to be) little Catholic girl not only acknowledging other gods, but demanding proper respect be shown to them. (That right there should've told him that I'm not a Catholic)

After a VERY long pause, Don leaned across the table and said "Julie Ann... I'm half Ojibwe."

Now it was my turn to be stunned into silence.

It was Don's people, his ancestors, who built this site. No wonder he took such an active interest in it. No wonder he was so insistent on being the one who talked to me. No wonder he would've traded his first-born for access to this site, and was readily agreeing to all our demands. This was his heritage. This was his birthright.

We sat there in silence, just staring at each other. Here is a man who has a vested interest in protecting this site every bit as much as I do. Actually, even more than I do.

Finally, I had a friend among the Feds.

After an agonizingly long silence, I finally piped up "Before we continue on with how we're going to protect the site, can I ask you something?" He nodded, so I continued, "After we got home from the Boundary Waters, I had to make an offering. I mean we really felt like we were tapped, for some reason known only to the gods. They led us there. We were meant to find it. I owed a huge debt of thanks, and I repay my debts... but I wasn't sure what to offer. I didn't want to offend with my ignorance, but I couldn't let it slide without making an offering. So I burned two entire sage bushes and a pile of myrrh… was this appropriate?"

This put Don (who was still assuming that I'm Catholic) completely over the edge. He burst out laughing. Once he pulled himself together, he finally said, "Technically, tobacco would've been the appropriate offering." Then he leaned over the table, and grinning from ear to ear he whispered "But I'm sure the Great Spirit was touched by your thoughtfulness, regardless of what you offered."

Although it never came up in conversation after that, I'm pretty sure Don has figured out at this point that I'm not Christian, and that Celtic cross has no religious implications attached to it what so ever.

Once promises were made, and the discussion complete, Don got his X on the map. And the business of the expedition began.

From here I was passed to Brian, another Fed, who would be the one acting as expedition leader. My brother Mark and I were instantly asked to be on the team. They needed guides out to the site. Even with an X on the map, the Boundary Waters is a huge chunk of land. Guides are necessary. We know the best routes, we know the best portages, we know the best campsites, we know the most direct route in, and we know the general boundary to the site. Due to his family obligations, Mark had to bow out. That left me. There was no way I WASN'T going to go. Still leery about any Feds other than Don, I was going to go along to make sure they didn't booger up the site. (Insert a

mental picture for yourself of a snarling pit bull with a sigil around its neck)

The expedition was set for October 23rd - 25th. With winter approaching Minnesota fast, this was only going to be a quick in and out expedition to map out the outer boundary, take photos, start the paperwork, and get a general "feel" for the site. Brian and Lee were the Feds on the team. Stacy is with the State who was granted permission on to the team, as a representative from the State. And lastly, I rounded out the expedition, as "Sacajewea and Sherpa-extraordinaire."

Brian secured a cabin for us close to where we would be pushing off into the Boundary Waters; for the night before we went in, and for the night when we came out. I had to fill out the paperwork to become a Federal volunteer. It left a bad taste in my mouth, but the Feds were claiming me as a Federal employee in case an issue of liability came up. Which, actually, was very nice. If I got mauled by a bear, the Feds would be footing the bill. If I wrenched an ankle while bouldering during a portage, the Feds would be footing the bill. If I threw my back out while hauling the canoe, the Feds would be footing the bill. If a poacher decided I looked an awful lot like a deer or a moose, and took a shot at me, it would be an assault on a Federal employee. Well, I didn't get mauled. I didn't get shot at. I didn't wrench an ankle, or throw out my back. But I did get a lovely Federal Forest Services Volunteer patch that I can sew onto something.

The morning we were going into the Boundary Waters, we woke up to discover it had snowed during the night and was still snowing. Remember me telling you that I'm not a lucky gal? Yeah.

For the duration of the expedition, at no point in time was it not snowing, sleeting, or raining.

Yeah.

It was going to be a hard day. Long, hard, bitterly cold, and very wet.

I had no problem guiding our merry band of damp outdoor enthusiasts out to the site. It took several hours worth of canoeing, portaging, hauling, and with the sun behind overcast skies, periodic compass checking, but really we got out there in record time. We went in stripped down to bare essentials, so we were traveling light. And the archaeologists got a kick out of watching me sing Sinatra's "Swinging On A Star" over and over, as my little "zen-thing" that I do while I'm in "the pain cave" ("the pain cave" is where you zone out from this world, to block the physical pain of carrying a 40-pound canoe and a 20-pound daypack for a mile over a brutal portage. I completely blank out and sing "Swinging On A Star" over and over, for the duration of the portage. That's just how I handle "the pain cave") There were four portages in, and four portages out. I think they all know "Swinging On A Star" by heart now.

Once out at the site, the circles were brutally hard to find. The large circles were unmistakable; but the snow-covered smaller circles, the vast majority of them, were indistinguishable from the mounds of reindeer moss that is prolific throughout the area. If you are unfamiliar with reindeer moss, they're like big fluffy pom-pom tufts of moss. So all we could really do was walk the perimeter of the site, snap some photos, and start the paperwork. We couldn't look for artifacts in the snow. They explained that they needed "historical garbage" to use in conjunction with this site to help determine the makers. Right now, all we have are rocks. What we need are arrowheads, flint knapping shards, beads, broken bits of pottery, and the like. With the absence of "historical garbage" on the record they have to maintain that the site is "of unknown origins" Which is just fine with me. I don't want people coming out here and boogering with the site. Off the record, however, they seem pretty set on this being Ojibwe Vision Quest Circles.

The reason this site is so important is because Vision Quest circles have never been found in Minnesota before, much less four acres of them. Our early estimate of 2-3 acres was bumped up to 4 after the expedition.

Stacy, however, is still my ace in the hole. Stacy can date the lichen at the site. It will take her months to do so, but she can date the lichen. Once we have a ballpark date on the lichen, we'll know who the makers were. For example, if the lichen comes back 300 years old, well duh... that's Ojibwe.

For the sake of site preservation I truly hope we DON'T find any "historical garbage" out there. I would be tickled pick if this site had to be listed as "of unknown origins." Stacy can still date the site; we don't need the "historical garbage." So I'm very content to let her date it, and leave it at that. However, that brings me back to "what legacy in stone did the ancients leave for us to uncover." So...the site needs further study.

With the October expedition completely awash due to the snow cover, the expeditions have been set to resume in the spring. I've been asked, again, by both the State and the Feds to go along as "Sacajewea and Sherpa-extraordinaire." And, it's within compliance of my agreement with Don to keep us in the loop every step of the way.

So, I guess if you were hoping for a big resolution at the end of this installment, you're going to be disappointed. I'll have no new news to share with you until spring when the expeditions resume, or when Stacy dates the lichen.

My story doesn't end there, though. Since the expedition, some things have come to pass. Allow me to refresh your memory on a few things I stated early on. Don made a comment about me being "the right size for a Voyageur" and I made the comment that those turned out to be fateful words. I also mentioned that while talking to Don, I had made the comment that I couldn't shake the feeling that we've somehow been tapped; that we were led there, that we were meant to find this site. The time is now for me to clarify these things.

Winter is now in full swing in Minnesota, and now that I'm effectively grounded for the winter, I turn my hobbies to more "indoor tasks" One of them is I'm the family genealogist. I've been working my patrilineal side for years. Since I came back from the expedition, my mother has asked me to start working the matrilineal side of the family. I've been putting that side off for years because there isn't much information for me to really start from. However, she gave me what she had, and I began to work it. The job was further hindered by the fact that she really only had the women's names. Which wouldn't be a

problem, but once you get into the 1800's, when women really were little more than property, it's hard to track women down. One name in particular I had trouble with: Elizabeth Wells Gibbs. Before the age of 20 or so, she simply didn't seem to exist. I tracked her down to having lived in Beltrami County, Minnesota. Not being overly familiar with that county, way in the northern part of the state, I pulled out my atlas. It turns out that the Red Lake Indian Reservation occupies a solid third of that county. Then I hit pay dirt. I found out why Elizabeth didn't "exist" before she was 20 or so years old. Her name wasn't Elizabeth.

Elizabeth Wells was the name given to her by a court to make the recording of her marriage "prettier." Her real name was Nokezhigoke. Elizabeth belonged to the Red Lake Chippewa band of the Ojibwe. I had no idea I was part Ojibwe. My grandmother was darker-skinned, but many "white" folks have darker complexions. I have a couple of aunts who are "questionable" but they certainly pass for white. As for me hell when it comes to "passing for white" blonde hair and blue eyes are the only things that trumps my red hair and green eyes. But that is my PATRILINEAL Celtic blood speaking. I had no idea I was part Ojibwe... and I'm thrilled to find out that I am! I told Don that we were led there; that we were "tapped" for some reason. Don wanted this site because it was part of his heritage, his birthright. His ancestors built this site... and so did mine. Perhaps divine intervention did play a part in our discovery. Perhaps the ancients did lead a lost son and daughter home.

Don's comment on me being "the right size for a Voyageur" also turned out to be rather fateful. So how did Elizabeth / Nokezhigoke come to marry a white man? She lived on a reservation; and in the mid-1800's, white folks didn't have a whole lot of business being on a reservation. Not to stir up bad history, but let's face facts... there was no love lost there... on either side. Further digging led me to the Northwest Fur Company. In around 1850, The Northwest Fur Company dropped an outpost on the Red Lake Reservation to trade with the Ojibwe there. Only the fur traders had unhindered access and granted safe passage through the reservation at that point in time. I found out that my great great great grandfather was a Voyageur. Well I'll be dipped... Don was right.

In my life, I've been a great many things: daughter, sister, friend, wife, Druid, and Celt... now I get to be these things too.

Before I found out I was part Ojibwe, I was just a little Druid standing firm on my belief in protecting the sanctity of sacred places. And I was prepared to protect it with all the ferocity I could muster. But I had no idea when this journey began that it would become a personal one. Many things happened out on Shield rock. Many things lost, have now been found.

Maybe I'm lucky after all...

Yours in the Mother,

Julie Ann-

Note: If you noticed I was intentionally evasive on the location of the site...you're right...I am. I mean no disrespect; and while I don't worry about the Druids, all it takes is one idiot to learn the location of the site. One idiot can destroy the site. One idiot can pillage the site. One idiot can desecrate the site. I cannot, in good conscious, make the site's location public knowledge. I hope all of you understand and respect my decision.

Stay tuned as the expeditions resume next spring / summer. Updates to come...

Yule Gift Ideas

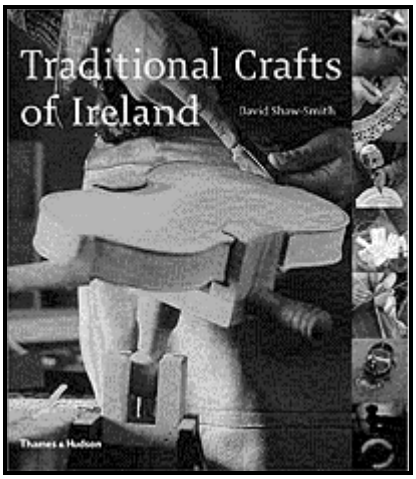
Traditional Crafts of Ireland

By David Shaw-Smith

The turn of the spinning wheel, the harnessed horses pulling the plow, the knock of the cooper's hammer, the scything of the summer's corn—all these were once familiar sights and sounds in and around Irish homesteads. They echo the history of crafts that may go back 3,000 years into Ireland's past.

In this book, time stands still as we meet the skilled practitioners of more than forty traditional Irish crafts, from woodcarvers, thatchers, goldsmiths, and potters to glassblowers of the world-famous Waterford crystal, crios weavers from the Aran Islands, and the makers of items as varied as harps and quilts, baskets and curraghs, drystone walls and Irish lace.

David Shaw-Smith has traveled the length and breadth of Ireland and its islands to assemble this record, documenting the crafts in their natural surroundings before they disappear completely. His superb color photographs include both poetic images of the finished craft pieces and informative sequences explaining the production process. They are accompanied by Sally Shaw-Smith's evocative drawings and by texts from some of Ireland's finest historians and craft writers.



A magnificent testament to the centuries-old traditions of a vibrant land, the book is both a chronicle of times past and a celebration of an enduring culture, and will appeal to anyone connected with the Emerald Isle or who has ever visited it. It is the culmination of a forty-year project, the first fruits of which were seen in David Shaw-Smith's earlier book, Ireland's Traditional Crafts, published in the 1980s.

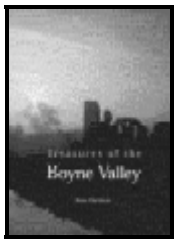
David Shaw-Smith is a Dublin-born independent film producer. His films on traditional Irish crafts have been seen all over the world and have received many awards, including the Golden Harp. His research and photographs on traditional crafts are scheduled to become part of the Irish National Archives.

ISBN 0-500-51142-X, 677 illustrations, 621 in color · 256 pages, US$40.00

Treasures of the Boyne Valley

By Peter Harbison

The River Boyne flows from west to east through the rich limestone land of Co. Meath, about 30 miles north of Dublin. Its combination of fertile soil and navigable access to the sea has ensured that it has been inhabited continuously from the end of the Ice Age. It is one of the most historic regional areas, not just in Ireland, but also in all of northwest Europe.



Peter Harbison's book discusses the history of the Boyne Valley, the landscape, the peoples who have left their imprint on the region since pre-history, the houses and monuments, the battle sites and all the other aspects that make it such a rich source of interest.

The highlight of the book is of course the three great Stone Age burial sites at Dowth, Knowth and Newgrange, all at least as old as the Egyptian pyramids, and the latter, one of the wonders of Europe. But Harbison also deals deftly with other matters: with the Battle of the Boyne (1690), so crucial for later Irish history; with writers like Mary Lavin, Francis Ledwidge and Lord Dunsany who lived in and wrote about the region; with the houses, churches and monastic settlements.

The book is richly illustrated with original landscape photography by Tom Kelly, himself a resident of the valley, and with historic prints.

Hardback, 192 pages, Publisher: Gill & Macmillan; ISBN: 0717134989, US$40.00

Legendary Ireland: A Journey through Celtic Places and Myths

By Eithne Massey

This beautiful book visits twenty-eight richly atmospheric sties and tells the mythological stories associated with them. Woven into these landscapes are tales of love and betrayal, greed and courage, passion and revenge, featuring the famous characters of Celtic lore, such as Cú Chulainn the children of Lír and Queen Maeve.

The historical and archaeological facts, and the folk traditions of each ancient site are explored. Some are famous such as Tara and Newgrange; others are less well known but equally captivating such as the Béara Pennisula in Cork.

In a world where many have lost touch with the land and their past, the legendary Irish landscape still survives and the stories are never quite over as long as there are people to tell them.

Hardback, 240 pages, publisher: O'Brien Press, ISBN 0-86278-766-1, US$30.00

Witness the Winter Solstice

SUNRISE AND SUNSET
AT THE UMASS SUNWHEEL
Sunrise @ 7:00 a.m.,
Sunset @ 3:30 p.m.
Sunday & Monday—Dec. 21 & 22, 2003

Members of the general public are invited to join Dr. Judith Young of the U.Mass. Amherst Dept. of Astronomy to watch the Sun rise and set over the tall standing stones in the U.Mass. Sunwheel for the winter solstice. This is when the Sun is at its most southerly position in rising and setting, at its lowest noon-time altitude, and when days are shortest. Sunrise and sunset gatherings will be held on BOTH SUNDAY AND MONDAY, Dec. 21 & 22, 2003. Visitors for the winter solstice sunrise viewing should arrive at 7:00 a.m. and visitors for the sunset viewing should arrive by 3:30 p.m. The sky will be particularly beautiful at sunrise both mornings, since the waning crescent Moon will rise just before the Sun, and Jupiter will be high in the south. For those interested in learning about the sky, there will be a presentation, which will include the cause of the seasons, the Sun's path in the sky, the phases of the Moon, and the story of the U.Mass. Sunwheel. Bring your family, your questions, your camera, your curiosity, and DRESS WARMLY. A $3 donation is requested to help cover the cost of additional stonework for the Sunwheel.

The calendars list Dec. 22, 2003 as the day of the winter solstice, with the exact instant of solstice being 2:04 a.m. Eastern Standard Time. The word solstice means 'standstill', and refers to the fact that the rising and setting location of the Sun stays relatively fixed on the horizon for a 2-week period around solstice, with Dec. 22 in the middle. Should rain cause the Sunwheel events to be cancelled, you can visit the Sunwheel on your own for another week and still see the Sun rise and set over the tall standing stones.

The U.Mass. Sunwheel is located south of Alumni Stadium, just off Rocky Hill Road. It can be reached from the center of Amherst, following Amity St. to the west. After crossing University Dr. at the light, continue on Rocky Hill Rd. for about 1/4 mile, and make your first right, on to Stadium Dr., and park. All visitors should wear warm clothing, suitable for standing still on frozen or soggy ground, and you may wish to bring a folding chair and/or blanket.

For more information, see:
http://www.umass.edu/sunwheel
Dr. Judith S. Young
Professor, Dept. of Astronomy
620 GRC Tower B
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003
413-545-4311 (voice)
413-545-4223 (FAX)
young@astro.umass.edu
http://www.umass.edu/sunwheel

Celtic Studies Course!

There is a new Celtic studies course being offered at the UC Santa Cruz Extension campus in Cupertino.

The Story of the Celts in Ireland X479 History (1)

This course attempts to answer some intriguing questions about the Celts of Ireland, a people often associated with fairy tales, folklore and fancy jewelry. The questions will take us back in time to discover a heritage that some call "Celtic Magic." A few obvious questions include the following: Who were the Celts anyway? Was Brigid a goddess, an abbess, or both? Were the Druids a secret society? Where is the land of eternal youth? For answers, we will investigate Celtic spirituality before and after Saint Patrick. We will listen to stories of mystery and imagination in literature, as well as decipher patterns of Celtic art in metal work, illuminated manuscripts and sculptured stone crosses. From a variety of sources, we will fashion a mental tapestry of how Celts on the fringe of Europe imagined the other world while maintaining a harmony with nature. Throughout the course, we will explore the roots of contemporary recordings from artists of Celtic music.

MICHAEL DONNELLAN, Ph.D., hails originally from the west of Ireland. He has taught at several San Francisco Peninsula colleges as well as at educational institutions in the Midwest and on the East coast.

Fee: $195 ($215 if registering after February 7). Enrollment limited. 5 meetings: Saturdays, 10:30 am-12:30 pm, February 21-March 20. UCSC Extension, 10420 Bubb Rd.

EDP 033W11 (use this EDP code to enroll)

For more information call (831) 427-6695 or email: Camille Martinez cmartinez@ucsc-extension.edu Stephanie Dekking sdekking@ucsc-extension.edu

Calendar

Yule, Winter Solstice, when the Sun enters Capricorn, will occur on Saturday, December 21, at 11:40 p.m. Pacific Standard Time.

A Druid Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $8.00 and email subscriptions are free. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's post mail subscription free. Write to:

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Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION THREE

A Druid Missal-any

Volume Twenty

2004 c.e.

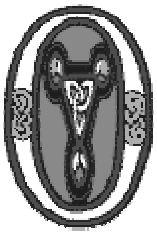
Drynemetum Press

A Druid Missal-Any Oimelc Year XLI Vol. 20 Number 1 January 30th, 2004 c.e.

A well done job

Oimelc Essay: Smooring

By Stacey Weinberger



imelc, the festival of Brigit, Brighid, Bride, Breedes, one of the major goddesses in the Celtic pantheon. The name Brigit is derived from the Old Celtic word brig meaning high, rank. She is sometimes called the Gaulish Minerva since both the Celtic Brigit and Roman Minerva were associated with healing and crafts. The same root brg is found in the northeast British tribe the time before and during the Roman period the Brigantes ("high or noble people") as well as in their patron goddess Brigantia. There is a stone relief of Brigantia at the Roman military site at Birrens, the site of a fort in Dumfries, southern Scotland that carries an inscription to Her:

BRIGANTIAE S AMANDVS
ARCITECTVS EX IMPERIO IMP F
"To Brigantia, Sextus Amandus,
former Imperial Architect,
faithful to the emperor (set this up)."

Like Minerva she shares similar iconography, wearing on her breast Minerva's symbol of the Gorgon's head and carrying a spear and the globe of victory, showing a link between the Roman goddess and Brigantia. Like Bride Brigantia was associated with fertility and healing, and was a patroness of the arts. On the Continent near Bregenz, Austria there is a Gaulish tribe, the Brigantii, who probably also called Brigantia their patron deity.

In Ireland we first read of Brigit as an Irish goddess in Cormac's Glossary written in the 10th century. She is seen here as a triple goddess of healing, smithcraft, and poetry. Cormac writes:

"Brighid i.e. a poetess, daughter of the Dagda. This is Brighid the female sage, or woman of wisdom, i.e. Brighid the goddess whom poets adored, because very great and very famous was her protecting care. It is therefore they call her goddess of poets, by this name. Whose sisters were Brighid the female physician (woman of leechcraft), Brighid the female smith (woman of smithwork), from whose names with all Irishmen a goddess was called Brighid."

In both 12th century manuscripts the Book of Invasions of Ireland (Lebor Gabala Erenn), the mythological history of Ireland, and the Battle of Magh Tuireadh Brigit is mentioned as the daughter of the Dagda, god of the Tuatha De Danaan. In the Book of Invasions she is called a poetess and is associated with domestic animals, cattle and sheep. She is solidified as protectoress of the flocks, which carried over into Her guise as the Saint.

Brigit was the territorial goddess of Leinster although She was venerated all over Ireland. It was at Kildare that it was said there was an altar dedicated to Her, where a perpetual fire burned, tended by 19 women. In Christian times 19 nuns tended this fire, and still do to this day, in honor of the Saint Brigit.

In Scotland Bride is still remembered as the patron saint of the family hearth, which hearkens back to her association with smithcraft and poetry, creative inspiration, which the Gaels "regarded as a supersensual form of fire (see the term "fire in the head" in one sense as poetic inspiration). Evidence of this can been seen in some of the kindling and smooring blessings collected by Alexander Carmichael in his collection of hymns and incantations the Carmina Gadelica. Bride was invoked in the kindling the fire or in smooring the fire. Where wood had been unobtainable, a peat fire kept burning perpetually, or "smoored" to last through the night. Carmichael writes: "The ceremony of smooring the fire is artistic and symbolic, and is performed with loving care. The embers are evenly spread on the hearth - which is generally in the middle of the floor - and formed into a circle. The circle is then divided into three equal sections, a small boss being left in the middle. A peat is laid between each section, each peat touching the boss, which forms a common centre... The circle is then covered over with ashes sufficient to subdue but not to extinguish the fire."

SMOORING BLESSING

I will smoor the hearth
As Mary would smoor;
The encompassment of Bride and of Mary,
On the fire and on the floor,
And on the household all.

Who is on the lawn without?
Fairest Mary and her Son,
The mouth of God ordained, the angel of God spoke;
Angels of promise watching the hearth,
Till white day comes to the fire.

BEANNACHADH SMALAIDH

Smalaidh mis an tula
Mar a smaladh Muire;
Comraig Bhride 's Mhuire,

Air an tula's air an lar,
'S air an fhardaich uile.

Co siud air liana mach?
Muire ghrian-gheal 's a Mac,
Bial Dia dh'iarradh, aingheal Dia labhradh;
Ainghle geallaidh faire an teallaidh,

Gu'n rig latha geal gu beallaidh.

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Though Carleton was out of session for Yule, I and one other Druid went out to the stone circle. Other people had been around, it was clear, from the prints in the snow. There was no service, mostly just an enjoyment of the moment and I ended, most sacrilegiously by making a snow angel on top of the center stone.

Carleton is now back in session, though the Druids have not had the first meeting of the year. However, there is exciting news in that my fellow Arch-Druid, Corwin Troost, has returned from a self-imposed exile in Japan and we expect to learn much from his trip.

Bamboo Grove: News from Delaware

Brightest Blessings to All!

Much has happened to the Bamboo Grove recently. There have been sad endings, and hopeful beginnings. During the season of sleep, one of our little muses --Lucky the mouse--passed away into the spirit realm to join one of our other little muses --Cricket (also a mouse)—who had gone on ahead. We now are eight in number:

*the Arch Druid, a stately bamboo plant

*Myself—Scribe/Caretaker/current Bard of the Reform XLI (who has been nowhere to be found for quite awhile, I know, I know! Sorry!)

*The muses—Karma the beautiful and graceful Rough Green snake; Leo the gentle giant of a Maine Coon cat; Panda & Rygel the oddball guinea pigs; and Rascal & Spud the creamsicle colored, ever inquisitive mice

~*~New Beginnings~*~

As for the hopeful beginnings—I recently got engaged to a wonderful scamp named Jeff, whom I think must have at least one "trickster" animal totem like myself! He's an Air Force Reservist and one of the most unique, endearing, and thoughtful souls I have ever had the honor of meeting in this particular lifetime (grin). I definitely feel blessed, and I look forward to this season of new life with renewed hope and anticipation.

Over the past few seasons, it seems that my personal life has seamlessly begun to meld and keep pace with the seasons and their symbolic meanings. I feel that when I stop trying too hard and finally surrender myself to the dance of life, things just seems to flow easier and much more naturally. Recently I designed my own phoenix tattoo and had it custom done, something I've wanted to do for years. It is a physical and tangible reminder of past trials by fire that I have survived, emerging stronger each time. It is also a reminder that though the fire within may have flickered to an ember at times, it never died out. Although I didn't coordinate the timing of the phoenix tattoo with the new season, it feels particularly appropriate at this time and will always hold extra significance to me.

Brightest blessings,

BrightMirage (Bard of the Reform XLI)

Dravidia Grove: News from Maryland

O.K. all, not much going on here, we had a major week of snow and ice followed by some power outage that lasted 6 hrs. Study is going good, and the grove is patiently awaiting spring (please hurry). A few new books of reference to study, and a new look at some old traditions. The Grove has as of yet to finish all the text that I have accumulated (editing that is), but I have discovered a few new outlooks by studying nature in its quiet season. Squirrels seem to be the most active, and it is incredible to watch them for six hours to see nature at it's finest. Also, the Groves official date to move to Indiana is March 27th of 2004, and we will still have the same email addy. Anyone else close to Louisville Ky., I will be about 15 mins away on the Indiana side.

Dolanimus

Hemlock Grove: News from New York

No new news from hemlock splinters. This is the season of enforced rest. Minus 16 may be normal for Minnesota but it has largely shut things down here. We harp, write, and struggle to earn money to burn things with next summer.

Rowan-Oak Grove, MOCC: News from Oklahoma

rowan-oak grove in tulsa has had a very full month in december. the new years brought us a new computer and a large donation which enabled us to get much needed office equipment and supplies for the grove. sis rhiananne is up for member of the year for that blessing. other news for january so far is not so good. the grove was devastated when the beloved familiar of one of our members was foully killed and returned its yard hours afterward with his head crushed. peruvian snowflake was m.s. white tigress and her boyfriend m.c.dov. she is our co hps/druidess in training and my next door neighbor. we had several deaths in the grove family over the new year.

m.s. white raven will have her birthday bash on the 24th of january. talking leaves will have about 6 or so pages this month because there is a lot of news to cover and the addition of two regular articles that’s all for now i think.

m. s. white raven arch-druidess

Tuatha De Danaan Grove: News from California

Hi, Stacey! Just thought I'd let you know about Tuatha De Danaan Grove, founded 14 years ago when Tezra gave me 3rd Order. It is the old Berkeley/Mother Grove, and has held rituals from time to time; lately, it has been hibernating, but could come back to life if interest were aroused.

Back in 1984 or so, as a parting gift, Isaac handed the reins over to me, but, not at that time being a 3rd, I had to wait to make full use of his offering.

Please list my e-mail address as FrPA861@yahoo.com.

Peace!

Jeffrey

Poison Oak Grove, News from California

Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

After a nearly four-year search we have found cabers to replace the ones rotting or falling over at the Grove site. The search was so difficult because we needed ones with bark still on them and not the (probably arsenic) treated ones more commonly found at lumberyards and building supply stores. Our Server Morag found them at Grove Way Bonsai Nursery in Hayward, the perfect size: 5, 6, and 7 inches in diameter and 8 ft. in length. Ironically it was the first shipment they have had in three years

Posthumous member Emmon had originally set the cabers on the periphery of the Grove site at the point where the Sun would rise on the particular High Day. He rose early on the High Day to mark where the sun came up and set the caber on that spot. He carved a notch at the top of each caber to sight the Sun from the altar. The altar had an indentation built into to it for one's staff specifically for that purpose. I feel like the Grove site is becoming complete again. It has been a four and a half year process that has included rebuilding the steps and replacing the sacred Grove trees as they had fallen over or died.

Caber adventure! After a nearly four year search we have found cabers to replace the ones that had rotten or fallen over due to age and the bucks using them to rub the velvet from their antlers, thanks to Server Morag. The week before Oimelc we transported them to the Grove site and hauled them up the hill. The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry however. The week before when we had Druid services I had parked the Druid mobile with one wheel off the asphalt in the mud. This caused the wheel to spin be I still managed to back the car out. I thought the problem was because the car wasn't as heavy as the previous Druid mobile which never had a problem. But I was proved wrong. A friend who had a '61 Chevy Apache panel truck drove the cabers to the Grove site and got his wheel stuck in the same place. This time we had to call the automobile club to tow him out. Because of this delay and the rainy weather of the following day, the setting of the cabers will have to wait for sometime later in February. Extra hands are welcome.

Calling the mists.

Back to the Shadows Again

By Emmon Bodfish

(In the first incarnation of A Druid Missal-Any Emmon would periodically publish "see and do" articles for readers who wondered how to "do" Druidism. I found these articles ultimately helpful and practical and of course very do-able if one but put effort into them—Editor's note.)

The Druids of folktale were imputed with the power to create a magical mist, the "Cleo Trom" in which to hide themselves or to obscure the field of battle and aid their chieftains' armies. In fact, according to one source, ability to raise the Druid Mist was a test of anyone claiming to be a Fear-droi or a Wizard. This ability is also remembered in fragments of the Ossianic poems and in folklore from the Continent. In his book on magic, Steven Richards remarks that this "Invisibility is the peculiar mark of the Western magician as levitation is of the Oriental one."

In practice, there are different levels of making oneself invisible. At the first level is the crass psychological technique of diverting attention to something else while you quietly walk away, or perform the slight-of-the-hand that completes the trick. Stage magicians, thieves, and Sherlock Holmes are adepts at this one.

On the second level is the method actor's strategy of changing his emotional state, manner and gait such that he seems to turn into (or out to be) someone or something other than who he was, and so to "disappear" into the role. Crowley, working at this level of transformation, tells of the following incident that happened to him in London. When he was walking down a lane, he saw, coming toward him, a group of students who knew him and who were not particularly friendly to him or his ideas. Wishing to avoid their ridicule or worse, he ducked down a side street, but they followed him. The street proved to be a blind end. After stepping into a shop doorway, he rushed back out, having changed his gait and demeanor utterly, and bustled past them in a businesslike way. They did not recognize him and he escaped.

At the third level is something between this technique and that of thought projection or active telepathy. Mrs. Alexander-David Neil describes the first few rings of this level in her book of observations of mystics in India and Tibet. Basically it involves the ability to control your output of emotional energy, your projection of your "presence" in the situation. If you walk through a crowd shouting, bumping against people, and otherwise calling attention to yourself, you will make yourself

quite visible. However, if you steal along noiselessly, you may be able to pass without being seen. Animals know this instinctively, and use it to catch their prey. As J.H. Brennan points out, merely sitting motionless cuts down on your visibility. Beasts of prey avoid this difficulty by bobbing their heads, creating the illusion of motion. However quiet you are, though, there is still the unquietness generated by your mind. The work of the mind generates an energy which spreads all around the one who produces it, and this energy is felt in various ways by those who come into touch with it. If you can stop even that source of noise, you become as silent as one could be. You maybe seen in the way that a camera "sees" things, but you will not be noticed. No knowledge consciousness, (nampar shespa) follows the visual contact; we do not remember that this contact has occurred.

"When the mind inhibits emanation of its radiative energy," says Evans-Wentz, "it ceases to be a source of mental stimuli to others, so that they become unconscious of the presence of the Adept of the Art just as they are unconscious of invisible beings living in a rate of vibration unlike their own." It is like the ostrich burying his head in the sand. One draws his attention into himself, instead of directing it outward, and by stopping the flow of the mind, turns off the noise.

In the most elementary sense, this form of invisibility is just moving along quietly. "The real secret of invisibility is not concerned with the laws of optics at all," writes Crowley. "The trick is to prevent people from noticing you when they normally would do so." As the test of his power, Crowley took a walk in the street in a golden crown and a scarlet robe without attracting attention. Eliphas Levi makes the same point in several of his manuscripts. This non-projection technique of un-noticibility/invisibility is described by this author's friend, who is considerably good at it, as "pull in your vibe." The Druid Mist cannot hide you if you continue to project a strong emotional presence. Some people say this feels like a drawing in of their personal energy, pulling it back in through the area just above the solar plexus.

Begin, then, by becoming mentally silent, calming your emotions until you reach emotional neutrality, having withdrawn your presence into yourself. Being able to stop the sentences flowing through your head is essential to any success in spiritual or psychic endeavors. It is the first rung of the ladder. This is mentioned in so many different religious and magical traditions that it must be accepted as one of the essential ingredients. Second, you must learn to stop, or put aside, the mood of the moment. This means stopping the flow of emotional energy surging up and down the body. We can all do this, if for only a moment. Take for example the experience of waiting for an important phone call. It is important to you to make a good impression. But while you are waiting by the phone, you become involved in a heated argument with another person in the room. Emotion is surging up and down through your body. Then the phone rings; this is it; you must be personable. You stop. That moment of suspension when you have left the argument and before you turn your attention to the phone, is it, the emotional neutral-point. You can learn to prolong that minute of emotional silence.

When you have silenced your mental verbalizations and are holding a neutral emotional stance, pull in your social, interactive energy, and your presence will seem to fade into the background. You have become a shadow. A camera will "see" you sitting there, but you will not be noticed. You will not register on the consciousness or in the memories of other people. As a secondary benefit, this mental state allows you to see the world quite objectively, in increased detail and dimensionality.

To this state of unnoticibility you add the fourth level by forming the Druid Mist. While it is the least understood part of the art of invisibility, it has been used and described for millennia, just as out ancestors could throw a missile accurately without understanding gravity or trajectory. Forming the Cleo Trom may involve the ability to control either light, or matter, or perception. The Mist seems to absorb light; it is dull colored, gray, and visually uninteresting, as well as hard for the eye to focus on; it does not make itself noticeable. Forming it requires preparation and practice. First, you must train yourself to be able to concentrate on one thing for a fairly long time, ten to twenty minutes. Training the attention and developing the will are basics in all magical traditions. It makes the difference between magic as psychic phenomena and magic as wishful thinking. In learning these skills, small amounts of practice daily works better than long sessions, infrequently. The learning may take anywhere from two weeks to two years, but there are interesting experiences along the way.

Begin by getting mentally silent and emotionally calm. Staring at a dark, plain background, relax your vision, focusing in the middle distance. Concentrate your will and energy on a point in mid-air four or five feet in front of you. Madame Blavatsky found it helped to think of willing the matter making up the air to gather and concentrate at this point. This may require a number of practice sessions of ten to twenty minutes each. When the Mist starts to form, it is grayish and almost invisible. You may only notice that you can no longer see the texture of the dark backdrop. For some reason there is a tendency at first for the eyes to cross while practicing this, so privacy is recommended. ("Just what we need...a gonzo wizard." cf. Bored of the Rings) After you have produced some of the Mist, you can counter its tendency to disperse by willing it to spin counter clockwise and contract. When you have gathered a mass of the Mist, a good amount which you can definitely see, the final step is to place it where you want it to be, between yourself and noxious stimuli or yourself and other persons. My consultant describes the technique as holding the Cleo with your eyes and pulling it along with your gaze. A woman mystic whom Madame Blavatsky interviewed during her oriental travels, collected and controlled the Mist by moving her hands as though gathering something together and guiding it. This would be the mudra approach. It is a technique widely used by Western mediums. When you think you can form the Mist reliably, success is always sporadic at first, try practicing with a full length mirror, placed eight or ten feet away from you. This way you can see how much of your reflection is blotted out by what looks like a grayish film on the surface of the mirror. Until you are very adept, be cautious of inviting friends to watch. The phenomena requires all of your concentration, and because friends are more disturbing to it than strangers. Anything that evokes an emotional response from you dissipates the effect. When you are well practiced, it is possible to get up, wrapping the Cleo Trom around you like a circular curtain and move

about unobtrusively, unnoticed by those around you. But you must maintain the psychological silence and physical unobtrusiveness described as Level Three, or people will become aware of your presence, though not of the details of your physical appearance. H.S. Lewis tells an interesting account of this in one of his autobiographical essays. He was practicing forming the mist in a cafeteria, in order to shut out the noise of the people around him and be undisturbed. When he finished his meal, and went to pay, he recognized the owner of the establishment, an old acquaintance of his, working the cash register. He spoke to the man in a friendly way, but his friend treated him coldly, like a peculiar stranger and would give him no indication of recognition. On his way out of the restaurant, Lewis realized that he still had some of the Cleo Trom wrapped about him, not having dispersed it. This is usually done by dismissing it with your mind, willing it to disperse outward and upward, or in counter-clockwise swirls away from you. Some people find it is only necessary to "let go of it from the will."

"The Mist begins to gently lift. The air begins to clear."

The Mist will disperse naturally as you put your attention on immediate matters and become re-involved with the business of the day and the emotions of the moment.

Photographs I have seen of people practicing holding the Cleo Trom around themselves, show an unfocused area, or streaked appearance in the place of the person's image.

This may seem small stuff compared to descriptions in the old sagas, but even in the Iron Age, it required a fair number of Druids to obscure a battlefield.

Other Druid Groups

Ancient Order of Druids in America

Greetings all,

I'm pleased to announce that the Ancient Order of Druids in America has a website again—http://www.aoda.org—and is on its way out of five years of hibernation. There's a short history by the previous Grand Archdruid at http://www.aoda.org/aodahist.htm , for those who are interested in its origins and affiliations.

Mike Scharding's RDNA site is also listed on the AODA links page on the contact and links page, http://www.aoda.org/contact.htm .

Yours beneath the sacred oaks,

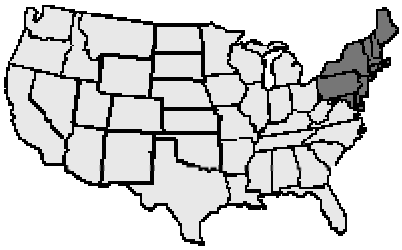
John Michael Greer

North East Druid Coalition

Welcome to all Followers of the Druid Path from the North East

The purpose of the North East Druid Coalition is to foster the goals you will see below in support of our path. Formed in August of 2003, the NEDC is comprised of and open to all orders, groves and Druidic organizations in our region. The North East Druid Coalition covers NJ, NY, PA, MA, CT, RI, VT, ME, NH, and Ontario, Canada.

Looking for Druid community in your area? We can help. See our links on the Navigation Bar at the top of the pages to the resources that we offer.



The goals of the NEDC are:

- To provide greater visibility for Druidism in this region...
- Provide a vehicle for a united voice in local, regional, national and international matters that concern us
- Provide networking opportunities and contacts for those on or wish to be on the Path of Druidism
- Provide support for the projects of the various orders and organizations
- To improve regional, national and international communications within the discipline and to work toward better regional organization of events and seasonal activities.

Our Structure

We recognize that modern Druidism encompasses many paths; therefore no group shall claim precedence over any other at our gatherings.

In keeping with the tradition of Druids throughout history we hold that Druids are men and women of peace and integrity, serving as teachers, philosophers, ambassadors, judges, seers, lawyers, healers, poets and bards for their tribes.

Every Druid group in our geographic region is entitled to have at least one representative on the on-line planning committee for events and seasonal activities

The NEDC offers the following workshops:

The Sacred Hearth: The Goddess Bridget and the Feast of Imbolc, Workshop on The Goddess Bridget and the Feast of Imbolc, followed by Imbolc Ritual based on authentic Scottish and Irish folklore and rituals. We will explore Bridget's role as Patroness of the Bards, Protector of Women and Children, and Mistress of the Elements. Fee is $35. Visit Dun na Sidhe website at www.mobiusbandwidth.com or Register via http://www.goddessofthesevensisters.com/ Date: Monday, February 2, 2004. Time: 7:00 Contact: Sharynne NicMhacha at highlandpriestess@hotmail.com

Irish Ceili and Set dance Workshops

At the Guiding Star Grange, 401 Chapman Street, Greenfield, MA. 2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays. 3 PM to 6 PM. Admission is $7.00. Leather soled shoes recommended. Call for info: 860-688-3094 Class dates: January 11, 25 February 8, 22, 29 March 14, 28 Date: Sunday, February 08, 2004. Time: 3:00 Contact: Cathy and Jim Mieczkowski at mairecait@att.net

The Triple Spiral: Intro to Celtic Magick and Celtic Spiritual Tradition

Three part workshop on Celtic Spirituality, Magick and Deities with Celtic priestess, Harvard Scholar and author Sharynne NicMhacha. Location and power of the Otherworld, sacred sites, cosmology, the Celtic year wheel, the three worlds and four directions, sacred talismans, and Irish, Gaulish, British deities. Wed. 2/11, 2/18 and 2/25 from 7-9 pm. Full descriptions at Dun na Sidhe website at www.mobiusbandwidth.com or

register online at www.GoddessOfTheSevenSisters.com. Contact: Sharynne NicMhacha at highlandpriestess@hotmail.com

Celtic Myth, Poetry and Language

Four part workshop on Celtic language, myth, deity names, incantations, poems and songs (Old Irish, Scottish Gaelic, Welsh, Cornish) with Celtic priestess, Harvard scholar and author Sharynne NicMhacha. Sliding scale $45- 55. Western Mass area - 1 to 1 1/2 hrs from Boston, Hartford, Brattleboro, etc. Sunday 2/15, Sat. 2/21, Sat. 3/20 and Sat. 3/27 from 4-6 pm. Last class is potluck and ceili. Date: Contact: Sharynne NicMhacha at highlandpriestess@hotmail.com

The Mysteries of Albion: Myth and Magick of Avalon, Britain and Wales.

Three part workshop, Wed. 3/24, 3/31 and 4/7 from 7-9 pm. Part One: Folklore, Fairy Lore and Magick of Wales. Part Two: The Spirits of Annwn - British and Welsh Legends, Deities and Mythology. Part Three: The Lessons of Avalon: The Spiritual Core of Arthurian Myth and Legend. Full descriptions at Dun na Sidhe website at http://www.mobiusbandwidth.com/ or Register via www.GoddessOfTheSevenSisters.com. Contact: Sharynne NicMhacha at highlandpriestess@hotmail.com

The Nine-Fold Path of the Celtic Goddess

Meet the powerful Goddesses of Celtic tradition, and explore nine major archetypes (including witch, healer, land goddess, sage, mother etc.) We will connect with and honour these divine women in ceremony, and learn how to develop relationship with them in our daily lives. Register online via www.GoddessOfTheSevenSisters.com Date: Monday, April 19, 2004 - Time: 7:00 Contact: Sharynne NicMhacha at highlandpriestess@hotmail.com

May Day and the Celtic Fairy Tradition

Join us for this celebration of Beltaine, the beginning of Summer! We will learn about traditional lore associated with the Celtic Fairy Faith, including how to make offerings to and honour the Fairies (the People of the Sidhe) throughout the ritual year. We will also participate in a meditation and ceremony to honour the Sidhe. Register online via www.GoddessOfTheSevenSisters.com Date: Monday, April 26, 2004 - Time: 7:00 Contact: Sharynne NicMhacha at highlandpriestess@hotmail.com

Tree Workshop and Beltaine Celebration

May 1-2, 2004 TREE WORKSHOP AND BELTAINE CELEBRATION with author, herbalist and Druid Priestess Ellen Evert Hopman M.Ed. Frederick, MD. Learn the medicinal and spiritual aspects of local trees and the basics of Druid ritual form. For registration and information Contact: 301-829-5048. www.springfever.com

Wisdom of Trees, Language of Birds: Intermediate Celtic Magick

Two Part workshop in Intermediate Celtic Magick and Spirituality. Part One: Exploring the power, symbolism and mythological language associated with sacred animals and birds, ways to honour and connect with these spirits. Part Two: The Voice of the Forest - The Mysteries of Ogam, The Irish Tree alphabet. Wed. 5/5 and 5/12 7-9 pm. Full descriptions at Dun na Sidhe website at www.mobiusbandwidth.com or register online at www.GoddessOfTheSevenSisters.com. Contact: Sharynne NicMhacha at highlandpriestess@hotmail.com

Druid, Shaman, Priestess: Intro to Celtic Shamanism and the Sisterhood of Nine.

Two part workshop on Celtic shamanism, mysticism and the Ninefold Sisterhood of priestesses. Part One: The three-fold cosmos, sacred animals and the power of flight, learn the basics of shamanic journeying and elements of the Celtic shamanic tradition. Part Two: Wisdom of Druids and Bards, vision and prophecy, and traditions regarding nine-fold sisterhood of priestesses or goddesses. Mondays. 5/17 and 5/24, 7-9 pm. Full descriptions at Dun na Sidhe website at www.mobiusbandwidth.com or register online at www.GoddessOfTheSevenSisters.com. Contact: Sharynne NicMhacha at highlandpriestess@hotmail.com

NEDC website: http://www.technovate.org/nedruid/

Resources

Cross Quarter Days

By Ignatz Fezman, Preceptor, Poison Oak Grove

(In the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) there was a Table of Moveable Feasts that showed the exact times, in Greenwich Mean Time, of the Solstices, Equinoxes, and the arrival of the Sun at the midpoints of the Fixed Signs and at the arrival 16 deg 18 min of declination North and South of the Celestial Equator, in other words the Cross Quarter Days. The dates and times were given up until the end of 1999, after that Druids were on their own. Until now. Grove Mathematician and Preceptor Ignatz has developed a program using to calculate the Cross Quarter Days, the astronomical High Days. The dates and times of the Solstices and Equinoxes are easily found in the yearly almanac or Pocket Astrologer. A Druid Missal-Any hopes to publish Brother Ignatz's High Day calculations to year 2100 soon. In the meantime here are the dates for 2004 along with the explanation of his methods. --Editors note.)

Astrodienst (www.astro.com) is a Swiss outfit that sells astrological services and software. They write and sell their own astrological programs; along the way, they have developed a software toolkit for programmers who want to write astrological software. The toolkit is called the Swiss Ephemeris and it comprises two parts:

1. A series of data files, giving the positions of all objects of astrological interest over a span of more than 10,000 years, based on a cleverly compressed version of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory's astronomical ephemeris. This is divided into a number of files, each covering 400 years.

2. A library of program functions for accessing the data, and for doing useful calculations, including various date conversions and co-ordinate transformations.

The Swiss Ephemeris is released under a dual license: if you use it to write commercial programs, then you owe Astrodienst a license fee; if instead you distribute your programs for free, or don't distribute them at all, then you don't need to pay Astrodienst.

The Swiss Ephemeris is written in the programming language C, and is intended for use by programmers writing in that language. Many other languages have what's called a Foreign Function Interface (FFI), which lets their programs use pre-compiled software written in other languages (i.e. the Swiss Ephemeris); however, in my experience these FFIs are often incomplete and poorly documented. Since my C skills are rather thin and I needed the practice, I decided to work in C rather than

in the languages I'd used for my previous cross-quarter calculations

Cross-Quarter Days for 2004

Greenwich Mean Time

Oimelc as 15 deg of Aquarius, Feb. 4, 2004 11:58 GMT
Oimelc as 16 deg 18 min decl, Feb. 4, 2004 14:55 GMT
Beltane as 15 deg of Taurus, May 5, 2004 04:04 GMT
Beltane as 16 deg 18 min decl, May 5, 2004 00:56 GMT
Lughnasadh as 15 deg of Leo, Aug. 7, 2004 04:20 GMT
Lughnasadh as 16 deg 18 min decl, Aug. 7 2004 07:30 GMT
Samhain as 15 deg of Scorpius, Nov. 7, 2004 01:60 GMT
Samhain as 16 deg 18 min decl, Nov. 6, 2004 22:59 GMT

Cross-Quarter Days for 2004, Pacific Time

Oimelc as 15 deg of Aquarius, Feb. 4 2004 03:58 PST
Oimelc as 16 deg 18 min decl Feb. 4, 2004 06:55 PST
Beltane as 15 deg of Taurus, May 4, 2004 21:04 PDT
Beltane as 16 deg 18 min decl, May 4, 2004 17:56 PDT
Lughnasadh as 15 deg of Leo, Aug. 6, 2004 21:20 PDT
Lughnasadh as 16 deg 18 min decl, Aug 7 2004 00:30 PDT
Samhain as 15 deg of Scorpius, Nov. 6, 2004 17:60 PST
Samhain as 16 deg 18 min decl, Nov. 6, 2004 14:59 PST

News

Call for Nominations:

MAA Graduate Student Committee

The Medieval Academy of America's Graduate Student Committee is looking for graduate students to serve on the committee for a two-year term, 2004-2006.

The committee acts on behalf of graduate students in North America and overseas to voice their concerns and promote their participation within the Medieval Academy of America (MAA) and the broader academic community.

For more information on the committee and the medieval graduate student Med-Grad listserv, please see the Medieval Academy Website at http://www.medievalacademy.org, under "Graduate Students." You do not have to be a member of the MAA to sign up for the listserv.

All graduate students interested in serving on the Graduate Student Committee, and who are/will be members of the MAA, are invited to nominate themselves. Please (re)introduce yourself to the med-grad listserv and send a brief statement, c.v., and the name of one reference as soon as possible to Richard K. Emmerson at RKE@MedievalAcademy.org. Indicate your university, discipline, and particular interest in contributing to the committee. We hope to represent a wide range of academic disciplines and geographic regions on the committee. Two graduate students will be appointed to the committee by the Council when it meets in Seattle in April 2004.

Military Pagan Network

Board of Directors

Selects New Executive Director

Columbia, MD - January 14, 2004: On the 14th anniversary of the founding of the Military Pagan Network, Inc. founder, Chairman and Executive Director John Machate stepped out of office. Upon resignation he stated "It has been a fun time but it is now time for the organization to stand on its own under new leadership." He also stepped down from his position as Chairman of the Board of Directors allowing Angela Peerman to be elected in his place. Mr. Machate will remain on the Board of Directors and run for re-election this year, he will also serve the new Executive Director as PR Manager and Webmaster.

It did not take the board long to determine who would sit in the top staff seat of the organization. Dr. Mark Drake Spaeth of Circle Sanctuary and the Lady Liberty League, most well known as Circle's candidate for military Chaplaincy was the outgoing Executive Directors one and only choice. After a brief interview period and introduction to the positions duties Dr. Spaeth accepted the nomination with the blessings of Selena Fox of Circle Sanctuary, "Drake has been helping Pagans in the US military for many years. Best wishes to him and MPN as he is expanding this work as MPN's new Executive Director! And thanks to John for his many years of service!"

Founded in 1992, incorporated in 1997 the Military Pagan Network Inc. acted as a store and group information resource for Neopagans in the military. The corporation now provides material regarding various Neopagan religions to the Chaplaincy, as well as fulfilling its original goal of providing contacts near military bases around the world. In 1997 the corporation expanded its services to include assisting military members with the proper handling of harassment and discrimination. In 1999 the IRS awarded the Military Pagan Network, Inc. an advanced determination of tax-exempt status in accordance with Internal Revenue Code 501(a) as an organization described in section 501(c)3. In 2002 that advanced determination was lifted and the Military Pagan Network, Inc. has been found to be tax exempt as described in section 501(a) as an organization described in section 501(c)3 if the Internal Revenue Code.

Note to editors: If you are interested in viewing additional information on Military Pagan Network, please visit the Military Pagan Network website at http://www.milpagan.org/ Copyright ©2004, Military Pagan Network Inc.

A Holiday to the Iron Age

(Iron Age House anyone?)

Holidaymakers will be able to spend a week living in the Iron Age at a new tourist attraction being planned in the Forest of Dean (England). Tourists will give up their clothes and modern items and dress in costume and spend time living in the village of Cinderbury. They will sleep in primitive huts and will have to cook for themselves, mine ore, make tools and weapons and look after the village's animals. Mobile phones and watches will be confiscated and the project website says that "make-up, jewelry, hair products and perfumes are strongly discouraged and will possibly be mocked".

The living history project is being created near Clearwell. Although corporate funds are still needed it is hoped the village will be open by May. Project boss Jasper Blake said: "The village came about in a weird kind of way. I have now been doing archaeology in the area for 10 years with different groups and I love working in this area but I wanted to earn a living doing it. I visited other places which are commercial operations and I thought I could do it with this place. We now have our plot of land and have made a deal with the landowner and we are pretty well ready to put in a planning application. This is going to be a high profile, media friendly project and there is nothing much like it anywhere else in the country so we expect interest to be high."

Mr. Blake added: "If we get corporate interest there is no reason why we can't be open by May. There is no way that we could get the whole thing built ready for then, but part of the experience will be to get people to get involved with building some of the roundhouses and help build it up as a living community."

Mr. Blake explained that although there were no remains of Iron Age huts in the Forest they would be using a template of what is known about roundhouses and use local materials to build them.

For more information see the Cinderbury website (http://www.cinderbury.co.uk/)

Calendar

Oimelc as 15 degrees of Aquarius occurs on Feb. 4 2004 3:58 a.m. Pacific Standard Time or by an alternative method as 16 degrees 18 minutes of declination on Feb. 4, 2004 at 6:55 a.m. Pacific Standard Time. Hang your Druid robe outside on the eve of Oimelc so that Bride might bless it as she passes by.

A Druid Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $8.00 and email subscriptions are free. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's post mail subscription free. Write to:

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Spring Equinox Essay: Rhiannon and Macha

By Emmon Bodfish
Reprinted from Spring Equinox 1987,
A Druid Missal-Any

pring Equinox, balance, awakening, a time of planting, a time in keeping with the theme of Irish Macha, Patroness of farmers, the Horse-goddess, who could run with the speed of a horse or become one. On the Continent She was called Epona. She was Rhiannon in Wales. She is a shape-shifting Goddess who can appear in human form, or in the form of a mare, or of a woman mounted on horseback. She is responsible not only for the fertility of herds, but of the ground as well. She is described in Celtic myths as the mother of kings or as capable of bestowing sovereignty on the rightful king. She is represented by the white mare whom the Kings of Ireland espouse at their coronations. Prof. J. Duran speculates that Macha and the mare represents the agrarian classes, the "Tuath," the third of the three castes in ancient Celtic society. (The other two were the warriors and the Druids. "Caste" is a poor word since these categories were not rigid, and some movement between them was possible, but it is used in Indo-European studies for lack of a better term.)

Macha may have been the Patroness of the Tuath, as Bride was the Patroness of Bards, and as the Morgani were associated with the warrior caste. Llyr, or Manannan McLlyr, it is said, also has ancient equine themes running through His worship. There is a theory that He was a Horse-deity back on the steppes of the Indo-European homeland, and that only later, when the Celtic peoples reached the Atlantic coast and the Island, did He become a Sea-god. He is always portrayed in a chariot, or riding in a boat, or in a combination of both, as in His sea-shell boat drawn by porpoises. This considered, He may be more a charioteer or vehicular god than a Horse-deity.* Epona rides astride. Cernunnos, the other shape-shifting, fertility-bestowing deity, never rides. He sits on the ground among the wild beasts, and is spoken of as running with the deer. These latter two figures hark back to the earliest Eur-Asian levels, very likely to the Paleolithic. Similar figures may have been common to the Ice Age peoples of Eastern Europe and West Asia from whom the Proto-Indo-Europeans sprang. In that early time, in the art of the Magdelinian hunters, a similar theme can be seen.

The Paleolithic dancer wearing a horse-head mask is a woman. The men wear disguises of horned animals, bear, or mammoths. The connection between Macha, the female shape-shifter-shaman-magician, and the horse may be very old, paralleling the male enchanter of horned animals, from the time when the Horned Man and the Horse Woman danced in Paleolithic caves.

*Could He be persuaded to protect us nowadays in our cars?

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Carleton runs along as usual. It's been a cold and snowy winter up until recently, which has made for some good celebrations (as well as broomball), though weather suddenly warmed up in the middle of last week, and spring seems intent on coming early.

While I am in semi-exile due to my senior project, Corwin is currently running the grove and doing a good job at innovation. He's come up with a new ceremony, which has been described by one person as druidical free-association. Corwin calls it calling. Basically you choose one aspect of the world to come and be with us for the ceremony, and list some of the important aspects/things it can help with.

We also celebrated "Create your own religious texts night." Only one religious text was created: The Book of Pass Around. The people who were present each wrote a verse and passed it to the next person. Some time next term we'll get together and everyone will bring their own version of what they wanted to happen, breaking off after one of the earlier verses. If all goes well I will submit those for the next Missal-Any.

Digitalis Grove: News from D.C.

Mike has been doing nothing but editing the Green Book and Magazine Volume, such that he has miserably memorized the two mega-volumes, and can think only of freedom from the endeavor. This month the Cherry Blossoms of Washington will distract him a little, and he is expecting a new puppy to train for the Guide Dog Foundation. He is currently seeking a job in the Federal Government bureaucracy, so that he can relocate after a few years to the West Coast.

Dravidia Grove: News from Maryland

All is well here, lots of rain, and the ground is soaked through. Have not had much time to do too much except pack and get ready for the move. Final date is 3/27/04 but don't worry, Dravidia Grove will continue in Indiana and I hope that the area change will provide new members as well. Have found a great place for purchasing swords. I collect them and have really got some beautiful pieces and at a real good price...These are not the high quality pieces, nor the cheap display pieces either, they are real decorative swords...

Well Blessed Be and cya in Indiana

Rowan Oak Grove: News from Tulsa, OK

Rowan-Oak Grove is undergoing a reorganization and general spring cleaning early this year. adjustments to delegation of offices and authority have taken a major load off arch-druidess m.s. white raven's shoulders. another change that is occurring is that as sis tsarah is preparing to move to another town we are going to have to have someone else with a vehicle that will provide our car pooling for field trips. even with all of these changes happening we just added the Gray Angels Grove in texas, adding another 25-30 members to our grove family, our 40th member to the tulsa grove and our 16th member (living in florida) to our online grove (having members all over usa and canada). at the same time the muskogee mother grove is going through changes that i'm sure my mentor myrddin will tell you of. it looks like for both of us it will be a busy 6-8 months. m.c. werebear, m.s. white tigress, m.s. maximus pheonixfire all received their elevations from novice to apprentice (1st degree sharayean trad) in the ovates classes and continue on towards achieving full druidic wicca training as the tradition itself evolves toward a more fully druidic path. secretary/treasurer m.c. werebear is catching up on all the paperwork that couldn't be done while the computer was down, including the yearly financial report for 2003 and the finalizing of the by-laws adapted from the original tbrsc by-laws, (our first grove now headed by m.s. cattwoman in wagner) bro valens our arch druid is head of the circle of Cybele study group and administrator the knights of the celtic cross with our sir redwolf as fully trained at mocc with the knights there and the head of our security team. the grove is also making plans for a business venture to more fully be self supporting and give grove members that have been unable to find work a chance at gainful employment. we will send you more on this as it evolves. beltaine looks to be one if our busiest convocations of all time with many things to vote on that will effect our grove family, in addition to our yearly field trip to renfaire at muskogee as part of the celebration. ostara rites will be held march 20 according to the grove calendar barring unforeseen events and the feast of sharaye and her consort the 31 of march which is a sharayean trad minor holy day.

the blessings of light, love and healing to you all

m.s. white raven, arch-druidess
rowan-oak grove

Poison Oak Grove, News from California

Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

The ongoing work on the Grove site moves slower than molasses in January. Due to an extremely wet winter we have not been able to carve site lines and set up the new cabers marking the High Days. The weather seems to be cooperating with the coming of the Spring and we hope to get them up in time for Beltaine.

Poison Oak Grove is sad to announce the passing of the tenant of the main house, Mike Auerbach. Mike was a small yet strong and feisty woman. Sometimes she could be difficult about sharing the electricity and water, but this past year we came to an understanding. May her journey to Tir nan Og be a smooth one as she waits for her partner Charlie and her beloved dogs Kodak and Reno.

ARDA 2 Update

By Mike Scharding, Digitalis Grove

As you know, about this time last year, I promised that ARDA 2 would be imminently released, and continued to make deadline extensions. Well, after taking two of the book projects directly under my wing, the presses have finished the massive 847 page Green Volume and the 700 page Magazine Volume is nearly completed and will be sent to the printer in Early April. The 750 page Main Volume should be out in May, if all goes well, as it is the most complicated of the series. Those who ordered the book can begin to expect it in their pot of gold shortly after St. Patrick's Day by Leprechaun Rainbow Express.

The Green Books doubled from my early estimates, and anything that was vaguely copyright protected was removed from the Main Volume. The contents are viewable for free on-

line and can be downloaded, printed and bound locally by yourself at: www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html

One problem I had is that it went way over-estimate, and hardcover binding is just simply not feasible at $45 per book, in addition to printing costs of $25; so I had them softbound like a telephone book at $10 per book. Library copies will still be hardbound. Another problem I had was that I waited too long to cash most of the checks you sent. I will return them with the first volume that I'm mailing out, and I'm hoping that you'll reissue new checks at the original estimate of $71 for the set of three.

http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/
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for surrounding page's graphics.

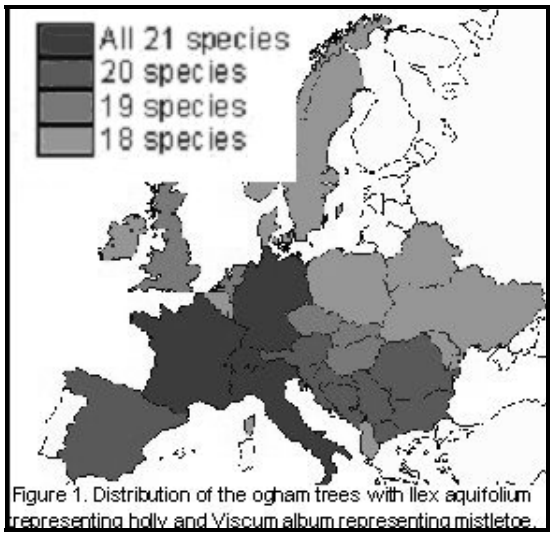
Ogham Rant

By Mark Carter

(This article evolved out of a posting on the newsgroup alt.religion.druid as a sort of open letter to a single person. It has been rewritten by the author for inclusion here. We at the Missal-Any hope that it provokes some thoughts as well as some comments.—The Editor)

As many readers know, there's an extreme divergence of Ogham theories between the trained experts (historians and archeologists) and the neopagan community. Mainstream historians place ogham's creation in fifth century Ireland while many neopagans push it back to a much earlier time. For a moment, let's totally disregard the origins of Ogham and focus only upon its later usage and the changing interpretations of it. By the time we reach the manuscript tradition and start examining fourteenth century texts, like the Book of Ballymote, we are at least nine hundred years removed from Ogham's creation and its invention begins to appear irrelevant to the argument. Possibly Ogham had undergone significant reinterpretation between the fifth and fourteenth centuries and the Auraicept may no longer reflect the original tradition. The scribe was certainly copying from older texts but may have been unfamiliar with what he was copying or perhaps the text was incomplete. Portions of the Auraicept appear childish and we suspect the authors were trying to flesh out a system which was already in decline when they wrote.

Despite these flaws one fact becomes obvious; Ogham is a memory system. Regardless of what else it might have been the memory training possibilities are the most conspicuous when you look at the Auraicept, the kennings, and the variants such as river Ogham, church Ogham, and fortress Ogham. Yet, many modern druids have placed the cart before the horse in their interpretations of this system. They tend to believe that the kennings and other Ogham listings were used to conceal Ogham in literature; particularly in poems. Then, with this misconception in mind, they search Celtic literature for Ogham kennings in hopes of finding hidden messages. Not only do they search Irish literature but they spend a great deal of time examining Welsh literature as well, despite the fact that Ogham was an Irish invention and not Welsh at all. Consider what has been done to Cad Goddeu; a late and garbled Welsh poem constantly being reinterpreted in light of Irish Ogham theories. Robert Graves popularized this method and gave it the unofficial blessing of the literary crowd but it was heading that way even before him.



Distribution of trees mentioned in Ogham, related to Europe, showing a preference for a possible western continental origin.

Concealing Ogham messages in poetry is crazy. Just try to write out even the shortest druidic statement in Ogham kennings and then devise a poem around it. The poem would take hundreds of lines to convey a single sentence. Think of the most basic druidic concept; something like Mela's "act bravely in war, souls are immortal, there is another life after death." In English (rather than Gaelic) this totals 73 letters. You'd have to write out 73 Ogham kennings and devise a poem around them; keeping the same letter order, otherwise, the message would be garbled. It's impossible and justifies Macalister's claim that Ogham is "childishly impractical". Druids didn't do this. Later bards didn't do it either. If they did two things would be obvious: there would be several times more Ogham kennings in the surviving poetry and there would be much more surviving poetry itself because the amount required to conceal druidic believes would be massive. Clearly, there are no hidden druidic messages waiting to be found in the surviving poetry.

The question is: what was the point of the kennings and Ogham listings in the Auraicept if they weren't used for concealment? Obviously, the kennings and listings were used as a memory system. The real point of these lists wasn't to secretly communicate druidic messages but to memorize lists of important fortresses, churches, and common names of local birds and rivers; among other things. The Ogham thus became a mnemonic aid allowing the user to memorize long lists of important names, places, or events. In its most basic form this memory system needed no religious or poetic value at all. However, poets could draw upon these mental lists when needed and such Ogham listings could supply a needed word when the poet either suffered writer's block or recited impromptu poetry. A poet needing a word, which started with B, could mentally scour the various Ogham listings for a fortress, church, bird, or other object to flesh out his composition. Thus, occasionally, we find a single Ogham kenning in a poem but find no others.

Why? Not because the poem contains hidden messages but simply because the poet needed a fitting word or phrase and fell back on the memorized kennings to supply it.

Regardless of Ogham's age or its original intent one thing is clear; by the fourteenth century it was being used for a memory system. Probably, it had been used like this for centuries before the fourteenth century. Some of the kennings and other Ogham variants are incredibly childish and this is possibly because the authors of the Auraicept were recording a memory system, which was already in decline at the time. They were in fact attempting to flesh out a memory system, which was already partially lost. This also accounts for the false kennings and corrupt Ogham variants within the text. Some of the variants such as "man Ogham", "dog Ogham", or "cow Ogham" aren't true kennings. They simply substitute the number of letter strokes with the number of cows or dogs. Nuinne becomes five cows instead of five strokes; nobody is fooled by this and it serves no purpose. These "weaker" Ogham variants are either late and corrupt imitations or early attempts at creating a memory system from Ogham. I suggest they are late corruptions simply because the "stronger" points of Ogham seem to predate them and therefore prove that the stronger (i.e.: more useful) kennings are older.

The same can be said of many of the written variants upon the stemline. "Ridge Ogham", "shield Ogham", and all the other variants, which attempt to conceal the written script, are childish and fool nobody. They look like the sort of ciphers children use to pass notes at school and they would be no harder to decode. They are possible evidence that the scribe was attempting to flesh out a partial system. Either he was working from an incomplete/corrupt text, he was making things up based on what he thought Ogham was once used for, or (most likely) he was expanding upon a shorter text, which was nothing more than earlier notes taken by someone else who was familiar with the complete system. The earlier text possibly contained many headings and listings for Ogham, which were not given, and the scribe merely fleshed it out with what he thought those Ogham variants were. In modern terms: he was trying to write his thesis using only the Cliffnotes.

Therefore, Ogham could exist with no magic or religious purpose at all. It was merely a memory system and the magic/religious/poetic side could have developed either concurrently with Ogham's creation or sometime after the fact. This accounts for the close association between knowledge and poetry in Irish culture. You don't need to be smart to write poetry but it certainly helps and anyone who memorized the Ogham kennings and variants would have a mental spreadsheet in their head to fall back upon any time they were stuck with a poem. Thus, the more of this system you knew the smarter you became and also the more able to write poetry. Yet, any time you fleshed out a poem with an Ogham kenning you were, in a sense, putting "filler" into your poem. Anyone familiar with Ogham would notice the kenning and realize you were falling back upon hack methods. Thus, poets didn't strive to secretly utilize Ogham in their poems as some modern druids suggest. In fact, they strived to avoid Ogham kennings. Only this can account for the relatively few Ogham kennings in the surviving poetry. Those poems in which we find kennings aren't the best examples of Irish poetry, they are the worst. A poem depending entirely upon kennings and listings taken from this system wouldn't be a masterpiece; it would be hack verse, which any third year fili could write. This, in turn, explains why the Ogham variants were kept secret; how better to cultivate an aire of superiority than to conceal the system from the non-fili? Keeping the non-poet ignorant of the system meant keeping the masses in check; exactly as the fili did. Also, notice the fili's total disregard for the poetic opinion of the masses. The fili wrote for each other and didn't care what the non-poet thought of their work. They often had to explain their own poems to the non-poet because the non-poet was unfamiliar with the system and was unable to judge good poetry from bad.

Dichetal do Chennaib seems to prove the case and also suggests that this memory system is much closer to the fifth century than the fourteenth. Dichetal do Chennaib is "recital from the finger-ends" in which the poet recites an impromptu poem by somehow consulting his fingertips. Cormac's Glossary flatly states that Dichetal do Chennaib allowed the poet to create a poem instantly and without study. This is because the poet is counting off the Ogham on his fingertips and reciting the rhyming letter attributes derived from the Ogham ciphers. There is nothing mystical, or even religious, in this method. A poet reciting a poem upon the Irish character Balor could quickly count off on his fingers and rhyme Balor to a relevant fortress, church, and bird from his memorized list of Ogham variations. The result wouldn't be a deeply esoteric poem of druidic mysticism. It would be a piece of hack poetry based on commonly known Ogham associations. Dichetal do Chennaib's non-religious purpose is proven by the fact that St. Patrick allowed its practice even after the introduction of Christianity. He had banned Imbas Forosnai and Teinm Laegda for their paganism but apparently Patrick realized that Dichetal do Chennaib was non-religious in function; it was merely counting off on your fingers as you reviewed the ogham listings during recitation. Patrick knew he had to retain this system; it was the foundation of Irish memory training and therefore the core of Irish education itself. Patrick Joyce came near the truth when he said Dichetal do Chennaib was "the utterance of an extempore prophecy or poem that seems to have been accomplished with the aid of mnemonic contrivance of some sort in which the fingers played a principle part." Joyce also mentions that "the fingers were used as a mnemonic aid in the pagan Dichetal do Chennaib."

A rock with Ogham in Ireland.

Now we begin to understand the vague references within the Book of Ballymote, which imply Ogham hand signaling between the fili. Undoubtedly, this is a reference to the habit of counting on the fingers as the fili mentally cycles through his memorized Ogham lists. A fili mentally consulting the Ogham while reciting may very well count upon his fingers during recital. Another poet who observes him could easily reconstruct his thoughts because he also knew the relevant Ogham lists. Thus, one poet watching another count off his fingers could simultaneously arrive at the same rhyming word. If he blurted it out before his partner it would appear to the ignorant observer that the two men had secretly communicated the word from one to the other. To see this method in action simply stand in a crowd and count upon your fingers while reciting: "thirty days hath September". Inevitably someone will join the rhyme and this would appear to be the result of secret communication to any observers unfamiliar with the poem.

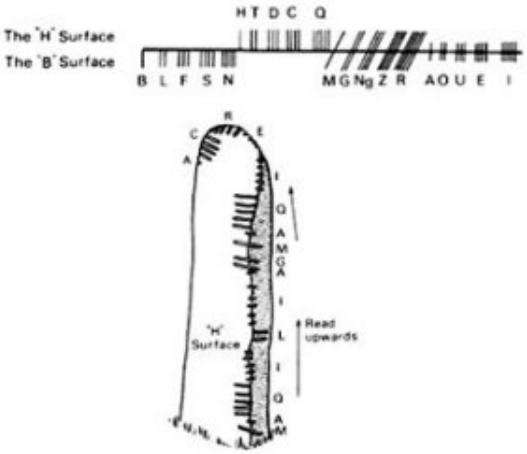
This finger counting method, incidentally, destroys the assertion that druids and later fili could conduct two different conversations at once; one verbally and another via signaling. Macalister suggests that such methods were possible and that the

fili could verbally say one thing while secretly conveying a contradictory meaning to a fellow poet via signaling. This was manifestly impossible. If the poet said anything during his finger counting it would most likely be a muttered recital of the Ogham listings he was reviewing. The ability to count off Ogham listings while simultaneously speaking on an entirely different subject is unrealistic. The fili could no more review their Ogham listings during conversation than a modern English speaker could find the fifteenth letter of the alphabet without muttering the entire alphabet under the breath and counting off his fingers until reaching the correct letter. Attempting to count off the English alphabet while discussing any other subject proves this.

If this theory is correct one question remains: why does the Auraicept mention "shin Ogham", "nose Ogham" and other Ogham signaling performed against various straight, flat surfaces? Is it possible that these methods were used as subtle prompts to reciting fili from an observing colleague? Impromptu recitals were part of the fili's final testing and demonstrated his mastery of the one hundred and fifty Ogham listings. Possibly a floundering fili received assistance from a colleague during his testing. Likewise, this signaling could be used during critical public recitals, thereby protecting the integrity of the fili order as a whole. This silent coaching was a far cry from the blatant signals flashed between coaches and players in modern baseball and is more akin to the modern practice of lawyers secretly prompting their clients during court testimony or the subtle cues used between celebrities and talk show hosts to ensure a smooth dialogue during live performance.

When did this system develop? If this interpretation of Dichetal do Chennaib is correct then this system must have been in place by Patrick's time at least; putting it contemporary with the majority of the known Ogham inscriptions. Significantly, this puts us in a druidic time frame and suggests the possibility that the Ogham memory system retains some druidic impact. It certainly did at some point but these druidic traits may not have lasted long enough to be well recorded in the fourteenth century. Ogham as a memory system may have been in decline in the fourteenth century and the manuscript tradition doesn't necessarily reflect earlier (more druidic) usage. By the time Ogham was put on paper it was being used for memory training and was clearly subjected to various corruptions, regardless of what it may have been before that. These corruptions included not only continual modernization which moved it further and further away from it's origins, but also attempts to restore the more pagan aspects which the later scribes believed were lost; Irish scribes possibly held some fairly inaccurate conceptions of their ancestors much as their Welsh brothers did. Lastly, the Ogham system was corrupted by other memory systems; mainly the cabal.

It seems that few people have commented upon the cabalistic influences within the Auraicept: the building of the tower, the dispersal of languages, and the 72 poets who collected the languages (led by Fenius Farsaidh, a descendant of Noah). All of this is cabalistic. By the time the Book of Ballymote was compiled all of these elements had already appeared in those cabalistic texts pouring out of Spain and France. This exact same story was used to account for the creation of Hebrew and the secret preservation of the cabal through the descendants of Noah. Certainly, this tradition isn't Celtic and the Celts wouldn't have credited the creation of Gaelic to a descendant of Noah on the plain of Shinar unless they were trying to tie their own beliefs into a Judeo-Christian system. It's been argued that the Auraicept contains intentional deception but that's almost beside the point. We're not concerned with whether or not the Irish believed the story; the mere fact that they knew the tale and included it proves cabalistic impact. Regardless of whether the author believed it or not he obviously drew from contemporary cabalistic sources of the time.



Also, few neopagans notice that the Auraicept contains Hebrew and runes as well. It's plain as day in Calder's translations. Page 313 lists both Hebrew and "Scandinavian Ogham" (runes). The 84th example in Calder's reproduction is listed as Hebrew and below it appears a similar script; perhaps a corrupt Hebrew variant. Calder lists it as "unnamed". There's other strange looking alphabets listed in Ballymote that are obviously not Ogham. Nor do they look like Hebrew, or any of the more commonly found magical alphabets (Celestial, Theban, Malachim, "Passing the River"). Page 307 reproduces three enclosed figures; two of which are often reproduced in modern neopagan texts. The third figure is seldom addressed. Why has it been ignored so often? Because it's not as intelligible as the other two. It resembles a magic circle taken from cabalistic text.

How much cabalistic contamination was there? Nobody knows but the fact that the two systems were merged at all indicates that the author of the Auraicept was at least partially familiar with both systems and saw a need to tie Ogham traditions into the contemporary Judeo-Christian system. Was he fleshing out a partial Ogham tradition with cabalism or was he attempting to compare Ogham tradition to the more popular cabal? Either way, the Auraicept strives to put Ogham on equal footing with the cabal, if not to supersede it entirely. Apparently, the Irish fili were not going to accept the importation of a foreign memory system without some compromise. The Auraicept dismisses Hebrew as the language "some say...the people of heaven had" and proceeds to offer Gaelic as the new divine language. The final result was a partial merger of these systems as the Celts struggled to tie Celtic history into biblical history at a time when biblical history was blindly accepted as the final word.

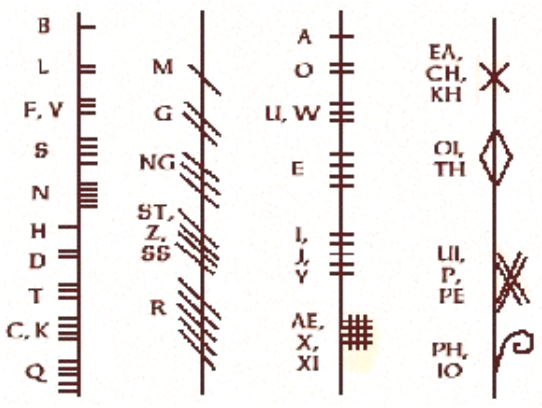
If all of this is correct, what is proven? The argument that Ogham memory training was a late invention completely modeled upon the cabal and earlier Greek memory methods seems faulty and can't be supported from the text of the Auraicept alone. The Auraicept's scribe certainly didn't create this system from Ogham in an attempt to create a native equivalent to the cabal; some sort of system already existed. If the theory of Dichetal do Chennaib is correct then Ogham memory training obviously predates any cabalistic impact; and we do know that the druids were respected for their amazing memory and they must have had some sort of system. Conversely, it could be argued that the manuscript tradition of Ogham is almost a complete rewrite of Ogham traditions. If Welsh bards could project their own misconceptions of their druidic past into their poetry then the same thing might have

happened in Irish manuscripts as well. Maybe an Ogham memory system existed in the fifth century and by the fourteenth century it was so corrupt that what we have today is mostly cabalistic corruption and recreations of what the Irish believed they had lost.

Incidentally, Carmina Gadelica contains the following prayer;

Uiriel shall be at my feet
Ariel shall be at my back
Gabriel shall be at my head
Raphael shall be at my side

It's unknown how long the Scots had this poem before Carmina Gadelica published it but nearly the same prayer is found in cabalistic literature. If nothing else it proves that cabalism was accepted into folk beliefs as authentic tradition at some point. Certainly, this predates W.B. Yeats and the Golden Dawn; although that doesn't necessarily push it back to before the fourteenth century.



Lastly, someone more familiar with Celtic literature could argue that this Ogham memory system traveled from Ireland to Wales. The Irish impact on the Mabinogion is well established. Some Welsh poetry seems to be modeled upon the Irish as well. T.G. Jones argues that Welsh poetic laws are based upon the Irish and there was communication between the two schools in the middle ages. We know the Bardic system lasted longer in Ireland and it was stronger there too. The lowest ranked Irish bard still ranked higher in courts than the highest ranked Welsh bard. It seems that at some point Welsh bardism was revived with a strong infusion of the Irish system. Some of the Welsh poetic rules appear to be weaker version of the rules within the Auraicept and it's possible that the Welsh had adopted some memory system as well; possibly based on Ogham, although it's unlikely. There's no known Ogham kennings in Welsh poetry but there are superficial similarities, which suggest they were copying the general idea: tree symbolism, finger counting, and rigid similes similar to kennings but lacking a concrete system. A Welsh poem cited in Barddas suggests that Wales had an identical system: "A didactic bard...on the fingers it is necessary to question him". The Welsh hero Hu Gadarn supposedly wrote the first Welsh mnemonic poem and his follower, Tydain, made such mnemonic poetry the primary method of record keeping. Barddas is a faulty document but it could at least suggest that Morganwg himself saw the memory applications of Ogham or Dichetal do Chennaib and tried to introduce them into Welsh bardism. Someone at sometime certainly saw the memory aspect and tried to put it into the Welsh system.

Calder, George, ed and trans. Auraicept na N'Eces. Edinburgh: Four Courts, 1995
Carmichael, Alexander. Carmina Gadelica. 2 vols. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1928
Jones, T. Gwynn. "Bardism and Romance." Transactions of the Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion. London, 1915. 205-310.
Joyce, Patrick Weston. A Social History of Ireland. 2 vols. New York: Benjamin Blom, 1968
Macalister, R. A. S. Secret Languages Of Ireland, The. Amsterdam: Philo, 1976

Bricriu building his drinking hall.

Bricriu's Bluff and Bluster

Based on Perudo and Liar's Dice and Bluff
(Dice and cups available commercially)
By Mike Scharding, 2004
Color board printout at
www.geocities.com/mikerdna/bricriu.jpg

Objective

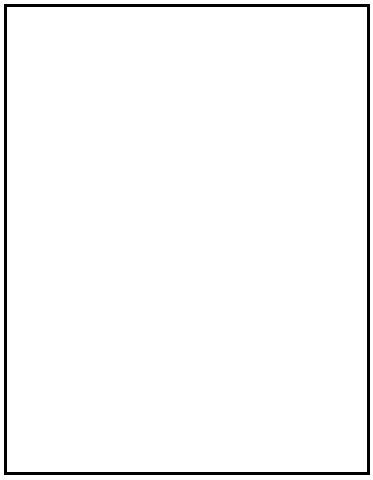
Bricriu, the trickster god of Irish legends, is holding the Trickster Convention, and has invited other trouble-making spirits from other parts of the world to exchange schemes, ploys and devious ideas. At the end he reveals a new tournament to decide where the next convention will be held in the next century. The game is played in a golden palace with 20 white shields and 10 red shields hanging on hooks upon the walls of the hall. Bricriu addresses the assembly and says the purpose of the game is to see who is the more conniving and devious spirit.

The goal is to be the last player to have at least one die in play. A game is played in rounds by two to six players (four or five is best) and takes 30-40 minutes for a full game. During each round, the players roll their dice, an opening bid is made, and play continues as the bid is raised until it is challenged, and the challenge is resolved. Players lose dice for incorrect bids or challenges. Once a player has lost all of their dice, they are out of the game.

Preparation

Print a color version of the board and laminate it. Collect five dice for each player. (30 white dice) Have one colored dice as a bid marker (preferably red). One plastic opaque cup for each player (six cups)

Game Board



Click on this weblink for a color print out
www.geocities.com/mikerdna/bricriu.jpg

The Red Die

Players will place this dice on the bidding circles track to declare their bids and make it easier to keep track.

The Bidding Circles Track

This is the white and red circle shields that ring the board. As the bids are called and raised, the red die is moved sun-wise (clockwise) on the bidding spaces around the track. Players declare their bids by placing the red die on either Number Bid circles or Magic One Bid circles allowing all players to decide whether its time to raise a bid or challenge. (If the bid, for some reason, goes above 20 White circles or 10 Red circles, just keep going around the board adding 20 (or 10) to the number written on the board.)

The Lost Dice Squares

Players place any dice that they have lost on these squares, where they will remain out of play. This aids other players to keep track of how many dice are in play or out of play; making bid calculations more simple.

The White Dice

Players will bid on ALL white dice in play, including those in their own cup (or those show outside the cup, but in play.) Dice on Lost Dice Squares do not affect game play. The single pip on the dice is a "Magic One." and will change to match the number called on any bid, without control of the die's owner.

Game Rules

0. Choose the First Bidder of the Game

Every one rolls all five of their dice, to determine who will start the game. The person with the highest total will start and then proceed clockwise around the table. Ties are re-rolled.

1. Roll the Dice

We begin. All players take a dice cup and five white dice. They shake their dice and give them a roll, but do not let their opponents see what they have rolled. Keep them concealed under the cups. You may peek in your cup as often as you like, but secrecy is a critical aspect of Bricriu's Bluff & Bluster!

2. Opening Bid

The first player can declare any amount of numbers (or Magic Ones) as their opening bid, even if they didn't roll that many. You base your bid on your estimate of all dice in play. There are two types of opening bids; Number Bids and Magic Ones Bids.

Number Bids:

The white shields along the bidding circle track are for Number Bids. A Number Bid is a claim that revealing all of the dice in play (your dice and your opponents') will show a particular number (Magic Ones count towards the number called, being like jokers in a deck of cards.) All matching number and Magic Ones on the white dice count together toward a Number Bid.

For example, if you have three 5s and your three opponents each have one Magic One (but no 5s), there are really six 5s in play (5+5+5+1+1+1). After reading your opponent's eyes for weakness, declare your bid by placing the red die with a six facing up on the white "5" shield circle.

Magic Ones Bids:

Red shields are used for Magic One Bids. A Magic One Bid is a claim that revealing all of the dice in play (your dice as well as those of your opponents) will show a particular amount of Magic Ones. Only Magic Ones will count toward a Magic One Bid, but this gives you another option in bidding and bluffing your opponents in tight situations.

For example: If you have three Magic Ones in your hand and you suspect that your other opponents each have a Magic One in their hand, then it is reasonable to advance the red die around the Bidding Circles Track to the red "6" shield circle and have the red die face upwards with a Magic One on it.

3. Bluff, Bluster and Raise

After the opening bid is made, play continues clockwise to the next surviving player. You cannot pass. Each player in succession will have only two options that they can make:

A. Raise the current bid, or

B. Challenge the current bid.

Remember, all the white dice in play, both yours and the dice held by other players, even the dice you can't see should be considered when you calculate to raise the bid. It's okay to bluff and bluster, and setting the next bid just a bid higher than the true odds, will force the next person into a difficult dilemma of whether to risk a challenge or raise it to even more ridiculous odds. Don't make it an easy decision for them.

Raising the Bid

Raising the bid is the key to strategy. Depending on your opponents' bidding and the dice showing in your cup, you can raise the bid in a few different ways.

A. Either keep the red die on the same bidding circle, or turn it to show a higher number on the die. (For example, if your opponent's poor bid was four 3s, then you can raise that with a daring bid of four 4s, four 5s, or four 6s.)

B. Or, move the red die clockwise to any higher Number Bid circle (White), and turn the dice to show any number you want on top. (For example, if your opponent declares a bid of four 3s, then you can upset

the game by confidently bidding five 2s, six 5s, seven 3s, and so on.)

C. Or, move the red die clockwise to any Magic One Bid circle (Red) and turn the red die to show a Magic One on the top. For instance, if your opponent declares a bid of five 3s, counter his impetuous bid with a bid of three Magic Ones (or even four Magic Ones), since it is in a position on the Bidding Circle Track that is higher (i.e. clockwise) from the already declared bid.

NOTE: If you are playing by the Show and Reroll rule, after your bid you should immediately announce or execute this maneuver before the next player makes their call.

Bid raises continue to rise from one player to the next until challenged.

Challenging the Bid

If you don't think there are enough white dice in play to support the latest bid, then you can challenge the bid rather that raise it. You can only challenge a bid on your turn, and must loudly and clearly call out the word "Challenge" or "call" for everyone to reveal their dice. This decision cannot be reversed or recalled.

4. Resolving the Challenge and Ending the Round

Once a player has challenged a bid, all players lift their cups and reveal their dice to everyone. Count all the dice in play that match the bid; numbers and Magic Ones for Number Bids; or Magic Ones only for Magic One Bids.

After you count the total, it is time to determine who lost.

A. If the actual amount of dice is equal to or more than the bid amount, the challenger loses the challenge, and forfeits one dice, and puts the dice on the Lost Dice Track in the middle of the board, and drinks once.

B. If the actual amount of dice is less than the bid amount, the bidder loses the challenge, and forfeits one dice, and puts the dice on the Lost Dice Track in the middle of the Board, and drinks once.

C. If you are player by the optional Special Rule "Perfect Bid," and the bid is exactly the same as the bid amount, then everyone but the bidder loses a die and drinks. This rule tends to unbalance the game's odds quickly, but is enjoyable because you get to berate the challenger verbally.

Challenge Examples:

Example One:

You challenge a bid of ten 5s. When all the white dice are counted, there are eight 5s and four Magic Ones. That's twelve 5 in all, two more than the bid amount. Therefore the bidder was right; there were at least ten 5 in play. So you lose the challenge and place one of your dice on the Lost Dice Track.

Example Two:

You challenge a bid of five Magic Ones. When the dice are counted, there are four Magic Ones. You win the challenge. The bidder loses the challenge and surrenders one die to a Lost Dice square.

5. Next Round

After the challenge is resolved either way it is time for the next round and the red die is reset to the white "1" circle with a one facing up. All load the dice you still have into your cup and roll again, as in the beginning. The player who won the last round takes the red die and starts the bidding in the new round. Bidding, of course, can begin anywhere on the bidding track.

Game continues until people run out of dice.

SPECIAL OPTIONAL RULES

Mix and match these rules to the players' preferences.

Show and Re-roll Rule

This is great for confusing your opponents. Immediately after opening or raising a bid, you may put one or more of your dice outside your cup for all players to see, then reroll and hide all of your remaining dice. Any rerolled dice that match your bid (if challenged) will count towards it. Showing and rerolling can therefore improved your chance of winning a possible challenge.

Your can show any amount of dice outside of your cup, as long as you have at least one die left to reroll. The dice shown does not have to match your bid at all, but that may help to convince the next player. The dice outside your cup remain there for the rest of the round, and count towards any future challenge, and can not be returned to your cup until the next round, possibly inhibiting your options, if the bid should revolve around the table to you again.

Perfect Bid Rule

If the amount of dice is exactly the same as the bid amount, everyone except the bidder lose the challenge, and must forfeit a die to the Lost Dice Track and drink once. This often unbalances a game, on average people will lose two or three dice in the game to this rule, if used, lowering the strategy quotient in the game. You could also have dice lost only by challenger and ALL but bidder must drink once, which is more fair.

Die Hard Rule (Corollary to Perfect Bid Rule)

You cannot lose your last die when there is a perfect bid, unless you are the player who is actually challenging the bid.

For example, you have one die left. Alex has four dice, Sue and Susan both have two, Shane challenges Sue's bid of eight 4s. There are exactly eight 4s shown. Normally in this situation, all players except Sue would have to surrender one die each, but under the Die Hard rule, because you didn't call the challenge, you are saved and can keep your final die.

Big Miss Rule

The difference between the actual amount of dice and the bid affects the number of dice lost. If there are more dice than the bid called, the losing challenger loses the difference in dice to the center track (if he challenges seven 5s, and there are nine 5s, then the challenger loses two dice (nine minus seven =two.) If the bidder bids seven 5s and there are actually four 5's, then the bidder lose three dice (seven minus four = three.)

News

Pagan Fire Festival Reignites with a Fee

By Alastair Jamieson
From The Scotsman
Thu 19 Feb 2004,
http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/index.cfm?id=196812004

THE Beltane Fire Festival, which heralds the arrival of spring with spectacular traditional dancing, is to return to Edinburgh after organisers struck a deal with the council to lease Calton Hill for a night.

The agreement, which puts the boisterous all-night event on a formal footing for the first time, will mean revellers from around the world being charged between £2 and £4 to go on to the hill to watch the celebrations.

Last year's event was cancelled for the first time in its 15-year history after council officials insisted the Beltane Fire Society needed a public entertainment licence.

It is understood councillors wanted the celebration to "grow up" and become more professional following complaints about excessive drinking, noise and risks to public safety.

The number of people attending the event, which has attracted crowds of 15,000 in the past, will be limited to 12,000 as part of the new arrangement.

A council insider said: "The event is fantastic and it is great to be supporting it again on a proper, contractual level. There were concerns that there was no control over anything and that people were just turning up and getting completely out of their heads.

"There were people so drunk that they were waking up on the hill the following morning."

The event is now expected to go ahead this year, with organisers agreeing to a string of conditions imposed by Edinburgh City Council.

As well as the limit on numbers, the festival will be forced to finish at 1am and provide stewarding to ensure crowd safety. The deal is expected to be approved by councillors at a meeting next week.

Organisers are introducing the entrance charge to meet the cost of providing stewards.

Ricky Henderson, the city council's leisure leader, said: "There will be some fairly robust conditions placed on their licence."

The fire festival, which takes place on the night of 30 April, features 300 performers and celebrates the beginning of summer in the old Celtic calendar. Staged at Calton Hill since 1988, it is the biggest Beltane celebration in the UK and attracts visitors from all over the world.

Beltane, which has strong undertones of fertility, has significance for pagans, who believe that the event marks the "coming of age" of the gods born at the previous corresponding winter solstice.

Dougie Kerr, the Calton ward councillor, said this year's event was the organisers' last chance to prove they could operate the festival without disruption to neighbours.

Mr Kerr said: "If it's going to come back, I'm determined it's going to come back on a proper footing. It has caused a number of problems in the past and it's not just problems to the residents. I have been seriously concerned about public safety at this event and I think in the past it has been non-existent."

But Mr. Henderson said organisers realized there would have to be controls to ensure the festival runs smoothly.

"I think the impression the officials have got from dealing with the Beltane Fire Society is that people seem to be far more serious and professional in their approach," he said.

The Beltane Fire Society has also agreed to stop the use of drums at 1am and finish cleaning Calton Hill by 9am the following day.

Steve Cardownie, the Deputy Lord Provost and champion of the Edinburgh Festival, said: "This has the potential to be a great event and can be an important part of Edinburgh's portfolio of festivals. It has always been popular, but there has been a need to improve the public safety. Hopefully, Beltane will remain an important part of the city's calendar of celebrations."

The Beltane Fire Society was unavailable for comment yesterday.

The Beltane Fire Festival takes the form of a procession which snakes around the hill between points entitled fire, air, earth and water.

The name is thought to have derived from a Gaelic-Celtic word meaning "bright/sacred fire". It was held to mark and celebrate the blossoming of spring, and coincided with the ancient pastoral event of moving livestock to summer grazing. It was a celebration of the fertility of the land and animals.

Historically, the Beltane festival was the primary focus of a community's year. Before the Romans divided the seasons into a calendar of 12 months, the Celtic year was marked by four quarter days: Beltane, Lughnasadh, Samhuinn and Imbolc. Of these, Beltane was the most frequently and significantly celebrated.

Druids Want Involvement at Stonehenge Project

From This is Bristol, March 2, 2004.
http://www.themodernantiquarian.com/site/458#news

Druid leaders yesterday called for the creation of a sacred site at Stonehenge for the re-burial of human remains unearthed during a unique road project in the area. They want a parcel of land near the "powerful temple of our heritage" to be set aside as a ceremonial shrine for the Pagan and Druid communities. They also hope to carry out important rituals at key stages of the

proposed Stonehenge Tunnel construction, such as the first ground breaking "to ease ancestral spirits". And they want to be informed of any archaeological discoveries during the £193million A303 road scheme in the World Heritage Site.

The Druid Network told a public inquiry they were in favour of the 4,500-year-old stone circle being returned to its natural setting without nearby roads and visitor centre. But they are concerned about various aspects of the proposed project, which is the subject of a 10-week public inquiry in Salisbury. Giving evidence for the network, Emma Restall Orr said the scheme "lacks any acknowledgement of this ancient site's significance as a working temple for existing spiritual and religious communities".

She said: "A major concern is the potential lack of respect given to our ancestors and their physical remains." Such problems could be diverted if "the sanctity of the temple" was acknowledged and respected throughout the work.

Ms Restall Orr said the Druids wanted to carry out their rituals at important stages of the three-year construction programme. These include the first sod-cutting and when the work nears sensitive sites such as Longbarrow Crossroads, the Avenue and the Heel Stone. Rituals were also required at times of significant archaeological finds during tunnelling at the heritage site, especially the uncovering of human remains.

She said: "Of particular concern are human remains. "We seek assurances that any Pagan human remains found during the work are treated with appropriate respect. While we do not wish to stop the archaeologists from gaining knowledge, removing human remains to store in museums is no longer acceptable within international Pagan communities. All human remains must be reburied with the appropriate Pagan ritual as close to the site of discovery as possible, together with their grave goods - or appropriate facsimiles. We would support the setting aside of a piece of land within the World Heritage Site that could act as a ceremonial funerary shrine for the Pagan and Druid communities. This could be used not only for the reburial of the ancient dead, but also as a place of honouring the dead within many modern spiritual communities."

Calif. County Votes to Ban Biotech

Wed Mar 3, 2004
By Paul Elias, AP Biotechnology Writer

UKIAH, Calif. AP)—Mendocino County voters approved the nation's first ban on the raising and keeping of genetically engineered crops or animals.

The vote Tuesday represented a big black eye for the biotechnology industry, which spent more than $500,000 to defeat the measure in a county of 47,000 registered voters.

"They had the money, we had the people," said Els Cooperrider, who led the local ballot measure.

With 97 percent of precincts reporting, Measure H had support from 56 percent of voters in the area known for its wineries.

Opponents of the measure could not be immediately reached for comment. Their campaign headquarters in Ukiah was vacant with a "for lease" sign on it.

Led by organic vintners and farmers, backers of the ban raised and spent close to $100,000.

The ban will have little direct effect inside Mendocino County, since there are no known genetically modified crops raised in the area.

But Mendocino County's organic growers said they would use the law as a marketing tool, especially in Europe, where opposition to genetically engineered foods is fierce.

The victory is also expected to embolden similar movements in neighboring Northern California counties as well as elsewhere in the county.

The biotechnology industry may file a lawsuit trying to overturn the new law. The industry argued that biotechnology regulation should be left to the federal government, otherwise biotech companies will have to wade through a hodgepodge of local laws.

Editor's note: This reminds us of the old ad campaign "It's not nice to fool Mother Nature." Communities are starting to stand up to the biotechnology industry and their bio-engineered foods. We don't know what the long term effects are on our bodies, neighboring plants, the environment. Best to leave well enough alone.

Announcements

Psychic Eye Book Shop Closing

WE REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT
THE SAN FRANCISCO PSYCHIC EYE BOOK SHOP
WILL BE CLOSING.

We will continue to be open during this closing process, which should carry us through the next two to three weeks. Unfortunately, due to the state of the economy, it has come down to this, but we will endeavor to return to the San Francisco Bay area as soon as is humanly possible.

We have valued your continued patronage over the years, and we will continue to offer most of our merchandise via our website http://www.pebooks.com/shop/ (tax-free to California residents) and our remaining 8 locations will of course continue to offer readings, both in person and over the telephone. If anyone has any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to e-mail us at chris@pebooks.com.

2004 CSANA Conference

The 2004 CSANA conference will be held April 15-18, 2004 on the campus of St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto, co-hosted by the Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto, and the Celtic Studies Program, St. Michael's College, University of Toronto. The conveners are David Klausner of the Centre for Medieval Studies and Ann Dooley of the Celtic Studies Program. St. Michael's College is located on the east side of the university campus, in the heart of downtown Toronto in a park-like setting that is close to museums, shopping, restaurants and art galleries, all easily accessible by public transportation (TTC).

Confirmed participants include Pádraig Ó Riain of University College Cork, Máire Ní Mhaonaigh of the University of Cambridge, and Graham Isaac, John Koch and Brynley Roberts of the University of Wales, Aberystwyth.

Travel:

For those arriving by air, a taxi from Pearson International Airport to the University of Toronto costs approximately $40.00. Pacific Western operates coach service from the airport to the major downtown hotels approximately every half hour at a cost of $14.95 one-way ($25.75 return). The closest drop-off hotel is the Delta Chelsea Inn on Gerrard Street West; from there it is a short taxi ride to the university campus and the conference hotels. Or, for $2.25 exact change, and a possible wait, one can take the Airport Rocket Shuttle to the Kipling subway station and take the subway from there to either the St. George stop (exit at St. George, turn left, and walk south to Bloor, then turn right and walk west on Bloor for Quality Hotel Midtown) or to the Bay St. stop (exit at Cumberland for the Howard Johnson hotel, walk left to Avenue, turn right, and walk north on Avenue); the hotels are a short walk from their respective stops.

Accommodation:

Arrangements have been made with two local area hotels. Please make your own reservations. Cut-off date for room bookings at the conference rate is March 15.

Quality Hotel Midtown
280 Bloor Street West (at St. George Street)
Cost: Cdn.$109.00 + taxes per night
Phone: 1-800-228-5151 or 416-968-0010
and quote "CSANA Conference - Group No. 102035"

Howard Johnson Hotel 89 Avenue Road
(North of Bloor Street)
Cost: Cdn.$89.00 + taxes per night
Phone: 1-800-446-4656 or 416-964-1220 and quote "CSANA Conference"

Conference Schedule:

All sessions will take place at Robert Madden Hall on the main floor of Carr Hall, 100 St. Joseph Street, St. Michael's College.

Thursday, April 15

1.30 p.m.-5 p.m. Registration and sessions 6-7.30 p.m. Reception: (Charbonnel Lounge, Elmsley Hall, 81 St. Mary Street) Optional evening event: Traditional music session at Dora Keogh's Pub, 141 Danforth Avenue

Friday, April 16

9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sessions (break for lunch 12.30-2 p.m.) 7.30 p.m. Chinese banquet (prior registration required)

Saturday, April 17

9 a.m.-5.30 p.m. Sessions (break for lunch 12.30-2 p.m.) Optional evening event: Informal gathering at McVeigh's New Windsor Irish Tavern, 124 Church Street

Sunday, April 18

10 a.m.-1.30 p.m. Sessions

Registration:

The registration fee is $30.00 (student rate $20.00). Registration for the Friday night banquet is also required ($30.00).

We encourage you to register by Friday, April 2, 2004 so that accurate arrangements may be made. Please make cheques payable to "Celtic Conference" and mail with registration form to:

Jean Talman
Celtic Studies
St. Michael's College
81 St. Mary Street
Toronto, ON M5S 1J4
CANADA
Phone: 416-926-7145
Email: jean.talman@utoronto.ca
Fax: 416-926-2330

The Celtic Cauldron of Creation

A Shamanic Retreat Exploring the Spirit-Powers of Dana Facilitated by Tom Cowan (author of Fire in the Head) and Frank MacEowan Assisted by Susan McClellan

Long before the arrival of the Gaels, an ancient race of people inhabited Ireland known through oral traditions and written history as the Tuatha De Danann, or the Shining Ones. This mystical race may have originated in the primal forests of Old Europe, somewhere in a Celtic Otherworld manifesting along the Danube. The Dananns were highly attuned to the mysterious elements of nature, possessed advanced spiritual powers, and may have been attempting to bring forth an enlightened society on Earth, as other mystical races around the world are thought to have been attempting in the dreamtimes of their own cultures.

In this weeklong retreat we will delve deeply into the ancient mysteries surrounding the Dananns and look at how their unique culture and spirituality shaped the beliefs and practices of the later Celtic peoples of Ireland and Britain. Our intention will be to prepare ourselves to be skillful recipients of the potent spiritual forces the Dananns tended in their own lands and within themselves, and which are still accessible to us. It is our belief that the Dananns are initiating people in our own day to preserve and carry forth their wisdom and spiritual knowledge for the sake of humanity and the nonhuman communities of life on our Mother, the Earth.

We will trace and track the dana energies as they reveal themselves in the Three Cauldrons of the Soul, as they help to shape the Wheel of the Four Airts, and as they originate in the Primal Mother Spirit called Danu or Dana by those earliest Celtic peoples. Through ritual and ceremony, we'll contact the Dana life-force behind the spirits of nature in our own lands so that we may become better healers and seers. By drumming, dancing, and dreaming we will spend intimate time with the dana energies and allow them to initiate us into the mysteries that the Shining Ones are calling back into the visible world for its renewal and transformation, not to mention our own.

TWO LOCATIONS:

August 18-22, 2004 near Denver, Colorado. Contact: Cynthia McMahon at 303-726-8508 or drummingcircles@yahoo.com

September 22-26, 2004 Kirkridge near Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. Contact: Susan McClellan at 302-478-6844 or kwahul@aol.com

Calendar

The Vernal Equinox, when the Sun crosses the equator, will occur on March 19, at 10:49 p.m. PST. The Sun rises due East and sets due West today and the Night equals the Day. Balanced now are we!

A Druid Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $8.00 and email subscriptions are free. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's post mail subscription free. Write to:

A Druid Missal-Any
P.O. Box 5003
Elmwood Station
Berkeley, CA 94705
E-Mail: poppinjay@earthlink.net

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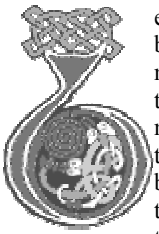
Beltane Year XLII
Vol. 20 Number 3
May 1st, 2004 c.e.

Beltane Essay: Shafts and Gatherings

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 1983
By Emmon Bodfish



eltaine, one of the greatest, and, now-a-days, best known, of the Old Celtic High Days, it marks the beginning of Samhradh, summer, and the "Season of Life." Historically, it signaled the moving of the herds out to summer pastures in the mountains. Great fires were built to welcome back the Sun, and the cattle were driven through the flames for purification before starting on their way to the high meadows. The Druid caste, priests and priestesses, presided over these rites at which all the clans gathered together at the ritual sites such as Tara and Carnutes for celebration, planning, and deliberation. Quarrels were settled and justice meted out. This was another Druid function, that of magistrate, with a specialized sub-group of the priestly class acting as judges. Sacrifices were offered to Belenos and on the Continent, to Gaulish and Galatian analogs of this Indo-European Sky God. Another opinion holds that this derivation of Beltaine from the name of a sun god, Beal, is problematical, and that Beltaine was, like Samhain, a festival of all the Gods and Goddesses.

For the New Reformed Druids of North America, it is the beginning of the Season of Life and the end of the Season of Sleep. The first spirits of the year will be added to the Chalice of Waters that is shared at each service, and the Third Order members will change their ceremonial ribbons, worn over the fronts of their robes, from white to red ribbons. The Earth Mother wakes from her winter sleep, and chants and praises are addressed to her.

Live Oak Grove plans to inaugurate the shaft grave, a Toll-Uaigh; we have dug this winter at Larry Press's (Archdruid) instigation, with an offering of some of the new Waters of Life from the first chalice of the new season. Shaft graves were build in Ancient Gaul, and perhaps elsewhere in Druidic lands. Offerings presumably to the Earth Mother, were put into these deep shafts at different times over a long period. Some of the "Tolls" were twelve meters deep, and offerings might include a whole tree. We plan to offer a piece of the sacrifice at each service which will be put into the shaft after the rest of the sacrifice has been placed in the altar fire.

News of the Groves

Galatia Grove: News from Turkey

We, The Grove of Galatia assembled accept the following principles as self evident: 1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many. 2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.

The Grove Constitution will be forwarded to you within one or two days by the Secretary Rev. Ozturk Kosemen. At present the Grove has two Joint Archdruids elected by the membership Rev. M. Graham MacKenzie-Rolls and Rev. John Roderick Clay. Our High Priestess is the Rev. Ayshe Dikman. Our Chief Bard and Secretary is Rev Ozturk Kosemen. Our Annalist is Deniz Ozguhan. The total membership as of this date is 25. We have 3 Ordained Druids, 2 Ordained Bards and 10 Ovates.

We wish to apply to be recognized as a Proto-Grove or Grove of the RDNA. The Grove is located in Izmit Turkey and is associated with Kocaeli University.

Acorn Grove: News from Ontario

Hello from the, until recently, frosty north. It is Beltane and our last snowfall was just 4 weeks ago. Time for rebirth, renewal, and lots and lots of yard work... Especially when three of the faithful are rather large dogs (Scully, Roswell, Kodiac).

The Acorn Proto-grove has fallen of the RDNA radar screen of late largely due to the fault of the Arch-Druid (pro tem) to read all his email completely and respond to Stacey's call for News... Impeachment proceedings will begin shortly.

The group has had a slow down of activity of the Druish spirituality sort, but a rapid increase of the daily secular sort, One (Bella) moved to a faraway town, One (Ric) went financially bankrupt, One (Jim) is currently getting a divorce, but curiously Two of them are doing musical comedies (Tim & Ric). Perhaps seeking solace from day to day lives in the limelight of the theatre. Both have secured roles in the Aurora Opera Company's productions of "My Fair Lady" and "Hello Dolly". Neither of them is Dolly.

Of an interesting spiritual note the Dali Lama is coming to town (Toronto) and one of our cohorts (Jen) actually managed to get tickets to go hear him speak. Expect a healthy dose of Tibetan Buddhism to be added to our Zen-Franciscan dialogs in the future.

Plans for he Second Annual Grove Wilderness camp are underway, however, seeing that we are traditional Druids of the Reform, each of us has three or four opinions on where it is we should go. Last year we went to Awenda Provincial Park, this year a private cottage (Trina's) has been offered but plans are still uncertain.

Cheers

Ric Knight odm

Bamboo Grove: News from Delaware

Greetings! The Bamboo Grove has been a bustling place as of late. I recently won a contract bid to work on the Piping Plover Conservation Project; it's a 5 month contract and I will be working for DNREC (the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control). I am extremely excited to be able to put my degree to good use...finally! What's more, this type of work is in sync with my passion and purpose in life, to take an active role in protecting my wild brothers and sisters.

In other news, we have lost some beloved members and gained some new. Spud the mouse passed on after putting up a good fight...his spunk and spirit will truly be missed. The Arch-Druid has been transplanted and will hopefully enjoy being able to stretch its cramped roots. My fiancé and I have set up an aquarium, home now to a varied group of crabs--Fiddlers, Rusty, and Reds--as well as crayfish, guppies, and plecos. Our little condo is feeling more like home!

May you all have a wonderful Spring!

Brightest blessings,
BrightMirage (Maryann)

Digitalis Grove: News from D.C.

I took time from my intensive Job Search to go down to the National Mall to enjoy the beautiful weather. Hachi, Norway and I attended the opening ceremony of the WWII memorial in Washington DC on April 29th and ceremonially dropped a thimble full of whiskey in the fountain to bless the new site, and pray for the ecological damage to be quickly healed in the area.

In other news, I have been spending a great deal of time reflecting on the role of outreach to the community in a ministerial manner. As the RDNA doesn't have a great deal of public affairs practice or interfaith experience, I've been working with a number of on-line pagan-clergy conferences, talking with elder RDNA priests and writing little essays to clarify my personal thoughts on the likely issues. These might reach the precipitation point by Summer Solstice issue of the Druid Missal-Any.

Dravidia Grove: News from Maryland

Hello all,

Just getting settled in right now, not too much going on here except look for work and I got a chance to go see Thunder Over Louisville which is a big fireworks display they do here every year. It is pretty cool; it even includes an Air Show....Well all that about covers it.

Dolanimus

Nemeton Awenyddion: News from Cohasset, California

Things are finally coming back to life here as the warm sun continues to bless nearly everyday with beauty and the Spring life returns full force. Getting ready for a lively Beltain celebration/campout doing all the stuff, maypole, ritual, Bardic circle, camping, etc. There's more information in our Grove's website if you wish to find out more about our campouts.

Rhiannon

Duir De Danu Grove: News from California

The Hunt is On

And the two, the Co-Arch-Druid and the Preceptor, did hunt for a suitable place for ritual. They rode their fire-chariot on the roads, their only weapon a map showing the parks. But the parks were elusive. Yea they did flee from the people's gaze. Nowhere was there a grove suitable for ritual. But the two hunters pluck up their courage and continue to hunt, ever more determined to find a place for the Grove to meet.

Tegwedd ShadowDancer
Chronicler and Co-ArchDruid of Duir de Danu Grove NRDNA

Poison Oak Grove, News from California

Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

There are a couple of sayings that are fitting for this past year: that which does not kill you makes you stronger, and the deities give you no more than what you can handle. Well, I'm pretty well thrashed physically and mentally and am at the "done" phase, so enough now, for a little while, ok Whichever Deity is Deciding to Test Me?

I negotiated with the new tenant of the main house last week to pay him a small monthly so I can continue to use his water for the grove site, and when it's hot he'll leave the driplines on for a few days. I'm also getting access to the neighbor's barn across the street for grove maintenance supplies. One of the neighbor's will be helping bring the firewood Emmon left me to the new house. How odd that with the timing I have a place to keep it now. Also odd is a sense of being "taken care of," with the acquisition of the house, the chandelier, the drapes, and now the firewood.

In the carpool on the way to work one day this week the radio played strains of "Here comes the Sun, It's all right, it's all right," bringing me out of my reverie of worry as a reminder that Beltaine was coming, the celebration of the return of the sun god Belenos, of the Season of Life, of Summer. It's been a year of travails, and distractions: the death of a parent, the loss of family, the death of a pet, of a good friend, the loss of the cabin by the grove site. The music was a reminder of the Here and Now, of the Bigger Picture, of the Balance that is so easy to forget. Oh Beal, forgive this one due to her own mortal limitations!

On this Beltaine day, whether you celebrate it on the First or astronomically on the Fourth, take some time to go outside, breath in the fresh air, skip around a tree if you don't have a May Pole, take a swig of whiskey, the waters-of-life, and celebrate the waking of the Earth Mother!

A Reformed Druid Anthology 2 Update

Well, with the return of the sun's strength since Yule, we were able to get the massive 850 page Green Book volume of the Anthology done in March by the staff of the East Coast office of the Drynemetum Press. Unfortunately due to some problems in the West Coast office, the Magazine Collection (2nd Volume of ARDA 2) is now 4 weeks behind our previous optimistic projections. Therefore, only 25% of the files are now available on the ARDA 2 website, but glacial progress should speed up with the warming temperatures, and more fortunate luck.

I have revised my estimate for the magazine volume to be 750 pages and it should be done in 6 weeks by the Summer Solstice, if we're lucky. By July, if things continue as they are now. We appreciate your continued patience also in the release of the Main Volume which is similar straits, but you can be assured that once it is in my hands from our associate in the Central Office, it will go fly to the presses within a week!

The website address is
http:/www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html

Beltane Jokes

Q: Which brand of clothing would the Cerne Abbas Giant like to wear?
A: Tommy Hilfigur

Q: Which brand of yogurt do Druids love the most?
A: De Dannon

The Difference Between Wicca and Druidism

Because this is an on going topic of question in the pagan community, as people try to find and understand their niche, A Druid Missal-Any offers yet another perspective on the difference between Wicca and Druidism, this time submitted by Founder and Patriarch of the Fifth Order Norm Nelson.

One group says, "By the pricking of my thumbs, something wiccaed this way comes."

The other group says, "By the pricking of my thumbs, something wickered this way comes."

News

Sudden Oak Death Update

Feds Order Inspections of Calif. Nurseries
Fri Mar 26, 2004
By MICHAEL R. BLOOD, Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES - The federal government Friday barred California nurseries from shipping 59 plant species out of state until they can be declared free of a disease that has killed thousands of oaks in California and Oregon.

Beginning Monday, nurseries that want to ship plants that can act as hosts of the fungus-like blight, called "sudden oak death," must undergo inspections before products can leave California, the U.S. Agriculture Department said. The list includes species and subspecies of popular garden plants such as rhododendron, azaleas and camellias.

Similar restrictions have been in place in 12 Northern California counties since 2001.

One industry representative said the decision will delay shipments, but could reopen markets that recently closed to California nurseries.

"A number of states have blockaded California plants from entering. If this causes those states to accept shipments, there are some great benefits that come along with this action," said Tom O'Brien, a lobbyist for the California Association of Nurseries and Garden Centers.

The announcement came as another setback for California's $2.35 billion nursery industry, which is also threatened by an invasion of imported red fire ants and other disease-carrying pests.

Nursery plants are the state's third-largest agricultural commodity, behind dairy products and grapes.

In recent weeks, 10 states have restricted the sale of certain host plants, and Florida has banned the import and sale of all nursery plants from California.

The blight, which is related to the type of organism believed to have caused the Irish potato famine in the mid-19th century, does not necessarily kill the shrubs it infects.

No cure has been found for the disease, first spotted in 1995, and it is unclear how it spreads.

On the Net: http://www.suddenoakdeath.org

Cell Phones Alter National Park Landscape

Monday, April 12, 2004, 2:05 p.m.
By Becky Bohrer, Associated Press

When Sean Morrissey scaled California's 14,491-foot Mount Whitney for the first time a few years ago, he couldn't wait to take in the view. A woman who made the climb at the same time couldn't wait to dial her cell phone.

"This one woman was making call after call," said Morrissey, who is from Los Gatos, Calif. "It seemed very out-of-place. It seemed out-of-place to go through all that effort to make an outbound call."

Cell phones have long been virtually unavoidable on city streets and in shopping malls. But they now are showing up in some of the very places people go to get away from it all: national parks.

For park managers, this is a challenge. Officials with the National Park Service say they want to meet the needs of visitors and provide for their safety. But they also must protect the park and the visitor experience. And there is no set policy on how to strike this balance.

To some degree, the Park Service is complicit in the problem: At least 15 National Park Service sites have allowed telecommunications companies to put up cell towers within their boundaries. Yellowstone has five. (Also, many towers are situated just outside national parks, enabling park visitors to place calls even from some backcountry areas.)

Some conservationists complain that cell phone technology is ruining nature; not only by scarring the landscape with cell towers (one tower in particular, near Yellowstone's Old Faithful, has been criticized as an eyesore), but also by contributing to the death of solitude.

"It's possible you could come to a trail in Yellowstone and see someone yakking on the phone to their stockbroker," said Dennis McKinney, development director at Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility.

Jeffrey Hunter was jolted from his sleep at 6 a.m. by a fellow hiker who used his phone while at a shelter in Great Smoky Mountains National Park to remind his wife to bring sodas when she met him later.

"He woke everybody up in the entire shelter," said Hunter, of Chattanooga, Tenn., who was hiking the Appalachian Trail. "I was incredulous that someone would wake people up for a couple Diet Cokes."

And guide Neil Courtis recalled a private tour he led in Yellowstone National Park last fall that included a business-minded father from New York who was desperately trying to get a cell phone signal so that he could make calls or check his messages.

"When you're trying to give a tour, that's kind of annoying," Courtis said. "It kind of ruined the tour" for the others.

Lane Baker, Yellowstone's deputy chief ranger, said many people expect to be able to use cell phones and that Park Service officials cannot dictate how tourists use them.

"You can't control what they do at Old Faithful like you can't control what they do in downtown New York," she said.

And Baker said cell phones in the park have a definite positive side, making a difference in the way officials receive and respond to emergency calls. "I wouldn't want to do my job without one," Baker said.

Last July, a desperate cell phone call from 13,000 feet on the Grand Teton in Wyoming alerted rescuers that lightning had struck a party of 13 climbers near the summit.

Rangers flew in by helicopter and were able to pluck the most badly injured from the mountain before dark. One climber was killed by the lightning; the others survived.

But on the other side of the equation, Yosemite spokesman Deb Schweizer said the park also has gotten calls from hikers who are simply pooped and want a lift out. They get a polite refusal.

"Just because you're tired doesn't mean we're going to send someone out," she said.

Editor's note: In these times of easy and mindless convenience it is important as Druids to remain mindful and respectful of others who are out to enjoy Nature as well. If you must bring that cell phone while hiking, during grove services, or otherwise spending time in the great outdoors put it on vibrate!

Events

3rd Annual Interfaith Pagan Pride Parade and Celebration

May 15, 2004, Berkeley, CA

We are pleased to announce our third Annual Parade and Celebration from 10:00am - 5:00pm at the Civic Center Park on MLK between Center and Allston Way. This year our theme is "Divine Feminine", and we have expanded the celebration to include vendors, crafts, and food (positioned nearby). We are also exited to announce that we will be featuring an "Author's Circle," in which you can meet and converse with the Pagan community's leading published Authors. We are continuing to encourage the participation of floats and costumed participants this year, and will offer special awards for both Best Float and Best Costume, so don't miss your chance to show us how creative you can be. Camera Shy? Bring a mask, or come down and cheer the community on...we would definitely love that.

Information: 510-496-6051, paganparade@earthlink.net or visit http://www.paganparade.org .

Ancient Ways Festival

June 2 thru 6
Harbin Hot Springs, Middletown, CA

Ancient Ways hosts an eclectic pan pagan gathering of magical folk. Weekend includes workshops, rituals, camping in a clothing optional environment. Cost (before April 15): $70, 1-night; $105, 2-nights; $135, 3-nights; $160, 4-nights.

Information: 510-653-3244, festival@ancientways.com or visit www.ancientways.com

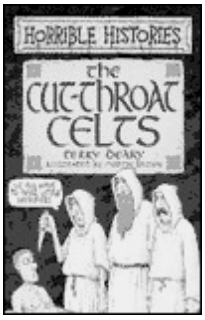
Modesto Pagan Pride Day Harvest Fest

September 11; Modesto, CA

The 2004 Harvest Fest will be held at the American Legion Hall. We plan on offering 20 to 30 craft vendors, covens, and non-profit booths in addition to 4 to 5 authors and speakers. Bands, mythic dancers, entertainment and more will grace our entertainment stage on the deck. We will also be featuring an art show, discussion panels, and a 9/11 memorial. We are planning a second memorial ritual in respect to 9/11. We will also be having a large Memorial Banner that we hope to get 100's of Pagan signatures on before we send it to New York and Washington DC. Cost: Free, with a canned food donation. Details TBA as plans progress.

Information: 209-549-1727,
wprayers@whisperedprayers.com or visit
http://www.aupagans.com/Modesto/PPD.html.

Book Reviews

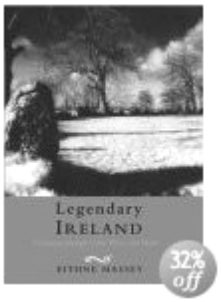


The Cut-Throat Celts

By Terry Deary
Published by Scholastic Ltd. 1997 About $7.
By Michael, Digitalis Grove

This is a 130 page heavily illustrated little paperback that is chock-full of "incriminating" material about the ancient Celts, delightfully presented in a humorous manner to thrill and shock the young teenager, but still readable enough for an adult. Dr. Terry Deary has written about 16 of these books in the "Horrible Histories" series, to encourage younger British readers to find the "juicy, insane, raw and bleeding" aspects of what is often a rather dry subject. Other enticing titles are "Rotten Romans", "Smashing Saxons", "Bloody Scotland" and simply "Ireland". He apparently has a big fan club, rare for a historian, a group he often execrates with typical British slang. He has apparently widely consulted and combed through the existing archeological and historical texts on the ancient Celts (covering mostly

700BCE-700CE, especially on Gaul), with often a surprising knack for remembering the stranger aspects and stories. The errors are surprisingly few for someone who is not an acknowledged Celtic specialist, although he glaringly confused Ogham and Nordic runes in one chapter. Naturally, there is much on the religious aspects of the Druids, and he is not mean spirited, but the sacrifice jokes do get a bit old after the first few chapters, and rarely goes beyond solid historical details of Celtic spirituality. However, even if you think you've read it all, read this and get a few chuckles about it; and leave it where your child can run across it. See Amazon for the author, or go to www.terry-deary.com for a full list of his titles.



Legendary Ireland:

A Journey Through the Celtic
Places and Myths by Eithne Massey
(Hardback; 25.00 Euro / 30.00 USD / 19.00 UK; 240 pages.)
From the Read Ireland Book News

This book is a vivid and original journey through the Celtic places and myths of ancient Ireland. Woven into the Irish landscape are tales of love and betrayal, greed and courage, passion and revenge, featuring the famous personalities of Celtic lore, such as CuChulainn and Queen Maeve, Diarmuid and Grainne, the Children of Lir, Oisin and Fionn. The book also reveals some of the less well-known but equally captivating stories, including 'The Hag of Beara', and 'Li Ban, the Mermaid of Lough Neagh'. The author has re-visited all twenty-eight sites and explores their history, archaeology and folklore. All of these magical and mythical places open windows to a heroic yet very human world. Illustrated with atmospheric photographs and elegant engravings, full colour throughout.

Read Ireland
342 North Circular Road
Dublin 7, Ireland.
Telephone and facsimile number: +353-1-830-2997.
http://www.readireland.com

Calendar

Beltane, the beginning of the Season of Life, as 15 degrees of Taurus, will occur on May 4, 2004 at 21:04 PDT or conversely as 16 degrees 18 minutes decl. May 4 at 17:56 PDT. Poison Oak Grove's social observance of Beltaine has not been decided yet.

A Druid Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $8.00 and email subscriptions are free. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's post mail subscription free. Write to:

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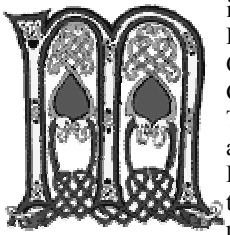
A Druid Missal-Any
Summer Solstice Year XLII
Vol. 20 Number 4
June 19th, 2004 c.e.

Summer Solstice Essay:

Danu and Stonehenge

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 1987
By Emmon Bodfish



idsummer Solstice, one of the four minor High Days of the Reformed Druid Calendar, is associated with the Celtic Goddess Danu, Mother of the Gods, the Tuath de Danann. She is particularly associated with rivers, and rivers from the Don in Russia to the Don in Scotland are thought to be named for Her. She is probably the same figure as the Irish Goddess, Anu, and the Bretons' Ana. Roman Diana and Greek Artemis may be other cognates of this Pan-Indo-European deity. These theories are based on the study of word origins, and on the witness of Gallo-Roman writers of the period who noted the similarities in character, rituals, and Seasons of Worship between Danu and Diana. These primary historical sources, written when the Celtic religion was still practiced in Gaul, corroborate the evidence from linguistic studies. There is opinion about that Danu was not an important Deity, or even that the Celts lacked a Mother-Goddess figure, but I can find no hard evidence in Philology, history, or Celtic Mythology for this point of view.

Like Roman Diana, Danu's totem is the boar, an animal also associated with a female agricultural deity in the Balkans. Danu, like Frigga of the Germans, presides over marriage and fertility. The luckiness of June weddings may be a distant memory of Her festivities. Mugwort is Her flower, an herb also sacred to Roman Diana; the ripe ear of grain is Her token. (This fits T. Edwards' theory that the Christian Madonna was modeled after (to co-opt?) the various Mother-Grain Goddesses of pagan Europe.) On the Isle of Man it is customary to wear a sprig of mugwort to the Midsummer dance, and in England, placing mugwort under her pillow is said to bring a young woman dreams of their future husband. **1** In Scotland, there are all night bonfires, song fests, and dances for the young, unmarried people of the villages.

This is the morning on which the Sun used to rise over the heel stone at Stonehenge, thus beginning the new season in the Megalithic calendar. It no longer rises at that point owing to the procession of the Earth's axis, but celebrations are held there, anyway.

The Druids did NOT build Stonehenge. It antedates their arrival in Britain by centuries. It was William Stuckeley in 1717 who mislocated the Druids there. He did some of the best archeological fieldwork of his day, but his theorizing later wildly outstripped his data. The mistake was an honest one, however, considering what was known in his time. He showed that the stones were not a memorial to King Arthur nor a Roman temple, the two then common theories. He was the first to establish the monument as definitely pre-Roman. The only knowledge of pre-Roman Britain he had came from Roman and Greek writers of the Classical Period. They said that Britain was inhabited by Celts whose priests were the Druids. So, if the stones were older than any Roman constructions, Stuckeley reasoned, they must have been put there by Druids. He knew of no other candidates. But in the last two centuries, archeology has provided us with many, even too many other possibilities. The currently favored candidates are the early Neolithic farmers of Natufian stock, a longheaded, slender, fine-boned people who inhabited the Salisbury area from 2900-2500 B.C. coinciding with the most accurate modern date for the first cycle of building at Stonehenge. A larger boned hardier people later took over the monument and set up the Blue Stones, but they too had disappeared before the arrival of the Celts around 480 B.C.

This is not to say that the Celts did not take cognizance of the huge stones. They worked monuments of other prehistoric peoples into their mythology and song. Numerous Bardic compositions refer to the Sidh Mounds of Ireland and the Carnes of Scotland as sacred places and the long abandoned abodes of the Gods. They may have done the same for Stonehenge, but the English traditions and Bardic works were almost all lost, while the Irish are among the best preserved of any oral lore.

> "Behold the Sidhe before your eyes. It is manifest to you that it is a king's mansion, which was built by the firm Dagda.It is a wonder, a court, and admirable hill."
>
> "The Sidhe of Donegal," a seminar by Prof. Duran.

Two or more different groups of peoples, sharing the same or similar astronomically oriented beliefs, contributed to the five cycles of construction and reconstruction at Stonehenge. Theirs was a fairly sophisticated culture for the time. They knew that the Solstices, eclipses of the Moon, and the courses of the stars were regular predictable events. Their stone moving techniques were on a par with the times. Though not aligned accurately enough for an "observatory" in the modern sense, the stones can serve as a calendar rectifier, an eclipse predictor, and, of course, as a ritual site for religious ceremonies. But what those religions were must remain a matter of conjecture. Clearly they had something to do with sunrise, Midsummer Solstice, moonrise, and lunar eclipses, but what they meant, and what the people did

there, is probably not recoverable. As Clannad sings "Forgotten is the race that no one knows." **2**

1 A friend of mine tried the experiment of putting mugwort under her pillow, but reported she had no dreams at all. "I guess I'm just going to stay single." She is till fancy-free three years later. If anyone wants to try this, you can get mugwort in most herb shops. Send in your results and we'll publish them for Lughnasadh.
2 Clannad, a modern Irish Folk Group. "Ring of Stones," good album.

News of the Groves

Sylvagaia/Elder Grove: News from France

Sylvagaia/Elder Grove is happy to present itself to the Druidic world. Although this grove consists mainly of trees, shrubs, lichens, woodland animals and myriad other life forms, we are represented by a spokesperson of the sapient persuasion. Who greets fellow sisters and brothers with joy. We strongly belief that nature is good, very good even (since we like to look after ourselves). We seek awareness in many of the things we do - even in some of the things we don't do. Our number is indefinite, since life forms come and go. A small family of humans have the honor to look after us in our divers encounters with the human race. Let's see how they will do.

The humans garden a lot and enjoy the freedom of not buying food to others. They think it makes them more self sufficient and independent. Furthermore they belief that various degrees of self sufficiency, coupled with a simple, frugal lifestyle will do good to the planet, the Earth-Mother, and consider this a holy act. Perhaps a personal and spiritual duty.

To contact us: cerne@club-internet.fr
(Green Willem; Homo Sapiens Sapiens spokes-being for Sylvagaia/Elder Grove, France).
To not contact us: ...../I\

Peace, in the Earth Mother,

Greenwillem

Creeks Called Rivers Grove: News from West Virginia

Hey, it's Darren from Creeks Called Rivers.

Time comes and time goes, and in time two of us have moved from Columbus and back to West Virginia. This doesn't mean that Creeks Called Rivers Grove is dead; it just means that without the 2 of us, it's much less likely to be particularly active. If you still want to keep CCR listed on the page, go ahead and direct email to this account.

Now, as for the future...we're pressing on as Little Mountains Grove (with the fine tradition of my fig tree as Archdruid). For the record, we are just outside of Parkersburg, WV, nestled among the oak and ash.

And, um, sorry for the lapse in communication.

From the bounty of the Earth Mother,

—Darren

Eurisko Grove: News from Virginia

I would like to announce the return of Eurisko Grove, an RDNA protogrove. In conjunction with PagaNet, we conducted a Beltaine ritual in Hampton Va. for approximately 30 people. For midsummer, members of our group will be celebrating with Earthrising, a CUUPs chapter in Newport News Va., & conducting a private ritual at Natural chimneys park in Mt. Solon Va. based on reading from Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

Swamp Grove: News from Florida

Please add my new e-mail: spacerock@comcast.net and note that our little group is now located in Ft. Myers rather than Naples. We moved about a half hour north but we still have some of the old gang and some new folks as well. Saint Herbert (One of our longtime members) is helping me to make a new website, so I will let you know as soon as it is up. The move was hectic and many adventures occurred since our last contact, but the damn grove just won't die. I guess it is meant to be.

Summer comes quickly to the swamp Grove, filling us with more lethargy than usual. Our rainy season has started and it will rain for about 30-45 minutes each day until late September or early October. The summer Solstice is upon us and we shall celebrate another year with food and drink and the playing and smoking of the pipes. We look forward to winter the same way our northern brothers and sisters long for the summer, everything about our grove seems to be backwards but that's just the way we are. Our fruit trees are doing well enough to produce most of the year round; Figs, Oranges, Lemons, Bananas, Miracle Fruit, Surinam Cherries, Avocados, Papayas and Grapefruit. This year's garden was not the best, as we planted it too late and the sun gets too hot for veggies early here.

Dravidia Grove: News from Indiana

All is well here, had a lot of Tornado Warnings this past month, and not much time between work and them to scout a new location for the ceremonies. Settling in nicely though...Did some research at the library on Mistletoe growth in Southern Indiana, and it is all over the place here, just have to find a few patches and get a good out of the way location setup... Still have to finish the unpacking of my Altar and Books, and have not a lot of time to do it with work. Have to work a few more hours than normal to make ends meet here... Well that about ends it here.

Yours in the Mother.

Cat-in-the-Corner Grove: News from Colorado

Cat-in-the-Corner Grove is still here, albeit in a rather inward-focused state at present (not hibernation, more like introspection). Nothing wrong with that, Nature has cycles of rest & activity too.

Sunset Proto-Grove: News from California

As I sit upon this mossy rock
underneath the trees
I smell the earth and summer scent

...listen to the rustle of the leaves.
I leave an offering to the one
and have a drink of water.
I quietly listen to the passing deer
and birds chasing one another.
the sun shines through the gaps in the trees
as though a miracle has occurred
...and so it has.
deep breath.
a wonderful midsummer to all!
Don't leap too close the fire.

Poison Oak Grove, News from California

Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

This Summer Solstice is the last High Day we will have the little cabin on Emmon's land. The new tenant of the main house decided he wanted it as a playroom for his kids, and being good friends with the director of the Muir Heritage Land Trust, guess who lost out. It is with tremendous sadness that I will be vacating the cabin by the end of July. Yes, I will have my own pity party. I've been the only friend of Emmon's who has been involved with the maintenance of the property, organized the creation of the memorial boulder, attended any of the town council meetings, or meeting the neighborhood associations to set up the land as open space. Not even a family member has taken part. I've been a good tenant and even paid for repairs out of my own pocket. It's like it hasn't even mattered. It just seems wrong. My greatest fear is that this is a pissing contest and we will no longer be able to use and enjoy the grove site, but have been assured this is not the case and I still have the support of the community. All things are ephemeral. We will learn to adapt. We have been incredibly lucky to have been able to use the cabin at all. For this we will always be grateful.

Witness the Summer Solstice at the UMass Sunwheel

Sunrise 5:00 a.m. & Sunset 7:30 p.m.
Sunday & Monday
June 20 & 21, 2004

Members of the University community and the general public are invited to witness the passing of the seasons by joining Dr. Judith Young of the U.Mass. Dept. of Astronomy to watch the Sun rise and set over the tall standing stones in the UMass Sunwheel for the upcoming SUMMER SOLSTICE. Visitors for the sunrise viewing should arrive at 5:00 a.m., and visitors for the sunset viewing should arrive at 7:30 p.m. The sunrise and sunset events will be held on both Sunday & Monday, June 20 and 21, 2004. The sky will be particularly beautiful at sunset both evenings with the waxing crescent Moon toward the west.

For those interested in learning about the sky, there will be a presentation, which will include the cause of the seasons, the Sun's path in the sky, the phases of the Moon, and the story of building the Sunwheel. Bring your questions, your curiosity, insect repellent, and be prepared for cool temperatures when the Sun is down. Visitors are also welcome to bring lawn chairs or blankets to sit on. A $3 donation is requested to help with the cost of stone pathworks and exhibit expansion, which are planned for the Sunwheel. Sunwheel T-shirts & sweatshirts will be available for purchase.

At the time of the summer solstice, when the days are longest and the nights are shortest, the Sun rises and sets at its most northerly location, over the tallest stones in the Sunwheel. The word 'solstice' means standstill, and refers to the fact that at solstice, the Sun appears to rise and set in the same direction for over a week. Even though the instant when the Sun is most northerly is on June 20 @ 8:57 p.m., visitors will be able to see the Sun rising and setting over the summer solstice stones from about June 17-26. The astronomical cause of the Sun's standstill is one of the topics, which will be explained during the Sunwheel gathering.

The UMass Sunwheel is located south of Alumni Stadium, just off Rocky Hill Road and across from the maze. The Sunwheel can be easily reached from the center of Amherst, following Amity St. to the west, on the right hand side of the road about 1/4 mile after crossing University Drive. In the event of rain, the events will be cancelled, and visitors are encouraged to visit the Sunwheel on their own.

For more information on the UMass Sunwheel, check out the web site at http://www.umass.edu/sunwheel

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Just How Far Have We Come?

Thoughts on the Berkeley Interfaith
Pagan Pride Parade

On Saturday May 15th pagans of all colors and stripes turned out for the Third Annual (and Final) Interfaith Pagan Pride Parade in Berkeley. This year's theme was "Divine Feminine: Celebrating the Spirit of the Earth Mother." Among

the variety of groups participating were NROOGD, Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, ADF, OBOD, Tambores do Brasil, Temple of the Hebrew Goddess, and it was the biggest, most colorful, and best attended parade in its three-year history. Diana Paxon, noted science fiction author was this year's parade marshal.

The very local paper, the Berkeley Daily Planet covered the event that was followed by celebrations in Civic Center Park, with speakers, ritual, blessings, and music. Rather than covering the event in a fair and informative manner this paper publishes a scathing, mocking article, taking us back 20 years to the era of misunderstanding and prejudice of the pagan community.

It made me spitting mad! Berkeley, that so-called bastion of liberalness, treats and considers pagans this way? The same town that banned American flags on fire trucks after 9/11? One of the centers of the anti-war and civil rights movements? It makes me realize the town is only open-minded and alternative when it suits it, like a permanently rebellious teenager.

There was a tremendous outpouring of anger and resentment by the pagan community in the form of well-written letters to the paper. And the Berkeley Daily Planet downplayed the biased article and wrote off the negative comments by saying the article was "only poking fun." What if it did that towards blacks or Christianity or Judaism or pot smoking? You betcha it never would. How convenient.

By the way, the organizers had decided to resign before the article because of all the bureaucracy they had to go to. The parade was relegated to a single lane on Shattuck Ave (a four-lane busy street in downtown Berkeley). No one could really see it unless they were on the sidewalk next to the lane the parade was in. It was very insulting and I wanted to cry.

They wanted the endorsement of the Sierra Club but had to change the name to do it. That's why it's no longer the Interfaith Pagan Pride Parade any more. How sad. How very sad. Stay tuned for next year's "Earth Heart Parade and Festival." Back in the closet again? At least we will be able to show our faces in public and not risk being burned at the stake.

Included below are the original article, readers' responses, and the response of the Daily Planet.

Pagans on Parade Cavort in Downtown Berkeley

By RICHARD BRENNEMAN, Berkeley Daily Planet, 05-18-04

Bay Area tree-worshippers, Goddess-worshippers, gay and straight wiccans, Shinto devotees and their kindred—many of them clad in lavish costumes—gathered in Berkeley Saturday for the always colorful Pagan Pride Parade and Celebration.

The day began with a parade through downtown city streets—where most of the spectators seemed to be equipped with digital cameras—before winding up in Civic Center Park.

The city managed to keep traffic flowing in both directions along Shattuck Avenue as the parade passed by, with parking enforcement and police officers, aided by barricades and cones, confining celebrants to one southbound lane.

Drivers hoping to use Milvia Street along the length of the Berkeley High School campus were less fortunate, finding traffic blocked in both directions. Allston Way adjacent to Civic Center Park was also closed, and traffic on several downtown side streets was restricted to a single lane.

Though paganism was nowhere defined in event literature, a visitor to the affair could have walked away from the festivities with the notion many adherents were polytheist peddlers.

The grassy area of Civic Center Park was encircled by a ring of booths offering crystals, dolls, drinking horns, clothing, jewelry, idols, drawings, prints, ointments, oils, incense, and palm and card readings.

One clothing seller was decidedly perturbed to see a reporter's camera aimed at his ware. "What're you doing?" he asked. "Tryin' to conduct an inventory?"

The Internal Revenue Service, it seems, has taken to wandering various shows and taking before-and-after merchandise photos in search of vendors underreporting their sales.

One notable exception to the commercialism was a group of five neatly groomed young adults standing next to a plastic barrel propping up a FREE WATER sign. Asking all comers, "free water?," they dispensed their refreshing libations with a smile and no further comment.

A curious reporter, pleased to have quenched his thirst after an hour shooting pictures under the bright, warm sun, asked one of the quintet, "Who are you, and why are you doing this?"

"Oh, it's Michael's birthday, and he thought it would be nice to come down here today and pass out water," one of them answered.

Michael turned out to be Michael Duenes, a distinctly non-pagan teacher at Redwood Christian High School in San Lorenzo, and a little more coaxing revealed his story.

"When we came down here, I didn't even know that there'd be a pagan festival today, but I figured there'd be a lot of a thirsty people. We don't mention who we are, because God's love is free," Duenes explained.

He said he opted to pass out the bottled water on his birthday as a symbol of the living water of Christ.

Duenes and his fellow water dispensers are members of The Berkeley Mosaic—"We think of ourselves as broken people united by Christ" —a congregation led by Pastor Dennis Tuma.

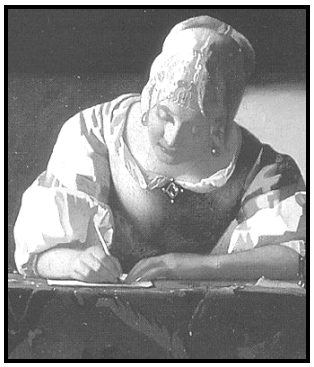
"I'm glad to see the Daily Planet here," Duenes said. "I got one of your t-shirts at the Solano Stroll, and I wear it to school sometimes on Fridays. The students seem surprised I'm from Berkeley, but I tell them I love it here."

The other dispensers of free things—recruiters for the Covenant of the Goddess and the Temple of the Hebrew Goddess and promoters of gay marriage, immigration rights for same-sex partners, and legalized prostitution (itself a fine old pagan tradition)—were restricted to the elevated plaza around the defunct fountain, an area that attracted few visitors.

The paganisms on offer were distinctly New Age version of ancient traditions. No animals (or humans) were offered up as sacrifices, and the closest thing to ritual scarification on view were tattoos.

There were no temple prostitutes and no orgies, though several costumed males wore the horns of satyrs and the ever-randy Pan, and the only bared female breasts appeared on modern-day replicas of ancient Minoan statues.

And the only equivalent of the All-Seeing Eye was the tripod-mounted video camera run by a red-coated gentleman from atop the tower of old city hall building.



Readers Respond to Pagan Parade Coverage

Berkeley Daily Planet (06-01-04)

Editors, Daily Planet:

I appreciated that your paper's coverage of the Berkeley Pagan Parade ("Pagans on Parade Cavort in Downtown Berkeley," Daily Planet, May 18-20). However I felt that focusing at least half of the article on a little Christian group giving out water, and not on the actual Pagans (which, by the way, should be capitalized out of respect, just like Christianity and Hinduism) and what their parade was even about. Turning one of the few times in a year that (minority) Pagans can come into the spotlight into yet another excuse to write about (dominant) Christians is very unfortunate. Not only that, but the article not-so-subtly compares the gentle Christian act of giving water to hypothetical Pagan orgies and animal sacrifice; this is downright insulting innuendo, and utterly unprofessional in the extreme.

Also, why must Pagans "cavort" when they have a parade? If it were a Catholic parade, would your journalists say they were "cavorting"? Or imply that one should expect to see Jews being tortured (as they were by Catholics centuries ago)? Of course not! And why? Because such innuendoes would be very offensive and insulting to Catholics. Yet your paper seems to think it's perfectly fine to say and imply similar things to Pagans.

Please show our religion the same respect you show the dominant ones in our country and keep these things in mind when your paper next covers a Pagan activity.

Brett Lowry

Editors, Daily Planet:

I assume Richard Brenneman's article on the Interfaith Pagan Pride Parade and Celebration was an attempt to narrate a visitor's experiences of the festival. However, Mr. Brenneman did resort to gratuitous negatives and common biases in order to define the event. I quote "paganism... nowhere defined in event literature," "no animals (or humans) were offered up as sacrifices," and "no temple prostitutes and no orgies" and "only equivalent of the "All-Seeing Eye was the tripod-mounted video camera... atop the tower of old city hall," and "promoters of ...legalized prostitution (itself a fine old pagan tradition) were restricted to...the elevated plaza..."

My impression of the event was entirely different. I read the program guide and found a wealth of information. I saw a wholesome celebration of interfaith groups, good selection of arts and crafts, plus marvelous music performances. The "all-seeing eye" happened to be Berkeley Community Media, Berkeley's own cable TV station, which filmed the festival from various locations including the old city hall tower. Also, proponents of the Berkeley ballot measure on prostitution were not part of the approved pagan pride event, though I did see one unauthorized petition gatherer walking from the adjacent Farmer's Market into the festival.

There is already too much divisiveness in the world to add "paganism in Berkeley" to the roster. I hope the Berkeley Daily Planet will do a follow-up story, an interview with an event representative, or a retraction regarding the above article. A follow-up would be an ideal opportunity for Berkeley's premier voice to dispel prejudice and inform the public about modern neo-paganism.

Gianna Ranuzzi

Editors, Daily Planet:

My father, Phillip Potter of the Baltimore Sun, brought me up to respect the profession of journalism, and used to revile "yellow sheet journalism" as an insidious betrayal of the public trust. Your recent article, "Pagans on Parade Cavort in Downtown Berkeley," is a fine example of the worst sort of journalism. I was there for the entire day, and note that almost every word of Richard Brenneman's article was spurious, inciteful, and devoid of truth. In this day and age of Christian and Islamic fundamentalism, hate mongering and violence, the last thing we need is journalistic religious intolerance. You owe the organizers of the event, the participants, and the community an apology.

Shame on you.

Susan Potter

Editors, Daily Planet:

As a dedicated reader of the Daily Planet I'm ashamed, disgusted and most of all insulted by your horrible, poorly researched article about The Interfaith Pagan Pride Parade. As an independent paper you require the support of your community, and you managed to disrespect a large number of us with this article. If you continue to publish this kind of garbage you're going to see your support base start slipping away. I will never read the Daily Planet again; you are a disgrace to Berkeley and all that it stands for. Fundamentalists would be (and I'm sure are) proud!

With regret and disdain,

Caitlyn Powell

Editors, Daily Planet:

I am personally offended by the article by Richard Brenneman on Pagan Pride Day in Berkeley. I am a Pagan myself and attended the event. I found it peaceful and a celebration of religions that are fairly new and religions that predate Christianity and not the prostitution peddling festival of tax evasion evil that Mr. Brenneman made it out to be. The way the article was written reveals his ignorance and bigotry of the pagan community.

I was really offended by his contrasting of the Christians who dispense free water (which was much appreciated) and the vendors at the event. He made no mistake portraying the scene like the pagans are a bunch of tax evading, religion peddling misfits and the water dispensing Christians as an island of righteousness in a sea of sinfulness.

I will not put up with this and will be distributing the article among other pagans as far as I can reach. I will be encouraging them to not read the Berkeley Daily Planet and it's affiliates until a full-page apology is made.

I have to congratulate Mr. Brenneman and the Berkeley Daily Planet on offending an entire religious community that practices nothing but love of each other, the earth and love of peace with his venom. If that's what was intended, it has been done.

Stephanie Jones

Editors, Daily Planet:

Regarding your article on the Pagan Parade: What a poor excuse for journalism. And, to assign blame where blame is due, what a lazy, irresponsible editorial choice to allow this story to run as written. Certainly the cynical, world-weary, sarcastically tongue-in-cheek approach to writing has its place, and one has to look no further than the East Bay Express and the Bay Guardian to find countless examples of this style, in which informative content is wholly subsumed by attitude. Until now, I've viewed the Daily Planet as a publication with a sincere interest in serving the Berkeley community. Mr. Brenneman's approach to his reportage of the parade, however, reveals a complete lack of interest in his subject matter, as well as an arbitrary, mean-spirited willingness to cast the volunteer efforts of a large group of community-minded participants in a negative light.

As someone who has regularly volunteered my own time as a professional musician to help with fundraising events for the Parade, it pisses me off no end to see the efforts of a talented, hard-working community of people dismissed out of hand as nothing more than selfish, immoral, parasitic indulgence. I pity the journalist who refuses to do even the minimum of research on his subject in order to free his sarcastic "wit" to function unencumbered by the facts. Brenneman is no Steve Rubenstein or Dave Barry, but if that's the type of writing he aspires to, maybe you should give him a column; that way, your readers won't mistake him for an actual reporter.

Mark Ungar
San Francisco

Editors, Daily Planet:

I found your article "Pagans on Parade" by Richard Brenneman to be really lame and disrespectful. Why does he delight in criticizing the hard work and positive energy of others? Here we have a group of people singing, dancing, drumming, and adding beauty to Berkeley, and the only good thing he has to say is about someone who wasn't part of the event (the Christian dispersing water). As a pagan, and a druid, I found his denigration of the celebration of my faith to be completely inappropriate. Does he walk by Bar Mitzvahs and find things to mock about the celebrants? Get a clue, dude!

Here's hoping he sleeps well at night with the comforting thought that 1,500 witches are pissed off at him.

Sweet dreams!

Kira Westfall

Editors, Daily Planet:

I was shocked that a city with the reputation for fairness that Berkeley used to enjoy would cover an event as all-inclusive and supportive of minorities as the Pagan Pride Parade with such poor journalism and unfairness.

A large portion of the feature was devoted to how Christians were dispensing "the living water" of Christ, while nowhere did the Planet's intrepid reporter get to the heart of what paganism is all about.

An article of this nature might have been appropriate on the op-ed page, or better yet in a Christian newspaper. The Planet is apparently turning Moonie.

John Koenig
Former Berkeley resident

Editors, Daily Planet:

I was extremely disappointed by the May 18 article by Richard Brenneman entitled "Pagans on Parade Cavort in Downtown Berkeley." I have never attended the parade. I heard about the event on KPFA and in the SF Bay Guardian. I support events that attempt to build bridges between spiritual communities, particularly in these extremely troubled times. I was hoping to read a comprehensive article in your paper describing the events of the day. Instead I found an article that was heavily biased and extremely disrespectful in tone.

Except for his section on the Christian group, Mr. Brenneman repeatedly utilized gross stereotype to frame his so-called report. I was touched and enjoyed the reporter's description of the Christian group offering water. Curiously there were no other attempts to personalize other less mainstream participants at the parade. I can only assume that Mr. Brenneman was unable to maintain the objectivity required of a reporter when he went on this assignment. I am puzzled that his editors were unable to recognize the manifest problems with this story. I hope that in the future the Daily Planet will be more careful about whom they assign to write and edit such stories. Please let me know how the Daily Planet intends to proceed in this matter. Thank you.

Megan Evart
Concord

Editors, Daily Planet:

Becky O'Malley's editorial, "Seeing Ourselves as Others See Us" in the May 25 edition, cuts to the crux of the matter. The point of Richard Brenneman's piece "Pagan's Parade..." in fact was to "poke gentle fun" at those with whom your paper does not purportedly agree on a religious basis. But his piece -

however innocently intended - had missed its mark, as did her support for it.

What makes Garrison Keillor's prodding at Lutherans, Unitarians, Catholics, etc., humorous and effective is that Keillor makes his living as a humorist. Perhaps more importantly, Keillor makes clear his own beliefs in God, and with his one foot on that ground, he allows an audience or a reader see him as a part of his joke, rather than apart from it.

Mark Twain's letters regarding Mormons and Christian evangelicals to the journal Alta California were simply that: letters.

While objectivity is a goal difficult to achieve by any writer, it is the goal of a journalist. Based on previously authored articles, I've been under the impression that Mr. Brenneman is a journalist, and therefore, follows basic journalistic principles. One of which is to offer a fair and balanced report.

Brenneman's Pagan article had other intentions and was inappropriate for the main body of your newspaper. Its placement did nothing short of alienating a harmless group of people at a harmless gathering. The article would have better served the readership as an editorial opinion, a review or column.

For Brenneman to willingly show bias in an inappropriate format is self-indulgent. To then to be supported by a top executive, whose tone is to trivialize the matter, is patronizing, and it leaves the Berkeley Daily Planet and its journalists suspect in their endeavors to serve the community as something more than just a self-aggrandizing vehicle for advertisers.

Bob Ferrer

Editors, Daily Planet:

I read an article that greatly disturbed me, and I wanted to bring this to your attention.

There was a gathering In Berkeley, and it was covered and written with such disdain for the Pagan Society, I and my fellow sisterhood and brotherhood of witches and pagans are appalled, that you would allow this inflammatory article to be written. I understand freedom of speech, however this goes far beyond that, and I would only hope you will take a closer look at this article and justify why you would think this article was written fairly and without prejudice.

I am proud to call my self a Witch. I am Pagan, and I for one take extreme exception to your article sir. Who ever wrote this should indeed be careful that they have not set them selves up for slander and libel.

Freedom of Religion, means all religions...
Safyre Witch

Editorial: Seeing Ourselves as Others See Us

Becky O'Malley, Berkeley Daily Planet (05-25-04)

A famous Celtic bard once wrote:

"O wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as ithers see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us,
An' foolish notion:
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,
An' ev'n devotion!"

In modern English,

"Oh would some Power give us the gift
To see ourselves as others see us!
It would free us from many a blunder
And foolish notion.
What airs in dress and gait would leave us,
And even devotion!"

That's from Robert Burns' poem "To a Louse," in which the poet describes his reaction on seeing a louse crawling on the bonnet of a pretentious and well-dressed churchgoer.

The Daily Planet has been deluged with letters from pagans around the world, as far away as South Africa, because our man Richard Brenneman dared to poke a little gentle fun at last week's Interfaith Pagan Pride Parade. Or perhaps we should say from Pagans, since we got at least one letter saying that (contrary to the advice of our dictionaries and style books), the word should be capitalized, as is Christian, because Pagans have a real religion too.

We certainly agree that they have a real religion. Which is precisely why they, like all other religions, are fair game for having fun poked at them by the irreligious. Making fun of religion is a tradition as old as some of the traditions which today's neo-Pagans believe themselves to be reviving. Mark Twain practiced it. While the irate p/Pagans are web-surfing, they should check out, for example, his 1867-1869 letters to the San Francisco journal Alta California, in which he makes fun of both Mormons and Christian evangelicals. Today, Garrison Keilor's Prairie Home Companion regularly ridicules Lutherans, Catholics, and any other representatives of mainstream religions who live in his fictional Lake Woebegon, Minnesota. (He never mentions p/Pagans, so there must not be any in Lake Woebegon.) We reprinted a long angry letter from the p/Pagan parade co-coordinators on the same page with our regular comic strip from Dan O'Neill, who chose on that very day to make fun of Christians, Jews and Muslims all in one strip.

San Francisco's Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, a group of gay guys, make fun of Catholic nuns. As someone who was educated by nuns, and who found them in the main to be women of kindness, intelligence and strong character, I might take offense at the parody. As a feminist, I might complain that the SPIs are secretly resentful of women who are in a position of power. But over the years I've noticed that, while seeming to mock nuns, they're also noted the good works nuns have done, and have imitated them by doing good works in their own community, the sincerest form of flattery.

By the way, Brenneman's description of the Christian group giving out free water at the event was also tongue-in-cheek, but the ironic tone he employed seems to have escaped many of the letter writers. Some of them, of course, admit that they didn't read the piece, but are just responding to an alert broadcast on p/Pagan blogs on the Internet.

A few of the letters we've received from the p/Pagans have threatened to sue the Planet for libel, and one cited the ACLU's sponsorship of their parade as justification for that point of view. I'd check with the ACLU before taking that theory too far. If one wanted to get into a deep First Amendment analysis of the p/Pagan event, questions might be raised about whether or not fees paid to the city of Berkeley were 100 percent compensation for the cost to the city of policing and cleaning up, and if not, why not? Would the same courtesies have been extended to, for example, Lutherans on the Loose, as to p/Pagans on Parade? Under the U.S. Constitution, governments are not supposed to do special favors for any particular religion.

And who's going to compensate the farmer's market vendors for lost business? One farmer told me that one might expect that events in Martin Luther King Civic Center Park would be good for business, but in fact the reverse is true: Big gatherings with blocked-off streets and amplified sound drive away food shoppers.

In our book, people are welcome to hold any religious beliefs that they choose, but that doesn't give them a free pass from criticism, whether it's in the form of ridicule or as serious disagreement. Religious belief has always been used as justification for outrageous and intolerable actions, and that includes some of the beliefs and practices espoused by today's new Pagans. Many people believe that the world would be a better place without religion, and a cursory look at today's activities in the region which spawned the three desert monotheistic religions suggests that they might be right.

Becky O'Malley

Prayer for Sleep

By Robin Goodfellow
Modified for the RDNA with permission.

Earth Mother, rock me in your arms; Be'al, guard my rest from fear, regret, doubt and anxiety. Refresh me in soul, mind and body. Bestow this blessing; I offer my prayer. Sustain me in that perfect peace and awareness promised us who have you in our minds and hearts.

~~~

Let me never forget You. Let me feel your warm embrace that comforts me in my troubles, that reminds me that all is not as fearsome as it seems at times, and that I am never alone and without You. Your loving presence gives my heart the reassurance and my mind the courage to carry on peacefully this night and in the days to follow after and after again. In your presence am I safely held secure.

~~~

Through the divine connection we share, You and I, this is so, and I am at peace.

Peace, Peace, Peace!

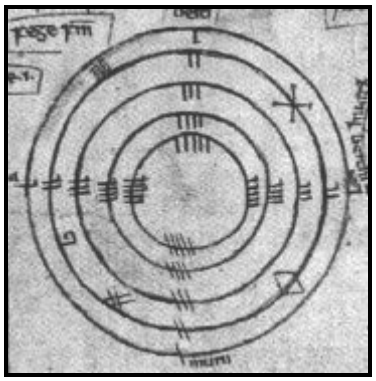
Events

July 10 - Celtic Pagan Study Group - Redwood City Imbas, a Celtic Restorationist organization, invites you to a Celtic Pagan Study Group at the Redwood City Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (back lounge), 2124 Brewster Avenue, at 1:00pm. The group plans to meet monthly. Please, no small children or food. Cost: $5; nobody turned away for lack of funds. Information: brenda at twoburrens.com

GODDESS SCREENINGS: "Signs Out of Time: the story of Marija Gimbutas" by Donna Read & Starhawk and "Mother Earth: Revisioning the Sacred" by Mary R. Hopkins. July 10, 2004 7:00 pm. $10 - $20 sliding scale. All genders are welcome!

AT: Change Makers Books and Gifts for Women 6536 Telegraph Ave and 66th Street. PH. 510-655-2405. 4 blocks south of Ashby near Ashby Bart station. Open 11-7, closed Tuesdays. www.ChangeMakersForWomen.com

Book Reviews



The Druids' Alphabet

By Robert Lee (Skip) Ellison
Earth Religions Press, 2002, $17.95 US, ISBN 1-59405503-3
Review by Daven

One would think that a book on the Ogham by the current Arch Druid of the Ar nDraiocht Fein would be a book a cut above many others, and that thinking would be correct in this work.

I got this book to continue my studies in the Ogham and I was expecting something very different from what I got. I was expecting a work on the divination of the Ogham, but instead I got almost a masterwork on the Ogham Alphabet itself. Contained in this work are examples of the 120 different Ogham sets that the Druids used, with graphic examples taken from the various museums that still have them in their collection, and much other lore on the Ogham. There is information on the Bird Ogham, the River Pool Ogham, and all of it points to the Ogham associations that we have now being a way to remember the letters, much like today's alphabet of A is for Apple, B is for.

The section on the different types of Ogham script and the different associations that the letters have makes this work invaluable in and of itself. But there is some more.

Skip's first few chapters give common meanings for the Ogham, and explain why extra letters have been added to some of the current sets of letters. Later chapters gives a brief discussion of divination and what it is (although there are no associations and meanings of the Ogham letters included), a brief history of the ADF and a brief warning about Robert

Graves and his work "The White Goddess". I feel the latter is necessary as the Celtic Tree Calendar many use now is completely made up out of whole cloth, and the author points this out directly.

After that are multiple translations from multiple sources for the Battle of the Trees. Then there is a correspondence chart that has very brief divinatory meanings along with instructions of how to make "Ogham disks" for use in divination.

The author states in his introduction that this work is a culmination of the texts he has written for the ADF on the Ogham, published for the first time and available to the public. That's how this text reads like. Understanding that is essential, as there seem to be some holes in the material. Logical trains of thought stop and (for example) the things that one would expect to be present are not. I can only assume that this is due to those sections of the material considered secret and for the ADF only. Which is fair enough since there is material in every tradition that is secret.

I'm giving this book 4 1/2 stars of 5. I feel that for a serious student of the Ogham this is a necessary reference work, a companion to all the other works on the Ogham there are. It will fill in many holes in the information, and it is written in an easy to understand style that makes it a gentle read while not detracting from the weight of the work itself at all.

Daven

Calendar

Summer Solstice, when the Sun enters Cancer and reaches its highest point, the zenith, in the sky, will take place on Sunday, June 20th at 5:57 p.m. PST.

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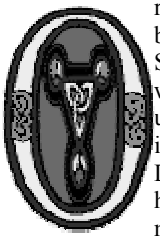
Lughnasadh Essay: Summer Games

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1988
By Emmon Bodfish



Originally a celebration of the funeral games held by Lugh, Celtic god of light for his father the Sun, Lughnasadh marks the Sun's position half way between Solstice and Equinox. By now, usually August sixth or seventh, the day's length is noticeably shortened. The sun, re-born on December 22, is in decline, and the season of the harvest, Foghamhar, is coming. This High Day marked the beginning of the harvest in pre-industrial times, and in Druidic times was known as the Festival of the First Fruits. Cutting of the new grain could begin, and "hungry July" was over. In the Celtic countries, this middle-of-the-summer festival is still marked by The Races in Ireland, the Revels in Wales, and the highland Games in Scotland. In a livestock-raising culture like that of the Iron Age Celts, this was the most likely time of market faires and regional gatherings. The calves of the spring were old enough to sell or trade. Likewise the sheep would have been sheared and the lambs were old enough to be bartered. This was a festival of the Tuatha, the largest class in the Celtic society, comprised of the farmers, craftsmen and merchants. The other two classes were the Warriors and the Clergy, which last included Bards, Ovates, Filidhs and Druids, their students and retainers.

In the Neo-Pagan R.D.N.A. tradition, anyone who has a garden or grows anything, should save the first picked produce of the summer season and bring it, or a portion of it to the Lughnasadh celebration to be offered along with the Grove Sacrifice and hopes and prayers of prosperity to come.

News of the Groves

Sylvagaia/Elder Grove: News from France

Computer's broken and in repairs for an eternity now. Furthermore we're doing the haying, the wood, stable for the goats... etc. Too much to do, no time, no internet access (I am writing from a library now).

Greetings and until later,

Willem

Digitalis Grove: News from D.C.

I've been busy. Went to MN for my annual pilgrimage and to unwind in the forest, streams and lakes with my dog & partner. I also met with Brother Shane here in D.C. and we're thinking about reviving services this fall and introducing him to the many Druids around the mystic district. This Lughnasadh, I brought Sister Colleen Peterson of distant Alaska into the first three orders of the RDNA, my first ordination in 16 months. Any one visiting DC is welcome to write to me about ways to overcome distance problems and ordination at mikerdna@hotmail.com

Brother Stephan in Carleton (MN) graduated and has been working on updating a database of "Druid-related" books at Carleton's library that complement the Druid Archival materials. With the list, I intend to purchase and donate new books that are needed for future scholars. As for ARDA 2, Stacey and I will redouble our efforts, after her relocation is complete, to get out Volume 3: Druidic Newsletters this year.

Yours in the Mother,

Mike the fool

New Grove

Catnip Grove: News from Maryland

We are located in Baltimore, MD. There are about 15 of us (cats and humans). New members must be personally invited by the Arch Druid (me), and can only be admitted with their cats. Cats are not required to attend rituals. Catnip Grove can be contacted by emailing the publisher of A Druid Missal-Any, see address at end of newsletter.

Eurisko Grove: News from Virginia

Jaquie's herb harvesting is coming along quite nicely. We have also already started to receive the gifts of the first harvest. A neighbor of ours who have an extensive vegetable garden has already shared with us, tomatoes, cucumbers & okra. Gwydion is working in cooperation with his men's group, Exploring the Primordial Male to host an afternoon of men's drumming on July 2. EPM is also working with PagaNet Inc. to conduct a Public ritual entitled "Putting the Lugh back into Lughnasadh". The previous working title was "The Passion of the Lugh, Our God can die horribly too"

Rowan-Oak Grove: News from Tulsa, OK

Rowan-Oak Grove has gone into a holding pattern until after an issue requiring a tribunal is settled. We will be celebrating lughnassadh but all classes have been suspended until the samhain convocation when among other things we will

vote on wether to continue as a grove or at least temporarily disband all together.

the arch-druidess is frankly tired of all the bs associated with this tribunal issue and so are the rest of the remaining members. the three other groves in the rowan-oak family have had troubles of their own recently. so the convocation will concern all these issues and will include a voting from all three other arch-duid(ess)s for their groves on the situations troubling us.

we hope that all is well for the groves around the world and for all single trees as well as we approach Lughnasadh

m.s. white raven, arch-druidess
rowan-oak grove tag for mocc

Dravidia Grove: News from Indiana

All is well here, had quite a few storms of late and the weather is extremely hot when it isn't raining. Have been studying nature again, have opted to study birds, and rabbits. It is amazing what you can learn just by watching these marvels of nature. There are so many things to learn and the Mother sheds her secrets so easily... Also have come across some new books and have taken the time to get another 3rd of my editing done on my Magick Text... Almost there for those of you who are patiently waiting… Have also begun writing a new book that I will title "The Theories of Mother & Magick" It will contain a variety of thoughts and new theories that I have been working on in the area of magick and different abilities inherent to mankind... Should make for very good reading when it is finished... Well all too much thinking tonight…

Yours in the Mother.

Rogue River Protogrove: News from Oregon

Several of us just returned from the Oregon Country Fair (www.oregoncountryfair.org). A wild, goofy, silly time was had by all. We can arrange carpooling to help save resources so we can, hopefully, attend more events around the area in the future.

Don't forget our Fall Equinox annual camping weekend at a reserved campgrounds in the Rogue River National Forest (Oregon, USA) on September 3, 4, 5. Activities include swimming, fly fishing (beginners welcome and equipment will be provided), workshop by John Michael Greer (topic TBA), Ceilidh (music party/bardic circle) and two Druid rituals. It's FREE but donation appreciated.

Don't let the lack of camping equipment keep you from joining us because we've had two tents and lots of other outdoor equipment donated.

For more information, please email aigeann@earthlink.net

Central Valley Oak Protogrove: News from California

In our neck of the woods, August is the time for County Fairs and the State Fair. These are places the farmers display their crops and livestock for sale and auction. This is also the time local corn, berries, and melons make their appearances. We at the Central Valley Oak Protogrove are doing a special campout in the mountains to celebrate Lughnassadh and the Blue Moon We are going to spend 3 days relaxing under the stars with a campfire, stories, and, of course, Ritual.

Sean mac Dhomhnuill
Central Valley Oak Protogrove

Sunset Proto-Grove: News from California

Hello from Sunset Proto-Grove:

So that, big wheel keeps on turnin'; big sun keeps on burnin'!

My first attempt at veggies, are proving fruitful. Giving me gumption enough to plan an entire garden for next spring's plantings. (I have counted 40 cherry tomatoes growing on my 3 plants...although only 3 are ripe at this time, I have been pouring over my sunset garden guide.)

Saturdays before heading out to the grove-site, (a very shady grove-site) I have been taking the time, to sit out on our sunny patio absorb some sun, and listen to the wind in our VERY big tree. It's become quite a ritual. A real wonderful way to prepare before heading out to the grove.

I have been feeling very AT PEACE with my world lately. Enjoying my life, my family and my friends, and making a concerted effort to share my appreciation for them with them.

Plans for Lughnasadh are; after a trip to the grove, bake fresh bread (very Zen), teach the kids how to make corn dollies, and to enjoy plenty of fresh fruits, veggies and beer, at dinner.

Interesting, how the summer isn't even over yet, and already I am slipping back into my annual need for home, quiet and introspection.... right on cue.

Also, I am planning my yearly SUN ritual! Meaning a vacation where I get to lie in the sun all week. Something I truly treasure. Usually I do this in the spring, in the desert as a way to 'warm my bones' after a long foggy and rainy northern California winter...but due to scheduling this year my sun-soaking will be done on the beach in August. I love how warm (in that I don't burn easily) and golden a day of basking makes me feel...like I have just been blessed by the sun god himself. Quite worth the wait.

Blessings to all,

O.

Poison Oak Grove, News from California Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

Eris continues to reign at the home of A Druid Missal-Any. In preparation for library shelves to be built, all the boxes of books were moved outside, including the box that has the Chronicles and the Lughnasadh liturgy in it. I emailed the liturgy document to myself at work, but it wouldn't print out on two printers. The printer at home needs the software to be reinstalled after the electrician turned off the power without telling me while the computer was on (this is why the Missal-Any is especially late this issue...), and PC Doctor had to come out to fix it. The printer paper is still in a box somewhere... Thanks to one of our members a last minute call is insuring we will have our Lughnasadh scripts!

Today was the last day in the cabin. I had moved out most of the contents the previous two weekends. All that was left was a low table made of burl wood, a few tools, and an unfinished self-portrait of Emmon. These items proved to be amongst the most challenging. The burl seemed to be almost as heavy as The Dagda's club, and I'm surprised I was able to move it at all, much less able to bring it home. The portrait was almost too big to fit in the car and rode up close to the ceiling of the car. I am still having a hard time grasping losing the cabin and why. It is much too simplistic to say, "It was time to move on." Alexandra Kennedy says you need not end a relationship because a person dies. Perhaps it was time for me to have my own "cabin," one that someone could not take away, as the house is like a bigger

version of it, and it is mine and not a rental. Keeping the cabin forever wasn't realistic (the Muir Heritage Land Trust was thinking about tearing it down at one point), having this house isn't quite so.

On the way home from the cabin there was a small stand by the local pear orchard. A sign asked for people to pick pears for the Contra Costa Food Bank and I stopped and did so. I received some pears in return for the work and it reminded me of the concept of reciprocation so prevalent in ancient Celtic society. I will be offering one of the pears as a "first fruit" of the harvest at the Lughnasadh service, as well as some of the wild plums and blackberries that grow along the path up to the house.

Geasa: The Ethics in the Teaching Way of Nwyfre and A Clear Path to Rid Unhealthy Energetic Debris

By: Rhiannon Hawk, Nemeton Aweyddion

There has been nothing more profound to me than the responsibilities one takes when they make the self realization of the spirit of Nwyfre. When you work with this spiritual energy it not only awakens us to being more aware of ourselves, our surroundings, the environment, community, our homes, and mostly our commitments we make within our Nemetons--sacred space. From each step we take on our journeys to each word we speak, Nwyfre's essence flows out from within. When we are in a merged state, a scepter of light opens a door for us, a doorway to clearer perceptions and higher senses of Gwynfyd Knowledge. With these gifts and awareness comes an immense responsibility that we must not be ignorant of. To take responsibility of our brains, our hearts, and our feet on the path we walk, and words we speak of this truth, all in alignment with the scepter, a truth we hold deeply within. To keep this alignment true, is to speak the truth that we may also walk our talk, and set boundaries within ourselves not to make commitments to things that we cannot uphold. This includes the contracts we make with other people; very similar to the oath we take into the clan family. With each person we make an oath, consciously or subconsciously, this happens usually by the end of the very first time we meet. Then with friends we've known longer in this life, we continue to create geasa (rules) and make more oaths. They are broken sometimes; there should be forgiveness.

Usually when you first meet a person you will have a natural premonition about them. You will be able to feel if your energy flows harmoniously with theirs or if they clash. Upon the meeting you will be able to tell how close you will be able to be around the person, you will also be able to know how open you can be with them. At clan gatherings there should be no second guessing about this, for if you are all merged, then you can all be open with one another and not set up negative geasa. But, this geasa is usually set up with people who are outside of the clan. This is especially true if the meeting is with another person who is unaware or not merged. It is similar to making a contract, between your energy and their energy and the reactions that occur with one another on an energetic mostly subconscious level.

On an ethical level, the geasa set up is usually contains a negative energetic reaction, and the oath set up is of positive reaction. In an oath, there are still commitments and responsibilities we take to keep the relationship to oath with our alignment of Nwyfre. If we stay true within ourselves then the oaths we take are good and stay where they are, kept healthy. But, if we stray from our commitments or our responsibilities we make in our oaths, then they can turn into geasa easily. In geasa we attract to ourselves lessons that are usually of negative or unhealthy cycles that go around and repeat. Until we can clear the patterns and return back to our original oath to stay in truth and alignment the geasa stays on a course that ends in destruction. When people have habits of going back and forth in a dualistic pattern unable to clear away energetic debt, then it is or becomes a pattern that they will be unable to heal. They will not be able to clear the debris until that energetic debt is dealt with on a much deeper level in the subconscious mind, forgiveness is made, and truth is returned, alignment is made. Even though this whole ethical way seems to be dualistic we must remember that the geasa is really like an illusion that we try to set in stone by creating it in front of ourselves. We make it so the geasa appears in our lives on a regular basis. We do this subconsciously so that we will see it more and hopefully catch onto the pattern. We do this so we will eventually see it. Like a mud puddle in your front yard that you purposely avoid everyday upon leaving or arriving at your house but you still manage to get a little mud on your feet anyway, and you still see that it's there everyday, controlling some aspect of your life. It does not go away by itself. Imagine a person with a multitude of these patterns going simultaneously, all at the same time.

We not only set up oaths or geasa with other people, but with each thing we interact with in creative, energetic, or spiritual ways. Even with the natural world around us, Nature. But, most of our patterns here begin within ourselves. In how we feel about ourselves, our physical limitations, self-esteem, egos, and the food we eat. We set up what seems right to us at the given time depending on how we feel within ourselves at that moment. Usually those who are unaware will gladly partake in what feels good to them, what ever it is, whenever they feel the needs of it. This unawareness causes the worst of health problems. Sometimes just a little knowledge can change a person’s whole perception of the way they do things, the food they eat, their negative attitudes or unbalanced egos. How a person feels about life and being alive is reflected in their health and responsibility to taking care of themselves. Next, it is reflected in their daily activities, the things they do on a regular basis from the moment they wake up, how they start their day, to the activities they do before bed. Then their dreams reflect these all back to them.

In the oath taking and alignment we are taught and brought to realization that there is sacredness in all of life. All of life around us is a blessing. When we encounter this awareness we are in awe of the cosmos and our innate connection with it. With this awareness comes our oath, our responsibilities to lead our lives in health and harmony. These things go hand in hand, it is hard to have one without the other in order to be in truth within.

It is easy to see how right action and thought or wrong action and thought set up our oaths and geasa. So now you know that geasa is an energetic debt and oaths are a geasa debt release.

Geasa is based on untruth and illusions. These come from our patterns of subconscious ways that use subtle manipulations to take energy from other people, nature, or things. When we do this it is because we are then in a state of separateness, separate from our oath and alignment. When we are not in alignment, we have cut ourselves off from the natural energy flow; our body senses a need for more energy then. If we do not go within and merge with our alignment then our subconscious patterns reactivate and we, with little knowing, do things to get energy from other people. What we do with little knowing to get more energy is subtle manipulations such as; bringing up an old blame to our partners or using negative attitudes that make other people have to go out of their way for us.

By their doing this, they then give us energy. All we really need to realize is that we can connect with Nwyfre in any time that we feel we are disconnected. A lot of the time when we feel negative, we need to go within and ask ourselves questions about it. We need to word the questions the right way to get the right answers. If you ask a question and the answer doesn't seem correct or clear, then find another way of wording it. Use symbols and visualizations when you are asking the questions to help your inner knowing self to understand where you are coming from and what you are asking.

Above all else, the ethical sense that comes from our experiencing Nwyfre, is respect for life, in all its forms of beauty and all its lessons. For it is here in Abred, the Middleworld, that we are to learn to overcome our geasa and heal our patterns to become energy debt free.

In the Cymru lore, geasa could be placed on another person. In the story of Arianrhod, she places geasa on her son Llew, and the geasa was that he would not have a name unless she named him, he would never wear armor unless she put it on him, and he would never have a partner from any of the three worlds. Symbolically, Arianrhod mirrored an energetic dept on Llew because she was tricked into giving birth to him by her own brother Gwyddion. She forced his karma to return upon him by placing geasa. Can this be done? Well yes it can but it's not ethically correct because the debt will always be there till it is dealt with and an oath is made.

I have an interesting story dealing with this energetic debt. I was at a psychic fair one time and a friend of mine bought me a booklet of Karma Tickets. The way you used them was, if you saw someone causing themselves karmic debt then you write them a ticket so that hopefully they will see what they are doing and then make amends. Well, his little Karma Ticket book I found out, also causes debt to the one who doles the tickets out. Strange things started happening every time I handed out a ticket, negative events would begin to occur. I thought I'd test it further and wrote no tickets for two weeks. Nothing bad happened. Then the week after that I wrote a couple of tickets and negative things began happening like pouring rain. I stopped altogether and burned the book and thus the geasa quit happening.

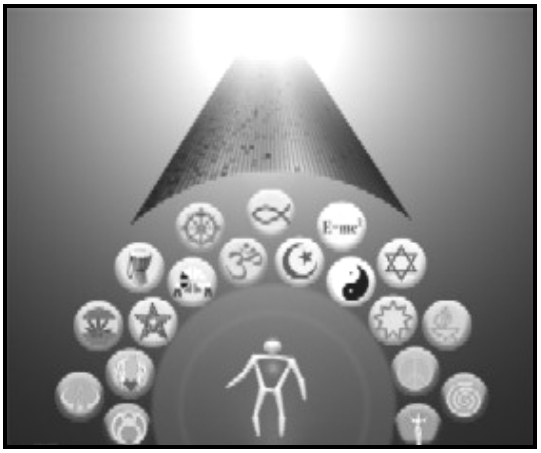
So, back to Nwyfre and living life fully, full of respect for its lessons. For without the lessons and patterns we could not grow. Even though we may at times toil in the struggle as if caught in mud, we can learn and grow from this experience. But, for those of us who are aware it is much easier than it is for those who don't know what a pattern is or where to find one. This is where we as teachers or leaders of the old ways and old lore can assist those still struggling behind us. But, then again, care needs to be taken when offering this help. That is, those struggling need to be made aware, then they have to ask. It is not for us to decide for them to erase their debt or make their journey easier. No, the kind of support and assistance they need is direction, not answers and not a spell to break them free. For how will they ever grow if they do not learn for themselves? Helping someone to be more aware and find direction is the best help we can really offer. This applies to energy healing as well, the person in need has to agree and accept the sharing of your healing gifts before you can work on them. To try and send someone healing without asking their consent is like the Karma Tickets and will create energetic dept unto you.

If you stay aligned and merged you can live more fully and have more positive experiences and emotionally and spiritually grow at a faster pace beyond energy dept. Look at your life and if you can divide up all the things you do in one a week, how much of your time gets wasted on stuff that takes you no where? Stuff that doesn't contribute to your growth or awareness? How much of what you do do you do while on auto mode, not really thinking much at all but just doing a task for the tasks sake? Like cleaning the house, it can be a pretty consistent thing in your life, especially if you have kids. Do you play music and sing while you polish the mirror, or do you get angry that someone forgot to pick up their shoes or left papers crumpled on the floor? Or do you just go on auto and think nothing but just do it anyway? Cleaning can actually be a good energy raiser that can be used to clear energy dept. Very similar to cleaning a roadside and collecting recyclables to turn in. When we volunteer to clean something outside ourselves this reflects back inward and we are then working on ourselves, on our inner brightness and dept release. So, these chores are not as boring as most think and have much more benefit than just tidying an area. When we can work in this light we are then living fully and experiencing the fullness of the action we take in pursuit of living our dreams awake. When we do these tasks on auto, we are moving slow or fast in our physical bodies but, our energetic bodies far behind and keeps lagging. Eventually we become

tiresome of getting our tasks done and our energy is drained by not fully participating, we lose energy. When we are awake and fully here, we gain energy and learn quicker when we participate.

To round off this article I will conclude that when we live, fully aware, then we are experiencing much more than someone who is not. Therefore, having much more experience will guide you to grow faster and learn quicker. This is not a selfish act, it is a selfless act because when we participate, everyone around us will experience a lifting also and we will have no geasa with them. Through this awareness we will be assisting those who wish to learn and grow, and we will need nothing in return from them, for Nwyfre will supply the energy we need to get it done.

Gadael hi Bhod!



Pagan Charity

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE USE
July 13, 2004

Contact: Public Information Officer, Cherry Hill Seminary, thistle@cherryhillseminary.org, 802-234-6420.

Pagan Group Included in Federal Charity Network

For the first time ever, a pagan group has been included in a US federal charity campaign. The Sacred Well Congregation and the International Institute of Cultural and Religious Studies (SWC/ICRS) have been accepted into the US' federal Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).

"It is a good thing for the pagan community because it brings to light that we can (and must) function on a par with mainstream charitable, service and educational non-profits, and that our services, visions and goals are just as worthy as any of theirs," said David Oringderff, an instructor in Pastoral Counseling at Cherry Hill Seminary for professional pagan ministry.

The CFC is the only authorized fund raising organization allowed to solicit charitable donations from Federal employees (civilian and military). The CFC is supervised by the Office of Personnel Management and implemented through 340 regional CFC district offices. (http://www.opm.gov/cfc/).

"The Combined Federal Campaign is the Federal Government's version of the United Way, except the requirements for inclusion are much more stringent, especially for the National Listing. In fact, several United Way agencies are included in the CFC," Oringderff said.

Inclusion in the CFC's national List will means that SWC/ICRS's listing will appear in all 340 regional campaign drives. Money raised from this effort will be used to directly support the congregations' services, goals and visions including many initiatives that have led to greater tolerance, understanding and acceptance of alternative spiritualities in inter-faith communities, the pan-pagan community, and society at-large. SWC/ICRS provides open, public venues for the practice of the Old Religions; promoting community benevolence efforts, spiritual counseling, and religious educational programs. (http://sacredwell.org).

Most of the funding that Sacred Well will receive from the CFC and public and private grants will be devoted to the collection and preservation of source material and converting it to digital format and making that material publicly available to scholars and researchers.

"The remainder will be used to fund community service projects such as counseling, mentoring, etc to local communities where we have a presence, institutions, and in support of military groups and initiatives for service members following alternative spiritual paths," Oringderff explained.

The Rev. Dr. Oringderff is also a founding member of Sacred Well and of the SWC International Executive Council of Clerics. He is an elder and a high priest in the Greencraft Tradition of Craft Wicca. He is a consultant to numerous interfaith groups including the DoD Armed Forces Chaplains Board. Dr. Oringderff is a clinical and forensic psychologist and resides near San Antonio in Schertz, Texas.

News

Druid Charged for Carrying Sword

From correspondents in London
July 14, 2004

A BRITISH druid was in court today charged with carrying a ceremonial sword, used for casting spells, while on a shopping trip to a local hardware store.

Merlin Michael Williams appeared at a magistrates' court in the southern English coastal town of Portsmouth wearing his full druidic regalia of green robe and blue cloak, with talismans around his neck.

The 26-year-old was charged with possessing an offensive weapon after a security guard saw him with the sheathed 90cm blade draped over his shoulder as he browsed through a branch of Wilkinson Hardware.

About a dozen fellow members of the Insular Order of Druids sat in the court's public gallery, while chief druid King Arthur Pendragon, wearing white robes with a red lion emblazoned on the front, acted as Williams's legal adviser.

The sword, named Talisen, has been confiscated by police as evidence.

"It is accepted by the Crown this (sword) was sheathed and there was no offensive action by the defendant. The issue is whether this is an offensive weapon per se," prosecutor Colin Shackel told the court.

The case was later adjourned so the prosecution could examine what Mr. Williams said were case histories which set a precedent for druid ceremonial swords not being considered offensive weapons.

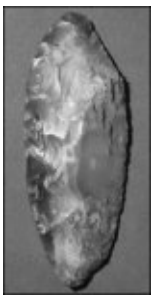
According to a spokesman for the Insular Order of Druids, ceremonial swords are used for casting spells and other ritualistic purposes.

Druids were the pagan priest class in early Britain, particularly for the Celtic tribes from around 600 BC, and are associated with sacred stone circles such as the famous site at Stonehenge, southwest England.

However, little is known about their activities and modern druids are sometimes dismissed as fantasists with a fondness for dressing up and no genuine link with the activities of the past.

Agence France-Presse

This report appears on NEWS.com.au.



Bronze Age Knife Found in Wales

Daily Post, North Wales (24 July 2004)

A North Wales housewife found a Bronze Age knife crafted 4,500 years ago while digging in her vegetable patch. Marylyn Sheldon knew she had discovered something special after unearthing the flint blade at her Llanarmon-yn-Ial home, in Denbighshire. Experts at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, confirmed it was a bronze aged blade forged around 2,500 BCE.

"I was digging in my vegetable patch to put broad beans in," she said. "I knew it was a worked flint blade as soon as I saw it." Mrs Sheldon contacted Denbighshire council and the authority's countryside service archeologist Fiona Gail was called in. "She took photos. Later on I also found some flint chippings while digging in the garden. Eventually they identified it as a flint knife dating from the Bronze Age which could have been used as a scraper," Mrs Sheldon said.

Mrs Sheldon says she may donate the knife to a local museum. The small village of Llanarmon-yn-Ial is surrounded by ancient barrows and mounds. Mrs Gale said: "It is an interesting find and provides more information about the area. I think there were some other finds from a nearby cave in the village in the early years of the 20th century."

Editor's note: Grow your own vegetables? See what you might find! You could contribute to history as well as to your health!

Events

Max Dashu Slide Show!

A Must See for anyone interested in Goddesses, Women's Herstory, and Neolithic cultures that promoted peace and egalitarian relations between men & women.

Independent scholar Max Dashu founded the Suppressed Histories Archives in 1970, back in the days when Women's Studies departments had not yet come into being. Since then, she has photographed over 10,000 slides and created 80 slideshows on international women's history, including Women in Power, Witch Hunts and Racism: History and Lies. Max Dashu has done extensive interdisciplinary research on the European witch hunts and folk traditions about witches. She is also an artist who publishes prints and notecards highlighting powerful women. Visit her website for more information http://www.suppressedhistories.net

"The lineal descent of the People of the Five Nations shall run in the female line. Women shall be considered Progenitors of the Nation. They shall own the land and the soil. Men and women shall follow the status of their mothers."—From the Law of the Iroquois Confederation

Date: Sat, Aug 7, 2004
Title: Icons & Matrix Slideshow
Time: 7:30pm
Leader: Max Dashu
Cost: $10-15

Calendar

Lughnasadh, when the Sun is half-way between the Summer Solstice and Fall Equinox, will occur this year astronomically on Friday, August 6 as 15 degrees of Leo at 9:20 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time, or alternatively as 16 degrees 18 minutes decl on Saturday, August 7 at 12:30 a.m. Pacific Daylight Time. Make an offering of the first fruits and vegetables from your garden or from the first apple crop in your local supermarket. If you can't cut down your own grain, celebrate by eating pasta.

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Fall Equinox Essay:

Cernunnos and Dances

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 1989
By Emmon Bodfish

quinox approaches! This is the time sacred to Cernunnos, the Hunter God. The cult of the horned god, the shaman-god dressed in the horns and hide of a hoofed prey-animal, is one of the most ancient themes running through Indo-European-Siberian group of cultures. Cave paintings in France and Spain dating from the Paleolithic show these figures, and he is seen again on the Gundestrup cauldron, crafted by the Eastern European Celts under Druid auspices and direction, he wears the antlers of the stag. It would be rash to think of all the horned Eurasian gods as Cernunnos, each tribe probably had their own name for him, but the theme seems universal among those cultures which lived through the last Ice Age in Europe and Euro-asia north of the Caucus. In the Pre-Indo-European Balkans he is associated with the goat, in Siberia with the reindeer, in England with the Red Deer, and in the Mediterranean and Ireland with the bull. (Here is another element linking Erin to Spain and the Mediterranean world as opposed to the rest of the British Isles or Gaul.)

Everywhere Cernunnos is associated with a horned and hoofed, food producing species. He may be the Being commemorated in the "horn-dances" carried out in a number of English villages up through the nineteenth century, and now exclusively in Abbots Bromley. Whether this is a local survival from Druidic or even Pre-Celtic times, or is a rite brought with them by the Anglo-Saxon invaders in the service of their cognate deity, Hern the Hunter, is not known.

Originally Cernunnos seems to have been a hunter's god, and later to have become associated with flocks and herds as "Master of the Animals." Still later he is appealed to for prosperity and fertility in general. This was the stage of the tradition seen in the Grecian Pan cult, and in that of European "Robin Goodfellow," later distorted and debased by Christian missionaries into their "devil" cults and images. There is no devil in the Celtic Pantheon. A cosmic "bad guy" is a theological invention of a set of Middle Eastern religions including Zoroastrianism, Persian, Sumerian and Semitic as well as Christianity. Devil inventing and worshipping as we see it now is a Christian spin-off, and usually a rebellion against that same faith. It has nothing to do with the older, indigenous religions and God-figures of Europe. Cernunnos was an extremely popular figure among the farming peoples of Celtic Europe, and the Romans, newly Christianized themselves, seeing that they could not co-opt his worship, or euphemize him into a "saint," as they did a number of the other Druidic deities, debased him into a demon, i.e. the god of a rival, competing theocracy. Margaret Murray first enunciated this theory in the 1920s. Her work then fell into disrepute in the '40s and '50s, but has since been revived and vindicated. Her book, The God of the Witches, Oxford University Press, 1970, is worth reading if you can find it. G. Rachel Levy also sheds some light on the Mediterranean versions of his worship in her book The Gate of Horn, Farber and Farber, 1948. (This book is now published as Religious Conceptions of the Stone Age and Their Influence Upon European Thought, New York: Harper, 1963.)

The Gaelic word "Faighe" that came to be translated "prophet," originally meant "seer" and was the name of one class of Druids, solitary forest-dwelling mystics, who may have originally been connected with the worship of Cernunnos in his role as the shaman-god. "Fiagh," the Gaelic root word for "deer," is suggestive in this regard. The old "seer" whom Finn encountered beside the sacred pool was probably one such. They are associated with the Hazel, as Cernunnos may have been as Bride is associated with the Birch and Lugh with the Apple tree.

The Horned-god had a second sacred time beginning around the Winter Solstice with the tradition of the Flying Shaman. Mystic and inter-world journeyer, he descends into the Land of the Ancestors, (the sun, sinking to its nadir?) to bring back new souls, of game animals and kine and humans that new animals and Infants may be born and increase and prosperity be assured. This journey, "dedicated to the continual flow and renewal of life,*" was still being undertaken by Finn-Ugric and Siberian tribal shamans into this century. It is well documented and the beliefs behind it recorded by A. A. Popov, the Russian anthropologist in his numerous books and articles.

Cernunnos' rituals and, from the evidence of offerings left secretly at cave shrines, his worship, continued long after nominal Christianization of Europe. The Highland Calluinn (Hazel-tree) Ritual is an example of one such rite, still in practice in the nineteen century. The Protestant cleric who recorded it seems to have had no inkling of its meaning, but he writes that the people of the west Highlands, in the middle of the

seventeenth century, were "little more than heathens, having been neglected by the Roman Church." According to Dwelly, of Dwelly's Gaelic-English Dictionary fame, it is an old west Highland belief that old Calluinn night, when the winds blow from the West, is the night of the fecundation of the trees. The West is the direction of the Celtic Other World, and of the dead. One wonders if this post-Solstice celebration marks the successful return of the shaman, (as well as the sun) from the Land of the Dead with his sack of new souls and spiritual gifts from the Ancestors. (See the Yule Druid Missal-Any for 1986 for the "Santa" Claus-Cernunnos-Flying shaman connection.)

*Quote from the R.D.N.A New and Full Moon Day Service

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

It's the summer and Carleton has been quiet. However the tree and flowers are beautiful and inspiring here, worthy of just finding time and sitting outside contemplating, or just doing the work one might've done inside. The weather has been a little strange; some of August was surprisingly cool. The Carleton grove will have started up by the time this appears, though as I right it is still two weeks away.

Sylvagaia/Elder Grove: News from France

Hi folks

I feel it's time for me to move on and I just want to say good bye and thanks. Seems the most decent thing to do. I haven't talked a lot lately. The computer's been broke for about three months, but I've enjoyed the time when we did talk. Thanks Stacey and Mike, you're very kind people. Brightest blessings to you.

Please consider the Sylvagaia Proto Grove as missing in action. It never really got into action anyway, coward that it is.... Nobody's fault.

Life is very tough and complicated at the moment and we've got to work extremely hard to get things going again. Sometimes we feel a bit depressed. It's not easy seeing your crops blown away by the beautiful but often uncaring hands of nature. When the Mother has a scratch, the continents shake. Farming is weird business.

I've learned a lot from Reformed Druidism and will keep many of your insights and humour close to me, as I will stumble on, figuring out my own strange and personal form of earth spirituality.

See you somewhere

Willem

Awen Proto-Grove: News from Calgary

Greetings everyone!

Awen Grove is a small grove that is starting out in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. We have been in existence for just under a year, but all oak trees start out as little nuts, so we should be ok...

Our focus is on the Path of Service: Service to the Gods, Service to the Community and Service to the Self

We have done a few public rituals, our first being Samhain 2003, and we are beginning to make ourselves known to the general community for local community service through volunteer efforts and event planning.

All of us are looking forward to interacting more with other folks within the RDNA!

Blessings,

Athelia Nihtscada, Senior Druid of Awen Grove
awengrove@yahoo.ca

Aelven Star Grove: News from Pennsylvania

Greetings from Aelvenstar Grove!

After an 'interesting' summer, I am continuing Ogham studies and have been gathering sticks for magick and divination. I made a really neat wand last year, and am just about to put finishing touches on my staff.

Other news.... A website is in the works and is coming along slowly but surely. Will keep you posted

The Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire runs August 1 through October 24, 2004 and we are organizing an outing for any and all who would like to join our small group for the outing. Please email me if interested: aelvenstargrove@yahoo.com

Peace and blessings in the Mother,

Autaini
Arch Druidess Aelvenstar Grove

Digitalis Grove: News from D.C.

Robert Larson's death deeply affected me, as his influence in founding the Berkeley Grove and publishing of the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) led to the re-emergence of my Carleton Grove and inspired me to publish ARDA. I'm in the process of trying to get the Order of Danu (10th) established this year for departed Druids, and conferring with the Patriarch of Sirona to resume the filling of the Higher Orders. I'll tell you later how it works out. Right now, I'm preparing for the approach of hurricane Ivan and the arrival of a second dog in my home.

Creeks-Called-Rivers Grove: News from West Virginia

Creeks-Called-Rivers Grove has dried up and blown down the road to West Virginia. We're having another go here in WV as Little Mountains Grove. So far there have been no fatalities, so I'd say that's good.

—Darren

Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross – Muskogee/Mother Grove Oklahoma

The editor extends her apologies for the belated posting of the Muskogee/Mother Grove news. Partially due to moving and partially because she didn't think anyone would actually send anything there, she had not checked her P.O. box. Here is the Muskogee/Mother Grove news from Beltaine 2004.

It's been a while since I wrote an update about what's going on with the grove. Honestly we've been having activity,

but nothing exactly what I'd call newsworthy. But now, some threads of activity are weaving themselves together in an identifiable fashion. For instance, the thread of activity that dates back to the late summer of '03. August to be exact. It was about a dream. I dreamed that I was standing beside Salt Creek (a tributary to the Arkansas River below Brushy Mountain, just outside Muskogee) and there came seven thin, sick head of cattle out of the creek. I awoke. I knew this dream. It was the second half of Pharaoh's first dream, signifying seven years of famine. Why the Old Ones were using biblical imagery to communicate the point, I do not know, but I'd learned from dreaming prophetic dreams and 'seeing" things not to ignore dreams such as this.

Making a common sense review, and a moral inventory of the ramifications of both not sharing the dream and sharing it, I decided to write about the vision-ream. The first time I broke the news of the dream was in the MOCC Free Voice (Sept. '03) making reference to a 2002 dream that probably dealt with the sacking of museums and libraries of Baghdad. I admitted that there were those who would wag their heads and label me a doomsayer, but I had to share the dream and what I had felt that it had revealed. I wrote: "if we are to hold out against this turbulent season, we must hold fast to our principles, our customs, and our traditions. We must learn to cooperate and to build together. Our teachings are the foundation of hope, and our traditions are the very blueprint of stability. Let us also use vision to be overcomers. I am not a doomsayer, and I believe that we can weather the coming season and come out smelling more or less like a rose." I anticipated a backlash of persons making mention of the Archdruid going insane. Oddly, there was a consensus that hard times did appear on the horizon, and they also seemed extended and difficult.

Not being the good, little, obedient clergy person, I found myself where I've been several times before. I was endangering future non-profit status as a church for my local grove by commenting on political and economic topics... perhaps because I am a Druid and Druidism has historically overstepped polite boundaries a number of times, perhaps because there's a higher law than a tax code. In October's issue I revisited the seven years of hard times between 2003-2012, this time urging the use of wisdom. "We ought always to seek out wisdom. Not only in facing the future, but, in confronting our own mistakes and our own shadows. We are slightly less than perfect; though we are hardly ever confronted with this fact... we have our shortcomings. We have our shadow selves. It is unavoidable... Wisdom, like the taproot of the oak, runs deep to reach precious water. So when we put wisdom to use, it goes deep within and all around us to search out life giving and life affirming answers. Not just metaphysically, but readily put to use to meet most every need."

November covered sacrifice. December covered cooperation. "Traditions change. Wisdom is oft unheeded and under-appreciated. Sacrifice often seems wasted. But no one can deny the worth of cooperation.

"I am often held at awe at the sheer raw power of cooperation. That power arises from the fact that when you have two people agreeing on one thing, the power of consensual reality meets the magick of faerie sight. This concept is lost on no one. In the Bible, it manifestly states that 'where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them.' The meeting place of mind, spirit and body is the place where the divine can intervene. It is where concept takes on the power of force. Cooperation is where things get done. It is the wellspring of all accomplishment.

"Cooperation is the antithesis of self-serving pride. One cannot succeed in cooperation when the do not compromise one with the other, because that is the very nature of cooperation. More than one agrees upon an idea, both come to a mutually beneficial agreement as to how to accomplish the end, and they compromise on self-sufficiency by developing independence. That is cooperation.

"I freely admit, in a religion such as Druidism, so individualistic that to mention cooperation seems to some to be a dirty word, it is almost an alien invasion. After all, doesn't cooperation mean that we must give up some of our freedom? Well, Druids have their role historically being involved in Order and working together, too. Be fair about it. In the MOCC Order of Ascension and Ordination (specifically in the Ritual of the Staff) all the MOCC clergy are charged 'to together bear both responsibility, co-workers upon the common land.' Cooperation gets that dirt underneath the fingernails.

"Working together toward a common goal. For us, we must look at cooperative economics, cooperative ventures, and cooperative effort. No one is left behind in our way of thinking. This is the very basis of what we teach socially: that we are part of a World Tribe that we form a Tuath—a tribe—with strong ties as long as we honor those ties and do not walk away from them. With all the talents we have been gifted with, there is no such thing as a 'weak link' in our chain. Everyone has their contribution to make; everyone has their unique place within the circle."

And with Yule, I closed the secular calendar year and began my annual sabbatical. It's a bit of tradition that I observe between Yule and Ostara, and it helps to refresh the spirit, sol I take it without fail, unrepentant of my doing so.

I dreamed again. I was in a coracle, one of those little Irish boats of wickerwork with watertight skins over it, looking for all the world like a flipped over turtle shell floating in the water. All around me were bundles of tinder, and I know the flaming arrows soon would be coming down. I was going out on the Western Sea, but couldn't see my own destination.

There were three cases before me, three bundles in midnight blue velvet. All of a sudden, the coverings were removed. Revealed were three items, all in heavily wrought silver of fine craftsmanship, fashioned to depict grapevines, fruit and knot work all woven together. The first item is a drum, the second a harp, and the third a chalice.

One must assume that, being upon the Path, staying in one spot can be a bad thing. One either tends and appreciates this spot, or one steps again onto the Path and appreciate the ever-changing lessons that are both the love and the spice of life. To quote Julia Child, "Life itself is the proper binge." And in appreciation of life, I took the lesson of the year-king and after 19 years of tending to the MOCC—Muskogee/Mother Grove (9 years unofficially, 10 years officially), this humble Druid stepped down from the Archdruidic Chair.

You know the trick where the magician pulls the tablecloth off the table and all the place settings remain undisturbed? Yeah, it's kind of like that. Eyebrows raised, there was some resignation to the fact, but for a while nothing happened. Then some voices came out to the fore noticing something, or rather a lack of something.

"Tom, anything going on with the College this weekend?" Even though the official name of the group is the MOCC these days, members of the M/M Grove still use the shortened form of the old name, "The College." "Nope," I respond. Interesting thing about the word "nope." It does not mean "no" as many people assume. Otherwise, you could say "I have nope money in my pocket." You can, however, say with complete assurance that other people will understand you (at least in the Old South) that ever-famous quadruple negative: "Nope, y'all, I ain't got none nohows." "Nope" takes on the connotation of an observance akin to the Maine "a-yup," except that it means the

exact opposite. It smacks of a commentary that not only is a negative response to a question, but also effectively communicates disinterest or negates the preceding comment or question with one fell swoop.

So, one by one, I watched first this one, then that one, come up and view the mantle of office. They take note of what it means, reflect on what being an Archdruid would mean to them. "Tom, anything going on with the College this weekend?" "Nope," I respond, "still waiting on someone to step up to the bat. I can't do it when I'm gone." They look at me. "I don't have enough experience," they say. "Experience is the best teacher," I say, "It's the only way to learn.'

At Ostara it was time for the blessing of the fields. With the time of the rite nearing, no one had truly stepped to the fore, and it was becoming obvious that the post of Archdruid was about to become a communally held post, mostly so that people could get their feet wet in a leadership role. Br. Shadowdancer (Mark) was the first to start calling around and organizing. In just a few days, a rite was thrown together. Nothing fancy, but a wholly legitimate rite with seven people in attendance. At ritual's closing, we held hands. Together we seven set forth the Faith. "With these words, we bless the fields..."

Rowan-Oak Grove: News from Tulsa, OK

Rowan-Oak Grove has weathered the rainiest summer in my memory, and a very trying several months resulting from actions of people within the grove and others outside belonging to another druid organization bringing the issue to our attention. the situation has finally been brought to a sense of closure and although it very nearly caused our demise as a grove we have emerged stronger though with a smaller congregation. arch-druid valens of the Circle of Cybele, one of the groves in the rowan-oak family is in texas at the moment, and we have not heard from sis jokers wild arch druidess of our texas grove in a month or so but they were having problems of their own. TBRSC our wagner grove has reported that all is well for them and has shown strong support of our actions throughout our own troubles. while waiting for the rain to quit so my roof can be fixed we called a temporary halt to classes being held at my home during inclement weather. Mabon is our next scheduled rite and classes are tentatively being held at the park near my home. there have been several births and deaths within our congregation including the loss of sis white tigress' two cats, one to a brutal killing by persons unknown, and the arch-druidess own beloved familiar adonis the perfect kitty. however a new kitty has come to live in our hearts for the arch-druidess was given a large grey tortishell tabby named Hercules for his strength and very talkative. the grove puter recently got sick and had to have windowsxp reinstalled and we have been troubleshooting for almost a week tracking down drivers and glitches in programming. but at least the puter is working reasonably well. it is scheduled for a new hard drive and a fresh install of programs so the current hd can be reformatted and used to build another tower. Our online grove is growing again and recently added a new member who is considering joining the main offline grove with his entire family.. well i guess that about sums up the news for the Rowan-Oak Grove family may Mabon bring all druids throughout the world a fresh sense of renewal and a harvesting of the lessons learned throughout the summer with a new perspective.

healing, light, and peace to you all
M.S. White Raven arch-druidess
Rowan-Oak Grove
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Dravidia Grove: News from Indiana

All is well here in Southern Indiana, we have had a very rainy season, and it has not been a good Summer due to it...Have taken time to download more files for my database, and have spent the time reading some of my books that I just acquired...

Rogue River Protogrove: News from Oregon

Our group celebrated Fall Equinox over the Labor Day holiday by camping in Oregon's Rogue River National Forest.

Looking ahead to Samhain, a new member and Priestess of Ana is creating for our group a very special ritual honoring Ana, Welsh Goddess of the Realms of the Dead. Please email us for details, as we will hold this gathering in October on the banks of Big Butte Creek, which is at the heart of the Rogue Valley's watershed.

The first weekend in October we're also looking forward to a visit by the intrepid Gordon Cooper, Druid scholar and member of one of the few surviving Woodcraft organizations. Gordon had planned to attend a Cthulhu Mythos convention in Portland, OR instead, but the rugose tentacles will have to ooze ichor without him. (For background on Woodcraft and Earthcraft, please see: www.Earthcrafters.org)

Fall blessings,

Aigeann

Sunset Proto-Grove: News from California

Things have been going well here personally, spiritually etc. I am in the middle of some legal stuff that is going to drone on for a few more months. Hopefully it will be resolved by Yule so I can spend my week off baking and concentrating on my family unit, gingerbread, apple cider, and evening logs in the fireplace as I like to do.

Have been having intense talks with a friend about the nature of humankind. I always am so disappointed in the human race's (as a whole. Think politics and general international consensus on foreign aide etc.) unwillingness to see beyond themselves and their current situations to the future. She thinks I am naive to expect it of others because she does not think that empathy, caring, and foresight are necessarily basic human traits (outside of the family and close friendship unit.) for the mass population. This has led to some interesting discussions. I am thankful to have an outlet for 'intellectual conversation'. The kids don't do too well with that- at least at the same level, and being a business major not too many of my classmates are very into deeper intellect either. (Thus the nick-name at school - 'Tree-Hugger'.)

I am still looking forward to those wonderful cool months and long 'crunchy' evening walks in the leaves whenever I can squeeze one in. I hope everyone is doing well!

O.

Poison Oak Grove, News from California

Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

One night while eating dinner there was a slow crrrr-aaa-ccckkkk and crash! I said out loud, "What the hell was that?" My first thought was oh no, fire! (We had two fires in Canyon about a month ago, one very close to the house and were ready to evacuate), but then reason kicked in and I realized that's the sound of a tree falling in the woods! It didn't sound like it hit any buildings and we went out to investigate. A huge live oak

tree had fallen across the path to the house and down the little glen almost to the deck of the people who live below. Other neighbors were coming out to see too and check to see if anything was damaged. Apparently it was heard from quite a distance as other residents of the town were asking about it at the post office.

I saw at this as an "opportunity" rather than an inconvenience. It was a well-timed gift. We will not want for firewood this winter, even if the neighbors take some, which is important as a wood burning stove is our heat source. And no one or creature was hurt and nothing was damaged. Cernunnos was looking out for us! A neighbor told me that it was Celtic folklore that oak trees are known for protecting people and not falling on them. If any one knows more about this please let us know.

A Passing...

It was Bob Larson who brought the RDNA to California from Carleton. He founded the Berkeley Grove in 1968, which later spawned Live Oak Grove, Hazelnut Grove, Birch Grove, Duir De Danu Grove, Tuatha De Danu Grove, Baccharis Grove, and Poison Oak Grove. The traditions most of us in the California Groves follow can be traced back to Bob. He made Druidism come alive with his interest and vitality. He is responsible, along with Isaac Bonewits, for the Druid Chronicles (Evolved), a revision of the Druid Chronicles made in 1976.

I had the pleasure to meet Bob on a couple of occasions, one of them before my Third Order ordination where he and the AD asked me to cover my ears so they could discuss the mystery of mysteries of the Order. He came to our Beltaine service in 2002 and gifted the grove with a bottle of fine Irish whisky.

Bob was a subscriber to A Druid Missal-Any and had wanted to write an article on Dalon Ap Landu. His brother sent me the Epistle he had been working on, which Mike will include in ARDA 2.

Bob passed away on Lughnasadh, 6 August.

Obituary for Robert George Larson

By Lawrence T. Larson

Robert (Bob) Larson was born in Waukegan, Illinois to Lawrence and Margaret Larson on August 31st, 1943. He passed away in Oakland, CA on August 6, 2004. Bob was a graduate of Waukegan Township High School and advanced his education at Carleton College from 1961 to 1965. At that time, so typical of the 1960s, Bob became a free spirit, grew his hair long, bought a guitar and headed west. Arriving in Oakland, he first worked as a longshoreman and for the last 25+ years, as a printer.

Bob loved to play guitar, mandolin and banjo, and for several years, participated in Renaissance Fairs. He collected and read books with a passion and had a particular interest in all things Celtic/Irish.

Bob never married. He was preceded in death by his mother, father, and older brother Donald. He is survived and was loved by his two older brothers, Richard and Lawrence; two nephews, Lawrence and Eric; three nieces Jacqueline, Christina and Kathleen; one grandnephew and four grandnieces. We will him Godspeed and a hearty welcome into God's Kingdom. Funeral arrangements are by the Neptune Society of Oakland. He will be interred with his parents in Warren Cemetery in Gurnee, Illinois.

Editor's note: Bob's brother Lawrence requests if anyone has any memories of Bob that they would like to share that he would appreciate receiving them. Please send them to A Druid Missal-Any, address at the end of this newsletter, or to poppinjay@earthlink.net and I will forward them on to him.

Robert Larson's Memorial Ritual

By Stephen Abbott, Hazelnut Grove,
Transcribed with notes by Tegwedd Shadow Dancer,
Duir de Danu Grove

Editor's note: Stephen and Bob were longtime friends since the early days of the RDNA in California in the 1970s. It was with them that the "Celtic Think Tank" was born: they and other druids would gather at the print shop where Bob worked to talk, share ideas, tell awful druish puns, and basically spend time with good friends. Stephen considered Bob to be one of his mentors. Stephen did this memorial ritual for Bob after finding out about his passing into the arms of the Earth Mother and has submitted it for publication in A Druid Missal-Any

I set up the ritual in phases, trying to give it some form of structure.

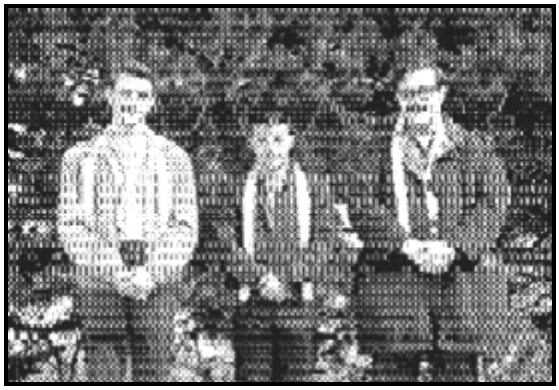
Phase 1: I performed a ritual bath to cleanse myself mentally, psychically, and physically. The bath was also helping me become more alert and awake. Now I was ready to perform the rite.

Phase 2: I set aside a ritual space in one of the vacant rooms. In this room, I already had some of my wooden furniture. I placed my two spears, my two staves, and my altar in the room. I set up my Tibetan shaman's drum, my three sickles, and a bronze candlestick with a single black candle. The candle, of course, was new. I placed the Druid books from Michael Scharding on one of the wooden shelves on the right side of the room. I then placed my Stonehenge pieces on either side of the Druid books. On the Altar, I placed my magickal teddy bear, which I identified to a degree with Terlach as a big teddy bear. For those who did not know him, he was a very large and tall man with long dark hair. [He was also a very gentle sweet man. te]

I placed my divination board on the floor in front of my altar. On the altar I placed my wizard's head, which bore an uncanny resemblance to Robert. Tegwedd called him Terlach, but I always just called him Robert. [I called him Terlach because that was his Druid name. te] I wore my ritual robe that Tegwedd had made for me years earlier. This robe has the symbol [if you can, Mike, insert the Druid sigil here. I have no way of doing so here. te] the shield and two spears on the front and back. I also wore my Druid ribbons. I placed my two tap lights on either side of my divination board.

Phase 3: The Ritual: The ritual itself was quite simple. I started it out by ritually lighting the black candle. In this ritual, the black candle represented death and the dark realm. Next, I called upon the four quarter and the four elements, plus Spirit in the Sacred Center. Then I called upon the Earth Mother and Dalon Ap Landu to join the rite. Afterwards, I sang the "Earth Mother" song. Badly, I'm afraid, since I was a little rusty. As we all know, our gods and goddesses have a sense of humor. Next I consecrated and shared the Waters of Life. I transformed the Waters of Sleep into the Waters of Life [because of certain metabolic peculiarities, Stephen cannot have alcohol. te] Because of the move, I did not have access to any true Waters of Life. I used the wooden chalice, which had been used in my rituals for the Hazelnut MotherGrove. Next I got rather personal and simply talked to Robert as if he were in the room with me. I related to him my memories of him and the many rituals that he and I had participated in together. I related to him about going to his apartment to play war games. Robert had been an avid war game player. I told him that I still had all the games he had given me such as Winter War, Soldiers, and The Franco-Prussian War. All of these games had been published by SPI (Simulations Publications Inc.). I related to him the time when he had given Gaelic classes to members of the Grove. I told him I still possessed the Gaelic handouts he had given to us after every class. I had put those handouts together and put them into a Druid notebook. I related to him all the funny things that had happened when he and I were together. I told him I would miss him and how bad I had felt when I lost contact with him after moving to Sacramento now some 10 years ago. [Has it really been 10 years? te]

Phase 4: I sang the "Lady's Bransle" and "The Lughnasadh Song", after which I had a period of silence. I commented afterwards about his passing on Lughnasadh and that he would return from the otherworld with many stories and tales about his adventures there.



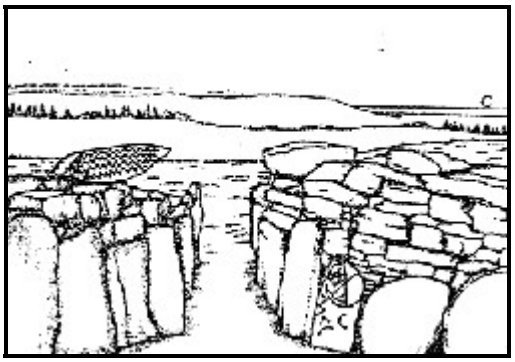
Phase 5: I called on the Earth Mother and Dalon Ap Landu to bless his path to the otherworld and to guide and protect him while he resided there. Then there was another moment of silence. I performed a divination with cards from the following Tarot decks.

1. Was the "Celtic Tarot," which oddly enough is an Italian deck.
2. "Tarot of the Druids"
3. "The Faery Wicca Tarot"

The first card was from the Druid Tarot. It was the King of Swords. (upright) I felt Robert's presence strongly in this card. Like Robert, the King of Swords depicts a king of great intellect and in this deck he is none other than King Arthur in middle age. The card depicts a man of great intellect and wisdom, which fits Robert to a T. This card gave to the reading the element of Air and the quarter of the east. A card of pure intellect and wisdom. The next card came from the Faery Wicca deck. The card was the four of Fire. The card's title was Lord of Completion. This seems appropriate as well. It is also known as the Lord of Perfected Work. This seemed to fit. Robert always tried to do his best and make things look good. This card brings to the reading the element of Fire and the quarter of the south. The next card came from the Italian "Celtic" deck. The 6 of Cups. This card's title is the "Lady of Pleasure." Robert loved to have a good time. He seemed to love being alive. This card gave the reading the element of Water and the quarter of the west. The last card was from the Italian Druid deck. The 9 of Pentacles. The card's title is the "Lady of Material Gain." Robert was concerned about money and all things earthy when I knew him. He wasn't rich, but I believed he lived comfortably. That card gave the reading the element of earth and the quarter of the north. That completed the Tarot layout. All the four elements were represented. The next card would be the Ogham card from "The Celtic Oracle." This card was the Spindle OIR. This is one of the vowel sounds after the basic 20. This Ogham card relates to the concepts of lighting and beauty. I read the passage assigned to this card.

I ended this phase by saying my final goodbyes to my friend and fellow Druid Robert. I thanked the Earth Mother and Dalon Ap Landu for attending the rite. I then drew the Druid sigil three times and spoke the words "Peace, Peace" and "Peace." I then returned the waters to the Mother by pouring them into the fish pond in the back yard. This concluded the Druid sendoff of AD Robert Larson. May he stay in our memories forever. May his passing not be in vain and may the Earth guide and protect his spirit till he returns to this world again.

Stephen Warren McCauley Abbott
AD Hazelnut MotherGrove (in abeyance)



Thoughts on Becoming an Elder

By Stacey Weinberger

I was listening to Ashley Mac Isaac's version of The Mull of Kintyre on the way home from work a couple of weeks ago. It was the song I had been listening to while driving back from the pre-adoption meeting of my youngest cat who had gone missing the night before; somehow I felt playing it might help him come back. I was crying as the words evoked a time past, and my thoughts couldn't help but turn to Bob Larson, whose passing I just received news of just the day before.

I had not been in the Berkeley Grove when Bob was AD, but have heard tales of him playing the recorder as members were arriving or how he could command a service, his presence, and his sense of humor. I did have the opportunity to meet him three times, one of which he came to our Beltaine service, where I did get to the privilege of hearing his sonorous voice sing the Earth Mother chant...I have regrets on not getting to know him better. His was a wealth of knowledge never to be tapped. I do know he was working on an article about Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of each and every Grove invoked in every RDNA service, but it will never see the light of day. This is the second passing of an elder in the RDNA (Emmon Bodfish in 1999), and it made me realize this will be starting to happen as the first generation of RDNA Druids get older. Very sobering. The next generation of Druids are becoming the elders, my generation!

But wait, I'm not old enough yet, I don't know enough yet, I'm not wise, I'm still learning! How could I be an elder? But the signs are there. Both parents are dead, there is no "big person" to go to for even the mundane world questions. My role models were dying off. With the death of my mentor Emmon five years ago I was not having much success of finding a new teacher with whom I was as sympathetic and who knew what I needed to know to continue on the path of my personal training as a Druid that he had set me upon and that had the potential of becoming as comfortable as a pair of brown loafers. Ironically it wasn't until after Emmon died that I "received the calling" to Third Order. I was on my own, with just a letter from him from the early 90s when I inquired about attaining Thirds, what his requirements were, etc, but I hadn't been ready then and merely played with my studies. After he died I was finally ready but my teacher, mentor, and friend was gone. I was left to muddle my way on my own. In the meantime I become the mover and shaker of my Grove, begin study of Scottish Gaelic, start reading books on Celtic history, cultural/anthropological Shamanism, maintain the old grove site, start publishing the Missal-Any again, become a moderator of the RDNA email list, and am dragged kicking and screaming to the office of Arch Druid of my Grove. I start getting inquiries from people wanting to be ordained.

But wait, I'm becoming the person I would want as a mentor (ignoring the foibles of course). The various people I thought could possibly become teachers are treating me as an equal and value my opinion and sometimes even, gasp, look to me for advice. Is this taken to be a sign? Is it time to assume the mantel of elder now? Is it time to become my own role model as someone suggested? Is it ok? I know I will never know enough or be wise enough to my satisfaction, and there is always that nagging doubt that someone will find out those truths and point and laugh. Still, this coat does feel kind of comfy now as I sit by the fire on a cold fall night, stirring the embers a bit, and look out at the stars.

Taranis Tracts

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA
COUNCIL OF TARANIS to the
COUNCIL OF DALON AP LANDU

Greetings to my brothers and sisters of the Reform,

I bear good news and hope you are well.

This morning after a long and difficult vigil in the midst of the tornados, lightning and howling winds of Ivan that pummeled my grove of D.C. with heavy rains, but fortunately left none harmed, I have now fully assumed the mantle and responsibilities of the Patriarchy of the Order of Taranis at eight A.M. on the eighteenth of September 2004. The storm is over and the Council of Taranis was established and convened at eighth street SE of Washington DC at a Starbucks coffee house. I hope to cautiously reign with wisdom, humility and compassion over its functions for as long as I am able.

The following ground rules for the Council were established. When I pass on or step down, the Council is encouraged to continue to meet without me, on their own, until a

new Patriarch is established by the Order of Sirona to replace me. Each full member has an equal vote, and voting shall be by a 2/3 majority of all those who reply to the council's business after a reasonable effort has been made to reach them, and the Patriarch must be definitely be informed of the vote before and afterwards to be official. Proposals unfinished after three months have elapsed from the date announced are voided. Votes must be made in person to the Patriarch or sent by phone, fax, e-mail or other electrical means. No members can be expelled from or barred from participating in the Order, except with both the assent of the Patriarch and the 2/3 majority vote of the council, and it is hard to think that such a situation should ever happen.

The first order of business, over a triple-shot Java-chip frappacino, at our full council was to establish the ordination liturgy to bring in more members in the future. A slightly modified version of Nozomi Kibou's unofficial service was unanimously adopted and was arranged so that any priest/ess wishing to enter the Order could perform it themselves, after being invited, by any member of Taranis, to join the council's exploration of the mysteries of the weather. The full text of the ordination will be published later in ARDA 2 this fall. The symbol of the Order is decreed to be a black and yellow ribbon bound together in three knots (and worn as a maniple over either hand) to remind us that Druidry is not only about speaking with thunder, not only of speaking with the whisper of winds, and not to hesitate to choose which option when the course is certain enough. The other symbol of the Order is an umbrella or golf club to be carried as is comfortable, preferably a yellow and/or black one.

The second order of business, conducted at nine A.M., was to unanimously elect Irony Sade to assume upon himself the Patriarchy of the Order of Llyr, the Ninth Order in accordance with the power invested in our Council by Reformed tradition. Nine cheers were cried out in celebration. The council here now bids that Brother Irony forthwith quickly devise and adopt an appropriate ceremony, become consecrated and convene the Council of Llyr. We chose Irony for he has shown great wisdom of the land and also from the extensive experience he has from his travels by and on the many oceans and seas of the world. He is skilled in the ways of boating, fishing and swimming; and he will know whom to call and join his Order. The Council and Patriarch wish him great success in his endeavors.

The third order of business, conducted at ten A.M. was to induct David Fisher as an honorary member of our Council, with no voting privileges or responsibilities, but with freedom to address the council with his wisdom and bear its symbols. If he should later choose to fully become a member of the council, that request is granted at such time it is made.

The fourth order of business, conducted at ten thirty A.M. was to invite Samuel Adams, the Druid of Saint Olaf College to join the Order's Council at his convenience. We await you.

With that concluded, the Council of Taranis wished to you, my brothers and sisters, fair winds and pleasant weather, then called a recess and finished its business in good humor.

I hereby verify that all this is true, and submit this to you by the power of electricity.

Yours in the Mother,
Michael James Anthony Ulhail Scharding,
ODAL, Gr., Be.
Patriarch of Taranis
Day 49 of Foghamhar, Year XLII of the Reform

* * * * *

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA
COUNCIL OF SIRONA

Peace be unto all humanity, and in particular, unto our brothers and sisters in the Reform.

At 2100 hours UTC on this date, every patriarch or priest consecrated to Sirona being present, the Patriarch declared the Council of Sirona to be in session.

After reverent waiting, the Council turned its attention to expressions of hope, from some of those of the Reform, for consecration of a Patriarch of Taranis. The Council decided, in one voice, that the time of waiting has been fulfilled, and directed the Patriarch of Sirona to inform Michael Scharding, he of that name who was ArchDruid of the Mother Grove, that he is declared Patriarch-Elect of Taranis, and bid him cause a ceremony to be conducted, consecrating him to that Spirit's service. The Council and Patriarch convey to him best wishes for a crackling and spirit charged conduct of his vocation.

Peace be unto all humanity, and in particular, unto the Patriarch of Taranis and his whole Order.

I, G. R. Zempel, only Patriarch of Sirona, have set my hand to this on behalf of the Council of Sirona.

—G. R. "Gary" Zempel

Interview with David Fisher

By Stephen Crimmins,
Archdruid Emiritus of Carleton Grove

I recently had the privilege of transcribing an interview of the man who is generally known as the primary founder of Reformed Druidism, David Fisher. I was given the ability thanks to Michael (Mec) Scharding, who conducted the interview, as

well as to Eric Hilleman for lending me transcribing equipment. The first thing that came into my mind was: how did Scharding manage to get an interview with Fisher who, I had thought, was too embarrassed of Druidism to give an interview. The key, Scharding insisted, was following up on his original call, nothing more. My image of David Fisher has been changing for some time since I was introduced to the contents of the International Druid Archives last year. Listening to the interview has changed my opinion further. This article is an attempt to distill some of what I have learned about our heretofore legendary founder, as well as to share some of the gems of the interview. For those who want to read the complete transcript, it will be published in the oral history section of ARDA II. If you can't wait that long, you can probably pester myself or Scharding.

Margot Adler's Drawing Down the Moon paints a picture of Fisher similar to the one that I had until recently. According to it "In 1964 the [religion requirement] regulation was abolished but, much to the surprise-and it is said, horror-of the original founders, the RDNA continued to hold services and spread its organization far beyond the college campus. One of the founders, David Fisher, who wrote many of the original rituals, is now an Episcopal priest and teacher of theology at a Christian college in the South, having apparently washed his hands of the RDNA." I know, moreover, that this opinion is fairly wide spread among those people I've talked to but I have recently come to realize that this is not exactly true.

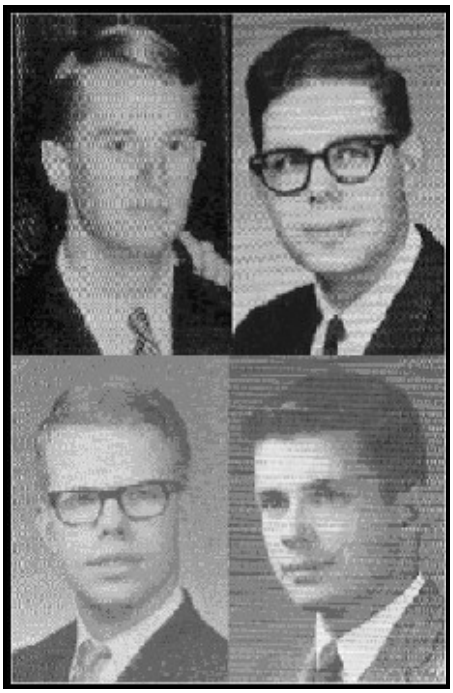


Figure 1 Fisher, Cherniack, Nelson, and Frangquist.

It is, of course, widely known that there were actually three founders: Norman Nelson, Howard Cherniack, as well as David Fisher. However, for some reason, Fisher has gotten most of the blame. For instance, Joan Carruth's "Epistle to the Myopians" asks "May the Earth-Mother keep David the Fisher in Her sight and bless him, for this is all his fault." But, since he was accompanied by two other founders why is he held above the others? Certainly, while Cherniack forgot about Druidism, Nelson has continued to be active to the present day.

The idea of Fisher as primary founder has precedents from the earliest days. He was the first person credited in the Druid Chronicles (Reformed) as preaching the word of Reformed Druidism, most likely because he was the first Arch Druid. However, Fisher is also often credited with bringing in the majority of the customs of the Druids. In so far as Fisher was the Arch Druid he may have had a special burden to come up with liturgical material. According to the Druid Chronicles and other sources Fisher claimed that he had been made a Druid in high school. However, Fisher has refuted this, saying that he "never claimed any special consecration by a Druid in England." If that is true Fisher was never under the burden of creating material by himself as a "pre-existing" ritual.

Regardless, it seems clear that much of the creation of the Reformed Druids was shared. As he notes in the interview, "we sort of dreamed a piece up here and a piece up there, improvising as we went along the way people, I suppose, sometimes do." This is not to say, either, that Fisher was not the creator of much of the material. For instance he suggested that he "must've dreamed" the sigil up, though he doesn't remember much about his inspiration for and ideas about it except that the idea of "closing the circle" was important. The meditations were also his addition to the services. On the other hand many other parts of the Druids were the creation of some of the other founders and early members. Fisher credits the higher orders to a suggestion by Nelson and notes that the tenets are the only lasting contribution of Cherniack. Fisher credits the liturgy as something that "I and Norman Nelson wrought in 1963 on Saturdays," though he does not indicate whether the work was equal or not. Indeed the balance of the initial work will probably be left an open question for the future because, as Fisher points out, "I didn't take notes at the time because, obviously, I didn't think I was founding something for thirty, forty years..."

However, in the period after the founding, Fisher, of the three founders, did have a tendency to be a guiding force. Among his early letters are responses to early council proposals, not only accepting some and rejecting others, but also requesting changes in parts, as well sending his own proposals to the council. This occurred despite feeling that Druidism did not meet a need for him and, moreover, that he was being drawn by his increasing Christianity away from Druidism. However, a partial answer could be found in a later letter in which Fisher explained his desire for the proposals as trying to combat over complicated organization that his own actions had inspired. Hence he felt responsible, as a founder, to at least guide what he had started. However, in that type of action it is easy to see Fisher in a parental role that is missing from the later actions of either of the other two founders. This guidance indicates both that Fisher saw himself more as a founder and probably has led others to feel that he had a special role among the founders.

Fisher's interview indicates another 'founder' who was more important as a source of meaning in rituals: David Frangquist. According to Fisher, Frangquist "essentially took what had been a protest against religion requirement and an occasional exercise in pantheistic speculation and turned it into, if not a religion, something like a religion." Moreover, Frangquist was the first leader of the group for whom the Druids "served a [spiritual] need." We know that Frangquist's search for material was apparently more extensive than Fisher's. While it would be difficult to say how much he added it is possible to mention a few notable contributions. Frangquist published the Druid Chronicles (Reformed). While at least some of the material was the writings of other druids, the more serious material in the books of Customs and Meditations is certainly Frangquist's. He is also responsible for the collection of the Green Book of Meditations, which was intended to be a guide to later Arch Druids. While Fisher can be seen as creating the Druids, Frangquist created a groundwork for its continuation and is probably most responsible that it is still around. Frangquist has also continued to be a leader in the Druids. When

the Carleton Grove faltered in the 1980's Frangquist came to stir up interest. Of course, all of this is not to say that Frangquist is the founder of Druidism instead of Fisher. Fisher indicates that Frangquist "refounded" the Reformed Druids; that is to say that while Fisher along with Nelson and Cherniack started the Druids and gave it much of its outward form, Frangquist was the prime mover in imbuing the movement with meaning. Both individuals were important in the creation of what Druidism is, but in different ways.

It is also claimed that, having started something that blossomed into something he hadn't expected, Fisher "washed his hands" of Reformed Druidism. What is true is that, after a point, Fisher stopped providing the guidance that he initially offered and has stopped initiating contact with Druids; the latest letter from Fisher to a Druid in the International Druid Archives has been dated to 13 April 1970. In his interview Fisher says that he has replied to letters sent to him more recently, though none of the replies have made their way to the Archives. However, his letters have stopped being instructions and aid for a wide audience of Druids

Fisher has expressed concern for the Druids; he particularly expressed worry about people who approach the Druids as something that it is not. Perhaps, he has even wished from time to time that he never started the Druids so that people could not be hurt by it. But having such concerns does not mean that he feels that, on the whole, the Druids are not worthwhile. Indeed, at the end of the interview he wished that the Druids would continue to be around as an aid to those for whom it was suitable.

But if Fisher has not washed his hands of Druidism, why do many people believe he did? Before answering that I will examine why Fisher's early guidance and more active role have faded. This is given a fairly clear answer in the interview. Fisher admits that "I've not maintained an active tie with Druidism because sometimes the leadership has seemed very strange to me." Though Fisher may have felt responsible to some degree early on as the nature of the Reform has changed his desire to guide those led by a different spirit of the Reform has dissipated.

There are, however, good reasons why Fisher has been seen as a recluse. For my own belief I would point to the research of Scharding who only managed to speak to Fisher after ten years and multiple attempts. A certain feeling came from him to me and, I would think, to others that Fisher didn't want to talk. Admittedly Scharding may have had been helped along in his belief. After telling Robert Larson that he had been unable to contact Fisher during an interview Larson's response is 'that figures,' followed by an explanation of why Larson isn't surprised. That may have been enough to turn a string of unsuccessful attempts to contact Fisher into a belief that Fisher couldn't be contacted.

However, the quotation from Margot Adler is of an earlier date and probably arises from the period when Neopagans began to use the vehicle of Reformed Druidism. Certainly Fisher became much more silent as his creation turned towards this new religious category and his Christianity may have convinced others that he was more opposed to the new path of Reformed Druidism than he actually was. In specific, I would point to Isaac Bonewits as the origin for the belief, especially since he was the primary source for the Reformed Druid material in Drawing Down The Moon. I cannot help but feel that when Bonewits wrote that "many of the older members of the RDNA disapprove of Neopagan Druidism, considering it a dangerous step backwards" he was thinking of David Fisher. Bonewits had a vision of Reformed Druidism not as becoming a neopagan vehicle but as already being one, a point which was denied by many of the founders. While there may be other reasons that Bonewits and others saw Fisher as being repulsed by his creation, Bonewits held this belief and was instrumental in its spread.

I hope that I have been able to convince people of two things. The first is that while Fisher is most famous as the founder of Druidism there were others who might take more credit especially in the creation of the meaning and continuation of Druidism. Secondly, that Fisher has not repented of his creation. He still takes an interest in the Druids even if he doesn't actively seek them out. His actions and inactions in the past may have led to other views, but those may now be cleared away. I, at least, have come to a new respect for Fisher and for the importance of other founders as well as for who Fisher is today. I would like to end with a few quotes from the interview, which I felt to be interesting.

* (On how the Druids were started) One night Norman Nelson, Howard Cherniack, and myself were having one drink too many and were trying to figure out what we could do to deal with this (religious) requirement.
* (An analogy for Reformed Druidism) Well, I suppose, given people's need for alternative spiritualities, the Druids are like a template on a word processor that can be filled in with a number of contents.
* (On some of the sources of Reformed Druidism) I must admit we were all readers of science fiction or science fantasy
* (On the Druid Chronicles (Reformed)) I thought it was pretty fun.

Seasons of Food

Fall Equinox 2004 - Figs
By Oriana Lewallen, Sunset Proto-Grove

As the harvest of fresh figs enter into the farmers market this time of year, they also seem to eek their way into appetizers, salads and dessert menus at a variety of restaurants. These sweet and versatile fruits have perked my interest at this time, the beginning of fall, and so I thought I would learn a bit more about them.

Figs, as it turns out, are one of the oldest foods in recorded history. It is "believed to be indigenous to western Asia, but was distributed by humans throughout the Mediterranean [region.]....

Evidence of fig cultivation has been found in excavations of Neolithic sites as early as 5,000 BC." (Hellenic LLC)

Figs are mentioned in Greek and Roman mythology, as well as the Christian bible. The prophet Mohammed and Homer both made mention of the good attributes of figs and these sweet fruits were said to be the favorite food of Cleopatra. In fact, it is speculated that Cleopatra's last serving of figs hid in their midst the famous asp, which has been blamed as the cause of her death. Figs are also useful as an herbal remedy, "The milky juice of the freshly-broken stalk of a Fig has been found to remove warts on the body." (Grieve) In Roman mythology the creation of figs was attributed to the god Bacchus, and images of Bacchus were shown with a garland of fig leaves about his head.

It is unclear whether figs were first introduced to the Celts during the original Celtic tribal migration into Europe and Mediterranean or whether the Romans brought figs to the Celts. It has been noted that, "By the end of the Roman Empire, fifth century, fig culture was well distributed. It stretched from Africa, Portugal, France, [the] Channel Islands, and the southern part of England." (FAB) Due to climate, it is unlikely that figs were cultivated widely in England until later, as the trees cannot adjust to cold weather climates. It is very likely however, that dried figs were brought to the Celts regularly along the established trade routes. These days, "in Scotland and many parts of England a south wall is indispensable for their successful cultivation out of doors." (Grieve)

There are literally hundreds of varieties of figs, and the Calimyrna fig; grown in California's San Joaquin Valley requires "a most unusual type of pollination in order to have the fruit mature." (Valley Fig Growers) A tiny wasp called the Blastophaga enters the inverted blossom and pollinates the female flowers. The tiny wasp then exits the fig to pollinate others

Some interesting fig facts as prepared by the California Fig Board (website):

* Although considered a fruit, the fig is actually a flower that is inverted into itself. The seeds are drupes, or the real fruit. Figs are the only fruit to fully ripen and semi-dry on the tree.

* For many years the fig has been used as a coffee substitute. The fruit contains a proteolytic enzyme that is considered an aid to digestion and is used by the pharmaceutical industry.

* And, because of its high alkalinity it has been mentioned as being beneficial to persons wishing to quit smoking.

* Figs contain a natural humectant; a chemical that will extend freshness and moistness in baked products.

* California produced over 30 million pounds of dried figs in 1997. All dried figs harvested in the United States are grown in California's Central Valley.

Recipe for Figs

Dessert: Baked Figs with Honey
Serves 4
Ripe yet Firm Figs
4T Wild Honey
1T Olive Oil
Vanilla Ice Cream (optional)

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Snip of points of figs, and brush with olive oil. Arrange figs in small baking pan. (To avoid sticking you can either place each fig on its own individual fig leaf to bake, or simply grease the pan.) Immediately lower oven temperature to 400 degrees. Bake until they puff up, about 10 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool. After cooling split each fig in half lengthwise, and drizzle with 1 T of honey. For an added treat top off with a small scoop of vanilla or French vanilla ice cream and/or chopped walnuts. Serve immediately.

**End note: Another way I have had baked figs prepared recently as a salad and appetizer is to quarter them, without piercing the bottom, put a generous amount of gorgonzola cheese in the center, and wrap them in a very thin slice (or two) of prosciutto. (Enough to hold them together) the baking process appeared to be much the same as what I have presented above, maybe a minute or two longer. However, this is rich... so be sure to have a good glass of vino on hand. Enjoy!

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http://www.du.nw.schule.de/stgym/Irland/Celts/Timetable.htm
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http://www.botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/f/figcom12.html
Valley Fig Growers; http://www.valleyfig.com/index.htm

Dessert; Baked Figs with Honey- Figs Recipe created by Oriana after consulting a meal at Don Giovanni's, Napa, CA and a book on Italian cooking, "Food & Wine's Quick Italian cooking from scratch"... this recipe is conglomeration and variance from the two sources with the addition of vanilla ice cream being all

About Nwyfre

By: Rhiannon Hawk, Nemeton Aweyddion

Editor's note: in the Lughnasadh 2004 issue of A Druid Missal-Any Sister Rhiannon wrote an article, Geasa: The Ethics in the Teaching Way of Nwyfre and A Clear Path to Rid Unhealthy Energetic Debris. We have had many inquiries asking what Nwyfre is. Sister Rhiannon explains:

The name Nwyfre could be translated as the spark that ignites the inner flame to burst forth from the Nemeton, to open the center world (Earth) to become a scepter of light that brings all the Triads together in the Here and Now. Nwyfre is not comparable to Dalon Ap Landu, which seems to me to be more comparable to what we would call Cariad Wen or the Nine Fold One. Nwyfre opens the Nemeton so the Nine Fold One can be present fully in the Nemeton.

Spell of the Day: Ethics and Issues

By El Byrd

I cringed inwardly when I see "spell for the day." Why? Because there seems to be too much spell work emphasis and no building of framework for spellwork. I think that the framework is sadly missing in today's majick practice.

My great-gram was a witch. When she worked with one of the kids, she was very emphatic that spells were a last resort. Use only in emergency, Use only when all avenues are exhausted but never, NEVER use as a first attempt to solve a problem.

She taught this way so that we would look for both mundane solutions and majickal ones. And sadly, I don't see that kind of emphasis today. There seems to be too much emphasis on casting spells and doing majick, with little emphasis on mundane solutions.

Now as I move through majick circles, I see a lot of cringing when I mention ethics in majick. I have wondered about it many a time and I have come to the conclusion that many majick users today want to take the easy way out of a problem. In taking the easy way, they have no reason to work a problem from a mundane stance. But as many more practiced majick users know, the easy way can turn into the hardest way of all and have the highest cost in the long term.

When I see a spell, I wonder first and foremost if I will ever really use that spell. My thinking being that if I need a spell, I can make a spell. Second, I wonder if it is better to use the spell written by someone with a particular event or person is the best way for me to go, I am not trying to affect the other person or event but MY person or event.

I won't argue that spells are cool and neat but I will argue if they are making life better or worse when used with little regard for mundane solutions. I would urge any and all who would want to use majick to first look for a mundane solution.

Devise a framework of when you will or will not use majick. This framework is called ethics. Ethics don't just apply to work or school but to all things in life and they are not connected to religion. I would hope that all majick users would have a personal ethic system but I know this is not always done.

Ethics in majick is no more than a series of if-then questions or statements. If this mundane way doesn't work to protect my car, then I will ward my vehicle. If talking to a person about my issues with them does not work, then I will talk to someone to help me talk to them. If that does not work, then I will write them a letter explaining my issues. And last if those did not work, then I might cast a spell to bring understanding to them of my issues.

So I encourage everyone to build that framework and use those spells like and expensive spice, sparingly.

Blessings,

El

News

Libertarian Activist Gary Copeland Passes Away

It is with sadness that I announce the passing of druid and long-time Libertarian Activist Gary Copeland. He passed away on Monday, August 2, 2004. He is survived by his wife Kelley O'Neill, and three children, Lake, Willow and Ciera.

Gary had been active in the Libertarian Party for over 20 years. He was an outspoken Druid, in fact, he was the first Druid to run for State Office. He has been a candidate for Governor of California, Orange County Supervisor, and other offices. He had been active with voter outreach and with NORML. Anyone who knew Gary knows that he was a generous, spiritual, enthusiastic activist.

U.K. Prosecutors Drop Case Against Druid

August 3, 2004 PORTSMOUTH, England --Prosecutors dropped charges Tuesday against a man who explained that he carried a sword into a shop because he is a druid.

At a brief appearance in court last month, Merlin Michael Williams, 26, said previous cases heard by the court had allowed druids the right to carry ceremonial swords, which are used to cast spells and create circles of safety.

Williams, of Westbourne, southern England, was arrested July 9 after carrying his weapon while shopping at a store in Portsmouth. The sword was confiscated as evidence. The Crown Prosecution Service said the matter had been considered and "it was deemed not to be in the public interest to continue with the

case." Williams, who wore his green and blue druid's robes at last month's court appearance, said his sword, which he calls Taliesin, had been returned. "I am just happy to have got my sword back so I can continue with my duties as sword-bearer," he said. "I can understand how the misunderstanding happened with the police but it was all a bit heavy-handed and they should have listened to my explanation." Williams is a member of Insular Order of the Druids, which was founded in 1993 at Stonehenge and is one of at least eight self-styled druid groups in Britain.

C. The New York Times 2004

Events

Witness the Autumnal Equinox

AT THE UMASS SUNWHEEL
SUNRISE 6:45 a.m. & SUNSET 6:00 p.m.
WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY
SEPT. 22 & 23, 2004

You are invited to witness the passing of the seasons by joining Dr. Judith Young of the U.Mass. Dept. of Astronomy to watch the Sun rise and set over the tall standing stones in the U.Mass. Sunwheel for the upcoming Autumnal Equinox. Visitors for the sunrise viewing should arrive at 6:45 a.m., and visitors for the sunset viewing should arrive at 6:00 p.m. The sunrise and sunset events will be held on both Wednesday and Thursday September 22 and 23, 2004.

For those interested in learning about the sky, there will be a presentation that will include the cause of the seasons, the Sun's path in the sky, the phases of the Moon, and the story of building the Sunwheel. Bring your questions, your curiosity, and DRESS WARMLY; a $3 donation is requested to help cover the cost of future stonework at the site. Sunwheel T-shirts & sweatshirts will also be available for purchase.

The exact instant of equinox is 12:30 p.m. EDT on Wednesday Sept. 22. On the equinox, any observer located on the Earth's equator will see the Sun pass directly overhead at local noon and that person will cast no shadow at noon. For all observers on Earth (excluding the N and S poles), the Sun on the equinox is up for 12 hours and down for 12 hours, illuminating all latitudes! (At the N and S poles, the Sun encircles the horizon for 24 hours, either very slowly rising or very slowly setting for the entire day). From the Sunwheel here in Amherst, the equinox Sun will be seen to rise and set through East and West stone portals.

The U.Mass. Sunwheel is located south of Alumni Stadium, just off Rocky Hill Road. It can be easily reached from the center of Amherst, following Amity St. to the west. The Sunwheel is on the right hand side of the road about 1/4 mile after crossing University Drive. ALL VISITORS SHOULD WEAR WARM CLOTHING, SUITABLE FOR STANDING STILL ON WET OR SOGGY GROUND. In the event of rain, the events will be cancelled, and visitors are encouraged to visit the Sunwheel on their own.

For more information on the U.Mass. Sunwheel, see http://www.umass.edu/sunwheel

The Magical Isles with Mara Freeman

December 4, 2004

An exhilarating tour of the ancient sites of the British Isles and Ireland! Explore standing stones, stone circles, henges, hill-forts, burial mounds and many hidden wonders of the Celtic lands that are still, despite extensive archeological research, places of enduring mystery. As we take a journey through slide images around Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England, we will visit haunted caves, hills of vision, islands of pilgrimage and the holy shrines of Celtic saints. You will learn the ancient spiritual, symbolic and mythological importance of each place in the landscape why springs and wells are places of healing; holy hills the centers of geo-mythic energies; and bottomless lakes the abode of legendary beasts. Along the way, you will learn about curious folk customs and rituals, including the lore of faeries, witches and ghosts, and hear many fascinating myths and legends, including Arthurian tales, and legends of dragons, giants, and the Sleepers within the Earth.

10AM-5PM, $117, through UCSC Extension, 1101 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz, CA. http://www.ucsc-extension.edu. Use code EDP 042W26 to enroll. Call University of Santa Cruz Extension, (831) 427-6600 to register.

For more information, please see Mara's website - The Chalice Center for the Celtic Spirit http://www.celticspirit.org

New Celtic Music CD!

Greetings-

Irony and Omen Sade (AD of Carleton 1996-99) have just released their first recording, a CD of Celtic harp and flute music titled Rising Sea.

If you would like a copy or more information about Rising Sea please email or write. They are $14 each, which includes shipping and handling. Questions should come to irony@starmind.org. Orders may be sent to:

Irony Sade
Living Pan Productions
3830 State St. Road
Skaneateles, NY 13152

Thank you all for your support and interest in our music!

Regards,

Irony.
Hemlock Splinters Grove

Calendar

Fall Equinox will occur on Wednesday, September 22, 2004 at 8:30 a.m., Pacific Daylight Time.

A Druid Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $8.00 and email subscriptions are free. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's post mail subscription free. Write to:

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P.O. Box 406
Canyon, CA 94516
Please note the new mailing address!
E-Mail: poppinjay@earthlink.net

A Druid Missal-Any
Samhain Year XLII
Vol. 20 Number 7
October 30th, 2004 c.e.

Samhain Essay: Paying Respects

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1989
By Emmon Bodfish

amhain, Celtic New Year, the Day Between the Worlds, the Druid year starts on Samhain. The sun is half way between Autumn Equinox and Winter Solstice. Samhain marks the end of the harvest season. All fruit and grain not gathered in by Samhain Eve must be left in the fields to feed the birds and wild animals, the flocks of Cernnunos, and its vegetable life essence, its "spirit" becomes the property of "The Little People," the Sidhi, and feeds them. (Is our word, "fairy," derived from "fear an sidhi," meaning in proto-Gaelic "a person of the Sidhi," one of the little people?) Sidhi is pronounced in Gaelic as English "shee." A Banshee, the spirit that gives prophecies and mourns for the dead, means literally "a woman of the Sidhi." Another folk tradition, probably from old Druid times, holds that "Pukas," mischievous spirits, will come out on Samhain night and steal the nourishing essence of any food crops left in the fields, or, if it is not to their liking, will despoil it. Their mythic descendents swarm out in the form of hordes of trick-or-treaters and disguised, costumed revelers.

This is the night when the Other World, the world of the dead, the future souls, and of the ancestors, comes the closest to our world and "dimension hopping" is the easiest. It is time to honor dead ancestors, and remember old friends. This was "the day of the dead" long before the Christian era. The dead were thought by the ancient Celts to have a wider and truer perspective on things than we mortals do, and to be able to advise their descendents and friends, They know all history, are aware of all forces and causes, and can intuit the future better than we. Pay your respects at graves or memorials, ask questions of departed friends, ancestors, or mentors. Leave out food offerings for them at your Samhain Eve celebrations and vigils. Get out old photographs. Review the past, this pre-Samhain week, and pay old debts, spiritual or emotional. Find lost belongings, make amends. Then celebrate.

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Here at Carleton, the leaves have been brilliant since late August, and have been spectacular in the past few weeks. We initiated several to the joys of walking the Arb on Autumnal Full Moons, and Ian Hill was ordained 3rd order (congratulations). Our weather has been nice, but we are afflicted with the yearly plague of stinging beetles.

Corwin

Akita Grove: News from Japan

Pat says things are going well in Japan, despite the recent hurricanes, and requests that Mike do something to ameliorate their severity. Mike sent him a pinwheel in response to brighten his mood. Pat says he has thrown the gauntlet down this year, and is fully determined to defeat Mike in the Bardic arts in this winter's contest.

Awen Proto-Grove: News from Calgary

It is a time of unions here at Awen Grove! Aspen and Athelia got married on September 18th and things are just starting to settle down now. As the wedding plans die down, new ones are starting as two of our grove members plan to be handfasted in November!

The weather is starting to turn to winter as we expect 15 cm of snow on October 16 and still more the next day! This is Calgary, however, and we could have +20 degree Celsius weather by the middle of November... who knows?

We wish everyone a wonderful Samhain season. Stay warm!

Blessings,

Athelia Nihtscada /|\
Senior Druid, Awen Grove

Digitalis Grove: News from D.C.

As you'll see in this issue, with the help of Stephen Crimmins at Carleton, I've completed assembling and printing the Main Volume of ARDA 2. The files should be up at http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html and the physical books should be in the mail. Stacey and I are at work with typo-

checking and tweaking the illustration and layout of the final Magazine Volume of ARDA 2, by Oimelc. Stephen and I are also putting out two commemorative volumes of mid-1970s RDNA materials this winter. After that I promise not to print any more books, but I am releasing a Druid movie DVD called "Gatorr" this winter, and judging a Bardic Contest too.

I've ordained Joss Badger in Texas this month, and he has in turn ordained Lydia from Oklahoma City, so the RDNA now has a southwestern presence. I heard about the ordination of Ian Hill and Will Reckner at Carleton, so I am now feeling easier about the continuation of Druidism there.

Eurisko Grove: News from Indiana

In our grove at this time of year, we ritually celebrate the fall of the green man & the return of the horned god. this is similar to the wiccan oak king/holly king battle. but it seems more fitting to us to have this battle that causes the seasons to change to occur on the equinoxes a time when both are in balance for a moment then one gains the upper hand.

the reverse happens at the spring equinox. cernunnos and his creatures are associated with the winter solstice yet cannot just appear there. like all things cyclical there needs to be an ascent, climax decent of power, energy & symbolism.

for us ivy is the link that is associated with both. we even try to spend part of the season of mabon looking for unintended images of them in such as robin hood or a wild herdsman.

we closed with the a final appearance of the green man in a secluded wood, in which we hope to meet a presence that we could only call herne, the lord of the forest.

not sure how, if at all, this fits in with most druid's interpretation of the season, or in interpretation of previous RDNA established materials, but wanted to try to share it with you all anyway.

Gwydion
eurisko grove
an rdna proto-grove

Hemlock Splinters Grove: News from New York

Grove activity at Hemlock Splinters has been hampered by the purchase of a home many miles from our grove site. Bonfires continue, but not on the scale they once did. Irony and Omen have just published _Rising Sea_ a collection of mostly Celtic harp and flute music, available from the grove (irony@starmind.org), or at CDBaby.com. Irony has also returned to full-time student status at the school for Environmental Science and Forestry, where he is quietly trying to create photosynthetic humans. Anyone with ideas in this regard is encouraged to write.

Aelven Star Grove: News from Pennsylvania

Oh dear! Time has a way of flying by! It's that time of the year, Samhain...my favorite holiday.

Aelvenstar Grove is meeting for ritual and fellowship this Samhain. Please email aelvenstargrove@yahoo.com for info.

What else is new? In addition to ogham and magick study and practice, I am currently studying hypnotherapy and hope to pass my exams and receive certification soon.

Oh, I would like to mention Meetup (www.meetup.com) You can sign up and meet with fellow druids in your local areas, some whom possibly may be interested in joining the RDNA.

Wishing you all a very blessed Samhain,

Autaini
Aelvenstar Grove
Philadelphia, PA
aelvenstargrove@yahoo.com

Palm Grove: News from Florida

Well 3 hurricanes right over the place has knocked down much of the storage buildings, power outs and all. It was very interesting. 2 of the 5 Sacred Palms perished in the onslaught but 3 remain, though a bit more worn for their trouble.

We mourn the passing of our valued member: Winston Pugnacious who was only 3 years old and still playful. Sadly, the heat of the day and perhaps a snake took him down while out on his chain. (The cutest pug you ever saw).

All in all it has been a very hard year here in the grove.

On a brighter note:

The Website is up at http://palmgrove.bravehost.com/ The Site is designed to be a free and open meeting place for druids and druid curious from all walks and followings. Available is a chatroom, a forum area, a free classifieds area, a free links page and more. Stop on by and tell a friend.

I am learning about Celtic Runes and charms now and I am preparing to start making my own sets of rune stones, and amulets. Keep an eye on the website for them.

DraigMor
High Druid At Palm Groves, Florida

Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross – Muskogee/Mother Grove Oklahoma

The MOCC—M/M Grove disbanded sometime after Beltane. It's hard to say when, but a new AD was not forthcoming, and I knew my time in Muskogee was short. Mark Harris (Shadowdancer) tried to get it together for a while, as did a couple other persons, but, in the end, it was not to be. But walking down the streets, the trees whisper and stand witness to what was. The big question was what to do with the various items that belonged communally to the MOCC here in Muskogee. We did consider whether to give them to the Tulsa group or send them off to some sort of Pagan collection somewhere, but it seemed more of a tradition to give them to a up and coming Pagan group here in Muskogee (we found 2, one in Muskogee that is being started by a cousin of mine, Shannon Smith, and on in Ft. Gibson that is run by Vikki Valenzuela). The two of them have close ties to what was the MOCC--Muskogee/Mother Grove. Smith's group will be using the MOCC's rites as a template until they can get their ritual cycles up and going (a great-grandchild of the RDNA?) and the group run by Ms. Valenzuela is co-founded by an old MOCC member, Myk Rose. While the MOCC--M/M Grove fell, there is a considerable legacy that it has left behind here in the Pagan community.

As Samhain nears (locally, we give it the very improper pronunciation sa-MAIN) the cold weather is beginning to arrive just a little early. These rains and changing of the leaves usually come around just as the costumes are being put on kids and pumpkins are being carved. Now, it's happening in mid-October. I'm preparing for a move to Austin, where I'm pretty sure I'll become involved in the Druid community once again. Here in Muskogee, though, there's a feeling that the Grove is no longer quite human. The trees keep whispering, and I'm sure the pecans,

elms and oaks are disputing amongst themselves. The black walnuts are in a convocation of their own, I'm sure and the mulberry is just too easily distracted to be of any help in this great meeting of theirs. Both Oak and Pine vie for the Archdruidic Chair, I'm told, and Pecan is preparing the tables for Cakes and Ale...

This declare above all:

Thomas Lee Harris, Jr.
(aka Br. Myrddin A Maeglin)
Former Archdruid, MOCC--Muskogee/Mother Grove

Rowan-Oak Grove: News from Tulsa, OK

we are gearing up for the Samhain convocation and costume party we hold every year. we will be voting on new board members, ratification of the current by-laws or modification there of and other issues which came up earlier this year. the tulsa grove has had several people move out of town in the last few months which necessitated the replacement on the board of directors at least as an alternate.

the wagner grove has been going through similar problems and i haven't heard from our gray angels grove in texas in a few months, and no response to emails so i must assume sis joker's wild is offline and will contact me when she can.

my ministers license is now registered downtown so i'm officially able to do marriages etc.....

finally done with the remodeling to the apartment so bad weather will not keep us from meeting.

i guess that is about it for now stay safe and well everybody.

healing light and peace

m.s. white raven arch-druidess
rowan-oak grove mocc tag

Rose Rock Grove: News from Oklahoma

Samhain is almost here, and with my third order vigil still creaking my bones, I'm happy to announce that our grove is up to official grove status. Our Druid-on-the-go hasn't actually begun his journey, but we hope to hear from him soon. Plans for the upcoming holiday include writing to those who have left, for those of us with loved ones or ancestors still on our minds, finding representations of those ancestors we plan to honour, (whether objects they owned, pictures, or just something from or representing a particular country, depends on the individual) and figuring out what we're going to cook. There will be a sugar cookie baking party, some of which will be eaten at the party, some to be reserved for Samhain, and some to go to the Campfire USA Pumpkin Patch booth. Samhain ceremony to take place in my back yard, followed by divination and horror movie watching in the living room. Not to mention passing out candy to trick or treaters.

Current plans for November: A quilting bee for the Eric "Groo" Jones memorial quilt, a culling of closets, drawers, and pantries for clothes and canned goods to donate to one (or more, depending on amount) of the local shelters. Also coats to be culled for the Share the Warmth program. That's all we have going right now.

Lydia "Mouse" Van de Grift

Dravidia Grove: News from Indiana

Hello all,

Not much new here, am getting ready for Samhain. Have been invited to participate in an online experience, sounds different... Will also celebrate with the usual candle lighting and food placement... Maybe even a few spirit conjurings... Have a good Samhain

^v^ ^v^ ^v^ ^v^
|/vvvvvvv\|
BOO!!!

/|\ Dolanimus /|\

Cattle Grove: News from Texas

Yes, yes, I know it has been quite a while since there has been any news from Texas but there is a reason (a reason, not an excuse!). Everyone that was part of the Cattle Protogrove seemingly went their separate ways. I stopping going to A&M Commerce for financial reasons, as did 2 of the other members, and one stayed there. So the protogrove has been hibernating for a while, waiting for the right moment to come back and that time appears to be now. It has moved back to Dallas, TX so hopefully we will actually find some more members (there are several of us talking and really all we need to do is find some initiative and meet somewhere). Also, I was recently ordained 3rd order by Mike (thanks Mike!) so hopefully we can turn what was once Cattle Protogrove into Cattle Grove!

Anyways we will keep the updates coming!

Joss Badger

Rogue River Protogrove: News from Oregon

It was exciting for all of us to take part in an official ritual in connection with taking the Waters of Life. Mr. Abbott also led us in an elaborate reading of the future of RDNA in northern California and Oregon. We plan to report the details in the Winter Solstice Missal-Any.

Additionally, the Rogue River Protogrove looks forward to hosting a fundraiser for Mr. Abbott next Spring, which will consist of a slide show of the history of the Hazelnut Grove and some of RDNA's influential members of the past. We will post the details as soon as they are finalized.

A great time was had by all!!!

Blessings,

Aigeann

Sierra Madrone Grove: News from California

We at the Sierra Madrone Grove held a beautiful Ritual along the Bear River to mark the Autumn Equinox. We spent the day walking in the forest and had a nice picnic with the kids. We did the opening Rituals at both the North Valley Pagan Pride and the Sacramento Pagan Pride. We had a booth at both and our Grove Diviner/Seer Stephen Abbott performed his trademark divination for crowds to see.

Sean Mac Dhomhnuill
Sierra Madrone Grove

Nemeton Awenyddion: News from California

Nemeton Awenyddion is going through some very interesting changes, as the seasons change, so does the Grove. With local members moving or going through major life changes it seems that they would want to be more involved in the Nemeton space and worship/meditations to help them to gain more clarity and balance. This Samhain will be a quiet one for us this year and I will be making a venture out to visit dear Sister Stacey towards the end of Oct. to make up for that. Our online classes just started booming again and going full force but without any more local inquiries for membership. I've also decided to undertake, after being asked for the last ten years by Lakota family, to participate in Sundance ceremony this next year so I'll be preparing to be a singer for that as well.

Yours In The Mother,

Rhiannon Hawk Ard Gwyddon/
Druid of Nemeton Awenyddion
and of Proto-Grove Druid Heart Spirit
Cohasset, California

Sunset Proto-Grove: News from California

Long Crunch leaf walks are in store. In the past week the weather has changed, and we are enjoying brisk evenings and mornings. Our elm out back has decided to begin dropping its share of leaves, and makes me wish I'd called the trimmer earlier. (Every tree needs its haircut.)

We really enjoy celebrating Samhain in style at our home, as we have a birthday the day before. This year we will have about 20, 11 and 12 year old girls carving pumpkins in our garage, eating spider cupcakes, and watching scary movies through the night. With that kind of crowd we ought to have a bonfire... but then Id have to get a permit.

Don't forget to feed the brownies b'fore you go to sleep, else they'll come and play tricks on you!

"Wooooooshh went the wind...& out went the light, & five little pumpkins rolllled out of siiight...."

Happy Samhain to all

O.

Poison Oak Grove, News from California

Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

When I first moved into the new house I drank distilled water because the water came directly from a spring that wasn't the best to drink from. After starting to feel poorly, low energy, easily out of breath, tired all the time, bad nails, I found out that distilled water leaches minerals out of your body. Though I see an herbalist it wasn't getting better. At our last service two weeks ago I asked Diancecht, Physician to the Gods and his daughter Airmid, Herbalist for assistance in find out how to treat this malady. The very next week in conversation with another RDNA member, the Druidess from Texas, when I told her of the symptoms, she looked them up and said it was a vitamin B deficiency, easily treated by B-complex. After just a few days of taking the vitamins I felt so much better. I've been a member of the RDNA for 20 years now and it always amazes me when the deities come through. This is a religion that works!

On October 23 was the first Northern California Druid Moot in Cupertino. A good time was had by all. Bonds were forged and re-established. Because of the friendships made at the Moot it looks like Duir De Danu Grove will be able to have a grove site on which to meet again!

This promises to be the first of many on-going moots that will happen in Northern California. We will be changing geographic locations to accommodate the various pockets of RDNA members in the area.

The Llyr Tract

By Irony Sade, Pending Patriarch of Llyr, 9th Order

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA
To the COUNCIL OF DALON AP LANDU
Greetings,

I am humbled and honored to be nominated for the patriarchy of the Order of Llyr. Having lived beside, sailed on, and all but drowned in the sea perhaps I can attempt to begin to understand its mysteries.

As one of the younger druids I have watched this discussion of the higher orders quietly, hardly feeling that it was my place to speak. Their utility beyond the funerary is unclear to me, though in the course of time that may change. As I understand it, nomination to the order of Llyr conveys no power, but three responsibilities: To seek to understand the sea; to offer membership to those druids who do the same; and to nominate someone to the Order of Danu.

If Llyr is one of the most obscure deities - just as the sea is a largely unknown realm, even to those who sail upon it, then Danu, as the patron of the Otherworld, is even more mysterious. It does seem that only those who have died might understand her.

I like the notion that those druids who have died are offered membership in her order by Danu herself. This argues in favor of Mr. Crimmins's idea that the patriarch should be a dead druid, possibly the first third order who died in the Reform. At the same time, it seems reasonable that there be one living member of the Tenth, to look after Death's business on earth, so to speak, or to speak for the dead, if you prefer. What his or her role would be, I do not know. Catholicism aside, people die without help. Would the role of the Danu's priest be to acknowledge the dead, to set them on their path to the Otherworld, to remind the rest of us that our path does not end here, or something else?

I would appreciate the input of the more senior druids as to potential nominees for the order of Danu. Some of you I will be contacting directly. Everyone else in the counsel, specifically those whom I have not met, is invited to contact me: irony@starmind.org

Yours in the Mother,

Irony Sade
Pending Patriarch of Llyr

ARDA 2 Main Volume Completed!

By Mike Scharding

Yes, its about 15 months late. My apologies to all the inconveniences it has caused you.

As you remember, the massive 846 page Green Books volume came out in March 2004, and the Main Volume is done and will be mailed out promptly on Thursday Oct 28th, so you should be looking for this monster a little after Halloween. The 820 page Magazine Volume will be out sometime before Oimelc 2005 with 26 years of NRDNA newsletters and magazines since 1977; although we have gone double over-budget already due to poor estimation on size and binding costs; a subject covered in a plaintive letter accompanying the books.

The Main Volume is also a real hefty beauty, what we call "Minnesota Size." It is expertly hand-sewn with a hard-back spine in a lovely shade of shocking orange covers, weighing over three pounds and 883 pages and a few thousand articles. By the time you read this Samhain issue, the on-line files will be securely hosted at Carleton's server in both .pdf and .doc format. Thus, the rest of you can freely download your own copies to your computer and just print out the sections that you like; double-side them and bind them with either a super-stapler or take them down to Kinko's copier shop and spiral bind them (usually in two 440 page halves, splitting Parts 0-4 and 5-10 for $8 each.) The website address is http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html

What can I say, but there's something for everyone in here. It is too large to be easily carried out in the field, and it is really meant to be a reference tool, and semi-portable abridged copy of the plentiful Druid Archives stored at Carleton College. Here are some highlights in the Main Volume (marked with asterisk in the 20 page Table of Contents).

Part Zero: Expanded Study Program from 12 to 20 steps; with an online study group this winter (see next article).

Part One: Druid Chronicles, with few changes.

Part Two: Apocrypha. Expanded from 25 to 100 letters, adding debates regarding Codex Affair, Smiley's draft-dodging, Tom Cross Affair, and most recent internet shenanigans.

Part Three: Liturgies. Expanded from about 30 to about 120 services and liturgical articles. More of Isaac's late 70s services, comparisonal studies of ADF, Keltria, and OMS services, on-line service, new orders, French, German, and Japanese Orders of Worship, seasonal festival activities, various divination methods, meditational techniques, and new funeral and wedding services.

Part Four: Trivia and Customs. Doubled in size to include more calendrical articles, graphic diagrams of the family of Druid groups in America, on-line propaganda samples, constitutional variations, organizational structuring of ADF, Keltria, and OMS, and standard correspondence formats.

Part Five: The Druish Books of the Hassidic Druids has few changes.

Part Seven: Druid Miscellaneous has relocated most of its contents to the Green Books volume, and has new essays on the RDNA by Irony Sade and Stephen Crimmins.

Part Eight: General History of RDNA has been updated slightly.

Part Nine: Books of Latter Day Druids has added the "Dead Lakes Scrolls" of recent historical accounts of Carleton and Akita Grove.

Part Ten: Oral Histories has added interviews of Isaac Bonewits, Alice Cascorbi '88, Mike Scharding '04, Irony Sade '99, Merri Beth Weber '03; and as a special treat, David Fisher '65 Founder of Reformed Druidism.

I hope you enjoy it, and I'm taking in submissions of liturgies, epistles, articles, poems, essays, etc for ARDA 3 to be published in 2013, so

2004-2005 Wintry ARDA 2 Study Session Begins

Well, you've finally got the enormous files or books of the Main Volume. You're welcome to flip through it by yourself, but you might want a little company if you are going to seriously plow through its entire unfamiliar contents. For this purpose, I've established a free on-line conference at yahoogroups.com called "Reformed_Druid_Texts" that you can join by clicking this button and registering or e-mailing me at mikerdna@hotmail.com.

The RDT conference will last from Nov 1st 2004 to May 1st 2005 and will closely follow the Study Guide's 20 step program to wend our way more-or-less chronologically through 40 years of baffling materials. There will be about 30 people or so in the class, and jump in whenever you want, but realistically join up before Nov 15th. I reasonably expect about one serious posting of a few paragraphs per lesson from participants. People who satisfactually complete the rigorous regimen will get a spiffy shiny certificate of a "Deanship of Druid Textology" (D.D.T.) to go on their wall.

Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 30th Anniversary Reprint

To honor Robert Larson's passing this August, Stephen Crimmins and I are releasing a new edition of the RDNA literature that Larson and Bonewits assembled in 1976. It was a work of beauty, and disseminated Reformed Druidism to a wider audience and DC(E) kind of put us on the map, so to speak, as the most over-published Druid group in America; a tradition that has continued. We're trying to faithfully replicate much of the art and layout (minus Celtic border designs) and reprinting the contents of DC(E) word for word, correcting typos, although the pagination will differ slightly. It will be about 250 pages long. If you'd like to write a small nostalgic memo for its introductory section, then email me at mikerdna@hotmail.com

DC(E), 2nd Edition, will be released on-line this winter, for free downloads and print outs, but if you'd rather order a commemorative hard-back edition, you should send $50 by paypal.com to Mike using my address easternasia@hotmail.com as the destination account; and then send me another e-mail with your proper physical mailing address. Deadline for those special orders is Dec 1st 2004.

Reformed Druidic Movie DVD Released

If you wish to give a loved one something that hurts more than a lump of coal for the Yuletime exchange of presents, consider a copy of the worst Druidic movie ever made at Carleton College in 1996; with a cast drawn mostly from the Carleton Druids itself. "Gatorr: the Fighting Rabbit" is a two-hour barbarian spoof filmed amidst the lush forests and fields where the RDNA was founded. Although not officially made as a Druid project, it is nonetheless permeated with the humor, spirit and sites of that Grove in the early 90s.

Gatorr is the ponderous saga of a young pacifistic barbarian, in a post-apocalyptic Uzbekistan, whose tribe is ruthlessly slaughtered by bandits. Young Gatorr staggers off to the mountain-bound Lepus monastery to train in the fighting style of the rabbit, gains very little wisdom, and then wanders chaotically about in search of his sister, fighting monsters, meeting strange friends, communing with nature, being barbarically bored, breaking into castles and attempting to wreak vengeance for his family. The usual stuff of the genre. Did I mention the long walking scenes, and peppy soundtrack?

Gatorr is being distributed free with all ARDA 2 book orders, but if you'd also like to buy a copy for your own, send $10 by paypal.com to my account, which is called "easternasia@hotmail.com." After that, send me an e-mail to that address with your own mailing address before December 1st, and I'll guarantee the DVD will be in your stocking before the Solstice.

2004-2005 Wintry Bardic Contest Begins!

Just because the Time of Sleep is approaching after Halloween, means that your creative urges have to go dormant! Last year's 3rd Annual contest fizzled out, but we're ready to try yet again.

The RDNA will have our 4th Annual Wintry Bardic Contest from Nov 1st to May 1st, on this conference. Anytime during that period, submit to me your poems, songs, SHORT epic sagas, free-verse, or SHORT stories to me at mikerdna@hotmail.com I will host them this year as the judge [That way, I'll have a better chance of winning, no?]

Rules:

0. Anyone can play and enter, even your friends.
1. You can spoof an existing song/poem or be an entirely original creation, but the words have to be your own or a collaboration. If spoofing, please list the source of the music or original lyrics.
2. Subject may be anything vaguely "Druidic," what ever that means. Quality is not a big concern for me either. Have fun. Maximum of 20 entries per person, meaning you Pat.
3. Humor, anger, vexing, angst-drawn, serious, thoughtful, weird, drama-queenish is all perfectly acceptable; but naughty words may be tsk-tsk'ed and finger-waggled.

4. Poetry will be collected throughout the winter. Spurts of poetry will be issued forth regularly every two weeks between November 1st and May 1st (about 13 mailings).
5. Bribes must be at least $500, to be acknowledged.
6. Winner will be announced May 1st, 2005 and will bear the honor of "Bard of the Reform" from May 2005 to May 2006.
7. Entries will be posted on RDNAtalk and at http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/bard4.html and sent by e-mail.
8. Submission of an entry is considered to be accepting their reprint in the Green Books of ARDA 3 in 2013. Unless you tell me that they are copyrighted, I will assume they are for the public domain. I will label them either way according to your choice.

To see previous Bardic contest entries go to:

http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/bard.html 2001-2002 Winter

http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/bard2.html 2002-2003 Winter

Yours in the Mother,

Mike the Fool
mikerdna@hotmail.com

Mystery of The Dragon: A Ritual Meditation

By MaDagda, Duir De Danu Grove

Here lies the Mystery of The Dragon. The Mystery of the Dragon is comprised of two ritual meditations, which are to be held for the feasts of Samhain and Beltaine. These meditations, predominately the same meditation, but worded to fit each feast is based loosely on Arthurian Druidism and parts of the whole are based on the movie "Excalibur," produced by John Boorman and the book "Dancing with Dragons," written by D. J. Conway.

These meditations were primarily written for inclusion in Druidic ritual, however, they may be used within a Wiccan circle. If done within a Wiccan Circle, it would be ideal to include deities of Celtic origin.

Ritual preparation, concluding the ritual, and other ritual activity outside of these meditations should be done according to personal taste and tradition.

For the Feast of Samhain

The Beginning

Everyone holds hands around the ritual area. The participants are to close their eyes and take several deep breaths and as they breathe they are to think of The Dragon.

Leader: I would like you now to begin thinking about The Dragon. The ancient one who has existed before the dawn of time. The one who is everywhere and is everything. Its body is the Earth itself. Its forked tongue strikes upon the land like lightning. Its breath is the mist that casts shrouds and veils the land. Its scales glisten upon the waves of the sea. And Its Spirit lies in the wisdom of the cycle of awakening and sleep.

We are here to seek The Dragon so that we may learn from It, to seek Its wisdom, and to feel Its power and strength. But, to encounter The Dragon we must enter Its mouth and descend into the Dragon's heart.

The Mouth of the Dragon

Leader: You now find yourself standing before the mouth of a cave. You notice that along its edges, on both top and bottom are large, vertical rock formations that appear as if they were teeth. You now walk into the cavern into the cavern, which is dimly lit, and head down a narrow passage that ends at the top of a stairway.

The Spiral Staircase

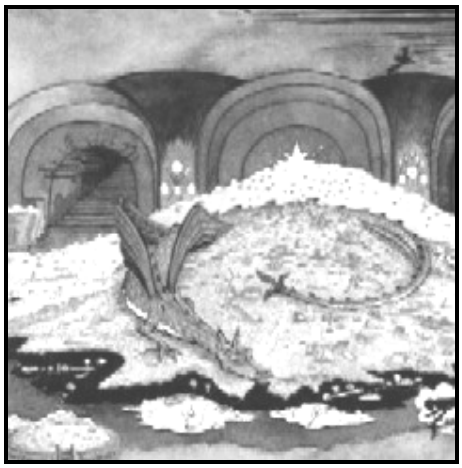
Leader: You descend the stairs and soon discover that the stairway is a spiraling staircase. You travel downwards, spiraling deep into the Earth. After a while it seems that you will never stop, yet you continue onward.

The Cavern of the Tap Root Forest

Leader: Soon you descend into a cavern filled with taproots that plunge from the ceiling and then bore down into the floor. It is as if a forest of these tap roots lay all about you in all directions. The air is thick with the rich, loamy scent of the Earth. You take note of the varying sizes of these roots; some are as big as tree trunks while others are as thin as wire. You also notice that this cavern is alive with tiny creatures; insects, spiders, reptiles, and other such animals that have shunned the light of the sun and live in eternal darkness. After taking some time here, you now proceed your descent of the Spiral Staircase, going deeper into the Earth.

The Well of Hidden Flowing Waters

After some time, you begin to hear a faint sound of flowing water, and as you descend the staircase, it becomes louder and louder. You soon come to a landing beside an underground river and the waters roar as they flow from a waterfall at the end of the cave. The air is moist and cool. You feel refreshed standing along the shore of this river. If you wish, you may drink of the waters. As you drink in the waters, you find them to be cool and refreshing, giving you renewed strength and vitality. When you have finished, you continue down the Spiral Staircase.



The Vault of Hidden Gems

After going deeper down the Spiral Staircase, you end now in a cave filled and glowing with every sort of gem known. The room is brightly lit and it seems as if the gems themselves are the source of light in this chamber. You see before you giant diamonds, clusters of rubies and emeralds, long spires of quartz, gems of all shapes and size. As you look around you see to one wall an exit, which is ringed about with giant points of amethyst, arranged as if they were teeth within a gaping mouth. You walk towards this exit and find yourself again before a spiraling staircase. You now step down the staircase, once again going deeper, deeper, and deeper within the Earth.

The Heart of the Dragon

Leader: After what has seemed to be forever, the stairs now end in a brightly lit, circular chamber. You notice the entire room; the walls, the floor, and the ceiling are made of crystal as if this room was cut out from once giant crystal. As you enter the chamber you are filled with wonder and bursting with the urge to ask about what you see.

Note: If there are enough people, assign someone to play the Voice of the Seeker.

Voice of the Seeker: What is this place?

Leader: here you enter the Heart of the Dragon. Here all things are possible and all things meet their opposites.

Voice of the Seeker: The future?

Leader: And the past.

V.S. Knowledge?

Leader: And oblivion.

V.S.: Fulfillment?

Leader: And emptiness.

Here within the Heart of The Dragon fear meets courage, weakness meets strength, wasting away meets health, hate meets love, and folly meets wisdom.

Within the Heart of The Dragon you may change that which you will to change. Now take some time to think of that which you will to change within your life and as you do so, I shall awaken The Dragon so that we may ask for Its blessings and to aid us with Its power.

Awakening The Dragon

Here the Leader repeats the Charm of Making x9

Anail Nathrock Uthvoss Bethudd Dochiel Dienve

Leader: We, who are assembled here within the Heart of The Dragon, call You forth. Awaken and arise O' Ancient One! Mighty One, who is everywhere and everything, aid us with Your power and strength. Guide us with Your wisdom! Great Serpent, ancient before the dawn of time, AWAKEN AND ARISE!

Note: The leader will let out a roar at this point signaling the presence of the Dragon.

Leader: Behold and feel The Dragon within you. Feel It move through you, out of you, and then back into you. Feel yourselves joined together in this circle enclosed and linked together by the power of The Dragon. Feel the Power of the Dragon. Feel Its strength and Its wisdom.

Know that aided by The Dragon, you may change that which you will to change and it shall come to pass. Know that you are planting seeds of change within the Dragon's Heart, allowing them to nurture and germinate until the time of awakening when they shall burst forth full of life and promise.

Know also that you may call upon The Dragon whenever you have need. For the power, the strength, and the wisdom of the Dragon are yours. Here lies the Mystery of The Dragon. We are all part of The Dragon, therefore, we are The Dragon.

Now breathe deep. Breathe in the Essence of The Dragon. Feel it in your feet and ankles. From your ankles to your knees, to your thighs, and up into your hips. Bring the power of the Dragon from your hips to the your stomach and now up to your heart. From your heart, bring the Essence of the Dragon up to your shoulders and then down your arms.

Feel the power of The Dragon move about the circle as it moves to the person next to you and then back into you. Feel it leave and enter you at the same moment. Feel yourselves joined within this circle by the power of The Dragon. Savor this moment. Remember it always, for we are all one, bound by the Essence of The Dragon, because we are The Dragon.

Now bring the Essence of The Dragon up from your shoulders to your throat and then to your forehead. From your forehead, bring the Essence of The Dragon rise to the top of your head and form either the wings or horns of The Dragon there.

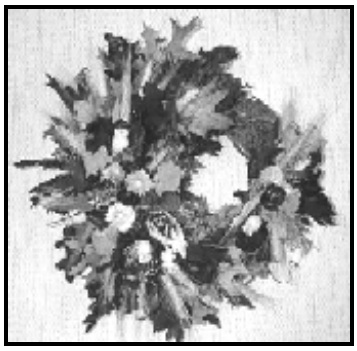
Now, let go. Release the wings or horns of The Dragon and watch them fly within the circle and then out of it, soaring into the universe, breathing deeply as you do so.

Ascending the Spiral Staircase

Leader: It is now time to depart, yet before we leave, take a moment to thank The Dragon as It returns to Its rest. (Pause) When you are ready, go to the spiral staircase and begin to climb up to the Mouth of The Dragon. Soon you reach the Vault of Hidden Gems. You continue on and reach the Well of Hidden

Flowing Waters. If you wish, you may stop and drink of the waters, feeling them invigorate you to the core of your being. When you have finished, you continue your spiraling ascent and reach the Cavern of the Tap Root Forest. You breath in the cool, rich, earthy smell of the cavern, feeling yourself becoming grounded. You continue onwards and upwards and climb quickly, spiraling out of the Earth and soon come to the cave which leads to the Mouth of The Dragon. You follow the passageway down, coming to the Mouth of The Dragon, where you step into the warm, shining sun.

Now take a few deep breaths, and be here, in this place from whence you began your journey. Be here at this present time. When you are ready, open your eyes. Should you feel the need, you may return a portion of The Dragon's power to the Earth.



Random Acts of Druidry

By Gwyddion Realm, Eurisko Grove

I was driving home from the Autumn Moon Festival on Saturday night trying to figure out what to do with all the harvest decorations from our table. I didn't want to throw them away. Then it occurred to me. Why don't I make a harvest altar? Not only that, why don't I put it in one of the special places I like to stop when I go out for a walk. I have a special place by the water - a place where the water, earth, and sky all meet.

Imagine the sense of curiosity, wonderment, and possibly even magic when a passerby happens to come across it. If they're in the know on these things themselves, they may be even more happily surprised. I wonder if ancient Druids left altars like this in the forests. I wonder what would happen if more people started to leave such altars in places like city parks or down nature trails. What if people started doing this for every solstice, equinox, and other Pagan holidays?

Guidelines for a Nature Altar:

1. Use it to celebrate solstices, equinoxes, and other Pagan holidays.

2. Position the altar somewhere off the beaten path. Place it somewhere that is semi-public, but not heavily trafficked. You don't want it somewhere where it will be trampled or desecrated.

3. Make sure it's all natural and biodegradable. We don't want to litter the earth. Use plants, stones, and other items of the season:
Fall/Harvest - pumpkins, gourds, autumn leaves, and acorns.
Winter/Yule - evergreens, pine, holly, pinecones, and mistletoe.
Spring - Ivy, flowers, and so on.

Summer - Oak branches, apples, and other plants, fruits, and flowers of the season.

4. Pass it on. Suggest to your friends and others that they do the same.

Seasons of Food

Samhain 2004 - Apples

By Oriana Lewallen, Sunset Proto-Grove

There are only a few fruits that I can call 'icons' of the fall season. These are the fruits that seem to be the last ones offered at the vegetable stand down the road before the winter season comes, and they take down their hand-painted OPEN signs. The other thing that creates a fall food icon for me is the smells that conjure images I can relate to, as summer becomes fall. Who can deny that when they think of fall they think of the smell of pumpkin pie spices, or my personal favorite apple cider mulling on the stove with cloves, oranges and cinnamon? These smells invite me to, slip on a chunky warm sweater, go for a brisk mitten and scarf laden walk in the crunchy fall foliage, light a log in the fireplace and afterward cuddle down for a long read, with a steaming cup. They also invite me to make and enjoy warm leisurely meals with my family, and to share the fruits of the harvest with my friends.

There are a thousand plus varieties of apples grown in the United States currently. (4cs.com) Apples are varied in size, flavor, shape and color and each person seems to have their own distinct variety as a favorite. (My personal favorites are the Jonagold and the Gala varieties.) Everyone seems to know the Granny Smith and the Red Delicious; here are some lesser-known varieties to try. Of course this is just a basic list-

Arkansas Black Baldwin Criterion Doctor Matthews Gold Coast Honey Crisp Idared Lady Moyers Prize Northern Spy Snow Apple Sweet Emma

(A master list of apple varieties can be found at www.bighorsecreekfarm)

The Apple goes back as far as written history allows and farther. Though no one knows for sure who cultivated the apple originally, the remnants of apple seeds have been found in Southern England during excavations, and have been attributed to the Neolithic era. It is assumed that the crab apple was a common part of the human diet at this time. (Originally the wild apple tree, malus pumila var mitris, produced a large quantity of small sour, mostly seed and core fruits.

Though in mythology there are many instances where apples are named, it was not until later that the variety of fruit we know today was named an 'apple'. Until this point in time, many fruits were classified as 'apples' including, "melons, avocados, cashews, cherimoyas, dates, eggplants, lemons, oranges, peaches, pineapples, pine nuts, pomegranates, potatoes, quinces, and tomatoes (vegparadise)...

The Health benefits of the Apple are great. Many nutrients and vitamins are present in the Apple. These cause the Apple to be one of great benefit to the consumer. Apples are high in fiber and contain pectin both of which aids in digestion and digestive tract health but also aids in reducing blood sugar and high cholesterol. Apples contain antioxidants that aid the immune system, and reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers. A grated apple, due to high water content, if served to a patient can greatly reduce their fever. "Steamed apples sweetened with

honey are beneficial for a dry cough and may help to remove mucous from the lungs. (vegparadise)" Eating apples cleans your teeth, and gives you a dose of potassium, folic acid, and vitamin C. If these aren't enough reasons to believe the adage, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away." I don't know what is.

Some Samhain apple traditions are:

Bobbing for Apples- Unmarried people would attempt to take a bite out of an apple bobbing in a pail of water. The first person to do so was believed to be the next to marry.

Peeling Apples- Attempting to produce a long unbroken apple peel was said to estimate the number of years you had to live. The longer the peel, the longer your life expectancy.

Peeling an apple and throwing the peel over one's shoulder was supposed to reveal the initial of one's future spouse.

Apple Games-

Snap apple is a game where a coin is inserted into an apple by pushing it in as far as possible. The apple is dangled from a string. The arms are tied behind the back and people bite at the apple. The first person that succeeds at biting into the coin inside the apple, wins.

Apple Recipe:

Apple Coleslaw*

Serves 8

1/2 head red cabbage, cored and thinly sliced
1/2 head green cabbage, cored and thinly sliced
2 Granny Smith apples, cored and coarsely chopped
3 carrots, peeled and shredded
1 C mayonnaise
2 T apple cider vinegar
1 T honey
1 tsp caraway seeds
1 tsp salt
1/2tsp black pepper

1. In a large bowl, combine the red and green cabbage, apples, and carrots.
2. In a small bowl, combine the remaining ingredients; mix well. Pour the mayonnaise mixture over the cabbage mixture; toss well.
3. Cover and chill until ready to serve.

*Recipe found at Ivillage.com - tried and tasted by the Lewallen family... yummy!

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News

Job Opening: Lecturer in Prehistoric Archaeology, University of Wales Bangor

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND WELSH HISTORY Lecturer in Prehistoric Archaeology Salary: Lecturer Grade A: £23,643 - £27,116 p.a. Closing Date: 12-11-2004 Post Description: Applications are invited for the above post. The successful candidate will be a specialist in Prehistoric Archaeology with the ability to make an important contribution to the research profile of the Department. Research interests in any aspect of prehistoric archaeology are welcome, including landscape archaeology and the prehistoric archaeology of Britain and Ireland. The successful candidate will be required to play a significant role in the teaching of prehistoric archaeology and the principles and techniques of archaeology, including theory, and to take part in administrative duties in the Department.

The post will commence in January 2005.

Other Information:

Application forms and further particulars should be obtained by contacting:

Human Resources,
University of Wales,
Bangor, Gwynedd,
LL57 2DG.
Tel: (01248) 382926 / 388132
E-mail: personnel@bangor.ac.uk

Please quote reference number 04-4/66 when applying.

For informal discussions concerning this position, candidates are encouraged to contact:

Email: Dr. Raimund Karl r.karl@bangor.ac.uk or Dr Nancy Edwards his010@bangor.ac.uk

Events

The Mysteries of Avalon

November 12-13 - Ben Lomond

Mara Freeman presents The Mysteries of Avalon at the Amity Center. This weekend we will explore the beauty, wisdom and power of Avalon, which will take us through many magical paths in the Forest, including:

The Faery Realm of Morgen le Fay, the Nine Sisters, the Dark Goddess and Mysteries of the Cauldron and the Chalice of Healing;

The "wild wisdom" of Merlin: originally known as Myrddin, Welsh bard, prophet, magician and archetypal Guardian of Britain.

The Mysteries of Glastonbury: the small town in southwest England, where Avalon meets our own world; the hidden secrets of Glastonbury Tor, the Chalice Well, and the ancient Abbey with its legends of Joseph of Arimathea and King Arthur.

The Wasteland—the myth and its meaning for us today in our current planetary crisis—and how we can redeem it through reconnecting with the Goddess of the Sacred Land who guards the Grail.

To set sail for this magical isle, we will go by the "three arts" of the Western inner tradition: ritual, meditation and the Vision Journey. This experiential work will enable us to discover how "Avalon of the Heart" can open us to wisdom and healing for our lives and our Earth today. Information: 800-694-1957 or avalon@celticspirit.org

Book Review

Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Art: Geometric Aspects

by Derek Hull
From Read Ireland Book News - Issue 286

Trade Paperback; 40.00 Euro / 48.00 USD / 25.00 UK; 250 pages, with colour and black-and-white illustrations throughout

Much of early medieval Celtic and Anglo-Saxon art is based on the display of motifs keys, interlacing, spiral and zoomorphic in well-defined panels in simple and complex arrays. A study of the arrangements of the panels and the fine details of the motifs indicates that the artists relied on geometric methods and principles first used by Egyptians and Greeks. Some of the works are incredibly intricate and challenge us to unravel the way they were created. This book reflects the authors life-long interest in interpreting the exciting and exotic patterns revealed by scientific studies using light and electron microscopes. His interest in Celtic and Anglo-Saxon art started with a casual observation of an interlacing pattern on an early medieval stone cross set in a churchyard. There followed many years of exploration of art in metal, stone and vellum from all parts of Ireland and the British Isles. This book reveals new and intriguing facets of these works that add to our appreciation of the beauty of the art and the skills of the artists.

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Calendar

Astronomical Samhain, when the sun is mid way between the Autumn Equinox and the Winter Solstice, will occur as 15 degrees of Scorpius on Nov. 6 2004, at 8:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time, or by an alternative method of calculation as 16 degrees, 18 minutes declined on Nov. 6, at 2:59 p.m. Pacific Standard Time.

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Yule Year XLII
Vol. 20 Number 8
December 23rd, 2004 c.e.

Yule Essay: Bards, Ogma and Ogham

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 1985
By Emmon Bodfish

Yule begins Winter, Geimredh, season of the Bard. The File and Bards, like the troubadours who followed them, practiced their art "from Samain until summer" as in the old poem of Forgoll, the Bard, who tells King Mongan a story each night from his wise repertory. And, as Keatings explains, commenting on the Old Irish, the winter practices of the File, lodging from house to house in exchange for their songs and stories, had become such a great burden for Ireland, that a king had the idea of banishing them:

"It is by Aodh son of Ainmire that a great assembly of Drom Ceat was convened where there was a gathering of the nobles and ecclesiastics(?) of Ireland. Aodh had three reasons to convene this assembly, the first of them being to banish the File and Bards because they constituted a heavy burden and were hard to govern."

At this time, Keatings adds, almost a third of the well-born men in Ireland belonged in some way to the Bardic class. "And from Samhain to Beltaine, they lodged at the homes of the nobles of Ireland." The project failed because Conchobar, to show his Druid orthodoxy and generosity, gathers up the File and Bards and maintains them for seven years, and also sends Cuchulainn to meet them. (It is not, in the light of this, accidental that we have more verse remaining about Conchobar than about any other Pre-Christian Irish king.)

The tradition continued after the Christianization. A folklorist whom the Rees quote recalled that

"Just until recently, the Irish story tellers, heritors of the Bards, also did not exercise their art during the summer. In order to feel at ease, it had to be winter and night had to have fallen."

The patron god of Bards and storytellers is Ogmios, Champion of Strength and Eloquence. Lucian, writing in the second century, equates him with Roman Hercules, but notes these differences. First, Ogmios is portrayed as an old man, white haired, but still powerful. The Gauls, he learned through his native acquaintance, associate eloquence with the old champion, and not with Hermes, whom they see as too young and callow. On one of the temples or art works then extant, Ogmios, he says, is pictured leading a joyful band of men, attached to him by thin chains which link their ears to the tip of his tongue, a striking visual portrait of persuasive ability. The Irish god Ogma or Oghma, is clearly the same divine persona, though Prof. MacCana feels that the name may be a borrowing instead of a genuine cognate. But the figure appears, often qualified by the title "Grainainech" of-the-Sun-like-Countenance, and The Honey-Mouthed, both in Ireland and Wales as on the Continent. He is also known as "trenfher," champion, or literally the "heavy man." In insular traditions he is not only the patron of eloquent speech, but also the inventor of writing, in the old Irish system of Ogham letters. This is a system of writing made up of bars of varying lengths place above and below a central line. It is of uncertain origin, but clearly designed for carving on stone, or at the end of square pillars.

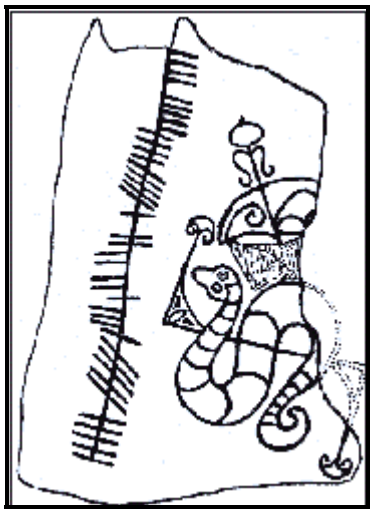
It continued in use into the Early Middle Ages. MacCana believes it probably evolved out of an earlier set of magical symbols; perhaps some of the same ones that gave rise to the Norse Runes.

As Ogham came into use after the Celts were exposed to the Latin alphabet, MacCana contends it may have evolved thus: "seeing the utility of the Sound=Letter system of Latin script, the Gauls may have let the magic symbol whose name contained the sound stand for that sound in all words." Other scholars, such as Prof. Rhys, and Charles Squire, believe Ogham was the indigenous script of Ireland. They stress that it more closely resembles a binary or trinary code, akin to the bars and lines of the I Ching, than the picture writing of sound diagrams from which Mediterranean and hence all Western systems of letters evolved.

Most Ogham inscriptions are found in Ireland and Scotland, where the Romans never came. (Druidism is full of these riddles.)

Being in this way the God of Writing, it may not be an accident that Oghma is one of the very few Celtic gods for whom we have written records of his worship, i.e. prayers. Two "defixiones," inscribed tablets, were found in France on which Ogmios is beseeched to avenge the author and wreck a curse on certain individuals. In Irish sources, he is also the Champion in

this sense of judge and avenger, and to him binding oaths are made. He is invoked as "the god who binds" the binding power of words and oaths, the spell-binding power of eloquence, so graphically portrayed by the thin golden chains by which he leads his listeners, in the scene described by Lucian. This ability to persuade, convince, and enchant with words was highly regarded in Celtic society, and a part of the training of Bard, Filidh, and Druid alike. LeRoux speculates that the "magic of Ogham" that Cuchulainn used in the Tain Bo Cuailnge to stop, single handed, the advance of the Connaught army, was not supernatural magic, but persuasion, or eloquent diplomacy and playing for time.



Thus, Oghma is the one to invoke in negotiations, when eloquent speech and persuasive ability are needed.

Oghmic Incantation Here is an incantation to an Oghma like figure of "Sun-like Countenance" from the Scottish oral folk tradition. The Preceptor has used it and gives testimony of its utility.

The litigant went at morning dawn to a place where three streams met. And as the rising sun gilded the mountain crests, the man placed his two palms edgeways together and filled them with water from the junction of the streams. Dipping his face into this improvised basin, he fervently repeated the prayer,

Ionnlaidh mise m'aodann
'S na naodh gatha greine,
Mar a dh'ionnlaid Moire a Mac
Am bainne brac na breine.
Gaol a bhi 'na m'aodann,
Caomh a bhi 'na m'ghnuis,
Caora meala 'na mo theanga,
M'anail mar an tuis.
Is dubh am bail ud thall,
Is dubh daoine th'ann;
Is mis an eala bhan,
Banruinu os an ceann.
Falbhaidh mi an ainme Dhe,
An riochd feidh, an riochd each,
An riochd nathrach, an riochd righ:
Is treasa lion fin na le gach neach.

I will wash my face
In the nine rays of the sun,
As Mary washed her Son*
In the rich fermented milk.
Love be in my countenance,
Benevolence in my mind,
Dew of honey in my tongue,
My breath as the incense.
Black is yonder town,
Black are those therein,
I am the white swan,
Queen above them.

I will travel in the name of God,
In likeness of deer, in likeness of horse,
In likeness of serpent, in likeness of king:
Stronger will it be with me than with all persons.

*A later introjection which does not rhyme.

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

The grove here at Carleton is mostly silent these days, empty not only of animals and seasonal plants, but also of students. Before leaving for the term, we had a sweat and a fun anonymous sealed message distribution day. We also got a mysterious letter asking for the attendance of "The Chief Druid" of the grove at a store opening in London. All goes well, except that our exorcism of the White House seems to have had only limited effect.

Stephen Crimmins has completed his editing of the second edition of Druid Chronicles (Evolved) and is reviewing Richard Shelton's "Carleton Druid Compendium".

Digitalis Grove: News from D.C.

Mike has decided, failing the acquisition of a cushy Federal job by April, to relocate to South Korea next summer and teach English there from July 2005-July 2006, perhaps longer on the EPIK program. He invites you to join him, if you're interested in working in the same city with him.

After finishing ARDA 2's third and last volume with Stacey (NRDNA Magazines 1976-2004), Mike wishes to go out on new adventures overseas where the cooking is better, and Republicans are scarce. He will study local religion and get a better feel for Northeast Asian politics on the side. Most likely, a new Grove will be established, the first in Korea; much like the Akita and Shikoku Grove were established during his stay in Japan from 1996-2000.

Rowan-Oak Grove: News from Tulsa, OK

With the arch-druidess finally getting her financial life back under control we were able to turn our attention once again to the needs of the grove. the decision was made to start a culdee sect study group within the grove since so many members were christo pagan, and were interested in exploring this aspect of druidism. showings at our rituals have been almost nil unless the arch-druidess was putting on a feast anyway so for the time being we are exploring other avenues. for the past two saturdays our culdee group has been doing studies from a antique bible reading for the home study group book given to me by my erstwhile mentor myrddin a maeglin and we pick apart the scriptures going back to the hebrew, arramaic or greek to find the connotations found in the origional languages. everyone has remarked that doing so has given them a new perspective on what was really written. we have also discussed the evolution of the early church history, both in rome and in the british isles and how the two christian sects differed enormously and the influence of the druids on both. this has been an interesting class

and will probably evolve into a full seminar for our students seeking the priesthood. AS for yule itself while nothing specific is planned we might try learning some of the older pagan carols and do a bit of caroling- if anyone actually shows the interest in doing it. the change over to sis crystal as vp of the board of directors, sis erika as head of corn maiden society helped enormously, bro velderonne and bro thomas are alternating as our summoners and everyone else retained former positions in the board of directers. sis m.s. sylver catt was raised to eldership at samhain, she heads our wagner grove and has more than earned this elevation. secretary bro m.c. werebear and the arch-druidess m.s. white raven have joined a peace activist group and have become involved in helping to end the war in our own small fashion. oops gotta run, got a member online who is trying to stop someone from oding. back into counselor mode.

healing light and peace
m.s. white raven

Dravidia Grove: News from Indiana

Hello all,

It is once again that time of study and that is what I have been doing with my time. I did manage to see a few raccoons out back last night. There were a total of 5 of them playing around the yard. The weather has not turned too cold yet, but it is cold enough to put a damper on your outdoor plans. We had a fantastic Samhain, and a few good scares by hiding under the pile of leaves in the front yard. Have some really good video shots of it that went back to England with my Brother-in-law.

Enjoy the changing of the leaves.

Dolanimus

Canine Grove: News from Oregon

I am still a wandering Druid wannabe in the watery clutches of western Oregon. I foresee a damp solitary ritual out in the woods begging the sun king to hurry up and return! Also, this diehard single woman finally consented to a proposal of marriage after forty-five years of happily traipsing about on this planet on her various errant adventures. (Besides, who can say no to getting hitched at the Church of Elvis?!)

Bindi, somewhere in the vicinity of Portland, OR

Sierra Madrone Grove: News from California

We at the Sierra Madrone Grove are planning two events to mark our "Season of Sleep". We are planning a large public Yule Gathering to be held Dec 17th at the Unitarian Universalist Church on Sierra Dr in Sacramento. The Event will start at 7:00 pm. We will also be holding a private Hogmanay Celebration on Dec 31 to mark the New Year.

Sean Mac Dhomhnuill

Sierra Madrone Grove

Sunset Proto-Grove: News from California

It is the season of sleep. Every day now, I go to work in the dark and come home in the dark. I only really see the sun on the weekends. This really brings the seasons true self out for me. It's these months when I don't really get to see the beauty of our earth daily, that make the spring so wondrous. I concentrate now on catching up on projects in the house. Updating scrapbooks, decorating for Yule, continuing to try and fill the empty spaces still present in our new home, in an effort to bring the 'cozy' feeling into every room. Cooking more hot meals now. A roast in the oven, a stew simmering on the stove...baking.

The cozy feeling I search to create for my family is much like a warm nurturing womb in the dark season. And in the spring we open the windows. Dust, clean, sort, store, sell. Opening the house to the newly emerging season and the light.

Lovely the circle of life.

"...Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons,

It is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth."

—Walt Whitman

Best Wishes to all-

Oriana

Poison Oak Grove, News from California

Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

Our Samhain Social was celebrated this year in the ArchDruidess' new house. We sent a place for those who have gone on before, putting on that plate a bit of everything from our feast. When dessert time came and everyone got a piece of the AD's specialty, persimmon pudding, our Server, who was seated next to the "empty" place setting proclaimed, "I don't know who is sitting there, but he sure wants that cake!" Later that night the AD set the plate outside for the spirits. In the morning everything was still there, except for the persimmon pudding!

Call to the Morrigan

By Morag NicBride, Server, Poison Oak Grove

Asking help of gods has always been an uncertain business: how do you know when you are answered, or even heard? Who is listening, and what allows one cry to be heeded, and not another?

And what happens to one's system of rational thought when it seems a call has been answered, not by the modern accepted version of God, but by something much older and more dangerous?

At a grove service in early June, I made a request for help. My neighborhood, a small, quiet Oakland street near San Leandro, was under siege from a band of young men who had attached themselves to the household directly across the street

from my home. They were present day and night, in and out in clusters, glaring at anyone who looked at them, loud at late hours, their friends and associates visiting in a steady parade of arrogance.

For two years, the situation had been increasing. Weekends, especially three-day holiday weekends, had ceased to be times of relaxation and pleasure. When the tenant was gone, as she frequently was over the weekend, people came in carloads, blocking my driveway and loitering on the sidewalk, talking loudly, bringing their laundry, stashing items in an unlocked car on the property. Drugs and petty prostitution were part of the mix; my partner of 16 years had been offered both. It embarrassed and offended him to think that these people regarded him as a potential customer. The father of one of the young men, the most belligerent and aggressive of the lot, would come over himself to participate in the activities.

Our little block was marked territory, nearly a gang zone, although the young men, mostly in their early twenties, were not a gang. Calling the police was dicey, as it was never clear whether or not the tenant had given her permission for the crowd to be at her house. The owner was more or less hoping everything would go away, apparently unaware of the Oakland statute that allows the police to evict tenants who have become a severe nuisance, and that he could be liable for a hefty fine upwards of $12,000. When I mentioned it to him, he still didn't want to do anything.

Useless to describe the irresponsibility and indifference of the tenant herself, she is a good-natured individual who is hard to dislike, but she really does not care what her neighbors must endure. Nothing changed until it began to affect her directly.

The last episode in this silly drama had occurred on the Memorial Day weekend.

At a subsequent grove gathering, after consulting with my Arch-Druidess, I called upon the Morrigan. I asked them for help in protecting my home and neighborhood, not for any punishment for or revenge upon the people involved. As I spoke aloud, great vultures circled low over the trees of the grove, continuing their flight until I finished my request. I am not making this up; they did not begin circling until I began my request, and they did not long remain after I was finished. I recall seeing two, but am not sure how many were actually there.

The next long weekend was July 4, and, as expected, the tenant of the problem house departed with instructions to the homeowners left, right, and across the street (me) that "no one" was to be in the house. Leaving it in our hands, was, of course, a convenient way to be sure that nothing really would be done, because we were concerned about retaliation, among other things. The big, bluff middle-aged man on one side was reluctant to call police, because he did not want to see young African-American men in jail, but he was not afraid to let them know that he was ready to make the call.

Late on a weekend night, the party began. Cars slipped by and people disappeared into the house, but no lights were on. Quiet or not, there was a lot of traffic for a house that was supposed to have "no one" in it. I am not sure that it was our call that initiated the visit by the police. They had to have been very close by. We called the Oakland non-emergency number to ask what we should do, as we knew that the tenant was not home, not to ask for police intervention, but while we were on the phone, the patrol cars arrived.

My partner and I stayed inside, peering out the window of a darkened room; there were at least five patrol cars, and a helicopter circling above. The racket was frightening; later, neighbors from down the street collected on the sidewalk in front of my house to watch after danger of gunfire had passed.

The Morrigan is said to fly shrieking overhead, in the form of a raven, or carrion crow, and to call up a danse macabre of dead warriors to stoke the fury of battle; indeed it seemed so that night. There were fifteen or so people in that tiny house, and those that were not immediately arrested attempted to flee. Three, a man and two women, hid under the car of the neighbor to the left of the raided house. Others jumped fences and fled through yards. It is my understanding that all were apprehended, including a person who was on probation, and most certainly faced a much longer jail term than he had before.

It was well after midnight before the last of those arrested had either been taken away or released. The house was locked up again. We managed to get some sleep; I learned from the neighbor whose car had played temporary "donjon" that she was none too pleased with the action, as she was imprisoned in her house for most of it, but she was not surprised that it happened.

There was more to come; Sunday night, even after the ruckus, we saw one of the miscreants come to the door of the house, and go in. I called the police; they came, and, this time, unleashed a police dog when the people inside refused to come out. Two young men were wrestled out of the house and onto the ground. One was let go, and the other taken to jail. The one released had a key, which, we found later, he had made on the sly when he had had one of the tenant's keys in his possession.

To say that quiet and contentment ruled afterwards would be wishful thinking, but things are definitely more peaceful, and far less confrontational.

Was this juxtaposition of ancient lore and modern action actual cause and affect?

As I stated earlier, perhaps the call to the Morrigan gave me and my partner and, as a result, others, courage to finally act; we were not the only people who called out the law, or stood up to the belligerent crowd in the months that followed.

Literature concerning the Morrigan warns of residual violence, and disquiet and physical threat continued to plague the woman who lives in the house. She did not really want everyone to go away, nor did her son, both of them giving lip service to the idea while allowing some of the people hauled out of their house by force to return. As of today, the arrogance and overbearing invasive nature of the visitors has by and large ended, as if the events of the summer caused them to understand that they did not have free rein on the street. Whatever they may say, their behavior has changed. The most threatening and troublesome individuals are gone, some for good. Nonetheless, it is clear to us that she profits by the activity in her home, and has used the hands-off attitude of our neighborhood to quietly continue other ugly goings-on, for which there will no doubt be another kind of reckoning, only not just now.

The Morrigan is too powerful and unpredictable a force to call upon for anything less than full battle. Don't ask for their help unless you mean it, or, in a more familiar phrase, be careful what you wish for; you may get it. Also, as the matter began to finally wind down over the weeks, I had the very strong feeling that it was best to look for help elsewhere in the pantheon of Celtic deities, should there be a need. It was and is time for gentler influences.

In psychological, and maybe karmic, terms, it might be said that my neighbors and I got ourselves charged up to take on the problem, and had to deal with the fallout. We fielded it the best we could for the time, and, because of our own unacknowledged fears and hidden intent, we got what we asked for.

Or the Morrigan did what I asked of them, and left the pieces to fall as they might.

Comments on the nature of the Morrigan and some of their symbols:

The Morrigan, also Morrigu, is a triune deity, composed of the three goddesses, Badb, Macha, and Nemain. Together they are so powerful that it is considered wiser to invoke them separately, as their collective energy can turn violent.

"Morrigan" is translated by two separate sources as "great queen", and "phantom queen".

Among the animals associated with the Morrigan are the carrion crow and the raven.

Carrion crows do not inhabit the West, and I thought that they might be a European bird. To my surprise, they are well known in the south and middle parts of the United States, but by other names: turkey buzzard, or vulture. The California species is slightly different in appearance, but they were indeed the birds that flew over the grove.

These big, black birds have an unsavory reputation because of their eating habits, but they are wonderful flyers. Vultures most likely evolved from eagles and hawks, and the former, at least, are not beyond dining on carrion themselves. It is also good to recall that the carrion eaters keep things clean for the rest of the world.

Locally, there is a large flock that roosts in the tall trees around and about San Leandro. I have seen them circling high in the air directly above St. Leander's Catholic Church, and once I saw them perched, broad-shouldered and ominous, atop the eucalyptus trees situated directly next to San Leandro city hall. From all appearances, they stay there regularly. The raven is one of my favorite birds. Intelligent, clever, resourceful, and playful, it is a figure in the folklore of many cultures.

Many ravens roost in the trees around my house and along the streets in this community. Right now, as it is nearly winter, they are not as plentiful as in the summer and early fall, when the pickings are better. They are huge birds, which we often do not realize, because from a distance, it is easy to mistake them for crows, which are much smaller, and have a more raucous cry. The raven makes a low croak, and there is language in it.

One such is the double word "croak-croak" which means "here I am". I have heard a raven give such a call when it has made a kill, or has got hold of some other food, perhaps calling its mate to share the meal. As I was leaving my door for work one day, a raven took flight from my front yard. Its wingspan was nearly as wide as the span of my arms, and it had a body as large as that of a big hawk. I have also seen them close at hand, begging for food with great birdly charm, in the Grand Canyon. They stand as tall as my knee, and have beaks three inches long. The head boatman on one of my Grand Canyon river trips pointed out an aerial squabble between a gathering of ravens and a raptor, which was getting the worst of the fight. He claimed to have seen ravens harass hawks and eagles for the sheer fun of it.

My favorite raven prank happened during one breakfast on that same trip. The cook had set up the food on long tables, as usual, including a platter of English muffins. One of our winged camp followers was hopping about on the rocks behind the tables, ignored by every one. As we sat about the camp eating, we saw the bird launch itself into the air, swooping in a wide arc overhead, the pale round circle of an English muffin dangling from its talons.

Plants associated with the Morrigan are henbane and nightshade. Nightshade is common in this area, and, if the berry is ripe, it is quite edible and very tasty, sweet, with an intense tomato flavor. I would not recommend trying it unless you are very sure.

Sources:

The Druids, Peter Berresford Ellis
Celtic Myth and Magick, Edain McCoy
National Audubon Society Web site, www.audubon.org

The Heart of the Spiral:

A Story in Two Parts

By Brian Jeffries

(Editor's Note: occasionally we at A Druid Missal-Any receive worthy submissions of fiction of a Druish nature from RDNA members. Previously we published The Soul of Juliana Spring by Irony Sade of Hemlock Splinters Grove. This one was submitted by a member of the RDNAtalk conference, who not long ago was asking questions on the conference for his research on the Druid's favorite tree, the oak. Little did I know it was for this intriguing story!)

Foreword

I drink from the flowing phenomenal well
My thirst for experience deep
I hunger for secrets the ages foretell
The secrets that they did not keep

Story and style are written in stone
A burial mound shows the place
The point of an arrow, an altar, a throne
Illuming the ways of our race

To tell about time is the simplest thing
The way of a spiral, an uncoiling spring
Bedrock to capstone, the key is in place
A conscious revival, a memory trace

To those who remember, I leave it with you
Retelling's the way it can last
A crystal portrayal - the best we can do
Inspiring future through past

More than twenty thousand years ago, Stone Age Europeans worshipped the immortal Great Goddess, who was personified as the wild, primitive woman in her threefold aspects of beautiful maiden, motherly matron, and wise old crone. It was She who presided over all acts of creation and destruction. Represented as Earth Mother, Moon Goddess, and Sea Goddess, She had countless other titles.

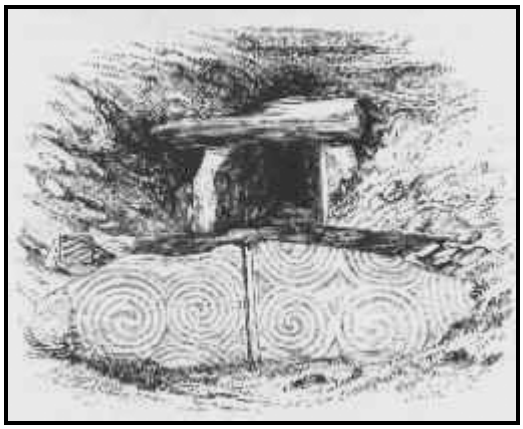
Gradually, the early nomadic hunter-gatherers turned to agriculture, and among the farmers were those who observed the cycles of the heavens and the seasonal changes of the land and sea. They became able to predict natural events, and thus were considered to be valuable members of society. These were the druids, who came to be the educated class among the warriors, farmers, craftsmen, slaves, and eventually, metal smiths. The science of the druids crossed over into the realm of magic, rituals of which were performed on hilltops in groves of oak trees.

Twisted and split and blasted by bolts
Yet stately serene grew the dark sacred oaks
On top and defiant of wind and of weather
Their deep diving roots held the mountains together

Among the several different types of druids were the ollaves, or master poets, who were the keepers of myth, history, genealogy, and the Spirit of Poetry, which reincarnated down through the ages. For them, the Goddess as Muse was the ultimate source of all inspiration.

Her symbol, the spiral, is a fundamental design of nature, and for humankind, it represents life, death, and rebirth through the Immortal Spirit.

This is the tale of Dylan O'Cleary; family man, athlete, adventurer, and natural landscaper, who was given a mysterious book for his research on oak trees, leading him to the very heart of the spiral.



The Heart of the Spiral:

A Tale of Poetic Rebirth

In the sea-womb's mist
Lies the Isle of the West
Gray Spiral Castle
Upon its mount rests

In his sleeping chamber within ancient stone walls, the Master Poet stirred, his blue-gray eyes focusing into wakefulness. Gesturing to the hooded figure waiting by the chamber door he queried: "Apprentice, how long have I slumbered?"

"It is the early twenty-first century after Christ, Master. This is a time of great change for the Mother of All Living and consequently for poetry as well."

"A change for the better it surely must be," yawned the Master, "for upon my last awakening I found both to be held in small regard. Once again, it seems that She has a task for us to perform in the Realm of the Living. Tell me now," he directed, arising and stretching, "who and what has awakened me from my dreams?"

Peering into a large crystal pyramid set atop an oaken pedestal, the Apprentice replied, "A man named Dylan recites from `The Song of Amergin', Master."

I am a stag: of seven tines

"So. The Celtic calendar-alphabet within which is contained the Name of the Creator. This is an incantation of great power. Apprentice, where dwells this man?"

I am a hawk: above the cliff
"In the Land of the Lightning Bolt, on the western shore of the Southern Sea."
I am a hill of poetry

"This Dylan is a simple man who finds joy in the experiences of the natural world, and who has had little formal training in poetry and myth."

I am a wave of the sea

"Think you that such a one would be suitable for our purpose, Apprentice?"

I am a tear :
The sun lets fall

"Perhaps I do, Master, for it is plain that he feels the magic present in the verse that he reads, although he is ignorant as to its meaning."

I am a wizard:
Who but I
Sets the cool head
Aflame with smoke?

"What text does this man recite from?" queried the Master.
"`The White Goddess' by Robert Graves," came the reply.

I am a breaker: Threatening doom

"Ah!, Graves is it!" exclaimed the Master. "`The White Goddess' is his excellent history of poetic myth and a guide to the foundations of language. Its influence should serve well to facilitate our work with this `man of the natural world'."

Invoke, People of the Sea, invoke the poet,
That he may compose a spell for you.
For I, the Druid, who set out letters in Ogham form,
I, who part combatants,
I will approach the ring fort of the Sidhe to seek a cunning poet that together we may concoct incantations.
I am a wind of the sea

* * *

As he finished reading the last line of the three thousand year old poem, the hair rose on the back of Dylan's neck. A rush of energy coursed up his spine and he was flooded with an ecstatic feeling he had never before felt. "Wow! Incredible!" exclaimed Dylan to himself.

"This poem, what's it called? `The Song of Amergin.' Why is it affecting me this way? These ancient words mean little to me, but I can't stop the feeling that I've known them before in other times, other places."

Late into the moonlit night he read on in wonder, and finally, with the sea sounds outside the window lulling him, he slept.

When Dylan awoke the next morning, the sun had been up for an hour. Rubbing the sleep from his blue eyes, he went outside to look for his wife, Dana. He found her pruning plants among the array of green hues in the garden. After a morning kiss, Dylan took her hand and they sat down beneath an oak tree's gently bobbing branches, where he related to her his experience of the previous night. "The feeling that I've known that ancient poem before is accompanied by the equally unlikely notion that Robert Graves, in the year of my birth, wrote `The White Goddess' specifically for me to study," he said wonderingly.

"Maybe it does all have a meaning," replied Dana. "In my studies of the metaphysical, I've read that there are no coincidences or intuitions without some reason, and that it's wise to heed them when they occur."

"Honey, as you know," answered Dylan, "I've always been skeptical of accounts of magic and mysticism, but from the words of a long-dead bard, my imagination has been given a tremendous charge of energy, and I have to know what it's all about."

"You had better read on then, and hope for some clues," she advised, turning back to her task.

That night, after a long day of planting oak trees and arranging a landscape with Dana, Dylan relaxed in a chair with a spiral notebook in his lap, regarding the pen in his hand. In the twenty-five years that had passed since finishing school, he had used this instrument of power mostly for the writing of checks and the filling out of bills. Seldom did he even write to his kin, many of whom lived far away. A medieval Welsh Triad from the book came into his mind:

Three things that enrich the poet:
Myth
Poetic power
A store of ancient verse

The ecstatic feeling returned in a rush and his pen found the paper. Considering some of his life's elements, and weaving in knowledge gained from the book, he wrote:

Youthful sun beckons a new season's shoots
Winter leaves carpet the old oak tree's roots
Song of the Earth flowing upward in prayer
Bass note of thunder rolls down through the air
Melody strong let the new day begin
A summoning call to the druid within
A summoning call to the druid within

Old oaks and thunder bestir memories
Of dark forests ancient with tall sacred trees
Acorns and seedlings are what they have been
The groves will return like the druid within
The groves will return like the druid within

Sylvan cathedral a sacrifice burns
In thanks to Earth spirits as the great year wheel turns
Hooded forms chanting as magic begins
To call 'cross the ages to the druid within
To call 'cross the ages to the druid within

* * *

As they turned away from the image within the crystal, the Master Poet, with an amused look on his weathered face, asked, "What say you about these lines, Apprentice?"

"It may be that we attempt to turn base metal to gold, Master," he replied, "though rhyme and meter are passable."

"Because of his connection with the oak tree, gained by his diligent propagation and conservation of its species, this Dylan has unknowingly tapped the ancient power of druid magic. Therein lies the key to his journey, and it will enable him to express the essence of the realms he has mastered in the language of poetry," replied the Master.

* * *

Later, reading into the early morning hours, with Dana and their two young children long asleep, Dylan encountered the thirteenth century poem entitled:

`The Tale of Taliesin.'
Primary Chief Bard am I to Elphin
And my original country is the region of the summer stars
I have been winged by the genius of the splendid crozier
I have obtained the muse from the Cauldron of Cerridwen
I have been in an uneasy chair above Spiral Castle
And the whirling round without motion between the elements
I shall be until the day of doom upon the face of the earth
I was originally little Gwion
And at length I am Taliesin

Taliesin! The power in that name and in the antique verse was so intense that Dylan could only shake his head and blow through pursed lips as poetic ecstacy once again coursed through him. "What is the story and meaning behind these lines? Why do I feel their words so strongly, as if I knew them well? How does the Muse inspire?" he asked himself in amazement. From his love of the sea and his long experience as a surfer, he was able to relate to the words:

...the whirling round without motion between the elements.

This was a fair description of surfing within the vortex of a curling wave - a barrel ride, which also happened to be an ecstatic experience. Too, the lines brought to mind the eye of a hurricane; the calm within the heart of that mighty elemental force beloved of wave riders. The pen in Dylan's hand moved toward the notebook, and words flowed:

Daughter of the Sun and Earth
Scirocco has been given birth
Libya's dunes feel her growing desire
Whose shape shifting sands are the fuels of her fire
She whirls on so lightly down through the Sudan
To the Ivory Coast and Liberia's span

There as two passionate lovers they meet
The white-capped Poseidon embraces her feet
Above them are flying her bright cirrus tresses
Far down below his blue face she caresses
God of the sea and her most willing slave
He joins in the dance of the wind and the wave

Westward she flies! - A scirocco no longer
Unfurling her beauty, her love growing stronger
The Lesser Antilles receives her clear eye

She spins a pirouette from the sea to the sky
Seeking a path in her amorous quest
With great pomp and majesty she waltzes northwest

Yes, I call her the Dancer - the one I long for
Her ranks roll in rhythm upon the wild shore
Sirens' sweet singing - I too am the slave
For I must dance the dance of the wind and the wave
My dance is my prayer in our aqueous bliss
To the whirling White Goddess - please spare me death's kiss

* * *

Stroking his thin, grizzled beard, the Master looked at the Apprentice and asked, "Wouldn't you say that he has hit upon a worthy topic here?"

"As you know, Master, I have a particular fondness for sea rhymes, and although it lacks technical sophistication, his passion lends it a certain grace," came the grudging answer, as the image faded from the crystal.

* * *

To be continued

News

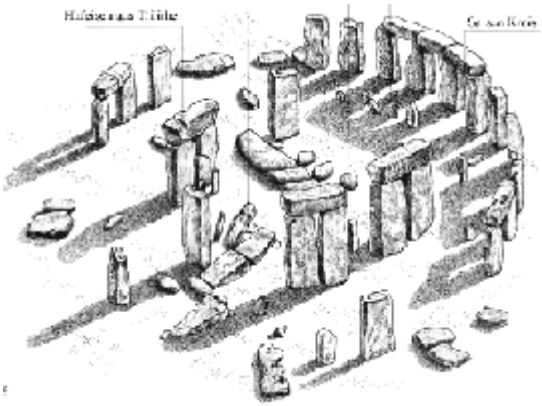
Iron Age Cornish Hill Fort For Sale

A hill fort in Cornwall, south-west England, will go on sale next month. Lescudjack Hill Fort, the area's largest Iron Age settlement, is to be auctioned by Fulfords Estate Agents in Penzance on 2 December. The guide price of £28,000 includes a 2.5 acre area of land off Pendennis Road, Penzance, with stunning views over Penzance to Mount's Bay and the Mousehole Peninsula. Historians and schools have raised concerns about the sale. Local author and historian Ian Addicoat said: "Clearly it is imperative that such an historic and important site is maintained and preserved correctly. I think if there were any plans to develop such an important site there would be an outcry, and I would be very surprised if the planners would allow it. I hope whoever takes it on appreciates its history and considers allowing it to be used as an amenity. I'm not sure the public is aware of its significance. They probably think it's a field with a nice view. But historians are certainly aware of what it represents."

In 2002, children from Penzance Infants School made the hill fort their summer project, and 30 children delivered a 500-name petition to the Mayor of Penzance calling for improvements to the site. Headteacher Nikki Owen said: "It took us some time to track down the owner of the site, who turns out to be somebody in Newlyn. It is very disappointing that it is being sold off. I only hope that any future owner will develop it as a public amenity and show its historic significance."

The site, which is believed to date to around 300 BCE, has never been properly excavated. Historian Craig Weatherhill, who mentioned Lescudjack in his book Belerion, said: "Some 15 to 20 years ago there was a proposal to do a hefty excavation but it came to nothing. It has never really been dug properly. I would be delighted if local historical groups are successful, because they would have the well-being of the site at heart."

Source: Western Morning News (15 November 2004) http://www.thisiscornwall.co.uk/displayNode.jsp?nodeId=144143&command=displayContent&sourceNode=144131&contentPK=11312399&moduleName=InternalSearch&keyword=hill%20fort&formname=filtersearch



A new Theory about Stonehenge

(Editor's Note: As we know, the Druids DID NOT build Stonehenge, but it does not cease to fascinate those associated with Druidism, harkening back perhaps to our Indo-European megalithic-building roots. Most probably it is because it is ingrained even in our minds due to faulty yet earnest research in the 18th century. One mystery loves another. For that reason I include this article.)

For more than 20 years, Derbyshire carpenter Gordon Pipes has been striving to find an answer to a 4,000-year-old question that still confounds archaeologists; namely: How, without roads or wheels, did Neolithic man transport 80 sarsen stones, each weighing an average of 30 tons, 20 miles from the Marlborough Downs to Salisbury Plain to construct Stonehenge? The site also comprises 98 blue stones, each weighing six tons, from the Preseli Mountains in Wales. The question of how these were conveyed over land - it is agreed they must have been ferried in boats along the Severn Estuary and River Avon - is also unanswered. But Pipes is convinced he has found the solution. "In terms of Stonehenge, theories that one stone could have been dragged a mile a day by 700 men

using rope and wooden rollers seemed as viable to me as alien involvement. The rollers wouldn't have taken the weight and the physical effort required would have been super-human," he explains. "It occurred to me that a megalith could be picked up, moved a short distance, put down and moved again.

Further research suggested this would be quicker, require less manpower and negate the need for muscle power. Also, the initial inertia the body experiences when attempting to drag large stones, is all but nullified."

Called stone rowing, the procedure involves laying down a number of logs - the number determined by the weight of the stone - in a parallel formation. Resting on supports, the logs are positioned just above the ground. Some are then used to support the stone, while the rest act as a continuous fulcrum for wooden oars, or levers, inserted underneath the stone. By pressing down on the levers, the stone rises two inches clear of the support logs, and when the levers are moved sideways, the stone moves forward.

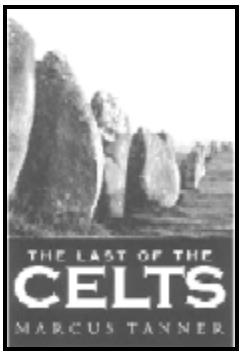
Pipes tested his theory in his garden. "Four of us carried out this experiment using a four-ton concrete block, four logs and four levers," he explains. "We were able to move the block between six and 12 inches at a time with ease. I then set up a ramp and discovered that the method also worked uphill when using more levers and incorporating a break mechanism."

Mike Pitts, editor of British Archaeology, suggested that, "Few archaeologists ever consider practical issues like moving stones. Gordon's ideas fascinate because they come from an understanding of lifting and moving things, rather than from theories dreamt up at a desk. And while he doesn't underestimate the difficulties facing the Stonehenge builders, neither does he come up with impossibly complicated solutions. It's the first time that someone has come up with anything really sensible for a long time."

Pipes is planning further experiments on Salisbury Plain next summer, including an attempt to move a 40-ton block.

Source: The Guardian
http://education.guardian.co.uk/higher/research/workinprogress/story/0,11109,1362131,00.html

Book Review



The Last of the Celts

By March Tanner
From Read Ireland:
Hardback; 37.00 Euro / 45.00 USD / 25.00 UK; 390 pages

A cultural tour spanning the Celtic world from the Outer Hebrides of Scotland to Brittany, and from Cape Breton to Patagonia, this book sets out to find out what has happened to the Celtic peoples in a world where pressure to conform to Anglo-American culture has grown ever stronger. Taking the form of a journey that starts in the wilds of north-west Scotland, before proceeding through western Wales, the Isle of Man, troubled Northern Ireland, the western seaboard of the Irish Republic and The French region of Brittany, the author weaves solid historical research into the language, religion, music and customs of the peoples concerned with first-hand encounters with a host of priests, ministers, government officials, cultural activists, musicians and writers. The author finds talk of a Celtic revival much misplaced, for while the term \"Celtic\" is banded around as never more, largely to suit the needs of commerce and tourism, the fragile cultures the word actually refers to in the north-west of Britain, Ireland and France are closer than ever before to extinction. As the author discovers on his journey, the tide is going out at different speeds in different places. While Welsh culture and language are (relatively) robust, the rich culture of the Bretons is heading for almost certain oblivion in a decade or two at most, as relentless, centuries-long pressure to be French reaches its climax. Nor are the prospects much brighter for the small Celtic communities in the New World. As the author travels from Cape Breton in Canada to Patagonia in Argentina, he finds the once sturdy communities of Gaelic and Welsh speakers facing exactly the same threats of assimilation and ultimate disappearance. It is a development that impoverishes as all.

To order books from the Read Ireland Book Review send an email to the order department at: greg@readireland.ie Please be sure to include your mailing address and credit card details.

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All Prices and Rates are in Euro (US Dollar and UK Sterling prices are guidelines based on current exchange rates.) Euro prices on books reviewed above are firm. Post + package is charged at cost.

Events

The Avalon Mystery School

January 15, 2005

The Avalon Mystery School presents a series of six monthly classes on the Arts of Sacred Magic with Mara Freeman. Discover; The basics of Western Magic as taught in the Avalonian Branch, How to open your psychic and spiritual centers to contact innerworld beings Guides, Teachers and Guardians, The Three Arts of Meditation, Vision Journey and Ritual whys and hows, Ways to forge a strong connection to Self and Spirit that will transform your life. Our Mission: The goal of the Mysteries is the conscious realization of the self as

connected with all beings, visible and invisible, on the great Tree of Life, and ultimately with the Source of All. From this understanding comes the power to mediate spiritual energies into the physical plane for healing both ourselves and our world. 10AM-4PM in a beautiful secluded location in Ben Lomond, CA. $60 per class or $300 to register for series. Please call 1-800-694-1957 or e-mail avalon@celticspirit.org for more details. To learn more about the Avalon Mystery School, visit us at

http://www.avalonmysteryschool.net

Festival of Brigit: Goddess of the Growing Light

January 29, 2005

Mara Freeman hosts Festival of Brigit: Goddess of the Growing Light at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 490 Aguajito Rd, Carmel, CA, from 10:00am- 5:00pm. This weekend is the traditional time of the Celtic festival of Brigit, the powerful Goddess of Fire who brought the gift of the sun's growing light and the abundance of earth to her people, and later became the most beloved and powerful of Irish saints. Revered as a woman of wisdom and inspiration, Brigit was also a healer, keeper of the sacred fire, guardian of holy wells, and the muse of poets and visionaries. We will bring our sleeping winter senses to the radiance of this Sun Goddess, and waken to the luminous world of Celtic magic by entering into her Mysteries through: Listening to the old stories, poetry and lore about Brigit from different Celtic lands -- Practicing ritual and meditations that will open the gates to her temple of wisdom -- Working with the Three Fires of this Triple Goddess: Fire in the Head, Fire in the Hearth and Fire in the Forge -- Weaving Brigit's Crosses, symbols of the sun and ancient talismans of protection -- Celebrating the ascending Light of the Year through song and circle dance. And like our Scottish and Irish ancestors did every year, we will once again perform the lovely ancient ceremonies that welcome back this goddess of the early spring who brings the promise of renewal. We will return to the world with gifts for the soul and the power to call upon these ancient teachings to fire the glow of spirit and beauty in our own lives. Cost: $80. Information: 800-694-1957, events@celticspirit.org or visit

http://www.celticspirit.org/sacredgrove.htm

Announcing Canada's First National Pagan Conference

http://cnpc.officeprofessor.ca/
Theme: Past, Present and Future.
Place: Edmonton, Alberta, U of Alberta campus.
When: May 20-23, 2005

Special guest: Kevin Marron (author of Witches, Pagans, and Magic in the New Age. Toronto: Seal Books, 1989) His book was a ground-breaking piece on our presence and culture.

Agenda: There will be panels on the various Pagan paths, on Paganism in the various regions of Canada, as well as on the various subjects that concern us - interacting with the mainstream community, forming "churches" and getting marrying rights, Pagan parenting, how are we living our beliefs environmentally, Pagan chaplaincy, etc.

Hopefully this will be an annual event, with the second one held in some entirely other part of the country (Maritimes?)

There will be more announcements as information becomes confirmed and available. (Costs - to be determined soon.)

We are looking for suggestions for panels or talks, and looking for participants.

An open discussion list for all things about the conference other than actual planning can be found at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Gaia_Gathering.

Calendar

Yule, Winter Solstice, Sunstop, when the Sun reaches its lowest point in the sky as it travels along the celestial equator, will occur this year on Tuesday, December 21, at 4:42 a.m. Pacific Standard Time.

A Druid Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are $8.00 and email subscriptions are free. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's post mail subscription free. Write to:

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Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION FOUR

The Druids Egg

Order of the Mithril Star

OMS is either an Offshoot of the RDNA or a Group in Near-Orbit.
Their Views are Their Own Affairs.

Volume One

2002 & 2003

Drynemetum Press

The Druid's Egg

Vol. 1,No. 1
Imbolc 2003
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The "State of the Order": Where We Are at Today

Greetings in the Mother:

Our latest "online" Druidcraft 101 class will be under way on February 2nd. Imbolc will also be the launch day for our new Druidcraft 202 class, based upon A Reformed Druid Anthology. The Mother Grove is also sponsoring a LIVE version of Druidcraft 101 beginning in March at Sybok and Ceridwen's cabin in the Cascade foothills. The Talent (OR) proto-grove will be doing the same thing down in their end of the Rogue Valley.

Ceridwen's Astropagan 201 (intermediate level) class is also well underway now, having begun on January 2. Her beginners' class, Astropagan 101 will be offered again beginning March 1, and it already has 67 pending students.

All classes are available over email via Yahoo Groups. See http://www.mithrilstar.org/courses.htm for further details.

The last quarter of 2002 saw a loss for us as far as Groves established under our wing are concerned. With the moving of Angie Druid Fulmer to Israel, we lost the fledgling Circle of the Beavers proto-grove in Corvallis, OR. Cylch Sequoia Sempervirons Grove (Hiouchi, CA) broke up due to internal strife. And two other proto-groves, one based in the Seattle area and the other in Tennessee left the OMS outright (although I understand they retain standing in the RDNA). On the other hand, the Mother Grove of OMS has gained one new member, and a new proto-grove is forming in Talent OR.

My father was a farmer, and like all farmers he experienced crop losses and failures from time to time. However, he was in tune with nature, and like any Druid, he realized that these things go in cycles, and the next crop he planted would be bigger and healthier than the one he lost.

Membership wise we are now at 91 (down from 173). Of those, 42 are active, 49 are inactive. 69 are 1st Order, 14 are 2nd, 5 are 3rd, 1 is a 5th and 2 are 7ths.

The Mother Grove will hold its monthly "Pagan Movie Night" (for members of Southern Oregon Pagan Network) on February 1st. This month we will be (appropriately enough) showing "Groundhog Day," with Bill Murray. In March, we plan to show "The Sorceress and the Friar" (the English version, not the French sub-titled one), which is about 12th Century France and a "Forest Witch" who gives the Friar a run for his money!

Plans for Imladris (see http://www.mithrilstar.org/imladris) are progressing, despite our having decided that the present location of the Mother Grove has too few acres to properly do what we want. A couple of realtors are already working to find a suitable space for us in the Rogue Valley. Waiting is.

Despite our losses in the last quarter of 2002, we are predicting a strong 2003. We believe we will double in size by this time next year, and hopefully spawn at least three new Groves. Imladris will be well on the way to becoming a reality. Like in the above farming analogy, we expect that weeds will be present in our fields, but weeding is always a part of good cultivation. Farther ahead, we are dedicated to seeing OMS-RDNA Groves at our future colonies on the Moon and Mars! We will be around, preserving the RDNA far into the future. After all, if a growing percentage of the Earths population chooses to live their lives as Druids and Gods, we feel that it can only help to bring balance and a return to the reverence that Nature deserves!

And so must it be!

The Druid's Egg

Vol. 1 No. 2
Calan Mai Beltane 2003 / YR 41

Druidcraft 101

Order of the Mithril Star's next online Druidcraft 101 class begins June 21 and will last about 16 weeks. To enroll, send a blank email to druidcraft101@yahoogroups.com or enroll online at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft101 For more details, visit http://www.mithrilstar.org/d101.htm

Druidcraft 202

The next Druidcraft 202 course (A Walk Through the ARDA) will begin June 21. This will be a revised class that will encompass the NEW improved ARDA and will take approximately 40 weeks! (Not for the feeble!). Once again, Norm Nelson and Michael Scharding will be joining us to share their unique perspectives. To enroll, send a blank email to druidcraft202@yahoogroups.com or enroll online at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft202 For more details, visit http://www.mithrilstar.org/d202.htm

Rogue Valley (OR) Druid Summit Planned

OMS is organizing a "Rogue Valley Druid Summit" where the leaders of all the Druid groups represented in Southern Oregon can meet and share concerns, methodology and simply fellowship. RDNA, ADF, Henge of Keltria, Tuatha d'Brighid and Sisters of Avalon all have representation here.

Astrology Classes Continue

Sister Ceridwen is deeply involved in her beginning and intermediate Astrology classes. For info on upcoming classes (held online) go to http://www.mithrilstar.org/huntersmoon

EVERY PAGAN NEEDS LEGAL PROTECTION;

http://www.prepaidlegal.com/go/earseneau

Best Wishes and Happy 41st to Our Comrades

OMS wishes to express our congratulations to the rest of RDNA on the celebration of 40 years of existence. Best wishes also to those making the pilgrimage to Carleton. May your journey be safe and may the Earth Mother grant you enlightenment and inspiration.

Financial Report For 2002

The Order collected a total of $541.00 in the fiscal year of 2002 (Jan1 to Dec 31). All funds were deposited into the Imladris fund for the purchase and building of our Druid Monastery.

Discussion has begun on ways to expedite the building of Imladris. Some of the proposals thus far are:

--Make dues mandatory for all degrees (currently they are mandatory for the Third degree up).
--Charge for classes.
--Charge an Initiation fee for each degree.
--Require that D101 students purchase "Stranger..." from us directly.
--Sell timeshares in Imladris.
--Reinstate the requirement that Groves pay a portion of dues to the Mother Grove. The suggestion was 33%.
--Set up an online "craft" store where members could sell their homemade items, splitting the profit with Imladris.

There are other possibilities as well. The Mother Grove is inviting all interested parties to submit ideas. We expect to institute some kind of program by Midsummer. Comments should be directed to pendderwydd@m...

Growth of the Order -- 1st Quarter 2003

Currently, there are 106 Druids on the rolls. 46 Druids are "active," which is to say, they are participating at some level in the Order. Of those:

--30 Druids are of the First Degree.
--8 Druids are of the Second Degree.
--5 Druids are of the Third Degree.
----2 of these are "conditional" (meaning they are owing dues for the current fiscal year).
--1 Druid is of the Fifth Degree.
--2 Druids are of the Seventh Degree.

13 new Druids have pledged since Imbolq.
--2 of those are now inactive.

There is currently 1 active Grove, with 4 members.
There are no active proto-Groves.

There are 3 "proposed" proto-Groves (no papers filed).

The current Druidcraft 101 class began with 98 students.
There are currently 29 students remaining (they have just received Lesson 10). 10 students have already Pledged.

IT'S OKAY FOR PAGANS TO MAKE MONEY!

http://www.mithrilstar.org/ppl

Imladris

The search for land for Imladris has shifted to Humboldt County in California. Humboldt is the 2nd county south of the Oregon border.

The largest city is Eureka, and its biggest attribute is Redwoods. The town we feel drawn to live closest to is Arcata, a liberal, college town (home to Humboldt State University), located approximately in the middle of the "Redwood Empire". Land there is relatively inexpensive (compared to the Rogue Valley in OR). This, and it's even milder weather patterns,

proximity to the redwoods and the ocean, and other factors, have caused the shift in emphasis.

CONCLUSION

That's the news from the Mother Grove of the Order of the Mithril Star, RDNA. May you all have a blessed Beltane. We'll see you again at Lughnassadh.

Please support the Order: http://www.mithrilstar.org/donate.htm

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The Druid's Egg

Vol. 1 No. 3
32 Foghamhar 41
Lughnasadh 2003

Thou art God/dess: The Sun God Lugh has been sending one heat wave after another to us here in the Rogue Valley, and we are doing our best to stay cool! Gardening and magickal workings are only done in the early morning, dusk, or late into the evening during this season!

ROGUE VALLEY DRUID SUMMIT

The first Rogue Valley Druid leadership summit was held at Sybok and Ceridwen's cabin in the Cascade foothills in early July. They all agreed to disagree, and not let their differences become barriers to networking. In anticipation of their relocation to the "Redwood Empire", Sybok & Ceridwen handed over the controls to the So. Oregon Pagan Network website and discussion group to Aigeann, lead Druid of the Rogue River ProtoGrove (ADF). Future meetings were discussed.

FACT-FINDING IN ARCATA CA

Ceridwen and Sybok are planning a fact-finding mission to Arcata, CA later in August. They'll meet with members of the Sequoia Pagan Alliance (http://www.sequoiapagans.org) and with old friends from the original "Jefferson Index", as well as meet, greet, and hug our friends, the sequoia sempervirons.

DRUIDCRAFT 101

The Midsummer session of Druidcraft 101 is well under way. We started this time with a record breaking 120 total. With the Midterm just sent out, we are down to a more reasonable 49. So far no new members have joined. But, "waiting is." The next online Druidcraft 101 class begins November 2nd. To enroll, send a blank email to druidcraft101@yahoogroups.com or enroll online at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft101 For more details, visit http://www.mithrilstar.org/d101.htm

DRUIDCRAFT 202

Druidcraft 202 (A Walk Through the ARDA) began June 22. This is a revised class encompassing the NEW improved ARDA. Once again, Norm and Michael are with us sharing their unique perspectives, and they seem to be having fun doing it, although the class as a whole seems rather unfocused, therefore, most druidic! The next session begins November 30th. To enroll, send a blank email to druidcraft202@yahoogroups.com or enroll online at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft202 For more details, visit http://www.mithrilstar.org/d202.htm

NEWS OF THE GROVES

ProtoGroves are now forming in Talent OR, New York City, and Connecticut. The Mother Grove will relocate from Grants Pass OR to Arcata, CA in the Spring of 2004.

ASTROLOGY FOR PAGANS

Progress is being made in Ceridwen's Astrology for Pagans classes: on July 7, the Beginning class has graduated into the Intermediate sessions, and there will be an Advanced session soon for the other Intermediate class. A new Beginning class will start in November 1, 2003; to enroll, send a blank email to: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/astropagan101/

Several students have expressed an interest in becoming "Professional Astrologers" as well. Ceridwen has been putting together a Certification program towards this end, as well as working on a "Pagan Studies" program which will include other classes besides Astrology, such as Numerology, Tarot, Shamanic Pathworking, and many others.

If you are interested in a private consultation about your Astrological chart, please visit her home page at: http://www.mithrilstar.org/huntersmoon/

PRE-PAID LODGING AT IMLADRIS

We are now projecting that the guest facilities at Imladris will open in the Spring of 2005. Phase One will include 100 camping spaces, three guest cottages, an on site store, laundry facilities and hot tubs. Phase Two (to be completed by Summer, 2006) will include three more guest cottages and 25 RV spaces. Phase Three (Fall 2007) will include six guest cottages, a swimming pool, and a 2,800 square foot conference center and all purpose building. In between the phases, we'll be working on the central circle, labyrinth, meditation garden and fire ring.

We're now offering pre-paid lodging at Imladris, as a well to bring this all about. Lodging packets are available for a minimum donation of $100. I'm including a chart with the details, but here is how it works:

If you donate $200, that entitles you to a choice of 20 campsite nights, 16 RV nights, or 4 cottage nights. If we don't open by our stated deadlines, you double your nights for each year we are behind. Pre-paid nights will be available for use at conferences and conventions.

Lodging rates are based on current rates being charged by innkeepers in the Redwood Empire area. They could (and probably will) go up by our target date, so buying in early can save you a lot of money, and consider: you're already saving over 50% from the get go!

Check out the attached chart and let me know what you think -- or better -- purchase a lodging packet today!

Use the following "Pay Pal" link:

https://www.paypal.com/xclick/business=ceridwen%40mithrilstar.org&item_name=Prepaid+lodging&no_note=1&tax=0&currency_code=USD

(Note: Remember that the requirement for Seventh degree is that you visit the Redwoods once every three years.)

CONCLUSION

The Mother Grove wishes all of you a most bountiful first harvest for Lughnasadh, and abundant blessings throughout the season!

May you never thirst,

Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau,

AD Ceridwen Seren-Ddaear,

Clerk Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, OMS-RDNA

The Druids Egg Send letters, submissions to mithrilstarnews-owner@yahoogroups.com There is no guarantee that your submission will be published. All submissions become the property of the OMS-RDNA. Published four times each year by The Mother Grove of The Order of the Mithril Star -- Reformed Druids of North America Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng y Bydoedd Grove "A non-prophet, ir-religious, dis-organization" No rites reversed -- Copyright (c) 2003

ACT NOW TO PURCHASE PRE-PAID LODGING AT IMLADRIS

Located in the pristine Redwoods of Northern California, Imladris will be the "Left Coast's" PREMIER Pagan and Naturist vacation venue, Pagan conference/ritual/retreat center, and the headquarters of the Order of the Mithril Star --Reformed Druids of North America.

We are now projecting that the guest facilities at Imladris will open in the Spring of 2005.

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Use the following "Pay Pal" link: https://www.paypal.com/xclick/business=ceridwen%40mithrilstar.org&item_name=Prep\aid+lodging&no_note=1&tax=0&currency_code=USD

Note: Remember that the requirement for Seventh degree is that you visit the Redwoods once every three years.

PRE-PAID LODGING

Night's can be used in combinations and for however long it takes to use them up. Pre-paid nights are available for conventions and special events. Pre-paid nights are transferable (A one time $30 charge is added if transferred to a non-OMS member. Also, please make sure whomever you transfer it to knows we are a clothing-optional recreational facility).

Donation Amount	Campsite Nights	RV Nights	Cottage nights
$100.00	10	8	2
$150.00	15	12	3
$200.00	20	16	4
$250.00	25	20	5
$300.00	30	24	6
$350.00	35	28	7
$400.00	40	32	8
$450.00	45	36	9
$500.00	50	40	10
$600.00	60	48	12
$700.00	70	56	13
$800.00	80	64	15
$900.00	90	72	17
$1,000.00	100	80	19

If facilities do not open by Spring 2005 (Summer 2006 for RV spaces) then you DOUBLE your nights for each year past the deadline.

Normal rates (as of Summer 2003):

Campsite: $20 / night

RV Space: $25 / night

Cottage: $104 / night

Facilities at Imladris:

100 Camping spaces (with picnic table, fire ring, garbage receptacle, "bear proof" food locker), rest rooms, showers, laundry facility, hot tub, campground store.

25 RV spaces (same as above, plus electric/water hookups and dump site (extra $10 charge).

12 Cottages (furnished 16 ft geodesic domes)

Swimming pool

Hot tubs

Sauna

Reiki – Massage therapist

Weight room

Meditation – Yoga room

Labyrinth

Community fire ring and ritual circle

2'800 square foot multi purpose room (will include food service, barista) (60' geodesic dome)

Nature trails

Nearby Attractions:

Numerous Redwood State and National Parks

6 nude or clothing optional beaches

The Pacific Ocean

Whale watching tours (seasonal)

Historical Eureka and Arcata

And much, much more...

Top of Form

Make a Donation

Bottom of Form

NOTE: THIS OFFER WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE ONCE IMLADRIS OPENS FOR BUSINESS

Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION FOUR

The Druids Egg

Order of the Mithril Star

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Volume Two

2003 & 2004

Drynemetum Press

The Druid's Egg -

Vol.2 No. 1
1 Geimredh 42 –
Samhain/Calen Gaeaf 2003 –
www.mithrilstar.org
See the groovy html version at
http://www.mithrilstar.org/newssamhain03.htm

HAPPY NEW YEAR – Y.R. 42 BEGINS TODAY

A new year means new beginnings, and we've already made many changes in anticipation of the new year of the reform.

We've completely overhauled the website, adding new features such as a whole new section devoted to the Coastal Redwood, and a new calendar is under construction to help you keep track of those pesky Druish dates, such as today:

1 Geimredh YR 42, which is also, 1 Mí na Samhna YR 42. It is also the Welsh day of the week, Dydd Sadwyrn, and to us in OMS; it is the day of Sequoia, our most sacred tree.

The new calendar should help you not only to learn this system of dating, but also keep track of it all.

NEW MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS DURING Y.R. 42

We will begin sending out member's kits beginning in November. The kits will be sent out to all new paid members and will consist of:

--A membership card with expiration date (your dues "due" date). --A membership certificate suitable for framing --A VHS recording of the documentary "Tree Sit: The Art of resistance," which documents Earth Firsts! on-going campaign to save the Redwoods in Northern California.

NEW ARCH-DRUID AT THE MOTHER GROVE

Ceridwen Seren-Ddaear was ordained Arch-Druid of the Mother Grove on the Full Moon, 42 Foghamhar YR 41 (August 11, 2003). Ceridwen is the wife of the former Arch-Druid and OMS founder, Sybok Pendderwydd. She also teaches the online Astrology for Pagans class (see http://www.mithrilstar.org/huntersmoon) and makes her living as a professional astrologer.

NOVEMBER 8TH – HARMONIC CONCORDANCE

Thou Are God/dess!

The Mother Grove invites and encourages all of you to join us in a meditation/visualization ceremony that will take advantage of all the powerful energies that will be present on the Lunar Eclipse of Saturday, Nov. 8.

We will begin the ceremony at the peak time of the Eclipse, which will be at 5:15pm Pacific Standard Time, (so that would be 6:15pm Mountain Standard time, 7:15pm Central Standard Time, and 8:15pm Eastern Standard Time - and for those of you elsewhere on the planet, please figure out when it will be for where you are).

We plan to spend at least an hour formally - and possible most of the night personally - tuning in to the global community and celestial energies, as this will be so much more powerful than the typical Full Moon or Lunar Eclipse. You might want to refer back to the article that was recently posted in here about the astrological and astronomical phenomena happening at that time.

Things to visualize and project:

1. Initially, feel the connection with the "web of light" from other spiritual seekers, Druids, pagans, etc. as we pool our energies together to create a vast and powerfully vibrant energy grid for the good of the Earth Mother to use as she sees fit.

2. See our energies meeting and blending into a cool, healing green energy that will spread across the planet, cooling the global warming phenomena (especially the polar ice caps and glaciers of the world's mountains), healing and nurturing the endangered ecosystems, protecting and preserving the wild animals and the trees and forests of the planet (with special emphasis on the redwoods and other endangered rain forests and species of special trees in your area). Do this until this green energy covers and permeates the entire planet and all who live upon Her.

3. Next project the calmness and groundedness of the green energies to remind those in political power that we are a human family, and that they need to need to wake up, see the "larger picture" perspective and get back to the basics of mutual respect and unselfishness so that we as a species can become further evolved and enlightened - and that we need to live in the "eternal now" and take responsibility for our actions and thoughts.

(Yes, I know this sounds very "idealistic", but isn't magik about visualizing the "best possible outcome" in the midst of chaos and imbalance?)

4. Visualize Mithril Star groves popping up all over the planet, made up of Druids who have gained awareness, empowerment, and a desire to give of themselves to make a better world for all of us - choosing their own causes toward this end - on whatever level they feel their power is the strongest and most inspired.

5. For those who wish to remain solitary in their spiritual workings, you can still meditate and visualize and put energy toward aiding the Earth Mother and all Her creatures - She needs all of us now, offering to Her whatever energy we can give to Her. You can also share energy with other OMS Druids on a psychic level to further our common goals and workings.

6. And those in need of personal healing for themselves and/or loved ones can channel some of this energy for this as well - because the healthier and more balanced we are, the more we will have to give in the long run. A recharged "battery" will do more and last much longer than one that is drained and weak - so by all means, heal thyself! :)

7. And lastly, use this time as a turning point in your lives, planting the seeds for inner transformation that will be mirrored in outer transformation, for "As within, so without". And with the celestial phenomena, "As above, so below". The Earth Mother is going through Her own transformation as well, and as we live in Her aura, we need to be like conductors (like acupuncture needles or standing stones) to collect these energies and channel them into Her so that as She heals, so do we, and so that as we evolve and grow, so does She. This is a truly symbiotic relationship we have with Her, and we need to play our part in that process as unselfishly as She does...

So please, mark your calendars, clear your schedules for an hour, and join us - any time that night would be good, but close to the peak time would be ideal... :)

Blessings,

Ceridwen Seren-Ddaear /|\ Arch Druid of the Mother Grove Order of the Mithril Star

NEW WATER SHARING GUIDELINES

ADOPTED BY MG OFFICIAL

STATEMENT OF THE AD Oct 10 2003

Thou Art God/dess,

As we have seen recently in this group, there are several differing viewpoints and issues regarding the sharing of water, as well as changes (and/or proposed changes) within the Order as a whole. I'd like to address and hopefully clarify these issues her.

Let me begin by saying that our "dis-Order" will always grow and evolve, even as each of its members grow and evolve. We are not a stagnant entity, and very little about the Order is "carved in stone." There will always be room for growth and renewal and evolvement.

That said, let's go over some points:

1. If you agree to the three tenets ("Nature is groovy", Nature is groovy", and "Thou Art God/dess"), take the pledge, and pay dues (former members have until next Midsummer to comply to the dues-paying), you are considered an OMS Druid. Period. No degrees ・just an OMS Druid. THIS IS NOT LIKELY TO EVER CHANGE ・in other words, this is the only aspect that is carved in stone.

2. Here is where we begin to touch on some changes, mostly involving water-sharing and ordinations. After reading all the posts concerning this, and discussions with the MG, we've come up with a list of all the different options/levels, which will be divided into two camps: "degree-oriented" and "non-degree-oriented":

a. Members-at-large: those OMS Druids who never share water, or who only share water with their own nest or significant other(s). IOW, the 3rd, or "Nest/Family" level. These members would have NO "official degree status" within the Order.

b. "Degreed" Members: Those OMS Druids who follow all the requirements (which have actually been in effect for the past TWO YEARS, btw) for the different degrees, quoted here: http://www.mithrilstar.org/degrees.htm

c. "Non-Degreed" Water-sharing Members: Those OMS Druids who share water on any of three different levels within the Order, which are as follows:

TRIBE Level: OMS Druids who would willingly share water with other members of the Order, either at a public gathering or an online ritual or gathering.

CLAN Level: OMS Druids who would also share water with members of a Grove of their making or choosing, as well as with the Tribe.

NEST/FAMILY Level: OMS Druids who would also share water with members of their own polyfidelitous "Nest", as well as with the Clan and Tribe.

(NOTE: Each of these three levels implies a progressively more intimate level of commitment)

These three levels will be added to Lesson 11 in future D101 classes to provide choices for those who are not ready to only operate from the 3rd, or "Nest" level, but who would like to take smaller steps toward intimacy and commitment to others.

Now, a note to those of you who are of the "Olde OMS school": The addition of the progressive levels of water-sharing does not in any way effect or "water down" the higher level of commitment you all go by.

As we are not all operating from the same spiritual levels, I feel that these choices will more effectively offer all of us a way to commit to this group and each other from whatever level we are most comfortable.

IOW, it will allow all of us to "walk our talk" and express our own divinity at whatever level we feel ready. It is a way of "honouring" where each of us is coming from, and not imposing unrealistic expectations where they are not appropriate or welcome.

Blessings and full chalices to you all,

Ceridwen Seren-Ddaear Arch Druid of the OMS Mother Grove

AD's ADDENDUM TO WATER SHARING STATEMNT

Regarding degrees and ordination:

Some of you have received "clergy ordination" from the Universal Life Church. This is yours, and not the same as the OMS degree system ordinations...

Although many of you have "technically" fulfilled the basic requirements for each of the first few degrees, these won't be fully complete until you have received and shared the consecrated waters from a 3rd degree Druid.

We are looking into making that as easy as possible. One idea is to open the Chat Room at various times (like Full Moons or around Holidays) and doing an online consecration of the waters and OMS ordinations at that time.

You would hold your chalice of water near your computer, and we would do an online blessing and consecration of your water...then you would share it at either the Tribe, Clan or Nest level with whomever you feel comfortable doing so - or you can just share with myself and/or Sybok, which would count as well. (This seemed easier than sending consecrated waters through the mail).

Once your waters are consecrated and shared, we would do the online ordinations for each of the levels of the participants. Then you would be considered fully ordained at that level in the Order.

That seems to be the quickest and easiest way to fulfill the water-sharing requirement for each of the degrees. However, we are open to hearing other ideas about ways to do this... :)

Blessings,

Ceridwen /|\

OMS SCHISIMS FROM RDNA – OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF THE AD

Sept. 4, 2003

TAG All, Well, it's official: as of tonight we are now a schism (or satellite) group of the Reform. This decision was not made lightly, but with much deliberation and divination and soul-searching by myself and the MG, taking all recent factors into account. What this means:

1. We have remodeled the OMS website to reflect our new direction - it actually resembles the pre-RDNA state, with a few exceptions, and some dressing up. We have taken nearly all mention of RDNA out, except for a couple places where it is appropriate. We will also be adding a "dedication" page that will list ALL of our sources of inspiration - hopefully in the next week or so. This is a work-in-progress, and by no means finished...Check it out at: http://www.mithrilstar.org (you might have to refresh your bookmark)

2. We are now an independent entity, yet still consider ourselves a part of the Reform and the American Druid Family - it's like we moved out of the house, but we are still in the neighborhood...

3. We realized that any closer relationship (as we were originally planning) is now a fruitless endeavor, as there are irreconcilable differences between ourselves and the very outspoken schism of the "N"-RDNA...and we are not really sure exactly what the "silent majority" actually feels, so...

4. Although the group entity of OMS has done this, this does not mean that as individuals we can't still remain connected with the friends we have made in the RDNA. There are some really nice people in there that some of us would like to stay in touch with...

5. Those of you who choose to leave all this behind are free to leave the RDNAtalk group and those who wish to remain there may do so - that decision is up to you as individuals - there is no more group requirement of any kind for you to be involved therein.

6. As we have been told many times by the Reform, we are perfectly capable of standing on our own as an independent entity, and I think we will all come out of this stronger and more grounded than before.

7. Any questions or comments are certainly welcome... :)

Blessings,

Ceridwen /|\

THE STATE OF THE ORDER NEW YEARS DAY Y.R. 42

As of today we have 123 members, of which, 55 are considered "active."
96 members are eligible for ordination into the First Degree.
2 members are ordained First Degree Druids.
18 members are eligible for ordination into the Second Degree
4 members are eligible for ordination into the Third Degree
0 members are eligible for ordination into the Fourth Degree
1 member is an ordained Fifth Degree Druid
0 members are eligible for ordination into the Sixth Degree
2 members are ordained Seventh Degree Druids

During YR 41:
345 students took the Druidcraft 101 class
15 graduated and became members

10 members resigned:
7 during the season of Geimredh
2 during the season of Samradh
1 during the season of Foghamhar

1 member passed to the Summerlands during the season of Geimredh

During YR 41, the Order experienced a net Membership gain of 4

Proto-groves are forming in Central New York state; Talent, Oregon; Salem, Oregon and Humboldt County, California

DRUIDCRAFT 101

The Samhain session of Druidcraft 101 is well under way, this time with 77 seekers (so far -- enrollment is open until Nov. 7th). Three new members have already joined the Order from this group, and we haven't even sent out the first lesson yet. Lady Heart is teaching this session.

This is the first of the "share ware" sessions of D101, where students are being asked to contribute $100 to the Order if they feel they have benefited from the class.

The Midsummer session ended in October with 21 surviving. Of those, seven joined the Order and three are still thinking about it.

The next online Druidcraft 101 class begins March 21st, 2004. To enroll, send a blank email to druidcraft101@yahoogroups.com or enroll online at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft101 For more details, visit http://www.mithrilstar.org/d101.htm

DRUIDCRAFT 202

Druidcraft 202 (A Walk Through the ARDA) has been discontinued due to gross lack of interest. You can still take the course as a self-study. The files necessary will be uploaded in a few weeks to the Mithril Star News files section.

ASTROLOGY FOR PAGANS

Ceridwen currently has two intermediate sessions going, and has just started a new beginning session on November 1st.

If you are interested, you have until the doors close on November 7th to enroll in the latest beginning session.

To enroll, send a blank email to: astropagan101-subscribe@yahoogroups.com or subscribe on the web at: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/astropagan101

If you are interested in a private consultation about your Astrological chart, please visit her home page at: http://www.mithrilstar.org/huntersmoon

CONCLUSION

The Mother Grove wishes all of you a most blessed New Year, and a very joyous Yule, and abundant blessings throughout the season!

May you never thirst,

Ceridwen Seren-Ddaear, AD

Sybok Pendderwydd, Clerk

Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, OMS

NEXT ISSUE WILL BE PUBLISHED ON IMBOLQ / OIMELC -- 2 Earrach yr 42

WANT TO JOIN THE ORDER? http://www.mithrilstar.org/join.htm

WANT TO DONATE TO THE ORDER? http://www.mithrilstar.org/donate.htm

The Druids Egg -- 1 Geimredh YR 42 -- Vol. 2 No. 1

Send letters, submissions to mithrilstarnews-owner@yahoogroups.com There is no guarantee that your submission will be published. All submissions become the property of OMS. Published four times each year by The Mother Grove of the Order of the Mithril Star Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng y Bydoedd Grove "An autonomous collective of Reformed Druidry." Copyright (c) 2003

The Druid's Egg -

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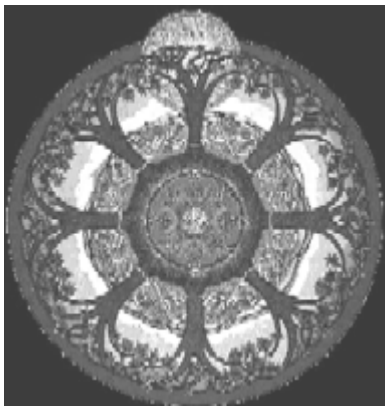
1 Earrach 42 - Oimelc / Imbolc 2004 -
www.mithrilstar.org
See the groovy html version at
http://www.mithrilstar.org/newsimbolc04.htm



MOTHER GROVE MOVING MARCH 1ST

The Mother Grove is relocating to Humboldt County, CA at the beginning of March. Ceridwen and Sybok are currently hunting for a new home in the "Redwood Empire," and would greatly appreciate good vibes and successful house-hunting magick. As soon as we know where we are landing, a new address will be published on the website.

START A PROTO-GROVE

GET FREE DUES FOR LIFE!

Well, the life of your grove anyway. :)

The deal is simple -- If you start a grove between now and Midsummer, you are exempt from dues for that year, and for each subsequent year your grove is in operation.

As with any "deal," there are some strings attached:

-You must be a paid up member of the Order in good standing and ordained to at least the 1st Degree.
-In addition to yourself, you need two warm bodies.
-You must file the necessary forms to register a proto-grove with the Clerk of the MG.
-After a year and a day, you must be ordained to 3rd Degree, and your two members must be ordained to First and paying dues (which makes your proto-grove a Grove) and you must file a Grove constitution with the Clerk of the MG.
-So long as your grove continues to exist and is in good standing, YOUR dues are considered paid.
-Offer applies only to the original Arch-Druid of your Grove (that would be you). Proto-grove registrations must be filed with the Clerk no later than sundown of Midsummer's Day (51 Samradh YR 42).

Forms may be obtained by writing the Clerk of the Mother Grove.

Re: NEW MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS DURING Y.R. 42

By now everyone who has ever paid dues to us (and is still an active member) should have received their member's kit.

We began sending out member's kits beginning in November. The kits consist of:

--A membership card with expiration date (your dues "due" date). --A membership certificate suitable for framing --A VHS recording of the documentary "Tree Sit: The Art of Resistance," which documents Earth Firsts! on-going campaign to save the Redwoods in Northern California.

We've temporarily run short of the videos, but will be making more copies a soon as we can. Until then, however, we have had to limit who receives them to those members who have joined or renewed their membership since November 1.

If we owe you a tape, you will get it before Midsummer. Waiting is!

AVALON RISEN -- A NEW ONLINE STORE RUN BY THE ORDER

We have just recently launched our new online store, featuring Order-related items, including "Mithril Star" pendants, ritual cloaks, and T-shirts. We've become wholesalers with AzureGreen, and can get anything in their catalog (www.azuregreen.com) for you at 20% off their regular retail prices.

Our online store will be at http://www.mithrilstar.org/avalon and will feature a shopping cart powered by Pay Pal, so you can do all your shopping easily and conveniently.

Please keep checking that page, as we will be adding new inventory to the store every week!

Also, if there are any items that you see on the AzureGreen website that you think we should carry in our store, please write us and we will consider it.

BRIGHID

It was said: "from Brighid's feast day onwards the day gets longer and the night shorter." Although this refers to the time of the winter Solstice, the felt truth was that the goddess brought back the growing light. On the eve of La Feill Bhrihde (St.Brigid's Day), the Old Woman of Winter, the Cailleach, journeys to the magical isle in whose woods lies the miraculous Well of Youth. At the first glimmer of dawn, she drinks the water that bubbles in a crevice of a rock, and is transformed into Bride, the fair maid whose white wand turns the bare earth green again.

http://www.chalicecenter.com/imbolc.htm

Brigit

Invocation of the Wise

In a glass
Of scryer's black
Visions of life
Bring full impact
Wells pour out
Your sacred flame
Prophetic words
In wisdom's name
The Womb impregnated
With poetic rhyme
Birthed to life
In seasons time
Summoned
In your healing light
Tbe with me on
This moonstruck night.

Ladygueneva.com
Invocation by Lady Gueneva

Bride put her finger in the river
On the Feast Day of Bride
And away went the hatching mother of the cold.
- Carmina Gadelica

DRUIDCRAFT 101

The Samhain session of Druidcraft 101 is has 5 more lessons to go. Out of 77 that began the class, 29 have survived, and 5 have joined the Order. Lady Heart is doing a wonderful job teaching the class.

This is the first of the "share ware" sessions of D101, where students are being asked to contribute $100 to the Order if they feel they have benefited from the class.

The next online Druidcraft 101 class begins March 21st, 2004. To enroll, send a blank email to druidcraft101@yahoogroups.com or enroll online at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft101 For more details, visit http://www.mithrilstar.org/d101.htm

1st ONLINE ORDINATIONS A SUCCESS!

We held our first ever online ordinations in the mithrilstar chat room on the new moon of January 21st. This was a "three in one" ritual evening, with candidates for the First, Second and Third degrees participating.

Out of 44 Druids eligible for First Degree, 13 were ordained that evening. Out of 11 Druids eligible for Second Degree, 8 were ordained that evening. Out of 7 Druids eligible for Third Degree, 3 were ordained.

In the future, we will only be conducting ordination rites for one degree at a time, since this "mass" ordination seemed in retrospect to be rather factory-like.

The Arch-Druid is currently looking at dates for future ordinations. However, if you are in a hurry, you may make a private appointment with her for a phone or chat room ordination - or you can contact one of the three new Third Degree Druids, as they are empowered to perform the rites for First and Second degrees.

Write the clerk of the Mother Grove for a list of 3rd's.

ASTROLOGY FOR PAGANS

Ceridwen currently has two intermediate sessions going, and a beginning session, which started on November 1st.

The next beginners session is slated to start on Saturday, March 20, 2004 (New Moon after Spring Equinox).

To enroll, send a blank email to: astropagan101-subscribe@yahoogroups.com or subscribe on the web at: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/astropagan101

If you are interested in a private consultation about your Astrological chart, please visit her home page at:

http://www.mithrilstar.org/huntersmoon

ALMANAC

- Today is Imbolc / Oimelc, or February 2, 2004 CE.
- It is the 2nd day of the Season of Earrach, as well as the 2nd day of the Month of Mi na hOimelc.
- It is also Tuesday, in the common tongue, or Dydd Mwrth in Welsh. It is the Druidic day of the Holly tree.
- It is also Groundhog Day.
- FULL MOONS occur on 6 Earrach, 35 Earrach and 65 Earrach.
- NEW MOONS occur on 20 Earrach, 49 Earrach and 79 Earrach.
- The Sun enters Pisces on 19 Earrach.
- The anniversary of the passing of co-founder Adam Walks Between Worlds occurs on 20 Earrach.
- Mean Earraigh (March) begins on 30 Earrach (a Monday - Dydd Llun - Day of the Willow).
- Adam and Sybok first conceived of OMS on 45 Earrach YR 33.
-
- Oestar - Alban Eiler, Ostara, or the Spring Equinox occurs on 48 Earrach.

Cold unfolds
To springs fresh breeze
Oh lady of rebirth
Your flowery scent does please
In a time
Of equal light
I call to you
By will and rite
Changing seasons
Beginnings do end
Ye that which which dies
Sees birth again
Teach me growth
The best in me
The beauty of life
So mote it be!

Invocation by Lady Gueneva ladygueneva.com

- The Sun enters Aries on 48 Earrach.
- Deareadh Earraigh (April) begins on 61 Earrach (a Thursday - Dydd Lau - Day of the Oak).
- A Solar Eclipse will occur on 79 Earrach.
- The Sun enters Taurus on 79 Earrach.

CONCLUSION

The Mother Grove wishes all of you a most blessed Imbolc, and abundant blessings throughout the season!

May you never thirst,
Ceridwen Seren-Ddaear, Arch Druid
Sybok Pendderwydd, Clerk
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, OMS

NEXT ISSUE WILL BE PUBLISHED ON BELTANE / Calen Mai -- 1 Samradh YR 42

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WANT TO DONATE TO THE ORDER? http://www.mithrilstar.org/donate.htm

The Druids Egg -- 1 Earrach YR 42 -- Vol. 2 No. 2

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The Druid's Egg

Vol.2 No. 3
1 Samradh 42 - Beltane / Calen Mai 2004
www.mithrilstar.org
See the groovy html version at
http://www.mithrilstar.org/newsbeltane04.htm

MOTHER GROVE HAS MOVED

(Update by Ceridwen Seren-Ddaear, A-D)

We landed in King Salmon, CA (about a mile or so south of Eureka) on the evening of Feb. 28th in a little seaside cottage (about a block from the beach), in the middle of a peninsula. It was the first and only place we looked at the week before when we did a day trip down here, and we spent the afternoon schmoozing with the landlord, who then took us out to eat after we signed the application.

There is a canal just off our back yard (in fact, all the "alley ways" are actually canals)! Our small street dead ends into the road that goes around the peninsula, and after walking over two dunes, the beach is right there. It has rock jetties sticking out on each side, where people like to fish, and where an otter and assorted seals like to frequent. Sea gulls are always swooping around you...there is a marshy area where large numbers of snowy egrets, blue herons and ducks hang out, and the salt sea air is very invigorating. Sybok says it even has a "sweet" quality to it...a most magickal place!

The cottage itself is a small one-bedroom, and the landlord actually lives in an attached part of it that is cordoned off from the rest. There is a fenced-in back yard, and the canal is just down a small hill on the other side of the fence. It has many boats moored there, and is really cool-looking.

We are having to adjust to living among people again, after our near hermit-like existence in the mountains behind Grants Pass. But it is a pretty quiet street, and the neighbors we have met are really nice...

And the nearest REDWOODS are within 5 miles of us - we have already visited those gentle giants, and they felt very welcoming...in fact, we just recently visited the Redwood Park that is right in Eureka, and it has the most charming little zoo inside of it! What a cool place to take our friends (and

OMS members) when they visit...

Sybok found a job at Bayshore Mall, less then ten minutes from our new home. Now, the hunt for real estate begins. Stay tuned...

START A PROTO-GROVE

GET FREE DUES FOR LIFE!

Well, the life of your grove anyway. :)

The deal is simple -- If you start a grove between now and Midsummer, you are exempt from dues for that year, and for each subsequent year your grove is in operation.

As with any "deal," there are some strings attached:

-You must be a paid up member of the Order in good standing and ordained to at least the 1st Degree.
-In addition to yourself, you need two warm bodies.
-You must file the necessary forms to register a proto-grove with the Clerk of the MG.
-After a year and a day, you must be ordained to 3rd Degree, and your two members must be ordained to First and paying dues (which makes your proto-grove a Grove) and you must file a Grove constitution with the Clerk of the MG.
-So long as your grove continues to exist and is in good standing, YOUR dues are considered paid.
-Offer applies only to the original Arch-Druid of your Grove (that would be you). Proto-grove registrations must be filed with the Clerk no later than sundown of Midsummer's Day (51 Samradh YR 42).

Forms may be obtained by writing the Clerk of the Mother Grove.

DRUIDCRAFT 101: THE SELF-STUDY ON CD-ROM

We've completed compilation of the D101 CDROM, and have started to offer it at Avalon Risen, on the D101 homepage, and on eBay. We're charging the general public $24 for the cd, but OMS members can pick it up for $5 (and that's post paid). See http://www.mithrilstar.org/memd101cd.htm to order at the member's price.

Also, we are giving it away to new members who join without going through the online D101 class, that way they don't have to wait for a new session to begin; they can just jump right in to the self-study.

AVALON RISEN -- A NEW ONLINE STORE RUN BY THE ORDER

We have just recently launched our new online store, featuring Order-related items, including "Mithril Star" pendants, ritual cloaks, and T-shirts. We've become wholesalers with AzureGreen, and can get anything in their catalog (www.azuregreen.com) for you at 20% off their regular retail prices.

Our online store is at http://www.mithrilstar.org/avalon and will feature a shopping cart powered by Pay Pal, so you can do all your shopping easily and conveniently.

Please keep checking that page, as we will be adding new inventory to the store every week! We already many beautiful ritual items in there!

Also, if there are any items that you see on the AzureGreen website that you think we should carry in our store, please write us and we will consider it.

STATS

As of today we have 127 members, of which, 52 are considered "active."
26 members are eligible for ordination into the First Degree.
8 members are ordained First Degree Druids.
6 members are eligible for ordination into the Second Degree
4 members are ordained Second Degree Druids
1 member is eligible for ordination into the Third Degree
3 members are ordained Third Degree Druids
1 member is an ordained Fifth Degree Druid
2 members are ordained Seventh Degree Druids

So far During YR 42:
147 students took the Druidcraft 101 class
25 are still in class
4 graduated and became members

So Far During YR 42, the Order has experienced a net Membership gain of 4

Total Groves: 2
Total US Members: 94
Total Canadian Members: 8
Total International Members: 25
Total Countries represented: 9
Total US States represented: 32
Total Canadian Provinces represented: 6
Top 5 US States: OR=9, CA=9, WA=8, FL=7, NY=5
Total members in areas with Redwood Groves: 4

DRUIDCRAFT 101

The Oestre session of Druidcraft 101 is doing the midterm as we speak. Out of 70 that began the class, 24 have survived, and 2 have joined the Order. Max is doing a wonderful job teaching the class. Hunter is helping moderate and also doing an excellent job.

This is the second (and last) "share ware" session. We've come up with a sliding scale (see

http://www.mithrilstar.org/suggested.htm) for donating to the Order, and with future classes we're just going to make the donation a mandatory thing.

The next online Druidcraft 101 class begins August 18th, 2004. To enroll, send a blank email to druidcraft101@yahoogroups.com or enroll online at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/druidcraft101 For more details, visit http://www.mithrilstar.org/d101.htm

2nd ONLINE ORDINATIONS COMING UP SOON

Our next online ordinations will be held in the mithrilstar chat room sometime before Midsummer. We'll be doing them two weeks in a row, the first evening for First degree and the second for second.

There are currently 33 Druids eligible for the First Degree, 6 eligible for Second and 2 eligible for 3rd.

If you are in a hurry, and don't want to wait for the online date, you may make a private appointment with Ceridwen for a phone or chat room ordination - or you can contact one of the three new Third Degree Druids, as they are empowered to perform the rites for First and Second degrees.

Write the clerk of the Mother Grove for a list of 3rd's.

ASTROLOGY FOR PAGANS

Ceridwen currently has one intermediate and two advanced sessions going, as well as a beginning session that started on March 20, 2004.

To enroll, send a blank email to: astropagan101-subscribe@yahoogroups.com or subscribe on the web at: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/astropagan101

You will then be put on a pending list until she is ready to do another beginning cycle - at a time yet to be determined.

If you are interested in a private consultation about your Astrological chart, please visit her home page at: http://www.mithrilstar.org/huntersmoon

TREASURERS REPORT FOR 2003

Total Dues collected: $767.81
Cafe Press sales: 0.00
Administrative expenses: $335.58
Amount donated to Redwood campaigns: $432.23
Balance as of 1/1/2004: $ 0.00

May

Beltane

Bring me my drum and
bring me my cymbal
Bring forth the sistrum,
bring forth the timbal
Dance now for Hathor, celebrate beauty
dance in Her honor, sing for our lady.

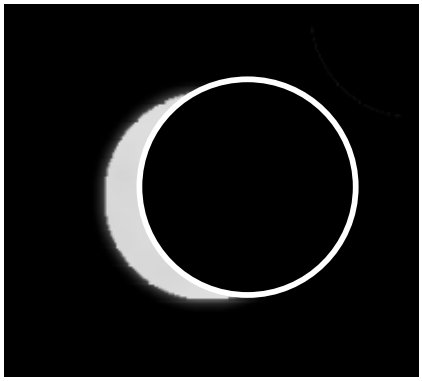
Beltane Incense

3 parts lilac flowers
2 parts frankincense
2 parts pathcouli
Lilac oil (optinal)
Grind together, mixing well.
Toss onto belfries on Beltane.

ALMANAC

- Today is Beltane / Calen Mai, or May 1, 2004 CE.
- It is the 1st day of the Season of Samradh, as well as the 1st day of the Month of Mi na Bealtaine.
- It is also Saturday, in the common tongue, or Dydd Sadwrn in Welsh. It is the Druidic day of the Sequoia (Coast Redwood) tree recognized ONLY by OMS Druids).
- FULL MOONS occur on 4 Samradh, 33 Samradh, 63 Samradh and 92 Samradh (A "Blue Moon").
- NEW MOONS occur on 18 Samradh, 48 Samradh and 78 Samradh.

- A Lunar Eclipse occurs on 4 Samradh.



- The birthday of our late co-founder Adam Walks Between Worlds occurs on 6 Samradh.
- The Sun enters Gemini on 20 Samradh.
- Mean Samhraidh (June) begins on 32 Samradh (a Tuesday - Dydd Mawrth - Day of the Holly).

- Midsummer - Alban Heruin, or the Summer Solstice occurs on 51 Samradh.
- The Sun enters Cancer on 51 Samradh.
- Dearead Samhraidh (July) begins on 62 Samradh (a Thursday - Dydd Lau -- Day of the Oak).
- On 66 Samradh 2001, OMS joined the RDNA.
- The Sun enters Leo on 83 Samradh.

CONCLUSION

The Mother Grove wishes all of you a most blessed Beltane, and abundant blessings throughout the season!

May you never thirst,

Ceridwen Seren-Ddaear, Arch Druid

Sybok Pendderwydd, Clerk

Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, OMS

NEXT ISSUE WILL BE PUBLISHED ON LUGHNASADH /Lammas-1 Foghamhar YR 42

WANT TO JOIN THE ORDER? http://www.mithrilstar.org/join.htm

WANT TO DONATE TO THE ORDER? http://www.mithrilstar.org/donate.htm

The Druids Egg -- 1 Samradh YR 42 -- Vol. 2 No. 3

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The Druid's Egg

Vol.2 No. 4
1 Foghamhar 42 - Lughnasadh / Lammas 2004
Newsletter of the Order of the Mithril Star
www.mithrilstar.org
See the groovy HTML version at
http://www.mithrilstar.org/newslammas04.htm

HELP SAVE OUR SACRED REDWOOD - WRITE YOUR REPRESENTATIVES TODAY

This is our first salvo in our campaign to protect the Coast Redwood. Here is the letter I have sent to my Senators and Congressperson:

"The Coast Redwood (Sequoia Sempervirons) is not only a California treasure but a national treasure as well. With less than 4% of them left, why aren't they at least on the threatened species list, if not on the endangered species list?

"How bad does it have to get before a species is considered "endangered"? I'm thinking here of the fact that less than 4% of Coast Redwoods are left, and how companies like Pacific Lumber are literally "clear-cutting like drunken sailors," thus reducing that 4% on a daily basis.

"What do we know of the effect on global climate change the destruction of the other 96% of this species has had?

"What do we know of the effect on global climate change the destruction of the remaining 4% of this species will have?

"I urge you to draft legislation that would ban the harvest of the Coast Redwood, and the sale and export of Redwood products (for least for 100 years). This will insure not only that the present old growth Redwoods will be protected, but that younger Redwoods will have the opportunity to become old growth. This is for our children, our grandchildren, and I believe the future of this planets climate.

"Thank you for listening."

You may use my letter, or write one of your own.

Naturally, you must use REAL names and addresses, but email is just fine for this purpose.

Please "b.c.c." me any email you send your representatives. Also, please send copies of any response you get to us as well.

Hard copies may be sent to: OMS; PO Box 8004; Eureka CA 95502-8004

I thank you, the Order thanks you, and our sacred Redwoods thank you.

May you never thirst.
Sybok Pendderwydd /|\
Clerk, Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng y Bydoedd Grove:
Mother Grove of the Order of the Mithril Star
Eureka, CA USA -- mithrilstar.org
"An autonomous collective of Reformed Druidry."

DRUIDCRAFT 101: THE SELF-STUDY ON CD-ROM V8.4

We've upgraded the D101 CDROM and included the new Lesson 4-A (Nature is). We've been selling it at Avalon Risen, on the D101 homepage, and on eBay. We're charging the general public $19 for the CD, but OMS members can pick it up for $5 (and that's post paid). See http://www.mithrilstar.org/memd101cd.htm to order at the member's price.

Also, we've been giving it away to new members who join without going through (or signing up for) the online D101 class -- that way they don't have to wait for a new session to begin -- they can just jump right in to the self study.

AVALON RISEN -- RECOMMENDED BOOK LIST PARTIALLY ONLINE

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We've also started a new books section, featuring the "official" OMS Bibliography (a work in progress) using both AzureGreen and Amazon.Com as a resource.

Our online store is at http://www.mithrilstar.org/avalon and features a shopping cart powered by Pay Pal, so you can do all your shopping easily and conveniently.

Please keep checking that page, as we will be adding new inventory to the store every week! We already have many beautiful ritual items in there!

Also, if there are any items that you see on the AzureGreen website that you think we should carry in our store, please write us and we will consider it.

THE CASE FOR PAGAN PACIFISM

Editorial By Sybok Pendderwydd

Historically, Pagans have been warriors. Pagans have not been opposed to warfare in general, whether it was for the purpose of defending their territory against invaders, or for the less noble cause of cattle raiding, or the even less noble cause of being the invaders themselves. But for the most part, traditional warfare had little negative impact on the environment. Blood and human remains are biodegradable after all, and often times warfare was just a faster method of returning to the Earth from which we come. The only notable exceptions were the Roman practice of salting the fields of those they conquered, rendering them sterile for a hundred years or more; and of clear cutting the sacred Groves of the Druids.

Modern warfare is different. Modern warfare involves conflict not only between combatants but also between man and nature. Attacks on the environment have become more savage as technology has developed. Environmental destruction has become an inevitable result of modern warfare and military tactics. The nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons that have emerged during the late twentieth century present threats to life itself; but short of that apocalypse, modern weapons can cause or hasten a host of environmental disasters, such as deforestation and erosion, global warming, desertification, and long-term pollution of air and water.

Modern Pagans, or "Neo-Pagans" as we are sometimes called, are drawn to this spirituality by the recognition that the Earth itself is a living, breathing, entity. We Pagans are therefore the caretakers of the planet; Priests and Priestesses of the Earth Mother, Gaia. In most aspects of our lives, Her well-being is taken into consideration first and foremost. Additionally, we are charged with trying to reverse the damage that has already been done, and guarantee that future damage will not occur. This in essence makes all Pagans eco-warriors, fighting the good fight for the environment in the arena of politics on a local, national and global scale.

We must therefore, in the defense of the Earth Mother, renounce modern warfare, and militarism, altogether. Every weapon that is fired today pollutes the Earth, and the bigger and more impersonal the weapon, the more the negative impact on the environment. We must become pacifists, and like other religious pacifists, we must not allow ourselves to be drafted into military service. Although there are certainly opportunities in the military to effect the environment in positive ways, in the event of war, those opportunities become moot. Modern warriors directly pollute the environment. There is just no way

around this, or we find hypocrisy staring us accusingly in the face.

Note: Opinions expressed by the Clerk do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mother Grove.

LUGHNASADH SESSION OF DRUIDCRAFT 101 FEATURES NEW LESSON

We are now accepting enrollments for the next session of Druidcraft 101.

Use this link to enroll: http://mithrilstar.org/d101enroll.htm

If you are a member of the Order, the money commitment does not apply to you.

The "doors' will open on Thursday, August 12th. The first lesson will be uploaded on Wednesday, August 18th. Last day to enroll is Tuesday, August 24th.

This session we are adding a new lesson: Lesson 4-A: "Nature is." This lesson will give an overview of our first two tenets and an introduction to the Gaian Hypothesis.

STATS

As of today we have 132 members, of which:
20 members are eligible for ordination into the First Degree. 10 members are ordained First Degree Druids.
2 members are eligible for ordination into the Second Degree
5 members are ordained Second Degree Druids
3 members are ordained Third Degree Druids
1 member is an ordained Fifth Degree Druid
2 members are ordained Seventh Degree Druids

So far During YR 42:
147 students took the Druidcraft 101 class
6 graduated and became members

So Far During YR 42, the Order has experienced a net Membership gain of 5

Total Groves: 2
Total US Members: 101
Total Canadian Members: 9
Total International Members: 21
Total Countries represented: 8
Total US States represented: 32
Total Canadian Provinces represented: 6
Top 5 US States: OR=11, CA=9, WA=9, FL=9, NY=7
Total members in areas with Redwood Groves: 4

4 NEW MEMBERS FROM OESTRE DRUIDCRAFT 101 SESSION

The Oestre session of Druidcraft 101 has just concluded. Out of 70 that began the class, 12 have survived, 4 have joined the Order, and 2 have indicated they will soon. Max and Hunter have done a wonderful job with this class.

This was the last "share ware" session. We've come up with a sliding scale (see http://www.mithrilstar.org/suggested.htm) for donating to the Order, and with the Lughnasadh session we've made the donation a mandatory thing.

The next online Druidcraft 101 class begins Wednesday, August 18th, 2004. To enroll, go to http://mithrilstar.org/d101enroll.htm For more details, visit http://www.mithrilstar.org/d101.htm

3rd ONLINE ORDINATIONS COMING UP BY SAMHAIN

Our next online ordinations will be held in the mithrilstar chat room sometime before Samhain.

There are (as of this writing) 20 Druids eligible for the First Degree, 2 eligible for Second and 1 eligible for 5th.

If you are in a hurry, or not able to make an online ordination, and don't want to wait for the online date, you may make a private appointment with Ceridwen or Sybok for a phone or chat room ordination - or you can contact one of the three new Third Degree Druids, as they are empowered to perform the rites for First and Second degrees.

Write the clerk of the Mother Grove for a list of 3rd's.

LUGHNASADH

This Holiday honours the Sun God, Lugh, who has many names and titles: Lleu/Lugh/Lugus, Lugh of the Long Arm, Lleu Llaw Gyffes, Warrior God of Justice, Travelers and Crafters. He is All Skilled, and is the Samildeach; the "Many-Gifted One". Sun Lord. Master of all the Arts. The Shining One. God of Light. Lord of All Four Corners.

The name Lugh means "light". He is the Child of the Sun. Lugh is also the God of grain harvests, of crafting, metallurgy, grains & breads, looms, and fire. Stories tell that He had taken on human form to worship among the Druids. Lugh is known as a defender of the people, especially those who may be threatened by the forces of Nature. Lugh's Spear is the flash of Light that pierces the Darkness. He is Energy. A Sun God and God of the Sky and of Lightening, as well as of Death and Rebirth. He is Mage, Alchemist and Sorcerer.

Lugh is seen as a God of Triplicity; as passionate Youth, wise King and Sage Elder. He embodies the Male dualities of Fire and Air. He is the Sacrificed God and is Protector and Defender.

Lugh teaches us not to fight battles out of anger, but to fight for causes that are just and right. He teaches us to honour our promises and our oaths.

Song of Lughnasadh

I am the sovereign splendor of creation
I am the fountain and the courts of bliss
I am the bright surrender of the willpower
I am the watchful guardian and the kiss
I am the many-coloured landscape
I am the transmigration of the geese
I am the burnished glory of the breastplate
I am the harbour where all strivings cease.

~~ Written by Caitlin Matthews

ASTROLOGY FOR PAGANS

Ceridwen currently has one Intermediate and three Advanced sessions in progress.

SOMETHING NEW! For those who don't want to wait for a new Beginning class session to start, or who wish to work at their own pace and schedule, Ceridwen is now offering PRIVATE TUTORING sessions! Because of the increased "personal attention" these entail, there will be a sliding scale fee required...

If you wish to take advantage of this new offer, or need more information about it, send an email to: ceridwen@s... Subject line: AstroPagan private tutoring

You will then be contacted immediately and a schedule will be set up that will conform to your own personal needs - NO WAITING! Each lesson will be offered whenever YOU are ready for it - and if you need to take time off at any point for personal business or holidays or whatever reason, your schedule will be adjusted accordingly!

Or...

To enroll for the next group class, send an email to: ceridwen@s... Subject line: AstroPagan group class

You will then be put on a pending list until she is ready to do another beginning cycle - at a time yet to be determined.

If you are interested in a private consultation about your Astrological chart, please visit her home page at:

http://www.mithrilstar.org/huntersmoon

Lammas

Balor, you are the arrow of time, speeding through space to bring all to conclusion. You are the blind eye of truth, freeing us from all deceit, all delusion.

Sun King Anointing Oil

10 drops frankincense oil
10 drops sandalwood oil
3 pinches saffron or safflower
Light-colored olive oil to fill jar completely

Mix well in an airtight two-ounce jar. Turn jar over once a day for at least ten days before using. Concentrating on the Sun, rub the oil on the person or token representing the sun.

ALMANAC

- Today is Lughnasadh / Lammas, or August 1, 2004 CE.
- It is the 1st day of the Season of Foghamhar, as well as the 1st day of the Month of Mi na Lunasa.
- It is also Sunday, in the common tongue, or Dydd Sul in Welsh.
- It is the Druidic day of the Birch.
- FULL MOONS occur on 29 Foghamhar, 59 Foghamhar, and 88 Foghamhar.
- NEW MOONS occur on 15 Foghamhar, 45 Foghamhar and 74 Foghamhar.
- A Solar Eclipse occurs on 74 Foghamhar.
- A Lunar Eclipse occurs on 88 Foghamhar.
- The Sun enters Virgo on 22 Foghamhar.
- The birthday of our Arch-Druid, Ceridwen Seren-Ddaear, occurs on 23 Foghamhar.
- Me キ n F 璟 hair (September) begins on 32 Foghamhar (a Wednesday - Dydd Mercher - Day of the Hazel).
- The Order of the Mithril Star formally schismed from the Reformed Druids of North America on 35 Foghamhar YR 41 (September 4 2003).
- Mabon, or the Autumnal Equinox occurs on 53 Foghamhar.
- The Sun enters Libra on 53 Foghamhar.
- Deireadh Foghmhair (October) begins on 62 Foghamhar (a Friday - Dydd Gwener -- Day of the Apple).
- The Sun enters Scorpio on 83 Foghamhar.
- The New Druid Year (YR 43) begins at Sundown, 92 Foghamhar (Samhain / Calan Gaeaf), A Sunday - Dydd Sul - Day of the Birch.

CONCLUSION

The Mother Grove wishes all of you a most blessed Lughnasadh, and abundant blessings throughout the season!

May you never thirst!
Ceridwen Seren-Ddaear, Arch Druid
Sybok Pendderwydd, Clerk
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, OMS

NEXT ISSUE WILL BE PUBLISHED ON SAMHAIN / Calan Gaeaf-1 Geimredh YR 43

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The Druids Egg -- 1 Foghamhar YR 42 -- Vol. 2 No. 4

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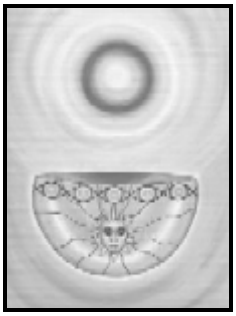


Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION FOUR

The Druids Egg

Order of the Mithril Star

OMS is either an Offshoot of the RDNA or a Group in Near-Orbit.
Their Views are Their Own Affairs.

Volume Three

2004 & 2005

Drynemetum Press

The Druid's Egg

Vol.3 No. 1
1 Geimredh 43 - Samhain / Calan Gaeaf 2004 -
www.mithrilstar.org
View the groovy html version at
http://mithrilstar.org/newssamhain04.htm

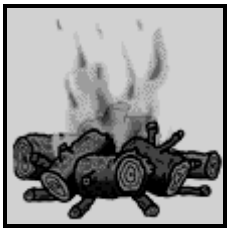
BLESSED SAMHAIN TO ALL

Samhain (Sa-un), (or SOW-en), known in Modern Irish as La Samhna (Laa Sa-u-Nu), in Welsh as Nos Galan Gaeaf (that is the night of the Winter Calends), in Manx as Laa Houney (Hollantide Day), Sauin or Souney; is, of course, the eve of "All Saint's Day", All Hallow's Evening or Halloween.

Among other things, it is the beginning of the Winter Half of the Year (the seasons of Geimredh & Earrach) and is known as "the Day Between Years." The day before Samhain is the last day of the old year and the day after Samhain is the first day of the new year (though for clarity's sake, most New Reformed Druids assign each Samhain to the year following it. Being a day "between years," it is considered a very magical night, when the dead walk among the living and the veils between past, present and future may be lifted in prophecy and divination. As the Celtic New Year, it is the time when the veil separating the worlds of men and of the Tuatha de Danaan is at its thinnest, allowing the spirits of the dead, the faery folk, devas, etc., to pass back and forth with little effort.

SAMHAIN AROUND THE WORLD

In Scotland, people would place stones or nuts in the ashes of the hearth before going to bed Samhain night. Anyone whose stone had been disturbed during the night was said to be destined to die during the coming year.



On Crete, each family prepares a pot of porridge (made by boiling wheatberries, pomegranate seed, raisins, currants and almonds) and then carries it from house to house throughout the village. At each home, a little of their porridge is taken out and added to the household's pot and a little of that household's porridge is added to theirs. By the end of the day, each family takes home a nearly identical mixture of the village's porridge to honour all the departed.

In Sicily, this day is called the Festival of the Dead and it is an important celebration, especially for the children, as their dead relatives return to leave them traditional candies and cakes as well as toys.

In Latin America, families celebrate the Day of the Dead by visiting cemeteries and cleaning the graves of their relatives. They also honor the memory of departed loved ones by leaving them flowers and by baking traditional cakes and pastries. In Finland, the celebrations we associate with Samhain actually occur around Easter.

GWYN AP NUDD

The white son of darkness, at Samhain in his antler head dress he leads the wild hunt out from Yynis Whittrin the Isle of Glass, better known as Glastonbury Tor. With his red, black and white hounds and his hooded riders Gwyn as Lord of war and death gathers the souls of the dead, leading them through the underworld to rest and rebirth. A powerful perhaps frightening image.

There are however many aspects to this complex deity. His role as Lord of death is a crucial part of the sacred cycle.

Gwyn has many other faces - he is a Lord of the forests, a being of great knowledge and wisdom - he has great concern over the fate of the earth.

Gwyn is the lover of Creudlad, and he is Lord of the Tylwyth Teg [Welsh Faeries]. He beckons you where the veil is thinnest to follow him into another place.

REFORMED DRUIDISM 101: THE SELF-STUDY ON CD-ROM V.9.0

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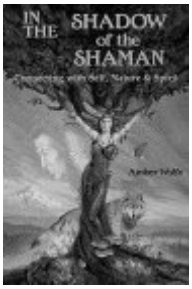
The "official" OMS Bibliography continues to grow. If you haven't checked it out lately, please do. Sybok has put a lot of hours into this effort. The bibliography is now up 90% and functioning. Sybok is still working on the "miscellaneous" page, but should have that up within the week. Then he will be going back and adding in all the suggested works that have been coming in (thanks to those who have contributed). The bibliography is very much an ongoing work in progress, so be sure to check it from time to time for updates.

One of the things about it is that it functions as a "suggested reading list" but it also reveals something of the character of the Order, in much the same way that perusing a new friends book shelf will reveal something of their character.



About 99% of the books have links either to our own Avalon Rising sale site, or to Amazon.com, where you can purchase the item. The only ones that don't are those we couldn't find and are out of print. Check it out: http://www.mithrilstar.org/avalon/bibleo.htm

Do feel free to make suggestions. And if you have a review of any work therein, please submit it and we'll give you the credit. Also, you have to know we didn't -- we couldn't -- read every book in the list. If you believe or are aware of a book that shouldn't be on the list, for whatever reason, please let us know (and tell us why). Likewise, if we've left something out, or "misplaced" a book (maybe it's in the wrong category?).

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CAILLEACH - THE VEILED ONE

A Dedication to the Crone The Cailleach (KAL-y-ach) is the Ancient Earth herself. She is the lichen-covered rocks and the mountain peaks. She is the bare earth covered with snow and frost. She is the Deep Ancestress, veiled by the passage of time.

At Hallowmas, Brighid withdraws her green mantle from the Earth. With a last stunning flourish of colour, her power withdraws into the ground. The very soil now holds all of Life. Plants have deposited their seeds there, to wait for the return of the Light. Trees now only live in their roots, leaving their branches bare to the keen winds. Animals as small as insects and as large as bears go into the Earth to sleep the Winter away. The wet of the Winter rains helps last year's plants to transform into fertile soil for the next season of growth.

The Cailleach is the Goddess who oversees this transformation. She is the one who watches over the culling of old growth. She is the Death Goddess, who lets die what is no longer needed. But in the debris of the passing year, she also finds the gems, the seeds for the next season. She is the guardian of the seed, the keeper of the essential life force. She holds the very essence of power.

This is the hag of winter, often described as an ugly giantess leaping from mountaintop to mountaintop. The rocks she drops from her apron become hills. She has a blue-black face with only one eye in the centre of her forehead. Her teeth are red and her hair is matted brushwood covered with frost. She wears grey clothes and a great plaid is wrapped around her shoulders. When the Winter storms rage through the hills, people say the Cailleach is tramping her blankets. She washes her plaid in the eddies of the Corryvreckin off the Scottish coast, and the next day the hills are white with snow.

It is clear that the Cailleach is one with the land, clothed in snow in winter, with brushwood growing on her body. Her one eye shows that she sees beyond dualities to the ultimate unity of all things on the Web of Life.

Her appearance alone makes her awesome to encounter. It is hard to relate to someone that ugly. Whenever people encounter her in meditation, they usually feel fear and awe, because she is clearly very powerful. She is the essential power of the Earth, and she has made it clear to me that she will continue to punish our disrespect for her with flood and other natural disaster. This is not a lady to be trifled with.

In Celtic myth and legend, the hag is often equated with the Sovereignty of the land. The spirit of the land traditionally held the sovereign power, and any king only held office by symbolic marriage to the spirit of the land. The story of Niall makes this very clear.

Women who identity with this Goddess find that she gives them Sovereignty in their lives - a special kind of power and confidence. The Cailleach, fierce though she may be, lives in all of us. She gives us the wisdom to let go of what is no longer needed, and keeps the seeds of what is yet to come. She stands at the cusp of Death and Life.

Of course, the Cailleach's best-known guise is that of the winter goddess, representing cold, darkness and death. In the winter months she rides through the air on the back of a wolf (the Gaelic word for January is Faoilleach, "wolf month"), bringing freezing cold, blizzards and ice. Highland tradition says that she has a magic wand which she uses to strike down the tiniest signs of spring growth - she acts as destroyer, bringing the frost that kills the first shoots of plants, the early lambs. Many sources say that her reign ends on April 25, now a Christian festival to celebrate the Annunciation, centuries ago - La na Caillich, Cailleach Day, the beginning of spring in Scotland. Others say she remains active until Beltane, and that the varying winter conditions in April represent her last fight against the arrival of spring.

Some stories tell of the Cailleach's son who represents spring and who, in order to defeat winter, has to free a young girl held prisoner by his mother. The Cailleach escapes his fatal blow by becoming part of the landscape, turning into a rock or boulder (there's a Cailleach Mountain in the Cuillins on the Isle of Skye, for example - one of her haunts).

The next aspect of the Cailleach is closely related to the above. She is also a weather goddess, a goddess of storms. The west coast of Scotland is her favourite haunt. In her guise as storm goddess she is usually known as Cailleach Bheur. Bheur means sharp and can apply to wind and weather as well as a person.

The one place that is mentioned most frequently in connection with Cailleach Bheur is the whirlpool of Corryvreckan, just north of Jura. It is one of the spots most feared by sailors as its power can change very suddenly. West coast lore has it that the whirlpool is Cailleach Bheur's washtub. In winter, she is said to wash her plaid, representing the whole of Scotland. When she has finished, the plaid is white and Scotland is covered in snow.

At other times of the year, sailors need to look and listen. Are there little wavelets on whirlpool, foam gushing? Cailleach Bheur is treading her laundry. Is there a noise like thunder? It's the Cailleach's sneeze! Both are sure signs that it would be very dangerous to go near the whirlpool. Further inland, the Cailleach can control tidal lochs, causing storms so violent that boats can't leave harbour. This could have had serious consequences in the days before roads and bridges were built.

But the Cailleach does not only act as destroyer. On the contrary: some attribute to her the creation of the whole of the Hebrides! There are lots of anecdotes about landscape creation, both deliberate and accidental. The Cailleach is said to walk about carrying stones in a basket or a creel occasionally dropping them, thus creating mountains and groups of islands such as the Garvellachs. A wonderful bawdy story features the giant Cailleach wading through the sea, apron full of rocks, near the Ayrshire coast when a French sailor moves his boat underneath her. As the storyteller quaintly puts it, "he tickles her where you would expect a Frenchman to tickle a woman" - she shrieks and drops one of her rocks (the Frenchman has a lucky escape!), which we now know as Ailsa Craig. Loch Awe came into being when the Cailleach of Cruachan failed to cover the well on Ben Cruachan in time, and the water gushed out down into the valley, flooding villages and drowning people. She was devastated and she turned to stone, became the boulder that can still be seen on top of the mountain. You can visit Cruachan Power Station near Oban and enjoy a tour into the mountain - the story is part of it!

The Cailleach is very fond of animals, which leads on to the last aspect, that of the supernatural guardian. Many a Cailleach acts as a guardian of deer, looking after their welfare and making sure that there is a healthy population. The most famous of deer guardians is Cailleach Beinne Brice, the Cailleach of Beinn Bhreac (or Ben Breck) near Loch Treig in Lochaber. Local hunters were once familiar with her. Their relationship was one of mutual respect. The Cailleach was happy to speak to them, to tell them how the deer were doing, to tell them how many they could shoot and when. The hunters would always keep to her instructions, knowing that she had control over the balance between human and nature. People would notice if they did something wrong, such as the two young lads who went hunting on Stob Coire Claurgih in the Grampians. The Cailleach pointed them in the right direction to shoot a deer. The lads tied a rope around it and dragged the stag all the way home... or so they thought. When they arrived, only the rope was left. They told their father how they had found the stag, and their father asked, "Did you bless the meat?" When they denied it, their father explained: "Well, if you don't bless the meat, then it's the fairies who get their share!"

So, as you have seen, there is more to the Cailleach than her winter goddess aspect. You may have felt her presence on a cold January night - I have, and I'm sure she dropped those big snowflakes on my nose to nudge me into getting back to my research! - but don't just look for her there... find her in Scotland's mountains, by the lochs, in pastures and meadows, and in the forests... for she is in all of them, a mistress of the land.

OLDE WELSH PROSE

(Author Unknown)
He who knows the ways of beast and birds,
Who can distinguish them by sound and cry,
Who knows the bright quicksilver life in streams,
The courses that the stars take in the sky,
May never had laid hands on books, yet he,
Is sharing wisdom with infinity...
He who works with sensitive deft hands
At any woodcraft, will absorb the rain,
The sunlight and the starlight and the dew,
That entered in the making of its grain;
He should grow tall and straight and clean and good,
Who daily breathes the essence of wood,
He who finds companionship in rocks,
And comfort in the touch of vine and leaf,
Who climbs a hill for joy, and shouts a song,
Who loves the feel of wind, will know no grief;
No loneliness that ever grows too great;
For he will never be quite desolate...
He shares, who is companioned long with these,
All ancient wisdom and philosophies.

MEET OUR NEW TREASURER

Owing to the problems of managing the Orders monetary assets from a long distance, our former Treasurer, Br. Phaedrus, stepped down from his role in late summer.

We were pleased to find a willing and very capable replacement in the form of a new member of the Mother Grove from Garberville, CA: Moonflower.

Moonflower, a CPA by profession, has enthusiastically taken over the office of Treasurer, and has actually thrown herself into the Order, advancing to the 3rd degree in almost as many months!

LUGHNASADH SESSION OF REFORMED DRUIDISM 101 CONTINUES

As an Order, we're adapting more and more of RDNAs traditions (with our own little tweaks of course) every year, and our online course is reflective of that. So in August, we changed the name of the course to Reformed Druidism 101, which is much more accurate. The current session has 14 survivors, and 4 have already joined the Order (2 were members going in). Sadly, a few who did not survive simply refused to pay their obligation. Honor can be so lacking in the Pagan community. The next session will begin in January. If you are a member of the Order and need to take it, use this link to enroll:

http://mithrilstar.org/d101enroll.htm

If you are a member of the Order, the money commitment does not apply to you.

THE STATE OF THE ORDER

NEW YEARS DAY Y.R. 43
As of today we have 138 members, of which:
21 members are eligible for ordination into the First Degree.
16 members are ordained First Degree Druids.
3 members are eligible for ordination into the Second Degree
4 members are ordained Second Degree Druids
3 members are ordained Third Degree Druids
1 member is eligible for ordination into the Fourth Degree
1 member is an ordained Fifth Degree Druid
2 members are ordained Seventh Degree Druids

During YR 42:
186 students started the Druidcraft 101 class
15 finished and became members

During YR 42, the Order experienced a net Membership gain of 15
Total Groves: 2
Total US Members: 116
Total Canadian Members: 9
Total International Members: 22
Total Countries represented: 11
Total US States represented: 32
Total Canadian Provinces represented: 6
Top 5 US States: OR=12, CA=9, WA=10, FL=11, NY=7
Total members in areas with Redwood Groves: 4

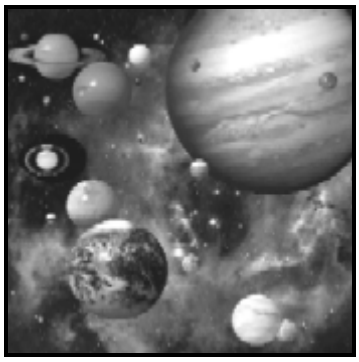
4th ONLINE ORDINATIONS COMING UP AROUND YULE

Our next online ordinations will be held in the mithrilstar chat room sometime around Yule.

There are (as of this writing) 21 Druids eligible for the First Degree, 3 eligible for Second and 1 eligible for 4th.

If you are in a hurry, or not able to make an online ordination, and don't want to wait for the online date, you may make a private appointment with Ceridwen or Sybok for a phone or chat room ordination - or you can contact one of the three new Third Degree Druids, as they are empowered to perform the rites for First and Second degrees.

Write the clerk of the Mother Grove for a list of 3rd's.



ASTROLOGY FOR PAGANS

Ceridwen currently has four Advanced sessions and one Beginning session in progress. Because of this large amount of classes, she will be taking a "hiatus" from the group class format for quite some time (at least until all of her current students graduate)...

Ceridwen is, however still offering PRIVATE TUTORING sessions! Because of the increased "personal attention" these entail, there will be a sliding scale fee required...

If you wish to take advantage of this offer, or need more information about it, send an email to: ceridwen@hunters-moon.org Subject line: AstroPagan private tutoring

You will then be contacted immediately and a schedule will be set up that will conform to your own personal needs - NO WAITING! Each lesson will be offered whenever YOU are ready for it - and if you need to take time off at any point for personal business or holidays or whatever reason, your schedule will be adjusted accordingly!

Or...

If you are interested in a private consultation about your Astrological chart, please visit her home page at: http://hunters-moon.org

ALMANAC

- Today is Samhain / Calen Gaeaf, or November 1, 2004 CE.
- It is the 1st day of the 43rd Year of the Reform, the 1st day of the Season of Geimredh, and the 1st day of the Month of Mi na Samhna.
- It is also Monday, in the common tongue, or Dydd Llun in Welsh.
- It is the Druidic day of the Willow.
- FULL MOONS occur on 26 Geimredh, 56 Geimredh, and 86 Geimredh.
- NEW MOONS occur on 12 Geimredh, 41 Geimredh and 71 Geimredh.
- The birthday of our Co-Founder, Sybok Pendderwydd, occurs on 15 Geimredh.
- The Sun enters Sagittarius on 21 Geimredh.
- Mean Geimhridh (December) begins on 31 Geimredh (a Wednesday - Dydd Mercher - Day of the Hazel).
- Yule / Alban Arthuan, or the Winter Solstice occurs on 51 Geimredh.
- The Sun enters Capricorn on 51 Geimredh. Deireadh
- Geimhridh (January, the new common year 2005) begins on 62 Geimredh (a Saturday - Dydd Sadwrn -- Day of the Sequoia).
- The Sun enters Aquarius on 80 Geimred.

Samhain

Let me be a bloodhound in your pack, Lord Herene,
racing toward a horizon that recedes
with each swift step we take toward it.
Let me burn with your dark fire.
Let me serve you with my fearless deeds.

Wild Hunt Talisman

Cedar, Sandalwood, Wormwood, Myrrh
Place a pinch of each in a pouch to be worn or carried to attune with the Wild Hunt.

Irish Galway Wassail

While wassailing is now usually associated with Yule, it originated around Samhain. It was usually done by a group of individuals who had imbibed too much Samhain ale. They would gather stones or weapons and cider and go out to find the largest apple tree around. There, they throw the stones (or fire their weapons) into the branches of the apple tree to frighten away evil faeries. They would then drink to the tree's health and sustenance. Today, "wassailing" means the drinking to the health of anyone with a spiced punch or cider.

1 1/2 cups water
1/2 cup heavy cream
6 baked apples, cut into small pieces
5 egg whites
1 1/4 cups granulated sugar
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
2 teaspoons allspice
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ginger
8 whole cloves
1 quart ale
1 cup cooking sherry
1 cup Irish whiskey

Directions

1. Bring the water and cream to a slow boil and remove from heat.
2. Beat the egg whites well.
3. Thoroughly mix in all the remaining ingredients except the alcohol. Allow this mixture to cool slightly, enough so that the heat from it will not crack your punch bowl. If you have a non-glass container for your wassail, you can skip the cooling process.
4. Blend in the alcohol just before serving, and be sure to offer the traditional toast to the old apple tree.

Good Solstice
May Yule and this turning of the
wheel bring you love, peace,
and good fortune in the coming year.
Let us welcome the returning sun
with hope and Joy.
May you never thirst!

CONCLUSION

The Mother Grove wishes all of you a most blessed New Year, and abundant blessings throughout the season!

May you never thirst!
Ceridwen Seren-Ddaear, Arch Druid
Sybok Pendderwydd, Clerk
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, OMS

NEXT ISSUE WILL BE PUBLISHED ON Imbolq / Oimelc - 1 Earrach YR 43

WANT TO JOIN THE ORDER? http://www.mithrilstar.org/join.htm

WANT TO DONATE TO THE ORDER? http://www.mithrilstar.org/donate.htm

The Druids Egg -- 1 Geimredh YR 43 -- Vol. 3 No. 1

Send letters, submissions to mithrilstarnews-owner@yahoogroups.com There is no guarantee that your submission will be published. All submissions become the property of OMS. Published four times each year by The Mother Grove of the Order of the Mithril Star Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng y Bydoedd Grove Eureka California USA "An autonomous collective of Reformed Druidry" Copyright (c) 2004

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PART TWELVE

CONCLUSION
to
A REFORMED
DRUID ANTHOLOGY

2nd Edition

2005 c.e.

The Drynemetum Press

Conclusion… *or is it*?

By Mike the Compiler

The journey through the recorded writings of the Reformed Druids has been long and ARDAous. Sometimes it has been a creative delight of innovation, other times it has been ploddingly dull, one word after another, but it is complete in a sense, and yet unfinished. As every commencement speaker pronounces, the end of one journey is but the signal for the preparation of new tasks for the next trip.

Thank you for reading these works. A writer and a reader need each other for completion. It has been my great honor and privilege to be fated to have had the time, access, advice and resources to assemble this collection. So many interesting articles, thoughts and hopes have been preserved here. I hope these words have guided you well on your travels and provided support in your travails. May they have pointed out promising directions to explore and experience.

While I may be remembered as Mike the Compiler, a job at which I have thriven, my fondest memories remain the many campfires I have sat around with my friends over the years, sharing whiskey and stories. Druidism, like bread, kneads to be baked fresh every day. Yet, even as I write these words, more than 200 pages of new material has already built up, and may one day be published in another edition.

But I will not weigh you down further anymore with my books, indeed, I hope to lighten your step with the last two parts of this volume. The pilgrim's knapsack must indeed be light, and these three cumbersome volumes may be difficult to bring along, so I have reduced them to two silvery disks that I hope you will reflect on in the coming years. Perhaps they will pay the cost of the Ferryman at a difficult fording?

The two discs are compact with an alimentary organization. First there is the Appendix (Part 13); an unlucky useless vestige, often painful, best removed; which is where I am placing an often execrated movie discovered in the bowels of the archives; Gatorr the Fighting Rabbt, a barbarian flick from the Carleton Grove that is indeed difficult to stomach. Second, there is the Gaul Bladder (Part 14); a repository of Bile (considered the sacred trees of both the continental Celts of France and the incontinental Celts of Britain and Ireland) to properly digest and separate fatty foods; appropriate for our corpulent publications. They should keep you in good humor.

So kind reader, given the fickleness of fate, these may be the last chance to write to you, so I leave you with my warmest heart-felt wishes for your health, wealth and search for Truth. May you attain such and travel well.

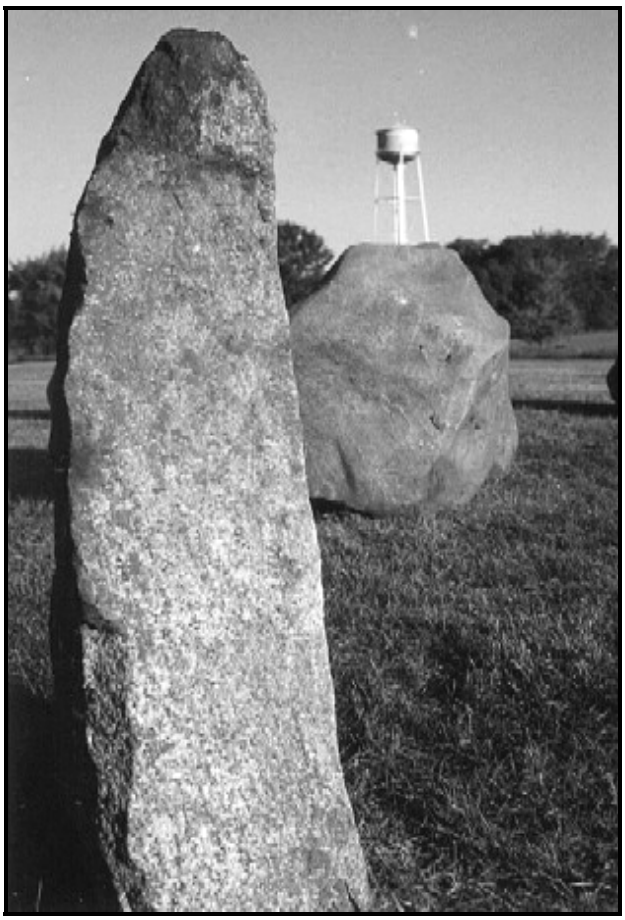
Yours in the Mother,
Mike the Compiler
Day 72 of Earrach, Y.R. XLII

A Druid's Blessing

May the Gods be with you and bless you:
May you see your children's children.
May you be poor in misfortune, rich in blessings.
May you know nothing but happiness
From this day forward.

May green be the grass you walk on,
May blue be the skies above you,
May pure be the joys that surround you,
May true be the hearts that love you.
May the warm rays of sun fall upon your home
And may the hand of a friend always be near.

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon your fields.
And until we meet again,
May Be'al hold you in the palm of his hand.

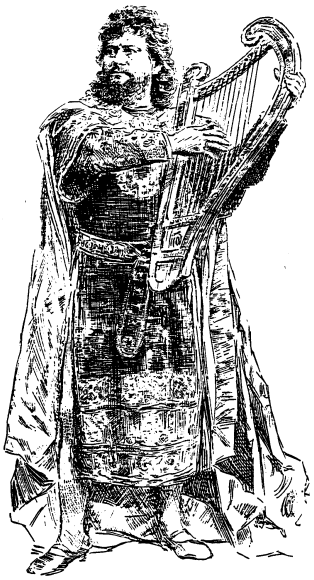


APPENDIX - DVD

PART THIRTEEN

GATØRR: THE FIGHTING RABBIT

1995 c.e.



"A man's fate is only known half-way through life… if it were revealed earlier, it would seem but an illusion… " -Plexus

Half Døzen Eggs Production
in conjunction with
The Drynemetum Press

2004 Introduction

The 2 hour barbarian movie, Gatorr, DVD was added to ARDA 2's Magazine Volume as an afterthought because it so captures the spirit of Carleton Druidism in 1995, although it was not strictly intended as a Druidic movie. Mark Heiman and I had ample contacts with members of heavily overlapping Carleton groups like; Carleton Druids, the Folk Music Society, The Folk Dance society, Science Fiction Alliance, Society for Creative Anachronism and the Mystery Science Theatre 3000 club. Armed with only a shoestring budget of $2000, three long summer months, piles of fake fur & beards, and 6 months of hotly debated scripts, we set out to make Carleton College's first full-length student film, and to briefly turn the amazing foliage and structures of Carleton & Olaf into the mythical wonderland that it is in my heart.

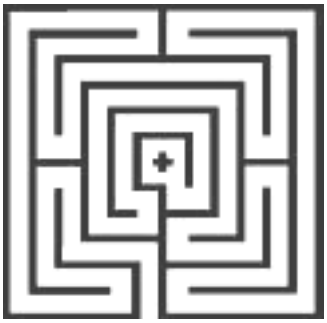
Intentionally awful as it is, Gatorr has a graceful lilt and it is emblematic of the way Druids fully throw themselves into their projects, with every ounce of their skill, determination and free time, even when they don't have a clue. (Carleton Grove even celebrates a Welsh holiday, Mwfydnfud: Messing With Forces We Do Not Fully Understand.) As the script developed, the introduction of several pseudo-religious lines and plot elements began to mature. As all films, it is a self-portrait of the inner workings of the creator. The cynical post-modernist hero is evident, perhaps giving the underlying message that society remolds the less-than-stellar reality of heroic figures to match its needs. From a sheltered, comfortable world, he undertakes new mystical challenges and is sent on a quest to right wrongs, and to understand himself. Gatorr's a good natured, bumbling fool pushed by circumstances much beyond his control into a leading position, some pretensions towards heroism, but hindered by his ineptitude. Barbarian is a relative term used by civilized people for others who are mutually not understandable and at a state of lower technological or apparent complexity, but also those too close to Nature.

Much of the movie is about walking, since the life of even adventurers is mostly spent in travel and commonplace activities, punctuated by decisive moments. Thus, the film shows the excruciating details to reveal the subtler nature of heroes. Many elements and events of the movie (e.g. the Slainte & shoes) are purposely obscure in reason and origins, as is much of life's driving forces. There are several wizards and sages in the movie, some benevolent, others driven by deep seated grudges and fears. The element of reconciliation exists, but sadly wasn't developed fully in the movie. The background music and film credits (all three of them) remain the past part.

Therefore, I have included Gatorr in Part Thirteen, a listing of cast & credits (many of whom were Druids), a map of where all the scenes took place, and the English version to the love theme of the movie. If anyone would like a copy of the DVD, send $10 to cover shipping costs to me, ask for the address at mikerdna@hotmail.com

Enjoy.

Mike the FoOl



Cast in Order of Appearance

Master Skaltørr	**Mark Heiman**
Blaxørr	Mike Scharding
Geezør	Fer Hørn
Tontørr	Mike Smit
Kippor	Mark Heiman
Weedorr	**Rebecca Hröbak**
Plåntōrr	Daniel Martin
Gatørr	Aric Stewart
Mixonn	Drew Johnson
Venearr	Rebecca Hrøbak
Kankorr, the Elder	**Fer Horn**
Gregorr, the unseen	Mike Scharding
Grakkle	Mike Smit
Vilajorr	Sam Adams
Guard 1	Mike Scharding
Guard 2	**Drew Johnson**
Guard 3	Mike Scharding
Guard 4	Mike Scharding
Traktorr, the Nasty	Mike Scharding
Schreich 1	Fer Horn
Horse	**Granite Boulder**
Young Gatorr	Erik Plaksin
Young Blendearr	Fer Horn
The Shoes	Die Booten
Schreich 2	Fer Horn
Black Dog	**Das Hünd**
Plex!us	Sam Admas
Sumgei	Mike Schard!ing
Mos!us, the Bald	Dave Diehl
Kok!us	Falon Yinung
Disq!us	**Rebecca Murray**
Kalkul!us	Mike Scharding
Visk!us, the Hairy	Fer Horn
Dühbi!us	Mike Smit
Ros!us, the Trainer	Mike Scharding
Midwife	**Amy Harris**
Pastwife	Fer Horn
Very Young Blendearr	The Babe
Very Young Gatorr	The Babe
Knochorr, the Doorman	Mike Scharding
Braxia, War Mistress	**Rebecca Murray**
Nude Gatorr	Mike
Torgorr	Mark Heiman
Klaxorr, the King	Christie Howard
Young Torgorr	Rebee Kavich
Wicked Motherr	**Fer Horn**
Wicked Fatherr	Mike Scharding
Young Magōrr	Chris Gwinn
Young Snake	Ollie
Rostarr, the Cook	Eric Plaksin
Flippy the Snake	**Flippy**
Guard 5	Mike Scharding
Guard 6	Fer Horn
Guard 7	Fer Horn
Guard 8	Mike Scharding
Roverr	**Inanimate Sphere**
Magōrr	Chris Gwinn
The Snake	Ollie
Hell Beast, the Beast	Chris Gwinn
Guard 9	Mike Smit
Guard 10	**Mike Scharding**
Ferret Guide	Gus the Groundhog
Brute 1	Daniel Martin
Brute 2	Fer Horn

Alli Gatorr	Alli Gator
Brute 3	Mike Smit
Brute 4	Fer Horn
Brute 5	Mike Scharding
Dilly, the Duck	**Dilly**
Brute 6	Mike Scharding
Brute 7	Tim Smit
Brute 8	Dan Fehler
Waterbug	Wally
Runørr	**Dan Fehler**
Guard 11	Mike Scharding
Guard 12	Tim Smit
Traktorr, the Icky	Fer Horn
Death Hound 1	Mike Scharding
Death Hound 2	**Mike Smit**
Death Hound 3	Tim Smit
Schreich 3	Mike Scharding
Schreich 4	Fer Horn
Old Mitsu Shenobi	Mike Scharding
The Magic Sword	**Itself**
Death Hound 4-10	Fer Horn
Death Hound 11-13	Mike Scharding
Ed, the Vormit Leader	Fer Horn
Ted, the Vormit	Christie Howard
Ned, the Vormit	**Mike Scharding**
Guard 13	Mike Scharding
Brute 9	Fer Horn
Guard 14, the Strict	Mike Smit
Guard 15	Fer Horn
Guard 16	**Mike Scharding**
Brute 10	Mike Smit
Grakkle's Evil Twin	Mike Smit
Schriech 5	Mike Scharding
Fighting Rabbit	Das Kaninchen

Vormit Army
John Costello, Fer Horn, Aric Stewart, Mike Scharding, Ed Burke, Eric Plaksin

Traktorian Horde
Naomi Kritzer, Sam Adams, Mike Scharding
John Costello, Drew Johnson, Ed Burke, Aric Stewart

Score Composed, Arranged & Borrowed by Mark Heiman
Performed by the Synthetic Symphony Orchestra
Conducted by Mark F. Heiman

"Love Theme from Gatorr" performed by The Eye-Patch Boyz
Sound Track available where all disreputable recordings are sold.

Special thanks to:
Happy Chef
Godfather's
K-Mart
Carleton College
St. Olaf College
Nerstrand Woods
and everyone else who had a hand in this.

This is a work of fiction. Any resemblance to actual persons or events, living or dead, is purely coincidental, and idicates that you lead a more interesting life than most of us.

Credits

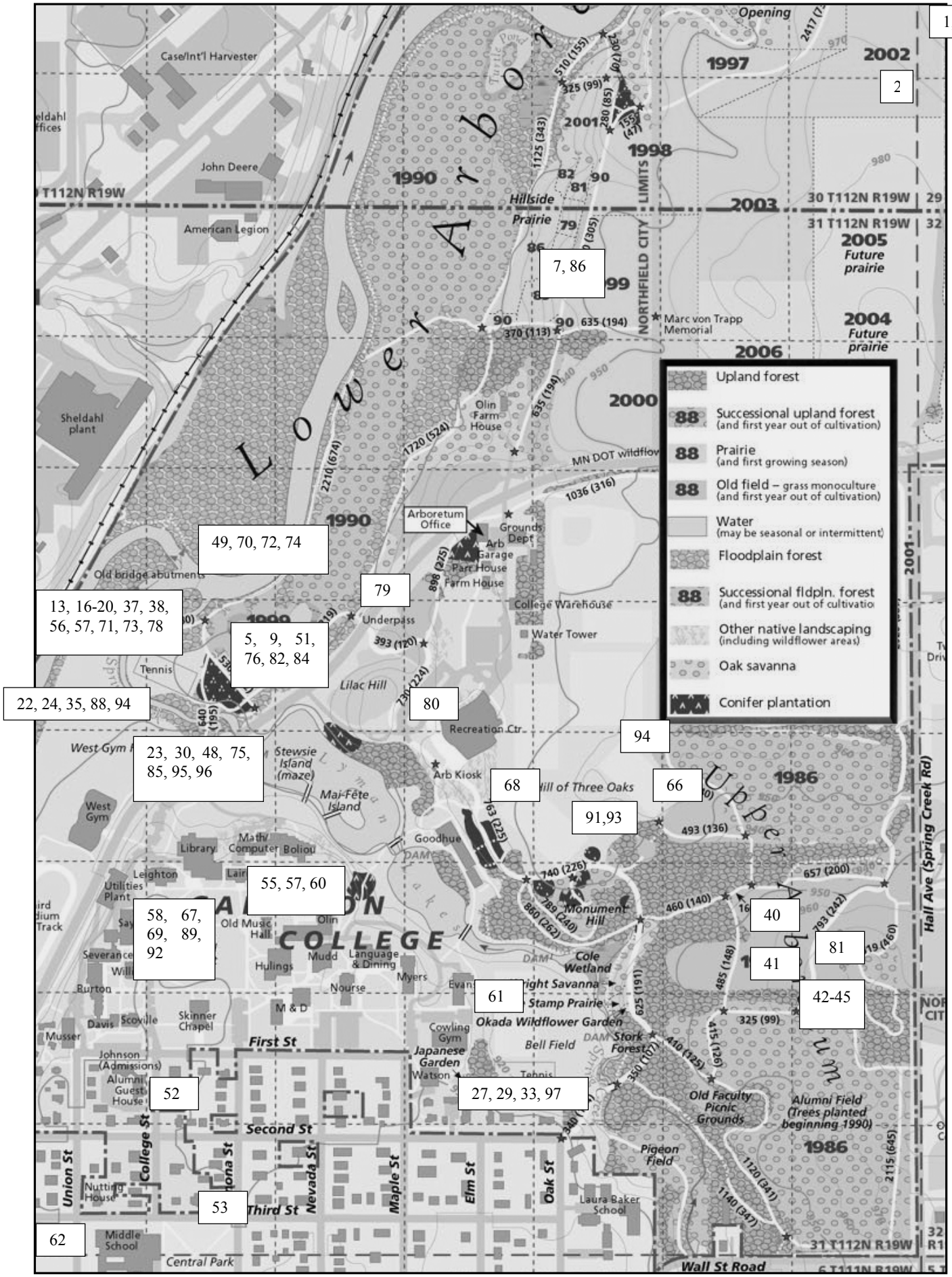
Director	Mike Scharding
Producer	Mark Heiman
Writers	Mike Scharding
	Mark Heiman
	Diane Gordon
	Roger Sørensen
Camera	Mark Heiman
Apprentice Camera	Mike Scharding
Underwater Special Effects	Mark Heiman
Animal Trainer	Fer Horn
Dialogue Prompters	Fer Horn, Mike Scharding
	Mark Heiman, Aric Stewart
Fire Tender	Fer Horn
Pyrotechnicians	Mike Scharding
	Mark Hieman, Aric Stewart
Costume & Props	Mike Scharding, Fer Horn
	Roger Sorensen, Mark
	Heiman Aric Stewart
Set Design	Mike Scharding, Fer Horn
	Mark Heiman, Aric Stewart
Machines	Mark Heiman
Water Safety Supervisor	Mike Scharding
Makeup	Mike Scharding
Site Coordinator	Rebecca Hrobak
Martial Arts Supervisor	Dave Diehl
Combat Advisor	Mike Scharding
Snake Handler	Eric Plaksin
Drivers	Mike Scharding
	Mark Heiman
	Rebecca Hrobak,
Gaffer	Mark Heiman
Best Boy	Mike Scharding
Dolly Grip	Amy Harris
Welsh Language Advisor	Sam Adams
Scot Language Advisor	Mike Scharding
Japanese Language Advisor	Roger Sorensen
German Language Advisor	Mike Scharding, Fer Horn
Icelandic Language Advisor	Isaberg Heiman
Uzbeki Cultural Advisor	Mike Scharding
Laundry	Fer Horn
Stunts	Mike Scharding
	Mike Smit
Agricultural Advisor	Eric Plaksin
Culinary Advisor	Eric Plaksin
Fruit & Vegetable Trainer	Fer Horn
Catering	The Happy Chef
Security	Chris Gwinn
Floral Arrangements	Floral Davenport
Lighting Design	Mark Heiman
Choreographer	Fer Horn
Boom	Fer Horn
Jewelry Design	Chris Gwinn
Carpenter	Mike Scharding
	Mark Heiman
Auditor	Guido
Unit Publicist	Mark Heiman
Not Pictured	Suzanne Mastaw
Casting	Mike Scharding
	Mark Heiman
Title Design	Mike Scharding
	Mark Heiman
Editors	Mike Scharding
	Mark Heiman
Sound Editor	Mark Heiman

Filming Locations of Gatorr

Most of the scenes in the movie were shot at Carleton College in Northfield Minnesota, about 30 miles south of the Twin Cities. St. Olaf campus is on the other side of Northfield, with nice stonework. Nerstrand Woods State Park is about 10 miles away with beautiful forest, a nice waterfall, and wondrous wildflowers.

1. Outside Cabin	00:00
2. Farm by the Cabin	3:00
3. Outside Cabin	5:00
4. Inside Cabin	10:00
5. Big Rock, Lower Arb	13:30
6. Inside Cabin	15:00
7. Hillside Prairie	16:30
8. Inside Cabin	18:30
9. Big Rock, Lower Arb	
10. Nerstrand Entrance	**22:30**
11. Nerstrand Entrance	
12. Nerstrand Entrance	
13. Tennis Courts, Lower Arb	
14. Nerstrand Woods	
15. Nerstrand Woods	
16. Tennis Courts, Lower Arb	
17. Tennis Courts, Lower Arb	
18. Tennis Courts, Lower Arb	
19. Tennis Courts, Lower Arb	
20. Tennis Courts, Lower Arb	
21. Nerstrand Woods	
22. West Gym Field	**25:40**
23. Lyman Lakes "Good place to die"	26:00
24. West Gym Field	27:30
25. Nerstrand Stairs	27:31
26. Flatten Hall door, St. Olaf	28:00
27. Japanese Garden	28:50
28. Nerstrand Stairs	34:30
29. Japanese Gardens	35:15
30. Lyman Waterfall	35:50
31. Japanese Gardens	36:20
32. Inside Cabin	40:30
33. Japanese Garden	44:00
34. Nerstrand Stairs	**46:50**
35. West Gym Field	**47:14**
36. Nerstrand Woods	**47:25**
37. Tennis Courts, Lower Arb	**48:00**
38. Tennis Courts, Lower Arb	**48:30**
39. Nerstrand Entrance	**48:17**
40. Upper Arb Field	**48:30**
41. Upper Arb Field	**48:45**
42. Upper Arb Field	**48:50**
43. Upper Arb Field	**49:07**
44. Upper Arb Field	**49:18**
45. Upper Arb Field	**49:30**
46. Nerstrand Entrance	**49:40**
47. Nerstrand Entrance	**49:44**

48. Lyman Waterfall	50:00
49. Cannon River	50:15
50. Holland Hall	54:30
51. Big Rock, Lower Arb	55:39
52. Hill House Basement	59:00
53. Central Park	56:30
54. Hill House Basement	59:00
55. ACNS Basement	1:00:00
56. Tennis Courts, Lower Arb	1:01:10
57. ACNS Basement	1:01:20
58. Leighton Hall	1:02:31
59. Holland Hall, St. Olaf	1:02:50
60. ACNS Basement	1:03:00
61. Evans Hall	1:03:08
62. Hill House Basement	1:03:30
63. Holland Hall, St. Olaf	1:07:50
64. Hill House Basement	1:09:00
65. Holland Hall, St. Olaf	1:09:45
66. Hill of 3 Oaks, Sunset	1:10:20
67. Leighton Hall	1:10:25
68. Hill of 3 Oaks, Ferret	1:10:20
69. Leighton Hall	1:11:29
70. Cannon River	1:11:30
71. Tennis Courts, Lower Arb	1: 12:00
72. Cannon River	1:12:30
73. Tennis Courts, Lower Arb	1:16:50
74. Cannon River	1:18:45
75. Lyman Rock Pile	1:22:19
76. Big Rock, Lower Arb	1:22:45
77. Nerstrand Waterfall	1:23:10
78. Tennis Courts, Lower Arb	1:24:00
79. Underpass, Lower Arb	1:28:00
80. Hill of Dirt, Upper Arb	1:28:10
81. Grass Field, Upper Arb	1:29:00
82. Big Rock, Lower Arb	1:29:40
83. Nerstrand Woods	1:30:20
84. Big Rock, Lower Arb	1:31:40
85. Lyman Rock Pile	1:32:20
86. Hillside, Upper Arb	1:33:20
87. Nerstrand Waterfall	1:33:25
88. West Gym Field	1:33:32
89. Hadzi Arch, Library	1:35:32
90. Holland Hall, Olaf	1:37:10
91. Hill of 3 Oaks	1:37:40
92. Hadzi Arch, Library	1:38:10
93. Hill of 3 Oaks	1:38:45
94. Pine Grove Area & West Gym Field switchbacks	1:39:30
95. Lyman Lakes, Stewsie Island. Pre-Maze	1:41:30
96. Lyman Waterfall	1:46:50
97. Japanese Garden	1:46:48
CREDITS	1:48:00-1:55:00


Lower Arboretum
Upper Arboretum
Upland forest
Successional upland forest (and first year out of cultivation)
Prairie (and first growing season)
Old field – grass monoculture (and first year out of cultivation)
Water (may be seasonal or intermittent)
Floodplain forest
Successional fldpln. forest (and first year out of cultivation)
Other native landscaping (including wildflower areas)
Oak savanna
Conifer plantation
Case/Int'l Harvester
John Deere
American Legion
Sheldahl plant
Hillside Prairie
NORTHFIELD CITY LIMITS
Marc von Trapp Memorial
Future prairie
Olin Farm House
Arboretum Office
Grounds Dept
Arb Garage
Parr House
Farm House
Old bridge abutments
Underpass
College Warehouse
Water Tower
Tennis
Lilac Hill
Recreation Ctr
West Gym
Stewsie Island (maze)
Mai-Fête Island
Arb Kiosk
Hill of Three Oaks
Goodhue
Monument Hill
Cole Wetland
Stamp Prairie
Okada Wildflower Garden
Stork Forest
Bell Field
Japanese Garden
Old Faculty Picnic Grounds
Alumni Field (Trees planted beginning 1990)
Pigeon Field
Laura Baker School
Hall Ave (Spring Creek Rd)
Wall St Road
Central Park
Middle School
Library
Math/Computer
Boliou
Leighton
Utilities Plant
Old Music Hall
Olin
Severance
Hulings
Mudd
Language & Dining
Myers
Nourse
Burton
Davis
Scoville
Skinner Chapel
Musser
M & D
Cowling Gym
Watson
Johnson (Admissions)
Alumni Guest House
Nutting House
First St
Second St
Third St
College St
Union St
Nevada St
Maple St
Elm St
Oak St
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30 T112N R19W
T112N R19W
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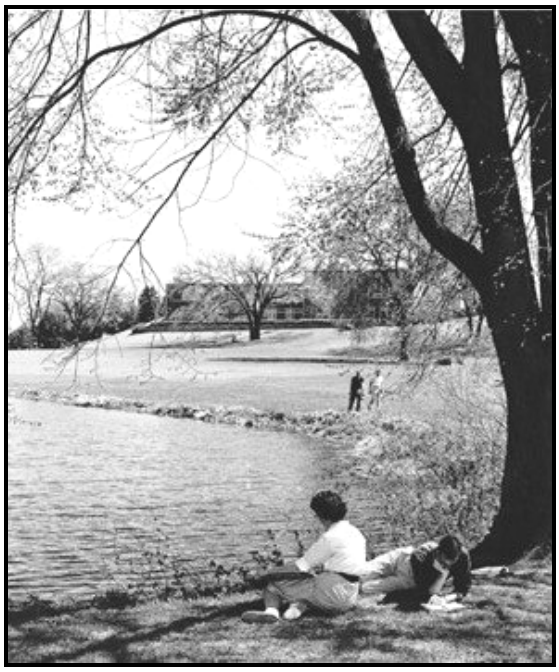
Love Theme of Gatorr

The world is falling all to pieces
It's true that entropy increases
Where in all this tired and troubled world
is there a place for you and me?

Our love is like a raging river
Filled with Gators, all a quiver
How can we find happiness and hope
among these brutes and barbarians?

Hold me in your arms
Touch me with your knees
Take me in the trees
My post-apocalyptic love.

Love like our is never ending
Love me like you're not pretending
Why do people stop and stare
Whenever we come up for air?



Who cares if you're not the hero?
No one else could come so near-o.
Who'da thought the end of civlization
Could be so … romantic?

Hold me in your arms
Touch me with your knees
Take me in the trees
My post-apocalyptic love.

Hold me in your arms
Take me with your knees
Touch me in the trees
My post-apocalyptic love.

GAUL BLADDER - CD ROM

PART FOURTEEN

THE DRUID DISK

2005 c.e.

The Drynemetum Press

Table of Contents

The Druid Disk contains quite a lot of material, which I will try to list in an indexed format, but just clicking through is usually enough to find everything. Especially interesting material is bold faced. Extracopies available from the Carleton Archives or from mikerdna@hotmail.com

I. ARDA 1 and 2 Texts

A. ARDA 1 (1996)
- i. ARDA-00 Introduction
- ii. ARDA-01 Druid Chronicles
- iii. ARDA-02 Apocyrpha
- iv. ARDA-03 Liturgy
- v. ARDA-04 Constitutions
- vi. ARDA-05 Hassidic
- vii. ARDA-06 Green Books
- viii. ARDA-07 Miscellany
- ix. ARDA-08 General History
- x. ARDA-09 Latter Day Druids
- xi. ARDA-10 Oral Interviews

B. ARDA 2 Pictures
- i. ARDA 2 Magazine Illustrations
  1. 1976-1981 Pentalpha-Druid Chronicler
  2. 1982-1991 Old Missy Pictures
  3. 1994 RDNA Newsletters
  4. New Missy Pictures
- ii. Carleton College & Druid Shots
  1. Carleton Shots
  2. Famous Druids
  3. Marks images in .jpg
  4. Mark's Pictures
- iii. Druid Store Pictures
- iv. Main Volume Illustrations
  1. Apocryhpa Graphics
  2. Liturgy Graphics
  3. Last Minute Pictures
- v. MS Word Inventories of Pictures

C. ARDA 2 Green Books
- i. ARDA 2 Green in MS WORD .doc format & .pdf
  1. 2part6-0 Introduction
  2. 2part6-1 Volume 1
  3. 2part6-2 Volume 2
  4. 2part6-3 Volume 3
  5. 2part6-4 Volume 4
  6. 2part6-5 Volume 5
  7. 2part6-6 Volume 6
  8. 2part6-7 Volume 7
  9. 2part6-8 Volume 8
  10. 2part6-9 Volume 9
  11. 2part6-10 Volume 10
  12. 2part6-11a Volume 11
  13. Game boards for 6-11

D. ARDA 2 Magazine Volume
- i. Final Magazine Folder (both .doc & .pdf)
  1. 2part11-0 Intro
  2. 2 part11-1a 1977
  3. 2 part11-1b 1978
  4. 2part11-1c1 1979-80
  5. 2part11-1c2 1980
  6. 2part11-1d 1981
  7. 2part11-2a 1982-3
  8. 2part11-2b 1968-5
  9. 2part11-2c 1986-7
  10. 2part11-2d 1988-9
  11. 2part11-2e 1990-4
  12. 2part11-3a 2000-1
  13. 2part11-3b1 2002
  14. 2part11-3b2 2002
  15. 2part11-3b3 2002
  16. 2part11-3c1 2003
  17. 2part11-3c2 2003
  18. 2part11-3d1 2004
  19. 2part11-3d2 2004
  20. 2part11-4 2003-4
  21. 2part12through14
- ii. Temporary File Folder
  1. Ooodles of them.

E. ARDA 2 Main Volume (.doc & .pdf)
- i. 2part0 Introduction
- ii. 2part1 Chronicles
- iii. 2part2-1 Early Apocrypha
- iv. 2part2-2 Late Apocrypha
- v. 2part3-1 Early Liturgy
- vi. 2part3-2 Middle Liturgy
- vii. 2part3-3 Late Liturgy
- viii. 2part4 Constitutions
- ix. 2part5 Hassidic
- x. 2part7 Miscellany
- xi. 2part8 General History
- xii. 2part9 Latter-Day Druids
- xiii. 2part10 Oral Interview

II. Internet Stuff

A. ADF & Keltria Online Publications

B. Carleton Caucus Conference 1999-2004

C. MOCC On-line Publications

D. New Missal-Any Files, HTML (plain by title and illustrated with #X)
- i. Missalany Beltane 2001 #5
- ii. Missalany Beltane 2002 #13
- iii. Missalany Beltane 2003 #21
- iv. Missalany Beltane 2004 #29
- v. Missalany Fall 2001 #8
- vi. Missalany Fall 2002 #16
- vii. Missalany Fall 2003 #24
- viii. Missalany Fall 2004 #32
- ix. Missalany Lugh 2001 #7
- x. Missalany Lugh 2002 #15
- xi. Missalany Lugh 2003 #23
- xii. Missalany Lugh 2004 #31
- xiii. Missalany Oimelc 2001 #3
- xiv. Missalany Oimelc 2002 #11
- xv. Missalany Oimelc 2003 #19
- xvi. Missalany Oimelc 2004 #27
- xvii. Missalany Samhain 2000 #1
- xviii. Missalany Samhain 2001 #9
- xix. Missalany Samhain 2002 #17
- xx. Missalany Samhain 2003 #25
- xxi. Missalany Samhain 2004 #33
- xxii. Missalany Spring 2001 #4
- xxiii. Missalany Spring 2002 #12
- xxiv. Missalany Spring 2003 #20
- xxv. Missalany Spring 2004 #28
- xxvi. Missalany Summer 2001 #6
- xxvii. Missalany Summer 2002 #14
- xxviii. Missalany Summer 2003 #22

xxix. Missalany Summer 2004 #30
xxx. Missalany Winter 2000 #2
xxxi. Missalany Winter 2001 #10
xxxii. Missalany Winter 2002 #18
xxxiii. Missalany Winter 2003 #26
xxxiv. Missalany Winter 2004 #34

E. OMS On-Line Publications
  i. OMS Conference 2003-2004
  ii. OMS Druid Egg 2003-2004
  iii. Reformed Druids Internationale Conference 2004
  iv. Webpage Backup 2005

F. RDNA homepage html backup

III. Other Publications

A. ARDA 2 Odd Liturgy Frangments 2000-5
  i. Foreign Language materials

B. ARDA 3 Materials 2003-2013
  i. Articles for ARDA 3
  ii. Druidical Treasure

C. Carleton Druid Collection 1976 & 2005
  i. Mike's Unofficial Version
  ii. Richard's Official Version

D. Confessions of a Carleton Archdruid 1989-94

E. Earlier Copy of ARDA 2 2004

F. Druid Archives Reference Materials 1993-2005
  i. Old Archives Lists
  ii. Druid Archives Index 2005
  iii. Carleton Book List

G. Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 2005
  i. Final DCE Files
    1. dce1
    2. dce2
    3. dce3
    4. dce3a first half
    5. dce3b secondhalf
  ii. Temp DCE Files
    1. dce(p1) .doc & .pdf
    2. dce(p2) .doc & .pdf
    3. dce(p3) .doc & .pdf

H. Green Books, originals Vol 1-5
  i. Deep Ecology Collection
  ii. Fergus8color
  iii. Grenbk1a
  iv. Grnbk2
  v. Grnbk3a
  vi. imperfectgreenbook4
  vii. treenbeardsgreenbok5
  viii. Vol5firsthalf
  ix. vol5secondhalf
  x. willwellswales1
  xi. willwellswales2
  xii. willwellswales3
  xiii. willwellswales4

I. Various Author's papers
  i. documents
  ii. from Daniel hansen
  iii. from mec
  iv. from robharrison
  v. from irony
  vi. from sam

J. MECS ARDA 1 Backup
  i. (simple .doc file conversions)

K. Pre-ARDA 1 Publication 1988-1995
  i. Books of Poetry 1993 & 1994 files
  ii. Original Green 2&3 writings files
  iii. Afrojedi
  iv. Answer
  v. comp singular space
  vi. deadbay scrolls
  vii. Druid history
  viii. greenbook 2
  ix. greenbook 3
  x. HDNA
  xi. Isaac Apocrypha
  xii. Order Worship
  xiii. Song Poetry 2

L. RDNA Correspondence 2000-4
  i. 2000
  ii. 2001
  iii. 2002
  iv. 2003
  v. 2004
  vi. finished letters

Final Thought…

"Some say that Druidism is a fringe religion,
but the benefits are worth it."
-Anonymous